

4 The Republic of Adygheia

Perceptions of rights, freedoms and life chances of ordinary people

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цӀыфӀыгӀгӀэр Ӏахьэмугош
(Humanity is an asset that cannot be shared)
An Adyge saying

This chapter is based on a survey conducted in October and November 2005 in all the *raions* of Adygheia.¹ The survey intended to check the perceptions of people living in the Republic of Adygheia of some basic civil and political rights, freedoms and also life chances and their implementation. Selected results will be discussed below, after some explanations of the country, the survey and the concepts polled.

Adygheia: a brief introduction

Adygheia is an autonomous republic within the Russian Federation (RF). Its territory is 7,790 square kms, and it is an enclave within, and completely surrounded by, the Krasnodar *Krai*.² The titular ethnic group, after which the republic is named – the Adyghe – are a minority of the population. According to the 2002 all-Russian Census, the population of the republic added up to 444,438 people belonging to 151,597 households. Of these 66 per cent were Russians and only 23 per cent Adyghe. The population is distributed equally between rural and urban areas with 52.64 per cent living in the cities of Maikop (the capital) and Adygeisk and three other urban districts and the rest in seven *raions*.³ The female population forms a majority of 53.5 per cent.⁴

Adyghe is the self-designation of several groups in the North-Western Caucasus – the Adyghe of Adygheia, the Cherkes, the Shapsugh and the Kabartay. All are known in English as Circassians and in Russian, Turkish and other Middle Eastern languages as Cherkes.⁵ In the mid 1860s, at the end of the ‘Caucasian War’, the majority of the Circassians was forced to migrate to the Ottoman Empire and the number of the Circassians in the Northern Caucasus dropped by as much as 80 per cent.⁶ The Soviet authorities divided the remaining Circassian population in the Caucasus into Adyghe, Cherkes, Kabartay and Shapsogh, and each of the former three was designated a separate national unit – the

Autonomous *Oblasts* of Adygheia and Karachai-Cherkesia and the Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (ASSR) of Kabardino-Balkaria. The historical Shapsogh land is part of the Krasnodar *Krai*.

The Adyghe, like most of the people in the Northern Caucasus, are Muslims. Nowadays many Adyghe villages have mosques. This, however, does not mean that 'Islamic fundamentalism' is on the rise. The perception of Islam in Adygheia is very moderate and people's beliefs are considered their personal matter. Outward signs of religiosity, for instance headscarves, are absent.⁷ Most Russians in Adygheia are Orthodox Christians and some Russian villages have churches. Like the Muslim Adyghe, they are not religious fundamentalists. Generally speaking, religion in Adygheia seems to be a factor that defines social relations in neither community.

The Autonomous *Oblast* of Adygheia was established in 1922. In 1990 its status was upgraded to ASSR. In 1992, after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the Republic of Adygheia became a member of the Russian Federation.⁸ 'The historical injustice of being dispersed as a result of Russian Imperialism in the 19th Century and divided and isolated [from each other] by Soviet policies became a powerful argument of the various Circassian nationalist organizations.'⁹ However, the Adyghe nationalist organizations have not been successful in organizing a massive repatriation of Adyghe from the diaspora, which means that the titular people of the Republic of Adygheia has remained a minority within its own land.

Concepts

Rights and freedoms

The 'Universal Declaration of Human Rights' guarantees all human beings some basic rights and freedoms regardless of their 'race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status'.¹⁰ The countries that have endorsed this declaration affirm the equality of all citizens before the law. However, in reality laws are not always applied as they were conjured in theory. In many countries human rights are violated even though they are guaranteed by their constitutions. Some theories of democratization of societies have looked at the legal status only. This is especially true of the formal democracies of the 'third wave'.¹¹ It seems, however, that the perceptions of ordinary citizens provide us with an additional tool to understand better the degree of democracy in a specific country.¹² In the post-Soviet context the people's perceptions are crucial, because in the USSR people 'were accustomed to following the direction of state institutions, and expected the state to guarantee the implementation of rights and freedoms'.¹³ Today people still have great expectations from the state to realize their rights.¹⁴

According to the Constitution of the Republic of Adygheia,¹⁵ which is in agreement with the Constitution of the RF, all residents of the Republic of Adygheia enjoy rights and freedoms, including those enumerated in the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Three of these rights are dealt with below.

In parallel to Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights¹⁶ and Article 28 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation,¹⁷ the Constitution of Adygheia guarantees ‘religious freedom’, that is ‘the right to freely practice religion, freedom to choose not to practice any religion, freedom to believe in any religion and belief.’¹⁸ According to the US Department of State, however, ‘the government [of the RF] generally respects this right in practice; however, in some cases the authorities imposed restrictions on some groups’.¹⁹ The Chechen conflict supplies usually the legal basis for such restrictions, especially on Muslim groups or sects.

The Constitution of Adygheia, reflecting Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,²⁰ guarantees ‘freedom of thought and speech’.²¹ The media are accepted as basic means for the implementation of this right. Thus, Article 27 (4) of the Constitution of Adygheia states that ‘all information resources and all means of information are free’.²² The Freedom House report, however, states that ‘the Russian state continues to control the country’s three main federal television networks, a key source of information for most of the population and a heavy influence on many regional broadcasters’.²³ Also in Adygheia the (local) media are controlled – in fact, owned – by the state. The people, thus, have access only to channels – whether federal or local – which represent the political views of the status quo. Yet the media, as important a means for the freedom of speech as they might be, are but part of it. Another major component of freedom of thought and speech is an atmosphere enabling people to tell their ideas and beliefs in public to friends as well as to strangers, i.e. surveyors.

The right to participate in the administration of state affairs both directly and through their representatives, is promised by Article 30 of the Constitution of Adygheia,²⁴ reflecting of Article 21(1) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.²⁵ This can be understood as ‘right of political participation’, which is an important element of democracy. The Constitution of Adygheia stipulates that the president must speak both official languages of the republic – Adyghe and Russian. But this clause had been suspended for ten years just before the presidential elections of 2002, which opened the way for all citizens to be candidates in the elections.²⁶ So, legally the equal ‘right to political participation’ exists in the Republic.

Life chances

‘Feelings of social insecurity and injustice’²⁷ are common consequences of transition. In such a period of accelerated change, concepts of equality, justice and social security gain importance. Adygheia, like all ex-Soviet polities, is in transition to new social, political and economic systems. Thus, the three questions collected under the title of ‘life chances’ are indicators of people’s chances to social mobility and even survival.

Although the Constitution of Adygheia provides equal rights to all its residents, there is a positive discrimination of the titular nation, which as mentioned

before, is a minority within the population.²⁸ Under these circumstances the question of how the nationalities of Adygheia see their position in the society becomes an important aspect in understanding them. If a person believes that he or she has a chance in life, a chance to make a change, a chance to improve his or her position in society, economically or socially, then that person would be satisfied with his/her life. On the other hand, if a person is insecure about his or her life chances because of his/her nationality, he/she would be mistrustful of society. The way ordinary people perceive 'equality of life chances regardless of origin' is essential to understanding the people of post-Soviet Adygheia.

Another instrumental concept to understand society is 'support'. Under the Soviets, the state had provided support to those in need. Due to the strong systems of health care, employment, education and security, no group existed that could be defined as 'people in need'. Everyone got their basic needs from the state; in case of sickness a doctor would pay a house visit; if medical care was needed, the state provided it, etc. In present day Adygheia the systems of social security still exist but do not function as efficiently as they did in Soviet times. The inability of the state to provide similar support is likely to either cause people to move to the concept of support by people or to increase alienation and isolation. Yet, the in-depth interviews showed that there is no such understanding of support in Adygheia. When ordinary people were asked about their perceptions of the implementation of 'support for those in need' it is very likely that they evaluated the state security system as a whole.

The biggest problem facing democratizing countries these days is corruption and unequal distribution of wealth. If everyone gets what he/she deserves during the period of change, the economy would develop faster and the transition to a market economy would be less problematic. In Adygheia, unequal distribution of wealth is visible at first sight. Especially, in the two cities Maikop and Adygeisk, the newly emerging districts with 'huge' houses are one of the things to attract attention immediately. The non-transparent source of wealth of some groups is bothering people. So the people's perception of the 'distribution of wealth' in Adygheia is a crucial concept to understand people's sensitivity about justice in this society.

Methodology

The survey was designed as a multistage sampling. At the first stage the sample was divided into sections corresponding to the nine administrative divisions of Adygheia (the two cities and the *raions*). The erstwhile size of the sample was $n=500$. Then, in order to reach the minimum requirement for statistical analysis, the sample for each stratum was rounded to at least 30. Thus, the total grew to $n=605$. At the second stage, proportionate sample sizes were calculated for the urban and rural sectors, the urban sector consisting of five towns. At the third stage all rural settlements were listed and 30 randomly selected villages were sampled. Local interviewers were preferred, especially in the villages, to fill in

questionnaires with randomly selected people. The number of valid questionnaires was 532.

Of those 532 questionnaires 50.4 per cent were filled in urban areas – 221 (41.4 per cent) in the city of Maikop. Russians were the largest group among the respondents, with 48.4 per cent. Adyghe interviewees made up 44.6 per cent, and 37 persons (6.9 per cent) belonged to other nationalities. Male respondents amounted to one-quarter of the total. About 23.1 per cent of the respondents were over the age of 50, 31.35 per cent were below 30 and the rest were between the ages of 30 and 49. About 33.9 per cent of the male and 44.6 per cent of the female respondents had permanent full time jobs. Around 28.1 per cent of the males and 15.5 per cent of the females were unemployed. Part time and irregular workers made up 39.1 per cent of all respondents.

Results

General

When asked of their opinion as to what degree the above mentioned rights and freedoms were fulfilled, both minority Muslim Adyghe and majority Orthodox Christian Russians – as well as all others – agreed that ‘freedom of religion’ was ‘fully implemented’ in the Republic.

When we look at the two issues related to the democratization of the state, ‘freedom of speech’ and ‘right to participate in political life’ they got the mark of ‘almost fully implemented’. In the in-depth interviews I was repeatedly told that ‘it is not like in Soviet times’. Under the Soviets people were afraid to talk even to their friends, especially if their ideas did not conform to official views. But even today people are not keen to answer questions by a foreigner unless a trusted local mediates.²⁹

‘Equal life chances for all citizens regardless of nationality’ is perceived by the respondents as ‘partly implemented’. As an outsider, I observed the support of Adyghe to other Adyghe, especially in bureaucratic institutions and in the villages. Adyghe see themselves as citizens of the RF, but this does not allay Russians’ fears of being pushed to an inferior position in the Republic.

As mentioned above, the concept of ‘support by people’ is rather new to the Republic since support has traditionally been provided by the state. Although in some places, especially in the villages, compact communities could be observed where people knew each other, most people, as part of urbanization and modernization, have to survive on their own. Thus, ‘support for those in need’ was given the marks of ‘partly implemented’ and ‘not implemented at all’ by the majority of the respondents.

The last concept, ‘just and fair distribution of wealth’ is seen as ‘not implemented at all’. The transition to market economy has been rapid and many elite members of the glasnost era used their positions to acquire economic power. In Adygheia, people are very uncomfortable with the opaqueness of the economy and the unfair distribution of wealth.

Table 4.1 Implementation of rights, freedoms and life chances

	1 Fully implemented		2 Partly implemented		3 Not implemented		Total	
	N	Per cent	N	Per cent	N	Per cent	N	Per cent
Freedom of religion	416	80.3	93	18.0	9	1.7	518	100
Right to political participation	185	36.2	266	52.1	60	11.7	511	100
Freedom of free speech	214	41.1	250	48.0	57	10.9	521	100
Equality of life chances regardless of origin	171	32.9	228	43.8	121	23.3	520	100
Support for those in need	13	2.5	288	55.6	217	41.9	518	100
Just and fair distribution of wealth	42	8.2	205	40.0	265	51.8	512	100

By territorial breakdown

Data have been examined on three levels: by territorial unit (*raions* and cities), by juxtaposing rural to urban areas and third by contrasting the city of Maikop with the rest of the country.

'Freedom of religion' was described as 'fully implemented' in all territories, differences among them being insignificant. Some differences can be observed, however, between urban and rural communities as well as between Maikop and the rest. In urban areas and in Maikop, 'religious freedom' is seen as a little less 'implemented'.

A significantly greater variance could be found in the replies on the questions related to 'freedom of speech'. In Maikop, for example, about one-quarter of the respondents believed it was 'not implemented at all', while in Adygeisk, and the Teuchezhskii and Shovgenovskii *raions*, no one answered to that effect, while three-quarters of the respondents in these two *raions* believed that 'freedom of speech' was 'fully implemented'. More than half of the respondents from urban communities said 'freedom of speech' was 'partly implemented', whereas more than half in rural communities replied that it was 'fully implemented'. The same pertains to Maikop versus other districts: 57.4 per cent 'partly implemented' in Maikop as opposed to 53.8 per cent 'fully implemented' in the rest of the country.

'Political participation' is perceived to be more 'implemented' by respondents from the Shovgenovskii *raion* and the city of Adygeisk than from other *raions*, more 'implemented' in urban communities than in rural areas and less 'implemented' in Maikop than in other parts of Adygheia

In the Teuchezhskii *raion*, 67.7 per cent of the respondents thought that all citizens had 'equal life chances regardless of their origin'. In the city of Maikop and in the Takhtamukaiskii *raion*, on the other hand, about one-third of the people responded that there was 'no equality in life chances'. Again, in rural areas, people displayed more optimism, with 46.8 per cent stating that this

Table 4.2 Territorial breakdown

		<i>Freedom of religion</i>	<i>Right to political participation</i>	<i>Freedom of free speech</i>	<i>Equality of life chances regardless of origin</i>	<i>Support for those in need</i>	<i>Just and fair distribution of wealth</i>
Maikop city	Fully I.	75.3%	27.4%	23.1%	17.4%	0.0%	5.1%
	Partly I.	21.9%	54.0%	57.4%	46.3%	45.8%	36.6%
	Not I.	2.8%	18.6%	19.4%	36.2%	54.2%	58.3%
Adigeisk city	Fully I.	72.7%	55.6%	40.0%	36.4%	0.0%	9.1%
	Partly I.	27.3%	44.4%	60.0%	54.5%	80.0%	45.5%
	Not I.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	9.1%	20.0%	45.5%
Maikopski raion	Fully I.	77.6%	36.4%	52.2%	35.8%	3.0%	11.9%
	Partly I.	19.4%	54.5%	40.3%	49.3%	67.2%	40.3%
	Not I.	3.0%	9.1%	7.5%	14.9%	29.9%	47.8%
Giaginski raion	Fully I.	93.9%	50.0%	51.5%	39.4%	0.0%	0.0%
	Partly I.	6.1%	46.9%	45.5%	51.5%	81.8%	54.8%
	Not I.	0.0%	3.1%	3.0%	9.1%	18.2%	45.2%
Tahta-mukay raion	Fully I.	71.2%	37.5%	34.6%	34.7%	1.9%	8.3%
	Partly I.	26.9%	60.4%	61.5%	36.7%	51.9%	31.3%
	Not I.	1.9%	2.1%	3.8%	28.6%	46.2%	60.4%
Koshable raion	Fully I.	88.9%	29.1%	43.6%	49.1%	7.3%	18.2%
	Partly I.	11.1%	60.0%	45.5%	34.5%	50.9%	38.2%
	Not I.	0.0%	10.9%	10.9%	16.4%	41.8%	43.6%
Tevchjski raion	Fully I.	87.1%	51.6%	83.9%	67.7%	12.9%	13.3%
	Partly I.	12.9%	45.2%	16.1%	25.8%	51.6%	43.3%
	Not I.	0.0%	3.2%	0.0%	6.5%	35.5%	43.3%
Krasnoga vardeysko raion	Fully I.	90.9%	50.0%	56.5%	45.5%	0.0%	0.0%
	Partly I.	9.1%	36.4%	39.1%	50.0%	77.3%	72.7%
	Not I.	0.0%	13.6%	4.3%	4.5%	22.7%	27.3%
Shovgenovskii raion	Fully I.	93.9%	60.6%	79.4%	50.0%	5.9%	12.5%
	Partly I.	6.1%	33.3%	20.6%	44.1%	64.7%	37.5%
	Not I.	0.0%	6.1%	0.0%	5.9%	29.4%	50.0%
Region df = 16	Chi-square	21.808	40.766	95.649	76.862	59.611	32.540
	Sig.	0.150	0.001*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.008*
URBAN	Fully I.	74.7%	31.3%	29.5%	21.8%	1.1%	8.1%
	Partly I.	22.9%	53.5%	54.5%	45.0%	51.2%	34.7%
	Not I.	2.4%	15.1%	16.0%	33.2%	47.7%	57.2%
RURAL	Fully I.	87.4%	42.3%	55.4%	46.8%	4.3%	8.4%
	Partly I.	11.7%	50.2%	39.9%	42.4%	60.9%	46.7%
	Not I.	0.9%	7.5%	4.7%	10.8%	34.8%	44.9%
Zone df = 2	Chi-square	13.276	10.736	41.579	52.174	12.673	8.196
	Sig.	0.001*	0.005*	0.000*	0.000*	0.002*	0.017*
Maikop	Fully I.	75.3%	27.4%	23.1%	17.4%	0.0%	5.1%
	Partly I.	21.9%	54.0%	57.4%	46.3%	45.8%	36.6%
	Not I.	2.8%	18.6%	19.4%	36.2%	54.2%	58.3%
Others	Fully I.	83.8%	42.6%	53.8%	44.0%	4.3%	10.5%
	Partly I.	15.2%	50.7%	41.3%	42.1%	62.5%	42.6%

Continued

Table 4.2 Continued

		<i>Freedom of religion</i>	<i>Right to political participation</i>	<i>Freedom of free speech</i>	<i>Equality of life chances regardless of origin</i>	<i>Support for those in need</i>	<i>Just and fair distribution of wealth</i>
	Not I.	1.0%	6.8%	4.9%	13.9%	33.2%	47.0%
NNP df = 2	Chi-square	6.598	23.016	60.084	54.921	28.654	8.648
	Sig.	0.037*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.013*

Note

* The Chi-square statistic is significant at the 0.05 level.

chance was 'fully implemented' and 42.4 per cent 'partly implemented'. Among urban respondents only one-fifth considered it is 'fully implemented'.

On the question of support, 12.9 per cent of the respondents from the Teuchezhskii *raion* said there was 'high support for those in need' whereas in four other districts nobody provided a similar response. In Adygeisk and the Krasnogavardeiskii and Giaginskii *raions* about four-fifths of the respondents stated that it was 'only partly implemented'. According to half of urban respondents 'support to those in need' was 'not implemented at all' and almost the same percentage said that it was 'partly implemented'. In rural areas this ratio was 34.8 per cent and 60.9 per cent respectively. A similar difference could be observed between Maikop (54.2 per cent 'not implemented' and 45.8 per cent 'partly implemented') and the rest of the country (62.5 per cent 'partly implemented', 33.2 per cent 'not implemented at all').

Although some people in Koshekhabskii (18.2 per cent), Teuchezhskii (13.3 per cent) and Shovgenovskii (12.5 per cent) *raions* believed that wealth was distributed 'fairly', nobody described it so in the Giaginskii and Krasnogavardeiskii *raions*. More than 60 per cent of the respondents in the Takhtamakaiskii *raion* said there was no 'fairness in the distribution of wealth'. In urban areas 57.2 per cent and in Maikop 58.3 per cent believed that 'just distribution of wealth' was 'not implemented at all'. In rural areas this percentage was a bit smaller.

We can say thus that people living in Maikop were less optimistic in their belief that the above six principles were indeed being implemented than people living in rural areas.

By demographic breakdown

In this category data were examined along the following divisions: gender, age groups (all respondents being grouped into three categories: those below the age of 29, those between 30 and 59 and those above 60), nationality and marital status.

An overwhelming majority of the respondents, irrespective of sex, age group, nationality and marital status, stated that 'freedom of religion' was fully implemented in the Republic. (That is, 76.5 per cent of the males, 81.6 per cent of the

females; 84.6 per cent of those over 50, 79.2 per cent of those between 30 and 49 and 79.3 per cent those below 29; 81.1 per cent of the Adyghe and 81.2 per cent of the Russians (though only 68.6 per cent among members of other nationalities); 81.9 per cent of the married and 82.4 per cent of the unmarried.)

With regard to 'freedom of speech' the only significant difference was along the nationality determinant: whereas half of the Adyghe responded that 'freedom of speech' was 'fully implemented' only a third of the Russians did so. The percentage of those seeing 'freedom of speech' as partly implemented was 41.3 per cent among the Adyghe and 54.1 per cent among the Russians. (Among members of other nationalities 47.2 per cent indicated that it was 'partly implemented' and 16.7 per cent as 'not implemented at all'.)

As for 'political participation', the only difference runs along age: nearly half of those above 50, (47.4 per cent) responded that it was 'fully implemented' and 43 per cent that it was 'at least partly implemented'. Among those below 29 only 24.8 per cent thought it was 'fully implemented' while about 62.1 per cent said it was only 'partly implemented'. Among those between 30 and 49, half replied that it was 'partly implemented; while 38.3 per cent replied that it was 'fully implemented'.

With respect to 'life chances' three of the categories discussed here produced split results. Age was one of them. As many as 42.9 per cent of those above 50 said 'equality of life chances among different nationalities' existed as opposed to only 19.5 per cent among those below 29. More than half of the latter assured that equality was 'partly implemented, and so did some 42 per cent of those between 30 and 49. National belonging determined the results as well: 33.6 per cent of the Russians and 31.4 per cent of members of other nationalities reported that they did not enjoy 'equal life chances' as opposed to only 10.5 per cent among the Adyghe. Among the Adyghe 48 per cent believed that 'equal life chances for all regardless of origin' were 'fully implemented' as compared to only one-fifth of the Russians and members of other nationalities. Finally, also marital status influenced the results. While 40.4 per cent of the married respondents felt that equal life chances existed for members of all nationalities, only 19.6 per cent of the unmarried believed so. As many as 29 per cent of the unmarried stated that it was 'not implemented at all'.

Regarding to the perception of 'support for those in need' the categories had no influence. In all of them more than half of the people believed that 'support' was only 'partly implemented' and many felt that it was 'not implemented at all'.

Responses on 'justice in wealth distribution' were strongly related to age group and nationality. People above 50 were less optimistic with regard to 'fairness in the distribution of wealth' – 57.9 per cent of them – whereas 54.1 per cent of those between 30 and 49 and 43.6 per cent of those below 29 said that 'justice in wealth distribution' was not implemented. Only 14.7 per cent of those below 29, 3.9 per cent of those between 30 and 49 and 7.9 per cent of those above 50 considered it fully implemented. A majority among the Russians and members of other nationalities (60.7 per cent and 54.3 per cent respectively) believed that 'just and fair distribution of wealth' was 'not implemented' while

Table 4.3 Demographic breakdown

		<i>Freedom of religion</i>	<i>Right to political participation</i>	<i>Freedom of free speech</i>	<i>Equality of life chances regardless of origin</i>	<i>Support for those in need</i>	<i>Just and fair distribution of wealth</i>
Male	Fully I.	76.5%	39.1%	38.6%	29.8%	0.8%	6.1%
	Partly I.	22.0%	54.1%	52.3%	42.7%	55.3%	39.4%
	Not I.	1.5%	6.8%	9.1%	27.5%	43.9%	54.5%
Female	Fully I.	81.6%	34.9%	41.5%	33.4%	2.6%	8.8%
	Partly I.	16.5%	51.6%	47.0%	44.6%	56.1%	40.5%
	Not I.	1.8%	13.4%	11.5%	21.9%	41.3%	50.7%
Sex df = 2	Chi-Square	1.991	4.323	1.283	1.767	1.772	1.222
	Sig.	0.369	0.115	0.526	0.413	0.412	0.543
Over 50 years old	Fully I.	84.6%	47.4%	47.9%	42.9%	3.4%	7.9%
	Partly I.	15.4%	43.0%	43.0%	37.8%	50.0%	34.2%
	Not I.	0.0%	9.6%	9.1%	19.3%	46.6%	57.9%
30–49 years old	Fully I.	79.2%	38.3%	39.7%	37.7%	1.7%	3.9%
	Partly I.	19.9%	49.6%	48.3%	42.0%	62.1%	41.9%
	Not I.	0.9%	12.2%	12.1%	20.3%	36.2%	54.1%
Younger than 29 years old	Fully I.	79.3%	24.8%	38.9%	19.5%	3.1%	14.7%
	Partly I.	17.1%	62.1%	51.9%	50.6%	51.2%	41.7%
	Not I.	3.7%	13.0%	9.3%	29.9%	45.7%	43.6%
Age df = 4	Chi-Square	8.475	15.853	3.813	21.659	7.063	17.884
	Sig.	0.076	0.003*	0.432	0.000*	0.133	0.001*
Adyghe	Fully I.	81.1%	41.6%	50.9%	48.0%	3.9%	11.6%
	Partly I.	17.1%	49.6%	41.3%	41.5%	56.3%	47.1%
	Not I.	1.8%	8.8%	7.8%	10.5%	39.7%	41.3%
Russian	Fully I.	81.2%	31.5%	32.9%	21.1%	0.8%	6.0%
	Partly I.	17.6%	54.2%	54.1%	45.3%	55.3%	33.3%
	Not I.	1.2%	14.3%	12.9%	33.6%	43.9%	60.7%
Other	Fully I.	68.6%	35.3%	36.1%	20.0%	5.6%	2.9%
	Partly I.	25.7%	52.9%	47.2%	48.6%	52.8%	42.9%
	Not I.	5.7%	11.8%	16.7%	31.4%	41.7%	54.3%
Nationality df = 4	Chi-Square	5.571	6.922	17.888	57.993	6.719	20.241
	Sig.	0.234	0.140	0.001*	0.000*	0.151	0.000*
Married	Fully I.	81.9%	40.1%	42.1%	40.4%	3.6%	7.0%
	Partly I.	17.0%	48.0%	48.9%	41.5%	55.2%	41.1%
	Not I.	1.1%	11.9%	9.0%	18.1%	41.2%	51.9%
Not married	Fully I.	82.4%	26.3%	40.9%	19.6%	0.7%	11.8%
	Partly I.	15.4%	62.8%	50.4%	51.4%	54.0%	39.7%
	Not I.	2.2%	10.9%	8.8%	29.0%	45.3%	48.5%
Divorced, or separated, and other	Fully I.	72.8%	37.9%	38.8%	31.4%	2.0%	6.8%
	Partly I.	24.3%	49.5%	42.7%	38.2%	58.4%	35.9%
	Not I.	2.9%	12.6%	18.4%	30.4%	39.6%	57.3%
Marital status df=4	Chi-Square	5.457	9.134	7.940	22.500	3.903	4.154
	Sig.	0.244	0.058	0.094	0.000*	0.419	0.386

Note

* The Chi-square statistic is significant at the 0.05 level.

about half of the Adyghe stated it was ‘partly implemented’. A small minority believed it was ‘fully implemented’ – 11.6 per cent among the Adyghe, 6 per cent among the Russians and 2.9 per cent among members of other nationalities.

The few significant differences are connected to the nationality and age group of the respondents. Russians were less comfortable about ‘freedom of speech’ and those below the age of 29 felt that they were left out of politics. The latter group was more optimistic about ‘justice in wealth distribution’ but less so about ‘equality of life chances’. As a rule, Adyghe perceive ‘equality of life chances’ as more implemented than did Russians and members of other nationalities.

By economic breakdown

The four variables discussed here are employment status, income sufficiency,³⁰ income³¹ and social class.

Economy related variables did not demonstrate significant differences in the evaluation of the three freedoms and rights. For example, in all categories over three-quarters of the respondents stated that ‘freedom of religion’ was ‘fully implemented’. (Among high-income groups this reached a high of 89.3 per cent.) The same can be said about ‘support for the needy’.

Economy related variables did not demonstrate significant differences in the evaluation of the three freedoms and rights except for the relation between income and freedom of speech. For example, in all categories over three-quarters of the respondents stated that ‘freedom of religion’ was ‘fully implemented’. Freedom of speech was seen as ‘fully implemented’ by half of the respondents with incomes below half median, as ‘partly implemented’ by 45.7 per cent and 55.1 per cent of the respondents with incomes below median and between median and two median respectively. Among the respondents with highest incomes, 73.3 per cent regarded the ‘freedom of speech’ as ‘partly implemented’.

With regard to ‘support for those in need’ respondents with lowest and highest incomes said it was not implemented. Three-fifths of the respondents with incomes between half median and three medians regarded it as partially implemented.

Also the responses to questions related to the ‘distribution of wealth’ show a significant correlation with employment and income sufficiency. Thus, 54.4 per cent of respondents employed full time did not believe wealth was distributed fairly and 39.5 per cent said it was only ‘partly implemented’. Half of those employed irregularly and more than half of the unemployed believed that ‘fair distribution of wealth’ was not implemented. The figures of those regarding the issue as ‘only partly implemented’ were 41.3 per cent of those employed part time and 45.6 per cent of those employed irregularly.

More than half of the respondents who claimed ‘totally insufficient income’ regarded the ‘distribution of wealth’ as unequal and 37.6 per cent as ‘partly implemented’. This figure is a bit higher among respondents who stated that their income was ‘insufficient for most of their needs’. So did about half of the respondents with a ‘fairly sufficient income’. On the other hand, half of those

Table 4.4 Economic breakdown 1

		<i>Freedom of religion</i>	<i>Right to political participation</i>	<i>Freedom of free speech</i>	<i>Equality of life chances regardless of origin</i>	<i>Support for those in need</i>	<i>Just and fair distribution of wealth</i>
Full time	Fully I.	83.2%	40.3%	38.4%	36.5%	2.6%	6.2%
	Partly I.	14.8%	44.4%	45.5%	41.6%	60.5%	39.5%
	Not I.	2.0%	15.3%	16.2%	21.8%	36.9%	54.4%
Part time	Fully I.	73.5%	36.2%	39.6%	30.6%	4.2%	15.2%
	Partly I.	24.5%	55.3%	50.0%	51.0%	52.1%	41.3%
	Not I.	2.0%	8.5%	10.4%	18.4%	43.8%	43.5%
Irregular	Fully I.	77.9%	31.3%	37.4%	27.5%	2.1%	4.4%
	Partly I.	20.7%	59.0%	52.5%	47.8%	57.9%	45.6%
	Not I.	1.4%	9.7%	10.1%	24.6%	40.0%	50.0%
Do not work	Fully I.	81.1%	33.7%	50.5%	36.6%	2.2%	15.1%
	Partly I.	17.8%	56.5%	45.2%	40.9%	48.9%	32.3%
	Not I.	1.1%	9.8%	4.3%	22.6%	48.9%	52.7%
Employment	Chi-Square	3.832	9.085	12.142	4.550	4.662	14.774
	Sig.	0.699	0.169	0.059	0.603	0.588	0.022*
Lower	Fully I.	76.6%	41.3%	33.8%	30.4%	3.8%	5.4%
	Partly I.	22.1%	41.3%	51.3%	36.7%	44.9%	33.8%
	Not I.	1.3%	17.3%	15.0%	32.9%	51.3%	60.8%
Working	Fully I.	82.9%	34.7%	42.7%	30.1%	.8%	7.3%
	Partly I.	15.4%	54.0%	45.2%	43.9%	54.0%	30.9%
	Not I.	1.6%	11.3%	12.1%	26.0%	45.2%	61.8%
Middle	Fully I.	79.5%	35.3%	41.3%	33.0%	2.7%	7.3%
	Partly I.	19.4%	54.3%	49.2%	46.6%	59.4%	46.9%
	Not I.	1.1%	10.5%	9.5%	20.5%	37.9%	45.8%
Upper middle to upper	Fully I.	80.6%	22.9%	35.3%	40.0%	5.6%	13.9%
	Partly I.	11.1%	62.9%	50.0%	37.1%	52.8%	38.9%
	Not I.	8.3%	14.3%	14.7%	22.9%	41.7%	47.2%
Social class	Chi-Square	11.876	7.495	3.923	6.919	8.527	14.181
	class df=6 Sig.	0.065	0.277	0.687	0.328	0.202	0.028*

Note

* The Chi-square statistic is significant at the 0.05 level.

who were 'more or less satisfied with their income' believed it was 'partly implemented' and only 30 per cent said it was 'not implemented'.

By political breakdown

Two variables of political participation were examined in the survey: voting behaviour³² and membership in a political party or organization. Three-quarters of the respondents had voted in the elections of 2002 and 57 people (10.7 per cent) were members of political parties or organizations. Of these, membership in a political party or organization did not manifest significant correlations with answers.

Table 4.5 Economic breakdown 2

		<i>Freedom of religion</i>	<i>Right to political participation</i>	<i>Freedom of free speech</i>	<i>Equality of life chances regardless of origin</i>	<i>Support for those in need</i>	<i>Just and fair distribution of wealth</i>
1 – Our income is insufficient – we live on minimum	Fully I.	82.9%	34.5%	39.5%	36.7%	2.9%	5.4%
	Partly I.	14.8%	48.1%	49.5%	39.0%	51.0%	37.6%
	Not I.	2.4%	17.5%	11.0%	24.3%	46.2%	57.1%
2 – Our income is insufficient for most of our needs	Fully I.	79.8%	33.3%	35.4%	22.4%	1.0%	7.2%
	Partly I.	19.2%	60.4%	49.5%	51.0%	54.2%	30.9%
	Not I.	1.0%	6.3%	15.2%	26.5%	44.8%	61.9%
3 – Our income is sufficient on average	Fully I.	76.4%	39.6%	45.6%	34.5%	3.4%	8.3%
	Partly I.	22.2%	50.7%	43.5%	43.9%	60.5%	49.0%
	Not I.	1.4%	9.7%	10.9%	21.6%	36.1%	42.8%
4 – Our income is sufficient for most of our needs	Fully I.	83.3%	43.3%	46.7%	33.3%	3.3%	20.0%
	Partly I.	13.3%	46.7%	50.0%	50.0%	66.7%	50.0%
	Not I.	3.3%	10.0%	3.3%	16.7%	30.0%	30.0%
5 – Our income is sufficient	Fully I.	78.6%	28.6%	35.7%	33.3%	0.0%	17.9%
	Partly I.	21.4%	67.9%	57.1%	48.1%	57.1%	35.7%
	Not I.	0.0%	3.6%	7.1%	18.5%	42.9%	46.4%
Income Suff. df = 8	Chi-Square Sig.	5.569 0.695	15.441 0.051	6.821 0.556	8.433 0.392	7.649 0.468	24.768 0.002*
Below half median	Fully I.	80.0%	45.6%	51.8%	39.3%	0.0%	7.1%
	Partly I.	18.2%	38.6%	33.9%	28.6%	35.7%	33.9%
	Not I.	1.8%	15.8%	14.3%	32.1%	64.3%	58.9%
Between half median and median	Fully I.	80.2%	37.9%	43.8%	32.7%	2.5%	7.0%
	Partly I.	19.1%	45.8%	45.7%	47.5%	62.3%	40.5%
	Not I.	0.6%	16.3%	10.5%	19.8%	35.2%	52.5%
Between median and two medians	Fully I.	82.2%	34.4%	34.2%	34.6%	2.5%	6.4%
	Partly I.	15.3%	57.1%	55.1%	42.3%	55.4%	40.4%
	Not I.	2.5%	8.4%	10.8%	23.1%	42.0%	53.2%
Between two and three medians	Fully I.	82.1%	40.0%	42.5%	22.5%	2.5%	10.0%
	Partly I.	15.4%	52.5%	45.0%	52.5%	60.0%	45.0%
	Not I.	2.6%	7.5%	12.5%	25.0%	37.5%	45.0%
Above three medians	Fully I.	66.7%	26.7%	6.7%	26.7%	0.0%	13.3%
	Partly I.	33.3%	73.3%	73.3%	53.3%	46.7%	33.3%
	Not I.	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	20.0%	53.3%	53.3%
Income df = 8	Chi-Square Sig.	5.604 0.692	14.356 0.073	15.810 0.045*	9.763 0.282	16.329 0.038*	3.156 0.924

Note

* The Chi-square statistic is significant at the 0.05 level.

The only variables with diverse answers are 'equality of life chances', 'support for those in need' and 'just and fair distribution of wealth'. As it seems, the differences are concurrent with voting behaviour. Thus, 25.2 per cent of the respondents who did not vote in the 2002 elections perceived 'equal life chances' as fully implemented, while among those who voted it was 35.8 per cent. Those who ticked 'not implemented at all' were one-quarter and one-fifth respectively. In comparison, 56.3 per cent of those with no right to vote said 'equal life chances' did not exist in Adygheia. 'Fair distribution of wealth' is perceived as 'not implemented' by 64 per cent of respondents who did not vote, and by 47.4 per cent of those who did. The percentages for 'partly implemented' were 28.8 per cent and 44.3 per cent respectively.

In short, political participation is not very prominent among the respondents. Although three-quarters voted in the 2002 elections, only some are active members of political organizations or parties. Even if the perception of rights

Table 4.6 Political breakdown

		<i>Freedom of religion</i>	<i>Right to political participation</i>	<i>Freedom of free speech</i>	<i>Equality of life chances regardless of origin</i>	<i>Support for those in need</i>	<i>Just and fair distribution of wealth</i>
Did not vote	Fully I.	80.2%	33.0%	34.2%	25.2%	0.0%	7.2%
	Partly I.	18.9%	58.7%	53.2%	48.6%	51.8%	28.8%
	Not I.	0.9%	8.3%	12.6%	26.1%	48.2%	64.0%
Voted	Fully I.	80.5%	37.9%	42.9%	35.8%	3.1%	8.3%
	Partly I.	17.7%	49.6%	46.4%	43.2%	57.7%	44.3%
	Not I.	1.8%	12.5%	10.7%	21.0%	39.2%	47.4%
Not have a right to vote	Fully I.	81.3%	18.8%	43.8%	12.5%	6.3%	12.5%
	Partly I.	12.5%	62.5%	50.0%	31.3%	31.3%	18.8%
	Not I.	6.3%	18.8%	6.3%	56.3%	62.5%	68.8%
Voting behaviour df = 4	Chi-Square	2.655	5.633	3.047	15.008	9.754	13.008
	Sig.	0.617	0.228	0.550	0.005*	0.045*	0.011*
Not a member of political org.	Fully I.	80.9%	35.4%	41.5%	32.9%	2.6%	8.2%
	Partly I.	17.4%	52.2%	47.2%	43.4%	54.5%	40.6%
	Not I.	1.8%	12.4%	11.4%	23.7%	42.9%	51.2%
Member of a political org.	Fully I.	78.9%	41.8%	36.8%	33.9%	1.8%	8.9%
	Partly I.	19.3%	50.9%	54.4%	46.4%	64.9%	35.7%
	Not I.	1.8%	7.3%	8.8%	19.6%	33.3%	55.4%
Political organization membership df = 2	Chi-Square	0.131	1.661	1.124	0.485	2.240	0.500
	Sig.	0.936	0.436	0.570	0.785	0.326	0.779

Note

* The Chi-square statistic is significant at the 0.05 level.

and freedoms did not exhibit significant differences according to the variables, people who voted in 2002 were more optimistic about ‘equality of life chances’ and ‘equality of wealth distribution’.

Conclusion

In this chapter I tried to illustrate the current situation in the Republic of Adygheia by analysing the perceptions of ordinary people of the above concepts. Further study is surely needed on the questions of belonging, understanding of justice and the concept of equality among the people living in Adygheia as well as among other Circassian communities, namely in Kabardino-Balkaria and Karachai-Cherkesia, in order to understand the distinctiveness of this culture.

The six variants related to ‘freedom’ and ‘life chances’ have not been chosen randomly. These are important concepts that characterize the satisfaction of people with their society.

The three concepts of ‘freedom’ are closely related to where a person places oneself in the society. ‘Freedom of faith’ is crucial for a person not to feel isolated in his/her society. If one does not feel ‘represented in politics’ one considers oneself excluded from his/her society. ‘Freedom of speech’ is also fundamental, because without it one would feel barred from society. The above study shows that in Adygheia ordinary people feel freedom in their hearts and minds, in their mentality and in their words. They perceive the three basic civil and political rights as almost fully realized.

Like the concepts of ‘freedom’ the concepts of ‘equality’ – or as they are named in this chapter ‘life chances’ – are important for understanding an individual’s intensity of the feeling of belonging to a society. Considering oneself ‘equal’ in society is vital for a person to feel strong enough to cope with life. To feel that the economy provides one with what one deserves, results in the feeling of being appreciated. Being part of society means to deem oneself secure, that one will not be lonely if in need. In Adygheia the feeling of justice, security and equality is not perceived as realized.

Russian media and Russian nationalists frequently claim that the Adyghe, although a minority of the population in the Republic of Adygheia, are positively discriminated by the state.³³ To the contrary, I observed that the Adyghe see themselves first as Russian citizens, and they do not detach themselves from the Russian population of the RF in general, and of the Republic in particular. Still, the survey shows that members of other nationalities – mainly ethnic Russians – feel discriminated against.

The people’s expectations from the new political system – ‘democracy’ – are more or less implemented, but their expectations from the new economic system – ‘market economy’ – are not. The concepts expected to develop as part of it, such as solidarity among people, are still non-existent and people, in inertia from Soviet times, expect the state to supply them with everything they need.

I would like to argue, therefore, that the people of Adygheia live in a

democratic society but they will not be satisfied with their society until the concepts of belonging and solidarity mature and the economy expands and serves equally and fairly all the citizens.

Notes

- 1 The project, of which this survey was part, is entitled 'Life Standard in the Post-Soviet Context: The case of the Republic of Adygheia'. It was supported by the Scientific and Technical Research Council of Turkey and the Middle East Technical University Research Fund. I am thankful to Baj Kaya Şenvar, Yedic Memet Uzun, Jade Anzavur Muratov (the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Adygheia) and Jade Zuriet Anzavurova, without whom I would not have been able to do this field research. I would also like to thank to Professor Yusuf Ziya Özcan and all of my friends who read earlier drafts of this article, for their comments and suggestions.
- 2 A. Sh. Buzarov, T. P. Varshanina, N. V. Kalsaian, A. V. Krasnopolskii, N. V. Krasnolskaia, D. A. Kuasheva, T. N. Melnikova, P. A. Sipesivtsev, A. E. Hachegogu and E. A. Shebzuhova, *Geografiia Respubliki Adygheia* Maikop: Adygheiskoe respublikanskoe knizhnoe izdetel'stvo, 2001, p. 5.
- 3 Calculated from data supplied by the Committee of State Statistics of the Republic of Adygheia.
- 4 'Adyghe', from Wikipedia the free encyclopedia, available online at: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adyghe.
- 5 For differing definitions of the Adyghe and the groups included under this term see Adolf Berje, *Kafkasyalı Dağlı Kavimlerin Kısa Tasviri* [A Short Description of the Caucasian Mountaineers], (Ankara: Kafkas Derneği Yayınları, 1999), p. 33 (originally published in Russian in 1858); Ufuk Tavkul, 'Kafkasya'nın Otokton (Yerli) Halkları Meselesi ve Kafkasya Halklarında Etnik Köken Arayışları [The Problem of the Autochthonous Peoples of Caucasus and the Search for the Ethnic Origin of the Caucasian Peoples], *Kırım Dergisi*, 1998, No. 6 (24), pp. 36–39; Hayri Ersoy and Aysun Kamacı, *Çerkes Tarihi* [The History of the Circassians], İstanbul: Tömzamanlar Yayıncılık, 1992, pp. 15–17; Suzanne Goldenberg, *The Pride of Small Nations*, London and New Jersey: 2ed Books, 1994, p. 3. The people of Adygheia say that Circassians and Adyghe are synonyms and include under these names the Cherkes, the Kabartay and the Ubih, but not the Abhaz, whom they regard as close relatives of Circassians.
- 6 Hayri Ersoy and Aysun Kamacı, *Çerkes Tarihi*, [Circassian History], İstanbul, 1992, p. 96.
- 7 I have been to a religious Adyghe wedding ceremony in a mosque. It was more like a secular celebration with many of the women not wearing headscarves and some Russians attending the ceremony as well.
- 8 *Geografiia Respubliki Adygheia*, p. 7.
- 9 Zeynel A. Besleney, 'Policy of Positive Discrimination for the Titular Nation and its Impact on the Local Politics in the Republic of Adygheia of the Russian Federation', available online at: www.circassianworld.com/Adygheia.html (accessed 6 June 2007).
- 10 The United Nations, 'Universal Declaration of Human Rights', available online at: www.un.org/Overview/rights.html (retrieved on 22 December 2005).
- 11 For the theory of third wave of democratization see Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991.
- 12 Delhey and Tobsch, summarize the political theory on the transition to democracy as consisting of two steps, first is transition to democratic rule and second consolidation. Jan Delhey and Verena Tobsch, *Understanding Regime Support in New Democracies:*

Does Politics Really Matter More than Economics? Berlin, 2000, available online at: skylla.wz-berlin.de/pdf/2000/iii00-403.pdf. Mason argues that ‘there is increasing evidence, both survey-based and qualitative, that suggests that fairness evaluations [popular assessment of the fairness of political and economic systems], are a more powerful determinant of support for the new systems than either egocentric or sociotropic assessments.’ David S. Mason, ‘Fairness matters: equity and the transition to democracy’, *World Policy Journal*, Winter 2003/04, Vol. XX, No. 4, pp. 48–56. I combine both approaches with the question ‘how can a system that is neither understood nor supported by ordinary people consolidate?’ Thus, by looking at the ordinary people’s perception of the situation, we can comprehend the real level of democratization in a country.

- 13 Abraham Shara, ‘The Perpetuation of Legal Nihilism and the Assertion of Personal Freedoms in the Post-Soviet Space’, available online at: www.wcl.american.edu/hrbrief/v7i2/perpetuation.htm, (p. 1).
- 14 During my first in-depth interview in Adygheia, I struggled to explain the difference between the ‘existence’ of a right in the law and its ‘implementation’.
- 15 The Constitution was confirmed on 14 May 1995. Since then some amendments were added to it.
- 16 See: www.un.org/Overview/rights.html.
- 17 Section 1, Chapter 2, Article 28 of the Russian Constitution, available online at: www.friends-partners.org/oldfriends/constitution/russian-const-ch2.html.
- 18 Article 27 (1) – quoted from Fahri Huvaj, *Adige Cumhuriyeti Yasaları* [The Laws of the Republic of Adygheia], Ankara, Adige Yayınları, 2000, p. 28.
- 19 US Department of State, ‘International Religious Freedom Report 2003, Russia’, available online at: www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2003/24430.htm.
- 20 See: www.un.org/Overview/rights.html.
- 21 *Adige Cumhuriyeti Yasaları*, Article 27 (2), p. 28.
- 22 *Adige Cumhuriyeti Yasaları*, Article 27 (4), p. 28.
- 23 ‘Freedom House Country Report, Russia’ (2005), available online at: www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=47&nit=366&year=2005.
- 24 *Adige Cumhuriyeti Yasaları*, Article 30, p. 29.
- 25 See: www.un.org/Overview/rights.html.
- 26 Hasan Kanbolat and Suat Kınıklioğlu, ‘The Adygeya Republic: A Litmus Test Of Russian Federalism?’ (2002) *Central Asia–Caucasus Analyst*, available online at: www.cacianalyst.org/view_article.php?articleid=1191&SMSESSION=NO (p. 1).
- 27 Delhey and Tobsch, *Understanding Regime Support*, p. 22.
- 28 Besler, ‘Policy of Positive Discrimination’, p. 3.
- 29 Ethnic Russians in particular were less likely to speak with a foreigner or even a local stranger. Adyghe would answer as part of their cultural tradition (the *Adyghe Kh’abze*). On the other hand, they would usually say they did not have time or that they did not answer questions in principle.
- 30 The sufficiency of the income for a person and a household to survive and satisfy basic needs.
- 31 Income is the stated household income. In the analysis it is divided into five groups taking half the median as the cut-off point. Median household income of the sample is 7,000 Rubles (about US\$250).
- 32 The question was ‘did you vote in the last elections?’. The last elections in Adygheia were in 2002.
- 33 See Besler ‘Policy of Positive Discrimination’ and Kanbolat and Kınıklioğlu, ‘The Adygeya Republic’ for arguments on this issue.