

FUNDAMENTAL COMPONENTS AND DYNAMICS OF IDENTITY FORMATION PROCESSES IN KAZAKHSTAN

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<https://doi.org/10.52536/2415-8216.2026.114.2.004>

Abstract. This article examines the dynamics of the formation of national and civic identity in Kazakhstan in the context of post-Soviet transformation and ethnic diversity. Being a multiethnic state, Kazakhstan implements a special model of nation-building, which seeks to combine the symbolic primacy of the titular nation with the formation of an inclusive civic identity. The main components of identity, the factors of its formation and the dynamics of transformational changes are analyzed. Special attention is paid to the Kazakhstani experience of forming a national identity in a multiethnic society. The article examines modern challenges and trends in the development of civic consciousness, the role of the state, education and the information space in strengthening national unity. The analysis and conclusions showed that the civil and ethno-cultural concepts of the nation are used in the formation of civic identity in compliance with the norms of the constitution, to ensure the equality of all citizens, regardless of ethnic, linguistic, cultural, religious or other affiliation. Methodologically, the article combines a qualitative analysis of constitutional provisions, political documents and official materials with a secondary analysis of opinion polls and expert assessments prepared by national research institutes.

Keywords. *ethnopolitics, national identity, civic identity, globalization, social transformation, civil society, national unity.*

ҚАЗАҚСТАНДАҒЫ БІРЕГЕЙЛІК ПРОЦЕСТЕРІНІҢ НЕГІЗГІ КОМПОНЕНТТЕРІ МЕН ДИНАМИКАСЫ

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Андатпа. Мақалада посткеңестік трансформация және этникалық әртүрлілік контекстінде Қазақстанда ұлттық және азаматтық бірегейлікті қалыптастыру динамикасы қарастырылады. Қазақстан көп ұлтты мемлекет бола отырып, титулдық ұлттың символдық басымдығын инклюзивті азаматтық бірегейлікті қалыптастырумен ұштастыруға ұмтылатын ұлт құрылысының ерекше моделін іске асырады. Сәйкестіктің негізгі компоненттері, оның қалыптасу факторлары және трансформациялық өзгерістер динамикасы талданады. Көпэтносты қоғамда жалпыұлттық бірегейлікті қалыптастырудың қазақстандық тәжірибесіне ерекше назар аударылады. Азаматтық өзін-өзі танудың қазіргі заманғы сын-қатерлері мен даму тенденциялары, мемлекеттің, білім берудің және ұлттық бірлікті нығайтудағы ақпараттық кеңістіктің рөлі қарастырылады. Талдау мен қорытындылар ұлттың азаматтық және этномәдени тұжырымдамалары Конституция нормаларын сақтау бойынша, этникалық, тілдік, мәдени, діни және өзге де тиесілілігіне қарамастан барлық азаматтардың теңдігі бойынша азаматтық бірегейлікті қалыптастыруда пайдаланылатынын көрсетті. Әдістемелік тұрғыдан алғанда, мақала конституциялық ережелерді, саяси құжаттар мен ресми материалдарды сапалы талдауды әлеуметтанулық сауалнамалар мен ұлттық ғылыми-зерттеу институттары дайындаған сараптамалық бағалауды қайталама талдаумен біріктіреді.

Түйін сөздер: *этносаясат, ұлттық бірегейлік, азаматтық бірегейлік, жаһандану, әлеуметтік трансформация, азаматтық қоғам, ұлттық бірлік.*

ФУНДАМЕНТАЛЬНЫЕ КОМПОНЕНТЫ И ДИНАМИКА ИДЕНТИФИКАЦИОННЫХ ПРОЦЕССОВ В КАЗАХСТАНЕ

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Аннотация. В данной статье рассматривается динамика формирования национальной и гражданской идентичности в Казахстане в контексте постсоветской трансформации и этнического разнообразия. Будучи полиэтническим государством, Казахстан реализует особую модель нациестроительства, которая стремится сочетать символическое первенство титульной нации с формированием инклюзивной гражданской идентичности. Анализируются основные компоненты идентичности, факторы ее формирования и динамика трансформационных изменений. Особое внимание уделяется казахстанскому опыту формирования общенациональной идентичности в полиэтническом обществе. Рассматриваются современные вызовы и тенденции развития гражданского самосознания, роль государства, образования и информационного пространства в укреплении национального единства. Анализ и выводы показали, что гражданская и этнокультурная концепции нации используются в формировании гражданской идентичности по соблюдению норм конституции, по равноправия всех граждан, независимо от этнической, языковой, культурной, религиозной и иной принадлежности. Методологически статья сочетает качественный анализ конституционных положений, политических документов и официальных материалов с вторичным анализом социологических опросов, и экспертных оценок, подготовленных национальными исследовательскими институтами.

Ключевые слова: этнополитика, национальная идентичность, гражданская идентичность, глобализация, социальная трансформация, гражданское общество, национальное единство.

Introduction

Issues of national identity and ethnopolitical governance remain central in the study of multiethnic states, particularly in post-imperial and post-socialist contexts. One of the principal challenges of nation-building under such conditions lies in reconciling ethnic diversity with political unity while preventing the emergence of exclusionary or destabilizing forms of nationalism.

The growing significance of identity as a social and political phenomenon is also evident in the context of rapidly evolving ethnopolitical processes in the contemporary world. These processes are shaped by a wide range of factors, including the increasing influence of ethnic consciousness, the expansion of digital information technologies and artificial intelligence, as well as the spread of separatism, extremism, and the intensification of interethnic, interreligious, and intercultural divisions [1].

Kazakhstan represents a particularly illustrative case in this regard, as it has developed a state-centered model of identity formation that emphasizes civic unity and social cohesion while simultaneously maintaining the symbolic predominance

of the titular nation.

Since gaining independence in 1991, Kazakhstan has faced the complex task of constructing a national identity within a society characterized by considerable ethnic heterogeneity and a profound Soviet institutional and cultural legacy.

The complexity and inconsistency of the development of contemporary post-Soviet societies demonstrate that citizenship, as a value-semantic core of individual consciousness and behavior, directly influences the ways in which political interests are expressed and civic functions are exercised. The absence or insufficient development of civic consciousness can entail significant political costs. Instead of adopting an exclusively ethnic model of nationhood, Kazakhstan has promoted a discourse of civic unity grounded in common citizenship, political loyalty, and social stability. At the same time, state policy has strengthened the cultural and linguistic significance of the Kazakh people as the historical foundation of statehood.

In recent years, as a result of state policies, various conceptual approaches to the formation of the Kazakh national mentality have gained prominence. In this context, strengthening national identity through a deeper awareness of the role of political, ideological, and traditional culture in addressing contemporary challenges has become increasingly significant. By utilizing the potential of deliberative institutions such as the National Kurultai and the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, state authorities have sought to reassess the national value system and enrich it with new meanings. In particular, governmental discourse has increasingly emphasized the importance of Kazakhstani citizenship, respect for state symbols, and shared values and ideals, including patriotism, humanism, hospitality, diligence, respect for traditions, and family values. These efforts are directed toward the formation of a new national identity grounded in ethnocultural diversity and the mastery of the state language by all citizens [2].

The long-term objective of state policy is the consolidation of Kazakhstani society at the level of a fully developed civic identity and the formation of a unified political nation. Historically, representatives of more than one hundred ethnic groups reside on the territory of modern Kazakhstan alongside the titular Kazakh nation. From the first years of independence, national policy has focused on improving the interaction between state institutions and civil society organizations in the sphere of interethnic relations. This objective led to the creation of a specialized institutional structure responsible for regulating interethnic relations — the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan [3]. According to the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan adopted on March 15, 2026, the powers of this institution have been strengthened and integrated into the new consultative and advisory body known as the Halyk Kenesi [4].

Within the framework of comprehensive modernization of the political system, it became necessary to adopt a conceptual document systematizing the fundamental principles, values, and priorities of domestic policy. In this regard, the Presidential Decree of November 5, 2025 “On the Fundamental Principles, Values, and Directions of the Internal Policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan” systematized the work conducted in the domestic political sphere and defined key priorities, including the development of public dialogue in interethnic relations, religious affairs, and the cultural and humanitarian sectors [5].

Processes of globalization and the digitalization of social life inevitably integrate Kazakhstani society into global processes, significantly expanding the communicative space of modern individuals. Under these conditions, two contrasting perspectives on identity become particularly relevant: civic identity on the one hand, and ethnic or national identity on the other.

However, despite the growing scholarly interest in identity formation in post-Soviet states, the Kazakhstani case remains insufficiently examined within a broader comparative theoretical framework of nationalism and nation-building studies. Existing research often focuses either on institutional mechanisms of interethnic harmony or on ethnocultural revival separately, while the interaction between civic identity, ethnic symbolism, globalization, and state-led modernization remains underexplored.

The study of national and civic identity occupies a central position within contemporary political science, sociology, and nationalism studies. International scholarship offers several influential theoretical approaches that explain the mechanisms of nation-building and identity formation in multiethnic societies.

One of the most influential contributions belongs to Benedict Anderson, who conceptualized the nation as an “imagined community” constructed through shared symbols, communication practices, and collective narratives [6]. From this perspective, national identity emerges through socially reproduced forms of belonging supported by state institutions, education systems, and media discourse.

Ernest Gellner interpreted nationalism as a product of modernization, industrialization, and centralized state-building [7]. This approach is relevant to Kazakhstan, where modernization reforms, educational transformation, and language policy have become important instruments for consolidating political unity.

Anthony D. Smith’s ethno-symbolist approach emphasizes the role of myths, collective memory, historical traditions, and cultural symbols in nation formation [8]. In Kazakhstan, these elements are reflected in the revival of historical memory, traditional culture, and the symbolic role of the Kazakh people as the state-forming nation.

Rogers Brubaker critically reconsidered nationalism as a dynamic institutional and political process shaped by state practices and public discourse rather than as a fixed social category [9]. This approach is particularly useful for understanding Kazakhstan’s state-led policies aimed at constructing interethnic harmony and civic integration.

The concept of constitutional patriotism developed by Jürgen Habermas also provides an important framework for analyzing civic identity in contemporary societies. Habermas argued that political loyalty in democratic states should be based primarily on constitutional values, civic participation, and shared political principles rather than ethnic homogeneity [10]. Manuel Castells emphasizes the role of digital communication networks in shaping identity in the information age.

Kazakhstani scholars have also made important contributions to the study of identity formation and ethnopolitical processes. R.K. Kadyrzhanov conceptualizes nation building in Kazakhstan as a synthesis of civic and ethnocultural principles. Z.K. Shaukenova emphasizes the importance of social cohesion and interethnic tolerance, while A.N. Nysanbayev analyzes the cultural and philosophical

dimensions of identity formation in the context of globalization.

Unlike previous studies that mainly describe institutional mechanisms of interethnic policy in Kazakhstan, this article offers a comparative theoretical interpretation of identity formation through the synthesis of civic, ethnocultural, and constructivist approaches. The study contributes to existing scholarship by analyzing the interaction between state-led nation-building policies, globalization processes, digital communication, and the transformation of public consciousness in contemporary Kazakhstan.

However, existing research insufficiently integrates globalization, digital transformation, and state policy into a unified analytical model. This study addresses this limitation.

Research Methodology

The purpose of this article is to identify scientifically grounded approaches to the further development of civic identity in contemporary Kazakhstan and to analyze the possibilities for the formation of Kazakh national identity in the era of information technologies and expanding communication opportunities.

The research methodology is determined by the objectives of the study and is aimed at achieving a comprehensive understanding of the role of public policy in shaping modern national identity. The article employs interdisciplinary research approaches drawn from history, political science, sociology, culturology and related fields.

The methodological framework includes general scientific methods such as analysis and synthesis, which enable the examination of the concepts of ideology, identity, and social processes, as well as the identification of different types of identity.

The theoretical framework of the study is based on constructivist, ethno-symbolist, and civic approaches to nationalism and identity formation. Constructivist approaches make it possible to analyze identity as a socially and politically constructed phenomenon shaped through discourse, institutions, and symbolic practices. Ethno-symbolist theory provides analytical tools for examining the role of historical memory, language, and cultural traditions in nation-building processes. Civic approaches emphasize the role of constitutional values, citizenship, and political participation in the formation of collective identity within multiethnic societies.

Conceptual analysis is applied to explore the relationships among key theoretical categories within the Kazakhstani context. Additionally, the method of critical discourse analysis is employed to identify ideological meanings embedded in programmatic political documents and public narratives related to national identity and civil society.

The study also relies on sociological data, expert surveys, monographic publications, and contemporary political and social research. A qualitative research design was adopted, combining document analysis with the secondary analysis of sociological data. This approach enables a comprehensive examination of both the normative foundations of Kazakhstan's ethnopolitical policy and its social outcomes.

The empirical basis of the study consists of two primary types of data:

- Analysis of political and regulatory documents.
- Secondary analysis of sociological data.

The research incorporates the results of national sociological surveys and expert assessments conducted by Kazakhstani research institutions. These data provide valuable insights into public perceptions of national identity, interethnic relations, and attitudes toward government institutions involved in managing cultural diversity.

The empirical material includes:

- official statistical data of the Bureau of National Statistics of Kazakhstan
- sociological surveys on identity and interethnic relations
- state policy documents on national unity and cultural development.

Methods applied:

- comparative analysis of theoretical approaches
- conceptual analysis of identity categories
- critical discourse analysis of state narratives
- secondary analysis of sociological data.

The methodological framework is grounded in constructivist, civic, and ethno-symbolic theories of nationalism.

Main Part

One of the defining characteristics of Kazakhstan is its multinational composition combined with a unitary form of statehood. In addition to the Kazakh population, which constitutes the majority, more than one hundred and twenty ethnic groups reside in the country. This demographic structure creates the need to reconcile ethnic (Kazakh) and civic (Kazakhstani) identities.

According to official data from the Bureau of National Statistics of the Agency for Strategic Planning and Reforms of the Republic of Kazakhstan as of early 2025, the ethnic composition of the population is as follows: Kazakhs account for 71.3% of the population; Russians — 14.6%; Uzbeks — 3.3%; Ukrainians — 1.8%; Uighurs — 1.5%; and representatives of other ethnic groups — approximately 5.3% [11].

The postcolonial dimension is also significant in the formation of national identity. Kazakhstan is currently re-evaluating its historical past, including the legacy of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union, while simultaneously reviving interest in its Turkic and Islamic cultural roots. The country is therefore attempting to balance historical memory with aspirations for modernization.

Regional differences also influence identity formation. Southern regions tend to be more traditional and religious, whereas the northern and eastern regions demonstrate stronger European cultural influences. In large cities, particularly among younger generations, a new “hybrid” identity is emerging that combines national cultural elements with global cultural influences.

In academic literature, identity is generally understood as an individual's awareness of belonging to a particular social group or community [12, p. 37]. National identity is typically formed through shared cultural traditions, language, historical memory, and collective symbols, ensuring cultural continuity and the preservation of national heritage [12, p. 52].

Civic identity, by contrast, refers to an individual's political and legal affiliation with the state. It presupposes respect for laws, participation in public life, and

recognition of civic rights and responsibilities [12, p. 29]. Scholars emphasize that in multinational states civic identity can function as an important integrative factor, facilitating the formation of a unified political community [12, p. 77].

The formation of identity is a complex social process that includes several interconnected components.

The cultural-historical component encompasses language, traditions, historical memory, and cultural heritage, which together constitute the foundation of national identity and ensure cultural continuity [13, pp. 21–25]. In Kazakhstan, the historical heritage of nomadic civilization, traditional culture, and the national values of various ethnic groups significantly contribute to identity formation.

The political-legal component is associated with the functioning of state institutions and the legal system. It contributes to the development of citizens' sense of responsibility toward the state and society [14, p. 41]. The development of a rule-of-law state and democratic institutions strengthens civic identity and encourages civic engagement.

The socio-value component includes systems of social values, moral norms, and ideals, which emerge through the process of socialization and reflect the cultural characteristics of society [15, p. 66]. For Kazakhstan, interethnic harmony, tolerance, and respect for cultural diversity represent key social values.

The psychological component relates to emotional attachment to one's country, culture, and society, manifested in feelings of patriotism, national pride, and civic responsibility [16, p. 90].

Finally, the information and communication component has become increasingly influential in the context of digitalization. Mass media, digital communication, and social networks play an important role in shaping public consciousness, collective memory, and cultural values. As Manuel Castells argues, identity in the information age is increasingly formed through network communication and symbolic interaction within the global information space [17]. Under these conditions, digital technologies significantly influence both civic and ethnocultural forms of identification [18, p. 102].

Modern Problems of Identity Development in Kazakhstan

The development of national and civic identity in Kazakhstan occurs under the influence of a number of global and domestic challenges. One of the most significant factors shaping identity processes in the modern world is globalization. On the one hand, globalization facilitates active interaction among cultures and the expansion of international communication. On the other hand, it can contribute to the erosion of traditional cultural values and the blurring of national identity. Many scholars emphasize that globalization generates new forms of cultural hybridity, in which elements of different cultural systems interact and form new social models of identification [19, p. 54].

Migration processes also influence the formation of identity by creating new forms of cultural interaction and social integration. In multinational states such as Kazakhstan, migration can simultaneously generate opportunities for intercultural dialogue and potential social challenges related to integration and adaptation [20, p. 71]. Furthermore, the rapid development of information technologies has transformed traditional mechanisms of communication and socialization, particularly among

younger generations, which in turn affects the formation of their value orientations and identity patterns [21, p. 83].

Socio-economic factors also play an important role in shaping identity. Social inequality and regional disparities may influence the development of social identity and civic solidarity. Economic instability can increase social tension and weaken the sense of civic unity among citizens [22, 103-106].

Modern scholarship distinguishes between two principal types of identity: personal and social identity. Personal identity refers to a set of individual characteristics and personal qualities that define a person's uniqueness. Social identity, in contrast, is associated with group membership and reflects an individual's belonging to specific social categories or communities [23, p. 307]. In contemporary societies, national unity is shaped by several key conditions, including shared statehood, civic participation, tolerance, and respect for national symbols.

Kazakh researcher R.K. Kadyrzhanov conceptualizes nation-building as a process of transforming a multiethnic population into a unified political community composed of citizens of different ethnic backgrounds. In this framework, the nation is understood primarily as a civic rather than an ethnic entity. According to Kadyrzhanov, the identity that unites the Kazakh nation is based on political community and the shared relationship between citizens and the state [24, p. 39].

At the same time, Kadyrzhanov's concept emphasizes the special role of the Kazakh people as the state-forming nation. Consequently, the state language and Kazakh culture are considered fundamental cultural pillars of national identity [24, p. 28]. In this sense, nation-building in Kazakhstan represents a synthesis of two initially contrasting models of nationhood: ethnic and civic. This synthesis combines elements of ethnonationalism related to the state-forming nation with the idea of a supra-ethnic Kazakhstani civic identity shared by all citizens of the republic.

One of the most sensitive issues in the nation-building process is the linguistic environment. The Kazakh nation itself is historically divided into Kazakh-speaking and Russian-speaking segments, which complicates the development of a unified linguistic identity. Understanding the dynamics of cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity in Kazakh society is therefore essential for ensuring political stability and national security [25, p. 39].

In the context of contemporary social transformations, the spiritual development of society becomes a crucial factor in maintaining national identity. Consequently, national priorities include the preservation of moral values, historical traditions, and the cultural, educational, and scientific potential of the country. Sociological research indicates that among the most significant indicators of the spiritual and moral state of society are the following values: "being a citizen of Kazakhstan" (90%), "knowing and speaking one's native language" (86.2%), and "maintaining strong family ties" (82.1%) [25, pp. 123–124].

However, despite the widespread recognition of civic values, only 50.1% of respondents associate these values with belonging to a state-forming nation. These results reveal a noticeable distinction between civic and ethnic identity within the population. At the same time, ethnic identification remains particularly significant for representatives of the titular Kazakh nation, 86.7% of whom consider belonging to the indigenous nation to be an important element of their identity [25, p. 127].

The legal foundation for national unity and interethnic harmony is enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan, which emphasizes respect for human rights, the rule of law, and the strengthening of national unity [3]. Over the years of independence, Kazakhstan has implemented a series of institutional reforms aimed at strengthening civic identity, including constitutional amendments, the adoption of new legal frameworks, and the modernization of state institutions.

National identity is also expressed through ethnocultural symbolism, including language, historical memory, state symbols, rituals, traditions, and national holidays. These elements play an important role in promoting patriotism, strengthening national consciousness, and maintaining interethnic harmony within society.

Research Results

The Kazakhstani experience illustrates the broader ethnopolitical dilemma faced by many multiethnic states: how to reconcile social unity with cultural diversity without reinforcing ethnic divisions. Kazakhstan's approach combines civic nation-building with strong state regulation of interethnic relations, resulting in a hybrid model that prioritizes social stability and political cohesion.

The contemporary development of Kazakhstani society demonstrates several positive trends. One of the most significant achievements has been the gradual formation of a shared national identity that unites representatives of different ethnic groups. Active participation of citizens in public life contributes to the strengthening of civic identity and the development of democratic institutions. In this process, the education system plays a crucial role by promoting civic responsibility and national consciousness among younger generations.

The formation of national identity in Kazakhstan can be divided into several historical stages:

1. The period of formation of an independent state (1991–2000);
2. The period of institutional strengthening of the state (2000–2010);
3. The period of modernization of public consciousness (2010–2019);
4. The period of democratization and social transformation (2019–present).

The contemporary model of identity formation in Kazakhstan is based on the combination of national traditions with civic values in order to ensure sustainable development and political stability. This model seeks to promote a unified civic identity among citizens regardless of ethnic or religious affiliation.

From a comparative theoretical perspective, Kazakhstan's model demonstrates features of both ethnic and civic nation-building. On the one hand, state policy emphasizes the symbolic and cultural role of the Kazakh nation, including the strengthening of the state language and the revival of historical traditions. On the other hand, official discourse promotes inclusive citizenship and political integration regardless of ethnic affiliation. Thus, Kazakhstan's identity model may be interpreted as a hybrid form of nation-building combining elements of ethnocultural symbolism with civic integration. As noted by Rees and Burkanov, the Kazakhstani state has pursued a civic nation-building strategy aimed at creating a cohesive national identity while simultaneously preserving the significance of ethnonational belonging, resulting in a complex and hybrid model of national integration. [26, pp. 433–455].

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Unlike classical Western nation-state models characterized by relatively homogeneous populations, Kazakhstan's experience reflects the challenges of post-Soviet multiethnic transformation, where identity formation occurs simultaneously under the influence of globalization, postcolonial reinterpretation of history, and state modernization strategies.

The ethno-demographic context of Kazakhstan is characterized by a high level of ethnic diversity. According to official statistics, Kazakhs constitute the majority of the population, followed by Russians, Uzbeks, Ukrainians, Uyghurs, and other ethnic groups. Such a structure creates an environment of dual identity in which civic and ethnic identifications coexist.

The structural components of identity formation in Kazakhstan include four interrelated elements:

Cultural-historical component: language, traditions, and historical memory.

- Political-legal component: citizenship, institutions, and the rule of law.

- Social-value component: tolerance, interethnic harmony, and civic responsibility.

- Information and communication component: digital media and network communications shaping perceptions of identity.

Empirical data indicate that the majority of citizens primarily identify themselves with Kazakhstan as a civic state. At the same time, ethnic identity remains important, especially among the titular nation, while bilingualism and multilingualism play a stabilizing role.

Sociological surveys indicate that the majority of Kazakhstanis identify themselves as part of a unified national community. According to a national survey

conducted in 2023, 87% of respondents primarily associate themselves with the citizenship of Kazakhstan, while 83% feel connected to their ethnic group and to their place of residence [1]. These findings suggest that civic and ethnic identities coexist and complement one another rather than being mutually exclusive.

Language also remains a key component of identity formation. Kazakh has the status of the state language and plays a central role in nation-building, while Russian continues to function as the language of interethnic communication. Survey results show that 42% of respondents use Kazakh within the family, 38% use Russian, and 17% use both languages. In addition, English is increasingly perceived as an important factor for professional development, with 34% of respondents associating knowledge of English with improved career opportunities [1].

Cultural traditions and national holidays also contribute significantly to the formation of a shared national identity. According to sociological data, the most widely celebrated holidays include Nauryz (March 22), New Year's Eve (December 31), Victory Day, and religious holidays such as Oraz, Eid al-Adha and Christmas. Notably, Nauryz is celebrated by nearly all residents of Kazakhstan regardless of their ethnic background [27, p. 75].

Public attitudes toward ethnic diversity are generally characterized by a high level of tolerance. Approximately 83% of respondents expressed readiness to live next to representatives of other ethnic groups, and 78% indicated willingness to establish friendships with them. Only about 3% expressed distrust toward people of other nationalities, indicating that diversity is largely perceived as a positive social value [1].

At the same time, sociological data reveal that citizens demonstrate a strong sense of responsibility toward their country and their local communities. Around 55% of respondents feel responsible for the development of the country as a whole, while 56% feel responsible for their region of residence. These indicators highlight the strengthening of civic identity and collective responsibility among the population.

Globalization and digitalization reinforce the formation of hybrid identity, especially among the younger generation, which combines national and global cultural patterns.

The findings demonstrate that Kazakhstan's identity model cannot be classified as purely civic or ethnic. Instead, it represents a hybrid system combining:

- civic integration through institutions and citizenship
- ethnocultural symbolism linked to historical continuity
- state-managed interethnic harmony mechanisms

This supports the view that post-Soviet nation-building differs fundamentally from classical Western models due to:

- strong state involvement
- postcolonial identity reconstruction
- multilingual social structure
- digital transformation of communication systems

However, potential tensions remain, particularly in linguistic policy, socio-economic inequality, and uneven regional identity development.

Conclusion

The formation of national identity in Kazakhstan is based on the interaction and relative balance between ethnic and civic forms of identification.

The analysis demonstrates that Kazakhstan's experience generally confirms the theoretical assumption that national identity in multiethnic states cannot be based exclusively on either ethnic or civic principles alone. Instead, stable models of nation-building tend to emerge through the combination of ethnocultural symbolism, shared political values, and institutional mechanisms of civic integration.

At the same time, the Kazakhstani model illustrates several specific post-Soviet features, including the strong role of the state in regulating identity processes, the coexistence of bilingual and multicultural environments, and the continuing influence of Soviet historical legacies on public consciousness.

The Kazakh model of interethnic harmony is grounded in a system of interconnected values that guide the country's national policy.

The findings further suggest that nation-building in Kazakhstan follows a dual logic. On the one hand, there is a symbolic emphasis on the special role of the titular nation as the historical foundation of statehood. On the other hand, the state promotes an inclusive civic identity aimed at integrating representatives of all ethnic groups into a single political community.

Over the years of independence, Kazakhstan has developed a comprehensive institutional and legal framework regulating interethnic relations. These institutions enjoy a relatively high level of public support and contribute to maintaining social stability. However, the complexity of interethnic relations requires continuous monitoring and active engagement from both state institutions and civil society organizations.

The results of the study indicate that several key factors play a crucial role in strengthening national identity in Kazakhstan. Among them are the development of an effective education system, the implementation of a balanced language policy, the promotion of shared national values, and the expansion of public dialogue between the state and society.

In particular, the following policy priorities can be identified:

- improving the quality of education and civic upbringing within the educational system;
- developing a constructive language policy that strengthens the role of the Kazakh language while preserving linguistic diversity [8];
- modernizing methods of teaching the Kazakh language in educational institutions;
- strengthening mechanisms of communication and feedback between the government and society;
- improving the socio-economic well-being of the population.

In the context of rapid technological development, digitalization, and the growing influence of artificial intelligence, public consciousness is increasingly shaped by both state ideology and pluralistic ideological influences. These processes affect the dynamics of political and constitutional reforms and influence the development of civil society.

The multidimensional and dynamic nature of identity processes in Kazakhstan requires balanced political decisions and responsible policy choices regarding

models of social development. One of the most promising models capable of ensuring the interethnic and interfaith consolidation of Kazakhstani society can be described as the principle of “unity in diversity”, which reflects the country’s effort to harmonize cultural pluralism with national cohesion [28, p. 37].

The study confirms that Kazakhstan’s nation-building model is best understood as a hybrid form of identity formation combining civic and ethnocultural principles.

The key conclusion is that:

civic identity ensures political cohesion

ethnocultural identity provides symbolic continuity

both dimensions are mutually reinforcing rather than contradictory

Future challenges include strengthening civic inclusion, balancing language policy, and adapting identity frameworks to digital transformation.

The article was prepared as part of the scientific program of the Science Committee of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan under research project BR28713029, “Study of the Social Role of Folk Art in the Formation of Modern National Identity: Modification and Reconstruction of Spiritual Culture”.

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Материал поступил в редакцию 06.11.2025

Утвержден к публикации 18.06.2026