

# A Comparative Analysis of Return Migration Policy: Germany, Russia, Kazakhstan

2015

Elizabeth Boyd  
*University of Central Florida*

Find similar works at: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/honorstheses1990-2015>

University of Central Florida Libraries <http://library.ucf.edu>

 Part of the [International and Area Studies Commons](#)

## Recommended Citation

Boyd, Elizabeth, "A Comparative Analysis of Return Migration Policy: Germany, Russia, Kazakhstan" (2015). *HIM 1990-2015*. 610.  
<https://stars.library.ucf.edu/honorstheses1990-2015/610>

This Open Access is brought to you for free and open access by STARS. It has been accepted for inclusion in HIM 1990-2015 by an authorized administrator of STARS. For more information, please contact [lee.dotson@ucf.edu](mailto:lee.dotson@ucf.edu).

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF RETURN MIGRATION POLICY: GERMANY,  
RUSSIA, AND KAZAKHSTAN

by

ELIZABETH L. BOYD

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the Honors in the Major Program in International and Global Studies  
in the College of Science  
and in The Burnett Honors College  
at the University of Central Florida  
Orlando, Florida

Summer Term 2015

Thesis Chair: Dr. Houman Sadri

## **ABSTRACT**

The intent of this thesis is to analyze and compare the return migration policies in Germany, Russia, and Kazakhstan. It is a relatively new category of migration policy, having only been identified in the 1970s. There is no uniform policy for return migration and consequently, each country has its own unique policy. Ethnicity plays a major role in all three countries' policies. However, some policies of return migration are more successful than others.

## **DEDICATION**

For those who believed in my ability and supported me through this process.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

My sincere gratitude to my Thesis Chair, Dr. Sadri, for all of his encouragement, support, and patience throughout this endeavor. Without his guidance this thesis would have been impossible. I would also like to thank the rest of my committee, Dr. Knuckey and Professor Abbas for their assistance and advice. I thank my family and friends for their patience and unrelenting support, especially my mother and Kayla for their editing assistance.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	1
GERMANY.....	4
POST-WWII .....	5
FEDERAL EXPELLEE LAW .....	7
THE IMPACT OF THE SOVIET UNION.....	8
RESULTS.....	9
BEGINNING OF THE END.....	10
RUSSIA.....	11
TRADITION OF ATTRACTING FOREIGNERS.....	12
SOVIET ERA .....	13
AFTER THE SOVIET UNION .....	13
COMPATRIOTS .....	15
RESULTS.....	16
KAZAKHSTAN.....	17
INDEPENDENCE.....	18
ISSUES FACING A MULTI-CULTURAL STATE.....	19
ISSUES WITH EXECUTION .....	20
OUTCOME .....	21
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	22
REFERENCES .....	25

## **LIST OF TABLES**

Table 1: Statistical results of repatriation programs and naturalization.....	23
---	----

## **INTRODUCTION**

Return migration, also known as repatriation, is defined as an individual returning to their place of origin. It appears straightforward on the surface, and then you begin think about it and the questions start forming. Why would people return migrate? The whole point of migrating is to settle permanently in another country for a better life. What could possibly entice them to return? This topic is exceedingly more complex than its simplistic definition.

Return migration is an issue that impacts the political, economic, and social aspects of a country. Consequently, it is important not only to understand the motivation, but also the impact on a country's infrastructure. There are numerous factors that precipitate return migration such as war, natural disasters, and education. There are also different versions of repatriation policy in each country. As a result, return migration effects each country in different ways and therefore, it would be a grave mistake to ignore this human phenomenon.

The importance of return migration is something that becomes more obvious with each investigation and discovery regarding the topic. However, this was not always the case. Compared to other types of migration, return migration is singularly young. It was not until the 1970s that studies into this phenomenon began, and it is still a relatively unknown

and unexplored subject.<sup>1</sup> As a result there is not a great deal of in depth studies of individual countries' policies, let alone comparative studies. Thus, this paper will seek to compare three countries different regions that have used return migration policies.

The three countries whose return migration policies will be compared are Germany, Russia, and Kazakhstan. They are in different regions and have diverse historical backgrounds, which has resulted in the implementation of their own unique versions of return migration policy to entice their expatriates to return home. Germany was chosen to represent Europe. It had a long lived policy of return migration beginning at the end of WWII. Next was Kazakhstan to represent Central Asia. It has one of the younger policies in existence as well as being the first former Soviet Republic to create a policy. Last was Russia, because it is part of both Europe and Asia and yet belongs to neither. They are all similar in that they are establish democracies and they were greatly affected by WWII and the existence of the Soviet Union.

Deciding on a policy of return migration is the simplest part of the process. The successful creation and implementation is fraught with difficulties. The internal structure of each country will have a great effect on how the policy is carried out. Additionally, how the citizens of a country feel about the policy as well as the repatriates can have a large effect on the success of a policy. In order to be successful, a country must have an overall objective, or reason for their policy. Then their success is determined by how well they

---

<sup>1</sup> Olga Zeveleva. "Political Aspects of Repatriation: Germany, Russia, Kazakhstan. A Comparative Analysis." *Nationalities Papers: The Journal of Nationalism and Ethnicity* 42, no. 5 (2014): 808-27. Accessed February 27, 2015. Academic Search Premier, 809

meet that objective. So the more specific and realistic the objective, the more successful a country's policy.

## GERMANY

Out of all three countries, Germany is the first to initiate a policy of return migration. In the aftermath of WWII, the massive losses and displacement of citizenry, the division of Germany, and of course, German nationality, resulted in West Germany's implementation of the policies of repatriation. These policies specifically targeted the ethnic Germans living in Eastern Europe, and of these ethnic Germans, primarily the ethnic Germans of Russia. In the mid-1700s, the ancestors of these Russian Germans were drawn to Russia in response to the offer of land and autonomy by Catherine II.<sup>2</sup>

However, since that time, there was a gradual loss of autonomy for the Russian Germans and eventually they were completely absorbed by the Russia state and subsequent Soviet state. They continued to live peacefully in Russia, however that changed after WWII. During the war, Hitler betrayed Stalin and invaded the Soviet Union. This was intolerable to Stalin, who got his revenge following the war by deporting the Russian Germans descended from Catherine II's German emigrants.<sup>3</sup> It was at about the same time that West Germany decided to implement their policies, which in turn gave the deported Russian Germans a new home.

---

<sup>2</sup> Anja Steinbach. "Intergenerational Transmission and Integration of Repatriate Families from the Former Soviet Union in Germany." *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* 32, no. 4 (2001): 505-15. Accessed February 20, 2015. JSTOR, 506.

<sup>3</sup> Klaus J. Bade. "From Emigration To Immigration: The German Experience In The Nineteenth And Twentieth Centuries." *Central European History* 28, no. 4 (1995): 507-35. Accessed February 27, 2015. JSTOR, 510.

In hindsight, it becomes obvious that the German obsession with ethnicity. As is evident by the occurrence of WWII, German ethnicity is a matter of pride and by extension perceived the unification of all ethnic Germans as a duty. This belief can be clearly seen by the implementation of a return migration policy.

### POST-WWII

At the end of WWII, Germany was decimated. They had lost a great deal of their population due to casualties from war, displacement, and the exodus or murder of the German Jews. During the war, a large portion of the German population was made up of foreign workers either voluntarily or as slaves. So after the war Germany was in shambles, cities had been leveled by bombs, people had fled, and the economy was destroyed. Consequently, the slave workers were freed and returned to their homes. Also, with the future of Germany in the hands of the victors many of the other foreign workers left in search of better opportunities. This of course does not include the casualties from the war, both military and civilian. All in all, the German population was severely decreased by the Second World War. In addition, Germany was then divided between the Allies and eventually became two sections East Germany and West Germany, which divided the population even more since East Germany essentially became a part of the Soviet Union.

Furthermore, German nationalism did not die with the end of the war. Despite nationalism leading the German people into two wars, where they lost both times, nationalism was not demonized until much later. As a result, the German people still wanted one thing, the unification of all Germans. However, instead of allowing Germany to swallow other countries to achieve this goal, the ethnic Germans who wished to live in Germany had to move to Germany. Moreover, not all ethnic Germans voluntarily repatriated to Germany. As the Soviets moved through Eastern Europe, they forced all ethnic Germans to leave, expelling them from all Soviet territories and giving them no choice but to resettle in West Germany.<sup>4</sup> All of these things culminated in the creation of the German return migration policy.

The German return migration policy began after WWII during the 1950s under Chancellor Adenauer. This of course meant that it would only be implemented in West Germany since the Soviet Union had control of East Germany. At this time, the term Russian Germans began to be used to refer to the Russians of German ancestry mentioned above, the largest group of ethnic Germans to migrate to Germany.<sup>5</sup> Some of these Russian Germans chose to voluntarily return migrate into West Germany, while others were forced out by the Red Army and became part of the expellee population. However, they were not

---

<sup>4</sup> Falck, O, S Hebllich, and S Link. "Forced Migration and the Effects of an Integration Policy in Post-WWII Germany." *BE Journal Of Economic Analysis & Policy* 12, no. 1 (2012): *Social Sciences Citation Index, EBSCOhost* (accessed March 15, 2015), 3.

<sup>5</sup> Olga Zeveleva. "Political Aspects of Repatriation: Germany, Russia, Kazakhstan. A Comparative Analysis." *Nationalities Papers: The Journal of Nationalism and Ethnicity* 42, no. 5 (2014): 808-27. Accessed February 27, 2015. Academic Search Premier, 812.

the only people who became Soviet expellees, ethnic Germans in the Sudetenland, East Prussia, Silesia, and other regions, were forced to leave their homes and migrate to West Germany.<sup>6</sup> In order to respond to this large influx of expellees, West Germany implemented the Federal Expellee Law.

### *FEDERAL EXPELLEE LAW*

The Federal Expellee Law came into effect in 1953 in West Germany. This law emphasized German ethnicity and specifically targeted the German descendants in Eastern Europe and Russia. It stated that anyone of German descent born after 1922 that also formally recognized as having German nationality would be eligible for German citizenship. The law primarily assisted with the economic situation of people classified as expellees.<sup>7</sup> In order to be classified as an expellee, an individual had to have lived within the eastern Germany or Austria Hungary borders of 1917-1937 during WWII, and be a German citizen or ethnic German. It also included political refugees from the Soviet zone of Germany.<sup>8</sup> It was accompanied by German Basic Law set very loose qualifications for achieving German citizenship. Article 116, section 1 allows refugees or deportees of Germany ethnicity and spouses or descendants of an ethnic German to attain citizenship.<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> Falck, Heblich, and Link, 3

<sup>7</sup> Falck, Heblich, and Link, 1

<sup>8</sup> Falck, Heblich, and Link, 7

<sup>9</sup> Germany (West). *The basic law of the Federal Republic of Germany: Amendments as of December 31, 1961*. 1949. New York: German Information Center, 45.

## THE IMPACT OF THE SOVIET UNION

The Soviet Union was vital to the development Germany's return migration policy. The central reason for the creation of the policy was due to the East-West tensions at the time, especially their ideological differences. The Soviet Union's policies on emigration were an immense obstacle to the German return migration policy. It was restrictive in the extreme making it nigh on impossible for people to leave, let alone allow the ethnic Germans take advantage of the Federal Expellee Law. However, this began to change in the late 1980s after Mikhail Gorbachev came to office. He began a process of liberalization that resulted in the loosening of emigration policy, allowing people to leave the Soviet Union.<sup>10</sup> This finally allowed Russian and Eastern European ethnic Germans to utilize the Federal Expellee Law for German citizenship, since the German areas destroyed in WWII were not rebuilt. Consequently, Russian-Germans had the highest immigration rate in Germany.<sup>11</sup> This number further increased with the collapse of the Soviet Union. However, with the fall of the Soviet Union, the purpose of the German return migration policy disappeared as well.

---

<sup>10</sup> Zeveleva, 812

<sup>11</sup> Steinbach, 505-06

## RESULTS

As a result of the Federal Expellee Law, there were two major influxes of ethnic Germans. The first was after WWII and the second after the loosening of emigration policy in the Soviet Union. There were also two main groups of repatriates: ethnic Germans and citizens from Eastern Europe and ethnic Germans and citizens from East Germany. Combined, these groups increased the German population by about twelve million, giving Germany a total population of more than 65 million people.<sup>12</sup>

Positives and negatives followed this increase in population. The repatriates found it easy to find employment without taking away jobs from native Germans; satisfying a demand for workers. By virtue of having employment, the repatriates contributed to the German infrastructure and social insurance.<sup>13</sup> Unfortunately, it was not sufficient to completely support the demands of the increased population on the Germany economy. Consequently, more restrictive changes were made, slowly negating the Federal Expellee Law.

---

<sup>12</sup> Arne Gieseck, Ullrich Heilemann, and Hans Dietrich Von Loeffelholz. "Economic Implications of Migration into the Federal Republic of Germany, 1988-1992." *International Migration Review* 29.3 (1995): 693-94

<sup>13</sup> Gieseck, 695-99

## BEGINNING OF THE END

Initially, there were restrictions, such as adding a language test to the requirements for citizenship. Then, restrictions were created to contain fake asylum seekers. Finally, in 2000, Germany revised its citizenship laws so that people born after 1992 would no longer be eligible for citizenship based on ethnicity. This eliminated the 1913 principle of common descent as well as the basic assumption that ethnic background equated citizenship, and thus ending the German policy of return migration.<sup>14</sup>

The West German government never set out to specifically create a policy of return migration. It derived as a result of the times. The hostility between communism and capitalism was essential to the creation of the policy. It allowed ethnic Germans to claim citizenship and receive social benefits, something they could not receive in communist countries. As is evidenced in the chapter above, the German policy was principally ethnic based for the vast majority of its existence. This trend did not change until the very end, when the German government began to phase out its policy of return migration. Additionally, it is clear that overall, the German policy was remarkably successful in accomplishing exactly what it was meant to accomplish.

---

<sup>14</sup> Zeveleva, 813-14

## RUSSIA

Russia's return migration policy is as unique as the country itself. After the fall of tsarist Russia and again after the collapse of the Soviet Union, many citizens fled the country.<sup>15</sup> Russia has a long history of inviting foreigners to move to Russia and become citizens during imperial times, the Germans invited by Catherine II are a familiar example of this tradition.<sup>16</sup> However, Russia chose to create their policy with a central element that is the exact opposite of every other return migration policy. As was emphasized in the German section and as will be emphasized in the Kazakhstani section, ethnicity is the end all be all. Instead, Russia's policy is centered on the group identified as compatriots.

There are many similarities in Russia's policies regarding migration beginning in imperial time all the way to present day. All were interested in attracting and maintaining citizens, yet only the modern Russia has policies for return migration. While the effort to create a return migration policy in Russia is still in its early stages, it is not well organized nor has it had the same success as Germany.

---

<sup>15</sup> Sergei Abashin. "Migration From Central Asia To Russia In The New Model Of World Order." *Russian Politics & Law* 52.6 (2014): 8-23. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 27 Jan. 2015, 9

<sup>16</sup> Anja Steinbach. "Intergenerational Transmission and Integration of Repatriate Families from the Former Soviet Union in Germany." *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* 32, no. 4 (2001): 505-15. Accessed February 20, 2015. JSTOR, 506

## TRADITION OF ATTRACTING FOREIGNERS

Beginning in imperial times, Russian leaders have sought to entice foreigners to become Russian. The foreigners were offered various incentives to encourage their naturalization. However, the tsars were not interested in any and every foreigner. They specifically targeted service elites, merchants, and skilled workers. These foreigners were highly prized by the tsars for their ability to assist in the modernization of Russia. The imperial obsession with foreigners had a far reaching effect in that migrants and the Russian economy are still closely intertwined to this day.<sup>17</sup>

Additionally, the tsars went to great lengths to retain their citizenry by banning emigration and refusing to recognize the loss of Russian citizenship through naturalization in other countries.<sup>18</sup> This was due to the tsars' irrational fear of losing its citizens. This fear, as well as the use of restricting methods in order to retain citizens is echoed during the Soviet era of Russia.

---

<sup>17</sup> Eric Lohr. "Russian Citizenship." *Problems Of Post-Communism* 60.6 (2013): 3-15. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 26 Mar. 2015, 4

<sup>18</sup> Lohr, 5

## SOVIET ERA

When the communists came to power, they sought to distance themselves entirely from imperial Russia. As a result, all the prerevolutionary laws became void in 1917.<sup>19</sup> They then passed laws restricting emigration. Therefore, people within the Soviet Union were unwilling to leave their region.<sup>20</sup> It was not worth the effort because traveling, let alone moving between Soviet Republics was needlessly complex, as were all bureaucratic activities within the Soviet Union. However, unlike the tsars, the communists regularly stripped individuals of their citizenship.<sup>21</sup> The extensive control enforced on the population lead to stagnant population in addition to stifling the economy, which eventually lead to the collapse of the Soviet Union.<sup>22</sup>

## AFTER THE SOVIET UNION

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the floodgates opened. Many citizens fled from what was left of the Soviet Union and the instability and economic hardship therein. As a result, there was a need for workers in Russia. There were no more restrictive laws on

---

<sup>19</sup> Lohr, 4

<sup>20</sup> Abshin, 8

<sup>21</sup> Lohr, 8

<sup>22</sup> Abshin, 9

emigration which lead to a willingness to migrate to Russia. In response to the collapse, the Russian government rehabilitated the tradition of attracting and holding citizens.

In regards to the definition applied to migrants, there was a great deal of ambiguity in official Russian documents.<sup>23</sup> It was the same for migration policy until 2006, when the policy of return migration was formalized. It targeted three main groups: Russian citizens living outside of Russia, former Soviet Union citizens, and emigrants from the Soviet Union as well as their descendents. There was emphasis given to maintaining ties with former Soviet citizens living outside of Russia, also known as compatriots. With return migration institutionalized, there was promoted at the compatriots abroad as part of a larger plan to improve the demographics in Russia. The compatriots were more desirable to other foreigners due to their familiarity, however slight, with Russian culture.<sup>24</sup> The largest group of repatriates unexpectedly came out of Central Asia, in large part to escape persecution. The majority of these repatriates were also highly educated which caused high demands for employment in Russia.<sup>25</sup> Interestingly, the largest number of return migrants came from Kazakhstan.<sup>26</sup>

So, there was some success in getting people to return migrate, however the bigger challenge is getting these repatriates integrated into society. The federal government created the overarching policy and left the determination of the logistics to the local

---

<sup>23</sup> Dmitry Gorenburg. "Migration Policy In Russia." *Russian Politics & Law* 51.3 (2013): 3-5. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 26 Mar. 2015, 3

<sup>24</sup> Olga Zeveleva. "Political Aspects Of Repatriation: Germany, Russia, Kazakhstan. A Comparative Analysis." *Nationalities Papers* 42.5 (2014): 808-827. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 21 Jan. 2015, 815-16

<sup>25</sup> Abshin, 8-10

<sup>26</sup> Zeveleva, 816

government. Each regional government is responsible for forming a resettlement plan, presenting it for approval to the federal government, and then implementing it. They had to decide how to provide housing, employment opportunities, training, and other basic needs for the repatriates.<sup>27</sup>

Unlike in Germany where there were a multitude of benefits, Russian lawmakers were exceedingly reluctant to provide any special benefits for the repatriates. Finally, in 2013, the Duma wrote a new law pertaining to the citizenship process for repatriates. It greatly simplified the process by eliminating the five year residency requirement, the proof of residence, proof of income, and proof of language proficiency. Essentially, this law integrated repatriates politically into Russia. It was also meant to assist in closing the gap between repatriates who did and did not acquire citizenship.<sup>28</sup>

### *COMPATRIOTS*

The term compatriot is mentioned above, but it has a very unique connotation to Russia and its return migration policy. It refers to people who first, live outside of Russia, second, identify themselves with Russia, and third, due to historical, linguistic, or cultural connection, wish to preserve a relationship with Russia, an opaque definition for an ambiguous policy. The term can be applied to both citizens and non-citizens of Russia and is wholly voluntary. In other words, current citizens, former citizens, or former Soviet

---

<sup>27</sup> Zeveleva, 816

<sup>28</sup> Zeveleva, 817

Republic citizens can determine whether they wish to identify themselves with Russia. So in contrast with Germany and Kazakhstan, Russian return migration is not ethnic based, but a voluntary choice.<sup>29</sup>

## RESULTS

Currently, there has been very little success for the Russian policy of return migration. The vast majority of the repatriates have been individuals from former Soviet Republics how have identified themselves as compatriots. Additionally, these individuals are mainly coming to Russia in search of work, so there is no guarantee that they are permanently relocating to Russia, only time will tell. One of the objectives of the Russian return migration policy was to improve the demographics, and yet there has been negligent improvement, again due to the majority of the repatriate being from Soviet Republics. Then, there is the arbitrary concept of compatriot, an unusual method for return migration and an extremely inefficient one. Having to voluntarily decide to be affiliated with Russia does not nearly evoke the same sense of belonging that comes with ethnicity.

---

<sup>29</sup> Zeveleva, 815-16

## KAZAKHSTAN

For decades, Kazakhstan was one of the Soviet Republics and as such lacked its independence. It, like all the other former Soviet Republics, was made to enforce the strict Soviet regulations, including those related to emigration. However, this did not prevent large numbers of Kazakhs from fleeing the Soviet Union to evade communism and look for job opportunities.

After the fall of the Soviet Union, Kazakhstan faced many difficulties, the foremost of which was national identity.<sup>30</sup> In the aftermath of Soviet control, Kazakhstan was no longer a nation-state; it had become multicultural.<sup>31</sup> As a result, there were divergent ideas about how to proceed with certain policies including return migration.<sup>32</sup>

As in Germany and Russia, implementation was no easy task. Kazakhstan faced complications in their execution of their return migration policy and was forced to adjust their policy a few times. They also faced some familiar issues both socially and economically that Germany and Russia handled as well. On the other hand, Kazakhstan's policy of return migration has been overwhelmingly successful and pragmatic despite the problems encountered.

---

<sup>30</sup> Yves-Marie Davenel. "Cultural mobilization in post-Soviet Kazakhstan: views from the state and from non-titular nationalities compared." *Central Asian Survey* 31, no.1 (March 2012): 17-29. *Academic Search Premier*. EBSCOhost (accessed February 10, 2015), 19

<sup>31</sup> Olga Zeveleva. "Political Aspects Of Repatriation: Germany, Russia, Kazakhstan. A Comparative Analysis." *Nationalities Papers* 42.5 (2014): 808-827. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 21 Jan. 2015, 814

<sup>32</sup> Işık Kuşçu. "Ethnic Return Migration and Public Debate: The Case of Kazakhstan." *International Migration* 52, no. 2 (April 2014): 178-97. *Academic Search Premier*. EBSCOhost (assessed April, 10, 2015), 180

## INDEPENDENCE

After its independence, Kazakhstan faced many obstacles, the most important of which was national identity. Under the Soviet Union, Kazakhstan's ethnic demographics changed. After the collapse, the Kazakhs only made up forty percent of Kazakhstan's population. Additionally, Soviet Control had resulted in the loss of Kazakh language and cultural traditions.<sup>33</sup> Consequently, return migration policy rose to the forefront of Kazakhstan's politics.

Kazakhstan became the first former Soviet Republic to implement a policy of return migration for its diaspora.<sup>34</sup> This was due to the urgent need felt by many to reinstitute Kazakh culture and traditions into the newly independent state. The Kazakhstani policy targeted ethnic Kazakhs outside of Kazakhstan, especially those who had earlier fled from the Soviet Union and their descendants.<sup>35</sup> The policy was given a great deal of rhetoric by its supporters, especially President Nursultan Nazarbayev. They greatly emphasized the discrimination Kazakhs faced under the Soviet Union and encouraged Kazakhs to return to the homeland.<sup>36</sup>

In 1991, the Citizenship Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan was implemented and included that allowed for the Kazakhs who had fled Soviet repression to return migrate as

---

<sup>33</sup> Zeveleva, 814

<sup>34</sup> Kuşçu, 179

<sup>35</sup> Zeveleva, 814

<sup>36</sup> Isik Kuscu Bonnenfant. "Constructing The Homeland: Kazakhstan's Discourse And Policies Surrounding Its Ethnic Return-Migration Policy." *Central Asian Survey* 31.1 (2012): 31-44. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 28 Jan. 2015, 32

well as giving all ethnic Kazakhs outside of Kazakhstan eligibility to apply for citizenship should they wish to move to Kazakhstan.<sup>37</sup> In the following year, the campaign to encourage return migration including various benefits, like housing and allowances, as incentive. However, the supporters of the ethnic based policy failed to grasp that not everyone would agree with their policy.

#### *ISSUES FACING A MULTI-CULTURAL STATE*

Not everyone supported the ethnic based return migration policy. There were many who felt that it was special treatment of the Kazakhs and discrimination against all the minority groups.<sup>38</sup> This caused problems in the execution of the policy because there were many who were reluctant to give any assistance to the repatriates.<sup>39</sup> Additionally, there was a great deal of tension between the Kazakhs and the minorities as well as competition over the available jobs and resources.<sup>40</sup>

---

<sup>37</sup> Zeveleva, 815

<sup>38</sup> Kuşçu, 180

<sup>39</sup> Kuşçu, 189

<sup>40</sup> Kuşçu, 180

## ISSUES WITH EXECUTION

Initially, there was an emphasis on using the policy to return the entire Kazakh diaspora. They eventually realized that in order for the return migration policy to be effective, more realistic goals were necessary. In addition, the responsibility for the policy kept being shifted to different institutions as they were phased out or their focuses were changed. This made the organization and effectiveness of the policy difficult.<sup>41</sup>

Kazakhstan's system for implementing the policy was similar to that in Russia. The federal government determined the policy, but the actual planning and implementation was left to each of the provinces. They had the responsibility of assisting with housing, employment, training, and language lessons. In certain provinces, there were difficulties in supplying enough housing, employment and other benefits.<sup>42</sup> Moreover, they also had the financial burden of supplying these benefits with no help from the federal government which at times resulted in a lack of these benefits and finger pointing between the local and federal government regarding responsibility.<sup>43</sup> However, the largest problem in the execution of the policy of return migration was corruption. It plagued all levels of government.<sup>44</sup> It was not unusual for government officials to require bribes to provide repatriate with the benefits that were meant to be free.

---

<sup>41</sup> Bonnenfont, 34-6

<sup>42</sup> Kuşçu, 187

<sup>43</sup> Bonnenfont, 37

<sup>44</sup> Kuşçu, 189

## OUTCOME

In order to deal with the large number of return migrants and to set more realistic goals for the return migration policy, Kazakhstan turned to quotas.<sup>45</sup> Additionally, emphasis shifted from encouraging the return of all Kazakhs. They encouraged the return of those who wished to return, but also created policies that would protect the Kazakhs in their host countries.<sup>46</sup>

Overall, Kazakhstan has been successful with their policy of return migration. They were searching for a new national identity, although it is not the nation-state many wanted.<sup>47</sup> This success is extremely impressive given that they chose to implement this policy directly after their independence, during a very critical transition period.<sup>48</sup> Furthermore, the policy was implemented in 1992, which means that it has been operating successfully for the last twenty-three years with no end in sight.

---

<sup>45</sup> Bonnenfont, 38

<sup>46</sup> Bonnenfont, 35

<sup>47</sup> Davenel, 18-9

<sup>48</sup> Bonnenfont, 41

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

In the end, there are many methods for return migration and even more factors that contribute to or hinder the success of such a policy. Deciding to have a policy of return migration and having a successful policy of return migration. That is not to say that having a successful policy is impossible and at the same time, there is no perfect formula for success either.

Both Germany and Kazakhstan have had extremely successful policies. However, they did have to make adjustments along the way. Initially, Germany wanted to return all ethnic-Germans outside of Germany. This focus shifted toward the Russian-Germans in response to the tension and between communism and capitalism and was completely successful. Similarly, Kazakhstan wanted to return all ethnic-Kazakhs. After some time, they realized how unrealistic this goal was and instead focused on returning those with an interest in returning, which increased the policy's success. On the other hand, Russia has struggled with its policy, starting out ambiguous both in policy and definition of repatriates with no change in sight and minimal success. Overall, each policy is unique to its country and so was its success as seen in Table 1.

Table 1: Statistical results of repatriation programs and naturalization

	Population of the receiving country (average for the years of the program)	Approximate number of people living outside of the country who are eligible for repatriation the start of the program (including family members)	Number of people who repatriated (including family members)	Repatriates as % of total population	Average number of repatriates per year	Percentage of those who are eligible for citizenship who successfully obtained citizenship
<i>Germany</i>	78.1 million (1954-2008 average)	~ 4 million	1954-2008: 2 350 179	~3.01%	42 730	100%
<i>Kazakhstan</i>	15.03 million (1998-2004 average)	~4.3 million	1998-2004: 67 500	~0.45%	9 642	76%
<i>Russia</i>	140.9 million (2008-2010 average)	~ 35 million	2008-2010: 28 086	~0.02%	9 362	58.3%

Source: Olga Zeveleva. "Political Aspects of Repatriation: Germany, Russia, Kazakhstan. A Comparative Analysis." *Nationalities Papers: The Journal of Nationalism and Ethnicity* 42, no. 5 (2014): 808-27. Accessed February 27, 2015. Academic Search Premier, 819

All in all, there needs to be more research on this subject because there is not enough information. There needs to be in depth studies done at all levels of analysis. It is necessary to know the objective of each country in order to determine their policy's success. However, most important is how the affects the country. Is social welfare able to handle the influx in patients? Then there are jobs; are the repatriates taking away jobs from native citizens? What about politics? Are certain parties more attractive to the repatriates or are certain parties more supportive of return migrants? There are so many different aspects of this topic to be investigated. For example, the success of these policies needs to be studied to discover if there are certain factors that lead to success. Understanding what makes a successful policy could help countries who want to or need to implement a policy of return migration. At this point, any and all research is welcome because there are so many aspects of this topic that need to be uncovered, so any research helps to reveal more about this unknown subject.

## REFERENCES

- Abashin, Sergei. "Migration From Central Asia To Russia In The New Model Of World Order." *Russian Politics & Law* 52.6 (2014): 8-23. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 27 Jan. 2015.
- Bade, Klaus J. "From Emigration To Immigration: The German Experience In The Nineteenth And Twentieth Centuries." *Central European History* 28, no. 4 (1995): 507-35. Accessed February 27, 2015. JSTOR.
- Bonnenfant, Isik Kuscu. "Constructing The Homeland: Kazakhstan's Discourse And Policies Surrounding Its Ethnic Return-Migration Policy." *Central Asian Survey* 31.1 (2012): 31-44. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 28 Jan. 2015
- Davenel, Yves-Marie. "Cultural mobilization in post-Soviet Kazakhstan: views from the state and from non-titular nationalities compared." *Central Asian Survey* 31, no.1 (March 2012): 17-29. *Academic Search Premier*. EBSCOhost(accessed February 10, 2015)
- Falck, O, S Hebllich, and S Link. "Forced Migration and the Effects of an Integration Policy in Post-WWII Germany." *BE Journal Of Economic Analysis & Policy* 12, no. 1 (2012): *Social Sciences Citation Index*, EBSCOhost (accessed March 15, 2015).
- Germany (West). *The basic law of the Federal Republic of Germany: Amendments as of December 31, 1961*. 1949. 45. New York: German Information Center.
- Kuşçu, İşik. "Ethnic Return Migration and Public Debate: The Case of Kazakhstan." *International Migration* 52, no. 2 (April 2014): 178-97. *Academic Search Premier*. EBSCOhost (assessed April, 10, 2015).

Gorenburg, Dmitry. "Migration Policy In Russia." *Russian Politics & Law* 51.3 (2013): 3-5.

*Academic Search Premier*. Web. 26 Mar. 2015.

Lohr, Eric. "Russian Citizenship." *Problems Of Post-Communism* 60.6 (2013): 3-15. *Academic*

*Search Premier*. Web. 26 Mar. 2015.

Steinbach, Anja. "Intergenerational Transmission and Integration of Repatriate Families

from the Former Soviet Union in Germany." *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*

32, no. 4 (2001): 505-15. Accessed February 20, 2015. JSTOR.

Zeveleva, Olga. "Political Aspects of Repatriation: Germany, Russia, Kazakhstan. A

Comparative Analysis." *Nationalities Papers: The Journal of Nationalism and*

*Ethnicity* 42, no. 5 (2014): 808-27. Accessed February 27, 2015. *Academic Search*

*Premier*.