

Overview of CIS countries Recommended for Research Geography

2017

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General Overview of CIS

Geographical and Administrative Overview

- After disintegration of the USSR in 1991 there appeared **15 independent states** – one of them being Russia
- Depending on their geographical position, culture and history of relationships with Russia they can be **divided into the following groups**:
 - **Baltic states**: Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia
 - **Eastern European states**: Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova
 - **Transcaucasian and Southern Caucasian states**: (compared to Northern Caucasus which is a part of Russia): Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan
 - **Central Asian states**: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan
- The total population of post-Soviet space states is over 293 million people, out of which 142 millions live in Russia

- 1 – Russia
- 2 – Baltic states
- 3 – Eastern European states
- 4 – Transcaucasia
- 5 – Central Asia



Commonwealth of Independent States

- In December 1991 after the dissolution of the Soviet Union three countries – Russia, Ukraine and Belarus – **signed an agreement** that established the end of the Soviet Union and formation of the **Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) as its legal successor**.
- **The administrative center of CIS** is located in Minsk, the capital of Belarus
- Throughout the years, eight more states joined CIS, **and the full list of the participant countries** is as follows:
 - Armenia
 - Azerbaijan
 - Belarus
 - Kazakhstan
 - Kyrgyzstan
 - Moldova
 - Russia
 - Tajikistan
 - Turkmenistan (associate member, CIS charter not ratified)
 - Ukraine (associate member, CIS charter not ratified)
 - Uzbekistan
- CIS members that ratified the CIS charter, except Azerbaijan, **form CIS Free Trade Zone** with reduced quotas and tariffs and centralized regulation
- **Other purposes of CIS** cover aspects of security, crime prevention, finance and law.



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CIS Research Recommendation in Transcaucasia: Azerbaijan

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- Country on the shore of the Caspian sea with the population of over 9.7 mln people and the capital city of Baku
- Divided into 66 districts, 11 republican cities and 1 autonomous republic of Nakhchivan
- Azerbaijan is an agricultural and industrial country that shows high level of development throughout years and tops the list of CIS countries by development rates
- Main industrial areas of Azerbaijan are oil and natural gas mining and production, chemical industry, iron and coal mining, crops and textile
- Human development index in Azerbaijan is steadily growing too
- Tourism is yet another sphere that Azerbaijan eagerly develops
- Currency: Manat
- Timezone: UTC +4
- Official language: Azerbaijani



Major Cities of Azerbaijan: Capital City and West

Baku

- The capital and the biggest city of Azerbaijan with the population reaching 2.2 mln people
- The biggest industrial, economical and scientific center not only of Azerbaijan, but of all Transcaucasia
- The biggest Caspian port and the biggest Caucasian city
- Along with oil production, trading and heavy industry the city is known for high pace development in hi-tech and IT spheres
- Baku often hosts various cultural and sport events and programs, such as European games in 2015, UNEP in 2019 and Eurovision in 2012
- *Recommended for research projects when it is relevant to study consumer behavior in the capital city of Azerbaijan*
- *Research language: Azerbaijani*



Ganja



- The second biggest city of Azerbaijan with the population of more than 350 thousand people located about 350 km away from Baku
- The biggest city in the western Region of Azerbaijan
- This area with the rich natural, cultural and historical heritage
- During the last 10 years a great number of companies has been established there. To name a few, there are Ganja Automobile factory, Ganja non-ferrous metal processing factory, Ganja manufacturing factory, Ganja Alumina plant, textile factory, aluminum factory and Ganja Wine factory.
- *Recommended for research projects when it is relevant to study consumer behavior in a major city of the west of Azerbaijan*
- *Research language: Azerbaijani*

Major Cities of Azerbaijan: South

Sumgait

- The third biggest city of Azerbaijan with the population of about 300 thousand people
- Sumgait is located near the Caspian Sea, about 31 kilometers (19 miles) away from the capital city - Baku
- Sumgait is mostly an industrial city
- Proximity to Baku also allows Sumgait to develop in various other spheres
- *Recommended for research projects when it is relevant to study consumer behavior in a rather big , yet not the capital city and compare behavior patterns of citizens of the capital and of the regional city*
- *Convenient logistics from Baku has an impact on consumer behavior and is relevant for research projects organization*
- *Research language: Azerbaijani*



Lenkoran

- This is a small seaside town near the southern border with Iran, with the population of 45 thousand people
- It is the biggest city in the Southern region of Azerbaijan
- The Lenkoran region takes the first place in the republic for cultivation of rice, tea, citruses, vegetables
- The Lenkoran region is an important producer of spring and winter vegetables. Rice, grapes, tobacco, citrus trees and oak woods thrive in the warm climate.
- *Recommended for research projects when it is relevant to study consumer behavior in a town in the southern region of Azerbaijan near Iranian border*
- *Research language: Azerbaijani*



Major Cities of Azerbaijan: North

Sheki

- Shaki is located in northern part of Azerbaijan on the southern part of the Greater Caucasus mountain range, 325 km (202 miles) from Baku. The population of the city is 63 thousand people
- One of the most ancient cities of Azerbaijan, Sheki is rightly called the architectural reserve of the country
- *Recommended for research projects when it is relevant to study consumer behavior in the north-western region of Azerbaijan near Georgian border*
- *Research language: Azerbaijani*



Quba

- Quba is one of the largest cities in Northern part of Azerbaijan. The town is located 170 km to the north of Baku right on the picturesque hillsides
- It has population of 38 100 people
- Quba is famous for producing high quality apples
- The town has well-developed touristic infrastructure
- *Recommended for research projects when it is relevant to study consumer behavior in a town in the north-eastern region of Azerbaijan near Russian border*
- *Research language: Azerbaijani*

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CIS Research Recommendation in Eastern Europe: Belarus

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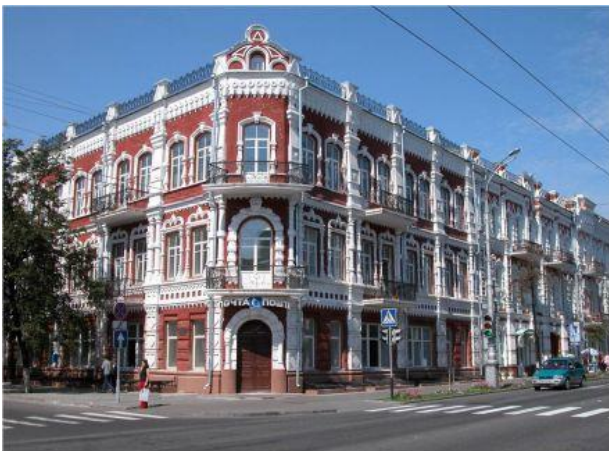
- A landlocked country in Eastern Europe with the population of 9.5 mln people and capital city of Minsk
- Divided into 6 territories with regional centers located in the cities of Brest, Vitebsk, Gomel, Grodno, and Mogilyov
 - Minsk is a city of a special economic and administrative importance, so Minsk and Minsk region are treated as separate entities
- Three of the main pillars of Belarusian economics are agriculture, metallurgy and mechanical engineering
 - State ownership plays big role in Belarusian industry
- Belarus' geographical position makes it an important transport joint between Eastern and Western Europe
- Currency: New Belarusian Rouble
- Timezone: +3 UTC
- Official languages: Belarusian and Russian



Major Cities of Belarus: Capital City and South-East

Minsk

- The capital and the biggest city of Belarus with the population of nearly 2 mln people (up to 2.65 mln with agglomeration)
- The biggest administrative, political, financial, cultural and scientific center of the country
- Administrative center of CIS
- With its history running from 11th century, it's a home for dozens of ethnic groups and cultures
- *Recommended for research projects when it is relevant to study consumer behavior in the capital city of Belarus*
- *Research language: Russian, Belarusian – depending on the segment of respondents*



Gomel'

- Gomel' is located in the south-east of Belarus and has population of over 521 thousand people which makes it the second city after Minsk in terms of population
- Gomel's economy is formed mostly by heavy industry and mechanical engineering
- *Recommended for research projects when it is relevant to study consumer behavior in a big, yet not capital city of Belarus and also in the south-eastern part of the country*

Major cities of Belarus: South-West and North-West

Brest

- Brest is located in the south-west of Belarus near the border with Poland
- Brest's population is over 340 thousand people which makes it 6th city in the republic in terms of population size
- Thanks to its location it plays essential role in railway, car and river transport and logistics
- *Recommended for research projects when it is relevant to study consumer behavior in the city in the south-west of Belarus or compare behavior patterns of citizens of the capital city and regional city of the south-west of the country*



Vitebsk

- Located in the north-east of Belarus, it has the population of over 376 thousand people
- The second most ancient city of Belarus, it is number 4 in terms of population size
- Thanks to its convenient geographical location, historically it has been an important trading and transport center
- Hosts over 300 plants and factories operating in various spheres
- *Recommended for research projects when it is relevant to study north-west of Belarus*



Major cities of Belarus: West and East

Grodno

- Located in the western part of Belarus near borders with Poland and Lithuania
- In 2014 it was awarded with title of the Cultural capital of Belarus
- Grodno's population is over 365 thousand people (5th biggest city in Belarus)
- Important logistical center, historical and cultural place with rich and ancient heritage
- *Recommended for research projects when it is relevant to study western part of Belarus*
- *Especially recommended if it is relevant to study Belarusian religious minorities*



Mogilev

- Mogilev is located in the eastern part of Belarus and has the population of 378 thousand people which makes it 3rd city in the republic
- It is important industrial, cultural and economical center connecting Russia, Ukraine, Poland and Lithuania
- Main spheres of Mogilev's industry are petrochemicals and chemicals
- *Recommended for research projects when it is relevant to study consumer behavior in the eastern part of Belarus*

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CIS Research Recommendation in Central Asia: Kazakhstan

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- Formally belonging to Central Asia, geographically Kazakhstan is a landlocked country located both in Asia and in Eastern Europe
- Its population exceeds 17.6 mln people
- While the capital of the country is Astana, the biggest city and economical/financial center is Almaty
- Kazakhstan is the largest and strongest economy of Central Asia and it generates 60% of the region's GDP
- Main spheres of Kazakhstan's economy are oil, natural gas and mineral resources along with livestock and textiles
- Currency: Tenge
- Timezone: UTC +5/+6
- Official languages: Kazakh and Russian. Kazakh language has the status of "state" language, whereas Russian, which is spoken by most Kazakhstanis, is declared an "official" language, and is used routinely in business, government, and inter-ethnic communication, although Kazakh is slowly replacing it.



CIS Research Recommendation in Central Asia: Kazakhstan

- Kazakhstan is divided into **14 regions**. The regions are further subdivided into districts. Three cities – the space hub **Baykonur**, the largest city **Almaty** and the capital **Astana** - are not part of the regions they are surrounded by.
- Baykonur city has a special status because it is currently being leased to Russia with Baykonur Cosmodrome until the year of 2050.



Major Cities of Kazakhstan: The Capital and the Biggest City

Almaty

- The biggest city of Kazakhstan with the population of 1.7 mln people
- Was the Kazakh capital until 1997 when this status was passed to Astana; known as the “Southern Capital of Kazakhstan” since then
- Holds special status as financial, industrial, cultural and scientific center of the country
- It was named Beta- Global City in 2012 in accordance with GaWC study by its involvement into global economy, making it second in these ranks among CIS
- Economy in Almaty shows steady growth and good forecasts at least until 2020
- *Recommended for research projects when it is relevant to study the biggest city of Kazakhstan*



Astana

- The capital of Kazakhstan with the population of over 880 thousand people, 1 mln with extended territories
- Located in the northern part of the country; received the status of the capital city in 1998
- Having privileges of a special economic zone, Astana experiences both extensive and intensive development that shows no signs of slowing down
- Astana hosts various events of cultural, sport and economical spheres, such as Asian Games, International Expo-2017, Eurasian Economic community coordination
- *Recommended for research projects when it is relevant to study the capital city of the country*



Major Cities of Kazakhstan: Center and South

Shymkent

- Shymkent is the administrative center of the South Kazakhstan region, the most densely populated southernmost region in Kazakhstan
- It is the third most populous city in Kazakhstan after Almaty and Astana with an estimated population of more than 902 000 people, expected to hit 1 million mark in 2019.
- A major railroad junction on the Turkestan-Siberia Railway, the city is also a notable cultural center with an international airport
- *Recommended for research projects when it is relevant to study big yet not the capital city located in the South of Kazakhstan*



Karaganda

- With its population over 507 thousand people, Karaganda is the fourth most populous city in Kazakhstan, after Almaty, Astana and Shymkent
- Karaganda is an industrial city, built to utilize nearby coal mines. Karaganda region is rich in mineral deposits and coal.
- Industrial significance of Karaganda makes it an attractive working, cultural and educational center.
- *Recommended for research projects when it is relevant to study a big city of Karaganda region which is the center of Kazakhstan*



Major Cities of Kazakhstan: West and East

Aktobe

- Aktobe is the administrative center of Aktobe region, Western Kazakhstan. The city population is 400.323 people which makes it the biggest city in the Western Kazakhstan and the 5th biggest in the country.
- The economy of the entire region relies on agriculture, heavy industry and energy resources: major oil and gas pipelines connect the region to the other parts of Kazakhstan and extend to China.
- *Recommended for research projects when it is relevant to study Aktobe Region and the city which is quite big, yet smaller than the key biggest cities of Kazakhstan*



Pavlodar

- Pavlodar is a city in northeastern Kazakhstan and the regional center of Pavlodar region
- Its population is 335.185 people which ranks it 7th in the country.
- It is one of the oldest cities in the north-eastern Kazakhstan and its location on the border with Russia has historically attracted merchants and businessmen.
- The largest local industries nowadays are aluminum, industrial chemicals and farm machinery.
- *Recommended for research projects when it is relevant to study Pavlodar region which is in the North East of the country*

Sources of Information

Information and images are taken from open sources under Creative Commons license such as:

- <http://www.cisstat.com/>
- <http://www.forbes.ru/>
- <http://www.rbc.ru/>
- <http://www.stat.gov.kz/>
- <https://ru.wikipedia.org/>

and others

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