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DEVELOPMENT FEATURES OF URBAN RESIDENCE IN THE ARAN ECONOMIC AND GEOGRAPHICAL REGION OF AZERBAIJAN

The article examines the problems in this area and develops proposals to address them. The article analyzes the dynamics of the level of urbanization in the Aran economic-geographical region, the formation and development of urban settlement in the administrative regions. The study of demographic processes in urban areas of the region shows that in recent years there has been a natural increase in the population, a decrease in the dynamics of births and marriages, an increase in mortality, infant mortality and divorce. The population potential and the current state of industrial production in the territory of the Aran economic-geographical region of Azerbaijan, both in the cities of the republican subordination and the central type of the administrative region, have been studied. The prospects of future development of the cities were commented by studying the issues of employment and use of labor resources in the Aran economic-geographical region. Development of agriculture and related processing industries, trade, services and other areas based on the economic potential of the Aran economic-geographical region will increase the level of employment and stimulate the population to remain in the field by providing jobs with increasing demographic potential. The article provides information on the socio-economic situation in the Aran economic-geographical region, is important for assessing the level of use of existing potential, attracting foreign and local investors to various sectors of the region's economy. Azerbaijan, including the Aran economic and geographical region, has great potential for the non-oil sector of the economy. Cotton, grapes, grain, fruits and vegetables, potatoes, various cereals, etc. are grown in the fertile lands of the Aran zone of the republic.

Key words: urban settlement, economic-geographical position, productive forces, socio-economic development, demographic potential.

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Әзірбайжанның Аран экономикалық-географиялық аймағында қалалық резиденциясының даму ерекшеліктері

Мақалада осы саладағы мәселелер зерттеліп, оларды шешу бойынша ұсыныстар жасалады. Аран экономикалық-географиялық аймағындағы урбанизация деңгейінің динамикасы, әкімшілік аудандардағы қалалық елді мекендердің қалыптасуы мен дамуы талданады. Облыстың қалалық аудандарындағы демографиялық процестерге жүргізілген зерттеу соңғы жылдары халықтың табиғи өсуі, туу мен неке динамикасының төмендеуі, өлім-жітімнің, нәрестелер өлімі мен ажырасудың көбейгені байқалғанын көрсетеді. Әзірбайжанның Аран экономикалық-географиялық ауданы аумағы мен республикалық бағыныстағы қалаларда да әкімшілік ауданның орталық түрінде демографиялық әлеует пен өнеркәсіптік өндірістің қазіргі жағдайы зерттелді. Аран экономикалық-географиялық аймағында ауылшаруашылық шикізатын толық кешенді өңдеу негізінде заманауи бәсекеге қабілетті өнімдер шығаруға қабілетті бірлескен өнеркәсіптік кәсіпорындар құру (шетелдік инвесторларды тарту арқылы) Ресей қалаларының экономикалық базасы мен әлеуметтік инфрақұрылымын жақсартады. Аран аймағының экономикалық әлеуетіне негізделген ауылшаруашылығын және онымен байланысты қайта өңдеу өндірістерін, сауданы, көрсетілетін қызметтерді және басқа да салаларды дамыту жұмыспен қамту деңгейін арттырады және демографиялық әлеуеті өсіп келе жатқан жұмыс орындарын құра отырып, халықты далада қалуға ынталандыратын болады. Мақалада қолда бар әлеуетті пайдалану деңгейін бағалау, өңір экономикасының түрлі салаларына шетелдік және жергілікті инвесторларды тарту үшін маңызды Аран экономикалық-географиялық ауданындағы әлеуметтік-экономикалық жағдай туралы ақпарат берілген. Әзірбайжан Аран экономикалық-географиялық аймағын қоса алғанда, экономиканың мұнай емес секторы үшін үлкен әлеуетке ие. Республиканың Аран аймағының құнарлы жерлерінде мақта, жүзім, астық, жемістер мен көгөністер, түрлі дәнді дақылдар және т. б. өсіріледі.

Түйін сөздер: қалалық қоныс, экономикалық-географиялық жағдай, өндіріс күштер, әлеуметтік-экономикалық даму, демографиялық әлеует.

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Особенности развития городской резиденции в Аранском экономико-географическом регионе Азербайджана

В статье исследуются проблемы в этой сфере и разрабатываются предложения по их решению. Анализируется динамика уровня урбанизации в Аранском экономико-географическом регионе, формирование и развитие городских поселений в административных районах. Изучение демографических процессов в городских районах области показывает, что в последние годы наблюдается естественный прирост населения, снижение динамики рождений и браков, рост смертности, младенческой смертности и разводов. Исследованы демографический потенциал и современное состояние промышленного производства на территории Аранского экономико-географического района Азербайджана, как в городах республиканского подчинения, так и в центральном типе административного района. Создание совместных (за счет привлечения иностранных инвесторов) промышленных предприятий в Аранском экономико-географическом районе, способных производить современную конкурентоспособную продукцию на основе полной комплексной переработки обильного сельскохозяйственного сырья, улучшит экономическую базу и социальную инфраструктуру городов России. Развитие сельского хозяйства и связанных с ним перерабатывающих производств, торговли, услуг и других сфер, основанное на экономическом потенциале экономико-географического региона Аран повысит уровень занятости и будет стимулировать население оставаться в поле, создавая рабочие места с растущим демографическим потенциалом. В статье представлена информация о социально-экономической ситуации в Аранском экономико-географическом районе, важная для оценки уровня использования имеющегося потенциала, привлечения иностранных и местных инвесторов в различные отрасли экономики региона. Азербайджан, включая Аранский экономико-географический регион, имеет большой потенциал для нефтегазового сектора экономики. На плодородных землях Аранской зоны республики выращивают хлопок, виноград, зерно, фрукты и овощи, картофель, различные злаки и др.

Ключевые слова: городское поселение, экономико-географическое положение, производительные силы, социально-экономическое развитие, демографический потенциал.

Introduction

Cities are the main centers of socio-economic development of the country, the development of natural resources and their transformation into a final product, the settlement of the population, the provision of various levels of socio-cultural services, employment. Urban settlements, mainly located in a favorable AIC, develop in a short period of time, leading to a change in the geographical position of the area in which they are located, and have a decisive impact on the socio-economic and demographic development of the surrounding areas. In this sense, the regulation of socio-economic development of cities, the improvement of their economic structure, the solution of social and environmental problems, the improvement of cultural and social security of the population is an important task.

Socio-economic development in accordance with demographic development must be ensured in all cities and settlements of the economic-geographical region, and the preservation, protection

and improvement of ecological balance must always be in the center of attention. Such a settlement system can take the form of an autonomous city, urban agglomeration, urbanized region or zone, megacity. In modern times, most urbanists see urbanization as a process of alternating stages of historical development. The actuality of the subject concerns the covering development features of the urban residents in Aran economic and geographical region of Azerbaijan. The subject of the paper is urban residents in Aran region. The object of the study is development features of the urban residents.

The purpose of the work is to analyze main points in transition from urban networks to urban systems. The general thesis of the study is that the geographical study of the evolution of cities has allowed an important territorial process - the systemic role of cities in the process of land acquisition and socio-cultural development - and, consequently, the transition from urban networks to urban systems. An urban system is a territorial form of settlement in any taxonomic unit that arises around a city-forming

nucleus. Such a settlement system can take the form of an autonomous city, urban agglomeration, urbanized region or zone, megacity.

Research method and level of study

The theoretical basis of the research is the provisions in the scientific research of Azerbaijani scientists working in the field of ethnography and economic geography. Research methods such as history, mapping, mathematical-statistical, systematic analysis, comparison were used in the analysis of urban settlement of the region. AM Hajizade, AA Nadirov, EG Mehraliyev and NH Ayyubov, VA Efendiyev and Sh.G. Demirgayev, Sh.M. Muradov and Z.N. Eminov played a great role in the study of the urban population in Azerbaijan.

Analysis and discussion

A short recent history of settlement in the economic-geographical region

Favorable physical and economic-geographical position of the Aran economic-geographical region, which covers mainly the Kur-Araz lowland, plain relief, abundant agro-climatic resources, mild winter here have led to the development of this area from ancient times. It has led to the emergence and formation of settlements of various sizes and functions. As early as the 8th and 9th centuries, there was the city of Barda, the capital of medieval Caucasian Albania, a major center of trade and crafts, and the now non-existent city of Baylakan, located near the confluence of the Kura and Araz rivers. However, the formation of modern settlements, the formation of rural, urban and urban settlement systems dates back to the Soviet era.

Analysis of statistical data shows that the Kur-Araz region still had a developed industry and mechanized multi-sectoral agriculture during the Soviet era. The process of intensive development of the territory and the formation of industrial hubs based on the rich natural resource potential of the region is progressing rapidly. As the relief of the lowland economic-geographical region is formed by plains, it has a positive effect on the comfortable settlement of the population, efficient location of production and development of transport roads (Eminov, 1995). During these years, the creation of reservoirs on the Kura, Araz and other relatively small rivers, the construction of many irrigation canals led to the development of labor-intensive crop production (grapes, vegetables, cotton), and the processing of their products led to the development

of the processing industry, the commissioning of power plants has strengthened the economic base of the settlement by radically improving the energy supply of labor.

The transformation of the Aran economic-geographical region into the main electricity region of the republic has played a special role in the development of urban settlements. The expansion of the network of enterprises in the light and food industries, the development of the fuel and engineering sectors stimulated the population to remain in place by providing jobs with the growing demographic potential (Eminov, 2010a). The development of a dense transport network and all its forms, the passage of international road, rail and pipeline transport through the territory of the economic region has also been one of the important factors in the development of the region, especially the formation and development of cities and settlements. It is no coincidence that several cities and settlements (eg, Yevlakh, Laki, Hajigabul, etc.) were first formed as transport hubs.

In modern times, most urbanists see urbanization as a process of alternating stages of historical development. The concept of five-stage urbanization is more popular in the West than in the last century. This popular five-stage concept of urbanization was developed by the American urbanist C.P. Gibbs (Gibbs, 1963). According to C.P. Gibbs: 1) (Cities that play a central role in the surrounding villages grow slowly), the urban population is growing more slowly than the rural population. 2) The urban population is growing faster than the rural population (the share of the urban population is increasing), and cities are ahead of the rural population in terms of population growth. 3) The urban population continues to grow, and the share of the rural population is declining. At this stage, the rural population is steadily declining due to the influx of people into cities. Villages are shrinking in size and population. 4) The rural population is steadily declining and the population of large cities is growing (centrifugal), while the population of small towns is declining. At this stage, the continuation of the process, the concentration of the population in large cities and agglomerations against the background of declining population growth in small towns reaches a peak. 5) At this stage, the trend is changing sharply, the centrifugal direction of the population is increasing. The population moves to small towns and settlements, as well as to the surrounding areas.

Unlike the republican cities of the Aran economic and geographical region, such as Mingachevir and Shirvan, the cities of 16 other administrative rural districts are in the first phase according to the concept

of C.P. Gibbs in the world urbanization landscape. Medium-sized cities of the economic-geographical region, such as Mingachevir and Shirvan, correspond to Phase II according to this concept. However, it is necessary to take into account the specifics of the development stages of these cities in the region.

Later, the theory of differential urbanization by H.S. Geyer and T. Kontulin was published in world urban science. This theory is a new, slightly different version of Gibbs' concept. In essence, it consists of the concentration and deconcentration of the population, the balance of migration and the upper or lower population in the hierarchy of settlements of different sizes (large cities, medium-sized cities, small towns). Here, several phase pairs (early and mature phase pairs) form three main cycles: 1) urbanization, 2) polarization or reversal (from large and medium-sized cities to small settlements), and 3) counter-urbanization (reverse urbanization). Finally, the period of reurbanization is discussed.

According to the theory of HS Geyer and T. Kontulin, according to the universal scheme of urbanization (migration balance or population dynamics), urbanization in the whole republic is in the second stage (except for the Baku agglomeration). and here, again, the conditions for the preservation of local identity (sometimes specific cases of pseudo-urbanization are known to third world countries). However, the central cities of the small administrative district, formed in the rural area of the study area, do not fit into this scheme. Because in these small towns sometimes (depending on the political situation, the resettlement of refugees and IDPs, the resettlement of Meskhetians from the Central Asian republics, economic and social reasons, etc.) the migration balance is not very high, positive or negative.

Medium-sized republican cities such as Mingachevir and Shirvan correspond to the second mature phase of this scheme. It should be noted that these medium-sized cities of Ara differ in that the characteristic stages of the concepts developed in the developed West differ to some extent from the sequence of development and adaptation to local conditions. The reason is the collapse of the socialist social system, instead of the emergence of a normal market economic system, the rapid change of production relations and the local transitional position.

In the medium-sized cities of Mingachevir and Shirvan, which have not yet passed the theoretical urbanization phases of the economic-geographical region, a similar trend has begun to the process of contrabourization, which is characterized by local

conditions. The deterioration of urban livelihoods in the post-Soviet space due to the disruption of economic chains in the industrial area was due to the need to alleviate living conditions by moving to the surrounding villages or working in the suburbs.

From the sixth stage of urbanization in the developed world (the second adult phase of contrabourization), then in the world's urban studies, such concepts as «smart city», «innovative city», «creative small town» have long been included in geourbanistics. The post-industrial age of the republican cities of Mingachevir and Shirvan is reminiscent of the industrial cities of the leading countries of the 1950s and 1960s.

In the Aran economic-geographical region, small towns, which are the centers of administrative districts, serve as centers, and the surrounding villages as peripherals. According to the hierarchy of Azerbaijani cities in the economic-geographical region, three types of cities can be distinguished: regional city centers (Mingachevir, Shirvan) and Yevlakh, a city of local importance, and 15 cities of regional importance (Repub. of Azerb, 2018).

Most of the cities and settlements in the economic-geographical region were formed mainly during the Soviet era. In particular, Mingachevir and Shirvan, the 4th and 5th cities of Azerbaijan after Baku, Ganja and Sumgayit in terms of demographic, economic and social potential, have been established as important energy centers. Due to the rapid socio-economic development of the region, the growth rate of urban settlement and the population living in them was higher than the average level of the average republic (Regions of Azerbaijan, 2014). For example, if in 1939-1959 the growth of the urban population in this region was 167.9%, in 1959-1979 it was 81.9%, in 1979-1989 it was 25.2%, in the republic these indicators were 52.8%, respectively. %, 80.8% and 15%.

In general, while the urban population in the Aran economic-geographical region increased 9 times during 1926-1989, it increased 6 times in the whole republic. The growth rate of the urban population in the economic-geographical region during the comparative period was higher than the national average, on the one hand due to the small urban population in the economic-geographical region in the base year, on the other hand due to faster socio-economic development of the region. The rapid development of intensive and urban agriculture has led to an influx of people not only from different regions of the country, but also from outside the country, and has played an important role in the demographic development of new and existing settlements.

According to NA Babakhanov, who studied the geographical problems of the development of the Mil and Mugan plains, which are part of the economic-geographical region, 20,000 Azerbaijanis from Armenia in 1948-1953, and 15,000 Azerbaijanis from Central Asia and Kazakhstan from 1958 to 1965-1966. More than 3,000 people were relocated in an organized manner. This population had a favorable gender-age structure for natural growth, ie high demographic potential.

Currently, the urban settlement system of the Aran economic-geographical region is represented by 18 cities and 39 settlements according to 2018 statistics. These are 23.1% of cities and 14.9% of settlements, respectively. 743.8 thousand people or 14.3% of the urban population of the republic settled in these settlements (Repub. Of Azerb. Geography «Regional Geography», 2015). Three of these cities, Mingachevir, Shirvan, and partly Yevlakh, in contrast to all other cities of the economic and geographical region in terms of demographic and socio-economic development potential, have performed and continue to perform the functions of major regional centers as republican cities.

The administrative centers of the village of the same name in the Aran economic-geographical region are Agjabedi, Agdash, Beylagan, Barda, Bilasuvar, Goychay, Hajigabul, Imishli, Kurdamir, Neftchala, Saatli, Sabirabad, Salyan, Ujar and other subordinate cities of Zardab region. These cities of the economic-geographical region differ little from each other in terms of function, population and socio-economic potential [Regions of Azerbaijan, 2014]. Chemical industry enterprises operate in Mingachevir, Salyan and Neftchala. There are plastic plants in Salyan, iodine-bromine plants in Neftchala and sugar factories in Imishli. Aran economic-geographical region is located on the main transport lines (railways and highways) of national and international importance. Roads connecting Baku with the main economic regions of the country, Georgia, Iran and Turkey pass through the territory of this economic-geographical region. The recent increase in international freight traffic has increased the importance of these roads (Efendiyev, 2013).

Regulation of geodemographic conditions and development of urban settlement in the Aran economic region is a part of the sustainable socio-economic policy pursued in the country. There is a need to study the demographic conditions of cities in the region for more efficient organization of production and population. Geodemographic conditions reflect the natural movement of the

population, its structure and location patterns. At present, 37.4% of the population in the Aran economic-geographical region, most of the industrial and socio-economic potential is concentrated in urban areas. (Eminov, 2010b).

Although Mingachevir, Shirvan, Yevlakh and other cities of the region played a progressive role in the formation of the country's economy, their position in the development of urbanization was felt weak. For this reason, the region lags far behind the national level in terms of the growth of natural growth during 1990-2017. Although the region ranks third in the country in terms of the share of urban population, the country's share of urban population has declined in the last 20 years. This is due to the fact that the growth rate is lower than the national level. In order to solve the problems in the demographic development of urban areas, it is necessary to conduct scientific analysis and develop an action plan at the state level based on their results. Measures taken to protect the health and social security of the country's population, solve the employment problem and other areas play an important role in the development of demographic problems. (Eyyubov, 2018a).

Aran economic-geographical region ranks 2nd in the country in terms of total population and urban population, as well as 1st in terms of the number of urban settlements. In 2018, the share of economic-geographical region in the total population of the Republic of Azerbaijan was 20.3% and 14.3% in the urban population. Despite the fact that there are 18 cities and 39 settlements in the region, the country's urban population is 37.4%, ie low.

Cities in the region have existed since ancient times. Barda and Beylagan were ancient cities and were known as large trade centers in the Middle Ages. Barda lost its former glory after the devastating marches of the Slavs (10th century) and Beylagan Mongols (13th century). In the 19th century, they existed as villages. At the beginning of the 20th century, Agdash, Goychay and Salyan joined the ranks of cities formed in connection with the development of capitalist relations and located on transport roads. Later, in connection with industrialization in the Soviet period, in 1935-1941, Sabirabad, Yevlakh, Kurdamir, Hajigabul, Ujar; Barda and Mingachevir in 1948; In 1954, Shirvan (Alibayramli), from 1959 to 1970, Neftchala, Imishli, Bilasuvar, Beylagan, Zardab and in 1971, Saatli received the status of cities. Of these, only the cities of Mingachevir and Shirvan became centers of heavy industry as newly built cities.

All other cities were formed from settlements formed on the basis of villages. Among the urban-creating factors in the formation of these cities, the leading factor was industry, especially light and food industries (Geyer, 1993).

Although the population growth in the central cities of the region Mingachevir, Shirvan and Yevlakh increased from 106.4 thousand to 195.0 thousand in 1970-1989, in 2018 it was 251.5 thousand. The share of the region's urban population

has increased from 31.1% to 37.8% over the years, and has declined to 33.6% in modern times.

The growth of the urban population in the region was higher during the Soviet period, especially in 1970-1989, when it was 50.9%, while during the period of independence from 1999 to 2018, the growth was 23.6%, which is twice lower than the previous figure. At present, the share of the region's urban population in the country has decreased compared to 1999 (Table 1).

Table 1 – The dynamics and share of urban population growth in the region

Years	Population of the economic region, thousand people		Share of population by country (%)		Level of urbanization (%)
	General	City	For the general population	On the urban population	
1970	966,5	342,1	18,9	13,3	35,4
1989	1351,9	516,3	19,3	13,6	38,0
1999	1627,0	606,2	20,5	15,0	37,3
2018	2006,0	749,5	20,3	14,3	37,4

Source: Demographic indicators of Azerbaijan Baku, SSC, 2018

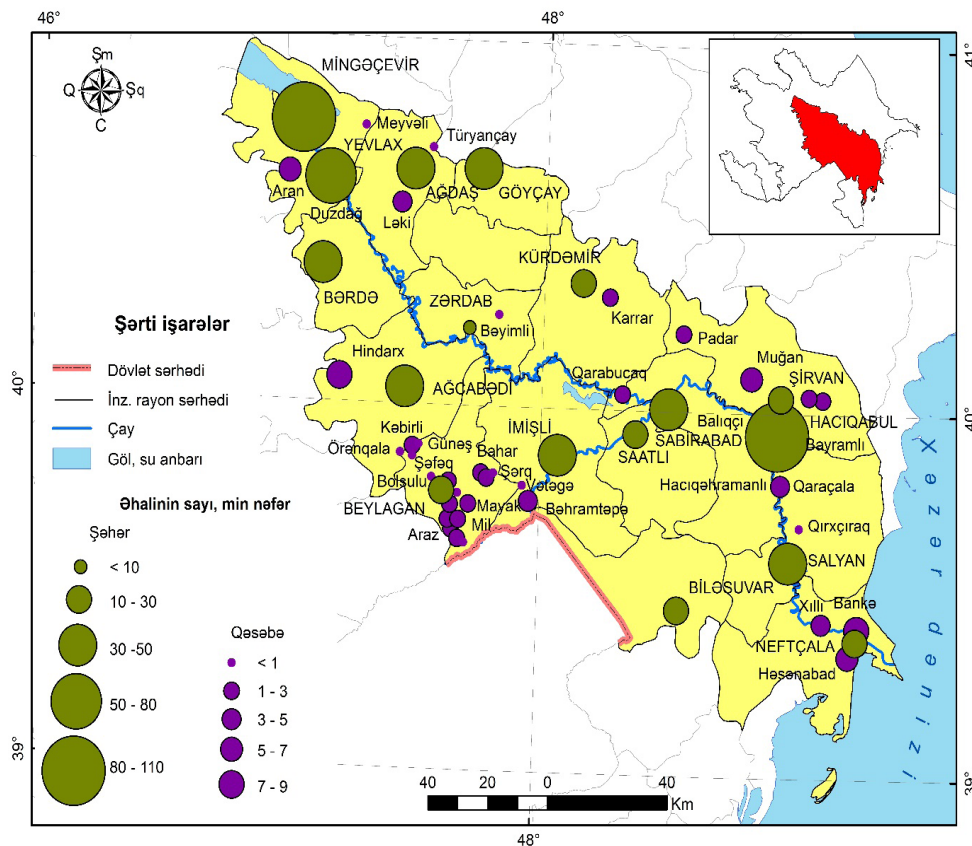


Figure 1 – Population dynamics of cities and settlements of Aran economic region (thousand people)
Source: «Population of Azerbaijan» compiled on the basis of statistical data (2018).

The level of urbanization in the Aran economic-geographical region differs by administrative districts, such as Yevlakh and Hajigabul with more than 50%, Neftchala and Beylagan with 40-50%, Salyan, Agjabadi, Imishli, Agdash districts with 30-40%. belonged to. Saatli, Sabirabad, Kurdamir districts were distinguished by a low level of urbanization (Figure 1).

Over the past 18 years, as in the Republic of Azerbaijan as a whole, the share of the urban population in the total population of the economic-geographical region has decreased significantly. This is due to the post-independence war, the occupation of more than 20% of Armenia's territory, the formation of a large army of refugees and internally displaced persons, the breakdown of traditional production and economic relations, the economic crisis and so on. was due to the slow development of urban economy for various reasons.

The settlements in the urban settlement system of the Aran economic-geographical region are represented by 39 settlements. As of 01.01.2017, 79.6 thousand people live in these settlements, which is only 7.0% of the total urban population of the economic-geographical region. The 8 largest settlements (Banka, Hasanabad, Aran, Mugan, Bahramtapa, Garachala, Khilli, Laki) differ in terms of population. The population of these settlements varies from 3.8 thousand (Laki) to 7.8 thousand (Banka). A total of 44.6 thousand people live in them. This means 56% of the population of all settlements in the economic region. However, they make up 22.9% of all settlements in the economic region.

Most settlements have very small populations. The population of the smallest settlements is 200-

300 people. Due to the decline or underdevelopment of their economic bases, they are developing demographically, and some (for example, Vataga) are completely empty. Laki settlement is an urban-type settlement with a relatively large population in the settlement system of the Aran economic-geographical region. 3,800 people live in this settlement. The settlement is located in the Agdash region, in a favorable economic and geographical position on the Baku-Tbilisi international railway and highway. Although the settlement has an ancient history, it was given the status of a settlement in 1934 (Eminov, 2010c). The population of the settlement is 3.8 thousand people (2017). The population is formed due to natural increase. Due to the very weak economic base, demographic development has almost stopped. Thus, the population has not increased recently (2001-2017). Some of the demographic potential has migrated to the periphery.

Processing enterprises have an exceptional role in the formation of the market of industrial raw materials of agricultural origin. The development of the processing industry has a significant impact on the socio-economic development of the region, increasing employment and lowering unemployment (Eyyubov, 2008b). The population of the settlements in the economic-geographical region works mainly in the fields of animal husbandry, grain growing, cotton growing, fruit growing and vegetable growing. The lack of processing facilities in these areas hinders the demographic development of settlements. Other urban-type settlements of the economic-geographical region are very small in terms of population. Their demographic development trends for 1999-2017 can be seen in the figures in Table 2.

Table 2 – Population structure in urban areas in the lowland region

	Indicator	1999			2017			Growth for 1999-2017 %		
		sum	city	district	sum	city	district	sum	city	district
Country	number thousand people	4053,6	3056,6	997,0	5199,0	3661,1	1531,9	1145,4	6105	534,9
	share %	100	75,4	24,6	100	70,5	29,5	28,3	20,0	53,7
Aran	Number, thousand people	606,2	564,4	41,8	743,8	619,8	124,2	137,8	55,4	82,4
	pay %	100	93,1	6,9	100	83,3	16,7	22,7	9,8	198,1

Source: Badalov E.S. Demographic conditions in large and major cities of Azerbaijan/ACC works, B, 2016, p. 32-45; Population of Azerbaijan. Baku - 2018, SSC.

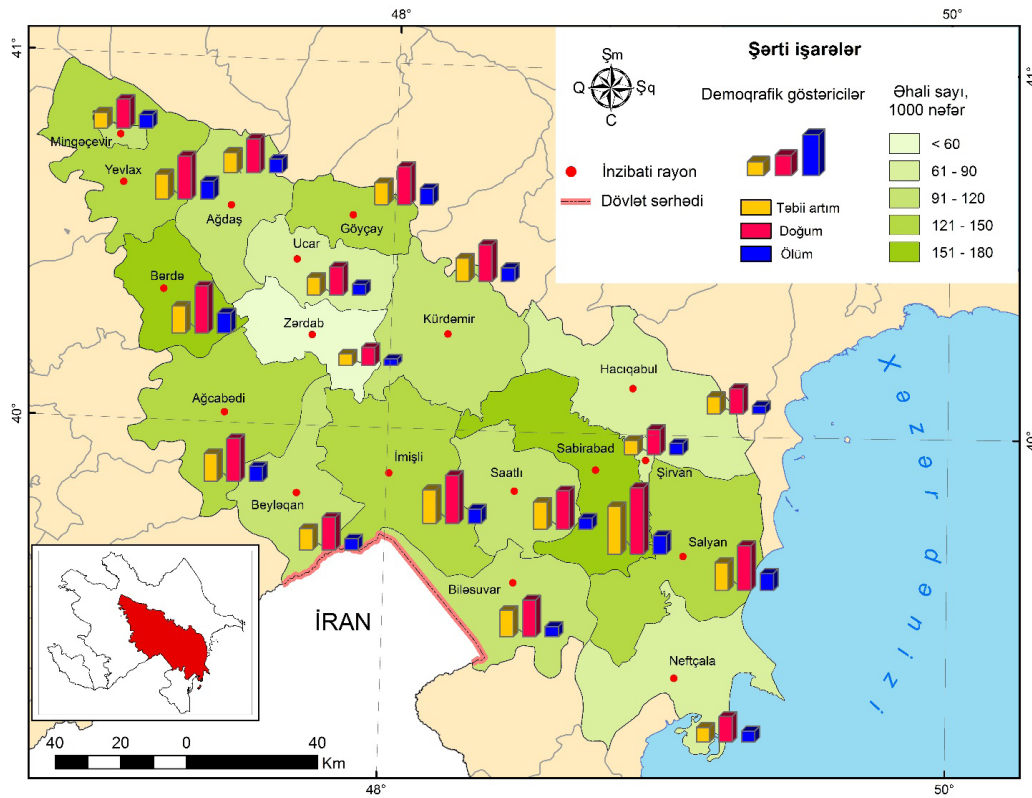


Figure 2 – Demographic indicators of the Aran economic geographical region.

Table 3 – Population change in cities and level of urbanization in regions (thousand people)

№	Cities	1970	1989	1999	2018	Share of urban population%		Level of urbanization by regions, %	Growth for 1989-2018, %
						For the general population	On the urban population		
1	Mingechevir	43,1	82,3	94,0	103,2	100	100	100	25,4
2	Shirvan	33,8	58,0	69,5	85,8	100	100	100	47,9
3	Yevlakh	29,5	44,7	52,0	61,2	48,0	89,0	54,0	36,9
4	Agjabadi	17,0	25,0	33,7	41,0	30,5	82,3	37,0	64,0
5	Barda	20,8	30,6	36,0	39,9	25,7	100	25,7	30,4
6	Salyan	24,2	29,4	35,4	38,4	28,0	88,1	38,1	30,6
7	Goychai	25,9	30,7	34,8	36,9	30,9	100	30,9	20,2
8	Imishli	17,8	25,7	30,7	35,5	27,6	87,9	31,4	38,1
9	Agdash	14,9	19,6	22,5	32,1	29,5	88,7	33,3	63,8
10	Sabirabad	13,4	18,4	27,3	30,6	17,5	100	17,5	66,3
11	Hajiqabul	14,9	21,2	22,2	27,0	36,2	72,2	50,1	27,4
12	Bilasuvar	11,8	18,4	17,3	22,8	22,3	100	22,3	21,2
13	Neftchala	7,1	14,1	17,9	21,8	25,0	53,4	46,7	54,6
14	Saatli	6,6	14,1	16,5	19,7	18,5	100	18,5	39,7
15	Kurdamir	13,3	15,3	17,7	18,9	16,4	85,1	19,2	23,5
16	Ujar	11,0	14,2	15,5	18,0	20,5	100	20,5	26,8
17	Beylagan	7,6	12,1	13,9	16,5	16,9	41,1	41,2	36,4
18	Zardab	6,2	8,3	10,0	10,9	18,7	91,6	20,5	31,3

Source: Eminov Z.N. Population of Azerbaijan. Baku-2005, Demographic indicators of Azerbaijan. Baku: SSC 2018.

Although there was a steady increase in the dynamics of the urban population in the region in 1989-2017, the share of the urban population decreased in the 1990s, increased in the 2000s, and declined again in 2010. The decline in this process was due to the faster growth of the rural population in natural growth and the weak migration flow from the villages to the cities of the region. The growth process in the region in the early 2000s took place with the creation of new settlements on the basis of villages.

During 1999-2017, the population growth rate in the cities of the region was twice as low as the national average, while in the settlements it more than doubled. As a result, the share of urban population in this period decreased to 10% of the urban population of the region (Table 2). In 1989-2018, the population growth rate in cities was lower than in the Soviet period of 1970-1989, however, high growth has recently been observed in Sabirabad, Agdash, Agjabadi, Neftchala and Shirvan, and low growth in Mingachevir, Goychay, Bilasuvar and Kurdamir, the region's central cities.

In the economic-geographical region, 89.2% of the total urban population lives in cities. Only 10.8% of the total urban population is concentrated in settlements. As of 01.01.2017, 79.6 thousand people live in these settlements, which is about 10.8% of the total urban population of the economic-geographical region (Efendiyev, 1995).

It should be noted that despite the rapid growth of the urban population in the Aran economic and geographical region, this region is still one of the least urbanized regions of Azerbaijan compared to the average republican level. The suitability of the plain for agricultural activities has resulted in the relatively rapid development of settlements, especially villages, both territorially and demographically (Eminov, 2006).

According to the latest statistics (2017), 38.6% of the total population in the Aran economic-geographical region is urban, while in the country this figure is 54.1%. This was due to the weak development of urban areas in the economic-geographical region – industry, transport, various social infrastructures compared to the average national level (Eyyubov, 2008c).

The cities of Mingachevir and Shirvan, specializing in the energy industry, were also formed as centers of the oil, gas and construction industries. The food and light industries of local importance, mainly processing agricultural products, have developed in small towns in the center of the administrative district (Huseynova, 2010). Recently, a number of food industry and machine-building enterprises equipped

with new technological equipment in the economic-geographical region are of national importance. Naturally, the implementation of the «State Programs for Socio-Economic Development of the Regions» will create conditions for the development of urban areas of the economic-geographical region and increase the level of urbanization, increasing the labor force engaged in this area.

Conclusion

The results we have obtained while studying the trends observed in the processes of urban settlement and demographic development in the Aran economic-geographical region can be summarized as follows.

Natural growth (81%) was the most important factor in the growth of the urban population in the economic-geographical region during 1999-2017. This period was characterized by a negative migration balance for cities. During this period, due to the creation of new settlements, their population growth was 3 times and accounted for 60% of the growth in these urban areas, while the population growth rate in cities was 2 times lower than the national average.

During the period of independence, the highest population growth among cities was in Sabirabad, Agjabadi, Agdash and Neftchala, only in Agdash as a result of the merger of several villages around the city. In 2010-2018, the average annual growth of the urban population in the region weakened (from 8,000 to 5,000).

To implement sustainable measures in the field of employment, social protection, medicine and other areas to address the problems of demographic development in the cities of the region. Due to the low economic and geographical location of the Aran in the neighborhood of the occupied territories and the fact that it is a strategically important region of the country, urban development and urban development should be important as the main priority of the state. Analysis of prospective demographic processes shows that in the next 10 years, the region's urban population growth rate and birth rate are expected to decrease by 1.5-2 times, especially the average annual growth rate, which will slow down demographic development in cities and the country. will deepen strategically important problems. We recommend the following suggestions in this regard.

It would be optimal to open new industrial parks in the important cities of Mingachevir and Shirvan, to expand urban areas in accordance with the new urban infrastructure.

It is important to establish industrial districts in Yevlakh, Agjabadi, Barda, Salyan, Goychay, Imishli and Agdash, as well as in Sabirabad, Hajigabul and Neftchala.

In the economic-geographical region, it is expedient to give the status of settlements to large villages and cities to large settlements.

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