

TRENDS IN CENSUS HOUSEHOLDS IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC IN THE LAST THIRD OF THE 20th CENTURY*)

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Abstract: The analysis focuses on evaluating the trends of census households over the course of the past forty years, with an emphasis on the 1990s, when changes in the demographic behaviour of the population of the Czech Republic occurred in connection with the transformation of society after November 1989.

Keywords: census, census households, family household, one-person household, average number of members

The growth in the number and the decline in the average size of census households in 1961–1991 as a result of the joint effect of demographic development and socio-economic factors

Since 1961, when for the first time in the history of Czechoslovak censuses family ties were surveyed in connection with cohabitation and household arrangements by means of so-called census households (CH), the number of census households increased, up by one-third to 2001. Although until 1991 the development of the internal structure and size of households seemed to resemble development in advanced countries, it was based on a different demographic and socio-economic situation, and in a detailed analysis it is possible to discover relatively significant differences. Generally, however, household development can be described as relatively fluid, stabilised by a generally high rate of early marriage, a planned family policy, and by the real possibilities of obtaining independent housing, even when taking into account the shifts in the age structure of the adult population and efforts on the part of nuclear families and individuals to obtain independent housing. The rising divorce rate brought about an increase in the number and percentage of lone-parent family households with children and one-person households, while the percentage of the numerically largest group – couple (two-parent family) households – decreased, even though their numbers had been on the rise up to 1980. The stagnating, or just slowly improving, mortality rate among women and the worsening mortality rate among men, starting in middle age, contributed to an increase in the percentage of households of single widows and of lone-parent family households of older people. The result of these trends was a continuous decrease in the average size of census households. Even the increase in fertility intensity in the 1970s, which only temporarily slowed the decline in the average size of two-parent family households, did not prevent this decrease, as the reduction in the fertility rate that began in the second half of the 1950s slowly started again toward the end of the 1970s. In addition to demographic development other factors had an effect on the reduction in the size of census households, factors of a social and economic nature – mainly the spread of the objective possibility of acquiring a flat, owing to intensified flat construction, the improving financial situation of households, which enabled them to attain independent housing and run their households independently (e.g. among individuals of retirement

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Table 1 Numbers and increases of Census households: by type, 1961–2001

Households by type	Households total (thous.)					Increase (thous.)		Increase (in %)	
	1961 ¹⁾	1970	1980	1991	2001	1970-01	1991-01	1970-01	1991-01
Census households, total	3 214.3	3 502.7	3 875.7	4 051.6	4 270.7	768.0	219.1	21.9	5.4
Family households	2 655.0	2 794.2	2 881.9	2 947.3	2 910.0	115.8	-37.3	4.1	-1.3
Couples	2 405.4	2 487.5	2 556.8	2 512.9	2 333.6	-153.9	-179.3	-6.2	-7.1
- with dependent children	1 405.4	1 404.4	1 475.4	1 395.9	1 090.8	-313.7	-305.1	-22.3	-21.9
- without dependent children	1 000.0	1 083.1	1 081.4	1 117.0	1 242.8	159.7	125.8	14.7	11.3
Lone-parents	249.6	306.7	325.1	434.4	576.4	269.7	142.0	87.9	32.7
- with dependent children	114.7	157.0	203.9	254.1	343.4	186.4	89.3	118.7	35.1
- without dependent children	134.9	149.7	121.2	180.3	233.0	83.3	52.7	55.6	29.2
One-person households	514.7	668.6	938.8	1089.6	1276.2	607.6	186.5	90.9	17.1
Multi-person non-family households ²⁾	44.6	39.9	55.0	14.7	84.5	x	x	x	x
Lone-parents without dep. children + multi-person non-family households ⁴⁾	179.5	189.6	176.2	195.0	317.5	127.9	122.6	67.5	62.8
Share of households out of total Census households (CH) in %									
- Family households	82.6	79.8	74.4	72.7	68.1	-11.7	-4.6	-14.7	-6.3
Couples	74.8	71.0	66.0	62.0	54.6	-16.4	-7.4	-23.1	-11.9
- with dependent children	43.7	40.1	38.1	34.5	25.5	-14.6	-9.0	-36.4	-26.1
- without dependent children	31.1	30.9	27.9	27.5	29.1	-1.8	1.6	-5.8	5.8
Lone-parents	7.8	8.8	8.4	10.7	13.5	4.7	2.8	53.4	26.2
- with dependent children	3.6	4.5	5.3	6.3	8.0	3.5	1.7	77.8	27.0
- without dependent children	4.2	4.3	3.1	4.4	5.5	1.2	1.1	27.9	25.0
- Multi-person non-family households	1.4	1.1	1.4	0.4	2.0	x	x	x	x
- One-person households	16.0	19.1	24.2	26.9	29.9	10.8	3.0	56.5	11.2
Average number of persons in CH, total									
- Couples	3.45	3.30	3.27	3.21	3.12	-0.18	-0.09	-5.5	-2.8
- with dependent children ³⁾	4.23	4.03	3.97	3.92	3.88	-0.15	-0.04	-3.7	-1.0
- without dependent children ³⁾	.	2.65	2.32	2.33	2.45	-0.20	0.12	-7.5	5.2
- Lone-parents	2.55	2.51	2.49	2.44	2.46	-0.05	0.02	-2.0	0.8
- with dependent children ³⁾	2.97	2.73	2.66	2.64	2.62	-0.11	-0.02	-4.0	-0.8
- without dependent children ³⁾	.	2.37	2.21	2.17	2.24	-0.13	0.07	-5.4	3.5
- Multi-person non-family households ⁴⁾	2.15	2.14	2.14	2.06	2.12	x	x	x	x

Note: 1) Differences in the definitions of one-person households, etc.

2) In 1991 defined differently - slightly incompatible with other censuses (see text), in 2001 this group included 34.5 thous. households of grandparents with grandchildren - incompatible with previous censuses.

3) 1961, 1970 children up to the age of 15.

4) Comparable data in this total.

age), along with changes in lifestyle (the effort among CH to live as independent households, the spread of urban lifestyles into rural areas, which indirectly contributed to changes in the structure of the housing stock, as smaller flats were built during mass housing construction).

The increase in the number of census households was fastest in the 1960s and especially in the 1970s, when there was a one-tenth increase of CH in each intercensal period. A decisive role in these increases was played by the very dynamic growth in the number of one-person households. During the 1970–1980 intercensal period there was a 40% increase in one-person households (270 000).

In the 1980s the tempo of the growth in the number of census households fell to half its previous tempo. The increase of just under 180 000 households in the 1980s (4.5%) derived from the continuously high increase in the number of census households of individuals (CHI) – 16% of the figure in 1970 (151 000) – and by the accelerated rate of the increase in the number of lone-parent family households (110 000)¹⁾. For the first time there was a decrease in the number of two-parent family households as a whole, owing to the effect of the reduction in the number of couple households with dependent children (a decrease of 80 000).

Changes in the structure of family households in the 1990s – especially under the effect of the changes in marriage and fertility patterns

The dramatic changes in demographic behaviour after 1990 and the socio-economic transformation of society began to have a significant effect on development trends in the structure and numbers of census households. Compared to the previous census, the changes in the demographic behaviour and way of life that had been under way since the mid-1990s became apparent in the 2001 census, despite the fact that the considerable inertia in household structure and in household formation somewhat weakened the effect of these changes. Changes primarily occurred in marriage and fertility patterns (mainly the decline of marriage and fertility intensity and a shift to higher rates of these events at a later age), a decrease in the mortality rate among women and men, and other changes of a more social nature (an increase in the intensity of the divorce rate, more widespread unmarried cohabitation, which changed the composition of census households by increasing the percentages of one-person households, lone-parent households, and couple households without dependent children. But the relative increase in the total number of census households in the last intercensal period did not differ much from the increase in the 1980s.

The internal structure of households – mainly couple households with or without dependent children, and lone-parent households – changed markedly, and changes also occurred in the composition of one-person households, both in terms of gender and in terms of age and marital status. There was also an increase in the proportion of multi-person non-family households (even when methodological changes of distinguishing such households are taken into account).

The total number of census households increased in the most recent intercensal period by just under 220 000, relatively by 5.4%. In absolute numbers, the increase in the number of one-person households by 187 000 (17%) was again of key significance, as they came to comprise 30% of census households. Like in the 1980s, there followed an increase in lone-parent households by 142 000, but in terms of the dynamics of growth it was the fastest growing group of households, increasing by approximately one-third. However, they still only accounted for 13.5% of households. The relative increase in lone-parent households was almost equally as high as in the previous decade, even though a change in the methodology for distinguishing such households resulted in some of them (lone-parent households of grandparents with grandchildren) being reassigned to the group of multi-person non-family households (if the method of categorisation had not been changed, the increase would have been 34.5 thousand higher). There was an increase in the methodologically comparable data file of “other” multi-person households (lone-parent households without dependent children + multi-person non-family households) between 1991 and 2001 of a total of 122 000 households (63% of their number in 1991), both owing to the decline in the marriage rate among divorcees and to the changes in lifestyle and household management of these CH.

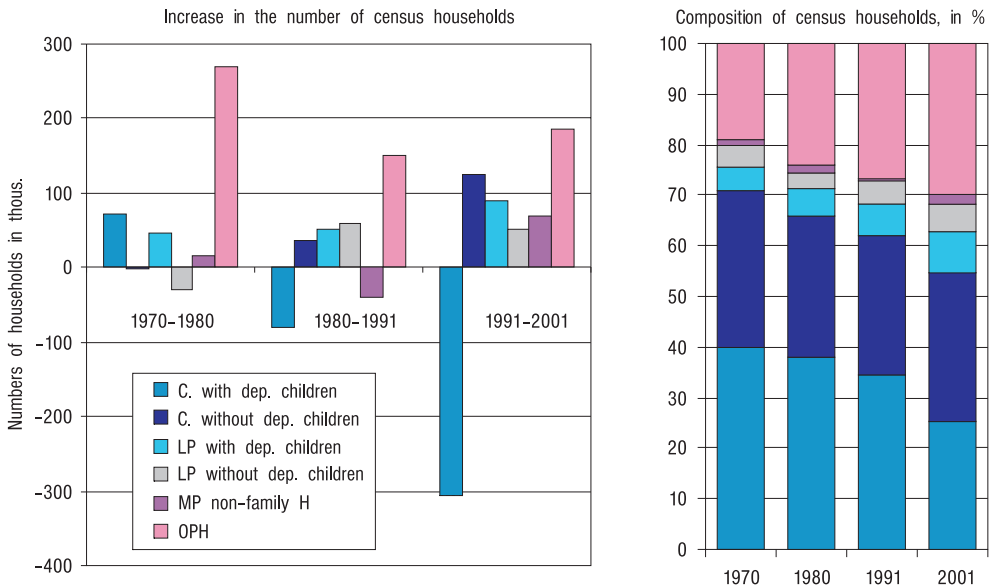
¹⁾ More detailed analysis of all these changes is limited to the 1970–2001 period, as since the 1970 census the methodology used to define census households has changed somewhat.

Family households

The high numerical increases in these types of households were reduced in the total number of CH by the substantial decrease in households of couples (180 000). In terms of the internal structure of these households, there was a reversal of the relationship between family households with dependent children and family households without dependent children. The signs of an increasing proportion of couples without dependent children, as this group was increased by couples that previously had dependent children, born in the population wave in the 1970s, that were gradually reaching adulthood, became evident in a comparison of the results of the censuses in 1991 and 1980, but the increase of 11% represented by 126 000 couple households without dependent children in 2001 signified the first time they constituted an absolute majority and at the same time prevented a massive decrease in the number and percentage of couple households. The effect of the decrease in the intensity of the marriage and fertility rates among young women, especially aged 25 and under, brought about a decline in the intensity of the formation of couples with children among women up to the age of 30 at the head of couple households. The start of what had previously been the constant renewal of the family cycle shifted in the most recent census to a later age or stopped. During the 1990s there was a decrease of more than 300 000 couple households with dependent children, that is, more than one-fifth of their number in 1991.

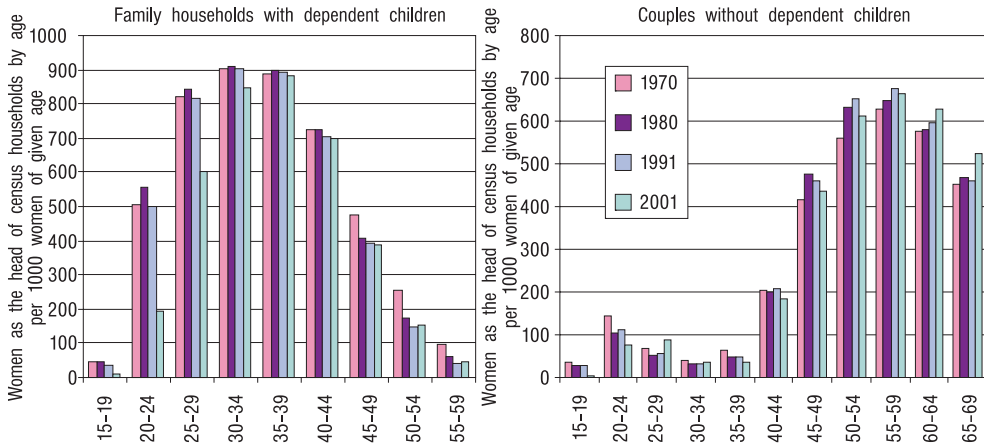
The growth in the number and proportion of couple households without dependent children was mainly a consequence of the improving mortality rate among the elderly, which was reflected also in the higher intensity of the formation of couple households without dependent children headed by a woman over the age of 60 (Figure 2) and an increase in the number of

Figure 1 Number and structure of census households



Key: Couples with dependent children = C. with dep. children
 Couples without dependent children = C. without dep. children
 Lone-parent with dependent children = LP with dep. children
 Lone-parent without dependent children = LP without dep. children
 Multi-person non-family households = MP non-family H
 One-person households = OPH

Figure 2 Intensity of forming family households with a woman as the head: 1970–2001



them over the age of 70; it was further reinforced by the higher intensity of the formation of these households in the 25–34 age group (the result of the postponement of childbirth by couples). Even as couple households decreased proportionally to 55% of the total number of CH, they remained the most widespread form of household, and the majority of the population still lives in this form of household (more than 6.6 million people, of which 4 million live in couple households with dependent children).

However, the significance of family households as a whole in society declined owing to the reduction in the number and percentage of couple households with dependent children. As the dynamics of the growth in the number of family households slowed (only 2% in the 1980s), in the recent intercensal period this was translated into a decline (by 1.3%, a decrease in absolute numbers of 37 000), so that the proportion of family households was less than the 70% of the total census households. The reduction in the proportion of family households was not even prevented by the increase in the intensity of the formation of lone-parent family households with children, primarily headed by women aged 25–39, which, together with the higher number of women born in the 1970s, was the main cause in the 1991–2001 period for the total increase of these households by 89 000. Lone-parent family households with dependent children still made up only a small part of the number of family households with children, and in the Czech environment they continue to be a numerically less significant group of CH. However, the situation is different in terms of ratios: in 1970 for every 100 couple households with dependent children there were just 11 lone-parent households with dependent children, but by 2001 this figure had risen to 31. If we look at lone-parent family households with children from the perspective of family cohabitation, raising children, and the social problems of their existence, these increases should on the contrary be given more attention.

Unmarried cohabitation

The decline in the proportion of couple households was not even prevented by the growing numbers of unmarried cohabitation registered in the census. Their number grew in the 1991–2001 period by one-half, but they still represented only 5.4% of all couple family households (2 percentage points more than in 1991). Although the number of cohabitations counted in the censuses are, considering the method used to ascertain and process this information, certainly undervalued²⁾, the development

²⁾ Only those cases where both partners were registered as permanent residents in the same flat were recorded.

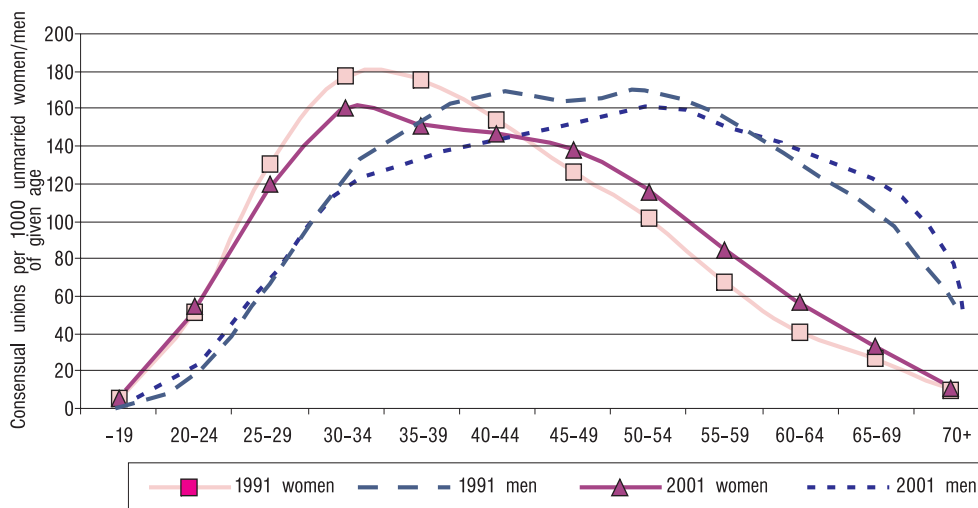
Table 2 Consensual unions in 1991 and 2001

Type of consensual unions	Number of consensual unions (thous.)		Increase 1991–2001		Percentage in family households	
	1991	2001	thous.	%	1991	2001
Total	84.9	125.3	40.3	47.5	3.4	5.4
- without dependent children	45.4	73.9	28.4	62.5	4.1	5.9
- with dependent children	39.5	51.4	11.9	30.2	2.8	4.7
- with 1 child	19.2	28.2	9.0	47.0	3.4	5.9
- with 2 children	13.8	16.4	2.6	18.8	2.1	3.2
- with 3+ children	6.5	6.8	0.3	5.0	4.1	6.8

of their composition in terms of the number of children living in these families and in terms of marital status seems to be relatively reliable. The biggest increase occurred in the number of cohabitations without dependent children (by 60%), of which 74 000 were recorded (60% of all UC). Unmarried cohabitation with children was most often with one child (28 000), and this category made up just less than 6% of all couple households with one child, which was the same as the percentage of UC without dependent children out of total couple households without dependent children.

An increase in the number of unmarried cohabitations can be observed in all age groups. The biggest increase was among young people of both sexes under the age of 35, while there was an increase of 2.5 times in the 25–29 age group, and in the 50–59 age group it increased by more than three-quarters. The number of unmarried cohabitations in the largest age group, 40–49 years, grew by one-fifth for both sexes. Thus the relation changed in favour of young people living in unmarried cohabitation: women under 35 made up 42% of those in unmarried cohabitation, while the proportion of middle-age women (35–59 years) fell to 46%; the proportion of men under the age of 35 in unmarried cohabitation grew to 35%, but middle-aged men made up more than one-half of those in unmarried cohabitation. Among both men and women there was a decrease in the proportion of people over the age of 60 in unmarried cohabitation (men 17%, women 15%). As a result there was a change even in the relation by marital status of people living in unmarried cohabitation.

Figure 3 Intensity of forming consensual unions: by age and sex



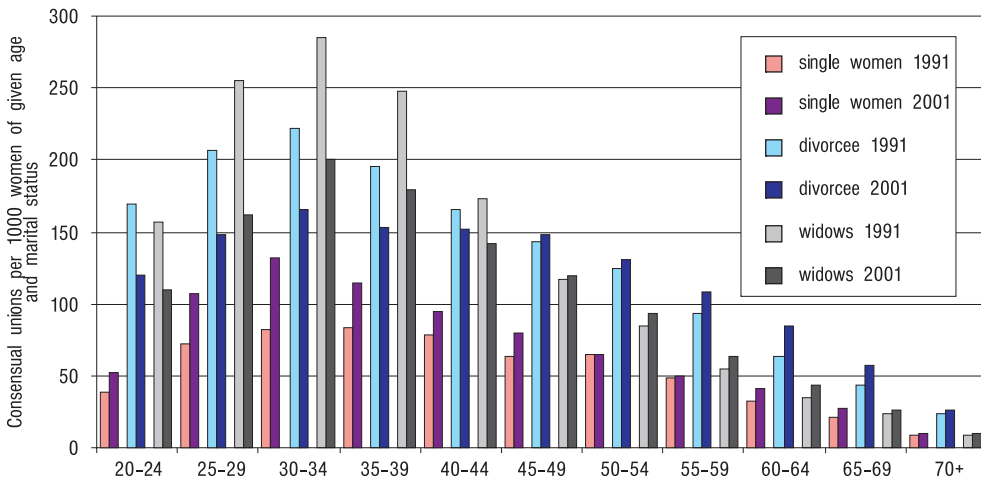
Note: Number of consensual unions including married persons living in a consensual union (CU) with an unmarried person

Table 3 Numbers and composition of consensual unions: by sex, age and marital status

Age group	Men					Women				
	Total	Composition by marital status (%)				Total	Composition by marital status (%)			
		Single	Married	Divorced	Widowed		Single	Married	Divorced	Widowed
2001										
18-24	10 277	96.9	0.6	1.7	0.0	19 207	94.2	1.3	3.6	0.1
25-29	19 007	84.9	1.5	12.5	0.1	20 195	71.1	2.6	24.2	1.0
30-34	14 774	55.7	2.9	39.6	0.3	13 653	34.9	3.7	56.3	3.7
35-39	13 272	35.9	3.2	58.3	1.0	11 927	19.7	3.4	68.7	7.1
40-49	28 098	23.7	2.8	70.1	2.3	25 315	9.9	2.9	73.4	12.7
50-59	23 464	16.7	2.7	73.9	5.5	20 805	6.3	2.0	62.7	28.2
60-69	9 922	15.1	2.8	63.1	18.0	8 952	4.7	1.4	38.2	54.8
70+	6 365	11.7	2.5	39.5	45.3	5 159	3.8	0.6	21.1	73.9
Total	125 269	41.4	2.5	49.5	5.4	125 269	35.2	2.4	46.0	15.5
1991										
18-24	4 526	86.7	1.1	11.6	0.1	8 545	75.4	1.5	21.7	1.0
25-29	7 155	59.2	1.4	38.6	0.3	8 062	32.7	1.9	60.5	4.5
30-34	9 370	38.2	1.6	59.0	0.8	9 604	16.2	1.6	73.0	8.8
35-39	12 831	27.9	1.3	69.0	1.4	12 273	11.2	1.4	73.7	13.4
40-49	23 433	20.9	1.2	74.7	2.8	21 556	8.6	1.3	69.5	20.4
50-59	12 818	20.5	1.5	68.0	9.6	11 752	7.2	1.3	49.0	42.3
60-69	9 258	17.9	1.7	52.0	28.1	9 019	5.7	1.2	27.4	65.4
70+	5 517	11.3	1.8	28.8	57.7	4 102	5.5	1.0	13.1	80.0
Total	84 934	29.6	1.4	59.2	9.4	84 934	18.2	1.4	54.8	25.3

Note: Remainder to 100% are cases where family status was not determined.

Figure 4 Intensity of forming consensual unions of women: by age and marital status



There was an increase in the proportion of single people in unmarried cohabitation, although there was always a higher proportion of single men than women – in 2001 it rose above two-fifths and thus approached the percentage of divorced men, who by 2001 constituted less than one-half. While the proportion of single women almost doubled, they still made up only 35% of the total. As a consequence, the proportion of divorced women decreased to 46% (down by 9 percentage points), and the proportion of widows fell to 15%. Single men and women up to the age of 30 formed the absolute majority, divorced women began predominating from the age of 30, while divorced men began predominating five years later, but maintained this predominance up to the age of 70. Despite the decrease in the proportion of widows, they continued to predominate from the age of 60.

The composition of people living in unmarried cohabitation by age and marital status depended primarily on the number of people in individual categories and their changes during the life cycle. An idea of the real intensity of the formation of unmarried cohabitation cleansed of the effects of age structure can only be obtained by calculating the intensity of the formation of unmarried cohabitation for individual age groups separately for both sexes and even more strictly by marital status. The Figure 4 reveals the seemingly surprising decline in the intensity of unmarried cohabitation in the most recent intercensal period among unmarried women aged 25 to 40 and among unmarried men aged 30 to 60 (to simplify, the low numbers of married people living in unmarried cohabitation are included). It is at a later age that the intensity of the formation of unmarried cohabitation rises for both sexes. The increase in the number of unmarried cohabitations is thus primarily the result of increases among young people.

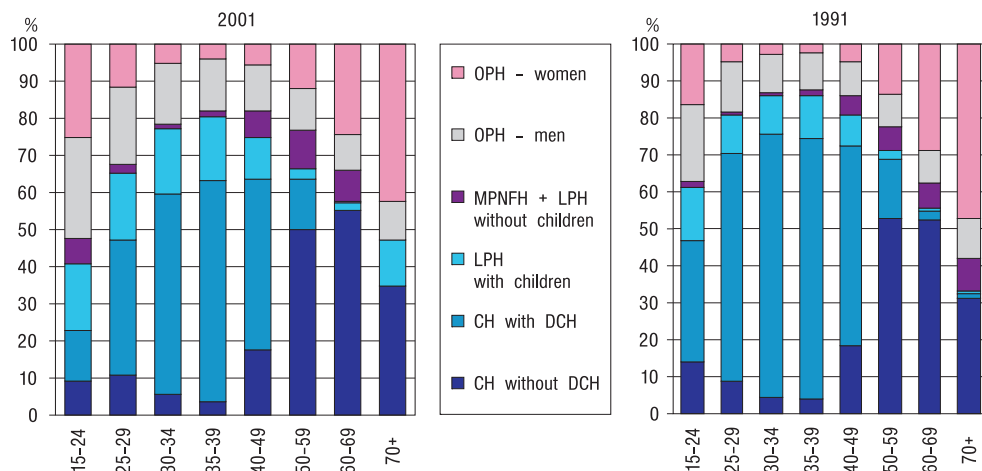
This is more evident from the graph of the intensity of the formation of unmarried cohabitation among women by marital status, and it is also revealed in a comparison of the composition of people by marital status from the years 1991 and 2001. The increase in the number of unmarried cohabitations among young women was affected by both the higher intensity with which these cohabitations were formed by single women (even up to 50 years of age) and by their higher numbers (in comparison with 1991 up to 60 years of age); a decline in the intensity of the formation of unmarried cohabitation was recorded among divorced and widowed women aged 20–44, also amidst higher numbers of divorced women. Among men the intensity of the formation of unmarried cohabitation by marital status developed similarly – it increased among singles to 40 years, among divorced men it fell up to 60 years (the results for widowers up to the age of 30 are not reliable owing to the small number of cases). The increase in the number of singles up to 60 years and divorced men over 45 had, as in the case of women, a decisive effect on the increase in unmarried cohabitation among men.

The number of unmarried cohabitations thus increased mainly under the effect of the growing proportion of single people, of which more were living in unmarried cohabitation than was observed in the census in 1991.

Other multi-person households and one-person households

The results of the censuses in 1991 and 2001 showed a substantial increase in the number of multi-person non-family households – especially ones headed by a person aged 20–29 or over the age of 70 – and also of lone-parent family households without dependent children, especially those headed by women aged 45–59. Among households headed by older people in particular the increases reflected the methodological changes (as indicated above); for this reason the two groups were combined for further analysis.

The increase in one-person households in the 1990s compared to the previous intercensal period was not too large, though there was a change in the relation of one-person households by sex. Owing to the effect of larger increases in the number of households among men than among women, their numbers became closer, so that for 100 one-person households of women there were already 80 one-person households of men, while in 1991 the figure had been just 63. What contributed to reducing the difference between the proportion of one-person

Figure 5 Composition of census households: by age of household head

Note: In couple households the household head is the woman
Key:

OPH - women, men = One person household - women, men

MPNFH + LPH without children = Multi-person non-family household + Lone-parent household without dependent children

LPH with children = Lone-parent household with dependent children

CH with DCH = Couple household with dependent children

CH without DCH = Couple household without dependent children

households by sex was the number of divorced men aged 40–59, who in 2001 made up more than one-half of one-person households of men. The cause of the high increase in the number of households of divorced men was the decrease in the marriage rate among divorced men in this age group (in 1991 divorced men made up 9.7% of men in this age group, and by 2001 the figure was 14%). The increase in the number of all one-person households in the last intercensal period was primarily influenced by the higher numbers of people reaching the age at which one-person households predominate (in this case, up to the age of 30), and structurally higher percentages of single and divorced people in practically all age groups, and partly also the higher intensity of the formation of these households among women aged 25–39.

Average household size and the composition of family households by the number of members

In the 1990s the trend of the decreasing size of census households continued and did so at just a slightly faster tempo than in the previous two intercensal periods. The biggest effect on this trend was again mainly the increase in the number and percentage of one-person households and also the decreasing size of two-parent households with dependent children. If we compare the average size of just multi-person households, they decreased from 3.20 in 1970 to 2.97 members in 2001, thus by 7%, with the decrease from 3.09 to 2.97 between 1991 and 2001 again being the fastest decrease.

Family households with other members

In the 2001 census, for the first time an increase was recorded in the average number of members in couple and lone-parent family households without dependent children: in the first case the increase was from 2.33 in 1991 to 2.45 members in 2001, and in the second case from 2.17 to 2.24 members. The reasons for this may be on the one hand the more common occur-

Table 4 Family households with additional occupants

Year	Total		Family households with dependent children						Family household without dependent children						
	Num. of households in thous.	Two-parent family households (Lone-parent family households) in %	Total in thous.	With 1 additional occupant				With 2+ additional occupants in thous.	Total in thous.	With 1 additional occupant				With 2+ additional occupants in thous.	
				in thous.	of which (%)					in thous.	of which (%)				
					Mother	Father	Other				Mother	Father	Other		
Two-parent households with additional occupants															
1980	114.5	4.5	54.2	52.9	75.1	16.8	8.1	1.3	60.3	59.2	76.0	12.6	11.4	1.1	
1991	87.1	3.5	48.8	47.4	76.1	16.1	7.8	1.4	38.3	37.7	79.3	12.1	8.6	0.6	
2001	93.2	4.0	40.8	39.8	63.0	15.7	21.3	1.0	52.4	50.4	57.0	8.1	34.9	2.0	
Lone-parent family households with additional occupants															
1980	17.8	5.5	9.1	8.8	50.2	7.5	42.3	0.3	8.7	8.5	58.7	6.7	34.6	0.2	
1991	43.2	9.9	14.5	13.3	65.9	10.0	24.1	1.2	28.7	25.9	87.1	10.0	2.9	2.8	
2001	32.2	5.6	20.7	19.9	64.7	12.6	22.7	0.8	11.5	10.7	54.1	6.8	39.1	0.8	

Note.: In 1980 family households with or without children up to the age of 15. In 1991 the Lone-parent household data set included cases of a lone-grandparent with grandchildren, in 2001 they were no longer included.

rence of other members living with family households, and on the other hand the extension of the period during which adult independent children continue to live with the family as a result of the postponement of marriage among young people or because they are not living with a partner.

While during the 1970s and 1980s the number of couple households with other cohabiting members decreased, in the 1990s it grew in absolute numbers by more than 6000 households; the number of couple households without dependent children in which one or more other persons – not including parents (spouses) and potentially also their independent children – were living increased by one-third. Among couple households with dependent children the decline in the number of households with other cohabitating members continued even in the most recent intercensal period. Among lone-parent households the number and percentage of households with additional members decreased, but the decrease only occurred among lone-parent households without dependent children, which given the low number of this group may just be a result of a methodological change – the exclusion from this group of lone-parent households of grandparents without dependent children. Conversely, more often than before other members lived with lone-parent households with dependent children. The proposition that the numbers of households with other members also increased as a result of methodological changes in the classification of households of grandparents with grandchildren is supported by the change in the structure of additional household members; particularly in households without dependent children the previously predominant portion of cohabiting mothers or mothers-in-law of head of household substantially decreased in favour of other persons (a proportion comparable to past censuses was formed by cohabiting mothers or mothers-in-law only in lone-parent families with dependent children). However, at the same time it is necessary to take into account that the increase in couple households with other members is also a reflection of an alternative solution to the difficulty of finding independent housing³⁾.

³⁾ Another alternative may be, for example, the increase in the number and percentage of dwellings containing two or more census households (in the 1990s there was an increase of 54 000 dwellings, that is, 17% of the number in 1991); if an adult, economically active individual was living together with a family household, it depended only on the declaration of the household arrangement of the individual within the shared housing as to whether it would be regarded as an independent household or as an independent child within one family census household (in addition, the declared household arrangement need not have corresponded to reality).

Table 5 Composition of households with two or more members: by number of members, 1970–2001

Year	Census household with two or more members									Average number of members
	Total in thous.	With number of members (in thous.)				Composition by number of members in %				
		2	3	4	5+	2	3	4	5+	
Census households with two or more members, total (incl. multi-person non-family households)										
1970	2834.1	975.6	810.7	701.5	346.3	34.4	28.6	24.8	12.2	3.20
1980	2936.9	1056.5	732.3	842.8	305.3	36.0	24.9	28.7	10.4	3.17
1991	2961.9	1125.5	752.3	827.2	256.9	38.0	25.4	27.9	8.7	3.09
2001	2994.5	1251.3	823.9	733.1	186.2	41.8	27.5	24.5	6.2	2.97
Difference 2001–1991	32.6	125.8	71.6	–94.1	–70.7	3.8	2.1	–3.4	–2.5	–0.12
Two-parent households										
1970	2487.5	743.7	728.8	678.1	336.9	29.9	29.3	27.3	13.5	3.30
1980	2556.8	802.6	637.2	819.7	297.3	31.4	24.9	32.1	11.6	3.27
1991	2512.9	827.6	634.1	800.8	250.4	32.9	25.2	31.9	10.0	3.21
2001	2333.6	815.6	641.3	698.1	178.6	35.0	27.5	29.9	7.6	3.12
Difference 2001–1991	–179.3	–11.9	7.2	–102.7	–71.8	2.1	2.3	–2.0	–2.4	–0.09
Lone-parent family households										
1970	306.7	196.4	78.2	22.9	9.2	64.0	25.5	7.5	3.0	2.51
1980	325.1	205.4	89.5	22.4	7.8	63.2	27.5	6.9	2.4	2.49
1991	434.4	284.1	117.5	26.3	6.5	65.4	27.0	6.1	1.5	2.44
2001	576.4	359.5	175.6	34.0	7.3	62.4	30.4	5.9	1.3	2.46
Difference 2001–1991	142.0	75.4	58.1	7.7	0.8	–3.0	3.4	–0.2	–0.2	0.02

The permanent decline in the proportion of census households with five or more members

In the past decade it has been possible to observe an increase in the proportion of two-member households (couple households and other multi-person households together) occurring at an accelerated tempo (by almost 4 percentage points). While the weight of three-member households has continued to increase, this category did not reach the level of 27% that it reached in 1970. Since 1970 the biggest change was in the proportion of four-member households, which, unlike three-member households, had increased between 1980 and 1991, owing to the natality wave of the 1970s. But in the 2001 census their proportion had fallen to a level lower than what was observed in 1970 (mainly owing to the effect of lower numbers of two-child two-parent families during the period of reproductive depression). The reduction in the size of multi-person households, among which family households figure significantly, resulted from the continuous decrease in the number and percentage of couple households with five or more members and earlier also by the decline in the proportion of lone-parent families with four or more members.

In the period between 1970 and 2001 the percentage of two-member two-parent family households increased to 35%, and starting in the 1980 census the percentage of three-member two-parent families also increased (to 28%), while the almost one-third proportion of four-member households recorded in 1980 and 1991 decreased in 2001 to less than 30% (the decline in the marriage and fertility rates and changes in the composition of households during the life cycle). In lone-parent family households the almost two-thirds predominance of two-member households over thirty years decreased in favour of three-member households, the proportion of which increased from one-quarter in 1970 to more than 30% in 2001. Two-member households made up 90% of the multi-person non-family households.

Changes in the structure of the composition of families and households is changing mainly among the younger generations

The relatively stable development in the number and composition of households that was observed between the 1960s and the end of the 1980s was in the last decade of the 20th century subjected to the effect of the new model of demographic behaviour of mainly the young generations. They were strongly affected by the new economic and social conditions connected with the emergence of the Western European model of a more highly differentiated society, including models of reproductive behaviour, individualisation trends, and changes in the value system, and by the opportunity to take advantage of more modern scientific knowledge (health care) and technological innovations (the role of new communications technology) in the newly forming environment of a market economy. All these changes were reflected in the living arrangements of people in families and households as they occurred on the level of population structures that emerged before the emergence of the new model of demographic behaviour, not just individual structures (age and marital status) but also past structures of households and families and previous demographic behaviour. For this reason, these dramatic changes are reflected on a much smaller scale than we would expect and relate primarily to the younger generations. (The significance of the reproductive function of family households is explained in more detail in **Family Households as Measured in the Census 2001** by Milan Kučera, also published in this volume.)

One-person households also warrant special attention, not just with respect to what percentage of the population they constitute and the relatively substantial changes in their composition that occurred during the 1990s, but also because one-person households are becoming a strong interest group, whose specific needs will have to be respected and quickly addressed.

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