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SME Landscape in Asia: Interactive Guidebook

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Introduction

Purpose of the Guidebook

This electronic guidebook is designed to help newly emerging SME owners in CICA countries develop their businesses and navigate relevant government policy measures. It offers opportunities to learn from the experiences and best practices of countries with similar levels of economic development. Through real-world examples and different approaches, the guide aims to equip business owners, policymakers, and other stakeholders with the tools and knowledge to overcome challenges and support the sustainable development of SMEs in their countries and across the CICA region.

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Understanding SME Policy

Economic Overview

➤ Azerbaijan

In 2024, businesses, organizations, and individual entrepreneurs in the country produced 126.3 billion AZN worth of GDP, a 4.1% increase compared to 2023. GDP per capita reached 12,382.5 AZN. Investments in fixed capital amounted to 21,435.1 million AZN. Investments in the non-oil and gas sector increased by 3.3%. From January to November 2024, the average nominal monthly wage for paid employees rose by 8.0% compared to the same period in 2023, reaching 996.8 AZN. During the same period, Azerbaijani legal and physical entities conducted trade operations with partners in 176 countries, exporting to 120 and importing from 167 countries.

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➤ Kazakhstan

The monitoring data on SMEs in the Republic of Kazakhstan (as of 1 January 2025)¹, published on the website of the Bureau of National Statistics of the Republic of Kazakhstan, are attached.

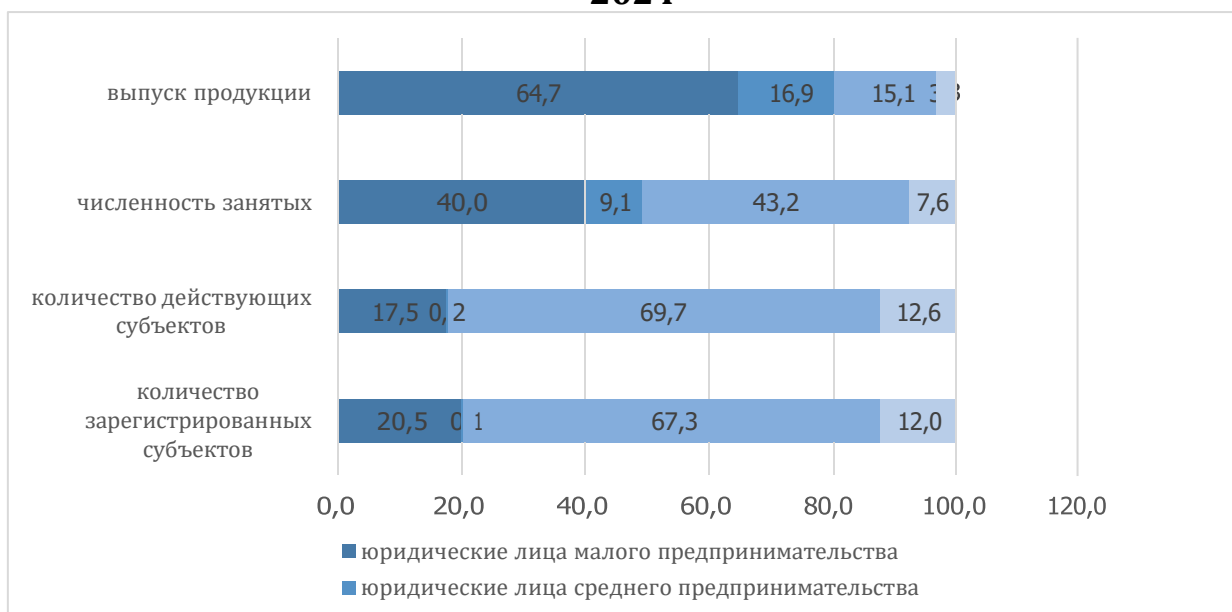
Key indicators highlighted in the Q1 2025 monitoring data are as follows:

- 1) The number of registered SMEs as of 1 January 2025 amounted to 2,262.4 thousand units;
- 2) The number of operating SMEs as of 1 January 2025 amounted to 2,071.7 thousand units;
- 3) The number of people employed in SMEs as of 1 January 2025 amounted to 4,422.1 thousand people;
- 4) The output of products by SMEs in January-December 2024 amounted to 81,920.0 billion tenge.

¹ <https://stat.gov.kz/en/industries/business-statistics/stat-org/publications/350850/>

5) SMEs account for 45.8% of the total economically active population of the country. Almaty and Astana have the highest regional shares. The lowest share is recorded in the Zhambyl Region.

Breakdown of main SME performance indicators for January-December 2024



Source: BNS RK

Official statistics show that, in the country, SMEs accounted for 39.3% of GDP in January-September 2024, an increase of 2.8 p.p. compared to the same period of the previous year.

SMEs share in GDP (GRP)*

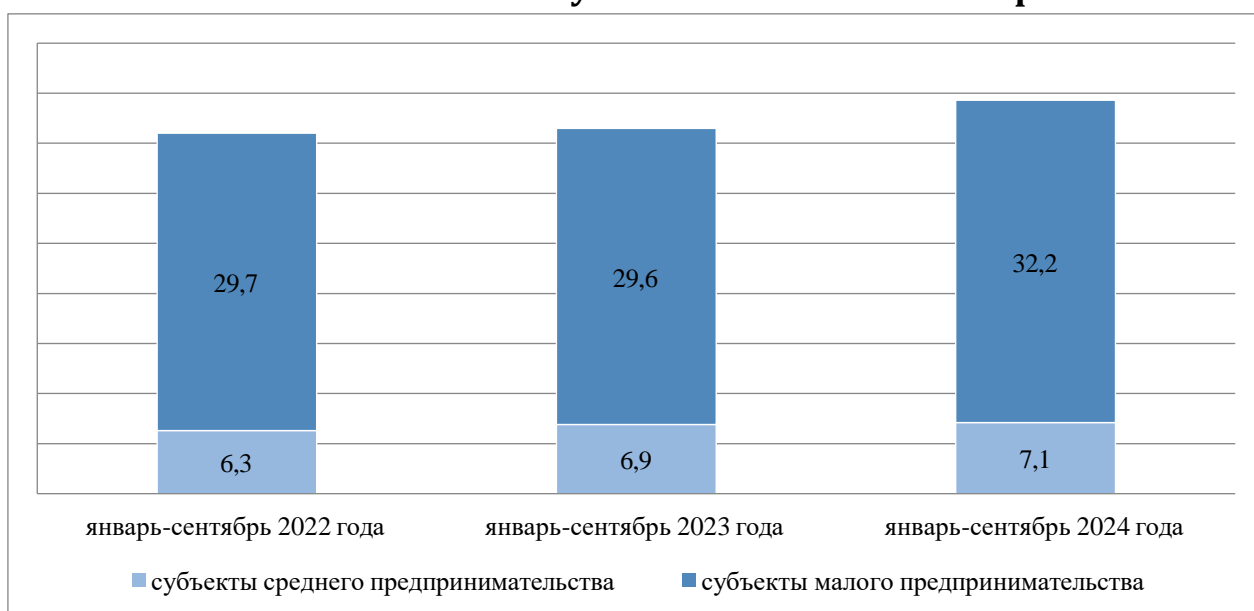
	January-September 2024		January-September 2023	
	GVA of SMEs, M tenge	Share in GDP (GRP), %	GVA of SMEs, M tenge	Share in GDP (GRP), %
Republic of Kazakhstan	33,389,821.2	39.3	27,604,326.4	36.5
Abay Region	406,299.4	18.2	359,064.3	18.6
Akmola Region	748,057.5	28.3	604,077.0	26.2
Aktobe Region	1,019,238.6	28.3	853,793.1	27.0
Almaty Region	1,736,413.9	46.0	1,462,649.7	47.3
Atyrau Region	2,510,555.4	25.4	2,426,763.8	25.1
West Kazakhstan Region	1,164,141.7	34.7	1,005,860.7	33.2
Zhambyl Region	528,727.5	23.8	391,161.5	20.5
Zhetisu Region	449,611.3	32.1	386,153.3	32.0

Karagandy Region	1,144,959.9	19.7	1,010,493.8	19.7
Kostanay Region	875,018.2	28.7	772,107.7	28.5
Kyzylorda Region	431,167.0	20.5	331,349.1	17.7
Mangystau Region	1,115,284.9	30.5	987,477.8	28.0
Pavlodar Region	639,873.6	21.1	504,207.8	19.8
North Kazakhstan Region	513,960.9	28.4	390,037.6	25.4
Turkistan Region	882,874.9	27.9	568,706.2	21.1
Ulytau Region	99,060.8	7.3	59,773.2	4.9
East Kazakhstan Region	763,354.1	22.9	697,857.6	22.3
Astana	6,698,776.7	72.8	5,837,506.4	74.5
Almaty	10,060,551.5	61.2	7,751,580.8	53.1
Shymkent	1,601,893.4	54.8	1,203,705.0	49.2

Source: BNS RK

By entity category, small enterprises account for 32.2% and medium enterprises for 7.1%.

SMEs' share in GDP by small and medium enterprises



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➤ Kyrgyzstan

Economic situation of SMEs in the Kyrgyz Republic as of the first quarter of 2025

In January-March 2025, small and medium enterprises continued to play a key role in the economy of the Kyrgyz Republic, demonstrating strong growth in key indicators.

As of 1 April 2025, there were 16.9 thousand enterprises operating in the country, of which 15.9 thousand were small enterprises and 1.0 thousand were medium enterprises. The number of individual entrepreneurs reached 492.8 thousand, an increase of 4.9% compared to the same period last year. The number of employees in small and medium enterprises amounted to 102.0 thousand people.

The volume of gross value added produced by SMEs amounted to 121.4 billion soms, which is 20.5% more than in the same period last year. The share of SMEs in the GDP structure was 36.9%.

The SME sector has demonstrated growth in almost all key industries:

- Industrial production - 32.8 billion soms (+22.3%),
- Trade and repair of cars - 259.9 billion soms (+2.9%),
- Hotel and restaurant services - 7.7 billion soms,
- Agriculture (including farms) - 22.9 billion soms (+12.3%),
- Contract construction works - an increase of 4.3%.

The revenue of small and medium enterprises (excluding farms and sole proprietors) from the sale of products and services amounted to 104.5 billion soms, an increase of 30.0% compared to the first quarter of 2024. The share of SME revenue in the total revenue of enterprises in the real sector of the economy was 33.9%.

The highest entrepreneurial activity is still concentrated in Bishkek, where 70.1% of small enterprises are located and 72.2% of the total revenue of SMEs is generated.

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➤ Russia

In 2024, according to the Rosstat estimate, the growth rate of Russian GDP remained high, exceeding the level of 2023, amounting to 4.3%.

The industrial production index increased by 4.6% in 2024, which is

higher than in 2023 (4.3%)².

The unemployment rate in 2024 dropped to a historic low level of 2.5% of the total workforce.

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➤ Türkiye

As of May 2025, Türkiye's foreign trade landscape reflects both challenges and opportunities amid global economic shifts.

In 2024, Türkiye's merchandise exports reached approximately \$262 billion, marking a 2.5% increase from the previous year. The top export sectors included:

- Vehicles and Automotive Parts: \$29.46 billion
- Machinery and Mechanical Appliances: \$22.35 billion
- Textiles and Apparel: \$17.15 billion
- Electrical Machinery and Equipment: \$11.45 billion
- Iron and Steel Products: \$10.5 billion

• Imports: Imports totaled around \$344 billion in 2024, a 4.9% decrease from 2023. This reduction led to a narrowing of the trade deficit to \$82.2 billion, down from \$106.2 billion in 2023. The import-to-export ratio improved to 76.1%, up from 50% in 2002. Türkiye's primary trading partner, with exports to the EU reaching \$108.7 billion in 2024. A customs union with the EU facilitates seamless trade. Exports to the U.S. were approximately \$16.7 billion in 2024, with a similar value of imports. Bilateral trade with Italy reached \$30 billion, with a target set to increase this to \$40 billion. Recent agreements include joint defense projects and infrastructure collaborations.

Despite global trade uncertainties, Türkiye's strategic location and robust manufacturing base provide opportunities to attract companies seeking to relocate production due to changing trade dynamics. Ongoing efforts to enhance export sectors and improve the investment climate are expected to bolster Türkiye's position in international trade.

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² <https://rosstat.gov.ru/folder/313/document/246950>

Business Environment and Legal Framework for SMEs

➤ Azerbaijan

To support SME development, several government bodies and infrastructure tools have been established. Since 2018, the Small and Medium Business Development Agency (KOBIA) has been operational. It is a public legal entity under the Ministry of Economy, providing a range of services to SMEs and coordinating public services in this field.

Government mechanisms offer consulting, financial, training, tax, and customs support. The legal framework has been made more favorable through a simplified tax regime, quick business registration via “ASAN Service” and “SME Houses,” and the implementation of the e-government system. In addition, the Law on the Development of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises came into force on December 2, 2022.

The Role of SMEs in the Azerbaijani Economy

SMEs play a critical role in the non-oil economy by increasing employment and expanding local production. Micro, small, and medium enterprises make up 99.7% of all active businesses in the country. They mainly operate in trade, hospitality, industry, agriculture, tourism, and logistics sectors.

Industrial and Economic Zones in Azerbaijan

- **Alat Free Economic Zone (AFEZ)**

Established by Presidential Decree on May 22, 2020, the AFEZ is located in the Alat settlement of Baku's Garadagh district. Its goals are to attract investments in the non-oil sector, promote export-oriented production, and enhance the country's transit and logistics potential.

Advantages:

- Tax-free environment (corporate income tax, VAT, customs duties, etc.)
- Simplified and fast registration procedures
- Infrastructure-equipped area with access to sea port, roads, and railway
- Activities governed by independent zone regulations rather than

national law

- Equal rights for foreign and local investors
- Operations and development are managed by the AFEZ Management Organization

Industrial Parks – Existing Structures in Azerbaijan

To promote industrial production, regional economic development, and improve the investment environment, several industrial parks have been established. These parks offer tax and customs incentives, ready infrastructure, and organizational support.

Main Industrial Parks:

- **Sumgayit Chemical Industrial Park** – The largest and most developed, specialized in chemicals, petrochemicals, construction materials, and metallurgy.
- **Mingachevir Industrial Park** – Specialized in light industry and textiles; contributes to regional employment.
- **Pirallahi Industrial Park** – Specialized in pharmaceuticals; strategically important for localizing medicine production.
- **Hajigabul Industrial Park** – Focused on automotive and mechanical engineering sectors.
- **Aghdam Industrial Park** (established in 2021) – First industrial park in liberated territories of Karabakh; prioritizes light industry, food processing, and construction materials.
- **Araz Valley Economic Zone Industrial Park** (established in 2021) – Aims to revive liberated areas, boost Karabakh's industrial potential, support entrepreneurship, and create competitive industry based on modern technologies.
- **Qaradağ Industrial Park** (established in 2015) – Supports non-oil sector development, competitive production using modern technologies, and promotes employment in production.
- **Nakhchivan Industrial Park** (established in 2024) – Focused on fostering competitive industrial production based on innovation and high technology, supporting entrepreneurship, and contributing to non- oil sector growth.

Incentives for Industrial Parks:

- Exemption from VAT on imported machinery, technological equipment,

and installations;

- In addition, residents of industrial parks are exempt from customs duties on such imported machinery, equipment, and installations for a period of 10 years.

SME House

The Small and Medium Business Houses (SMB Houses) is an organizational unit of the Small and Medium Business Development Agency responsible for coordination of services rendered by state bodies and private entities to entrepreneurs in the single space.

This is the on-stop-shop center for provision of different G2B, B2B and support services for SMEs.

In 2024 the SME House model was selected as an innovative public sector management by the of Observatory for Public Sector Innovation (OPSI) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The model was praised for its effective one-stop service, its role as a bridge between government and business, and its contribution to transparency and client satisfaction.

SME Friends

SME Friend networks are local focal points of KOBIA operating in more than 50 regions of the country. They are in close contact with SMEs and facilitates their access to all range of Government services and support tools.

SME Friends carry out regular site visits and arrange regional sectoral meetings in the framework of public-private cooperation platform.

Legal Framework for SMEs

The legal framework for SMEs in Azerbaijan aims to support entrepreneurship and regulate it in line with market economy requirements. The Law “On the Development of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises” was adopted in 2022. It governs the relations in the field of SME development and defines the forms and methods for promoting state support to micro, small, and medium enterprises. Additionally, the Tax Code and the Customs Code are the main legal documents regulating SME activities.

Government Support and Incentives

The Government of Azerbaijan implements various incentive and support mechanisms to develop SMEs. Through the Small and Medium Business Development Agency (KOBIA), entrepreneurs are provided with advisory services, training, and business development tools. Institutional and legal models such as SME Development Centers, SME Model Enterprises, and SME Friends support SME growth.

Furthermore, mechanisms such as the "Startup" certificate, "SME Cluster" certificate, investment promotion documents, and others offer tax exemptions, simplified tax regimes, and specific benefits in social contributions. Entrepreneurs are offered low-interest loans, state grants, and subsidies to help them grow and expand. Export-oriented businesses also benefit from customs duty exemptions and better access to foreign markets.

Support for Access to Large Retail Chains

KOBIA promotes the placement of locally produced goods in large retail networks. To this end, the Agency supports establishing links between entrepreneurs and retail chains, organizes product presentations and B2B meetings, and provides technical advice on packaging, labeling, and quality certification.

Free Participation in Exhibitions

KOBIA enables micro and small businesses to participate in local and international exhibitions free of charge. The goal is to help SMEs present their products and services, find business partners, and expand sales opportunities. The Agency covers the preparation of booths, logistics, and organizational support.

Domestic Market Research

KOBIA conducts analytical research and surveys on the internal market situation, consumer demand, and the competitive environment. These studies help entrepreneurs identify new business directions and better plan their existing operations. SMEs use the results of these studies to improve their product range and sales strategies.

Startup Certificate

- Issued to legal and physical persons who are starting a business and have innovative, technology-based projects.
- Grants exemption from income tax for a period of 3 years.
- Issued via an electronic system in cooperation with the Ministry of Economy.

Public Council under KOBIA

The Public Council under the Small and Medium Business Development Agency (KOBIA) was established in 2021 and consists of representatives from 15 non-governmental organizations and business associations.

The main goal of the Council is to enhance transparency and accountability in KOBIA's operations, ensure public oversight, and contribute to the reflection of business community opinions and proposals in state policy.

Council members, representing organizations that protect entrepreneurs' interests, regularly organize thematic public discussions, business forums, and consultations. These events aim to address current challenges, develop proposals for regulatory initiatives, and strengthen the dialogue between the state and entrepreneurs.

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➤ Kazakhstan

The categories of business entities are defined under Article 24 of the Entrepreneur Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 375-V 3PK³ of 29 October 2015.

1. Depending on the average annual number of employees and the average annual income, business entities **are categorized as follows:**

Small-sized business entities, including microbusiness entities;

Medium-sized business entities;

Large-sized business entities.

³ <https://adilet.zan.kz/eng/docs/K1500000375>

2. The categorization of business entities as specified in paragraph 1 of this article serves the following purposes:

Government statistics;

Providing government support;

Applying other provisions of the laws of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

For the purposes of government statistics, the only criterion used is the average annual number of employees.

For the purposes of providing government support and applying other provisions of the laws of the Republic of Kazakhstan, two criteria are used: the average annual number of employees and the average annual income.

For the purposes of providing government support and applying other provisions of the laws of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the average annual number of employees of business entities using the labour of employees of the sending party, under a staffing services contract, is determined with consideration of the employees of the sending party.

The average annual number of employees of business entities is determined with consideration of all employees, including those of its branches, representative offices and other separate divisions, as well as the individual entrepreneur.

The average annual income is the sum of total annual income or income of business entities applying in accordance with the tax legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan a special tax regime based on a patent, a simplified declaration or using a special mobile application, for the last three years, divided by three.

Government support programmes for private businesses may establish additional criteria.

3. Small-sized business entities are individual entrepreneurs not registered as legal entities, as well as legal entities engaged in entrepreneurship, with an average annual number of employees of no more than one hundred people and an average annual income of no more than three hundred thousand times a monthly calculation index set by the law on the national budget and in effect on 1 January of the corresponding financial year.

Microbusiness entities are small-sized business entities engaged in private entrepreneurship, with an average annual number of employees of no more than fifteen people or an average annual income of no more than thirty thousand times a monthly calculation index set by the law on the national budget and in effect on 1 January of the corresponding financial year.

4. For the purposes of providing government support and applying other provisions of the laws of the Republic of Kazakhstan, individual entrepreneurs or legal entities engaged in the following activities cannot be considered small-sized business entities, including microbusiness entities:

- 1) Activities related to the trafficking of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursors;
- 2) Production and/or wholesale of excisable products;
- 3) Grain storage operations at grain receiving stations;
- 4) Running lotteries;
- 5) Gambling activities;
- 6) Activities related to the trafficking of radioactive materials;
- 7) Banking (or certain types of banking operations) and insurance operations (except for the activities of insurance agents);
- 8) Auditing activities;
- 9) Professional securities operations;
- 10) Activities of credit bureaus;
- 11) Security activities;
- 12) Activities related to the circulation of civilian and service weapons and their ammunition;
- 13) First subtype digital mining activities.

Individual entrepreneurs and legal entities engaged in the activities specified in this paragraph are classified as medium-sized business entities, and, if they meet the criteria established in [paragraph 6](#) of this article – as large-sized business entities.

For private business entities, which are payers of gambling business tax, fixed tax and single land tax, under the tax legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the criterion used is the number of employees.

5. Medium-sized business entities are individual entrepreneurs and legal entities engaged in entrepreneurship that do not fall under the categories of small- or large-sized business entities, in accordance with [paragraphs 3](#) and [6](#) of this article.

6. Large-sized business entities are individual entrepreneurs and legal entities engaged in entrepreneurship that meet one or both of the following criteria: the average annual number of employees is more than two hundred fifty people and/or the average annual income over a three-million times a monthly calculation index set by the law on the national budget and in effect on 1 January of the corresponding financial year.

Exceptions

Certain types of organizations, regardless of their size (e.g., state-owned enterprises, joint-stock companies with more than 25% state ownership, or companies holding monopoly power), are not considered SMEs.

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➤ Kyrgyzstan

Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) play a key role in developing the economy, providing employment, promoting regional development and supporting entrepreneurial activity in the Kyrgyz Republic. The Government has introduced simplified legal and administrative mechanisms to improve business conditions and stimulate SME growth.

Legal framework for SME activities

According to the Tax Code of the Kyrgyz Republic:

- A small business entity is defined as an organization or individual entrepreneur whose total revenue over the past 12 consecutive months does not exceed 8,000,000 soms. If revenue exceeds this threshold, the entity continues to be considered small until the end of the current calendar year for tax reporting and tax purposes.
- A medium business entity is defined as an organization or individual entrepreneur whose total revenue over the past 12 consecutive months exceeds 8,000,000 soms, but does not exceed 50,000,000 soms.

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➤ Russia

Small businesses play a vital role in Russia's economic system, employing millions of people and contributing to the development of local economies. They serve as a source of innovation, provide flexibility in the labor market, and complement the activities of large corporations.

The Russian government actively interacts with entrepreneurs, striving to create conditions under which small businesses can prosper and develop. State support also acts as a tool to help overcome the obstacles and challenges that representatives face.

As of March 2025, 6,665,754 SMEs are registered in the Russian Federation, of which 6,419,103 are microenterprises, 225,739 are small enterprises, 20,912 are medium enterprises. For the year 2024, the share of SMEs in total employment is 42%, in the national economy (GDP) – about 21.7%, in exports – about 17%⁴.

Small enterprises specialize mainly in trade and agriculture. Medium enterprises are represented more in higher value-added sectors - manufacturing and construction. Other typical activities of SMEs include transport and shipping, real estate, production and distribution of electricity, gas and water, tourism, information and communication, medical services, education and professional, scientific and technical activities.

• Legal Framework for SMEs

The main federal document regulating SMEs in the Russian Federation is the Federal Law № 209 of 24.07.2007 "On the Development of Small and Medium-Sized Businesses in the Russian Federation". Under this Law, regional and local authorities are obliged to develop SMEs by allocating the necessary funds from their budgets. This support is centralized in nature, while each region can independently add supplementary business support programs from the regional budget.

In accordance with Article 4 of above-mentioned Federal Law SMEs include business entities, business partnerships, production cooperatives, consumer cooperatives, peasant (farm) households and individual entrepreneurs registered in accordance with the laws of the Russian Federation and meeting certain conditions.

These conditions include:

a) the average staffing number of employees for the previous calendar year must not exceed the following limits: up to 15 people – for microenterprises; up to 100 people – for small enterprises; up to 250 people – for medium enterprises; However, there are exceptions:

- the average staffing number of employees in clothing and footwear industry organizations for the previous calendar year: up to 15 people – for microenterprises; up to 100 people – for small enterprises; up to 1,000 people – for medium enterprises;

- average staffing number of employees for the previous calendar year for public catering organizations and individual entrepreneurs: up to 15 people –

⁴ https://www.economy.gov.ru/material/news/rekordnyh_659_mln_dostiglo_chislo_malyh_i_srednih_predpriyatiy_v_rossii.html

for microenterprises; up to 100 people – for small enterprises; up to 1,500 people – for medium enterprises.

b) income received from entrepreneurial activity for the previous calendar year must not exceed the following limits: up to RUB 120 million - for microenterprises; up to RUB 800 million – for small enterprises; up to RUB 2 billion – for medium enterprises.

c) compliance with the requirements for the structure of the registered (share) capital of a legal entity (the share of large companies and foreign legal entities in the registered capital of SMEs is limited to 49% (it can reach 100% if the foreign founder is classified as an SME according to the criteria of the Russian Federation); the share of the Russian Federation, constituent entities of the Russian Federation, municipalities must not exceed 25%).

When a legal entity or an individual entrepreneur is considered valid for SME status Federal Tax Service of Russia includes it automatically in the Unified Register of Small and Medium Enterprises⁵.

• **Government Support of SMEs**

The Russian government has created a complex system of support for entrepreneurship, which has proven to be an effective tool for SME development.

Joint-stock company “Russian Small and Medium Business Corporation” (RSMB Corporation) is a federal development institution for small and medium enterprises support which has been operating since 2015⁶.

The controlling shareholder of RSMB Corporation is the Russian Federation represented by the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation.

RSMB Corporation provides financial and guarantee support to SMEs. Corporation implements the government preferential loan, guarantee programs, and provides “umbrella guarantees” to enable SMEs to obtain loans where there is a lack of collateral. RSMB Corporation facilitates industrial cooperation and distribution of SMEs with large private Russian and foreign companies as well as with retail chains. Through its subsidiary, SME Leasing, it offers preferential equipment leasing. Its other subsidiary

⁵ <https://rmsp.nalog.ru/>

⁶ <https://corpmsp.ru/about/>

SME Bank provides preferential loans under government programs and bank guarantees.

Support for small and medium-sized enterprises in industrial cooperation and distribution by RSMB Corporation includes:

- monitoring compliance with the government's 25% quota for large state-owned enterprises' procurements from SMEs;
- assistance in industrial cooperation with private Russian and foreign companies searching for suppliers of industrial products and providing them with comprehensive support;
- cooperation with the regions for organizing distribution of SME products in Russia's retail chains;
- implementation of the Farmer's Island project to facilitate the marketing of agricultural products.

RSMB Corporation provides efficient and tailored measures for SMEs in a one-stop-shop mode using the Digital platform МСП.РФ. The Digital platform МСП.РФ is the state platform created for entrepreneurs and those who are just planning to start their own business (there are more than 30 services available on the Digital Platform now and about 1 M users have been registered).

In order to receive feedback from entrepreneurs and to provide them with legal support for business 360° Service on the Digital platform МСП.РФ was created for effective interaction and prompt resolution of entrepreneurs' issues.

In addition, SME status entitles the company to a range of other benefits and support measures from the government.

Some of these include⁷:

- simplified accounting and reporting. Small enterprises may keep their accounts in a simplified manner. For example, they may not make provisions for future expenditure, they may not apply certain accounting rules and they may record their income and expenditure on a cash basis. Accounting reports can also be simplified - usually only two forms: a balance sheet and a profit and loss account;
- reporting to the Federal State Statistics Service. Small enterprises are exempt from submitting a large number of statistical forms. They usually report every five years as part of a continuous statistical monitoring;

⁷ <https://www.banki.ru/news/daytheme/?id=11005849>

- tax benefits. Regional authorities have the right to set reduced tax rates for SMEs, for example on profit tax, property tax, land tax and transport tax;
- reduced rates of contribution to national insurance. Reduced rates of contribution apply to SMEs for payments to employees above the minimum wage: 10% for pension insurance, 5% for health insurance and 0% for social security insurance;
- cash transactions. Small enterprises may not set a cash limit. Sole traders may not issue cash receipts and cash payments and may not keep a cash book;
- deposit insurance. Funds in bank accounts and deposits of SMEs are subject to mandatory deposit insurance. If the bank in which the company (individual entrepreneur) keeps money goes bankrupt or loses its license, an SME can receive an insurance payout;
- preferential loans. SMEs can obtain loans at preferential rates for investment purposes, to replenish working capital, to refinance existing loans and to develop business activities.

Each region of Russia also has own regional institutions supporting SMEs in the form of autonomous non-profit organizations, development corporations, associations, trade unions, foundations and other civic associations that stimulate the work of SMEs.

Such institutions coordinate the interaction of SMEs with government bodies on issues of providing support measures to entrepreneurs, assist in solving system problems (various regulatory and administrative barriers, changes in national standards, etc.), provide loans for the implementation of projects aimed at introducing advanced technologies, creating new products or organizing import-substituting production, provide grants and non-financial support to young and socially oriented entrepreneurs, and also organize the participation of SMEs in business missions and international exhibitions both in Russia and abroad.

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➤ Türkiye

The Regulation on Small and Medium Enterprises, which was announced by the Presidential Decree dated 24.05.2023 and numbered 7297 and published in the Official Gazette dated 25.05.2023 and numbered 32201, determines all definitions, classifications and regulations regarding SMEs.

In Türkiye, SMEs are evaluated in 3 groups: micro - small – medium our definition of SME is based on the number of employees, annual net sales revenue and financial balance sheet. Businesses employing less than 250 people, whose annual net sales revenue or financial balance sheet does not exceed 500 million Turkish Liras (TL) are defined as SMEs.

Micro-enterprises are enterprises with less than 10 employees and an annual net sales revenue or financial balance sheet of 10 million TL.

Small-enterprises are enterprises with less than 50 employees and an annual net sales revenue or financial balance sheet of 100 million TL.

Medium-enterprises are enterprises with less than 50 employees and an annual net sales revenue or financial balance sheet of 500 million TL.

The approximate number of SMEs in Türkiye is 3.7 million. The share of SMEs in all enterprises is 99.7%. In addition to this; SMEs constitute 70.6% of employment, 47.5% of personnel costs, 42.5% of turnover, 36.3% of production and 36.4% of value added.

In Türkiye, SMEs are primarily represented in the following sectors:

- Manufacturing (including textiles, automotive, and food processing)
- Construction (real estate development and infrastructure)
- Retail and Wholesale Trade (local stores, distribution, and imports/exports)
- Agriculture and Food Processing (crop production, livestock, and food packaging)
- Services (transport, logistics, tourism, education, healthcare, and IT)
- Tourism (hotels, restaurants, and travel agencies)
- Information and Communication Technology (ICT) (software, e-commerce and digital services)

These sectors highlight the diverse roles SMEs play in driving economic growth in Türkiye.

In Türkiye, several institutions support the development of SMEs:

- Turkish Ministry of Industry and Technology is a government body responsible for shaping and implementing policies related to industrial development, technological advancement, and innovation in Türkiye. Its main objectives include fostering economic growth, enhancing industrial competitiveness, supporting research and development (R&D), promoting the

digital transformation of industries, and ensuring the efficient use of resources across various sectors, with a particular focus on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

- KOSGEB (Small and Medium Enterprises Development Organization of Türkiye): Provides financial support, grants, and training for SMEs, to increase the share and efficiency of small and medium-sized enterprises in meeting the economic and social needs of the country, to increase their competitiveness and to realize the integration in the industry in accordance with the economic developments.

- TOBB (Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Türkiye): Represents SMEs and offers services such as business networking, advocacy, and economic development initiatives.

- TÜBİTAK (The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Türkiye): Supports R&D and innovation for SMEs, offering funding and technological assistance.

- İŞKUR (Turkish Employment Agency): Provides support for workforce training, employment, and development programs for SME employees.

- Development Agencies: Regional organizations that offer funding, guidance, and consultancy to SMEs, particularly for local economic development.

- The Credit Guarantee Fund (KGF): plays a vital role for SMEs in Türkiye by providing them with easier access to financing. It offers credit guarantees to SMEs, helping them secure loans from banks that they might otherwise struggle to obtain due to insufficient collateral or high risk. This support boosts the liquidity of SMEs, enabling them to grow, invest in innovation, and improve their operations. The KGF is crucial in fostering financial inclusion and helping SMEs overcome challenges in accessing capital, which is essential for their sustainability and competitiveness.

These institutions help SMEs with financing, innovation, workforce development, and business growth, driving the sector's overall development in Türkiye.

In the 12th Development Plan of Türkiye, SMEs (Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises) hold a significant place due to their crucial role in the country's economic development. SMEs are recognized as the backbone of the Turkish economy, contributing to employment, innovation, and regional development. The plan emphasizes strengthening SMEs by improving their access to financing, promoting digital transformation, enhancing their competitiveness,

and fostering innovation. The aim is to create an environment where SMEs can grow, adapt to global market demands, and contribute to sustainable economic growth.

In Türkiye, several strategies and government programs aim to support and develop the SME sector:

Financial Support and Incentives

KOSGEB offers grants, low-interest loans, and financial assistance for innovation, and international market expansion.

SME Support Programs provide financial aid for technology adoption, product development, and business modernization.

Training and Capacity Building

KOSGEB and TOBB offer training, seminars, and workshops to improve business management, entrepreneurship, and technical skills.

İŞKUR provides workforce training programs to enhance skills in line with industry needs.

Innovation and R&D Support

TÜBİTAK offers funding for research and development projects, promoting innovation in SMEs. Programs focus on increasing SMEs' technological capabilities and product quality.

Export and Market Expansion

The Turkish Exporters Assembly (TİM) supports SMEs in accessing international markets through export training and market development programs.

KOSGEB's Internationalization Programs help SMEs enter global markets.

There are many institutions and organizations supporting SMEs in Türkiye. The mechanisms shared below for the support provided to SMEs include the support provided by public authorities in Türkiye.

Supports provided to SMEs by Small and Medium Enterprises Development Organization of Türkiye (KOSGEB):

- Entrepreneur Support Programme
- Capacity Building Support Programme
- SME Digital Transition Support Programme

- Green Industry Support Programme
- Employment Protection Support Programme
- Global Competitiveness Support Programme
- Strategical Product Support Programme
- SME Technological Product Investment Support Programme
- TEKMER Support Programme
- Mentoring and Evaluation Support Programme
- Recovery of Businesses after Earthquake Support Programme

Details for these supports can be reached from www.kosgeb.gov.tr

Supports provided to SMEs by The Scientific and Research Council of Türkiye (TÜBİTAK):

- 1501 Industrial R&D Projects Grant Programme
- 1503 R&D Project Brokerage Events Grant Programme
- 1505 University – Industry Collaboration Support Programme
- 1507 TÜBİTAK SME R&D Start-Up Support Programme
- 1509 TÜBİTAK International Industrial R&D Projects Grant Programme
- 1511 Research Technology Development and Innovation Projects in Priority Areas G.P. (Technology Focused Industrial Movement Programme)
- 1512 Entrepreneurship Support Programme
- 1513 Technology Transfer Office Support Programme
- 1514 Venture Capital Funding Programme (Tech-InvesTR)
- 1515 Frontier R&D Laboratory Support Programme
- 1601 Capacity Building for I&E Grant Programme
- 1602 TÜBİTAK Patent Support Programme
- 1607 BIGG+ SME Mentorship Interface
- 1612 BIGG – 1st Phase Implementing Agencies Call
- 1701 R&D Project Evaluation and Monitoring Call
- 1702 Patent Based Technology Transfer Support Call
- 1704 SAYEM – Industrial Innovations Network
- 1707 SME Support Call for Order-Based R&D Projects

1711 Artificial Intelligence Ecosystem Call

1812 Investment Based Entrepreneurship Support Programme (BIGG Investment)

1831 Climate-Informed and Green Innovation Technology Extension Programme

1832 Call for Green Transformation in Industry SAYEM Green Transformation Call

Details for these supports can be reached from www.tubitak.gov.tr

Supports Provided by Türkiye Technology Development Unity (TTGV):

- Eco-Production Industry Programme
- Climate Lab Community Programme
- Climate Pioneer Investment Programme
- Enterprise Development Portfolio

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Step-by-Step Business Guide

Business Registration Process

➤ Azerbaijan

In Azerbaijan, entrepreneurship can be carried out either by forming a legal entity or as an individual entrepreneur without establishing a legal entity. Electronic services are available for registering with the tax authority under the “single window” principle.

Registration links:

- For individuals: <https://www.taxes.gov.az/az/page/fiziki-sexsler-ucun>
- For legal entities: <https://www.taxes.gov.az/az/page/huquqi-sexsler-ucun>

Registration can also be completed quickly and electronically through “ASAN Service” and “SME Houses.” Currently, legal entity registration can be completed online in just one step within 20 minutes. The system does not require an electronic signature, and documents are submitted only through the online cabinet — no extra time or cost is involved.

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➤ Kazakhstan

Multifunctional entrepreneurship service centres (MESCs)

MESCs provide services related to accounting, tax accounting, statistical reporting, business plan development and a range of government services, including residence registration, submitting applications for property and land cadastre, obtaining electronic digital signatures (EDS), duplicate documents, pension accrual certificates, as well as property ownership or non-ownership certificates and others.

This initiative is implemented under the agreement between the Atameken NCE and the State Corporation Government for Citizens, as well as through a regional-level memorandum of cooperation. Several services are now

available in a single location, significantly simplifying the process of doing business.

MESCs across the country

Regional Chamber of Entrepreneurs in Astana

Address: 2/1 Baurzhan Momyshuly Avenue, 4th floor, Astana;

Working hours: Monday to Friday from 9:00 to 18:00, with a lunch break from 13:00 to 14:00;

Regional Chamber of Entrepreneurs in Almaty

Address: 79/71 Abylai Khan Avenue, Corner of Aiteke Bi Street, 1st floor, Almaty;

Working hours: Monday to Friday from 9:00 to 18:00, with a lunch break from 13:00 to 14:00;

Regional Chamber of Entrepreneurs in Shymkent

Address: 304 G Yerimbetov Street, Shymkent;

Working hours: Monday to Friday from 9:00 to 18:00, with a lunch break from 13:00 to 14:00;

Regional Chamber of Entrepreneurs in the West Kazakhstan Region

Address: 84 Issatay-Makhambet Street, 1st floor, Oral;

Working hours: Monday to Friday from 9:00 to 18:00, with a lunch break from 13:00 to 14:00;

Regional Chamber of Entrepreneurs in the Abay Region

Address: 100 Pushkin Street Semey;

Working hours: Monday to Friday from 9:00 to 18:00, with a lunch break from 13:00 to 14:00;

Regional Chamber of Entrepreneurs in the Atyrau Region

Address: 78 Satpaev Street, 2nd floor, Atyrau;

Working hours: Monday to Friday from 9:00 to 18:00, with a lunch break from 13:00 to 14:00;

Regional Chamber of Entrepreneurs in the Kostanay Region

Address: 114 Al-Farabi Street, 1st floor, Kostanay;

Working hours: Monday to Friday from 9:00 to 18:00, with a lunch break

from 13:00 to 14:00;

Regional Chamber of Entrepreneurs in the Mangystau Region

Building No. 2, 35 Microdistrict, 1st floor, Aktau; Contact details:
+7 702 578 31 28

Working hours: Monday to Friday from 9:00 to 18:00, with a lunch break from 13:00 to 14:00;

Regional Chamber of Entrepreneurs in the Turkistan Region

Address: 42 Kozhanov Street, Turkistan;

Working hours: Monday to Friday from 9:00 to 18:00, with a lunch break from 13:00 to 14:00;

Regional Chamber of Entrepreneurs in the Ulytau Region

Address: 25 Zheltoksan Street, Tabrys Business Centre, Zhezkazgan;

Working hours: Monday to Friday from 9:00 to 18:00, with a lunch break from 13:00 to 14:00;

Regional Chamber of Entrepreneurs in the Aktobe Region

Address: 22 Sankibay Batyr Avenue, Kazyna Business Centre, Aktobe;

Working hours: Monday to Friday from 9:00 to 18:00, with a lunch break from 13:00 to 14:00;

Regional Chamber of Entrepreneurs in the Kyzylorda Region

Address: 123 Korkyt Ata Street, Kyzylorda;

Working hours: Monday to Friday from 9:00 to 18:00, with a lunch break from 13:00 to 14:00.

E-platforms and services

eGov.kz – filing applications, registering businesses and obtaining licenses online;

G4b.kz /https://services.atameken.kz/ – online access to consultations and support measures;

Business.gov.kz – a single portal for government services for businesses;

Qoldau.kz – a platform for submitting applications for agricultural subsidies.

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➤ Kyrgyzstan

The Entrepreneurship Support Centre (ESC) in Bishkek was established with the aim of increasing the availability and quality of government, financial and consulting services for entrepreneurs through centralized services in one place – in a “one-stop-shop” format.

Location: 152 Ibraimov St., Bishkek, 2nd floor (business centre “Eldorado”); Schedule: Mon - Fri from 09:00 to 18:00, lunch break: 12:30-13:30; Contacts: +996 (312) 38 01 29; +996 (312) 38 03 06; +996 (312) 29 02 01

Basic ESC services:

- Registration, re-registration and termination of activities of legal entities and individuals (sole proprietors)
- Submission of tax and statistical reports
- Obtaining licenses, permits, certificates and extracts from state registers
- Consultations on starting and running a business, exporting, PPP, and developing business plans
- Access to the services of banks, insurance and financial organizations, including JSC “Guarantee Fund”

The agencies and organizations represented are:

Government agencies:

The State Tax Service under the Ministry of Finance of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Ministry of Justice of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Ministry of Health of the Kyrgyz Republic, the State Customs Service under the Ministry of Finance of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Financial Market Regulation and Supervision Service under the Ministry of Economy and Commerce of the Kyrgyz Republic, etc.

Financial and commercial organizations:

JSC “Aiyl Bank”, JSC “Keremet Bank”, JSC “RSK Bank”, JSC “Guarantee Fund”, JSC “State Insurance Company”, Entrepreneurship Development Fund

Who can use the services of an ESC:

All entrepreneurs registered in Bishkek, regardless of citizenship and legal form. The service is provided irrespective of registration with the district tax authorities of the capital.

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➤ Russia

Digital Platform MCII.PΦ was developed by RSMB Corporation together with the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation, with the participation of entrepreneurs themselves, to help online (step-by-step), free of charge, in a “one-stop shop” mode to start business with government support. The "Start business online" service can help authorized users of the Platform to choose the legal form that best suits needs of the business and optimal taxation system.

During the process of submitting an application for state registration, the online platform issues an electronic signature, checks a set of documents, sends an online application to the Federal Tax Service of Russia, informs the entrepreneur of the status and sends registration documents.

The online assistant will help the entrepreneur at all stages of registering business.

Also, there are more than 400 so-called “My Business” centers operating in Russian regions, which provide support to SMEs, information, consulting, educational, property, and financial support, and provide comprehensive services to SMEs operating in the area of innovation and production modernization, as well as in the area of export of goods, works, and services⁸.

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➤ Türkiye

Türkiye is a dynamic and strategic location for entrepreneurs looking to establish a presence at the crossroads of Europe and Asia. With a growing economy, a young population, and increasing global trade links, the country presents an attractive environment for both local and international business ventures. This article outlines the step-by-step process of registering a business in Türkiye, with a focus on the most common type of company: The Limited Liability Company (Ltd. Şt.).

The first step in registering a business in Türkiye is selecting the appropriate company structure. While options include Sole Proprietorships, Joint Stock Companies (JSC), and Branch Offices, the Limited Liability Company

⁸ https://economy.gov.ru/material/news/centry_moy_biznes_okazali_podderzhku_bolee_chem_613_tys_predprinimateley_i_samozanyatyh_v_2024_godu.html

(LLC) is the most popular choice due to its flexibility and relatively simple requirements. Next step is choosing a unique company name. This name must be reserved and verified through the MERSIS (Central Registration System), which is Türkiye's online business registry.

The company's Articles of Association (AoA) are a critical legal document outlining the business structure, activities, shareholders, capital, and management framework. This document must comply with the Turkish Commercial Code and be registered within the MERSIS system. Once prepared, it must be notarized by a Turkish notary.

According to Turkish law, a minimum capital of 10,000 TRY is required for an LLC. At least 25% of this capital must be deposited into a temporary bank account before registration. The remaining amount must be paid within 24 months after the registration date.

The next step is submitting your documentation to the local Trade Registry Office, which formalizes your company's legal status. The required documents typically include:

Articles of Association, Proof of capital deposit, Identification and signatures of shareholders and directors, Lease agreement for your company's address, Application form and registration fees.

Upon successful submission and approval, the company is registered, and its formation is published in the Turkish Trade Registry Gazette.

After registration, the company must be registered with the local Tax Office to receive a tax identification number. If your business activities are subject to Value Added Tax (VAT), you must apply for VAT registration as well.

If your company will employ staff, you must also register with the Social Security Institution (SGK) to ensure compliance with Türkiye's labor laws and social insurance obligations.

Following tax registration, open a permanent corporate bank account under the company's name. This account will be used for all financial operations, including transferring the remaining capital (if applicable), handling client payments, and managing employee salaries.

Certain business activities—such as operating in the food, healthcare, construction, finance, or education sectors—require additional licenses or permits from relevant ministries or local authorities. It is crucial to consult with a legal advisor or business consultant to ensure compliance with sector-specific regulations.

The overall registration process usually takes 1 to 2 weeks, assuming all documents are in order and correctly submitted. The total cost — including

legal, notary, translation, and registration fees—generally ranges between \$3,000 to \$5,000 USD, although this may vary depending on the company size and industry.

Türkiye offers a relatively straightforward and business-friendly registration process, especially for LLCs. By following the legal requirements and engaging with the appropriate government bodies, entrepreneurs can establish a legally compliant company and take advantage of Türkiye's growing market and strategic location. For foreign investors, seeking support from a local business consultant or legal expert is highly recommended to navigate regulatory nuances and language barriers.

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Licensing and Regulatory Requirements

➤ Azerbaijan

A simplified licensing and permitting mechanism is in place in Azerbaijan. Currently, only 36 types of business activities require a special license (e.g., pharmaceuticals, telecommunications, banking, handling hazardous substances). Most SMEs can operate without a license by completing state registration and following general rules.

In some cases, depending on the nature of the activity, sanitary or technical permits may be required (e.g., food production, commissioning of construction facilities).

Entrepreneurs may apply online through the "Licenses and Permits" portal by filling in the required form and uploading documents (such as educational certificates, equipment lists, etc.). The application is reviewed within 10 business days, and if all conditions are met, the license is issued. Licenses are now granted indefinitely, and fees for many activities have been reduced.

Reliable importers can benefit from the "Green Corridor" system, which significantly simplifies customs procedures.

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➤ Kazakhstan

No. Title of the legal act

1. Entrepreneur Code. <https://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/K1500000375>;
2. Civil Code. <https://adilet.zan.kz/eng/docs/K940001000> ;
3. Tax Code. <https://adilet.zan.kz/eng/docs/K1700000120>;
4. Labour Code. <https://adilet.zan.kz/eng/docs/K1500000414>;

No. Title of the legal act

5. Law on the Support of Innovation.
https://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/Z060000135_z060135.htm;
6. Law on Natural Monopolies.
<https://adilet.zan.kz/eng/docs/Z1800000204>;
7. On Approval of the Rules, Forms of Support and Other Conditions Required for the State Non-Financial Support to Private Entrepreneurship Entities Granted in Various Sectors of the Economy, which Fall within the Competence of Several Sectoral Public Authorities. Decree No. 626 of the Government of Kazakhstan.
<https://adilet.zan.kz/eng/docs/P2400000626/info>;
8. On Some Measures of State Support for Private Entrepreneurship. Decree No. 754 of the Government of Kazakhstan.
<https://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/P2400000754>
Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan

Codes and laws

Entrepreneur Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 375-V 3PK of 29 October 2015;

Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Administrative Offenses No. 235-V 3PK of 5 July 2014;

Civil Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 268-XIII of 27 December 1994;

Civil Procedure Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 377-V of 31 October 2015;

Criminal Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 226-V 3PK of 3 July 2014;

Labour Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 414-V 3PK of 23 November 2015;

Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Taxes and Other Obligatory Payments to the Budget (Tax Code) No. 120-VI 3PK of 25 December 2017;

Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan on the Health of the People and the Health Care System No. 360-VI 3PK of 7 July 2020;

Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Permissions and Notifications No. 202-V 3PK of 16 May 2014;

Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Self-Regulation No. 390-V 3PK of 12 November 2015;

Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Public Services No. 88-V of 15 April 2013;

Law on Compulsory Social Medical Insurance No. 405-V 3PK of 16 November 2015.

In addition, business activities in each field are regulated by the relevant sectoral legislation.

Regulations

Order of the Minister of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Approval of the List of Information Instruments No. 107 of 28 December 2018;

Order of the Acting Minister of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 48 of 22 June 2022 on Approval of the Rules for the Development of the Risk Assessment and Risk Management System by Regulatory Government Bodies and on Amendments to Order of the Acting Minister of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 3 of 31 July 2018 on Approval of the Rules for the Development of the Risk Assessment System and Form of Checklists by Government Bodies;

Orders of central government bodies approving checklists in various areas of control;

Sanitary and epidemiological requirements for facilities across various sectors of activity.

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➤ Kyrgyzstan

Modern measures to improve the business environment

The following measures are being implemented in the Kyrgyz Republic to improve the business climate and reduce the administrative burden:

- Implementation of the “one-stop shop” principle when registering a business through an online platform;
- Provision of an electronic digital signature (EDS) and online access to permits;
- Access to government support through the Entrepreneurship Development Fund, the National Investment Agency under the President of the Kyrgyz Republic and Entrepreneurship Support Centres (ESC);
- Simplified financial reporting for SMEs, especially those applying special

tax regimes;

- Digitalization of interaction with government agencies through the Tunduk platform, including the development of electronic document management and API integration with tax authorities.

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➤ **Russia**

The licensing procedure is regulated by the Federal Law "On Licensing of Certain Types of Activities" dated 04.05.2011 N 99⁹.

Most SMEs can operate without a license by completing state registration and following general rules in accordance with other federal laws governing entrepreneurship in Russia in general, including: Federal Law No. 99 dated 04.05.2011 "On Licensing of Certain Types of Activities", Federal Law No. 129 dated 08.08.2001 "On the State Registration of Legal Entities and Individual Entrepreneurs", Federal Law No. 294 dated 26.12.2008 "On the Protection of the Rights of Legal Entities and Individual Entrepreneurs in the Implementation of the State Control (Supervision) and Municipal Control", Federal Law No. 135 dated 26.07.2006 "On Protection of Competition" and others.

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➤ **Türkiye**

1. Turkish Commercial Code (TCC) – Law No. 6102

Effective Date: July 1, 2012

The Turkish Commercial Code is the primary piece of legislation regulating all commercial entities in Türkiye, including their incorporation, structure, governance, and liquidation.

Key Provisions:

Defines the types of legal entities (LLC, JSC, partnerships, etc.)

Sets out the rules for incorporation, shareholding, and capita

Regulates financial reporting and auditing obligation

Requires companies to maintain proper corporate governance structure

⁹ https://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_113658/

Mandates registration with the Trade Registry

2. Turkish Code of Obligations – Law No. 6098

Effective Date: July 1, 2012

This code complements the TCC by regulating contractual relationships, including those between shareholders, employers, and third parties.

Relevant Sections:

General provisions on contracts and liabilities

Employment agreements and obligation

Lease and service contracts (relevant to company offices or consultants)

3. Tax Procedure Law – Law No. 213

This law governs all tax-related procedures for individuals and legal entities operating in Türkiye.

Key Requirements:

Taxpayer registration and tax number issuance

Bookkeeping and invoice issuance rules

Value Added Tax (VAT), Corporate Tax, and other obligations

Filing deadlines and penalties for non-compliance

4. Foreign Direct Investment Law – Law No. 4875

Purpose: Encourages and regulates foreign investment in Türkiye.

This law ensures that foreign investors have the same rights and obligations as Turkish citizens when establishing a business.

Investor Rights:

Equal treatment for foreign and domestic investors

No prior approval required for most foreign-owned companies

Free transfer of profits, dividends, and capital

Protection of intellectual property

5. Social Insurance and General Health Insurance Law – Law No. 5510

Covers social security obligations for companies hiring employees.

Requirements:

Register with the Social Security Institution (SGK)

Pay monthly social security premiums

Provide health and retirement benefits

6. Labor Law – Law No. 4857

This law governs employment relationships in Türkiye.

Obligations for Employers:

Minimum wage compliance

Working hours and overtime rules

Severance pay and termination procedures

Occupational health and safety standards

7. Electronic Signature Law – Law No. 5070

Enables businesses to use electronic signatures in official transactions and digital contracts, including company registration through MERSIS (Central Registration System).

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Access to Finance and Investment Opportunities

Financing Options (Grants, Loans, Venture Capital, Angel Investors)

➤ Azerbaijan

Various public instruments are used to support SME financing in Azerbaijan, including:

- **Concessional loans:** Provided through the Azerbaijan Business Development Fund (ABDF), the Agricultural Credit and Development Agency (AKIA), and the Innovation and Digital Development Agency (IDDA). Loan amounts range from 5,000 AZN to 10 million AZN. Interest rates vary between 5–7%, and grace periods are applied.
- **Loan guarantees and interest rate subsidies:** Offered by the Mortgage and Credit Guarantee Fund (MCGF) and ABDF. These guarantees and subsidies mainly target entrepreneurs operating in the non-oil sector and in the territories liberated from occupation.
- **Investment financing:** Implemented through the Innovation and Digital Development Agency and the Azerbaijan Business Development Fund (ABDF). These mechanisms are applied in the form of participation in charter capital and share acquisition.
- **Equity Investment:** Carried out through IRIA and the Azerbaijan Investment Company by participating in charter capital or acquiring shares.
- **Grant Financing:** Provided by KOBIA and IRIA for projects related to innovation, education, and business support. The maximum grant amount is 500,000 AZN from IRIA and 20,000 AZN from KOBIA.
- **Venture Capital:** Startups can receive investments through the "Caucasus Ventures" fund with the participation of IRIA.

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➤ **Kazakhstan**

Financial mechanisms:

Subsidizing loan interest rates

The government compensates part of the interest rate on bank loans, making borrowing more affordable for businesses. The Damu Fund etc.

Loan guarantee

The government (through the Damu Fund) provides partial coverage of the borrower's obligations to the bank.

Business development grants

First-time entrepreneurs and SMEs receive grant funding for the development of their projects.

Programmes through the Damu Fund and local executive authorities.

Microcredit

Offering microloans on favourable terms (especially for start-ups and rural businesses).

Export insurance and subsidies

Offered through KazakhExport and QazTrade to SME exporters: contract insurance, reimbursement of certification fees and logistics costs.

Non-financial mechanisms:

Consulting services in multifunctional entrepreneurship service centres and business service centres

Free consultations on business, taxation, legal matters and company registration.

Infrastructure mechanisms:

Multifunctional entrepreneurship service centres (MESCs)

Unified platforms that provide businesses with access to the full range of government services in one place.

Business incubators and industrial parks

Offering premises, equipment and legal support on favourable terms.

Digitalized procedures

Online business registration and submission of application for support measures through eGov and Atameken Services.

The current Single Comprehensive Business Support Programme provides for the merger of the Business Roadmap and Economy of Simple Things programmes. The Programme primarily focuses on the development of competitive, import-substituting and export-oriented industries, as well as the creation of new jobs.

The Programme consists of six tracks:

I track Microentrepreneurship;

II track Small and Medium Entrepreneurship;

III track Small, Medium and Large Entrepreneurship in Manufacturing and Services;

IV track Entrepreneurship in Single-Industry Towns, Small Cities and Rural Areas;

V track Social Entrepreneurship;

VI track Stock Exchange.

Across these tracks, priority in budget allocations for new project subsidies will be given to enterprises operating in the manufacturing sector.

The Programme provides for a phased transition from subsidies to guarantee instruments and other measures of non-financial support. New approaches to subsidizing SME projects involve a differentiated method of subsidizing, with a gradual transition to market-based conditions.

That is, with the subsidy applied, the end borrower will be financed at a rate of 8% for the first three years, 9% in the fourth year and 10% in the fifth year. This approach will reduce the burden on the budget and enable a gradual transition of businesses to market-based financing mechanisms.

To enhance the effectiveness of government support measures, reciprocal obligations have been strengthened. In addition, baseline entry criteria have been established for selecting competitive SMEs. That said, the gradual shift away from subsidies includes an expansion of loan guarantees.

The guarantee instrument is one of the most effective measures for addressing the problem businesses face with insufficient collateral for bank loans.

Under the Single Programme, the loan amount eligible for the guarantee instrument was increased to 3.5 billion tenge, with guarantees provided for up

to 50%, and the list of the Common Classifier of Economic Activities for the use of this instrument was expanded.

The new approach to guarantees involves a transition to market conditions, where entrepreneurs will pay a commission for guarantees exceeding 500 million tenge.

For social entrepreneurs, the guarantee amount has been increased to 1 billion tenge.

The Programme also provides for alternative financing instruments such as syndicated lending, extended terms for bonded loans, grants for social entrepreneurs and participants in the One Village – One Product project, as well as the implementation of regional programmes through subsidies for agricultural production cooperatives.

The new tracks and approaches of the Single Comprehensive Programme will undoubtedly ensure the continuous development of businesses throughout all stages of their operations.

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➤ **Russia**

Preferential loans and bank guarantees are the two pillars of financial support.

A simplified method of obtaining a loan for SMEs with insufficient collateral is the "umbrella" mechanism, operated by RSMB Corporation with its own guarantee for the loan provided by a commercial bank (30 banks are accredited). The guarantee can be worth up to RUB 1 billion, up to 50% of the loan amount and for a period of up to 10 years.

Microfinance organizations (MFOs) (165 registered MFOs by March 2025) and regional guarantee organizations (RGOs), of which there are more than 90, also participate in the SME financing processes providing microloans and guarantees accordingly.

SMEs can also benefit from preferential leasing conditions by contacting SME Leasing.

Other SME financing programs are also being implemented. These include the Preferential Lending Program of the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Russian Federation. It focuses on investment and working capital purposes for SMEs in the machine tool and robotics sectors. Companies can obtain a loan from the SME Bank at a preferential rate.

The service infrastructure for SMEs support in Russia, along with state specialized development institutes, includes:

- 1) regional centers and agencies for entrepreneurship development;
- 2) state and municipal foundations for supporting entrepreneurship;
- 3) joint-stock investment foundations and closed-end mutual investment foundations that raise investments for SMEs;
- 4) business parks and organizations managing business parks;
- 5) marketing and educational-business centers;
- 6) industrial technology parks and management companies of industrial technology parks;
- 7) state foundations for the support of scientific, scientific-technical, and innovative activities operating in accordance with the laws of the Russian Federation;
- 8) microfinance organizations providing microloans to small and medium enterprises and (or) organizations that form the infrastructure for small and medium enterprises support (hereinafter referred to as microfinance organizations for entrepreneurial financing);
- 9) other entities.

Large companies launch accelerators, educational forums, organize project competitions, case championships and support student business incubators.

The Agency for Strategic Initiatives and RSMB Corporation are holding a federal competition called "Create OURS", in which young people aged 14-28 who want to start their own business or have recently started a business can compete for a grant of 1 million rubles and receive expert advice on attracting investment, promoting business in the media and selecting support measures.

The Innovation Support Fund implements a number of initiatives- "InnoShkolnik", "START", "UMNIK" and "Student Start-Ups" programs, which provide grants of up to 1 million rubles in areas such as digital technologies, new devices and smart production technologies, biotechnology, creative industries, medicine and health-saving technologies, and resource-saving energy.

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➤ Türkiye

In Türkiye, to facilitate SMEs' access to finance, ensuring that they are able to use credit under appropriate conditions, KOSGEB SME Financing Support Programme has been commenced where all or part of the interest/profit share of the loan is covered by KOSGEB after the bank has provided loans to the enterprises.

Registered and active SMEs which already exists in KOSGEB database with up-to-date SME Information Statement, without any prohibition record under KOSGEB Support Facilities and one of covered business type under this program are eligible for application.

Entrepreneurs and SMEs acting in strategic or priority sectors can benefit from this programme. Within the scope of this programme, loan types are as follows;

Working Capital Loan (up to 18 months and max. loan amount is 50.000 TL, if the entrepreneur is young (under 30 age), female, disabled, veteran or first degree martyr relative. max. loan amount is 70.000 TL)

Machinery and Equipment Loan (up to 36 months and max. loan amount for SMEs in strategic or priority sectors is 500.000 TL)

Financial mechanisms proposed to SMEs in Türkiye are generally conducted by Credit Guarantee Fund (KGF A.Ş.). These mechanisms mainly aim to provide guarantee for banks or public institutions.

Credit Mechanisms Provided to SMEs by Credit Guarantee Fund (KGF A.Ş.):

- Export Support Package
- Investment Support Package
- Support Package for Operating Expenses
- Investment-Project Finance Support Package
- Manufacturing Industry Support Package
- Operating Expenses Support Package for 6th February 2023 Earthquakes
- Investment Support Package for 6th February 2023 Earthquakes
- Support Package for Severance Payment of Retirement Age Victims
- Regional SME Support
- Support Package for Activities Generating Fx-Based Income
- Support Package for Women Entrepreneurs

- Entrepreneur Support Package
- Support Package for Green Transformation and Energy Efficiency
- Technology Support Package
- Support Package for Digital Transformation
- Educational Support Package
- Financial Energy Support Package for Agricultural Production
- Enterprise Expenditures Support Package
- TURWIB Programme Support Package
- TKYB Support Package
- Cold Air Units and Frigorific Vehicles Support Package
- Additional Employment Support Package
- Manufacturing Based Import Substitution Support Package
- Treasury Fund (20 Billion TL) (KOBİ Deger Loans I and II)
- Treasury Fund (35 Billion TL)
- Treasury Fund (52,5 Billion TL)
- Treasury Fund (200 Billion TL)
- Ekonomi Deger Loans
- TOBB Nefes Loan 2020 Support

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Market Entry Strategies

Finding Business Partners and Networks

➤ Azerbaijan

For SMEs to enter new markets and strengthen their position in existing ones, networking, identifying partners, and understanding export procedures are essential. In Azerbaijan, several state and private initiatives support this goal:

- **Business Associations and Chambers of Commerce:** Through platforms such as the National Confederation of Entrepreneurs (ASK), SMEs can build connections with local and international businesses and exchange experience.
- **KOBIA Initiatives:** Programs like the “Exporters’ Club,” networking events at SME Houses, and regional business forums help entrepreneurs expand their networks.
- **International Events and Trade Missions:** Participation in exhibitions and export missions is supported by the state, often resulting in signed international cooperation agreements.
- **Online Platforms and Digital Networking:** Platforms like Azexport.az and other B2B resources help SMEs promote their products to foreign buyers.
- **Supply Chain Integration:** SMEs can secure consistent orders by becoming subcontractors to large companies.

Role of Business Councils

Business Councils play a significant role in expanding SMEs’ international relations. These platforms, supported by KOBIA, facilitate mutual business missions, meetings, and experience exchange to foster new partnerships.

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Specialized institutions supporting SME development in Kazakhstan are the following:

4.1 Damu Entrepreneurship Development Fund JSC

The primary government institution supporting SMEs:

Subsidizing loan interest rates;

Providing loan guarantees; Issuing grants;

Consulting services through multifunctional entrepreneurship service centres (MESCs) and support programmes.

4.2 Kazakhstan Industry and Export Center QazIndustry JSC

Supporting industry and localizing production:

Subsidies for production costs;

Supporting the improvement of labour productivity.

4.3 National Agency for the Development of Innovations QazInnovations JSC

Supporting startups and innovative businesses:

Innovation grants;

Supporting R&D (research and development);

Acceleration services.

4.4 KazakhExport JSC (Export Insurance Company)

Supporting foreign economic activities of SMEs:

Export contract insurance;

Export financing;

Financial guarantee support.

4.5 KAZAKH INVEST JSC

Investment promotion and support for investment projects in Kazakhstan, including those involving SMEs.

4.6 Baiterek Fund through its subsidiaries

A wide range of SME support is provided within the overall Baiterek ecosystem through Damu, QazIndustry and QazInnovations.

4.7 Microcredit funds and microfinance institutions (MFIs)

In the regions, microfinance programmes for first-time entrepreneurs are often implemented with the support of local executive authorities and the Damu Fund.

Government programmes and initiatives:

Digital Economy National Project

Technology startup support programme. Creating conditions for the rapid launch and scaling of IT projects.

Astana Hub Programme

The International Technopark of IT Startups in Astana.

Offering:

Tax benefits (exemption from VAT, CIT and social tax).

Free tuition through accelerators (Startup School, Scale Up).

Mentoring and access to international markets.

Grant support for the development of startups.

The Seed Money programme from Astana Hub

Direct financing in the early stages. The amount of grants: 5-20 million tenge for MVP and pilot projects.

Financial support and venture investments QazTech Ventures

(subsidiary of Baiterek Holding)

Co-investing in startups together with venture funds.

Programmes:

Matching Funding Programme (50/50 co-financing with private investors).

Venture funds

MOST Ventures, White Hill Capital, My Ventures and others.

Investing in IT, fintech, biotech and agrotech projects.

Grant support

Astana Hub grants for product development, market entry and user engagement.

Grants from the Ministry of Digital Development, Innovation and Aerospace Industry:

For R&D (research and development).

For early-stage startups.

Infrastructure for startups

Technoparks and business incubators

Astana Hub – largest.

TechGarden (Almaty) – technopark of new technologies.

StartUp Kazakhstan – startup acceleration and scaling programme.

Coworking spaces and accelerators

MOST Business Incubator, ID Labs, QazInnovations.

Offering a workspace, legal and marketing support.

Tax and administrative benefits

Astana Hub residents are exempt from:

Corporate income tax.

VAT.

Social tax.

Simplified procedure for obtaining permits to attract foreign specialists.

Support	Specific measures
Funding	Grants, seed investments, venture funds
Training	Free accelerators, startup schools
Benefits	Tax exemptions for IT startups
Infrastructure	Technoparks, coworking spaces, incubators

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➤ **Russia**

In order to find business partners and present own company and products, it is convenient to use the Industrial Cooperation and Distribution service of МСП.РФ Platform. Authorized users of the Platform may offer their products and services to potential customers and publish their requests to find suppliers of non-food, industrial and food products¹⁰.

Manufacturers of products may publish information on their companies, products and services, and offer them directly to potential customers.

For further assistance, the entrepreneurs can contact the managers of the Service through the e-mail: b2b@corpmsp.ru.

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¹⁰ <https://mcp.rf/services/support/filter/>

➤ Türkiye

Finding business partners and building networks in Türkiye involves a combination of leveraging digital platforms, engaging with local business organizations, and attending relevant events.

Online Platforms

- StartupTürkiye / StartupIstanbul – Platforms promoting the Turkish startup ecosystem. Good for tech and innovation partnerships.
- Kompas Türkiye, Yellow Pages Türkiye, or Türkiye Exporters Directory – For B2B searches by industry.

Chambers of Commerce & Business Councils

- TOBB (The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Türkiye) – Main national body. Useful for finding industry-specific contacts.
- DEİK (Foreign Economic Relations Board of Türkiye) – Facilitates international partnerships.
- Local Chambers (e.g., Istanbul Chamber of Commerce) – Valuable for regional networking.

Trade Fairs and Conferences

- CNR Expo Istanbul and TÜYAP Fairs – Major venues hosting international trade fairs across industries.
- Sector-specific expos like WorldFood Istanbul, WIN EURASIA (Industry), or IFM (fashion, construction, etc.).

Embassies and Trade Offices

Business Incubators and Accelerators

- ITU Çekirdek, KWORKS, and Teknopark Istanbul – Support innovation and startups. Excellent for tech collaboration.
- Government support programs like TÜBİTAK and KOSGEB often facilitate partner finding.

Professional and Industry Associations

- Associations like TIM (Turkish Exporters Assembly), TÜSİAD (Turkish Industry and Business Association), or MÜSİAD (Independent Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association).

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Import-Export Regulations

➤ Azerbaijan

The Customs Code and other regulatory acts serve as the main legal documents governing import-export operations. The State Customs Committee applies customs duties and oversees tariff and non-tariff regulations. Some products are subject to export duties or benefit from customs exemptions, and import VAT and excise taxes are applicable.

To promote exports, the Azerbaijan Export and Investment Promotion Agency (AZPROMO) provides support to entrepreneurs for participation in international exhibitions, access to foreign markets, and attracting investment. Within the “Made in Azerbaijan” initiative, government subsidies and favorable programs are available for exporters. Azerbaijan has also joined several international trade and customs agreements to simplify procedures and expand exporters’ access to global markets.

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➤ Kazakhstan

On 1 July 2024, the head of state signed the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Public Procurement (*hereinafter – the Law*). The Law entered into force on 1 January 2025.

In accordance with paragraph 7 of Article 27 of the Law, public procurement **from SMEs** is carried out based on the list of goods, works and services in accordance with the procedure and volumes approved by the authorized body.

According to Appendix 3 to the Order of the Minister of Finance of the Republic of Kazakhstan as of 8 October 2024 No. 677 on approval of the list of goods, works, services, rules and volume of public procurement carried out from SMEs (*hereinafter – the Order*), public procurement of goods, works and services the cost of which **does not exceed fifty thousand times the monthly calculation index (MCI) (196.6 million tenge in 2025)**, established for the corresponding financial year by the law on the republican budget, **is carried out from SMEs**.

Thus, according to the Order, **priority has been set for SMEs** in the implementation of public procurement of **goods, works and services up to 50,000 MCI**, according to the list specified in Appendix 1 to the Order:

- purchase of goods from individuals and legal entities listed in **the register of domestic producers of goods, works and services** (*priority for domestic producers*);

- works, except for construction, performed by individuals and legal entities of the Republic of Kazakhstan (*all works, with the exception of works carried out by means of a competition using the rating-point system*);

- services provided by individuals and legal entities of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

For reference: according to paragraph 2 of the Order, the rules do **not apply** to public procurement of goods, works and services carried out in accordance **with the list of goods, works and services for which the method of public procurement is determined by the authorized body**, as well as to public procurement of goods, works and services for which **exemptions from the national legislation have been established by the decision of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan**.

The above-mentioned norm was introduced as part of the implementation of the new law on public procurement in order to **support SMEs**, as well as **increase competitiveness** in procurement.

Procurement of Samruk-Kazyna JSC

In the procurement of Samruk-Kazyna JSC, there are mandatory evaluation criteria for SMEs when comparing tender bids from potential suppliers that affect a conditional price reduction. If the potential supplier **meets the status of an SME**, a **conditional price reduction of 1%** is provided based on a document issued in accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Moreover, according to paragraph 11 of article 42 of the Procurement Procedure, **if the conditional prices of the tender price proposals are equal, a potential supplier who is an SME is recognized as the winner** (*if there is no producer of the purchased goods among the procurement participants*).

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➤ Russia

In addition to the main federal laws, Federal Law No. 164 of 08.12.2003 “On the Fundamentals of State Regulation of Foreign Trade Activities” also regulates export-import activities. The law defines the powers of the Russian Federation in the field of foreign trade activities in order to ensure favorable conditions for foreign trade activities, as well as to protect the economic and political interests of the Russian Federation.

JSC Russian Export Center (REC) is a state institute for supporting non-resource exports, REC conducts analytical work, offers services to exporters for insuring foreign trade transactions, helps to participate in international tenders, assists in finding foreign counterparties, consults on customs clearance of goods, and provides credit and guarantee support to businesses. The REC has also exclusive authority to issue Free Sale Certificate.

In 2022, the REC received a mandate to support the import of products necessary for the production of goods and the implementation of investment projects.

Assistance to Russian exporters in obtaining permission for processing in the customs territory, in order to be exempt from import customs duties and VAT in relation to foreign goods that are used in the production of exported products.

Export support centers provide support to small and medium-sized businesses at all stages of the export transaction: from basic consultations on foreign economic activity and training to finding a partner, organizing the participation of SMEs in business missions and international exhibitions both in Russia, both at home and abroad, assistance in placing SMEs on electronic trading platforms, in bringing products into compliance with mandatory requirements (standardization, certification, necessary permits) and in ensuring the protection of intellectual property abroad, including obtaining patents¹¹.

Currently, there are 82 Export Support Centers operating in 82 constituent entities of the Russian Federation.

Case Studies and Success Stories

A number of Russian SMEs have followed a successful development path and gained recognition in both local and international markets. Below are three

notable examples from different sectors:

1. **EastAgro Don Ltd** - the first and only plant in Russia for comprehensive processing of Topinambur (Топинамбур), combining innovative technologies and environmentally friendly raw materials. The company not only produces functional ingredients but is also creating a new industry in the country's agricultural sector. **EastAgro Don** company received financial support from RSMB Corporation and SME Bank.

Key Advantages:

- Raw Materials: Topinambur is grown on 2,000 hectares in the Central Black Earth region, ensuring quality control "from field to product".
- Production capacity: The plant produces up to 5,000 tons of Topinambur-based ingredients annually. These prebiotic ingredients contain up to 70% native inulin — a key component for gastrointestinal health.
- Certification: Compliance with international standards is confirmed by ISO 22000:2018, FSSC 22000, and "Organic System" certifications.

Areas of Application:



- Food industry;
- Production of feed and preventive preparations for pets;
- Premixes for productive animals.

The use of EastAgro Don Ltd ingredients with high native inulin content not only enhances the nutritional value of products but also transforms them into functional health solutions. In the food industry, these additives enrich bakery products, dairy products, and dietary supplements, promoting better digestion and immune system strengthening. In animal feed, prebiotics improve nutrient absorption, reduce disease risks, and enhance productivity in poultry and pig farming.

Export Expansion:

The plant's products have already gained international recognition. In May 2023, a strategic protocol was signed with China, allowing the import of EastAgro Don Ltd ingredients into the Chinese market. The company's plans are ambitious:

- Export Geography: China, EAEU countries, India, Vietnam, Iran, UAE, Turkey, Qatar, Egypt, Indonesia.
- Goals for 2024-2025: Entering the markets of Southeast Asia and the Middle East with a supply volume of over 3,000 tons per year.
- Infrastructure: Expanding production capacities and opening representative offices in key regions.

The company doesn't just process Topinambur—it creates a new standard for functional nutrition and veterinary products. Focus on quality, government support (including agreements at the level of the heads of Russia and China), and ambitious plans make EastAgro Don Ltd a key player in the global prebiotics market.

2. The story of **Moda CHE LLC** began in 2008 when they, along with a small team of fashion-loving enthusiasts, decided to bring something fresh and innovative to the industry¹².

From the very beginning, their ambition was to make brands recognizable and popular not only domestically, but also internationally.

To achieve this goal, they consistently participated in fashion shows, exhibitions, and festivals such as Milan Fashion Week, EFU, Sochi Fashion Week, the Sheikh Zayed Heritage Festival in the UAE (Abu Dhabi), and even opened Moscow Fashion Week in partnership with an artist and a choreographer Mario Forelli.

They presented their work at exhibitions in Kazakhstan and Turkey, and participated in business missions to Uzbekistan and China, expanding our horizons and establishing new connections.

Their collections were showcased at the “Top Model Russia” and “Russian Beauty” competitions, reflecting their partnerships with the organizers of these prestigious events.

Currently, they are working on creating a unique show, which they are eager to present on the international stage. They plan to showcase their national and ethnic flavor with collections from Russian designers on the most beautiful and titled models of all ages, historical and modern trends in hairdressing, and talented musicians and artists of various genres, all interwoven into a unique, original narrative inspired by Russian fairy tales.”

Their goal is to demonstrate that fashion can embody a piece of a nation’s history and culture.

All of this is made possible by the professional community of creative individuals whom they engage in collaboration with our company.

Goals for 2025-2026 Project Geography: China, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and others. Scope of Application: Presenting the show at event-based activities: exhibitions, forums, and business missions; Presenting show-performances on theatrical and concert stages; Organizing fashion shows, beauty pageants, and fashion weeks. Duration: from 3 days to 3 months. Mission: Through culture and art, to strengthen relationships between

¹² <https://sugarbrand.ru/index.php/ru/>

countries and create unique shows for expanding horizons and fostering a holistic understanding of the world”.



3. **ROBBO** is a sovereign educational robotics platform for teaching children computer science, robotics, 3D prototyping based on free hardware and software¹³.



The only platform in the world that trains future engineers and removes dependence on proprietary technologies and software, rather than developing users of foreign commercial products.

ROBBO CLASS is a STEM solution for existing educational institutions for children from 5 to 15+ years old, as well as university students.

ROBBO is a leadership project of the Agency for Strategic Initiatives (ASI Russia), National Technological Initiative Leadership Project (Russia), SKOLKOVO Russia Resident and Member of the National Technological Initiative Educational Clubs Movement.

¹³ <https://robbo.ru/>

In 2024, the company became a Resident of the Vorobyovy Gory Innovative Scientific and Technological Center at Moscow State University (Lomonosov Cluster), opened representative offices in MIPT and the Phys-Tech Lyceum of Moscow (the most significant leadership brands in technological education in Russia for many years).

The ROBBO company received financial support from RSMB Corporation and SME Bank. The ROBBO project was supported by the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin within the framework of the ASI Russia forum “Strong Ideas for New Times”.

President Putin instructed to assist in the development of the ROBBO platform after a meeting with the company’s founder Pavel Frolov in July 2022.



ROBBO Achievements:

- Winner of the St. Petersburg Government competition for "Best Innovative Project in the Industrial Sector";
- Winner of the St. Petersburg Government's "Exporter of the Year" competition in the "Breakthrough of the Year" category;
- Won the championship in the "Best Social Project of 2018" competition;
- Won the “Exporter of the Year 2021” competition;
- Winner of the prestigious international competition Google RISE (Roots in Science and Engineering);
- Won the FINLANDING business competition organized by the Finnish government;
- Won the Fukuoka Government Technology Project Competition in Japan;
- Winning the China Innovation Competition held in Jianye District, Nanjing in 2021(organized by the government of China);
- Selected as one of the "Top Ten European Education Projects in 2022" by "Educational Technology Insights" magazine;
- Won the “Worlddidac exceptional product 2023” issued by the 20th

World WORLDDIDAC Award.

The company's top manager has been honored to become Worlddidac's consul in 2024, an elected position for two years that gives the company an advantage in spreading its ideas and educational approaches to the community of educators and school managers around the world.

ROBBO key numbers:

- 100,000+ students globally;
- 43+ countries;
- 650+ schools and training centers ROBBO plans to enter Israel, Republic of Korea, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Bangladesh, Kyrgyzstan, Thailand, Türkiye, UAE, Egypt, Uzbekistan, India, Vietnam, Iran, Qatar. ROBBO now has offices and manufacturing in the Russian Federation, People's Republic of China.

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➤ Türkiye

Türkiye's position as a bridge between Europe and Asia makes it a vital hub for international trade. The country has harmonized much of its trade legislation with the European Union (EU) due to the EU-Türkiye Customs Union, which facilitates smoother trade relations. Below is a detailed guide to the regulations governing imports and exports in Türkiye.

Legal Framework

Primary Laws and Agreements:

- Customs Law No. 4458: Main legal basis for import/export operations and customs procedures
- Foreign Trade Law No. 1567: Regulates foreign trade policy and controls.
- EU-Türkiye Customs Union Agreement (1995): Eliminates tariffs and quotas on industrial goods between Türkiye and EU member states
- Anti-Smuggling Law No. 5607: Addresses illegal trade and non-compliance.
- VAT Law No. 3065: Governs the application of VAT on imports.

Key Authorities and Institutions

- Ministry of Trade – Oversees all foreign trade regulations and policies.
- Customs Directorate General – Manages customs enforcement and procedures.
- Turkish Standards Institution (TSE) – Ensures product compliance with Turkish standards.
- Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Türkiye (TOBB) – Issues certain certificates (e.g., Certificates of Origin).
- Exporters' Associations – Handle export registration and documentation.

Import Regulations

- Import License: Not needed for most goods, but required for specific controlled items (e.g., chemicals, medical equipment, food products).
- Customs Declaration: Submitted electronically via Single Window System (Tek Pencere Sistemi).
- Commercial Invoice: Must contain seller, buyer, goods description, value, and Incoterms.
- Bill of Lading or Air Waybill: Proof of shipment.
- Certificate of Origin: Confirms the origin of goods.
- Customs Duties & Taxes:
 - Customs duty
 - Value Added Tax (18% standard rate)
 - Special Consumption Tax (SCT) for specific products (e.g., alcohol, tobacco, cars)

Products must comply with Turkish/European standards. Certain goods require CE marking, TSE certification, or conformity assessment reports.

Export Regulations

Exporter Registration: Company must register with a relevant Exporters' Association.

Electronic Export Declaration (ETGB): Filed via Turkish Customs' online platform.

Standard Export Documents:

- Invoice
- Packing List
- Certificate of Origin
- EUR.1 / ATR Movement Certificate (for trade with EU)

- Export License (if applicable)
- Transport and insurance documents

Customs and Incentives:

Exports are VAT-exempt, but exporters can apply for a VAT refund.

Government incentives include:

- Export credits and insurance (via Türk Eximbank)
- R&D and marketing support
- Trade fairs and international promotion subsidies

Restricted and Prohibited Goods

Examples of Restricted Goods (require permits), Pharmaceuticals, Radioactive materials, Military equipment, Food and agricultural products (require health certificates), Prohibited Items, Narcotics, Obscene materials, Certain pesticides and chemicals (as per EU directives)

Free Zones and Special Trade Areas

Türkiye operates Free Zones (Serbest Bölgeler), which allow companies to:

- Import raw materials and export finished products without customs duties or VAT
- Benefit from simplified procedures and tax incentives
- Be located near major ports (e.g., Istanbul, Mersin, İzmir)

Trade Agreements

Türkiye has signed Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with over 20 countries, including:

- EFTA countries (Switzerland, Norway, etc.)
- South Korea
- United Kingdom (post-Brexit FTA)

These agreements often provide preferential tariff rates and simplified documentation for eligible goods.

Türkiye's import and export system is modern, integrated with international standards, and particularly streamlined for trade with the EU due to the Customs Union. While the process is generally business-friendly, compliance

with product standards, proper documentation, and understanding customs procedures are critical for smooth operations.

Case Studies and Success Stories

Lots of Turkish SMEs and startups have followed successful development path and gained recognition in both local and international markets. Below are three notable examples from different sectors:

1. Trendyol



Trendyol was founded in 2010 by Demet Mutlu, a visionary entrepreneur who sought to revolutionize the Turkish retail market. The idea behind Trendyol was to create an online marketplace that would cater to the needs of Turkish consumers by offering a wide range of products, from fashion to electronics, with the convenience of home delivery.

Demet Mutlu had a background in business and management, having studied at Stanford University. Before launching the company, she had experience working in e-commerce and retail in the United States. This experience helped her understand the dynamics of online shopping and how the Turkish market could benefit from a modern, digital shopping platform.

At the time, the e-commerce landscape in Türkiye was still in its infancy, and the company's business model was based on providing discounted fashion and popular products via a simple and easy-to-navigate website.

Trendyol quickly became one of the largest e-commerce platforms in Türkiye. Its ability to offer a diverse range of products, from clothing to electronics, combined with significant discounts and promotions, resonated with Turkish shoppers.

In 2011, the company secured its first major investment from Tiger Global,

a prominent venture capital firm. This allowed the company to scale quickly, investing in technology and logistics.

By 2012, Trendyol's platform had grown to over 1 million registered users. The company also began to expand its product range, introducing categories like home goods, beauty products, and baby care.

As the platform's user base expanded, the company worked on improving its logistics and delivery capabilities. This was crucial in a country like Türkiye, where geographical challenges and varying infrastructure could affect timely deliveries.

During this period, Trendyol made significant strides not only in the Turkish market but also on the international stage.

A defining moment in the company's history came in 2018 when Alibaba invested \$1 billion in the company. Alibaba, the Chinese e-commerce giant, acquired a majority stake, securing 70% ownership. This partnership allowed Trendyol to expand rapidly and benefit from Alibaba's technological expertise, particularly in logistics and cloud computing.

With this backing, the company accelerated its efforts to expand its operations across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. Alibaba's involvement also helped Trendyol improve its technology stack and data analytics, leading to better customer experiences.

By the end of 2019, the company had positioned itself as the market leader in the Turkish e-commerce space. It was already one of the most popular shopping platforms, with millions of active users and a growing product catalog that included over 500,000 products from various sellers.

Trendyol's logistics network was key to its success. It built a strong infrastructure of warehouses, fulfillment centers, and delivery systems to ensure that products could be delivered quickly and efficiently across Türkiye.

In 2021, the company reached a significant milestone when it became Türkiye's first decacorn (a company valued at over \$10 billion). This was a huge achievement not just for the company but for Türkiye's tech startup ecosystem as a whole.

The company's valuation skyrocketed as Alibaba continued to pour money into the platform and the company continued expanding. In 2021, the company also launched its supermarket and grocery delivery service, Trendyol Go, which added a new revenue stream to the business.

In recent years, the company has continued to innovate and build upon its success:

Trendyol has aggressively pursued a quick commerce model with the

launch of Trendyol Go in 2022, a delivery service for groceries, fresh food, and other everyday essentials. It aimed to compete with Getir, a leading Turkish quick commerce platform.

Trendyol Go provides 30-minute delivery times and a wide range of grocery products, targeting the growing demand for fast and convenient shopping experiences

Trendyol has heavily invested in AI-powered technology to improve customer experiences and streamline its logistics operations. This includes the use of data analytics to offer personalized shopping experiences, as well as AI-driven recommendations for products.

Its logistics network now includes advanced warehouse robots, smart delivery systems, and artificial intelligence to help optimize supply chains and ensure efficient product fulfillment.

Trendyol has taken significant steps toward sustainability, including working with partners and suppliers to reduce carbon emissions, encourage eco-friendly packaging, and support ethical business practices.

The company has made strides toward green logistics by incorporating electric delivery vehicles into its fleet.

The company has continued expanding into new regions, including Europe and parts of Asia. It is aiming to become a regional e-commerce leader in the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) region and compete with other large platforms like Amazon, Zalando, and AliExpress in neighboring countries.

In 2023, the company made headlines again when Uber expressed interest in acquiring an 85% stake in its grocery delivery service, Trendyol Go, for approximately \$700 million. This deal would bring the company's grocery business under Uber's global umbrella, expanding its footprint in Türkiye and the MENA region.

Looking forward, the company aims to maintain its leadership in the Turkish market while expanding its logistics, fintech, and AI-based services to further increase its reach. With the backing of Alibaba and continued investments in innovation, Trendyol is poised to become a regional powerhouse in e-commerce, continuing its focus on speed, technology, and customer satisfaction.

Key Takeaways from Trendyol's Success:

Strong Initial Focus on Fashion and Lifestyle: Trendyol gained early success by focusing on trendy fashion, offering significant discounts, and providing a streamlined online shopping experience

Technological Investment: Trendyol's continuous focus on improving its platform with AI, logistics technology, and data analytics set it apart in a competitive market.

Global Backing: The strategic partnership with Alibaba was key to Trendyol's rapid scaling and expansion. Alibaba's experience in logistics, tech infrastructure, and market insights helped the platform reach new heights

Adaptability and Diversification: Trendyol didn't just stop at e-commerce. It continuously diversified, adding new services like Trendyol Go (grocery delivery) and expanding into the logistics and fintech spaces.

Trendyol is an excellent example of how a Turkish startup can become a global player in the e-commerce space. Its growth story reflects the increasing potential of Türkiye's tech and startup ecosystem, and its innovative approach to e-commerce, logistics, and quick commerce places it at the forefront of digital commerce in the region.

2. Getir



Getir was founded in 2015 by Nazım Salur, a serial entrepreneur with a background in technology and logistics. The idea for Getir stemmed from Salur's belief that the future of retail was moving towards ultra-fast delivery services, with a focus on convenience and speed for customers. The company was born in Istanbul, Türkiye, and aimed to solve a major pain point in the Turkish market: the lack of quick and efficient delivery services for everyday products, especially groceries.

Salur had previously worked in the tech and logistics sectors, which gave him the experience and expertise to tackle the complex logistics behind a rapid

delivery service. His vision was to combine his love for technology with the growing trend of mobile-based services to create a seamless, on-demand solution for everyday products.

Getir's launch was aimed at addressing a growing demand for same-day delivery of everyday essentials. The key difference between Getir and traditional grocery delivery services was its promise to deliver products in 10 minutes or less—a radical new approach to delivery that would change the logistics game in Türkiye.

Initial Product Offering: Initially, the company offered a small selection of essential products, such as snacks, beverages, personal care items, and household goods. The goal was not to replace supermarkets but to serve customers who needed quick access to everyday items, without the hassle of going out to a store.

Getir had to build an intricate logistics network, including micro-warehouses placed strategically around the city to ensure fast delivery. This was an ambitious plan, requiring careful planning and resources, especially in a city like Istanbul, which has challenging traffic conditions.

By 2016, Getir had raised a total of \$25 million in its first round of venture funding, including investment from US-based Vostok New Ventures. This capital allowed the company to scale its operations, adding more products to its catalog and expanding its logistics network to more areas within Istanbul.

2017 marked another milestone for the company when it expanded its operations to Ankara and Izmir, two other major cities in Türkiye. The company continued to develop its logistics system and improve delivery times to maintain its competitive edge.

By 2019, Getir had firmly established itself as the leader in Türkiye's quick commerce space, with thousands of active customers and a fleet of delivery drivers. Getir was becoming synonymous with "fast"—its distinctive model was now widely recognized, with thousands of products available for delivery in less than 10 minutes.

As Getir's business in Türkiye grew, the company began to look beyond its borders. In 2020, it made its first international expansion, venturing into London, UK, marking a significant step toward its vision of becoming a global leader in quick commerce.

Getir's move into London was strategic. The UK had a growing appetite for online grocery shopping, and the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the demand for fast and reliable delivery services.

In addition to grocery delivery, the company began offering other essential

items like pharmaceuticals, household products, and electronics. It also started to integrate AI and data analytics into its operations to enhance delivery routes and inventory management.

In 2021, Getir took a significant leap forward by acquiring Gorillas, a German-based competitor, for \$1.25 billion. Gorillas was another leader in the quick commerce industry, providing 10-minute grocery deliveries across Europe.

This acquisition marked Getir's full entry into the European market, giving it a strong foothold in key countries like Germany, France, and the Netherlands. The merger also expanded Getir's logistical infrastructure and added new customers to its base.

In 2021, Getir made headlines with the closure of a Series E funding round, raising \$768 million and achieving a valuation of \$12 billion. This investment enabled the company to scale its global operations further and solidify its leadership position in the burgeoning quick commerce sector.

2022 saw Getir expand to the United States, starting with New York City. The company aimed to compete with other players like Instacart and Amazon Fresh, but its key differentiator remained its 10-minute delivery promise.

Getir was betting on its ability to navigate the complexities of the US market with its established logistics network and technology. This expansion also opened up new opportunities to experiment with automation, robotic delivery systems, and AI-driven customer experiences.

By this time, Getir had expanded its catalog to include a much wider range of items, from fresh groceries to ready-to-eat meals, drinks, beauty products, and even pet care. The company had quickly diversified its business beyond groceries to cater to every consumer need within the quick commerce framework.

Despite its success, Getir has faced several challenges, particularly in terms of sustainability and competition. As a rapidly growing company, Getir faced issues with profitability, especially with the high costs of running a logistics network and managing the complexities of urban delivery.

Getir's primary competitors in the quick commerce space include Gorillas, Flink, and Zapp in Europe, while companies like DoorDash and Instacart are prominent in the US.

In 2023, Getir faced challenges as the company reduced its operations in some European markets, pulling out of Italy and Spain to focus on more profitable regions. Despite these setbacks, the company remains a formidable

player in the quick commerce space, continuously adapting its strategy to local market conditions.

Getir has invested in sustainability initiatives, including the introduction of electric vehicles for deliveries and working with eco-conscious suppliers. This move is aimed at reducing its carbon footprint as it scales globally.

Key Takeaways from Getir's Success:

10-Minute Delivery Promise: Getir is built around the idea of delivering products to customers within 10 minutes. This is made possible by strategically placed micro-warehouses in densely populated urban areas.

Technology and Data: Getir has invested heavily in AI and machine learning to optimize routes, inventory management, and supply chains. This technology plays a crucial role in ensuring speed and efficiency.

Wide Product Range: Getir started with groceries and essentials but quickly expanded to offer a broad range of products, including snacks, beverages, personal care items, pharmaceuticals, and electronics.

Logistics and Delivery Network: Getir has an extensive logistics network that combines micro-warehouses, delivery fleets, and cutting-edge technology to ensure the efficient operation of its 10-minute delivery service.

The future of Getir looks promising as it continues to focus on expanding its global footprint and perfecting its quick commerce model. With its recent acquisitions and continuous innovation in AI and logistics, the company is well-positioned to remain one of the leaders in the rapidly growing sector of ultra-fast delivery services.

As the company pushes into new markets, it will continue to compete with giants in the food delivery and e-commerce industries. At the same time, its ability to diversify its product offerings and maintain efficient operations will likely dictate its continued success.

Getir has transformed the way people think about grocery delivery and quick commerce. From its early days in Istanbul, the company's commitment to speed and convenience has resonated with consumers worldwide. With continuous innovation in logistics, technology, and an aggressive global expansion strategy, Getir is set to continue shaping the future of delivery services globally.

3. Insider



Insider is a Turkish-founded software company that provides a comprehensive customer experience optimization platform. It focuses on data-driven digital marketing, offering a suite of tools for personalization, analytics, customer engagement, and automation. Its solutions help businesses deliver personalized experiences across different digital channels, such as web, mobile, email, and social media. Insider's platform leverages artificial intelligence (AI) to enhance marketing campaigns and optimize user engagement.

Insider was born out of a desire to help businesses provide more personalized experiences to their customers, utilizing data and AI to optimize customer interactions. At the time of its founding, the marketing automation landscape was still evolving, and Insider saw a gap in the market for a platform that could offer integrated, AI-powered customer engagement tools for businesses of all sizes.

The company focused on providing marketing technology solutions with an emphasis on personalization, data analytics, and marketing automation. They began by offering tools that could help businesses understand and interact with their users more effectively.

Challenges: The initial years were challenging, as Insider had to gain traction in a competitive global market. They needed to prove that their AI-based approach could significantly improve customer engagement and marketing outcomes for businesses.

First Major Customers: Insider gained early attention from local brands, focusing on increasing their customer engagement and sales.

Expansion of Capabilities: Insider gradually expanded its product offerings

beyond simple marketing automation, integrating more advanced features like real-time web personalization, A/B testing, segmentation, and advanced analytics.

Key Focus: AI-driven customer experience management became the core value proposition. The platform used machine learning to analyze customer behaviors and predict actions, delivering personalized content to users at the right time.

International Expansion: Around this time, Insider started looking at international expansion. They began offering their services to companies in other markets, initially focusing on Europe, the Middle East, and Asia.

Key Partnerships: Insider collaborated with some well-known brands and enterprises, including Unilever, Samsung, and Coca-Cola, which were some of its early big-name clients.

Series A: In 2017, Insider raised a \$7 million Series A round, which was a critical step for the company's international expansion. This funding allowed them to enhance their product further and scale their team.

Growing Global Presence: By the end of 2017, Insider had expanded into the U.S. and Europe, setting up offices in London and New York. They also increased their presence in Asia and Latin America.

Key Investments: As Insider attracted more attention from venture capital, the company's credibility in the global marketing technology (MarTech) sector grew. This helped them to further build out their platform's capabilities and integrate more advanced AI-driven tools for companies worldwide.

Product Innovations: By 2020, Insider's platform had grown to include more advanced cross-channel personalization, allowing businesses to deliver tailored experiences not just on websites, but across email, mobile, and in-store interactions.

Series B: In 2020, Insider secured \$32 million in a Series B funding round, led by Sequoia India and other global investors. This round further solidified Insider's position as a leading global player in the MarTech space.

Expansion: The capital raised from this round was used to enhance its product suite, expand its global sales and marketing teams, and further invest in research and development.

Global Offices: Insider expanded its offices worldwide, with teams in Singapore, New York, London, Dubai, Madrid, and other cities. By this time, it had built a network of over 700 employees.

Customer Base: Insider began working with major global companies in e-commerce, retail, and travel industries, including AirAsia, L'Oreal, Domino's, and Kuehne+Nagel.

AI-Powered Features: As Insider grew, the company continued to evolve its AI-driven platform. It developed Predictive AI, which was designed to help businesses predict customer behavior, enhance personalization, and optimize marketing spend. Additionally, it enhanced Automation AI, which allowed for the automatic adjustment of content and offers based on real-time data.

Customer Expansion: The company worked with major multinational clients, such as Coca-Cola, Unilever, and IKEA, and expanded into sectors like e-commerce, finance, and media.

Global Leadership in MarTech: By 2022, Insider was recognized as a leader in the Gartner Magic Quadrant for Digital Marketing Analytics, a key benchmark for the industry.

Insider made significant strides in privacy-focused marketing by ensuring that their platform adhered to GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) and other global data privacy laws. This was increasingly important as data privacy became a significant concern in global markets.

AI and Customer Data Platform (CDP): Insider continued enhancing its AI-powered Customer Data Platform (CDP), which aggregated data across all touchpoints and provided businesses with deeper insights into customer behavior and trends. The platform also helped organizations make smarter marketing decisions and improve their return on investment (ROI).

New Ventures: In 2023, Insider introduced new solutions around mobile app personalization, which further strengthened its position as a leading provider of cross-platform marketing solutions.

Recognition in MarTech: Insider has been consistently recognized in several MarTech industry reports, including being listed in the Forrester Wave for Digital Experience Platforms.

Growth and Impact: By 2025, Insider had a customer base across 30+ countries, and it had established itself as one of the top global players in personalization and customer experience management.

Key Features of Insider's Platform

Cross-Channel Personalization: Offers real-time personalization on websites, mobile apps, email, and in-store channels.

Predictive AI: Uses machine learning algorithms to predict customer behavior and make real-time adjustments to content, messaging, and offers.

Automation Tools: Automates repetitive marketing tasks like email segmentation, A/B testing, and campaign management.

Customer Data Platform (CDP): Centralizes customer data from all touchpoints, providing businesses with a 360-degree view of each customer.

Analytics & Reporting: Offers in-depth analytics, segmentation, and reporting tools to optimize marketing campaigns.

Insider's journey from its humble beginnings in Istanbul to becoming a global leader in customer experience optimization is a testament to its innovative approach to marketing technology. By focusing on AI, predictive analytics, and personalization, Insider has been able to empower businesses around the world to deliver better customer experiences. With ongoing expansion and constant product innovation, Insider continues to set new standards in the MarTech industry.

4. Peak Games



Peak Games is a prominent Turkish mobile gaming company that has achieved significant success in the global gaming industry. Founded in 2010 by Sidar Şahin, the company has evolved from a regional developer to a major player in the international gaming market.

Peak Games was established in Istanbul with the vision of creating a technology company that could reach a global audience. The company initially focused on developing casual and social games tailored for the Turkish and Middle Eastern markets. Its early portfolio included digital versions of traditional Turkish games such as Okey Plus and 101 Okey Plus, which became

immensely popular in the region. These titles were designed to offer multiplayer experiences that mirrored traditional social gaming, fostering community engagement.

By 2017, Peak Games had expanded its reach and was generating significant revenue from international markets, particularly the United States and Europe. The company also made a strategic move by selling its card games division, which included titles like Spades Plus, Gin Rummy Plus, and Okey Plus, to Zynga for \$100 million. This transaction was notable as it involved the largest intellectual property rights sale in Türkiye's history at that time.

Peak Games achieved significant milestones with the launch of its puzzle games Toy Blast in 2015 and Toon Blast in 2017. Both games quickly gained popularity worldwide, particularly in the United States, and became staples in the casual gaming genre. By mid-2020, these titles collectively had over 12 million daily active users, contributing to Peak Games' status as one of the top mobile game developers globally.

The company's success was also reflected in its financial performance, with nearly 99% of its revenue coming from international markets. Peak Games ranked among the top 10 mobile gaming companies in the U.S. in terms of both revenue and user base.

In June 2020, Peak Games was acquired by Zynga, a leading U.S.-based social game developer, for approximately \$1.85 billion. This acquisition included both the card games division, which had been sold earlier, and the puzzle game studio responsible for Toy Blast and Toon Blast. Following the acquisition, Peak Games continued to operate independently under its original leadership, with Sidar Şahin remaining as CEO.

The deal marked a significant achievement for the Turkish tech ecosystem, as Peak Games became the first Turkish startup to reach a valuation exceeding \$1 billion, earning it the designation of a "Turcorn".

Peak Games' success has had a profound impact on Türkiye's startup landscape. The company's growth has attracted significant foreign investment into the Turkish gaming sector, making Türkiye one of the most invested countries in Europe for gaming ventures. In the first half of 2022 alone, Turkish gaming startups received a record \$313 million in investments.

Additionally, Peak Games has inspired a new generation of entrepreneurs. Notably, 28 former Peak Games employees have gone on to establish their own startups, many in the gaming industry, contributing to the broader growth of

Türkiye's tech ecosystem.

Today, Peak Games continues to operate as a subsidiary of Zynga, maintaining its headquarters in Istanbul. The company remains focused on developing engaging and innovative mobile games, with a commitment to preserving its unique creative culture and brand identity. Through its enduring success, Peak Games has not only solidified its position in the global gaming industry but has also played a pivotal role in elevating Türkiye's presence in the international tech arena.

6. Firefly



Firefly is a technology-driven advertising company founded by Turkish entrepreneurs Kaan Günay and Onur Kardeşler. Established in San Francisco in 2017, Firefly has rapidly grown into a leading player in the digital out-of-home (DOOH) advertising industry, leveraging smart technology to transform urban advertising landscapes.

Firefly was conceived to modernize traditional outdoor advertising by integrating digital screens onto vehicles such as taxis and rideshare cars. These screens display location-based, real-time advertisements, offering brands targeted exposure while providing drivers with an additional revenue stream.

The platform also incorporates environmental sensors to collect urban data, which can be utilized for various civic and commercial purposes.

2018: Firefly secured a \$21.5 million seed investment led by GV (formerly Google Ventures) and NFX, marking a significant step in its expansion .

2019: The company raised an additional \$30 million in Series A funding, again led by GV, with participation from NFX. This capital facilitated Firefly's entry into the New York City market, where it acquired the digital operations of Strong Outdoor, a major player in NYC's taxi advertising sector.

2020: Firefly received a \$660,000 investment from Galata Business Angels (GBA), marking GBA's largest single investment at the time. This funding supported Firefly's expansion into new U.S. cities and further technological development.

United States: Firefly operates in major cities including San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, Dallas, and Miami, providing digital advertising solutions across a wide network of vehicles.

United Kingdom: In 2022, Firefly acquired Ubiquitous, a London-based taxi advertising company, marking its entry into the UK market and expanding its international footprint.

Firefly's platform combines hardware and software to deliver dynamic advertising experiences. The company installs smart screens equipped with sensors on vehicles, enabling:

Targeted Advertising: Ads are displayed based on the vehicle's location, time of day, and traffic conditions, ensuring relevance to the audience.

Data Collection: Sensors gather environmental data, such as air quality and temperature, which can be shared with city planners and other stakeholders for urban development and planning.

Driver Revenue Generation: Drivers earn additional income by participating in the advertising program, with some reporting up to a 15% increase in earnings.

Endeavor Selection: In 2020, Firefly was selected as an Endeavor Entrepreneur, joining a global network of high-impact entrepreneurs and gaining access to resources and mentorship to accelerate its growth.

Team Expansion: The company has grown to a team of over 200 employees, with a significant presence in Istanbul, where it employs software developers to support its technological initiatives.

Firefly continues to innovate in the digital advertising space, aiming to:

Expand its network: Increase the number of vehicles equipped with smart screens in existing and new markets.

Enhance technology: Develop more advanced data analytics capabilities and integrate additional sensor technologies.

Foster partnerships: Collaborate with municipalities, advertisers, and other stakeholders to create smarter, more connected urban environments.

With its unique business model and technological edge, Firefly is poised to play a significant role in the evolution of urban advertising and smart city infrastructure.

7. Martı



Martı is a Turkish mobility technology company that has rapidly transformed urban transportation in Türkiye through its electric vehicle-sharing and ride-hailing services. Founded in 2018 by Oğuz Alper Öktem and Sena Öktem, Martı began operations in Istanbul in 2019 and has since expanded to multiple cities across Türkiye.

2018: Martı was established with the vision of providing eco-friendly and efficient urban transportation solutions.

2019: The company launched its electric scooter-sharing service in Istanbul, offering a sustainable alternative to traditional transportation methods.

2020: Martı expanded its services to Ankara, introducing electric scooters to the capital city.

2021: Martı reached a valuation of \$100 million following a successful Series B investment round.

2022: The company introduced its ride-hailing service, Martı TAG, allowing users to share rides with others in the same direction, promoting eco-friendly transportation.

2023: Martı acquired Zoba, a U.S.-based AI startup specializing in fleet optimization for two-wheeled electric vehicles. This acquisition aimed to enhance operational efficiency and service quality.

Fleet Size: As of the end of 2023, Martı operates a fleet of over 38,000 electric scooters, bikes, and mopeds across Türkiye.

Ride-Hailing Service: By December 2023, Martı's ride-hailing service had over 452,000 riders and more than 100,000 registered drivers, exceeding its targets for the year.

Public Listing: In July 2023, Martı's shares began trading on the New York Stock Exchange under the ticker symbol MRT, marking a significant milestone in the company's growth.

Service Areas: Martı's services are available in major Turkish cities, including Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, Antalya, Kocaeli, Muğla, and Mersin.

Future Plans: The company aims to continue expanding its fleet and services, focusing on sustainability and technological innovation to meet the growing demand for eco-friendly urban transportation solutions.

Martı's commitment to providing sustainable and efficient transportation options has positioned it as a leader in Türkiye's mobility sector, contributing to the global shift towards greener urban transportation solutions.

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SME Questionnaire (Azerbaijan)

1) Criteria for identifying SME entities in Azerbaijan

By Resolution No. 556 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated December 21, 2018, the "Criteria for the classification of micro, small, medium, and large business entities" were approved. The classification of business entities as micro, small, medium, or large is based on the number of employees and annual revenue (as shown in the table below).

Classification Criteria for Business Entities

Category of Business Entity	Average Number of Employees	Annual Revenue (thousand AZN)
Micro-enterprise	1 – 10	≤ 200
Small enterprise	11 – 50	200 < revenue ≤ 3,000
Medium enterprise	51 – 250	3,000 < revenue ≤ 30,000
Large enterprise	251 and above	> 30,000

Annual revenue includes the value of goods delivered, services rendered, and works performed during the reporting year, as well as non-sales income.

According to these criteria, the classification of a business entity as micro, small, medium, or large is based on the higher of the two indicators: “average number of employees” or “annual revenue.”

2) Number of SMEs in Azerbaijan, and their share in value added, employment, and exports

- In Azerbaijan, SMEs account for more than 99% of all business entities.
- As of 2023, there are approximately 401,149 registered SME entities.
- The share of SMEs in GDP reached 18% in 2023, and 27.2% in non-oil GDP.

- SMEs play a significant role in employment — 44% of the workforce is employed in SME enterprises.
- SMEs contribute approximately 28% to non-oil exports (according to the State Tax Service).

3) Sectors of the economy where SMEs are mainly active

In Azerbaijan, SMEs are mainly engaged in the following sectors:

- Trade, including vehicle repair
- Industry
- Transportation and warehousing
- Accommodation and food services
- Manufacturing
- Construction

4) Specialized institutions that support SME development in Azerbaijan

- Small and Medium Business Development Agency (KOBIA) – www.smb.gov.az
- Azerbaijan Entrepreneurship Development Fund (EDF) – <https://edf.gov.az>
- Mortgage and Credit Guarantee Fund (MCGF) – <https://mcgf.gov.az>
- Innovation and Digital Development Agency (IRIA) – <https://www.idda.az>
- National Confederation of Entrepreneurs (ASK) – <http://ask.org.az>
- Azerbaijan Export and Investment Promotion Agency (AZPROMO) – <https://www.azpromo.az>
- Agricultural Credit and Development Agency (AKIA) – <https://akia.gov.az>

5) Strategies and government programs for SME sector development in Azerbaijan

- Azerbaijan 2030: National Priorities for Socio-Economic Development
- "The 2022–2026 Socio-Economic Development Strategy of the Republic of Azerbaijan"
- State Programs on the Socio-Economic Development of Regions
- "2023–2027 State Program on the Socio-Economic Development of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic"

- "First State Program on the Great Return to the Liberated Territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan"

6) Support mechanisms that are available for SMEs in Azerbaijan

Investment Promotion Certificate:

- Introduced by Presidential decrees since 2016, the investment promotion mechanism covers projects in various economic sectors. According to the Tax Code and the Law on the Customs Tariff of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the certificate exempts legal entities and individual entrepreneurs from:
 - 50% of profit or income tax for 7 years,
 - VAT and customs duties on imported equipment and machinery,
 - Property tax on investment-based assets,
 - Land tax on relevant properties owned or used.

Concessional State Loans and Financial Support:

- Low-interest and long-term loans are provided to entrepreneurs by ABDF, AKIA, and IDDA. In addition, interest rate subsidies and guarantee mechanisms are available (through ABDF and MCGF).

SME Houses and One-Stop Services:

- SME Houses offer both public and private sector services in one place, in a fast and transparent manner. This model has been recognized by the OECD as an innovative mechanism.

Export and Investment Promotion Tools:

- Trade missions, participation in exhibitions, export promotion under the "Made in Azerbaijan" brand, and investment support programs help SMEs enter foreign markets.

Preferential Access to Public Procurement:

- SMEs are encouraged to participate in public procurement. Legal preferences are applied to support their involvement in tenders and quotation processes.

Digital and Technological Support Programs:

- Targeted projects and programs are implemented in cooperation with public and private institutions to support digitalization, access to technology, and innovation potential of SMEs.

Domestic Market Research:

- Sectoral market demand, market gaps, and sales opportunities are analyzed by professional research companies engaged by KOBIA, and the results are shared with entrepreneurs.

Startup Certificate:

- Issued to innovative micro and small businesses, this certificate grants exemption from income tax for three years.

SME Cluster Certificate:

- Provided to enterprises cooperating in industrial and service sectors, granting access to shared infrastructure, technology, and promotional support.

Access to Large Retail Chains:

- KOBIA supports entrepreneurs in placing their products in supermarket chains and promotes the expansion of sales channels.

Grant Program:

- Grants up to 20,000 AZN are provided for projects focused on education, awareness, research, and business support. The aim is to strengthen entrepreneurial culture and knowledge.

Industrial and Free Economic Zones in Azerbaijan

- **Alat Free Economic Zone (AFEZ)**

Established by Presidential Decree on May 22, 2020, and located in Alat settlement, Garadagh district, Baku, the goal of AFEZ is to attract investment in the non-oil sector, promote export-oriented production, and boost transit-logistics capacity.

Key Advantages:

- Tax-free environment (income tax, VAT, customs duties, etc.)
- Simplified and fast registration procedures

- Well-equipped infrastructure and broad logistics options (proximity to sea port, road, and rail)
- Activities regulated by special zone law independent of national legislation
- Equal rights for domestic and foreign investors
- AFEZ Management Organization oversees operations and development

Industrial Parks – Existing Structures in Azerbaijan

To promote industrial production, regional development, and improve the investment climate, several industrial parks have been created. These parks offer tax and customs benefits, ready infrastructure, and organizational support.

Main Industrial Parks:

- **Sumgayit Chemical Industrial Park** – The largest and most developed, specialized in chemicals, petrochemicals, construction materials, and metallurgy.
- **Mingachevir Industrial Park** – Specialized in light industry and textiles; contributes to regional employment.
- **Pirallahi Industrial Park** – Specialized in pharmaceuticals; strategically important for localizing medicine production.
- **Hajigabul Industrial Park** – Focused on automotive and mechanical engineering sectors.
- **Aghdam Industrial Park** (established in 2021) – First industrial park in liberated territories of Karabakh; prioritizes light industry, food processing, and construction materials.
- **Araz Valley Economic Zone Industrial Park** (established in 2021) – Aims to revive liberated areas, boost Karabakh's industrial potential, support entrepreneurship, and create competitive industry based on modern technologies.
- **Qaradağ Industrial Park** (established in 2015) – Supports non-oil sector development, competitive production using modern technologies, and promotes employment in production.
- **Nakhchivan Industrial Park** (established in 2024) – Focused on fostering competitive industrial production based on innovation and high technology, supporting entrepreneurship, and contributing to non- oil sector growth.

Incentives for Industrial Parks:

- Exemption from VAT on imported machinery, technological equipment, and installations;
- In addition, residents of industrial parks are exempt from customs duties on such imported machinery, equipment, and installations for a period of 10 years.

7) Existing service infrastructure for SMEs in Azerbaijan

SME Houses:

- SME Houses are created to provide business entities with access to both public and business-related services in a single location, without barriers, bias, or bureaucracy.
- Currently, SME Houses operate in Baku, Yevlakh, and Khachmaz. A service point also operates in the State Services Center in Shusha, and an additional service office functions in Khudat under the Khachmaz SME House.
- These centers provide services for every stage of business—from planning to management—such as full business registration, licensing, tax and regulatory reporting, import/export processing, logistics and infrastructure access, and more. Several banks are also represented in SME Houses.

SME Development Centers:

- These regional centers offer training, consulting, information, and legal services to entrepreneurs, aiming to improve their knowledge and skills.
- Incubation and Acceleration Centers
- Designed to support the development of business ideas and the growth of startups, these centers provide mentoring, investment attraction, business model development, and networking opportunities.

Startup Development Centers:

- These centers offer technical and consulting support for turning innovative ideas into real businesses. Facilities include labs, coworking spaces, and training programs for young entrepreneurs.
- E-Government Services (e.g., ASAN Service, e-tender, e-customs)

- Ensure transparent and fast delivery of digital public services related to entrepreneurship such as tax registration, tender applications, and customs declarations.

SME Model Enterprise:

- A joint initiative of government, the private sector, and universities, this model helps improve management processes, reduce waste, and implement modern organizational innovations in businesses.

8) Tax incentives for SMEs in Azerbaijan

According to changes to the Tax Code that came into force in 2024:

- Individual entrepreneurs classified as micro-businesses (with at least 3 employees and no overdue social insurance payments) are exempt from income tax on 75% of their business income.
- In certain service sectors, micro-entrepreneurs with an annual turnover (excluding expenses) of up to 45,000 AZN are eligible for the same 75% income tax exemption without additional conditions.

Eligible sectors include: software development, design and decoration, translation, advertising, research, education, culture, sports, legal, audit, accounting, financial consulting, journalism, market research, valuation, delivery (excluding cargo transportation), and tour guiding.

- VAT and Customs Exemptions for Innovation and Export Activities
- Entrepreneurs engaged in innovation and export-oriented activities may benefit from VAT and customs duty incentives. These include exemptions on imported technological equipment and application of zero-rate VAT on export operations. The aim is to support the development of innovative products and access to foreign markets.

9) Mechanisms and concessional financing opportunities for SMEs in Azerbaijan

- Concessional Loans via the Entrepreneurship Development Fund (EDF), including credit guarantees and interest subsidies for businesses in liberated territories
- Loan Guarantees and Subsidies from the Mortgage and Credit Guarantee Fund (MCGF)
- Funding through IRIA: loans, investments, venture capital, and grants

- Concessional Agricultural Loans via the Agricultural Credit and Development Agency (AKIA)
- Project Investments via the Azerbaijan Investment Company (AIC)
- Grants provided by the Small and Medium Business Development Agency (KOBIA)

10) Main laws and regulations governing the SME sector in Azerbaijan

The key legal documents regulating SME activities in Azerbaijan include:

- The Law “On the Development of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises”
- The Law “On Entrepreneurial Activity”
- The Tax Code of Azerbaijan Republic
- The Customs Code of Azerbaijan Republic

11) Institutional and technical mechanisms that protect SME interests and resolve disputes in Azerbaijan

Commercial Courts:

- Specialized in handling commercial disputes between business entities.

Small and Medium Business Development Agency (KOBIA):

- Actively reviews appeals related to the protection of SME interests.

National Confederation of Entrepreneurs (ASK):

- Coordinates the activities of entrepreneurs and protects their legal and economic interests.

Independent Consulting and Legal Services:

- Available for SMEs needing professional advice and legal support.

Mediation Institutions:

- Specialized organizations operating in the field of dispute resolution.

12) SME participation in public procurement in Azerbaijan

The Law “On Public Procurement” of the Republic of Azerbaijan provides several benefits for SMEs:

- According to Article 38.3, the performance guarantee is set at 10% of the contract value. For micro and small enterprises, it is reduced to 5%.
- According to Article 38.10, if subcontractors are involved, at least 20% of the subcontracted amount must be awarded to local micro, small, or medium enterprises.

- According to Article 39.1, if the procuring authority includes advance payment in the tender conditions, the advance shall not exceed 30% of the contract amount. For micro and small enterprises, this limit is increased to 50%.

Article 48.2 stipulates that for quotation requests:

- If the estimated value is up to 30,000 AZN — only micro and small enterprises may participate.
- If the estimated value is between 30,000 and 100,000 AZN — micro, small, and medium enterprises are eligible.

13) Projects and tools that support youth and women entrepreneurship in Azerbaijan

- “SME Volunteers” and mentorship programs for young entrepreneurs
- Business development initiatives and promotion of women entrepreneurship
- Special grants provided by startup and innovation centers

14) SME digitalization and green transition in Azerbaijan

SME Digitalization Program

- Launched in 2024 by KOBIA and the Innovation and Digital Development Agency.
- Initiatives like “digiMATE” platform and “DIGI30” provide practical support.
- Digitalization efforts are also backed by grants and other financial tools.

Green Business Initiatives and ESG Principles

- In March 2024, KOBIA joined the UN Global Compact.
- Within the “Year of Solidarity for a Green World” and COP29, KOBIA launched the “Baku Climate Coalition Declaration for SMEs' Green Transition.”
- A Unified ESG Platform (ESGhub.az) has been created and a National Standard adopted.

15) Startup development in Azerbaijan

State Support for Startups in Azerbaijan

1. Startup Development Center (Baku SME House)

- Created for early-stage startups under KOBIA.
- Provides access to 3D printers and scanners, laser cutting tools, CNC robots, cameras, and other equipment.
- Offers design, engineering, expert, and mentoring support.

2. SME Development Centers (KOBIMs)

Located across regions, these centers provide:

- Trainings and seminars by professional experts
- Individual and group consulting services
- Networking, access to international programs, and funding
- Support for women, youth, and persons with disabilities
- Support for family businesses and innovation-driven initiatives

These efforts aim to strengthen the startup ecosystem and promote innovation across regions.

Tax Incentives and Financial Support for Startups

1. Startup Certificate and Tax Benefits

- According to a 2021 Cabinet decision, micro and small businesses may receive a “Startup Certificate.”
- Holders are exempt from profit and income tax on innovation income for three years.
- Eligible sectors include fintech, e-commerce, digital marketing, edtech, e-payments, and logistics.

2. Grant Support

- Grants up to 20,000 AZN are available for education, science, research, and support-focused projects.
- These grants aim to help bring innovative solutions to market.

3. Training and Mentorship Support

- Free training, consulting, and mentorship services are provided by KOBIA’s regional development centers.
- Services are delivered by experts to support innovation-driven businesses.

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SME Questionnaire (Kazakhstan)

1. What criteria are used to define SMEs in your country?

The categories of business entities are defined under Article 24 of the Entrepreneur Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 375-V 3PK¹⁴ of 29 October 2015.

1. Depending on the average annual number of employees and the average annual income, business entities **are categorized as follows**:

Small-sized business entities, including microbusiness entities;

Medium-sized business entities;

Large-sized business entities.

2. The categorization of business entities as specified in paragraph 1 of this article serves the following purposes:

Government statistics;

Providing government support;

Applying other provisions of the laws of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

For the purposes of government statistics, the only criterion used is the average annual number of employees.

For the purposes of providing government support and applying other provisions of the laws of the Republic of Kazakhstan, two criteria are used: the average annual number of employees and the average annual income.

For the purposes of providing government support and applying other provisions of the laws of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the average annual number of employees of business entities using the labour of employees of the sending party, under a staffing services contract, is determined with consideration of the employees of the sending party.

The average annual number of employees of business entities is determined with consideration of all employees, including those of its branches, representative offices and other separate divisions, as well as the individual entrepreneur.

The average annual income is the sum of total annual income or income of business entities applying in accordance with the tax legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan a special tax regime based on a patent, a simplified declaration or using a special mobile application, for the last three years, divided by three.

¹⁴ <https://adilet.zan.kz/eng/docs/K1500000375>

Government support programmes for private businesses may establish additional criteria.

3. Small-sized business entities are individual entrepreneurs not registered as legal entities, as well as legal entities engaged in entrepreneurship, with an average annual number of employees of no more than one hundred people and an average annual income of no more than three hundred thousand times a monthly calculation index set by the law on the national budget and in effect on 1 January of the corresponding financial year.

Microbusiness entities are small-sized business entities engaged in private entrepreneurship, with an average annual number of employees of no more than fifteen people or an average annual income of no more than thirty thousand times a monthly calculation index set by the law on the national budget and in effect on 1 January of the corresponding financial year.

4. For the purposes of providing government support and applying other provisions of the laws of the Republic of Kazakhstan, individual entrepreneurs or legal entities engaged in the following activities cannot be considered small-sized business entities, including microbusiness entities:

- 1) Activities related to the trafficking of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursors;
- 2) Production and/or wholesale of excisable products;
- 3) Grain storage operations at grain receiving stations;
- 4) Running lotteries;
- 5) Gambling activities;
- 6) Activities related to the trafficking of radioactive materials;
- 7) Banking (or certain types of banking operations) and insurance operations (except for the activities of insurance agents);
- 8) Auditing activities;
- 9) Professional securities operations;
- 10) Activities of credit bureaus;
- 11) Security activities;
- 12) Activities related to the circulation of civilian and service weapons and their ammunition;
- 13) First subtype digital mining activities.

Individual entrepreneurs and legal entities engaged in the activities specified in this paragraph are classified as medium-sized business entities, and, if they meet the criteria established in [paragraph 6](#) of this article – as large-sized business entities.

For private business entities, which are payers of gambling business tax, fixed tax and single land tax, under the tax legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the criterion used is the number of employees.

5. Medium-sized business entities are individual entrepreneurs and legal entities engaged in entrepreneurship that do not fall under the categories of small- or large-sized business entities, in accordance with [paragraphs 3 and 6](#) of this article.

6. Large-sized business entities are individual entrepreneurs and legal entities engaged in entrepreneurship that meet one or both of the following criteria: the average annual number of employees is more than two hundred fifty people and/or the average annual income over a three-million times a monthly calculation index set by the law on the national budget and in effect on 1 January of the corresponding financial year.

Exceptions

Certain types of organizations, regardless of their size (e.g., state-owned enterprises, joint-stock companies with more than 25% state ownership, or companies holding monopoly power), are not considered SMEs.

2. What is the number of SMEs in your country and their share in value added, employment and exports?

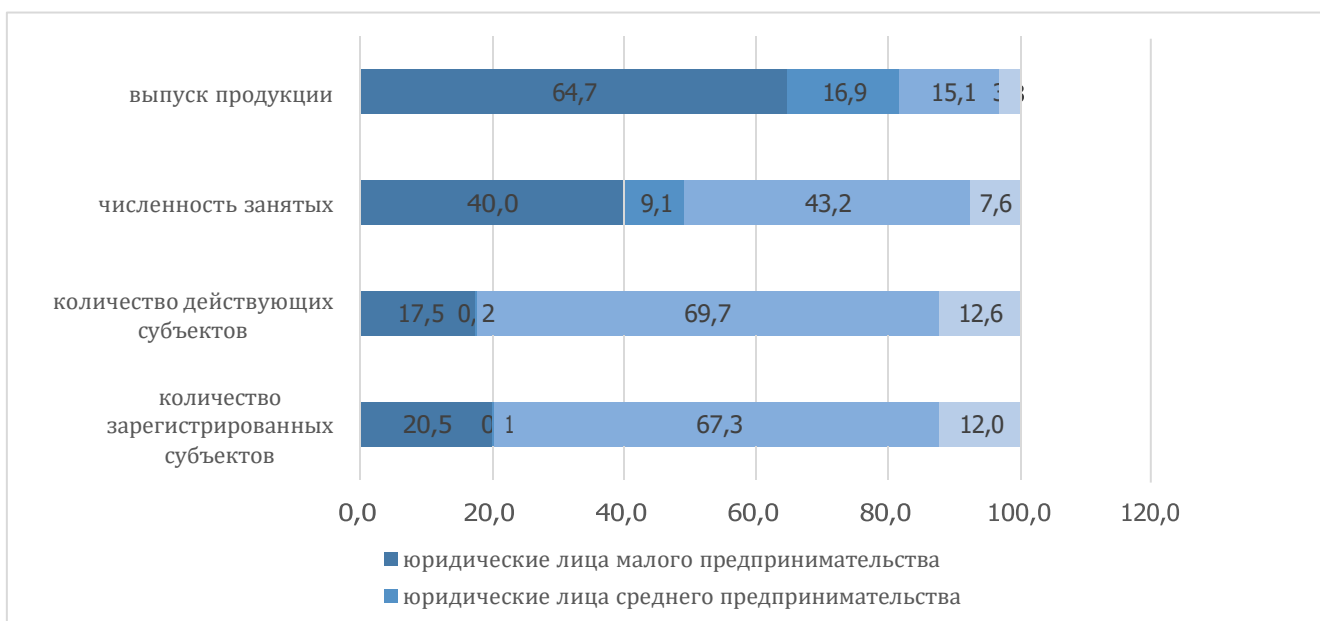
The monitoring data on SMEs in the Republic of Kazakhstan (as of 1 January 2025)¹⁵, published on the website of the Bureau of National Statistics of the Republic of Kazakhstan, are attached.

Key indicators highlighted in the Q1 2025 monitoring data are as follows:

- 6) The number of registered SMEs as of 1 January 2025 amounted to 2,262.4 thousand units;
- 7) The number of operating SMEs as of 1 January 2025 amounted to 2,071.7 thousand units;
- 8) The number of people employed in SMEs as of 1 January 2025 amounted to 4,422.1 thousand people;
- 9) The output of products by SMEs in January-December 2024 amounted to 81,920.0 billion tenge.
- 10) SMEs account for 45.8% of the total economically active population of the country. Almaty and Astana have the highest regional shares. The lowest share is recorded in the Zhambyl Region.

¹⁵ <https://stat.gov.kz/en/industries/business-statistics/stat-org/publications/350850/>

Breakdown of main SME performance indicators for January-December 2024



Source: BNS RK

Official statistics show that, in the country, SMEs accounted for 39.3% of GDP in January-September 2024, an increase of 2.8 p.p. compared to the same period of the previous year.

SMEs share in GDP (GRP)*

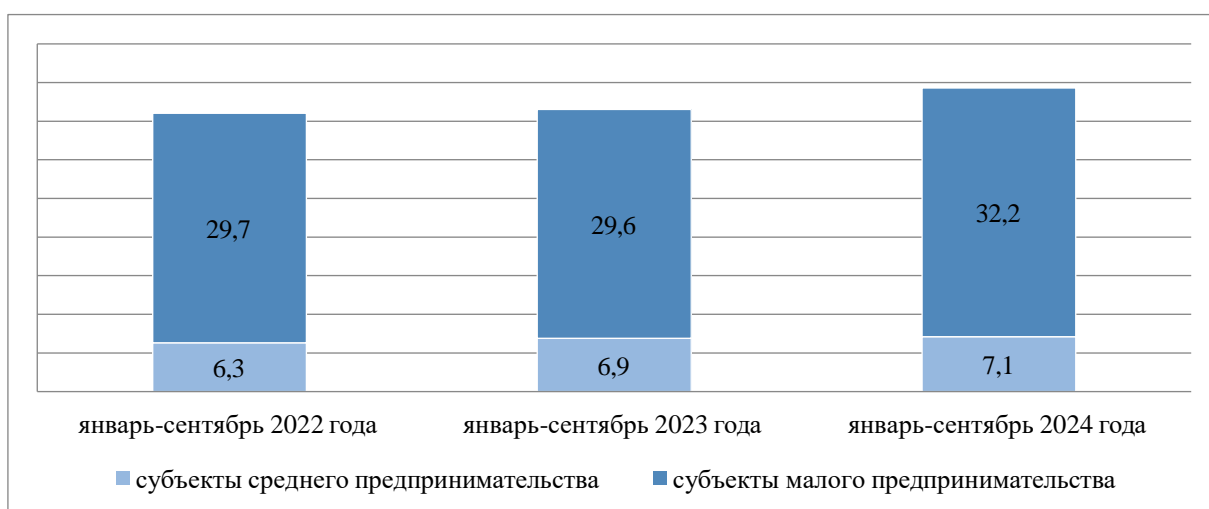
	January-September 2024		January-September 2023	
	GVA of SMEs, M tenge	Share in GDP (GRP), %	GVA of SMEs, M tenge	Share in GDP (GRP), %
Republic of Kazakhstan	33,389,821.2	39.3	27,604,326.4	36.5
Abay Region	406,299.4	18.2	359,064.3	18.6
Akmola Region	748,057.5	28.3	604,077.0	26.2
Aktobe Region	1,019,238.6	28.3	853,793.1	27.0
Almaty Region	1,736,413.9	46.0	1,462,649.7	47.3
Atyrau Region	2,510,555.4	25.4	2,426,763.8	25.1
West Kazakhstan Region	1,164,141.7	34.7	1,005,860.7	33.2

Zhambyl Region	528,727.5	23.8	391,161.5	20.5
Zhetisu Region	449,611.3	32.1	386,153.3	32.0
Karagandy Region	1,144,959.9	19.7	1,010,493.8	19.7
Kostanay Region	875,018.2	28.7	772,107.7	28.5
Kyzylorda Region	431,167.0	20.5	331,349.1	17.7
Mangystau Region	1,115,284.9	30.5	987,477.8	28.0
Pavlodar Region	639,873.6	21.1	504,207.8	19.8
North Kazakhstan Region	513,960.9	28.4	390,037.6	25.4
Turkistan Region	882,874.9	27.9	568,706.2	21.1
Ulytau Region	99,060.8	7.3	59,773.2	4.9
East Kazakhstan Region	763,354.1	22.9	697,857.6	22.3
Astana	6,698,776.7	72.8	5,837,506.4	74.5
Almaty	10,060,551.5	61.2	7,751,580.8	53.1
Shymkent	1,601,893.4	54.8	1,203,705.0	49.2

Source: BNS RK

By entity category, small enterprises account for 32.2% and medium enterprises for 7.1%.

SMEs' share in GDP by small and medium enterprises

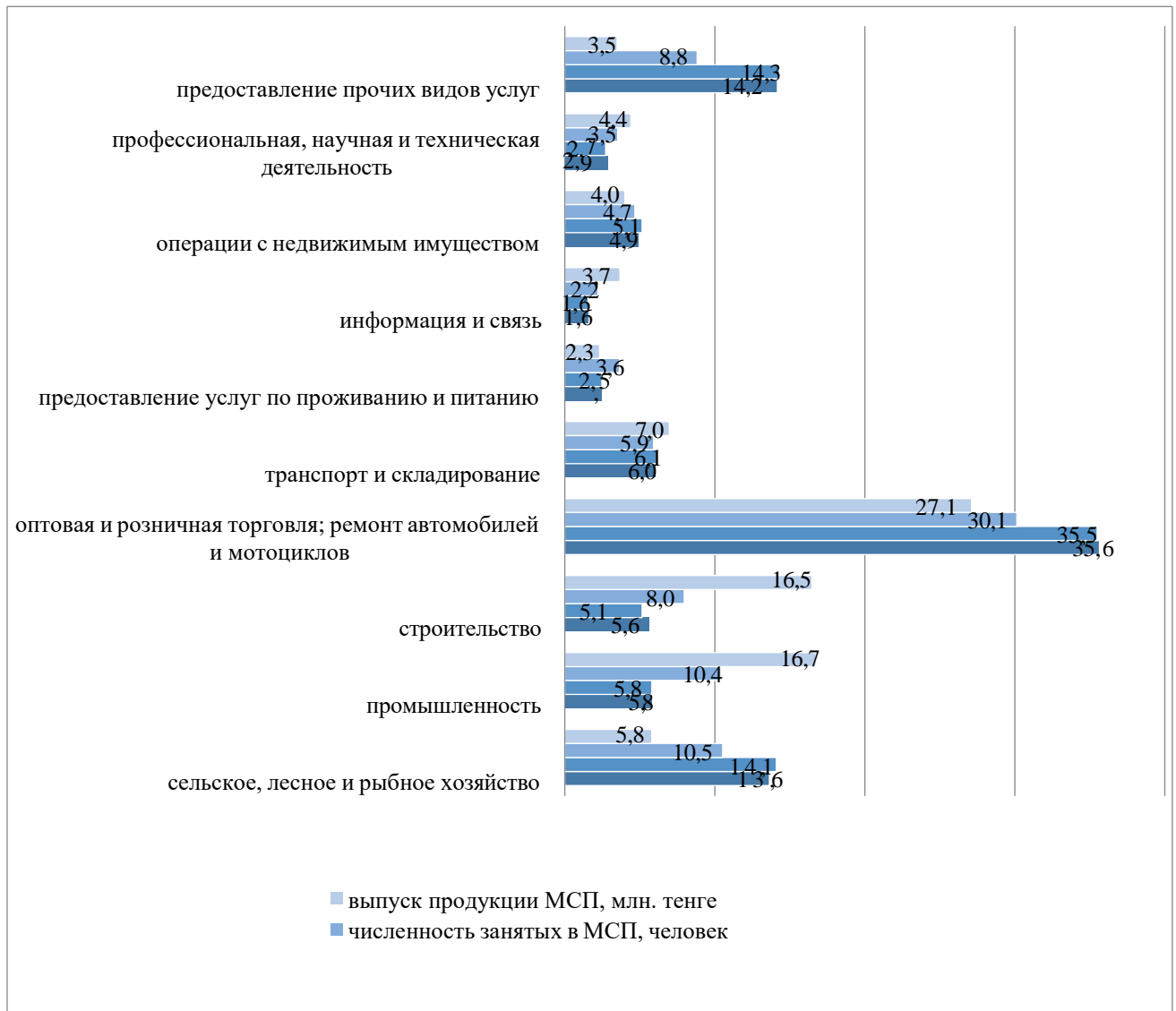


Source: BNS RK

3. Which economic sectors have the highest representation of SMEs in your country?

The largest share of SMEs, employment and output is found in the sector of “Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles”.

Breakdown of main SME performance indicators by FEA for January-December 2024



Source: BNS RK

Economic sectors	SME examples	Approximate number of entities
Trade	Stores, supermarkets, online stores and wholesale warehouses	~80,000-90,000

Economic sectors	SME examples	Approximate number of entities
Consumer services	Beauty salons, dental clinics, fitness centres, educational courses and travel agencies	~60,000-70,000
Construction	Construction companies, contractors, and repair and finishing services	~40,000-50,000
Manufacturing industry	Production of furniture, foodstuffs, textiles and packaging	~30,000-35,000
Agriculture	Farms, greenhouses and agro-processing	~25,000-30,000
Information technology	Web studios, software development, start-ups and IT consulting	~15,000-20,000
Transportation and logistics	Taxi services, cargo transportation, courier services and logistics companies	~20,000-25,000
HoReCa	Restaurants, cafes, mini-hotels, hostels and catering services	~10,000-15,000

stat.gov.kz

4. Which specialized institutions support the development of SMEs in your country?

Specialized institutions supporting SME development in Kazakhstan are the following:

4.8 Damu Entrepreneurship Development Fund JSC

The primary government institution supporting SMEs:

Subsidizing loan interest rates;

Providing loan guarantees;

Issuing grants;

Consulting services through multifunctional entrepreneurship service centres (MESCs) and support programmes.

4.9 Kazakhstan Industry and Export Center QazIndustry JSC

Supporting industry and localizing production:

Subsidies for production costs;

Supporting the improvement of labour productivity.

4.10 National Agency for the Development of Innovations
QazInnovations **JSC**

Supporting startups and innovative businesses:

Innovation grants;

Supporting R&D (research and development);

Acceleration services.

4.11 KazakhExport JSC (Export Insurance Company)

Supporting foreign economic activities of SMEs:

Export contract insurance;

Export financing;

Financial guarantee support.

4.12 KAZAKH INVEST JSC

Investment promotion and support for investment projects in Kazakhstan, including those involving SMEs.

4.13 Baiterek Fund through its subsidiaries

A wide range of SME support is provided within the overall Baiterek ecosystem through Damu, QazIndustry and QazInnovations.

4.14 Microcredit funds and microfinance institutions (MFIs) In the regions, microfinance programmes for first-time entrepreneurs are often implemented with the support of local executive authorities and the Damu Fund.

5. Which policies and government programmes support the development of the SME sector in your country?

The Concept for the Development of Small and Medium Entrepreneurship in the Republic of Kazakhstan until 2030 outlines the vision for the sector's growth over this period. The document aims to stimulate and develop the economic activity of businesses and ensure the creation of competitive SMEs. To this end, the document outlines the approaches to SME development that prioritize support for SMEs with strong growth potential. Specifically, it provides for the creation of an institutional environment that supports entrepreneurial activity; the development of regulatory frameworks for entrepreneurial activity that impact the business climate and environment; and the effectiveness of the structure of government support measures. The

activities of the Atameken NCE to implement the Concept for SME Development in the Republic of Kazakhstan until 2030, within the framework of non-financial support, are outlined in **ANNEX 1 (Non-Financial Support Measures of the Atameken NCE for SMEs in Kazakhstan)**.

ANNEX 2 (Register of Government Support Measures) presents the existing GSMs for SMEs in Kazakhstan for 2025.

6. What support mechanisms are available for SMEs in your country?

6.1 Financial mechanisms:

Subsidizing loan interest rates

The government compensates part of the interest rate on bank loans, making borrowing more affordable for businesses. The Damu Fund etc.

Loan guarantee

The government (through the Damu Fund) provides partial coverage of the borrower's obligations to the bank.

Business development grants

First-time entrepreneurs and SMEs receive grant funding for the development of their projects.

Programmes through the Damu Fund and local executive authorities.

Microcredit

Offering microloans on favourable terms (especially for start-ups and rural businesses).

Export insurance and subsidies

Offered through KazakhExport and QazTrade to SME exporters: contract insurance, reimbursement of certification fees and logistics costs.

6.2 Non-financial mechanisms:

Consulting services in multifunctional entrepreneurship service centres and business service centres

Free consultations on business, taxation, legal matters and company registration.

6.3 Infrastructure mechanisms:

Multifunctional entrepreneurship service centres (MESCs)

Unified platforms that provide businesses with access to the full range of government services in one place.

Business incubators and industrial parks

Offering premises, equipment and legal support on favourable terms.

Digitalized procedures

Online business registration and submission of application for support measures through eGov and Atameken Services.

7. What service infrastructure is in place to support SMEs in your country?

Multifunctional entrepreneurship service centres (MESCs)

MESCs provide services related to accounting, tax accounting, statistical reporting, business plan development and a range of government services, including residence registration, submitting applications for property and land cadastre, obtaining electronic digital signatures (EDS), duplicate documents, pension accrual certificates, as well as property ownership or non-ownership certificates and others.

This initiative is implemented under the agreement between the Atameken NCE and the State Corporation Government for Citizens, as well as through a regional-level memorandum of cooperation. Several services are now available in a single location, significantly simplifying the process of doing business.

MESCs across the country**Regional Chamber of Entrepreneurs in Astana**

Address: 2/1 Baurzhan Momyshuly Avenue, 4th floor, Astana;

Working hours: Monday to Friday from 9:00 to 18:00, with a lunch break from 13:00 to 14:00;

Regional Chamber of Entrepreneurs in Almaty

Address: 79/71 Abylai Khan Avenue, Corner of Aiteke Bi Street, 1st floor, Almaty;

Working hours: Monday to Friday from 9:00 to 18:00, with a lunch break from 13:00 to 14:00;

Regional Chamber of Entrepreneurs in Shymkent

Address: 304 G Yerimbetov Street, Shymkent;

Working hours: Monday to Friday from 9:00 to 18:00, with a lunch break from 13:00 to 14:00;

Regional Chamber of Entrepreneurs in the West Kazakhstan Region

Address: 84 Issatay-Makhambet Street, 1st floor, Oral;

Working hours: Monday to Friday from 9:00 to 18:00, with a lunch break from 13:00 to 14:00;

Regional Chamber of Entrepreneurs in the Abay Region

Address: 100 Pushkin Street Semey;

Working hours: Monday to Friday from 9:00 to 18:00, with a lunch break from 13:00 to 14:00;

Regional Chamber of Entrepreneurs in the Atyrau Region

Address: 78 Satpaev Street, 2nd floor, Atyrau;

Working hours: Monday to Friday from 9:00 to 18:00, with a lunch break from 13:00 to 14:00;

Regional Chamber of Entrepreneurs in the Kostanay Region

Address: 114 Al-Farabi Street, 1st floor, Kostanay;

Working hours: Monday to Friday from 9:00 to 18:00, with a lunch break from 13:00 to 14:00;

Regional Chamber of Entrepreneurs in the Mangystau Region

Building No. 2, 35 Microdistrict, 1st floor, Aktau; Contact details: +7 702 578 31 28

Working hours: Monday to Friday from 9:00 to 18:00, with a lunch break from 13:00 to 14:00;

Regional Chamber of Entrepreneurs in the Turkistan Region

Address: 42 Kozhanov Street, Turkistan;

Working hours: Monday to Friday from 9:00 to 18:00, with a lunch break from 13:00 to 14:00;

Regional Chamber of Entrepreneurs in the Ulytau Region

Address: 25 Zheltoksan Street, Tabrys Business Centre, Zhezkazgan;

Working hours: Monday to Friday from 9:00 to 18:00, with a lunch break from 13:00 to 14:00;

Regional Chamber of Entrepreneurs in the Aktobe Region

Address: 22 Sankibay Batyr Avenue, Kazyna Business Centre, Aktobe;

Working hours: Monday to Friday from 9:00 to 18:00, with a lunch break from 13:00 to 14:00;

Regional Chamber of Entrepreneurs in the Kyzylorda Region

Address: 123 Korkyt Ata Street, Kyzylorda;

Working hours: Monday to Friday from 9:00 to 18:00, with a lunch break from 13:00 to 14:00.

E-platforms and services

eGov.kz – filing applications, registering businesses and obtaining licenses online;

G4b.kz /<https://services.atameken.kz/> – online access to consultations and support measures;

Business.gov.kz – a single portal for government services for businesses;

Qoldau.kz – a platform for submitting applications for agricultural subsidies.

8. Does your country offer tax incentives for SMEs?

The Tax Code provides special tax regimes for SMEs. For example, under such regimes, emergent small businesses are not required to maintain accounting records (individual entrepreneurs using a patent or simplified declaration who are not VAT payers). Reduced tax rates are provided compared to those applicable under the general tax regime.

Article 678 of the current Tax Code outlines the following types of special tax regimes (STRs):

1) Special tax regimes for small businesses, including:

Special tax regime based on a patent;

Special tax regime based on a simplified declaration;

Special tax regime using a fixed deduction;

Special tax regime using a special mobile application;

2) Special retail tax regime;

3) Special tax regimes for agricultural producers:

Special tax regime for peasant or private farms;

Special tax regime for agricultural producers and agricultural cooperatives.

Conditions for applying these regimes in 2025 are as follows:

STR type	Taxable entity	Taxable item	Income limit	Number of employees	Tax rate
Patent	Individual entrepreneurs	Income	3,528 monthly calculation index per year (13.9M tenge)	No hired employees	1%
Mobile application	Individual entrepreneurs	Income	3,528 monthly calculation	No hired employees	1%

			index per year (13.9M tenge)		
Simplified declaration	Individual entrepreneurs, limited liability partnerships	Income	24,038 monthly calculation index per half year (94.5M tenge)	Up to 30 people	3%
Fixed deduction	Individual entrepreneurs, limited liability partnerships	Income – up to 70% deduction	144,184 monthly calculation index per year (566.9M tenge)	Up to 50 people	10% (individual entrepreneurs), 20% (legal entities)
Retail tax	Individual entrepreneurs, limited liability partnerships	Income – payroll	600,000 monthly calculation index per year (2.36B tenge)	Up to 200 people	4%-2% (B2C), 8% (B2B)
Legal entities-agricultural producers (-70%)	Legal entities-agricultural producers, peasant farm enterprises	Benefits for 70% reduction of taxes (individual income tax, corporate income tax, social tax, transport, property)			
Single land tax for	Peasant farm enterprises	Income	Limited by land plot area only		0.5%

peasant farm enterprises				
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9. What financing mechanisms and preferential financial instruments are available to SMEs in your country?

Supporting business and developing entrepreneurship in Kazakhstan

The current Single Comprehensive Business Support Programme provides for the merger of the Business Roadmap and Economy of Simple Things programmes. The Programme primarily focuses on the development of competitive, import-substituting and export-oriented industries, as well as the creation of new jobs.

The Programme consists of six tracks:

I track Microentrepreneurship;

II track Small and Medium Entrepreneurship;

III track Small, Medium and Large Entrepreneurship in Manufacturing and Services;

IV track Entrepreneurship in Single-Industry Towns, Small Cities and Rural Areas;

V track Social Entrepreneurship;

VI track Stock Exchange.

Across these tracks, priority in budget allocations for new project subsidies will be given to enterprises operating in the manufacturing sector.

The Programme provides for a phased transition from subsidies to guarantee instruments and other measures of non-financial support. New approaches to subsidizing SME projects involve a differentiated method of subsidizing, with a gradual transition to market-based conditions.

That is, with the subsidy applied, the end borrower will be financed at a rate of 8% for the first three years, 9% in the fourth year and 10% in the fifth year. This approach will reduce the burden on the budget and enable a gradual transition of businesses to market-based financing mechanisms.

To enhance the effectiveness of government support measures, reciprocal obligations have been strengthened. In addition, baseline entry criteria have been established for selecting competitive SMEs. That said, the gradual shift away from subsidies includes an expansion of loan guarantees.

The guarantee instrument is one of the most effective measures for addressing the problem businesses face with insufficient collateral for bank loans.

Under the Single Programme, the loan amount eligible for the guarantee instrument was increased to 3.5 billion tenge, with guarantees provided for up to 50%, and the list of the Common Classifier of Economic Activities for the use of this instrument was expanded.

The new approach to guarantees involves a transition to market conditions, where entrepreneurs will pay a commission for guarantees exceeding 500 million tenge.

For social entrepreneurs, the guarantee amount has been increased to 1 billion tenge.

The Programme also provides for alternative financing instruments such as syndicated lending, extended terms for bonded loans, grants for social entrepreneurs and participants in the One Village – One Product project, as well as the implementation of regional programmes through subsidies for agricultural production cooperatives.

The new tracks and approaches of the Single Comprehensive Programme will undoubtedly ensure the continuous development of businesses throughout all stages of their operations.

10. What are the main legal acts and regulations governing the SME sector in your country?

No. Title of the legal act

- 1 Entrepreneur Code. <https://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/K1500000375>;
- 2 Civil Code. <https://adilet.zan.kz/eng/docs/K940001000> ;
- 3 Tax Code. <https://adilet.zan.kz/eng/docs/K1700000120>;
- 4 Labour Code. <https://adilet.zan.kz/eng/docs/K1500000414>;

No. Title of the legal act

- 5 Law on the Support of Innovation.
<https://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/Z060000135/z060135.htm>;
- 6 Law on Natural Monopolies.
<https://adilet.zan.kz/eng/docs/Z1800000204>;
- 7 On Approval of the Rules, Forms of Support and Other Conditions Required for the State Non-Financial Support to Private Entrepreneurship Entities Granted in Various Sectors of the Economy, which Fall within the Competence of Several Sectoral Public Authorities. Decree No. 626 of the Government of Kazakhstan.
<https://adilet.zan.kz/eng/docs/P2400000626/info>;
- 8 On Some Measures of State Support for Private Entrepreneurship. Decree No. 754 of the Government of Kazakhstan.
<https://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/P2400000754>

Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan**Codes and laws**

Entrepreneur Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 375-V 3PK of 29 October 2015;

Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Administrative Offenses No. 235-V 3PK of 5 July 2014;

Civil Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 268-XIII of 27 December 1994;

Civil Procedure Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 377-V of 31 October 2015;

Criminal Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 226-V 3PK of 3 July 2014;

Labour Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 414-V 3PK of 23 November 2015;

Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Taxes and Other Obligatory Payments to the Budget (Tax Code) No. 120-VI 3PK of 25 December 2017;

Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan on the Health of the People and the Health Care System No. 360-VI 3PK of 7 July 2020;

Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Permissions and Notifications No. 202-V 3PK of 16 May 2014;

Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Self-Regulation No. 390-V 3PK of 12 November 2015;

Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Public Services No. 88-V of 15 April 2013;

Law on Compulsory Social Medical Insurance No. 405-V 3PK of 16 November 2015.

In addition, business activities in each field are regulated by the relevant sectoral legislation.

Regulations

Order of the Minister of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Approval of the List of Information Instruments No. 107 of 28 December 2018;

Order of the Acting Minister of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 48 of 22 June 2022 on Approval of the Rules for the Development of the Risk Assessment and Risk Management System by Regulatory Government Bodies and on Amendments to Order of the Acting Minister of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 3 of 31 July 2018 on Approval of the Rules for the Development of the Risk Assessment System and Form of Checklists by Government Bodies;

Orders of central government bodies approving checklists in various areas of control;

Sanitary and epidemiological requirements for facilities across various sectors of activity.

11. What organizational and technical mechanisms are in place to protect the interests of SMEs and facilitate dispute resolution?

Kazakhstan has introduced both organizational and technical mechanisms to protect the interests of SMEs and facilitate dispute resolution. The main institutions are the Atameken National Chamber of Entrepreneurs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Council for the Protection of Rights of Entrepreneurs and the Business Ombudsman, all of which ensure representation, protect rights and facilitate interaction with government authorities. Pre-trial methods of conflict resolution, such as mediation and conciliation procedures as outlined in the Administrative Procedural Code, are also applied. Judicial disputes are resolved by specialized economic courts and

arbitration tribunals under the Law on Arbitrage. Additionally, self-regulatory organizations and electronic resources, like the egov.kz portal, offer entrepreneurs access to legal services and tools for protection.

Official information sources include the following websites: atameken.kz, ombudsmanbiz.kz and egov.kz.

12. How is the participation of SMEs in the public procurement process supported in your country?

Public procurement:

On 1 July 2024, the head of state signed the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Public Procurement (*hereinafter – the Law*). The Law entered into force on 1 January 2025.

In accordance with paragraph 7 of Article 27 of the Law, public procurement **from SMEs** is carried out based on the list of goods, works and services in accordance with the procedure and volumes approved by the authorized body.

According to Appendix 3 to the Order of the Minister of Finance of the Republic of Kazakhstan as of 8 October 2024 No. 677 on approval of the list of goods, works, services, rules and volume of public procurement carried out from SMEs (*hereinafter – the Order*), public procurement of goods, works and services the cost of which **does not exceed fifty thousand times the monthly calculation index (MCI) (196.6 million tenge in 2025)**, established for the corresponding financial year by the law on the republican budget, **is carried out from SMEs**.

Thus, according to the Order, **priority has been set for SMEs** in the implementation of public procurement of **goods, works and services up to 50,000 MCI**, according to the list specified in Appendix 1 to the Order:

- purchase of goods from individuals and legal entities listed in **the register of domestic producers of goods, works and services** (*priority for domestic producers*);
- works, except for construction, performed by individuals and legal entities of the Republic of Kazakhstan (*all works, with the exception of works carried out by means of a competition using the rating-point system*);
- services provided by individuals and legal entities of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

For reference: according to paragraph 2 of the Order, the rules do **not apply** to public procurement of goods, works and services carried out in accordance **with the list of goods, works and services for which the method of public procurement is determined by the authorized body**, as well as to public procurement of goods, works and services for which **exemptions from the national legislation have been established by the decision of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan**.

The above-mentioned norm was introduced as part of the implementation of the new law on public procurement in order to **support SMEs**, as well as **increase competitiveness** in procurement.

Procurement of Samruk-Kazyna JSC

In the procurement of Samruk-Kazyna JSC, there are mandatory evaluation criteria for SMEs when comparing tender bids from potential suppliers that affect a conditional price reduction. If the potential supplier **meets the status of an SME, a conditional price reduction of 1%** is provided based on a document issued in accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Moreover, according to paragraph 11 of article 42 of the Procurement Procedure, **if the conditional prices of the tender price proposals are equal, a potential supplier who is an SME is recognized as the winner** (*if there is no producer of the purchased goods among the procurement participants*).

13. What projects and support tools are used to develop youth and women's entrepreneurship?

According to 2024 data, 1,049,151 women run SMEs, accounting for 48.1% of the total number of SMEs (2,178,951).

The Atameken National Chamber of Entrepreneurs (NCE) of the Republic of Kazakhstan acts as the operator of non-financial support measures. This includes service support, information and consulting services, business networking, training and access to sales markets. A special place is occupied by the One Village – One Product project (OVOP), where women from rural regions create unique products from local raw materials. In 2024, with the support of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), three groups of employees of the NCE and the Business Women's Council visited Kyrgyzstan to study the experience of implementing the OVOP, which strengthened cooperation and

exchange of practices. We also hold Business Women's Council forums, exhibitions and business missions.

In addition, the following programmes are implemented:

1. The Umai Preferential Mortgage Programme, the programme provides women with financial stability and affordable housing.

2. The Umit State Programme from the Damu Fund, where the nominal interest rate for the final borrower is 16.5%; the maximum loan amount is up to 20 million tenge;

3. Grants and subsidies for aspiring business women;

4. Consultations and training, including EBRD courses with the issuance of certificates during the first year after receiving the loan.

5. The free online Business Qymyz programme and the Coca-Cola Belesteri competition with grants from USD 2,000 to USD 4,000 for the best business ideas are also available.

Other initiatives:

TalpynUP: training, mentoring and financing of startups in cooperation with Imperial College London and the Association of Business Coaches of Kazakhstan;

EBRD programmes: financial support, training, mentoring through the Women in Business and the Business Lens (business assessment on seven key aspects);

She's Next. Empowered by Visa: global support for women's entrepreneurship;

Dell Women's Entrepreneur Network (DWEN): an international network for business scaling.

It can also be noted that the **Center Credit Bank** has launched the **Business-Aru Project** in March 2025 to support women's entrepreneurship.

Grants for young people (up to 29 years old) through employment centers

To start your own business without a refund.

Simplified procedure for obtaining a grant when defending a business plan.

Micro-credit programme for young people.

Rates from 2.5% per annum.

The amounts range from 5 to 20 million tenge.

The term is up to 5-7 years.

Source: Damu Fund, Agrarian Credit Corporation, local executive authorities.

Zhas Project (for young people)

Grant support for youth startups in the regions.

14. How is the digitalization and green transition of SMEs supported?

About 80% of the world's countries have committed themselves to achieving carbon neutrality by a specific deadline, including Kazakhstan, which has set such a goal by 2060. One of the effective mechanisms for achieving the stated goal is to create a framework for green finance. Today, we have established the basic legislative and regulatory framework for the development of the green finance market.

The Environmental Code adopted in 2021 introduces a taxonomy of green projects, a legislative definition of green finance, specific tools for economic stimulation of activities aimed at environmental protection.

There is an adopted taxonomy of green projects subject to financing through green bonds and loans. The taxonomy provides clear definitions of the types and technologies of green projects, so that all market participants (banks, funds, investors, supervisors, users) have the same basis for defining their tasks, programmes and financial products, such as the conditions for issuing green loans.

Currently, the banking sector plays an important role in financing the transition to a less carbon-intensive economy. And this is happening in most countries of the world. Financial institutions can not only facilitate the flow of funds into the green economy, but also indirectly increase transparency when requiring business entities to disclose information about green investments.

A relevant problem is the access of SMEs to green finance products. At the same time, large initial capital expenditures prevent SMEs from engaging in green projects. However, the government has begun to pay more attention to ESG requirements.

In order to provide preferential financing for green projects, a new financial support tool has been introduced within the framework of the National Entrepreneurship Development Project for 2021-2025 to stimulate the development of green energy and green economy – a guarantee on issuers' bonds, including those implementing green projects. For example, under the guarantee, the total nominal value of the issue of green bonds is no more than

5 billion tenge per issuer. The guarantee amount is up to 50% of the issue volume of green bonds in the range of 2.5 billion tenge per issuer.

Furthermore, to enhance and establish favourable conditions for subsidizing the coupon rate of green bonds, there is an instrument that supports the subsidy of green bond coupon rates. The coupon rate is the base rate increased by 5% for bonds with a maturity of up to 5 years. At the same time, 6% is paid by the entrepreneur, and the difference is subsidized by the state. The value of the issued bonds should not exceed 3 billion tenge.

All these measures are important legal steps that will allow our business entities to operate within a single regulatory framework that defines the types of economic activities and projects aimed at protecting the environment.

Government policy measures aimed at mitigating the environmental impact of SMEs are among the main factors of greening the economy. Although the scale of the environmental impact of individual SMEs may be insignificant, their overall influence can have a tremendous effect.

Improving environmental performance is also a significant opportunity for the business development of SMEs themselves as suppliers of goods and services within the production chain.

An equally important place in the green transition is occupied by the development of the waste management system, including reducing the volume of waste disposal in landfills, increasing the share of recycling and recovery of secondary resources from waste.

The Government has approved a mechanism for concessional financing of waste management projects – the purchase of garbage trucks, sorting lines and processing facilities. Financing is provided through the Industrial Development Fund with a 3% interest rate and a loan term of 3 to 15 years. The total amount of allocated funds is about 200 billion tenge for 3 years, the leaseholder/borrower's own participation is at least 20% of the project cost, of which at least 10% is cash.

As part of the implementation of this mechanism, the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Kazakhstan, together with the akimats, has formed a preliminary pool of 94 projects worth 232 billion tenge, according to official information. However, today there are 45 rejected projects out of 94 projects.

At the first stage, 65 projects were approved for a total amount of 307.1 billion tenge (including 252.5 billion tenge accumulated through disposal fees), of which:

- for 5 projects, Zhasyl Damu JSC sent funds to the Industrial Development Fund in the amount of 5 billion tenge (3.5 billion tenge accumulated through

disposal fees), of which the Industrial Development Fund sent 3.4 billion tenge to the final borrower for 4 projects;

- 3 projects worth 42.4 billion tenge (including 37.2 billion tenge accumulated through disposal fees) were approved at the second stage of consideration in the Industrial Development Fund and are at the stage of concluding contracts to provide funds to investors;

- 14 projects worth 28.8 billion tenge (including 23.5 billion tenge accumulated through disposal fees) are at the second stage of consideration in the Industrial Development Fund.

- 43 projects worth 230.7 billion tenge (including 188.1 billion tenge accumulated through disposal fees) are being improved by investors based on the comments of the Fund (solving land issues, connecting to infrastructure, finalizing the financial and economic model, approving projects on the construction and installation works, etc.), then they will be submitted for consideration to the Fund (for stage 2) (consideration of financial viability).

Within the framework of 65 projects, the capacity will increase for waste processing by 1.1 million tons per year; for sorting - 2.2 million tons per year; for the purchase of special equipment - 113 units.

Environmental legislation also provides for a measure to support business entities engaged in the collection, transportation, sorting and burial of solid waste by reimbursing costs from the disposal fee.

In 2024, this EcoQolday financial support programme was launched with new conditions. According to information from Zhasyl Damu JSC (the programme operator), by the end of 2024, 30.2 million tenge was paid to glass collectors and processors for 561.5 tons of glass, including collectors in the amount of 27.2 million tenge, processors in the amount of 3 million tenge.

15. How is startup development supported in your country?

Government programmes and initiatives

Digital Economy National Project

Technology startup support programme.

Creating conditions for the rapid launch and scaling of IT projects.

Astana Hub Programme

The International Technopark of IT Startups in Astana.

Offering:

Tax benefits (exemption from VAT, CIT and social tax).

Free tuition through accelerators (Startup School, Scale Up).

Mentoring and access to international markets.

Grant support for the development of startups.

The Seed Money programme from Astana Hub

Direct financing in the early stages.

The amount of grants: 5-20 million tenge for MVP and pilot projects.

Financial support and venture investments

QazTech Ventures (subsidiary of Baiterek Holding)

Co-investing in startups together with venture funds.

Programmes:

Matching Funding Programme (50/50 co-financing with private investors).

Venture funds

MOST Ventures, White Hill Capital, My Ventures and others.

Investing in IT, fintech, biotech and agrotech projects.

Grant support

Astana Hub grants for product development, market entry and user engagement.

Grants from the Ministry of Digital Development, Innovation and Aerospace Industry:

For R&D (research and development).

For early-stage startups.

Infrastructure for startups

Technoparks and business incubators

Astana Hub – largest.

TechGarden (Almaty) – technopark of new technologies.

StartUp Kazakhstan – startup acceleration and scaling programme.

Coworking spaces and accelerators

MOST Business Incubator, ID Labs, QazInnovations.

Offering a workspace, legal and marketing support.

Tax and administrative benefits

Astana Hub residents are exempt from:

Corporate income tax.

VAT.

Social tax.

Simplified procedure for obtaining permits to attract foreign specialists.

Support

Specific measures

Funding

Grants, seed investments, venture funds

Training	Free accelerators, startup schools
Benefits	Tax exemptions for IT startups
Infrastructure	Technoparks, coworking spaces, incubators

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SME Questionnaire (Russia)

1. What are the criteria for defining SMEs in Russia?

In accordance with Article 4 of Federal Law No. 209 dated July 24, 2007 “On the Development of Small and Medium Enterprises in the Russian Federation”, SMEs include business entities, business partnerships, production cooperatives, consumer cooperatives, peasant (farm) households and individual entrepreneurs registered in accordance with the laws of the Russian Federation and meeting certain conditions.

These conditions include:

- the average staffing number of employees for the previous calendar year must not exceed the following limits: up to 15 people – for microenterprises; up to 100 people – for small enterprises; up to 250 people – for medium enterprises; However, there are exceptions:

- the average staffing number of employees in clothing and footwear industry organizations for the previous calendar year: up to 15 people – for microenterprises; up to 100 people – for small enterprises; up to 1,000 people – for medium enterprises;

- average staffing number of employees for the previous calendar year for public catering organizations and individual entrepreneurs: up to 15 people – for microenterprises; up to 100 people – for small enterprises; up to 1,500 people – for medium enterprises;

- income received from entrepreneurial activity for the previous calendar year must not exceed the following limits: up to RUB 120 million – for microenterprises; up to RUB 800 million – for small enterprises; up to RUB 2 billion – for medium enterprises.

- compliance with the requirements for the structure of the registered (share) capital of a legal entity (the share of large companies and foreign legal entities in the registered capital of SMEs is limited to 49% (it can reach 100% if the foreign founder is classified as an SME according to the criteria of the Russian Federation); the share of the Russian Federation, constituent entities of the Russian Federation, municipalities must not exceed 25%).

2. What is the number of SMEs in your country and their share in value-added, employment, and exports?

The Unified Register of Small and Medium Enterprises of the Russian Federation is posted on the portal of the Federal Tax Service. Information about SMEs

is entered into the Register automatically, based on data from the Unified State Register of Legal Entities, the Unified State Register of Individual Entrepreneurs and tax reporting.

As of March 2025, 6, 665,754 SMEs are registered in the Russian Federation, of which 6,419,103 are microenterprises, 225,739 are small enterprises,

20,912 are medium enterprises. For the year 2024, the share of SMEs in total employment is 42%, in the national economy (GDP) – about 21.7%, in exports – about 17%.

3. In which economic sectors are SMEs primarily represented in Russia?

Small enterprises specialize mainly in trade and agriculture. Medium enterprises are represented more in higher value-added sectors - manufacturing and construction. Other typical activities of SMEs include transport and shipping, real estate, production and distribution of electricity, gas and water, tourism, information and communication, medical services, education and professional, scientific and technical activities.

4. What specialized institutions support the development of SMEs in Russia?

Joint-stock company “Russian Small and Medium Business Corporation” (RSMB Corporation) is a federal development institution for small and medium enterprises support which has been operating since 2015; it was established by Decree of the President of the Russian Federation No. 287 dated 05.06.2015 "On the Measures for the Further Development of Small and

Medium Enterprises" to provide the support required by Federal Law No. 209 dated 24.07.2007 "On the Development of Small and Medium Enterprises in the Russian Federation".

The controlling shareholder of RSMB Corporation is the Russian Federation, represented by the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation.

The ecosystem of RSMB Corporation includes its subsidiaries SME Bank, SME Leasing, and МСП.РФ Digital Platform.

1. RSMB Corporation provides financial and guarantee support to SMEs. Corporation implements the government loan, guarantee programs, and provides "umbrella guarantees" to enable SMEs to obtain loans where there is a lack of collateral. RSMB Corporation facilitates industrial cooperation and distribution of SMEs with large private Russian and foreign companies as well as with retail chains. Through its subsidiary, SME Leasing, it offers preferential equipment leasing. SME Bank provides loans and bank guarantees.

2. The Digital Platform МСП.РФ is currently the main source of information of support measures for SMEs.

The Digital Platform provides targeted selection and proactive approval of support measures, as well as the provision of services required at different stages of business development, without the personal presence of entrepreneurs.

In 2025, more than 30 different online services and hundreds of support measures are available on the Digital Platform. All Digital Platform users have their own digital profile, so that federal and regional support tools and services are offered to participants taking into account its needs and stage of business development.

There are more than 400 so-called "My Business" centers operating in Russian regions, which provide support to SMEs, over 90 industrial parks and technology parks, which are a territorial production, scientific, technological and technical base for the implementation of innovative projects, including for SMEs, as well as regional guarantee organizations, which carry out activities aimed at providing small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with guarantee support in order to facilitate their access to credit and other financial resources.

5. What strategies and government programs exist for the development of the SME sector in Russia?

In accordance with the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation No. 309 dated May 7, 2024 "On the National Development Goals of the Russian Federation for the Period up to 2030 and for the Future up to 2036", the Ministry of Economic Development of Russia has developed a new structure of the Federal Project "Small and Medium Enterprises and Support for Individual Entrepreneurial Initiative". This Federal Project is the main regulatory document which stipulates goals, support measures for SMEs and means of their implementation.

The main goal of the Federal Project: to ensure real growth of income per employee of a small and medium enterprise 1.2 times higher than the growth of Russian GDP.

Key objectives of the Federal project:

- stimulate the growth of SMEs in priority sectors of the economy and the transition of companies to a “higher” category (from micro to small enterprises, from small to medium enterprises);
- allocate financial support for priority sectors of the economy; – maintain and develop the existing infrastructure for SME development: production (industrial parks, technology parks, business parks), service (My Business centers, export support centers) and online (MCPI.PΦ Digital Platform) infrastructure.

6. What support mechanisms are available for SMEs in Russia?

I. The following areas of activity of RSMB Corporation can be identified as the main mechanisms for supporting SMEs:

1. Financial support. RSMB Corporation ensures the implementation of the government's loan and guarantee programs. RSMB Corporation provides so-called "umbrella guarantee" to enable businesses to obtain loan when collateral is insufficient. It is also the operator of preferential loan programs for small and medium enterprises for investment and working capital purposes. Through its subsidiary MSP Leasing, it offers preferential equipment leasing. Preferential loans and bank guarantees are also provided through SME Bank.

2. Support for small and medium-sized enterprises in industrial cooperation and distribution:

- Monitoring compliance with the government's 25% quota for large state-owned enterprises' procurements from SMEs;
- Assistance in industrial cooperation with private Russian and foreign companies searching for suppliers of industrial products and providing them with comprehensive support;

- Cooperation with the regions for organizing distribution of SME products in Russia's retail chains;

- Implementation of the Farmer's Island project to facilitate the marketing of agricultural products.

3. Digitalization of support measures through the MCPI.PΦ Digital Platform.

In February 2022, the MCPI.PΦ Digital Platform was launched - a single online resource that brings together SMEs, self-employed people, regions, government agencies, state-owned companies and organizations across Russia. MCPI.PΦ provides entrepreneurs with a full range of support measures and services.

4. Getting feedback from entrepreneurs and providing them with legal support for business. 360° Service on MCPI.PΦ was created for effective interaction

and prompt resolution of entrepreneurs' issues. RSMB Corporation lawyers help the entrepreneurs to understand the situation and explain the legal aspects

of doing business in accordance with the law.

At the same time, RSMB Corporation interacts with "My Business" centers, regional guarantee organizations, technology parks, etc.

In addition, SME status entitles the company to a range of benefits and support from the government. Some of these include:

- simplified accounting and reporting. Small enterprises may keep their accounts in a simplified manner, for example, they may not make provisions for future expenditure, they may not apply certain accounting rules and they may record their income and expenditure on a cash basis. Accounting reports can also be simplified - usually only two forms: a balance sheet and a profit and loss account;

- reporting to the Federal State Statistics Service. Small enterprises are exempt from submitting a large number of statistical forms. They usually report every five years as part of a continuous statistical monitoring;

- tax benefits. Regional authorities have the right to set reduced tax rates for SMEs, for example on profit tax, property tax, land tax and transport tax;

- reduced rates of contribution to state insurance funds. Reduced rates of contribution apply to SMEs for payments to employees above the minimum wage: 10% for pension insurance, 5% for health insurance and 0% for social security insurance;

- cash transactions. Small enterprises may not set a cash limit. Sole traders may not issue cash receipts and cash payments and may not keep a cash book;
- deposit insurance. Funds in bank accounts and deposits of SMEs are subject to mandatory deposit insurance. If the bank in which the company (individual entrepreneur) keeps money goes bankrupt or loses its license, an SME can receive an insurance payout;
- preferential loans. SMEs can obtain loans at preferential rates for investment purposes, to replenish working capital, to refinance existing loans and to develop business activities.

Each region of Russia also has local institutions supporting SMEs in the form of autonomous non-profit organizations, development corporations, associations, trade unions, foundations and other public associations that stimulate the work of SMEs.

Such institutions coordinate the interaction of SMEs with government bodies on issues of providing support measures to entrepreneurs, assist in solving system problems (various regulatory and administrative barriers, changes in national standards, etc.), provide loans for the implementation of projects aimed at introducing advanced technologies, creating new products or organizing import-substituting production, provide grants and non-financial support to young and socially oriented entrepreneurs, and also organize the participation of SMEs in business missions and international exhibitions both in Russia and abroad.

II. State-owned (municipal) microfinance organizations (SMFOs) provide microcredit to legal entities, individual entrepreneurs and self-employed.

All state-owned microfinance organizations have been supervised by the RSMB Corporation since 2023 and operate according to uniform rules and deadlines.

The microfinance selection and acquisition service was developed and launched on MCII.PΦ.

The main objectives of microfinance are investment, working capital replenishment and refinancing.

SMFOs provide microloans to SMEs of up to RUB 5 million and to self-employed of up to RUB 500,000 for up to 3 years at lower interest rates (the average weighted rate as of January 2025 is up to 8.3%) compared to bank products.

III. Regional guarantee organizations (RGOs) provide guarantees in all regions of the Russian Federation when absence of the necessary collateral

occurs while receiving repayable financing for any purpose for small and medium businesses, self-employed persons, as well as the organizations engaged in SME support infrastructure.

The types of liabilities include credit, loan, financial leasing, bank guarantee, etc. The amount of a single guarantee is up to RUB 25 million and up to RUB 100 million (for RGOs with a capital of over RUB 700 million), the commission of the RGO is from 0.5% to 3% per annum, and the coverage is up to 70% of the credit amount.

7. What service infrastructure is available for SMEs in Russia?

The service infrastructure for SMEs support in Russia, along with state specialized development institutes, includes:

- 1) regional centers and agencies for entrepreneurship development;
- 2) state and municipal foundations for supporting entrepreneurship;
- 3) regional guarantee organizations;
- 4) joint-stock investment foundations and closed-end mutual investment foundations that raise investments for SMEs;
- 5) technology parks;
- 6) innovation and technology centers;
- 7) business parks and organizations managing business parks;
- 8) business incubators;
- 9) chambers and centers of crafts;
- 10) subcontracting support centers;
- 11) marketing and educational-business centers;
- 12) export support centers;
- 13) leasing companies;
- 14) consultation centers;
- 15) industrial (production) parks and management companies of industrial (production) parks;
- 16) industrial technology parks and management companies of industrial technology parks;
- 17) technology commercialization centers;
- 18) centers for collective access to high-tech equipment;
- 19) engineering centers;
- 20) prototyping and industrial design centers;

- 21) technology transfer centers;
- 22) centers of cluster development;
- 23) state foundations for the support of scientific, scientific-technical, and innovative activities operating in accordance with the laws of the Russian Federation;
- 24) microfinance organizations providing microloans to small and medium enterprises and (or) organizations that form the infrastructure for small and medium enterprises support (hereinafter referred to as microfinance organizations for entrepreneurial financing);
- 25) centers of innovation in the social sphere;
- 26) certification, standardization and testing centers;
- 27) centers for supporting folk arts and crafts;
- 28) centers for the development of rural and ecological tourism;
- 29) multifunctional centers for the provision of state and municipal services, providing services to small and medium enterprises;
- 30) chambers of commerce and industry;
- 31) competence centers in the field of agricultural cooperation and support for farmers;
- 32) other entities.

8. Are there any tax incentives for SMEs in Russia?

Since 2025, amendments to the Tax Code of the Russian Federation have come into force, expanding the list of cases in which the investment tax deduction from the profit tax can be applied (Federal Law No. 337-FZ of 30 September 2024).

Now organizations will be able to receive a reduction for venture or direct investments in innovative projects or innovative activities under investment partnership agreements. The mandatory condition is the presence of such a partnership in the relevant regional register.

Organizations may apply for this reduction at the place of their location (or their separate divisions) if they are located in the territory of the constituent entity of the Russian Federation that has granted the right to receive this reduction.

Entrepreneurs who register as individual entrepreneurs for the first time have the right to use tax holidays – this is the application of a zero tax rate during the first two tax periods. There are two conditions for using this benefit: type of activity and share of income.

Individual entrepreneurs in the production, social, scientific spheres, in the sector of household services to the population, as well as when renting out premises for temporary residence have the right to a zero rate. Regional laws may include specific types of activities and other restrictions, such as the number of employees and the level of income subject to the zero rate taxation under the simplified tax system.

Tax holidays for individual entrepreneurs are valid until 2026. However, each region applies its own validity period and conditions. Newly registered individual entrepreneurs have the right to assess taxes at a zero rate for two tax periods if the laws on tax holidays continue to be in force or have been extended.

9. What financing mechanisms and preferential financial instruments are available to SMEs in Russia?

A simplified method of obtaining a loan for SMEs with insufficient collateral is the "umbrella" mechanism, operated by the RSMB Corporation with its own guarantee for the loan portfolio provided by a bank (30 banks are accredited). Moreover, the guarantee can be up to RUB 1 billion, up to 50% of the loan amount and for a period of up to 10 years.

Microfinance organizations (MFOs) (165 registered MFOs by March 2025) and regional guarantee organizations (RGOs), of which there are more than 90, also participate in the SME financing processes.

SMEs can also benefit from preferential leasing conditions by contacting SME Leasing.

Other SME financing programs are also being implemented. They include the Preferential Lending Program of the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Russian Federation. It focuses on investment and working capital purposes for SMEs in the machine tool and robotics sectors. Companies can obtain a loan from the SME Bank at a preferential rate of 5% per annum.

Under the new program, manufacturers of machine tools and industrial robots will be able to raise between RUB 30 million and RUB 200 million to implement investment projects or for working capital purposes. The maximum duration of the financing is 5 years. For investment projects, the "umbrella" guarantee of RSMB Corporation is provided, which can cover up to 50% of the loan amount.

10. What are the main legislative and regulatory documents governing the SME sector in Russia?

The main federal document regulating SMEs in the Russian Federation is the Federal Law № 209 of 24.07.2007 "On the Development of Small and Medium-Sized Businesses in the Russian Federation".

Under this Law, regional and local authorities are obliged to develop SMEs by allocating the necessary funds from their budgets. This support is centralized in nature, while each region can independently add supplementary business support programs from the regional budget.

Other federal laws governing entrepreneurship in Russia in general, including small and medium business, include: Federal Law No. 129 dated 08.08.2001

"On the State Registration of Legal Entities and Individual Entrepreneurs", Federal Law No. 294 dated 26.12.2008 "On the Protection of the Rights of Legal Entities and Individual Entrepreneurs in the Implementation of the State Control (Supervision) and Municipal Control", Federal Law No. 99 dated 04.05.2011

"On Licensing of Certain Types of Activities", Federal Law No. 135 dated 26.07.2006 "On Protection of Competition" and many others.

11. What organizational and technical mechanisms exist to protect SME interests and resolve disputes in Russia?

1. The Federal Law "On the Protection of Rights of Legal Entities and Individual Entrepreneurs in the Exercise of State Control (Supervision) and Municipal Control" dated 26.12.2008 N 294 vests the prosecutor's offices of the Russian Federation with the power to ensure the prevention of violations in the exercise of control measures in the sphere of entrepreneurship.

In order to improve the effectiveness of the prosecutor's supervision over the enforcement of legislation protecting the rights of business entities, public councils for the protection of small and medium-sized enterprises have been set

up in prosecutor's offices with the participation of law enforcement and regulatory agencies, public organizations and business associations.

2. The Commissioner for the Protection of the Rights of Entrepreneurs under the President of the Russian Federation and his working staff are the state body with the rights of a legal entity which provides guarantees of the

state protection of the rights and legitimate interests of business entities and observance of these rights by the state authorities, local government bodies and officials.

3. The platform "ЗАБИЗНЕСС.РФ" is aimed at: reducing administrative pressure on business from law enforcement agencies; ensuring the protection of the rights and legitimate interests of persons engaged in entrepreneurial activities; promoting the development of constructive dialogue between business and the authorities.

4. The 360° Service on the МСП.РФ Digital Platform was launched by RSMB Corporation to protect the rights of entrepreneurs. The 360° Service includes eight thematic sections where the entrepreneur can submit a request on specific problems, including difficulties in conducting tenders, on issues of inspections by regulatory authorities, and also share his/her opinion on the work of the support infrastructure, RSMB Corporation, and development institutions on issues of receiving government support measures.

12. How is support provided for SMEs' participation in the public procurement process in Russia?

Federal Law No. 223 dated 18.07.2011 "On the Procurement of Goods, Works, and Services by Certain Types of Legal Entities" defines the principles and conditions for procurement by the organizations in the management or capital of which the State participates. The law obliges entities with 50% state participation to purchase a certain share of goods and services from SME entities. Currently, the procurement quota for SME entities is 25%.

RSMB Corporation monitors compliance with the 25% SME procurement quota for state-owned enterprises.

In 2024, the volume of procurement by companies with state participation from SMEs will amount to RUB 8 trillion. Significant growth is predicted for the future.

According to the Federal Law "On the System of Contracts in the Field of Procurement of Goods, Works and Services for State and Municipal Needs" No. 44 dated 05.04.2013, state and municipal customers are obliged to purchase at least 25% of their annual procurement volume from SMEs.

13. What projects and support tools are implemented for the development of youth and women entrepreneurship?

a. Federal measures to support youth entrepreneurship include, depending on the department or authority: grants for the implementation of

projects through competitions, organization of training courses, introduction of federal projects to develop youth employment in the labor market, implementation of the National Project "Small and Medium Entrepreneurship and Support for Individual Entrepreneurial Initiatives", as well as the implementation of programs to support youth entrepreneurship through the development of cooperation between educational institutions, the real sector of the economy, and government agencies.

There are also Innovative Scientific and Technological Centers (ISTC), which unite business, universities and research organizations, the purpose of which

is to provide conditions for the development of scientific and technological activities, where entrepreneurs have the opportunity to test their solutions directly in production. The main advantage of the ISTC is the provision of tax benefits

and administrative preferences. In particular, under certain conditions, residents are exempt from paying the income tax and VAT for up to 10 years, and are entitled to a reduced rate of insurance premiums.

Large companies launch accelerators, educational forums, organize project competitions, case championships and support student business incubators.

The most important are, for example "New Link. Projects" of Russian Railways, which considers projects in more than 10 areas: development of the transport process, improvement of energy efficiency, development of the locomotive complex, etc.; the SberStudent accelerator of Sberbank, in which participants can receive grants and raise investments; Alfa-Bank's program, in which young entrepreneurs can count on a pilot project, financed by Alfa Bank, expert assistance in product development, long-term cooperation, and even the sale of a product to the bank; SIBUR LLC's "Growth Formula", according to which participants, with the help of mentors and in the process of educational tracks, develop projects in specified areas, and the winners receive financial support.

The Agency for Strategic Initiatives and RSMB Corporation are holding a federal competition called "Create OURS", in which young people aged 14-28 who want to start their own business or have recently started a business can compete for a grant of 1 million rubles and receive expert advice on attracting investment, promoting business in the media and selecting support measures.

The Innovation Support Fund implements a number of initiatives- "InnoShkolnik", "START", "UMNIK" and "Student Start-Ups" programs, which provide grants of up to 1 million rubles in areas such as digital technologies,

new devices and smart production technologies, biotechnology, creative industries, medicine and health-saving technologies, and resource-saving energy.

b. Measures to support women's entrepreneurship are provided under the SME Support Program, implemented by the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation since 2005.

Since 2019, support for women's business has been provided within the framework of the SME national project, which stipulates implementation of the measures to provide a range of services, assistance and support measures to SMEs in "My Business" centers, including financial (loan, guarantee, leasing) services, consulting and educational support, social entrepreneurship, export support.

According to the Unified register of SMEs receiving support from the Federal Tax Service (FTS of Russia) as of July 2024, the number of women entrepreneurs amounted to 6.4 million people (individual entrepreneurs and self-employed persons), or 43% of the total number of individual entrepreneurs and self-employed persons – 14.8 million people. According to the data from the All-Russian Public Organization of SMEs "OPORA RUSSIA", 58% of women entrepreneurs run businesses in the service sector, 28% in trade and 14% in manufacturing.

According to the Federal Tax Service of Russia, the most popular areas among self-employed women are: marketing and advertising, renting out apartments, tutoring, hairdressing, manicure and pedicure services, creating their own products, interior design and tailoring.

With the development of creative industries, women have more opportunities for self-fulfillment. Creative industries include all kinds of craft production, hospitality, fashion, art, gastronomy, etc., where gender differences do not play a role. Such projects are currently experiencing high rates of development.

Since 2012, the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation has been implementing the "Mother Entrepreneur" program. This program was developed specifically for women on maternity leave, mothers of minor children and women registered with the employment service. The aim of the project is to help them start their own business and realize business ideas that they were unable to implement on their own.

14. How is the digitalization and green transition of SMEs supported?

An effective tool for comprehensive support of small and medium enterprises is the Digital platform of RSMB Corporation - МСП.РФ, which is the state platform created for entrepreneurs and those who are just planning to start their own business. It was developed by RSMB Corporation together with the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation, with the participation of entrepreneurs themselves, to provide access to all necessary services and support in one place.

There are more than 30 services available on the Digital Platform now and about 1 M users have been registered.

Personal accounts of regional executive authorities of 89 subjects of the Russian Federation are already operating on the Platform. 33 regions have integrated their local systems with the Digital Platform. So it means that businessmen can apply for all regional and federal support measures in one point.

Personal account of the organization provides support tools for development and analytics of support measures. Among them: ability to receive online applications from businesses, CRM-system for processing applications by government agencies, management analytics in case of providing support measures, ability to generate reports on the provided support.

Currently, more than 30 services are available on the Digital platform, including the “Industrial Cooperation and Distribution” service. Using Industrial Cooperation and Distribution service, authorized users of the Digital platform may offer their products and services to potential customers and publish their requests to find suppliers of non-food and industrial products. In recent years, Russian government agencies and private companies have been actively implementing ESG principles. The commitment to achieving sustainable development is reflected in the Concept of the Russian Federation's Transition to Sustainable Development.

SMEs could become a new driver for the promotion of sustainable development principles in Russia in the coming years, and ESG transformation could in turn help them achieve the sustainability required in today's rapidly changing economic reality.

As part of the involvement of the business community in the implementation of national development goals, the EPS Rating methodology was developed in the Central Federal District in 2022. The acronym EPS stands

for Ecology, People and State. The main difference between the EPS Rating and other sustainable development ratings is the greater emphasis on corporate social responsibility.

The EPS Rating evaluates several parameters of a company. "Ecology" – business' influence on the environment; types of technologies and environmental projects promoted by the business. "Personnel" – level of remuneration, social and demographic programs, charitable projects. "State" – this block evaluates tax history, business reputation, social investment in the regions of presence, and interaction with business associations. Based on the results of the comprehensive assessment, participants are assigned the EPS Rating. The rating results are published in open access on the website ЭКГ-РЕЙТИНГ.РФ. In February 2024, the status of the EPS Rating method was consolidated in the format of a national standard.

The Investment Project Office of the Association of Interregional Social and Economic Interaction "Central Federal District" has developed a model law on the development of responsible business management to support responsible companies.

In addition, Sberbank PJSC has developed an ESG model for the region - a tool for sustainable development of a constituent entity of the Russian Federation in the environmental, social and governance spheres.

Based on the ESG model of the region, the executive authorities of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation will be able to update their regional strategies and plans for social and economic development in accordance with ESG approaches, as well as to develop an ESG strategy for the constituent entities of the Russian Federation.

15. How is the development of startups supported in Russia?

The Russian government has defined the goals and objectives of the new phase of development of the SME sector and the directions of state support for this sector up to 2030.

Changing the quality structure of SMEs, which are still dominated by retail companies (36%), is crucial. It is proposed to focus on supporting the companies involved in import substitution, manufacturing industry, information technologies, engineering, and tourism services. Today, such companies make up 21% of the overall structure of the SMEs sector.

Russian companies can count on receiving subsidies from the federal budget to stimulate innovative activities, receiving support measures from the specialized institute for the development of small and medium enterprises

(RSMB Corporation), and participating in innovative entrepreneurship support subprograms.

Decree of the Government of the Russian Federation No. 1847 dated 02.11.2023 outlined the special role of supporting small technology companies (STC) as a tool for implementing a new technology policy and a way to increase the level of innovation activity in the Russian Federation, including within the framework of the federal project "Takeoff – from Startup to IPO".

Applicant companies included in the STC register may apply for special support measures, such as tax preferences, financial support (grants and subsidies for R&D, R&D product development), consulting support, export support, and a preferential lending program for high tech SMEs within the framework of the federal project "Takeoff – from startup to IPO" (provided by SME Bank).

The Skolkovo Foundation and the Innovation Development Fund (IIDF (Internet Initiative Development Fund), formerly known as the Innovation Promotion Fund, IPF) are key players in supporting start-ups and innovative projects in Russia. They offer a variety of support measures, including funding, infrastructure, educational programs and expert assistance.

The Skolkovo Foundation has launched a platform of searching for customers and contractors for R&D and other technological solutions in Russia and the EAEU member states with the aim of establishing effective mechanisms for technological partnership between participants in cooperation processes. This platform is focused on developing services for the rapid, high-quality transfer of technologies from the academic environment to the real sector of the economy and is a marketplace in the field of R&D.

In order to help investors and potential industrial partners in searching for promising projects for the STC, the Ministry of Economic Development of Russia has created the "Startup Show-case" – a mechanism for providing information support for the development of innovative activities and state support for such activities. The "Show-case" is a platform solution that enables interaction between small technology companies, investors and industrial partners. Within the framework of this project, technological startups are given the opportunity to search for investments, investors – for promising projects, and industrial partners – for innovative products.

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SME Questionnaire (Türkiye)

1. What are the criteria for defining SMEs in your country?

In Türkiye, SMEs are evaluated in 3 groups: micro - small – medium our definition of SME is based on the number of employees, annual net sales revenue and financial balance sheet. Businesses employing less than 250 people, whose annual net sales revenue or financial balance sheet does not exceed 500 million Turkish Liras (TL) are defined as SMEs.

Micro-enterprises are enterprises with less than 10 employees and an annual net sales revenue or financial balance sheet of 10 million TL.

Small-enterprises are enterprises with less than 50 employees and an annual net sales revenue or financial balance sheet of 100 million TL.

Medium-enterprises are enterprises with less than 50 employees and an annual net sales revenue or financial balance sheet of 500 million TL.

2. What is the number of SMEs in your country and their share in value-added, employment, and exports?

The approximate number of SMEs in Türkiye is 3.7 million. The share of SMEs in all enterprises is 99.7%. In addition to this; SMEs constitute 70.6% of employment, 47.5% of personnel costs, 42.5% of turnover, 36.3% of production and 36.4% of value added.

3. In which economic sectors are SMEs primarily represented in your country?

In Türkiye, SMEs are primarily represented in the following sectors:

- Manufacturing (including textiles, automotive, and food processing)
- Construction (real estate development and infrastructure)
- Retail and Wholesale Trade (local stores, distribution, and imports/exports)
- Agriculture and Food Processing (crop production, livestock, and food packaging)

- Services (transport, logistics, tourism, education, healthcare, and IT)
- Tourism (hotels, restaurants, and travel agencies)
- Information and Communication Technology (ICT) (software, e-commerce, and digital services)

These sectors highlight the diverse roles SMEs play in driving economic growth in Türkiye.

4. What specialized institutions support the development of SMEs in your country?

In Türkiye, several institutions support the development of SMEs:

- **Turkish Ministry of Industry and Technology:** is a government body responsible for shaping and implementing policies related to industrial development, technological advancement, and innovation in Türkiye. Its main objectives include fostering economic growth, enhancing industrial competitiveness, supporting research and development (R&D), promoting the digital transformation of industries, and ensuring the efficient use of resources across various sectors, with a particular focus on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

- **KOSGEB (Small and Medium Enterprises Development Organization of Türkiye):** Provides financial support, grants, and training for SMEs, to increase the share and efficiency of small and medium-sized enterprises in meeting the economic and social needs of the country, to increase their competitiveness and to realize the integration in the industry in accordance with the economic developments.

- **TOBB (Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Türkiye):** Represents SMEs and offers services such as business networking, advocacy, and economic development initiatives.

- **TÜBİTAK (The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Türkiye):** Supports R&D and innovation for SMEs, offering funding and technological assistance.

- **İŞKUR (Turkish Employment Agency):** Provides support for workforce training, employment, and development programs for SME employees.

- **Development Agencies:** Regional organizations that offer funding, guidance, and consultancy to SMEs, particularly for local economic development.

- **The Credit Guarantee Fund (KGF):** plays a vital role for SMEs in Türkiye by providing them with easier access to financing. It offers credit guarantees to SMEs, helping them secure loans from banks that they might otherwise struggle to obtain due to insufficient collateral or high risk. This support boosts the liquidity of SMEs, enabling them to grow, invest in innovation, and improve their operations. The KGF is crucial in fostering financial inclusion and helping SMEs overcome challenges in accessing capital, which is essential for their sustainability and competitiveness.

These institutions help SMEs with financing, innovation, workforce development, and business growth, driving the sector's overall development in Türkiye.

5. What strategies and government programs exist for the development of the SME sector in your country?

In the 12th Development Plan of Türkiye, SMEs (Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises) hold a significant place due to their crucial role in the country's economic development. SMEs are recognized as the backbone of the Turkish economy, contributing to employment, innovation, and regional development. The plan emphasizes strengthening SMEs by improving their access to financing, promoting digital transformation, enhancing their competitiveness, and fostering innovation. The aim is to create an environment where SMEs can grow, adapt to global market demands, and contribute to sustainable economic growth.

In Türkiye, several strategies and government programs aim to support and develop the SME sector:

Financial Support and Incentives

KOSGEB offers grants, low-interest loans, and financial assistance for innovation, and international market expansion.

SME Support Programs provide financial aid for technology adoption, product development, and business modernization.

Training and Capacity Building

KOSGEB and TOBB offer training, seminars, and workshops to improve business management, entrepreneurship, and technical skills.

İŞKUR provides workforce training programs to enhance skills in line with industry needs.

Innovation and R&D Support

TÜBİTAK offers funding for research and development projects, promoting innovation in SMEs. Programs focus on increasing SMEs' technological capabilities and product quality.

Export and Market Expansion

The Turkish Exporters Assembly (TİM) supports SMEs in accessing international markets through export training and market development programs.

KOSGEB's Internationalization Programs help SMEs enter global markets.

6. What support mechanisms are available for SMEs in your country?

There are many institutions and organizations supporting SMEs in Türkiye. The mechanisms shared below for the support provided to SMEs include the support provided by public authorities in Türkiye.

Supports provided to SMEs by Small and Medium Enterprises Development Organization of Türkiye (KOSGEB):

Entrepreneur Support Programme

Capacity Building Support Programme

SME Digital Transition Support Programme

Green Industry Support Programme

Employment Protection Support Programme

Global Competitiveness Support Programme

Strategical Product Support Programme

SME Technological Product Investment Support Programme

TEKMER Support Programme

Mentoring and Evaluation Support Programme

Recovery of Businesses after Earthquake Support Programme

Details for these supports can be reached from www.kosgeb.gov.tr

Supports provided to SMEs by The Scientific and Research Council of Türkiye (TÜBİTAK):

1501 Industrial R&D Projects Grant Programme

1503 R&D Project Brokerage Events Grant Programme

1505 University – Industry Collaboration Support Programme

1507 TÜBİTAK SME R&D Start-Up Support Programme

1509 TÜBİTAK International Industrial R&D Projects Grant Programme

1511 Research Technology Development and Innovation Projects in Priority Areas G.P. (Technology Focused Industrial Movement Programme)

1512 Entrepreneurship Support Programme

1513 Technology Transfer Office Support Programme

1514 Venture Capital Funding Programme (Tech-InvesTR)

1515 Frontier R&D Laboratory Support Programme

1601 Capacity Building for I&E Grant Programme

1602 TÜBİTAK Patent Support Programme

1607 BIGG+ SME Mentorship Interface

1612 BIGG – 1st Phase Implementing Agencies Call

1701 R&D Project Evaluation and Monitoring Call

1702 Patent Based Technology Transfer Support Call

1704 SAYEM – Industrial Innovations Network

1707 SME Support Call for Order-Based R&D Projects

1711 Artificial Intelligence Ecosystem Call

1812 Investment Based Entrepreneurship Support Programme (BIGG Investment)

1831 Climate-Informed and Green Innovation Technology Extension Programme

1832 Call for Green Transformation in Industry

SAYEM Green Transformation Call

Details for these supports can be reached from www.tubitak.gov.tr

Supports Provided by Türkiye Technology Development Unity (TTGV):

Eco-Production Industry Programme

Climate Lab Community Programme

Climate Pioneer Investment Programme

Enterprise Development Portfolio

Details for these supports can be reached from <https://ttgv.org.tr>

7. What service infrastructure is available for SMEs in your country?

KOSGEB, which is the most important public institution responsible for the development and support of SMEs in Türkiye, has a platform called ‘SME Information System’. This system is directly integrated into the ‘electronic government applications’ system of the Republic of Türkiye. In other words, the owners and signatories of all SMEs operating in Türkiye have gained the right to apply online for the support provided by KOSGEB. Thus, representatives of SMEs do not have to physically reach KOSGEB when applying for support. In addition, the system is compatible with the platforms of other government agencies, and the most up-to-date data on SMEs are automatically reflected in the SME declaration document.

On the other hand, it's a well known fact that SMEs' share in production, exports, added value, and investments are becoming more and more ample, and henceforth their importance for the country's economy increases day by day. Due to the growth and development of the labour market, creating new business areas and expanding and developing the existing enterprises has great importance.

Adopting the information-based methods to be able to design business-specific supports, KOSGEB has put into service the Business Assessment Report, which will help SMEs to observe their current conditions and develop future-oriented strategies. Based on the understanding of "Every SME is a Value for the Future of the Country" and the motto "We Value You", the Business Assessment Report is the most comprehensive document today prepared using administrative records that will contribute to the development of SMEs. The Business Assessment Report has been made available to all businesses free of charge via the e-Government platform. Today, when information comes to the fore and its significance is better understood, SMEs will be able to reach information about the state of the sector, thanks to the comprehensive data included in the Business Assessment Report. Consequently, the SMEs will have the chance to position themselves in their sectors, in their regions, and throughout Türkiye. The report, which is produced specifically for each enterprise by processing the administrative records of institutions and organizations, can be verified thanks to the QR code in the upper right corner of its pages. Thus, it can be safely used as a reference, especially in foreign and domestic business relations, financial institutions and many similar places.

8. Are there any tax incentives for SMEs in your country?

Tax incentives are financial benefits provided by the government to encourage investment in specific industries, regions, or activities. These incentives can take various forms, including tax exemptions, reductions, allowances, and credits. In Türkiye, tax incentives are a key part of the government's strategy to boost economic growth and development.

a. Investment Incentive Program

The Turkish government offers an Investment Incentive Program designed to encourage both domestic and foreign investments. This program provides a variety of tax benefits depending on the region and sector of investment, including:

Corporate Tax Reductions: Depending on the region, investors can benefit from significant reductions in corporate tax rates, sometimes down to 0%

VAT Exemptions: Exemptions from Value Added Tax (VAT) are available for machinery and equipment purchases related to the investment.

Customs Duty Exemptions: Imported machinery and equipment can be exempt from customs duties.

Social Security Premium Support: The government covers a portion of the employer's social security contributions for a specified period.

Interest Rate Support: Investors can receive support in the form of reduced interest rates on loans.

b. Research and Development (R&D) Incentives

To foster innovation, Türkiye provides generous R&D incentives for companies involved in research and technological development. These include:

R&D Tax Deductions: Up to 100% deduction on R&D expenditures from the taxable income.

Income Tax Withholding Incentives: Reduced income tax withholding for employees working in R&D and innovation activities.

Social Security Premium Support: Exemptions from social security premiums for employees engaged in R&D activities.

R&D Centers: Companies with dedicated R&D centers can benefit from additional tax reductions and exemptions.

c. Technology Development Zones (Technoparks) Incentives

Businesses located in Technology Development Zones (Technoparks) in Türkiye enjoy several tax benefits, including:

Corporate Tax Exemption: Income derived from R&D activities in Technoparks is exempt from corporate tax until 2023.

Income Tax Exemption: Employees working in Technoparks are exempt from income tax on their wages.

VAT Exemption: Sales of software and R&D products developed in Technoparks are exempt from VAT.

d. Free Zones (FZ) Incentives

Türkiye's Free Zones (FZs) are special areas where businesses can benefit from various tax advantages, including:

Corporate Tax Exemption: Companies operating in FZs are exempt from corporate tax on income derived from export activities.

VAT Exemption: Goods and services purchased within the Free Zones are exempt from VAT.

Customs Duty Exemption: No customs duties are applied on goods entering or leaving the Free Zones.

Income Tax Withholding Incentives: 100% exemption from income withholding tax on employee salaries for companies exporting at least 85% of the FOB value of products produced in free zones 100% exemption from income tax on employee salaries.

e. Strategic Investment Incentives

For investments that are considered strategically important for Türkiye's economy, such as subway, bridges, highways and dams additional incentives are provided:

Tax Reductions: Strategic investments may qualify for higher rates of tax reductions.

Interest Rate Support: Strategic projects can receive greater interest rate support.

Land Allocation: The government may allocate land for strategic investments at reduced costs.

9. What financing mechanisms and preferential financial opportunities are available for SMEs in your country?

In Türkiye, to facilitate SMEs' access to finance, ensuring that they are able to use credit under appropriate conditions, KOSGEB SME Financing Support Programme has been commenced where all or part of the interest/profit share

of the loan is covered by KOSGEB after the bank has provided loans to the enterprises.

Registered and active SMEs which already exists in KOSGEB database with up-to-date SME Information Statement, without any prohibition record under KOSGEB Support Facilities and one of covered business type under this program are eligible for application.

Entrepreneurs and SMEs acting in strategic or priority sectors can benefit from this programme. Within the scope of this programme, loan types are as follows;

Working Capital Loan (up to 18 months and max. loan amount is 50.000 TL, if the entrepreneur is young (under 30 age), female, disabled, veteran or first degree martyr relative. max. loan amount is 70.000 TL)

Machinery and Equipment Loan (up to 36 months and max. loan amount for SMEs in strategic or priority sectors is 500.000 TL)

Financial mechanisms proposed to SMEs in Türkiye are generally conducted by Credit Guarantee Fund (KGF A.Ş.). These mechanisms mainly aim to provide guarantee for banks or public institutions.

Credit Mechanisms Provided to SMEs by Credit Guarantee Fund (KGF A.Ş.):

Export Support Package

Investment Support Package

Support Package for Operating Expenses

Investment-Project Finance Support Package

Manufacturing Industry Support Package

Operating Expenses Support Package for 6th February 2023 Earthquakes

Investment Support Package for 6th February 2023 Earthquakes

Support Package for Severance Payment of Retirement Age Victims

Regional SME Support

Support Package for Activities Generating Fx-Based Income

Support Package for Women Entrepreneurs

Entrepreneur Support Package

Support Package for Green Transformation and Energy Efficiency

Technology Support Package

Support Package for Digital Transformation

Educational Support Package

Financial Energy Support Package for Agricultural Production

Enterprise Expenditures Support Package

TURWIB Programme Support Package

TKYB Support Package

Cold Air Units and Refrigeric Vehicles Support Package

Additional Employment Support Package

Manufacturing Based Import Substitution Support Package

Treasury Fund (20 Billion TL) (KOBİ Deger Loans I and II)

Treasury Fund (35 Billion TL)

Treasury Fund (52,5 Billion TL)

Treasury Fund (200 Billion TL)

Ekonomi Deger Loans

TOBB Nefes Loan 2020 Support

Details for these supports can be reached from www.kgf.com.tr

10. What are the main legislative and regulatory documents governing the SME sector in your country?

The Regulation on Small and Medium Enterprises, which was announced by the Presidential Decree dated 24.05.2023 and numbered 7297 and

published in the Official Gazette dated 25.05.2023 and numbered 32201, determines all definitions, classifications and regulations regarding SMEs.

11. What organizational and technical mechanisms exist for protecting SME interests and resolving disputes?

KOSGEB (small and medium enterprises development organization), Chambers Of Commerce and Chambers Tradesmen are the organizations related with SME'S. As of 01.01.2019, mediation has been introduced as a condition of litigation for commercial disputes. In other words, the parties to a commercial dispute must first apply to a mediator, not to the court. If the dispute cannot be resolved through mediation, the parties to the commercial dispute may go to court. Arbitration commission is also another mechanism used in the solution of commercial disputes. Arbitration is the final resolution of a dispute by a third party (arbitrator), limited to disputes that the law allows to be resolved in this way. The disputes which are not solved by mediator or arbitration commission mainly resolved in commercial courts.

12. How is support provided for SMEs' participation in the public procurement process in your country?

The weight of SMEs in public procurement participation rates is low compared to their contribution to the Gross Domestic Product. Furthermore, SMEs' participation in cross-border tenders is also low. In this context, efforts are being made to support SMEs' participation in public procurements, especially those to be held between countries (cross-border), through co-financing actions to be carried out by intermediary institutions.

SMEs with domestic goods certificates have an advantage in tenders. The product must be entirely produced in Türkiye or the important stages in the production process and the final workmanship and stage that are economically necessary must be made in Türkiye. The local contribution rate reached as a result of the calculations to be made regarding the product must be at least 51%. Domestic Goods certificate provides 15% price advantage in public tenders.

In addition to that, Technological Product Experience Certificate (TÜR) is a certificate obtained by the Ministry of Industry and Technology of the Republic of Türkiye, with the examination of TÜBİTAK (in self-funded projects), for the products obtained as a result of R&D studies carried out by a company

with public support or its own resources. It replaces the work completion certificate in public tenders.

13. What projects and support tools are implemented for the development of youth and women entrepreneurship?

KOSGEB's Entrepreneurship Support is a non-refundable grant program that aims to alleviate the financial burdens of women entrepreneurs in the process of establishing a business. As of 2025, businesses established as individuals will receive 10,000 TL in establishment support, while businesses established as capital companies will receive 20,000 TL. In addition to all these supports, if the entrepreneur is young, female, disabled, a veteran or a first-degree relative of a martyr, an additional 10,000 TL will be added to these amounts.

Within the scope of Business Development Support, up to 1,500,000 TL and 80% reimbursement support is provided for personnel expenses. The duration of this support is determined as 36 months. This limit increases to 1,650,000 TL for women, young, disabled, veteran or martyr relatives. In addition, machinery-equipment, software and service procurement expenses (training, consultancy, certification, test-analysis, marketing, design, industrial property rights) are also within the scope of support. These supports aim to increase employment and support sustainability in the businesses of women entrepreneurs.

The Opportunities Map in the digital portal created within the scope of the "Young Women Building Their Future Project" carried out by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Sabancı Foundation in cooperation with the Ministry of Family and Social Policies and the Ministry of Labor and Social Security includes job, internship, education and entrepreneurship supports.

The Ministry of Commerce has also established the "W2W-National Women Exporter Network Platform" in order to develop the institutional capacity of more women entrepreneurs and integrate them into export processes, create the communication network they need and integrate them into export processes.

The General Directorate of Tradesmen, Craftsmen and Cooperatives of the Ministry of Commerce provides grant support within the scope of the KOOPDES program, along with training, entrepreneurship and consultancy support for Women's Initiative Production and Business Cooperatives.

14. How is the digitalization and green transition of SMEs supported?

KOSGEB has two separate supports in these areas: The first one is SME Digital Transformation Support Program and the second one is Green Industry Support Program.

SME Digital Transformation Support Program aims to support digital transformation processes in order to improve and make the business processes of small and medium-sized enterprises more efficient, to increase their competitiveness and to increase their share in the economy. Small or medium-sized enterprises operating in the manufacturing sector whose "Operating Profit" or "Total Equity" of the last 3 (three) fiscal years is not negative can apply this program. Credit upper limit per business is 20.000.000 TL and the duration of the program is 24 months.

The partners of the Türkiye Green Industry Project, which will be carried out with the support of the World Bank, are KOSGEB, TÜBİTAK and the Ministry of Industry and Technology. The project consists of three components.

In the first component, KOSGEB will provide reimbursable support for the green transformation activities of SMEs. The program will support activities to be carried out by industrial SMEs in thematic areas such as renewable energy, resource efficiency, waste management, circular economy, etc.

In the second component, TÜBİTAK will target companies that engage in green innovation activities that involve the development of new green technologies, products or processes in Türkiye or other markets. The supports that green start-ups, SMEs, large companies or company consortiums can apply for will include R&D, prototype development, standard development and new product or process development that contribute to green production or higher energy and/or resource efficiency.

The Ministry of Industry and Technology will ensure effective management of the project by executing the Project Management, Needs Analysis, Capacity Development, Green Industry Academy, Green Monitoring System and Promotion and Dissemination work packages under the third and technical support component of the project.

Providing Energy and Resource Efficiency and Reducing Carbon Emissions for Industrial SMEs

KOSGEB is responsible for providing support for Providing Energy and Resource Efficiency and Reducing Carbon Emissions for Industrial SMEs within the scope of Component 1 of the "Türkiye Green Industry Project" to be carried out with the World Bank.

Supporting Solar Energy Investments for Industrial SMEs

This component aims to decarbonize energy systems in industrial activities and to increase the competitiveness of SMEs by reducing their energy costs. Rooftop solar power plants described as on-site and combined solar power plants within industrial facilities will be supported within the scope of the project.

Priority will be given to increasing the use of renewable energy resources and ensuring that energy is safe and sustainable in activities related to clean, reliable energy transformation in industry.

15. How is the development of startups supported in your country?

There are many institutions and organizations supporting startups in Türkiye. The mechanisms shared below for the support provided to startups include the support provided by public authorities in Türkiye.

Supports provided to SMEs by Small and Medium Enterprises Development Organization of Türkiye (KOSGEB):

- Entrepreneur Support Program

To ensure the sustainability of newly established businesses by supporting them in sectors determined in line with our country's strategic priorities.

Within the scope of this program;

All businesses operating in sectors supported by KOSGEB can apply for Business Start-up Support,

Business Development Support NACE code;

C-Manufacturing

61- Telecommunications

62- Computer programming, consultancy and related activities

63- IT infrastructure, data processing, hosting and other information service activities

72- Scientific research and development activities

sectors.

KOSGEB's Entrepreneurship Support is a non-refundable grant program that aims to alleviate the financial burdens of women entrepreneurs in the process of establishing a business. As of 2025, businesses established as individuals will receive 10,000 TL in establishment support, while businesses

established as capital companies will receive 20,000 TL. In addition to all these supports, if the entrepreneur is young, female, disabled, a veteran or a first-degree relative of a martyr, an additional 10,000 TL will be added to these amounts.

Supports provided to Startups by The Scientific and Research Council of Türkiye (TÜBİTAK):

1507 TÜBİTAK SME R&D Start-up Support Program

R&D is the systematically conducted innovative activities and the use of the knowledge in new applications (product, process) in order to increase scientific and technical knowledge. Innovation refers to a series of scientific, technological, financial and commercial activities aimed at transforming an idea into a developed, improved or new and marketable product or process.

The 1507 SME R&D Start-up Support Program aims to develop the technological and innovation capacities of organizations at the Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) scale, to make them more competitive, to be able to carry out systematic projects, to develop high value-added products, to have a corporate research technology development culture, and to take part more effectively in national and international support programs.

The 1507 SME R&D Support Program is carried out by invitation. The support provided is in the form of a grant (non-refundable). There is no limitation on the subject of the projects unless otherwise stated in the call announcement. Applications can be made for R&D projects from all sectors and in all technology fields.

- 1512 Entrepreneurship Support Program (BİGG)

The BİGG Portal Application, which was created to bring together BİGG companies that form the TÜBİTAK BiGG Ecosystem and work to serve for joint success and growth, with mentors and investment funds, has been launched.

The 1512 Entrepreneurship Support Program aims to support activities from the idea stage to the market so that entrepreneurs can transform their technology and innovation-focused business ideas into enterprises with high added value and qualified employment potential, thus encouraging qualified entrepreneurship and creating start-up companies that can develop innovative, high-tech products and services with international competitive power.

Within the scope of the program, entrepreneurs are provided with entrepreneurship training, and technical, commercial and administrative support is provided to the entrepreneur by guides with industry experience.

This program consists of three stages explained below for the transformation of innovative business ideas into commercial products/processes/services. The entrepreneur can complete each stage in order and proceed to the next stage if deemed appropriate by TÜBİTAK.

- 1607 BiGG+ SME Mentorship Interface

BiGG + SME Mentor Interface Call was opened with the aim of supporting activities to create and implement mentoring mechanisms to increase the business development and innovation capacities of SMEs.

The main reason for this call is to develop and implement a mentoring mechanism for the commercialization of products and services of SMEs supported within the scope of TÜBİTAK TEYDEB Programs, to enter new markets and to increase the export capacities of these SMEs in order to use public resources allocated to Research and Innovation areas more effectively and efficiently.

Mentoring services are expected to have an impact on SMEs in two dimensions:

Increase in Commercial Maturity (For example, sales by companies in the product development phase, market diversity by companies with sales revenue, export, etc.)

Increase in R&D and innovation capacity (For example, ensuring the continuity of activities in the field of innovation, institutional execution of innovation activities, etc.).

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