

## **Oponent's review on Ph.D. thesis**

### **Ainur Karzhaubayeva: Frontier migration between Kazakhstan and Russia: The case of the West Kazakhstan**

Frontier migration between Kazakhstan and Russia has long tradition and belongs to the controversial issues in Kazakh-Russian relationship. The problem started to be important mainly after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Despite its obvious political significance, there is no detailed research on this issue up to now. From this point of view the topic of presented Ph.D. thesis is important and actual.

The main goal of the thesis is to analyse frontier migration between Kazakhstan and Russia from different points of view and to contribute to the formation of relationships between Kazakhstan and Russia and population living on the borderlands. The thesis consists of 11 chapters including Introduction and Conclusion and its total extent is 243 pages. All requirements needed for good orientation in the text are included: lists of abbreviations, tables, figures, maps, pictures, and appendices (21). Introduction is devoted to the aims and objectives of the research and its theoretical and practical relevance. Author also informs about structure of the research – the number of chapters is 11, not 12 stated here and the way of enumeration of the sections is unknown. Literature dedicated to the problem of frontier migration between Kazakhstan and Russia is discussed in the second chapter. The attention is given also to the research concerning social and cultural aspects of the issue. Chapter 3 has theoretical character and informs about migration theories and concepts. The problem of national/ethnic identification is here also briefly discussed. Research questions and hypothesis given in chapter 4 include all important aspects of the problem under study: the characteristics features of the Kazakhstan-Russia border, ethnic and demographic situation and migration in the borderlands. All aspects are clearly connected and give good information about the problem under study. Data availability and their quality are generally discussed in chapter 5 and the shortages of Kazakhstan's system of data collection on migration are stressed. Chapter 6 has methodological character and informs about adopted approaches and methods. Sample survey used in the research is also mentioned in this chapter, but better arrangement would be to include such information in the previous chapter dealing with data sources.

Further three chapters (7-9) have descriptive character and inform about features and problems on border lands, ethno - demographic situation and give socio-economic characteristics for selected regions Orenburg and West Kazakhstan, where the sample survey was conducted. Historical approach and border policy formation are also mentioned. In spite of the descriptive character, information given in this part of thesis is interesting and enables better understanding such complex problem. Chapter 8 reflects the general problem in comparing population dynamics in national/ethnic sphere. Ethnic data usually reflect the political situation in a state and position of minorities during the time and it does not enable to obtain accurate numbers and this fact is necessary to take into account. Results of author's sample survey "Frontier migration between Kazakhstan and Russia: The case of the West Kazakhstan" are given in chapter 10. The principal aspects of the frontier migration in the region are analysed including causes, motives and directions of migration, the impact of border control etc. Second part of chapter 10 is devoted to the relationship between available social characteristics of respondents and intensity of frontier migration using Generalized linear models. More attention is given to the descriptive analyses (subchapter 10.1) while the findings obtained by model (subchapter 10.2) are very brief. Last chapter 11 (Conclusion) is well arranged: hypotheses are confronted with the results of the research, the principal findings are given in clear way and global concepts of international migration are also taken into account. Author tries to summarize recommendations for future study of frontier migration, data collection and orientation of research. The list of literature is numerous and documents good orientation in the problem. For future research I recommend strictly follow the general instruction given for quotation of literature, e.g. in all cases periodical "Statistika"

is given without a specification (number, pages) etc. The choice of colours in graphic presentation is also important; some figures in chapter 10 do not give clear information.

The author has fulfilled the thesis objectives and there are no serious deficiencies. Notes mentioned above concerns mainly possible structure of the work or have technical character and do not influence the quality of the work. I appreciate the effort to realize the field research, without it the knowledge of the issue would not be so complete.

The presented Ph.D. thesis of Ainur Karzhaubayeva fulfils demands put on the doctoral thesis and I recommend it for defence.



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