Kabardino-Balkarian Republic is one of 89 subjects of Russian Federation located on the northern slope of central Caucasus and the adjacent plain.

More than a hundred nationalities live here. Of them Kabardians make 49.2 percent; Balkars - 9.6; Russians - 30.7; and representatives of other nationalities - 10.5 percent.

The republic consists of 9 administrative and territorial regions: Baksansky (administrative centre - Baksan), Zolsky (Zalukokuazhe), Maysky (Maysky), Prohladnensky (Prohladny), Tersky (Terek), Urvansky (Nartkala), Chegansky (Chegem-I), Chereksky (Kashkhatau), Elbrussky (Tyrnyauz) and cities of republican subordination: Nalchik and Prohladny. There are 101 village administrations, 165 inhabited localities, 7 urban settlements and 7 cities. The share of urban population is more than 60 percent and it grows on.

The capital of the republic - the city of Nalchik - was founded in 1818. Nalchik is a large cultural, scientific and industrial centre, All-Russian resort with the population of 257, 3 th. people.

Kabardino-Balkarian Republic borders on Georgia, Stavropol Territory, the Republic of North Ossetia - Alania, Karachay-Cherkess Republic, the Republic of Ingushetia. Its territory is 12.5 th. square kilometres. The population is about 800 thousand people; density - 63 persons per square kilometre, that 7 times exceeds the average Russian index.

NATURE AND CLIMATE

Geomorphologically the republic is subdivided in three parts: mountains, foothills and plains. Half of the area is occupied by mountains which together with foothills are affluent in mineral resources and springs, pastures and woods. The plains abound in fertile soils. The republic has vast deposits of molybdenum and tungsten, lead, tin, copper, iron ore, gold, arsenic, antimony, stone and brown coal, petroleum, tuff, volcanic pumice and ashes, phosphorite, limestone, marl, gypsum, floridine and fire-clay; there is about a hundred of
hot, cold and mineral springs. Fauna is opulent with a variety of game and birds. Climate is moderate: the average annual temperature is 9-10 degrees of heat, and annual precipitation quantity - 600-700 mm. 215 days a year the temperature is more than 5 degrees of heat by Centigrade.

**ECONOMY**

Kabardino-Balkarian Republic is one of the most attractive and moreover economically and socio-politically stable centres of Southern Russia. This opens up broad prospects for mutually beneficial relations in various spheres of foreign economic activities.

In terms of finance and raw materials the republic is based on non-ferrous ores, petroleum and natural gas, various kinds of mining and chemical raw materials, various mineral and fresh water springs, valuable building materials. In all, more than 40 mineral deposits are exploited, and the assessed supplies of mineral springs are more than 12 thousand cubic metres of daily debit. A number of deposits is absolutely unique. The Tymyauzsky tungsten-molybdenum complex - a famous supplier of strategic raw materials - is working on the basis of one of the world richest tungsten and molybdennum ore deposits.

The natural, climatic and demographic conditions of the republic mainly meet the requirements of quite developed mulatto-branch economy. The industry makes half the gross national product and, of course, takes the leading place.

Kabardino-Balkaria manufactures many quality things, such as oil-extracting equipment, various kinds of electrocables, diamond tools, artificial leather, film materials and many more. These goods are in great demand both on home and foreign markets. Recently has been observed the development of such branches of industry as chemical and petrochemical, electrotechnical, electronic, mechanical engineering, wood- and metalworking, ferrous and non-ferrous metallurgy, instrument-making, power-engineering, food-processing and light industry. The main peculiarity of the industry is its high concentration in few industrial centres - Nalchik, Tymyauz, Prohladny, Terek, Baksan and Maysky.

**AGRICULTURE**
The richest land and beneficial climate of Kabardino-Balkaria contribute to the development of diversified agriculture: plant-growing, stock-breeding, gardening, viticulture, silkworm breeding, beekeeping, fur trade. The basic field cultures are corn, wheat, sunflower, millet, hemp, vegetables, potato. In stock-raising prevail beef and dairy animal husbandry, sheep-breeding, poultry farming and horse-breeding. The Kabardian horses are widely known in the country and abroad by their exclusive endurance.

The traditional branch of sheep-breeding gives way to manufacturing of multifarious consumer goods out of sheep-skins, so it’s expedient to construct local sheepskin processing enterprises and furriers. In this connection joint ventures with foreign investments are extremely encouraged.

The process of country farms establishment in Kabardino-Balkaria proceeds. Their total number amounts to 470 with ground area of 5,2 thousand hectares. Their importance in food supplies on the local market is increasing.

**ENERGY-ELECTRICAL SUPPLY**

About 90 percent of electricity consumed is supplied to KBR by the Northern Caucasus Integrated Power Grid. In these conditions, besides the four existing hydro-electric power stations with general capacity of 27 thousand kilowatt, it is expedient to construct the chain of large and medium-sized hydro-electric power stations on mountain rivers, as well as to use non-conventional sources of energy, such as solar, geothermal and biopower. Potential average annual capacity of Kabardino-Balkar rivers basin exceeds 8 mln.kilowatt.

**ROADS AND TRANSPORTATION**

Automobile, railway and air transport are developing on an extensive scale. Economic ties with other regions of Russian Federation are provided by the railway and, in particular, motor transport. The latter’s share in total volume of cargo and passengers transportation is more than 80 percent. In this connection it seems that further development of first class motor road system and completion of construction of a circuit around Nalchik will greatly improve ecological conditions of the capital and resorts.

The highway «Caucasia» passes through KBR and connects it with Rostov area, Stavropol Territory, Krasnodar Territory, Karachay-Cherkess Republic, Adygey, North Ossetia - Alania, Ingushetia, Chechnya, Dagestan and also with Georgia and Azerbaijan.

«Nalchik» airport provides direct flights not only to Moscow and other regions of Russian Federation, but to Turkey, Syria, Jordan and United Arab Emirates as well. The construction of a new top level airport complex is under way and the local authorities are in quest for foreign partnership in this field.

The nearest air- and seaports transporting passengers and goods are: «Mineralnye Vody» airport (distance from Nalchik is 100 km); «Novorossiysk» seaport (530 km); «Tuapse» seaport (450 km).
FOREIGN INVESTMENT

The important place in the republic economy belongs to foreign economic activities. The major articles of export are artificial diamonds and tools made of them, tungsten and molybdenum, oil-extracting, medical and wood-processing equipment, cable production, artificial leather, raw leather materials and furs, agricultural production. Among the imported things one can name equipment and machines, food products, grain cultures, medicines and various consumer goods. In total volume of export deliveries the share of raw materials and goods is more than 70 percent, the share of machines and equipment is 27 percent. More than a half of production is exported to capitalist countries: Turkey, USA, Germany, Finland, Netherlands. The significant part of import (82 percent) is intended for Baltic States, Western and Eastern Europe.


The Administrative Committee of the program "Stabilization and Development of the Economy of Kabardino-Balkarian Republic" (Administration of Free Economic Zone) and Ministry of Foreign Relations of Kabardino-Balkarian Republic are taking a complex of measures on enhancement of investment appeal of the republic and improvement of foreign investors working conditions.

There are two main directions:

1. Regulation of registration and further work of foreign enterprises and joint ventures.

At the moment the agreement is signed between Administration of Free Economic Zone and State Registration Chamber under the aegis of Ministry of Economy of Russian Federation. Thus, the registration of all enterprises with foreign participation is entrusted with free economic zone (FEZ). Under this agreement, at the Ministry of Foreign Relations of Kabardino-Balkarian Republic the Branch of Registration chamber has been created. It will register all the joint ventures in Kabardino-Balkarian Republic and then promote their efficiency, co-ordinating and interacting with the authorities.
2. Granting tax and other privileges to foreign investors.

The granting of tax privileges was started in 1996 by adoption of the law, according to which non-resident enterprises in Kabardino-Balkarian Republic enjoyed certain privileges in terms of the taxes collected for republican and local budgets.

Currently this law is elaborated in the Parliament of Kabardino-Balkarian Republic with the purpose of deepening and broadening of investors privileges, their complete exemption from taxes, collected for republican and local budgets.

The Government of the republic has considered and submitted to the Parliament the laws "On investing activities and investors tax privileges in Kabardino-Balkarian Republic" and "On creation of zones of economic development in Kabardino-Balkarian Republic". The point of both laws is to exempt foreign investors participating in economic development of the republic from the taxes collected for republican and local budgets.

After adoption of the Law of Russian Federation "On free economic zones in Russian Federation" there appeared legal ground for implementation of the Enactment on creation of free customs zone of production type in KBR. The first in Kabardino-Balkarian Republic free customs zone is going to be located on the territory of "Elbrus-Avia" airport. Besides the trade operations, it’s supposed to provide on its territory the registration of industrial enterprises, insurance company and the bank, and also organise customs warehouse facilities and necessary infrastructure.

EDUCATION

Kabardino-Balkarian Republic has advanced systems of education and science, represented by 250 comprehensive schools, more than 300 pre-school educational establishments, 25 educational institutions of vocational training, including 7 higher schools, 17 scientific research institutes and observatories. These institutions actively participate in international conferences on development of modern educational systems, collaborates in the field of education and upholds relations with educational institutions and organisations of USA, Germany, Great Britain, Turkey, Syria and Jordan.

Kabardino-Balkarian State University (KBSU) is the leader among the higher schools of the republic. It has 15 faculties and 77 chairs and about 9 thousand students are specialising here in 40 various directions, including economics and law. More than 60 percent of fundamental scientific researches conducted in the republic are carried out in KBSU.

Kabardino-Balkarian agricultural academy, Northern Caucasus institute of arts and Nalchik teacher-training college also enjoy wide popularity in the region.

The republic has large scientific potential, allowing to carry out both fundamental and applied researches of regional and nation-wide importance. Lots of research, conducted by the scientists of republic, is carried out within the framework of state programmes.
Today the fundamental sciences are represented here by research institutions:

- Kabardino-Balkarian Centre of Science of Russian Academy of Sciences;
- Mountain Geophysical Institute;
- Research Institute of Applied Mathematics and Automation;
- Neutrino Observatory;
- Astronomic Observatory;
- Medical and biological centre;
- Ecological station;
- Northern Caucasus Scientific Geographical Station;
- Agricultural Research Institute;
- Mountain and Foothill Gardening Research Institute;
- Northern Caucasus Soils Institute;
- Northern Caucasus branch of International Academy of Information;
- Research Institute of History, Philology and Economics;
- Adyge (Circassian) International Academy of Science;
- Kabardino-Balkarian branch of Academy of Technological Sciences.

Besides there are dozens of design offices, project institutes and college research laboratories.

**TOURISM AND HEALTH-RESORT FACILITIES**

Kabardino-Balkaria is All-Russian and international centre of tourism, mountain climbing and downhill skiing. 14 tourist centres, 8 Alpine camps and 6 hotels function here. High mountain ranges, deep gorges with mountain rivers rushing down, forest-clad slopes, attractive alpine meadows can easily convince anyone that the Trans-Elbrus area is not only in no way inferior to the Western centres of tourism and mountain-skiing, but exceeds them in the primordial beauty of its nature.

The Republic is one of the best Russian health-building centres in terms of facilities provision and comforts. A combination of spas with sulphate-, iodine-bromine- and nitrogen-rich springs and the miraculous curative muds of Lake Tambukan makes it a unique place for people with health problems Particularly popular is the resort of Nalchik - 340-hectare oasis of orchards and parks - with its magnificent compound of different health-building institutions.

On common recognition, Kabardino-Balkaria is a republic with the most stable socio-political situation, providing extremely beneficial conditions for versatile and mutually advantageous relations.

**History of Kabardian horses**

Kabardian breed has evolved from many eastern breeds of steppe horses (Nogai, Kalmuk, Bashkir, Don), Mongolian breeds and then was enhanced with best purebred breeds of that time (Karabakh, Persian, Akhal-Teke).
Arabian breed also was used in the process of forming the Kabardian horse. One of these lines, especially well known for its speed was called "Shagdi" ("faster than a bullet").

Careful human selection over more than 500 years has taken the best features of all the breeds to produce an excellent army and work horse.

Traditional methods of breeding in harsh, mountain region utilised the nature itself to produce a horse which is extremely tough and resistant to difficult environmental conditions.

**Ancient origins**

The Kabardian breed was mentioned in historical sources for the first time around XVI century.

Kabardian culture itself is very old, dating back to Hettes, and their breeding of horses was always outstanding and widely known. Along with this went great skill in horsemanship.

Oldest historical sources mentioning specific horse breed from Caucasus are Hette clay tablets, Greek and Caucasian myths (Nart sagas). Also informations about Cherkess Mameluke dynasty who ruled Egypt from XIV-XVI century mention their excellent horses and advanced horsemanship skills.

**Middle ages**

Up to XVI century the Kabardian nations have ruled major part of Western Caucasus and the horses were important part of their culture and military strength. For this reason, a lot of effort was put into breeding the horses and improving the breed.

At the end of XVIII and beginning of XIX century Russian expansion to the south started bloody and prolonging conflict which led to extermination of many local nations together with their horses.

Even in the middle of XIX century, number of Kabardian horses was estimated to be around 200'000 heads. The following pacification of Caucasus by Tsarist armies led to significant reduction of the number of horses.

**Dramatic twentieth century**

The Communist Revolution in the beginning of XX century led to next extermination of the horses, which were part of the "old order" and symbol of Caucasus' independence. And, of course, part of Circassian army power that had to be destroyed.

Between the two World Wars the Red Army also noticed usefulness of the Kabardian breed for the army and the work of marshall Budyonny led to reviving of the former Kabardian type.

Later work of Soviet horse farms in Caucasus (especially Republic of Kabardino-Balkaria) was putting focus on Anglokabardian horses, because army requested taller horses. Endurance and ability to survive in harsh environment were not that important.
In 60's breeding work done by stud farms in Karachai-Cherkess Republic (western neighbour to KBR) resulted in creating new breed of Karachai horses. Main difference was that Karachai horses were heavier and more massive than Kabardians. In the beginning Karachai breed was described in breeding literature as subtype of Kabardian horses. The dispute is being continued up to now - Karachai breeders claim a completely new breed that has little connections to Kabardians, others see no difference between Karachai and massive type of Kabardian horse. This dispute will undoubtly continue until some form of organized breeding starts.

The result of Soviet era was around 5000 horses described in five stud books released since 1920.

The last Russian studbook of the Kabardian breed was released in 1993. Since then all attempts to coordinate breeding efforts in the republic were failing, mostly because of lack of funding or lack of interest of the local authorities.

**Latest history**

The end of XX century was catastrophic for the breed - Soviet collective agricultural farms (Kolkhoz - kollektivnoe khozyaystvo) were running against any economic sense and their existence was based completely on funding (sponsoring) from the central budget.

When the stream of money from the federal budget stopped suddenly during USSR collapse (Perestroika, 1989-1991 and official end of USSR in 1991), the farms started sending hundreds of horses to slaughterhouses to get any funding. The money earned on horse sausages only prolonged the agony of Kolkhoz, it didn't stop their collapse. Some of the people associated with this bussiness are still present in Russian horse sport unfortunately.

In the face of financial problems and especially inability to pay salaries to workers many citizens of KBR either got horses instead of money or were able to buy them very cheaply from the farms. Private people almost never sent horses to slaughterhouses because of very important position of horse in Kabardian tradition and culture. This way many very good breeding horses have been saved.

The only govermental farms specialising in Kabardian breed left were Malkinskiy and Chegemskiy, but due to poor funding the number of horses they maintain is small and they don't seem to have any concrete breeding target.

The federal government of Russian Federation and autonomous government of Kabardino-Balkaria don't pay too much attention to the horse, which was symbol of Kabarda for the last several hundreds years.

Currently most of the breeding work is being done by private farmers and breeders. Almost every family in the villages like Nartan, Chegem and others has one or two horses. They walk freely and graze everywhere in the village. Some people have more horses - usually 5-10 heads and they use them for riding. Interest for endurance sport is growing and so is number of people who try to train the horses for competitions. Many people keep horses just because they love them and shy (kabardian word for "horse") plays great role in their tradition and personality.

Farmers usually own from 1-10 horses. The biggest private herd in Kabardino-Balkaria is around 150 heads and belongs to Ibragim Yaganov, known from his presence on European endurance competitions.

In general number of horses in KBR is growing quickly. Much progress has been made when Kabardians started to be seen in international endurance competitions and people in the republic - carefully watching their neighbors taking horses to Europe - realized that there's new potential in these horses, that has been previously unknown.
The progress has been little organized however. Breeding is chaotic. Recording of family lines is based mostly on individual breeder's memory.

**Endurance in Russia**

Endurance riding has long history in Russia. There always have been long trails made by individual sportsmen for different occasions. For example in 1994 a group of three Kabardian horses went from Moscow to Sankt Petersburg (700 km) in only 6 days. Three years earlier other group rode from Moscow to Ivano-Frankovsk total distance of 2063 km. These were done by private persons.

First documented race was performed in 1931 when Kabardian mare Aza finished distance of 100 km in 4h25m with average speed 22,2 km/h. In winter 1935-36 a group of 15 Kabardians and 8 Anglokabardians went 3000 km in 47 days making average 64 km per day with maximum one-day distance of 120 km. One month later the same riders rode 550 km on muddy roads from Pyatigorsk to Rostov-na-Donu in only 5 days with maximum one-day distance of 150 km. These records were set by army riders and though impressive, they had little to do with nowadays endurance.

There were numerous endurance races performed in Russia in the end of 80's and beginning of 90's. Since end of 90's number of endurance competitions compatible with FEI started to grow and almost each year there was Russian Endurance Championship.

Results from these competitions are not, however, very much respected in the endurance community outside of Russia. People quote numerous abuses in the veterinary and organizational procedures observed on the competitions in years 2002-2005.

Situations where winner of Russian Championship wins 160 km race with average speed close to 19 km/h (unusual even in most prestigious European championships where average is around 17 km/h) cause questions about real distance of the race, especially when the same horse gets eliminated for metabolism after first gate on international competition just a few months later. Very poor results of Russian winners in European competitions also result in doubts about judging and veterinary standards held in Russian championships.

On Championship of Russian held in June 2005 in Nalchik organizers have registered more than 40 horses belonging to... themselves. Most of these horses were bought from KBR farmers in... February 2005. So preparation of completely fresh horses to 160 km championship (2x80 km) took four months. Result was that some horses were not even allowed to start and over 30% were eliminated after first circle.

Another problem in Russian competitions is that there rarely are competitions shorter than 90 km and since 2004 the only competitions were... championships on 160 km. In result horse owners don't treat any distance shorter than 160 km as serious and even if they did - they have no possibility to run horses on shorter distance.

Questions about horse's health and proper development are rarely raised in this case. And we've seen examples of Russian horses physically ruined after starting their endurance career from 160 km and then racing only on this distance over only two seasons.

The result of this situation is a dead loop - if you're interested in racing your horse in endurance, you have no choice but race 160 km. If you think your horse is not ready for that, you don't have any possibility to get necessary experience and training in shorter races - because no-one makes them.

In spite of these problems we believe Kabardian horses have future in endurance racing. What makes us think so is that they had some excellent results in the recent years, which proves that they have the potential to compete with practical monopolist of nowadays endurance - Arabians. Most
notable results were first three places in Championship of Poland (2004), 16 place in Championship of World 2004 in Dubai and especially second place in Championship of Germany 2004.

But all horses which got these results were trained in Europe since 2002 and every effort has been made to train them by world recognized standards about proper body development and horse's well-being.

**Future**

No doubt that breeding horses requires funding. This funding can be provided by government or by private people.

In case of Kabardian breed chances for local or federal authorities funding the development of the breed are little in the perspective of the next few years. Money which is sent from federal budget for development of farming is being mostly stolen at local authorities level in highly corrupted Caucasian republics.

There are hopes associated with long awaited change of regime of Vladimir Kokov, who has been "democratically electing" himself for president of Kabardino-Balkaria three times already. No-one is able to say however who will become new president (since last year not elected but indicated by president Putin) and will he show any interest about horses?

So far only funding has been provided by private people both in Kabardino-Balkaria and from abroad. Kabardian horse lovers from all Europe and other countries where Circassians live (Turkey, Jordania) are supporting horse breeders in Caucasus. But sponsoring individual persons won't solve the global problem - organisation of now chaotic breeding in Kabardino-Balkaria.

However there's new chance for the Kabardian horse breeders - the endurance racing. Endurance racing matches almost perfectly the old (pre-Soviet) profile of Kabardian horses. Endurance and Circassian chivalry - these two terms have very much common points.

However successful entering the endurance market requires defining proper breeding target which will can compete on the international races. International breeders have developed new types of Arabian horses which are almost invincible in endurance races. Competing with them will be very difficult but can be done, as the results Kabardians got so far show.

Taking into account that it was done with very little resources, we can imagine what results can be achieved with professional training and - in longer perspective - professional breeding.

Second chance is recreational trail riding - profile of this sport perfectly matches Kabardian horses. Most of the Kabardian horses now sold in Europe are bought just for that - for weekend recreation or for holiday trails. People love calm and stable character of Kabardian horses. The owners love even more that they don't have problems with health and aren't picky about food

www.JusticeForNorthCaucasus.com