

THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

The Russian Federation is the largest country in the world. It occupies about one-seventh of the earth's surface. It covers the eastern part of Europe and the northern part of Asia. Its total area is about 17 million square kilometres. The country is washed by 12 seas and 3 oceans: the Pacific, the Arctic and the Atlantic. In the south Russia borders on China, Mongolia, Korea, Kazakhstan, Georgia and Azerbaijan. In the west it borders on Norway, Finland, the Baltic States, Belorussia, the Ukraine. It also has a sea-border with the USA.

There is hardly a country in the world where such a variety of scenery and vegetation can be found. We have steppes in the south, plains and forests in the midland, tundra and taiga in the north, highlands and deserts in the east.

There are two great plains in Russia; the Great Russian Plain and the West Siberian Lowland. There are several mountain chains on the territory of the country: the Urals, the Caucasus, the Altai and others. The largest mountain chain, the Urals, separates Europe from Asia.

There are over two million rivers in Russia. Europe's biggest river, the Volga, flows into the Caspian Sea. The main Siberian rivers — the Ob, the Yenissei and the Lena -flow from the south to the north. The Amur in the Far East flows into the Pacific Ocean.

Russia is rich in beautiful lakes. The world's deepest lake (1,600 metres) is Lake Baikal. It is much smaller than the Baltic Sea, but there is much more water in it than in the Baltic Sea. The water in the lake is so clear that if you look down you can count the stones on the bottom.

Russia has one-sixth of the world's forests. They are concentrated in the European north of the country, in Siberia and in the Far East.

On the vast territory of the country there are various types of climate, from arctic in the North to subtropical in the south. In the middle of the country the climate is temperate and continental.

Russia is very rich in oil, coal, iron ore, natural gas, copper, nickel and other mineral resources.

Russia is a parliamentary republic. The Head of State is the President. The legislative powers are exercised by the Duma.

The capital of Russia is Moscow. It is its largest political, scientific, cultural and industrial centre. It is one of the oldest Russian cities.

At present, the political and economic situation in the country is rather complicated. There are a lot of problems in the national economy of the Russian Federation. The industrial production is decreasing. The prices are constantly rising, the rate of inflation is very high. People are losing their jobs because many factories and plants are going bankrupt.

But in spite of the problems Russia is facing at present, there are a lot of opportunities for this country to become one of the leading countries in the world. For sure that we younger generation, can do very much to make Russia as strong and powerful as it used to be.