

COUNTRY FACT SHEET

KOSOVO

(April 2016)

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I. CHECKLIST

1. To do before the return:

The returnee should:

- request documents from German authorities that might be needed later on.
 - Must: Birth certificates of children born in Germany (without these, serious problems may arise when entering the country or during the registration procedure), school diplomas and certificates of attended vocational courses and trainings.
 - Recommended: Recommendation letters from employers, EU driving licenses, proof of affiliation with any type of business, cultural or sport association is of high importance.
- get information concerning the arrival at the airport and the onward journey.
 - In the last 6-7 years the road infrastructure has improved significantly through governmental investments. In recent years the first highway has been built which connects Kosovo with Albania.
 - The railway infrastructure is in a poor condition and is being used to limited extends. There are two main routes covered by railway transportation for passengers, Prishtina-Peja-Prizren and Prishtina-Kacanik. Many railways segments are out of use.
 - Taxi transportation is available and a wide spread service in the country, but it is not a very popular transport mode due to high costs of services offered by taxi companies.
 - There is no part of the country which is not accessible, except during certain periods in winter which are characterized by enormous snowfalls.
- check vaccinations (especially for children).
Kosovo vaccination program:
 - Upon birth: BCG and Hepatitis B vaccines should be injected first, whereas DTP, Poliomyelitis, Hepatitis B and Hib 1 vaccines should be injected during the second month of a child's life.
 - In the third month of life the child receives DTP, Poliomyelitis and Hib 2 vaccines in order to continue with DTP, poliomyelitis, Hepatitis B and Hib 3 vaccines in the fourth month of life. The cycle is completed with MMR vaccination which is due between the 12th and 18th month of life.
 - Next phases: At the age of 6-7 children receive DT, Poliomyelitis and MMR vaccine orally. The process is finished within a period of 12-18 years when children/teenagers receive Poliomyelitis, DTP and TT (Tetanus) Vaccines. If this circle is not completed vaccination should be continue where it was formerly interrupted.
- find a temporary accommodation.
Directly after return, returnees often to not have anywhere to go. Accommodation up to seven days at governmental reception centers, hosted and covered by the government, is possible.

2. To do immediately after the return:

The returnee should:

- register with relevant authorities.
 - First registration: Upon return, conducted by the Reintegration Department of Ministry of Internal Affairs right after passing border controls at the airport or land border crossings
 - Registration at the Civil Matters Administration Office in order to apply for IDs and to be recorded in the Civil Registration Books of Kosovo (if not already done). In order to obtain an ID and be recorded in Civil Books of Kosovo, applicants have to prove their identity by providing an old Kosovan document (ID card, birth certificate or passport). Children born in Germany should present the translated birth certificate, issued by German authorities, or Form A (international birth certificate), which is verified and validated by central authorities in a special process. For these cases applicants have to apply at the municipal Civil Matter Administration office. Parents should also provide a marriage certificate and copies of passports.
 - After obtaining ID cards the employment center should be visited.
- apply for social welfare.
Social assistance offices are established in every town across the country. Criteria to benefit from social assistance are strict and only persons in extreme need will be supported.
- contact services assisting with the search for jobs and housing.
Employment Offices are located in each town of Kosovo, and returnees should visit them in order to register as job seekers. Returnees should bring the ID card issued by Kosovan authorities.

- apply for child care, schools or other educational institutions.
 - Day-care facilities for children are widely available in Kosovo, especially in cities, both in public and private ownership.
 - School enrolment is a smooth process. Returned childrens' skills will be examined by the respective School Board in order to determine which class they should attend. Diplomas and certificates received in the host country have to be presented.

II. HEALTH CARE

1. Health care system

a. General information on the health care system

The health care system in Kosovo is organized on three levels: primary, secondary and tertiary. Primary health care (PHC) is provided by Main Family Medicine Centers, which operate in more than 30 municipalities across Kosovo with very limited diagnostic capacity. Family Medicine Centers and health service ambulances offer basic primary care services.

Secondary health care services are provided by six regional hospitals located in the main cities of Kosovo. All the hospitals are operational but the capacity of their laboratories and X-ray departments is limited. Regional hospitals have 450-550 beds each.

Tertiary health care is provided by the University Clinical Center, located in Prishtina. 2,500 beds are available.

b. Access, especially for returnees:

- Health care services are provided free of charge by public health institutions for specific groups of people and returnees have good access in all situations.
- There is no health insurance system established in Kosovo yet. Private companies offer health insurance but are very expensive.

2. Medical treatment and availability and costs of medication

a. Medical facilities and doctors

- QKUK-KUCC (Kosovo University Clinical Center) is the main public health establishment located in Prishtina. KUCC is an umbrella with 15 clinics operating under its supervision. The following clinics are operating under UCC: Anesthetic and Intensive Care Unit, Dermatology and Sexually transmitted diseases, Emergency Care Center, Gynecology and Obstetrics, Neurology, Neurosurgery, Orthopedics, Pediatrics, Pediatric surgery, Psychiatry, Pulmonary, Surgery, Urology, Central Pharmacy, National Institute of Public Health.
- Consolidated private health sector, covering many health fields: The services are of higher quality compared to the UCC but prices are mostly not affordable for the wider population. Most well-known private clinics in country are as follow: American Hospital, Aloka Clinic, Bahceci, Euromed and Rezonanca Hospital.

b. Procedures of admission

Persons must contact institutions on the primary level of the health system, Family Health Center or Main Family Health Center, first. If follow-ups are needed, regional hospitals established in the main regions of Kosovo should be visited. If services are not available at institutions of the secondary level of the health system, patients receive a written recommendation to enter the tertiary level, the QKUK clinic in Prishtina.

c. Availability and costs of medication

Essential medicines are supposed to be available free of charge in every public health care center, but are often out of supply and not available in public clinics. Private pharmacies may be able to import drugs needed, but they are likely to be expensive and the supply may be uncertain. There are possibilities to import medicaments from neighboring regions/countries.

III. LABOR MARKET AND EMPLOYMENT

1. Labor market situation

a. Labor force

- The official number of employed persons in Kosovo is 323,508 in both, the public and private sector. However, this number is not a good indicator due to the large informal labor market. The legal working age in Kosovo is 18, while the pension age is 65.
- According to the Annual Report for 2014, published in 2015 by MLSW, most available jobs are offered in the services sector and construction, followed by the production sector and agriculture.

b. Average income: 200 EUR

c. **Important figures on the economic situation**

- GDP per capita: 3,050.00 EUR (Source: Ministry of Economic Development; GoK)
- Economic growth: 3.8% in 2015 (Source: Ministry of Economic Development; GoK)
- Poverty rate: 29.7% (Source: UNDP)

d. **Unemployment rate**

- According to the Employment Department of MLSW the official unemployment rate is 35.3%, whereas the unemployment rate of the youth (age group 18-24) is 61%.
- Total of unemployed persons registered as jobseekers in public employment services (end of 2014): 127,921 females and 146,566 males.
- Total of “unqualified” jobseekers is 156,881 persons (end of 2014).

2. **Ways / assistance to find employment**

- Public sector jobs are published on websites and in national newspapers, but also physically on information boards of the institution or agency publishing the vacancy. In the private sector the informal channel (word of mouth) is much spread.
- Employment in the private sector is underdeveloped. Some of the main websites: appk.org | www.ofertapune.com | www.portalpune.com | www.shkabaj.net | www.portalpune.com | gjirafa.com

3. **Unemployment assistance**

Kosovo doesn't offer any form of unemployment support scheme.

4. **Further education possibilities and vocational trainings**

- VTC Trainings are available to: Unemployed persons and registered jobseekers, belonging to ethnic minorities and vulnerable groups.
- Available vocational trainings: accounting, arc and gas welding, hairdressing, car-electricians, electricians, IT training, hydraulics, soldering, construction, carpentry, tailoring etc.
- VTC locations: Prishtina, Mitrovica, Dolane, Peja, Gjakova, Prizren, Ferizaj and Gjilan. Two Centers of Competence in Skenderaj and Malisheva, for Building and Construction, Commerce, Administration and Trade.

IV. HOUSING

1. **Housing situation**

a. **Average rent, running costs/utilities** (e.g. electricity, water, etc.)

- Approximate monthly rents in Prishtina are: Studio/flat: 150-200 EUR; one bedroom apartment: 200-250 EUR; two bedroom apartment: 250-350 EUR; three bedroom apartment: 300-500 EUR. Rents in other cities in Kosovo (e.g., Peja, Mitrovica, Ferizaj) are approximately 50-80 EUR cheaper than in Prishtina.
- Price for electricity per KW is 0.055 EUR, whereas price for 1 m³ household water is 0.350 EUR.

b. **Demand and supply**

Construction has been one of the fastest growing sectors in the country, but demand for apartments is still high, mainly as a result of migratory movements of rural population to towns. This demand keeps prices of rents at a very high level.

c. **Housing facilities for returnees / social housing**

There are no special housing facilities for returnees, except for the refugee reception center which is hosting asylum seekers in Kosovo. Returnees are mostly accommodated in rented premises with the maximum duration of one year.

2. **Ways / assistance to find accommodation**

Apartments can be found through estate agencies throughout the country or one's own research. Inside the town of Prishtina the price to buy 1 m² of an apartment or house is between 700 and 800 EUR, whereas prices in other towns are lower, between 500 and 600 EUR.

Main websites: www.kosova-immobilien.com | <http://kosova-estate.com> | www.prona.net

3. **Social grants for housing**

Social Work Centers are the main providers of social grants for housing, beyond occasional support offered by some NGOs. However, these centers only assist those persons who participate in the social aid scheme and in particular cases those being affected by natural disasters like fire, earthquakes, flooding, etc.

V. SOCIAL WELFARE

1. Social welfare system

a. General information on the welfare system

In order to obtain social assistance applicants should visit Social Work Centres and check if they fall under criteria determined by the Ministry for Labor and Social Welfare.

b. Access, especially for returnees

- Eligibility and requirements
 - Category one: persons over 18 years, with permanent disabilities and not capable to work; persons over 65 years; permanent care givers for persons with disabilities and over 65 years; persons up to 14 years old; persons between 15 and 18 years old, attending regular education; and single parents with at least one (1) child under the age of 15
 - Category two: Families with one person capable for work AND at least one child under the age of five (5) or taking permanent care of an orphan under the age of 15.
 - The same criteria are applied to returnees.
- Registration procedure for social security/insurance
 - Centers are located in every municipality of Kosovo. Applicants must present the document of nonprofessional engagement (being unemployed) which is issued by Employment Offices in the respective municipality.
- Required documents
 - ID card of Republic of Kosovo, birth certificates of all family members, death/divorce certificate and declaration of family unit

c. Benefits

The person must visit the nearest Center for Social Welfare for further information and submission of the documents. The highest amount of assistance for single parents is 90 EUR per month and this is the only support. The social scheme is inflexible so no other form of assistance (e.g. child allowance) is available.

2. Pension system

a. General information on the pension system

- Public pension insurance fund: 10% of the workers' gross salary has to be paid into this fund, 5% by the employer and 5% by the employee.
- The base (or elderly) pension is one of the mandatory forms of pension and is given to every permanent citizen of Kosovo over 65 years of age, without any other preconditions. The monthly basic scheme pension is 75 EUR. The monthly contribution scheme pension is 158 EUR. Medical issues need to be covered personally

b. Access, especially for returnees

- Eligibility/Requirements

Anyone who is Kosovo's resident is eligible to access the basic pension fund of Kosovo, whereas the contribution pension scheme can be accessed by those who worked and contributed to the pension fund.
- Required documents
 - Basic pension scheme: ID card of Republic of Kosovo
 - Contribution pension scheme: ID card copy, certificate or diploma of education level and birth certificate

3. Vulnerable Groups

a. General information on vulnerable groups

Recognized categories: self-subsistent mothers, unaccompanied minors, victims of trafficking, disabled persons (autism). Access to social services is very limited and strictly evaluated with tough eligibility criteria as a result of the governments' limited financial resources.

b. Assistance for vulnerable persons

Social Work Centers are the main contributors to the wellbeing of vulnerable groups. Some NGOs and international organizations support specific vulnerable groups in Kosovo, such as victims of trafficking and unaccompanied minors.

VI. EDUCATION

1. Educational system

General information on the system

- Compulsory education: age 6 to 11 (classes 6-11)
- After completion of the secondary school students must take a national test.
- Studies available at Bachelor, Master and PhD level. Students may choose full-time or part-time studies. The University of Prishtina (UP) is the only public university in Kosovo.

2. Access and registration procedure, especially for returnees

- School enrollment procedures are rather simple and very open and inclusive. Parents should consult the school representatives closest to the place of residence in order to register their children. They need to present birth certificates for children who are registered with the school for the first time.
- Returning children who participate at a reintegration program receive support for school enrollment.

3. Costs, loans and stipends

a. General information on tuition fees

There are no tuitions fees in primary and secondary public schools, but on the higher education level and in private institutions on all levels.

b. Access and requirements to stipends and/or loans for covering tuition

Neither governmental stipends nor study loans are available. Sometimes international and local organizations, foreign Embassies, charitable funds and occasionally governmental institutions provide assistance to students.

4. Approval and verification of foreign diplomas

The National Qualifications Authority is in charge of recognizing foreign diplomas. Its responsibilities are the oversight of national qualifications along with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, the Agency for Accreditation and other professional bodies approved for this purpose by the government, and in particular the acknowledgement of professional qualifications and foreign diplomas.

VII. CONCRETE SUPPORT FOR RETURNEES

1. Reintegration assistance programs

- The Government of Kosovo budgeted a 3.5 million EUR reintegration fund to assist Kosovan returnees. Support includes food and non-food items, hygienic items, accommodation, business startups and house renovation and construction. Returnees can access most of the reintegration schemes, like employment, business startups, food and non-food items, hygienic packages, but cannot benefit from house renovation and construction schemes. (Since March 2016 also those who left Kosovo after 28 July 2010 can benefit from reintegration schemes.)
- Applications need to be submitted at Municipal Return Offices (MRO) established in every municipality. Business startup assistance can amount to 2000 EUR in kind.
- Employment centers and the UNDP support returnees with salary subsidies.

2. Support to start income generating activities

Beside bank loans which are available at any time, the offer is limited to occasional projects by the International Organization for Migration and civil society organizations.

VIII. CONTACT INFORMATION AND USEFUL LINKS

UNDP

Address: UNDP Kosovo Office, Zagrebi St. No. 39,
10 000 Prishtina

E-mail: registry.ks@undp.org

Tel: +381 (0) 38 249066

Fax: +381 (0) 38 249065

Website: www.ks.undp.org

UNHCR

Address: Lorenc Antoni Str. no 26, Pejton,
10 000 Prishtina

E-mail: halilis@unhcr.org

Tel: +381 (0) 38 241 509

Website: www.unhcr.org

Contact Person: Shpend Halili

E-mail: halilis@unhcr.org

<p>Reintegration Department – Ministry of Internal Affairs Address: Str “Luan Haradinaj” n.n, 10 000 Prishtina Tel: +381 38 521 266 Website: www.mpb-ks.org</p> <p>Contact Person: Fahrije Ternava E-mail: Fahrije.Ternava@rks-gov.net</p>	<p>Department of Employment Address: Government building, Prishtina E-mail: Ylber.A.Aliu@rks-gov.net Tel: +381 38 200 26 112 Website: https://mpms.rks-gov.net</p> <p>Contact Person: Ylber Aliu E-mail: Ylber.A.Aliu@rks-gov.net</p>
<p>University Clinical Centre Address: Str. Rrethi i Spitalit nn, Prishtina Tel: +381385 00 600</p>	<p>Kosovo Property Agency Address: “Perandori Justinian”, st. no. 5, Qyteza Pejton, 10 000 Prishtina Tel: +381 38 249 918 Fax: + 381 38 249 919 Website: http://kpaonline.org</p>
<p>Kosovo Agency of Statistics Address:”Zenel Salihu”, nr. 4, 10 000 Prishtina E-mail: economic@rks-gov.net Tel: +381 (0) 38 200 31 129 Fax: +381 (0) 38 235 033 Website: http://ask.rks-gov.net</p> <p>Contact Person: Isa Krasniqi</p>	<p>APPK Address: Andrea Gropa p.n, 10 000 Prishtina Tel: +381 (0)38 24 34 74 Fax: +381 (0)38 24 34 75 Website: http://appk.org</p> <p>Contact Person: Bedri Xhafa</p>