

# MISSIONARY ATLAS PROJECT

## SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE

### SERBIA

#### Snapshot Section

**Country Name:** Republic of Serbia (*Republika Srbija*)

**Country Founded in:** Kingdom of Serbia—1817  
Independence from Serbia and Montenegro—June 5, 2006

**Population:** 10,150,265

**Government Type:** (national, regional and local) Republic

**Geography/location in the world:** Southeastern Europe. Serbia lies between Macedonia and Hungary

**Number of people groups:** 32

**Picture of flag:**



**Major Religion and % of population:** Serbian Orthodox—85%

**All religions and % for each:**

Serbian Orthodox—85%

Catholic—5.5%

Protestant—1.1%

Muslim—3.2%

Unspecified—2.6%

Unknown or Atheist—2.6%

**Government interaction with religion:** Serbia is undergoing the process of adopting a new constitution, but currently, the law provides for freedom of religion, and the government generally respects this right.

## Country Profile

### Basic Facts

#### Country Name –

Republic of Serbia (*Republika Srbija*)

#### Demographics –

The Republic of Serbia currently has a population of 10,150,265. The capital city is Belgrade, with a population of 1.5 million. Citizens of Serbia are referred to as “Serbs.”

Life expectancy at birth:

75.06 years

- Males—72.49 years
- Females—77.86 years

Fertility rate—1.69 children per woman

Ethnic Groups:

- Serb—82.9%
- Hungarian—3.9%
- Romany—1.4%
- Yugoslavs—1.1%
- Bosniaks—1.8%
- Montenegrin—0.9%
- Other—8%

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/rb.html>

#### Language –

The official language of Serbia, which is spoken by 88.3% of the people, is Serbian (српски језик). It is the most widely spoken Southern Slavic language. Serbian can be written with variations of either the Latin or the Cyrillic alphabet. Standard Serbian is based upon the Štokavian dialect of the South Slavic language. Most Serbian speakers in Serbia typically speak the Ekavian variant, while the Ijekavian variant is spoken in southwestern Serbia.

Hungarian is spoken by 3.9% of the population, Bosniak by 1.8%, Romany by 1.1%, and other 4.1%. Hungarian, Romanian, Slovak, Ukrainian, and Croatian all have official status in the province of Vojvodina. Likewise, Albanian is an official language in Kosovo.

#### Society/Culture –

Serbia has a somewhat complex culture. Serbs are the most numerous group of the Southern Slavs. Through the Middle Ages, Serbia was greatly influenced by the Byzantine Empire, which most notably led to the establishment of the Serbian Orthodox Church.

Serbs produced great literature through these years, such as *Miroslav's Gospel*, which was named one of the most important works of literature by UNESCO in 2005.

The five hundred years of Ottoman domination, heavily influenced the Serbian culture, including their language. The Ottomans brought with them Islamic culture. During Ottoman rule, Serbs were not allowed to use musical instruments or even learn to read and write. Inevitably, Serbian literature declined. Interestingly, however, it was during this time, that the *gusle*, which is a one stringed Serbian instrument, was invented. The *gusle* has been used through the generations to play simple songs conveying long held traditions and memories. It was popular to gather around and listen to epic Serbian songs being played.

Once the Ottomans were driven out by Austria-Hungary, ushering in rule by the Hapsburgs, the Serbian culture was able to once again develop and thrive. The revival of Serbian culture strengthened upon Serbian autonomy and independence in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the last few years, the West has had a tremendous influence; however it is counter-balanced by a resurgence of traditional culture.

The country of Serbia even up into the 20<sup>th</sup> century has continued to flourish and grow. Ivo Andrić won the Nobel Prize in 1961 for his book entitled The Bridge on the Drina. BITEF, Belgrade International Theatre festival began in 1967 and is one of the world's largest theatre festivals in the world. In 2007 Serbia won the Eurovision Song Contest. This program is one of the world's most watched non-sport related events that occur during the year. The 2008 Eurovision Song Contest will be held in Belgrade, Serbia.

## **Government –**

The *Republika Srbija* (Republic of Serbia) is based upon a republic government, with the capital city being Belgrade. The republic is divided into 190 municipalities (opcinas). Furthermore, Serbia is divided into Serbia Proper, Vojvodina Autonomous Province, and Kosovo and Metohija Autonomous Province.

Serbia officially gained independence June 5, 2006. This was the official split between the former Serbia and Montenegro. Their constitution was adopted on November 8, 2006, while it became effective on November 10.

Serbia's legal system is based on civil law and Serbia has yet to accept ICJ jurisdiction. There is universal suffrage at the age of 18.

Serbia has a three branch government:

- Executive
  - Chief of State—President
    - Elected by direct vote for 5 year term for up to 2 terms.

- Head of Government—Prime Minister
  - Elected by the Assembly
- Cabinet—Federal Ministries
- Kosovo
  - Kosovo has its own President, Prime Minister, and Cabinet. The president is elected by the Assembly for a 3 year term, and the prime minister and cabinet are elected by the Assembly.
- Legislative
  - Unicameral National Assembly
    - 250 seats—elected by direct vote for 4 year terms
    - Kosovo—unicameral Assembly with 120 seats (100 elected by direct vote and 20 from minority communities; all serve 3 year terms).
- Judicial
  - Constitutional Court
  - Supreme Court
  - Appellate Courts
  - District Courts
  - Municipal Courts
  - Kosovo—Supreme, District, Municipal, and Minor Offense Courts.
  - The UNMIK (United Nations Mission in Kosovo appoints all judges and prosecutors.

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/rb.html>

## **Economy –**

The Serbian economy suffered through the 1990s as mismanagement led to economic sanctions, as well as social disturbances bringing about damaging airstrikes by NATO. In fact, the economy in 1999 was only half the size of the economy in 1990.

President Milosevic was removed in October of 2000, as the new democratic government worked to stabilize the economy as well as moving towards market reforms. They joined the World Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development in December. In June of 2001, the World Bank moved to raise \$1.3million in an effort to help with economic restructuring. In November of the same year the Paris Club rescheduled the country's public debt, canceling two-thirds of it. Then in July of 2004, the London Club cancelled \$1.7 billion of the debt. Nevertheless, the actual economic improvements have reportedly been slim.

Serbia is seeking membership in the EU and the World Trade Organization. Kosovo has independently been restructuring their economy, moving it towards a market economy independent upon the international community. Both the Serbian dinar and the euro are acceptable currencies in Kosovo.

Serbian currency—Serbian Dinar (RSD)  
58.6925 RSD/1USD

Gross Domestic Product

- Purchasing Power Parity—\$44.83 billion (including Kosovo)
- Official Exchange Rate—\$19.19 billion (excluding Kosovo)
- Real Growth Rate—5.9% (excluding Kosovo)
- Per capita—\$4,400 (including Kosovo)
- Percentage Breakdown
  - Agriculture—16.6%
  - Industry—25.5%
  - Services—57.9%

Budget (this includes Montenegro; some individual figures are not yet available)

- Revenues—\$11.45 billion
- Expenditures—\$11.12 billion

Public Debt 53.1% of GDP

Labor Force—2.961 million (including Kosovo and Montenegro)

Unemployment Rate—31.6%

Population below poverty—30%

Unemployment rate—31.6%

(Unemployment is approximately 50% in Kosovo)

Inflation rate—15.5%

External Debt--\$15.43 billion (including Montenegro)

Agricultural products: wheat, maize, sugar beets, sunflower, beef, pork, milk

Industries: sugar, agricultural machinery, electrical and communication equipment, paper and pulp, lead, transportation equipment.

Industrial production growth rate—1.4%

Serbia was pledged \$2 billion in economic aid in 2001. The EU and the US actually placed the aid on hold due to Serbia's lack of cooperation in handing over General Ratko Mladic to the criminal court.

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/rb.html>

## **Literacy –**

This section will cover the literacy of the country including any gender, tribal, caste, or other social differences in literacy.

96.4% of all Serbs over the age of 15 can read and write.

- 98.9%—males
- 94.1%—females

(This statistic excludes Kosovo, which in 2000 statistics reported 21-25% literacy)

Literacy Exchange: <http://www1.uni-hamburg.de/UNESCO-UIE/literacyexchange/kosovo/kosovo.htm>  
<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/rb.html>

## **Land/Geography –**

Serbia lies in Southeastern Europe, between Hungary and Macedonia. The total area is 88,361 square kilometers, which is slightly larger than South Carolina. Serbia is bordered on the west by Croatia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Albania, on the south by Macedonia, on the east by Bulgaria and Romania, and on the north by Hungary.

Mostly, Serbia has a continental climate, with cold winters and hot and humid summers. However, towards the southern regions, there is some Mediterranean climate with cold winters, heavy snowfall, and hot, dry summers.

Serbia houses rich and fertile plains in the north, limestone mountain ranges and basins in the east, and ancient mountains in the southeast. The highest point is Daravica, which is 2,656 meters.

Serbia has many natural resources including oil, gas, coal, iron ore, copper, lead, zinc, antimony, chromite, nickel, gold, silver, magnesium, pyrite, limestone, marble, salt, and simply arable land.

Serbia is sometimes struck with destructive earthquakes.

Water pollution is a problem. The pollution originates from industrial waste dumping in the Sava River, which flows then into the Danube. Serbia also faces air pollution in the industrial areas, including Belgrade.

## **History**

The Serbian state and the Nemanjic dynasty were simultaneously founded by Stefan Nemanja in 1170 AD. This Medieval Serbian state was established on Byzantine territory in the Raska region, in the South-central part of present day Serbia. The state quickly expanded, and Stefan Nemanja annexed the Zeta region, which is present day Montenegro.

His middle son Stefan succeeded him, while he gave Zeta to his oldest son Vukan. Stefan became the first Serbian king in 1217, after he was recognized and received a crown from the Pope. Shortly thereafter, in 1219, Stefan's younger brother Sava, who was a monk, obtained autocephalous status for the Serbian Church and became the first archbishop in Serbia.

Within the next generation, Serbia became dependent upon neighboring states, including Byzantium, Bulgaria, and Hungary. Dragutin who gained power from his father Uros I, who was Stefan's son, was married to a Hungarian princess. Dragutin ended up abdicating the throne,

handing it to his brother Milutin. Milutin was a strong and favored leader, and was able to successfully strengthen Serbia, particularly through his diplomacy. He was married five times, to Hungarian, Bulgarian, and Byzantine princesses. His son, Stefan Decanski, succeeded him, and expanded the kingdom towards the east. During this time he acquired Macedonia.

Serbia continued to be successful, gaining a high political, economic, and cultural reputation. They reached their zenith in the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century under the rule of Stefan Dusan. Tzar Stefan Dusan expanded Serbia to the south, the east, and the southeast, doubling the size of his kingdom. He, however, was succeeded by his son Uros, who was given the title “the Weak,” which is reflective of the course the Serbian kingdom took under his rule. Meanwhile, during this time, the Ottoman Empire was expanding, having conquered Byzantium, and was seeking to control the Balkan states.

The Serbian kingdom was eventually conquered by the Ottoman Turks, who ruled over them from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. While the Serbs suffered a crucial defeat and lost Macedonia in 1371 at the river Marica, a greater Serbian defeat came a few years later in 1380 on Kosovo Polije, known as the Battle of Kosovo. While the Serbs were in essence already defeated and unable to stand against the Turks, their leader Stefan Lazarevic did his best to maintain his kingdom, moving the capital to the northern city of Smederevo. The Turks, nevertheless, continued their invasion and completely took over all of the Serbian lands in 1459.

The Islamic Turks sought to put an end to the Serbian social elite through physical extermination. They further persecuted and abused the Serbian Christians, whom they treated as slaves.

Through the centuries, Serbia continued to fight with the Europeans, hoping to defeat and drive out the Turks. At one point, after the Great War from 1683-1690, Austria decided to pull out of the battle, but invited the Serbians to come and reside in Austrian land. At this point, many Serbs took up the offer, fled their homelands and their Ottoman oppressors, serving to depopulate much of the Southern Balkans. The Turks in turn used this as an opportunity to complete the spread of Islam to the vulnerable areas including Kosovo, Raska, Metohija, and parts of Macedonia.

In 1804 and again in 1815, Serbia revolted against their Ottoman rulers, in what is known as the First and Second Serbian Uprisings. The Ottoman Empire was actually facing internal struggles, and could not withstand the Serbian revolution. In 1878 the independent Principality of Serbia was established and recognized. The Kingdom of Serbia was then established in 1882.

Serbia was integrated into the European states, giving rise to political parties, and eventually a period of parliamentary democracy in the opening of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Liberation wars broke out in the Balkans from 1912-1913, as the Europeans worked to finally force the Turks completely out of the area.

The First Balkan War: The Balkan Wars took place in Southeastern Europe during the years of 1912-1913. The Balkan Wars were made up of four different wars going on at the same time,

with four different countries fighting the same enemy and in the same region of area. Montenegro began the Balkan Wars on October 5<sup>th</sup>. The main area to be attacked was Shkodra along with a concentration in Novi Pazar. Bulgaria attacked Eastern Thrace while Serbia attacked in the direction of Skopje and Bitola.

On October 26, 1912 Thessaloniki was liberated then the Greek and Serb forces turned west. The islands of the Aegean were liberated by the Greek navy. In December there was a cease fire which took place between the Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria, Serbia and Montenegro. A coup took place in January. Turkey made the decision to continue on with the war. Bulgarian forces took over Adrianople while the Greek forces liberated Aegean Islands. The war was finished with the Treaty of London on May 17, 1913.

The Second Balkan War: The Greek army entered into the city of Thessaloniki and upon a request from the Bulgarians to allow a battalion into the city in exchange for a Greek battalion to enter into the city of Serres. The size of the Bulgarian unit ended up being much larger than had been expected so under a mutual decision both battalions were removed and transported to Dedeagac.

The Greeks had allowed the Bulgarians to maintain control of their section of the railroad due to the fact that the Bulgarians were in a large part of control to the whole railroad. The Bulgarians then came back to the Greeks requesting they give up a portion of land Pieria causing the Greek army to remain on high alert. There was also tension rising between Serbia and Bulgaria. A treaty came afterwards between Greece and Serbia which was a treaty of mutual defense stating that they would not attack Bulgarian or Austro-Hungarian.

However Bulgaria did not recognize the treaty signed by these two countries. Bulgaria chose to attack on June 17, 1913 the Serbian forces in Gevgelija and the Greek army in Nigrita. The Greek army was able to defeat the Bulgarians at Kilkis-Lahanas. The Greek army was able to defeat Bulgaria by splitting up and taking over all of the land west of the Mesta River while the other part of the army defeated Bulgaria at the Kresna straights.

The Greek and the Bulgarians were able to come to a ceasefire agreement due to the fact that the Bulgarians were feeling pressure from the Romanian army in the north. There was a decision made by the Romanians to declare war on June 27 against the Bulgarians due to their position. When the ceasefire happened they were only 30 kilometers from Sofia. The Ottoman Empire was able to retake control of Adrianople which was a former capital city for the Turks and they also took back control of eastern Thrace of which they had lost during the first Balkan War. They were able to take back control of a land mass in Europe which was slightly larger than now modern day Republic of Turkey.

Shortly thereafter, in Sarajevo in 1914, Austrian Crown Prince Franc Ferdinand was assassinated. This sparked an Austrian attack on Serbia and essentially was the launching of the First World War. Serbia lost 28% of its population during WWI, which was 58% of the total male population.



After the ending of World War I and with that both the disintegration of the Austria-Hungary Empire and the Ottoman Empire, in December 1918, the Serbs united with their neighbors to establish the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. In 1929, King Aleksandar I decided to ban national political parties, hoping to ease national divisions. He also assumed executive power and renamed the kingdom Yugoslavia. In 1934, the king was assassinated by a Bulgarian extremist national organization.

In the early 1940s Hitler pressured Yugoslavia to join the Axis forces, however Yugoslavia refused. Nevertheless, in April of 1941, the Axis powers invaded, occupied, and dissolved Yugoslavia. Germans specifically occupied Serbia. Most of the west, including Bosnia and Herzegovina was converted into a Nazi puppet state known as the State of Croatia, the north was annexed by Hungary, the eastern and southern areas were annexed to Bulgaria, Kosovo and Metohija was annexed by Albania, Montenegro was occupied by Italy and lost territory to Albania as well, and Slovenia was divided with one part to Germany and one part to Italy.

The brutal practices of the State of Croatia stirred the Serbs to rise and take a stand against the Croatian government. The National Liberation Army, led by Josip Broz Tito, soon led this resistance. They helped not only liberate Serbia and other Yugoslav territories in 1944-45, but also contributed to the overall Allied victory, particularly in Hungary, Austria, and Italy.

In the midst of the Serbian resistance and revolution, the monarchy was removed and replaced with a republic. In 1943, Josip Broz Tito became the first president of Socialist Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia now was composed of six republics, including Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, and Montenegro, as well as the autonomous regions of Vojvodina and Kosovo & Metohija. Through the years, the trend seemed to be that the republics sought power, weakening in effect the federal power. This is reflected in the 1974 Constitution that encourages nationalism and secessionism. Tito remained the leader of Yugoslavia until his death in 1980.

In the early 90s, as communism was collapsing across Europe, Yugoslavia began to break up. Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina seceded from Yugoslavia by force, all by 1992, while Macedonia was able to do so peacefully. In a parliament session in April of 1992, however, Serbia and Montenegro decided to stay as members of the Yugoslav federation.

The beginning of the Kosovo Wars started March 24, 1999 against Yugoslavia because of their not being willing to sign a peace agreement with the Serbs for Kosovo. In February of 1999 there were peace talks taking place to help the nationals gain free elections that were fair, for the people of Kosovo to protect human rights, and finally a judicial system that is fair. On March 18, 1999 the Rambouillet Accords was signed with the intention of bringing in of 30,000 NATO troops so that everything would stay as it should in Kosovo. However the Serbians were not accepting to this part of the treaty. The bombing began on March 24, 1999.

The NATO actions can be summed up with the purpose to push out the Serbs, to allow the peacekeepers to come in, and to allow the refugees to come back and return into the country. The war was fought between Yugoslavia and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The attacks came from both the land and sea.

Many ethnic Albanians were forced from their homes by the Serbian troops into Macedonia and into Albania. The people moved out of the country by riding upon tractors and the elderly people were taken out by wheelbarrow or were carried upon other refugee's shoulders and backs. When Kosovo was being attacked several crucial targets that were hit were used by the civilians and by the military such as bridges, factories, power stations, and telecommunications facilities.

For the people of Yugoslavia their thoughts of the war were very much against by the Serbs, but the Albanians were in support of the war. Since the time of the war Kosovo still to this day remains unresolved and is under the control of NATO. During 2006 negotiations began to help determine the final status of Kosovo.

At the point that NATO took over in Kosovo in 1999 there were Serb forces made to leave the city and there was a definite separation between Serbs and Albanians. The Albanians in Kosovo wanted independence. They were backed by the United States and the European Union. However, there was definite opposition from both Serbia and Russia. Also, the Serbians in Kosovo were opposed to allowing independence within the area.

In 2003, Yugoslavia was converted into the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro. But a few years later, in 2006, the two peacefully separated and declared independence. Kosovo currently remains a Serbian province, and as such is an unresolved and potentially unstable, international issue. Kosovo has been under the administration of the United Nations since 1999.

In a report from the United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo stated on January 16, 2008, coming out of four months of peace talks, failed to reach results. On February 17, 2008 Kosovo leaders approved a declaration of Independence from Serbia. The UN and the European Union do not recognize Kosovo as independent. The results of this declaration remain to be seen on the political front.

<http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/1998/10/kosovo/>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Balkan\\_Wars](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Balkan_Wars)

<http://www.njegos.org/heritage/gusle.htm>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Serbian\\_culture](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Serbian_culture)

<http://www.unmikonline.org/news.htm>

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7205622.stm>

<http://www.serbia-info.com/enc/history.html>

[www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com)

[http://www.snaga.org.yu/Ilustrovana\\_istorija\\_srba/tekst/engleski/02/02-uvod.html](http://www.snaga.org.yu/Ilustrovana_istorija_srba/tekst/engleski/02/02-uvod.html) (Illustrated History of the Serbs)

## **Christian History**

\*\*\*Yugoslavia, the former country which included both Serbia and Montenegro, is now the two separate countries of Serbia and Montenegro. The Christian History section is information from Yugoslavia because these two countries have not been separated from one another, but for a few years.

The first Christians in what is present day Serbia were most likely Jews converted through the ministry of the Apostle Paul. Christianity existed then in an organized form by the 4<sup>th</sup> century

that was recognized both by Rome and Constantinople. The 9<sup>th</sup> century brought the influence of Byzantium by missionary influence of Cyril and Methodius which translated the liturgy into the national language. In the year 1054 the Great Schism occurred which divided the people based on religious affiliations which exist to this very day.

Several Christians were sent out as missionaries from Serbia not long after the arrival of Christianity in the early Christian centuries. With the influence from Constantinople many more missionaries were sent out. This was able to continue up through the 20<sup>th</sup> century even though the country was under communist rule. During the 1990's the Serbian Orthodox missionaries were largely sent out from Yugoslavia.

During the 16<sup>th</sup> century in Yugoslavia there was an increase in Protestantism, Lutheranism from Germany and Calvinism from Switzerland. However, the Counter Reformation was able to stop the Protestants from gaining a strong hold. During the Counter Reformation the Protestants were under a lot of persecution. The Austro-Hungarian emperor Joseph II allowed the Lutheran church to re-establish itself which remained under the Hungarian Evangelical Church until World War I.

In 1918 the Evangelical Church of Yugoslavia came into existence which eventually became the German Evangelical Church in 1933. The Lutheran Church unity disintegrated during World War II and after World War II in 1945 each of the churches became separate.

Several other small Protestant denominations which exist are Brethren, Baptist, Nazarenes, and Methodists. During the 1990's the Serbian Orthodox missionaries were largely sent out from Yugoslavia.

February 21, 1974 the former Republic of Yugoslavia proclaimed through Article 154 that there was equality of rights and duties for all citizens without any discrimination especially due to religion. In Article 174 it stated that religious communities were free from the State.

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religion\\_in\\_Serbia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religion_in_Serbia)  
World Christian Encyclopedia, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, 812-816; Library of Congress -Country Study

## **Religions**

### **Non-Christian/Non-Evangelical**

#### *Orthodox Churches*

##### Albanian Orthodox Church

- 15 congregations with 50,000 adult members. There were an estimated 100,000 affiliates in 1995.

##### Bulgarian Orthodox Church

- This church has 30 congregations with 20,000 adult members. There were 35,000 affiliates in 1995.

##### Greek Orthodox Church

- This church has been in Serbia since 50 AD and has 2 congregations with 5,000 adult members. There were 9,000 affiliates in 1995.

This church is composed mainly of Greek ex-patriots and Arabs

#### Romanian Orthodox Church

- There are 50 congregations with 20,000 adult members. There were an estimated 50,000 affiliates in 1995.

#### Russian Orthodox Church

- There are 10 congregations and 7,000 adult members. There were an estimated 15,000 affiliates in 1995.

#### Serbian Orthodox Church

- This church was established in 150 AD, and has 1,115 congregations and claims 2,595,000 adult members. In 1995 there were approximately 5,359,000 affiliates.
- There are 13 dioceses and 36 bishops.

### *Roman Catholic Church*

#### Catholic Church in Serbia

- This church began in 250 AD and has 171 congregations with 323,000 adult members. There were 430,147 affiliates in 1995.

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#### *Church of the Spirit (Foot Washing)*

- This was established in 1930 and has 90 congregations across Serbia. There are 58,600 adult members, and in 1995 there were 75,000 affiliates.
- They baptize only in the name of Jesus.

#### *Church of the Spirit (Infant Baptizing)*

- This church was established in 1930 and has grown to have 60 congregations with 2,500 members. There were 5,500 affiliates in 1995.
- This is an indigenous Pentecostal church

#### *Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormon)*

- There were 100 adherents and at least 2 units in 1999.

### *Islam*

- Islam entered the area in the 15<sup>th</sup> century through the Turkish conquest of 1459. Most of the Muslims in Serbia are actually Bosnians that live in Serbia.

### *Judaism*

- Jews have been living in Yugoslavia since the Roman times. Before WWII there were about 76,000 Jews in Yugoslavia, but more than 60,000 of them were killed in concentration camps. 8,000 subsequently migrated to Israel.
- Prior to the dissolution of Yugoslavia, there were 36 Jewish communities united in the League of Jewish Communities of Yugoslavia. The League was founded in 1919, but it lost its power upon the break up of the empire. There are no rabbis in the country.
- There is only one functioning synagogue, which is in Belgrade.

#### *United Jehovah's Witnesses in Serbia*

- This group became established in Serbia in 1925 and has 57 congregations with 3,961 adult members. In 2006 there were 99 people baptized into the Jehovah's Witnesses in Serbia.

### **Christian/Evangelical**

#### *Christian Adventist Church in Serbia*

- This church was established in 1909 and has 69 congregations and 2,023 adult members. In 1995 there were reportedly 4,500 affiliates.

#### *Christian Nazarene Community*

- This church was established in 1871 and has 80 congregations with 1,500 adult members. There were 4,000 affiliates in 1995.

#### *Church of God in Serbia*

- This church has 30 congregations and 5,000 adult members. In 1995 there were an estimated 8,000 affiliates.

#### *Church of United Brethren in Christ in Serbia*

- This church was established in 1900 and has 24 congregations and 1,000 adult members. In 1995, there were approximately 2,000 affiliates.

#### *Evangelical Church*

- This church was established in 1800 and has 9 congregations with 2,800 members. There were 5,500 affiliates in 1995.

#### *Free Brethren Congregations*

- Established in 1905, this church has 25 congregations in Serbia, and 3,400 members. There were 9,500 affiliates in 1995.

#### *Gypsy Evangelical Movement*

Isolated radio churches

#### *Methodist Church in Serbia*

- The Methodists were established in Serbia in 1890. They have 14 congregations and 1,200 members. In 1995 they reported 2,000 affiliates.

#### *Reformed Christian Church in Serbia*

- This church was established in 1550 and has 110 congregations and 8,500 members. In 1995 they reported 21,250 affiliates.

#### *Slovak Evangelical Christian Church*

- This church was established in Serbia in 1680 and now has 52 congregations and 28,700 members. In 1995 there were 41,000 affiliates.

### *Baptist Churches in Serbia*

- The Union of Baptist Churches was established in Serbia in 1875 and there are 51 congregations with 1,619 members. In 1995 they reported 2,000 affiliates.
- Union of Evangelical Baptists in Serbia reports 13 units and 568 adherents in 1998.
- The Baptist World Alliance reports in 1998 that there were 2,187 adherents and 64 congregations of Baptists in Serbia.

### *Church of England*

- This church has been in Serbia since 1850 and has 2 congregations with 150 adult members. In 1995 there were an estimated 300 affiliates.
- This is made up of English speaking ex-patriots.

### *Other Protestants*

- 80 congregations, 3,000 members, 5,000 affiliates.
- About 40 of these groups are underground.

World Christian Encyclopedia, Vol. 1, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, page 813-16.

<http://www.watchtower.org/e/statistics/wholereport.htm>

[www.adherents.com](http://www.adherents.com)

## **People Groups**

### **33269**

#### **Albanian, Gheg (1,754,000)**

Albanians are descendents of the original inhabitants of the Balkan Peninsula. Before WWII and the Communist regime of the 1940's, Albanians maintained tribal life. As communism took over, the Albanians were forced into cities and into apartment style housing units. They had to leave behind the tribes, religion, and dress of their native way of life.

Albania experienced numerous changes at the fall of communism and has struggled to re-establish their identity and pride. The Ottoman Turks brought Islam to the Albanians during the Ottoman Empire, but they practiced a folk Islam. In 1967, Albania actually declared itself to be the first atheistic state and closed its borders to the outside world.

The Albanians are a Eurasian people primarily speaking Albanian Gheg. Alternate names for the Albanians are Gheg, Kosovar, Chamurian, Gheg Speaking, and Scutari.

The Albanians in Serbia are primarily Sunni Muslim. Only 0.118% are evangelical Christian. While there is not a complete Bible translated into their language, there is a New Testament as well as portions from the Old Testament, and many ministry tools including the *Jesus* film.

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#### **American, U.S. (2,100)**

English is the primary language of the American people living in Serbia. They are a North American people of the Anglo American people cluster. They are primarily Christian (78%), but the number of Evangelicals is unknown.

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**Arab, Lebanese (18,000)**

The Arabs are from the Arab World affinity block and the Arab-Levant people cluster. Alternate people names include Lebanese Arab, Lebanese Sunni, and Lebanese Shiite. They speak North Levantine Spoken Arabic, and are predominately Muslim. Approximately 2% of the Lebanese Arabs in Serbia are Christian adherents, but the number of evangelical Christians is unknown. The Lebanese Arabs are considered “least reached.”

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**Armini, Aromanian (14,000)**

The Armini are a part of the Albanian people cluster. They are alternately referred to as Aromunen, Vlach, Aromanian, and Macedo-Rumanian. The Armini speak Aromanian.

Their primary religion is orthodox Christianity, claiming 90% of the population in Serbia. The number of Evangelical Christians is unknown. There is yet to be a complete Bible translated in their mother language, but there are multiple agencies working with this group.

**00000**

**Bosniak (134,000)**

The Bosniak people are a Eurasian people of the Southern Slavic people cluster. They are originally from the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which was at one time a part of Yugoslavia.

Alternate names include Bosniac, Croatian, Muslmani, Croat, and Musselmani.

They primarily speak Bosnian and adhere to Islam. They are Sunni Muslim. There are no known evangelical Christians among the Bosniaks in Serbia. They are among the least reached peoples of Europe. There is a Bible in the Bosnian language.

**00000**

**British (46,000)**

The British are of the Anglo Celt people cluster of the Eurasian affinity bloc. They are alternately named Anglo-Pakistani, Euronesian, Scottish, White, and Anglophone. The British speak English and are primarily Christians (70%). The number of evangelical Christians is unknown.

**00000**

**Bulgarian (55,000)**

The Bulgarian people are a Southern Slavic people. Alternate names include Balgarski, Bogomil, Palityan, Moldovian, and Pomaks. The Bulgarians speak the Bulgarian language.

Bulgarians largely adhere to orthodox Christianity (68%). The number of evangelicals is unknown.

**00000**

**Cherkess, Adyghe (2,000)**

The Adyghe (Adyg) people originate from the northwest Caucasus region in the Adygeya Republic of the Russian Federation. While the people call themselves the “Adyghe” in the west they are often referred to as Circassians or Cherkes. They are also alternately known as Kjax and Shapsug. They speak the Adyghe language, and usually Russian as well. Both languages utilize the Cyrillic alphabet.

The people first became an official group in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, although they likely existed long before that. They never were a politically united group and while this reduced their influence in their region, it prevented them from being conquered by the invading groups such as the Mongols, Avars, and Huns. They eventually were conquered by Russia in the 18th century due to the lack of unity. After they were conquered in 1864, many people fled to the Ottoman Empire.

The Adyghe people were warlike tribes and young boys were trained to be warriors. Even women fought alongside their husbands. There are about thirteen predominant tribes. Family units are not strong among the people, nor even encouraged.

The Adyghe people are predominately Sunni Muslim and are among the least reached peoples. Less than 0.01% is Christian adherents, and the number of evangelical Christians is unknown. They have the New Testament, but still not the complete Bible translated into the Adyghe language.

**00000**

**Croat (307,000)**

The Croats, alternately known as Bosnian, Serbian, Muslimani, are Southern Slavs from former Yugoslavia. They primarily speak Croatian. Croats primarily adhere to Roman Catholicism. About 0.45% of the population is evangelical Christians.

**00000**

**Czech (40,000)**

The Czechs in Serbia are a Western Slavic Eurasian People. They speak Czech and are 70% Christian adherents. The number of evangelical believers is unknown.

**00000**

**Deaf (Unknown)**



The deaf in Serbia use Yugoslavian Sign Language. They are among the least reached peoples. Little information is available on the group.

**00000**

**French (5,500)**

The French in Serbia, referred to also as Franco-Mauritian Mulatto and Metropolitan, primarily speak French. They are of the French people cluster. The French are mostly Christian (76%), but it is unknown if any of these are evangelical Christians.

**00000**

**German (28,000)**

The Germans are a Eurasian People. They are alternately referred to as German Standard, High German, Saxon, Volga German, and Transylvanian. The Germans in Serbia are predominately Christian, with 78% claiming affiliation with a Christian church. It is not known how many are evangelical Christian.

**33628**

**Gorani (20,000)**

The Gorani are ethnically a Southern Slavic people group who live within the mountainous region of Gora-Drage in Kosovo. They predominately live across 18 villages in Serbia. They natively speak Nasinski, which is a Torlakian dialect, but they also speak Serbian. A Gorani diaspora occurred as it became increasingly difficult to live off of the rough terrain of the Gora mountain region, and thus the males were sent further and further to find work.

The Gorani are Slavic Muslim and are among the least reached peoples. They are approximately 1% evangelical Christian.

**00000**

**Greek (9,300)**

The Greeks are descendants of migrants of the Balkan Peninsula who went to Russia in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. After the Russian Turkish wars, there was a great population movement, where primarily the oppressed Christian population found hope and fled the Turkish rulers by following the Russian army out in droves. The Greeks are alternately named Dimotiki, Greek Cypriot, Hellenic, Romei, Romeos, and Urum. They are of the Eurasian Affinity Bloc, and speak Greek.

The Greeks are primarily Greek Orthodox (90%). The number of evangelicals is unknown.

**00000**

**Hungarian (419,000)**

The Hungarians are a Eurasian people. Alternate names include Magyar, Szekely, and Siculi. They speak the Hungarian language and 0.0162% are evangelical Christians.

**00000**

**Istriot (2,000)**

The Istriot people or Istro-Romanians are a Romanian people who predominately speak Istro Romanian. It is thought that they might have fled from their home in Transylvania after the Black Death more than 600 years ago. The Istro-Romanians are Roman Catholic (90%). The number of evangelicals is unknown.

**00000**

**Italian (19,000)**

The Italians are a Eurasian people who speak the Italian language. In Serbia 83% are Roman Catholic. The number of evangelicals is unknown.

**00000**

**Jew, Serbian Speaking (1,700)**

The Jews of Europe arrived on the continent at least 2,000 years ago during the early days of the Roman Empire. Since that time, they have been a significant influence in the history and culture of Europe. Much of what is considered "Jewish" today finds its roots among the European Jews. The Serbian speaking Jews in Serbia are among the least reached peoples.

Only about 0.20% is thought to be Christian adherents, but the few if any are known to be evangelical.

**00000**

**Macedonian (49,000)**

The Macedonians are a Eurasian People of the Southern Slavic people cluster. They speak Macedonian and are primarily orthodox adherents (90%). The number of evangelical believers is unknown.

**00000**

**Montenegrin (184,000)**

Montenegrins are a Southern Slavic Eurasian People. They primarily speak Serbian. The Montenegrins in Serbia are 66.7% orthodox adherents. The number of evangelicals is unknown.

**00000**

**Polish (25,000)**

The Polish, also known as Poles or Silesians, are a Eurasian people of the Western Slavic people cluster. They primarily speak Polish. The Poles living in Serbia are 85% Roman Catholic. Evangelical percentages are unknown.

**00000**

**Romani, Sinte, Manush (1,000)**

The Romani are a Gypsy, South Asian people. Alternate names for them include: Croatian Gypsy, Kazakhstani Gypsy, Manuche, Manush, Rom, Rommane Gypsy, Sasitka, and South German Romany.

They speak Sinte Romani and are 70.02% orthodox adherents, but the number of evangelicals is unknown. They still need portions of the Bible translated into their language.

**00000**

**Romani, Vlax (37,000)**

Gypsies, often called Romani or Domari, are made up of two separate groups: the Ghorbati and the Nawari, originating from India. They speak the Vlax Romani. Alternate people names include Arhagar, Baltic Gypsy, Cingane, Gitano, Gypsy, Kalderash, Lovar, Lowara, Norwegian Gypsy, Cale, and Colombian Gypsy.

The Romani in Serbia are reportedly (50%) Christian adherents, but the percentage of evangelicals is unknown. They do not have the complete Bible translated into their language.

**39305**

**Romani-Serbian (164,000)**

The Serbian Romani, are typically referred to as Balkan or Romani Gypsies. They are located throughout Eastern Europe. They call themselves "Rom" which in Romani means "men," and is derived from the Indian word "Dom" which refers to a low caste of men who earn a living through singing and dancing. The Gypsies are a South Asian people and speak Balkan Romani. They are highly discriminated against. Gypsies place a high value on family loyalty and tend to live together with extended family.

The Balkan Gypsies primarily adhere to the Eastern Orthodox Church (65%). The number of Evangelic Christians is unknown. They have the New Testament translated in their language, but have yet to have the entire Bible.

**00000**

**Romanian (74,000)**

The Romanians are alternately named Istrio-Romanian and Oltenia. The Romanians are of the Romanian people cluster and speak the Romanian language. The Romanians living in Serbia are 0.21% evangelical Christians.

**00000**

**Russian (46,000)**

The Russians of Serbia, also known as Eluosi, Olossu, and Russ, are a Eurasian people, of an Eastern Slavic people group. They speak Russian and are 55% Christian adherent. The number of evangelicals is unknown.

**00000**

**Ruthene (28,000)**

The Ruthene people are a Eurasian originated Gypsy people. Alternate names include Balkan Gypsies, Hungarian Gypsies, Jerides, Rusin, and Ruthenian. They are Eastern Slavic and primarily speak Rusyn. Actually, 20% are evangelical Christian. They Ruthene people have no Bible in their language.

**969**

**Serb (6,301,000)**

The Serbs are of Eurasian descent, and of the Southern Slavic people cluster. Alternate names include Bosnian, Continental Croat, Croatian, Muslimani, and Serbian. They speak Serbian and are primarily Orthodox. 0.152% is evangelical Christians.

**00000**

**Slovak (74,000)**

The Slovak people are a Eurasian people, of the Western Slavic people cluster. They speak Slovak and are primarily 80% Roman Catholic adherents. The number of evangelical Christians is unknown.

**00000**

**Turk (46,000)**

Turks are originally from Turan, which lies between the Caspian Sea and the Mongolian Desert. The Turks are alternately named Anatolian, Baharlu Turk, Masakhastian, Meskhetian Turk, Osmanli, Ottomon Turk, Rumelian Turk, and Urum.

The Turks speak Turkish and are predominately Sunni Muslim. The Turks are among the least reached peoples. It is not known if there are any Christians among the Turks in Serbia. They have the Bible and many ministry tools available in Turkish.

**00000**

**Ukrainian (2,900)**

The Ukrainians in Bulgaria are an Eastern Slavic Eurasian people. They are actually the second largest ethnic group from the former Soviet Union. Their historic ties to Poland and Cossack

tradition contribute to their colorful folk heritage. The Ukrainians in Bulgaria tend to live in the Varna Province. They primarily speak Ukrainian and are 70% orthodox adherents.

[www.peoplegroups.org](http://www.peoplegroups.org)

[www.joshuaproject.org](http://www.joshuaproject.org)

### **Missiological Implications**

1. Evangelical Christians and churches should pray for the peoples of Serbia and ask God's blessings on these war-torn peoples. Christians should pray for the reduction of ill-will among these peoples.
2. Evangelical Christians and churches should seek opportunities to minister to the physical needs of the peoples in Serbia
3. Evangelical Christians and churches should develop a methodology for sharing the Good News with followers of Orthodox Churches and Roman Catholic Churches and train local believers in the use of these methods.
4. Evangelical Christians and churches should pray for and seek to aid in the evangelization of the Gypsies in Serbia.
5. Evangelical Christians and churches should seek means to implement evangelism and church planting among the Albanian peoples. The presence of over one million people in this group underlines the need for immediate evangelism.
6. Evangelical Christians and churches should seek means to evangelize and start churches among the six million Serbs.