



KCSS
Kosovar Centre for Security Studies

KOSOVO RISK ASSESSMENT REPORT SINCE INDEPENDENCE

FEBRUARY 2008 – JUNE 2017



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following a risk assessment approach that best suits Kosovo's context, KCSS developed a database of threat incidents covering the period of almost a decade long, namely between February 2008 to June 2017. It is evident that since the emergence of the Syrian conflict and the foreign fighter phenomenon, the religious threat incidents have increased slightly compared to previous years. Yet, the findings of this assessment suggest that political threat incidents continue to take much larger share of the pie of all threat incidents in Kosovo in the past decade. Of the 73 recorded threat incidents in KCSS's database, the majority or close 62 percent have been political, while around 36 percent have been religious in nature. The assessment also indicates that the execution rates among all the registered threats (threats that went beyond verbal warnings or the ones that were not foiled by authorities) has been much higher among political type of threats than the religious ones. Close to 80 percent of executed threats were political in nature, while close to 70 percent of unexecuted ones were religious in nature.

Of all the recorded threats, almost all, or close to 93 percent of political threat incidents have been domestic in scope, while more than half of religious threat incidents, or 58 percent of them have been international in scope. It is interesting to note that these religious threat incidents that have been international in scope can be further grouped into two categories, namely those that have been registered in the western hemisphere of the world on the one hand, and those that have been registered in the Middle East - characteristic of foreign fighter phenomenon, on the other. The threat incidents registered in the West usually involve Kosovo related individuals that are not strongly linked to Kosovo; they usually represent the younger generation of migrants who have either left Kosovo in their early age with their parents during the conflicts of 1990s, or have been born in one of the western countries.

When it comes to the consequences of each of the registered threats, our threat incident database shows that the majority of threats have been non-lethal. More than 70 percent of all registered threat incidents in the past decade have resulted in no casualties – neither death nor injuries. Only around 16 percent of threat incidents during the past decade resulted in deaths, while more than 10 percent resulted in injuries. It is also interesting to note that in terms of consequences of threat incidents, there is an inverse relationship between political and religious types of threat incidents.

More than 65 percent of threat incidents that resulted in deaths (or a total of 8 of them) were political in nature, while the others, or a total of 4 threat incidents in the past decade were religious in nature. Of these 4 religious threat incidents that resulted in death, none of them were domestic in scope, i.e. none occurred inside the territory of Kosovo. Statistically speaking, the number of casualties, both in terms of deaths or injuries, remains insignificant. When examining the average number of casualties against the total number of threats, it becomes evident that there was 1 death and 1 injury for every seven years.

The link between returned foreign fighters and threats in Kosovo remains very weak. Of around 117 returned foreign fighters, 5 were involved in threats which were never executed. The total number of threats in which these five individuals were involved is 3 out of 73 registered threat incidents. The analysis of threat incidents in and from Kosovo over the past decade suggests that the risks have been relatively low, both in terms of their scope, but also in terms of the consequences. KCSS, nonetheless, abstains from making any predictive claims with regards to future possible involvements, as there is very little information, for example, with regards to the currently detained and sentenced returned foreign fighters, their relationship with such decisions, their behavior inside the prisons, and the possible effects that these may have had on them about the state, its institutions, and society in general.

1. INTRODUCTION

Between 2012 and 2017, around 315 Kosovo citizens are reported to have travelled to conflict zones in Syria and Iraq.¹ Of these, more than a third have already returned to Kosovo. Another third is believed to still be in the conflict areas, including dozens of non-combatants, among which there are many women and children, while around 60 individuals are believed to have already lost their lives.² The number of more than 110 returnees and a similar number of potential returnees raise concerns about the possible risks that they carry for individual and collective security and freedoms in Kosovo, and beyond. According to the 2016 Kosovo Security Barometer (KSB), 75 percent of Kosovo's citizens perceive the foreign fighter returnees as a threat, while more than 50 percent would not receive a returnee back into their communities.³

The potential threat from the emergence of the unprecedented foreign fighter phenomenon among some Kosovo citizens has been widely speculated in reports and media outlets on both national and international levels. Various outlets, from those in the United States (US) like *The New York Times* which described Kosovo as a "fertile ground for ISIS" and a "pipeline for Jihadists", to the Italian based *L'Espresso* which claimed that the notorious Kosovo originating foreign fighter, Lavdrim Muhaxheri, was ready to come back to Kosovo with 300-400 fighters from the Caliphate surmised the levels of threats in different tones.⁴ While the media reporting on the issue at hand may be downplayed as unprofessional or not analytical enough, they nevertheless have an

1 The year 2017 hereinafter refers to the period January-June 2017.

2 These are the most recent approximate estimates according to various reports, i.e: Rita Augestad Knudsen, "Radicalization and Foreign Fighters in the Kosovo Context: An Analysis of International Media Coverage of the Phenomena," Working Paper (Oslo, Norway: Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, 2017), /en/Publications/CRIStin-Pub/Radicalization-and-foreign-fighters-in-the-Kosovo-context-An-analysis-of-international-media-coverage-of-the-phenomena; Leonora Aliu, "Të Zgjedhësh Mes Qytetit Tënd Dhe Shtetit Islamik," Kosovo 2.0 (blog), October 17, 2017, <http://kosovotwopointzero.com/choosing-city-islamic-state/>.

3 Vesë Kelmendi, "The Citizens' Views against Violent Extremism and Radicalization in Kosovo," Kosovo Security Barometer (Prishtina, Kosovo: Kosovar Centre for Security Studies, June 13, 2016), <http://www.qkss.org/en/Reports/The-citizens-views-against-violent-extremism-and-radicalization-in-Kosovo-710>; Florian Qehaja, Skender Perteshi, and Mentor Vrajolli, "Mapping the State of Play of Institutional and Community Involvement in Countering Violent Extremism in Kosovo" (Prishtina, Kosovo: Kosovar Centre for Security Studies and The Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers, February 13, 2017), <http://www.qkss.org/en/Reports/Mapping-the-state-of-play-of-institutional-and-community-involvement-in-countering-violent-extremism-in-Kosovo-864>.

4 Carlotta Gall, "How Kosovo Was Turned Into Fertile Ground for ISIS," *The New York Times*, May 21, 2016, <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/22/world/europe/how-the-saudis-turned-kosovo-into-fertile-ground-for-isis.html>; Marco Pacini, "Il Ritorno Del Boia Dei Balcani," *L'Espresso*, December 26, 2016, <http://espresso.repubblica.it/attualita/2016/12/22/news/il-ritorno-del-boia-dei-balcani-1.291989>.

immense ability to shape public opinion and perceptions on both national and international levels, impacting - in various degrees - policy making as well.⁵

The International Centre for Counter-Terrorism in the Hague (ICCT) noted that the foreign fighter phenomenon poses a “serious security risk” to European Union (EU) Member States and their national societies.⁶ A number of EU Member States have already adjusted their threat assessment levels to higher levels of threat since 2011 when the Syrian conflict began and the foreign fighters emerged from their soils.⁷ With regards to Kosovo, however, a USAID commissioned team carried out a risk assessment of violent extremism back in April – May 2015, noting that the violent extremism “risk in Kosovo remains very low”.⁸ According to USAID, some of the reasons for the low risk, among others, include the general views held in Kosovo about Government’s response to the issue, which was noted to have been “measured, balanced, and generally viewed positively”.⁹ The USAID’s assessment also highlighted its respondents’ views that violent extremism is “a potentially existential threat in the long-run [...] casting a light on the infiltration of religion as a guiding principle in a fundamentally secular society”.¹⁰

A number of foreign fighter-linked events unfolded since, what appears to be, the last risk assessment report carried out by the USAID on Kosovo. In July 2015, Kosovo security authorities detained five individuals near Badovc Lake, who the media claimed were attempting to poison the lake – one of the main water resources for the capital.¹¹ The charges for an attempted poisoning of the water were subsequently dropped, though the suspects continued to be kept in detention on other terrorism charges.¹² A few months later, at the request of the US Government, the Malaysian authorities arrested Ardit Ferizi, a 20 year old computer hacker from Kosovo, who was suspected

5 Augestad Knudsen, “Radicalization and Foreign Fighters in the Kosovo Context.”

6 Bibi van Ginke and Eva Entenmann, “The Foreign Fighters Phenomenon in the European Union: Profiles, Threats & Policies,” Research Report (The Hague: International Centre for Counter-Terrorism - The Hague, April 2016), http://icct.nl/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/ICCT-Report_Foreign-Fighters-Phenomenon-in-the-EU_1-April-2016_including-AnnexesLinks.pdf.

7 van Ginke and Entenmann.

8 USAID, “Kosovo Violent Extremism Risk Assessment: April-May 2015,” Report (USAID, 2015), http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00M3P6.pdf.

9 USAID.

10 USAID.

11 The Guardian, “Kosovo Cuts Pristina Water Supply over Alleged Isis Plot to Poison Reservoir,” *The Guardian*, July 11, 2015, sec. World news, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jul/11/kosovo-cuts-pristina-water-supply-over-alleged-isis-plot-to-poison-reservoir>.

12 Kreshnik Gashi and Labinot Leposhtica, “Kosovo Drops Poisoning From Terrorist Charges,” *Balkan Insight*, December 11, 2015, <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/kosovo-prosecution-finds-no-proof-of-isis-poisoning-the-lake-12-11-2015> According to informal talks with the representatives of the Directorate of Anti-Terrorism in the Kosovo Police, the alleged attempt of lake poisoning was something that they have heard only from the media, and that they had other suspicions with regards to the arrested individuals. .

of providing Daesh with personal information of more than 1,000 US government employees.¹³ Also in November 2016, Kosovo's security authorities arrested more than a dozen individuals suspected of planning simultaneous terrorist attacks in Kosovo and in Albania where the 2018 World Cup qualifying match between Albania and Israel was going to take place.¹⁴ More recently, in April 2017, Kosovo's Security Council issued a statement warning the public of what appeared to be an ambiguous all-out threat against "Kosovo's constitutional order", some of Kosovo's "institutional leaders and public officials", aiming to "destabilize Kosovo".¹⁵ According to the statement, these acts were planned to be carried out by "a few individuals and their groups associated with groups and individuals from other countries outside Kosovo", and are related to "people with questionable past, working with groups and services of some countries and can be related to the incriminated persons in conflicts outside Kosovo, as well as and particular countries [sic.]" that aim to destabilize Kosovo.¹⁶ As such, Kosovo's Security Council pointed at both, state and non-state actors as possible addresses where these threats might have been originating.

Against this background, KCSS carried out a risk assessment of various threats in and from Kosovo since its declaration of independence in February 2008 to June 2017. While this report does not provide a comprehensive report on risk analysis, it approaches threats more comprehensively, which we discuss in the following section on methodology. Following the methodological section, the report continues to provide a general overview of Kosovo related threats where the general types and scope of threats are presented. The overview is then followed by the section on the credibility of threats where a more detailed assessment of their seriousness according to their type and scope is discussed. The assessment then continues with the consequences of these threats, and presents some information on casualties and threat targets in the past decade. The assessment lastly presents the relationship of foreign fighters against the background of different types and scopes of Kosovo related threats.

13 US Department of State, "Country Reports on Terrorism 2015" (Washington, D.C.: United States Department of State, June 2, 2016), <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2015/index.htm>.

14 Kosovo Police, "Policia e Kosovës Arrin Rezultate Pozitive Në Parandalimin Dhe Arrestimin e Personave Të Dyshuar Për Terrorizëm," November 16, 2016, <http://www.kosovopolice.com/sq/informacione/policia-e-kosoves-arrin-rezultate-pozitive-ne-parandalimin-dhe-arrestimin-e-personave-te-dyshuar-per-terrorizem>.

15 The Office of the Prime Minister of Kosovo, "Press Release," April 14, 2017, <http://www.kryeministri-ks.net/?page=2,9,6726>.

16 The Office of the Prime Minister of Kosovo.

2. METHODOLOGY

There is no single approach to estimating risks of possible acts of terror, since this involves large uncertainties and requires an in-depth treatment of every single threat incident that occurred or might have occurred under certain conditions. One way to go about estimating the level of threats in Kosovo is to use the already established approaches that examine the individual level characteristics of former foreign fighters or those suspected of being involved in any past threat incidents to derive predictive statements about their future behavior.¹⁷ While such individual level approaches have many advantages, it is impossible to utilize them in our present assessment, because we would need to rely on in-depth personal information and histories regarding each individual's ideological development, psychological background, family and social backgrounds, personality developments – information that, except for some general personal characteristics, is not available for any of the Kosovo based suspects.

Another way to go about estimating the level of threat in Kosovo is to engage in a structural level of past threat incidents in terms of the type of threat, targets involved, vulnerabilities, and the consequences of threats. Such an approach has been proposed by RAND Center for Terrorism Risk Management Policy which views terrorism risk as having three components: “the *threat* to a target, the target’s *vulnerability* to the threat, and the *consequences* should the target be successfully attacked.”¹⁸ RAND’s terrorism risk assessment proposal is a predictive one, whereby indicators are derived for all three elements which are then used to make probabilistic claims of a possible risk emerging from a particular attack of a certain type with some expected damage of a certain type in the future. For instance, in RAND’s proposal:

- *threat* is defined as the “probability that a specific target is attacked in a specific way during a specified time period”;
- *vulnerability* is defined as the “probability that damages (where damages may involve fatalities, injuries, property damage, or other consequences) occur, given a specific attack type, at a specific time, on a given target”; and
- *consequence* is defined as the “magnitude of damage (e.g., deaths, injuries, or property damage), given a specific attack type, at a specific time, that results in damage to a specific target”.¹⁹

17 Karl Roberts and John Horgan, “Risk Assessment and the Terrorist,” *Perspectives on Terrorism* 2, no. 6 (2008), <http://www.terrorismanalysts.com/pt/index.php/pot/article/view/38>; Bart Schuurman and Quirine Eijkman, “Indicators of Terrorist Intent and Capability: Tools for Threat Assessment,” *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict* 8, no. 3 (September 2, 2015): 215–31, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17467586.2015.1040426>.

18 Henry H. Willis et al., “Estimating Terrorism Risk,” Product Page (RAND Center for Terrorism Risk Management Policy, 2005), <https://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG388.html>.

19 Willis et al.

KCSS basis its risk assessment threat largely on the elements developed by RAND, with some modifications. First, KCSS's approach will not be predictive; this is because the number of total threats identified for the purposes of present assessment is much lower than any predictive study would require to allow for any statistically or substantively significant predictive claims. Second, KCSS's approach is historical and contextual, in that it analysis the past risk events against the domestic and international context, from which it derives some of the analysis – not predictions. To support this approach, the KCSS team of researchers have developed a threat incident database which includes all threat events since February 2008 to June 2017. The rationale behind this decade long temporal aspect of the study is our basis to use the month of Kosovo's independence as a starting point, and the month of the present year when this report is being compiled as the end point of the analysis. The database is the key component of this risk assessment, and with the publication of this report, KCSS makes its database publicly available for external validity purposes.²⁰ Third, we believe that to better understand the level of terror risk or risks involving Kosovo originating foreign fighters, a cross-type threat comparison would provide the necessary contextual feed to the study. This is because to be able to say whether there is a low or a high risk or anything in between, it necessarily involves comparison – i.e. lower compared to what, or higher compared to what? Accordingly, after having studied our database, the bulk of the analysis presented here is a comparison between two types of threats: *religious* and *political* based threats. Another comparative aspect we introduce for the purposes of making our assessment contextually sensitive, is that we include a cross-country evaluation of terrorism index, so to be able to see where Kosovo stands in such indices (that others have developed) compared to other countries relevant for this analysis.

Before proceeding to the actual analysis, a few words on data collection on Kosovo related threat incidents are necessary. An essential element to recording threat events that have taken place during the period of present assessment, involves the adoption of a working definition of "terrorism", "threat of terrorism", or "risk of terrorism", or simply "threats" or "threat incidents". Currently there are more than several hundred definitions of terrorism.²¹ In light of this, KCSS does not aim to provide its own definition of terrorism to the already plethora of definitions provided by government agencies, scholars, and organizations. Choosing one existing working definition over another or providing a new one, however, requires a rationale of either decision, and it necessarily involves value judgements. KCSS is aware that any decision will satisfy some, and upset others. We highlight the fact, however, that neither of the available definitions are satisfactory for Kosovo's context; this is because most of these definitions consider terrorism to be a violent act that has been already undertaken, and not a threat of use

20 If the readers have difficulties in finding or obtaining the database online, they should send an inquiry to obtain the database either to the author of this report or to the KCSS.

21 Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, Revised and Expanded Edition (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2017).

of violence. Of course, some others do include such components, but if we are to leave out the threat of use of violence, and include only violent acts that have already taken place, then there would be very little to talk about threats of terrorism in Kosovo, as not many (if any) acts of violence, especially those involving foreign fighters have taken place inside the country.

KCSS believes that it is sensible to draw from two definitions of terrorism which overlap in most of their definitional attributes, while being exclusive in some other attributes – which we note. We first look at the definition of terrorism provided in Kosovo’s Criminal Code. Article 135 of Criminal Code of the Republic of Kosovo defines terrorism as:

[T]he commission of one or more of [...] criminal offenses with an intent to seriously intimidate a population, to unduly compel a public entity, government or international organization to do or abstain from doing any act, or to seriously destabilize or destroy the fundamental political, constitutional, economic or social structures of the Republic of Kosovo, another State or an international organization [...].²²

The definition provided by Kosovo’s Criminal Code is difficult to operationalize for the purpose of identifying possible threats that deserve to be included in our database, though we utilize it as a starting point. To circumvent the operationalization problem of the above-mentioned definition we register threats that get captured as closely as possible by the definition provided by the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) which defines terrorism as “the threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence by a non-state actor to attain a political, economic, religious, or social goal through fear, coercion, or intimidation.”²³ The GTD’s definition is further specified by clarifying that, to be recorded in the database:

- The incident must be intentional
- The incident must entail some level of violence or immediate threat of violence
- The perpetrators of the incidents must be sub-national actors²⁴

It is therefore these two definitions which the KCSS team used as orientative instruments in identifying the threats that deserve a place in KCSS’s database of threats.

22 Republic of Kosovo Assembly, “Criminal Code of the Republic of Kosovo,” Pub. L. No. 04/L-082, § Article 135, 63 (2012), <http://www.kuvendikosoves.org/?cid=2,191,914> - which also provides the list of acts considered as acts of terrorism.

23 National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), “Global Terrorism Database (GTD) Codebook: Inclusion Criteria and Variables,” 2017, <https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/about/>.

24 For more details on the GTD’s terrorism see: National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START).

Finally, data on threats between February 2008 and June 2017 were collected from a combination of sources. To begin with and for consistency purposes, we have taken threats registered on GTD's database as a starting point, given that GTD is one of the most comprehensive terrorist databases registering world-wide terrorist incidents since 1970s as a collaborative project of a number of universities and organizations.²⁵ While this was a good starting point, we had to modify GTD's database in two respects. We made minor modifications on some of the incidents that GTD has recorded. For instance, GTD recorded the assassination of one of the PDK's candidates for MP, Elvis Pista in Rahovec back in in 2014, as a terrorist incident. We have removed this and other similar events recorded by GTD, since these types of incidents cannot be captured by the above provided definitions, and would generally not serve well our analysis of threat incidents. We also made some major modifications in that we added a lot more incidents to our database, compared to what the GTD has provided in their database for Kosovo. We have identified additional threat incidents by exhausting the following additional sources: all the annual US State Department Country Reports on Terrorism; all the annual Kosovo Police Reports; all the irregularly issued (publicly provided) Kosovo Police magazine "the Protector"; all the annual EUROPOL reports; and the national and international media outlets that may have reported on various incidents. We are aware that there may be one or another threat incident that may have not been included in the database. This may be the case with those threats that have not figured in the above exhausted sources. Despite this, we believe that such oversight is minimal given Kosovo's small size in terms of territory and population, and whatever slight oversight in this regard will not change our overall conclusions and the findings in this report.

25 For more see: National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), "Global Terrorism Database (GTD)," 2017, <https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/about/>.

3. OVERVIEW OF THREAT INCIDENTS

Over the course of almost a decade, between February 2008 to June 2017, KCSS has registered 73 threat incidents, which amount to less than 8 threat incidents a year. These incidents can further be divided into two broader types, namely political and religious threat incidents. Of the 73 threat incidents, close to 62 percent, or 45 of them have been political, around 36 percent, or 26 have been religious, while another two threats remain unknown in terms of their motivation and intent. This means there have been less than 5 political threat incidents a year (on average), and less than 3 religious threat incidents a year (on average) over the course of the period under analysis.

Except for the year 2009 when a total of only 3 incidents were registered, in all other years, political threat incidents represented the larger share of threat incidents compared to the total. Over these years, it becomes clear that since the emergence of Deash in 2014 and the emergence of foreign fighter phenomenon, the religious based threat incidents take up the larger share of threats compared to previous years; yet, despite this, these incidents remain under-represented compared to politically motivated threat incidents. As shown in Figure 1, between 2011 and 2016, political threat incidents go over 50 percent of the total threat incidents recorded for each year. The two threats which cannot be categorized either as political or religious include one incident which occurred in the August 2016 “Beer Festival” in Prishtina, where allegedly a gun was fired, and was wrongly taken to be a terrorist act by the standing crowd. This incident caused around 40 injuries by the ensuing stampede.²⁶

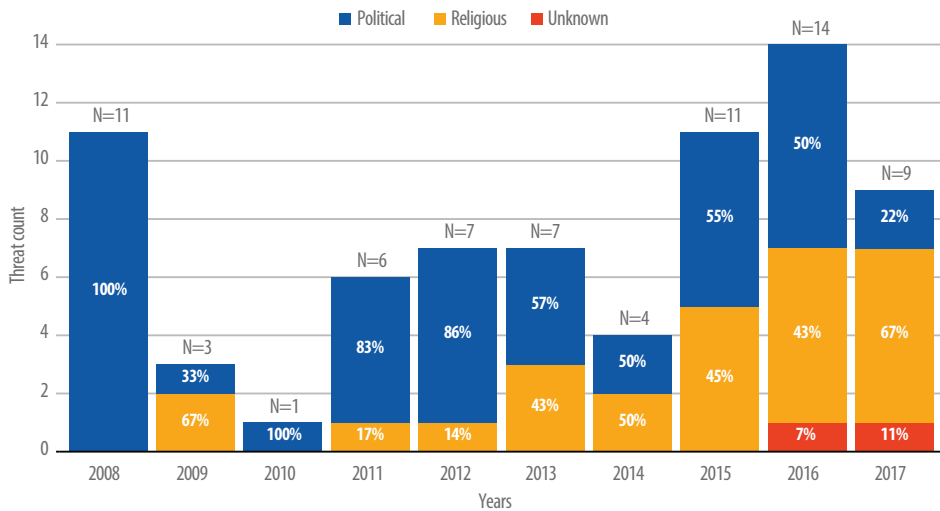
The other incident which we cannot classify, is the one derived from the ambiguous statement issued by the Kosovo Security Council, also mentioned in the introduction of this report. This threat remains vague in that it refers very ambiguously to various state and non-state targets. The Kosovo Security Council statement was issued in April 2017, at a time when multiple events unfolded. During this period, the Montenegrin special prosecutor made public the charges and evidence against those (suspected to have been influenced by Russia) to overthrow the government in Montenegro back in 2016.²⁷ At the same time, the Serbian Police arrested a number of Serb citizens in Serbia from Veliko Gradiste and Zrenjanin, who were suspected of preparing and selling chemical materials (weapons) to jihadists in Syria while allegedly transporting those

26 Kara O'Neill, “Over 40 People Injured in Beer Festival Stampede after Someone Shouts ‘ISIS,’” *Mirror*, August 2, 2016, <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/world-news/terrifying-scenes-40-people-injured-8543905>.

27 Ed Adamczyk, “14 Indicted in Montenegro Coup Attempt Plot,” *UPI*, April 14, 2017, https://www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2017/04/14/14-indicted-in-Montenegro-coup-attempt-plot/6681492172477/.

through Kosovo.²⁸ Also, the Kosovo Police detained an individual in Peja who posted a video on Youtube showing the very same individual singing jihadi supporting songs.²⁹ We do not claim that Kosovo's Security Council public warning was issued as a result of these events, but such multifaceted events are telling of the context in which such a statement was issued.

Figure 1: Kosovo related threat types (2008-2017), N=73



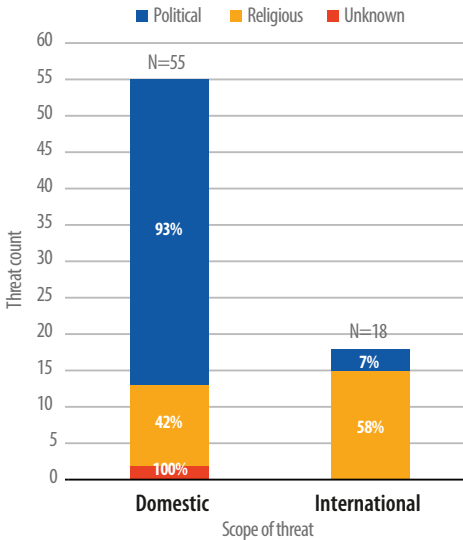
In terms of their scope, the Kosovo related threat incidents remain largely domestic, though some of them also include an international dimension. Of the 73 total threat incident counts, 55 of them, or 75 percent of the total have had a domestic scope, while another 18, or 25 percent have had an international dimension. Here *domestic* refers to threat incidents that occurred inside the territory of Kosovo, while *international* refers to outgoing threat incidents, meaning that the incident originated from an individual related to Kosovo who has threatened an entity outside the territory of Kosovo. The international dimension also refers to incoming threat incidents, meaning that the incident has originated from abroad, threatening subjects inside the territory of Kosovo. An example at hand is the one mentioned earlier where chemical weapons produced in Serbia allegedly were being transported through Kosovo. It is interesting to note that while political threat incidents represent the majority of threats in Kosovo in the past decade, the majority, or 58 percent of Kosovo related religious threat incidents have been international in scope, while 42 percent of them have remained

28 Gazeta Metro, "Serbët Që u Shisnin Armë Kimike Xhihadistëve, Përmes Kosovës," *Gazeta METRO*, April 14, 2017, <http://gazetametro.net/serbet-qe-u-shisnin-arme-kimike-xhihadisteve-permes-kosoves/>.

29 GazetaExpress, "Gjuriq: Serbia Do Të Vazhdojë Projektet Në Kosovë," September 20, 2016, <http://www.gazetaexpress.com/lajme/gjuriq-serbia-do-te-vazhdoje-projektet-ne-kosove-254911/>.

domestic in scope, as shown in Figure 2. Alternatively, the overwhelming majority of political threat incidents, or as many as 93 percent of them have remained domestic in scope. A more in-depth analysis of what such a division entails in terms of credibility of threats, targets involved, and consequences, will be provided in the subsequent sections.

Figure 2: Scope of Kosovo related threat types (2008-2017), N=73



While it is beyond the purposes of this report to elaborate on the reasons or causes behind the inverse relationship between the political and religious types of threat incidents on the one hand and their domestic and international scopes on the other, a few observations are worth drawing here. Most of the religious threat incidents of the international scope in western countries have involved Kosovo related individuals that are not necessarily strongly linked to Kosovo, but who represent the younger generation of migrants who have left Kosovo in their early age with their parents during the 1990s conflicts in the Balkans. One such example is the one involving two brothers, Hysen Sherifi (29 years old at the time of detention)

and Shkumbin Sherifi (23 at the time of detention), who have been sentenced by the federal court of the Eastern District of North Carolina in the US for plotting to behead federal agents and witnesses (this involves Hysen Sherifi – the older brother).³⁰ Hysen Sherifi issued such threats from his prison cell, while he involved his brother (Shkumbin) in the planning of the plot together with other individuals. Both brothers and other family members immigrated to the US during the 1990s at a very young age.³¹ Another similar example includes the case of Arid Uka, who shot two American

30 US Department of Justice, "Convicted Terrorist Sentenced to Life in Prison for Plotting to Kill Witnesses in His Terrorism Trial," May 13, 2013, <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/convicted-terrorist-sentenced-life-prison-plotting-kill-witnesses-his-terrorism-trial>.

31 Daily Mail, "Convicted US Terrorist Plotter Commissioned 'Murder-for-Hire Hit Men to Behead Witnesses for \$5,000 a Head' While in Prison," *Mail Online*, January 26, 2012, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2092141/Hysen-Sherifi-US-terrorist-plotter-commissioned-hit-men-behead-witnesses-prison.html>; For more details on the case see: CI CENTRE, "Domestic Terrorism Case: Hysen Sherifi," *The Centre for Counterintelligence and Security Studies* (blog), accessed October 23, 2017, http://www.cicentre.com/?SHERIFI_Hysen.

soldiers at the Frankfurt Airport back in 2011.³² Arid Uka of a family who had already migrated to Germany some forty years ago was born in 1990.³³ This is another typical example of a Kosovo related, but not Kosovo grown, attacker involved in a threat incident of an international scope. These are some typical, though not the only examples of the Kosovo (weakly) related individuals involved in threats incidents abroad.

The other threat incidents of the international scope involving Kosovo related individuals are the more recent ones involving foreign fighters in non-Western countries. Some of the cases include those in which an individual from Kosovo was involved in a shoot-out in the province of Nigde in Turkey in March 2012, where three people were left dead, among which were a few Turkish soldiers and police officers.³⁴ Another case includes that of Blerim Heta, who in March 2014 killed around 50 people by blowing himself up in Baghdad, Iraq.³⁵ In summary, the majority of Kosovo related religious threat incidents remain international in scope (compared to their domestic scope) and involve young individuals. In the case of individuals involved in threat incidents in Western countries, it seems that they have weaker links to Kosovo - they have either been born outside Kosovo, or have migrated at a very early age. For reference, other examples are all listed in the KCSS database of threats provided as an online annex to this document.

Lastly, in this overview, we consider it to be worthwhile presenting some cross-country analysis from the Global Terrorism Index (GDI), which basis its events on the Global Terrorism Database (GTD). As such, we urge the readers to be cautious on this sort of comparison, as we already indicated that GTD, in the case of Kosovo, needs an update. Another aspect of these indices that makes us call for caution is that they are context insensitive. Nonetheless, for the purposes of this overview, we still consider it valuable to present Kosovo's standing among other (mainly) western countries on the Global Terrorism Index.

32 The Guardian, "Kosovan Albanian Admits Killing Two US Airmen in Frankfurt Terror Attack," *The Guardian*, August 31, 2011, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/aug/31/kosovan-albanian-admits-killing-airmen>.

33 Allan Hall, "'This Is My Favourite Killer Outfit': Face of Kosovan Muslim Who Shot Dead Two U.S. Airmen at Frankfurt Airport," *Mail Online*, March 3, 2011, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1362463/Arid-Uka-Face-Kosovan-Muslim-shot-dead-U-S-airmen-Frankfurt-airport.html>.

34 Besar Likmeta, "Turkey Arrests Albanians After 'Terror' Attack :: Balkan Insight," *Balkan Insight*, March 21, 2014, <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/three-albanians-arrested-in-turkey-terror-attack>.

35 Linda Pressly, "The Boy from Kosovo Who Grew up to Be a Suicide Bomber," *BBC News* (blog), October 8, 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-29524402>.

Table 1: Country ranking based on Global Terrorism Index (GTI) database³⁶

Rank	State	2014	2015	2016	3 year average
1	Turkey	5.980	5.737	6.738	6.152
2	Russia	6.760	6.207	5.430	6.132
3	UK	5.170	5.613	5.080	5.288
4	USA	4.710	4.613	4.877	4.733
5	France	2.670	4.553	5.603	4.275
6	Ireland	3.090	3.663	3.429	3.394
7	Germany	1.020	3.442	4.308	2.923
8	Norway	3.570	2.738	2.077	2.795
9	Italy	2.550	3.364	2.363	2.759
10	Sweden	1.070	3.083	3.984	2.712
11	Kosovo	2.730	3.018	2.205	2.651
12	Spain	1.840	2.622	1.203	1.888
13	Macedonia	1.450	2.252	1.860	1.854
14	Bosnia	0.760	1.516	2.675	1.650
15	Belgium	0.530	1.977	1.245	1.251
16	Albania	0.190	2.116	1.103	1.136
17	Switzerland	1.340	1.342	0.288	0.990
18	Austria	0.240	2.088	0.182	0.837
19	Denmark	0.190	0.090	2.152	0.811
20	Finland	0.000	0.000	2.377	0.792
21	Netherlands	0.580	0.429	0.864	0.624
22	Serbia	0.580	0.410	0.086	0.359

As can be noted in Table 1, the three-year average Global Terrorism Index (2014-2016) ranks Kosovo 11th on the list of 22 countries under analysis. The scores in Table 1 represent a more complex calculation of the combination of the following four factors: (i) total number of terrorist incidents in a given year; (ii) total number of fatalities caused by terrorists in a given year; (iii) total number of injuries caused by terrorists in a given year; and (iv) a measure of the total property damage from terrorist incidents in a given year. We strongly encourage the interested readers to consult the more in-depth description of such indicators on GTI's reports themselves. Based on these indicators, Table 1 shows that Kosovo ranks lower on terrorism index (lower threat) than do European countries such as Norway, Germany, Sweden, Italy, the US, the UK, or other like Turkey, Russia. At the same time, ranks higher (though with lower margins) than other Balkan countries, such as Serbia, Bosnia, Albania, and a few other European countries.

36 Global Terrorism Indices from 2014, 2015, and 2016 reports from: Vision of Humanity, "Terrorism Index," *Vision of Humanity* (blog), accessed October 23, 2017, <http://visionofhumanity.org/indexes/terrorism-index/>.

4. CREDIBILITY OF THREATS

Not all threat incidents in the past decade have had the same status of credibility – in that not all of them were executed, and not all of the unexecuted ones have had the same weight in terms of the degrees of their seriousness had they been executed. The majority of threat incidents, or 44 of the total 73 were executed and the other 29 remained unexecuted. However, political threat incidents have had a much higher rate of execution than the religious threat incidents. Compared to the 78 percent execution rate among all the political threats, only 31 percent of all the religious threats were executed, as shown in Figure 3. To put this in yearly average in relation to the total number of threats, there have been less than 4 executed political threats a year, and less than 1 executed religious threat a year.

Furthermore, not all of the unexecuted threats have had the same characteristic of non-execution. For instance, from the share of 22 percent of unexecuted political threat incidents, 11 percent failed to be executed, only two percent were foiled, while another 9 percent of the unexecuted political threats remained at the level of a warning or decree issued by known or unknown groups or individuals. A failed political threat, for instance, was the one when in September 2008, an armed group of people wearing the insignia of the AKSh (Armata Kombëtare Shqiptare / Albanian National Army) stopped a bus carrying the KEK (Korparata Energjetike e Kosvoës / Kosovo Energy Corporation) employees and asked to check their IDs.³⁷ We register this and other similar incidents as “failed”, because the perpetrators did not inflict any harm or did not take any action that might have led to an outcome for which the threat would have been considered as executed. Those political threats registered with the “warning” status are those that have involved, for instance, AKSh issuing warning statements to the political elite to reject the Brussels Agreement, or their warning threats issued to the Kosovo MPs to not vote for the demarcation agreement with Montenegro.³⁸

Alternatively, from the share of 69 percent of religious threat incidents that remained unexecuted, 4 percent of the total threats failed to be executed, 50 percent of the total were foiled by the authorities, while 15 percent remained at the level of a warning or decree issued by known or unknown groups or individuals. It appears therefore that the security

37 US Department of State, “Country Reports on Terrorism 2008” (Washington, D.C.: United States Department of State, April 2009), <https://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2008/>.

38 MalishevaPress, “AKSH Kërcënon Qeverinë, Urdhëron Mustafën e Thaçin t’i Tërheqin Nënshkrimet Nga Marrëveshja e Brukselit (Dokument),” September 9, 2015, <http://malishevapress.com/aksh-kercenon-qeverine-urdheron-mustafen-e-thacin-ti-terheqin-nenshkrimet-nga-marreveshja-e-brukselit-dokument/>; Lajmi.net, “Deputetët Që Do Të Votojnë pro Demarkacionit Tash i Kërcënon Edhe AKSH-Ja!,” August 26, 2016, <http://lajmi.net/deputetet-qe-do-te-votojne-pro-demarkacionit-tash-i-kercenon-edhe-aksh-ja/>.

authorities in Kosovo were much swifter in foiling religious threats, while failing to do so with regards to political threat incidents. There are numerous such examples which we have registered in our database, but some of the examples include for instance the detainment of seven individuals in Prishtina and Gjilan back in November 2013 who were suspected of planning a terrorist attack in Kosovo.³⁹ The other example is the detainment of five individuals near Badovc Lake, which the authorities claimed were planning another terrorist plot in Kosovo.⁴⁰ There are other similar examples at both domestic and international level, which we are registered in our database as “foiled” by the authorities. Those religious threat incidents which are registered with the status of a “warning” include those, for instance, when in November 2014 the media reported that Daesh’s Ebu Bakr Al-Baghdadi sent a letter to then Prime Minister, Hashim Thaçi, threatening Kosovo with attacks as a revenge against the detention of Muslims in Kosovo.⁴¹ Another religious threat incident, among others, that carries the status of “warning” includes the 20 minute long video where Balkan jihadists, among whom included some Kosovo foreign fighters, that was a warning to the Balkan people, including Kosovo.⁴²

Figure 3: Status of Kosovo related threat types (2008-2017), N=73

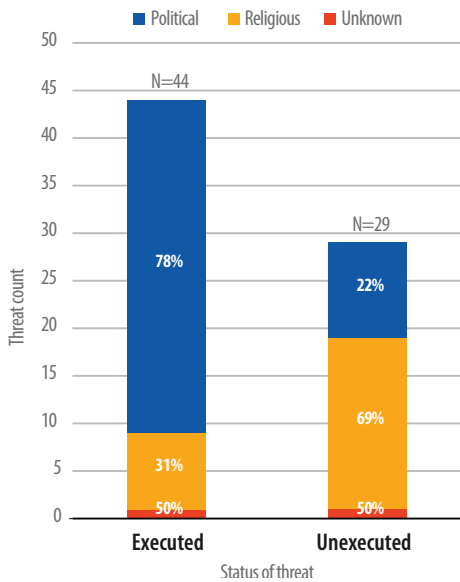
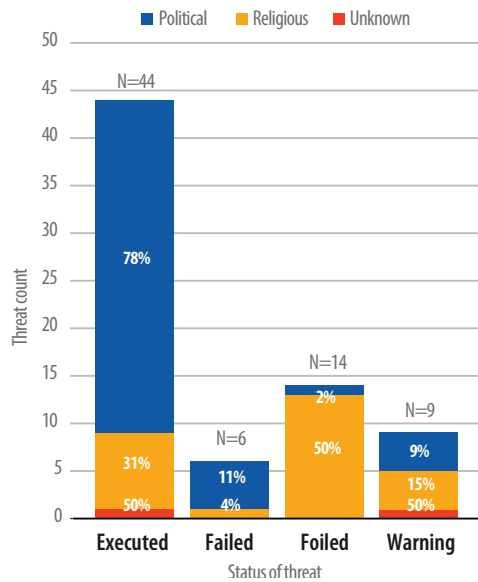


Figure 4: Detailed status of Kosovo related threat types (2008-2017), N=73



39 US Department of State, “Country Reports on Terrorism 2013” (Washington, D.C.: United States Department of State, April 2014), <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2013/index.htm>.
 40 2015 US State Department Country Report on Terrorism
 41 US Department of State, “Country Reports on Terrorism 2015.”
 42 Jihadology.net, “Al-Hayāt Media Center Presents a New Video Message from The Islamic State: ‘Honor Is in Jihād: A Message to the People of the Balkans,’” June 4, 2015, <http://jihadology.net/2015/06/04/al-%e1%b8%a5ayat-media-center-presents-a-new-video-message-from-the-islamic-state-honor-is-in-jihad-a-message-to-the-people-of-the-balkans/>.

When examining the status of (non)execution of threat incidents according to their scope (domestic/international), it is evident that the execution rate of political threat incidents domestically is much higher than the total rate of execution discussed above, and likewise the execution rate of religious threat incidents domestically remains much lower than the total rate of religious threat incidents' execution. The execution rate of the political threat incidents in the domestic scope has been 81 percent, while the execution rate of religious threat incidents domestically has remained at only 18 percent. This trend reverses, when examining these types of threat incidents in their international scope. The execution rate of political threat incidents in the international scope has remained only at 33 percent, while those of religious threat incidents in the international scope has remained at 40 percent, which is much higher than the total execution rate of the total religious threat incidents, or the ones executed domestically. We call for caution when reading our interpretations in percentage points here, especially the threat incidents of international scope, because their total number (N) in general remains very low. For instance, in the past decade the total number of executed international threat incidents of religious types is 6, which means around 1 executed religious threat in every two years

It is also interesting to note from Figure 6 where we present the detailed status and scope of Kosovo related threat types, that the rate of execution of religious threat incidents in the international scope remains much higher than their execution rate in the domestic scope. Seventy-five percent of the executed religious threat incidents are international in scope, while 25 percent are domestic. While at the same time, all but one executed political threat incidents, or 97 percent remained domestic in scope. The one executed political threat of the international scope is the May 2015 insurgency of a group of Kosovars in Kumanovo, Macedonia.⁴³ While the execution rate of religious threat incidents remains higher in the international scope than in the domestic one, it is also evident that the majority, or 62 percent of the foiled religious threats were foiled internationally, while 38 percent were foiled domestically. Some of the political threats of the international dimensions that remained unexecuted and hold the status of "warning" include a couple of incoming international threat of political type issued by Irinej, the Patriarch of the Serb Orthodox Church, who in several instances, like those of November 2015 and in October 2016, called on Kosovo Serbs to use force against Kosovo, should the latter become a member of UNESCO or for other reasons.⁴⁴ Despite the fact that such threats came from a religious authority outside Kosovo, we

43 Fatjona Mejdini, "Macedonia's Kumanovo Shootout Still Raising Suspicions," *Balkan Insight*, May 10, 2016, <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/macedonia-s-kumanovo-shootout-still-raising-suspicions-05-10-2016>.

44 Sasa Dragojlo and Petrit Collaku, "Serbian Patriarch's Kosovo Force Threat 'Endangers Stability,'" *Balkan Insight*, 04 Nov 15, <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/serbian-patriarch-war-call-threatens-region-stabilit-11-04-2015>; BlicOnline, "ONO ŠTO JE SILOM OTETO, SILOM SE I VRAČA' Patrijarh Irinej: Nećemo Dozvoliti Da Kosovo Bude Izgubljeno," October 11, 2016, <http://www.blic.rs/vesti/drustvo/ono-sto-je-silom-oteto-silom-se-i-vraca-patrijarh-irinej-necemo-dozvoliti-da-kosovo/b3nesdf>.

have registered them as a political threat incidents, given that the Serbian Orthodox Church and the Serbian State are mutually and often involved in state policy making.

Figure 5: Status and scope of Kosovo related threat types (2008-2017), N=73

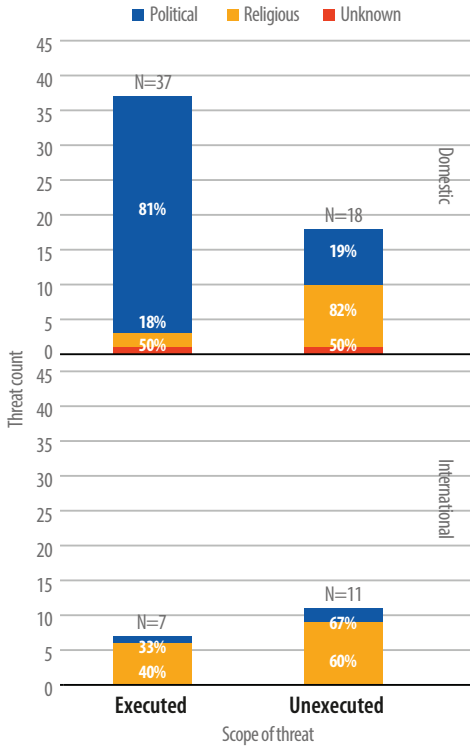
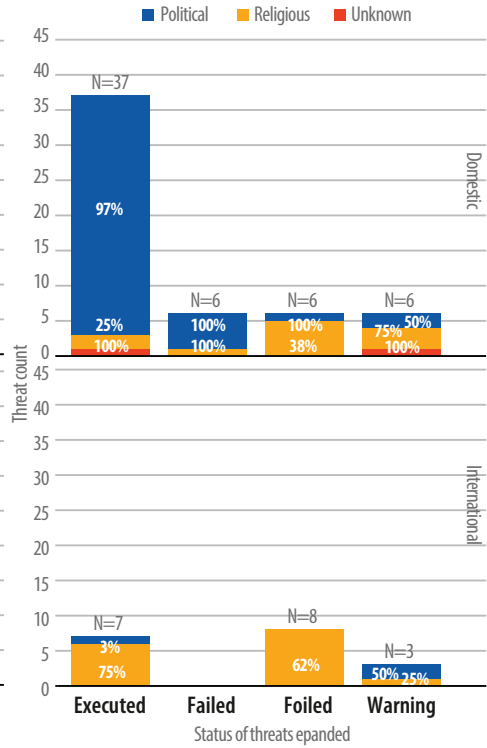
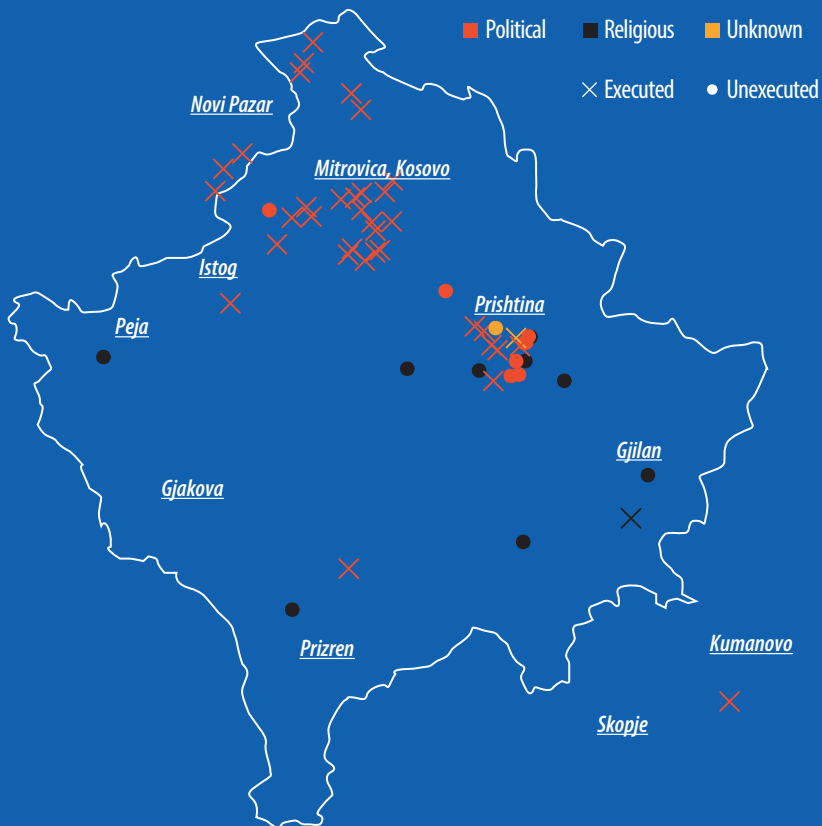


Figure 6: Detailed status and scope of Kosovo related threat types (2008-2017), N=73



Lastly, we present the geographic distribution of threats based on their type (political/religious/unknown) and their status (executed/unexecuted) in the maps below. The majority of political threats that have been executed become clearer when looking at Map 1, which presents the data on Kosovo. Map 1 shows how the majority of political threat incidents (that were mostly executed) have occurred in the northern part of Kosovo, and a few in the capital Prishtina, while the majority of religious threat incidents have remained unexecuted and spread around different parts of Kosovo. The subsequent maps, namely, Map 2, Map 3, and Map 4 show the geographical distribution of such threat incidents around the world. For instance, in Map 4 (South East Asia) there is a single executed religious threat, which is registered as a result of the Kosovo originating computer hacker who hacked into the US administration system and allegedly delivered the material to Daesh back in September 2015. Having mentioned this kind of threat, it also becomes evident that not all threat incidents that have been executed are the same in their kind and consequence, which takes us to the next section of the report where we discuss the consequences of all these threat incidents in terms of their type, status, and scope.

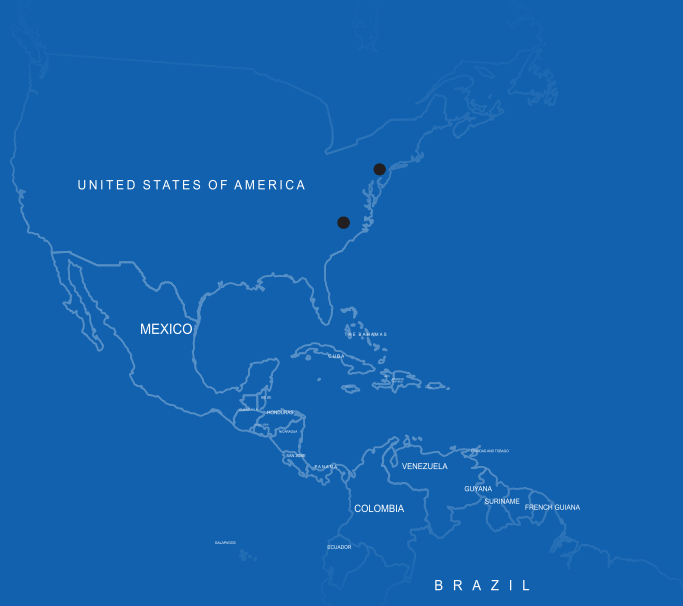
Map 1: Type and status of Kosovo related threats (2008-2017), N=73



Map 2: Europe and Middle East, N=70



Map 3: North America, N=2



Map 4: South East Asia, N=1

■ Political ■ Religious ■ Unknown ✕ Executed ● Unexecuted



5. CONSEQUENCES

Just like we showed in the previous section that not all threats are the same in terms of their credibility, since some of them were executed while many others remained unexecuted, Kosovo related threat incidents also vary in terms of their consequences. Some of them resulted in death, some in injury, while the majority of these threats had no casualties. Of the 73 total registered threats, 52 or 71 percent of them resulted in no casualties, while only 12 threat incidents, or 16 percent resulted in deaths, and 8 of them, or close to 11 percent resulted in injury. This means that on average, there was (a little more than) 1 threat per year that led to death from all the registered threats regardless of the type or scope. In total, therefore, threats in Kosovo have remained very low in their lethality, and the overwhelming majority of them caused no casualties – neither death or injury. This speaks of the nature of Kosovo related threat incidents in the past decade – as mostly and on average being physically not harmful to individuals or other objects when.

When it comes to the consequence according to their types, the majority of the threat incidents that caused death remained political. For instance, as Figure 7 shows, 67 percent of the threats that caused death were political in nature, while the other 33 percent of threats that caused death were religious. Furthermore, no religious type of threat incident caused injury, while 88 percent of injury related threat incidents were political in nature. To put these in average terms, there was less than 1 political threat incident that led to death in a given year, and there was less than 1 religious threat incident that led to death in two years.

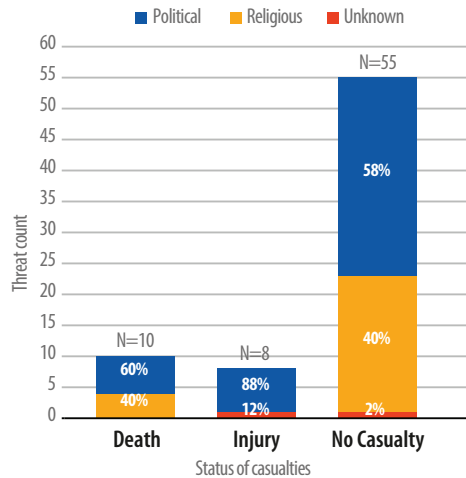
Most of the political threat incidents that resulted in death relate to those in the northern part of Kosovo over the course of past decade. For example, in March 2008 a Ukrainian trooper died as a result of injuries suffered from a hand grenade that was thrown in clashes in that area of Kosovo.⁴⁵ Other examples of such threats that results in death that are recorded in our database, among others, include the killing of a Kosovo Police officer in July 2011;⁴⁶ an ethnic Albanian private citizen that died after a grenade was thrown into his apartment;⁴⁷ or the attack on EULEX that took place in the northern part of Kosovo where a Lithuanian member of the mission saw death as a result.⁴⁸ Simi-

45 Fred Attewill and Ian Traynor, "UN Police Officer Dies after Kosovo Clashes," *The Guardian*, March 18, 2008, sec. World news, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2008/mar/18/kosovo.serbia1>.

46 Freedom House, "Kosovo" (Washington, D.C.: Freedom House, 2012), <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2012/kosovo>.

47 ICG, "Tracking Conflict Worldwide" (International Crisis Group, 2012), <https://www.crisisgroup.org/crisiswatch/print?t=Crisiswatch+April+2012&crisiswatch=553&date=April+2012>.

48 Balkan Insight, "EULEX Policeman Shot Dead in North Kosovo," *Balkan Insight*, September 19, 2013, <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/eulex-attacked-in-north-kosovo>.

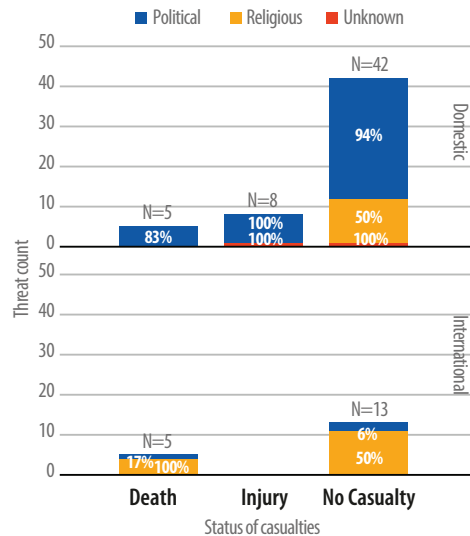
Figure 7: Casualties in Kosovo related threats (2008-2017), N=73

lar other types of threats that resulted in either death, injury, or had no casualties are recorded in the publicly available KCSS database of threat incidents.

We have also examined the distribution of casualties for each threat type based on their scope (domestic/international). As shown in Figure 8, religious threat incidents of the domestic scope have resulted in no death or injury. All, or a total of 4 religious threat incidents that resulted in death were international in scope. These include the more recent ones involving the Syrian conflict where, for example, in March 2014, Blerim Heta blew himself up killing dozens in Baghdad, or the case of March 2012 where an individual from Kosovo was involved in the killing of a few Turkish soldiers in Nigde, Turkey.⁴⁹ On the other hand 88 percent of political threat incidents that resulted in death were domestic in scope. All of the threats that inflicted injury were domestic in scope and political in nature. To summarize, of 73 total registered threats, only in 12 of them there was death involved, of which 8 were political in type (7 domestic and 1 international) while 4 were religious in type (all international).

So far in this section we discussed the number of threats and their type and scope that resulted in death, injury, or no casualties at all. Now we turn to discuss the number of casualties according to threat types and their scope. Threat incidents that inflicted death are mixed. While death inflicting incidents are rare, the chart in Figure 9 shows that in the domestic scope death has been caused only by some political threats and

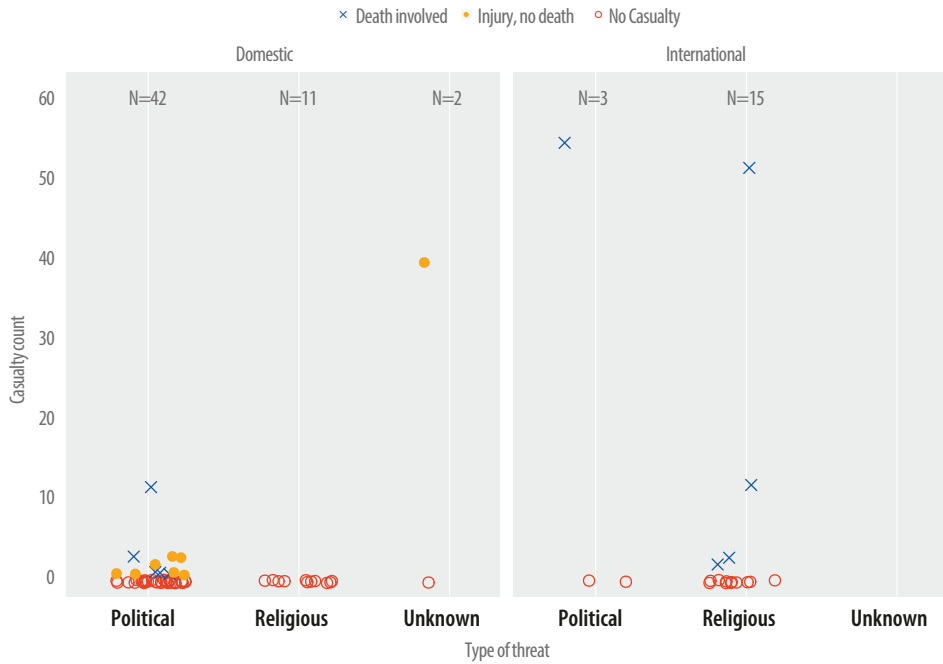
49 Pressly, "The Boy from Kosovo Who Grew up to Be a Suicide Bomber"; Likmeta, "Turkey Arrests Albanians After 'Terror' Attack :: Balkan Insight."

Figure 8: Casualties based on scope in Kosovo related threats (2008-2017), N=73

the number of people who died in those threats remained low – shown in red x-es in Figure 9. When it comes to the international scope, likewise, the number of threats which resulted in death remained low, but caused higher death counts. For instance, the political incident in Macedonia resulted in a death toll of close to 20 people, while a religious threat incident which caused the death of more than 50 people remains that of the suicide bombing undertaken in Bagdad by Blerim Heta who went to fight as a foreign fighter.

Regardless, the average number of casualties per threat remains extremely low. There are two ways at looking at these averages. One way is to look at the average number of casualties against total threats registered in our database. If we do so, then the average number of deaths per threat in the past decade is 1.26, while the average number of injuries per threat in the past decade is 1.40. This means that on average around 1 person died and 1 was injured per each threat throughout the past decade. If we look at these averages per year, then the numbers go around 9 times lower, i.e. close to 0.15 individuals that died or got injured in each year. Table 2 shows more details regarding these averages, including the numbers in terms of type and scope of threats.

Figure 9: Casualties count based on scope in Kosovo related threats (2008-2017)



Another way at looking at the averages is to examine them not against total threats, but only against total casualty inflicting threats. If we do so, then, as Table 3 shows, the average number of deaths per death inflicting threats in the past decade is 9.20, which means around 1 person died per year in a death inflicting threat. Likewise, the average number of injured individuals per injury inflicting threats in the past decade is 6.2, which means that around one person per every two years was injured in the injury inflicting threats. Table 3 shows more details regarding these averages, including the numbers in terms of type and scope of threats.

Table 2: Average number of casualties per total Kosovo related threat over 2008-2017

Average/TOTALS	Political		Religious		Total	
	Death	Injury	Death	Injury	Death	Injury
Domestic	0.12	0.60	0.00	0.00	0.09	1.18
International	6.00	12.33	4.60	0.00	4.83	2.06
Total	0.51	1.38	2.65	0.00	1.26	1.40
Yearly average	0.06	0.15	0.28	0.00	0.14	0.15

Table 3: Average number of casualties per casualty inflicting Kosovo related threat over 2008-2017

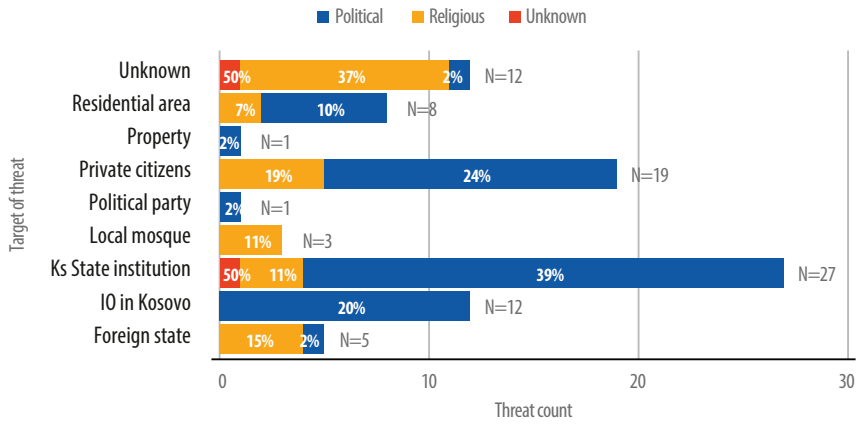
Average/WITHIN	Political		Religious		Total	
	Death	Injury	Death	Injury	Death	Injury
Domestic	1.00	2.78	0.00	0.00	1.00	2.78
International	18.00	37.00	17.25	0.00	17.4	37.00
Total	3.83	6.20	17.25	0.00	9.20	6.20
Yearly average	0.41	0.67	1.85	0.00	0.99	0.67

The section on the consequences of threats would remain unfinished if we did not discuss the targets of each threat, regardless of whether they were executed or not. KCSS database shows that close to 40 percent of political threat incidents had Kosovo state institutions as their target, around a quarter of them had as targets private citizens, 20 percent had as their target International Organizations in Kosovo (i.e. KFOR, EU-LEX), while 10 percent of political threat incidents had residential areas as their target. Most of these relate to the incidents that took place in the northern part of Kosovo, and some others in the capital. As for the targets of religious threat incidents, a good number of them, or around 40 percent remain unknown. Close to 20 percent of religious threat incidents had as their target private citizens, which is 5 percent lower than political threat incidents, while 15 percent of them had as their target a foreign state. The latter relate mostly to the few incidents that happened in Nigde, Turkey, in Baghdad, Iraq, and similar. Furthermore, 11 percent or a total of 3 religious based incidents had as their targets local mosques. One of those includes in the incident of January 2016, where an explosive was found in a local mosque in Drenas, but was not executed.⁵⁰ Another includes the incident of August 2016, when a local Serb citizen who had camouflaged himself as an imam entered a mosque in one of Gjilan's villages, and vandalized it, and the other involves a more recent incident in which another local Serb attacked a mosque in Novobërdë, where the mosque was vandalized in its inside.⁵¹ We advise the readers to consult Figure 10, and for more details they should consult the KCSS database.

50 Klan Kosova, "Ekskluzive: Gjendet Eksploziv Te Xhamia Në Drenas," January 29, 2016, <http://klankosova.tv/ekskluzive-gjendet-eksploziv-te-xhamia-ne-drenas/>.

51 T. Selimi, "Synon Ta Shkatërronë Minaren e Xhamisë Në Velekincë, Veç Pse Kishte Shqiponjën Në Të," *Bota Sot*, August 14, 2016, <http://www.botasot.info/gjilani-kosova/565952/synon-ta-shkaterroje-minaren-e-xhamise-ne-velekince-vec-pse-kishte-shqiponjen-ne-te/>; *GazetaExpress*, "Serbi Demolon, Shkollën, Xhaminë Dhe Ambulancën Në Novobërdë (Foto)," *GazetaExpress*, April 15, 2017, <http://www.gazetaexpress.com/lajme/serbi-demolon-shkollen-xhamine-dhe-ambulancen-ne-novoberde-foto-o-357340/?archive=1>.

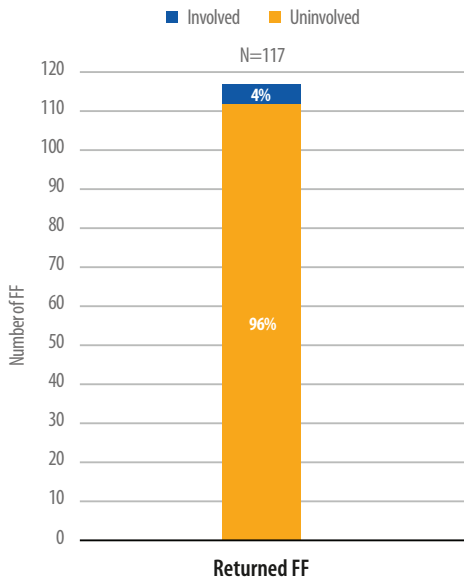
Figure 10: Threat targets in Kosovo related threats (2008-2017), N=88



6. FOREIGN FIGHTER RELATED THREATS

The emergence of foreign fighter phenomenon has justifiably raised many concerns regarding the potential threat that each of the returned or potential returnee may pose to various targets in Kosovo, be the state institutions or its private citizens, or residential areas. Our database shows, nevertheless, that very few foreign fighters have been involved in any of the registered threats, while none of these threats in which they were involved were executed. Of the total 117 returned foreign fighters, only 5 of them have been involved in possible threats, while the overwhelming majority, or 96 percent of the returned fighters do not figure as participants in any of the threats registered by KCSS, as shown in figure 11.

Figure 11: FF count involved in threats in Kosovo (2008-2017), N=117



There could be many interpretations of such a low number of the returned foreign fighter involvement in threats. Two, nonetheless, are worth considering. One sensible interpretation of their low involvement in threats could be that the Kosovo security authorities have acted swiftly in detaining the overwhelming majority of the returned, when they first began detaining several dozens of suspects since the summer of 2014, and as a result kept them on watch. While this could be a plausible interpretation, and perhaps may hold true in some respects, it nonetheless fails to explain why many of the returnees who have been free well until the summer of 2014 did not take any threatening action against any target. Before the major raids took place, there

were only two alleged returnees that have been arrested with some others under the suspicion of planning a terrorist plot.⁵² The recent major threat that was foiled by Kosovo and Albanian authorities where 19 individuals were arrested under the suspicion of planning a simultaneous attack in Albania and Kosovo during the Albania-Israel football match, only one resulted to have been in Syria before.⁵³ The other sensible

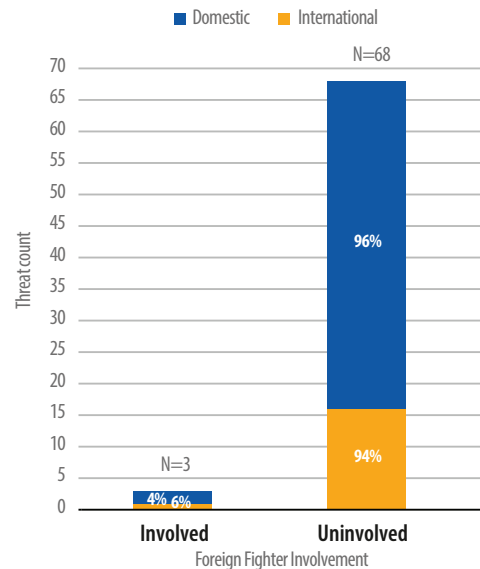
⁵² US Department of State, "Country Reports on Terrorism 2013."

⁵³ Fatjona Mejдини, "Albania Police Take No Chances With Israel Match," *Balkan Insight*, November 11, 2016, <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/albania-unprecedented-security-measures-over-football-match-with-israel-11-11-2016>.

interpretation could be the fact that many of the returnees, especially many of those that travelled to and returned from Syria prior to 2014, may simply not pose traditional terror threats, like others who travelled there after Deash was established in mid-2014. This is because, as KCSS indicated in its April 2015 report, many of these early “travelers” and returnees have regretted the fact for having gone there and returned disillusioned by the reality there.⁵⁴ Otherwise, at least we should have seen many more involved in religious threat incidents prior to their detention in and after the summer 2014 raids.

In addition to the number of the returned foreign fighter, we also have look at the number of threats in which they were involved, and out of 71 counts of threats, the returned foreign fighters have been involved in only 3 of them, or in total around 4 percent of them. As indicated already before in this text, none of these threats were executed, because all three were foiled. Also, none of the three threats they were involved in have been the same in their credibility. The two threats incidents that occurred domestically in which returned foreign fighters were involved include those that security authorities and the media claimed that they were plotting some terrorist attack – therefore this is difficult to judge at this point. One of the cases is the Badovc Lake case, where among the 5 arrested individuals 2 appear to have been in Syria before, and the other is the 2013 case in which 7 individuals were arrested in Prishtina and Gjilan, and likewise, 2 resulted to have been involved in Syria. The more serious threat in which a single returned foreign fighter partook, was the case of the planned simultaneous attack on Kosovo and Albania during the Albania-Israel football match in November 2016 – yet of the 19 arrested in the case 18 were never in Syria. Therefore, these sort of threats, and the others in which no returned foreign fighter was involved speak of threats that are posed by individuals who have never been to Syria. It would be therefore safe to summarize this part by stating that the returned foreign fighter link with threats in Kosovo remains very weak; though we abstain from making any predictive statement for the future with the currently available information.

Figure 11: FF count involved in threats in Kosovo (2008-2017), N=117



54 Shpend Kursani, “Report Inquiring into the Causes and Consequences of Kosovo Citizens’ Involvement as Foreign Fighters in Syria and Iraq,” Policy Report, Occasional Paper (Prishtina, Kosovo: Kosovar Center for Security Studies, April 2015), http://www.qkss.org/repository/docs/Report_inquiring_into_the_causes_and_consequences_of_Kosovo_citizens_involvement_as_foreign_fighters_in_Syria_and_Iraq_307708.pdf.

7. CONCLUSION

Following an approach that could best suit an analysis of risks in Kosovo's context, KCSS developed a database of threats covering the period of almost a decade long, namely between February 2008 to June 2017. It is evident that the emergence of the Syrian conflict and the foreign fighter phenomenon, the religious threat incidents have increased slightly compared to previous years. Yet, the findings of this assessment suggest that political threat incidents continue to take the larger share of the pie of all threats in Kosovo. Furthermore, during this very period, the political threat incidents have had a much higher execution rate than the religious threat incidents, which remained quite low in their ability to be executed. This is partly because the religious threat incidents were foiled, and partly because their credibility remained questionable as some of them stayed in the status of "warning".

When it comes to the consequences of each of these threats, our database and analysis shows that in threats where death was involved, 70 percent were political in nature, while the other share, while around 30 percent were religious in nature. In total however, the number of threats in which there was death involved remains very marginal, or 12 out of 73 threat incident counts. We have also looked at the number of casualties involved in the 73 threat counts in our database. Statistically speaking, the number of casualties, both in terms of deaths or injuries, remains insignificant. When examining the average number of casualties against the total number of threats, it becomes evident that there were 1 death for every seven years, and likewise 1 injured in every seven years. When examining the average number of casualties against the number of casualty inflicting threats, it still becomes evident that the number of casualties remains very low – around 1 death per year, and around 1 injured per year. There was no death or injury registered domestically from religious threat incidents; they were more evident in the international dimension, though the numbers continued to remain marginal.

The link between returned foreign fighters and threats in Kosovo remains very weak. Of around 117 returned foreign fighters, 5 were involved in threats which were never executed. While the total number of threats in which these five individuals were involved is 3 out of 73. KCSS, nonetheless, abstains from making any predictive claims with regards to future possible involvements, as there is very little information, for example, with regards to the detained and sentenced returned foreign fighters, their relationship with such decisions, their behavior inside the prisons, and the possible effects that these may have had on them about the state, its institutions, and society in general.

Lastly, a common concern that is raised in Kosovo context is the impact that the religious threat incidents (as low as they may be compared to other threats) may have on the social order and general values that the state and (presumably) the majority of its society want to maintain. According to the analysis of this report, we consider these concerns to be substantially exaggerated, and we base this on two grounds. First, none of the religious threat incidents registered in the past decade have had either the capacity or the ability to overturn the social order. In other words, such threats have been insignificant in their ability to do so. The biggest challenge to Kosovo's social (and Constitutional) order came mainly from political threat incidents, as many of these threats had clear targets (state institutions), and aims (disagreements with the social and Constitutional order). Second, when it comes to threat to values, we consider that the term "threat to values" is often manipulatively used, because discussing "threat to values" requires the assumption that values are frozen in time and space – which is a fundamentally misleading assumption from sociological aspect. The notion of values and traditions is a fluid one, that changes over time and space. Any discussion that attempts to homogenize such notions opens the door to manipulation in the discussion and debate about threats themselves.

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