

# FRONTIER MIGRATION BETWEEN KAZAKHSTAN AND RUSSIA: IN A CASE OF THE WEST KAZAKHSTAN

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## Summary

The border between Kazakhstan and Russia is one of the longest continuous overland borders in the world which is dividing not only two the greatest states in the post soviet area – Kazakhstan and Russia – but also two big regions – Russia and Central Asia, regions related to western and eastern parts. In the Soviet Union frontier migrations did not use to cause any problems and they, consequently, were not taken as an object of special scientific research. Disintegration of the USSR and formation of boundary barriers made impossible keeping old relations and connections. At the same time, migratory communications between border regions of Kazakhstan and Russia proceeded intensively, but the character and ways were considerably changed. Therefore, the purpose of the given research is studying causes, intensity, character and feature of frontier migrations between Russia and Kazakhstan.

For studying of migratory moods of the population and their relations to boundary problems we had conducted survey in Uralsk. Uralsk is the regional centre with the developed infrastructure located on the border and has both – a railway and a highway – connections with Russia.

## Methods

The survey was being held in August, 2009. There were asked equal number of persons by sex. The national structure of respondents reflects ethnic structure of the population of area.

Besides, this work contains the results of previous public opinion poll of 2001 and 2005.

## Result I

### POPULATION IN FRONTIER AREAS OF RUSSIA (NEAR THE RUSSIA-KAZAKHSTAN BORDER)

- According to the estimations for 2009, there are 27.8 million people living in the frontier regions of Russia; among them there are 3 million people who live in the administrative areas near the border.
- In frontier areas of Kazakhstan there are more than 6 million people.

### POPULATION IN FRONTIER AREAS OF KAZAKHSTAN

- For both sides the general increase in population has obviously reduced. In Kazakhstan it is connected with emigration of Russian people. However, inflow of the Russian population due to immigration from the neighbor Kazakhstan's areas has helped Russia to stabilize demographic situation, having kept and even having increased the population.

### RUSSIAN POPULATION OF KAZAKHSTAN

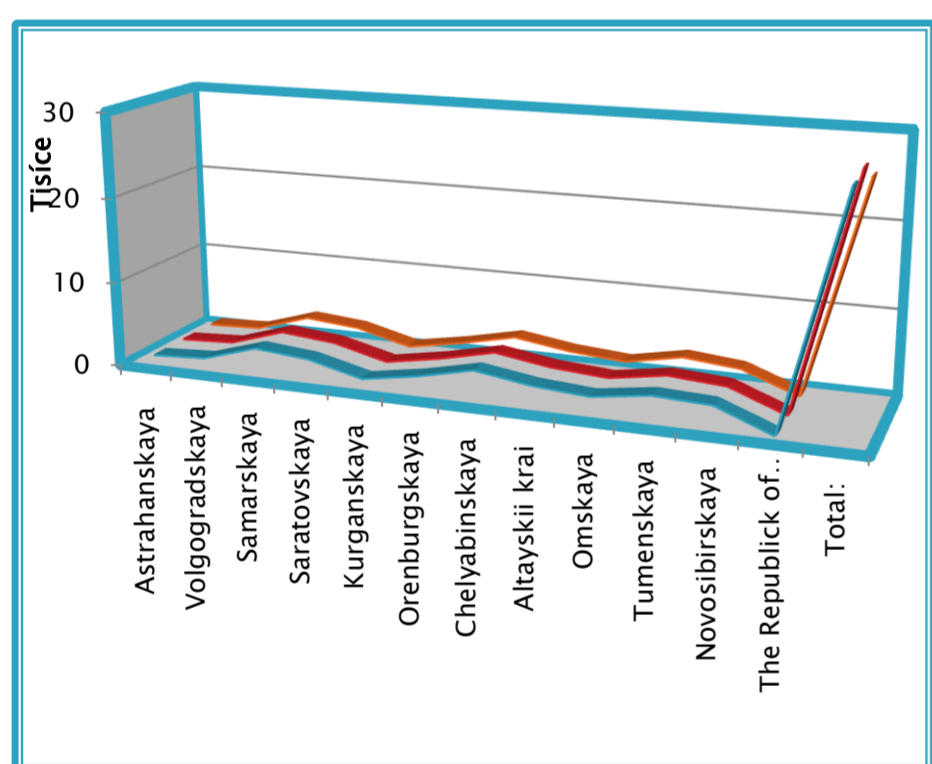
- Comparing the situation in Kazakhstan now and during the Soviet period, number and percentage of Russian population has fallen. Nevertheless, about 47 percent of Russian population of Kazakhstan lives in the frontier areas now. Therefore, the frontier areas of Kazakhstan keep remaining the regions with concentration of Russian population.

## Conclusion

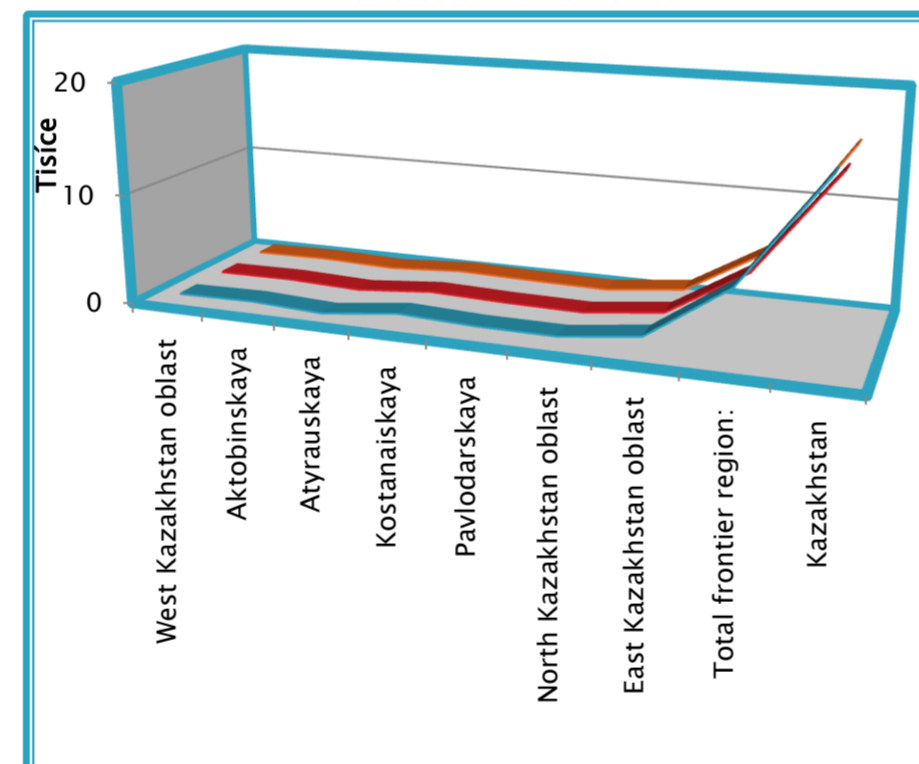
- The research allows concluding that the border did not become a barrier constraining development of two neighbor countries' connections even though year by year the Russian side makes the boundary control stricter, motivating it with the necessity of the safety.

- The border having divided the two beside settlements with the inhabitants who always had and continue to maintain related and economic relations has seriously complicated a life of people both in Kazakhstan and Russia. Moreover, due to the appeared barriers, social and economic transformations in both states have been complicated and their economic "isolation" has increased.

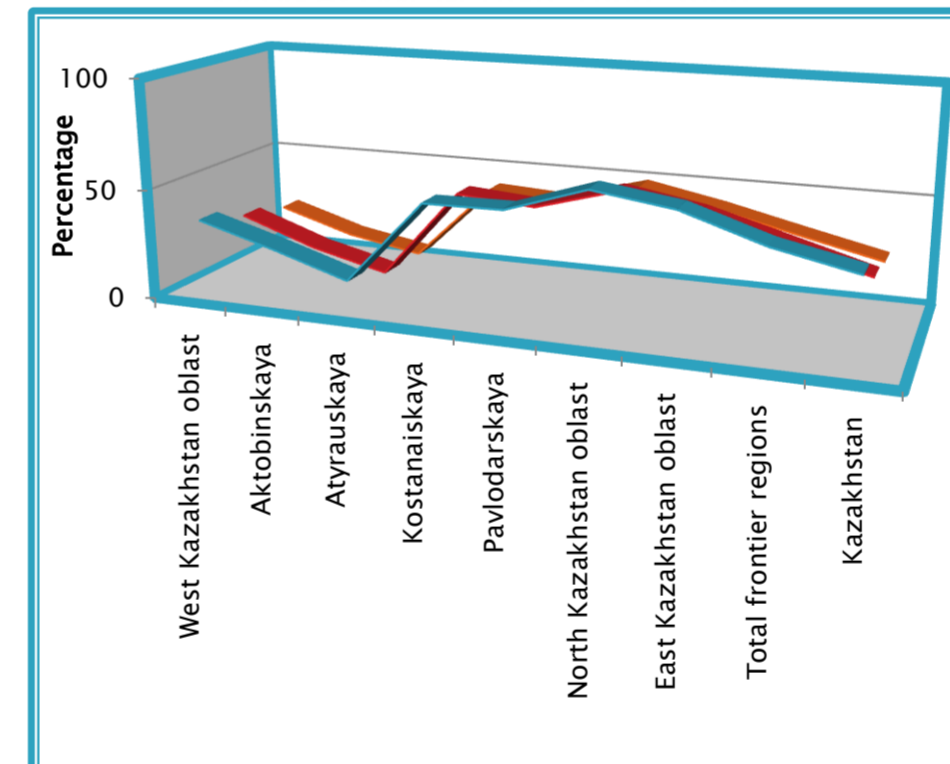
POPULATION IN FRONTIER REGIONS OF RUSSIA IN 1989, 1999, 2009



POPULATION IN FRONTIER REGIONS OF KAZAKHSTAN IN 1989, 1999, 2009



RUSSIAN POPULATION IN FRONTIER REGION OF KAZAKHSTAN IN 1989, 1999, 2009



## Result II

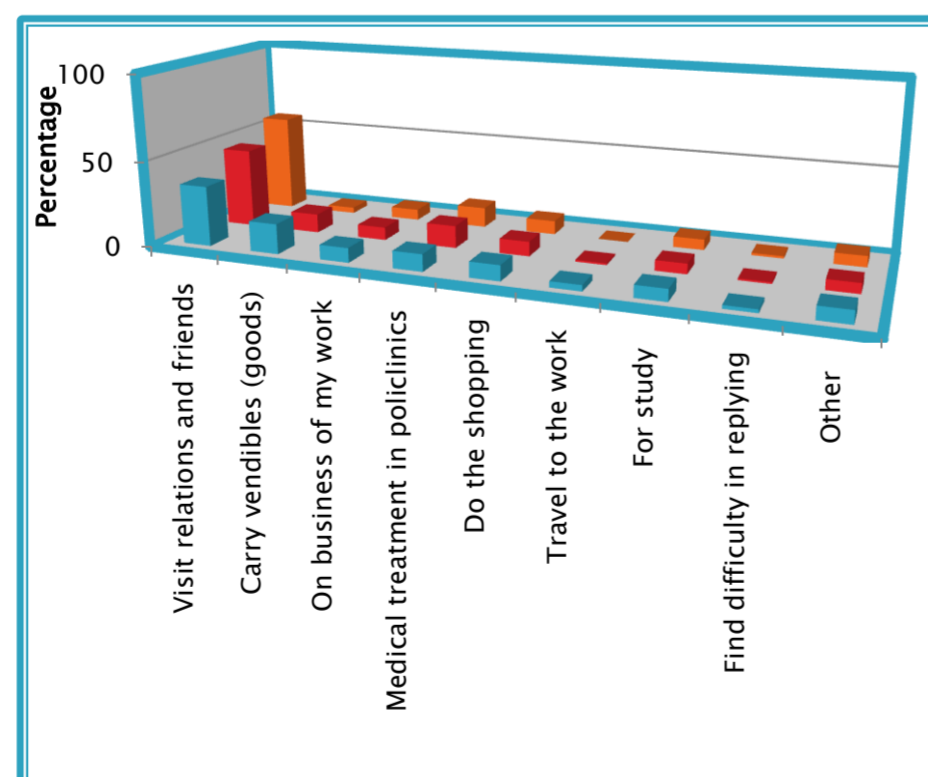
### THE REASONS OF FRONTIER MIGRATION:

- Visiting relatives and friends – 56.7 percent;
- Treatment at Russian polyclinics – 11.7 percent;
- Purchasing the goods for the house – 8.0 percent;
- Business trips – 6.3 percent.

### THERE IS REDUCTION IN:

- Trips with commercial purpose – from 17.5 to 3.3 percent.
- Trips with employment purpose – from 3 to 0.3 percent.

PURPOSES OF THE FRONTIER MIGRATION TO RUSSIA



### INTENSITY OF MIGRATION

Despite the border division and control intensification at the boundary check points, the indivisible space of social and economic relations remains. About a half of the population continues to go to a neighbor country with different intensity. Last years frontier migrations tend to decrease. The main causes of the trips reduction are:

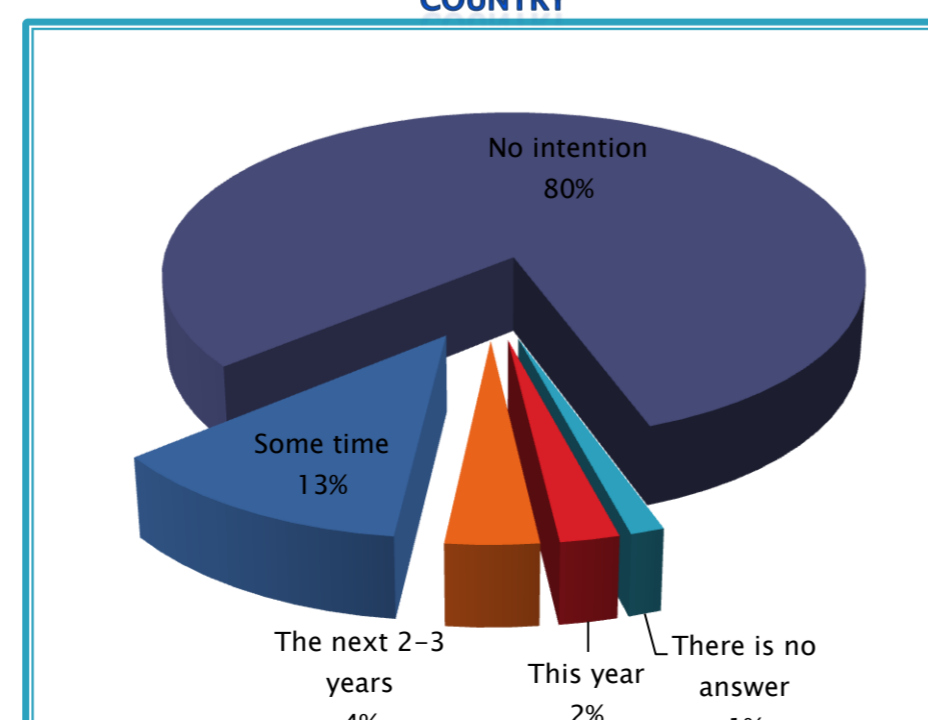
- No need in visiting a neighbor country – 12.7 percent;
- Financial difficulties – 7.5 percent;
- Difficulties in border crossing – 5.7.

- At the same time, as the research shows, under condition of some kept "openness" the frontier territory can represent a number of benefits and advantages to the neighbor living populations that are adjusted on interstate integration and are capable to use the boundary connections. It finally can give additional development stimulus to both sides' territories.

### MIGRATORY MOODS

- The analysis of migratory moods has shown that the main part (80.3 percent of respondents) of population does not plan to migrate from the country.
- Mostly, Russians want to leave thinking of moving to Russia. Representatives of other nationalities would simply like to live in economically developed countries.
- Migratory moods have an expressed "western" direction, nobody is going to go the countries of Central Asia.

INTENTION OF RESPONDENTS TO MOVE TO OTHER COUNTRY



### SEASONAL NATURE OF FRONTIER MIGRATIONS

- Trips to the Russian Federation have got an expressed seasonal nature. And 80 percent of all visits are mainly in the summertime.

### MARRIAGES

- Among migrants there is a high percent of mixed marriage representatives – 7.2 percent, whereas in Western Kazakhstan region this percent is not as high – 2.3 percent.

## Reference

- Regiony Kazakhstana. Statisticheskii sbornik. Astana – 2009. – 437 p. – pp.73–75.
- [http://demoscope.ru/weekly/ssp/rus02\\_reg.ph](http://demoscope.ru/weekly/ssp/rus02_reg.ph)

## Further information

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