The legal system of the Republic of Kazakhstan, along with legal systems of Italy, France, Germany, Austria and other countries, belongs to the Roman-German (continental) legal system. As opposed to the Anglo-Saxon legal system (England, the USA), where judicial precedents are the main legal sources, Roman-German legal system has a single hierarchically structured system of enacted law sources.

Written constitution (fundamental law) plays the essential role among the law sources in the Roman-German legal system, and has the supreme legal force. In accordance with the article 4 of the Constitution of Kazakhstan, the Law in the Republic is made of the norms of the Constitution, laws which conform to the Constitution, other normative legal acts, international treaties and other obligations of the Republic of Kazakhstan, as well as normative resolutions of the Constitutional Council and the Supreme Court of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Hierarchy of the law sources in Kazakhstan is determined by the Law of the RK dated March 24, 1998, “On Normative legal acts.” In accordance with the article 4 of this Law, Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan, has the uppermost legal force. Following the Constitution, all normative legal acts are arranged in the hierarchy presented below:

1. Laws which modify and amend the Constitution;
2. Constitutional laws and Edicts of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan which have a force of Constitutional law;
3. Codes of the Republic of Kazakhstan;
4. Laws of the Republic of Kazakhstan, as well as Edicts of the President having force of the law;
5. Normative resolutions of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan and its chambers;
6. Normative edicts of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan;
8. Normative legal acts of the ministers of the Republic of Kazakhstan and other heads of central state authorities, normative resolutions of the central state authorities and normative resolutions of the Central Election Committee of the Republic of Kazakhstan;
9. Normative legal orders of the heads of the branches of central state authorities;
10. Normative legal decisions of Maslikhats (local representative body), normative legal degrees of Akimats (local executive body), normative legal decisions of Akimats.
The normative legal acts of the lower level cannot contradict the normative legal acts of the higher level. Upon occurrence of contradictions between norms of the normative acts of different level, norms of act of higher level shall have priority. Upon occurrence of contradictions between norms of normative legal acts of the same level, norms introduced later have the priority.

The resolutions of the Constitutional Council of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Supreme Court of the Republic of Kazakhstan are out of the specified hierarchy. Normative resolutions of the Constitutional Council of the Republic of Kazakhstan are based solely on Constitution, and all other regulatory legal acts cannot contravene them.

International treaties ratified by Kazakhstan have priority over its laws and are applied directly, unless international treaty specifies its application requires issuance of a law. Thus, recognized principles and provisions of international law are an element of the legal framework of the Republic of Kazakhstan, to which all legal subjects may appeal.

The basics of the civil relations can be found in the article 6 of the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan. According to this article, in the Republic of Kazakhstan the state property and private property are equally recognized and protected.

Central Normative legal act in the sphere of civil law relations, the Civil Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan, consists of two parts – General and Special. General Part was adopted on December 27, 1994, and became effective from March 1, 1995. Special Part entered into force on June 1, 1999. Notwithstanding that both parts of the Civil Code are already in effect, the process of their improvement through modifications and amendments is still in progress.

The General Part of the Civil Code regulates such issues as legal status of private and legal entities, transactions, ownership rights, general provisions on obligations and contracts, The Special Part of the Civil Code contains norms that regulate specific types of obligations (sale and purchase, donations, lease, services, etc.), as well of intellectual property rights, inheritance (succession) and international private law.

Along with the Civil Code, business activity in Kazakhstan is regulated by other normative legal acts, including:

- Edict of the President of the RK, having a force law, dated May 2, 1995, “On economic partnerships”;

Unique feature of Kazakhstani legislation, compared to that of CIS countries, is that from July 1, 2006, private businessmen and enterprises are statutorily entitled to participate in lawmaking process, in drafting laws that concern regulation of private business. Central and local authorities submit such draft laws to accredited associations of private businessmen and
enterprises for their expert opinion. Such opinion is a recommendation, and must accompany the draft law during the process of discussion and adoption.