

Dinara Ualkenova:
One-parent families in the East-Kazakhstan region

The thesis deals with the issue of one parent families as a new emerging phenomenon in the region of East Kazakhstan. The analysis consists of investigating their structure, size, historical and modern conditions. The author starts with the delimitation of the topic and discussion of relevant research literature. They are some overlapping issues, more particularly those related to the definition of a family and household or to a family perceived from parent perspective compared with child's view. The historical background which impacts current family ties is also examined. After defining objectives, studying corresponding literature and describing data and methods, the analytical part follows. The analysis is divided into two parts. The first part deals with descriptive findings where the approaches of classical demography are used. The second part presents in depth study relying on the issues of multistate demography.

The master thesis consists of 112 pages. It is divided into four parts: 1) Introduction, 2) Theoretical framework, 3) Structure of households, single-parent households in the East-Kazakhstan region, and 4) Family trends and patterns in East-Kazakhstan region. The introduction specifies the goals and outlines the structure of the master thesis. The theoretical framework part starts with the overview of literature, and is followed by the definition of lone-parent family concept, historical background of traditional family transformation to the modern family. Data sources and methods are described in the last part of this theoretical framework. After thorough investigation of international practice of household's classification at the beginning of the third part, the Kazakhstan situation is shown in the next subchapter dealing with the transition from traditional family to the modern households in Soviet and Kazakhstani censuses. The last part of this section addresses single-parent household characteristics and their development. It also provides first data based information. More precisely, East Kazakhstan region is compared with whole Kazakhstan or contrasted against South Kazakhstan. The results show changes between two censuses 1989 and 1999 in household size and structures. These three sections include about 40 pages. The fourth part is the most relevant and shows descriptive and multistate demographic analysis of demographic development in the East Kazakhstan region. First, trends in the extra-marital fertility, divorce and widowhood are presented for the last decade. The most valuable part follows and consists of data adjustment for subsequent multistate life table study according to marital status. The results clearly show the difference between male and female behavior in that respect and the role played in family dissolution by a strong excess male mortality.

The master thesis, evaluated as a whole, is well structured and written. The question can be related to the graphs 54-57 where standardized ratios are displayed, while inside of the graphs the rate is reported. In addition, the values in the graphs 54-55 are extremely high for University graduates. Page 13, it should be DHS, page 111 Keilman.

To conclude, the author, Dinara Ualkenova, proved by this master thesis the ability to delimit the topic, to investigate it with appropriate methods, especially to use more advanced methods (decomposition techniques, multistate life tables) and obtain interesting results. Therefore, I recommend the thesis to be submitted.

Praha 16.12.2010

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