

The information contained in this report is current as of July 2021. It is provided as a service to users and it is therefore general and should not be considered or relied on as comprehensive or as legal advice. Nothing contained herein creates an attorney-client relationship between IRAP or any of the law firms that participated in this project and any users of this information.

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Is there a refugee protection program? Please describe it.</p> | <p>The Republic of Azerbaijan signed the UN Refugee Convention. Subsequently, it adopted a law establishing a legal mechanism for those who reside outside the former Soviet Union seeking refuge in Azerbaijan.¹</p> <p>The Republic of Azerbaijan has a refugee protection program pursuant to the law “on status of refugees and forcibly displaced (persons displaced within the country) persons.”²</p> |
| <p>Who runs any available refugee protection program? Who determines which applicants qualify for refugee protection?</p> | <p>The Republic of Azerbaijan State Migration Service runs the refugee protection program.³ Applicants who are refugees qualify for refugee protection.⁴</p> <p>The term refugee applies to one who has a “well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to</p> |

¹ *Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan: On the status of refugees and IDPs (Internally Displaced Persons)*, available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Migration/pushback/AzerbaijanSubmission.pdf>

² *Id.*

³ <https://www.migration.gov.az/en>.

⁴ *Id.*

| | |
|--|---|
| | it.” ⁵ |
| Is the refugee protection program functional? For example, how long does it take for decisions to be issued? What percentage of applications are granted? | <p>The decision on granting refugee status is made by the State Migration Service within 3 (three) months from the date of registration of application for granting refugee status.⁶</p> <p>If denied refugee status, the individual will be “notified within five days from the day of the decision, stating the reasons for the refusal and the procedure for appealing the decision.”⁷</p> |
| Do refugees have a right to work? A right to education? A right to medical care? Please describe. | <p>Refugees have a right to work. Refugees are given assistance to secure employment.⁸ Refugees are not required to obtain a work permit.⁹</p> <p>Refugees have a right to education.¹⁰</p> <p>Refugees are provided “necessary medicines and medical care in temporary accommodation and hospitals for the elderly, children, persons with disabilities, low-income persons and persons who have lost breadwinner of the householder.”¹¹</p> |
| Are those seeking refugee protection free to live freely or forced to reside in camps? | <p>Those seeking refugee protection are free to live freely.¹² However, the individual seeking refugee status may be</p> |

⁵ *Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan: On the status of refugees and IDPs (Internally Displaced Persons)* at art. I.

⁶ <https://www.migration.gov.az/en>, *Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan: On the status of refugees and IDPs (Internally Displaced Persons)* at art. XII.

⁷ *Id.* at art. XIII.

⁸ *Id.* at art. XVI.

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ *Id.* at art. VI.

¹¹ *Id.*

¹² *Id.*

| | |
|--|---|
| | <p>“voluntarily placed and accommodated in detention centers of illegal migrants.”¹³</p> |
| <p>Does a grant of refugee protection result in a pathway to permanent status? In other words, can a refugee eventually become a citizen? Is there another form of legal permanent status available for people with refugee status?</p> | <p>The grant of refugee protection can result in a pathway to permanent status.¹⁴</p> <p>To assist refugees in obtaining permanent status, “conditions are created for refugees to integrate, naturalize, learn the language. And get acquainted with their rights and responsibilities.”¹⁵</p> |
| <p>Does the country offer temporary protections available other than refugee status? If so, what are they?</p> | <p>After an individual applies for refugee status, but is waiting for approval, the individual has the right to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Reside temporarily in the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan; • Use interpreter’s service free of charge; • Get employed temporarily; • Get medical assistance; • be voluntarily placed and accommodated in the detention centers of illegal migrants of the relevant executive authority in accordance with the procedure established by the Migration Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan together with the family members accompanying him/her until the issue of granting refugee status is resolved; • Freely practice his/her religion; • Contact with representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.”¹⁶ |

¹³ *Id.*

¹⁴ *Id.* at art. VII.

¹⁵ *Id.*

¹⁶ *Id.* at art. XI.

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>What, if any, penalties are there for people without status or people who are denied refugee protection?</p> | <p>Those who are denied refugee protection may be sent from the Republic of Azerbaijan to another country.¹⁷</p> <p>However, if an individual arrives illegally, and without proper documentation, the individual will not be involuntarily returned “to a country where his life or liberty is endangered.”¹⁸</p> |
| <p>What organizations exist in-country that can help displaced people seek available protections? What other organizations in the country may be able to help displaced people access services and rights, even if their mission is not to specifically work with refugees and displaced people?</p> | <p>Humanitarian aid is available to refugees.¹⁹</p> <p>Relief agencies in Azerbaijan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Azerbaijan Red Crescent Society²⁰ • The Adventist Development and Relief Agency²¹ • Children’s Aid Direct²² • Cooperatives for Assistance and Relief Everywhere²³ • International Committee of the Red Cross²⁴ • International Eurasia Press Fund²⁵ • International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies²⁶ • Norwegian Humanitarian Enterprise²⁷ |

¹⁷ *Id.* at art. VIII.

¹⁸ *Id.* at art. V.

¹⁹ *Id.* at art. VII.

²⁰ www.redcrescent.az

²¹ <http://www.adra.org>

²² <http://www.cad.org.uk>

²³ <https://www.care-international.org/where-we-work/azerbaijan>

²⁴ <http://www.icrc.ch>

²⁵ www.iepf-ngo.org

²⁶ <http://www.ifrc.org>

²⁷ <http://www.nhe-az.org/>

| | |
|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OXFAM²⁸ • United Methodist Committee on Relief²⁹ • United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees³⁰ • United Nations Children’s Fund³¹ • World Vision³² |
| <p>Is there other information that might be valuable for displaced people arriving in that country to know?</p> | <p>The Republic of Azerbaijan operates as a semi-presidential republic, with a prime minister and president working alongside one another.³³ The major languages of Azerbaijan are Azeri and Russian.³⁴ The primary religion of Azerbaijan is Islam.³⁵</p> <p>While Azerbaijan is a semi-presidential republic, it is not free of human rights violations.³⁶ Specifically, the people of Azerbaijan have little to no freedom of expression.³⁷ The media is censored, and “dissenting voices are practically absent from mainstream media and critical journalists risk arrest and imprisonment.”³⁸ Further, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict of September 2020 resulted in continued violence and unrest within the country.³⁹</p> |

²⁸ <https://www.oxfam.org/en/tags/azerbaijan>

²⁹ <http://gbgm-umc.org/umcor/ngo/azerbaijan/>

³⁰ <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/azerbaijan.html>

³¹ <https://www.unicef.org/azerbaijan/>

³² <https://www.wvi.org/azerbaijan/about-us>

³³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Politics_of_Azerbaijan

³⁴ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-17043424>

³⁵ *Id.*

³⁶ *Id.*

³⁷ *Id.*

³⁸ *Id.*

³⁹ <https://www.amnesty.org/en/countries/europe-and-central-asia/azerbaijan/report-azerbaijan/>