

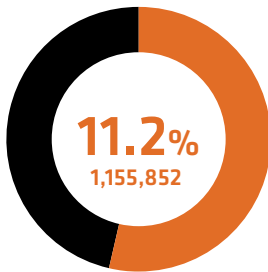


Diaspora engagement mapping AZERBAIJAN

Facts & figures

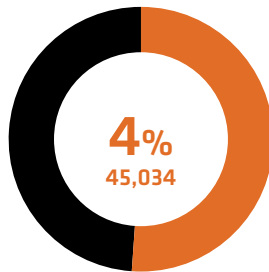
Emigration

% of emigrants in total population



♂ 53.8%
♀ 46.2%

% of which in the EU



♂ 51.2%
♀ 48.8%



Remittances as a share of GDP: 3.3%
Remittances inflow (USD billion): 1,403



Top countries of destination

Russia	767,159
Ukraine	83,121
Kazakhstan	50,552
USA	23,715



Political rights



Dual citizenship¹



Right to vote in national elections for citizens residing abroad²



Voting from abroad:³

At polling stations



Terminology: National lawmakers operate with two terms – ‘diaspora’ and ‘Azerbaijanis living abroad’. The [Law On the State Policy Towards Azerbaijanis Living Abroad \(Art.6.2\)](#) uses both terms. However, it only defines ‘Azerbaijanis living abroad’ as follows:

- Citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan and their children;
- Persons who were previously citizens of the Azerbaijan SSR or the Republic of Azerbaijan and their children;
- The term ‘Azerbaijanis living abroad’ also applies to the persons and their children who are not citizens of Azerbaijan and have never held citizenship of Azerbaijan, but consider themselves Azerbaijanis in terms of ethnic, linguistic, cultural or historical ties.

The term “World Azerbaijanis” is also sometimes used to refer to the diaspora, outside of official documents.

1 Art. 10 of the Law on Citizenship of the Republic of Azerbaijan “Non-Recognition of Affiliation of the Citizen of the Republic of Azerbaijan to Citizenship of a Foreign State” states that when a citizen of the Republic of Azerbaijan has dual citizenship, the citizenship of a foreign state shall not be recognized except for cases stipulated in international treaties of the Republic of Azerbaijan, or in accordance with item 32 of article 109 of the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

2 Article 16.4 of the Election Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan “Cases of Citizens’ Non-Participation in Voting” stipulates that citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan who are in a foreign country where no Azerbaijani diplomatic Representation or Consulate exist, or where no Precinct Election Commission has been established at the Azerbaijani Diplomatic Representation or Consulate according to Article 35.6 of this Code, shall not participate in voting.

3 Article 35.6 of the Election Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Law On the State Policy Towards Azerbaijanis Living Abroad⁴ 2002



The law consists of protecting basic rights and freedoms of Azerbaijanis living abroad (Art. 2.0.1.); strengthening ties between Azerbaijanis living abroad, state bodies, and non-governmental organisations of the Azerbaijan Republic; providing Azerbaijanis living abroad with information on the domestic and foreign policy of Azerbaijan, its economic, social and cultural life (Art. 2.0.2); engaging Azerbaijanis living abroad in protecting and strengthening the state independence and sovereignty, and the economic, social and cultural development of Azerbaijan (Art. 2.0.3); assisting in creating national and cultural autonomies, public associations of Azerbaijanis living abroad (Art 2.0.4).

Overview of the policy and legislative framework



- 2004** ● **The Concept of State Migration Management Policy of the Republic of Azerbaijan** stipulates that the migration state authorities will focus on the following activities: establishing close relations with Azerbaijani communities and associations operating abroad; assisting the Azerbaijani Diaspora and strengthening its potential in order to protect the rights and interests of Azerbaijanis working or residing abroad.
- 2002**
▼
2009 ● **Decree On Establishment of the State Committee on Affairs with Diaspora of the Republic of Azerbaijan.** The State Committee is designed to work with diaspora to develop state policy and ensure the implementation of this policy; to help to protect the rights and freedoms of Azerbaijanis living in foreign countries, and to preserve and develop their national entity, including study and use of the mother tongue. It also collects, analyses, and evaluates information about the situation of Azerbaijanis living abroad and has established a special data bank for this purpose.
- 2018** ● **The Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the Establishment of the Fund for Support to Azerbaijani Diaspora⁵** under the subordination of the State Committee on Affairs with Diaspora of the Republic of Azerbaijan, includes: further development and introduction of values and interests of the State of Azerbaijan among World Azerbaijanis, implementation of activities for the protection of national interests abroad; national and civil rights of Azerbaijanis living abroad; assistance in solving social, economic, political, cultural and moral challenges of the compatriots; implementation of social projects and further consolidation of the organisations of the Azerbaijani diaspora.

» Trends

Azerbaijan aims at mobilising an international Azerbaijani diaspora. The unresolved Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has been one of the most influential factors driving Azerbaijan's policy in organising and supporting diaspora activities abroad. The Pro-Azerbaijan lobby is designed to increase the weight and voice of Azerbaijan's interests in the world, and in European politics.

Azerbaijan also aims to empower Azerbaijanis living abroad and to strengthen their networks with the diaspora. In this regard, the State Committee on Affairs with Diaspora in cooperation with Azerbaijanis living abroad established 12 Coordinating Councils covering 29 European countries, as well as 10 Azerbaijani houses abroad where various events are hosted for the diaspora. The State Committee has also created an interactive [diaspora map](#)

⁴ Law No. 413-IIG On the State Policy Towards Azerbaijanis Living Abroad dated of December 27, 2002, with amendments of the Law No. 426-VQD of the Azerbaijan Republic of 29.11.2016. Accessed August 7, 2020. Available at <http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/1947>

⁵ Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the Establishment of the Fund for Support to Azerbaijani Diaspora dated July 6, 2018. Accessed August 7, 2020.

(2018), showing 560 Azerbaijani Diaspora organisations operating in 49 countries. There is also the [Information System of Diaspora of Azerbaijani Scientists \(2018\)](#) and the web page [Biographies' of Azerbaijanis living abroad \(2018\)](#) which aims at collecting and distributing information about Azerbaijanis living abroad. Both web resources are updated regularly.



Achievements

Recognition: A medal “for services in diaspora activity” was established by the Presidential Decree of December 25, 2019.⁶ The medal will be given to distinguished persons for their services in diaspora activities.

Obstacles



- **Lack of a legal framework:** There is no comprehensive, long-term strategy on diaspora. Social capital, including professional knowledge, skills and expertise, is still less valued as a form of diaspora engagement in Azerbaijan.
- **Limited unity and communication:** Azerbaijanis living abroad are heterogeneous and not in agreement on all subjects, which prevents them from uniting, organising, and acting as a single force. The diversity and fragmentation of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in some countries limits collaboration between organisations and the State of Azerbaijan.

SPOTLIGHT: effective practices



Next Step

Next Step is a ‘Start-up ecosystem’ aiming to develop the start-up ecosystem in Azerbaijan, and to strengthen the relations of start-up players living in different countries of the world. The Azerbaijani Innovation House connects the start-up ecosystem of Azerbaijan with the Silicon Valley. The opening ceremony of the Azerbaijani Innovation House took place in February 2020 at Stanford University, US.

Azerbaijani Diaspora Youth Summer Camp

The camp is organised in cooperation with the Fund for Support to Azerbaijani Diaspora. It is designed for young people (aged 18–29) who are able to communicate in Azerbaijani language and are interested in the history and culture of Azerbaijan. The first summer camp dedicated to the 100th Anniversary of the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan took place in 2018 in Shaki, whilst the 2020 edition’s theme was volunteering. The initiative is present on social media networks [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

YOUTH

⁶ Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the application of the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On amendments to the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan” dated December 3, 2019 No. 1723-VQD.



MOBILAZE Migration studies weekends

YOUTH;
EDUCATION

The objective of the MOBILAZE project (2016-2019) was 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. As part of the project, several study weekends were organised by the State Committee on Work with Diaspora; they focused on various topics related to migration challenges, including an introduction to migration and development. The weekends targeted young professionals working in a migration-related field and aimed to raise awareness of opportunities for development offered by migration in the context of Azerbaijan.

Reintegration Support to Azerbaijani Returnees (RESTART) project 2019 – 2021

RETURN AND
REINTEGRATION

This project, which is co-funded by several EU Member States (Germany, the Netherlands and Poland) and implemented by ICMPD, aims at supporting the implementation of the readmission agreement in the area of reintegration through strengthening the capacities of authorities and civil society in Azerbaijan to actively facilitate sustainable return from the European Union Member States and reintegration of Azerbaijani nationals

World Azerbaijanis Congress

YOUTH;
NETWORKING

The congress serves as a discussion platform for diaspora leaders. It works to protect the rights and freedoms of compatriots, to undertake diaspora advocacy and lobbying, to develop a strategy for youth in the Azerbaijani Diaspora movement, and to be representative in political life and other important topics for the diaspora. The first Congress of World Azerbaijanis was held in 2001 and subsequent congresses were held in 2006, 2011 and 2016. The fourth congress brought together over 500 diaspora representatives and guests from 49 countries.⁷ The congress elected the Coordinating Council for World Azerbaijanis, which aims to meet every year and is led by its executive secretary. The Executive Secretary of the Council is a Chairman of the State Committee on works with Diaspora.

⁷ Report. Az(2016): IV Congress of World Azerbaijanis opens in Baku. Accessed August 4, 2020. Available at <https://report.az/en/diaspora/iv-congress-of-world-azerbaijanis-opens-in-baku/>

Annex:

List of actors

Diaspora related institutions

- **At regional level**

The President of the Republic of Azerbaijan 1991

In 2002, former President Heydar Aliiev issued the Decree on the establishment of the State Committee on Work with the Diaspora.

- At ministerial level

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan 1991

The MFA is in charge of promoting the rights and interests of Azerbaijanis abroad.

- At sub-ministerial level

The State Committee on Work with the Diaspora of the Republic of Azerbaijan 2008⁸

This governmental agency within the Cabinet of the Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan is in charge of establishing and maintaining contacts with the Azerbaijani diaspora abroad and supports the Azerbaijanis around the world in their efforts for national unity. Nowadays, the State Committee on Affairs with Diaspora is an executive body that includes five departments divided by world regions: Russia, Belarus and Ukraine; the EU countries; Asian and Transcaucasian states; the USA and Canada; plus one additional territorial department dealing with Azerbaijanis living in Georgia. The Committee is headed by the Chairman who is appointed by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The State Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan 2012

The agency concentrates on the innovation potential of the Azerbaijani diaspora. On 15 February 2019, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the State Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the State Committee on Work with Diaspora of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The Memorandum envisages joint events on providing Azerbaijanis living abroad with services in a mobile form. The cooperation also includes protection of the rights and legitimate interests of Azerbaijanis living abroad, as well as coordinating the activities of ASAN Radio and the Azerbaijani Diaspora Support Fund in order to carry out legal and propaganda work aimed at disseminating Azerbaijani realities around the world.⁹

- At local level

Fund for Support to Azerbaijani Diaspora (ADDF) 2018

The Fund for Support to Azerbaijani Diaspora is a legal entity aimed at informing the international community about reforms and achievements in the Republic of Azerbaijan to protect interests of the country, its national and moral values. It implements activities directed to the protection of the national and civil rights of Azerbaijanis living abroad; undertakes advocacy and related social projects; and consolidates links with diaspora organisations.

⁸ <http://www.e-qanun.az/framework/17528>

⁹ Available at <http://vxside.gov.az/en/article/1130> Accessed August 7, 2020.

The Heydar Aliyev Foundation 2004

The Foundation aims to promote the cultural heritage of Azerbaijan and Azerbaijan's image worldwide.

Diaspora organisations in Europe



Zentralrat der Aserbaidtschanischen Diaspora in Deutschland (ZADD e.V) 2017 Germany [EN: The Council of the Azerbaijani Diaspora in Germany]

Status of the organisation: Active

Integration activities

The association aims to improve the integration of Azerbaijanis living in Germany and to increase their access to opportunities in all areas of life, in particular through practical help, support and representation of diaspora interests. It also aims to familiarize the German population with Azerbaijani culture, music, history and politics.

The Congress of European Azerbaijanis (CEA) 2004 Belgium

Status of the organisation: Inactive

Development activities

CEA is officially based in Belgium. CEA is mainly organising events to conduct pro-Azerbaijani lobby. Its 2004 establishing conference was attended by representatives of the Azerbaijan communities and diaspora organizations of Ukraine, the Russian Federation, Belarus, Sweden, Switzerland, Norway, Denmark, Finland, Belgium, Austria, Netherlands, France, Spain, Czech, Poland, Romania, Hungary, Bulgaria, Germany, heads of the Azerbaijan societies functioning in the US, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. [f] [🐦]

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