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**ILHAM ALIYEV: AZERBAIJAN BECAME REGIONAL HUB BOTH ECONOMICALLY AND POLITICALLY**

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Azerbaijan has become both economically and politically regional hub, President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev said at the meeting with the delegation led by Chairman of Germany's Committee on Eastern European Economic Relations Wolfgang Büchele.

Speaking about holding of international events with the participation of representatives of both neighboring and far countries, the head of state noted that Azerbaijan is turning into a significant energy hub of the region. According to him, multibillions have been invested in the global energy projects implemented with the initiative of our country.

Noting that Azerbaijan has also become a transport hub of the region, the president said that Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway, which was launched last year, is already used for transportation of cargos between Europe and Asia. The head of state stressed that geographical position, security in the country, hospitability of people, friendship and multiculturalism, high-level hotels and recreational centers, modern airports create opportunities for Azerbaijan's significance in the region and projects on metro construction will be implemented this year. Stressing that Azerbaijan's oil and gas sector has great prospectus and is sufficient for next decades, the president noted that there are wide opportunities for activity of foreign companies in the country.

The head of state underlined that tourism is paid attention in the country and this field is developed in regions too. It was noted that number of tourists visited Azerbaijan increased 24% in 2016, 20% in 2017 and 17% in January 2018. He noted that the region that had been settled by Germans at the time may be an interesting route for German tourists and there are good opportunities for cooperation in this direction.

[http://en.apa.az/azerbaijan\\_energy\\_and\\_industry/ilham-aliyev-azerbaijan-has-become-both-economically-and-politically-regional-hub.html](http://en.apa.az/azerbaijan_energy_and_industry/ilham-aliyev-azerbaijan-has-become-both-economically-and-politically-regional-hub.html)

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