

The History of Administrative and Territorial Structure of Karabakh

Qarabag.com provides a reference on the history of administrative structure of the territory of Karabakh since the establishment of the Karabakh khanate. 27 official and academic sources were used in the preparation of this material.

1747: Panakh khan, whose family descended from Javanshir of Dizak from Saryjaly, founded Karabakh khanate on the territory of Karabakh vilayet of Persia, which was ruled by Afsharid dynasty.

[\[Qajar Ch. Old Shusha. Baku, 2007. Page 61\]](#)

[\[Mirza Jamal Jevanshir Of Karabakh. The History Of Karabakh. Baku, 1959. Page 66\]](#)

1750-1755: Panakh khan added Zangezur to Karabakh khanate.

[\[Mirza Jamal Jevanshir Of Karabakh. The History Of Karabakh. Baku, 1959. Page 70.\]](#)

1805: Karabakh khanate recognized the supreme authority of the Russian Empire.

[\[Evetski O. Statistical description of the Transcaucasian region. St. Petersburg, 1835. Pp. 201-202\].](#)

12.10.1813: According to the Gulistan Peace Treaty, Karabakh khanate passed into the possession of the Russian Empire.

[\[Weidenbaum E. Guide to the Caucasus. Tiflis, 1888. Page 146\]](#)

During the first years of Russian rule, Karabakh was divided into 14 magals (*Magal is a small administrative unit in the Islamic East*).

[\[Qajar Ch. Old Shusha. Baku, 2007. Pp. 82-83\]](#)

1835: Karabakh province added to Muslim Provinces of Transcaucasia of the Russian Empire.

1836: Karabakh province consisted of 23 magals and 2 minbashes.

The magals:

- Araspar
- Bargushat
- Varanda
- Hajisamli
- Javanshir
- Dizakh
- Egermidort
- Zangezur
- Kapan
- Karachorli
- Kelopi
- Migriguney
- Otuz-Ekin
- Sisian
- Takli-Muganli
- Talysh
- Tativ
- Khachin
- Chaundur
- Chelaburt
- Ekonom
- 1st Kaberli
- 2nd Kaberli

The minbashes (*small administrative unit*):

- Araspar
- Jabrayil

1840: Karabakh province was incorporated into the newly formed Caspian region, all magals were renamed into districts, and provinces were renamed into uyezds (counties). Thus Karabakh province became an uyezd of the same name.

[\[The Caucasian calendar for 1871. Tiflis, 1870. The Section Two Historical review of Baku province. Pp. 44-45\]](#)

1846: Caspian region which included Karabakh district was renamed Shamakha province.

[\[The Caucasian calendar for 1871. Tiflis, 1870. The Section Two Historical review of Baku province. Pp. 44-45\]](#)

In the same year, Karabakh uyezd was renamed Shusha uyezd.

[\[The Caucasian calendar for 1868. Tiflis, 1868. The Section Three The Historical review of civil units of the Caucasus and the Transcaucasus regions. Page 398\]](#)

1855: Shusha uyezd was divided into 5 districts and 1 pristavstvo (an administrative unit like county):

1. Varanda district
2. Jevanshir district
3. Zangezur district
4. Keberli district
5. Chelaburt district
6. Mustafakhanli pristavstvo

[\[The Caucasian calendar for 1856. Tiflis, 1855. The Section Three Pp. 362-441\].](#)

1859: Shamakha province was renamed Baku province. Shusha uyezd remained with the Baku Governorate.

[\[The Caucasian calendar for 1870. Tiflis, 1869. The Section Two Pp. 99-101\].](#)

1868: According to “The transformation of the administration of the Caucasus and the Transcaucasus regions” dated 09.12.1867, Zangezur district was separated from Shusha uyezd and transformed into Zangezur uyezd. After that, the both uyezds were included into the Elisabethpol Governorate formed in the same year.

[\[The complete collection of Laws of the Russian Empire. The Second Set Volume XLII. The Section Two St. Petersburg, 1871. Page 383\]](#)

[\[The Caucasian calendar for 1869. Tiflis, 1868. The Section Two Page 115\]](#)

[\[The Caucasian calendar for 1892. Tiflis, 1891. The Section Two Chronology. Page 33\]](#)

1873: As part of the Elisabethpol Governorate, among other uyezds there were also the 4 Karabakh uyezds:

- Jabrayil
- Jevanshir
- Zangezur
- Shusha

[\[The Caucasian calendar for 1878. Tiflis, 1877. The Section Two Pages 323, 326\]](#)

1905: The administrative center of Jabrayil uyezd was moved to the village Karabulag, the village of Karabulag was renamed Karyagino, and the uyezd was renamed Karyagin (Karyaginskiy).

[\[The Caucasian calendar for 1906. Tiflis, 1906. The Section One Page 238\]](#)

30.07.1918: By the decision of the Government of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic, Karyagin uyezd was returned to its former name – Jabrayil.

[\[Azerbaijan Democratic Republic \(1918-1920\). Legislative acts \(Collection of documents\). Baku, 1998. Page 225\]](#)

30.11.1920: By the decision of the Politburo and the Organization Bureau of the Central Committee of the Azerbaijani Communist Party (*the highest party authority of the republic*), Zangezur was ceded to Armenia. The remaining eastern part of Zangezur uyezd was transformed into Qubatlı district.

[\[The history of the formation of the Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Azerbaijan SSR. 1918-1925. Documents and materials. Baku, 1989. Pages 63, 80\]](#)

04.07.1923: According to the Decree of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the Azerbaijan SSR (*the highest authority of state power in the Republic in 1922-1938*), the Autonomous Region of Nagorno-Karabakh with the center in Khankendi was created in the Nagorno Karabakh.

[\[The history of the formation of the Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Azerbaijan SSR. 1918-1925. Documents and materials. Baku, 1989. Page 151\]](#)

21.07.1923: According to the Decree of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the Azerbaijan SSR (*the highest state authority in the Republic in 1922-1938*) and the Council of People's Commissars of the Azerbaijan SSR (*the Government of the Republic*), the city of Shusha was incorporated into Nagorno-Karabakh. At the lowlands of Karabakh, two uyezds were formed – Agdam and Jabrayil. The Kurdistan uyezd was formed from the territory occupied by kurds.

[\[The history of the formation of the Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Azerbaijan SSR. 1918-1925. Documents and materials. Baku, 1989. Page 157\]](#)

The Autonomous Region of Nagorno-Karabakh was formed from the parts of Shusha, Javanshir, Karyagin and Qubadli uyezds. It Included:

- former Shusha uyezd -120 villages with the city of Shusha located in the mountainous part of the region;
- Javanshir uyezd – Western part of the region with 55 villages;
- Karyagin uyezd– 31 villages with the center in Hadrut,
- Several villages from Qubadli uyezd.

After its formation the Autonomous Region of Nagorno-Karabakh was divided into:

- Varandin district (former Shusha district) – with the center in the village Khonashen. There were 5 volosts (townships). There were 46 villages in total.
- Jraberd district (formerly Javanshir uyezd) – with the center in the village Agdara. There were 4 volosts (counties). There were 63 villages in total.
- Dizak district (parts of the former Karyagin (Javanshir) and Shusha (Tug with neighboring villages) uyezds) – with the center in the village Hadrut. There were 5 volosts. There were 48 villages in total.
- Khachen district (former Shusha uyezd) – 5 volosts and two cities – Shusha and Stepanakert. The latter was the center of the Autonomous Region of Nagorno-Karabakh.

There were 65 villages in total.

[\[Kocharyan, G. A. Nagorno Karabakh. Society of Examination and Study of Azerbaijan. Baku, 1925. Page 8\]](#)

[\[Lisitsyan S. Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh. Ethnographic essay. Academy Of Sciences Of Armenia. Yerevan, 1992. Page 39\].](#)

06.08.1923: Due to the separation of the mountainous part of Karabakh into an autonomous region, from the rest of Karabakh:

- The lowlands of Shusha and Javanshir uyezds formed the territory of Agdam uyezd with the center in Agdam.
- The mountainous part of Javanshir uyezd inhabited by Kurds moved to the territory of Qubadli uyezd and formed the Kurdistan uyezd with the center in Pirijan.
- Jabrayil uyezd included the lowlands of the territory with the center in Jabrayil.

[\[The history of the formation of the Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Azerbaijan SSR. 1918-1925. Documents and materials. Baku, 1989. Pp. 156, 160, 173-175, 190\].](#)

1929-1930: Agdam, Jabrayil and Kurdistan uyezds were abolished. Districts were created on their territory, the list of which is given in "Census of Azerbaijan in 1931".

- Agdam, Barda, and Aghjabedi districts were established on the territory of Agdam uyezd.
- Karyagin, Djabrail and Zangelan districts were established on the territory of the Jabrail uyezd.
- Kelbajar and Lachin districts were established on the territory of Kurdistan uyezd.

The Autonomous Region of Nagorno-Karabakh, consisted of:

- Jerabert district.
- Dizakh district.
- Martuni district.
- Stepanakert district.
- Shusha district.

[\[Census of Azerbaijan in 1931. Issue 11. Baku, 1932. Page 9, 221-229\]](#)

1937: According to the new Constitution of the Azerbaijan SSR, the Autonomous Region of Nagorno-Karabakh was renamed the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region (NKAR).

[\[Newspaper Bakinskiy Rabochiy, No. 63, 16.03.1937.\]](#)

04.01.1964: According to the Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Azerbaijan SSR (the highest state authority in the Azerbaijan SSR in 1938-1994) the following administrative units were abolished:

- Agjabedi district-with the transfer of the territories to Agdam district.
- Jabrayil district -with the transfer of the territories to Fizuli district.
- Qubadli district- with the transfer of the territories to Zangelan district.
- Mir-Bashir district – with the transfer of the territories to Barda district
- Shusha district was abolished, and the territory was transferred to Stepanakert district.

Thus, on the territory of Karabakh, there were formed:

- Agdam district
- Fizuli district
- Kalbajar district
- Lachin district
- Zangelan district

As well as the districts of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region:

- Hadrut district
- Mardakert district
- Martuni district
- Stepanakert district

[\[Azerbaijan SSR. Administrative division. Baku, 1964. Pp. 12-15, 42-45, 63-65, 80-83, 105-108, 144-154, 254\]](#)

01.01.1977: The territory of Karabakh included:

- Agdam district
- Jabrayil district
- Zangelan district
- Kalbajar district
- Qubadli district
- Lachin district
- Fizuli district

As well as the districts of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region:

- Gadрут district
- Mardakert district
- Martuni district
- Stepanakert district
- Shusha district.

[\[Azerbaijan SSR. Administrative division. Baku, 1979. Pp. 17-18, 35, 41-42, 53-56, 63-64, 81-82, 112-117.\]](#)

26.11.1991: According to the decision of the Supreme Soviet of the Azerbaijan SSR, the Nagorny Karabakh Autonomous Region was abolished.

[\[Tsutsiev A. Atlas of ethnopolitical history of the Caucasus \(1774-2004\). Moscow, 2006. Page 90\]](#)

[\[Bakinskiy rabochiy newspaper № 230, 27.11.1991.\]](#)

However, on **27.11.1991**, the State Council of the USSR canceled this resolution.

[\[Bakinskiy rabochiy newspaper № 232, 29.11.1991.\]](#)

26.12.1991: With the collapse of the USSR, the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region (NKAR) ceased to exist.

13.10.1992: According to the decision of the Milli Majlis of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Agderi (Mardakert) district was abolished and its territory was divided between Agdam, Kelbajar and Terter districts.

2020: According to the administrative-territorial division of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the territory of the former NKAR and adjacent districts are the following:

- Agdam district (Ağdam rayonu)
- Jabrayil district (Cəbrayıl rayonu)
- Zangilan district (Zəngilan rayonu)
- Kalbajar district (Kəlbəcər rayonu)
- Qubadli district (Qubadlı rayonu)
- Lachin district (Laçın rayonu)
- Terter district (Tərtər rayonu)
- Fuzuli district (Füzuli rayonu)
- Khojavent district (Xocavənd rayonu)
- Khojali district (Xocalı rayonu)
- Shusha district (Şuşa rayonu)
- City of Khankendi (Xankəndi şəhəri)

[\[Classification of administrative divisions, 2019. The State Statistics Committee of Azerbaijan Republic Baku, 2020. Pp. 12, 27-28, 40-41, 45-46, 57, 58-59, 63-64, 73-74, 77-78, 94, 95-96, 103\]](#)