

## **Second demographic transition in the Czech Republic: Stages, specific features and underlying factors**

*Paper presented at the EURESCO Conference "The second demographic transition in Europe", Bad Herrenalb, Germany, 23-28 June 2001*

**SECOND DRAFT, July 2001**

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### **(INTRODUCTION)**

#### ***Do you believe in the second demographic transition?***

*Fifteen years since Ron Lesthaeghe and Dirk van de Kaa first presented their notion of the second demographic transition (Lesthaeghe and van de Kaa, 1986), this concept remains both attractive and controversial. Though many demographers now commonly use the term 'second demographic transition' as a label, description and even explanation of various population trends in many European countries, there are only few researchers outside Europe, who have started to use this term. And even in Europe, if you would ask the question "Are European populations undergoing second demographic transition?", many demographers would provide negative answer, using various arguments why they do not subscribe to this concept (see for instance Cliquet, 1991). However, you could find yourself terribly confused if you would continue asking those giving positive answer in a following way: "What are the most important features of the second demographic transition?". At this moment, you could discover that there are many different "second demographic transitions" and each of the persons addressed is emphasising different changes and various underlying mechanisms.*

#### **Second demographic transition in a nutshell**

Before we start commenting the long way to the second demographic transition in the Czech Republic, we first turn back to the question "*What are the most important features of the second demographic transition?*". Lesthaeghe and van de Kaa have dealt with the concept in several papers (e.g. Lesthaeghe and van de Kaa, 1986, van de Kaa, 1987, 1994, 1997, 1999 and Lesthaeghe, 1995), stressing a plethora of interconnected demographic changes and underlying mechanisms. In 1987 (p. 5), van de Kaa saw a decline of fertility to a level below replacement to be the principle demographic feature of the second demographic transition. Logical sequence of demographic changes was characterized by four main shifts (p. 11): From the *golden age of marriage to the dawn of cohabitation* (1), from an era of the *king-child with parents* to that of the *king-pair with a child* (2), from *preventive contraception to self-fulfilling conception* (3) and towards *pluralistic families and households* (4). Changes in fertility and family formation were made possible by a broad ideational and cultural change that took place in the west European countries since the 1960s. A strong articulation of individual autonomy, an emphasis on the need for democratic decision-making, tolerance, freedom and individual rights, are common to the European societies where the second demographic transition has taken place (van de Kaa, 1994, p. 109). Lesthaeghe (1995, p. 22) recognises multiple sources for the motivations underlying the second demographic transition: increased minimal standards of partnership quality, individual autonomy, anti-authoritarian ideology, and advanced consumerism coupled with increased market orientations. Rapid weakening of the social control by institutions, and especially the process of secularisation, has resulted in an increasing tolerance towards behaviour once considered as 'deviant', such as non-marital unions, births to single mothers, deliberate childlessness, homosexuality or the acceptance of non-marital sexual relationships. Availability of modern contraceptives, especially the pill, was the prerequisite for the mastery of contraception and perfect control of women over their reproductive lives, which in turn "laid the axe at the root of traditional relation between sex and marriage and between parents and their children" (van de Kaa, 1994, p. 113).

**BOX 1:****WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC?****Opinions of Czech demographers on demographic changes in the 1990s**Rychtaříková, 1996:

*"In the West...the inner choice was concerned. In the East the situation is diametrically different today, because the changes in demographic patterns there are connected to a large extent with rapidly changing economical conditions, which are for the majority of population unfavourable."*, (p. 82)

- two models of procreative behaviour: older women vs. new baby-boomers from the 1970s
- not a postponement of births but the reduction of marriages and childbearing

Rabušic, 1996:

*"...contemporary population trends represent...the shift towards the standards typical in modern democratic societies..."*, (p. 173)

- second demographic transition
- long-term, not only short-term phenomena

Rabušic, 1997:

- disagreement with Rychtaříková (1996)

*"I consider the creation of democratic space for individual choice and lifestyle to be the main reason of demographic changes in our country...changes in the character of Czech demographic reproduction are not a result of economical crisis and deteriorated social security, but they are outcomes of cultural changes that crystallised among young cohorts born in the beginning of the seventies."*, (p. 115)

Stloukal, 1997:

- general shift towards more cautious, less family-oriented attitudes and forms of individual behaviour

*"...the analogy (with the second demographic transition in Western Europe) is not perfect. Most importantly, whereas the spread of innovative forms of behaviour in the West was largely explainable in terms of ideational shifts and changes in contraceptive technology, the recent developments in Eastern Europe seem to be more related to politics...the great 'demographic shocks' evident in Eastern Europe today are merely transitory reactions to changing socioeconomic conditions...The vision of the West and the East of Europe jointly converging to a single pattern of reproductive behaviour may reflect a poverty of imagination."*, (p. 448)

Fialová, Kučera 1997:

- rapid adaptation to the present pattern of demographic behaviour in Western Europe

*"The change in political system opened up Czech society and brought it into direct contact not only with the culture of Western Europe but also with its lifestyle. Marriage and family are no longer among the foremost interests of young people, who now have different ideas how to spent their time."*, (p. 101)

Pavlík, 1997:

- analogy of development in Western Europe after the completion of demographic revolution

Rychtaříková, 1997:

- intensive demographic changes only since 1992 (when the economic downturn begun), not directly from 1990

*"...I will not pretend to this society that nothing is happening and that we are only approaching the West. Due to our negative natural population increase and contemporary fertility trends we really create something 'specific east-European' again."*, (p. 268)

Kučera, 1997:

- the coincidence of economic and social changes and the beginning of the second demographic transition
- Rychtaříková overestimates the influence of economic conditions
- ...while Rabušic underestimates them

Andrie, 1997:

- reasons of lowered reproduction are above all economical
- population policy tools should be implemented immediately

Stloukal, 1998:

- the Czech family can support the burden of economically insecure times
- young people are pragmatically adjusting their attitudes

*"... recent development in the Czech Republic - indeed in Eastern Europe generally- seem to be primarily the outcome of post-Communist social and economic policies, with shifts in value orientation and long-term reproductive preferences of the people playing (so far) much less important roles."*, (p.8)

Rychtaříková, 1999: (referring to the post-communist countries in general)

*"Currently, we observe East-West division, where the East displays a specific almost 'crisis' behaviour."*, (p. 24)

*"The sequences of stages are different, as well as the initial external conditions."*, (p.27)

Rychtaříková, 2000:

*"The population of the Czech Republic can be labeled as very pragmatic because depressions and peaks could be observed in period fertility development in the past. Those variations were always related to changing external conditions..."* "All symptoms seem to indicate crisis behaviour more than intentional choice. Consumer prices, low real wage growth, high unemployment, and a rather 'medium' level of social protection have contributed to family income deterioration. The intensification of pathological occurrences – rising criminality, corruption etc. – lead to an increased general feeling of insecurity and distress", (p.101)

Extending the ideas proposed by Hoffmann-Nowotny (1987), van de Kaa (1994, p. 105) has constructed an explanatory framework for the second demographic transition, composed of the three basic dimensions of social system (structure, culture and technology) and distinguished the effects of changes in these dimensions on individuals, primary groups and secondary groups. Later, he has constructed a summary overview of logically ordered demographic phases of the second demographic transition, based on the observation of demographic changes in west European societies between 1965 and 1995 (van de Kaa, 1997, p.8). These are 15 interlinked stages, starting by the decline in fertility at higher ages of women and higher birth orders.

Though van de Kaa (1994, p. 103) claims that “at the current stage of demographic knowledge, a comprehensive theory of the ‘second demographic transition’ cannot yet be developed”, we are in fact dealing with a complex theory linking together broad socio-cultural and demographic changes.

In the paper we discuss a specific way towards the second demographic transition in the Czech Republic. We compare the sequence of the second demographic transition in the Czech Republic with the sequence experienced in the Netherlands, a ‘model country’ for the second demographic transition. We discuss the peculiarities of development in the Czech Lands, marked by a very long pre-transition stage, which lasted four decades and which paved way to a rapid start of the second demographic transition in the 1990s. Analysing the Czech experience, we have to deal with several questions: How to assess the onset of the second demographic transition? What triggers the demographic change? How did the new economic constraints and difficulties experienced over the 1990s influence the ongoing demographic changes? How did the progression of the second demographic transition in the Czech Lands differ from the West European societies?

Over the 1990s, there has been a lively discourse among the Czech demographers, whether the second demographic transition has been taking place in the Czech Republic. Two contrasting views, stressing either the importance of broad societal changes or the influence of some emerging economic difficulties, have been proposed. Box 1 summarises the main points of this dispute.

Despite some differences, we see the broad societal transformation in the Czech Republic over the 1990s to be an accelerated version of the societal change that started in west European countries by a quarter of century earlier. We provide some evidence on the changes in attitudes, spread of modern contraception, importance of education and other relevant topics that support this idea.

In the final part we discuss how relevant the theory of the second demographic transition is for a description of current demographic changes in the Czech Republic.

### **Onset and stages of the second demographic transition in the Czech Republic**

Inspired by the scheme of the sequence of the second demographic transition in Western Europe, we have constructed an overview of the sequences of demographic change in the Czech Republic since 1950 (Table 1). Figure 1 shows the time trend in occurrence of various phases leading to the second demographic transition in the Czech Republic and provides comparison with the Netherlands, where some phases were not present and many were differently timed and ordered. Particular demographic changes related to the progression of the second demographic transition in the Czech Republic and in the Netherlands are compared in Figures 2.1 to 2.16. (Appendix)

Several major differences are worth mentioning before we comment on various changes in more detail.

- » Initial demographic changes typical for the second demographic transition had started in the Czech Republic already in the 1950s, i.e. earlier than in the Netherlands.
- » In the 1960s, specific patterns of reproduction, typical for many socialist countries of Central Europe, gradually developed in the Czech Lands. This period led to a divergence from the ‘theoretically expected’ progression of the transition.
- » In the 1970s and 1980s, the conservation of previous patterns of reproduction and family life took place in the Czech Republic. No new stages of demographic changes developed over these two decades. In contrast, in the Netherlands, second demographic transition progressed fast throughout the 1970s and 1980s

**Table 1: Stages and sequences of the second demographic transition in the Czech Republic and in the Netherlands, 1950-2000**

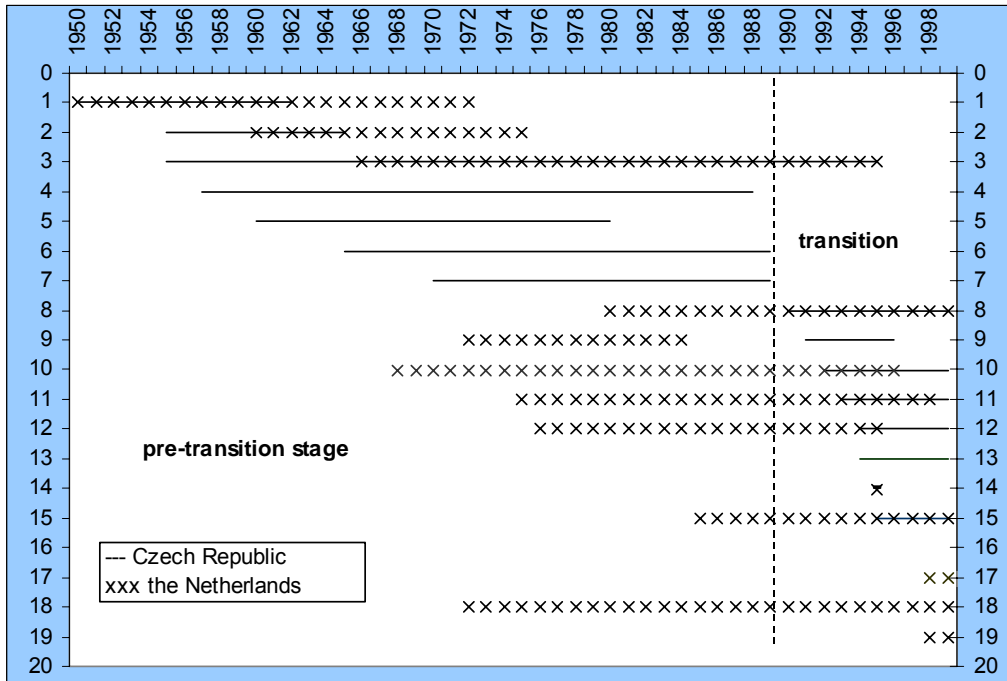
I. Pre-transition stage: 1950-1989		Czech Republic:		Netherlands:	
1950s: -> Socialist version of the modernisation of society: Industrialisation, increase in living standards and social security, female labour participation, secularisation, liberalisation of divorce and abortion.		period	cohorts	period	cohorts
1	Decreasing age at first marriage. First child usually born soon after the marriage (within one year). The mean age of mother at first birth is decreasing as well. (Figure 2.1)	1950-1962		1950-1972	
2	Decline in higher-order fertility, development of the ideal of the two-child family model. (Figure 2.2.a and 2.2.b)	1955-1962	until C 1945	1960-1975	C 1930-45
3	Due to the liberal legislation (1949), divorces becoming more common and increasingly accepted by the society. (Figure 2.3)	1955-1995		1966-1995	
4	Legalization of abortion in 1957 enables further reduction of 3 <sup>rd</sup> birth rates, first and second order fertility remains high. Abortion accepted as a substitution of contraception among married women, especially for limitation of 3 <sup>rd</sup> and higher order births. Abortion rates display inverse trends to fertility (Figure 2.4).	1957-1988			
5	Increase in pre-marital sexual relations. Premarital conceptions are getting more common, many women are entering marriage pregnant. (Figure 2.5)	1960-1980			
6	Modern contraception is disseminated to certain extent (Figure 2.6). The quality, availability and choice of the contraceptive means remains limited. Sex education and knowledge of contraception remains low among young women. Abortions often substitute contraception among many women.	1965-1989			
7	Non-marital unions become partly accepted among divorced people. Cohabitations before marriage are still relatively rare .	1970s-1980s			
-> 1970s+1980s: Life transitions occur early and a large majority of women enter marriage and experience childbirth. The proportion of older never-married women is very low and lifetime childlessness uncommon. Two-child family norm strongly established as an ideal family size. (Figure 2.1.)			C 1930-1960		
II. Second demographic transition: 1990-2000					
8	Cohabitation commonly accepted as a distinctive stage before marriage. Some people decide not to marry, even if the bride is pregnant. Share of nonmarital births increasing, especially among young women having first child. (Figure 2.8)	1990+		1980+	
9	Decline in first marriage rates (Figure 2.9.a) and in first-birth probabilities (Figure 2.9.b). Decline in probabilities of the second childbirth among women with one child (Figure 2.9.c). Total fertility rates are falling rapidly.	1991-1996		1972-1984	
10	Modern contraception increasingly used among all groups of women (Figure 2.6). Young people often use contraception since the onset of their sexual life (Figure 2.10). Abortion rates declining steadily.	1992+		1964-1996 (the pill)	
11	Postponement of first births and first marriages, the incidence of early births and marriages is rapidly declining. (Figure 2.11)	1993+		1975-1998	
12	Proportion of never-married people is rapidly increasing, especially among women and men below age 30. (Figure 2.12)	1994+			
13	Natural increase of population becomes negative. Immigration gains on importance, however the total population size is declining. (Figure 2.13)	1994+			
14	Divorce rate stabilised at high level. (Figure 2.3)	1995		1995	
15	Fertility patterns becoming more diverse with regard to the timing, number of children and setting (marriage vs. cohabitation vs. single mothers).	mid-1990s+		1980s+	
16	Not all postponed children are born. Increase in lifetime childlessness and in the proportion of never-married women. (Figure 2.16)		C 1962+		C 1945+
III. Second demographic transition: future stage					
17	Cohabitation accepted not only as a distinctive pre-marital stage but as an alternative to marriage. Proportion of non-marital births further increases.			late 1990s	
18	Abortion rate stabilised at low level. Abortions mostly used by younger women at an early stage of their reproductive life.			1972+ (since legalisation)	
19	Postponement stops. Period fertility rate slightly increases.			1998+ (only temporary?)	

Note: Grey fields indicate the sequences that were peculiar to the development in the Czech Republic.

They are not commonly associated with the second demographic transition.

- » After the collapse of the communist regime in the Czech Republic in 1989, the second demographic transition has been progressing rapidly there. By 1999, almost all demographic changes commonly associated with the transition have already started.

Figure 1: Stages of the second demographic transition in the Czech Republic (in comparison with the Netherlands), 1950-1999



In our explanation of these differences, we look at the progression of demographic changes in two distinct periods, one characterised by the state-bureaucratic socialist system lasting till 1989, and the second, marked by intensive social and economic changes since 1990.

### Pre-transition stage: 1950-1989

The late 1940s saw in by-then Czechoslovakia an establishment of the totalitarian communist regime that promised to rebuild radically the society, to modernise it and to get rid of the old system of social stratification. The period of the 1950s was full of paradoxes. The 'modernisation', often labelled as a 'building of communism' had to be strongly imposed from above and the Communist party has tried to get a complete control over the society and to punish everyone, who would not subscribe to the officially proclaimed ideas. The Czech Lands experienced forced secularisation supported by a radical anti-religious ideology. Extensive industrialisation based on the exploitation of coal mining and heavy industry, created need for the new workforce. As a result, many women were strongly encouraged to participate in the labour force, which was not seen by many of them as a liberation and emancipation from the traditional gender roles, but more as a second burden they have to struggle with (see Box 2). Official rhetoric was deeply collectivist; the 'interests of the collective' - which always meant a non-family unit such as the 'working collective' - were always considered to be superior to the interests of the family, perceived by many as an outdated bourgeois institution.

Initially, 'modernising' efforts brought some positive results, which even enabled an extension of individual autonomy over a limited number of issues. The strong egalitarianism and paternalistic care eradicated most extreme social inequalities and lead to the increase in the living standards and health care for a large group of inhabitants. Liberal legislation on divorce (1949) and abortion (1957) paved way to the first demographic changes commonly associated with the second demographic transition: increasing divorce rates, decreasing higher-order birth rates and free availability of abortion on request.

Around the mid-1960s, modern contraception (the pill and the IUD) has been gradually introduced and toward the end of the 1960s, period fertility rates had been declining well

Specific position of Czech women originates from the social development in the last 50 years. The process of **'forced emancipation'** of women under communist regime after the second world war was driven by the idea of **economic independence** through the introducing of the **full employment**. Apart from this, the traditional gender role in the family remained unchanged and "both were incorporated into 'the new socialist women - **working mother**'...Practically all legislation and all the instruments considered women to be workers and mothers, but men were never considered workers and fathers." (Navarová, unpublished paper). The state family policy had destructive impact on family life including **the suppression of father's role in the family**<sup>1</sup>. The **double role of women**<sup>2</sup> was facilitated by fairly long maternal leave<sup>3</sup> and by a broad network of public child care facilities and kindergartens.

The high female employment continued in the 1990s; women still make around 45 % of workforce and as opposed to the situation in Western Europe, a large majority of more than 80 % of employed women works full time. **The double role of Czech mothers remained to some extent unchanged**<sup>4</sup> and there is no will for change among older generations. Generally accepted gender role of husbands is professional career and financing of household, while the accepted role of wives is cooking, cleaning, shopping and child care<sup>5</sup>. Feminism and the women's emancipation movement is seen as unnatural and alien. Among recently spread western ideologies, "Hardly any of new outlooks were a priori denounced and misunderstood as (feminism)." (Boehmová, 1998, p. 10)<sup>6</sup>

On the labour market, Czech women are facing **discrimination as a standard**: Salaries of women are in average by one quarter smaller than that of men, women are generally less frequently employed on high posts<sup>7</sup>, even in feminized sectors, where the majority of employees are women (especially education and health care). The advertisements seeking for employees often contain **sex-discriminating conditions**. The threat of pregnancy is a usual issue at entrance interviews and the questions concerning private life of woman are commonly asked: Marital status, present and desired children, attitudes towards family formation. **Women are usually fully conscious of gender segregation**, but many put up with the situation. However the equality of men and women is guaranteed by the Czech constitution, "...there is no legislation directly protecting (women) against discrimination." (Čermáková, 1999, p. 129) Concluding from ISSP Family and Gender Relations survey carried out in the Czech Republic in 1994-5, Czech women emerged as rather conventional in their attitudes towards gender issues and family, they believed that **woman is primarily responsible for the home and the family**, but they were markedly less conservative than Czech men in these issues (Crompton, 1997)<sup>8</sup>.

But the change of gender roles after 1989 is not imperceptible. Especially young generations, who are postponing marriage and childbearing to older ages, are putting emphasis on the individual and they do not intend to spend their life in a schizophrenic role of mothers and housewives on the one side and full-time employees on the other side. Members of young generations are focused on education, travelling or career. Populous baby-boom cohorts of the mid-1970s are likely to change gradually stereotypes, norms of behaviour and prejudices deep-rooted over the forty years of destruction of civil society by the communist system. The change seems to be foremost cohort driven, occurring slowly together with the 'dying out' of older generations.

The change of the picture of women in the Czech press illustrates the unobtrusive transformation of Czech woman. During the previous regime, the "image of woman in media was constricted to woman as a mother and woman as a housewife, who always needs an advice. Authors of articles for women concentrated on a proper child care and tips for housekeeping. Until the second half of the eighties the articles about sex were tabooised, as well as information about AIDS, sexual violation and maltreatment of women." (Boehmová, 1998, pp. 8-9) Since 1989, the women-oriented press has often been focused on emerging issues and "in unity with contemporary social development in the USA and Western Europe, *Cosmopolitan*, *Elle*, *Harper's Bazaar* as well as Czech magazine *Betty* have embraced the support for women's emancipation, tolerance and freedom. But this attitude is not clear, accentuating only some manifestations – the freedom they perceive in sexual freedom, cohabitation, in business or manager jobs. These journals issue articles concerning emancipation, but at the same time they publicise what they disapprove or what keeps women on the position they dislike – preoccupation with own image, cosmetics, advertising, accentuation of particular movies" (Osvaldová, 1998, p. 15) "...in *Cosmopolitan*) the theme of family, husbands and especially little children is suppressed..." (Hauserová, 1998, p. 22) "Thanks to the stories carried by the press and audio-visual media, women obtain information about alternative lifestyles, about the choice between career and household, about new possibilities of dividing house work and child care between both partners, about encoded stereotypes of perception of women, about prejudices." (Boehmová, 1998, p. 32)

Media also played an important role for the rapid spread of modern contraception and sexual knowledge after the fall of prudish and sexually conservative communist regime: "...media...became the crucial source of information (particularly among youth) about sexual issues. To a large extent they thereby substitute the lack or insufficiency of sexual education at schools and in family." (Weiss, 2001, p. 32)<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The inharmonious gender relationship afterwards often flew into divorce; every fifth marriage in the 1960s and even more than one third of marriages in the 1980s broke down.

<sup>2</sup> "From sociological point of view Communism created very hybrid model of a woman role, combining some bourgeois ideals of quite challenging standard of family and household with real conditions of pre-industrial, self-supplier society..." (Havelková, 1998, p. 8)

<sup>3</sup> The maternal leave remained relatively long in the 1990s (28 weeks, 37 weeks for unmarried mothers or in the case of multiple confinement). The leave can be prolonged with the 'parental leave', which is also available for fathers since 2001. This leave is up to 3 years long and afterwards the employer is obliged to accept the parent back to job. However, the current situation is often unlike the legislation in reality.

<sup>4</sup> McDonald (2000) distinguishes between the two types of gender equity: one in the institutions that deal with people as individuals, such as education and market employment, and second in the institutions that deal with people as members of families, such as industrial relations (the terms and condition of employment), services, government transfers, and the family itself. In the countries, where the equity is high in both types of institutions (social and economic institutions have adapted more quickly to the gender equity model, like in Nordic countries, English-speaking countries and France), the level of fertility is recently higher than in the countries, where the equity in education and employment is not followed by the gender equity in the family and social structures (south-European countries and also Central-Eastern European countries, including the Czech Republic); there, the fertility level is the lowest-low.

<sup>5</sup> In 1996, 59 % of men and 49 % of women agreed with the statement that "Man should earn the money and woman should look after the house" (Rodina '96, cited in Křížková, 1999, p. 205).

<sup>6</sup> According to Jiřina Šiklová, (1993, p. 42): "...western...feminism originated as reaction to patriarchy, while feminism in our countries will be influenced by our experience with state paternalism."

<sup>7</sup> "The percentage of women in high position at work has remained stable throughout the 1990s at 3,7 % (9,1 % for men)." (Čermáková, 1999, p. 130)

<sup>8</sup> "A number of parallels can be drawn between the contemporary experiences and attitudes of Czech women and those of British women of twenty years ago." (Crompton, 1997, p. 137)

<sup>9</sup> The share of people responding that the school was the main source of information about sexuality is quite low - 7 % of men and 9 % of women in 1998 - while the role of media and books is much more important – for 40 % and 39 % respectively. (Weiss, 2001, p.126)

below the replacement level. Czech society was undergoing a period of limited democratisation. In some sense, the second half of the “electrifying sixties” was comparable to the West European societies; it was a period of profound social changes and even larger expectations. The second demographic transition was likely to start in the Czech Republic.

After the political crisis in 1968 and the tightening of the power of the conservative wing of the Communist party, the society reacted by increasingly embracing the family values<sup>1</sup>. As the opportunities for self-development, for a career, education or for leisure activities were limited, the family served as an arena for self-realisation and individual self-fulfilment. For many people, family constituted an unofficial sphere of existence, where they lived a kind of schizophrenic dual lives, making clear distinction between public and private behaviour and morality (Machonin, 1997, p. 38, Macek et al., 1998, p. 550).

The “escape into the family” was further supported by the pronatalist measures, such as advantageous loans for the newlyweds or the intensive construction of new apartments, which came into effect after 1971. Official pronatalism was motivated primarily politically and economically; social and demographic factors played only a minor role. Population policy was based on the notion of the need for increasing manpower to reduce the labour shortage typical for extensive and ineffective economy. The Soviet conception of extensive population growth had some additional influence on this policy (Kučera, 1994, p. 60-61). Under the system of bureaucratic distribution of housing, formation of a family was the easiest option for young people to move out of parental home. On the other side, the childless and unmarried people had virtually no chance of ever obtaining a flat.

Over the 1970s and 1980s, the political system had been primarily focused towards own conservation (Stloukal, 1996, p. 4). While these two decades saw broadening scope for individual autonomy and changes in the values and attitudes among west European populations, which paved way to the second demographic transition, the social development had been frozen in the Czech Republic. The development of a plurality of thought systems was impossible. Czech society thus retained many characteristics of traditional and patriarchal societies (Možný and Rabušic, 1998, p. 109).

On the whole, demographic development of the Czech society in the 1980s was characterised by a strong uniformity in marriage and fertility trends, early family formation and universality of these institutions<sup>2</sup>, high frequency of abortions and large prevalence of pre-marital conceptions. The ideal of the two-child family model was strongly entrenched in society, more than 55 % of women born in the 1950s had exactly two children at the end of their reproductive life (Figure 2.7). Several structural and technological features were typical for a modern society (high labour participation of women, extensive social security network, universal education or somewhat limited spread of modern contraception), while the cultural environment was marked by totalitarian regulations and lack of choice and opportunities, which effectively prevented the progression of the new demographic trends experienced on the other side of the Iron curtain.

Thus, the second demographic transition could not fully develop in a country, where the political system was undemocratic and supported values like uniformity, passivity, conformity or obedience. Therefore, we do not interpret the few steps towards the second demographic transition that took place in the Czech Republic since the 1950s as a manifestation of this transformation. We see them as a part of the pre-transition stage, which lasted for four decades.

### **The 1990s: Nothing is as it was**

Paradoxically, the long pre-transition stage also paved way to the rapid demographic changes over the 1990s. Apart from the high degree of familism, value system of the Czech population had gradually developed toward increasing permissiveness in certain domains of individual rights (right for abortion, divorce or tolerance of lone motherhood), toward broad secularisation, extremely high labour participation among women, but also toward pragmatism and consumer culture (despite – or in fact due to – the limited availability of consumer goods). Stloukal (1996, p. 14) considers consumerism, which had become widespread during the era of the communist rule to be intimately connected with familism, as

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<sup>1</sup> This development is well comparable with the case of Poland, where the social disintegration, polarizing alienation and discontent with the totalitarian control after 1981 lead paradoxically to the increasing importance of family and also to the increase in period fertility.

<sup>2</sup> Among women born in 1955, only 5.5 % remained childless and 5.1 % never-married (Figure 2.16).

**Box 3:**

**VALUES AND ATTITUDES: STRUCTURE AND CHANGE**

Value surveys have prominent place in the study of recent demographic changes<sup>1</sup>. In the following tables, we selected some indicators reflecting the values related to recent demographic development.<sup>2</sup>

Table B 3.1: Religiosity among women, 1997

Birth cohorts	1973-77	1953-57
Age group at interview	20-24	40-44
Attendance of religious services at least once a week	4.6 %	3.6 %
Importance of God	14.6 %	15.3 %

Data: Fertility and Family Survey, 1997

Table B 3.2: Permissiveness towards homosexuality, 1991-2000

Permissive towards homosexuality (positions 8-10 on ten-point scale)	17.4%	1991 EVS
Homosexuality considered as harmless variation or natural	M 45%,F 41%	1993 DEMA
Homosexuality considered as harmless variation or natural	M 48%,F 54%	1998 DEMA
Agree, that the cohabitation of homosexual partners would be recognised by law	54.8%	2001 S-F

Data: European Value Survey (Van den Broek, 1994), DEMA (Weiss, 2001), Sofres-Factum (2001)

marriage in the Czech society. However, the proportion of women agreeing with the statement that marriage is an outdated institution is slightly rising over time and especially among the youngest women (see Tables B 3.3-3.4). Cohabitation is seen as equal to marriage in many aspects by about half of female respondents and the intergenerational difference is not clearly distinctive (see Table B 3.5). Thus the view that "no favourable conditions exist for the broader expansion of cohabitation neither culturally (marriage is still considered an important part of traditional values), nor technically (a massive increase is not possible due to shortages in available affordable housing)" (Mašková and Stašová, 2001, p.85) is disputable.

These findings in mind, it must be admitted that certain attitudinal mix of familism on the one side and a tolerance towards non-traditional family forms on the other side are typical for the Czech society as "many people in the same time express a high evaluation of marriage and an openness to the ideas of more liberal concepts of partnership" (Kuchařová and Petrová, 1997, p. 183).

Divorce has been commonly accepted by the society since the 1950s, even for the reasons related to personal feelings (such as love, satisfactory sexual relationship and mutual understanding).

Table B 3.6 : Would you consider the following statements sufficient or insufficient for splitting up?

Birth cohorts	1973-77	1953-57
Age group at interview	20-24	40-44
<b>Partner drinks too much</b>		
Sufficient	90.1%	86.9%
Insufficient	7.4%	7.8%
Don't know	2.5%	5.2%
<b>Lack of love from partner</b>		
Sufficient	66.3%	48.0%
Insufficient	19.5%	36.6%
Don't know	14.2%	15.4%
<b>Personality clashes with partner</b>		
Sufficient	49.3%	39.5%
Insufficient	36.2%	47.1%
Don't know	14.5%	13.4%
<b>Unsatisfactory sexual relationship with partner</b>		
Sufficient	28.0%	23.5%
Insufficient	47.5%	61.4%
Don't know	24.5%	15.0%

Data: Fertility and Family Survey, 1997 (Female sample)

During the communist era, there existed in the Czech society "an eclectic and somewhat incoherent set of social values" (Mareš et al., 1991). This incoherence in the value structure can be seen in several aspects.

With regard to Church affiliation and church attendance the Czech Republic belongs among the most secularised countries in Europe (Hamplová, 2000, Van den Broek and de Moor, 1994).

Permissiveness towards deviations from the traditional pattern reflects the tolerance of society and the degree to which individualization proceeds, especially "the acceptance or rejection of homosexuality is a highly sensitive indicator of tolerance toward outgroups in general." (Inglehart 2000, p. 29)

**Cohabitation versus marriage**

With regard to marriage, there is still high level of esteem for the institution of

Table B 3.3 : Do you agree with the statement that marriage is an outdated institution?

1991 EVS	6.60%
1997 FFS	M 9.9%, F 9.3%

Data: European Value System (Van den Broek, 1994), Fertility and Family Survey, 1997

Table B 3.4: Do you agree with the statement that marriage is an outdated institution?

Birth cohorts	1973-77	1953-57
Age group at interview	20-24	40-44
Agree	11.8%	4.2%
Disagree	81.0%	90.1%
Don't know	7.2%	5.7%

Data: Fertility and Family Survey, 1997 (Female sample only)

Table B 3.5: Considering marriage and cohabitation, how do you evaluate the possibility of achieving the following by living together instead of being married?

Birth cohorts	1973-77	1953-57
Age group at interview	20-24	40-44
<b>A stable relationship</b>		
Favourable	58.1%	54.7%
Neither	31.6%	28.5%
Unfavourable	10.3%	16.7%
<b>Having a child</b>		
Favourable	51.4%	52.7%
Neither	27.7%	23.2%
Unfavourable	20.9%	24.2%
<b>Social acceptance</b>		
Favourable	54.2%	49.3%
Neither	30.9%	32.2%
Unfavourable	14.9%	18.5%

<sup>1</sup> "Attempts to measure cultural changes in preferences, values, and ideational goals, although affected by the classic caveats pertaining to all empirical work, have produced patterning worthy of further consideration and integration." (Lesthaeghe, 1988, p.2)

<sup>2</sup> In tables generated from Fertility and Family Survey, we have compared the views of two distinctive cohorts, aged at the time of interview 20-24 and 40-44. The responses of women aged 25-40 resembled remarkably the responses of older women for all questions considered.



### Family life and children

In the Czech society, highly favourable attitudes towards children and family life are found and "a child is considered to be substantial element in a person's happiness. Czechs look for their self-fulfilment in their family and in the relationship with their children" (Kolorosová, 1995, p.114).

However, traditional familistic values have eroded through the 1990s and "young generation ... starts to consider that child is not necessary condition to woman's life fulfilment" (Rabušic, 2000, p.289)

The acceptance of abortion in the Czech society is high since the liberalisation of abortion laws in 1957. Slightly higher approval for abortion among older generations can be explained by the widespread practice of abortions in the past. At present, the young generations think about abortions in different terms. However, the difference diminishes in the last statement whether the respondent approves an abortion in case that woman does not wish to have a child for the time being.

Table B 3.8: Do you approve or disapprove of abortion under the following circumstances? (Female respondents, 1997)

Birth cohorts	1973-77	1953-57
Age group at interview	20-24	40-44
<b>When the mother's health is at risk from the pregnancy</b>		
Approve	92.6%	95.6%
Disapprove	3.9%	2.0%
Don't know	3.5%	2.3%
<b>When the child is likely to be born physically handicapped</b>		
Approve	80.5%	91.6%
Disapprove	8.9%	4.4%
Don't know	10.6%	4.0%
<b>When the woman is not married</b>		
Approve	6.0%	16.8%
Disapprove	88.3%	77.9%
Don't know	5.7%	5.4%
<b>When a married couple does not want to have any more children</b>		
Approve	43.6%	57.0%
Disapprove	41.8%	29.2%
Don't know	14.5%	13.8%
<b>When the woman does not wish to have a child for the time being</b>		
Approve	40.1%	38.9%
Disapprove	45.4%	49.7%
Don't know	14.5%	11.4%

Data: Fertility and Family Survey, 1997

Table B 3.7: Importance of children, female respondents

Birth cohorts	1973-77	1953-57
Age group at interview	20-24	40-44
<b>A married couple should have at least one child</b>		
Agree	77.3%	86.9%
Neither	13.5%	10.1%
Disagree	9.2%	2.9%
<b>A man/woman should have at least one child in order to be fulfilled</b>		
Agree	51.0%	62.4%
Neither	23.8%	23.5%
Disagree	25.2%	14.1%
<b>I don't believe you can be really happy if you do not have children</b>		
Agree	41.8%	52.6%
Neither	27.7%	23.5%
Disagree	30.5%	23.9%

Data: Fertility and Family Survey, 1997

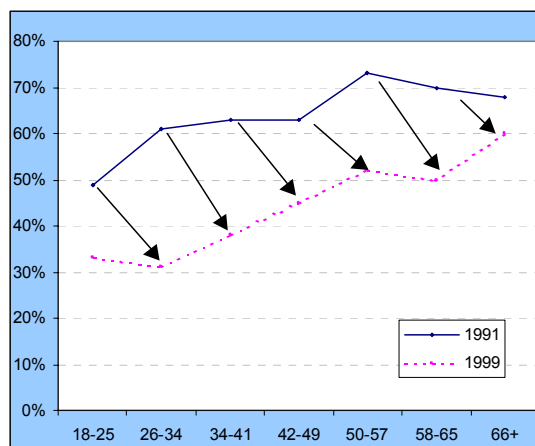


Figure B 3.1 : Women need children in order to be fulfilled (percentage women agreeing), Data: FFS 1997

Source: Data from the European Value Survey 1991 and 1999, presented in Rabušic (2000, p. 290).

many people evaluated their standards of living in terms of family welfare. Pragmatic adjustment to the changing social conditions, mirrored also in demographic trends, is an attribute of the Czech population that was stressed by several demographers (e.g. Fialová and Kučera, 1997, p. 100, Rychtaříková, 2000, p. 101)

After the demise of totalitarian regime in 1989, rapid and deep transformation of previous patterns of fertility, reproduction and family life has been taking place in the Czech Republic. Virtually all demographic changes proceed in the direction foreseen by the theory of the second demographic transition. In fact, many stages of the transition have been taking place simultaneously and it is even impossible to talk about logical ordering of various phases of change. In our figure of the sequence of the second demographic transition in the Czech Republic, nine specific 'stages' have started over the 1990s (Figure 1). Thus, the 1990s represent a unique period of a dramatic transformation of demographic landscape in the Czech Republic that left clear imprint on the behaviour of birth cohorts growing up at the beginning of the 1990s, particularly those born in 1973-1977. One specific and probably long-lasting result of these profound demographic changes is both natural and total population decrease, which has not been experienced in most west European countries. Sharp decline in the number of births, partly induced by the postponement of births, has not been compensated for by the decline in mortality or by international immigration since 1994 (Figure 2.13).

Democratic political conditions that provide space for individual freedom are frequently associated with the broad ideational change conducive for the second demographic transition. Inglehart (1995, p. 400) found extremely strong connection between the postmodernisation<sup>3</sup> and democracy. We interpret the establishment of democracy, which opened space for the development of civil society and individual freedoms as the first and decisive sequence in the chain of further developments that influenced demographic behaviour of the Czech population, such as the 'contraceptive revolution', shifts in the value orientation, increasing emphasis on education, individualism and consumerism and also the emergence of the new economic problems.

Highly secularised Czech society has rapidly accepted individualistic Western value system, which coincides with the legitimation of cohabitation, voluntary childlessness, nonconformist sexual behaviour, abortion or euthanasia (Lesthaeghe, 1983, p. 412). While the right for an abortion was supported and the pre-marital sex was common already during the pre-transitional stage, the 1990s brought increasing popularity of consensual unions, acceptance of voluntary childlessness, legitimation of homosexuality<sup>4</sup> and a widespread interest in sexuality (see Box 3). A broad medialisation of sex (see Box 2) has contributed to the rapid spread of modern contraception, especially among the adolescent women. While for the women born in the 1960s the first sexual experiences commonly resulted in unplanned pregnancies and 'forced marriages', women born since the mid 1970s are well aware about various contraceptive methods and most of them have a firm control over the reproduction (see Figure 2.10). Though the onset of sexual life among teenage women has not changed much during the last decade (Weiss and Zvěřina, 2001, p. 38), once excessive fertility and abortion rates of adolescent women have plummeted over the 1990s (Figure 2.11).

As van de Kaa suggested in 1993 (p. 113) the 'mastery of contraception' seems to have indeed an independent effect on the relaxation of norms of reproductive behaviour, which paradoxically lead to the increase in non-marital births. Besides the decline in fertility and marriage rates (Figure 2.9a and 2.11), partly driven by the postponement of these major life commitments<sup>5</sup> (Figure 2.1), partly by the real reduction in fertility and marriage intensities, the spread of cohabitation and non-marital births constitutes the major demographic change in

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<sup>3</sup> According to Inglehart (2000, p. 21 and 25), postmodern values are characterized by increasing emphasis on quality-of-life, environmental protection or self-expression. Increasing tolerance is another feature of the 'self-expression dimension', which is strong in affluent societies.

<sup>4</sup> The homosexual minority was almost invisible during the Communist era, with no opportunities for legal social activities. Most of the Czech society disapproved homosexuality. This has changed rapidly over the 1990s and the perception of homosexuality as a deviant behavior has diminished (Box 3). The legislative changes have made homosexual partnerships more equal to the heterosexual ones. In 1990, the legal age for the sexual activity of the same-sex couples has been set equal with the heterosexual couples (15 years of age). In 2001, the government has agreed upon the legislative proposal that will enable legal registration of homosexual partnerships. The law still has to pass through the Parliament.

<sup>5</sup> The adjustment of the period fertility rates (method proposed by Bongaarts and Feeney 1998 and 2000) in 1990 and 1996-98 indicates that approximately two thirds of the decline in the total fertility rate during this period (TFR was 1.89 in 1990 and 1.17 in 1996-98) was due to the postponement of birth, while only one third was due to the real reduction in fertility level (Sobotka, 2001).

the 1990s. While the proportion of young women living in any partnership has declined over the 1990s, the proportion of women living in consensual union has increased. Among women born before 1972 who have entered any union by the age 20, less than one third started with the cohabitation. This proportion was stable for all cohorts born between 1953 and 1972. In contrast, among women born in 1973-1977, cohabitation was more common experience than the direct marriage by the age 20. The formation of first union among these women resembles more the behaviour of their Dutch counterparts (birth cohorts 1963 to 1968 in Figure 3) than the behaviour of their older fellows.

With an increasing acceptance of cohabitation as a distinct pre-marital stage in life, many women did not feel obliged to marry when they got pregnant outside marriage. The proportion of births conceived outside marriage has not changed much over the 1990s and it has oscillated around 40 % since 1992. Nevertheless, the share of women marrying in order to 'legitimate' their soon-to-be-born child has declined dramatically. The stable proportion of 80 % of women, who did so in the 1980s, indicated a strong preference for a traditional family at that time. In 1999, more than half of women who got pregnant outside marriage and who wanted to give birth to a child, did not marry before the childbirth (Figure 4). This shift shows that still generally widespread traditional familistic values in the Czech society are not so deeply rooted. The proportion of women, who did not feel necessary to marry in order to have children, has increased so rapidly that it should mirror more than the 'commitment crisis' among men. It clearly shows that the cohabitation has been increasingly viewed as an equal alternative to marriage, even in the stage of family life related to the child rearing.

Figure 3: Proportion of first unions started by cohabitation (share on the total number of first unions started before a given age), Czech Republic and the Netherlands

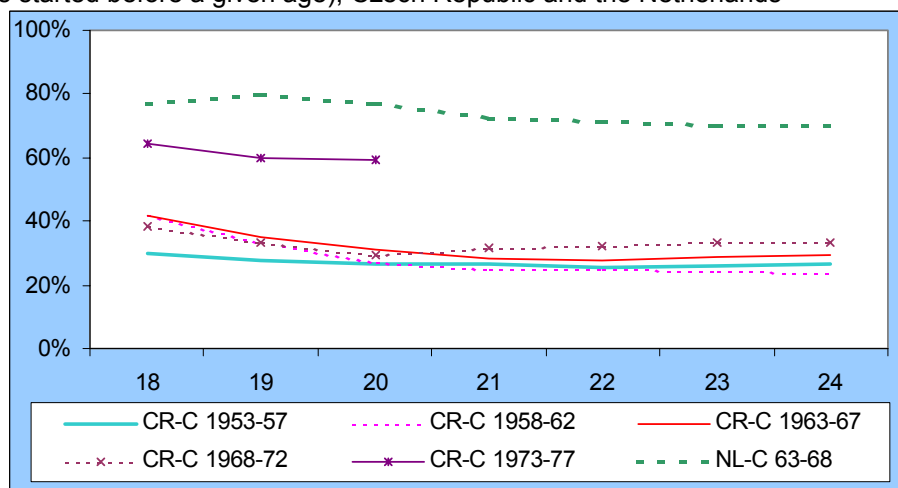
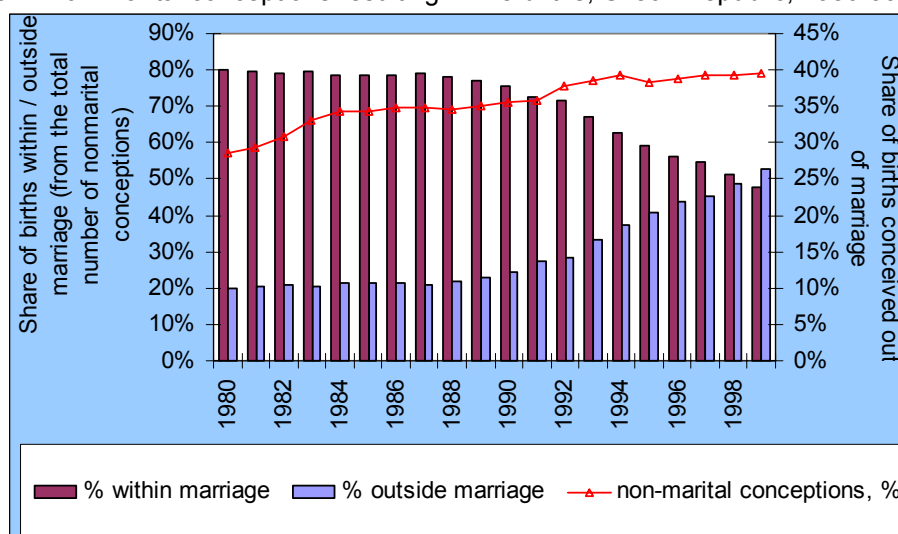


Figure 4: Non-marital conceptions resulting in live births, Czech Republic, 1980-99



**BOX 4:**

**EDUCATION**

In the concepts describing current demographic changes, education is systematically associated with occurrence and expansion of the new demographic phenomena (premarital cohabitation, postponement of childbearing and partnership, use of modern contraceptives).

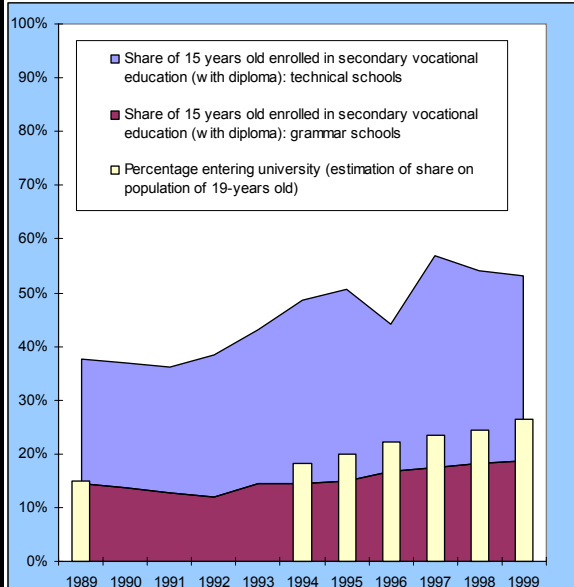


Figure B 4.1: Is it educational expansion?  
Data: Czech Statistical Yearbook 2000, MŠMT 2000

Matějů et al. in 1991 (quoted by Čerych et al., 1999, p.45) characterised the perception of education by the Czech society in a following way: "By the end of the 1980s, in the eyes of young people, success in life was tied *either* to higher education, *or* skills, *or* to the ability to 'make money and to get rich'. The meritocratic pattern of strategies of life linking higher education, skills and financial reward was deeply disrupted".

Since 1990 important changes occurred in the Czech educational system. There has been a notable growing interest to study in secondary vocational schools with diploma at the expense of apprentice schools. The proportion of young people entering the university has nearly doubled from 1990 to 1999. Moreover, each year more than half of the applicants are not admitted to the universities, due to the long-lasting neglect of high education and insufficient political will to improve this situation. These facts mirror rising educational aspiration among young people as well as the higher evaluation of education in the Czech society. Life success has become strongly associated with educational achievements.

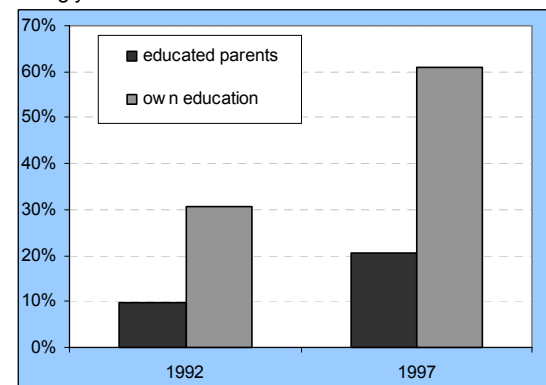


Figure B 4.2: What's important for a person to be successful in life? (% of answers 'very important' and 'important')  
Data: ISSP 1992, 1997, published in Čerych et al., 1999

The education has both direct and indirect effect on the entry into partnership and parenthood.

1. The level of education is assumed to be connected with individual orientation, preferences and different life strategies.
2. Educational level predetermines the position of woman on the labour market and introduces different choices and options into woman's life.
3. Enrolment in education is assumed to be incompatible with the childcare (institutional effect of education). The fact of being enrolled in education plays an important role in the decision to enter partnership or parenthood. Women with higher level of education need more time to acquire their qualification and this seems to be the driving force behind the later start of family formation.

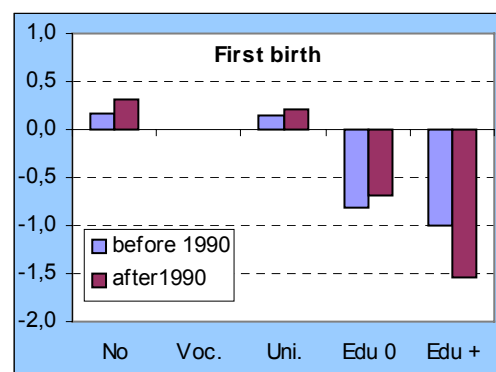
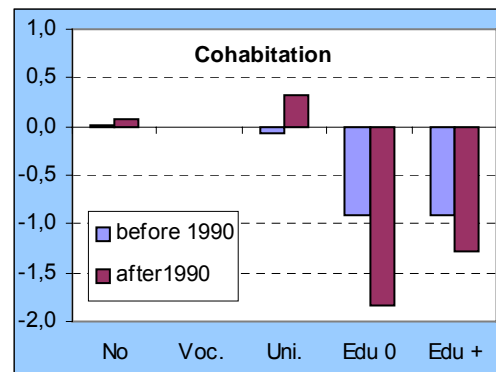
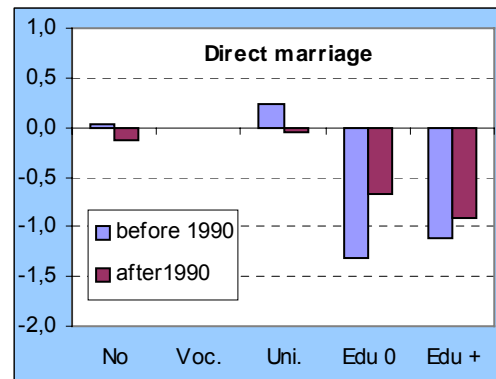


Figure B 4.3-B 4.5: Odds ratios of effect of education (see following page)

No=no degree  
Voc.=vocational degree  
Uni.=university degree  
Edu 0=in education, no degree  
Edu +=in education, vocational or university  
Data: FFS 1997

Table B 4.1: Proportional hazard models on transitions into first partnership and first parenthood with the effects of education

	First partnership by direct marriage		First partnership by cohabitation		First childbirth (dated back by 8 months)	
	1970-90	1990-97	1970-90	1990-97	1970-90	1990-97
Constant	-6.57 ***	-7.71 ***	-5.61 ***	-4.21 ***	-4.89 ***	-5.51 ***
<b>Age (slopes)</b>						
15-18	1.58 ***	1.52 ***	1.06 ***	0.77 ***	0.97 ***	0.98 ***
18-20	0.34 ***	0.15	-0.20	-0.38 **	0.39 **	0.08
20-22	0.02	0.16	0.02	-0.30	0.07	-0.04
22-25	-0.19 **	-0.05	0.12	0.01	-0.1 *	0.08
25-35	-0.12 *	-0.05	-0.20	-0.02 *	-0.07 *	-0.02
<b>Education</b>						
No degree	0.04	-0.13	0.01	0.07	0.10	0.22 *
Vocational degree	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
University degree	0.23	-0.04	-0.07	0.31 **	0.27	-0.14
In education, no degree	-1.31 ***	-0.68 ***	-0.92 ***	-1.84 ***	-0.80 ***	-0.77 ***
In education, vocational + univ.	-1.11 ***	-0.92 ***	-0.90 ***	-1.29 ***	-0.97 ***	-1.44 ***
Number of subepisodes	2551	1245	2551	1239	2565	1280
Log-likelihood	-3147.6	-1112.9	-1344.5	-1082.6	-4022.7	-1770.5
Number of events	722	210	231	199	899	330
Number of individuals	1361	767	1361	766	1361	808

Significance levels: \*&gt;0.90; \*\*&gt;0.95; \*\*\*&gt;0.99

Data: FFS Czech Republic 1997

The main question in the study of current reproductive behaviour is whether education has changed its influence on early life transitions and whether the different levels of education are associated with different strategies of entry into partnership and parenthood.

The impact of education on delaying first childbirth and union formation is analysed with the help of event history analysis using the framework proposed by Blossfeld and Huinink (1991). We use the data from Family and Fertility Survey in Czech Republic conducted in 1997. Education is treated in two ways:

- Institutional effect of education – time-dependent dummy variable indicating whether or not a woman is currently in education.
- Highest obtained level of education – time-dependent.

Three status changes – entry into parenthood, entry into partnership by direct marriage and by cohabitation – stand in the centre of our analysis. We used hazard models with the specification of baseline risks by age of woman (with exposure time starting at age 15). Models are constructed separately for two periods, 1975-1990 and 1990-1997.

Institutional effect of education was pronounced in all models. Once education was completed, there were no different preferences by educational status in entry into partnership by direct marriage in both periods. The situation is more complex regarding cohabitation. While before 1990 no variations by educational status were found, in the later period women with the university degree opted for cohabitation more often than other groups of women. At the same time women enrolled in education displayed notably lower risk of starting cohabitation. This may be due to the specific housing situation characterised by unavailability of cheap accommodation outside parental families or student houses in university cities.

Effect of education on birth of first child has not been alternated in given periods. The probabilities of having first child declined across all educational levels. Women with the lowest level of education had in both periods significantly higher probability to become mothers.

Thus, the prolongation of education and higher enrolment of young people in education lead directly to the postponement of major life transitions. Furthermore, there was an important indirect effect of education for the formation of values and attitudes favouring the choice of the new forms of partnership among young people.

Apart from the direct effects of the spread of knowledge about contraception and the use of modern contraception, we put forward several factors, which are crucial for the interpretation of rapid demographic changes in the 1990s. There has been an increasing interest in higher education and the perception of education as a necessary condition for a success in life has increased dramatically (Box 4). Though the 'educational expansion' has progressed only gradually, each year an increasing number of students has been enrolled in the university education since the beginning of the 1990s. The effects of education on first births and first unions is further described and analysed in Box 4. In a highly secularised society, there has been further change of attitudes toward an increasing tolerance of non-traditional sexual behaviour, non-marital partnership, births to single mothers or deliberate childlessness. The attitudes and attitudinal change among Czech women are discussed in detail in Box 3.

Many Czech demographers consider the 'worsening economic conditions' or the 'economic crisis' to be the major cause of recent demographic changes (see the summary of this discourse in Box 1). Though the decline in the state support for the families with children probably had some influence on the willingness of young people to marry and to have children, we do not see the most important issues connected with the 'economic crisis', but with the constraints similar to those commonly experienced in many West European societies, especially with the difficulties to combine work and child-rearing. Despite the economic decline experienced in the period of 1990-1993, Czech economy has recovered relatively well after the 'shocks' caused by the implementation of market economy and the level of real GDP as well as that of real wages has exceeded the pre-transition levels (1989) in 2000. Moreover, some surveys carried out in the mid-1990s, i.e. in the period of the most intensive decline in fertility rates, have not supported the notion of dramatically worsening economic conditions in the families<sup>6</sup>. Two phenomena – the shortage of cheap housing in the large cities and unemployment among young people – certainly had affected childbearing and union formation. However, the difficult housing situation did not influence the timing of marriage among large majority of young people<sup>7</sup>. The youth (age 15 to 24) unemployment rate has been quite low till 1997; then it reached 17.4 % in 1999, which is the level well comparable to most west European countries.

In a more competitive environment, where more emphasis is put on the productivity, flexibility and effectiveness, the combination of paid work and childcare for women has become increasingly difficult. There are deep gender inequalities in the level of salaries, employment prospects or in access to high positions (for more detailed discussion, see Box 2).

Though the importance of economic issues should not be neglected in the interpretation of recent demographic shifts, the roots of these changes lie in a broad societal transformation after 1989.

## Conclusion

In the paper we discussed a peculiar way to the second demographic transition in the Czech Republic. We distinguish two contrasting periods in the progression of this process. The first period, the 'pre-transition stage' started around 1950 and was marked by an extensive and forced 'modernisation' during an early era of the state-bureaucratic socialism. A few stages characteristic for the second demographic transition had started already as early as in the 1950s and 1960s. However, the lack of choices and opportunities for alternative lifestyles effectively prevented the progression of further changes till the late 1980s. At the same time, the patterns of fertility, family formation and reproductive life had grown remarkably uniform, with most women entering marriage and having children at an early age. The society displayed a mixture of modern and traditional features, with a strong overall control of the state over each aspect of social life. Therefore, we do not interpret the few initial

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<sup>6</sup> The survey among Czech adolescents carried out in 1995 (Macek et al., 1998, p. 558) showed that Czech teenagers were more positive in their assessments of costs of change than their counterparts in Bulgaria or in Hungary. The surveys carried out in 1994 and 1996 (ISSP, 1994 and 1996) did not support the hypothesis about the rapidly declining living standards in the families of young people (Kuchařová and Petrová, 1997, p. 180). The surveys have indicated that "the postponement (of births and marriages)... is not a fatal result of the more difficult economic conditions as such, but it is the outcome of gradually changing new complex approach to life" (ibid., p. 189).

<sup>7</sup> According to the survey carried out in 1997 among recently married couples, only 7 % of respondents stated that the housing shortage had a "crucial influence" for the timing of their marriage and 15 % respondents perceived this influence as "minor" (Kostelecký, 1997, p. 4).

steps toward the second demographic transition to be the manifestation of this process. However, the long pre-transition stage was important for the rapid and intensive demographic changes over the 1990s. In the secularised and pragmatic society, where people were relatively tolerant to many non-traditional forms of behaviour, the social and demographic changes after the establishment of a democracy were sudden and intensive. The spread of new phenomena such as cohabitation, non-marital childbearing, societal acceptance of homosexuality or legitimisation of childlessness point out that it is not a temporary crisis behaviour, but a deep demographic transformation that has been taking place in the Czech Republic over the 1990s. Rapid diffusion of modern contraception, increasing importance of high education and the boom of new opportunities has been important forces behind the rapid spread of the second demographic transition in the Czech Republic. Economic difficulties played an important role in influencing the demographic behaviour of young generations, and yet these difficulties did not have an appearance of a 'crisis'; mostly these are the problems young people face anywhere in Western Europe: shortage of cheap housing, fairly high unemployment rates and especially the increasing incompatibility of career with the childcare.

In short, there is no doubt that the second demographic transition has been taking place in the Czech Republic since the early 1990s. In 1999, the demographic behaviour of young cohorts of Czech women often resembled more the behaviour of their Dutch counterparts than that commonly experienced by Czech women born by a decade earlier.

Nevertheless, many important theoretical issues pertaining to the theory of the second demographic transition may be drawn based on the Czech experience. Not only that the sequence of the transition may be substantially different from the 'ideal sequence' identified by van de Kaa in 1997<sup>8</sup>, but in a period of intensive demographic changes, many stages of the transition may take place simultaneously. The theory of the second demographic transition links together broad social, cultural, technological and demographic changes. Indeed, in the Czech society the mutual influence of these changes brought forth the large demographic transformation. On the other hand, many 'progressive' demographic changes occurred even in the uniform and undemocratic environment. This fact brings about an important question: How to assess whether the second demographic transition is taking place or not? This question leads to another one, posed already in the introductory part: Which are the most important features of the second demographic transition? It is not easy to answer these questions and thus the dispute on 'whether the second demographic transition is going on' is likely to continue in many countries.

*In 1990 the democracy and civil society still were a novelty for a majority of Czech people. If someone, inspired by the concept of the second demographic transition, would predict that virtually all the changes commonly associated with this transition would be intensively progressing over the next ten years, it would be considered as a too radical prediction. Everyone expected many changes to occur – the deep societal and economic transformation could not pass by without influencing the demographic environment – but perhaps nobody foresaw such a radical shifts in fertility, nuptiality or family formation that have taken place there.*

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<sup>8</sup> Van de Kaa (1997, p. 9) rightly points out that "whether an innovation is accepted a decade earlier or later, may greatly influence the speed and impact of its diffusion. This may affect the ordering of events and the duration between them".

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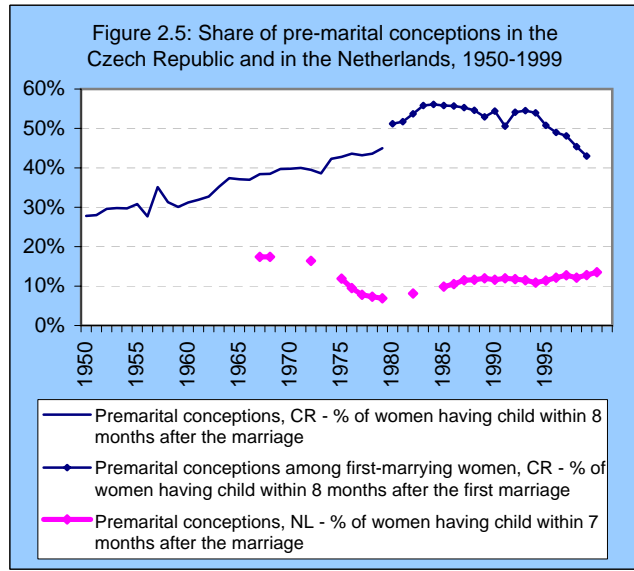
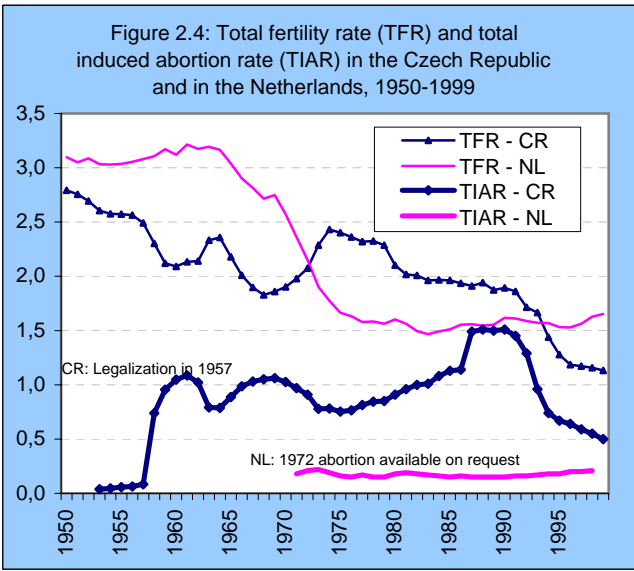
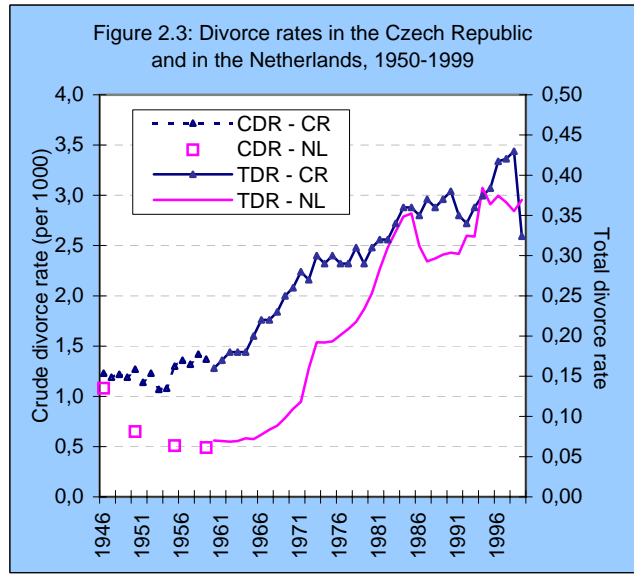
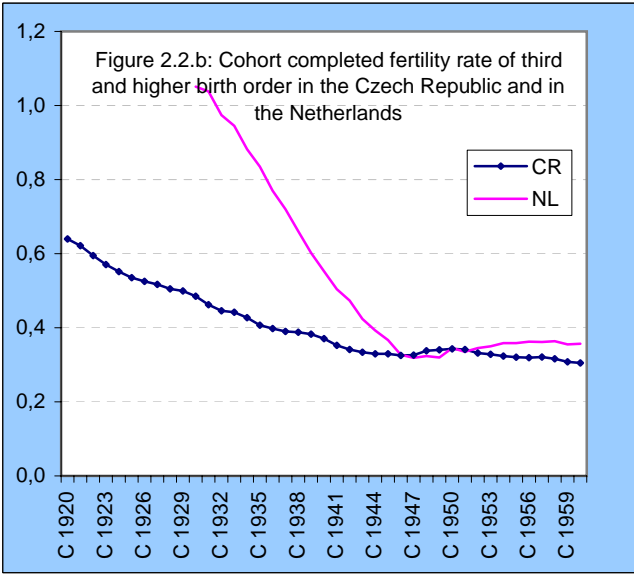
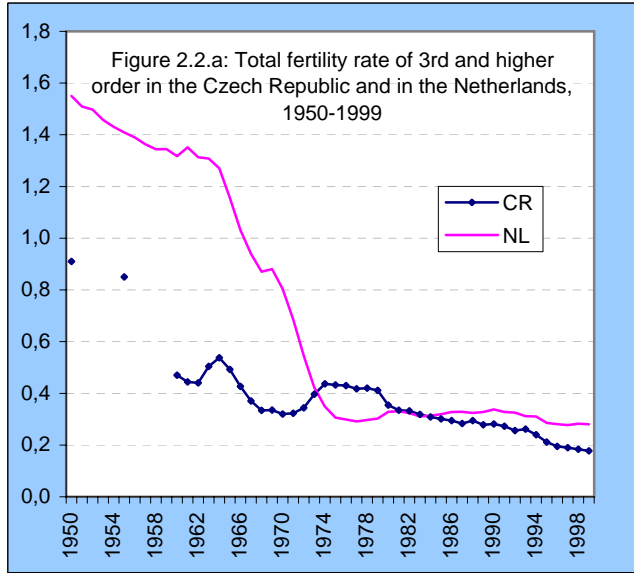
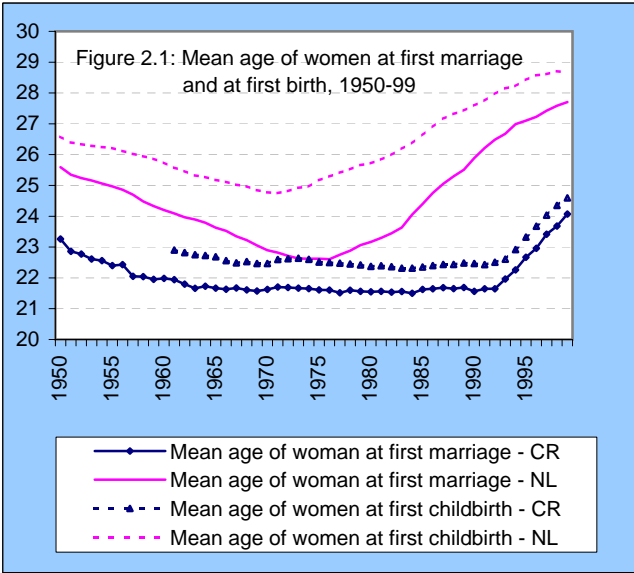
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APPENDIX: Figures 2.1-2.16



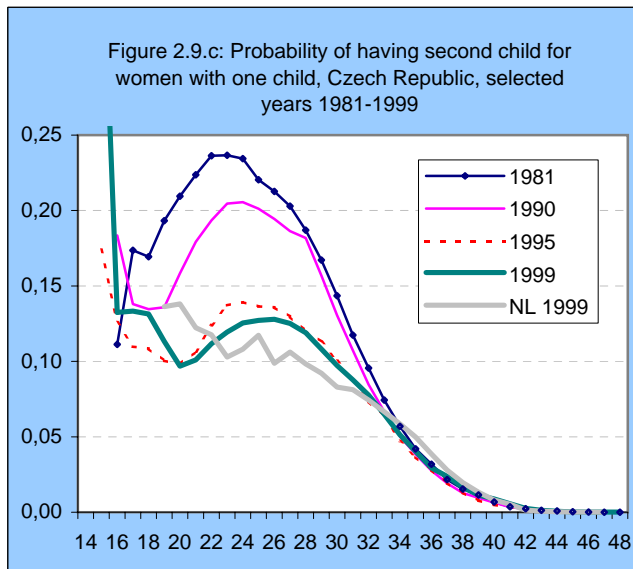
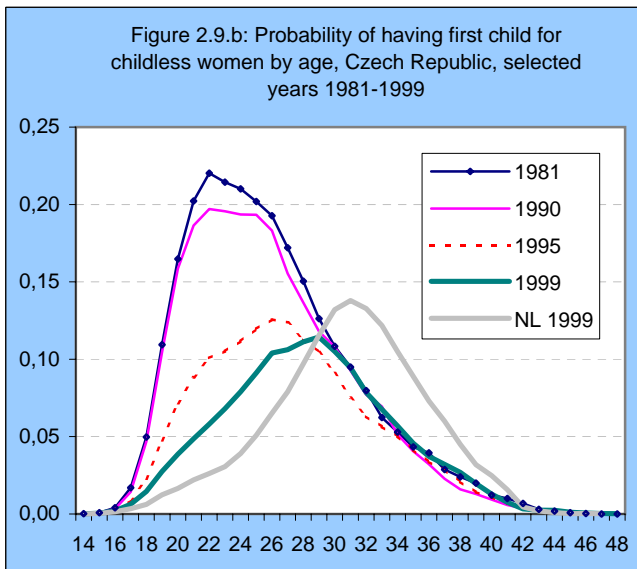
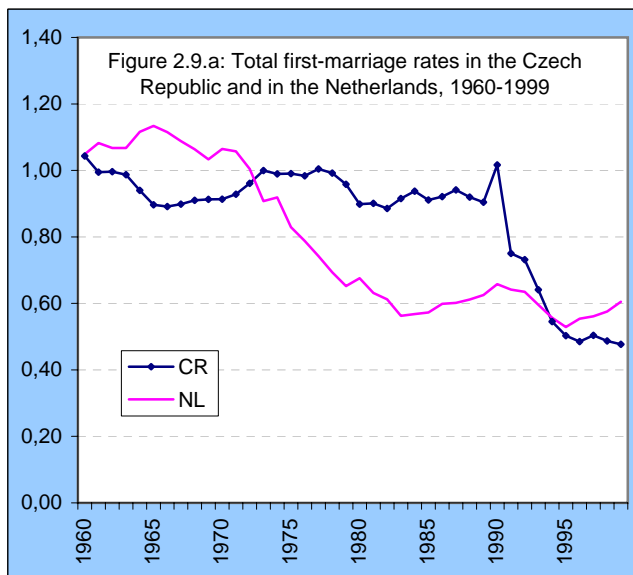
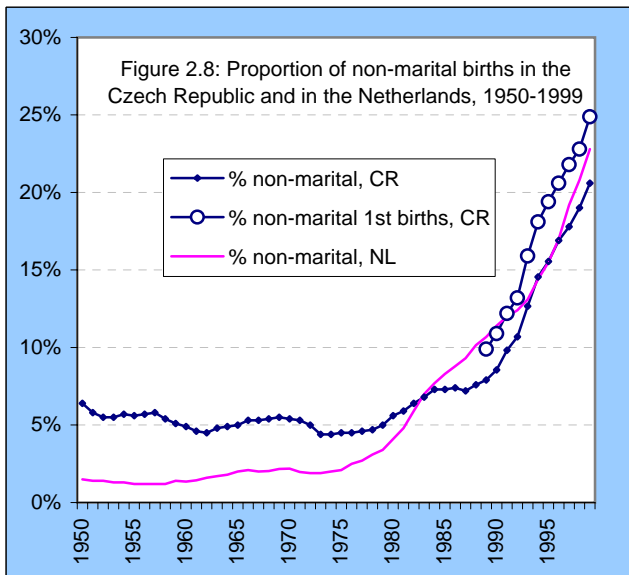
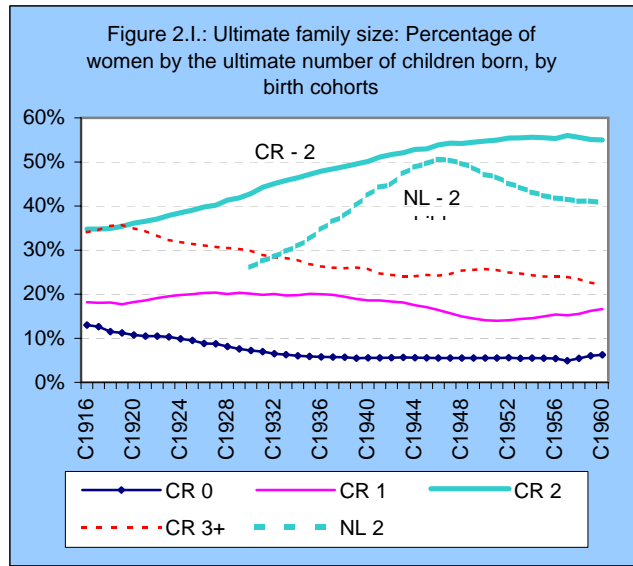
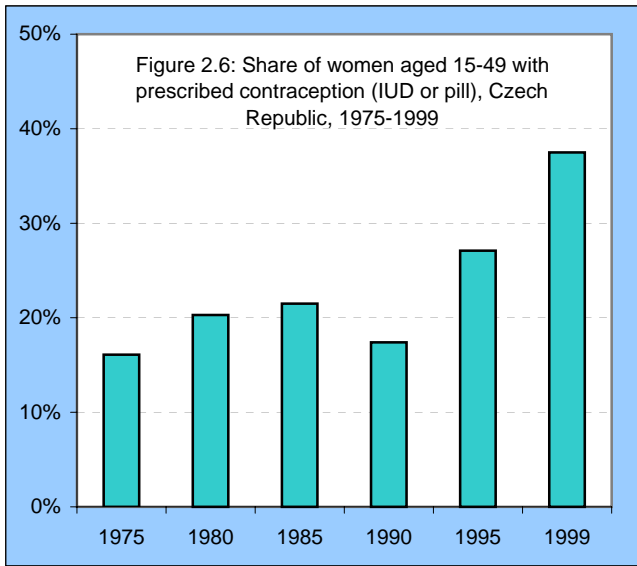


Figure 2.10: Contraceptive use at first sex, women by birth cohorts, Czech Republic, FFS 1997

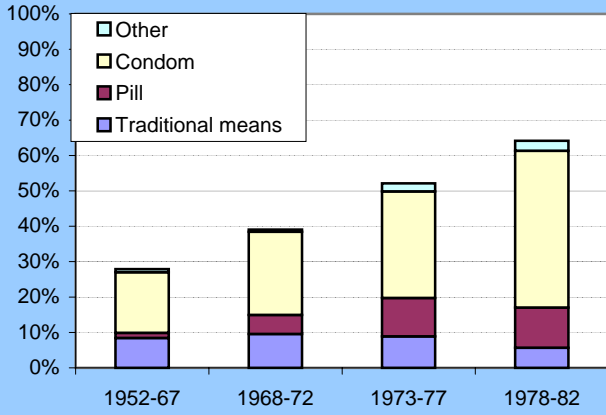


Figure 2.11: Cumulative birth rate and first-marriage rate (per 1000), Czech Republic, women aged 15-19 years

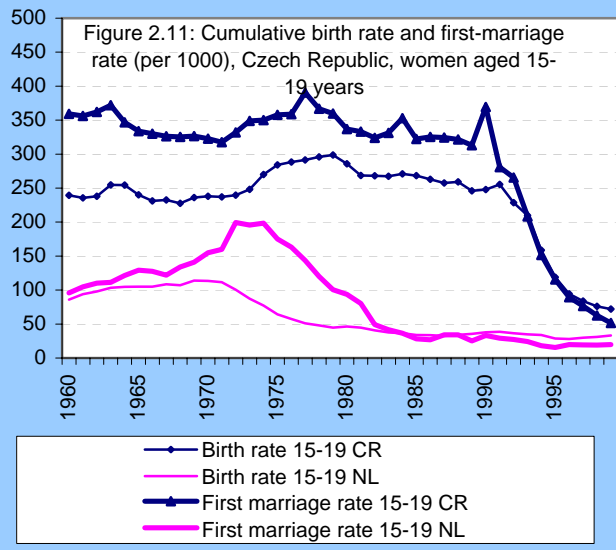


Figure 2.12: Proportion of men and women married at age 20-24 and 25-29, Czech Republic, 1950-2000

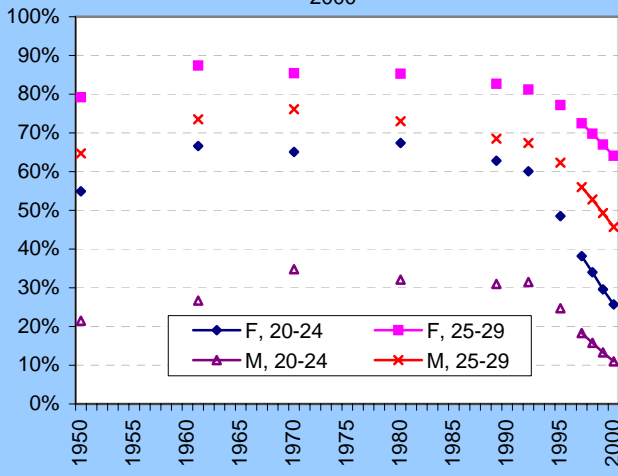


Figure 2.13: Natural and total population increase (per 1000 inhabitants) in the Czech Republic and in the Netherlands, 1950-2000

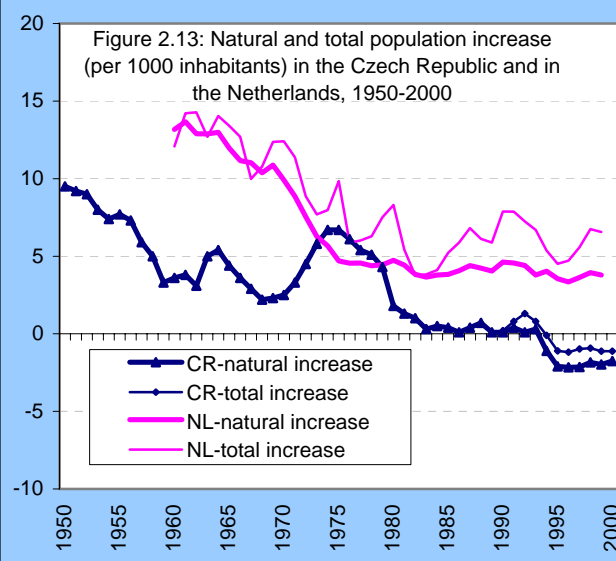


Figure 2.16: Lifetime childlessness and proportion of never-married women in the Czech Republic and in the Netherlands, birth cohorts 1920-1965

