



Local Development
Organization
منظمة التنمية المحلية

Economic studies of cities

Azaz city



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Introduction

This study is part of the economic studies carried out by the Research and Studies Department of the Local Development Organization (LDO) on cities and towns in Syria, and it contains economic information about a number of cities in Idleb and Aleppo provinces, and this series of studies came as a result of its reliance on the field survey in order to document the situation of economic development in the Syrian cities that were studied, with the aim of preparing economic development plans that contribute to improving the standard of living of the region's residents, qualifying human resources capable of adopting and implementing income-generating projects, increasing access to basic resources and services, and supporting for conflict-affected communities and achieving the goal of reaching sustainable ones.

The economic reality of the cities was analyzed with a view to determining the need for income-generating projects in order to achieve strategic goals and development plans, to mitigate the impact of unstable economic conditions in the region.

Research Methodology

This study relied on sectoral analysis, reviewing during the study the factors affecting the economic status of each city, regardless of the cities, areas, or districts to which it belongs administratively.

This study relied on a field survey with the aim of documenting the economic situation in the cities covered by the study. A questionnaire was prepared for this purpose. The sample size reached 40 people from each city distributed as follows:

5 people: Members of the city's local council.

5 legal persons: Mukhtar or a person working in an organization from the people of the region.

15 people: professionals, and shop owners.

15 people: local residents, with educational attainment.

The monitoring and evaluation team at the Local Development Organization collected the required data by the questionnaire. The information of this study monitors the economic situation in the targeted cities in March 2020, where the preparation of the questionnaire and data collection took 15 days, then the period of preparing economic studies for the targeted cities started, which It lasted 15 working days and ended with the researcher's release of economic studies on April 10th 2020.

In addition to relying on secondary data by the local councils in the cities concerned with the study.

Information about the region and geographical location

Azaz city is the center of Azaz region in Aleppo province and is considered the northern border of Aleppo towards Turkey, and its population in 2011, according to civil status records, reached 88,676 people.

It is of strategic importance, controlled by the Syrian opposition since 2012, and has been under constant bombardment by the regime forces and its allies since the outbreak of the Syrian revolution.

Azaz city is located about 50 km north of Aleppo, and it is close to the border with Turkey, where it is only five kilometers from Bab Al-Salama crossing connected with the Turkish border.

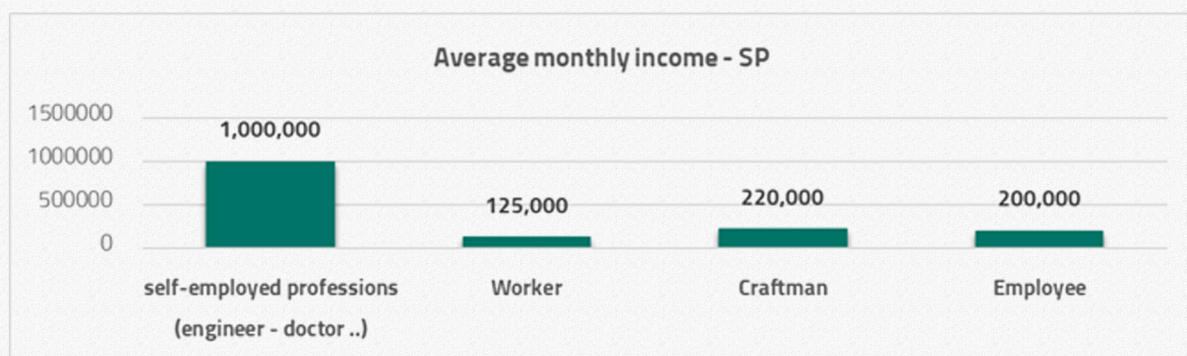
Azaz region is divided into several areas: Azaz center, Akhtarien, Nubul, Tal Refaat, Souran and Mare', and includes many towns and villages.

Azaz is considered a historical city, and it contains the Great Mosque, whose construction dates back to 120 AH (737 AD), and Azaz Castle is one of the most important archeological hills in Syria.

Azaz is of economic importance and cultivates wheat, cotton, summer vegetables, vine, figs, cherries, and olives, as it includes the second largest olive press in the country.

Population

Azaz city currently has approximately 170,000 people, of whom nearly 70,000 are indigenous people, and during the revolution nearly 100,000 people have been displaced, from the various cities of Syria.

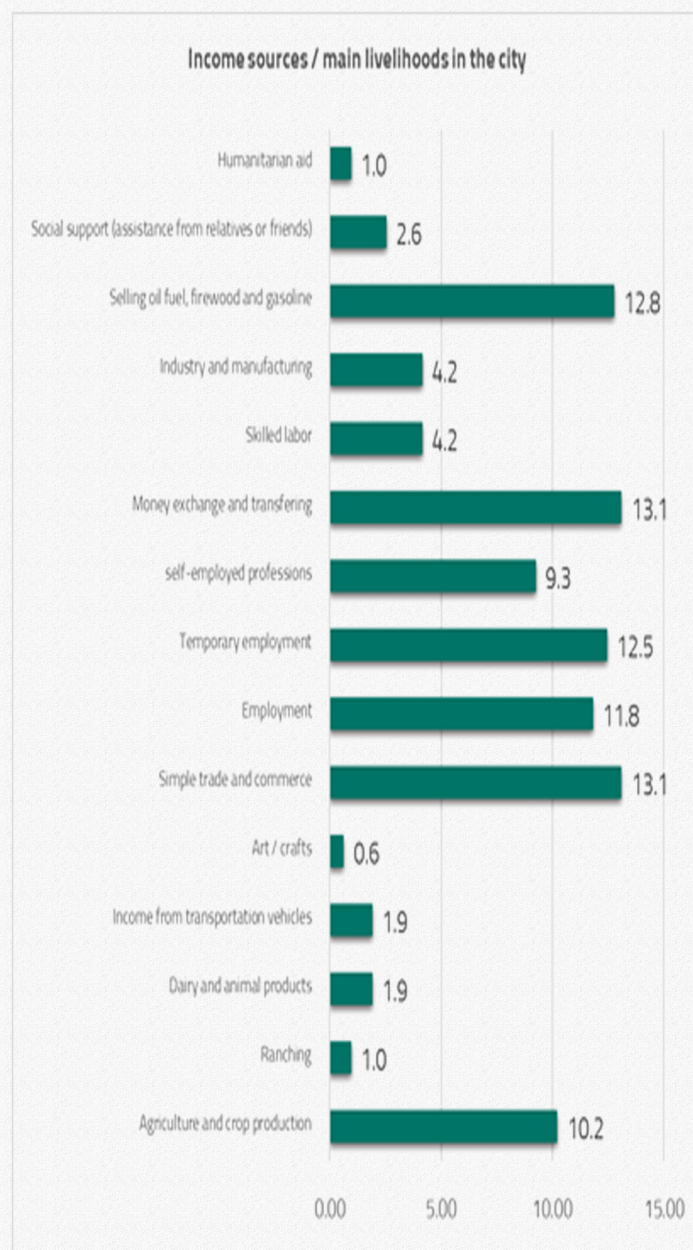


Source: Local Council

Income sources and main livelihoods in the city

Residents of the city depend on several sources of income and livelihoods, the most important of which are simple trade and exchange, entry of transport vehicles from trucks and passengers, temporary labor wages, agriculture and crop yields, in addition to jobs in civil society organizations or jobs in the local council and its service sectors (mill – Cleanliness), in addition to the salaries of members of the Free Army, fighting factions, and money exchange.

In a small percentage, the population depends on sources of income such as handicraft, dairy, animal products, livestock, industry and manufacturing, and humanitarian aid. There are other sources such as providing services (private water wells that provide an income source for their owners and workers, electricity generators that provide an income source for their owners and diminishing their importance after Nameen takes over the electricity sector,

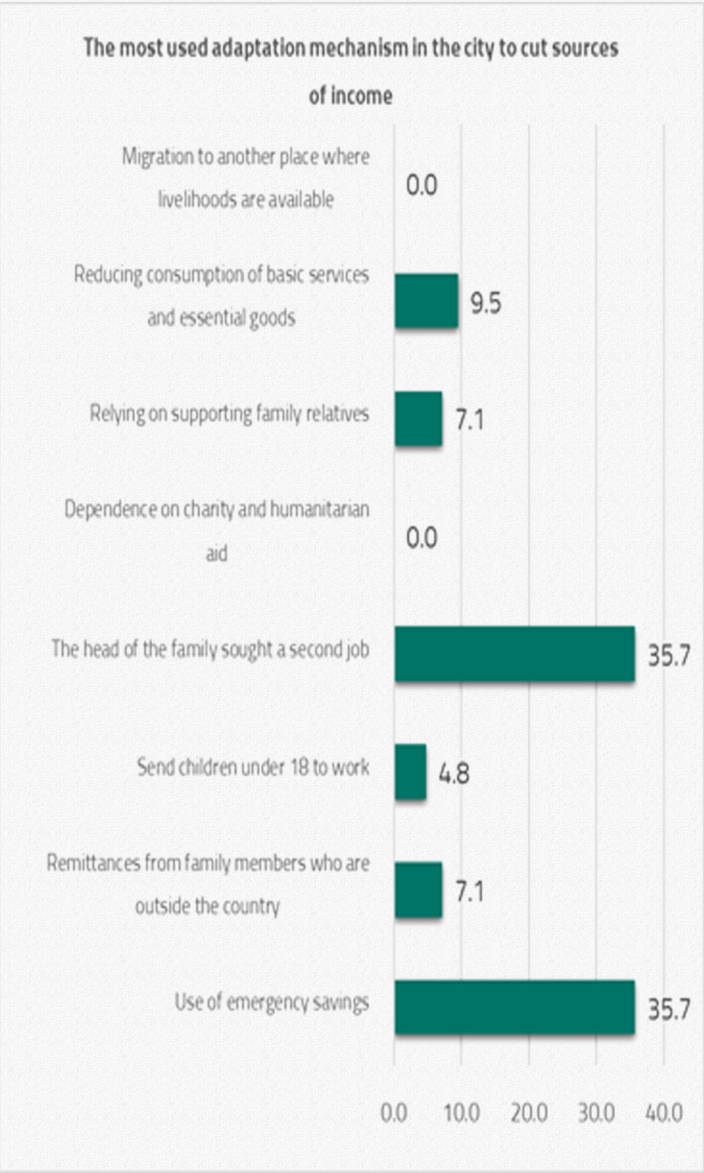


The diagram shows the ratio of the source of each income from the sources in the city.

The most used adaptation mechanism in Azaz city, which the residents' resort to in response to the interruption of their income sources

Naturally, some people may be tempted to leave their jobs for several reasons, including the expiry of the work contract, or problems that may encounter, so there may be a break in the source of income, the interruption period may be longer or shortened

In response to the interruption of income sources, the residents of the city rely on several mechanisms to adapt to this situation.



Most of the mechanisms are the head of the family's search for another job, and also one of the other mechanisms is the use of emergency savings, and these two mechanisms are the most used.

Then followed by reducing the consumption of basic services and necessary goods, and some are forced to use relatives who are outside the country to send money, or rely on the support of relatives from the family or send children under 18 YO to work.

Rarely, one of the residents of the city of Azaz, migrates to another place to

search for other sources of livelihood, or rely on charity and humanitarian aid.

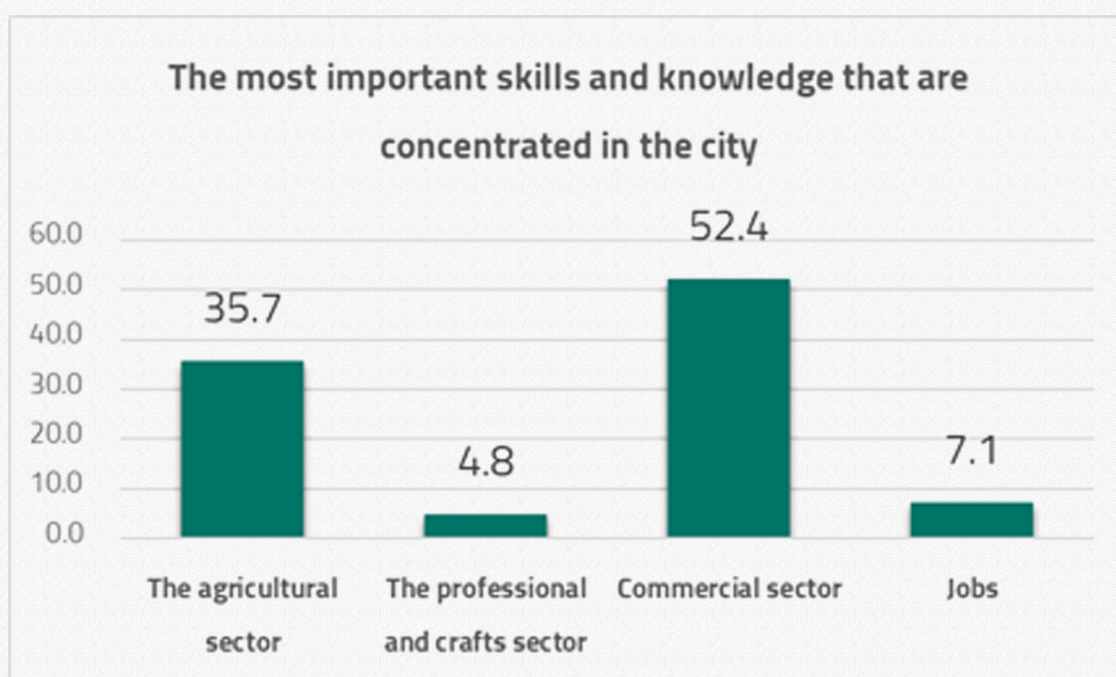
The most important skills and knowledge in the city

The population residing in Azaz depends on a number of skills and knowledge, the most important of which are skills and knowledge in the commercial sector, where Azaz is located at the mouth of major roads and mediating areas subject to several sides, which is the closest to Bab Al-Salama border crossing with Turkey, and with the population density as a result of displacement from most of Syrian regions and cities, in which trade was more active than before the revolution.

Then the agricultural sector, where wheat, cotton, summer vegetables, grapevine, figs, cherries, and olives are cultivated, as it includes the second largest olive press in the country.

With a small percentage of job skills related to the required specializations such as project management with civil society organizations or accounting or other specializations, and to a lesser extent the skills in the professional and crafts sector

The most important skills and knowledge that are concentrated in the city are distributed as follows:



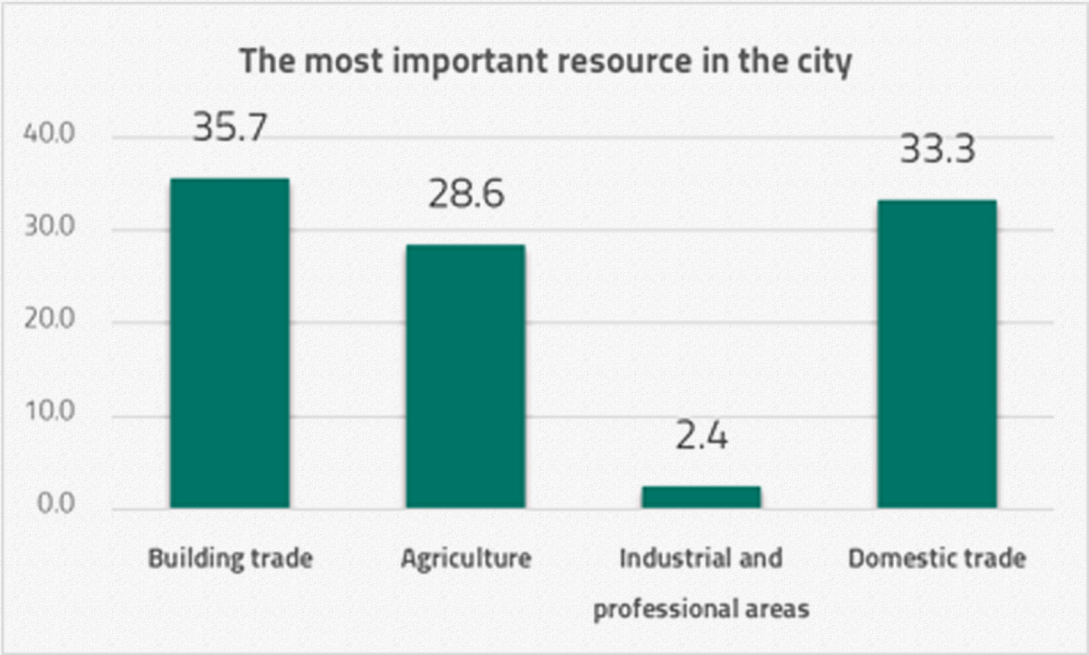
The most important resource in the city

The local economy in Azaz currently depends on several sectors, the most important of which is construction trade and then internal trade. There are shops in the historical market (Al Ateek), the vegetable and meat markets, the food market, the clothing market, and the auto market. It also includes workers and employees who work in sales or cargo and storage.

Then agriculture, where the production of agricultural lands, such as seasons, rents, and guarantees, constitutes sources of income for part of the population of the city in addition to agricultural workers (daily wages). A number of men, women and children work in this way sometimes.

Industrial areas, as there are industrial workshops and craftsmen but with a small percentage compared to the rest of the resources.

The results of the questionnaire distributed showed that the most important economic resources for the city are distributed as follows:



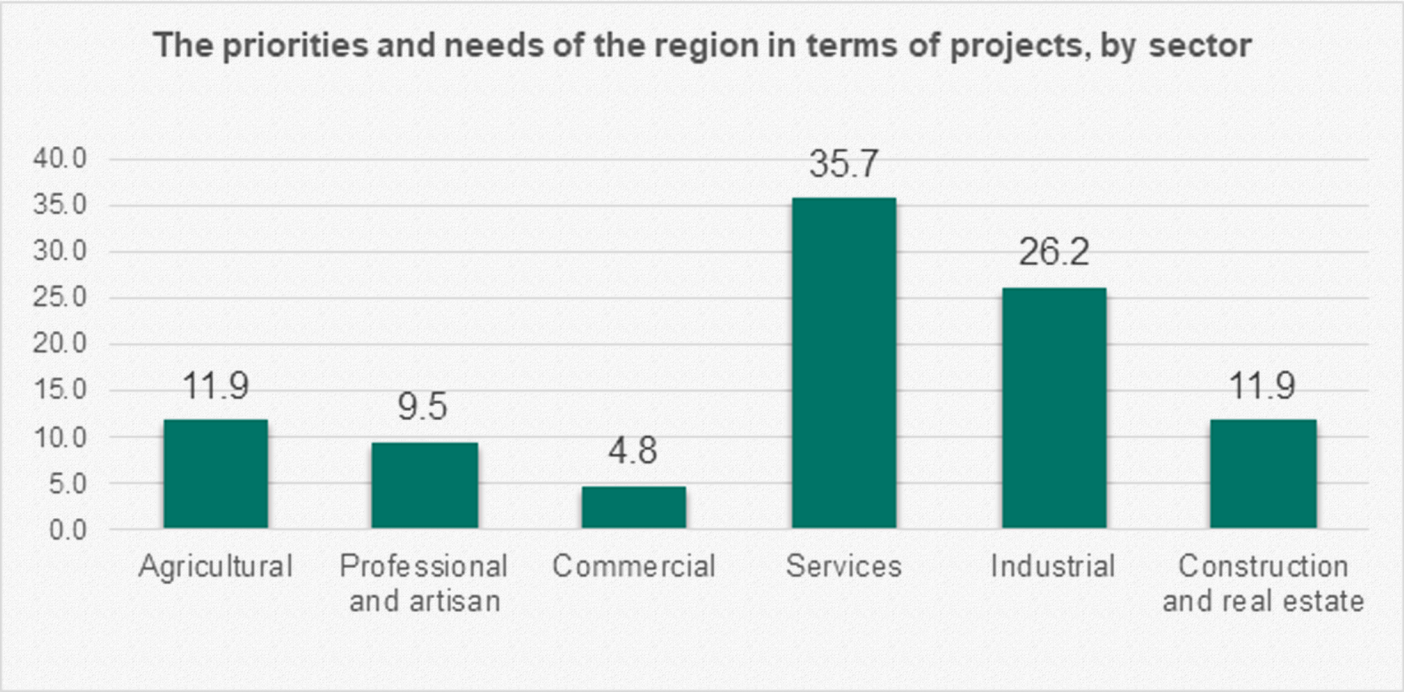
The priorities and needs of the region in terms of projects, by sector

Azaz city, in cooperation with civil society organizations, the resident population, and all other actors in the city, is looking to implement a number of projects during the coming period, as a questionnaire has been distributed to the actors in the city in order to determine the priorities and needs of the city of projects by sectors.

It turned out that the most important projects that the city needs are service projects, the most important of which is the medical sector at the present time.

Then projects in the industrial sector, then construction, real estate, agricultural and vocational, and, to a small extent, projects in the commercial sector.

In the following graph, the percentage of project needs is according to each sector:



Recommendations and suggestions

1. Working to encourage programs that enhance the culture of entrepreneurship, mainly among youth and women, by supporting the service and industrial sector in particular so that the infrastructure is secured to establish factories and encourage the capitals abroad to invest in the city and secure employment opportunities for the labor force, and to secure basic needs, it is a necessary material for the city.
2. The interest of the organizations in revitalizing the commercial and agricultural sector, exploiting the city's basic resources and proposing development projects that benefit from the energies and experiences in the city.
3. Directing the organizations' support to small projects (sewing workshops, carpentry workshops, and various handicrafts) since most of the population does not have sufficient liquidity to open development projects and to tackle the issue of unemployment.
4. Establishing agricultural establishments to support the agricultural sector, such as setting up a feed factory, a dairy factory, and a consortium to benefit from agricultural products in the region and cover the region's feed needs.
5. Supporting the medical sector, providing supplies to combat Coronavirus epidemic, supporting sterilization supplies, securing layer imaging and magnetic resonance imaging devices for hospitals, and providing quality medicines for chronic diseases such as cancer and liver.
6. Support and establishment of a private hospital for children, as there is only a single hospital for women and children, and it is not sufficient given the population density within the city.



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