

SOCIAL POLICY IN OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY IN KAZAKHSTAN: COMPARATIVE AND RISK-ORIENTED ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

The study examines the social policy mechanisms aimed at protecting workers employed in hazardous and dangerous working conditions in Kazakhstan. Particular attention is paid to the effectiveness of the existing system of social guarantees and the prospects for its transformation in the context of modern labour protection standards. The relevance of the research is determined by the need to strengthen socially oriented approaches in occupational safety policy and to improve the protection of workers' rights and well-being. The research methodology is based on a comprehensive analysis of labour legislation, regulatory documents, statistical data, and international practices in the field of occupational safety and social protection. The results demonstrate that the current list-based system of social guarantees does not fully reflect the real level of occupational risks and does not ensure equal access to protective mechanisms for all categories of workers. The study identifies institutional and legal barriers limiting the effectiveness of social guarantees, including fragmented regulation and insufficient incentives for employers to improve working conditions. Based on a comparative analysis of international approaches, the authors substantiate the importance of transitioning to a risk-oriented model focused on prevention, social justice, and the creation of safe and decent working conditions. The proposed recommendations are aimed at improving state social policy in the field of occupational safety and strengthening the system of social protection for workers in Kazakhstan.

Keywords: Social Policy, Occupational Safety, Hazardous Working Conditions, Social Guarantees, Labour Protection, Occupational Risks, Workers' Rights, Risk-Oriented Approach.

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Қазақстандағы еңбек қауіпсіздігі саласындағы әлеуметтік саясат: салыстырмалы және тәуекелге бағдарланған талдау

Аңдатпа. Зерттеуде Қазақстандағы зиянды және қауіпті еңбек жағдайларында жұмыс істейтін қызметкерлерді қорғауға бағытталған әлеуметтік саясат тетіктері қарастырылады. Қолданыстағы әлеуметтік кепілдіктер жүйесінің тиімділігіне және оны қазіргі еңбек қауіпсіздігі стандарттары жағдайында жетілдіру перспективаларына ерекше назар аударылады. Зерттеудің өзектілігі еңбек қауіпсіздігі әлеуметтік бағдарланған саясатты күшейту және қызметкерлердің құқықтары мен әл-ауқатын қорғау қажеттілігімен анықталады. Зерттеу әдіснамасы еңбек заңнамасын, нормативтік-құқықтық құжаттарды, статистикалық деректерді және еңбек қауіпсіздігі мен әлеуметтік қорғау саласындағы халықаралық тәжірибені кешенді талдауға негізделген. Зерттеу нәтижелері әлеуметтік кепілдіктердің қолданыстағы тізімдік жүйесі кәсіби тәуекелдердің нақты деңгейін толық ескермейтінін және қызметкерлердің барлық санаттары үшін қорғаныс тетіктеріне тең қолжетімділікті қамтамасыз етпейтінін көрсетті. Сонымен қатар, әлеуметтік кепілдіктердің тиімділігін шектейтін институционалдық және құқықтық кедергілер, оның ішінде нормативтік реттеудің бытыраңқылығы мен жұмыс берушілерді еңбек жағдайларын жақсартуға ынталандырудың жеткіліксіздігі анықталды. Халықаралық тәжірибені салыстырмалы талдау негізінде алдын алу қағидаттарына, әлеуметтік әділеттілікке және қауіпсіз әрі лайықты еңбек жағдайларын қалыптастыруға бағытталған тәуекелге бағдарланған модельге көшудің маңыздылығы негізделді. Ұсынылған ұсыныстар Қазақстандағы еңбек қауіпсіздігі саласындағы мемлекеттік әлеуметтік саясатты жетілдіруге және қызметкерлерді әлеуметтік қорғау жүйесін нығайтуға бағытталған.

Түйін сөздер: әлеуметтік саясат, еңбек қауіпсіздігі, зиянды еңбек жағдайлары, әлеуметтік кепілдіктер, еңбекті қорғау, кәсіби тәуекелдер, қызметкерлердің құқықтары, тәуекелге бағдарланған тәсіл.

Социальная политика в сфере безопасности труда в Казахстане: сравнительный и риск-ориентированный анализ

Аннотация. В статье рассматриваются механизмы социальной политики, направленные на защиту работников, занятых во вредных и опасных условиях труда в Казахстане. Особое внимание уделяется эффективности действующей системы социальных гарантий и перспективам ее трансформации в условиях современных стандартов охраны труда. Актуальность исследования обусловлена необходимостью усиления социально ориентированных подходов в государственной политике в сфере безопасности труда, а также повышения уровня защиты прав и благополучия работников. Методология исследования основана на комплексном анализе трудового законодательства, нормативно-правовых документов, статистических данных и международного опыта в области охраны труда и социальной защиты. Результаты исследования показали, что действующая списочная система социальных гарантий не в полной мере отражает реальный уровень профессиональных рисков и не обеспечивает равный доступ к механизмам защиты для всех категорий работников. Выявлены институциональные и правовые барьеры, ограничивающие эффективность социальных гарантий, включая фрагментарность нормативного регулирования и недостаточную заинтересованность работодателей в улучшении условий труда. На основе сравнительного анализа международного опыта обоснована необходимость перехода к риск-ориентированной модели, ориентированной на профилактику, социальную справедливость и формирование безопасных и достойных условий труда. Предложенные рекомендации направлены на совершенствование государственной социальной политики в сфере безопасности труда и укрепление системы социальной защиты работников в Казахстане.

Ключевые слова: социальная политика, безопасность труда, вредные условия труда, социальные гарантии, охрана труда, профессиональные риски, защита прав работников, риск-ориентированный подход.

Introduction

The provision of social guarantees for workers employed in harmful and hazardous working conditions remains one of the central challenges of modern labour policy and occupational safety systems. In industrial economies, employees working in mining, metallurgy, construction, transportation, chemical production, agriculture, and other high-risk sectors are regularly exposed to physical, chemical, biological, and psychosocial hazards that may negatively affect their health, productivity, and quality of life. International labour standards developed by the International Labour Organization (ILO), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the European Union emphasize that the protection of workers in hazardous environments is not only a legal obligation of the state and employers but also an essential component of sustainable socio-economic development. In this regard, social guarantees play a crucial role in compensating workers for occupational risks, preventing workplace injuries and diseases, and ensuring social justice within labour relations.

In Kazakhstan, the issue of labour protection has become increasingly important due to the rapid development of industrial production, expansion of extractive industries, urbanization, and technological modernization. The country's economy is heavily dependent on sectors characterized by hazardous and harmful working conditions, particularly mining, oil and gas extraction, metallurgy,

energy production, and manufacturing industries. According to national statistical data, hundreds of thousands of workers continue to perform their duties in workplaces that do not fully comply with sanitary-hygienic and occupational safety standards. Exposure to excessive noise, vibration, toxic substances, dust, radiation, high temperatures, and physically demanding labour create substantial risks for occupational diseases, temporary disability, and work-related accidents. Consequently, the effectiveness of social guarantees provided to such workers has become a matter of growing public, economic, and political concern.

Social guarantees represent an important mechanism for protecting workers employed in hazardous environments. These guarantees include reduced working hours, additional paid annual leave, increased wages, professional pension contributions, free medical examinations, provision of personal protective equipment, and preventive nutrition measures. Their primary objective is to compensate employees for the negative effects of harmful working conditions while simultaneously encouraging employers to improve occupational safety practices. Effective social protection systems contribute to workforce stability, reduce labour turnover, improve employee motivation, and minimize the long-term economic burden associated with occupational injuries and diseases. As noted by Rodriguez, the protection of workers' rights and health is a fundamental prerequisite for decent work and sustainable labour relations in modern economies [1].

Despite the existence of labour protection legislation and state guarantees, the current system operating in Kazakhstan faces numerous structural and institutional challenges. One of the main problems is the persistence of a list-based regulatory approach inherited from the Soviet labour protection model. Under this system, professions and industries are classified according to predetermined lists of hazardous occupations rather than actual occupational risk levels identified through continuous workplace assessment. Such an approach does not adequately reflect technological changes, modernization processes, or the real exposure of workers to harmful factors. As a result, some employees continue to receive social guarantees despite improved working conditions, while others working in newly emerging hazardous environments may remain insufficiently protected.

Another important issue is the fragmentation and inconsistency of the regulatory framework governing occupational safety and social guarantees. Relevant provisions are dispersed across labour legislation, ministerial orders, sanitary regulations, and industry-specific acts, which complicates enforcement and compliance. In practice, employers may avoid conducting proper workplace assessments or attempt to minimize the recognition of harmful working conditions in order to reduce financial obligations related to compensatory payments and professional pension contributions. Such practices weaken the effectiveness of labour protection mechanisms and contribute to underreporting of occupational risks and diseases. Santos emphasizes that ineffective institutional regulation and insufficient employer responsibility often undermine the achievement of social sustainability goals within labour markets [2].

The current system also lacks sufficient economic incentives encouraging employers to invest in safer technologies and preventive occupational safety measures. Existing guarantees are predominantly compensatory in nature, focusing on payments and benefits after exposure to hazardous conditions rather than promoting proactive risk reduction strategies. International experience demonstrates that modern occupational safety systems increasingly rely on risk-oriented approaches that prioritize prevention, continuous monitoring, and adaptive workplace management. Countries within the European Union and North America have gradually shifted from rigid

list-based systems toward dynamic occupational risk assessment models, allowing social guarantees to be more accurately aligned with actual workplace hazards and employee exposure levels.

The vulnerability of workers employed under insecure and hazardous conditions further strengthens the necessity of reforming labour protection systems. Bazzoli and Probst argue that insecure forms of employment often increase workers' exposure to occupational risks while simultaneously reducing their access to effective social protection mechanisms [3]. This problem is especially relevant for developing and transition economies, where industrial modernization frequently outpaces the development of labour safety regulations and institutional enforcement mechanisms.

Against this background, the present study aims to analyse the current framework of social guarantees for workers employed in harmful and dangerous working conditions in Kazakhstan and to identify the key socio-economic and legal barriers limiting its effectiveness. The study further seeks to evaluate international approaches to occupational safety regulation and examine their applicability within the Kazakhstan context. Particular attention is devoted to the transition from the traditional list-based model toward a risk-oriented system capable of ensuring more equitable, flexible, and evidence-based labour protection mechanisms.

The scientific significance of this research lies in its comprehensive assessment of the relationship between occupational risks, labour legislation, and social protection measures in Kazakhstan. The practical significance of the study is associated with the development of recommendations aimed at improving the national mechanism of social guarantees, strengthening occupational safety standards, and increasing employer responsibility for workplace conditions. Ultimately, the proposed reforms are intended to contribute to the creation of a safer working environment, reduction of occupational injuries and diseases, and enhancement of the overall quality of labour relations in Kazakhstan.

Methodology

Data collection for this study was conducted through a combination of structured interviews, surveys, and the review of existing literature and

regulatory documents. The interviews and focus group discussions were conducted with a diverse group of stakeholders across various industries exposed to harmful working conditions. Surveys were distributed to workers to gather data on their experiences and perceptions of the current social guarantee system. Additionally, case studies of international best practices, particularly from the EU and the USA, were reviewed to provide a comparative analysis and to draw lessons applicable to the Kazakhstan context. The data collected was systematically analysed to identify gaps in the current system, challenges faced by workers and employers, and potential areas for reform. The analysis focused on understanding the correlation between existing regulatory frameworks and the actual conditions faced by workers in hazardous environments.

The study also includes the analysis of pilot projects implemented in various enterprises across Kazakhstan. For instance, at the TOO "Kazphosphate" Mineral Fertilizers Plant, new safety protocols and advanced protective equipment were introduced as part of a pilot project to improve working conditions. These pilot projects serve as case studies to test the feasibility and effectiveness of proposed reforms, such as transitioning to a risk-oriented approach. The results from these pilot projects were closely monitored and evaluated to determine their impact on worker safety and the overall effectiveness of social guarantees. The findings from these case studies were then used to inform the broader recommendations made in this study.

Thus, the methodology of this study is designed to provide a comprehensive and evidence-based evaluation of the social guarantee system in Kazakhstan. By integrating both qualitative and quantitative research methods and drawing on practical case studies, this study seeks to provide actionable recommendations for enhancing the safety and well-being of workers in harmful and hazardous working conditions.

Regulatory analysis

In the Republic of Kazakhstan, state regulation of labour for workers engaged in heavy, harmful (particularly harmful), and/or dangerous working conditions is implemented through a mechanism of social guarantees. This mechanism includes reduced working hours (Clause 2, Article 69 of the Labor Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan),

additional paid leave (Clause 1, Article 89 of the Labor Code), and increased wages (Article 105 of the Labor Code). These guarantees are provided according to an approved list of industries, workshops, professions, and positions, detailing heavy work, work with harmful, and/or dangerous working conditions. Furthermore, labour legislation mandates employers to provide milk or equivalent food products, and/or specialised dietary foods at their own expense to employees directly engaged in harmful types of production (Clause 4, Article 182 of the Labor Code) (Minister of Healthcare and Social Development of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2015).

Since January 1, 2014, a professional pension system has been introduced into the existing mechanism of social guarantees for workers in harmful and/or dangerous conditions. Under this system, employers make mandatory professional pension contributions from their own funds for the benefit of workers, based on a list of industries, jobs, and professions with harmful working conditions.

While these provisions are intended to protect workers, several shortcomings hinder their effective implementation. First, the reliance on a list-based approach, which categorises jobs based on pre-determined criteria, often fails to account for the actual conditions workers face. This can result in misclassification and inadequate protection for some workers, while others might receive benefits unnecessarily. Additionally, the regulatory framework is dispersed across various legal documents, making it cumbersome for employers to comply comprehensively. There is also a lack of incentives for employers to improve working conditions, as the focus remains on compensatory measures rather than preventive strategies.

Moreover, the provision of milk and dietary products, although well-intentioned, may not always align with current scientific understanding of occupational health needs. The professional pension contributions, while beneficial, add a financial burden on employers, which can sometimes discourage compliance. To address these issues, a shift towards a risk-oriented approach is necessary, ensuring that social guarantees are tailored to the actual risks faced by workers, and fostering a culture of prevention and continuous improvement in workplace safety.

In Kazakhstan, the regulatory norms for providing guarantees to workers engaged in heavy,

harmful, and/or dangerous working conditions are characterised by a list-based approach. This approach, enshrined in national labour laws and various government decrees, ensures that workers in specified industries and professions receive social guarantees such as reduced working hours, additional paid leave, and increased wages. However, the socio-economic landscape reveals significant challenges in the effective implementation of these guarantees. Many workers still face harsh working conditions without adequate protection, leading to increased health risks and economic instability. The lack of a dynamic and responsive regulatory framework further exacerbates these issues, as it fails to address the evolving nature of occupational hazards and the actual conditions faced by workers on the ground [4].

The legal framework governing labour protection in Kazakhstan, while comprehensive in scope, often encounters implementation challenges that undermine its effectiveness. The reliance on a list-based system creates legal barriers that impact workers negatively. For instance, the mandatory periodic certification of workplaces (attestation) to confirm harmful conditions is a prerequisite for workers to receive enhanced social guarantees. However, many employers either fail to conduct these attestations or manipulate the results to avoid additional costs. This not only deprives workers of their rightful benefits but also perpetuates unsafe working conditions. Moreover, the existing laws do not adequately incentivize employers to improve workplace safety, leading to a high incidence of occupational hazards and diseases [5].

Workers in Kazakhstan engaged in harmful and dangerous conditions face numerous specific problems that highlight the inadequacies of the current regulatory approach. According to statistical data, in 2022, approximately 386,390 workers were employed in environments that did not meet sanitary and hygienic standards [6]. This included exposure to high levels of noise, vibrations, toxic gases, and dust, as well as extreme temperatures. The manufacturing, mining, construction, and transportation sectors were particularly affected. Despite existing legal provisions, many workers do not receive the social guarantees they are entitled to, such as additional paid leave or increased wages, due to the failure of employers to conduct proper workplace attestations.

By way of comparison, in the European Union (EU), compensation systems for working in harmful

and dangerous conditions have long been abandoned, unlike in some post-Soviet countries. EU countries refrain from offering additional pay for hazardous work for ethical reasons. It is considered inappropriate to use economic incentives to compel workers to accept known risks. Instead, the EU focuses on maintaining high levels of welfare through legally established work hours, paid leave, guaranteed minimum wages, job security, and social protection. Progressive countries have replaced therapeutic and preventive nutrition programs with educational materials on proper diets [7].

In the United States, material rewards for dangerous work are excluded from the Ethical Code of Public Industrial Hygienists. Instead, preventive measures are emphasised to ensure safe working conditions. The US Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) mandates that both employees and employers share responsibility for creating safe working conditions. Health Risk Assessment (HRA) has become popular, allowing for individual health risk evaluations of workers. Most states have laws regarding working hours, women's labour, and minimum wages, although these laws vary by state. Unions play a crucial role in overseeing employers' use of hired labour [8-9].

The list-based approach, common in Kazakhstan and other former Soviet states, relies on predefined lists of industries, jobs, and working conditions to determine eligibility for social guarantees. In contrast, the risk-oriented approach, more prevalent in the EU and the USA, evaluates the specific risks associated with different jobs and adjusts social guarantees accordingly. This method is more dynamic and responsive to the actual working environment, promoting a culture of continuous improvement and prevention.

In Germany, the determination and amount of hazard pay are regulated by collective agreements between employers and unions, varying from 5% to 15%. In France, hazard coefficients range from 0.5% to 2% based on the risk category. In the USA, hazard pay for dangerous work is based on a list of 16 factors, varying from 8% to 25% of the wage rate. Japan also implements reduced working hours for those engaged in underwater and other health-risking jobs. These practices underscore the importance of tailoring social guarantees to specific risks present, rather than relying solely on predefined lists [9].

Malaysia's occupational safety and health system has evolved significantly over the past three decades, shifting from a narrow prescriptive regime

to a wider self-regulatory framework. The modern legal framework began with replacing the 1967 Factories and Machinery Act with OSHA 1994, which introduced self-regulation, shared responsibility, and mandated safety committees. Workplaces with more than forty employees are required to establish a Safety and Health Committee. Implementation of these statutes is overseen by DOSH, which functions as the main national enforcement agency. Between 2003 and 2007, DOSH conducted 144,943 statutory inspections and issued 5,559 notices, with prosecutions increasing by 120 percent nationwide during this period. In summary, Malaysia's OSH framework has progressed remarkably. However, gaps still exist in high-risk sectors, SME compliance, and the integration of social protection programmes, requiring ongoing legislative refinement and greater alignment of enforcement resources with sectoral risk profiles.

Results

The regulatory analysis of norms for providing guarantees to workers engaged in heavy, harmful, and dangerous work in Kazakhstan reveals specific features based on the list-based approach. According to Article 1 of the Labor Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan, "guarantees" are defined as means and conditions ensuring the realisation of workers' rights in the sphere of social and labour relations. The Labor Code prescribes several guarantees for workers in hazardous and dangerous jobs, including reduced working hours (Article 69), additional paid annual leave (Article 89), increased pay (Article 105), and free provision of milk, special clothing, and personal protective equipment (Article 182).

Despite the shift towards a risk-oriented model of labour protection, the regulatory pol-

icy in Kazakhstan still adheres to the list-based approach, which does not meet modern social demands. The legislative regulation is suboptimal because the norms are scattered across various legal acts. These include:

- Lists No. 1 and No. 2 of industries and professions with harmful working conditions (Government Resolution No. 1930, December 19, 1999)
- Rules for mandatory periodic certification of production facilities by working conditions (Order No. 1057, December 28, 2015)
- Lists of professions entitled to reduced working hours and other benefits (Order No. 1053, December 28, 2015)
- Rules and norms for the issuance of milk and special clothing (Orders No. 1054 and No. 1056, December 28, 2015)
- Rules for the implementation of mandatory professional pension contributions (Government Resolution No. 520, June 30, 2023).

The analysis revealed that the relation covering around 8,000 professions and 11 industries with harmful and dangerous working conditions; the list-based approach does not incentivize employers to improve and modernise production. The legislation fails to account for the actual working conditions of employees, thereby not promoting necessary improvements.

Table 1 presents an analysis of the current practices in providing social guarantees to workers in Kazakhstan who are engaged in harmful and dangerous working conditions. It details the number of professions eligible for additional paid annual leave and reduced working hours across various industries, highlighting the extent and nature of these guarantees. The data reflects the legislative requirements and the specific conditions under which these guarantees are provided.

Table 1- Current Practices in Providing Social Guarantees in Kazakhstan

Industry	Additional Paid Leave (Days)	Reduced Working Hours (Professions)
Mining	36 (7), 30 (39), 24 (44), 18 (23), 12 (49)	94
Coal and Shale Industry	36 (15), 30 (5), 24 (2), 18 (48), 12 (111)	22
Geological Survey and Topographic Works	12 (3), 6 (16)	2
Metallurgical Production – Ferrous Metallurgy	24 (1), 18 (3), 12 (591), 6 (262)	39
Metallurgical Production – Non-Ferrous Metallurgy	24 (57), 18 (68), 12 (813), 6 (213)	612
Metallurgical Production – Auxiliary Workshops	12 (27), 6 (12)	1

Metallurgical Production – Scrap Metal Processing	12 (12), 6 (19)	3
Metalworking	12 (110), 6 (76)	28
Chemical Production	24 (21), 18 (25), 12 (829), 6 (155)	329
Oil and Gas Industry	12 (94), 6 (86)	24
Electrical and Electronics Manufacturing	24 (2), 18 (1), 12 (234), 6 (156)	85
Textile and Light Industry	12 (204), 6 (276)	12
Agriculture	18 (5), 12 (39), 6 (19)	24
Transport	24 (1), 12 (124), 6 (146)	62
Healthcare	36 (6), 30 (26), 24 (5), 18 (22), 12 (107), 6 (23)	123
Other Industries	Various	Various

Note: Numbers in parentheses represent the number of professions eligible for each category of additional paid leave.

The regulatory analysis shows that the current legislation encompasses approximately 8,000 professions and 11 industries with harmful, heavy, and dangerous working conditions. These lists were updated in 2007, 2010, 2015, 2020, and 2022. However, the list-based approach does not incentivize employers to improve and modernize production. The legislation fails to consider the actual working conditions of employees.

Kazakhstan has initiated pilot projects across various enterprises to test the implementation of new approaches to improve working conditions and social guarantees. For example, at the TOO “Kazphosphate” Mineral Fertilizers Plant, the introduction of new safety protocols and the use of advanced protective equipment have been piloted. These projects aim to reduce the exposure of workers to harmful conditions and provide better health and safety outcomes.

The transformation of the social guarantee mechanism in Kazakhstan involves several steps. Initially, there is a need to shift from the traditional list-based approach to a risk-oriented model. This requires a comprehensive risk assessment of various professions and working environments to accurately identify and mitigate hazards. Secondly, updating the regulatory framework to reflect these changes is crucial. This includes consolidating scattered regulations into a cohesive and comprehensive set of guidelines that are easy to follow and enforce.

Effective collaboration between industry experts and government bodies is essential for the successful implementation of new approaches to social guarantees. This collaboration ensures that regulations are practical and grounded in real-world conditions. Industry experts provide valuable insights into specific risks and appropriate

mitigation strategies, while government bodies ensure that these measures align with national labour laws and international standards. Joint efforts can also lead to the development of training programs for both workers and employers, promoting a culture of safety and compliance across all sectors.

Different professional groups face unique hazards that require tailored measures to ensure their safety and well-being. For instance, workers in the mining industry may need advanced respiratory protection and regular health screenings, while those in chemical manufacturing might benefit from improved ventilation systems and personal protective equipment. By addressing the specific needs of each group, Kazakhstan can provide more effective social guarantees that protect workers from the particular risks associated with their professions.

In summary, the results of this study underscore the limitations of Kazakhstan’s current system of social guarantees, particularly its reliance on outdated regulatory practices and a list-based approach. The pilot projects demonstrate the potential applicability of a risk-oriented approach and the need for comprehensive reforms that prioritize worker safety and well-being. Addressing the identified socio-economic problems and legal barriers is crucial for the successful implementation of these reforms, ensuring that all workers in hazardous conditions receive the protection and support they deserve.

Discussion

The study’s key findings reveal significant inadequacies in Kazakhstan’s current system of social guarantees for workers in hazardous working

conditions. The regulatory analysis highlighted that the existing framework, heavily reliant on a list-based approach, fails to adequately address the actual risks faced by workers. This approach often leads to misclassification of jobs and unequal distribution of benefits, which in turn compromises worker safety and well-being. Additionally, the study found that there is a lack of economic incentives for employers to improve workplace conditions, further exacerbating these challenges.

These findings are particularly relevant in the context of Kazakhstan’s labour policy, where ensuring the safety and well-being of workers is not only a matter of social justice but also a critical component of sustainable economic development. The reliance on outdated regulatory practices and the fragmented nature of the legal framework highlights the urgent need for reform. The study’s recommendations for transitioning to a risk-oriented approach and introducing economic incentives are crucial for aligning Kazakhstan’s labour policies with international standards and enhancing the effectiveness of social guarantees [10].

Transitioning to a risk-oriented approach, as recommended by the study, has the potential to significantly enhance the effectiveness of social guarantees in Kazakhstan. A risk-oriented approach would involve comprehensive risk assessments tailored to the specific conditions of each workplace. This method would ensure that protections and benefits are directly aligned with the actual hazards workers face, thereby offering a more equitable and effective system of social guarantees. Such an approach would not only improve worker safety but also contribute to higher overall job satisfaction, as workers would feel more secure and valued in their roles.

Moreover, a risk-oriented approach could foster a culture of safety within organizations, where employers are motivated to continually assess and mitigate risks rather than merely adhering to outdated regulations. This shift would likely lead to better health outcomes for work-

ers, reduce the incidence of workplace accidents and illnesses, and ultimately contribute to a more productive and satisfied workforce. One of the key advantages of a risk-oriented approach is its flexibility in addressing the dynamic and evolving nature of workplace hazards, quickly adapting to changes as new technologies are introduced.

The success of risk-oriented approaches in other countries, particularly in the European Union (EU) and the United States (USA), illustrates the potential benefits of adopting this model in Kazakhstan. In the EU, the implementation of the ST RK ISO 45001-2018 standard has significantly improved workplace safety across various industries by providing guidelines for identifying and managing occupational risks [11]. Similarly, in the USA, a risk-oriented approach has been instrumental in enhancing safety performance in sectors such as construction [12].

Economic incentives play a crucial role in motivating employers to improve workplace safety and provide better social guarantees for their employees. In Kazakhstan, where the enforcement of labour regulations can be challenging, particularly in smaller enterprises, economic incentives can serve as powerful tools to encourage compliance and promote safer working conditions. One effective form of economic incentive is the provision of tax breaks or subsidies to companies that invest in improving workplace safety. Additionally, offering public recognition or awards to companies with exemplary safety records can further motivate employers to maintain high safety standards.

In Kazakhstan, different professional groups face unique hazards that require specific safety measures and social guarantees. To effectively protect these workers, it is crucial to implement tailored policies that address the risks associated with each profession. Table 2 below outlines proposed tailored social guarantees and safety measures for key professional groups, such as miners and chemical workers, highlighting the distinct protections necessary to ensure their safety and well-being.

Table 2 - Tailored Social Guarantees for Specific Professional Groups in Kazakhstan

Professional Group	Key Risks	Proposed Social Guarantees and Measures	Involvement of Stakeholders
Miners	Respiratory issues, cave-ins, explosions	- Advanced respiratory protection - Regular health screenings	Involvement of industry experts in safety protocol design

Chemical Workers	Exposure to toxic substances	- Advanced ventilation systems - Real-time air quality monitoring	Collaboration with worker representatives for compliance
Construction Workers	Falling objects, slips, trips, and falls	- Enhanced PPE requirements - Mandatory safety training	Regular consultation with safety inspectors
Healthcare Workers	Exposure to infectious diseases	- Regular immunization programs - Provision of adequate PPE	Continuous feedback from medical professionals
Agricultural Workers	Pesticide exposure, heavy machinery risks	- Regular health checks - Safe handling and application training	Joint efforts with agricultural safety experts

The discussion has highlighted several critical aspects of Kazakhstan’s current labour policies, particularly concerning workers in hazardous and dangerous environments. The analysis revealed that the existing list-based approach to social guarantees is insufficient for addressing the real risks faced by workers across various industries. The transition to a risk-oriented approach offers a promising solution, providing more tailored and effective protections that can adapt to the evolving nature of workplace dangers.

As mentioned earlier, implementing economic incentives for employers, such as tax breaks, subsidies, and public recognition, can motivate companies to prioritize workplace safety and offer better social guarantees. These incentives, proven successful in other countries, can be adapted to Kazakhstan’s unique context, fostering a safer and more productive work environment. The implications of these discussions for Kazakhstan’s future labour policies are profound. By adopting a risk-oriented approach and implementing targeted incentives and measures, Kazakhstan can significantly enhance the safety and well-being of its workforce, aligning its labour policies with international standards.

Conclusions

The analysis of current practices in providing social guarantees in Kazakhstan highlights several key findings. The existing system, which relies heavily on a list-based approach, has been found to be outdated and insufficient in addressing the dynamic needs of modern work environments. Despite regulatory frameworks that include specific provisions for reduced working hours, additional paid leave, and protective measures, there is a significant gap in the actual implementation and effectiveness of these guarantees. The pilot projects implemented in various enterprises such as TOO “Kazphosphate” have demonstrated the potential benefits of transitioning to a risk-oriented

approach. This approach, focused on assessing and mitigating specific workplace hazards, provides a more flexible and effective mechanism for protecting workers. Furthermore, collaboration with industry experts and government bodies has proven essential in developing practical and enforceable regulations. Enhanced data collection and environmental monitoring efforts are critical in ensuring that improvements are based on accurate and up-to-date information.

The transition to a risk-oriented approach in providing social guarantees opens numerous avenues for further research. Future studies should focus on refining risk assessment methodologies to better capture the diverse range of hazards present in different industries. Additionally, there is a need for longitudinal studies to evaluate the long-term impacts of implemented safety measures on worker health and productivity. Comparative research involving international best practices can provide valuable insights into optimizing Kazakhstan’s regulatory framework. Finally, interdisciplinary research involving occupational health, economics, and social sciences will be crucial in developing comprehensive and effective social guarantee systems that are both worker-centric and economically sustainable.

Overall, while significant progress has been made in identifying and addressing the shortcomings of the current system, continued research and collaboration are essential to fully realise the potential of a risk-oriented approach. By leveraging data-driven insights and fostering partnerships across sectors, Kazakhstan can develop a robust and adaptive framework for worker protection and social guarantees.

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