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Economic Efficiency and Priorities of Public Administration Regulation: The Case of Kazakhstan

ZHANNA AUBAKIROVA¹, OLESSYA ZHIDKOBLINOVA², LEILE KOMEKBAYEVA³,
ZHANAT KHISHAUYEVA⁴, BAGDAT SPANOVA⁵ and RABIGA ZHAPAROVA⁶

¹ PhD student, Karaganda University of Kazpotrebsoyuz, Karaganda, Kazakhstan, e-mail: aubakirova_1979@bk.ru
ORCID: 0000-0002-1080-557X

² Associate Professor, Karaganda University of Kazpotrebsoyuz, Karaganda, Kazakhstan,
e-mail: olesya.zhidkoblinova@mail.ru ; ORCID: 0000-0001-9072-6419

³ Associate Professor, Karaganda University named after E.A. Buketova , Karaganda, Kazakhstan,
e-mail: l.komekbaeva@mail.ru ; ORCID: 0000-0002-0508-0199

⁴ Associate Professor, Karaganda University named after E.A. Buketova , Karaganda, Kazakhstan,
e-mail: Zhanat-t2007@mail.ru ; ORCID: 0000-0003-2048-2265

⁵ Doctor of Philosophy, Karaganda University of Kazpotrebsoyuz, Karaganda, Kazakhstan,
e-mail: spanova.bagdat@bk.ru ; ORCID: 0000-0002-7226-3796

⁶ Doctor of Philosophy, Karaganda University named after E.A. Buketova , Karaganda, Kazakhstan,
e-mail: Rabigaergalievna@mail.ru ; ORCID: 0000-0003-3814-0028

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ABSTRACT

The study of issues of increasing the efficiency and improving the management activities of rural and local self-government seems to be a fairly relevant topic, the study of which will allow us to draw a number of conclusions and generalizations that are important for the further development of the institution of local self-government. The formation of an effectively functioning system of local self-government in the country requires solving the problem of forming a sufficient financial and economic basis for solving local issues. The purpose of the study is to analyze the economic efficiency and priorities of the regulation of public administration on the materials of the Republic of Kazakhstan, including the Karaganda region. A properly formed and well-regulated system of local self-government can have a significant impact not only on issues of local importance, but in the long term it can affect the socio-economic development of the region and even the state, which confirms the analysis of the study conducted by the authors.

INTRODUCTION

Local self-government is an important part of communication between the state and its citizens. Many important government functions are performed at this level. For example, there is the provision of public goods and services. Day-to-day matters are also regulated at the local government level and therefore remain important to citizens. The well-being of households, the well-being and safety of streets and neighborhoods, and, ultimately, urban space, to a large extent depend on the quality of work of local authorities (Skica and Rodzinka, 2021). Some researchers even believe that communication between citizens and authorities at the local level contributes to the development of democracy in the state (Kutsenko, 2020).

The formation of local self-government is a dynamic process that goes through several stages associated with the formation and development of civil society, the general level of socio-economic development of the country and other factors and circumstances that directly affect the life of local communities. As general and local conditions change, the local government system must adapt to these changes in order to ensure effective management. Therefore, at each stage of the formation and development of the local government system, it is necessary to solve specific problems that the author will consider in this study.

In the context of Kazakhstan, the development of local self-government is closely linked to the decentralization of power and the democratization of the political system. To achieve this goal, the Kazakh authorities should develop a new regulatory framework that will help strengthen the institutions of local self-government (hereinafter referred to as LSG). Since this is not entirely possible under the current constitutional system, changes must be made to the country's basic legislation, including the Electoral Law and the Law on Political Parties.

The Republic of Kazakhstan today independently determines its course of development in the turbulent space of the world economy, which is no longer determined by the previous vectors of development, but forces it to quickly and efficiently respond to the ongoing restructuring of the global system of economic ties and relations. The internal pace of development of the republic is more than ever influenced by global trends associated with falling prices for energy resources and raw materials, a change in technological structures and a redistribution of the directions of financial flows and investments (Borodin et al., 2020). The situation has also been exacerbated by the global COVID 19 pandemic, the impact of which on the global economy and the economic development of countries and regions has yet to be assessed (Banaszyk et al., 2021). It is already becoming clear that the reproduction of the economy within a single country will take quite a long time, since the current situation has led to the aggravation of the situation of small business and entrepreneurship, which are the basis of the well-being of the average resident of small towns and rural areas. The economic and social rights of the population were also under threat, which, in an unfavorable set of cases, could intensify negative trends against the backdrop of ongoing changes.

Thus, the analysis of the effectiveness of public administration is one of the most urgent problems both in theory and in practice. For the further development of a socially oriented state in Kazakhstan, it is becoming increasingly important to study the theoretical and methodological problems of determining the effectiveness of local authorities.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Today, one can observe many differences in the systems of local self-government in different countries. But despite the differences in the public administration system, the formation of an efficiently functioning system of local self-government in the country requires solving the problem of forming a sufficient financial and economic basis for solving local issues (Okuneviciute Neverauskiene et al., 2021; Halaskova et al., 2021). According to the Charter of 1985, local self-government represents is the right and real ability of local self-government bodies to regulate a significant part of state affairs and manage it, acting within the framework of the law, under their own responsibility and in the interests of the local population. According to the European Charter of Local Self-Government, there are four main characteristics without which local self-government cannot be exercised:

- the authority to act within the limits established by law;
- strengthening local self-government with the right to independently manage resources;

- power in the state with clearly defined functions;
- presence of elected bodies of local self-government.

Local self-government throughout the world is the foundation of regional development. In a number of European countries, there is a trend towards relatively high employment in municipal firms, for example, in Germany, almost 50% of the municipal workforce works in municipal firms, and in Italy, almost 30%. In Sweden, 34% of the total number of employees of state enterprises work in municipal firms (Giuseppe and Reichard, 2008). Valach and Bumbalova (2020) state that the largest group (51.23%) consists of municipal firms with fewer than 10 employees. Based on this indicator, such firms belong to the so-called micro firms.

According to studies by Ş. Gherghina, et al. (2020) and V. Mutalimov et al. (2021) small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) play a crucial role in local economic development, playing a notable role in job creation, poverty reduction and economic growth, however, they face many barriers to funding. The same can be said about entrepreneurial activity in general and its impact on economic growth (Gomes & Ferreira, 2022). R. Babun (2020) argues that local governments with sufficient administrative and financial autonomy are able to find and attract labor for local businesses, which also ensures the growth of local human capital. Entrepreneurial activity allows local governments to collaborate with other governments to solve development programs that they cannot implement with their own resources (Skica and Rodzinka, 2021). Local councils and mayors can decide whether to use local assets in this way.

Under market governance, local governments prioritize revenues with the primary goal of strengthening local finances. In non-market management, local governments use municipal property to exercise legal powers and prioritize the social characteristics of the goods provided, with revenue generation playing only a secondary role. According to Bumbalova et al. (2021), the main purpose of municipalities should be to carry out economic activities for the benefit of society. On the one hand, this does not automatically exclude activities not related to the autonomy mandate; on the other hand, autonomy puts the achievement of social well-being above profitability.

M. Fil'a et al. (2020) define municipal enterprises as organizations that carry out economic activities that are useful for society, but unprofitable for the private sector, organizations that are useful for the private sector, but cannot be implemented in this sector, and natural monopolies. The business activity of the municipality is a tool for creating suitable economic conditions for the development of entrepreneurial activity in the private sector (Orszaghova and Greganova, 2018; Smutka and Steininger, 2016; Meyer et al., 2018).

The quality of regulation is recognized as a key factor in effective, efficient and proper governance (Weatherill, 2007). For example, as in other countries in the region, due to the needs of citizens and especially businesses, as well as new technological, economic and social changes, the government of the Republic of Montenegro has developed policies and legislation aimed at reducing the administrative burden, especially for businesses. Although most of these strategies have been adopted very recently and the extent of their effect and implementation will be seen in the coming years, it remains unknown whether evidence-based information was taken into account in their development and the needs of stakeholders. However, one of the segments that has received insufficient attention and for which there is no significant empirical information is the consideration of all regulatory, organizational, personnel and practical factors that affect access to administrative services, especially on the part of business (Halili, 2020).

According to A. Ingrams et al. (2020), public administration reform is a powerful concept. If we look back at government institutions of any era, we find instances of movements within the political system seeking to reshape or revise existing institutions. At various times, public affairs leaders have supported specific approaches to change as general organizational principles for how public affairs should be conducted (Kamensky, 1996; Tat-Kei Ho, 2002). C. Pollitt and G. Bouckaert (2011) define public administration reform as “deliberate changes to the structures and processes of public sector organizations to make them (in some sense) perform better”.

In accordance with the studies of B. Utibaev and G. Utibaeva (2022), in Kazakhstan, one of the important problems is the lack of clear and actually defined functions and powers at the lower levels of government. Based on the study of the experience of local government abroad, the authors determined that

in solving socio-economic issues it is necessary to endow local governments with sufficient rights and powers. The authors state that the state policy in the field of management at different levels requires the development of a system.

Local self-government, which must be considered as a method or tool of rational public administration. It is substantiated that the more powers are exercised, taking into account local conditions and opportunities, the more comprehensively they will meet the interests of the population and management will be more effective (Utibaev and Utibaev, 2022; Meyer et al, 2017).

2. METHODOLOGY

In the context of the development of public administration in accordance with the principles of sustainable development, the issue of the development of local self-government institutions in Kazakhstan remains relevant. The process of development of local self-government involves not only a change in the legislative framework, but also a real increase in the civic activity of the local community.

Agriculture in Kazakhstan is one of the priority areas of economic development, which has great potential and reserves. Diverse climatic conditions make it possible to grow almost all crops and livestock in temperate zones. Almost a quarter of the country's territory is occupied by steppes, half by semi-deserts and deserts, and the remaining quarter by foothills. 80% of the country's territory is occupied by arable land, with an area of more than 200 million hectares. However, only 40% of this area, or 96 million hectares, is used for agriculture (Figure 1).

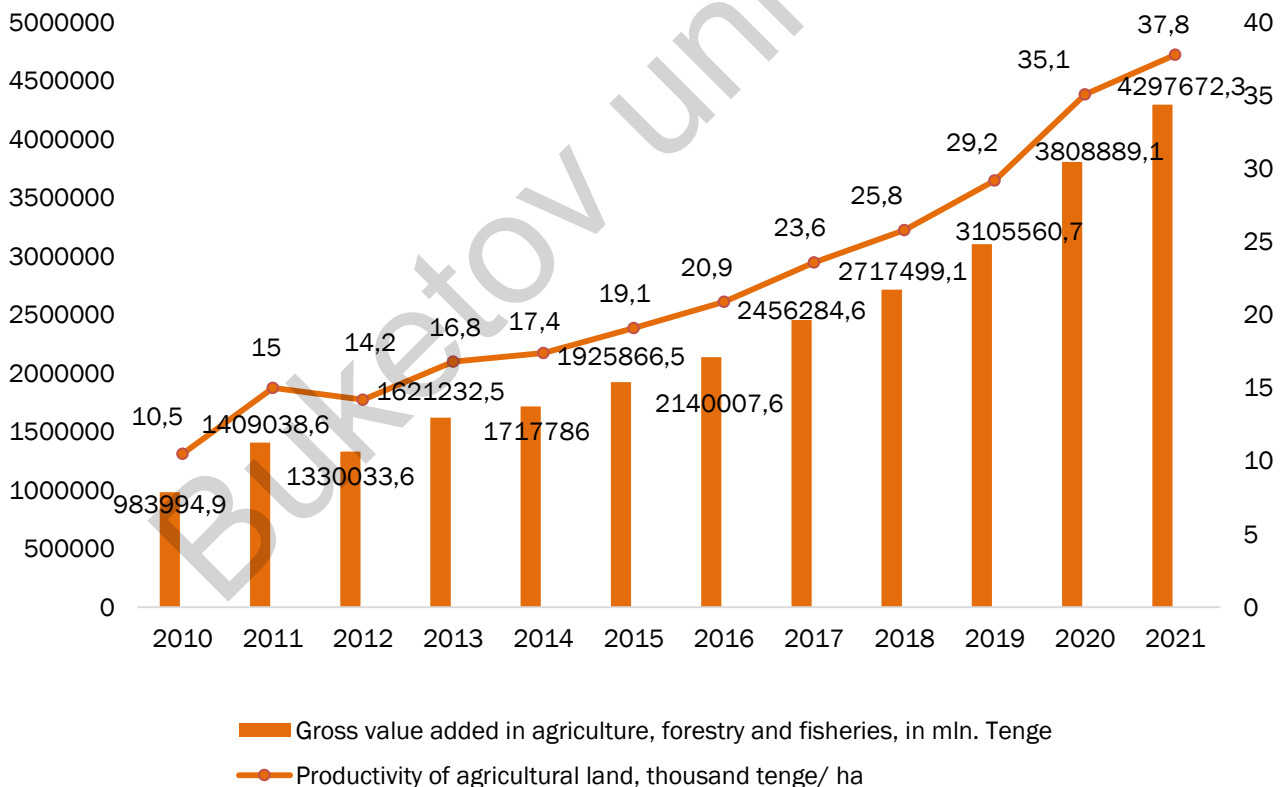


Figure 1. Indicators characterizing agriculture in the Republic of Kazakhstan

Source: compiled by the authors

The agricultural sector in Kazakhstan has always been considered a fundamental component of the national economy. This is based on a number of advantages that the republic has:

- the presence of a large area - in terms of the number of agricultural lands per capita, Kazakhstan ranks second in the world;
- being one of the largest exporters of grain and flour;
- growing demand for food from neighboring countries (China, Central Asia, EEC, CIS).

To improve the socio-economic development of the country, the Head of State in the Message to the people of Kazakhstan dated September 1, 2021 "The unity of the people and systemic reforms are a solid foundation for the country's prosperity" identified key initiatives for the well-being of citizens and in the Message to the people of Kazakhstan dated March 16, 2022 "New Kazakhstan: the path renovation and modernization" announced systemic reforms. So, for example, in the future, by 2022, it is planned to introduce 2000 advanced farms and 14 digital farms in Kazakhstan, that is, 1 digital farm in each region, thereby developing eco-tourism (Figure 2).

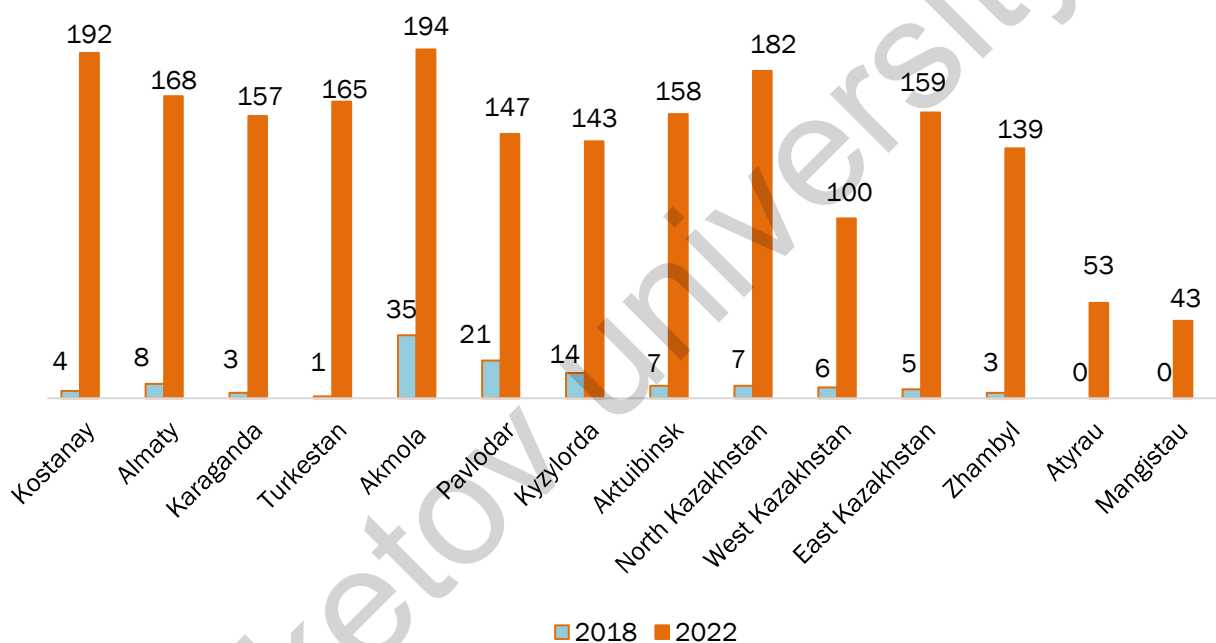


Figure 2. Forecast indicators of the development of advanced farms in the regional aspect by 2022 in Kazakhstan

Source: compiled by the authors

In terms of areas, the distribution of subsidies is leveled off with a slight advantage in favor of crop production (Table 1).

Table 1. Distribution of subsidies in the Republic of Kazakhstan by areas

Subsidies	Crop production, thousand tenge	Animal husbandry, thousand tenge	Total thousand tenge
Animal husbandry	-	40673246839	40673246839
Fertilizer	19138436739	-	19138436739
Pesticides	26800767236	-	26800767236
Seeds	9497363160	-	9497363160
Hectare subsidy	7667397000	-	7667397000
Total	43965527396	40673246839	84638774235
%	51,9	48,1	100

Source: compiled by the authors

It is important to note that investment is aimed at ensuring the development of an economic entity in the long term, that is, the development of an investment project is carried out under conditions of uncertainty and includes such a factor as risk (Kozhakhmetova et al., 2019). The dependence of local budgets on centralized transfers of the republican budget is also influenced by the fact that rural akims do not gain independence in decision-making and are not endowed with sufficient powers to independently form the local budget and plan the development of their administrative unit together with representative authorities. Against this background, the transfer to the level of the rural district of part of the communal property, as well as the authority to control the targeted use of land plots and landscaping, is not sufficient to acquire the status of a self-governing unit.

The main part of local budget expenditures is aimed rather at meeting current needs, rather than at technological or innovative development. The reason for such a division of budget expenditures is the lack of proper participation and interest of local executive authorities in regional development and capacity building. As a result, a paradoxical situation arises when strategic programs and projects are developed at the republican level, industrial and innovative development programs are implemented, and at the local level these programs are accepted at best as an opportunity to use additional funds, and at worst as something far from reality. development of the region and has nothing to do with the current situation.

We will consider the system of state local self-government on the materials of the Karaganda region, which, in accordance with the Program for the Development of Regions until 2024, is assigned to the Central-Eastern macroregion, the share of which is:

- in the GDP of the Republic of Kazakhstan is - 18.3% (after the Western macro-region - 23.8% and Almaty - 21.2%);
- the share of the population - 20% (after the Southern macro-region - 37.7%);
- with a high level of urbanization - 69.7% (after the cities of Astana and Almaty).

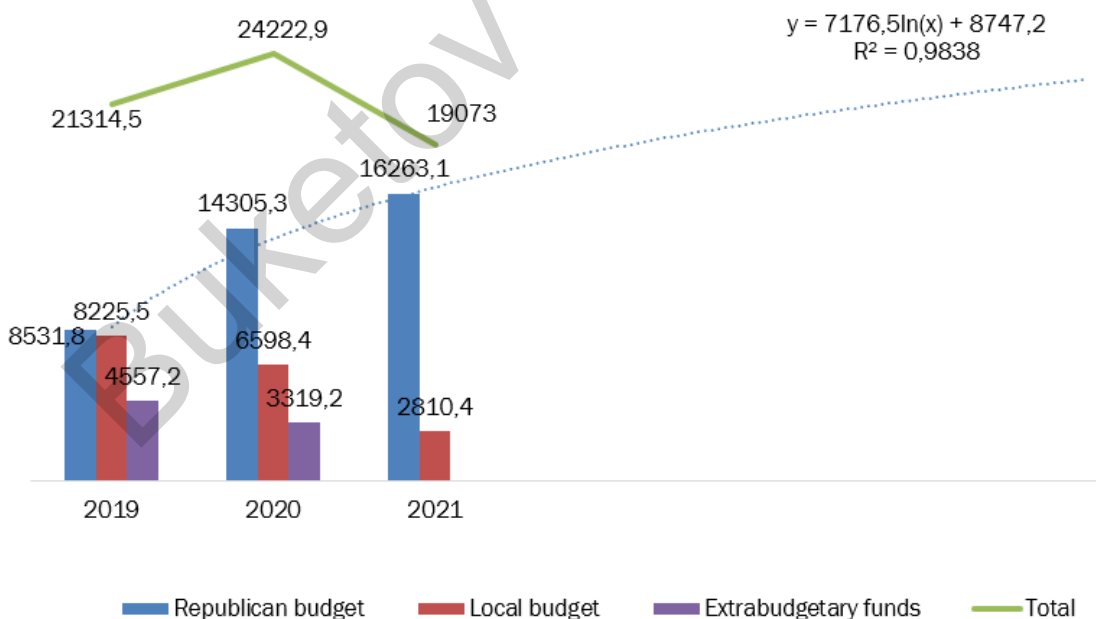


Figure 3. Expenditures for activities financed from the republican and local budgets of the Karaganda region for 2022
 Source: compiled by the authors

Local self-government, especially in rural areas, is of great importance, which is given a place for institutional reforms in the countryside in order to assist the state and local governments in the development

of various forms of civic participation - territorial public self-government, rural credit cooperation, farmer self-government, local support funds rural development and other forms of involvement of residents, without which there will be no real local self-government. In this regard, in order to ensure the economic and social stability of the region, financing is carried out at the expense of the republican and local budgets, which involves an increase in budgetary funds, not taking into account 2021, the indicators of which were dependent due to the Covid-19 pandemic (Figure 3).

It is obvious that the filling of the budgets of district centers and villages depends on the regional authorities to no lesser extent than the filling of regional budgets on the decisions of the central government. According to the data presented in Figure 4, agricultural services in the Karaganda region have unstable dynamics.

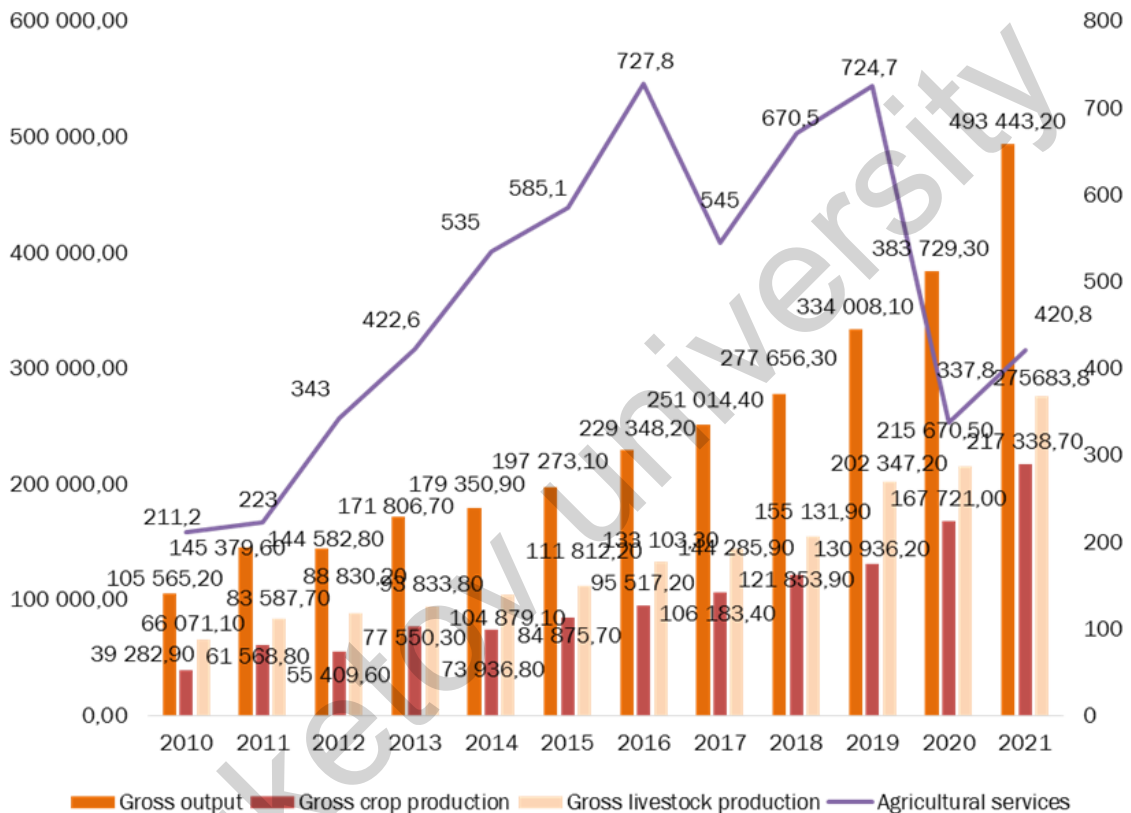


Figure 4. Gross output of agricultural products (services) of the Karaganda region for the period from 2010-2021, million tenge

Source: compiled by the authors according to <http://www.stat.gov.kz>

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to consider the further dynamics of the development of agricultural indicators in the Karaganda region, using the data presented in Figure 6, Forecast calculations will be carried out using regression analysis and the Excel program. To do this, we will consider the relationship of the system of state local self-government with the indicators of agriculture in the Karaganda region, which relate to one of the administrative budget programs, occupying 90.1% of the implementation.

In accordance with the forecast calculations made, we obtain the following data (Table 2).

Table 2. Forecast values of development indicators of the Karaganda region for 2021-2025 (mln. tenge)

<i>Indicator</i>	2022	2023	2024	2025
<i>Agricultural services</i>				
Trend	742,5118	779,42	816,3282	853,2364
Growth	837,0097	915,7508	1001,899	1096,152
Prediction	742,5118	779,42	816,3282	853,2364
Linear	742,5118	779,42	816,3282	853,2364
<i>Gross output</i>				
Trend	395162,9	420189,9	445216,9	470243,8
Growth	462391,4	519179,1	582941	654533,7
Prediction	395162,9	420189,9	445216,9	470243,8
Linear	395162,9	420189,9	445216,9	470243,8
<i>Gross crop production</i>				
Trend	168484	179373,4	190262,9	201152,3
Growth	202029,1	228460,3	258349,5	292149
Prediction	168484	179373,4	190262,9	201152,3
Linear	168484	179373,4	190262,9	201152,3
<i>Gross livestock production</i>				
Trend	225936,4	240037,1	254137,7	268238,3
Growth	259858,7	290399	324528,6	362669,4
Prediction	225936,4	240037,1	254137,7	268238,3
Linear	225936,4	240037,1	254137,7	268238,3

Source: own

Based on the forecast calculations made with the help of regression analysis, the author proposes measures to implement the local government development policy aimed at creating a system of interaction between the population, local government and government, the effective functioning of which will ensure:

- increasing the role of the population in the qualitative solution of issues of local importance;
- improving the standard of living of the population;
- increasing political stability in the region.

CONCLUSION

Local self-government is inextricably linked with the real object of self-government - the local community. However, society is a complex socio-economic system that covers all spheres of human activity: economic, social, political, ideological, cultural and environmental. Residents should be given real opportunities to independently and responsibly solve local problems through the organization of local self-government. Currently, the reform of local government has serious political limitations and is superficial, aimed more at creating the appearance of democratic change than at true decentralization.

The main problems to be solved in the national local self-government are:

- a clear definition of the territorial basis of local self-government;
- determination of financial resources for the local government budget;
- establishing criteria for distinguishing between common property (state property) and property of local governments, as well as determining the sources of formation of the latter;
- expansion of forms of direct exercise by citizens of the right to local self-government, such as referendums, local legislative initiatives, nationwide discussion of draft decisions of local authorities and other related issues;
- giving the executive bodies of the district and city levels the dual status of the executive bodies of local self-government;
- introduction of accountability of elected members of autonomous bodies;

- including integration of local community bodies.

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