

Geographic Names Standardization Policy for Kosovo

United States Board on Geographic Names
Foreign Names Committee



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1. Introduction

This geographic names standardization policy has been prepared as an aid to those geographic names experts who are the working staff for the United States Board on Geographic Names (BGN) in the standardization of the geographic names of Kosovo for United States Government use. The BGN and its staff work to effect consistent treatment of geographic name spellings in U.S. Government databases, publications, maps, and charts. The country policies are intended to satisfy, in part, the statutory requirements levied upon the BGN in Public Law USC 80-242 to develop principles, policies and procedures for geographic names standardization, and to promulgate decisions with respect to the principles of geographic nomenclature and orthography.

2. Languages and Language Policy

a. Demographics

Official population statistics for Kosovo are incomplete, due to boycotts of official censuses by members of ethnic minority groups, particularly Serbs. The official results of the 2011 census showed a population of 1,739,825 inhabitants. Kosovo's population is overwhelmingly ethnic Albanian (>90%), with ethnic Serbs forming the second-largest grouping. Other groups include ethnic Ashkali, Bosniaks, Gorani, Roma, and Turks.

As in most of the Balkans, ethnicity and religion are generally mutually-exclusive, and this is also the case in Kosovo. Ethnic Albanians, Ashkali, Bosniaks, Gorani, and Turks are mostly Sunni Muslim. Ethnic Serbs are primarily Eastern Orthodox. The small Roman Catholic community is primarily ethnic Croat with some ethnic Albanians.

b. Languages

Kosovo's two countrywide official languages are Albanian and Serbian. In municipalities where minority groups comprise at least 5% of the population, the language of that minority is official in that municipality. To date, the only minority languages with official status at the local level are Bosnian and Turkish.

c. Geographic Names Standardization

There is no official body tasked with standardization of geographic names in Kosovo. Kosovo is not a member of the United Nations and does not participate with the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN).

3. Toponymic Policies

a. Script and/or Orthography

Kosovo has two official languages at the national level. Albanian is written in the Roman script, natively, while Serbian is written in Serbian Cyrillic. Serbian may also be written in the Serbian Latin script. Either script is found on authoritative sources.

b. Romanization

Serbian is the only language spoken in Kosovo that requires romanization. It is romanized using the Serbian Cyrillic Table of Correspondences (2002). Serbian is also written in the Serbian Latin

script. Where sources do not indicate a Serbian Cyrillic script, analysts should reverse romanize the Serbian Latin script per the table of correspondences.

c. Diacritics

The following diacritics exist in Kosovo.

Albanian			
Character	Unicode Value	Character	Unicode Value
Ç	00C7	Ë	00CB
ç	00E7	ë	00EB
Serbian			
Character	Unicode Value	Character	Unicode Value
Č	010C	Š	0160
č	010D	š	0161
Ć	0106	Ž	017D
ć	0107	ž	017E
Đ	0110	đ	0111

d. Generic Terms

For Albanian language generic terms, please consult the BGN Albania country policy. For Serbian language generic terms, please consult the BGN Serbia country policy.

e. Hyphenation, Capitalization, and Spelling

Kosovar names follow general BGN policy in regard to hyphenation, capitalization, and abbreviation. The initial letter of prepositions in place names is never capitalized, unless the preposition occurs as the first element in a compound place name.

f. Long and short forms

Administrative division names are accorded long and short forms. Short-form names are to be ranked as the primary approved name and the long form as the secondary approved name.

Optional short forms are also provided for the BGN standard names of railroad stations, railroad stops, and populated places that contain prepositions. When supported by evidence from official sources, optional short forms are provided for BGN standard names that contain generic terms, e.g., *lumi*, *liqeni*. In such cases the specific name element becomes the short form name.

Short forms are not added to variant names and should be removed when a formerly approved name becomes a variant name.

g. Numbers

Cardinal and ordinal numerals that occur in geographic names should be spelled out completely in BGN standard names.

h. Abbreviations

Abbreviated names should be spelled out completely in BGN standard names. The abbreviated form is captured as the name on source; it need not be captured as a variant.

i. Unique linguistic situations

Albanian

Albanian language mapping typically depicts the definite form of Albanian proper nouns.

Since May 1995, BGN policy has been to use the indefinite form for:

- (a) all populated place names, including those which contain a hyphen
- (b) all short-form administrative division names
- (c) all physical feature names which do not include a generic term

The definite form will be used for:

- (a) all long-form administrative division names
- (b) all physical feature names which contain a generic term

Exceptionally, in cases where the indefinite form cannot be identified or derived, the definite form may be used. In all cases, the definite form captured as the name on source, as well as a variant.

The table below instructs analysts how to convert definite nouns into their indefinite form.

	<i>Singular</i>					
	<i>Masculine</i>		<i>Feminine</i>		<i>Plural</i>	
	<i>Indefinite</i>	<i>Definite</i>	<i>Indefinite</i>	<i>Definite</i>	<i>Indefinite</i>	<i>Definite</i>
After <i>ër</i> or <i>ës</i>		-i		-a		-it
After <i>k</i>, <i>g</i>, <i>h</i>		-u				
After <i>V'</i>		-j or -u		-ja		-të
After <i>o'</i>				-ja		-t
After <i>o</i>				-ua		-t
All others		-i		-a		-t

Serbian

In line with collection standards across the former Yugoslavia, Serbian language names are captured using the 'hbs' language code (Bosnian/Croatian/Montenegrin/Serbian). In municipalities where approved Bosnian and Serbian names diverge, the 'hbs' language code will be used for both, with the appropriate dialect code selected for the respective names.

4. Political Geography Policy

Across Kosovo, approved names should be collected for all official languages, where they exist. Albanian language names always take precedence with a name rank of 1, followed by Serbian with name rank 2, and, where necessary, minority languages with name rank(s) 3, etc. This policy applies to all toponymic features in Kosovo.

Occasionally, analysts may encounter features with minority-language sources, but no authoritative Albanian language sources are available. In these instances, analysts should assign minority-language names as unverified (“D” names), pending authoritative Albanian-language sourcing. At that point, the Albanian-language name will take precedence as the approved name, with the minority language name receiving an approved (“N” name) status if the minority-language name is official, or a variant status in all other instances.

a. Kosovo

Conventional Short Form	Kosovo
Conventional Long Form	Republic of Kosovo
Albanian Short Form	Kosovë
Albanian Long Form	Republika e Kosovës
Serbian Short Form – Non-Roman Script	Косово
Serbian Short Form – Romanized	Kosovo
Serbian Long Form – Non-Roman Script	Република Косово
Serbian Long Form – Romanized	Republika Kosovo

b. Capital Name

Conventional Short Form	Pristina
Albanian Form	Prishtinë
Serbian Form – Non-Roman Script	Приштина
Serbian Form – Romanized	Priština

c. First-order Administrative Divisions of Kosovo

Kosovo is divided into 38 municipalities. Seat names in Serbian mirror the municipality name, with the exceptions of Mitrovicë e Veriut/Severna Mitrovica and Mitrovicë e Jugut/Južna Mitrovica, which share Mitrovicë/Mitrovica as their seat. In both Mamushë and Prizren, Turkish is a co-official language. The respective spellings, in Turkish, are Mamuşa and Prizren.

Albanian Name	Serbian Name	Serbian Cyrillic	GEC	GENC	Seat
Deçan	Deçani	Дечани	KV01	XK-01	Deçan
Dragash	Dragaš	Драгаш	KV02	XK-02	Dragash
Ferizaj	Uroševac	Урошевац	KV03	XK-03	Ferizaj
Fushë Kosovë	Kosovo Polje	Косово Поље	KV04	XK-04	Fushë Kosovë
Gjakovë	Đakovica	Ђаковица	KV05	XK-05	Gjakovë
Gjilan	Gnjilane	Гњилане	KV06	XK-06	Gjilan
Glllogovc	Glogovac	Глоговац	KV07	XK-07	Glllogovc
Graçanicë	Gračanica	Грачаница	KV31	XK-08	Graçanicë
Hani i Elezit	Đeneral Janković	Ђенерал Јанковић	KV32	XK-09	Hani i Elezit
Istog	Istok	Исток	KV08	XK-10	Istog
Junik	Junik	Јуник	KV33	XK-11	Junik
Kaçanik	Kaçanik	Качаник	KV09	XK-12	Kaçanik

<i>Albanian Name</i>	<i>Serbian Name</i>	<i>Serbian Cyrillic</i>	<i>GEC</i>	<i>GENC</i>	<i>Seat</i>
Kamenicë	Kamenica	Каменица	KV10	XK-13	Kamenicë
Klinë	Klina	Клина	KV11	XK-14	Klinë
Klllokot	Klokot	Клокот	KV34	XK-15	Klllokot
Leposaviq	Leposavić	Лепосавић	KV12	XK-16	Leposaviq
Lipjan	Lipljan	Липљан	KV13	XK-17	Lipjan
Malishevë	Mališevo	Малишево	KV14	XK-18	Malishevë
Mamushë	Mamuša	Мамуша	KV35	XK-19	Mamushë
Mitrovicë e Jugut	Južna Mitrovica	Јужна Митровица	KV38	XK-38	Mitrovicë
Mitrovicë e Veriut	Severna Mitrovica	Северна Митровица	KV39	XK-39	Mitrovicë
Novobërdë	Novo Brdo	Ново Брдо	KV16	XK-21	Novobërdë
Obiliq	Obilić	Обилић	KV17	XK-22	Obiliq
Partesh	Parteš	Партеш	KV36	XK-23	Partesh
Pejë	Peć	Пећ	KV18	XK-24	Pejë
Podujevë	Podujevo	Подујево	KV19	XK-25	Podujevë
Prishtinë	Priština	Приштина	KV20	XK-26	Pristina
Prizren	Prizren	Призрен	KV21	XK-27	Prizren
Rahovec	Orahovac	Ораховац	KV22	XK-28	Rahovec
Ranillug	Ranilug	Ранилуг	KV37	XK-29	Ranillug
Shtërpçë	Štrpce	Штрпце	KV23	XK-30	Shtërpçë
Shtime	Štimlje	Штимље	KV24	XK-31	Shtime
Skenderaj	Srbica	Србица	KV25	XK-32	Skenderaj
Suharekë	Suva Reka	Сува Река	KV26	XK-33	Suharekë
Viti	Vitina	Витина	KV27	XK-34	Viti
Vushtrri	Vučitrn	Вучитрн	KV28	XK-35	Vushtrri
Zubin Potok	Zubin Potok	Зубин Поток	KV29	XK-36	Zubin Potok
Zveçan	Zvečan	Звечан	KV30	XK-37	Zveçan

d. Conventional and/or Anglicized Names

Conventional Names

<i>Conventional Name</i>	<i>UFI</i>	<i>UNI</i>	<i>Designation</i>
Pristina	-93264	10916705	PPLC

Anglicized Variant Names

<i>Name</i>	<i>UFI</i>	<i>UNI</i>	<i>Designation</i>
North Mitrovica	12658691	15896900	ADM1
South Mitrovica	12658688	15880038	ADM1

e. Unique Geopolitical Situations

For the latest country-specific boundary dispute information, consult the US Department of State Office of the Geographer and Global Issues (internationalboundaries@state.gov).

As of March 2020 Kosovo has been recognized as an independent state by approximately 100 out of 193 U.N. member states, including the United States. The government of Serbia does not recognize Kosovo's independence, and maintains a territorial claim to the entire country. Kosovo is not a member of the United Nations.

5. Source Material

The websites cited below contain authoritative, detailed mapping over the entirety of Kosovo.

Albanian names:	Kosovo Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning Geoportal http://geoportal.rks-gov.net
Serbian names:	Republic of Serbia Geodetic Authority "GeoSrbija" web portal http://a3.geosrbija.rs