



1. What is the ethnic/race breakdown in Kyrgyzstan and what is the percentage of each group in the total population of Kyrgyzstan?

Ethnicity	% of Kyrgyzstan population (according to 2009 census ¹)	Ethnic population based on 2009 census
Kyrgyzstani	70.09%	3,802,225
Uzbek	14.3%	766,880
Russian	7.8%	418,298
Others (including Dungan, Ukrainian, and Uighur)	7%	375,396
Total	100%	5,362,800

The official Kyrgyzstan census of 2009 gave a total population of 5,362,800, a figure that included citizens temporarily domiciled outside Kyrgyzstan.² The CIA World Factbook estimated the current population (in 2011) to be 5,508,626.³

A United Nations Statistical report noted that the number of Russians living in Kyrgyzstan has fallen by 183,600 since 1999, a 30% decline. According to the 1999 official census, the ethnic composition of the population was Kyrgyzstani 64.7% (approx. 3.5 million people

¹ UN statistical Division 2009, National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic, undated, http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sources/census/2010_PHC/Kyrgyzstan/A5-2PopulationAndHousingCensusOfTheKyrgyzRepublicOf2009.pdf – Accessed 2 March 2011 – Attachment 1.

² Institute for War and Peace Reporting 2009, 'Kyrgyz census figures overstated' 2 July, <http://iwpr.net/report-news/kyrgyz-census-figures-%E2%80%99Coverstated%E2%80%9D> – Accessed 2 March 2011 – Attachment 2.

³ CIA The World Factbook 2011, Kyrgyzstan, 2 February, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/kg.html> – Accessed 2 March 2011 – Attachment 3.

based on 2010 population estimates), Uzbek 13.8% (760,000), Russian 12.5% (688,500), Others 8.8% (485,000).⁴

2. What is the religious breakdown in Kyrgyzstan and what is the percentage of each group in the total population of Kyrgyzstan.

CIA World Factbook gives the following breakdown of religious affiliation in Kyrgyzstan:⁵

Religion	Percentage of adherents (1999 census)	Number of adherents based on UN percentage and 2010 population estimates.
Muslim	75%	4,131,470
Russian Orthodox	20%	1,101,725
Others	5%	275,431

The above figures, derived from the 1999 census, are generally the percentages quoted for the religious affiliations of Kyrgyzstan residents. The State Agency for Religious Affairs (SARA), a government controlled agency run under the auspices of the Kyrgyzstan President, maintains records on the numbers of church members, however, these records were apparently lost in the 2010 protests.⁶

There is close correlation between ethnicity and religious identification; Russians are almost universally Russian Orthodox and Kyrgyzstani and Uzbeks are primarily Muslims.⁷ The most recent official statistics on religious affiliation come from the 1999 census. Given the decline of over 30% in the ethnic Russian population since 1999, it is reasonable to conclude that the percentage of the Kyrgyzstan population identifying as Russian Orthodox has decline by a similar margin since then. This would put the present Russian Orthodox population closer to 14% (about 750,000). The US Department of State cites unspecified „official’ statistics giving a 2008 figure of 11% and possibly as low as 8% of the population.⁸

⁴ UN statistical Division 2009, National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic, undated, http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sources/census/2010_PHC/Kyrgyzstan/A5-2PopulationAndHousingCensusOfTheKyrgyzRepublicOf2009.pdf – Accessed 2 March 2011- Attachment 1.

⁵ United Nations Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review 2009, *Submission of The Becket Fund for Religious Liberty*, 2 November, http://lib.ohchr.org/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/Session8/KG/BF_UPR_KGZ_S08_2010_BecketFundReligiousSociety.pdf – Accessed 3 March 2011 – Attachment 4.

⁶ US Department of State 2010, *International Religious Freedom Report 2010 Kyrgyz Republic*, 17 November, www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2010/148795.htm – Accessed 3 March 2011 – Attachment 5.

⁷ US Department of State 2008, *International Religious Freedom Report 2008 Kyrgyz Republic*, 25 February, <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2008/108502.htm> – Accessed 4 March 2011 – Attachment 6.

⁸ US Department of State 2009, *2009 Human Rights Report: Kyrgyz Republic*, 11 March, Section 2.c – Accessed 4 March 2011 – Attachment 7.

3. What country information is there about discrimination against persons of Russian ethnicity and Russian orthodox religion in Kyrgyzstan, particularly single women or single elderly women?

The treatment of ethnic Russians in Kyrgyzstan is affected by the strong influence of the Russian Federation due to its proximity, relative size, and history. Russian authorities, while declining to directly meddle in internal Kyrgyzstani affairs, have stated a willingness to intervene militarily to protect its interests. Russia maintains a large military base in Kyrgyzstan and Russian is an official language.⁹

The main source of ethnic tension in Kyrgyzstan is between the majority Kyrgyzstanis, and Uzbeks, particularly in the south. By comparison the level of conflict between Russians and Kyrgyzstanis is less frequent and less violent. Reports were found stating crowds chanted anti-Russian statements and harassed ethnic Russians during the April 2010 uprising.¹⁰ One observer, Ryskeldi Satke, claimed that Russian news agencies were systematically falsifying these reports.¹¹ No reports were located indicating an organised or consistent level of discrimination aimed at ethnic Russians or Russian Orthodox members.

In the capital Bishkek, sources note that many ethnic Kyrgyzstanis resent the perceived dominance ethnic Russians hold over the business community.

4. Does the Government and/or its authorities prevent Russian Orthodox practice in any way in Kyrgyzstan?

The Russian Orthodox Church is able to operate freely in Kyrgyzstan and along with Islam is recognised by the government as a „traditional religion‘.¹² The Church appears to be an influential force on the conduct of the State Agency for Religious Affairs (SARA).¹³ SARA has been criticised for its attempts in restricting the religious freedom of groups such as Jehovah’s Witnesses and Hare Krishnas.¹⁴ The Russian Orthodox Church works in conjunction, rather than opposition, to Islamic groups on areas of shared concern such as curbing proselytizing.¹⁵

No sources have been located stating that there is any official policy aimed at preventing worship by Russian Orthodox Church members in Kyrgyzstan. In 2009 legislation was passed

⁹ Utyaganova M. 2000, „Kyrgyzstan adopts Russian as official state language‘, *Central Asia News Caucasus Institute Analyst*, 6 July, <http://www.cacianalyst.org/?q=node/519> – Accessed 4 March 2011 – Attachment 8.

¹⁰ The Voice of Russia 2010, „Kyrgyz rioters chant anti-Russian slogans‘, 19 April, <http://english.ruvr.ru/2010/04/19/6613022.html> – Accessed 2 March 2011 – Attachment 9.

¹¹ Satke, R. 2010, „Russian media offensive: Pre & Post-Crisis Kyrgyzstan‘, *The Agonist*, 27 November <http://agonist.org/node/68066/print> – Accessed 2 March 2011 – Attachment 10.

¹² UN statistical Division 2009, National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic, undated, http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sources/census/2010_PHC/Kyrgyzstan/A5-2PopulationAndHousingCensusOfTheKyrgyzRepublicOf2009.pdf – Accessed 2 March 2011- Attachment 1.

¹³ Bayram M. 2009, „Kyrgyzstan: Why is new Religious Education Law being hurried?‘, *Forum 18*, 6 November, http://www.forum18.org/Archive.php?article_id=1373 – Accessed 4 March 2011 – Attachment 11.

¹⁴ United States Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services 1998, Kyrgyzstan: Status of Cossacks, Russians, and Russian Orthodox, 3 December <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/topic,463af2212,49709c7d2,3df0a6a34,0.html> – Accessed 4 March 2011 – Attachment 12.

¹⁵ US Department of State 2010, *International Religious Freedom Report 2010 Kyrgyz Republic*, 17 November, www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2010/148795.htm – Accessed 3 March 2011 – Attachment 5.

by the national government placing restrictions on churches with less than 200 adherents. These laws were supported by the Russian Orthodox and Islamic Churches in Kyrgyzstan.¹⁶

Russian Orthodox Church in Kyrgyzstan is governed by the Diocese of Tashkent and Central Asia. Several sources state that there are 44 Russian Orthodox Churches in Kyrgyzstan;¹⁷ the dioceses website provides details for 41 churches.¹⁸

5. Is there any evidence that Kyrgyz males are harassing and attacking single women in Kyrgyzstan?

No reports were found stating that elderly single women were harassed or attacked in levels above the general crime rate in Kyrgyzstan.

6. Is there country information showing that the government and its police or security agencies are not protecting Russian orthodox Russians, particularly women?

No sources were found to indicate the Kyrgyzstani government or the police were not protecting Russian Orthodox members and/or ethnic Russians. Many sources were located demonstrating a high level of discrimination (including violence) against females in Kyrgyzstan.

Discrimination generally occurred within family structures (domestic violence); despite strong legislation against such practices, police appear ambivalent to crimes against females. According to Central Asia Online, there were over 10,000 reported cases of domestic violence in 2008. Human rights expert Anara Niyazova claims that in the six years up to 2009, criminal charges were filed in only one case.¹⁹ Human rights advocate Asel Manapova claimed that the police were generally unwilling to send officers to something they saw as „strictly a family matter.”²⁰

Discrimination and violence appeared to be primarily aimed at younger females. Elderly Kyrgyzstanis were generally unaffected by violence and vocational discrimination; many, particularly those without family networks, endured severe financial hardship due to meagre pensions. The majority of financial and logistical support for elderly Kyrgyzstani citizens

¹⁶ Asia News 2009 „Even more restrictions in new law on religious freedom”, 14 January, <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Even-more-restrictions-in-new-law-on-religious-freedom-14209.html> – Accessed 4 March 2011 – Attachment 13.

¹⁷ US Department of State 2010, *International Religious Freedom Report 2010 Kyrgyz Republic*, 17 November, www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2010/148795.htm – Accessed 3 March 2011 – Attachment 5.

¹⁸ Russian Orthodox Diocese of Tashkent and Central Asia, Churches and monasteries of Tashkent and Central Asian Diocese [original: храмы и монастыри ташкентской и среднеазиатской епархии] http://translate.googleusercontent.com/translate_c?hl=en&ie=UTF-8&sl=ru&tl=en&u=http://www.pravoslavie.uz/churches.htm&rurl=translate.google.com.au&usg=ALkJrhjY8UzUxfduW-v0Rqeg07gyOTqsw original www.pravoslavie.uz/churches.htm – Accessed 2 March 2011.

¹⁹ Abdullo Z. 2009, „Kyrgyzstan provides no protection to domestic abuse victims”, *Central Asia Online*, 3 August, http://centralasiaonline.com/cocoon/caii/xhtml/en_GB/features/caii/features/2009/08/03/feature-04 – Accessed 4 March 2011 – Attachment 14.

²⁰ Abdullo Z. 2009, „Kyrgyzstan provides no protection to domestic abuse victims”, *Central Asia Online*, 3 August, http://centralasiaonline.com/cocoon/caii/xhtml/en_GB/features/caii/features/2009/08/03/feature-04 – Accessed 4 March 2011 – Attachment 14.

comes from non-government groups such as the Babushka (grandmother) adoption programme.²¹

Crime rates in general are high in Kyrgyzstan, particularly in the south and the capital. The Kyrgyzstani Criminal Investigation authority stated that approximately 19,000-20,000 crimes were committed in the country in 2010. Over half of all crimes were committed by persons aged between 14 and 28.²²

7. Is there information to show that extortion, ransom and kidnapping is on the rise in Kyrgyzstan and if so, is there evidence that the government is trying to contain it?

No sources were found to indicate that kidnapping occurs on a wide level. Kyrgyzstan does have a tradition of „bride kidnapping’ (*ala kachuu*) where young women are taken for the purpose of marriage.²³ This term is used to describe a „traditional’ ritual where a female is taken by a group of men; in some cases this is done so with the consent of the female. One source, Russell Kleinbach, claims that half of all marriages in Kyrgyzstan involve bride kidnapping and that in two thirds of these cases, the kidnapping was non-consensual.²⁴ Bride kidnapping is primarily restricted to the ethnic Kyrgyzstani population and was uncommon in the Russian community.²⁵ No sources were found of instances where Kyrgyzstani men kidnapped Russian „brides’.

News services reported isolated examples of people, mostly foreign nationals, being kidnapped for ransom. These events took place in southern Kyrgyzstan, particularly in the Osh region. In December 2010, Fergana News reported a spate of kidnappings in Osh where seven girls were abducted, raped, and had their heads shaved before release. The report noted that all of the kidnapped girls were Uzbeks.²⁶

Reports were located stating that extortion carried out by organised crime groups exists, particularly in Osh. Kyrgyzstani government authorities provide regular information on crime and security matters including statistics, briefings on trends, and announcements of investigations and arrests.²⁷

8. When did the overthrow of government occur in Kyrgyzstan? Since the installation of the new government, is there country information to indicate that Russian Orthodox are being discriminated against even more so than prior to its installation?

²¹ Trilling, D. 2009, „Kyrgyzstan: Adopt-a-Babushka Program Keeps Some Elderly Kyrgyz Citizens Going’ Eurasianet.org, 7 July, <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insightb/articles/eav070709.shtml> – Accessed 2 March 2011 – Attachment 15 & <http://www.babushkaadoption.org/>

²² Niyazona M. 2011, „Kanat Kerezbekov: 50 percent of crimes committed by youth’, *24.kg news agency*, 24 February, <http://eng.24.kg/community/2011/02/24/16466.html> – Accessed 4 March 2011 – Attachment 16.

²³ Kleinbach R., Ablezova M. & Aitieva A. 2005, Kidnapping for marriage (ala kachuu) in a Kyrgyz village, Central Asian Survey, June, http://www.afpwebfolio.org/files/1839_101.pdf – Accessed 3 March 2011 – Attachment 17.

²⁴ Kleinbach R. & Salimjanova U. 2007, „Kyz ala kachuu and adat: non-consensual bride kidnapping and tradition in Kyrgyzstan’, June, http://faculty.philau.edu/kleinbachr/2007_study.htm – Accessed 3 March 2011 – Attachment 18.

²⁵ Human Rights Watch 2006, „Reconciled to Violence’, available at <http://www.hrw.org/en/reports/2006/09/26/reconciled-violence>, September, Volume 18, No.9, p. 87, – Accessed 3 March 2011 – Attachment 19.

²⁶ Ferghana News Agency 2010, „Kyrgyzstan: Ethnic Uzbek girls are being raped in Osh’, 13 December, <http://enews.ferghananews.com/news.php?id=1952> – Accessed 2 March 2011 – Attachment 20.

²⁷ See <http://eng.24.kg/investigation/>

The president of Kyrgyzstan, Kurmanbek Bakiev, was overthrown following riots in early April 2010.²⁸ Bakiev was replaced as president by the former Foreign Minister, Roza Otunbaeva, who became acting president on 7 April 2010 and confirmed as president by the provisional government on 19 May 2010.²⁹ Following these events, ethnic clashes took place between Uzbeks and Kyrgyzstani groups, particularly in Southern Kyrgyzstan.³⁰ Reports on this violence do not make reference to any attacks against Russian Orthodox Church members.

Several news commentators have claimed that Russia supported and possibly instigated the overthrow of the former regime that, it is claimed, was hostile towards Russian interests in Central Asia.³¹ The interim government requested Russian armed intervention in June 2010 to assist in quelling violence in southern Kyrgyzstan, particularly Osh.³² The Russian president, Dmitry Medvedev, declined to assist, describing the events as an internal problem.³³

The proposed constitution offers some safeguards to minorities and would make Russian an official state language. Sources reveal a strong fear amongst Russians in Kyrgyzstan with many immigrating to Russia, however no reports of violence or discrimination against Russians were found apart from a few isolated incidents.³⁴

Parliamentary elections took place in October 2010 with the majority of independent observers giving positive reports on the fairness of the poll.³⁵ No single party gained more than 17% of the vote (less than 9% of eligible votes).³⁶ According to CIS think tank analyst, Vladimir Zharikhin, the new coalition government would not pursue an anti-Russian policy and was likely to be friendly towards Moscow.³⁷ Presidential elections are scheduled for 2011.³⁸

²⁸ Dzyubenko O. 2010, „Otunbayeva sworn in as Kyrgyz interim president’ *Reuters*, 3 July, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/07/03/us-kyrgyzstan-president-idUSTRE66200B20100703> – Accessed 2 March 2011 – Attachment 21.

²⁹ Dzyubenko O. 2010, „Otunbayeva sworn in as Kyrgyz interim president’ *Reuters*, 3 July, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/07/03/us-kyrgyzstan-president-idUSTRE66200B20100703> – Accessed 2 March 2011 – Attachment 21.

³⁰ Stern D. 2010, „Kyrgyzstan: surviving ethnic conflict’ *Global Post*, 17 June, <http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/asia/100617/kyrgyzstan-news-ethnic%20conflict> – Accessed 4 March 2011 – Attachment 22.

³¹ Górecki, W. 2010, Russia’s position on the events in Kyrgyzstan (April – June 2010), 27 July, <http://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/osw-commentary/2010-07-27/russias-position-events-kyrgyzstan-april-june-2010> – Accessed 2 March 2011 – Attachment 23.

³² Global Research 2010, Kyrgyzstan Asks for intervention of Russian Peacekeepers, June 13, <http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid=19702> – Accessed 3 March 2011 – Attachment 24.

³³ Global Research 2010, Kyrgyzstan Asks for intervention of Russian Peacekeepers, June 13, <http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid=19702> – Accessed 3 March 2011 – Attachment 24.

³⁴ St. Petersburg Times 2010, „Sun fails to keep Russians in Kyrgyzstan’, 21 May, http://www.sptimes.ru/index.php?action_id=2&story_id=31478 – Accessed 2 March 2011 – Attachment 25.

³⁵ Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe 2010, „Statement by Ms. Lydia Imanalieva, permanent representative of the Kyrgyz republic to the OSCE, at the meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council, 10 October, <http://www.osce.org/pc/73318> – Attachment 26.

³⁶ Fergana News Agency 2010, „Kyrgyzstan: CEC announced final results of parliamentary elections’, 1 November, <http://enews.ferghananews.com/news.php?id=1902&mode=snews> – Accessed 4 March 2011 – Attachment 27.

³⁷ Russia & CIS Business and Financial Newswire 2010, „New Kyrgyz coalition will not pursue anti-Russian policy – analyst, 30 November, http://goliath.ecnext.com/coms2/gi_0199-13961538/New-Kyrgyz-coalition-will-not.html – Accessed 2 March 2011 – Attachment 28.

³⁸ Madorsky D. 2010, „Kyrgyzstan’s interim govt unveils reform plan’, *Reuters*, 19 April, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/04/19/idUSLDE6310EG> – Accessed 4 March 2011 – Attachment 29.

According to government sources, no ethnic conflicts were registered in 2011 in Kyrgyzstan. Deputy Chairman of the People's Assembly of Kyrgyzstan Erke Bayaly told a press conference that the government "hold consultations, explanatory works regularly in regions. We explain that in case of ethnic conflict, participants of the incident will be punished".³⁹

9. Is there any information that indicates that Russian Orthodox members are safer if living in another part of the country?

No information was found to indicate that Russian Orthodox adherents were safer in a particular part of the country. It is noted that in general, the southern part of Kyrgyzstan has experienced much greater levels of crime and violence than the rest of the country.

The majority of Russian Orthodox adherents live in the northern cities of Kyrgyzstan, particularly the capital, Bishkek.⁴⁰ Russians make up a significant amount of the population in the Issyk-Kul lake tourist region, in particular the regional capital, Karakol and Cholpon-Ata.⁴¹

Southern Kyrgyzstan has a small number of Russians, particularly in the Osh region.⁴² This area was the scene of major conflict in 2010 between Kyrgyzstanis and Uzbeks. No sources were found of violence against Russian Orthodox members in this region.

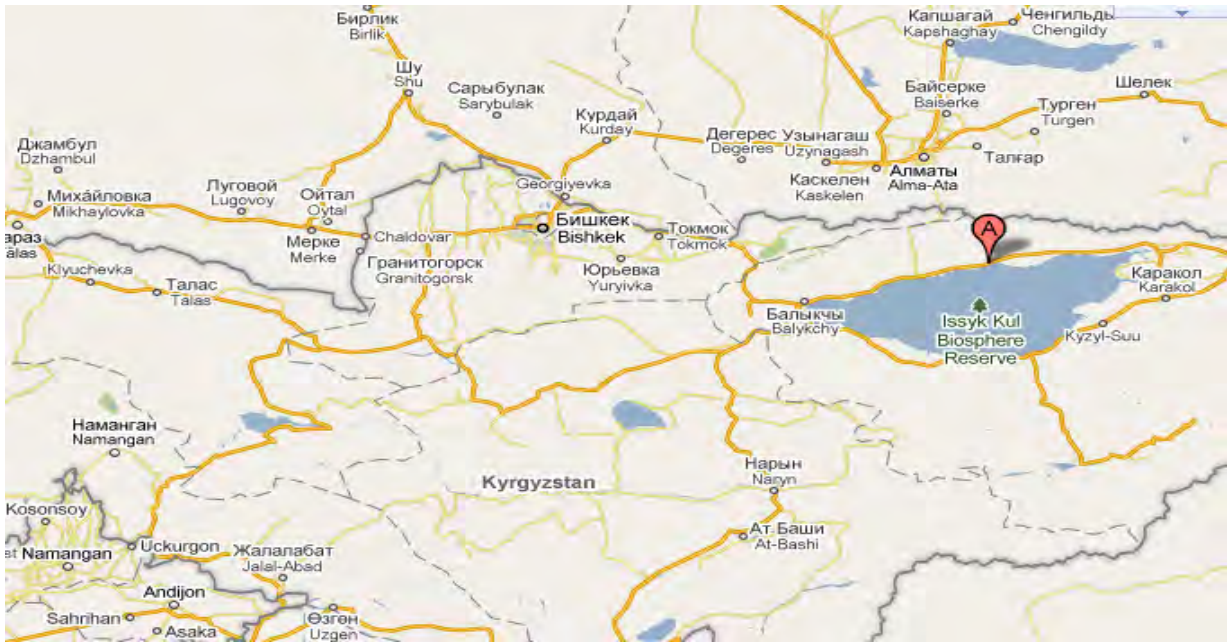
³⁹ Kyrgyzstan National News Agency 2011, „No ethnic conflicts were registered in 2011 in Kyrgyzstan’ 22 February, http://eng.kabar.kg/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1922&Itemid=1 – Accessed 3 March 2011 – Attachment 30.

⁴⁰ US English Foundation Research 2007, „Minority groups: To what extent are minority groups in this country disadvantaged by their language?’, 15 October, <http://www.usefoundation.org/view/787> – Accessed 2 March 2011 – Attachment 31.

⁴¹ Peyrouse S. 2008, *The Russian Minority in Central Asia: Migration, Politics, and Language*, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, p. 2. <http://www.wilsoncenter.org/topics/pubs/OP297.pdf> – Accessed 3 March 2011 – Attachment 32.

⁴² Toursunov H. 2010, „Kyrgyzstan: Leaving Home to Go Home’, Transitions Online Website, 25 March, <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900SID/ASHU-83VQLN?OpenDocument> – Accessed 3 March 2011 – Attachment 33.

Maps



- Google map of Kyrgyzstan showing location of Bulan-Sogottu (A), the national capital Bishkek, and the provincial capital, Karakol.⁴³



- Map 2 – Location of Russian Orthodox churches in Issyk-Kul diocese⁴⁴. Bulan-Sogottu marked at A. The nearest churches are located at Cholpon-Ata (marked with a red arrow) and

⁴³Google Map of Bulan-Sogottu, <http://maps.google.com.au/maps?hl=en&tab=wl> – Accessed 3 March 2011 – Attachment 34.

⁴⁴ Google Map of Bulan-Sogottu, <http://maps.google.com.au/maps?hl=en&tab=wl> – Accessed 3 March 2011 – Attachment 34. Information taken from: Russian Orthodox Diocese of Tashkent and Central Asia, „Churches in Issyk-Kul Province of Kyrgyzstan’ Undated, http://translate.googleusercontent.com/translate_c?hl=en&ie=UTF-8&sl=ru&tl=en&u=http://www.pravoslavie.uz/churches.htm&rurl=translate.google.com.au&usg=ALkJrhjY8UzUxufduW-v0Rqeg07gyOTqsw – Accessed 7 March 2011 – Attachment 35. Original <http://www.pravoslavie.uz/churches.htm>

Grigorievka (orange arrow). The capital of Issyk-Kul Province, Karakol, is located at the green arrow.

Attachments

1. UN statistical Division 2009, National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic, undated, http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sources/census/2010_PHC/Kyrgyzstan/A5-2PopulationAndHousingCensusOfTheKyrgyzRepublicOf2009.pdf – Accessed 2 March 2011..
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