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Impact of global and local urbanization and social trends on the future of Kazakhstan

The article examines global and local trends in the urbanization process in Kazakhstan and the world and their impact on the future of the country. In 2007, a turning point in the urbanization of the entire world came — the milestone of 50 % was overcome, and by 2050 66 % is expected. It describes forecasts for an increase in women's economic influence at the expense of third world countries, influence on the development of scientific and technological progress through the activities of special scientific zones or cities with a high density of technical companies, as well as the change of the global consumer base from Europe and America to the countries of Asia and Tropical Africa, the beginning of economic growth on the African continent. At the end of the XXI century, the three largest cities in the world will be in Tropical Africa — Lagos, Kinshasa, Dar es Salaam. It provides statistics on the development of urbanization in Kazakhstan, approaching the indicators of population ageing, the dangers of too rapid growth of megacities without adequate medical and educational provision. The article concerns state measures to prevent the formation of “marginal rings”, due to the growth of protest potential in the event of a social crisis, as well as the desire to reduce the outflow of population from rural areas. It reveals the prospects for the formation of agglomerations in Kazakhstan and the similarity of local trends in Kazakhstan and Russia in terms of population reduction in small and medium-sized cities and the growth in the number of large cities and megacities. Analysis of the studied material is provided.

Keywords: urbanization, megacities, metropolis, megalopolis, infrastructure, trends, population ageing, urban population, number of citizens, internal migration.

Introduction

The relevance of the research topic lies in the global urbanization trend, which brings with it changes in social relations, new rules of life, including for the Republic of Kazakhstan. Some of the global urbanization trends will be reflected in Kazakhstani society, some, due to local characteristics and level of development, will be modified or become authentic. A feature of the study of the prospects for the impact of urbanization on the country is a clear example of its influence on the northern and southern capitals of Kazakhstan, which became the main centers of attraction for internal migration for 2 decades.

The study aims to reveal the impact of global and local urbanization and social trends on the future of Kazakhstan. The research objectives are a) to trace the main global urbanization and social trends in Kazakhstan; b) to identify local trends in urbanization; c) to analyze the prospects for the development of urbanization in Kazakhstan.

The main conflict in the theory of urbanization development in the country is the contradiction in the position of the state and the expert community regarding its further course. Urbanization is a challenge to a wide range of spheres of life, associated with the possibility of social tension in cities overloaded with migration flows. This challenge requires an equally wide range of actions in the most diverse areas of public administration, designed for the long term.

Much of the research on this topic does not raise the issue of the political impact of urbanization on society and the political consequences of an untimely and inappropriate response to this complex phenomenon.

A review of the literature showed sufficient knowledge of this topic, revealed the ongoing process from different sides, and showed a close relationship with other social trends.

Experimental

The article uses materials from theoretical and practical research of domestic and foreign scientists in the field of urbanization. Based on inductive, deductive and statistical conclusions, the method of theoretical synthesis and generalization was applied.

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Results

During theoretical study of the given problem, tendencies were identified, directly or indirectly related to urbanization. The rapid growth in the population of the metropolises of Kazakhstan will lead to an increase in the number of unemployed and non-studying youth, which threatens high protest potential in times of crisis crises.

The novelty of the study lies in the fact that both the influence of global and local trends in urbanization is considered.

The study revealed the following results:

a) The global trend of increased activity of the female population in the economic sphere is apparent at the present time. Kazakhstan has approached the beginning of population aging (if the share of citizens over 65 years old is above 7 %, then society is considered ageing).

b) The reasons for controlling internal migration, in addition to containing social tension in the two capitals, may be due to the local feature of urbanization when huge agricultural areas remain without any impact. This already creates strategic problems.

c) Urbanization and urban growth alone do not bring economic benefits, unless the new townspeople change their way of life to the city, which in this case means “more efficient”. The growth of education and a change in mindset leads to greater self-actualization of former rural residents, which causes greater productivity and involvement in higher cultural mass and commodity-money relations.

The concept of urbanization as a mental transition from traditional thinking to urban–modernistic is interesting.

Discussions

In 2007, for the first time in human history, 50 % of the world’s population began to live in cities, and according to forecasts, by the middle of the 21st century, it will increase to 66 % [1]. The assessment was complicated by the differences in the classification of settlements in different countries. For example, in Scandinavia, where a small population is dispersed over a large area, a city is considered to be a settlement with a population of 200 inhabitants or more. In Japan, the situation is diametrically opposite — a large population and a disproportionately small area, and a city — from 50 thousand inhabitants [2].

During these years, the growth of urbanization will be driven by an increase in the urban population in the traditionally rural countries of Africa and Asia. Kazakhstan will contribute to this process, but not as significantly as India, China, Indonesia, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Bangladesh.

Economic growth will directly depend on innovation and scientific and technological progress, which will take place in specially oriented metropolises or special zones like American “Silicon Valley”, Israeli “Silicon Wadi”, Indian Bangalore, etc. In this trend, our country is still acting as a consumer of innovations, but not their creator.

Metropolises will be the engines of the world economy and this process will only intensify. Perception of megalopolises will change (that is, urban agglomerations with a population of over 10 million people and a GDP of over \$100 billion) as part of a certain state to be perceived as a semi-independent subject with its own interests. An example is Moscow and Russia, Greater Tokyo and Japan, London and Great Britain [3]. The largest city in Kazakhstan is Almaty, capable of reaching 3.5 million people in the next 10 years, but in the foreseeable future, the achievement of the status of a megalopolis is not expected [4].

By 2030, about 1 billion women will be economically active. Therefore, the role of women in the cities of developing countries will increase, due to the fact that this will be facilitated by an increased standard of living and differentiated ways of earning. This process is especially noticeable in our country on the example of the “beauty sphere”, which in a few years has formed a large block of business areas, in one form or another, affecting a significant percentage of the female population of the country.

In general, the economy of the 21st century will be heavily dependent on the growth of the middle class in East and Southeast Asia and Tropical Africa, and for the same reason, by the end of the century, the largest cities in the world will be African megalopolises (Lagos, Kinshasa, Dar es Salaam) [5].

As for local trends, since the middle of the twentieth century, Kazakhstan continues to be the country with the largest urban population in Central Asia [6]. Kazakhstan corresponds to 4 stages of development according to the Gibbs concept — the growth of suburbs from which agglomerations are then formed.

By 2021, the level of urbanization in Kazakhstan reached 58 % and at this stage 5 agglomerations are being formed: Nur-Sultan, Almaty, Aktyubinsk, Shymkent, Karaganda [7].

Three Kazakhstani metropolises (Almaty, Nur-Sultan and Shymkent) account for about 21 % of the population and up to 33 % of the country's GDP, which indicates the increased efficiency of these administrative entities.

Living in one of these 3 cities in itself increases life expectancy by up to 5 years over the national average. However, the increased rate of urbanization in the capital and Almaty leads to an increase in the level of citizens without financial savings, without the possibility of meeting additional needs, except for the basic ones, regardless of the availability of their own housing. This group of people occupies up to 50 % of the population of these cities [1].

Three large cities with their inherent social problems become centers of criminal life, which increases the percentage of crimes than the national average (up to 36 % of all crimes). Uneven development of urban transport, social, educational infrastructure leads to the formation of different economic zones of residence. City districts deprived of infrastructure are becoming the focus of the population with an unstable financial situation and a marginal outlook, so-called disadvantaged areas.

Increasingly, the country's top officials are making statements about the uncontrolled growth of megacities and the problems of providing all newcomers with medicine and education. This is due to the actual freedom to change the place of residence within the country, without additional restrictions, such as in Uzbekistan. According to the Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan on September 1, 2021, mechanisms for regulating internal migration will be envisaged in this matter [8].

The increase in the share of the urban population is a worldwide process. For several centuries, this phenomenon has been going through an active phase and so far no special reasons are visible that can prevent this. *Without the availability of alternative places of residence with a high standard of living, similar to those in megacities, the measures will be artificial and ineffective.*

Without the necessary attention to social and infrastructural spheres, urbanization contributes to the formation of "marginal rings" — those poor areas near large cities. To combat this phenomenon, the state apparatus has postponed its previous priority of creating megacities in Kazakhstan. This was also facilitated by the fact, that over the past 10 years, about 1.2 million people have left the country's agricultural sector creating a strong staff deficit, which is difficult to fill in the shortest possible time. Besides, Kazakhstan has the 9th largest territory in the world and the outflow of the population from the developed rural lands, especially the borderlands, can lead to unexpected strategic consequences for the state as a whole [9].

At the moment, our country is inferior to the developed economies of the world in the efficiency and productivity of the agricultural sector by 10–12 times [10].

Problems of public transport and the entire infrastructure in general, as well as the problem of housing are the two pillars of future urban instability. Citizens choose private transport, due to their reluctance to use an underdeveloped system of public mobility, which in turn overloads the streets, leading to rush hour traffic jams. The expansion of the types of transport, accessibility and quality of mobility by the user of urban transport infrastructure leads to the refusal of frequent use of personal cars, and in the future forms the self-sufficiency of public transport, instead of private one. However, in Kazakhstan, they still continue to solve this issue by expanding roads to the detriment of other road users, giving priority to car drivers. Although an illustrative experiment in which several dozen drivers of private cars are housed in one shuttle bus, thereby colossally unloading road traffic, it remains in the field of theoretical knowledge, not practical applications. In European countries, the public transport user has a key advantage over the driver, and the road policy of states makes the absence of a car more advantageous and convenient.

A new trend that has not yet been encountered in history is ageing of the world's population. The growth in the level of life safety, the availability of medicine and education, the absence of world wars contributes to an increase in life expectancy and a decrease in fertility.

Kazakhstan is entering the initial stage of demographic ageing of the population. The demographic situation in Kazakhstan is characterized by an increase in the proportion of older people in the age structure of the country's population (citizens aged 65 and over — 7.5 %, and by 2050 may reach 14 %). This will create an additional burden on the socio-economic sphere, because the ratio of older people to people of working age will grow from 20 % in 2019 to 38 % in 2050. The number of young specialists will decrease, while the number of pensioners will increase [11].

Certain concerns are inspired by the obsolescence of the communal infrastructure, which is currently worn by 57 %. In addition, in the housing stock of 78 thousand apartment buildings, over 18 thousand need repair, which indicates the moral obsolescence of every fourth apartment building in the country [12].

There are two distinct trends in Russian cities that are identical to the urbanization processes in Kazakhstan. The population of small and medium-sized cities is declining, and large cities are being transformed into agglomerations [13].

There are several dozen depressed small and medium-sized cities in the country, the main problems of which lie in the ecological situation, requiring immediate, costly and radical solutions, a change in the approach of the authorities to the problem of small towns and unfavorable phenomena in industry and social sphere, unfortunate location of the city bypassing transport, resource and infrastructure corridors [14].

The era of renewable energy sources has shown that the city should become not just a metropolis, but, first of all, an “ecopolis” [15]. On the example of Almaty, Kazakhstan already has the experience in urban space greening. Planting a “green belt” around Nur-Sultan suggests a long-term development of this technique.

Conclusions

Urbanization is a global trend that each country goes through with its own individual characteristics: Cultural, social, demographic, and others. Most likely, the process of urbanization will continue at the expense of those regions of the planet that have still retained a high level of rural population. For 70 years, Kazakhstan was the most urbanized region of the USSR among the Central Asian republics. This is also reflected in the level of the elderly population, when north and east of the country is comparable in terms of performance with some European countries, and south and west with Central Asia.

Urbanization requiring solid multi-stage long-term policies to prevent social tension due to the excessive migration flow to the country’s megacities, most likely to be met by restrictive measures on internal migration, which will not remove the issue from the agenda, but only postpone it.

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Т.С. Тұқпатұллин, Д. Панто

Әлемдік және жергілікті урбандалу және әлеуметтік үрдістердің Қазақстанның болашағына әсері

2007 жылы бүкіл әлемнің урбандалуында бетбұрыс кезеңі басталды — 50 % межеден өтті, ал 2050 жылға қарай 66 % болады деп күтілуде. Мақалада үшінші әлем елдері есебінен әйелдердің экономикалық ықпалының ұлғаюы, арнайы ғылыми аймақтардың немесе техникалық компаниялардың тығыздығы жоғары қалалардың қызметі есебінен ғылыми-техникалық прогрестің дамуына әсер ету болжамы сипатталған. Еуропа мен Америкадан Азия мен тропикалық Африка елдерінде жаһандық тұтыну базасының өзгеруі, Африка құрлығында экономикалық өсудің басталуы байқалды. ХХІ ғасырдың аяғына қарай әлемдегі ең ірі үш қала тропикалық Африкада — Лагос, Киншаса, Дар-эс-Саламда орналасады. Қазақстанда урбандалуды дамыту статистикасы келтірілген, халықтың ерте қартаю көрсеткіштеріне жақындау байқалады, тиісті медициналық және білім берумен қамтамасыз етудің ақ мегаполистердің тым тез өсу қаупі сезіледі. Осыған байланысты мемлекеттің әлеуметтік дағдарыс жағдайында наразылық әлеуетінің өсуіне байланысты «шекті сақиналардың» қалыптасуына жол бермеу, сондай-ақ халықтың ауылдан кетуін азайтуға ұмтылу шараларын қарастыру керек. Қазақстандағы агломерациялардың қалыптасу перспективалары зерттелді. Қазақстан мен Ресейдің шағын және орта қалаларындағы халық санының қысқаруы және ірі қалалар мен мегаполистер санының өсуіндегі жергілікті тенденциялары салыстырылды. Осы мақаланың авторлары зерттелген материалдың толық талдауын ұсынған.

Кілт сөздер: урбандалу, инфрақұрылым, үрдістер, халықтың қартаюуы, қала халқы, азаматтар саны, ішкі көші-қон.

Т.С. Тукпатуллин, Д. Панто

Влияние мировых и локальных урбанизационных и социальных тенденций на будущее Казахстана

В 2007 г. наступил переломный момент в урбанизации всего мира — преодолён рубеж в 50 %, а к 2050 г. ожидается 66 %. В статье описаны прогнозы по увеличению женского экономического влияния за счет стран третьего мира, влияние на развитие научно-технического прогресса за счет деятельности специальных научных зон или городов с повышенной плотностью технических компаний. Произошла смена глобальной потребительской базы из Европы и Америки в страны Азии и Тропической Африки, наблюдается начало экономического роста на Африканском континенте. В конце ХХІ в. три самых крупных города мира будут находиться в Тропической Африке — Лагосе, Киншасе, Дар-эс-Саламе. Приведена статистика развития урбанизации в Казахстане, заметно приближение к показателям раннего старения населения, ощущается опасность слишком быстрого роста мегаполисов без надлежащего медицинского и образовательного обеспечения. В этой связи рассмотрены меры государства по предотвращению формирования «маргинальных колец», по причине роста протестного потенциала в случае социального кризиса, равно как и желание ослабить отток населения из сельской местности. Изучены перспективы формирования агломераций в Казахстане. Проведено сравнение локальных тенденций Казахстана и России по сокращению численности населения малых и средних городов и роста численности крупных городов и мегаполисов. Авторами настоящей статьи представлена попытка полного анализа исследуемого материала.

Ключевые слова: урбанизация, инфраструктура, тенденции, старение населения, городское население, число граждан, внутренняя миграция.

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