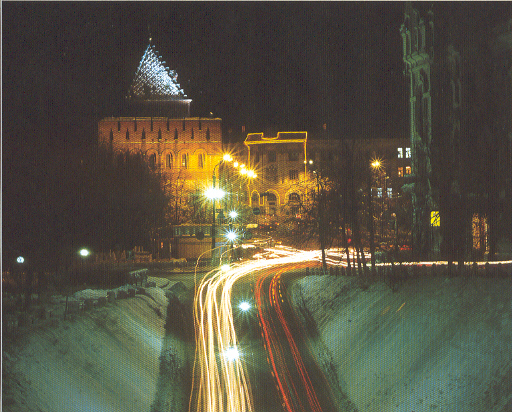
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Выполнил: Лукоянов А.И.

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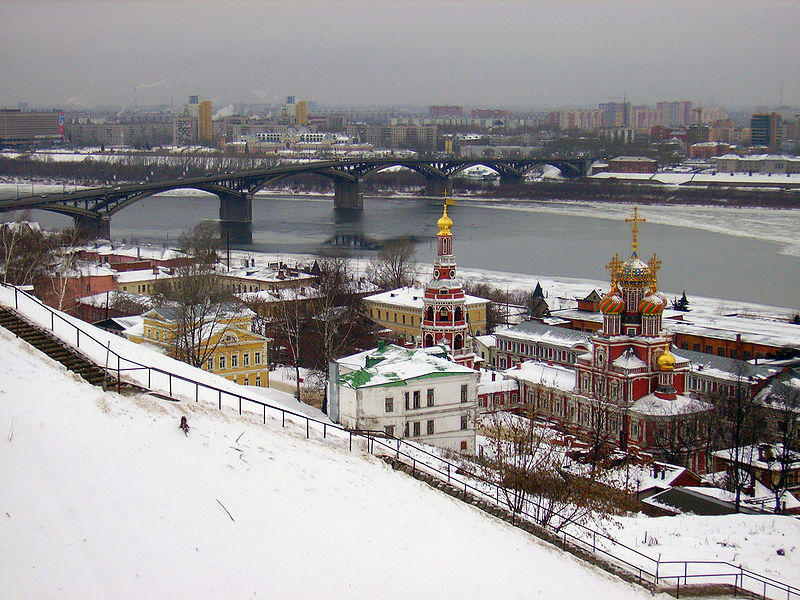
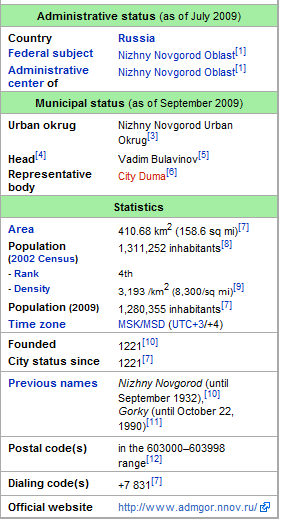
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**Nizhny Novgorod** (Russian: Ни́жний Но́вгород), colloquially shortened as Nizhny, is the fourth largest city in Russia, ranking after Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Novosibirsk. Population: 1,311,252 (Russian Census (2002);[8] 1,438,133 (1989 Census).[13] It is the economic and cultural center of the vast Volga-Vyatka economic region, and also the administrative center of Nizhny Novgorod Oblast and Volga Federal District.

View of Nizhny Novgorod near the Oka River

From 1932 to 1990, the city was known as Gorky (Го́рький),[11] after the writer Maxim Gorky who was born there.

The city is an important economic, transport and cultural center of the nation

**History**

**A seat of medieval princes**

After the destruction of the Mordvin Inäzor Obram administrative centre and fillfort named Obran Osh (Ashli) at the site of future stone Kremlin in 1220, a small Russian wooden hillfort was founded by Grand Duke Yuri II of Russia in 1221. Located at the confluence of two most important rivers of his principality, the Volga (Mordvin "Rav" or "Rava"), and the Oka, and Obran Osh was renamed Nizhny Novgorod. Its name literally means Lower Newtown, to distinguish it from the older Novgorod. Its independent existence was threatened by the continuous Mordvin attacks against it. The major attempt made by Inäzor Purgaz from Arzamas in January 1229 was repulsed, but after the death of Yuri II on March 4, 1238 at the Battle of Sit River the Mongols occupied the fortress and the remnants of small Nizhny Novgorod settlement which surrendered without any resistance in order to preserve what had been developed since Purgaz's attack eight years earlier. Later a major stronghold for border protection, Nizhny Novgorod fortress took advantage of a natural moat formed by the two rivers.

Along with Moscow and Tver, Nizhny Novgorod was among several newly-founded towns that escaped Mongol devastation on account of their insignificance, but grew into during the period of the Tatar Yoke. With the agreement of the Mongol Khan, Nizhny Novgorod was incorporated into the Vladimir - Suzdal Principality in 1264. After 86 years its importance further increased when the seat of the powerful Suzdal Principality was moved here from Gorodets in 1350. Grand Duke Dmitry Konstantinovich (1323-1383) sought to make his capital a rival worthy of Moscow; he built a stone citadel and several churches and was a patron of historians. The earliest extant manuscript of the Russian Primary Chronicle, the Laurentian Codex, was written for him by the local monk Laurentius in 1377.

**The strongest fortress of Muscovy**

Аfter the city's incorporation into Muscovy (1392), the local princes took the name Shuisky and settled in Moscow, where they were prominent at the court and briefly ascended the throne in the person of Vasili IV. After being burnt by the powerful Crimean Tatar chief Edigu in 1408, Nizhny Novgorod was restored and regarded by the Muscovites primarily as a great stronghold in their wars against the Tatars of Kazan. The enormous red-brick kremlin, one of the strongest and earliest preserved citadels in Russia, was built in 1508–1511 under the supervision of Peter the Italian. The fortress was strong enough to withstand Tatar sieges in 1520 and 1536.

Kuzma Minin appeals to the people of Nizhny Novgorod to raise a volunteer army against the Poles.

In 1612, the so-called national militia, gathered by a local merchant, Kuzma Minin, and commanded by Knyaz Dmitry Pozharsky expelled the Polish troops from Moscow, thus putting an end to the "Time of Troubles" and establishing the rule of the Romanov dynasty. The main square before the kremlin is named after Minin and Pozharsky, although it is locally known simply as "Minin Square." Minin's remains are buried in the citadel. (In commemoration of these events, on October 21, 2005, an exact copy of the Red Square statue of Minin and Pozharsky was placed in front of St John the Baptist Church, which is believed to be the place from where the call to the people had been proclaimed.)

In the course of the following century, the city prospered commercially and was chosen by the Stroganovs (the wealthiest merchant family of Russia) as a base for their operations. A particular style of architecture and icon painting, known as the Stroganov style, developed there at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries.

The historical coat of arms of Nizhny Novgorod in 1981 was: A red deer with black horns and hooves on a white field. The modern coat of arms circa a ribbon with colours of the Russian national flag.

Church of the Nativity of Our Lady, built by the Stroganovs

**Great trade centre**

In 1817, the Makaryev Fair, one of the liveliest in the world, was transferred to Nizhny Novgorod, which thereupon started to attract millions of visitors annually. By the mid-19th century, the city on the Volga was firmly established as the trade capital of the Russian Empire. The world's first radio receiver of engineer Alexander Popov and the world's first hyperboloid tower and lattice shells-coverings of engineer Vladimir Shukhov were demonstrated at the All-Russia industrial and art exhibition in Nizhny Novgorod in 1896. According to official Imperial Russian statistics the population of Nizhny Novgorod as of 14 January 1913 was 97.000 (rounded to the nearest thousand).

Minin Square

The largest industrial enterprise was the Sormovo Iron Works which was connected by the company´s own railway to Moscow station in the upper part of Nizhny Novgorod. The private Moscow — Kazan Railway Company´s station served the lower part of the town. Other industries gradually developed, and by the dawn of the 20th century it was a first-rank industrial hub as well. Henry Ford helped build a large truck and tractor plant (GAZ) in the late 1920s, sending along engineers and mechanics, including future labour leader Walter Reuther.

This building formerly housed the Great Russian Fair

**The Soviet Era**

There were no bridges over the Volga or Oka before the October Revolution in 1917. The first bridge over the Volga was started by the Moscow-Kazan Railway Company in 1914, but only finished in the Soviet Era when the railway to Kotelnich was opened for service in 1927.

The famous writer Maxim Gorky was born in Nizhny Novgorod in 1868 as Alexei Maximovich Peshkov. In his novels he realistically described the dismal life of the city proletariat. Even during his lifetime, the city was renamed Gorky following his return to the Soviet Union in 1932 on invitation of Joseph Stalin. The city bore Gorky's name until 1991. His childhood home is preserved as a museum, known as the Kashirin House (Russian: Домик Каширина), after Alexei's grandfather who owned the place.

Shukhov towers built in Nizhny Novgorod suburbs near Dzerzhinsk in 1927–1929

During much of the Soviet era, the city was closed to foreigners to safeguard the security of Soviet military research and production facilities, even though it was a popular stopping point for Soviet tourists traveling up and down the Volga in tourist boats. Unusually for a Soviet city of that size, even the street maps were not available for sale until the mid-1970s. Mátyás Rákosi, communist leader of Hungary died here in 1971.

The physicist and the Nobel laureate Andrei Sakharov was exiled there during 1980-1986 to limit his contacts with foreigners.

**Economy**

Nizhniy Novgorod Oblast ranks seventh in Russia in industrial output, while the processing industry predominates in the local economy. More than 633 industrial companies employ nearly 700 000 people, or 62% of the workforce involved in material production. Industry generates 83% of the regional GDP and makes 89% of all material expenditures. The leading sectors are engineering and metalworking, followed by the chemical and petrochemical industries and the forestry, woodworking, and paper industries. The first three sectors account for about 75% of all industrial production.

Nizhniy Novgorod Oblast has traditionally been attractive to investors. In 2002, Moody's rating agency confirmed a Caa1 rating based on the region's long-term foreign currency liabilities.

The region maintains trade relations with many countries and has an export surplus. The largest volume of exports goes to Ukraine, Belarus, Switzerland, Kazakhstan, Belgium, and France. Imports come mainly from Ukraine, Germany, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Austria, the Netherlands, China, and the United States.

The stock market infrastructure is quite well developed in Nizhniy Novgorod, and the exchange business is expanding. Companies and organizations registered in the region include 1153 joint-stock companies, 63 investment institutions, 34 commercial banks, 35 insurance companies, 1 voucher investment fund, 1 investment fund, 17 nongovernmental pension funds, 2 associations of professional stock market dealers, and 3 exchanges (stock, currency, and agricultural). Nizhny Novgorod Region is noted for having relatively highly developed market relations.

**Information technology**

Nizhniy Novgorod is one of the centers of the IT Industry in Russia. It ranks among the leading Russian cities in terms of the quantity of software R&D providers . In Nizhniy Novgorod there are number of offshore outsourcing software developers, including Devetel Ltd., MERA Networks, RealEast Networks, and Teleca, that specialize in delivering services to telecommunication vendors. Also Intel has opened a software R&D center with more than 500 engineers in Nizhniy Novgorod.

There are 25 scientific R&D institutions focusing on telecommunications, radio technology, theoretical and applied physics, and 33 higher educational institutions, among them are Nizhny Novgorod State Medical Academy, Nizhny Novgorod State University, Nizhny Novgorod Technical University, as well as Nizhny Novgorod Institute of Information Technologies (former MERA Networks training center), that focuses on information technologies, software development, system administration, telecommunications, cellular networks, Internet technologies, and IT management.

Nizhniy Novgorod has also been chosen as one of four sites for building an IT-oriented technology park—a special zone that has an established infrastructure and enjoys a favorable tax and customs policy.

**Engineering industry**

The engineering industry is the leading industry of Nizhniy Novgorod economy. It is mainly oriented towards transportation, i.e., the auto industry, shipbuilding, diesel engines, aircraft manufacture, and machine tools, with the auto industry being the leading sector (50%). Largest plants are:

JSC "Gorky Automobile Plant" - personal cars, trucks, armored personnel carriers, and other autos;

JSC "Krasnoye Sormovo" - river and sea ships, submarines;

JSC "Sokol" - airplanes, jets;

JSC "Nitel" - TV sets;

JSC "RUMO" - diesel generators;

JSC "Krasnyy yakor" - anchor chains;

JSC "ZeFS" - metal-cutting machines.

**Transportation**

Gorkovskaya Railroad (Горьковская железная дорога), which operates some 5,700 km of rail lines throughout the Middle Volga region (of which some 1,200 are in Nizhny Novgorod Oblast), is headquartered in Nizhny Novgorod. Overnight trains provide access to Nizhny Novgorod from Moscow. Since December 2002, a fast train transports passengers between Nizhny Novgorod and Moscow in less than five hours. One can continue from Nizhny Novgorod eastward along the Trans-Siberian Railway, with direct trains to major cities in the Urals and Siberia, as well as to Beijing.

Construction of metro bridge, April 2008

Nizhny Novgorod Strigino Airport has direct flights to major Russian cities, as well as to Frankfurt (three flights a week by Lufthansa). The air base Sormovo was an important military airlift facility, and Pravdinsk air base was an interceptor aircraft base during the Cold War. S7 Airlines goes to Moscow Domodedovo airport daily.

One of the three bridges spanning the Oka

Nizhny Novgorod is an important center of Volga cargo and passenger shipping. In the summer, cruise vessels operate between Nizhny Novgorod, Moscow, Saint Petersburg, and Astrakhan. In 2006 a small number of Meteor-class hydrofoils resumed operations on the Volga river.

The city is served by Russian highway M-7 (Moscow – Nizhny Novgorod – Kazan – Ufa), and is a hub of the regional highway network.

Riverside terminal

Public transport within the city is provided by a small subway system (Nizhny Novgorod Metro), tramways, marshrutkas or minibuses, buses and trolleybuses. Electric and diesel commuter trains run to suburbs in several directions.

Free shuttle buses run from several points in the city to the MEGA shopping complex, which opened in October 2006 in Fedyakovo, a few kilometers to the east of the Nizhny Novgorod city line.

**City layout**

****  Nizhny Novgorod is divided by the Oka River into two distinct parts. The Upper City (Russian: Нагорная часть, Nagornaya Chast) is located on the hilly eastern (right) bank of the Oka. It includes three of the eight city districts into which the city is administratively divided:

Nizhegorodsky (the historical and administrative center of the city);

Historic center of Nizhny Novgorod, including Church of the Nativity and Kremlin walls on the hill

Prioksky;

Sovetsky.

The Lower City (Russian: Заречная часть, Zarechnaya Chast) occupies the low (western) side of the Oka, and includes five city districts:

Kanavinsky (the site of the Nizhny Novgorod Fair and the location of the main train station);

Moskovsky (home of the Sokol Aircraft Plant and its airfield);

Sormovsky (where Krasnoye Sormovo and the Volga Shipyard are located);

Avtozavodsky (built around the GAZ automotive plants);

Leninsky.

All of the today's lower city was annexed to Nizhny Novgorod in 1929–1931.

The city has many industrial suburbs, such as Kstovo, Dzerzhinsk, and Bor. The town of Semyonov, to the north of Nizhny Novgorod, is known as a craft center for Khokhloma wood painting. Another suburb, Balakhna, is noted for its medieval architecture.

**Main sights**

Much of the city downtown is built in the Russian Revival and Stalin Empire styles. The dominating feature of the city skyline is the grand Kremlin (1500-11), with its red-brick towers. After Bolshevik devastation, the only ancient edifice left within the kremlin walls is the tent-like Archangel Cathedral (1624-31), first built in stone in the 13th century.

**Cultural features**

There are more than six hundred unique historic, architectural, and cultural monuments in the city; that gave grounds to UNESCO to include Nizhny Novgorod in the list of 100 cities of the world which are of great historical and cultural value.

Planetarium and circus

There are about two hundred municipal and regional art and cultural institutions within Nizhny Novgorod. Among these institutions there are eight theatres, five concert halls, ninety-seven libraries (with branches), seventeen movie theaters (including five movie theaters for children), twenty-five institutions of children optional education, eight museums (sixteen including branches), and seven parks

**Nizhny Novgorod art gallery**

The art gallery in Nizhny Novgorod is a large and important art gallery and museums of human history and culture.

Nizhny Novgorod has a great and extraordinary art gallery with more than 12,000 exhibits, an enormous collection of works by Russian artists such as Viktor Vasnetsov, Karl Briullov, Ivan Shishkin, Ivan Kramskoi, Ilya Yefimovich Repin, Isaak Iljitsch Lewitan, Vasily Surikov, Ivan Aivazovsky, there are also greater collections of works by Boris Kustodiev and Nicholas Roerich, not only Russian art is part of the exhibition it include also a vast accumulation of Western European art like works by David Teniers the Younger, Bernardo Bellotto, Lucas Cranach the Elder, Pieter de Grebber, Giuseppe Maria Crespi, Giovanni Battista Piranesi, and lot more.

Finally what makes this gallery extremely important is the amazing collection Russian avant-garde with works by Kazimir Malevich, Wassily Kandinsky, Natalia Goncharova, Mikhail Larionov and so on. There is also collection of East Asian art.

** Churches**

Other notable landmarks are the two great medieval abbeys. The Pechersky Ascension Monastery features the austere five-domed cathedral (1632) and two rare churches surmounted by tent roofs, dating from the 1640s. The Annunciation monastery, likewise surrounded by strong walls, has another five-domed ****cathedral (1649) and the Assumption church (1678). The only private house preserved from that epoch formerly belonged to the merchant Pushnikov.

Pechersky Ascension Monastery

New Fair Cathedral (Aleksandr Nevsky Cathedral)

There can be little doubt that the most original and delightful churches in the city were built by the Stroganovs in the nascent Baroque style. Of these, the Virgin's Nativity Church (1719) graces one of the central streets, whereas the Church of Our Lady of Smolensk (1694-97) survives in the former village of Gordeevka (now, part of the city's Kanavinsky District), where the Stroganov palace once stood.

**Other notable churches include:**

the Saviour Cathedral, also known as the Old Fair Cathedral, a huge domed edifice built at the site of the great fair to an Empire style design by Agustín de Betancourt and Auguste de Montferrand in 1822;

the so-called New Fair Cathedral, designed in the Russian Revival style and constructed between 1856 and 1880 at the confluence of the Oka and the Volga;

Saviour (Old Fair) Cathedral

the recently reconstructed church of the Nativity of John the Precursor (1676-83), standing just below the Kremlin walls; it was used during the Soviet period as an apartment house;

the parish churches of the Holy Wives (1649) and of Saint Elijah (1656);

the Assumption Church on St Elijah's Hill (1672), with five green-tiled domes arranged unorthodoxly on the lofty cross-shaped barrel roof;

the shrine of the Old Believers at the Bugrovskoe cemetery, erected in the 1910s to a critically acclaimed design by Vladimir Pokrovsky;

the wooden chapel of the Intercession (1660), transported to Nizhny Novgorod from a rural area.

There is also a mosque in Sennaya Square, where the Muslim populations of the city go for Friday prayers, Islamic activities and activities which are organised by the mosque. There is also a small shop to buy halal meats. Most of the Muslims in this city are Tatars.

The centrally located Nizhny Novgorod Synagogue was built in 1881-83; disused during the Soviet era, it was renovated and reopened ca. 1991.

**Other**

A singular monument of industrial architecture is a 128-metre-high open-work hyperboloid tower built on the bank of the Oka near Dzerzhinsk as part of a powerline river crossing by the eminent engineer and scientist Vladimir Shukhov in 1929.

A staircase connecting the Kremlin with the Volga river offers a panoramic view of the surroundings. The staircase itself was constructed in the late 1940s by German prisoners of war forced to labour around Gorky.

Volga riverside view

**Sports**

The city ice hockey team Torpedo Nizhny Novgorod play in the KHL. The city is represented at football by FC Volga Nizhny Novgorod who play in the Russian First Division. The other footbal team from Nizhny Novgrod, FC Lokomotiv Nizhny Novgorod who had played in the Russian Premier League and Intertoto Cup became defunct in 2006. The city field hockey team are HC Start. Their bandy team Start plays in the highest division of the Russian Bandy League. In 2002 they reached the final against Vodnik. Both matches were played in Arkhangelsk due to warm weather. After that an artificial ice was built.