



Kosovo

Family Life



In Kosovo, it is common for families to consist of parents, children, and grandparents, and more rarely aunts, uncles, or even cousins. It is becoming more common in Kosovo for both parents to work. If both parents are employed and grandparents live in the same house, usually grandparents take care of the children or housework while the parents work. Parents typically share the authority in the household equally, but there are some more traditional families where the father is the authority of the house.

Responsibilities: Part time jobs for teenagers are very rare in Kosovo. Usually, parents give children weekly allowances for personal items and parents purchase items for social activities. Some children get money from parents on a daily basis, depending on the amount needed for school lunch or expenses related to school. Most students don't have any experience cooking, especially boys; it is uncommon for teenagers in Kosovo to cook for themselves. They are expected to clean their room and to take care of their clothes, but usually they not do not laundry or help with cleaning the house. It is more common for girls to help out in the house than it is for boys.

Pets: Pets are common and typically live outside in Kosovo; it is uncommon for pets to be kept inside the house.

Parental Involvement: Parents in Kosovo usually try to monitor what their children do online, including who they socialize with, but this can be difficult especially when they work long hours or the family structure is larger. It is common for parents to let teens have personal time, but evenings are usually family time. Parents are usually not overly involved in teenagers' extra-curricular activities.

As for parental involvement in their children's school, parents in Kosovo are called in to school at least twice a year for a regular meeting by the main professor who acts as the guidance counselor for each student. In case of an emergency they may be called individually or as a group, depending on the issue.

School



Classes: In public high schools in Kosovo, students have one main room where all classes are taught and the teachers rotate. In some private high schools, teachers have a set room and students change classrooms. Students in Kosovo do not choose their classes in public school, but private schools function very similarly to the U.S. and students are allotted class choices. Students are evaluated through homework, class attendance, special assignments (group projects), oral exams, and semester exams. At the end of each schooling level (9th-12th grade, there is a national final exam (known as the matura), and it typically takes place the first Saturday of June.

School Relationships: School relationships in Kosovo are more formal than in the U.S. In public high schools, when a teacher enters the class, all students stand up and greet the teacher. They usually speak by asking for the teacher's permission first, and all students refer to the teacher as 'professor.' Classes are not segregated by gender, so boys and girls study in the same classes.

Extracurricular Activities: These activities are less prevalent in Kosovo than they are in the U.S. Students who are interested in an activity usually make arrangements directly with the teacher who is in charge of that activity. These activities can take place during the school day or after class; sports especially take place after the school day is finished.

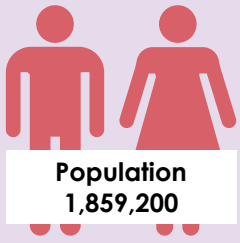
School Rules and Attire: The rules regarding cell phones and fighting in Kosovo are not as strict as in the U.S. Tardiness is not tolerated, and if a student enters the classroom after the teacher, they might either not be allowed to attend the class or remain marked as absent. The use of uniforms varies depending on the school and location in Kosovo. Some schools have uniforms, but others have a dress code.

Returning from Exchange: The academic requirements placed on returning YES students depend largely on the school. Some schools give students the option to take the final exams for the classes they did not take while in the U.S., and will allow them to pass on to the next grade if they pass the additional exams. Other schools may require students to repeat a year. The potential outcomes are explained explicitly to students before they come for their YES year.



Personal Interactions

Pristina



Population
1,859,200



Square Miles
10,908

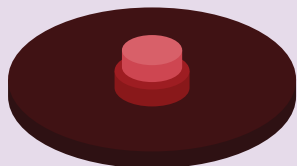


Currency
Euro

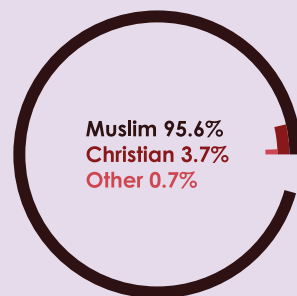


Literacy rate
96.8%

Literacy rate
98.8%



Albanian Kosovar 88%
Serbs 7%
Other 5%



Teenagers in Kosovo are expected to inform parents about decisions they want to make. Parents often advise them, but leave the final decisions to their children. However, sometimes children just need to inform parents of what they are doing and not ask for permission.

Mixed Gender Socializing: Kosovar teenagers sometimes socialize in groups, and sometimes one-on-one. Both ways are considered appropriate, and the choice is left up to the individual. Culturally, it is fine to socialize in mixed gender groups, but this might be an issue for students from rural areas. They might be more shy and withdrawn in this kind of a situation.

Friendships: Teenagers in Kosovo consider peers who they only know casually to be 'acquaintances', and peers they interact beyond just saying 'hello!' to be friends. 'Best friends' are those whom they share more time with or details from their personal life that they wouldn't with other friends. Friends might borrow money from one another, but are expected to return the money borrowed; however, if one forgets, the friend would rarely remind the former about this.

Communication Styles: It is uncommon for parents and their children to talk openly about personal issues in Kosovo, especially feelings. Showing negative emotions depends on the openness of the family. Children are not expected to participate in adult talk and usually are expected to be respectful, especially of elders like grandparents. Maintaining personal space when speaking to another person might be different than what is common in the U.S. Also, sometimes teenagers of the same sex are more physically affectionate than the norm in the U.S.

Eye contact: Eye contact is important in Kosovar culture, as it is a sign of respect for those with whom you are speaking. Teenagers are expected to make eye contact with adults.

Food and Culture



Food in Kosovo can be very traditional. Students from Kosovo are used to hot, usually home-cooked meals for lunch or dinner. Meal times are when families get to spend time together, except for weekday breakfasts, which are usually eaten separately because of different schedules. Although halal diets are not very important or common in Kosovo, pork is not very popular. Muslim families usually do follow a halal diet and do not consume pork.

Guests in Kosovo are usually offered food and drinks, and it is not considered rude if they politely decline, although they might be asked more than once. Teenagers are usually given 'lunch money' as it is uncommon for students to take food with them to school from home.

Religion: Attending religious services in Kosovo might differ from common practice in America. Usually Muslim men and women attend separate religious ceremonies, but Christian families may go to church together. However, children and teenagers are often times not required to attend these ceremonies.

Holidays: Major holidays include Ramadan, Eid-al-Fitr, Eid-al-Adha for Muslims, and Easter and Christmas Eve for Catholics, New Year's Eve, and Kosovo's Independence Day. Usually, there is no school during these one-day holidays and the first day of Ramadan. Holidays are celebrated by family gatherings and visiting relatives, big meals enjoyed together, and going out in the evening.

Personal Hygiene



Teenagers in Kosovo expect to bathe every day or sometimes once in two days. Bathing less frequently usually means longer showers. Teenagers might not be used to keeping the bathroom tidy because their parents clean up after them. Kosovar teenagers generally will not wear the same clothing two days in a row especially if they go to school, but that does not necessarily mean that they will put the previously worn clothes in the hamper for washing. They might just put it away and wear it later unless it is obviously dirty. It is uncommon to wash clothes after just one use, except socks and underwear. Most Kosovar teenagers do not do their own laundry. Usually people change their clothes once they come home from work or school. People in Kosovo do not enter homes with their shoes on.