

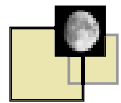
- Population: 2–2.2 million
- Ethnic composition: Albanian 88%, Serb and Montenegrin 7%, Other 5% (Turks, Romani)
- Religion: Islam, Catholic, Orthodox
- Area: 7,000 mi<sup>2</sup>

This region of the Balkans is known by two names: Kosovo by Serbs and Kosova by Albanians. (This article uses Kosova since it is about Albanian Muslims.)

Kosova has been part of the Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman Empires, and then part of both Serbia and Yugoslavia. Since June 1999, Kosova has been under United Nations administration, following the extreme ethnic violence between the Serbs and Kosovar Albanians. Kosova has become increasingly calm and peaceful over the past few years, and the European Union is playing a major role in its reconstruction.

Some Christians visited Kosova recently: "We spent most of our time with a congregation in Pristina, the capital. We were amazed at the openness of the people to discuss Christ. Wherever we went we had great freedom to share the gospel, and we gave out many Bibles and tracts. One brother gave some seminars at a university campus which were attended by about 100 people each time. When some Muslim fundamentalists were loud and disruptive during the meeting, it only encouraged others who were discontented with Islam. Afterwards Albanian believers shared their faith with people present. It was exciting to see the Albanians share their stories with boldness!"

Some former Muslim Kosovars are even involved in missions. Recently, six joined a team of Western Christians and spent a week in Istanbul. They handed out Christian literature and talked to Muslims. The Kosovars were very touched to see that the Turks — who originally brought Islam to Kosova — were open to the Gospel and wanted to know more about Jesus. As God worked in their hearts, the Kosovar believers gave up negative attitudes towards Turks and were filled with compassion and love.



## ► Pray

- The new Kosovar believers need discipleship training. Pray that new believers will continue to grow in the knowledge of God and become even more effective in proclaiming their faith in word and deed.
- Pray that the Lord will continue to create an even greater spiritual hunger among the Muslim Kosovars.
- Pray that the Kosovar believers would be filled with God's wisdom to be a light and a source of hope to their people.