

RESEARCH

OPEN ACCESS

Ethnic Policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan in Central Asia in the Context of Cultural Integration and Political Change: Historical and Demographic Aspects

Ganiy Karassayev,[†] Kanat Yensenov,[‡] Bekmurat Naimanbayev,^{§*} Kulpash Ilyassova,^{||} and
Dametken Suleimenova[¥]

Abstract

This study seeks to identify key trends in the transformation of the ethno-demographic structure and the mechanisms of ethno-political regulation in the Republic of Kazakhstan within the broader context of post Soviet modernisation. Drawing upon data from Kazakhstan's population censuses (1989–2025), relevant legislative and regulatory acts, and public statements, the research traces the principal stages in the evolution of state ethnic policy and the processes of interethnic integration.

The findings reveal that between 1989 and 2025, the proportion of the Kazakh population increased more than one and a half times, rising from 39.7% to 70.4%, while the share of the largest European minorities—primarily Russians—declined to a historic low of approximately 15%. This demographic shift was facilitated by state programmes for the repatriation of ethnic Kazakhs, initiatives to stimulate natural population growth, and targeted measures designed to ensure socio economic stability in vulnerable regions.

Particular attention is devoted to the role of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, an institution that has evolved from a platform celebrating cultural diversity into a symbol of national unity centred on the Kazakh language and shared civic values. Language courses for returnees, support for bilingual education, and projects aimed at retaining young professionals have played a crucial role in stabilising human resources and mitigating the effects of brain drain.

The results of this study may serve as a foundation for practical recommendations to further refine ethnic policy and migration management. They also provide a valuable basis for comparative analysis of integration models in multinational states across Central Asia, offering insights into the interplay between demographic transformation, ethnic regulation, and national modernisation.

Keywords: Demographic Advantage; Repatriation of Oralmans; Interethnic Harmony; Language Policy; Migration Processes; National Identity; Kazakhstan

[†] Professor, Department of Source Studies, Historiography and National History, Institute of State History of the Science Committee of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kazakhstan

[‡] Associate Professor, Department of History of Kazakhstan, L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University, Kazakhstan

[§] Professor, Department of History of Kazakhstan and Social Disciplines, South Kazakhstan Pedagogical University, named after U. Zhanibekov, Kazakhstan

*Corresponding Author Email: bekmanbayev.nai@gmail.com

^{||} Associate Professor, Department of Oriental Studies, L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University, Kazakhstan

[¥] Associate Professor, Department of History of Socio-Economic Development of Kazakhstan, Institute of State History of the Science Committee of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kazakhstan

©2026 by Karassayev et al. is licensed under CC BY 4.0. To view a copy of this license, visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>.

Introduction

The relevance of this study is underscored by the challenges confronting the Republic of Kazakhstan, one of the most multi-ethnic states in Central Asia. In the context of political transformation, the consolidation of national identity, and escalating geopolitical risks, the pursuit of sustainable interethnic stability and the preservation of internal harmony remain central priorities of national policy. Kazakhstan's pronounced ethnic diversity renders it a particularly significant subject of scholarly inquiry within the regional framework.

The formation of Kazakhstan's population structure has been shaped by historical processes including the colonial policies of the Russian Empire, large-scale migration flows, and forced deportations (Aliyeva, 2025; Yesmaganbet & Kairbekov, 2025). In contemporary political discourse, the memory of these events—such as the Alash Orda movement—is frequently mobilised to legitimise current ethnic policies, reinforcing narratives of continuity in Kazakh nationhood and affirming the titular group's central role in state-building. This selective historical memory underpins measures promoting the Kazakh language and cultural dominance, necessitating a systematic ethnic policy to regulate interethnic relations and integrate cultural diversity into a unified national identity. While the rhetoric of unity through ethnocultural diversity occupies a prominent place in state discourse, this model remains vulnerable to shifts in the political and social environment, requiring continual institutional adaptation.

The relevance of this issue has intensified with the strengthening role of the titular Kazakh nation and the active promotion of the Kazakh language as a marker of national unity, accompanied by growing demands to safeguard the rights and interests of ethnic minorities. Scholarly interest in Kazakhstan's ethnic policy and nation-building has persisted since independence in 1991 and has deepened in response to demographic and cultural transformations. Research confirms that

Kazakhstan's ethno-political trajectory is marked by internal contradictions, combining elements of an inclusive "Kazakhstani civic nation" with an increasing emphasis on ethnic Kazakh nationalism as the dominant axis of cultural and language policy.

Empirical studies illustrate this duality. Sadvokassova et al. (2025), drawing on national surveys and interviews, demonstrate that despite official commitments to multiculturalism, state policy increasingly prioritises the Kazakh language as the principal symbol of identity and social cohesion. Regionally, this manifests in funding for Kazakh-language education, restoration of traditional place names, and support for cultural initiatives centred on the titular nation (Eschment & De Cordier, 2021). Similarly, Boman & Mussakhanova (2024) identify a "triple trajectory" of nation-building: continuation of post-Soviet multicultural discourse, intensification of cultural "Kazakhisation," and selective adoption of Western educational approaches. Bekzhanova & Makoelle (2023) further highlight the gradual "Kazakhisation" of education and cultural policy, noting its role in preventing large-scale interethnic conflict, though localised tensions such as the 2020 Korday events reveal the fragility of harmony.

English-language scholarship has critiqued Kazakhstan's model as "managed multiculturalism" (Dave, 2007; Schatz, 2004), emphasising state oversight of minority assimilation and limited space for autonomous cultural expression. Institutional mechanisms, particularly the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, have been examined as symbolic instruments of harmony with limited political influence (Abdraimov et al., 2023). Divergences in identity perceptions between titular and minority groups, especially among younger generations, further underscore incomplete integration (Lazëri, 2024; Schiek, 2022).

Recent demographic shifts—Kazakhs now comprising over 71% of the population, with minorities reduced to 29% (Bureau of National Statistics, 2025a), and symbolic policies such as

the transition to the Latin script and restoration of historical place names signal a new wave of nationalisation. These developments reshape the balance between cultural unification and multiculturalism, creating empirical realities that demand deeper analysis.

Accordingly, this study aims to provide a comprehensive theoretical and empirical examination of Kazakhstan's state policy on interethnic harmony and cultural identity, situating demographic transformations within the broader political and foreign policy context. The research objectives are threefold:

- To trace the evolution of theoretical approaches to ethnopolitics, from the multiculturalism model of the 1990s to the civic nation concept of the 2000s, and further to the integrative ethno-national paradigm of 2010–2020.
- To analyse the institutional mechanisms underpinning these models, including the activities of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, language policy, and demographic regulation.
- To assess the impact of political and cultural transformations on interethnic relations and processes of cultural integration

Methodology

The study was conducted in the Republic of Kazakhstan between February and May 2025 and employed a multi-level analytical approach. Its empirical foundation comprised official demographic statistics, regulatory and legal acts, meeting minutes, public statements by national leadership, and analytical reports from international research centres. Core demographic data were drawn from the national censuses of 1989, 1999, 2009, 2021, and 2025, published and verified by the Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan Committee on Statistics (2025) and the National Bureau of Statistics. These census years, selected in accordance with the official schedule, reflect the dynamics of demographic and ethno-social transformation across the late Soviet and post-Soviet periods.

The statistical corpus enabled the construction of dynamic series illustrating the proportion of Kazakhs, Russians, and other ethnic groups (including Uzbeks, Ukrainians, Uyghurs, Tatars, and Germans). This facilitated the identification of long-term demographic trends, emigration and repatriation patterns, and structural shifts in the ethnic composition of society. To enrich contextual analysis, aggregated materials from *Minority Rights Group* (2025), the *Eurasian Research Institute* (Makhanov, 2025b), *Bizmedia.kz* (Results of the 2009..., 2010), and the *Census of Population of the Republic of Kazakhstan in 1999* (E-history.kz., 2025) were incorporated.

Institutional mechanisms underpinning the formation and transformation of state ethnic policy were reconstructed through systematic processing of official documents selected for their normative and political significance. The analysis focused on materials originating from central government bodies, particularly presidential messages, strategies, concepts, and state programmes. Key sources included President N.A. Nazarbayev's reports to the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan (1995, 1996, 1997, 1999, 2001, 2006, 2010) and Decree No. 856 (2002) "On the Strategy of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan and the Regulation on the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan."

The dataset was examined using the historical-documentary method to identify stages and rhetorical emphases, complemented by content analysis to systematise public speeches. Tables and graphs were prepared to visualise demographic dynamics, including a table charting the ethnic composition of Kazakhstan's population (1989–2025) and a graph illustrating trends in the share of key ethnic groups.

A double verification procedure was applied to ensure internal consistency across all materials. The final corpus provided a comprehensive empirical basis for analytical conclusions regarding the nature and specificity of Kazakhstan's ethnic policy in the context of cultural integration and socio-political transformation. This methodological framework

thus enabled the tracing of causal links between demographic change, migration processes, institutional innovation, and the mechanisms governing Kazakhstan's multi-ethnic society.

Results

Dynamics of the Ethnic Structure of Kazakhstan's Population

An examination of population data derived from the official censuses of the Republic of Kazakhstan (1989, 1999, 2009, 2021, and 2025), supplemented by analytical materials from Minority Rights Group (2025), the Eurasian Research Institute (Makhanov, 2025b), the Census of Population of the Republic of Kazakhstan in 1999 (E-history.kz., 2025), and Bizmedia.kz (Results of the 2009..., 2010) reveal a discernible and consistent transformation in the ethnic composition of the population across the post-Soviet period (1991–2025). Beyond mere demographic shifts, these changes have engendered profound socio-cultural consequences, particularly in the context of state policies directed towards fostering national unity. The evolving demographic balance has emerged as a pivotal determinant in shaping an ethno-political model that simultaneously consolidates the identity of the titular nation whilst endeavouring to preserve a measure of interethnic concord.

Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, Kazakhstan inherited a complex ethnic mosaic, the product of late-Soviet demographic engineering (1980–1990). The census of 1989, conducted on the eve of independence, recorded Kazakhs at 39.7% of the population, while Russians constituted 37.8%, thereby reflecting an almost symmetrical distribution between the two largest groups and underscoring the multinational character of the state (Davletova et al., 2025). Other ethnic communities—Uzbeks, Uyghurs, Ukrainians, Tatars, Germans, Koreans, among others—collectively accounted for 22.5%, further complicating the cultural landscape of the nascent republic. This demographic configuration was the cumulative outcome of forced migrations, industrialisation drives, resettlement of specialists during successive

five-year plans, and mass deportations under Stalinist policies. It entrenched a linguistic and cultural milieu wherein Russian functioned as the principal interethnic lingua franca.

In the wake of independence, Kazakhstan's demographic trajectory underwent a deliberate reorientation, profoundly influencing both ethnic balance and state policy. On one hand, the government instituted programmes to repatriate ethnic Kazakhs (Oralmans) from neighbouring and distant countries—China, Mongolia, Iran, Afghanistan, and former Soviet republics—under frameworks such as Law No. 204 “On Population Migration” (Republic of Kazakhstan, 1997), the Concept of Migration Policy (2000–2015), and Resolution No. 602 “On Approval of the Concept of Migration Policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2017–2021” (Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2017), (Zhang & Tsakhirmaa, 2022). These initiatives facilitated expedited citizenship, financial assistance, housing subsidies, language instruction, and integration measures. The repatriation of Oralmans was not merely demographic policy but a cultural strategy, replenishing human capital lost to migration and reinforcing Kazakh presence in border and northern regions historically dominated by other ethnic groups (Tsyrfay et al., 2024; Doszhan, 2023).

Concurrently, waves of emigration among non-titular groups, Russians, Germans, Ukrainians, Jews—were propelled by economic dislocation, industrial restructuring, and cultural realignment. Ethnic Germans availed themselves of Germany's *Spätaussiedler* programme, while Russians utilised the Voluntary Resettlement Programme (2006) of the Russian Federation (Minority Rights Group, 2025). By the 1999 census, Kazakhs had risen to 53.5%, a striking increase from 1989, attributable to both repatriation and high rural fertility rates (Results of the 2009..., 2010; Census of Population..., 2025). Conversely, Russians and Germans declined markedly in northern and eastern regions, with local *maslikhats* lamenting shortages of industrial and educational specialists.

Between 2000 and 2020, the demographic ascendancy of Kazakhs consolidated further, driven by stable birth rates, sustained repatriation, and cultural “Kazakhisation” of education. The 2009 census recorded Kazakhs at 63.1%, Russians at 23.7%, and other groups at approximately 6% (Results of the 2009..., 2010). This reflected not only demographic momentum but also state-led initiatives to expand Kazakh-language schooling, establish cultural centres, and embed the titular language in higher education (Kucherbayeva & Smagulova, 2023). Assimilation processes accelerated, reshaping the national demographic structure and diminishing the influence of minority communities.

The most recent censuses (2021–2025) mark the culmination of this trajectory: Kazakhs constituted 70.4% in 2021 and 71.3% in 2025, a threshold often perceived as indicative of a predominantly mono-ethnic polity (Makhanov, 2025b; Bureau of National Statistics, 2025b). Russians declined to 15.5% in 2021 and 14.6% in 2025, the lowest in Kazakhstan’s modern history, while other minorities continued to diminish through assimilation and urban migration. Thus, Kazakhstan’s demographic evolution has crystallised into a model in which the titular nation commands overwhelming numerical dominance, while the state simultaneously cultivates a narrative of interethnic harmony.

Table 1: Dynamics of the Ethnic Structure of the Population of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 1989-2025

Year	Kazakhs (%)	Russians (%)	Others (%)
1989	39.7	37.8	22.5
1999	53.5	29.9	16.6
2009	63.1	23.7	6
2021	70.4	15.5	14.1
2025	71.3	14.6	14.1

Source: Compiled by the Authors based on Results of the 2009 National Population Census (Bizmedia.kz, 2010); Davletova et al. (2025); Census of Population of the Republic of Kazakhstan in 1999 (E-history.kz., 2025); Makhanov (2025a, 2025b); Bureau of National Statistics (2025b).

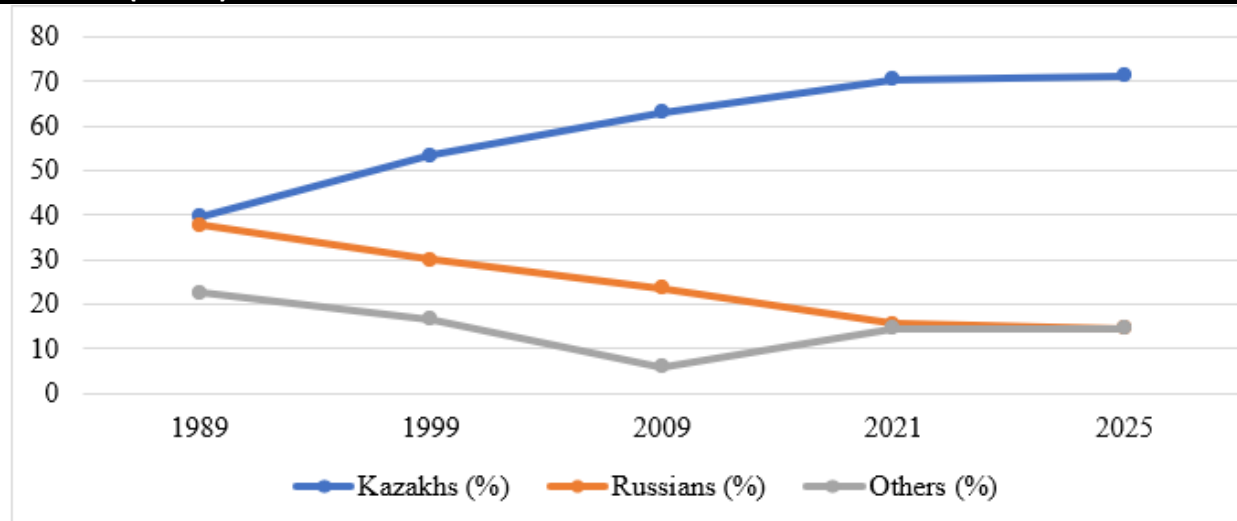


Figure 1. Trends in changes in the ethnic composition of Kazakhstan’s population based on the results of censuses conducted between 1989 and 2025

Source: Compiled by the Authors based on Results of the 2009 National Population Census (Bizmedia.kz, 2010); Davletova et al. (2025); Census of Population of the Republic of Kazakhstan in 1999 (E-history.kz., 2025); Makhanov (2025a, 2025b); Bureau of National Statistics (2025b).

Figure 1 illustrates changes in the ratio between groups over time. The curve for the titular nation shows steady growth, confirming the effectiveness of demographic revival and cultural integration programmes, while the curves for the largest minority and other groups indicate a gradual decline, reflecting both internal demographic factors and international migration.

The findings demonstrate that, over nearly four decades (1989–2025), Kazakhstan has undergone a profound metamorphosis: from a multinational republic characterised by near parity between the titular nation and minority groups to a more homogeneous polity in which the Kazakh ethnic community predominates. This demographic transformation has engendered a novel framework for state ethnic policy, compelling the authorities to recalibrate the delicate equilibrium between ethnocultural pluralism and consolidation around a shared linguistic and cultural foundation.

The expansion of the titular nation's demographic share, accompanied by the contraction of smaller communities, constitutes a substantive empirical marker of the efficacy of repatriation initiatives, language policies, and the overarching strategy of “unity in diversity”, which continues to serve as the rhetorical cornerstone of Kazakhstan's national idea (Sharimova, 2024). In this regard, the statistically verified dynamics of ethnic composition not only mirror natural demographic processes but also provide a critical baseline for more nuanced inquiry into the mechanisms through which ethnic policy is articulated and implemented.

Institutional Mechanisms and their Role in Shaping Interethnic Harmony

The attainment of independence by the Republic of Kazakhstan confronted the state with a complex and multidimensional challenge: the imperative of securing interethnic harmony and unity within a multinational society shaped by long historical processes of migration, deportation, and colonisation. A pivotal institutional response was the establishment of

the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan in 1995—an unprecedented innovation in the post-Soviet space. Conceived as a consultative and advisory body under the aegis of the President, the Assembly brought together representatives of more than one hundred ethnic communities, whether residing in compact settlements or dispersed across the country. Initiated by President Nursultan Nazarbayev, the Assembly was envisaged as a cornerstone in constructing national identity, harmonising the principles of cultural pluralism with the symbolic affirmation of the titular nation as the foundation of statehood (Insebayeva & Insebayeva, 2022; Umbetbayeva et al., 2024). As Nazarbayev repeatedly underscored in his public addresses, interethnic harmony in a multi-ethnic polity does not arise spontaneously; rather, it is the product of deliberate, coherent state policy that requires systematic planning, sustained vigilance, and strategic oversight (Zhussupova, 2021).

Since its inception, the Assembly has embodied the state's commitment to guaranteeing all ethnic communities the right to preserve and cultivate their cultural and linguistic identities. The strategy pursued has emphasised integration rather than coercive assimilation: minorities are encouraged to participate fully in the civic and linguistic life of the nation whilst retaining essential elements of their cultural distinctiveness. The idea was first articulated at the inaugural Forum of the Peoples of Kazakhstan in 1992 and formally institutionalised by presidential decree in March 1995 (Assembly of People of Kazakhstan, 2025a; 2025b). At its first session, the Assembly defined its priorities as fostering common ground among diverse communities and strengthening public trust through constructive dialogue between state authorities and ethno-cultural associations. For the empirical dimension of this study, a corpus of official documents was systematically examined, including minutes of Assembly sessions and key public statements by the national leadership spanning the period 1995–2025 (see Table 2).

Table 2. Chronology of Key Official Statements and Regulatory Acts Reflecting the Evolution of the Activities of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan (1995-2025)

No.	Act name
1	Report of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev at the first session of the Assembly of the Peoples of Kazakhstan (March 24, 1995) (1995)
2	Report of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev at the third session of the Assembly of the Peoples of Kazakhstan (April 29, 1996) (1996)
3	Report of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev at the fourth session of the Assembly of the Peoples of Kazakhstan (June 6, 1997) (1997)
4	Resolution of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan No.1869 "On the Implementation of the Decree of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated December 10, 1997 No. 3790 "On declaring 1998 the Year of National Unity and National History" (Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 1997)
5	Report of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev at the fifth session of the Assembly of the Peoples of Kazakhstan (January 21, 1999) (1999)
6	Speech by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev at the eighth session of the Assembly of the Peoples of Kazakhstan (Astana, October 24, 2001) (2001)
7	On the Strategy of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan and the Regulations on the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan (26 April 2002)
8	Speech by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev at the XII session of the Assembly of the Peoples of Kazakhstan (Astana, October 24, 2006) (2006)
9	10.20.2010 Speech by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev at the XVI session of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan (2010)
10	Speech by the President of Kazakhstan N. Nazarbayev at the XXII session of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan (2015)
11	The Head of State took part in the work of the XXXII session of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, "Fair Kazakhstan: Unity, Stability, Development" (President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2023)
12	The Head of State held the XXXIII session of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan "Unity. Creation. Progress" (President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2024)

Source: Compiled by the Authors based on Decree of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 1014 "On Approval of the Concept for the Development of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan for 2022-2026" (2022).

The analysis of this corpus reveals that, between 1995 and 2010, the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan primarily fulfilled an advisory and coordinating role, functioning as a platform for institutionalising dialogue between the state and ethno-cultural associations and serving as a conduit for articulating the requests of ethnic communities to the authorities. A defining feature of this period was its pronounced emphasis on safeguarding and cultivating cultural diversity, enshrined in legislative acts and regulatory frameworks governing the Assembly's activities. Session records consistently document measures such as

financing national cultural centres, establishing networks of friendship houses, supporting national publications, and providing schools and courses for more than twenty minority languages. These initiatives nurtured public trust and alleviated ethnic tensions during the turbulent post-Soviet transformation.

A retrospective examination of official statements and regulatory instruments discloses a gradual reorientation: while the initial emphasis lay on cultural autonomy, by the close of this period the Assembly's symbolic role as an institution of national integration had become more pronounced. The state increasingly

promoted participation in Kazakh-language and civic spaces to consolidate society, without compelling minorities to relinquish their cultural distinctiveness. The advancement of the Kazakh language and the cultivation of a unified civic identity assumed growing centrality. Thus, in its first fifteen years, the Assembly operated as a flexible instrument for reconciling interests and balancing cultural pluralism with pan-Kazakh unity, grounded in shared values and symbols.

A significant dimension of the Assembly's work has been the annual organisation of national culture festivals, friendship forums, and the Day of Unity of the People of Kazakhstan (Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, 2025a; 2025b). These events embodied the state's guiding slogan, "unity in diversity", and showcased the peaceful coexistence of multiple cultures. Financial support from local budgets and grant programmes further enhanced the autonomy of communities while reinforcing trust between the state and ethnic groups, particularly amidst the economic challenges of the 1990s.

Materials from the mid-2000s to early 2010s indicate a discernible shift from the celebration of cultural diversity towards the consolidation of unity through common symbols and the Kazakh language as the principal integrative medium. From this period onwards, initiatives to engage minorities in Kazakh-speaking spaces intensified, with the expansion of classes, language courses, and cultural programmes (Makhanov, 2025a; 2025b). Grant criteria increasingly privileged projects that promoted the Kazakh language and fostered a shared national identity. These developments illustrate the state's emphasis on integration—incorporating ethnic groups into the civic and linguistic framework—rather than coercive assimilation.

Between 2010 and 2025, the consolidation of Kazakh as the cornerstone of national unity became more pronounced, reinforced by demographic shifts: the proportion of Kazakhs rose to 70.4% in 2021, while Russians declined to 15.5%, strengthening arguments for linguistic consolidation as the foundation of civic cohesion. During this period, networks of Kazakh language courses expanded, particularly in

northern and eastern regions with substantial minority populations (Hoff & Barboza, 2025; Yedgina et al., 2023). Programmes targeted public sector employees and local authorities, complemented by information campaigns emphasising proficiency in the official language as a prerequisite for integration. These measures reinforced unity and cultivated a common Kazakh-speaking civic space, while continuing to preserve minority languages and cultural practices.

Yet, despite this consolidation, Kazakhstan has not renounced multilingualism: the Constitution enshrines Kazakh as the state language, while Russian retains its role as the language of interethnic communication, and minority languages and cultures continue to receive state support (Report of the President of..., 1995). In practice, however, these policies are increasingly subordinated to the overarching national objective of constructing a unified cultural and linguistic space. The emphasis on integration ensures that minorities are incorporated into the civic community without forcible cultural assimilation.

In conclusion, the evolution of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, as traced through archival materials, demonstrates a transition from cultural pluralism to an integrative paradigm, with the Kazakh language and shared civic identity emerging as central unifying elements. This transformation reflects the adaptability of state ethnic policy to demographic and socio-political realities and offers a model of institutional flexibility for managing ethnic diversity in Central Asia.

Migration Processes and their Impact on Contemporary Ethnopolitics

Migration processes constituted one of the principal drivers of Kazakhstan's shifting ethnic composition in the post-Soviet era (Apsamatova & Stempkovskaya, 2024; Ilieva, 2020). In the early 1990s, almost all northern and eastern regions witnessed a substantial outflow of population, predominantly Russian-speaking citizens and members of traditional European minorities, including Germans, Ukrainians, and Belarusians (Davletova et al., 2025; Abdykulova

et al., 2019). The decline of industrial production, the collapse of the planned economy, and pervasive socio-political uncertainty provided powerful incentives for emigration to countries of historical origin. A significant proportion of Russians—more than half of their 1989 population—and the majority of ethnic Germans departed; by the early 2000s, only around 15% of the German community remained compared to the late 1980s (Kuldasheva, 2024). The principal destinations were Russia, Germany (for ethnic Germans), and other post-Soviet states. According to the Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan Committee on Statistics (2025), the population declined from 16,451,700 at the end of 1991 to 14,865,600 by the end of 2000, reflecting a net migration outflow of approximately 1.6 million people. Economic hardship and uncertainty regarding the legal status of professionals further exacerbated these emigration trends.

Concurrently, this exodus of European-origin populations was counterbalanced by the repatriation of ethnic Kazakhs (*oralman*) from abroad, which emerged as a decisive demographic factor. State programmes facilitated the return of Kazakhs from Mongolia, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, China, and other Central Asian states. Since the early 1990s, hundreds of thousands of repatriates migrated to Kazakhstan, partially offsetting demographic losses (Taldybayeva et al., 2021). These opposing flows—the departure of non-indigenous populations and the influx of ethnic Kazakhs—produced a distinctive migration balance, significantly augmenting the share of the titular nation. At the close of the Soviet period (1989), Kazakhs were only a relative majority; by the mid-2020s, their proportion exceeded 70%, while Russians accounted for approximately 15% (Bureau of National Statistics, 2025b). This dynamic exemplifies the state's integrative approach: returning Kazakhs were assimilated into economic, social, and civic spheres, while minorities retained cultural and linguistic rights, thereby distinguishing integration from coercive assimilation.

The repatriation effort was not without challenges. Social tensions occasionally arose between “local” Kazakhs and returning *oralman/kandas*, rooted in disparities of language proficiency, cultural practices, and socio-economic expectations. Repatriates from China or Mongolia often struggled to adapt to administrative frameworks and labour markets, while segments of the local population perceived them as competitors for employment, housing, and state assistance. These difficulties necessitated targeted governmental interventions, including adaptation programmes, language instruction, and social support schemes designed to facilitate integration.

The mass emigration of the 1990s also had a pronounced professional dimension. The departure of highly qualified specialists—engineers, scientists, doctors, and teachers—created acute shortages in strategically vital sectors. This issue was repeatedly highlighted at the official level: by the mid-1990s, government authorities and expert circles stressed the urgency of retaining professional personnel (Bokayev et al., 2020). The state responded with measures to curb the “brain drain” and promote the training of local specialists. Initiatives of the National Council for Demographic and Social Policy under the President included financial support for young families and affordable housing projects (Decree No. 383, 2007; Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2008). Pilot schemes in northern regions sought to generate employment in the social sector, prioritising local graduates to mitigate further emigration. Retraining programmes and internal migration incentives were also deployed to address regional imbalances.

The decline of the Russian-speaking population profoundly reshaped the linguistic landscape (Azhimov et al., 2026; Brait et al., 2025). In medium-sized towns and rural areas, where Russian-speaking populations diminished, Kazakh increasingly became the dominant language of everyday communication and commerce. In education, this manifested in the gradual transition of schools to Kazakh-language

instruction: between 2000 and 2005, Russian-language classes declined, replaced by mixed or Kazakh-language streams in regions previously dominated by Russian (Makhanov, 2025b). Simultaneously, linguistic adaptation programmes targeted repatriates, many of whom lacked fluency in Kazakh. Special courses introduced in the early 2000s facilitated integration into education and the labour market without erasing minority identities (Yuhan et al., 2024; Zharkynbekova et al., 2024). The enhanced prevalence and prestige of Kazakh in public life was thus closely linked to demographic shifts and state policies aimed at cultivating a unified linguistic and cultural space.

Official statistics delineate two distinct phases of migration dynamics during independence (1991–2025). The first phase (1991–2009) was marked by a negative migration balance and large-scale outflow. The second phase, commencing around 2010, witnessed stabilisation: emigration rates fell sharply, and natural growth became the principal driver of population increase (Ministry of National Economy, 2025). Repatriation programmes became more targeted, focusing on young, skilled families capable of rapid integration. Consequently, during the 2010s, the share of Kazakhs continued to rise, surpassing 70% by 2021, while Russians and other European minorities stabilised at markedly reduced levels (Bureau of National Statistics, 2025b).

These multi-vector migration flows profoundly shaped Kazakhstan's contemporary ethnic, linguistic, and professional landscape. The mass emigration of the 1990s depleted human capital and challenged the state's capacity to retain specialists, while simultaneously stimulating programmes for internal labour development and mobility (Jahelka, 2024; Zhang & Tsakhirmaa, 2022). Large-scale repatriation not only compensated for demographic losses but qualitatively shifted the balance in favour of the titular nation, laying the foundation for linguistic and cultural integration. The present ethno-demographic map of Kazakhstan—with Kazakhs as the overwhelming majority and European minorities markedly reduced—is the outcome of

these transformative migration processes. State policies continue to advocate integration of *oralman* and minorities into economic, social, and civic spheres, while endorsing the preservation of minority identities, thereby maintaining a clear distinction between integration and assimilation.

Discussion

The results attest that Kazakhstan's ethno-demographic landscape has undergone profound and systemic transformations during the years of independence (1991–2025), reflecting the state's strategic trajectory towards consolidating national identity and internal cohesion. The proportion of the titular nation, the Kazakhs, rose from less than 40% at the close of the Soviet period (1989) to over 70% by 2021, while the share of the largest minority, the Russians, was nearly halved. This demographic reconfiguration was facilitated by a comprehensive policy framework encompassing large-scale repatriation programmes for *oralman*, the maintenance of stable birth rates among Kazakhs, the gradual Kazakhisation of education and media, and institutional mechanisms for interethnic harmony, most notably through the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan. The state's approach privileged integration—ensuring the inclusion of minorities in economic, social, and civic spheres—while permitting the preservation of cultural and linguistic identities, thereby eschewing coercive assimilation. Yet, as scholars such as Dave (2007) and Schatz (2018) contend, Kazakhstan's multiculturalism remains largely “managed” by the state, constrained by top-down regulation.

An examination of migration and demographic dynamics across three decades reveals Kazakhstan's transformation from a classically multi-ethnic republic into a polity marked by the demographic predominance of the titular nation. This transition reinforced the centrality of the Kazakh language in official communication, education, and public discourse. However, as Dave (2007) observes, integration policies, while inclusive, often delimit genuine minority autonomy, underscoring the controlled nature of

Kazakhstan's multiculturalism. The declining proportion of Russians and other European minorities prompted a recalibration of ethnic policy, emphasising the integration of remaining minorities into a shared cultural and linguistic space, while fostering a civic identity anchored in Kazakh culture.

The Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan evolved significantly during this period. Initially conceived in the 1990s as a forum for institutionalising cultural diversity, it gradually assumed the role of a symbolic and coordinating centre for consolidating society around shared values, the Kazakh language, and the notion of a "single nation." The mass emigration of Russians, Germans, and Ukrainians in the 1990s, coupled with the repatriation of Kazakhs from Mongolia, China, Uzbekistan, and beyond, radically altered the ethnic balance (Tsyrf, 2013; Koshbakova, 2022). Since the 2010s, the increasing share of the titular nation has suggested the emergence of a majority-led integrative state model, accompanied by the decline of European minorities and the strengthening of the symbolic and institutional status of Kazakh language and culture. Schatz (2018) interprets this model as emblematic of the tension between civic rhetoric and ethnic dominance, illustrating how state-led multiculturalism coexists with selective reinforcement of titular-nation primacy.

The transition from the Nazarbayev era to the Tokayev government, and the adoption of the *Jana Qazaqstan* ("New Kazakhstan") concept in 2022, marked a pivotal political juncture. While the principal objectives of ethnic integration and the advancement of Kazakh culture endure, *Jana Qazaqstan* foregrounds reforms in governance, civic engagement, and social policy, which may indirectly reshape ethnic policy by enhancing transparency, decentralisation, and responsiveness to minority concerns. Preliminary evidence suggests the persistence of regulated multiculturalism, albeit reframed within a discourse of modernisation and inclusivity, signalling measured progression rather than radical departure.

The findings of this study resonate with existing scholarship while offering additional empirical nuance. The observed intensification of "Kazakhisation" in education, the transition to the Latin alphabet, and the introduction of trilingual education policies corroborate Terlikbayeva and Menlibekova (2021), who highlight the deliberate embedding of Kazakh into public life, reinforced by bilingualism and the gradual predominance of the state language in schools. This study confirms that educational policy actively stimulated Kazakh-language instruction in response to demographic shifts, without infringing upon the rights of Russian speakers. Similarly, Smagulova and Suleimenova (2023) emphasise the displacement of Russian in professional and educational contexts, mirroring the institutional strengthening of Kazakh identified herein. Nonetheless, these policies may be interpreted as facets of the managed multicultural framework articulated by Dave (2007), wherein minority languages and cultures are tolerated yet carefully regulated to safeguard titular-nation primacy.

Patterns of language policy transformation identified in this study, where Kazakh assumes a symbolic role in civic unity while Russian remains the language of interethnic communication, align with Abasilov and Kapalbek (2024). They argue that moderate linguistic integration, acknowledging titular-nation dominance, was essential for maintaining interethnic stability and effecting the transition from Soviet multinationalism to a Kazakh-centric cultural model. The constitutional recognition of Russian as an official language mitigated potential tensions, complementing institutional mechanisms of integration through the Assembly and educational reforms.

Economic measures to retain young professionals, including housing incentives and employment programmes, corroborate Narymbaeva et al. (2024) and Kaimoldiyev (2021), who underscore strategies to counteract "brain drain" and harness domestic intellectual capital. These initiatives illustrate the state's reliance on regulatory control, job creation, and

human capital mobilisation to mitigate the consequences of educational migration.

Repatriation findings correspond with Bazarbekov et al. (2024) and Zharkenova et al. (2022), who highlight challenges of social adaptation, language barriers, and administrative integration, necessitating targeted housing and employment programmes. Kappassova et al. (2024) further affirm that repatriation constitutes a central demographic strategy, strengthening the titular nation's share while regulating internal migration and supporting minority cultural retention.

In sum, the conclusions of this study are congruent with international research on Kazakhstan's ethnopolitical and linguistic transformation, while extending empirical insight into institutional personnel support, regional housing initiatives, and targeted adaptation measures for *oralman*. The state's policies exemplify an integrative model that fosters social cohesion, linguistic consolidation, and economic inclusion without compelling minorities to assimilate, offering valuable lessons for multi-ethnic societies navigating demographic and migratory transitions.

Conclusion

The study identified the principal demographic shifts, examined the institutional mechanisms underpinning interethnic harmony, and analysed the migration processes that have shaped Kazakhstan's contemporary ethno-demographic landscape. Particular emphasis was placed upon the historical evolution of ethnic policy since the early 1990s, the role of state-led repatriation programmes, statistical trends in ethnic composition, and the instruments of social and cultural integration.

Between 1991 and 2025, Kazakhstan underwent a profound transformation from a Soviet-style multi-ethnic republic into a polity characterised by the demographic predominance of the titular Kazakh nation, whose share, according to the 2025 census, exceeded 71.3%. This outcome attests to the efficacy of the state's demographic strategy, which combined natural population growth with the organised repatriation of

Kazakhs from neighbouring and distant countries (China, Mongolia, Uzbekistan, Russia, among others), alongside policies designed to stimulate birth rates and encourage balanced regional distribution.

Qualitative analysis indicates a relative stabilisation in the proportions of several ethnic groups, suggesting demographic levelling without abrupt fluctuations in the ethnic structure. This reflects a gradual transition from a historically diverse mosaic to a more balanced composition, while preserving cultural plurality. Quantitative data confirm the steady increase in the share of Kazakhs from 39.7% in 1989 to 71.3% in 2025, accompanied by a decline in the proportion of Russians to approximately 15.5%. These trends embody both natural demographic processes and deliberate structural reforms in ethnic policy, aimed at consolidating civic unity and strengthening a national core, whilst safeguarding minority rights within the state framework.

Institutional mechanisms, particularly the activities of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, facilitated a smooth transition from cultural pluralism to an integrative model grounded in a shared linguistic and cultural foundation. Through the consistent implementation of language programmes, the support of national cultural centres, and the training of personnel proficient in the official language, the role of Kazakh as the backbone of national unity was progressively reinforced.

The study acknowledges certain limitations, notably its reliance on official statistical data, which may not fully capture migration processes within the informal sector. This constraint could affect the precision of estimates concerning internal migration and repatriation.

Future research might profitably explore the social adaptation of new immigrants, evaluate the effectiveness of language programmes, and assess the impact of demographic policy upon regional economic development. Comparative analysis with other post-Soviet states implementing analogous repatriation initiatives would also yield valuable insights.

In conclusion, the analysis underscores the strategic significance of demographic and institutional policies in shaping Kazakhstan's contemporary ethno-demographic and linguistic landscape. The findings carry broader implications for multi-ethnic post-colonial states, illustrating how a calibrated blend of managed multiculturalism, language policy, and targeted repatriation can foster integration, sustain social cohesion, and reconcile the preservation of minority rights with the consolidation of national identity. Such lessons may inform policymakers and scholars engaged in nation-building across similarly heterogeneous societies.

References

- 10.20.2010 Speech by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev at the XVI session of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan. (2010).
https://www.akorda.kz/ru/speeches/internal_political_affairs/in_speeches_and_addresses/vystuplenie-prezidenta-respubliki-kazakhstan-n-a-nazarbaeva-na-xvi-sessii-assamblei-naroda-kazakhstana-20-10-2010g_1340717888
- Abasilov, A., Kapalbek, B. (2024). Linguistic dynamics and language policy in Kazakhstan: Challenges and future prospects. *European Journal of Language Policy*, 16(2), 155-176.
<https://doi.org/10.3828/ejlp.2024.9>
- Abdraimov, E.A., Sadykov, T.S., Kabyltayeva, S.K. (2023). Assembly of the people of Kazakhstan: history and activities at the present stage. *Bulletin of the Karaganda University. History and Philosophy Series*, 109(1), 7-13.
<http://doi.org/10.31489/2023HPh1/7-13>
- Abdykulova, G., Mussabalina, G.T., Bukanova, R.G., Kazhenova, G.T. (2019). Research methodology of the city's history of everyday life. *Opcion*, 35(20), 49-68.
<https://produccioncientificaluz.org/index.php/opcion/article/view/24507>
- Aliyeva, S. (2025). Interdisciplinary dialogues: Combining science and art in contemporary cultural production. *Interdisciplinary Cultural and Humanities Review*, 4(2), 48-57.
<https://doi.org/10.59214/cultural/1.2025.48>
- Apsamatova, E., Stempkovskaya, E. (2024). Youth identity crisis and the search for the meaning of life. *Bulletin of the Jusup Balasagyn Kyrgyz National University*, 16(2), 94-99.
[https://doi.org/10.58649/1694-8033-2024-2\(118\)-94-99](https://doi.org/10.58649/1694-8033-2024-2(118)-94-99)
- Assembly of People of Kazakhstan. (2025a). The activities of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan.
<https://assembly.kz/en/prochee/the-activities-of-the-assembly-of-people-of-kazakhstan/>
- Assembly of People of Kazakhstan. (2025b). Activity.
<https://assembly.kz/en/ank/obshchaya-informatsiya/deyatelnost/>
- Azhimov, B., Kairbekov, N., Bulan, Z., Imammadi, T. (2026). Researching a new religious phenomenon of the central asia: digital sufism. *Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe*, 46(1), 90-110.
<https://doi.org/10.55221/2693-2229.2710>
- Bazarbekov, T.R., Sarsembayev, A.B., Zhumzhayeva, N.B. (2024). *Kazakhstan's Management of Migration: Adapting to New Circumstances*. Astana: Maqsut Narikbayev University.
<http://repository.kazguu.kz/bitstream/handle/123456789/2090/Gr%205%20Bazarbekov%20T.%20R.%2c%20Sarsembayev%20A.%20B.%2c%20Zhumzhayeva%20N.%20B..pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>
- Bekzhanova, Z., Makoelle, T.M. (2023). Latinization of the Kazakh alphabet: Implications for education, inclusion, and social cohesion in Kazakhstan. *SAGE Open*, 12(4).
<https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440221138820>
- Bokayev, B., Torebekova, Z., Davletbayeva, Z. (2020). Preventing brain drain: Kazakhstan's presidential "Bolashak" scholarship and government regulations of intellectual migration. *Public Policy and Administration*, 19(3), 25-35.
<http://doi.org/10.5755/j01.ppaa.19.3.27764>
- Boman, B., Mussakhanova, A. (2024). Going in three directions: Parallel trajectories of Kazakhstanization, Westernization, and post

Soviet multiculturalism in Kazakhstan's elementary and secondary education.

Globalisation, Societies and Education.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2024.2355203>

Brait, B., Souza, G.T., Amorim, M., Silva, A.P.F.P., Pistori, M.H.C., Rosa, C.G., Stella, P.R., Storto, L.J. (2025). Bakhtin and Linguistics: A Dialogue Settled in the Beginning of the 20's/. *Bakhtiniana*, 20(1), e66039e.

<https://doi.org/10.1590/2176-4573e66039>

Bureau of National Statistics. (2025a). Economics.

<https://stat.gov.kz/en/industries/social-statistics/demography/publications/157662>

Bureau of National Statistics. (2025b). Population of the Republic of Kazakhstan by individual ethnic groups and age groups (at the beginning of 2025).

<https://stat.gov.kz/en/industries/social-statistics/demography/publications/337150/>

Census of Population of the Republic of Kazakhstan in 1999. (2025). <https://e-history.kz/en/calendar/show/27842>

Dave, B. (2007). Kazakhstan: Ethnicity, Language and Power. London: Routledge. <https://www.routledge.com/Kazakhstan---Ethnicity-Language-and-Power/Dave/p/book/9780415482981>

Davletova, G., Dosekeyva, K., Junusbayeva, A., Chatybekova, K., Zhuztayeva, B. (2025). Ethno-demographic and urbanisation processes in Kazakhstan (1970-2020). *RIVAR*, 12(34), 68-81. <http://doi.org/10.35588/6hngqr67>

Decree of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 1014 "On Approval of the Concept for the Development of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan for 2022-2026". (2022).

<https://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/U2200001014>

Decree of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 383 "On the State Program of Housing Construction in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2008-2010". (2007).

<https://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/U070000383>

Decree of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 856 "On the Strategy of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan and the Regulation on the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan". (2002).

<https://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/U020000856>

Doszhan, R. (2023). Multi-vector cultural connection in the conditions of modern globalisation. *Interdisciplinary Cultural and Humanities Review*, 2(1), 27-32.

<https://doi.org/10.59214/2786-7110-2023-2-1-27-32>

Eschment, B., De Cordier, B. (2021). Introduction: Ethnic, civic, or both? The ethnicities of Kazakhstan in search of an identity and homeland. *Central Asian Affairs*, 8(4), 315-318. <https://doi.org/10.30965/22142290-12340010>

Hoff, S.L., Barboza, G. (2025). Languages, Language, and Linguists: The Study of the Diversity of Languages According to Saussure and Benveniste. *Bakhtiniana*, 20(1), e65692e. <https://doi.org/10.1590/2176-4573e65692>

Ilieva, R.K. (2020). Problematics Concerning the Bulgarian Cross-Border Labor Migration. *International Journal of Economics and Management Studies*, 7(4), 12-14, <https://doi.org/10.14445/23939125/IJEMS-V7I4P103>

Insebayeva, S., Insebayeva, N. (2022). The power of ambiguity: National symbols, nation-building and political legitimacy in Kazakhstan. *Europe-Asia Studies*, 74(4), 660-682. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09668136.2021.1912296>

Jahelka, T. (2024). The Critical Theologian and Philosopher Karol Nandrásy. *Filozofia*, 79(1), 81-89. <https://doi.org/10.31577/filozofia.2024.79.1.6>

Kaimoldiyev, A. (2021). Improvement of governmental policy in the field of educational migration: Strategies for applying intellectual potential in the Republic of Kazakhstan. *Astana: The Academy of Public Administration Under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan*.

<http://repository.apa.kz/handle/123456789/827>

Kappassova, G., Altybassarova, M., Yelmuratov, G., Rakhimbaeva, M., Polomarchuk, B. (2024).

Migration processes in the Republic of Kazakhstan: Regularities, problems, and prospects. *Two Homelands*, 59, 106-130.

<https://doi.org/10.3986/2024.1.07>

Koshibakova, B. (2022). Sociocultural identity of the Kyrgyz in the context of globalization.

Bulletin of the Jusup Balasagyn Kyrgyz National University, 14(1), 137-143.

<https://balasagynbulletin.com/en/journals/tom-14-1-2022/sotsiokulturnaya-identichnost-kyrgyzov-v-usloviyakh-globalizatsii>

Kucherbayeva, D., Smagulova, J. (2023).

Language revitalization: Challenges for Kazakh in higher education. *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, 14(2), 166-178.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/18793665231189326>

Kuldasheva, Z. (2024). Labor migration in Central Asia: Issues, impacts, and strategic solutions. *Slovak Journal of International Relations*, 22(2), 162-182.

<https://doi.org/10.53465/SJIR.1339-2751.2024.2.162-182>

Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 204 "On Population Migration". (1997).

https://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/Z970000204_/links

Lazëri, M. 2024. *The National Majority as a Local Minority: National Identity, Dominance, and the Minority Experience*. Amsterdam: Free University of Amsterdam.

<https://doi.org/10.5463/thesis.813>

Makhanov, K. (2025a). The ethnic profile of urbanization in Kazakhstan: The intercensal change between 2009 and 2021.

<https://www.eurasian-research.org/publication/the-ethnic-profile-of-urbanization-in-kazakhstan-the-intercensal-change-between-2009-and-2021/>

Makhanov, K. (2025b). The trends of language shift in education in Kazakhstan.

<https://eurasian-research.org/publications/the-trends-of-language-shift-in-education-in-kazakhstan/>

[trends-of-language-shift-in-education-in-kazakhstan/](https://eurasian-research.org/publications/the-trends-of-language-shift-in-education-in-kazakhstan/)

Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan Committee on Statistics. (2025).

Kazakhstan during the years of independence.

<https://stat.gov.kz/upload/medialibrary/804/8eflcs9o9il7u7a76lc3bktetpvl66b7/1.%20Kazakhstan%20during%20the%20years%20of%20independence.pdf>

Minority Rights Group. (2025). Germans in Kazakhstan.

<https://minorityrights.org/communities/germans/>

Narymbaeva, A., Rakhymzhanov, Y., Abdukarimova, Z., Osmanova, G., Satbayeva, A., Alimbetova, A. (2024). Exploring Intellectual and Educational Migration in Kazakhstan: Documentary Analysis. *Access to Justice in Eastern Europe*, 7(4), 317-346.

<https://doi.org/10.33327/AJEE-18-7.4-a000128>

Report of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev at the first session of the Assembly of the Peoples of Kazakhstan (March 24, 1995). (1995).

https://online.zakon.kz/Document/?doc_id=30007149

Report of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev at the third session of the Assembly of the Peoples of Kazakhstan (April 29, 1996). (1996).

https://online.zakon.kz/Document/?doc_id=30014233

Report of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev at the fourth session of the Assembly of the Peoples of Kazakhstan (June 6, 1997). (1997).

https://online.zakon.kz/Document/?doc_id=30014234

Report of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev at the fifth session of the Assembly of the Peoples of Kazakhstan (January 21, 1999). (1999).

https://online.zakon.kz/Document/?doc_id=30014236

Resolution of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 1126 "On Approval of the

Nurly Kosh Program for 2009-2011". (2008).

<https://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/P080001126>

Resolution of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 602 "On Approval of the Concept of Migration Policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2017-2021 and the Action Plan for the implementation of the Concept of Migration Policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2017-2021". (2017).

<https://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/P1700000602>

Resolution of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan No.1869 "On the Implementation of the Decree of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated December 10, 1997 No. 3790 "On declaring 1998 the Year of National Unity and National History". (1997).

<https://adilet.zan.kz/rus/docs/P970001869>

Results of the 2009 national population census. (2010). <https://bizmedia.kz/2010-11-15-itogi-naczionalnoj-perepisi-naseleniya-2009-goda-2/#:~:text=%>

Sadvokassova, A., Burkhanov, A., Sharipova, D. (2025). In search for Kazakhstani identity: Societal perceptions of Kazakhstan's nation-building. *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, 31(1), 114-137.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/13537113.2024.2422198>

Schatz, E. (2004). *Modern Clan Politics: The Power of "Blood" in Kazakhstan and Beyond*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

https://books.google.com.ua/books/about/Modern_Clan_Politics.html?id=vhLg4p4viUIC&redir_esc=y

Schiek, S. (2022). The politics of stability in Kazakhstan: Depoliticising participation through consultative ideology? *Europe-Asia Studies*, 74(2), 266-287.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/09668136.2022.2034746>

Sharimova, M. (2024). Repatriation in Kazakhstan: Relevance of terminology and social adaptation (according to the results of sociological research). *Journal of Psychology & Sociology*, 88(1), 98-109.

<https://doi.org/10.26577/jpss.2024.v88.i1.08>

Smagulova, J., Suleimenova, E. (2023). Toward Post-Russianness? Narrative Adjustment among Kazakhstani Teachers of Russian. In: *Russian as a Transnational Language: Resonance, Remembrance, Renewal* (pp. 35-62). New York: Routledge.

<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003088004>

Speech by the President of Kazakhstan N. Nazarbayev at the XXII session of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan. (2015).

https://www.akorda.kz/ru/speeches/internal_political_affairs/in_speeches_and_addresses/vystuplenie-prezidenta-kazahstana-nnazarbaevana-hhii-sessii-assamblei-naroda-kazahstana

Speech by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev at the eighth session of the Assembly of the Peoples of Kazakhstan (Astana, October 24, 2001). (2001).

https://online.zakon.kz/Document/?doc_id=30014242

Speech by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev at the XII session of the Assembly of the Peoples of Kazakhstan (Astana, October 24, 2006). (2006).

https://online.zakon.kz/Document/?doc_id=30074242

Taldybayeva, D., Serikkaliyeva, A., Nadirova, G., Zhailybayev, D. (2021). Young repatriates in Kazakhstan: Problems and solutions. In: *International Society for Technology, Education, and Science* (pp. 42-55). Antalya: ISTES Organization.

<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED623789.pdf>

Terlikbayeva, N., Menlibekova, G. (2021). The dynamics of language shift in Kazakhstan. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics*, 3(2), 12-22.

<https://doi.org/10.32996/jeltal.2021.3.2.2>

The Head of State held the XXXIII session of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan "Unity. Creation. Progress". (2024).

<https://www.akorda.kz/ru/glava-gosudarstva-provel-hhiii-sessiyu-assamblei-naroda-kazahstana-edinstvo-sozidanie-progress-2531558>

The Head of State took part in the work of the XXXII session of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan “Fair Kazakhstan: Unity, Stability, Development”. 2023.

<https://www.akorda.kz/ru/glava-gosudarstva-prinyal-uchastie-v-rabote-xxxii-sessii-assamblei-naroda-kazahstana-spravedlivyy-kazahstan-edinstvo-stabilnost-razvitie-273488>

Tsyrf, I. (2013). The formation of the European identity of Ukraine: Key factors and principles. *Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review*, 30, 43-63.

<https://www.cceol.com/search/article-detail?id=36550>

Tsyrf, I., Serbina, N., Daineko, V., Rozhkova, M., Bozhkov, A. (2024). Research on the legal principles of foreign policy identity in international relations. *Social and Legal Studies*, 7(2), 201-209.

<https://doi.org/10.32518/sals2.2024.201>

Umbetbayeva, Z., Suleimenova, S., Ospanova, D., Nurahmetova, G., Aigarinova, G. (2024). National Legislations on Air Quality Protection and Penalties for Atmospheric Air Pollution in Central Asia. *Pakistan Journal of Criminology*, 16(3), 171-190.

<https://doi.org/10.62271/pjc.16.3.171.190>

Yedgina, G., Dzhumabekov, D., Zuyeva, L., Dosova, B., Kozina, V. (2023). Language policy in Kazakhstan in the context of world practice. *Journal of Nationalism, Memory & Language Politics*, 17(1), 76-96.

<https://doi.org/10.2478/jnmlp-2023-0004>

Yesmaganbet, N., Kairbekov, N. (2025). Examination of the Activities of Religious Educators of the Soviet Period in the Context of the Development of European Religious Thought. *Pharos Journal of Theology*, 106(3), 1-15.

<https://doi.org/10.46222/pharosjot.106.3030>

Yuhan, N., Zhylin, M., Antonyuk-Kyrychenko, S., Popova, N., Harbar, M. (2024). Cognitive Aspects of Translation: The Latest Research in Psycholinguistics and Cognitive Science. *Forum for Linguistic Studies*, 6(4), 316-325.

<https://doi.org/10.30564/fls.v6i4.6775>

Zhang, Z., Tsakhirmaa, S. (2022).

Ethnonationalism and the changing pattern of ethnic Kazakhs' emigration from China to Kazakhstan. *China Information*, 36(3), 318-343.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0920203X221092686>

Zharkenova, S., Ongarbayev, Y., Nurmagametov, A., Galiakbarova, G. (2022). State support for compatriots: Improving Kazakhstan legislation. *Brazilian Journal of International Law*, 19(3).

<https://doi.org/10.5102/rdi.v19i3.8526>

Zharkynbekova, S., Tazhibayeva, S., Shakhputova, Z., Agabekova, Z., Azamatova, A., Kuzar, Z. (2024). Transnational practices of Kazakh repatriates: The role of family in the adaptation of ethnic Kazakh students from Mongolia and China. *Frontiers in Sociology*, 9, 1452785.

<https://doi.org/10.3389/fsoc.2024.1452785>

Zhussupova, A. (2021). Kazakhstan supports interethnic accord since independence.

<https://astanatimes.com/2021/03/kazakhstan-supports-interethnic-accord-since-independence/>

Compliance With Ethical Standards

The study received ethical approval from the Research Ethics Council (University named after U. Zhanibekov). The Council verified that all procedures were conducted in compliance with the principles of the Declaration of Helsinki (1964) and its later amendments (APPROVAL No. 654392).

Republic of Kazakhstan
University named after U. Zhanibekov

ETHICAL APPROVAL

The study "ETHNIC POLICY OF THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN IN CENTRAL ASIA IN THE CONTEXT OF CULTURAL INTEGRATION AND POLITICAL CHANGE: HISTORICAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC ASPECTS", conducted by the Ganiy Karassayev, Kanat Yensenov, Bekmurat Naimanbayev, Kulpash Ilyassova, Dametken Suleimenova, received ethical approval from the Research Ethics Council (University named after U. Zhanibekov). The Council verified that all procedures were conducted in compliance with the principles of the Declaration of Helsinki (1964) and its later amendments. The study was approved for execution in its current form (APPROVAL No. 654392).

CHAIRMAN OF THE RESEARCH ETHICS COUNCIL

N. B. Shegenbayev



Conflict Of Interest

The authors have stated explicitly that there are no conflicts of interest in connection with this article.

AI Use Statement

AI-based language support was employed during manuscript preparation to improve clarity, grammar, and academic expression. The authors independently evaluated all revisions and retained full responsibility for the intellectual content and final version of the article.

Author Contributions

Each author has participated in the concept and design; analysis and interpretation of data;

drafting or revising of the manuscript and that each author has approved the manuscript as submitted. All authors agree to be accountable for all aspects of the work.

Funding

The authors did not receive support from any organisation for the submitted work.

Data Availability Statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author.