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DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVES AND SOCIAL VULNERABILITY RISKS IN AKTOBE REGION (WESTERN KAZAKHSTAN)

ABSTRACT

The population is a source of a country's state potential that aids the achievement of strategic plans. Well-being of the population is a guarantee of successful implementation of employment programs in the context of market economics. The main task of state regulation is to reach the desired goal and targets under the conditions of contemporary and actual environment.

Research objective

The objective is to review the implementation of state programmes in regards to population employment and to analyse the actual concepts of state politics development in regards to employment, its efficiency in the present environment of social tension of a region – Aktobe oblast.

Methods

By means of analysis the general scientific research methods have been defined – system methods based on analysis and evaluation of practical and operative data of official statistical sources of Committee on Statistics of Republic of Kazakhstan, the data of city department of Aktobe Employment Centre.

Conclusions

The article generalizes the systems of state principles in implementation of state programmes for elimination of social threats leading to different external and internal threats, poverty and social tension in the region. It reveals the legal steps and responsibility of the employment parties, relationship of unemployed citizens and the state.

KEYWORDS: *social protection, population employment, unemployment, state regulation of employment sector*

INTRODUCTION

In the current climate of social and economical development of the country the issue of various factors impact on the building and implementation of regional programmes for protection of unemployed people's social rights becomes important.

The significance of the issue is reflected in the analysis of implementation of state programmes for solution of social politics in general. The state significance in social protection is the concrete steps that are reduced to practical work of all government's branches for the aim to realize citizens' rights and freedoms. Successful implementation of social programs depends not only on the government's efforts, but also on the consciousness and educational level of citizens. In practice, approved and well-written state programs can be accepted by citizens as receiving material funds and the possibility of dependency. There is an acute need for implementing not only social programs, but also bringing to the consciousness of every citizen that social support is a partial and temporary assistance for poor and socially vulnerable population to make their social adaptation easier and start favourable life activity.

The reason for close attention to the Western region of Kazakhstan – Aktobe region is specified by existing social tension in the region, demand for preventing repeated aggressive protests against existing unemployment threshold in the economically difficult period of time for the country.

Research objective

The objective of research is to review the implementation of state programmes in regards to population employment and to analyse the actual concepts of state politics development in regards to employment, its efficiency in the present environment of social tension of a region – Aktobe oblast. Review most acceptable measures for decreasing the risks of social threats' grow. Estimate the capabilities of region's resources of providing occupation for maximum number of unemployed people.

Research methods

As the research methods are used the general scientific research methods – the system methods based on analysis and evaluation of practical and operative

data of official statistical sources of Committee on Statistics of Republic of Kazakhstan, the data of city department of Aktobe Employment Centre.

IMPLEMENTATION OF FUNDAMENTAL OBJECTIVES OF STATE REGULATION IN POPULATION EMPLOYMENT

The contemporary development trends of Republic of Kazakhstan in context of market economics are the reason for active development and realization of a number of constructive, well-ordered and consistent steps in order to achieve the state's common strategy – to join Top 30 Most Developed Countries in the World (Strategy 2050, Kazakhstan).

One of preferred directions of long-term development strategies of Republic of Kazakhstan is the consolidation of the statehood through stable and united nation, it's well-being and sustainability, support of socially vulnerable segment of people, contribution into moral and ethical education and invigoration of the nation.

Kazakhstan implemented state strategical system to ensure development of each social and economical aspect of the regions including their resource potential. Each region is individually unique in its resources, perspectives and potential. The state, in turn, was obliged to combine the advantages of each region and implement a cycle of beneficial cooperation to provide citizens with all the necessary resources.

Currently in general the improvement of the social and economical conditions, formation and balanced development of future generations are the objectives not only special youth-oriented, but also implemented in the country ambitious state programmes for education advancement, public health, boosted industrial development.

Kazakhstan government while performing economical modernization pays special attention to the issue of forming fundamentally new employment relationship model that combines entrepreneur support with respect to workers' interest, protection of interests of all Republic's social groups which may be highlighted via following algorithm:

- 1) start of the Digital Kazakhstan programme, which will contribute to communication development and provide countrywide access to the fibre-optic network environment;

- 2) free vocational training; Since 2017 such education is available both for unemployed youth and older people without vocational education;
- 3) introduced obligatory learning and teaching other subjects from senior classes' course in Kazakhstan schools in English language;
- 4) orientation to the agricultural development, which is expected to bring Kazakhstan amongst world's biggest agricultural producers and accordingly allow creation of new jobs;
- 5) implemented the macroeconomic policy of the state – members of the Eurasian Economic Union for 2015–2016, the main objective which is to decrease risks for the long-term prospects of sustainable economic development of state members, search of internal sources of economic growth, including effective interaction of economies of state members and implementation of integration capacity of the Union was (The decision of the supreme economic council, 2015).

Table 1.

Main job market indicators in RoK for 2012–2016

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Population, '000 of people	16673.077	16909.766	17160.744	17417.673	17670.6
Occupied population, '000 of people	8507.1	8570.6	8510.111	8623.811	8522.3
Employees, '000 of people	5813.7	5949.7	6109.7	6294.9	6361.5
Self-employed workers, '000 of people	2693.4	2621.0	2400.4	2328.9	2160.8
Unemployed population, '000 of people	474.8	470.7	451.911	451.111	441.3
Amount of unemployed people registered in the employment centres, '000 of people	34.63	30.03	33.43	34.6	37.5
Unemployment rate, %	5.3	5.2	5.0	5.0	4.9

Source: original study based on data of www.stat.gov.kz, access: 3.03.2017

State has identified the institutional goals in population employment, unemployment problems and manpower mobility, which will remain in the centre of attention of social, politic and economic activities in the developing

regions. The increasingly achieve significance at contemporary stage of global economical crisis.

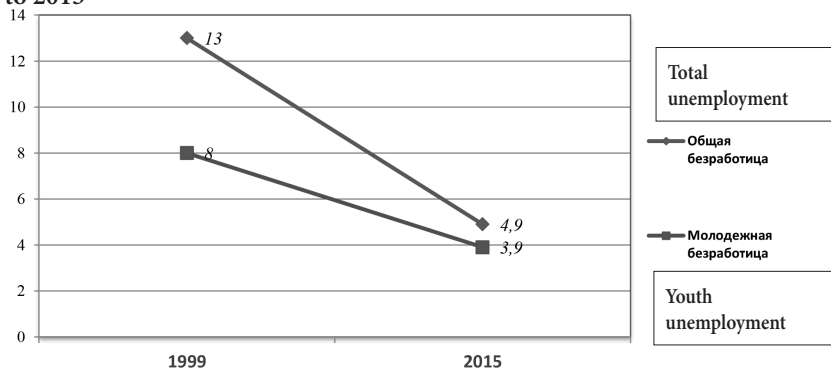
In order to establish more flexible job market that allows long-term restructuring and economy effectiveness increase in general, Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Republic of Kazakhstan is working on improvement of the existing regulatory legal acts to ensure increasing effectiveness of state regulation of population employment and social protection, job market balance, targeting of unemployed people social support in the context of relaxation of employment relationship and improvement of state services rendering quality in regard to employment (Statistic dates, 2016) (table 1).

Thus, state employment programmes' objectives shall contribute to positive dynamics of republic's population social support processes. So, in view of recent five-year plans there is observed more trust to the employment authorities, this reflects in increasing amount of registered unemployed citizens, which contributed into small decrease of the unemployment rate in republic in general.

We presume that the positive indications dynamics in the population employment in Republic of Kazakhstan is targeted to provide stable and productive population occupation by developing work potential, assistance in recruitment. So, from 1999 to 2015 in Kazakhstan the unemployment level decreased by 2.7 times and was equal to 5% (in 1999 – 13.5%), amount of unemployed population decreased from 950k in 1999 to 451.1k in 2015 (figure 1).

Figure 1.

Percentage of total unemployment and unemployed youth for the period from 1999 to 2015



Source: original study based on the data of <http://www.enbek.gov.kz>, access: 3.03.2017

According to the statistical data all over the republic in these years more than 111k people were contracted to the social jobs, wherefrom 77.6k were further employed to regular job. More than 91k of young citizen were sent to the youth practice (young people's internship up to 6 months at state's own cost), 57.4k of them managed to find employment.

At the same time 344.6k people were employed at the vacancies available in the vacancy database. Implementation of DKZ 2020 has allowed to keep the unemployed rate in Kazakhstan at 5% level. This is a fairly stable percentage of unemployment, which implies a lack of leverage and tools that influence on program's effectiveness for unemployment elimination in the way of implementing national large industrial manufacturers, factories, and plants can provide a long-term employment of a huge number of people (Baldin, 2011).

In 2016 the total number of unemployed rate didn't changed much, but leverage to the unemployment level has changed, the state has reinforced its positions in that direction. As per October 1, 2016 as part of the programme Employment Roadmap 2020 (DKZ, 2020) were employed about 156k people, wherefrom 142.3k – to the regular job. This became main project in the context of achieving employment objectives.

Worth to be noted that official statistics do not displays the real picture of determination of unemployed status & revenue distribution, as there are no reliable data on actual income earned by the richest and poorest social groups. This relates to the fact that part of the individuals referred to as low-income receiving has extra informal, as well as often "shady" makings. First of all such situation has developed around unemployed women, recent graduates and "young" pensioners (20–26 years and 30–49 years) (Lygina, Kim, 2011).

The latent unemployment in Kazakhstan exists, but according to official statistical data it is really small – about 0,4% to the economically active the population. In Kazakhstan very high level of independently busy workers that means – almost every third citizen of the republic provides himself with work and doesn't depend on the employer (Izgarina, 2014).

It should be noted, the labor market in the Republic of Kazakhstan is unbalanced on demographic, industry, regional spheres. In particular, in coal and mining, oil processing areas the male labor prevails and the entities where female labor would be most fully applied are poorly developed here, and from

here number of the unemployed of the country nearly two thirds constitute women (The information magazine KAZPORTAL.kz, “Unemployment in Kazakhstan”, 2016, Kazakhstan).

The state programmes developed in order to enforce active employment promotion, unemployment protection and other social protection assistance measures take the most load for achieving the goals that ensure mitigation of risks from social threats.

The system of social protection of the population is set of standard and methodical, organizational and material resources which is implemented within activities of a specific social industry – the social service rendering the state services to the population on the basis of individual “pointed” approach (Novikova, 2013).

The operating system of social protection is characterized by prevalence of the principle of complete solidarity, high level of the state participation and low incentives. So, for example, the provision of social assistance was the reason for citizens’ desire to receive it, many citizens became content with minimum benefits, not trying to occupy themselves with responsible work. Stimulating levers for citizens, such as an explaining their opportunities, implementing free educational system for the personality development, for increasing the foundations of entrepreneurial activity could motivate citizens to improve low-income, to turn-off a fear of risks and emerge entrepreneurial knowledge (Massalov, 2012).

On the principle of complete solidarity social security on disability, on the occasion of loss of the supporter, social protection of jobless citizens and on age is organized. All physical persons – citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan in case of approach of risk cases receive public welfare payments at the identical level regardless of participation in a labour activity and a fee.

Population employment centres develop and implement following systems of measures in order to assist the social protection:

- 1) employment promotion for unemployed citizens of the region;
- 2) collaboration with employers in search of jobseekers to the vacancies;
- 3) arrangement of professional training and retraining for unemployed citizens;
- 4) arrangement of services for social vocational guidance;

- 5) assistance in citizens' business initiative;
- 6) arrangement of youth practice;
- 7) arrangement of social jobs;
- 8) assistance in voluntary migration to increase manpower mobility.

At same time the freedom of rights is provided to the unemployed citizens:

- 1) free consulting, information and social vocational guidance services by population employment centres in order to choose or change the occupation (blue-collar, complementary profession etc.);
- 2) social payments in case of job loss;
- 3) free training at state's cost for a new blue-collar profession or achieving new one;
- 4) choice of expected job.

The freedom and rights provided to the unemployed citizens ensures support of the socially vulnerable population groups, define the system of measures for protection of the population groups that are endangered by loss of stable income.

Such measures are:

- 1) arrangement of job placement assistance system for unemployed citizens through simultaneous control by several legal regulations stipulating responsibility both on region employers' and employment authorities' sides;
- 2) implementation of the Employment Roadmap 2020 project Social jobs – partial funding for hiring qualified workers;
- 3) implementation of the Employment Roadmap 2020 project Youth practice – full funding for internship of university and college graduates within 6 months in order to obtain starter working skill at the studied profession (category);
- 4) implementation of the Public works project – funded within budget and employers' funds for unemployed, university students, general high-school students during summer holidays and individuals not provided with job due to business interruptions.

REVIEW OF DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVES AND SOCIAL VULNERABILITY RISKS IN AKTOBE REGION

To the moment most of the attention is attracted to the western part of Kazakhstan, particularly to Aktobe region. Such focused society attention to the region is specified by its economical and investment potential:

- 1) the region is actively picking up the pace in industrial and novel development; there is a plant that produces high-carbon ferrochrome having thousands of employees, unparalleled anywhere in the world by know-hows and novel solutions;
- 2) investors are actively placing their funds in the oil industry, the region is rich for geological reserves of oil and gas;
- 3) the biggest chemical, light and agricultural industry plants are located in Aktobe (more than 700 operations).

Region is taking 2nd place in the world by chromium ore reserves, third by copper ore, fourth by gas reserves.

The factors became a foundation for Head of state defining the strategical direction for the region – to become a million population city until 2040 with current Aktobe population of 521,180,000 people (www.stat.gov.kz, access: 3.03.2017).

The region that have unique mineral and raw resource (around 340 mineral deposits), where a positive grow of processing industry share can be observed, has a great potential of taking a lead in the republic by all region development indicators including economically active population share.

Statistical analysis of the region in context of occupation and population employment can be generalized by representing main social and economical indices of western part of Kazakhstan – Aktobe region (table 2).

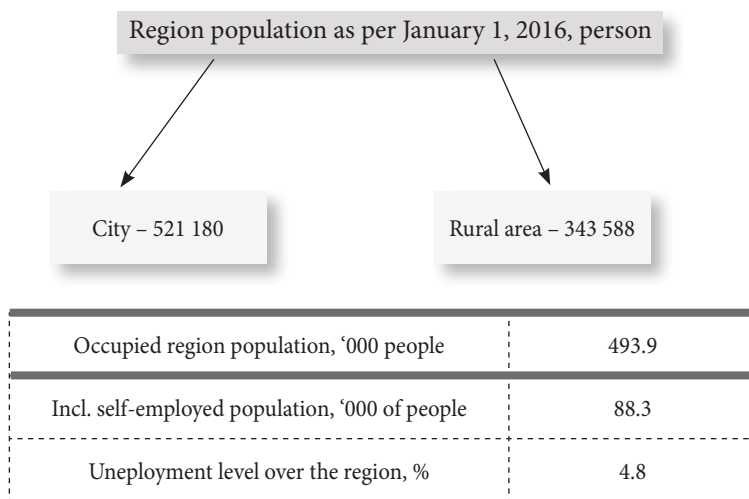
Based on indices data given in table 2, there are significant measures for resolving the main social problem – population unemployment. In terms of reaching social demographic target – to become a million population city and to maintain positive balance of social and economical welfare of the region, state population employment authorities have taken a number of measures, which implementation is contributed by following:

- 1) application of most advanced and improved leverage to increase the population employment awareness;

- 2) protection of local job market via implementing tax burden system for employers involving foreign manpower;
- 3) accessible inspecting system of unemployed citizen job placement transparency via implementing of reporting form for employers;
- 4) stable allocation of 40% of republican budget for social projects support;
- 5) systematic integration and improvement of state programmes against unemployment;
- 6) subsidizing due to staff reduction or business interruptions;
- 7) citywide, region-wide, specialized (for demographic group with medical and social problems – handicapped) job fairs;
- 8) three-side development in professional education direction, retraining citizens at full state’s costs.

Table 2.

Main social protection indices over Aktobe region for 1.01.2016



Source: original study based on data of www.stat.gov.kz, access: 3.03.2017

As per operational data of Aktobe City Department of Population Employment in the context of population job placement assistance we will reflect following data on employment programme implementation (table 3).

Table 3.

Operational data of population employment authorities' activities in Aktoke for 2015, 2016

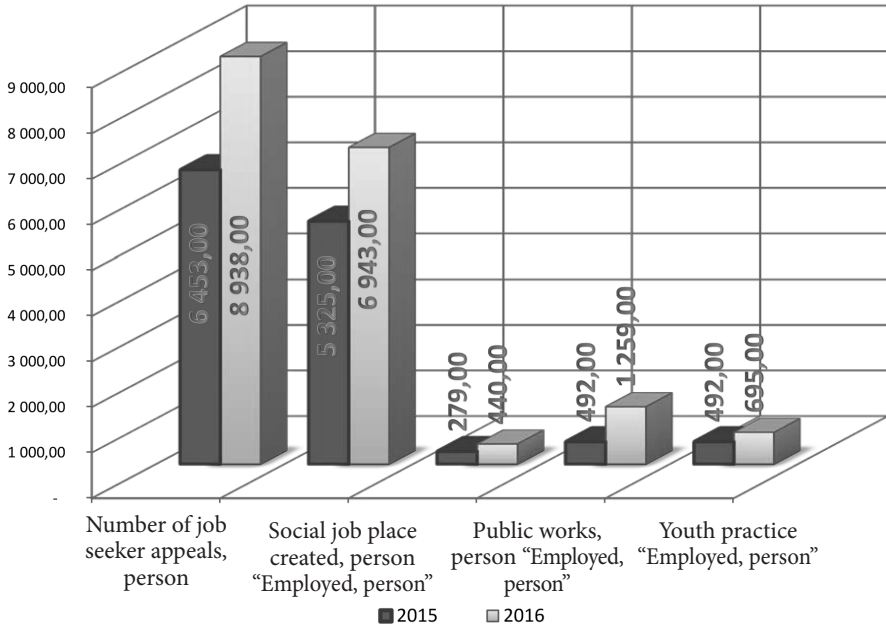
	2015	2016	% ratio
Number of job seeker appeals, person	6 453	8 938	139%
Employed, person	5 325	6943	130%
Social job place created, person	279	440	157%
Public works, person	490	1259	255%
Youth practice	492	695	141%
Amount of job fairs conducted, pcs.	10	12	
Incl. special for disabled people, pcs.	2	3	

Source: original study based on data of Aktoke City Department of Population Employment

Amount of citizen appealing for jobs in 1 calendar year rose up by 38%, 30% more citizens employed thanks to the assistance of Aktoke Population Employment Centre. Today, we can make a bold conclusion about increasing public confidence in the work of Employment Centres. Thus, the state authority for population employment properly provides employment assistance, which is also contributed by advanced citywide and region-wide activities as job fairs, where responsibility of governmental and non-governmental organizations is to announce in public the amount of free job places. Therefore society and state act as guarantor of social well-being of the people by acting at most transparent external resources (table 4).

The economic growth is possible only upon reaching required social standard of living. Due to the complex measures for social support of citizens taken by the state during the period from 2001 to 2015 the population share with the income below a subsistence minimum decreased from 46,7% to 2,7% respectively. This indicator demonstrates decrease in level of poverty and improvement of quality of life of Kazakhstan citizens.

Table 4.
Operational data of population employment authorities' activities in Aktobe for 2015, 2016



Source: original study based on data of Aktobe City Department of Population Employment

The existing risks of social ill-being in the region arising in connection to the existing unemployment and poverty levels:

- 1) public psychology and mentality, its readiness and reluctance to hard and intellectual work;
- 2) low education of rural areas and districts population, therefore easily endangered by the threats and risks of destabilizing nature;
- 3) outside interruption into state system of the country by terrorist aggression threats funded by third parties;
- 4) other risks arising from topics of corruption fighting.

CONCLUSIONS

Development and implementation of special measures for preserving job places and employment assistance would allow saving high employment

level in times of temporary economical challenges related to impact of world financial economical crisis.

The current transition to the boosted industrial and novel development from one side extends the possibilities of further employment growth, from another it requires development and implementation of new different approaches for integration of internal manpower reserves into job market, increasing quality and economical activity of work resources.

Generalizing the said above, it is to be noted that Aktobe region of Republic of Kazakhstan in anticipation of its ambitious development is facing many social and economical challenges, sets up a brand new course in development of the region, which in future will be able to respond the country society calls and balance out the existing poverty threshold by intelligent and modern social politics.

The unemployment always has been and will be a national threat, a weak link in establishment of powerful state. Doubtfully, important aspect of social welfare will be the constant fighting against poverty and unemployment, where the state together with society shall achieve an undeniable victory.

This requires for importance of state authorities' activities protecting citizens from various social threats to be highlighted.

But still there exists some problems in social policy: firstly, the employees of government agencies should be qualified better, periodically intense their competence and improve their professional skills. That would give a new impulse for the social programs, a flexible approach to the unemployed population. Often, a less qualified employee performs its functions solely under the approved regulations and documentation, without any idea how to react to the situation from the point of view of its originality. A qualified, more literate and benevolent state employee would raise greater confidence in social protection by citizens.

Every citizen of the country should know that he can be protected in old age, in case of injury, having life and health insurance, social and labour protection. That can ensure demographic stability, reduces the social risk of huge emigration and could become a national success of sustainable development. The institutions for the social protection must be developed and improved by all criteria. Today, state employees and state institutions do not have much authority among the population. Views are contradictory. Employers aren't

sure of Employment Centres' competence, unemployed citizens there is no full confidence that they will be provided with employment. Considering that Kazakhstan is a young country, these problems perhaps, would be researched through a prism of human experience and will be adequately solved in the nearest future.

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