

KOSOVO - INFORMATION SHEET

BACKGROUND

Called the Republic of Kosovo the country is bordered by Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Macedonia, and Albania. Formerly autonomous within former Yugoslavia, it later came under the territory of Serbia until it declared independence in early 2008. It has been in conflict with neighboring countries for a long time. Ethnic Albanians make up 90% of the country whilst the remainder is made up of Serbs. The Kosovar Albanians are largely Muslim whilst the Serbians are generally Eastern Orthodox Christian.

LANGUAGES

Albanian and Serbian are both official languages. Bosnian, Turkish and Roma are also spoken.

ETHNIC MAKEUP

- Albanians 88%
- Serbs 7%
- Bosnian, Gorani, Romani, Turks, Ashkali and Egyptian 5%

SOCIAL CUSTOMS

Ethnic Albanians tend to have large families, of eight to ten children, and extended families often live together in a compound of houses enclosed by a stone wall.

The Serbian government closed all Albanian schools in Serbia because it did not approve the curriculum, which favoured Albanian culture. Since the declaration of independence the schools have reopened.

****NOTE:** The majority of the population of Kosovo is made up of Albanian Kosovars so information referred to in the BISS Albania - Information sheet is relevant. Please refer to that sheet.

REFERENCES

1. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/kv.html>
2. http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Culture_of_Kosovo