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EU-KAZAKHSTAN ON THE MOVE

SPECIAL REPORT | OCT 2021

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A new political season has started, together with some easing of COVID-19-related travel and meeting restrictions. As journalists and politicians prepare to take the plane and renew contacts, EURACTIV has taken snapshots of the ongoing cooperation between the EU and Kazakhstan.

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INTERVIEW

Kazakhstan justice minister: We aim to create good conditions for foreign investors

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By Georgi Gotev | EURACTIV.com



Justice minister of Kazakhstan Marat Beketaev in the EURACTIV office in Brussels on 30 September 2021. [Georgi Gotev]

In a comprehensive interview, Kazakhstan's Justice Minister Marat Beketaev discussed Kazakhstan's relations with the EU, its ongoing multi-billion international court cases, and the Central Asian country's strategic development plans and efforts to create good conditions for foreign investment.

Marat Beketaev, a lawyer by training, has been the minister of justice since

February 2019. He has previously served as vice minister of justice, advisor to the prime minister, and a diplomat in Kazakhstan's ministry of foreign affairs.

He spoke to EURACTIV's Senior Editor Georgi Gotev.

We are speaking in Brussels, can you tell us with whom you have met?

I am here to meet officials in the

EP, in the EC; mainly, we are here to inform our partners about reforms in Kazakhstan, particularly in the field of human rights. We want to raise awareness in Brussels in the EU about investment opportunities in Kazakhstan and the protection of property rights – these are the main topics of my two-day visit.

You mentioned the European Parliament, has the climate improved

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since a [resolution was passed in February](#) that was highly critical of the human rights situation in Kazakhstan, possibly as the result of some [aggressive lobbying](#)?

Indeed, this resolution was quite a surprise for us. It was done at a time when many reforms were done in Kazakhstan, new laws were adopted, improving the situation with human rights, and suddenly came this resolution. We realised it was not enough to decide something and implement it, but also to inform our partners in Europe and America.

Who did you meet in the EP?

The Ambassador (Baimukhan Margulan) suggested inviting everyone, especially those who are most critical of Kazakhstan. And that was done, some of them agreed to come. It was not an easy conversation, but we had an opportunity to tell our part of the story. We didn't agree on everything, but we found common ground on many topics. Also, as a country, we are not limiting ourselves to meeting officials. We also meet NGOs, not only here but also in Washington, online, on a regular basis.

Can you name these NGOs?

Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International. The big ones, the most active, the most influential.

Kazakhstan has an excellent track record in maintaining good relations with its neighbours and with global players. Is Kazakhstan's experience with conflict resolution and conflict prevention interesting for your EU partners?

We could talk about these issues

for hours. But you have to bear in mind that I am not a diplomat...

But you are; I've seen your CV...

I used to work for the foreign office for a little while. But now, I consider myself a lawyer. To answer your question, we believe in constructive dialogue in transparency, and once you have that, you have a sound basis for establishing good relations with the global society. It was a concept established by our first president (Nursultan Nazarbayev) of multi-vector policy, of multi-vector diplomacy. We cannot limit ourselves to the neighbouring countries, and we are big enough in terms of territory, economy, and our positions to talk openly to all the global players. Unless we do so, we won't be able to develop our country the way we are doing at the moment.

Closer to your portfolio, let me ask you about the multi-billion court cases that are sometimes reported in the world media. One of them, the [Stati case](#), was called "one of the biggest frauds in the history of international arbitration"...

I could say that out of 23 cases brought by different organisations against Kazakhstan, we won 10 cases fully, four cases are still ongoing, seven cases we lost, and two cases were settled. But when we are talking about losing particular cases, we have to bear in mind that what was given was not the full amount; it's 10, 20, 30% of the initial claim. And we promptly paid all the cases, but one, the Stati case.

We believe we have the capacity in the country to deal with arbitration cases, in terms of human resources, in terms of funding, to find the best

lawyers, and in terms of the legal system in general. Let me explain. All the cases were brought in relation to events that were happening before 2010 – the late 1990s, early 2000s. The system then wasn't sophisticated enough to deal with investments in a proper diligent way. If you were to get a contract for an oil field, you have to have relevant resources: engineers, infrastructure, financing relevant to this particular oil field. But in the early independence days, these regulations were not in place, and sometimes companies without experience and capacity were given such contracts. Some of them went into investment disputes. But now, we are no longer allowing companies without experience of capacity to operate in our economy.

In addition to that, our bureaucracy is much more flexible and capable of conducting negotiations. The world is not perfect, and sometimes we have disputes with our investors. Our bureaucrats are well prepared to negotiate and find compromise solutions with investors, and I can give many examples. This allows avoiding costly arbitration. When it comes to arbitration, we have qualified people, highly educated, fluent in English, to represent our position in arbitration or in court. This is big and responsible work, and we are capable of doing it.

Regarding the Stati case, they initiated arbitration against Kazakhstan under the EU-supported Energy Charter Treaty (ECT), is this a misuse of legislation put in place for a good purpose?

I fully agree, there are some so-called investors who are abusing mechanisms designed to protect investors, but these mechanisms aren't perfect. For example, the

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Energy Charter Treaty doesn't allow governments to bring counter-claims. This is a flaw in the mechanism, and we raised this issue with the ECT, and we are in discussion with them on how these problems could be fixed. Regarding the Stati case, we are in dispute not only with the Stati, but with bondholders, financial institutions which bought those bonds from Stati, and when they discovered that Stati had committed fraud and stole money from them, instead of suing Stati, they decided to cooperate with him. This is a classic Ponzi scheme when a victim engages in cooperation with a criminal to defraud yet another victim. This is what we believe is happening now, and we are prepared to continue all the legal work in the courts. It is already public that a number of countries have started criminal investigations, all considering evidence provided by the government of Kazakhstan. For example, Luxembourg has already started their own criminal investigations.

It is also important to know that although legal disputes take place in the courts, the Stati took this dispute out of the court to the media. We have to react. It's not us who started this media campaign. We are only reacting.

What is your perception of the international climate as we are slowly emerging from the COVID pandemic? There are new geopolitical tensions, we read, for example, that big projects in which Kazakhstan has expressed interest, such as the Belt and Road, are facing hurdles?

Every crisis is an opportunity. Of course, Kazakhstan was hit by the pandemic like all the other countries, but this year we expect growth of 3.75%, which is a good achievement. We observe that new industries start to emerge, especially IT. We are thinking about what could be done to boost this growth in Kazakhstan. We realise that we are competing with our neighbours for FDI, and this could be done only by providing better conditions for investors. You know about our first President's initiative – the [Astana International Financial Centre](#), which is governed by English law, and all the judges are English judges. They have heard already more than 100 cases, and the arbitration centre under the auspices of AIFC has administered more than 400 cases already. This is a good result in itself, a good opportunity not only for foreign investors – but national investors are also very happy using these mechanisms to resolve their disputes.

So essentially, Kazakhstan remains optimistic?

If we are quick enough to take niches on the market, this will give growth to our economy. Nowadays, with the development of technologies, it's not a matter of human resources anymore. It is more about energy resources. If you want to operate a modern plant, most of the work will be done by robots. And for robots, you will need energy resources. This is exactly what Kazakhstan could exploit. We have energy resources, and we are limited in human resources, we are only 19 million people.

Another obstacle for us is that we are a landlocked country. We could be producing at much lower prices in case we had access to sea routes. But again, with the advance of technology, it's becoming cheaper and cheaper to transport. We are welcoming any initiative which makes our products competitive. It doesn't really matter what route they will take. More affordable air, cheaper rail, or the Elon Musk truck – which is announced but not yet produced. Transportation means a lot for us. The cheaper it gets, the better for us.

INTERVIEW

Kazakhstan looks for best practices in Europe to improve child rights

By *Vladyislav Makszimov* | EURACTIV.com



Aruzhan Sain, Ombudswoman for Children's Rights of Kazakhstan.

When Kazakhstan decided it was going on the hunt for the “practical, best practices for effective solutions” that would bolster the rights of its youngest citizens, the Central Asian children’s rights ombudswoman came to Europe.

“We really need practical best practices and effective solutions, for instance in terms of the rights of children with disabilities,” Aruzhan Sain, a TV-personality-turned civil servant, told EURACTIV.

Sain was appointed to the post of Kazakhstan’s Commissioner for Children’s Rights following her charity work with the Mercy society, a foundation she set up to raise money for children to get medical treatment abroad for serious conditions.

Her appointment is part of Kazakhstan’s wider drive to get younger professionals from outside the public sector into civil service in an effort to rejuvenate its public administration.

The drive for best practices reached Europe as well, and Sain visited centres in Belgium and Luxembourg that provide integrated care for differently abled children, including preventive, pedagogical, and social services.

She was particularly impressed by the holistic approach of Luxembourg after her meeting with the Grand Duchy’s Commissioner for Children’s Rights, Charel Schmit.

“It was very interesting to see how the work was organised by the

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Luxembourgish government, which, through non-profit organisations, sort of reaches people and provides a wide range of services that help not only children but also adults,” she said.

Back home Sain is now lobbying for more public resources to be provided to her office that would allow it to have farther reach.

“Our group of experts has submitted a legislative proposal to the parliament because in Kazakhstan, the Ombudsperson is a public office and unfortunately there is nothing behind the institution, that is, there is no funding, no staff,” she said.

Sain also pointed out that Kazakhstan’s large territory makes it difficult to reach the six million children she is responsible for, so future regional presence will be key. Kazakhstan is the world’s ninth-largest country, but it has a population of only 19 million, a third of it under 18.

Asked if more decentralisation could be a workable answer to this problem, Sain said that in order for “self-governance to be effective, one needs a necessary level of consciousness of citizens” and “society unconditionally trusting the government and the government unconditionally trusting society”.

“This way of relations is like a two-way road, everyone needs to work their part,” she said, adding that “executive discipline” is now one of the areas being worked on in Kazakhstan to make sure children are actually able to take advantage of benefits and services provided for by law but often not implemented at the regional level.

Sain added she is greatly inspired by the experience of Singapore, a country known for successfully combining economic achievements with relatively limited political freedom, and “their attitude towards children as the most important capital of their state, in which they consciously invest money.”

One of the first areas where she turned for reforms after being appointed to her post two years ago was sports and arts education.

“Previously, we did not have free sports and art clubs for children... which were mostly at the expense of parents,” she said.

The state has now rechanneled funds meant for financing professional sports from the public budget to such extracurricular activities, and will now pay private service providers to organise them on the basis of demand.

“In addition to the fact that it is of great benefit for the children, it also gives a very good basis for the development of this area as a business, as entrepreneurship. Because, unfortunately, this industry has been neglected, but now that investment went there,” Sain told EURACTIV.

INTERVIEW

Kazakh official: The Taliban are no threat to Central Asia

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By Alexandra Brzozowski | EURACTIV.com



Talgat Kaliyev, Special Representative of the President of Kazakhstan on Afghanistan. [Inform.kz]

It is necessary to create conditions for dialogue with the new government in Afghanistan, regardless of its political attitudes and ideologies. This is very important for both the Central Asian countries and the EU, Kazakhstan's Talgat Kaliyev told EURACTIV in an interview.

Talgat Kaliev is the special representative of the president of

Kazakhstan on Afghanistan. He answered written questions sent by EURACTIV's Alexandra Brzozowski.

What is Kazakhstan's assessment of the situation in Afghanistan after the withdrawal of NATO troops and, more generally, the position of your country on the situation in Afghanistan?

Kazakhstan is closely following the development of the military-political

situation in Afghanistan. With the complete withdrawal of US and NATO troops, the Taliban movement controls almost the entire territory of the country. We clearly understand the reasons behind the withdrawal of the US-led international coalition troops from Afghanistan. The US as a whole has achieved one of its main goals by reducing the terrorist threat from Afghanistan.

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The changes that took place in this country from August to the present day were generally quite expected and predictable. We thought it would take a longer time for the Taliban to come to power, but everything happened much faster. The formation of a new government is expected. In all likelihood, the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, based on the norms of Sharia and Islamic law, will be proclaimed.

However, at the moment, we do not feel any serious regional threats in light of the change of power in Afghanistan. As we see it, the Taliban do not have any expansionist plans with regard to the countries of Central Asia.

We note that now the leadership of the reconciliation process has passed to the Afghans themselves, without external mediation. Many years of experience have clearly confirmed that there is no alternative to the peace process led by the Afghans themselves. The citizens of this country will themselves have to determine the most optimal model of state and social structure based on their historical experience and socio-political realities.

We believe that at the present time, it is advisable to wait for the first steps and statements of the new government, including on foreign policy. On the whole, our further policy towards Afghanistan, including the issue of recognizing the new government after its formation, will depend on these actions.

It should be noted that this issue depends on the relevant decision of the UN Security Council to lift the sanctions against the Taliban. A positive decision by the UN Security

Council will contribute to the start of full-fledged interaction of the world community with the newly formed Afghan government.

We support the opinion of the international community on the need to form an inclusive and representative government, in compliance with the norms of international humanitarian law, including against women and ethnic minorities, preventing the presence of terrorist groups that pose a threat to other states.

It is also necessary to monitor the further development of the situation, taking into account the justified risks of the spread of terrorism and extremism, the deterioration of the situation with the illegal circulation of weapons and drugs, as well as the growth of illegal migration and the influx of refugees, including the penetration of destructive elements into the region, violations of regional trade, economic, transport and logistics and energy ties, suspension of existing and planned strategic infrastructure projects in the region.

How can you describe Kazakhstan's cooperation with the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), which appears to have a particular importance in the new context?

In connection with the deteriorating situation in Afghanistan, the UN leadership asked the Kazakh side to temporarily station in Almaty part of the international personnel of UNAMA and other UN agencies accredited in Afghanistan.

As a responsible member of the UN and the world community, as well as based on the principles of international humanitarian law, Kazakhstan has made a positive

decision on this issue.

On 18 and 22 August, two aircraft with UN international staff arrived in Almaty. Most of the arrivals, about 100 people, will remain in Kazakhstan and form a temporary UNAMA remote office in Almaty. The placement of the UNAMA remote office is still planned for six months and may be extended.

The decision to temporarily deploy the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) in the city of Almaty recognized Kazakhstan's role in ensuring regional and global security.

We are ready to provide full assistance in the further functioning of this mission, which is designed to assist in the early stabilization of the situation and the reconstruction of Afghanistan.

We hope that the deployment of UNAMA in Almaty will serve as an effective tool for expanding fruitful cooperation in the field of efforts of the international community to rebuild Afghanistan using Kazakhstan's potential as a transcontinental transport and logistics hub.

The attention of the international community is mainly focused on the consequences of the Taliban's capture of the entire territory of Afghanistan in the form of a humanitarian and food crisis, refugees, and compliance with international humanitarian law.

In this regard, Kazakhstan is ready to continue providing regular humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan, continuing since 2008, especially in terms of higher education programs. About 30 Afghan girls are studying in Kazakhstan with the support of the EU and UNDP, this

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year it is planned to admit another 100 to the universities of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. Also, students from Afghanistan study in our country on grants provided by the Kazakh side.

Kazakhstan is ready to continue implementing these programs. At the same time, in practice, the decision to leave will be taken by the new Afghan authorities. When any of the Afghan citizens who are on our territory apply for refugee status, the authorized state bodies consider them in accordance with national legislation and international humanitarian law.

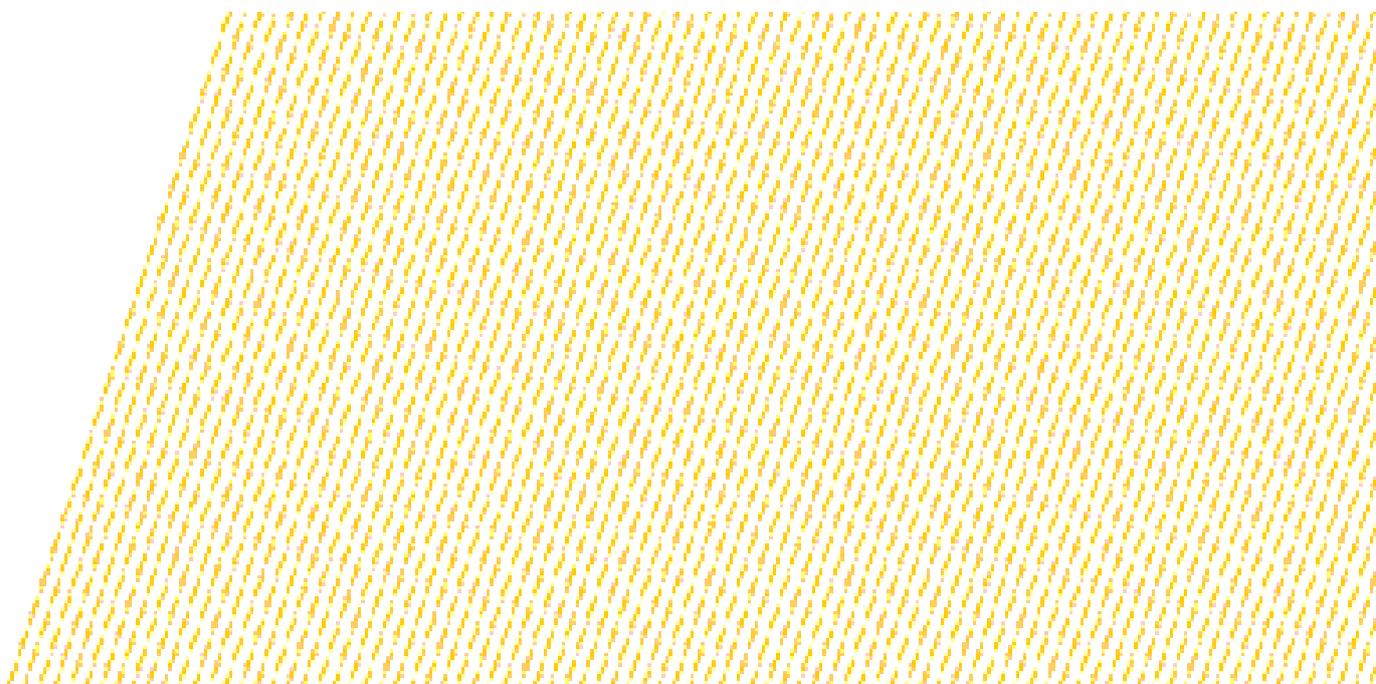
What is the potential to help resolve regional security issues around Afghanistan in synergy between Kazakhstan and the EU?

Within the framework of joint work to resolve regional security issues in the context of the situation in Afghanistan, it is advisable to use further the potential of interaction at the level of special representatives for Afghanistan and the EU.

During the recent visit to Nur-Sultan of the EU Special Representative for Central Asia, Teri Hakala, an agreement was reached to maintain a constant dialogue on Afghan issues. Working contact was also established with the acting EU Special Envoy for Afghanistan, Thomas Niklasson. This format provides an opportunity not only to exchange views on the current situation but also to develop common approaches and initiatives on regional security issues in the current environment.

It is necessary to create conditions for dialogue with the new government, regardless of its political attitudes and ideologies. This is very important for both the Central Asian countries and the EU countries.

In general, within the framework of the expanded strategic partnership between Kazakhstan and the EU, we are interested in the further development of comprehensive cooperation.



INTERVIEW

Kazakhstan minister: We steadily observe our obligations in the field of human rights

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By Georgi Gotev | EURACTIV.com



Aida Balaeva, Minister of Information and Social Development of Kazakhstan. [Abai.kz]

Kazakhstan is moving towards reforms progressively and steadily, with the state now supporting and financing NGOs and the political opposition enjoying full parliamentary rights, Aida Balaeva, the information and social development minister, told EURACTIV in an interview.

Aida Balaeva has been Kazakhstan's minister of information and social development since May 2020. She has a degree in sociological sciences and has held various positions, including deputy akim (mayor) of the capital (then Astana). She answered written questions sent by EURACTIV's Georgi Gotev.

We have already reported that President

Kassym-Zhomart Tokayev initiated a whole package of reforms, including in the field of human rights and civil society. What steps is your ministry taking to support these initiatives?

As you may know, this year is a special one for our country. We are celebrating the 30th anniversary of Independence. For the Kazakh people,

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it is a period of great changes. I am talking primarily about civil society. This concept appeared here along with the gaining of Independence.

Of course, there were serious difficulties of a social and economic nature. But time has shown that we have managed to create an active independent community of non-governmental organizations. So, at the dawn of Independence, only a couple of dozen NGOs worked in Kazakhstan. Today, 17,000 NGOs are actively working in the country, more than 22,000 public organisations are registered in total. This means that nowadays, in any field, processes are taking place with the participation of civil society institutions. And state funding for NGO projects increased from 100 thousand to 45 million US dollars, and in total, about 37,000 people are employed in the civil sector.

In the process of active development of the civil society, laws and strategic documents were adopted and improved. All this ultimately allowed the non-governmental sector to become the most important cluster of the country's socio-economic sphere.

Today we see that modern Kazakhstani civil society is ready to become an engine to implement the package of reforms in the country announced by President Tokayev since it has become a reliable partner of the state.

Is there any centralized body in Kazakhstan for mediation between the state and society?

We have created a powerful consultative and advisory body – the National Council of Public Trust,

where the most pressing problems of the state and society are discussed by leading experts, well-known public figures with the direct participation of the President of the country.

It has been in operation for only two years but has already significantly increased the public's confidence in the authorities. First, there is evidence from sociological studies. Secondly, the principle of openness of its work and the constant rotation of its composition gives the society a sense of belonging, delegation of powers, since the members of the Council become personalities from the people, the so-called "leaders of public opinion."

Of course, it is difficult, and in some places impossible, to cover all the problems of society within the framework of one Council. The NCPC is the supreme body. Besides it, we still have many platforms for interaction between the state and society. The fact is that one of the key cases of the President's reform package is the concept of the "Hearing State". Now it is being introduced into the functional work of every state body. The main provision of the concept is an obligatory reaction to the opinion of society and the civil sector. For example, government agencies have designated authorized officials for interaction with NGOs. The Coordination Council and regional councils for interaction with NGOs at various government levels are successfully operating, where issues of interaction between government bodies and civil society institutions are discussed.

In other words, the development of an active civil society is a priority for state policy, especially considering that Kazakhstan is moving towards

further democratization.

Is the state financially supporting the NGOs?

Non-governmental organizations receive financial support through state social orders, grants and awards for NGOs. Today it is recognized in many countries of the world and the most effective method of supporting the development of NGOs.

In Kazakhstan, over the past five years, allocated funds for state social orders have grown by 54.8%. Last year, more than 1600 projects were implemented across the country in various areas of society's activities. Hundreds of organizations were given the opportunity for further development, and thousands of people were employed.

The operator of the grant funding is a specially created Center for Support of Civil Initiatives. The Center itself can receive support both from the state and from extra-budgetary sources, for example, from foreign donors. At the same time, the Operator Center is obliged to annually publicly report to the public on the work done. It is a practice in such countries as the USA, Russia, Croatia, Hungary, Romania, Estonia, etc.

Can you give an example of what you consider successful activities of NGOs and civil society?

During the COVID-19 pandemic, civil society, primarily activists and volunteers, played a big role in preventing the pharmaceutical business from entering into price collusion, not creating an artificial shortage of necessary medicines, so that quarantine measures were respected by food and entertainment

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entities. It became clear that there was a need for legislative regulation of public control.

In this regard, our ministry has developed a draft law, “On public control”, which was actively discussed on many platforms. Public control is a tool that will directly influence many processes in the country, including ensuring the transparency of the state and quasi-state sectors.

Also, in our country, the institution of public councils of various levels has been developed – under the central state, local executive bodies. Their activities have also recently been regulated by law. Thanks to this, the procedure for forming the composition of public councils has been improved, which makes the competitive selection of members more transparent and accessible, the quantitative composition of public councils has been determined, their powers, rights and obligations have been expanded etc.

I should note that today almost all laws applied in the field of social relations are undergoing a process of improvement, updating the norms in accordance with modern realities.

Earlier this year, the European Parliament adopted [a resolution on human rights violations in Kazakhstan](#). The document mentions a significant increase in pressure on non-governmental organizations. Will Kazakhstan work to implement the recommendations of the European Parliament?

Kazakhstan observes deliberately and steadily its obligations in the field of human rights. This is an indisputable fact. Indeed, today large-

scale political transformations have been launched in terms of protecting human rights, building a democratic society and introducing the concept of a “hearing state”. Among the current achievements, I want to note the adoption of a new law on peaceful assemblies, the decriminalization of defamation, the humanization of certain articles of the criminal code, the introduction of a 30% electoral quota for women and youth, as well as the accession of Kazakhstan to the Second Optional Protocol on the abolition of the death penalty.

In accordance with the amendments to the Law “On Political Parties”, registration barriers for the creation of political parties have been lowered. Now in Kazakhstan, it is necessary to collect only 20 thousand signatures instead of 40 thousand.

An institution of parliamentary opposition has been introduced, for which legal guarantees are assigned to initiate parliamentary hearings on topical issues of the life of the state and society, to introduce alternative bills to those government bills on which the opposition does not agree, as well as the opportunity to speak at joint sessions of the chambers of Parliament, plenary meetings of the Mazhilis and other events within the walls of the Parliament by the leaders or representatives of opposition factions.

These novels represent an important political reform. They fully correspond to the main positions of the report of the European Commission for Democracy through Law, “On the Role of the Opposition in a Democratic Parliament”.

Regarding the checks reflected in

the resolution in relation to a number of civil sector organizations, it should be noted that violations in 13 non-profit organizations were identified as part of the monitoring carried out by the state revenue authorities. The fact of violations is confirmed by the leaders of these organizations.

I want to emphasize that the actions of the tax authorities in terms of control over the financial activities of organizations are carried out solely with the aim of ensuring the transparency of the use of funds received from abroad.

You know that the requirement to provide non-profit organizations with a report on their activities, including information on funds received from foreign sources, is in line with modern international practice. Such norms are contained in the legislation of different countries of the world, such as the USA, Great Britain, Israel, etc.

In general, I want to say that Kazakhstan is moving towards reforms progressively. We are a relatively young state, but over the 30 years of independence, we have done a lot for our country to develop and Kazakhstanis to feel free and protected.

Stakeholders: Human capital and green transformation are key for Kazakhstan

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By Alexandra Brzozowski | EURACTIV.com reporting from Nursultan



Eurasian Media Forum 2021. [Alexandra Brzozowski/stream]

Investment in human capital, green transformation, and attention on human rights is essential for the further successful development of Kazakhstan, stakeholders at a recent forum in Nursultan said.

“Over the past two years, Kazakhstan has undertaken comprehensive political reforms,” Maulen Ashimbayev, Chairperson of the Senate of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan, said at the recent Eurasian Media Forum held in the country’s capital.

In June 2021, Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev signed a decree “On further measures of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the field of human rights”, which he said represents an important step in the political modernisation of the Central Asian country.

The plan includes eliminating discrimination against women, boosting freedoms of association and expression, and freedom to life and public order.

Earlier this year, the European

Parliament passed a resolution criticising Kazakhstan for its human rights record, highlighting gender issues, the situation of civil society groups and activists, and demanding the release of detained activists.

Kazakh officials responded that the criticism was unfair and that the EU should not ignore or discourage efforts to improve the country’s record on human rights.

Since then, the law on rallies has been liberalised, emphasising the state’s willingness to accept an

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alternative view and provide the necessary facilities for its public demonstration. The opposition was guaranteed rights in parliament, women and young people were allocated a 30% quota in party lists for elections to the Majilis and local representative bodies,”

Ashimbayev added that other signs of modernisation have been that state institutions and public administration systems have been established, borders have been delimited, and a new capital has been built.

According to Igor Rogoff, Member of the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe for Kazakhstan, the body’s evaluation of that reform had been positive.

While Kazakhstan is not a member of the Council of Europe (CoE), the opinion of the Venice Commission [stated](#) that “most provisions of the draft are consistent with the Council of Europe’s objectives and recommendations in the sphere of legal enforcement of the rights and freedoms of individuals in their relations with the state through

effective public administration and administrative justice.”

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

“We see significant achievements in terms of poverty rates and unemployment,” Yakup Beris, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Resident Representative in Kazakhstan, said.

According to Beris, the country has come to belong to a group of well-developed countries in terms of human capital development, with market and social reforms having been adopted and social public service constructed.

The Human Development Index (HDI) of Kazakhstan, which is the index used by the United Nations to measure the progress of a country, was 0.825 points in 2019, leaving it in 51st place in the table of 189 countries evaluated.

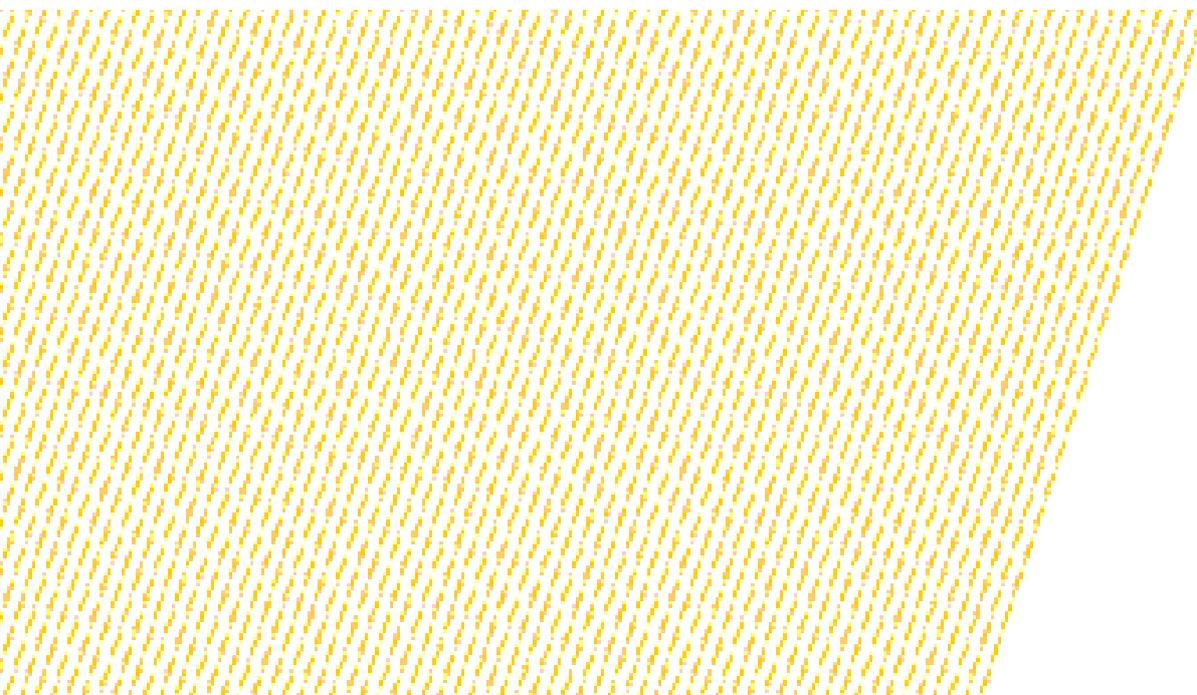
Asked what perspective he would see for the country’s way forward, Beris said that “internally, this is about what kind of economic project would follow into the future, what

kind of skills that would require and that would have a lot of bearing on what kind of human capacity would like to produce with one’s education system.”

“Today, the duration of education in Kazakhstan has increased by 3.8 years, which means children spend more time in educational institutions and receive a comprehensive and high-quality education,” Beris added.

However, he stressed that green transformation would be essential for the country’s future development stating that it had followed an energy-intensive growth trajectory so far.

“That requires investing into the economy differently with a green perspective and hope to generate new types of jobs, as well as income for people,” he added.





For information on
EURACTIV Special Reports...

Contact us

Georgi GOTEV

Senior Editor

georgi.gotev@euractiv.com

tel. +32 4 99 528 72

Teresa DOMINGUEZ

EU Affairs Senior Manager

teresa.dominguez@euractiv.com

tel. +32 (0) 47 601 78 26