

COUNTRY PROFILE

Republic of Kazakhstan

I. BACKGROUND

Area	2,724,900 Sq. km
Population	17,563,300 (August 2015)
GDP	USD 217.87 billion (2014 est.)
GNI per capita	USD 11,850 (2014)
HDI	0.788 – ranked 56 out of 188 countries (2014)
Life expectancy at birth	69.4 years
Mean years of schooling	11.4

a. Indicators on Quality of Public Service¹:

Indicator ²	2000	2005	2010	2013	2014
Government effectiveness	25.9	34.6	40.7	35.4	54.3
Regulatory quality	27.0	44.6	41.1	36.8	44.7
Rule of Law	16.3	24.9	32.7	30.3	34.1
Control of corruption	8.3	15.6	16.7	19.6	26.0

b. Political and Administrative Structure

The Republic of Kazakhstan is a unitary state with a presidential system of government. According to its Constitution, Kazakhstan is a democratic, secular, legal, and social state which recognizes Man, his life, rights and freedoms as the supreme values of the country.

Kazakhstan gained independence on 16 December 1991. Astana is the capital city of the country. The Kazakh language is the official language of Kazakhstan, and the Russian language has the status of the language of interethnic communication. The unit of currency used in Kazakhstan is the tenge.

The President of the Republic of Kazakhstan is the head of state, the highest political official, who determines the main directions of domestic and foreign policy of the country and represents Kazakhstan on the international arena. The President is a symbol and guarantor of

¹ Percentile ranks indicate the percentage of countries worldwide that rank lower than the indicated country, so that higher values indicate better governance scores.

² *Government effectiveness* captures perceptions of the quality of public services, the quality of the civil service and the degree of its independence from political pressures, the quality of policy formulation and implementation, and the credibility of the government's commitment to such policies. *Regulatory quality* captures perceptions of the ability of the government to formulate and implement sound policies and regulations that permit and promote private sector development. *Rule of law* captures perceptions of the extent to which agents have confidence in and abide by the rules of society, and in particular the quality of contract enforcement, property rights, the police, and the courts, as well as the likelihood of crime and violence. *Control of corruption* captures perceptions of the extent to which public power is exercised for private gain, including both petty and grand forms of corruption, as well as "capture" of the state by elites and private interests.

the national unity, state power, inviolability of the Constitution, as well as the rights and freedoms of individuals and citizens.

The Government exercises executive powers, heads the system of executive bodies and exercises supervision of their activities. The Parliament of the Republic performs legislative functions and consists of two Chambers: The Senate and the Majilis. The Senate is composed of 47 members. Two members from each of the 14 regions, and two from each of the two cities of national significance (Astana and Almaty), as well as 15 members who are appointed by the President with due regard to equal representation of national, cultural and other significant interests of the society. Senate members serve a term of six years. The Majilis consists of 107 members, nine of whom are elected by the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan. Three parties are currently (2016) represented in the Mazhilis: “*Nur Otan*” (the People’s Democratic Party), “*Ak zhol*” (Democratic Party of Kazakhstan) and the Communist People’s Party of Kazakhstan. The term of office of the Majilis members is five years.

Following its independence, Kazakhstan witnessed a great path of political, socio-economic and administrative transformations. An integral part of these has been civil service reform.

II. CIVIL SERVICE PROFILE

a. Legal basis of the civil service

The Law on Civil Service is the main legal instrument regulating civil service in Kazakhstan. In addition, bylaws such as Presidential decrees, Government acts and official acts of the Ministry for Civil Service Affairs (formerly the Civil Service Agency) provide the legal basis for the organisation of civil service in Kazakhstan, the regulations pertaining to the functional relations in the civil service and it establishes the legal status of a civil servant.

Specifically, Chapter I of the Law of 2015 defines the concepts of the civil service, including functions of the civil service regulation body, outlines civil servants’ post classification, roles and functions of HRM departments in government bodies and it specifies the main principles of the civil service. The Law further stipulates service duties, including civil servants’ status and rights, job responsibilities, limitations of engaging in entrepreneurial activity, participation in political party activities, and terms of engaging in paid jobs outside the civil service. It also describes functions of political civil servants, permanent secretaries and chiefs of staff (Chapter II). It also determines provisions of entry into civil service detailing the basic and special requirements, competition, selection, appointment terms, background checks, probation period, as well as instances for suspension and dismissal from the civil service (Chapters III, V, VII, and X). In addition, the Law also sets conditions for granting incentives, career promotion, rotation, training, internships, imposing disciplinary sanctions and performance evaluation (Chapters VI, VII). Chapter IX considers remuneration and incentives system, types of leave, and pensions.

Furthermore, general rules and principles of behaviour for civil servants including measures to ensure confidentiality of information, handling conflict of interest and preventing corruption delinquency, among other, are provided (Chapter VIII). The Law also delineates

conditions for dispute resolution, attestation, reinstatement in office, and employment of foreigners (Chapter XI). Additionally, the Law on Civil Service states that labour legislation provisions are applicable to civil servants with consideration of the specificities of this law. Relations pertaining to the civil service, which are not regulated by this law are subject to provisions of other relevant legislation.

b. Definition of civil servant

In accordance with the Law on Civil Service of 2015, which came into effect on 1 January 2016, civil service is defined as work of civil servants in the government bodies which entails exercising official powers aimed at implementation of government's tasks and functions. This Law determines a civil servant as a citizen of the Republic of Kazakhstan holding a government post, in accordance with legally established practice and remunerated from the state or local budget, or from the funds of the National Bank of the Republic of Kazakhstan, in a government body and exercising official powers aimed at implementation of government's tasks and functions.

Civil service in Kazakhstan is unified and is divided into the categories of central service and service in local governments. The Law of 2015 defines the following types of civil servants:

- Political civil servant: his/her appointment or election is of political nature and is responsible for implementation of political goals and tasks³;
- Administrative civil servant: his/her employment is permanent and professional with the exception of some cases (determined by the laws of the Republic and Presidential decisions). Administrative civil servants are divided into two Corps: "A" and "B", where Corps "A" are civil servants of a managerial level, for whom specific recruitment, employment and dismissal conditions are in place⁴; Corps "B" refers to the rest of the civil servants.

The 2015 Law introduced the possibility of hiring foreign workers in government bodies through service contracts, subject to approval of a National Commission on cadre policy under the President and positive results of a background check by the National Security Commission.

According to the Presidential Decree on the Registry of civil service posts of 2015, civil service posts are divided as follows:

- a. Political;
- b. Corps "A":
 - Category 1 – central government and heads of local districts;
 - Category 2 – local audit commissions;
- c. Corps "B":

³ To address certain ambiguities in the functional division of vice-ministers (political appointees) and permanent secretaries (Corps "A"), a special article was included in the Law on Civil Service of 2015 which provides a detailed list of functions for both of these posts.

⁴ Corps "A" civil servants are employed by ministries and heads of regions on the basis of service contracts of a maximum duration of eight years.

- Category A – Presidential Administration;
- Category B – Offices of Parliament, Prime-Minister’s Office, government bodies reporting to the President;
- Category C – ministries;
- Category D – regions;
- Category E – districts

c. Civil servants’ profile

Eligibility criteria

To apply and be considered for a position in the civil service, the following basic requirements should be met (Law on Civil Service 2015, Article 16): “an applicant should be a citizen of Kazakhstan of minimum age of 18 years, and not older than the retirement age, and should meet job requirements, possess relevant education, work experience, knowledge and qualities, and be of sound health”. The Law of 2015 also specifies a number of restrictions for entering the civil service:

- Persons deemed legally incapable; having certain medical conditions preventing them from carrying out certain tasks;
- Persons who were previously dismissed for disciplinary offences, corruption;
- Persons who have outstanding convictions, convictions for grave offences and crimes committed as part of an organised criminal group.

General job requirements pertaining to educational level and work experience vary from post to post; these are approved by the official act of the Ministry for Civil Service Affairs. Specific job requirements outlining educational profile and knowledge and skills required are determined on the basis of this official act by each ministry.

Total number of civil servants

The total number of civil servants’ posts in Kazakhstan were 98,886, of which 91,330 are filled (01/01/2016).

Number of civil servants as proportion of the total population and of the labour force.

Proportional to the total population (17,417,673 as of 2015), there is one civil servant per 192 people.

Gender and age distribution of civil service

According to data of January 2016, civil service is slightly skewed towards female employees accounting for 55% (50,219) of the total, while male employees constitute 45% (41,111).

The average age of civil servants in Kazakhstan is estimated to be at 39 years, with the average age of political appointees being slightly older than that of administrative civil servants of Corps A and B: 48.3, 46.6 and 38.9 respectively.

d. Civil servants' remuneration structure

According to the Law of Civil Service of 2015, remuneration in civil service includes a salary and a salary increment and/or a bonus. Salary rates for each hierarchical rank is determined by Presidential Decree and is based on the category and work experience in years.

A bonus is determined based on performance, while a salary increment is given for working overtime and for performing additional functions.

III. BODY RESPONSIBLE FOR HR POLICY AND IMPLEMENTATION

Human resources management in civil service is regulated by several legal acts, mainly by the 2015 Law on Civil Service and the Labour Code. The Ministry for Civil Service Affairs of Kazakhstan is the legal entity responsible for the human resources management function in civil service. It was established in 2015 and is directly subordinate to the Prime Minister. The Ministry has regional departments in all of the 14 regions of Kazakhstan, as well as in Astana and Almaty.

According to Article 5 of the Law on Civil Service, the Ministry for Civil Service Affairs of Kazakhstan provides coordination and methodological support to the HRM processes within the civil service, controls and assesses the quality of public service delivery, oversees compliance of civil servants to ethical norms and evaluates the implementation of HRM function in government bodies. Specifically, the Ministry coordinates activities of HR units⁵ of the government agencies, provides guidance on HRM, as well as professional development and training to civil servants through the Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan and regional study centres.

a. Organisation of the selection and recruitment process in civil service

Article 14 of the 2015 Law on Civil Service stipulates that “a civil servant enters the service either through appointment or election, as well as other cases determined by the legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan”.

Recruitment of Corps “A” civil servants is conducted through a personnel reserve pool, which is formed by the decision of a National commission on cadre policy under the President. Government bodies can then choose to recruit Corps “A” civil servants from this personnel reserve pool. Recruitment of Corps “B” civil servants is carried out through a three-tier system starting from the bottom (entry-level posts). Recruitment is either internal (among current employees only) or external (only for entry-level positions).

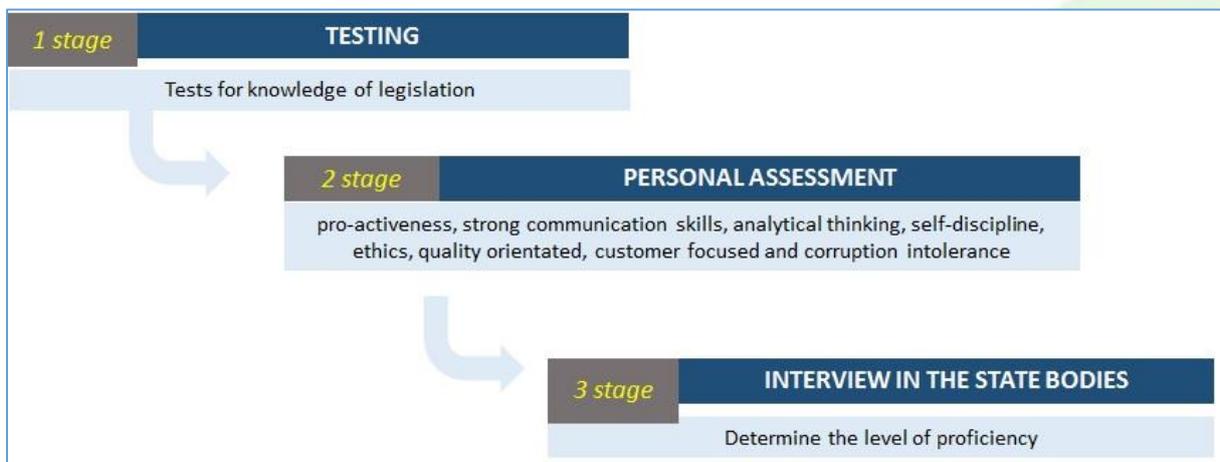
According to Article 20 of the Law, new civil service entrants and those re-entering the civil service are subject to a probation period of up to 6 months (by 3+3 system). Each new civil servant is assigned with a mentor whose responsibility is to develop and adhere to an

⁵ As outlined in the Law on Civil Service of 2015, human resources departments of government bodies are independent of other departments within government bodies, and report directly to a permanent secretary/chief of staff/head of the government. Local government bodies and regional departments of central government bodies are also allowed to create centralised HR departments for several closely located districts.

adaptation plan for the new entrant into civil service. At the beginning of service, a new civil servant is given a 3-month probationary period. If after this 3-month probationary period, the civil servant receives an unsatisfactory rating, the probationary period is prolonged for another 3 months. Once the 6-month probationary period is completed, a decision is made on whether the civil servant can remain in the civil service. If a newly recruited civil servant receives an unsatisfactory rating at the end of the 6-month probationary period, the public body he/she works for has to seek approval from the Ministry for Civil Service Affairs on whether to keep or let go.

Internal recruitment is carried out by a recruitment committee of the ministry / government body in question, for the employees of that ministry / government body only. If no suitable candidate is found, recruitment is extended to cover all current civil servants. If no suitable candidate is found following this civil service-wide internal recruitment, external recruitment procedures are used.

The three stages of external recruitment are: [a] test administered by the Ministry; [b] interview with the Ministry to assess whether candidate fits in with the civil service values; and [c] interview at the government body which has the vacancy.



Source: Ministry of Civil Service Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan

Since 2013, the Ministry has been developing a unified electronic system for human resources management (“e-kyzmet” or “e-service”) that is to be implemented in all government bodies and it further promotes development and maintenance of such HR databases. This system functions as an automatic administration system of personnel to ensure electronic management of human resources in compliance with relevant policies and standards.

b. Promotion process in civil service

According to the 2015 Law on Civil Service, a civil servant is promoted to a higher post following consideration of his/her qualifications, competencies, ability, merit and performance. Promotion is carried out through general and internal competition⁶.

Besides, in accordance with the legislation on public service, transfer of civil servants can be carried out in state agencies for positions in groups of categories "A" and "B" of administrative positions of the Corps "B" (and in the state bodies, positions which refer to the categories "A" and "B" of administrative positions of the Corps "B"), as well as from posts in government agencies of categories "A" and "B" of the Corps "B" to other state agencies.

c. Performance appraisal, training, and career development

According to the 2015 Law on Civil Service, there are separate performance evaluation procedures for political appointees, and for civil servants of Corps "A" and "B". Performance of political civil servants is evaluated by the President⁷ or an official appointed by him for the purpose. Performance of Corps "A" civil servants is evaluated by the official who has the right of appointment and dismissal of such civil servants. For Corps "B" civil servants, performance evaluation is carried out by their direct supervisors and colleagues, as well as their subordinates. Once civil servants' performance is assessed, the evaluation results are approved by an Evaluation Commission within the relevant government body.

Performance evaluation rules for administrative civil servants are approved by Presidential Decree. Performance evaluation methodology for Corp "A", based on performance evaluation rules, is designed by the Ministry, while government bodies design their own performance evaluation methodologies for Corp "B" based on the model methodology provided by the Ministry for Civil Service Affairs.

According to the Law unsatisfactory performance evaluation is the basis for contract termination (Corps "A"); and downgrading or dismissal (Corps "B").

IV. ETHICS AND ANTI-CORRUPTION STRUCTURES

The Law on Civil Service and the Law on Anti-Corruption regulate ethical standards in the Civil Service of Kazakhstan. The Law on Civil Service regulates disciplinary action against ethical misdemeanours, conflict of interest and ethical standards. The Law on Anti-Corruption outlines principles of combatting corruption including anti-corruption measures, the entities responsible for anti-corruption and the extent of their authority, as well as managing the consequences of corruption-related offenses. Furthermore, the Law has introduced new anti-corruption measures, such as anti-corruption monitoring and standards, analysis of corruption risks, development and cultivation of an anti-corruption culture, control of finances, conflict of interest, and preparation of the National anti-corruption report.

⁶ The option of transfer between jobs in different ministries and government bodies is no longer available (apart from personal aides, press-secretaries and advisors).

⁷ This provision was newly introduced by the Decree No. 295 of the President of the RoK on 4 July 2016: http://online.zakon.kz/Document/?doc_id=32642822#pos=7;-294

According to the Law on Anti-Corruption, property and assets of civil servants are subject to declaration upon entry into the civil service and for the rest of the civil servants, the declaration is compulsory on a yearly basis. Information contained in civil servants' property declaration is subject to publication for political and Corps "A" civil servants, members of Parliament and managerial level staff in the quasi-governmental sectors. The Law also outlines the basic procedure of whistle-blowers' protection.

Moreover, the Department for Anti-Corruption Policy in the Ministry for Civil Service Affairs was established, in 2015, to provide systematic warnings and policy advice on prevention of corruption. Anti-corruption monitoring, analysis of corruption risks, development and cultivation of an anti-corruption culture are the main tasks of this Department.

The National Anti-Corruption Bureau was established under the Ministry for Civil Service Affairs as the implementing authority on criminal law measures against corruption.

The now dissolved Agency for Civil Service Affairs and Anti-Corruption developed the anti-corruption strategy 2025 and an Action Plan, which identify corruption sensitive areas and provide for targeted actions aimed at modernisation of anti-corruption investigation and enforcement, state procurement, reform of the public finance system, increased interagency coordination for prevention of corruption, introduction of corruption risk analysis and monitoring and formation of anti-corruption culture. In this strategy, there is a provision for a special position of an officer in charge of ethics compliance within every ministry and government body. Every regional department of the Ministry has an ethics council responsible for disciplinary action and ethics compliance. The Ethics Officer is institutionalized in government bodies to foster ethical compliance of civil servants.

The "Ethical Code of Civil Servants of the Republic of Kazakhstan" and the "Regulations of Ethics Officer" were approved in 2015. The Code includes a chapter on Ethics of Civil Servants, which defines the requirements for civil servant's behaviour, including standards of behaviour during non-office hours, as well as standards of relations in the work place.

It is worth noting that this is the first time that breach of ethics entailed disciplinary actions.

V. CIVIL SERVICE REFORMS: PAST, CURRENT AND PLANNED

a. Past reforms

Phase 1: 1995 – 2000

A Presidential Decree on civil service was issued in 1995 laying the foundation of the modern civil service system in Kazakhstan.

As a result, in 1999, the Civil Service Law and 11 Presidential Decrees were passed, which led Kazakhstan to be the first among the post-soviet countries to introduce the following innovations in legislation⁸:

⁸ Intensive study of international experience and analysis of own problems allowed Kazakhstan to determine the main directions of the first stage of reforms of the late nineties (Baimenov, 2000).

- Division of civil servants into political and career officers;
- Open and mandatory competitive selection/recruitment – as a means to admit only the qualified candidates into the civil service;
- Protection of career civil servants when a political leadership changes;
- Creation of a specialized Civil Service Agency.

One needs to take into account the historical context within which these seemingly basic features of a professional civil service were introduced. In a country with a long history of a Soviet style civil service, where all civil servants were considered political appointees (party members), understanding of the need to distinguish between administrative (non-political) and political civil servants inevitably took almost a decade. Thus, taking into account the features of the transition period, a position-based civil service model was chosen in Kazakhstan (Baimenov, 2000). The position-based model allowed for more flexibility in hiring internally – from within the civil service - as well as externally – from the national job market. This was deemed necessary, as rapidly changing societal demands along with the strategy to catch-up in modernising the country, required new knowledge, skills and leadership styles that could better be found in the wider job market. Since the adoption of this Law over 550,000 citizens participated in competition procedures to enter civil service, of which 130,000 were recruited and appointed in the civil service.

It is important to highlight that a test on legislation knowledge was part of the selection procedures. This was a very important step in a country, where the traditions of the Rule of Law were weak. Thus, in short, the first stage of reforms was directed towards elimination of a patronage-based system, which should be understood as an effort to enhance meritocracy.

In addition, given the assumption that access to education is the key to meritocracy, President Nazarbayev – in order to mitigate the risks associated with elites monopolising access to education and thus perpetuating themselves – initiated, in 1993, a generous scholarship programme – the “*Bolashak*”⁹ programme, which in Kazakh language means future. The idea was to provide talented youth with free access to education in leading universities around the world, the expenses for which would be fully covered by the government so that they could come back to Kazakhstan better equipped to contribute to the country’s modernization efforts. Since 1993 about 10,000 Kazakhstan citizens from all strata of society gained degrees from the best universities and joined the job market at home including the civil service¹⁰. This scholarship served to level the playing field in terms of access to quality education. Year by year the Programme has been gaining pace and thus it has been adopted to serve the implementation of state objectives.

⁹ For more information on the history of the programme, see <http://bolashak.gov.kz/en/o-stipendii/istoriya-razvitiya.html>

¹⁰ Since its inception, the Bolashak Scholarship Programme has benefited 11,126 Kazakhstan citizens, who have studied and graduated from 200 top universities in 33 countries. As a result of this purposeful policy initiative, the Bolashak Scholarship Programme was named as the best academic mobility programme among 11 such programmes, during the VIII International Going Global Conference in Miami in 2014.

Phase 2: 2011 – 2013

Despite the measures introduced, Kazakhstan kept analysing implementation of the legal framework and faced certain challenges. Among those were the following:

- Lack of an unbiased approach of competition commissions; sometimes the results of a competition were predetermined;
- Using loopholes in the legislation for so-called "team movements" by newly appointed ministers/ governors;
- Lack of using the personnel reserve;
- High level of corruption;
- Insignificant role of HR units in state agencies and municipalities.

Having analysed accumulated problems, good practices as well as increasing expectations of society, the President of the Republic, in 2011, approved the Concept of a new model for civil service by defining its basic principles as meritocracy, efficiency, transparency and accountability to society. Principal changes in the legislation and 18 Presidential Decrees were adopted in March 2013. In short, the new phase of reforms focused on introducing new instruments and mechanisms in human resources management to enhance meritocratic recruitment and promotion. In sum, these were the following:

- ***Enhancement of transparency and objectivity of competitions:***
For the first time, observers and experts were introduced to monitor and evaluate the competition process. Observers could attend the interviews with candidates, review the work of recruitment panels and provide their opinions to the concerned public body's management. In this context, members of the media and of non-governmental organizations could also participate as observers.
- ***Restriction of out-of-competition movements:***
Out-of-competition movement of civil servants was a major loophole for corrupt practices and so-called "team movements" (when a new minister is appointed to a ministry, he/she crowds out almost half of the ministry's officers by putting unreasonable pressure on them and bringing in his/her loyal officers by means of rotation). Changes in the legislation that limit out-of-competition movements allowed to fundamentally solve this issue. The number of rotations between public bodies has decreased by 30 times. At the same time, transfers within departments have been enabled.
- ***Professionalization of personnel management units:***
In order to professionalize the state administration apparatus, there is a need to professionalize Personnel Management Units (HR units) in state agencies, by implementing and properly enforcing new staffing techniques in civil service. Thus, unified personnel management units were created in the districts – whose primary responsibility is to handle human resources management processes, and hence professionalise to the extent possible the HRM function. These units took over the

work, which was previously done by civil servants at the district and village levels, along with dispensing their other duties and responsibilities.

– ***Introduction of Senior Executive Service - Corps "A":***

In 2013, the President decided to decrease the number of political appointees by 8 times, a decision considered by international experts as an unprecedented manifestation of the political will, and a clear sign of a move towards professionalization of the civil service. The Senior Executive Service – so-called Corps "A" – was introduced by a Presidential order. It introduced a special selection procedure utilising the personnel reserve pool¹¹, competitive selection, retention and termination of civil service, as well as special qualification requirements. In this context, out of a total of 97,000 civil service positions, 550 were earmarked as Corps "A" positions. Open competitive selection processes for entering Corps "A" helped explore the HR capacity and find new potential managers who under the patronage system and the political nature of appointments could not catch the eye of governors or ministers.

– ***Strengthening the system of ethical and disciplinary control:***

The Law "On Civil Service" was enhanced with a new chapter on: [a] Code of ethics and anti-corruption behaviour of civil servants; [b] An increased role of disciplinary committees of government agencies; and [c] Coordination of their activities with the Civil Service Agency. Moreover, political civil servants, who are heads of state bodies and governors of local governments are to resign in case of corruption offenses made by their subordinates whom they have appointed. Along with this, the Law on Civil Service determines personal responsibility for illegal public administrators staffing decisions.

Overall, it is important to mention that the key indicators of the new model of civil service implementation are defined as:

- Enhancement of public trust in the system of competitive selection of personnel for the civil service;
- Enhancement of civil servants' trust in the principle of meritocracy; and
- Increasing levels of citizens' satisfaction with the availability and quality of public services.

b. Current reforms

Phase 3: 2015 – to present

¹¹ Appointment to administrative positions of Corps "A" is made exclusively from the personnel pool formed by the National Commission on Personnel Policy under the President of Kazakhstan. The National Commission based on the results of testing distinguished candidates into 4 groups: strategic, organizational, economic, expert-analytical, financial and auditing, as well as a relative ranking among all applicants.

Current reforms in the civil service of Kazakhstan are framed within the five institutional reforms and the national plan of the “100 Concrete Steps,” both adopted in 2015; as well as on the new Law “On Civil Service of the Republic of Kazakhstan,” also adopted in 2015. The first of these five institutional reforms proposed the “Creation of a modern and professional civil service ensuring quality implementation of economic programmes and the provision of public services”, currently implemented. They are directed towards building a professional civil service, based on the career-based civil service model, incorporating a competency and competitive approach. A competence profile, i.e. a description of the necessary skills, will be developed for each position. The profile includes analytical, organizational, managerial and communication and other specific skills. In this manner, the form of activity a candidate is most effective will be reviewed and it will be the basis for a decision to whether he/she can participate in the competitive selection process for employment in the civil service.

Career planning will be an incentive for officials to improve the efficiency of civil servants’ work. A system of individual career planning is being developed. There will be given two or three positions, which are of interest to a given civil servant and, therefore, measures for professional development will be prepared to work effectively for these positions.

The relation between career planning and assessment of competence profile will identify strengths of civil servants, will expand their knowledge, develop their specific skills and abilities that will allow them to continue to move up the career ladder.

Current reforms may be summarised as follows:

- Modernizing procedures for entering civil service: entry into civil service should start with low-level positions;
- Candidates for low-level positions are selected and all civil servants are promoted based on a competence-based approach;
- Procedures for selecting first-time civil servants are centralized and a three-stage selection system is introduced;
- Mandatory 3+3 probationary periods for first time civil servants (midterm and final job competence assessment in three months and in six months respectively) is introduced;
- Free housing is provided to rotated civil servants while in discharge of duties, without the right to privatize it;
- A system of regular training and development of civil servants, at least, once every three years, is introduced;
- Civil servants to senior positions of Category B are promoted based on a competitive process only;
- Foreign managers, some specialists from private sector and citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan who are employees of international organizations can be appointed in case of special requirements and for a specific list of positions. This step makes civil service open and competitive;
- A new ethical code for the civil service is developed overseen by an Ethics Officer;
- A specialised anti-corruption unit is established in the Civil Service and

- Anticorruption Agency for systemic prevention of corruption offences of law;
- A new law on civil service was adopted in 2015;
 - Attestation of existing civil servants was conducted after the new law on civil service had been adopted.

 <p>Abolition of Category «B» of Human Resource institution and personnel transition</p> <p><i>(except secretariat of the political service, as well as between government agencies belonging to the category "A" and "B")</i></p>	 <p>New approaches of evaluating the effectiveness of public servants' activities</p>	 <p>➤ Increasing of trial period from 3 to 6 months and appointing mentors</p>	 <p>Rotation of senior level positions of Category «B»</p> <p><i>(In a format of job swap within the system of state authority)</i></p>
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Source: Ministry of Civil Service Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan

c. *Planned reforms*

Priorities of the next phase of civil service reform – in congruence with the 5 institutional reforms announced by the President in March 2015 – are further development of an autonomous and professional state administration apparatus where meritocracy, transparency and accountability should prevail. These initiatives may be summed as follows:

- Hiring foreign subject-matter experts in the civil service in Kazakhstan (for particular positions);
- Minimization of patronage;
- Transparency of decision-making and accountability of political appointees and state apparatus in general;
- Involvement of civil society into decision-making (maybe crowd sourcing, etc);
- Access to Information Act;
- Gradual devolution of power to civil society organizations.

According to the Ministry for Civil Service Affairs, a conceptual document is currently under development aiming at further development of civil service in Kazakhstan and based on the best practices of countries with developed civil service systems.

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The Regional Hub of Civil Service in Astana (ACSH) was established in March 2013, when representatives of 25 countries, as well as of 5 international organisations, unanimously adopted the ACSH’s Founding Declaration. The ACSH is a multilateral institutional platform for the continuous exchange of knowledge and experience in the field of civil service development, aiming to stimulate civil service transformation in the region, through capacity development activities, and by disseminating innovative approaches to civil service reform, through evidence-based solutions, informed by a comprehensive research and policy agenda. It has financial and institutional support from the Government of Kazakhstan, and backing of the United Nations Development Programme as the key implementing partner. The geographical range of the participating countries – currently encompassing 32 countries - stretches from the Americas and Europe through Central Asia and Caucasus to ASEAN countries, which demonstrates that effective civil service is a constant and universal need for all nations. For more information, please visit: www.regionalhub.org

This document was last updated on: 19 August 2016

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