

1. Periodic reports submitted:

- The fifth and sixth joint periodic reports under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child were submitted to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in December 2018;
- The fourth Periodic Report on the implementation of the UN International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights was submitted to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in December 2018;
- The tenth, eleventh, and twelfth joint periodic reports on the UN International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination were submitted to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in February 2019;
- The sixth Periodic Report on the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women was submitted to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in May 2019;
- The fifth Periodic Report on the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment was submitted to the UN Committee against Torture in January 2020;
- The third Periodic Report on the UN Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families was submitted to the UN Committee on Migrant Workers in February 2020;
- Common Core Document submitted initially to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in October 2017, has been updated three times and submitted to the High Commissioner in 2019, 2021, and in 2023.

2. Presentations of periodic reports:

- Presentation of the fourth Periodic Report on the UN International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights was held September 30-October 1, 2021, in a virtual format in the framework of the 70th session of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;
- Presentation of the third Periodic Report on the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families was held on October 4-5, 2021 in a virtual format in the framework of the 32nd session of the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families;
- Presentation of the fifth and sixth joint periodic reports on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child was held on January 23-24, 2022 in the framework of the 93rd session of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child;

- Presentation of the sixth Periodic Report on the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women was held on June 16, 2022, as part of the 82nd session of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women;
- Presentation of the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth joint periodic reports on the UN International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination was held on August 15-16, 2022 in the framework of the 107th session of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

3. Azerbaijani nationals represented in UN treaty bodies:

- Nadir Adilov was elected to the UN Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights for the term 2021-2024;
- Azad Taghizade was elected to the UN Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families for the term 2022-2025;
- Farid Ahmedov was elected to the UN Human Rights Committee for the term 2023-2026;
- Elgun Safarov was elected to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women for the term 2023-2026.

4. International instruments signed or ratified:

- Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (April 1, 2020);
- Amendments of 2016 to the Annexes of the Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention (Revised) 2003 (May 4, 2021);
- Fourth Additional Protocol to the European Convention on Extradition (May 1, 2023);
- Convention on the Service Abroad of Judicial and Extrajudicial Documents in Civil or Commercial Matters (September 30, 2022);
- Convention on the International Recovery of Child Support and Other Forms of Family Maintenance (February 28, 2024);
- Occupational Safety and Health Convention No.155 (May 29, 2024);
- Protocol No. 16 to the Convention on the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (November 1, 2023);
- The Second Additional Protocol to the European Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters (signed on April 4, 2023). This instrument is currently in the process of ratification;
- Protocol No. 13 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, concerning the abolition of the death penalty in all circumstances (signed on March 8, 2023). The instrument is currently in the process of ratification;

- Additional Protocol to the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism (signed on March 20, 2023). This instrument is currently in the process of ratification.

5. Adopted normative legal acts:

- Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On Vocational Education” (April 24, 2018);
- Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On the Rights of Persons with Disabilities” (May 31, 2018);
- Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On Environmental Impact Assessment” (June 12, 2018);
- Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “About the State Register of the Population of the Republic of Azerbaijan” (December 28, 2018);
- Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On General Education” (March 29, 2019);
- Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On Media” (December 30, 2021);
- Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On Development of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises” (December 2, 2022);
- Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On Political Parties” (December 16, 2022);
- Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism” (new version, December 30, 2022);
- Law “On Lawyers and Lawyers activity” was amended by the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan of March 5, 2019;
- Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On Non-Governmental Organisations (Public Associations and Foundations)” was amended by the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan of June 30, 2020;
- Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On the Freedom of Religious belief” was amended by the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan of May 4, 2021;
- Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On Judicial-Legal Council” was amended by the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on June 9, 2023.

6. In accordance with the “National Programme for Action to Raise Effectiveness of the Protection of Human Rights and Freedoms” of 2011, training programmes, conferences, scientific and practical seminars, and other educational activities on human rights continue to be organised in Azerbaijan for civil servants, staff of the courts, the Office of the Prosecutor General’s Office, the State Security Service and staff of the Ombudsman’s Office.

In the Ministry of Internal Affairs, over the past five years, about 13,000 employees have been involved in activities related to ensurance of human rights and freedoms. Employees are sent to foreign countries for training under the Council of Europe, the OSCE, and other international organisations to study international experience.

Every year, the State Committee for Family, Women, and Children Affairs, along with state bodies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), conducts activities aimed at raising awareness of human rights among state officials and professionals, including discussions on State policy on children, ensuring the rights of refugee children, migrants, exploitation of child labour, gender equality, safety and support for victims of domestic violence.

During the reporting period, employees of the State Migration Service were regularly involved in a series of training on the protection of migrants' rights, women's rights and gender equality, children's rights, and other human rights activities organised by the Service's Training Center, as well as international and local partners. Over the reporting period, the Training Center conducted 11 trainings with the participation of 269 people, including newly hired employees of the State Migration Service.

Over the same period, the Ombudsman held numerous human rights legal education events in all cities and districts of Azerbaijan with the participation of relevant state bodies, public organisations, and media representatives.

The programmes of the initial training courses for judicial candidates and the compulsory training courses for candidates, successfully passed the qualifying examination for admission to the judiciary and the Bar, including candidates wishing to engage in professional notarial activity, held at the Justice Academy in 2018-2022, contained some articles from international human rights treaties. In the corresponding period, up to 3,000 persons were registered for mandatory training at the Judicial Academy.

Training programmes for judges are annually improved. Since 2019, in particular, the annual training programmes have included new training on the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the Improving Women's Access to Justice. Also, the annual training programmes have included Media and Freedom of Expression: Article 13 (Right to an Effective Remedy) and Article 14 (Prohibition of Discrimination) of the European Court of Human Rights since 2021. Furthermore, the training programmes have included Justification of Judicial Decisions and Human Rights, the UN Human Rights Mechanisms, Approaches and Tools, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights since 2022. 1,050 judges and about 1,000 lawyers participated in human rights training throughout 2018-2022.

The Academy of Justice promoted the European Programme for Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals (HELP), which supports the Council of Europe member states in implementing the ECHR. To date, 121 people have completed 5 HELP courses on Access to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the European Court of Human Rights, and, currently, the number of HELP users in Azerbaijan is 1225.

7. As of January 1, 2023, 993 state-registered religious communities operate in the country. 956 of them are Muslim religious communities, and 37 are non-Muslim (26 Christian, 8 Jewish, 1 Krishna Consciousness, and 2 Bahai). By Article 8 of the Law on the Freedom of Religious Belief, Islamic

religious communities are subordinate to the Caucasus Muslim Board, and other religious communities have the right to subordinate and change their subordination to religious centers (institutions) operating inside and outside the country. There are 2,253 mosques, 16 churches, and 7 synagogues in the Republic.

8.

- 350,000 manats (three hundred fifty thousand) for a religious institution of Baku and Azerbaijan Diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church;
- 350,000 manats (three hundred and fifty thousand) for a Religious Community of Mountain Jews of Baku city;
- 350,000 manats (three hundred and fifty thousand) for a Religious Community of European Jews of Baku;
- 350,000 manats (three hundred and fifty thousand) for a religious institution of the Apostolic Prefecture of the Catholic Church;
- 350,000 manats (three hundred and fifty thousand) for an Albanian-Udi Christian Community;
- 350,000 manats (three hundred and fifty thousand) to the Spiritual Values Promotion Foundation for material support for other non-Islamic religious communities.

9.

The name of the legal structure	Number of organisations
Non-profit organisations	5028
Public organisations	3680
Foundations	213

10. The Agency is actively involved in implementing the state policy in the NGO sector and, every year, supports hundreds of NGO projects addressing various public issues.

Azerbaijan Science Foundation with its targeted funding through grants for fundamental, applied, and experimental research and other scientific activities in the natural, technical, humanitarian, and public fields, Education Development Fund financing programmes and projects aimed at the developing the education system, Educational Student Loan Fund that issues educational student loans, and the Youth Fund that implements projects and finances grants in the field of youth policy, successfully operate in Azerbaijan.

11. Eight candidates took part in the Presidential elections, 6 of them were nominated by political parties, 1 - on their initiative, and 1 - by an initiative group of voters.

41,462 candidates stood for 15,156 seats in 1,606 municipalities at the municipal elections. 14,353 of them were nominated by 13 political parties, 2 by an initiative group of voters, and 27,107 candidates ran on their initiative.

1314 candidates took part in the elections for 125 Milli Majlis deputy seats. 246 of them were nominated by 19 political parties, 11 by an initiative group of voters, and 1,057 candidates participated in the elections on their initiative.

12. Applicants must have a law degree and three years of experience in a legal specialty to sit for the exam. A selection process is required to enter the profession. The first stage is a written test, and the second is an interview. Those who successfully pass the test undergo a mandatory one-month preparatory course followed by an oath of office. The Academy of the Ministry of Justice holds the training courses. The classes are taught by lawyers with long experience in various branches of law.

A person with dual citizenship and obligations to other states is not eligible to become an attorney. Besides, a person found legally incapable or with limited legal capacity; a person unable to practice as an attorney as a result of mental or physical disabilities proved with a medical report; the one who has an outstanding or unexpunged criminal conviction, as well as the one in respect of whom there is an effective court decision on the application of coercive medical measures may not hold the status of an attorney.

Applicants who previously had the status of a judge or an attorney (except for attorneys whose status has been terminated for disciplinary reasons) do not take a written test or mandatory courses. They are only interviewed. Doctors of Laws, as well as persons who have had the status of a judge of the Constitutional Court or a president of a court of appeal or a court of cassation, may obtain advocate status without taking the exam.

13. 123 people who have completed this multi-stage process, including years of training at the Academy of Justice and internships in the courts have been appointed to various judicial positions. At present, more than 300 candidates for judgeships are also at different stages of the competition.

At present, for the first time, 80% of the entire judiciary is made up of new-generation lawyers (under 35 years of age), and up to 50% are women.

14. In 2021-2022, 9 employees were brought to strict disciplinary responsibility for failure to comply with ethical standards in dealing with prisoners.

Over the reporting period, 49 cases of self-harm, 8 suicides, 1 suicide attempt, and 5 escapes occurred in temporary detention facilities of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. 107 staff members of temporary detention facilities were disciplined for failure to monitor detainees appropriately, 9 of them were dismissed from service, and other disciplinary measures were taken against 98 people.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs during service inspections revealed 1,300 facts of violation of moral and ethical behavior and punished 1,322 employees in 2018-2022. 121 of them were dismissed from service, 139 were relieved of their positions, 16 were demoted, and 1,046 were subjected to other measures of responsibility.

Over the last five years, 298 citizens complained of ill-treatment, 315 employees were brought to justice, 18 of whom were dismissed from their posts, and 297 were brought to responsibility.

15. In 2018-2022, by conducting operational and investigative measures in combating trafficking in persons, 758 cases of human trafficking were detected, 14 criminal groups, consisting of 34 people, were neutralised, and 112 people who committed these illegal acts were brought to criminal responsibility.

Following the relevant decree of the Cabinet of Ministers, all victims received a lump-sum allowance, 399 victims and 11 probable victims (a total of 410 people) were placed in a shelter and provided with medical, social, psychological, legal, and other assistance.

164 victims of trafficking in persons received vocational courses, 75 were employed, 3 received temporary residence permits, 31 received identity cards, 8 underwent surgeries, 12 received medical treatment, 3 received targeted social assistance, 5 people received aid in obtaining a plot of land to secure a permanent place of residence, 4 got help in enrolling in a boarding school with comprehensive education, and 279 victims were interviewed and returned to their families.

Out of 393 victims of human trafficking referred to non-governmental organisations for social services, the “Clean World” Social Union hosted in its shelters 125, 67 in shelters of the “Tamas Regional Development” Public Union, 101 received help in the “Global Family - Legal Assistance to Family” Public Union, 43 in the “Women of the XXI Century”, 39 in the “Women Initiative for Society Empowerment” and 18 in the “Azerbaijan Children Union”. All these people received appropriate assistance.

Of the 433 victims referred to the Assistance Center for Victims of Human Trafficking under the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, 154 received psychological, 81 legal, and 61 medical assistance. 133 potential victims of trafficking were referred to the Assistance Centre by public organisations, 99 of whom received medical, 63 psychological, and 53 legal aid.

Children of victims were also considered. 164 children of victims received educational materials, 89 joined the preschool education programme, 71 received a birth certificate, 61 were assisted in filiation and alimony, and 22 received in-hospital treatment.

30.348 manats accumulated in the account of the Relief Fund for Assistance to Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, 444 victims and 48 potential victims received financial aid. 230 human trafficking victims received legal assistance in the investigation process, and 298 victims were provided with lawyers (members of the Bar Association) in court hearings.

16. There was an overall decrease in the poverty rate between 2018 and 2022. In 2019, the poverty rate decreased by 0.3% compared to 2018, but in 2020, due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the poverty rate increased. Between 2021 and 2022, there was a following decrease in the poverty rate: 5.1% in 2018, 4.8% in 2019, 6.2% in 2020, 5.9% in 2021, and 5.5% in 2022.

According to the Law “On the Minimum Subsistence Wage in the Republic of Azerbaijan in 2021”, the subsistence minimum in the country was set at 196 manats and the minimum wage was 250 manats, which is 27.6% higher than the subsistence minimum in the country. Currently, the average monthly wage is 856.20 manats, the average pension is 372.13 manats, and the retirement pension is 400.50 manats. The need criteria for 2022 was 200 manats, and the subsistence minimum was 210 manats. Thus, the need criteria for 2022 has increased by 17.65% or 30 manats compared to the figure for 2021 (170 manats), and the subsistence minimum for 2022 has increased by 7.14% or 14 manats more than the subsistence minimum for 2021 (196 manats). According to the Law on the limit “On Threshold of Need Criteria for 2023”, the need criteria for 2023 is 246 manats, and according to the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On the Minimum Subsistence Wage in 2023”, the subsistence minimum is set at 246 manats.

Following the Presidential Decree “On Additional Measures to Improve the Social Welfare of the Population”, the minimum monthly wage has been raised by 15% to 345 manats since January 1, 2023. The minimum salary increase contributes to the rise in decent employment, preventing illegal jobs by helping to legalise labour relations and encouraging workers to conclude employment contracts.

The following is a year-by-year breakdown of the number of welfare beneficiaries provided with apartments and cars during 2018-2022:

YEAR	Number of people provided with apartments	Number of cars provided to people
2018	626	265
2019	934	592
2020	1503	400
2021	3000	164
2022	1500	160

Following the Presidential Decree “On Increasing the Amount of Social Benefits”, from January 1, 2023, the amount of old-age allowance was raised from 180 manats to 220 manats; the amount of social benefits for persons with disabilities who have lost 81-100% of their body functions was raised from 220 manats to 270 manats; the amount of allowance for disabled people who have lost 61-80% of their body functions was raised from 180 manats to 220 manats; and the amount of social benefits for persons with disabilities who have lost 31-60% of their body functions was raised from 120 manats to 150 manats, The amount of allowance for persons with disabilities who have lost 31-60% of body functions was raised from 120 manats to 150 manats, the amount of social benefits for loss of a breadwinner was raised from 100 manats to 120 manats, the amount of allowance for low-income families with a child under one year of age increased from 70 manats to 100 manats, the amount of social benefits for the birth of a child was raised from 300 manats to 500 manats, and the amount of allowance for women with more than 5 children raised from 70 manats to 105 manats.

The payment of targeted state social assistance to improve the financial well-being of low-income families continued during 2022. 290,000 family members from 65,000 families received targeted state social assistance in 2022. The average amount of social benefits per family amounted to 392 manats, which means an increase of 40% compared to 2021. This assistance amounted to 424 manats (an increase of 42%) in the first quarter of 2023.

The minimum pension was raised 2.5 times from 110 manats to 280 manats from February 1, 2019, to February 1, 2023, to strengthen the social protection of citizens, increase purchasing power, and increase the real income of elderly citizens.

The average monthly labour pension was 372 manats in 2022 (a 12% increase compared to 2021) and 423 manats in 2023 (a 16% increase compared to 2021). The retirement pension amounted to 399 manats (an 11% increase compared to 2021) in 2022. It amounted to 456 manats in the first quarter of 2023 (a 15% increase compared to 2022).

During 2022, monthly benefits were paid to 403,000 citizens (4% of the population), one-time benefits were paid to 75,000 citizens (0.7% of the population), social benefits were paid to a total of 478,000 citizens (4.7% of the population), and 368,000 citizens (3.6% of the population) received a presidential pension.

Since 2017, the State Employment Agency has implemented a self-employment programme to expand employment opportunities for unemployed and job-seeking citizens as well as develop their entrepreneurial abilities. Being one of the most effective employment programmes over the five years of implementation, the coverage of persons involved in the programme was increased 15 times and reached more than 16 thousand persons per year in 2022. In the first quarter of 2023, this figure was 994 persons. During the entire implementation period, small family farms were created for more than 60 thousand families.

In the post-war period, the “Employment Marathon” project was implemented to encourage the active participation of employers in the employment of family members of martyrs and veterans who suffered in the Patriotic War. As a result of the project, 2,538 people were employed.

In total, as a result of employment-related measures taken in 2022, 40 thousand people were provided with suitable work. 6,333 people received average monthly payments totaling 348 manats through unemployment insurance payments. In the first quarter of 2023, 13 thousand people got suitable jobs, and 2179 people received unemployment insurance payments (average monthly amount totaled 402 manats).

A new active employment measure launched in 2020 - a programme for financing (subsidizing) wages of workers together with the employer, is aimed at supporting the employment of not only the unemployed, but also employers. Under this programme, 1,926 people have already been provided with jobs and this process continues.

To mitigate the impact of the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and to reduce the impact of the processes that occurred in international markets on domestic prices in the country, as well as to provide state support to vulnerable groups of the population, during 2022, labour pensioners who retired on a general basis have been paid financial benefit of 200 manats, as well as pensioners receiving long-service awards were paid financial aid of 10% of the amount of the assigned pension.

17. The YERLI Project has been implemented to encourage the improvement of knowledge in the field of information technology and promote employment opportunities and finding distant jobs without leaving their regions.

Representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture, the State Employment Agency, and the Small and Medium Business Development Agency conducted training and seminars at the Youth Employment Summer Camp and Summer Camp for Young Entrepreneurs and Startups to organise meetings between young people and entrepreneurs. Young people with partial hearing, speech, and physical disabilities from 19 cities and districts of Azerbaijan participated in the Youth Career School project.

The Support for Rural Youth Employment programme under the New Way organisation of the Public Association for Youth Education aims at educating young people from the regions in the areas of career planning and preparation, labour market and employment, educating to solve problems of unemployment and qualified personnel shortage covers four economic zones of the country.

In the framework of the “Rural Youth Employment Support” Winter Camp, organised in 2023 by the Ministry of Youth and Sport to train young human resources, participants were informed about current trends and new challenges in the labour market.

18. Allocations to science and education amounted to 3% of GDP in 2022. Expenditure made for science and education in 2023 account for 14% of all state budget allocations.

There have been built 23 new schools, opened 30 new modular schools, and renovated more than 700 institutions in 2022.

151,899 children were enrolled in first grades, and 91,549 children were enrolled in school preparatory groups in 2022.

Since 2017, within the framework of the Development of Community-Based Pre-school Education project, 15,177 children aged 3-4 years have been engaged in preschool education in 847 groups arranged in 55 districts and cities of the country.

The implementation of the State Programme for the Development of Inclusive Education for People with Disabilities for 2018-2024 continues. 160 students were enrolled in inclusive classes of 22 schools in the 2022-2023 academic year.

In the 2022-2023 academic year, 48,780 students earned the student title. It is 11.3 % more than in the previous academic year. The number of students in the 2022-2023 academic year is 216,440.

Based on the results of the selection conducted in 2022 within the framework of the “State Programme on Increasing the International Competitiveness of the Higher Education System in the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2019-2023”, 84 people were granted the right to study at the state expense on 7 priority specialties in 40 leading higher education institutions.

The “Digital Skills” project has been implemented since the 2017-2018 academic year to improve the digital abilities of students for their free and purposeful activity in the information space. Currently, the project covers 300,000 students in 418 schools in 48 cities and districts of the country. In general, education institutions engaged in the project update information and communication, arrange training series for teaching staff, and provide quick access to the Education Network of Azerbaijan.

Between November 25, 2021, when the Educational Student Loan Fund embarked on issuing educational student loans, and November 30, 2022, the Fund received more than 17,000 applications, of which more than 10,000 were approved. For the fall semester of the 2022-2023 academic year, more than 7,000 students applied, of which 4,265 applications were processed.

19.

Minority language	Number of schools	Number of students
Talysh	257	18390
Lezgin	99	12721
Avar	20	1670
Tsakhur	3	435
Udin	3	181
Khinalig	1	78
Kurdish	1	17
TOTAL	384	33492

20. According to the analysis of citizens' appeals received by DOST (Agency for Sustainable and Operative Social Provision) during 2022, no cases of violation of labour rights of citizens related to discrimination in labour relations were registered. The DOST received 15479 applications from citizens related to labour rights violations, of which 11044 (71%) were from men and 4435 (29%) from women in 2022. Violation of labour rights was mainly related to non-payment of wages and final payment upon dismissal of employees (37.9%), cancellation of notices of employment contracts (13.7%), reinstatement (12.5%), and other offenses (35.9%).

21.

- The post of First Vice-President of the Republic of Azerbaijan;

- The post of Chairman of the Parliament (Milli Majlis);
- The posts of Commissioners for Human Rights (Ombudsman) of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Autonomous Republic of Nakhchivan;
- The posts of eight deputy ministers;
- The positions of the Chair of the State Committees for Family, Women, and Children Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Autonomous Republic of Nakhchivan;
- The posts of two Deputy Chairmen of the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, as well as the post of Deputy Chairman of the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs of the Autonomous Republic of Nakhchivan;
- Seventy-three deputy positions in local executive power bodies.

According to the results of the elections to Milli Majlis of the Republic of Azerbaijan held in 2020, out of 117 elected deputies, 22 were women. According to the results of the last municipal elections held in 2019, the share of women among the members of municipalities amounted to 39%, compared with 4% in 2004.

Around 180 women are engaged in the diplomatic service, including two Ambassadors Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Azerbaijan, one Deputy Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, two Heads of Department, and four Deputy Heads of Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

125 (21.5%) judges out of 582 are women. Notably, 23 judges (59%) out of 39 were women in 2022, and 14 women (35%) were appointed judges out of 40 women.

The number of women serving and working in the internal affairs bodies has increased by 16% (+636) over the last three years, reaching 4609 at the end of 2022 and accounting for about 12% of the total personnel. 19% of females are middle and senior ranks, 59% are rank-and-file, and 22% serve (work) in civilian positions. Among the total number of women, the proportion of those working on manager positions is 1.6%.

Women account for approximately 8.7% of the total number of prosecutors. Nine of them hold senior positions, including 2 district prosecutors, 1 head of department at the Prosecutor General's Office, 3 deputy heads of department, 1 head of division, 1 senior assistant prosecutor of Baku City, and 1 deputy district prosecutor.

22. The State Agency for Medical and Social Expertise and Rehabilitation has 14 rehabilitation institutions, including the Prosthetic-Orthopedic Production and Rehabilitation Center, whose services cover the entire country. In 2022, 50,366 citizens with disabilities benefited from rehabilitation services (of which 12,197 inpatients, 19,561 outpatients, 16,606 telerehabilitation services, 1,458 as part of a socio-psychological support project, 319 with hippotherapy, and 225 people received mobile services).

In 2022, based on 31,242 applications from 12,181 citizens with disabilities, 66,299 rehabilitation devices were provided by the Prosthetics-Orthotics Production and Rehabilitation Center of the State Agency for Medical and Social Expertise and Rehabilitation.

The Government takes measures to improve the individual mobility of people with disabilities to ensure the highest possible level of independence, including the provision of assistive devices free of charge. 2,961 wheelchairs, including electric wheelchairs were supplied during the reporting period.

At the end of 2022, 392 military personnel received 409 high-tech prosthetic devices in the post-war period. 202 wounded and suffering from limb amputation during the Second Karabakh War and subsequent period received 211 high-tech prostheses.

Since the 2nd quarter of 2022, rehabilitation centres under the State Agency for Medical and Social Expertise and Rehabilitation have arranged mobile services to increase the accessibility of rehabilitation services for people with disabilities to ensure the sustainability of the results achieved in the process of rehabilitation, and to provide medical and socio-psychological assistance at home to people experiencing difficulties in moving from their place of residence. More than 200 citizens with disabilities have been served within the framework of mobile rehabilitation activities, with a guarantee of compliance with the provision of rehabilitation services in maximum proximity to the place of immediate residence of people with disabilities.

Disabled people under the age of 18 years have received increased access to outpatient services through the “RehaBus” (Rehabilitation Bus) project launched in the 2nd quarter of 2022. In the framework of the project, citizens were provided with psychological assistance and informed about diseases and methods of care. A total of 568 citizens took advantage of this opportunity.

In collaboration with the World Health Organisation (WHO), r-ATA (Rapid-Assistive Technology Assessment), STARS (Systematic Assessment of Rehabilitation Situation), and ATA-C (Assistive Technology Assessment-Capacity) studies have been conducted to assess the needs of the population for technical rehabilitation aids in the areas of mobility, vision, hearing, communication, cognition, and self-care, ways to provide them, create a national rehabilitation programme and improve the provision of rehabilitation services.

In April of 2022, 10 assessment scales and measures (Modified Ashward scale, Morse Fall Scale, Functional Independence Measure, etc.) and international rehabilitation protocols (American Society of Neurorehabilitation, British Association of Cardiac Rehabilitation, Irish Association of Cardiac Rehabilitation, etc.) have been launched to provide rehabilitation services based on the best international practices.

Within the framework of the partnership between the European Union and the Republic of Azerbaijan, with the support of the European Commission, the project to transform the rehabilitation system through the transition from a medical to a social model of service provision for citizens with disabilities has been

launched. The project aims to increase the social inclusion of citizens with disabilities and to improve the quality of services provided.

Based on global trends and international experience in the provision of rehabilitation services, and taking into account the transition of the approach to rehabilitation from the medical to the biopsychosocial model, a widely popular modern rehabilitation method involving horses (hippotherapy) has been commenced.

Throughout 2018-2022, social programmes ensured the participation of persons with disabilities in the following sports games, exhibitions, and arts festivals:

- 2018-X All-Republican Exhibition of People with disabilities (249 participants).
- 2019-VIII All-Republican Contest of Artistic Creativity of People with disabilities (341 participants).
- 2021-XI All-Republican Exhibition of People with disabilities (217 participants).
- 2022-VI All-Republican Competition in Indoor Sports among People with Disabilities (580 participants).

23. According to preliminary estimates, it is planned to build 523 educational institutions, including 1 vocational, 265 kindergartens, and 257 general educational institutions in the liberated from occupation territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

On May 10, 2022, the foundation of the Fuzuli Vocational Lyceum was laid. The territory of the Lyceum occupies an area of 3.2 hectares and includes educational, laboratory, and sports complexes.

On September 15, 2022, for the first time after a 29-year break the first academic year took place at secondary school in Aghali village of Zangilan district. The school is designed to accommodate 360 students.

For the purpose of restoration and reconstruction of territories liberated from occupation, voluntary, safe, and dignified return of IDPs to their historical lands, effective implementation of the reintegration process, provision of protection of their rights “I State Programme on the Great Return to the territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan liberated from occupation” was approved by the Presidential Order dated November 16, 2022.

8 bln manats were allocated for the implementation of the I State Programme, which combines priorities such as the rationale, necessary activities, and expected results; organisation of safe living and public administration; construction and provision of infrastructure in cities, towns, and rural areas; return of population and creation of sustainable communities in the liberated territories; construction of strategic and extensive infrastructure; integration of economy of territories into the domestic and foreign value chain; improvement of environment; and introduction of environmentally friendly technologies.

A total amount of 985 manats million, allocated from the state budget and the State Oil Fund, to provide 11,611 families with new housing was spent for the construction and commissioning of 18 residential complexes and settlements consisting of private houses (this figure includes infrastructure constructed in the liberated territories of Azerbaijan) for IDP families in 2018-2022.

Besides, 128 families have already returned to the liberated-from-occupation villages of Aghali and Talysh of Zangilan and Terter districts, and 221 families have already moved to Lachin city within the framework of the “I State Programme on the Great Return to the territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan liberated from occupation”.

Following the Presidential Order “On Increasing Single Monthly Allowances for Internally Displaced Persons and the Persons Equated to Them”, dated February 26, 2019, starting from April 1, 2019, the amount of the single monthly allowance increased by 50%, respectively, from 33 manats to 60 manats.

According to the order, amount of the single monthly allowance for IDPs and the persons equated to them increased by 50% from April 1, 2019, respectively, from 22 manats to 33 manats and from 40 manats to 60 manats.

Following the Procedure for the Payment of a Lump-Sum Monthly Allowance in place of Payments from the State Budget for Food, Communal, and Other Services for IDPs and Persons Equated to Them, a total of 1,532.5 manats million was allocated to IDPs from the state budget throughout the period 2018-2022.

24. DOST (Agency for Sustainable and Operative Social Provision)

DOST Agency was created to provide public social services on a single platform, through a “single window”, as well as to ensure full transparency, convenience, and satisfaction of the population with social services in compliance with the Presidential Decree “On Additional Measures Related to the Improvement of Management in the Areas of Population Employment, Labour, Social Protection and Provision” dated 9 August 2018.

DOST centers provide 154 services that cover employment, labour, and social protection. Today 5 DOST centers operate in Baku and the Absheron district, which have already benefited 530,000 citizens. According to the strategic goals of DOST, it is planned to establish 17 regional centers and 55 district branches of DOST until 2025.

The E-Government Portal

Following the Presidential Decree of 12 September 2018, an e-government portal has been set up with a view to protecting human rights, combating corruption and ensuring transparency. The e-government portal (www.e-gov.az) facilitates the relevant communication between the state bodies and the citizens

through the “single window”. Appropriate additions and amendments have been made to 45 legislative acts of the country to ensure the functioning of this mechanism.

The myGov portal

The “myGov” portal (www.my.gov.az) has been created to facilitate the work of citizens through electronic services and to ensure their transparency and efficiency. Through the “myGov” portal, citizens can familiarise themselves with the information provided by public authorities, confirm its authenticity, apply for services electronically, obtain electronic certificates and other documents, and regulate the process of disseminating information to other institutions.

Government Cloud (G-Cloud)

The Presidential Decree of June 3, 2019, on the creation of the “Government Cloud” (G-cloud) and measures in the field of cloud services approved the concept of the Government Cloud and the “Transition Plan of State Information Systems and Resources to the Government Cloud” was approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of October 29, 2020. Following the Transition Plan, a gradual transfer of state information systems and resources to the Government Cloud has been launched.

SIMA Digital Signature

The Ministry of Digital Development and Transport collaborated with the companies SVORT and SIMA in developing a new generation of cloud digital signature called “SIMA” within the public and private partnership framework to accelerate the digital transformation and promote online services in Azerbaijan. With the new signature service of 2022, it is possible to receive electronic public services, as well as services and products in the banking sector, non-bank credit organisations, insurance, mobile operators, electronics, household, TV and Internet providers, and other areas where an electronic signature is used. More than 200,000 users who have downloaded the SIMA mobile application can use more than 100 different services from public and private institutions.

The Smart City and Smart Village Concept

According to the Presidential Decree of April 19, 2021, On the Development of Smart Cities and Villages, a Concept has been developed based on international experience. In accordance with the Concept, the Ministry of Digital Development and Transport launched the “biletim.az” portal at the end of 2022 that allowed digitization of services provided in public transport through the online sale of tickets for intercity and interregional regular bus routes.

The Electronic Prosecutor’s Office Information System

Another important innovation is related to the “Electronic Prosecutor’s Office” Information System applied from April 1, 2023. This information system is intended to ensure the use of modern information and communication technologies in the activities of the Prosecutor’s Office. The application of the information system is aimed at protecting human and civil rights and freedoms, expanding the possibilities of access to the Prosecutor’s Office, ensuring the efficiency, effectiveness, and transparency of the Prosecutor’s Office activities, preventing misuse of the rights, and also serves to ensure electronic case management and electronic document flow.