

Kosovo

Kosovo declared independence from Serbia in 2008. 23 out of 27 EU countries have recognized it, as well as half of the UN Member States.

Without political considerations, we adopt the point of view of international sport associations, like the IOC, FIFA and UCI, to present a Kosovar list separated from Serbia. The IOC, for instance, recognizes Kosovo and 2 Kosovar athletes earned gold medals during the 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo. In our sport, the UCI recognizes Kosovo per se as well.

Website of the Cycling Federation of Kosovo: <http://kosovacycling.org>

Like its neighbour, North Macedonia, Kosovo is a landlocked country. It's bordered by Serbia to the north and east, North Macedonia to the south-east, Albania to the south-west and Montenegro to the west.



Geography of Kosovo

Quickly said, Kosovo occupies an area of 10.900km² made of two plains surrounded by mountains.

The first is called « Fusha e Kosovës » in Albanian (« Kosovo Field »). It lies in the east and is the upper course of the Sitnica that passes west of Priština, the capital city. So, before referring to the whole country, « Kosovo » only refers to its eastern part. In Serbian, this plain is called « Kosovo Polje », « Field of the Blackbirds ». The battle that took place there in 1389 was a defeat for the Serbs against the Ottomans, but still today its a major reference for the Serbian nation. This largely explains why Serbia refuses to recognize Kosovo's independence. Gazimestan (KOS017) will bring you into the middle of the battlefield.



The Kosovo plain



Metohija

The western plain (actually it's a plateau) is Metohija. It's called « Dukagjin » in Albanian and Metohija in Serbian. It is the upper course of the White Drin. So, the full name of Kosovo is « Kosovo and Metohija ». That's its official name in Serbia and also for the UN.

Mountains are at the borders. The highest point, Gjeravica or Đeravica (2656m) lies in the west, in the Mounts Bjeshkët e Nemuna or Prokletije. We approach it at the top of Bjeshkët e Belegut (031).

The north is overhung by the Kosovar part of the Kopaonik Mts. (Serbian BIG). Its highest point is Oštro Koplje / Bajraku (1789m). We'll make do with the 1211m of Belo Brdo (001).



Kosovo and Metohija



Gjeravica / Đeravica (2656m)

To the east of Priština, we have the Goljak Mts. (Malet e Gollakut on the map below). The Velja glava (1181m) is its highest point. In this region, we've selected 3 climbs higher than 1000m: 023-Kalaja e Novobërdës / Tvrđava Novo Brdo (1072m), 018-Prapashticë / Propaštica (1040m) and 024-Feriqevë / Firićeja (1036m).

In the south-east, the Malet e Karadaku is called « Skopska crna gora » in macedonian, since its highest point (Ramno, 1651m) lies in North Macedonia. You'll be able to approach it very close at the top of Brodec (MKN041).

The south is occupied by the Šar Mts. (Malet e Sharrit or Šar planina), straddling Kosovo and North Macedonia. The Titov vrv (2747m) is its highest point, on the other side of the border. There are many opportunities to visit them: the mountain town Restelicë / Restelica (1479m, 045), the BIG Prevallë / Prevalac (1515m, 043) and the 2 ski resorts Brod-Arxhena (1483m, 044) and Brezovicë / Brezovica (1730m, 048). At Ljuboten (MKN001) you'll visit the Macedonian side.



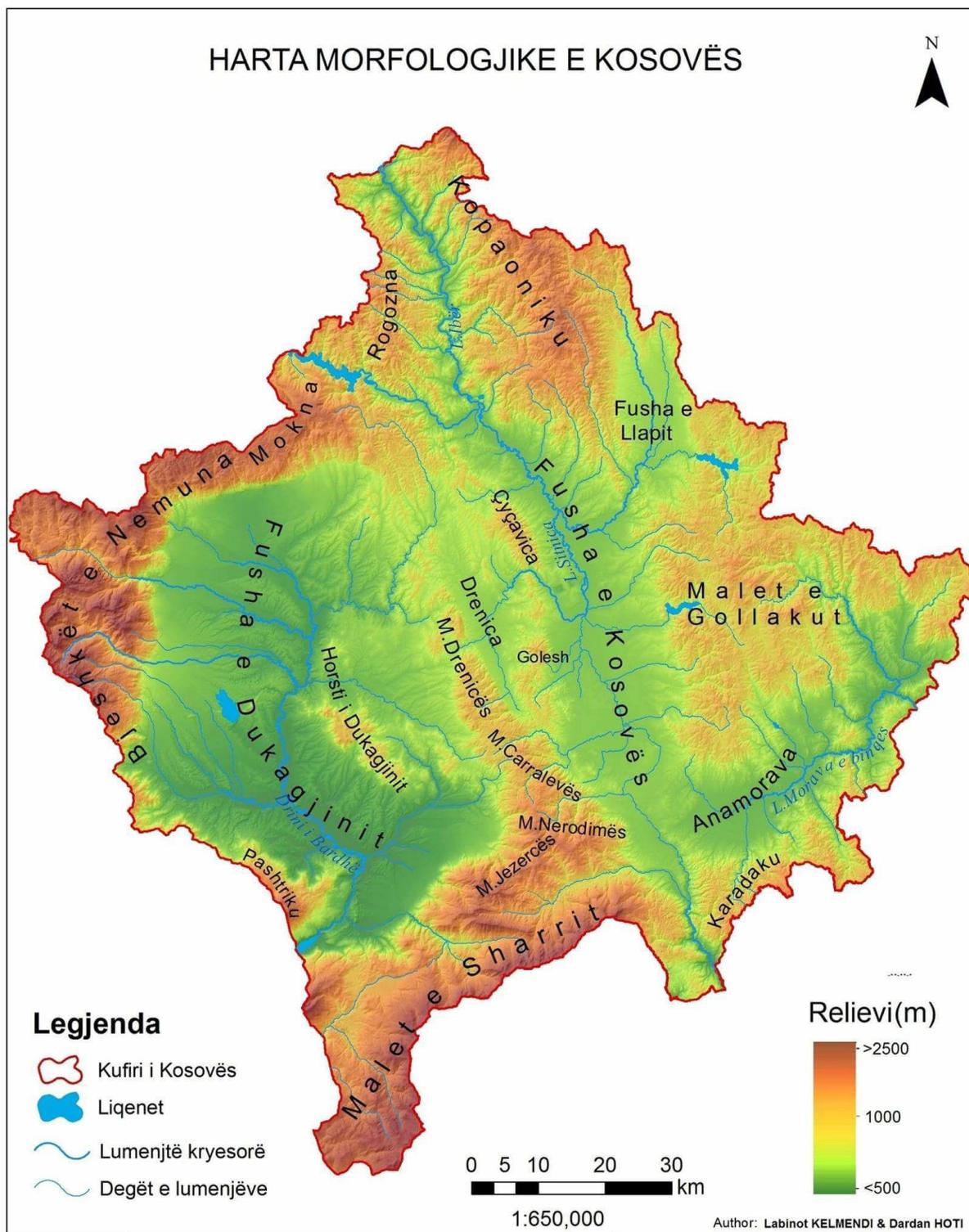
Restelicë / Restelica



Brod-Arxhena

For the foothills, Prizren and its surroundings will do the trick: 041-Cviljen (1375m) or 042-Breznë / Brezna (976m).

The inland isn't flat, the region between the two plains is mountainous as well. North of the Šar Mts., we find, for instance, 047-Jezerc / Jezerce (1299m), 020-Maja e Goleshit / Goleš (1013m) or, a little farther west, 033-Maja e Zatriqit (1022m).



Tourism in Kosovo

There are two national parks in the largest mountain ranges: Bjeshkët e Nemuna (in the west) and the Šar Mts. in the south. In the first we've selected 5 climbs: Bogë (012), Koshutan / Košutane (013), Shtëpia Alpikë Ranch (014), the Cima Coppi of the challenge Bjeshkët e Belegut (1858m, 031) and Koshare (032). In the second, the BIG Prevallë / Prevalac (043) and Brezovicë / Brezovica (048).



The road to Belegut



Brezovicë / Brezovica

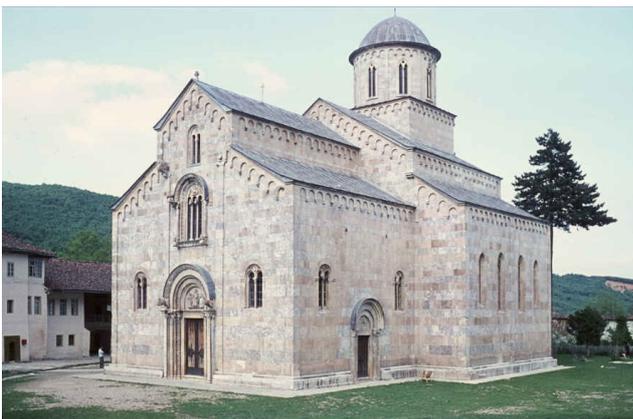
In Priština, a ride to the Parku i Gërmisë / Park Grmija (019) is highly recommended.

World Heritage

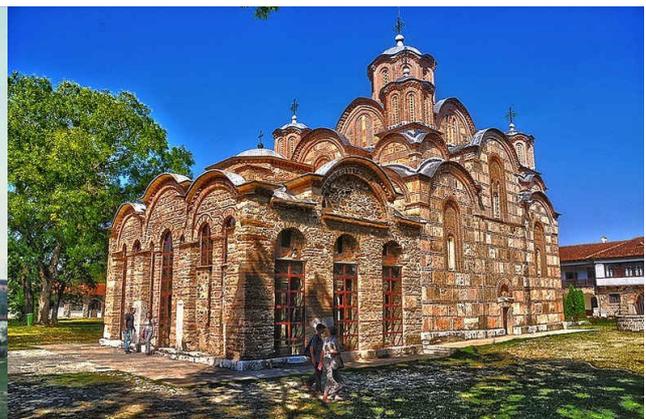
Kosovo is not a UNESCO member state (as the two-thirds quota hasn't been reached). However, 4 Serbian Orthodox churches and monasteries are protected under the label « Medieval Monuments in Kosovo ». Two of them are in the challenge:

-Visoki Dečani is a monastery. Its cathedral is the largest medieval church in the Balkans and it contains thousand Byzantine frescoes. It is located in the first part of Bjeshkët e Belegut (031).

-Gračanica monastery was founded in the XIVth century. It's the starting point of Shashkoc / Šaškovac (022).



Visoki Dečani



Gračanica

Other Orthodox monasteries are in the list: Svete Petke (Ulije, 002), Sokolica (007) and Gorioč (011).

Places of remembrance:

Gazimestan (017) is a monument in the shape of a medieval tower, that commemorates the Battle of Kosovo Polje (June 15, 1389). The defeat of the Serbs led to the Ottoman rule for almost five centuries, but it reinforced the Serbian national consciousness, that is still alive.

The Koshare Memorial (032) honours the Kosovar martyrs in a battle (from April until June 1999) in which the Kosovo Liberation Army (UÇK), supported by the Albanian Army and the NATO, fought against the Yugoslav Army and Russian volunteers.

Klečka (035) is a village in which 22 Kosovo Serb civilians were killed, allegedly by members of the Kosovo Liberation Army in July 1998.



Gazimestan



Koshare

A few fortresses :

Kalaja e Harilaqit (021) is a Byzantine castle (4th–6th century AD).

The Prizren Fortress (039) was the capital city of the Serbian Empire, established in 1346 by Dušan the Mighty, hence its other name: « Dušan's Fortress » (« Dušanov grad »).

Novobërdë / Novo brdo (023) is contemporary of the Prizren Fortress. It was built to protect a mine, that will become the most important in Serbia. It was a real town with 7 orthodox and 2 catholic churches.



Prizren Fortress



Novo Brdo

Some of the most beautiful panoramas:

-Shtëpia Alpikë Ranch (014), scenic restaurant built on a hillside above Pejë / Peć.

-Maja e Goleshit / Goleš (020) is a mount with antennas, that overlooks the Prishtina Airport. It is located north of the Kalaja e Harilaqit ruins.

-At the top of Maja e Zatriqit (033), you'll appreciate the 700m vertical drop and the huge view to the Šar Mts. to the south.

-Jezerc / Jezerce (047) is another delight to the eyes, for instance from the restaurant Belle Vue.



Shtëpia Alpikë Ranch



Maja e Zatriqit

Tourism in blue

The Gazivode / Ujman Reservoir (004) is located on Ibar River, it is 24km long and crosses the « border » (the idea is controversial) with Serbia.

Mirusha / Miruše Waterfalls is one of the most visited places in the country. The river dug a 10km long canyon with 13 lakes connected by waterfalls, the highest of which is 22m high.



Gazivode / Ujman



Mirusha / Miruše

Sport in Kosovo

The highest climbs lie in the Šar Mts. (Zone 3): 1858m at the top of Bjeshkët e Belegut (031), 1730m at Brezovicë / Brezovica (048), 1515m in Prevallë / Prevalac (043), 1483m in Brod-Arxhena (044) and 1479m in Restelicë / Restelica (045).

In the Zone 1, tops are still high: 1484m in Koshutan / Košutane (013) and 1476m in Bogë (012).

The Zone 2 is lower, Novo brdo (023) and its 1072m is the highest point.



Prevallë / Prevalac



Bogë

The Top10 in europoints

Bjeshkët e Belegut (991pts),

Cviljen (879),

Maja e Zatriqit (859),

Brezovicë / Brezovica (818), Jezerc / Jezerce (751), Prevallë / Prevalac (725), Stolovi (672),

Novosellë / Novo Selo (658), Bajgorë / Bajgora (633) and Restelicë / Restelica (591).



The KFOR at Cviljen



Prizren from Novosellë / Novo Selo

The Top 10 in bomb

Kalaja e Prizrenit / Prizrenski grad (36),

Shtëpia Alpikë Ranch (34),

Maja e Zatriqit (32),

Brezovicë / Brezovica (31),

Novosellë / Novo Selo (30),

Cviljen and Sokolica Monastery (29),

Zasellë / Zasela and Koshare (28),

Jezerc / Jezerce (26).



The last hairpin before the Prizren Fortress



Sokolica Monastery

The Top10 in elevation gain

Bjeshkët e Belegut (1246m), Prevallë / Prevalac (1097), Cviljen (927), Jezerc / Jezerce (860), Bajgorë / Bajgora (852), Brezovicë / Brezovica (835), Stolovi (807), Belo Brdo (759), Maja e Zatriqit (684) and Novosellë / Novo Selo (613).



Route to Zasela with view to Kosovska Mitrovica



Bajgorë / Bajgora (Çeshmja e Luanit)

The Top10 in distance

Prevallë / Prevalac (26km), Shtrazë / Straža et Bjeshkët e Belegut (25), Kalaja e Novobërdës / Tvrđava Novo Brdo (24), Prapashticë / Propaštica, Stolovi et Bajgorë / Bajgora (21), Belo Brdo (18), Restelicë / Restelica (17) and Jezerc / Jezerce (16).

Media climbs in Kosovo

The **Tour de Kosova** exists since 2010 and belongs to the UCI calendar since 2018 (category 2.2). Unfortunately, since the change of status, the race only uses motorways:

<http://kosovacycling.org/2019/07/04/etapa-e-1-tour-de-kosova-2019/>

UCI Tour de Kosova 2017
17-20 August 2017

Etapa I
17.08.2017 - 165km
Prishtinë - Ferizaj - Ferizaj
 Etapa II
18.08.2017 - 140km
Ferizaj - Kamenar - Rakosh - Klinë - Gjakovë
 Etapa III
19.08.2017 - 155km
Gjakovë - Çitllarevë - Malishevë - Durrës - Lendevicë
 Etapa IV
20.08.2017 - 130km
Prizren - Prevalë - Brezovicë - F. Pajtimë - Viti - Gllan - Mramor

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 FEDERATA E ÇIKLIMTË TË KOSOVËS
 CYCLING FEDERATION OF KOSOVA
 RTK
 DUKAGJINI
 Red Bull

Before 2019, the BIG Prevallë / Prevalac was crossed at least 4x (in 2012, 2015, 2017 and 2018). In 2017 and 2018, to go from Shtime / Štimlje to Komoran(e), the route theoretically had to climb to Pjetërshiticë / Petraštica (046).



The Tour de Kosova 2017 to Prevallë



The road to Pjetërshiticë / Petraštica

Car hill climbs

<http://www.rallycross-photo.com/heuvelklim2/category/kosovo/>

3 climbs concern the challenge:

- Prevallë interests pilots as well as cyclists. There is a hill climb on both sides (Prevallë in the NW and Brezovica in the NE).
- Pouskë / Pousko with its delicious viewpoint to Prizren is the first part of Cviljen (041).
- Jezerc from Nerodime is a part of the east side of 047.



The Prevallë Gorge



The Pousko Viewpoint to Prizren

