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A map of Kosovo showing its international borders

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The European country of Kosovo has agreed to a Trump administration request to allow the U.S. to deport a small group of migrants to the landlocked Balkan nation who are not from there, U.S. and Kosovar officials told CBS News. Officials in Kosovo, Europe's youngest country, agreed to host 50 deportees from other countries, the latest agreement in a broader and aggressive effort by the Trump administration to convince countries around the world to accept migrants who are not their citizens.In a statement to CBS News, Kosovo's embassy in the U.S. confirmed the deportation agreement."In response to the request from the United States regarding the reception and relocation of third-country nationals, we have expressed our willingness to cooperate with the United States in addressing this matter under established conditions," the embassy said.Kosovo's embassy said the deal would allow 50 deportees from other nations to be "temporarily relocated" to Kosovo, while officials there work to facilitate "their safe return to their home country." It's unclear who exactly could be sent by the U.S. to Kosovo or which countries they would be from. Typically, the U.S. uses third country deportation agreements to deport migrants whose home countries won't take them back, in some cases because of strained diplomatic relations.Kosovo's embassy said the government in Pristina would seek "the opportunity to select individuals from a proposed pool, provided they meet specific criteria related to the rule of law and public order."In a statement to CBS News, the U. S. State Department said, "We welcome cooperation on this key Trump Administration priority.""We are grateful to our partner Kosovo for receiving third country nationals removed from the United States and facilitating those aliens' safe return to their home countries," the State Department added. Formerly part of Yugoslavia, Kosovo declared its independence from Serbia in 2008. The country is recognized by more than 100 nations, including the U.S. But other nations do not recognize its independence, including Serbia, which considers Kosovo one of its regions.Kosovo considers the U.S. one of its strongest allies on the international stage. After the chaotic American military withdrawal from Afghanistan in the summer of 2021, Kosovo agreed to host Afghan evacuees who required extra vetting due to security flags.Since President Trump began his second term and launched a sweeping crackdown on illegal immigration, the U.S. government has approached nations in Asia, Africa, Latin America and other parts of the world, seeking deportation deals. The second Trump administration has already deported several hundred Asian and African migrants to Costa Rica and Panama. It sent more than 200 Venezuelans accused of gang ties to El Salvador, where they were imprisoned at an infamous mega-prison. And it has tried to deport migrants to violence-torn Libya and South Sudan, though those efforts have been stymied by U.S. courts. Camilo Montoya-Gálvez Camilo Montoya-Gálvez is the immigration reporter at CBS News. Based in Washington, he covers immigration policy and politics. This page is no longer being updated. It was last updated on 26 June 2023Kosovo unilaterally declared independence from Serbia in February 2008, after years of strained relations between its Serb and mainly Albanian inhabitants. It has been recognised by the United States and major European Union countries, but Serbia, backed by its powerful ally Russia, refuses to do so, as do most ethnic Serbs inside Kosovo.After the break-up of the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s, Serbia responded to separatist pressure from Kosovo by launching a brutal crackdown on the territory's Albanian population, which was only brought to an end by Nato military intervention in 1999.Until 2008 the province was administered by the UN. Reconciliation between the majority Albanians, most of whom support independence, and the Serb minority remains elusive.Many of those living in majority Serb areas of the north refuse to recognise Kosovo institutions.Capital: PristinaArea: 10,887 sq kmMajor languages: Albanian, SerbianPopulation: 1.8 millionLife expectancy: 68 years (men) 73 years (women)Image source, Getty ImagesIn April 2021, parliament chose Speaker Vjosa Osmani as president to serve a five-year term.This followed the resignation of President Hashim Thaci inNovember 2020 on learning that the Kosovo war crimes tribunal in The Hague had confirmed his indictment for war crimes. Prime Minister: Albin KurtiImage source, Getty ImagesAlbin Kurti of the centre-left Vetevendosje party took over as prime minister in March 2021.Kurti, has said that "certain EU member states" are preventing visa liberation which would allow visa-free travel in the Schengen area.Although he has been critical of the EU, Kurti says he is not bitter about it. He told the BBC that the EU had helped Kosovo a lot and the country looked forward to joining other member states one day, he said.Image source, Getty ImagesTelevision is the most popular medium. Most households have cable, meaning that domestic stations face strong competition from popular channels based in Albania.Public broadcaster RTK was set up as an editorially independent service.News websites are becoming key information sources, while the printed newspaper market is in decline.Image source, Getty ImagesImage caption, Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic, a Serb nationalist, stripped Kosovo of autonomy. Serbs regard Kosovo as the birthplace of their nationSome key dates in Kosovo's history.1st Century AD - The Romans gain control of the area, populated by a people known as Dardani, who are thought to be either Illyrian or Thracian in origin.6th Century - Slavs begin to settle in the area, which slips from Roman/Byzantine control and becomes a disputed border area.12th Century - Serbia gains control of Kosovo, which goes on to become the heart of the Serbian empire. The period sees the building of many Serbian Orthodox churches and monasteries.1399 - Epic Battle of Kosovo heralds 500 years of Turkish Ottoman rule. Over the centuries the religious and ethnic balance tips in favour of Muslims in Albania.1912 - Balkan Wars: Serbia regains control of Kosovo from the Turks.1946 - Kosovo is absorbed into the Yugoslav federation. 1974 - Yugoslav constitution recognises the autonomous status of Kosovo, giving the province de facto self-government.1981 - Troops suppress separatist rioting in the province.1990 - Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic strips Kosovo of its autonomy and imposes Serbian administration on the territory, prompting Albanian protests. 1991 - Start of the violent break-up of Yugoslavia. Kosovar Albanians launch a passive resistance movement, but fail to secure independence.1996 - The rebel Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) steps up attacks on Serbian authorities in Kosovo. Their campaign grows, along with a Serbian crackdown. Image source, Getty ImagesImage caption, Kosovar Albanians fled to neighbouring countries to escape ethnic cleansing by Serbs1999 - After international efforts fail to stop the Kosovo conflict, Nato begins aerial bombardment of Serb targets. Yugoslav and Serbian forces respond with a campaign of ethnic cleansing against Kosovar Albanians, prompting an exodus. Following a peace agreement, Yugoslav and Serbian forces withdraw from Kosovo and a UN sponsored administration takes over.2004 - Nineteen people are killed in the worst clashes between Serbs and ethnic Albanians since 1999. The violence starts in the divided town of Mitrovica.2008 - Kosovo unilaterally declares independence. 2012 - Group of countries overseeing Kosovo since 2008 ends its supervisory role. Nato-led peacekeepers and EU rule-of-law monitors remain.2013 - Kosovo and Serbia reach a landmark agreement on normalising relations that grants a high degree of autonomy to Serb-majority areas in northern Kosovo, while both sides agree not to block each other's efforts to seek EU membership.2022 - Heightened tensions amid Pristina's aim of making Kosovo an independent state. The international community does not universally recognize these policies despite having significant (de facto) control over their territories. Kosovo, tucked in Southeastern Europe and sandwiched between Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, and North Macedonia, is one of the partially recognized states in Europe. Although it declared independence from Serbia in 2008, Kosovo is recognized by 98 of the 193 United Nations (UN) member states, 26 North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) members, and 22 European Union (EU) member states. Serbia does not recognize its sovereignty, with the two sides currently working to normalize their relations. Where Is Kosovo? Map of Kosovo. Kosovo is a tiny landlocked country in Southeastern Europe located on the Balkan Peninsula. It strategically lies on the peninsula's center and is enclosed to the north and east by Serbia, West by Montenegro, Southwest by Albania, and Southeast by North Macedonia. Being a landlocked country, Kosovo has no access to the Mediterranean Sea and can only access the Adriatic Sea through either Montenegro or Albania. The Kosovo-Serbian border stretches for about 380 km along Kosovo's eastern and northern edges. However, Serbians have, on numerous occasions, claimed North Kosovo since they form the majority, preventing access by Kosovo custom officers and police. Pristina is Kosovo's capital and largest city. Located near the Goljak Mountains, in the northeastern part, it occupies about 572 km2 and hosts about 200,000 people, mostly ethnic Albanians. It is approximately 520 km to the south of Belgrade (Serbia's capital) and 90 km to Skopje's (North Macedonia) north. Its strategic location makes it Kosovo's financial, economic, commerce, and political center. Pristina also hosts the country's government, parliament, as well as the prime minister and president's residences. Is Kosovo A Country? Flag of Kosovo. Kosovo is the world's second-youngest country, only older than South Sudan, formed from Sudan in 2011. After years of conflict and strained relations with Serbia, Kosovo declared her independence on February 17, 2008. Although Serbia, alongside 94 other UN member states, including China and Russia, does not recognize its sovereignty, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruled that Kosovo was rightfully an independent and sovereign state. Kosovo is a democratic republic, with politics taking place under a parliamentary representation. The government of Kosovo is divided into three branches: legislative, executive, and judicial branches. The executive branch comprises the president, prime minister, and cabinet. The president serves as the head of state while the prime minister heads the government. Kosovo's current president is Vjosa Osmani, while Albin Kurti is the prime minister. The Assembly of Kosovo comprises 120 members elected directly every four years through a secret ballot. 20 of the 120 seats are reserved for minority groups, including Serbs, Egyptians, Romani, Bosniaks, Goran, Ashkali, and Turks. Once the assembly is constituted, it elects the country's president to serve for a five-year term, renewable only once. The Assembly also elects a prime minister and approves their cabinet nominees. The judiciary is an independent branch, responsible for administering justice. Brief History The 13th-century Pec Monastery, built during the reign of the Serbian Kingdom. Kosovo's history is closely linked with the histories of the neighboring countries, particularly Serbia and Albania. Its strategic location and abundant natural resources made it a favorable place for human settlement as early as the Neolithic period. The Dardani are probably the earliest and most important tribe to have lived in present-day Kosovo. During the Roman period, Kosovo became one of the Byzantine Empire's most important provinces. The region experienced numerous raids from around the 4th century CE, leading to mass Slavic migration in the 6th and 7th centuries. In the 9th century, Kosovo fell to the First Bulgarian Empire, but the Byzantine Empire restored its control in the late 10th century. The Serbian Empire took control of Kosovo and ruled the region until the mid-15th century. Kosovo became the Serbian Kingdom's religious, cultural, and political center. From 1455 to 1912, the Ottoman Empire occupied Kosovo, first as part of Rumelia and later as a separate Vilayet (province). The Vilayet included the present-day Kosovo territory, Montenegro, northern Albania, western Serbia, and northwestern North Macedonia. The Ottomans introduced Islam and attracted numerous ethnic Albanians, who took up prominent positions in the government. However, the Kingdom of Serbia, which once possessed the Vilayet of Kosovo, planned on getting their land back, leading to the Serbian-Ottoman War between 1876 and 1878. In 1912, the Balkan League defeated the Ottomans in the First Balkan War and drove them out of their region. Western Kosovo was absorbed by the Kingdom of Montenegro, while Eastern Kosovo fell to the Kingdom of Serbia. In 1922, Kosovo became part of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, culminating in the creation of the Republic of Kosovo in 1990 and the Kosovo War of 1998-99. At the end of the war, at least 10,300 civilians had been killed, mostly ethnic Albanians. The post-war events included talks over Kosovo's final status and subsequent independence declaration on February 17, 2008. Demographics Kosovo has an estimated population of 1.8 million people, with Albanians as the ethnic majorities. The minority ethnic groups are Serbs, Roman, Turks, Gorani, and Bosniaks. Albanians account for about 88% of the total population, while Serbs are about 7%. Pristina is the largest municipality, followed by Prizren (187,000) and Ferizaj (101,000). Although numerous languages are spoken in Kosovo, Albanian and Serbian are the country's official languages. Albanian is the first language for about 95% of the population, while Serbian is used as the first language by 1.6% of the population. Other languages are Bosnian, Turkish, and Roma. Islam is the largest religion in Kosovo, with 95.6% of the country's total population being Muslims. Christian adherents constitute 3.7%, with the majority being Roman Catholics. Islam was introduced into the country by the Ottomans. Today, Kosovo has Europe's second-highest proportion of Muslims after Turkey. Geography The Sharr Mountains. Kosovo. Kosovo is a landlocked country in the Balkan Peninsula, covering about 10,887 km2, of which only 1% is water. Although the country does not border any sea or ocean, it has rich water sources, including rivers that flow into the nearby Aegean, Adriatic, and Black Seas. Drini i Bardhë is the country's longest river at 140 km, while Lumëbardhi i Prizrenit is the shortest river, at 19 km. Besides rivers, there are natural and artificial lakes and streams in the country. Kosovo has diverse relief and landscape, with the Sharr Mountains dominating the southeastern and southern edges. The western edge is distinguished by the Albanian Alps. At 2,658 m, Velika Rudoka, located in the Sharr Mountains, is Kosovo's highest peak. The Prokletije, considered part of the Dinaric Alps, is one of Europe's inaccessible and complex mountain range regions. Besides the mountain, two plains, Dukagjinj plains in the west and Kosovo plains in the east, also define Kosovo's topography. Kosovo's climate is mostly continental due to its proximity to the Adriatic and the Aegean Seas. The mountainous regions are the coldest areas, while the southern area is the warmest, where the Mediterranean climate is prevalent. Kosovo receives a mean annual precipitation of 600-1,300 mm, while the mean annual temperature is 9.5 °C. Wildlife A bear in a sanctuary in Kosovo. Kosovo has abundant biodiversity, habitat, and ecosystems. Although the country represents just about 2% of the Balkan Peninsula's total area, it represents about 18% of Europe and 25% of the peninsula's flora. The Mediterranean climate has enabled plants, such as terebinth, fragrant virgin's bower, and wild asparagus, to thrive in the area. The Sharr woodland area hosts 86 vascular plants, while the Prokletije areas have about 125 endemic plant species. Some of the country's endangered floral species are carnation, globe-flower, Didier's tulip, European yew, and field elm. The hills and plains are home to numerous animals, including deer, bears, ravens, rabbits, starrings, and magpies. The mountainous regions host quails, partridges, squirrels, and storks. Lakes and rivers contain trout, salmon, scuba, gudgeon, eel, carp, catfish, and torpedo. Economy Vineyard in Rahovec, Kosovo. Although Kosovo's economy has suffered from strained Kosovo-Serbia relations, its GDP has grown, especially after the declaration of independence. The country's economy is transitional, with major development taking place in the construction, retail, and trade sectors. The economy is highly dependent on FDI and foreign remittance. Comparatively, Kosovo is one of Europe's poorest countries, with a per capita GDP of \$4,649. About 17% of the population lives well below the poverty line, and 30% of the working-age population are not engaged in meaningful employment. Agriculture and tourism contribute significantly to the country's economy. Agriculture contributes over 30% of the GDP, with wine production as one of the most successful industries. The US and Germany are the two main destinations for Kosovo wine. The country's main tourist attractions are the rock formations, mountains, rivers, lakes, and historical cities, such as Peja, Prizren, and Gjakova. Visit the Definitions and Notes page to view a description of each topic.comparison ranking: total 167comparison rankings: total 152; female 152; male 152Albanian audio sample:Serbian language sample:comparison ranking: total 119comparison ranking: total 66comparison ranking: total population 153comparison rankings: services 168; industry 82; agriculture 96comparison ranking: total 5 Where is Kosovo located on the world map? Why is Kosovo known as a self-declared independent country? What historical events led to Kosovo declaring independence? Who are the main ethnic groups living in Kosovo? What is the significance of the city of Pristina in Kosovo? How does Kosovo's declaration of independence affect its international relationships? What are the arguments for and against Kosovo's independence from Serbia? How does the United Nations view Kosovo's independence? What are some challenges faced by Kosovo as a self-declared independent nation? Kosovo, self-declared independent country in the Balkans region of Europe. Although the United States and most members of the European Union (EU) recognized Kosovo's declaration of independence from Serbia in 2008, Serbia, Russia, and a significant number of other countries—including several EU members—did not. Given this lack of international consensus, Kosovo was not immediately admitted to the United Nations (UN). In 2010 the International Court of Justice ruled that Kosovo's declaration of independence did not violate international law, but Serbia rejected that decision.The name Kosovo is derived from a Serbian place-name meaning "field of blackbirds." After serving as the centre of a medieval Serbian empire, Kosovo was ruled by the Ottoman Empire from the mid-15th to the early 20th century, a period when Islam grew in importance and the population of Albanian speakers in the region increased. In the early 20th century Kosovo was incorporated into Serbia (later part of Yugoslavia). By the second half of the century, the largely Muslim ethnic Albanians outnumbered the predominantly Eastern Orthodox Serbs in Kosovo, and interethnic tensions frequently boiled the province. Audio File: National anthem of Kosovo Head Of Government: Prime Minister: Albin Kurti Capital: Pristina Population: (2025 est.) 1,569,000 Head Of State: President: Vjosa Osmani Form Of Government/Political Status: multiparty transitional republic2 with one legislative house (Assembly of Kosovo [1203]) Official Languages: Albanian, Serbian Official Religion: none Official Name: Republika e Kosovës (Albanian); Republika Kosovo (Serbian) (Republic of Kosovo)1 Total Area (Sq Km): 10,905 Total Area (Sq Mi): 4,210 Monetary Unit: euro (€) Population Rank: (2025) 155 Population Projection 2030: 1,801,000 Density: Persons Per Sq Mi: (2025) 372.7 Density: Persons Per Sq Km: (2025) 143.9 Urban-Rural Population: Urban: (2011) 38.2% Rural: (2011) 61.8% Life Expectancy At Birth: Male: (2022) 68.8 years Female: (2022) 73.6 years Literacy: Percentage Of Population Age 15 And Over Literate: Male: (2004) 97.3% Female: (2004) 91.3% Gni (U.S.\$ '000,000): (2023) 10,581 Gni Per Capita (U.S.\$): (2023) 6,020 In 1998 an ethnic Albanian-led secessionist rebellion escalated into an international crisis (see Kosovo conflict), which culminated in 1999 in an air bombardment of Yugoslavia—by then a rump of the former federal state, comprising only Serbia and Montenegro—by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Following the restoration of peace, Kosovo was administered by the UN Interim Administrative Mission in Kosovo. Throughout this period—in the course of which Yugoslavia changed its name to Serbia and Montenegro (2003) and then separated into those independent states (2006)—Serbia continued to consider Kosovo part of its territory. Nevertheless, under UN supervision, Kosovo developed the structures of an independent country, and in February 2008 it formally declared independence from Serbia. An EU mission charged with overseeing police, judicial, and customs activities largely replaced the UN presence later that year. Pristina (Albanian; Serbian: Priština) is the capital and largest city. Map of Kosovo Physical features of Kosovo.A landlocked country, Kosovo is bordered by Serbia to the north and east, North Macedonia to the south, Albania to the west, and Montenegro to the north-west. Kosovo, about the same size as Jamaica or Lebanon, is the smallest country in the Balkans. The borders of Kosovo are largely mountainous, characterized by sharp peaks and narrow valleys. The Sharr (Serbian: Šar) Mountains lie along the southern border with North Macedonia, while the Kopaonik Mountains are situated along the northeastern border with Serbia. The highest point is Mount Gjeravica (Deravica), at 8,714 feet (2,656 metres), on the western border with Serbia. The interior terrain comprises high plains and rolling hills; about three-fourths of the country lies between about 1,600 and 5,000 feet (500 and 1,500 metres) above sea level. Limestone caves are found in several parts of the country. A range of hills running north-south through central Kosovo separates the Kosovo Plain in the east from the Dukagjin (Metohija) Plain in the west. These plains constitute the country's two main basins. The Kosovo Plain is drained by the northward-flowing Sitnica (Sitnica) River, a tributary of the Ibar (Ibar) River. The Dukagjin Plain is drained by the southward-flowing Drini i Bardhë, or White Drin (Bell Drim). The soils of the plains are among the most fertile in the Balkans and support the cultivation of grains, fruits, and vegetables. In general, Kosovo has a moderate continental climate, although the proximity of the Mediterranean Sea has a tempering effect, especially in the southwest. Summers are warm, with average high temperatures reaching the low 80s F (upper 20s C); average highs during the winter months are in the low 40s F (about 5 °C). The country receives more than 25 inches (650 mm) of precipitation annually, with significant snowfall occurring in the winter. Mountainous areas experience both colder temperatures and greater precipitation. Despite its small area, Kosovo boasts a rich assortment of plant species, including about a dozen that are found only in Kosovo. Forests cover about two-fifths of the land, with oak trees predominating in lower elevations and pines growing in the mountains. Animal life is relatively diverse as well. Brown bears, Eurasian lynx, wildcats, gray wolves, foxes, chamois (a goatlike animal), roe deer, and red deer are among the mammals that inhabit the mountainous border regions. More than 200 species of birds live in Kosovo or migrate there seasonally. Among them are the Old World blackbirds for which Kosovo Polje ("Field of the Blackbirds"), site of the 1389 Battle of Kosovo, was named. In the second half of the 20th century, as a result of Serbian out-migration and higher Albanian birth rates, there was a dramatic shift in the ethnic composition of Kosovo. The Albanian share of the population rose from about half in 1946 to about four-fifths by the 1990s. Meanwhile, the proportion of Serbs fell to less than one-fifth. After the Kosovo conflict of 1998-99, additional Serbs emigrated. Thus, in the early 21st century, the population makeup was approximately nine-tenths Albanian and less than one-tenth Serb, with the remainder comprising Bosniaks (Bosnian Muslims), traditionally itinerant peoples (i.e., Roma and two other groups, Ashkali and Egyptians [also called Balkan Egyptians], that are commonly classified as Roma but regard themselves as distinct), Turks, Gorani (a Muslim South Slavic people), Croats, and Montenegrins. The Serbs are concentrated in northern Kosovo, particularly in Mitrovicë (Mitrovica), as well as around Shtërpce (Štrpce), on the North Macedonian border. Albanian and Serbian are the official languages of Kosovo. According to the 2008 constitution, Turkish, Bosnian, and Romany also have official status in relevant municipalities. The Albanian spoken in Kosovo is a subvariety of the Gheg dialect; it is commonly known as kosovarce. Standard literary Albanian is used in written communication and in the broadcast media. Serbo-Croatian, also known as Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian (BCS), is the language spoken by Serbs, Bosniaks, Croats, and Montenegrins. However, speakers of BCS tend to refer to their own language as Serbian, Bosnian, Croatian, or Montenegrin, depending on their ethnicity, and consider it to be distinct from the other groups' languages, despite mutual intelligibility. The Roma speak Serbian or Romany, while the Ashkali and the Egyptians speak Albanian. Turkish is spoken by the Turks as well as by some Albanians. The Goran people speak their own South Slavic dialect, akin to BCS and Macedonian. Official Name: Republic of KosovoLocal Names: Kosovë / Kosovë / KosovoCapital: Prishtinë / Prishtinë / PristinaGeography: Southeast EuropeDemonym: KosovovarPopulation: 1,977,993 (2024 estimate) Kosovo Population Demographics Age Structure: 0-14 years: 22.7% (233,010 males, 216,304 females) 15-64 years: 68.9