

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

Source: UNDP HDI; World Bank (2015)

a. Indicators on Quality of Public Service:

Indicator	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

Source: World Bank (2015)

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, fundamental 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 nation's official language; Russian has the status of the language of interethnic communication.

The President of the Republic of Kazakhstan is the head of state and highest political officer. He determines the main directions of domestic and foreign policy and represents Kazakhstan on the international arena. The President is a symbol and guarantor of national unity and state power. He protects the inviolability of the Constitution and of the rights and freedoms of individual citizens.

The Government exercises executive powers, heads the system of executive bodies and coordinates and supervises their activities. The Parliament of the Republic performs the legislative functions. It consists of two Chambers: The Senate and the *Mazhilis*. The Senate is composed of 47 members: two members from each of the country's 14 regions and two from each of the two cities of national significance (Astana and Almaty). It also includes 15 members who are appointed by the President with due regard to the equal representation of national, cultural and other significant groups in society. Senate members serve a term of six years. The Mazhilis 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 Mazhilis members is five years. After gaining independence, Kazakhstan has experienced a political, socio-economic and administrative transformation. An integral part of this change has been civil service reform.

II. CIVIL SERVICE PROFILE

a. Legal basis of the civil service

The Civil Service Law of 2015 came into effect on 1 January 2016. It is the main legal instrument regulating the civil service in Kazakhstan. In addition, such bylaws as Presidential decrees, Government acts and directives of the Civil Service Agency (formerly the Ministry for Civil Service Affairs) provide the legal basis for the organisation of the civil service and for the legal status of civil servants, as well as regulations pertaining to relations in the civil service.

Specifically, Chapter I of the Law defines the concepts. It states the main principles of the civil service and the functions of the civil service regulatory body. It also outlines civil servants' post classification and the role and functions of HRM departments in government bodies. The Law further stipulates service duties, including civil servants' status and rights, job responsibilities, limitations in terms of engaging in entrepreneurial or other gainful pursuits outside the civil service and participation in political party activities. It also describes the functions of political civil servants, permanent secretaries and chiefs of staff (Chapter II). Furthermore, it delineates provisions for entry into the civil service, including minimum and special requirements, competition and selection processes, appointment terms, background checks, probation periods, as well as cases of suspension and dismissal from the civil service (Chapters III, V, VII, and X). In addition, the Law sets out the conditions for performance evaluation, promotion, career development, rotation, training, internships and for imposing disciplinary sanctions (Chapters VI, VII). Chapter IX considers remuneration and incentives system, types of leave and pensions. The general rules and standards of conduct of civil servants include measures to safeguard the confidentiality of information, handle conflicts of interest and prevent official corruption. These

and other provisions are included in Chapter VIII. The Law also covers conditions for dispute resolution, attestation, reinstatement and the employment of foreigners (Chapter XI)¹.

b. Definition of civil servant

In accordance with the Law on Civil Service of 2015, civil service is defined as the work of civil servants in government bodies. This entails exercising official powers aimed at the implementation of the government's policy and administrative functions. The Law defines a civil servant as a citizen of the Republic of Kazakhstan, who holds a government post and exercises authority in implementing government policy and performing administrative functions, in accordance with the law. For these tasks he/she is compensated from the state or local budget or from funds of the National Bank of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The civil service in Kazakhstan is unified but also divided into two broad categories: central and local government administration. According to the Law of 2015, there are two types of civil servants:

- **Political civil servants:** Their appointment or election is politically-determined and they are chiefly responsible for policy implementation based on political goals²;
- **Administrative civil servants:** Their employment is permanent³. Administrative civil servants are divided into two Corps: "A" and "B", where Corps "A" consists of civil servants at a managerial level, for whom specific recruitment, employment and dismissal conditions apply⁴; and Corps "B" which consists of the remaining civil servants.

In sum, according to the Presidential Decree "On the Registry of Civil Service Posts" (2015), civil servants are divided hierarchically as follows:

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

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

¹ The Law on Civil Service of 2015 also states that labour legislation provisions are applicable to civil servants, however taking into consideration 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.

² 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 posts.

³ With the exception of some cases, determined by the laws of the Republic and Decisions of the President.

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

c. Civil servants' profile

Eligibility criteria

In order to apply and be considered for a position in the civil service, the following basic requirements must 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. Applicants should meet the job requirements, possess a relevant education, work experience, knowledge and qualities and be of sound health”*. The Law of 2015 disqualifies the following:

- Persons deemed legally incapable; having certain adverse medical conditions, which may prevent them from exercising their functions;
- Persons who were previously dismissed for disciplinary reasons, and/or 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 the educational level and work experience vary from post to post. Specific job requirements outlining the needed educational profile, as well as the knowledge and skills required are determined based on this Law 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 (1/01/2016).

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

There is one civil servant for every 192 people. A total of 91,330 civil servants over a population of 17,417,673 (as of 2015) represent just over half of a percent (0.52%) of the total population.

Gender and age distribution of civil service

In January 2015, civil service encompassed 50,219 female civil servants (55%) and 41,111 male civil servants (45%). The average age of civil servants in Kazakhstan is estimated at 39 years of age. By contrast, the average age of political appointees is slightly higher than that of administrative civil servants (Corps A and B), which are 48.3 years and 38.9 years respectively.

d. Civil servants' remuneration structure

According to the Law of Civil Service of 2015, remuneration in the civil service includes a salary, a salary increment and/or a bonus. Salary rates for each hierarchical rank are determined by a Presidential Decree. They are based on the position category and work experience in years. A bonus is based on performance, while the salary increment is given for working overtime and for performing additional functions.

III. BODY RESPONSIBLE FOR HR POLICY AND IMPLEMENTATION

Human resources management in the civil service is regulated by several legal instruments, namely the Law on the Civil Service (2015) and the Labour Code. The Agency for Civil Service Affairs and Anti-Corruption is the legal entity responsible for the human resources management function. The Agency for Civil Service Affairs and Anti-Corruption was first established in 2014. In 2015, it was transformed into the Ministry for Civil Service Affairs but in September 2016, reverted to the Agency for Civil Service Affairs and Anti-Corruption. The Agency is directly subordinate to the President.

The Agency for Civil Service Affairs and Anti-Corruption provides coordination and technical support to the HRM within the civil service. It monitors and assesses the quality of public service delivery, oversees the compliance of civil servants to ethical norms and evaluates HRM-related functions, as well as their implementation by government bodies. Furthermore, the Agency coordinates the activities of HR units⁵ of government agencies and provides guidance on HRM practices. It also offers professional development and training to civil servants through the Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan and several regional study centres.

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

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

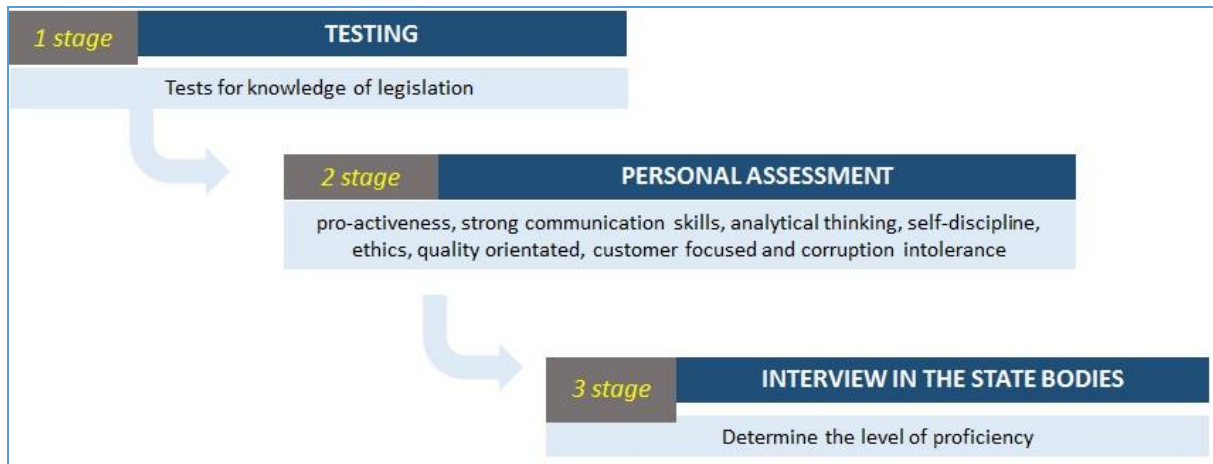
Recruitment to Corps “A” is conducted by means of a personnel reserve roster, constituted by decision of the National Commission on cadre policy under the President. Government bodies can then recruit Corps “A” civil servants by choosing candidates from this personnel roster. Recruitment to Corps “B” is carried out through a three-tier system starting at the bottom (entry-level posts). Recruitment is either internal (limited to current employees) or external (this applies to entry-level positions only).

According to Article 20 of the Law, new entrants into the civil service and those re-entering are subject to a probation period of up to 6 months (by a 3 + 3 system). Each new civil servant is assigned a mentor, whose responsibility is to guide the candidate through the integration process along with an agreed adaptation plan upon entering the civil service for a 3-month probationary period. If, at the end of this 3-month period, the civil servant receives an unsatisfactory rating, the probationary period is prolonged for another 3 months. Upon completion of the 6-month probationary period, a decision is made on whether the entrant can remain in the civil service. If a newly recruited civil servant receives another unsatisfactory rating at the end of the 6-month probationary period, the public organisation seeks a decision from the Agency for Civil Service Affairs and Anti-Corruption on whether to keep this person or let go.

Internal recruitment is carried out by a recruitment committee of the hiring ministry or government body hiring only from among its own personnel. If no suitable candidate is found, the recruitment process is opened to all civil servants, civil service-wide. If, again, no suitable candidate can be found, the external recruitment procedures are used.

⁵ As outlined in the Law on Civil Service of 2015, human resources departments of government bodies are independent of other departments within government. They 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.

Figure 4: Stages of external recruitment in Kazakhstan



Source: Ministry of Civil Service Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan (2015)

External recruitment consists of three stages: [a] a test administered by the Agency; [b] an interview at the Agency to assess whether the candidate possesses the required civil service values; and [c] an interview required by the government body that has announced the vacancy.

A unified electronic system for human resources management⁶ has been introduced, since 2013. It is gradually being implemented across all government bodies, in which HR databases are developed and maintained. This system functions as some sort of automated personnel administration system, so as to ensure the electronic management of human resources in compliance with relevant policy standards.

b. Promotion and transfer processes in civil service

According to the 2015 Law on Civil Service, civil servants are promoted to a higher post following an evaluation of their qualifications, competencies, ability, merit and performance. The promotion process is carried out through general and internal competitions. Civil servants can also be transferred, between state agencies, to eligible positions in categories “A” and “B”, as well as from the posts of categories “A” and “B” in government agencies to other state agencies⁷.

c. Performance appraisal, training and career development

According to the 2015 Law on Civil Service, there are distinct and separate performance evaluation procedures for political appointees and civil servants of Corps “A” and “B”. The performance evaluation of political civil servants is carried out by the President⁸ or an official appointed by him for this purpose. The performance evaluation of Corps “A” civil servants is carried out by the official who has the responsibility for their appointment and/or dismissal. Performance evaluation of Corps “B” civil servants is carried out by their direct supervisors, colleagues and subordinates. Once the civil servants’ performance is assessed, the evaluation results are approved by an Evaluation Commission established for this purpose within each government body.

Performance evaluation rules for administrative civil servants are approved by Presidential Decree. However, performance evaluation methodology for Corps “A” is designed and formulated

⁶ “E-kyzmet” (“e-service”).

⁷ An option of transfer between jobs in different ministries and government bodies is no longer available (apart from personal aides, press secretaries and advisors).

⁸ This provision was recently introduced by Decree No 295 of the President of the Republic (4 July 2016). See also: http://online.zakon.kz/Document/?doc_id=32642822#pos=7;-294

by the Agency for Civil Service Affairs and Anti-Corruption, while government bodies design their own performance evaluation methodologies for Corps “B” personnel, based on a model provided centrally. According to the Law, an unsatisfactory performance evaluation is the basis for contract termination for Corps “A” civil servants; downgrading or dismissal for Corps “B” personnel.

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 for ethical misdemeanours, conflicts of interest and ethical standards. The Law on Anti-Corruption outlines the strategy for combatting corruption and sets out anti-corruption measures. It showcases the entities responsible for anti-corruption activities and highlights the extent of their authority, as well as management practices in dealing with corruption-related offences. The Law on Anti-Corruption has introduced such new anti-corruption measures as anti-corruption monitoring, corruption risk analysis, development and cultivation of an anti-corruption culture, control of finances, conflict of interest and preparation of the national anti-corruption report.

According to the Law on Combatting Corruption, the property and assets of civil servants are subject to declaration upon entry into the civil service. For other civil servants, the declaration is compulsory on a yearly basis. Information contained in the civil servants’ property declaration is subject to publication, in the case of political and Corps “A” civil servants, members of Parliament and managerial level staff in the quasi-governmental sectors. The Law also outlines the basic procedures for whistle-blowers’ protection.

The National Anti-Corruption Bureau⁹ of the Civil Service Affairs and Anti-Corruption Agency provides systematic cautionary notices and policy advice on the prevention of corruption. Among the main tasks of the Bureau are: anti-corruption monitoring, analysis of corruption risks and development and cultivation of an anti-corruption culture in the civil service.

The Civil Service Affairs and Anti-Corruption Agency has also developed an Anti-Corruption Strategy 2025 and an Action Plan, which identify corruption-sensitive areas. They provide for targeted actions aimed at modernising anti-corruption investigations and enforcement processes, state procurement, public finance systems, as well as increased interagency coordination for the prevention of corruption, introduction of corruption risk analysis and monitoring and education. The Strategy provides for a special position; an officer in charge of ethics compliance within each ministry or government body. Ethics Officers positions are institutionalised in government bodies in order to foster ethical compliance for civil servants. Every regional department of the Agency has an ethics council responsible for disciplinary action and ethics compliance.

The “*Ethical Code for the Civil Servants of the Republic of Kazakhstan*” and the “*Regulations for Ethics Officers*” were approved in 2015. The Code includes a chapter “On Civil Servants’ Ethics”. This defines the requirements for civil servants’ behaviour, including standards of conduct, relations at the work place, as well as for non-office hours.

V. CIVIL SERVICE REFORMS: PAST, CURRENT AND PLANNED

a. Past reforms

Phase 1: 1995 – 2000

⁹ Reorganised in September 2016, based on the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of the Ministry for Civil Service Affairs.

The Presidential Decree on Civil Service (1995) laid the foundation of the modern civil service system in Kazakhstan. In 1999, the Civil Service Law and 11 Presidential Decrees were passed, making Kazakhstan to be the first among all post-soviet countries to introduce innovations in civil service related legislation¹⁰. Specifically, the legislation introduced:

- Distinction of civil servants into political and career officers;
- Open and mandatory competitive selection and recruitment processes as the means of admitting only the best qualified candidates into the civil service;
- Protection of career civil servants, in the case of political change; and
- Creation of a specialized Civil Service Agency.

One needs to take into account the historical context within which these seemingly basic traits 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 and party members, understanding the need to distinguish between administrative (non-political) and political civil servants required almost a decade to materialise.

Considering the peculiarities of the transition period, a position-based civil service model was chosen. 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 national strategy tended to speed up the modernisation of the country. Such modernisation called for new knowledge, skills and leadership potential, which could be found more easily in the wider job market (Baimenov, 2000). Since the adoption of this model over 550,000 citizens participated in competition procedures to enter civil service. Of these, 130,000 were recruited and appointed to the civil service.

It is important to stress that a test on legislation 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, the first stage of reforms was directed towards the elimination of a patronage-based system and could be understood as an effort to enhance meritocracy. On the assumption that access to education is key to meritocracy, as well as with a view to mitigating the risks of elites monopolising access to education, President Nazarbayev initiated, in 1993, a generous scholarship programme – the “*Bolashak*”¹¹ programme (meaning future in Kazakh). 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 state. Then, these individuals would come back to Kazakhstan better equipped to contribute to the country’s modernization efforts. Since its inception, about 10,000 Kazakhstani citizens from all the strata of society have been awarded degrees from the best international universities and joined the job market at home including the civil service¹². This scholarship served to level off the playing field in terms of access to quality education. Year by year, the Programme has been gaining pace and thus has been adopted to serve the implementation of state objectives.

Phase 2: 2011 – 2013

¹⁰ Intensive study of international experience and analysis of its own problems allowed Kazakhstan to determine the main directions of the first stage of reforms in the late nineties (Baimenov, 2000).

¹¹ For more information on the history of the programme, see <http://bolashak.gov.kz/en/o-stipendii/istoriya-razvitiya.html>

¹² Since its inception, the Bolashak Scholarship Programme has benefited 11,126 Kazakhstan citizens, who studied and graduated from the top 200 universities in 33 countries. Because 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 (2014).

Despite the measures introduced, Kazakhstan kept facing certain challenges. Among those were the following:

- Lack of an unbiased approach by competition commissions (it has been found that at times the results of competitions were predetermined);
- Use of loopholes in the legislation for so-called "team movements" by newly appointed ministers/ governors;
- Inadequate utilisation of the personnel reserve;
- High levels of corruption; and
- Insignificant role of HR units in state agencies and municipalities.

Following further analysis of the challenges and a review of good practices, the President approved a Concept Note on a new model for the civil service (2011). This took into consideration the increasing expectations of society. The Concept Note defined the basic principles of civil service in terms of meritocracy, efficiency, transparency and accountability to society. These principal changes in the existing legislation and 18 Presidential Decrees were adopted in March 2013. In brief, this phase of reforms focused on introducing new instruments and mechanisms in human resources management to enhance meritocratic recruitment and promotion processes. These reforms were the following:

- ***Enhancement of transparency and objectivity of competitions:***

For the first time, observers and experts were introduced to monitor and evaluate the competitive process. Observers could attend the interviews with candidates, review the work of recruitment panels and provide their opinions to the management of the hiring organisation. Members of the media and of non-governmental organizations may also participate as observers.

- ***Restriction of out-of-competition movements:***

The movement of civil servants outside competitive processes - the so-called "team movements"¹³ – was a major loophole leading to irregular practices in staff movements. Changes in the legislation limiting such movements allowed to drastically tackle this issue. The number of rotations between public bodies has decreased 30 times over the past five years. At the same time, however, transfers within departments have been facilitated.

- ***Professionalization of personnel management units:***

It was recognised that Personnel Management Units (HR units) in state agencies must be professionalised, along with the rest of the state administration. Thus, unified personnel management units were created in the districts, whose primary responsibility has been to handle human resources management processes. This action was meant to professionalise HRM functions, to the extent possible, by introducing new staffing techniques in civil service management. These units took over the work, previously performed by civil servants at the district and village levels, along with their regular duties and responsibilities.

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

In 2013, the President decreased the number of political appointees eightfold¹⁴ by introducing the Senior Executive Service – known as Corps "A" – through a Presidential Order. A special selection procedure was employed utilising the personnel roster¹⁵. The

¹³ When a new minister was appointed, he/she crowded out almost half of the ministry's officers by putting unreasonable pressure on them and replaced them with his/her loyal officers, by means of "rotation".

¹⁴ This action was considered as an unprecedented manifestation of the political will and a clear sign of a move towards professionalization of the civil service, by international experts.

¹⁵ 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 the Republic of Kazakhstan. The National Commission, based on test results, allocated candidates into four groups: [i] strategic; [ii] organizational; [iii] economic, expert-

result of this process was to establish 550 Corps “A” positions out of a total of approximately 97,000 civil service positions. The open competitive selection processes utilised for entering Corps "A" helped explore the dormant human resource capacity and find potential managers who, they could not have been discovered under the patronage system and the political nature of most appointments.

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

The Law "On Civil Service" was enhanced with a new chapter dealing with: [a] a Code of ethics and anti-corruption conduct 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, the Law stipulated that political civil servants, who are heads of state bodies and governors of local governments should resign if the subordinates, whom they may have appointed were involved in corruption offenses¹⁶.

In sum, key goals of this new model of civil service include:

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

b. Current reforms

Phase 3: 2015 – to present

Current civil service related-reforms are encompassed in the “*Five Institutional Reforms*” and the “*100 Concrete Steps*” national plan. Both were adopted in 2015¹⁷. The 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*”. They are directed towards building a professional civil service, based on a career-based model, incorporating a competency and competitive approach. A competency profile will be developed. It is a comprehensive description of the necessary skills needed for each position¹⁸. In this manner, a candidate’s capacity may be assessed in terms of effectiveness and suitability. Assessment results will constitute the basis for deciding whether an individual can participate in a competitive selection process for potential civil service employment.

A system of individual career plans is being developed, because career planning is generally considered to be an incentive for civil servants to improve the efficiency and quality of their work. Through this system, civil servants will be offered two or three positions, which are of interest to them and a professional development plan will be prepared in furthering civil servants’ development.

Competencies assessment and career planning contribute to identifying the strengths and weaknesses of civil servants. They help expand their knowledge and develop the skills and abilities that would allow them to climb the career ladder.

Current civil service reforms may be summarised as follows:

analytical; and [iv] financial and auditing; and ranked candidates within each group according to test scores they had obtained.

¹⁶ In the context, the Law on Civil Service introduced personal responsibility for public administrators’ staffing decisions.

¹⁷ As well as on the new Law “On Civil Service of the Republic of Kazakhstan”, also adopted in 2015.

¹⁸ The profile includes analytical, organizational, managerial, communication and other specific skills needed for a position.

Modernisation of procedures for entering civil service (entry should take place at low-level positions);

Candidates for low-level positions are selected on a competency-based approach; all civil servants are promoted on the same basis;

- Selection procedures for new civil servants are centralized and a three-stage selection system is introduced;
- Mandatory 3+3 probationary periods for new entrants are introduced;
- Free housing is provided to civil servants on “rotation” but without the right to own;
- A system of regular training and development, at least once every three years, is introduced;
- Civil servants who have been appointed to senior positions of Category B are promoted through a competitive process only;
- Foreign managers, some specialists from the private sector and citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan, who are employees of international organizations, can be appointed to meet special requirements and positions placed on a separate list. This process contributes to making the civil service open and competitive;
- A new ethical code is developed; its implementation is overseen by an Ethics Officer;
- A specialised anti-corruption unit is established in the Agency for Civil Affairs and Anti-corruption¹⁹ for a systematic to prevention of corruption offences;
- A new law on the civil service was adopted in 2015; and
- Attestation of active civils servants was conducted after the new law on the civil service has been adopted.

c. **Planned reforms**

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

- Minimization of patronage;
- Transparency of decision-making and accountability of political appointees and of the administration in general;
- Involvement of civil society into decision-making;
- Enactment of the Access to Information Act;
- Gradual devolution of power to civil society organizations; and
- Hiring foreign experts in the civil service of Kazakhstan for specialised positions.

Figure 5: Current reforms in the Republic of Kazakhstan



Source: Ministry of Civil Service Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan (2015)

¹⁹ Nowadays part of the newly formed Agency for Civil Service Affairs and Anti-Corruption.

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