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KAZAKHSTAN ON THE WAY TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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The scientific publication examines current issues of good governance in light of the implementation and achievement of sustainable development in the context of modernization of the economy and public administration system of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The scientific publication is intended for a wide range of readers and can be used as an analytical, scientific-methodological and source base for researchers and experts on the problems of good governance in Kazakhstan in light of the development of the green economy, achieving inclusive economic growth, as well as the teaching staff, students and students of educational organizations in specialized areas.

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INTRODUCTION

The development of the Republic of Kazakhstan towards inclusive economic growth requires that people participate in the decision-making process. This allows for the interests of different groups to be taken into account and contributes to a more balanced development of the economy. In addition, it helps identify and solve social problems.

In turn, when people participate in governance, they feel responsible for the development of society and the economy. This can encourage them to participate more actively in economic processes.

Good governance enables the creation and implementation of long-term sustainable development strategies. This means that resources should be allocated efficiently to important projects such as infrastructure, education and health, and thus contribute to the principle of “leaving no one behind”.

In Kazakhstan, several institutions actively support the implementation of good governance in the context of inclusive economic growth, among which we highlight the Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population, the Anti-Corruption Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan, etc.

For example, the Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan is responsible for the development and implementation of economic policy, including strategies aimed at inclusive growth. It actively works to improve the business environment and reduce administrative barriers, which helps attract investment and develop entrepreneurship.

In turn, the Anti-Corruption Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan also plays an important role in ensuring transparency and accountability of government agencies. It implements anti-corruption initiatives and programs aimed at increasing citizens’ trust in government institutions, which is a key aspect of good governance.

Good governance also promotes innovation and new technologies that increase the productivity and competitiveness of the economy in the area of new technological solutions of the country.

Good governance promotes the implementation of the principles of sustainable development and green economy, which helps to solve environmental problems while supporting economic growth.

In his Address in September 2024, the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan emphasizes the need for sustainable economic growth, which should be inclusive and contribute to improving the quality of life of citizens [1].

The head of state emphasizes the importance of modernizing state

institutions and increasing their efficiency to ensure transparency and accountability, and also focuses the audience's attention on the need to invest in social infrastructure, which is important to support economic growth and improve the living conditions of the population [1].

The implementation of the above priorities is relevant from the point of view of following the principles of Good Governance, which were first proposed by the Council of the European Union in 2007 and were further developed in the activities of the United Nations (UN). The UN notes that good governance has a great impact on economic development through a number of important mechanisms that contribute to sustainable economic growth and improving the quality of life of people.

First of all, good governance involves the implementation of the principle of «transparency and accountability», the main tool of which is the reduction of corruption. As a rule, good governance reduces corrupt practices, which leads to a more stable and predictable business environment. As a result, this attracts investment and stimulates economic growth, including its orientation towards inclusiveness.

An important factor in good governance is trust in public institutions, since transparent governance procedures increase citizens' trust in government bodies, which leads to improved interaction between the state and business.

The National Development Plan of Kazakhstan until 2029 aims to create a sustainable and inclusive economy capable of coping with modern challenges [2].

Kazakhstan is implementing several specific mechanisms for good governance within the framework of green economy projects. Thus, Kazakhstan has adopted bills aimed at the transition to a green economy. One of them is the simplification of the processes for obtaining permits for environmentally friendly projects and technologies. This promotes the introduction of green technologies and improves the business environment.

Kazakhstan actively uses public consultation mechanisms, which allows local residents to participate in the discussion of environmental projects and initiatives. This makes government bodies more open and accountable, and also helps improve the quality of their decisions.

In this study, we examined the concept of "Good Governance" in the context of its application to achieve sustainable development goals, including the development of inclusive economic growth and mechanisms for implementing the principles of the green economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Based on the relevance of the topic, the purpose of the study is to review and analyze the implementation of good governance principles

in the context of achieving inclusive economic growth and a green economy in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

To achieve this goal, we have implemented the following tasks:

1. Conduct an overview of the main concepts of «Good governance»;
2. Conduct a comparative analysis of good governance indicators in the Republic of Kazakhstan and the countries of Central Asia;
3. Analyze the main indicators of the development of inclusive economic growth in the Republic of Kazakhstan;
4. Conduct an assessment of Kazakhstan's achievements on the path to the development of a green economy.

Research Methodology. In the analysis, we used methods of comparative statistical analysis, a review of reports from international organizations, and scientific publications on the topic of the study. To conduct a comparative analysis of good governance indicators in the Republic of Kazakhstan, we used secondary data presented in the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) and Global Sustainable Competitiveness Index (GSCI) ratings.

The information base of the study was the materials of reports of international organizations: The World Bank, the United Nations, the International Organization for Migration, etc., data from the National Bureau of Statistics of the Agency for Strategic Planning and Reforms of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

This study consists of an introduction, 4 sections, a conclusion and a list of references. The work presents 10 tables and 22 figures.

The scientific publication is aimed at a wide range of experts involved in the implementation of good governance principles, achieving sustainable development goals in the context of inclusive economic growth, and the introduction of green technologies for the sustainable economic development of the country.

1

OVERVIEW OF THE GOOD GOVERNANCE CONCEPT

Effective governance is necessary in order to achieve sustainable development and inclusive growth. It involves developing rules and frameworks that ensure fair distribution of resources, preservation of environmental safety, and active participation of all social groups in economic processes.

The concept of good governance is aimed not only at improving the economy, but also at observing moral and ethical principles, taking into account the interests of all social groups. Based on the twelve principles of the Strategy for Innovation and Good Governance at Local Level, the concept of good governance is widely used by the Council of the European Union (EU) (*Figure 1*). To achieve the goals set out in the strategy, local authorities, national governments and various stakeholders must collaborate. This includes creating a platform where stakeholders can communicate and monitor the implementation of best practices [3].

Fair Election Conduct and Participation	Responsiveness to the needs of citizens	Efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources	Openness and transparency in management	Rule of Law and Ethical Conduct
Competence and capacity of local officials	Innovation and openness to change	Sustainability and long-term orientation	Good financial management	Respect for human rights and cultural diversity
		Accountability of decision makers		

Figure 1 - 12 principles of the EU Council Strategy on Innovation and Good Governance
Source: Compiled on the basis of [1]

Good governance is essential to achieving sustainable development and inclusive growth. It includes the creation of policies and frameworks that ensure fair distribution of resources, environmental sustainability and the active participation of all social groups in economic processes. A review of the literature shows that key aspects of good governance include inclusion, green growth, economic policy, monitoring and evaluation, public-private partnerships, digitalization and trade (*Table 1*).

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Table 1- Key aspects of good governance for sustainable development

Aspects of Good Governance	Description
Inclusiveness	Good governance must pay special attention to the inclusion of disadvantaged and marginalized groups. This is vital because many people still lack access to basic services such as electricity, sanitation and clean drinking water. To ensure that growth benefits all segments of society, such groups must be integrated into economic life.
Green growth	This is a new approach to sustainable development that emphasizes the rational use of natural resources while minimizing negative impacts on the environment. To ensure that economic growth is not dependent on the environment, good governance should promote policies that encourage sustainable practices across sectors. This includes investing in sustainable agriculture and renewable energy, as well as developing policies that prevent irreversible damage to the ecosystem.
Economic policy	Governance structures should support economic policies that promote competitiveness and innovation. This includes providing technical support to sectors such as renewable energy and organic agriculture that can improve local economies and promote gender equality.
Monitoring and evaluation	Effective monitoring of economic performance and social justice is critical. Good governance must establish clear indicators to measure progress towards inclusive growth. It also ensures that policies are adjusted based on how well they are working to reduce inequality and promote sustainable practices.
Public-private partnership	Collaboration between civil society, the private sector and government is critical to achieving sustainable and inclusive development. These partnerships can leverage resources and expertise to address structural challenges, improve regional competitiveness and foster innovation in service delivery.
Digitalization and trade	Embracing digital trade can help micro, small and medium enterprises (MS-MEs), especially those run by women or from marginalized groups, open up new markets. For these businesses to thrive, good governance must support policies that encourage fair trade and facilitate access to digital platforms.

Source: Compiled by authors on the basis of [4, 5, 6]

Strengthening governance institutions and implementing effective reforms are vital to achieving sustainable development and improving the overall quality of life of citizens. Good governance is widely associated with institutional issues, social justice and inclusion.

Public administration must be responsible for two areas of development: a society that is increasingly vocal in its demands for high stan-

dards of service, and an economy that operates in an increasingly inter-connected world.

Good governance refers to a set of qualitative characteristics related to rule-making processes and their institutional frameworks and embodies values such as:

- Active participation,
- Transparency,
- Responsibility,
- Public access to information.

The United Nations views good governance as an effective mechanism for achieving and implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, which were adopted in 2015 (*Table 2*).

Table 2 - Principles of «good governance»¹

Principles	Competencies
Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - competence; - sound public policy; - cooperation;
Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - integrity; - transparency; - independent supervision;
Inclusiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - principle of “leaving no one behind”; - non-discrimination; - participation; - subsidiarity; - equality between generations.

Source: compiled on the basis of UN data, 2018

In its WGI project, the World Bank provides aggregate and individual governance indicators for more than 200 countries and territories for the period 1996-2022 across six governance dimensions: voice and accountability, political stability and absence of violence/terrorism, government effectiveness, regulatory quality, rule of law, and control of corruption [7].

The Global Sustainable Competitiveness Index (GSCI) is a comprehensive tool that assesses the resilience and competitiveness of countries using 190 quantitative indicators. First published in 2012, the GSCI serves as an alternative to GDP, providing information on country-specific risks to business and tracking policy progress [8].

The study, Mapping the Evolution of Good Governance: A Literature Review Perspective, examines how concepts and practices of good governance have changed over the years, with a particular focus on how glo-

¹ The principles of “Good Governance” were developed by the UN Committee of Experts on Public Administration [Electronic resource] // URL: //https://publicadministration.un.org/en/Intergovernmental-Support/Committee-of-Experts-on-Public-Administration/Governance-principles

balization, technology and social change have influenced this evolution [9].

According to Hasanuddin's research [10], a comparative analysis of the idea of good governance in different national and international contexts is necessary to understand how principles are adapted and translated according to the specificities of each region. The author notes that history and social context influence governance; changes in technology and globalization in governance, as well as citizen participation and transparency in modern governance systems are crucial.

Hasanuddin's findings are complemented by research by Marwa Houy and Abdelhay Benabdelhadi, who find that the impact of good governance varies depending on the political system, governance structure and other contextual factors [11]. This highlights the need to tailor governance approaches to the specific circumstances of each country.

Democratic institutions and processes promote accountability, transparency, and the rule of law. Research shows that countries with higher democratic scores tend to have higher good governance scores. Strong democracy and good governance contribute to more stable and predictable economies, which attract investment and promote growth. [11].

In general, the Democracy Index and the concept of Good Governance are closely interrelated. Countries with higher democratic scores tend to demonstrate more effective governance based on the principles of accountability, transparency and the rule of law. However, there are exceptions, as effective governance can be achieved in countries with limited democracy, provided that the key principles of Good Governance are met.

Considering that Kazakhstan is currently focusing on inclusive economic growth and the green economy, let us consider publications in this direction.

Djeneba Doumbia's article, «The Role of Good Governance in Fostering Pro-Poor and Inclusive Growth», published on the Brookings website, explores the relationship between good governance and inclusive economic growth, particularly in the context of poverty and inequality [12]. The author highlights key aspects that can contribute to inclusive growth: control of corruption and quality of regulation, government effectiveness and the rule of law, and human capital development. At the same time, efforts to strengthen governance and control corruption should be a priority for countries seeking economic progress.

Kazakhstan is no exception in this regard, and the country is making significant progress in this direction. The analysis of the Worldwide governance indicators presented in Section 2 demonstrates the sustainability of the actions of the Government of Kazakhstan in this regard.

The article by Karand A.V. & Mitin N.N. examines the theoretical foundations of the green economy as a priority paradigm of regional eco-

conomic development in the context of the concept of good governance. The authors note that good governance presupposes decentralization in decision-making, giving citizens the right to vote and constant communication between the state and citizens based on cooperation to determine strategic vectors of development [13].

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) report, *The Governance of Inclusive Growth*, explores the importance of good governance for achieving inclusive economic growth. It highlights that inclusive growth requires not only economic policies but also the active participation of all stakeholders in decision-making [14]. In this report, the OECD provides policy recommendations to support inclusive growth. It emphasizes that achieving inclusive growth outcomes requires consistent action throughout the policy cycle, from design and implementation to evaluation.

Since gaining independence, Kazakhstan has consistently implemented reforms in one or another area of public administration, following the recommendations of international organizations.

Thus, both international organizations and researchers emphasize that good governance, including control of corruption, quality of regulation, state effectiveness and the rule of law, plays a key role in ensuring inclusive and sustainable economic growth. However, the effect depends on the specific context and requires an integrated approach. In this regard, it is important to consider the main approaches to the implementation of good governance approaches in Kazakhstan to ensure inclusive economic growth of the country's green economy.

2

GOOD GOVERNANCE IN KAZAKHSTAN: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

In the Democracy Index 2023², which is annually compiled by the Economist Intelligence Unit, Kazakhstan in 2023 ranked 120th out of 167 countries, scoring 3.08 points out of 10 possible. Norway ranks first in the ranking (9.81 points). This index, in turn, consists of the following sub-indices: I - Electoral Process and Pluralism, II - Functioning of Government, III - Political Participation, IV - Political Culture and V - Civil Liberty.

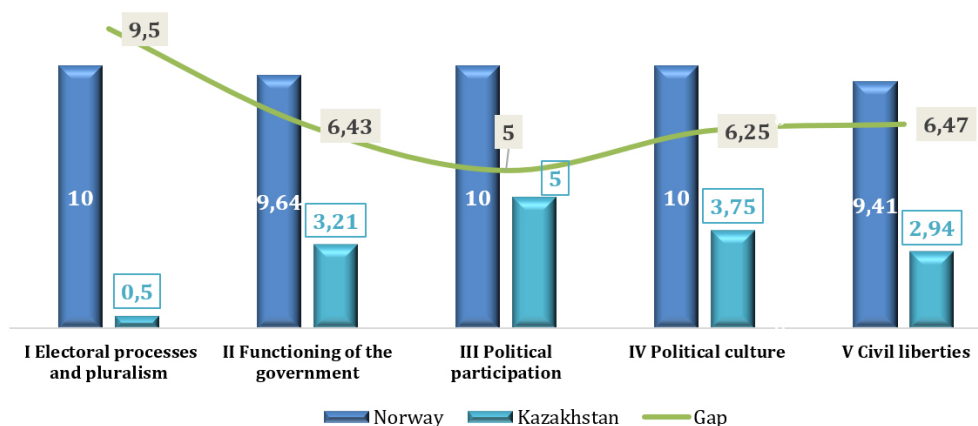


Figure 2 - Democracy Index in Kazakhstan and Norway in 2023
Source: Based on the Democracy Index 2023

Overall, Kazakhstan is striving to reduce the gap in the democracy index: the gap from the leader, Norway, in 2023 was more than 6 points, and from the world average - 2.15 points, and this gap tends to decrease. This is also due to the improvement of good governance processes.

² The Democracy Index is a ranking developed by the Economist Intelligence Unit that assesses the state of democracy in 167 countries around the world. It is based on 60 indicators grouped into five categories: electoral process and pluralism, civil liberties, functioning of government, political participation and political culture

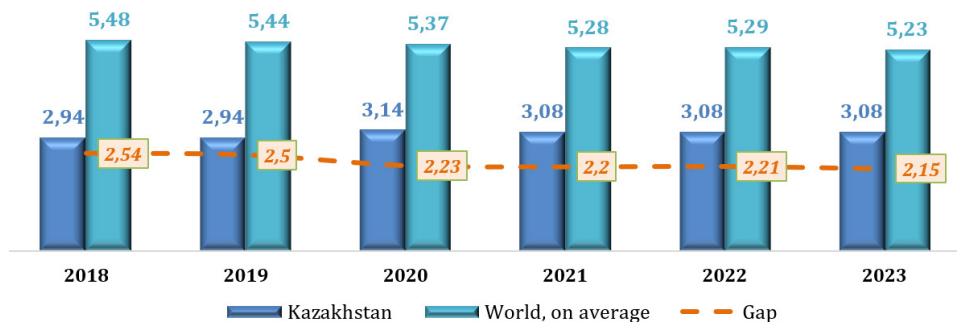


Figure 3 - Dynamics of the Democracy Index compared to the world average
 Source: Based on the Democracy Index 2023

The Democracy Index assesses aspects such as civil liberties and political participation of citizens. These factors are key elements of the concept of Good Governance, as they ensure citizen involvement in decision-making and public control.

There are regional differences in the interpretation and application of the principles of Good Governance. The Democracy Index allows countries to be compared in a global context and regional trends to be identified.

According to *Table 3*, Kazakhstan has improved its position in this rating by 7 points compared to 2022, although the indicators for 5 sub-indices remained at the 2022 level. At the same time, it is ahead of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in the rating by 35, 42 and 28 positions, respectively. At the same time, in this index, Kazakhstan lags behind Kyrgyzstan by 11 positions, primarily due to the low indicators of the sub-index «Electoral processes and pluralism». Along with this, Kazakhstan is ahead of other Central Asian countries in the sub-indices «Functioning of the government», «Political participation».

The “Government functioning” category of the Democracy Index assesses the effectiveness and accountability of state institutions. It is directly related to the principles of Good Governance, such as the rule of law, transparency and efficiency.

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Table 3 – Democracy Index in Central Asia

	Score	Rank	Change in ranking compared to previous year	I Electoral processes and pluralism	II Functioning of the government	III Political participation	IV Political culture	V Civil liberties
Kazakhstan	3,08	120	7	0,5	3,21	5	3,75	2,94
Kyrgyzstan	3,7	109	7	4,33	1,86	3,89	3,13	5,29
Tajikistan	1,94	155	1	0	2,21	2,22	4,38	0,88
Turkmenistan	1,66	162	-1	0	0,79	2,22	5	0,29
Uzbekistan	2,12	148	1	0,08	1,86	2,78	5	0,88

Source: Based on the Democracy Index 2023

Involving citizens in decision-making processes can increase accountability and transparency, thereby strengthening democratic legitimacy. Today, the strategic document that ensures the development of the public administration system is the Concept for the Development of Public Administration in the Republic of Kazakhstan until 2030, adopted in 2021 by the Decree of the President.

One of the strategic directions for the development of public administration is to increase the efficiency of government agencies by improving the personnel management system and developing their professional competencies. It is also important to ensure transparency and openness of government agencies for citizens and businesses, which includes improving access to information and public participation in the decision-making process. In addition, it is necessary to actively develop e-government and digitalization of public services to reduce bureaucracy, improve the convenience of interaction between citizens and government agencies, and improve the quality of services provided.

Several key reforms have been implemented in Kazakhstan that have contributed to improving the economic efficiency of public administration:

1. Civil service reform

The new civil service model was introduced to improve human resource management, which includes the creation of an integrated personnel management system. This allows for increased efficiency in personnel decision-making and improved quality of services provided. In July 2024, a new Concept for the Development of the Civil Service of the Republic of Kazakhstan was adopted by the Decree of the President.

2. Development of E-Government

E-government has become an important tool for improving the efficiency of public administration. It simplifies procedures, reduces bureaucracy and improves the availability of public services for citizens.

Kazakhstan's approach to the implementation of open government is largely determined by the issue of open data. The government has identified the development of e-government as one of its main priorities, as a result of which Kazakhstan became the first country in Central Asia to develop a corresponding initiative. This allowed Kazakhstan to take 28th position out of 193 countries in the UN e-government development ranking for 2022. Previously, Kazakhstan held the highest position in the ranking, also 28th place, in 2014. In 2016, the country ranked 33rd, in 2018 - 39th, and in 2020 - 29th place.

In Kazakhstan, the level of development of e-government is quite high, which contributes to more responsible management and meeting the needs of citizens.

- Implementation of electronic services: Kazakhstan is actively developing platforms for the provision of public services in electronic format, which allows citizens to receive services faster and more conveniently. This includes the creation of the «Electronic Government» portal, where various services are available, such as business registration, obtaining licenses and access to information on public procurement.

- Digitalization of processes: as part of the public administration reform, digitalization of processes is being implemented, which allows for a reduction in bureaucratic procedures and an increase in transparency. The use of information technologies contributes to more efficient management of resources and improved interaction between government agencies and citizens.

- Improving access to information: e-government development also includes initiatives to improve citizens' access to information about the activities of government bodies. This contributes to increased transparency and accountability of government.

- User training and support: Kazakhstan runs programs to train citizens and civil servants in the use of electronic services. This is important to improve digital literacy and ensure the effective use of new technologies.

- Integration with international standards: Kazakhstan strives to comply with international standards in the field of e-government, which includes cooperation with international organizations, such as the OECD, to exchange experiences and implement best practices.

- Benefits for business: the development of e-government is also aimed at creating a more favorable business climate. Simplifying registration and permitting procedures helps attract investment and develop

entrepreneurship.

Thus, the development of e-government in Kazakhstan is an important step towards modernizing public administration, increasing its efficiency and improving the quality of life of citizens. These initiatives contribute to the creation of a more transparent, accessible and responsible system of public administration.

3. Decentralization

As part of decentralization reforms, local governments have been given more powers and financial independence. This allows them to respond more effectively to the needs of local communities and improve the quality of services. Several key measures have been taken in Kazakhstan to strengthen the financial independence of local governments:

- Introduction of the fourth level of the budget system: In 2018, Kazakhstan introduced the fourth level of the budget system, which allows rural areas to manage their own budgets and municipal property. This change reduces the dependence of local authorities on subventions provided by higher-level budgets and allows for the use of diverse sources of revenue, such as taxes, fees, and income from municipal property.

- Adoption of the concept of local self-government development: in August 2021, the Concept of Local Self-Government Development in Kazakhstan until 2025 was adopted, which is aimed at improving the financial base of local authorities and expanding their powers.

- Training and professional development of local leaders: as part of the reforms, a training program was organized for akims (heads of local authorities), during which about 2,500 participants received knowledge about the expanded functions of local governments and mechanisms for direct financing of local budgets [15].

- Creating mechanisms to increase the tax base: the government is working to transfer some taxes and fees to the rural district level, which should increase their budget revenues. This includes the possibility of creating public utilities that can provide services and generate revenues for local budgets.

- Simplification of procedures and improvement of legislation: work is underway to change legislation in areas such as public procurement and simplification of procedures for the fourth level of the budget, which should contribute to more efficient financial management at the local level.

These measures are aimed at creating a more sustainable financial base for local governments, which, in turn, should contribute to more effective solutions to local problems and improve the quality of life of citizens.

4. Improving ethical standards

- The introduction of ethical standards for civil servants is aimed at combating corruption and increasing citizens' trust in state institutions. The development of codes of conduct for civil servants helps to form higher standards of professionalism and responsibility.

5. Increase transparency and accountability

- Governance reform includes mechanisms that promote greater transparency and accountability of government bodies. This includes the introduction of systems for monitoring and evaluating the performance of government agencies, openness and transparency of budget information, open data, etc.

These reforms aim to create a more effective, transparent and accountable public administration system, which in turn contributes to sustainable economic growth in Kazakhstan. Improving the quality of public services, reducing bureaucratic barriers and increasing citizens' trust in public institutions are key to achieving these goals.

Evidence of the effectiveness of the reforms is the improvement in Kazakhstan's Good governance indicators.

Kazakhstan scores above average on several WGI dimensions, such as "government effectiveness" and "regulatory quality". However, it lags behind the leaders in "voice and accountability", "rule of law" and "control of corruption" (Figure 4).



Figure 4 – Good Governance Indicators for 2022

Source: Based on <https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/worldwide-governance-indicators>

At the same time, Kazakhstan is a leader in terms of "good governance" among Central Asian countries in such indicators as "control of

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corruption,” “government effectiveness,” “quality of regulation,” and “rule of law” (Figure 5).

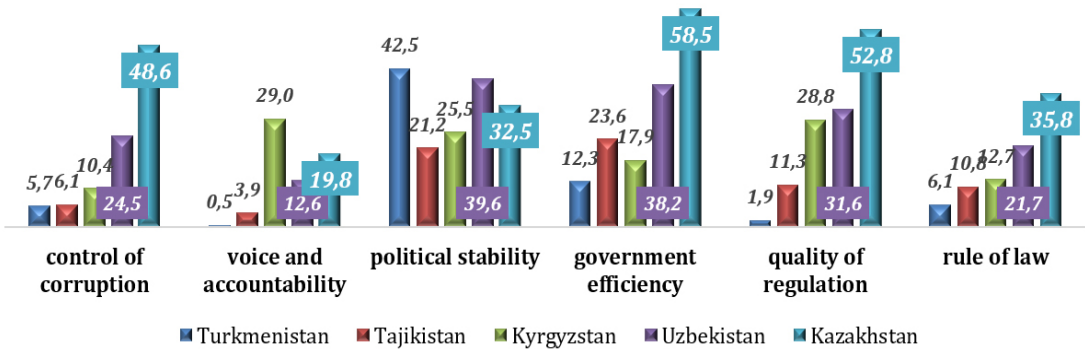


Figure 5 – Worldwide governance indicators in 2023 for Central Asian countries
Source: Based on <https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/worldwide-governance-indicators>

In 2018, Finland was the world leader in the WGI’s Control of Corruption indicator, while Denmark was the leader from 2019 to 2022. At the same time, Kazakhstan significantly improved its score from 37.6 (132nd place) to 48.6 points (108th place) from 2018 to 2022, respectively. Kazakhstan also demonstrated progress, improving its score to 39 on the Corruption Perception Index in 2023, which is due to a number of reforms aimed at combating corruption and the Government’s efforts to return of illegally acquired assets (Table 4).

Table 4 – Dynamics of the indicator “Control over corruption”

Countries	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Tajikistan	8,1	6,7	9,0	8,1	6,7	6,1
Uzbekistan	11,9	12,9	15,2	15,7	22,4	24,5
Turkmenistan	7,1	7,6	7,6	5,7	5,7	5,7
Kazakhstan	20,0	37,6	45,2	41,0	47,1	48,6
Kyrgyzstan	12,9	16,2	17,1	13,3	12,9	10,4

Source: Based on <https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/worldwide-governance-indicators>

According to the “government effectiveness” indicator, Singapore ranks first (100 points) for the specified period of time; it is noteworthy that Kazakhstan rose from 104th to 88th place (an increase of 16 positions).

An equally important indicator of «good governance» is «voice and accountability», in which Kazakhstan has risen 8 positions since 2018 in 2022, ranking 168th out of 213 countries. The country also demon-

strates positive growth dynamics in the «rule of law» indicator, ranking 137th (an increase of 4 positions compared to 2018).

But better indicators for the indicator of the effectiveness of public administration bodies are significantly higher than other WGI indicators. In addition, the trend of its change is consistently positive: from 11.35 percentiles in 2002, it rose to 58.49% in 2022. At the same time, Kazakhstan demonstrates stable growth dynamics of this indicator compared to other Central Asian countries (*Table 5*).

Table 5 - Dynamics of the indicator «Government effectiveness»

Countries	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Tajikistan	11,0	11,4	12,4	21,9	29,5	23,6
Uzbekistan	30,0	31,4	31,4	29,5	40,5	38,2
Turkmenistan	14,3	13,3	14,3	13,8	14,3	12,3
Kazakhstan	49,5	51,0	54,8	55,7	55,2	58,5
Kyrgyzstan	22,4	29,0	25,7	31,4	22,4	17,9

Source: Based on <https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/worldwide-governance-indicators>

Thus, the current state of public administration in Kazakhstan is characterized by both the process of improvement and the presence of significant challenges. Kazakhstan has made significant progress in improving the quality of public services and the efficiency of the civil service, which is reflected in the improvement of the World Bank indicators on governance. This has also been facilitated by the introduction of e-government and the principle of «one-stop-shop» for the provision of services, which has ensured the increase in the availability and quality of public services, as well as the improvement of the indicators of «quality of regulation» (*Table 6*).

Table 6 - Dynamics of the indicator «Quality of regulation»

Countries	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Tajikistan	11,9	11,4	11,4	11,4	11,4	11,3
Uzbekistan	8,6	10,0	11,9	13,8	31,9	31,6
Turkmenistan	1,9	2,9	2,4	1,9	1,9	1,9
Kazakhstan	61,0	59,0	60,5	56,7	55,7	52,8
Kyrgyzstan	37,6	36,7	37,6	36,7	30,5	28,8

Source: Based on <https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/worldwide-governance-indicators>

These processes were further developed with the adoption of the Decree of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated April 13, 2022 No. 872 «On measures to de-bureaucratize the state apparatus»[16]. The main principles of de-bureaucratization of the state apparatus are:

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priority of substance over form, digitalization by default, managerial responsibility, continuous improvement and optimal regulation.

According to the National Report on the State of the Civil Service of Kazakhstan for 2023, as a result of decentralization, 496 functions of state bodies were redistributed. Of these functions, the government transferred 473 to central government bodies, as well as 2 to local executive bodies. As a result of these actions, the activities of some state bodies were de-bureaucratized. As a result, 364 functions were excluded from legal acts due to their formality and re-fixed in the provisions on state bodies [17].

Kazakhstan is implementing reforms aimed at reducing the state's share in the economy, which currently exceeds 40%. The Decree of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated May 8, 2024 No. 542 [18] «On measures to liberalize the economy» envisages the privatization of state assets and a reduction in state intervention in the economy.

The government aims to create a competitive environment, which includes removing barriers to private investment and developing mechanisms that facilitate a market economy. These processes are supported by the implementation of the rule of law principle, which places Kazakhstan ahead of other Central Asian countries (*Table 7*).

Table 7 - Dynamics of the Rule of Law indicator

Countries	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Tajikistan	7,6	7,6	8,6	9,0	10,5	10,8
Uzbekistan	11,0	12,9	13,3	12,9	18,6	21,7
Turkmenistan	5,7	6,2	6,2	6,2	6,7	6,1
Kazakhstan	32,9	33,3	32,9	36,2	33,3	35,8
Kyrgyzstan	17,1	18,1	19,0	17,6	13,8	12,7

Source: Based on <https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/worldwide-governance-indicators>

Overall, Kazakhstan has demonstrated positive results in the area of economic growth and public administration reforms. However, to achieve sustainable growth and diversification of the economy, it is necessary to continue working on improving management practices, increasing transparency and combating corruption. These measures will help create more favorable conditions for business and improve the quality of life of citizens.

At the same time, an important factor in increasing institutional effectiveness is the participation of civil society in decision-making. In this regard, we note that over the past six years, Kazakhstan has demonstrated a steady growth in the WGI indicator «voice and ac-

countability». According to *Table 8*, this indicator has grown from 13.79 percentiles to 19.8 percentiles in 2022 (an increase of 1.5 times) compared to 2017. Only Uzbekistan has shown a greater increase (3.64 times), which is due to the acceleration of institutional reforms in the country (*Table 8*).

Table 8 – Dynamics of the indicator «Voice and Accountability»

Countries	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Tajikistan	4,9	4,9	3,9	3,9	3,4	3,9
Uzbekistan	3,4	6,3	6,3	6,3	12,6	12,6
Turkmenistan	1,0	1,0	1,0	1,0	1,4	0,5
Kazakhstan	13,8	15,0	14,5	15,9	18,8	19,8
Kyrgyzstan	33,5	34,5	33,3	32,4	32,4	29,0

Source: Based on <https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/worldwide-governance-indicators>

The sustainable growth dynamics of the analyzed indicator is largely due to the fact that Kazakhstan is implementing the concept of the «Hearing State» [19], aimed at ensuring that the constitutional rights and freedoms of individuals, businesses and the non-governmental sector are fully realized, as well as stimulating their participation in socially important areas of life.

The concept of civil society development, approved by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated August 27, 2020 [20], provides for the development of a unified regulation for holding public hearings based on international standards and recommendations, in particular those contained in the UN Economic Commission for Europe Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters [21].

The adoption of the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan “On Public Control” [22] and the creation of the information system “E-OTYNYSH” contributes to the development of the institution of petitions in electronic form for citizens to initiate reforms and proposals for improving public administration.

It should be noted that the effectiveness of the reforms being implemented is largely linked to political stability and the level of democratization (*Table 9*). At this time, Kazakhstan needs to strengthen its governance structure, focusing on institutional reforms, increasing the accountability of the public sector and promoting civic engagement. These measures are necessary to create a more favorable environment for economic growth, which will also affect political stability in the country.

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Table 9 – Dynamics of the indicator «Political stability»

Countries	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Tajikistan	22,9	19,8	26,4	26,9	23,6	21,2
Uzbekistan	37,6	35,8	34,9	32,1	37,7	39,6
Turkmenistan	40,0	45,8	40,6	41,0	34,9	42,5
Kazakhstan	47,1	44,8	41,5	38,2	38,2	32,5
Kyrgyzstan	31,9	28,8	37,7	28,8	29,7	25,5

Source: Based on <https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/worldwide-governance-indicators>

Good governance is critical to economic growth, but Kazakhstan must address governance issues comprehensively to fully realize its economic potential.

In this regard, let us analyze the Global Sustainable Competitiveness Index, which consists of six sub-indices: natural, social and intellectual capital, resource productivity, economic sustainability and governance. This index shows a country's ability to meet the needs and basic needs of current generations, while maintaining or increasing national and individual wealth in the future, without depleting natural and social capital. This index is calculated by SolAbility Sustainable Intelligence³, and:

- Natural capital: the given natural environment, including the availability of resources and the rate of depletion of these resources.
- Resource efficiency: the efficiency with which available resources are used as a measure of operational competitiveness in a resource-constrained world.
- Social capital: the health, security, freedom, equality and life satisfaction that contribute to development.
- Intellectual capital: the ability to create wealth and jobs through innovation and value-added industries in globalized markets.
- Economic sustainability: economic sustainability and competitiveness reflect the ability to create wealth through sustainable economic development that exploits its full potential.
- Governance effectiveness is the provision of a framework for sustainable and stable wealth creation through resource allocation, infrastructure, market and employment governance.

In 2023, the leaders of this rating were the Scandinavian countries, led by Sweden (59.6 points), Finland (59.4 points) and Iceland (59.2 points).

Kazakhstan ranks 66th in this rating, Kyrgyzstan ranks 79th, Uzbekistan ranks 89th, Tajikistan ranks 125th and Turkmenistan ranks 145th. At the same time, Kazakhstan lags behind the countries with the max-

³ SolAbility is a sustainability think tank and consultancy that has produced 3 DJSI Global Industry Leaders. URL: <https://solability.com/>

imum score by 25%, and Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan by 26.8%, 28.8%, 33.1% and 35.4%, respectively (Figure 6).

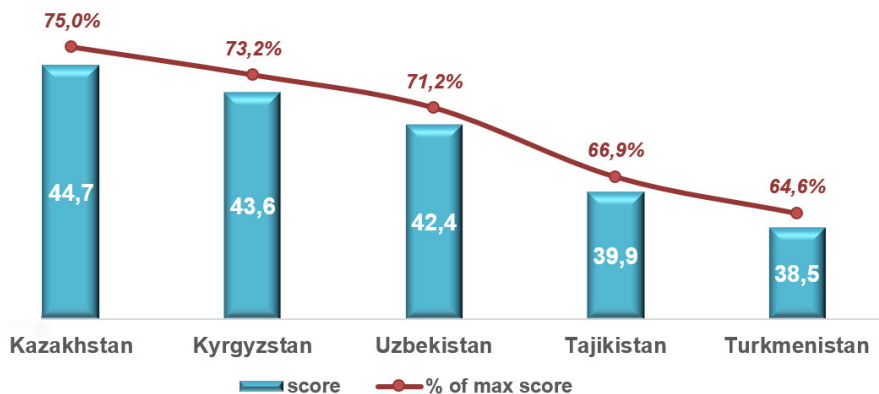


Figure 6 - Global Sustainable Competitiveness Index in Central Asian Countries
 Source: Based on <https://solability.com/the-global-sustainable-competitiveness-index/the-index>

Figure 6 shows the data on the sub-indices of the Global Sustainability Index for the Central Asian countries, where we see that Kazakhstan is the leader in economic sustainability indicators (44.6%, lagging behind the countries with the maximum score by 21.1%). The leader in this index in the world ranking is Slovenia with an indicator of 56.5 points.

Kazakhstan also leads among the Central Asian countries in terms of intellectual capital, occupying 58th place in the world ranking, while lagging behind the leader of the sub-rating - the Republic of Korea by 42.2%.

According to the authors of the report, countries with a high score in this ranking are more likely than others to develop (or maintain) a successful economy through research and knowledge-based industries, i.e. industries with high added value, and, therefore, to achieve higher growth rates. In this regard, as the Head of State noted at a meeting of the National Council for Science and Technology, the development of science is a strategically important priority for Kazakhstan. At the same time, it is especially important to create conditions for talented and capable young people to engage in science [23].

Good governance is definitely related to the issues of developing and maintaining social capital. To maintain a stable environment in which economic activity can take place, a certain level of social balance or social consensus is necessary. Economic prosperity depends on the level of social capital of a country. The greater the social consensus, the more people want to do something for the greater good, such as the sustainable development of the country.

The ranking for social capital is led by the Scandinavian countries,

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with Iceland in the lead (66 points). Kazakhstan ranks 68th out of 180 countries. Among the Central Asian countries, Uzbekistan leads, ranking 42nd (*Figure 7*). In this regard, it is important for Kazakhstan to focus on the implementation of the principle of “leaving no one behind.” The principle of inclusiveness, or the actions of inclusive institutions, are the basis for the functioning of the system of instrumental support for economic development, which allows a wider range of citizens to participate in economic relations with the opportunity to receive and earn more income.

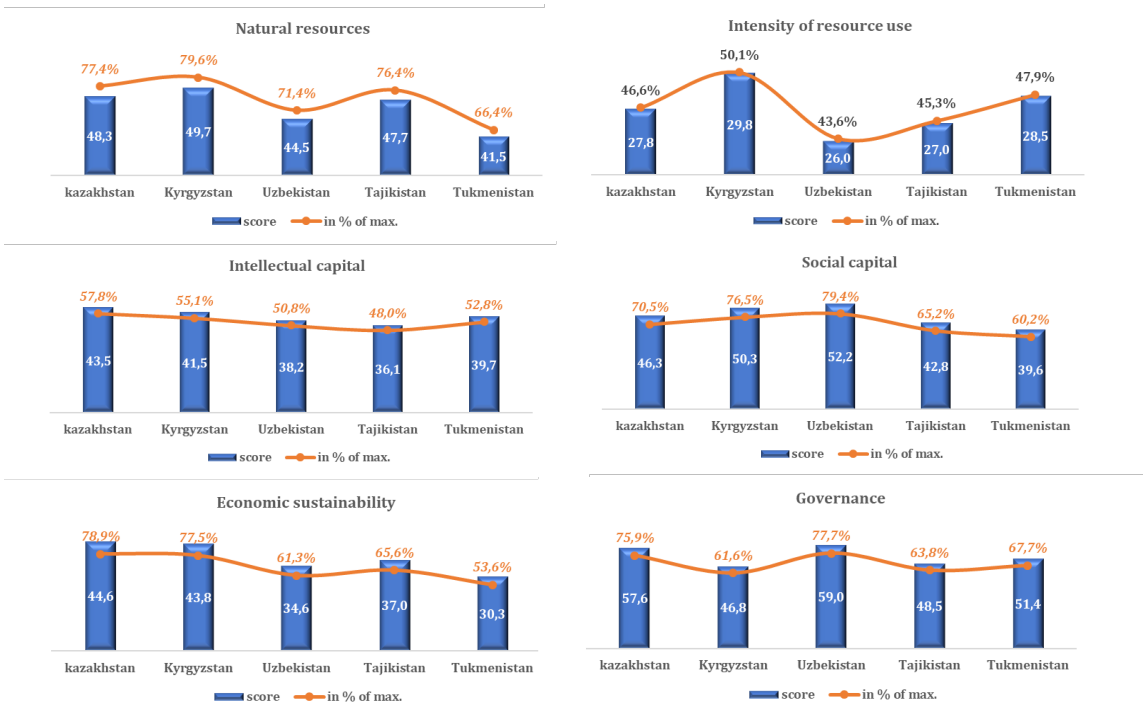


Figure 7 - Sub-indices of sustainable competitiveness in Central Asian countries

Source: Based on <https://solability.com/the-global-sustainable-competitiveness-index/the-index>

Kazakhstan can manage its capabilities in terms of preventing corruption, digitalizing business processes, increasing the country’s intellectual potential, and implementing social preferences in society. The formula for good governance for Kazakhstan is:

**GOVERNANCE = DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATION:
FORMATION OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CAPITAL**

At the same time, important elements of modern society that help create more equitable and efficient systems are inclusiveness, the tran-

sition to more efficient technologies and transport accessibility of the territory. Inclusive growth and green technologies depend on good governance.

Good governance promotes inclusive growth through:

Transparency and accountability. Transparent governance processes allow all sectors of the population to participate in decision-making, resulting in a more equitable distribution of resources and opportunities.

Citizen participation. Involvement of different groups in the decision-making process helps to take into account their needs and interests, which leads to more equitable economic growth.

The implementation of environmentally friendly technologies also depends on proper governance:

Strategic planning. Developing and implementing strategies for the use of clean technologies and sustainable development are part of good governance. This may include funding energy efficiency and renewable energy projects.

Collaboration with the private sector. Good governance promotes innovative green technologies and practices in construction and other sectors.

Good governance creates conditions for sustainable development, taking into account the interests of all sectors of society and promoting more efficient use of resources. In this regard, let us consider how the principle of inclusiveness and the development of a «green» economy are implemented in Kazakhstan.

3

INCLUSIVE GROWTH: NO ONE WILL BE LEFT BEHIND

The transition to an inclusive and sustainable growth path is an important policy goal of Kazakhstan and part of the country's commitments under the 2030 Agenda. Kazakhstan strives to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets aimed at ensuring the well-being of all citizens.

Inclusive growth emphasizes the importance of not only quantitative economic growth, but also qualitative improvement in the lives of all citizens, especially those who are least advantaged. It aims to create an economic system in which everyone has an equal chance of success and prosperity, which implies the implementation of good governance principles.

Over the past 30 years, Kazakhstan has shown significant economic growth. As one of the largest oil-producing economies, the country has been able to use oil revenues as an engine of economic development. According to the BNS RK, GDP per capita increased from US\$1,350.4 in 1996 to US\$13,276.7 in 2023. At the same time, this growth was accompanied by an improvement in living standards and a decrease in poverty. In 1996, about 30% of the population lived below the poverty line, while in 2023 this figure dropped to 5% (*Figure 8*).

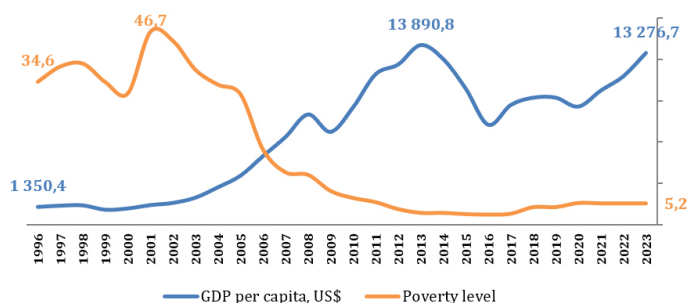


Figure 8 - Dynamics of GDP per capita and poverty in Kazakhstan

Source: Calculated based on data from the Bureau of National Statistics of the ASPR of the Republic of Kazakhstan

The Gini coefficient also showed a noticeable decrease against the backdrop of economic growth in the early 2000s – from 0.366 in 2000 to 0.267 in 2009. In the subsequent period 2010-2023, it tended to gradually increase and varied within the range of about 0.278-0.291. At the same time, from 2013 to 2023, it increased by 5.1% (Figure 9). Data from the World Inequality Database indicate that 1% of the population in Kazakhstan own 29.2% of the country’s national wealth, while 50% of the population owns only 4.6% of this wealth [24].

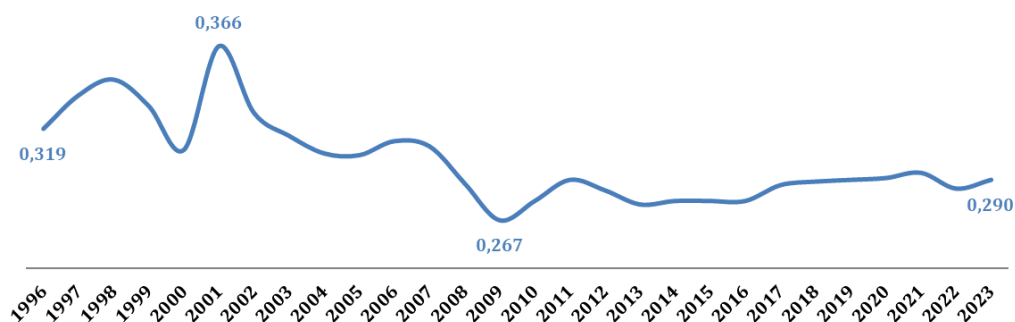


Figure 9 - Gini coefficient in Kazakhstan, 1996-2023

Source: Calculated based on data from the Bureau of National Statistics of the ASPR of the Republic of Kazakhstan

Therefore, at the current stage of development, Kazakhstan faces an important task of launching the economy in terms of achieving inclusiveness.

President Tokayev presented a new economic course in 2023. The goal of the reforms is to achieve sustainable economic growth of 6-7% and double the size of the national economy to 450 billion dollars by 2029. At the same time, the focus will be on «a fair distribution of national wealth so that every citizen can feel the fruits of progressive economic development» [25].

Challenges for an Inclusive Economy

Kazakhstan’s economic growth has disproportionately benefited higher-income groups, while lower- and middle-income households have been left behind. Kazakhstan now faces a number of key challenges that will shape the country’s further inclusive development.

Managing Demographic Challenges

Demography is both a challenge and an advantage for any country. Harnessing its potential provides an opportunity to ensure a sustainable future for its citizens.

Against the backdrop of steady population growth in Kazakhstan, there is a transformation of the age and gender structure of the popu-

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lation, which will determine the future demographic dynamics, as well as the socio-economic trends of the country's development.

Thus, the share of working-age citizens decreased in the period from 2011-2023 from 64.0% to 57.7%, while the share of children increased from 26.1% to 31.2%, the share of the older generation - from 9.9% to 11.4%. At the same time, it should be noted that the rate of decline in the working-age population has slowed down in recent years, due to the entry into the active age period of the generation born in the early 2000s, when high birth rates were noted (*Figure 10*).

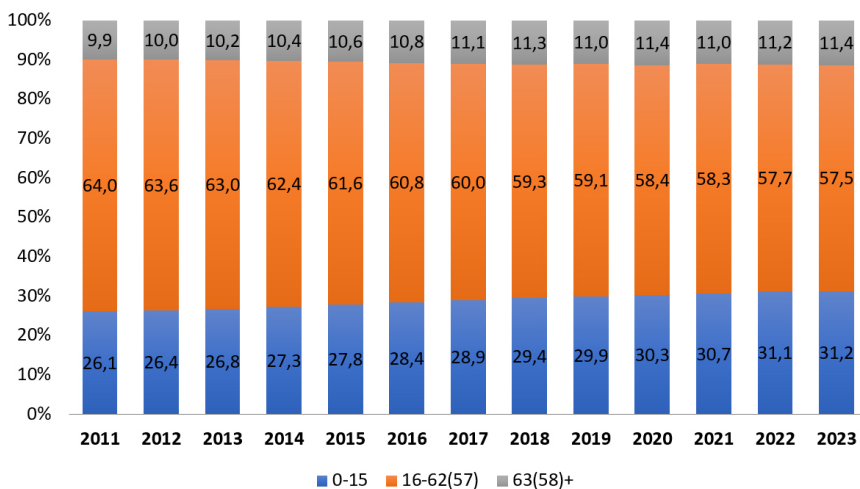


Figure 10 - Population structure of Kazakhstan by main age groups, % (at the beginning of the year)

Source: Calculated based on data from the Bureau of National Statistics of the ASPR of the Republic of Kazakhstan

At the same time, some peculiarities are noted in the gender and regional context.

Firstly, the share of women in the population structure is decreasing. Compared to 2011 (women - 51.8%, men - 48.2%), the share of women decreased by 0.6% at the beginning of 2023. These changes are mainly due to changes in the age structure of the population - a significant increase in the share of the population under the working age, in which the share of the male population is higher (women - 48.6%, men - 51.4% at the beginning of 2023).

Secondly, the regions show multidirectional dynamics of population growth. Thus, the population of the southern and western regions is the youngest. In the Turkestan and Mangistau regions, the highest share of children and adolescents under the age of 15 is - at the beginning of 2023, their share was 39.5% and 38.7%, respectively.

At the same time, in the northeast and central parts of the country,

the population is aging due to insignificant natural population growth and negative migration balance. The highest proportion of the elderly population at the beginning of 2023 lives in the North Kazakhstan region (18.6%), East Kazakhstan (19.3%) and Kostanay (16.8%) regions.

Ensuring equal access to the labour market

Data over the past 10 years show consistent positive trends in Kazakhstan’s labor market. Labor force participation and unemployment rates remain relatively stable, despite the impact of external factors such as the pandemic (*Figure 11*).

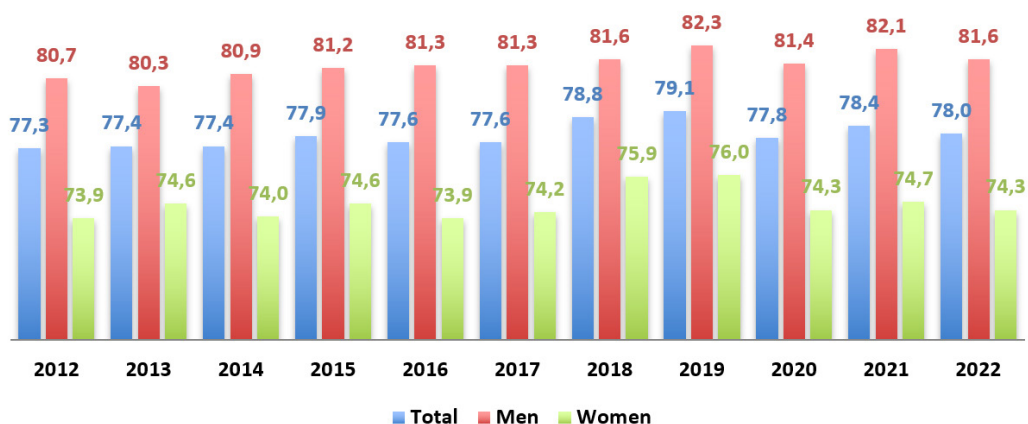


Figure 11 - Employment rate to working-age population, in %
 Source: Calculated based on data from the Bureau of National Statistics of the ASPR of the Republic of Kazakhstan

There are minor differences in the labor force participation rate between the regions of Kazakhstan. The regions with the lowest participation rate are Shymkent city and Turkestan region, where the participation rate is around 59-63%. While the regions with the highest participation rate are Atyrau and Mangistau regions, where this figure reaches 73-77%.

Regions specializing in the extractive industry (Mangistau, Atyrau and Karaganda regions), as well as the cities of Almaty and Astana, are characterized by a high concentration of hired employment. While agriculturally oriented regions, such as North Kazakhstan, Zhambyl and Kostanay regions, have a significant share of self-employed people working in agriculture.

In terms of gender, since 2001, the female labor force participation rate has remained approximately the same, decreasing from 65% to 63.3%. The male labor force participation rate is 74.5% as of 2023. Compared to the labor force participation rate in upper-middle income countries, the gap between men and women in Kazakhstan is lower [26].

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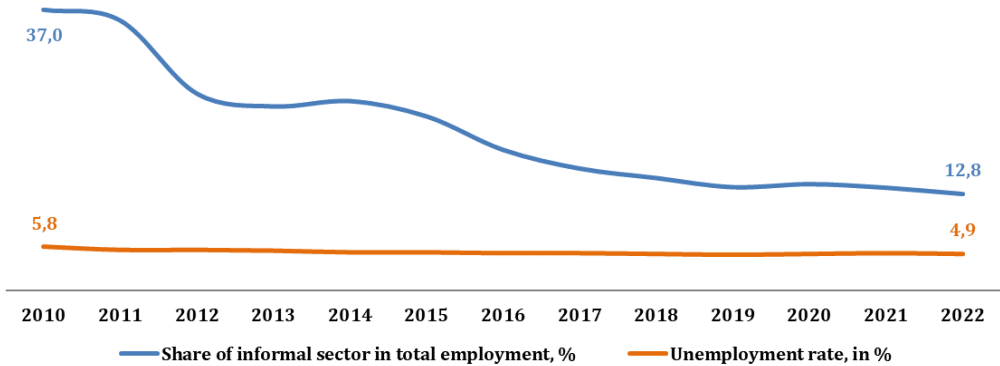


Figure 12 - Unemployment and informal employment in Kazakhstan

Source: Calculated based on data from the Bureau of National Statistics of the ASPR of the Republic of Kazakhstan

The unemployment rate was 4.9% in 2023, with the rate for men being 4.2% and for women 5.3%. Informal wage employment has significantly decreased from 37% to 12.8% in 2010-2023 (Figure 12). At the same time, shadow employment is much more common in the southern regions and in the agricultural, trade and other services sectors.

Improving the quality of human capital

Over the years of independence, Kazakhstan has made significant progress in developing human capital. As of 2022, the country is categorized as a country with a very high level of human development (HDI), ranking 67th among 193 countries (Figure 13).

Between 1990 and 2022, life expectancy at birth in Kazakhstan changed by 4.6 years, expected years of schooling changed by 2.6 years, and average years of schooling changed by 4.9 years.

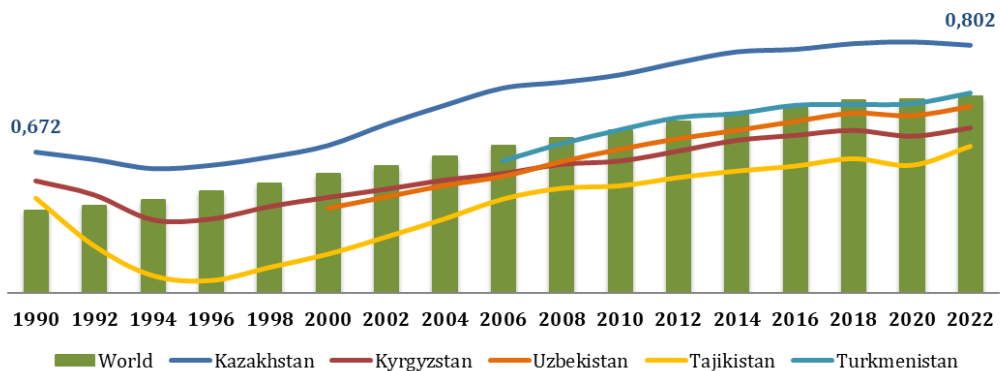


Figure 13 - Human Development Index in Central Asian Countries, 1990-2022

Source: Human Development Report 1990-2022

In the Central Asian region, Kazakhstan is ahead of its neighboring countries. In 2022, Turkmenistan (94th place), Uzbekistan (106th place), Kyrgyzstan (117th place) were included in the list of countries with a high level of human development, and Tajikistan (126th place) - with an average level of human development. The leading countries in the ranking were Switzerland, Norway and Iceland.

Against the backdrop of the impact of the pandemic, the value of the global Human Development Index (HDI) has shown negative dynamics for several years in a row around the world. Kazakhstan's HDI has decreased since 2018 from 0.804 to 0.802 points.

Reducing the gap in access to quality education is the core of the country's policy. The PISA-2022 (Programme for International Student Assessment) study showed that the quality of secondary education hinders the accelerated development of human capital. Compared to 2018, Kazakhstan ranked 46th among 81 countries in mathematics (54th in 2018), 61st in reading (69th in 2018), and 49th in science (69th in 2018). However, 15-year-old students scored below the OECD average. The gap between students from the richest 25% of households is 41 points ahead of their peers from the poorest 25% in mathematical literacy.

Thus, Kazakhstan is committed to inclusive economic growth, which reflects its desire to improve the quality of life and ensure equal opportunities for all segments of the population.

Improving the efficiency of the Kazakhstan economy, stimulating innovation and attracting foreign investment are part of the strategies developed and implemented by the country's government. These actions are aimed at achieving long-term goals in the field of economic development and improving the well-being of the population.

Inclusive growth in Kazakhstan includes programs that support vulnerable groups such as women and youth. This allows them to access resources and participate in economic processes.

Supporting innovation and technology that creates new jobs and increases productivity is critical. Kazakhstan is actively using digital technologies to support inclusive growth in its economy.

As part of its inclusive growth policy, Kazakhstan pays special attention to environmental sustainability. Initiatives to develop renewable energy sources and improve energy efficiency reflect the country's commitment to comply with international environmental standards and minimize negative impacts, which demonstrates the country's focus on a green economy.

4

KAZAKHSTAN ON THE WAY TO A GREEN ECONOMY

Good governance promotes the development of a green economy by supporting sustainable technologies and practices. In recent decades, many developed and developing countries have prioritized sustainable economic development, setting targets for the rational use of resources and reducing negative impacts on the environment. This approach underlies the concept of a green economy, which aims to integrate environmental and social aspects into economic activity in order to achieve sustainable development (*Figure 14*).

KEY PRINCIPLES DEFINED BY THE CONCEPT: ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY, SOCIAL INCLUSION, ECONOMIC EFFICIENCY.

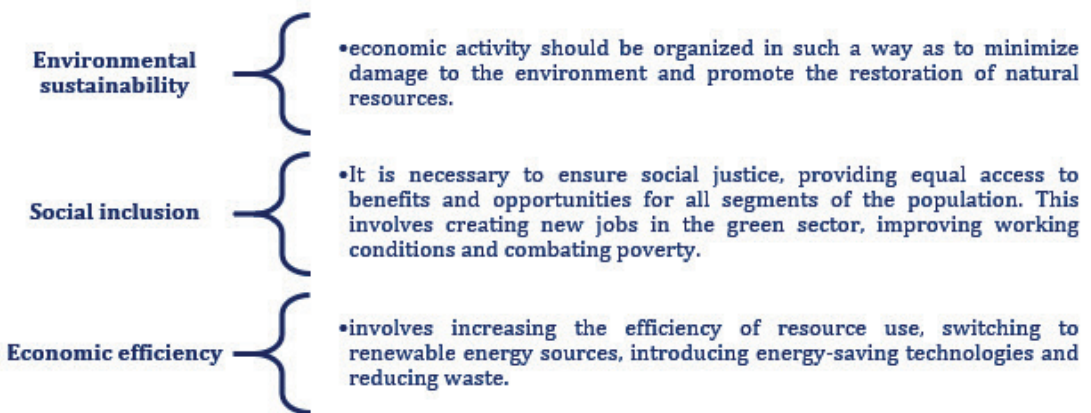


Figure 14 - Key principles of the concept of green economy

These principles underlie many international programs and initiatives aimed at promoting a green economy, such as: the Green Economy Initiative, launched by the United Nations Environment Programme in 2008; the Paris Agreement, adopted in 2015 under the UN Convention on Climate Change; the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by the UN in 2015 as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; the European Green Deal, adopted by the European Union in 2019, and many others.

However, the transition to a green economy is not without challenges. Among them are the need for significant investment, reforming governance systems, and overcoming socio-economic barriers. However, despite these difficulties, international programs and policies such as the Paris Agreement and the European Green Deal demonstrate that the transition to a green economy is not only possible, but also necessary to ensure the long-term well-being of the planet and its people.

Transformation of the economy of Kazakhstan

In recent decades, Kazakhstan has become one of the leading regional leaders in sustainable development and the transition to a green economy. This path has been marked by significant efforts and achievements aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions, developing renewable energy sources and strengthening environmental sustainability. Kazakhstan's commitment to the international agenda to combat climate change and achieve carbon neutrality makes it an important player on the global stage in this area.

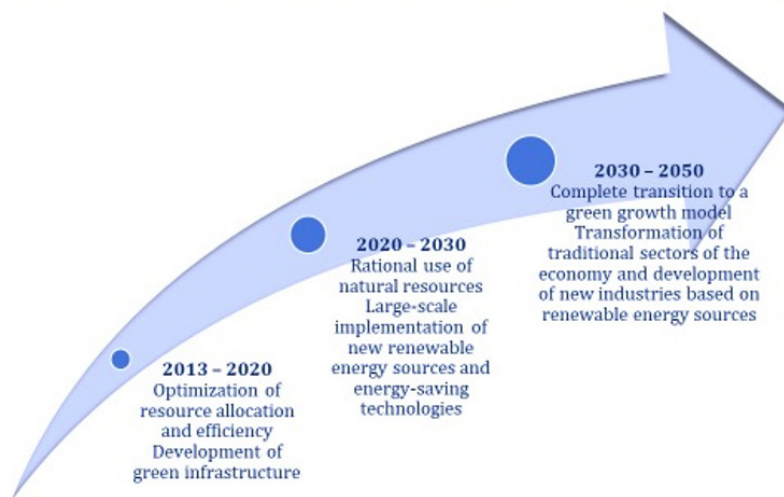
Kazakhstan's transition to a green economy model is a key element in the country's strategy for ensuring sustainable economic growth. In this direction, the state is taking active steps that cover various sectors of the economy.

Key dates

The transformational path began in 2013 with the adoption of the "Concept of the Transition of the Republic of Kazakhstan to a Green Economy," which laid the foundations for the national sustainable development strategy. This document defined key areas that ensure the transition to a green development model: increasing energy efficiency, developing renewable energy sources (RES), improving water and waste management (*Figure 15*).

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>1% of GDP or 3-4 billion US dollars annual investment in green economy



*Figure 15 - Strategy for Kazakhstan's transition to a «green» economy model
Source: Based on [28]*

In 2024, amendments and additions were made to the Concept for the transition of the Republic of Kazakhstan to a green economy for the period 2024-2030 [28]. The additions and changes are related to changing conditions and a larger scope and approaches to the transition to a green economy.

Following the course of sustainable development, Kazakhstan demonstrated its commitment to the global fight against climate change by becoming an active participant in the Paris Agreement. In August 2016, the country signed the Paris Agreement, and in December of the same year it was already ratified, which confirmed Kazakhstan's commitments within the international climate movement.

Even before the official signing of the Paris Agreement, in September 2015, Kazakhstan submitted its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. As part of the NDC, Kazakhstan committed to achieving the following goals:

- unconditional reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 15% by December 2030 compared to 1990 levels;
- conditional reduction of GHG emissions by 25% by December 2030 compared to 1990 levels, subject to additional international investment, access to the low-carbon technology transfer mechanism, funds from the Green Climate Fund and the flexible mechanism for countries with economies in transition.

In December 2020, at the Climate Ambition Summit, President Tokayev announced a new goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2060. This

ambitious commitment is part of a broader strategy to transition to a green economy. This decision underlines the country's seriousness in combating climate change.

An important step in implementing the commitments made was the approval in February 2023 of the "Strategy for Achieving Carbon Neutrality of the Republic of Kazakhstan by 2060" [29].

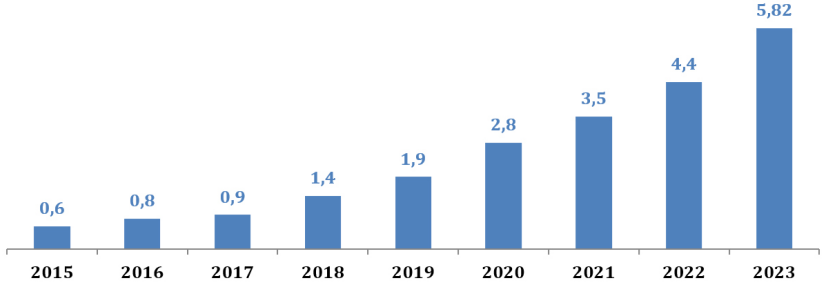
According to this strategy, the country plans to achieve zero GHG emissions by 2060, provided that 45% of GHG is absorbed from the land use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF) sectors. In addition, the country will actively introduce low-carbon technologies, expand renewable energy facilities and improve energy efficiency in all sectors of the economy.

Achievements of the modern period

Renewable energy sources (RES). One of the important tasks at the present stage is the transformation of the energy sector, the development of renewable energy sources. The law on support of renewable energy sources in Kazakhstan was first adopted in 2009, which was an important step towards the development of green energy in the country. However, despite the initial efforts, real impetus to the development of renewable energy sources was given only after subsequent revisions of this law, which took place between 2013 and 2017. These changes made significant improvements to the legislative framework, which made it possible to create more favorable conditions for investment in renewable energy sources, attract private companies and launch large projects in this area. As a result of these legislative reforms, Kazakhstan was able to significantly accelerate the development of renewable energy, making renewable energy sources an important component of its energy balance and sustainable development strategy.

Today, there is a steady increase in the share of electricity produced by renewable energy sources. Without taking into account large hydroelectric power plants in the total volume of electricity production, the share of renewable energy sources in 2023 was 5.82% (*Figure 16*), with the volume of generated energy of 6.6 billion kWh. It should be noted that since 2014, the installed capacity of renewable energy sources has increased more than 16 times - from 178 MW to 2868 MW by the end of 2023.

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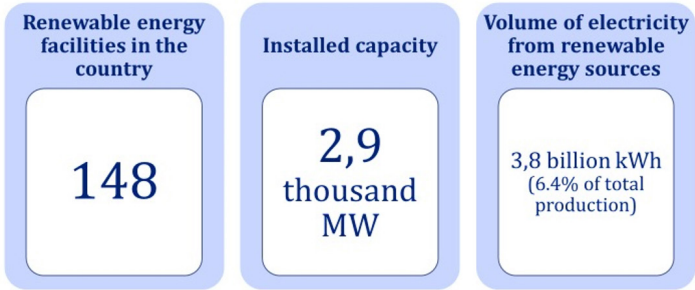


*Figure 16 - Share of renewable energy sources in total electricity production by year, %.
Source: Calculated based on data from the Bureau of National Statistics of the ASPR of the Republic of Kazakhstan*

The increase in electricity generation by renewable energy sources in 2023 compared to 2022 is 30%. The largest share of electricity generation comes from wind power plants - 3,824.99 million kWh, the smallest from bioelectric power plants - 2.71 million kWh, solar power plants generated 1,853.95 million kWh, small hydroelectric power plants - 993.87 million kWh.

At the end of 2023, the installed capacity of renewable energy sources is 2,868.6 MW, including: wind power plants - 1,394.6 MW, small hydroelectric power plants - 269.605 MW, solar power plants - 1,202.61 MW and bioelectric power plants - 1.77 MW.

According to the results of the first half of 2024, 148 renewable energy plants with a total installed capacity of 2903.7 MW are already successfully operating in Kazakhstan. These plants include 59 wind power plants (WPP), 46 solar power plants (SPP), 40 hydroelectric power plants (HPP) and 3 bioelectric power plants (BioPP). Together, they provide for the production of 6.47% of the total electricity in the country, which is a significant contribution to the energy balance of Kazakhstan and confirms the country’s desire to develop sustainable and environmentally friendly energy sources (Figure 17).



It is planned to commission 6 new projects with a capacity of 196.9 MW

*Figure 17 - Development of renewable energy sources in Kazakhstan
Source: <https://qazaqgreen.com/>*

By 2030, Kazakhstan plans to increase the share of renewable energy sources in the structure of electricity production to 15%, and by 2050 - to 50%, taking into account other alternative energy sources.

Energy conservation and energy efficiency improvement are among the key elements on the path to a green economy. The basis for creating an energy conservation policy was the goal of reducing the energy intensity of the gross domestic product (GDP) of Kazakhstan. The high energy intensity of GDP is largely due to the structure of the economy. A significant part of the GDP is formed by large sectors of the extractive and manufacturing industries, which are traditionally characterized by high levels of energy consumption. In addition, the size of Kazakhstan's GDP largely depends on the volume of raw material exports and world prices for them, which also affects the energy intensity of the economy.

According to the Concept for the transition to a green economy, the task is to reduce the energy intensity of the country's GDP by 25% by 2025 and by 50% by 2050 (from the 2008 level). It should be noted that the 2025 indicator was achieved ahead of schedule: in 2021, a reduction in the energy intensity of GDP by 38.5% from the 2008 level was achieved (*Figure 18*).

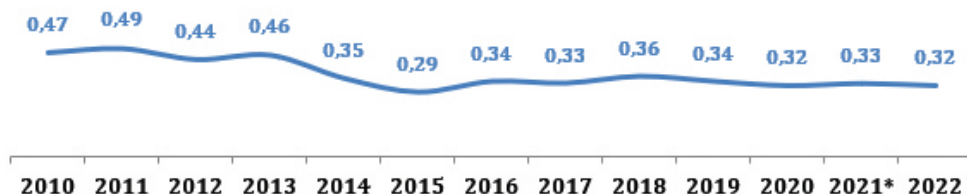


Figure 18 - Energy intensity of Kazakhstan's GDP, tons of oil equivalent/thousand US dollars in 2010 prices

Source: Calculated based on data from the Bureau of National Statistics of the ASPR of the Republic of Kazakhstan

In 2023, taking into account the need to adjust plans for further development, as well as with the aim of achieving sustainable development of Kazakhstan by reducing energy intensity and increasing energy efficiency in all key sectors of the economy, the «Concept for the Development of Energy Saving and Improving Energy Efficiency in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2023-2029» was approved. This strategic document covers five key areas: industry, energy, buildings, transport and population. Within each of these sectors, specific indicators have been established aimed at reducing energy intensity and improving energy efficiency:

- Industry. The goal is to reduce energy intensity by 10% by 2029. This involves the introduction of energy-efficient technologies and the modernization of production processes in large industrial enterprises.
- Energy. This sector envisages a reduction in energy intensity by

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5% by 2029. This is planned to be achieved through the optimization of energy infrastructure, improvement of energy production and distribution technologies.

- Buildings. One of the key objectives is to reduce energy consumption per square meter to 10% by 2029. This includes measures to improve the energy efficiency of existing and new buildings, improve thermal insulation standards and introduce energy-saving technologies.

- Transport. The concept also covers measures to reduce energy intensity in the transport sector, which includes a transition to more environmentally friendly and energy-efficient modes of transport.

- Population. Particular attention is paid to education and involvement of the population in energy saving processes, which includes educational programs and initiatives to raise awareness of the importance of rational energy use.

Energy efficiency is one of the main trends in the global economy today, covering all aspects of technological development, modernization and diversification. This trend not only helps reduce energy costs, but also plays a key role in increasing the competitiveness and efficiency of economies around the world.

In addition, in order to ensure the fulfillment of the task of improving Kazakhstan's position in the world ranking of energy intensity of the economy, it is proposed to introduce an indicator to reduce the energy intensity of GDP from the 2021 level by 35% by 2050.

Improving energy efficiency and modernizing infrastructure will allow Kazakhstan to significantly reduce energy consumption and reduce CO₂ emissions. Industry, which is the main source of emissions, will also be subject to profound changes, including the introduction of carbon capture and storage (CCS) technologies and the transition from coal power to cleaner energy sources.

The development of renewable energy sources and the introduction of energy-efficient technologies create new jobs in the construction, operation and maintenance of new facilities. This contributes to an increase in employment and the creation of economic opportunities in various regions of Kazakhstan.

Sustainable agriculture. An important direction in the development of sustainable agriculture is the development of organic farming. According to a study by scientists, organic farming, compared to traditional agriculture, can reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 25% per hectare of cultivated area by eliminating the use of nitrogen fertilizers and pesticides. It also absorbs 10% more CO₂ in the soil due to the accumulation of humus, which absorbs carbon dioxide in the atmosphere to retain it in the soil.

According to FiBL and IFOAM the global organic farming market reached

almost 135 billion euros in 2022. The countries with the largest organic markets included the United States (58.6 billion euros), Germany (15.3 billion euros) and China (12.4 billion euros). In terms of total share of the global market, the United States occupies 43%, the EU - 34%, China - 9.2%.

Kazakhstan is one of the few countries producing organic agricultural products. The production and sale of organic agricultural products is an important national competitive advantage of the agro-industrial complex (AIC) of Kazakhstan. The export of organic products is becoming an important part of the agricultural economy of Kazakhstan. The main export items are wheat, flaxseed and soybeans. According to the FiBL and IFOAM ratings, out of 123 countries, Kazakhstan ranks 9th in the export of organic products, 4th among countries exporting organic wheat, 6th in the export of organic flaxseed.

In 2024, Kazakhstan approved the law «On the production and circulation of organic products» (comes into force on November 11, 2024), which defines the legal, economic, social and organizational foundations for the production of organic products aimed at developing the domestic market for organic products and increasing their competitiveness in foreign markets. According to the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan, there are currently about 38 certified farms operating in Kazakhstan.

Water-saving technologies play a significant role in the development of sustainable agriculture. The share of water consumption by agriculture in the country is 60% of the total water intake. On average, from 2020 to 2022, water intake for agricultural needs is 14.8 km³, of which 77% was used for regular irrigation needs on an area of 1.18 million hectares.

The efficiency of irrigated agriculture is inextricably linked with the widespread use of water-saving irrigation technologies. The rate of implementation of water-saving irrigation technologies averages 30.0 thousand hectares/year (*Figure 19*).

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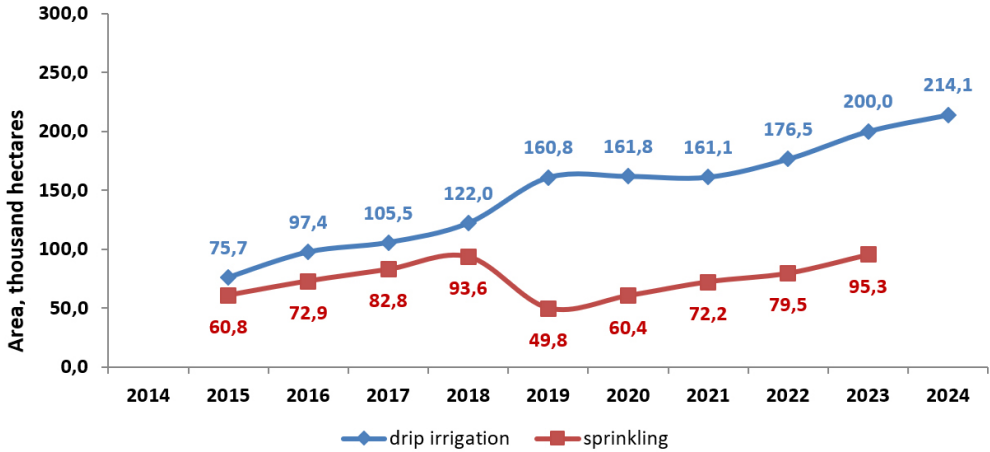


Figure 19 - Dynamics of the implementation of water-saving irrigation technologies in the Republic of Kazakhstan

Source: according to data from the Kazakh Research Institute of Water Management

The measures taken to stimulate the introduction of water-saving technologies will allow to create savings of irrigation water in irrigated agriculture up to 135 million m³/year by 2025, and up to 690 million m³/year by 2030. The introduction of drip irrigation and other water-saving technologies has reduced water consumption by 30% and increased production productivity.

The introduction of sustainable agricultural practices such as drip irrigation and organic farming helps to increase rural productivity, reduce poverty and promote ecotourism. This, in turn, improves the quality of life of rural populations and promotes social inclusion.

Waste management and recycling. Kazakhstan ranks 175th in the world in terms of waste recycling. According to Yale University analysts, the waste recycling rate in Kazakhstan in 2022 was 3.8, while the maximum rate achieved in the world was 67.1 (Figure 20).

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Rank	Country	indicators	
		material recycling rate*	municipal solid waste and commercial waste control factor
1	Republic of Korea	67,1	97,9
2	Samoa	57,6	36,8
3	Benin	56,9	13
4	Iceland	55,5	91,9
5	Australia	52,9	95
30	Uzbekistan	31,6	8,1
75	Belarus	19	64,2
94	Turkmenistan	15,3	65,2
106	Kyrgyzstan	14,6	n/a
111	Tajikistan	13,9	n/a
168	Russia	5,3	41,1
175	Kazakhstan	3,8	39,6
179	Serbia	1	59,9

** When calculating the coefficient, only data on the recycling of metal, plastic, paper and glass were taken into account*

Figure 20 - Ranking of countries by level of waste recycling, 2022

Source: Yale Center for Environmental Law & Policy

Note - according to the source methodology, 100 is the maximum possible coefficient

Every year, Kazakhstan generates about 4.5-5 million tons of municipal waste - about 0.6 kg per day per capita. And only 13-15% of it is recycled, and this mainly applies to plastic, waste paper, glass and tin containers.

In 2022, the total volume of waste was 3 million tons, with 13.5% of waste sent for recycling (*Figure 21*).

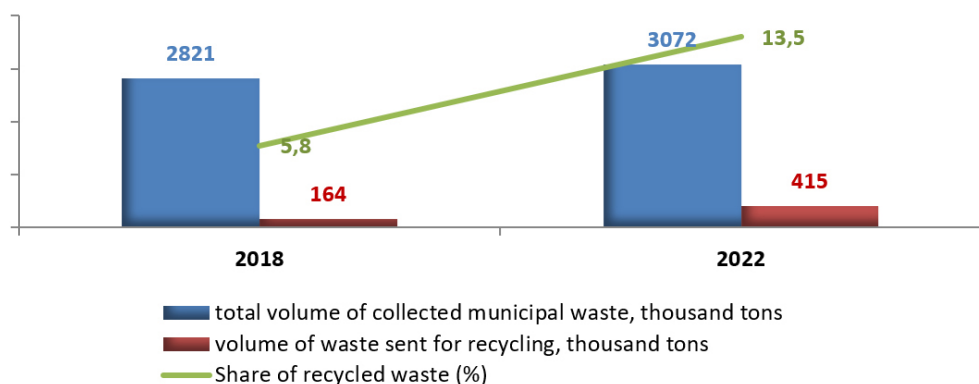


Figure 21 - Waste recycling volumes in Kazakhstan, 2022

Source: according to data from the Kazakh Research Institute of Water Management

Last year, the total volume of waste amounted to 4.1 million tons, of which 3.3 million tons were municipal waste. At the same time, municipal

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waste consists of more than 70% useful fractions, namely: 16% plastic, 11% waste paper, 9% glass, 37% organic waste.

According to the results of 2023, the volume of sorted waste in Kazakhstan amounted to 1.3 million tons, which is 6.8% more than the previous year. However, the share of recycling and disposal of municipal solid waste (MSW) from the volume of generation was 24%, industrial waste - 30.38%.

For the main types of waste, such as glass, plastic and waste paper, unfortunately, the current processing capacities are low.

In general, the country has seen an increase in the volume of waste sent for recycling: if in 2019 they amounted to 151 thousand tons, then in 2023 - 390 thousand tons. The number of organizations involved in waste sorting, recycling and disposal is also growing. According to statistics, in 2023, there were 808 companies in Kazakhstan engaged in the collection and removal of municipal waste (*Table 10*), of which 261 organizations are engaged in waste sorting, recycling and disposal.

Table 10 - Waste recycling indicators for 2019-2023

Indicators	2019	2023
Total volume of collected municipal waste, thousand tons	2913	3298
Volume of collected waste sent for recycling, thousand tons	151	390
Number of enterprises and organizations collecting and removing municipal waste, units	587	808

Source: the Bureau of National Statistics of the ASPR of the Republic of Kazakhstan

Currently, in terms of solid municipal waste processing, it is planned to build 37 new and modernize 8 existing plants with a total capacity of more than 1.2 million tons per year. This will increase the volume of processing to 1.4 million tons per year.

According to the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Kazakhstan, in 2024-2026, 200 billion tenge of budget funds will be allocated to finance projects for the launch of new waste disposal and processing plants taking into account advanced European experience. The preliminary pool included 11 projects worth 60 billion tenge.

In general, waste and garbage recycling is becoming a positive trend and helps improve the environmental situation in the country. Thus, in the North Kazakhstan region, the Raduga company processes polyethylene and paper waste, produces various consumer goods. In Shymkent, the Eurocrystal company processes glass and produces glass containers. In the Almaty region, the KZ recycling company produces

paper products from waste paper. And in the Kyzylorda region, each district is developing its own waste recycling project.

Also, the separate waste collection program launched in 2023 made it possible to increase the share of waste recycling to 20%. Currently, each region and metropolis have collection points for plastic and waste paper.

According to the Concept for the transition of Kazakhstan to a green economy, by 2030 the municipal waste recycling indicator in the country will be 40% (Figure 22).

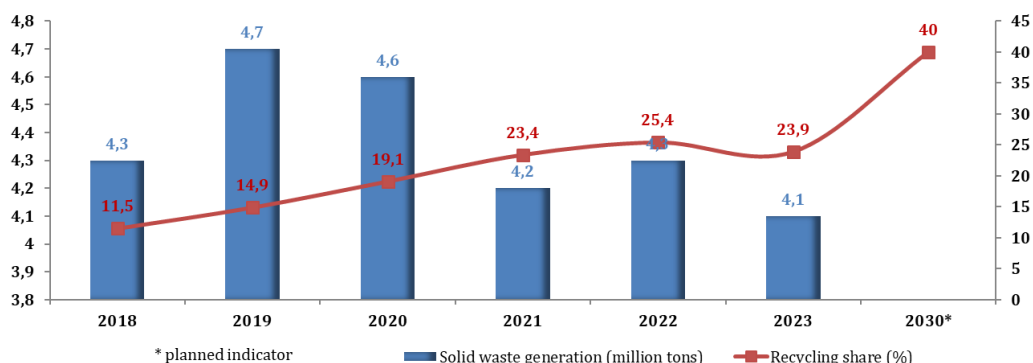


Figure 22 - Indicators of collection and recycling of household waste in the Republic of Kazakhstan

Source: Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Bureau of National Statistics of the ASPR of the Republic of Kazakhstan

Challenges

Kazakhstan’s economy relies heavily on traditional energy sources such as coal and oil, which play a key role in the country’s budget through their production and export. This dependence makes Kazakhstan vulnerable to fluctuations in global energy prices and poses challenges in the context of the transition to carbon neutrality.

In the energy sector, it is necessary to modernize the power grid and create a more flexible energy system capable of effectively managing variable energy sources such as wind and solar. For a successful transition to a green economy, it is necessary to develop human capital. This includes training specialists in the field of renewable energy sources, energy efficiency, environmental management and other key areas of the green economy. A shortage of qualified personnel can slow down the transition process.

However, Kazakhstan already has large enterprises that use solar and

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wind energy, which indicates a positive trend in the development of renewable energy. The introduction of these energy sources is an important step towards reducing the carbon footprint and diversifying the country's energy balance.

The implementation of large-scale green economy projects requires significant investment. Attracting private and international investment, as well as ensuring the availability of financial instruments to support green projects is a priority task in the transition to green development.

These challenges highlight the need for a comprehensive and strategic approach to developing a green economy in Kazakhstan and determine the importance of international cooperation and investment to achieve these goals.

CONCLUSION

Achieving qualitatively new positive transformations in all spheres of modern society, creating “working” guarantees of human and civil rights and freedoms are, of course, organically linked to the effective functioning of all institutions of state power. The Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan has become an unshakable guarantor of ensuring state stability, consistent improvement of the activities of state bodies, development of the political system, progressive and dynamic implementation of radical political, legal and socio-economic reforms, overcoming social contradictions and conflicts.

Good governance is widely related to institutional issues, social justice and inclusiveness.

Achieving inclusive economic growth and implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are important tasks for Kazakhstan. Good governance plays a key role in this process, ensuring effective governance, transparency and citizen engagement.

Good governance promotes the participation of various stakeholders in planning and policy development. This inclusiveness ensures that different points of view are considered, which will lead to fairer results.

As shown in the report, Kazakhstan is gradually implementing Good governance approaches in management and, it should be noted, has achieved certain results.

Reforming the public administration system ensures the development of democracy and increases the accountability of the state apparatus to the people.

The processes of decentralization and public involvement in decision-making not only increase the efficiency of governance, but also give it flexibility and sustainability at the local level.

Kazakhstan’s targeted policy towards vulnerable groups of the population, ensuring access to the labor market, access to education and increasing the level of human capital forms the basis of an inclusive economy.

By consistently implementing the principle of good governance, Kazakhstan has achieved significant success in moving towards a green economy and carbon neutrality. The implementation of adopted strategies requires significant investment and political will, but the country demonstrates its readiness for these changes, seeing them as an opportunity for economic growth and strengthening the international image as a responsible participant in the global fight against climate change. Kazakhstan continues to confidently move along the path of sustainable development, making a significant contribution to international efforts

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to protect the environment and ensure the well-being of future generations.

Global experience shows that strong, inclusive institutions create policies that promote inclusive growth with the necessary depth and consistency. Governments can ensure that the needs and concerns of the disadvantaged are reflected in policy decisions, especially with respect to powerful, organized interest groups, if they act openly and responsibly. In addition, meaningful stakeholder engagement can lead to more targeted and effective policies and their implementation. Informed, inclusive, and tailored policymaking can help ensure that the well-being of citizens is a central factor in economic policymaking.

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