

## 1. Introduction

The Kosovo Vital Statistics System (VSS) was reactivated with funding from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)(January to December 2001) and the Dutch Government (August 2002-July 2003 with the United Nation Population Fund (UNFPA) acting as the executing agency. SOK would like to use this occasion to thank the aforementioned donors and other donors for their continuous support.

This is the first bulletin with complete data for 2002 and 2003, after the reactivation of VSS in July of 2001. The main source of information on births, deaths and marriages come from forms filled out at civil registry offices and in registry books.

Data collection is done using special statistical instruments: a statistical form for births (DEM-1), a statistical form for deaths (DEM-2) and a statistical form for marriages (DEM-3).

According to legal regulation concerning the completion of registry books, it is obligatory to register a vital event such as a birth, a death or a marriage in the place where the event occurred, whether or not persons who are related with the event, live in that location. Results of vital statistics are then processed principally according to the place where a person lives; this accords to international rules, which correspond to the conception of a permanent population, which is also applied in the case of censuses.

This bulletin briefly covers the information collected by the vital statistical system which occurred during the years 2002 and 2003, and briefly explains the importance of collecting such information. Also provided are some methodological explanations and a short population analyses. At the end of the bulletin tables are presented containing data at both the level of the state and municipality.

We hope that the data published in this bulletin is found useful, the Population Statistics Department (DSP) of SOK welcome any suggestions or comments in order to improve the content and quality of future publications.

Executive Director of SOK  
Hysni Thaqi

## Chapter I: Vital Statistic System (VSS) in Kosovo (2002 and 2003)

### 1.1 A short history

Data on births, deaths and marriages from 1900 to 1912 were archived in books in Ottoman administrative offices and religious institutions in the area. In the period between 1921 and 1939, statistical data about vital events were protected and recorded mainly through documents provided by religious institutions i.e. churches and mosques, a small amount of data came from government offices, whereas data on divorce was kept in courts that dealt with marriage matters.

After the Second World War (in 1947) a VSS in Kosovo began. All statistical data on vital events were provided through civil offices, whilst the courts still provided data on divorces.

After 1991, for security reasons, the majority of Albanians abstained from using the civic system of registration. The crumbling of the VSS began when political problems arose in early 1989 and its total demolition occurred during the war of 1999. This led to the destruction of many buildings and also to the disappearance of statistical records that, were believed, to be sent to Serbia.

The first attempts to rebuild and restart the VSS were made at the end of 1999 when UNMIK stepped in - resurrecting the statistical institution of Kosovo and printing all relevant documents for archiving.

After the reactivation of the civic registration process, efforts made to obtain data for vital events was renamed the “Reactivation of the Vital Statistics System” and was planned within the Population Statistics Department (DSP) of SOK.

In the beginning however there was darkness, but with financial help from UNFPA, which was supported by CIDA, technical help was brought in from Montreal University and later by the Netherlands Government.

July 2001 saw the start of the reactivation of the VSS, and the collection of data on births, marriages and deaths began. In January of 2004, the DSP reactivated another area of vital statistics – divorces -results are expected in 2005.

## 1.2 SOURCES OF DATA COLLECTION AND PROCESING

The only sources of information on vital statistics come from documents provided by registry books on births, deaths and marriages filled out at civil registry offices and medical institutions. Births and deaths occurring in hospital are registered by medical staff who complete statistical forms –for births DEM-1 and for deaths DEM-2.

One copy of the completed form is kept by the hospital; one copy is given to the person related with the event; while two copies are forwarded to a civil registry center (one of which is eventually sent to SOK). Once a civil registry office has registered an event in the registry book a copy is forwarded to SOK.

According to legal regulations, but also according to methodological recommendations, it has been explicitly made clear that a vital event is to be recorded in the place where the event occurred. When information is processed, and on the occasion of publications, data is grouped according to permanent residence: for cases of births permanent residence is of the mother, for deaths it is permanent residence of the deceased and for marriages it is the permanent residence of the married couple.

Regarding the calculations for the level of occurrence and information about vital events, data is to be published according to important characteristics such as: age, sex, ethnicity, municipality/ residence, education, family size etc. which is also usually required information from the population census or population registers.

It is very important to emphasize the need to apply legal regulations which make it obligatory for Kosovo's to register, on time, vital events in registry books in civil registry offices.

### 1.3 IMPORTANCE OF THE VSS

In order to analyze the demographic situation of a country, the main sources of information are provided from a census (which according to United Nation rules should be realized every ten years) and the VSS. Information from these sources will help in analyzing main demographic variables such as fertility, mortality, and migration. These are the three components of population change in a country.

Population size and whether it increases or decreases, is a result of the number of births, deaths and migrants. Population will increase when births, in-migration or both take place and will decrease when deaths, out-migration or both take place.

This can be represented by the formula:

$$P^1 = P^0 + (L-V) + (I+E)$$

**P<sup>1</sup>** is the estimated population at the end of the year,  
**P<sup>0</sup>** is the population in the middle of the year,  
**L** is the number of births in the current year,  
**V** is the number of deaths in the current year,  
**I** is the number of in-migrants in the current year and  
**E** is the number of out-migrants in the current year.

This basic demographic equation, used to calculate the population size of a territory, can be correctly measured if the number of births, deaths and migrants are correctly estimated. However, the present vital registration system only collects information on births, deaths and marriages while the collection of data on migration is still under consideration.

In order to achieve high coverage and good quality, the DSP has organized training, seminars/ workshops and discussions at central, regional and municipal levels. The DSP is aware that this cannot be achieved without help and support from all users and key players, especially from institutions that deal with legal matters who can enforce laws. The division considers it is very important that continuous discussions and sharing of information should be organized with civil registrars and medical staff as well as finding ways and means for grater participation from civil society as whole.

The VSS in Kosovo has been functioning from August 2001. According to the first preliminary results and now the completed results, when comparing with data from 1948-1990 we ascertain that despite the DSP commitment, during this time the DSP has not been able to capture more than 65% of deaths, and more than 85% of births. So far, the VSS has not been able to fulfill the UN criteria of at least 90% coverage, which is considered to be the minimum for a successful system. This situation clearly signals that a lot has to be done; changes and improvements within the civil service system of Kosovo must be made, particularly in the areas which deal with the registration of deaths.

## 1.4 Completed Activities

Until the reactivation of the VSS in July 2001, many activities were completed in fixed phases.

- November 1999- Municipal civil registrars were hired by UNMIK
- January 2000- Municipal Civil Registry Offices started issuing certificates for births, deaths and marriages.
- March 2000-UNMIK issued regulation number 2000/13 on the Central Civil Registry
- October 2000- Agreement signed between UNFPA and SOK to reactivate the Vital Registration System.  
Situation analysis of the civil registration system (a prepared report from DSP was submitted to UNFPA- Mr. Olivie Brazerit).
- February 2001 – Mr. Gani Kadriu and Mr.Kadri Sojeva, visited the University of Montreal, Canada, where they consulted with the experience of VSS Canada.
- January – February: Mr. Somon Jana,from the University of Montreal was recruited by UNFPA as a consultant to the VSS project at DSP of SOK.
- In the beginning of 2001- Gani Kadriu, Kadri Sojeva, Somon Jana and Tite Habijarka visited Albania and Macedonia. Field visits to municipalities by the team of Gani, Kadri and Simon Jana.
- January –February 2001- Mr. Victor Piche and Jean Lachapelle from the University of Montreal visited SOK.
- March-July- 2001- Legal basis was reviewed and a draft regulation was submitted for the Vital Registration System. Forms and instruction books (drafts ) for the separate registration of births, deaths and marriages were prepared.
- June 2001 – Training of SOK staff, civil registrars and medical staff. Discussed and finalized forms.
- June-August 2001- Dissemination workshop organized and public campaign initiated( only posters were printed)
- August 2001- Reconstructed Vital Registration System starts after the 1999 war.
- December 2001- Memorandum of understanding signed between Central Civil Registry and SOK on data collection from the civil registration system, for vital events.
- January 2002- Vital Registry System was installed.
- January -February 2002- Evaluation of the first phase of the project by Ms. Louise Lapoinet, CERAC inc.Montreal University.
- March 2002 – Somon Yana submitted final result of first phase of the VSS.
- May 2002- Data entry operators hired and trained which were transferred to other duties before they have finished data entry of Vital Statistics.

- June 2002- data entry starts at the second half of 2001 which was an ongoing process, until completion in 2003.
- From June 2002 till March 2004, there was a problem for experts in IT division of SOK for data processing ; from DSP for publishing and dissipation of information regarding Vital events n Kosovo, were left unfulfilled.
- June 2002- UNFPA- employs Mr. Prabhat Dixid from Nepal, technical advisor/ Demographic expert to assist in the Vital Division of SOK.
- February 2004- Arrival of Mr. Hysni Thaqi, Executive Director of SOK, April 2004, an expert for data processing in It center is recruited which unblocks the main obstacle, which during two years has prevented the realization of the third phase of VSS and generation of vital event information.

### 1.5 Activities to be realized in the future

- In order to complete the VSS, DSP will aim to provide data on migration as migration is vital component for the correct estimation of population size.
- Improvements in other activities such as technical, organizational, professional aspects and systematic procedures in order to increase the number and quality of capturing vital events on time, and to distribute information effectively.
- In particular, efforts need to be made in order to increase the number of vital registration forms coming from areas with high Serbian populations.

## 1.6 Estimation of population size

### Population change

From analyzing data about population growth, during the period 1948-1997, we estimate that there was a net population increase in Kosovo of around 33673 people, with an average rate of net increase per year of 24.7 per thousand people. This is a population growth rate of 2.2% per year.

During the period 1991 until 1997, there was a net increase of around 37187 people, or an average net rate of increase per year of 17.96 per thousand. The population growth rate for Kosovo in this period was 1.7775 %.

Population change - estimation

Year	Number of people (000)
1991	1967
1992	2006
1993	2043
1994	2077
1995	2113
1996	2151
1997	2186

(Source: Serbian statistical year-book 1998 page 42. tab. 3-2)

### Estimation

In the absence of data on the total population size of Kosovo but in order to create base line data needed for calculating population statistics we are forced to use data from the last census in 1981 so as to make estimates about the population in Kosovo for the period 1998-2004. Data for the population size in the mentioned period was calculated and estimated with a population growth rate per year of 1.775%.

Population change

Year	Number of people (000)
1998	2225
1999	2264
2000	2304
2001	2345
2002	2387
2003	2429
2004	2473

(Estimation: Statistical Population Division of SOK)

### 1.7 Population of Kosovo 1948-1997

(Source: Serbian statistical year-book 1998 page 42. tab. 3-2)

Years	Population at 30. 06 .(000)	Births	Deaths	Infant deaths	Natural growth	Per 1000 people			Infant deaths per thousand live births.
		Total	Total			Births	Deaths	Natural Growth	
1948	733	27792	10324	...	17468	37.9	14.1	23.8	...
1949	751	31643	12927	4208	18716	42.1	17.2	24.9	133.0
1950	764	35222	12991	4977	22231	46.1	17.0	29.1	141.3
1951	780	29299	14833	5103	14466	37.6	19.0	18.5	174.2
1952	793	35619	13867	5197	21752	44.9	17.5	27.4	145.9
1953	813	34595	16726	5999	17869	42.6	20.6	22.0	173.4
1954	832	38595	13201	5520	25394	46.4	15.9	30.5	143.0
1955	842	36736	15292	6025	21444	43.6	18.2	25.5	164.0
1956	859	37819	13692	5175	24127	44.0	15.9	28.1	136.8
1957	873	34159	15300	5464	18859	39.1	17.5	21.6	160.0
1958	890	39285	11598	4928	27687	44.1	13.0	31.1	125.4
1959	921	37364	12878	5190	24486	40.6	14.0	26.6	138.9
1960	944	41631	13365	5518	28266	44.1	14.2	29.9	132.5
1961	972	40561	11759	5108	28802	41.7	12.1	29.6	125.9
1962	997	41336	15024	6072	26312	41.5	15.1	26.4	146.9
1963	1021	41525	12423	5351	29102	40.7	12.2	28.5	128.9
1964	1046	42557	12731	5418	29826	40.7	12.2	28.5	127.3
1965	1075	43569	11767	5341	31802	40.5	10.9	29.6	122.6
1966	1101	42429	10266	4357	32163	38.5	9.3	29.2	102.7
1967	1131	44001	11308	4739	32693	38.9	10.0	28.9	107.7
1968	1159	44627	10781	4552	33846	38.5	9.3	29.2	102.0
1969	1189	46480	10892	4404	35588	39.1	9.2	29.9	94.8
1970	1220	44496	10829	4286	33667	36.5	8.9	27.6	96.3
1971	1254	47060	10312	4215	36748	37.5	8.2	29.3	89.6
1972	1291	47943	10270	3753	37673	37.1	8.0	29.2	78.3
1973	1329	47714	10358	4053	37356	35.9	7.8	28.1	84.9
1974	1367	49847	10075	4069	39772	36.5	7.4	29.1	81.6
1975	1406	49310	10018	3961	39292	35.1	7.1	27.9	80.3
1976	1446	51355	10149	3678	41206	35.5	7.0	28.5	71.6
1977	1487	49849	9811	3681	40038	33.5	6.6	26.9	73.8
1978	1526	49027	9776	3409	39251	32.1	6.4	25.7	69.5
1979	1566	48125	9575	3424	38550	30.7	6.1	24.6	71.1
1980	1555	53147	8909	3069	44238	34.2	5.7	28.4	57.7
1981	1595	48111	9677	3024	38434	30.2	6.1	24.1	62.9
1982	1629	52865	10479	3466	42386	32.5	6.4	26.0	65.6
1983	1664	49645	11040	3437	38605	29.8	6.6	23.2	69.2
1984	1699	55243	10573	2921	44670	32.5	6.2	26.3	52.9
1985	1735	53925	11826	3026	42099	31.1	6.8	24.3	56.1
1986	1773	54519	10446	2819	44073	30.7	5.9	24.9	51.7
1987	1811	56221	10307	2848	45914	31.0	5.7	25.4	50.7
1988	1850	56283	10257	2916	46026	30.4	5.5	24.9	51.8
1989	1889	53656	10181	2745	43475	28.4	5.4	23.0	51.2
1990	1930	55175	8214	1897	46961	28.6	4.3	24.3	34.4
1991	1967	52263	8526	1761	43737	26.6	4.3	22.2	33.7
1992	2006	44418	8004	1526	36414	22.1	4.0	18.2	34.4
1993	2043	44132	7804	1471	36328	21.6	3.8	17.8	33.3
1994	2077	43450	7667	1081	35783	20.9	3.7	17.2	24.9
1995	2113	44776	8671	1058	36105	21.2	4.1	17.1	23.6
1996	2151	46041	8392	734	37649	21.4	3.9	17.5	15.9
1997	2186	42920	8624	781	34296	19.6	3.9	15.7	18.2



## Chapter II –Preliminary Analysis

### 2.1 Analysis

When analyzing demographic events in the years 2002 and 2003, the important fact to be considered is that in Kosovo, vital events (births and deaths) are not captured on a satisfying scale. This is because adequate legislative regulation does not exist which enforces citizens to register vital events in civil registry offices with in time limits. Therefore, we cannot make persuasive conclusions from the produced information or present the real situation of vital events and the natural increase of population in Kosovo for these years

As mentioned earlier population increase directly depends on different components of population (live births, deaths and migration). The higher the rate of capture of these components the more precise the information is for estimating the rate of population increase within a country. However, owing to the commitment of professional staff in the DSP, their work in the field and their contacts with relevant institutions, progress on vital events reporting has become evident when compared to the preliminary period of the reactivation of the VSS in 2001.

Based on the data presented in the tables of this bulletin, the rate of population increase in Kosovo, 2002, was around 13.0 per thousand and in 2003 was around 11.0 per thousand. In earlier periods (1948-1988), the rate of population increase was the highest in Europe besides Turkey and was on average around 35.0 per thousand. Now it shows a decrease of more than 50 percent, but this is mainly the result of the non-reporting of events. In the year 1990-1991, the average rate of population increase in Kosovo was around 23.3 per thousand, whereas, in the period 1992-1996 was on average around 16.8 per thousand, this decrease continued to fall to 15.7 per thousand 1997.

This fall in the population growth rate, after the year 1991, is not a reflection however of the real situation of population growth in Kosovo, but is a result of Non-cooperation (non registration of the events) of the population majority with civil registration offices. For security reasons of mothers and children, most births occurred at home or in private clinics that at the time, did not keep records corresponding to vital events within the system of the previous regime. This situation destroyed the relationship between the VSS and the population, which naturally needed time to re-establish.

For the years of 1998, 1999, 2000 and 2001, SOK does not have full vital statistics data. It is worrying, that even now, vital events that occur in locations where Serbs are concentrated are not being registered in the civil registry offices of Kosovo. Therefore, DSP of SOK does not have adequate information for one part of Kosovo's population.

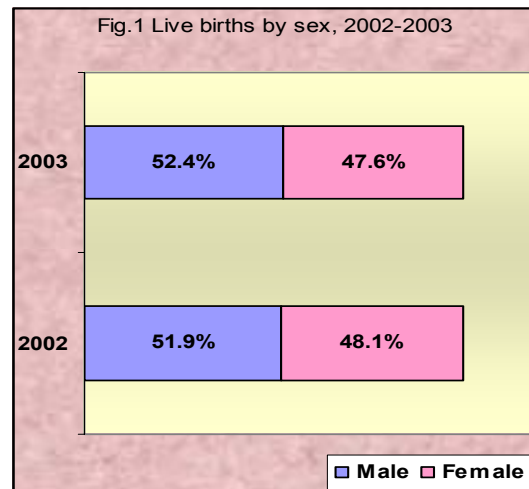
## 2.2 Births

According to information collected by the VSS for 2002, there were 36347 registered births, 36136 of which were born alive whilst 211 were born dead (stillbirths).

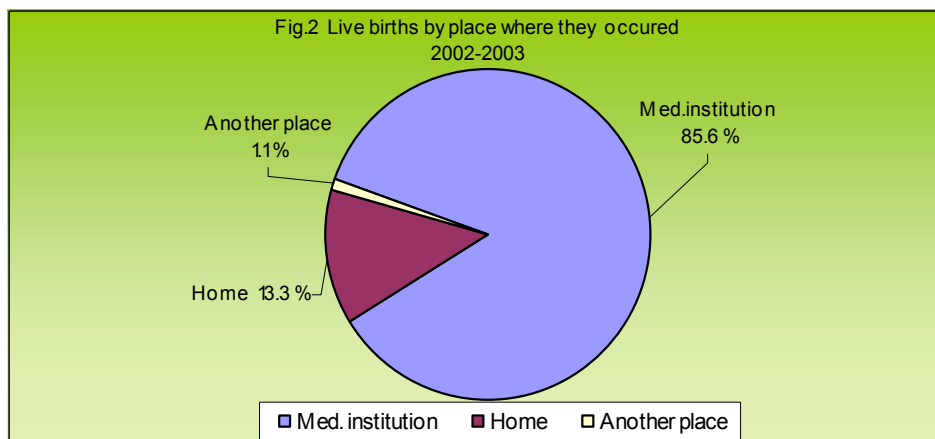
The crude birth rate for all births was 15.2 per thousand, for live births the crude birth rate was 15.1 per thousand. The vital index was 6.4 (number of live births per hundred deaths) and the rate of natural increase was 12.8 per thousand.

The sex ratio at birth was 1.08; this means that for every 100 female babies born there were 108 male babies. The stillbirth rate – stillbirths per 1000 births - was 5.8 per thousand.

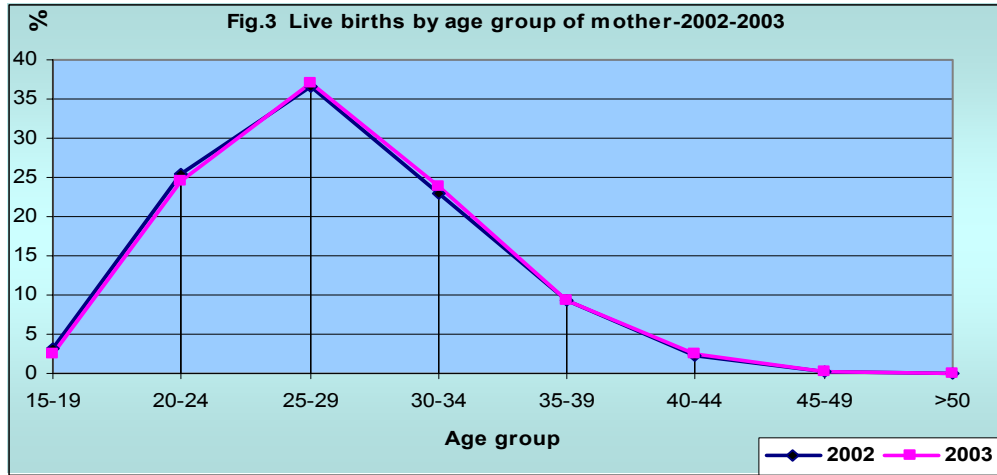
In 2003 a total of 32186 births were registered, 31994 of which were born alive, whilst 192 were stillbirths. The crude birth rate for all births was 13.3 per thousand, 13.2 per thousand for live births. The still birth rate was 6.0 per thousand. The vital index was 5.0, and the rate of natural increase 10.5 per thousand. The sex ratio at births was 1.10 (see figure 1.)



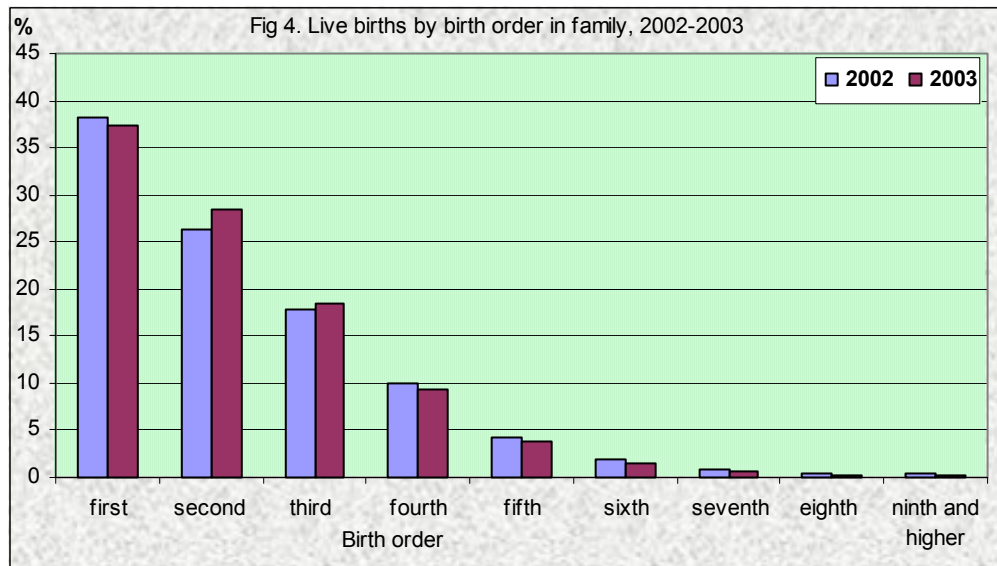
For the years 2002 and 2003, on average around 85.6% of births occurred in a medical institution, 13.3 % at home and 1.1 % occurred in other places.



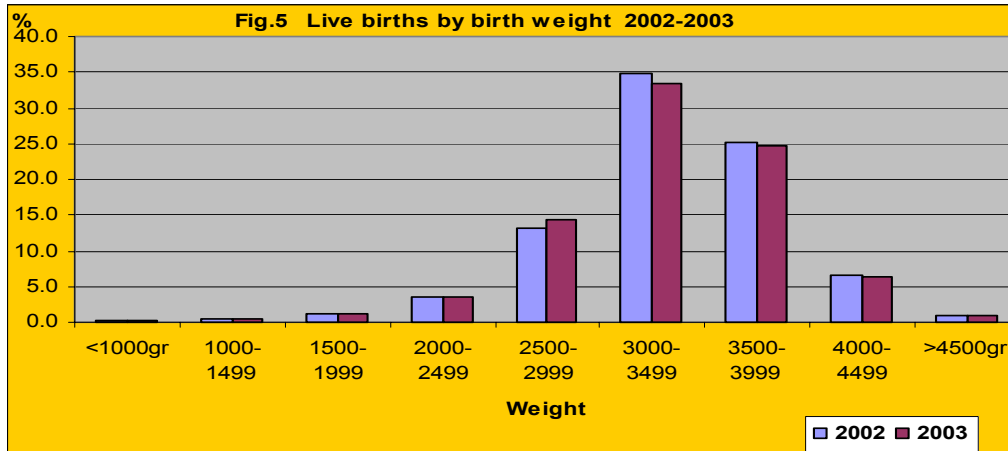
According to age-group, more than 35% of births were born to women aged between 25-29, 25% of births were born to women aged between 20-24, 23.4% of births were born to women aged between 30-34, and 14.8% occurred to women of other ages. For both years this pattern was the same (see figure 3.) The average age of women giving birth in 2002 was around 28 and in 2003 the average age had raised slightly to 28.1



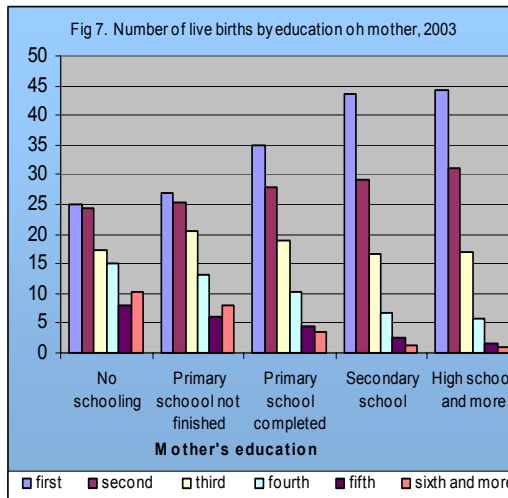
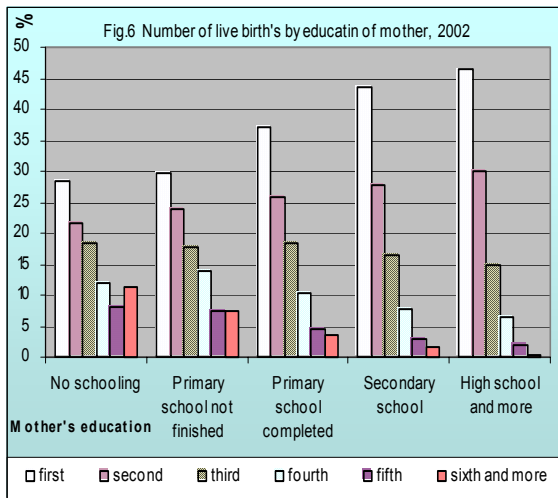
According to birth order, on average for both years, 37.8% of women who gave birth, gave birth to their first child, 27.3% of mothers gave birth to their second child, 18% of mothers gave birth to their third child and 17% of mothers gave birth to their fourth or more child.



In 2002 and 2003, 34% of babies weighed between 3000-3499 grams, 24.9% of babies weighed between 3500-3999grams, 19.2% of babies weighed less than 3000 grams while 7.5 % of babies weighed more than 4000 grams (see figure5).



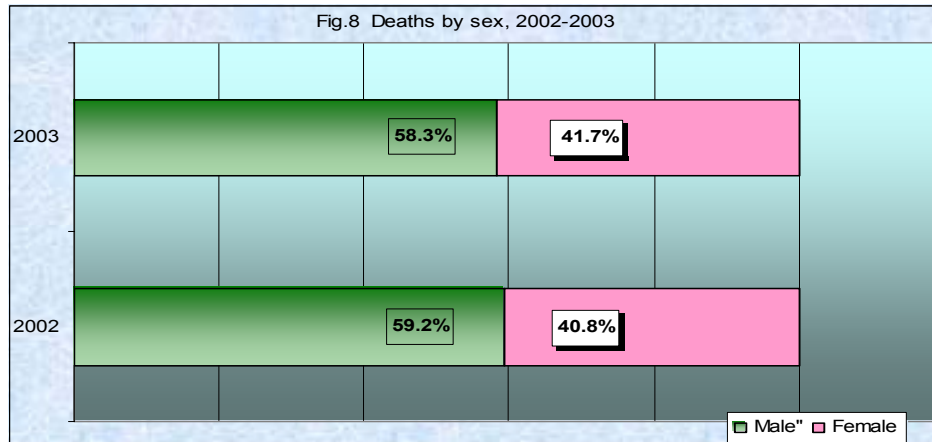
Figures 6 and 7 show the effect of educational level on the number of children a woman gives birth to. It is clear that woman with lower education are likely to have a larger family than those who attended higher education.



## 2.3 Deaths

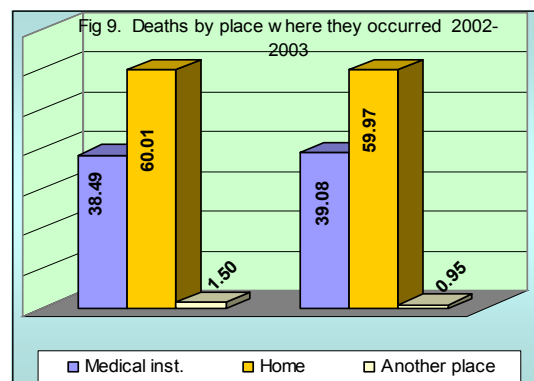
In 2002, 5654 cases of death were registered, from which 3348 (or 59.2%) were men and 2306 (or 40.8 %) were women. From the total number of registered deaths, 403 were infants.

In 2003, 6417 cases of death were registered, from which 3741 (or 58.3%) were male and 2676 (or 41.7%) were females (see figure 8).



In both 2002 and 2003 the sex ratio at death (number of males that die for every 100 females) was the same at around 1.4.

It is worrying that in the years 2002 and 2003, more than 60 percent of deaths occurred in home and only 40 percent occurred in hospital. For cases that occurred at home, there were very few causes of death were provided along with other missing information that is asked on the statistical form (DEM-2)

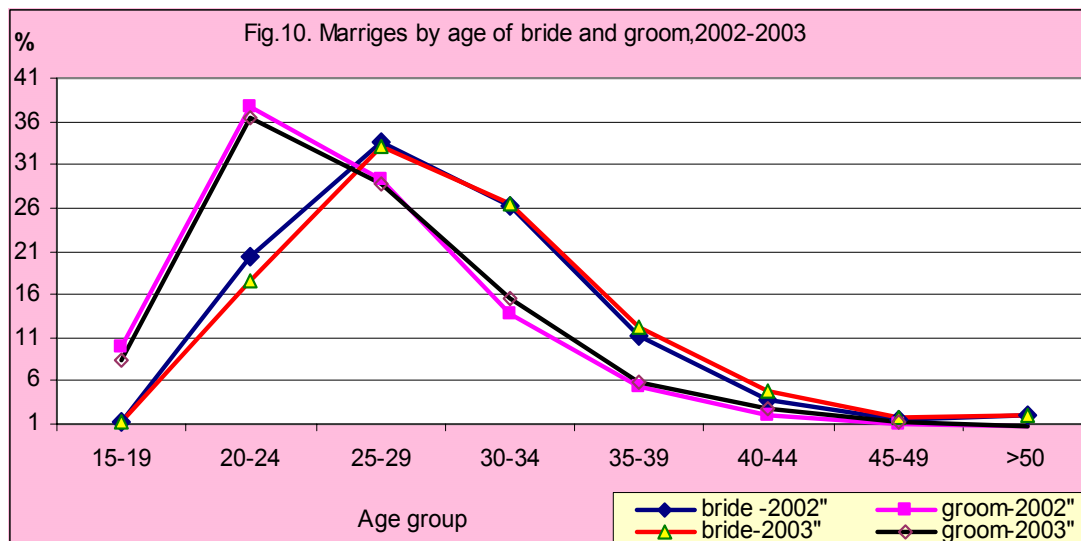


**According to the population changes in the period pf 1948-1997 and estimates provided for the period between 1998-2004; in order that the capturing of vital events (births and deaths) is at a satisfying level (more than 95%), the crude birth rate should be 22 per thousand, the vital index should be 5.5, the net natural increase should be 18 per thousand, the crude rate of death should be 5.0 per thousand and the infant mortality rate should be around 30 per thousand live births**

## 2.4. Marriages

In Kosovo in 2002, 18280 marriages were registered. According to age-group, the highest number of marriages occurred to women between 20-24 years (37.6% of women) while it was more common for men between 25-29 years to get married (33.6% of men). The mean age of marriage at the national level, in 2002 was 27 years old (29 years for men and 25.8 years for women).

In 2003, 17034 marriages were registered. According to age-group, the highest number of marriages occurred to women between 20-24 years (36.7% of women) while it was more common for men between 25-29 years to get married (33% of men). The mean age of marriage at the national level was 28 years (30 years for men and 26 years for women).



## 2.5 Births, deaths and marriages according to the month in which they occurred 2002-2003

