

FREIGHT-FORWARDING

As of 25 November 2025, the *Bill On Freight-Forwarding* has passed two readings in the Milli Maclis (Parliament) in pursuance of implementing the measure from the *2022–2026 Socio-Economic Development Strategy*. The bill defines key terms such as carrier, forwarder, forwarder’s fee, client, freight-forwarding services, participants, cargo, and cargo transport documents. It also establishes rules governing domestic and international relations among participants.

Under the bill, the forwarder is responsible for organizing and providing services for a fee, in accordance with the client’s instructions and at the client’s expense. Freight services may not proceed without properly executed cargo-transport documents, which include: (i) the client’s task, (ii) the forwarder’s note, (iii) the warehouse note, and (iv) other applicable documents.

The bill also establishes responsibilities and liabilities:

- cargo loss: cargo is deemed lost if not delivered within three months of acceptance or within thirty days after the contractual deadline, unless proven otherwise,
- forwarder liability: the forwarder is liable for delays unless caused by *force majeure*, the client, or third parties engaged by the client. In such cases, a penalty of three percent of the fee per day or hour, capped at 80 percent, applies,
- client obligations: clients must reimburse expenses incurred during service; unjustified non-payment incurs a ten percent penalty, while late fee payments are subject to three percent per day or hour, also capped at 80 percent, and
- forwarder as carrier: when the forwarder transports cargo using vehicles owned, leased, or provided by the client, it assumes liability as a carrier.

The bill does not apply to: (a) cargo transported *via* pipelines or electricity networks; (b) transportation by: (i) utility or emergency vehicles, (ii) defense or public order vehicles, (iii) official service vehicles of state bodies, budget organizations, local authorities, the Central Bank, extra-budgetary funds, foreign missions, or international organizations, (iv) service vehicles of entities and individual entrepreneurs, (v) transport for internal or technological needs without public road access, (vi) personal transportation by individuals; (c) military or state-operated non-commercial vessels and cargo; (d) goods purchased online for personal consumption; and (e) postal items transported through specialized services.

The interaction between the bill, if and when adopted, and the Civil Code’s general provisions, as well as its special rules, such as those on transportation, will ultimately be shaped by implementing regulations and subsequent practice.

“INVEST IN AZERBAIJAN”

On 6 November 2025, Presidential Decree No. 521 established the “Invest in Azerbaijan” system, operated by the Azerbaijan Export and Investment Promotion Agency, known as AZPROMO, under the Ministry of Economy. It provides a one-stop electronic platform for investor applications and information on opportunities, requirements, and incentives.

HIGHLY QUALIFIED MIGRATION

On 3 April 2025, the Cabinet of Ministers, by Resolution No. 99, approved the *Rules and Criteria of Assessing Highly Qualified Migrants* under Presidential Decree No. 156 of 6 June 2024.

The status exempts migrants from obtaining a work permit and may serve as a basis for obtaining a temporary residence permit. Applicants are evaluated on a points-based scale across six criteria: (i) work experience (0–35 points), (ii) alignment with national development (0–20), (iii) education (0–15), (iv) financial security (0–15), (v) labor market impact (0–10), and (vi) language skills (0–5). Those scoring at least 70 out of 100 points receive a five-year electronic document, renewable upon reassessment.

Resolution No. 323 of 30 October 2025 complemented this by approving the *Regulations of Portal for Highly Qualified Migrants*. The portal can be accessed at: <https://www.pass.gov.az>

COMPETITION CRIME REFORM

On 31 October 2025, the Milli Maclis adopted amendments to the Criminal Code addressing competition restrictions, now encompassing unlawful horizontal and vertical agreements.

According to the bill: (i) large damage is punishable by three to seven years' imprisonment, a ban from holding certain positions of up to three years, or a fine three times the damage; and (ii) especially large damage carries seven to twelve years and a fine of four times the damage.

Following the amendment, the crime defines large damage as ₼200,000.00–₼500,000.00, substantial damage as ₼500,000.00–₼1,000,000.00, and especially large damage as over ₼1,000,000.00.

Once the bill takes effect, a person in charge of the business may avoid criminal liability by fully compensating the damage caused or returning illicit gains to the state, plus paying an equal amount to the budget.

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Republic of Azerbaijan

For Further Information:

ContactUs@Bureau28a.com

*Information does not, and is not intended to, constitute legal advice

67, Neftçilar Avenue

Baku, AZ1095

Republic of Azerbaijan

www.bureau28a.com

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