

# **Baseline Study on Migration in Azerbaijan**

**Study developed within the framework of the EU-  
funded Support to the Implementation of the Mobility  
Partnership with Azerbaijan (MOBILAZE) project**





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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Azerbaijan's migration policy framework has seen major developments in recent years, including through the consolidation of migration-relevant legislation in the Migration Code. Particularly, close cooperation with UNHCR on asylum status determination is resulting in overall recognition rates comparable to those in EU countries (for some groups).

Azerbaijan continues to host a large number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) due to the ongoing conflict with Armenia. Official statistics provided by the State Committee for Refugees and IDPs put the number of IDPs at 789,000, while UNHCR refers to around 613,000 IDPs as of 2016. A further 68,000 persons have been internally displaced since 2009 due to natural disasters. Refugee inflows from other countries have increased but remain low compared to countries in the region.

A growing number of (short-term) migrants come to Azerbaijan – 48,500 temporary residence permits were issued in 2016 and 54,000 in 2015, mostly for citizens of Turkey, the Russian Federation and Georgia. Permanent residence permits may only be issued after at least two years of residence. More than 3,200 of these permits were issued in 2016.

In general, Europe and the EU-28 are increasingly becoming attractive destinations for migrants from Azerbaijan – at least 42,000 Azerbaijanis currently live in the EU, although the Russian Federation remains both the main country of destination and origin (of immigrants and returning migrants). Based on data compiled for this report, total net emigration from Azerbaijan is still negative. Among the post-Soviet countries, Azerbaijan has had one of the highest emigration rates – but with a decreasing trend since the 1990s.

The sizable number of Azerbaijani emigrants abroad (1.1 million) points to further potential for deepened transnational ties, economic and social, which could prove beneficial for Azerbaijan's economic recovery and stabilisation during the coming years.

Remittance inflows to Azerbaijan peaked in 2012 and showed a sharp decrease in 2015 and 2016, partly due to the devaluation of the Manat against the US dollar. Similarly, remittance outflows peaked in 2012 – and have exceeded inflows since that year (when compensation of employees are considered).

Attracting highly skilled migrants in order to stimulate the economy is currently a major policy objective. Against the background of the 2016 economic recession, and considerable short-term mobility but low migration levels for foreigners, further incentives to attract skilled migrants might need to be implemented, such as offering longer residence permits. Harnessing the social, educational and economic potential of Azerbaijani emigrants and diasporas abroad might also prove beneficial to gaining economic momentum.

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# LIST OF ACRONYMS

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<b>ARRA</b>	Azerbaijani Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Agency
<b>ASAN</b>	State Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan
<b>AZSTAT</b>	State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan
<b>BPM</b>	Balance of Payments Manual, International Monetary Fund
<b>CIS</b>	Commonwealth of Independent States
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organisation
<b>ENIGMMA</b>	Enhancing Georgia's Migration Management' project'
<b>ENP</b>	European Neighbourhood Policy
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>EU-28</b>	The current 28 EU Member States
<b>EUROSTAT</b>	Statistical Office of the European Union
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>GNI</b>	Gross National Income
<b>ICMPD</b>	International Centre for Migration Policy Development
<b>ICRC</b>	International Committee of the Red Cross
<b>IDP</b>	Internally Displaced Person
<b>IMF</b>	International Monetary Fund
<b>IOM</b>	International Organization for Migration
<b>UMIS</b>	Unified Migration Information System
<b>MFA</b>	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan
<b>MIA</b>	Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan
<b>MLSPP</b>	Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Population of the Republic of Azerbaijan
<b>MOBILAZE</b>	Support to the Implementation of the Mobility Partnership with Azerbaijan' project'
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>PCA</b>	Partnership and Cooperation Agreement
<b>PPP</b>	Purchasing Power Parity
<b>SMS</b>	State Migration Service of the Republic of Azerbaijan
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UN DESA</b>	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>UNFCCC</b>	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

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This report has been drafted within the framework of the EU-funded project ‘Support to the Implementation of the Mobility Partnership with Azerbaijan (MOBILAZE)’. The project is based on the main priority areas defined by the Mobility Partnership between the EU Member States and the Republic of Azerbaijan signed in 2013. The main objective of the project is to support the implementation of the Mobility Partnership between the EU and Azerbaijan with a specific focus on strengthening the capacity of the government to develop and implement the national migration policy. The project is being implemented by ICMPD together with nine co-implementing partner institutions from seven EU Member States, namely: Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland and Slovakia.

The project consists of the following five components:

- Component 1: Building of analytical capacities for informed migration policy making
- Component 2: Legal migration from and to Azerbaijan
- Component 3: Document security
- Component 4: Improvement of the asylum decision-making procedure
- Component 5: Return and reintegration

The specific objective of Component 1 is to improve the monitoring, analytical and forecasting capacities of the Government of Azerbaijan and migration policy development. In particular, the aim is to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the migration situation in Azerbaijan, support capacity building in the areas of data collection and analysis and migration research methods, and strengthen analytical and research capacities.

The main objective of this report is to provide a comprehensive overview of the migration situation in Azerbaijan based on existing data and information, and to discuss the results of existing empirical research on migration.

This report has been drafted and developed jointly by the ICMPD MOBILAZE team and Azerbaijani researchers involved in the project. The drafting process started during the one-month internship in summer 2016 at ICMPD of two representatives from Baku State University (from the Departments of Economics and International Law) and one representative from the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Population. Furthermore, consultation meetings were held with relevant stakeholders during a research mission to Baku in October 2016, and additional data were requested and analysed for the finalisation of the report.

Following a brief summary of the recent migration history of Azerbaijan (chapter 2), an overview of the current migration policy framework (chapter 3) and relations between the EU and Azerbaijan (chapter 4), immigration to Azerbaijan is discussed, in particular the resident immigrant population, acquisition of citizenship, residence permits, main types of current immigration (labour, education, asylum) and irregular migration (chapter 5).

Methodological challenges related to measuring emigration and net migration should be considered for a comprehensive perspective on migration dynamics (see chapter 6 on emigration). Economic and social developments are often closely linked to migration, both in terms of driving factors and

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impacts on sending and receiving countries (see chapter 7 on migration and development). Given the high relevance for Azerbaijan, the section on internal migration focuses on the situation of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) (chapter 8).

The final section (chapter 9) includes a summary overview of recommendations for policy and research/data analysis as well as suggestions for further improvements in accordance with each of the topics covered in this report.

## 2. OVERVIEW OF AZERBAIJAN'S RECENT MIGRATION HISTORY

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As a result of forced migration of Azerbaijanis since 1988, the war with Armenia since 1992 and subsequent forced displacement (Najafizadeh, 2013) Azerbaijan today is home to several hundred thousand IDPs.

In addition to Nagorno-Karabakh, the seven adjacent administrative regions of Kalbajar, Lachin, Qubadli, Jabrayil, Zangilan, Agdam and Fuzuli were also completely or partially occupied by Armenian forces (SMS, 2017a).

The UN Security Council passed four resolutions in 1993 (822, 853, 874 and 884) on the conflict between the Republics of Armenia and Azerbaijan, calling on parties to cease hostilities, reaffirming the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and calling for the withdrawal from occupied territories. Already in 1994, the OSCE Minsk Group was established to work towards a peaceful settlement of the conflict (OSCE, 2017).

The 2005 resolution of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (1416) also refers to the unresolved conflict and states that more than ten years after its onset, “considerable parts of the territory of Azerbaijan are still occupied by Armenian forces”. The resolution describes the ethnic hostilities and expulsions as similar to the concept of ethnic cleansing and reaffirms “the right of displaced persons from the area of conflict to return to their homes safely and with dignity”. Furthermore it urges all Council of Europe member and observer states to provide humanitarian aid to “the hundreds of thousands of people displaced as a consequence of the armed hostilities and the expulsion of ethnic Armenians from Azerbaijan and ethnic Azerbaijanis from Armenia”.

In 2008, following a flaring up of hostilities, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution (243) calling for the withdrawal of Armenian forces from occupied territories in Azerbaijan, with 39 votes in favour, 7 against and 100 abstentions.

The European Parliament in a 2010 resolution (OJ C 161E) explicitly referred to the several hundred thousand internally displaced persons and refugees who remained displaced, asserted their rights (including the right to return) and demanded the withdrawal of forces from all occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

Although often referred to as a frozen conflict, violence erupted again recently, in spring 2016, as well as in February and July 2017 (eurasianet.org, 2017a, b).

Despite this protracted conflict situation, Azerbaijan has been the only country in the South Caucasus exhibiting steady population growth since gaining its independence in 1991 (UN DESA, 2015a). Although population exchange and net emigration loss affected Azerbaijan as well, particularly during the years after independence, natural population growth has consistently outweighed the negative migration balance (AZSTAT, 2016a). Immigration and emigration were particularly high before and after 1990, but both rapidly declined in the mid-1990s (see table 1).

Also, before and after 1991, Azerbaijan was a destination country for Meskhetian Turks from Uzbekistan as well as Azerbaijani refugees from Armenia. These refugees were naturalised in

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1998 (see section 5.2.). Emigration mainly concerned ethnic minorities (Muradov, 2001). Notably, international migration – both emigration and immigration – has been strikingly low during recent years (but has been underestimated, see conclusion in chapter 9).

**Table 1: Population change in Azerbaijan, 1989-2017**

Year	Population (1 Jan)	Births	Deaths	Natural increase	Immigration	Emigration	Net migration
2017	9,810,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
2016	9,705,600	159,464	56,648	102,816	3,200	1,700	1,500
2015	9,593,000	166,210	54,697	111,513	2,700	1,600	1,100
2014	9,477,100	170,503	55,648	114,855	1,900	800	1,100
2013	9,356,500	172,671	54,383	118,288	3,100	800	2,300
2012	9,235,100	174,469	55,017	119,452	2,200	200	2,000
2011	9,111,100	176,072	53,762	122,310	2,200	500	1,700
2010	8,997,600	165,643	53,580	112,063	2,200	800	1,400
2009	8,897,000	152,139	52,514	99,625	2,300	1,400	900
2008	8,779,900	152,086	52,710	99,376	3,600	2,500	1,100
2007	8,666,100	151,963	53,655	98,308	2,000	3,100	-1,100
2006	8,553,100	148,946	52,248	96,698	2,200	2,600	-400
2005	8,447,400	141,901	51,962	89,939	2,000	2,900	-900
2004	8,349,100	131,609	49,568	82,041	2,400	2,800	-400
2003	8,269,200	113,467	49,001	64,466	2,500	3,800	-1,300
2002	8,191,400	110,715	46,522	64,193	1,200	4,300	-3,100
2001	8,114,300	110,356	45,284	65,072	2,600	7,300	-4,700
2000	8,032,800	116,994	46,701	70,293	4,400	9,900	-5,500
1999	7,953,400	117,539	46,295	71,244	4,800	9,100	-4,300
1998	7,876,700	123,996	46,299	77,697	5,400	10,500	-5,100
1997	7,799,800	132,052	46,962	85,090	7,500	15,700	-8,200
1996	7,726,200	129,247	48,242	81,005	5,800	13,200	-7,400
1995	7,643,500	143,315	50,828	92,487	6,200	16,000	-9,800
1994	7,549,600	159,761	54,921	104,840	8,600	19,600	-11,000
1993	7,440,000	174,618	52,809	121,809	16,300	28,500	-12,200
1992	7,324,100	181,364	51,258	130,106	35,700	49,900	-14,200
1991	7,218,500	190,353	44,659	145,694	66,300	106,400	-40,100
1990	7,131,900	182,989	42,819	140,170	84,300	137,900	-53,600
1989	7,021,200	181,631	44,016	137,615	-	-	-40,200

Data do not include Azerbaijani citizens immigrating. Temporary residence permits also not included.

- = no data available

Source: AZSTAT, 2016a, 2017a, b, c

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Azerbaijan's population grew by over six million, a more than four-fold increase (Muradov, 2001). Nearly 70% of the increase occurred between 1959 and 1999 when the population grew by over 900,000 each decade. This population growth has continued in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, with an increase of 1.8 million between 2000 and 2017 (+22%). For January 2017, the State Statistics Committee estimated the population of Azerbaijan at 9.8 million people, including the occupied territories<sup>1</sup> (AZSTAT, 2017b).

Population statistics in Azerbaijan are based on census data. Since regaining its independence, Azerbaijan has carried out two censuses, in 1999 and 2009. The next census round is envisaged for 2019. In between censuses, statistics on births, deaths, immigration and emigration are used to produce population estimates. Statistical information on migration is collected based on registration forms of persons arriving in and departing from Azerbaijan. For migration statistics, an immigrant is defined as a foreigner who enters the country for permanent stay, an emigrant is defined as a person who de-registers to leave the country for permanent residence (AZSTAT, 2016a).

**Migration statistics in Azerbaijan refer to immigrants as foreigners who enter the country for permanent stay (which is only granted after two years of temporary residence in the country).**

**Emigration statistics refer to persons who de-register to leave the country for permanent residence abroad.**

During the twentieth century, as a result of industrialisation, Azerbaijan experienced population inflows to urban areas, particularly in the eastern part of the country. The fundamental changes in the political, economic and social life of the country at the beginning of the 1990s sped up this process considerably. The movement of population from rural areas to developing cities has fostered urbanisation in Azerbaijan. The proportion of the urban population stood at 53% in 2017 (see table 2).

**Table 2: Urban and rural population in Azerbaijan, 1989-2017**

Population	1989	1999	2009	2017	1989	1999	2009	2017
	persons	persons	persons	persons	%	%	%	%
Urban	3,805,900	4,064,300	4,727,800	5,199,000	54.2	51.1	53.1	53.0
Rural	3,215,300	3,889,100	4,169,200	4,611,000	45.8	48.9	46.9	47.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,021,200</b>	<b>7,953,400</b>	<b>8,897,000</b>	<b>9,810,000</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: AZSTAT, 2016a: 41, 2017b

Historically, the ethnic diversity of the population was much higher, for example during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when up to 40% of the population belonged to ethnic minorities. In the second half of the past century, the number and share of Russians and Armenians in particular fell, most notably after 1989. In 1999, these two groups each accounted for less than 2% of the population. Based on data from the 2009 census, the main ethnic minority groups in Azerbaijan are Lezgis (2%), Armenians, Russians, Talysh (1% each), and Avars and Turks (less than 1% each). 92% of the population identified as Azerbaijanians (see table 3). Lezgis and Talysh are commonly regarded as belonging to the original population of Azerbaijan (Rumyansev, 2009).

<sup>1</sup> "Occupied territories" as referred to in Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly Resolution 1416 (2005) and UN Security Council Resolutions 822, 853, 874, and 884 (all 1993).

**Table 3: Ethnic groups in Azerbaijan, 1939-2009 (top 10 groups in 2009)**

Ethnic group	1939	1979	1999	2009	1939	1979	1999	2009
	persons	persons	persons	persons	%	%	%	%
Azerbaijanians	1,870,500	4,708,800	7,205,500	8,172,800	58.4	78.1	90.6	91.6
Lezgis	111,700	158,100	178,000	180,300	3.5	2.6	2.2	2.0
Armenians	388,000	475,500	120,700	120,300	12.1	7.9	1.5	1.3
Russians	528,300	475,300	141,700	119,300	16.5	7.9	1.8	1.3
Talysh	87,500	-	76,800	112,000	2.7	-	1.0	1.3
Avars	15,700	36,000	50,900	49,800	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6
Turks	-	7,900	43,400	38,000	-	0.1	0.5	0.4
Tatars	27,600	31,400	30,000	25,900	0.9	0.5	0.4	0.3
Tats	-	8,900	10,900	25,200	-	0.1	0.1	0.3
Ukrainians	23,600	26,400	29,000	21,500	0.7	0.4	0.4	0.2
Other	152,300	98,200	66,500	57,300	4.8	1.6	0.8	0.6
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>3,205,200</b>	<b>6,026,500</b>	<b>7,953,400</b>	<b>8,922,400</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

- = no data available

Note: Ethnicity based on self-identification, based on census data; column totals may not add up to 100% due to rounding errors

Source: AZSTAT, 2016a: 54

## 3. CURRENT MIGRATION POLICY

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As in all post-Soviet countries, Azerbaijan's migration policy and institutional management structure started to rapidly develop after regaining independence in 1991; this development has seen a revolution through the establishment of the State Migration Service (SMS) in 2007 and the adoption of the Migration Code in 2013.

This chapter covers an overview of three main migration policy and institutional management areas currently in place in Azerbaijan, as well as possible steps for their improvement which are on the table for migration policy makers in Azerbaijan. These are (1) strengthening the institutional setup for improved migration management, (2) improvement of policy framework documents, such as strategies and action plans, and (3) development and enhancement of sector-specific policies, such as policies on visas, labour migration, data management systems, return and reintegration, and other areas. The purpose of this chapter is to focus on these migration management and policy areas with the aim of explaining current policy directions and their perspectives. The specific legislative norms or administrative aspects of these policies are examined to different degrees in the following chapters.

### 3.1 Migration management

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The leading role in migration management in Azerbaijan is vested in the SMS. This agency has been established in order to strengthen control over management of migration processes, work towards the prevention of irregular migration, and analyse, regulate and provide prognoses of migration processes, as well as to harness migration for the country's political and economic interests.

The roles of the different bodies engaged in migration management in Azerbaijan are as follows:

- The **President of the Republic of Azerbaijan** participates in shaping migration policy (legislative initiative, signing of laws, right of veto, management of foreign affairs). He holds the exclusive power to take decisions regarding acquisition of citizenship and granting political asylum in Azerbaijan as outlined in the constitution.
- The **State Migration Service** – as the main authority coordinating and executing control over migration policy – maintains a database on migration, the UMIS (see section 3.3.3. below); grants temporary and permanent residence permits to foreigners and stateless persons; grants extensions of temporary stay for foreigners and stateless persons in the Republic of Azerbaijan; grants work permits; determines citizenship and refugee status and handles readmission issues. For these purposes it cooperates with the State Security Service, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Population, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Foreign Intelligence Service.

- The **Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)** is responsible for visa policy including issuance of entry visas, extension of temporary stay in the Republic of Azerbaijan for special categories (members of staff of diplomatic missions, consulates and international organisations, and their family members, foreigners and stateless persons visiting the Republic of Azerbaijan for a diplomatic or special purpose stipulated by international agreements supported by the Republic of Azerbaijan), providing consular services to Azerbaijani citizens abroad, keeping the register of Azerbaijani citizens who live in foreign countries on a permanent or temporary basis, and promoting and developing cooperation in the field of migration with international organisations and partner countries (MFA, 2016a).
- The **Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Population of the Republic of Azerbaijan (MLSP)** is the principal governmental authority responsible for managing the national labour market. The Department for Employment Policy and Demography specifically works on labour migration issues and the State Employment Service (which functions in the framework of the Ministry) facilitates professional integration of immigrants. The MLSP is the main focal point for concluding international bilateral agreements in the area of labour migration. The Minister of Labour and Social Protection of Population also chairs the **Commission on Establishment of Labour Quotas**, which submits for approval each calendar year to the Cabinet of Ministers recommendations for foreign labour quotas.
- The **Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA)** is responsible for issuing identity registration documents to stateless persons and granting citizenship, jointly with the SMS, and for fighting organised crime and trafficking in human beings, among other tasks. With the creation of the SMS in 2007 and later with the introduction of the 'one-stop shop' in 2009, the registration of foreign citizens and stateless people was transferred to the SMS in 2013. In terms of legal and labour migration, the SMS is the primary implementing agency. The Ministry does, however, oversee the Entry-Exit and Registration Interagency Automated Information Search System (IAMAS). This system is coordinated by a joint commission which includes members of other ministries and agencies.
- The **State Border Service** is the main state authority responsible for exercising border control. It registers foreigners at border checkpoints, counteracts irregular migration and checks grounds for foreigners' entry (Migration Policy Centre, 2013). According to the current legislation the main functions of the State Border Service are to ensure border security and inviolability, counter international terrorism, combat irregular migration, drug trafficking and smuggling of weapons or ammunition, prevent proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their components, and assure the safety of hydrocarbon deposits and oil and gas infrastructure (Azərbaycan Respublikası Dövlət Sərhət Xidməti, 2017).
- The **State Committee on Work with the Diaspora** supports and coordinates activities of Azerbaijani diaspora organisations. The key tasks of the Committee include collecting and analysing data on Azerbaijanis residing abroad, organising events for diaspora members in Azerbaijan and abroad, and providing support to diaspora members through diaspora organisations (see section 7.4.).

Important steps aimed at the introduction of biometric identification have been taken in Azerbaijan to facilitate migration processes and prevent irregular migration. Thus, a Task Force consisting of representatives of relevant state agencies has been set up, which developed the State Program on Biometric Identification in the Republic of Azerbaijan further endorsed by Presidential Decree No. 1963 on 13 February 2007 (MFA, 2016a).

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New amendments made to the Law on National Identity Card of the Republic of Azerbaijan (which entered into force on 1 January 2014) provide for the introduction of identity cards furnished with electronic chips containing personal data.

In 2015 the SMS set up a Public Council composed of representatives of civil society organisations (CSOs). In June 2017 elections to the Public Council took place, with the new Council consisting of representatives of seven CSOs: Hayat (an international humanitarian organisation), the Public Union for Support to Tourism and National Cuisine Promotion, the Evolution and Integration International Public Union, the Regional Gender Centre Public Union, the Leadership School of the Azerbaijani Child and Youth Peace Network, the Executive Committee of the Citizen's Labor Rights Protection League, and the Azerbaijan Red Crescent Society (SMS, 2018a). The main objective of the Public Council is to ensure public participation in the work of the SMS and increase its transparency. In November 2015 the Public Council submitted a list of 27 recommendations for improving migration management in Azerbaijan to the SMS, 22 of which were taken into consideration (SMS, 2016b).

Recently several services of the SMS such as the issuance of temporary and permanent residence permits, work permits, determination of Azerbaijani citizenship etc. have been partly outsourced to ASAN centres (one-stop shop centres) in order to provide more efficient and transparent services to migrants.

### 3.2 Policy framework and legislative documents

Prior to the adoption of the Migration Code in 2013 around 20 normative acts existed regulating different aspects of migration (for example the Law on Immigration, Law on Labour Migration, etc.) which were then merged into the Code. At the same time, the State Migration Management Policy Concept of Azerbaijan (2004) and the State Migration Programme for 2006-2008 also contributed to codification of migration legislation in Azerbaijan.

The Migration Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan establishes norms concerning the implementation of the state policy in the sphere of migration in the Republic of Azerbaijan, the regulation of migration processes and relations arising in this sphere and the legal status of foreigners and stateless persons within the country. It is a comprehensive document consisting of 95 articles clustered in 15 chapters and 6 sections which establishes all main migration-related definitions and regulates issues related to:

- exit from/entry to the country for citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan;
- foreigners' and stateless persons' entry to/exit from the Republic of Azerbaijan;
- temporary stay for foreigners and stateless persons and issuance of temporary and permanent residence permits, as well as registration of residence;
- rights and obligations of stakeholders of migration processes;
- labour migration; and
- state control over migration measures and prevention of irregular migration.

Although the Migration Code has only recently been adopted, several changes have already been introduced. In 2014 for example a new chapter entitled 'Placement and detention of foreigners and stateless persons in centres for illegal migrants' was added. This important chapter covers grounds and duration for detention, procedure for placement, rights and duties of migrants placed in those centres, rules of use of special tools and force, etc. At present such centres are operational in Baku, Yevlakh and Nakhchivan.

Migration issues are also touched upon in “Azerbaijan 2020: Look Into The Future” Development Concept (Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan, 2012) and the National Action Programme in the Field of Increasing Efficiency in Protection of Human Rights and Freedoms in the Republic of Azerbaijan (Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan, 2011).

The Azerbaijan 2020 Concept in particular emphasises that international cooperation on improving the system of regulation of labour migrants will be continued. At the same time, “appropriate work will be carried out to create an efficient mechanism regulating the use of social allowances by refugees from other countries, prevent the illegal influx of foreign labour force into the country and strengthen the social security of Azerbaijani citizens working abroad” (p. 26).

The Human Rights Action Programme of 2011 contains the following points:

- Implementation of measures on extension of treaty-law framework improving the legal status of the citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan living in foreign countries and regulating the protection of their rights.
- Continuation of the measures to bring the conditions at places of detention in line with international standards.
- In order to promote the UNESCO principle ‘Education for All’ and facilitate a more effective protection of human rights and freedoms, preparation of trainers in the field of legal education for different population groups (women, children, youth, the disabled, the elderly, refugees and internally displaced persons, prisoners, soldiers, drug users and people with HIV/AIDS).
- Preparation and implementation of joint projects with specialised institutions of the United Nations and other international organisations.

Certain policy documents specifically target the Azerbaijani diaspora abroad. These documents include (1) the Law on State Policy on Azerbaijanis living abroad (2002) and (2) the Presidential Decree on the establishment of the State Committee on Affairs of Azerbaijani People Residing Abroad (2002). In 2008, the Committee was renamed the State Committee on Work with the Diaspora.

### **3.2.1 International law**

Existing policy framework documents have also been positively affected by the fact that Azerbaijan is a state party to the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families. Azerbaijan has also joined the Palermo Protocols related to the trafficking and smuggling of migrants.

In addition, Azerbaijan has concluded bilateral agreements on the social security of migrants with Georgia, Ukraine, Italy, Russia, Moldova, Belarus, Turkey, and Kazakhstan. Inter alia, these agreements cover social protection of circular migrants between countries and recognition of work experience of Azerbaijani migrants in Azerbaijan before migration (Allahveranov and Huseynov, 2013, Agreement on Mutual Labour Activity, 2014, Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Labour, Social Security and Employment, 2013).

Due to the large number of Azerbaijani migrant workers in Russia, a Partnership Agreement with the Russian authorities is under discussion.

For a more detailed discussion of the legislative framework and labour migration policies, including the labour migration quota, see ICMPD's recent assessment report *Review of legal and labour migration mechanisms in the Republic of Azerbaijan* (ICMPD, 2016).

### 3.3 Sector policies

#### 3.3.1 Management of inflow and movement of foreigners

A foreign citizen may enter the territory of Azerbaijan if s/he holds a valid passport, a document attesting an entry visa or residency status and with the permission of the body implementing border control if no other order is defined by the legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan or international treaties.

Citizens of those states which have agreements on visa-free travel in the Republic of Azerbaijan (currently nine post-Soviet countries) may stay in Azerbaijan for a maximum of 90 days per year (1 month for citizens of Turkey, 15 days for citizens of Iran) if no other term is defined by international treaties of the Republic of Azerbaijan (MFA, 2016b).

Foreigners and stateless persons staying in Azerbaijan temporarily more than 10 days have to register at a place of residence. Persons travelling to the Republic of Azerbaijan with a visa have to be registered at a place of residence for the period indicated in the visa while persons who need no visa have to be registered at a place of residence for 90 days (SMS, 2018a).

Visas are issued in diplomatic missions and consulates of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Visitors from Qatar, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Japan, Indonesia, China, South Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Turkey, Israel, United Arab Emirates and the US (for flights to New York-Baku only) can get a visa upon arrival at all international airports in Azerbaijan (MFA, 2017, SMS 2018). The types of visas are as follows (Migration Code, 2013, MFA, 2016c):

- a) Ordinary visa – for personal travel, tourism, participation in cultural or sports events, education, business, scientific purposes, employment, for treatment or for humanitarian reasons. An entry visa can be issued for a single entry (up to 90 days) or for multiple entries with validity of up to 2 years.
- b) Diplomatic and service visa – for foreigners and stateless persons arriving for official visit.
- c) Transit visa – for travelling to third countries across the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

For foreign investors, real estate owners, highly qualified specialists, labour migrants, full-time students, close relatives of Azerbaijani citizens and family members of migrants holding a residence permit (inter alia) who seek to take up residence in Azerbaijan, temporary residence permits may be issued for an initial period of up to 1 year (3 years for investors), and may be extended for another 2 years multiple times (3 years for investors) (article 49 of the Migration Code).

After at least 2 years of temporary residence, foreigners may apply for a permanent residence permit – valid for 5 years. Permanent permits may be extended for additional 5-year periods upon submission of all relevant documents (article 54, Migration Code).

According to the legislation, foreigners are required to register within ten days of entry to Azerbaijan. Failure to comply with this rule may lead to a fine or deportation with a ban on re-entry.

### 3.3.2 Policies on return and readmission

A Readmission Agreement with the EU has been signed by Azerbaijan and entered into force in September 2014. The SMS is the national body responsible for implementing this agreement. In 2014 the SMS received readmission requests regarding 15 persons from EU Member States, of which requests regarding eight persons were granted, and three readmissions were carried out (SMS, 2017c). In 2015, the number of persons for whom readmission requests were received was much higher (506 in total), as was the number of granted cases (301). Almost two-thirds related to persons to be readmitted from Germany. 70 readmissions were carried out. Numbers for 2016 show a similar number of requests and persons (491) but an increased number of readmissions carried out (123, see table 4). As in the year before, most readmission requests as well as persons readmitted came from Germany, followed by Sweden and the Netherlands.

**Table 4: Readmission requests (persons) received and processed by the SMS in 2016**

Requesting country	Received	Granted	Denied	In process	Readmitted
Germany	360	173	180	7	72
Netherlands	37	19	18	0	6
Sweden	34	29	5	0	22
Austria	25	10	15	0	7
Belgium	12	12	0	0	4
France	11	3	8	0	3
Norway	6	5	1	0	3
Poland	5	5	0	0	1
Lithuania	1	1	0	0	1
Finland	0	0	0	0	0
Latvia	0	0	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>120</b>

Source: SMS, 2017c

At present authorities are discussing a draft Readmission Agreement between Azerbaijan and the Russian Federation (SMS, 2015). Other bilateral readmission agreements are currently being negotiated with Moldova, Pakistan, Turkey, Ukraine, and Georgia, (SMS, 2018a).

The Mobility Partnership declaration between the EU and Azerbaijan (signed on 5 December 2013) stresses the importance of social protection and integration of migrant workers in Azerbaijan as well as of measures supporting reintegration of return (regular) and returned (irregular) migrants, e.g. through acquiring further qualifications, developing entrepreneurship and particularly supporting vulnerable groups of migrants (par. 13, annex II-IV).

Although programmes exist catering to the needs of IDPs in Azerbaijan (see chapter 8), there are currently no state programmes of assistance for citizens returning. There is, however, a working group coordinated by the SMS consisting of representatives of relevant central executive authorities to facilitate the effective reintegration of persons readmitted to Azerbaijan in cooperation with public institutions (SMS, 2018a).

### 3.3.3 Data management systems

The **Unified Migration Information System (UMIS)**, hosted by the SMS, enables the maintenance of registration of foreigners and stateless persons living or residing in Azerbaijan, supply of information to different state bodies participating in migration management, and the automatisisation of documents, inspections and registry (SMS, 2014).

### 3.3.4 Awareness raising

In 2015 the Public Council under the SMS organised language courses for 94 asylum seekers and refugees in Azerbaijan and provided consultations to some 200 migrants on various matters. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism has also conducted information sessions for the staff of some 60 hotels in order to familiarise them with the legislation affecting registration of foreigners in Azerbaijan.

At the same time, foreigners and stateless persons entering Azerbaijan receive relevant information brochures in Russian, English, Arabic, Farsi, Urdu and other languages related to their rights. The SMS also maintains a training centre which offers various trainings and courses for migrants, including language courses. ASAN centres also play an important role in raising awareness concerning migration issues. More and more foreigners and citizens receive migration-related information at these centres.

In cooperation with media organisations the SMS organised numerous public meetings, e.g. in higher schools, held “Open Doors Day” events, and implemented awareness raising projects targeting groups of concern.



## 4. AZERBAIJAN AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

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The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan sees the cooperation with the European Union as “one of the foreign policy priorities of Azerbaijan” (MFA, 2016d). Since 1991 Azerbaijan has received EU funding of about 333 million euro for various humanitarian, technical, food and emergency assistance projects (MFA, 2016d). For this purpose, the Minister of Economy and Industry of the Republic of Azerbaijan was appointed as a National Coordinator for the projects implemented under the EU technical assistance programmes.

At present, the main legislative framework between Azerbaijan and the EU is the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), which entered into force in 1999. In 2003 the EU engaged further with Azerbaijan through its European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP).

In November 2006 the EU-Azerbaijan Cooperation Council adopted a joint EU-Azerbaijan Action Plan which provides for a comprehensive and ambitious framework for joint work with Azerbaijan in all key areas of reform (Delegation of the European Union in Azerbaijan, 2016).

As envisaged by the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, the Cooperation Council determines major guidelines of cooperation. The Cooperation Committee meets annually and assists the Council in its activities by giving recommendations. The subcommittee on Trade and Economic Issues works under the authority of the Cooperation Committee and discusses trade, investment and other issues related to economic cooperation under the PCA (Delegation of the European Union in Azerbaijan, 2016).

In May 2009, a further step was taken with the participation of Azerbaijan in the Eastern Partnership (EaP). The EaP is based on a commitment to the principles of international law and fundamental values – democracy, the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms. It also encompasses support for a market economy, sustainable development and good governance (EU External Action, 2016).

Since 2009, the EU also supports smaller size NGO projects under Human Rights, Democratisation and Non-State Actor budget lines.<sup>2</sup> As part of the international support to the development of migration policy in Azerbaijan, the European Commission and UNHCR jointly financed the project ‘Initiative on increasing quality of asylum systems in Eastern Europe and South Caucasus’ which is currently being implemented in Azerbaijan (UNHCR, 2017a).

Alongside with the PCA and the Action Plan of 2006, there are two legal documents regulating the relations between Azerbaijan and the EU: (1) the Framework Agreement signed between the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the European Commission (2008) and (2) the Single Strategic Framework 2014-2017 (still under development) (EaPTC, 2014).

The most recent agreements with the EU include the Joint Declaration on a Mobility Partnership (signed by Azerbaijan in 2013), the Readmission Agreement (signed in 2014; EU, 2014a) and the

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<sup>2</sup> For the full list of projects financed in Azerbaijan see: [http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/azerbaijan/projects/list\\_of\\_projects/projects\\_en.htm](http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/azerbaijan/projects/list_of_projects/projects_en.htm)

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Visa Facilitation Agreement (signed in 2013; EU, 2014b). These agreements entered into force in September 2014 (and do not apply to the UK, Ireland or Denmark).

The Readmission Agreement sets out clear obligations and procedures for the authorities of both Azerbaijan and the respective EU Member State as to when and how to take back people who are illegally residing on their territories (EU, 2014). In addition, two bilateral readmission agreements have been concluded with Norway (udiregelverk.no, 2014) and Switzerland (FDFA Switzerland, 2016), both non-EU but Schengen countries. In April 2017, a readmission agreement has been signed between Montenegro and Azerbaijan (SMS, 2017i).

The Mobility Partnership Declaration intends to better manage legal and labour migration, prevent and combat irregular migration, promote international protection and maximise the development impact of migration and mobility (Mobility Partnership, 2016).<sup>3</sup>

The Visa Facilitation Agreement aims at making it less expensive and faster for citizens of Azerbaijan to acquire short-stay visa for the Schengen area. Moreover, students, journalists, representatives of civil society, or persons participating in scientific, cultural, artistic activities or sport events benefit from a full visa fee waiver. For large categories of persons the agreement also simplifies the criteria for issuing multiple-entry visas valid for up to five years (European Commission, 2013).

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<sup>3</sup> For the full text see [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/international-affairs/global-approach-to-migration/specific-tools/docs/mobility\\_partnership\\_of\\_azerbaijan\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/international-affairs/global-approach-to-migration/specific-tools/docs/mobility_partnership_of_azerbaijan_en.pdf)

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## 5. IMMIGRATION

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According to migration statistics published by the State Statistical Committee, levels of immigration to Azerbaijan have been decreasing in recent years. But due to a similar trend in emigration, the net migration balance has turned positive from 2008 onwards (see table 1). During 2016, 3,233 immigrants entered the country for permanent residence (see table 8 below), based on data from the State Migration Service and the Ministry of Internal Affairs. In that same year, 1,711 emigrants left the country permanently (AZSTAT, 2017c).

Migrant stocks and flows are mostly regional and shaped both by historic ties and present opportunities. Azerbaijan has set labour migration quotas to manage labour migration while protecting the local labour market.

Immigrants are required to apply for temporary permits first (valid for up to 12 months with the option of extension). Permanent residence permits (valid for five years) may be issued after at least two years of temporary residence.

Applications for citizenship are possible after five years of legal residence, are bound to a legal source of income, language skills in Azerbaijani, and abiding by the constitution and Azerbaijani legislation (see the Law on Citizenship, 1998). In the case of double citizenship the second citizenship is not recognised (except for exceptional cases).

### 5.1 Immigrant population

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Based on the most recent census data available (2009), there are more than 250,000 foreign-born residents in Azerbaijan (see table 5). A large share among these are likely ethnic Azerbaijanis who moved to Azerbaijan during the late 1980s and early 1990s, the years of large-scale population movements between the former Soviet/newly independent post-Soviet states.<sup>4</sup>

Based on population data, the UN Population Division (UN DESA, 2015b) produced estimates for international migrant stock in 2015 which are reproduced here. The number of immigrants resident in Azerbaijan is estimated to have slightly increased after the census year of 2009, reaching around 264,000 in 2015 (see table 5). This total increase corresponds to increases in estimates for all major groups shown below. This appears to be a valid assumption for all but the Kazakhs – net migration between Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan was negative for the period 2009-2015 (AZSTAT, 2016b).

Although the largest group among the foreign-born is categorised as born in Armenia (~149,000 in 2015), most of these migrants are ethnic Azerbaijanis (and

**Of the more than 250,000 migrants (foreign-born) estimated to be resident in Azerbaijan in 2015, a large share were likely ethnic Azerbaijanis who moved to Azerbaijan during the late 1980s and early 1990s. Census results from 2009 show only 15,000 foreign citizens, or 0.2%, a share lower than in any EU country in 2015.**

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<sup>4</sup> The exact years of these movements cannot be traced, as neither national data nor UN data include an annual disaggregation of immigrant stocks.

indeed Azerbaijani citizens, although there is no data available on the citizenship of this group) and consist of those who left Armenia before, during and after 1993 and found refuge in Azerbaijan.

Among the ca. 51,000 Georgia-born and almost 29,000 Russia-born migrants, very high shares appear to be Azerbaijani citizens (based on the comparison of 2009 census data).

Other groups of immigrants include persons born in Uzbekistan (17,000), Kazakhstan (3,600), and Ukraine (2,800) – also for these groups the share of Azerbaijani citizens seems to be very high. Smaller groups include Kyrgyz (2,600) and Turks (2,100) – apparently mostly nationals of their respective countries – Turkmen (1,700) and Iranians (1,500).

Women are slightly overrepresented among immigrants (52%, see table 5), but the share of women among all immigrants is highly variable. It is particularly high among Ukrainians (73%), Russians (67%) and Turkmen (56%), and particularly low on the other hand among Iranians (37%) and Turks (26%).

**Table 5: International migrant stocks in Azerbaijan (foreign-born population (ctb), refugees (r) and foreign citizens (ctz)), top 10 countries in 2015**

Country of birth/ Country of citizenship	Estimates (2015, ctb + r)	Census data (2009, ctb)	Census data (2009, ctz)	Share of women (2015, ctb)
Armenia	148,503	143,726	-	49.2%
Georgia	51,141	49,496	4,088	51.6%
Russian Federation	28,760	27,835	3,417	67.3%
Uzbekistan	17,030	16,482	420	51.7%
Kazakhstan	3,621	3,505	138	58.2%
Ukraine	2,817	2,726	252	72.9%
Kyrgyzstan	2,556	2,474	-	51.5%
Turkey	2,121	2,053	1,484	25.6%
Turkmenistan	1,724	1,669	117	55.9%
Iran	1,530	1,481	518	36.6%
Other	4,438	3,546	4,388	54.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>264,241</b>	<b>254,993</b>	<b>14,822</b>	<b>52.1%</b>

- = no data available

Source: UN DESA, 2015b, 2017, Migration Policy Centre, 2013

In total, the stark contrast between the 255,000 migrants (defined as the foreign-born population in Azerbaijan) and the only 15,000 foreign citizens in the census 2009 may be explained by the large share of ethnic Azerbaijanis among the foreign-born – many of whom were naturalised in 1998. In many contexts, these ethnic nationals are not regarded as migrants. The share of foreign citizens in Azerbaijan was below 0.2% in 2009 – lower than in any EU country in 2015 (EUROSTAT, 2017a).

Comparing these estimates to empirical data on ethnic groups from the 2009 census, an important distinction is to be made. The 120,000 ethnic Armenians (see table 3 above) largely consist of the population in Nagorno-Karabakh (SMS, 2017a) and are most likely not foreign citizens or foreign-born, but the historic population of that region – those who have been living there for generations.

The almost 149,000 persons born in Armenia, on the other hand, seem to be largely another independent group – ethnic Azerbaijanis who migrated to Azerbaijan and were later naturalised (see chapter 5.2. below). These interpretations are preliminary and should be further corroborated by detailed multivariate and regional analyses of census data.

## 5.2 Acquisition of citizenship

Matters related to Azerbaijani citizenship are generally outlined in the Constitution of Azerbaijan and details are provided in the Azerbaijani Law on Citizenship.

According to the Law on Citizenship, Azerbaijani citizenship can be acquired either through birth or through naturalisation (article 11). In May 2014, the legislation of Azerbaijan introduced a restrictive provision on double citizenship. According to this change, if a citizen of Azerbaijan acquires citizenship of a foreign state, s/he has to inform the MFA of Azerbaijan or the SMS within one month (except in cases when that citizenship was obtained prior to entry into force of the said change), which usually results in the loss of Azerbaijani citizenship. Failure to provide such information leads to being held responsible to the Criminal Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

According to article 14 of the Law on Citizenship, “foreign citizens and stateless persons, continuously and permanently living on legal grounds on the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan during the last 5 years, with a legal source of income, committed to respect the Constitution and the laws of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and also submitting a document about the knowledge of the state language may be admitted to the citizenship of the Republic of Azerbaijan [...]”. The application for naturalisation can be submitted online (SMS, 2017b).

Azerbaijan applies the *jus sanguinis* (right of blood) principle when granting citizenship, so children of two foreign nationals may only become Azerbaijani nationals through naturalisation later on, not at birth (article 12). If one of the parents holds Azerbaijani citizenship, the child also receives Azerbaijani citizenship (article 11 and 12). When both parents (foreign nationals) of a child obtain the citizenship of Azerbaijan, their children under the age of 14 automatically become citizens of Azerbaijan (article 19 of the Law on Citizenship). If only one parent obtains citizenship of Azerbaijan, then the citizenship of the child has to be requested by this parent and the second parent has to consent to it (article 21). If the child is 14-18 years old, his/her consent is needed for the change of citizenship (article 25). Children of parents who are both stateless automatically receive the citizenship of Azerbaijan (article 12).

Since 1996 Azerbaijan is party to several international instruments regulating citizenship and migration issues including:

- the 1957 Convention on the Nationality of Married Women;
- the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons; and
- the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.

In recent years naturalisation has not been widely used in Azerbaijan. In 2016, only 192 naturalisations were granted, of which six out of ten consisted of stateless persons who were granted Azerbaijani citizenship (see table 6). Also in previous years stateless persons accounted for more than half and up to 85% of all naturalisations. Between 2007 and 2016, a total of 1,118 stateless persons and 181 Russian citizens were naturalised. The numbers for other groups (e.g. Georgians and Turkmen) are far lower and mostly do not exceed a dozen cases per year.

There are no statistics on rejected applications for naturalisation.

**Table 6: Naturalisations 2007-2016, top 10 groups**

Former citizenship	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Stateless	4	44	62	63	104	161	196	186	181	117
Russian Federation	2	4	17	3	17	11	19	19	56	33
Georgia	4	19	1	10	4	8	7	3	3	21
Turkmenistan	1	3	3	2	5	2	4	19	9	11
Kyrgyzstan	0	0	1	0	3	2	2	0	4	3
Ukraine	0	1	6	1	1	6	1	22	2	2
Uzbekistan	1	3	7	2	2	1	2	5	6	1
France	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	5	1
Iran	4	14	5	14	6	13	0	0	0	0
Kazakhstan	4	2	6	1	2	1	0	1	2	0
Other	5	7	7	3	2	8	0	6	2	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>192</b>

Source: SMS, 2017h, Ministry of Internal Affairs, 2017

The largest number of naturalisations took place following the adoption of a new Law on Citizenship of Azerbaijan in 1998, when around 188,000 refugees from Armenia and 33,000 refugees from Uzbekistan (the Meskhetian Turk minority) and stateless persons were granted the citizenship of Azerbaijan as can be seen from time series on stocks of refugees in Azerbaijan, see table 7 (UNHCR, 2018, Law on Citizenship, 1998). The refugees from Armenia were those ethnic Azerbaijanis who had to flee from Armenia between 1988 and 1991 as a result of the Karabakh conflict.

**Table 7: Refugee population in Azerbaijan by country of origin, 1992-2000**

Refugees (incl. refugee-like situations)	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Armenia	195,000	200,000	201,440	200,000	198,000	198,000	188,400	188,400	-
Uzbekistan	-	-	29,015	-	35,682	35,682	33,216	33,216	-
Various/Unknown	51,000	28,840	1,025	33,682	-	-	-	-	-
Others	0	0	155	0	10	33	19	27	287
<b>Total</b>	<b>246,000</b>	<b>228,840</b>	<b>231,635</b>	<b>233,682</b>	<b>233,692</b>	<b>233,715</b>	<b>221,635</b>	<b>221,643</b>	<b>287</b>

Source: UNHCR, 2018

In 2016 some 3,600 persons remained stateless in Azerbaijan (see table 14 in section 5.4. below).

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## 5.3 Regular immigration

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As noted above, immigration flows to Azerbaijan appear to be at a low level compared to other European countries<sup>5</sup> and have not exceeded 5,000 persons per year since 1998 (AZSTAT, 2016b). However, available immigration statistics do not include citizens of Azerbaijan (AZSTAT, 2016c), for example, return migrants, and are thus not directly comparable to international migration statistics.

Until 2012, the majority of immigrants came from Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries, most notably the Russian Federation. In 2013 there is a time-series break due to a changed definition – immigration statistics are based on statistics of permanent residence permits (by citizenship) since that year. In other words, data before 2013 are not directly comparable to data afterwards.

These new data since 2013 show larger numbers of immigrants from Turkey, Iran and other foreign countries (see table 8). In 2016 the largest group of immigrants originated from Georgia (1,134), followed by the Russian Federation (910). Turkey (214) and Iran (145) recently also rank among the main sending countries. Immigration for permanent residence is therefore clearly a regional phenomenon, mostly related to neighbouring countries.<sup>6</sup>

When this is compared to data compiled by EUROSTAT, larger inflows are visible. Data from sending countries (that is countries which record the next residence of emigrants) from 2016 showed around 15,000 persons leaving for Azerbaijan, primarily from the Russian Federation (around 13,700) and Germany (around 1,100) (see annex table 30).

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<sup>5</sup> Azerbaijan is considered a European country in this report, following the definition of the Council of Europe which includes the Caucasus countries as Member States.

<sup>6</sup> Immigration statistics (annual flows) by country of birth are not available for 2013-2016.

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**Table 8: Immigration for permanent residence, top 10 countries of citizenship in 2016**

Country of origin	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013 <sup>1)</sup>	2014 <sup>1)</sup>	2015 <sup>1)</sup>	2016 <sup>1)</sup>
Georgia	238	158	403	68	35	48	7	696 <sup>b</sup>	490	782	1,134
Russian Federation	1,394	1,269	2,024	1,580	1,706	1,655	1,628	1,098 <sup>b</sup>	623	930	910
Turkey	7	8	267	38	4	3	4	398 <sup>b</sup>	160	164	214
Iran	4	7	32	6	5	-	-	120 <sup>b</sup>	106	144	145
Kazakhstan	94	92	196	157	177	183	229	130 <sup>b</sup>	81	103	132
Ukraine	127	105	174	130	97	103	73	173 <sup>b</sup>	72	99	126
Turkmenistan	171	159	204	154	62	37	36	91 <sup>b</sup>	48	50	124
Uzbekistan	111	77	96	70	53	58	62	93 <sup>b</sup>	68	95	116
Kyrgyzstan	12	10	11	18	4	13	33	42 <sup>b</sup>	16	33	46
Pakistan	-	-	22	-	-	-	-	45 <sup>b</sup>	22	30	19
Other countries	74	69	168	71	85	81	100	243 <sup>b</sup>	173	219	267
CIS countries	1,956	1,749	2,781	2,155	2,166	2,111	2,134	1,668 <sup>b</sup>	926	1,336	1,493
Other countries	276	205	816	137	62	70	38	1,461 <sup>b</sup>	933	1,313	1,740
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,232</b>	<b>1,954</b>	<b>3,597</b>	<b>2,292</b>	<b>2,228</b>	<b>2,181</b>	<b>2,172</b>	<b>3,129<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>1,859</b>	<b>2,649</b>	<b>3,233</b>

<sup>1)</sup> Based on data from the State Migration Service and the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan.  
b = time-series break

- = no data available

Data do not include Azerbaijani citizens immigrating. Temporary residence permits also not included.

Source: AZSTAT, 2016b, 2017c

### 5.3.1 Residence permits

Short-term migrants according to the UN recommendations on international migration statistics (see annex 11.2.) include persons with a temporary residence permit valid between 3 and 12 months. According to the Migration Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan, temporary permits are valid for up to 12 months and may be extended; permanent permits may be issued after at least 2 years of temporary residence and are valid for 5 years (articles 49 and 52 of the Migration Code). More than 48,000 such temporary permits were issued in Azerbaijan in 2016, while the number of permanent residence permits issued was much lower, around 3,200 (see table 9).

Summing up both types of permits, most of these migrants are Turkish citizens (24%). Russians (18%) and Georgians (17%) also constitute large groups of temporary migrants. Among European countries, only the UK (6%) and Ukraine (3%) list among the top 10 countries of citizenship of migrants holding either temporary or permanent residence permits. Temporary migration is therefore mostly a regional phenomenon.

The total number of permanent residence permits issued in previous years ranged from around 1,900 to 3,200 (2,950 in 2012, 3,125 in 2013, 1,859 in 2014, and 2,649 in 2015, see table 10), whereas the number of temporary residence permits issued has been much higher and growing markedly – from 38,417 in 2012 to 46,123 in 2013, 51,366 in 2014 and 53,954 in 2015. The growth in this category was mainly due to large increases in issued permits for citizens of Georgia (+5,000

between 2012 and 2015), the Russian Federation (+3,200), Uzbekistan (+2,300), Ukraine (+1,000) and Bangladesh (+800) (SMS, 2016c). From the available data, the apparent upward trend has reversed in 2016, the first year since 2012 showing a decrease of total temporary residence permits. This reversal is explained by a trend reversal for most countries, except for Iran and India, for which the number of temporary permits was still increasing in 2016 (see tables 9 and 10).

**Table 9: Issued residence permits, top 10 countries of citizenship in 2016**

Country of citizenship	Permanent residence permits	Temporary residence permits (3-12 months)	Total
Turkey	214	12,055	12,269
Russian Federation	910	8,594	9,504
Georgia	1,134	7,894	9,028
UK	-	2,906	2,906
Iran	145	2,088	2,233
India	-	1,740	1,740
Ukraine	126	1,523	1,649
Uzbekistan	116	1,106	1,222
Kazakhstan	132	941	1,073
Turkmenistan	124	891	1,015
Other	332	8,739	9,071
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,233</b>	<b>48,477</b>	<b>51,710</b>

- = no data available

Sources: SMS 2017e

**Table 10: Issued residence permits, top 10 countries of citizenship in 2015**

Country of citizenship	Permanent residence permits	Temporary residence permits (3-12 months)	Total
Turkey	164	14,178	14,342
Russian Federation	930	9,019	9,949
Georgia	782	8,263	9,045
UK	4	3,015	3,019
Uzbekistan	95	2,749	2,844
Iran	144	1,786	1,930
Ukraine	99	1,783	1,882
India	4	1,508	1,512
Bangladesh	2	1,050	1,052
Kazakhstan	103	944	1,047
Other	322	9,659	9,981
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,649</b>	<b>53,954</b>	<b>56,603</b>

- = no data available

Sources: SMS 2016c, d

Temporary residence permits may be extended multiple times for a period of up to two years each, and up to three years for investors (article 49 of the Migration Code).

Official immigration statistics for 2013-2015 are based on the number of permanent residence permits issued (see tables 8-10). But those immigrants who renew their temporary permits and stay for a cumulative 12 months or more also fall under the international definition for immigrants (see annex, 11.2.). In order to also include these immigrants in migration statistics, data on temporary residence should be analysed further.

Most importantly, the largest share of immigrants – according to UN recommendations, defined as those who change their country of residence for at least a year – appears to be return migrants (Azerbaijani citizens). From the Russian Federation alone, 11,686 Azerbaijani citizens emigrated in 2016; in the same year, 13,670 emigrants (all citizenships) left the Russian Federation to live in Azerbaijan (data from the Russian Statistical Office, see annex tables 33 and 30 respectively). The same pattern is visible for Germany (1,194 Azerbaijani citizens emigrating/1,117 emigrants to Azerbaijan) and other European countries – citizenship and destination country are mostly the same. Immigration to Azerbaijan in 2016, including both foreign and Azerbaijani citizens, therefore comprised at least 15,000 persons, most of them arriving from the Russian Federation (see annex table 30). Further efforts should be made to analyse immigration more comprehensively, also covering other sending countries (e.g. Turkey, the CIS, Iran, India or Bangladesh).

### 5.3.2 Labour immigrants

Immigration of foreigners is largely driven by labour migration – student mobility and asylum play only a minor role. Azerbaijan is increasingly becoming a country of labour immigration, particularly for short-term migrants. Developments in the construction sector and the oil sector are attracting growing numbers of foreign workers.

State institutions are interested in attracting highly skilled migrant workers in particular in order to support economic growth and development. This need for qualified workers is mirrored in labour migration quotas (which were introduced in 2010).

The roadmap of the national economy and major economic sectors enacted in March 2016 outlines 11 sectors for development which are also relevant for labour market policy. The eight priority sectors are (abc.az, 2016):

1. The oil and gas sector, including the chemical industry
2. Agriculture
3. Consumer goods
4. Heavy industry and the machine-building industry
5. Specialised tourism
6. Trade logistics
7. Affordable housing
8. Training

These are complemented by three supporting sectors:

9. Financial services
10. Telecommunications
11. Utilities

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The labour migration quota also functions as a means to protect the local workforce. The Migration Code (2013) includes a provision (article 61.2) that a foreign worker may only fill a vacancy when no Azerbaijani citizen holding the skills required is available (labour market test). In general, employers wishing to hire foreign workers need to file applications for the respective residence permits. For a review of labour migration laws and policy, see the report *Review of legal and labour migration mechanisms in the Republic of Azerbaijan* (ICMPD, 2016a).

### 5.3.3 Educational immigrants

The development of human capital is one of the key elements of Azerbaijan's development concept for 2020 (Azerbaijan 2020). In particular, chapter 7.2 on the formation of a modern education system outlines plans to increase Gross Domestic Product (GDP) share for education expenses and increase the quality of education.

While a target for Azerbaijani students studying abroad is defined, there exists no corresponding target for foreign students within the country. However, the importance of international relations for academic institutions is highlighted. In 2005 Azerbaijan has joined the Bologna Process aimed at creating the European Higher Education Area and is part of the Erasmus+ programme (Erasmus+ Azerbaijan, 2017).

Foreign students enrolling in Azerbaijan mostly enter the academic fields of medicine, economics, humanities and technical studies (Ministry of Education, 2017).

In total, 5,007 foreign students from 75 countries were studying in higher education institutions of Azerbaijan in 2016, according to the Ministry of Education (see table 11). Compared to the year before, enrolment in 2016 rose by 16%, back to the level of 2014. This might be turning point after a downward trend visible since 2008 when the total number of foreign students stood at 7,137 (Ministry of Education, 2017). The number of students continuously decreased until 2013 and again in 2015.

Four out of ten foreign students in Azerbaijan come from Turkey, around 2,100 in 2016. Other groups include students from Iran (615), Georgia (468), the Russian Federation (458), Iraq (400) and Turkmenistan (201). With a few exceptions, Azerbaijan attracts students from Asian countries, most of them in the region and linked through language and ethnic ties as well as a common history.

UNESCO statistics on international students in tertiary education show a rise in the number of foreign students from 2006 to 2009 but otherwise similar trends, although overall numbers are lower (see table 12). Differences between national data and UNESCO data may be due to deviating concepts but remain unclear.

**Table 11: Foreign students (tertiary education) in Azerbaijan, top 10 countries of origin (stocks by end of the year), 2009-2016**

Country of origin	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Turkey	4,073	3,459	3,170	3,093	2,720	2,624	2,217	2,115
Iran	1,484	1,332	1,140	801	606	484	381	615
Georgia	87	83	112	255	281	380	353	468
Russian Federation	217	209	221	252	273	346	316	458
Iraq	104	130	124	174	160	161	132	400
Turkmenistan	157	179	207	249	271	239	218	201
China	248	255	207	193	174	155	144	109
Kazakhstan	13	10	27	42	40	92	55	69
Pakistan	124	140	46	45	41	70	62	64
Nigeria	22	25	28	25	29	39	72	61
Other	280	314	311	361	396	432	376	447
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,809</b>	<b>6,136</b>	<b>5,593</b>	<b>5,490</b>	<b>4,991</b>	<b>5,022</b>	<b>4,326</b>	<b>5,007</b>

Source: Ministry of education, 2017

**Table 12: International students (tertiary education) in Azerbaijan, top 10 countries of origin, 2009-2015**

Country of origin	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Turkey	4,010	3,445	3,052	2,854	2,583	2,480	2,402
Iran	1,284	1,051	898	783	608	560	372
Russian Federation	224	263	221	177	232	213	270
Turkmenistan	110	170	127	165	197	177	236
Georgia	113	144	124	117	126	242	223
Iraq	86	88	117	112	147	155	141
China	185	189	152	155	110	161	131
Pakistan	31	65	86	23	31	46	58
Kazakhstan	22	34	25	17	21	45	51
Syria	14	16	17	23	26	32	32
Other	237	261	255	202	360	295	273
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,316</b>	<b>5,726</b>	<b>5,074</b>	<b>4,628</b>	<b>4,441</b>	<b>4,406</b>	<b>4,189</b>

Source: UNESCO, 2017

## 5.4 Asylum in Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan's legislation on asylum was drafted based on key international instruments including the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. At different times Azerbaijan received asylum seekers from the Russian Federation (Chechnya), Iran, Afghanistan and other countries, mostly due to military conflicts in those countries.

UNHCR works in close cooperation with relevant ministries of Azerbaijan and together with other international and national organisations (e.g. ICMPD, ICRC, IOM, EU, USAID, etc.) to assist Azerbaijan in meeting its international obligations.

### 5.4.1 Legislative framework

The legislative framework regulating the legal status and treatment of asylum seekers in Azerbaijan has been evolving since independence in 1991. The main provisions related to protection are prescribed in the Constitution of Azerbaijan (article 70), which declares that Azerbaijan should grant asylum to foreign citizens and stateless persons in accordance with internationally recognised principles and norms. Presidential Decree No. 419 adopted in 2000 established the first provisions on granting asylum to aliens.<sup>7</sup> After ratifying the 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its respective Protocol in 1993, Azerbaijan adopted the Law on Status of Refugees and IDPs of the Republic of Azerbaijan in 1999<sup>8</sup> in which refugees and IDPs are defined close to the international definition and detailed provisions are provided for treating asylum seekers from the moment they approach the Azerbaijani authorities until the final decision. This law, *inter alia*, contains exceptions from granting refugee status, a list of the rights of refugees and asylum seekers, the prohibition of *refoulement*, grounds for loss of refugee status, etc.

Refugee status is granted to a person who is not a citizen of Azerbaijan or a stateless person who demonstrates a well-founded fear that s/he may become a victim of persecution on the basis of race, nationality, religion, belonging to a certain social group or having a certain political opinion (Law on Status of Refugees, article 1). It is worth mentioning that the Law on Status of Refugees does not provide for 'humanitarian status' similar to the European subsidiary protection status, but the Constitution does envisage 'political asylum' as such.

Azerbaijan has in the past faced a number of issues relating to infringement of the non-*refoulement* principle. When the Russian Federation alleged that former Chechen fighters were using Azerbaijan as a safe haven, the government ordered the expulsion of ethnic Chechens, without notifying UNHCR (U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, 2005). In the same period, two cases were decided related to non-*refoulement* at the international level: i) *Elif Pelit v. Azerbaijan*, with the UN Committee Against Torture confirming a violation of article 3 (non-*refoulement*) of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Guluzade, 2009, *Elif Pelit*, [2005]) and ii) *Garayev v. Azerbaijan* with the European Court of Human Rights confirming a violation of article 3 (prohibition of torture) of the European Convention of Human Rights (Guluzade, 2012, *Garayev*, [2010]).

<sup>7</sup> Presidential Decree 'On approving the "Rules for considering the application for obtaining a refugee status"', available in Azerbaijani at <http://e-qanun.az/framework/380>. An unofficial English translation is available at [https://www.ecoi.net/file\\_upload/1504\\_1217254712\\_rules-to-examine-applications-for-refugee-status.pdf](https://www.ecoi.net/file_upload/1504_1217254712_rules-to-examine-applications-for-refugee-status.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> This law has replaced a previous law on refugee status from 1992.

### 5.4.2 Overview of the asylum procedure

Asylum seekers can submit their application for refugee status at border-crossing points as well as to the State Migration Service. During consideration of their application (within three months), asylum seekers can voluntarily be placed in a facility for irregular migrants. Asylum seekers have to undergo relevant medical examinations and vaccinations (free of charge).

Individual applications are assessed by the State Migration Service of Azerbaijan. A submission of an asylum application may be unsuccessful at two stages:

1. An asylum seeker's application may not be admitted during the first instance review of the application, which means that they are not registered as asylum seekers at all. Reasons for non-admissions include the provision of fraudulent documents, refusal to provide information, violation of the timeframe for submission of the application, criminal prosecution in Azerbaijan, a criminal conviction for a serious offence in the country of origin, etc. (Law of Status of Refugees and IDPs, article 2 and Rules for considering the application for obtaining a refugee status).
2. After the person is registered as an asylum seeker and is provided with basic rights and guarantees, the SMS has three months to determine the status of the asylum seeker.

In the case of a negative decision on asylum, applicants have a right to appeal in court. They hold the status of an asylum seeker until the final court decision comes into effect. Rejected asylum seekers do have the option to apply for asylum with UNHCR.

In the case of a negative decision after the asylum status determination, rejected asylum seekers have one week to leave Azerbaijan. If the person does not leave before the given date, s/he will be considered an irregular migrant and will be subject to deportation procedures. Administrative expulsion decision-making and procedures are prescribed in the Migration Code.

Expulsion of non-immigrant foreigners can be ordered by the MIA, the State Migration Service or a court in relation to foreigners who have seriously infringed the legislation on the legal status of foreigners. 48 hours are granted for voluntary return, which can be extended in justified cases. Failure to depart within the fixed time limit leads to detention and forced expulsion ordered by a court (Migration Policy Centre, 2013).

Refugee status holders do not need to obtain a work permit in Azerbaijan (irregular labour had been an issue before the Migration Code was adopted in 2013). Refugees obtain travel documents once they are granted a refugee status.

Since 2013 the SMS in cooperation with UNHCR has been implementing the project *Initiative on increasing quality of asylum systems in Eastern Europe and South Caucasus*. In addition, component 4 of the project *Support to the Implementation of the Mobility Partnership with Azerbaijan (MOBILAZE)* implemented with ICMPD since 2016 also deals with the improvement of the asylum decision-making procedure.

### 5.4.3 Asylum statistics

According to data from UNHCR 2,277 foreigners applied to national authorities for asylum in Azerbaijan between 2005 and 2015. During these years, the number of first-time applicants fluctuated between 69 and 399 per year (UNHCR, 2018).

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Among all applicants to the SMS in 2016 (209, including family members) the seven largest groups were citizens of Afghanistan (141 persons, or 67% of the total number of applicants), Pakistan (25 persons, 12%), Iraq (18 persons, 9%) and Iran (9 persons, 4%) (see table 15).

Based on figures from UNHCR, there were almost 1,200 recognised refugees in Azerbaijan by the end of 2016, most of them from Afghanistan (562) and the Russian Federation (501) (see table 14). Comparable statistics from the SMS show lower numbers as they only include those granted refugee status under national law (see above). From UNHCR's data, a downward trend has been visible during recent years, especially due to decreasing numbers of refugees from the Russian Federation.

The number of pending cases of asylum seekers in 2016 stood at 221, with Afghans and Russians constituting the two largest groups here as well. 2015 marked a turnaround, as in previous years the backlog of pending asylum applications had been on the rise, peaking at 394 cases in 2014.

Although asylum seekers have the right to appeal to court against the rejection of the application for obtaining refugee status, there has not yet been any positive appeal decision (UNHCR, 2012, 2017b).

The State Committee for Refugees and IDPs puts the current number of IDPs at 789,000 (State Committee for Refugees and IDPs, 2017a), while UNHCR refers to more than 613,000 IDPs (UNHCR, 2018). This discrepancy can be explained by differences in definition – national authorities also include children of IDPs in the statistics.

While time series are not available from the State Committee for Refugees and IDPs, UNHCR statistics show that after four years of increasing figures, the number of IDPs started to fall again in 2015, reaching 613,129 in 2016. The earliest record in this series is from 1992 when UNHCR data show a peak of 778,000 IDPs in Azerbaijan.

**Table 13: IDPs, refugees and asylum-seekers in Azerbaijan, data from national authorities, stocks 2016-2017**

	2016 <sup>1)</sup>	2017 <sup>2)</sup>
<b>IDPs</b>		
<b>Total</b>	-	789,000
<b>Refugees</b>		
Iran	42	-
Afghanistan	17	-
Pakistan	1	-
Armenia	1	350,000
Uzbekistan	-	70,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>420,000</b>
<b>Asylum seekers</b>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>1,500<sup>2)</sup></b>
<b>Stateless persons</b>		
<b>Total</b>	-	-
<b>All persons of concern</b>		
<b>Total</b>	-	<b>1,210,500</b>

- = no data available

1) Data received from the State Migration Service; refugees recognised between 2004 and 2017; asylum seekers pending at the end of 2017

2) Data received from the State Committee for Refugees and IDPs of the Republic of Azerbaijan; 1,500 asylum seekers and refugees from other countries than Armenia and Uzbekistan

Sources: SMS, 2017f, 2018b, State Committee for Refugees and IDPs, 2017a

Numbers for stateless persons appear to have not been updated recently, showing a constant 3,585 persons in this category since 2012 (see table 14).

Summing up most recent totals of IDPs, asylum seekers, recognised refugees and stateless persons, the overall population of concern for UNHCR was 618,298 in 2016.

It has to be noted that UNHCR statistics deviate from statistics published by national authorities, as the latter base their data on differing concepts. The State Committee for Refugees and IDPs refers to a total population of 1.2 million IDPs, refugees and asylum seekers (see table 13). In addition to the differing concepts of IDPs, the State Committee also regards the Azerbaijanis who fled from Armenia in the 1990s and the Meskhetian Turks who fled from Uzbekistan as part of today's refugee population.

**Table 14: IDPs, refugees, asylum seekers, stateless persons and other populations of concern to UNHCR, stocks 2008-2016 (top 5 citizenships in 2016)**

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
<b>IDPs</b>									
<b>Total</b>	<b>603,251</b>	<b>586,013</b>	<b>592,860</b>	<b>599,192</b>	<b>600,336</b>	<b>609,029</b>	<b>622,892</b>	<b>618,220</b>	<b>613,129</b>
<b>Refugees</b>									
Afghanistan	125	149	718	706	576	603	618	602	562
Russian Fed.	1,770	1,334	1,028	889	781	657	557	539	501
Iran	97	113	104	85	78	77	76	71	61
Pakistan	1	1	3	7	5	9	17	18	22
Syria	-	-	-	1	3	9	7	8	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,061</b>	<b>1,642</b>	<b>1,891</b>	<b>1,730</b>	<b>1,468</b>	<b>1,380</b>	<b>1,299</b>	<b>1,278</b>	<b>1,183</b>
<b>Asylum seekers</b>									
Afghanistan	24	15	2	21	82	164	160	134	106
Russian Fed.	0	10	4	7	11	44	31	46	55
Pakistan	8	5	3	3	11	38	141	2	21
Iraq	1	4	0	1	0	12	11	3	10
Iran	8	8	2	14	17	5	16	13	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>278</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>221</b>
<b>Stateless persons</b>									
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,078</b>	<b>2,078</b>	<b>2,078</b>	<b>1,741</b>	<b>3,585</b>	<b>3,585</b>	<b>3,585</b>	<b>3,585</b>	<b>3,585</b>
<b>All persons of concern</b>									
<b>Total</b>	<b>607,934</b>	<b>590,298</b>	<b>596,877</b>	<b>602,734</b>	<b>605,526</b>	<b>614,290</b>	<b>628,190</b>	<b>623,373</b>	<b>618,298</b>

- = no data available

Source: UNHCR, 2018

The number of persons seeking protection in Azerbaijan (including family members) has been fluctuating between 70 and around 200, with the exception of 2014 and 2015, when the number was markedly higher (399 and 255 respectively) (see table 15). Due to an increase of asylum seekers from Turkey in 2017, that year also showed a peak of 262 persons including family members. In almost all years Afghans constituted the largest group, followed by Pakistanis and Iranians. Ukrainians only applied in larger numbers in 2014 and 2015 (none in 2017). Only very few Syrians and Russians have submitted applications in recent years.

Recognition rates for the government procedure remain at a very low level. During the course of 2015 there were 255 applications from asylum seekers submitted to the State Migration Service (see table 15) and at least 257 decisions taken (see table 17). According to UNHCR and the SMS, the number of positive decisions was zero (see table 17). Irrespective of which source is consulted, the total number of persons granted refugee status by national authorities has not exceeded 16 since 2008.

**Table 15: Asylum applications in Azerbaijan, top 10 countries of origin and total, 2010-2017**

Asylum seekers	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Afghanistan	14 (20)	15 (35)	22 (63)	41 (114)	56 (174)	31 (108)	50 (141)	63 (134)
Pakistan	19 (29)	14 (15)	21 (24)	24 (32)	107 (123)	75 (78)	20 (25)	17 (23)
Turkey	-	-	-	-	-	2 (2)	1 (2)	15 (51)
Iran	12 (19)	8 (16)	1 (5)	3 (7)	5 (9)	12 (18)	7 (9)	7 (10)
Iraq	4 (14)	-	-	-	3 (14)	1 (1)	9 (18)	5 (14)
Syria	-	1 (4)	1 (5)	3 (6)	1 (1)	5 (5)	1 (1)	4 (7)
Russian Fed.	-	1 (1)	-	-	1 (1)	1 (1)	1 (4)	3 (5)
Tajikistan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2 (6)
Yemen	-	-	-	1 (2)	-	1 (5)	1 (1)	2 (4)
Sri Lanka	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2 (3)
<b>Total</b>	<b>50 (83)</b>	<b>41 (73)</b>	<b>52 (108)</b>	<b>75 (166)</b>	<b>202 (399)</b>	<b>146 (255)</b>	<b>95 (209)</b>	<b>122 (262)</b>

- = no data available

Persons and persons including family members (in brackets) who submitted applications

Source: SMS, 2017f, 2018b

**Table 16: Recognition of refugee status in Azerbaijan by country of origin, 2008-2017**

Country of origin	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Afghanistan	-	-	-	-	1 (2)	3 (7)	1 (1)	0	4 (16)	1 (3)
Iran	1 (1)	1 (4)	-	-	-	1 (1)	-	-	-	1 (4)
Iraq	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 (4)	-	-	-
Armenia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 (1)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 (1)</b>	<b>1 (4)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1 (2)</b>	<b>4 (8)</b>	<b>2 (5)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4 (16)</b>	<b>3 (8)</b>

- = no data available

Persons and persons including family members (in brackets) who received refugee status

Source: SMS, 2017f, 2018b

On the other hand, recognition rates are considerably higher among those cases administered by UNHCR (both refugee status and complementary protection are considered in the UNHCR procedure). The recognition rate for Afghan applicants reached 56%, for Russian applicants 79%, for Ukrainian applicants 76% and for Syrian applicants even 100%. Only for applicants from Pakistan and Iran were the recognition rates very low. For Syrians and Afghans these UNHCR recognition rates were close to overall recognition rates in the EU-28 in 2015, while for Pakistanis, and Iranians they were markedly lower, and for Russians and Ukrainians considerably higher (see table 17).

**Table 17: Asylum Seekers and Refugee Status Determination in Azerbaijan, 2015, top 7 countries of origin by applications in 2015**

Origin	RSD procedure type / level <sup>1)</sup>	Total persons pending start-year	of which UNHCR assisted	Applied during year	Decisions during 2015				Total persons pending end-year	of which UNHCR assisted	Total recognition rate <sup>2)</sup>	Other-wise closed rate <sup>2)</sup>	Refugee status recognition rate (EU-28) <sup>2)3)</sup>	Total recognition rate (EU-28) <sup>2)3)</sup>
					Recognised	Rejected	Other-wise closed	Total decisions						
Afghanistan	G / FI	22	22	108	0	114	5	119	11	11	0.0%	4.2%	28.7%	66.9%
Afghanistan	U / FI	160	160	129	76	60	30	166	123	123	55.9%	18.1%		
Pakistan	G / FI	0	0	78	0	68	10	78	0	0	0.0%	12.8%	9.1%	26.4%
Pakistan	U / FI	119	119	84	1	159	41	201	2	2	0.6%	20.4%		
Russian Federation	G / FI	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0.0%	0.0%	18.6%	24.9%
Russian Federation	U / FI	31	31	50	15	4	16	35	46	46	78.9%	45.7%		
Ukraine	G / FI	0	0	33	0	24	9	33	0	0	0.0%	27.3%	4.4%	29.8%
Ukraine	U / FI	12	12	10	16	5	1	22	0	0	76.2%	4.5%		
Iran	G / FI	0	0	18	0	17	1	18	0	0	0.0%	5.6%	61.1%	65.0%
Iran	U / FI	16	16	11	1	11	2	14	13	13	8.3%	14.3%		
Yemen	G / FI	0	0	5	0	5	-	5	0	0	0.0%	0.0%	37.5%	73.9%
Yemen	U / FI	0	0	8	3	0	0	3	5	5	100.0%	0.0%		
Syria	G / FI	0	0	5	0	4	0	4	1	1	0.0%	0.0%	80.7%	97.3%
Syria	U / FI	7	7	6	6	0	0	6	7	7	100.0%	0.0%		

1) G = Government; U = UNHCR; FI = First Instance

2) Protection indicators (own calculations following UNHCR methodology):

Refugee status recognition rate: Recognised divided by total of Recognised, Other positive and Rejected

Total recognition rate: Recognised plus Other positive divided by total of Recognised, Other positive and Rejected

Otherwise closed rate: Otherwise closed divided by Total number of decisions

3) Only first instance decisions

\* = fewer than five cases; - = no data available

Sources: UNHCR, 2018, EUROSTAT, 2016, own calculations

## 5.5 Irregular migration

Recently large numbers of cases of illegal stay have been identified by authorities in Azerbaijan. These mainly concerns citizens of the Russian Federation, Turkey, and Georgia, but also Ukrainians, Iranians, Iraqis and other citizens. In 2016, more than 26,000 cases of illegal stay were recorded (see table 18). 70% of these persons received orders to leave the country within 48 hours, 21% were forced returns (among them primarily Russian citizens) and the remaining 9% were cases of legalisation of residence (the largest group being Turkish citizens).

The total number of cases of irregular stay in 2016 was very similar in 2015 (26,369), but lower than in 2014 (37,420) and in 2013 (33,617). Earlier reports from 2008 and 2009 show much smaller numbers: 409 and 2,158 persons respectively were “refused residence” (ICMPD, 2011).

**Table 18: Illegal stay and return, 2016**

Countries	Identified cases of illegal stay	Forced returns (administrative expulsion)	Prescriptions to leave (within 48 hours)	Legalisation of residence
Russian Federation	11,531	1,831	9,149	551
Turkey	3,820	809	2,519	492
Georgia	3,086	586	2,362	138
Ukraine	944	258	578	108
Iran	939	305	521	113
Iraq	610	230	224	156
Kazakhstan	458	134	272	52
UK	423	26	330	67
Uzbekistan	419	161	204	54
Bangladesh	338	209	58	71
Other	3,867	974	2,323	570
<b>Total</b>	<b>26,435</b>	<b>5,523</b>	<b>18,540</b>	<b>2,372</b>

Source: SMS, 2017g

## 6. EMIGRATION

### 6.1 Introduction

Among the post-Soviet countries, Azerbaijan has had one of the highest emigration rates. In 2000, the approximate emigration rate, that is, the percentage of emigrant stock in relation to the resident population of the country of origin, stood at 15.6% (OECD, 2010). This rate was higher than for other former Soviet countries, comparable to the emigration rates of Belarus (15.5%) or Moldova (14.3%), but still lower than Georgia (18.2%), Armenia (18.5%) or Kazakhstan (22.2%).

However, since its independence, the emigration rate for Azerbaijan has been continuously falling. Based on population statistics published by the State Statistical Committee and immigrant as well as emigrant stocks estimated by the UN Population Division, we were able to calculate emigration rates from 1990 to 2015 (see table 19).

The emigration rate decreased from 19.4% in 1990 (before independence) to 17.4%<sup>9</sup> in 2000, 11.9% in 2010 and 10.9% in 2015 – showing a continuous downward trend. This effect is due to both the growing (non-migrant) population in Azerbaijan and the decrease in emigrant stocks, but has been driven since 2010 largely by population growth – the birth surplus in Azerbaijan (see table 1).

**The emigration rate captures the percentage of emigrant stock in relation to the resident population of the country of origin.**

**The emigration rate for Azerbaijan has been continuously falling, from 19.4% in 1990 to 10.9% in 2015 – mostly due to population growth in Azerbaijan.**

**Table 19: Emigration rates for Azerbaijan, 1990-2015**

Country of Birth	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015
Total population (1 Jan)	7,131,900	7,643,500	8,032,800	8,447,400	8,997,600	9,593,000
Immigrants (foreign-born)	360,600	344,070	327,540	302,220	276,901	264,241
Non-migrant population	6,771,300	7,299,430	7,705,260	8,145,180	8,720,699	9,328,759
Emigrant stock	1,634,021	1,712,735	1,628,105	1,447,042	1,178,793	1,146,769
Emigration rate	19.4%	19.0%	17.4%	15.1%	11.9%	10.9%

Sources: AZSTAT, 2016, UN DESA, 2015b, own calculations

<sup>9</sup> This rate is above the approximate rate given by the OECD as it only includes the non-migrant population in Azerbaijan.

## 6.2 Emigrants from Azerbaijan worldwide

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For the following sub-chapter, the UN estimates on international migrant stock have been analysed – which are based mostly on census data from the respective countries of destination.

The Russian Federation has been and remains the country of destination hosting the largest number of migrants from Azerbaijan. Although a continuous decline since the early 1990s is visible, the most recent estimate for 2015 indicates around 767,000 Azerbaijani migrants (born in Azerbaijan) residing in the Russian Federation (see table 20). The Russian Federation's census data from 2010 list the number of Azerbaijanis (country of birth) in Russia at 743,854 (UN DESA, 2017). In other words, two-thirds of all Azerbaijani emigrants currently live in the Russian Federation. The share of irregular migrant workers has been high for Azerbaijani migrants in the Russian Federation (Yunusov, 2012). Only 48,846 Azerbaijani citizens held a valid work permit in 2015 (ROSSTAT, 2016a), but these low numbers compared to all Azerbaijani migrants might simply be due to a large number of permanent residents who do not require work permits.

Based on emigrant stocks, emigration from Azerbaijan is a regional phenomenon, concentrated mostly in post-Soviet states. The top five destination countries are successor states of the USSR, and adding up the figures for the former Soviet Union states (but excluding the Baltic states), more than 90% of Azerbaijani emigrants were concentrated in these countries in 2015.

Neighbouring Armenia hosts the second-largest group of migrants born in Azerbaijan (likely ethnic Armenians) – almost 88,000; a decreasing group exhibiting an age structure pointing to earlier migration cohorts, the largest groups being 50-59 year-olds and persons above 70 years (ARMSTAT, 2011). Also, Armenian statistics divide these into those born in Nagorno-Karabakh (22%) and elsewhere in Azerbaijan (78%). Further information on this population, particularly on their legal status and citizenships, is not available.

Numbers of Azerbaijani emigrants have remained stable in Ukraine during the last ten years, a country hosting just above 82,000 Azerbaijan-born migrants in 2015. Kazakhstan ranks fourth and hosts around 48,000 emigrants, showing an upward trend since 2005. Uzbekistan, the United States and Germany are estimated to each host around 20,000 emigrants. The US and particularly Germany seem to have become attractive destinations recently, as numbers of emigrant stocks from Azerbaijan have doubled (in the US) and even increased by a factor of 32 (in Germany) since 1990 (see table 20). Israel and Belarus (each around 13,500 in 2015) show slightly decreasing numbers of emigrants from Azerbaijan over time.

Jointly, the EU-28 have become an important destination for emigrants, primarily Germany, France, the UK and Sweden. UN estimates put the number of emigrants from Azerbaijan in the EU-28 in 2015 at more than 42,000. The opposite trend can be observed for the (12 non-EU) post-Soviet countries, but total estimates are still above one million emigrants.

Migrants in the Russian Federation worked in wholesale, retail, construction, the processing industry and in transport, most of them irregularly. In the United States, positions offered to Azerbaijani migrants included unskilled work in construction (for men), housekeeping and childcare (for women), and at gas stations (both) (Yunusov, 2012: 3f).

**Table 20: International migrant stocks from Azerbaijan (foreign-born population (B) and refugees (R)), 1990-2015, by top 10 countries in 2015**

Country/ region of destination	Type of data	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015
Russ. Fed.	B	936,852	905,728	841,759	805,658	752,975	767,339
Armenia	B R	464,459	560,521	525,188	376,174	142,156	87,675
Ukraine	B	81,482	87,250	94,083	85,967	82,025	82,299
Kazakhstan	B	35,789	35,661	35,532	40,508	45,483	48,377
Uzbekistan	B	23,261	22,987	22,744	22,504	21,360	20,357
USA	B	9,026	11,382	14,205	15,311	16,605	19,799
Germany	B	600	6,621	12,642	15,592	18,541	19,180
Turkey	B R	4,062	9,832	15,638	16,114	16,605	16,856
Israel	B R	14,696	15,271	14,990	13,969	13,118	13,529
Belarus	B	15,651	14,826	14,000	13,806	13,611	13,493
Other		48,143	42,656	37,324	41,439	56,314	57,865
<b>EU-28</b>		8,569	15,560	23,269	31,705	39,920	42,677
<b>Total (World)</b>		1,634,021	1,712,735	1,628,105	1,447,042	1,178,793	1,146,769

Source: UN DESA, 2015b

At the end of 2016, more than 26,000 Azerbaijani citizens held valid residence permits in one of the 28 EU Member States. Most of these permits were held by Azerbaijani citizens in Germany (11,463), France (3,297), the UK (1,941) the Netherlands (1,935), and Sweden (1,621) (see table 21).

In total a quarter of these permits were issued for family reasons (26%), one out of seven permits was issued for educational purposes (13%), but only 9% for work reasons. Residence permits due to refugee status or subsidiary protection accounted for 18% of all permits. The remaining 34% were permits issued for other reasons. The UK in particular attracts students – 56% of all residence permits there were issued for educational purposes – but also Italy, where 47% of residence permits were issued for education. Family reasons were most prevalent in Sweden, where nearly half (48%) of all residence permits fell into this category. Work reasons were particularly important for Azerbaijani citizens in Poland (43%). International protection (refugee status and subsidiary protection) was the most common category among residence permit holders in France, accounting for a combined 65%.

**Table 21: Valid residence permits in EU countries by reason and country of residence, 31 Dec 2016, top 10 countries**

Permits by reason							
Country of residence	Total	Family reasons	Education reasons	Remunerated activities reasons	Refugee status	Subsidiary protection	Other
Germany	11,463	3,210	703	628	1,289	572	5,061
France	3,297	666	152	69	2,075	58	277
United Kingdom	1,941	487	1,078	301	16	2	57
Netherlands	1,935	202	127	68	33	24	1,481
Sweden	1,621	770	18	108	234	64	427
Czech Republic	1,093	249	258	255	23	2	306
Poland	994	116	322	427	3	5	121
Italy	693	193	329	87	35	23	26
Spain	581	170	101	49	33	0	228
Austria	557	77	113	10	0	0	357
<b>EU-28</b>	<b>26,485</b>	<b>6,955</b>	<b>3,543</b>	<b>2,315</b>	<b>3,842</b>	<b>754</b>	<b>9,076</b>
Share of all residence permits	100%	26%	13%	9%	15%	3%	34%

Source: EUROSTAT, 2017b

### 6.3 Recent emigration and methodological challenges

Emigration flows are particularly difficult to fully assess by sources of sending countries alone. De-registration is not always completed, even when emigrants are required to give notice to authorities (Jensen, 2013). One approach to nevertheless collect empirical data is to refer to statistics of destination countries. The Statistical Office of the European Union (EUROSTAT) provides annual immigration statistics for all EU countries and 18 further European, Western Asian and Central Asian countries. In addition, the following statistics also draw from National Statistical Institutes in Germany, the Russian Federation and Georgia.

Assuming identical concepts of migrants and full coverage, emigration and immigration flows between any two countries by definition match. Considering immigration statistics by the country of previous residence criterion, at least 28,600 persons emigrated from Azerbaijan to foreign countries in 2016, a number much higher than in the official migration statistics for Azerbaijan. 84% of these emigrants were registered in the Russian Federation – 24,109 persons (see table 22). Germany ranks second with 3,703 immigrants arriving directly from Azerbaijan. Other European countries have accounted for only very small shares of annual migration flows in recent years.

It has to be noted that other main emigration countries such as Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, the US, Turkey and Georgia are not included in these statistics. Emigration might therefore be even higher.

**Table 22: Persons emigrating from Azerbaijan to the EU + Russia, 2007-2016, selected top countries**

Destination country	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Russ. Fed.	20,968	-	-	14,500	22,316	22,287	23,453	26,367	24,326	24,109
Germany	768	818	-	-	-	1,359	1,665	2,178	3,419	3,703
Sweden	153	132	178	202	232	233	183	187	173	233
Netherlands	66	82	82	114	123	89	98	121	97	117
Austria	87	95	-	-	73	124	-	117	99	93
Switzerland	-	-	-	-	91	96	123	113	81	68
Lithuania	19	8	11	13	27	41	37	85	39	87
Norway	47	70	43	64	66	65	46	41	40	20
Belgium	-	-	-	92	109	87	46	40	72	47
Italy	-	37	35	51	39	35	43	29	52	61

- = no data available

For the full table see annex table 31.

Sources: EUROSTAT, 2018a, Statistisches Bundesamt, 2014, 2015, 2017, 2018, ROSSTAT, 2016a, b, 2017

Alternatively, immigration statistics by citizenship can be analysed. The Russian authorities registered 18,274 Azerbaijani citizens immigrating in 2016 (see table 23). This constituted by far the largest outflow to any single country. In 2016 Germany ranked second as a destination country with 3,985 Azerbaijani immigrants and Georgia third with 3,420. Other European countries show relatively small inflows, for example Sweden (238), Hungary (200), the Czech Republic (136), the Netherlands (118) and Austria (95). Residence permit statistics from the US also indicate continuous outflows – between 600 and 2,400 Azerbaijanis (country of birth) were granted permanent resident permits each year from 2005-2012 (US Department of Homeland Security, 2013).

**Table 23: Azerbaijani citizens immigrating to the EU, the Russian Federation and Georgia, 2007-2016, selected top countries**

Destination country	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Russ. Fed.	7,448	6,657	6,225	4,929	16,572	17,126	18,027	21,507	19,432	18,274
Germany	747	831	-	-	-	1,360	1,705	2,196	3,154	3,985
Georgia	-	-	-	-	-	1,883	3,211	2,163	2,839	3,420
Sweden	155	114	176	228	250	247	196	193	179	238
Austria	85	102	-	-	70	123	-	117	100	95
Switzerland	51	64	70	104	108	103	127	109	84	76
Netherlands	25	53	43	61	61	51	65	107	82	118
Hungary	16	32	24	32	31	35	45	83	75	200
Lithuania	16	5	6	13	25	38	34	81	36	85
Czech Rep.	317	91	110	213	58	154	39	47	34	136

- = no data available

For the full table see annex table 34.

Sources: EUROSTAT, 2018b, Statistisches Bundesamt, 2016, 2017, ROSSTAT, 2015b, 2017, GEOSTAT, 2018

In total, at least 26,913 Azerbaijani citizens emigrated to other countries in 2016. This is a minimum estimate, as the data analysed here for 2016 only cover the EU-28, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland, the Russian Federation and Georgia. As above, other main emigration countries such as Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and the US are not included in these statistics. Irregular migration is also not captured in official migration statistics.

### 6.3.1 Student mobility

UNESCO provides data on international student mobility for purposes of tertiary education. In 2015, the most recent year with almost complete data (except for the UK, France and a few other countries where not data is available), a record high of more than 38,000 students from Azerbaijan were registered in tertiary education institutions abroad. Despite incomplete figures, an increase of students enrolled abroad is visible since 2012 for all destination countries except the United States, Belarus and France (see table 24).

The main destination countries for students from Azerbaijan in 2015 were the Russian Federation (14,083 students enrolled), Turkey (10,638 students) and Ukraine (9,257 students). Language skills in particular might be a decisive factor for prospective students, which would explain the strong regional focus of student mobility.

**Table 24: International students (tertiary education) from Azerbaijan by country of destination, top 15 countries 2010-2016**

Country of destination	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Russian Federation	-	12,161	8,744	-	12,680	14,083 <sup>w</sup>	-
Turkey	2,819	3,668	4,412	6,989	6,901	10,638	-
Ukraine	(n)	(n)	(n)	(n)	7,599	9,257	-
Georgia	229	336	280	860	-	1,372	-
UK	302	445	574	638	783	-	-
Germany	384 <sup>e</sup>	-	-	580	642	667	-
Kazakhstan	116	170	91	102	124	163	665
USA	405	432	446	371	364	387	-
Belarus	184	279	307	291	293	362	-
Czech Republic	58	86	133	185	209	209	-
France	210	232	252	216	201	-	-
Italy	31	48	47	55	113	156	-
Latvia	13	22	44	97	125	137	-
Lithuania	3	20	56	97	155	126	-
Poland	31	29	53	84	117	-	-

<sup>e</sup> UNESCO estimate

<sup>w</sup> includes data from another category

(n) = magnitude nil or negligible

- = no data available

Source: UNESCO, 2017

## 6.4 Asylum seekers and refugees from Azerbaijan

Due to the ongoing war over Nagorno-Karabakh, displacement remains high not only internally, but also internationally. A total of 9,712 persons had received a refugee or other positive status abroad by the end of 2015, with 517 new recognitions during that year (see tables 25 and 26). The Azerbaijani refugee population was concentrated in France, Germany and Armenia – which points to ethnic differentiations between these groups.

A small number of refugees were naturalised in their respective countries of asylum in 2015 (63 in France, 53 in Armenia), thereby falling out of the statistical classification (see table 25). In total, increases outnumbered decreases – the stock of refugees from Azerbaijan grew during 2015.

Globally, the average recognition rate for refugees from Azerbaijan stood at 17% for refugee status, and 22% for all positive status decisions, including complementary forms of protection (see table 26). In other words, almost four out of five applications resulted in negative decisions. Due to a high number of new applications in 2015 (3,800) and a lower number of decisions during that year (2,904), the backlog of pending applications grew to 5,230 by the end of 2015 (most of them in Germany).

Recognition rates varied between countries of asylum (UNHCR, 2016, not shown). Among the three main countries of asylum, statistical chances for recognition (all positive decisions) were lowest in France (12%/22%, for first instance/administrative review decisions), and higher in Germany (29%/50%, new/repeat application) as well as Sweden (33%/45%, first instance/repeat application).

**Table 25: Refugees from Azerbaijan, excluding asylum seekers, and changes by country of asylum, 2015**

Country of asylum	Population start-2015		Major increases during 2015	Major decreases during 2015	Population end-2015	
	Total	of whom UNHCR-assisted	Individual recognition	Naturalisation	Total	of whom UNHCR-assisted
Armenia	1,554	1,554	-	53	1,501	1,501
France	2,771	-	201	63	2,816	-
Germany	2,167	-	102	-	2,171	-
Other	-	-	214	-	3,224	50
<b>Total</b>	-	-	<b>517</b>	-	<b>9,712</b>	<b>1,551</b>

The refugee population is included in this table if their number was 1,000 or more at the end of 2015. A dash (-) indicates that the value is zero or not available.

Source: UNCHR, 2016

**Table 26: Asylum applications from Azerbaijan and refugee status determination, all countries of asylum 2015**

Pending start-2015	Applied during 2015	Decisions during 2015					Pending end-2015	Protection indicators <sup>1</sup>			
		Positive		Rejected	Otherw. closed	Total		Recognition rates (%)		O/w. closed rate (%)	Change pending cases (%)
		Conv-ent ion status	Compl. protec- tion status					Ref. status	Total		
4,561	3,800	394	123	1,801	586	2,904	5,230	17.0	22.3	20.2	14.7

<sup>1</sup> Protection indicators (calculated by UNHCR):

Refugee status recognition rate: Recognised divided by total of Recognised, Other positive and Rejected \* 100%.

Total recognition rate: Recognised plus Other positive divided by total of Recognised, Other positive and Rejected \* 100%.

Otherwise closed rate: Otherwise closed divided by Total number of decisions \* 100%.

Change in pending cases: Cases pending on 31 December 2015 minus Cases pending as at 1 January 2015 divided by Cases pending as at 1 January 2015 \* 100%.

Source: UNCHR, 2016

# 7. MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

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## 7.1 Introduction

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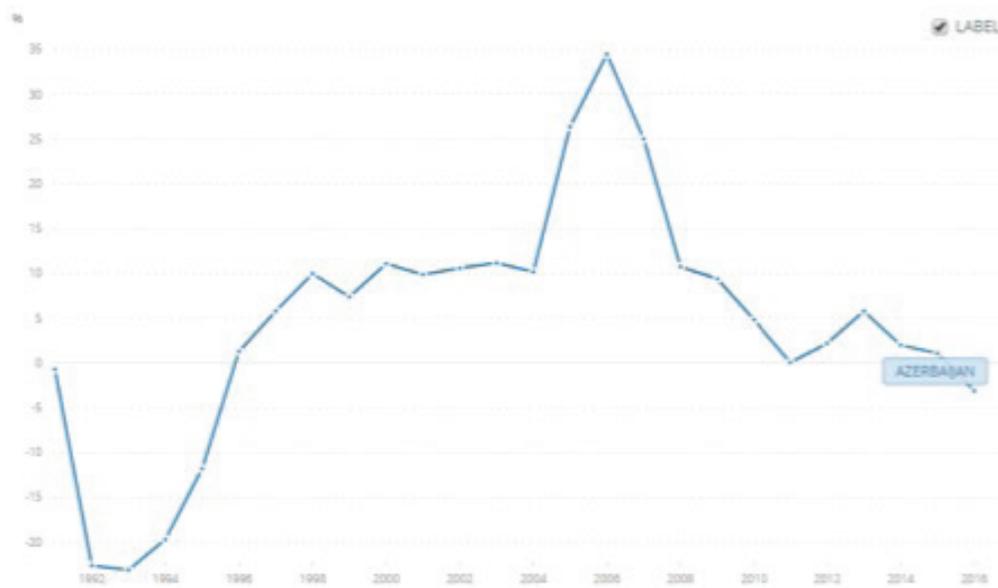
While economic progress since the mid-1990s has been significant, developmental challenges remain for Azerbaijan. The combination of a strong dependency on revenues from the oil and gas sector, the concentration of labour force in agriculture, a youth bulge, and below-average enrolment in tertiary education all pose risks for positive development (World Bank, 2017a). Recent increases in the share of the population with tertiary education – academics (25% in 2015) – are promising, but levels remain low compared to other European countries (World Bank, 2018).

One of the main factors attracting immigrants has been the economic development of Azerbaijan, as reflected in high per capita gross domestic product growth and considerable poverty reduction in recent years. During the 2000s, the growth rates of the Azerbaijani economy were among the highest in the world, peaking in 2006 at a record 34.5%, also a global high in that year (AZSTAT, 2017d, World Bank, 2018).

Starting in the late 1990s, Azerbaijan's economy has been growing at a rapid pace, driven by the thriving oil and gas sector. Annual GDP growth rates fluctuated around 10% between 1998 and 2004. In the following three years, GDP growth reached record highs: 26.4% in 2005, 34.5% in 2006 and 25.0% in 2007. Since then, growth rates have shown a downward trend, hitting zero growth (0.1%) in 2011, recovering to 5.8% in 2013, but falling again to 1.1% in 2015 (see graph 1).

For the first time since 1995, Azerbaijan has entered a recession in 2016. Recent data show negative growth of -3.1% (AZSTAT, 2017d). The slump in oil prices and the country's large dependency on oil and gas exports have driven this economic slowdown, while public investment has also decreased (World Bank, 2017c). On the positive side both the IMF and the World Bank forecasts put real growth between 1% and 3% for the current and the coming years, 2017-2019 (IMF, 2017, World Bank, 2017d).

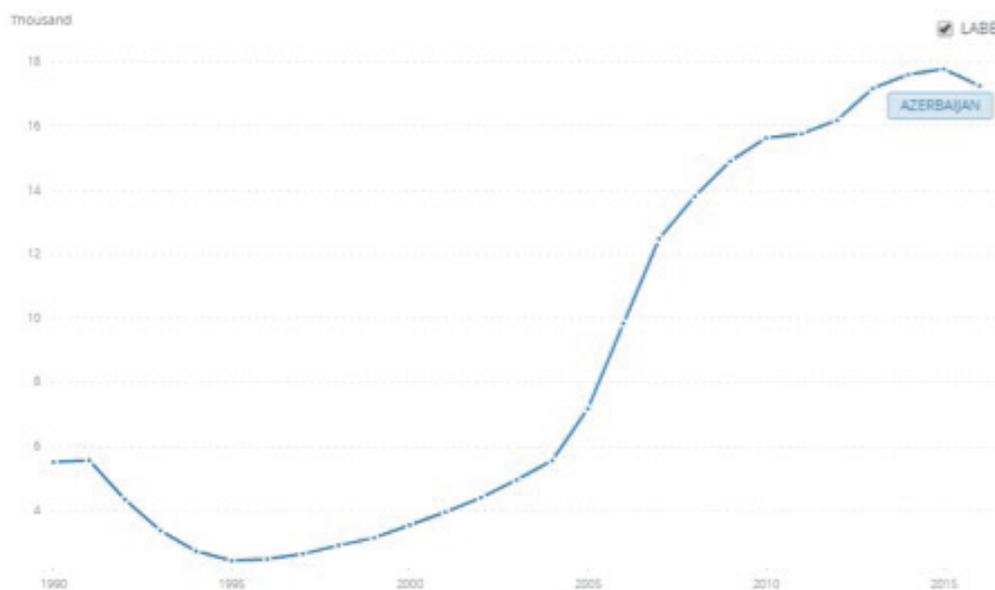
**Graph 1: GDP growth (annual %) for Azerbaijan, 1990-2016**



Source: World Bank, 2018

GDP per capita at purchasing power parity (PPP) has increased continuously since the mid-1990s until 2015 (see graph 2). The boom years 2005-2007 translated into rapidly rising GDP per capita, with relatively modest increases or sideward movements since and a decrease in 2016. For that year GDP per capita (PPP) in Azerbaijan stood at 17,253 international dollars – almost double the levels of Georgia (9,997 international dollars) or Armenia (8,818 international dollars) (World Bank, 2017d).

**Graph 2: GDP per capita (PPP) in current international \$ (thousands), 1990-2016**



Source: World Bank, 2018

The national poverty rate decreased from 50% in 2001 to 16% in 2007 and continued sinking to 6% in 2012, and the unemployment rate stands at 5%, with a decreasing trend since 2000 (World Bank 2017b, e).

Azerbaijan ranked 78<sup>th</sup> in the global Human Development Index 2014, after Georgia (ranked 76<sup>th</sup>) but before Armenia (ranked 85<sup>th</sup>) (UNDP, 2015). Life expectancy at birth stood at 75.2 years in 2016 (AZSTAT, 2018a), expected years of schooling at 11.9, mean years of schooling at 11.2 in 2014 (UNDP, 2015) and Gross National Income (GNI) per capita (PPP) at \$16,130 in 2017 (World Bank, 2018). Azerbaijan's Human Development Index value has gradually but continuously increased from 0.640 in 2000 to 0.741 in 2010 and 0.751 in 2014. International student mobility is larger outbound than inbound – by 6.6% (measured as a percentage of all students enrolled in tertiary education in Azerbaijan).

Demographic indicators show that Azerbaijan's population is comparatively young (median age 32.3 years) and still shows a low old-age dependency ratio (12.6) (AZSTAT, 2018b). The total fertility rate for 2016 was 2.0 (AZSTAT, 2018c). Yet demographic shifts will result in much higher old-age dependency ratios in the decades to come (34.8 projected for 2050 by the Wittgenstein Centre, 2016), comparable to those of many European countries today.

Also, Azerbaijan is the only of the three South Caucasus countries where projections foresee positive population growth as well as positive net migration in the coming years. Azerbaijan's population might reach 10 million before 2020 and 11 million before 2050 years, mainly driven by a projected birth surplus (Wittgenstein Centre, 2014, UN DESA, 2015a).

## 7.2 Remittances

Remittances to Azerbaijan peaked in 2012, totalling 1.99 billion US dollars. In 2013 remittance inflows fell by 13%, rising again in 2014 by 7% to 1.85 billion US dollars (see table 28). The large decreases in 2015 (-31%) and 2016 (-49%) can be partly explained by the devaluation of the Manat.

Azerbaijan is one of the most important remittance sending countries – among middle-income countries globally, Azerbaijan ranked 8<sup>th</sup> in 2014 with 2 billion US dollars sent (after Kazakhstan with 3.6 bn US dollars and Thailand with 3.1 bn US dollars, and before Ukraine with 1.7 bn US dollars) (World Bank, 2016). Remittance outflows have been rising mostly in parallel to inflows, also peaking in 2012 at 2.1 billion US dollars. Since that year, outflows have slightly outweighed inflows, resulting in a negative balance (-83 million US dollars in 2012, -23 million US dollars in 2015).

Total remittances sent to Azerbaijan amounted to 643 million US dollars in 2016, constituting a 1.7% share of GDP (World Bank, 2018). Compared to the GDP share that remittances constitute in Georgia (10.4%) and Armenia (13.1%), official remittances played only a minor role for Azerbaijan – an advantage in a situation of negative net flows as seen from in the World Bank statistics.

Among the countries sending remittances to Azerbaijan, the Russian Federation ranks first, with 737 million US dollars sent in 2015, constituting a share of 58%. Remittances from Armenia amount to 212 million US\$, 17% of all inward remittances. Inflows of remittances from Ukraine (83 million US\$, 7%), Kazakhstan (49 million US\$, 4%) and Uzbekistan (32 million US\$, 2%) are smaller in volume (World Bank, 2017g).

**Table 27: Remittance inflows to and outflows from Azerbaijan (US\$ millions), 2008-2016, data from the Central Bank**

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Inward remittance flows	1,416	1,182	1,338	1,772	1,852	1,579	1,709	1,183 <sup>b</sup>	564
Change year-over-year	18.8%	-16.6%	13.2%	32.4%	4.6%	-14.7%	8.2%	-30.8%	-52.3%
Outward remittance flows	399	522	840	1,138	1,892	1,579	1,523	943 <sup>b</sup>	490
Change year-over-year	45.9%	30.9%	60.8%	35.5%	66.2%	-16.6%	-3.5%	-38.1%	-48.1%
Net flows	1,017	659	498	633	-40	0	186	240 <sup>b</sup>	75

<sup>b</sup> As of 2015, assessments of remittances are carried out in accordance to the new BPM methodology guidance (6<sup>th</sup> edition) designed by the International Monetary Fund balance-of-payments (BPM methodology guidance 5<sup>th</sup> edition until 2014)

Source: Central Bank of the Republic of Azerbaijan, 2017, own calculations

Differences between data provided by the Central Bank of Azerbaijan (table 27) and the World Bank (table 28) can largely be explained by deviating definitions. While World Bank's calculations also include compensation of employees working abroad (the income of border, seasonal or other short-term workers) as defined under the concept of *personal remittances* by the IMF (2008) and thus show higher levels of both inward and outward remittances, the Central Bank's data seem to be based only on personal transfers.

The trends visible from the data, however, are very similar. Year-over-year changes do not differ much, with the exception of 2008-2010, where personal transfers from Azerbaijan rose steeply and compensation of employees declined, and 2013, when personal transfers from Azerbaijan dropped while increased compensation of employees counterbalanced this decrease partly (World Bank, 2016).

**Table 28: Remittance inflows to and outflows from Azerbaijan (US\$ millions), 2008-2016, data from the World Bank**

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Inward remittance flows	1,518	1,255	1,410	1,893	1,990	1,733	1,846	1,270	643
Change year-over-year	19.8%	-17.4%	12.4%	34.2%	5.1%	-12.9%	6.5%	-31.2%	-49.4%
Outward remittance flows	567	638	954	1,280	2,073	1,903	2,031	1,293	-
Change year-over-year	40.2%	12.5%	49.4%	34.2%	62.0%	-8.2%	6.8%	-36.3%	-
Net flows	951	617	457	613	-83	-169	-185	-23	-

Source: World Bank, 2017f, own calculations

### 7.3 Sustainable investments

Harnessing the potentials of labour migration represents an option to support future growth. Non-oil growth and private sector growth need to be strengthened in particular in Azerbaijan (World Bank, 2017c).

Continued support to entrepreneurship holds potential (World Bank, 2017a, Gurbanov, 2014). Especially given the existing ‘youth bulge’ and stable birth surpluses, the labour market will need to absorb large numbers of youths. Rates of business ownership and potential entrepreneurs (those considering setting out on this path) in particular are at lower levels than the regional average in Europe and Central Asia.

Investments in education are among the most promising strategies for mid- to long-term productivity growth. Tertiary education enrolment in Azerbaijan (20%) lags behind other middle-income countries (World Bank, 2017d). Research and Development investments have remained at low levels in Azerbaijan during the last 20 years, well below the 3.5% of GDP recommended by international organisations (Abasli, 2016). Indeed, recently the Research and Development expenditure share has fallen, from 0.25% of GDP in 2009 to 0.22% in 2015 (World Bank, 2018).

Migration systems are linked by multi-dimensional ties – historic, cultural, economic, and social. Identifying existing trends and anticipating their potential could prove successful. The diversification of Azerbaijan’s migration system is becoming visible – a stronger orientation towards EU destination countries (especially Germany and France, but also the Netherlands, the UK and Sweden), and increased mobility in both directions with the Russian Federation as well. Temporary or circular migration is becoming more frequent (almost 54,000 temporary residence permits were issued in Azerbaijan in 2015, compared to around 38,000 in 2012) (SMS, 2016c). Studies should explore the potential of emigrants and diasporas to invest in their home country – and create lasting transnational ties.

Low productivity and over-qualification are additional hindrances to growth (Allahveranov and Huseynov, 2013). For young graduates to translate their skills into innovations, more entrepreneurial and private sector opportunities would be needed.

### 7.4 Diaspora engagement

At least 400 Azerbaijani diaspora organisations are currently active in more than 50 countries (State Committee on Work with the Diaspora, 2018). In addition the European Azerbaijan Society (teas.eu, 2017) actively supports coordination efforts.<sup>10</sup> Countries where diaspora organisations are active include Turkey, the Russian Federation, Iran, Iraq, Georgia, Ukraine, many other European countries – among them Germany, France, Belgium, and the Netherlands, the United States (Uslu and Kocaman, 2013), Australia, and multiple countries in Central Asia, East and Southeast Asia, the Middle East and North Africa, and Central and South America.

The first World Congress of Azerbaijanis was convened in 2001 in Baku, bringing together more than 400 delegates representing more than 200 organisations from 36 countries (State Committee on Work with the Diaspora, 2016). In the following year, the State Committee on Work with

<sup>10</sup> The formerly active All-Russian Azerbaijani Congress was dissolved on September 19, 2017 (State Committee on Work with the Diaspora, 2018).

the Diaspora was founded by a Presidential Decree. After the 2006 and 2011 World Congress meetings, the fourth and latest World Congress of Azerbaijanis met in June 2016 in Baku. In his opening address, President Aliyev pointed out the importance of relations between diaspora organisations, embassies and government authorities (State Security Service, 2016).

## 8. INTERNAL MIGRATION

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### 8.1 Introduction

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In the past three decades, internal migration in Azerbaijan has been caused mainly by internal conflict and war, natural disasters, and economic and educational drivers. High internal migration in the early 1990s was related to the conflict in Karabakh and the (forced) resettlement of IDPs. In addition, some 67,865 people were displaced between 2009 and 2014 due to natural disasters (IDMC, 2014).

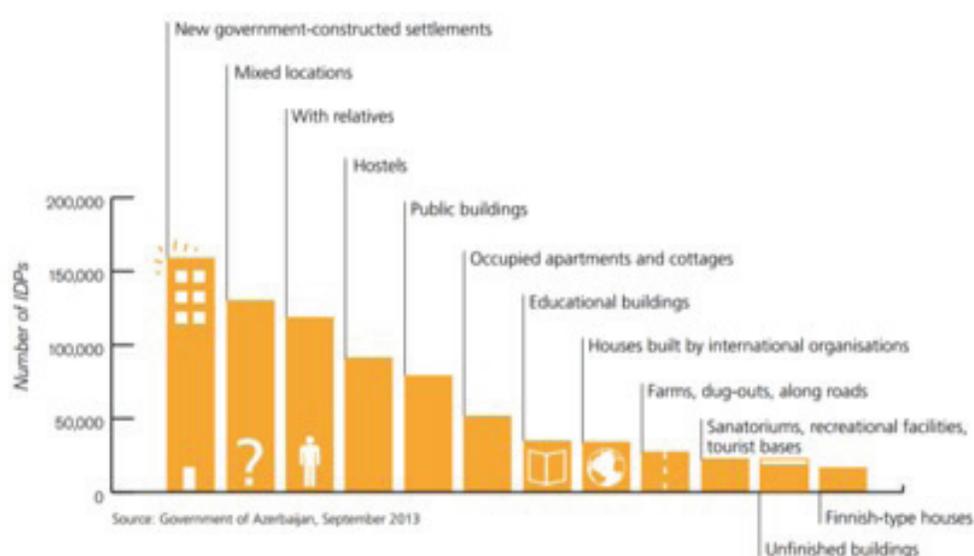
### 8.2 Internally Displaced Persons

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As a result of the war with Armenia, ethnic Azerbaijanis as well as some minority groups (for example Kurds, Russians and Turks) fled from Karabakh to other parts of Azerbaijan and thus became internally displaced. The territorial gains by Karabakh and Armenian forces resulted in Azerbaijan losing control over about 20% of its territory. By the time of the ceasefire in 1994, an estimated 700,000 people had been displaced in Azerbaijan (IDMC, 2014, for current UNHCR statistics see table 14 in section 5.4.3.).

The Government of Azerbaijan runs the State Programme for the Improvement of Living Standards and Generation of Employment for Refugees and IDPs. In 2007 the last emergency camps in which IDPs had been living since the early 1990s were closed. By 2014, the government had also relocated around 180,000 IDPs and refugees to more than 80 settlements (IDMC, 2014). Large numbers of IDPs also live with relatives, in hostels or in public buildings (see graph 3). Some IDPs have occupied empty houses and apartments – causing controversy and court cases.

In 2011, the World Bank reported the poverty rate for IDPs at 25%, five percent higher than for the general population. The unemployment rate for IDPs stood at 60%, compared to 43% for the general population (IDMC, 2014). The general poverty rate (at national poverty lines) was much lower, at 6% in 2012, while the unemployment rate stood at 5.1% in 2017 (World Bank, 2018).

**Graph 3: Types of IDP housing**

Source: IDMC, 2014

### 8.2.1 Regulatory framework for IDPs in Azerbaijan

The following legislative acts form the legal framework for IDP policy in Azerbaijan:

- the Law on the Status of Refugees and Forcibly Displaced Persons (1999);
- the Law on Social Protection of Forcibly Displaced Persons (1999);
- the State Programme for the Improvement of Living Standards and Generation of Employment for Refugees and IDPs (2004)

The following national institutions deal with internally displaced persons in Azerbaijan (Salinas, 2003):

- **The State Committee for Refugees and Displaced Person** has direct responsibility for the IDP population and, together with the regional Executive Committees, provides direct assistance to IDPs. The Ministries of Health, Education, Labour and Social Affairs, and parliamentary commissions for social policy and for human rights are all included within this institutional framework.
- **The Department of Repatriation** was created in 1999 within the structure of the State Committee to coordinate repatriation of the displaced in the event of peace. So far, this department has been involved in directing the repatriation of IDPs to the villages of Agdam and Fizuli.
- **Department for problems of refugees, internally displaced persons, migration and affairs with international organizations** under the Administration of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Azerbaijan Republic, established in 2004 (State Committee for Refugees and IDPs, 2017b).
- **The Republican Commission on International Humanitarian Assistance** was created in 1995 – its task is to coordinate the receipt and distribution of international humanitarian assistance. Representatives of this commission have two main tasks: liaising with international organisations and NGOs, and coordinating programmes in specific areas of Azerbaijan. Via its Working Group, the Commission is responsible for coordinating all programmes (e.g., income-

generation projects among IDPs) in designated provinces of Azerbaijan. Recently, it has been dealing with the problems of families displaced by the rising levels of the Caspian Sea.

- **The State Commission for Reconstruction and Rehabilitation**, established in 1996, is in charge of coordinating all national and international input towards reconstruction.
- **The Republican Commission on International and Technical Assistance**, via its A Programme for the Resettlement and Reconstruction of the Liberated Areas, designed by the government and the international community, has been set up to support the return of more than 36,000 people. The Azerbaijani Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Agency (ARRA) implements the programme, under the leadership of the State Commission for Reconstruction and Rehabilitation (Salinas, 2003).

While the government took over the vast majority of costs related to solving IDP-related matters, international organisations including the World Bank, UNHCR, UNDP, IOM and national agencies (USAID) have also contributed to the process.

### 8.3 Ecological migrants

The numbers of ecological migrants are lower than those of internally displaced persons. However, according to IDMC (2014), 67,865 people were displaced between 2009 and 2014 due to natural disasters. Frequent natural disasters in Azerbaijan include floods, landslides, earthquakes, salinisation, sea-level fluctuations, etc.

In 2010 more than 70,000 people were affected by a flood and tens of thousands of homes destroyed near the confluence of the Kura and Araz rivers (Safaraliyev, 2015, see also table 29). Some of the displaced were IDPs from Karabakh. In 2012 the earthquake in Zaqatala and Gakh led to the evacuation of some 7,000 families (IOM, 2016). Generally the authorities undertake efforts to rebuild or repair houses damaged by natural disasters, but in case of large-scale disasters this is often not feasible.

**Table 29: Major hazards in Azerbaijan from 1990 to 2016**

Event	Year	Deaths	Total population affected
Earthquake	2012	0	22,499
Extreme temperature	2012	5	-
Flood	2010	3	70,000
Flood	2009	0	5,000
Landslide	2000	11	-
Earthquake	2000	31	-
Earthquake	1999	1	9,170
Earthquake	1998	1	700,010
Flood	1997	11	75,000
Flood	1995	0	1,650,000

- = no data available

Source: EM-DAT, 2017

### 8.3.1 Regulatory framework for ecological migrants in Azerbaijan

The following normative-legal acts set the regulatory framework for ecological migrants in Azerbaijan:

- the National Environmental Action Plan for 1998-2003;
- the State Program on Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Development (2008-2015), which addresses environmental concerns particularly in relation to water supply and sanitation;
- the Law on Protection of Environment (1999);
- the Law of Ecological Security (1999);
- the State Concept of the Azerbaijan Republic on the Migration Management Policy (2004) which underlines ecological migration from the Caspian Sea region as one of the main challenges; and
- the State Migration Program of the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2006-2008.

At the international level, Azerbaijan signed the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in June 1992 and in 1997 a State Commission on Climate Change was established by presidential decree.

## 9. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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Official migration statistics for Azerbaijan apparently only cover a small share of immigration and emigration: in immigration statistics, only foreign citizens who are granted permanent residence permits are included. Recommendations for international migration statistics foresee the inclusion of both citizens and non-citizens who change their country of residence for more than 12 months. Data on Azerbaijani citizens returning or immigrating to Azerbaijan are not available and not included in immigration statistics. Also, foreign citizens holding (consecutive) temporary residence permits of 12 months or more are not included in immigration data.

Based on data provided by EUROSTAT, the United Nations Population Division, National Statistical Institutes and other sources, a more complete picture of migration movements becomes visible: at least 15,100 persons immigrated to Azerbaijan in 2016, and at least 28,600 emigrated from Azerbaijan. Although these statistics, based on international data sources, do not cover all known destination and origin countries, it appears that both immigration and emigration have been increasing since 2007, resulting in continued negative migration balances.

For 2016 a negative migration balance of at least 13,500 persons has to be assumed (28,600 emigrants vis-à-vis 15,100 immigrants, including both foreign and Azerbaijani citizens, see annex table 32). This migration loss is mainly driven by emigrants to the Russian Federation, and might even be higher, as Kazakhstan, the United States and other non-European countries have not been included in these estimates.

Azerbaijan's migration system exhibits strong regional ties – the main countries of destination for emigrants as well as the main countries of origin for immigrants are former Soviet countries. First and foremost, the Russian Federation hosts the largest emigrant population (estimated at almost 770,000 in 2015). EU countries (especially Germany, France, the Netherlands, the UK and Sweden) are increasingly becoming destination countries as well. Between 1990 and 2015, the number of Azerbaijanis in the current EU-28 countries increased by a factor of five – to more than 42,000 (see table 20).

The largest group of immigrants in Azerbaijan originates from Armenia and consists of ethnic Azerbaijanis who were forced to flee in the early 1990s due to the war with Azerbaijan's Western neighbour. Around 50,000 persons born in Georgia and 29,000 born in the Russian Federation were estimated to be resident in Azerbaijan in 2015 – all three declining populations since the 1990s.

**At least 15,100 persons immigrated to Azerbaijan in 2016, and at least 28,600 emigrated from Azerbaijan. Therefore a negative migration balance of at least 13,500 persons has to be assumed.**

**National migration statistics undercover both immigration and emigration, because they do not include Azerbaijani return migrants and temporary permit holders in immigration statistics and only refer to official de-registrations in emigration statistics.**

Processes of ethnic homogenisation in the South Caucasus (for Georgia see ICMPD, 2015) are visible also in Azerbaijan. The ethnic Azerbaijani share of the total population was over 90% in 2009 – while the shares (if not always the absolutes numbers) of ethnic minorities have been decreasing since Azerbaijan's independence.

Refugee flows to Azerbaijan have recently shown a peak in 2014 (399 applicants including family members) but remain low in comparison with other countries in the region and in elsewhere in Europe. Recognition rates for asylum seekers in 2015 differed markedly between those applying to the government (0%) and those subsequently applying to UNHCR (between 56% for Afghans and 100% for Syrians). The restrictive handling of asylum applications is based on considerations related to the already large number of refugees and IDPs in Azerbaijan. More than 618,000 persons remain internally displaced due to the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh, with 20% of Azerbaijan's territory occupied.

Given these challenges, combined with the 2016 economic depression and the current economic outlook, Azerbaijan might face obstacles attracting highly skilled foreign labour – one of its policy objectives. However, highly skilled and educated Azerbaijani diaspora members might be incentivised to return to Azerbaijan temporarily or permanently to fill gaps in the skilled labour force, particularly in the non-oil sectors of the economy.

## Recommendations

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- Foster and support academic as well as policy-oriented research on migration and integration, to enable the build-up of expertise and topical exchange between researchers, policy makers and practitioners.
  - Commission a more comprehensive analysis of migration movements between Azerbaijan and other countries, as well as on emigrant populations, covering further sending and receiving countries (such as Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine, Turkey, Iran, India, Bangladesh and the United States).
  - Commission studies exploring the interest of diasporas and emigrants in investing in Azerbaijan.
  - Encourage and support the implementation of household surveys to assess developmental impacts of migration and changes in social structures, also covering remittances sent and received.
  - Establish a Migration Research Advisory Board at the SMS, as a coordinating body, including academics as well as researchers and experts from international organisations and NGOs in order to facilitate exchange between policy makers and researchers, based on a shared understanding of the relevance of evidence-based policies.
- Revise official migration statistics to include:
  - both foreign citizens and Azerbaijani citizens immigrating and emigrating, in line with UN recommendations.
  - temporary residence permit holders who have stayed more than 12 months.

- disaggregations by country of citizenship, country of birth and country of origin/country of destination, each further disaggregated by gender and age groups.
- Leading up to the 2019 census, revise population statistics, closing the expected gap between current projections and census results; and publish population statistics (estimates) disaggregated both by citizenship and country of birth.
- Aim to attract larger numbers of foreign students to higher education institutions. Acquiring degrees in Azerbaijan would also ease labour market entry for those who find opportunities, and support entrepreneurial ideas.
- Support educational mobility for Azerbaijani students, in line with the Azerbaijan 2020 Development Concept.
- Increase spending on Research and Development.
- Attract highly skilled immigrants, for example, by:
  - offering two-year temporary residence permits or five-year residence permits, tied to employment, and lower issuance fees.
  - ensuring transferability of social benefits between further countries of origin and Azerbaijan.
- Attract and support return migrants, in particular for positions in the non-oil sectors of the economy (tourism, engineering, education, etc.) and encourage entrepreneurship.



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*Note: All URLs last accessed on 5 April 2018 (except stated otherwise).*

# 11. ANNEX

## 11.1 Tables

**Table 30: Persons immigrating to Azerbaijan from the EU-28 and other European and Asian countries (data from countries of origin), 2007-2016**

Country of origin	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Armenia	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Austria	16	25	-	31	37	-	-	-	43	47
Belarus	16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Belgium	-	-	-	35	44	35	120	77	83	50
Bosnia-Herz.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bulgaria	0	-	-	-	-	12	13	7	14	8
Croatia	0	-	-	-	1	0	-	-	1	1
Cyprus	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Czech Republic	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Denmark	-	1	3	3	0	6	3	2	2	4
Estonia	3	3	4	1	0	0	2	2	1	12
Finland	9	1	2	3	0	1	5	1	1	2
FYROM <sup>1)</sup>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
France	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Germany	871	936	-	-	-	699	686	828	937	1,117
Greece	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hungary	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Iceland	0	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1
Ireland	3	4	7	8	-	-	-	-	-	-
Israel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Italy	-	1	1	7	8	8	46	23	18	17
Kyrgyzstan	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Latvia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Liechtenstein	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lithuania	26	38	34	23	25	18	56	74	174	97
Luxembourg	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Malta	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Moldova	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Netherlands	14	14	-	-	-	24	53	26	43	33
Norway	6	4	6	13	15	19	16	27	26	26
Poland	1	16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Portugal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Romania	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Russian Federation	1,355	-	-	1,111	1,255	4,185	6,207	13,973	13,666	13,670
San Marino	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Slovakia	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Slovenia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	5
Spain	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sweden	7	5	10	9	13	17	13	23	15	17
Switzerland	-	-	-	-	15	51	52	55	86	45
Tajikistan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Turkey	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
United Kingdom	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Uzbekistan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>n.c.</b>	<b>n.c.</b>	<b>n.c.</b>	<b>n.c.</b>	<b>n.c.</b>	<b>5,075</b>	<b>7,272</b>	<b>15,119</b>	<b>15,115</b>	<b>15,152</b>

- = no data available; n.c. = not comparable

<sup>1)</sup> Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Sources: EUROSTAT, 2018c, ROSSTAT, 2015a, 2016b, 2017, Statistisches Bundesamt, 2014, 2015, 2017, 2018

**Table 31: Persons emigrating from Azerbaijan to the EU-28 and other European and Asian countries (data from countries of destination), 2007-2016**

Country of destination	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Armenia	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Austria	87	95	-	-	73	124	-	117	99	93
Belarus	181	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Belgium	-	-	-	92	109	87	46	40	72	47
Bosnia-Herz.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bulgaria	0	-	-	-	-	9	20	22	13	11
Croatia	0	1	5	0	0	0	6	3	12	5
Cyprus	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Czech Republic	127	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Denmark	12	26	21	22	14	18	22	11	17	13
Estonia	7	9	3	9	14	3	12	5	24	28
Finland	18	42	13	14	23	17	14	8	14	36
FYROM <sup>1)</sup>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
France	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Germany	768	818	-	-	-	1,359	1,665	2,178	3,419	3,703
Greece	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hungary	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Iceland	0	-	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	5
Ireland	25	19	10	12	-	-	-	-	-	-
Israel	132	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Italy	-	37	35	51	39	35	43	29	52	61
Kyrgyzstan	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Latvia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Liechtenstein	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lithuania	19	8	11	13	27	41	37	85	39	87
Luxembourg	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Malta	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Moldova	93	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Netherlands	66	82	82	114	123	89	98	121	97	117
Norway	47	70	43	64	66	65	46	41	40	20
Poland	2	22	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Portugal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Romania	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Russian Federation	20,968	-	-	14,500	22,316	22,287	23,453	26,323	24,326	24,109
San Marino	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Slovakia	-	0	3	0	0	0	0	1	3	3
Slovenia	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	3	6	4
Spain	42	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sweden	153	132	178	202	232	233	183	187	173	233
Switzerland	-	-	-	-	91	96	123	113	81	68
Tajikistan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Turkey	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
United Kingdom	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Uzbekistan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>n.c.</b>	<b>n.c.</b>	<b>n.c.</b>	<b>n.c.</b>	<b>n.c.</b>	<b>24,463</b>	<b>25,770</b>	<b>29,332</b>	<b>28,487</b>	<b>28,643</b>

- = no data available; n.c. = not comparable

<sup>1)</sup> Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Sources: EUROSTAT, 2018a, ROSSTAT, 2016a,b, 2017, Statistisches Bundesamt, 2014, 2015, 2017, 2018

**Table 32: Net migration for Azerbaijan and the EU-28 and other European and Asian countries, 2007-2016**

Country of origin/ destination	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Armenia	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Austria	71	70	-	-	36	-	-	-	56	46
Belarus	165	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Belgium	-	-	-	57	65	52	-74	-37	-11	-3
Bosnia-Herz.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bulgaria	0	-	-	-	-	-3	7	15	-1	3
Croatia	0	-	-	-	-1	0	-	-	11	4
Cyprus	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Czech Republic	119	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Denmark	-	25	18	19	14	12	19	9	15	9
Estonia	4	6	-1	8	14	3	10	3	23	16
Finland	9	41	11	11	23	16	9	7	13	34
FYROM <sup>1)</sup>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
France	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Germany	-103	-118	-	-	-	660	979	1,350	2,482	2,586
Greece	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hungary	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Iceland	0	-	0	0	0	0	1	1	-3	4
Ireland	22	15	3	4	8	6	10	15	27	-
Israel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Italy	-	36	34	44	31	27	-3	6	34	44
Kyrgyzstan	-17	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Latvia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Liechtenstein	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lithuania	-7	-30	-23	-10	2	23	-19	11	-135	-10
Luxembourg	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Malta	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Moldova	92	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Netherlands	52	68	-	-	-	65	45	95	54	84
Norway	41	66	37	51	51	46	30	14	14	-6
Poland	1	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Portugal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Romania	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Russian Federation	19,613	-	-	13,389	21,061	18,102	17,246	12,350	10,660	10,439
San Marino	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Slovakia	-	0	3	0	0	0	0	1	2	3
Slovenia	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	2	5	-1
Spain	40	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sweden	146	127	168	193	219	216	170	164	158	216
Switzerland	-	-	-	-	76	45	71	58	-5	23
Tajikistan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Turkey	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
United Kingdom	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Uzbekistan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>n.c.</b>	<b>n.c.</b>	<b>n.c.</b>	<b>n.c.</b>	<b>n.c.</b>	<b>19,388</b>	<b>18,498</b>	<b>14,213</b>	<b>13,372</b>	<b>13,491</b>

- = no data available; n.c. = not comparable

Positive/negative numbers indicate a positive/negative migration balance for the respective country.

<sup>1)</sup> Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Sources: Own calculations based on EUROSTAT, 2018a, c, ROSSTAT, 2015a, 2016a, b, 2017, Statistisches Bundesamt, 2014, 2015, 2017, 2018

**Table 33: Azerbaijani citizens emigrating from the EU-28 and other European and Asian countries, 2007-2016**

Country of origin	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Armenia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Austria	17	24	-	-	32	38	-	42	46	47
Belarus	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Belgium	9	-	-	42	56	64	136	108	73	55
Bosnia-Herz.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bulgaria	0	-	-	-	-	0	4	5	11	9
Croatia	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1
Cyprus	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Czech Republic	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	63	107	157
Denmark	-	1	1	4	5	3	1	4	5	14
Estonia	0	2	3	0	0	0	0	2	14	12
Finland	1	2	0	1	0	2	6	2	0	2
FYROM <sup>1)</sup>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
France	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Georgia	-	-	-	-	-	1,210	1,631	1,254	1,574	1,772
Germany	896	950	-	-	-	686	679	844	912	1,194
Greece	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hungary	0	1	0	4	4	15	1	0	8	15
Iceland	0	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Ireland	0	0	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Italy	-	0	0	3	1	2	4	5	1	5
Kyrgyzstan	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Latvia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	-	-
Liechtenstein	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lithuania	8	21	17	13	17	19	47	65	168	91
Luxembourg	0	0	0	5	0	1	5	6	4	1
Malta	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Moldova	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Netherlands	10	3	11	14	13	19	26	27	36	41
Norway	7	2	7	9	12	25	34	26	19	11
Poland	0	16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Portugal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Romania	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Russian Federation	108	100	88	80	402	2,772	4,757	11,963	11,999	11,686
San Marino	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Slovakia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Slovenia	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	5
Spain	34	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sweden	10	7	5	10	21	23	30	36	50	21
Switzerland	11	21	34	54	43	53	66	72	98	54
Tajikistan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Turkey	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
United Kingdom	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Uzbekistan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>n.c.</b>	<b>n.c.</b>	<b>n.c.</b>	<b>n.c.</b>	<b>n.c.</b>	<b>4,933</b>	<b>7,427</b>	<b>14,536</b>	<b>15,126</b>	<b>15,194</b>

- = no data available; n.c. = not comparable

<sup>1)</sup> Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Sources: EUROSTAT, 2018d, Statistisches Bundesamt, 2014, 2015, 2017, 2018, ROSSTAT, 2015b, 2017, GEOSTAT, 2018

**Table 34: Azerbaijani citizens immigrating to the EU-28 and other European and Asian countries, 2007-2016**

Country of destination	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Armenia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Austria	85	102	-	-	70	123	-	117	100	95
Belarus	149	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Belgium	38	-	-	102	175	133	80	43	57	77
Bosnia-Herz.	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bulgaria	0	-	-	-	-	9	18	20	10	10
Croatia	0	0	5	1	0	0	5	3	9	1
Cyprus	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Czech Republic	317	91	110	213	58	154	39	47	34	136
Denmark	11	19	12	18	13	10	20	11	11	13
Estonia	6	10	3	7	11	5	12	6	25	27
Finland	9	12	8	6	20	17	8	10	16	40
FYROM <sup>1)</sup>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
France	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Georgia	-	-	-	-	-	1,883	3,211	2,163	2,839	3,420
Germany	747	831	-	-	-	1,360	1,705	2,196	3,154	3,985
Greece	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hungary	16	32	24	32	31	35	45	83	75	200
Iceland	0	-	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	4
Ireland	7	6	4	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Italy	-	34	38	42	41	35	40	17	38	44
Kyrgyzstan	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Latvia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	24	-	-
Liechtenstein	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lithuania	16	5	6	13	25	38	34	81	36	85
Luxembourg	3	2	14	4	18	17	13	7	13	25
Malta	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Moldova	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Netherlands	25	53	43	61	61	51	65	107	82	118
Norway	40	58	33	52	58	60	35	29	34	25
Poland	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Portugal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Romania	-	2	3	1	3	14	20	40	14	15
Russian Federation	7,448	6,657	6,225	4,929	16,572	17,126	18,027	21,507	19,432	18,274
San Marino	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Slovakia	-	0	3	0	0	0	0	1	3	1
Slovenia	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	3	7	4
Spain	56	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sweden	155	114	176	228	250	247	196	193	179	238
Switzerland	51	64	70	104	108	103	127	109	84	76
Tajikistan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Turkey	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
United Kingdom	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Uzbekistan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>n.c.</b>	<b>n.c.</b>	<b>n.c.</b>	<b>n.c.</b>	<b>n.c.</b>	<b>21,420</b>	<b>23,702</b>	<b>26,818</b>	<b>26,252</b>	<b>26,913</b>

- = no data available; n.c. = not comparable

<sup>1)</sup> Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Sources: EUROSTAT, 2018b, Statistisches Bundesamt, 2014, 2015, 2017, 2018, ROSSTAT, 2015b, 2017, GEOSTAT, 2018

**Table 35: Net migration for Azerbaijani citizens in the EU-28 and other European and Asian countries, 2007-2016**

Countries of origin/ destination	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Armenia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Austria	68	78	-	-	38	85	-	75	54	48
Belarus	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Belgium	29	-	-	60	119	69	-56	-65	-16	22
Bosnia-Herz.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bulgaria	0	-	-	-	-	9	14	15	-1	1
Croatia	0	-1	5	1	-1	-1	5	3	9	0
Cyprus	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Czech Republic	309	-	-	-	-	-	-	-16	-73	-21
Denmark	-	18	11	14	8	7	19	7	6	-1
Estonia	6	8	0	7	11	5	12	4	11	15
Finland	8	10	8	5	20	15	2	8	16	38
FYROM <sup>1)</sup>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
France	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Georgia	-	-	-	-	-	673	1,580	909	1,265	1,648
Germany	-149	-119	-	-	-	674	1,026	1,352	2,242	2,791
Greece	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hungary	16	31	24	28	27	20	44	83	67	185
Iceland	0	-	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	3
Ireland	7	6	3	4	-	-	-	-	-	-
Italy	-	34	38	39	40	33	36	12	37	39
Kyrgyzstan	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Latvia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	-	-
Liechtenstein	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lithuania	8	-16	-11	0	8	19	-13	16	-132	-6
Luxembourg	3	2	14	-1	18	16	8	1	9	24
Malta	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Moldova	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Netherlands	15	50	32	47	48	32	39	80	46	77
Norway	33	56	26	43	46	35	1	3	15	14
Poland	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Portugal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Romania	-	2	3	1	3	14	20	40	14	15
Russian Federation	7,340	6,557	6,137	4,849	16,170	14,354	13,270	9,544	7,433	6,588
San Marino	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Slovakia	-	0	3	0	0	0	0	1	3	1
Slovenia	0	1	-1	0	0	0	1	3	6	-1
Spain	22	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sweden	145	107	171	218	229	224	166	157	129	217
Switzerland	40	43	36	50	65	50	61	37	-14	22
Tajikistan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Turkey	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
United Kingdom	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Uzbekistan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>n.c.</b>	<b>n.c.</b>	<b>n.c.</b>	<b>n.c.</b>	<b>n.c.</b>	<b>16,487</b>	<b>16,275</b>	<b>12,282</b>	<b>11,126</b>	<b>11,719</b>

- = no data available; n.c. = not comparable

Positive/negative numbers indicate a positive/negative migration balance for the respective country.

<sup>1)</sup> Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Sources: own calculations, based on EUROSTAT, 2018b, d, Statistisches Bundesamt, 2014, 2015, 2017, 2018, ROSSTAT, 2015b, 2017, GEOSTAT, 2018

## 11.2 International definitions of migrants

### UN Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration (UN DESA Statistics Division, 1998)<sup>11</sup>

An *International migrant* is defined as any person who changes his or her country of usual residence.

*Country of usual residence*: The country in which a person lives, that is to say, the country in which he or she has a place to live where he or she normally spends the daily period of rest. Temporary travel abroad for purposes of recreation, holiday, visits to friends and relatives, business, medical treatment or religious pilgrimage does not change a person's country of usual residence.

*Long-term migrant*: A person who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least a year (12 months), so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her country of usual residence. From the perspective of the country of departure the person will be a long-term emigrant and from that of the country of arrival the person will be a long-term immigrant.

*Short-term migrant*: A person who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least 3 months but less than a year (12 months) except in cases where the movement to that country is for purposes of recreation, holiday, visits to friends and relatives, business, medical treatment or religious pilgrimage. For purposes of international migration statistics, the country of usual residence of short-term migrants is considered to be the country of destination during the period they spend in it.

### EU Regulation on Community statistics on migration and international protection (862/2007/EC)<sup>12</sup>

Article 2, 1.

(a) 'Usual residence' means the place in which a person normally spends the daily period of rest, regardless of temporary absences for purposes of recreation, holiday, visits to friends and relatives, business, medical treatment or religious pilgrimage or, in default, the place of legal or registered residence.

(b) 'Immigration' means the action by which a person establishes his or her usual residence in the territory of a Member State for a period that is, or is expected to be, of at least twelve months, having previously been usually resident in another Member State or a third country.

(c) 'Emigration' means the action by which a person, having previously been usually resident in the territory of a Member State, ceases to have his usual residence in that Member State for a period that is, or is expected to be, of at least twelve months.

(f) 'Immigrant' means a person undertaking an immigration.

(g) 'Emigrant' means a person undertaking an emigration.

<sup>11</sup> UN DESA Statistics Division. (1998). Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration. Revision 1. UN Doc. ST/ESA/STAT/SER.M/58/Rev.1, §§ 32, 37.

<sup>12</sup> Council Regulation 862/2007/EC on Community statistics on migration and international protection, 2007 O.J. L199/23.

## **Baseline Study on Migration in Azerbaijan**

**Study developed within the framework of the EU-funded Support to the Implementation of the Mobility Partnership with Azerbaijan (MOBILAZE) project**

**International Centre for Migration Policy Development, 2018**

This study is one of the outcomes of the EU-funded 'Support to the Implementation of the Mobility Partnership with Azerbaijan' (MOBILAZE) project.

The aim of the study is on the one hand to analyse migration trends in Azerbaijan and on the other assess existing sources in order to put forward recommendations on information collection and analysis to facilitate informed migration policy making. The main focus of the document is Azerbaijan's recent migration history and migration management and policy, immigration and emigration, relations with the EU, asylum, migration and development, internal migration and IDPs.

The study is based on desk research as well as research undertaken during the MOBILAZE internship to ICMPD and fact-finding research missions to Baku for follow-up data collection and interviews.