

Azerbaijan's Multicultural Policy of Ethnic Diversity

Azerbaijan is a country in the South Caucasus region with a population of 10,3 million¹. After gaining independence, fundamental changes occurred in Azerbaijan's politics, economy, and society. Since 1991, Azerbaijan has become a hotspot for several interethnic conflicts, one of which, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, continues to date. This made the regulation of ethnocultural diversity one of the most important directions of state policy. However, as we observe, public discourse about the policy of multiculturalism in Azerbaijan expanded after the establishment of the service of the Department of Humanitarian Policy, Diaspora, Multiculturalism and Religious Issues². The Baku International Multiculturalism Center was founded subsequent to this; tasked to promote the so-called Azerbaijani model of multiculturalism and to ensure the preservation of tolerance, cultural, religious and linguistic diversity in accordance with the ideology of Azerbaijanism³. It was a logical continuation of the 'Baku Process' initiated in 2008, whose main goal was to promote intercultural dialogue⁴. As a result, the president of Azerbaijan, Aliyev (İham Əliyev), has often mentioned in his public speeches that the multiculturalism policy is an integral part of the state policy of Azerbaijan. This led to 2016 being declared the 'Year of Multiculturalism' in Azerbaijan. The establishment of the President's Department of Humanitarian Policy, Diaspora, Multiculturalism, and Religious Issues, as well as the Baku International Multiculturalism Centre, demonstrate that the state is addressing multiculturalism policy for the management of ethnic and religious diversity in Azerbaijan.

¹ *Azerbaijan Population 2022 (Demographics, Maps, Graphs)*, "World Population Review", <https://world-populationreview.com/countries/azerbaijan-population> (15/05/2022)

² Originally instituted in 2005 under the title of: State Counsellor for National Minorities and Religious Organizations. From 2014 to 2019 under the title of: State Counselor on Multiculturalism, Inter-ethnic and Religious Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan. <https://president.az/az/articles/view/11095> (20/05/2022)

³ *Our goal*, "Baku International Multiculturalism Center", <http://multikulturalizm.gov.az/en/post/974/our-goal.html> (20/05/2022)

⁴ E. Najafov, *The Baku Process: its Nature, History, Goals and Participants*, [in:] *Azerbaijani Multiculturalism. Textbook for Higher Education*, K. Abdulla, E. Najafov, (ed.), Baku 2018, p. 372.

All above-mentioned processes actualized studies in Azerbaijan on the basis of the historical roots of the formation of multiculturalism as a social phenomenon and the essence of all concepts related to it in Azerbaijan. Researchers started to write more academic works related to Azerbaijani multiculturalism and at the same time it became a popular topic across the mass media. In addition, Higher Education Universities of Azerbaijan began to teach the subjects such as ‘Azerbaijani multiculturalism’ and ‘Introduction to multiculturalism’⁵; further encouraging research in this area.

We propose that the more factors of influence that are put in play the more distinct will be the state multicultural policy. We also posit that there are several factors influencing Azerbaijan’s multicultural policy which can be divided into two forms: internal and external. Among the internal factors would be Azerbaijan’s ethnic and religious diversity, the dangers of separatism and the Talysh and Lezgi disputes. Among the factors more external in nature would include: the membership of Azerbaijan in the Council of Europe and the OSCE, and the Armenia – Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict⁶. Factor analysis is centered on cause-and-effect relations, explaining multicultural policy, and considering the wider domestic and international context of Azerbaijan, (which determines the policy of multiculturalism in this state). This means that we assume that Azerbaijan’s multicultural policy is a variable dependent in nature; conditioned by independent variables (which are individual factors). In this article, we limit ourselves to analyzing the ethnic diversity of Azerbaijan as an internal factor influencing Azerbaijan’s multicultural policy.

This paper presents an analysis of ethnic diversity as an internal factor influencing Azerbaijan’s multicultural policy which is an objective reason for the formation of such a policy. We examine each ethnic group in Azerbaijan, concentrating on their contemporary condition within the context of Azerbaijan’s multiculturalism policy. The remainder of this paper will follow this form: The specificity of the multicultural policy and the multicultural policy of Azerbaijan is explained first, followed by an analysis of the specificity of the ethnic structure of Azerbaijan. The topic discussed in this article is relevant because the policy of multiculturalism is still part of the state policy of Azerbaijan. The recent war between Azerbaijan and Armenia from September 27, 2020, until December 10, 2020, accentuated

⁵ *Multikulturalizm mərkəzində Azərbaycan multikulturalizmi fənnini tədris edən mütəxəssislərlə görüş keçirilib [A meeting was held at the Multiculturalism Center with experts teaching the subject of Azerbaijani multiculturalism]*, <https://cutt.ly/HCVRC8k> (27/05/2022).

⁶ After the country’s entry into the Council of Europe on 25 January 2001, Azerbaijan signed and ratified the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. Moreover, the Republic of Azerbaijan joined the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) (since 1 January 1995 OSCE) on 30 January 1992. Helsinki Final Act was accepted by Azerbaijan.

such; actualizing the problems associated with the coexistence of various ethnic and religious groups within one state in Azerbaijan.

Specificity of multiculturalism and Azerbaijan's multicultural policy

One of the important concepts discussed in this article is the politics of multiculturalism. What is multiculturalism and what do we expect from state declared multiculturalism as a part of state policy? Multiculturalism, as a term, was popularized in Canada in the 1960s to counter biculturalism; a project of Canada's Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism⁷. The term "multicultural" is often used as a descriptive term to characterize the fact of diversity in society⁸. The concept of multiculturalism emerged in connection with the cultural, ethnic, social, and political demands of the national minorities and immigrants in the program of the Pierre Trudeau administration in Canada in 1971. Lately, this concept has been used in different countries such as Australia, the USA and Sweden; even broadening into other social aspects in the context of human rights and equality. Multiculturalism is all about equality, mutual respect, acceptance, and tolerance between representatives of different nations, religions, cultures, communities, etc. The basic principles of multiculturalism are tolerance and integration.

The concept of multiculturalism is considering the dominant and minority cultures of this or that state as equal and contributes to their integration as opposed to the assimilation process. The problem of multiculturalism is quite complicated since, on the one hand, there is a position to preserve the traditions and cultural code of small nations and communities, as well as the right of every person to profess any religion, to use his native language, and the like. On the other hand, there is a need to build a homogeneous society. The most popular policies in this regard are assimilation, isolation, integration, and multiculturalism. Integration and assimilation are two notions that are commonly opposed with multiculturalism in contemporary times.⁹ There are different models of multiculturalism in the modern world due to the fact; that most countries are polyethnic and they have different ways of interaction with the diversity existing within their borders. A society in which the representatives of different ethnic, racial, religious, and cultural groups live is called a multicultural society.

⁷ J. Jedwab, *Multiculturalism*, "The Canadian Encyclopedia", <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/multiculturalism> (27/05/2022).

⁸ S. Song, *Multiculturalism*, "The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Fall 2020 Edition)", Edward N. Zalta (ed.), <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2020/entries/multiculturalism> (27/05/2022).

⁹ T.R. Johansson, *In defence of multiculturalism – theoretical challenges*, 'International Review of Sociology' 2022, p. 2, published online, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03906701.2022.2045141>.

An influential study by Bhikhu Parekh has shed more light on multiculturalism. He argues that almost all modern societies are multicultural and their cultural diversity derives from several sources, such as the process of globalization, the collapse of traditional moral consensus, the liberal emphasis on individual choices, and immigration¹⁰.

Multiculturalism is one of the concepts discussed in terms of social justice, equality of opportunity, and democracy. Since multiculturalism is the product of society's development, it is a social phenomenon in its essence, as it affected by events in society. From the arguments of Dumouchel, we understand that multiculturalism can be a part of government policy only in those countries where the government "actively encourages and supports the rights and interests of different cultural groups"¹¹. This argument engendered another question: which groups exactly fall into the object of multiculturalism? In connection with this, the Stanford Encyclopedia writes that: "Contemporary theories of multiculturalism, which originated in the late 1980s and early 1990s, tend to focus their arguments on immigrants who are ethnic and religious minorities"¹². In this context, Azerbaijan is a country where the multiculturalism policy is not related to immigration processes. The net migration rate of Azerbaijan from 2008 to today is positive¹³, but new immigrant communities are still not observed. Azerbaijan's multicultural policy focuses on ethnic and religious minorities that have lived within Azerbaijan historically.

The terms 'Azerbaijani multiculturalism' and 'the Azerbaijani model of multiculturalism' are used in the political lexicon nowadays. This prompts several question: What influenced its formation and development? We know that historically Azerbaijan has been an ethnically diverse state. Azerbaijan is positioned in a particularly significant military-strategic location, since it connects both Europe and Asia, as well as Russia and the Middle East. An ancient zone of human habitation encompasses the South Caucasus as well as all of the historical areas of Azerbaijan. It is emphasized that the history of statehood in the territories of modern Azerbaijan covers a period of more than 2,600 years by various historians. All the historical lands of Azerbaijan were concentrated in the ancient Caucasian Albania and the state called Atropatena¹⁴. During the Middle Ages, these regions were

¹⁰ B. Parekh, *Dilemmas of a Multicultural Theory of Citizenship*, 'Constellations' 1997, vol. 4 no. 1, p. 54. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8675.00036>.

¹¹ P. Dumouchel, *Comparative Multiculturalism and Justice: a Methodological Suggestion*, 'An Interdisciplinary Journal in Social Sciences' 2015 vol. 2 no. 1, p. 29.

¹² S. Song, *Multiculturalism ...*, op. cit.

¹³ R. Hosner, M. Guluzade, V. Wagner, *Baseline Study on Migration in Azerbaijan*, 2018, <https://cutt.ly/wCm5Aqz> (27/05/2022).

¹⁴ I. Zardabli, *The History of Azerbaijan: from ancient times to the present day*, London 2014, p. 89-90.

divided among a number of different empires. In this region throughout the 18th century, many minor khanates were founded. In the 19th century, it was divided between Russia and Iran, and the territory that is now known as Azerbaijan was included into the Russian Empire¹⁵. The main objective reason for Azerbaijan's ethnic and cultural diversity is that its area has historically been part of several empires. This is clear when one examines the history of ethnic and religious groups in contemporary Azerbaijan. In modern times, this is reflected in the reality of the political context. It is also significant that Azerbaijan is the only post-Soviet state which has declared multiculturalism as a state policy and this step can be called experimental.

When analysing the essence of Azerbaijan's multicultural policy, it is important first to determine whether there is a constitutional basis for this policy? Beyond that, what are the legislation that support this policy, and what are the international treaties in this regard joined by Azerbaijan? As stated, multiculturalism became a component of national strategy, this model was established by historical development, had political significance, and became government policy. The presence of ethnocultural and religious diversity, as well as the formation of fair relations between various groups and the preservation of cultural diversity, requires constitutional and legal governance in this area.

On November 12, 1995, a nationwide referendum resulted in the adoption of the Republic of Azerbaijan's Constitution. In 2002, 2009, and 2016, it was amended by the nationwide referendum. Even after the 2016 constitutional referendum, multiculturalism and the terms and articles that may express it are not found in the highest law, despite the fact that the state's multiculturalism plan began in 2012. However, the following article of the Constitution establishes direct protection of the rights and liberties of national minorities and ethnic groups residing in Azerbaijan:

- Article 21. Official language;
- Article 25. Right for equality;
- Article 44. Right for nationality;
- Article 45. Right to use mother tongue;
- Article 48. Freedom of conscience¹⁶.

¹⁵ B.W. Charles, S.R. Grigor, *History of Transcaucasia*, 'Encyclopedia Britannica', 1998, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/history-of-Transcaucasia> (20/05/2022).

¹⁶ The Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan.
https://www.stat.gov.az/menu/3/Legislation/constitution_en.pdf(15/05/2022)

Before the first Constitution of independent Azerbaijan was adopted in 1995, the President signed a decree on September 16, 1992¹⁷, which was aimed at developing interethnic relations, protecting cultural diversity, and providing a free development of national minorities and ethnic groups in the state till the adoption of the first Constitution of the independent Republic of Azerbaijan. Though the preservation and development of religion, language, and cultural identity of national minorities and ethnic groups were undertaken by the state, the creation of conditions for the development of folk arts and crafts, and the free performance of religious rituals, there was still a need for their constitutional guarantee. The legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan reflects the provisions of the Constitution on ethnic and religious diversity and equality. The legislation states clearly that racial, ethnic, or religious affiliation does not rule out the equality of rights before the law and the courts. The right to equality is one of the basic principles in the Civil Code, Criminal Code, Criminal-Procedure Code, Labour Code, the Law on Education, Law on Culture, and other legislative acts of the Republic of Azerbaijan. For instance, the Article 109 (discrimination), Article 11 (racial discrimination, apartheid), Article 283 (prevention of national, racial, social, or religious hatred and hostility) of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan give a legal basis to opposing discrimination and ensuring tolerant coexistence in Azerbaijan¹⁸.

The opportunity to get education in one's native tongue is the most significant part of ethnic minority's lives. Minorities are provided by opportunities to organize groups and individual classes in their own languages in preschool, primary schools and in schools of general education. Azerbaijan's law 'On Education' enshrines the right to choose the language of education. In Azerbaijan, ethnic and national minorities have the opportunity to organize groups and individual courses at their own languages in preschool educational institutions, general education schools, and primary schools. The freedom to choose the language of instruction is included in Azerbaijan's Education Law¹⁹.

¹⁷ "Azərbaycan Respublikasında yaşayan milli azlıq, azsaylı xalq və etnik qrupların hüquq və azadlıqlarının qorunması, dil və mədəniyyətlərinin inkişafı üçün dövlət yardımı haqqında" ["On the protection of rights and freedoms and state support for the development of the language and culture of the national minorities, small nations and ethnic groups residing in the Azerbaijan Republic"], Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan of September 16, 1992, No. 212 <https://e-qanun.az/framework/2345> (21/05/2022).

¹⁸ Criminal Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan, https://adsdatabase.ohchr.org/IssueLibrary/AZERBAIJAN_Criminal%20Code.pdf (21/05/2022).

¹⁹ Education Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan. *Article 32. Rights and responsibilities of learners. 32.3.2. independently choose the educational institution, specialization, profession, the form of training and the language of education*, https://adsdatabase.ohchr.org/IssueLibrary/AZERBAIJAN_Law%20on%20education.pdf (21/05/2022).

As we reviewed, Azerbaijan has formed a legal framework for the national minorities and religious confessions, which are the most important constituents of a multi-ethnic state, and in this context, Azerbaijan has been cooperating with many international organizations such as the United Nations, Council of Europe, OSCE, EU, Organization of Islamic Cooperation, UNESCO and the like. Since joining to the UN in March 1992 below mentioned first two international human rights treaties which are related to the multiculturalism policy ratified by Azerbaijan and one was signed.

- Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities.
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.
- Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

On 25 January 2001, Azerbaijan became a full member of the Council of Europe. Today, one of the most important international organizations with which Azerbaijan cooperates is the Council of Europe. The Republic of Azerbaijan acceded to the ‘The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities’²⁰ of the Council of Europe on June 13, 2000. The Convention is an important international treaty for the protection of the rights of national minorities and provides the protection of the existence of national minorities, their culture, and identity at the highest level. Such fundamental rights are also regulated by the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. However, The Framework Convention also defines guaranteed rights that apply only to national minorities²¹.

We concluded that Azerbaijan has a sufficient legal framework for the protection of ethnic, national, and religious minorities after studying the legal basis of the country’s multicultural policy. But how is all of this put into action? Are the rights of the ethnic groups being violated? It should be emphasized that these concerns are closely tied to Azerbaijan’s overall human rights situation. However, such a wide framing of the topic is not the goal of our study.

Analysis of the specificity of the ethnic structures of Azerbaijan

Without regard to the ethnic and religious groups in any state it is impossible discuss multiculturalism in general. Besides the Turkic-speaking Azerbaijanis, many national mi-

²⁰ *Signatures and ratifications of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages*, <https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-charter-regional-or-minority-languages/signatures-and-ratifications> (21/05/2022).

²¹ *The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities*, <https://rm.coe.int/16800c10cf> (21/05/2022).

norities and ethnic groups live in Azerbaijan. According to the 2009 census²², the national composition of the population of Azerbaijan consists of Azerbaijani Turks (91.6%) and multiple ethnic minorities (8.4%). Among the latter are Lezgins, Armenians, Russians, Talyshs, Avars, Ahiska Turks, Tatars, Tats, Ukrainians, Tsakhurs, Ingiloys, Jews, Kurds, Gryzs, Udis, Khynalygs, and others which can be named²³. This may be seen clearly in the diagrams 1 and 2 that are provided below. Some of these minority peoples are indigenous peoples of Azerbaijan, while others have settled in the country because of the socio-political processes taking place at various stages of history

Azerbaijan has a complex linguistic landscape. Today, the peoples living in Azerbaijan belong to four major language families. These are the Turkish branch of the Altai language family, the North Caucasus, the Indo-European, and the Kartvelian language families²⁴. Languages of these language families, spread in Azerbaijan can be grouped as follows:

- The Azerbaijani language belongs to the Oguz subgroup of the Turkish language group of the Altai family, the Tatar language of the Kipchak branch;
- the Lezgin, Tsakhur, Udi, Budug, Gryz, Khynalyg (*Ketish*), Haput, Jek, Elik, Yerguch and Rutul languages belong to the Lezgin subgroup of the Nakh and Dagestan branch of the North Caucasian language family, the Avar language belonging to the Avar-Andi sub-group (*belonging of the Udi language of the Lezgin subgroup is controversial*);
- the Russian and Ukrainian languages belonging to the Eastern-Slavic branch of the Slavic group of the Indo-European family of languages, the Talysh, Kurdish and Tat languages of the Iranian language group (*the dialect of the Tat language - the language of the Mountain Jews (juuri, juhuri)*) and the Armenian language belonging to a different group;
- the South Kartvelian group of the Kartvelian language family, represented by the Georgian language. The carriers of this language are Christian and Muslim Ingiloys²⁵.

Azerbaijan is also one of the areas where the first religious beliefs and monotheistic religions were spread. This state has always been the focus of attention due to the spread of religious beliefs and convictions since ancient times, a favourable geographical position, mild climate, and rich natural resources. These factors played a special role in the settlement of numerous ethnic and religious groups in Azerbaijan at different times. In ancient times,

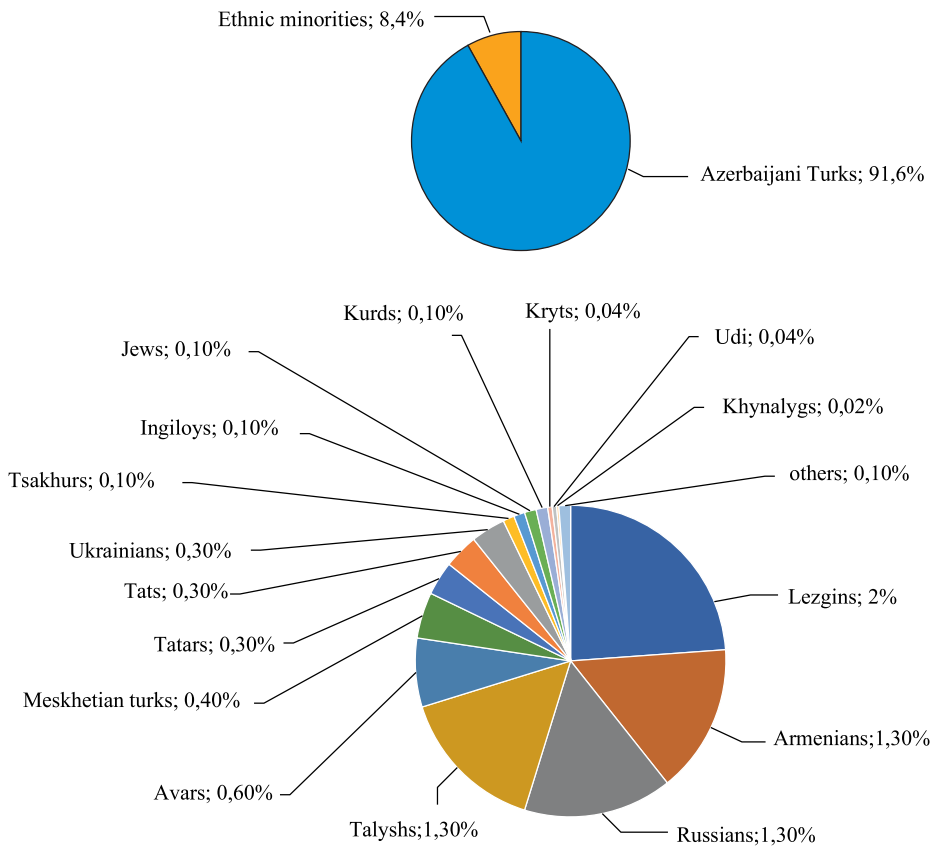
²² State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan held a new census of population in 2019 but did not announce official results of the census yet. Last checked date August 2022.

²³ *Demographic indicators of Azerbaijan*, 2021, <https://www.stat.gov.az/source/demography/ap/?lang=en> (21/05/2022).

²⁴ Q. Cavadov, *Azərbaycanın azsaylı xalqları və milli azlıqları: tarix və müasirlik* [Minor nations and national minorities of Azerbaijan: history and modernity], Baku 2000, p.15.

²⁵ *Azerbaijan*, Ethnologue, <https://www.ethnologue.com/country/az> (15/05/2022).

Diagram I-II: The national composition of the population of Azerbaijan according to the census held in Azerbaijan 2009



(Diagrams created by the author according to the source: State Statistical Committee, 2021).

religious rites and ceremonies played an important role in the lives of people living in the Azerbaijani lands, who worshipped fire, water, trees, mountains, the spirit of the ancestors, various natural phenomena, and heavenly bodies. Even thousands of years later, some of these beliefs remain in the memory of people and they can also be observed in their lifestyles. In different periods of history, Zoroastrianism, Manichaeism, Mazdakism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam have been widely spread throughout Azerbaijan. Some of these religions are the basis of the religious beliefs of the Azerbaijani population today.

According to the Constitution of Azerbaijan, religion is separate from the state. All religious beliefs are equal before the law. But the state acts as the patron of religions and creates conditions for the equal development of all religions existing in the state (Article 18). All

religious communities are required to go through the state registration process. According to information provided by the State Committee for the Work of Religious Organizations²⁶, 970 religious organizations have been registered in the state. 933 of them are Islamic, 37 are non-Islamic (Christian - 26, Jewish - 8, Krishna - 1, Bahai - 2). There are no official results of polls about religious beliefs in Azerbaijan expect above mentioned registration of religious communities. And the State Committee for the Work of Religious Organizations does not record information about how many people belong to these communities.

In this article we analyzed sixteen ethnic groups in total, including the national minorities in the population censuses in Azerbaijan. According to official statistics, the Lezgins, Armenians, Russians, Talyshs, and Avars make up the largest ethnic group, while the Udis are the smallest ethnic group in Azerbaijan. According to the 2009 census, 0.10 per cent of the population is classified as other ethnic groups, without specifying them. It is practically impossible to find official information about other ethnic groups living in Azerbaijan apart from the scientific literature. As we can see from official statistics each other ethnic group has no more than 1,000-2,000 people living in Azerbaijan. Among other ethnic groups and national minorities living in Azerbaijan, one can point out Arabs, Persians, Poles, Romani, and other peoples. Our focus was limited to the analysis of ethnic groups and national minorities included in 2009's population census.

Analyzing each ethnic group separately, the following generalizations and concluding remarks can be made about ethnic groups and multiculturalism in Azerbaijan:

- In general, ethnic minorities are more than eight per cent of the population, which makes it possible to address multiculturalism in general and the multicultural policy of this state.
- We concluded that modern migration communities are not observed in Azerbaijan. Even if there are small migration communities from countries such as Pakistan, Afghanistan, and China, so far there is no official information about them in the population census; all ethnic groups within Azerbaijan having lived there historically or moved to this country at least half a thousand years ago. Azerbaijani multiculturalism is not connected with modern migration processes.
- Ethnic groups live mainly in the border regions of the country and in each neighbouring state there are representatives of the same ethnic group, which makes it dangerous for the preservation of the integrity of the state. Already in the modern history of Azerba-

²⁶ Statistical figures related to religious field, The State Committee on Religious Associations of the Republic of Azerbaijan, https://scwra.gov.az/en/view/pages/306?menu_id=83 (05/05/2022).

ijan, there were several attempts of separatism. One of these conflicts with the Armenian population of the country continues to this day. This is one of the main factors leading the state towards a multicultural policy.

- There are no official results of polls about religious beliefs in Azerbaijan. However, according to the registered religious communities, we can approximately determine the religious beliefs of the population. Around sixty-nine per cent of the population is Muslim, and four per cent are non-Muslim. In religious terms, the state is less diverse than when compared by ethnicity; because many large ethnic minorities (such as the Talysh, Lezghins) are Muslim in their religious beliefs. Firstly, this makes them closer to the titular nation to the Azerbaijanis. Second, these ethnic minorities recognise themselves as another ethnic group. But at the same time, due to the commonality of religious beliefs, they have many common customs and rituals in their daily life with the titular ethnic group which make them unified.
- Cultural diversity assumes particular importance for economic development, as well as sustainable development as a whole. Economic interests linked to multicultural heritage can raise new waves of further initiatives in Azerbaijan (at both the governmental and non-governmental level) at the national level but also at regional and international levels.
- There are more than sixteen ethnic and national minorities in Azerbaijan, but only four linguistic groups to which they belong. This is also one of the factors (like religion) that bring citizens of Azerbaijan together.
- All ethnic groups in Azerbaijan are from the same race.
- Almost half of the ethnic groups have no opportunity to receive education in primary school in their own mother tongue languages or even particular subjects. Only Lezgins, Armenians, Russians, Talyshs, Jews, Ukrainians, Udi and Khynalyg people have a chance to get an education in their native languages and these opportunities are not uniform in nature. It should be pointed out that only ethnic Russians have a chance to study all subjects in their native language and to continue their education at High Education institutions in Russian. What emerges from our analysis is that the media in Azerbaijan is also not available in the languages of all ethnic groups.

Conclusions

Azerbaijan's ethnic diversity may be viewed as a strength than rather than as a political liability; encouraging the representatives of those with different cultural backgrounds to look for ways of promoting universal positive attitudes towards diversity. The policy

of multiculturalism seems ideal for this purpose, despite its inherent difficulties. As often stated, people from similar cultural backgrounds may feel a sense of integration and security but a lack of understanding of the beliefs and cultures of others dissimilar to themselves may lead them toward the embrace of views of cultural superiority.

Analysing all ethnic groups in Azerbaijan, we recognize that all these groups have their unique language, history, and some of them have follow religions different from the titular ethnic group. The existence of such diverse peoples necessitate that the state introduces ethnic policies in relation to them. The most significant result has been that the Azerbaijani state has started to embrace the concept of a policy of multiculturalism concerning its diverse population, formally recognizing the existence of multiple ethnic groups. However, more government action at the national level in this regard is needed for the implementation of a comprehensive multicultural policy inclusive of all ethnic groups in Azerbaijan.

Streszczenie

Azerbejdżańska wielokulturowa polityka różnorodności etnicznej

Na politykę wielokulturową Azerbejdżanu wpływa kilka czynników, przy czym jednym z ważniejszych jest różnorodność etniczna. Skład etniczny Republiki Azerbejdżanu jest bogaty i oprócz Azerbejdżan posługujących się jednym z języków turekijskich, w Azerbejdżanie żyje wiele mniejszości narodowych, małych narodów i grup etnicznych. W artykule przedstawiono analizę zróżnicowania etnicznego jako wewnętrznego czynnika wpływającego na politykę wielokulturową Azerbejdżanu, co jest obiektywną przyczyną kształtowania się takiej polityki. Rozważono każdą grupę etniczną w Azerbejdżanie, skupiając się na ich obecnym stanie w kontekście polityki wielokulturowości Azerbejdżanu. W pierwszej kolejności wyjaśniane są zasady polityki wielokulturowej w ogóle oraz okoliczności kształtowania polityki wielokulturowej Azerbejdżanu, a następnie analizie poddana jest specyfika struktury etnicznej Azerbejdżanu. Najbardziej znaczącym rezultatem było to, że państwo azerbejdżańskie zaczęło wprowadzać koncepcję polityki wielokulturowości wobec zróżnicowanej populacji, formalnie uznając istnienie wielu grup etnicznych. Jednak w celu realizacji kompleksowej polityki wielokulturowej obejmującej wszystkie grupy etniczne w Azerbejdżanie potrzebne są dalsze działania rządowe na poziomie krajowym w tym zakresie.

Słowa kluczowe:

Azerbejdżan, wielokulturowość, różnorodność etniczna, polityka etniczna, struktura etniczna

Key words:

Azerbaijan, multiculturalism, ethnic diversity, ethnic policy, ethnic structure

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