

## Khakass

### Profile

According to the 2002 national census, there are 75,622 Khakass in the Russian Federation. Khakass ethnicity is derived from a mixture of Uygur Turkic, Tuvan and other groups. The majority of Khakass live in the Khakass Republic (pop. 546,072: Khakass 12.0 per cent, Russians 80.3 per cent, others 7.7 per cent) and adjacent areas in southern Siberia.

The Khakass religion is a mixture of shamanist-animist and Eastern Orthodox beliefs.

### Historical context

The groups that came to form the Khakass fell under Russian domination in the seventeenth century. Prior to the Bolshevik Revolution, these groups did not identify themselves by a single name. In the early twentieth century, a nationalist movement sprang up among Khakass as a reaction to Russian immigration. After the Bolshevik Revolution, in response to Khakass nationalist demands, the Soviet regime established an AOk in 1925 and this became an AO in 1930. The traditionally close ties to Tuvans and Altai have led nationalists to demand the restoration of the 'historical unity' of Khakassia, Altai and Tuva.

### Current issues

Language shift and identity loss is a concern to many Khakass. According to a survey conducted by scholars at Khakassia State University in 2002 and published in 2005, 35 per cent of students in the republican capital Abakan were studying Khakass. Yet only 2 per cent reported using the language with their parents and 22 per cent with their grandparents, while none reported using it with their friends.