

Serbia



Serbia ([listen](#)), Serbian: Србија / Srbija, IPA: [s̩r̩bija]), officially the Republic of Serbia (Serbian: Република Србија / Republika Srbija), is a sovereign state situated at the crossroads of Central and Southeast Europe in the southern Pannonian Plain and the central Balkans. It borders Hungary to the north; Romania and Bulgaria to the east; Macedonia to the south; Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro to the west and claims a border with Albania through the disputed territory of Kosovo. Serbia numbers around 7 million residents. Its capital, Belgrade, ranks among the oldest and largest cities in southeastern Europe. Following the Slavic migrations to the Balkans postdating the 6th century, Serbs established several states in the early Middle Ages. The Serbian Kingdom obtained recognition by Rome and the Byzantine Empire in 1217, reaching its peak in 1346 as a relatively short-lived Serbian Empire. By the mid-16th century, the entire modern-day Serbia was annexed by the Ottomans, at times interrupted by the Habsburg Empire, which started expanding towards Central Serbia from the end of the 17th century, while maintaining a foothold in modern-day Vojvodina. In the early 19th century, the Serbian Revolution established the nation-state as the region's first constitutional monarchy, which subsequently expanded its territory. Following disastrous casualties in World War I, and the subsequent unification of the former Habsburg crownland of Vojvodina (and other territories) with Serbia, the country co-founded Yugoslavia with other South Slavic peoples, which would exist in various political formations until the Yugoslav Wars of the 1990s. During the breakup of Yugoslavia, Serbia formed a union with Montenegro, which dissolved peacefully in 2006. In 2008, the parliament of the province of Kosovo unilaterally declared independence, with mixed responses from the international community. Serbia is a member of the UN, CoE, OSCE, PfP, BSEC, CEFTA and it is acceding to the WTO. Since 2014 the country has been negotiating its EU accession with perspective of joining the European union by 2025 and is the only country in the current enlargement agenda which is designated as "free" by Freedom House. Since 2007, Serbia formally adheres to the policy of military neutrality. An upper-middle income economy with a dominant service sector followed by the industrial sector and agriculture, the country ranks high by the Human Development Index (66th), Social

Progress Index (45th) as well as the Global Peace Index (56th). == Etymology == The origin of the name, "Serbia" is unclear. Various authors mentioned names of Serbs (Serbian: Srbi / [sr̩bi] and Sorbs (Upper Sorbian: Serbja; Lower Sorbian: Serby) in different variants: Surbii, Suurbi, Serbloi, Zeriuiani, Sorabi, Surben, Sarbi, Serbii, Serboi, Zirbi, Surbi, Sorben, etc. These authors used these names to refer to Serbs and Sorbs in areas where their historical (or current) presence was/is not disputed (notably in the Balkans and Lusatia), but there are also sources that mention same or similar names in other parts of the World (most notably in the Asiatic Sarmatia in the Caucasus). Theoretically, the root *srb- has been variously connected with Russian paserb ([pas'erb], "stepson"), Ukrainian pryserbytyisia ([prɪsɛrɐbɪtɪsɪja], "join in"), Old Indic sarbh- ("fight, cut, kill"), Latin sero ("make up, constitute"), and Greek siro (σιρω, "repeat"). However, Polish linguist Stanisław Rospond (1906–1982) derived the denomination of Srb from srbati (cf. sorbo, absorbo). Sorbian scholar H. Schuster-Šewc suggested a connection with the Proto-Slavic verb for "to slurp" *srb-, with cognates such as [srb] (Russian), [srb] (Ukrainian), [srb] (Belarusian), srbati (Slovak), [srb] (Bulgarian) and [srb] (Old Russian). From 1945 to 1963, the official name for Serbia was the People's Republic of Serbia, which became the Socialist Republic of Serbia from 1963 to 1990. Since 1990, the official name of the country is the "Republic of Serbia". == History == == Prehistory == Archeological evidence of Paleolithic settlements on the territory of present-day Serbia are scarce. A fragment of a human jaw, was found in Siĳevo (Mala Balanica) and believed to be up to 525,000—397,000 years old. Approximately around 6,500 years BC, during the Neolithic, the Starĳevo, and Vinĳa cultures existed in or near modern-day Belgrade and dominated much of the Southeastern Europe, (as well as parts of Central Europe and Asia Minor). Two important local archeological sites from this era, Lepenski Vir and Vinĳa-Belo Brdo, still exist near the banks of the Danube. == Ancient history == During the Iron Age, Thracians, Dacians, and Illyrians were encountered by the Ancient Greeks during their expansion into the south of modern Serbia in the 4th century BC; the northwesternmost point of Alexander the Great's empire being the town of Kale-Krševica. The Celtic tribe of Scordisci settled throughout the area in the 3rd century BC and formed a tribal state, building several fortifications, including their capital at Singidunum (present-day Belgrade) and Naissos (present-day Niš). The Romans conquered much of the territory in the 2nd century BC. In 167 BC the Roman province of Illyricum was established; the remainder was conquered around 75 BC, forming the Roman province of Moesia Superior; the modern-day Srem region was conquered in 9 BC; and Baĳka and Banat in 106 AD after the Dacian Wars. As a result of this, contemporary Serbia extends fully or partially over several former Roman provinces, including Moesia, Pannonia, Praevalitana, Dalmatia, Dacia and Macedonia. The chief towns of Upper Moesia (and wider) were: Singidunum (Belgrade), Viminacium (now Old Kostolac), Remesiana (now Bela Palanka), Naissos (Niš), and Sirmium (now Sremska Mitrovica), the latter of which served as a Roman capital during the Tetrarchy. Seventeen Roman Emperors were born in the area of modern-day Serbia, second only to contemporary Italy. The most famous of these was Constantine the Great, the first Christian Emperor, who issued an edict ordering religious tolerance throughout the Empire. When the Roman Empire was divided in 395, most of Serbia remained under the Eastern Roman Empire, while its northwestern parts were included in the Western Roman Empire. By the early 6th century, South Slavs were present throughout the Byzantine Empire in large numbers. == Middle Ages == Serbs, a Slavic tribe that settled the Balkans in the 6th or early 7th century, established the Serbian Principality by the 8th century. It was said in 822 that the Serbs inhabited the greater part of Roman Dalmatia, their territory spanning what is today southwestern Serbia and parts of neighbouring countries. Meanwhile, the Byzantine Empire and Bulgarian Empire held other parts of the territory. Christianity was adopted by the Serbian rulers in ca. 870, and by the mid-10th-century the Serbian state stretched the Adriatic Sea by the Neretva, the Sava, the Morava, and Skadar. Between 1166 and 1371 Serbia was ruled by the Nemanjiĳ dynasty (which legacy is especially cherished), under whom the state was elevated to a kingdom (and briefly an empire) and Serbian bishopric to an autocephalous archbishopric (through the effort of Sava, the country's patron saint). Monuments of the Nemanjiĳ period survives in many monasteries (several being World Heritage) and fortifications. During these centuries the Serbian state (and influence) expanded significantly. The northern part, Vojvodina, was ruled by the Kingdom of Hungary. The period known as the Fall of the Serbian Empire saw the once-powerful state fragmented into duchies, culminating in the Battle of Kosovo (1389) against the rising Ottoman Empire. The Serbian Despotate was finally conquered by the Ottomans in 1459. The Ottoman threat and eventual conquest saw large migrations of Serbs to the west and north. == Ottoman and Habsburg rule == After the loss of independence to the Kingdom of Hungary and the Ottoman Empire, Serbia briefly

regained sovereignty under Jovan Nenad in the 16th century. Three Habsburg invasions and numerous rebellions constantly challenged Ottoman rule. One famous incident was the Banat Uprising in 1595, which was part of the Long War between the Ottomans and the Habsburgs. The area of modern Vojvodina endured a century-long Ottoman occupation before being ceded to the Habsburg Empire at the end of the 17th century under the Treaty of Karlowitz. In all Serb lands south of the rivers Danube and Sava, the nobility was eliminated and the peasantry was enserfed to Ottoman masters, while much of the clergy fled or were confined to the isolated monasteries. Under the Ottoman system, Serbs, as Christians, were considered an inferior class of people and subjected to heavy taxes, and a small portion of the Serbian populace experienced Islamisation. The Ottomans abolished the Serbian Patriarchate of Pe■ (1463), but reestablished it in 1557, providing for limited continuation of Serbian cultural traditions within the empire. As the Great Serb Migrations depopulated most of southern Serbia, the Serbs sought refuge across the Danube River in Vojvodina to the north and the Military Frontier in the west, where they were granted rights by the Austrian crown under measures such as the Statuta Wallachorum of 1630. The ecclesiastical center of the Serbs also moved northwards, to the Metropolitanate of Sremski Karlovci, as the Serbian Patriarchate of Pe■ was once again abolished by the Ottomans in 1766. Following several petitions, the Holy Roman Emperor Leopold I formally granted Serbs who wished to leave the right to their autonomous crownland. In 1718–39, the Habsburg Monarchy occupied Central Serbia and established the "Kingdom of Serbia". Apart from Vojvodina and Northern Belgrade which were absorbed into the Habsburg Empire, Central Serbia was occupied by the Habsburgs again in 1686–91 and in 1788–92. === Revolution and independence === The Serbian Revolution for independence from the Ottoman Empire lasted eleven years, from 1804 until 1815. The revolution comprised two separate uprisings which gained autonomy from the Ottoman Empire that eventually evolved towards full independence (1835–1867). During the First Serbian Uprising, led by Duke Kara■or■e Petrovi■, Serbia was independent for almost a decade before the Ottoman army was able to reoccupy the country. Shortly after this, the Second Serbian Uprising began. Led by Miloš Obrenovi■, it ended in 1815 with a compromise between Serbian revolutionaries and Ottoman authorities. Likewise, Serbia was one of the first nations in the Balkans to abolish feudalism. The Convention of Ackerman in 1826, the Treaty of Adrianople in 1829 and finally, the Hatt-i Sharif, recognized the suzerainty of Serbia. The first Serbian Constitution was adopted on 15 February 1835. Following the clashes between the Ottoman army and Serbs in Belgrade in 1862, and under pressure from the Great Powers, by 1867 the last Turkish soldiers left the Principality, making the country de facto independent. By enacting a new constitution without consulting the Porte, Serbian diplomats confirmed the de facto independence of the country. In 1876, Serbia declared war on the Ottoman Empire, proclaiming its unification with Bosnia. The formal independence of the country was internationally recognized at the Congress of Berlin in 1878, which formally ended the Russo-Turkish War; this treaty, however, prohibited Serbia from uniting with Bosnia by placing Bosnia under Austro-Hungarian occupation, alongside the occupation of Sanjak of Novi Pazar. From 1815 to 1903, the Principality of Serbia was ruled by the House of Obrenovi■, save for the rule of Prince Aleksandar Kara■or■evi■ between 1842 and 1858. In 1882, Serbia became a Kingdom, ruled by King Milan I. The House of Kara■or■evi■, descendants of the revolutionary leader Kara■or■e Petrovi■, assumed power in 1903 following the May Overthrow. In the north, the 1848 revolution in Austria led to the establishment of the autonomous territory of Serbian Vojvodina; by 1849, the region was transformed into the Voivodeship of Serbia and Banat of Temeschwar. === Balkan Wars, World War I and the First Yugoslavia === In the course of the First Balkan War in 1912, the Balkan League defeated the Ottoman Empire and captured its European territories, which enabled territorial expansion into Raška and Kosovo. The Second Balkan War soon ensued when Bulgaria turned on its former allies, but was defeated, resulting in the Treaty of Bucharest. In two years, Serbia enlarged its territory by 80% and its population by 50%; it also suffered high casualties on the eve of World War I, with around 20,000 dead. Austria-Hungary became wary of the rising regional power on its borders and its potential to become an anchor for unification of all South Slavs, and the relationship between the two countries became tense. The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria on 28 June 1914 in Sarajevo by Gavrilo Princip, a member of the Young Bosnia organization, led to Austria-Hungary declaring war on Serbia. In defense of Serbia, and to maintain her status as a Great Power, Russia mobilized its troops, which resulted in Austria-Hungary's ally Germany declaring war on Russia. Serbia won the first major battles of World War I, including the Battle of Cer and Battle of Kolubara – marking the first Allied victories against the Central Powers in World War I. Despite initial success, it was eventually overpowered by the Central Powers in 1915. Most of its army and some people fled through Albania to Greece and

Corfu, suffering immense losses on the way. Serbia was occupied by the Central Powers. After the Central Powers military situation on other fronts worsened, the remains of the Serb army returned east and led a final breakthrough through enemy lines on 15 September 1918, liberating Serbia and defeating the Austro-Hungarian Empire and Bulgaria. Serbia, with its campaign, was a major Balkan Entente Power which contributed significantly to the Allied victory in the Balkans in November 1918, especially by helping France force Bulgaria's capitulation. Serbia was classified as a minor Entente power. Serbia's casualties accounted for 8% of the total Entente military deaths; 58% (243,600) soldiers of the Serbian army perished in the war. The total number of casualties is placed around 700,000, more than 16% of Serbia's prewar size, and a majority (57%) of its overall male population. As the Austro-Hungarian Empire collapsed, the territory of Syrmia united with Serbia on 24 November 1918, followed by Banat, Bačka and Baranja a day later, thereby bringing the entire Vojvodina into the Serb Kingdom. On 26 November 1918, the Podgorica Assembly deposed the House of Petrović-Njegoš and united Montenegro with Serbia. On 1 December 1918, at Krsmanović's House at Terazije, Serbian Prince Regent Alexander of Serbia proclaimed the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes under King Peter I of Serbia. King Peter was succeeded by his son, Alexander, in August 1921. Serb centralists and Croat autonomists clashed in the parliament, and most governments were fragile and short-lived. Nikola Pašić, a conservative prime minister, headed or dominated most governments until his death. King Alexander changed the name of the country to Yugoslavia and changed the internal divisions from the 33 oblasts to nine new banovinas. The effect of Alexander's dictatorship was to further alienate the non-Serbs from the idea of unity. Alexander was assassinated in Marseille, during an official visit in 1934 by Vlado Chernozemski, member of the IMRO. Alexander was succeeded by his eleven-year-old son Peter II and a regency council was headed by his cousin, Prince Paul. In August 1939 the Cvetković–Maček Agreement established an autonomous Banate of Croatia as a solution to Croatian concerns. === World War II and the Second Yugoslavia === In 1941, in spite of Yugoslav attempts to remain neutral in the war, the Axis powers invaded Yugoslavia. The territory of modern Serbia was divided between Hungary, Bulgaria, Independent State of Croatia (NDH) and Italy (greater Albania and Montenegro), while the remaining part of Serbia was placed under German Military administration, with Serbian puppet governments led by Milan Aćimović and Milan Nedić. The occupied territory was the scene of a civil war between royalist Chetniks commanded by Draža Mihailović and communist partisans commanded by Josip Broz Tito. Against these forces were arrayed Axis auxiliary units of the Serbian Volunteer Corps and the Serbian State Guard. Draginac and Loznica massacre of 2,950 villagers in Western Serbia in 1941 was the first large execution of civilians in occupied Serbia by Germans, with Kragujevac massacre and Novi Sad Raid of Jews and Serbs by Hungarian fascists being the most notorious, with over 3,000 victims in each case. After one year of occupation, around 16,000 Serbian Jews were murdered in the area, or around 90% of its pre-war Jewish population. Many concentration camps were established across the area. Banjica concentration camp was the largest concentration camp, with primary victims being Serbian Jews, Roma, and Serb political prisoners. During this period, hundreds of thousands of Serbs fled the Axis puppet state known as the Independent State of Croatia and sought refuge in Serbia, seeking to escape the large-scale persecution and genocide of Serbs, Jews, and Roma being committed by the Ustaše regime. The Republic of Užice was a short-lived liberated territory established by the Partisans and the first liberated territory in World War II Europe, organized as a military mini-state that existed in the autumn of 1941 in the west of occupied Serbia. By late 1944, the Belgrade Offensive swung in favour of the partisans in the civil war; the partisans subsequently gained control of Yugoslavia. Following the Belgrade Offensive, the Syrmian Front was the last major military action of World War II in Serbia. The victory of the Communist Partisans resulted in the abolition of the monarchy and a subsequent constitutional referendum. A one-party state was soon established in Yugoslavia by the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, between 60,000 and 70,000 people were killed in Serbia during the communist takeover. All opposition was suppressed and people deemed to be promoting opposition to socialism or promoting separatism were imprisoned or executed for sedition. Serbia became a constituent republic within the SFRY known as the Socialist Republic of Serbia, and had a republic-branch of the federal communist party, the League of Communists of Serbia. Serbia's most powerful and influential politician in Tito-era Yugoslavia was Aleksandar Ranković, one of the "big four" Yugoslav leaders, alongside Tito, Edvard Kardelj, and Milovan Đilas. Ranković was later removed from the office because of the disagreements regarding Kosovo's nomenklatura and the unity of Serbia. Ranković's dismissal was highly unpopular among Serbs. Pro-decentralization reformers in Yugoslavia succeeded in the late 1960s in attaining substantial decentralization of powers, creating substantial autonomy in Kosovo and

Vojvodina, and recognizing a Yugoslav Muslim nationality. As a result of these reforms, there was a massive overhaul of Kosovo's nomenklatura and police, that shifted from being Serb-dominated to ethnic Albanian-dominated through firing Serbs on a large scale. Further concessions were made to the ethnic Albanians of Kosovo in response to unrest, including the creation of the University of Pristina as an Albanian language institution. These changes created widespread fear among Serbs of being treated as second-class citizens. === Breakup of Yugoslavia and political transition === In 1989, Slobodan Milošević rose to power in Serbia. Milošević promised a reduction of powers for the autonomous provinces of Kosovo and Vojvodina, where his allies subsequently took over power, during the Anti-bureaucratic revolution. This ignited tensions between the communist leadership of the other republics, and awoke nationalism across the country that eventually resulted in its breakup, with Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and Kosovo declaring independence. Serbia and Montenegro remained together as the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY). Fueled by ethnic tensions, the Yugoslav Wars erupted, with the most severe conflicts taking place in Croatia and Bosnia, where the large ethnic Serb communities opposed independence from Yugoslavia. The FRY remained outside the conflicts, but provided logistic, military and financial support to Serb forces in the wars. In response, the UN imposed sanctions against Serbia which led to political isolation and the collapse of the economy (GDP was \$24 billion in 1990 to under \$10 billion in 1993). Multi-party democracy was introduced in Serbia in 1990, officially dismantling the one-party system. Critics of Milošević claimed that the government continued to be authoritarian despite constitutional changes, as Milošević maintained strong political influence over the state media and security apparatus. When the ruling Socialist Party of Serbia refused to accept its defeat in municipal elections in 1996, Serbians engaged in large protests against the government. In 1998, peace was broken again, when the situation in Kosovo worsened with continued clashes between the Albanian guerilla Kosovo Liberation Army and Yugoslav security forces. The confrontations led to the short Kosovo War (1998–99), in which NATO intervened, leading to the withdrawal of Serbian forces and the establishment of UN administration in the province. After presidential elections in September 2000, opposition parties accused Milošević of electoral fraud. A campaign of civil resistance followed, led by the Democratic Opposition of Serbia (DOS), a broad coalition of anti-Milošević parties. This culminated on 5 October when half a million people from all over the country congregated in Belgrade, compelling Milošević to concede defeat. The fall of Milošević ended Yugoslavia's international isolation. Milošević was sent to the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. The DOS announced that FR Yugoslavia would seek to join the European Union. In 2003, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was renamed Serbia and Montenegro; the EU opened negotiations with the country for the Stabilization and Association Agreement. Serbia's political climate remained tense and in 2003, the prime minister Zoran Đinđić was assassinated as result of a plot originating from circles of organized crime and former security officials. On 21 May 2006, Montenegro held a referendum to determine whether to end its union with Serbia. The results showed 55.4% of voters in favor of independence, which was just above the 55% required by the referendum. On 5 June 2006, the National Assembly of Serbia declared Serbia to be the legal successor to the former state union. The Assembly of Kosovo unilaterally declared independence from Serbia on 17 February 2008. Serbia immediately condemned the declaration and continues to deny any statehood to Kosovo. The declaration has sparked varied responses from the international community, some welcoming it, while others condemned the unilateral move. Status-neutral talks between Serbia and Kosovo-Albanian authorities are held in Brussels, mediated by the EU. In April 2008 Serbia was invited to join the Intensified Dialogue programme with NATO despite the diplomatic rift with the alliance over Kosovo. Serbia officially applied for membership in the European Union on 22 December 2009, and received candidate status on 1 March 2012, following a delay in December 2011. Following a positive recommendation of the European Commission and European Council in June 2013, negotiations to join the EU commenced in January 2014. == Geography == Located at the crossroads between Central and Southern Europe, Serbia is found in the Balkan peninsula and the Pannonian Plain. Serbia lies between latitudes 41° and 47° N, and longitudes 18° and 23° E. The country covers a total of 88,361 km² (including Kosovo), which places it at 113th place in the world; with Kosovo excluded, the total area is 77,474 km², which would make it 117th. Its total border length amounts to 2,027 km (Albania 115 km, Bosnia and Herzegovina 302 km, Bulgaria 318 km, Croatia 241 km, Hungary 151 km, Macedonia 221 km, Montenegro 203 km and Romania 476 km). All of Kosovo's border with Albania (115 km), Macedonia (159 km) and Montenegro (79 km) are under control of the Kosovo border police. Serbia treats the 352 km long border between Kosovo and rest of Serbia as an "administrative line"; it is under shared control of Kosovo border police and Serbian police forces, and

there are 11 crossing points. The Pannonian Plain covers the northern third of the country (Vojvodina and Mađava) while the easternmost tip of Serbia extends into the Wallachian Plain. The terrain of the central part of the country, with the region of Šumadija at its heart, consists chiefly of hills traversed by rivers. Mountains dominate the southern third of Serbia. Dinaric Alps stretch in the west and the southwest, following the flow of the rivers Drina and Ibar. The Carpathian Mountains and Balkan Mountains stretch in a north–south direction in eastern Serbia. Ancient mountains in the southeast corner of the country belong to the Rilo-Rhodope Mountain system. Elevation ranges from the Midžor peak of the Balkan Mountains at 2,169 metres (7,116 feet) (the highest peak in Serbia, excluding Kosovo) to the lowest point of just 17 metres (56 feet) near the Danube river at Prahovo. The largest lake is Đerdap Lake (163 square kilometres or 63 square miles) and the longest river passing through Serbia is the Danube (587.35 kilometres or 364.96 miles).

=== Climate === The climate of Serbia is under the influences of the landmass of Eurasia and the Atlantic Ocean and Mediterranean Sea. With mean January temperatures around 0 °C (32 °F), and mean July temperatures of 22 °C (72 °F), it can be classified as a warm-humid continental or humid subtropical climate. In the north, the climate is more continental, with cold winters, and hot, humid summers along with well distributed rainfall patterns. In the south, summers and autumns are drier, and winters are relatively cold, with heavy inland snowfall in the mountains. Differences in elevation, proximity to the Adriatic Sea and large river basins, as well as exposure to the winds account for climate variations. Southern Serbia is subject to Mediterranean influences. The Dinaric Alps and other mountain ranges contribute to the cooling of most of the warm air masses. Winters are quite harsh in the Pešter plateau, because of the mountains which encircle it. One of the climatic features of Serbia is Košava, a cold and very squally southeastern wind which starts in the Carpathian Mountains and follows the Danube northwest through the Iron Gate where it gains a jet effect and continues to Belgrade and can spread as far south as Niš. The average annual air temperature for the period 1961–1990 for the area with an altitude of up to 300 m (984 ft) is 10.9 °C (51.6 °F). The areas with an altitude of 300 to 500 m (984 to 1,640 ft) have an average annual temperature of around 10.0 °C (50.0 °F), and over 1,000 m (3,281 ft) of altitude around 6.0 °C (42.8 °F). The lowest recorded temperature in Serbia was −39.5 °C (−39.1 °F) on 13 January 1985, Karajukića Bunari in Pešter, and the highest was 44.9 °C or 112.8 °F, on 24 July 2007, recorded in Smederevska Palanka. Serbia is one of few European countries with very high risk exposure to natural hazards (earthquakes, storms, floods, droughts). It is estimated that potential floods, particularly in areas of Central Serbia, threaten over 500 larger settlements and an area of 16,000 square kilometers. The most disastrous were the floods in May 2014, when 57 people died and a damage of over a 1.5 billion euro was inflicted.

=== Hydrology === Almost all of Serbia's rivers drain to the Black Sea, by way of the Danube river. The Danube, the second largest European river, passes through Serbia with 588 kilometers (21% of its overall length) and represents the largest source of fresh water. It is joined by its biggest tributaries, the Great Morava (longest river entirely in Serbia with 493 km of length), Sava and Tisza rivers. One notable exception is the Pčinja which flows into the Aegean. Drina river forms the natural border between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, and represents the main kayaking and rafting attraction in both countries. Due to configuration of the terrain, natural lakes are sparse and small; most of them are located in the lowlands of Vojvodina, like the aeolian lake Palić or numerous oxbow lakes along river flows (like Zasavica and Carska Bara). However, there are numerous artificial lakes, mostly due to hydroelectric dams, the biggest being Đerdap (Iron Gates) on the Danube with 163 km² on the Serbian side (a total area of 253 km² is shared with Romania) as well as the deepest (with maximum depth of 92 m); Perućac on the Drina, and Vlasina. The largest waterfall, Jelovarnik, located in Kopaonik, is 71 m high. Abundance of relatively unpolluted surface waters and numerous underground natural and mineral water sources of high water quality presents a chance for export and economy improvement; however, more extensive exploitation and production of bottled water began only recently.

=== Environment === With 29.1% of its territory covered by forest, Serbia is considered to be a middle-forested country, compared on a global scale to world forest coverage at 30%, and European average of 35%. The total forest area in Serbia is 2,252,000 ha (1,194,000 ha or 53% are state-owned, and 1,058,387 ha or 47% are privately owned) or 0.3 ha per inhabitant. The most common trees are oak, beech, pines and firs. Serbia is a country of rich ecosystem and species diversity – covering only 1.9% of the whole European territory Serbia is home to 39% of European vascular flora, 51% of European fish fauna, 40% of European reptile and amphibian fauna, 74% of European bird fauna, 67% European mammal fauna. Its abundance of mountains and rivers make it an ideal environment for a variety of animals, many of which are protected including wolves, lynx, bears, foxes and stags. There are 17 snake species living all over the country, 8 of them are venomous.

Serbia is home to highly protected owl species. In the northernmost part of Vojvodina plain, in the city of Kikinda, a number of endangered 145 long-eared owls is noted, making this town the world's biggest settlement of these species. Serbia is considerably rich with threatened species of bats and butterflies. Mountain of Tara in western Serbia is one of the last regions in Europe where bears can still live in absolute freedom. Serbia is also home to about 380 species of bird. In Carska Bara, there are over 300 bird species on just a few square kilometers. Uvac Gorge is considered one of the last habitats of the griffon vulture in Europe. There are 377 protected areas of Serbia, encompassing 4,947 square kilometers or 6.4% of the country. The "Spatial plan of the Republic of Serbia" states that the total protected area should be increased to 12% by 2021. Those protected areas include 5 national parks (Zemljanica, Tara, Kopaonik, Fruška Gora and Šar Mountain), 15 nature parks, 15 "landscapes of outstanding features", 61 nature reserves, and 281 natural monuments. Air pollution is a significant problem in Bor area, due to work of large copper mining and smelting complex, and Pančevo where oil and petrochemical industry is based. Some cities suffer from water supply problems, due to mismanagement and low investments in the past, as well as water pollution (like the pollution of the Ibar River from the Trepča zinc-lead combine, affecting the city of Kraljevo, or the presence of natural arsenic in underground waters in Zrenjanin). Poor waste management has been identified as one of the most important environmental problems in Serbia and the recycling is a fledgling activity, with only 15% of its waste being turned back for reuse. The 1999 NATO bombing caused serious damage to the environment, with several thousand tons of toxic chemicals stored in targeted factories and refineries released into the soil and water basins.

== Politics == Serbia is a parliamentary republic, with the government divided into legislative, executive and judiciary branches. Serbia had one of the first modern constitutions in Europe, the 1835 Constitution (known as "Sretenje Constitution"), which was at the time considered among the most progressive and liberal constitutions in the world. Since then it has adopted 10 different constitutions. The current constitution was adopted in 2006 in the aftermath of Montenegro independence referendum which by consequence renewed the independence of Serbia itself. The Constitutional Court rules on matters regarding the Constitution. The President of the Republic (Predsednik Republike) is the head of state, is elected by popular vote to a five-year term and is limited by the Constitution to a maximum of two terms. In addition to being the commander in chief of the armed forces, the president has the procedural duty of appointing the prime minister with the consent of the parliament, and has some influence on foreign policy. Aleksandar Vučić of the Serbian Progressive Party is the current president following the 2017 presidential election. Seat of the presidency is Novi Dvor. The Government (Vlada) is composed of the prime minister and cabinet ministers. The Government is responsible for proposing legislation and a budget, executing the laws, and guiding the foreign and internal policies. The current prime minister is Ana Brnabić of the Serbian Progressive Party. The National Assembly (Narodna skupština) is a unicameral legislative body. The National Assembly has the power to enact laws, approve the budget, schedule presidential elections, select and dismiss the Prime Minister and other ministers, declare war, and ratify international treaties and agreements. It is composed of 250 proportionally elected members who serve four-year terms. The largest political parties in Serbia are the centre-right Serbian Progressive Party, leftist Socialist Party of Serbia and far-right Serbian Radical Party.

=== Law and criminal justice === Serbia has a three-tiered judicial system, made up of the Supreme Court of Cassation as the court of the last resort, Courts of Appeal as the appellate instance, and Basic and High courts as the general jurisdictions at first instance. Courts of special jurisdictions are the Administrative Court, commercial courts (including the Commercial Court of Appeal at second instance) and misdemeanor courts (including High Misdemeanor Court at second instance). The judiciary is overseen by the Ministry of Justice. Serbia has a typical civil law legal system. Law enforcement is the responsibility of the Serbian Police, which is subordinate to the Ministry of the Interior. Serbian Police fields 26,527 uniformed officers. National security and counterintelligence are the responsibility of the Security Intelligence Agency (BIA).

=== Foreign relations === Serbia has established diplomatic relations with 188 UN member states, the Holy See, the Sovereign Military Order of Malta, and the European Union. Foreign relations are conducted through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Serbia has a network of 65 embassies and 23 consulates internationally. There are 65 foreign embassies, 5 consulates and 4 liaison offices in Serbia. Serbian foreign policy is focused on achieving the strategic goal of becoming a member state of the European Union (EU). Serbia started the process of joining the EU by signing of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement on 29 April 2008 and officially applied for membership in the European Union on 22 December 2009. It received a full candidate status on 1 March 2012 and started accession talks on 21 January 2014. The European Commission considers accession possible by 2025. The province of

Kosovo declared independence from Serbia on 17 February 2008, which sparked varied responses from the international community, some welcoming it, while others condemn the unilateral move. In protest, Serbia initially recalled its ambassadors from countries that recognized Kosovo's independence. The resolution of 26 December 2007 by the National Assembly stated that both the Kosovo declaration of independence and recognition thereof by any state would be gross violation of international law. Serbia began cooperation and dialogue with NATO in 2006, when the country joined the Partnership for Peace programme and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council. The country's military neutrality was formally proclaimed by a resolution adopted by Serbia's parliament in December 2007, which makes joining any military alliance contingent on a popular referendum, a stance acknowledged by NATO. On the other hand, Serbia's relations with Russia are habitually described by mass media as a "centuries-old religious, ethnic and political alliance" and Russia is said to have sought to solidify its relationship with Serbia since the imposition of sanctions against Russia in 2014. === Military === The Serbian Armed Forces are subordinate to the Ministry of Defence, and are composed of the Army and the Air Force. Although a landlocked country, Serbia operates a River Flotilla which patrols on the Danube, Sava, and Tisza rivers. The Serbian Chief of the General Staff reports to the Defence Minister. The Chief of Staff is appointed by the President, who is the Commander-in-chief. As of 2017, Serbia defence budget amounts to \$503 million or an estimated 1.4% of the country's GDP. Traditionally having relied on a large number of conscripts, Serbian Armed Forces went through a period of downsizing, restructuring and professionalisation. Conscription was abolished in 2011. Serbian Armed Forces have 28,000 active troops, supplemented by the "active reserve" which numbers 20,000 members and "passive reserve" with about 170,000. Serbia participates in the NATO Individual Partnership Action Plan program, but has no intention of joining NATO, due to significant popular rejection, largely a legacy of the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia in 1999. It is an observer member of the Collective Securities Treaty Organization (CSTO) The country also signed the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe. The Serbian Armed Forces take part in several multinational peacekeeping missions, including deployments in Lebanon, Cyprus, Ivory Coast, and Liberia. Serbia is a major producer and exporter of military equipment in the region. Defence exports totaled around \$483 million in 2016. Serbia exports across the world, notably to the Middle East, Africa, Southeast Asia, and North America. The defence industry has seen significant growth over the years and it continues to grow on a yearly basis. === Administrative divisions === Serbia is a unitary state composed of municipalities/cities, districts, and two autonomous provinces. In Serbia, excluding Kosovo, there are 138 municipalities (opštine) and 23 cities (gradovi), which form the basic units of local self-government. Apart from municipalities, there are 24 districts (okruzi, 10 most populated listed below), with the City of Belgrade constituting an additional district. Except for Belgrade, which has an elected local government, districts are regional centers of state authority, but have no powers of their own; they present purely administrative divisions. Serbia has two autonomous provinces, Vojvodina in the north, and Kosovo and Metohija in the south, while the remaining area, "Central Serbia", never had its own regional authority. Following the Kosovo War, UN peacekeepers entered Kosovo, as per UNSC Resolution 1244. In 2008, Kosovo declared independence. The government of Serbia did not recognize the declaration, considering it illegal and illegitimate. == Demographics == As of 2011 census, Serbia (excluding Kosovo) has a total population of 7,186,862 and the overall population density is medium as it stands at 92.8 inhabitants per square kilometer. The census was not conducted in Kosovo which held its own census that numbered their total population at 1,739,825, excluding Serb-inhabited North Kosovo, as Serbs from that area (about 50,000) boycotted the census. Serbia has been enduring a demographic crisis since the beginning of the 1990s, with a death rate that has continuously exceeded its birth rate, and a total fertility rate of 1.43 children per mother, one of the lowest in the world. Serbia subsequently has one of the oldest populations in the world, with the average age of 42.9 years, and its population is shrinking at one of the fastest rates in the world. A fifth of all households consist of only one person, and just one-fourth of four and more persons. Average Life expectancy in Serbia at birth is 74.8 years. During the 1990s, Serbia had the largest refugee population in Europe. Refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Serbia formed between 7% and 7.5% of its population at the time – about half a million refugees sought refuge in the country following the series of Yugoslav wars, mainly from Croatia (and to a lesser extent from Bosnia and Herzegovina) and the IDPs from Kosovo. It is estimated that 300,000 people left Serbia during the 1990s, 20% of whom had a higher education. Serbs with 5,988,150 are the largest ethnic group in Serbia, representing 83% of the total population (excluding Kosovo). With a population of 253,899, Hungarians are the largest ethnic minority in Serbia, concentrated predominantly in northern Vojvodina and representing 3.5% of the country's population

(13% in Vojvodina). Romani population stands at 147,604 according to the 2011 census but unofficial estimates place their actual number between 400,000 and 500,000. Bosniaks with 145,278 are concentrated in Raška (Sandžak), in the southwest. Other minority groups include Croats, Slovaks, Albanians, Montenegrins, Vlachs, Romanians, Macedonians and Bulgarians. Chinese, estimated at about 15,000, are the only significant immigrant minority. The majority of the population, or 59.4%, reside in urban areas and some 16.1% in Belgrade alone. Belgrade is the only city with more than a million inhabitants and there are four more with over 100,000 inhabitants. === Religion === The Constitution of Serbia defines it as a secular state with guaranteed religious freedom. Orthodox Christians with 6,079,396 comprise 84.5% of country's population. The Serbian Orthodox Church is the largest and traditional church of the country, adherents of which are overwhelmingly Serbs. Other Orthodox Christian communities in Serbia include Montenegrins, Romanians, Vlachs, Macedonians and Bulgarians. Roman Catholics number 356,957 in Serbia, or roughly 6% of the population, mostly in Vojvodina (especially its northern part) which is home to minority ethnic groups such as Hungarians, Croats, Bunjevci, as well as to some Slovaks and Czechs. Protestantism accounts for about 1% of the country's population, chiefly Lutheranism among Slovaks in Vojvodina as well as Calvinism among Reformed Hungarians. Greek Catholic Church is adhered by around 25,000 citizens (0.37% of the population), mostly Rusyns in Vojvodina. Muslims, with 222,282 or 3% of the population, form the third largest religious group. Islam has a strong historic following in the southern regions of Serbia, primarily in southern Raška. Bosniaks are the largest Islamic community in Serbia; estimates are that around a third of the country's Roma people are Muslim. There are only 578 Jews by faith in Serbia. Atheists numbered 80,053 or 1.1% of the population and an additional 4,070 declared themselves to be agnostics. === Language === The official language is Serbian, native to 88% of the population. Serbian is the only European language with active digraphia, using both Cyrillic and Latin alphabets. Serbian Cyrillic is designated in the Constitution as the "official script" and was devised in 1814 by Serbian philologist Vuk Karadžić, who based it on phonemic principles., while the Latin alphabet is given status of "script in official use" by the constitution. A survey from 2014 showed that 47% of Serbians favour the Latin alphabet, 36% favour the Cyrillic one and 17% have no preference. Recognized minority languages are: Hungarian, Bosnian, Slovak, Croatian, Albanian, Romanian, Bulgarian and Rusyn. All these languages are in official use in municipalities or cities where the ethnic minority exceeds 15% of the total population. In Vojvodina, the provincial administration uses, besides Serbian, five other languages (Hungarian, Slovak, Croatian, Romanian and Rusyn). == Economy == Serbia has an emerging market economy in upper-middle income range. According to the IMF, Serbian nominal GDP in 2017 is officially estimated at \$39.366 billion or \$5,599 per capita while purchasing power parity GDP was \$106.602 billion or \$15,163 per capita. The economy is dominated by services which accounts for 60.8% of GDP, followed by industry with 31.3% of GDP, and agriculture at 7.9% of GDP. The official currency of Serbia is Serbian dinar (ISO code: RSD), and the central bank is National Bank of Serbia. The Belgrade Stock Exchange is the only stock exchange in the country, with market capitalization of \$8.65 billion and BELEX15 as the main index representing the 15 most liquid stocks. The economy has been affected by the global economic crisis. After almost a decade of strong economic growth (average of 4.45% per year), Serbia entered the recession in 2009 with negative growth of -3% and again in 2012 and 2014 with -1% and -1.8%, respectively. As the government was fighting effects of crisis the public debt has more than doubled: from pre-crisis level of just under 30% to about 70% of GDP and trending downwards recently to around 60%. Labor force stands at 3.1 million, of whom 56.2% are employed in services sector, 24.4% are employed in the agriculture and 19.4% are employed in industry. The average monthly net salary in November 2017 stood at 47,575 dinars or \$480. The unemployment remains an acute problem, with rate of 13% as of 2017. Since 2000, Serbia has attracted over \$25 billion in foreign direct investment (FDI). Blue-chip corporations making investments include: Fiat Chrysler Automobiles, Siemens, Bosch, Philip Morris, Michelin, Coca-Cola, Carlsberg and others. In the energy sector, Russian energy giants, Gazprom and Lukoil have made large investments. Serbia has an unfavorable trade balance: imports exceed exports by 23%. Serbia's exports, however, recorded a steady growth in last couple of years reaching \$17 billion in 2017. The country has free trade agreements with the EFTA and CEFTA, a preferential trade regime with the European Union, a Generalized System of Preferences with the United States, and individual free trade agreements with Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Turkey. === Agriculture === Serbia has very favourable natural conditions (land and climate) for varied agricultural production. It has 5,056,000 ha of agricultural land (0.7 ha per capita), out of which 3,294,000 ha is arable land (0.45 ha per capita). In 2016, Serbia exported agricultural and food products worth \$3.2 billion, and the export-import ratio was

178%. Agricultural exports constitute more than one-fifth of all Serbia's sales on the world market. Serbia is one of the largest provider of frozen fruit to the EU (largest to the French market, and 2nd largest to the German market). Agricultural production is most prominent in Vojvodina on the fertile Pannonian Plain. Other agricultural regions include Mađava, Pomoravlje, Tamnava, Rasina, and Jablanica. In the structure of the agricultural production 70% is from the crop field production, and 30% is from the livestock production. Serbia is world's second largest producer of plums (582,485 tons; second to China), second largest of raspberries (89,602 tons, second to Poland), it is also a significant producer of maize (6.48 million tons, ranked 32nd in the world) and wheat (2.07 million tons, ranked 35th in the world). Other important agricultural products are: sunflower, sugar beet, soybean, potato, apple, pork meat, beef, poultry and dairy. There are 56,000 ha of vineyards in Serbia, producing about 230 million litres of wine annually. Most famous viticulture regions are located in Vojvodina and Šumadija.

=== Industry === The industry is the economy sector which was hardest hit by the UN sanctions and trade embargo and NATO bombing during the 1990s and transition to market economy during the 2000s. The industrial output saw dramatic downsizing: in 2013 it was expected to be only a half of that of 1989. Main industrial sectors include: automotive, mining, non-ferrous metals, food-processing, electronics, pharmaceuticals, clothes. Automotive industry (with Fiat Chrysler Automobiles as a forebearer) is dominated by cluster located in Kragujevac and its vicinity, and contributes to export with about \$2 billion. Serbia's mining industry is comparatively strong: Serbia is the 18th largest producer of coal (7th in the Europe) extracted from large deposits in Kolubara and Kostolac basins; it is also world's 23rd largest (3rd in Europe) producer of copper which is extracted by RTB Bor, a large domestic copper mining company; significant gold extraction is developed around Majdanpek. Serbia notably manufactures intel smartphones named Tesla smartphones. Food industry is well known both regionally and internationally and is one of the strong points of the economy. Some of the international brand-names established production in Serbia: PepsiCo and Nestlé in food-processing sector; Coca-Cola (Belgrade), Heineken (Novi Sad) and Carlsberg (Bačka Palanka) in beverage industry; Nordzucker in sugar industry. Serbia's electronics industry had its peak in the 1980s and the industry today is only a third of what it was back then, but has witnessed a something of revival in last decade with investments of companies such as Siemens (wind turbines) in Subotica, Panasonic (lighting devices) in Svilajnac, and Gorenje (electrical home appliances) in Valjevo. The pharmaceutical industry in Serbia comprises a dozen manufacturers of generic drugs, of which Hemofarm in Vršac and Galenika in Belgrade, account for 80% of production volume. Domestic production meets over 60% of the local demand.

=== Energy === The energy sector is one of the largest and most important sectors to the country's economy. Serbia is a net exporter of electricity and importer of key fuels (such as oil and gas). Serbia has an abundance of coal, and significant reserves of oil and gas. Serbia's proven reserves of 5.5 billion tons of coal lignite are the 5th largest in the world (second in Europe, after Germany). Coal is found in two large deposits: Kolubara (4 billion tons of reserves) and Kostolac (1.5 billion tons). Despite being small on a world scale, Serbia's oil and gas resources (77.4 million tons of oil equivalent and 48.1 billion cubic meters, respectively) have a certain regional importance since they are largest in the region of former Yugoslavia as well as the Balkans (excluding Romania). Almost 90% of the discovered oil and gas are to be found in Banat and those oil and gas fields are by size among the largest in the Pannonian basin but are average on a European scale. The production of electricity in 2015 in Serbia was 36.5 billion kilowatt-hours (KWh), while the final electricity consumption amounted to 35.5 billion kilowatt-hours (KWh). Most of the electricity produced comes from thermal-power plants (72.7% of all electricity) and to a lesser degree from hydroelectric-power plants (27.3%). There are 6 lignite-operated thermal-power plants with an installed power of 3,936 MW; largest of which are 1,502 MW-Nikola Tesla 1 and 1,160 MW-Nikola Tesla 2, both in Obrenovac. Total installed power of 9 hydroelectric-power plants is 2,831 MW, largest of which is Đerdap 1 with capacity of 1,026 MW. In addition to this, there are mazute and gas-operated thermal-power plants with an installed power of 353 MW. The entire production of electricity is concentrated in Elektroprivreda Srbije (EPS), public electric-utility power company. The current oil production in Serbia amounts to over 1.1 million tons of oil equivalent and satisfies some 43% of country's needs while the rest is imported. National petrol company, Naftna Industrija Srbije (NIS), was acquired in 2008 by Gazprom Neft. The company has completed \$700 million modernisation of oil-refinery in Pančevo (capacity of 4.8 million tons) and is currently in the midst of converting oil refinery in Novi Sad into lubricants-only refinery. It also operates network of 334 filling stations in Serbia (74% of domestic market) and additional 36 stations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 31 in Bulgaria, and 28 in Romania. There are 155 kilometers of crude oil pipelines connecting Pančevo and Novi Sad refineries as a part of trans-national Adria oil pipeline. Serbia is

heavily dependent on foreign sources of natural gas, with only 17% coming from domestic production (totalling 491 million cubic meters in 2012) and the rest is imported, mainly from Russia (via gas pipelines that run through Ukraine and Hungary). Srbijagas, public gas company, operates the natural gas transportation system which comprise 3,177 kilometers of trunk and regional natural gas pipelines and a 450 million cubic meter underground gas storage facility at Banatski Dvor. === Transport ===

Serbia has a strategic transportation location since the country's backbone, Morava Valley, represents by far the easiest route of land travel from continental Europe to Asia Minor and the Near East. Serbian road network carries the bulk of traffic in the country. Total length of roads is 45,419 km of which 782 km are "class-Ia state roads" (i.e. motorways); 4,481 km are "class-Ib state roads" (national roads); 10,941 km are "class-II state roads" (regional roads) and 23,780 km are "municipal roads". The road network, except for the most of class-Ia roads, are of comparatively lower quality to the Western European standards because of lack of financial resources for their maintenance in the last 20 years. There are currently 124 kilometers of motorways under construction: two sections 34 km-long of the A1 motorway (from south of Leskovac to Bujanovac), 67 km-long segment of A2 (between Belgrade and Ljig), and 23 kilometers on the A4 (east of Niš to the Bulgarian border). Coach transport is very extensive: almost every place in the country is connected by bus, from largest cities to the villages; in addition there are international routes (mainly to countries of Western Europe with large Serb diaspora). Routes, both domestic and international, are served by more than 100 bus companies, biggest of which are Lasta and Niš-Ekspres. As of 2015, there were 1,833,215 registered passenger cars or 1 passenger car per 3.8 inhabitants. Serbia has 3,819 kilometers of rail tracks, of which 1,279 are electrified and 283 kilometers are double-track railroad. The major rail hub is Belgrade (and to a lesser degree Niš), while the most important railroads include: Belgrade–Bar (Montenegro), Belgrade–Šid–Zagreb (Croatia)/Belgrade–Niš–Sofia (Bulgaria) (part of Pan-European Corridor X), Belgrade–Subotica–Budapest (Hungary) and Niš–Thessaloniki (Greece). Although still a major mode of freight transportation, railroads face increasing problems with the maintenance of the infrastructure and lowering speeds. All rail services are operated by public rail company, Serbian Railways. There are only two airports with regular passenger traffic: Belgrade Nikola Tesla Airport served almost 5 million passengers in 2016, and is a hub of flagship carrier Air Serbia which carried some 2.6 million passengers in 2016. Niš Constantine the Great Airport is mainly catering low-cost airlines. Serbia has a developed inland water transport since there are 1,716 kilometers of navigable inland waterways (1,043 km of navigable rivers and 673 km of navigable canals), which are almost all located in northern third of the country. The most important inland waterway is the Danube (part of Pan-European Corridor VII). Other navigable rivers include Sava, Tisza, Begej and Timiș River, all of which connect Serbia with Northern and Western Europe through the Rhine–Main–Danube Canal and North Sea route, to Eastern Europe via the Tisza, Begej and Danube Black Sea routes, and to Southern Europe via the Sava river. More than 2 million tons of cargo were transported on Serbian rivers and canals in 2016 while the largest river ports are: Novi Sad, Belgrade, Pančevo, Smederevo, Prahovo and Šabac. ===

Telecommunications === Fixed telephone lines connect 81% of households in Serbia, and with about 9.1 million users the number of cellphones surpasses the total population of by 28%. The largest mobile operator is Telekom Srbija with 4.2 million subscribers, followed by Telenor with 2.8 million users and Vip mobile with about 2 million. Some 58% of households have fixed-line (non-mobile) broadband Internet connection while 67% are provided with pay television services (i.e. 38% cable television, 17% IPTV, and 10% satellite). Digital television transition has been completed in 2015 with DVB-T2 standard for signal transmission. === Tourism === Serbia is not a mass-tourism destination but nevertheless has a diverse range of touristic products. In 2017, total of over 3 million tourists were recorded in accommodations, of which some 1.5 million were foreign. Foreign exchange earnings from tourism were estimated at \$1.44 billion. Tourism is mainly focused on the mountains and spas of the country, which are mostly visited by domestic tourists, as well as Belgrade and, to a lesser degree, Novi Sad, which are preferred choices of foreign tourists (almost two-thirds of all foreign visits are made to these two cities). The most famous mountain resorts are Kopaonik, Stara Planina, and Zlatibor. There are also many spas in Serbia, the biggest of which are Vrnjačka Banja, Soko Banja, and Banja Koviljača. City-break and conference tourism is developed in Belgrade and Novi Sad. Other touristic products that Serbia offer are natural wonders like Đavolja varoš, Christian pilgrimage to the many Orthodox monasteries across the country and the river cruising along the Danube. There are several internationally popular music festivals held in Serbia, such as EXIT (with 25–30,000 foreign visitors coming from 60 different countries) and the Guča trumpet festival. == Education and science ==

According to 2011 census, literacy in Serbia stands at 98% of population while computer literacy is at

49% (complete computer literacy is at 34.2%). Same census showed the following levels of education: 16.2% of inhabitants have higher education (10.6% have bachelors or master's degrees, 5.6% have an associate degree), 49% have a secondary education, 20.7% have an elementary education, and 13.7% have not completed elementary education. Education in Serbia is regulated by the Ministry of Education and Science. Education starts in either preschools or elementary schools. Children enroll in elementary schools at the age of seven. Compulsory education consists of eight grades of elementary school. Students have the opportunity to attend gymnasiums and vocational schools for another four years, or to enroll in vocational training for 2 to 3 years. Following the completion of gymnasiums or vocational schools, students have the opportunity to attend university. Elementary and secondary education are also available in languages of recognised minorities in Serbia, where classes are held in Hungarian, Slovak, Albanian, Romanian, Rusyn, Bulgarian as well as Bosnian and Croatian languages. There are 17 universities in Serbia (eight public universities with a total number of 85 faculties and nine private universities with 51 faculties). In 2010/2011 academic year, 181,362 students attended 17 universities (148,248 at public universities and some 33,114 at private universities) while 47,169 attended 81 "higher schools". Public universities in Serbia are: the University of Belgrade (oldest, founded in 1808, and largest university with 89,827 undergraduates and graduates), University of Novi Sad (founded in 1960 and with student body of 47,826), University of Niš (founded in 1965; 27,000 students), University of Kragujevac (founded in 1976; 14,000 students), University of Priština – Kos. Mitrovica, Public University of Novi Pazar as well as two specialist universities – University of Arts and University of Defence. Largest private universities include John Naisbitt University and Singidunum University, both in Belgrade, and Educons University in Novi Sad. Public universities tend to be of a better quality and therefore more renowned than private ones. The University of Belgrade (placed in 301–400 bracket on 2013 Shanghai Ranking of World Universities, being best-placed university in Southeast Europe after those in Athens and Thessaloniki) and University of Novi Sad are generally considered as the best institutions of higher learning in the country. Serbia spent 0.64% of GDP on scientific research in 2012, which is one of the lowest R&D budgets in Europe. Serbia has a long history of excellence in maths and computer sciences which has created a strong pool of engineering talent, although economic sanctions during the 1990s and chronic underinvestment in research forced many scientific professionals to leave the country. Nevertheless, there are several areas in which Serbia still excels such as growing information technology sector, which includes software development as well as outsourcing. It generated \$200 million in exports in 2011, both from international investors and a significant number of dynamic homegrown enterprises. In 2005 the global technology giant, Microsoft, founded the Microsoft Development Center, only its fourth such centre in the world. Among the scientific institutes operating in Serbia, the largest are the Mihajlo Pupin Institute and Vinča Nuclear Institute, both in Belgrade. The Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts is a learned society promoting science and arts from its inception in 1841. With a strong science and technological ecosystem, Serbia has produced a number of renowned scientists that have greatly contributed to the field of science and technology. == Culture == For centuries straddling the boundaries between East and West, the territory of Serbia had been divided among the Eastern and Western halves of the Roman Empire; then between Byzantium and the Kingdom of Hungary; and in the Early modern period between the Ottoman Empire and the Habsburg Empire. These overlapping influences have resulted in cultural varieties throughout Serbia; its north leans to the profile of Central Europe, while the south is characteristic of the wider Balkans and even the Mediterranean. The Byzantine influence on Serbia was profound, firstly through the introduction of Eastern Christianity (Orthodoxy) in the Early Middle Ages. The Serbian Orthodox Church has had an enduring status in Serbia, with the many Serbian monasteries constituting the most valuable cultural monuments left from Serbia in the Middle Ages. Serbia has seen influences of Republic of Venice as well, mainly through trade, literature and romanesque architecture. Serbia has five cultural monuments inscribed in the list of UNESCO World Heritage: the early medieval capital Stari Ras and the 13th-century monastery Sopoćani; the 12th-century Studenica monastery; the Roman complex of Gamzigrad–Felix Romuliana; medieval tombstones Stećci; and finally the endangered Medieval Monuments in Kosovo (the monasteries of Visoki Dečani, Our Lady of Ljeviš, Gračanica and Patriarchal Monastery of Peć). There are two literary monuments on UNESCO's Memory of the World Programme: the 12th-century Miroslav Gospel, and scientist Nikola Tesla's valuable archive. The slava (patron saint veneration) is inscribed on UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage Lists. The Ministry of Culture and Information is tasked with preserving the nation's cultural heritage and overseeing its development. Further activities supporting development of culture are undertaken at local government level. === Art and architecture === Traces

of Roman and early Byzantine Empire architectural heritage are found in many royal cities and palaces in Serbia, like Sirmium, Felix Romuliana and Justiniana Prima. Serbian monasteries are the pinnacle of Serbian medieval art. At the beginning, they were under the influence of Byzantine Art which was particularly felt after the fall of Constantinople in 1204, when many Byzantine artists fled to Serbia. The most noted of these monasteries is Studenica (built around 1190). It was a model for later monasteries, like the Mileševa, Sopoćani, Žiča, Gračanica and Visoki Dečani. In the end of 14th and the 15th centuries, autochthonous architectural style known as Morava style evolved in area around Morava Valley. A characteristic of this style was the wealthy decoration of the frontal church walls. Examples of this include Manasija, Ravanica and Kalenić monasteries. Icons and fresco paintings are often considered the peak of Serbian art. The most famous frescos are White Angel (Mileševa monastery), Crucifixion (Studenica monastery) and Dormition of the Virgin (Sopoćani). Country is dotted with many well-preserved medieval fortifications and castles such as Smederevo Fortress (largest lowland fortress in Europe), Golubac, Maglić, Soko grad, Ostrvica and Ram. During the time of Ottoman occupation, Serbian art was virtually non-existent, with the exception of several Serbian artists who lived in the lands ruled by the Habsburg Monarchy. Traditional Serbian art showed some Baroque influences at the end of the 18th century as shown in the works of Nikola Nešković, Teodor Kračun, Zaharije Orfelin and Jakov Orfelin. Serbian painting showed the influence of Biedermeier, Neoclassicism and Romanticism during the 19th century. The most important Serbian painters of the first half of the 20th century were Paja Jovanović and Uroš Predić of Realism, Cubist Sava Šumanović, Milena Pavlović-Barili and Nadežda Petrović of Impressionism, Expressionist Milan Konjović. Noted painters of the second half of 20th century include Marko Čelebonović, Petar Lubarda, Milo Milunović, and Vladimir Veličković. Anastas Jovanović was one of the earliest photographers in the world, while Marina Abramović is one of the world leading performance artists. Pirot carpet is known as one of the most important traditional handicrafts in Serbia. There are around 100 art museums in Serbia, of which the most prominent is the National Museum of Serbia, founded in 1844; it houses one of the largest art collections in the Balkans with more than 400,000 exhibits, over 5,600 paintings and 8,400 drawings and prints, including many foreign masterpiece collections. Other art museums of note are Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade and Museum of Vojvodina in Novi Sad.

=== Literature ===

The beginning of Serbian literacy dates back to the activity of the brothers Cyril and Methodius in the Balkans. Monuments of Serbian literacy from the early 11th century can be found, written in Glagolitic. Starting in the 12th century, books were written in Cyrillic. From this epoch, the oldest Serbian Cyrillic book editorial are the Miroslav Gospels from 1186. The Miroslav Gospels are considered to be the oldest book of Serbian medieval history and as such has entered UNESCO's Memory of the World Register. Notable medieval authors include Saint Sava, Jefimija, Stefan Lazarević, Constantine of Kostenets and others. Due to Ottoman occupation, when every aspect of formal literacy stopped, Serbia stayed excluded from the entire Renaissance flow in Western culture. However, the tradition of oral story-telling blossomed, shaping itself through epic poetry inspired by at the times still recent Kosovo battle and folk tales deeply rooted in Slavic mythology. Serbian epic poetry in those times has seen as the most effective way in preserving the national identity. The oldest known, entirely fictional poems, make up the Non-historic cycle; this one is followed by poems inspired by events before, during and after Kosovo Battle. The special cycles are dedicated to Serbian legendary hero, Marko Kraljević, then about hajduks and uskoks, and the last one dedicated to the liberation of Serbia in 19th century. Some of the best known folk ballads are The Death of the Mother of the Jugović Family and The Mourning Song of the Noble Wife of the Asan Aga (1646), translated into European languages by Goethe, Walter Scott, Pushkin and Mérimée. The most notable tale from Serbian folklore is The Nine Peahens and the Golden Apples. Baroque trends in Serbian literature emerged in the late 17th century. Notable Baroque-influenced authors were Gavril Stefanović Venclović, Jovan Rajić, Zaharije Orfelin, Andrija Zmajević and others. Dositej Obradović was the most prominent figure of the Age of Enlightenment, while the most notable Classicist writer was Jovan Sterija Popović, although his works also contained elements of Romanticism. In the era of national revival, in the first half of the 19th century, Vuk Stefanović Karadžić collected Serbian folk literature, and reformed the Serbian language and spelling, paving the way for Serbian Romanticism. The first half of the 19th century was dominated by Romanticism, with Branko Radićević, Đura Jakšić, Jovan Jovanović Zmaj and Laza Kostić being the most notable representatives, while the second half of the century was marked by Realist writers such as Milovan Glišić, Laza Lazarević, Simo Matavulj, Stevan Sremac, Vojislav Ilić, Branislav Nušić, Radoje Domanović and Borisav Stanković. The 20th century was dominated by the prose writers Meša Selimović (Death and the Dervish), Miloš Crnjanski (Migrations), Isidora Sekulić (The Chronicle of

a Small Town Cemetery), Branko Ćopić (Eagles Fly Early), Borislav Pekić (The Time of Miracles), Danilo Kiš (The Encyclopedia of the Dead), Dobrica Ćosić (The Roots), Aleksandar Tišma, Milorad Pavić and others. Pavić is the most widely acclaimed Serbian author of the beginning of the 21st century, most notably for his Dictionary of the Khazars (Rečnik Hazarski rečnik), which has been translated into 24 languages. Notable poets include Milan Rakić, Jovan Dučić, Vladislav Petković Dis, Rastko Petrović, Stanislav Vinaver, Dušan Matić, Branko Miljković, Vasko Popa, Oskar Davičo, Miodrag Pavlović, and Stevan Raičković. Notable contemporary authors include David Albahari, Svetislav Basara, Goran Petrović, Gordana Kuić, Vuk Drašković, and Vladislav Bajac. Ivo Andrić (The Bridge on the Drina) is possibly the best-known Serbian author; he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1961. The most beloved face of Serbian literature was Desanka Maksimović, who for seven decades remained the leading lady of Yugoslav poetry. She is honored with statues, and postage stamps, and streets are named for her. There are 551 public libraries biggest of which are: National Library of Serbia in Belgrade with funds of about 5 million volumes, and Matica Srpska (oldest Serbian cultural institution, founded in 1826) in Novi Sad with nearly 3.5 million volumes. In 2010, there were 10,989 books and brochures published. The book publishing market is dominated by several major publishers such as Laguna and Vulkan (both of which operate their own bookstore chains) and the industry's centerpiece event, annual Belgrade Book Fair, is the most visited cultural event in Serbia with 158,128 visitors in 2013. The highlight of the literary scene is awarding of NIN Prize, given every January since 1954 for the best newly published novel in Serbian language (during times of Yugoslavia, in Serbo-Croatian language).

=== Music ===

Composer and musicologist Stevan Stojanović Mokranjac is considered the founder of modern Serbian music. The Serbian composers of the first generation Petar Konjović, Stevan Hristić, and Miloje Milojević maintained the national expression and modernized the romanticism into the direction of impressionism. Other famous classical Serbian composers include Isidor Bajić, Stanislav Binički and Josif Marinković. There are three opera houses in Serbia: Opera of the National Theatre and Madlenianum Opera, both in Belgrade, and Opera of the Serbian National Theatre in Novi Sad. Four symphonic orchestra operate in the country: Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra, Niš Symphony Orchestra, Symphonic Orchestra of Radio Television of Serbia, and Novi Sad Philharmonic Orchestra. The Choir of Radio Television of Serbia is a leading vocal ensemble in the country. The BEMUS is one of the most prominent classical music festivals in the South East Europe. Traditional Serbian music includes various kinds of bagpipes, flutes, horns, trumpets, lutes, psalteries, drums and cymbals. The kolo is the traditional collective folk dance, which has a number of varieties throughout the regions. The most popular are those from Užice and Morava region. Sung epic poetry has been an integral part of Serbian and Balkan music for centuries. In the highlands of Serbia these long poems are typically accompanied on a one-string fiddle called the gusle, and concern themselves with themes from history and mythology. There are records of gusle being played at the court of the 13th-century King Stefan Nemanjić. Pop music has mainstream popularity. Željko Joksimović won second place at the 2004 Eurovision Song Contest and Marija Šerifović managed to win the 2007 Eurovision Song Contest with the song "Molitva", and Serbia was the host of the 2008 edition of the contest. Most popular pop singers include likes of Miroslav Balašević, Goca Tržan, Zdravko Čolić, Aleksandra Radović, Vlado Georgiev, Jelena Tomašević and Nataša Bekvalac among others. The Serbian rock which was during the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s part of former Yugoslav rock scene, used to be well developed, featuring various rock genres, and was well covered in the media, which included numerous magazines, radio and TV shows. During the 1990s and 2000s popularity of rock music declined in Serbia, and although several major mainstream acts managed to sustain their popularity, an underground and independent music scene developed. The 2000s saw a revival of the mainstream scene and the appearance of a large number of notable acts. The most notable Serbian rock acts include Bajaga i Instruktori, Disciplina Kičme, Ekatarina Velika, Električni Orgazam, Eva Braun, Kerber, Neverne Bebe, Partibrejkers, Ritam Nereda, Orthodox Celts, Rambo Amadeus, Riblja Čorba, S.A.R.S., Smak, Van Gogh, YU Grupa and others. Folk music in its original form has been a prominent music style since World War One following the early success of Sofka Nikolić. The music has been further promoted by Danica Obrenić, Anđelija Milić, Nada Mamula, and even later, during 60s and 70s, with stars like Silvana Armenulić, Toma Zdravković, Lepa Lukić, Vasilija Radojčić, Vida Pavlović and Gordana Stojićević. Turbo-folk music is subgenre that has developed in Serbia in the late 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s and has since enjoyed an immense popularity through acts of Dragana Mirković, Zorica Brunclik, Šaban Šaulić, Ana Bekuta, Sinan Sakić, Vesna Zmijanac, Mile Kitić, Snežana Đurišić, Šemsa Suljaković, and Nada Topčagić. It is a blend of folk music with pop and/or dance elements and can be seen as a result of the

urbanization of folk music. In recent period turbo-folk featured even more pop music elements, and some of the performers were labeled as pop-folk. The most famous among them are Ceca (often considered to be the biggest music star of Serbia), Jelena Karleuša, Aca Lukas, Seka Aleksić, Dara Bubamara, Indira Radić, Saša Matić, Viki Miljković, Stoja and Lepa Brena, arguably the most prominent performer of former Yugoslavia. Balkan Brass, or truba ("trumpet") is a popular genre, especially in Central and Southern Serbia where Balkan Brass originated. The music has its tradition from the First Serbian Uprising. The trumpet was used as a military instrument to wake and gather soldiers and announce battles, the trumpet took on the role of entertainment during downtime, as soldiers used it to transpose popular folk songs. When the war ended and the soldiers returned to the rural life, the music entered civilian life and eventually became a music style, accompanying births, baptisms, weddings, and funerals. There are two main varieties of this genre, one from Western Serbia and the other from Southern Serbia. The best known Serbian Brass musician is Boban Marković, also one of the biggest names in the world of modern brass band bandleaders. Most popular music festival are Guča Trumpet Festival with over 300,000 annual visitors and EXIT in Novi Sad ("The best European festival" in 2007 by UK Festival Awards and Yourope – the European Association of the 40 largest festivals in Europe) with 200,000 visitors in 2013. Other festivals include Nišville Jazz Festival in Niš and Gitarijada rock festival in Zaječar.

=== Theatre and cinema === Serbia has a well-established theatrical tradition with Joakim Vujić considered the founder of modern Serbian theater. Serbia has 38 professional theatres, the most important of which are National Theatre in Belgrade, Serbian National Theatre in Novi Sad, National Theatre in Subotica, National Theatre in Niš and Knjaževsko-srpski teatar in Kragujevac (the oldest theatre in Serbia, established in 1835). The Belgrade International Theatre Festival – BITEF, founded in 1967, is one of the oldest theater festivals in the world, and it has become one of the five biggest European festivals. Sterijino pozorje is, on the other hand, festival showcasing national drama plays. The most important Serbian playwrighters were Jovan Sterija Popović and Branislav Nušić, while today renowned names are Dušan Kovačević and Biljana Srbljanović. The Serbian cinema is one of the most dynamic smaller European cinematographies. Serbia's film industry is heavily subsidised by the government, mainly through grants approved by the Film Centre of Serbia. In 2011, there were 17 domestic feature films produced. There are 22 operating cinemas in the country, of which 12 are multiplexes, with total attendance exceeding 2.6 million and comparatively high percentage of 32.3% of total sold tickets for domestic films. Modern PFI Studios located in Šimanovci is nowadays Serbia's only film studio complex; it consists of 9 state-of-the-art sound stages and attracts mainly international productions, primarily American and West European. The Yugoslav Film Archive used to be former Yugoslavia's and now is Serbia national film archive – with over 95 thousand film prints, it is among five largest film archives in the world. Serbian cinema dates back to 1896 with the release of the oldest movie in the Balkans, The Life and Deeds of the Immortal Vožd Karađorđević, a biography about Serbian revolutionary leader, Karađorđević. The most famous Serbian filmmaker is Emir Kusturica who won two Golden Palms for Best Feature Film at the Cannes Film Festival, for When Father Was Away on Business in 1985 and then again for Underground in 1995. Other renowned directors include Goran Paskaljević, Dušan Makavejev, Želimir Žilnik, Goran Marković, Srđan Dragojević and Srđan Golubović among others. Steve Tesich, Serbian-American screenwriter, won the Academy Award for Best Original Screenplay in 1979 for the movie Breaking Away. Some of the most prominent movie stars in Serbia have left celebrated heritage in cinematography of Yugoslavia as well. Notable mentions are Zoran Radmilović, Pavle Vuisić, Radmila Savićević, Olivera Marković, Mija Aleksić, Miodrag Petrović Čkalja, Ružica Sokić, Velimir Bata Živojinović, Danilo Bata Stojković, Seka Sablić, Olivera Katarina, Dragan Nikolić, Mira Stupica, Nikola Simić, Bora Todorović, and others. Milena Dravić is the most celebrated actress in Serbian cinematography. The actress has won Best Actress Award on Cannes Film Festival in 1980.

=== Media === The freedom of the press and the freedom of speech are guaranteed by the constitution of Serbia. Serbia is ranked 54th out of 180 countries in the 2014 Press Freedom Index report compiled by Reporters Without Borders. Both reports noted that media outlets and journalists continue to face partisan and government pressure over editorial policies. Also, the media are now more heavily dependent on advertising contracts and government subsidies to survive financially. According to AGB Nielsen Research in 2009, Serbs on average watch five hours of television per day, making it the highest average in Europe. There are seven nationwide free-to-air television channels, with public broadcaster Radio Television of Serbia (RTS) operating three (RTS1, RTS2 and RTS3) and remaining four are private broadcasters: Pink, Happy TV, Prva, and O2.TV. Viewing shares for these channels in 2016 were as follows: 20.2% for RTS1, 14.1% for Pink, 9.4% for Happy TV, 9.0% for Prva, 4.7% for

O2.TV, and 2.5% for RTS2. There are 28 regional television channels and 74 local television channels. Besides terrestrial channels there are dozens Serbian television channels available only on cable or satellite. There are 247 radio stations in Serbia. Out of these, six are radio stations with national coverage, including two of public broadcaster Radio Television of Serbia (Radio Belgrade 1 and Radio Belgrade 2/Radio Belgrade 3) and four private ones (Radio S1, Radio S2, Play Radio, and Radio Hit FM). Also, there are 34 regional stations and 207 local stations. There are 305 newspapers published in Serbia of which 12 are daily newspapers. Dailies Politika and Danas are Serbia's papers of record, former being the oldest newspaper in the Balkans, founded in 1904. Highest circulation newspapers are tabloids Vešernje Novosti, Blic, Kurir, and Informer, all with more than 100,000 copies sold. There are one daily newspaper devoted to sports – Sportski žurnal, one business daily Privredni pregled, two regional newspapers (Dnevnik published in Novi Sad and Narodne novine from Niš), and one minority-language daily (Magyar Szó in Hungarian, published in Subotica). There are 1,351 magazines published in the country. Those include weekly news magazines NIN, Vreme and Nedeljnik, popular science magazine of Politikin Zabavnik, women's Lepota & Zdravlje, auto magazine SAT revija, IT magazine Svet kompjutera. In addition, there is a wide selection of Serbian editions of international magazines, such as Cosmopolitan, Elle, Grazia, Men's Health, National Geographic, Le Monde diplomatique, Playboy, Hello! and others. There are two main news agencies, Beta and Fonet. As of 2017, out of 432 web-portals (mainly on the .rs domain) the most visited are online editions of printed dailies Blic and Kurir, news web-portal B92, and classifieds KupujemProdajem. === Cuisine === Serbian cuisine is largely heterogeneous, sharing characteristics of the Balkans (especially former Yugoslavia), the Mediterranean (Greek in particular), Turkish, and Central European (especially Austrian and Hungarian) cuisines. Food is very important in Serbian social life, particularly during religious holidays such as Christmas, Easter and feast days i.e. slava. Staples of the Serbian diet include bread, meat, fruits, vegetables, and dairy products. Bread is the basis of all Serbian meals, and it plays an important role in Serbian cuisine and can be found in religious rituals. A traditional Serbian welcome is to offer bread and salt to guests. Meat is widely consumed, as is fish. Serbian specialties include leševani (caseless sausages made of minced meat, which is always grilled and seasoned), pljeskavica, sarma, kajmak (a dairy product similar to clotted cream), gibanica (cheese and kajmak pie), ajvar (a roasted red pepper spread), proja (cornbread), and kašamak (corn-flour porridge). Serbians claim their country as the birthplace of rakia (rakija), a highly alcoholic drink primarily distilled from fruit. Rakia in various forms is found throughout the Balkans, notably in Bulgaria, Croatia, Slovenia, Montenegro, Hungary and Turkey. Slivovitz (šljivovica), a plum brandy, is a type of rakia which is considered the national drink of Serbia. === Sports === Sports play an important role in Serbian society, and the country has a strong sporting history. The most popular sports in Serbia are football, basketball, tennis, volleyball, water polo and handball. Professional sports in Serbia are organized by sporting federations and leagues (in case of team sports). One of particularities of Serbian professional sports is existence of many multi-sports clubs (called "sports societies"), biggest and most successful of which are Red Star, Partizan, and Beograd in Belgrade, Vojvodina in Novi Sad, Radnički in Kragujevac, Spartak in Subotica. Football is the most popular sport in Serbia, and the Football Association of Serbia with 146,845 registered players, is the largest sporting association in the country. Dragan Džajić was officially recognized as "the best Serbian player of all times" by the Football Association of Serbia, and more recently the likes of Nemanja Vidić, Dejan Stanković and Branislav Ivanović play for the elite clubs of Europe, developing the nation's reputation as one of the world's biggest exporters of footballers. The Serbia national football team lacks relative success although it qualified for three of the last four FIFA World Cups. Serbia national youth football teams have won 2013 U-19 European Championship and 2015 U-20 World Cup. The two main football clubs in Serbia are Red Star (winner of the 1991 European Cup) and Partizan (finalist of the 1966 European Cup), both from Belgrade. The rivalry between the two clubs is known as the "Eternal Derby", and is often cited as one of the most exciting sports rivalries in the world. Serbia is one of the traditional powerhouses of world basketball, as Serbia men's national basketball team have won two World Championships (in 1998 and 2002), three European Championships (1995, 1997, and 2001) and two Olympic silver medals (in 1996 and 2016) as well. The women's national basketball team won the European Championship in 2015 and Olympic bronze medal in 2016. A total of 31 Serbian players have played in the NBA in last two decades, including Predrag "Peja" Stojaković (three-time NBA All-Star) and Vlade Divac (2001 NBA All-Star and FIBA Hall of Famer). The renowned "Serbian coaching school" produced many of the most successful European basketball coaches of all times, such as Željko Obradović, who won a record 9 Euroleague titles as a coach. KK Partizan basketball

club was the 1992 European champion. Recent success of Serbian tennis players has led to an immense growth in the popularity of tennis in the country. Novak Đoković, twelve-time Grand Slam champion, finished in 2011, 2012, 2014 and 2015 as No. 1 in the world. Ana Ivanovic (champion of 2008 French Open) and Jelena Janković were both ranked No. 1 in the WTA Rankings. There were two No. 1 ranked-tennis double players as well: Nenad Zimonjić (three-time men's double and four-time mixed double Grand Slam champion) and Slobodan Živojinović. The Serbia men's tennis national team won the 2010 Davis Cup while Serbia women's tennis national team reached the final at 2012 Fed Cup. Serbia is one of the leading volleyball countries in the world. Its men's national team won the gold medal at 2000 Olympics, and has won the European Championship twice. The women's national volleyball team won the European Championship twice as well as Olympic silver medal in 2016. The Serbia men's national water polo team is the second most successful national team after Hungary, having won Olympic gold medal in 2016, three World Championships (2005, 2009 and 2015), and six European Championships in 2001, 2003, 2006, 2012, 2014 and 2016 respectively. VK Partizan has won a joint-record seven European champion titles. Other noted Serbian athletes include: swimmers Milorad Čavić (2009 World champion on 50 meters butterfly and silver medalist on 100 meters butterfly as well as 2008 Olympic silver medalist on 100 meters butterfly in historic race with American swimmer Michael Phelps) and Nađa Higl (2009 World champion in 200 meters breaststroke – the first Serbian woman to become a world champion in swimming); track and field athlete Ivana Španović (long-jumper; 2016 European champion and bronze medalist at the 2016 Olympics); wrestler Davor Štefanek (2016 Olympic gold medalist), and taekwondoist Milica Mandić (2012 Olympic gold medalist). Serbia has hosted several major sport competitions in the last ten years, including the 2005 Men's European Basketball Championship, 2005 Men's European Volleyball Championship, 2006 and 2016 Men's European Water Polo Championships, 2009 Summer Universiade, 2012 European Men's Handball Championship, and 2013 World Women's Handball Championship. The most important annual sporting events held in the country are Belgrade Marathon and Tour de Serbie cycling race. == Public holidays == The public holidays in Serbia are defined by the Law of national and other holidays in the Republic of Serbia. == See also == National colours of Serbia International rankings of Serbia Outline of Serbia Timeline of Serbian history == References == Sources: == External links == Official website National tourist organisation of Serbia Serbia from UCB Libraries GovPubs. Serbia at Curlie (based on DMOZ) Serbia profile from the BBC News. Wikimedia Atlas of Serbia Geographic data related to Serbia at OpenStreetMap Key Development Forecasts for Serbia from International Futures. "Serbia". The World Factbook. Central Intelligence Agency. Serbia Corruption Profile from the Business Anti-Corruption Portal