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AN EVALUATION OF THE LIFE QUALITY AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX (ON THE EXAMPLE OF THE GREATER CAUCASUS PROVINCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN)

Purpose. All socio-economic reforms implemented in the country are aimed at improving the quality of life of the population. Thus, despite the implementation of a plethora of social reforms, there are still issues in this area. The quality of life of the population is influenced by demographic indicators, population health indicators, education level, income and other factors. Based on these indicators, the level of development of the region is determined. The essential purpose of the study is to determine the living standards of the population in the region, to investigate the causes of the identified problems, identify areas for their elimination, and make scientifically sound proposals. The results of the study may be one of the ways to increase the human development index in the region in the future.

Research method. The analysis is based on the data of the Institute of Geography of the National Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan, the State Statistics Committee, and the works of scientists who have conducted research in the economic and social spheres. The study analyses the primary results of socio-economic reforms in the country, the current state of demographic development, the problems in this area and their solutions. Statistical analysis, comparative analysis and generalisation methods were used in the research process.

Results. The longevity and healthy lifestyle of the population should be ensured in the regions. This is important for increasing the productive activity and social welfare of the population. Health and life expectancy depend on the quality of health care in the country, as well as in the regions. For this purpose, the application of state-of-the-art technologies in health care and the training of qualified personnel will allow achieve high results. Quality health care and a healthy lifestyle are likely to increase life expectancy in the regions.

Scientific innovations. For the first time, the article examines the assessment of the quality of life of the population in the economic regions of the Greater Caucasus province. The analysis of the average life expectancy, education level, and income of the population in the studied area according to statistical indicators is given. These indicators were calculated based on current statistics and changes in this area were investigated from various aspects. It was determined that the quality of life of the population is formed under the influence of social, economic and demographic factors. The analysis indicates that the socio-economic processes taking place in the country have a direct impact on the lives of the population. Thus, during the transition period, socio-economic difficulties, loss of business opportunities, and reduced incomes in the social sphere had a negative impact on the quality of life of the population. Thus, in order to improve the welfare of the population in the Republic of Azerbaijan, in order to achieve greater success on the path to human development in the future, a purposeful state policy or certain action plan should be implemented in the regions, including the Greater Caucasus province.

Practical importance. The results and recommendations of the research can be used in the implementation of measures and programs to improve the quality of life of the population in the Greater Caucasus province.

Keywords: Human Development Index, life quality, average life expectancy at birth, educational level, incomes of population.

Introduction. Studying the life quality of the population is one of the priority directions for the sustainable development of the regions of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Dynamically developing and competitive regions are a source of improvement for the whole country. The essential purpose of sustainable development can be represented as the protection of territorial integrity and amelioration of the living quality of the population living in harmony with the environment. The sustainable development perspectives of the regions of the Republic of Azerbaijan depend on a detailed study of the regional characteristics of the quality of life of the population. While determining the quality of life, it is necessary to analyze the indicators that characterize it. The application of key indicators of quality of life paves the way for assessing the quality of life of the population of the regions of Azerbaijan and the formation of regional socio-economic policy.

Various aspects of human life specify the diversity of the concept of "quality of life" and the criteria for its assessment. In the geographical scientific literature, the assessment of the quality of life of the population is generally determined by four groups of factors that create the conditions for the formation of quality of life at the regional level - demographic, economic, social and environmental.

At the stage of contemporary development, people are one of the main economic resources. This is the reason why the study of the processes of accumulation and development of human potential is becoming increasingly important. One of the primary indicators assessing the effectiveness of national and regional socio-economic systems is the Human Development Index and Living Standards Index.

The basic purpose of the research is to analyse the current living standards of the population in the region, accelerate socio-economic development and submit scientifically sound proposals to improve the quality of life of the population.

Material and methods. E.Diener, E.Suh (1997), A.Sen (2007), S.A.Vasnev, V.M.Jerebin and A.N.Romanov (2002) and other foreign scholars' scientific works are the primary sources to carry out research on life quality. From Azerbaijani researchers, A.Aliyev (2000), N.Gasimov (2000), Sh.M.Muradov (2004), J.B.Guliyev (2011), R.S.Abdullayeva (2014), M.H.Rizayev (2014) studied the life quality of population and its amelioration direction, Z.N.Eminov (2015), Z.T.Imrani (2015), N.A.Pashayev (2015), N.H.Ayyubov (2015), E.S.Badalov (2015), R.N.Karimov (2015), G.R.Aghakishiyev (2015), H.M.Tahirova (2015) and other researchers studied in detail the territorial organization of the economy, the number of population, settlements, demographic development, social services in different economic regions. Additionally, the official statistical materials were examined during the research.

The research work was carried out using mathematical-statistical, comparative analysis, system-structural and other methods.

The object of study. The region studied - the Greater Caucasus province occupies an important geopolitical position in the country and has great natural, demographic, economic and historical-cultural potential. Effective use of the region's potential can ensure sustainable development, high living standards and quality of life.

The Greater Caucasus province consists of 4 economic regions, including Baku, Absheron-Khizi, Shaki-Zagatala, Guba-Khachmaz, and Daghlig (Mountainous) Shirvan economic regions. The Baku economic region was not included the investigation since this region statistical indicators are relatively higher as opposed to the other regions. The region has a favourable economic and geographical position in the north, north-west and northeast of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The region covers 29,6% of the country's territory with 25,7 thousand km². According to the statistical data for the year 2021, 20,7% of the country's population is concentrated in this region with a population of 2092,3 thousand people. The urban population is 1002,4 thousand people and the rural population is 1090,3 thousand people, which constitutes 18,7% and 22,9% of the country's population, respectively [1].

58,8% of the country's output, including 9,5% of the industrial production, 23,9% of the agricultural production, 19,2% of fixed capital investment, 5,1% of the employed population and 12,6% of retail trade were accounted for by region [2].

Analysis and discussion. The most important duty facing a sustainable socio-economic policy is to improve the quality of life of the population. Quality of life is a category that covers all areas necessary for the livelihood of the population. The quality of life of the population is understood as meeting the material, spiritual and social needs of the people, depending on their needs. These needs are closely linked to the development of the country or region. Therefore, the criteria for assessing the quality of life are different for countries. The generally accepted indicators of quality of life are as follows:

- Income of the population (average nominal and real incomes per capita, average salary, minimum wage and pensions);
- Demographic trends (average life expectancy at birth, birth, death, infant mortality, maternal mortality, age and sex composition of the population);
- Quality of education;
- Quality of health care;
- Quality of social services;
- Quality of environment and others [13].

The quality and quantity indicators characterising their living quality were also relatively advanced and renewed as the demand of people has changed during the socioeconomic and political events emerging in the various periods. From the 70s of the last century to the present day, while assessing the level of development of each state, such concepts as "living conditions", "living standards", "quality of life", "population quality", "Human Development Index", "human capital" and other terms have been assessed [12].

It seems expedient to factor in the concept of "quality of life of the population" with human development, this is because the realization of human potential in the socio-economic system finds its expression in improving the quality of life of the population. Unequivocally, in the analysis of the quality of life of the population, when developing a regional policy and assessing its effectiveness, generalizing indicators are used, which allow to more accurately compare areas according to the level of socio-economic development. One such indicator is the Human Development Index (HDI). The HDI has been prepared to compare countries and has been published in the annual reports of the United Nations Development Program since 1990 [16]. The indices in the Human Development Reports for Azerbaijan have been calculated since 1995.

Human Development Index is calculated in three directions:

1. Health (the average life expectancy at birth);
2. Education (literacy level among adults, the share of people studying at educational institutions among the total population);
3. Economic (Total incomes per capita) [10].

Without a shadow of a doubt, health is the greatest blessing for people, and its indicators are one of the primary factors characterizing human development. There are various health indicators are used depending on the purpose of calculating the coefficients characterizing sustainable human development and the calculated coefficient. The use of various health indicators featuring health depends primarily on the level of development of the country and, accordingly, the health problems facing the country and how to discuss these challenges. In recent years, along with the average life expectancy, several other indicators have been used to characterize longevity. This is the life expectancy at birth [14]. The life expectancy at birth is calculated for those born in each specific year and is one of the most up-to-date statistics. The advantage of this indicator is that it indicates the creation of conditions for long and healthy life. It should be noted that this figure differs sharply between countries. For example, the life expectancy at birth in the Republic of Azerbaijan is 73,2 years [1]. Generally, the traditional longevity and economic and social reforms in Azerbaijan create the conditions for further increasing life expectancy in the country. Life expectancy at birth in the country in 1995 was 69,1 years, including 65,2 years for men and 72,9 years for women. In 2019, these indicators increased by 7,3 years and reached 76,4 years, including an increase of 8,8 years and reached to 74 years for men, and an increase of 5,8 years and reached to 78,7 years for women. On the contrary, in the year 2020, there was a remarkable decrease among both sexes. Thus, the life expectancy at birth decreased from 76,4 to 73,2. Frankly speaking, the figure decreased by 3,9 years standing at 70,1 years for men and it experienced a decline by 2,2 years standing at 76,5 years for women.

The indicators of the life expectancy in the Greater Caucasus province varied with the same trend both in urban and rural places. It can be interesting to note that the life expectancy for females has increased more than for males. The essential reason underlying this situation is that generally, women are engaged in lighter work than men, as well as, they nourish regularly and take a rest when the occasion arises. This is the reason that the primary direction in improving the quality of life of men should be recreation and rehabilitation. For this reason, it can be utilised from foreign countries' practises. Thus, in Western European countries, such as the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Germany, Ireland, the United Kingdom, etc. the reduction in working hours, and the state's control over the setting of weekly hours has paved the way for emerging of the serious results. Undoubtedly, based on these principles, it can be achieved to improve the quality of life of men playing a key role in the demographic development of the population. However, in the region, as in the country, there has been a decline in life expectancy at birth over the past year. Thus, the life expectancy at birth in 2019 decreased from 75,6 years to 72,9 years and stood at 72,2 in 2020. Among men, this figure declined to 68,8 years seeing 4,1 years decrease as opposed to 1,7 years decrease among women (76,6 years) (Table 1).

The COVID-19 pandemic, which has spread around the world since the last months of 2019, has had a serious impact on our country, as well as on all regions of the Greater Caucasus. The announcement of quarantine in densely populated areas of the country, and the formation of a special quarantine regime in the last 2 years have affected the demographic and quality of life of the population. There has been a significant increase in the number of deaths in susceptible people and the elderly, who are more susceptible to succumbing to disease. Restrictions imposed by strict quarantine rules on the country's population for several months have also culminated in both economic and demographic consequences. These effects have had an impact on life expectancy at birth, as exemplified by the decline over the past year. However, the high number of deaths during the pandemic is not the only direct consequence of the disease. Thus, the introduction of a strict quarantine regime has indirectly contributed to meteorological sensitivity, healthy eating routines and an increase in a number of exacerbations.

Table 1.
The average life expectancy at birth in the Greater Caucasus province

Economic regions	2019						2020					
	Total		Urban places		Rural Places		Total		Urban places		Rural Places	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Absheron-Khizi	79,4	73,8	79,4	73,7	77,9	74,0	77,0	69,6	76,8	69,4	77,7	72,0
Shaki-Zagatala	77,9	72,8	77,4	71,2	77,8	73,3	76,7	70,1	76,5	67,7	76,6	71,0

Guba-Khachmaz	77,5	72,5	75,7	70,6	78,4	73,4	76,3	67,0	75,1	67,2	77,0	69,2
Daghlig (Mountainous) Shirvan	78,3	72,5	78,2	71,7	77,9	72,5	76,3	68,6	76,9	67,1	75,3	69,2
Greater Caucasus	78,3	72,9	77,7	71,8	78,0	73,3	76,6	68,8	76,3	67,9	76,7	70,4
Azerbaijan	78,7	74,0	78,5	73,5	78,9	74,5	76,5	70,1	76,2	70,1	77,0	70,1

Source: Women and men in Azerbaijan, 2021 [3]

In the postpandemic period the longevity and healthy lifestyle of the population should be ensured in the regions. This is substantial for increasing the productive activity and social welfare of the population. Health and life expectancy depend on the quality of health care in the country, as well as in the regions. For this purpose, the application of state-of-the-art technologies in health care and the training of qualified personnel will create a suitable condition to achieve high results. This means that quality health care and a healthy lifestyle will increase life expectancy in the regions. The average life expectancy of the new-born children is one of the essential indicators of the socioeconomic development level. Being as a essential demographic indicator, the average life expectancy is used for the calculation of the Human Development Index. In order to determine the index, at the same time, the educational level of the population settling in the country, as well as the value of the national income per person (with dollars) is taken into account.

It is an undeniable fact that knowledge, education and outlook are the basis for the development of a successful civilization, and the people are considered its creator, protector, bearer and applicant [15]. For this reason, education, which is the most important factor in the acquisition of knowledge, plays a special role in assessing sustainable human development. Various education indicators can be also involved, depending on the coefficients used to assess the country's development and determine its sustainability. When the government pays attention to education, science, organization and provision, the indicators of knowledge and technological development can be at a higher level, which has an impact on the level of human development [18]. In recent years, extensive measures aimed at building, rehabilitating, expanding, and modernizing novel schools and other educational institutions, and strengthening the material and technical base have contributed to further improving the level of education in the country.

The number of people studying at the educational institutions and the educational level in Azerbaijan and its administrative districts is obtained on the basis of census materials. Thus, the data on the education of the economic regions included in the Greater Caucasus province were calculated on the basis of the 2009 census material since the 2019 census materials were not ready. According to the data obtained, 30,4% of people studying at the educational institutions were accounted for by Shaki-Zagatala. The Absheron-Khizi was the second on the list with 27,4%, just ahead of Guba-Khachmaz at 26,1%. The remaining 16,1% fell to the Daghlig (Mountainous) Shirvan's share. Surely, the emergence of such differences in the region was due to the level of development of economic regions, the number of population and the age group. Provided that we look at the gender distribution, it is clear that men are more educated than women, due to the relatively high number of boys born (Table 2).

The number of population aged 15 and over in the Greater Caucasus province is 1,4 million people. Analysis of the level of education indicates that 98.8% of the total population are educated and 1.2% are uneducated. Given the fact that we pay attention to the gender distribution of the population in the economic regions, the number of women in both the educated and uneducated populations is higher than men. 47,9% of the studying in the educational institution (400,1 thsd. people) in the Greater Caucasus province was accounted for by the females compared to the males whose share stood at 52,1%. In the province, 51,2% of the educated women was formed by women whereas this figure hovered under 49% standing at 48,8%. Additionally, these figures were 71,1% for the former and 28,3% for the latter. The numerical advantage of the uneducated women is due to religious-ritualistic factors, early marriages and other factors.

Table 2.

The number of people studying at the educational institutions and the educational level (2009)

Economic regions	People studying at the educational institutions			The educational level of population aged 15 and over					
	Total	Female, %	Male, %	Educated			Uneducated		
				Total	Female, %	Male, %	Total	Female, %	Male, %
Absheron-Khizi	109552	47,1	52,9	393520	51,6	48,4	3057	71,0	29,0

Shaki-Zagatala	121681	49,0	51,0	431087	51,0	49,0	5209	69,4	30,6
Guba-Khachmaz	104330	47,3	52,7	359446	50,8	49,2	5340	73,5	26,5
Daghlig (Mountainous) Shirvan	64523	48,1	51,9	204371	51,4	48,6	2968	73,1	26,9
Greater Caucasus	400086	47,9	52,1	1388424	51,2	48,8	16574	71,7	28,3

Source: Regions of Azerbaijan [2]

One of the important factors for improving the quality of life in the regions is to expand the opportunities for quality education of the population rather than high quantity and to bring personnel and vocational training in line with contemporary requirements. The transition to planned education will form the basis of professional training. The essential indicator used in assessing the state of human development and calculating various coefficients for this purpose is the amount of per capita income in the country. It is usually expressed as Gross National Income (GNI) per capita. In order to determine the differences between countries and to make comparisons on the basis of a single indicator, in international practice it is accepted to indicate income in US dollars for all countries [16].

Analysis of GNI per capita in Azerbaijan over the years indicates that growth was observed from 2005 to 2008. The four-fold drop in world oil prices in 2009 also affected our country. The years 2009 and 2010 were years of the financial and economic crisis in the world. Thus, per capita GNI in 2009 decreased by 10,4% compared to the previous year. Despite the global recession, as a result of economic reforms in Azerbaijan, GNI growth has resumed since 2010. Although there was a rapid increase until 2014, a sharp decline (30,4%) was experienced again in 2015 (Figure 2). This is due to the acute crisis in the global financial system. Thus, the dollar, which is considered the financial denomination of the United States, was raised from 0,25 to 0,50% by the decision of the Federal Reserve System of that country, and after 6 months the decision was made again and increased to 0,75% [5]. The global financial system and international investment agreements have temporarily collapsed the entire system because it is conducted under this financial denomination. Because such interest rate changes are not made quickly, but in different years and with caution. Such a high and rapid decline in interest rates in our country, as well as in the world, has caused concern in the financial market. The increase in the value of the dollar denomination against the manat by more than 1,5 times was a key factor in reducing the country's GNI.

The concept of quality of life is closely linked to living standards. The standard of living is an indicator of reflecting the well-being and income of the population. Provided that we look at the figures 3 and 4, until 2015, the income of the population by the country and economic regions experienced an upward tendency while in the year 2016, there was a sharp decline in this figure. As a consequence of the luckly implemented State Programs on the "Socioeconomic development of the regions", the income of the population commented again to rise as opposed to the previous period. Nonetheless, as a result of the increase in the value of dollars, the general indicators took a downward trend compared to the previous years. Supposed that we compare the economic regions, the highest income belongs to the Absheron-Khizi economic region while the lowest figure witnessed in the Daghlig (Mountainous Shirvan) economic region. The figures for Guba-Khachmaz and Shaki-Zagatala were almost equal.

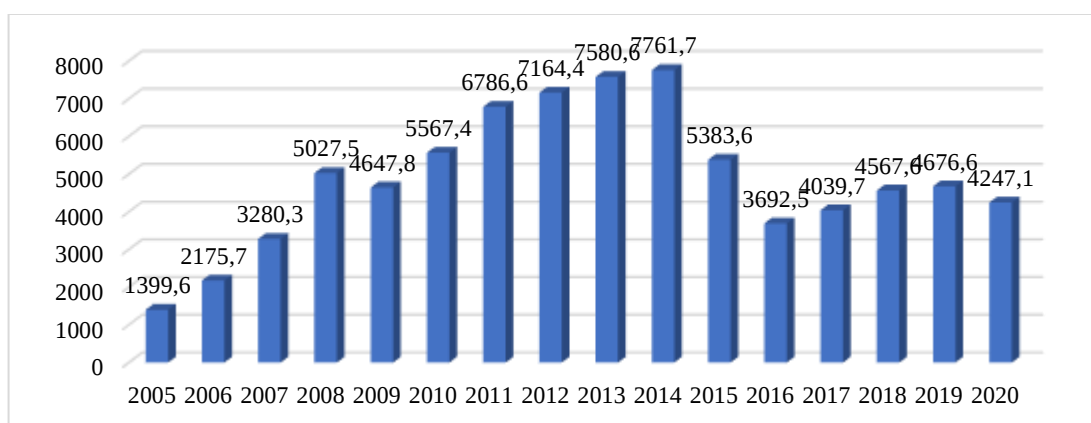


Figure 2. A volume of GNI per capita in Azerbaijan [4]

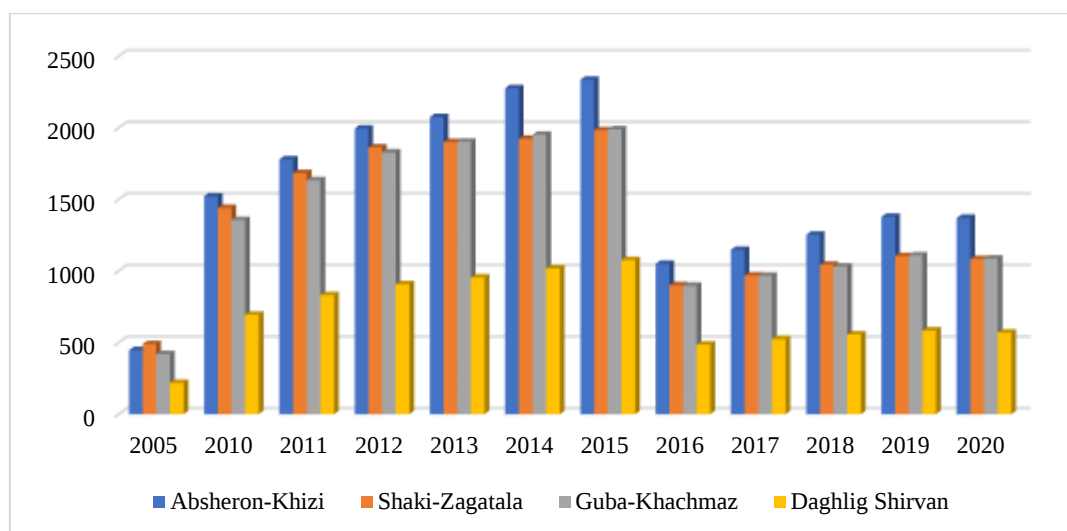


Figure 3. The incomes of the population in the Greater Caucasus province, with million dollars [4]

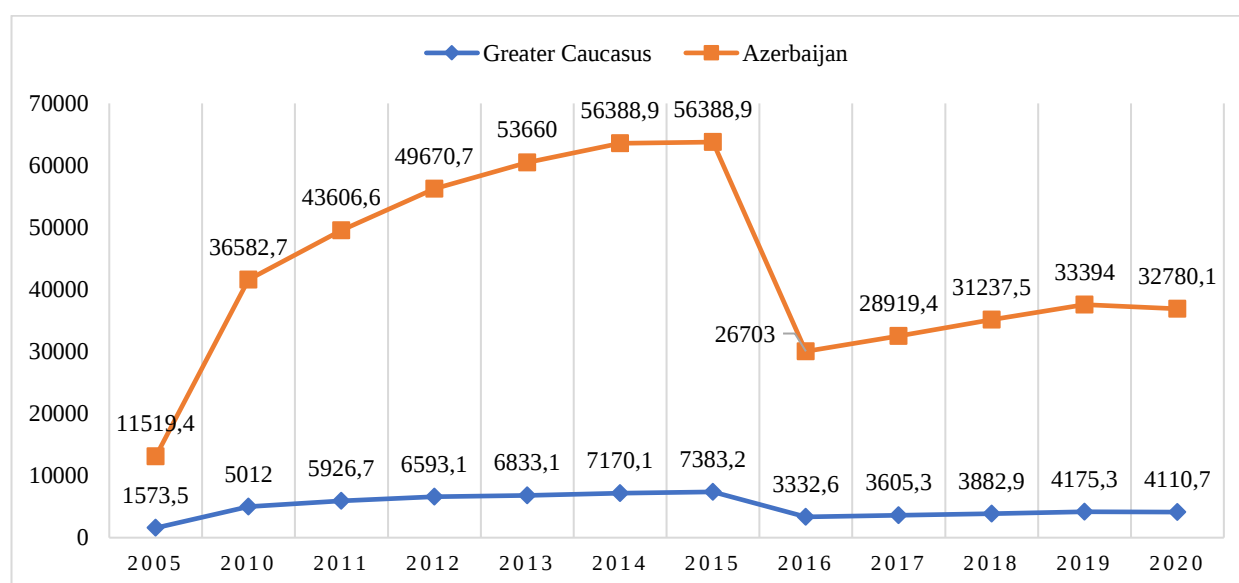


Figure 4. The incomes of population, with million dollars [4]

In the year 2005, by the country, the Greater Caucasus province formed 13,7% of the population income. By 2015, the income of population had continued to rise by the region and the country. However, owing to the same reason, there was a dramatical decline in this indicator. Hence, during the one year, the income of population fell from 47,4 to 45,1%. In the following years, there was negligible growth in the income. In the year 2020, the income of population was 12,5% by the country.

Regardless experinecing increase in 2019, in 2020, this figure saw a gradual decline not only by economic regions but also by country. In the last one year, the income of population witnessed 1,8% decrease in the country compared to the Greater Caucasus province where this percentage was one and half per cent.

Employment constitutes the basic part of the population's income. Ensuring employment in the regions is one of the fundamental conditions for improving the living standards of the population and, consequently, reducing poverty. Although income is an important tool in improving the quality of life of the population, it is not taken into consideration as the only factor that contributes to poverty reduction. Addressing the problem of poverty in the region, along with increasing the income level of the population, makes it necessary to develop social services.

Not only economic growth but also the social welfare of the entire population of economic regions should be an important factor for the high development of the region. As the country's economy develops, it is necessary to increase the income of the population, including wages, and ensure a decent level. Increasing the time and conditions of health and rest ensure the development of natural growth. In addition to the sustainable development should increase the fair distribution of income in the regions and the social welfare of the low-income population.

Dissemination of human development indices in a transparent manner, sharing information and new practices, not only in our country, but also in the region and the world, can develop a global mechanism for sustainable development. The realization of such goals would be an important step for the future. At present, a number of organizations and projects are being implemented in this direction.

Created with the support of the European Research Council, the “Globaldatalab” (Global Data Laboratory) project provides information on the Human Development Index of 186 countries and their 1783 regions [19]. Health index, education index, living standard index and Human Development Index indicators for Azerbaijan and its regions from 1995 to 2019 were provided. From there, information was obtained on the Absheron-Khizi, Shaki-Zagatala, Guba-Khachmaz, Daghligh (Mountainous) Shirvan economic regions included in the Greater Caucasus province.

After gaining its independence, the Republic of Azerbaijan was included in the list of countries comparable in terms of human development. From 1995 onwards, the results of Azerbaijan have been reflected in the rankings prepared on the basis of various indicators of the Global Human Development Reports of the UNDP, including the HDI.

Since 1995, the reduction of poverty, economic growth reflecting the country’s economy and the volume of GNI per capita, as well as the increase of the average life expectancy and education levels, in turn, has also culminated in a gradual rise in the indicators of human development, as a result of the country's well-thought-out and systematic measures for human development in close cooperation with international organizations. The experience of developed countries shows that the health of the population, which characterizes the quality of life, life expectancy at birth, depends on the organization of health care in each country, the efficient use of funds allocated for health from the state budget.

Human Development Index in Azerbaijan increased by 11,4% from 1995 to 2005, by 10,4% from 2005 to 2010, and by 1,6% from 2015 to 2019. In the Greater Caucasus province, an increase of 11,6%, 10,4% and 1,6% was observed, respectively. As can be experienced from the figures, development has been at the same pace in both the country and the region. Analysis of the data indicates that as the health, education and living standards indices grow, so does the Human Development Index. According to the health index, the Shaki-Zagatala economic region is the leader in the region. This figure is 8.7% and 3.9% higher than in the republic and the region, respectively. According to other indicators, the Absheron-Khizi economic region differentiates in the region. This region has higher prices than the average of the country and the region. Thus, it has an advantage of 6.9% and 9.5%, respectively, according to the education index, 6.9% and 9.5% according to the living standard index, 6% and 6.1% according to the human development index. Provided that we rank the economic regions in the region according to the HDI, the Absheron-Khizi economic region is the first on the list, and the other places are occupied by Shaki-Zagatala, Guba-Khachmaz and Daghligh (Mountainous) Shirvan economic regions (Table 3).

Table 3.
The indicators of the Human Development Index in the Greater Caucasus province

Health index						
	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2019
Absheron-Khizi	0.723	0.744	0.775	0.809	0.830	0.845
Shaki-Zagatala	0.760	0.777	0.809	0.845	0.866	0.886
Guba-Khachmaz	0.720	0.741	0.772	0.806	0.827	0.841
Daghligh Shirvan	0.718	0.739	0.770	0.805	0.825	0.839
Greater Caucasus	0.730	0.750	0.781	0.816	0.837	0.853
Azerbaijan	0.697	0.719	0.750	0.784	0.804	0.815
Education index						
Absheron-Khizi	0.660	0.683	0.697	0.704	0.726	0.761
Shaki-Zagatala	0.614	0.636	0.648	0.603	0.675	0.706
Guba-Khachmaz	0.573	0.594	0.606	0.611	0.631	0.661
Daghligh Shirvan	0.565	0.585	0.597	0.654	0.622	0.651
Greater Caucasus	0.603	0.625	0.637	0.643	0.664	0.695
Azerbaijan	0.618	0.640	0.652	0.659	0.680	0.712
Life quality level						

Absheron-Khizi	0.559	0.603	0.675	0.795	0.805	0.795
Shaki-Zagatala	0.481	0.522	0.590	0.703	0.712	0.706
Guba-Khachmaz	0.485	0.526	0.595	0.707	0.717	0.710
Daghligh Shirvan	0.469	0.510	0.577	0.688	0.698	0.691
Greater Caucasus	0.499	0.540	0.609	0.723	0.733	0.726
Azerbaijan	0.513	0.556	0.626	0.741	0.751	0.744
Human Development Index						
Absheron-Khizi	0.644	0.676	0.716	0.775	0.788	0.801
Shaki-Zagatala	0.608	0.639	0.679	0.736	0.749	0.761
Guba-Khachmaz	0.585	0.616	0.654	0.710	0.722	0.734
Daghligh Shirvan	0.575	0.606	0.644	0.700	0.711	0.723
Greater Caucasus	0.603	0.634	0.673	0.730	0.743	0.755
Azerbaijan	0.605	0.636	0.674	0.727	0.744	0.756

Source: Global Data Laboratory [19]

The high indicators achieved in improving the living standards of the population of Azerbaijan have been made possible by the implementation of several important state programs implemented in the country over the past decade. Thus, in order to improve the welfare of the population in the Republic of Azerbaijan, in order to achieve greater success on the path to human development in the future, a purposeful state policy or certain action plan should be implemented in the regions, including the Greater Caucasus.

Results.

- Over the past year, with health indicators life expectancy at birth witnessed a decline by 4.2% in the country owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, these indicators were 2,2% for women and 5,6% for men in the Greater Caucasus province. For this reason, a 1,5% decline was observed in household incomes;

- Of 400,1 thousand population studying at the educational institution in the Greater Caucasus province, 47,9% of the total figure were women whereas this figure was 52,1%. Turning to the educated people, the indicators stood at 51,2 and 48,8% for women and men, respectively. Regarding uneducated people, these percentages stood at 71,1% and 28,3, in turn.

- In spite of experiencing increase in the revenues of the population in country and in the economic regions in 2015, the figure saw a sharp fall in 2016. This is because the USA dollar factored in the finance nomination increased from 0,25% to 0,75% according to the decree of the Federal Reserve System. However, the substantial cause behind the recession in the population income by 1,5% was related to the Covid-19 pandemic.

- Improving the life quality provides an opportunity to identify priority areas. In spite of the high level of GNI, the low quality of any of the other indicators of quality of life (life expectancy, health, education, literacy, environmental status, etc.) will lead to a decline in the human development index;

- It is necessary to eliminate a number of negative trends in terms of improving the quality and competitiveness of human capital, ensuring the balanced development of human capital. It would be expedient to implement projects using international experience to reduce the differentiation of the population in terms of income, increase life expectancy and create an effective educational environment.

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