

Lead-in

- 1 Which region do you live in? Which other regions surround it?
- 2 Which countries surround the Russian Federation? How many of them used to belong to the Soviet Union?
- 3 Look at the Russian banknotes. Which regions are represented on them?

Reading & Listening

- 4 Listen and circle on the map the regions that are mentioned.
- 5 Read and match the names. Then explain the words in bold.

oblast	territory
okrug	region
kray	district
raion	subregion

- 6 Read again. What do these numbers stand for?

1991, 130, 89, 21, 49, 2000

- 7 Look at the numbered regions* on the map. Which are *republics*, *krais*, *oblasts*?

Speaking

Use the map to present the Russian Federation to your classmates.

Important Information and Statistics

Russia has been officially known as the Russian Federation since 12th December 1991. Before that Russia was one of the republics of the USSR. Its name was the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR).

Russia is the largest country on Earth. It is nearly twice the size of the USA and it **spans** ten time zones and two continents. Recent **figures** show that nearly 148 million people live in Russia, giving it the fifth largest population in the world after China, India, the USA and Indonesia. The people consist of around 130 different nationalities, the largest of these being Russians – with 81.5% of the total. The **territory** of Russia covers just over 17 million sq. km and its largest subject is the republic of Sakha-Yakutia at over 3 million sq. km. One of the smallest is Moscow at only 1,000 sq. km. Strangely, it is one of the most **densely** populated regions with nearly 9 million citizens. Evenkia is the smallest region of Russia in terms of the population and has only 18,000 residents.



Entities of Russia

Russia now consists of 89 **entities** – 'subjects of the Russian Federation' - and within the **constitution** they appear in alphabetical order: 21 republics; 6 *krais* (territories); 49 *oblasts* (regions); 2 cities of federal significance: Moscow and St Petersburg; one **autonomous oblast** (autonomous region) and 10

★ 1 Krasnodar, 2 Stavropol', 3 Adygea, 4 Karachay-Cherkessia, 5 Kabardino-Balkaria, 6 North Ossetia, 7 Ingushetia, 8 Chechnya, 9 Mordovia, 10 Chuvashia, 11 Mari El, 12 Udmurtia

Federation



autonomous *okrugs* (districts). Each of the above subjects is further divided into *raions* (sub-regions) or administrative *okrugs* in Moscow. The **latter** are split into elementary administrative units. In the countryside these elementary units are typically called *volosts*. In Moscow the districts are broken down into *upravas*. At the present time every city in Russia has a Mayor and a Mayor's office.

Federal Districts

On 13th May 2000, 7 federal Districts were created by presidential **decree**. This reform aimed to make the federation function in a more controlled way. It is the job of the President to **appoint** their representative in each district. The federal districts are: Central (around

Moscow); North-Western (St. Petersburg); Volga (Nizhniy Novgorod); Urals (Yekaterinburg); Siberian (Novosibirsk); Far Eastern (Khabarovsk) and Southern (Rostov-On-Don).

Executive power in most of the regions is **exercised** by the highest official elected by citizens: the head of administration, the governor, the president, or the chairman of the government. However, a parliamentary system still exists in Udmurtia. In Dagestan, the head of state is elected by special representative **assembly**. In most *krais*, *oblasts* and *okrugs*, governors were elected for the first time in 1996-1997. Before that, the regions were ruled by heads-of-administration appointed by the President. The term of office is usually four to five years.