

DIVORCES IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC 1991–2006: WHAT DIVORCE REPORTS CAN TELL US (PART 2)*

Divorce rate statistics are based on the Divorce Reports, which contain various types of information on top of the most essential information for evaluating a demographic process – divorce rate. We have already discussed data from the Reports that relate to the course of the divorce proceeding itself in *Demografie* (2008, 50: 213–218) or *Czech Demography* (2009, 3: 119–124), now we will focus on the demographic aspects.

Divorcees according to the information in the Divorce Reports

The information on people who were divorced in a Czech court includes their date of birth, state citizenship, highest completed level of education, and order of the divorce. All these data, along with the cause of the divorce, are recorded only in those divorce proceedings that end with a divorce being granted. In this text then we are only talking about effectuated divorces, not divorce proceedings otherwise terminated.

Like other demographic processes, the divorce rate has a strong correlation with a person's age. However, the Divorce Reports do not explicitly state the age of the divorced male or female; rather in the statistical processing of information a person's age is calculated from his/her **date of birth** (before 1995 the person's entire personal identification number was listed) and the date of divorce, which is the date on which the divorce report was despatched, as indicated in the form¹⁾.

Age-specific divorce rates are most easily calculated as reduced rates, where the number of divorces among people of a given age is related to the mid-year population of that age. The distribution of these rates is significantly related to the character of nuptiality, to when men/women tend to marry, and thus at what age they are then able to get divorced. In the observed period between 1991 and 2006 nuptiality underwent substantial changes and in conformity with the changes in nuptiality the reduced rates of divorce shifted their axis and intensity to an altogether different point than where it was fifteen years previously.

Table 1 Reduced rates of divorce by sex and age

Age group	1991	1994	1997	2000	2003	2006	1991	1994	1997	2000	2003	2006
	Males						Females					
15–19	0.17	0.10	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.01	1.10	0.67	0.24	0.14	0.09	0.07
20–24	8.95	8.10	5.53	3.01	1.92	1.19	17.77	15.88	11.58	6.97	5.28	3.56
25–29	17.47	18.19	17.20	12.60	10.37	6.98	19.04	20.29	20.67	17.28	15.08	11.95
30–34	15.71	16.92	18.05	16.98	17.10	14.42	14.30	16.15	17.85	17.02	19.38	17.20
35–39	13.25	13.88	15.65	14.93	18.17	17.18	12.42	13.08	14.87	14.08	17.45	17.66
40–44	10.83	11.49	12.67	12.15	15.06	15.88	8.87	9.83	10.91	10.60	13.78	14.39
45–49	7.14	8.23	9.17	9.11	11.83	11.91	5.12	5.90	6.99	7.37	9.18	9.63
50–54	4.17	4.86	5.60	5.73	7.20	8.03	2.56	2.90	3.52	4.03	4.90	5.45
55–59	2.36	2.37	2.98	3.42	3.97	4.26	1.26	1.16	1.56	1.63	2.29	2.51

In 1991 the highest reduced rate of divorce among women occurred at the age of 25, while in 2007, according to nuptiality life tables, only 22% of females are even married by that age. Given the postponement of first marriage to a later age, the highest reduced rates of divorce among females now occurs in the age interval from 33 to 39 years and among men between 35 and 43 years, reaching a value of around 18%. Changes in nuptiality began to be more palpably reflected in the age-specific divorce rate from the 2nd half of the 1990s, when there was a significant decrease in the number of younger

¹⁾ This article was published in *Demografie*, 2009, 51 (2), pp. 143–151. The contents of the journal are published on the website of the Czech Statistical Office at: <http://www.czso.cz/csu/redakce.nsf/i/demografie>.

¹⁾ Starting in 2007 a new piece of information in the report is used to calculate age: the date on which the decision legally came into effect, combined with the date of birth.

Figure 1 Share of divorced people in five-year age groups as of 31 December, males

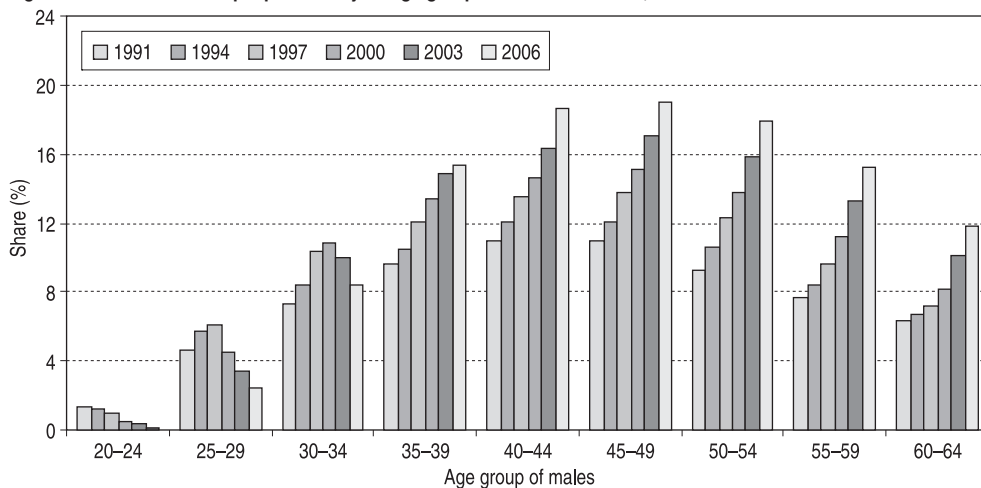
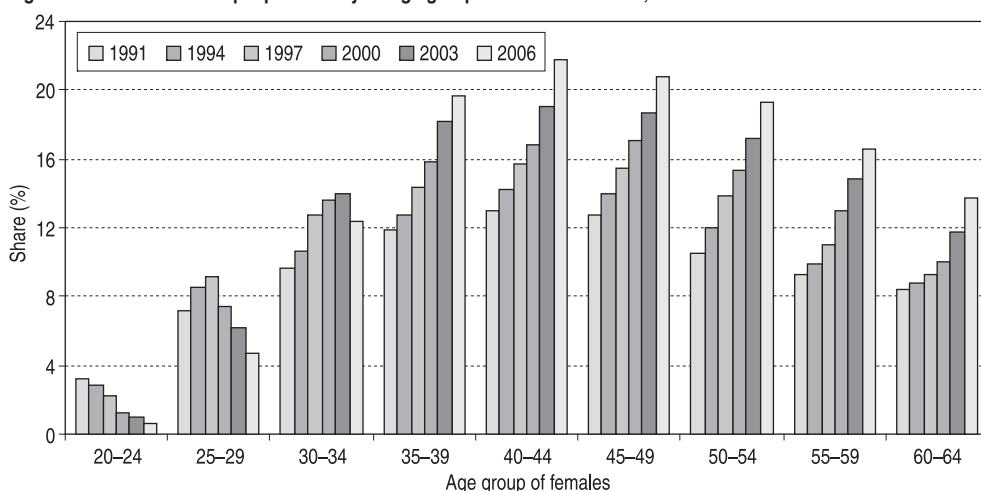


Figure 2 Share of divorced people in five-year age groups as of 31 December, females



people divorcing. Conversely, from the start of the 21st century there has been a clear trend of an increasingly significant rise in the divorce rate around the age of 35 and more.

Another criterion for evaluating the divorce rate (from the perspective of age) is the share of divorced people in a certain age group (as of 31 December of a given year, when balanced figures on the population composition by marital status are available). Like the reduced rates, this piece of data reflects not just the change in the divorce rate but also the change in the nuptiality rate. Along with the rise in the divorce rate and the postponement of first marriages another key process here is the decreasing rate of remarriage. The second-named process leads to a decline in the share of divorcees in the younger age groups, while the first- and third-named processes result in an increase in the share of older divorced people. The 'borderline' age in this regard appears to be 35.

The share of divorced people in the individual age groups shows a similar trend for both males and females, while at any given age there is always a higher share of divorced females than divorced men. Relatively the largest number of divorced people is found among 45–49 year old males (the percentage in this category has gradually risen from 11% to 19%) and among 40–44 year old females (13% at the

start of the 1990s, 22% at the end of 2006). Between 1991 and 2006 the most stable percentage of divorced people was in the 30–34 age group, with an average of 9.4% among males and 12.4% among females. The youngest age group, 15–19 year olds, is not represented in Figures 1 and 2, because there is just a very small number of divorces in this group (less than 1%), but it should still be noted that the share of divorced people in this age group changed dramatically, by more than 90%: among males it fell from 0.12 to 0.01‰, among females from 0.59 to 0.03‰.

Age-specific divorce intensity is best described with so-called net rates, wherein the number of divorces is related only to people actually in a position to divorce, i.e. married people. These intensity indicators in a certain respect have remained unchanged since the early 1990s: the maximum figures continued to be in the youngest age groups (Figures 3 and 4). However, the numbers changed substantially.

Figure 3 Divorce intensity by age (number of divorces per one thousand married persons), males

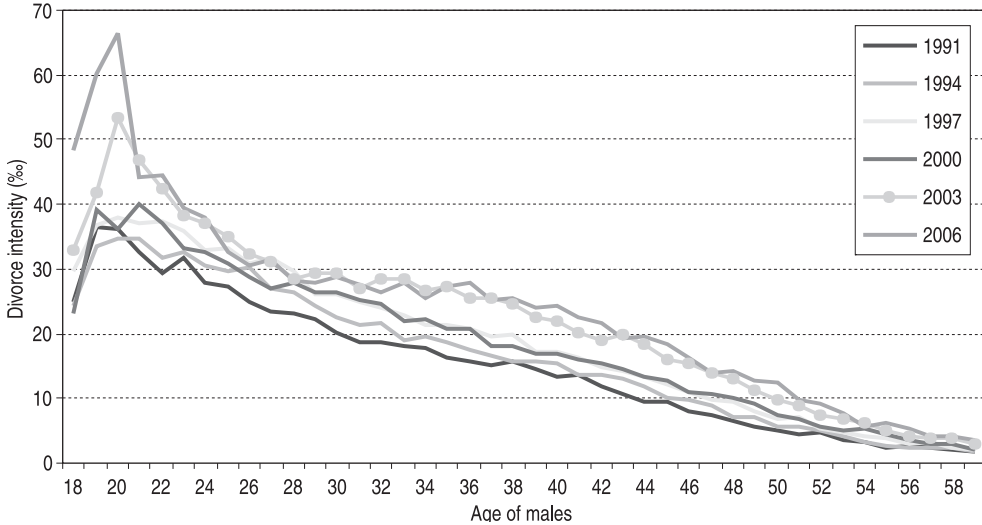
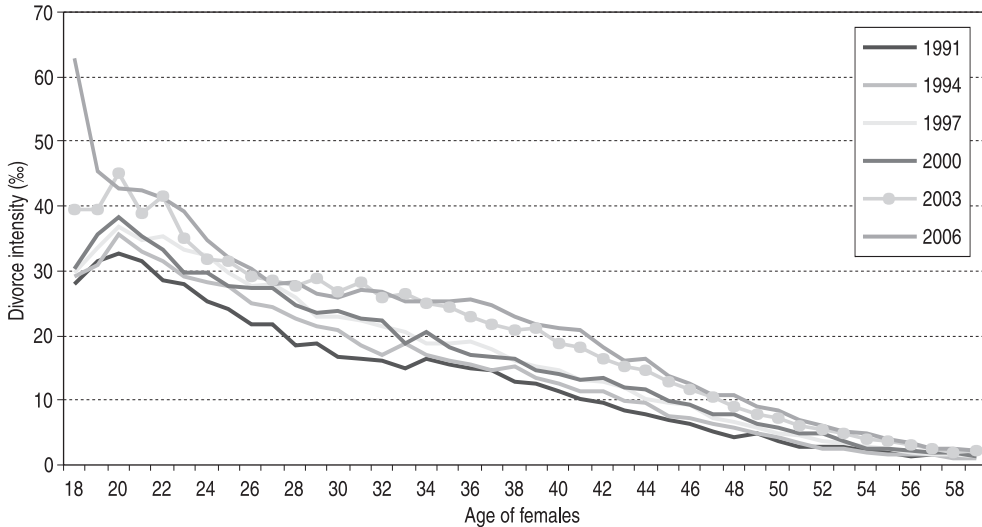


Figure 4 Divorce intensity by age (number of divorces per one thousand married persons), females



While in 1991 an average of 30 per one thousand married females between the ages of 20 and 24 divorced, in 2006 the figure was 42 per thousand married females. Among married males the trend was similar: in the 20–24 age group the divorce intensity rose from 33 to 51%.

Every age group saw an increase in age-specific divorce intensity. The biggest changes were witnessed in divorce among males over the age of 45 and females over the age of 40, the figures for which more than doubled from what they were in 1991. Conversely, the most stable trend in divorce intensities was recorded in the 25–29 age group. Divorce intensity's rising trend was interrupted only at the turn of the century, when it was affected by an amendment to the Family Act (effective 1 August 1998). Consequently, age-specific divorce intensities returned to the level they were at in 1991, and in younger age groups they were even lower (Table 2).

Table 2 Divorce intensity by sex and age (cohort-period specific events)

Age	Males							Females						
	1991	1994	1997	1999	2000	2003	2006	1991	1994	1997	1999	2000	2003	2006
15–19	17.2	8.3	9.0	8.0	9.0	16.8	23.4	14.4	12.6	12.8	8.6	11.1	30.1	29.3
20–24	33.2	33.4	37.0	30.6	37.2	44.6	50.9	30.4	32.0	34.6	26.8	34.4	40.0	42.2
25–29	25.3	28.8	31.7	23.2	29.4	32.7	32.2	22.2	25.4	28.6	21.1	27.3	29.7	30.5
30–34	19.6	21.7	24.8	18.8	25.0	28.5	27.7	16.5	19.2	22.0	16.5	22.1	27.1	26.2
35–39	16.2	17.6	20.6	15.0	20.0	25.9	26.3	14.8	15.6	18.1	13.3	17.7	22.9	24.7
40–44	12.8	14.3	15.9	12.2	16.0	20.7	22.5	10.3	11.6	13.4	10.5	13.3	17.8	19.5
45–49	8.2	9.5	11.1	9.0	11.5	15.3	16.5	6.0	7.1	8.5	7.3	9.2	11.6	12.7
50–54	4.7	5.5	6.4	5.8	6.8	8.8	10.4	3.2	3.4	4.4	4.1	5.0	6.2	7.0
55–59	2.6	2.6	3.4	2.8	3.9	4.6	5.1	1.6	1.4	1.9	1.9	2.1	2.9	3.3
DRM ^{a)}	11.5	12.2	13.1	9.6	12.2	14.0	13.6	11.4	12.2	13.1	9.7	12.2	14.0	13.7

Note: ^{a)} Divorce rate of marriage = number of divorces to total number of marriages (married males/married females).

Statistical records traditionally include data on the petitioners' highest completed level of **education**, but since 2005 this information is provided on a voluntary basis²⁾. In more than half of all cases the spouses filing for divorce have the same level of education, which corresponds to the educational homogeneity of marriages. Generally, the level of education listed most often is secondary education without GCSE (roughly 50% of males and 40% of females), followed by secondary with GCSE (20–30% of males and 30–40% of females). The third-largest group is made up of people with basic education, but over the years their share decreased from more than twenty to roughly ten percent. The fewest divorcees state the highest educational category, with complete university education. However, their share has been growing gradually and since 2003 men with university education have even outnumbered men with basic education among divorced people.

Since 1991 data on divorces by the spouses' education have also been available in combination with the duration of the marriage and the year of the marriage. Therefore, when comparing the educational structure of the initial marriages, assuming that the spouses had completed their education at the time of marriage, we can calculate the total divorce rate separately for individual spousal educational combinations. Were the divorce intensities in 2006 to remain constant, in 15 years 33% of marriages would end in divorce. Relatively the fewest divorces would occur among marriages between a male with university education and a female with secondary education with GCSE and between two spouses with university education (19% and 23%, respectively), while the most divorces would occur among marriages between two people with secondary school without GCSE, between partners with basic education, and in marriages between a man with basic education and a woman with university education (40–50%). Divorces between people with university education tend on average to occur after a longer period of marriage than is the case of people in lower educational categories.

The structure of divorce **by order** has long remained unchanged. Repeat divorces make up approximately one-fifth of all divorces in the Czech Republic, among both males and females. However, the proportion of higher-order divorces understandably differ by the age of the divorcees, and there are also regional differences in the values of this indicator.

Another differentiating factor in the structure of divorce by order is education. Relatively the most second- and higher-order divorces are recorded among people with basic education, both for males and

²⁾ For two years autocorrects was applied in the statistical processing, and after it was abandoned in 2007 education was not determined for 18% of females and 18% of males.

females. In 2006, 28% of divorced females with basic education went through a repeat divorce, while among females with university education the figure was just 14%. In the case of females, the higher the education the lower the share of repeat divorces. The situation with males is different in that the percentage of repeat divorces is approximately the same at 17% to 20% in every educational group except basic education, where it is higher (24–25% in recent years) (Table 3).

Table 3 Percentage of repeat divorces by sex and education

Education	1991	1994	1997	2000	2003	2006	1991	1994	1997	2000	2003	2006
	Males						Females					
Basic	21.9	21.3	22.8	24.7	24.0	25.2	26.7	25.4	26.7	28.3	27.7	28.1
Secondary without GCSE	17.4	16.7	18.4	19.4	19.0	19.7	17.3	16.9	18.5	18.7	19.6	19.9
Secondary with GCSE	17.2	16.0	17.6	18.1	17.3	19.1	15.3	14.5	15.3	15.8	16.4	16.5
University	16.0	16.6	17.9	19.3	19.5	19.3	13.4	11.0	13.3	14.0	13.7	14.2
Total	18.2	17.4	18.8	19.7	19.1	20.0	19.1	17.7	18.7	18.8	19.0	19.2

In 1991–1994 the Divorce Reports also included an item on **nationality**. In total, 93–95% of people divorcing indicated that they had Czech (Moravian, Silesian) nationality, while the most common other nationality was Slovak (which in 1991 accounted for 68% and in subsequent years 56–61% of all the nationalities indicated other than Czech).

In 1995 the item on nationality was replaced with **citizenship**. In the following years the number of divorced couples in which at least one partner had a citizenship other than Czech grew continuously, and in recent years the tempo of the increase has accelerated. However, the percentage remains small: in 2006 the figure was 6.0% of the total; 3.7% of divorced males had foreign citizenship and 2.6% of divorced females did. The number of divorces in which both partners have foreign citizenship has also been rising, most of them involve marriages between two Slovak citizens.

The range of different citizenships recorded has always been wider among male foreigners than female, but it has widened for both in recent years: in 1995, the first year in which citizenship was recorded, there were 51 different citizenships recorded among males and 32 among females (including the Czech Republic, but excluding the category of other and unknown), by 2006 the number of different

Table 4 Divorces by citizenship

Indicators	1995		1997		2000		2003		2006	
Total divorces	31 135		32 465		29 704		32 824		31 415	
– two citizens of the CR	30 419		31 605		28 700		31 459		29 543	
– one foreigner	677		817		958		1 316		1 786	
– both foreigners	39		43		46		49		86	
Proportion of divorces with at least one foreigner (%)	2.3		2.6		3.4		4.2		6.0	
Divorced foreigners	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Total divorces	479	276	595	308	689	361	850	564	1155	803
by country of citizenship:										
Germany	35	15	36	17	55	7	68	15	64	10
Poland	32	47	28	53	22	49	41	48	31	29
Russia	8	20	25	20	35	39	60	80	58	96
Slovakia	221	139	213	118	159	92	150	98	198	155
Ukraine	7	14	19	28	45	96	79	164	114	271
Vietnam	32	8	47	10	83	23	123	48	250	110
by divorce order:										
1st	386	193	460	215	526	232	593	339	853	455
2nd or higher	93	83	135	93	163	129	257	225	302	348
Proportion of repeat divorces (%)										
– by foreigners	19.4	30.1	22.7	30.2	23.7	35.7	30.2	39.9	26.1	43.3
– by citizens of the CR	18.3	17.9	18.8	18.6	19.6	18.6	18.8	18.6	19.8	18.6

citizenships had grown to 81 and 47, respectively. Although the variety of different citizenships recorded has widened, certain citizenship groups have tended to dominate. Only six citizenships have alternated among the four-largest groups in the observed period: Slovak, German, Polish, Vietnamese, Russian, and Ukrainian. Among women the largest groups contain relative more events than is the case among males.

Between 1995 and 1998 the largest number of divorces with foreign citizens involved citizens of the Slovak Republic, a large number of whom were people who had married when both spouses were members of a single Czechoslovak state. In 1995 every second divorced female of foreign citizenship was a Slovak citizen. In the years that followed the share of Slovaks fell sharply and in 1999 they were slipped out of first place. At that time the largest number of foreign divorced females were Ukrainians, and they are still the foreigners who most often appear in divorce court. The situation of foreign divorced males is different. Slovak citizens were still the most common foreign participants in divorce proceedings in 2003, and it is only since 2004 that males of Vietnamese citizenship have outnumbered them.

Compared to Czech citizens, foreigners are less often recorded among first divorces (Table 4). While among Czech citizens the share of second- and higher-order divorces is between 18% and 20% for males and females, among foreign divorced males the figure ranges between 20% and 30%. The highest figure is among foreign divorced females and is often greater than 30%, which is more than double the figure for Czech females.

Divorced marriages according to the information in the Divorce Reports

The last circle of items in the Divorce Reports that was selected for the purpose of this article related to the divorced marriage. Generally the selected items can be described as characteristics common to both spouses: the date of the marriage, the number of minor children, and finally the shared residence of both spouses had to be filled in, even for divorce proceedings that did not end in divorce, but here we will leave those events aside.

From a demographic perspective the most important piece of information for studying divorce rate is the **date of the marriage** (since 2001 the full date has been recorded, while before it was just the month and the year), from which the length of the duration of the marriage is calculated in reference to the date of the divorce³⁾. Although the number of divorces has not changed much in recent years, there have been significant changes in the structure of divorce by marriage duration.

Over the years there has been a decrease in the number of divorces that occur shortly after the wedding. This is partly the result of new legislation (in 1998 a legal amendment tightened the restrictions on obtaining a divorce shortly after marriage), but it is more owing to the fact that the number of new marriages decreased and people are marrying at a more mature age, often after having lived together for a period. Conversely, a long-term rising trend in the intensity of divorce among older marriages emerged, most markedly among unions longer than ten years in duration. Today these account for almost 60% of all recorded divorces.

Divorce intensity differs primarily according to the duration of marriage. This indicator has in recent years begun to peak in the fifth and sixth year of marriage, compared to the early 1990s when it peaked

Table 5 Divorces by the duration of marriage

Duration of marriage (years)	1991	1994	1997	2000	2003	2006
0-1	2 668	1 724	1 366	1 263	1 331	1 280
2	2 471	2 268	1 639	1 624	1 526	1 400
3	2 422	2 624	2 026	1 790	1 705	1 441
4-5	3 957	4 474	4 477	3 145	3 317	3 225
6-7	3 077	3 470	4 292	3 123	3 008	2 984
8-9	2 446	2 813	3 364	3 179	2 582	2 594
10-14	4 749	4 935	5 871	6 180	7 148	5 681
15-19	3 843	4 029	4 003	3 797	5 188	5 479
20 and more	3 733	4 602	5 427	5 603	7 019	7 331
Total	29 366	30 939	32 465	29 704	32 824	31 415

³⁾ Since 2007 the date of the marriage and the date on which the divorce legally comes into effect are the decisive dates for determining the duration of a marriage.

Table 6 Intensity of divorce by the duration of marriage

Duration of marriage (years)	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
0	0.65	0.60	0.39	0.41	0.37	0.42	0.47	0.57	0.41	0.00	0.28	0.31	0.36	0.38	0.36	0.30
1	2.46	2.23	2.16	2.07	1.88	2.00	2.04	2.27	1.89	2.32	2.11	2.05	2.17	2.15	1.94	2.17
2	3.04	2.87	3.09	3.11	2.97	3.03	2.89	3.01	2.48	2.88	2.89	2.74	2.83	2.81	2.63	2.79
3	2.93	2.75	3.09	3.24	3.46	3.35	3.26	3.15	2.51	3.20	3.12	3.12	3.13	3.01	2.84	2.83
4	2.58	2.55	2.75	2.76	3.07	3.29	3.24	3.18	2.35	3.00	2.97	3.04	3.02	3.01	2.88	3.03
5	2.24	2.23	2.43	2.57	2.61	3.02	3.03	2.90	2.15	2.67	2.82	3.02	2.98	3.06	2.96	3.02
6	1.98	2.07	2.14	2.18	2.34	2.55	2.74	2.70	2.01	2.46	2.75	2.62	2.82	2.87	2.63	2.88
7	1.81	1.83	1.96	2.02	2.09	2.37	2.41	2.47	1.74	2.30	2.51	2.48	2.63	2.60	2.50	2.61
8	1.68	1.57	1.75	1.79	1.86	2.10	2.20	2.19	1.69	2.14	2.39	2.28	2.25	2.50	2.29	2.31
9	1.45	1.47	1.67	1.67	1.69	1.91	1.91	1.91	1.43	2.00	2.07	2.17	2.11	2.30	2.08	2.32
0–4	2.33	2.20	2.30	2.32	2.35	2.42	2.38	2.43	1.93	2.28	2.27	2.25	2.30	2.27	2.13	2.23
5–9	1.83	1.83	1.99	2.05	2.12	2.39	2.46	2.44	1.81	2.31	2.51	2.52	2.56	2.67	2.49	2.63
10–14	1.11	1.10	1.20	1.24	1.30	1.42	1.45	1.51	1.08	1.49	1.68	1.74	1.84	1.90	1.80	1.81
15–19	0.79	0.77	0.83	0.87	0.88	0.96	0.97	1.00	0.70	0.96	1.10	1.18	1.27	1.33	1.33	1.32
20–24	0.50	0.50	0.53	0.58	0.60	0.66	0.64	0.68	0.51	0.65	0.74	0.78	0.87	0.91	0.89	0.92
25 and more	0.19	0.19	0.20	0.22	0.22	0.26	0.27	0.28	0.24	0.29	0.32	0.34	0.38	0.39	0.41	0.41
Total divorce rate	34.8	33.9	36.2	37.5	38.4	41.8	42.1	43.1	32.5	41.4	44.7	45.7	48.0	49.3	47.3	48.7
Mean marriage duration at divorce	10.1	10.2	10.3	10.5	10.5	10.6	10.7	10.8	10.8	11.0	11.3	11.5	11.8	11.9	12.2	12.0

Table 7 Divorce rate by order

Indicators	1991	1994	1997	2000	2003	2006	1991	1994	1997	2000	2003	2006
	Total divorce rate						Mean marriage duration at divorce					
1st marriages	36.0	39.3	43.6	42.7	50.2	50.8	10.3	10.7	11.0	11.3	12.0	12.5
Remarriages	29.5	30.3	36.2	36.3	40.1	42.0	8.5	9.0	9.2	9.7	10.3	10.4
Total	34.8	37.5	42.1	41.4	48.0	48.7	10.1	10.5	10.7	11.0	11.8	12.0

in the third and fourth years of marriage. The biggest increase in divorce intensity was among marriages of longer duration, and the divorce intensity among marriages more than 25 years in duration almost doubled between 1991 and 2006. In conformity with this development the mean marriage duration at divorce (calculated from the distribution of intensities by marriage duration) in the indicated period increased by almost two years, from 10.1 to 12.0 years.

The total divorce rate, which determines what percentage of marriages would end in divorce if the current rate of divorce by duration of marriage were preserved, has in recent years remained at a level just below fifty percent. It came closest to the fifty-percent mark in 2004 when it reached 49.3%. At the start of the 1990s, though, it was less than 40%. The Czech Republic thus traditionally figures in the top rankings in international comparisons of divorce rates.

Individual intensities, including total divorce rate, can be calculated separately for first marriages and remarriages. Table 7 shows that first marriages have a higher total divorce rate than remarriages; on the other hand, when higher-order marriages end in divorce it is on average approximately two years earlier than in the case of first marriages.

A time series of divorce rates by duration of marriage for a single marriage cohort can be source data for the cumulated divorce rate of the given marriage cohort. Because data on divorces by year of the marriage are only available since 1991, by 2007 it is possible to obtain a divorce rate at most for marriages sixteen years in duration. During this period, 34% of the marriages that took place in 1991 have ended in divorce. Data on the divorce rates of ten-year marriages is available for seven marriage cohorts (1991–1997): 23–24% of these marriages ended in divorce.

The highest divorce rate so far is observed in the cohort of marriages from 1998, of which 12.0% of couples divorced after five years and 20.3% after eight years (Table 8). Conversely, in the next marriage cohorts, of marriages that took place in the year 1999 and 2000, a lower intensity of divorce in the first

Table 8 Cumulated divorce intensity of marriage cohort by the duration of marriage (age-cohort specific events)

Duration of marriage	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
1	0.6	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.4
2	2.8	2.5	2.3	2.4	2.4	2.6	2.6	2.8	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.6	2.4	2.5	2.6	
3	5.9	5.6	5.4	5.2	5.5	5.2	5.4	5.8	4.9	5.0	5.3	5.2	5.1	5.6		
4	9.3	9.1	8.5	8.6	8.1	8.2	8.5	8.9	8.1	8.2	8.1	8.1	8.1			
5	12.5	12.3	11.9	11.0	10.9	11.3	11.4	12.0	11.3	11.0	11.1	11.3				
6	15.6	15.4	14.2	13.5	13.8	14.3	14.3	15.1	14.3	14.0	14.2					
7	18.4	17.4	16.5	16.2	16.5	17.0	17.2	17.7	17.2	17.1						
8	20.4	19.5	18.9	18.8	19.0	19.7	19.7	20.3	20.0							
9	22.4	21.8	21.2	21.1	21.4	22.0	22.0	22.9								
10	24.5	23.8	23.3	23.3	23.5	24.3	24.5									
11	26.6	25.8	25.5	25.3	25.6	26.5										
12	28.5	27.8	27.4	27.2	27.8											
13	30.5	29.6	29.2	29.1												
14	32.3	31.4	31.0													
15	33.9	33.2														

Note: The data also reflect divorces in made in 2007.

Table 9 Average marriage duration at divorce by citizenship

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Divorces of males-foreigners	9.3	8.3	8.4	7.3	6.7	7.8	7.2	8.0	7.4	7.8	7.6	7.5
Divorces of females-foreigners	10.5	11.2	10.3	8.9	9.1	8.3	8.7	8.7	8.2	8.3	8.3	7.9
Divorces of two foreigners	11.8	12.4	12.7	9.4	10.6	10.2	9.4	10.8	11.3	12.5	13.3	12.2
Divorces of two citizens of the CR	11.0	11.4	11.7	12.0	12.2	12.5	12.8	13.1	13.5	13.7	14.1	14.1
Total divorces	11.0	11.3	11.6	11.8	12.0	12.3	12.6	12.9	13.3	13.4	13.8	13.7

Note: Calculated from absolute data on duration of marriage.

years of marriage was observed, but its cumulative divorce intensity after six years of marriage drew even and then even surpassed the divorce rate of other cohorts, e.g. the 1994 and 1995 cohorts.

While the mean marriage duration at divorce has generally increased since the mid-1990s, this indicator has exhibited the opposite trend among marriages in which one of the spouses had foreign citizenship. In the late 20th century this trend was decreasing and is now below eight years, thus an average of six years fewer than the average of divorced marriages in which both partners are Czech citizens. The trend in the average duration of marriages in which both partners are foreigners is very uneven, as in absolute figures the numbers are very small. However, it can be said that marriages between two foreigners on average divorce later than those in which only one spouse is a foreigner.

Another piece of data characterising dissolved marriages is the **number of (living) children** born of marriage. Until 1994 both the total number of children and the number of minor children were indicated in the Divorce Reports, but since 1995 only data on the number of (living) minor children from the marriage are available. (The Civic Code defines the age of majority as the age of 18.)

As the share of older marriages among divorces has increased over the observed period, the share of divorces with minor children has decreased: while in 1991, 71.7% of divorced marriages had minor children, in 2006 it was only 60.5%. Data on the structure of divorces by the number of minor children (Table 10) confirm that the 1998 amendment to the Family Act above all impacted families with young children – the temporary decrease in the number of divorces in 1999 was caused by a decrease in the number of divorces of marriages with minor children.

What has not changed over the course of the years is the structure of divorced marriages with minor children by their number: over the observed period, 55–59% of these divorced marriages were families with one minor child, 36–38% had two minor children, and just 5–6% had three children. The average number of children in divorced families has long remained constant at 1.5.

The number of minor children in a family understandably has much to do with the duration of a mar-

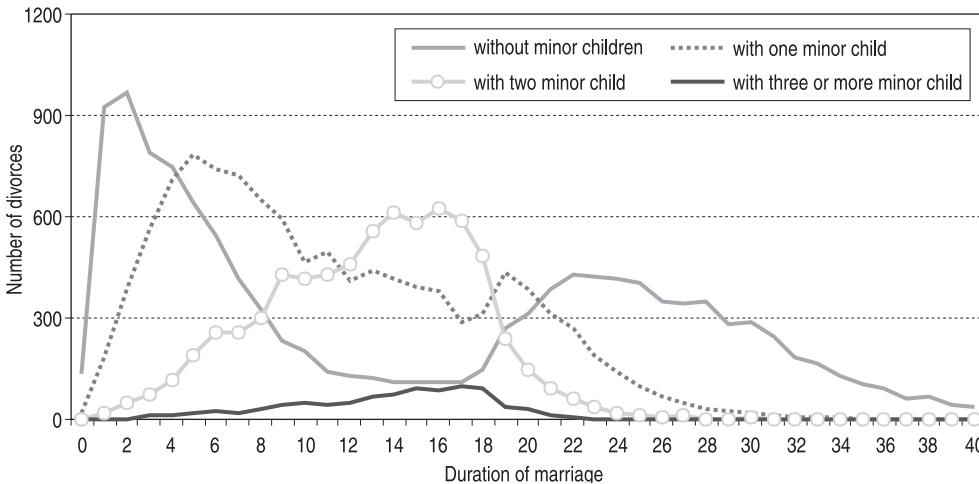
Table 10 Divorces by number of minor children

Number of minor children	1991	1994	1997	1998	1999	2000	2003	2006
0	8 313	8 650	9 862	10 727	9 480	10 637	12 119	12 412
1	11 638	12 902	13 274	12 607	8 199	11 084	11 748	11 004
2	8 076	8 124	8 144	7 802	5 248	7 015	7 929	7 085
3	1 176	1 091	1 006	994	632	813	853	774
4	134	146	144	183	80	127	132	98
5 or more	29	26	35	50	18	28	43	42
Total divorces	29 366	30 939	32 465	32 363	23 657	29 704	32 824	31 415
Divorces with minors	21 053	22 289	22 603	21 636	14 177	19 067	20 705	19 003
incl: with one child (%)	55.3	57.9	58.7	58.3	57.8	58.1	56.7	57.9
with two children (%)	38.4	36.4	36.0	36.1	37.0	36.8	38.3	37.3
with 3 or more children (%)	6.4	5.7	5.2	5.7	5.1	5.1	5.0	4.8
Proportion of divorces with minors (%)	71.7	72.0	69.6	66.9	59.9	64.2	63.1	60.5
Average number of minor children in family with minors	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5
Number of minor children	32 014	33 143	33 332	32 192	21 005	28 215	30 927	28 117

riage. Figure 5 shows the curves capturing the number of divorces by the number of minor children and by the duration of a marriage in 2006. The distribution of divorces without minor children shows two peaks: one shortly after the start of a marriage, when the couples is still childless, and the second after about 22 years of marriage, when the couple’s children have already reached the age of majority. The same is true of divorces with one minor child, the only difference being that the first peak comes approximately three years later, and the second peak comes earlier, around 20 years of marriage. The divorce curve for families with two minor children has one peak, which in the early 1990s stretched over the broad interval of 8–18 years after the wedding, with the number of divorces in families of this size surpassing the number of divorces in other groups defined by the number of minor children. Today the interval in which families with two minor children form the largest divorce group is narrower, with the 15-year duration mark forming the top end of the interval. The absolute number of divorces in families with three or more minor children is substantially lower compared to the other groups and the number rises with the duration of the marriage, peaking after 15–18 years of marriage, and then dropping sharply.

Another piece of data that is common to both divorcing spouses is their last shared **place of residence**, which provides information on the regional distribution of divorce. There are regional variations

Figure 5 Divorces by duration of marriage and the number of minor children, 2006



not just in the overall divorce rate (measured as total divorce rates), but also, for example, in the share of higher-order divorces or in the mean marriage duration at divorce. However, here we shall refrain from describing these regional differences and shall just note that generally there is a higher divorce rate in the regions of Northwest Bohemia and in recent years also in the Středočeský region (a total divorce rate of over 50%), while the lowest divorce rate is traditionally recorded in the Vysočina region (39% in 2006), and the Pardubický, Jihomoravský, and Zlínský regions.

Conclusion

The data provided in the Divorce Reports are generally sufficient to meet the needs of demographic statistics, that is, for calculating intensity indicators, while the most interesting data relate to information that tells us more about the divorced marriages. However, the informative capacity of some items in the Divorce Report (the cause of the breakdown of marriage, education) is reduced by the fact that the provision of some information is optional or need not be determined. Moreover, Divorce Reports do not meet the requirements (and thus are not intended) for conducting a deeper analysis of divorce, and for that we have to turn to other studies, such as sociological studies, which focus on the factors that influence divorce and the timing of divorce, the accessibility of divorce, family arrangements after divorce, and society's view of divorce. It is also important to interpret divorce rates in relation to nuptiality intensity.

The Czech Republic has long had a consistently high divorce rate: almost every second marriage ends in divorce. Even at the international level the Czech total divorce rate is one of the highest, alongside Scandinavian and Russian divorce rates, though international comparisons are not simple given the differences in divorce legislation in various countries. In recent years the structure of divorces in the Czech Republic has changed in the direction of more divorces among marriages of long duration.

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