

Supervisor's review on Ph.D. thesis of Ainur Saparbekova:

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

The Republic of Kazakhstan became an independent state in 1991 which created new geopolitical conditions for its population development. As a result migration component of population change started to play an important role in achieving positive demographic trends in short-term perspective. Therefore the topic of the submitted thesis is highly relevant and due to its complexity belongs rather to unique study in this respect. Moreover, the decreasing natural population growth has become a key issue in political discussion also in other post-soviet countries and the possibility to stabilize population development through strategic migration policy could be taken as an example how to tackle with this issue. Studies of such kind are very beneficial as they can serve as a tool for other countries.

The analysis of the role of migration in the recent and future population development of the Republic of Kazakhstan was divided into several steps that followed the specified objectives: (1) to identify the strategic goals of population development in Kazakhstan and to identify the position of migration within the state policy, (2) to describe the past and present migration process in Kazakhstan, (3) to define the main determinants of immigration to Kazakhstan, (4) to analyze the impact of migration on size and structure of population in Kazakhstan, (5) to differentiate between the ethnic return migration, refugee movement and illegal migration in Kazakhstan: policy strategy versus the effects of policies, (6) to consider the perspectives of migration within the population development, and (7) to assess the capacity of migration from the future perspectives.

In the first part of the thesis the conceptual and empirical framework is presented. Difference between the explicit and implicit migration policy is well understood as well as the necessity to include integration policy into migration policy. The term "oralmans" is introduced within the context of the ethnic return migration. Migration models of selected European countries including the Czech Republic, was used to document different migration policy practices. Finally, relevant migration theories are discussed in order to formulate the research questions and better achieve research objectives.

The core of the work is concentrated particularly in the chapters seven and nine. In chapter seven the international migration in the Republic of Kazakhstan was analyzed in more detail. Both statistical data provided by the Agency of Statistics of the Republic of Kazakhstan and panel data taken from the World Bank and United Nations were used. As a result the descriptive statistics are well complemented by using linear regression methods. Panel data analysis was used to specify the determinants of immigration flows in Kazakhstan and the effect of both push and pull factors. Interestingly, immigration quota (as institutional factor) was found to be statistically significant for explanation of inflows of *oralmans* whereas the GDP per capita (as economic variable) did not show statistical significance. Furthermore, cross-sectional analysis of migration flows in 1999-2010 used random effects model of linear regression and based on panel data served to find statistically significant explanatory variables. Although political stability in the origin countries or the existence of common land border between Kazakhstan and origin countries have some relevancy only the existence of considerable numbers of ethnic Kazakhs showed to be significant at the 95% level.

Another important part of the thesis is the evaluation of migration policy in the chapter nine. Two main categories are differentiated: effect and effectiveness. "*Effect*" refers to the actual result whereas effectiveness is used to measure the degree to which a policy measure is

successful in producing a desired result. In line of these two approaches *what could be understood by saying "the ethnic return migration policy could be considered as effective" (page 143)?* Furthermore, it is mentioned that evaluation of migration policy can be carried out in the different stages of policy-making. *When the "ex ante" and when the "ex post" evaluation is used in the thesis (page 127)?*

The submitted work has sufficient extent of 172 pages including appendix. It is well structured and consists of eleven logically developed chapters. Descriptive, analytical and synthetic parts of work are well balanced and the main goals were achieved. The author was also aware of some methodological limitations particularly related to evaluation of migration policy such as availability of data or unquantifiable elements of immigration objectives. The recommendations for the future migration strategy are summarized. Despite its relevancy it is rather complex issue and it has to be formulated within the whole population policy. As it was mentioned in the thesis the dynamics of population of Kazakhstan had been largely dependent on migration processes. In the future the main component of population change is expected to be natural increase whereas the role of international migration will probably diminish. *Do you think that family policy would play more important role than migration one?*

Ainur Saparbekova has proved the sufficient knowledge of the demographic issue under study, ability for good research work in this field as well as good language skills. Furthermore, she was able to work independently, to use appropriate methods and to interpret the results within the broader context.

In my view the submitted work meets the criteria for Ph.D. thesis in demography therefore I recommend this work to be defended.

11 March 2013



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