

Travel to Kursk

Contributed by Administrator
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How to get there, around and away. Kursk has very developed bus and railway networks. There are also flights to and from Moscow and St Petersburg. Kursk is on the Moscow-Kharkiv railway with trains to Moscow (eight hours). You can go to/from Kharkiv by a train (three hours), to the Caucasus and Crimea daily and to Oryol (two or three hours). The train station is located about 3km northeast of Krasnaya Pl on Internatsionalnaya Street. Also you can arrive to Kursk by frequent bus services from Oryol, Belgorod, Moscow and Kharkiv. Kursk has a numerous buses, trams and trolley-buses routes between the train station and Krasnaya pl. The bus station is located northwest of the centre. Kursk Oblast borders Bryansk Oblast on the northwest, Orlovsk Oblast on the north, Lipetsk Oblast on the northeast, Voronez Oblast on the east, Belgorod Oblast on the south, and Sumy Oblast (Ukraine) on the west. Total border length of Kursk Oblast is 1250 kilometers (674 miles).

Geography Relief The oblast occupies the southern slopes of the middle-Russian plateau, and its average elevation is from 177 to 225 meters (580-738 ft.). The surface is hilly, and intersected by ravines. The central part of Kursk oblast is more elevated than the Seym Valley to the west. The Timsko-Shchigrinskiy ridge contains the highest point in the oblast at 288 meters (945 feet) above sea level. The low relief, gentler slopes, and mild winter make the area suitable for farming, and much of the forest has been cleared. **Drainage** Kursk Oblast contributes to two major drainage areas—the Dnepr (=5?@) and Don (>=) rivers (78% and 22% respectively). In the oblast there are 902 rivers and streams with total length is around 8000 kilometers (4300 miles). Major rivers are Seym (!59<), Psel (A5;) and Kshen (H5=L). The inland waters of Kursk oblast consist of 145 artificial lakes and about 550 small ponds. **Soils** The chernozem, or black soils, formed mostly from glacial drift and well adapted for wheat, cover around 70% of the land of the oblast. Podzolic soils cover 26% of the region. **Climate** Kursk Oblast's location at the centre of the European part of Russia gives the region a medium continental climate: warm summers and relatively mild winters. In July the average daytime high temperature is 19.3° C (66.7° F). In January the average high is -8.6° C (16.5° F). The average number of frost-free days ranges from 150 in the north to 160 in the south. The growing season in Kursk Oblast varies, from 180 days in the north, to 195 days in the southwest. The average annual precipitation for the oblast is 584 millimeters (23 inches), but it ranges from 634 millimeters (25 inches) in the northwest, to about 500 millimeters (20 inches) or less in the southeastern corner. The maximum of the rain falls during June and July. The snow depth in Kursk Oblast differs considerably, from 300-400 millimeters (12-16 inches) in the north of the oblast, to 150-250 millimeters (6-10 inches) in the south. Annual sunshine is 1775 hours. Kursk oblast is a part of the Eastern European forest-steppe. One-quarter of Kursk oblast was once heavily wooded. Hardwood timbers included oak, ash, and elm. Now forest covers only 10% of the oblast. Animals native to the area are numerous. Pike, bleak, and perch in abundance swim in local rivers. Otter and badger, as well as wild boar, elk and roe deer remain numerous in many parts of the area. **Natural resources** Kursk oblast is one of the nation's major producers of iron ore. The area of Kursk Magnetic Anomaly has one of the richest iron ore deposits in the world. Also, rare-earth and base metals occur in commercial quantities in several locations. Refractory loam, mineral sands and chalk are quarried and processed in the region. Oblast's sufficient reserves of artesian well water are proving useful for medical purposes. **Demographics:** Almost 35% of the population lives in Kursk, about 18% lives in six other towns (Zeleznogorsk (5;57=>3>@A:), Kurchatov (C@G0B>2), L’gov(L3>2), Shchigry (!83@K), Ryl’sk (K;LA:), Oboyan’(1>O=L)), and the rest resides in towns with population less than 10,000 and in rural areas. Rural area of Kursk oblast was settled in a pattern of collective farms with unified communities. The most widespread type of rural settlements has from 200 to 500 inhabitants. Urban settlements originally served defensive and industrial purposes. **The people.** These are population figures according to the census of 2002: Total population: 1,235,091 Males: 343,783 Females: 412,697 Urban population: 61.25% Rural population: 38.75% Population density: 42 per sq kilometer (144 per sq mile) There are 10 towns, 23 townlets and 444 villages. Kursk Oblast is one of the most ethnically homogeneous regions in Russia. The population is about 96 percent Russians. Ukrainians, the largest minority group, make less than 2% of population. The annual growth rate of the Oblast’s population is negative; death rate exceeds overall birth rates and immigration. **History** Although territory of Kursk oblast had been populated since the end of the last Ice Age, information about the area was scanty until 1596 when the Kursk stronghold was built. A real growth of the area around Kursk began soon after that, with a large migration from Central Russia after famine in the beginning of XVII century. Between 1708 and 1719 Kursk uyezd was a part of the newly created Kiev guberniya. From 1719 to 1727 it was a part of Belgorod province of Kiev guberniya. From 1727 to 1749 and from 1749 to 1779 Kursk uyezd was part of Belgorod namestnichestvo and Belgorod guberniya respectively. On May 23, 1779 Kursk guberniya was established. The latter subdivision existed until 1928 when the guberniya’s subdivision was replaced by oblast’s subdivision. The territory of Kursk guberniya became a part of Central Chernozem Oblast. Since Central Chernozem Oblast was very large its administration was very difficult. As a result on June 13, 1934 Central Chernozem Oblast was divided into two oblasts: Kursk Oblast and Voronez Oblast. In the period between 1934 and 1954 oblast’s borders had been changed very frequently. However, the area and borders of the oblast have remained the same from 1954. During World War II, the territory of Kursk oblast was occupied by the German troops from fall of 1941 till summer of 1943. Battle of Kursk which was one of the major battles of WWII took place in the region between July 5 and August 23, 1943. **Politics**

The Parliament of Kursk Oblast is the Kursk Oblast’s Duma which consists of 45 members elected for four-year term. The head of the oblast is a governor who is appointed by the President of Russian Federation. The centre-right

United Russia Party and the left Communist Party of Russian Federation (KPRF) are Kursk Oblast's major political parties. Traditionally, the Communist Party is the strongest in the Oblast's rural area. Economy

Industry Oblast's production dropped rapidly during the 1990s, as industrial crisis was stimulated by the national wide economical crisis which followed by the fall of the Soviet Union. However, by the end of the decade output was increasing. Moreover the manufacturing sector, despite a sagging economy in the late 20th century, accounts for about 40% of the oblast's GDP. Engineering industry, electric-power industry, metal-working industry, chemicals and food processing are the dominant industries. **Agriculture** Most of the main farming areas are used for natural pastures or cultivation, which involves mainly wheat, sugarcane and fodder crops. The main categories of productive holdings are wheat farms, dairy farms, poultry farms and beef cattle. Agricultural lands cover 23,000 sq. kilometers (6,700 sq miles) or 77% of the oblast. **Transportation**

Transportation industry of Kursk oblast, with easy access to national and international markets, is the basis for the oblast's development. The most important modes of transport throughout Kursk oblast are by railway and road. Total length of railway network is 1,100 kilometers (590 miles). Two major rail links pass through Kursk oblast: Moscow-Kharkov and Kiev-Voronezh. Region roads serve all towns and rural settlements through 5,600 kilometers (3,000 miles) road network. In addition there is an airport in the oblast which was opened to international flights in July 1997.

Education

The largest university of Kursk oblast is the Kursk State Technical University which is located in the Kursk City. There are also 22 other high education bodies in Kursk oblast. **Tourism**

Kursk oblast's natural attraction is the State Central-Chernozem national park which offers great opportunity for hiking. Oblast's forests and others undeveloped areas are ideal for hunting, fishing and camping. Traditional art and architecture are preserved in the town-museum of Ryl'sk and others historical towns of Kursk Oblast.

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