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**Removing regulatory and procedural barriers to trade in the
Economic Commission for Europe region, country studies:
Armenia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan****Assessing regulatory and procedural barriers to trade in the
context of integration into value chains: study of Kazakhstan*****Submitted by the secretariat*****Summary*

In June 2023, the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) secretariat initiated a study identifying regulatory and procedural barriers to trade for exports of vegetable oil from Kazakhstan, aimed at fostering integration into regional and global value chains.

The work is part of the series on national studies prepared under the ECE extra-budgetary project “Fostering Resilient, Diversified and Sustainable Value Chains in the Eurasian Region after COVID-19”. The study’s preliminary findings, including recommendations on enhancing trade facilitation reforms and quality infrastructure, were discussed during the ECE regional workshop that took place on in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan (5–6 March 2024). ***

The study assesses current and potential export markets and aspects of the frameworks for trade facilitation (including through business process analysis) and the quality infrastructure for trade. The findings aim to assist Kazakhstan in increasing cross-border trade by making trade-related procedures more efficient, with the ultimate objective of reaping benefits from new growth opportunities and delivering on the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. This document presents the summary of the study.

* This document has not been formally edited by ECE.

** The present document was submitted to the conference services for processing after the deadline due to the late approval by the Government.

*** See <https://unece.org/media/news/388901>

I. Introduction

1. Kazakhstan, one of the largest economies in Central Asia, aspires to become a key trading hub for goods and services, linking Eastern Asia and Western Europe. The country aims to leverage its unique location by adopting several trade-liberalization policies, by attracting foreign investment, by enhancing trade routes for road, rail and air transportation, and by increasing digital connectivity, thereby enhancing its status as a vital hub for the exchange of goods and services between regions..
2. Kazakhstan has been steadfast in its efforts to actively engage in regional and global integration processes. After acceding to the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2015, the country co-hosted the twelfth Ministerial Conference in 2022. Through participation in regional blocks such as the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), Kazakhstan has forged closer ties with neighbouring countries, facilitating trade and cooperation across a wide range of sectors. Moreover, the country's strategic location at the crossroads of Europe and Asia has enabled it to play a crucial role in regional integration initiatives, further enhancing connectivity and fostering economic collaboration with countries along the ancient Silk Road routes.
3. Whereas mineral products maintain a significant presence in Kazakhstan's export profile (representing 53.8 per cent of total exports in 2023),¹ the Government is actively pursuing diversification efforts. These initiatives aim to create a more sustainable and equitable economy by emphasizing higher value added industries, fostering growth in the knowledge economy and integrating Kazakh entrepreneurs into global and regional value chains.
4. The agro-industrial sector plays a crucial role in the country's diversification strategy. Through targeted government investments in rural entrepreneurship, infrastructure development and the implementation of modern technologies, efforts are being directed towards not only boosting production capacity but also improving product quality across a wide range of products.
5. In recent years, the economy has been shifting away from dependency on traditional commodity industries such as the cultivation of staple crops like wheat, barley and raw sunflower seeds. Instead, efforts were directed towards cultivating value added agriculture. In 2022, processed agricultural product turnover in Kazakhstan reached USD 6.8 billion, a 37.6 per cent increase from the previous year. Exports of processed agricultural products amounted to USD 2.5 billion, driven by increased shipments of products like wheat flour, sunflower oil and other items. Imports of processed agricultural products reached USD 4.3 billion, driven by heightened imports of various food items.²
6. While considerable progress has been made in broadening the export base and enhancing trade regulations for processed agricultural goods, especially in the context of the WTO accession, there remains untapped potential for more focused initiatives at the sectoral level to fully leverage the country's capabilities.
7. Kazakhstan's agri-food sector has significant potential for integration into global value chains, mainly through diversification of its export portfolio in terms of products and destination markets. Kazakhstan's vegetable oil industry presents substantial opportunities for export growth and economic development. Despite challenges like adverse weather and competition, Kazakhstan can benefit from investing in technical equipment and staff training to meet quality standards and enhance its trade potential. Recognizing the importance of efficient oil transportation logistics, it is critical to continue facilitating the seamless movement of goods and services. Diversifying export routes will not only strengthen the

¹ Kazakhstan Bureau of National Statistics, "Statistics of foreign, mutual trade and commodity markets - Foreign trade turnover of the Republic of Kazakhstan (January-December 2023)", 15 February 2024. Available at <https://stat.gov.kz/en/industries/economy/foreign-market/publications/123067/>.

² State Revenue Committee of the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Kazakhstan, "Customs statistics of foreign trade (January-December 2022)", 21 May 2024. Available at https://kgd.gov.kz/en/exp_trade_files.

economy's resilience but also enhance connectivity and integration within regional and global trade networks.

8. The ECE assists its member States³ with building capacities for better integration into the global economy and harnesses trade, innovation, and infrastructure financing for sustainable development in the region. It has a long-standing and close cooperation with Kazakhstan. The country was among the first member States to receive capacity-building support under the ECE studies on regulatory and procedural barriers to trade (RPBT) in 2014.⁴

9. Responding to further capacity-building requests of Kazakhstan, in June 2023, the ECE launched a new study focusing on the export potential of vegetable oil.⁵ This study is part of the series on national studies prepared under the ECE extra-budgetary project “Fostering Resilient, Diversified and Sustainable Value Chains in the Eurasian Region after COVID-19”. The study’s preliminary findings, including recommendations on enhancing trade facilitation reforms and quality infrastructure, were discussed during the ECE regional workshop on prospects for building resilient, diversified and sustainable value chains in Central Asia, which took place on 5–6 March 2024 in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.⁶

10. This document presents the summary of the ECE study. The study is divided into three sections. Section I summarises current and potential export markets for vegetable oil. Section II presents a business process analysis (BPA) when the selected product is destined for export to the European Union (EU). Section III describes constraints related to the quality infrastructure for exports of vegetable oil. The recommendations aim to assist Kazakhstan in facilitating cross-border trade by making trade-related procedures more efficient.

II. Key findings

A. The agro-industrial sector in Kazakhstan: current trends and opportunities for exports of vegetable oil

11. Given the extensive territory and abundant agricultural resources of Kazakhstan, the agro-industrial sector plays an important role in shaping the country's export profile and strengthening international and regional trade ties. By harnessing the potential for attracting investment, diversifying exports and integrating into global value chains, the sector also offers the potential for fostering long-term sustainable development and improving living standards in the country.

12. In recent years, Kazakhstan has faced numerous challenges in the export of industrial and agricultural products, which have impacted trade flows and posed obstacles to efforts to provide higher value-added and upgrading along regional and global value chains. One set of challenges arose from the COVID-19 pandemic, which has led to changes in global trade. Restrictions on the movement of goods, reduced demand, and disruptions in logistics chains have affected Kazakhstan's export operations. Another set of challenges arose from the changing geopolitical context in the region, including economic sanctions. Economic sanctions have led to a decrease in exports from the EU to the Russian Federation, while at the same time, enhancing Kazakhstan's exports to the Russian Federation. In 2023, the Kazakh economy began rebounding, with growth increasing from 3.2 per cent in 2022 to 4.9 per cent in 2023, influenced also by government spending.⁷

³ ECE specifically supports its 17 programme countries in Central Asia, the Caucasus, the Western Balkans and Eastern Europe, in close cooperation with United Nations country teams.

⁴ See https://unece.org/DAM/trade/Publications/ECE-TRADE_407E-Kazakhstan.pdf.

⁵ ECE held a roundtable discussion with the government entities in Kazakhstan to discuss priorities for the project on 7 June 2023. See <https://unece.org/media/news/379612>.

⁶ See <https://unece.org/media/news/388901>.

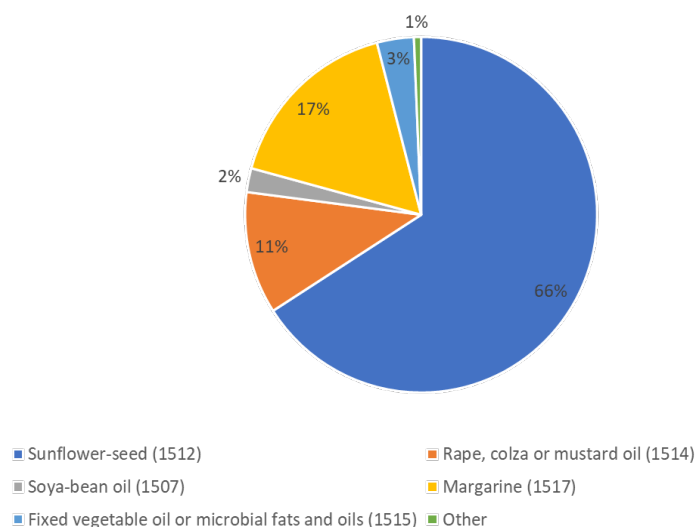
⁷ World Bank report “Shaping tomorrow: reforms for lasting prosperity”, see <https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/099759502082435630/idu133466db918b7c14af01903b1ab7f20dfb809>.

13. While positive trends emerge, attention has to be given to the socio-economic toll of the shocks affecting the Central Asian region. Sustained inflation and rising borrowing costs call for adaptive governance and international cooperation. Both can help navigate turbulent times and foster a more resilient and inclusive post-pandemic future.⁸

14. With regards to the agri-food sector, in 2021–2023, Kazakhstan witnessed a substantial surge in the export of processed agricultural commodities. The total export value showed a 67.8 per cent growth. Export growth has been driven by a range of products, including wheat or rye flour, vegetable oil, bran, meat, margarine, beverages, and tobacco.⁹

15. Kazakhstan's trade profile in vegetable oil exports reveals a substantial presence in the global market, with a focus on certain harmonized system (HS) codes, particularly 1507, 1512, 1514, and 1515.¹⁰ In 2022, the majority of exports from Kazakhstan (66 per cent of vegetable oil exports) were of sunflower, safflower, and cotton oil (HS code 1512), which amounted USD 349,6 million. The other two leading export categories are margarine (HS code 1517)¹¹ and rape oil (HS code 1514).

Exports from Kazakhstan at 4 digits in category HS category in year 2022



Source: ECE, based on Trade Map Statistics of the International Trade Center

16. In 2022, the primary markets for vegetable oil exports were China, with a value of USD 162.8 million (37.4 per cent of vegetable oil exports), followed by Uzbekistan at USD 135.6 million (31.2 per cent) and Tajikistan at USD 60.8 million (14.0 per cent). These three countries collectively constituted 82.6 per cent of the total vegetable oil exports in 2022.¹²

17. Over the recent years, the exports of vegetable oil from Kazakhstan to China increased by more than 60 per cent (from 99.6 USD million in 2019 to 162.8 USD million in 2022). Exports continued to grow in 2023. According to official statistics, the share of vegetable oil in the country's total exports to China was 1.2 per cent in 2022 and 1.4 per cent over seven months of 2023.¹³ In 2022, the majority of Kazakhstan's exports were in the category of sunflower oil (60 per cent of all exports in HS code 15). See table 1 for additional detail on HS codes exported from Kazakhstan to China in 2022.

⁸ See <https://www.worldbank.org/en/region/eca/publication/europe-and-central-asia-economic-update>

⁹ National Statistics Bureau of Kazakhstan, Statistics of External Trade, Mutual Trade, and Commodity Markets.

¹⁰ For the purpose of this Study, vegetable oil includes these HS codes.

¹¹ The Study does not include this HS code in further analysis as it is not exported to China.

¹² State Revenue Committee of the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

¹³ State Revenue Committee of the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Table 1:
Kazakhstan's exports to China by HS codes 1507, 1512, 1514, 1515 (mil. USD)

<i>HS Code</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>	<i>2021</i>	<i>2022</i>	<i>2023^a</i>
1507	Soya-bean oil and its fractions; whether or not refined, but not chemically modified	0.9	1.1	-	-	-
1512	Sunflower, safflower or cotton oil and their fractions; whether or not refined, but not chemically modified	30.9	36.3	7.6	100.5	78.8
1514	Rape, colza or mustard oil and their fractions; whether or not refined, but not chemically modified	44.7	29.1	8.8	45.0	17.7
1515	Fixed vegetable fats and oil (including jojoba oil) and their fractions, whether or not refined; but not chemically modified	23.1	24.5	23.9	17.3	6.6

Source: ECE, based on the statistics of the State Revenue Committee of the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Kazakhstan

^a (Cumulative for the year up to July)

18. A growing preference for healthy lifestyles and cooking at home in both developed and developing countries, which accelerated as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, has led to increasing demand for vegetable oil worldwide. Kazakhstan already has a substantial demand for vegetable oil domestically and holds great potential in expanding its export supplies, including to a growing market like China.

B. Trade facilitation conditions in Kazakhstan for exporting vegetable oil

19. In recent years, the Government of Kazakhstan has adopted a set of legislative and practical measures, including those related to the implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (WTO TFA), those related to paperless and paperless cross-border trade, as well as those related to sustainable trade. According to the United Nations Global study on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation, which tracks progress in implementing WTO TFA measures as well as the ones which go beyond the Agreement, in 2023, Kazakhstan improved its overall trade facilitation score to 76.34 per cent. This is a significant increase compared to 70.97 per cent in 2021 and only 36.56 per cent in 2015.¹⁴

20. As part of the study presented in this paper, a business process analysis (BPA) was undertaken for vegetable oil exports from Kazakhstan to China. Overall, the processes and procedures associated with export are relatively simple and straightforward. On average, the entire export process takes 27 days, with the longest time taken by preparing for the transportation of goods by rail and obtaining the necessary conformity certificates. The export of vegetable oil should be accompanied by a standard set of documents. At the same time, some challenges remain.

21. Some of them are associated with Kazakhstan's landlocked position. The transportation of vegetable oil and its derivatives heavily relies on railway transport, facing persistent and unresolved logistical challenges. Kazakhstan Temir Zholy, the national railway company, reported that, between January and May 2023, only 30 per cent of approved wagons were loaded. At the same time, operations at a terminal designed to unload vegetable oil stored in tanks are expected to start shortly at the Alashankou station in China. The terminal is expected to manage one train daily (comprising roughly 50 wagons). Kazakhstan's processors foresee that the introduction of this terminal will mitigate logistical hurdles linked with shipments in the area.

¹⁴ See <https://www.untfsurvey.org>. See also United Nations ECE. 2023. Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation: UNECE Regional Report 2023, United Nations, Geneva.

22. Interviewed economic operators have also reported the inconvenience of coordinating rail transportation with KTZ-Freight Transportation LLP, the national freight carrier.¹⁵ KTZ-Freight Transportation LLP requires an application for transportation 20 days before the start of the month when products will be sent. This poses challenges, as shipments can be difficult to anticipate.¹⁶ Furthermore, when exporting products to China by rail, there is a need to reload products at the border due to the different sizes of the railway gauge. In this regard, exporters not only lose time during the reloading process but also incur financial costs. The total cost of exporting vegetable oil from Kazakhstan to China is around USD 1,180 on average for one railway wagon. Payment for transportation by rail is the main expenditure item and accounts for 88 per cent of the total cost of exports.

23. Finally, accessing information about Chinese product requirements can be challenging. Exporters lack information about existing opportunities to certify products for compliance with Chinese requirements. In addition to the nationwide requirements, different provinces may have their own requirements. Importantly, there is no infrastructure between Kazakhstan and China that would allow paperless cross-border data exchange for accompanying documents. Similarly, there is no mutual recognition of respective electronic versions. This situation increases the time and financial costs and hinders the growth of exports – not only for vegetable oil but, more generally, for all products.¹⁷

C. Quality infrastructure in Kazakhstan: institutional framework, regulatory and procedural requirements applicable to vegetable oil

24. Cooperation between Kazakhstan and China in the agricultural sector is a strategic imperative. Enhancing conformity assessment mechanisms and addressing logistical challenges in oilseed product transportation to China is crucial for optimizing efficiency and strengthening Kazakhstan's position in the regional and international oilseed market.

25. Kazakhstan has implemented a robust quality infrastructure system that is aligned with international standards and WTO requirements. The key components of this system include technical standardization, which ensures precise specifications for products, services, and processes; measurement uniformity, which guarantees consistent and comparable quantitative assessments nationally and internationally; and formal accreditation of the competence of entities like laboratories and certification bodies.

26. Over recent years, the Government has made significant efforts to digitize and enhance conformity assessment procedures to eliminate “grey” certificates. This contributes to enhanced transparency in the conformity assessment process and to the objective of providing consumers with safe and high-quality products. At the same time, these efforts also helped reduce technical barriers to trade.

27. In 2023, Kazakhstan launched the “e-KTRM” State information system for technical regulation¹⁸ (Electronic-Committee for Technical Regulation and Metrology). This system is designed to streamline registry management in technical regulation by electronically generating conformity assessment documents. More broadly, it helps to automate processes, to minimize technical barriers, and to safeguard the domestic market from hazardous and substandard products. Since 2023, all accreditation procedure applications have been processed within the e-KTRM information system.

28. Subsequently, e-KTRM system will be integrated with the Single Window information system of the Committee of State Revenues under the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Currently, the single window information system facilitates the

¹⁵ By the Resolution of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated September 29, 2017, KTZ Freight Transportation LLP was assigned the status of the National Freight Carrier.

¹⁶ Rules for the transportation of goods by rail No. 612 of 2 August 2019.

¹⁷ Related work has been done in the context the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA). In 2023, the SPECA participating States (which includes Kazakhstan) developed the Roadmap for the Digitalization of Multimodal Data and Document Exchange along the Trans-Caspian Transport Corridor, Using United Nations Legal Instruments and Standards.

¹⁸ See <https://www.gov.kz/memleket/entities/mti-ktrm/press/news/details/488910?lang=ru>.

issuance of conformity assessment documents for both, the Republic of Kazakhstan and the EAEU. The integration of the two systems will help create a unified digital platform for technical regulation.

29. Kazakhstan faces a longstanding challenge in achieving the mutual recognition of conformity assessment procedures in its international trade relations. This challenge is also evident in the context of exporting vegetable oil. The country has addressed this challenge through participation in various international projects aimed at enhancing its quality infrastructure for trade. Challenges, however, remain, including a shortage of testing laboratories and concerns about their adequacy, especially in critical sectors such as the chemical industry and for critical policy objectives such as food safety and energy efficiency. The ongoing efforts to establish the Regional Reference Center under the Central Asian Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) program may open doors for new partnerships. Continuous work on this initiative and the simultaneous enhancement of capacities at analytical and testing laboratories are vital steps for fostering economic growth and cooperation in the region.

III. Recommendations

30. Trade has a powerful role to play in ensuring the strong and sustainable economic growth of Kazakhstan. While significant progress has been made to accelerate the integration into global and regional value chains, more could be done to exploit its full potential, especially in the agricultural sector.

31. Some of the remaining challenges associated with Kazakhstan's landlocked position relate to trade facilitation and quality infrastructure (see table 2, below). It is hoped that this study enables the Government to further remove barriers to trade in vegetable oil, and indirectly – also for trade in other products.

32. The recommendations provided in this study aim at facilitating cross-border trade by making procedures more efficient. In so doing, they aim at reaping increased benefits from the growth opportunities generated by the global and regional integration and contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals including Goals 1 (no poverty), 8 (decent work and economic growth), 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure) and 17 (partnerships for the goals).

33. ECE, through its three core functions – developing norms, standards and legal instruments; hosting a convening platform and providing technical cooperation across a number of relevant sectors – stands ready to assist the Government of Kazakhstan in implementing the forthcoming recommendations, which build on best practice recommendations for trade facilitation and electronic businesses, regulatory cooperation, and agricultural quality standards.

Table 2:
Identified challenges and ECE recommendations for the way forward

<i>Challenge(s)</i>	<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>ECE tools supporting the implementation</i>
<i>Trade facilitation</i>		
Requirement to provide government bodies with documents and information already available from other government bodies, even if they are accessible through interdepartmental collaboration or data exchange through system integration	Eliminate the practice of government bodies demanding documents from participants in foreign economic activities that are issued by other authorities, even though these documents can be retrieved from integrated interdepartmental systems. Ensure access to these systems and databases at the necessary stages.	<p>ECE Recommendation 33. Recommendation and Guidelines on Establishing a Single Window</p> <p>ECE Recommendation 35. Establishing a Legal Framework for an International Trade Single Window</p> <p>ECE Recommendation 36. Single Window Interoperability</p> <p>ECE Recommendation 38. Trade Information Portals</p> <p>UN/CEFACT Buy-Pay-Ship Reference Data Model (BSP-RDM) BRS</p> <p>UN/CEFACT Buy/Ship/Pay Reference Data Model</p>
Absence of electronic data exchange management in the context of business-to-business interactions (e.g. organization of transportation, cargo insurance, contract with a customs broker, etc.)	<p>Promote the use of the electronic contract function in the single window. Include the following functions and documents: templates are made available for electronic contracts between traders; exporters and other interested parties can conclude contracts online, in the system; submission and mutual recognition of the supporting documents is possible.</p> <p>Develop and promote the use of intercomputer systems in a standardized format known as electronic data interchange, which typically includes an application programming interface to facilitate interaction with the database (e.g. the “Documentolog” service).</p>	<p>United Nations Rules for Electronic Data Interchange for Administration, Commerce and Transport (UN/EDIFACT)</p> <p>ECE UN/CEFACT electronic data exchange (EDI)</p> <p>UN/CEFACT Buy/Ship/Pay Reference Data Model</p> <p>UN/CEFACT Recommendation 33. Recommendation and Guidelines on Establishing a Single Window</p> <p>ECE Recommendation 36. Single Window Interoperability</p>
Lack of trust and recognition of electronic documents issued in another country	Conclude intergovernmental and interdepartmental agreements with third countries on the electronic exchange of documents in the field of agriculture and transport (Ministry of Agriculture and the customs authority).	<p>UN/CEFACT White Paper on eDATA Verifiable Credentials for Cross-Border Trade</p> <p>ECE Recommendation 49. Transparency at Scale (forthcoming)</p>
Limited logistical infrastructure for the transportation of oilseed products to China	Undertake an infrastructure assessment, engaging stakeholders to plan improvements	<p>ECE Recommendation 42. Establishment of a Trade and Transport Facilitation Monitoring Mechanism (TTFMM)</p>

<i>Challenge(s)</i>	<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>ECE tools supporting the implementation</i>
	and implement upgrades according to a phased plan. ¹⁹	
	Invest in upgrading railway facilities, including loading and unloading stations, to enhance the efficiency of oilseed product transportation.	
	Collaborate with Kazakhstan Railway to implement measures that increase the loading capacity of approved tanks and reduce delays at border crossings.	
Inefficiencies and delays at border crossings in Kazakhstan and China	Improve coordination at border crossings to expedite the transit of oilseed products.	ECE TIR Convention and eTIR procedure
	Cooperate with Chinese authorities to streamline border crossing procedures, particularly at the Dostyk- Alashankou crossing.	
	Establish a joint working group involving representatives from both countries to address and resolve issues related to slow unloading speeds.	
	Explore utilizing alternative border crossings, such as Altynkol-Khorgos, to transport vegetable oil in tanks. Address challenges associated with shipments through this border crossing.	
Lack of a monitoring mechanism to track the loading and unloading processes at border crossings and railway stations	Establish a mechanism for ongoing monitoring of logistical processes and promptly implement adjustments based on real-time data. ²⁰	ECE Recommendation 42. Establishment of a Trade and Transport Facilitation Monitoring Mechanism (TTFMM)
	Establish a monitoring mechanism to track the loading and unloading processes at border crossings and railway stations, utilizing data analytics to enhance overall efficiency.	ECE TIR Convention and eTIR procedure
<i>Quality infrastructure</i>		
Shortage of modern testing laboratories and weak regulatory framework for testing	Develop a comprehensive plan for the systematic upgrading of existing testing laboratories, focusing on the acquisition of state-of-the-art equipment to meet international standards.	ECE Recommendation A. Further Developments in International Cooperation on Technical Harmonization and Standardization Policies

¹⁹ Relevant entities and stakeholders include the Ministry of Transport, Kazakhstan Temir Zholy (the national railway company), the Ministry of Trade and Integration, and the Ministry of Agriculture.

²⁰ Relevant entities and stakeholders include the Ministry of Transport, Kazakhstan Temir Zholy (the national railway company), and the Ministry of Trade and Integration.

<i>Challenge(s)</i>	<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>ECE tools supporting the implementation</i>
	Identify precise areas within vital sectors such as the chemical industry, food safety and energy efficiency to strategically broaden the reach of testing laboratories and supplementary testing facilities.	ECE Recommendation I. Education on Standards-Related Issues ECE Recommendation K. Metrological Assurance of Conformity Assessment and Testing
	Facilitate partnerships between government agencies and private enterprises in establishing and managing testing laboratories, including by providing incentives such as tax breaks or grants to attract private investments into the testing infrastructure.	ECE Recommendation L. International Model for Transnational Regulatory Cooperation Based on Good Regulatory Practice ECE Recommendation T. Standards and Regulations for Sustainable Development
	Establish a regular monitoring and evaluation mechanism to assess compliance with regulatory standards and identify areas for improvement.	ECE Recommendation 40. Consultation Approaches ECE Recommendation 41. Public-Private Partnerships in Trade Facilitation
Need for continuous update of technical regulations system	Conduct regular and comprehensive examinations of the technical regulation systems in key importing countries (for the Ministry of Trade and Integration and its affiliated agencies).	ECE Recommendation A. Further Developments in International Cooperation on Technical Harmonization and Standardization Policies
	Extend coverage to include additional key trading partners and regularly update the guides to reflect any changes in technical regulations.	ECE Recommendation B. Coordination of Technical Regulations and Standardization
	Establish a dedicated unit or platform to be responsible for continuously monitoring and analysing the technical regulation landscape in importing countries.	ECE Recommendation C. International Harmonization of Standards and Technical Regulations ECE Recommendation H. Presentation of UNECE Recommended Standards and Harmonized Technical Regulations
Lack of technical competence of laboratory professionals	Implement training programs for laboratory professionals to upgrade their skills and stay abreast of advancements in testing methodologies. Foster collaboration with international institutions and experts to provide technical assistance and knowledge exchange opportunities for existing laboratories.	ECE Recommendation I. Education on Standards-Related Issues ECE Recommendation K. Metrological Assurance of Conformity Assessment and Testing UNECE Recommendation I. Education on Standards-Related Issues
Limited cooperation at accreditation and conformity levels	Foster collaboration between accreditation bodies, conformity assessment bodies, and testing laboratories for efficient certification	ECE Recommendation G. Acceptance of Conformity Assessment Results

<i>Challenge(s)</i>	<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>ECE tools supporting the implementation</i>
	processes and establish frameworks for mutual recognition of test protocols and conformity assessments in priority sectors.	ECE Recommendation F. Creation and Promotion of International Agreements on Conformity Assessment
	Streamline administrative processes to enable the issuance of certificates of conformity based on recognized test protocols from collaborating entities, reducing redundancy and expediting certification processes.	ECE Recommendation A. Further Developments in International Cooperation on Technical Harmonization and Standardization Policies
Insufficient veterinary system evaluation	Continue to collaborate on ensuring food safety by conducting regular evaluations of veterinary systems (Ministry of Trade and Integration, in coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture and their affiliated agencies).	ECE Recommendation 1. UN Layout Key for Trade Documents UN/CEFACT Electronic SPS Certificate (e-CERT)
	Regularly conduct joint audits and inspections of Kazakhstan's veterinary system with Chinese experts to maintain and improve the quality and safety of livestock products exported to China.	
	Establish a mechanism for continuous communication and information exchange between the veterinary authorities of both countries to promptly address emerging challenges.	
Lack of transparency and information sharing	Enhance transparency and information sharing between Kazakhstan and China on agricultural practices and regulations.	UN/CEFACT Recommendation 49. Transparency at Scale (forthcoming)