

## **Reviewer's report on the dissertation thesis submitted by Aida Baigarayeva**

### *Reproductive behavior and patterns in the South Kazakhstan region*

The submitted dissertation thesis by Aida Baigarayeva deals with an issue of fertility in Kazakhstan. More specifically, the work is focused on the South Kazakhstan region in the most recent years, although this fact is not obvious from the title, and on reproductive behavior, attitudes and plans. With respect to amount of scientific works published on the given issue recently, with no doubts the theme of dissertation thesis is actual and highly relevant.

The whole thesis consists, including introduction and conclusion, of eight chapters in 194 pages. The first chapter is devoted to introduction which defines studied problem, aim of the work and specifies the research questions and hypothesis. In addition, the structure of the thesis is also introduced. The work is divided into two parts: "technical" and "body part of the thesis". The technical part embraces the second chapter focused on literature overview. The list of literature is comprehensive and includes works related to study of fertility intentions in general as well as with respect to Kazakhstan. Although literature review provides an idea what was done in that field of research, it is a pity that methods and results of several works as well as their shortcomings are not discussed so deeply. Following third chapter is devoted to the theoretical framework of the dissertation thesis. The first sub-chapter defines the basic terminology, for example what is a reproductive behavior, and theoretical concepts of planned behavior, Theory of Conjunctural Action, the life history theory, approach considering gender, and government action in Kazakhstan with possible impact on reproductive behavior. The sub-chapter is also presented as a list without in depth discussion. The second sub-chapter describes basic features of the demographic concepts of the first and the second transition. The following third sub-chapter is devoted to fertility theories which are summarized in the division of the economic and non-economic approaches. Also these parts are predominately descriptive with no critical comments on strong and weak points of those approaches. The fourth chapter focuses on methodology and data, which were for the work available and utilized. Sub-chapters about data quality and basic characteristic of the survey, which became the core data source, are also involved. In the methodology part the calculation of the crude birth rate, total fertility rate, general fertility rate, and fertility indicators reflecting birth order as well as decomposition method and multinomial logistic regression are relatively clearly and sufficiently described. With respect to objectives of the thesis, the chosen methods are relevant and appropriate. The fifth chapter deals with the position of Kazakhstan among neighboring countries. Basic features of development in fertility, mortality and migration predominantly in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century are presented. The subsequent sub-chapter focuses on population development in Kazakhstan itself since the 90's of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and component of fertility considering birth order and ethnicity. The chapter six has similar structure as the previous one, but in this case the population development in the South Kazakhstan region is described. In comparison with the national level, additional information on fertility differences by marital status are presented. The last seventh chapter is the core chapter of the dissertation, because it analyses

the reproductive ideals, preferences, intentions and reproductive thoughts and their realization in the South Kazakhstan region in comparison with the North region. The sub-chapters are descriptive as well as analytical, because the multinomial regression analysis is applied. The last chapter, which is not in the text numbered, is devoted to conclusion. The summary chapter seems to be too general without direct connection to defined research questions and hypothesis.

With respect to above mention overview of the work, it is obvious that submitted dissertation thesis has logical structure, adequate methods and it fulfills the basic requirements of qualification works. Nevertheless it is necessary to note that some shortcomings are present in format of the work, quotations and interpretation of data and results. For instance, it seems unjustified to have page with one chart and short paragraph. But in general, graphical layout of the work is well done. In addition, in data presenting sometimes units and/or time specification are missing. For example, on page 34 or 77 data on ethnic difference are presented, but it is not clear for what year data originated. There is a quotation to the Demographic yearbook, but year in quotation corresponds to data publication and not to data collection. Furthermore, it seems unsuitable, due to shortcomings of given indicator, to illustrate low mortality level by the crude death rate without additional explanation and discussion (e.g. page 80). Also from the text is not obvious, how the significance/insignificance of relationship between for instance desired number of children and gender of a parent was obtained (e.g. page 155). It would be also convenient to specify what means “economic situation” or “economic stability” and to interpret the final results in broader context (e.g. possible consequences for applied family policy, etc.). Although some small errors are also present in quotations, it has to be taken into account that no quotations are missing.

I do recommend the submitted dissertation thesis by Aida Baigarayeva for defence.

Prague, 19<sup>th</sup> September 2012

RNDr. Olga Sivková, Ph.D.