

NEWSLETTER

for the Research Project

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

Issue #4
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Major news:

- Collection of the LIK: 2011 Wave 2 data cleaning has been finished
- LIK insights:
 - Low preference for current political system
 - Bride capturing is on a decline

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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. Researchers interested in the LIK dataset are requested to send an email to kyr@diw.de describing the project they wish to conduct using the data.

2. Insights from Wave 2

The data cleaning process for the second wave (2011) of the Life in Kyrgyzstan (LIK) survey has recently been finalised. We were able to re-interview 2,856 of the 3,000 (95.2 percent) originally sampled households and 7,364 of the 8,160 (90.2 percent) adult individuals that were interviewed in 2010. This is a very good result and we hope to be

able to follow as many of these adult individuals as possible in the third wave. Data collection will again take place in autumn of 2012.

Given that the LIK is a multi-topic survey, we would like to highlight some interesting findings. In this issue of the newsletter, we focus on political preferences and bride kidnapping.

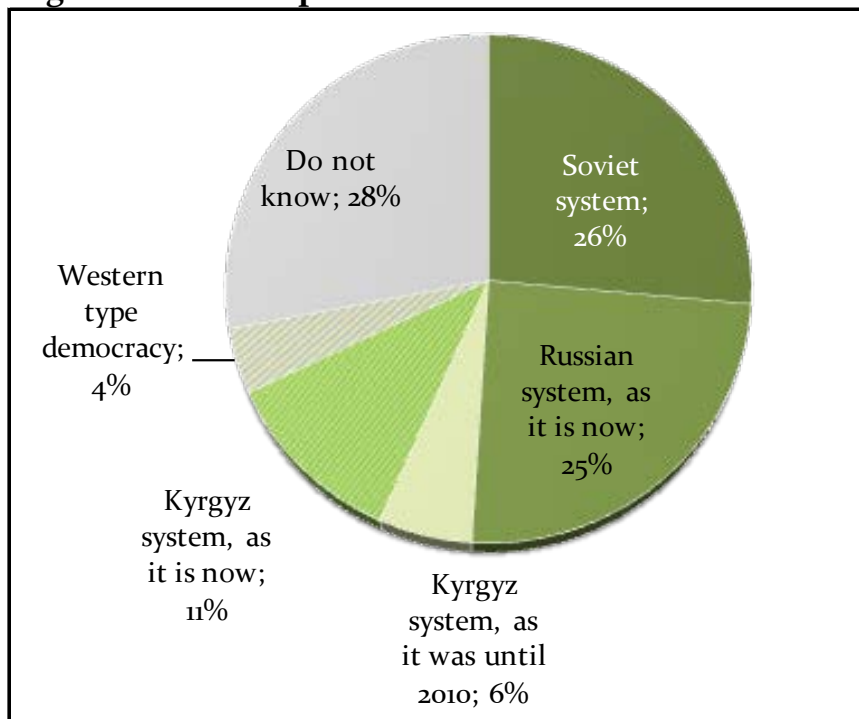
Preference for political system

The question on political preferences in the second wave of the LIK was phrased as follows: "In your opinion, what kind of political system is the most suitable for Kyrgyzstan?". The answer options were 1) “Soviet system”, 2) “Russian system, as it is now”, 3) “Kyrgyz system, as it was until 2010”, 4) “Kyrgyz system, as it is now”, 5) “Western type democracy”,

and 6) “Do not know”.

The answers from 7.7 thousand respondents show very low preference for both the presidential and the parliamentary political systems (Figure 1), which Kyrgyzstan has adopted so far (6 and 11 percent of respondents, respectively).

Figure 1: Political preferences



Source: *Life in Kyrgyzstan survey 2011*

A quarter of the respondents prefer a Soviet type political system, and another quarter prefers the current political regime in Russia, which is the major destination of labour migrants.

The political preferences vary by age: more than half of respondents aged 60+ favour the Soviet type political system, while 38 percent of the aged 18-24 feel less certain. The current political system in Russia is popular among all age groups, while a Western type democracy is the least popular. The political preferences do not differ much by gender, but they diverge somewhat when we look at responses based on educational attainment. University educated respondents appreciate the current political system in Kyrgyzstan more (14 percent) than individuals with lower educational backgrounds (11 percent).

Bride kidnapping

Bride kidnapping, an arrangement of often non-consensual marriages in post-nomadic cultures in Central Asia, has been a recent research and policy issue in Kyrgyzstan. This old tradition has been criticised for violation of human rights and restriction of freedom of women. Given that the LIK asks adult respondents about their marital status and the arrangement of their marriage, we would like to shed some light on this phenomenon using the data from 2010. We look at whether there is a difference in the education and labor market

status between women who reported to have got married through bride-kidnapping and those who got married by love. We restrict our sample to rural married females aged 20-69 and of Kyrgyz origin, because bride kidnapping is more prevalent among this ethnic group.

In total, around 21 percent of females in the subsample reported getting married through bride kidnapping, which is lower than arranged marriages (26 percent), and much lower than marriages by love (53 percent).

Further analysis reveals two

interesting results. First, bride kidnapping as a form of marriage is on decline. Its incidence fell from 34 percent among the aged 50-59 to 14 percent for the aged 20-29.

Second, we do not find very large socio-economic differences between those who got married by bride-kidnapping and those who got married by love (see Table 1). The women who got married by bride kidnapping are more likely to have a lower level of education and to be employed in low-skilled jobs, mostly in agriculture. They also tend to be older and to have more children. However, we do not find much difference in terms of employment and parental education.

Table 1: Marriage arrangements and socio-economic characteristics

Sub-sample of married Kyrgyz rural women

	Age	Years of schooling	Employed, %	Employed in AG, %	Skilled job employment, %	Number of children	Parental years of schooling	# of obs.
Love marriage	38.0	11.5	46	21	38	3.0	8.9	687
Bride kidnapping	41.3	10.8	48	29	29	3.7	8.4	286

Source: *Life in Kyrgyzstan survey 2010*

3. "Well-Being in Central Asia" Conference in Berlin



"Well-Being in Central Asia" Conference in Berlin, May 2012

On May 10-11, DIW Berlin in cooperation with Humboldt University of Berlin and Leibniz University Hannover held the conference "Micro-Level Analysis of Well-Being in Central Asia" in Berlin. This multi-disciplinary conference was aimed at reviewing the well-being and living standards of people in Central Asia twenty years after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Nauro Campos, Brunel University (UK), gave the

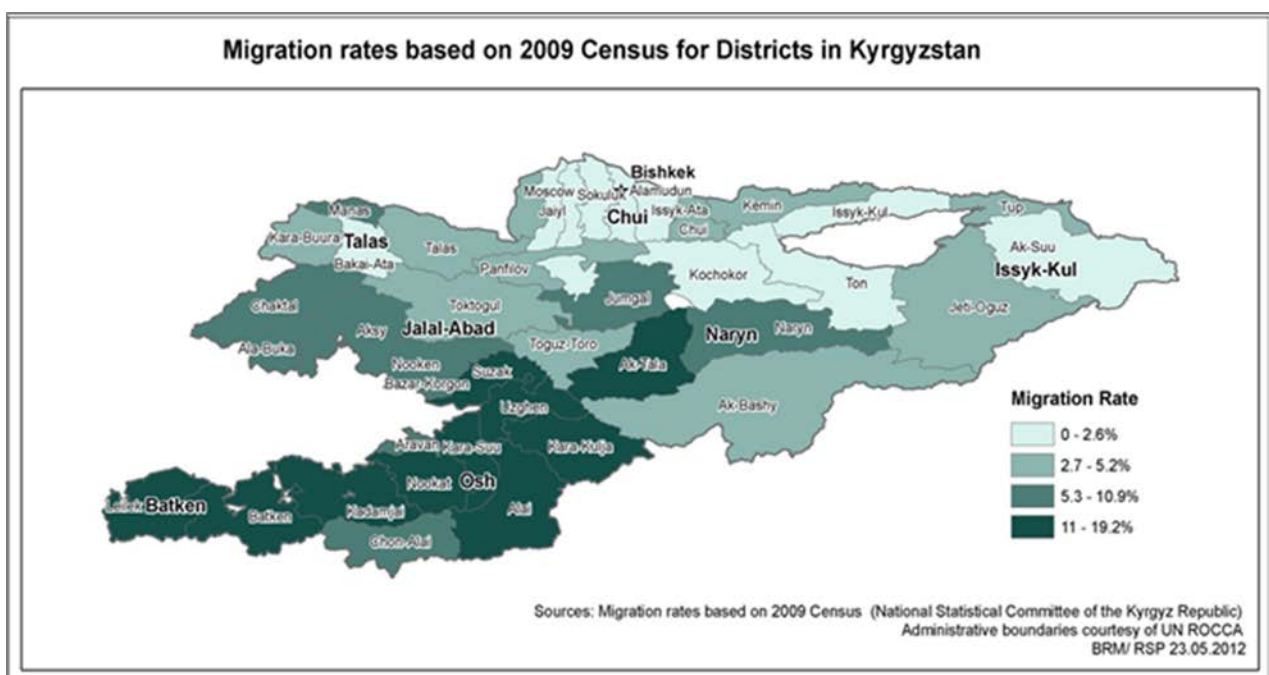
keynote lecture in which he made a connection between subjective well-being and economic reforms in transition countries. In 13 paper contributions, researchers from Europe, USA, UK, and Central Asia discussed the impact of topics such as migration, trade, violent conflict, energy tariffs, or studying abroad on well-being. The conference programme can be found here: <http://www.diw.de/centralasia>.

4. Visualization Workshop

"The specific aim of the workshop was to explore and use the potential of visual representations to be able to discover hidden patterns and relationships between migration, mobility and development."

On May 21-25, Bakhrom Mirkasimov participated in the "Migration and Mobility Data Visualization Workshop" organized by Susan Thieme, Ulrike Müller-Böker and Ross Purves of the University of Zurich. The organisers were supported by visualization experts from the City University London. The specific aim of the workshop was to explore and use the potential of visual representations to be able to discover hidden patterns and relationships between migration, mobility and development concealed in mainly large as well as smaller datasets.

During the workshop, the participants were introduced to visualization techniques to explore, analyze, and present datasets. Below is a migration map for Kyrgyzstan that was produced at the workshop. Migration rates are based on 2009 Census data provided by the National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic. While previous migration maps for Kyrgyzstan illustrate the rate of migration at the oblast (region) level, this map is more detailed and shows migration at the rayon (district) level.



5. Conference and Seminar Presentations

In the first half of 2012, the project team had again the opportunity to attend several conferences and seminars and present their research work. Here is an overview of these presentations:



“Well-Being in Central Asia” Conference opening, Berlin, May 2012

“Are Uzbeks Better Off Than Kyrgyz? Measuring and Explaining Horizontal Inequality in Kyrgyzstan” (Susan Steiner), 12th Jan Tinbergen European Peace Science Conference, Berlin, 25.-27.6.2012

“Displacement in Kyrgyzstan: Evidence from a new micro-level dataset” (Antje Kröger), 12th Jan Tinbergen European Peace Science Conference, Berlin, 25.-27.6.2012

“Migration and Social Networks: Mutual Insurance in the Sending Communities” (Susan Steiner), 8th Annual Conference of the Verein für Socialpolitik Research Committee Development Economics, Bonn, 22.-23.6.2012

“Post-socialist transition and educational mobility in Kyrgyzstan” (Damir Esenaliev), 26th Annual Conference of the European Society for Population Economics, University of Bern (Switzerland) 20.-23.6. 2012

“Determinants and Welfare Effects of Smallholder Market and Export Participation in Kyrgyzstan” (Damir Esenaliev), Conference “Micro-Level Analysis of Well-Being in Central Asia”, Berlin, 10.-11.5.2012

“Migration and Social Networks: Mutual Insurance in the Sending Communities” (Susan Steiner), Annual Meeting of the Allied Social Science Association, Chicago, 6.-8.1.2012

“Displacement in Kyrgyzstan: Evidence from a new micro-level dataset” (Antje Kröger), Annual Meeting of the Allied Social Science Association, Chicago, 6.-8.1.2012

6. Funding of the Project



This project is funded by the Volkswagen Foundation which is a nonprofit foundation under private law. 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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