
**THE TERRITORIAL ORGANIZATION AND INTERNAL DIFFERENCES OF
INFRASTRUCTURE IN SHEKI-ZAGATALA ECONOMIC-GEOGRAPHIC REGION OF THE
REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN**

Kh.A.Badalova

*Institute of Geography named after acad. H.Aliyev
Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences, 115 H. Javid ave, Baku, AZ1143*

xedice.eyyubova@gmail.com

Article history:

Received: 03 april 2019

Dispatched for revise:

10 may 2019

Accepted: 13 december 2019

Keywords:

Sheki-Zagatala

infrastructure

trade

domestic

sustainable development

regionalization

Abstract

Today, one of the major challenges in sustainable socio-economic development of the regions is the level of infrastructure development and the appropriate assessment of its territorial organization. Over the past 20 years, certain improvements have been observed in the infrastructure of the Shaki-Zagatala economic-geographical region, but there are disproportions between the service sector and population growth rate and demand. Differences between city and village in all elements of the infrastructure continue to be the same as in the previous periods. This factor is observed by the migration of the population from villages to cities, as well as to other countries. In order to eliminate the problem at least partially, the internal differences infrastructure of the Sheki-Zagatala region were determined through modern and scientific geographical methods. Meantime, the population and the level of infrastructure provision was studied, the potential of the region was assessed, and the Sheki-Zagatala economic-geographical region was divided into three zones compliant to the level of development.

1. Introduction.

The concept of infrastructure is understood as the basis of the economic system, its internal structure, which is derived from the combination of the Latin words *infra* which means ‘low, bottom’ and *structure* which means ‘structure, residence’ [2]. Infrastructure which plays an important role in the development of a society and has been an essential part in the production areas is a tool for the normal development of economic activity.

In modern conditions infrastructure is combined in three forms: production infrastructure that participates in the production process, social infrastructure that are services for the population life activities and market infrastructure that are facilities used for delivery of services and products. [4, p. 8] But the development and regulation of the infrastructure sectors are directly related to the financial opportunities of the region. As it is impossible to expand and develop infrastructure without financial resources [6].

2. Material and method

In general, infrastructure development and efficient territorial organization depends on the current state of the economy and the pace of development of the country. From this point of view, the socio-

economic potential of each region should be explored and the opportunities how to use it must be determined and thus, infrastructure should be developed in mutual relations.

In order to determine the territorial arrangements and internal differences in the infrastructure of Sheki-Zakatala economic-geographical region, infrastructure areas within each administrative district should be planned and their priorities should be identified. In this case the number of population, social and production infrastructure areas, the transport and communication routes linking to them, and the more promising tourism facilities in the region should be analyzed, the method of regionalization should be applied. When preparing a regionalization scheme, the growth rate of demand for infrastructure and the socio-economic development of the region, as well as the level and territorial differences of social infrastructure in Sheki-Zakatala economic-geographical region should be considered.

Regionalization of the area should be divided according to any similarity or the coordination of the features. Physical-geographical regionalization is based on the laws of the nature; economic-geographical regionalization is based on the laws of the society considering the usage of the nature [3].

Territorial organization of natural, economic and social resources and their relative assessment is the key factor in the regionalization of infrastructure areas.

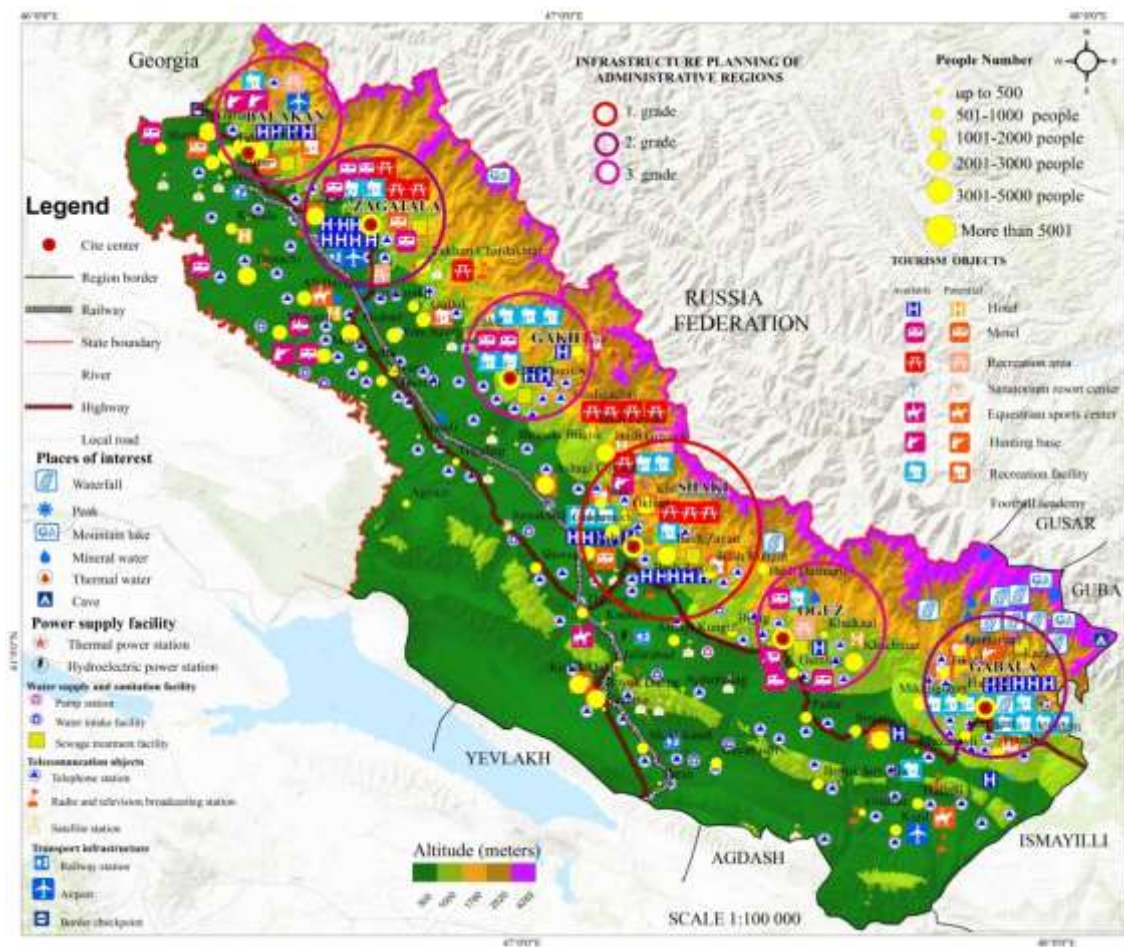
3. Analysis and discussion.

10.2 % of the country's territory and 6.2 % of the country's population are concentrated in the territory of the Sheki-Zakatala economic-geographical region in the north-western part of the Republic of Azerbaijan located on the southern slope of the Greater Caucasus including the administrative regions of Zakatala, Balaken, Gakh, Sheki, Oguz and Gabala with the territory of 8,84 thousand km² and with the population of 616,8 thousand people. The population density per km² is 70 people, that is below the average national level (114 people). The settlement system in the economic-geographical region is regulated by 6 administrative regions, 6 townss, 8 settlements and 336 vilages [1].

There are some differences in the territorial organization of infrastructure areas in Sheki-Zakatala economic-geographical region we are exploring.

We've been trying to explore these differences in terms of the number of people living in the area and their infrastructure provision. As a result, along with the existing infrastructure facilities of the economic-geographical region, its potential opportunities have also been appreciated. In this case, highways and railways, bus and railway stations, airports, border control checkpoints, settlement water supply enterprises, i.e. pumping stations, water intake and waste water treatment facilities, kindergartens, educational institutions, healthcare facilities, telephone stations, satellite antennas and others have been widely analyzed, outstanding and relatively abandoned areas of the region have been identified.

As a result of the analysis, according to the development level and perspectives three zones have been distinguished in the region. The first zone includes the administrative centers and surrounding areas of Sheki; the second zone includes those of Gabala and Zakatala; and the third one includes those of Balaken, Oguz and Gakh (pic. 1.).



Pic. 1. Territorial organization of infrastructure in the Shaki-Zakatala economic-geographical region

Sheki and its surrounding areas like Baltaly, Gakhmud, Okhud, Kish, Bash Zeyzit, Indja and others refer to the first zone. The zone unites the neighboring areas for its historical, social and economic development and infrastructure. As a center Sheki is an important part of the settlement frame and has developed its production and social functions.

In the economic-geographical region of Sheki with its own pace of development there are quite a lot of infrastructure facilities as well as hunting grounds, hotels, motels, leisure facilities and grounds unlike other regions. The construction of recreation facilities near the villages of Indja and Gakhmud villages and a recreational area near Goynuk village is expected to give future benefits as a long-term project within the zone. In the recent years the hostel services have been widely spread here and foreign citizens can book reservations with the help of Internet. However, the construction work carried out in Sheki and its surroundings is slowing down the process.

The second zone includes Gabala and Zakatala administrative regions. The launch of a new airport in Qabala administrative center in the recent years and development of hotel business are highly appreciated. There are many recreational facilities here, but they are mainly concentrated in the central part of the administrative region.

In the administrative region of Gabala 61% of the population works in the rural areas, 20.7% in the sphere of service, 10.5% in trade and the rest work in other spheres [5, s. 95]. In terms of employment, the population mainly tends to focus in the administrative center which is a part of the covered area.

Tikanly and Mikhligovag villages near which we are constructing recreational facilities has been mentioned as a promising area in the region. The biggest problem within the zone is the lack of motels and hostels. In the future there are enough potential opportunities for development of this zone to achieve the first level as Sheki. Those include sanatorium-spa facilities, hunting grounds, sport academy, mineral waters and waterfalls within the zone. On their base, it is possible to develop ecological tourism and mountaineering in the areas with the height more than 2,500 meters. In general, though the central part of the administrative region is regarded as secondary, the infrastructure facilities and their activity here are quite high.

In the process of analysis of Zakatala administrative region, its central part and adjacent villages have been considered as secondary zones. According to the level of socioeconomic development,

the administrative region relatively falls behind Sheki. The availability of airport, railway station, hotel, motel and sufficient recreational facilities and grounds has had a positive impact on its development. But production infrastructure is poorly developed here and some newly-established food industry enterprises have stopped their activity.

The main type of occupation of population in the administrative region is agriculture. 44 thousand people that are 66.4% of its total population work in this sphere. The service sector occupies the second place in the structure of employment and 4830 people (7.3 %) work in the field of education, 4171 people (6.3%) work in trade sector, 2041 people (3.1%) in healthcare and 1272 people (2.3%) work in public administration. The share of construction sector in this indicator is 6.9% and that of industry is 2.3% [5, s. 93]. These indicators mentioned in the employment structure are mainly related to the secondary zone.

The zone has been included in the list of attractive places for tourism and recreation. Although there are hotels and leisure facilities, motels are not available for visitors in this area. In the future there is a need for construction of motels not only in this zone but in the administrative region as well. We have proposed to construct an equestrian center and a hotel in Muganly village.

The center of Balaken administrative region that belongs to the third zone has a central urban structure. From this point of view, considering the structure of employment in the zone, we can see that most of the population works in service and trade fields. Overall, the share of agriculture in the population employment is higher in this region (70%).

The infrastructure areas related to the border geographical position have strong potential for development. The development of specialized traditional agriculture areas can contribute to the expansion of production infrastructure. Agricultural production can lead to a complex development of the market infrastructure and other areas that serve it. However these factors should be established in rural areas in parallel with the center of Balaken. In this case it will be possible to keep the demographic potential of the villages in the places.

The infrastructure areas have been well developed in the center of the administrative region of Balaken which is a part of the third zone located on a highway of national significance. The central part of the zone is densely populated and has been provided with an airport, a hunting farm, hotels, recreation facilities, a radio broadcasting station, a se-

wage regulator and others. There is a need for construction of motels and recreation facilities in the zone. Along with these the villages with the altitude of 500 meters are poorly infrastructured. There is a need to build a more number of infrastructure facilities here.

It should be noted that the maritime station and the border checkpoint belonging to the territory of the administrative region are not included in the zone as they are isolated from the settlements and have poor infrastructure. There is a need for construction of hotels and motels near these facilities and production infrastructure facilities should also be established in the rural settlements. This will allow the administrative region to develop and, as it has borders with Georgia, will create conditions for marketing products produced here.

Poor development of initial processing enterprises of agricultural products in Gakh administrative region has led to the fact that production infrastructure is relatively weak here in comparison with other regions. 59% of the population works in the agriculture here while the share of workers in the industry is only 2.1%. 27.7% of the population works in service sector and 5.7% works in the construction sector. The improvement and rational use of territorial organization of production infrastructure within the area that we are separating is one of the most important factors not only for the administrative region but also for socio-economic development of the region.

Although the center of Gakh administrative region and its north and north-west part is well maintained with hotel, motel, recreation facilities and grounds, the overall infrastructure is poor here. As production areas are poorly developed in this mountainous region, production and social infrastructure areas fall back in comparison to other regions.

Oguz administrative region with its own development pace is far behind other regions. The biggest problem in the administrative region is unemployment. Despite the increase of labor resources in the town of Oguz the employment of the population is poor and it causes recession in the socioeconomic development of the region. 56.7% of the population works in agriculture sector, 27.1% works in service sector, 8.7% in construction, 1.3% in industry and other sectors.

The center of Oguz administrative region and its surrounding villages are included in the third zone. Despite the potential opportunities of the region they are poorly used. In comparison with other zones the territory is poorly maintained with economic and infrastructural areas. There is a need to

create hotels, motels, recreation centers and treatment sanatoriums as well as to improve and restore infrastructural facilities in the least populated zone of Oguz.

4. Conclusion

A number of objective laws have been discovered in the study of infrastructure of Sheki-Zakatala economic-geographical region:

- While developing the territorial system of infrastructure it was found that there was a sharp contrast in the services provided to the population throughout the region. These differences allow to divide the studied region into 3 zones based on the level of development and perspectives: I - Shaki, II – Gabala, Zagatala, III - Balakan, Oghuz, Gax.
- Infrastructure has been well integrated in the regional centers and there is a close inter-field cooperation. However, there is still a need to conduct activities in several infrastructure facilities.
- Connection between rural settlements and the territorial organization of infrastructure was poorly arranged. The lack of medical service facilities, lack of teachers at schools, problems with connection of transportation with regional centers in winter period and etc. in mountain villages.
- Potential opportunities of the region are not fully implemented. It is possible to increase the level of social life of population and recruit local human resources to different jobs through developing tourism and recreation activities.

REFERENCES

1. Regions of Azerbaijan. Baki; 2018, 794 p.
2. Aliyeva M.I. The problems of production infrastructure in Azerbaijan. Baki, Science, 2012, 140 p.
3. Hasanov T.G. Economic-geographical regionalization. Baki, Baki University, 2012, 245 p.
4. Ibrahimova I.H. The economy of agricultural industry. Baki, 2016, 655 p.
5. The population settlement and the problems of demographic development in Sheki-Zakatala administrative region. Baki, 2016, 184 p.
6. Imrani Z. T., Badalova K. A. Attractiveness of Azerbaijan Republic for sustainable development and investment. "Science and world" international scientific journal. № 12 (40), Vol.1. Volgograd, 2016, p. 92-95

ŞƏKİ-ZAQATALA İQTİSADI-COĞRAFI RAYONUNDA İNFRASTRUKTURUN ƏRAZI TƏŞKİLİ VƏ DAXİLİ FƏRQLƏRİ

X.A.Bədəlova

Xülasə. Müasir şəraitdə regionların davamlı sosial-iqtisadi inkişafına nail olmaq və regional problemləri müəyyən etmək üçün qarşımızda duran əsas vəzifələrdən biri yerlərdə infrastrukturun inkişaf səviyyəsi və

ərazi təşkilininin düzgün qiymətləndirilməsindən ibarətdir. Son 20 ildə Şəki-Zaqatala iqtisadi-coğrafi rayonunun infrastrukturunda müəyyən irəliləyişlər nəzərə çarparsa da, xidmət sahələri ilə əhalinin artım sürəti və tələbatı arasında tərs mütənasiblik vardır. İnfrastrukturun bütün elementlərində şəhərlə kənd arasında fərqlər əvvəlki dövrlərdə olduğu kimi yenə də qalmaqda davam edir. Bu amil əhalinin kəndlərdən şəhərlərə, eləcə də başqa ölkələrə miqrasiya etməsi ilə müşahidə olunur. Problemi qismən də olsa aradan qaldırmaq məqsədi ilə tərəfimizdən coğrafi metodların tətbiqi və müasir elmin nəaliyyətlərindən istifadə etməklə tədqiqat ərazisinin infrastrukturunda mövcud olan daxili fərqlər müəyyən edilmişdir. Bu zaman hər bir yaşayış məntəqəsində əhalinin sayı və onların infrastrukturla təminat dərəcəsi araşdırılmış, regionun potensial imkanları dəyərləndirilmiş və inkişaf səviyyəsinə görə Şəki-Zaqatala iqtisadi-coğrafi rayonu üç zona ayrılmışdır.

Açar sözlər: Şəki-Zaqatala, infrastruktur, xidmət, ticarət, davamlı inkişaf, rayonlaşdırılma.

**ТЕРРИТОРИАЛЬНАЯ ОРГАНИЗАЦИЯ И
ВНУТРЕННИЕ РАЗЛИЧИЯ В
ИНФРАСТРУКТУРЫ ШЕКИ-
ЗАКАТАЛЬСКОГО ЭКОНОМИКО-
ГЕОГРАФИЧЕСКОГО РЕГИОНА**

Х.А.Бадалова

Аннотация. Одна из главных задач, стоящих перед нами в современных условиях-добиться устойчивого социально-экономического развития регионов, определить региональные проблемы, уровень развития инфраструктуры на местах и оценка территориальной организации. За последние 20 лет были

отмечены некоторые улучшения в инфраструктуре Шеки-Загатальского экономико-географического региона, но существует несоразмерная пропорция между сектором услуг и темпами роста населения и спросом. Различия между городом и деревней во всех элементах инфраструктуры остаются такими же, как и в предыдущие периоды. Этот фактор наблюдается при миграции населения из сел в города, а также в другие страны. Чтобы частично устранить проблему, внутренние различия в инфраструктуре исследовательской области были определены с использованием географических методов и использования современной науки. Исследовались численность населения в каждом населенном пункте и уровень их обеспеченности инфраструктурой. Потенциальные возможности региона были оценены, и Шеки-Загатальский экономико-географический регион был разделен на три зоны в зависимости от уровня развития.

Ключевые слова: Шеки-Закатала, инфраструктура, обслуживание, торговля, устойчивое развитие, районирование.