

Program approaches to stimulating fertility: experience in the implementation of the North- Kazakhstan region

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Abstract. The Republic of Kazakhstan is a country with low population density. In order to stimulate fertility, government takes economic measures on both republican and regional levels. The program “Fund of Generations” is an attempt to increase the birthrate among large families with four and more children in the North Kazakhstan region. This article demonstrates the results and barriers on the way of implementation of this program.

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Introduction

Social protection is critical to child well-being because children are one of the most vulnerable groups in all countries due to their age, physical and developmental fragility, societal status and dependence on others [1]. In any country, parents and government create the right conditions and mechanisms to improve the system. This is the nature of man that the present generation should take care of future ones [2].

One of the essential components of the Kazakh family and demographic policy is an effective policy for children, creating a quality environment for children, including encouragement for childbirth. Nobel laureate Gary Becker insists that the birth rate is high, where the economic benefits of having children surpass all the costs of their content [3], i.e. predominant factors are becoming economic motives.

Current demographic status

The Republic of Kazakhstan is a sparsely populated country – its density is less than 6 people per square kilometer. According to the Statistics Agency of Kazakhstan in the Republic, fertility of a population has been increasing over a number of years.

It has become possible due to the social policy of the state in relation to pregnant women, the rate support. In accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan a series of measures on social protection of motherhood and childhood is carried out:

- one-time public assistance in connection with the birth of a child of 30 monthly indices (1 MI - a measure for the calculation of benefits and other social payments, as well as for the

- application of penalties, taxes and other charges in accordance with the laws of the Republic of Kazakhstan. 2010. - 1413 tenge, 2011. - 1512 tenge, 2012. - 1618 tenge, 2013. - 1731 tenge. 2014 - 1852 KZT ≈ \$10), with the birth of the fourth and subsequent children - 50 MI;

- monthly public assistance for child care until the age of 1 year, regardless of family income (allowance is established in a differentiated way according to the number of children: - from 5 to 5.5 MI for the first child, from 5.5 to 6.5 MI - for the second, from 6 to 7.5 MI - for the third and from 6.5 to 8.5 MI - for the fourth and subsequent children).

- working mothers are paid child care benefit for a child under 1 year of 40% of the average wage [4].

According to the Labour Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan in addition to a break for rest and meal, women with children under the age of one and a half year, fathers (adoptive parents) with children under the age of one and a half year without a mother, are provided with additional breaks for breastfeeding and feeding children at least every three hours. Duration is as follows: having a child - every break of at least 30 minutes, having two or more children - at least one hour.

Employer upon written request of a pregnant woman, a woman with a child under the age of three years, provides them with part-time work. As well for taking care of the child until the age of three, mother or father of the child can be granted leave without pay, during which the worker retains his or her job position.

Experts predict that by 2018 Kazakhstan will have reached the number of 18 million people. By 2020 - 18 million 500 thousand people. Nominated and more confident predictions, "whereas

the UN predicts growth of Kazakhstan's population in 2050 to 21 million, our experts predict up to 24 million people" [5].

In turn, the Kazakh demographer M. Tatimov notes several demographic problems of Kazakhstan. There are now 350 000 unmarried women aged 25 to 50 years, one of the solutions is seen in "civil marriage" [6]. The observed "baby boom" in the country, according to Tatimov, will be in 2012 - 2015. "And then by 2090 or 2100 - the so-called demographic transition will have happened. We will start to die out, as all European nations today". He also highlights the dangerous relationship for population growth when the "7.5 percent of the population over 65 years is doomed to extinction". Currently, "the share of the population over 65 years that we have is 7%" [6]. And, for example, "in Russia, Belarus and Ukraine, it is about 12-13 %." On the other hand, the reduction of maternity benefits to the state threshold wages of 180 000 tenge (≈\$998) and future increase in the retirement age for women in 2018 may adversely affect fertility.

The demographer believes that by 2020 the share of Kazakhs should be more than 70 percent. Number of Russian will decline from 23 percent to 17 percent. Other oriental ethnic groups will grow, but slightly. Everything will depend on the migration process. Demographic behavior of the oriental type that involves many children, particularly becomes the key aspect of population growth [7]. Moreover, the average age of the Kazakhs is 26 years. The average age of the Russians and Ukrainians in Kazakhstan is 35-40 years [6].

Besides the increasing birth rate, the number of large families with four or more children has also increased. According to the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, in 2012 there were 208 thousand large families, which is 17.5 % more than in 2006. Also during this period the number of mothers of large families, awarded with signs "Altyn Alka" (giving birth to 7 and more children) and "Kymis alka" (6 children), has increased by 13%, amounting to 245 thousand mothers [8].

Positive dynamics of fertility observed in the whole country at the regional level is not proportional. Analysis of fertility shows to be the highest in South Kazakhstan region, and the lowest in the North- Kazakhstan region. In this context, the need to equalize fertility population in regions with a low level comes to the forefront.

Fund of Generations: results

As it is seen from the Comparison table of fertility (see the Table 1) at the national level and the North Kazakhstan region in 2000-2008, the birth rate in the area per 1000 population increased from 10.6

to 13.95 births (in the Republic of Kazakhstan - 22.75), in 2009, this ratio decreased and amounted to 13, 52 compared to 2008, but not even reached the national level.

Table 1. Comparison table of fertility in the North-Kazakhstan region and the Republic of Kazakhstan for 1999-2012 years

Years	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Number of the born children	8003	8018	7935	8011	8277	8223	8529	8308	8277	9085	8734	8720	8655	8681
The birth rate per 1,000 people in the North Kazakhstan region	10,6	11,1	11,1	11,7	12,7	12,2	12,8	12,5	12,6	13,9	13,5	14,8	14,8	
The birth rate per 1,000 people in the Republic of Kazakhstan	14,6	14,9	14,9	15,3	16,6	18,2	18,4	19,7	20,8	22,8	22,0	22,5	22,5	23

Source: Department of Statistics, North Kazakhstan region

In order to stimulate fertility in the North-Kazakhstan region the 2010-2014 "Fund of generations" Program was organized by the regional authorities. The purpose of this program was to stimulate the birth rate in large families, achieving a threshold level 22 births per 1,000 people, or 14,000 newborns a year.

At the beginning of the program in North-Kazakhstan region, there were about 170 697 women of childbearing age, including 125 548 women, or 73.5% - working women, in 2009 they bore 4075 children. Also in 2009, in the North- Kazakhstan region 2798 women (32.0 %) bore the second child, 1181 (13.5%) – the third one, and 568 women (6.6%) – the fourth. The share of children who were born first and second in the family was 80%, third and more - 20%. Moreover, in the urban families. The share of children who were born first and second was 88%, and the third and next - 12%, in rural areas - 73.7 and 26.3 %, respectively. From these data, the focus should be stated primarily on rural residents. About 500 -550 million tenge was planned to be spent on the program from the local budget annually [9].

Economic mechanisms have become a factor of stimulating, namely social payments in connection with the birth of the fourth child and 160 monthly indices for each child in the family and placement of funds on deposit until adulthood, as well as the adoption of a child. Deposit account till of the child's adulthood will allow to accumulate up to 10 thousand dollars. On the other hand, the recent adoption of the law "On education savings " with the interest rate of 7 % makes the total 17%, and thus in 18 years it will be possible to save about 33 thousand dollars. In addition, the Vitro fertilization Center was opened in

Petropavlovsk (a town in the North Kazakhstan region) in 2012.

Nevertheless, in September 2012 the program was suspended, and in April 2013 it was announced about the closing, due to the fact that it did not reach goals. According to the Head of the coordination of social programs and social protection of the population standard deviation A.Sakipkereeva "when in 2005 by the decision of the regional akim (mayor) all fresh mothers were paid 30 thousand tenge, there really was a baby boom in the area. Whereas the program "Fund of Generations" did not have such effect, unfortunately". One of the reasons was the lack of the regional budget for the project. However, the program increased the number of mothers of large families by 35%. During the period of the program 879 million tenge, or 4,803,278 dollars were transferred for 3456 children from 854 families, actually showing coverage program by 25 % of the stated targets.

Discussion and conclusion

One of the important factors that adversely affects the implementation of the program is the emigration from the region. Internal migration, in particular, narrows the potential of the program. According to the Department of Statistics of the North Kazakhstan region, its population was 579,488 people on January 1, 2013. Population from 2000 to 2012 declines by more than 1.2%. For the period 1999-2011 about 256,027 people, or an average of 23,275 people a year departed from the North Kazakhstan region.

Concerning migration issues, in 2012 5697 people from North Kazakhstan emigrated to other regions of the country, the main is Akmola region (2,535 people or 44.5%), Astana (1390 people, or 24.4%). The opposite 844 people (31.8%) from Akmola region and 411 (15.5 %) from Astana moved to the North Kazakhstan region. However, the most often destination from the North Kazakhstan is the Russian Federation (95.8 % of all departures), the remaining 4.2% - the CIS countries. The largest arrival in is also from Russia (65 % of all immigrants from the CIS). Among the arrivals, there is a high proportion of former citizens of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, who respectively make 11.6% and 10.6 %. The negative balance with other countries was due to the migration to Germany. There is still the shortfall in external and internal migration in. In all districts, except Kyzylzhar district and Petropavlovsk, the number of emigrants exceeds the number of arrivals. It turns out that the regional center, nearby the Kyzylzhar district is the most attractive for living in, and the remaining 12 districts are not obvious interest to stay [10].

These data only provide an indication of "shallowing" demographic potential of the region as a result of migration processes. The apparent migration of the population nullifies efforts to increase fertility. Indeed, in many respects the desire and decision to move are caused discontent socio-economic status of the family, unemployment, insufficient facilities and availability of health and education, water supply.

McDonald states that fertility policy includes three categories:

- Financial incentives: periodic cash payments, loans, tax deductions, free or subsidized services for children;
- Work and family initiatives: maternity or paternity leave, child care, flexible working hours;
- Broad social change supportive of children and parenting: child-friendly environments (including kindergartens and schools), marriage and relationship support, development of positive social attitudes towards children and parenting [11].

One-time cash payments, maternity leave and even the campaign "Balapan", which provides with child care centers attracts definite attention but for families who plan to have their first, second or third child. Especially, taking into consideration the total fertility rate for 2012 was 2.41 – 2.5. It means that average woman in Kazakhstan has 2-3 children [12], [13]. Nevertheless, families demand for high-quality children that drives people to choose very few (but positive) numbers of children; the other is a shift in relative prices that makes children less attractive [14].

The results of the program implementation are disputable. Economic situation, migration in the region, low quantity of large families and lack of regional budget caused closing of the program. However, the birth rate among large families with four and more children in the region has risen and these families has received benefits.

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