

Kazakhstan: Developing an Informative Website for Promoting a Positive Image of the Country

By

Temirlan Aigozhin and Adilet Issayev

Project Advisor:

Professor Stephen Bitar

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Chapter 1: Introduction

As was discovered through a survey conducted by the project team on campus, many people don't know basic facts about the country of Kazakhstan. Namely, only 14% of people who took the survey could point Kazakhstan on the world map, and only 12% could remember any facts about the country (Aigozhin, Temirlan. "Kazakhstan on WPI Campus" Survey. 3 December 2014.). At the same time, 100% of the respondents pointed out that they would like to learn more about Kazakhstan. In order to provide information to the WPI community and the rest of the world, an informative and easily accessible tool was necessary. The project team has decided to develop an informative website, which included facts about modern Kazakhstan, its history, and interesting facts to make it easy for people to learn about Kazakhstan.

Developing such a resource was a multiple-step process, comprising of the following: sending out a survey to the WPI community; conducting research on the country of Kazakhstan; conducting research on website development; developing the website; and finally, developing the report.

The process resulted in a report with a lot of valuable information, some of which is not available in English, and is only available in Russian and English. Thus, the project team hopes that this report will be a useful resource for developing a positive image of the country of Kazakhstan in the WPI community. At the same time, the main goal of the project was to design an easily accessible informative website. The website was designed and tested by the project team and is now available online. The address of the website can be found in the Results section of the report.

Chapter 2: Background

According to the survey and years of experience of Kazakh students, not many people of WPI community have an idea about the country of Kazakhstan. Being the institution that values diversity and having representatives from sixty eight countries, it is important for WPI community to at least be aware of trivial facts of the foreign students' homelands. In order to produce an informative website with reliable data, the project team conducted thorough research on Kazakhstan, including the history of ancient Kazakhstan, development of Kazakhstan during the Soviet regime, and finally, modern Kazakhstan. Additionally, the project team studied different website building resources, in order to choose the most effective.

2.1 Brief History of Kazakhstan

2.1.1 Ancient Kazakhstan

In the first centuries AD, on the territory of the Central Asian steppes flourished nomadic Scythian-Saka civilization, cultural monument of which has survived to the present day. The example of this is the famous Golden Warrior, which is known for its beauty, elegance and the historical value for Kazakhstan. The exact copy of the Golden Warrior's costume is preserved as national heritage and is displayed in the central museum in Astana. The costume can be seen in Figure 1 below.



Figure 1: The Golden Warrior of Issyk

In ancient times, Saka tribes were the first people who occupied Kazakhstan territory; they spoke Turk dialect and inhabited the banks of small rivers and lakes (All about Kazakhstan, n.d.).

During the following centuries in the steppes of modern Kazakhstan, a mighty Hun Empire was formed, which had a tremendous influence on the geopolitical map of the world in that era (Overview: 10 Years of Independence, n.d.). Under the blows of Attila the Hun warriors the Great Roman Empire was fallen. With the territory gains, Huns brought to Europe the

cultural achievements that have had a significant contribution to the modern image of civilized man.

In the aftermath, the successors of the Huns became Turk-speaking tribes of several large state-owned entities, called kaganates, stretching from the Yellow Sea in the east to the Black Sea in the West (All about Kazakhstan, n.d.). The map of the eastern and western khaganates can be found in Figure 2.



Figure 2: Khaganates map

These states were based not only on the type of nomadic farming, but also created the original urban culture, which had a rich tradition of trade and craft. Thus, in the oases of Central Asia (the area of southern Kazakhstan) were established towns and caravanserais, through which passed the famous caravan trade route known as the Silk Road that linked Byzantium and China (Visit Kazakhstan, n.d.).

In 1221, the Mongol tribes under the leadership of Genghis Khan conquered Central Asia. The Mongol invasion had a significant impact on the history of the Kazakh people. Among

the measures that have been taken in respect of Genghis Khan Kazakh nomads, there were attempts to replace the division of tribal territorial administration and combine the nomads as the ruling class under the supreme authority of Genghis Khan and his successors (The history of Kazakhstan, n.d.).

Much of present-day Kazakhstan became part of the Golden Horde, Ulus, which belonged to the heirs of Jochi, the eldest son of Genghis Khan. Kazakh khans later were his direct descendants. During the period of its political and military power, the Golden Horde had a significant impact on the development of Russian statehood and generally determined the geopolitical balance of power in Eastern Europe. (The history of Kazakhstan, n.d.).

2.1.2 Formation of the Kazakh nation

By the second half of the 15th century, a process of consolidation had begun among the nomadic peoples living on the territory of modern Kazakhstan. This process evolved from their world-view and style of life. A short time later, the first Kazakh states were formed, and by the beginning of the 16th century, a united Kazakh nation had emerged. The ethnonym “Kazakh” in old Turkic meant “free, independent” and fully reflected the character of a people who had long aspired to live independently (Visit Kazakhstan, n.d.).

In the first century of its existence, under the guidance of wise Khans, rulers, Az-Djanibek and Tauke Kazakh nation managed to keep the power of the state and its territorial integrity (Unesco world heritage center, n.d.). The nomadic life and the relationship between layers of the Kazakh society was developed. Kazakh people ideologically shaped as Muslim ethnicity. The education system and writing were based on the Arabic alphabet, Islamic education and traditional nomadic upbringing (The history of Kazakhstan, n.d.).

2.1.3 Russian colonization of Kazakh steppes

In geopolitical terms, nomadic Kazakhstan, overwhelmingly dependent on natural processes, has become the subject of claims of the two major states of Eurasia, China and Russian.

In the XVII-XVIII centuries, sent by Chinese Bogdykhans, Jungar nomadic tribes deployed the large-scale war against the Kazakh Khanate. Across the steppes occurred fierce battles. In 1723 the Kazakhs suffered a crushing defeat that is still remembered as a tragedy of "Ak taban shubyryndy" (The history of Kazakhstan, n.d.).

Thanks to the courage of the Kazakh warriors, determination of Ablay Khan, who led the resistance, diplomatic skills Kazakh biys, and dedication of the people, Kazakhstan managed to avoid full capture and physical destruction of the population. In order to guarantee gaining their independence and security, Kazakh khans began to seek military protection in the Russian Empire, which at that time was actively expanding its borders to the east (Visit Kazakhstan, n.d.). However, with the help of the military, Russian Empire began widespread construction of fortified cities, the mass migration of population from the interior of Russia, the transfer of grazing land for the peasants' land, territorial division along the lines of the Russian administrative-territorial division, which ultimately resulted in the loss of Kazakhstan independence (Unesco world heritage center, n.d.).

2.1.4 Development of Kazakhstan during the Soviet regime

Soviet power was established after the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 in Kazakhstan. The map of USSR with Kazakhstan territory indicated on the map can be seen in Figure 3.



Figure 3: Map of USSR

World War I and the Civil War destroyed the economy of the entire country. The winter of 1920-1921 led to the deaths of almost half of the cattle. Summer 1921 was a barren consequently leading to famine. Only at the end of 20-ies economy of Kazakhstan has been restored. In 1920, Kazakhstan became autonomous, and in 1936 - a republic of the USSR (All about Kazakhstan, n.d.).

Given the economic backwardness of the region, the Federal Government has outlined the accelerated pace of development of the economy of Kazakhstan and by 1941 the volume of industrial production increased compared with 1913, eight times. Thus, due to the capabilities of the planning system to concentrate resources on the implementation of large-scale economic

projects, Kazakhstan in the 30 years from the edge of former nomads turned into a region with a large and diverse industry, developed agriculture and animal husbandry, with a high level of culture.

On the territory of Kazakhstan thousands of large industrial enterprises were created that contributed to tens of thousands of kilometres of railways and roads. Kazakhstan has become a major producer of non-ferrous and ferrous metals, coal, oil, grain and livestock products. In 1991, Kazakhstan's share accounted for 70% of the Union production of lead, zinc, titanium, magnesium, tin, phosphorus, and 90% chromium, 60% silver, and molybdenum. Kazakhstan has become a major producer of grain (All about Kazakhstan, n.d.).

Kazakhstan was the only republic of the former Soviet Union, in which the indigenous people were a minority; this situation began to emerge in the 30s, not only as a result of heavy losses of the population, but also eviction from other regions of the USSR on the territory of Kazakhstan, hundreds of thousands of people who disliked the Bolshevik regime, the organization in its territory became victims of the terror camps in 1937-1938 (Visit Kazakhstan, n.d.).

2.1.5 Modern Kazakhstan

Between 70-80 years, Soviet Union's economic and socio-political crises appeared in Kazakhstan. Rigid planning system hampered the development of the country. That is why the policy of perestroika was wide supported among the Kazakh people who believed in transparency and democracy. However, in December 17, 1986, when the first democratic performance of young people in Almaty took place they were brutally suppressed, which showed doom to "socialist" system (Unesco world heritage center, n.d.).

Since the beginning of the 90s the leadership of Kazakhstan launched a large-scale

transformation of the socio-political system. April 24, 1990 Law was approved by President of the Kazakh SSR, and was elected the first President Nursultan Nazarbayev. In October 25, 1990 the Supreme Soviet of the Kazakh SSR adopted the Declaration of State Sovereignty, which was first fixed indivisibility and inviolability of the territory, the country is defined as a subject of international law, an institution of citizenship and equal rights of ownership (All about Kazakhstan, n.d.).

The events of August and December 1991 - the failed coup in Moscow and Belovezhskaya agreement, put the last point in the history of the USSR and 16 December 1991, the Parliament of the republic declared the independence of the Republic of Kazakhstan. (All about Kazakhstan, n.d.).

2.2 Geography of Kazakhstan

2.2.1 Geographical Location

Republic of Kazakhstan is located on the junction of two continents, Europe and Asia. Located in the central Asia, Kazakhstan occupies an area of 2.7 million square kilometres. Kazakhstan is the world's ninth largest country and the world's largest landlocked country. Its territory can fit seven largest European states, such as France, Spain, Sweden, Germany, Finland, Italy and Great Britain taken together. See Figure 4.



Figure 4: Kazakhstan on the World Map

In the east, north and northwest of sides of the country, Kazakhstan borders with Russia. To the south, Kazakhstan borders with Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and on the southeast with China. (Kazakhstan overview, facts and features, n.d.)

Kazakhstan's border runs along the Caspian Sea, then along the Volga steppes, rises northward to the southern spurs of the Ural Mountains, and then stretches along the West Siberian Plain to the Altai Mountains. On the east country borders on ridges and Tarbagatai Dzhungarin; the south border runs along the mountains of Tien Shan and Turan lowland to the Caspian Sea. The total length of the Kazakhstan borders is 12,187 kilometres. (Kazakhstan overview, facts and features, n.d.) See Figure 5.



Figure 5: Borders of Kazakhstan

2.2.2 Kazakhstan Terrain

The Kazakhstan's terrain is very diverse. Fifty eight percent of the territory is covered by deserts and semi-deserts and 10 % by mountains. In the north of the country the majority of the lands are steppes and forest steppes. Also, 23 % of the country is arable and 70 % is available for transhumance (Kazakhstan overview, facts and features, n.d.)

The lowest point in Kazakhstan is Karagiye that is located on the peninsula of Mangyshlak which is 132 meters below sea level. The highest point is Khan Tengri, 6995 meters (Kazakhstan overview, facts and features, n.d.)

2.2.3 Climate

The territory of Kazakhstan is located far from the ocean and it is open to the winds from the west and north. This factors influence the basic properties of the Kazakhstan climate, which

are sharp continental, and uneven distribution of natural precipitation. (Kazakhstan climate)

Winters in Kazakhstan are cold and long in the north, but moderately soft in the south. The average January temperature ranges from -18 degrees Celsius in the north to -3 degrees Celsius in the south. Summers are usually dry with the north being warm during, the center being very warm and the south often hot. Precipitation is insignificant, except for the mountain regions. (Kazakhstan climate).

2.2.4 Flora and Fauna

The Kazakhstan territory has more than six thousand plant species, which include 515 that are endemic. The flora species includes 68 species of trees, 266 species of shrubs, 433 species of dwarf shrubs, 2598 species of perennial herbs, and 849 species of annual herbs. Forests in Kazakhstan occupy 1.2% of the territory and among this 4.2 % are saxaul forests and shrubs. (Kazakhstan flora and fauna, n.d.)

The diverse climate and the presence of the various flora species give rise to many other species of living creatures that inhabit Kazakhstan land. (Kazakhstan flora and fauna, n.d.)

- Birds – about 590 species
- Animals – 178 species
- Reptiles - 49 species
- Amphibians - 12 species
- Fish – 107 species
- Insects – not less than 30,000 species

2.2.5 Natural Resources

Kazakhstan's treasure is its mineral resources. Kazakhstan has the 6th largest volume of mineral resources in the world. Out of the 110 elements of chemical periodic table, 99 elements have been discovered, 70 elements have been explored, 60 are being recovered and used in Kazakhstan's soil. Mineral and resources base of the Republic of Kazakhstan consists of 5,004 fields, costing around 46 trillion USD. (Geography of Kazakhstan, n.d.).

Globally, Kazakhstan is already the largest wolfram producer, and in terms of wolfram reserves, Kazakhstan holds the first place throughout the world. Kazakhstan has the second largest chrome ore and phosphate reserves in the world. It is ranked fourth in the world in terms of its lead and molybdenum reserves, and eighth in terms of total ironstone reserves (16.6 billion tones) after Brazil, Australia, Canada, USA, India, Russia and Ukraine.

- One hundred and sixty oil and gas deposits are so far explored in Kazakhstan, with recoverable reserves of 2.7 billion tones. Around 300 significant gold deposits are under forecast in Kazakhstan, 173 of which were explored in detail. (Geography of Kazakhstan, n.d.).

- Over 100 coalfields were explored throughout Kazakhstan. The largest is the Ekibastuz field, which differs in high capacity of brown-coal layers and Karaganda coal basin with the reserves of over 50 bln tns of coal. (Geography of Kazakhstan, n.d.).

Kazakhstan possesses large volumes of potassium and other salt borate reserves, bromine, sulfate, phosphate compounds, the most varied raw materials for paint and varnish industry. Sulphur pyrite, which consists of polymetallic ores, is used to arrange sulfuric acid other chemicals production. Kazakhstan possesses significant reserves of natural resources for glass and whiteware industry: rare precious stones, a variety of construction and covering materials. (Geography of Kazakhstan, n.d.)

2.3 Politics

2.3.1 Current Foreign policy of Kazakhstan

The current foreign policy of Kazakhstan determined by President and carried out by the work of Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The primary goals of Kazakhstan's foreign policy are as follows:

- Protect national interests.
- Provide favorable conditions for political and economic development.
- Develop strategic cooperation with leading countries and regions of the world.
- Improve cooperation with international organizations.
- Strengthen democratic principles within the new world order.
- Contribute to global and regional security and stability while opposing new threats such as, terrorism, drug trafficking, and organized crime.
- Participate in the processes of regional and global economic integration.
- Promote democracy as well as social and human development.
- Protect the environment and sustain development.

These policies were adopted to ensure peaceful coexistence with other countries and make active contributions towards beneficial international cooperations (Foreign Policy)

2.3.2 History of making and key decisions

Kazakhstan's foreign policy was formulated shortly after Kazakhstan gained its independence on December 16, 1991. The first President of the independent Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, indicated that diplomacy's main objective was to create and maintain favorable conditions for steady development of the Kazakhstan based on political and economic

reforms. The nature of these reforms determines the nation's foreign policy priorities, impartiality, and a desire to be fully involved in both international and regional events. The Government made key decisions and adopted policies regarding: the military, politics, economics, democratic reforms, and a new state governing system (Foreign Policy). These decisions were essential in easing Kazakhstan's transition to the world community and helped create a foreign policy in harmony with the global political trend towards liberalization (Foreign Policy).

One of the most important decisions Kazakhstan made during the last 15 years was to become a non-nuclear state and pursue a policy of nonproliferation. Kazakhstan's diplomacy was successful in developing positive relations with 140 countries and helping it to become a member of 64 international political and economic organizations. In March 1992, Kazakhstan was accepted into the United Nations Organization and has played an active role in its initiatives for the past 22 years(Foreign Policy). There have been no conflicts or confrontations between Kazakhstan and other countries to date, thus further underscoring the effectiveness of the nation's diplomacy.

The Anti-nuclear movement in Kazakhstan, "Nevada Semipalatinsk", was formed in 1989 and was one of the first major anti-nuclear movements in the former Soviet Union. It was led by author Olzhas Suleimenov and attracted thousands of people to its protests and campaigns which eventually led to the closure of the nuclear test site at Semipalatinsk in north-east Kazakhstan in 1991. The movement was named "Nevada Semipalatinsk" in order to show solidarity with similar movements in the United States aiming to close the Nevada Test Site. The Soviet Union conducted 456 nuclear weapons tests at the Semipalatinsk Test Site, between 1949 and 1989. The United Nations believes that one million people around Semipalatinsk were

exposed to radiation, and the incidence of birth defects and cancer is much higher than for the rest of the country (Foreign Policy).

According to UNESCO, Nevada-Semipalatinsk played a positive role in promoting public understanding of "the necessity to fight against nuclear threats". The movement gained global support and, became "a real historical factor in finding solutions to global ecological problems".

2.3.3 Global and regional integration

Kazakhstan has signed more than 1,300 international and intergovernmental contracts and agreements establishing a practical, contractual, and legal framework for relations with other countries. Furthermore, to create conditions required for integration into global and regional processes, Kazakhstan has established active cooperation with the majority of North American, European, and Asian countries as well as their chief regional organizations, including the:

- Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)
- Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO)
- Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC)

Participation in regional and global affairs and events is necessary to strengthening Kazakhstan's independence(Foreign Policy). The nation is involved in several global transformation processes that highlight the issue of interdependence. Problems that were once considered domestic or regional now have a larger impact on the world, causing globalization to become the dominant factor in world politics. Although interdependence is a factor in areas such as finance, technology, and information technology (IT), the globalization of the economy is gaining influence and importance in society as it affects major political decisions (Foreign Policy).

Kazakhstan continues to develop regional alliances in every corner of the world because of the increasing significance of globalization and economic integration. Many countries recognize their national goals can only be achieved through developing regional cooperation. For this reason, Kazakhstan has undertaken efforts to promote regional economic integration. For example, the city of Astana has increased its cooperation with the:

- Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)
- Eurasian Economic Association
- Central Asian Economic Association
- Shanghai Cooperation Organization

During a 1992 meeting with the UN, President Nazarbayev called for an initiative to establish the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building measures in Asia (CICA), designed to develop and strengthen security and related organizations. Many Asian nations encouraged this initiative and a number of international organizations, including the United Nations, supported the process. In June 2002, the first CICA summit took place, and the “Almaty Act,” which outlines the principles of security and cooperation in Asia, was adopted (Foreign Policy).

In early 2005, Kazakhstan called on its neighbors to help establish the Central Asian Union based on the following shared characteristics:

- History
- Ethnicity
- Culture
- Economy

- Challenges
- Future interests

2.3.4 Kazakhstan and Russia

Kazakhstan's relations with Russia Federation is considered to be the major focus of foreign policy of Kazakhstan. This relationship mostly consists of diplomatic and geopolitical connections. It is also important to note that Russia is the largest trade partner of Kazakhstan. Political cooperation between Russia and Kazakhstan showed huge progress for the last few years in important directions such as delimitation of the state border, which is the longest land border in the world, deepening integration in bilateral and multilateral formats, working closely on the most pressing issues on the international agenda. One of the great importance for the development of allied relations between two countries is the Russian support in foreign policy initiative of Kazakhstan. One of the example of such strong parOn OSCE meeting in 2010, Russia expressed its strong support for the Kazakhstan's proposal for chairmanship in OSCE. (Russian and Kazakhstan)

2.3.5 Kazakhstan and China

The diplomatic relations between the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Republic of China were established on 3 January 1992. The relationship between two countries is related mainly on economic interests, rather than political. There are many large investments in the oil and gas sectors. Chinese companies continuously take participate in other sectors of Kazakhstan's economy.

2.3.6 Kazakhstan and USA

The diplomatic relations between the Republic of Kazakhstan and United States were established the next day after the recognition of Kazakhstan sovereignty. The main relationship of the two countries consists of the fields in defence and security. Kazakh soldier are trained in the US. Armed Forces of Kazakhstan are partially supplied with American equipment.

Kazakhstan also participates in the program “Partnership for Peace” that initiated by NATO.

2.3.7 Kazakhstan Flag



Figure 6: The Flag of Kazakhstan

The Flag of sovereign Kazakhstan was officially adopted in 1992. The State Flag of the Republic of Kazakhstan is a rectangular breadth of blue colour with the image of the sun in its center with a soaring steppe eagle underneath. Along the flagstaff there is a vertical band with the national ornamental patterns. The images of the sun, rays, eagle and ornament are of golden colour (Akorda).

In heraldry each colour has its own specific meaning. Thus, a blue-sky colour symbolizes honesty, fidelity and integrity. Moreover, the blue-sky colour has a deep symbolic meaning in Turkic culture. The ancient Turkic peoples always worship the Sky as their God, and their blue-sky banner symbolized devotion to Father Ancestor. The blue colour of the State Flag of Kazakhstan means pure sky, peace and prosperity, and self-colour of the background represents the unity of our country (Akorda).

According to the heraldic principles the sun symbolizes wealth and abundance, life and energy. That is why the sun rays on the flag have the form of grain, a symbol of wealth and welfare. By representing the sun at its state attributes Kazakhstan reaffirms its commitment to universal values, which also indicates that the new young country is full of life-affirming energy and is open to all countries for cooperation (Akorda).

The image of the steppe eagle is one of the main heraldic attributes which is used on coat of arms and flags of various peoples for centuries. This image is commonly considered as a symbol of power, insight and generosity. A soaring steppe eagle represents by itself a power of the state, its sovereignty and independence, aspiration to high goals and sustainable future. The image of the steppe eagle on the world outlook of Eurasian nomads has a special place and is associated with such notions as freedom and fidelity, sense of dignity and courage, strength and purity of thoughts. The symbolically rendered silhouette of the golden steppe eagle reflects aspiration of the young sovereign state to the heights of world civilization (Akorda).

Another important element of the State Flag is a vertical band with the national ornamental patterns. This Kazakh ornament is one of the forms of specific artistic perception of world in strict accordance with aesthetic styles of the people. Representing a harmony of various forms and lines, it is also an expressive means of discovery of the inner world of the people. The

national ornament along the flagstaff represents the art and cultural traditions of the people of Kazakhstan (Akorda).

2.3.8 International exhibitions and sporting events in Kazakhstan

Expo 2017 is an International Exposition scheduled to take place in 2017 in Astana, Kazakhstan. On November 22, 2012 Astana was chosen by the International Exhibitions Bureau (BIE) as the venue to host EXPO-2017, which will focus on the theme "Future Energy". The theme is aimed to concentrate on both the future of energy, but also on innovative, but practical energy solutions, and their global impact. EXPO-2017 will be the first time that a major international exhibition of this kind is coming to a country from the former Soviet Union. More than 100 countries and 10 international organizations are expected to participate. Around 2-3 million people are expected to visit the international pavilions from June to September 2017. 25 hectares is planned for the pavilions of Expo 2017. The site has a convenient access to Astana's city center, the international airport and the railway station. The Expo Site is also linked with a network of Kazakhstan's inter-city roads to ensure a quick access from all the country. Construction of the pavilions will begin April 2014 with 20 companies from Kazakhstan and 49 companies from around the globe. Currently, designs are being considered for the grounds of Expo 2017 from architects in the UK, USA, Germany, Austria, Netherlands and China. On April 24, 2014 the President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev took part in a capsule-laying ceremony of the Astana EXPO-2017 Exhibition center construction in Astana, which will be located near the Nazarbayev University. (EXPO-2017, n.d.)

The University Sport Federation (FISU) officially announced Almaty the host of the Winter Univerisade-2017. Italian Trentino was also bidding to host the contest, but withdrew because of the economic difficulties. In the end Almaty turned out to be the only bidder.

Almaty presented its bid to host the 28th Winter Universiade-2017 in Brussels on November 29. Akim (Mayor) of Almaty Akhmetzhan Yessimov represented the city.

The Winter Universiade is an international sporting and cultural festival which is staged every two years in a different city. It is only second to the Olympic Games. The programme of the Winter Universiade currently includes 6 compulsory sports (8 compulsory disciplines) and up to 3 optional sports chosen by the host country. It gathered a record of 2,668 participants in Trentino, Italy, in 2013 and a record number of 52 countries in Erzurum, Turkey, in 2011. Embracing FISU's motto of 'Excellence in Mind and Body', the Winter Universiade incorporates educational and cultural aspects into 11 days of sports competitions, allowing university student-athletes worldwide to celebrate with the host city in a true spirit of friendship and sportsmanship. (Almaty Universiade, n.d)

Chapter 3: Methodology

The goal of this project was to provide an accessible informative website, which included facts about modern Kazakhstan, its history, and interesting facts to make it easy for people to learn about Kazakhstan. To accomplish this goal the following 3 objectives were completed:

Objective 1: Develop and collect results of a "Kazakhstan on WPI Campus" Survey.

- This step required the project team to develop a survey to test the knowledge of Kazakhstan on WPI campus.

Objective 2: Conducting research on the country of Kazakhstan

- As part of Objective 2, the project team conducted an extensive research of Kazakhstan's ancient and modern history, as well as facts about geography, politics and tourism.

Objective 3: Choose the website builder and develop the website

- Choosing an easily accessible and cost-effective website builder with comprehensive building tools was the first part of fulfilling Objective 4. Then, the website was created using the chosen website builder and background information.

3.1. Developing and collecting results of a "Kazakhstan on WPI Campus" Survey.

In order to fulfil the goal of the project, the project team needed to identify and analyze reliable information on familiarity with Kazakhstan in WPI community. Since there was no statistical information available on how much WPI community knows of Kazakhstan, a quick and efficient way of getting information was essential. Statistically valid information about a large number of people, namely, WPI community members, was necessary in order to fulfil the project goal. Since the necessary information was not readily available through other means, a survey was developed.

Since the main focus of the project was developing the website rather than collect

detailed statistical information, a case study survey format was chosen. Case study surveys collect information from a part of a group or community, without trying to choose them for overall representation of the larger population (Hampton, et. al., n.d.). Such type of surveying provides specific information about the community studied, which was sufficient for fulfilling Objective 1 of Methodology chapter.

Another step in successfully conducting a survey was choosing the most effective and easy result collection method. According to the "Conducting Surveys" article, surveys that are delivered in a less personal way have a return rate of only two to three percent, unless they're on a very hot topic for the community being surveyed. Taking that into consideration, an oral type of survey was chosen. Oral surveying allowed the project team to ask WPI community members in person and collect the results right away. *The survey included* with 5 short questions on general knowledge of Kazakhstan. The questions were kept short and easy, in order to keep the attention of people being surveyed. 2 questions were open-ended and 3 questions were in "yes or no" format. The questions were as follows:

- 1) Have you ever heard about Kazakhstan?
- 2) Can you show Kazakhstan on the world map?
- 3) Can you list any 3 facts about Kazakhstan?
- 4) Have you ever seen the Borat movie?
- 5) Do you want to learn more about Kazakhstan?

Collecting survey results allowed the team to process to Objective 2 of the project. Survey results are discussed and analysed in-depth in the Results sections.

3.2 Conducting research on the country of Kazakhstan

Objective 2 included extensive research of the history of ancient Kazakhstan, and Kazakhstan in the modern world, its geography, politics, tourism and interesting facts about the country. Obtaining such information was necessary for the project team to fulfil the goal of the project.

The history of ancient Kazakhstan was described with the use of Almaty library, Kazakhstan. There were a lot of useful books (cited in the Works Cited section), including the works of the Kazakh authors and literary historians. The team believed that using authentic history facts, described by the members of Kazakhstani authors association helped deliver the history of Kazakhstan most accurately and in-depth. The background history of Kazakhstan was written relying on the works of Yermakhan Bekmakhanov, Shoqan Walihanov, and other significant Kazakh ethnographers and historians.

To picture modern Kazakhstan, project team mostly used web-based research, visiting Kazakhstani governmental websites. In particular, the background section 2.2.2.1 Current Foreign policy of Kazakhstan was developed almost solely with the use of the official Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan website. Additionally, sections on international cooperation and relationship with Russian and China were developed using not only history websites, but also the Kazakhstani news websites. Information about the traditional food, games and world heritage of Kazakh culture was obtained from the UNESCO website. Unesco website was very helpful in providing unbiased and accurate information on the culture of Kazakhstan.

Information obtained in the background research was carefully analyzed for the key points. Then, the shortened version of the research was included in different sections on the website. Background research was vital for the project team in order to proceed to Objective 3.

3.3 Developing the website

The project team carefully studied website building sources, in order to identify a website with comprehensive building tools, easily accessible and cost-effective. The team evaluated different options and chose the Go Daddy's website builder, because it was a fast means of creating the website, with its own tools that make the editing and addition of information easy and time-efficient (Website Builder Software, n.d.).

Using the Go Daddy's website builder, team members built, checked and hosted the informative website. The website was built to suit the needs of the project and raise awareness of Kazakhstan online and within WPI community. Using the drag-and-drop functionality, easily comprehensive pieces of information about Kazakhstan were added to the website, including video, audio, image galleries, social networking integration, maps and a link to the Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The team tried to compile the shortened data from the Background section of the report with informative links and videos to make a single source that offers most basic facts one needs to know about the country.

Since Go Daddy offers three different pricing plans to choose from, the team decided to choose the more price-effective personal website plan, which offers a free domain with annual plan, 1 GB Disk Space, and 150 GB Bandwidth. The number of pages, disk space and bandwidth increases from the Economy to Deluxe to the Premium plan. In future, should there be a better plan fit for the website, upgrading will be done easily.

As the last step of fulfilling Objective 3, the website was tested. The team was well aware that the website problems could deter WPI community and other Internet users from visiting. Thus, it was decided to implement a testing strategy. 5 members of WPI community were asked their opinion about the website. Since WPI community is the target audience, it was important to

get their feedback and address it on the website. Additionally, the project team members watched testers use our website. That was done to see which pages they visited first, which pages they found confusing, all for rearranging the pages for optimal results and better navigation. Lastly, the team checked for problems like typos and broken links.

Chapter 4: Results

4.1 Survey

The survey questions were developed in order to support the main problem statement of the project, which states that there is lack of awareness about Kazakhstan within WPI community. The survey questions were composed to demonstrate the lack of knowledge about Kazakhstan amongst WPI community respondents. As discussed in the Methodology section, the survey included 5 short questions on general knowledge of Kazakhstan. The questions were as follows:

- Have you ever heard about Kazakhstan?
- Can you show Kazakhstan on the world map?
- Can you list any 3 facts about Kazakhstan?
- Have you ever seen the Borat movie?
- Do you want to learn more about Kazakhstan?

As can be seen from Table 1, only a small number of respondents were able to show Kazakhstan on the world map (18 %), or list any 3 facts about Kazakhstan (14 %). At the same time, 80 % of people who took the survey reported that they have seen the Borat movie. This fact lead the project team to believe that WPI community members did not only lack awareness of the country of Kazakhstan, but also may have had some misconceptions about it.

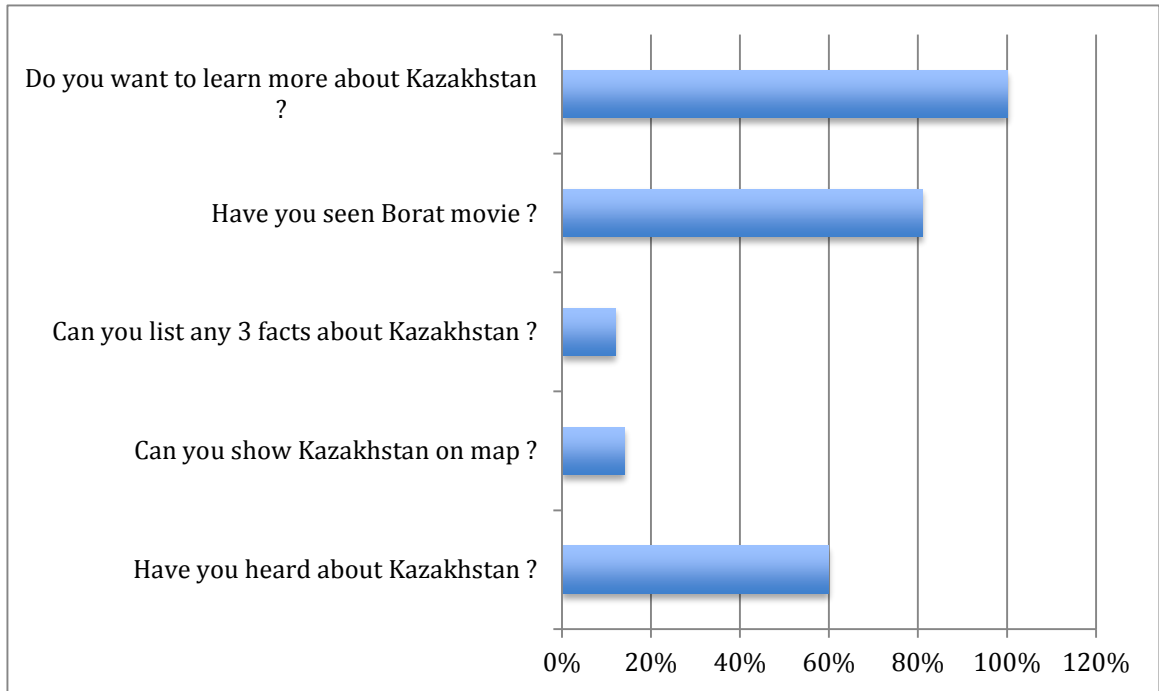


Figure 7: Survey results

The results assisted the project team in proving that there is indeed lack of knowledge of Kazakhstan in WPI community and that the website development will be of interest to the community members.

4.2 Website

As part of the last Objective of the Methodology section, the project team developed an informative website with interesting and concise information about Kazakhstan. The resulting website contains information described in the Background section. The website was developed using Go Daddy’s website builder. However, the colour scheme and the overall design of website pages were developed by the project team. Once the visitor opens the home page of the website, he sees the name of the website: Explore Kazakhstan. The page also contains an informative video about the country. The video was put on the first page intentionally, to capture the visitor’s attention and spark his/her interest in the rest of the website.

The landing page design was inspired by the national symbols of Kazakhstan, the National Flag and the National Emblem. The landing page picture can be found below.



Figure 8: Explore Kazakhstan website landing page

Using links on the right side of the landing page, visitors can navigate the website, and learn more about history, culture, geography, politics, places to visit and interesting facts about Kazakhstan. Additionally, there are buttons that allow sharing of the website using various means, including Facebook, Twitter, e-mail and Google Plus.

As the visitor scrolls down the page, he/she is able to read the brief history of Kazakhstan, separated into the following sections: Kazakhstan in ancient times, development of the Kazakh nation, Russian colonization of the Kazakh steppes, Development of Kazakhstan during the Soviet regime, and finally, Independence of Kazakhstan. The order of the sections is not chronological, and is the same as in the Background section of the report.

It is worth noting that the project team did not only include the information obtained during background research. On the Places to visit page, there is a handy link that brings the

visitor to the Visa and Consular section of the Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan website. Using information obtained from that resource, website visitors can save time searching for visa requirements.

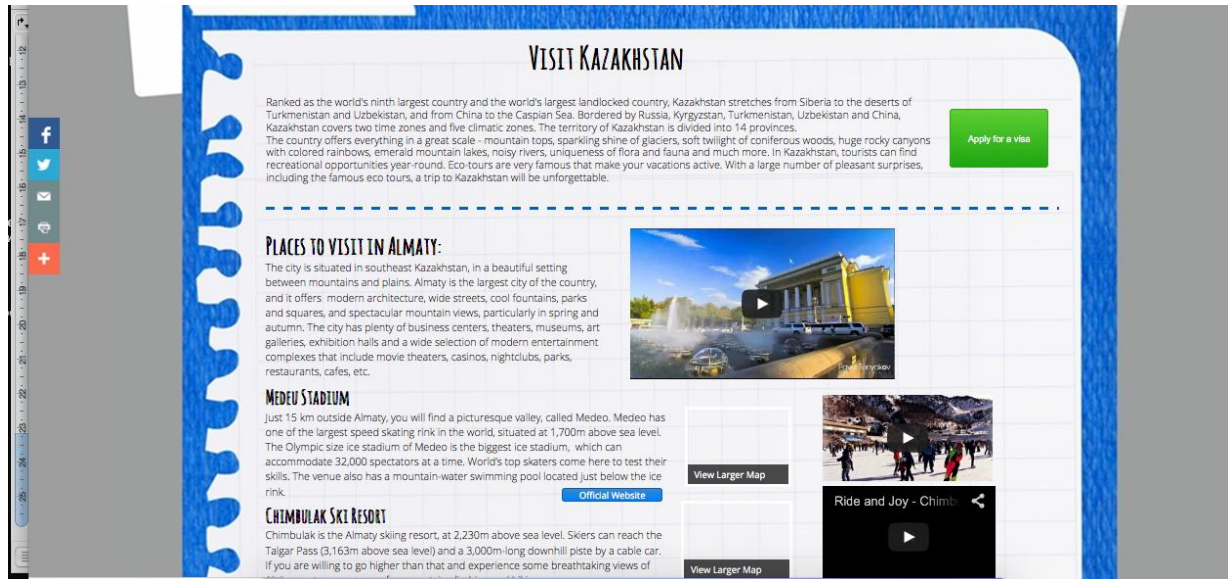


Figure 9: Places to Visit page of the website

On the same Places to visit page, the website visitor is able to find plenty of information about main touristic attractions of the country. In addition to the name, location and brief description of the place to visit, a Google map and a video is included. This layout was chosen to give more information about touristic places in Kazakhstan in a shorter amount of time.

Those who are interested in the culture of Kazakhstan will find this website a very valuable resource. The Culture page of the website includes 4 subsections: Traditions and holidays, Games, Music and Cuisine.

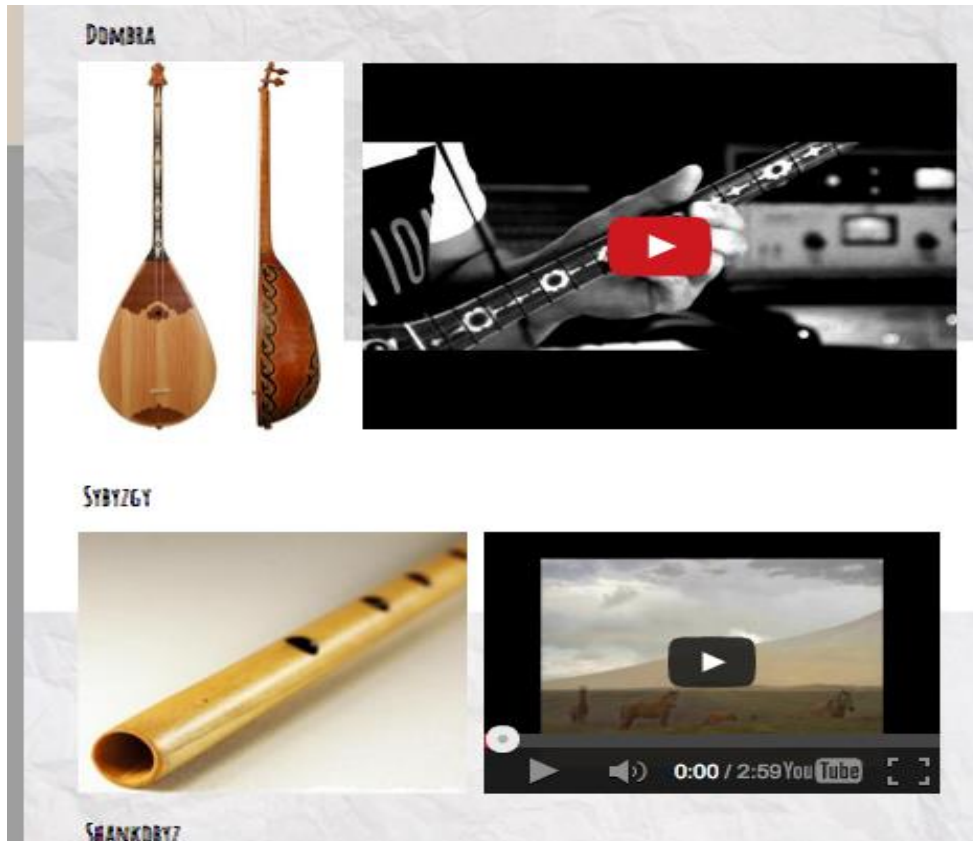


Figure 10: Kazakh national musical instruments

Each section is developed carefully, with much attention to detail. The project team outlined the most recognized cultural attractions of Kazakhstan and also included corresponding video links, for the convenience of website visitors.

4.3 Recommendations

Having reached the goal of the project through fulfilling Objectives 1-3, the project team has recommendations for the project.

Recommendation 1: The survey target group should be chosen more carefully in order to represent the response of the entire community. Interest groups should be chosen proportionally to the actual community groups, and additional information could have been collected, such as the nationality, gender and age of the respondents. Such information may be useful in analysing

survey statistics. Additionally, a more detailed survey may assist the project group in creating a separate section on analyzing the reasons for knowing/not knowing about Kazakhstan.

Recommendation 2: The website shall be modified, to make sure that website visitors get the most relevant information. Also, modifying the website is crucial for avoiding broken links and outdated information.

Appendices

Appendix 1. Responses to the "Kazakhstan on WPI Campus" Survey.

	Have you ever heard about Kazakhstan?	Can you show Kazakhstan on a map?	Can you list 3 facts about Kazakhstan?	Have you seen the Borat movie?	Do you want to learn more about Kazakhstan?
1	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
3	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
4	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
5	No	No	No	No	Yes
6	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
7	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
8	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
9	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
10	No	No	No	No	Yes
11	No	Yes	No	No	Yes

12	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
13	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
14	No	No	No	No	Yes
15	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
16	No	No	No	No	Yes
17	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
18	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
19	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
20	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
21	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
22	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
23	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
24	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
25	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
26	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
27	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes

28	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
29	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
30	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
31	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
32	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
33	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
34	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
35	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
36	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
37	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
38	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
39	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
40	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
41	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
42	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
43	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes

44	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
45	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
46	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
47	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
48	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
49	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
50	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
51	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
52	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
53	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
54	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
55	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
56	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
57	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
58	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
59	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes

60	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
61	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
62	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
63	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
64	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
65	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
66	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
67	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
68	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
69	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
70	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
71	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
72	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
73	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
74	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
75	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes

76	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
77	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
78	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
79	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
80	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
81	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
82	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
83	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
84	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
85	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
86	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
87	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
88	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
89	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
90	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
91	No	No	No	Yes	Yes

92	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
93	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
94	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
95	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
96	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
97	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
98	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
99	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
100	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes

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