

# 11. NATIONALITIES POLICY IN KAZAKHSTAN

## INTERVIEWING POLITICAL AND CULTURAL ELITES

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Kazakhstan is a multiethnic state with a population of approximately 15 million. Despite having more than one hundred different nationalities, Kazakhstan is considered to be one of the most stable post-Soviet republics with respect to interethnic relations. On both the official and unofficial levels, people appear to be aware of the fact that different nationalities live together in Kazakhstan and they all are citizens of the republic.

They often have quite different views, however, as regards the government's nationalities policy. Many non-Kazakhs feel that they are discriminated against by the government and express their discontent and uneasiness about the future. Ethnic Kazakhs, however, do not necessarily think that they receive favorable treatment of any kind. Meanwhile, ethnic minorities, in contrast to Kazakhs and Russians, feel that their interests are neglected or not considered seriously. What matters here is not who is right but the fact itself that there are different—sometimes contradicting—perceptions among people. Objective or subjective, perception is what determines one's behavior.

This article<sup>1</sup> focuses on different opinions on the nationalities policy of today's Kazakhstan. It is based on a survey of political and cultural elites who have some influence on public opinion and, to a lesser extent, on decision making within the government. How do they evaluate the government's policy on the nationalities question? How does their ethnic background affect their opinions? The article is divided into three sections: the first part gives background and explains the purpose and methods of the survey; the

second part provides analysis of the answers of interviewees, breaking them down into five groups. In the third and final section, I will discuss what we can learn from this empirical study.

## Background

### *Nation-building in Independent Kazakhstan*

In December 2001, Kazakhstan celebrated its tenth anniversary of independence. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, efforts have been made to give attributes of a sovereign state to the borders it inherited from the former empire. Yet the process of national integration is still in an early stage. To designate people resident in the country, irrespective of nationality, "Kazakhstantsy" (Kazakhstanis) is the widely used Russian expression. But does it mean anything more than the people of Kazakhstan? Is there anything that integrates these people into a nation with a common identity?

*The Concept for the Formation of State Identity of the Republic of Kazakhstan*, an official document prepared by the National Committee on State Politics under the President, says, "Kazakhstan is the ethnic center of Kazakhs. Nowhere else in the world do they possess a form of statehood that would demonstrate concern about the preservation and development of Kazakhs as an ethnic group, about their culture, way of life, language, and traditions. The definition of Kazakhstan as a national state [natsional'noe gosudarstvo (in Russian), ultiq memleket (in Kazakh)] should identify it first of all in this capacity." At the same time, the document presupposes that "the definition of Kazakhstan as a national state regards the strategic tendency in the development of a state identity to be the creation in the future of a nation-state [gosudarstvo natsii (in Russian), ilt memleketi (in Kazakh)]. The citizens of such a state, regardless of ethnic affiliation, comprise a single people; their belonging to this state serves as their main identifying characteristic."

The last part of this definition appears to correspond to the idea of civic nation-building. For all practical purposes, however, no concrete measures are being taken to build such a nation. The Assembly of Peoples of Kazakhstan,<sup>2</sup> which was founded to strengthen interethnic accord, is being used instead by the president to legitimize his power, as well as to control ethnic movements by accepting or refusing their membership to the Assembly. Nevertheless, the official announcement of a civic nation-building strategy itself sends an important message, in light of other countries' neglect of minorities or acts of ethnic cleansing.

What is being done in Kazakhstan in the framework of nationalities

policy is to realize the first idea: to make Kazakhstan an ethnic center for Kazakhs. The important areas in this respect are policies concerning history, migration, and languages. As we shall see later, these policies often have a declarative character, or they are conditioned by political goals and rarely succeed in achieving proposed aims. Yet they do have some impact on the feelings of the population, especially among non-Kazakhs. Meanwhile, unlike Malaysia's New Economic Policy, no concrete measures are being taken to give real assistance to individual Kazakhs.<sup>3</sup>

History is being mobilized to support the idea that only Kazakhs have rights to claim the status of an indigenous people in Kazakhstan. According to the Concept for the Formation of State Identity, mentioned above, "Historically, the state [Kazakh Khanate that was formed in the fifteenth century] defended the interests of Kazakhs exclusively, as at that time there were no other ethnic groups in this territory." Although it admits that Kazakhstan's current borders were formed under Soviet rule, it maintains that they "correspond completely to the historically formed area of habitation of the Kazakh people." These views are reflected in the official interpretation of the history of Kazakhstan and in the curricula of schools and universities. The preamble to the present Constitution also contains a phrase stating that the people of Kazakhstan build their statehood "on ancient Kazakh land."

As a part of a project to reinforce this theory, Soviet and Russian names of cities, villages, streets, schools, universities, and various organizations are being changed to Kazakh names. In Almaty, for example, Karl Marx Street is now called Qonaev (Kunaev) Street, after the former first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan; Mir ("peace" in Russian) Street has become Jeltoqsan ("December" in Kazakh) Street.

In migration policy, the government encourages ethnic Kazakhs living abroad (from elsewhere in the CIS as well as from other foreign countries) to come to Kazakhstan. Repatriates are called *oralmans* in Kazakh, which means "people who came back." This is because many, if not all, *oralmans* are descendants of those Kazakhs who fled Kazakhstan during forceful collectivization and famine in the 1930s. But it is the number of those who left Kazakhstan after the independence, not repatriated Kazakhs, that has greatly changed the national composition in recent years.

Because of Slavic immigration that began under the tsarist regime and continued during Soviet times, forceful sedentarization of Kazakh nomads, starvation, and purges in the 1930s that claimed lives of nearly 40 percent of Kazakhs at that time, as well as deportations of peoples to the territory

of Kazakhstan in the 1930s and 40s, Kazakhs became a minority in their own homeland. In recent years, however, the overall ethnic composition has been shifting in their favor. This change is largely the result of the huge emigration of "Europeans," the majority of whom are Russians and Germans. Why are they leaving? This is a debatable question. Some explain their departure as a result of Kazakhstan's poor economic conditions as well as a desire to live in their "historical homeland." Others blame the government's discriminatory policy against nontitular nationalities. Another factor contributing to the increase of the Kazakh population in the republic is its relatively higher growth rate.

The language policy defines Kazakh as the only language of the republic. According to the 1995 Constitution, Kazakh is the state language (Article 7[1]): "In state organizations and organs of local self-government the Russian language is officially used on an equal basis with Kazakh" (Article 7[2]). Thus Russian, which is spoken by almost the entire population to a greater or lesser degree, has acquired *de facto* official status, although the Constitution carefully avoids declaring it an official language. According to the language law adopted in July 1997, "The state language is the language of state administration, legislation, and legal proceedings, functioning in all spheres of public relations throughout the entire territory of the state" (Article 4). Article 4 also states that "[i]t is the duty of each citizen of the Republic of Kazakhstan to master the state language."

In reality, the Kazakh language is far from operative in all spheres of public relations. Russian still prevails in society, in particular among the urban population. What really matters is not the elimination of the Russian language itself but the possible manipulation of language. According to the language law, "[the] list of professions, specialties and posts for which knowledge of the state language is necessary . . . is determined according to the laws of the Republic of Kazakhstan" (Article 23). Here it should be noted that Russian-speakers include a significant proportion of urban Kazakhs. Theoretically, a person who does not speak the state language faces difficulty in pursuing a career irrespective of nationality. But in reality it appears that those Kazakhs who are not fluent in Kazakh are not necessarily barred from the state apparatus.

What is most obvious (and the most worrisome for non-Kazakhs) is something that is apparently not included in the government's nationalities policy: the monopolization of all branches of power and public offices by Kazakhs. We do not know to what extent this phenomenon is caused by a deliberate policy. At least there has not been any kind of official statement or regulations on ethnic aspects of personnel affairs. There are different

explanations for this: Russians (and some Kazakhs, too) tend to blame the government's deliberate yet secret policy, as well as nepotism among Kazakhs; others deny such intentions and explain Kazakhs' predominance by the increase of Kazakhs' share among the whole population as well as Russians' preference for the private over the public sector.<sup>4</sup>

Is Kazakhstan going to build an ethnic Kazakh state or a civic nation-state, the members of which will feel themselves to be equal citizens of the republic, or will it build something in between? Has its government been successful in integrating people with different ethnic backgrounds, or has it failed? Is there risk of ethnic tension in the future? There are a variety of opinions on these issues in Kazakhstan, which is quite natural in a multi-ethnic state. The following survey was conducted to give a detailed description of the different views on the nationalities policy of Kazakhstan.

#### *About the Survey*

This survey is not an opinion poll. The questionnaire was used simply to ask questions related to Kazakhstan's nationalities policies systematically. We did not survey a sufficient number of people to draw any statistically reliable conclusions. Nor did we aim to gather a sample of respondents representative of the ethnic, gender, or other backgrounds of the whole population in Kazakhstan. Thus, the analysis should be regarded not as statistical but as descriptive.

The survey was conducted between October 2000 and February 2001 (most intensively in November and December). We interviewed forty-five people: leaders of political parties and public movements, activists of ethnic cultural centers, members of parliament, scholars (political scientists and historians), journalists, and government employees. Most of the interviewees live in Almaty, the former capital of Kazakhstan, but a couple of them reside in the new capital, Astana. This geographical focus is primarily due to logistical reasons, but it also can be justified somewhat: Almaty still is an intellectual and political center, especially for the opposition.

Respondents were asked to fill out a questionnaire (see the attached sample), which was collected immediately after the interview or a couple of days later. As a few people preferred to give oral answers, an interviewer wrote them down on their behalf. The author herself and three Russian males worked together in distributing, collecting, and sometimes filling out questionnaires. We asked respondents for permission to write their names in the questionnaires. Almost all of them (except four) agreed. Some of those who identified themselves nevertheless asked to keep details of their answers anonymous.

The author made a draft, which was revised with the help of the local Russian-speaking scholars. If an interviewee did not agree with the suggested answers or had additional comments, we asked that s/he write down his/her own opinions. We tried to use neutral terms to avoid giving the impression that we supported/opposed the government or a particular ethnic group. In the process of conducting the survey, some of the prepared answers proved inappropriate. There were a few cases in which interviewees forgot to fill out a couple of pages. When we expected multiple answers, we asked respondents to mark all answers with which they agreed. It turned out that a couple of questions from which we expected to get a single answer received multiple answers.

For some questions, respondents were asked to explain why they answered yes or no. For example, if the answer for question 3 was yes, the respondent was supposed to proceed to 3(a), not 3(b). Yet respondents quite often filled out each subquestions regardless of how they answered the main question. In the following discussion, all answers for subquestions, irrespective of the answers for the main questions, were used for the analysis. Thus, in some cases the number of those who answered a subquestion exceeds those who answered yes or no to a main question.

Interviewees were asked to indicate their nationality. All respondents agreed to do so, and a few of them gave more than a single response (for example, "I am Russian but my mother is Kazakh"). For the sake of convenience, however, only what they indicated as their nationality is used for the grouping of respondents.

In the following analysis, five categories are used: Kazakh nationalists, Russian nationalists, Kazakh intellectuals, Russian intellectuals, and intellectuals of ethnic minorities. This does not mean, of course, that nationalists are not intellectuals. Nationalists here include those who head movements that claim to fight for Kazakhs' or Russians' rights. Our intention is not to label or criticize nationalists. Rather, it is to enable an analysis of the patterns of their thoughts so we can compare them with other respondents. As discussed below, the views expressed by nationalists and others do not necessarily differ greatly. A single category such as "ethnic minorities" may not be entirely appropriate, as each ethnic group has different historic, political, social, and cultural backgrounds. But there must be common interests for minorities, too. Our primary interest is to compare their opinions with those of Russians in order to determine whether there is a common front among non-Kazakhs.

## Analysis of the Survey

### *Kazakh Nationalists*

This group includes Aldan Aimbetov, editor in chief of *Kazakhskaiia Pravda*; Sabetkazy Akatai, chairman of the National Party Alash; Khasen Kozhakhmet, chairman of the Civil Movement Azat; and Kaldarkhan Kambar, a journalist for the Kazakh-language newspaper *Turkistan*. *Kazakhskaiia Pravda* is a nationalist newspaper, though it is printed in Russian. Unlike the others, Kambar is not a self-proclaimed activist. It is perhaps appropriate to include him in this group, however, as Kazakh-language newspapers serve as a forum for Kazakh nationalists and for those who are concerned about the language, culture, traditions, and history of the Kazakh people.

A summary of the positions of our Kazakh nationalists is as follows. Kazakhstan should build a multiethnic state with certain privileges for the Kazakh people, and the government actually pursues a nationalities policy that follows this strategy. There is little possibility of civic nation-building because of the absence of a common idea and democratic institutions through which interethnic relations can be regulated, as well as Russia's intention of serving as a guarantor of the Russian population in Kazakhstan, the disdainful attitude of non-Kazakhs toward Kazakh culture and language, and the indifferent attitude toward the country's future among the population. The decrease of the non-Kazakh population will eventually lead to the formation of a monoethnic Kazakh state. The Kazakh language should be developed to realize this.

The Kazakh language should be the only state language. Government support for the Kazakh language and culture is insufficient and must be strengthened. State symbols should reflect the history and traditions of the Kazakh people, but in reality they do so only imperfectly. It is appropriate to rename cities and streets, as this is a necessary process for the reestablishment of historical justice as well as for elevating the level of ethnic consciousness of Kazakhs. Some renaming, however, cannot be justified.

The return of ethnic Kazakhs from abroad represents the reestablishment of historical justice and is absolutely correct. It is also necessary in order to increase Kazakhs' share in the whole population of Kazakhstan. Non-Kazakhs are leaving the country not because of discrimination against them but of their own accord (for economic reasons or to return to their historical homeland). The government is unsuccessful or not interested in preventing population flight. Overrepresentation of Kazakhs in the state structures, caused by deliberate government policy or by Kazakh tradition

is justifiable and entirely fair. State policy in conflict prevention is generally correct, and there is little danger that it will lead to interethnic tension. The president has greatly contributed toward maintaining interethnic accord.

### *Russian Nationalists*

Let us proceed to Russian nationalists. This group includes Victor Mikhailov, chairman of the Republic Slavic Movement Lad (Harmony); Iurii Bunakov, leader of Russkaia Obshchina (Russian Community); and Boris Tsybin, chairman of Russkii Soiuz (Russian Union).

We can summarize their opinions as follows: The government aims to build a monoethnic Kazakh state by culturally assimilating or by ousting non-Kazakhs. It is necessary, however, to establish a state for all nationalities without any privileges or discrimination on the basis of ethnic background. There is little chance for civic nation-building because of the absence of a common idea capable of consolidating society; lack of democratic institutions; the claim by ethnic Kazakhs of special privileges; and the sense among non-Kazakhs of discrimination and lack of full-fledged citizenship. For a monoethnic Kazakh state to be established, it would be caused by a decrease of non-Kazakh population. Yet it is impossible to assimilate completely or drive out nontitular ethnic groups. In addition, the Kazakh language has not been established to the degree at which it could prevail in society.

Russian should become a state language. State symbols should reflect Kazakhstan's multiethnic population, yet in reality they reflect only the history of Kazakhs. Frequent rewriting of history and renaming of cities and streets will alienate non-Kazakhs.

The return of Kazakhs from abroad is politically motivated and does not represent genuine assistance to them. It is also premature since Kazakhstan does not have necessary resources for their housing and employment. The population flight of non-Kazakhs is driven by economic as well as political reasons: non-Kazakhs feel that they are discriminated against, and the government deliberately provokes or does not take any measures to stop their departure.

The state conducts a policy of increasing the share of Kazakhs in the government sector, which is unfair with regard to other nationalities. Conflict-prevention measures are not very effective. To maintain interethnic accord, constitutional and legislative reforms are necessary; new government institutions to regulate interethnic relations should be formed; territorial autonomy ought to be created; and a quota system should be introduced for ethnic groups in state organs. The current nationalities policy may lead to interethnic tension.



*Kazakh Intellectuals*

This group consists of eighteen people: Berik Abdygaliev, Zhulduzbek Abylkhozhin, Ravil' Aitkaliev, Gaziz Aldamzharov, Murat Auezov, Madel Ismailov, Rustem Kadyrzhanov, Erzhan Karabekov, Klara Khafizova, Dos Kushim, Seidakhmet Kuttykadam, Marat Mazhitov, Zhanbolat Murzalin, Azat Peruashev, Zhanibek Suleev, and Sabit Zhusupov (for profiles, see the attached list). We failed to ask two persons in Astana whether they would mind including their names on the questionnaire. For convenience, they are designated below as Anonymous No. 1 and No. 2. Within this group of Kazakh intellectuals, a variety of opinions are to be found: some individuals expressed views that were quite similar to those of the Kazakh nationalists, while others held opinions resembling those of Russian intellectuals. Because of their views on various issues, it is difficult to divide this group into pro-Kazakh nationalist or pro-Russian subgroups.

A majority of Kazakh intellectuals support the idea that a state should be established as a common home for all ethnic groups in Kazakhstan, yet some insist that certain privileges should be accorded the titular ethnic group. As to current policy, a variety of answers were expressed: a state is being established without any privileges or discrimination on the basis of ethnic background; certain privileges are provided to Kazakhs; and there is no clear policy with respect to nation-building. Some respondents in this group stated that while no privileges should be given to any particular ethnic group, in reality Kazakhs are favored. A majority expressed optimism about the possibility of civic nation-building in Kazakhstan, and all eighteen were of the opinion that building a monoethnic Kazakh state was impossible. According to half of the respondents, the state does not work on anything with respect to the nationalities question; according to a third, it regulates personnel questions in state structures.

As for the state language, the most popular opinion is to give Russian an official status while maintaining Kazakh as the only state language. In the view of some respondents, however, Russian also should become a state language. According to most respondents, cultural and language policies are mere slogans, or they do not contribute to the real development of the Kazakh language. A majority expressed the belief that state symbols should reflect the history and traditions of Kazakhs, but according to a few respondents, the symbols should be abstract or reflect the multiethnic composition of the population. As for the renaming of streets and cities, the prevailing sentiment is positive.

Two-thirds of respondents in this group think that the return of ethnic Kazakhs from abroad represents the reestablishment of historical justice

and is, therefore, absolutely justified. At the same time, more than a half believe that it is conditioned by political goals and does not represent genuine assistance to repatriates. Some also point out such problems as the difficult adaptation of repatriates and lack of financial resources for their housing and employment.

According to an absolute majority, economic difficulties are a primary reason for emigration; a third indicate emigrants' desire to go back to their historical homeland. A few blamed discrimination against non-Kazakhs. As for migration policy, the two main explanations are: the state would like to halt the population flight but is incapable of doing so, and the state is not in favor of the outflow of the population but conducts a policy that facilitates it. A few expressed the belief that the state had no desire to stop it, or deliberately conducted a policy to promote emigration.

Almost everyone acknowledged the predominance of Kazakhs in state structures. Yet various opinions are to be found as to the reasons for it and whether it can be justified. Responses include the following: it can be justified and is driven by Kazakh traditions or by a deliberate state; it is caused by a deliberate policy and is unfair; it is not correct but the government is not to blame for it. As for a policy for conflict prevention, one-half of respondents gave an evaluation of positive or satisfactory; the other half offered a negative estimation or expressed the opinion that nothing was done for this purpose. Half called for constitutional and legislative reforms, while a few were of the belief that introduction of new government institutions or of quotas in state organs would be useful for maintaining interethnic accord. Half the respondents expressed serious concern that a Kazakhs' dominant position in state structures might lead to ethnic tension.

### *Russian Intellectuals*

Eleven people are included in this category: Vladimir Dunaev, Valentina Kurganskaia, Gennadii Malinin, Aleksei Pugaev, Irina Savostina, Aleksandr Skryl', Andrei Sviridov, Petr Svoik, Valer'ian Zemlianov, and Evgenii Zhovtis. One preferred to remain anonymous (he is referred to below as Anonymous No. 3). No substantial difference of opinion was found between Russian intellectuals and nationalists. In particular, Zemlianov (a member of the parliament) and Sviridov (a free-lance journalist) expressed views that were very similar to those of the nationalists.

The views of this group can be summarized as follows. On nation-building, their views break down into two groups: those who think that policy is not fair to all nationalities (a state is being established with certain privileges for Kazakhs, a monoethnic Kazakh state is being established

with subsequent cultural assimilation or even the ousting of other nationalities), and those who do not perceive any clear policy. No respondent expressed the belief that a state was being established without any privileges or discrimination on the basis of ethnic background. According to an absolute majority, Kazakhstan ought to establish a state as a common home for all ethnic groups. As to the possibility of civic nation-building, there were almost equal numbers of positive and negative answers. As regards the possibility of building a monoethnic Kazakh state, the response was primarily negative, yet some expressed the fear in such a possibility.

This group's respondents maintained that the state works on, first of all, regulating personnel questions in government structures. According to a majority, Russian should become a second state language, but a fraction of respondents would be happy if it had official status. In the opinion of many, government cultural policy and its support for the Kazakh language are of a declarative character; some, however, are of the belief that it really contributes to the development of Kazakh.

All respondents agreed that history was being rewritten, and a majority saw the renaming of streets and cities as a negative phenomenon. As for Kazakh repatriates, according to many, their return is conditioned by political goals, and it is premature, yet a portion of respondents considered it to be the reestablishment of historical justice. Economic problems were the most frequently mentioned reason for population flight. Many also blamed discrimination against non-Kazakhs. In the view of Russian intellectuals, the state conducts a policy that facilitates the population flight though it is not in favor of the departure of Russians, or the government has no desire to halt their departure. According to a few respondents, the government deliberately conducts a policy facilitating population flight.

All respondents in this group expressed the view that Kazakhs were increasingly monopolizing state structures and that this was caused by a deliberate state policy and was unfair to non-Kazakhs. As for conflict prevention, the state's actions are limited to slogans, or even aggravate the situation. Constitutional and legislative reforms are necessary, and quotas for each nationality should be introduced in state structures. A few respondents expressed the desire for territorial autonomy. Many warned that the nationalities policy conducted by the state could lead to ethnic tension: personnel policy in government structures, language policy, renaming of streets and cities, changes in the system of education were cited as factors that could cause such conflicts.

*Intellectuals of Ethnic Minorities*

There were nine respondents in this group: Aleksandr Dederer, Amanchi Gunashev, Bakhtiiar Kadyrbekov, German Kim, Georgii Ksandopulo, Nadir Nadirov, Mussib Navruzov, and Leonid Pitaenko. One person preferred to remain anonymous (Anonymous No. 4). Each of them represented a different ethnic background: Azerbaijan, Belarus, Chechen, German, Greek, Korean, Kurd, Tatar, and Uzbek. Many of them lead organizations representing their ethnic groups.

The opinions expressed by intellectuals of ethnic minorities can be summarized as follows. With respect to nation-building, many expressed the opinion that a state was being established with certain privileges for Kazakhs, or a monoethnic Kazakh state was being established with subsequent cultural assimilation of other nationalities. A majority answered that a state should be established as a common home for all ethnic groups without any privileges or discrimination, yet a few expressed support for building a state with certain privileges for the Kazakh people. The view regarding the possibility of civic nation-building was largely optimistic. As for the possibility of building a monoethnic Kazakh state, there were a fairly equal number of positive and negative answers.

Respondents in this group were of the opinion that the state was working on regulating the language problem and personnel questions, and raising the ethnic consciousness of Kazakhs. Russian should become a state language, or it should be accorded official status. Many expressed the belief that the Kazakh language was being actively developed thanks to state support. As to state symbols, opinion was divided: some said that they should reflect the history and traditions of Kazakhs, while others said that they should not. Both positive and negative answers were given for the renaming of cities and streets. Most respondents were of the opinion that history was being reviewed very often or to a certain extent.

Intellectuals among ethnic minorities expressed the view that the return of ethnic Kazakhs from abroad was conditioned by political goals and did not represent genuine assistance to them, or that it was premature since there were insufficient resources for their housing and employment. Yet some respondents indicated that it represented the reestablishment of historical justice. Among the reasons for the population flight, economic difficulties were frequently cited, while some explained it as being motivated by the desire to return to the historical homeland as well as by discrimination against non-Kazakhs. More than a half of the respondents indicated that the state would like to halt population flight but was incapable of doing so; some also expressed the following views: that the state,

while not in favor of it, conducted a policy that facilitates it, and that the state had no desire to halt it or deliberately conducted a policy facilitating it.

According to almost all respondents, Kazakhs have a dominant position in the state structures, and this dominance is unfair. They blamed both a deliberate state policy and traditions among Kazakhs. A rather optimistic view prevailed as to the government's role in conflict prevention, with respondents naming the president as a main contributor to the maintenance of interethnic accord. As for the measures necessary for keeping peace among ethnic groups, constitutional and legislative reforms were most frequently mentioned, followed by quotas in organs of government for various nationalities, and territorial autonomy. Some respondents found difficult to answer the question of whether the state's nationalities policy led to interethnic tension; at the same time, there was a roughly equal number of both positive and negative answers. Among those who express the belief that the nationalities policy would harm interethnic relations, personnel policy was mentioned as a factor that could facilitate such tension.

## Conclusion

We should not draw any general conclusion on nation-building in Kazakhstan from a survey of a small number of people. But some observations can be made about how people think about the nationalities policy by comparing each group's opinions.

### *Differences among and within the Groups*

As expected, the opinions expressed by Kazakh nationalists and Russian nationalists contradict each other on almost all issues. This is clearly shown in the analysis above. In addition, Russian nationalists tend to estimate the state's support for Kazakhs, their language, and their culture to a greater extent than Kazakh nationalists do. For example, in question 1, Russian nationalists expressed concern about the establishment of a monoethnic Kazakh state, while their Kazakh counterparts said that they believed that the state merely gave some privileges to Kazakhs. Similarly, if Kazakh nationalists regarded the state's support for the Kazakh language and culture as insufficient, Russian nationalists saw the state as actively working on these issues, thus putting Russians at a disadvantage.

As for the possibility of building a civic nation, both Kazakh and Russian nationalists expressed agreement that this was impossible. They cited different reasons for their agreement. Both groups agreed that lack of a common idea and democratic institutions were obstructions to civic

nation-building. Kazakh nationalists also blamed Russia's intervention, a separatist mood, indifference to the country's future, and contempt toward the Kazakh culture by non-Kazakhs. Russian nationalists, for their part, expressed the belief that Kazakhs' claim for privileges and discrimination against non-Kazakhs were factors that made civic nation-building difficult.

There are other cases where respondents answered similarly but with quite different implications. Some non-Kazakhs agreed with Kazakh nationalists that a monoethnic Kazakh state might be established in Kazakhstan, mainly by a steady decrease in the non-Kazakh share of the population. But if Kazakh nationalists welcomed such a tendency, others were obviously worried about it.

The opinions of Kazakh intellectuals were diverse: some expressed views resembling those of the Kazakh nationalists, while others often agreed with the Russian intellectuals. The difference between the Kazakh nationalists and some Kazakh intellectuals whose opinions are close to the nationalists is that the latter are more optimistic about the possibility of civic nation-building and deny the possibility of establishing a monoethnic Kazakh state. The diversity of views among Kazakh intellectuals may be partly explained by the larger number of respondents in this group. It is often said that many representatives of the Kazakh cultural elite are linguistically Russified and thus share a similar mentality with the Russians. As far as our survey is concerned, however, those Kazakhs who often agreed with the Russian intellectuals on the nationalities question were not necessarily Russified Kazakhs.

Differences in opinion among Kazakhs are also related to political orientation—between those who actively support the president and his regime and those who are in the opposition. Naturally, the first group supports the government policy, and though it is not necessarily satisfied with the results, it believes appropriate goals have been established. The opposition, on the contrary, believes that what the state works on in the sphere of the nationalities question is of a declarative character or serves to aggravate ethnic relations; this group criticizes the regime for playing the ethnic card in order to legitimate its power. It should be noted, however, that not everyone who expresses critical views on the state nationalities policy supports the opposition.

In this regard, it should be noted that Kazakhstan's nation-building is a policy directed from above that does not involve mobilization of the masses. Political parties and movements, including those based on nationality, do not play an important role in Kazakhstan's politics. Nor do they enjoy a strong support among citizens. At any rate, the parliament enjoys

limited popularity. The multiparty system is a mere formality, with a majority of parliamentary seats held by members of pro-presidential parties and "nonpartisans" who often support the president.

If we compare opinions of the Russian nationalists and those of the Russian intellectuals, there are no fundamental differences regarding nationalities policy. Yet one can detect certain differences. Russian intellectuals often express the opinion that there is no clear nationalities policy (or they believe it to be of a declarative character), while nationalists insist that the state actively supports the Kazakh language and culture. Russian intellectuals show a certain understanding for Kazakhs' cultural and other needs. As compare to intellectuals, Russian nationalists express more concern regarding discrimination against Russians.

Intellectuals among ethnic minorities and Russian intellectuals share similar views. But minorities show more understanding for Kazakhs as regard to state symbols and the renaming of streets and cities; they are also more optimistic about interethnic accord than Russian intellectuals. Yet, like Russian nationalists, they tend to see the state's support for the Kazakh language and culture more genuine than others do. This may be explained by their minority status, which makes them responsive to language and cultural issues, or by their social status as leaders of an ethnic cultural center, which makes them concerned about their own language and culture.

#### *Possible Area of Compromise*

It is noteworthy that there are issues upon which all groups agree. Almost all respondents, irrespective of ethnic or other background, believe that Kazakhs have a dominant position in the state structures. And many of them consider that it is the result of a deliberate policy. Although they disagree on whether it can be justified, the survey shows an interesting agreement on this issue and the reason for it.

Quite a few respondents, regardless of their background, name the president as a main contributor to the maintenance of interethnic accord. This is more obvious among the Kazakh nationalists and the intellectuals of ethnic minorities.

Meanwhile, there are a variety of opinions within each group as regards state symbols. To the question of whether they know the symbols of sovereign Kazakhstan or not (see question 10 of the attached questionnaire), quite a few respondents answer that they do not know the national anthem very well. As for the national emblem and flag, they are better known, but their origins are often not familiar to respondents, which perhaps explain very different answers to question 11.

Respondents, regardless of which group they belong to, also disagree as to language processes. This may be explained by the difficulty to create objective criteria to measure such processes, and also by the fact that one's estimation is dependent on his environment (for example, where and with whom he works) and one's expectation about the languages. An enthusiastic activist for the development of the Kazakh language may think that Russian still prevails and Kazakh should develop much faster, while a person who does not speak Kazakh may see the same situation that Kazakh is being employed in a broader sphere to the detriment of Russian.

Kazakhs and non-Kazakhs are not necessarily against each other on all questions. Certain compromise may be achieved as to state symbols, the return of Kazakhs from abroad, and support for the Kazakh language and culture. Many non-Kazakh elites would agree to give support for the Kazakh language on condition that the command of the Kazakh language should not be used to justify discrimination in employment, and Kazakh develops not at the expense of Russian. Meanwhile, Kazakhs are often against Russian's becoming a second state language not because they wish to exclude the Russian language from Kazakhstan, but because they are afraid that by doing so the development of the Kazakh language, which had been disregarded in Soviet times, might be slowed down. One possibility is to keep Kazakh the only state language while giving Russian an official status.

It seems that the current regime, however, does not genuinely work in the spheres where compromise would be achieved. Rather, monopolization of the state structures by Kazakhs, with which non-Kazakhs hardly agree, is clearly progressing. True or not, many believe that it is a deliberate state policy. If this tendency continues and if no concrete measures will not taken, it may lead to ethnic tension in the future.

Notwithstanding the above-mentioned problems, it is noteworthy that the respondents, including nationalists, do not attack a particular ethnic group. As for non-Kazakhs, they draw a line between Kazakhs and Kazakh politicians/bureaucrats who they believe conduct a discriminatory policy against them. Although we cannot tell whether such an attitude is shared by ordinary people, it is important that elites do not stir the people to attacking one other along ethnic lines. It is also interesting that several respondents agree that the people of Kazakhstan are primarily deserving of credit for maintaining interethnic accord, despite the fact that "the people of Kazakhstan" was not an option given in the questionnaire.



**List of interviewees** (in alphabetical order)

- Abdygaliev, Berik: First Deputy-Director, the Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies
- Abylkhozhin, Zhulduzbek: Professor, Institute of History and Ethnology
- Aimbetov, Aldan: Editor in Chief, *Kazakhskaia pravda*
- Aitkaliev, Ravil': Research Fellow, Kazakhstan Institute of Socio-Economic Information and Forecast
- Akatai, Sabetkazy: Chairman, National Party Alash
- Aldamzharov, Gaziz: Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Republican People's Party of Kazakhstan
- Auezov, Murat: Executive Director, Soros Foundation-Kazakhstan
- Bunakov, Yurii: Head, Russkaia obshchina of the Republic of Kazakhstan
- Dederer, Aleksandr: Chairman, Republican Association of Germans of the Republic of Kazakhstan
- Dunaev, Vladimir: Senior Lecturer, Institute of Philosophy and Political Science
- Gunashev, Amanchi: Plenipotentiary, Republic of Ichkeriia [Chechnya] in Kazakhstan
- Ismailov, Madel: Chairman, Labor Movement of Kazakhstan
- Kadyrbekov, Bakhtiiar: President, Dostlik Association of Civic Organizations of Uzbeks of the Republic of Kazakhstan
- Kadyrzhanov, Rustem: Head of the Department of Political Science and Ethnology, Institute of Philosophy and Political Science
- Kaldarkhan, Kamdar: Head of Political Department, *Turkestan*
- Karabekov, Erzhan: Correspondent, Radio Liberty
- Khafizova, Klara: Director of Center for Strategic and International Studies, Professor of International Relations Department, University Kainar
- Kim, German: Vice-President, the Association of Koreans of Kazakhstan, Head of the Department of Korean Studies, Kazakh National State University
- Kozhakhmet, Khasen: Chairman, Civil Movement Azat
- Ksandopulo, Georgii: Chairman, Association of Greek Culture Centers of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan
- Kurganskaia, Valentina: Director, Center for Humanities Studies
- Kushim, Dos: Leader, Detar Center
- Kutykadam, Seidakhmet: Chairman, Republican Social Movement Orleu
- Malinin, Gennadii: Head of Ethno-Sociology Section, Institute of Philosophy and Political Science

- Mazhitov, Marat: Deputy Chief Editor, *Akikant* political journal
- Mikhailov, Viktor: Chairman, Republican Slavic Movement Lad
- Murzalin, Zhanbolat: Director of the Center for Social Studies, Institute for the Development of Kazakhstan
- Nadirov, Nadir: President, Iakbun Civic Union of Associations of Kurds
- Navruzov, Mussib: Chairman, Azerbaijan Culture Center Turan
- Peruashev, Azat: First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Civic Party
- Pitaenko, Leonid: Chairman, Byelorussian Culture Center
- Pugaev, Aleksei: Editor, *Human Rights in Kazakhstan and the World* [a bulletin of Kazakhstan International Bureau for Human Rights and Rule of Law]
- Savostina, Irina: Chairwoman, Pokolenie Association of Public Movements for Social and Legal Protection of Pensioners of the Republic of Kazakhstan
- Skryl', Aleksandr: Editor, *Human Rights in Kazakhstan and the World*
- Suleev, Dzhanibek: Deputy Editor, Internet Newspaper *Navigator*
- Sviridov, Andrei: Freelance researcher of Kazakhstan's mass media
- Svoik, Petr: Deputy Chairman, Democratic Party Azamat
- Tsybin, Boris: Chairman, Russkii soiuz of the Republic of Kazakhstan
- Zemlianov, Valer'ian: Deputy of Mazhilis [Lower Chamber of Parliament] of the Republic of Kazakhstan
- Zhovtis, Evgenii: President, Kazakhstan International Bureau for Human Rights and Rule of Law
- Zhusupov, Sabit: President, Kazakhstan Institute of Socio-Economic Information and Forecast

Note: Four wished to remain anonymous. The interviewees' names are Latinized from Cyrillic script according to the U.S. Library of Congress transliteration system. For non-Russian names, the Russian spelling (provided by interviewees themselves or shown in their publications) was used, although they do not fully express original pronunciation. The profiles given here are at the time of the interview. Interviewees' middle names and academic titles are not listed above because we do not have full information for all respondents. We apologize to those who gave us academic titles and wished that they be mentioned.

**Sample of the questionnaire** (translated from Russian)

1. What kind of policy, in your opinion, is conducted in Kazakhstan with respect to interethnic relations in the state-building process?

- A state is being established as a common home for all ethnic groups without any privileges or discrimination on the basis of ethnic background. At the same time, however, each ethnic group has the chance to preserve its own ethnic characteristics and consciousness.
  - A multiethnic state is being established taking into consideration such factors as culture, customs, traditions, and the mentality of Kazakhs, with certain privileges for the Kazakh people.
  - A monoethnic Kazakh state is being established with subsequent cultural assimilation of other nationalities.
  - A monoethnic Kazakh state is being established that presupposes the subsequent ousting of other nationalities.
  - All nationalities are being merged into the new, unified nation that is being formed.
  - I do not see clear policy with respect to nation-state building.
  - Other:
- 

2. What kind of state policy, in your opinion, is necessary for Kazakhstan with respect to interethnic relations in the state-building process?

- To establish a state as a common home for all ethnic groups, without any privileges or discrimination on the basis of ethnic background. At the same time, each ethnic group should have the chance to preserve its own ethnic characteristics and consciousness.
  - To establish a multiethnic state taking into consideration such factors as culture, custom, traditions, and the mentality of Kazakhs, with certain privileges for the Kazakh people.
  - To establish a monoethnic Kazakh state with subsequent cultural assimilation of other nationalities.
  - To establish a monoethnic Kazakh state that presupposes subsequent ousting of other nationalities.
  - To merge all nationalities into a new, unified nation.
  - Other:
-

3. Do you think that in Kazakhstan it is possible to build a civic nation, the members of which will feel themselves to be citizens of the country regardless of their ethnic background?

- Yes.
- No.
- Difficult to answer.

3 (a). If yes, why? (Please mark all answers with which you agree.)

- Many Kazakhstanis, regardless of nationality, have a common mentality, and they all consider one another compatriots.
  - A majority of Kazakhstanis understands that Kazakhstan is and will be a multiethnic state, and that all should live under equal conditions.
  - People understand that all Kazakhstanis share a common fate.
  - Nationalists (Kazakh, Russian, or other) do not enjoy support of the population in Kazakhstan.
  - Other:
- 

3 (b). If not, why? (Please mark all answers with which you agree.)

- There is no common idea capable of consolidating society regardless of its members' ethnic background.
  - Kazakhstan lacks democratic institutions through which interethnic relations can be regulated.
  - There is no agreement as regards the country's territorial integrity, and there is a separatist mood (for example, some maintain that Kazakhstan's northern regions belong historically to Russia).
  - Russia serves as guarantor of the Russian population in Kazakhstan and thereby has a negative influence on interethnic relations.
  - Many are inclined to emigrate abroad and do not think about the country's future.
  - Some Kazakhs think that their rights should predominate, as they are an indigenous people.
  - Some non-Kazakhs think that they are discriminated against, and, therefore, they do not consider themselves to be full-fledged citizens of Kazakhstan.
  - Some non-Kazakhs do not respect the Kazakh language, culture, and customs, which has a negative influence on interethnic relations.
  - Other:
-

4. Do you think that it is possible to establish a monoethnic Kazakh state in Kazakhstan?

- Yes.
- No.
- Difficult to answer.

4 (a). If yes, why? (Please mark all answers with which you agree.)

- Objective processes ensure a steady decrease in the non-Kazakh share of the population.
  - The composition of the population by nationality will change with the help of the government, to the advantage of Kazakhs.
  - State support of the Kazakh language and its introduction into all spheres of government activities will lead to the domination of the Kazakh people.
  - Other:
- 

4 (b). If not, why? (Please mark all answers with which you agree.)

- Kazakhstan is a multiethnic state, and it is practically impossible to assimilate or oust non-Kazakhs, who comprise half of the entire population.
  - Objective processes, despite the state's efforts, will be conducive to the creation of a multiethnic state.
  - The Kazakh language and culture have not been established to the degree at which it would prevail in society.
  - Other:
- 

5. What, in your opinion, does the state work on within the framework of the realization of the state nationalities question? (Please mark all answers with which you agree.)

- Regulation of the language problem.
  - Raising the ethnic consciousness of Kazakhs.
  - Reviving the ethnic culture of Kazakhs.
  - Regulating migration processes.
  - Regulating personnel questions in government structures.
  - For all practical purposes, the state does not work on anything.
  - Other:
-

6. The constitution defines Kazakh as the state language (Section 1, Article 7); at the same time, it states that "Russian is officially employed on an equal level with Kazakh in state organizations and in organs of local administrative self-rule" (Section 2, Article 7). In this respect, do you believe that

- No other language but Kazakh should be the state language?
  - Russian should become a (second) state language?
  - Russian should not become a state language, but it should acquire official status (as an official language or language of interethnic communication)?
  - Other?
- 

7. What is your view on the dynamics of language processes in Kazakhstan?

- The Kazakh language grows in importance without causing harm to the Russian language.
  - The Kazakh language grows in importance while the Russian language declines.
  - The Russian language continues its dominance, as the significance of Kazakh remains unchanged.
  - The Russian language continues its dominance, and the significance of the Kazakh language is declining.
  - Other:
- 

8. What is your opinion about the development of the Kazakh language and its support by the state?

- The Kazakh language is being actively developed, and it is being employed in a broader sphere thanks to state support.
  - The Kazakh language is, in fact, not being developed, in spite of state support.
  - State support for the Kazakh language is of a declarative character.
  - Other:
- 

9. In the cultural sphere, what kind of policy, in your opinion, is being conducted?

- Conditions are being created for the development of the cultures of all peoples residing in Kazakhstan.
- Conditions are being created only for the development of the culture of

the Kazakh people.

- Efforts are being made to build an all-Kazakhstan multiethnic culture.
- The state is, for all practical purposes, conducting no policy in support of culture.
- Other:
- 

10. Do you know the symbols of sovereign Kazakhstan (anthem, emblem, flag)?

	National anthem	National emblem	National flag
Yes, completely.			
Yes, but insufficiently.			
Somewhat.			
Rather vaguely.			
Don't know.			

11. Do Kazakhstan's symbols (the anthem, emblem, flag, etc.) reflect the Kazakh people's history and traditions?

- Yes, fully.
- Yes, but not sufficiently.
- Somewhat.
- Rather weakly.
- They do not reflect their history and traditions.
- Difficult to answer.

11(a). If, in your opinion, Kazakhstan's symbols do not reflect the history and traditions of the Kazakh people, substantiate your opinion.

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12. Do you believe that state symbols should reflect the history and traditions of the Kazakh people as an indigenous ethnic group?

- Yes, because Kazakhs constitute the state's indigenous ethnic group.
- No, because the symbols should reflect the multinational populations of Kazakhstan.
- No, because symbols in a multinational state ought to be abstract and not reflect the ethnic characteristics of one or another nation.

Other:

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13. What is your opinion of the renaming of cities and streets since independence?

- Positive.
- Negative.
- Indifferent.
- Difficult to answer.

13(a). If your evaluation is positive, then why? (Please mark all answers with which you agree.)

- It is a necessary process for the reestablishment of historical justice.
  - It is a necessary process for elevating the level of national consciousness among Kazakhs.
  - It is a necessary process for inculcating Kazakhstan patriotism among the entire population, regardless of nationality.
  - Other:
- 

13(b). If your evaluation is negative, then why? (Please mark all answers with which you agree.)

- History should not be rewritten.
  - It facilitates alienation among representatives of non-Kazakh nationality.
  - It is a waste of money by bureaucrats in order to pretend that they are working.
  - It is not always justified with respect to the merits of the persons for whom streets are named. (If you are of this opinion, could you please offer concrete examples.)
- 

It does not help to increase the level of ethnic self-consciousness among Kazakhs. (Please explain, if possible.)

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Other:

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14. Are there cases in which history is reviewed and historical values are reevaluated?

- Yes, one frequently encounters such cases.
- Yes, but they do not occur on a mass level.
- They are extremely insignificant.
- There are practically no such cases.
- There are no such cases.

14(a). If yes, how would you explain such cases?

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15. With which of the following opinions regarding Kazakh repatriates (*oral-mans*) do you agree? (Please mark all answers with which you agree.)

- The return of ethnic Kazakhs from abroad represents the reestablishment of historical justice and is absolutely justified.
  - Their return is necessary for increasing the share of Kazakhs in Kazakhstan.
  - Their return is conditioned by political goals and does not represent genuine assistance to oralmans.
  - The return of ethnic Kazakhs is premature, since at the present time there are insufficient resources for their housing and employment in Kazakhstan.
  - The return of ethnic Kazakhs is unfair, because the state should first resolve the problems of its citizens regardless of nationality.
  - The return of ethnic Kazakhs is problematic, because some Kazakhs who come from other countries have a different mentality, and they find it difficult to adapt in Kazakhstan.
  - Other:
- 

16. With which of the following opinions regarding emigration of the population would you agree?

- The population flight is driven mainly by economic problems.
  - The population flight is driven mainly by the desire to return to the historical homeland.
  - The population flight is driven mainly by discrimination against the non-Kazakh population.
  - Other:
-

17. With which of the following opinions regarding the state's migration policy are you in agreement?

- There is a desire to halt population flight, and much is being done to achieve this.
  - The state would like to halt population flight but is incapable of doing this.
  - The state, while not in favor of population flight, conducts a policy that facilitates it.
  - The state has no desire to halt population flight.
  - The state deliberately conducts a policy facilitating population flight.
  - Other:
- 

18. Do you believe that representatives of Kazakh people have a dominant position in the state structures?

- Yes.
- No.
- Difficult to answer.

18(a). If yes, then with which of the following opinions do you agree?

- The preponderance of representatives of Kazakh people in state structures is justified and entirely fair.
  - It is a manifestation of unfairness with regard to representatives of other nationalities.
  - Other:
- 

18(b). If yes, then how would you evaluate the reasons for such a phenomenon? (Please mark all answers with which you agree.)

- It is a deliberate state policy for increasing the share of Kazakhs in state structures.
  - It is a phenomenon independent of state policy, and it may be explained by the strength of traditions among Kazakhs, who are compelled to employ, lobby for, and support their relatives and fellow-countrymen.
  - Non-Kazakhs do not seek to work in government structures.
  - Leaders within state structures prefer to refrain from hiring non-Kazakhs, as they fear that they may soon leave Kazakhstan.
  - Other:
-

19. How would you evaluate the state's conduct in the area of maintaining interethnic accord and preventing interethnic conflict?

- Positively.
- Satisfactorily.
- Negatively.
- I cannot evaluate it, as there is no real work being done to prevent interethnic conflict.

19(a). If positively, then who, in your opinion, is primarily deserving of credit for maintaining interethnic accord and avoiding interethnic conflict in Kazakhstan? (Please mark according to importance, using 1 to indicate the greatest benefit, 2 the next highest benefit, and so forth.)

- The president.
  - The government.
  - The parliament.
  - The Assembly of the Peoples of Kazakhstan.
  - Other.
- 

19(b). If you have a negative opinion of the state's role in maintaining interethnic accord, then why?

- Despite the fact that appropriate goals may be established, they are not fulfilled by bureaucrats.
  - The state's actions are limited to sloganeering and declarations; in reality, little is done.
  - The state's actions aggravate the situation; peace exists despite, rather than because of, the actions of the state.
  - Other:
- 

20. What, in your opinion, does the state need to do in order to provide greater guarantees of interethnic accord? (Please mark all answers with which you agree.)

- There is no need to change anything; everything is fine as it is.
- There are problems, but one shouldn't change anything now; any changes would disturb the existing balance and make the situation worse.
- Constitutional and legislative changes are necessary.
- New state institutions that regulate interethnic relations are necessary.

- Quotas in organs of government should be introduced for representatives of various nationalities.
  - Territorial autonomy ought to be created.
  - Other:
- 

21. Whose interests, in your view, are expressed by the state's nationalities policy? (Please mark all answers with which you agree.)

- The interests of the whole people of Kazakhstan.
  - The interests, first of all, of Kazakhs, but with consideration of the interests of other ethnic groups.
  - The interests of Kazakhs without consideration of the interests of other ethnic groups.
  - The interests of bureaucrats within the state apparatus, regardless of ethnic differences.
  - The interests of Kazakhs, without regard to the interests of other ethnic groups.
  - The interests of the Kazakh majority of the bureaucratic apparatus.
  - The interests of the president and those closest to him.
  - Other:
- 

22. Could the nationalities policy conducted by the state lead to interethnic tension?

- Yes.
- No.
- Difficult to answer.

22(a). If yes, then name the factors that could facilitate such tension. (Please mark all answers with which you agree.)

- Language policy (in particular, accelerating the introduction of the Kazakh language in office communications).
  - Renaming streets and cities.
  - Reviewing and reevaluating history.
  - Changes in the system of education in schools and institutions of higher education.
  - Migration policy.
  - Personnel policy in government structures.
  - Other:
-

Date: \_\_\_\_\_2000/2001

Nationality

- Kazakh
- Russian
- German
- Uzbek
- Tatar
- Uighur
- Belarus
- Korean
- Other (fill in) \_\_\_\_\_

Social position/profession

- Civil servant
- Member of parliament
- Leader of a political party
- Leader of a ethnic-cultural center
- Researcher/analyst
- Representative of the mass media

Notes:

- <sup>1</sup> This article is a summary of my paper "Nationalities Policy in Kazakhstan: Interviewing Political and Cultural Elites," in Nurbulat Masanov et al., *The Nationalities Question in Post-Soviet Kazakhstan* (Middle East Studies Series No. 51, Chiba: Institute of Developing Economies, 2002).
- <sup>2</sup> The Assembly of the Peoples of Kazakhstan was established by presidential decree on March 1, 1995, as a consultative organ under the president "in order to strengthen public stability and interethnic accord." It is chaired by the president himself.
- <sup>3</sup> There are no statistics of average income along ethnic lines. But Kazakhs are not the richest: Kazakhstan's rural area is suffering severe economic difficulties, and the percentage of rural population is rather high among Kazakhs.
- <sup>4</sup> It should be noted that out-migration of Slavs and increasing monopolization of power by Kazakhs already had started in Soviet times. It is, however, after the independence that those processes have become even more conspicuous.

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