

OFFICIAL NAME: Kyrgyz Republic
CAPITAL: Bishkek
SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT: Unitary Multiparty Republic
AREA: 69,700 Sq Km (26,900 Sq Mi)
ESTIMATED 2000 POPULATION 5,158,100



LOCATION AND GEOGRAPHY: Kyrgyzstan is located in Central Asia and is a former republic of the USSR. It is bound by Kazakhstan to the north, Uzbekistan to the west, Tajikistan to the southwest and China to the southeast and east. The country lies between the Tien Shan Mountain Ranges to the northeast and the Pamir-Alai Mountain Ranges to the southwest. Around 75% of the land area is mountainous while between the snow covered mountain summits lie broad grassy highland valleys and a large salt lake, called Issyk Kul which occupies a highland basin in the northeast. The Issyk Kul is heated by volcanic action and influences the surrounding regions climatic conditions. The principal rivers are the Naryn and Chu Rivers. Major Cities (pop. est.); Bishkek 631,300, Osh 218,700, Dzhalaal-Abad 74,200, Tokmak 71,200, Przhevalsk 64,300 (1991). Land Use; forested 4%, pastures 44%, agricultural-cultivated 7%, other 45% (1993).

CLIMATE: Kyrgyzstan has a continental climate with conditions influenced by elevation. Average annual precipitation varies from 250 to 280 mm (10 to 15 inches) and is carried by the northwest, west and southwest air masses. In general, the summers are hot and dry while the winters are cold. Average temperature ranges are from 2 to 4 degrees Celsius (35 to 40 degrees Fahrenheit) in January to 16 to 18 degrees Celsius (60 to 65 degrees Fahrenheit) in July but vary according to elevation.

PEOPLE: The principal ethnic majority are the Kyrgyz who account for 52% of the population while 22% are Russians, 13% are Uzbeks and 2.5% are Ukrainians. Other ethnic minorities include Tartars, Belarussians, Azerbaijanis, Kazakhs and Tajiks.

DEMOGRAPHIC/VITAL STATISTICS: Density; 23 persons per sq km (59 persons per sq mi) (1993). Urban-Rural; 37.9% urban, 62.1% rural (1992). Sex Distribution; 49.1% male, 50.9% female (1991). Life Expectancy at Birth; 64.3 years male, 72.6 years female (1991). Age Breakdown; 38% under 15, 27% 15 to 29, 16% 30 to 44, 11% 45 to 59, 6% 60 to 74, 2% 75 and over (1989). Birth Rate; 29.1 per 1,000 (1991). Death Rate; 6.9 per 1,000 (1991). Increase Rate; 22.2 per 1,000 (1991). Infant Mortality Rate; 29.7 per 1,000 live births (1992).

RELIGIONS: Mostly Sunni Muslims with Christian minorities of Russian Orthodox and Roman Catholics.

LANGUAGES: The official languages are Kyrgyz and Russian, while each ethnic minority also has its own language.

EDUCATION: Aged 19 or over and having attained: primary 4.7%, incomplete secondary 20.9%, secondary 44.4%, incomplete post-secondary 19.3%, higher 10.7% (1989). Literacy; N/A.

MODERN HISTORY - WWII TO 1993: On Dec. 12, 1991 Kyrgyzstan 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 Brezhnev 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. On Aug. 31, 1990 Kyrgyzstan declared its independence. 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. In Jan. 1992 Kyrgyzstan became a founding member of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). In July 1992 the government implemented an economic austerity program that had been prepared by Pres. Askar Akayev and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). In 1992 Kyrgyzstan signed an agreement with China to supply electricity to Xinjiang and the nation officially joined the UN, the IMF and the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). In May 1993 due to IMF pressure Kyrgyzstan introduced its own currency and withdrew from the CIS rouble zone that resulted in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan suspending trade with the country. In Sept. 1993 Kyrgyzstan joined the CIS economic union but insisted it would keep its own currency. On Nov. 29, 1993 Pres. Akayev announced plans for a referendum to be held on his rule in Jan. 1994 due to the continuing difficulty in implementing a privatization program of state enterprises and free-market reforms. His main opposition came from the reconstituted Communist Party of Kyrgyzstan which was gaining dominance of the National Assembly and opposed most proposed reforms. In 1993 political infighting played a significant role in worsening the already poor economic conditions of the country, although Pres. Akayev remained committed to the establishment of a free-market democratic state.

CURRENCY: The official currency is the Som (S) divided into 100 Tyiyn.

ECONOMY: Gross National Product; USD \$3,745,000,000 (1993). Public Debt; USD \$418,000,000 (1994). Imports; R 354,618,000,000 (1993). Exports; R 264,722,000,000 (1993). Tourism Receipts; N/A. Balance of Trade; R -89,896,000,000 (1993). Economically Active Population; 1,836,000 or 48.7% of total population (1993). Unemployed; 8.3% (1993).

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

MAIN PRIMARY PRODUCTS: Antimony, Coal, Cotton, Fruit and Vegetables, Grapes, Hydroelectricity, Lead, Livestock, Mercury, Oil and Natural Gas, Sugar Beets, Tobacco, Uranium.

MAJOR INDUSTRIES: Agricultural Machinery, Building Materials, Electronic Equipment, Heavy Electrical Machinery, Hydroelectricity, Instruments, Machine Building, Metal Working, Mining, Motor Vehicle Assembly, Non Ferrous Metallurgy.

MAIN EXPORTS: Agriculture, Antimony, Building Materials, Coal, Cotton Fibers, Dump Trucks, Electrical Engineering Products, Machine Tools, Machines, Mercury, Petroleum, Sugar, Washing Machines.

TRANSPORT: Railroads; route length 789 km (490 mi) (1990). Roads; length 19,100 km (11,868 mi) (1990). Vehicles; cars 173,800 (1988). Merchant Marine; N/A. Air Transport; passenger-km 3,708,300,000 (2,304,230,000 passenger-mi) (1990).

COMMUNICATIONS: Daily Newspapers; total of 128 with a total circulation of 1,129,000 (1993). Radio; receivers 825,000 (1991). Television; receivers 875,000 (1991). Telephones; units 367,400 (1993).

MILITARY: 7,000 (1995) total active duty personnel with 100% army while military expenditure accounts for 1.4% (1993) of the Gross National Product (GNP).