



2015 Minerals Yearbook

AZERBAIJAN [ADVANCE RELEASE]

THE MINERAL INDUSTRY OF AZERBAIJAN

By Elena Safirova

Azerbaijan produced a wide range of metals and industrial minerals, including aluminum, copper, gold, iodine, iron ore, limestone, silver, and steel. The country was making concerted efforts to use proceeds from hydrocarbon exports to develop its industries, in particular, the ferrous metallurgy, chemical, and petrochemical industries. Azerbaijan's major importance as a world mineral producer, however, was based on its crude petroleum industry and, more recently, its natural gas industry. The country had been a significant crude petroleum producer for more than a century, and the focus since independence in 1991 was on developing offshore resources in the Caspian Sea. Oilfield and gasfield development was concentrated in two projects—the Azeri-Chirag-Guneshli (ACG) offshore oilfield complex and the Shah-Deniz offshore gasfield (U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2016).

Minerals in the National Economy

In 2015, the real gross domestic product (GDP) of Azerbaijan increased by 1.1%. The nominal GDP amounted to \$52.97 billion,¹ and industrial production contributed 34.0% to the total GDP. Mining and quarrying accounted for 77.6% of the country's industrial output; the rest was produced by manufacturing (15.6%) and electricity, heating, and water production and distribution (6.8%). In 2015, industrial production increased by 2.4% and production by the extracting sector increased by 2.0% compared with that of 2014 (State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan, 2016a, p. 213–215, 218–233; 2016b).

In 2015, Azerbaijan exported about \$11.4 billion worth of goods and services; this was a 47.7% decrease compared with export revenues in 2015, primarily because of a sharp decrease in petroleum prices and the subsequent devaluation of the manat in 2015. Of that amount, 86.5% came from exports of mineral fuels, mineral oils, and products made from them. The main export partners of Azerbaijan were Italy (which received 19.7% of Azerbaijan's total exports), Germany (10.7%), France (7.6%), Israel (7.0%), the Czech Republic (4.8%), Indonesia (4.2%), Austria and Russia (3.6% each), and Georgia and Portugal (3.2% each). Azerbaijan's total imports in 2015 were valued at about \$9.22 billion, and the revenue from imports was practically unchanged from that of 2014. The main imported commodities included machinery and equipment (26.7%); base metals and articles made out of them (20.3%); vehicles, aircraft and transportation equipment (7.7%); chemical products (7.6%); and mineral products (2.4%). The country's major import partners during the year were Russia (which provided 15.6% of Azerbaijan's imports), Turkey (12.7%), the United States (9.2%), Germany (7.5%), Italy (6.4%), Japan (6.1%), the United Kingdom (6.0%), China (5.6%), and Ukraine (3.4%). In 2015, foreign trade turnover in Azerbaijan decreased to \$20.65 billion from \$31.01 billion in 2014, and the trade balance decreased to

¹Where necessary, Azerbaijani manats (AZN) were converted to U.S. dollars (US\$) at an annual average exchange rate of 1.026AZN=US\$1.00 for 2015.

\$2.20 billion from \$12.64 billion (State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan, 2016c).

Production

In 2015, Azerbaijan's production of copper ore, iron ore, and gold increased by 44%, 40%, and 19%, respectively. Aluminum metal production increased by 5.9%; refinery products, by an estimated 5.1%; and crude steel, by 4.8%. Alumina, caustic soda, and sulfuric acid were not produced at all. Construction sand production decreased by 56%. Output of limestone and bentonite decreased by 31% and 30%, respectively. Steel pipe production decreased by 17%; steel rebar, by 11%; gypsum, by 10%; marketable salt, by 8.3%; silver, by 8.0%; and cement, by 6.5%. Production of natural gas increased by 2.2%, and production of crude petroleum decreased by 0.9%. Production data for these and other mineral commodities are in table 1.

Structure of the Mineral Industry

As of January 1, 2016, the country had 791 enterprises engaged in mineral extraction activities. Of these, 35 were established in 2015; another 7 enterprises closed during the year. More specific information about mineral industry enterprises is in table 2 (State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan, 2016a).

Commodity Review

Metals

Aluminum.—In 2015, Azerbaijan produced about 53,300 metric tons (t) of primary aluminum, of which 7,000 t was used to produce aluminum coils. The only active producer of primary aluminum in Azerbaijan was the aluminum complex in the city of Ganja, which was built by OOO Det. Al Aluminum Holding (Det. Al). Det. Al opened its first facility, a primary aluminum plant with the capacity of 50,000 metric tons per year (t/yr) of aluminum, in 2011. In January 2014, Det. Al opened two more plants—a rolling plant and a pressure processing and painting plant, each with a capacity of 50,000 t/yr. The complex imported alumina from Brazil, Jamaica, the United States, and Venezuela (Contact.az, 2014; Gasanova, 2016).

In 2016, Det. Al was planning to produce 56,000 t of primary aluminum and to use between 15,000 and 20,000 t to produce aluminum coils that reportedly were in high demand; about 6,000 t of the coils produced would be painted coils used in construction and for the manufacture of composite panels. The coils were between 6 and 10 millimeters thick and between 1,000 and 1,700 millimeters wide and were exported to Germany, Italy, Jordan, Switzerland, Turkey, and other countries. In addition to coils, Det. Al had produced aluminum slabs since November 2013. Within the next 3 years, the company was planning to expand its primary aluminum

production capacity to 200,000 t/yr and to construct an anode plant with a capacity of 125,000 t/yr (Contact.az, 2014; Gasanova, 2016).

Gold, Silver, and Copper.—In 2015, Azerbaijan reported producing 2,229 kilograms (kg) of gold; 890 kg of silver; and 969 t of copper. Compared with production in 2014, copper and gold output increased by 44% and 19%, respectively, owing to a production rampup at the Gosha Mine, but silver production decreased by 8%. All gold, silver, and copper in Azerbaijan was produced by Anglo Asian Mining PLC (Anglo Asian) of the United Kingdom. In 2009, Anglo Asian began gold production at the Gedabek gold, silver, and copper mine, which is located about 55 kilometers (km) from the city of Ganja. At the end of 2013, another mine, the Gosha Mine, which is located within 50 km of Gedabek, started production. In 2014, the company produced 14,981 t of ore grading 6.15 grams per metric ton gold at Gosha. Anglo Asian was owned by R.V. Investment Group Services (49% interest) and the Government of Azerbaijan through the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources (51% interest) (table 1; Anglo Asian Mining PLC, 2016 MinerJob.ru, 2016).

The original production-sharing agreement between Anglo Asian and the Government included development of six polymetallic deposits in southwestern Azerbaijan—the Gedabek, the Gosha Bulag, the Gyzyt Bulag, the Ordubad, the Soyutlu, and the Vezhnali fields. The Gyzyt Bulag, the Soyutlu, and the Vezhnali fields are located in the breakaway region of Nagorno-Karabakh where conflicts with ethnic Armenians took place from 1988 to 1994. By yearend 2015, the total loans taken by Anglo Asian were \$52.8 million, of which \$37 million was owed to the Amsterdam Trade Bank. Other creditors included International Bank of Azerbaijan (\$13.1 million), Pasha Bank (\$1 million), Yapi Kredi of Turkey (\$0.9 million), and Atlas Copco (\$0.8 million) (Anglo Asian Mining PLC, 2016).

In August 2015, Anglo Asian planned to start industrial-level production at the Gadir underground mine located at the Gedabek deposit. The company began development of the mine at the end of 2014 and, by July 2015, had produced about 3,000 t of ore that was sent to the agitation leaching plant, which had opened in June 2013 (Mineral.ru, 2015a).

In February, the President of Azerbaijan issued a decree about the creation of a state company that would engage in prospecting, exploration, development, and management of deposits of nonferrous and precious metals. The company would be called ZAO AzerGold. The Ministry of Economy and Industry was charged with defining the strategy for the new company and was responsible for the hiring and firing of management staff and appointing advisory board members for the new company; it was also required to develop and get approval for the proposed structure and governing bylaws of the new company. The decisions about appointing the president and vice-presidents of the advisory board and the decisions about reorganization or the potential liquidation of AzerGold remained with the president (Mineral.ru, 2015b).

Industrial Minerals

Cement.—In 2015, Azerbaijan produced about 2.68 Mt of cement, which was a 6.5% decrease compared with the 2014 production level. Azerbaijan had three large cement plants and about a dozen small plants that served local communities, for a total (combined) capacity of 5.2 million metric tons per year (Mt/yr) of cement. The oldest of the three plants, Holcim Azerbaijan OJSC, which was previously known as the Garadagh cement plant, was a part of Holcim Group of Switzerland. In July 2015, Holcim Group merged with Lafarge S.A. of France, and the Holcim Azerbaijan plant became a part of the new HolcimLafarge Group. The plant was located in the Sahil settlement of Baku and had a production capacity of about 2.2 Mt/yr of cement (tables 1 and 2; Winters and de Beaupuy, 2014).

The other two cement plants were OOO Qazax Sement Zavodu (Qazax Sement) and Norm Sement. The Qazax Sement plant was located in Dash Salahli village, Gazakh region, and was commissioned in August 2014. The plant was owned by Akkord Corp., had the capacity to produce 1 Mt/yr of cement, and employed about 550 workers. The company planned to increase its production capacity to 3 Mt/yr by 2017. The other plant, Norm Sement, was built by the Azerbaijani company Norm LLC and was put into operation in July 2014. The plant was located 45 km to the west of Baku in Gyzyldash village in the Karadag region and had the capacity to produce 2 Mt/yr of cement. The plant had 350 workers, and another 150 were employed in providing raw materials for the plant and in other auxiliary sectors (Efendiyev, 2014; Mejid, 2014; Gazakh Cement Plant LLC, 2016).

As of 2015, annual cement consumption in Azerbaijan was about 4.4 Mt/yr, but domestic production was only about 2.7 Mt/yr. As a result, Azerbaijan continued to import cement from neighboring countries. It was expected that once the two new plants reach their planned capacity, Azerbaijan would be able to meet its domestic demand and even start exporting cement (Azizov, 2015).

Mineral Fuels

Natural Gas.—In 2015, Azerbaijan produced and sold as a commodity 19,236 million cubic meters of natural gas, which was an increase of 2.2% compared with the level of output in 2014. Total gas production in 2015 was 29,742 million cubic meters, which was a 1.1% increase compared with total production in 2014. As of January 2016, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, which referenced the Oil and Gas Journal, Azerbaijan's gas reserves were approximately 991 billion cubic meters. Almost all Azerbaijani gas was produced in two offshore fields—the ACG complex and the Shah-Deniz field (AnalitikaUA.net, 2014; ABC.az, 2016; U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2016).

Petroleum.—In 2015, the volume of crude petroleum production in Azerbaijan decreased to 41.6 Mt, or by 0.9% compared with that of 2014. In Azerbaijan, petroleum production had been much lower than in 2010, when the country produced 50.8 Mt. In 2015, Azerbaijan exported 38.1 Mt of petroleum, which was an 8.7% decrease. The major source

of crude petroleum in the country was the ACG field, which had been in operation for more than 15 years. The ACG field is located about 100 km east of Baku in the Caspian Sea and covers 430 square kilometers. The ACG field had an estimated 5 billion barrels of reserves; it produced mostly Azeri Light, which is a medium-light and sweet crude petroleum that is valued for its middle-distillate yield. The ACG petroleum project was developed by a consortium of companies led by BP p.l.c. of the United Kingdom, which had a 35.78% share in the project. Other participants included State Oil Co. of the Azerbaijan Republic (SOCAR) (11.65%), Chevron Corp. of the United States (11.27%), Inpex Corp. of Japan (10.96%), Statoil ASA of Norway (8.56%), Exxon Mobil Corp. of the United States (8.01%), Türkiye Petrolleri A.O. (TPAO) of Turkey (6.75%), Itochu Corp. of Japan (4.3%), and Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) of India (2.7%) (Alizade, 2014; AnalitikaUA.net, 2014; Neftgaz.ru, 2016; U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2016).

Until January 2015, Azeri crude petroleum was refined domestically at two refineries—the Azerneftiyag refinery (which specialized in producing heavy refinery products) and the Heydar Aliyev refinery (which produced light refinery products), both of which were owned by SOCAR. The combined nominal refining capacity of the two refineries was about 400,000 barrels per day (about 22 Mt/yr), but the actual production capacity was much lower. In 2014, SOCAR announced the liquidation of the Azerneftiyag refinery and merged it into the Heydar Aliyev refinery. As a result, the Heydar Aliyev refinery effectively absorbed the Azerneftiyag's facilities into its production and management structure. After the merger, SOCAR announced that the combined refinery had a production capacity of 6 Mt/yr (Day.az, 2015; U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2016).

SOCAR was continuing to plan the construction of a new petroleum refinery. According to the plan, the Oil and Gas Production Complex (OGPC) refinery would have the capacity to refine up to 9 Mt/yr of petroleum and would produce automobile gasoline as well as diesel fuel and jet fuel. The other components of the OGPC—a natural gas refinery and a petrochemical complex—were expected to be commissioned in 2020. The new refinery would be a part of a large project to construct an integrated complex for refining oil and gas combined with production of chemical products. The OGPC was expected to be commissioned in 2030; however, it was not clear if SOCAR would be able to adhere to the schedule given the sharply reduced revenues from petroleum sales. In the short term, SOCAR intended to modernize the Heydar Aliyev refinery and to increase its capacity to 7.5 Mt/yr from 6 Mt/yr. The modernization was expected to begin in 2016 and to be completed by the end of 2018. The estimated total cost of the refinery modernization was \$1 billion (Brelsford, 2016).

Outlook

In 2015, Azerbaijan continued to focus its attention on oil and gas production, but also made efforts to reinvest the proceeds from exporting hydrocarbons in other economic sectors, such as products of ferrous and nonferrous metallurgy and cement. Azerbaijan is also investing resources in building petroleum processing and petroleum transporting facilities, both

domestically and abroad, but many of those investments will take 5 or more years before completion.

In the next few years, it is likely that the country's oil production will decrease. Natural gas production, on the other hand, according to the Government, is likely to increase. Gold and copper production is likely to increase when the Gedabek and the Gosha Mines reach their production capacities and perhaps some other polymetallic deposits enter the production stage (Apostrophe.ua, 2016).

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TABLE 1
AZERBAIJAN: PRODUCTION OF MINERAL COMMODITIES¹

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Commodity ²	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
METALS					
Alumina	6,200	101,800	--	--	--
Aluminum, primary and secondary	20,000 ^c	54,890	53,290	50,357	53,303
Copper, mine output, Cu content	611	502	329	675 ^r	969
Gold kilograms	1,775	1,563	1,619	1,873	2,229
Iron and steel					
Iron ore, marketable:					
Gross weight	214,300	207,300	141,400	91,400	127,600
Fe content ^c	103,000	99,300	67,700	43,800	61,200
Steel:					
Crude	234,000	267,700	222,800	288,136	301,917
Pipe	98,500	61,773	60,785	35,883	29,687
Rebar	--	--	244,320	251,583 ^r	223,413
Silver kilograms	1,217	626	630	967 ^r	890
INDUSTRIAL MINERALS					
Bentonite	20,700	157,875	91,958	76,512	53,958
Cement	1,425,000	1,966,000	2,296,100	2,867,000	2,681,700
Gypsum	100,800	149,984	170,001	145,457 ^r	130,284
Iodine kilograms	350,000 ^c	240,400	249,100	221,100	210,400
Lime, construction	2,229	16,894	10,662	20,000 ^c	20,000 ^c
Limestone	1,200,000 ^c	1,696,977	1,013,531	694,996 ^r	477,636
Salt, marketable	5,128	5,345	4,855	5,173 ^r	4,743
Sand, construction	1,335,200	2,211,200	2,138,600	1,420,158 ^r	620,620
Soda, caustic	9,800	300	--	--	--
Sulfuric acid	15,500	4,300	200	--	--
MINERAL FUELS AND RELATED MATERIALS					
Natural gas ³ million cubic meters	16,361	17,242	17,895	18,827	19,236
Petroleum:					
Crude:⁴					
In gravimetric units	45,626,000	42,982,000	43,163,000	41,952,400 ^r	41,569,500
In volumetric units 42-gallon barrels	331,610,000	312,479,000 ^r	313,700,000	304,600,000	302,210,000
Refinery products:					
In gravimetric units	5,150,000 ^c	4,800,000	5,088,000	5,330,000	5,600,000 ^c
In volumetric units 42-gallon barrels	43,981,000	40,992,000	43,500,000	45,600,000 ^c	47,900,000

^cEstimated; estimated data are rounded to no more than three significant digits. ^rRevised. -- Zero.

¹Table includes data available through August 4, 2016.

²In addition to commodities listed, alunite ore may have been produced, but the information available was insufficient to make reliable estimates of output.

³Only gas sold as a commodity; includes associated gas.

⁴Only marketable; includes gas condensate.

TABLE 2
AZERBAIJAN: STRUCTURE OF THE MINERAL INDUSTRY IN 2015

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Commodity	Major operating companies and major equity owners	Locations or deposit names ¹	Annual capacity ^e
Alumina	Ganja refinery ²	Ganja	450,000
Aluminum	OJSC Azerbaijan Aluminum ² [Azeraluminum (Azeral)] (Det. AL Aluminum)	Sumqayit	60,000
Do.	OJSC Azerbaijan Aluminum [Azeraluminum (Azeral)] (Det. AL Aluminum)	Ganja smelter	50,000
Alunite ore	Zaglik alunite mining directorate	Zaylik, Dashcasan region	600,000
Cement	Companies: Norm sement (Norm LLC) OOO Qazax Sement Zavodu (Akkord Corp.) Holcim (Azerbaijan) OJSC (HolcimLafarge)	Locations: Gyzyldash, Karadag region Dash Salahli village, Gazakh region Baku	5,600,000 ³
Clay, bentonite	NA	Dash-Salakhinskoye deposit	100,000
Copper ore	Anglo Asian Mining PLC [R.V. Investment Group Services, 49% and Government, 51%]	Gedabek and Gosha	NA
Gold	kilograms do.	do.	2,300
Do.	Azerbaijan International Mineral Resources Operating Co. (AIMROC)	Chovdar deposit, near Ganja	NA
Iodine	OOO Azer-Yod	Plant in Nefchala	NA
Iron ore, marketable, Fe content	OAQ Daskesan Filizsaflashdirma	Daskasan region	70,000
Lime	AAC Co.	Plant in Baku region	65,000
Petroleum and natural gas:			
Crude petroleum and gas condensate	Azerbaijan International Operating Co., (AIOC) in conjunction with BP p.l.c. (35.78%), State Oil Company of Azerbaijan Republic (SOCAR) (11.65%), Chevron Corp. (11.27%), Inpex Corp. (10.56%), Statoil ASA (8.56%), Exxon Mobil Corp. (8.01%), Türkiye Petrolleri A.O. (TPAO) (6.75%), Itochu Corp. (4.3%), and Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) (2.7%)	Azeri-Chirag-Guneshli (ACG) offshore oilfields in the Caspian Sea	55,000,000
Refined petroleum	State Oil Company of Azerbaijan Republic (SOCAR)	Heydar Aliyev Baku refinery	6,000,000 ⁴
Natural gas	billion cubic meters International consortium consisting of BP p.l.c., Statoil ASA, OAO Lukoil, Oil Industries' Engineering and Construction (OIEC), State Oil Company of Azerbaijan Republic (SOCAR), Total S.A., and Türkiye Petrolleri A.O. (TPAO)	Shah-Deniz gas condensate field	NA
Natural gas, processed	NA	Plant in Karadagly region	NA
Salt, rock	NA	Hehram and Pusyan deposits, Naxcivan region	NA
Steel:			
Crude	OOO Baku Steel Co.	Baku	400,000
Pipe, tubes	OAQ Azerboru	Sumqayit	150,000
Ingot	Baku Steel Casting	Baku	NA

^eEstimated. Do., do. Ditto. NA Not available.

¹Many location names have changed since the breakup of the Soviet Union. Many enterprises, however, are still named or commonly referred to based on the former location name, which accounts for discrepancies in the names of enterprises and that of locations.

²The operational status of the plant in 2015 was not known.

³Capacity estimate is the total for all enterprises that produce cement.

⁴Capacity for crude petroleum distillation.