Unemployment in Ethnic Groups in Macedonia, Ohrid Agreement
Kicevo's Case

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Abstract

Kicevo, maybe after the position of Albanian language, is the clearer indicator of the difficulties that Albanians face in Macedonia, as well as the need for continuous compromise, even for the fundamental rights that in normal democratic states would not even count. Today, nearly 545,000 residents live outside the borders of the Republic of Macedonia, respectively 26% general population of the country. The unemployment rate not only is one of the highest in Europe (32%), in long term, more than 80% of the unemployed have been so for more than a year. Statistics show that the majority of them (63.8%) have been unemployed for more than 4 years. The objective of this study is the evaluation of the unemployment rate in the ethnic Albanian group in Macedonia as well as the evaluation of the implementation of the aspect that have to do with employment in terms of the Ohrid Agreement in order to highlight the implementation of this cohabitation contract in the Republic of Macedonia by aiding the policy makers to correctly adress the problems that affect inter-ethnic cohabitation in this Balkan State. The current study is of the cross-sectional type. In this study 500 individuals were included, of the Albanian entity, age 18-60 and that were Kicevo's residents in 2014. The individuals were chosen in a random manner in the public environments of the city in order to cover all neighbourhoods or its areas, also aiming the representation of the rural areas. The criteria of being included in the study was that the people should be of Albanian entity, age between 18 to 60 years old and should be resident of Kicevo, whether it was urban or rural area.

Introduction

There are no doubts that unemployment is one of the greatest challenges that global democracies have to face today. The unemployment rate has increased continuously in the past decades. In fact, at least from the crisis that included Europe in the 1979s, the dream of full and continuous employment is fading away in a progressive way. Even though the employment rates differ from one place to another, today all governments throughout Europe and in the world should deal with a large number of the people that are unemployed. Moreover, especially after 1990, this issue is becoming more of a structural problem, instead of a temporary problem, with continuous higher sections of the population who are excluded permanently from the labour market or at least for longer periods. Also, unemployment more and more affects the younger layers of the population (1).

In the same time, at least the European residents consider unemployment as one of the most important problems, if not as the most important in general, which continuously is proven by polls and opinions, which are conducted in different places and different time periods.

Unemployment is both individual and collective problem. There is no doubt that it is perceived as an examination by those who are directly affected by this vital issue. Parallel, paid labour from the society (state) is the main source of the income for the majority of the people, as well as it are something important that shapes peoples everyday life. Sociologists all around the world have long observed the negative consequences of the unemployment, at least for those who have lost their jobs (2), also including its psychological affects (3, 4). Therefore, unemployment for one individual is not only problematic in the conditions of lacking the economical resources, but also in the aspects of confidence and social knowledge (5).

However, unemployment in core is also a social and politic challenge. Our society still leans on the assumption that everyone should have a paid labour and that everyone should be included in the labour market. More precisely, in a widely accepted context, even though it currently is undergoing a downfall, where the male model is the backbone of the family (6), the assumption is that all the adult people should be in the labour market. Therefore the high unemployment rates cannot be accepted in social life as well as in politics and also relevant solutions should be found. Facing this challenge, coherent backlashes are required, both from the state and the civil society, in all the levels of government (local, national, European and World|). For example the European Union has set itself an objective to fight unemployment and social alienation. This was initially implemented through Social European Fund. Since 1990, however, initiatives like those of European Employment Strategy are implemented, and in general one common European Policy which is trying to include both parties, like the policy actors also and the civil society actors. The application of the so called Method of Open Coordination for the employment policies is part of this new strategy and aims the integration of all kinds of collective actors, together with the interest groups in search of more effective solutions. More important is the point where the national actors need to stimulate employment, and also limit the negative effects from this action. Political interventions have tried to follow mainly effective lines of interventions. On the other hand, governments have tried to develop new rules against unemployment. These refer to masses related to the rights and tasks of the labour seekers. The most important from this new rule is that it may be widely spread in the 1990s, the so-called "active mass", which lead to the fact that some called it "conditioning policy", whereas others considered it as "activation policy" (7, 8). In contrary to the passive masses, which mainly consisted of the offer of financial compensation for the unemployed, the active masses aim to maximize the chances of the people to find paid labour and to re (enter) in the labour market.

This is attempted to be achieved through a variety of strategies, like public services of employment, trainings and professional programmes, subsidies for the companies and so on. On the other hand, the governments themselves should also enter the labour market. Therefore, the most important change in the 1990s, very valuable to this day on, is the stimulating growth of the flexibility of the labour market, with its main objective to make the entrance in the labour market easier, but also to improve the competition of the companies in the globalisation period. For example, the activation policies are considered as a good way to improve "employment" of the unemployed people, or as a main path to prediction and the exercise a more strict control over the unemployed.

International Labour Office (ILO) defined unemployment in the thirteenth Conference of the Employment Statistics as: "unemployed people, who currently are ready for labour and in search of labour". The concept this way refers to the definition of employment: "People who work and get paid can be: "at work, also and do some tasks for the pay or wage", or they can be "with a job, but not working, or they have already worked their current job, and also were temporarily unemployed and had formal ties with their job" (9).

A self-employed person is defined as: "at work that performs some tasks for profit", or is: "in an enterprise, but not at work, individuals that don't work, for a particular reason". In accordance with this definition, working for at least one hour is enough. The main requirement here is the formal labour but not the main activity. As a result, the part time students or with a seasonal job are included, as well as the persons in leave, part time workers, interns and the members of the armed forces (10). The lack of one formal activity work-fulfilment of the requirements mentioned above (ready and in search of labour) – these people are considered as unemployed regardless their status of activity (ex. Student). The unemployment figures are published every year by the ILO, and they include the registered unemployment (11).

Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development gathered information on unemployment rates for seven member states of the European Union in 1996, and used the published rates from EUROSTAT. However, OECD currently is trying to calculate the number of the unemployed people for the states outside the EU. Both these organisations, like EUROSTAT, also and OECD, currently are using the definition of ILO for unemployment, with the change that EUROSTAT, includes only private family economies, in the European Study of Labour Force. This was also approved by OECD in 1999 for the states that were not covered by EUROSTAT, for comparison. This exclusion of the people that work and live in institutions leads you, for example to the fact that the members of the armed forces live in barracks, are included in the definition of the ILO, but excluded from the evaluation from EUROSTAT and OECD, as a part of the general labour force, the category reference to the standardized unemployment. As a result to this change in these data and in the methodology of OECD, there were minor differences in few states between the past and new evaluations (12).

EUROSTAT publishes the number of the unemployed people regarding the harmonized national data taken from the European System of Labour Force. The domestic composition between the unemployed is directly linked with the concepts of the labour force (13). In the past 20 years the concept of the "ready reserve" to calculate the potential number of the possible labour force, has always been a discussion issue, whereas today, mainly the statistic treatment of the percentage of the active people in the labour market is critical. The high number of the participants in the creation of the job vacancies, the following training and the qualification measures can lead to one deformation of the rate of unemployment through the hidden unemployment (14). Besides this, premature retirement and underemployment, partially as a result to political measures of the labour market, as part time work, and partially as a result to "undesired" part time labour, or out of the profile, meanwhile the individual wants a fulltime job, are subject of one great expanded discussion over the unemployment rate (15).

Individuals are considered as unemployed if they aren't employed or are employed for less than 15 hours per week, and also are searching for a job at least 15 hours labour with mandatory contributions of the social insurance. This means that the individual has, and is ready by all means end the period in which he performs paid labour, including here cases where he is ready for an job opening though the Employment Service Office. The readiness for labour is defined with precision: "individuals able for labour and ready to take over a reasonable job in accordance with the usual or standard conditions (16).

Job seekers/searchers are defined all those individuals that are looking for a continuous job which lasts more than 7 calendared days in their residence, and also out of this territory. They need to register in the Employment Services Office so they can be taken into consideration, and they also should be able and have permits to exercise the any kind of profession and they also should be residents.

The unemployed individuals, are job seekers, who are temporarily unemployed, but currently in search of a job with mandatory contributions of the social insurance, as well as are registered in the Employment Services Office personally, this definition also includes people that are currently not receiving any profits. On the other hand, the requirements of receiving profits of the unemployment are not enough to be calculated as unemployed, and here are also included the cases for the people who cannot get a job as a result of illness, or temporary health inability at least for six weeks (17).

Aims of the study

The aim of this study is the evaluation of the unemployment rate in the ethnic Albanian group in Macedonia as well as the evaluation of the imlementation of the aspects that have to do with the employment in the Ohrid Agreement in order to highlight the implementation of this contract of cohabitation in the Republic of Macedonia, aiding the policy makers to adress some of the problems so they will not affect interethnic cohabitation in this state of the Balkans.

Methodology

The current study is of the cross-sectional type. 500 individuals were included, of Albanian entity, 18-60 of age and were residents of Kicevo in 2014. The individuals were randomly chosen in the public enviorments of the city in order to cover all the

neighbourhoods or the areas of the city, also aiming the representation of the rural areas. The criteria of inclusion in the study were the Albanian entity, age between 18 to 60 years old and residents of Kicevo, both from urban and rural areas. Individuals younger than 18 were excluded from the study since usually this layer isn't included in employment and as such could not contribute in achieving our objectives for our study. Individuals over the age of 60 were also excluded since a great number of the subjects are in retirement and as such the chances of bad reports regarding the indicators used in our study. As far as for the subjects of Macedonian entity, there were no attempts to include them in the study as a reason to the sensitive topics.

   To calculate the magnitude of the sample software called Winpepi was used based on a number of conservative hypothesis that maximize the magnitude of the sample. The level of the statistic significance (error alpha or the value of P) was determined in 5% (two-directions) and the force of the study in 80%. Based on these assumptions and conservative magnitudes, was calculated that the minimal magnitude of the sample was 463 people. We decided to interview 500 people of the targeted aged in order to increase the strength of the study.

   To gether the data we used a half structured questionnaire, which was administrated by trained experts in the interviewing methods and familiar with the questionaire. The questionaire included data linked with the socio-demographic and socio-economic factors, and the factors linked with the employment and the barriers for employment while including the data regarding the duration of residence in this city, the level of connectivity with the relevant neighborhood, the level of isolation in the relevant neighborhood, the data for the employment status, its duration, current labor, the labor that is desired by the subjects, the level of satisfaction regardin the current job, the jobs that they dare not apply for, as well as other more specific aspects regardin discrimination at work as due to the entity, while catching a number of dimensions.

   Besides the tables for graphic presetation of the data, bar diagrammes were also used since the nature of the data favored the use of this technique (suitable for the visualisation of the categoric data). Pie charts were also used. The whole statictical analysis of teh data is used with the Statistical Package for Social Sciences, version 15.

Results
General data regardin the subjects in the study

   500 subjects participated in the study. Distribution of the participants according to the base socio-demographic characteristic in the following Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of the subjects according to the socio-demographic characteristics

Variable	Total	Gender		Value of P
		Male (n=268)	Female (n=232)	
Age (years)	38.6 ± 10.4 *	40.9 ± 9.1	36.2 ± 11.2	<0.001 ‡
Age				
≤30 yrs	123 (24.6) †	38 (14.2)	85 (36.6)	
31-40 yrs	168 (33.6)	102 (38.1)	66 (28.4)	<0.001 ¶
41-50 yrs	134 (26.8)	81 (30.2)	53 (22.8)	
51-60 yrs	75 (15.0)	47 (17.5)	28 (12.1)	
Education (years)	13.2 ± 3.4 *	13.5 ± 3.4 †	12.9 ± 3.4	0.077 ‡
Level of education				
0-4 yrs	67 (15.0)	32 (13.5)	35 (16.7)	
5-8 yrs	168 (37.7)	89 (37.6)	79 (37.8)	0.587 ¶
>8 v\yrs	211 (47.3)	116 (48.9)	95 (45.5)	
Religion				
Muslim	483 (96.6)	259 (96.6)	224 (96.6)	
Catholic	11 (2.2)	6 (2.2)	5 (2.2)	0.384 ¶
Orthodox	4 (0.8)	1 (0.4)	3 (1.3)	
Other	2 (0.4)	2 (0.7)	0 (0.0)	
Habitat				
Urban	294 (58.8)	149 (55.6)	145 (62.5)	0.118 ¶
Rural	206 (41.2)	119 (44.4)	87 (37.5)	
Marital Status				
Single	174 (39.7)	86 (36.3)	88 (43.8)	
Married	248 (56.6)	141 (59.5)	107 (53.2)	0.290 ¶
Divorced	8 (1.8)	6 (2.5)	2 (1.0)	
Widowed	8 (1.8)	4 (1.7)	4 (2.0)	

* Average value ± standard deviation. † Absolute number and percentage according the column (in parenthesis). Inconsistency with the total number comes as a result of the absence of the information. ‡ The Value of P according to the non-parametric Mann-Ëhitney U-test. ¶ The Value of P according to hi square test.

Whereas the following Table 2 presents the distribution of the subjects in the study social status and their economic situation

Table 2. Distribution of the subject according to the social-economic characteristics

Variable	Total	Gender		Value of P
		Male (n=268)	Female (n=232)	
Social Class				
Low	59 (11.8)	33 (12.3)	26 (11.2)	0.822 †
Middle	397 (79.4)	210 (78.4)	187 (80.6)	
High	44 (8.8)	25 (9.3)	19 (8.2)	
Economic Situation				
Very good	20 (4.0)	9 (3.4)	11 (4.7)	
Good	108 (21.6)	65 (24.3)	43 (18.5)	0.016 †
Average	272 (54.4)	151 (56.3)	121 (52.2)	
Bad	91 (18.2)	36 (13.4)	55 (23.7)	
Very bad	9 (1.8)	7 (2.6)	2 (0.9)	

[*] The absolute number and percentage according to the columns (in parenthesis). Inconsistency with the total number comes as a result of the lack of the information. [†] The Value of P according to hi square test.

The following table distributes the subjects in the study according to the duration of residence in Kicevo and the ties with the local community.

Table 2. Distribution of the subject according to the duration of residence in Kicevo and the ties to the local community

Variable	Total	Gender		Value of P
		Male (n=268)	Female (n=232)	
How long have you lived in the city?				
1-10 yrs				
11-20 yrs	35 (7.8) [*]	20 (8.3)	15 (7.2)	0.583 †
>20 yrs	45 (10.0)	21 (8.8)	24 (11.5)	
	368 (82.1)	199 (82.9)	169 (81.3)	
How connected are you with your neighbourhood				
Much	367 (75.4)	202 (77.4)	165 (73.0)	0.449 †
Not much	102 (20.9)	49 (18.8)	53 (23.5)	
Not at all	18 (3.7)	10 (3.8)	8 (3.5)	
How connected are you with the community of your entity?				
Much	351 (76.0)	182 (72.8)	169 (79.7)	0.130 †
Not much	102 (22.1)	61 (24.4)	41 (19.3)	
Not at all	9 (1.9)	7 (2.8)	2 (0.9)	
How connected are you with the community of the other entities?				
Much				0.104
Not Much	133 (28.9)	62 (24.8)	71 (33.8)	
Not at all	239 (52.0)	137 (54.8)	102 (48.6)	
	88 (19.1)	51 (20.4)	37 (17.6)	

[*] The absolute number and percentage according to the columns (in parenthesis). Inconsistency with the total number comes as a result of the lack of the information. [†] The Value of P according to hi square test.

The following presents the distribution of the subjects in the study according to the selected characteristics

Table. Distribution of the subject according to the specific characteristics

Variable	Total	Gender		Value of P
		Male (n=268)	Female (n=232)	
What don't you like in your city/neighbourhood				
Unemployment	140 (28.0)	67 (25.0)	73 (31.5)	0.047
Infrastructure	223 (44.6)	118 (44.0)	105 (45.3)	
Mentality	28 (5.6)	14 (5.2)	14 (6.0)	
Ethnic division	69 (13.8)	39 (14.6)	30 (12.9)	
Other	40 (8.0)	30 (11.2)	10 (4.3)	
Do you feel isolated in any way in your city/neighbourhood?				
Yes				0.663
No	99 (19.8)	55 (20.5)	44 (19.0)	
	401 (80.2)	213 (79.5)	188 (81.0)	
Have you experienced racism in your city/ neighbourhood?				
Yes	71 (14.2)	44 (16.4)	27 (11.6)	0.127
No	429 (85.8)	224 (83.6)	205 (88.4)	
If Yes, have you reported these incidents				
Yes	22 (31.0)	15 (34.1)	7 (25.9)	0.470
No	49 (69.0)	29 (65.9)	20 (74.1)	

*The absolute number and percentage according to the columns (in parenthesis). Inconsistency with the total number comes as a result of the lack of the information. † The Value of P according to hi square test.

Whereas the following Table presents the distribution of the subjects of the study is according to the employment status, durance of the employment and other aspect regarding it.

Table 2. Distribution of the subject according to the employment characteristics

Variable	Total	Gender		Value of P
		Male (n=268)	Female (n=232)	
Employment status				
Employed	245 (49.0) *	176 (65.7)	69 (29.7)	<0.001 †
Unemployed	255 (51.0)	92 (34.3)	163 (70.3)	
How long have you been employed				
0-5 yrs	128 (52.2) *	92 (52.3)	36 (52.2)	0.275 †
6-11 yrs	63 (25.7)	41 (23.3)	22 (31.9)	
12-17 yrs	32 (13.1)	24 (13.6)	8 (11.6)	
>17 yrs	22 (9.0)	19 (10.8)	3 (4.3)	
Current Job				
Public Administration	73 (29.8)	42 (23.9)	31 (44.9)	0.001 †
Private	172 (70.2)	134 (76.1)	38 (55.1)	
Are you happy with the current job?				
Yes	153 (62.4)	108 (61.4)	45 (65.2)	0.575 †
No	92 (37.6)	68 (38.6)	24 (34.8)	
Do you have any problems in your current job?				
Yes	77 (31.4)	56 (31.8)	21 (30.4)	0.834 †
No	168 (68.6)	120 (68.2)	48 (69.6)	
Is there any job that you dare not apply for ‡				
Yes				0.036 †
No	77 (17.3)	52 (20.6)	25 (13.0)	
	367 (82.7)	200 (79.4)	167 (87.0)	

*The absolute number and percentage according to the columns (in parenthesis). Inconsistency with the total number comes as a result of the lack of the information. † The Value of P according to hi square test. Between all subjects in the study.

Table 2. Distribution of the subjects according to other characteristics regarding employment

Variable	Total	Gender		Value of P
		Male (n=268)	Female (n=232)	
How do you get to work?				
By foot	90 (36.7) *	63 (35.8)	27 (39.1)	0.631 †
By car	118 (48.2)	88 (50.0)	30 (43.5)	
By public transport	37 (15.1)	25 (14.2)	12 (17.4)	
If public transport, do u feel safe?				
Yes	27 (73.0)	18 (72.0)	9 (75.0)	0.847 †
No	10 (27.0)	7 (28.0)	3 (25.0)	
Does the place where you reside affect the ability to seek for a job?				0.118 †
Yes	128 (29.5)	64 (26.4)	64 (33.3)	
No	306 (70.5)	178 (73.6)	128 (66.7)	
Does the language you are speaking affect the ability to search for a job?				0.278 †
Yes	185 (37.0)	105 (39.2)	80 (34.5)	
No	315 (63.0)	163 (60.8)	152 (65.5)	
Have you taken language courses to increase the chances for employment?				0.176 †
Yes	210 (42.0)	120 (44.8)	90 (38.8)	
No	290 (58.0)	148 (55.2)	142 (61.2)	
Have you had difficulties in the recognition of the qualifications				0.154 †
Yes				
No	83 (18.0)	53 (20.2)	30 (15.1)	
	378 (82.0)	209 (79.8)	169 (84.9)	

* **The** absolute number and percentage according to the columns (in parenthesis). Inconsistency with the total number comes as a result of the lack of the information. † The Value of P according to hi square test. Between all subjects in the study.

Table 2. Distribution of the subjects according to the aspects of discrimination regarding employment.

Variable	Total	Gender		Value of P
		Male (n=268)	Female (n=232)	
Does entity affect finding a job?				
Yes				0.001 †
No	132 (26.4) *	55 (20.5)	77 (33.2)	
	368 (73.6)	213 (79.5)	155 (66.8)	
Does gender affect finding a job?				
Yes	35 (7.0)	10 (3.7)	25 (10.8)	0.002 †
No	465 (93.0)	258 (96.3)	207 (89.2)	
Does age affect finding a job?				
Yes				<0.001 †
No	160 (32.0)	64 (23.9)	96 (41.4)	
	340 (68.0)	204 (76.1)	136 (58.6)	
Do you feel underestimated at work as a result to your entity?				
Yes				0.965 †
No				
	131 (26.2)	70 (26.1)	61 (26.3)	
	369 (73.8)	198 (73.9)	171 (73.7)	

* The absolute number and percentage according to the columns (in parenthesis). Inconsistency with the total number comes as a result of the lack of the information. † The Value of P according to hi square test. Between all subjects in the study.

Conclusions

The current study regarding the employment of the ethnic groups in the Republc of Macedonia, concretely the evaluation of the barriers for employment, the promotion of the employment in the public administration, incrising the possibilities for professional development and the solidarity of the ethnic groups, in accordance with the principles of teh Ohrid Agreement, offered for the firs time a deailed table regarding these issues in this state of the Balkan peninsula.

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The current study is among the few, if not the only one which offers detailed information regarding the different asspects of employment of the people of Albanian entity of the age 18 to 60 years old in Macedonia. Earlier studies that have dealt with this topic, for different reasons, have offered a limited overview of the employment situtation between the ethnic groups in Macedonia. For example, the last survey of the Workforce in the 1999 and publishe in 2000 offered only percentage between the ethnig groups in Macedonia, without detailing regariding the situation of each group in particular. This way, it's impossible to judge regardin the climate or prevailing spirit which are the advantaged or disadvantaged group in this diraction. Moreover, after 2000, The State Office of Statistics interrupted the publication of the data of employment according to the ethnic groups, for unclear reasons. This removed every possibility to judge regarding the employment situation in Macedonia according to ethnic groups prior 2001and after 2001 that concides with signing of the Ohrid Agreement, as it is explained earlier in this scientific study. In this framework and based on this reports, it is very hard to come out with conclusions if the Ohrid Agreement and the attempts for its implementation have fullfilled the local and international expectations regarding the offer of the equal chances of employment for all ethnic groups and the increase of the solidarity between them. Later reports always referred to the 1999 and are focused mainly in the very low participation of the females of the Albanian entity in the active force of the labor in Macedonia, while explaining this with the cultural rates of this grupation which sets tasks to the females as well as certain responsibilities regarding the progress of the household and the care for the children. Meanwhile, this can be partially true, we have in evidance in our study that it isn't all true. Based on our study, we evidenced that which situdation favors the disadvantage of the Albanian entitiy in Macedonia regardin the multy-direction employment, mainly not direct. In this manner, we argue that besides the distinctive culture of the Albanian entity which maybe favors females to stay at home, there also are other factors that have to do with the religious beliefs, habitat (the level of poverty there), the experience of racial phenomena, discurage of the access towards the professional trainings, as well as low training offered by the employer, which all together affect the very low levels of the participation of the Albanian females in the labor makret in Macedonia. These discoveries, and other interesting discoveries described and analyzed in this scientific report, were made possible thanks to this scientific study, which in this approach highlights this phenomena little treated and reported in a scientific method in the Republic of |Macedonia.

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Research Article

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