

DEVELOPMENT AND STRUCTURAL FEATURES OF RURAL SETTLEMENTS IN ARAN ECONOMIC-GEOGRAPHICAL REGION OF AZERBAIJAN

The aim of the study is to analyze characteristic features of the rural settlements in Aran economic-geographical region.

Methods. The study used the method of comparative historical methods, statistics, analyze.

Results. The size of the villages in the Aran economic region may be explained by the larger population, and the more favorable natural and geographical conditions, economic and demographic development of these settlements. Development of labor-intensive cotton, favorable transportation-geographical location of two republic junctions of the republic, which is adjacent to the Baku-Sumgait industrial junction, opportunities to sell agricultural products in Baku's capital region. The vast opportunities of the non-oil sector of Azerbaijan create a real basis for sustainable economic development. In the Aran economic district, which has a large land fund, the country produces cotton, grapes, grains, fruits and vegetables, potatoes, and so on.

Scientific novelty The development and structural features of the rural settlements of the Aran economic-geographical region provide the basis for determining the key development priorities of the region in a market economy. As the Aran economic region is the largest agricultural region of the republic, the share of urban population in the general population is small, and the share of the rural population is much higher. The population of the rural formed at the expense of high population growth has always had a positive dynamics. The observation of such a different trend was associated with a high level of natural growth compared to the general republic in the region and a low level of urbanization due to relatively poor socioeconomic development in the region. By increasing the level of utilization of potential labor resources in rural areas, it is possible to achieve normal demographic development and efficient placement in the Aran economic region. In the article, the information on the agricultural production of the region is important for evaluating the level of use of existing potential and attracting foreign and local investors to various spheres of the region's agriculture.

Keywords: rural settlements, productive forces, agrarian reform, agro-industrial complex, socio-economic development, demographic potential.

Introduction. The rural settlement system of the Aran economic district is represented by 790 rural settlements. All these villages are united in 392 villages. The villages of the Aran Economic Region account for 18.6% of all villages in the country. According to the 2009 population census in the Aran economic zone, the majority of rural settlements are villages with a population between 501-1000 and 1001-2000. This category villages refers covers 467 settlements (average). They make up 59.1% of all economic district villages. For comparison, this group of villages in the republic is 1867 and is equal to 44.0% of all villages in the country. Rural settlements with relatively high numbers in the economic district include settlements between 201-500 people. There are 130 villages in this category, which account for 16.5% of the rural area's economic system. This group villages are more in the republic, which is contained 22.2% . [8, pp/5-12]. In the economic region, relatively large rural settlements with a population of 2001-3000 comprise 95 units, which is 12.0% of the rural population of the economic region. Rural settlements of the respective category across the republic cover 7.5% of all villages. Apparently, this figure is significantly less than the respective figure on the economic region. These types of villages are mainly located in favorable economic and geographical locations - riverside, seaside, irrigation canals and transportation routes. Relatively good economic bases and labor-intensity (cotton processing plants etc.) is represented with farm fields. There are 55 large villages contain with a population of 3001-5000 people. They make up 7.0% of the economic region of rural settlements. In the whole republic this type of villages is 4.8%. Here too, the great villages are formed and developed on the basis of similar natural-geographical, socioeconomic bases, like the typical villages above. Some of them play an important role in the economic structure of industry and social infrastructure along with agriculture. Therefore, there are possibilities to get the status of their settlement in the near future. [6, pp/41-47]

Content of the research and the obtained results. As shown in Table 1, there are 16 largest villages in the Aran economic district with a population of over 5,000. These types of villages contain for 2.0% of all rural settlements in the economic district. In the economic district, the smallest villages (up to 200 people) belong to 27 villages. Rural settlements in this group are characterized by poor economic base, unfavorable economic and geographical location, and distance from river and irrigation canals and roads. They make up 3.4% of all rural settlements in the economic region.

According to the 2009 Census of Population in Aran Economic District, most villages are located in the Barda administrative district, by grouping of rural settlements and their structural

distribution by administrative regions (Table1). The rural settlement system of Barda district is represented by 110 points. It also means that the region accounted for 13.9% of all villages. There are 114.4 thousand people (01.01.2017) lives in these settlements, which is 9.2% of the rural population of the economic region. The average size of the villages was 1,040 people, much higher than the average economic district (794.3 people). Table1. shows that, as in the economic region, rural settlements in the Barda region are dominated by the average villages with a population of 501-1000 and 1001-2000. The number of villages in the first group is 37, the portion is 33.6%, the second group is 30, the portion is 27.3%. These rural settlements are located in the most important agricultural areas, and they perform mainly functions such as cotton growing, cattle breeding, grain growing and vegetable growing. In villages with a population changeable of between 201-500 people, there is a relatively contain large number. This group has 31 settlements, which cover 28.2% of all villages in the district. Barda has 6 villages with populations ranging from 2001 to 3000, and between 3001-5000 populations in 2 villages. Although the favorable physical-geographical and economic-geographical position has led to the relatively even distribution of villages by area, the most populous villages are predominantly located near the foothills, river and irrigation canals.

Table 1.

Grouping of rural settlements according to the 2009 census of population in Aran economic-geographical district

Districts	Number of rural settlements	According to their population								
		Up to 50	51-100	101-200	201-500	501-1000	1001-2000	2001-3000	3001-5000	More than 5000
Aghjabadi	43	-	-	-	3	12	13	9	5	1
Agdash	72	-	-	5	16	19	28	3	1	-
Beylagan	25	-	1	-	1	7	7	6	1	2
Barda	110	-	1	3	31	37	30	6	2	-
Bilasuvär	25	-	-	-	2	3	5	4	9	2
Goychay	55	-	-	-	10	17	17	5	13	2
Hajigabul	25	1	-	1	8	2	4	7	2	-
Imishli	48	-	-	1	2	14	21	3	6	1
Kurdamir	59	-	2	1	9	19	15	7	3	3
Neftchala	48	3	2	4	10	14	11	3	1	-
Saatli	43	-	-	-	1	10	19	8	4	1
Sabirabad	74	-	-	-	7	15	31	13	7	1
Salyan	48	-	-	1	4	12	17	8	5	1
Ucar	29	-	-	-	4	7	8	2	6	2
Yevlakh	46	-	-	1	13	12	13	7	-	-
Zardab	40	-	-	-	9	13	14	4	-	-
Economic district	790	4	6	17	430	214	253	95	55	16

Source: Census of Population of the Republic of Azerbaijan, 2009, Volume I, Baku 2010. page. 7-222

In the rural settlement system of the Aran economic district, Sabirabad administrative district is the second in terms of the number of villages. In this administrative region, the rural population is located in 74 villages. The villages of the administrative territory of Sabirabad account for 9.4% of all economic districts-villages. In these villages, 142.2 thousand people (01.01.2017), or 11.5% of the population lives in the economic-district. The average size of villages is 1921.6 people, which is 2.4 times larger than the average economic district. According to the 2009 census, the rural population of the administrative district is dominated by villages with a population of 1001-2000. This group of villages contain 41.9% (31 villages) of all administrative district villages. There are 15 villages with a population of 501-1000. Their part in the settlement system is 20.3%. The most populated areas relatively are the settlements with a population of 2001-3000. Their number is 13, and their specific weight is 17.6%. The number of population in large villages with populations ranging from 3001 to 5,000 people in the economic district are most likely in this administrative district. There are 7 of them, 9.5% of the villages of the administrative district. According to the population of the administrative district, the largest village is Galagain - 5888 people. There are no villages in the Sabirabad administrative area settlement system with a population of 0-200 people. In the administrative district the main rural settlements are the right bank of the Araz River, both coastal areas of the Kura River, and the main Mugan canal irrigation area.

Cotton-growing, vegetable growing, melon-growing and cattle-breeding in these areas with the intensity of irrigation led to the sustainable formation of the economic base of the villages and the creation of basic

Administrative-territorial divisions of Aran economic region, Aghdash administrative district occupies the third place by the number of villages. The rural settlement system of the Aghdash region is represented by 72 villages and contain 9.1% of all villages in the economic region. According to 2017 information, 71,900 population live in these settlements. The average size of villages during that period was 998.6 people, which is much higher than the indicator of economic region (794.3 people). According to the 2009 Census, the structure of rural settlements of the administrative district are dominated by villages with a population of ranging from 1001-2000. This group consists of 28 villages, representing 38.9% of all administrative district villages. In the structure of villages, villages with a number of population of between 501-1000 are settlements with 26.4% of all rural areas. In the settlement system of the Aghdash administrative area, the small villages with a population size of 201-500 are the third. They account for 22.2% of the villages (16 villages). The biggest village in the district is the village of Upper Laki with a population of 3,443. The villages in the territory of Aghdash are relatively evenly distributed over the territory on the point of compared to the previous administrative districts. The purpose direction of production of villages is cotton, vegetable growing, grain growing and cattle breeding.

The Kurdamir territorial unit is the fourth among the administrative regions according to number of villages in the economic district's rural settlement system. It accounts for 7.5% (59 villages) of the economic district. 92.3 thousand people or 14.8% of the rural population of the economic region live in these villages. The average size of the villages is 1564.4 people, it is close to the average economic region indicator. The largest settlement is Sigirli village - 6130 people. According to the 2009 Census, 501-1000 people make up the majority population in the villages the structure of the rural settlement system. Their number is 19 and accounts for 32.2% of all administrative district villages. The second largest part in the structure of villages belongs to the group of villages with a population of 1001-2000. There are 15 villages of this type with a specific weight of 25.4%. Unlike other administrative districts of the economic district, Kurdamir has more villages with a population of over 5,000. These are the villages of Sigirli (6130 people), Khyrdapay (6130 people) and Atakishili (5680 people). The mentioned settlements have a better economic and social base and are in a favorable transport and geographical location. Generally, the villages of the district are distributed equally, mainly due to the relief, favorable natural-geographical conditions and economic and geographical position. Production functions are mainly horticulture, pomegranate, horticulture, cotton and livestock.

As shown in Table 1, the Goychay administrative district is the fifth in terms of the number of villages in the rural settlement system of the Aran economic district. Here all the villages located in the region is 7.0% or 55. According to the 01.01.2017 information, in all these villages, 81500 people or 6.7% of the total rural population of the economic district were settled. The average size of the villages is 1,481.8 people, which is lower than the average economic district (1571.4 people). The biggest villages are Bigir (5,903 people) and Laki Naked (5660). According to the 2009 Census (Table 2), the rural population settlements occupies the first place in the structure of villages with 501-1000 people. Their number is 18 and comprises 32.7% of the administrative district villages. Second place is occupied by the villages with a population of 1001-2000. Their number is 17 and their special weight is 30.9%. Small villages with populations ranging from 201-500 are ranked third in the rural district's administrative system. Their number is 10 and their special weight is 18.2%. There are no small villages in the administrative district with a population of up to 201 people. There are 8 villages with populations ranging from 2001 to 5,000. Their specific weight is 14.5%. In the Goychay region the villages are distributed evenly. Production functions are horticulture, pomegranate, vegetable growing, grain growing and cattle-breeding.

Salyan, Neftchala and Imishli administrative districts have the same share in the structure of rural settlement system of Aran economic district. Each of these administrative territorial units has 48 rural settlements. Each of them accounts for 6.1% of the total economic area settlement system. Table 2 shows that in the villages of Salyan, 92.3 thousand people or 7.4% of the respective population of the economic region, 45.9 thousand or 3.7% in Neftchala, 87.0 thousand in Imishli. or 7.0% of the rural population of the economic district. The average size of villages is 1922.9 persons in Salyan, 1,812.5 people in Imishli, that is, more than the average economic indicator (1571.4 people), and less than average indicator 956.3 people in Neftchala. This is mainly due to the fact that the villages have different socio-economic bases and development. According to the figures in Table1, the rural areas of these administrative regions are dominated by villages with a population of 501-1000 and 1001-2000. In Salyan this category contain is 60.4%, in Imishli 72.9%, and in Neftchala 52.1%. There is a village in Salyan (Arbatan 5770) and

İmişli (6575 people in Sarkhanli) with a population of more than 5,000. The structure of the villages of Neftchala region is dominated by very small settlements with a population of up to 200 people. Neftchala differs from all administrative districts of the economic region by this indicator. There are 9 of them, covering 18.8% of all villages in the administrative district. Bununla birlikdə ümumi iqtisadi bölgə üçün müvafiq göstərici 5,5 dəfə çoxdur və 3,4% -ə bərabərdir. This may be explained by the specific socio-economic development of the Neftchala region and the economic base of the villages.

Table 2.

Rural population and average size of villages by administrative-territorial division of Aran economic region

Administrative districts	Rural settlements	Share in economic region (%)	Rural population, one thousand people (01.01.2017)	Share in economic region (%)	Average size of villages (person)
Aghjabadi	43	5,4	83,7	6,7	1946,5
Aghdash	72	9,1	71,9	5,8	998,6
Beylagan	25	3,2	56,6	4,6	2264,0
Barda	110	13,9	114,4	9,2	1040,0
Bilasuvay	25	3,2	78,3	6,3	3132,0
Goychay	55	7,0	81,5	6,6	1481,8
Hajigabul	25	3,2	36,6	2,9	1464,0
İmişli	48	6,1	87,0	7,0	1812,5
Kurdamir	59	7,5	92,3	7,4	1564,4
Neftchala	48	6,1	45,9	3,7	956,3
Saatli	43	5,4	85,7	6,9	1993,0
Sabirabad	74	9,4	142,2	11,5	1921,6
Salyan	48	6,1	92,3	7,4	1922,9
Ucar	29	3,7	68,8	5,5	2372,4
Yevlakh	46	5,8	58,3	4,7	1267,4
Zardab	40	5,1	45,9	3,7	1147,5
General e / d	790	100%	1241,4	100%	1571,4

Source: Population of Azerbaijan, Baku 2017, p.73; 77-79.

Yevlakh administrative district is the 9th in the number of villages in the rural settlement system of Aran economic region. This administrative-territorial share unit accounts for 46 or 5.8% of all economic district villages. According to the statistics as of 01.01.2017, 58.3 thousand people or 4.7% of the rural population of the economic region lived in these villages. The average size of the villages was 1267.4 people, significantly lower than the average economic district (1571.4 people). According to the 2009 Census, the population in the structure of villages is dominated by 201-500 with 13 villages (28.6%), with 1001-2000 people still in 13 villages (28.6%) and 12 villages with a population of 501-1000. (26.0%). There are no small and large villages registered (more than 3000) in the administrative district. The villages were distributed unevenly in the Yevlakh region. The main parts of the villages are the eastern part of the administrative district, especially the Kurboyu and Upper Karabakh canals, and the areas major concentrated rate impact of the Yevlakh-Mingachevir industrial junction. Intensive rural settlements are formed in the northwest and southwest parts of the administrative region. The functions performed by the villages are cotton-growing, vegetable growing, grain growing and cattle-breeding.

Aghjabadi and Saatli administrative regions occupy 10th and 11th places with the same specific weight (5.4%) in the rural settlement structure of the economic district. As Table 2 shows, 83.7 thousand people (6.7%) live in 43 villages of Aghjabadi and 85.7 thousand people (6.9%) live in so many villages in Saatli. The average size of villages is 1946.5 persons in Aghjabadi, and in Saatli is 1993 persons significantly exceeds the average economic indicator. This may be explained by the fact that the villages of these regions have a better socioeconomic base and favorable economic and geographical position. According to the 2009 Census, the demographic potential of the villages is dominated by villages with a population of 501-1000 and 1001-2000. In Aghjabadi, these two categories belong to 58.1% of all villages and 67.4% in Saatli. The largest village of Aghjabadi is Avsar (5989 people) and Garanuru (6,259) in Saatli. The main rural settlements are the Karabakh Plains, the foothills, the Upper Karabakh Canal and the Kurboyu, and the right coast of the Araz in Saatli and the northeastern parts of the district.

The economic bases of the villages of both administrative regions include cattle breeding, cotton growing, gardening, horticulture, etc. contane.

Zardab region is occuppaid 12th by the number of villages in the economic settlement system. It accounts for 40 villages or 5.1% of this type of settlements. As can be seen from Table 2, 45.9 thousand people or 3.7% of the population of the economic district live in these villages. The average number of villages is 1177.5 thousand people, which is much less than the average economic region. According to the 2009 Census, 14 villages (35%) with a population of 1001-2000 people and 13 villages with a population of 501-1000 (32.5%) prevail in the structure of rural settlements. The number of villages with a population of 201-500 is 9, which is 22.5% of all administrative district villages. The main villages are covered the left coastal areas of the Kura River. Rural population is virtually uninhabited due to the widespread use of salinities and swamps in the areas of the General Shirvan collector. The production and economic function of the villages is mainly cattle breeding, cotton growing, fruit growing, grain growing and vegetable growing.

According to the number of villages in the Ujar administrative district, the economy is ranked 13th in the rural settlement system. Ujar district is represented by 29 villages or 3.7% in the rural district of the economic district. In these villages, 68,800 persons or 5.5% of the population of the economic region live. By the average size of the villages (2372.4 people), it occupies a leading position, significantly differing from the economic average (1571.4). There are two large villages with a population of over 5,000 (2009). These are villages of Bargushad (6017 people) and Gazyan (6,162 people). There are 6 villages with a population of 3001-5000 people. In the structure of rural settlement, the number of villages with a population of 501-1000 and 1001-2000 is 7 and 8, respectively, representing 24.1% and 27.6%. Baku-Tbilisi rail and highways are the areas where large villages are located. Generally, villages were distributed evenly throughout the district. Their main functions are cotton-growing, fruit-growing and cattle breeding.

The next three places in the Aran economic region are Beylagan, Bilasuvar and Hajigabul administrative districts with the same indicators. There are 25 villages in each of them. The share of each of them in the economic region is 3.2%. According to the data of 2017, 56,600 people (4.6%) live in Beylagan villages, 36,600 (2.9%) in Hajigabul, 78.3 thousand (6.3%) in Bilasuvar. According to the average population in the economic district, the largest villages are in the Bilasuvar territorial division. The average size of the villages is 3132,0 people. The largest villages are Khurmandali (8541 people) and Beydili (5761 people) (2009). In the Beylagan district, the villages of the First Shahsevan (7968 people) and the Dunyamallar(6630 people), with a population of more than 5,000 people. The rural population in the Beylagan district is dominated by villages with a population of 501-1000 (28%) and 1001-2000 (28%). In the Bilasuvar region, villages with a population of 3001-5000 people (36%) and a population of 1001-2000 people (20%) prevail. As can be seen from the figures in Table 1, villages in the Hajigabul region have a population of 201-500 (32%) and 6 villages (28%) with a population of 2001-3000. The major rural settlements in Beylagan are the Karabakh plain, which covers the left bank of the Araz River and the right bank of the Upper Karabakh canal. The main production and economic functions of the villages are cattle breeding, cotton growing and grain growing. The main distribution areas of the villages in Bilasuvar are the surroundings of the irrigation canal named after Azizbeyov. Here, the main production and economic function of the villages is cattle breeding, cotton growing, grain growing and vegetable growing. The main rural settlements in the Hajigabul region are Kurboyu areas. The main activities of the rural population are horticulture, pomegranate, horticulture(melon and gourd growing), etc. areas. [3,2018]

According to 2017, 1241,400 people or 26.9% of the corresponding figure in the country are living in rural areas of the economic region. The average size of villages in the economic region is 1571.4 people, which is much higher than the average national figure (1,085.5 people). This is due to the fact that the economic district has a better demographic and socio-economic base. The Kura and Araz rivers and irrigation canals also played an important role in the formation of rural habitat for administrative areas in the economic region. The development of irrigated agriculture in hot, dry climates, and the more favorable development of cotton growing, vegetable growing, fruit growing and cattle-breeding stimulated the formation of river bank and dense rural habitat. This factor also contributed to the formation of the largest villages due to their demographic potential. Production and economic functions performed by the villages of the economic region are mainly cotton growing, dry subtropical fruit production, pomegranate farming, gardening, and cattle-breeding. Although the share of cotton production in the structure of rural production functions has decreased over the years of independence, its

share in recent years (after 2015) has been increasing. [8,pp.14-20]. Separate settlement ranges can be viewed in the following map-scheme.



Figure 1. Population in Aran Economic District, 2009

Agriculture is one of the main areas of economic activity in Aran economic district. Fruits growing, vegetables growing, grain growing, potatoes, grapes, melons and cattle breeding play a leading role in this area. As a result of consecutive and purposeful agrarian reforms, there is evidence of dynamic growth in the production of most agricultural products in the region. The main purpose of state regulation measures for the development of grain growing and the payment of the population of the country for such products is the establishment of domestic markets and provision of security. The main part of the population's provision of products is the account of grain production. The increasing of productivity in cattle breeding productivity it is directly related to the development of crop growing. Provision of the population with necessary supplies is one of the main priorities in the economic policy of the state. Due to the urgency of this issue, they have already begun the second phase of reform in the areas of concern in order to deepen some of the relationships in the sector especially agrar section [4]. Approved by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan No. 640 dated 2 March 2001. The implementation of the measures envisaged in the Azerbaijan Republic's Extreme Security Program has led to the effective implementation of supply-chain work in the country. The development of cotton farming is of strategic importance in the development of the agro-industrial complex and in ensuring socio-economic development. One of the labor-intensive sectors in agriculture is the expected to develop, of the cotton industry, and play an important role in increasing the employment of both rural and urban residents, providing initial and light industry services with small and medium-sized jobs. There are both natural and socio-economic aspects of cotton growing in the socio-economic period. Firstly, cotton growing is carried out on irrigated soils, which is why there are necessary conditions in the region. First of all, there are favorable conditions for developing entrepreneurship in cotton growing, which contributes to the strengthening of integration between different fields of activity. [7,pp.40-53]. Given the prevailing rural population in the region, it is essential to determine the prospects for agricultural development in the optimization of the socio-economic situation. Given that the economic region is the largest agricultural region of the country, it is advisable to create agricultural machinery. The light industry is closely linked to agriculture, which provides plant-based raw materials (cotton, linen, hemp, etc.) and cattle-breeding raw materials (leather, fur, silk, etc.). Such territorial ratios should be created within and between intersectoral complexes, which will help to effectively use local opportunities and address socio-economic problems. It is advisable to create small enterprises for the processing and storage of agricultural products, consumer goods, including light and food industries in order to attract a large part of the rural population to public production. In other words, the development of the areas of activity promotes the growth of employment and normal demographic development in rural areas. It is possible to improve the material and moral well-being of the rural population by involving all the potential

possibilities into the economy, positively affecting the efficient use of labor resources, contributing to GDP growth in the country, preventing rural outflow from rural areas and preventing migration problems.

Result. 1. The size of the villages in the Aran economic region may be explained by the larger population, and the more favorable natural and geographical conditions, economic and demographic development of these settlements. Development of labor-intensive cotton, favorable transportation-geographical location of two republic junctions of the republic, which is adjacent to the Baku-Sumgait industrial junction, opportunities to sell agricultural products in Baku's capital region, etc. This stimulated the demographic potential of the villages of the Aran economic district to be larger than the average republic. 2. As productive forces rise, mechanization of agricultural labor increases its intensity and productivity as a result of improved energy supply, formation of agro-industrial complexes, multilateral industrial-economic labor, cultural and domestic, transport links between Azerbaijan and rural areas fundamental quantitative and qualitative changes have been and are being made in the rural settlement system of its regions [5, p. 455]. 3. The vast opportunities of the non-oil sector of Azerbaijan create a real basis for sustainable economic development. In the Aran economic district, which has a large land fund, the country produces cotton, grapes, grains, fruits and vegetables, potatoes, and so on. It is possible to significantly increase the volume and cost of production due to the attraction of investments in this area through the creation of agroparks.

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