

Ageing in the Balkans – Does Migration matters?

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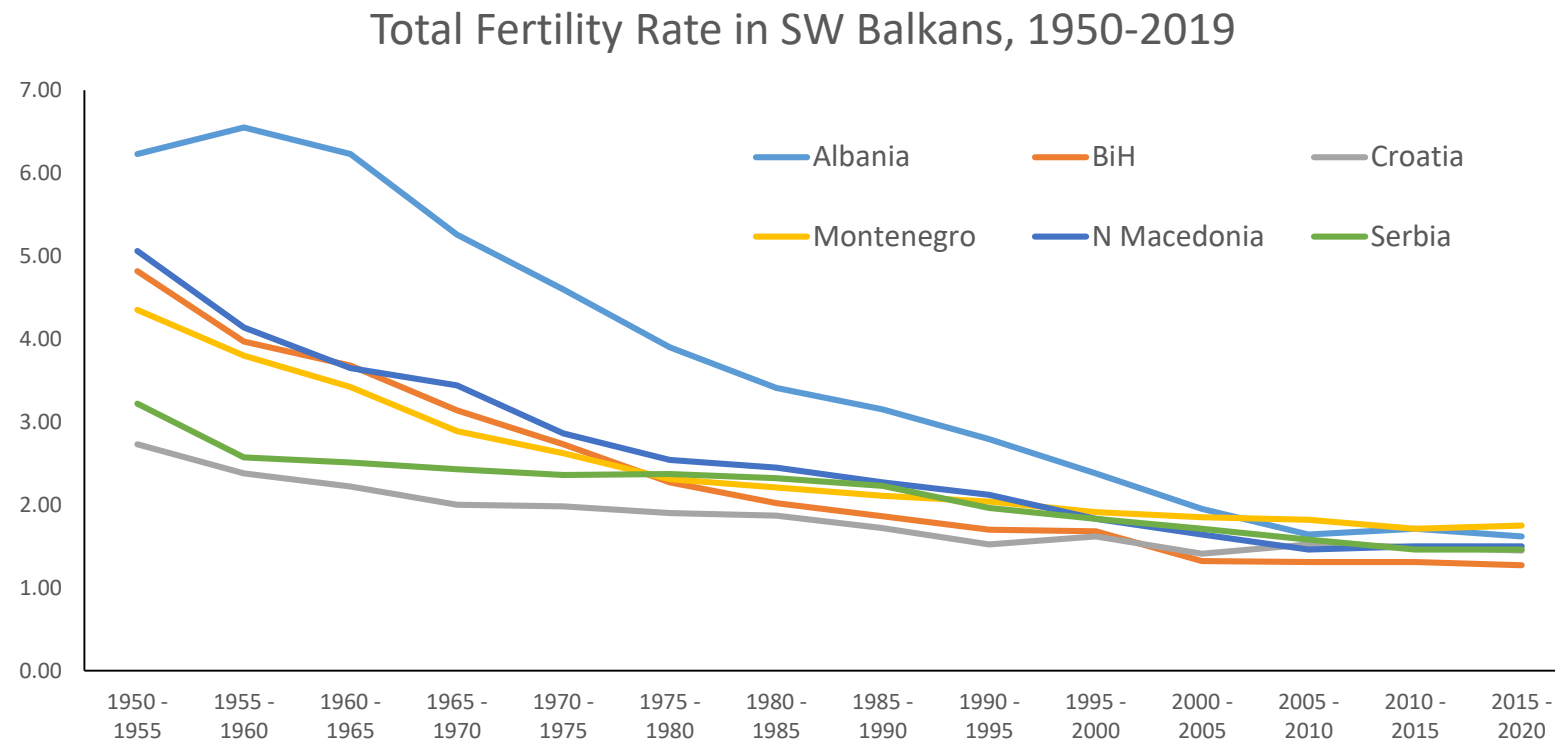
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What is the demographic “picture” in the South Western Balkans?



Source: UN Population Prospects, 2019

What is the demographic “picture” in the South Western Balkans?

Low levels of fertility – lowest low levels

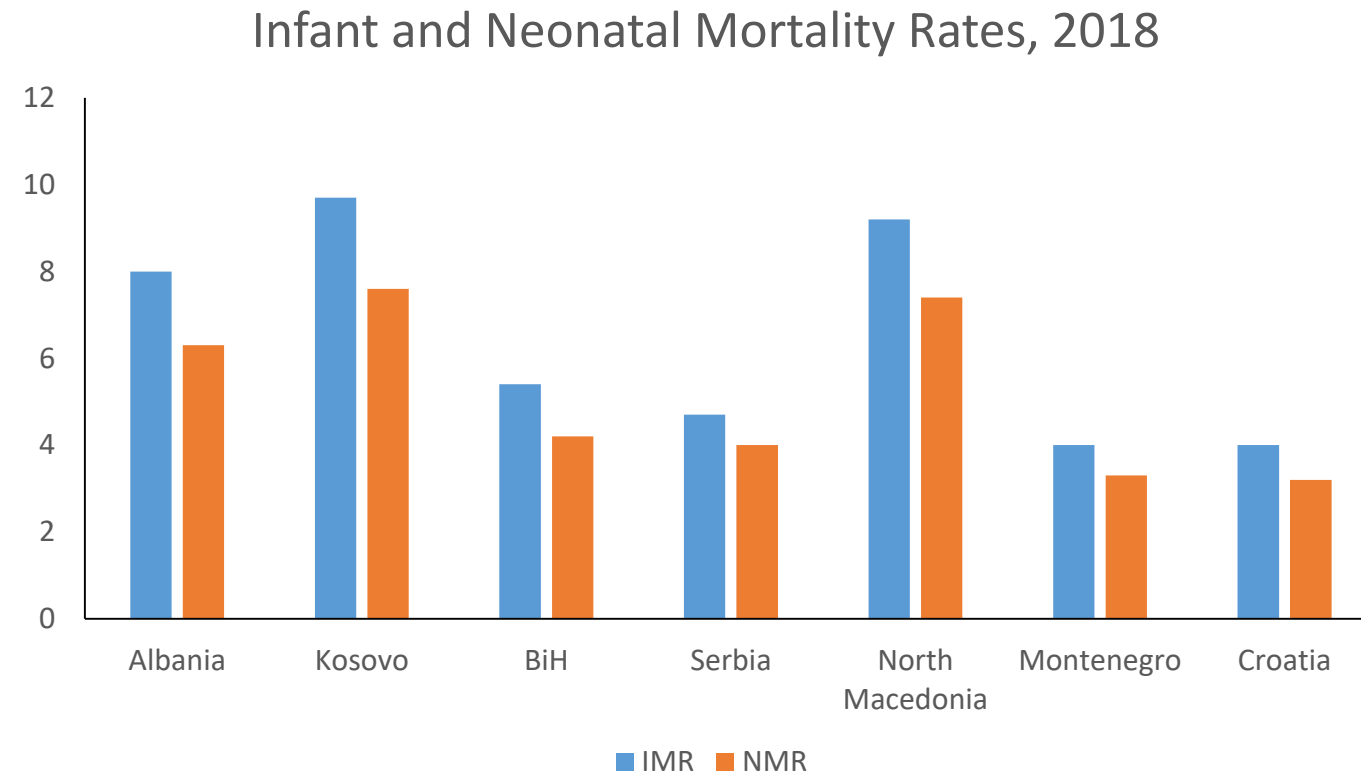
- TFR is between 1.3 and 1.8 children per woman in most SW Balkans
- How were these levels achieved?
 - Continuous declining trend (since before collapse of communism) - Serbia, Croatia, Montenegro, BiH)
 - Rapid declining trend (Albania and Kosovo)

What is the demographic “picture” in the South Western Balkans?

High levels of life expectancy at birth (Long Lives)

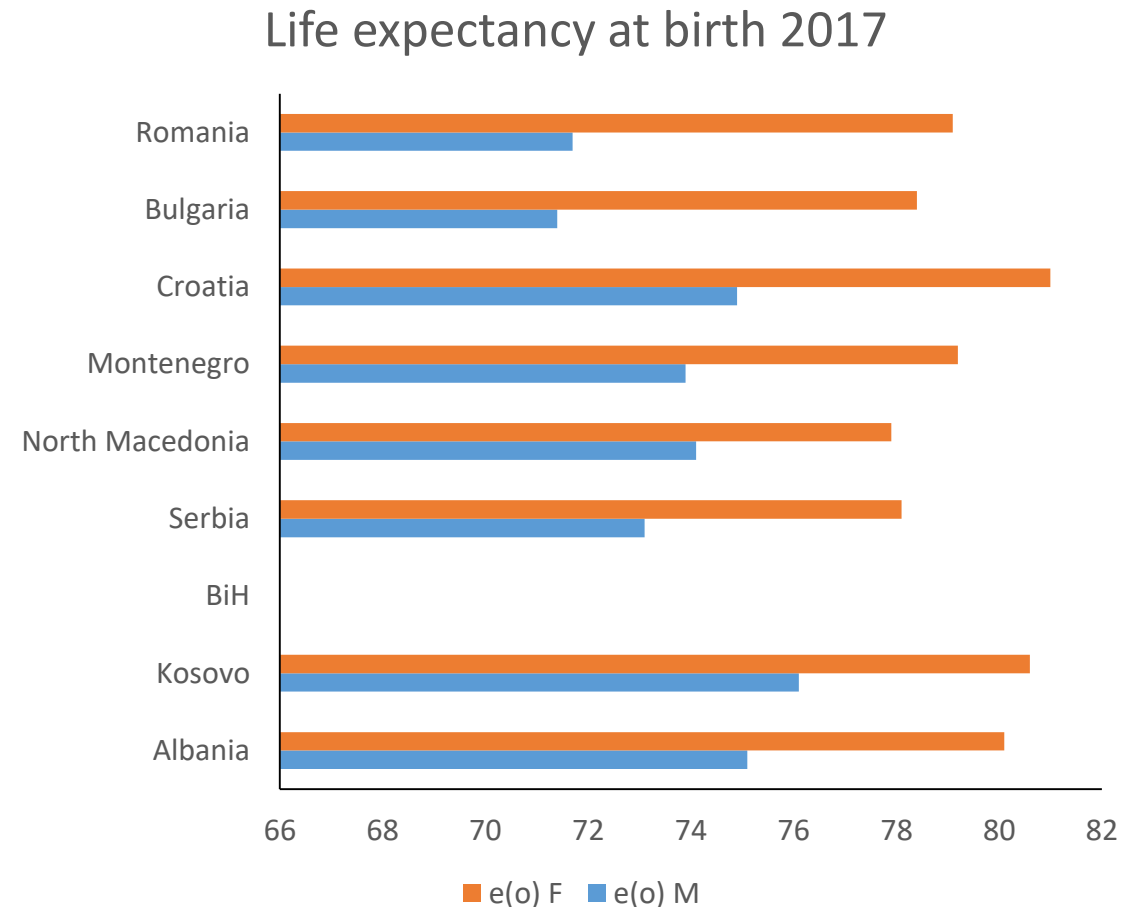
- $E(o)$ (M) between 71 – 76 years; $e(o)$ (F) between 75 – 81 years
- IMR in all countries less than 10 per 1000 live births;
- Neonatal Mortality rate continuous to be relatively high.
- So, in terms of survival not much difference from either west of east Europe.
- Some of the Balkans are different from Eastern Europe as they did not go through the so-called “adult mortality crises of Eastern Europe” (e.g. Albania and most former Yugoslav republics). Linked to Mediterranean diet and life style.

What is the demographic “picture” in the South Western Balkans?



Source: Eurostat 2019

What is the demographic “picture” in the South Western Balkans?



Source: Eurostat 2019

What is the demographic “picture” in the
South Western Balkans?

DEMOGRAPHIC REGIME:
LONG LIVES AND VERY LOW FERTILITY

What is the demographic “picture” in the South Western Balkans?

What is happening to migration?

- It has to be said that there are various trends/patterns across the Balkans – and it is difficult to generalise
- Data is a major issue. We only have estimates from between census populations and some of these countries either have no census or only one.
- But the overall trend is negative net migration during the transition period (1990 to present)

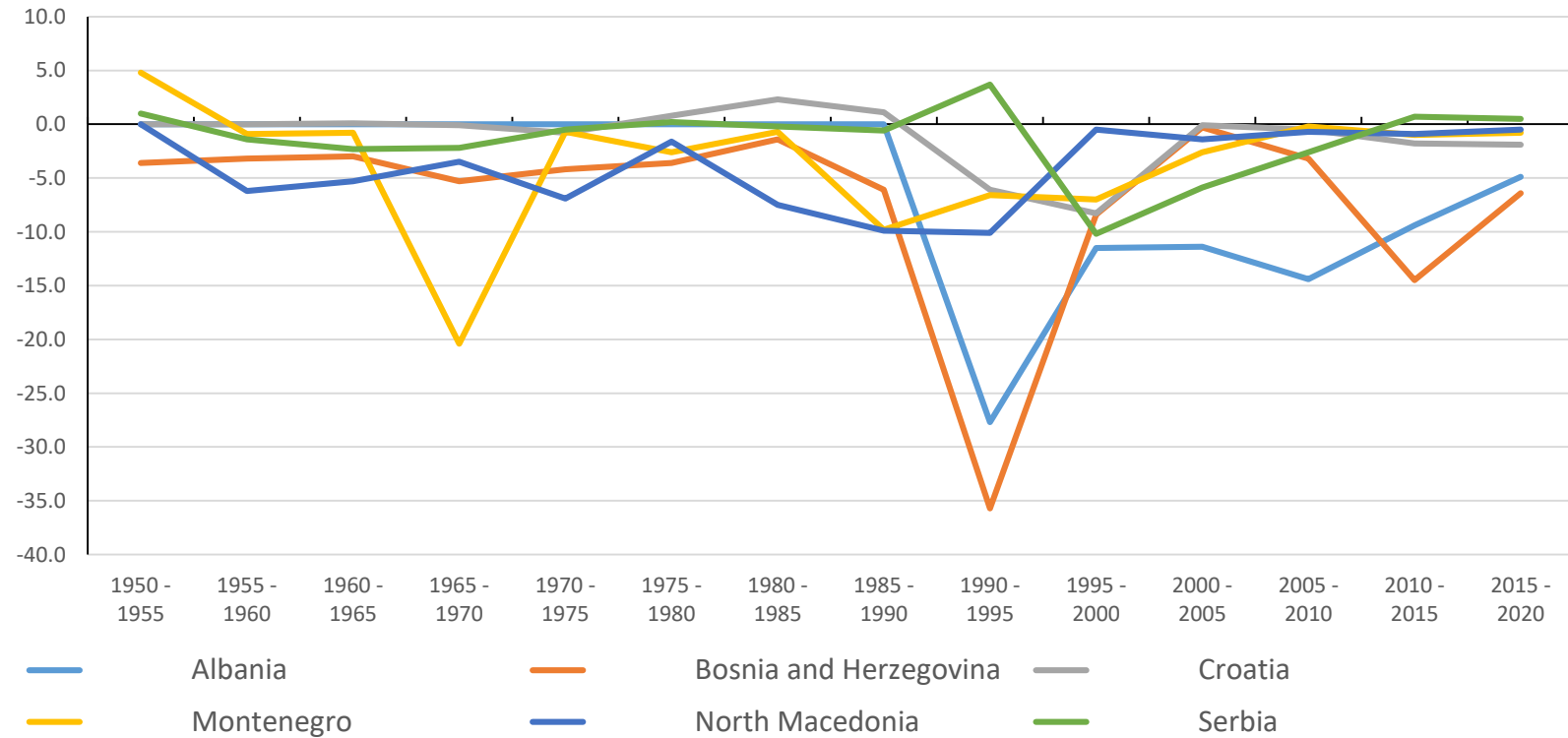
What is the demographic “picture” in the South Western Balkans?

What is happening to migration?

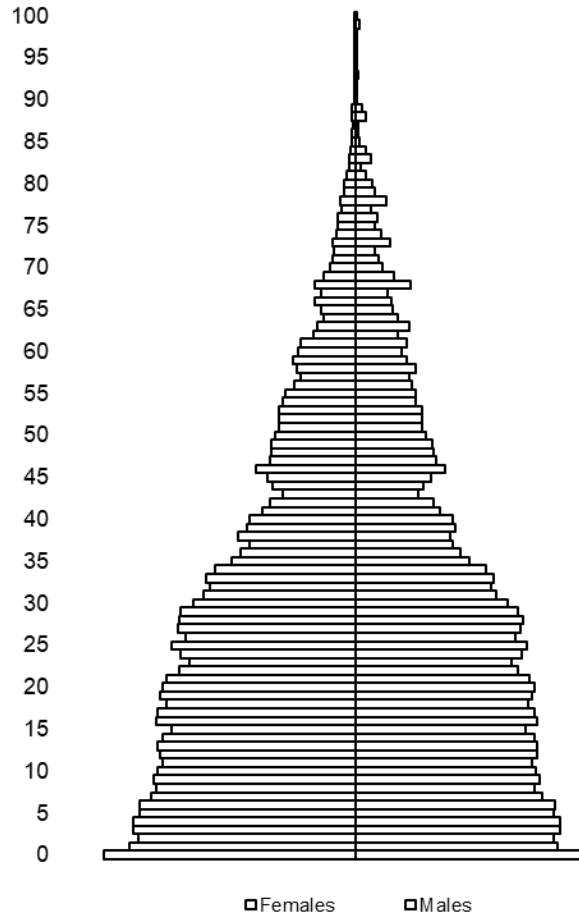
- e.g. Albania and BiH with net migration rates in different periods of up to -25. That is large by any standard.
- In some countries it is by far the dominant demographic process (e.g. in Albania where 1/3 of the population has emigrated, in BiH and in Kosovo similar trends but data unreliable)
- Migration has a double effect on population structure: a. reducing the tax paying population and b. reducing the level of childbearing.

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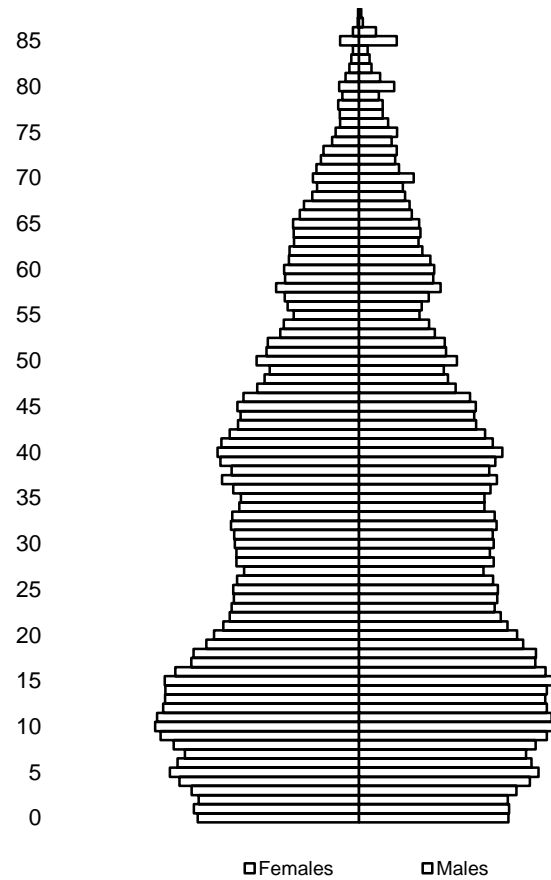
Net Migration Rate in SW Balkans, 1950-2019



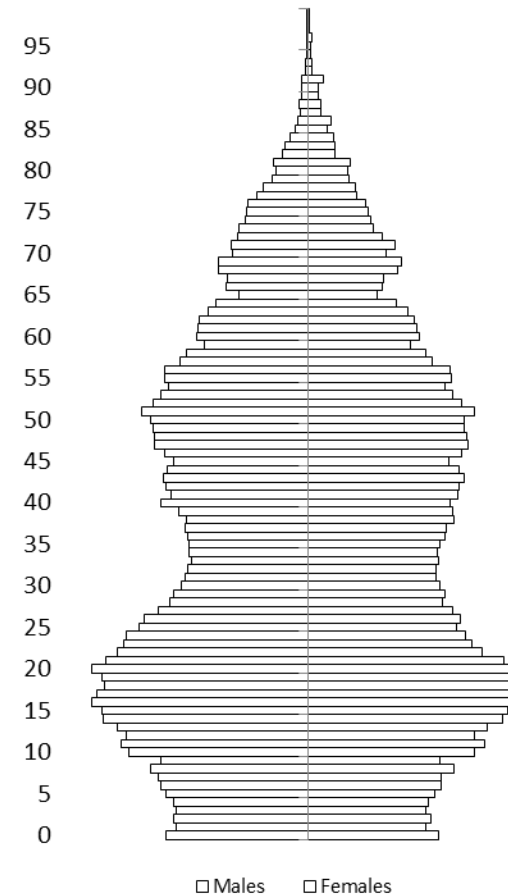
Emigration effect in Albanian population structure?



1989



2001



2011

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DEMOGRAPHIC REGIME:

LONG LIVES

VERY LOW FERTILITY

VERY HIGH EMIGRATION

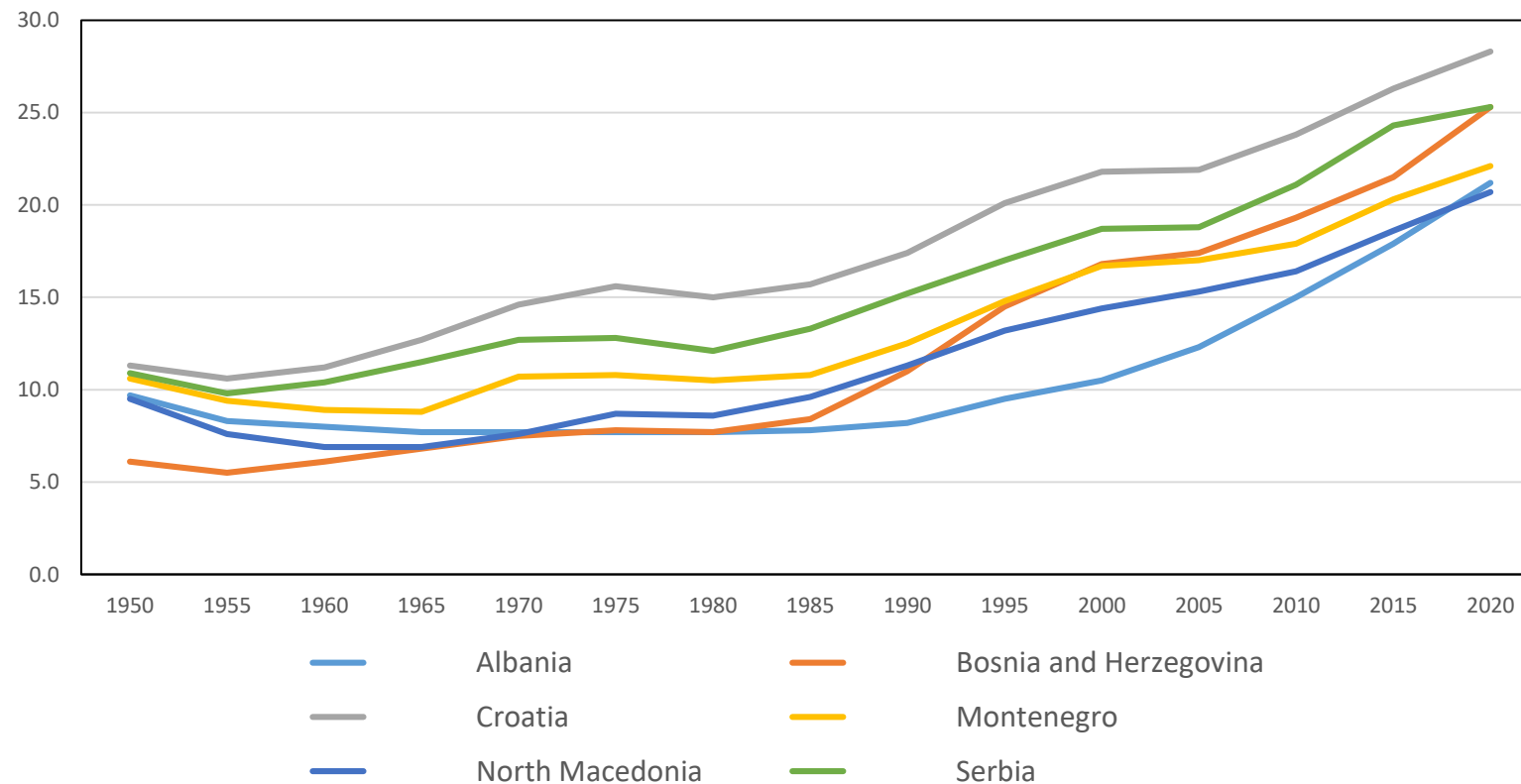
What is the demographic “picture” in the South Western Balkans?

What is the consequence of this “new demographic regime”? – Population Ageing

- By 2019 the population over 60+ has reached 20% (Albania 22%, Croatia about 27%, Serbia and BiH about 25%)
- The process has been very fast. The fast pace of increase starts in the mid-1980s, but it really accelerates in the 1990s.
- Time it took these countries for the population over 60+ to go from 10 to 20% is about 30 years in high migration populations (BiH, Albania and North Macedonia). It took some western European countries double that time.
- In 20 years-time by 2040 most projections predict that most of these countries 60+ population will reach 30%, and in some cases about 35% (e.g. Croatia and Serbia).
- But under different economic scenario – Middle Income Countries

What is the demographic “picture” in the South Western Balkans?

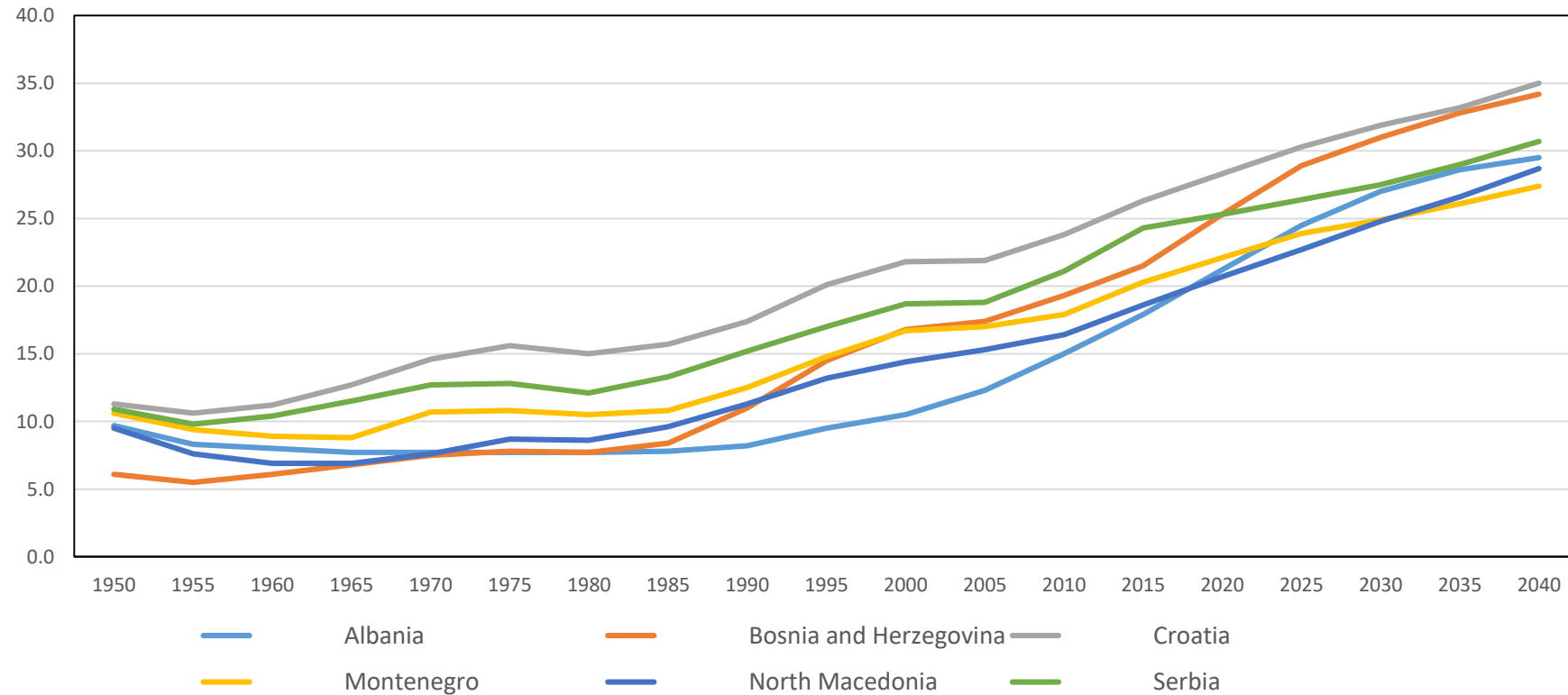
Percentage of population over 60+



Source: UN Population Prospects 2019

What is the demographic “picture” in the South Western Balkans?

Percentage of Population 60+ in %



Source: UN Population Prospects 2019

What is the demographic “picture” in the South Western Balkans?

Is migration responsible or partially responsible for this ageing?

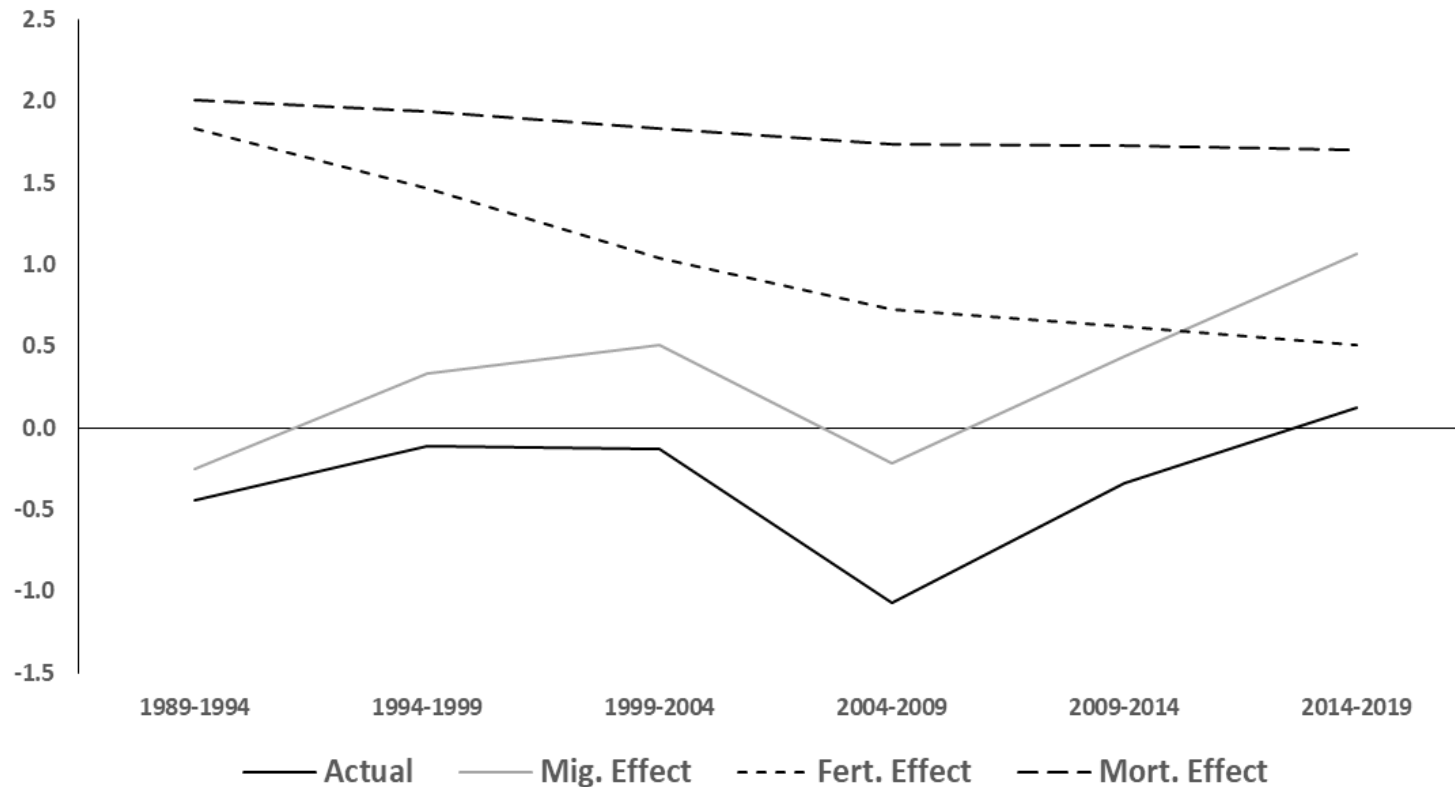
Case of Albania (because data permit us) and emigration the highest in the region:

What we did is that we take as base year population for projection 1989 (census year), and projection population of 2019, today's population, under different scenarios:

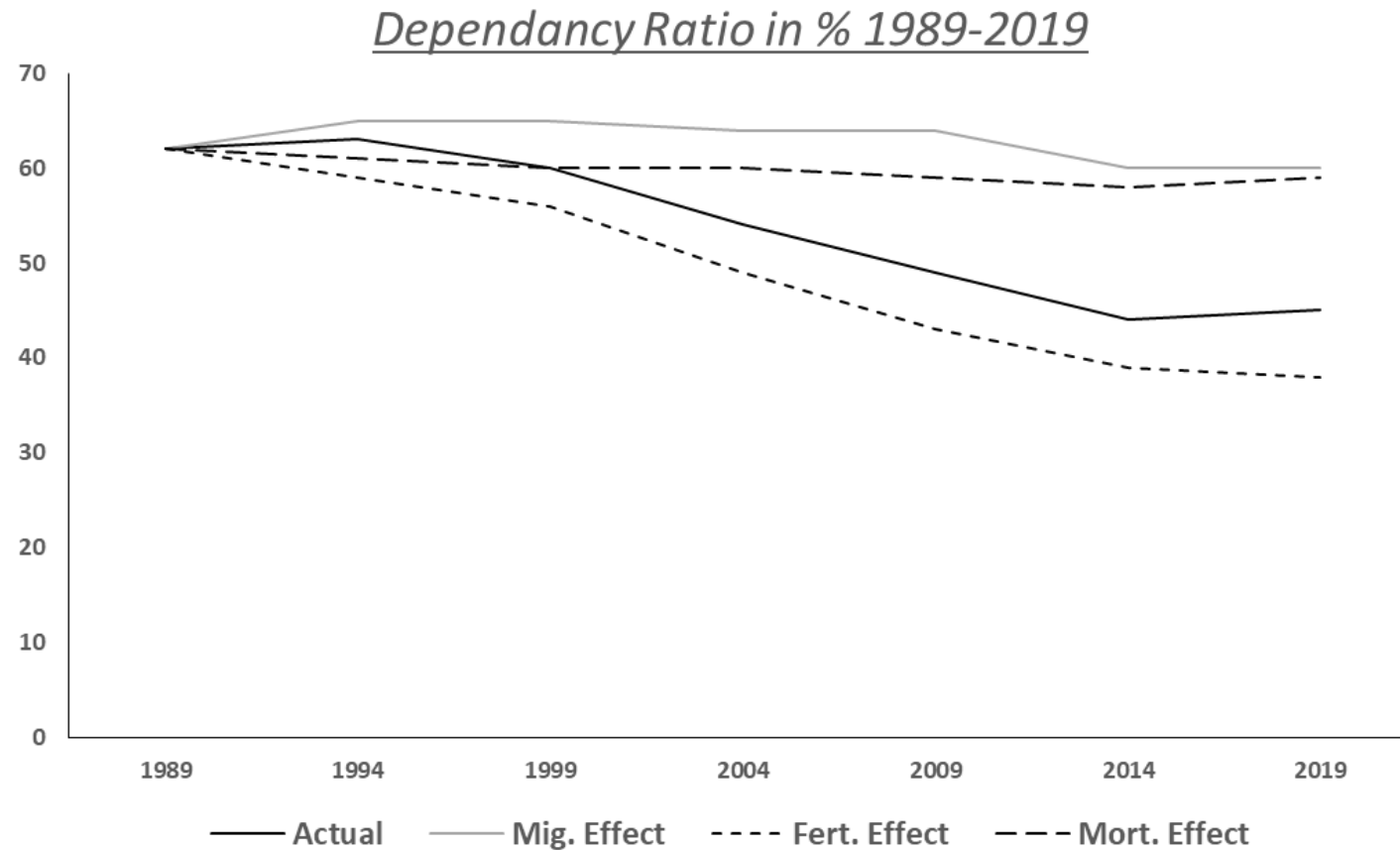
1. Migration effect real, fertility and mortality constant with the rate of base year;
2. Fertility effect real, the others constant
3. Mortality effect real, the others constant
4. The actual population of Albania in 2019

Is Migration responsible or partially responsible for Population Ageing?

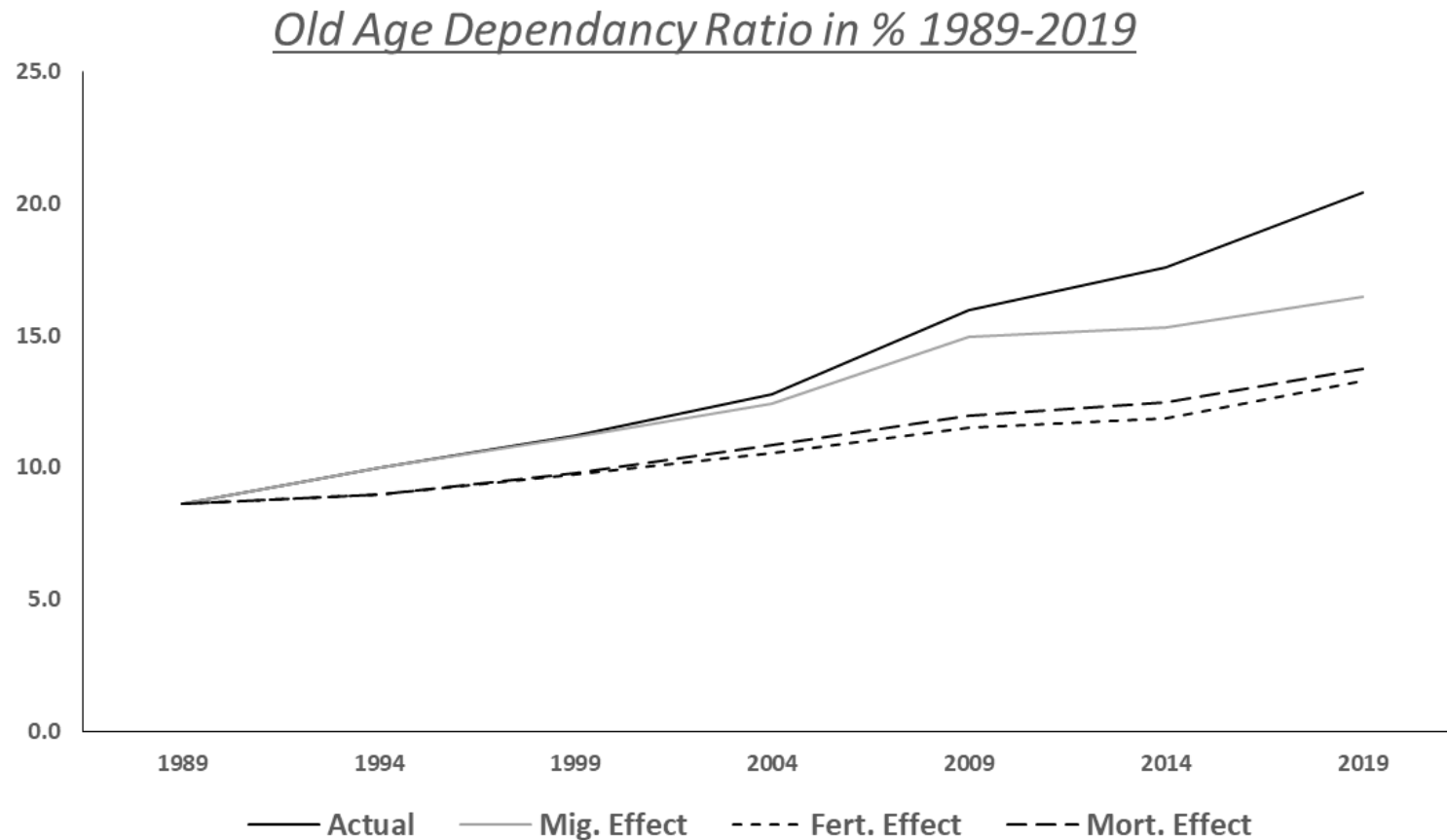
Annual Growth Rate 1989-2019



Is Migration responsible or partially responsible for Population Ageing?



Is Migration responsible or partially responsible for Population Ageing?



Is Migration responsible or partially responsible for Population Ageing?

- Albanian population has aged faster than expected in a short period of 30 years
- Mortality effect minimal
- Migration and fertility most important
- Migration has affected the speed of ageing

What should be the Future Policy focus - UNFPA?

Should we worry?

- a. Not necessarily – Ageing is a natural consequence of demographic transition, although it has come faster in the region compared to the rest of Europe.
- b. If the Right Policies, societies can benefit from it
 - We live longer but we also live healthier
 - The time of entering employment has increased with more children staying in education, thus late retirement will not change much the long life time in employment for the new generations.
 - In retirement, elderly continue to be productive and do contribute to society in formal and informal sectors.

What should be the Future Policy focus - UNFPA?

Should we worry?

But, only if the Right Policies are in place for:

i. Health care

ii. Social care:

- traditional family support is breaking down due to low levels of fertility).
- Thus who is going to support elderly populations when institutionalisation is not “socially acceptable in this part of Europe?

What should be the Future Policy focus -
UNFPA?

***NOT JUST FOCUS ON YOUNG PEOPLE
BUT ALSO THE ELDERLY***