

## The position of Ganja-Gazakh economical-geographical region in Azerbaijan tourism industry

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### Abstract

*It is possible to develop different types of tourism in Azerbaijan. The tourism industry must have assessed not only the capital city Baku as well as in other regions. The Development of tourism in Ganja-Gazakh economic and geographical region will impact revenues in the area of economic growth, flow foreign exchange, employment, the provision of modern infrastructure, international relations and so on. factors. There are great potentials to develop cultural, archaeological, ethnographic, ethnic and nostalgic, ecotourism, rural tourism and others in economic and geographic region. A number of programs have been adopted by the government to evaluate opportunities these potentials. As a result of government programs in the area of transport infrastructure has been repaired, new roads, several accommodation facilities were opened, a number of historical-architectural monuments have been restored, new museums were created. However, to adjust its market position in the area of tourism should be taken into to solve the price and service personnel problem.*

**Key words:** Azerbaijan tourism potential, tourism industry in Azerbaijan, types of tourism, Azerbaijan tourism infrastructure

### Introduction

Located at the crossroads of European and Asian cultures, Azerbaijan is a country with great tourism opportunities in terms of geographical and climate conditions. Situated in the middle of Transcaucasia transportation corridor, Azerbaijan is surrounded by Caspian Sea from the East. The country, which plays an important role in the realization of air and sea transport with the Caucasus and Central Asian countries, can also develop as transit territory. Azerbaijan, has its own old customs and traditions, culture examples made Before Christmas, ethnic minorities living in various regions, old folklore, more than 6 thousand historical-architectural pattern, a rich culinary and music has made important strides in recent years about the development of tourism.

## 1. The current state of Azerbaijan tourism

According to the statistical results of the UNWTO in 2015, the Republic of Azerbaijan has accepted 1,922 million tourists, which constitute a minority in comparison with previous years. By the statistical results of the same year, income of the country from tourism was 2.309 billion dollars, which is again less than previous years.(UNWTO,2016, p16)

The country land is divided into specific tourism regions according to the diversity of resources, their development level and future perspectives.The tourism regions such as Baku-Absheron, Guba-Khachmaz, Lankaran-Astara, Sheki-Zaqatala, Ganja-Gazakh, Karabakh and Nakhchivan have a different climate indicators depending on the geographical position where they are located.The wealth of natural and material resources accelerates the development of different types of tourism in each region.

Azerbaijan has a convenient location in terms of development beach tourism in coastal regions,cultural tourism in areas where culture samples are concentrated,ecotourism and therapeutic tourism in areas where natural and therapeutic resources are abundant,ethnographic tourism in regions where ethnic minorities are more,winter tourism in mountainous regions,village tourism in high mountain villages and etc.In addition, there are potential in order to develop tourism types such as entertainment, adventure, sports, archeology and etc in various tourism regions.

## 2. Tourism in Ganja-Gazakh economic-geographical region

Ganja-Gazakh economic-geographical region, which has great potential in terms of the evaluation of tourism facilities, is completely different from other regions according to various characteristics.The good level of the transportation infrastructure within the boundaries of the economic-geographical region and the provision of airports play an important role in the formation of tourist exchanges.As reported by the data of 2016, Ganja Airport has roundtrip flights to cities such as Baku, Istanbul, Moscow, St Petersburg, Ufa, Novosibirsk, and Tyumen.

The settlement of the region on the “Old Silk Road” makes it easier for foreign tourists to visit the tourist area at the same time by air, rail and automobile vehicles.In this respect, the presence of the region of Ganja as the most important transit junction of our Republic should be regarded as a factor that affects the intensity of the tourism flow from Europe to Asia on the basis of the TRACECA project.

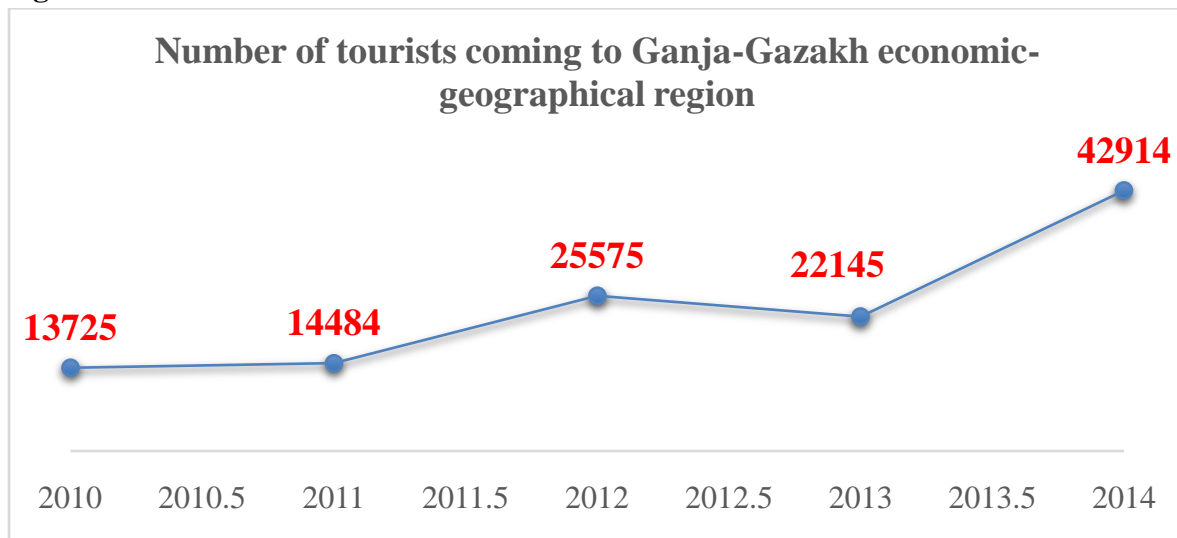
In the World Tourism Organization's Silk Road program has been stated that it will affect enough the construction of new highways, the construction works in the area, making new investments,protection of cultural life and environment.(WTO, 2015 p24)

When we look at the statistics for various years, the total income of businesses engaged in tourism activity in the Ganja-Gazakh economic-geographical region has been very variable and developed.However, it should be noted with regret that in the statistic of recent years,the total income of the tourism sector is only limited with the name of the city of Ganja and information about other cities and regions which included in this economic-geographical region has not been reflected.

Thus, according to the results of the statistics made in 2013, if the total income of enterprises engaged in tourism activities in the economic-geographical region of Ganja-Gazakh had been 13.3 thousand manats, these indicators increased to 62.6 thousand manats in 2014.(Azərbaycan Turizm, 2015)

It is possible to see that the number of accepted tourists is low when the economic-geographical region analyzes comparatively the tourism potential.So,in 2010,15973,in 2011,20800,in 2012,3249,in 2013,30004,in 2014,46697 people visited to Ganja-Gazakh economic-geographical region.But there is no such sharp difference between the number of general voyages and tourists.This proves once more that accepted tourist volume is a minority by the area of land,natural and historical resources.**Figure 1.1**

Figure 1.1



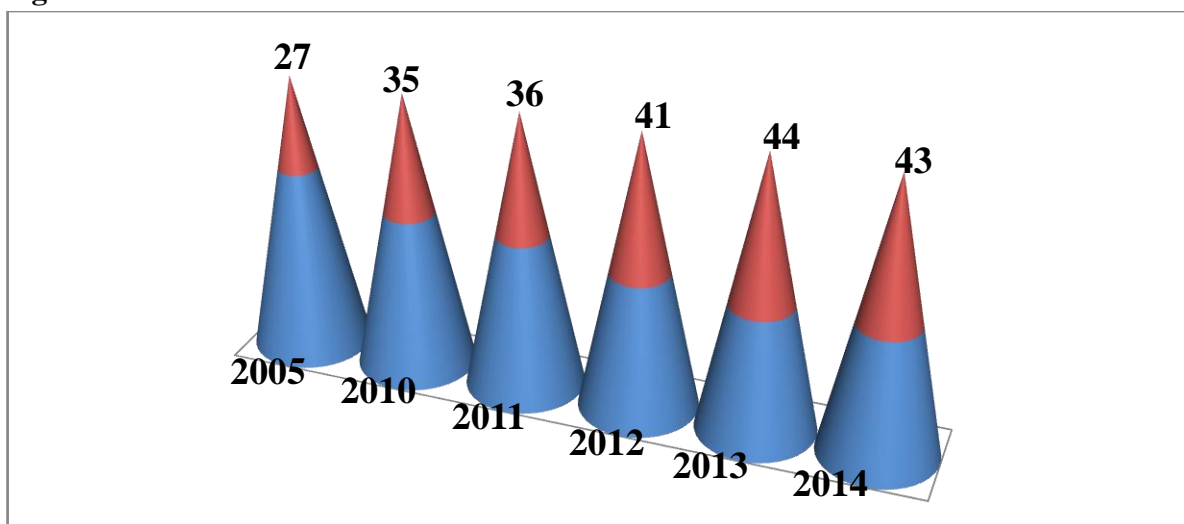
Source: Tourism in Azerbaijan statistical collection 2015

### 3. The State programs role in tourism industry of Ganja-Gazakh economical-geographical region

Taking into consideration the potential of the country, the 6th of April 2010, "The state program for the development of tourism in the Republic of Azerbaijan between 2010-2014 was adopted (**Azərbaycan Dövlət Proqramı, 2010**). According to the state program, it is envisaged to prepare recreational plans for recreational tourism resorts and sanatoriums (recreation-placement objects) and to respond to contemporary needs. In connection with this, a number of placement centers were built and used in Naftalan. Resort centers such as "Naftalan", "Magic Naftalan", "Miracle Naftalan", "Rixos Naftalan", "Chinar hotel and spa Naftalan", "Karabagh SPA and Resort", "Kashaltı" sanatorium and others are visual examples to them.

There are enough accommodation centers in the Republic of Azerbaijan which are in various categories and attributed to the star classification system every year. As reported by the year 2014 statistics, 43 hotels and hotel-type enterprises operate in the economic-geographical region of Ganja-Gazakh. In 2005, 27 hotels and hotel-type businesses were operating in the territory, but this figure increased in the following years. Although the land of the economic-geographical region is large enough compared to other regions, but the number of accommodation facilities is limited. **Figure 2.1**

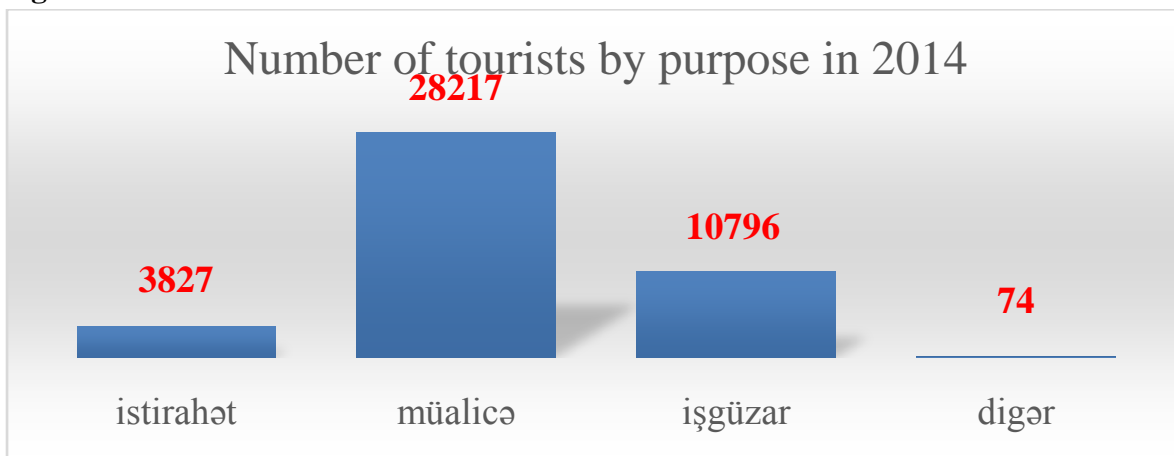
Figure 2.1



Source: Tourism in Azerbaijan statistical collection 2015

Tourists visit Ganja-Gazakh economic-geographic region in various purposes. However, if we pay attention to the results of the statistics made in 2014, we can observe that the number of people coming to the region related to treatment tourism is higher. Among the first reasons for this, in addition to the potentials, this trend has come to the fore both with infrastructural support by state and as a result of provision of infrastructure by entrepreneurs. Furthermore, among the first reasons are also the development of the service sector, the fact that the medical examinations are carried out at a high level and the personnel organize the working process well. This is the result of the fact that at the moment there are enough people employed in the accommodation enterprises in this area. **Figure 2.2**

**Figure 2.2**



Source: Tourism in Azerbaijan statistical collection 2015

According to the results of the statistics made in 2014, the number of tourists placed in 1-3 days in Ganja-Gazakh economic-geographical region became 28988, the number of tourists placed in 4-7 days was 16583, the number of tourists placed in 8-28 days and more became 1126 people. This proves once more that short-term visits are dominant. So tourists stay in less time, use existing resources in short time periods and eventually make minimum spending. **Figure 2.3**

**Figure 2.3**



Source: Tourism in Azerbaijan statistical collection 2015

#### 4. The tourism types of Ganja-Gazakh economical-geographical region

Currently, a variety of types of tourism are offered to tourists arriving at Ganja-Gazakh economic-geographic region. Among them, it is possible to show especially examples such as treatment, cultural, village and ecotourism. However there are such types of tourism that, although they are potential for them, they are still not evaluated. It is possible to develop cultural and business tourism in Ganja city, treatment and health tourism in Naftalan, ecotourism and village tourism in Goygol, recreation and mountaineering in Dashkesen, recreational tourism in Gazakh, Samukh and Tovuz, archaeological tourism in Shemkir, hunting and fishing tourism in Akstafa.

Gedebey land is rich with Albanian monuments, and the presence of some historical-architectural examples here is important for cultural tourism. The lives of Germans within the region in different periods, having various structures related to them, also the settlement of the Russians and preservation of their houses and cultures, all of these inform us their ethnographic tourism opportunities.

The fact that the western part of the economic-geographical region is adjacent to Armenia means that these places are not used completely along the border. In this war zones does not only have the development of tourism, but also does not have any growth in industrial area. Of course, as a result of such negative effects, the speed of progression in other parts of the region is very slow. Even though there are a number of possible joint development of tourism types, there are no businesses that serve the purpose of recreation in the border regions. The presentation of the territory is also partly slow in relation to the war situation. Among the first reasons for the minority of arriving tourists is the low level of advertising campaigns and advertising in various countries around the world. Because the majority of tourists from other countries of the world have recently chosen any direction according to the information they have gained from the internet.

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