

# РАЗВИТИЕ ЭКОНОМИКИ В СОВРЕМЕННЫХ УСЛОВИЯХ: ПРОБЛЕМЫ И ПЕРСПЕКТИВЫ

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## SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES AS A FACTOR IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ECONOMY OF KAZAKHSTAN

In today's global economy, States are striving to find effective ways to stimulate their economic growth. In this context, special economic zones (SEZs) have become one of the most important tools for attracting investment, technological development and creating new jobs. Kazakhstan, as a country with active integration into the global economy, also successfully uses the SEZ as a kind of driver of economic growth. Special economic zones are defined territories where a special legal regime operates and infrastructure has been created to facilitate the development of priority activities. The main purpose of the creation of the SEZ is to create favorable conditions for entrepreneurship, attract foreign investors, increase exports, as well as promote economic growth and development of the regions.

The study uses the analytical review method to identify the role of special economic zones in stimulating economic growth in Kazakhstan.

The history of special economic zones goes back to the second half of the 20th century, but the prerequisites for their creation can be found in earlier periods. The process of SEZ development can be divided into several stages [1]:

1. The early stage (the middle of the XX century). The first steps towards the creation of free economic zones can be found in the desire of some countries to create special zones with tax preferences to stimulate economic growth. An example of such zones is the Hong Kong Free Port, founded in the 1950s;

2. The experimental stage (1970s-1980s). During this period, some countries began to actively develop the concept of SEZ and implement it in practice. An example of successful implementation is the Shenzhen zone in China and Production Zones for export in various countries;

3. Global distribution (1990s and later). In the 1990s, the concept of free economic zones became widespread worldwide, and many countries began to create their own free economic zones with a diverse industry orientation. Singapore, Dubai (UAE), Mexico and others have become examples of successful special economic zones.

The creation of the SEZ contributes to the development of economic growth in several key areas:

1. *Attracting investments.* One of the main goals of the creation of the SEZ is to attract both domestic and foreign investments. Due to the provision of tax incentives, simplified procedures and other privileges to investors, SEZs are becoming an attractive place to invest capital. Investments, in turn, contribute to the development of new enterprises, job creation and an increase in production volumes.

2. *Development of economic sectors.* SEZs contribute to the development of specific sectors of the economy that are a priority for the country. For example, the creation of specialized zones for the production of high-tech electronics or metallurgy can significantly enhance the development of these sectors and improve the technological level of the country.

3. *Promoting innovation.* Many SEZs are focused on innovative development. Here, companies can introduce new technologies, develop innovative products and conduct scientific research. This helps to increase the level of technological equipment of the country and its competitiveness in the global market.

4. *Job creation.* SEZs contribute to the creation of new jobs, which is an important factor for the socio-economic development of the regions. Workers employed in the SEZ receive wages, consume goods and services, which contributes to an increase in consumer demand and the growth of the economy as a whole.

5. *Knowledge transfer.* The SEZ often creates conditions for close cooperation between business, scientific and educational institutions. This facilitates the transfer of knowledge and experience, which can enhance the innovative development of the country.

6. SEZs influence the stimulation of economic growth through the following mechanisms: *tax incentives and preferences.* Providing investors with special tax conditions allows them to reduce the cost of doing business and increase the profitability of projects.

7. *Simplified customs procedures.* Simplified procedures for the import and export of goods allow companies to reduce time and financial costs.

8. *Infrastructure.* The creation of a developed infrastructure in the FEZ facilitates business and attracts investors.

9. *Education and scientific research.* The opportunity to interact with universities and research institutes contributes to innovative development.

The creation of special economic zones in Kazakhstan began in 2001, when the first zone "Astana – new City" was created. Since then, the number of SEZs has increased to 14, including the newly created "G4 city" zone in Kunaev, Almaty region, covering various regions and industries [2]. The sectoral orientation of Kazakhstan's economic zones is diverse and covers various sectors of the economy, such as: oil and gas and chemical industries; manufacturing; agro-industrial complex; logistics and transport; innovation and technology; tourism and services; ecology and sustainable development.

According to official data [2], 317 projects worth 2.3 trillion tenge were implemented on the territory of the SEZ, 23,800 thousand permanent jobs were created, production amounted to more than seven trillion tenge, 480 billion products were exported. The country's budget received 352.9 billion tenge from the implementation of projects on the territory of the SEZ. It is also important to note that 2.7 trillion tenge of investments were attracted, 4.1 trillion within the framework of construction.

This substantial amount of investment was attracted from both local and foreign investors, including contributions from China, Russia and South Korea. The support of the Government of Kazakhstan has played a key role in the successful implementation of these SEZs, providing investors with tax incentives, infrastructure development and other benefits for companies wishing to invest in the country. One of the most notable and successful special economic zones in Kazakhstan is the Khorgos-Eastern Gate SEZ, located on the border with China. Established in 2011, it has been able to attract investments from more than 50 companies, including e-commerce giants Alibaba and JD.com from China. Quantitatively, investments in the Khorgos-Eastern Gate SEZ are estimated at 950 billion tenge (approximately 2.3 billion US dollars) by 2022 [3]. Other special economic zones of Kazakhstan have also proved successful in attracting investments. The Pavlodar SEZ, focused on the petrochemical and chemical industries, received investments of more than 100 billion tenge (approximately 335 million US dollars). Aktau SEZ, focused on the development of the Caspian Sea region, has also attracted investments of more than 70 billion tenge (approximately 125 million US dollars) [3]. The creation of new jobs in the special economic zones is one of the most important goals of these zones and Kazakhstan is no exception in this matter, as they contribute to the development of regions, increase employment and improve economic activity.

Thus, special economic zones, attracting investments, creating jobs and stimulating innovation, play an important role in the development of the country's economy. An analysis of the activities of the SEZ allows you to see their achieved results and consider the potential for further development. However, it should be understood that there are also challenges that special economic zones face. They imply the need to ensure a balance between the interests of investors and the social needs of the regions, as well as ensuring compliance with environmental and social standards. Therefore, for sustainable success, constant monitoring and adaptation of the SEZ development strategy to the changing economic and social environment is necessary.

#### References

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