




# Economic Growth for Sustainable Development: The COVID-19 Pandemic and Tax Instruments

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**Abstract:** This article examines the development of the information and communication technologies sector, which leads to significant changes in economic activity, which requires the introduction of appropriate government regulation instruments, including tax and customs tariffs. At the current stage, it is significant for the state to guarantee tax assessment from changing business measures and monetary exchanges. Simultaneously, computerized innovations are being brought into crafted by assessment and customs specialists. Taxes increasingly penetrate the digital economy, and digital technologies - into taxation (tax administration and tax control) in the condition of the COVID-19 pandemic. These correlative and reliant cycles are outlined by patterns in the advancement of the online exchange area and instances of crafted by assessment and customs experts in Kazakhstan. This article also examines the Laffer production curve and the ascending branch of the Laffer tax curve by the value of the area of fiscal contradictions.

## 1 INTRODUCTION


The current stage in the development of the world economy is characterized by an increase in the importance of technology. Technology is increasingly penetrating the economy, as is the economy in technology. This new stage is called the digital economy today.


Currently, digital markets are characterized by high rates of investment and innovation, leading to rapid technological advances in industries. The digital (electronic) economy, characterized as an economy described by the greatest fulfillment of the requirements of every one of its members using data, including individual data, ended up being exceptionally important in 2020, when the worldwide local area confronted the COVID-19 pandemic. Because of the advancement of data, correspondence and monetary advances, just as the accessibility of framework, which together give the chance of full collaboration in a half and half universe of all members in financial action: subjects and objects of the cycle of creation, dissemination, trade and


utilization of products and ventures, states have managed to maintain a certain stability.

The arrangement of the advanced economy decides the requirement for suitable turn of events and improvement of the cycles and instruments of state guideline. World Bank specialists think about the computerized economy (in the wide feeling of the word) as “a system of economic, social and cultural relations based on the use of digital information and communication technologies” (World Bank, 2016). The main features of the digital economy are determined by the following: - economic activity is focused on the platforms of the “digital” economy; - personalized service models; - direct interaction between producers and consumers; - the spread of the sharing economy; - the significant role of the contribution of individual participants (Keshelava et al., 2017).

The USA, European developed countries and the BRICS nations are sequentially in front of Kazakhstan in the authoritative and administrative guideline of projects for the computerized change of the economy overall by 2-3 years or more. The state

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program "Digital Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan" was approved in 2017. Accordingly, there is a lead in the combination and usage of instruments of state guideline of the economy changing towards digitalization (advancement of data and correspondence innovations) (Decree, 2017).

Epistemologically, notwithstanding, just as ontologically, a brought together way to deal with the meaning of the advanced economy has not been framed. Presumably, it can't be framed, however the current methodologies are fairly obscure. It is imperative that alongside the expression "digital economy", today such definitions as electronic economy, information economy, network economy, Internet economy are in use.

Ontos qualifies the computerized economy as a different area of the economy, where conventional monetary relations are adjusted with the assistance of new electronic, data and correspondence advancements, better approaches for getting sorted out creation, plans of action are presented, business measures are changed, and electronic merchandise and enterprises show up. The zone of tax collection, charge strategy and customs and levy guideline is no special case, and even, despite what is generally expected, requires need consideration. Assessments, expenses and customs obligations, just as systems for their organization, should be predictable with the changing industry cycles and advances of monetary exchanges. In most countries, the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic has resulted in a significant reduction in tax revenues. This is directly related to the decline in economic activity, and indirectly to the response measures of tax policy and administration. The impacts faced by households and businesses are leading to a disruption in economic activity that is unique to the current crisis. For example, the need for social distancing is reflected in different ways in the tax base, tax administration and tax compliance by taxpayers. In addition, a pandemic could have a more lasting impact on the structure of the economy. The external sectors of the economy of some countries may also be hit, leading to depreciation or devaluation of currencies, and possibly affecting tax revenues. The manifestation of this impact will depend on the structure of the economy.

In the field of tax policy and customs and tariff regulation of the digital economy, it is necessary to highlight two key areas: 1) taxation and customs and tariff regulation of activities in the advanced economy and 2) the presentation of advanced innovations in expense and customs organization and control. We will investigate these zones.

In Kazakhstan, computerized advances are being presented in assessment and customs organization in order to create comfortable conditions for taxpayers, reduce corruption and ensure revenues to the country's state budget.

Long before the start of the pandemic, the State Revenue Committee of the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Kazakhstan and its territorial bodies in the course of tax administration began to widely use various online tools and resources, that allowed:

- contactless exchange of documents with taxpayers via telecommunication channels (TCh), including receipt of tax returns, sending requests for documents and receiving answers to them with documents, as well as many other operations;
- provide an effective and contactless interaction via telecommunication channels (TCh) between tax authorities and banks;
- carry out non-contact tax control for a number of taxpayers in the form of tax monitoring, which is a method of extended information interaction based on remote access to the taxpayer's information systems, which, inter alia, provides the tax authority with current access to accounting and tax accounting data, taxpayer reporting in agreed formats.

In general, online tools and resources allow to use the automated information system (AIS) of tax administration, which ensures the automation of the activities of the SRC of the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Kazakhstan for all functions performed, including the constant pre-verification analysis in order to promptly identify signs of tax violations. The work of the system is aimed, among other things, at the crossing of commodity and cash flows, tracing family, corporate and labor ties, the repeatability of IP addresses, and identifying other signs of connectedness of participants in civil circulation.

During the fight against the pandemic, the State Revenue Committee of the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Kazakhstan also quickly launched new online services that allow:

- to find out information on what kind of help a business can get (this is only required to enter the taxpayer's IIN);
- to be able to check the existence of reasons for obtaining a deferral or installment plan for the payment of taxes;
- to check the taxpayer for the extension of the moratorium on bankruptcy;

- to read the answers to frequently asked questions about tax deferrals / installments related with COVID-19.

As Ruslan Ensebayev said, "Today, thanks to the systematic work carried out by the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Kazakhstan, there is an opportunity to pay taxes alternatively by replenishing the "Tax Wallet". This service provides the taxpayer with information about his current and forthcoming obligations with the budget. Money from the "Tax Wallet" is automatically credited to the corresponding taxes for which tax liabilities have arisen. At the same time, the details of payment of taxes are filled in automatically without being indicated by the taxpayer, which ensures their guaranteed delivery" (Official information resource of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2019).

The new service, in contrast to the existing services for debt or upcoming payments, makes it possible to replenish funds to uniform details, enable the option of automatically debiting funds from the "Tax Wallet" balance and receive notifications about debiting. The mobile version of the "Tax Wallet" operates on the e-Salyq platform of the State Revenue Committee of the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Kazakhstan, and will also be launched on the electronic government portal (egov.kz) and in the mobile application of Halyk Bank of Kazakhstan JSC (Homebank), and this service will also be implemented in the Kaspi.kz mobile application (BIC – Capital, 2019).

The advancement of advances today leads in the field of tax collection to two reciprocal, however inverse in heading, measures: from one viewpoint, there is a decrease in the shadow area because of the mechanical improvement of expense control and duty organization, and on the other, an expansion in the volume of this shadow area in uncontrolled or inadequately controlled structures exercises.

The expanded volume of advanced exchanges and administrations in electronic structure, the rise of digital currencies, semi cash, the improvement of the Internet of Things right now without fundamental and adequate government guideline lead to an increment in the volume of the shadow area of the economy, which contrarily influences the income segment of the spending plan. Truth be told, today it is the advanced economy that can be perhaps the most hazy areas of the economy, alongside even criminal operations (Pugachev, 2016).

Notwithstanding, it is absolutely the advancement of information preparing innovations, the rise of blockchain that open up promising circumstances for

utilizing worked in apparatuses for state guideline of the economy, specifically burdens, charges, customs obligations. For instance, today the blockchain permits the usage of supposed shrewd agreements, or keen agreements, or, all in all, gets, the end and execution of which happens naturally just upon the event of foreordained conditions. In such manner, the truth of the exceptionally not so distant future might be the programmed assortment of assessments, expenses and customs obligations speedily at the hour of usage of smart agreements. The acquaintance of this innovation contributes with an adjustment in the key standard of assessment assortment: the estimation and installment of duties will happen naturally at the hour of the exchange or exchange on the web, and not during the expense time frame. These possibilities will diminish the expenses of assessment organization and duty bookkeeping, both for the state and for citizens. The last won't need to compute charge bases, produce affirmations, round out installment orders toward the finish of the time frame, or affirm the need to give an allowance. Tax avoidance will get incomprehensible, and tax assessment overall will turn out to be more straightforward and require lower costs for the state and business.

An integral element of tax forecasting is the economic analysis of tax revenues both in general and by their individual types, the subject of which is not only the amount of taxes received and their dynamics. It is more important to analyze trends in the development of the tax base and its constituent elements, and the structure of taxpayers. It should be borne in mind that each tax has its own, special elements of the taxable base and its defining indicators, but individual elements of the taxable base are inherent in two or more types of taxes at once. Tax forecasting is based on a factor analysis of the dynamics and trends of the tax base as a whole and individual elements that make up it.

The changes taking place in the country's economy, its exit from the crisis, the solution of the problems of non-payments to the budget and economic entities to each other predetermine the possibility of clarifying the accents in the assessment of factors affecting the taxable base, the appearance of its other elements and characteristics. So, in 2003 E. Balatsky suggested that the fiscal Laffer curve, which describes the dependence of the volume of tax revenues on the tax burden, is not sufficient to understand the effectiveness of fiscal (tax) policy (Balatsky, 2003). The area of fiscal contradictions (AFC) is the symbolic distance between the Laffer points of the 1st and 2nd kind.

For a deeper analysis, it is necessary to consider another curve - the production Laffer curve, which describes the dependence of the volume of production (GDP) on the tax burden. A joint examination of the two curves provides a fresh look at the effectiveness of fiscal policy (Shcherbakov, 2019).

In Figure 1, the size of the fiscal “gap”  $\Delta q$  outlines a certain band (indicated by shading), which is called the AFC and has important properties. In the AFC, there is fiscal antagonism: an increase in the tax burden is “useful” to the budget and, consequently, to the state, but extremely “harmful” to the producer, i.e. the interests of one economic agent are achieved by infringing on the interests of another agent. This automatically follows from the fact that the downward branch of the Laffer production curve and the upward branch of the Laffer tax curve are involved in the AFC. Thus, the AFC is a values zone of the tax burden, in which the interests of the producer and the state are in conflict (Balatsky, 2016).

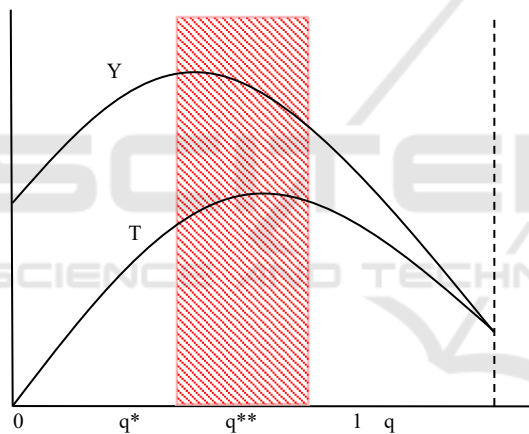


Figure 1: Schematic representation of the area of fiscal contradictions.

The introduction of the AFC into consideration brings in a new understanding of the effectiveness of fiscal policy: the wider the width of this zone, the greater the antagonism between the *stimulating* and *fiscal* functions of the country's tax system and the less chances to eliminate this antagonism.

In later years, the AFC has been subject to rethinking and various interpretations. So, in 2010 professor I. Maiburov interpreted the AFC as a kind of tax trap (Maiburov et al., 2010).

In particular, a fiscal policy in which the tax burden is higher than the Laffer point of the 2nd kind ( $q > q^{**}$ ) is classified as a *major tax trap*, and a policy in which the tax burden is within the AFC ( $q^* < q < q^{**}$ ), is treated as an *additional tax trap*.

The concept of the AFC is of limited scope; it is mainly used in the analytical practice of economists from Kazakhstan, Russia, Ukraine and Georgia. This state of affairs is largely due to criticism of the concept of the Laffer curve, which underlies the concept of the AFC.

In 2017, as per the European Commission, the powerful duty rate for computerized business was around 8.5%, while for business in general - 20-23%. At the state level, this translates into a huge drop in tax revenues, accounting for 12 to 15% of digital business volumes, respectively (Volovik, 2017).

In the event that we make an interpretation of this pattern into information on the volume of Web trade, for instance, the examination "DigitalEconomyCompass 2020", utilizing the supposition that there are no distinctions in the level of the taxation rate, incidentally, the potential duty incomes in the EU could add up to 40-50 billion dollars each year, in Ukraine - up to 0.24-0.3 billion, in Kazakhstan - up to 3.36-4.2 billion dollars each year (DigitalEconomyCompass, 2020). What's more, in the event that the portion of "uncontrolled" internet business develops, these volumes of lost duty incomes will likewise develop. Furthermore, that is simply web retail. What other duty potential is covered up by the remainder of the computerized economy?

The EU is creating instruments to improve charge proficiency while guaranteeing decency and uniform monetary standards for both customary and advanced organizations. Among the potential ways to deal with taking care of this issue are thought of:

- introduction of charges on the turnover of an advanced organization,
- taxation of pay from the arrangement of computerized administrations,
- taxation of computerized deals.

The experience of the Republic of Belarus, which is a leader among the CIS countries in the development of the field of information and communication technologies, is of interest for research and practical application. In Belarus, income from electronic interactive games is taxed. In 2019, the Tax Code of the Republic of Belarus fixes such categories as “electronic wallet”, “electronic money”, “provision of services in electronic form” (Pekarskaya, 2018).

The portrayed inclinations are not a removed endless future - partially, this is now a reality.

According to the Association of Internet Trade Companies, in 2019 in Kazakhstan online trade turnover exceeded 700 billion tenge, which is 1.8

times more than in 2018 - 269 billion tenge, which is already about 7% of the retail turnover. trade. According to forecasts, by 2023, the online retail market, the turnover of global e-commerce is expected to reach 2.7 trillion dollars. In this regard, taxation and control of the digital economy are already the challenges of today for tax and customs authorities.

In e-commerce itself, the demand for marketplaces is growing. Vivid examples are the electronic platforms Alibaba and Amazon, which occupy about half of the online markets in China and the United States. Another e-commerce trend is purchases primarily through smartphones. The share of buyers who place orders using smartphones worldwide is 54%. In Kazakhstan, this indicator approached 65%.

Figure 2 shows the major players in this sector.

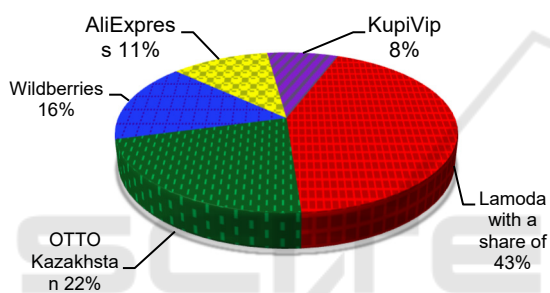


Figure 2: E-commerce market - fashion (clothing and footwear).

The largest online stores in Kazakhstan generate more than \$200 million in revenue. There are also industry leaders on the domestic Internet. One of them, with a turnover of \$120 million, was the segment of the sale of air and railway tickets. AirAstana is still the largest player here (71%). The second place is taken by Kazakhstan Temir Zholy (KTZh) with a share of 13%, the third is Aviata (6%), the fourth is Chocotravel (4%). Another major segment of the e-commerce industry is fashion (apparel and footwear). The turnover here is \$136 million (Kuzhukeeva, 2016).

## 2 METHODS AND TYPES OF TAXATION

Consumer protection and competition law does not consider the digital economy sector as special, for which there are separate requirements or exceptions. And thus, there are currently no special taxes for

digital businesses in Kazakhstan. Legal digital businesses work according to the current tax laws. The State Revenue Committee of the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the taxation direction of the digital economy has taken a noticeable step: it introduced tax administration of foreign suppliers of electronic and Internet services since 2017. Now they are tax-registered and pay VAT in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The introduction of digital technologies by tax and customs authorities is aimed at increasing the efficiency of the implementation of control and supervisory functions. The transformation of cash register equipment monitoring is also successful. With the help of the widespread introduction of online cash registers, today the State Revenue Committee (SRC) of the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Kazakhstan has at its disposal data across the country on all deals separated by merchandise. This gives new freedoms to burden organization and control. In fact, the State Revenue Committee (SRC) of the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Kazakhstan has moved from particular control to consistent checking. What's more, this is as of now a change in outlook in the control capacity of the assessment specialists. The customary way to deal with charge control, which was utilized until the mid 2000s, included checking every citizen once at regular intervals. The cutting edge approach is now founded on the investigation of large information. It includes the danger division of citizens, a huge decrease in the portion of on location examinations, while taking a stab at complete inclusion of all citizens by controller, while two citizens out of 1000 fall straightforwardly under charge audits (both cameral and on-site). Consequently, the portion of yearly investigated citizens has diminished multiple times. Obviously, the decrease in charge reviews is now the aftereffect of checking and rehearsing infringement of assessment enactment along with citizens by submitting remedial government forms. Simultaneously, charge observing isn't an advancement of the Kazakh charge specialists: since the start of the 2000s, applicable instruments have been effectively presented in evolved nations, the Netherlands and the UK were among the first on this way (Pugachev, 2016).

The development of electronic channels of interaction with taxpayers is one of the key and successfully implemented areas in the work of the State Revenue Committee of the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Currently, Kazakhstan has a large number of electronic tax services, including: "Personal account of the

taxpayer” on the website [salyq.kz](http://salyq.kz), “Electronic government” on the website [egov.kz](http://egov.kz), “API services of the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Kazakhstan”, “Mobile application of the portal of the SRC – eSalyq” is published on the AppStore and PlayMarket (Official Internet resource of the State Revenue Committee of the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2020).

Among the areas implemented by the State Revenue Committee of the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Kazakhstan, it is necessary to separately emphasize the development of a mechanism for tracing the movement of goods from the customs border of the EAEU to the phase of their execution, just as the advancement of the foundation of naming of products pointed toward forestalling the avoidance of obligations and contributing, in equal, to expanding the assortment of expenses and extract charges. The improvement of electronic announcing appears to be encouraging - customs freedom of products by means of the Web, when electronic archives are sent straightforwardly from the declarant's workplace directly to the customs inspector via remote channels.

Mukhambetov et al. (2020) in their study examined the analysis of financial indicators used to assess the sustainability of companies.

### 3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to the Decree of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan №721 dated October 30, 2020, the period of exemption for the obligation to calculate (accrue) compulsory professional pension contributions (CPPC), social security contributions (SSC), contributions to compulsory social health insurance (CSHIC and CSHI), with the exception of those paid by an individual entrepreneur for himself, was extended until January 1, 2021 (table 1).

The increase in profits in the field of e-commerce made domestic lawmakers think about the introduction of a new duty. The Majilis of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan approved a package of amendments to legislation on taxation and improving the investment climate. Within its framework, in particular, it provides the introduction of taxation of foreign companies engaged in electronic commerce and providing services via the Internet to citizens of Kazakhstan - the so-called “tax on Google”. Market experts are unanimous in the opinion that the developed concept of “tax on Google” is a response to modern trends in the development of digital business models and is consistent with international practice of taxation of digital activities.

Table 1: Detailed table on tax and deduction rates for the period from April 1, 2020 to January 1, 2021.

Taxes and social payments	Until April 1, 2020	From April 1 to September 30, 2020	From October 1, 2020 to January 1, 2021	Who is eligible for exemption?
Individual income tax	10,0%	0,0%	10,0%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals in private practice;</li> <li>• Subjects of micro, small, medium-sized businesses, carrying out activities according to the list of types of activities approved by the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan;</li> <li>• Subjects of large business carrying out activities according to the list of types of activities approved by the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan.</li> </ul>
Compulsory pension contributions	10,0%	0,0%	10,0%	
Compulsory professional pension contributions	5,0%	0,0%	0,0%	
Compulsory social health insurance contributions	1,0%	0,0%	0,0%	
Social tax	9,5%	0,0%	9,5%	
Social security contributions	3,5%	0,0%	0,0%	
Compulsory social health insurance	2,0%	0,0%	0,0%	
Note - compiled by the authors based on data from PwC Kazakhstan				

If the conditions of taxation in Kazakhstan are met, foreign companies will be obliged to calculate and independently pay VAT to the Kazakhstan budget at a rate of 12% of taxable turnover. A mechanism for fulfilling VAT obligations is also being developed. Presumably, there will be special conditions for the registration of such taxpayers.

By the way, in neighboring Russia, where the “tax on Google” was introduced back in June 2016, the rates are higher. For foreign organizations that provide electronic services, the sale place of which is Russia, there is a special procedure for taxing VAT. In particular, since 2019, the VAT rate has been set at 16.67% of the remuneration for electronic services, which includes VAT, and a simplified procedure for declaring VAT and specifics of paperwork that allow Russian buyers to accept input VAT as deduction.

## 4 CONCLUSIONS

Modern regulatory regulation of the digital economy in Kazakhstan is based on the regulation of the traditional, non-digital economy. In general, the state of legal regulation of the digital economy is critically assessed by experts. There is an obvious backlog of legal regulation from the needs of practice (in particular, against the background of the COVID-19 pandemic), and the time gap is increasing.

In this way, the digitalization of the economy, from one viewpoint, requires the advancement of methodological and lawful help for tax assessment from computerized business, and then again, the utilization of computerized advances opens up expansive possibilities for improving the devices of control exercises of expense and customs administrations.

This is proof of a specific rationalization: charges in the computerized economy and advanced innovations in tax assessment. It incorporates shared turn of events, and complementarity, and reliance - the famous "cat and mouse" of duty specialists and citizens. The impact here is gotten by all members in relations - citizens by upgrading the duty base in unregulated businesses, the state - by decreasing the unregulated and shadow areas by improving assessment organization and expense control advancements. Simultaneously, the potential for both duty enhancement and expanding charge incomes to financial plans stays huge, since the cycle is simply starting.

Kazakhstan, on the way to the formation of taxation of the digital economy, needs to understand the experience of developed countries that have

already implemented certain instruments, as well as, within the framework of integration processes in the EAEU, to study the possibility of harmonizing tax and customs and tariff regulation of the digital economy of the Union countries.

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