

## Ideas expressed by the respondents about family and relations between couples

Petra Šalamounová, Gabriela Šamanová

In January 2003 Centre for Public Opinion Research (CVVM) conducted a survey, which was, apart from other things, aimed at a family and family life. Our report pursues issues related to establishing a family, especially timing of certain events, and also to attitudes of the questioned to certain controversial issues of relations between couples. These opinions document well how open or conservative the respondents are. It can be presumed that public opinion significantly affects the demographic behaviour of individuals. It is important to realize that respondents express their general opinion or an ideal opinion. They don't indicate whether they would personally behave this way or prefer this model in their own life.

### Opinions on sexual relations and relations between couples

In the Czech Republic, similarly to other developed countries of the world, getting married and establishing a family is postponed to later age. In many cases, people don't accomplish one or both of these things during their life. At the same time it is clear, that sexual life is more and more separated from reproduction, also due to the development of modern methods of contraception.

The survey of CVVM mentioned above used a question from ISSP<sup>1</sup> research, which was conducted in the Czech Republic in 1999. The aim was to find out whether public opinion on pre-marital and extra-marital sexual relationship and sexual relationship between partners of the same sex changed and if it did, in what way. Percentual formulation of acquired answers is indicated in the following Table 1.

**Table 1: Opinions on sexual relations (in %)**

	Always wrong		Almost always wrong		Wrong in some cases		Never bad		Doesn't know	
	1999	2003	1999	2003	1999	2003	1999	2003	1999	2003
Pre-marital sexual relationship	3,1	2,4	4,3	3,2	21,3	24,6	67,2	65,6	4,0	4,2
Extra-marital sexual relationship	37,8	31,8	24,9	38,1	27,7	21,1	4,4	4,1	5,1	5,0
Homosexual relationship	23,8	25,0	9,7	14,1	17,6	22,1	26,1	15,8	22,7	22,6

Source: CVVM, Our Society (Naše společnost) 2003/January (n = 1086); SC & C, ISSP research of religion 1999/June-July (n = 1223)

<sup>1</sup> "What is your opinion on these questions?"

a) Do you think it is wrong when man and woman have sexual relationship before marriage?

b) And if a married man or a woman have sexual relationship with someone else, who is not their husband or wife?

c) And what about sexual relationship between two people of the same sex?"

Pre-marital sexual activities were perceived most tolerantly. Almost 66 % of respondents indicated that sex before marriage was never wrong and other 25 % of respondents said that it was wrong only in some cases. Only 6 % of the questioned denounced pre-marital sexual relationship as always wrong or almost always wrong. In comparison to the year 1999, no significant shift was registered in this issue. In both surveys the questioned had no problem to express their opinion on this question. 4% of respondents identically answered “doesn’t know”.

Statistics about the migration of population also confirm the traditionally benevolent approach to sexual relationships before marriage (Table 2). Practical demographics uses an indicator called pre-marital conception, which documents number of first children conceived before marriage. It includes all those that are born up to 8 months after marriage. In this way, premature births are compensated. This indicator has been decreasing during the last decade to the present level of 42 %. At the same time, however, extra-marital fertility keeps growing continuously.

**Tab. 2: Pre-marital conception (in %)**

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Up to 8 months	55,6	54,4	50,6	54,1	54,5	54,0	50,8	49,0	48,1	45,4	43,5	41,6

Source: our own calculations according to Population Migration 1989-2000, ČSÚ

Extra-marital relationships of married men or women were perceived far more harshly than their pre-marital activities. In this case, more than 70 % of the questioned believed that such a relationship was almost always wrong or even always wrong. 21 %, resp. 4 % of respondents tend to believe that extra-marital relation is wrong only sometimes, or even never. Similar assessment of extra-marital relations followed from the results of a survey from 1999. Most frequent answer in the 2003 survey was “almost always wrong”, which was reinforced to the detriment of both totally rejecting “always wrong” and rather tolerant “sometimes wrong”.

Almost a quarter of respondents (23 %) couldn’t comment on the issue of sexual relationship of partners of the same sex. Another quarter of respondents stated that homosexual relationship was always wrong. 16 % of respondents placed themselves in the opposite pole of the scale (never wrong). After excluding answers “doesn’t know” and adding up answers expressing rather negative and rather positive attitudes, we arrive at 50 % representation in both categories. In comparison to 1999, there is a shift towards negative assessment of homosexual relations. In 1999, only 43 % of respondents altogether indicated answers “always wrong” and “almost always wrong” (after subtracting answer “doesn’t know”). Number of answers “never wrong” decreased significantly in 2003 (by 10 percentage points).

Some socio-demographic characteristics of respondents affected their attitude to issues related to sexual behaviour. Younger people, people who don't express affiliation to a church or religious community and people from larger cities more frequently advocated this opinion. Significant prevalence of negative assessment of extra-marital relationships appeared among women. Almost 40 % of women believed that such a relationship was always wrong, and another 40 % of women believed that it was almost always wrong. Sexual relationship among partners of the same sex is assessed negatively predominantly by young people, who express affiliation to a church ("Always wrong" = 42 %).

The research did not survey to what extent respondents perceive marriage as important, and in how many cases they actually didn't mean pre-marital relationships (which are presumed, at least according to their name, to lead to marriage) but a complete alternative. In 1995, however, IVVM conducted a survey among single respondents about the form of partnership they preferred. 63 % of respondents preferred marriage, 15 people out of one hundred wanted to live with a partner, but without a marriage certificate. 12 % of the questioned were undecided and every tenth person wanted to live alone. Such a high proportion of people preferring solitude was probably influenced by the fact that older respondents, who were also included into category of single people, might have resigned on family and partnership because of their previous experience. The low number of people, who have never experienced marriage, doesn't provide enough space for further analysis.

Besides those, who don't want to get married, there is a group of people, who are not allowed to get married. They are people with homosexual orientation, who are prevented from legalizing their partnership by current legislation. CVVM survey concerning this issue asked following question: "Do you think that cohabitation of people of the same sex should be stipulated by law?" Opinions of citizens on legalization of registered partnership were scrutinized already for the fifth time in this way. Results including confrontation with previous surveys are indicated in the following Table 3.

**Table 3: Opinions on legalizing cohabitation of people of the same sex (in %)**

	1998/5	1999/4	2000/4	2001/4	2003/1
Certainly yes	12	15	11	13	16
Rather yes	23	23	22	28	33
Rather no	16	20	16	17	16
Certainly no	21	22	22	16	19
Doesn't know	28	20	29	26	16

Source: CVVM, survey Our Society 2003/January (n = 1086)

Altogether 49 % of the questioned agreed with legalization of cohabitation of people of the same sex (certainly + rather yes), which was the strongest support indicated since 1998. Altogether 35 % of the questioned rather or certainly disagreed, which was the second lowest rate of disagreement measured since 1998. Significantly lower frequency of answer “doesn’t know” (16 %) was registered in comparison with previous surveys. It confirms an increasing awareness of the respondents of the issue of registered partnership. It is evident from Table 3 that number of undecided respondents or those not interested in the problem positively decreased in favour of those advocating legal provision for cohabitation of partners of the same sex.

There seemed to be a statistically significant link between attitude towards legalizing cohabitation of homosexuals and the age of respondents. In the group of respondents, who advocated legalization, those not exceeding the age of thirty amounted to one third of all the questioned. On the contrary, one third of people opposing legalization consisted of people over sixty. Women were more inclined to legalization than men. After excluding answer “doesn’t know”, 62 % of women and 54 % of men expressed their support of legalization. There was a statistically significant difference between atheists and people expressing affiliation to a church or other religious community. Even though 34 % (also after excluding undecided respondents) of the believers stated that they rather supported legalization, the group was undervalued in comparison with atheists (43 %). Almost 32 % of believers certainly disagreed with legalization. People with no affiliation to a church certainly disagreed only in 16 % of cases.

In a survey of CVVM in January respondents were also asked about the best age for the first marriage, the best age for parenting the first and the last child and the ideal number of children in a family.<sup>2</sup> The same question was asked in a survey conducted by STEM agency in 1996.

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<sup>2</sup> “If you take into account all circumstances, what is your opinion on the best age for the first marriage, parenting of the first and the last child and ideal number of children in a family?”

- a) age of woman for getting married for the first time:
- b) age of man for getting married for the first time:
- c) age of woman for parenting the first child:
- d) age of man for parenting the first child:
- e) age of woman for parenting the last child:
- f) age of man for parenting the last child:
- g) ideal number of children in a family:

### Best age for the first marriage

There still persists an opinion that a woman should get married before her 25<sup>th</sup> birthday (see Table 4). Six respondents out of ten expressed this opinion. In the mid 1990's, three quarters of the questioned agreed with this opinion. Only minimum of the respondents regard thirty or more as the best age for the bride to get married for the first time. In 1996 not a single respondent mentioned age exceeding thirty. As regards grooms, respondents indicated higher age. In both compared years roughly two thirds of the questioned indicated age from 25 to 29 years. Proportion of those, who regard the best age of grooms as thirty or more, increased in 2003 (from 15 to 20 %). It is interesting that most frequent answer both for men and women identically was 25 years.

**Table 4: Answers to question: "According to your opinion, what is the best age of men and women to get married for the first time?"**

2003	For a woman			For a man		
	Frequency of answers	Proportion	Cummulative proportion	Frequency of answers	Proportion	Cummulative proportion
Up to 24 years	606	59,5	59,5	168	16,5	16,5
25 – 29	386	37,9	97,4	644	63,3	79,8
Over 30 years	27	2,6	100,0	206	20,2	100,0
Total number of answers	1019	100,0		1018	100,0	
1996	For a woman			For a man		
	Frequency of answers	Proportion	Cummulative proportion	Frequency of answers	Proportion	Cummulative proportion
Up to 24 years	1094	75,6	75,6	303	20,9	20,9
25 – 29	342	23,6	99,2	935	64,6	85,5
Over 30 years	12	0,8	100,0	210	14,5	100,0
Total number of answers	1448	100,0		1448	100,0	

Source: CVVM, survey Our Society 2003/January (n = 1086); STEM, module for family 1996/September (n = 1469)

Opinions on the best age of a bride differed according to age of the respondent. Younger people indicated more frequently age over 30 years. In case of grooms, the differences were not so significant. In both cases it depended on education of the questioned. As it was expected, University graduates chose higher age in both cases. On the contrary, inhabitants of smaller cities (between 5 and 20 thousand inhabitants) chose the youngest age of newlyweds. Attitudes of Prague inhabitants, who preferred higher marriage age, differed from the rest of the questioned.

Significant changes have occurred also in actual behaviour. Young people gradually abandon the model that was typical for the socialist era and postpone their marriage to a higher age. The last available data about demographic situation are from the end of 20<sup>th</sup> century, but nevertheless the shift is very significant. The highest probability for men to get married for the first time is between 26 and 28 years. At the end of the past regime this probability was the highest at a significantly lower age – roughly between 22 and 24 years. In case of women, the highest probability to get married for the first time is traditionally lower than in case of men, currently it is at the age of 25 to 26. However, in the end of 1980's, this probability was highest at around 20 years of age. Table 5 indicates the average age at marriage and some other characteristics of single fiancées.

**Tab. 5: Average age, median, lower and upper quartile of single fiancées.**

	1990	1992	1994	1996	1998	1999
Men						
Average age at marriage	23,96	24,79	26,15	27,12	28,11	28,52
Lower quartile	21,31	21,56	22,35	23,26	23,71	24,54
Age median	23,06	23,61	24,93	26,01	26,83	27,43
Upper quartile	25,43	26,57	28,38	29,61	30,77	31,26
Women						
Average age at marriage	21,43	22,53	23,93	24,88	25,77	26,23
Lower quartile	19,16	19,53	20,37	21,28	22,00	22,46
Age median	20,50	21,30	22,66	23,80	24,65	25,13
Upper quartile	22,54	24,08	25,88	27,06	28,33	28,52

Source: Development of Population of the Czech Republic, Faculty of Natural Sciences UK, 2000

Note: calculated from net-nuptiality table for single persons

### **The best age for parenthood**

According to CVVM, most respondents considered the best age of a mother for parenting the first child between 25 and 29 years. On the contrary, in 1996 there still prevailed an opinion that women should parent their first child before reaching 25 years of age. In 2003, only six out of one hundred respondents preferred primiparas of thirty years or older. As in the case of the best age for marriage the questioned mentioned most frequently the age of 25. Most respondents, roughly every fifth one, chose 30 as the best age for first fatherhood. Remaining respondents were inclined to indicating rather lower age. Almost 60 % of the questioned indicated age from 25 to 29 years. Compared to the previous survey, there occurred a shift towards higher average age.

**Table 10 and 11: Answers to question: "In your opinion, what is the best age of men and women for parenting the first child?"**

2003	For a woman			For a man		
	Frequency of answers	Proportion	Cummulative proportion	Frequency of answers	Proportion	Cummulative proportion
Up to 24 years	416	40,7	40,7	88	8,7	8,7
25 – 29	546	53,4	94,1	582	57,2	65,9
Over 30 years	60	5,9	100,0	347	34,1	100,0
Total number of answers	1022	100,0		1017	100,0	

Source: CVVM, survey Our Society 2003/January (n = 1086)

1996	For a woman			For a man		
	Frequency of answers	Proportion	Cummulative proportion	Frequency of answers	Proportion	Cummulative proportion
Up to 24 years	809	55,9	55,9	120	8,3	8,3
25 – 29	600	41,5	97,4	956	66,1	74,4
Over 30 years	38	2,6	100,0	371	25,6	100,0
Total number of answers	1447	100,0		1447	100,0	

Source: STEM, module for family 1996/September (n = 1469)

Again it was primarily education that affected the answers. People with A-levels or higher education preferred higher age of parents. The statements of respondents didn't differ according to their sex. Their age was of minimum importance and in case of their opinions about the age of fathers it did not matter at all. As it was already mentioned, people living in small cities differed from the other groups – they again chose younger age.

The answers to questions about the best age of parents for parenting their last child have a significantly wider dispersion, especially in case of fathers' age. Most respondents regard 40 and more as the best age of men. In case of mothers, only 16 out of one hundred people indicated this age category. Whereas in 1996 two thirds of the questioned thought that the age of a mother at her last childbirth should not exceed 34 years, the age between 35 and 39 years starts to prevail nowadays.

In this case, opinions didn't differ much according to socio-demographic characteristics of the respondent. What is unexpected is the link between the age of the mother at her last childbirth and the education of the respondent. The age of 40 and more at a woman's last childbirth was not mentioned most frequently by people with highest education, but by respondents with primary school education. Results concerning the age of fathers came out as expected. People with University education indicated more frequently age of 40 and more. This could be explained by the fact that people with higher education are more aware of risks connected with late maternity.

**Tables 12 and 13: Answers to question: "In your opinion, what is the best age of men and women to parent their last child?"**

2003	For a woman			For a man		
	Frequency of answers	Proportion	Cummulative proportion l	Frequency of answers	Proportion	Cummulative proportion
Up to 34 years	404	41,1	41,1	142	14,7	14,7
35 – 39	421	42,9	84,0	311	32,1	46,7
Over 40 years	157	16,0	100,0	516	53,3	100,0
Total number of answers	982	100,0		969	100,0	

Source: CVVM, survey Our Society 2003/January (n = 1086)

1996	For a woman			For a man		
	Frequency of answers	Proportion	Cummulative proportion	Frequency of answers	Proportion	Cummulative proportion
Up to 34 years	967	67,1	67,1	388	26,9	26,9
35 – 39	402	27,9	94,9	555	38,5	65,4
Over 40 years	73	5,1	100,0	499	34,6	100,0
Total number of answers	1442	100,0		1442	100,0	

Source: STEM, module for family 1996/September (n = 1469)

It is more difficult to compare ideas about the best age of men and women for parenting the first and the last child with the real data. As concerns fertility, demography usually works only with mothers. Continuous statistics indicate data about the age of a father, but only in case that he got married before the birth of his first child. Nowadays, when almost every fourth child is born to a single mother, the calculation of the average age of a father can be significantly biased. Moreover, we can presume that the age range of married fathers will be different from the age of single fathers. Furthermore, common statistics is not able to distinguish when the last child is concerned.

Since the middle of 1990's, average age of mothers has increased rapidly, from originally less than 25 years to current 27,2 years. Similarly, the age of mothers parenting their first child has increased. Currently it fluctuates around 25 years. From all the mothers who had their first child in 2000, 25 % were older than 26,4 years. However, every fourth primapara was younger than 21 years.



**Table 14: Average age of mother, modus, median, lower and upper quartile between 1989-2000.**

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Average age	24,8	24,8	24,7	24,8	25,0	25,4	25,8	26,1	26,4	26,6	26,9	27,2
Lower quartile	20,3	20,3	20,2	20,3	20,4	20,7	21,1	21,4	21,8	22,1	22,3	22,7
Median	22,9	22,9	22,9	23,0	23,2	23,6	24,0	24,4	24,7	25,0	25,4	25,7
Upper quartile	26,4	26,4	26,3	26,5	26,8	27,2	27,7	28,0	28,3	28,6	28,8	29,2

Source: own calculations based on Population Migration 1989-2000, ČSÚ

**Table 15: Average age of mother with a first child, modus, median, lower and upper quartile between 1989-2000**

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Average age	22,5	22,4	22,4	22,5	22,6	22,9	23,3	23,7	24,0	24,4	24,6	24,9
Lower quartile	19,0	19,0	19,0	18,9	19,0	19,2	19,4	19,8	20,0	20,3	20,5	20,9
Median	20,7	20,7	20,6	20,7	20,8	21,0	21,5	21,9	22,4	22,8	23,2	23,6
Upper quartile	23,2	23,1	23,1	23,3	23,5	23,9	24,4	24,9	25,3	25,7	26,0	26,4

Source: own calculations based on Population Migration 1989-2000, ČSÚ

### **Ideal number of children in a family**

In the period from 1996 to 2003, no significant changes in opinions concerning ideal number of children in a family occurred. In both cases, respondents indicated most frequently two children. The family model with two children has a long tradition in our country. 67 % of CCVM respondents have chosen this model. In 1996 it was by 3 percentage points more. More than 22 % of people regard three children as the ideal number. The proportion of people preferring larger families was slightly higher in 2003 than in 1996, but it is definitely not a statistically significant change. The answers were affected mainly by the age of respondents. Respondents in retirement age primarily preferred large families. On the contrary, people in middle age (30 – 40) indicated higher number of children least frequently. They usually grew in smaller families than the older respondents and unlike young respondents they already have experience with their own families. Therefore they can assess this problem more realistically. There were no significant statistical differences in the frequency of answers according to sex of respondents.

**Table 6: Answer to question: "In your opinion, what is the ideal number of children in a family?"**

	2003			1996		
	Frequency of answers	Proportion	Cummulative proportion	Frequency of answers	Proportion	Cummulative proportion
0	*	*	*	4	0,3	0,3
1	66	6,4	6,4	100	6,9	7,2
2	695	67,0	73,3	1022	70,5	77,7
3	235	22,6	96,0	286	19,7	97,4
4 +	42	4,0	100,0	38	2,6	100,0
Total number of answers	1038	100,0		1450	100,0	

Source: CVVM, survey Our Society 2003/January (n = 1086); STEM, module for family 1996/September (n = 1469)

Surprisingly, the distribution of answers corresponded to the education of respondents. Only three percent of University graduates regard one child as an ideal, which was the lowest proportion out of the four categories. On the contrary, family with one child seems to be most convenient to people with high school education without A-levels. University graduates, almost three quarters of them, more frequently prefer a family with two children. Affiliation of respondents to a church also affected the answers. Believers find three and primarily four children in a family as the ideal number. People with very low household income, which doesn't exceed 9,500 Czech Crowns, also prefer large families.

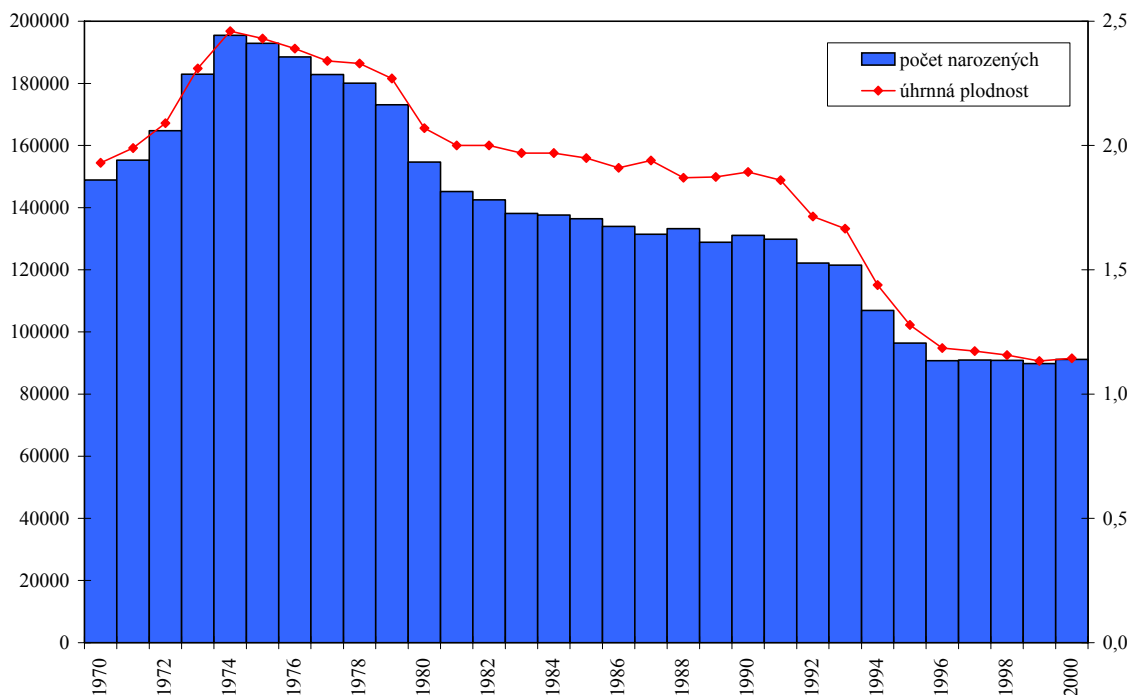
Excessively low fertility has troubled the Czech Republic and other developed countries for the whole 20<sup>th</sup> century. There were certain deviations in individual periods, usually following various external factors. Number of indicators is used for measuring fertility rate. One of the most basic ones is the so-called total fertility rate. It is usually calculated for each calendar year separately and it expresses how many children would be born to one woman if the structure of the children born according to mother's age remained unchanged. It is therefore more difficult to interpret the indicator of total fertility in times of significant changes.

Apart from this indicator, demography uses the so-called final fertility rate, which is calculated for individual generations. This indicator can be calculated only when women of the relevant age-group reach the age, when it is not probable that they will have any more children, that is, when they reach 40 years of age.

In an optimum case the values of total fertility rate should oscillate around 2 children per mother. In such a case, total reproduction of population is accomplished. The last time when the indicator in the Czech Republic reached values around 2 children per mother was at the beginning of 1980's (Diagram 1). Since then until the mid 1990's the level of total fertility rate decreased continuously. In the end of millenium this downfall stopped, but so far, no

significant change in the trend has occurred. There are many reasons for this development. In many surveys people still express their support for families and they consider children to be of a great value, but similarly to this case, they express something like a general ideal, instead of their own idea and their own plans.

**Diagram 1: Number of born children and total fertility rate in the Czech Republic, 1970 - 2000**



Source: own calculations according to Population Migration 1989-2000, ČSÚ.

### Opinions of respondents on abortions

The issue of abortion is traditionally linked to the issue of fertility. The development of these two indicators has been related for a long time. If fertility decreased, abortions increased and vice versa. Lately, these two processes were separated from the demographic point of view. The attitude of the public to the problem of abortion is nevertheless important.

CVVM<sup>3</sup> scrutinized opinion of respondents on abortions due to the risk of a defected child or due to the low income of the family. This question was taken over from ISSP research from 1999 with the intention to detect potential shift in opinions of the public on abortion. Results of the scrutiny from 1999 to 2003 are indicated in the following Table 7.

<sup>3</sup>“What do you personally think about a woman who terminates her pregnancy?  
a) If there is a high risk of having a defected child,  
b) If the family has a very low income and cannot afford another child.”

**Table7: Opinions of public on abortion (in %)**

	Always wrong		Almost always wrong		Wrong in some cases		Never wrong		Doesn't know	
	1999	2003	1999	2003	1999	2003	1999	2003	1999	2003
Risk of having a defected child	10,5	4,3	10,0	4,6	22,4	20,0	49,4	66,1	7,8	4,9
Cannot afford a child – low income	17,5	11,7	17,4	18,1	29,8	36,3	26,5	24,7	8,5	9,2

Source: CVVM, Our Society 2003/January (n = 1086); SC & C, ISSP religion 1999/June -July (n = 1223)

It is obvious from the CVVM results that the cause of abortion is important for respondents when assessing whether it is right, respectively wrong (see Table 7). 66 % of the respondents have never regarded abortion due to defected child to be wrong. One fifth of the respondents believed that abortion in this case was necessary only in some cases. The respondents, who believed that abortion was almost always or always wrong even in case of the risk mentioned above amounted together to 9 %. Less than a quarter of the respondents didn't consider abortion wrong in case the family had a low income and couldn't afford a child. 12 % agreed with possibilities "always wrong" and 18 % agreed with "almost always wrong". Highest proportion of respondents (36 %) indicated answer "sometimes wrong".

Opinions on termination of pregnancy have shifted rather significantly since 1999. As concerns termination of pregnancy because of the risk of having a defected child, the number of answers containing even slight negative assessment decreased. On the contrary, the number of respondents, who believe that in such a case abortion is never wrong, increased by 17 percentage points.

In the scrutinized period there also occurred changes in the attitude to the termination of abortion due to low family income. Whereas the frequency of answers remained on roughly the same level in categories "almost always wrong" and "never wrong", the proportion of answers "sometimes wrong" increased, primarily to the detriment of the answer "always wrong".

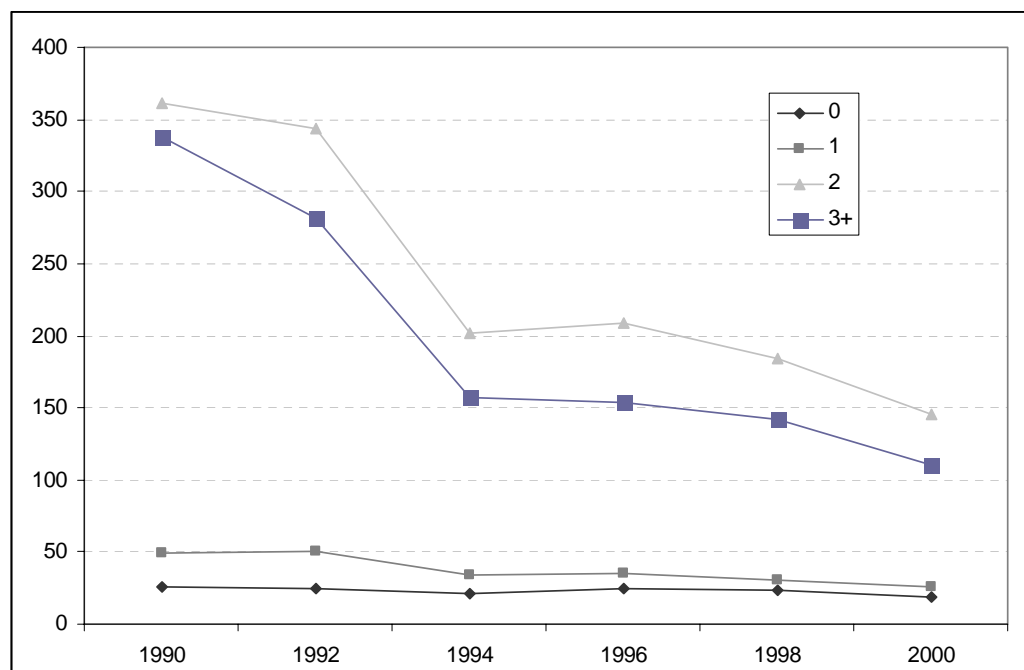
Whereas public opinion on abortions became "more tolerant", the actual rate of abortions in the Czech Republic was decreasing continuously since 1991 to the level of 63 of abortion to 100 women in 2000. This is especially due to the advanced public education and wide accessibility of modern contraceptive methods. On the contrary, the average age of women terminating their pregnancy increased to 29,5 years in the same period (Table 8).

**Table 8: Total abortion rate and average age of women at the time of the abortion**

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Total abortion rate	1,69	1,77	1,78	1,53	1,18	0,93	0,84	0,81	0,77	0,75	0,70	0,63
Average age	28,41	28,33	28,37	28,45	28,62	28,79	29,00	29,05	29,19	29,25	29,42	29,57

Source: own calculations according to Population Migration 1989-2000, ČSÚ.

Women with two or more children most frequently solve their situation by terminating their pregnancy (Diagram 2). Single women have a higher index of abortion rate than married women. Childless women undergo this procedure least frequently, disregarding their marital status.

**Diagram 2: Number of abortions per 100 born children according to the number of previous births**

Source: own calculations according to Population Migration 1989-2000, ČSÚ

## **Conclusion**

As the conducted survey indicates, the current demographic development is accompanied by a number of changes in public attitudes. In many cases, the respondents are more tolerant than they used to be. This trend was apparent especially in issues related to cohabitation of homosexual couples and to the problems of induced abortions. The idea about the best age of women and men for establishing family is shifting into higher age categories. On the other hand, the family model with two children is still prevailing and there even occurred a slight shift towards the support of larger families to the detriment of families with one child only.

The opinions of people between 20 and 30 years, that is of those, who primarily participate in reproduction, are especially important for future development of demography. The members of this group have often differed in their opinions from the rest of the questioned. This group more frequently considers 30 and more the best age for newly weds and for parenting the first child. The tolerance of respondents in this age category is evident also in their opinions on cohabitation of homosexual couples.

## **Sources:**

Survey Our Society (Naše společnost) 2003/January, CVVM 2003

STEM survey, module for family 1996/September, STEM 1996

SC & C, ISSP survey of religion 1999/June-July, SC & C 1999

Population Migration 1989-2000, Czech Statistics Office

Population development in the Czech Republic, Faculty of Natural Sciences, Charles University 2000