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REPUBLIC OF ADYGEA – SMALL AND BEAUTIFUL

Abstract

In this paper is considered the Republic of Adygea, one of the smallest federal subjects of the huge and complexly organized Russian Federation. Here is presented a concise history of building of the republic, as its today's natural characteristics: geographic position, area size and population, relief, climate and water, and natural resources and economy. Especially is emphasized the attractiveness of its touristic destinations and cultural heritage, as conditions for tourism development. Specific possibilities for cultural cooperation between Serbia and Adygea provides Circassian minority, who settled in Kosovo (and in other parts of Serbia) after the Crimean War, one part of which returned to the homeland.

Key Words: *Adygea, Krasnodar Reservoir (Kuban Sea), Plateau Lago-Naki, Scythian gold, agro-industry, tourism, heritage, development, cooperation, Circassians in Kosovo, cultural cooperation*

JEL Classification: R10, R11

РЕПУБЛИКА АДИГЕЈА – МАЛА И ЛЕПА

Апстракт

У чланку се разматра Република Адигеја, један од најмањих федералних субјеката огромне и комплексно организоване Руске Федерације. Приказана је кратка историја стварања републике, и њене данашње карактеристике: географски положај, површина и становништво, рељеф, клима и воде, као и природни ресурси и економија. Посебно се подвлачи њена атрактивност као туристичке дестинације и њено културно наслеђе, као услов за развој туризма. Специфичне могућности културне сарадње Србије и Адигеје пружа черкеска мањина насељена на Косову (и другим деловима Србије) после Кримског рата, чији се један део вратио у постојбину.

Кључне речи: *Адигеја, Краснодарско вештачко језеро (Кубањско море), Плато Лаго-Наки, Скитско злато, агроиндустрија, туризам, наслеђе, развој, сарадња, Черкези на Косову, културна сарадња*

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Introduction

Russia is the world's largest country, spreading over two continents – Europe and Asia, and covering 17,125,187 km² (Figure 1). At the beginning of 2016, the population is officially estimated to 146.5 million inhabitants. Today's Russia is a successor to several states. According to the questionable “Invitation of the Varangians” theory (Norman or Normanist theory), with its first proponents, the 18th-century German historians of Russia – Gerhardt Friedrich Bayer, Gerhard Friedrich Müller, August Ludwig von Schlözer and other German historians, such as Johann Erich Thunmann – all of those states originated in the ancient Russian state, founded in 862 and governed by the Rurik dynasty.

The modern-day Russian Federation is the legal heir of the Soviet Union (USSR). As Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR), it was part of the USSR from 30th December 1922, when the Soviet Russia, Ukraine, Belorussia and the Transcaucasian Federation united into the Soviet Union, until the end of 1991. On 8th December 1991, the Belavezha Accords signed by Russia, Ukraine and Belorussia declared the USSR dissolved and on 12th December, the agreement was ratified by the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR. On 25th December, the Supreme Soviet adopted a law to rename the RSFSR to Russian Federation. Two years after, on 25th December 1993, a new constitution came into force and it is current to the present day.



Figure 1. Russian Federation, Orthographic Projection

Source: <https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russia>

Russia is a complex entity, composed not only of republics, but also of other types of federal units, which all have a common denomination: federal subjects. The subjects of the contemporary Russian Federation were formed in the times of RSFSR. When the current Constitution was adopted in 1993, it defined 89 subjects. Subsequently, a series of transformations and name changes occurred, so after some regions unified on 1st March 2008, there was left a total of 83 subjects. Following the incorporation of Crimea referendum held on 18th March 2014, the number of federal subjects increased to 85 (Figure 2).



Обозначения на карте:

Области			Республики		Автономные округа	
1 - Астраханская	9 - Ленинградская	17 - Рязанская	1 - Адыгея	7 - Марий Эл	Край	
2 - Владимирская	10 - Липецкая	18 - Самарская	2 - Башкортостан	8 - Мордовия		
3 - Волгоградская	11 - Московская	19 - Свердловская	3 - Ингушетия	9 - Северная Осетия - Алания	1 - Краснодарский	2 - Ставропольский
4 - Воронежская	12 - Нижегородская	20 - Тамбовская	4 - Кабардино-Балкарская	10 - Удмуртская	Города федерального значения	
5 - Ивановская	13 - Новгородская	21 - Тульская	5 - Калмыкия	11 - Чеченская		
6 - Калужская	14 - Орловская	22 - Ульяновская	6 - Карачаево-Черкесская	12 - Чувашская	1 - Москва	2 - Севастополь
7 - Кемеровская	15 - Пензенская	23 - Челябинская	Автономная область			
8 - Костромская	16 - Ростовская	24 - Ярославская				

Figure 2. Russian Federal Subjects

Source: http://kcbux.ru/Statyy/ZA_zizny/za-016_karta-RF.html

According to the Russian Federation Constitution, the status of a federal subject, being the territorial unit of the highest level, belongs to the cities of federal importance (Moscow, Sankt Petersburg and, after the incorporation of Crimea on referendum held on 16th March 2014, also Sevastopol), and also to 22 republics (Adygea, Altai, Bashkortostan, Buryatia, Chechnya, Chuvashia, Crimea, Dagestan, Ingushetia, Kabardino-Balkaria, Kalmykia, Karachaev-Cherkessia, Karelia, Komi, Mari El, Mordovia, Sakha (Yakutia), North Ossetia-Alania, Tatarstan, Tuva, Udmurtia, Khakassia), 9 krajs (Altai, Zabaykalsky, Kamchatka, Krasnodar, Krasnoyarsk, Perm, Primorsky, Stavropol, Khabarovsk Krai), 1 autonomous oblast (Jewish Autonomous Oblast), 46 oblasts (Amur, Arkhangelsk, Astrakhan, Belgorod, Bryansk, Chelyabinsk, Ivanovo, Irkutsk, Kaliningrad, Kaluga, Kemerovo, Kirov, Kostroma, Kurgan, Kursk, Leningrad, Lipetsk, Magadan, Moscow, Murmansk, Nizhny Novgorod, Novgorod, Novosibirsk, Omsk, Orenburg, Oryol, Penza, Pskov, Rostov, Ryazan, Samara, Saratov, Sakhalin, Sverdlovsk, Smolensk, Tambov, Tver, Tomsk, Tula, Tyumen, Ulyanovsk, Vladimir, Volgograd, Vologda, Voronezh, Yaroslavl Oblast) and 4 autonomous okrugs (Nenets, Khanty-Mansi, Chukotka and Yamalo-Nenets Okrug).

In addition to the federal organs, each federal subject has its executive (governor), legislature (regional parliaments) and judicial branch (Constitutional or Statutory court). Each subject has its own Constitution (republics) or Statute (other subjects), as well as its own legislature, adopted by the respective regional parliament. The federal subjects each have two representatives in the Federation Council, which is the upper house of the Federal Assembly. All the subjects are equal in terms of their relationship with the federal government. They are empowered to solve issues delegated by the Constitution. The federal subjects are given no right to separate from the Russian Federation.



Figure 3. Federal Districts (Okrugs) of Russia

Source: http://kcbux.ru/Statyy/ZA_zizny/za-016_karta-RF.html

According to the fundamentals of political and social organization of the Russian Federation, the federal subjects are grouped in federal okrugs (districts) since 2000 (Figure 3). Districts are not subjects or any other kind of constituents of the Federation and they were formed after the example of the military okrugs. A federal district is an area in which the President of Russia is represented by a polpred representative, one of the leading members of the Administration of the President of Russian Federation, who substitutes the President in a number of occasions. At first seven okrugs were formed, while in 2010 the North-Caucasian separated from the South Federal Okrug, and after the incorporation of Crimea, the Crimean Federal Okrug was established. Therefore, 9 federal okrugs exist in today's Russian Federation.



Figure 4. Southern Federal District

Source: Арена

Main data of the federal districts are given in Table 1. They are established from 2010 Russian Census, except for the Crimean Federal District, that was incorporated in Russia on March 2014, after the Russian Census was held. As we can see, the Southern Federal District is one of the smallest – it is bigger only than North Caucasian and Crimean Districts. On the other hand, the number of inhabitants in this district is smaller only in comparison to Central Federal District, Volga Federal District and Siberian Federal District. This fact shows that the population density and, consequently, the economic activities in Southern Federal District are among the biggest in Russian Federation. Southern Federal District envelops two republics – Adygea and Kalmykia, Krasnodar Krai² and three oblasts – Astrakhan, Volgograd and Rostov, with capitals Maykop, Elista, Krasnodar, Astrakhan, Volgograd and Rostov-on-Don (Figure 4).

Table 1. Federal Districts of Russia

Name of District	Establishment Date	Area (km ²)	Population (2010 Russian Census)	Number of Federal Subjects	Administrative Center
Central Federal District	May 18, 2000	652,800	38,438,600	18	Moscow
Southern Federal District	May 18, 2000	418,500	13,856,700	6	Rostov-on-Don
Northwestern Federal District	May 18, 2000	1,677,900	13,583,800	11	Saint Petersburg
Far Eastern Federal District	May 18, 2000	6,215,900	6,291,900	9	Khabarovsk
Siberian Federal District	May 18, 2000	5,114,800	19,254,300	12	Novosibirsk
Ural Federal District	May 18, 2000	1,788,900	12,082,700	6	Yekaterinburg
Volga Federal District	May 18, 2000	1,038,000	29,900,400	14	Nizhny Novgorod
North Caucasian Federal District	January 19, 2010	170,700	9,496,800	7	Pyatigorsk
Crimean Federal District	March 21, 2014	26,100	2,284,400*	2	Simferopol

* <http://en.krymedia.ru/society/3365334-Results-of-Census-Population-of-Crimea-is-2284-Million-People>

Source: (Federal Districts of Russia)

Besides districts (okrugs), the federal subjects are grouped into:

- 12 economic regions,
- 10 geographic regions,
- 8 natural regions,
- 4 military districts (6 as of 2010), and
- 11 time zones.

Republics as the Federal Subjects of Russian Federation

According to the Population Census 2010, in Russian Federation live 304 nationalities. Among them, 41 nationality has more than 100,000 inhabitants. After the incorporation of Crimea, the Crimean Tatars became the 42nd nation with more than

² About Krasnodar Krai see more in: (Bukvić 2014).

100,000 people. Although in many cases all nationalities live mixed in Federation, they are more or less concentrated on minor territory, forming their own land. These lands are formed as republics. Republics are the specific subjects in Russia; they were formed as national-state formations. There are 22 republics in Russian Federation (Figure 5). Contrary to other subjects, they have their own constitution, and the right to establish their own official language. In Republic of Adygea official languages are Russian and Adygean (or West Circassian).

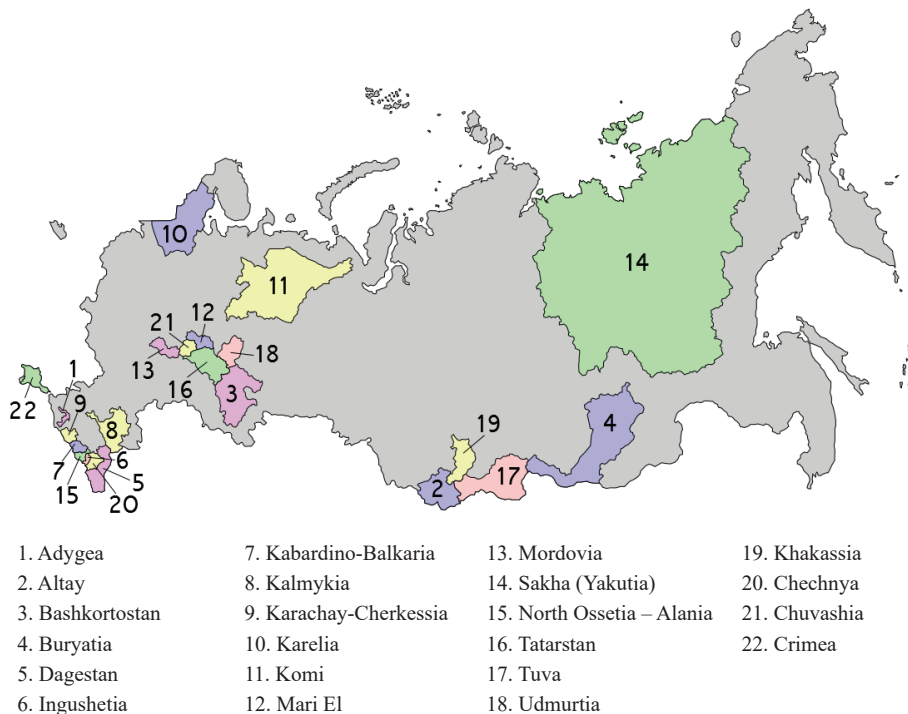


Figure 5. Republics of the Russian Federation

Source: [https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Республика_\(Россия\)](https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Республика_(Россия))

Republic of Adygea (other spellings Adygeya, Adyge, Adyghea) is one of the youngest formations in the status of republic within the today's Russian state. The formation of the republics, in general, began after the October Revolution, with many transformations, particularly in circumstances of the civil war and war against intervention of foreign forces. The territory of Adygea was in Kuban-Black Sea Soviet Republic from 30th May 1918 to 6th July 1918; it was formed by merging of the Black Sea Soviet Republic (existing from March–May 1918 on the territory of Black Sea Governorate in the Russian Empire) and Kuban Soviet Republic (existing from 13th April to 30th May 1918 within the general Kuban territory), with its capital in Yekaterinodar. Later, Kuban-Black Sea Soviet Republic was merged with Stavropol Soviet Republic and Terek Soviet Republic into the North Caucasian Soviet Republic (existing from 7th July to December 1918 with capital in Yekaterinodar, to August 17, when it was taken by Denikin's Volunteer Army, and then in Pyatigorsk to the end of 1918, when the majority of the

North Caucasian Republic’s territory was captured by White Army, and all republics were abolished). After the end of civil war, Adygea was formed at 27th July 1922, as Adygea-Cherkessian autonomous oblast on the territory of Maykop and Yekaterinodar sections of Kuban-Black Sea oblast. From August 1928 it was renamed into Adygean autonomous oblast. Finally, from July 1991 it is again republic – Republic of Adygea.

Republic of Adygea belongs to the Southern Federal District and North Caucasian Economic Region of the Russian Federation. This region comprises the whole of the North Caucasian Federal District (republics: Chechen, Dagestan, Ingushetia, Kabardino-Balkar, Karachay-Cherkess and North Ossetia-Alania, and Stavropol Krai) and part of the Southern Federal District: Republic of Adygea, Krasnodar Krai and Rostov oblast. North Caucasian Economic Region is one of the richest and strongest regions in Russia.

The symbols of the republic, the flag and the coat of arms of the Republic of Adygea are presented on Figure 6. On the green and gold Adyge flag are 12 stars that represent the 12 tribes of Adygs (Circassians) people. Adygea’s coat of arms also shows these 12 stars - the 12 tribes of Adyghe nation. In the center of the coat of arms is a rider on a horse, Sosruko or Sosriqwe, the hero of the Nart saga (saga of the North Caucasus’ nations), with a torch in his hand - a torch that he seized from the gods for people. Author of the national coat of arms is the artist of the Republic Davlet Meretukov.

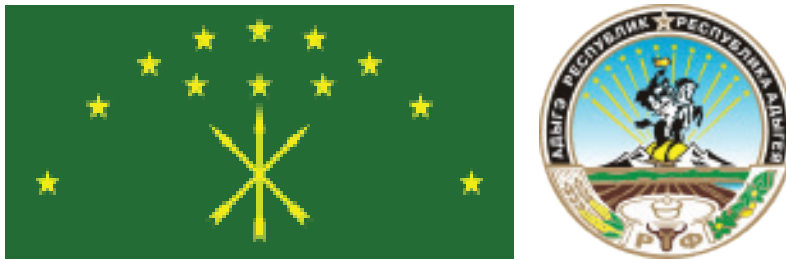


Figure 6. Flag and Coat of Arms of the Republic Adygea

Source: *Гербы регионов России*, № 2.

In terms of administrative divisions, Republic of Adygea consists of seven districts (raions) and two cities/towns (Figure 7): 1. Maykop City, 2. Adygeysk Town, 3. Giaginsky District, 4. Koshekhablsky District, 5. Krasnogvardeysky District, 6. Maykopsky District, 7. Takhtamukaysky District, 8. Teuchezhsky District, 9. Shovgenovsky District.

The capital city of the republic is Maykop. The name the city comes from Adyghe word that means “apple valley”. It is founded in 1857 as a fortress on the River Bela. In the second half of the 19th century the city lost its military importance and in 1870, by the decision of the Emperor Alexander II, was declared as county. The city is inhabited by 153,500 citizens (144,249 according to Census in 2010). Maykop is located in the north foothills of the Caucasus Ridge on the right bank of the Belaya River (the Kuban River tributary). Maykop is 1,255 km far from Moscow and is in the same time zone. The city’s name originates from an Adyghe word “Мыекуаре” (Мыекъуапэ) that is translated as “a settlement in the mouth of a river, flowing through the valley of apple trees”. It was established in 1857 as a Russian military fort and already in 1870 Maykop turned from a village into the main district town. Since 1991, Maykop has been the capital of the

Republic of Adygea in the Russian Federation. Maykop is also a cultural center of the republic. The National Museum of the Republic of Adygea in Maykop possesses unique archaeological and ethnographic collections. Also, the city has a branch of the State Museum of Oriental Art. Republic has two local universities where the aspiranture and doctorate are accessible, and where the scientific councils work. Adyge State University (former Teachers' Training Institute, founded in 1940) consists from many institutes (Art Institute and Institute of Physical Culture and Judo) and faculties: Adygei Philology and Culture, Natural, Engineering Physics, Historical, Mathematics and Computer Science, International, Pedagogy and Psychology, Philological, Economic, Legal, Department of Social Technologies and Tourism, Department of Mezhfakultetskie, and filials in Belorechensk and Novorossisk. Maykop State Technological University was founded on the basis of three colleges in 1993.

Geographic Position, Area Size and Population of Adygea

Republic of Adygea is one of the smallest federal subjects within the Russian state. It covers the area of 7,792 km² (0.05% of territory of Russian Federation), with territory that makes an enclave within Krasnodar Krai. Among the federal republics, smaller than Adygea is only Ingushetia. All other federal subjects in Russia are bigger, except the cities of federal importance (Moscow, Sankt-Petersburg and Sevastopol). Among European countries, Adygea is about the size of Cyprus (9,251 km²); it is greater only than Luxembourg, Andorra, Malta, Liechtenstein, San Marino, Monaco and Vatican. The republic is situated at basin of two main Kuban inflows – Laba and Belaya. Main part of the republic covers the area between 44° and 45°N, spreading the geographic latitude of, for example, Serbian capital Belgrade (44°49'14") and its neighborhood. The whole length of the borders of Adygea is 900 km, the spans in are 208 km (in direction north-south) and 165 km (in direction west-east).

45th circle of latitude crosses the Krasnodar Reservoir (Kuban Sea), the biggest reservoir of the Northern Caucasus. Its area is 420 km², volume 2.0 to 3.1 km³ (it is regulated, the water level oscillating about to 8 m), long 40 km, wide to 15 km. The reservoir was built in 1973–1975; east part of new reservoir includes former Tschikskoe Reservoir. 44th circle of latitude crosses the north-western parts of Big Caucasus. In the west-east direction, the republic is crossed with the 40th meridian, that goes through Lago-Naki Upland, one of the natural jewels of the republic, and near west of the capital Maykop (Figure 7).



Figure 7. Administrative Division of Republic of Adygea

Source: <https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Адыгея>

On the north, Adygea is bordered by Krasnoarmeysky, Dinskoy, Ust-Labinsky, Kurganinsky districts-raions of the Krasnodar Krai, and the City of Krasnodar; on the west, by Apsheronsky, Belorechensky and Seversky districts-raions, and the territory of the administration of City Goryachy Klyuch; on the east by Mostovskiy, Labinskiy and Kurganinskiy districts-raions of Krasnodar Krai. On the south, republic is bordered by raions of Big Sochi.

On the 1st January 2015, the total population of the Republic was estimated to 449,171 inhabitants (Численность постоянного населения 2015). The population density (57.6 per km²) is relatively high for the Russian Federation, although lower than in Krasnodar Krai. The shares of urban and rural population are 47.1 and 52.9. In comparison to Russian Federation, the share of urban population is considerably lower – in Federation, this share exceeds three quarters. It is also lower in comparison to Krasnodar Krai (54%).

Adygea is multi-ethnic republic. Over 80 ethnic groups live in the Republic. According to the Census 2010 (Итоги ... Том 4, 2012), dominant ethnicity are the Russians (63.6%), Adyghs, including Circassians are the second and make up 25.8%. Other ethnicities make up less than 10% of total population: Armenians (3.7%), Ukrainians (1.4%), Kurds (1.1%), Tatars (0.6), Roma (0.6%), etc. Titular nationality is more compact and make majority in city Adygeysk (78.4%) and in Teuchezhskiy (68.4%) and Shovgenovskiy District (62.5%), also in Koshekhabl'skiy District (49.4%), although there is less than half of total population.

Titular nationality – Adyghe (Circassians) were one of the most migrant population in history, and not only in Russia. “Circassians” is a common name for the group of tribes from north of Caucasus and Kuban (self name is Adyghe); in 1835 there were 527,000 inhabitants. After the Crimean (Eastern) war 1853–1856, in 1858 thousands of them emigrated in Turkey and number of inhabitants decreased to 315,000. After the new Russo-Turkish war in 1878 the population of Circassians was decreased in 1897 to 144,847 (Брокхаус и Ефрон, article Черкесы 2003). The tribes of Circassians are: Abzakh, Besleney, Bzhedug, Kabardian, Mamkhegh, Natukhai, Shapsug, Temirgoi, Ubykh, Yegeruqwai, and Zhanev. The administrative divisions in USSR placed Circassians under four different designations, namely *Adygeans* (Adyghe in Adygea), *Cherkessians* (Adyghe in Karachay-Cherkessia), *Kabardians* (Adyghe in Kabardino-Balkaria), *Shapsugians* (Adyghe in Krasnodar Krai), but all the four are essentially the same people (Adyghe) residing in different political units. Total population of Adyghe today is estimated very different, from about four to eight millions, but many of them live in Turkey, Jordan, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Germany, United States of America. In Russia, according to the Census 2010, Circassian population is 720,000, in Adygea 110,229. There are also small Circassian tribes: Adele, Ademey, Guaye, Shegak, Chebsin, Makhosh (Circassians).

After the Crimean war, in 1864, as the Circassians of Kosovo say themselves, their predecessors were forced to migrate to Kosovo (Джандар 2007). The presence of Circassians in Kosovo and in Metohia noticed famous Serbian traveller and historian Miloš S. Milojević (Милојевић 1871, 1877). In 1870s he traveled through the part of Old Serbia territory, then yet occupied by Turkey, that was considered as “the land of ethnic nucleus and center of Serbian medieval state of Nemanjić’s period”, and consisted from “areas”: Old Raška, Kosovo, Metohia, basin of Binička Morava and at the north Povardarje with Skorje” (Стојанчевић, 1997). He traveled by directive of Principality of Serbia Government and by intention of the Serbian Learned Society, predecessor of the contemporary Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, with permission of Turkish government. He found eight Circassian villages on Kosovo and neighboring areas, more precisely in Prishtina and Kurshumliya kadiluk (nahiya). The migration of Adyghe after Crimean war, especially to Kosovo and Metohia noted Kanitz (Канитц 1876). In 1952 begins the migration of Adyghe from Kosovo and Metohia to Turkey or back to the Adygea. Journey back to Adygea described Dzandar (Джандар 2007).

The religion among the Circassians is predominantly Muslim, but there is minority Habze, Orthodox Christians and Catholic, as well the Abkhazo-Circassian neo-paganism. Since the late 18th and early 19th century, the majority of Circassians are predominantly Sunni Muslim. In Adygea, among the whole population, the main religion is Orthodoxy.

Relief, Climate and Water

The Republic of Adygea lies at the south-west of Russian Federation (Figure 5). The Republic is entirely surrounded by Krasnodar Krai, that is with 75,485 km² nine times bigger than Adygea. Until 1991, Adygea was an autonomous oblast within the Krasnodar Krai, but then it declared independence and became republic. Adygea lies on the left coast of the Kuban River, which clearly divides it in two physical parts: the bigger

at the North that is plain, and mountainous at the south. The highest mountain peak is 3,238 m (mountain Chugush on the south of the republic, Figure 8). The mountain is located in the Western Caucasus, and contains 10 glaciers covering an area of 1.2 km².

The republic’s major mountains and peaks range in height from 2,000 to 3,238 metres, and include: Chugush Mountain — 3,238 m, Mount Fisht — 2,867 m, Oshten Mountain — 2,804 m, Pseashkho Mountain — 2,743 m, Shepsi Mountain — 2,755 m (mountain peak near Kurdzhinovo, Karachayevo-Cherkesiya). Oshten together with Fisht are the first from west Caucasus peaks, arise to the high of snow line and covered not only with even snows, but also with little glaciers.

The republic is rich of water, which resources are widely used in farming. The main river in Republic is 870-kilometer long Kuban River (Figure 9). Kuban (Russian: Кубань, Adyghe: Псыжь) is one of the major navigable rivers in the Caucasus region; it is navigable from the city Ust-Labinsk, in central part of the Krasnodar Krai on right (high) bank of Kuban River, up to Krasnodar. It forms part of the northern border between the Republic of Adyghea and Krasnodar Krai. Kuban flows mostly through Krasnodar Krai for 660 kilometres but also in the Karachay–Cherkess Republic, Stavropol Krai and the Republic of Adyghea. Kuban basin size is 57,900 km². The river was known to Herodotus as Hypanis, flows 870 kilometres north and west from its source near Mount Elbrus in the Caucasus Mountains (as it is formed at the merge of its two tributaries, Ullukam and Uchkulam), eventually reaching Temryuk Bay in the Sea of Azov. Kuban has great economic importance, among others, to the Adyghea. In 2008—2009 there were the plans to build Adyghea Hydroelectric Power Station, capacity of 72 MWh, but up to day these plans were not implemented.

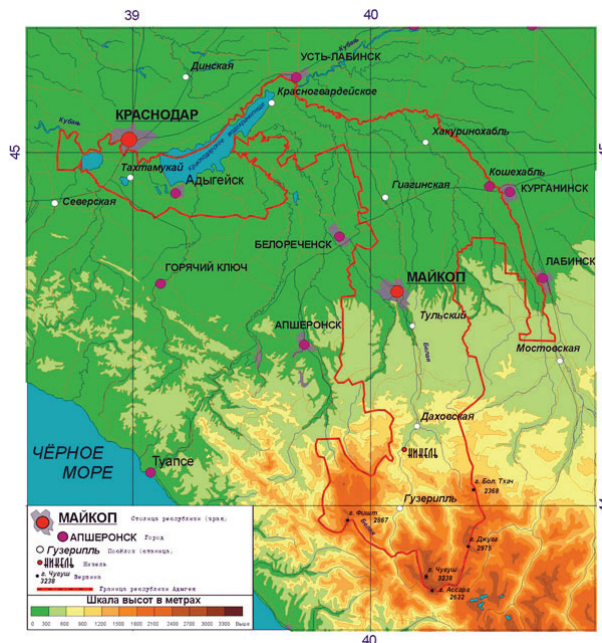


Figure 8. Physical Map of the Republic of Adyghea

Source: http://russia.auto-maps.com/physical_map_of_the_republic_of_adyghea/



Figure 9. Basin of the River Kuban
Source: (Сафронов, А.В. Бассейн Кубани)

Other important rivers in Adygea are Belaya and Laba. Belaya River, 273 kilometers long, (Russian: Бѐлая; Adyghe: Шъхъагуащэ) is a river in the Republic of Adygea and Krasnodar Krai of Russia. It is a tributary of the Kuban River, which it joins in the Krasnodar Reservoir. Laba River, 214 km long, forming part of the eastern border between Adygea and Krasnodar Krai, (Russian: Лаба (Laba); Adyghe and Kabardian: Лабэжь) is a river in Karachay-Cherkessia, Adygea and Krasnodar Krai. It is a tributary of the Kuban River, which it joins at Ust-Labinsk. It is formed by the confluence of the Bolshaya Laba River and the Malaya Laba River. It is used for irrigation and log driving. It is also suitable for rafting. Other rivers are Chokhrak River, Dakh River, Fars River, Khodz River, Kisha River, Psekups River, Pshish River, Sakhray River, Sukhoy Kurdzhips River — flows near the archaeological site at Mezmaiskaya cave. At the slopes of Fisht their flow start Rivers Pshekha 139 km long and Belaya, that belongs to Kuban basin, and river Shakhe inflows directly into Black Sea in Sochi. On the west mountain slopes is the waterfall Fisht 200 meters high. Other beautiful waterfalls are Rufabgo, Pshekhsky, Keyvu, Shapsug, Psedakh.

Climate in the republic is moderately continental (Котляков 2003). Average temperature in January is -2.3°C , in July 21.5°C . Precipitations are cca 700 mm per year. Main river is Kuban, with great reservoir (Kuban Sea). Also, there are the Shapsugskoe and Ocyabrskoe reservoirs.

Natural Resources and Economy

The republic is rich in oil and natural gas. In 1911, oil deposits were discovered in the vicinity of today's capital city Maykop. The discovery of extensive underground oil reserves has made Maykop a major center for oil extraction for the Soviet Union and subsequently, Russia. The amount of oil in the deposit was 171,000 tons on 1st January 1992 (out of which only 3,000 tons are produced each year). Adygea also has natural gas fields. The fields under development include the Maykop field (which is practically depleted), the Koshekhabelskoye field (which originally had 10.2 billion m³, of which only about 8% has been harvested) and a part of the Nekrasovskoye gas condensate field. Exploration is underway in the Severo-Kuzhorskoye field (with an estimated 1.6 billion m³); prospects were discovered in the Vostochno-Kuzhorskoye field (2 billion m³) and Vostochno-Giaganskoye field (4.4 billion m³). Expected gas reserves in this field in total amounts 20 billion m³. The Nekrasovskoye field is at the final developmental stage. (Data for oil and gas from: Smirnov 2006.)

Other natural resources include, in mountain part of republic, little fields (mineral deposits) of gold, silver, tungsten, iron, mercury, lead, and zinc. In republic are the deposits of building materials, including brick and haydite clay, sand, gravel, and ornamental stone. Also, it has large reserves of rubble. Other economically important sectors are food processing and the timber industry. Food, timber, woodworking, pulp and paper, heavy engineering, and metal-working are the most developed industries.

Even though it is now one of the poorest parts of Russia (average income is 12,493.4 rubles per capita), the republic has abundant forests and rich soil. The soil is predominantly chernozem, there are also kastanozems and mountain forest soils. The region is famous for producing grain, sunflowers, tea, tobacco, etc. Hog and sheep breeding are also developed. Forests cover almost 40% of its territory. About two-fifths of the territory of the republic is covered by temperate deciduous forest (beech, oak, hornbeam, maple). The main part of Caucasus Nature Reserve is placed in Adygea. Wild fruit forests, chestnut and nut plants are of great value. These forests are the unique natural phenomenon. They take up an area of over 15,000 ha (36,000 acres). The wild fruit forests that we see now are only the remains of the former famous “Circassian gardens”.

Favorable climatic conditions, presence of productive land and industrial reserves of the series of mineral resources, to a large extent determined the priorities in development of republic's economy. Republic protrudes as vendor of various agricultural row, products of engineering and metalworking, forestry and wood industry, also food industry. Great reserves of mineral and thermal waters make possible to develop sanatorium network. Here is a balneary and a Maykop spring of mineral water rich with Iodine and Bromine that is intended for treating pancreatic diabetes, adiposity, gout, as well as chronic gastritis with normal and hypersecretion of stomach. Chloride-hydrocarbonate mineral water from Lemonade factory “Maykopskaya” can be one of the important Adygean export products.

In republic today, about 90 large and middle companies in 11 branches are active. Leading branch is food manufacturing; the largest share of them in general volume of production is about 50 percent. Food industry enterprises produce meat and vegetables, fruits and fruit preserves, confectionery, pasta and wine and spirits, beer and dairy

products. Besides the production for the domestic market, republic also exports: products of engineering, forestry, light industry. The new perspective enterprises for production of polypropylene sack tare (bags) are also established in Adygea.

Adygeysk (Russian: Адыгѐйск; Adyghe: Адыгъкъалэ, Adəgəqalə) is a town in the Republic of Adygea, located near Krasnodar Reservoir, 100 kilometers northwest of Майкоп, the capital of the republic. Population: 12,237 (2010 Census). In Adygeysk are situated the companies for bakery products, eastern sweets and confectioneries, wine materials, dairy products and Adygea's cheese, soft drinks, beer, metal constructions for house building, modular buildings with small number of floors, knitwear, stores of petroleum products.

Agriculture is the foreground direction for the economy development. Natural conditions determine its multi-branch character. There is developed meat and dairy farming, manufacturing poultry farming, pisciculture. In agricultural sector production is made from more than 1.5 thousand subjects of all ownership: joint-stock companies, partnerships of varying types, collectively-equity economies. The crop area is about 200 thousand hectares; total harvest of cereals increased to 350 thousand tones in 2001.

Grain and industrial crops, vegetables have the largest share in the crops. Here is grown wheat, hordeum, mais, rapeseed, rice, sunflower, southern apple varieties, pear, plum, wild cherry, cherry, grape vine, other fruits, medicinal plants. The thing for special pride of Adygea is tea. Most “northern” in the world, it is very highly valued by connoisseurs. More than 60 years exists Майкоп experimental station St.-Petersburg's All-Russian Institute of Plant “Vavilov” (Всероссийский институт растениеводства им. Н.И. Вавилова). Here, the new varieties and hybrids of fruit and vegetables are being created. Station has one of the greatest collections of horticultural crops in the world (fruit, berries and nuts).

Long since, the national pride of Adyges was horse breeding. Now, in republic revives this forgotten branch of economy. Specialists of the State Stables and Майкоп horse-breeding nursery are developing sport horse-breeding. Horse racing is not only spectacular sight, but the possibility to invest capital in the cultivation of top-class horses. Very famous are hiking mountains and horse trails and routes. Vacation camps and bases can at the same time accept more than 1,500 vacationers.

Republic of Adygea constantly seeks to extend international economic relations. Partners of Adygea companies and organizations in foreign trade are more than 30 countries, including Germany, Turkey, France, Italy. Republic exports gearboxes of various modifications, machine tools, lumber, oilseeds, rice, canned products. In Adygea, about 50 companies work with foreign investments – companies from United Kingdom, France, Turkey, Syria.

The important constituents of natural potential of republic are resort and recreational resources and touristic resources. The territory of Adygea come under the zone of mixed tourism, as sports and medical, also informative. Its saturation of natural objects tour show is high. Bolshaya Azishkaya and Dakhovskaya caves, Khadzhokhsy Canyon, River Gorge Great Rufabgo, waterfalls, represent the attraction to the tourists. Republic has significant hunting resources.

In Adygea many natural protected zones were made. The first is “Caucasus Nature Reserve” (also Caucasus, or Кавкasky, Russian: Кавказский государственный природный биосферный заповедник им. Х.Г. Шапошникова), situated on the

territories of Republic of Adygea, Krasnodar Krai and Karachay-Cherkess Republic; series of the unique natural monuments and national natural park “Mountains of Adygea”. Caucasus Nature Reserve is a Russian “zapovednik” (strict ecological reserve) covering a heavily mountainous section of the Northwest Caucasus Mountains. It is the largest and the oldest in the territory of specially protected natural area in the Caucasus, having been created in 1924 as the Caucasian Bison Reserve. In 1979, the site was named a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, and in 1999 included in UNESCO World Heritage Site. In 2008 it was officially renamed after Khachatur (Christopher) G. Shaposhnikov, the biologist who founded the reserve. The area is situated in the Mostovsky District of Krasnodar Krai, covering an area of 280,335 ha. Bolshoi Tkhach is the natural park of regional importance, situated in Maykop raion. It is founded in 1997. The size of park is 3,705 ha. In 1999, with the other protected natural territories, it was included in object of World Natural Heritage “Western Caucasus”. Adygea is the unique state entity in the world, where specially protected natural territories make more than one-third of its area, and nearly 14 percent became objects of World Natural Heritage.

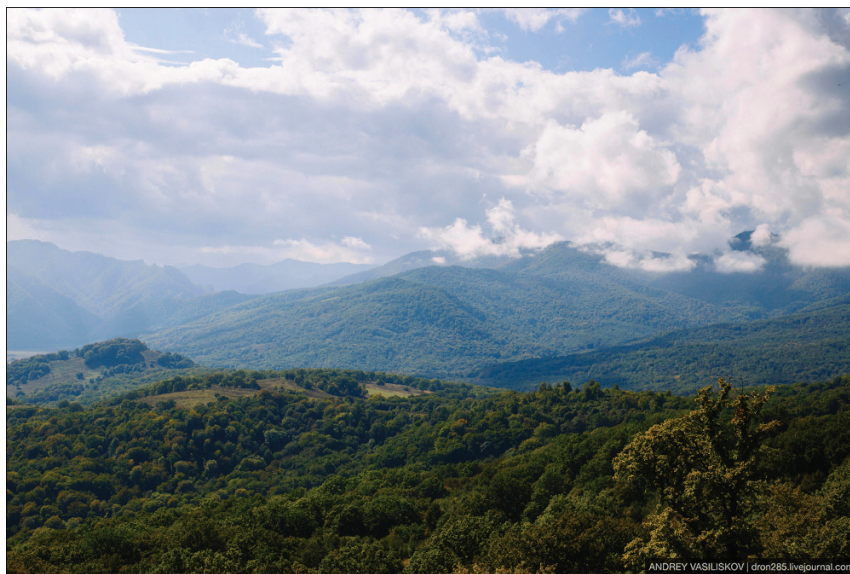


Figure 10. Plateau Lago-Naki
Source: (Василисков 2016а)

Plateau Lago-Naki — jewel of the mountain Adygea (see Василисков 2016а, also Василисков 2016б и 2016в). It is the highest accessible point, which can be reached by car. Most of the mountains of the Republic of Adygea are located on Lago-Naki plateau that stretches from the north to the south and from the west to the east for over 40 km. This is a common place for walking and mountain hiking, mountaineering and rock-climbing. Winter tourism and mountain skiing is now rapidly developing on Lago-Naki plateau territory. Just there pass all touristic routes to the most famous peaks of Caucasus Nature Reserve — Fisht, Pshkho-Su and Oshten. But it is much better to start

the route to the peaks from Yavorova Polyana, that is near settlement Guzeripl. There is also another way, where it is necessary to come to the to Azishskaya bend (known also as Stone Gate), to the narrow passage to Caucasus Nature Reserve, to go up to the observation deck and to enjoy plateau panorama.

The picturesque Lago-Maki plateau (Figure 10) is a unique place where can be found all wonders of the Caucasus — coves, snow covered mountain summits, rich alpine meadows, vast steppe, secular forests, mountain rivers with waterfalls and quiet lakes. Narrow impassable gorges adjoin spacious hollows between mountains. On the northern slope of Mount Fisht can be found the largest glacier — Bolshoy Fishtinsky — and 13 karst ponds that filled cup-like hollows made by the glacier. Next to the area are canyons of the Tsitsa River “boiling” with whirlpools and trees in blossom right behind it. Lago-Naki plateau is also known for a health resort that is located on the River Kurdzhips bank and thus carries its name. It specializes on treating the cardiovascular system, musculoskeletal apparatus, digestion system, nervous system and many other disorders. Visitors could spend their leisure time walking, riding a horse or a bicycle around the plateau. Extreme sports followers could go rafting. There is also a health improvement camp “Gornyi Kluch” (Mountain Spring) in Maykop District.



Figure 11. Guzeripl Dolmen № 1
Source: Guzeripl' Dolmen 1

Among other attractions of the Republic is the Belaya River canyon “Shum” that is also called as the Hadzhokskaya Gorge, where you could go on fascinating and unforgettable night walks; the Granite canyon and the Guamskoe Gorge, on the slopes of which you could see relic box-trees and yew-trees (4 km of Memzay settlement); the Rufabgo waterfalls; the Michael-Athos monastery founded in 1878; Azishskie karst caves, located in the southern part of the Azish-Tau Range on 1400 elevation above sea level (210 km from the region center). The caves are very picturesque and there is a guided tour through its passages and halls. Not far from a mountain settlement of Guzeripl (Russian Гузерипль, Адыге Гъузэрыплъ) can be seen the biggest dolmen of

the Republic (Guzeripl Dolmen № 1, Figure 11). The Guzerpil dolmen № 1 is one of the largest and most intact dolmens of Adygea. Dolmens (Adyghе: исп-унэ), a type of single-chamber megalithic tomb, represent a unique type of prehistoric architecture, built with precisely dressed large stone blocks. The Guzeripl dolmen 1, megalithic monument, is located on the territory of the Guzerpil cordon of the Caucasus Natural Reserve. It is dated to approximately 2000 B.C. Moreover, every spring Guzeripl hosts an international water rally.



Figure 12. Prehistoric lion, Gold, Maykop
Source: (Prehistoric lion)

The territory of present Adygea republic was inhabited from ancient times. Abadzhenskaya Paleolithic site is located in contemporary Maykop district. There are also a lot of archaeological sites of Bronze and Iron Ages. Maykop archaeological culture is well known, not only in Russia. Most of the precious items, excavated while Adygea was a part of Krasnodar krai, also known as “Scythian gold” or “Kuban gold”, are located outside Adygea for the time being. Unique items were found during excavation of hills near the village of Ulyap (formerly Ulsky village), Krasnogvardeysky district. It is here, just outside Ulyap village, that precious adornments from Scythian burial mounds were discovered. There were many excavations: in 1898, 1908, 1909, 1982, 1983, 2007, (see Ivantchik and Leskov 2015). On the Figure 12, the prehistoric lion is presented: Prehistory, Plaque, Lion, from Gold, 6 cm, Maykop culture, 3000-2500 BC, Eneolithic period, Copper Age, The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg.

Conclusion

Republic of Adygea is one of the smallest Russian federal subjects by both size and population, comparable only to European microstates. However, it is characterized

by great natural and cultural diversity and heritage. Additionally, there are favorable conditions for tourism development. Considering the characteristics of the economies of Serbia and Republic of Adygea, the possibilities of their cooperation lie in the areas of high technologies, science and investigations and, above all, in the agro-complex, as well as tourism. As accurate as it may be when it comes to Russia as a whole, the stereotyped vision of Serbian agricultural and food production as our biggest exportation potential is, in this case, not fundamental.

In regards to the cooperation with this region, as well with the whole of Russia, Serbian construction operation companies should not be underrated, since despite all the difficulties this branch has gone through in the transition process, it succeeded in establishing good reputation during the Sochi Olympics infrastructure development, thus occupying solid positions within Russia.

As a completely specific opportunity for development of (cultural) cooperation between Serbia and Adygea we should mention Circassian minority inhabited in Kosovo (and in other parts of Serbia) after the Crimean War. Part of them returned to the homeland Adygea since the mid-20th century, especially at the end of the 1990s; however, some among them in 2000s opted for life in Kosovo. Culture of Adygea is ancient and colorful. National dances have one of the prominent places in it. The best representative of the national culture of Adygeya is its National Museum, which is in Maikop since 1926.

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