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Elite Survey Reports - Introduction

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Elite survey reports



Bosnia and Herzegovina



Serbia



Montenegro



Kosovo



Albania



North Macedonia

Introduction

Religion has long been an essential element in the societies of the Western Balkan region, primarily because religious affiliation was key to cultural characterisation and ethnic differentiation,¹⁰⁷ but religion has achieved a prominent role in almost all aspects of society in the post-communist era. According to scholars, religion has not only witnessed a revival in these societies considering the increased number of religious activities, but the process of 'de-secularisation' of the public has been present as well.¹⁰⁸ Also, religion played a crucial role in the armed conflicts in the former Yugoslavia during the 1990s,¹⁰⁹ which came to define contemporary interreligious relations across the whole region. These are only some of the dimensions of the role of religion in Western Balkan society which this cross-country report attempts to analyse.

The goal of this survey report is to gather information and opinions on the role of religion in contemporary Western Balkan countries with regard to different societal issues such as politics, the economy, social cohesion, interreligious coexistence, tolerance, and democracy. In addition, the aim is to get an insight into multi-religious context and identify the role of religious institutions and leaders, their activities and practices. Finally, this survey report identifies areas for improvement, and the ways in which religion could be more beneficial to each society. While the analysis focuses on each country separately, this survey is part of an effort to better understand the role of religion in the entire region of the Western Balkans.

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107 Oddie, Morgan, 'The relationship of religion and ethnic nationalism in Bosnia and Herzegovina', *Religion in Eastern Europe*, XXXII, February 2012, p. 34.

108 Abazović, Dino, 'Rethinking Ethnicity, Religion, and Politics: The Case of Bosnia and Herzegovina', *Eur.Y.B. Minority Issues* 7:317, 2007, p. 318..

109 Oddie, (2012). *Op. Cit.* p. 39.



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