

Why Is Regional GDP Not Measured in Azerbaijan?

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To evaluate the outcomes of the four regional development programs implemented by the Azerbaijani government over the past 20 years, one of the clearest indicators would be the regions' changing share in the country's national income. For anyone interested in the topic, it would be important to know the share of Baku and that of the rest of the regions in GDP in 2004, and where it stands today. However, this is not an easy question to answer using publicly accessible, official sources

Only the annual reports recently [published](#) by the Baku City Statistical Office provide data on the volume of GDP generated in the capital. This gives some indication of Baku's contribution to the country's national income. But the same data is not disclosed for the remaining 13 economic regions. The most recent figure for Baku is from 2023, when the city generated 94,5 billion manats in GDP. According to the [State Statistical Committee](#) (SSC), total GDP in Azerbaijan that year was 126,3 billion manats. This means that Baku accounted for 75 percent of national income, while the remaining regions accounted for just 25 percent. In turn, 92 percent of GDP in industry, 65 percent in the trade sector, and 42 percent in construction were generated in Baku.

Instead of publishing value added by geographic region, the SSC releases a more general indicator – the total output of goods and services – which is not comparable with other countries. Unlike GDP, this figure includes intermediate consumption. As a result, it does not allow us to see the net value added in each region. But even this indicator is presented only partially, with no reasonable explanation. For instance, the volume of several free public services

(education, healthcare, and so on) provided by the state should be reflected in the regional breakdown of goods and services. If this indicator were fully disclosed, and if the share of value added in total output were used as a base, it would be possible to estimate regional GDP independently. Yet as things stand, the SSC's standards for information dissemination have made this option unavailable to independent researchers.

In neighboring countries, regional GDP is not only reported, but in some cases (such as in Türkiye) it is supported with detailed data. Three neighboring countries – Armenia, Georgia, and Türkiye – currently publish regional GDP figures. In [Armenia](#), the main issue concerns the frequency of publication. The most recent data available is from 2022. Even so, despite the delays, there is still a reliable source for forming a general picture of how the regions contribute to the national economy. According to the report, 62 percent of Armenia's GDP in 2022 was produced in the capital Yerevan, while 38 percent came from the rest of the country. The report includes figures on the total and per capita GDP of each region, as well as their share in total value added.

[Georgia's](#) official statistical agency also regularly publishes various indicators for the country's regions, including regional GDP. The most recent data is from 2023, which shows that approximately 52 percent of Georgia's GDP was generated in the capital, Tbilisi. Compared to Azerbaijan (25 percent) and Armenia (38 percent), the contribution of non-capital regions to GDP in Georgia (48 percent) is considerably higher. This share has remained roughly stable over the past 15 years.

Finally, [Türkiye](#) provides much more detailed information on added value generated in its regions. The dataset includes total and per capita GDP for all 81 regions of the country. It also contains the volume of value added for each economic activity by region, the dynamics of regional GDP across years, and the share of each of the 81 provinces and 26 statistical

regions in the national GDP. According to the results for 2023, only 9,5 percent of Turkey's 26,5 trillion lira GDP was produced in the capital Ankara, while 30 percent was generated in Istanbul, the country's main economic center.

The conclusion is that the absence of regional GDP data in Azerbaijan can only be interpreted as a political decision. A government that has politicized statistics to this extent is clearly unwilling to present the lack of meaningful regional development, despite having spent tens of billions of manats on regional programs over two decades. While it is possible to embellish regional development policy using various derived indicators, in the end, regional GDP – and its long-term dynamics as a share of national income – functions as a comprehensive indicator that integrates all the relevant sub-indicators. It brings closure to the debate.

This article focused specifically on how regional GDP is reported in official statistics in Azerbaijan and neighboring countries. However, one of the more important questions linked to this topic concerns regional disparities in economic opportunity. This includes the relative weight of different regions in the formation of national income, and the extent to which per capita income in the regions deviates from national and capital city averages. The next report by the BRI Economic Analysis Group will address this issue.