

Azerbaijan - The Hellenic Republic relations

Brief information on diplomatic relations:

The Hellenic Republic recognized independence of the Republic of Azerbaijan on **31 December 1991**. Diplomatic relations between the two countries were established on **2 April 1992**. The Embassy of the Hellenic Republic has been in operation in the Republic of Azerbaijan since **27 May 1993**. The Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Hellenic Republic was established on **16 April 2004**. On **22 October 2009** Mr. Rahman Mustafayev was appointed as a new Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Hellenic Republic. Ambassador Mustafayev presented his credentials to Mr. Karolos Papulias, the President of the Hellenic Republic, on **10 December 2009**.

High level mutual visits:

Heads of State:

20-22 June 2004- Official visit of H.E. Mr. Konstantinos Stephanopoulos, President of the Hellenic Republic, to the Republic of Azerbaijan

12-16 August 2004 - Working visit of H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, to the Hellenic Republic.

16-17 February 2009– First official visit of H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, to the Hellenic Republic.

5-6 April 2011– State visit of H.E. Mr. Karolos Papulias, President of the Hellenic Republic, to the Republic of Azerbaijan.

16-17 June 2014 - State visit of H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, to the Hellenic Republic.

Parliamentary visits:

23-26 January 2007 – Official visit of Mr. Konstantinos Tsiaras, Chairman of the Azerbaijan–Greece Interparliamentary Friendship Group, to the Republic of Azerbaijan.

9-11 June 2008 – Working visit of Mr. Oqtay Asadov, Chairman of the Parliament of the Republic of Azerbaijan, to the Hellenic Republic.

19-20 June 2008 – Working visit of Ms. Elsa Papadimitriou, Vice Speaker of the Hellenic Parliament, to the Republic of Azerbaijan.

5-9 May 2009 - Official visit of Mr. Konstantinos Tsiaras, Chairman of the Azerbaijan–Greece Interparliamentary Friendship Group, to the Republic of Azerbaijan.

1-2 September 2011 – Working visit of Ms. Elsa Papadimitriou, Member of the Hellenic Parliament and Council of Europe’s Legal Affairs and Human rights Commission, to the Republic of Azerbaijan.

24-27 November 2013 – Official visit of Mr. Hadi Rajably, Chairman of Azerbaijan–Greece Interparliamentary Friendship Group, to the Hellenic Republic.

Ministers:

10-11 April 1997– Official visit of Mr. Theodoros Pangalos, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic, to the Republic of Azerbaijan.

5-6 July 2006 – Official visit of Mr. Samir Sharifov, Minister of Finance of the Republic of Azerbaijan, to the Hellenic Republic.

5-6 July 2007 - Official visit of Mr. Heydar Babayev, Minister of Economic Development of the Republic of Azerbaijan, to the Hellenic Republic. 2nd meeting of Azerbaijan – Greece Intergovernmental Commission on Economic Cooperation was also held during the visit.

2 August 2007 – Official visit of Mr. Dimitris Siufas, Minister of Development of the Hellenic Republic, to the Republic of Azerbaijan.

17 March 2008 - Official visit of Mr. Christos Folias, Minister of Development of the Hellenic Republic, to the Republic of Azerbaijan.

1-2 July 2009 – Working visit of Ms. Dora Bakoyannis, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic, to the Republic of Azerbaijan.

17-18 September 2009 – Working visit of Mr. Muzas, Minister for Emergencies of the Hellenic Republic, to the Republic of Azerbaijan.

1-2 December 2009 – Working visit of Mr. Elmar Mammadyarov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, to the Hellenic Republic.

21-23 February 2010 – Official visit of Mr. Kamaladdin Heydarov, Minister for Emergencies of the Republic of Azerbaijan, to the Hellenic Republic.

28 June - 1 July 2010 – Working visit of Mr. Natiq Aliyev, Minister of Industry and Energy of the Republic of Azerbaijan, to the Hellenic Republic.

24-25 February 2011 – First official visit of Mr. Elmar Mammadyarov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, to the Hellenic Republic.

12-15 September 2011 – Working visit of Mr. Andreas Loverdos, Minister of Health of the Hellenic Republic, to the Republic of Azerbaijan.

24 October 2011 – Working visit of Mr. Yorgos Papakonstantinou, Minister of Environment, Energy and Climate change of the Hellenic Republic, to the Republic of Azerbaijan.

10 May 2012 – Working visit of Mr. Azad Rahimov, Minister of Youth and Sport of the Republic of Azerbaijan, to the Hellenic Republic.

29-30 April 2013– Official visit of Mr. Dimitris Avromouopoulos, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic, to the Republic of Azerbaijan.

19 May 2013 – Working visit of H.E. Mr. Antonis Samaras, Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic, to the Republic of Azerbaijan.

10 June 2013 - Working visit of Mr. Rovnaq Abdullayev, President of SOCAR, to the Hellenic Republic.

11-13 November 2013 – Official visit of Mr. Yannis Boutaris, Mayor of Thessaloniki, to the Republic of Azerbaijan.

20-21 December 2013 – Working visit of Mr. Rovnaq Abdullayev, President of SOCAR, to the Hellenic Republic.

18 -19 June 2014 - Official visit of Mr. Azad Rahimov, Minister of Youth and Sport of the Republic of Azerbaijan, to the Hellenic Republic.

Interparliamentary relations:

On 2 December 2000 the Azerbaijan-Greece Interparliamentary Friendship Group was established by the Parliament of Azerbaijan.

Following the parliamentary elections in Azerbaijan held on 7 November 2010 the Azerbaijan-Greece Interparliamentary Friendship Group by the Parliament of Azerbaijan was formed in the following composition: Mr. Hadi Racabli (Chairman of the Group), Mr. Azer Badamov, Mr. Bachtiyar Aliyev, Mr. Nazim Farajov, Ms. Sevinj Fataliyeva, Ms. Sevinj Hüseynova, Mr. Chingiz Ganizada, Mr. Iqbal Mammadov and Mr. Hüseynbala Miralamov.

The Azerbaijan-Greece Interparliamentary Friendship Group by the Hellenic Parliament was formed in the following new composition on 12 November 2012:

1. Mr. Dimitrios Kyriazidis – Chairman of the Group, (New Democracy (ND)),
2. Mr. Michail Tamilos – Deputy Chairman of the Group (ND),
3. Mr. Nikolaos Michalakis – Secretary of the Group (Radical Left Coalition (SYRIZA)),
4. Mr. Aichan Kara Giousouf – (SYRIZA),
5. Mr. Nikolaos Tsoukalis – Democratic Left (DIMAR),
6. Mr. Georgios Varemenos - (SYRIZA),
7. Mr. Georgios Kontogiannis - (ND),
8. Mr. Eleftherios Avgenakis - (ND),
9. Mr. Achmet Chatzi Osman – Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK),
10. Mr. İordanis Tzamtzis (Danis) - (ND),
11. Mr. Dimitrios Papadimoulis - (SYRIZA),
12. Ms. Maria Diakaki - (SYRIZA),
13. Mr. Apostolos Alexopoulos - (SYRIZA),
14. Ms. Maria Antoniou - (ND).
- 15.

Greek members of the Azerbaijan-Greece Interparliamentary Friendship Group visited Azerbaijan on **23-26 January 2007 and 5-9 May 2009**.

Azerbaijani members of the same Interparliamentary Friendship Group visited Greece on **26-30 June 2007 and 24-27 November 2013**.

Fields of cooperation:

Political cooperation:

Chronology of consultations between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs:

10-11 April 1997 - Official visit of Mr. Theodoros Pangalos, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic, to the Republic of Azerbaijan.

10-11 April 2003 – Working visit of Mr. Andreas Laverdos, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic, to the Republic of Azerbaijan.

18-20 June 2004 - Working visit of Mr. Evangelos Stilianidis, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic, to the Republic of Azerbaijan.

12-13 May 2009 - Working visit of Mr. Miltiadis Varvitsiotis, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic, to the Republic of Azerbaijan.

1-2 July 2009 - Working visit of Ms. Dora Bakoyannis, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic, to the Republic of Azerbaijan.

1-2 December 2009 - Working visit of Mr. Elmar Mammadyarov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, to the Hellenic Republic.

1-3 February 2011 - Working visit of Mr. Spiridon Kuvelis, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic, to the Republic of Azerbaijan.

24-25 February 2011 - First official visit of Mr. Elmar Mammadyarov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, to the Hellenic Republic.

6-8 March 2013 – Working visit of Mr. Dimitris Kourkoulas, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic, to the Republic of Azerbaijan.

29-30 April 2013 - Official visit of Mr. Dimitris Avromoupoulos, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic, to the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Signed agreements:

1. **11 April 1997, Baku** - Protocol between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic on cooperation.
2. **11 April 1997, Baku** – Agreement between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Hellenic Republic on the functions of consular sections of embassies.
3. **16 June 2014, Athens** - Memorandum on cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic on European Union matters

Economic relations:

For the last two years a new page has been opened in the bilateral economic relations between Azerbaijan and Greece. Steps taken mainly in the energy sector including selection of TAP gas pipeline project to transport natural gas of Azerbaijan to Europe through the territory of Greece and privatization of 66% of DESFA's shares – Greek gas operator by SOCAR create also enormous opportunities for bilateral cooperation in other economic fields.

Both sides are interested in developing cooperation in subsidiary fields of energy sector, agriculture, food industry, construction, tourism, information technology, alternative energy sources and other fields.

Meetings of the Azerbaijan-Greece Joint Intergovernmental Commission for Economic Cooperation took place on **10-11 April 2003** in Baku, **5-6 July 2007** in Athens and **1-3 February 2011** again in Baku.

Trade turnover between Azerbaijan and Greece (Source: Customs Committee of Azerbaijan, in mln.\$)

Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Export	182,0	115,1	290,8	179,0	255	208,1	849,1	810,3
Import	5,4	30,8	6,6	5,7	12,0	8,8	15,2	4,78
Trade Turnover	187,4	145,9	297,4	184,7	267	216,9	864,3	815,08

The bulk of trade turnover between two countries constitutes export of crude oil and natural gas from Azerbaijan. Main goods exported from Greece to Azerbaijan are pharmaceuticals, paper products, pipes, aluminum profiles and furs.

Major initiatives in the history of economic relations between Azerbaijan and Greece are selection of TAP gas pipeline project and privatization of 66% of DESFA's shares by SOCAR. As a locomotive of bilateral economic relations cooperation in the field of energy stimulates interaction in other above-mentioned economic fields. Mutual visits on official and business level, economic forums, exhibitions and other kind of events are regularly organized to explore bilateral cooperation opportunities in non-oil sector.

Greek-Azerbaijani Trade Chamber established in 2012 positively contributes to development of bilateral economic relations and promotes direct contacts between the business circles of both countries. Establishment of direct flight connections between the two countries since 2012 has boosted tourist flows in both directions.

Greek-Azerbaijani Friendship and Cooperation Association established in June 2013 with headquarters in Thessaloniki serves for promotion of cultural, scientific and business cooperation based on mutual interest with particular focus to Northern Greece.

Signed agreements:

1. **26 July 1994, Baku** - Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Government of the Hellenic Republic on cooperation in the fields of economy, industry and technology.
2. **21 June 2004, Baku** - Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Government of the Hellenic Republic on the promotion and mutual protection of investments.
3. **21 June 2004, Baku** - Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Government of the Hellenic Republic on international road transport.
4. **21 June 2004, Baku** - Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Government of the Hellenic Republic on mutual assistance in customs matters.
5. **7 April 2005, Baku** - Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Government of the Hellenic Republic on cooperation in the field of tourism.

6. **2 August 2007, Baku** - Memorandum on cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Government of the Hellenic Republic in natural gas and oil fields.
7. **16 February 2009, Athens** - Convention between the Government of the Republic of the Azerbaijan and the Government of the Hellenic Republic for the avoidance of double taxation and the prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes on income and on capital..
8. **16 February 2009, Athens** - Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Government of the Hellenic Republic on Cooperation in the Field of Information and Communication Technologies.
9. **16 February 2009, Athens** - Air services agreement between the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Government of the Hellenic Republic.
10. **16 February 2009, Athens** - Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Industry and Energy of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Ministry of Development of the Hellenic Republic in the field of renewable energy sources and energy efficiency.
11. **5 April 2011, Baku** - Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Government of the Hellenic Republic on maritime transport.
12. **5 April 2011, Baku** - Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Government of the Hellenic Republic on the cooperation in the field of protection of the environment.
13. **16 June 2014, Athens** - Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Government of the Hellenic Republic on cooperation in the field of agriculture.

Humanitarian relations:

The relations in the field of culture constitute one of the most important components of bilateral relations between Azerbaijan and Greece, and for the last years cooperation in this field has notably intensified. Within the period of 2010-2014 9 jazz, classic and popular concerts have been organized in Greece by the Embassy of Azerbaijan to promote Azerbaijani culture and music. These events have played a great role in strengthening of bilateral relations.

On 6 June 2014 a concert of the Azerbaijani State Chamber Orchestra was sponsored and arranged by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation in “Megaro Mousikissis” - the main concert hall of Greece.

Cooperation between two the countries in the fields of science, education, youth and sport are developing as well. Every summer students from Azerbaijan participate at the Greek language and culture courses organized by the Education, Religion, Culture and Sport Ministry of Greece. In the course of 2011-2012 Memorandums of Cooperation were signed between Athens State University and Baku State University, Azerbaijan Foreign Languages University and Baku Slavic University. In addition, since 2013 cooperation ties have been established between Thessaloniki Aristotle University and Baku State University and relevant projects are already being implemented. For the last years cooperation relations between think-tanks of both countries have also been expanded.

The pace of bilateral cooperation on youth and sport policy is increasing. So, the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the Ministry of Youth and Sport of Azerbaijan and the International Olympic Academy of Greece on 16 April 2013 paved the way for new cooperation opportunities in the field of Olympic Movement. Already in 2013 about 50 Azerbaijani students took part at the summer training courses of the Academy and one student began his studies at the Master Programme of this Academy. Two more Azerbaijani students were granted scholarships for Master degree by the said Academy.

By the initiative of Greek students Hellenic-Azerbaijani Youth Center was established in Athens in December 2013. The Center plays important role in promotion of contacts between the young people of both countries and implementation of relevant projects. Since 2014 the Azerbaijani language courses have been launched within the Center.

On 12-14 April 2014 in the framework of “Thessaloniki – European Youth Capital 2014” programme and with the assistance of the Ministry of Youth and Sport of Azerbaijan the concerts of Youth Chamber Orchestra of Baku Music Academy were organized in Athens and Thessaloniki. Besides during these visits representatives of youth organizations met each other and discussed cooperation opportunities. These initiatives have given a strong impetus for promotion of cooperation ties between young people and youth organizations of both countries.

Signed agreements:

1. **11 April 1997, Baku** - Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Government of the Hellenic Republic on cooperation in the fields of education, culture and science.
2. **11 April 2003, Baku** - Program between the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Government of the Hellenic Republic on cooperation in the fields of science, education and culture for the years 2002-2005.
3. **23 February 2010, Athens** - Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Government of the Hellenic Republic on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in the field of prevention and elimination of consequences of natural disasters and manmade accidents.
4. **5 April 2011, Baku** - Program between the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Government of the Hellenic Republic on cooperation in the fields of science, education and culture for the years 2011-2012-2013.
5. **16 June 2014, Athens** – Agreement between the Ministry of Youth and Sport of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Ministry of Education and Religion of the Hellenic Republic on cooperation in the field of youth.

Contractual-legal basis:

Up to date 21 legal documents were signed and another 11 are under consideration between the Governments of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Hellenic Republic.

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