

One-Stop-Shop Public Service Delivery Model: the Case of Kazakhstan



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Cover photo

The front-line employee of a one stop shop in Astana providing a public service to the citizen.
Photo courtesy of the State Corporation "Government for Citizens".

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This case study describes the implementation of One Stop Shop (OSS) policy for public service delivery in Kazakhstan. The case provides an analysis of the political and socio-economic conditions of the country in which public service reform has been implemented, and analysis of the measures taken by the Government of Kazakhstan to create One Stop Shops.

Special attention in the case is paid to the description of the barriers to comprehensive integration of public services, namely:

- 1. limited scope of influence of the State Corporation «Government for Citizens» on the process of improving the quality of public services;*
- 2. low wages of front-line employees;*
- 3. lack of effective inter-agency cooperation between government agencies, State Corporation and one stop shops; and*
- 4. complex bureaucratic language of public service standards, incomprehensible for the citizens.*

Despite the fact that a number of problems arise from the specific context of Kazakhstan, many political, organisational, technological and even cultural issues, identified in this case study also resonate with similar problems in other countries. In the final part the case study offers a number of policy recommendations to improve the quality of public services.

This case study will be beneficial to civil servants and practitioners not only from Kazakhstan, but also from other CIS countries, who are planning to establish “one-stop shops”, as well as for teachers to use in class discussions on public policy/public management. The case study is based on the analysis of primary data obtained through interviews with experts during July-September 2016 and analysis of extensive secondary data (legislation, reports of international organisations, research papers and media publications).

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1. INTRODUCTION TO THE CONTEXT OF KAZAKHSTAN

There are several reasons why Kazakhstan can be considered as an exceptional case. The historical legacy of Soviet rule, a huge geographical area with low population density, rich natural resources and comparative economic success - make it a unique case. Kazakhstan experienced rapid economic growth for most of its post-Soviet history, at least until the financial crises in 2007 and 2014. In December 2012, the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan (RK), Nursultan Nazarbayev presented his vision of Kazakhstan in 2050, which aims to enter the country in the 30 most developed countries, and to join the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). One of the priorities of this strategy is the formation of a professional state apparatus, for which «serving the people and the state are above all else.»¹

Over the past decade, the country has made important political steps, progressed towards the development of legally defined tax system, strengthened governance and the business climate, as well as provided resources for the improvement of social services and critical infrastructure to sustain economic growth.² Significant improvement must be noted in terms of social development of Kazakhstan in the period from 2000 to 2015, including the Gender Inequality Index, which has improved by 30% (ahead of all CIS countries), and the Human Development Index, in which Kazakhstan took 56th place from 188 countries in 2015 (including some developed countries), an improvement from 80th place in 2005.³

However, despite the recent transformation and rapid socio-economic development of Kazakhstan until the fall in world oil prices, the state of public administration system has not improved dramatically. Kazakhstan is facing a number of challenges, which undermine the stability and reputation of the country. These problems include the growing regional inequalities in the distribution of wealth with persistently high poverty levels, particularly in rural areas, limited human capital, an unequal implementation of the rule of law and democratic processes, the limited participation of citizens in political processes, and excessive corruption.⁴

Not long ago, in 2005 public services in Kazakhstan were provided for citizens by a variety of government agencies, which at that time operated in isolation, and scarcely exchanged information with other agencies. Limited access of citizens to information on the terms of the provision of public services, the lack of accountability of civil servants both to the public, and within the organisation for its performance, low wages and poor motivation of civil servants, all of these factors combined had a negative influence on the culture of the state apparatus in Kazakhstan. For registration of documents citizens had to get around tens and even hundreds of different institutions, spending a few days, weeks or even months. These effects led to a negative perception of the public about the state bodies, and this, in turn, negatively affected the image of the government as a whole.

Kazakhstan is in a much more difficult situation compared to other countries, which are located in small areas. In Kazakhstan, the low population density (6.51 inhabitants per square kilometer, or 184th position in the world by population density), which reside in the vast geographical area (country area is the 9th largest in the world). As of 2004, the population of Kazakhstan had a

1 Nazarbayev, N. (2012). "2050-Kazakhstan Strategy: New political course of the formed state", Address by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the people, 14 December, 2012.

World Bank. 2012. Kazakhstan - Country partnership strategy for the period FY12-FY17. Washington, DC: World Bank

2 United Nations Development Programme. (2015). Human Development Report 2015: The work in the name of human development.

3 United Nations Development Programme. (2015). Human Development Report 2015: The work in the name of human development.

4 Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. (2014). Kazakhstan: Review of the Central Administration, OECD Publishing, Paris.

low level of computer literacy (4.3%) and limited access to the Internet (2.8%).⁵

In 2005 Kazakhstan held the bottom line in the ranking of Transparency International in terms of the corruption perception index (107th place out of 158 on a par with countries in Africa, with 2.6 points).⁶ According to the Worldwide Governance Indicators report which covered 212 countries for the period from 1996 to 2008, Kazakhstan received the lowest scores (39 points out of 100 in terms of «good government» and 16 points out of 100 in terms of «control of corruption».⁷ The non-transparent and inefficient public administration system in Kazakhstan is often the target of criticism from both international and local experts.

In the case of Kazakhstan, many researchers have focused on a particular aspect of corruption as rent-seeking,⁸ and identified a wide range of factors that may be responsible for this aspect. In the context of Kazakhstan a list of such factors, according to some researchers, includes: weak democratic culture,⁹ weak judiciary,¹⁰ limited

power of civil society,¹¹ the «resource curse»,¹² «political inertia»,¹³ contextual corruption,¹⁴ high level of tolerance of corruption on the part of the local population;¹⁵ and limited access to information about public services.¹⁶ Public trust in state bodies and institutions of power has been undermined because of numerous cases of bribery and corruption on the part of civil servants and employees of state organisations, and in the provision of public services in almost all fields of activity. International organisations including the World Bank, the UN Development Programme in Kazakhstan, Asian Development Bank recommended the Government of Kazakhstan to immediately carry out administrative reform, including modernisation of the public service delivery system.

5 Nazarbayev, N. (2004). About state program of the formation "electronic government" in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2005-2007 years. Law of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan from November 10th 2004 #1471.

6 Pelizzo, R., Barysh, O., and Janenova, S. (2016). Objective or perception based: Kazakhstani debates about ideal measurement of corruption, Public Administration and Civil Service, Academy of Public Administration under the President of RK, No.3, pp. 93-115.

7 Kauffman, D. Kraay, A. and Mastruzzi, M. (2009). Governance Matters VIII: Aggregate and Individual Governance Indicators, The World Bank Policy Research Working Paper, June.

Hug, A. (2010). Kazakhstan at a Crossroads: Governance, Corruption & International Investment. The Foreign Policy Center, Articles and Briefings.

8 Hug, A. (2010). Kazakhstan at a Crossroads: Governance, Corruption & International Investment. The Foreign Policy Center, Articles and Briefings.

9 Nichols, P. (2001). The Fit Between Changes of the International Corruption Regime and Indigenous Perception of Corruption in Kazakhstan, University of Pennsylvania Journal of International Economic Law, vol. 22, n. 4, pp. 867-966.

10 Simonov, S. (2011). Retrospective analysis in reviewing concepts "corruption" and "corruption activity" in Kazakhstan. Legal reform in Kazakhstan, 2(54), p.59-64; Kaliyeva, G. (2013). Corruption Onset in the Nineteenth Century in Kazakhstan. In International Conference on Integration and Innovation in Science and Education, Central Bohemia University, Prague, Czech Republic, April 7-14.

11 Jandosova, J., Baitugelova, N., Jandosova, F. and Kunitsa, S. (2002). Perceptions of Corruption in Kazakhstan: by Parliamentarians, Public Officials, Private Business and Civil Society, Sange Research Centre and United Nations Development Programme, Almaty.

12 Bayulgen, O. (2009). Caspian Energy Wealth: Social Impacts and Implications for Regional Stability, in Amanda Wooden and Christoph Stefes (eds.) The Politics of Transition in Central Asia and the Caucasus: Enduring Legacies and Emerging Challenges, NY: Routledge.

13 Knox, C. (2008). Kazakhstan: Modernizing Government in the Context of Political Inertia, International Review of Administrative Sciences, vol. 74, n.3, pp. 477-96.

14 De Graaf, G. (2007). Causes of Corruption: Towards a Contextual Theory of Corruption, Public Administration Quarterly, vol. 31, n. 1-2, pp. 39-86; Perlman, B. and Gleason, G. (2007). Cultural Determinism Versus Administrative Logic: Asian Values and Administrative Reform in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. International Journal of Public Administration, vol. 30, n.12-14, 2007, pp. 1327-42.

15 Nezhdina, T. (2014). Examining the Causes of Systemic Corruption: The Case of Kazakhstan, Working paper: National Research University Higher School of Economics.

16 Janenova, S. and Kim, P.S. (2016). Innovating Public Service Delivery in Transitional Countries: The Case of One Stop Shops in Kazakhstan, International Journal of Public Administration 39 (4), pp. 323-333.

2. EVOLUTION OF OSS DEVELOPMENT: FROM THE CITIZENS FOR GOVERNMENT TO THE “GOVERNMENT FOR CITIZENS”

Historically, the origins of «One-Stop Shops» in Kazakhstan comes from the message of President Nursultan Nazarbayev in his address to the people of Kazakhstan in February 2005:

*«... There is a need to create public service centers (one-stop shops) using “single window» approach, where you can issue a passport, get taxpayer’s number, driving license, etc. at one place. As a pilot experiment, it can be done in Astana and Almaty this year.»*¹⁷

The main goal of OSS policy is to improve the quality of public services and reduce the level of corruption. The political leadership of the country had high hopes regarding implementing a policy of «single window» where OSSs were assigned the role of «panacea» from inefficient, sluggish and corrupt state apparatus.¹⁸ Vision of the «single window» principle as a method of corruption prevention was also reflected in the

Anti-Corruption Strategy of Kazakhstan for 2006-2010.¹⁹ The Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan under the leadership of Zagipa Baliyeva was appointed as coordinating body for the establishment of OSS.²⁰ Reform of the system of providing public services under the principle of «one stops shop» can be divided into four stages:

- I. 2005-2006 - pilot phase;
- II. 2007-2010 - resistance phase (solution of political, organisational and technological problems, decentralization attempt);
- III. 2011-2015 - innovative phase (integration with the system of «electronic government» Law of RK «On public services», expanding the range of public services);
- IV. 2016-2020 - integration phase (establishment and development of the State Corporation «Government for Citizens»).

Each of these stages is discussed in the remainder of the case study.

¹⁷ Nazarbayev, N. (2005). Kazakhstan on its way to rapid economic, social and political modernisation, Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan to people of Kazakhstan, 16 February, 2005.

¹⁸ Janenova, S. and Kim, P.S. (2016). Innovating Public Service Delivery in Transitional Countries: The Case of One Stop Shops in Kazakhstan, International Journal of Public Administration 39 (4), pp. 323-333.

¹⁹ Nazarbayev, N. (2005). On State programme on fighting corruption for 2006-2010 years, Law of the President RK from 23rd December, 2005, # 1686

²⁰ Zagipa Baliyeva was the Minister of Justice RK from April 2005 to April 2009, later Deputy of Majilis of the Parliament RK, from March 2016 – ombudsman on children’s rights in Kazakhstan

2.1 PILOT PHASE

In 2005 4 OSSs were established on a pilot basis in Astana and Almaty (Saryarkinskiy and Almatinskiy districts in Astana city and Almatinskiy and Turksibskiy districts in Almaty city) (see Box 1).

Box 1. One Stop Shop in Kazakhstan

Initially, OSS had a recognizable brand «Triangle of three colors: blue, green and yellow», blue and yellow represented colors of the flag of the country, symbolizing the «sky» and «sun»; green for Kazakhs symbolizes «youth and spring.» Later, there was a re-branding of OSSs with the new symbol in the form of blossoming white flower on a light green background, symbolizing a new kind of beginning (see Picture 1).

Picture 1. One Stop Shop buildings



Source: <http://www.today.kz>

OSS staff wear a special uniform: white shirt / blouse, dark bottom and green-and-yellow scarf with a badge and name tag. OSS offers clients a comfortable environment for public services. Electronic queuing was firstly introduced in OSSs, which was an innovation for the business sector at that time in Kazakhstan. Consultants meet the client at the entrance and provide information about the list of documents required to obtain a particular service, the cost and timing of services and offers an electronic queue number.

OSS first among public institutions offered barrier-free service, when the client communicates with the front-office employees without window partitions, on the same level (see Picture 2). Good conditions exist for the waiting in queue, and receiving public services by disabled people (separate window for receiving documents, ramps and call buttons) were set up. Most OSSs offer services of banks, notary, and photographer. In some large OSSs there are sensors that regulate temperature and play areas for children.

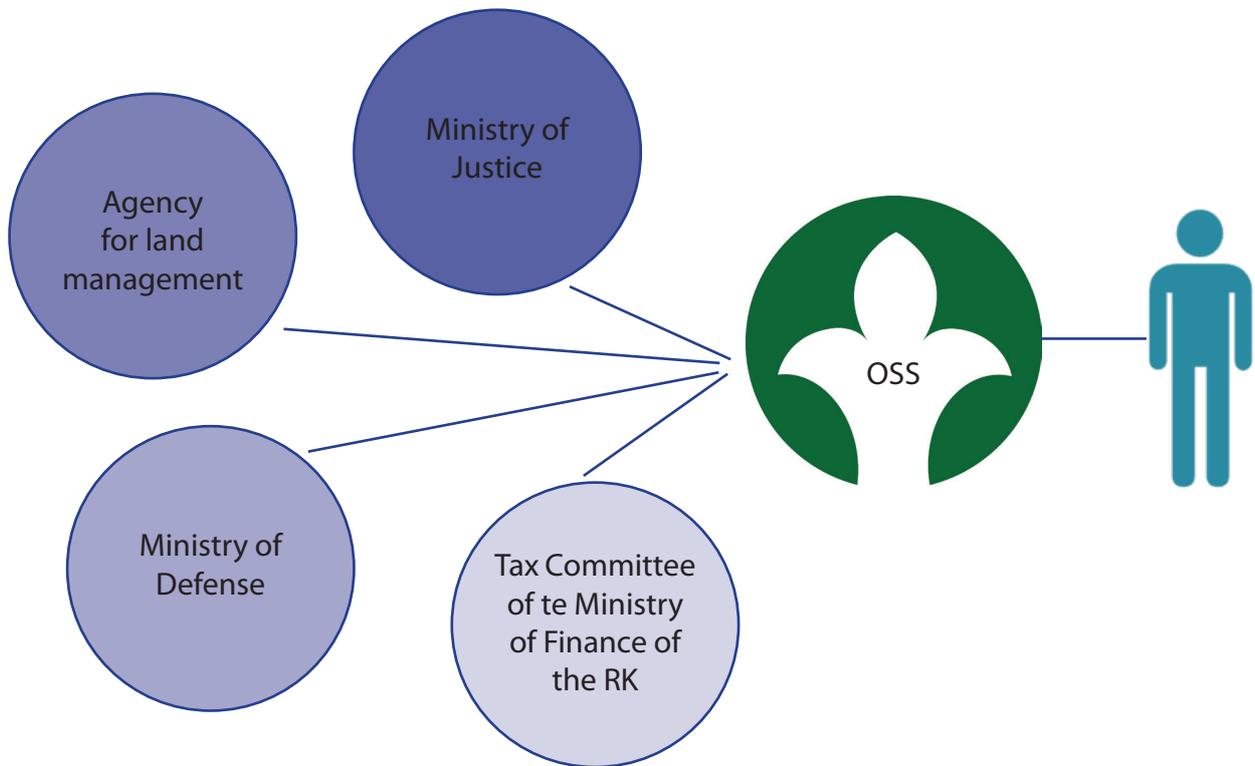
Picture 2. Barrier-free service for clients in the OSS



Source: State Corporation «Government for Citizens»

In the pilot phase the OSS provided services primarily of the coordinating body, i.e the Ministry of Justice (services for obtaining identity cards, passports, registration of birth certificate / marriage / death; registration of legal entities), and several services of other government agencies: Agency of RK for land management, Ministry of Defense of RK and Tax Committee of the Ministry of Finance (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Pilot model for public services



Interdepartmental working groups were created with many heated discussions between the Ministry of Justice and other government agencies. At that time, no one possessed any theoretical knowledge or practical experience in the integration of various public services. The Ministry of Justice initiated mass training of responsible staff and managers of OSSs: visits abroad to learn good international experience (for example, in the Netherlands, Germany, the UK, Canada, Singapore); international consultants were invited to organise training sessions in Kazakhstan. For the first time the standards and regulations of public services were developed in Kazakhstan, with specific terms of documents review and cost of services.

Experienced employees of relevant government agencies were selected on a competitive basis as leaders of OSSs who trained new staff on public service delivery. Everything was new and challenging for the first OSSs: employees had to learn how to provide various public services in one place, to be polite and attentive to the

customer. Wages of the front-line staff were extremely low given the enormous psychological load: pilot OSS with staff of 20-25 people served more than 1,000 clients on a daily basis. Front-line staff mostly were young people 23-28 years old, university graduates from different regions who came to gain practical experience. After a year of work in the OSS such employees went to other government agencies or business companies. Staff turnover in the first years of OSSs reached 80% per year.²¹

“If we talk about the difficulties that exist today in OSSs, from you, MPs, I will not hide - today they are working on an experimental mode. Today, there is no legal status of these centers, today experienced people work there on the basis of agreement among three ministers. Most of them - the workers of the real estate centers, people who do not want to give up these powers, do not want these services to be moved

²¹ Janenova, S. (2008). The Kazakh One Stop Shop: Challenges and Recommendations, in *Mixes, Matches and Mistakes: New Public Management in Russia and the former Soviet Republics*, Local Government Initiative/Open Society Institute, ed. B.Guy Peters, Budapest, Hungary, October, pp. 117-150.

*into the OSSs. There is pure sabotage.”*²²

The Ministry of Justice has sought to prove by its example to other agencies that the transfer of the functions of government services to the OSSs will lead to the improvement of quality of service and release time of employees of authorized state bodies in reviewing documents. The idea of introducing the principle of «single window», where OSSs started to provide services of several government agencies in one place, seemed revolutionary at that stage of development of the civil service system in Kazakhstan. For the first time division of the front office staff was introduced (i.e employees of OSS) and back office (state employees of authorized bodies). OSS employees received applications from citizens, passed them on to the competent authorities and returned the documents to customers, which excluded contact of civil servants with customers and reduced the risks of corruption. Creating OSS significantly simplified documentation procedures for the public.

Along with positive results, a pilot model of «single window» had a number of weaknesses which hindered the process of integration of public services fully. The improvement of the quality of public services has been achieved as a result of improved customer service from the side of front office. The conditions of receiving the documents, the primary contact of the citizen with the government were improved, however the business processes in the back offices of government agencies have not been subject to profound changes; procedures for the processing of applications and decision-making remained unchanged. As a result, pilot services have continued to be fragmented and disintegrated. Front-line personnel were criticized for the fact that they performed the work of «intermediaries» between customers and specialized government agencies, while not having powers and competences to review and make decisions on the applications of citizens.²³

22 Morzabayeva, Zh. (2006). Why not 9, but only 4? The head of Ministry of Justice denies the facts of financial violations, Newspaper “Republic”, 29 September, 2006.

23 Janenova, S. (2010). Public Service Integration in Kazakhstan: Why Alternative Access Rather Than Single Access? In Juraj Nemec and B. Guy Peters (eds). State and Administration in a Changing World, NISPAcee Press, Slovakia, pp.157-175.

2.2 RESISTANCE PHASE

In January 2007, the legal status of OSS was formalized as «public entities» and «delivering services for receiving applications and issuing formalized documents.»²⁴ OSSs' staff were not considered as civil servants and, accordingly, their level of wages and social benefits were less attractive in comparison with civil servants. In 2007 total of 182 OSSs were opened in the regional centers and cities of regional subordination, employing more than 8000 employees.²⁵ Every public authority had to determine the list of the most popular public services in its department, and optimize business processes to provide a particular service. In 2007, for the first time, the Register of public services was approved that were provided to individuals and legal entities. From the 132 types of public services in the register, 26 services for receiving applications and issuing formalized documents were made through OSS (mostly these services were of coordinating state body - the Ministry of Justice).²⁶

International practice shows that state bodies can express resistance in transferring its functions and activities, as it can carry a potential risk of loss of power over the human, legal and financial resources.²⁷ Some heads of state bodies of Kazakhstan also expressed serious concern about the delegation of functions to provide public services to the OSSs. Many government employees and supervisors who did not want to lose control over the sphere of public services were dissatisfied. The activity of OSSs has been heavily criticized by the political leaders of government agencies and the public. The official argument for

postponing the transfer of functions in providing public services to the OSSs were allegations that the front-office employees were not «experts» in the field of public services provided by their government agencies; they do not have special education and for this reason are not able to provide high quality of «their» public services.²⁸

Professional and organisational barriers posed a serious challenge to the Government of Kazakhstan because the ministries were trying to protect their interests. The situation was aggravated by the fact that state agencies interacted with each other to a limited extent and did not share information about citizens.

«The principle of «single window» has deprived many officials of additional «income» - bribes. Well, who wants to part from illegally prescribed fee for the registration of real estate services, land and other documents? While OSSs provide these services free of charge or for state fee strictly determined by law. The sooner such centers are introduced everywhere, the faster we will destroy corruption.»²⁹

Thus, the OSS policy reform was faced with the interests of the political and administrative elite, which sought to maintain control over the sphere of public services; the interests of various groups (police, social security, real estate and others), who defended their professional interests; and organisational barriers, as state bodies were not accustomed to act in a spirit of cooperation, support and exchange of experience. Under the pressure from critics of heads of relevant government agencies, the method of public service delivery according to the principle of «single window» was replaced by the so-called «alternative method» for public service delivery. In an alternative method, customers had an

24 The Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan. (2007). About creation of state agencies – one stop shops of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan, regulation of the Government RK, 5 January, 2007, #1

25 Information provided by MIT RK

26 The Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan. (2007). On approval of the Register of public services, provided to physical and legal entities, Law of the Government RK, 30 June, 2007, #561.

27 Flumian, M., Coe, A. and Kernaghan, K. (2007). Transforming service to Canadians: the Service Canada model. *International Review of Administrative Sciences*. 73(4), 557–568.

28 Janenova, S. (2010). Public Service Integration in Kazakhstan: Why Alternative Access Rather Than Single Access? In Juraj Nemeč and B. Guy Peters (eds). *State and Administration in a Changing World*, NISPAcee Press, Slovakia, pp.157-175.

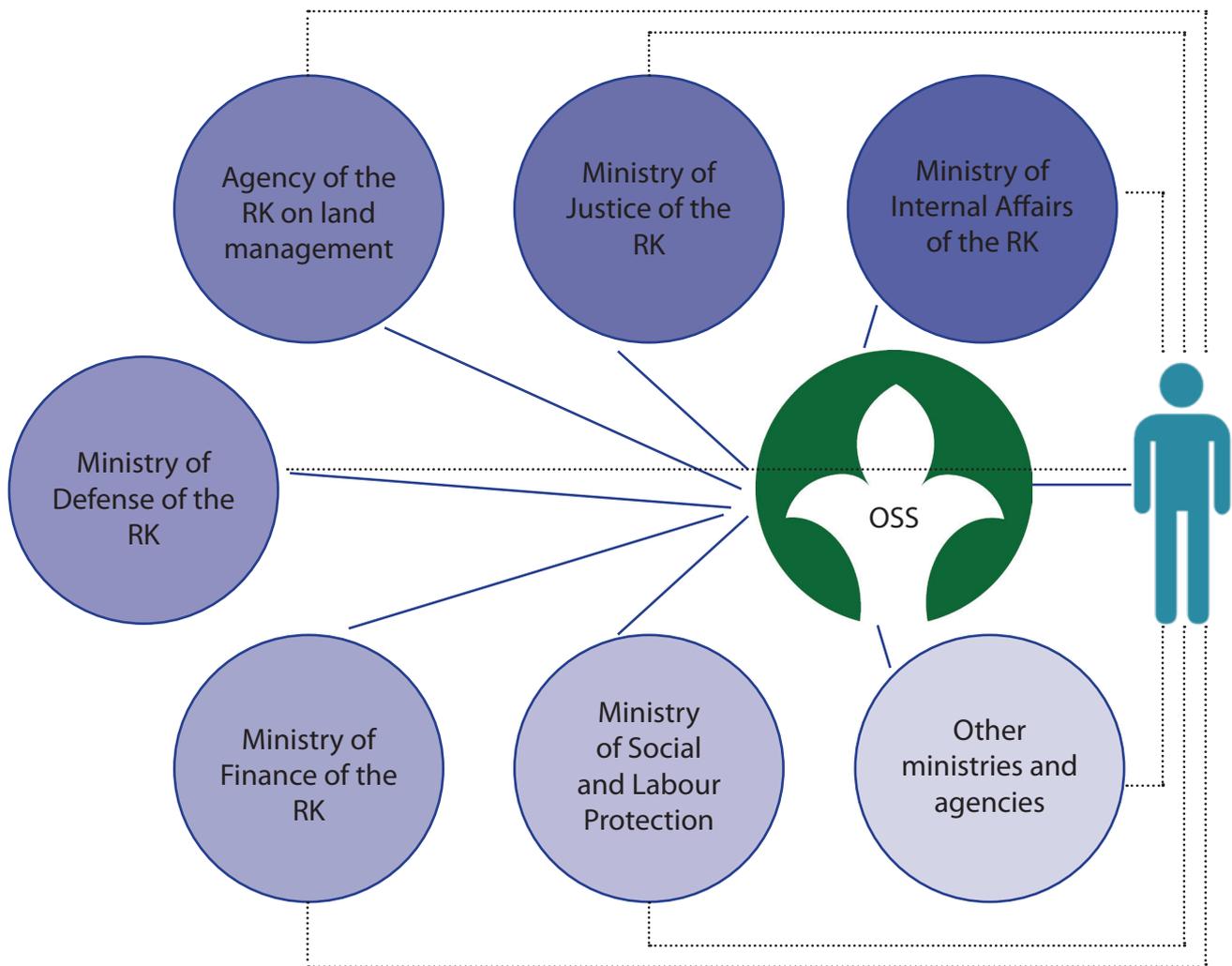
29 Ivanov, S. (2008). The corrupt officials turn against OSS. Newspaper "Express-K", 1 July, 2008.

opportunity to select to apply for public service to the OSS or to specialized public authority, that is, citizens had an alternative choice of public service provider (see Figure 2).

By applying the «alternative method», the government thus attempted to find a compromise, which would satisfy both sides: on the one

hand, the Ministry of Justice and its supporters, promoting the policy of «single window», and on the other hand, opponents, which at that stage were mostly among the political elite. Zagipa Baliyeva, a female-minister, with strong leadership qualities opposed the resistance and criticism addressed to the OSS and the Ministry of Justice, and continued with her ministry team

Figure 2. An alternative method of public services delivery



to push the reform through.³⁰ To a certain extent, OSSs were forced to compete with government agencies: they provided several services in one place, offering customers clear information on terms and requirements for the documents, and more comfortable waiting conditions; the working schedule at the OSS was more convenient for citizens (from 8 am to 8 pm, with no lunch break, Monday to Saturday) in comparison with the working schedule of the state bodies (from 9 am to 6 pm, with an hour lunch break, Monday to Friday, only certain days for the reception of citizens were established in some cases).³¹

In the ranking of public organisations on administrative barriers, compiled by the research center «Sange» in 2007, based on a survey of opinions of more than 5,000 customers in all regions, OSSs were assessed as having the least amount of administrative barriers (along with schools, water company, and border service) compared with other suppliers of public services (including registration of real estate, architecture, employment and social protection agencies, courts, police, local government bodies, education and health entities, etc.).³² The following factors were included in the category of administrative barriers in the government bodies as opposed to the OSS: long queues; provision of services with the help of acquaintances; unfriendly staff; lack of comfort in waiting areas in provision of services; very long terms for obtaining services; extortion; unjustified delay in solving the issue; absence

of explanatory information; poor organisation of employees; large list of documents for the execution of the service.

In 2011 the «Civil Alliance of Kazakhstan» conducted a public opinion survey of clients of 57 OSSs, which examined the availability and quality of services in all regional centers of the country through the method of «mystery shopping».³³ This monitoring revealed that the satisfaction of citizens with the services provided by employees of territorial divisions of state agencies was significantly lower in comparison with the services provided by OSS staff. The activities of most OSSs satisfied the population; quality of infrastructure, culture of service were rated above average.³⁴

Despite some success of OSSs in terms of public service delivery in the period from 2005 to 2008, the OSS continued to provide all of the same 26 public services, while state authorities were in no hurry to transfer their functions in providing public services to the OSSs. In April 2009, Zagipa Baliyeva resigns as Minister, and the pace of implementation of the policy of «single window» began to decline sharply.

The Ministry of Justice has expressed interest in the transfer of the functions of coordination over the OSSs due to the conflict of interests and contradictory role of the Ministry, on the one hand, as a service provider, on the other hand, as the OSS coordinator. Central government bodies expressed the view that the local executive bodies (akimats), as compared with any other central body can more effectively monitor the provision of public services at the local level, as well as respond to the needs of citizens. OSSs at the time had more than 300 offices that provided 57 types of services. In the autumn of

30 Benditsky, G. (2009). Where OSS tends to prove, or how subordinates of Zagipa Baliyeva perform the conjugal duty, Newspaper "Vremya", 29 January 2009; PSC "fry" Factory News, August 29, 2008, <http://www.newsfactory.kz/36343.html>; Baytuova, G. (2008). Zagipa Baliyeva promises to improve the performance of one stop shops in Taraz, Newspaper "Radio Azattyk", 29 October 2008; Oyshybaeva, J. (2006). The truth about Zagipa Baliyeva. The Minister of Justice reveals all the cards, newspaper "Liter", July 6, 2006; Sergeeva, I. (2007). Does it benefit the people? The new initiative of the head of the Ministry of Justice may result in a problem for the steel citizens, Newspaper "Respublika", February 9, 2007.

31 Janenova, S. (2010). Public Service Integration in Kazakhstan: Why Alternative Access Rather Than Single Access? In Juraj Nemec and B. Guy Peters (eds). State and Administration in a Changing World, NISPAcee Press, Slovakia, pp.157-175.

32 Turisbekov, Z., Jandosova, J., Tagatova, A. and Shilikbayeva, N. (2007). Administrative barriers as the source of corrupt legal violations in public service sphere, Almaty.

33 Civil Alliance project "Public Monitoring" was aimed at measuring the quality of work of OSSs and the satisfaction of visitors of OSSs funded by the EU. Monitoring was launched in July 25, 2011 in all regional centers of Kazakhstan in 57 OSSs. 57 observers, 1753 respondents and 282 OSS employees were involved. http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/kazakhstan/press_corner/all_news/news/2011/20110913_2_ru.htm

34 Civil Alliance of Kazakhstan named 3 worst OSSs, Tengrinews, 13 September, 2011, https://tengrinews.kz/kazakhstan_news/grajdanskiy-alyans-kazahstana-nazval-tri-hudshih-tso-na-196780/

2009, it was a political decision to transfer OSSs under the control of local administrations.³⁵ The government hoped that: «*Local authorities are working closely with the community and know better the needs of the residents [...] centers under the auspices of local government offices will operate much more efficiently, and will improve coordination*

of government agencies to gather information.»³⁶ The Ministry of Justice has continued to participate actively in the development of OSSs after their transfer to local government bodies, providing methodological and consultative support for akimats. However, the attempt to decentralize functions to coordinate OSSs failed.

³⁵ Starting from 1st of January, 2010 OSSs will be under the jurisdiction of akimats, BNews.kz, 15 October, 2009, http://bnews.kz/ru/news/obshchestvo/586031-2009_10_15-586031

³⁶ Starting from January 1, One Stop Shops is under the jurisdiction of akimats, Zakon.kz, 5 January, 2010, <http://www.zakon.kz/158517-centry-obslyzhivaniya-naselenija-s-1.html>

2.3 INNOVATIVE PHASE

Resistance of government agencies, the slowdown in development, as well as the unsuccessful transfer of functions for the coordination of OSSs to local administrations did not go unnoticed by the country's leadership. The President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, in April 2011, sharply criticized the work of OSS:

«It is necessary to further improve the quality of public services. This requires improvement in standards, optimization, implementation of e-services. First of all, services provided by OSSs [...]. We created OSSs as a service of «single window». I was told that if person comes, asks a question, and if the questions relate to the Ministry of Justice, police, tax, everything will be solved in OSSs, the documents will be provided and the person will not need to go to various the departments. What is it we see now? Where is this fairy tale? Who will deal with this? We did not want to torture people, but help them improve the quality of public services. And what is in reality? Take measures!»³⁷

In 2011, according to the results of public monitoring of the Civil Alliance the following problems in the provision of public services were identified:

- Lack of qualified workers at OSSs;
- Uneven load on the OSSs;
- Long waiting times (more than 40 minutes) in some cities of the country;
- Confusion in the organisational hierarchy, due to the fact that some services are not provided by the members of the OSS but by the staff of the territorial units of the Ministry of Justice (registration of citizens, the issuance of identity cards and passports), who do not obey the OSSs' administration.³⁸

³⁷ Nursultan Nazarbayev is dissatisfied with the performance of OSSs, Meta.kz, 18 April, 2011, <http://www.meta.kz/240204-nursultan-nazarbaev-nedovolen-rabotj-conov.html>

³⁸ The Minister of Communications and Informaiton RK Askar Zhumagaliyev held the meeting with OSSs' managers, Nomad, 5 may, 2011, <http://www.nomad.su/?a=3-201105050027>

In addition, the main causes of popular discontent were cases of corruption, low quality of infrastructure services for citizens, weak feedback and information provided for citizens, absence of analysis of the quality of work of OSS. In order to radically improve the performance of OSSs in March 2011 the coordination of OSSs was transferred to the Ministry of Communications and Information of Kazakhstan led by Askar Zhumagaliyev, Minister-innovator, one of the founders of e-government system.³⁹ In the structure of the Ministry, the Committee on Control Automation of state services and coordination of OSSs was established, which was headed by a young manager Bagdad Musin, who dealt with issues of OSSs from the beginning of reforms in the Ministry of Justice.⁴⁰

The new management team coordinating the OSS was distinguished by the professionalism in the field of information and communication, the ability to respond quickly to a variety of problems, and the introduction of innovative products in the provision of public services. So, in order to improve the effectiveness of the OSS, in 2011 OSS system was merged with e-government infrastructure and completely modernized, which resulted in reduced customer service time and introduction of performance evaluation system of the front-line staff. In order to reduce queues in OSSs, the possibility of booking for an appointment at OSS was introduced through the Internet or a call-center 1414.

³⁹ Askar Zhumagaliyev was the head of the Agency on information and communication RK from 2003 to 2006 years, the President of JSC "Kazakhtelecom" (2006-2010), the Minister of Communication and Information RK (2010-2012), the Minister of Transport and Communication RK (2012-2014). He is remembered by the public for the launch of 3G services, satellite television, the development of e-government portal and large-scale modernisation and automation of OSSs, which were transferred under his coordination in March 2011.

⁴⁰ In 2007-2010 Bagdat Musin worked as an adviser of the Minister of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan, from 2011 to 2014 headed the Committee for the Coordination OSS Ministry of Communication and Information RK as Vice Chairman, and later Chairman. Since August 2014 - Chairman of the Board of JSC "Kazpost".

The opportunity to pay state fines through payment gateway of electronic government or bankcard was offered, thereby reducing the queue at the bank cashier. One of the innovations of the Ministry of Communications was the creation of so-called «mobile» OSSs, which traveled to these regions according to the approved schedule in order to ensure access to public services for people in remote areas. Mobile OSSs - are special cars equipped with the necessary equipment, access to the Internet and databases (see Picture 3). Today, 70 mobile OSSs successfully operate in Kazakhstan.

Picture 3. Mobile OSS



Source: State corporation
“Government for citizens”

The transition to new working formats of OSSs allowed to improve the quality of public services for the population, and to create tools for monitoring and quality assessment. So, in 2011 to improve the control of activities of OSS and provide feedback to the population the Situational Centre was established, which carried out on-line video-monitoring of activities of all OSSs. Experts in real time see everything that happens in all OSSs and, if necessary, can quickly contact staff members of any OSS.⁴¹ With the help of information system of OSS, specialists in on-line mode analyse how many people are awaiting their turn at a particular time, how long the customer was served for, how the customers assess the quality of services of OSS, as well as the

⁴¹ Ministry of Information and Communication of RK

efficiency of the operators of OSS. For example, if the employee of the Situational Centre sees that the client waits for longer than 15-20 minutes, he/she contacts the head of the OSS to determine the reasons for the long waiting time to receive a service. Situational Centre allowed reception of citizens by the heads of central government agencies, video-conferences and meetings with affiliates, to organize training for the employees of OSS.

Number of OSSs and front-line employees with the number of public services, transferred to the OSS, grew rapidly. In this context, in 2011, the Republican State Enterprise “One-Stop Shop” was created (<http://con.gov.kz/>).⁴² In the period from 2011 to 2015 the Interdepartmental Commission operated for the selection of public services that were provided through the OSS.⁴³ In January 2012 there was a re-organisation of government agencies, as a result of which the Committee for the Control of automation of state services and coordination of one-stop shops of the Ministry of Communications and Information of Kazakhstan was transferred to the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Transport and Communications of Kazakhstan.⁴⁴

Starting from 2012 the opportunity to record digital signature (EDS) in OSS on identity cards was given to Kazakhstani citizens. The advantage of placing electronic signature on the ID-card of the citizen is the safe storage, precluding the possibility of copying the closed part of the key. The owner of ID card with EDS can independently obtain the necessary public services without even going out of home, through the e-government portal. In case of losing the identity card, the electronic signature could not be used without knowing the PIN code (similar to a bank card). From September 2013 the project on the organisation of the self-

⁴² The Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan. (2011). On some measures on optimization of the OSS activity, Regulation of the Government RK form 11 November, 2011, #1325

⁴³ Government Regulation of RK dated December 8, 2011 № 1503 “Rules for the selection of civil services to be provided through One Stop Shops”.

⁴⁴ Law of the President RK dated 20 January, 2012 “On the further improvement of the public administration system.”

service sector “Connection point” was started.⁴⁵ When a citizen comes to the OSS for any service, OSS employee will offer to get a digital signature, and then send him/her to the “self-service sector”, where he will clearly show how can he use the electronic signature and what kinds of public services can be accessed through the electronic signature. As a result of the automation of public services, changing them to electronic format, every year the number of services increases in OSS that are provided in electronic format (in 2013 - 17million, for 10 months of 2016 - 21.5 million). In addition, to an increase in the availability of public services for people with limited mobility the project on providing public services for people with disabilities by visiting them in their homes was launched.

Box 2. Development of e-government in Kazakhstan⁴⁶

The policy implementation of e-government during the past ten years (2006-2016) has allowed Kazakhstan to significantly improve its position in the world ranking. Kazakhstan rose 32 lines up in the UN e-government ranking compared with 2005 (from 65th place in 2005 to 33rd in 2016 out of 192) (UN Survey, 2016). In 2006, the e-government portal (<http://www.egov.kz/>) was created, providing access to information, interactive and transactional services, grouped by major categories of public services such as health, education, labor and employment, tourism and sport.

The number of Internet users in Kazakhstan has risen to 55 per 100 inhabitants, which is higher than set by the state task to achieve the rate of computer literacy and Internet users at 20% of the population. Despite the fact that the number of fixed-line phones is still small (25 per 100 inhabitants), the entire country uses the mobile phones (123 per 100 inhabitants). With the introduction of e-government in Kazakhstan public services became more accessible and transparent for the citizens, which partially reduced the risk of corruption and simplified conditions for opening and running a small business. In particular, such services like getting the certificates, registering a business and paying fines can be received via electronic government. Given the growth of Internet users in Kazakhstan, the role of e-government in providing public services will grow.

At the same time, the government of Kazakhstan is aware of the need to preserve traditional «face to face» methods of public service delivery (via OSS), taking into account the needs of different segments of the population who may not have access to computers and the Internet, and those citizens who prefer to receive services in-person by visiting OSSs.

Business processes were optimized in 2012 by reducing the number of documents and integration of information systems of state agencies with the “OSS” information system, which allowed to reduce the time of service from 40-60 minutes to 15-20 minutes. *Special public access points* (PAP) were established inside OSSs the same year, which reduce the time for acquiring the most popular public services (see Picture 4).

⁴⁵ Kirgeeva, E. (2014). One Stop Shop – the point of interaction between the population and the state, Newspaper “Kazhstanskaya Pravda”, 25 December, 2014.

⁴⁶ Analysis of the effectiveness of e-government in Kazakhstan requires separate research and is not a subject of detailed discussion in this case.

Picture 4. Public access point in the OSS



Source: State Corporation «Government for Citizens»

For example, one of the most popular services among population is a certificate of absence (presence) of real estate, which is required by the employer and by the local government for inclusion of citizens into the waiting list for subsidized housing. Such certificate, as well as the address certificate, certificate of pension accruals and other documents are available through the PAPs. The system for evaluation of the OSS employees from the client was introduced via “Touchscreen” monitors, which allows to timely monitor the quality of services. Upon receipt of the service, the customer is offered to choose one of three proposed options for evaluation of the OSS employee: «excellent», «good», «satisfactory». The experience of *Specialized OSSs* is remarkable as a successful example of preventing corruption and improving the quality of public services. Such *Specialized OSSs* provide services for the issuance of driving licenses and vehicle registration (see Pictures 5-6, Box 3).

Picture 5. Specialized OSS: training vehicles, an examination class, technical inspection and photo services.



Source: <http://www.motor.kz>

Picture 6. Sale of the popular car numbers in Specialized OSS.



Source: <http://www.motor.kz>

Box 3. Specialized One Stop Shops for drivers

Services for the issuance of driving licenses and vehicle registration until recently were in the top ten most corrupt public services in Kazakhstan.⁴⁷ In order to get a driver's license or register the vehicle, the citizens stood in long queues from early morning; it could take up to several days to receive these services; the points for receiving documents only worked on certain days and hours, forcing people to resort to using «intermediaries» offering an accelerated process for the provision of services for an additional illegal fee.

The address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan «Socio-economic modernisation - main direction of development of Kazakhstan», dated January 27, 2012, included a direct order for the construction and launch of specialized OSSs for registration of vehicles and issuance of driver's licenses. Only seven years later, with the support of the political leadership of the country, the first Specialized OSS was established in December 2012 in a pilot mode in the city of Karaganda. As a result of the automation of business processes, integration of databases and information systems of state agencies, the time for providing these services has decreased on average down to 2 hours (versus previous six to eight hours), and direct contact of citizens with executors responsible for the production of documents has been excluded. Today, Kazakhstan has 11 Specialized OSSs in major cities: Astana, Almaty, Karaganda, Taraz, Aktau, Pavlodar, Petropavlovsk, Kyzylorda, Taldykorgan, Kostanai and Aktobe. Further opening of Specialized OSSs is planned in other cities in the coming years.

In the Specialized OSS you can register vehicles, pay fines and fees, as well as obtain a license plate for the vehicle. The recipient of the service submits only one set of documents. Then the whole chain on registration or issuance of driver's license is put on the OSS staff. From 20 to 30 operators work in the hall. For example, taking a picture and applying for a driving license takes 20 minutes. The theoretical part of the exam for a driving license is conducted in a special computer room. The test takes 40 minutes. The practical part is held on a street circuit. Here, according to the Road Traffic Act, the driver must complete 12 special exercises. The route has all the road signs and traffic lights. The vehicle itself is equipped with sensors that capture the motion of the driver. At the end of the trip, the vehicle automatically evaluates it.

In order to minimize the human factor and reduce corruption risks, as well as to save customer's time, all the necessary specialists (psychiatrist, narcologist) are available in the OSSs. While previously the license plates of particular demand (eg, 777, 111, 007) were the subject of corrupt deals, now they are available for sale, and income from these sales goes to the state budget.

Source: Information of the MIC RK

⁴⁷ Turisbekov, Z., Jandosova, J., Tagatova J., and A. Shilikbaeva, N. (2007). Administrative barriers as a source of corruption offenses in the sphere of civil service, Almaty.

2.4 INTEGRATION PHASE

In May 2015, President Nursultan Nazarbayev has announced in the Plan of the Nation «100 concrete steps to implement the five institutional reforms» the «*establishment of the State Corporation «Government for citizens», which will become a single provider of public services based on the example of “Canada Service” in Canada and “Centrelink” in Australia. State Corporation integrates all OSSs in a single system. Kazakhstani citizens will receive all public services in one place*». ⁴⁸ “Service Canada” in Canada and “Centrelink” in Australia offer good international experience of public service integration aimed at increasing citizens’ satisfaction with the quality of services provided by a large network of service centers. At the same time, the two countries, Canada and Australia, as well as Kazakhstan, operate in conditions of large geographical areas and low population density, which requires the governments of these countries to make further efforts to ensure equal access to public services and high quality.

Since January 1, 2016, the works are being carried out for implementation of the Plan of the Nation. Kazakhstan has selected the development course according to the new legal and institutional environment, which is formed by the adoption of new laws and regulations. Regional branches of the State Corporation have been established around the country in order to ensure continuity of public service delivery processes and the formation of accountable government.

The state corporation as a single provider has combined the works to provide the most needed public services in the field of social protection, land relations and real estate, and has united four state-owned enterprises: 1. OSS; 2. Real Estate Center; 3. State Center for pension payments; 4. Scientific-Production Center of Land Cadastre. ⁴⁹

⁴⁸ N.Nazarbayev (2015). Plan of the Nation “100 concrete steps on implementation of 5 institutional reforms”, 6 May 2015.

⁴⁹ Government of the RK (2016). On establishment of a non-commercial, joint stock company “State Corporation “Government for Citizens”, Government Resolution No.39, 29 January 2016.

This allowed to increase the number of public services provided to citizens in one place based on the principle of «single window», provide a full cycle of services and constantly increase the range of public services. The sole shareholder of the State Corporation is the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan. An authorized body exercising the right to possession and use of the state package of shares of the State Corporation is the Ministry of Information and Communications of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The main objective of the State Corporation is to improve the quality, transparency and accessibility of public services provided to individuals and legal entities. State Corporation is working on the adoption of public services rendered by state agencies based on the principle of «single window», allowing citizens to receive a whole range of services.

*«Establishment of the State Corporation «Government for Citizens» has allowed us not only to unite the majority of public services in a single structure. Optimization of the governing administrative staff of structural units allowed us to get rid of bureaucratic ballast, often representing the corruption component in the field of public services.»*⁵⁰

General management of the state corporation is carried out by the Board of Directors; management of the current activities is carried out by the executive body - the Executive Committee. Currently, more than 70% of public services in Kazakhstan can be acquired by the citizen through the State Corporation - 530 of public services in total, of which 215 are provided by the State Corporation’s information system, 315 automated public services - through self-service “Connection point” sector. State Corporation works with the citizens of Kazakhstan via 353 front offices, including 12 Specialized OSSs. Number of employees is more than 21,000 people.

⁵⁰ State Corporation “Government for Citizens” has optimized structural subdivisions staff, Forbes Kazakhstan, August 12, 2016. http://forbes.kz/news/2016/08/12/newsid_118111

The development strategy of the NJSC «State Corporation «Government for Citizens» for 2016-2020 was approved in June 2016, which contains guidelines and targets for further development of the State Corporation. At the next step of enhancement of public services State Corporation introduces the principle of *«single application»* - when the citizen gets combined services and the final result by one application only. Further, the State Corporation plans to introduce the principle of *«life cycles»*, that is, the provision of public services based on life situations of citizens and the passage of a certain phase of life appropriate to their age, professional and social categories.

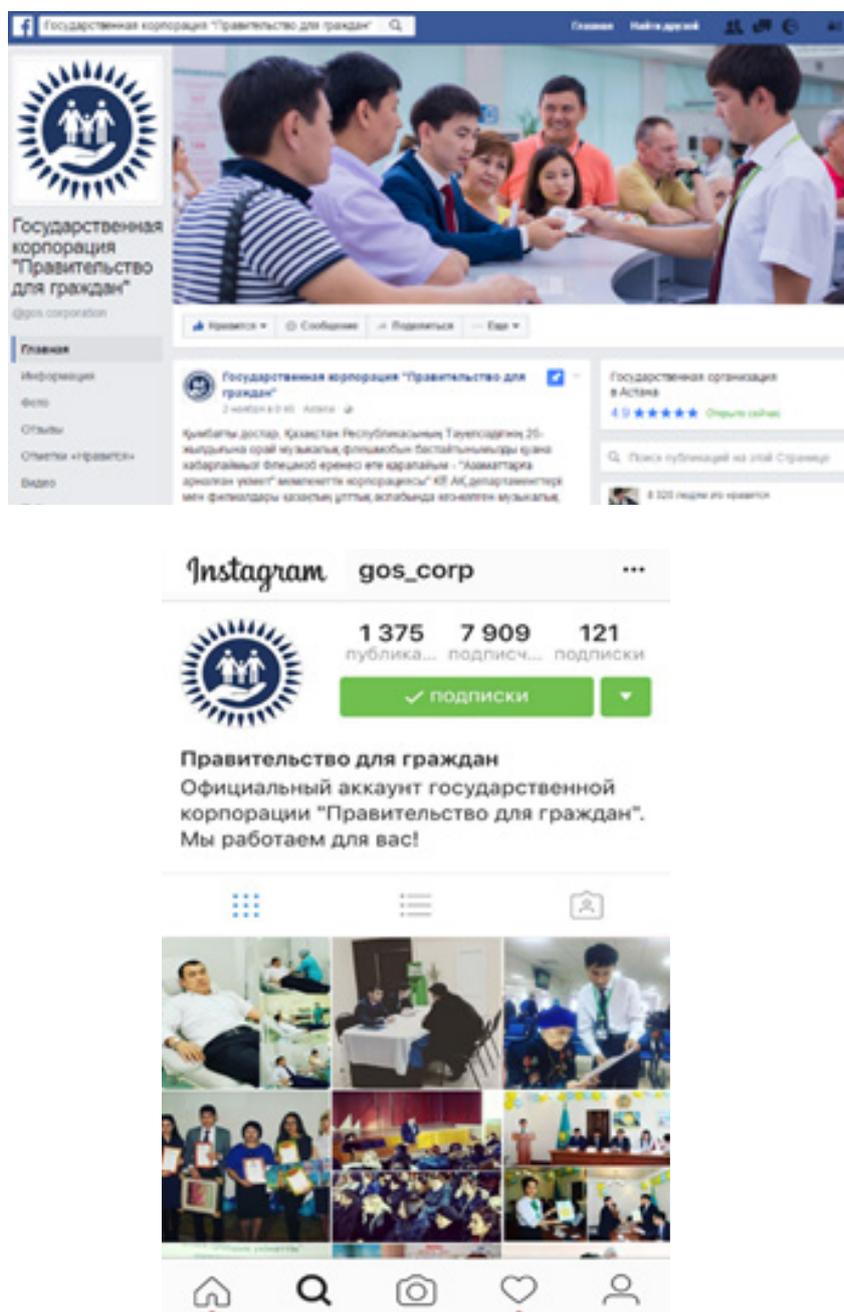
Uniform organisation standards for front offices of the united state enterprises have been introduced with the system of a single barrier-free service. For maximum convenience for citizens, the working hours of front offices were increased: from 9.00 to 20.00, including Saturday. State Corporation also has the training and excellence centre for professional development of front-

office employees with full-time, distance learning and mentoring programs.

In order to provide persons with disabilities with equal working conditions, 400 people were employed to the front offices of the State Corporation. 166 specialists from 83 front offices of modernized branches of State Corporation are being trained to learn sign language. In order to provide training abroad, the State Corporation employees were included into one of the six categories of workers to participate in the International Presidential program «Bolashak» for internships. State Corporation employees can undergo training at the Canadian Institute of services for citizens and Estonian Academy of Electronic Governance.

To provide feedback to the public, official accounts of the State Corporation are maintained in Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram social networks, where citizens can ask questions, get advice and leave the request (see Picture 7).

Picture 7. Web pages of the State Corporation on Facebook and Instagram



Source: State Corporation «Government for Citizens»

Official accounts provide information on the activities of the State Corporation, as well as special projects designed specifically for social media. Front offices are equipped with video rooms, where citizens can record a video message to the chief executives of central state agencies of Kazakhstan, akims of Astana, Almaty and regions. The state corporation will continue to create the image of a comfortable and «friendly» government agency, contributing to the discussion of innovation among the population and popularizing innovations through the media.

3. PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS

A number of policy recommendations are suggested below on the basis of analysis of primary data obtained through interviews with experts in July-September 2016 and analysis of extensive secondary data. This case examines four main factors that hinder the progress of the public services reform based on the «single window» approach:

1. *limited scope of influence of the State Corporation «Government for Citizens» on the process of improving the quality of public services;*
2. *low wages of front-line employees;*
3. *lack of effective inter-agency cooperation between government agencies, State Corporation and One Stop Shops; and*
4. *complex, bureaucratic language of standards for public services, incomprehensible for the citizens.*

Recommendation 1: It is necessary to consider the possibility of transmission of the e-government portal and the call-center, as well as functions for the development and changes in the standards and regulations of public services to the jurisdiction of the State Corporation «Government for Citizens».

While “Service Canada” in Canada is the sole provider of public services at the federal level, which provides government services through three channels: physical service centers, a single call-center and the portal of e-government, the situation in Kazakhstan is different. The State Corporation «Government for Citizens» provides advice and services for the collection and delivery of documents through a network of front offices. E-government portal and call-center, which are not part of the State Corporation, provide services via the internet and telephone, and are run by the joint-stock company «National Information Technologies» (main developer) and the Ministry of Information and Communications of Kazakhstan. If the state corporation should become a «single provider of public services in

Kazakhstan», it is recommended to consider the possibility of the transmission of e-government portal and call-center under the jurisdiction of the State Corporation. This will reduce the financial and time costs for inter-agency coordination and harmonization.

Second, central government bodies develop and approve standards and regulations of public services, in which state corporation cannot independently make changes. Standards and regulations of public services comprise the basic requirements of the rules for public service delivery of various government agencies (time standards, the list of documents, procedures and services, etc.). State authorities retain the right to introduce changes or postpone changes recommended by the State Corporation, and past experience shows that state bodies are not always interested in reducing red tape. In order to accelerate the reduction of administrative barriers, it is necessary to consider the possibility of transferring the functions of development and approval of standards and regulations of public services to the State Corporation. In this case, if public service standards will be transformed to the status of normative and technical documentation and if functions for their development and approval will be transferred to the State Corporation, it will allow them to be a catalyst for further improvement of the rules of state bodies.

A combination of measures for the transfer of e-government portal and call-center, and functions for the development and approval of public service standards to the State Corporation will significantly strengthen the role and status of the new organisation designed to be a «single provider of public services», and reduce the hidden resistance from government agencies.

In addition, in order to transit from the administrative power of the system to the customer-oriented model of interaction between the state and society, the State Corporation that

performs the functions of a social institution, must be given a special status in the change of relations between the state and citizens. This will require the adoption of a separate law on the State Corporation «Government for Citizens» by the example of countries that have successfully implemented reforms in the area of public services (eg, Malaysia, UK and others.). The further development of the State Corporation, aimed at the implementation of efficient and transparent service for the provision of public services, will be perceived by citizens as the effectiveness of the work of the Government as a whole.

Recommendation 2: It is necessary to significantly increase the wages of the front-line employees with the increasing range of public services provided through the one stop shops and raising qualification requirements for the front-line staff.

The range of public services provided through the OSS is constantly growing: 53 new services were added in 2016 to the list of public services provided through the front offices; in 2017 it is planned to transfer 80% of all public services to the State Corporation. The number of rendered public services is constantly increasing: more than 33 million of public services were delivered in only 10 months of 2016, of which 21.5 million provided in an electronic format. The increasing load of the work and increased requirements for the knowledge and skills of the front-line personnel at low, inadequate wages leads to a risk of lowered quality of public services, violations of the terms of registration, and the loss of experienced professionals.

To reduce disparities between the differences in wage levels of the combined state-owned enterprises, State Corporation introduced a single register of positions and the establishment of a uniform procedure for salaries. However, these measures may not enhance the motivation of staff, as salaries of the front-line staff are too low.

The issue of changing the remuneration system for the front-office employees and increasing wage demands urgent solutions. It is also recommended to consider the possibility of establishing a specific tariff on public services rendered by the State Corporation for the service provider.

Recommendation 3: It is necessary to raise the level of horizontal cooperation between government bodies, the front offices and the State Corporation for the integration and improvement of public services quality.

In Kazakhstan there is weak culture of interaction of state bodies.⁵¹ Cooperation between ministries and agencies mostly takes place at the highest level in the form of inter-ministerial committees. This is due to the existing civil service system, which provides a strict hierarchical structure, where the interaction at each level is strictly coordinated and controlled by the hierarchy.

Nevertheless, the successful integration of public services requires trust and horizontal cooperation at the middle level and the main staff level. In this connection, the following measures are recommended. First, the inter-agency discussion and solution of operational issues, using project management techniques can be delegated to middle managers and experts. This measure can improve the culture of inter-governmental cooperation. At the same time, the introduction of principles of horizontal cooperation would enable continuous improvement of public services both in the process of implementation, and after that, using the customer-oriented approach.

Secondly, the level of cooperation and interaction of each public body should be measured and evaluated. Measurement can be conducted through the survey of organisations that interact with the public agency on the basis of 360 degrees, and the number of projects and the amount of composite services implemented in

⁵¹ Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. (2014). Kazakhstan: Review of the Central Administration, OECD Publishing, Paris.

conjunction with other agencies. Thirdly, regular joint trainings for the employees of government agencies and front offices can promote a spirit of cooperation and mutual support.

Recommendation 4: It is necessary to provide information on public services in easy-to-understand, non-bureaucratic language for citizens.

In order to raise public awareness about public services, it is recommended to organize work to provide information about public services. In this area, notable is the Canadian experience, where the project is being completed to unite all the sites of government agencies on a single website «Canada.ca», where citizens can obtain all the necessary information about public services and the government. In Kazakhstan, an alternative site is «egov.kz» e-government portal. Unlike the Canadian «Canada.ca», the Kazakhstan portal contains minimal information about the list of required documents and the length of service performance. Moreover, along with the e-government portal, there are two duplicate sites of the State Corporation «<http://goscorg.kz/>» and «<http://con.gov.kz/>», which have sections on public services. However, these sections are filled with references to the standards of public services,

which are, to a greater extent, incomprehensible for citizens due to the complexity and bureaucratic style of the text. According to the legislation of Kazakhstan, standards and regulations of public services are developed and approved by the public authorities and, accordingly, State Corporation cannot influence the style of the public services standards and independently make any changes into them.

As a result, in order to get information the service recipients are forced to call to call-centers, write to blogs, or visit the OSSs. As the content analysis of the blog of Directorate for the provision of public services showed, in the event of difficult situations the OSS staff direct citizens to websites of government agencies that directly perform these services. In order to integrate the system to provide information it is recommended to combine e-government sites and the state corporation into a single portal where the maximum information about the state body would be represented, written in a clear, non-bureaucratic and user-friendly language. A special platform for citizens' complaints about complex public services could be organized on this portal, where one can get answers from the service providers.

4. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The impact of the reform of public services provision based on the «single window» model has made a tremendous effect on the entire government apparatus as well as on the Kazakhstan society. In 2005, nobody could have imagined that One Stop Shops in just one decade, will not only occupy a niche in the traditional system of state administration, but also be able to influence the culture of the state apparatus in Kazakhstan, to bring innovation in the provision of public services, and to teach employees of the state apparatus new values of “client orientation» as opposed to serving their own interests. Undoubtedly, the strongest sides on the implementation of the OSS reform exceed its weaknesses, which are specific to the Kazakhstan’s context and are temporary.

To date, Public Service Centers provide citizens and businesses of Kazakhstan with better, more transparent and more accessible public services, compared with the period before the reform of public services. However, there remain a number of barriers to full integration of public services, which need to be addressed urgently: *1. limited scope of influence of the State Corporation «Government for Citizens» on the process of improving the quality of public services; 2. low wages of front-line employees;*

3. lack of effective inter-agency cooperation between government agencies, State Corporation and front-offices; and 4. complex language of standards for public services, incomprehensible for the citizens.

This case study has presented an analysis of the implementation of the public services reform using the example of the One Stop Shops in Kazakhstan. This case study illustrates that for successful implementation of new and innovative reforms what is extremely important is the role of political leaders and their ability to inspire their team and lead the change in order to introduce innovations and improve the quality of life of citizens. The case describes typical problems associated with the implementation of the public policy based on the «single window» approach: the adoption of legal acts does not always lead to the practical implementation of the conceived ideas; civil servants are able to adapt the implementation of the policy to the interests of the political and administrative elite, to demonstrate hidden / obvious resistance, and thereby inhibit the progress of the reforms. Kazakhstan continues to find its own way to improve the living standards of citizens by adapting international experience to the specific socio-cultural and political context of the country.

Appendix: Questions for class discussion

1. What are the causes of resistance of state bodies to the integration process of public services in Kazakhstan?
2. What measures should be taken to create a continuous quality improvement system of public services?
3. How can we improve inter-agency cooperation between the different stakeholders of public service provision?
4. How can we improve cooperation between Kazakhstan's government and citizens in the public service delivery and, thereby, to restore public confidence in the state apparatus?

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The Regional Hub of Civil Service in Astana (ACSH), an initiative of the Government of Kazakhstan and the United Nations Development Programme, was established in March 2013 by 25 countries and 5 international organisations. It receives financial and institutional support from the Government of Kazakhstan and it relishes the backing of UNDP as the key implementing partner.

The ACSH is a multilateral institutional platform for the continuous exchange of knowledge and experience in the field of civil service development, aiming at supporting governments in the region through fostering partnerships, capacity building and peer-to-peer learning development activities; and evidence-based solutions, informed by a comprehensive research agenda. The geographical range of participants stretches from the North America and Europe, through the CIS, the Caucasus and Central Asia to ASEAN countries, demonstrating that partnership for civil service excellence is a constant and universal need for all nations.

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