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**НАЦИОНАЛЬНО-ЭТНИЧЕСКИЕ ХАРАКТЕРИСТИКИ ДЕМОГРАФИЧЕСКОГО РАЗВИТИЯ
СЕВЕРНЫХ РЕГИОНОВ АЗЕРБАЙДЖАНА (НА ПРИМЕРЕ ШАКИ-ЗАГАТАЛЬСКОГО
ЭКОНОМИКО-ГЕОГРАФИЧЕСКОГО РЕГИОНА)**

Цель. Изменения численности национальных меньшинств в отдельные годы оказали существенное влияние на этнодемографические процессы. Таким образом, в зависимости от геополитических и социально-экономических условий страны, в том числе уровня жизни населения и темпов развития населенных пунктов и демографической ситуации, с годами были зафиксированы значительные изменения демографических показателей меньшинств, и эти изменения выявили ее в северных регионах, различающихся по своему этническому разнообразию. Основная цель исследования - выявить тенденции этнодемографической ситуации в регионе, изучить причины тенденций демографической динамики и внести предложения по решению проблем.

Методы. Исследовательская работа проводилась с использованием математико-статистического, сравнительно-аналитического, исторического и анкетного методов. Наряду с статистическими материалами, положениями государственных законов, программ и приказов, информация в периодических изданиях сыграла решающую роль в проведении исследования.

Полученные результаты. В статье анализируются проживающие в регионе этнические меньшинства, ареал их распространения, тенденции в динамике населения, изменения половозрастной структуры и семейного положения, а также существенные факторы, влияющие на изменение этих демографических показателей. В статье также определены способы регулирования этнодемографической ситуации в регионе и, наконец, представлены результаты и предложения, подготовленные на научной основе.

Научные инновации. В статье впервые исследуются изменения этнодемографической ситуации этнических меньшинств в Шеки-Загатальском ИКР под влиянием определенных факторов и влияния принимаемых мер на сложившуюся ситуацию. Определено, что демографическая ситуация этнических меньшинств формируется под влиянием природно-географических факторов, а также социально-экономических и политических факторов, и в результате этих факторов этнодемографическая ситуация в отдельные годы существенно изменилась. Анализ показывает, что, несмотря на принятые меры, существуют существенные различия в демографической ситуации этнических меньшинств, проживающих на данной территории, и эти различия проявили и продолжают проявляться во всех этнодемографических процессах. В связи с этим, с точки зрения территориальной целостности страны, стратегического будущего и мультикультурных ценностей, необходимо реализовать определенный план действий по регулированию этнодемографической ситуации в республике, в том числе в Шеки-Загатальском экономико-географическом районе (ШКР), который отличается этническим разнообразием.

Практическое значение. Полученные результаты могут быть использованы для установления социально-экономической и политической стабильности в Шеки-Загатальском экономико-географическом районе, а также для регулирования международных отношений и достижения их гармоничной связи друг с другом путем обеспечения социально-экономического, национального и культурного развития, этнических групп.

Ключевые слова: экономический район, этнические меньшинства, население, половозрастной состав, брак, развод и этнодемографическое развитие.

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**NATIONAL-ETHNIC CHARACTERISTICS OF DEMOGRAPHIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE
NORTHERN REGIONS OF AZERBAIJAN (ON THE EXAMPLE OF SHAKI-ZAGATALA ECONOMIC-
GEOGRAPHICAL REGION)**

Purpose. Changes in the number of ethnic minorities in certain years have had a significant influence on ethno-demographic processes. Thus, depending on the geopolitical and socio-economic conditions of the country, including the living condition of the population, the pace of development of settlements and demographic situation, there have been recorded crucial alterations in the demographic indicators of ethnic minorities over the years and these alterations have been widely experienced in the northern regions of the state that these regions differentiate as their ethnic diversity. The primary purpose of the research is to identify trends in the ethno-demographic situation in the region, to investigate the causes of trends in demographic dynamics and to make proposals for figuring out challenges.

Methods. The research was carried out using mathematical-statistical, comparative analysis, historical and questionnaire methods. Along with, the statistical materials, provisions of state laws, programs and orders, information in periodicals played a pivotal role in conducting the research.

Results. The article scrutinizes the essential factors influencing changes in marital status, the structure of age-gender composition and trends in the number dynamics of the population. The article also determines the ways of regulation of the ethno-demographic situation in the region, and finally, presents the results and proposals prepared on a scientific basis.

Scientific innovations. For the first time, the article investigates the changes in the ethno-demographic situation of ethnic minorities in the Shaki-Zagatala economic-geographical region under the influence of certain factors and the impact of the measures taken on the current situation. It was determined that the demographic situation of ethnic minorities are formed under the influence of natural and geographical factors, as well as socio-economic and political factors, and as a result of these factors, the ethno-demographic situation has changed significantly in certain years. The analysis shows that despite taken measures, there are significant differences in the ethno-demographic situation, and these differences have shown and continue to manifest themselves in all ethno-demographic processes. In this regard, in terms of the country's territorial integrity, strategic future and multicultural values, a certain action plan should be implemented to regulate the ethno-demographic situation in the republic, including the Shaki-Zagatala economic-geographical region which is distinguished by its ethnic diversity.

Practical significance. The study results can be used to establish socio-economic and political stability in the Shaki-Zagatala economic-geographical region, as well as to regulate international relations and achieve the harmonious connection of ethnic minorities with each other by ensuring the socio-economic, national and cultural development.

Keywords: Economic region, ethnic minorities, the number of population, sex-age composition, marriage, divorce and ethno-demographic development.

Introduction. The formation of the national-ethnic composition of the population in Azerbaijan has taken place during the entire historical development of society, therefore, the ethnic composition has always been different, both within the historical lands of Azerbaijan and the modern Republic of Azerbaijan. In general, the population of the country can be compartmentalized as historical dwellers (Azerbaijanis, Lezgins, Avars) and migrated nations (Russians, Ukrainians, Armenians). From this point of view, the Shaki-Zagatala economic-geographical region is particularly distinguished by its ethnic landscape. The formation of the national composition of the region's population was strongly influenced by the process of coexistence and assimilation of Lezgins, Sakhurs, Avars, Inghilois, Tats and other ethnic groups with Azerbaijani Turks for centuries. However, although some of these ethnoses have common cultural values with the Azerbaijani Turks, each of them have added their special styles to the spiritual culture of Azerbaijan, preserving its ethnic specificity throughout history. The diversity and formation of ethnic composition in the region has changed directly due to historical migrations and ethno-demographic factors. The impact strength of these factors was formed under the direct influence of political, socio-economic and other factors.

Study of the subject. The study of ethno-demographic processes in the world, including Azerbaijan, has always been in the spotlight, and therefore, along with geographers, historians, ethnographers, economists, toponomists and others have been studying the ethno-diversity of the country. In the research process, from foreign researchers P.K.Uslar (1890), V.F.Minorsky (1957), I.Q.Gerber (1958), A.C.Harris (1992), J.M.Clifton (2005), C.Tiesen (2005), W.M. Schulze (2016), J.B.Minahan (2016) and from Azerbaijani geographers S.Y.Goychayli (1987), E.Q.Mehrliyev (1988), N.H.Ayyubov (1988), M.O.Sadigov (1988), Z.N.Eminov (2005), N.A.Pashayev (2010), E.S.Badalov (2016), R.N.Karimov (2016), from historians-ethnographers G.J.Javadov (2000), A.N.Mustafayev (2005), S.H.Aliyev (2007), I.M.Agayev (2006) and others' theoretical and methodological provisions of investigations were taken as a basis.

The object of research. The primary object of the investigation is the ethnic minorities living in the economic and the geographical region of Shaki-Zagatala and the trends in their demographic situation.

The results of the investigation. Shaki-Zagatala economic-geographical is located in the northern part of Azerbaijan and characterized by its polyethnic diversity. This region plays an important role in the demographic as well as ethno-demographic development and it consists of 6 administrative districts, including 6 cities and 336 rural settlements, and of them Shaki, Zagatala and Gabala districts differentiate with their population exceeding 100 thousand people (188,1 thousand, 129,8 thousand and 107,8 thousand people, in turn), respectively, 99.1 thousand people settled in Balakan, 57.2 thousand people in Gakh and 44.7 thousand people in Oghuz district. In general, of 10067.1 thousand population of the republic 626.7 thousand people or 6.2% are concentrated in this region [14].

In 2009, 8.4% of the total population in the country was made up of ethnic minorities whereas this figure for the region was about 2.5 times higher than the national average (18.6%), and it can be concluded that about one-fifth of the ethnic minorities are concentrated in this region. In particular, 100% of the Udis, 99.9% of the Sakhurs, 99.3% of the Avars, 76.4% of the Inghiloi, 15.7% of the Lezgins and 3.6% of the Turks and 0.7% of the Russians fall to share of the study area [13]. The historical settling and location of the region on the border with foreign countries have played an important role in the diversity of the national composition of the population in the region. The concentration of almost some of the country's ethnic minorities in the region improves the importance of studying and researching this region's population. In terms of their share the Avars are the second right after the Azerbaijanis with 11.6%, and they are compactly settled in Balakan, Gakh and Zagatala districts [11, p. 74]. The Avars are mainly settled in the Abaali, Akhakh dara, Ashagi Chardaghar, Jar, Chokakoba, Danachi, Dardogaz, Dombabina, Goyam, Hasanbina, Hoytala, Kebeloba, Gabizdara, Mazykh, Magov, Pashan, Uzungazmalar, Uzuntala, Vohtala, Zilban and Yolayrij villages of Zagatala district; Ajiligbina, Bechagarbina, Bedagar, Beretbina, Cederovtala, Cincartala, Ayritala, Isakhligirme, Kortala, Katekh, Garahajili, Gasbina, Gaysa, Gazma, Gullar, Mazimchay, Mesheshambul, Mahamalar, Rochahmad, Solban, Okuzovtala, Shambul, Sharif and Yeni Sharif villages of Balakan district [1, p. 79; 8, p.286].

Examples of Lezgin villages in the region, which make up 5.9% of the region's population, are Ashagi Dashagil, Ashagi Goynuk, Ashagi Keldek, Bayramkokhali, Bash Keldek, Bash Layski, Bilikh, Dizakhli, Amirvan, Kusnet, Gamarvan, Laza, Malikli, Syrt Yengija, Yenikend and Sileyli villages of Gabala district; Okhud village of Shaki district; Boyuk Soyudlu, Jalut, Khal-khal Gishlag, Karimli, Gumlug, Padar and Shirvanli villages of Oghuz district can be mentioned. Rutuls, one of the five Lezgin ethnic groups, settled in Dashuz, Shorsu, Shin and Armanat villages of Shaki district [3, p. 5].

The Sakhurs, one of the oldest ethnic groups in Azerbaijan, who historically lived in Dagestan and later migrated to Azerbaijan, mainly in the Zagatala, Gakh and Balakan districts, and they formed 2.7% of the region's population. They are primarily settled in Bazar, Alasgar, Daghi, Jimjimax, Findigli, Gozbarag, Galal, Gargay, Gimikh, Mamrukh, Mukhakh, Yeni Suvagil, Zayam villages of Zagatala district; Agyazi, Ashagi Malakh, Amirjan, Gulluk, Ilisu, Gum, Gashgachay, Lakit, Lakit Malakh, Lakit Kotuklu, Saribash, Uzumlu villages of Gakh district. They live together with Avars, Azerbaijanis and Turks in the Ayritala, Rochahmed, Beretbina, Mahamalar, Solban, Gasbina villages of Balakan district. Recently, there has been a decline in the number of Sakhurs in the region, since they, especially the younger generation, leaving their village after graduating from high school [5, p. 3; 8, p. 298].

The Inghiloi, one of the ancient ethnic groups of Caucasian Albania, are mainly concentrated in Balakan, Gakh and partly in Zagatala districts. Especially, they are settled in the Ititala village of Balakan district; Alibayli, Inghiloi-Kotuklu, Garagan, Zayam, Gakhinghilo, Gakhbash, Meshabash, Boyuk Alatamir, Kichik Alatamir, Garamesha, Ketgushan, Khalaftala, Baghtala villages of Gakh district. Notwithstanding, the Yengiyan village of Zagatala district is a mixed village in where the inghiloi live together with Azerbaijanis, however, this village was deleted from the list of Inghiloi villages because the peasants speak the Azerbaijani language [6, p. 3; 10, p. 7].

Traditionally, the Udis used to live in the Oghuz city and the Nic village of the Gabala district, however, in 1919-1922 the Udis moved to the village of Oktomberi in Georgia, nonetheless, currently, they live only in the Nic village in of Gabala district [2, p. 3; 8, p. 209]. In 2016, the number of Udis reached 6,000. In 2009, 65% of the village of Nic was ethnic Udi people, with the remainder being Azerbaijani [16, p. 192]. Due to fact that 100 Udi people lived in Oghuz in 1989, in 2009, they completely left the district [9, p. 28]. If we look at the dynamics over a decade between 1999 and 2009, there was an increase of 0.2% in the country, nonetheless, the number of ethnic minorities in the region decreased by about 10%. In general, with the exception of the Gabala district, the percentage of Azerbaijanis in the ethnic composition has increased, the share of other ethnic groups has decreased, and this decrease is most pronounced in the Gakh region (-21.2%).

Population decline is more pronounced in rural areas. According to residents, the younger generation is leaving the village due to economic difficulties, additionally, the unfavourable or non-existent educational institutions in the villages, the inconvenience of road and transport infrastructure have accelerated this process. According to the percentage decrease, the Zagatala region is in second place (-13.1%) and the reason for this negative demographic trend was the migration of Sakhurs and Avars to regional centres, Baku and Dagestan due to socio-economic difficulties. As the same situation was observed in the villages of Oghuz and Balakan districts, negative dynamics of 11.3% and 9.5% were observed in those districts, respectively [12]. In general, difficulties in rural areas have resulted in a decline in their number in all administrative districts, as the majority of ethnic minorities in the region live in villages and

the different vertical zoning of these villages affects their socio-economic development. In particular, the decline in the number of Russians, Udis, Avars, Sakhurs, Inghilois living in the region was directly related to the migration process, and the growth in the number of Lezgins and Azerbaijanis was due to natural increase. It can be concluded that the primary reason for the diminishment of ethnic minorities is not the decline in natural growth, but migration processes. Due to the high unemployment problem among the Avars, some migrants settle the cities to find favourable job opportunities, some of them migrate to Baku, and some of them left the country (Table 1) [4, p. 5].

Table 1.

The number dynamics of ethnic minorities in economin-geographical region

Districts	1999	2009	1999-2009 (Increase rate, %)
Shaki	8491	7641	-10,0%
Zagatala	43429	37752	-13,1%
Balakan	27058	24478	-9,5%
Gabala	18183	19985	+9,9%
Gakh	11806	9313	-21,2%
Oghuz	6753	5988	-11,3%
By region	115720	105157	-9,9%
By country	747936	749638	+0,2%

Source: [Calculations were made based on 1999 and 2009 census material of the Azerbaijan].

In 1999, the share of female in the population of both the country and the region was relatively higher. Similarly, in administrative districts, with the exception of the Gabala, the percentage of female was higher than that of male. Even in the administrative districts, this figure for ethnic minorities was relatively higher than both country's and region's indicators. The highest rate was registered in the Balakan district (51.2%). The main reason for a lower number of men than women this year was due to changes in the socio-economic and political situation. Thus, the closure of workplaces after the collapse of the USSR and the consequent widening of the unemployment problem during 1996-2000 accelerated the process of emigration among men due to the difficulties associated with low wages.

This process has resulted in an increment in the proportion of women not only by the total population of region and country but also it has gone up by ethnic groups [15, p.14]. Nevertheless, although the proportion of women in both the republic and the region has been higher over the past period, this figure has declined somewhat (50.5%). Similarly, the same trend was witnessed in all districts with the exception of Gakh district and the highest decrease rate was experienced in the Oghuz district (51.7%). In spite of the ratio between men and women were equal in the Gabala district in 1999, this ratio was disrupted in 2009 due to the high birth rate of boys and the influx of men from abroad. As Gabala is the most developed region in the region in terms of tourism-recreational potential, this process has directly influenced immigration processes, along with, natural increase rate was higher in this district since the main part of the district is inhabited by the Lezgins who have higher natural increase rate (Table 2).

Table 2.

Indicators of sex distribution of the population by ethnic minorities in administrative districts

Districts	Female				Male			
	1999		2009		1999		2009	
	number	share	number	share	number	share	number	share
Shaki	4310	50,8	3809	49,8	4181	49,2	3832	50,2
Zagatala	22264	51,3	19095	50,6	21165	48,7	18657	49,4
Balakan	13934	51,5	12376	50,6	13124	48,5	12102	49,4
Gabala	9089	50,0	9719	48,6	9094	50,0	10266	51,4
Gakh	6083	51,5	4837	52,0	5723	48,5	4476	48,0
Oghuz	3483	51,6	2892	48,3	3270	48,4	3096	51,7
Total population by region	264926	51.1	285894	50.5	253851	48.9	280089	49.5
Total population by state (thsd.p.)	4070.3	51.2	4508.0	50.5	3883.1	48.8	4414.4	49.5

Source: [Calculations were made based on 1999 and 2009 census material of the Azerbaijan]

Looking at the sex-age pyramid of the Avar people, it can be seen that there were sharp changes between 1999 and 2009, and this situation was most pronounced in the 0-4 and 5-9 age groups, as the number of people in both age groups, was approximately decreased by 2 times, and the primary cause of this trend

was the drop in natality. In the 10-14 age bracket, the fall is relatively lower. However, the high level of natural increase in previous years has led to an increase in the share of the population in the 15-29 age demographics. Although there has been a resurgence in the 30-39 age group, the ratio of the population in the 40-44 age group saw a downward tendency. Another noteworthy fact is that after the age of 85, the proportion of women fell, and the average life expectancy among women has decreased. In general, there were no significant differences in the percentage of men and women (Figure 1).

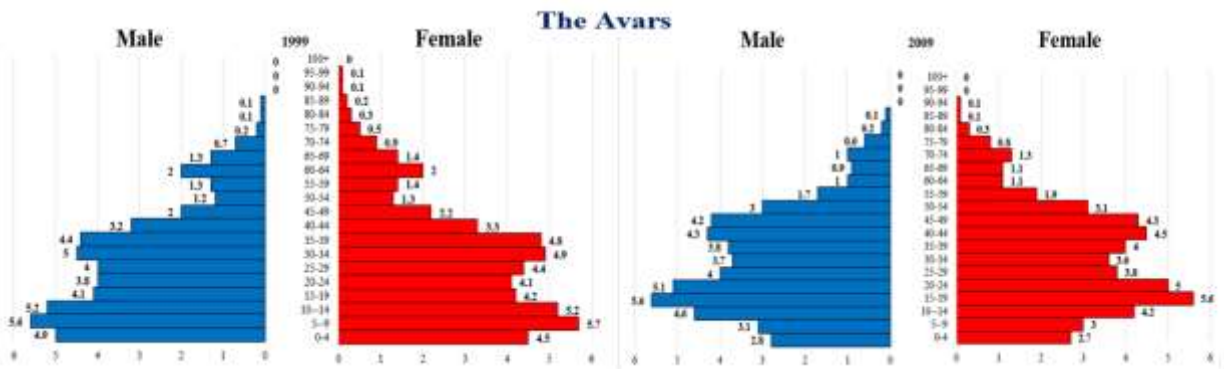


Figure 1. Changes in the age-sex composition by the Avars in the region in 1999-2009

As in the Avars, in the Sakhurs, the percentage of the 0-14 age group decreased, and in the 5-9 age group, this figure saw a downward trend by about 1.5 times. Due to the high natural increase of previous years, in 2009 more than 20% of the population was concentrated in the 15-24 age bracket. Even though there was a significant decline in the 25-39 age group as a result of migration of the younger population to neighbouring countries and urban centres for working purpose, there was an almost twofold increase in the 40-54 age group. The gender-age composition disturbed as a result of World War II was significantly expressed in the 50-54 age group in 1999 and in the 60-64 age group in 2009 and these indicators could not be restored. As with the Avars, although the average life expectancy decreased among women whereas there was a slight increase in males' average life expectancy. (Figure 2).

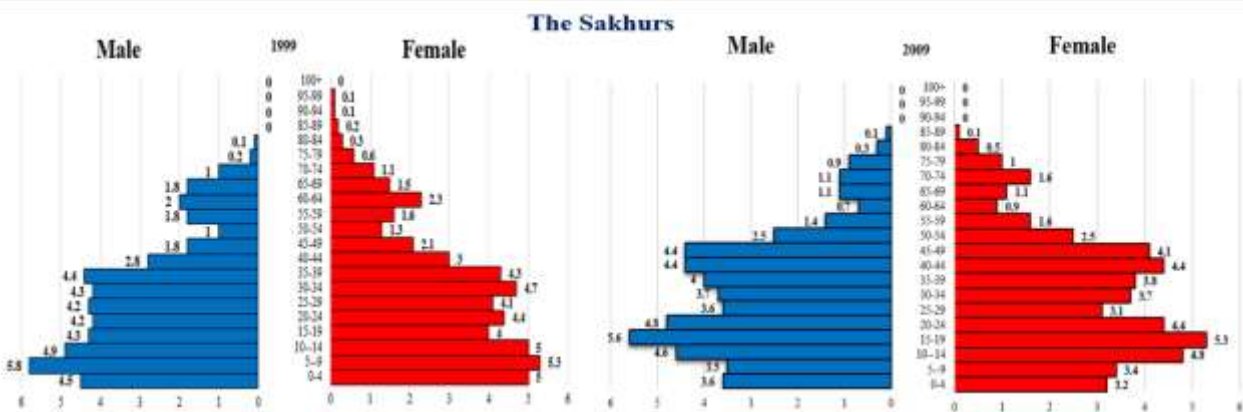


Figure 2. Changes in the age-sex composition by the Sakhurs in the region in 1999-2009

Analogically, the share of the Udi people in the 0-14 age group has halved while it rose in the 15-29 age group. Due to migrants in the 30-39 age group, the percentage of both sexes has decreased significantly. In the 40-year-old group, the reverse trend was experienced. As in other nations, the consequences of World War II manifested themselves in both the 50-54 age group in 1999 and the 60-64 age group in 2009 in both age groups. Similarly, the average life expectancy of the Udi people was accompanied by an increase in men and a decrease in women. In general, although there were significant differences in age groups whilst there were no significant differences in gender balance (Figure 3).

In comparison, there was a remarkable decline in the total population of the region in the 0-9 age group as in the minority ethnic groups, and this level of decrement was relatively higher than the indicator of the republic, and as in the minority ethnic groups, the composition of female over 80-year-old has curtailed for both country and region (Figure 4; Figure 5).

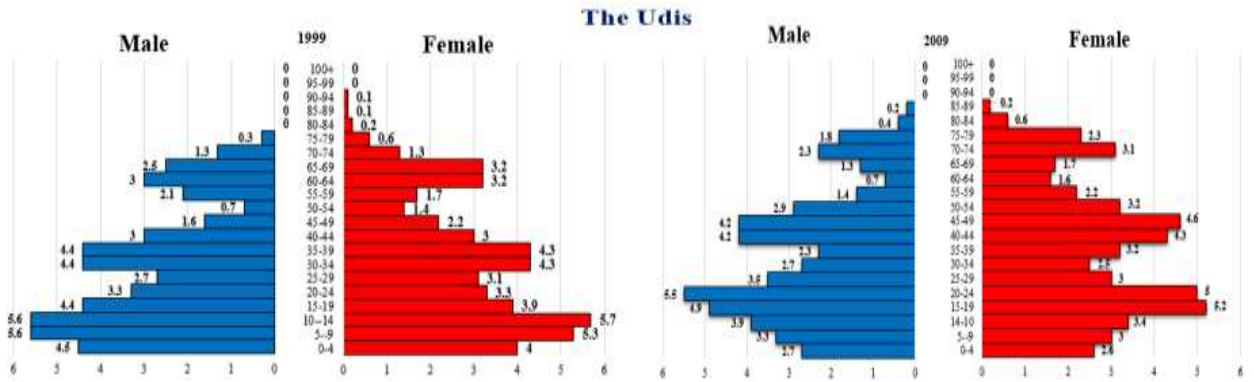


Figure 3. Changes in the age-sex composition by the Udis in the region in 1999-2009

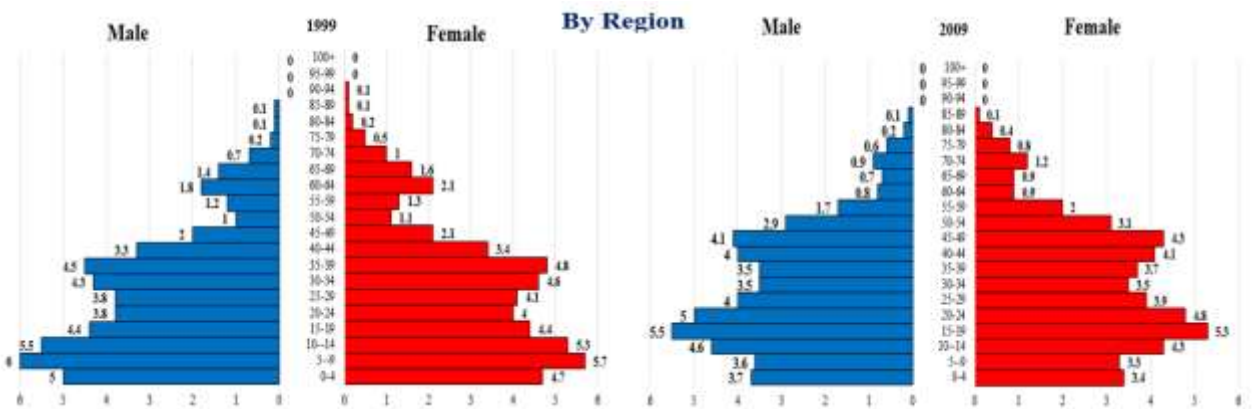


Figure 4. Changes in the age-sex composition by region in 1999-2009

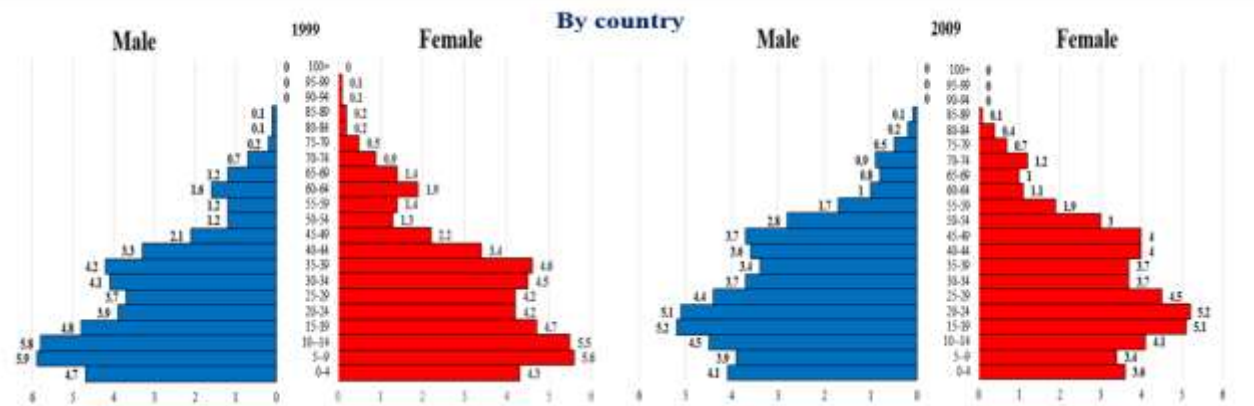


Figure 5. Figure 1. Changes in the age-sex composition by country in 1999-2009

However, unlike other ethnic groups, the lowest growth rate was recorded in the Udin population, which was significantly lower than the national level. At the same time, violations in the age-sex pyramid of the Udin and Avar peoples were most pronounced at the age of 25-34, and the main factor influencing this was due to paucity of employment opportunities, both sexes of this age group migrate to Russia and Georgia to find job opportunities and, likely, the sustainability of this situation will lead to serious problems such as a considerable diminishment in natural increase rate and an imbalance in the sex structure. Visa-free travel to neighbouring countries and the settlement of close relatives of ethnic minorities in these states is one of the essential factors accelerating migration, and in general, the high share of men in labour migration in the country has culminated in the same situation among ethnic minorities, and as a result of this situation, the share of female overtake the ratio of male. However, in some cases, the proportion rate can be diminished for both sexes in the same age demographics as some migrants migrate with their family members. Although this situation is not fairly common among Azerbaijanis, it is more widespread among ethnic minorities [15, p. 21].

Table 3.

Indicators of marital status for ethnic minorities in the region
(by Udi, Sakhur and Avar people)

Ethnic minorities	1999				2009			
	Married	Unmarried	Divorced	Widows	Married	Unmarried	Divorced	Widows
Avars	22091	9105	434	2544	22353	13979	577	2750
Sakxurs	7194	2760	69	774	6002	2767	83	589
Udi	2116	457	30	197	2005	815	43	231
Region	232319	81963	3206	24492	271469	129868	5587	29408
Country	3416363	1379529	79884	383058	4112986	2144121	124251	447459

Source: [All indicators were calculated based on 1999 and 2009 census materials].

Note: Since information on the marital status of minorities is provided throughout the country, the article only provides indicators of marital status for the Udi, Sakhur and Avar peoples, most of whom live in the study area.

Over the past period, there were fundamental changes in the marital status of ethnic minorities in the region. According to the data, despite the reduction in the number of Avars in the region, there was a climb in the number of married and unmarried people, nonetheless this increase was also reflected in the rise in the number of divorces and widows as a negative demographic trend. However, there has been a striking decline in the number of marriages among the Sakhur people, and this process is directly related to the decline in the number of Sakhurs in the region to 3,500. On the other hand, although there was a relative increase in the number of divorces, the number of widows decreased slightly. In the case of the Udis, the marital status was negative in all respects, as the number of married people grew slightly, while the number of unmarried, divorced and widows improved, while the number of unmarried people almost doubled. The primary cause for the decline in the number of married people is that young people of marriageable age leave the region to find a job, while the negative dynamics in the number of Udis, as in other minorities, has led to noticeable differences in marital status. However, there has been a significant increase in the number of married population in both the country and the region as a whole. Growth was observed in other indicators both in the country and in the region. In particular, the number of unmarried has increased in virtue of the younger population, and this process has had a direct impact on the reduction of marriages and natural increase. The decrease in the number of marriages is due to the inadequate financial situation of the population, the predominance of men among migrants and, consequently, the sex-age composition of the population (Table 3) [7, p.172].

Results and proposals.

- The number of ethnic minorities in the study area, as well as in all administrative districts of the region, with the exception of Gabala, has significantly decreased, presumably, this decline has intensified due to the increase in the number of immigrants;

- In contrast to the age-sex pyramid for the total population of the study area and the country, owing to the inadequacy of business opportunities, the influx of able-bodied young population to other countries and regions has accelerated the process of ageing from below, affecting natural increase;

- Negative indicators of the marital status of both the country and the economic region have affected ethnic minorities, and even the negative marital status of some minorities have accelerated;

- Construction or rehabilitation of infrastructure to ensure the socio-economic development of areas (especially rural settlements) to prevent negative ethno-demographic trends among ethnic minorities in the economic region, assessment of the economic potential of the area to increase labour-intensive production in regional centres and villages may play an important role in reducing migration processes, increasing natural growth and stabilizing the sex-age balance.

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