

Why do Kosovo-Serbia tensions persist?

June 12, 2023 • vajiramandravi.com



About Kosovo-Serbia tensions:

- Kosovo is a **mainly ethnic Albanian populated territory** that was **formerly a province of Serbia**. It **declared independence in 2008**.
- **Serbia has refused to recognize Kosovo's statehood** and **still considers it part of Serbia**, even though it has no formal control there.
- **Kosovo's independence has been recognized by about 100 countries**, including the United States.
- **Russia, China and five EU countries**, most of them with separatist regions of their own, **have sided with Serbia**.
- **The deadlock has kept tensions simmering and prevented full stabilization** of the Balkan region after the bloody wars in the 1990s.
- **What's the latest flare-up about?**
 - **After Serbs boycotted last month's local elections** held in northern Kosovo, **where Serbs represent a majority**, newly elected ethnic Albanian mayors moved into their offices with the help of Kosovo's riot police.
 - **Serbs tried to prevent them** from taking over the premises, **but police fired tear gas to disperse them**.

- **Serbs staged a protest in front of the municipality buildings, triggering a tense standoff** that resulted in fierce clashes between the Serbs and the Kosovo peacekeepers and local police.
 - **How deep is the ethnic conflict in Kosovo?**
 - The dispute over Kosovo is **centuries old. Serbia cherishes the region as the heart of its statehood** and religion.
 - **Numerous medieval Serb Orthodox Christian monasteries are in Kosovo.** Serb nationalists view a 1389 battle against Ottoman Turks there as a symbol of their national struggle.
 - **Kosovo's majority ethnic Albanians view Kosovo as their country** and accuse Serbia of occupation and repression. **Ethnic Albanian rebels launched a rebellion in 1998 to rid the country of Serbian rule.**
 - **Serbia's brutal response prompted a NATO intervention in 1999**, which forced Serbia to pull out and cede control to international peacekeepers.
 - **What is the situation locally?**
 - There are **constant tensions between the Kosovo government and the Serbs who live mainly in the north of the country** and keep close ties with Serbia.
 - **Attempts by the central government to impose more control in the Serb-dominated north are usually met with resistance from Serbs.**
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Q1) Which all countries border Kosovo?

Kosovo is a landlocked country bordered by Serbia to the north and east, North Macedonia to the south, Albania to the west, and Montenegro to the northwest. Kosovo, about the same size as Jamaica or Lebanon, is the smallest country in the Balkans.

Source: Explained | What is the Kosovo-Serbia conflict all about? Why have tensions flared again?

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