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Migration policy and its role in implementation of population development strategy of the Republic of Kazakhstan

Migrační politika a její role v implementaci strategie populačního vývoje Republiky Kazachstán

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Abstract

This work addresses the issues of migration policy and its role in population development of Kazakhstan. Migration and demographic development of the Republic of Kazakhstan had become prominent subjects of strategic policy under the new geopolitical reality and socio-economic development since the early 1990s. The intensive outflow of population during this period resulted in change of different quantitative as well as qualitative population characteristics. At the same time, the ethno-demographic disproportions maintained in the previous decades speeded up the "nation-building" process which was represented namely by policy on ethnic return migration. Thus, under these circumstances migration and demographic policies were placed among the priority issues of national security of the RK. In this contexts, the analysis presented in the submitted disseartion displays the effect of migration flows on demographic, socio-economic and ethnic composition of population. It considers the effect of policy measures on managing migration processes. The thesis finally analyzes the role of migration policy in demographic development of the country which has been closely connected with the strategic goals of socio-economic development

Key words: migration, policy, population, development, strategy, Kazakhstan

Contents

1. Introduction

Kazakhs as other nations inhabiting Eurasian steppes had always conducted the pastoral nomadic life that defined by migratory, livestock-breeding economy. Thus, starting from seasonal resettlements between *kystau* (a winter site) and *jailau* (a summer site) to the formation and development of Kazakh Khanate migration played a significant role. However, since the inclusion of Kazakhstan to the Russian Empire and especially during the whole 20th century migration processes became important from the political perspective, as migration in and out of Kazakhstan became a part of the colonization policy of the Tsarist Russia and continued as measures and forms to strengthen the Soviet totalitarian regime in the 1930s and 1940s. At the result, migration played significant role in development of population size and composition throughout the mentioned period. The issue of migration and demographic development became strategic policy objectives since the Republic of Kazakhstan obtained independence in 1991 taking into account the new geopolitical and socio-economic conditions. In this regard, the migration component of population change was considered as an important factor in achieving several important aims in a short-term perspective.

2. Research goals and objectives

The goal of the dissertation is determination of **the role of migration in population development of Kazakhstan** and **capacity of state migration policy in responding population development strategies.** In accordance with the goal of the dissertation the following objectives were specified:

- Identify the strategic goals of population development of the RK;
- Consider the past and present migration process in Kazakhstan;
- Define the main determinants of immigration in Kazakhstan
- Analyze the impact of migration on size and structure of population in Kazakhstan;

- Consider the state policy in regards with ethnic return migration, refugee movement and illegal migration in Kazakhstan and the effects of these policies;
- Consider the perspectives of population development and international migration in Kazakhstan
- Determine the capacity of migration and migration policy to achieve the goals of population development;

3. Materials (data) and methods

The main sources of statistical **data** used in the dissertation are data provided by the Agency of Statistics of the RK (www.stat.kz). Thus, the data on migration of population, generally size and structure of population were mainly obtained from demographic, statistical and ethno-demographic yearbooks, yearly and monthly statistical bulletins, the 1999 and 2009 Census results and other materials published by the Agency. It is necessary to take into account, that relatively comprehensive data on external migration in the RK is available since only 1999. The data for the analysis on determinants of international migration in the RK were taken from the World Bank Data (economic indicators) (www.worldbank.org), United Nations World Population Prospects, 10th Rev. (demographic indicators) (www.esa.u.org/wpp/), Worldwide Governance Indicators (indicators of political stability and government effectiveness) (www.govindicators.org). Additionally, the analysis on attitudes of the Kazakhstani citizens and the experts' view regarding migration processes and migration policy in Kazakhstan based on the results of the surveys presented by Mukhamedzhanov and Zhussupova (2011) and the Center for Social and Political Studies "Strategy" (www.ofstrategy.kz/) in 2009

The **methods** of descriptive statistics and demographic techniques were used in the analysis of trends and patterns of migration in Kazakhstan as well as main determinants of migration flows. In order to define the main factors that stimulate migration inflows to Kazakhstan, the linear regression was applied to the panel data that include the number of immigrants from 23 countries to Kazakhstan. The

random effects model was used as the variation across entities was assumed to be random and uncorrelated with the independent variables (Torres-Reyna 2009), and additionally included time invariant variables (i.e. land border as a dummy variable). For the analysis on the impact of migration on population development in Kazakhstan the correlation was used. In order to assess the role of international migration on population development of Kazakhstan the ratio on the basis of age-specific death and net migration rates was calculated. The indicator shows the role of migration in development of particular age structure of population if the ratio is higher than 1, or the role of mortality if the ratios is lower than 1. The scientific methods such as description, analysis, comparative and retrospective analyses were used while considering the development of the concept of migration policy, theoretical framework of the work as well as historical background of migration processes in Kazakhstan.

4. Results and discussion

4.1 International migration in the Republic of Kazakhstan

The effect of past migration flows in Kazakhstan, particularly during the Soviet Union resulted in the changes in size and composition of population throughout the mentioned period, which could be easily observed in the results of the all-Union Censuses (Alekseenko 2001, DSSK n.d.). Thus, the outcome of these processes could be concluded as population of Kazakhstan had become ethnically diverse with the position of Kazakhs as ethnic minority since 1939. This ethno-demographic disproportion along with the issue of depopulation became urgent issue in the political agenda since obtaining independence. The mass outflow of population, decreasing natural growth rates made the Kazakhstani government to prioritize population issues. The main direction in this respect was increase of population size by stabilizing the ethno-demographic situation of the country. It is necessary to emphasize, that the clear goals of population development as well as demographic policy have never been formulated officially. According to the Kazakhstani leadership, international migration had been expected to

solve this issue, particularly, ethnic return migration expected to increase the size of population as well as increase of Kazakhs in total population.

Trends in migration flows started during the years of *perestroika* with intensive outflow of Russian-speaking population continued after the obtaining of independence by the RK (Sadovskaya 2001). The political changes and systematic economic downturns after collapse of the USSR caused mass spontaneous movement of population between the CIS countries. The peak of emigration was observed in 1994, consequently showing the highest level of negative net migration. By 2000 negative net migration started to decrease (ASRK). The migration flows of the 2000s could be marked with the emergence of positive trends in its development in light with economic growth. Thus, decline in the intensity of emigration and increase in immigration flows, especially among ethnic Kazakhs resulted in gradual decline of negative net migration. The most positive trend during this decade was observed in 2004 when net migration showed positive value for the first time since 1968. This period could be marked with the fact that Kazakhstan became destination country for labor migrants mostly from Central Asian countries.

The analysis on the determinants of immigration flows in Kazakhstan showed significance of institutional factor represented by quotas for immigration of ethnic Kazakhs. Despite the fact that changes in the intensity of migration flows coincided with the changes in economic situation in the country, the economic variables, such as GDP per capita, did not show significance. The analysis on push factors showed that the existence of common land border between Kazakhstan and origin countries as well as existence of considerable number of ethnic Kazakhs residing in the origin countries was significant in explaining migration flows.

The demographic and socio-economic composition of migrants, both emigrants and immigrants, showed the prevalence of those in productive ages throughout the 1990s. The share of emigrants in these ages was 65 %, with the highest value in the age groups 18-29 (ASRK).

As regards to the age structure of immigration, 75 % of immigrants were in productive ages – particularly in age groups 18-29 (31 %) and 30-44 (23 %). The similar picture was observed in 2010. The educational structure of migrants revealed negative net migration among migrants with tertiary and secondary special education (that is 2–4 year education in college or vocational schools on the basis of secondary education) which had been preserved in 1999–2010. The positive net migration has been maintained only among those with secondary education since the second half of the 2000s. (ASRK). The educational level of oralmans (ethnic Kazakh repatriates) immigrated in 1991–2009 showed prevalence of ethnic Kazakhs with secondary education, followed by oralmans with special secondary and those who have no education.

As regards to the impact of international migration on population of Kazakhstan, the tangble effect was observed in respect to the changes in size of population, as mass outflows in the 1990s resulted in negative changes in population. The stabilisation of socio-economic situation in the 2000s resulted in increase of birth rates as well as positive net migration though the contribution of the latter componenet to the total change was not that significant. The role of migration on population age structure development showed that Kazakhstan lost its population in productive ages as a result of emigration (particularly in the 1990s). The role of migration in the following years decreased, except the second half of the 2000s where the ratio is above 1 for the age groups starting from 1-4 up to 10-14 among men and 25-29 among women. Another significant effect could be observed in the ethnic composition of population. The ethnic composition of net migration in 1999–2010 showed negative value among Russians, Germans and other European population, whereas the positive net migration was mostly observed among Kazakhs. Thus, immigration of more than 860 thousand ethnic Kazakhs (Comission on Human Rights under the President of RK 2012) obviously contributed to the increase in the share of Kazakhs that observed in the results of the 1999 and 2009 Censuses (ASRK 2000, 2010).

The main policy direction that had been implementing in Kazakhstan since the early 1990s has been ethnic return migration

policy. The implementation of the policy was carried out by means of immigration quotas introduced in 1993. The quota considered the financial and other assistances in the resettlement and initial adaptation of oralmans. However, by the end of 1990s the main part of ethnic migrants entering Kazakhstan was those outside the limit of allocated quota (ASRK 2011). With stabilization of economic situation, the annual quotas had been increased gradually to 20 thousand oralman families per year. However, one of the main policy issues recently is integration of oralmans. The main problems in this respect is employment as its level among oralmans in productive ages was low than the similar indicator for the whole population (UNDP 2006). Additionally, there is a problem with resettlement and housing. The immigration quotas initially considered regions of settlement. Despite this, the secondary migration of oralmans resulted in demographic disproportions among regions. Another policy issues related to migration of population deals with refugees, asylum seekers and irregular migrants. The basic regulatory measures and legislative base in these spheres have been developed recently. Despite the fact that most of the asylum seekers came from CIS countries, mostly non-CIS citizens are accepted to the refugee procedure. As regards to the illegal migration, with the economic growth and increasing living standards in Kazakhstan compared with other Central Asian countries, as they represent main origin countries according to the results of the regularization campaign in 2006, the RK could be considered as one of the destination countries for labor migrants. Despite the development of legislative base and numerous agreements to combat with illegal migration among CIS countries they did not have much effect on decrease of illegal migration. Thus, issues of illegal employment, illegal entry is one of the main issues in the agenda. In this regard, the survey results (Mukhamedzhanov and Zhussupova 2011) show that majority Kazakhstani citizens supported the application of more strict rules in accepting migrants and selective approach.

4.2 The perspectives of population development

The consideration of official documents such as the Development Strategy "Kazakhstan – 2030" 16 October 1997 (*Kazakhstanskaya Pravda* 11 October 1997), the Program "On demographic development of the RK for 2001–2005" adopted by the Decree of the Government of the RK No 1380 30 October 2001 (In: Collection of the Acts of the President and Government of the RK 2001, No 36–37 p. 485), the Concept of state demographic policy adopted by the Decree of the Government of RK No 1272 17 August 2000 (In: Collection of the Acts of the President and Government of the RK 2000, No 36–37 p. 432) and others indicates to the shift in the goals of population development compared with the 1990s towards human capital development in Kazakhstan. It is appeared that emigration of population in productive ages with certain skills and knowledge had a negative effect on the economy of Kazakhstan. Consequently, economic stabilization in the 2000s and direction of the Government toward accelerated industrial and innovative development, diversification of economy showed shortage of specialists and professionals in particular spheres of economy. It is necessary to mention, that the quantitative increase of population still remains among the main goals of population policy, as all the measures stated in those documents are intended to increase fertility, decrease mortality and maintaining positive net migration.

The projections available from the UN (2011) shows that population of Kazakhstan is expected to increase and reach 19.1 million and 21.8 million by 2030 and 2050 respectively. The main component of population increase is going to be natural increase, whereas net migration is expected to have a small significance in total population change as the forecasts prepared by the UN, UNCB and the ASRK showed net international migration ranging between - 0.5 (UN) to 1.5 (ASRK) per 1,000 population. However, it is necessary to take into account that the prediction of migration trends and directions comparing with the vital components of population change is difficult as it mostly depend on policy measures. Nevertheless, different internal factors such as demographic development of Kazakhstan particularly the

development of the age structure of population towards the increasing share of seniors, the economic situation that aimed at diversification of economy from resource export oriented economy to the development of innovative and technology sectors as well as external factors that closely connected with demographic, socio-economic situation and political stability in neighboring countries are expected to pull and push (from the perspectives of neighboring origin countries) international migrants.

5. Conclusion

The dissertation is aimed to determine the role of migration in population development of Kazakhstan and capacity of migration policy in responding population development goals. To sum up, for quite a long period the dynamics of population of Kazakhstan had been largely dependent on migration processes. Migratory movements to and from Kazakhstan especially in the Soviet period had an impact on the size as well as ethnic composition of population. On the other hand, these processes were one of the main factors determining further migration flows after obtaining independence. Long-time formation of multiethnic population that had been conserved during the Soviet period formed a potential source for outflow of population while sizable Kazakh diaspora was considered as potential source for immigration to Kazakhstan. The impact of mentioned migration processes on development of population had prioritized the population issues since the 1990s. The strategic goals in this respect were increase of size population and stabilization of ethno-demographic situation. Certain explicit as well as implicit policy measures were applied for the achievement of these goals.

Migration process which had occurred since independence of the RK could be conditionally divided into two chronological periods that have certain patterns in the specified periods. Thus, migration flows in the 1990s marked with the mass outflow of European population. The demographic characteristics of emigration showed that majority of emigrants were in productive ages, with high level of education and

specialists in the main spheres of economy. Thus, it had been considered as one of the negative consequences of emigration in the 1990s. On the other hand, the immigration of ethnic Kazakhs according to ethnic return migration policy Kazakh population which had been ethnic minority managed to pass through 50 % share in total population (ASRK 2000). The second chronological period started in the 2000s. Despite the fact that Kazakhstan still had been losing its population due to emigration in the early 2000s, this period could be marked with the emergence of new trends in migration. Kazakhstan became new destination country for labor migrants from CIS, mainly Central Asian countries while keeping the position of transit country for migrants from all over the Asia. Thus, economic growth in the 2000s and the direction of the Government toward accelerated industrial and innovative development of the national economy had an impact on shifting the goals of the Government in population development towards the quality and composition of labor market. Increase of population size also remains among the priorities of development strategies. In this regard, migration is expected to contribute to the development of quantitative and qualitative population characteristics by attracting specialist and professionals.

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