



## Europe :: Kosovo

### Introduction :: KOSOVO

#### Background:

The central Balkans were part of the Roman and Byzantine Empires before ethnic Serbs migrated to the territories of modern Kosovo in the 7th century. During the medieval period, Kosovo became the center of a Serbian Empire and saw the construction of many important Serb religious sites, including many architecturally significant Serbian Orthodox monasteries. The defeat of Serbian forces at the Battle of Kosovo in 1389 led to five centuries of Ottoman rule during which large numbers of Turks and Albanians moved to Kosovo. By the end of the 19th century, Albanians replaced the Serbs as the dominant ethnic group in Kosovo. Serbia reacquired control over Kosovo from the Ottoman Empire during the First Balkan War of 1912. After World War II, Kosovo became an autonomous province of Serbia in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (S.F.R.Y.) with status almost equivalent to that of a republic under the 1974 S.F.R.Y. constitution. Despite legislative concessions, Albanian nationalism increased in the 1980s, which led to riots and calls for Kosovo's independence. At the same time, Serb nationalist leaders, such as Slobodan MILOSEVIC, exploited Kosovo Serb claims of maltreatment to secure votes from supporters, many of whom viewed Kosovo as their cultural heartland. Under MILOSEVIC's leadership, Serbia instituted a new constitution in 1989 that revoked Kosovo's status as an autonomous province of Serbia. Kosovo's Albanian leaders responded in 1991 by organizing a referendum that declared Kosovo independent. Under MILOSEVIC, Serbia carried out repressive measures against the Kosovar Albanians in the early 1990s as the unofficial Kosovo government, led by Ibrahim RUGOVA, used passive resistance in an attempt to try to gain international assistance and recognition of an independent Kosovo. Albanians dissatisfied with RUGOVA's passive strategy in the 1990s created the Kosovo Liberation Army and launched an insurgency. Starting in 1998, Serbian military, police, and paramilitary forces under MILOSEVIC conducted a brutal counterinsurgency campaign that resulted in massacres and massive expulsions of ethnic Albanians. Approximately 800,000 Albanians were forced from their homes in Kosovo during this time. International attempts to mediate the conflict failed, and MILOSEVIC's rejection of a proposed settlement led to a three-month NATO military operation against Serbia beginning in March 1999 that forced Serbia to agree to withdraw its military and police forces from Kosovo. UN Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999) placed Kosovo under a transitional administration, the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), pending a determination of Kosovo's future status. A UN-led process began in late 2005 to determine Kosovo's final status. The negotiations ran in stages between 2006 and 2007, but ended without agreement between Belgrade and Pristina. On 17 February 2008, the Kosovo Assembly declared Kosovo independent. Since then, over 100 countries have recognized Kosovo, and it has joined the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and is in the process of signing a framework agreement with the European Investment Bank (EIB). In October 2008, Serbia sought an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on the legality under international law of Kosovo's declaration of independence. The ICJ released the advisory opinion in July 2010 affirming that Kosovo's declaration of independence did not violate general principles of international law, UN Security Council Resolution 1244, or the Constitutive Framework. The opinion was closely tailored to Kosovo's unique history and circumstances. Serbia continues to reject Kosovo's independence, but the two countries are currently engaged in an EU-facilitated dialogue aimed at normalizing the countries' relations.

### Geography :: KOSOVO

#### Location:

Southeast Europe, between Serbia and Macedonia

#### Geographic coordinates:

42 35 N, 21 00 E

#### Map references:

Europe

#### Area:

**total:** 10,887 sq km  
**country comparison to the world:** 169  
**land:** 10,887 sq km  
**water:** 0 sq km

**Area - comparative:**  
slightly larger than Delaware

**Land boundaries:**  
**total:** 702 km  
**border countries:** Albania 112 km, Macedonia 159 km, Montenegro 79 km, Serbia 352 km

**Coastline:**  
0 km (landlocked)

**Maritime claims:**  
none (landlocked)

**Climate:**  
influenced by continental air masses resulting in relatively cold winters with heavy snowfall and hot, dry summers and autumns; Mediterranean and alpine influences create regional variation; maximum rainfall between October and December

**Terrain:**  
flat fluvial basin with an elevation of 400-700 m above sea level surrounded by several high mountain ranges with elevations of 2,000 to 2,500 m

**Elevation extremes:**  
**lowest point:** Drini i Bardhe/Beli Drim 297 m (located on the border with Albania)  
**highest point:** Gjeravica/Deravica 2,656 m

**Natural resources:**  
nickel, lead, zinc, magnesium, lignite, kaolin, chrome, bauxite

People and Society :: **Kosovo**

**Nationality:**  
**noun:** Kosovar (Albanian), Kosovac (Serbian)  
**adjective:** Kosovar (Albanian), Kosovski (Serbian)  
***note:*** Kosovan, a neutral term, is sometimes also used as a noun or adjective

**Ethnic groups:**  
Albanians 92%, other (Serb, Bosniak, Gorani, Roma, Turk, Ashkali, Egyptian) 8% (2008)

**Languages:**  
Albanian (official), Serbian (official), Bosnian, Turkish, Roma

**Religions:**  
Muslim, Serbian Orthodox, Roman Catholic

**Population:**  
1,847,708 (July 2013 est.)  
**country comparison to the world:** 151

**Age structure:**  
**0-14 years:** 26.7% (male 256,261/female 236,865)  
**15-24 years:** 18.5% (male 179,935/female 161,938)  
**25-54 years:** 41% (male 399,714/female 358,406)  
**55-64 years:** 6.9% (male 62,667/female 65,346)  
**65 years and over:** 6.9% (male 53,174/female 73,402) (2013 est.)

**Median age:**  
**total:** 27.4 years  
**male:** 27 years  
**female:** 27.8 years (2013 est.)

**Sex ratio:**  
**at birth:** 1.08 male(s)/female  
**0-14 years:** 1.08 male(s)/female  
**15-24 years:** 1.11 male(s)/female  
**25-54 years:** 1.12 male(s)/female  
**55-64 years:** 0.94 male(s)/female  
**65 years and over:** 0.73 male(s)/female  
**total population:** 1.06 male(s)/female (2013 est.)

**Education expenditures:**

4.3% of GDP (2008)

**country comparison to the world:** 99

**Literacy:**

**definition:** age 15 and over can read and write

**total population:** 91.9%

**male:** 96.6%

**female:** 87.5% (2007 Census)

**Unemployment, youth ages 15-24:**

**total:** 73%

**country comparison to the world:** 1

**male:** 68.5%

**female:** 81.7% (2009)

Government :: **Kosovo**

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**Country name:**

**conventional long form:** Republic of Kosovo

**conventional short form:** Kosovo

**local long form:** Republika e Kosoves (Republika Kosovo)

**local short form:** Kosova (Kosovo)

**Government type:**

republic

**Capital:**

**name:** Pristina (Prishtine, Prishtina)

**geographic coordinates:** 42 40 N, 21 10 E

**time difference:** UTC+1 (6 hours ahead of Washington, DC during Standard Time)

**daylight saving time:** +1hr, begins last Sunday in March; ends last Sunday in October

**Administrative divisions:**

37 municipalities (komunat, singular - komuna (Albanian); opstine, singular - opstina (Serbian)); Decan (Decani), Dragash (Dragas), Ferizaj (Urosevac), Fushe Kosove (Kosovo Polje), Gjakove (Dakovica), Gjilan (Gnjilane), Glogovac (Glogovac), Gracanice (Gracanica), Hani i Elezit (Deneral Jankovic), Istog (Istok), Junik, Kacanik, Kamenice/Dardana (Kamenica), Kline (Klina), Klllokot (Klokot), Leposaviq (Leposavic), Lipjan (Lipljan), Malisheve (Malisevo), Mamushe (Mamusa), Mitrovica (Mitrovica), Novoberde (Novo Brdo), Obiliq (Obilic), Partesh (Partes), Peje (Pec), Podujeve (Podujevo), Prishtine (Pristina), Prizren, Rahovec (Orahovac), Ranillug (Ranilug), Shterpce (Strpce), Shtime (Stimlje), Skenderaj (Srbica), Suhareke (Suva Reka), Viti (Vitina), Vushtrri (Vucitrn), Zubin Potok, Zvecan

**Independence:**

17 February 2008 (from Serbia)

**National holiday:**

Independence Day, 17 February (2008)

**Constitution:**

adopted by the Kosovo Assembly 9 April 2008; effective 15 June 2008

**Legal system:**

evolving legal system; mixture of applicable Kosovo law, UNMIK laws and regulations, and applicable laws of the Former Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia that were in effect in Kosovo as of 22 March 1989

**International law organization participation:**

has not submitted an ICJ jurisdiction declaration; non-party state to the ICCt

**Suffrage:**

18 years of age; universal

**Executive branch:**

**chief of state:** President Atifete JAHJAGA (since 7 April 2011);

**head of government:** Prime Minister Hashim THACI (since 9 January 2008)

**cabinet:** ministers; elected by the Kosovo Assembly

(For more information visit the **World Leaders website** [↗](#))

**elections:** the president is elected for a five-year term by the Kosovo Assembly; election last held on 7 April 2011; note - the prime minister elected by the Kosovo Assembly

**election results:** Atifete JAHJAGA elected in one round (Atifete JAHJAGA 80, Suzana NOVOBERDALIU 10); Hashim THACI reelected prime minister by the Assembly

**Legislative branch:**

unicameral national Assembly (120 seats; 100 seats directly elected, 10 seats guaranteed for ethnic Serbs, 10 seats guaranteed for other ethnic minorities; members to serve four-year terms)

**elections:** last held on 12 December 2010 with runoff elections in a few municipalities in January 2011 (next expected to be held in 2015)

**election results:** percent of vote by party - PDK 32.1%, LDK 24.7%, VV 12.7%, AAK 11.0%, KKR 7.3%, SLS 2.1%, KDTP 1.2%, and others 8.9; seats by party - PDK 34, LDK 27, VV 14, AAK 12, KKR 8, SLS 8, JSL 4, KDTP 3, VAKAT 2, PDAK 1, NDS 1, BSDAK 1, IRDK, 1, PAI 1, SDSKIM 1, GIG 1, PREBK 1

#### **Judicial branch:**

**highest court(s):** Supreme Court (consists of the court president and at least 15 percent of judges to reflect Kosovo's territorial ethnic composition); Constitutional Court (consists of the court president, vice president, and 7 judges)

note - Kosovo initiated a new judicial system in January 2013

**judge selection and term of office:** Supreme Court judges nominated by the Kosovo Judicial Council, an independent body staffed by judges and lay members, and also responsible for overall administration of Kosovo's judicial system; judges appointed by the president of the Republic of Kosovo; judges appointed until mandatory retirement age; Constitutional Court members nominated by the Kosovo Assembly and appointed by the president of the republic to serve single, 9-year terms

**subordinate courts:** Court of Appeals (organized into 4 departments: General, Serious Crime, Commercial Matters), and Administrative Matters; Basic Court (located in 9 municipalities, each with several branches)

#### **Political parties and leaders:**

Albanian Christian Democratic Party of Kosovo or PNDSH [Uke BERISHA]

Alliance for a New Kosovo or AKR [Behgjet PACOLLI]

Alliance for the Future of Kosovo or AAK [Ramush HARADINAJ]

Alliance of Independent Social Democrats of Kosovo and Metohija or SDSKIM [Ljubisa ZIVIC]

Ashkali Party for Integration or PAI

Bosniak Party of Democratic Action of Kosovo or BSDAK

Vakat Coalition or VAKAT [Sadik IDRIZI]

Citizens' Initiative of Gora or GIG [Murselj HALJILJI]

Coalition for New Kosovo or KKR (includes AKR, Justice Party, Social Democratic Party, Pensionists and Disabled Party, Pensionists of Kosovo, PNDSH, and the Green Party of Kosovo)

Democratic Action Party or SDA [Numan BALIC]

Democratic League of Dardania or LDD [Nexhat DACI]

Democratic League of Kosovo or LDK [Isa MUSTAFA]

Democratic Party of Ashkali of Kosovo or PDAK [Berat QERIMI]

Democratic Party of Kosovo or PDK [Hashim THACI]

Independent Liberal Party or SLS [Slobadan PETROVIC]

Kosovo Democratic Turkish Party or KDTP [Mahir YAGCILAR]

Movement for Self-Determination (Vetevendosje) or VV [Albin KURTI]

Movement for Unification or LB [Avni KLINAKU]

New Democratic Initiative of Kosovo or IRDK [Xhevdet NEZIRAJ]

New Democratic Party or NDS [Predrag JOVIC]

Serb People's Party or SNS [Mihailo SCEPANOVIC]

Serbian Democratic Party of Kosovo and Metohija or SDSKiM [Sasa DJOKIC]

Serbian Kosovo and Metohija Party or SKMS [Dragisa MIRIC]

Serbian National Council of Northern Kosovo and Metohija or SNV [Milan IVANOVIC]

Social Democratic Party of Kosovo or PSDK

Socialist Party of Kosovo or PSK [Ilaz KADOLLI]

United Roma Party of Kosovo or PREBK [Haxhi Zylfi MERXHA]

United Serb List or JSL

#### **Political pressure groups and leaders:**

Council for the Defense of Human Rights and Freedom (human rights)

Organization for Democracy, Anti-Corruption and Dignity Rise! [Avni ZOGIANI]

Serb National Council (SNV)

The Speak Up Movement [Ramadan ILAZI]

#### **International organization participation:**

IBRD, IDA, IFC, IMF, ITUC (NGOs), MIGA

#### **Diplomatic representation in the US:**

**chief of mission:** Ambassador Akan ISMAILI

**chancery:** 1101 30th Street NW, Suites 330/340, Washington, DC 20007

**telephone:** 202-380-3581

**FAX:** 202-380-3628

**consulate(s) general:** New York

#### Diplomatic representation from the US:

**chief of mission:** Ambassador Tracey Ann JACOBSON  
**embassy:** Arberia/Dragodan, Nazim Hikmet 30, Pristina, Kosovo  
**mailing address:** use embassy street address  
**telephone:** [381] 38 59 59 3000  
**FAX:** [381] 38 549 890

#### Flag description:

centered on a dark blue field is the geographical shape of Kosovo in a gold color surmounted by six white, five-pointed stars arrayed in a slight arc; each star represents one of the major ethnic groups of Kosovo: Albanians, Serbs, Turks, Gorani, Roma, and Bosniaks

#### National anthem:

**name:** "Europe"

► [PLAY ANTHEM](#)

**lyrics/music:** none/Mendi MENGJIQI

**note:** adopted 2008; Kosovo chose to not include lyrics in its anthem so as not to offend minority ethnic groups in the country

#### Economy :: Kosovo

##### Economy - overview:

Over the past few years Kosovo's economy has shown significant progress in transitioning to a market-based system and maintaining macroeconomic stability, but it is still highly dependent on the international community and the diaspora for financial and technical assistance. Remittances from the diaspora - located mainly in Germany, Switzerland, and the Nordic countries - are estimated to account for about 14% of GDP, and donor-financed activities and aid for approximately 10%. Kosovo's citizens are the poorest in Europe with an average annual per capita income (PPP) of \$7,400. Unemployment, around 45%, is a significant problem that encourages outward migration and a significant informal, unreported economy. Most of Kosovo's population lives in rural towns outside of the capital, Pristina. Inefficient, near-subsistence farming is common - the result of small plots, limited mechanization, and lack of technical expertise. With international assistance, Kosovo has been able to privatize a majority of its state-owned-enterprises. Minerals and metals - including lignite, lead, zinc, nickel, chrome, aluminum, magnesium, and a wide variety of construction materials - once formed the backbone of industry, but output has declined because of ageing equipment and insufficient investment. A limited and unreliable electricity supply due to technical and financial problems is a major impediment to economic development, but Kosovo has received technical assistance to help improve accounting and controls and, in 2012, privatized its distribution network. The US Government is cooperating with the Ministry for Energy and Mines and the World Bank to prepare commercial tenders for the construction of a new power plant, rehabilitation of an old plant, and the development of a coal mine that could supply both. In July 2008, Kosovo received pledges of \$1.9 billion from 37 countries in support of its reform priorities, but the global financial crisis has limited this assistance and also negatively affected remittance inflows. In June 2009, Kosovo joined the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, and Kosovo began servicing its share of the former Yugoslavia's debt. In order to help integrate Kosovo into regional economic structures, UNMIK signed (on behalf of Kosovo) its accession to the Central Europe Free Trade Area (CEFTA) in 2006. Serbia and Bosnia previously had refused to recognize Kosovo's customs stamp or extend reduced tariff privileges for Kosovo products under CEFTA, but both countries resumed trade with Kosovo in 2011. The official currency of Kosovo is the euro, but the Serbian dinar is also used illegally in Serb enclaves. Kosovo's tie to the euro has helped keep core inflation low. Kosovo maintained a budget surplus until 2011, when government expenditures climbed sharply.

##### GDP (purchasing power parity):

\$13.59 billion (2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 143

\$13.3 billion (2011 est.)

\$12.68 billion (2010 est.)

**note:** data are in 2012 US dollars

##### GDP (official exchange rate):

\$6.247 billion (2012 est.)

##### GDP - real growth rate:

2.1% (2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 131

5% (2011 est.)

3.9% (2010 est.)

##### GDP - per capita (PPP):

\$0 (2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 229

\$0 (2011 est.)

\$0 (2010 est.)

**note:** data are in 2012 US dollars

##### GDP - composition, by end use:

**household consumption:** 93.3%  
**government consumption:** 16.5%  
**investment in fixed capital:** 31.2%  
**investment in inventories:** 0%  
**exports of goods and services:** 20.1%  
**imports of goods and services:** -61.1%  
(2011 est.)

#### **GDP - composition, by sector of origin:**

**agriculture:** 12.9%  
**industry:** 22.6%  
**services:** 64.5% (2009 est.)

#### **Agriculture - products:**

wheat, corn, berries, potatoes, peppers, fruit; dairy, livestock; fish

#### **Industries:**

mineral mining, construction materials, base metals, leather, machinery, appliances, foodstuffs and beverages, textiles

#### **Labor force:**

800,000

**country comparison to the world:** 148

*note:* includes those estimated to be employed in the grey economy (2011 est.)

#### **Labor force - by occupation:**

**agriculture:** 23.6%  
**industry:** NA%  
**services:** NA% (2010)

#### **Unemployment rate:**

45.3% (2011 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 191

45.4% (2010 est.)

*note:* Kosovo has a large informal sector that may not be reflected in these data

#### **Population below poverty line:**

30% (2010 est.)

#### **Distribution of family income - Gini index:**

30 (FY05/06)

**country comparison to the world:** 115

#### **Budget:**

**revenues:** \$1.74 billion  
**expenditures:** \$2.06 billion (2011 est.)

#### **Taxes and other revenues:**

27.9% of GDP (2011 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 105

#### **Budget surplus (+) or deficit (-):**

-5.1% of GDP (2011 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 168

#### **Public debt:**

5.5% of GDP (2011)

**country comparison to the world:** 152

6.2% of GDP (2010)

#### **Inflation rate (consumer prices):**

8.3% (2011 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 185

3.5% (2010 est.)

#### **Commercial bank prime lending rate:**

13.86% (31 December 2011 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 53

14.31% (31 December 2010 est.)

#### **Current account balance:**

-\$2.88 billion (2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 148

-\$900 million (2011 est.)

#### Exports:

\$419 million (2011 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 177

\$400 million (2010 est.)

#### Exports - commodities:

mining and processed metal products, scrap metals, leather products, machinery, appliances, prepared foodstuffs, beverages and tobacco, vegetable products, textile and textile articles

#### Imports:

\$3.3 billion (2011 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 142

\$2.7 billion (2010 est.)

#### Imports - commodities:

foodstuffs, livestock, wood, petroleum, chemicals, machinery, minerals, textiles, stone, ceramic and glass products, electrical equipment

#### Reserves of foreign exchange and gold:

\$NA

#### Debt - external:

\$326 million (2011 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 180

\$900 million (2010 est.)

#### Stock of direct foreign investment - at home:

\$21.2 billion (31 December 2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 68

\$24.35 billion (31 December 2011 est.)

#### Exchange rates:

euros (EUR) per US dollar -

0.7778 (2012 est.)

0.7185 (2011 est.)

0.755 (2010 est.)

0.7198 (2009 est.)

0.6827 (2008 est.)

#### Energy:: Kosovo

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#### Electricity - production:

5.16 billion kWh (2011)

**country comparison to the world:** 118

#### Electricity - consumption:

5.674 billion kWh (2011)

**country comparison to the world:** 109

#### Crude oil - proved reserves:

NA bbl (1 January 2012 est.)

#### Refined petroleum products - production:

0 bbl/day (2007)

**country comparison to the world:** 192

#### Refined petroleum products -

#### consumption:

NA bbl/day (2011 est.)

#### Natural gas - production:

0 cu m (2007)

**country comparison to the world:** 149

#### Natural gas - consumption:

0 cu m (2007)

**country comparison to the world:** 160

#### Natural gas - proved reserves:

NA cu m (2011 est.)

#### Communications:: Kosovo

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#### Telephones - main lines in use:

106,300 (2006)

country comparison to the world: 144

#### Telephones - mobile cellular:

562,000 (2007)

country comparison to the world: 163

#### Transportation:: Kosovo

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#### Airports:

6 (2013)

country comparison to the world: 173

#### Airports - with paved runways:

total: 3

2,438 to 3,047 m: 1

1,524 to 2,437 m: 1

under 914 m: 1 (2013)

#### Airports - with unpaved runways:

total: 3

under 914 m:

3 (2013)

#### Heliports:

2 (2013)

#### Railways:

total: 430 km

country comparison to the world: 114

standard gauge: 430 km 1.435-m gauge (2007)

#### Roadways:

total: 1,964 km

country comparison to the world: 175

paved: 1,706 km

unpaved: 258 km (2009)

#### Military :: Kosovo

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#### Military branches:

Kosovo Security Force (FSK) (2010)

#### Manpower fit for military service:

males age 16-49: 430,926

females age 16-49: 389,614 (2010 est.)

#### Transnational Issues :: Kosovo

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#### Disputes - international:

Serbia with several other states protest the US and other states' recognition of Kosovo's declaration of its status as a sovereign and independent state in February 2008; ethnic Serbian municipalities along Kosovo's northern border challenge final status of Kosovo-Serbia boundary; several thousand NATO-led Kosovo Force peacekeepers under United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo authority continue to keep the peace within Kosovo between the ethnic Albanian majority and the Serb minority in Kosovo; Kosovo and Macedonia completed demarcation of their boundary in September 2008

#### Refugees and internally displaced persons:

IDPs: 17,853 (primarily ethnic Serbs displaced during the 1998-1999 war; IDPs consist of an estimated 54% Serbs, 40% Albanians, and 5% Roma, Ashkalis, and Egyptians) (2012)