

International Students in Kosovo Frequently Asked Questions

A guide for current and future international students in the Republic of Kosovo

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Purpose of the Guide

The purpose of this guide is to provide information to those who are seeking international education in Kosovo. The guide is arranged in a frequently asked questions style, prioritizing the most common questions asked by current and future international students interested in Kosovo. While it is not possible to anticipate every question or provide the level of detail required in specific cases, this document is intended to provide a good starting place and direct the reader towards sources for additional and updated information. The guide focuses on Pristina, which is the national capital and largest city – and where the majority of current international students reside. Later versions of this guide hope to include other major cities in Kosovo which host international students at their universities.

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Studying in Kosovo

The youngest country in Europe, Kosovo declared independence in 2008. Kosovo is a very welcoming and quickly-changing country. It is a predominantly Muslim country with approximately 1.7 million people.¹ Kosovo has applied to join the European Union on December 15, 2022, so change is happening quickly. Kosovo is catching the attention of international students, with many wanting to know more about this young country and the educational opportunities within its borders.

This guide has been written to update the information about pursuing higher education studies – either short or long term – in Kosovo. It is recommended that you use it as a general reference to supplement materials provided by your partner organization and host university.



Map of Kosovo in Europe (image credit: istockphoto)

It is worth noting that most international students in Kosovo study in Pristina, the capital city, and this FAQ page is primarily focused on universities and student life in Pristina. In the future, we hope to update this document to include other cities, as well. For now, specific information about study experiences at other universities and student life in other cities can be gained by contacting the educational institution or program directly.

Why study in Kosovo?

Kosovo has a lot to offer international students! There are a variety of programs, in Albanian language and in English, and a large student-age population in the country. For most university degrees, international students do not pay more than domestic students. Moreover, student life in Kosovo is affordable, especially compared to other European cities. There are also many organizations, internships, and other opportunities available in Kosovo for students to enhance their studies.

¹ This information is according to the 2011 Census and did not include the districts in the northern part of Kosovo. Another census will be held in 2023.



The Kosovo National Library, part of the University of Prishtina (photo credit: Anne Campbell)

The city of Pristina is home to the [University of Prishtina](#) and [Rochester Institute of Technology - Kosovo](#) (formerly known as the American University of Kosovo, or AUK). Given this, there are many university-aged people in Pristina – and indeed throughout Kosovo. Pristina is a vibrant city! For students, there are many coffee shops for studying, many public and social events, and reliable local, national, and international bus services. Kosovo is close to many other tourist, historical, and natural places, so weekend trips to nearby towns and natural attractions are easy!

Many internationals are familiar with the Balkan Wars, which had a serious impact on Kosovo and the diverse populations in the country. Fighting ceased in 1999. Against the backdrop of this conflict, Kosovo leaders and the international community have led significant reconstruction efforts over the past 20+ years. Although there is still an international peace-keeping force in the country, the day-to-day life in Pristina is calm and safe.

There are new stores, restaurants, and construction happening throughout the country! Many diaspora return to Kosovo, especially in the summer, to meet with family and friends. English is widely spoken throughout Prishtina, and Kosovo uses the Euro for its commerce. Kosovan citizens are eager to help you with directions or suggestions, as needed. Kosovo is a great place to be a student, whether for a full degree or an international summer school program. Please read ahead to learn more about pursuing higher education in Kosovo.

How many universities are located in Kosovo?

There are seven public universities and 15 private universities with accreditation in Kosovo as of 2022-2023.² As Kosovo is a young country, the universities are at a varying level of development, ranging from newly accredited universities to those which were established during the period of Yugoslavia. For example, the University of Pristina was established in 1970 and was the first public institution in the Republic of Kosovo at the time of independence.

It is recommended that you select a university that is accredited by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency. The list of accredited universities can be found here: <https://akreditimi.rks-gov.net/en/about-kaa/>.



Students, faculty, administrators, and community partners at RIT-Kosovo (photo credit: RIT-Kosovo website)

How long will my degree course take?

Kosovo follows the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), which is a system across Europe to standardize the number of higher education credits needed to complete a degree. It is a central tool in the Bologna Process to harmonize higher education across Europe

² According to the [Kosovo Accreditation Agency](#) in December 2022. In this number of 22 universities, the University of North Mitrovica is not counted. It that operates within the Serbian education system and offers programs in Serbian language.

and facilitate study abroad. ECTS also contributes to European degrees being recognized abroad.³

Under the ECTS, a full year of study or work is considered to be 60 ECTS credits total. In a standard academic year, these 60 credits are usually divided into several smaller modules. A 'first cycle' (or bachelor's, or undergraduate) degree consists of either 180 or 240 ECTS credits. This equals an undergraduate degree of either three or four years of full-time study. Usually a 'second cycle' (or master's) degree equates to 90 or 120 ECTS credits. The use of the ECTS at the 'third cycle', or Ph.D. level, varies.

Is it possible to study in Kosovo for a short period, like one summer or semester?

Yes! There are two popular options for students who wish to pursue a semester or summer study in Kosovo.

The first option is via ERASMUS+ exchange programs. There are multiple types of exchanges for European and partnership countries, ranging from 1 semester to 12 months.⁴ Kosovo's ERASMUS+ website is <http://erasmuspluskosovo.org/>. To participate in ERASMUS+ exchanges, universities must have an inter-institutional agreement. To see if your university has an agreement with a university in Kosovo, contact your university ERASMUS+ Office.

The second option to study in Kosovo in the summer is through one of the international summer school programs. International Summer School Programs are offered at the University of Pristina, University of Prizren, and RIT Kosovo.



International Summer School Prizren 2022 (image source: Facebook)

³ More information on the ECTS is [available here](#).

⁴ More information on the ERASMUS+ Study Abroad Programme is [available here](#).

Each summer school has different curricular offerings each year, with a range from film studies to international law to peace and conflict studies. Specific information about upcoming Summer Schools can be found at the links below.

- *University of Prishtina: Prishtina International Summer University*
 - Website: [Prishtina International Summer University: Open Call](#)
 - [Facebook Page](#)
 - [My Summer University in the Republic of Kosovo](#) by Zabdiel Mignake from Togo
- *RIT Kosovo: Frederick C. Cuny Peace and Conflict Studies Summer Program*
 - Website: [Peace and Conflict Studies Summer Program](#)
 - Program overview (video): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hc166S6gNEg>
- *University of Prizren: International Summer School Prizren*
 - Website: <https://www.uni-prizren.com/en/summer-school/>
 - Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/ISSP2022/>

Can I pursue my studies in the English language in Kosovo?

Yes. For those seeking full degrees, there are English-language programs at two universities. At the University of Prishtina, there are degrees offered in English in the following faculties:

- Faculty of Economics: <https://ekonomiku.uni-pr.edu/page.aspx?id=1,19>
- Faculty of Law, Master Program Advanced European Studies <https://juridiku.uni-pr.edu/page.aspx?id=1,96>
- Faculty of Philology, English Language and Literature: <https://uni-pr.edu/page.aspx?id=2,156>

At RIT Kosovo, all degree programs – at the associate's, bachelor's, and Master's levels – are in English. The private university is modeled after its partner, the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) in Rochester, New York, USA.

For students pursuing short-term study abroad in Kosovo, students should work with program advisors to determine which English language courses are available at their host university during the period of study.

International summer university programs are in English.

Do I need to know the Albanian language to study in Kosovo?

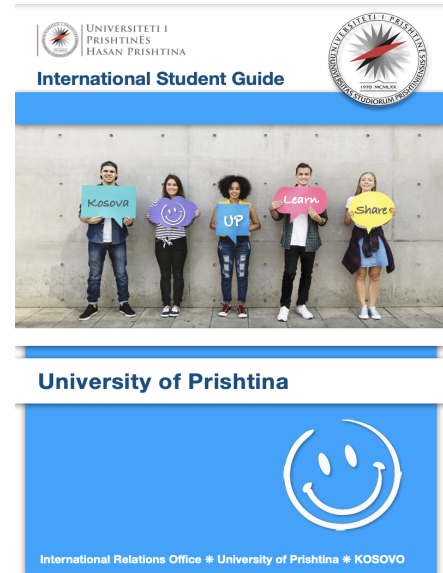
There is no formal requirement to know or learn the Albanian language. Many people and fellow students speak English. If you wish to learn Albanian while in Kosovo, there are opportunities to learn – both formally and informally. Once you arrive in Pristina, you are welcome to search for classes at your host university. Or perhaps you prefer to find individual tutoring at your universities or at organizations such as the [Alliance Francaise de Pristina](#).

Selecting a university and course of study

How can I find the best university or program for international students?

The University of Pristina and RIT - Kosovo are two universities in Pristina that have successfully hosted international students. Both universities offer degrees and/or courses in English, and you'll want to verify that your course is offered in English. In addition, neither institution charges any additional fees for international students – a unique quality in international higher education!

The University of Pristina [has prepared this helpful guide](#) (image on the right) for international students which you can learn more about international student life at the University of Pristina.



What are the admission requirements?

Admissions requirements differ by institution and by program. See the following websites for information about admission

- University of Pristina Admissions: Please contact the department to which you are interested in applying.
- RIT Kosovo Admissions: <https://www.rit.edu/kosovo/admissions>

For short-term exchanges or summer programs, you apply directly to these programs. More information on eligibility and selection processes is available there.

Will Kosovo's universities recognize my previous studies?

Universities in Kosovo will work with you to transfer credits and courses from previous study. Each case is different so please contact the head of your program to learn more about courses that may transfer to meet degree requirements.

Where can I find information about scholarships for international students?

While higher education in Kosovo is reasonably-priced, there are scholarships available to further defray the costs for international students. Scholarships can be identified through several different pathways.

First, be sure to look at local non-governmental organizations, local philanthropy, your home country government, and other sources which might provide scholarships for international study. There are also many different online search tools available to learn more about scholarships available to students from your country. Two popular search engines are <https://www.wemakescholars.com/> and <https://www.scholars4dev.com/>.

Second, be sure to ask each program or university for scholarship information. For example, here are some links to get you started in looking for scholarships for international students:

- ERASMUS + offers funding for students who are accepted through Inter-Institutional Partnerships. Contact the ERASMUS+ office at your home university to learn more about these opportunities.
- RIT Scholarships: <https://www.rit.edu/kosovo/scholarships-and-loans>

There are no designated scholarships for refugees at this time.



Students in Kosovo (photo credit: American Advising Office Website)

Living in Kosovo (Pristina)

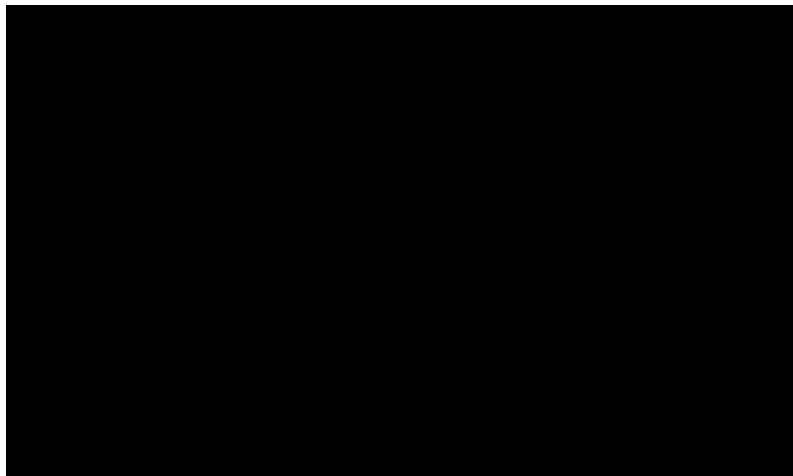
Do I need a visa to enter and stay in Kosovo as a student?

Citizens from most countries will not need to obtain a visa to enter the Republic of Kosovo. Before you travel to Kosovo, it is best to verify this with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Diaspora at <https://mfa-ks.net/>. If a Kosovo Embassy is located nearby, you may also wish to check with the Embassy of Kosovo in your – or a neighboring – country.

While entry into Kosovo may be easy, you will need to apply for a residency permit if you intend to stay longer than 90 days in Kosovo. This applies to students who enroll in a semester or year-long program, or those enrolled in a full degree program.

To apply for a residency permit, you will need to bring evidence of your student status and additional materials from your home country. See the full list of materials needed at <https://mpb.rks-gov.net/f/45>, under section 3: *Temporary Residence for the Purposes of Higher Education and Scientific Research*. Note that you'll want to collect some of these materials before you leave your home country, so plan ahead!

Where will I live during my studies?



University of Pristina student housing (credit: Facebook)

International students in Kosovo tend to choose one of three housing options. They either live in student dorms, rent a room in a private home, or rent their own apartment (often with other students to defray the cost of housing). Please contact your specific university or program for housing information. Word of mouth is a common way of learning about housing opportunities in Kosovo, so be sure to ask your specific

university or program for housing information. You can also obtain temporary housing in Pristina via an online service, like Booking.com or Airbnb.com, and then find permanent housing once you arrive. There are also real estate agents who can show you listings.

Many students live in university housing or near campus. The picture on the left is the University of Pristina Student Center housing. For those who live further from campus, there are reliable and

low-cost city buses that circulate throughout the city of Pristina and stop at both the University of Pristina and RIT Kosovo.



Pristina center (image source: Inspired By Maps Website)

Is Kosovo safe for international students?

Kosovo is generally safe for international students and people often look out for each other and offer help when distress occurs. Petty or street crime occasionally exists, and you are advised to take sensible precautions to protect yourself. When traveling outside of Pristina, consider traveling during the day and check the news and other alert services for local developments along your route and in your destination city.

As an international student in Kosovo, it is recommended that you have health insurance – in addition to the national services provided along with your temporary residency permit. There are multiple companies that provide health insurance, and it is recommended that you discuss options with your university or program. Pharmacies are found throughout cities; doctors' approval is typically not required to obtain medicines. In addition, the air quality in Pristina can be compromised – especially in the winter – and having a face mask can be useful.

Should you have a health or safety issue, there are services available for students at your host institution. The U.S. Embassy in Pristina maintains a list of hospitals that speak English; this list can be found at <https://xk.usembassy.gov/u-s-citizen-services/local-resources-of-u-s-citizens/doctors/>. Pharmacies are widely available throughout the country and can provide you with medicine directly without having to see a doctor. Covid-19 tests are widely available at pharmacies. Each university can direct students towards additional support, including academic advising and mental health support.

One challenge for international students in Kosovo is navigating menus, as food in restaurants and homes may not specify the ingredients. This can be especially challenging for those with severe food allergies or who follow vegan diets. For short term programs, it is recommended you consider bringing food products with you to supplement your nutritional needs. There are also vegetarian and international restaurants in Prishtina worth exploring for diverse diets!

What are the emergency numbers in Kosovo?

- Police: 192

- Fire Department: 193
- Ambulance: 194



Café culture (image source: Inspired By Maps Website)

Is Kosovo open and supportive of diverse identities?

As noted earlier, Kosovo citizens are generally welcoming to citizens and visitors. International visitors may receive questions or additional attention. However, there are few formal reports of discrimination against foreigners. Most citizens are open to speaking English or will find a colleague who can help translate.

For more information about how different populations are perceived and treated in Kosovo, please consider seeking recent information at the sources listed below, scanning updated information and events on Facebook, or visiting relevant offices in Pristina.

- State of civil society development: [Civicus's Overview of Kosovo](#)
- Human rights: [Human Rights Watch's summary of Kosovo](#)
- Women's role in society: [National Democratic Institute's projects in Kosovo](#)
- Inclusion and Anti-Discrimination: [Council of Europe's projects in Kosovo](#)

Funding your study in Kosovo

Planning for your studies abroad is not an easy task, and estimating needed funds can be a challenge. Total amounts per year will vary based on your housing preferences, your lifestyle choices, and your international travel. When estimating costs, be sure to include tuition, accommodation cost, daily living costs, health insurance, and transportation. Additional information about costs at Kosovan universities is below.

What are the tuition fees per year for international students?

As noted above, there are no additional fees for international students at the University of Prishtina and at RIT-Kosovo.

For more information about specific university or program costs, please visit the university's or program's website.

How much will it cost?

Costs to be a study in Pristina vary considerably, based on your choice of university, where you choose to live, and the quality of lifestyle you prefer. That being said, living in Pristina is considerably less expensive than many of the other nearby cities in the Balkans. To compare prices, consider using an online cost of living comparison calculator, such as [Numbeo](#) or [Expatistan](#), to estimate costs. By best estimates, the cost of a student apartment in the city center of Pristina can range between 150-400 Euros a month.

To help you plan your budget, consider using online tools such as budget calculators for international students. There are several options available online (for free use). Great suggestions on what to include and how to approach budgeting can be found at [this article](#) by Studee.com. Remember that Kosovo uses the Euro when calculating amounts and conversion rates from your home currency.

As a friend reminder, don't forget to look for scholarships from your home country or Kosovo universities. Additional information about scholarships is available in this document.

Learning more about being an international student in Kosovo

[ERASMUS+ Office in Kosovo](#)

[University of Prishtina International Cooperation Office](#)

[RIT Kosovo Admissions Office](#)

[Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation](#)

Additional, general resources for being an international student in Europe are provided by the European Commission. A good place to begin is <https://education.ec.europa.eu/study-in-europe>.



Leqinat Lake in Bjeshkët e Nemuna National Park (image source: Picasa)