

The opponent's review on the diploma thesis of Aigerim Meldeshova on „Differentiation and dynamics of fertility in Kazakhstan during the period of rapid economic growth“

The diploma thesis of Aigerim Meldeshova „Differentiation and dynamics of fertility in Kazakhstan during the period of rapid economic growth“ consists of 107 pages of text and 1 page of appendixes. The text is organized in nine numerated chapters including the introduction. It is completed by the lists of tables, figures and schemes, conclusion and references and the above mentioned appendix.

The diploma thesis is thematically focused on the process fertility, its developments and differentiation during the period of recent growth of Kazakhstani economy. The work is divided into two basic parts. The first, technical part contents problem definition, specification of research objectives, structure of the work and basic terminology as well as an attempt to set wider conceptual or theoretical frameworks necessary for successful solution of the diploma thesis tasks. This part is completed by discussion of data availability and methods used. The second part, the core of diploma thesis comprises chapters 7, 8 and 9. In the first of them, the recent economic history of the Republic of Kazakhstan is overviewed principal demographic responses on sweeping economic and social changes after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The 8th chapter is devoted to basic levels, structures and trend of natality and fertility on the national level between 1999 and 2008. These overviews creates a background for deeper analysis of existing differentiation of fertility levels, structures and trends by the type of settlement (rural-urban) and by ethnicity in the 9th chapter. The author's principal findings are summarized in the final chapter labeled as Conclusion.

The aims of the work and the related research questions are clearly set by the author in the introductory part. The proposed as well as followed structure of the work has its firm logical structure and is sufficiently compact. Using standard demographic methods the author is systematically describing and analyzing differentiated fertility in Kazakhstan in the extent allowed by available statistical data. The employed methods are properly selected and correctly used. Description of reality is well balanced and generalization made clear and understandable. Taking into account limits set by data availability I have no principal comments to the content of this diploma thesis. There are only some technical or better formal comments.

Probably my most important critics is concerning proper quotation of information sources. There are several parts of text where data or other information on unknown origin are used, for instance on the page 30, the 2nd paragraph, page 32 the 1st and 2nd paragraphs, page 34, the 1st paragraph etc. I would also welcome more careful approach to the titles, names and other labels used in some graphs and tables (fig. 1, 9, ...). In the economic part the author is using repeatedly the indicators based on local currency and US dollars but nowhere is the corresponding exchange rate mentioned. These minor notes and critical remarks have not principal influence on the overall evaluation of the submitted master thesis.

In sum, I am convinced that the thesis of Aigerim Meldeshova „Differentiation and dynamics of fertility in Kazakhstan during the period of rapid economic growth“ meets the basic requirements set for the diploma theses from Demography submitted at the Faculty of Science, Charles University in Prague and therefore I can recommend to the Commission for MA state exams to accept this work for its defense.

Prague, 20th June 2010

RNDr. Boris Burcin, PhD.
opponent