
THE POPULATION OF CZECHIA AND SLOVAKIA IN 1918–1945

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Abstract

During the interwar period the development of the population in Czechoslovakia reflected long-term reproductive trends (decreasing fertility and mortality) and the effects of contemporary political and economic developments. The populations of Czechia and Slovakia followed more or less similar paths of development, the difference being that fertility in Czechia tended to be lower than in Slovakia and the mortality conditions in Czechia were also better.

Keywords: Czechia, Slovakia, population development, population structure, 20th century

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the development of European populations during the first half of the 20th century it is possible to distinguish features that reflect both long-term tendencies in population reproduction over time (the completion of the first demographic transition) and the effects of specific political and economic conditions – i.e. the two world wars and changing economic cycles. In Czechoslovakia an important role in population development was also played by the heterogeneity of the country. Although the new state of Czechoslovakia was formed entirely from territory that was formerly a part of the Austro–Hungarian Empire, until 1918 Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia belonged to the Cisleithanian (i.e. Austrian) region of the Empire, in which they were autonomous administrative units, while Slovakia was newly delimited from the northern part of Hungary. In September 1919 Carpathian Ruthenia, territory which had previously been part

of Hungary, also became part of the state, but since it ceased to be a part of Czechoslovakia from March 1939, the overview of population development in Czechoslovakia presented below covers only the Czech lands³⁾ and Slovakia.⁴⁾

Ever since the early modern era, Czechia had belonged more to the western part of Central Europe. It was one of the most developed regions within former Austria-Hungary and the structure of its domestic economy reflected this, as less than half the population was dependent on agriculture for their livelihood and there was already a developed system of secondary and higher education. Slovakia, by contrast, had more features in common with Eastern Europe, in terms of the level and composition of the economy, but also with respect to family structure and the character of population reproduction. It was still an agrarian country, and its industry focused on processing ore and agricultural products. This was apparent from

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3) The Czech lands were made up of three parts - Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia; since 1993 the official name of the state is the Czech Republic or Czechia.

4) On the development of the population of Carpathian Ruthenia in the interwar period, see Šprocha – Tišliar, 2009a; Šprocha – Tišliar, 2009b.

the geographical distribution of the population: in 1921, 45% of the population in Czechia were already living in communities with more than 2,000 inhabitants, while in Slovakia the figure was 37% (despite the fact that some rural communities in Slovakia were numerically larger). In terms of family structure, in Czechia mean age at first marriage was slightly higher than in Slovakia. When J. Hajnal differentiated the European population by type of family behaviour, he drew a dividing line along the border between Moravia and Slovakia (*Hajnal*, 1965). At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, changes appeared in reproductive behaviour in both countries, as there were decreases in both the fertility and mortality rates. These processes began earlier in Czechia, and at the time the joint state was established Czech fertility and mortality was lower than in Slovakia.

The ethnic composition of the Czech lands and Slovakia was very heterogeneous: in both parts of the new state Czechs and Slovaks, the nationalities that spearheaded the movement to create the new state, made up two-thirds of the total population in Czechoslovakia, while one-third of the population in Czechia were Germans and one-third of the Slovak part were Hungarians. Neither Germans nor Hungarians agreed with the formation of the new state and tried to prevent it, and enduring conflicts between the different ethnic groups marked their subsequent co-existence within the new state.

Czechs and Germans tended to live in separate areas in Czechia, as did Slovaks and Hungarians in Slovakia, and each group maintained its own cultural traditions, and this reality had a fateful impact on the future development of the state. In Czechia the Czech population lived in inland areas, while the German population resided in the regions along the borders with Germany and Austria, where in some districts Germans made up as much as 98% of the population. The Hungarian minority in Slovakia was similarly settled within a compact area in Slovakia's southern border with Hungary stretching from Bratislava to Žitný ostrov and all the way to the border with Romania in Carpathian Ruthenia. This fostered a sense of mutual alienation between communities that grew into mutual antagonism and eventually into the rejection of a shared state. There were also other

ethnic groups in Czechoslovakia. There were Poles in part of Silesia and Ruthenians in eastern Slovakia. Jews, more a religious than an ethnic minority, lived in communities scattered around the country, tending to reside more in large towns in Czechia and in the countryside in Slovakia.

In September 1938 Czechoslovakia was forced to cede the border regions settled by Germans to Germany and the regions settled by Hungarians to Hungary. In March 1939 the remaining territory of Czech became the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia and came under the control of Germany, and what remained of Slovakia was declared the Slovak Republic, while the remainder of Carpathian Ruthenia was joined to Hungary. The joint state reformed in May 1945, but it came then to comprise only Czechia and Slovakia.

Population development during the interwar period has been of abiding interest to demographers, including demographers contemporary to the interwar period (e.g. *Boháč*, 1936; *Korčák*, 1947). Until 1992, as well as papers devoted either to Czechia (e.g. *Vávra*, 1962) or Slovakia (*Svetovň*, 1958), there were also studies that focused on the population of Czechoslovakia as a whole, most notably the work of *V. Srb* (e.g. 1968, 1978) and *M. Kučera* (1988). There was a move away from this approach after 1992, though studies still tend to include comparisons between the two now separate countries. For Czechia detailed summaries of population development in 1918–1945 can be found in studies by *M. Kučera* (*Kučera*, 1994; *Kučera*, 1998), *V. Srb* (*Srb*, 2004), and *Z. Pavlík* (*Pavlík – Rychtaříková – Šubrtová*, 1985), and *J. Musil's* contribution to *Dějiny obyvatelstva českých zemí* (History of the Population of the Czech Lands) is also very interesting (*Dějiny*, 1998). In recent years, population development in Slovakia has received extensive attention from *B. Šprocha* and *P. Tišliar*, who have written a number of studies on this subject (e.g. *Šprocha – Tišliar*, 2008a, 2008b, 2009c, 2012, 2014a, 2014b, 2016, 2017). For Slovakia there are detailed studies of population development analysed using modern demographic methods. They too include comparisons with development in other countries and often in particular with development in Czechia. And there are also books of maps that capture population development in the period of concern (e.g. *Láska – Pantoflíček*, 1935;

Tab. 1: Population of Czechia and Slovakia in 1918–1938¹⁾

| Date | Population (in thous.) | | Population density per 1 km ² | |
|------------|------------------------|----------|--|----------|
| | Czechia | Slovakia | Czechia | Slovakia |
| 31.12.1910 | 10,079 | 2,917 | 128 | 60 |
| 28.10.1918 | 9,987 | 2,968 | 127 | 61 |
| 15.02.1921 | 10,010 | 2,994 | 127 | 61 |
| 01.12.1930 | 10,674 | 3,324 | 135 | 68 |
| 30.09.1938 | 10,905 | 3,580 | 138 | 73 |

Note: *) Calculated in relation to the area of territory today.

Source: Federální statistický úřad, 1982.

Purš, 1965; Semotanová et al., 2016; Ouředníček – Jichová – Pospíšilová, 2017; Tišliar et al. 2017).

Somewhat less is known about the situation in 1938–1945. The reason for this is the problem with data availability, as demographic statistics on the ceded border regions were processed outside the territory of Czechia and Slovakia, and not in one place but in the different territories to which one or the other region had been annexed. Staff at the Czech statistical office in Prague continued to maintain data for the territory of the Protectorate and the Slovak statistical office in Bratislava did the same for the territory of the Slovak Republic, and immediately after the war the two institutions tried to estimate population development in the occupied border regions. These estimates continue to be used up to now. The text below is essentially a summary of findings published, primarily, in M. Kučera (1994) and V. Srb (2004) for Czechia and B. Šprocha and P. Tišliar for Slovakia (e.g. Šprocha – Tišliar, 2016). The basic data presented below are drawn from statistical publications (the population and housing censuses, statistical yearbooks, and demographic handbooks).

2. THE POPULATION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA IN 1918–1937

Czechoslovakia was declared an independent state on 28 October 1918. At that time, however, several hundred thousand of its men were far from home in the armies of the countries engaged in the First World War, which had not yet ended by the date of the country's founding, or they were in the Czechoslovak legions or in camps

for prisoners of war. If the size of the population on the territory of Czechoslovakia (without Carpathian Ruthenia) is retrospectively estimated as 12,955,000 (cf. Tab. 1) back to the date the new state was founded, this number is a fictitious one that includes these men and other persons temporarily absent from the territory. Nevertheless, for Czechia this figure was 70,000 fewer people than the number recorded during the census in 1910 (though on smaller territory), and, conversely, 51,000 more than the number recorded in Slovakia. In the population census carried out in the spring of 1921, 23,000 more people were counted in Czechia and 26,000 more in Slovakia.⁵⁾ Estimates indicate that by the end of September 1938 the population was 14,485,000 inhabitants. The number of inhabitants thus grew between 1918 and 1938 by 1.5 million people, i.e. by 12%, but the increase was 9% in Czechia and 21% in Slovakia. Slovakia also then came to account for an increasing share of the total population, a share that by 1938 had grown to 25%.

2.1 Population structure

The negative impacts of the events of the war on the age-sex structure of the population were already apparent in data from the 1921 population census. The traditionally cited figure for the number of Czechoslovak lives lost to the 1914–1918 war is 420,000 men (300,000 from Czechia and 120,000 from Slovakia), to which figure are added a further 80,000 people who died on top of this as a result of the worsening of the living conditions of ordinary citizens during the war years (60,000 of whom were in Czechia) (Federální statistický úřad, 1982).

5) In Slovakia an irregular population census was already held in 1919 (Tišliar, 2007). Because similar data are lacking for Czechia, below we present only the results of the population census in 1921.

There was a substantial decrease in the masculinity index, especially around middle age; the share of men in Slovakia was smaller than the share in Czechia, which had to do with the high rate of emigration among Slovak men, who had been leaving to find work abroad since the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. The deformation of the age structure was also visible in the number of births in 1915–1919. Because men were away from their families, approximately 550,000 fewer children were born in Czechia than had been in previous

years and 190,000 fewer children were born in Slovakia (*Federální statistický úřad*, 1982). This single slump in the number of births was reflected over time in older and older age groups and in 1938 it was observed among people aged 19–23 years. This fact did not have a very significant impact on the marriage and fertility rates in the Czech lands, but it began to be reflected in the number of marriages and the number of children born in Slovakia, where the mean age at which people marriage and the age of women at first childbirth were lower.

Tab. 2: Age-sex structure of the population in Czechia and Slovakia (%) and the masculinity ratio (ima) according to data from the population census in 1910, 1921, 1930 and on 1 July 1937

| Age | 1910 | | | 1921 | | | 1930 | | | 1937 | | |
|-----------------|-------|---------|---------|-------|---------|---------|-------|---------|---------|-------|---------|---------|
| | Males | Females | Ima | Males | Females | Ima | Males | Females | Ima | Males | Females | Ima |
| Czechia | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 0–14 | 34.9 | 33.0 | 1,005.5 | 29.2 | 26.5 | 1,015.6 | 24.8 | 22.8 | 1,023.8 | 24.4 | 22.5 | 1,025.7 |
| 15–24 | 17.6 | 17.5 | 955.2 | 20.7 | 20.0 | 955.6 | 19.9 | 18.5 | 1,011.9 | 15.1 | 14.0 | 1,020.8 |
| 25–34 | 14.3 | 14.1 | 966.6 | 14.3 | 15.5 | 849.0 | 18.0 | 17.6 | 962.8 | 19.3 | 18.2 | 1,003.7 |
| 35–49 | 17.1 | 16.9 | 960.5 | 17.9 | 18.4 | 895.0 | 17.8 | 19.5 | 859.3 | 20.6 | 21.9 | 887.7 |
| 50–64 | 11.0 | 12.2 | 863.0 | 12.4 | 12.9 | 888.5 | 13.1 | 14.0 | 880.4 | 13.4 | 15.0 | 847.2 |
| 65+ | 5.1 | 6.3 | 763.4 | 5.5 | 6.6 | 766.8 | 6.3 | 7.5 | 787.0 | 7.1 | 8.4 | 800.5 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 951.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 922.7 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 940.7 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 944.9 |
| Slovakia | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 0–14 | 39.3 | 36.4 | 1,005.6 | 33.7 | 31.6 | 1,010.2 | 33.2 | 30.6 | 1,019.4 | 33.0 | 30.7 | 1,025.9 |
| 15–24 | 17.6 | 17.3 | 949.9 | 22.0 | 20.7 | 1,005.8 | 20.1 | 18.9 | 1,001.2 | 16.9 | 16.0 | 1,021.2 |
| 25–34 | 11.9 | 12.7 | 868.0 | 13.2 | 13.7 | 907.2 | 15.9 | 16.3 | 913.5 | 17.3 | 16.8 | 1,007.6 |
| 35–49 | 10.5 | 11.5 | 854.5 | 9.8 | 11.1 | 841.8 | 10.4 | 11.3 | 864.8 | 12.7 | 13.4 | 918.4 |
| 50–64 | 13.0 | 13.5 | 892.6 | 12.8 | 13.6 | 892.7 | 11.5 | 12.8 | 842.2 | 11.2 | 13.0 | 858.5 |
| 65+ | 7.8 | 8.5 | 853.5 | 8.2 | 9.1 | 861.7 | 8.8 | 9.9 | 841.1 | 8.8 | 10.1 | 827.3 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 932.9 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 946.9 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 940.7 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 952.1 |

Source: Federální statistický úřad, 1982; Český statistický úřad, 1981; authors' calculations.

Tab. 3: Characteristics of the age structure of Czechia and Slovakia in 1910–1937

| Year | Share of children 0–14 (%) | | Dependency ratios | | | |
|------|----------------------------|----------|---------------------------|----------|---------------------------------------|----------|
| | | | 65+/(0–14) ⁽¹⁾ | | (0–14 and 65+)/(15–64) ⁽²⁾ | |
| | Czechia | Slovakia | Czechia | Slovakia | Czechia | Slovakia |
| 1910 | 33.9 | 37.8 | 16.8 | 21.7 | 65.6 | 85.1 |
| 1921 | 27.8 | 32.6 | 21.7 | 26.5 | 51.1 | 70.6 |
| 1930 | 23.8 | 31.9 | 29.1 | 29.3 | 44.4 | 70.3 |
| 1937 | 23.4 | 29.8 | 33.1 | 31.8 | 45.3 | 66.9 |

Note: *) Age Preference Rate: P_{65+}/P_{0-14}

**) Age Dependence Rate: $(P_{0-14} + P_{65+})/P_{15-64}$

Source: Federální statistický úřad, 1982.

Other differences between the two populations, however, can also be seen in the age structure: the share of children under the age 15 was smaller in Czechia, which reflected the lower rate of fertility there already in the early 20th century, and Czechia also had a larger share of people of middle age, especially middle-aged men. On the whole the age structure of the population in Slovakia was more like a progressive type of young population than the population in Czechia, which was already showing signs of being in the early stage of the process of demographic ageing from the bottom of the age pyramid. This process intensified towards the close of the 1930s in connection with a deep decrease in the number of children born during the years of the economic crisis.

2.2 Structure of the population by ethnicity, religion, and selected socioeconomic characteristics

Czechoslovakia was an ethnically heterogeneous state from the time it was founded. In Czechia, Czecho-Slovaks⁶⁾ made up approximately two-thirds of the population (67.7% in 1921), Germans almost one-third (30% in 1921), and members of other ethnic groups made up only

a small portion; 1% of the population were Poles, there were 26,000 Jews, and members of other ethnic groups amounted to just 30,000 people. In Slovakia, Slovaks formed an approximately two-thirds majority (65% in 1921), and Hungarians accounted for one-fifth of the population, but their share was decreasing. Less than 5% of the population in Slovakia were ethnic Germans and less than 3% were of Ruthenians (or Ukrainians). Czechs made up 2% of the population in Slovakia in 1921. The relations between members of individual ethnic groups, however, were not always amiable; the fact that the criterion used to determine nationality in the census was mother tongue instead of 'usual language', which had been used in Austrian censuses in the past, sparked displeasure among Germans in Czechia; they blamed this change for the decrease in the share of Germans in the country by 4.1 percentage points since 1910. In Slovakia the pre-war censuses officially asked about mother tongue, but in practice what they were asking about was really usual language (for details, see *Šprocha – Tišliar*, 2016: 156); probably for the same reason there was a dramatic decrease in the share of Hungarians in some regions in 1921 compared to the pre-war figures.

Tab. 4: Structure of the population of Czechia and Slovakia by ethnicity in 1921 and 1930 (%)

| Ethnicity | Czechia | | Slovakia | |
|---------------------------------------|---------|-------|----------|-------|
| | 1921 | 1930 | 1921 | 1930 |
| Czech | 67.5 | 68.4 | 2.4 | 3.7 |
| Slovak | 0.2 | 0.4 | 65.1 | 67.7 |
| German | 30.6 | 29.5 | 4.8 | 4.7 |
| Ukrainian and Ruthenian ⁷⁾ | 0.1 | 0.2 | 3.0 | 2.9 |
| Polish | 1.0 | 0.9 | 0.2 | 0.2 |
| Hungarian | 0.1 | 0.1 | 21.7 | 17.6 |
| Other and unknown | 0.5 | 0.4 | 2.8 | 3.2 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

Note: Data for members of the Czechoslovak state.

^{*)} In 1921 this category included Russians, Ukrainians, and Carpathorussians, in 1930 Russians and Ukrainians.

Source: Státní úřad statistický, 1934.

6) In the interwar period the official ethnicity was for political reasons defined as Czechoslovakian, which composed of two communities – Czech and Slovak, based on mother tongue. The population censuses in 1921 and 1930 also asked respondents about their mother tongue, but there was a minor methodological difference in the data collection. The definitive results of the population census were published for the Czechoslovak nationality; in the Introduction to the official statistical publication with data sources from the population census in 1930, which was written by Jaromír Korčák, data are presented for both nationalities separately for Czechia and Slovakia. These are used in Table 4.

Over the next twenty years the share of people of Czech and Slovak nationality increased slightly, while, by contrast, the numbers of Hungarians, Poles, and Germans decreased. This occurred as a result of real migration flows (e.g. the migration of entire families of ethnic Hungarian (public) officials out of Slovakia after Czechoslovakia was declared a state and after Slovak was declared the official administrative language, cf. Šprocha – Tišliar, 2012; and the re-emigration of Czechs and Slovaks out of Austria and Hungary (back to Czechoslovakia), but a role may also have been played by the way in which questions about nationality in the census were redefined or the possibility that some people grouped themselves with one of the ‘majority’ nationalities. The share of Slovaks in Slovakia may also have grown as a result of the higher fertility rate among ethnic Slovaks compared to Hungarians.

The newly formed state encompassed people of different religious denominations, but Roman Catholics dominated in both the Czech lands and Slovakia. In 1910, 95% of the population in Czechia were Catholics (Srb, 2004), while in Slovakia the figure was 70% (Šprocha – Tišliar, 2012). In 1910 there was almost no one who had no religious affiliation (e.g. in Czechia only 0.1% of people surveyed in the census described themselves as having no religious affiliation). The situation had changed slightly by 1921, as the number of people with no religious affiliation increased, probably under the influence of political parties that rejected religion

in their party programmes (socialists and communists), and this increase was most pronounced in Bohemia, where it reached almost 10% of the population, while in Moravia and Silesia it was less than 2%; no such trend was observed in Slovakia. The influence of the Czechoslovak (Hussite) Church, founded in 1920, was largely limited to within the Czechia, but by 1921 the census recorded more than half a million members of this church. Most of the people recorded as belonging to one of the traditional evangelical churches (the Augsburg and Helvetic faiths) were in Slovakia, where they made up one-eighth of the population and were found among both Slovaks and Hungarians. Approximately 270,000 people in the 1921 census indicated that they were Jews, and the figures were approximately the same in the Czech lands and Slovakia; given the smaller population size in Slovakia, however, there they made up more than 4% of the total population.

During the interwar period censuses only surveyed the *ability to read and to write*. However, this was one of the indicators that significantly differentiated between Czechia and Slovakia. While literacy was almost universal in the Czech lands from the end of the 19th century (in 1921 there were only 248,000 illiterate people among the population over the age of 5, i.e. 2.5%, and most of these people older residents in the mountain areas of eastern Moravia), in Slovakia 15% of the population over the age of 5 did not know how read or write. Thanks to intensive efforts to improve the overall cultural level of the population in Slovakia

Tab. 5: Structure of the population of Czechia and Slovakia by religion in 1921 and 1930 (%)

| Religion ^{*)} | Czechia | | Slovakia | |
|---------------------------|---------|-------|----------|-------|
| | 1921 | 1930 | 1921 | 1930 |
| Roman Catholic | 82.0 | 78.5 | 70.9 | 71.7 |
| Czechoslovak (Hussite) | 0.1 | 7.3 | 0.1 | 0.4 |
| Evangelical | 5.2 | 4.7 | 17.7 | 16.4 |
| Jewish | 4.0 | 1.1 | 4.5 | 4.1 |
| Greek Catholic | 1.2 | 0.0 | 6.5 | 6.4 |
| Other | 0.3 | 0.6 | 0.1 | 0.4 |
| No affiliation or unknown | 7.2 | 7.8 | 0.2 | 0.5 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

Note: *) Affiliation with the given Church.

Source: Státní úřad statistický, 1934.

and the fact that illiteracy was mainly observed among older people, by 1930 the share of illiterate people in Slovakia had decreased to 7%. Most of those who remained illiterate were Roma, among whom only 30% of men and 24% of women over the age of 10 knew how to read and write.

The number and shares of men and women who after completing their compulsory years of education (up to the age of 15) continued on to higher levels of education gradually increased in the younger age groups. However, out of the total population only around 5–7 % of people in the Czech lands went on to obtain a higher education, with more men than women doing so (Kučera, 1994), while in Slovakia the share was much smaller.

The population structure by sector of economic activity also differed between Czechia and Slovakia, though the significance of the non-agricultural sectors was growing significantly in both. Since the 19th century Czechia had witnessed the rise of a range of different types of industrial production and was home to heavy and engineering industries and to a number of light-industry sectors, mainly textile, clothing, and food production. In 1921 the share of people working in agriculture out of the working population was less than 30% and by 1930 it had decreased to 27%. In these years 41% and 38% of the populations, respectively, worked in industry or crafts, while 29% and 35%, respectively, were engaged in other occupations (Kučera, 1994). The growing importance of non-agricultural sectors was reflected

in the population's social composition, in which non-agricultural workers formed the largest group, with more than one-half of the population belonging to this group by 1930. The share of self-employed persons at the same time rapidly decreased, both in agriculture (decreasing numbers of independent smallhold farmers) and in crafts, which was a sign of the increasing concentration of agricultural and industrial production in the hands of larger enterprises.

The situation was different in Slovakia, where around 17% of the population was dependent on industry and 61% on agriculture for their living (Šprocha – Tišliar, 2009c). As well, local agricultural production was less developed, and work productivity and yields were also low. Slovakia was still characterised by agrarian overpopulation. It was dominated by small-scale farming, and agricultural enterprises up to 5ha in size accounted for more than 68% of the total number of agricultural farms (Šprocha – Tišliar, 2009c). Industrial production in Slovakia suffered more from the collapse of Austria-Hungary than it did in Czechia because it was more exposed to Czech competition and lost the opportunity to export to a large market, and it was hit hard by the economic crisis in 1921 and after 1930. For this reason decreases or stagnation were observed mainly in the number of people working in the mining, metal-working, and engineering sectors. The non-manufacturing sectors (commerce and services) were also major employers. The social category of workers and day labourers was largest in Slovakia, where almost

Tab. 6: Population by sector of employment in the national economy in Czechia and Slovakia according to data from the population census in 1921 and 1930 (%)

| Sector | Czechia | | Slovakia | |
|--------------------------------------|---------|-------|----------|-------|
| | 1921 | 1930 | 1921 | 1930 |
| Agriculture, forestry, fisheries | 29.6 | 26.9 | 65.1 | 64.4 |
| Industry and trades | 38.0 | 37.5 | 19.7 | 18.3 |
| Commerce, finance, insurance | 5.9 | 7.9 | 4.1 | 5.3 |
| Transportation | 3.8 | 4.0 | 3.5 | 3.4 |
| Public services, liberal professions | 6.2 | 6.2 | 4.1 | 4.8 |
| Other professions and unknown | 16.5 | 17.5 | 3.6 | 3.8 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

Source: Federální statistický úřad, 1982.

one-half of the working population performed these occupations. This category was also the one affected most by unemployment during the economic crisis in the 1930s.

During the economic crisis unemployment grew in Czechia and Slovakia. The number of unemployed rose sharply in 1930, and the largest unemployment figures were recorded in February 1933, when there were 920,000 unemployed people in Czechoslovakia as a whole. Unemployment started to decrease in the autumn of 1937 in connection with the growth in arms production (Kučera, 1994).

The results of the 1930 census reveal that there were also some differences in *household structure*. The average number of people per household was smaller in Czechia and the main reason for this was that Czechia had long had a lower fertility rate than Slovakia. There was also a larger share of one-family households than in Slovakia and a larger share of households made up of single individuals, although the share of the latter in both countries was small, with just 8% in the Czech lands and 6% in Slovakia. Three-generation households were found in both countries in rural areas, in most cases there were families with children living with grandparents, fewer unmarried adults living with their parents and grandparents.⁷⁾ The average household size was as a result relatively large (3.8 people in the Czech lands and 4.4 in Slovakia).

With respect to the structure of the population by *marital status*, one of the direct consequences of the First

World War was the smaller share of married women in both Czechia and Slovakia, especially among women up to the age of 60. While the share of married women in younger age groups had risen again by 1930, it remained low among middle-aged women. With the rise in the divorce rate, the number of people who were divorced or separated grew mainly in Czechia, but for the time being the increase was slight (in 1930 the census recorded only 35,000 men and 46,000 women who were divorced or separated). In Slovakia marriages ended less often in divorce, and in 1930 only 3,000 men and 6,000 women there were divorced or separated, a negligible number in relation to the population as a whole.

The events of the First World War also resulted in an increase in the number and share of widows in the population in both Czechia and Slovakia. The increase from 1910 to 1921 was observed mainly among middle-aged women. In the years that followed, however, improved mortality conditions led to a slight decrease in the share of widows and widowers in both populations.

Czechia long had a larger share of never married people. In 1921, 6% of men and 10% of women aged 50–54 were single, while in Slovakia the figure was just 4% for men and women. By 1921 the effects of the First World War were evident in the age structure by marital status. The shares of singles by age differed between Czechia and Slovakia because of differences in marriage behaviour, more people tended to get married in Slovakia than in Czechia.

Tab. 7: Share of married males and females by age in Czechia and Slovakia in 1910, 1921 and 1930

| Age | Czechia | | | | | | Slovakia | | | |
|---------------------|---------|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------|----------|---------|-------|---------|
| | 1910 | | 1921 | | 1930 | | 1921 | | 1930 | |
| | Males | Females | Males | Females | Males | Females | Males | Females | Males | Females |
| 15–24 | 3.0 | 15.1 | 4.9 | 13.2 | 5.3 | 18.7 | 13.3 | 29.9 | 8.6 | 28.6 |
| 25–34 | 64.5 | 72.6 | 57.4 | 62.8 | 65.1 | 70.2 | 68.5 | 73.6 | 73.6 | 78.1 |
| 35–49 | 87.9 | 79.2 | 86.9 | 75.1 | 88.6 | 74.8 | 89.8 | 77.6 | 90.4 | 76.8 |
| 50–64 | 85.1 | 62.0 | 84.1 | 60.9 | 86.1 | 61.5 | 87.2 | 61.6 | 87.3 | 61.9 |
| 65+ | 63.8 | 28.9 | 63.4 | 29.1 | 64.4 | 30.4 | 66.1 | 28.5 | 66.2 | 29.8 |
| Total ⁷⁾ | 57.5 | 53.2 | 54.5 | 48.8 | 58.4 | 53.6 | 57.9 | 55.6 | 59.2 | 57.1 |

Note: *) Out of the number of people aged 15+ whose marital status was recorded.

Source: Bureau der k. k. statistischen Zentralkommission, 1912; Státní úřad statistický, 1924; 1934.

7) According to Peter Laslett's typology: Extended family households - Extended upwards (4a) or multiple-family households - Secondary units Up (5a) - i.e. married couples older than the main household.

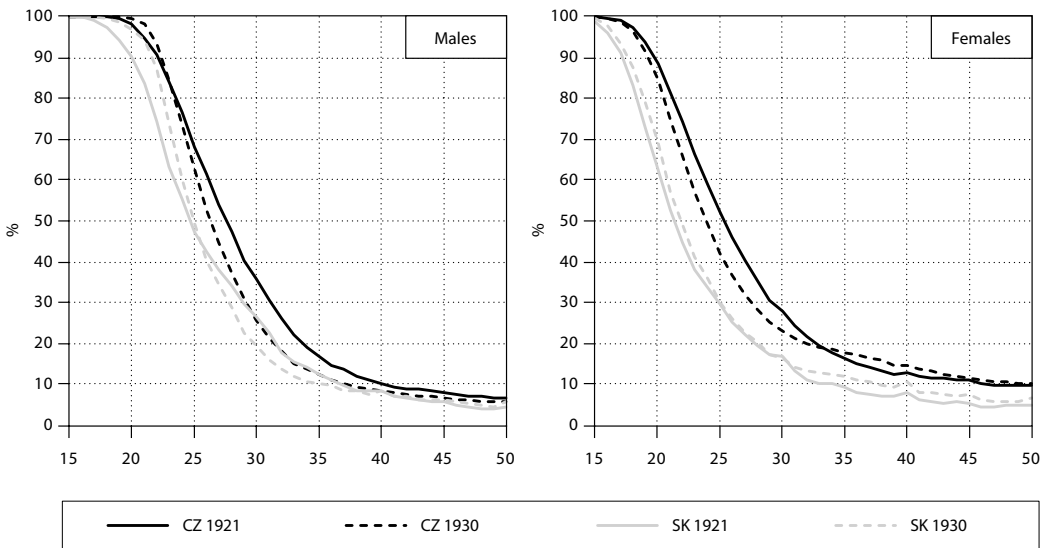
Tab. 8: Share of widows and widowers by age in Czechia and Slovakia in 1921 and 1930 (%)

| Age | Czechia | | | | Slovakia | | | |
|---------------------|---------|---------|-------|---------|----------|---------|-------|---------|
| | 1921 | | 1930 | | 1921 | | 1930 | |
| | Males | Females | Males | Females | Males | Females | Males | Females |
| 15–24 | 0.0 | 0.2 | 0.0 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.7 | 0.0 | 0.3 |
| 25–34 | 1.1 | 6.8 | 0.5 | 1.4 | 0.7 | 7.6 | 0.5 | 2.6 |
| 35–49 | 2.6 | 12.3 | 1.5 | 9.6 | 2.5 | 15.5 | 1.6 | 15.0 |
| 50–64 | 9.3 | 29.1 | 7.2 | 27.8 | 9.1 | 34.2 | 8.3 | 34.6 |
| 65+ | 32.2 | 63.0 | 30.7 | 60.9 | 30.9 | 67.9 | 30.8 | 68 |
| Total ⁹⁾ | 4.9 | 14.9 | 4.3 | 13.8 | 3.1 | 19.3 | 4.5 | 15.7 |

Note: *) Out of the total number of people aged 15+ whose marital status was recorded.

Source: Státní úřad statistický, 1924; 1934.

Figure 1a, 1b: Share of single men and women by age in Czechia and Slovakia according to data from the population censuses in 1921 and 1930



Note: CZ – Czechia, SK – Slovakia.

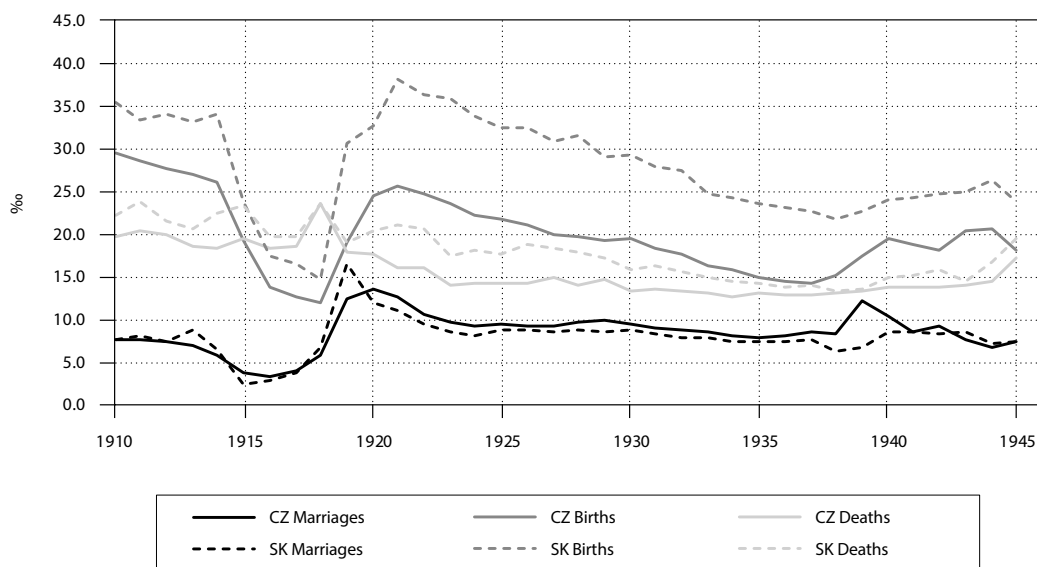
Source: Státní úřad statistický, 1924; 1934.

2.3 Population change

During the interwar period the population change was significantly shaped by two tendencies: the inertia that marked the years prior to this period and the effects of the contemporary economic and political situation. It is possible to observe these tendencies in the fertility and mortality trends and in family behaviour. Although the basic tendencies were similar, there were certain differences between the two populations. The differences were most apparent

in the fertility rate, which throughout the interwar period was consistently higher in Slovakia, and also in mortality conditions, as mortality was also constantly higher in Slovakia. In both populations, however, after the subsiding of the post-war surges in the population, the fertility rate decreased and reached its lowest levels in the middle of the 1930s. The mortality rate also decreased, somewhat more substantially in Slovakia than in the Czech lands. It is possible to say that conditions of population reproduction in Czechia

Figure 2: Number of live births, deaths, and marriages in Czechia and Slovakia per 1,000 inhabitants in 1910–1945



Source: Federální statistický úřad, 1982.

and Slovakia gradually became more alike and by the end of the 1930s the rates of reproduction in the two populations were closer than they had been when the state was founded.

2.3.1 Marriage and divorce

Nuptiality conditions in the interwar period were consistent with the tradition of forming families and households that had taken shape in the preceding period and with the economic situation in the interwar period, and in the first years they also reflected the impact of the First World War.

In 1919–1922 the annual number of marriages was extraordinarily high in both Czechia and Slovakia. The maximum recorded in 1918–1920 was a typical case of demographic compensation where the surge in the number of marriages offset the four years of the war when nuptiality was at a minimum. Marriages took place that had been made impossible by the war or postponed because of the difficult circumstances. In Czechia the maximum marriage rate was reached in 1920 (135,700 marriages), while in Slovakia it occurred right away in 1919 (49,400 marriages). The number of new marriages subsequently decreased,

and the nuptiality rate, especially among single people, pragmatically followed the trend in the economy: in the years of the economic recession at the start of the 20th century the number of marriages declined, but in the second half of the 1920s the number increased as the economy rebounded slightly. There was then a quick and steep decrease, and the number of marriages reached a low level in 1935 (85,200 in the Czech lands and 25,600 in Slovakia), as the crude marriage rate fell in the Czech lands from 13‰ to 8‰ and in Slovakia from 16‰ to 7‰.

The composition of fiancés by marital status at the time of marriage was similar in Czechia and Slovakia. The majority of marriages were protogamous (82% in the Czech lands and 85% in Slovakia in 1920, and 85% in the Czech lands and 87% in Slovakia in 1937). In the years after the war there was a slightly larger share of widows among brides, but their number gradually decreased. In the late 1930s 88% of grooms in Czechia were single when they married, 7% were widowers, and 4% were divorcees, and the figures were almost identical in Slovakia: 90% of grooms were single, 8% were widowers, and only 2% were divorcees. The figures for women were even more

alike, as 93% of brides in Czechia were single and 95% were in Slovakia, 3% in Czechia were widows and 4% in Slovakia, and 3% were divorced in Czechia and 5% in Slovakia.

Czechia and Slovakia differed, however, in terms of the average age of partners when they married and the overall nuptiality rate. In Czechia the mean age at first marriage was at that time 27–29 years among men and 24–26 years among women (Fialová, 1992). In Slovakia men were on average 26–28 years when they married for the first time and women were 22–24 years (Šprocha – Tišliar, 2008a). More women than men never married in both Czechia and Slovakia, but while among men the share was almost the same in both populations (around 6%), among women it was significantly larger in Czechia than in Slovakia (10% and 5%, respectively).

Differentiation of fiancés by social status and regional differences persisted in both populations. People in urban and industrial areas were typically older at the time of first marriage, while people in rural areas and especially in the agricultural regions of southern Moravia and southern Slovakia were typically younger when they married for the first time. In the 1920s the average age at marriage decreased slightly. The negative effects of the economic crisis in the early 1930s led to an increase in the age at first marriage, which was older in 1937 than it was in 1920 (Fialová, 1992).

The Czechoslovak state permitted two-stage divorce: separation from bed-and-board, where the spouses no longer lived together but they could not

remarry, and divorce, which represented the de facto legal end of a marriage (after which it was possible to remarry). Nevertheless, the number of divorces remained low in the 1920s and 1930s. Divorce was less common in Slovakia and the divorce rate was approximately half that in Czechia. In 1922, for instance, when the number of divorces temporarily increased, probably because it was made easier for already ‘dead’ marriages to divorce, there were 5,500 divorces in Czechia and 600 divorces in Slovakia. In the years that followed the crude divorce rate (the number of divorces per thousand inhabitants) was 0.4–0.5‰ in Czechia and 0.15‰ in Slovakia. While the number of divorces grew slightly, by the end of the 1930s the crude divorce rate was still only 0.7‰ in Czechia and 0.3‰ in Slovakia (Federální statistický úřad, 1982). At that time only 8–11% of defunct marriages in Czechia ended in divorce and 4–5% in Slovakia (Federální statistický úřad, 1982).

2.3.2 Natality and fertility

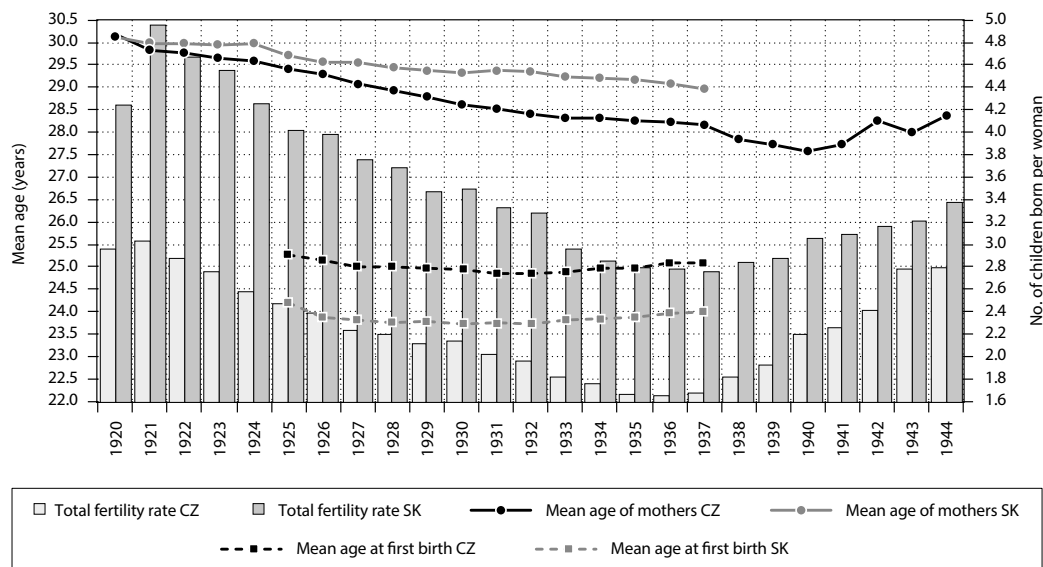
In the late 19th century the fertility rate in Czechia and Slovakia began a decreasing trend. The decline began earlier in Czechia (from the around the 1870s) and by 1914 there were 26 children born per 1,000 inhabitants and total fertility had by that time fallen to 3.3 children per woman. In Slovakia, where fertility began its decrease from a higher level and where the decline did not begin until the turn of the century, the crude birth rate reached 34‰ in 1910 and total fertility rate remained above 4 children per woman.

Tab. 9: Age at first marriage in the population in Czechia and Slovakia in 1920, 1930 and 1937

| Year | Czechia | | | Slovakia | | |
|----------------|----------|--------|------|----------|--------|------|
| | Mean age | Median | Mode | Mean age | Median | Mode |
| Males | | | | | | |
| 1920 | 28.6 | 27.6 | 26.0 | 26.1 | 25.3 | 24.0 |
| 1930 | 27.3 | 26.3 | 24.5 | 25.8 | 24.8 | 23.4 |
| 1937 | 28.4 | 27.5 | 25.7 | 27.1 | 25.8 | 24.0 |
| Females | | | | | | |
| 1920 | 25.5 | 24.6 | 23.7 | 22.7 | 21.9 | 20.5 |
| 1930 | 24.7 | 23.6 | 23.1 | 22.6 | 21.6 | 20.7 |
| 1937 | 25.8 | 24.9 | 23.7 | 23.0 | 23.0 | 22.9 |

Source: Státní úřad statistický, 1929a, 1936, 1941; authors' calculations.

Figure 3: Fertility characteristics of the population in Czechia and Slovakia in 1920–1944



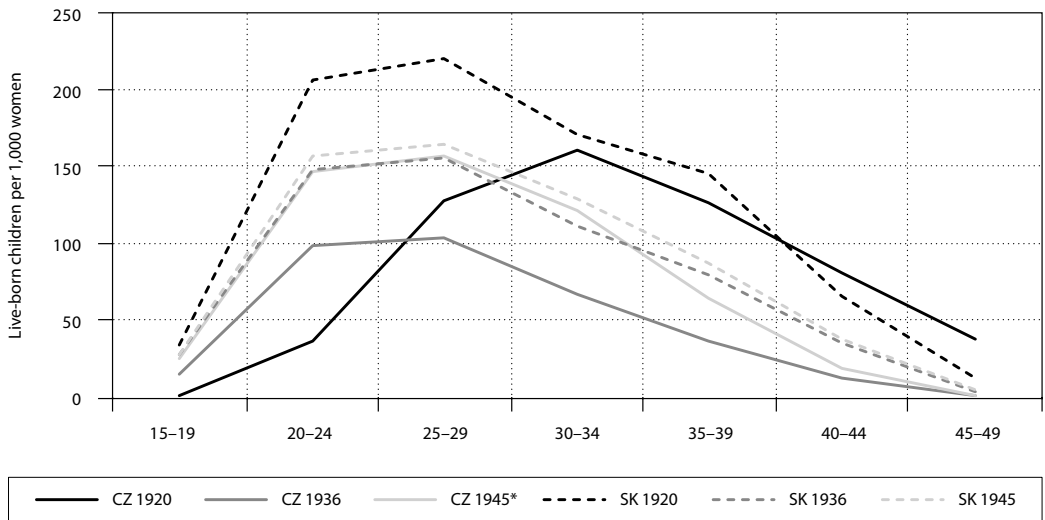
Source: ČSÚ: Obyvatelstvo – Roční časové řady [Population – Yearly time series]. Pohyb obyvatelstva; Státní úřad statistický 1929a, 1929b, 1930, 1932, 1936, 1938, 1941; authors' calculations.

During the years of the First World War the number of births decreased because men, regardless of their marital status, were called up to serve in the war. After the war, when they returned home to their families and as nuptiality gradually began to increase again, the number of births also began to rise. If in 1918 there were only 120,000 live births (12.1 per thousand inhabitants) in Czechia and 43,000 (14.6 per thousand) in Slovakia, by 1921 the number of live births had grown to 257,000 (25.7 per thousand) in Czechia and 115,000 (38.2 per thousand) in Slovakia. After that the number of births decreased almost continuously, reflecting an ongoing process of limiting family size. This decline was intensified by the economic crisis in the 1930s, and one sign of this was that total fertility rate fell from 3.04 children born per woman in 1921 to 1.66 in 1936 in Czechia and from 4.99 to 2.80 in Slovakia. In the years that followed the number of births and total fertility were slightly higher, but the process of limiting family size continued in both populations (cf. *Fialová – Pavlík – Vereš, 1992; Šprocha – Tišliar, 2014a*).

There were more boys than girls among live-born children. The masculinity index in both populations ranged between 1,050 and 1,075 boys per 1,000 girls, and these figures are consistent with the usual ratio. In terms of the share of births born inside or outside marriage, 88% of children in Czechia were born within a marriage and 92–94% in Slovakia. While the sex ratio was the same across the country, there were significant regional differences in the share of extramarital births, and the larger share of extramarital births in Czechia corresponded to the larger share of inhabitants of German nationality there, which had already been the case in the 19th century and in some other countries with a German-speaking population (Austria, Germany; cf. *Fialová, 1991*). In Slovakia more extramarital births occurred in the remote submontane regions and in southern Slovakia, where a larger share of the population was of Hungarian nationality (*Šprocha – Tišliar, 2014a*).

Reproductive conditions in the interwar period were characterised by a substantial decline in fertility. Two concurrent trends were behind the decline in the number of births. One was the increasing prevalence

Figure 4: Age-specific fertility rates in Czechia and Slovakia in 1920, 1936 and 1945^{*)}



Note: *) The year 1945 in Czechia for the Czech population only.
Source: Federální statistický úřad, 1982: 170, 172.

of the two-child family model, which manifested itself as a decline in the number and share of children born to older women (in Czechia the fertility rate of women aged 35–39 was still 93‰ in 1920, but by 1937 it was just 35‰, and in Slovakia there was a decrease over the same period from 145 to 79‰). The second factor was a response to the economic situation, as young women significantly reduced their reproductive plans (in the same period fertility among women aged 25–29 decreased from 176‰ to 105‰ in Czechia and from 206‰ to 148‰ in Slovakia).

The trend in the fertility rate was significantly determined by the fact that there was a decrease in both regional and socio-cultural differences. Although the fertility rate remained slightly higher in rural areas and among the segment of the population who made a living from agriculture, differences from the urban population grew smaller. Evidence of this is provided by data from the 1930 census, in which married women were asked how many live-born children they had from their current marriage. The census data also reveal that in Czechia and in Slovakia there were more children born in families of women who were Roman Catholics, while the smallest number

of births was in families of women who were Jews. Evangelical families also had fewer children.

The rapid decline in fertility during the years of the economic crisis, which blurred the differences between individual categories of the population and between regions, indicated that the interwar period saw a new type of reproductive behaviour take hold right across all of Czechia and Slovakia. Married couples limited the number of children they had to the number that seemed appropriate to them, or made decisions about expanding their family in reference to the current economic situation in the family. In Czechia a higher fertility rate and larger families continued to be found only in the remote mountain regions of western Šumava and eastern Moravia (cf. e.g. Fialová, 1991). Large families were more widespread in Slovakia, where they were most common in the agricultural regions of the Central Váh Region, and in the submontane regions of eastern Slovakia (Šprocha – Tišliar, 2014a).

3.3 Mortality conditions

Although in the years before the First World War the mortality rate decreased in Czechia and Slovakia,

it was still higher than the mortality rate in the more advanced parts of Europe. The mortality rate of infants and young children (up to the age of 5) continued to be higher and this had the effect of significantly worsening mortality conditions overall, because the relatively high fertility rates meant that infant deaths accounted for more than one-quarter of all deaths.

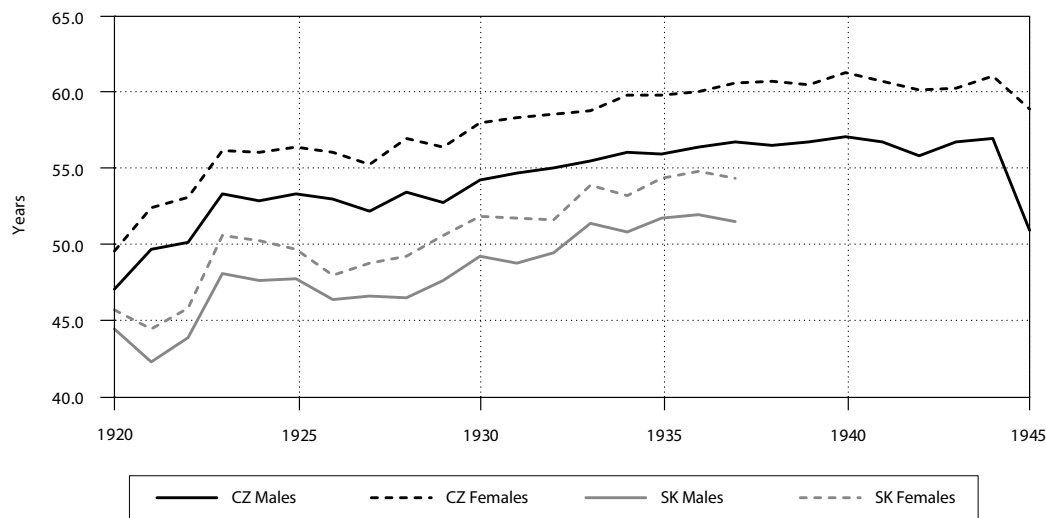
During the First World War mortality conditions gradually deteriorated among the civilian population, as they did in the other countries in the war (cf. e.g. Pozzi, 2002). Initially conditions worsened as a result of problems with food supply and the departure of doctors to the front, but in the final year of the war Europe was struck by a flu epidemic,⁸⁾ which peaked in the autumn of 1918, around the same time that the war reached its very dramatic conclusion. And it is evident for this reason that it received somewhat marginal attention. Yet the number of deaths (in the civilian population) that year was approximately one-quarter higher than in the preceding year. Unique features of this epidemic were that it had a higher fatality rate and it mostly killed young adults.

For example, in Czechia only 106 people died of the flu in 1917, but in 1918 the figure was almost 27,000, i.e. 24% of the total number of deaths (and these data are certainly underestimations; cf. Salfellner, 2017). More than half of the people aged 15–39 who died were killed by the flu (*Přirozená měna*, 2005). The echoes of this pandemic continued to influence the mortality rate in the years that followed until the epidemic finally subsided in 1920 (*Střítěský*, 1971).

In the first years after the First World War the number of deaths remained higher than usual, because as well as the waning flu epidemic the number of deaths was increased also by deaths among men who had returned from the war with serious injuries and by a higher mortality rate among very young children. In the following years, however, the pre-war trend returned and mortality conditions improved, albeit at a slower pace than in advanced western European countries.

There were nevertheless persistent differences between the mortality rates in Czechia and Slovakia. The best illustration of this is the trend in life

Figure 5: Life expectancy at birth in Czechia and Slovakia in 1920–1945



Note: In 1938–1945 Czech population of Protectorate.

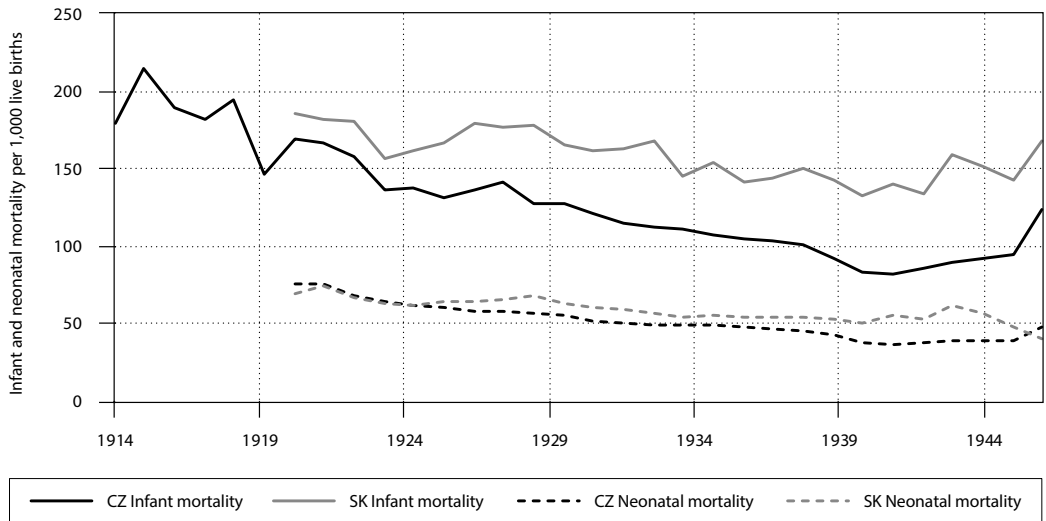
Source: Český statistický úřad, 2018a; Státní úřad statistický, 1929a, 1929b, 1930, 1932, 1936, 1938, 1941; authors' calculations.

8) This was the flu pandemic that swept across most of the world and in Europe peaked in the years 1918–1920. For details see Salfellner, 2017, Salfellner, 2018.

expectancy at birth. Throughout the (interwar) period the difference in life expectancy at birth in Czechia and Slovakia was approximately 5 to 6 years among men and 5 to 8 years among women, until

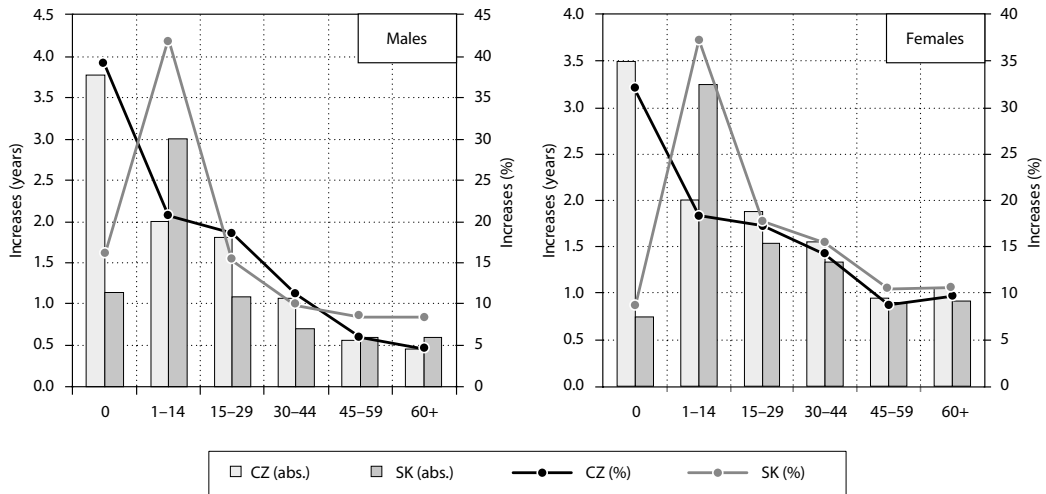
it decreased slightly in the late 1930s. Although there was definitely a decline in the mortality rate over time, in some years the number of deaths rose again; this was usually the result of a flu epidemic, and especially

Figure 6: The infant and neonatal mortality in Czechia and Slovakia in 1914–1945



Source: Český statistický úřad, 2005; Státní ústav statistický, 1944; Federální statistický úřad, 1982.

Figure 7: The contribution of age groups to the difference in mean life expectancy at birth by sex in Czechia and Slovakia between 1920 and 1937



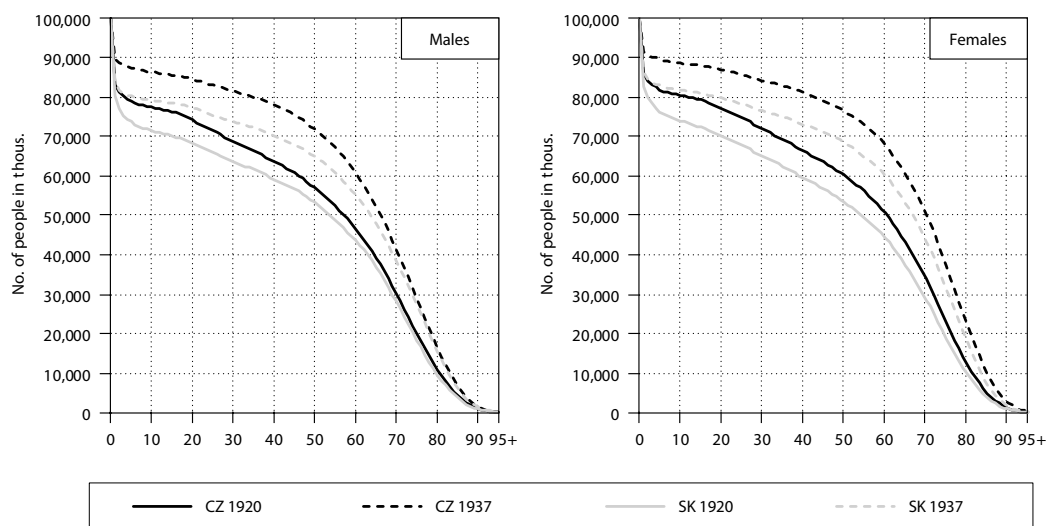
Source: Český statistický úřad, 2018a; Státní úřad statistický 1929a, 1929b, 1941; authors' calculations.

so in 1927 and 1929. The improving mortality rate reflected the introduction of new medical findings into practice, most notably findings relating to the spread of contagious diseases, as well as advances in the diagnosis and treatment of illnesses. This fact, however, was evidently also the source of persisting differences between the two populations' infant mortality rates, which dropped considerably in Czechia. By 1937 Czechia managed to reduce infant mortality to 100 per thousand of live births, but in Slovakia it remained at a level of 150 per thousand.

In the interwar period the biggest decrease in mortality in both populations was among young children aged 1–4 years and also among children aged 5–14 years. In older age groups the decline was milder, but mortality did decrease, more so among women (especially of middle age) than among men. As a result of this there was a slight increase in the numbers of people living to an older age. The mortality rate improved more in the 1920s than in the 1930s, the stagnation of which was undoubtedly influenced by the extremely negative socioeconomic conditions among a large portion of the population in towns and in rural areas.

Regarding the structure of deaths by cause of death, improved diagnostics brought about a decrease in the share of those deaths for which just 'old age' was listed as the cause of death. While this cause was given for one-quarter of deaths in 1920–1924, in 1935–1937 it was given for only one-eighth of deaths. In Slovakia, however, development lagged somewhat, as there the share of deaths attributed to this 'diagnosis' was significantly larger. There was a significant decrease in the share of people who died from infectious diseases or diseases of the digestive system, which was connected to improvements in preventing communicable diseases and better personal and community hygiene. Mortality from tuberculosis however remained high (in 1937 the figure was still 9.2% of the total number of deaths). Mortality from diseases of the circulatory system and neoplasms rose. Mortality conditions in an international comparison remained quite poor. In 1937 life expectancy at birth was 56.7 years for men and 60.6 years for women in Czechia, and 51.8 years for men and 54.7 years for women in Slovakia. For comparison, in 1935 life expectancy at birth in Sweden was 63.8 years for men and 66.1 years for women (Bardet – Dupaquier, 1999).

Figure 8: Life table survivors by exact age in Czechia and Slovakia in 1920 and 1937



Source: Český statistický úřad, 2018a; Státní úřad statistický, 1929a, 1929b, 1941; authors' calculations.

Tab. 10: Structure of deaths by cause of death in Czechia and Slovakia in 1931 and 1937 according to the 9th revision of the International Classification of Diseases (%)

| Disease | Czechia | | Slovakia | |
|--------------------------------|---------|-------|----------|-------|
| | 1931 | 1937 | 1931 | 1937 |
| Infectious and epidemiological | 15.7 | 13.1 | 16.6 | 14.7 |
| Tumours/Neoplasms | 10.7 | 11.8 | 4.4 | 6.0 |
| Circulatory system | 17.6 | 21.7 | 7.8 | 10.9 |
| Respiratory system | 11.9 | 11.6 | 16.7 | 17.2 |
| Digestive system | 7.7 | 6.0 | 8.1 | 8.0 |
| Diseases of (early) childhood | 4.7 | 3.8 | 11.3 | 8.8 |
| Old age/Natural causes | 10.3 | 9.1 | 17.2 | 17.1 |
| Imprecisely defined | 0.6 | 0.3 | 4.0 | 1.9 |
| Other | 20.6 | 22.4 | 13.9 | 15.5 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

Source: Státní úřad statistický, 1938, 1941.

4.1 The Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia

As noted in the introduction, both the economy and the internal political situation in Czechoslovakia deteriorated during the 1930s and from 1935 an external threat to the state also arose. Under pressure from Nazi Germany, Czechoslovakia lost the Sudetenland in September 1938, and in March 1939 it ceased to exist as an independent state. The remaining lands became the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, which was subordinate to the German Reich and was integrated into its economy. The consequences of these occurrences for population development changed over time. To assess this development it should first be mentioned that some data for the territory of Czechia are not available and estimates calculated directly after the war are used in place of the missing data. This period is without question the most difficult and complicated period of modern Czech history to date.

The annexation of the Sudetenland region in September 1938 was itself dramatic because the German army occupied the borderlands almost immediately after the Munich Agreement was signed on 29 September. Thousands of people were uprooted (it is estimated that around 530,000 Czechs left the occupied region), which seemed to herald the fact that the next ten years would be the decade that would see the biggest migration flows ever to occur on Czech territory. The enormous flows of migration continued, anti-fascists and Jews left the country, and

Czechs returned to the Czech lands from Slovakia and Carpathian Ruthenia. After the Protectorate was declared (15 March 1939) and especially at the start of the 1940s Nazis transported Jews and their political opponents to concentration camps, and within the frame of forced labour hundreds of thousands of young Czechs were sent to work in Germany to replace Germans who had been called into military service; after the allied armies began bombing the German interior, the inhabitants of some towns in Germany that had been destroyed were moved to Czechia, and after the war turned around, thousands of people passed through the Czech lands fleeing to the West before the advancing Eastern front. After the war, during the organised and unorganised expulsion of the Germans, 2,700,000 of them left the Czech lands. It is estimated that more than five million people were in motion over the course of this decade.

According to data reconstructed after the war, the number of inhabitants on the territory of Czechia increased from 1938, when it was 10,877,000 (mean population), until 1940 (11,129,000), and it is estimated that in 1944 it was 11,109,000.

From the figures for natural growth, according to the estimates made after the war, we can see the differences between the course of development in the Sudetenland and the inland areas. These differences were the result of distinct economic and social circumstances: in the autumn of 1938 the German economy was growing and certain pro-family policies

were applied in Germany that clearly helped to increase the marriage rate and then also the fertility rate in the German-annexed Sudetenland; by 1939 the marriage rate in the Sudetenland had reached 15‰ and in 1940 the crude fertility rate exceeded 25‰ (Kučera, 1994: 39). In the inland areas, population development was shaped more by the inauspicious economic conditions that preceded this period, though an economic revival was witnessed even there. The marriage rate also increased there, but by less, and there were two factors behind this increase: The first one had to do with the dissolution of the Czechoslovak army, the closure of the Czech universities, and the expansion of industrial production, which increased the number of young available as potential grooms. The second one was the total forced employment imposed on selected cohorts of young adults; in order to avoid being sent to Germany, these young people opted instead to get married; when forced employment eventually began to apply to married men and women without children, the numbers of births to some degree also increased. At that time, however, growing numbers of young Germans were being mobilised and were leaving for distant battlefields, and the number of marriages and births in the borderland region decreased. Mortality conditions remained more or less stable, but they were worse in the border regions than the inland areas. In 1942 the situation reversed.

The unusual circumstances shaping the marriage market led to a change in the Czech population's nuptiality behaviour. During the first half of the 1940s not only did the marriage rate rise but the age at first marriage decreased among both brides and grooms. Between 1938 and 1942 the share of brides aged 20–24 increased from 15% to 35%, and there was a proportional decrease in the share of brides aged 25–29. A similar shift occurred among men. While these figures were also influenced by the fact that the large cohorts born in the 1920s began to enter the marriage market, it is in this period nevertheless that we see the trend towards a decreasing marriage age establish itself.

During these years there was a relatively high divorce rate. M. Kučera considered the main reason for the rise in the number of divorces to be a change in the situation of families that the higher employment rate of women contributed to. Many women began

working in what to that time had been predominantly male environments, and that made it easier for both married men and married women to meet new people. Divorces between partners of different nationalities or races may also have contributed to the increased divorce rate (Kučera, 1994: 42).

Nativity followed a trend similar to that observed in nuptiality. The number of births grew continuously over these years: from 163,000 children born in 1938 to 230,000 born in 1944. The crude birth rate thus rose from 15.0‰ to 20.7‰ and total fertility rate increased from 1.82 to 2.80 (among the Czech population in the Protectorate, Kučera, 1994). However, the fertility rate rose among women of almost every age group in the Protectorate – the rise occurred first and was more substantial among women up to the age of 30, but after 1941 it was also observed among women aged 30–39; the fertility rate did not increase much among women older than that. In the early 1940s, 46% of births were first-order children, and later the share of second-order children also grew. Evidence that the transition to the two-child family model was by this time fully under way is provided by the fact that in 1944 only 16% of births were third-order children and only 13% were higher-order children (Kučera, 1994). Women who were aged 45–49 when the war was ending had on average 2.02 children, while women aged 50–54 at that time had 2.24 children. Another important development that took hold was that the number of children born outside marriage decreased, falling to 4.6% in the Protectorate by 1944.

The rise in natality and fertility in the Protectorate during the years of the war was initially an increase that offset the low rates during the time of the economic crisis. Later these increases were a consequence of the rise in nuptiality. It was only in the last years of the war that the number of births began to reflect the fact that larger numbers of women were reaching the age of peak fertility.

Mortality conditions in 1938–1944 were also influenced, and very significantly so, by contemporary circumstances. Throughout the period the crude mortality rate rose (from 13.2‰ in 1938 to 14.5‰ in 1944; this increase does not include the deaths that occurred outside the territory of the Protectorate or deaths that occurred in the Theresienstadt concentration camp). More detailed information

is only available for the Czech population of the Protectorate. According to estimates, the number of deaths grew by approximately 10,000 annually (by 75,000 in total). However, victims of war represented a specific category: executions (of which there were 3,299 in 1938–1944) and civilian victims that were killed during the final war operations in 1944–1945 or died in concentration camps (approximately 135,000). The increase in mortality among the population was influenced by the rise in mortality from infectious and parasitic diseases, vascular diseases, and neoplasms. Deaths from vascular diseases accounted for almost one-quarter of all deaths in 1944. A negative development was that there was a slump in the decline in infant mortality, which then began to rise again. In the late 1930s infant mortality decreased quite rapidly, declining to 83‰ by 1939. The decline then stopped and by 1944 infant mortality had risen to more than 95‰.

Official estimates are that the size of the population in Czechia as of 9 May 1945 was 10,840,000, which was 65,000 fewer people than in September 1938 (Srb, 2004). In comparison with 1918 the size of the population had grown by almost 8% (but it would fall dramatically in the months that followed). The transition to a low fertility rate in Czechia was basically completed by 1945 (the two-child model had established itself), with children being born to younger mothers and mostly within marriage. As well, the age at first marriage decreased, among both men and women, and the divorce rate increased. Although mortality conditions worsened, especially in the final months of the war, it was apparent from the changing character of mortality that even here changes were taking hold; except during the war years, both infant mortality and mortality among young children decreased, the structure of deaths by cause of death changed as the share of deaths from infectious diseases decreased while the share of deaths from what would come to be called lifestyle diseases grew (diseases of the circulatory system, neoplasms), and the improvement in mortality conditions was greater for women. Reproduction among the population in Czechia was characteristic of the situation at the end of the first demographic revolution.

4.2 Reproduction in Slovakia in 1938–1945

The years 1938–1945 were a time of many dramatic events for the population in Slovakia as well. The late 1930s were marked by the escalation of internal and international political tensions, which culminated in the Munich Conference and, most notably, the Vienna Arbitration, resulting in substantial territorial losses to Hungary and to some degree also Germany. Poland also raised a claim and obtained some territory in the north of Slovakia. However, the situation remained unsettled, and a combination of internal and external political pressures led to the breakup of Czechoslovakia and the emergence of an independent Slovak Republic. Hungary, which wanted to regain the territory of 'Upper Hungary', repeatedly tried to take advantage of the uncertain situation. After a short military conflict and the subsequent intervention of Germany, however, it had to make do with minor territorial gains from the eastern part of Slovakia. In 1938 and 1939 Slovakia lost a total of more than 858,000 inhabitants and territory equal to an area of more than 10,600 km². The last change was Slovakia's re-annexation of areas ceded to Poland in 1920 and 1938 after Poland was defeated. For the most part no battles took place in Slovakia until 1944, when the Slovak National Uprising broke out, after which Slovakia was the direct scene of war operations up until the end of the war.

The period of the war, except during the last two years, ushered in a number of positive developments that also influenced the character of demographic reproduction. The wartime economic boom helped generate considerable economic growth and this together with opportunities for work abroad (especially in Germany) basically eliminated the biggest problem interwar Slovakia had faced, which was unemployment. In the sphere of social and population policy Slovakia in many ways drew inspiration from Germany and adopted a number of pro-natal and pro-family policies. Official state propaganda also helped to assert a pro-family and pro-natal population climate (for more, see *Tišliar*, 2013). However, the long-lasting state of war led to a deterioration of living conditions for the population, especially as a result of rising prices amidst slower wage growth and chronic shortages of some foods. A negative feature was the racial differentiation of the population, which ultimately led to the extermination of the Jewish and to some

extent also the Roma population (especially in the south of Slovakia in the areas annexed to Hungary).

The unfavourable situation in 1938 and 1939 also left a mark on the demographic behaviour of the population in Slovakia. Foremost it was possible to observe a decrease in the number of marriages and in the intensity of nuptiality. To be thorough, we should note that in 1937, after a brief increase, there were almost 27,000 marriages, but the following year the figure was only just above 23,000. The figures for the crude marriage rate fell below 6‰. The last time nuptiality in Slovakia had been that low was during the First World War. After 1937, when the political situation settled, that combined with economic growth, the adoption of pro-population measures and the emergence of a pro-family climate contributed to a revival of nuptiality in the years that followed and an increase in the number of weddings. In 1940–1943, 29,000–30,000 couples married annually and the crude marriage rate rose well above 8‰. However, the last two years of the war brought a deterioration of the situation in Slovakia, and the marriage rate promptly responded to this. The numbers of marriages decreased to 25,000–26,000 and 7.2 and 7.5 marriages per 1,000 inhabitants, respectively, took place.

The number of divorces and the intensity of divorce were very low in Slovakia in the interwar period, though it showed a slight increasing tendency. During the observed period we first see a relatively pronounced increase in the number of divorces between 1939 and 1940 (from 800 to more than 950), and over the next two years the number of divorces in Slovakia remained above 900. However, between 1942 and 1943 and between 1944 and 1945 there were sharp declines in the number of divorces, in each case to fewer than 650 a year.

The transformation of fertility that was taking hold as part of the demographic revolution led in the interwar period to a steady decline in the birth rate. In 1937 the crude birth rate decreased to below 24‰ and fewer than 80,000 children were born in Slovakia. The following year brought an intensification of this decline, as the crude birth rate fell to 21.7‰. As in the case of the marriage rate, there was then a revival of reproduction. The number of births and the crude birth rate basically rose steadily until 1944, when it reached a high of almost 92,000 children and 26.5‰.

However, the next year, due to the events of the war and the preceding decline in nuptiality, the number of births fell sharply (to fewer than 82,000) and the birth rate did too (23.5‰). Total fertility rate reached approximately 3 children per woman, which was still slightly higher than the rate of 1937.

Negative development in mortality conditions did nothing to alter this trend. The numbers of deaths and the crude mortality rate both had a rising trend, like in Czechia (with the exception of the inter-year decrease in 1943). In the second half of the 1930s, 49,000–50,000 people died annually in Slovakia, but by 1942 the number of deaths rose to almost 56,000. Analogically, in 1937 there were approximately 14 deaths per 1,000 inhabitants, but five years later the figure was almost 16 deaths. Both indicators reached a peak in the last year of the war, when the number of deaths grew to 67,500 and the crude mortality rate rose above 19‰. Poor infant mortality rates remained a characteristic feature of mortality conditions in Slovakia in the years 1938–1945. From an initial rate of 135‰, infant mortality rose further to reach 150‰, and that figure was then exceeded during the last year of the war, when there were almost 169 deaths for every 1,000 live-born children during the first year of life. The negative mortality trend in Slovakia during and especially at the end of the war period is confirmed by levels of life expectancy at birth. At the start of the 1940s it was 53 years for men and approximately 57 years for women. In 1945, however, the life expectancy at birth decreased by approximately 11 years to age 42 for men and 7 years to age 50.5 for women. The specificity of the last year of the war is also confirmed by causes of death. On close examination we can see that more than one-fifth of all male deaths and one-tenth of all female deaths in that year were associated with the course of war operations. The main role in the process of mortality in Slovakia was played by epidemic and infectious diseases, which in 1939–1941 accounted for 15% of deaths, diseases of the respiratory system, which accounted for roughly 18%, and also the etiologically specific cause of death – old age (20%). Cardiovascular diseases and neoplasms together only accounted for less than 17%. Approximately 9% of deaths were due to specific diseases of early childhood and 7% to diseases of the digestive system.

The positive trend in fertility in 1940–1944 was greater than the worsening of mortality and the increase in the number of deaths, and consequently there were population increases produced by natural growth. However, the opposite situation was observed in migration, the calculation of which needs to take into account not just the forced emigration of the Czech population but also the deportation of the Jewish and to some extent also the Roma population,

and towards the end of the war also the at first uncontrolled and then controlled emigration of German inhabitants. In the post-war period Slovakia was also impacted by an exchange of inhabitants with Hungary and the emigration of some of Slovakia's Ruthenian population. The population of Slovakia consequently decreased between 1937 and 1945 from just under 3.56 million to approximately 3.43 million.

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