

FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS AS MEASURED IN THE CENSUS 2001*)

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Abstract: The article focuses on family households with dependent children (including consensual unions) and on the change in household structure resulting from changes in demographic behaviour among young people.

Keywords: census, lone-parent and two-parent family households by the number of dependent children, intensity of formation of family households, average numbers of dependent children

Family households are the foundation stones of the formation of social collectivities and are defined differently in different periods. Originally, a family household was defined as a group of individuals who live together in one house (which was characterised as a dwelling by its chimney, i.e. the presence of a hearth) and later in one dwelling or living quarters or even as an economic household (when the layout of the dwelling and the composition of its inhabitants and their financial means allow for independent household units of two or more families or other households in one residential space). In the Czech case, up until the 1961 census, in the interest of obtaining a precise and reliable calculation of the “needs” of a flat, households were defined as a two-parent family household (TPFH) and a lone-parent family household (LPFH), accompanied by the further specification of whether there are dependent children in the household or not.

Over time, as people’s views about living together changed, the key concept of households became the family household. Any analysis of census data on households must therefore include the study of trends in the number and composition of two-parent family households, at the centre of which are so-called nuclear families, and by extension also lone-parent households. Such data are collected in most countries, however differently they may be interpreted (households – dwelling, vs. housekeeping concept), and our detailed classification also contains comparable data.

Two-parent family households once made up the majority of social collectivities, and the loss of one of the two persons at the head of the household was usually quickly replaced with a new marriage. Detailed data from the 1930 census and the less sub-categorised data from the 1950 census confirm that the absolute majority of households were two-parent families (for every 100 married women in 1930 there were just 114 households with two or more members and in 1950 there were 125). The long-term rise in the divorce rate without a subsequent marriage, usually a woman-divorcee with a child (children), or with a marriage only occurring much later, led to an increase in the proportion of lone-parent family households: along with the ageing of the population and migration to the cities, this phenomenon contributed to the acceleration of the number and percentage of households of individuals. Thus while the number of two-parent family households continued to rise until 1980, their proportion in the population began to decrease gradually already in 1961 – from three-quarters of the population at that time to 55% in 2001. On the other hand, the proportion of lone-parent family

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households with children increased during the same period from just under 4% to 8%, or, in absolute figures, from 115 000 to 343 000 in 2001. The changes in demographic behaviour among young people in the final decade of the 20th century ushered in a dramatic decline in the number and percentage of two-parent family households. The scope and the causes of these changes in the number and structure of all households have been described elsewhere, in an article by *Dagmara Bartoňová* (*Demografie*, 2005, 47, p. 1–12), so here I will concentrate just on family households and particularly on those households in which there are dependent children. The data for two-parent family households do, however, include cases of acknowledged consensual unions (common-law marriage).

The Effects of the Decline in the Intensity of the Marriage Rate after 1990

Although the percentage of married women, broken down by age group, decreased even before 1990, a substantial decline occurred during the 1991–2000 period in the under-40 age group. The timing of marriage, specifically, the shift in the age of highest marriage rate intensity among single women from age 21 (1991) to age 25–26 (more recently), combined with the considerable decline in marriage rate intensity among divorced and widowed women, are the reason that in 2001 just under 60% of women aged 25–29 were married, that is, 25 percentage points below the figure in 1980, and for the 35–39 age group the figure was almost 10 percentage points lower. It is only in the over-60 age group that, as a result of the effect of the decline in the intensity of the mortality rate among older men and consequently the smaller number of widows, there are relatively more two-parent family households than before.

Table 1 Intensity of forming two-parent family households: by age of women

Age group	Married women per 100 women with realised marital status				Couple household with a woman as the head per 100 married women			
	1970	1980	1991	2001	1970	1980	1991	2001
15–19	8.5	8.3	7.2	0.8	88.8	76.8	76.6	131.2
20–24	65.1	67.4	61.6	21.4	91.7	88.5	87.8	96.4
25–29	83.4	85.3	81.7	59.9	96.8	96.0	96.1	92.4
30–34	89.0	87.0	83.9	74.6	99.6	98.8	99.7	96.1
35–39	88.3	85.8	82.5	76.5	100.4	99.7	100.6	98.1
40–44	85.9	84.7	80.8	76.1	100.5	100.4	100.7	99.2
45–49	82.0	82.1	79.0	74.9	100.6	100.5	100.4	99.6
50–54	77.6	77.4	76.8	73.7	100.6	100.3	100.5	99.6
55–59	70.2	69.2	70.5	70.1	100.6	100.1	100.5	99.7
60–64	59.3	59.5	60.2	63.7	100.9	100.2	100.4	100.3
65–69	45.3	47.3	46.3	52.6	104.3	100.3	100.5	100.5
70+	22.2	22.7	19.9	24.7	101.1	99.3	99.0	100.7

At the same time, there were fewer married women aged 25 and over at the head of two-parent family households. The largest disproportion roughly up to the age of 25 was caused mostly by the existence of consensual unions. The “missing” married women at the head of two-parent families were either found as spouses living separately, owing to not having a shared household, or were found in cases of broken households prior to divorce or without a divorce. The fact that there were more of these cases than there were consensual unions was the second but weaker cause of the decrease in two-parent family households.

Although the intensity of the divorce rate in recent years has grown almost uninterruptedly, it was only reflected in the number of lone-parent family households – along with the less frequent case of a second marriage – in age groups over 30. Younger women, mostly still single, formed lone-parent family households with dependent children less often than ever

before. The explanation is simple: among the low number of originally married women with children there were relatively fewer lone-parent family households with children headed by a divorced woman, and the high number of extra-marital children born to single women stemmed from the considerable increase in the number of young single women, while the intensity of their fertility increased very little.

The decline in the intensity of the marriage rate thus resulted in a smaller proportion of married women, who at the same time were less often at the head of a two-parent family household, and divorced and widowed women less often re-married. Owing to the effect of these three factors, even with fewer women becoming widows, in 1991–2001 the number of married women decreased by 120 000 (the proportion of those over the age of 15 fell from 60% to just under 55%) and the number of two-parent families decreased from 2 513 000 to 2 334 000, thus by 180 000 (7%).

The Structure of Family Households by the Number of Dependent Children

Changes in the number of two-parent family households were accompanied by – and this is a more significant finding – a change in the structure of the two-parent family household. Two-parent family households without dependent children increased in one decade by 126 000 (11%) to 1 243 000, while two-parent family households with dependent children decreased by 305 000 (22%) to 1 091 000. This is the continuation of a trend that began around the year 1980. The proportion of two-parent family households without dependent children increased from 28% to just 29% of the total census households, while the proportion of two-parent family households with dependent children decreased from 38% to 26%. If we add to this lone-parent households with dependent children, then in 1961 reproductively “active” women still made up 47% of the total census households (1 520 000), in 1980 the figure was 43% (1 679 000), and in 2001 it was just 34% (1 434 000). In a way, data on the composition of family households by the number of dependent children reveal the population situation better than data on fertility modified by changes in marital status. They also reflect how the structure of two-parent family households and lone-parent family households by dependent children is affected by the decline in the intensity of the marriage rate and fertility – whether marital or extra-marital. Nevertheless, every piece of more recent data is improved by the increasing age of child dependency resulting from the greater intensity of study at secondary school and university and studies and exchanges abroad.

A comparison of structural indicators in the past censuses (in 1970, before the demographic boom that followed a period of reproductive depression; in 1980, after the boom had peaked; in 2001, following a period of more pronounced changes in demographic behaviour) shows that:

- the smallest changes occurred in two-parent family households headed by a woman aged 20 and under (the percentage with children clearly modified by the effect of forced marriage owing to pregnancy or by unmarried cohabitation);
- the percentage of childless women in the 20–29 age group grew substantially; among women aged 20–24 the percentage of women with two children decreased to almost one-half the level observed in 1991, and similarly among women aged 25–29 the percentage of women with one child increased, accompanied by a decline in the percentage of those with two and especially three children;
- in the 30–34 age group there was an increase in the percentage of women with one child, which was connected with the decrease in the percentage of women with three children; the percentage of women with two children remained stable;
- the changes observed in the age group over 35 are again small, because these are usually two-parent family households that emerged before 1990, with children that were also born at that time or with just some children born at the start of the last decade.

Table 2 Composition of two-parent family households: by number of dependent children (% in given age group of women)

Age group	Census year	Number of dependent children					Average number of children		Women in %
		0	1	2	3	4+	All women	Women with children	
15-19	1970	50.3	45.8	3.5	0.3	0.1	0.54	1.09	8
	1980	42.4	52.2	5.2	0.2	0.0	0.63	1.10	6
	1991	48.7	48.0	3.1	0.2	0.0	0.55	1.07	6
	2001	51.2	43.9	4.6	0.3	0.0	0.54	1.11	1
20-24	1970	24.0	55.0	18.8	1.9	0.3	1.00	1.31	60
	1980	17.1	47.2	32.1	3.2	0.4	1.23	1.48	60
	1991	21.1	51.8	25.0	1.9	0.2	1.08	1.37	54
	2001	37.4	47.7	13.7	1.0	0.2	0.79	1.26	21
25-29	1970	8.5	38.0	43.8	8.0	1.7	1.57	1.71	81
	1980	6.4	25.0	55.8	11.2	1.6	1.77	1.89	82
	1991	7.4	29.6	53.9	8.0	1.1	1.66	1.79	79
	2001	15.8	39.4	40.2	3.8	0.8	1.35	1.60	55
30-34	1970	4.7	23.3	51.5	15.8	4.7	1.93	2.02	89
	1980	3.7	16.0	59.3	17.6	3.4	2.02	2.10	86
	1991	3.8	15.5	62.1	15.8	2.8	1.99	2.07	84
	2001	5.1	23.8	59.3	9.8	2.0	1.80	1.90	72
35-39	1970	7.3	25.8	46.4	15.5	5.0	1.86	2.01	89
	1980	5.6	23.0	52.6	15.4	3.4	1.90	2.01	86
	1991	5.9	22.1	55.1	14.4	2.5	1.86	1.98	83
	2001	4.8	20.9	59.0	12.7	2.6	1.88	1.97	75
40-44	1970	23.6	37.7	28.6	7.5	2.6	1.29	1.69	86
	1980	23.7	39.8	29.0	6.0	1.5	1.22	1.60	85
	1991	25.6	40.7	28.1	4.9	0.7	1.15	1.54	81
	2001	24.7	36.4	32.3	5.5	1.1	1.22	1.62	75
45-49	1970	50.6	33.6	12.4	2.5	0.9	0.70	1.41	82
	1980	57.5	31.2	9.5	1.4	0.4	0.56	1.32	83
	1991	58.3	31.5	9.0	1.0	0.2	0.53	1.28	79
	2001	58.6	29.2	10.6	1.3	0.3	0.55	1.34	78

Note: Proportion of women in %: percentage of women at the head of two-parent households in the given age group (potential no. of children of a two-parent family household)

These changes in the structure of the two-parent family households are correspondingly reflected in the average number of children, which is calculated in two ways (including or without childless women). The period of reproductive depression in the 1960s, when the average numbers of children in relation to each two-parent household was low, was followed by a demographic boom, during which all age groups up to the age of 40 saw an increase in both average values (this was a period of a real increase in fertility among those women who were affected by the positive changes in the living conditions of families with children at the peak reproductive age). In 1991 the average numbers of children were again lower, but usually still above the level they had been at in 1970. The data from the census in 2001 show a sharp decline in fertility in the under-30 age group, caused by the postponement of marriage, and in the 30-34 age group, caused, in my opinion, predominantly by the rejection of having children (or another child). In two-parent family households headed by older women over the age of 35, the data indicate an earlier higher marital fertility rate during the period of the demographic boom, together with an extension of the period of child dependency.

Similar changes in structure can be observed in lone-parent family households with dependent children; here, of course, for logical reasons, there is no "childless" item. The cited data include even the small, 11-13 % proportion of lone-parent households headed by men (2001).

In the 25–34 age group there is a distinct increase in the proportion of one-child households alongside a decline in two-child households and especially households with three or more children. This is reflected in the fact that single women heading lone-parent family households usually have just one child, and women-divorcees are leaving the marriage category with fewer children and entering the category of divorcees also with fewer children.

A comparison of the average number of children in two-parent and lone-parent family households shows that the decline in fertility after 1990 was reflected in both indicators. With a

lower fertility rate among women in the total population, the difference between the number of children in these two family categories decreases, as the limited fertility of single women and the premature termination of reproduction among divorced women (who make up the major part of lone-parent family households headed by a person over 30 years of age) do not play the kind of role they do in times when there is high fertility, when married women have tended to have three or even more children. Among the people heading lone-parent households with dependent children, in 2001 only 12% of those aged 20–24 were divorced, 54% of those aged 30–34 were divorced, and 63% of those aged 40–44 were divorced.

Since the census in 1961 the difference between two-parent and lone-parent family households with one and two children has increased, mainly as a result of the effect of the rising divorce rate. After 1990 a contributing factor was that the considerably larger number of single women than before also resulted in many more lone-parent families, mostly with just one child. In 1970 roughly one-eighth of one-child family households were lone-parent households, in 1980 around one-fifth, a decade later around one-quarter, and at the time of the census in 2001 almost one-third. Among two-child households, lone-parent households rose from an initial proportion of one-twentieth to one-fifteenth, one-tenth, and subsequently to one-sixth or one-seventh. The increase in the difference in 2001 was caused by the fact that divorced women were re-marrying less often than before. It is not possible to determine from the census data and how they were processed the extent to which marriage is postponed in a consensual union after the birth of a child and how much of an effect this has on the cited data.

A detailed calculation showed that while the number of lone-parent families of single women with dependent children gradually increased, the intensity of their formation between 1991 and 2001 only changed more for the age group over 30. The main part of the increase in the number of children born outside a marriage and thus also the number of lone-parent families with children stemmed from the fact that owing to the effect of postponing or rejecting marriage there was a considerable increase in the numbers of single women. The “replacement” of reproductively active married women with reproductively active single women is occurring more at a later age, over the age of 30, but the rate of replacement is considerably insufficient (see the average numbers of dependent children).

It is sometimes thought that from the perspective of reproduction it essentially does not matter whether a young single woman marries or whether she lives in a consensual union; both groups of women can subsequently have the same fertility rate, or the number of children in families of both types of cohabitation will be the same. More detailed information can be obtained from the data on the numbers of common-law marriages. In 2001, just under 10% of single men aged 30–34 lived in a consensual union; among women this figure was exceeded only given a wider age span of 25–34 years, and in the age group over 25 it was always more

Table 3 Intensity of forming lone-parent family households: by age of women

Age group	Women with children as the head of lone-parent households per 100 single women			
	1970	1980	1991	2001
15–19	0.9	1.0	1.0	1.0
20–24	15.1	19.3	18.9	8.4
25–29	44.2	49.1	49.9	35.4
30–34	54.3	61.3	62.1	68.6
35–39	56.8	63.6	65.2	73.8
40–44	45.5	49.7	50.9	55.5
45–49	29.2	28.2	29.6	31.8

Note: The increase in the proportion of unmarried women, especially in 1991–2001, is evident from the data in Table 1.

Table 4 Composition of lone-parent family households: by number of dependent children, % in given age group

Age group	Census year	Number of dependent children			Average number of children	Number of lone-parent households with children, in thous.
		1	2	3+		
15-19	1970	96.0	3.0	0.2	1.03	3.4
	1980	96.1	3.6	0.3	1.04	3.2
	1991	94.6	4.8	0.6	1.06	4.5
	2001	92.8	6.6	0.6	1.08	2.5
20-24	1970	88.4	10.6	1.0	1.13	23.5
	1980	82.4	16.1	1.5	1.19	22.3
	1991	86.1	12.8	1.1	1.15	25.6
	2001	86.2	12.2	1.6	1.15	27.8
25-29	1970	72.5	23.3	4.2	1.38	24.5
	1980	61.6	32.7	5.7	1.45	31.9
	1991	65.3	30.3	4.4	1.39	33.0
	2001	71.1	25.4	3.5	1.33	62.5
30-34	1970	55.2	33.4	11.4	1.58	18.3
	1980	48.6	41.1	10.3	1.64	36.9
	1991	45.8	43.5	10.7	1.65	36.6
	2001	52.6	39.3	8.1	1.56	63.4
35-39	1970	51.5	35.1	13.4	1.64	21.9
	1980	49.7	39.5	10.8	1.64	34.6
	1991	45.5	43.7	10.8	1.66	50.9
	2001	45.4	44.4	10.2	1.66	66.2
40-44	1970	62.4	29.1	8.5	1.48	24.0
	1980	65.0	28.7	6.3	1.43	24.1
	1991	65.7	29.2	5.1	1.40	48.9
	2001	61.9	32.5	5.6	1.45	53.6
45-49	1970	75.2	20.0	4.8	1.30	21.8
	1980	77.0	19.3	3.7	1.28	17.8
	1991	79.5	18.1	2.4	1.23	26.0
	2001	76.9	20.4	2.7	1.26	40.1

Note: Incl. male as the head of lone-parent households.

Table 5 Relationship between the number of two-parent and lone-parent family households with one child and two children

Age group	Lone-parent households with one child per 100 couples with one child				Lone-parent households with two children per 100 couples with two children			
	1970	1980	1991	2001	1970	1980	1991	2001
15-19	23.8	27.6	38.0	155.1	9.7	10.5	29.7	105.8
20-24	14.7	19.1	23.5	59.6	5.1	5.5	7.3	29.4
25-29	16.0	23.5	27.5	48.5	4.5	5.6	7.0	16.9
30-34	17.4	30.7	38.5	58.4	4.8	7.0	9.2	17.5
35-39	16.7	25.2	31.6	57.0	6.3	8.8	12.2	19.7
40-44	13.9	16.8	23.1	36.3	8.5	10.2	14.9	21.4
45-49	16.5	18.3	24.0	35.9	11.9	15.1	19.2	26.2

Note: Couple households by age of woman, lone-parent households by age of woman or man.

often a case of a single woman in a consensual union with dependent children than a case without children. According to the 2001 census, consensual unions only very slightly offset the decrease in marriages among young people.

From a demographic perspective, i.e. as part of the evaluation of the reproduction rate of

Table 6 Lone-parent family households of unmarried women with dependent children

Age group	1970		1980		1991		2001	
	Thous.	%	Thous.	%	Thous.	%	Thous.	%
Single women								
15-19	371.0	91.4	307.2	91.6	393.9	92.7	330.2	99.2
20-24	139.5	32.4	101.6	29.7	117.3	35.1	315.9	77.1
25-29	32.9	9.3	36.3	8.9	36.7	10.9	134.2	32.0
30-34	13.6	4.8	21.3	5.0	19.1	5.7	36.0	10.8
35-39	11.1	3.7	13.4	3.9	16.5	4.1	20.4	6.1
40-44	13.1	4.0	9.1	3.3	14.7	3.5	14.7	4.4
45-49	16.4	4.6	8.8	3.0	11.0	3.2	14.1	3.6
Lone-parent households of single women with dependent children								
15-19	1.4	0.4			1.5	0.4	2.0	0.9
20-24	3.8	2.8	3.8	0.9	4.4	3.8	13.4	4.2
25-29	2.5	7.5	3.0	8.3	4.1	11.1	14.6	10.9
30-34	1.4	10.4	2.7	12.5	3.3	17.1	7.5	20.7
35-39	1.3	11.6	1.8	13.2	3.0	18.2	4.9	23.8
40-44	1.2	9.4			2.3	15.7	3.0	20.3
45-49	1.0	6.4	1.4	8.9	1.0	9.5	1.9	13.5

Note: Percentage in the upper part of the table show the percentage of women out of total women, in the lower part of the table the percentage of single women forming a lone-parent family household with dependent children. Data for 1980 was processed for the age groups up to 25 and 40-49.

Table 7 Intensity of consensual unions of unmarried persons in 1991 and 2001 per 1000 unmarried persons of respective age group and sex

Age group	Single men		Single women					
	1991	2001	1991			2001		
			Total	Without children	With children	Total	Without children	With children
15-19	1.1	1.0	4.8	3.3	1.5	5.0	3.1	1.9
20-24	14.8	24.7	21.7	12.7	9.0	52.0	34.4	17.6
25-29	43.8	67.4	71.9	29.9	42.0	107.0	56.4	50.6
30-34	68.7	95.0	81.8	27.5	54.3	132.3	47.0	85.3

Table 8 Average numbers of dependent children in two-parent family households and in consensual unions of unmarried women in 2001

Age group	Percentage without children		Average numbers per women total (averages for total women)			Average numbers per women with children		
	Two-parent family households	Consensual unions	Two-parent family households	Consensual unions	Difference	Two-parent family households	Consensual unions	Difference
15-19	51	61	0.54	0.45	-0.09	1.11	1.16	0.05
20-24	37	66	0.79	0.45	-0.34	1.26	1.34	0.08
25-29	16	53	1.35	0.78	-0.57	1.60	1.66	0.06
30-34	5	36	1.80	1.16	-0.64	1.90	1.81	-0.09

groups of women with different living arrangements, the rise in the intensity of the formation of consensual unions and the increase in the number of extra-marital children (within or outside a consensual union) is thus manifested as an insufficient replacement to offset the decline in the number and percentage of married women living in two-parent family households at a higher fertility rate.

Single women in unmarried cohabitation are childless more often than they would be if

Table 9 "Replacement" of two-parent family households with consensual unions and lone-parent family households with dependent children of unmarried women

Age group	Married women per 100 women		Single women in CU and LPHDCH per 100 single women					
			1991			2001		
	1991	2001	Consensual unions	Lone-parent households with dependent children	Total	Consensual unions	Lone-parent households with dependent children	Total
15-19	7.2	0.8	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.5	0.9	1.4
20-24	61.6	21.4	3.8	3.8	7.6	5.2	4.2	9.4
25-29	81.7	59.9	7.2	11.1	18.3	10.7	10.9	21.6
30-34	83.9	74.6	8.2	17.1	25.3	13.2	20.7	33.9

Note: CU – consensual unions; LPHDCH – lone-parent family household with dependent children.

Table 10 Structure of single women in consensual unions: by number of dependent children, in %

Age group	Consensual unions of single women, in thous.	Number of dependent children				Consensual unions of single women per two-parent family households total, in %
		0	1	2	3+	
15-19	1.7	61.3	33.1	5.3	0.3	48.6
20-24	16.4	66.2	24.7	7.3	1.8	19.5
25-29	14.4	52.7	27.1	13.2	7.0	6.2
30-34	4.8	35.5	32.4	20.3	11.8	2.0

married, and the substantial difference in the fertility of both groups of women cannot be explained by the unverifiable assumption that some young single women live in a consensual union as “a trial”, so to speak, for a later marriage, and that after the birth of a child or even before they marry and become part of a different group of women in the observed population. This more often happens over the age of 30, when only 35% of this age group is made up of single women living in a consensual union (for women up to the age of 25 it is 94%, and in the 25–29 age group it is still 71%).

It can be assumed that the real numbers of unmarried young single women in a consensual union are higher than the partners indicated in their census forms. But any possible definition of a “trial marriage” is problematic. One verifiable fact is the finding derived from demographic statistical data that the proportion of first-order marital births from pre-nuptial conception (exactly within eight months of the marriage) decreased from an average of 55% in the long period up to 1994 to an average of just under 41% for the years 2000–2002. The decline in this indicator's values does not suggest that a consensual union before the birth of a child ends more often in marriage.

Information on the composition of family households – two-parent and lone-parent – is a manifestation of the characteristics of the fertility rate by age and marital status in the period immediately before a census, but also for the previous fifteen to twenty years. These data also make it possible to evaluate in greater detail the rate of extra-marital fertility, especially fertility among women living in a consensual union as a “substitute” for legitimate marriage. That is why it would be useful in future censuses to expand the categories in this direction.

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