How to Open a Factory in Kazakhstan

Planning to manufacture in Kazakhstan? Before you commit capital, you need a location that actually has power capacity, a legal path to the land, a realistic view of incentives, and a staffing and logistics plan. This guide sets out the stages in the order that avoids the most expensive mistakes.

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Key points

- Check grid and utility capacity before you secure land.
- A company with foreign participation can own land for industrial buildings, but not agricultural land and not land in the border zone.
- SEZ incentives depend on priority activities, statutory criteria and a decision by the authorities — the business case should work without them.
- Products subject to EAEU technical regulations can be sold only after conformity assessment, so plan certification early.

Start with feasibility, not land

A factory project is defined by its product, capacity, target markets and budget. Those decide how much power, water and gas you need, what logistics access matters, how many people you must hire and whether the project is likely to qualify for incentives. Settle them before you look at sites.

Choose a region and check utilities

A site can look perfect and still lack the grid capacity your line needs. Request technical conditions from the utility providers for power, water, gas and sewage before land or a building is secured, and compare regions on utilities, logistics, labour availability and incentive eligibility.

Land: what a foreign-owned company can hold

A company with foreign participation can own land for industrial and commercial buildings, with two important exceptions: it cannot own or use agricultural land, and it cannot own land in the border zone. Check the land's category and location against your ownership structure, and verify title and encumbrances before you sign. Many projects lease land or buildings, including inside special economic zones.

Special economic zones: eligibility, not entitlement

An SEZ participant must be a legal entity carrying out priority activities in the zone, so a branch will not qualify. Participation depends on meeting statutory criteria and on a decision by the authorities. Assess eligibility during feasibility and choose the structure before you apply.

Structure the operating company

Most plants are run by a Kazakhstan LLP: a separate legal entity with limited liability that can hold land, permits and staff and can apply for SEZ participation. Register it early enough to sign land, utility and construction contracts in its own name.

Design, permits and construction

Design and construction are done by licensed contractors. The route includes design, expert review where required, permits and construction or the fit-out of an existing building. Using an existing building usually shortens the path; timing depends on the project and cannot be promised in advance.

Equipment import and certification

Kazakhstan is part of the customs territory of the Eurasian Economic Union. Imported equipment is declared electronically, by the declarant or a customs broker. When goods are imported under a contract with a foreign supplier, the declarant is normally the EAEU party to that transaction — usually your Kazakhstan company.

Products subject to EAEU technical regulations can be placed on the market only after the conformity assessment those regulations require. If certification is planned late, a finished plant waits.

People and work permits

Hire the local team under Kazakhstan employment contracts and plan work permits for foreign engineers and managers. Permits are issued at the authorities' discretion and take time, so the hiring schedule must include that lead time.

A realistic timeline

Registering the company is measured in days. Land, utility connections, construction, equipment lead times and certification set the real timeline, which runs to months and often longer. A stage-by-stage plan built during feasibility is the only honest answer to the question “how long will it take?”.

Considering Kazakhstan?
Tell us what you want to build. We will tell you what it actually takes — the steps, the risks, and the realistic timeline — before you commit capital.
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Sources

1. Land Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Articles 23–24 — https://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/K030000442_

2. Law on Special Economic and Industrial Zones No. 242-VI of 3 April 2019 — https://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/Z1900000242
3. Kazakh Invest — Special Economic Zones — https://invest.gov.kz/doing-business-here/fez-and/
4. Customs Code of the Eurasian Economic Union, Articles 83 and 104 — https://eec.eaeunion.org/upload/medialibrary/9dd/Customs-Code-of-the-EAEU.pdf
5. Treaty on the Eurasian Economic Union, Article 53 — https://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/acc_e/kaz_e/wtacckaz85_leg_1.pdf

This page is general information about doing business in Kazakhstan, not legal or tax advice for your situation. Rules change and apply differently depending on your sector, structure and ownership.

Work permits, visas and residence permits are issued by Kazakhstan state authorities at their discretion. We prepare documentation and support the process. We cannot and do not guarantee any outcome.

Eligibility for investment incentives and special economic zone regimes is determined by the relevant authorities against statutory criteria. We assess your likely eligibility and prepare the application. We do not guarantee approval.

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