

Press Release

Czech public opinion on the rights of homosexuals – May 2017

- ⊙ Just under one-half (47%) of Czechs believe that life would not be difficult for anyone openly homosexual in their town or community. Conversely, 43% of citizens, most of them over the age of 60, believe that being openly homosexual would make life difficult for a person.
- ⊙ 37% of respondents state that they know or are friends with a homosexual man or woman, while 49% of respondents say that they do not.
- ⊙ Among the rights of homosexual men and women, the strongest public support is for the right to a registered partnership, a union that Czech legislation provides for. Approximately three-quarters of the Czech population (76%) support the right to a registered partnership.
- ⊙ 68% of people think that homosexuals should have the right to adopt the children of their partner, 52% support their right to marry, and 51% think that homosexuals should have the right to adopt children in institutional care.
- ⊙ The rights mentioned above are most often supported by respondents in the 15 to 29 age group, respondents who rate their living standard as good, and people who are more satisfied with their life. People who support all the rights mentioned above also more often state that they do have homosexual friends and that in their opinion being openly homosexual would not make life difficult for a person in the area where the respondent lives.

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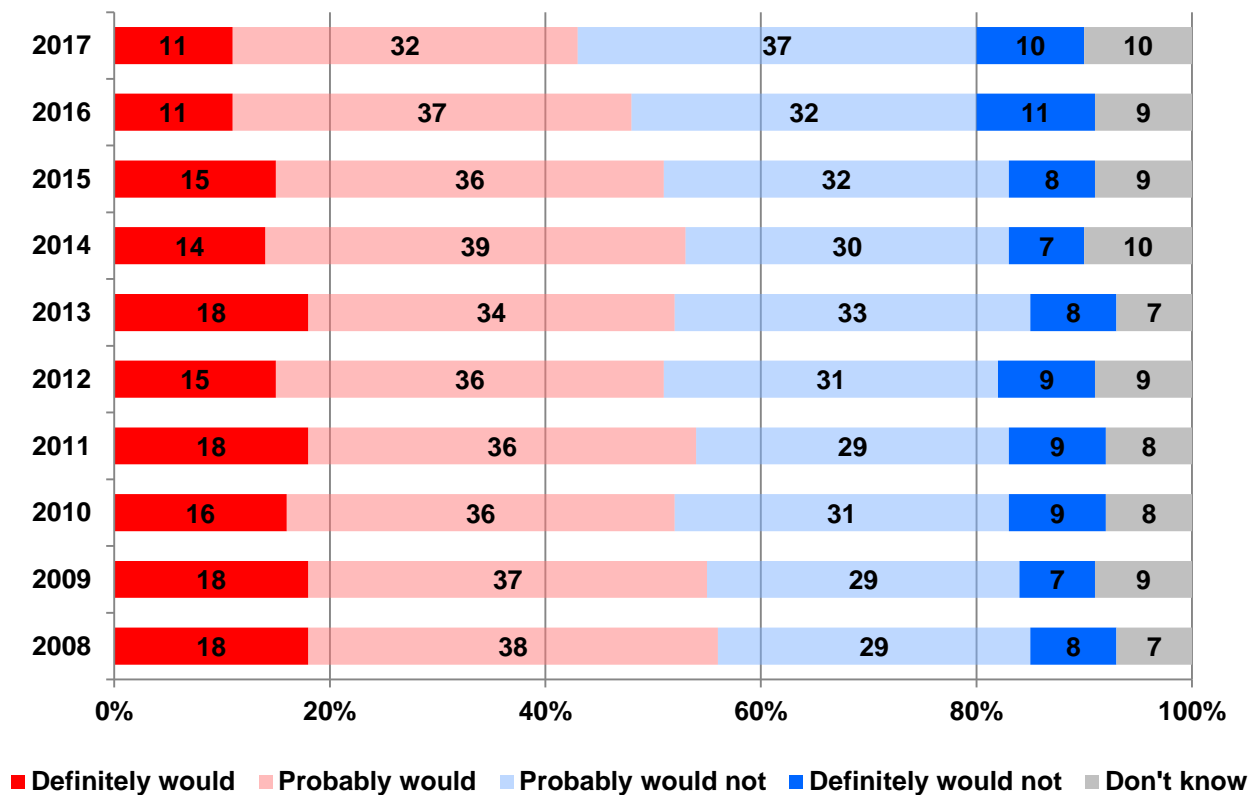


In May 2017 the regular Czech Society survey included a block of questions examining Czech society's tolerance of homosexual men and women. The survey also looked at the public's opinions on whether people with a same-sex orientation should have the right to form a registered partnership (civil union), the right to marry, the right to adopt children from 'institutions' – that is, children's homes – and the right to adopt the children of the partner the person is living with and whose children they are helping to raise.

Czech society's tolerance of homosexual men and women was measured with the aid of questions focusing on the reactions of the respondent's own immediate social environment. Respondents commented on whether being openly homosexual would make life difficult for a person in the respondent's town or community. Figure 1 shows that roughly two-fifths of people (43% - the sum of the responses 'it definitely would' and 'it probably would') believe that being openly homosexual would make a person's life difficult, while just under one-half (47%) believe it would not.

A comparison with past figures indicates that the opinion that being openly homosexual would make a person's life difficult decreased slightly from last year, especially in the response category 'it probably would', where a decrease of 5 percentage points was observed. Conversely, the share of people who answered 'it probably wouldn't' increased, also by 5 percentage points. The overall opinion that being openly homosexual would make a person's life difficult in the area where the respondent lives has weakened by 13 percentage points since 2008, while the opinion that it definitely or probably wouldn't make life more difficult has strengthened by 10 percentage points.

Figure 1. Would being openly homosexual make life more difficult for a person in your town or community?¹



Source: Public Opinion Research Centre, Institute of Sociology CAS (CVVM SOÚ AV ČR, v.v.i.), Czech Society (Naše společnost) 8–18 May 2017, 1019 respondents aged 15 and over, face-to-face interviews.

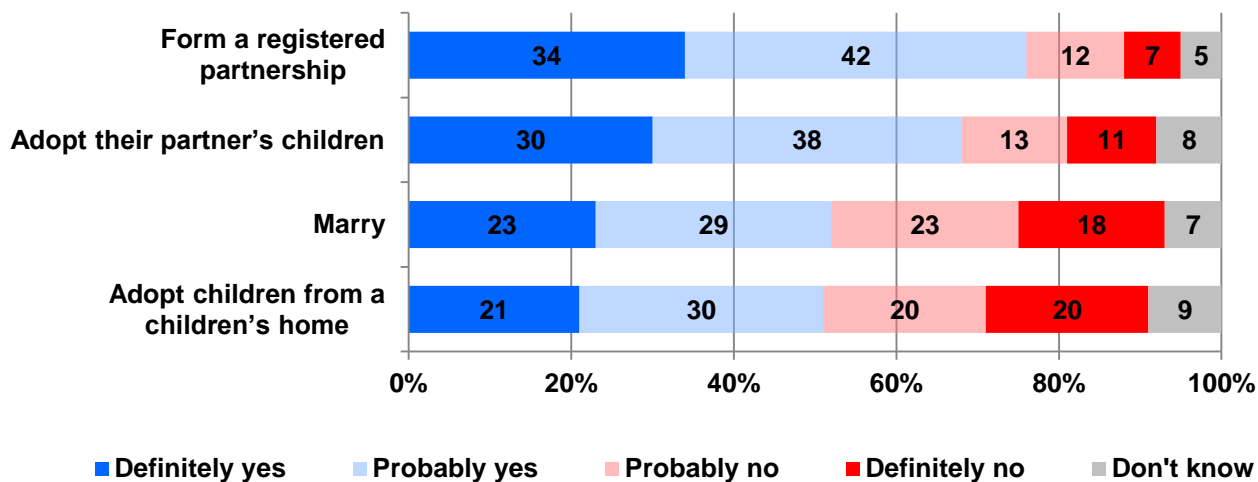
A more in-depth analysis revealed some differences that reflect the socio-demographic characteristics of the population. The opinion that being openly homosexual would definitely make a person's life more difficult is to a statistically significant degree more common among people over the age of 60, people with a more left-wing political orientation, people who rate their living standard as poor, and people who claim to be unhappy with their lives. The opposite opinion, that being openly homosexual would not make life more difficult for a person, was by contrast more common among people with a good standard of living, people who on the whole are happy with their lives, people who have homosexual friends or acquaintances, people with a right-wing orientation and people who indicated that they are not religious.

The survey included a dichotomous question on whether the respondent does or does not have any homosexual friends or acquaintances.² A yes response to this question was given by 37% of respondents, while 49% answered no and 14% selected 'don't know'. The share of people claiming they have no homosexual friends or acquaintances decreased from last year by 6 percentage points. Conversely, the share who answered 'don't know' grew by 5 percentage points.

The June survey also looked at Czech citizens' opinions on the rights of homosexual men and women (see Figure 2).

¹The question read: 'Imagine that there is someone in your town or community who is open about their homosexual orientation. Do you think that this would make life more difficult for that person in your town or community?' The response options were: it definitely would, it probably would, it probably would not, it definitely would not.
²The question read: 'Do you have any friends or acquaintances who are homosexual men or women?' The response options were: Yes / No.

Figure 2. Homosexual women and men should have the right...³



Source: Public Opinion Research Centre, Institute of Sociology CAS (CVVM SOÚ AV ČR, v.v.i.), Czech Society (Naše společnost) 8–18 May 2017, 1019 respondents aged 15 and over, face-to-face interviews.

Around three-quarters of the adult population (76%) support the right of homosexuals to form a registered partnership (civil union), a union that Czech law provides for. Less than one-fifth of respondents (19%) are opposed to the legal right of homosexual men and women to form a registered partnership. The Czech public is however less unequivocal in their opinion on whether same-sex couples should have the right to marry, although even on this matter agreement prevailed over disagreement, with 52% of respondents agreeing with the right to marry and 41% disagreeing.

There was also predominant agreement with the right to adopt the children of the partner the person is living with and whose children the person is helping to raise. Almost seven-tenths of the Czech public (68%) support giving homosexual men and women this right, with less than one-quarter of respondents (24%) opposed to it. In the case of adopting children in institutional care, i.e. from children's homes, there is slightly more agreement than disagreement, with 51% saying they strongly or somewhat agree with this, while 40% of the public strongly or somewhat disagree.

Support for all homosexual rights examined here is generally more common among people in the 15 to 29 age group, respondents who rate their living standard as good, and people who are more satisfied in life. People who support these rights also more often indicate that they have homosexual men or women among their friends and that in their opinion being openly homosexual would not make a person's life more difficult in the area where the respondent lives. With respect to most rights no significant differences were observed across educational groups, with the exception of the right to form a registered partnership, which was more often supported by people with upper secondary or university education.

Opponents of these rights were more often found among respondents who rate their living standard as poor, people with a left-wing political orientation, and respondents over the age of 60. Opponents of all the rights examined here also more often indicated that they have no homosexual friends or acquaintances and that in their opinion being openly homosexual would make life difficult for a person in the area where the respondent lives. Weaker support for these rights is also observed among Roman Catholics.

³ The question read: 'Do you think that homosexual women and men should have the right: a) to marry, b) to form a registered partnership (distinct from marriage), c) to adopt children from 'institutions' – i.e. children's homes, d) to adopt the children of the partner they are living with and whose children they are helping to raise?' The response options were: definitely yes, yes, no, definitely no.

Table 1. Homosexual women and men should have the right ... (a time comparison, in %)

	2005	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Form a registered partnership	61/30	69/24	75/19	73/23	72/23	72/23	75/21	72/23	73/23	74/22	74/21	76/19
Marry	38/51	36/57	38/55	47/46	49/45	45/48	51/44	51/44	45/48	49/47	51/43	52/41
Adopt children	19/70	22/67	23/65	27/63	29/60	33/59	37/55	34/57	-	-	-	-
Adopt their partner's children	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	58/32	59/33	62/29	68/24
Adopt children in institutional care	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	45/48	44/49	48/43	51/40

Note: The percentages in the table are the sum of responses 'definitely yes' and 'yes' and the sum of responses 'definitely no' and 'no'. The difference to 100 % for each item each year is made up of the response 'don't know'.

Source: Public Opinion Research Centre, Institute of Sociology CAS (CVVM SOÚ AV ČR, v.v.i.), Czech Society (Naše společnost) 8–18 May 2017, 1019 respondents aged 15 and over, face-to-face interviews.

Table 1 presents a time comparison of the survey results over the years. It shows that the public's opinion on the right to form a registered partnership has been very stable since 2008. This is true since 2009 also for the opinion on the right of homosexuals to marry, which, although it has fluctuated slightly, has remained at roughly the same level and the shares of supporters and opponents of this right have remained relatively even.

We asked repeatedly in surveys between 2005 and 2013 whether respondents agree with the right of homosexual women and men to adopt children, and in 2014 we began surveying separately opinions on the right to adopt a partner's children and opinions on the right to adopt children from children's homes. Czechs are more supportive of the right to adopt a partner's children, which 68% of Czech citizens currently agree with. Since the last survey there has been a very slight decrease in the number of people who disagree with both types of adoption, by 5 percentage points in the case of adopting a partner's children and by 3 percentage points in the case of adopting children in institutional care, which is a shift within the margin of statistical error. During the period in which the Public Opinion Research Centre has been asking this question the number of people who agree with the right of a homosexual person to adopt the children of their partner has risen by 10 percentage points, while the number of those who agree with the adoption of children in institutional care has risen by 6 percentage points. The number of people who disagree has decreased in both cases by 8 percentage points over the same period.

Technical parameters of the survey

<i>Survey:</i>	<i>Czech Society, v17-05</i>
<i>Survey by:</i>	<i>Public Opinion Research Centre, Institute of Sociology, Czech Academy of Sciences</i>
<i>Project:</i>	<i>Czech Society – Continuous Public Opinion Research Project of the Public Opinion Research Centre, Institute of Sociology, Czech Academy of Sciences</i>
<i>Field survey dates:</i>	<i>8–18 May 2017</i>
<i>Sampling method:</i>	<i>Quota sampling</i>
<i>Quotas:</i>	<i>Region (NUTS 3 Regions), size of place of residence, sex, age, education</i>
<i>Data source for quota sampling:</i>	<i>Czech Statistical Office</i>
<i>Representativeness:</i>	<i>Population of the Czech Republic over the age of 15</i>
<i>Number of respondents:</i>	<i>1019</i>
<i>Number of interviewers:</i>	<i>248</i>
<i>Data collection method:</i>	<i>Face-to-face interviews conducted by interviewers with respondents - combined CAPI and PAPI questioning</i>
<i>Research instrument:</i>	<i>Standardised questionnaire</i>
<i>Questions:</i>	<i>OV.114, OV.115, OV.180</i>
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Glossary of terms:

A quota sample replicates the structure of the basic population of the study (in this case the population of the Czech Republic over the age of 15) by setting quotas for different parameters. In other words, a quota sample is based on the same proportion of persons with the selected characteristics. We used data from the Czech Statistical Office to create the quotas. In our surveys quotas are set for sex, age, education, region, and community size. The sample is thus selected so that the percentage of men and women in the sample corresponds to the share of men and women in each region of the CR. Similarly the sample reflects the corresponding shares of the population in individual regions in the CR, citizens in different age groups, people with different levels of education, and people in different sizes of communities.

A representative sample is a sample from the total population whose characteristics can be validly inferred to apply as the characteristics of the population overall. In our case this means that respondents were selected with a view to generalising the collected data as applicable to the population of the Czech Republic over the age of 15.

The Public Opinion Research Centre (CVVM) is a research department of the Institute of Sociology, Czech Academy of Sciences. Its history dates back to 1946, when the Czechoslovak Institute for Public Opinion Research began operating as part of the Ministry of Information. The current CVVM emerged in 2001 when its predecessor (IVVM) was transferred from the Czech Statistical Office to the Institute of Sociology. Its incorporation within an academic institution provides a guarantee of high professional standards and quality, and as part of an academic environment the CVVM is required to fulfil criteria that ensure it meets the highest professional standards. The CVVM's work is centred on the Czech Society research project, in the frame of which it examines public opinion by conducting ten surveys annually on a representative sample of the population over the age of 15, with approximately 1000 respondents participating in each survey. The questionnaire's omnibus format makes it possible to cover a wide array of topics. Political, economic, and other generally social topics are regularly added to the survey. The surveys include both repeat questions, whereby it is possible to observe phenomena over time, and new topics that reflect current events. The long-term and continuous nature of this project focused on surveying public opinion is unique in the Czech Republic.]