



Kosovo



Background The Ottoman Empire took control of Kosovo in 1389 after defeating Serbian forces. Large numbers of Turks and Albanians moved to the region, and by the end of the 19th century, Albanians had replaced Serbs as the majority ethnic group in Kosovo. Serbia reacquired control of Kosovo during the First Balkan War of 1912, and after World War II, Kosovo became an autonomous province of Serbia in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY). Increasing Albanian nationalism in the 1980s led to riots and calls for Kosovo's independence, but in 1989, Belgrade -- which has in turn served as the capital of Serbia and Yugoslavia -- revoked Kosovo's autonomous status. When the SFRY broke up in 1991, Kosovo Albanian leaders organized an independence referendum, and Belgrade's repressive response led to an insurgency. Kosovo remained part of Serbia, which joined with Montenegro to declare a new Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) in 1992.

In 1998, Belgrade launched a brutal counterinsurgency campaign, with some 800,000 ethnic Albanians expelled from their homes in Kosovo. After international mediation failed, a NATO military operation began in March 1999 and forced Belgrade to withdraw its forces from Kosovo. UN Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999) placed Kosovo under the temporary control of the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). Negotiations in 2006-07 ended without agreement between Serbia and Kosovo, though the UN issued a comprehensive report that endorsed independence. On 17 February 2008, the Kosovo Assembly declared Kosovo independent.

Serbia continues to reject Kosovo's independence, but the two countries began EU-facilitated discussions in 2013 to normalize relations, which resulted in several agreements. Additional agreements were reached in 2015 and 2023, but implementation remains incomplete. In 2022, Kosovo formally applied for membership in the EU, which is contingent on fulfillment of accession criteria, and the Council of Europe. Kosovo is also seeking UN and NATO memberships.

Capital name: Pristina (Prishtine, Prishtina)

Government type parliamentary republic

Area
total : 10,887 sq km
land: 10,887 sq km
water: 0 sq km

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

Natural resources	nickel, lead, zinc, magnesium, lignite, kaolin, chrome, bauxite
Population	total: 1,977,093 (2024 est.)
Population growth rate	0.68% (2024 est.)
Ethnic groups	Albanians 92.9%, Bosniaks 1.6%, Serbs 1.5%, Turk 1.1%, Ashkali 0.9%, Egyptian 0.7%, Gorani 0.6%, Romani 0.5%, other/unspecified 0.2% (2011 est.)
Religions	Muslim 95.6%, Roman Catholic 2.2%, Orthodox 1.5%, other 0.1%, none 0.1%, unspecified 0.6% (2011 est.)
Languages	Albanian (official) 94.5%, Bosnian 1.7%, Serbian (official) 1.6%, Turkish 1.1%, other 0.9% (includes Romani), unspecified 0.1% (2011 est.)
Executive branch	chief of state: President Vjosa OSMANI-Sadriu (since 4 April 2021) head of government: Acting Prime Minister Albin KURTI (since 15 April 2025)
Legislative branch	legislature name: Assembly (Kuvendi i Kosoves/Skupstina Kosova)
Diplomatic representation in the US	chief of mission: Ambassador Ilir DUGOLLI (since 13 January 2022)
Diplomatic representation from the US	chief of mission: Ambassador (vacant); Chargé d'Affaires Anu PRATTIPATI (since January 2025)
Economic overview	small-but-growing European economy; non-EU member but unilateral euro user; very high unemployment, especially youth; vulnerable reliance on diaspora tourism services, curtailed by COVID-19 disruptions; unclear public loan portfolio health
Real GDP (purchasing power parity)	\$25.019 billion (2024 est.) \$23.962 billion (2023 est.) \$23.025 billion (2022 est.)
Real GDP per capita	\$16,400 (2024 est.) \$14,200 (2023 est.) \$13,000 (2022 est.)
Exports	\$4.156 billion (2023 est.) \$3.579 billion (2022 est.) \$3.138 billion (2021 est.)
Exports - partners	United States 16%, Albania 15%, North Macedonia 12%, Germany 8%, Italy 8% (2021)
Exports - commodities	mattress materials, iron alloys, metal piping, scrap iron, building plastics (2021)
Imports	\$7.362 billion (2023 est.) \$6.661 billion (2022 est.) \$6.128 billion (2021 est.)
Imports - partners	Germany 13%, Turkey 13%, China 10%, Serbia 7%, Italy 6% (2021)
Imports - commodities	refined petroleum, cars, iron rods, electricity, cigars, packaged medicines (2021)

Population Pyramid

