

NEWSLETTER

for the Research Project

“Economic Transformation, Household Behaviour and Well-Being in Central Asia: The Case of Kyrgyzstan”

Issue #2
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Major news:

- Data analysis of first wave of data ongoing
- Second wave about to be collected
- Conference on Well-being in Central Asia to be held in May 2012 in Berlin

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1. About the Project

The project “Economic Transformation, Household Behaviour and Well-Being in Central Asia: The Case of Kyrgyzstan” funded by Volkswagen Foundation aims (1) to collect nationally representative panel survey data in Kyrgyzstan, (2) to investigate well-being and household behavior in this country, and (3) to improve research capacity within the Central

Asian region. The project runs from January 2010 through December 2012. The project is a collaborative endeavour of DIW Berlin, Humboldt University of Berlin, the Center for Social and Economic Research (CASE-Kyrgyzstan), and the American University of Central Asia (AUCA), the latter two being based in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

2. First Wave

Data collection for the first wave of the *Life in Kyrgyzstan* panel survey was concluded in December of 2010. Three thousand households participated in the survey. In these

households, 8,160 individuals older than 18 years were interviewed. The survey is representative at the national level as well as for the South and North of the country.

2.1. Respondents

Every fifth respondent comes from the capital Bishkek. Five percent live in the southern biggest city of Osh.

Some interviewers, particularly in the South, encountered problems in locating the households on our sample list which had been prepared

by the National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic based on the 2009 Census. A substantial number of houses were found empty there. In Bishkek, refusal rates were notably high. Overall, 566 out of the 3,000 households on the original sample list had to be replaced with households from a reserve list.

2.2. Current Work

In May 2011, the data cleaning process for the first wave was finished and data analysis is now ongoing. A number of research papers, including on conflict and subjective well-being,

the effect of migration on social network formation in sending communities, and intergenerational mobility are being prepared at DIW Berlin.

3. Second Wave

“In the second wave, we include several new modules in the questionnaires such as time use, decision making, social gift exchange and fertility.”

At the moment, the revision of the questionnaires for the second round of the interviews is being finalised. Several small adjustments to the questionnaire forms from 2010 have to be made. For example, a number of questions that were not sufficiently answered in 2010 (e.g. on reverse

remittances, and agricultural markets) or are no longer relevant in 2011 (e.g. displacement due to unrest in 2010) are deleted. Furthermore, a number of new modules in the questionnaires, such as time use, fertility, decision making, and social gift exchange, are included.

3.1. Field Works

Two doctoral students are already in Bishkek to start preparing the pilot interviews, which will take place in the first two weeks of August. At the end of August, another doctoral

student will join the team in Bishkek for the interviewer trainings. It is planned to start data collection at the beginning of September.



Project members, Berlin, May 2011

3.2. Tracking of Individuals

The LIK survey is an individual panel survey, i.e., individuals who were interviewed in 2010 will be re-interviewed in the following years. All movements within Kyrgyzstan will be tracked. New households may enter the sample, for example, if an individual forms a new family. Experience from other panel surveys has shown that attrition rates are especially high after the first wave and, hence, a strategy to track as many individuals as possible was developed. Interviewers are sent to the participating individuals in August with a letter to remind them of our

survey. They will thank the individuals for participating in 2010 and tell them an approximate date when they will come again for the second round of interviews. Furthermore, interviewers left their business cards with the respondents in the last year so that the latter can contact them if they move. Respondents who moved within Kyrgyzstan during the last 12 months will be interviewed by the local interviewer in the new location to save money on travelling.



Project members at the Advisory Board Meeting, Berlin, May 2011

4. Advisory Board Meeting

In May 2011, the annual meeting of the Academic Advisory Board of the project was held at DIW Berlin. The project team presented the progress of the project and plans for research to the Board members, who are generally experts on Central Asia and/or survey

methodology, and received very valuable advice from them. The Kyrgyz partners in the project, Roman Mogilevsky from CASE-Kyrgyzstan and Prof. Zarylbek Kudabaev from AUCA, were present during the meeting.

5. Policy and Research Workshop in Bishkek

“The aim of this workshop in Bishkek is to bring together policy makers and researchers.”

On 15 September 2011, a one-day policy and research workshop will be conducted in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. The aim of this workshop is to bring together policy makers and researchers to learn about the benefits of panel data surveys and to present the data

from the first wave of our *Life in Kyrgyzstan* survey. Alexander Kremer, the World Bank Country Manager for the Kyrgyz Republic, has agreed to give the keynote address. The Friedrich Ebert Foundation thankfully provides the funding for this event.

6. Conference on Well-Being in Central Asia

“The transition from a planned to a market economy had dramatic consequences in all post-Soviet republics but especially so in Central Asia.”

DIW Berlin currently invites submissions for an international research conference on the Micro-Level Analysis of Well-Being in Central Asia on 10-11 May 2012 in Berlin, Germany. The transition from a planned to a market economy has had dramatic consequences in all post-Soviet republics but especially so in Central Asia. Twenty years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, we wish to examine the well-being of individuals and households in these countries.

The aim is to bring together researchers from several disciplines, especially economics, sociology,

geography, and anthropology, in this conference. No definition of well-being is imposed but papers using different concepts are welcome. All papers should have an empirical focus and use quantitative or qualitative data at the micro level.

The organising committee of the conference is delighted that the keynote lecture will be delivered by Prof. Nauro Campos (Brunel University, UK).

The submission deadline is 30 September 2011. Please see <http://www.diw.de/centralasia> for the complete Call for Papers.

Funding of the Project



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The grant is received within the funding initiative “Between Europe and the Orient - A Focus on Research and Higher Education in/on Central Asia and the Caucasus”. For further information:

<http://www.volkswagenstiftung.de>

For More Information on the Project:

VISIT THE PROJECT WEBSITE AT

<http://www.diw.de/kyrgyzstan>

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