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Azerbaijan

Since becoming independent in 1991, Azerbaijan has attracted significant international interest in its substantial oil and natural gas reserves. Foreign investors are helping the country to develop its rich oil and natural gas reserves in the Caspian Sea basin, and construction of new pipelines may allow Azerbaijan to become a significant energy exporter over the next decade.

Note: Information contained in this report is the best available as of June 2003 and is subject to change.



GENERAL BACKGROUND

Azerbaijan is one of five Caspian littoral states already capitalizing upon the sea's sizeable, but as of yet mostly untapped, hydrocarbon resources. Azerbaijan's real gross domestic product (GDP) grew by 10.6% to \$6.1 billion, in 2002 as foreign investors pushed ahead with major projects in Azerbaijan despite the worldwide economic slowdown. Even with the \$3.7 billion which has been invested into the country's oil sector since 1994, Azerbaijan is currently a relatively insignificant world oil and gas producer, although major increases are expected beginning in 2005.

In the meantime, Azerbaijan is struggling to overcome the economic collapse that followed independence from the former

Soviet Union, as the country's GDP contracted by almost 60% from 1990 to 1995. As recently as October 2002 it was estimated that almost one half of Azerbaijani citizens earned less than \$25 per month. In May 2003, the International Monetary Fund approved renewed funding for its Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility program in Azerbaijan, designed to re-structure the country's economy and alleviate economic hardships. To date, Azerbaijan reportedly has drawn \$41 million from the fund.

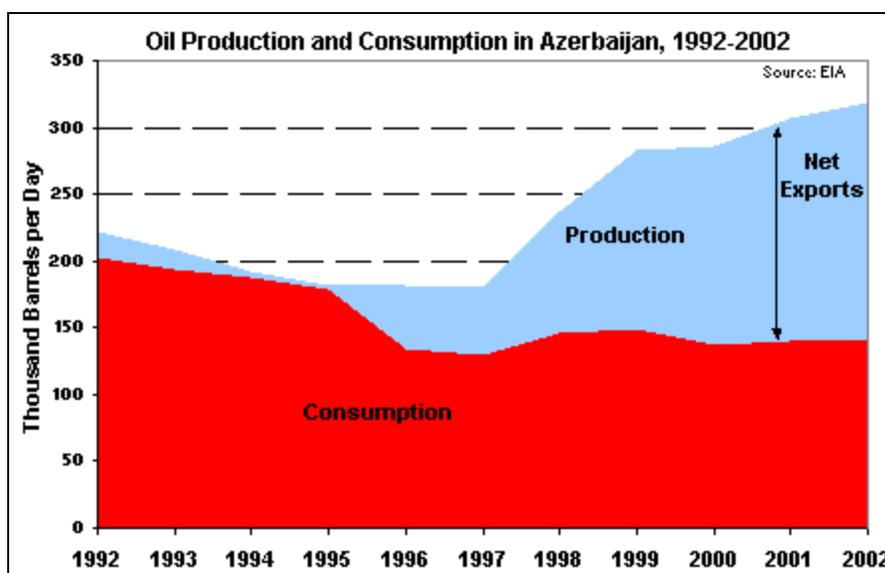
Azerbaijan's hope for future economic growth rests in large part with successful development of its vast oil and natural gas resources in the [Caspian Sea region](#). Crude oil and oil product exports make up over 70% of Azerbaijan's exports, and oil-related revenue makes up nearly 50% of budget revenues. On December 29, 1999, Azeri President Heydar Aliyev issued a decree creating a State Oil Fund designed to use money obtained from oil-related foreign investment on education,

reducing poverty, and raising the living standards of the rural population in Azerbaijan. As of January 2003, the State Oil Fund reportedly holds \$692 million, a \$200 million dollar increase over last year.

Heydar Aliyev, who first ruled Azerbaijan between 1969 and 1982 as First General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Azerbaijan Communist Party, became President of the Republic of Azerbaijan in June 1993, making him the country's second president since independence. In his first year as President, a peace was negotiated with neighboring Armenia, which Azerbaijan had been fighting since 1988. As a result the 1994 cease fire, Azerbaijan lost approximately 16% of its territory and many Azeris and Armenians were displaced. Lingering tensions between the two countries have led some analysts and investors to consider parts of the region unstable. (For more information, see: [Caspian Sea Region: Regional Conflicts](#)) Aliyev was re-elected as president in 1998 with the country's next elections scheduled to take place in October 2003.

OIL

Azerbaijan's oil production (total liquids) averaged 318,000 barrels per day (bbl/d) in 2002, of which approximately 310,000 bbl/d was crude oil. This represents a 4% increase over 2001 production, and builds upon five consecutive years of growth (see graph). At the same time, domestic petroleum consumption in Azerbaijan has fallen since independence, resulting in a growing margin for net petroleum exports (see graph). Azerbaijan exported approximately 178,000 bbl/d in 2002, most of which was routed to Russia, Turkey, and Italy.



Estimates of Azerbaijan's proven crude oil reserves range between 7 and 13 billion barrels according to industry journals and government sources. The country's largest hydrocarbon structures are located offshore in the Caspian Sea and account for most of the country's current petroleum production. The majority of Azerbaijan's oil output (64% in 2001) comes from the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan (SOCAR).

SOCAR

SOCAR was established in September 1992 with the merger of Azerbaijan's two state oil companies, Azerineft and Azneftkimiya. SOCAR and its many subsidiaries are responsible for the production of oil and natural gas in Azerbaijan, for operation of the country's two refineries, for running the country's pipeline system, and for managing the country's oil and gas imports and exports. While government ministries handle exploration and production agreements with foreign companies, SOCAR is party to all of the international consortia developing new oil and gas projects in Azerbaijan (see below). The company (not including subsidiaries) employs 75,000 people and is headed by Natick Aliyev (no relation to President Heydar Aliyev). In January 2003, Azeri President Aliyev issued a decree calling for the re-organization of SOCAR. According to SOCAR president Natick Aliyev, the re-organization should be complete by the end of 2003.

Most of SOCAR's production (65% in 2001) is derived from the offshore field "shallow-water Gunashli," known in the Soviet era as the "28th of April Field," and located 60 miles off Azerbaijan's Absheron Peninsula. Shallow water Gunashli first came online in 1981, but was developed only to a maximum water depth of 400 feet owing to technological constraints. Although foreign firms have shown interest in developing shallow water Gunashli, no deals between SOCAR and its suitors have yet been struck, and press reports indicate that production levels are falling as equipment is in disrepair and the structure is losing reservoir pressure. In August 2002, SOCAR began efforts to rehabilitate shallow water Gunashli independently by adding a new production platform designed to enable 12 new wells. SOCAR also operates 40 other older fields (both on- and off-shore), many of which are considered to be in similar disrepair and have been artificially stimulated for years using water injection. Press reports indicate that inefficiencies owing to aging equipment and largely depleted reservoirs have caused the cost of production of SOCAR's onshore crude oil to reach \$18 per barrel.



Azeri, Chirag, Deepwater Gunashli (ACG)

While SOCAR's Soviet-era fields are in decline, an influx of foreign investment since independence has revitalized the country's oil sector through the development of large scale new projects and the refurbishment of existing facilities. To date, Azerbaijan has signed over 20 major field agreements with approximately 30 companies from 15 countries. (For a listing of these agreements, see: [Azerbaijan Production Sharing Agreements](#))

Azerbaijan's increase in oil production since 1997 has mainly come from the international consortium known as the Azerbaijan International Operating Company (AIOC) AIOC

(partners: BP, Unocal, SOCAR, Inpex, Statoil, ExxonMobil, TPAO, Devon Energy, Itochu, Delta/Hess) operates the offshore Azeri Chirag and deep water Gunashli (ACG) mega-structure (see map), which is estimated to contain proven crude oil reserves of 5.4 billion barrels according to the field's operator, [British Petroleum](#). According to consortium member Statoil, AIOC reached an average daily output of 125,000 barrels in 2002, mostly from the Chirag-1 stationary platform. This production has been dubbed "early oil" by the company, and is currently exported through the "Western Early Oil Pipeline", which extends to the Georgian port of Supsa on the Black Sea (see below).

Azerbaijan's main production surge in the next decade is expected to come from the three-phase development of the ACG mega-structure. Production is slated to reach approximately 400,000 bbl/d

by 2005 with the full implementation of the first phase. Later implementation of phase 2 is expected by AIOC to boost production to roughly 1 million bbl/d by 2008-09. By some industry estimates, Azerbaijan could be exporting 1 million bbl/d by 2010 (roughly equivalent to 2002 exports from Algeria). Plans for phase 3, which will complete "full field development", are currently being investigated.

Not all of Azerbaijan's foreign investment projects have been successful, with several projects announcing disappointing drilling results and several joint ventures (JVs) and production sharing agreements (PSAs) shutting down. In 2000, Azerbaijan decided to abolish JVs and convert them to the more investor friendly PSAs in an effort to spur increased development.

Oil Exports

Currently, Azerbaijan's only export pipelines are the Baku-Novorossiisk pipeline ("northern route"), which sends Azeri oil to the Russian Black Sea, and the Baku-Supsa pipeline ("western route"), which mainly carries AIOC's "early oil" from ACG to Georgia's Black Sea coast (see map). Oil products such as lubricants also are exported by rail in tank wagons to Georgia's Black Sea ports.

Azerbaijan's options for increasing its oil exports depend to a large extent on the construction of new pipelines. Several oil export pipelines from the Caspian Sea region have been under consideration, but Azerbaijan has not wavered in its support for the proposed Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline. This so-called "Main Export Pipeline" would export Azeri (and possibly Kazakh) oil along a 1,040-mile route from Baku via Georgia to the Turkish Mediterranean port of Ceyhan, allowing oil to bypass the increasingly crowded Bosphorus Straits (see map). Construction of the 1-million-bbl/d pipeline, which is estimated to cost \$2.9 billion, is scheduled to be completed in 2004, with oil to begin flowing in 2005.

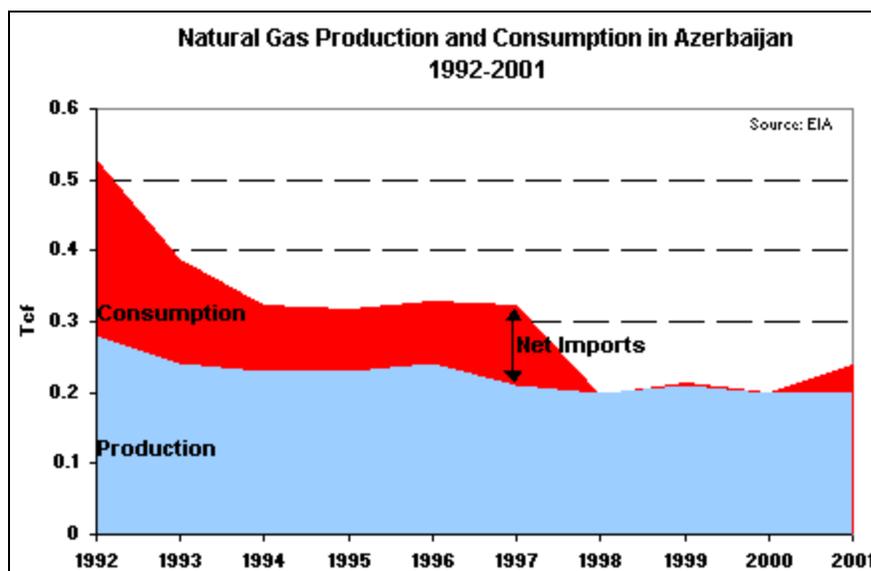
In addition, Iran, Russia, and Ukraine also have proposed alternative and supplemental oil export routes from Azerbaijan. The European Union's Transport Corridor Europe Caucasus Asia (TRACECA) program has been active in the region since 1993 upgrading and integrating rail and road transportation networks in an effort to promote trade ties with Europe along a West-East corridor. In Azerbaijan, the TRACECA program is providing logistical support to help Azerbaijan's aging rail system meet the country's growing oil transit needs.



Downstream/Refining

Azeri crude oil is refined domestically at two refineries: the Azerineftyag (Baku) refinery, with a capacity of 238,978 bbl/d, and the Azerneftyanajag (New Baku) refinery, which has a capacity of 202,830 bbl/d. With domestic production averaging 318,000 bbl/d in 2002 (and half of that exported as crude oil), Azerbaijan's refineries have been running well below capacity, with overall refinery utilization rates as low as 40%. Heating oil accounts for roughly half of output at Azeri refineries, followed by diesel fuel, gasoline, motor oil, kerosene, and other products.

Both of the country's refineries are in need of modernization, which the Azeri government estimates will cost between \$600 million and \$700 million. The U.S. Trade and Development Agency is financing a \$600,000 feasibility study to be conducted by ABB Lummus for upgrading the two refineries and the specialized oil port of Dubendi .



NATURAL GAS

Despite boasting one of the world's largest natural gas field discoveries of the last 20 years in Shah Deniz (see below), Azerbaijan is currently a net natural gas importer. Azerbaijan produced 200 billion cubic feet (Bcf) of natural gas in 2001, while consuming roughly 240 Bcf. The majority of Azerbaijan's natural gas imports currently come from Russia.

Azerbaijan has proven natural gas reserves of roughly 30 trillion cubic feet (Tcf), and the potential for even greater reserves. However, because there is insufficient infrastructure to deliver the country's natural gas from offshore fields (the source of the majority of the country's production), natural gas has been flared off instead of being piped to markets.

Virtually all of Azerbaijan's natural gas is produced by SOCAR from offshore fields. The country's leading natural gas producer, the Bakhar oil and gas field, is located off the the southern tip of the Absheron Peninsula and currently accounts for slightly over half of the country's natural gas output. Output at Bakhar has been declining in recent years, and according to press reports, SOCAR has begun efforts to develop a new deposit, known as Bakhar-2 located adjacent to the existing Bakhar field. SOCAR reportedly has plans to route some of the Bakhar-2 natural gas production for export in the near future. In addition to SOCAR, AIOC and other international consortia produce small amounts of associated natural gas as well.

Shah Deniz

Azerbaijan's major natural gas production increases into the future are expected from the development of the Shah Deniz field. The Shah Deniz offshore natural gas and condensate field, which is thought to be one of the world's largest natural gas field discoveries of the last 20 years, contains "potential recoverable resources" of roughly 14 Tcf (400 billion cubic meters) of natural gas according to the project's operator, British Petroleum. However, other industry and trade sources, employing widely different definitions of "reserves", estimate the field's size to be as high

as 35 Tcf. Shah Deniz is located in the Caspian Sea, approximately 60 miles southeast of Baku (see map below), and is being developed by the Shah Deniz consortium (members: BP, Statoil, SOCAR, LukAgip, NICO, TotalFinaElf, and TPAO). The Shah Deniz production sharing agreement was agreed to in 1996.

The first phase of the Shah Deniz field's development was officially sanctioned on February 27, 2003 and has been estimated to cost over \$3 billion. Phase one entails the installation of a new fixed offshore platform, two subsea pipelines to bring the hydrocarbons ashore, and a new onshore gas-processing terminal to be erected adjacent to the existing oil terminal at Sangachal, near Baku. Shah Deniz consortium members expect to begin producing natural gas for export in 2006. According to the partners, once the new infrastructure is in place, Shah Deniz will be capable of producing approximately 296 Bcf of natural gas (8.4 billion cubic meters) per year (roughly on par with 2001 natural gas production from Bahrain) as well as 40,000 bbl/d of condensate. Between 2006 and 2020, Shah Deniz is expected to add 110 million tons of oil equivalent to Azerbaijan's production. Natural gas from Shah Deniz, as well as associated gas from ACG and the Bakhar-2 project, is expected to make Azerbaijan self-sufficient in natural gas as well as to generate significant export revenue.

Natural Gas Exports

Azerbaijan currently lacks any infrastructure for the export of natural gas. However, efforts are currently underway to secure export routes and customers for gas deliveries beginning in 2006.



The main conduit for Azerbaijan's natural gas exports will be the "South Caucasus Pipeline," also known as "Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum," which will run parallel to the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline for most of its route before connecting to the Turkish infrastructure near the town of Horasan (see map). The South Caucasus pipeline is designed to have a capacity of 233 Bcf (6.6 Bcm) per year, and is to be completed in time for the Shah Deniz project's first contracted exports in 2006 (see below).

On March 12, 2001, Azerbaijan signed its first major natural gas export deal when it concluded an agreement to supply Turkey with natural gas beginning in 2004. In February 2003 the deal was renegotiated owing to project delays, and now calls for exports to begin in 2006 at a rate of 71 Bcf (2 BCM) per year, increasing to reach an average rate of 222 Bcf (6.3 Bcm) per year in 2009. There have been some doubts about Turkey's ability to consume and transit the quantities of gas that the country has agreed to purchase, (for more on natural gas in Turkey see EIA's [Turkey Country Analysis Brief](#)). Besides Turkey, other countries which are expected to purchase Azerbaijan's natural gas exports are Georgia and Greece.

COAL

Azerbaijan has no significant coal deposits, nor any measurable domestic coal production or consumption.

ELECTRICITY

Azerbaijan's power sector has an installed generating capacity of approximately 5.1 gigawatts (GW), consisting of eight thermal plants (accounting for roughly 80% of generating capacity) and six hydroelectric plants, all of which are owned by the state. Both electric generation and consumption have been relatively flat since independence, with generation totaling 18.2 billion kilowatthours (Bkwh) in 2001, and consumption of 16.6 Bkwh. Because of the country's inefficient distribution network, much of the country's generation is lost in transmission, making Azerbaijan a net electricity importer. In order to supply electricity to all parts of the country (including the Naxcivan exclave), Azerbaijan imports power from Russia, Turkey, Iran, and Georgia.

Built during the Soviet era, Azerbaijan's power infrastructure is in generally poor condition, with minimal public investment and maintenance since independence. The country's economic contraction during the mid-1990s, along with systemic problems--such as prices capped below market rates and frequent non-payment by customers--have left Azerbaijan's power sector without sufficient capital to upgrade aging power-generation facilities. The international donor community has undertaken several projects to restore and add new capacity to Azerbaijan's power sector, including a \$53 million loan by the World Bank to complete the construction of the 4,000-MW Yenikand hydroelectric plant (completed in May 2000), and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development's roughly \$21 million loan (in conjunction with the Islamic Development Bank and the European Union) for the reconstruction of the 360-MW Mingechar hydroelectric station on the Kura River (completed 2001).

In early 2003, Azerbaijan's newly completed Severnaya power plant began operation with the help of Japanese companies Mitsui and Mitsubishi. The 400-MW gas-fired unit will provide power mainly to the Absheron peninsula, and is expected to help raise Azeri electricity generation in 2003 by 6% over 2002 levels. Press reports indicate that Azerenergy is considering numerous plans to develop the country's distribution network and increase its generation capacity.

While state electric company Azerenergy has a monopoly on power generation, the country's national electricity network is divided into five regional grids--Baku; Nakhchivan; North (Sumqayit); South (Ali Bayramli); and West (Ganja--each of which has been opened to foreign investors via open joint stock companies. According to press reports, further privatization and foreign involvement is being considered.

COUNTRY OVERVIEW

President: Heydar Aliyev (since June 18, 1993; re-elected to a second, five-year term on October 11, 1998)

Prime Minister: Artur Rasizade (since November 26, 1996)

Independence: August 30, 1991 (from Soviet Union); National holiday: Independence Day, May 28

Population (7/02E): 7.8 million

Location: Southwestern Asia, bordering the Caspian Sea, between Iran and Russia

Size: 33,436 square miles (slightly smaller than Maine)

Major Cities: Baku (capital), Ganja, Mingechar, Nakhchivan, Stepanakert, Sumqayit, Yevlakh

Languages (1995E): Azerbaijani (Azeri) 89%, Russian 3%, Armenian 2%, other 6%

Ethnic Groups (1998E): Azeri 90%, Dagestani 3.2%, Russian 2.5%, Armenian 2% (almost all Armenians live in the separatist Nagorno-Karabakh region), other 2.3%

Religions (1995E): Muslim 93.4%, Russian Orthodox 2.5%, Armenian Orthodox 2.3%, other 1.8%. Note: religious affiliation is still nominal in Azerbaijan; percentages for actual practicing adherents are much lower.

ECONOMIC OVERVIEW**Minister of Economic Development:** Farhad Aliyev**Minister of Finance:** Avaz Alakbarov**Currency:** Manat**Exchange Rate (5/21/03):** U.S. \$1 = 4,915 manats**Nominal Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (2002E):** \$6.1 billion; **(2003F):** \$6.9 billion**Real GDP Growth Rate (2002E):** 10.6%; **(2003E):** 9.2%**Inflation Rate (Change in Consumer Prices, 2002E):** 2.8%; **(2003F):** 3.7%**Official Unemployment Rate (2002E):** 1.1%**Current Account Balance (2002E):** -\$642 million**Major Trading Partners:** Turkey, Russia, Georgia, Italy, Iran, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates**Merchandise Exports (2002E):** \$1.9 billion; **(2003E):** \$2.1 billion**Merchandise Imports (2002E):** \$1.7 billion; **(2003F):** \$1.9 billion**Merchandise Trade Balance (2002E):** \$243 million; **(2003F):** \$147 million**Major Exports:** Oil and natural gas (90%), machinery, cotton, foodstuffs**Major Imports:** Machinery and equipment, foodstuffs, metals, chemicals**Foreign Exchange Reserves (excluding gold) (2002E):** \$650 million**External Debt (2002E):** \$1.4 billion**ENERGY OVERVIEW****Minister of Fuel & Energy Development:** Macid Karimov**President, State Oil Company of Azerbaijani Republic (SOCAR):** Natic Aliyev**Proven Oil Reserves (1/1/03E):** 7-13 billion barrels**Oil Production (2002E):** 318,000 bbl/d (of which 310,000 bbl/d was crude oil)**Oil Consumption (2002E):** 140,000 bbl/d**Net Oil Exports (2002E):** 178,000 bbl/d**Crude Oil Refining Capacity (1/1/03E):** 441,808 bbl/d**Natural Gas Reserves (1/1/03E):** 30 trillion cubic feet (Tcf)**Natural Gas Production (2001E):** 200 billion cubic feet (Bcf)**Natural Gas Consumption (2001E):** 237 Bcf**Coal Production (2001E):** none**Coal Consumption (2001E):** minimal**Electricity Generation Capacity (2001E):** 5.1 gigawatts**Electricity Generation (2001E):** 18.2 billion kilowatt-hours (Bkwh)**Electricity Consumption (2001E):** 16.6 Bkwh**ENVIRONMENTAL OVERVIEW****Minister of Ecology & Natural Resources:** Huseyngulu Bagirov**Total Energy Consumption (2001E):** 0.57 quadrillion Btu* (0.1% of world total energy consumption)**Energy-Related Carbon Emissions (2001E):** 9.14 million metric tons of carbon (0.1% of world carbon emissions)**Per Capita Energy Consumption (2001E):** 69.7 million Btu (vs U.S. value of 341.8 million Btu)**Per Capita Carbon Emissions (2001E):** 1.13 metric tons of carbon (vs U.S. value of 5.51 metric tons of carbon)**Energy Intensity (2001E):** 150,572 Btu/\$1995 (vs U.S. value of 10,736 Btu/\$1995)****Carbon Intensity (2001E):** 2.43 metric tons of carbon/thousand \$1995 (vs U.S. value of 0.17 metric tons/thousand \$1995)**Fuel Share of Energy Consumption (2001E):** Oil (53%), Natural Gas (44%), Hydroelectric (3%)**Fuel Share of Carbon Emissions (2001E):** Oil (61%), Natural Gas (39%)**Status in Climate Change Negotiations:** Non-Annex I country under the United Nations

Framework Convention on Climate Change (ratified May 16th, 1995). Ratified the Kyoto Protocol on September 28, 2000.

Major Environmental Issues: local scientists consider the Abseron Yasaqligi (Absheron Peninsula) (including Baku and Sumqayit) and the Caspian Sea to be the most ecologically devastated area in the world because of severe air, water, and soil pollution; soil pollution results from the use of DDT as a pesticide and also from toxic defoliants used in the production of cotton.

Major International Environmental Agreements: A party to the Conventions on Biodiversity, Climate Change, Climate Change-Kyoto Protocol, Desertification, Endangered Species, Marine Dumping, Ozone Layer Protection. Has signed, but not ratified: none.

* The total energy consumption statistic includes petroleum, dry natural gas, coal, net hydro, nuclear, geothermal, solar and wind electric power. The renewable energy consumption statistic is based on International Energy Agency (IEA) data and includes hydropower, solar, wind, tide, geothermal, solid biomass and animal products, biomass gas and liquids, industrial and municipal wastes. Sectoral shares of energy consumption and carbon emissions are also based on IEA data.

**GDP based on EIA International Energy Annual 2001

ENERGY INDUSTRY

Organization: State Oil Company of Azerbaijani Republic (SOCAR); Azerigaz (state natural gas distribution company); Azerenergo (state electric company)

Major Oil Ports: Baku

Oil Export Pipelines: Baku-Novorossiisk (via Russia; "early oil" northern route), Baku-Supsa (via Georgia; "early oil" western route)

Major Oil Refineries (Capacities 1/1/02E): Azerineftyag (Baku) (238,978 bbl/d), and Azerneftyanajag (New Baku) (202,830 bbl/d)

Major Power Plants: Yenikand (4,000 megawatts, MW) (hydro), Azerbaijan Station near Mingechaur (2,100 megawatts, MW), Ali-Bayramli (1,100 MW)

Sources for this report include: Associated Press, BBC Monitoring International Reports, Central Asia & Caucasus Business Report, Caspian News Agency, Caspian Business Report, CIA World Factbook, Economist Intelligence Unit ViewsWire, The Financial Times, FSU Energy, FSU Oil and Gas Monitor, Global Inisght, Interfax News Agency, ITAR-TASS News Agency, Oil and Gas Journal, Petroleum Economist, Platt's Oilgram News, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Reuters, U.S. Department of Commerce's Business Information Service for the Newly Independent States (BISNIS), U.S. Department of Energy, U.S. Energy Information Administration, U.S. Department of State, World Markets Analysis.

LINKS

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Links to other sites:

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Contact:
David Correll
David.Correll@eia.doe.gov
Phone: (202) 586-7507

Fax: (202) 586-9753

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