**United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific**

**Republic of Kazakhstan**

**Lorne Park Secondary School**

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) is the regional development arm of the United Nations for the Asia-Pacific region. Kazakhstan is located in Central Asia, northwest of China; a small portion west of the Ural (Zhayyq) River in easternmost Europe. The country became a member in the UN on March 2nd, 1992. A secular [constitution](http://kazakhstanun.com/discover-kazakhstan/constitution-of-kazakhstan/) is the bedrock of [democracy in Kazakhstan](http://www.kazakhembus.com/kazakhstan-democracy) and modeled after Western separation of powers, and responsibilities of the executive, legislative and judicial branches. Kazakhstan’s president is Nursultan Nazarbayev.  He came to leadership in 1989 as first secretary of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan in the former Soviet Union, and was popularly elected in 1991 as president of an independent Kazakhstan.  He was [reelected](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/daniel-witt/kazakhstans-presidential-_b_847612.html) in April of 2015 to a five-year term. Under his leadership, Kazakhstan has shown steady economic growth, GDP, GNI and per capita income. Kazakhstan inherited more than 400 nuclear warheads after the collapse of the Soviet Union. President Nazarbayev signed a historic decree to close the Semipalatinsk test site and disarm more than 1,400 nuclear warheads and secure loose nuclear materials. Under his leadership as [Kazakhstan’s President](http://www.kazakhembus.com/node/275), the nation has proved to the world that a country can achieve economic prosperity and national security without nuclear weapons, rather than with nuclear weapons.

The country has a population of 16.4 million as of 2012. Its GDP for 2015 was US$ 184.361 billion. Life expectancy 2014 was 70 years. The country’s economy depends heavily on oil reserves, which are the ninth largest in the world, and hydrocarbon output was the equivalent of nearly 18% of GDP and about 60% of exports in 2015. Kazakhstan has transitioned from lower-middle-income to upper-middle-income status in less than two decades. The country moved to the upper-middle-income group in 2006. Since 2002, GDP per capita has risen and poverty has fallen sharply. Kazakhstan’s main short-term economic policy challenge is to adjust to the new reality of slower growth and lower income for the near future. Despite some positive institutional and legislative changes, investors remain concerned about corruption, bureaucracy, and arbitrary law enforcement, especially at the regional and municipal levels. The country has membership in organizations such as: The IMF, World Bank, Asian Development Bank, International Finance Coroporation, Commonwealth of Independent States, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, UN Human Rights Council, Shanghai Cooperation Organization and more.

In response to the global economic crisis, President Nazarbayev launched the [Nurly Zhol](http://www.kazakhembus.com/node/1080" \t "_blank), new economic policy. Nurly Zhol targets seven major areas of infrastructure development, such as energy, housing, industrial infrastructure, transportation and logistics, small and medium enterprises, public utilities and social infrastructure.

**Background Information on Kazakhstan**

Key Details (According to UN Data):

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Summary statistics** | | | | |
| Region | 2015 | Central Asia | | |  |
| Surface area (sq km) | 2014 | 2724902 | | |  |
| Population (proj., 000) | 2016 | 17855 | | |  |
| Pop. density (per sq km) | 2016 | 6.6 | | |  |
| Capital city | 2015 | Astana | | |  |
| Capital city pop. (000) | 2015 | 759 | | |  |
| Currency | 2015 | Tenge (KZT) | | |  |
| UN membership date | 2013 | 2 March 1992 | | |  |
| **Economic indicators** | | | | | | | |
| GDP: Gross domestic product (million current US$) | | | 2014 | 216036 | | |  |
| GDP: Gross domestic product (million current US$) | | | 2010 | 148047 | | |  |
| GDP: Gross domestic product (million current US$) | | | 2005 | 57124 | | |  |
| GDP per capita (current US$) | | | 2014 | 12436.2 | | |  |
| GDP per capita (current US$) | | | 2010 | 9076.7 | | |  |
| GDP per capita (current US$) | | | 2005 | 3696.9 | | |  |
| Unemployment (% of labour force) | | | 2014 | 5.1 | | | Estimate. |
| Unemployment (% of labour force) | | | 2010 | 5.8 | | | Estimate. |
| Unemployment (% of labour force) | | | 2005 | 8.1 | | | Estimate. |
| Exports (million US$) | | | 2015 | 79458.7 | | | 2014. |
| Imports (million US$) | | | 2015 | 41295.5 | | | 2014. |
| Balance (million US$) | | | 2015 | 38163.2 | | | 2014. |
| Major trading partners (% of exports) | | | 2015 | Italy (20.2), China (12.3), Netherlands (11.0) | | | 2014. |
| Major trading partners (% of imports) | | | 2015 | Russian Federation (33.4), China (17.8), Germany (5.6) | | | 2014. |



**Social Indicators**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Population growth rate (average annual %) | 2010-2015 | 1.6 |
| Urban population (%) | 2015 | 53.2 |
| Urban population growth rate (average annual %) | 2010-2015 | 0.9 |
| Fertility rate, total (live births per woman) | 2010-2015 | 2.6 |
| Life expectancy at birth (females/males, years) | 2010-2015 | 73.9/64.3 |
| Total dependency ratio (Pop. aged 0-14 & 65+ per 100 pop. 15-64) | 2015 | 50 |
| International migrant stock (000/% of total pop.) | mid-2015 | 3546.8/20.1 |
| Tourist arrivals at national borders (000) | 2014 | 4560 |
| Refugees and others of concern to UNHCR | mid-2015 | 7849 |
| Infant mortality rate (per 1 000 live births) | 2010-2015 | 14 |
| Health: Total expenditure (% of GDP) | 2014 | 4.4 |
| Health: Physicians (per 1 000 pop.) | 2013 | 3.6 |
| Education: Primary gross enrolment ratio (f/m per 100 pop.) | 2014 | 111.3/111.4 |
| Education: Secondary gross enrolment ratio (f/m per 100 pop.) | 2014 | 106.8/104.2 |
| Education: Tertiary gross enrolment ratio (f/m per 100 pop.) | 2014 | 54.2/42.9 |
| Intentional homicide rate (per 100 000 pop.) | 2014 | 7.4 |
| Seats held by women in national parliaments (%) | 2016 | 26.2 |

“Oil money is driving the development of Astana, which became Kazakhstan's new capital in 1997” (BBC News, 2016).

“Kazakhstan is the largest country in Central Asia and the ninth largest in the world” (Allworth, Hambly, Sinor, Smith, 2016). “Strategically, it [as in Kazakhstan] links the large and fast-growing markets of China and South Asia and those of Russia and Western Europe by road, rail, and a port on the Caspian Sea.The country’s proven oil reserves are the ninth largest in the world, and hydrocarbon output was the equivalent of nearly 18% of GDP and about 60% of exports in 2015” (The World Bank, 2015).

“The [Kazakhs](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Kazakh) are a nominally [Muslim](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Islamic-world) people who speak a Turkic language of the [Northwest](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Northwestern-Turkic-languages) or [Kipchak](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Kipchak-people)... group. Fewer than one-fifth of the more than eight million ethnic Kazakhs live outside Kazakhstan, mainly in Uzbekistan and Russia. During the 19th century about 400,000 Russians flooded into Kazakhstan, and these were supplemented by about 1,000,000 Slavs, Germans, Jews, and others who immigrated to the region during the first third of the 20th century” (Allworth, Hambly, Sinor, Smith, 2016).

**Kazakhstan’s Timeline (According to BBC)**

Published: 25 April 2015

**A chronology of key events:**

**1st-8th centuries** - Turkic-speaking and Mongol tribes invade and settle in what is now Kazakhstan and Central Asia.

**8th century** - Arab invaders introduce Islam.

**1219-24** - Mongol tribes led by Genghis Khan invade Kazakhstan and Central Asia. Later they become assimilated by Turkic tribes that make up the majority in their empire.

**Late 15th century** - With the formation of the Kazakh khanate, the Kazakhs emerge as a distinct ethnic group.

**Early 17th century** - Kazakhs split into three tribal unions, the Elder, Middle and Lesser Zhuzes, or Hordes, which were led by Khans.

**Russian domination**

**1731-42** - The Khans of the three Zhuzes formally join Russia in pursuit of protection from invasions from the east by the Mongols.

**1822-68** - Despite many uprisings, Tsarist Russia retains control over the Kazakh tribes, deposing the Khans.

**1868-1916** - Thousands of Russian and Ukrainian peasants are brought in to settle Kazakh lands; first industrial enterprises set up.

**1916** - A major anti-Russian rebellion is repressed, with about 150,000 people killed and more than 300,000 fleeing abroad.

**1917** - Civil war breaks out following the Bolshevik revolution in Russia.

**Soviet rule**

**1920** - Kazakhstan becomes an autonomous republic of the USSR. Until 1925 it is called the Kyrgyz Autonomous Province to distinguish its people from the Cossacks.

**Late 1920s-1930s** - Intensive industrialisation and collectivisation of agriculture. More than 1 million people die from starvation as a result of the campaign to settle nomadic Kazakhs and collectivise agriculture.

**1936** - Kazakhstan becomes a full union republic of the USSR.

**1940s** - Hundreds of thousands of Koreans, Crimean Tatars, Germans and others forcibly moved to Kazakhstan.

**1949** - The first nuclear test explosion is carried out at the Semipalatinsk nuclear test ground in eastern Kazakhstan.

**1954-62** - About two million people, mainly Russians, move to Kazakhstan during the campaign to develop virgin lands launched by Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev; the proportion of ethnic Kazakhs in the republic drops to 30%.

**1961** - The first manned spacecraft launched from the Baikonur space launch site in central Kazakhstan.

## Anti-Soviet stirrings

**1986** - About 3,000 people take part in protests in Almaty after Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev appoints Gennadiy Kolbin, an ethnic Russian, head of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan (CPK), replacing Dinmukhamed Kunayev, an ethnic Kazakh.

**1989** - Nursultan Nazarbayev, an ethnic Kazakh, becomes head of the CPK; parliament adopts a new law on language, proclaiming Kazakh the state language and Russian a language of inter-ethnic communication.

**1990** - The Supreme Soviet elects Nursultan Nazarbayev first Kazakh president and on 25 October declares state sovereignty.

**1991** August - President Nazarbayev condemns the attempted anti-Gorbachev coup in Moscow; the CPK withdraws from the Communist Party of the Soviet Union; Nazarbayev signs a decree on closing the Semipalatinsk nuclear test ground.

## Independence

**1991** December - Nursultan Nazarbayev wins uncontested presidential elections; Kazakhstan declares independence from the Soviet Union and joins the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

**1992** - Kazakhstan admitted into the United Nations and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, the predecessor of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

**1993** - A new constitution increasing presidential powers is adopted; a major privatisation programme is launched; Kazakhstan ratifies the first Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

**1995** - Kazakhstan signs economic and military cooperation pact with Russia; nuclear-free status is obtained; President Nazarbayev's term in office is extended until December 2000 and a new constitution adopted by national referendum.

**1997** - Major oil agreements secured with China. The Kazakh capital is moved from Almaty in the south to Akmola (formerly Tselinograd) in the north.

**1998** - New capital is renamed Astana. Constitution amended, extending president's term in office from five to seven years and removing upper age limit for president.

**2002** January - President Nazarbayev appoints Imangali Tasmagambetov as prime minister to replace Kasymzhomart Tokayev, who quit abruptly.

**2002** July - Democratic Choice co-founder and ex-energy minister Mukhtar Ablyazov jailed for alleged abuse of office.

**2002** August - Opposition figure Galymzhan Zhakiyanov, co-founder of Democratic Choice movement and critic of President Nazarbayev, is jailed for alleged abuse of office as regional governor.

**2003** January - Journalist and Nazarbayev critic Sergey Duvanov found guilty of raping minor and jailed. Rights groups say trial was flawed and an attempt to silence media criticism of president. He is later released on probation after serving a year of his three and a half year sentence.

**2003** May - Jailed opposition leader Mukhtar Ablyazov pardoned and released.

**2003** June - Prime Minister Tasmagambetov resigns over proposed land reform bill. Daniyal Akhmetov replaces him. Bill, allowing private ownership of land, is passed.

**2003** December - President Nazarbayev announces moratorium on death penalty

## Oil to China

**2004** May - Deal signed with China on construction of oil pipeline to Chinese border.

**2004** September/October - President Nazarbayev retains control over lower house of parliament as his Otan party wins majority of seats in elections which international observers criticise as flawed.

Parliament speaker Zharmakhan Tuyakbay resigns in protest at conduct of voting.

**2005** January - Court orders dissolution of Democratic Choice, one of the country's main opposition parties. The party is accused of breaching state security by calling on supporters to protest against parliamentary election results.

**2005** March - Opposition groups join together to form For A Just Kazakhstan movement led by Zharmakhan Tuyakbay.

**2005** November - Opposition figure Zamanbek Nurkadilov, a vocal critic of President Nazarbayev, found shot dead at his home.

**2004** August - Jailed opposition figure Galymzhan Zhakiyanov released from prison two years into seven-year sentence and sent into internal exile.

**2005** December - Nursultan Nazarbayev returned for further term as president with more than 90% of vote. Western observers say poll flawed.

President Nazarbayev inaugurates a 1,000-km (620 mile) pipeline to carry oil to western China.

**2006** January - Opposition leader Galymzhan Zhakiyanov returns home to Almaty from internal exile after being released on parole.

**2006** February - Opposition figure Altynbek Sarsenbaiuly, his bodyguard and driver are found shot dead outside Almaty.

**2007** January - Prime Minister Daniyal Akhmetov resigns, giving no reason for his move. He is replaced by former deputy premier Karim Masimov.

**2007** May - Parliament votes to allow President Nazarbayev to stay in office for an unlimited number of terms.

Mr Nazarbayev fires son-in-law Rakhat Aliyev in an apparent power struggle.

**2007** August - Trial of 30 alleged Islamists accused of belonging to the banned group Hizb ut-Tahrir, which advocates the setting up of an Islamic state across Central Asia.

**2007** August - Elections hand President Nazarbayev's Nur-Otan party all seats in the lower house of parliament. Observers say the conduct of the vote improved since the last election, but still did not meet international standards of fairness.

**2008** March - President Nazarbayev's exiled former son-in-law, Rakhat Aliyev, is sentenced to 20 years imprisonment in absentia after being found guilty of plotting a coup. Aliyev denies the charges, saying they are politically motivated.

**2009** April - President Nazarbayev announces his readiness to build a nuclear fuel bank to ensure other countries do not need to develop their own fuel. Idea first proposed by the International Atomic Energy Agency in 2005, and supported by both the United States and Russia.

**2009** June - A law tightens control over the internet by ruling that chat rooms, blogs and public forums count as mass media. This means a blogger could break the law by expressing a view.

**2009** October - A court rejects an appeal by prominent human rights activist Yevgeny Zhovtis against a manslaughter conviction stemming from a car accident. Mr Zhovtis and rights groups said he had not been given a fair trial.

France and Kazakhstan sign energy and business deals worth $6bn during a visit by President Nicolas Sarkozy. Kazakhstan also agreed to allow French military supplies to pass through on their way to Afghanistan.

**2009** December - Chinese President Hu Jintao and President Nazarbayev unveil the Kazakh section of a natural gas pipeline joining Central Asia to China.

**2010** January - Kazakhstan becomes the first former Soviet state to chair the Organisation of Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) security and rights group, despite criticism of its own democratic credentials. President Nazarbayev signals a change in emphasis from rights to security.