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A rich land where poverty is the norm

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Seeing the endless Plane of Kosova myself, I was not surprised the Serbs have been so reluctant to let Kosova slip from their tight grip.

Nowhere else in the Balkans is the land as fertile as in Kosova. But Kosova is not only a granary of biblical proportions.

The province itself is also incredibly rich in several mineral resources like coal and gold.

And yet the people of Kosova have been and are still poor. Life is especially difficult for old people and those who have no family members in the west to help them out.

This unlucky lot are expected to get by with only E60 (£40) a month they receive in the form of state benefits. Of course there are families who are entitled to less.

Salaries in Kosova are incredibly low, which makes the introduction of the Euro a cruel joke. The Euro makes Kosova an African appendix of the European Union.

The average salary in Kosova is E70 (£50), but there are people who earn only E30 (£18) per month.

The situation is a bit more different for the white-collar workers. At the University of Prishtina, a deputy-dean told me that a lecturer earns normally E170 (£135) per month.