

OFFICIAL NAME: Republic of Kazakhstan

CAPITAL: Astana

SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT: Unitary Multiparty Republic

AREA: 2,717,300 Sq Km (1,049,200 Sq Mi)

ESTIMATED 2000 POPULATION 16,733,100



LOCATION AND GEOGRAPHY: Kazakhstan is located in Central Asia and is a former republic of the USSR. It is bound by Russia to the north, the Caspian Sea to the west and southwest, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan to the south and China to the southeast. Most of the country's terrain consists of steppe that rises from a flat plain around the northern coastal region of the Caspian Sea to the hilly Kazakh Uplands in the east, which in turn extend in a northwest to southwest direction and further east reach the Altai Mountains as well as the Tarbagatai Ranges. To the southeast of the Balkhash Basin lie the Tian Shan Ranges while in the west and south the Turanian Depression, an ancient sea bed, is found. The country is generally arid with steppe or grasslands in the north which give way to semi-desert and desert areas in the center and far south respectively. Major Cities (pop. est.); Almaty 1,156,200, Karaganda 608,600, Chimkent 438,800, Semipalatinsk 344,700, Pavlodar 342,500 (1991). Land Use; forested 3%, pastures 69%, agricultural-cultivated 13%, other 15% (1993).

CLIMATE: Kazakhstan has a continental climate with seasonal temperature extremes. Winters are long and cold with snow cover lasting from 50 to 150 days depending on the region while summers are short hot and dry with an annual precipitation varying from less than 100 mm to 400 mm (4 to 16 inches). Average temperature ranges in the north are from -18 degrees Celsius (-4 degrees Fahrenheit) in January to 19 degrees Celsius (66 degrees Fahrenheit) in July, while in the south it ranges from -3 degrees Celsius (26.6 degrees Fahrenheit) in January to 30 degrees Celsius (86 degrees Fahrenheit) in July.

PEOPLE: The principal ethnic majority are the Kazakhs who account for 40% of the population while 38% are Russians, 5% are Ukrainians, 2% are Uzbeks and 1% are Belarussians. Other ethnic minorities include Tartars, Germans, Moldovans, Azerbaijani and Tajiks.

DEMOGRAPHIC/VITAL STATISTICS: Density; 6 persons per sq km (16 persons per sq mi) (1993). Urban-Rural; 57.4% urban, 42.6% rural (1991). Sex Distribution; 48.5% male, 51.5% female (1992). Life Expectancy at Birth; 63.8 years male, 73.1 years female (1991). Age Breakdown; 32% under 15, 25% 15 to 29, 21% 30 to 44, 12% 45 to 59, 6% 60 to 69, 4% 70 and over (1991). Birth Rate; 21.0 per 1,000 (1991). Death Rate; 8.0 per 1,000 (1991). Increase Rate; 13.0 per 1,000 (1991). Infant Mortality Rate; 27.4 per 1,000 live births (1992).

RELIGIONS: Around 40% of the population are Russian Orthodox while 38% are Sunni Muslims. Other religious minorities include Roman Catholics.

LANGUAGES: The official language is Kazakh, although Russian is also widely spoken and each ethnic minority also has its own language.

EDUCATION: Aged 25 or over and having attained: primary education or no formal schooling 16.2%, some secondary 19.8%, complete secondary 54.1%, higher 9.9% (1989). Literacy; N/A.

MODERN HISTORY - WWII TO 1993: On Dec. 12, 1991 Kazakhstan declared its independence, although prior to independence its history was closely tied with that of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). In Mar. 1953 Yosef Stalin died and was succeeded by Georgy Malenkov who was in turn forced to relinquish the party leadership to Nikita Khrushchev after a little over one week in power. In 1955 the Warsaw pact militarily aligned the Soviet Union with other communist countries and in Nov. 1956 the Soviet Red Army invaded Hungary to quell uprisings. In 1957 three communist ministers unsuccessfully attempted to depose Khrushchev which resulted in their expulsion from the central committee. In 1962 under Khrushchev's rule the USSR was involved in the Cuban Missile crisis and in the same year relations with China were broken off as a result of ideological differences. In Oct. 1964 Khrushchev was forced to retire and was succeeded by Leonid Brezhnev. In Aug. 1968 the Warsaw Pact forces led by the Red Army invaded Czechoslovakia to halt their Prague Spring reforms. In 1977 Breshnev was elected President. In Nov. 1982 Brezhnev died and was succeeded by Yuri Andropov, the former head of the KGB. Andropov introduced limited economic reforms and established an anti-corruption program. In Feb 1984 Andropov died and was succeeded by Konstantin Chernenko who in turn died on Mar. 10, 1985. On Mar. 11, 1985 Mikhail Gorbachev was elected as Chernenko's successor and Gorbachev embarked on a program which restructured the USSR's relations with the West. Gorbachev also established Glasnost (openness) as well as Perestroika (restructuring and reform). In Apr. 1986 a meltdown in the reactor of the Chernobyl nuclear power station in Ukraine sent radioactive fallout across northern Europe. In Dec. 1987 the USSR and USA signed the Treaty on Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF). In Feb. 1988 a dispute erupted between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh which resulted in mass demonstrations and strikes in the two republics. In Dec. 1988 an earthquake in Armenia killed some 50,000 people. In Apr. 1989 troops violently repressed demonstrations in Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia. In Dec. 1989 the Lithuanian Parliament adopted multiparty politics. In Jan. 1990 Gorbachev visited Lithuania and was met by some 250,000 pro-independence demonstrators. In Feb. 1990 some 18 people were killed in riots over housing discrimination in Tajikistan. In May 1990 Boris Yeltsin was elected President of the Russian

Federation and on Nov. 1, 1990 launched a 500 day plan to give the Russian Republic a free market economy. In June 1990 Nakhichevan an Azerbaijani enclave bordering Iran declared its intention for a unification with Iran while a civil war was escalating between Azerbaijan and Armenia. In the same month around 150 people were killed during ethnic clashes in Kyrgyzstan. In Jan 1991 another 15 people were killed as the Red Army seized a television station in Lithuania while in Latvia the Soviet Black Berets killed 5 people in an attack on the ministry building. In the same month troops were being deployed in Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia and Moldova. In Mar. 1991 pro-Yeltsin demonstrators held a mass rally. On Aug. 18, 1991 as Gorbachev was vacationing in the Crimea, the Politburo hard liners attempted a coup to remove Gorbachev from power through the declaration of a State of Emergency under the control of a State Committee. Almost immediately republic leaders declared the emergency committee illegal as well as unconstitutional and began to barricade their parliaments as troops and tanks were deployed throughout the republics. By Aug. 20 senior officers had refused to order their troops to use force against the civilians and on Aug. 21, 1991 the coup collapsed as troops were ordered to return to their barracks. Immediately following the unsuccessful coup many republics suspended or purged the communist party and on Sept. 5, 1991 after 3 days of debate the 74 years of centralized communist control came to an end. On Dec. 16, 1991 Kazakhstan declared its independence and in Jan. 1992 Kazakhstan became a founding member of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Following uncontested Presidential elections in Dec. 1991, Pres. Nursultan Nazarbayev a native Kazakh appointed a Russian, Sergey Tereshchenko as Prime Minister to reduce the possibility of ethnic tension and conflict. In May 1992 and in the face of price liberalization and economic difficulties Kazakhstan sign agreements with the US oil company, Chevron to develop its oil industry. In the same month Pres. Nazarbayev agreed on a trip to the US that Kazakhstan would remove all strategic nuclear weapons from its territory within two years. In June 1992 a draft constitution established Kazakh as the official language and ensured political pluralism. In July 1992 Kazakhstan sign another oil and gas agreement with a consortium of British Gas and Agip, an Italian oil company and in Nov. 1992 signed oil, transport and finance agreements with Iran. Also in 1992 Kazakhstan officially joined the UN, the IMF and the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). In 1993 Kazakhstan continued its commitment to democracy with the reinforcement of the Constitutional Court's independence through ruling several Presidential and government decrees unconstitutional. The government also continued its support of free press, privatization of public enterprises and the encouragement of foreign investment, although Pres. Nazarbayev and his government maintained their monopoly of political decision making due to the country's multiethnic environment. In June 1993 Pres. Nazarbayev established a special council of intellectuals and officials in the hope of finding a way to create a "national ideology". In Sept. 1993 Kazakhstan formed an economic union with members of the CIS while in Dec. 1993 agreements were signed with the US further committing Kazakhstan to remove strategic nuclear missiles in return for funding for such denuclearization. On Dec. 13, 1993 the Parliament ratified the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty.

CURRENCY: The official currency is the Tenge (T).

ECONOMY: Gross National Product; USD \$26,440,000,000 (1993). Public Debt; USD \$2,291,000,000 (1994). Imports; USD \$5,183,000,000 (1993). Exports; USD \$4,769,000,000 (1993). Tourism Receipts; N/A. Balance of Trade; USD -\$414,000,000 (1993). Economically Active Population; 7,390,000 or 43.8% of total population (1992). Unemployed; 4.9% (1993).

MAIN TRADING PARTNERS: Its main trading partner is the CIS.

MAIN PRIMARY PRODUCTS: Asbestos, Barite, Bismuth, Cadmium, Chromite Ores, Cobalt, Copper, Cotton, Gold, Hemp, Iron Ore, Lead, Livestock, Molybdenum, Natural Gas, Nickel, Oil, Opium Poppies, Phosphorite, Pyrophyllite, Rice, Silver, Sugar Beets, Tobacco, Tungsten, Wheat, Zinc.

MAJOR INDUSTRIES: Chemical Processing, Copper Smelting, Forging and Pressing Machines, Instruments, Iron and Steel, Mineral Processing, Mining, Oil Refining, Rolling Equipment, Sugar Refining, Textiles.

MAIN EXPORTS: Chemicals, Chemical Products, Clothing, Fertilizers, Iron Ore, Machinery, Minerals, Petroleum, Steel, Textiles.

TRANSPORT: Railroads; route length 13,174 km (8,186 mi) (1991), passenger-km 19,400,000,000 (12,055,000,000 passenger-mi) (1991), cargo ton-km 374,200,000 (256,290,000 short ton-mi) (1991). Roads; length 164,900 km (102,464 mi) (1992). Vehicles; cars 734,800 (1988). Merchant Marine; N/A. Air Transport; passenger-km 12,600,000,000 (7,829,000,000 passenger-mi) (1992), cargo ton-km 70,000,000 (47,943,000 short ton-mi) (1992).

COMMUNICATIONS: Newspapers; total of 450 with a total circulation of 6,700,000 (1989). Radio; receivers 4,188,000 (1992). Television; receivers 4,795,000 (1992). Telephones; units 1,559,300 (1993).

MILITARY: 40,000 (1995) total active duty personnel with 62.5% army, 0.0% navy and 37.5% air force while military expenditure accounts for 2.6% (1993) of the Gross National Product (GNP).