

Kosovo

Country name	Kosovo
State title	Republic of Kosovo
Name of citizen	Kosovan
Official languages	Albanian (sqi); Serbian (srp) ¹
Country name in official languages	Kosova (sqi); Косово / Kosovo (srp)
State title in official languages	Republika e Kosovës (sqi); Република Косово / Republika Kosovo (srp)
Scripts	Roman script (sqi and srp) and some use of Serbian Cyrillic
Romanization System	The Serbian Cyrillic table of correspondences can be applied to Serbian Cyrillic if encountered.
ISO-3166 code (alpha-2/alpha-3)	None – see footnote ² . XK/XKS can be used when a code is required.
English conventional name for capital	Pristina
Local name of capital	Prishtinë / Priština
Population / area	1,602,515 2024 est. ³ / 10,887km ²

Introduction

Kosovo declared its independence from Serbia in 2008. This was not recognised by Serbia itself, which continues to consider Kosovo as part of its sovereign territory. Although Kosovo's independence is recognised by the United Kingdom (along with 107 other countries), it is not a UN member state.

Prior to the separation, Kosovo had been part of Yugoslavia until that state's break-up in the early 1990s, then part of Serbia and Montenegro (which separated into two separate countries in 2006), before breaking away to form an independent state in 2008.

¹ ISO 639 codes are given for the languages mentioned in this Factfile.

² Note that because Kosovo is not a UN member state, there are no ISO codes for either Kosovo or its subdivisions. ISO administrative codes for Serbia include (Serbia's view of) Kosovo's districts but these should not be used for HMG purposes. The codes shown for subdivisions in this document are those of the US Geopolitical Entities, Names, and Codes (GENC) standard. In the absence of an international standard for Kosovo, UK users may use the US GENC codes for Kosovo, XK/XKS for the entity itself and the codes as shown in the code column in the administrative divisions table (p.4). It is also of note that, although HMG and US use XK/XKS, Kosovo itself often uses KS/RKS.

³ [Kosovo Statistics Agency \(KAS\)](#)

Kosovo is landlocked and shares international boundaries with Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia.

Geographical names policy

PCGN policy for names in Kosovo is to show dual-language Albanian and Serbian forms for all place names (unless the spelling is the same in both Albanian and Serbian, in which case this single name is all that is required, e.g. Zubin Potok). Albanian names will appear first followed by the Serbian form, separated by a slash, e.g. Ferizaj/Uroševac.

Further information on the background and evolution of this policy can be seen in PCGN's paper, *Toponymic Notes on Kosovo*, available on request.

Sources for geographical names

Kosovo maintains a geoportal available at: <http://geoportal.rks-gov.net/en> but importantly the names therein are shown in Albanian only so this cannot be used as a standalone source for HMG purposes.

Serbian language names are, naturally, contained in Serbia's national digital platform: [GeoSrbija](#). This may be used for reference, though it cannot be considered an official source, and should be used with caution given HMG's recognition of Kosovo as an independent state.

The US Board on Geographic Names (BGN) [Geographic Names Server](#) is a good source of names for Kosovo.

It is important to note that the UN and ISO do not recognise Kosovo as an independent state, therefore information from these organisations may not always be suitable to use for HMG purposes. For clarification or guidance, please contact PCGN.

Language and People

Albanian (sqi) and Serbian (srp)⁴ have official status across the country. In addition, there are three recognised regional languages: Bosnian, Romany and Turkish. Although Serbian within Serbia is official in both Roman and Cyrillic scripts, it is understood, given that the other official languages use only Roman script, that Serbian within Kosovo predominantly uses the Roman script. Bilingual street signs, for instance, appear in Albanian (in its indefinite form), and Serbian Roman script only.

If encountered, Serbian Cyrillic script may be converted to its Roman-script equivalent by applying the [Table of Correspondences](#) between the two systems approved by US and UK governments.

The official results of the 2024 census showed a population of 1,602,515 inhabitants, down from previous estimates of over 1.9 million. According to the [2024 census](#), Kosovo's population is nearly 93% ethnic Albanian, with ethnic Serbs forming the second-largest grouping with 2.3%. Other significant groups include ethnic Ashkali, Bosniaks, Gorani, Roma, and Turks.

⁴ Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian are sometimes grouped (together with Montenegrin) in a catch-all language code (hbs).

Nouns in Albanian may be in the definite or indefinite grammatical forms, which usually makes a minor difference to the end of the word. PCGN practice is to use the indefinite form for all populated place names, short-form administrative division names and all physical feature names which do not include a generic term. The definite form will be used for all long-form administrative division names and all physical feature names which contain a generic term.

Inventory of characters (and their Unicode encodings⁵):

Albanian

In addition to the unmodified letters of the basic Roman alphabet, the **Albanian** language contains the following letter-diacritic combinations:

Upper-case character	Unicode encoding	Lower-case character	Unicode encoding
Ç	00C7	ç	00E7
Ë	00CB	ë	00EB

Serbian

The [table of correspondences between Serbian Cyrillic and Roman](#) contains in its Roman-script form the following letter-diacritic combinations in addition to the unmodified letters of the basic Roman script:

Upper-case character	Unicode encoding	Lower-case character	Unicode encoding
Đ	0110	đ	0111
Ž	017D	ž	017E
Lj *	01C8	lj *	01C9
Nj *	01CB	nj *	01CB
Ć	0106	ć	0107
Č	010C	č	010D
Dž *	01C5	dž *	01C6
Š	0160	š	0161

*Note that these characters can also be reproduced with individual letters (e.g. lj).

Turkish

In addition to the unmodified letters of the basic Roman alphabet, the **Turkish** language contains the following letter-diacritic combinations and special letters:

Upper-case character	Unicode encoding	Lower-case character	Unicode encoding
Â	00C2	â	00E2
Ç	00C7	ç	00E7
Ğ	011E	ğ	011F
Î	00CE	î	00EE
İ	0130	ı	0131
Ö	00D6	ö	00F6
Ş	015E	ş	015F
Ü	00DC	ü	00FC
Û	00DB	û	00FB

⁵ See www.unicode.org

Administrative structure

The basic level of administrative division in Kosovo is the municipality. There are currently 38 municipalities (in Albanian: *komunë*, in Serbian: *opština* (општина)) in Kosovo: 27 of these have an Albanian majority, 10, a Serb majority (shown with * in the table below) and 1 (Mamushë/Mamuša/Mamuša⁶), a Turkish majority.

Kosovo's municipalities are grouped into seven non-administrative regions used by the [Kosovo Agency of Statistics](#) (KAS) and other state bodies for planning and reporting. The seven regional divisions are: Prishtinë/Priština, Mitrovicë/Mitrovica, Pejë/Peć, Prizren, Ferizaj/Uroševac, Gjilan/Gnjilane, Gjakovë/Đakovica.

ADM1 Albanian/Serbian	Administrative centre Albanian/Serbian	Serbian Cyrillic form of centre for reference	Code for reference ²	Centre location
Deçan/Dečani [also seen as Dečane in Serbian]	Deçan/Dečani	Дечани	XK-01	42°32'16"N 20°17'28"E
Dragash/Dragaš	Dragash/Dragaš	Драгаш	XK-02	42°01'35"N 20°39'12"E
Ferizaj/Uroševac	Ferizaj/Uroševac	Урошевац	XK-03	42°22'14"N 21°09'19"E
Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje	Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje	Косово Поље	XK-04	42°39'50"N 21°05'46"E
Gjakovë/Đakovica	Gjakovë/Đakovica	Ђаковица	XK-05	42°22'49"N 20°25'51"E
Gjilan/Gnjilane	Gjilan/Gnjilane	Гњилане	XK-06	42°28'08"N 21°27'48"E
Glllogovc/Glogovac [also seen as Drenas in Serbian]	Glllogovc/Glogovac (Drenas)	Глоговац	XK-07	42°37'42"N 20°53'38"E
Graçanicë/Gračanica*	Graçanicë/Gračanica	Грачаница	XK-08	42°36'04"N 21°11'45"E

⁶ The Turkish name Mamuşa is also official in this municipality.

ADM1 Albanian/Serbian	Administrative centre Albanian/Serbian	Serbian Cyrillic form of centre for reference	Code for reference ²	Centre location
Hani i Elezit/Elez Han [also seen as Đeneral Janković in Serbian] ⁷	Hani i Elezit/Elez Han (Đeneral Janković)	Елез Хан	XK-09	42°09'00"N 21°17'48"E
Istog/Istok	Istog/Istok	Исток	XK-10	42°46'51"N 20°29'15"E
Junik	Junik	Јуник	XK-11	42°28'33"N 20°16'38"E
Kaçanik/Kaçanik	Kaçanik/Kaçanik	Качаник	XK-12	42°13'55"N 21°15'34"E
Kamenicë/Kamenica	Kamenicë/Kamenica	Каменица	XK-13	42°34'41"N 21°34'49"E
Klinë/Klina	Klinë/Klina	Клина	XK-14	42°37'18"N 20°34'40"E
Klllokot/Klokot*	Klllokot/Klokot	Клокот	XK-15	42°22'17"N 21°22'28"E
Leposaviq/Leposavić*	Leposaviq/Leposavić	Лепосавић	XK-16	43°06'14"N 20°48'10"E
Lipjan/Lipljan	Lipjan/Lipljan	Липљан	XK-17	42°31'18"N 21°07'33"E
Malishevë/Mališevo	Malishevë/Mališevo	Малишево	XK-18	42°28'56"N 20°44'45"E
Mamushë/Mamuša/Mamuša ⁶	Mamushë/Mamuša/Mamuša	Мамуша	XK-19	42°19'51"N 20°43'37"E
Mitrovicë e Jugut/Južna Mitrovica (Mitrovica South) ⁸	Mitrovicë/Mitrovica	Митровица	XK-38	42°53'00"N 20°52'00"E
Mitrovicë e Veriut/Severna Mitrovica* (Mitrovica North) ⁸	Mitrovicë/Mitrovica	Митровица	XK-39	42°53'00"N 20°52'00"E
Novobërdë/Novo Brdo*	Novobërdë/Novo Brdo	Ново Брдо	XK-21	42°37'04"N 21°25'11"E
Obiliq/Obilić	Obiliq/Obilić	Обилић	XK-22	42°41'13"N 21°04'13"E

⁷ Elez Han became the official name in 2012, replacing Đeneral Janković. Nevertheless, given the continuing references to the former name, it may be useful to retain it as a bracketed reference.

⁸ The anglicised form can be included for reference, if felt to be useful.

ADM1 Albanian/Serbian	Administrative centre Albanian/Serbian	Serbian Cyrillic form of centre for reference	Code for reference ²	Centre location
Partesh/Parteš*	Partesh/Parteš	Партеш	XK-23	42°24'07"N 21°26'01"E
Pejë/Peć	Pejë/Peć	Пећ	XK-24	42°39'36"N 20°17'32"E
Podujevë/Podujevo	Podujevë/Podujevo	Подујево	XK-25	42°54'40"N 21°11'24"E
Prishtinë/Priština	Prishtinë/Priština	Приштина	XK-26	42°20'00"N 21°10'21"E
Prizren	Prizren	Призрен	XK-27	42°12'50"N 20°44'23"E
Rahovec/Orahovac	Rahovec/Orahovac	Ораховац	XK-28	42°23'58"N 20°39'17"E
Ranillug/Ranilug*	Ranillug/Ranilug	Ранилуг	XK-29	42°29'32"N 21°35'56"E
Shtërpcë/Štrpce*	Shtërpcë/Štrpce	Штрпце	XK-30	42°14'22"N 21°01'38"E
Shtime/Štimlje	Shtime/Štimlje	Штимље	XK-31	42°25'59"N 21°02'23"E
Skënderaj/Srbica	Skënderaj/Srbica	Србица	XK-32	42°44'48"N 20°47'19"E
Suharekë/Suva Reka	Suharekë/Suva Reka	Сува Река	XK-33	42°21'31"N 20°49'30"E
Viti/Vitina	Viti/Vitina	Витина	XK-34	42°19'17"N 21°21'30"E
Vushtrri/Vučitrn	Vushtrri/Vučitrn	Вучитрн	XK-35	42°49'23"N 20°58'03"E
Zubin Potok*	Zubin Potok	Зубин Поток	XK-36	42°54'52"N 20°41'23"E
Zvečan/Zvečan*	Zvečan/Zvečan	Звечан	XK-37	42°54'27"N 20°50'25"E

Other significant locations

PCGN Approved name ⁹	Official names in Kosovo: Albanian/Serbian Roman (Serbian Cyrillic)	Other names	Feature Type	Location
Dinaric Alps ¹⁰	Alpet Dinarike/Dinaridi (Динариди)	Alpi Dinariche (<i>ita</i>), Dinaridi (<i>bos, hrv</i>), Dinarsko gorstvo (<i>slo</i>)	Mountain range (<i>Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Italy, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovenia</i>)	45°00'00"N 17°00'00"E
Gjeravicë/Đeravica	Gjeravicë/Đeravica (Ђеравица)		Mountain (high point in Kosovo, 2656m)	42°31'58"N 20°08'28"E
Ibar	Ibër/Ibar (Ибар)		River (<i>Montenegro, Serbia, Kosovo</i>)	43°43'39"N 20°44'58"E
Kopaonik	Kopaonik/Копалоник (Копалоник)		Mountain range (<i>Kosovo, Serbia</i>)	43°15'00"N 20°50'00"E
Liqeni i Ujmanit/Gazivodsko jezero	Liqeni i Ujmanit ¹¹ / Gazivodsko jezero (Газиводско језеро)	Gazivoda Lake (<i>English conventional name</i>)	Artificial lake	42°57'42"N 20°34'01"E
Morava e Binçës/ Binačka Morava	Morava e Binçës/Binačka Morava (Биначка Морава)		River (<i>Kosovo, North Macedonia, Serbia</i>)	42°26'45"N 21°46'13"E
Sharr Mountains	Mali i Sharrit/Šar Planina (Шар Планина)	Šar Planina (<i>mkd</i>)	Mountain range (<i>Albania, Kosovo, North Macedonia</i>)	42°05'00"N 20°50'00"E
Drini i Bardhë/Beli Drim	Drini i Bardhë/Beli Drim (Бели Дрим)	White Drin (<i>English conventional name</i>)	River (<i>Kosovo, Albania</i>)	42°10'48"N 20°34'56"E

⁹ PCGN recommends use of conventional names for international features where they exist. If there is no conventional name, then the relevant name can be shown on the appropriate side of the international boundary on cartographic products.

¹⁰ Sometimes seen as Dinarides or Dinarite Mountains in English-language sources.

¹¹ Sometimes seen Liqeni i Gazivodës.

Useful references

- BBC Country Profile (no longer updated): <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-18328859>
- CIA World Factbook: [Kosovo - The World Factbook \(cia.gov\)](https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/docs/1008_16main.html)
- FCDO Geographical Names & Information: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/geographical-names-and-information>
- International Organization for Standardization (ISO): <http://www.iso.org>
- ISO Online Browsing Platform (OBP): <https://www.iso.org/obp/ui>
- Kosovo Geoportal: <http://geoportal.rks-gov.net/en>
- Kosovo Agency of Statistics: <https://ask.rks-gov.net/>
- PCGN Country Names list: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/country-names>
- Table of correspondences between Serbian Cyrillic and Roman: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/816783/TABLE_OF_CORRESPONDENCES_FOR_SERBIAN.pdf
- Unicode www.unicode.org
- US Board on Geographic Names Country Policy for Kosovo: [Kosovo Country Policy webversion JUNE2020.pdf \(nga.mil\)](https://www.nga.mil/Portals/0/Documents/Country_Policy_webversion_JUNE2020.pdf)
- US Board on Geographic Names Geographic Names Server: [GNS Search & Download WebApp \(nga.mil\)](https://www.nga.mil/Portals/0/Documents/GNS_Search_and_Download_WebApp.pdf)

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