



Demographic Shifts in the Czech Republic after 1989: A Second Demographic Transition View

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Abstract. A dramatic change in fertility, family formation and living arrangements took place in the Czech Republic over the 1990s. The establishment of democracy, profound social transformation and transition to the market economy affected the values and demographic behaviour of the young Czech generation. This paper examines whether these demographic shifts can be interpreted within the framework of the second demographic transition. The theoretical part discusses the idea of the transition, outlining three distinctive conceptualisations. Two of them – the view of the transition as a progression of characteristic interrelated demographic changes and a broader view stressing the importance of underlying ideational factors – fit the Czech situation very well. A comparison with the Netherlands reveals that the onset of the transition in the Czech Republic may be clearly located in the first half of the 1990s, lagging two decades behind the Netherlands.

Key words: Czech Republic, family, fertility, second demographic transition, values

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Résumé. Au cours des années 1990, des modifications importantes se sont produites en République tchèque dans les domaines de la fécondité, de la formation des couples et des modes de vie. Le rétablissement de la démocratie, une profonde transformation sociale et la transition vers l'économie de marché ont modifié les valeurs et le comportement démographique des jeunes générations tchèques. Cet article examine les mutations démographiques dans le cadre de la seconde transition démographique. D'un point de vue théorique, l'idée de transition recouvre trois conceptions différentes. La situation tchèque correspond très bien à deux d'entre elles, une conception de la transition comme une suite de changements démographiques interdépendants et une conception plus large mettant l'accent sur l'importance des facteurs idéationnels sous-jacents. Le début de la transition en République tchèque peut être situé dans la première moitié des années 1990, plus de deux décennies après celui de la transition aux Pays-Bas.

Mots clés: famille, fécondité, République tchèque, seconde transition démographique, valeurs

1. Introduction

After the demise of the totalitarian regime in 1989, a complex transformation of the previous patterns of fertility, reproduction and family life has been in progress in the Czech Republic. Period fertility rates have declined sharply to one of the lowest levels in the world, accompanied by the postponement of childbearing, which proceeded at an unprecedented pace. Correspondingly, marriages have also been postponed, marriage rates have fallen rapidly and the proportion of children born outside marriage has markedly increased. Demographic changes have progressed during an era of profound societal transformation, marked by the establishment of democratic institutions and the market economy, in which people's everyday lives have been radically affected.

Since the mid-1990s, Czech demographers have been engaged in a lively debate about whether the second demographic transition has been taking place in the Czech Republic. Some of them proposed that the demographic changes might be interpreted as a pragmatic reaction of the Czech population to changing external conditions (Rychtaříková, 2000; Stloukal, 1998), which nevertheless remained different from Western Europe (Rychtaříková, 1997; Stloukal, 1997). Rychtaříková (1996, 2000) emphasised the influence of unfavourable economic factors, pointing out high unemployment, inflation, economic crisis and uncertainty and stressing that "all symptoms seem to indicate crisis behaviour more than intentional choice" (2000: 101). Stloukal (1998: 8) viewed the demographic changes more generally as "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". Rabušic (1997, 2001), on the other hand, perceived demographic shifts as an accelerated second demographic transition, driven by cultural changes crystallising among the young cohorts born at the beginning of the 1970s and enabled by the creation of democratic space for individual choice and lifestyle. Fialová and Kučera (1997) stressed the mutual influence of the rapid adaptation to the present pattern of demographic behaviour in Western Europe combined with the pressure of new economic and social conditions.

This paper discusses whether the recent demographic shifts in the Czech Republic can indeed be viewed as a manifestation of the second demographic transition. Such discussion has important theoretical and methodological implications, reaching beyond the interpretation of demographic changes in Czech society. Firstly, the hypothesis of the second demographic transition has been formulated on the basis of Western European trends. The occurrence of this transition in a former Eastern Bloc country would support the view of its diffusion to other societies once they acquired particular social, economic and cultural characteristics. Secondly, we have to deal with a tricky question "How to ascertain whether the second demographic transition is taking place in a given society?" This question is closely related to another one: "What are the most important features of the second demographic transition?" The unique history of each society shapes its culture and institutions, which influence the life course of individuals. Recog-

nising the importance of cultural inheritance, the specific socio-economic context and national path-dependencies, one should expect to find prevailing demographic differences between societies experiencing the second demographic transition (see Billari and Wilson, 2001).

The paper is structured as follows. Section 2 discusses the concept of the second demographic transition. Section 3 outlines a possible operationalisation to ascertain whether the transition is taking place. Section 4 provides a broader picture of demographic changes in the Czech Republic since the 1950s, linking them with contemporary social developments. Section 5 examines how the distinctive concepts of the transition correspond to the demographic shifts in the Czech Republic. We make a comparison with the Netherlands, which may be viewed as a 'model country' for the second demographic transition. Section 6 focuses on the new opportunities and emerging economic constraints shaping demographic trends in the Czech Republic. Section 7 concludes the paper.

2. Second Demographic Transition: One or Many?

Shortly after Ron Lesthaeghe and Dirk van de Kaa first presented their hypothesis of the second demographic transition (Lesthaeghe and Van de Kaa, 1986) – initially with a question mark attached to it – Van de Kaa (1987) disseminated the idea in English and the concept has attracted a lot of attention as well as critical scrutiny (Cliquet, 1991). Addressing the ongoing development, incorporating new ideas and responding to some criticism, both Lesthaeghe (e.g. Lesthaeghe, 1995, 1998; Lesthaeghe and Neels, 2002; Lesthaeghe and Surkyn, 2002) and Van de Kaa (e.g. Van de Kaa, 1994, 1997, 2001a, 2001b) further elaborated the concept. As a result, it has become a complex theory,¹ stressing a plethora of interconnected demographic changes and underlying mechanisms. The gradual evolution of ideas, with some differences between the concepts proposed by Lesthaeghe and by Van de Kaa, coupled with increasing popularity of the term itself led to a certain confusion as to what the second demographic transition means. It has become loaded with many meanings, serving as a description, label, or even explanation of demographic changes and "its usage has escaped the control of its initial proponents" (Billari and Wilson, 2001: 6). A disadvantage of building a theory based on the ongoing development was also recognised by Van de Kaa (1994: 103–104) who proposed that "at the current stage of demographic knowledge, a comprehensive theory of the 'second demographic transition' cannot yet be developed". To examine the various aspects of the theory, we discuss three distinctive conceptualisations of the transition: (1) as a broad label for a number of interconnected demographic changes; (2) as a concept of such changes, proceeding in a logical and ordered sequence of stages; and (3) as a concept of behavioural change driven (dominantly) by cultural and ideational changes.²

2.1. TRANSITION AS A LABEL FOR INTERCONNECTED DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES

Perhaps the least complicated view perceives the second demographic transition as a progression of interlinked demographic changes, particularly in fertility, union formation and dissolution and living arrangements. What are the main characteristics of these demographic trends? Initially, Van de Kaa (1987: 4) considered the decline in fertility to a level “well below replacement” to be the principle demographic feature of the transition. Behavioural changes were characterised by the four main shifts (p. 11): (1) from the *golden age of marriage* to the *dawn of cohabitation*; (2) from an era of *the king-child with parents* to that of the *king-pair with a child*; (3) from *preventive contraception to self-fulfilling conception*; and (4) towards *pluralistic families and households*. Both Lesthaeghe and Van de Kaa (e.g. Lesthaeghe and Van de Kaa, 1986: 13; Van de Kaa, 1987: 25–26, 1994: 113–114, 1997; Lesthaeghe and Neels, 2002) repeatedly emphasised the catalytic role played by the adoption of modern contraception, especially the pill (the “pill effect”), which gave individuals almost complete control over their reproduction, but also had a direct impact on the norms regarding sexual and reproductive behaviour. It played a key role in the postponement of marriage and parenthood,³ which has now become a hallmark of the transition (Lesthaeghe and Moors, 2000: 124), as well as in the substitution of marriage by cohabitation, and paradoxically, in the increase in extra-marital childbearing: “modern contraception laid the axe at the root of the traditional relation between sex and marriage and between partners and their children” (Van de Kaa, 1997: 6).

The waning of marriage as an institution and an increasing freedom of individuals to choose a living arrangement that suits them are characteristic aspects of the second demographic transition, which was probably first manifested by rising divorce rates (Lesthaeghe, 1995: 36). A prolongation of the period of being single (Van de Kaa, 1994: 107), due to the postponement of union formation and instability of informal unions among young people and due to the rising divorce rates among older people, led to the increasing proportion of one-person households (Kuijsten, 1996: 125). Goldscheider (2000: 2) considers the increasing prevalence of non-family living to be the hallmark of the second demographic transition. The rise of parenthood within consensual unions, making cohabitation a more stable and more serious relationship, has been another important feature (Lesthaeghe, 1995: 46). These developments resulted in a greater variety of family types (Cliquet, 1991: 30), sometimes labelled as “pluralisation of living arrangements” (Kuijsten, 1996: 138). An increased “disorder” in the life course has made life-cycle transitions “more frequent, less strictly patterned, and more complex” (Lesthaeghe, 1995: 18), a development later coined as a “destandardization of the life course” (Lesthaeghe and Moors, 2000: 153).

2.2. TRANSITION AS A CONCEPT OF CHANGES PROCEEDING IN A LOGICALLY ORDERED SEQUENCE

While Lesthaeghe (1995: 17) broadly distinguished three phases of the second demographic transition in Western Europe, linking specific changes with the period of their progression (1955–1970, 1970–1985, and after 1985), Van de Kaa conceptualised the transition as a logical sequence of stages, where “each step taken seems to have led to the next; each option chosen made a further choice possible” (1987: 9). He constructed a summary overview of 15 stages of the second demographic transition, based on the observation of demographic trends in Western European societies between 1965 and 1995 (Van de Kaa, 1997: 8, 2001a: 302). This is an “ideal scheme” of the transition, starting with the decline in fertility at higher ages of childbearing and higher birth orders and ending up with the stabilisation of cohort fertility below the replacement level. Van de Kaa (1997: 9) recognised a strong diversity of European societies, which implies that “the variations in the tempo and the way in which certain changes take place need not worry us” and such variations do not exclude the possibility of convergence. However, the onset of the transition is important, the timing of innovation may greatly influence the speed and impact of its diffusion and “affect the ordering of events and the duration between them”.

The notion of the transition as a gradual ongoing process makes it, in theory, possible to identify the “leaders” and the “laggers”, either between countries, or within various subpopulations in one country. Scandinavian countries have been often proposed to lead the transition in Europe, particularly with respect to cohabitation, non-marital childbearing or destandardization of the order of life transitions (e.g. Lesthaeghe and Moors, 2000: 165). Within countries, the young, more educated women, living in the large cities and not attending church, whose political preferences are well left of the centre have been identified as the early adopters of the new behaviour (Van de Kaa, 1997: 9, quoting De Feijter, 1991).

2.3. TRANSITION AS A CONCEPT OF BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE DRIVEN BY CULTURAL AND IDEATIONAL CHANGES

The “story” of the second demographic transition links ideational and cultural change with the behavioural (demographic) shifts. Increased individual autonomy and individuals’ rights of self-fulfilment, driven by the rise of ‘higher-order needs’ are seen as the prime forces behind the transition (e.g. Van de Kaa, 1987: 6–7; Lesthaeghe, 1995: 21–22). Ideational change progressed hand in hand with secularisation, increasing numbers of young people enrolled in secondary and tertiary education and growing emancipation and labour participation of women. But there is also a strong economic element, since all these changes, progressing in tandem with the growth of the service economy, were made possible by the expansion of the welfare state, which guaranteed an unprecedented level of existential security.

The main features of ideational change have been summarised in Lesthaeghe (1995: 22–33) and Lesthaeghe and Neels (2002: 10–12). Typical manifestations are higher standards of partnership quality, growing risk-aversion regarding life-long commitments, growing tolerance for minorities, increased consumerism, decline in conformity and rejection of authority and distrust in political institutions.

Extending the ideas proposed by Hoffmann-Nowotny (1988), Van de Kaa (1994) constructed a broad explanatory framework for the second demographic transition, composed of the changes in the three basic dimensions of the social system – structure, culture and technology. Structural processes such as modernisation, growth of welfare society, increase in higher education and a shift to a service economy led to the increasing complexity of society and to the loosening of traditional structural ties, including family ties. Technological changes enable people to control their reproduction (contraception), to explore distant countries and cultures (accessible air travel), and to be globally exposed to new ideas (television, Internet). These changes induce cultural change, such as shifts in values, norms and institutions, through the processes of adaptation, innovation and diffusion. According to Preston (1987: 178), the pervasive role of the media, transmitting images of novel behaviour, fosters much more rapid change in values than was previously possible.

2.4. CHALLENGES TO THE CONCEPT

There are several critical points concerning the concept of the second demographic transition:

- 1) *What are the key features of the transition?* The idea linking together developments in fertility, family formation and dissolution, living arrangements, and occasionally even mortality and migration (see Van de Kaa, 1987, 1994) may resemble an “umbrella concept” describing parallel demographic changes rather than a well-developed theoretical framework.
- 2) *Is it really a distinctive transition or is it rather a prolongation of the first one? And what makes it distinctive from the historical first transition? Will it become universal, following the first transition?* Lesthaeghe and Van de Kaa (1986: 15) have acknowledged that the caesura between the first and the second demographic transition is not always sharp. Cliquet (1991: 26) argued that the second demographic transition appears as “an acceleration in the new demographic regime, which emerged with modernization”. Addressing this criticism, Lesthaeghe and Neels (2002: 6–12) outlined major demographic and societal contrasts between the first and the second transition, emphasising contrasting evolution in nuptiality. There are, they argued, “too many pattern reversals to entertain the notion of a single transition”.
- 3) *What is the expected final state; how does the “end of the transition” look like?* Lesthaeghe’s and Van de Kaa’s discussions are focused on the dynamic changes over time rather than on any form of the envisaged final state. As Lesthaeghe pointed out, the second demographic transition “is about ‘trajec-

ories' and not about the convergence or the final-state equilibrium" (personal communication, 2001).

- 4) *Should we expect convergence between countries undergoing the transition?* Many researchers have pointed out persisting national differences with respect to some features of the second demographic transition, such as the transition to adulthood (Billari and Wilson, 2001), living arrangements of young women in the early parental phase (Kuijsten, 1996), continuation of historical differences in family systems (Reher, 1998), or differences in nuptiality and living arrangements in general (Coleman, 1999). Studies of individual countries often emphasise the continuing distinctiveness of national patterns; for instance Castiglioni and Dalla Zuanna (1994: 134), pointing out a very low prevalence of cohabitation in Italy, argued that "Italy seems to follow a completely different path compared with Central and Northern Europe". Similarly, De Beer et al. (2000: 124), summarising their findings on the Netherlands and the Flemish part of Belgium, proposed that "different types of change in family and fertility behaviour cannot simply be interpreted in terms of one model of the second demographic transition". On the other hand, Bosveld (1996: 255) expressed cautious support for the "convergence view", finding that countries in her study on European fertility followed the same trajectory in the sequence of fertility patterns, although in Southern and Eastern European countries some phases started later and lasted longer. It is clear that the strong country-specific cultural and institutional factors cannot be overlooked as they continue to play an important role shaping national demographic trends. Increasing freedom to choose individual lifestyle does not mean that the preferences for particular lifestyles should be the same in different cultural contexts (Billari and Wilson, 2001: 14).

3. Operationalisation of the Second Demographic Transition

Our analysis is primarily based on indicators constructed from the vital statistics data. These indicators are usually available for longer periods of time and therefore may enable an identification of the onset and progression of the second demographic transition in various countries. Furthermore, we have utilised data of the 1997 Fertility and Family Survey (FFS) and the 1991 and 1999 rounds of the European Values Study (EVS) in the Czech Republic. Following the identification of three distinctive conceptualisations of the transition, we investigate to what extent the recent demographic transformation in the Czech Republic may be interpreted within their respective frameworks.

First we pay attention to the progression of selected demographic trends (Section 5.1). We focus on the timing, when particular levels of selected indicators were reached and on the relative change of some indicators in time. To provide a finer distinction of the progression of the transition, we outline two phases of the change. This distinction makes it possible to incorporate some features of the

transition, which may be only temporary, such as the decline of period fertility to a very low level. The first set of indicators, summarised in Table 1, is related to the period fertility level, which is expected to decline in the initial phase of the transition. A further distinction is made between fertility of young women below age 25, which is supposed to decline in both phases, and fertility of women over age 30, which is expected to recuperate in the second phase (Lesthaeghe and Moors, 2000). The second set of indicators captures the postponement of marriage and childbearing. In the latter phase, we expect that the mean age of women at first marriage would become higher than at first birth due to the earlier timing of non-marital births and an increasing number of women entering marriage after experiencing first birth. The third and largest set of indicators pertains to the decline of marriage as an institution and the rise of cohabitation and being single. Finally, the last indicator captures the spread of the contraceptive pill, which in theory should be a precondition of the above-mentioned behavioural changes. This macro-level analysis is complemented by the overview of life transitions experienced up to age 23 among three distinctive birth cohorts of Czech women.

To check whether demographic changes proceeded roughly in line with Van de Kaa's (1997, 2001a) scheme of the "ideal sequence" of the transition, we have constructed an overview of the sequence of demographic change in the Czech Republic since 1950 and compared it with the Netherlands (Section 5.2). With respect to the ideational change, we discuss the value changes in Czech society over the 1990s, particularly those related to family, reproductive behaviour and gender equality (Section 5.3).

4. The Background of the Post-War Demographic Changes in the Czech Republic

The late 1940s saw in Czechoslovakia the establishment of a totalitarian regime that promised to radically rebuild society, to modernise it and to get rid of the old system of social stratification. Modernisation, often labelled as the "building of Communism" had to be strongly imposed from above and the Communist party tried to establish a firm control over society. 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 the need for a new workforce. As a result, many women were strongly encouraged to participate in the labour force. Nevertheless, the traditional gender role in family remained unchanged and was incorporated into the double role of the new "socialist woman" – the working mother.

Strong egalitarianism and paternalistic care eradicated the most extreme social inequalities and led to an increase in living standards and health care. Liberal legislation on divorce (1950) and abortion (1957) paved the way to the first changes commonly associated with the second demographic transition: increasing divorce rates, decreasing higher-order birth rates and availability of abortion on request.

Table 1. Indicators of demographic change during the second demographic transition

Indicator	1st phase	2nd phase
<i>Period fertility level</i>		
1. Period total fertility rate (TFR)	TFR decline below 1.8 for a period of 5 years or more	–
2. TFR of women below age 25	Decline by 20% relative to the 1965 level	Decline by 60% relative to the 1965 level
3. TFR of women aged 30+	Lowest level after 1965 reached	Increase by 20% relative to the lowest level reached after 1965
<i>Postponement of childbearing and marriage</i>		
4. Mean age of mother at first childbirth	Onset of the increase lasting at least 5 years	Increase by 2 years relative to the lowest post-1965 level
5. Mean age of women at first marriage	Onset of the increase lasting at least 5 years	Reaching higher level than the mean age at first birth
<i>Weakening of marriage as an institution</i>		
6. Total first marriage rates of women	Decline below 0.8 for a period of 5 years or more	–
7. Proportion of extra-marital births	Higher than 10%	Higher than 25%
8. Total divorce rate	Exceeding 10%	Exceeding 25%
9. Proportion of women cohabiting at age 20–29	Exceeding 10%	Exceeding 25%
10. Proportion of never married women aged 20–29	Exceeding 60% among 20–24 group for the first time after 1965	Exceeding 50% among 25–29 group
<i>Contraceptive behaviour</i>		
11. Proportion of women aged 15–44 using pill	Exceeding 20%	–

In 1966 modern contraception (the pill and the IUD) had been introduced and towards the end of the 1960s, fertility rates declined well below the replacement level. Czech society experienced a period of limited democratisation. In some sense, the second half of the 1960s was comparable to Western European societies; it was a time of a profound social change and even higher expectations. However, modern contraceptives as well as information concerning sex and reproduction generally remained in short supply, leading to the excessive use of abortion and relatively high prevalence of unwanted and mistimed births and “shotgun marriages”. Abortion was relatively easily accessible and generally accepted, particularly as a means of fertility limitation (a sort of “ex-post” contraception) among women who already had given birth to the desired number of children (see Zeman, 2000).

After the political crisis in 1968 and the tightening control over society, advancing hand in hand with the consolidation of the power of the conservative wing of the Communist party, Czech society reacted by embracing family values. As the opportunities 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, the family constituted an unofficial sphere of existence, where they lived a kind of schizophrenic dual lives, making clear distinctions between public and private behaviour and morality (Machonin, 1997: 38). Moreover, broader family networks helped to substitute services unavailable due to the chronically underdeveloped service economy.

The “escape into the family” was further supported by pronatalist measures, which came into effect after 1971. The double role of women was facilitated by a fairly long maternal leave and by a broad network of public childcare facilities and kindergartens. Official pronatalism was primarily politically and economically motivated; social and demographic factors played only a minor role. Population policy was based on the perceived need to reduce the labour shortage typical of an inefficient economy. The Soviet conception of extensive population growth had some additional influence on this policy (Kučera, 1994: 60–61). Under the bureaucratic distribution of housing, the formation of a family was the easiest option for young people to move out of their parental home. Those who were childless and unmarried had virtually no chance of obtaining a flat.

Over the 1970s and 1980s, the political system was primarily focused on its own conservation (Stloukal, 1996: 4). While these two decades saw a broadening of individual autonomy and value changes in Western Europe, the extension of individual freedom was impossible in the Czech Republic. Czech society retained many characteristics of traditional and patriarchal societies (Možný and Rabušic, 1999: 109).

By the end of the 1980s, early family formation and universality of marriage and childbearing, as well as a high frequency of abortions and a large prevalence of pre-marital conceptions characterised the major patterns of family life in the Czech Republic. Only 5–6% of women born in the 1940s and 1950s have never married

and a similar proportion has remained childless. The ideal of the two-child family was strongly entrenched in society: more than 55% of women born in the 1950s had two children at the end of their reproductive lives and according to the EVS data from 1991, 73% of women considered two children to be an ideal family size. Several structural and technological features, such as high labour participation of women and an extensive social security network were typical of a modern society, while the cultural environment was marked by the totalitarian regulations and a lack of choice and opportunities.

Paradoxically, the totalitarian period paved the way to rapid demographic changes over the 1990s. Highly secularised, but also increasingly pragmatic and consumerist (despite – or in fact due to – the limited availability of consumer goods) Czech society had gradually become tolerant towards certain forms of non-traditional family behaviour, increasingly accepting abortion, divorce and single motherhood. Stloukal (1996: 14) considers consumerism to be intimately connected with familism, as 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 has been stressed by several demographers (Fialová and Kučera, 1997: 100; Rychtaříková, 2000: 101).

The demographic change over the 1990s constituted a sudden break with the previous characteristics of family and fertility behaviour. Between 1990 and 1996 the total fertility rate plummeted from 1.89 to 1.18 and later stabilised below this level. The decline was mostly driven by the postponement of childbearing, which proceeded at an unprecedented pace.⁴ Between 1992 and 2000, the mean age of mothers at first birth, which had been very stable for decades, increased by 2.6 years, from 22.5 to 25.1 years. Correspondingly, marriages have also been postponed and marriage rates have fallen rapidly. The proportion of children born out of wedlock has more than doubled since 1990, reaching 21.8% in 2000. Fertility rates of adolescent women, excessively high as compared with Western Europe, have plummeted over the 1990s. Unlike in the past, abortion rates declined sharply hand in hand with the decline in the birth rates. Between 1990 and 2000 the total induced abortion rate declined from 1.50 to 0.47 abortions per woman and the total number of conceptions have been reduced by half. In contrast with the majority of the post-communist countries, the 1990s also saw a considerable decline in mortality, stagnating or improving only slightly over the previous two decades and an increase in immigration, transforming the Czech Republic into an immigration country.

A dramatic demographic transformation left a clear imprint on the behaviour of birth cohorts growing up in the beginning of the 1990s, particularly those born between 1973 and 1977. One specific and probably long-lasting result of these profound changes is a population decrease, which has not been experienced in most Western European countries. Since 1994, the sharp decline in the number of

births has not been fully compensated by the ongoing decline in mortality or by immigration.

5. Is the Second Demographic Transition in Progress in the Czech Republic?

5.1. AN EXAMINATION OF THE “INTERCONNECTED DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES” VIEW

Table 2 provides an overview of the progression of the transition in the Czech Republic and in the Netherlands as captured by the indicators specified in Section 3 (see Table 1). The onset of the transition in the Netherlands, labelled in Table 2 as the first phase, may be located in the early 1970s; in total eight out of eleven “threshold levels” were reached in the period 1969–1977. In agreement with Lesthaeghe’s and Van de Kaa’s findings, increasing divorce rates and the widespread use of the pill were the earliest manifestations of the Dutch transition. The diffusion of extra-marital childbearing occurred relatively late, which may be explained by its very low prevalence (less than 2%) in the past, increasing substantially only since the mid-1970s. All selected indicators progressed in the direction suggested in Table 1 and eight out of nine threshold levels characterising the second phase were reached by 2001. The only indicator that, so far, did not conform to our expectations, is the mean age of women at first marriage, which remains lower than the age at first childbearing.

Judging the progression of characteristic demographic changes only, the onset of the transition in the Czech Republic is clearly located into the first half of the 1990s, lagging two decades behind the Netherlands. Eight out of eleven examined first-phase threshold levels were reached within the short period between 1991 and 1995. A peculiar aspect is a very early increase in divorce rates, with the first threshold reached around 1946 and the second one already in 1969. High divorce rates were typical of the former Communist countries, enabled by the liberal legislation adopted after World War II, and driven by a high prevalence of early marriages and “shotgun marriages” in particular. In contrast with the Netherlands, a significant increase in the use of the pill did not precede the demographic changes, but has run parallel with the changes: the proportion of women aged 15–49 who were prescribed oral contraception has increased from 4.2% in 1990 to 19.5% in 1995 and 31.9% in 2000 (UZIS, 2001). In general, the progression of typical demographic changes appears to be faster in the Czech Republic than in the Netherlands, with the second phase closely following the first one. In some respects, a comparison of these two countries supports the notion of a gradual convergence in demographic trends, illustrated in many graphs in the Appendix.

Can we observe changes in the living arrangements and life transitions among young Czech women and identify the expected “destandardization” of the life course? The 1997 survey (FFS) makes it possible to investigate the life transitions among women up to age 23 from the three distinctive birth cohorts: 1952–1967, representing the relatively stable pre-1989 demographic patterns; 1968–1972,

Table 2. Indicators of the second demographic transition in the Czech Republic and the Netherlands

Indicator	Czech Republic				The Netherlands			
	1st phase		2nd phase		1st phase		2nd phase	
	Year	Level	Year	Level	Year	Level	Year	Level
1. Period total fertility rate (TFR)	1992	1.71	–	–	1974	1.77	–	–
2. TFR of women below age 25	1994	0.77 (1965: 1.16)	1999	0.43	1973	0.65 (1965: 0.82)	1986	0.32
3. TFR of women aged 30+	1995	0.24	2000	0.28	1977	0.40	1985	0.52
4. Mean age of mother at first childbirth	1992	22.51	1999	24.59	1972	24.81	1986	26.89
5. Mean age of women at first marriage	1993	21.96	Not reached	–	1977	22.75	Not reached	–
6. Total first marriage rates of women	1991	0.75	–	–	1976	0.79	–	–
7. Proportion of extra-marital births	1992	10.7%	Not reached	–	1988	10.2%	2001	27.7%
8. Total divorce rate	ca. 1946	>0.10	1969	0.25	1969	0.10	1980	0.25
9. Proportion of women cohabiting at age 20–29	ca. 1998	>10%	Not reached	–	ca. 1980	>10%	1998	26.0%
10. Proportion of never married women aged 20–24	1998	63.7%	Not reached	–	1982	62.3%	1996	52.5%
11. Proportion of women aged 15–44 using the pill	1995	>20%	–	–	ca. 1971	>20%	–	–

Sources: CBS STATLINE (2002), Council of Europe (2001), CR POPIN (2001), CSU (1990–2001), CSU (1996a), EVS (1999), FFS (1997) and UZIS (2001).

Table 3. First partnership careers, leaving home patterns and living arrangements among three birth cohorts of Czech women up to age 23 (in %)

Percentage shares	Birth cohorts		
	1952–1967	1968–1972	1973–1974
<i>Experienced transitions by age 23</i>			
Left home	64.5	62.8	56.7
Ever single living	9.5	11.7	10.4
Ever cohabited	18.7	24.0	30.6
Ever any union	71.3	68.0	63.4
First union started at parental home	21.9	20.3	25.4
Ever married	66.5	58.8	48.5
Direct marriage	36.2	29.8	22.4
<i>Living arrangement at age 23</i>			
Living in first marriage	63.1	52.3	39.6
Living in first cohabitation	3.8	6.5	10.4
Single in parental home	23.0	22.2	32.8
Divorced or separated	2.5	4.9	5.2
Living in second union	1.8	4.3	8.2
<i>Total number of women</i>	905	325	134

Source: FFS (1997).

among whom many women entered first union after 1989; and the 1973–1974 cohorts, representing first cohorts reaching adulthood under the new political and economic conditions.⁵ Table 3 confirms the expectations of a relatively rapid cohort change and increasing variability in the life transitions among young adult women.

The proportion of women still living with their parents at age 23 – either single or with a partner – has increased and also the proportion of women who never entered any union has gradually risen. The shortage of affordable housing, which is pronounced in large cities, and which frequently results in a “cohabitation” of parents, their children and partners under one roof, reflects a specific institutional constraint inherited from the past. It was further exacerbated by the pricing policies of the 1990s, which established free-market rent for the newly rented apartments but regulated the rents in almost all others, making the choice to leave the parental home particularly difficult for many young people.

Less than half of the women belonging to the youngest generation (1973–1974) were married by age 23, as opposed to two-thirds of the women born in 1952–1967. The most usual path of leaving home, direct marriage, was less frequently taken by younger cohorts (22% of women born in 1973–1974) than the older ones (36% of women born before 1968). Considerably more women entered into cohabitation (30.6% from the 1973–1974 cohort, but only 18.7% from the pre-1968 cohort) and

more of them actually cohabited by age 23 (10.4% born in 1973–1974 as opposed to 3.8% born before 1968). As cohabitation became more prevalent, it seemed to lead to higher instability of first unions in their early phase; more women from the younger cohorts were divorced, separated or already in their second union when they reached age 23.

The above-sketched trends illustrate the increasing popularity of cohabitation, which gradually replaced early marriage, as well as an increasing diversity in the transitions and living arrangements among young women. Particularly among the post-1972 birth cohorts, early union formation resembles the behaviour of Dutch women more than the behaviour of earlier cohorts of Czech women. By age 20, cohabitation was more common than direct marriage for women born in the period 1973–1977, as opposed to the previous pattern of less than one-third of women entering cohabitation before marriage.

Cohabitation has been increasingly viewed as an equal alternative to marriage, even in the stage of family life related to child-rearing. The proportion of births conceived outside marriage has not changed much over the 1990s and it has oscillated around 40% of the total births since 1992. Nevertheless, the share of women marrying in order to “legitimise” their soon-to-be-born child has declined dramatically. The stable proportion of 80%, who did so in the 1980s, indicated a strong preference for a traditional family at that time. In 2000, more than half of women who became pregnant outside marriage and gave birth to a child did not marry before childbirth (Figure 1). This proportion has increased so rapidly that it reflects more than a commitment crisis on the partners’ side: it illustrates the rapidly declining pressure to bear children within marriage as well as an increasing preference of some couples to have children while cohabiting.

Judging purely on the basis of the characteristic behavioural changes, the available evidence suggests that the recent demographic shifts in the Czech Republic correspond very well with the changes envisioned by the second demographic transition theory, both from the macro- and micro-perspective (destandardization, more variable life courses).

5.2. AN EXAMINATION OF THE “ORDERED SEQUENCE OF CHANGES” VIEW

Attempting to trace the progression of demographic changes typical of the second demographic transition, we have constructed Table 4 which chronologically summarises distinctive stages of the transition in the Czech Republic as compared with the Netherlands. Particular demographic changes related to the summary overview in Table 4 are displayed in the Appendix. Since the table focuses on the Czech situation, many stages and their order differ considerably from Van de Kaa’s (1997) concept. Some stages, especially before 1989, were specific to the Czech Republic and did not occur in the Netherlands. They nevertheless belong to the logical sequence of events leading to the second demographic transition.

Table 4. Stages of the second demographic transition in the Czech Republic as compared with the Netherlands, 1950–2000

No.	Sequence	Van de Kaa*	Czech Republic		Netherlands	
			Period	Cohorts	Period	Cohorts
1	Decrease in 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 (Graph a).	3	1950–1962		1950–1972	
2	Decline in higher-order fertility (Graph b), emergence of the ideal of the two-child family model (Graph f).	1	1955–1962	Until C 1945	1960–1975	C 1930–1945
3	Due to the liberal legislation (1950), divorcees becoming more common and increasingly accepted by the society (Graph c).	5	1955–1995		1966–1995	
4	Legalization of abortion in 1957 enables further reduction of birth rates of parity 3, fertility of first and second order remains high. Abortion accepted as a substitution of contraception among married women. Abortion rates display inverse trends to fertility (Graph d).	8	1957–1988		–	
5	Modern contraception is disseminated to a certain extent. The quality, availability and choice of contraceptive means remain limited. Knowledge of contraception is low among young women. Abortions often substitute for contraception.		1966–1989			
6	Cohabitation becoming more common among separated and widowed people	9	1970s–1980s		1990s+	
7	Cohabitation commonly accepted as a distinctive stage before marriage. Some partners decide not to marry, even if the woman is pregnant. Share of nonmarital births increasing, especially among young women having first child (Graph g).	7	1990+		1980+	
	Decline in first marriage rates (Graph h) and first-birth probabilities (Graph i).	4	1991–1996		1972–1984	
	Decline in probabilities of the second childbirth among women with one child. Total fertility rates are falling rapidly.					

Table 4. Continued

No.	Sequence	Van de Kaa*	Czech Republic		Netherlands	
			Period	Cohorts	Period	Cohorts
8	Modern contraception increasingly used among all groups of women. Young people often use contraception from the onset of their sexual life (Graph j). Abortion rates declining steadily.		1992+		1970s+	
9	Postponement of first births and first marriages, the incidence of early births and marriages is declining rapidly (Graph k).	4, 6	1993+		1975–1998	
10	Natural increase of population becomes negative. Immigration gains in importance, however, the total population size is declining.		1994+		–	
11	Divorce rate stabilised at high level (Graph c).		1995		1995	
12	Fertility patterns becoming more diverse with regard to the timing, number of children and family status of mothers.	11	mid-1990s+		1980s+	
13	Total fertility rate tends to stabilise at low levels (Graph d). Not all postponed children are born. Increase in lifetime childlessness and in the proportion of never-married women (Graph l).	13, 14	1994+	C 1961+		C 1945+
14	Cohabitation accepted not only as a distinctive pre-marital stage, but as an alternative to marriage.	10	–		Late 1990s	
15	Proportion of nonmarital births further increases. Abortion rate stabilised at low level. Abortions mostly used by younger women at an early stage of their reproductive life.		–		1972+	
16	Postponement stops. Period fertility rate slightly increases.	12	–		1998+	
17	Cohort fertility stabilizes below the replacement level	15				C 1961+ (?)

Notes: Particular graphs mentioned in the table are displayed in the Appendix.

*Corresponding number of the stage in the scheme constructed by Van de Kaa (1997: 8, 2001: 302).

Sources: CBS STATLINE (2001 and 2002), Council of Europe (2001), CR POPIN (2001), CSU (1990–2001), CSU (1996a), CSU (2000a), FSU (1981–1989), Pavlík and Kučera (2001), Rychtaříková (1994) and UZIS (2001).

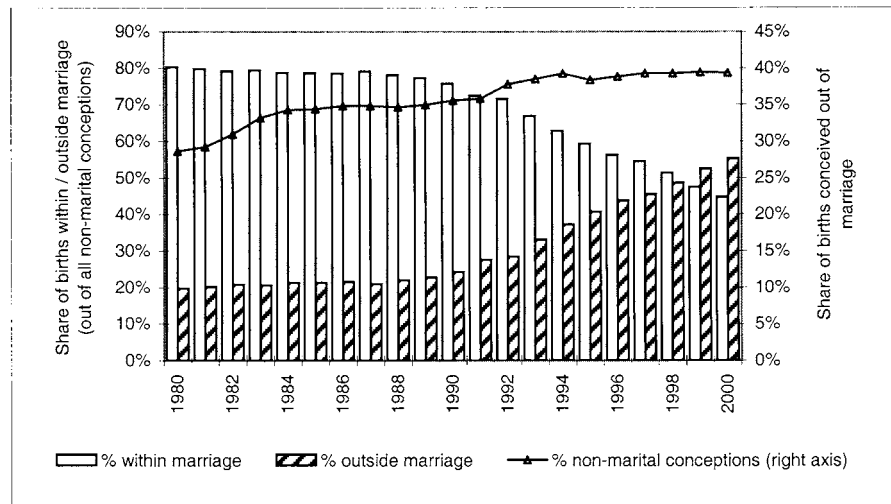


Figure 1. Non-marital conceptions resulting in live births, Czech Republic 1980–2000.
Source: Own calculations based on data from FSU (1981–1989) and CSU (1990–2001).

It is worth highlighting the major differences between the course of the transition in the Czech Republic on one side and the theoretical concept as well as the situation in the Netherlands on the other side:

- (a) Some initial changes characteristic of the transition, namely increasing divorce rates, pre-marital sexual relations, “shotgun marriages” as well as the availability of abortion, were prevalent in the Czech Republic already since the 1950s, that is 10–15 years earlier than in the Netherlands.
- (b) Highly uniform patterns of reproduction and family life gradually developed in the Czech Republic since the late 1950s and prevailed until the late 1980s, leading to a divergence from the ‘theoretically expected’ progression of the transition.
- (c) After the collapse of the Communist regime in the Czech Republic in 1989, all demographic changes commonly associated with the transition have progressed rapidly.

We do not interpret the events that took place before 1990 as a manifestation of the transition. It was only in the 1990s that the most typical features of the transition – postponement of marriage and childbearing, spread of cohabitation and a sharp decline in fertility and marriage rates – have been manifested. The change in the 1990s was so sudden that many ‘stages’ started and progressed almost simultaneously.

The overview illustrates that the country-specific context accounts for the progression of the transition which is considerably different from the ideal sequence outlined by Van de Kaa. It seems that in each country the change is indeed sequential and that particular stages create logical options for the next steps to be taken. However the choice made may strongly depend on country-specific factors.

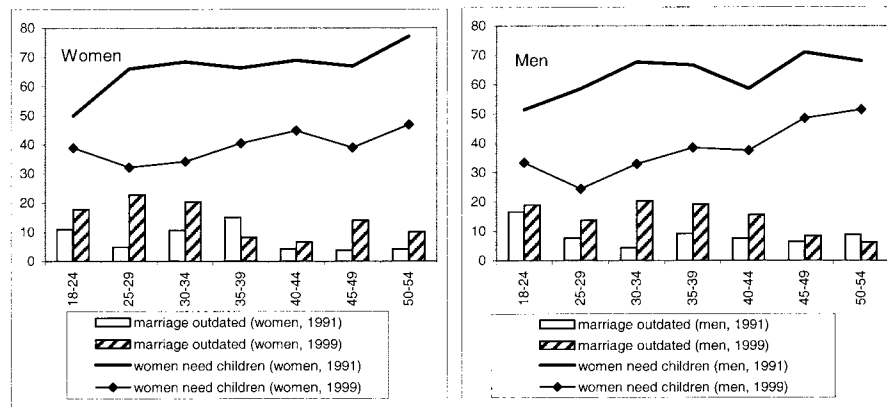


Figure 2. Percentage of respondents who agree with the following statements, by gender and age (Czech Republic, 1991 and 1999).

(a) Marriage is an outdated institution. (b) Woman has to have children in order to be fulfilled. Source: EVS (1991, 1999).

5.3. AN EXAMINATION OF THE “IDEATIONAL AND CULTURAL CHANGE” VIEW

After 1989, the highly secularised Czech society⁶ rapidly accepted the individualistic Western value system, which includes the legitimisation of cohabitation, voluntary childlessness, nonconformist sexual behaviour, abortion and euthanasia (Lesthaeghe, 1983: 412). While the right to abortion was supported and pre-marital sex was common already during the communist era, the 1990s saw the increasing popularity of consensual unions and the acceptance of voluntary childlessness and homosexuality.⁷ Broad media attention paid to sex contributed to the rapid spread of modern contraception, especially among adolescent women.

Rabušic (2001: 116) points out that over the 1990s the meaning of women's life ceased to be dominantly associated with children and motherhood. The decline in the prominent position of the family and childbearing as well as the shift in the perception of women's roles may be best illustrated by the EVS data. Two questions in this survey are of a particular interest: 1. “Do you think that a woman has to have children in order to be fulfilled?”, and 2. “Do you agree or disagree with the statement that marriage is an outdated institution?”. Although only a minority agreed that marriage is outdated, there has been a significant increase in the proportion of people sharing this view across virtually all age groups (Figure 2). The decline in the proportion of men and women who think that women need children in order to be fulfilled has been pronounced across all age groups. Hardly any gender difference was reflected in this view. We interpret this shift in two ways: on one side there is an increased recognition among men of the importance of women's non-family interests and activities and on the other side there is growing emphasis among women on activities outside the family.

Despite a difficult period of economic transformation, the Czech population displayed a modest growth in post-materialism, as conceptualised by Inglehart (Rabušic, 2000: 15). Higher tolerance and openness were direct results of a broader cultural and technological change enabled by the collapse of the totalitarian regime. The post-1989 changes brought a plurality of views and a boom in new forms of media; between 1989 and 1992 the number of regular newspapers and journals surged from 772 to 2,983 (CSU, 1993a: 315). Once severely limited, the new freedom to travel to the Western European countries introduced millions of Czechs to Western lifestyles. Furthermore, the pervasive spread of modern technologies – mobile phones, computers and the Internet – means that young people now belong to wider and long-distance social networks, which nurture a fast spread of new ideas and lifestyles.

To sum up, in accordance with the theory of the second demographic transition, demographic changes in the Czech Republic indeed occurred hand in hand with the ideational shifts. Although family and marriage continue to be highly valued by the majority of population, people across all age groups have become more tolerant towards alternative lifestyles and living arrangements and the increasing variability in the sequence and timing of major life transitions. At the same time they have actually embraced more diverse life courses.

6. Discussion: A Broader Framework of the Post-1989 Demographic Change

So far we neglected some important factors which shaped demographic change after 1989. But why, after all, was the political change in 1989 so important? The new opportunities opening up since 1990 – to travel, to study, to make a career, to run your own company, to switch jobs, to pursue various leisure activities – also started to compete with childbearing and family life. In this section we focus especially on the opportunities provided by higher education and the new labour market trends and on the emerging economic constraints.

6.1. NEW OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

The perception of education as a necessary ingredient for success in life has increased dramatically since 1990.⁸ The economic transformation, stimulating rapid growth of the service economy, has generated the need for a highly educated and flexible workforce. Investment in education constituted a possible means to reduce uncertainties on the labour market and the risk of unemployment. Broader opportunities for higher education have led to the extension of the period spent by young people in the pursuit of education. Furthermore, people with high education benefited most from the increasing income stratification; the wage level of university-educated employees rose from 134% of the average wage in 1988 to 165% in 1996 (Večerník, 1999: 119).

The changing character of employment has also contributed to the postponement and limitation of family formation and childbearing. The labour market of the 1990s has been characterised by a fundamental transformation of occupational structure, an expansion of the private sector, higher competitiveness, a growing demand for highly qualified workers, and also by an increasing demand for specialised education. The paths towards success and social mobility based on knowledge, skills, performance and luck have been re-established (Rabušic, 2001: 113) and thus created a plethora of new opportunities for ambitious and educated young people. According to the EVS survey, young people have increasingly regarded a job as the best way for a woman to be independent, which points to the growing emphasis put on career among them. The female labour force participation, almost universal before 1990, has declined only slightly. Women still make up around 45% of the workforce and, as opposed to the situation in Western Europe, a large majority of employed women work full-time. Especially among women with high education, the opportunity costs of childbearing have surged: the relative costs of childcare and child-rearing have become higher and the probability of losing a well-paid job during the maternity leave has sharply increased.

6.2. ECONOMIC CRISIS OR COMMON CONSTRAINTS?

Some Czech demographers consider the worsening economic conditions to be the major cause of recent demographic changes. However, despite the economic decline experienced in the period 1990–1993, the Czech economy has recovered relatively well after the shocks caused by the implementation of market economy, and the levels of real GDP as well as real wages have exceeded the pre-transition levels (1989) in 2000. 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.⁹ A persistent problem, the low availability of inexpensive housing, was only one out of many causes behind the postponement of marriage among young people.¹⁰

As a result of the labour market transformation, unemployment and the tendency towards unstable forms of employment have emerged as new phenomena. Even though unemployment remained relatively low, some people were particularly affected: younger women up to age 35, unskilled people and young persons below age 20.¹¹ In a more competitive environment, where more emphasis is put on productivity and flexibility, the combination of paid work and childcare has become increasingly difficult. Despite quite favourable legislation concerning maternal leave and unpaid parental leave,¹² women are frequently discriminated in the labour market. Questions concerning family status and family plans are standard features of job interviews and the employers often refuse to employ young women due to the inability to fire them during the period of parental leave (Kuchařová and Zamykalová, 2000).

The constraints discussed above are found in various forms in other European countries. For example Castiglioni and Dalla Zuanna (1994: 136) point out the difficult housing situation in Italy; Baizán et al. (2001: 28) regard the high risks of unemployment as the driving force of the delayed transition to adulthood in Spain. The globalised economy brings almost inevitably the demand for job flexibility, and as a result, growing uncertainty and declining ability among people to foresee the long-term consequences of their current decisions.

7. Conclusion

The 1990s represent a unique period which witnessed a dramatic transformation of the demographic landscape in the Czech Republic that left a clear imprint on the behaviour of birth cohorts growing up in the beginning of the 1990s, particularly those born in the period 1973–1977. We interpret the establishment of democracy, which created space for the development of civil society and individual freedom as the first and decisive step in the chain of further events that influenced demographic behaviour of the Czech population, such as the “contraceptive revolution”, shifts in values, increasing emphasis on education, and also the emergence of new economic problems. Despite some ambiguity, the concept of the second demographic transition provides a suitable framework for understanding the profound demographic changes in the Czech Republic. Examining three distinctive conceptualisations of the transition, we found that two of them fitted the Czech situation well: the view of the transition as a progression of mutually interrelated changes and a broader view, which stressed the importance of underlying ideational change. Judging the progression of characteristic demographic changes only, the onset of the transition in the Czech Republic is clearly located in the first half of the 1990s, lagging two decades behind the Netherlands. All the major features of the transition have taken place in the Czech Republic over the 1990s. A pronounced delay in childbearing and marriage indicates that the postponement shift from relatively early to relatively late timing of the life transitions may be the key element of the second demographic transition. A comparison of the Czech Republic and the Netherlands supports to a certain degree the notion of a gradual convergence in demographic trends, which generally seems to be the most controversial issue of the concept of the second demographic transition. Demographic shifts occurred hand in hand with a growing openness of Czech society, an increasing tolerance towards non-traditional living arrangements, a gradual shift towards post-materialism, but also increasing individualism and consumerism.

The progression of the second demographic transition in the Czech Republic, however, differed significantly from the generalised scheme of stages outlined by Van de Kaa in 1997. Without doubt, the transition proceeded sequentially and various stages followed each other in a logical fashion, creating space for the subsequent changes to occur. However, the logic of the process is too strongly determined by the country-specific historical and institutional context.

Some scholars emphasised the importance of the economic crisis factors and used them to oppose the “second demographic transition view”. The spread of cohabitation, non-marital childbearing, societal acceptance of homosexuality or legitimisation of childlessness indicate that it is not a temporary demographic crisis which would ultimately fade away as soon as the economic conditions improve, but a deep behavioural transformation that has been taking place in the Czech Republic over the 1990s. The new demographic trends have progressed fast irrespective of the economic ups and downs of the last decade. Moreover, as Lesthaeghe and Surkyn pointed out (1988: 36), the cultural, political and economic factors do not operate exclusively; they are interwoven and mutually reinforcing. Although neglected in the concept of the second demographic transition, increasing economic uncertainty in the early adult years has contributed to the postponement of childbearing and destandardization of the life course among young adults in Western and particularly Southern Europe.

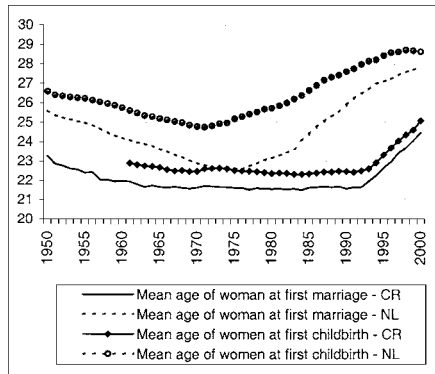
Broader economic and social change, such as the establishment of market economy, democratic pluralism, the shift towards the post-industrial service economy and the increasing pursuit of higher education among young people has brought the Czech society much closer to Western European societies. The evidence presented in this paper provides support for the view that the second demographic transition is spreading behind the eastern borders of the fallen Iron Curtain. Although the concept is complex and a bit fuzzy, it would nevertheless have provided a sound and unbeatable prediction of the demographic shifts in the Czech Republic, if someone had applied it shortly after the collapse of the totalitarian regime in 1989.

Acknowledgements

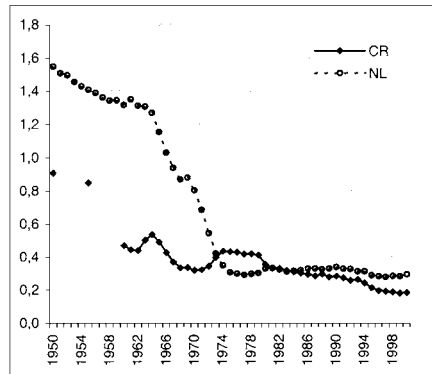
An earlier version of this paper has been presented at the Euresco conference “The Second Demographic Transition in Europe” in Bad Herrenalb, Germany (23–28 June 2001). We would like to thank the conference participants for their comments. We are also thankful to Frans Willekens, Leo van Wissen and Jun Tsutsumi for their comments on the earlier drafts. We appreciate the comments from two anonymous referees who contributed valuable suggestions on the previous draft.

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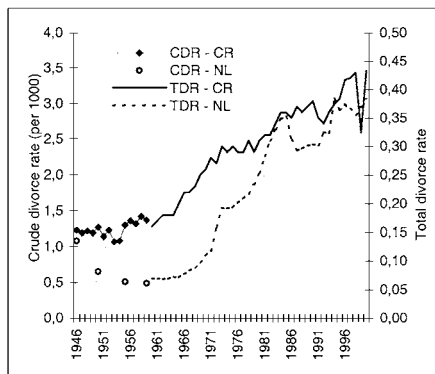
The research of Tomáš Sobotka was realised under the framework of the project “Towards a dynamic scenario model of economic determinants of European population development”, funded by the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO), project number A 510-03-901.



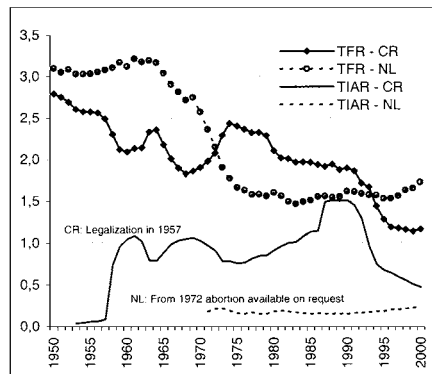
(a) Mean age of women at first marriage and at first birth.



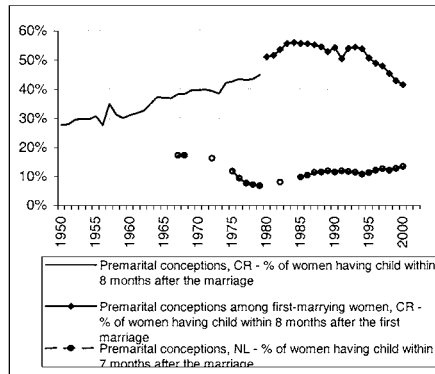
(b) Total fertility rate of birth order 3 and higher.



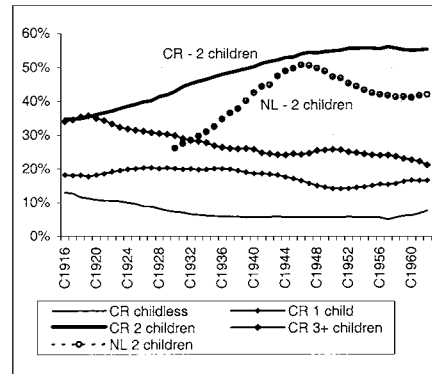
(c) Crude divorce rate (CDR, 1946-59) and total divorce rate (TDR, 1960-2000).



(d) Total fertility rate (TFR) and total induced abortion rate (TIAR).



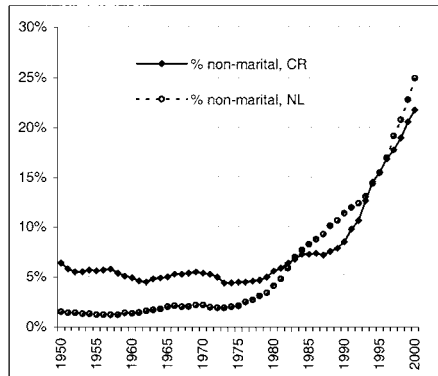
(e) Share of pre-marital conceptions (%).



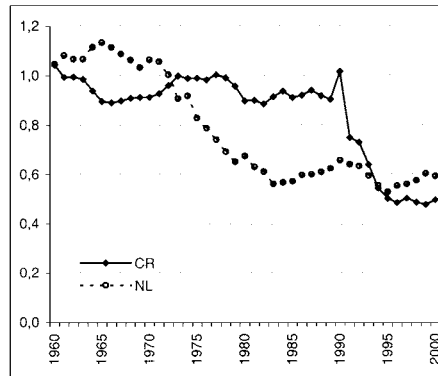
(f) Distribution of women born between 1916 and 1962 by the ultimate number of children.

Appendix 1. Selected indicators of demographic changes related to the second demographic transition in the Czech Republic (CR) and the Netherlands (NL), 1950–2000.

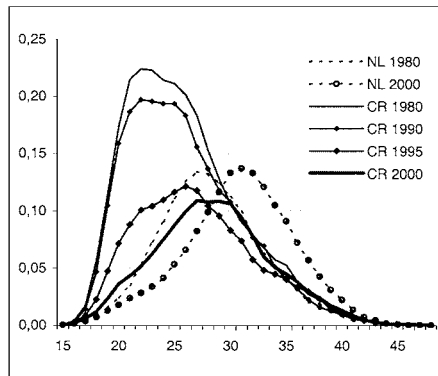
Sources: Council of Europe (2000), FSU (1981–1989), CSU (1990–2001), FFS (1997), Pavlík and Kučera (2001), CBS STATLINE (2001–2002), CR POPIN and own calculations based on these data sources.



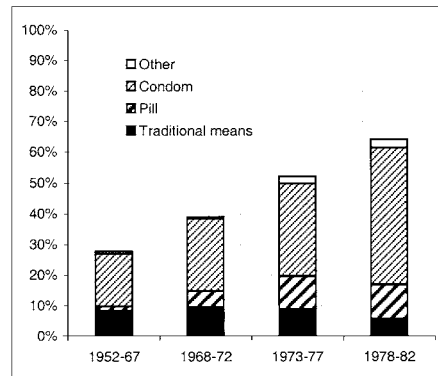
(g) Proportion of extra-marital births (%).



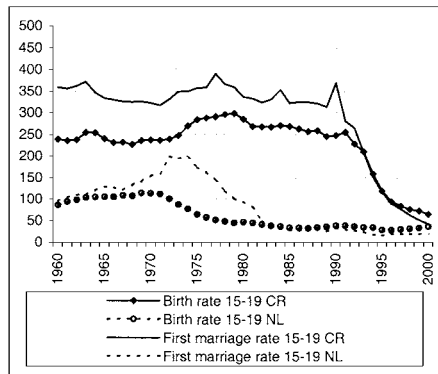
(h) Total first marriage rates (1960-2000).



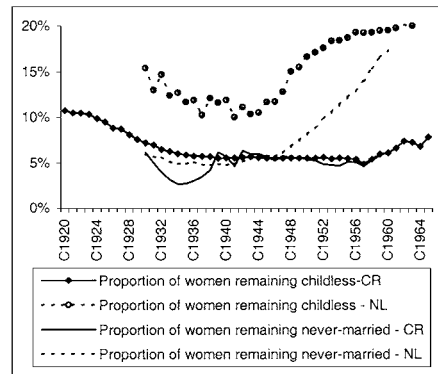
(i) Probability of having first child for childless women by age, (selected years).



(j) Contraceptive use at first sexual intercourse; birth cohorts of Czech women (FFS 1997).



(k) Cumulative birth rate and first-marriage rate (per 1000), women aged 15-19 years, 1960-2000.



(l) Lifetime childlessness and proportion of never-married women by birth cohorts.

Appendix I. Continued.

Notes

¹ We do not address the question of whether the second demographic transition is a theory, or just a concept, framework or a set of ideas. We use these terms interchangeably.

² Such distinct conceptualisations evolved from the widespread and rather loose use of the term. Neither Lesthaeghe nor Van de Kaa has ever dealt with the second demographic transition without pointing out the underlying ideational and cultural factors.

³ The delay in childbearing has become so pervasive in European societies that Kohler et al. (2002: 664) proposed their notion of the “postponement transition” toward a late-childbearing regime, which they perceive as a distinct (third) transition, following the second demographic transition.

⁴ The adjustment of the period fertility rates using the method proposed by Bongaarts and Feeney (1998) for 1990 and 1996–1998 indicates that about two-thirds of the decline in the total fertility rate during this period (TFR was 1.89 in 1990 and 1.17 in 1996–1998) may be attributed to the postponement of births, while only one-third to the “real” reduction in fertility level.

⁵ Since the survey took part in the last months of 1997 and we followed the life transitions of women up to age 23, our selection of the birth cohorts undergoing the most profound changes (1973 and younger) has been restricted to the 1973 and a large part of the 1974 birth cohorts, resulting in a fairly small sample size of 134 women.

⁶ In the 2001 Population Census, only 31.7% of people declared that they belong to a religious denomination (43.9% in 1991), while 58.3% stated that they are without religious affiliation (39.9% in 1991). Regular attendance at religious services, reflecting the institutionalised religiosity, is generally low: 11.7% attended religious services at least once a month in 1999 – the same proportion as in 1991 (EVS data, see Lužný and Navrátilová, 2001).

⁷ The de-stigmatisation of homosexuality is well illustrated by the EVS surveys. In 1991, 48% of women and 53% of men claimed they would not like to have homosexuals as neighbours. This proportion dropped to 17% and 22%, respectively, in 1999.

⁸ Perception that education is important for success in life has doubled between 1992 and 1997, from 30.5% to 60.9% (Čerych et al., 1999).

⁹ The ISSP surveys carried out in 1994 and 1996 did not support the hypothesis of rapidly declining living standards in the families of young people (Kuchařová and Petrová, 1997: 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 a gradually changing new complex approach to life” (ibid.: 189).

¹⁰ According to the survey carried out in 1997 among recently married couples, only 7% of the respondents stated that the housing shortage had a “crucial influence” on the timing of their marriage and 15% viewed the influence of housing shortage as “minor” (Kostelecký, 1997: 4).

¹¹ In 1998, when the unemployment rate surged to 7.3%, 16.7% of those with only basic education were unemployed. The youth (age 15 to 24) unemployment rate has been quite low until 1997; it then reached 17.4% in 1999, which is comparable to most West European countries (CSU, 1999a).

¹² Maternal leave lasts 28 weeks (37 weeks for unmarried mothers or in the case of multiple births). The leave can be extended with unpaid parental leave, which has been available to fathers since 2001. Parental leave lasts up to 3 years; during this period the employer is obliged to accept the parent back at his or her job. Parents may stay home for another year (“prolonged parental leave”), but without any guarantee of a job on their return.

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