



**Kazakhstan's  
COVID-19 Strategy:  
Chronology, Measures, Results**

**Analytical report**

**- Nur-Sultan -**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	3
1. COVID-19 PANDEMIC: INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL DIMENSIONS.....	5
2. SPECIFIC FEATURES AND PREVALENCE OF CORONAVIRUS IN KAZAKHSTAN.....	17
3. COUNTERACTION TO CORONAVIRUS COVID-19 .....	24
4. EVALUATION BY EXTERNAL REVIEWERS REGARDING TAKEN MEASURES ON FIGHT AGAINST THE CORONAVIRAL INFECTION COVID-19 IN KAZAKHSTAN .....	41
5. CURRENT CONSEQUENCES AND POSSIBILITIES FOR THE FUTURE .....	44
CONCLUSIONS .....	49
REFERENCES .....	51

## INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of 2020, the whole world has been facing major challenges due to the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic. This refers to a serious disease affecting the human respiratory system, potentially leading to physical complications up to a fatal outcome.

It is worth noting that coronaviruses constitute a large group of viruses with proven pathogenic properties in relation to humans or animals. A number of them may cause respiratory infections in humans ranging from common colds to more serious conditions [1]. As for COVID-19, the disease is caused by the last of the recently identified coronaviruses, which previously had been unknown. It transmits from human to human by airborne droplets through coughing or sneezing, or by contact through touch.

The first manifestation of this disease, which may resemble pneumonia in some respects, was noted in Wuhan City (China) at the end of December 2019. The source of the infection spread was the local Huanan Animal and Seafood Market. Later on, this process reached epidemic proportions, spreading to other cities and provinces of the PRC.

However, as far back as in January 2020, incidents of COVID-19 coronavirus infection were reported in Australia, Germany, India, Italy, the USA, Russia, Japan and other countries. Initially, the sources of infection were predominantly Chinese citizens who arrived in other countries for various reasons, as well as citizens of different countries who came back home from China or were in transit through it. But afterwards, the process of spreading the infection on the territory of the respective states rapidly became internal.

In this respect, on January 30 this year, World Health Organization (WHO) declared a public health emergency of international concern due to a global coronavirus outbreak, calling on the countries worldwide to take measures for early detection of the virus, including isolation of patients and tracing their contacts [2]. Later, on March 11 the WHO reported that the spread of the new coronavirus had reached the pandemic stage, since most countries and all continents were affected [3].

The first cases of COVID-19 coronavirus infection in Kazakhstan were registered on March 13, 2020. By that time, four people had been infected with it, three of them came to Almaty from Germany and one person arrived in

Nur-Sultan from Italy. Subsequently, the infection began to spread actively in the country and reached 4,578 registered cases on May 7 this year.

The national leadership initially responded to the critical processes related to the pandemic abroad. On January 26 this year, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev ordered the government to take decisive organizational measures for preventing the spread of coronavirus from China to Kazakhstan [4]. The first step was to strengthen control at airports and border checkpoints. The Ministry of Healthcare of the RoK commenced training exercises involving representatives of the border and customs services, air and rail passenger transport personnel to detect patients and place them in infectious diseases hospitals. This agency also recommended Kazakhstanis to avoid travelling to China unless absolutely necessary [5].

The decision of the Head of State to introduce the state of emergency throughout the Republic from March 16 this year, which was in effect until May 11, 2020, became unprecedented in the history of sovereign Kazakhstan. The measure that received an ambiguous reaction among the population seems to be quite justified given the growth of the level of spread of this disease in the country.

This report is aimed at presenting objective evaluations of processes and events related to the spread of COVID-19 coronavirus infection and its counteraction in Kazakhstan. To this effect, the report seeks to systematize and periodize government measures aimed at combating the spread of coronavirus in Kazakhstan and stabilizing the socio-economic situation.

## 1. COVID-19 PANDEMIC: INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL DIMENSIONS

With the spread of COVID-19 coronavirus infection nationally and globally, various measures have been taken by different countries and international organizations to counteract this process and to address its consequences.

According to Worldometer, as of May 11, 2020, **4,181,218 cases of infection**, 283,876 deaths and 1,493,490 recoveries had been confirmed in 212 countries and 2 international transport facilities [6].

*Table 1. The prevalence of COVID-19 in certain countries of the world*

No	Country	Number of infected people	Number of deaths	Number of recoveries
1	USA	1 367 638	80 787	256 336
2	Spain	264 663	26 621	176 439
3	Great Britain	219 183	31 855	Not available
4	Italy	219 070	30 560	105 186
5	Russia	209 688	1 915	34 306
6	France	176 970	26 380	56 217
7	Germany	171 879	7 569	145 600
8	Brazil	162 699	11 123	64 957
9	Turkey	138 657	3 786	92 691
10	Iran	107 603	6 640	86 143
11	China	82 918	4 633	78 144
<b>Worldwide:</b>		<b>4 181 218</b>	<b>283 876</b>	<b>1 493 490</b>

*Source: According to Worldometer (May 11, 2020, 05:33 GMT)*

It is natural that the most difficult situation was in **China**, where the infection spread from. Along with it, it was the Chinese epidemiologists who discovered a new type of coronavirus as a result of laboratory research and confirmed the possibility of its transmission from human to human, sharing this important information with the entire world. The authorities of this country also were the first to implement the practice of quarantining entire settlements, starting on January 23 this year from Wuhan city. First, public transport, subway, ferries, airport and railway station were suspended here, and residents were temporarily forbidden to leave the city without special reasons [7]. At the same time, in case of violation of quarantine measures, criminal liability is assumed.

Similar measures were later introduced throughout Hubei Province, with its population exceeding 65 million.

Other anti-virus measures implemented by the Chinese authorities include the following:

1. Cancellation throughout the country of events related to the celebration of the Chinese New Year, as well as the closure of cinema theatres, tourist facilities, etc.
2. Commissioning of two infectious diseases hospitals in Wuhan on February 4 and 8, built in the shortest possible time (7-10 days), with a total capacity of 2.6 thousand beds.
3. Suspension of industrial enterprises for two months.
4. Ensuring regular supply of the population with all necessary things (food, medicines, etc.).
5. Conversion of part of the manufacturing facilities to the production of protective masks.
6. Providing full transparency of information about the epidemiological situation in the country as a whole and in each settlement.
7. Turning educational institutions at all levels of education into online mode.

Postponement of a number of international events planned in the PRC, including the Asian Economic Forum in Boao, the World Athletics Championships indoors, Beijing International Automotive Exhibition (Auto China), etc. [8].

As part of quarantine maintenance, China also applied economic incentives to the employed population. These include, inter alia, maintenance and payment of salaries to employees of public enterprises and organizations, compensation for private small and medium-sized enterprises in the amount of declared profits, zeroing of value added tax (VAT) for enterprises that have switched to online work, etc [9].

Generally speaking, the Chinese authorities have utilized all available resources of the country to the maximum extent possible in the fight against coronavirus, while effectively combining methods of enforcement and stimulation. As a result, Beijing announced in late March that the spread of infection in the country had been halted. The key factors of success in this case should be considered, first and foremost, the high level of discipline among the population. Secondly, it's the mobilization of all strata and groups of the society, including private business. And, thirdly, it's the availability of sufficient

financial resources in China. Thus, all tiers of financial institutions together have allocated ¥71.8 billion (about \$10.3 billion) for the prevention and control of the spread of the disease. Moreover, China has provided another \$20 million to the WHO [10].

The imposition of various restrictions on contacts with China without prejudice to diplomatic and trade-economic relations with this country has become in fact one of the top priority measures of a number of countries worldwide. Air communication with China has been completely or partially suspended (in respect of certain cities) by Australia, Germany, Indonesia, Kenya, Pakistan, Turkey, etc. The land borders with this country have also been closed by Vietnam, India, the DPRK, Mongolia and Russia. Such countries as Israel, the Philippines, New Zealand and Singapore have extended the entry ban to all foreigners who have previously visited the PRC. At the same time, South Korea and Japan imposed this ban only on residents and foreign visitors to Hubei Province [11].

The first case of coronavirus in the **USA** was recorded by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention on January 21 this year. Since February 2, an emergency situation regime was introduced in the country, which prohibits Chinese citizens and foreigners visiting the USA, and provides for compulsory medical survey and two-week quarantine for Americans returning from China [12].

The broader measures to combat the spread of COVID-19 coronavirus infection were announced by President Donald Trump when he addressed the nation on March 11 this year. First off, entry into the US from Europe was forbidden for a month, except for Americans and citizens of Great Britain staying in European countries. This ban also does not apply to goods imported from Europe.

The US also declared the following:

1. Healthcare institutions have waived any additional fees for coronavirus treatment and have extended insurance coverage for this treatment.
2. Recommendations for limiting contact among people, especially with older citizens.
3. Provision of additional funding in the amount of \$8.3 billion to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention and other government departments for vaccine production, development of treatment methods, etc.



4. Providing financial assistance to working citizens who are sick, care for other sick people or are under quarantine.
5. Granting tax relief for certain individuals and legal entities, including the provision of deferred tax deductions without interest or penalties.
6. Provision of cheap loans to small enterprises, with the allocation of an additional \$50 billion [13].

The authorities of certain states and large cities have taken independent decisions on introduction of a State of Emergency regime on the territories entrusted to them, with introduction of various restrictions on the movement, meetings and labor activity of citizens, on closure of places of mass gathering of people, educational institutions, large enterprises, etc. Thus, the New York State authorities announced the establishment of a special zone of infection with a radius of one mile (1.6 km) in New Rochelle city, where the largest area of coronavirus infection was identified. Meanwhile, the U.S. National Guard soldiers were sent to help local residents to clean schools and deliver food to people in quarantine [14].

On April 11, a state of emergency was declared by Donald Trump in Wyoming State pursuant to an appeal by the local authorities. Wyoming became the last of the 50 states in the US with no such regime. As a result, since that moment, the whole country has been living in the “major disaster” regime for the first time in its history [15]. To mitigate the appropriate conditions for citizens, the legislative decision was made to pay \$1200 to each American with an annual income less than \$75,000, \$500 to families with children for each child, and \$600 to the unemployed

The United States has also strengthened its self-isolation regime in the area of international affairs. In particular, starting from March 20, the issuance of ordinary immigrant and non-immigrant visas has been suspended in embassies and consulates of the country around the world. Domestically, the procedure for issuing new residence permits (green cards) was suspended for two months from April 21. Similar to the Trump administration’s style, which runs a line to halt or reduce the U.S. participation in various international organizations, the decision to suspend the U.S. contributions to WHO was made because the organization “failed to cope with the Coronavirus pandemic” [17].

**France** became the country where, on January 24 this year, the first coronavirus infection in Europe was recorded. In this case, three people were infected, namely a citizen of this country and two Chinese tourists. The first death

from this disease in Europe also occurred in France (Note – a previously hospitalized tourist from the PRC died in Paris on February 14).

Initially, the French authorities implemented a plan to combat various epidemics, which was elaborated in 2009 and includes measures for the first phase to prevent and control the spread of various diseases and subsequently return to a normal situation in the appropriate territory. However, on February 29, the second phase of the plan was implemented in the departments of Oise and Haute-Savoie, which have become centers of mass infection. In particular, all mass events were banned, school classes were cancelled and residents were advised to limit their movements [18]. In particular, all mass events were banned and school classes were cancelled here, and residents were advised to limit their movements [18].

On March 16, President of France Emmanuel Macron announced a national quarantine in a sufficiently severe form. Among other things, the quarantine imposed bans on unnecessary exit from homes and any mass gatherings, administrative responsibility for breaching this regime and closing the external borders of the European Union, except for Great Britain, Switzerland and the French overseas territories. At the same time, the charging of bills for water, electricity and gas, as well as the collection of rent was suspended. In connection with the quarantine, the decision was also made to postpone the second round of municipal elections [19]. Prior to that, all educational institutions, restaurants, cafes, cinema theaters, night clubs, museums, etc., had been closed in the country. Initially, the quarantine was introduced for 15 days, but then it was extended for an indefinite period.

**Italy** has taken even more strong measures, becoming the first European country to declare a state of emergency to combat the spread of coronavirus infection. The relevant decision was taken on January 31 this year, with this regime in effect for 6 months. The government also allocated €5 million for combating epidemics [20]. This was followed by a national quarantine declared on March 10. Religious activities, including funerals and weddings, were also suspended under the quarantine.

To support the population and businesses, the Italian government has, first of all, suspended payments by citizens and certain commercial entities on loans and mortgage credits, assuming these obligations as part of government guarantees for banks. Secondly, it has introduced special benefits for different categories of the population. Specifically, a small bonus of up to €100 was

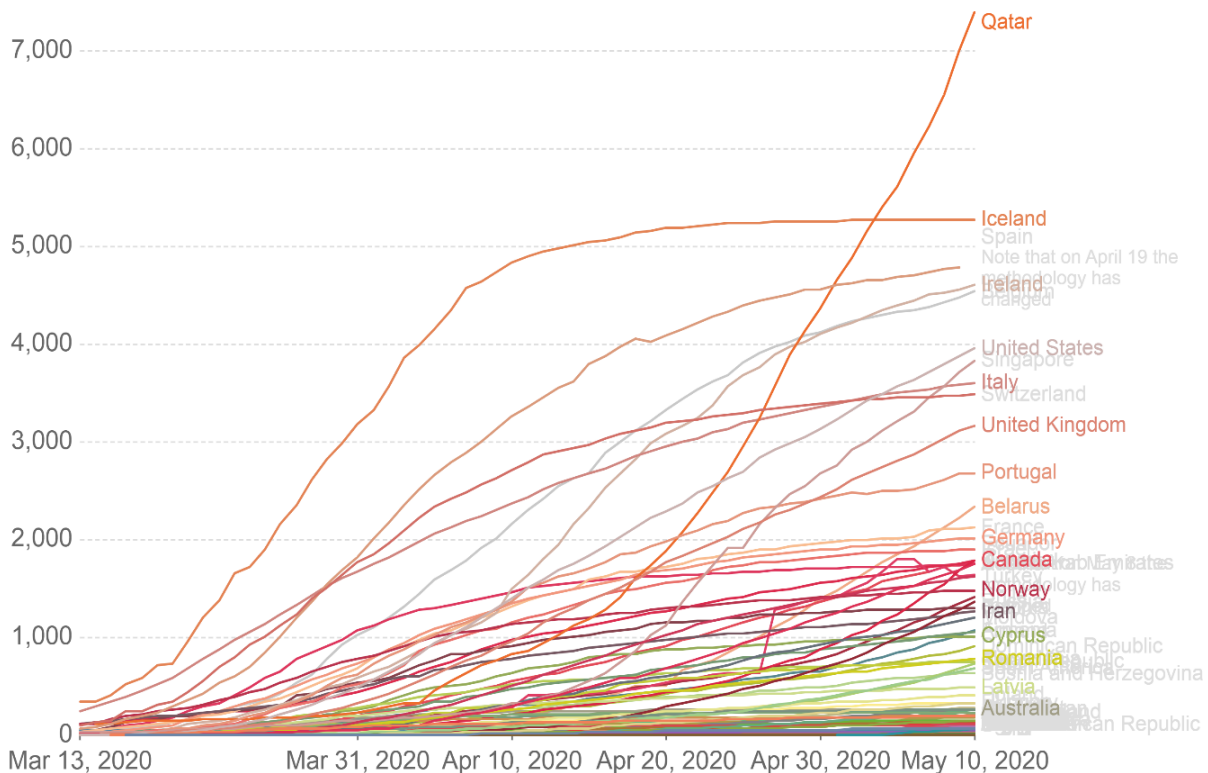
introduced for all workers with a total income not exceeding €40 thousand a year, who continue working under quarantine. A special voucher of €600 was granted to employed parents with children under 12 years old to compensate for babysitting services [21].

In **Russia**, on January 27, the operational headquarters to prevent the entry and spread of new coronavirus infection in the Russian Federation, headed by Deputy Prime Minister Tatiana Golikova, was established under the auspices of the government. Among the first measures taken as part of its activities, it's worth noting the inclusion of COVID-19 into the list of especially dangerous diseases. This enables the Russian authorities to isolate fellow citizens infected with this disease and to deport foreigners from the country in a similar case. Moreover, the Federal Antimonopoly Service and Roszdravnadzor have been tasked with monitoring the prices of medicines in pharmacies and preventing their increase [22].

At the beginning of February, Russia evacuated its citizens from Hubei Province. To this end, the Embassy of the Russian Federation in China organized the collection of these people who were in various cities of the province, and their delivery to Wuhan by rented buses. President of Russia Vladimir Putin instructed to involve military transport aircrafts of the Russian Aerospace Defense Forces for evacuating fellow citizens. As a result, 144 people, including 16 persons from other CIS countries, were taken to Tyumen by two aircrafts from Wuhan and then quarantined [22]. In March, Russia suspended air and rail traffic with a number of countries of near and far abroad, and also introduced temporary restrictions on entry into the country of foreign citizens and stateless persons. Additionally, the all-Russian voting on amendments to the Constitution of the Russian Federation, initially scheduled for April 22 this year, was postponed for an indefinite period.

## Total confirmed COVID-19 cases per million people

The number of confirmed cases is lower than the number of total cases. The main reason for this is limited testing.



Source: European CDC – Situation Update Worldwide – Last updated 10th May, 11:00 (London time) OurWorldInData.org/coronavirus • CC BY

**Diagram 1. The total number of confirmed cases of infection with coronavirus disease COVID-19 per million people in different countries worldwide (as of May 10, 2020)**

Source: Data from web-site <https://ourworldindata.org/>

Among other measures taken by various countries to counter the pandemic, the following should also be noted:

1. Introduction of curfew restrictions at prescribed times to strengthen quarantine among the population. This measure has been used, in particular, by Honduras, the Dominican Republic, India, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, etc.
2. Restrictions on the celebration of religious holidays and the performance of religious ceremonies. For example, church services before and during the Easter celebrations in Jerusalem, the Vatican, Moscow, etc., were held with no involvement of parishioners or pilgrims, with broadcasting on television and the Internet. And Saudi Arabia, despite the beginning of Ramadan, maintains the restriction on visiting

and holding daily and weekly Friday prayers in the mosques of Medina and Mecca since March 20.

3. Temporary or permanent release from prisons of persons convicted of various offences, so as to prevent the mass spread of coronavirus infection in penal institutions. This measure is primarily applied to certain categories of convicted persons on legal grounds (nature of offence, term for serving sentence) and/or social grounds (children, elderly persons). The most extensive use of this measure was made by Iran, where 219,000 prisoners were released from prisons in March this year, including the convicted on cases “involving a threat to the country’s security” [24].
4. Introduction of a temporary ban on the export of medical protective equipment (masks, gloves, suits, etc.) by Germany, Iran, Russia, France, the Czech Republic, etc. According to the World Trade Organization (WTO), this ban has been introduced by 80 countries, including 8 non-WTO countries. The WTO itself believes that the introduction of this measure “is fraught with the risk that import-dependent countries will be cut off from much-needed medical products” [25].
5. Introduction of a temporary ban on the export of certain foodstuff. Thus, pursuant to the decision of the Board of the Eurasian Economic Commission, exports of such food products as garlic, turnip, rye, rice, buckwheat, millet, etc. are prohibited from the territory of the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) from March 31 to June 30 this year.

This ban is meant to provide the population of the EEU member states with a sufficient quantity of these products during the aggravation of the sanitary-epidemiological situation [26].

In general, combating a new infection that has grown into a pandemic across the globe has revealed strong and weak points both in different spheres of certain countries and in the system of international relations.

Specifically, the existing procedure for examining various issues and making decisions in the European Union, which requires the involvement of official representatives of all EU member states, did not allow an adequate response so as to render the necessary medical and other assistance to Italy suffered most from coronavirus. In this regard, Prime Minister of Italy Giuseppe Conte stated that the European integration project would be threatened unless the EU countries agree on an economic response to the coronavirus pandemic [27].

Nonetheless, Italy receives some assistance from certain EU member states. For example, Austria and Germany have hosted over 100 Italian patients and covered their air travel and treatment costs, while Poland and Romania have sent medical teams to Italy. Italy has also received significant assistance from China, Cuba and Russia, which in aggregate sent more than 170 medical officers. It is noteworthy that about 600 Cuban medics currently work in 15 countries of the world, including Andorra, Barbados, Venezuela, Qatar, RSA, etc. [28].

On April 8, the European Union began implementing the “Team Europe” assistance programme for support to partner countries in their fight against coronavirus infection and its consequences. The programme budget exceeds €20 billion, which will be allocated to humanitarian aid, strengthening health systems and mitigating economic consequences. This assistance will be provided to some countries in Africa, the Middle East, Latin America, the Balkans and the Eastern Partnership members. In particular, Ukraine will receive €190 million, Georgia – €183 million, Serbia – €93 million, Armenia – €92 million, Moldova – €87 million and Belarus – €60 million [29].

On March 25, the United Nations (UN) Secretary-General Antonio Guterres presented a Global Humanitarian Response Plan to counter the threat of coronavirus spreading in developing countries. The plan envisages assistance to 40 countries in such matters as raising people’s awareness of measures for preventing and delaying the virus spread, expanding testing and free treatment of people at high risk of complications, funding the protection of medical and humanitarian staff, etc. These states include Afghanistan, Iraq, Venezuela, Libya, Syria, Ukraine, Ethiopia, etc. [30].

UN requested \$20 billion from developed countries, primarily G20 members, to implement this plan. The organization itself contributed \$63 million mostly from the UN Central Emergency Response Fund. Furthermore, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet called for a weakening the sanctions regime imposed on Iran, Cuba, North Korea and other countries. In particular, this concerns the removal of hospital equipment, medical supplies and other goods necessary for the combat against the pandemic from the sanctions lists [31]. In particular, this concerns the deleting of hospital equipment, medical supplies and other goods required for the combat against the pandemic from the sanctions lists [31].

At the same time, some countries have, on the contrary, shown their national selfishness in the face of the pandemic. Thus, apart from the suspension

of the WHO's funding, the USA also repurchased 200 thousand medical masks intended for Germany. They were made by the American 3M Corporation in Thailand, but were sent to the USA. In this respect, Andreas Geisel, the State Minister of the Interior of Berlin, which is the direct purchaser of this batch of masks, classified it as "an act of modern piracy" and called on the American administration to respect the rules of international trade [32]. Similar complaints against the USA were also made by officials from Canada and France. On the other hand, by mid-April this year, the United States had allocated about \$508 million to provide humanitarian aid to 104 countries.

The so-called "price war" between Russia and Saudi Arabia on the oil market, triggered by controversies between the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), which includes the CSA as a member, and Russia over the volume of oil production cuts, has become a huge challenge for the global economy amid the pandemic. The announcement on lowering the official prices for oil by \$6-8 per barrel by the state-owned oil company Saudi Aramco made on March 7 caused the cost of Brent oil to drop to \$31 barrel on the world market. Therefore, oil prices have fallen by more than 30% [33]. In turn, this negatively affected the world equity markets and national currency rates of a number of countries. The situation has been gradually stabilizing after the conclusion of an agreement between OPEC and non-OPEC countries, including Russia, to reduce oil production by 9.7 million barrels per day for two years, as from May 1 this year.

Due to the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic, the World Trade Organization (WTO) forecasts that in 2020 the volume of world trade will decline by at least 13 percent, and by a maximum of 32 percent. And the rate of this decline will be more significant for the global economy compared to the period of the global financial crisis in 2008–2009. [34]. The WTO experts also note the uncertainty about the pace of recovery of the world trade in 2021. This situation will greatly depend on the period of the pandemic and the efficiency of anti-crisis measures in different countries.

Worsening of the situation is also expected on the employment market. According to UN experts, as early as in the second quarter of this year 195 million people worldwide may lose their jobs. The most vulnerable are the self-employed, SMEs, farmers, daily wage earners, refugees and labor migrants [35].

Thus, the coronavirus pandemic COVID-19 has become a significant challenge for individual states and the entire world community, and its

consequences may have a long-term effect on further national and global development. The situation is worsened by the lack of effective drugs and universal methods to treat this disease.

On the one hand, the pandemic has exposed quite a high level of vulnerability of almost all countries worldwide, irrespective of their political, economic, military and other potential. In turn, this circumstance naturally determines the need for uniting different countries and international organizations to effectively counter the spread of the infection.

All kinds of medical, financial, humanitarian and other assistance rendered by different countries to each other form a sound basis for further development of the said line of international interaction. This includes the cooperation of healthcare specialists in creating a vaccine and drugs against coronavirus infection.

On the other hand, the pandemic has not led to the utmost elimination of mutual distrust and other dividing lines in the relations of a number of geopolitical actors, as well as the termination of political-military conflicts in "hot spots". A series of countries, in particular, remains under sanctions from the USA, UK, European Union, etc. In this context, the provision of different types of assistance is often the subject of mutual criticism and various accusations. And different disputes and contradictions occur both among longstanding opponents and members of such stable international associations as the EU and NATO.

Hence, there are certain risks that multiple crisis and conflict situations on the international scene will "freeze" for some time due to the pandemic, but may become more acute once the spread of COVID-19 decreases.

Some nations of the world will face even greater challenges in the near future. A decline in economic activity, growing unemployment and falling incomes for a certain part of the population, coupled with the psychological discomfort of the quarantine, may foster protest sentiments and socio-political tensions in various countries during the post-pandemic period. Against this backdrop, national governments will have to constantly balance measures to stabilize the socio-economic situation in their countries and provide assistance to vulnerable social groups, on the one hand, and to ensure law enforcement, with the possible introduction of any new restrictions on citizens' rights and freedoms, on the other hand.



Also, it is possible that some nations will retain restrictions on the entry of foreigners into their territory and the travel of their own citizens to other countries for a long time. On the one hand, it allows them to reduce the level of non-controlled and especially illegal migration, and to address the issues of employment and social protection for the benefit of their citizens. But, on the other hand, states with high levels of labor force export to economically developed countries will face problems due to unemployment and social security of citizens from among failed migrants. States, which attract both skilled and unskilled manpower from other countries, will also bear their economic losses.

Another common trend is the nearly widespread increase in the role and influence of the state in diverse areas, including health care, social protection, certain sectors of the economy and law enforcement. The state in countries with high levels of etatism gains extra control over society. As regards the countries with a neoliberal model of economy and relations between the state and society, this model is being seriously tested for strength. Also, the likely desire of the State to keep its position acquired during the pandemic may face resistance from society and its institutions during the post-pandemic period.

## 2. SPECIFIC FEATURES AND PREVALENCE OF CORONAVIRUS IN KAZAKHSTAN

In Kazakhstan, the first cases of coronavirus were detected on 13 March, current year, in four citizens of the country that had arrived from Germany and Italy to the cities of Almaty and Nur-Sultan. On the same day it became known that the father of one of the staff members of the embassy of Kazakhstan in Germany got contaminated. On the next day the infection was detected in two more citizens of Kazakhstan that had returned from Poland and Russia. They were admitted to hospital. At the same time, measures were taken to determine and isolate people that came into contact with them. As a result, only during the two days 1260 people have been placed in quarantine in the hospitals of Almaty and Nur-Sultan [36].

Evidently, the initial **cases of coronavirus COVID-19 in the country were of external origin.**

It is worthy of note that back on March 10 the Chief Sanitary Inspector of the country Zhandarbek Bekshin, with reference to the results of specialists' investigations, based on mathematical modelling, voiced the forecast of possible incidence of coronavirus in Kazakhstan between 11 March and 16 March. Thus, this forecast proved to be correct.

To prevent spread of the infection in the country, **on 15 March** the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev issued **a decree concerning imposition of the state of emergency in the Republic of Kazakhstan.** The state of emergency was announced from 16 March to 15 April, current year, and, in particular it provided for:

- ✓ enforcement of a quarantine;
- ✓ suspension of the activity of shopping and recreation centres, cinemas, theatres, exhibitions, and other places of mass gathering;
- ✓ prohibition of family, memorial, entertainment, sporting, and other mass events;
- ✓ performance of large-scale sanitary and epidemic-prevention measures, including those with the participation of the structural divisions of the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the law enforcement agencies, acting for the epidemiological welfare of the people;

- ✓ Imposition of limitations for entrance into/leaving the country for all kinds of transport (except the diplomatic service of the Republic of Kazakhstan and foreign countries, as well as the members of delegations from international organizations arriving to Kazakhstan at the invitation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan);
- ✓ Increase of control over people evading medical examination, treatment, and observance of the quarantine regime [37].

Kassym-Jomart Tokayev: "The pandemic of coronavirus announced by the World Health Organization became threatening in its scale. Therefore, in accordance with the law of Kazakhstan, I have signed a Decree concerning imposition of the state of emergency in our country ... I appeal to the citizens of Kazakhstan to provide the necessary assistance to the authorized agencies. We all should demonstrate responsibility and discipline in the current situation. On appearance of the first signs of ailment, it is necessary to seek medical advice at the place of residence. Evading medical examination and failure to observe the quarantine regime will be liable to prosecution. At the same time it is important to remember the simple ways of taking care of yourselves and your close people: washing hands regularly, observing sanitary hygiene, trying to avoid places of mass gathering" (from the TV address to the nation, 16 March, 2020)

As of 19 March, coronavirus incidence has been detected only in the cities of Almaty and Nur-Sultan, where in total 44 people were contaminated. Also, the disease was detected in two citizens of Kazakhstan staying in Hungary and Germany. There were 860 people quarantined in hospitals, and 2 611 people – at home [38].

However, starting from 20 March, the infection began to spread gradually through all regions of the country. On that day, two contaminated citizen of Kazakhstan that arrived by plane from Belarus were found in Karaganda. The next day was marked by confirmation of a coronavirus case in Kaskelen, Almaty Oblast. And between 22 and 24 March the similar cases were detected in Aktobe, Zhambyl, and North-Kazakhstan Oblasts and in the city of Shymkent [39].

On 26 March a 64-year old woman from Koshchy village, Akmola Oblast, Raikul Akimzhan died in the hospital of Nur-Sultan. A short time before she travelled by train to Almaty and Zhambyl Oblast on a visit. It was the first death

from coronavirus in Kazakhstan. The head of the state expressed condolences to the family and friends of the deceased in Twitter [40]. This case revealed the following negative tendencies connected with COVID-19 in Kazakhstan.

Firstly, the spread of the infection **became internal**. Previously this process went on through the citizens of Kazakhstan returning from abroad, but then the disease began to affect people living in different regions of the country, who had not left Kazakhstan before that.

Secondly, **the most vulnerable categories of citizens whose disease led to lethal outcome were people aged 50 and older** having in majority specific chronic illnesses (diabetes, bronchitis, angina, etc.). The serviceman, born in 1980, that served in one of the military units of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Kazakhstan in Mangistau Oblast, participated in cleaning of various objects in the city of Aktau as a member of a composite disinfection group and died on 24 April, became an exclusion.

In total in Kazakhstan, from 26 March to 10 May, 31 people died from coronavirus infection. The biggest number of lethal outcomes is accounted for Almaty (9 people). Then there come Shymkent – 5, Akmola Oblast – 4, Nur-Sultan and Karaganda Oblast – 3 per each, Pavlodar Oblast – 2, East-Kazakhstan, Zhambyl, Kostanay, Mangistau, and Turkestan Oblasts – 1 person per each [41].

As of 10 May, current year, there were **5 090 coronavirus cases** registered in Kazakhstan. With that, 1941 people recovered (38% of the total number of people infected). In the regional perspective, the quantitative indices are as follows.

Table 2. Prevalence of COVID-19 in Kazakhstan

№	Oblast / Town	Number of people infected	Number of people recovered
1	Akmola Oblast	109	90
2	Aktobe Oblast	172	54
3	Almaty Oblast	183	70
4	Atyrau Oblast	299	113
5	East-Kazakhstan Oblast	51	13
6	Zhambyl Oblast	179	84
7	West-Kazakhstan Oblast	249	96
8	Karaganda Oblast	191	96
9	Kostanay Oblast	61	28
10	Kyzylorda Oblast	229	161
11	Mangistau Oblast	120	16
12	Pavlodar Oblast	154	63
13	North-Kazakhstan Oblast	34	29
14	Turkestan Oblast	180	76
15	Nur-Sultan	1066	404
16	Almaty	1580	418
17	Shymkent	233	130
<b>Total in the country:</b>		<b>5090</b>	<b>1941</b>

Source: <https://www.coronavirus2020.kz/>  
(10 May 2020, 10.45 p.m.)

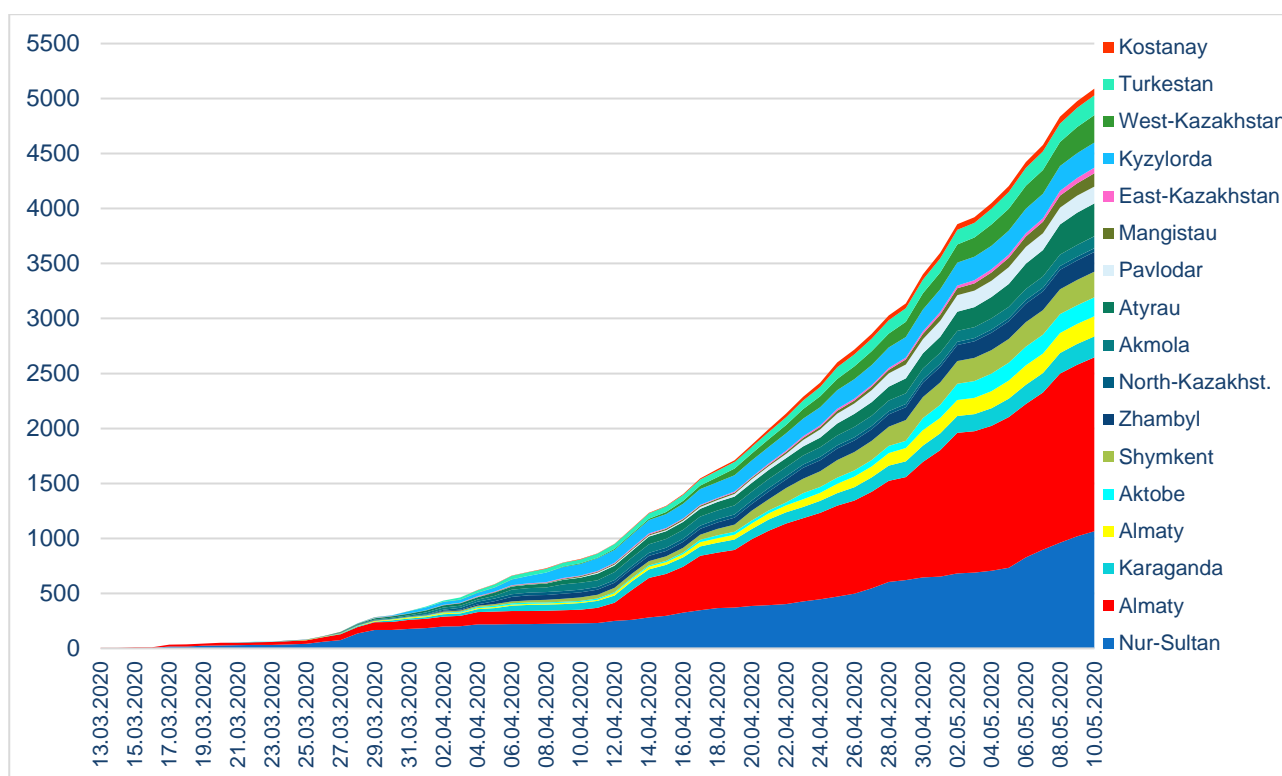


Diagram 2. Coronavirus COVID-19 spread dynamics (as of 10 May 2020)

Source: <https://www.coronavirus2020.kz/>  
(10 May 2020, 10.45 p.m.)

Thus, **coronavirus COVID-19 has been detected mostly in the two leading metropolises of the country.** The least number of cases has been registered in the East-Kazakhstan Oblast and North-Kazakhstan Oblast.

The factors that facilitate infection spread are high population density, which is especially characteristic of metropolises and certain regions of the country, unfavourable ecological and sanitary and epidemiological situation, failure to observe personal hygiene by many people, and multiple violations of the quarantine regime.

Notwithstanding the critical situation in the country and multiple warnings made by law enforcement agencies, a large number of the citizens of Kazakhstan in different regions of the country committed multiple violations of the quarantine regime. Moreover, according to the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, this tendency is aggravating. As of 31 March, 1 800 corresponding breachers have been held administratively liable, including those fined – 500 and subjected to administrative arrest – over 400 people, while by 16 April the number of them has increased to 5130 people. 2479 of them have been fined, 1 626 – arrested [42]. The main violations in this case were refuse to get treatment or refuse to isolate themselves, being in the streets for no good reason, trying to get into the towns closed for quarantine, illegal sale of protective means and antiseptics, spread of misinformation in messengers and social media, illegal work of trading and entertainment facilities, defiance and resistance to police officers, etc.

The medical personnel in direct contact with infected patients admitted to hospital or those engaged in epidemic prevention events also got into the contamination risk group. According to the Ministry of Public Health of the Republic of Kazakhstan, as of 27 April the number of medical personnel infected with coronavirus has equaled 820 people (30% of the total number of infected in Kazakhstan) [43].

It must be noted that spread of coronavirus infection COVID-19 and the restrictive measures taken by the state on purpose of stopping the process have led to certain critical consequences in different life spheres of the Kazakhstan society. Based on the data provided by the National Bank, the Ministry of the National Economy, and other state agencies, the following processes can be noted in Kazakhstan in the first quarter of 2020:

1. Decrease of the activity in the real sector of economy in accordance with decrease of the business activity index in January – March of the current

year from 50.1 to 41.5. In the construction sector, this index decreased from 55.2 to 43.5, in the industrial sector - from 51.8 to 46.5, in the service sector – from 48.8 to 38.7.

2. Decrease of the business climate index from 6.4 to -24.5, which is indicative of rapid deterioration of the business environment in March compared to the beginning of the year [44].
3. Reduction in the number of small and medium-sized businesses by 7 097 (from 1 325 615 in January to 1 318 518 in March, current year). What is more, this decrease concerned only individual entrepreneurs (by 0.8%).
4. Reduction in the number of employed people from 8 773 400 to 8 750 100. Thus, 23 300 people have lost their jobs by the beginning of April. The level of unemployment equaled 4.8% [45].
5. Decrease of the income level of people. In particular, as of 13 April, 24 600 employees of more than 2 thousand enterprises have been placed on leave in view of the quarantine without pay [46].

According to the forecast of the Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the expected downfall in all spheres of the country's economy connected with the epidemiology situation can lead to **reduction of the GDP in the current year by 0.9%**. Also, decrease of export and import by 16.3 billion US dollars and 7.5 billion US dollars, correspondingly [47], is expected. The critical situation in the global economy, including lack of stability of petroleum prices can also influence that.

Alongside with that, in the state of emergency we see decrease of the crime rate in the country. According to the Legal Statistics and Special Accounting Committee, the General Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Kazakhstan, in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of there were 54990 of criminal offence cases, which is, 23.9% less than in the same period of the previous year [48].

On the other hand, the cases of fraud rapidly increased in January-March of the current year (from 3084 to 9516), which can be associated with disorientation of the certain part of the population concerning getting various services during the quarantine. Also, the number of rape abuses increased (from 123 to 232), as well domestic crimes (from 51 to 185), which could be connected with the psychological discomfort in people in conditions of forced self-isolation.

The spread of coronavirus infection COVID-19 became a serious challenge for Kazakhstan. Even more so because the society and the state have

encountered such a phenomenon for the first time, while having no experience of adequate response in conditions of mass epidemics. However, having marshalled the necessary resources, the country's leaders have taken a number of measures in different directions, which all together were aimed at changing the situation for better.



### 3. COUNTERACTION TO CORONAVIRUS COVID-19

The following main stages of counteracting coronavirus infection COVID-19 in Kazakhstan can be distinguished, each of which is characterized by different dynamics of pandemic manifestation and corresponding response thereto.

**The first stage** of measures against spread of coronavirus infection began on 26 January 2020. The President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev instructed the Government to take decisive organizational measures to prevent spread of coronavirus in Kazakhstan.

For this purpose, on the same day, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan Askar Mamin held a meeting dedicated to prevention of coronavirus spread and preventive measures to be taken in Kazakhstan. Following the results of the meeting, the Head of the Government instructed to take the following complex of preventive measures:

1. Increase the sanitary and epidemiological control in border crossing points, including that in air, automobile, and railway transport facilities.
2. Provide medical observation of all people arriving from the PRC at the places of their residence.
3. Provide the readiness of medical institutions for rendering the necessary assistance to the people in the event of aggravation of the epidemiological situation.
4. Limit business trips to China and recommend not making trips for private affairs and for touristic purposes.
5. Suspend the regime of 72-hour visa-free stay in the Republic of Kazakhstan for transit passengers from the PRC.
6. Temporary suspend the activity of the Kazakhstan part of the International Centre of Boundary Cooperation "KHORGOS".
7. Activate work with the Kazakhstan citizens in the PRC to render consular and other assistance to them.
8. For the state agencies to organize the necessary interaction with the corresponding state structures of the PRC and other countries concerned to provide coordination of actions on prevention of the spread of coronavirus infection.
9. If necessary, provide urgent evacuation of the Kazakhstan students and other citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan staying in Wuhan, PRC.

10. Establish a cross-agency commission under a chairmanship of the Deputy Prime Minister B. Saparbayev that is assigned to prepare a plan of actions to prevent spread of coronavirus in Kazakhstan.

On 27 January, according to the instruction of the Head of the State, a cross-agency commission for coordination of measures on prevention of incidence and spread of coronavirus infection was established under the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan headed by the Deputy Prime Minister Berdibek Saparbayev, including all the state agencies concerned and local administrations (akimats) of oblasts and cities of Nur-Sultan, Almaty, and Shymkent. In particular, the commission was instructed to prepare a plan of actions for prevention of spread of coronavirus in the country.

Also, additional resuscitation isolation wards have been provided in infection hospitals in two cities – Nur-Sultan and Almaty. Starting from 27 January all the 13 regular bus routes with the People’s Republic of China (PRC) have been suspended.

On 31 January **the second stage** of increase of the sanitary and epidemiological control began: extra 150 sanitary and epidemiological service specialists were sent to the sanitary quarantine entry points on all borders; laboratory diagnostics of the new infection was arranged; a clinical treatment protocol and epidemic prevention measures algorithms were approved.

Starting from 1 February, passenger trains going between the PRC and the Republic of Kazakhstan were suspended. Besides, the citizens of Kazakhstan were evacuated from Wuhan during the first days of February.

Starting from 3 February, all the regular air flights (34 flights a week) between Kazakhstan and China were suspended. Besides, issuance of visas to all foreign citizens in China was suspended.

171 citizens of Kazakhstan have been admitted to the multi-field clinical hospital of Almaty with observance of all the infection control requirements.

Starting from 20 February, 2020, the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan launched **the third stage** of increase of control to prevent import and spread of the infection. During this period, a method of ranking countries in three categories depending on the coronavirus spread risk degree was developed and introduced. Depending on the risk level, people arriving from coronavirus troubled countries, were placed under corresponding medical examination.

*Table 3 Measures to be taken to people returning to Kazakhstan from other countries*

#	Category	Country	Measures
1	1 a)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• China</li> <li>• Iran</li> <li>• Republic of Korea</li> </ul>	Quarantine with isolation in a hospital for 14 days after crossing the border of the Republic of Kazakhstan
2	1 b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Italy</li> </ul>	Home quarantine at the place of residence (stay) for 14 days after crossing the border of the Republic of Kazakhstan
3	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Germany</li> <li>• Spain</li> </ul>	Medical supervision at the place of residence (stay) by phone calls for 14 days after crossing the border of the Republic of Kazakhstan.
4	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Japan</li> <li>• Thailand</li> <li>• UAE</li> <li>• France</li> <li>• Sweden</li> <li>• Malaysia</li> <li>• USA</li> <li>• Singapore</li> <li>• Kuwait</li> <li>• Bahrain</li> <li>• Iraq</li> <li>• Great Britain</li> <li>• Switzerland</li> <li>• Hong Kong (PRC)</li> </ul>	

In general, during these three stages a large amount of various measures was taken in the following basic directions:

**1. In the line of Medical supplies:**

- foundation of a 24-hour Call-centre 1406, +7 717 276 80 43 under RoK Ministry of healthcare;
- strengthening of epidemiological surveillance at the border checkpoints;
- introduction of a procedure of non-contact thermometry, obligatory for all, at the airports, railway stations and motor car passages;
- preparation of in-patient facilities for infectious cases with 6 000 beds for patients or people, who contacted the patients, and possibility of additional expansion to 4700 more beds;
- generation of required stock of personal protective equipment, means of prevention and treatment;
- establishing laboratory diagnostics of a new infection;

- approval of a clinical treatment protocol and procedures of epidemiological response;
- development and introduction of countries ranking technique by three categories depending on the risk degree of coronaviral infection incidence [49].

2. Within the framework of a work of Kazakhstan's diplomatic missions abroad:

- arranging crisis centres under the embassies and consulates of the republic in foreign countries so that Kazakhstan citizens, residing there, could address them;
- rendering assistance in evacuation of fellow citizens from foreign countries. Thus, as of the beginning of March, 480 Kazakhstanis were evacuated from China [50].

3. Limitation of Kazakhstan's communication with certain countries. Apart from aforementioned measures towards China, the number of flights with Azerbaijan, South Korea and Japan was also reduced, flight connection with Iran was suspended and the citizens of this country were forbidden from entering Kazakhstan.

Toward the end of the stage under review RoK president Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, in order to prevent entry and transmission of coronavirus in the country, directed the government and other state authorities to:

- enforce a temporary ban for execution of public cultural and sports events, conferences, and exhibitions. Among other things public events to celebrate Nauryz and military parade in honour of 75 years of Victory in the Great Patriotic War were cancelled;
- enforce sanitary schedule in all places of mass gathering, including shopping malls, markets, railway stations, airports, etc.;
- switch higher education institutions to distance learning;
- move up a start of spring break in schools to March 16 anni currentis [51].

Then and there, by virtue of measures taken, for almost one and a half month Kazakhstan managed to hold back an entry of coronavirus infection COVID-19 to its territory. Measures within epidemiological surveillance played a valuable role in it. As of March 12 anni currentis, among 96 persons, admitted prior to that with fever and ARVI, 52 were discharged. Within monitoring by all categories, among 4821 persons 958 citizens were released from monitoring [52]. The rest continued to be supervised by health professionals under in-patient conditions or remotely.

**The fourth stage** covers period from March 13, when infecting with COVID-19 by a group of Kazakhstanis was noted for the first time, to April 9 anni currentis. Its major feature was development of the country under the conditions of declared state of emergency.

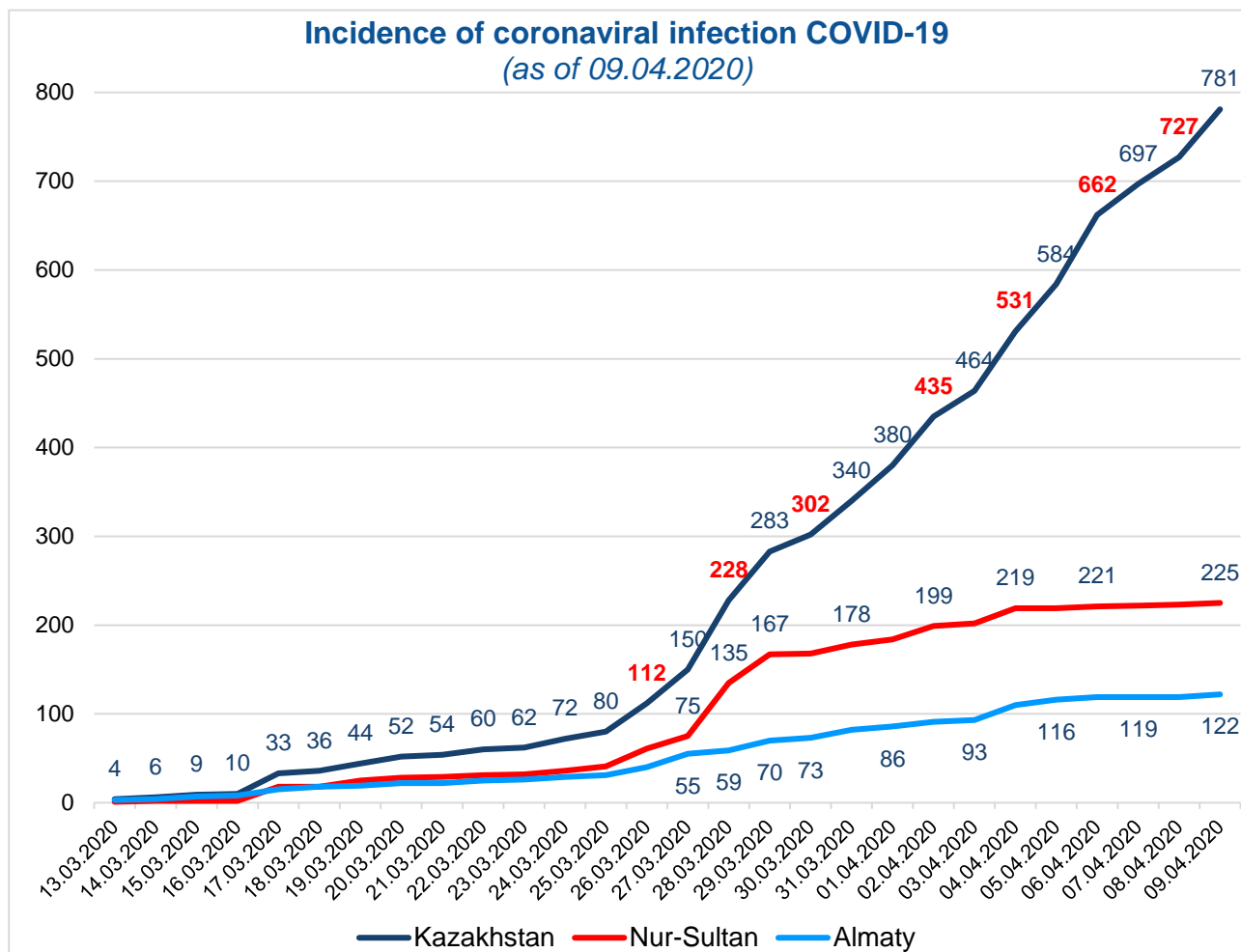
First of all, State Committee on Maintaining State of Emergency under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan was established by the Decree of the Head of State dated March 15 anni currentis. Its main tasks and functions are determined by RoK Law "On emergency situations" dated February 8, 2003. The State Committee included senior representatives of central government authorities and Houses of Parliament. The Prime Minister, Askar Mamin, was appointed as a Chairman of this authority.

Another important peculiarity of the stage under review was the urgency of actions not only for preventing transmission of coronaviral infection but for supporting national economy, normalizing social sector and maintaining public security. In accordance, first and foremost, with the instructions of the Head of State from his Televised address, speech at the meeting of the State Emergency Committee and Declaration, disclosed on March 16, 23 and 31 respectively, the following key measures were executed during the period under review:

**1.** Introduction of quarantine regimen in regions, cities of republican subordination and capital of the republic. Herewith this process was fulfilled by stages. The first ones were Almaty and Nur-Sultan cities, where this regimen was established on March 19. Then, from March 30 to April 7 quarantine was introduced in Atyrau, Karagandy, Aktau, Ust-Kamenogorsk, Semey, Shymkent, Aktobe, Taraz, as well as, fully or partially, within all regions of the country. Considering reinforcement of quarantine in two metropolitan cities from March 28, the regimen under review implies:

- shutting down entry to and departure from this city for all types of vehicles (apart from vehicles with certain cargoes), which is ensured by specially arranged checkpoints, as well as suspension of railway and air passenger service with this city;
- suspending operation of all organizations and enterprises in the ordinary course, apart from those, essential to life sustenance of the city, including health care institutions, utility service providers, proceri shops, pharmacies, etc.;
- restriction for citizens to leave their houses, except for purchasing grocery and medicines, as well as going to work if the required certificates are available;

- restriction for movement of citizens aged 65 or older outside, by ensuring delivery of food and medicines to them;
- ban for movement of minor children without being accompanied by adults;
- closing places of mass gathering (parks, squares, embankments, playgrounds, etc.);
- prohibition on gathering outdoors and in other public places by groups of more than three people (except for family members);
- stepwise limitation of the work of public transport;
- disinfection of porches and adjacent territories;
- switch of all educational institutions to distance learning;
- switch of eating establishments to delivery format. It should be noted that reinforcement of quarantine measures in Nur-Sultan and Almaty cities had a highly effective impact on containment of a coronaviral infection, which allowed to decrease the burden on health care facilities before engaging additional capacities



**Diagram 3. Incidence of coronaviral infection COVID-19 in Nur-Sultan and Almaty cities (as of 09.04.2020)**

Source: data from website <https://www.coronavirus2020.kz/>

## **2. Social protection measures:**

- making monthly payments in the amount of 1 minimum wage (42500 tenge) to the citizens that lost their income due to imposition of the state of emergency, as well as to those self-employed or working off-the-record;
- prohibition on charging penalties and fines and suspending payment of the amounts of principal debt and remuneration for all loans of citizens, suffering during the state of emergency;
- provision of free grocery and household sets for multi-child families, disabled persons of all categories and legally registered unemployed;
- indexation of pensions and government allowances, including target social assistance, by 10% in per year terms;
- prolongation of the right of uninsured citizens to receive medical care in the system of mandatory social medical insurance from April 1 to July 1 anni currentis;
- payment of bonus in the amount of one position salary to the doctors, police officers and other specialists, engaged in activities for the fight against coronavirus;
- establishing monthly flat-rate allowance to the salary to the healthcare professionals, engaged in epidemiological response, from 5 (212 500) to 20 (850 000) minimal wages, to be paid within three months.

## **3. Measures to support small and medium businesses:**

- suspending payment of the amounts of principal debt and remuneration by all credits of SMB, suffered under the conditions of emergency state;
- provision of SMBs with delay for three months on payment of all types of taxes and other mandatory payments without charging fines and penalty;
- for the SMBs in the worst-hit economy sectors (food services, transport services, IT-sector, hotel business, tourism, etc.), cancellation for 6 months (from April 1 to October 1 anni currentis) of accrual and payment of taxes and other payments from the payroll fund;
- suspension by executive bodies of all levels and subjects of quasi-public sector of accrual of rental charges for the SMBs on property units in their possession for three months;
- increase in control of RoK Ministry of finance over fulfilment by the state authorities of contractual obligations within implementation of public procurement and making of all payments for the services and works, actually executed, within 5 days;

- government and akimats are to ensure guaranteed purchase of products from domestic agricultural and processing companies through State food corporation at least for 6 months in advance.
- 4. Measures on employment of populations:**
- defining measures for preservation of jobs and consistent remuneration of labour within individual bailout plans of work with large enterprises, generated by the government;
  - allocating at least 300 billion tenge for implementation of a program “Employment Road Map” with possible increase of this amount to 1 trillion tenge;
  - mobilization and involvement of the young jobless in flood-control, spring field, construction and other works with relevant payment within “Employment Road Map”;
  - the government and akimats are to implement certain projects within “Employment Road Map” in Akmolinskaya, Almatinskaya and Turkestanaskaya regions;
  - provision of citizens, ready to go for a work to the aforementioned regions within “Employment Road Map”, with “relocation allowances” in the amount of 2 minimum wages (85 000 tenge) on arrival at work location [53].
- 5. Ensuring awareness of population on situation on extension of pandemic:**
- launching from March 20 anni currentis under the aegis of the International news agency “Kazinform” the website “Coronavirus2020.kz” that contains up-to-date information on the state of emergency, including rules of conduct during the quarantine, state measures on the fight against coronavirus, retraction of false information distributed, etc.;
  - starting from March 23, conducting daily briefings of the Minister of information and public development;
  - ensuring communication of information on contingency measures of central and local state authorities to the population in plain language;
  - extending access for the citizens to the mobile communication and internet, especially to learning resources, social networks and messengers, provision of relevant services independent of debt incurrence and of free access to all Kazakhstani internet-resources.
- 6. On international relations:**
- switching the work of RoK Ministry of external affairs to twenty-four hour mode;



- continuing activity on return (evacuation) of Kazakhstani from other countries. Only in the period from March 1 to 23 “Air Astana” air company transported more than 37 500 Kazakhstanis from abroad. Besides, the authorities arranged 14 charter flights from various countries from March 18 to 21, as a result of which another 2818 Kazakhstani tourists were transported [54];
- attraction of humanitarian aid from abroad. In the period under review Kazakhstan received such an aid from the USA (personal protective equipment), China (tests for determination of coronaviral infection, personal protective equipment, medical equipment, medicines), South Korea (tests) and UAE (personal protective equipment, antiseptics) [55]. Besides, 10 healthcare professional arrived from P.R. China in Nur-Sultan on April 9, which shared their experience and skills in treatment of coronaviral infection with Kazakhstani colleagues for the subsequent two weeks.

Kassym-Jomart Tokayev: “This crisis will shake up the state apparatus and domestic business. Its lessons should be taken into consideration. That being said, apart from prompt measures, we have development and acceptance of systemic approaches taking into account a life after the normalization of situation ahead of us. As a matter of fact, we stand on the verge of a brand new global world, in which Kazakhstan is to find its rightful place. I would like to emphasize that, in spite of all the difficulty of unfolding situation, it is far from catastrophic. We have all the possibilities, reserves. The main thing is that we started to prepare ourselves to the worst-case scenario in time and understand what needs to be done” (from the Speech at the meeting of the State Emergency Committee, 23.03.2020)

It should be noted that as of April 9 anni currentis 781 coronaviral infection COVID-19 cases were registered in Kazakhstan. The largest number accounted for Nur-Sultan (225) and Almaty (122) cities [56].

**The fifth stage** falls within April 10-26 anni currentis. It was started with the new speech of RoK President at the meeting of State Emergency Commission, on which the decision on prolongation of the current state was announced, taking into consideration the ongoing critical situation in the country. The Head of the

State signed relevant Decree on April 14, having extended the state of emergency till May 1 anni currentis.

At the same time Kassym-Jomart Tokayev announced a new set of anti-crisis instructions, based, mainly, on the deficiencies and omissions in the activity of various state authorities, admitted within the second stage of resistance to the pandemic.

Among them:

**1.** Safety provision of health care professionals, police officers, military officers, and volunteers, taking part in the fight against the coronavirus, including provision of personal protective equipment.

**2.** Expanding the scale of testing to get a full picture of consequences of coronavirus shedding in the country.

**3.** Measures on social protection of the population:

- ensuring timely receipt by the health care professionals of additional payments, assigned to them, and strict control and transparency in this process;
- developing a stepwise procedure for receiving financial aid from the government for the citizens, that lost their income, and its distribution through all mass media and social networks;
- solving the problem of remote receipt of payment cards by the citizens within three days;
- restraint of unjustified receipt of this state support by the persons with sufficient level of income;
- accelerating measures on decrease of utility fees with the emphasis on vulnerable social groups.

**4.** Preparing the plan of bringing the IT-area to a whole new level and revision of state program "Digital Kazakhstan" in favour of effective digitalization of the country.

**5.** Measures on employment of population:

- ensuring balance between temporary employment of people under crisis conditions and provision them with possibility of regular employment after the completion of the program within implementation of "Employment Road Map" program;
- resolution of safety issues in implementation of works within "Employment Road Map", including execution of the required sanitary and epidemiological treatment at the places of residence and labour activity of the program members.

## 6. Measures on stabilization of national economy:

- optimization of price regulating mechanisms across the whole price formation chain;
- considering possibility of rendering isolated state support to large enterprises under the conditions of reduction of external demand for their products;
- preparation of a range of proposals to maintain the stability of financial system of the country;
- provision of farmers with floating capital for the purchase of pesticides, fertilizers, high-quality seeds, and POL;
- ensuring trouble-free passage of the cars of agricultural food commodities suppliers to the cities under quarantine;
- approving mechanism, amount and sources of financing of activity on introduction of forward procurement system;
- permission for the activity of small and medium-sized enterprises provided that they maintain strict hygiene and infection control and social distancing at the work places [57].

**The sixth stage** started on April 27 and lasted to May 11, 2020. On April 27, the Head of the State made a new statement and announced prolongation of the state of emergency till May 11 anni currentis. It is evident that such decision was perfectly reasonable, taking into consideration a marked increase in the level of coronavirus infection incidence in the country. Only during April 27 total amount of those infected with coronavirus in Kazakhstan increased from 2 780 (the first half of the day) to 2 860 (the second half of the day) people [58].

Kassym-Jomart Tokayev: "We act depending on the actual situation at the local level. Our main task is protecting life and health of the population. We also take measures on preservation of population's income, assurance of social and economic stability. I would like to assure you once again – in these severe conditions no one is going to face their problems alone, the government will not give up on anyone... The peak of disease incidence in Kazakhstan has not been passed for good. There is still a danger of situation going out of control... Without further observation of safety precautions other sites of infections may appear. In case of one-time relief of quarantine measure we will face new wave of incidence... Our common task is to prevent negative scenario in Kazakhstan. For me nothing is more important than the life of each fellow citizen" (from the Speech of the Head of State, 27.04.2020)

At the same time, time, taking into consideration the public sentiment and situation in the economy, the country's leadership made decision on certain alleviation of restrictive measures in the regions under quarantine conditions.

*First*, permission for activity of industrial facilities, companies of construction and road-construction areas, large building material stores, organizations in the areas of transport, warehousing, service for agriculture, maintenance of motor transport and some types of service sector, banks and organizations of financial sector provided compliance with strict sanitary-epidemiological requirements.

*Second*, resumption of the work of Public Service Centre (PSC) in Nur-Sultan, West Kazakhstan, Karagandinskaya and Mangystauskaya regions with preliminary reservation of queue by phone (phone number 1414) or via special service at the "Electronic government" portal (egov.kz).

*Third*, provision of citizens with access to yards and garden plots while meeting the requirements, set by regional headquarters on prevention of coronaviral infection transmission.

*Fourth*, resuming flight connection between Nur-Sultan and Almaty from May 1 anni currentis with initial frequency of flights of 4 flights per day, reinforced norms of sanitary requirements, less passengers and special distanced seating in the cabin [59].

*Fifth*, permission for entry to the cities under quarantine for certain categories of residents of relevant regions. Namely, in Almaty entry and departure of employees of some organizations, which live in Almaty region, but work in the city, is allowed providing registration in the special database and provision of work references and certificates of negative coronavirus tests.

The Head of the State announced the following additional measures in favour of resistance against the pandemic and stabilization of situation in the country as well:

**1.** The government and the National Bank are to develop a Comprehensive plan for recovering an economic growth, including support of the most affected sectors.

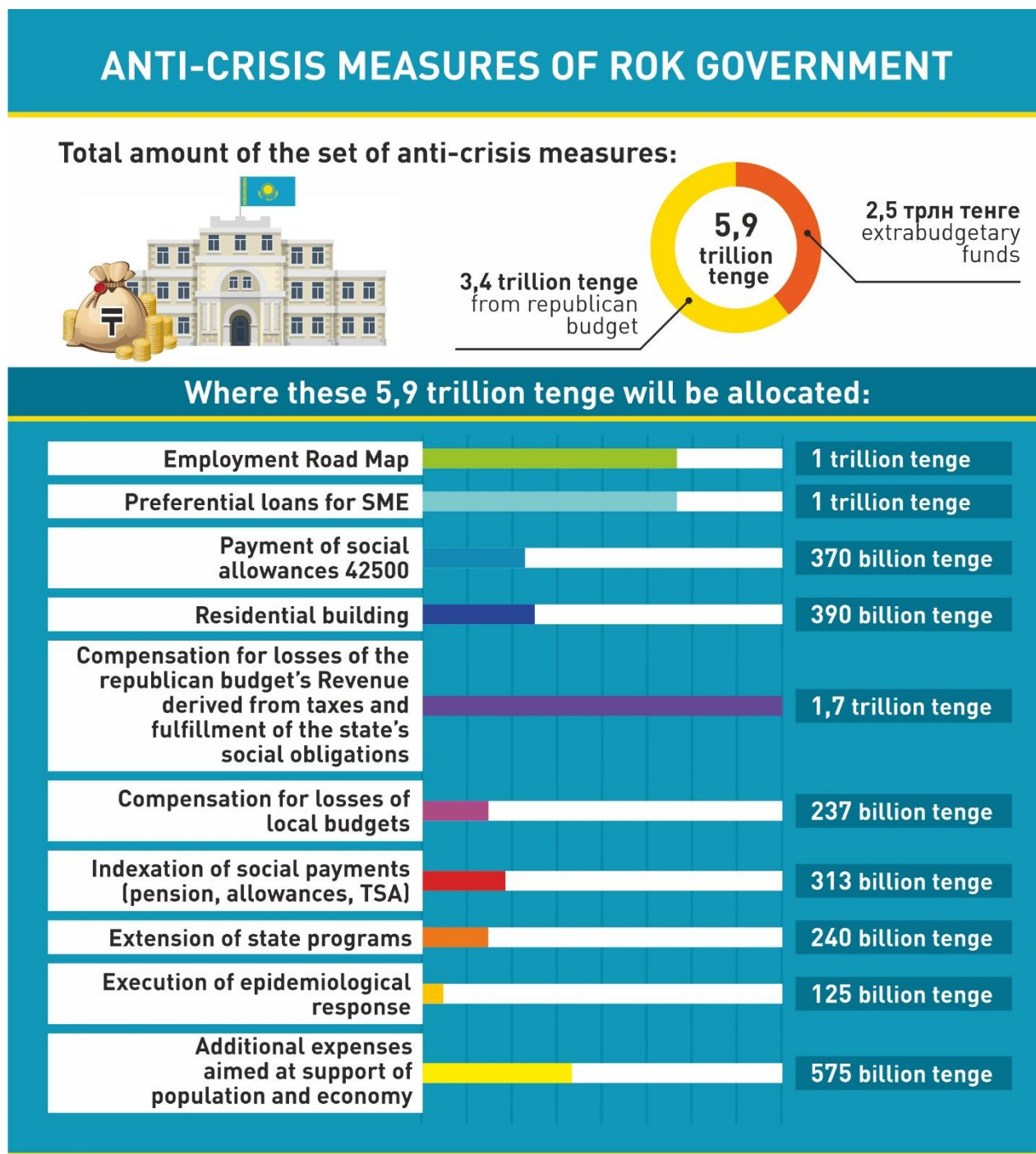
**2.** On medical supplies:

- Increasing the number of tests for coronavirus to at least 20 000–25 000 investigations per day;
- bringing production of domestic test systems to commercial scale;
- using available capacities to produce immunobiological medications;
- introducing practical proposals on improvement of public health protection system to the draft of new Code on People's Health and Healthcare System.

### 3. Measures on social protection of the population:

- repeated payment of support in the amount of 42500 tenge to the citizens that lost their incomes;
- provision with grocery baskets of more than 1,1 million of Kazakhstanis;
- provision of more than 1,6 million of citizens with support on payment for utility services;
- rendering financial assistance to the veterans of war and home front [60].

The government will allocate 5,9 trillion tenge for implementation of anti-crisis measures.



**Figure 1. Anti-crisis measures of RoK government**

In his speech to the Senate members of RoK Parliament on May 4 Kassym-Jomart Tokayev emphasized the following: “If situation does not worsen, the state of emergency will be cancelled on May 11. However, the measures, related to the quarantine regimen, shall be preserved. This is highly important for the population safety. I hope that our citizens will gradually resume a normal existence

We have a long-term strategic development path” [61].

On **May 11, 2020** during the meeting of the State Emergency Committee the RoK President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev **declared termination of the state of emergency**, at the same time having emphasized the preservation of virus infection hazard. In consequence of this the Head of the State noted that **quarantine restrictions will be relieved gradually**, with the improvement of situation in each region.

Termination of the state of emergency from May 11, 2020 **started the seventh stage** of measures, aimed at the fight against the coronavirus infection and restoration of economic activity. Thus, state committee on maintaining state of emergency was reorganized into State Committee on Recovering of Economic Growth.

Besides, within the framework of completion of state of emergency and gradual relief of restrictive measures the Head of the State initiated a range of new social and economic measures to support the national economy and wellbeing of population in the following directions:

1. **Increasing self-sustainability of Kazakhstan’s economy:** revision of industrialization approaches, increasing current local content from 40 to 60–70% for infrastructure programs, reforms in energy industry with emphasis on “green energy”, supporting agricultural workers.

2. **Effective application of funds within the program “Employment Road Map”** for lending to small businesses, preservation of population employment.

3. **Construction of affordable housing:** launching a mortgage project “5-10-20”, foundation of an institution of development and support – “Otbasy bank”, which will be intended for implementation of accounting, registration, and distribution of housing.

4. **Consideration and addressing the issue of introducing progressive scale for individual income tax** with regards to the salaries and other types of income. Revision of the approaches to the calculation of remuneration rate on loans depending on the type of borrower and type of product.

5. **Supporting national business:** measures on alleviation of prudential standards and reducing drain in liquidity, development of an additional set of temporary measures that expand banks' opportunities to give credits to economy, special measures for small business within "Business Road Map" program, extending the list of sectors for delays in loan payments.

6. **Switch to direct work with each capital owner:** development of individual support measures for each investor based on priority ranking and potential effect on the economy.

7. **Recognizing the imposition of the state of emergency as a force-majeure circumstance at the regulatory level for the economy sectors** that suffered the most from the imposition of the state of emergency, suspend bankruptcy procedures for such areas.

8. **Development of special plans on disposal of non-performing assets,** at the same time having enhanced the control and assessment of banks' committed personnel.

Apart from these directions the Head of State highlighted **the need of radical changes in social sector: medicine, education, social protection,** as well as mentioned focus on continuation of the reforms of state apparatus and development institutions. Namely, the changes made should be focused on increase of quality of health protection systems, readiness to quick response to emergency situations, introduction of modern remote technologies in education and medicine, digitalization of the whole process of receiving public services and support measures.

Then and there, taking into consideration gradual reduction of restrictive measures, a large-scale plan on restoration of national economy and continuation of structural reforms in social sector was initiated within new stage.

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Apart from timeliness and integrity of government's actions, aimed at resistance to coronaviral infection COVID-19 and support of economy, measures on implementation of public awareness efforts and feedback with population should be particularly pointed out. Thus, from the beginning of penetration of coronavirus infection the practice of conducting briefings on a daily basis on clarification of situation with viral shedding and measures, aimed at stabilization, was applied.

Starting from March 20, 2020 the website coronavirus2020.kz was launched, where official information on situation with coronavirus in Kazakhstan, principles of prophylaxis and measures on fight against viral shedding is posted, as well as refutations of false information, distributed online, are given. Also, twenty-four hour Call-centre started its work under RoK Ministry of health.

Particular attention should be given to **speeches and addresses of the Head of State to the population**. From the beginning of registration of the first cases of coronaviral infection COVID-19 within Kazakhstan and until the end of the state of emergency in the country RoK President made several addresses, each of which contained set of measures, aimed both at safety of the citizens and support of their wellbeing.

*Table 4. Addresses and speeches of the Head of State in the period from March 16 to May 11, 2020*

<b>№</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>Summary</b>
1	16.03.2020	Televised address	On imposition of the state of emergency on the entire territory of the Republic of Kazakhstan for the period from March 16 to April 15
2	23.03.2020	Speech at the meeting of State Committee on State of Emergency	On additional measures for preserving stable situation in the country (maintenance of public security, supporting wellbeing of citizens and national economy, switch to a new model of making managerial decisions).
3	31.03.2020	Televised address	Announcement of new set of social and economic measures.
4	10.04.2020	Speech at the meeting of State Committee on State of Emergency	Announcement on application of additional social and economic measures, prolongation of quarantine regimen in the capital, Almaty, Shymkent and in relevant regions until the end of April.
5	27.04.2020	Text address	On prolongation of state of emergency till May 11, switch to partial alleviation of quarantine regimen.
6	11.05.2020	Speech at the meeting of State Committee on State of Emergency	On termination of the state of emergency, preservation of hazard and gradual relief of quarantine restrictions, initiating new set of social and economic measures.



Such format of President's personal statements became one of the most effective instruments of interaction with population and had a positive impact on preservation of peaceful situation in the country.

#### 4. EVALUATION BY EXTERNAL REVIEWERS REGARDING TAKEN MEASURES ON FIGHT AGAINST THE CORONAVIRAL INFECTION COVID-19 IN KAZAKHSTAN

Systematic and overarching strategy of the government in the fight against the spread of coronaviral infection COVID-19 from the very beginning was in focus of both Kazakhstani experts and international organizations, foreign specialists.

Measures on control of coronaviral infection spread were carefully monitored by regional representatives of the World Health Organization in the first instance. Thus, in the opinion of WHO representative in the Russian Federation, Melita Vujnovic, quarantine measures, taken in time and fully complying with the relevant recommendations of their organization, and high level of self-isolation of the citizens **allowed Kazakhstan to achieve slowdown in the infection incidence in a speedy fashion** [62]. WHO representative in Kazakhstan, Caroline Clarinval, was in full solidarity with her as well. The expert emphasized that Kazakhstan learns the lessons of other countries and due to imposition of restrictions situation in the country is peaceful [63].

In addition to evaluation by WHO specialists, General Secretary of European Centre for Geopolitical Analysis Mateusz Piskorski (Poland) noted, in favour of Kazakhstan, lack of massive tourist flows, availability of high-quality, ever since Soviet times, health system and high level of citizens' disciplined approach [64].

Similar appraisals were given by Russian experts as well. In the opinion of Director General of Institute for Regional Problems, Dmitry Zhuravlyev, well-coordinated mechanism of actions, **systemic approach of the government and established healthcare system enabled Kazakhstan to achieve good results** in prevention of coronavirus shedding [65]. Expert of Russian Council on International Affairs, Nikita Mendkovich, in turn, emphasized that the Republic of Kazakhstan preserved low level of COVID-19 incidence due to the set of administrative and medical actions taken [66].

Diplomatic correspondent, political analyst from the Ukraine, Andrey Buzarov, also pointed out the effectiveness of integrity and consistency of actions on the part of Kazakhstan's authorities in the fight against the coronavirus infection. The expert highlighted that the **strategy to counter the**

**pandemic in Kazakhstan is characterized by intelligent ratio of sanitary and economic measures**, which is manifested in three important directions: timeliness, social profile of measures and far-sightedness. Thus, the expert notes that, despite the continuing fight against the coronavirus infection, authorities of Kazakhstan **think through further instruments of reformation to improve economic situation and healthcare system well in advance**. At the same time, compared to the range of other countries, a high level of being understanding of all relevant actions of the government is observed in the society in Kazakhstan [67].

Apart from measures, aimed at fight against the spread of coronaviral infection COVID-19, international experts paid special attention to anti-crisis instruments to support economy and wellbeing of the population, taken in Kazakhstan.

The President of the Ukraine Chamber of commerce and industry, Gennady Chizikov, thinks that measures, taken by the leadership of Kazakhstan, are able to stop the consequences of pandemic not only to the health of people but for the “health” of economy as well. The expert specifically took a favourable view of measures, aimed at support of the financial sector and distribution of additional funds for social benefits and increase of salaries for the specialists, deployed for the fight against the coronavirus infection. To this end relevant experience seems to be useful for this country [68].

In his turn the senior research fellow of the department of financial law of the Institute of Legislation and Comparative Law under the Government of the Russian Federation, Oganés Akopyan, turned attention to the experience of RoK National Bank under the conditions of a slowdown in global economy against the background of volatility in oil prices and fight against COVID-19. The expert thinks that the measures, taken by Kazakhstani regulatory institution, allowed to keep the exchange rate of the national currency from severe weakening, and tenge lost even less than a rouble in percentage terms thanks to which devaluation of the national currency in Kazakhstan did not exceed critical values. Besides, Akopyan emphasizes that the National Bank of Kazakhstan did not allow limitations in provision of credits to the banks in tenge and provided liquidity to the credit institutions at key interest, as a result both large and especially small and medium businesses were provided with survival and development conditions even in new severe constraints [69].

Actions on resistance to COVID-19 pandemic in Kazakhstan were noted by Asian Development Bank (ADB) as well. Namely, during the meeting with the minister of national economy, Ruslan Dalenov, the president of ADB, Masatsugu Asakawa, highly praised measures, taken by the government in the fight against the pandemic, including emergency response and clearly-defined set of emergency measures, imposed by local authorities [70].

Thus, summing up the comments regarding the measures to fight the coronaviral infection COVID-19 in Kazakhstan, it may be highlighted that external reviewers highly praised in the first instance the integrity and consistency of actions of Kazakhstani authorities, aimed both at containment of virus and maintenance of population's wellbeing and priming of economy.

## 5. CURRENT CONSEQUENCES AND POSSIBILITIES FOR THE FUTURE

It is obvious that spread of coronavirus infection COVID-19 and counteraction to this process revealed strengths and weaknesses in almost all life spheres of Kazakhstani society and state. Nevertheless, in the face of growth in the number of those, infected with coronavirus, and critical moments in the economy, the following positive consequences are observed.

1. For the benefit of development and timely implementation of anti-crisis measures the country's leadership has implemented **mobilization of all state and significant part of nonstate resources**. In turn, it required certain reinforcement of presidential vertical. In this regard, in particular, adoption by the RoK President on March 16 of a Decree "On measures to ensure social and economic stability" became prominent. According to this document the Head of the State as the highest official of the country extended his authorities in the part of change, when necessary, of regulating procedure in social and economic area in the issues of taxation, generation, adjustment and use of state budget, import and export of certain goods, public procurement, establishing threshold levels of tariffs and prices for grocery and other goods, etc. [71].

2. **A certain level of national economy stability is maintained**, among other things, thanks to rendering by the state of financial and other support to various industries and subjects, engaged in them. Thus, toward the end of April second-tier banks and other credit institutions granted delays in payments to 11 561 small and medium businesses for the amount of 138,8 billion tenge, as well as 246 loans to SMBs and individual entrepreneurs for the amount of 62,5 billion tenge were approved. Within the program "Ken dala" 2 405 farmers received preferential credits from Agrarian credit corporation in the amount of 70 billion tenge at 5% per annum [72].

3. **Social peace is ensured** at a sufficient level **as well**.

The main factor, affecting this, was increase in level of government social assistance to diverse communities. Thus, as of May 4 anni currentis social payments from the State Social Insurance Fund were assigned to 4 452 000 citizens due to loss of income in the period of state of emergency.

Within "Employment Road Map" program for YY2020–2021, realization of 1 265 projects with creation of 17 000 work places and employment 10 300 of

people was started. It is planned to employ 1,2 million people within this program in the rest of the year [73].

4. Active participation in the processes of resistance to coronavirus and rendering assistance to the fellow citizens in need is observed on the part of general public. First of all, it took the form of intense activity of the volunteers, which is particularly essential in view of declaring the year 2020 in Kazakhstan as the Year of the Volunteer. The main directions of volunteering activities under the state of emergency were implementation of awareness-raising activities with population, rendering assistance to health care workers in care of sick people, delivery of food products and medicines to the retired and disabled people, etc. Just in the second half of March in Almaty and Nur-Sultan cities the volunteers conducted about one thousand campaigns, including handouts of grocery baskets to about 8 000 families and of more than 200 000 medical face masks [74].

On March 20, upon the initiative of the First President of RoK – Yelbasy Nursultan Nazarbayev, a social fund “Birgemiz” was founded to render charitable assistance to vulnerable social groups under the conditions of pandemic. Local businessmen and philanthropists provide monetary assets to the fund as donations. As of May 4, 24,3 billion tenge were gathered in the fund’s accounts. Among them more than 18 billion tenge were allocated to render targeted aid in the form of payment of 50 000 tenge each to more than 360 000 people. Another 105 600 000 tenge were transferred to the accounts of 29 healthcare institutions of Nur-Sultan and Almaty for the payment to healthcare professionals, engaged in fight against coronavirus [75].

5. Despite the existing situation in the country, the process of political reformation, declared by Kassym-Jomart Tokayev since he took office as a President of RoK, goes on. So far, the Majilis of Parliament approved draft laws on the following initiatives of the Head of the State, which he declared on December 20, 2019 at the second meeting of the National Council of Public Trust:

- adoption of the law “On procedure for organizing and holding peaceful assemblies in the Republic of Kazakhstan”;
- introducing mandatory 30% quota for women and young people in the voting party lists;
- reducing the number of members of political parties, required for their state registration, from 40 000 to 20 000 people;
- establishing institute of parliamentary opposition;

- decriminalization of article 130 of RoK Criminal Code (“Slander”) and mitigation of punishment under article 174 of Criminal Code (“Fomenting of social, national, gender, racial, class or religious discord”) with replacement of custodial restraint with payment of penalty in the amount of 2 000 to 7 000 MCIs.

It should be noted that a range of **local experts give positive assessment to opportunities and prospects of Kazakhstan on resistance to coronaviral infection** and further development in post-pandemic period.

Kazakhstani political scientist Marat Shibutov among anti-crisis actions of the government specifically highlighted payment of allowances to the citizens due to loss of incomes, granting delays on bank credits, as well as possibility for executive authorities to reveal weak spots and employees, that do not comply with the certain requirements [76]. Another expert, economist Aidarkhan Kusainov, significant growth in state responsibility to the citizens ascribes to positive trend. He justifies imposition of the state of emergency and quarantine with the fact that the losses of society in result of these measures will be lower than its losses from expenses for treatment of sick people and other accompanying costs due to distribution of infection [77].

At the same time, critical appraisals of the actions of Kazakhstani authorities under the conditions of pandemic on the part of expert community are also observed. For example, former chairman of RoK National Bank Grigori Marchenko thinks that involuntary staying of 4 million residents out of employment for one month already will have negative impact on the country’s GDP. Besides, in his opinion, under quarantine conditions there are risks of growth in mortality rate due to alcohol abuse, domestic violence, etc., as well as non-delivery of qualified medical care to people with other diseases [78].

Recognising the reasonableness of certain critical assessments on the part of experts, it should be noted at the same time that for Kazakhstan anti-crisis actions under the conditions of pandemic are first-time experience. Consequently, some failures or other occur in the activity of state authorities, commercial entities, and civil institutions. However, the level of their occurrence is compensated to some extent by those measures that are implemented by the state and its authorities since the beginning of Y2020.

Herewith, deliberately assuming serious economic costs, fraught under the conditions of the state of emergency with the reduction of republican budget revenues and at the same time considerable expenses for the benefit of

stabilization of economy and social sector, the country's leadership contributes to preservation of citizens' health and life as a foundational resource of the country.

Regarding further development of Kazakhstan in the short run, there are also no single-valued predictions. Namely, according to the forecasts of the World Bank, a long-lasting quarantine of two leading cities – Nur-Sultan and Almaty, that represent more than a third of Kazakhstan's GDP, may “paralyse” economic activity of the country. In case of further spread of coronavirus across the regions and deterioration in external operating environment, republican GDP may be reduced during the current year by anywhere from 0,8% to 3%. This scenario may also significantly increase the poverty rate in the country [79].

From all appearances, further development of the country and especially of its economy will depend to a great extent on the level of further spread of coronaviral infection. Local epidemiologists expect the second wave of this process in Kazakhstan this autumn. Moreover, according to their forecasts, it coincides with flu epidemic. However, the Ministry of Healthcare forecasts increase of cases to 5400 as soon as late May [80].

Expectations of the second wave of pandemic are in line with similar forecasts of foreign specialists. For instance, the leader of expert group on pneumonia treatment in Shanghai (P.R. China), Zhan Wenghun, thinks that this process will take place this November. The reason for this is that COVID-19 is more adjusted to low temperatures and therefore there is a chance that it will spread faster in winter. Although, most likely, the next wave will not be so fast-moving anymore and will affect to the greatest possible extent mainly countries of Africa and South America with weak healthcare system [81].

According to estimates of Russian scientist, academician of RAS Sergey Nedospasov, the second wave of coronavirus epidemic is possible in case if respective vaccine does not appear. This being said it is impossible to determine exact timeframes of its occurrence due to the peculiarities of the coronavirus itself and healthcare system. At the same time, the expert is of opinion that, if the majority of Earth residents develop an immunity, the infection will be overcome [82].

It is not implausible that Kazakhstan has already passed the peak stage of pandemic and entered a phase of gradual reduction of the level of its distribution.



It is expected that it will be manifested mostly in the summer period under the influence of relevant natural and climatic factors. Herewith it is important that in January-April of this year Kazakhstan has already developed and applied relatively successfully various methods and measures to resist the spread of coronavirus infection COVID-19 and eliminate its consequences in various sectors. Therefore, it is expected that the society and state will be more prepared to possible onset of the second wave of pandemic than in the beginning of this year.

## CONCLUSIONS

Coronavirus pandemic became a great challenge to the whole world. Rapid spread of coronavirus infection COVID-19 presented many countries with the wide choice in the issues of security, politics, and economy. Not only the issues of population health, but also the problems of food safety, unemployment and poverty were thrown into sharp relief. Changes in global trade occurred, slowdown in global economy commenced. Some countries started to revise their own formats of political and diplomatic relations with other countries.

Majority of countries experiences these threats. Kazakhstan was no exception. This was evidenced by unprecedented decision of RoK President K.K. Tokayev to impose a state of emergency from March 16 to May 11, 2020 throughout the entire territory of the country. However, effective strategy of fight against spread of coronavirus infection, selected by Kazakhstani authorities, allowed reducing the scale of negative consequences for the country.

So, what is the peculiarity of strategy, selected by Kazakhstan? The analysis conducted allowed to answer this question through determination of crucial components of successfulness of government measures on the fight with coronavirus:

1. **Early intervention.** First decisive actions on prevention of possible threats were taken by the government as soon as in January, i.e. long before WHO declared situation with COVID-19 as pandemic.

2. **Promptness and determination** in introduction of measures. Despite the absence of COVID-19 cases within Kazakhstan in February-early March, the authorities were acting in a prompt manner. Rapid deterioration in epidemiological situation in a number of countries of South-East Asia, Middle East and Europe was taken into consideration. As a result, on March 2 RoK President K. Tokayev cancelled a number of public events in the country, several days later temporary ban for conduction of mass cultural and sports events, conferences and exhibitions was imposed.

3. **Phasing of measures.** The government made decision to act by stages. Taking into consideration growth of hazards, and hereafter distribution of coronaviral infection across the country, quarantine measures were gradually reinforced and getting stringent. In turn after passing the peak values the authorities adopted stepwise relief of restrictive measures in order to reduce the risk of new incidence rate growth spurt.

4. **Integrity.** Another peculiarity of the selected strategy was **combination of various approaches.** On the one part, the government put the safety of population, reduction of risk of high share of lethal cases at the top of the list, having taken for this purpose the measures on social distancing, temporary limitation of community commitment of the citizens and switch to remote interaction. On the other part, Kazakhstani authorities started to introduce measures on support of population and stimulation of the national economy in a prompt fashion.

Existence of these peculiarities in implementation of measures on fight against coronavirus infection allowed Kazakhstan to avoid significant losses in all main directions.

Post-pandemic period carries certain risks as well. First and foremost, they may affect the nation's economy and living standards of the population. That is precisely why after the termination of state of emergency on May 11, 2020 the Head of the State K.K. Tokayev initiated a new large-scale set of social and economic reforms, designed to mitigate these hazards, and continue fight against COVID-19.

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