

# Serbia



## Quick facts

Number of IDPs	225,000 – 230,000
Percentage of total population	3.2%
Start of current displacement situation	1999
Peak number of IDPs (Year)	248,000 (2004)
New displacement	Undetermined
Causes of displacement	Internationalised and internal armed conflict, generalised violence, human rights violations
Human development index	67

In 2008 Kosovo declared independence from Serbia. The UN General Assembly subsequently voted to refer the independence declaration to the International Court of Justice for an advisory opinion. At the end of 2009, 64 countries had recognised Kosovo. For the purpose of this page references to “Serbia” exclude Kosovo.

In 1999, bombardments by NATO forces and attacks by Kosovo Albanians forced Kosovo Serbs and Roma people to flee into Serbia proper or within Kosovo. As of December 2009, there were still around 225,000 IDPs in Serbia, including an estimated

# Kosovo



## Quick facts

Number of IDPs	19,700
Percentage of total population	0.9%
Start of current displacement situation	1999
Peak number of IDPs (Year)	36,000 (2000)
New displacement	Undetermined
Causes of displacement	Internationalised and internal armed conflict, generalised violence, human rights violations

Kosovo’s declaration of independence in 2008 created new uncertainty for the 19,700 people internally displaced within Kosovo, as well as for the 230,000 IDPs from Kosovo who were still residing in Serbia by the end of 2009. However there has been no further displacement since 2008. Serbia has not recognised the independence of Kosovo, continuing to regard it as a UN-governed entity within its sovereign territory.

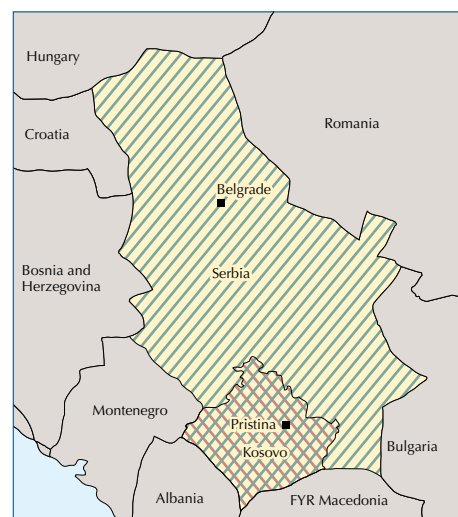
Living conditions are difficult and opportunities for IDPs to integrate are scarce where they are in a minority. Security concerns have prevented most from returning to repossess their property. Because of their limited freedom of movement

20,000 unregistered displaced Roma people. An additional 20,000 people were displaced in Kosovo, mainly in majority-Serb enclaves.

Few of the people displaced in 1999 have found durable solutions. After an almost complete halt of returns in 2008, rates increased slightly with some 540 returns in 2009. Prospects for return to Kosovo are limited, and many IDPs face difficulties in repossessing property and obtaining legal documentation. Those who have returned to Kosovo have struggled to find work, notably because of widespread discrimination against Serbs and Roma people. As a result, Serb IDP associations estimate that only 5,000 IDP minority returns out of 15,000 have been sustainable.

The Serbian government has implemented projects supporting the development of social housing for IDPs in recent years, notably for the 4,200 IDPs still in collective centres.

The most vulnerable IDPs are Roma people who have specific protection needs. Their lack of documentation and any official residence prevents them from registering as IDPs and limits their access to services and social benefits.



and the discrimination they face, IDPs’ access to land and employment has been very poor. Most Serb IDPs reside in enclaves and rely on a parallel system of education, policing, and health care supported by Serbia. However, they are increasingly approaching Kosovo institutions to obtain valid personal documentation or social benefits.

The rate of return fell in 2008 from an already low level, as IDPs waited to evaluate the approach of the Kosovo authorities towards non-Albanian communities. It increased only slightly in 2009 to 760, including 215 returns within Kosovo. In the meantime, reconstructed houses remained empty or were being sold as people did not dare to return.

The most vulnerable IDPs are Roma people, who have specific protection needs because of their social marginalisation and lack of civil documentation. This prevents them from registering as IDPs and limits their access to housing assistance and other social benefits, condemning them to inadequate living conditions. An increasing number of projects target minority communities to prevent displacement or offer permanent housing in the place of displacement, which seems to offer the best prospect of durable solution for Kosovo Serb IDPs.