



HUNGARIAN **DEMOGRAPHIC**  
RESEARCH INSTITUTE

# CHILDREN'S EXPERIENCES OF MOTHERS' PARTNERSHIP DISSOLUTION AND RE-PARTNERING: DIFFERENCES BETWEEN UNION TYPES AND COHORTS

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European Population Conference

Budapest, 25-28 June 2014



# Background

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- Diffusion of non-marital cohabitation and out-of-wedlock births
- Partnership dissolution and re-partnering



- Important implications for the lives of children involved
- Are children more affected?

(Heuveline et al. 2001; Heuveline—Timberlake 2002; Andersson 2002; Andersson—Philipov 2002; de Vaus—Gray 2004; Philipov—Jasilioniene 2007; Mureşan 2007; Blau—van der Klaauw 2008; van Gaalen—van Poppel 2009; Kennedy—Thomson 2010; Turunen 2011; van Poppel et al. 2013)



# Research questions

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How does the changing partnership behaviour of parents influence family composition from the point of view of the children?

1. How often do children born in cohabitation and marriage experience the dissolution of their parents' union? (convergence?)
2. How often do children live in stepfamilies due to the (re)partnering of their mother?
3. Have the experiences of children changed since the 1980s?



# Data and methods

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- Hungarian Generations and Gender Survey
- Child database (n = 8244) – restructured from mothers' partnership and birth histories
- The life course of children between ages 0–15
- Life table method (cumulative survival functions)
- Two synthetic cohorts: 1981–1988 and 2005–2012

## Analysis:

1. The partnership context of births
2. Dissolution of parents' union
3. Step-family formation
4. Summary measures



# The partnership context of births

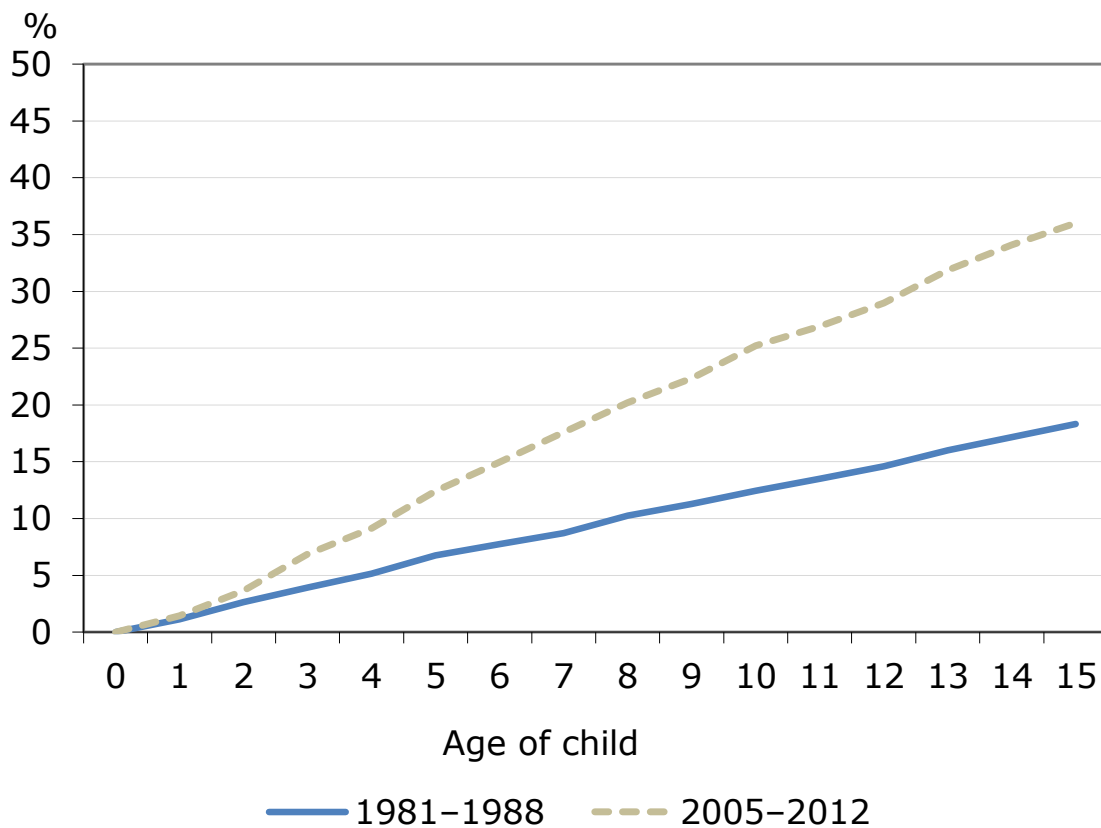
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	<b>1981–1988</b>	<b>2005–2012</b>
Born to lone mother	3.6	6.9
Born in cohabitation	2.8	34.7
Born in marriage	93.6	58.3
Total	100.0	100.0

The distribution of births by the mother's partnership status



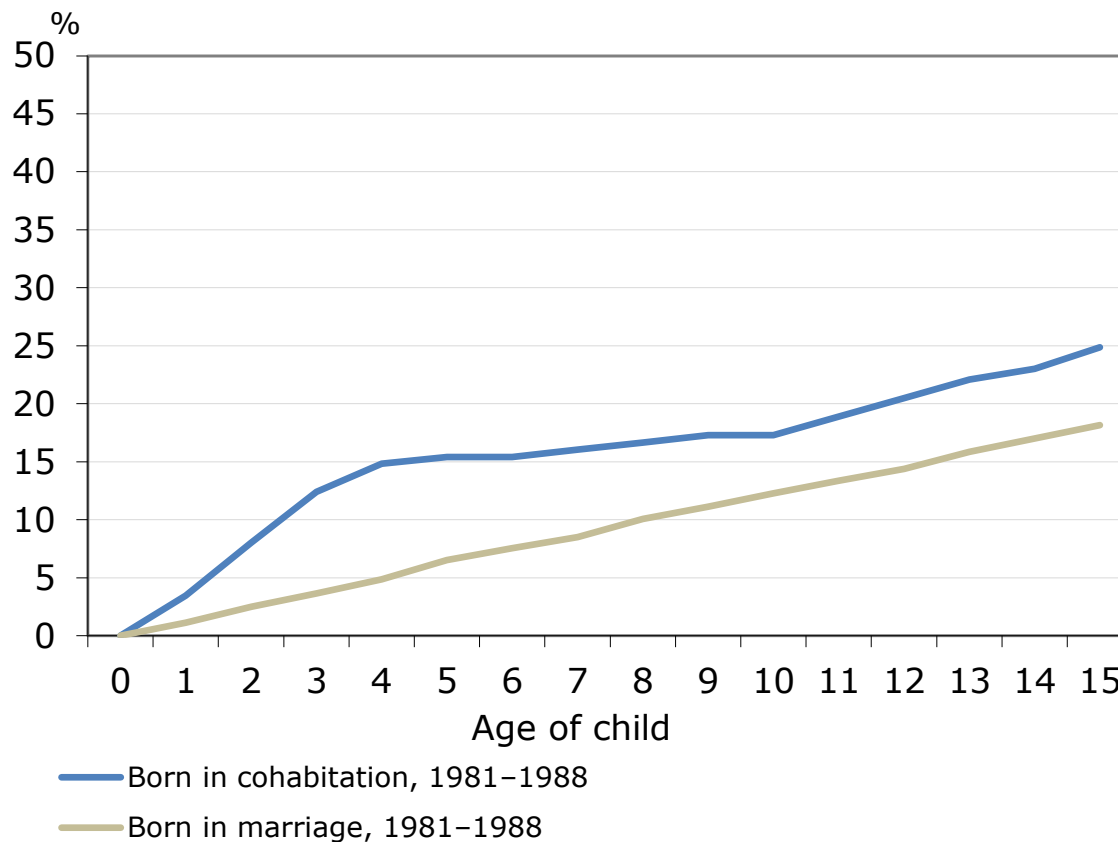
# Children's experience of partnership dissolution



The cumulative percentage of children who experience parental separation, for children born in union



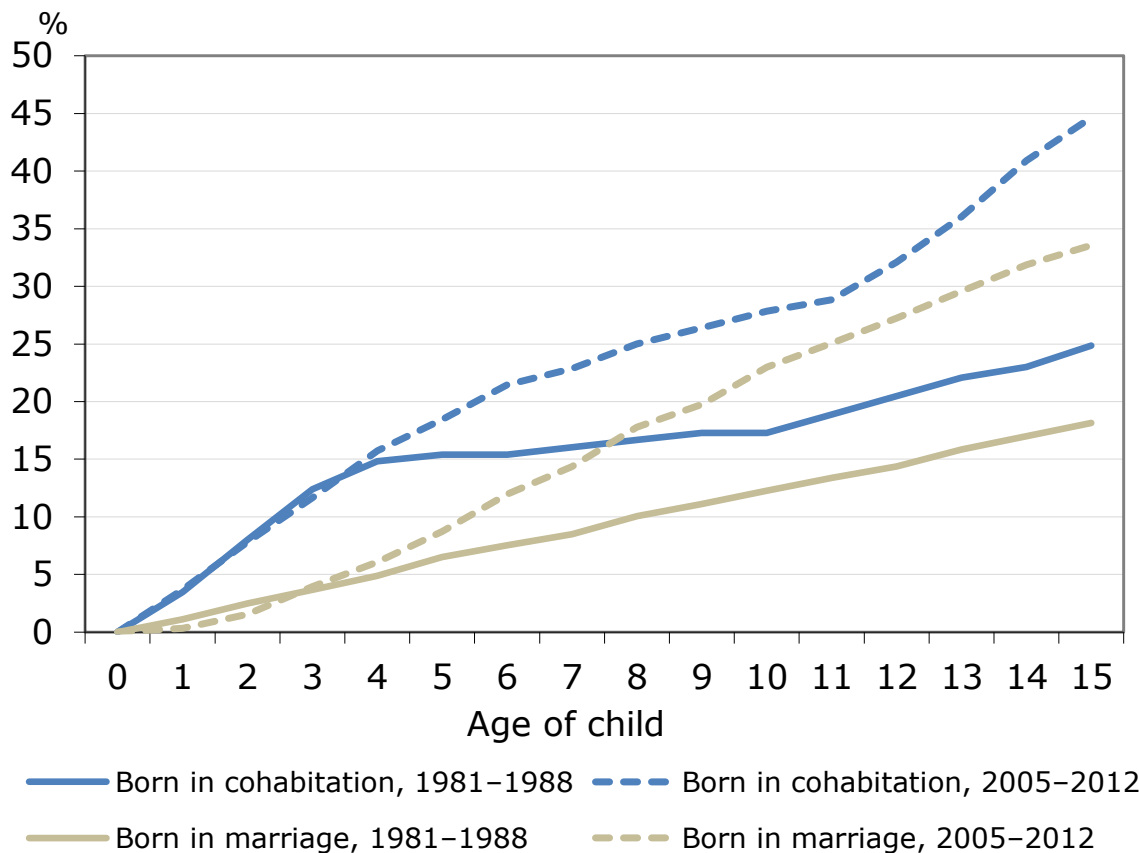
# Children's experience of partnership dissolution by union type



The cumulative percentage of children who experience parental separation by birth context



# Children's experience of partnership dissolution by union type



The cumulative percentage of children who experience parental separation by birth context





# Children's experience of partnership dissolution by union type – detailed

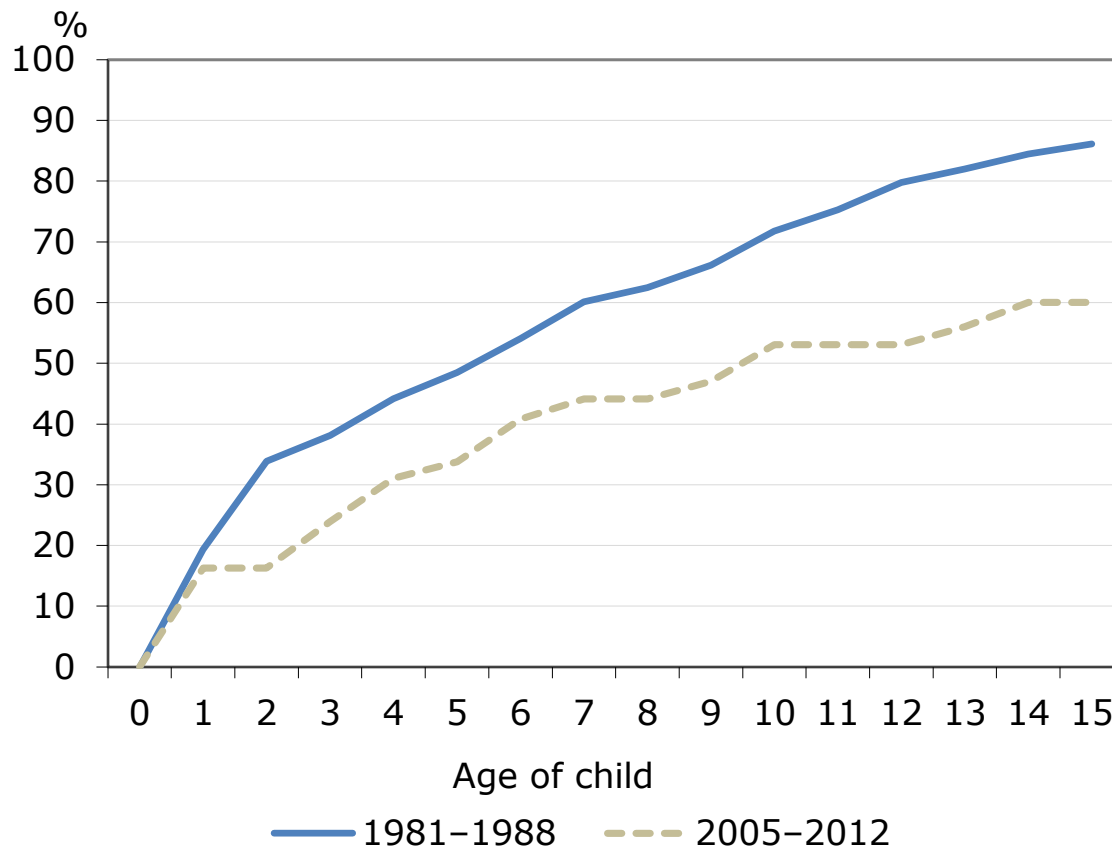
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	<b>1981–1988</b>	<b>2005–2012</b>
Born in cohabitation	24.9	44.7
Born in marriage	18.1	33.6
Direct marriage	17.4	26.9
Marriage after cohabitation	27.9	45.1

Percentage of children who experience parental separation by age 15, by detailed birth context



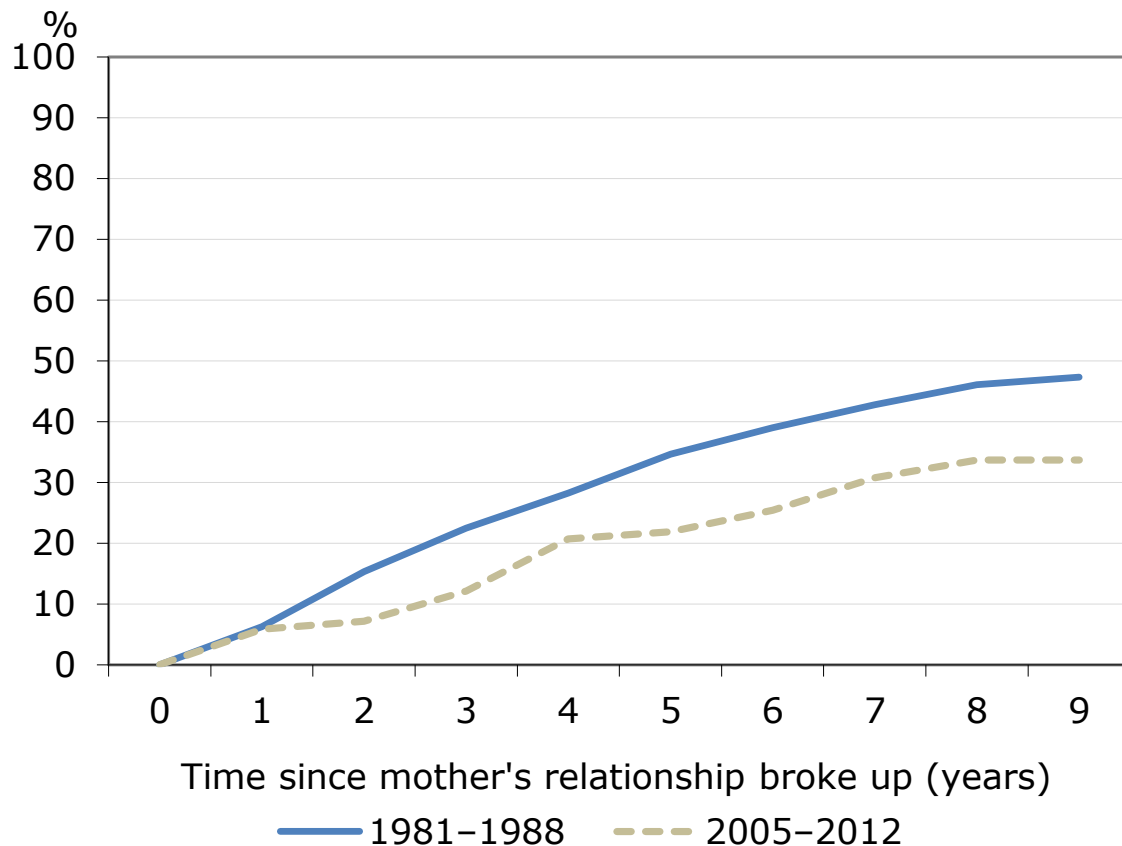
# Children's experience of step-family formation 1 – born to lone mothers



The cumulative percentage of children in step-parent families, for children born to a lone mother



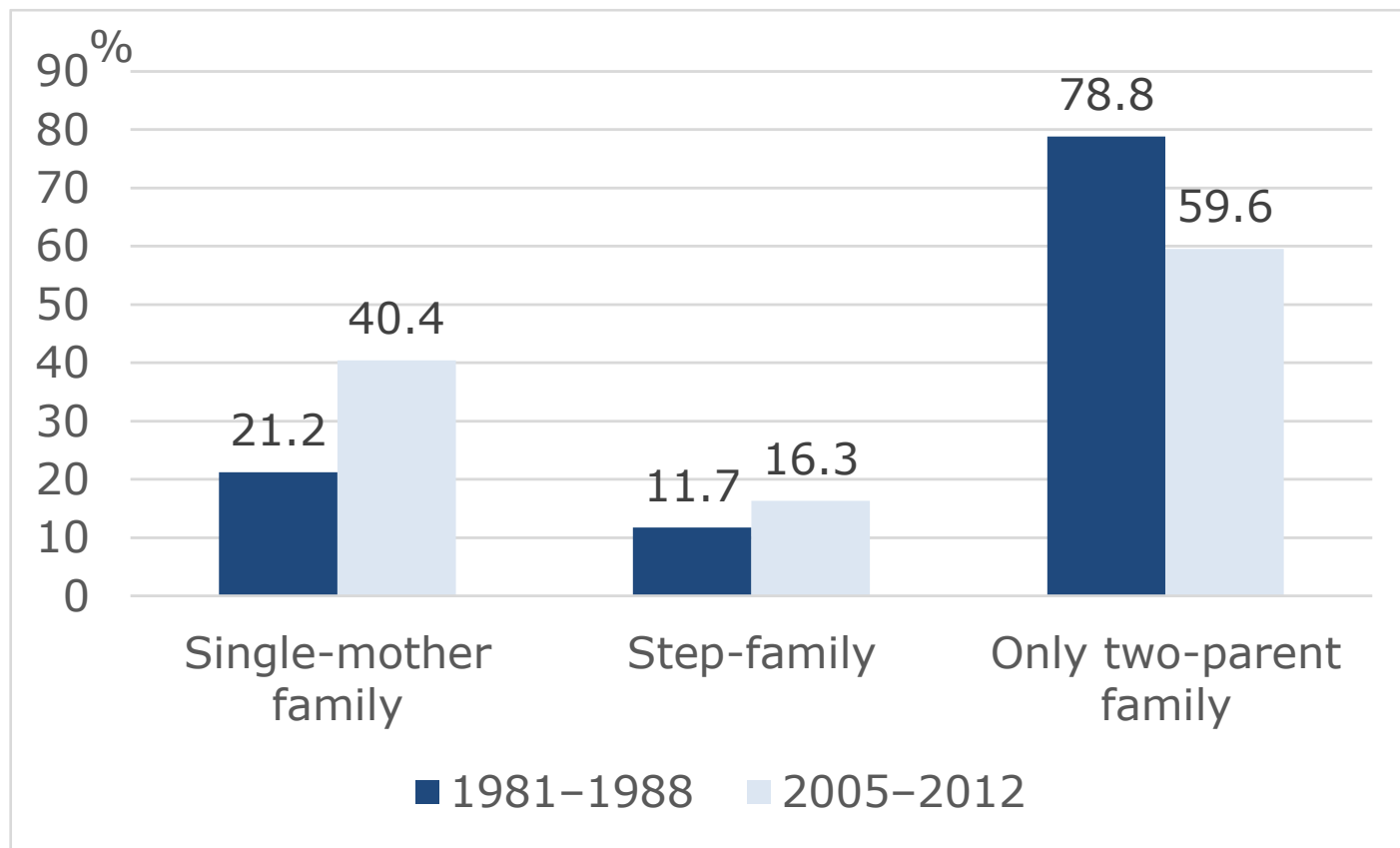
# Children's experience of step-family formation 2 – re-partnering



The cumulative percentage of children in step-parent families, for children born in union

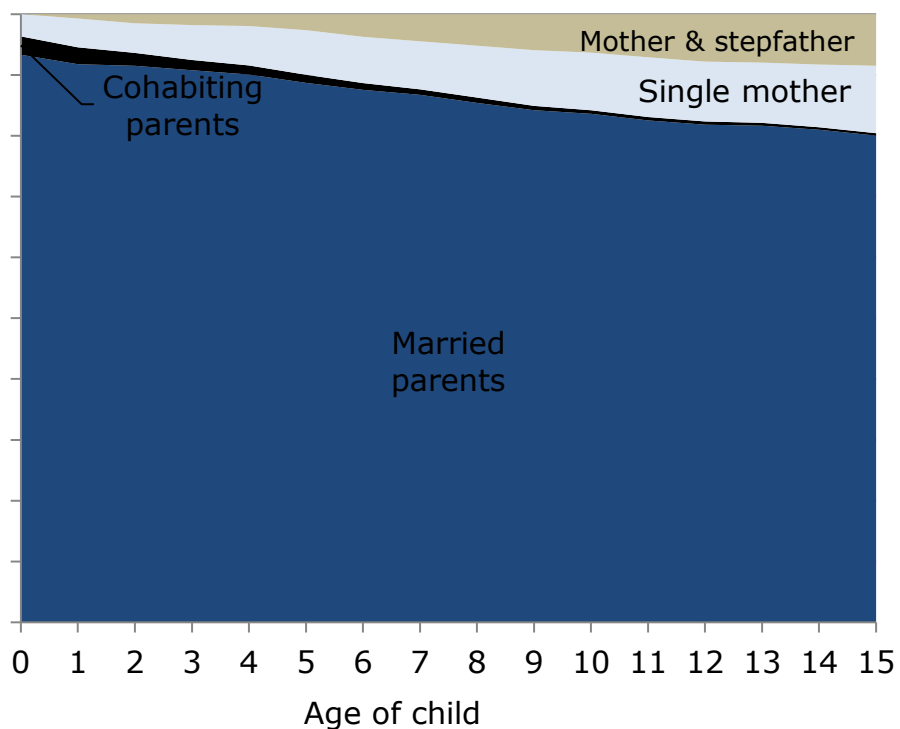


# Ratio of children experiencing living in different family forms

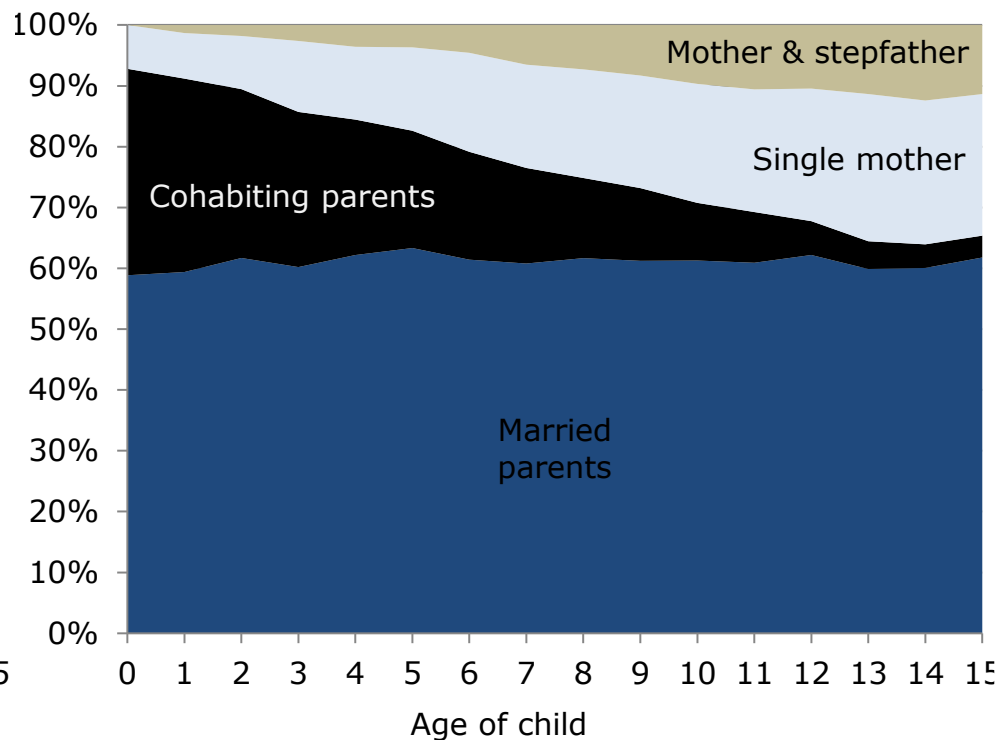


# Children's experience of living in different types of families

1981–1988



2005–2012



# Conclusions

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- Changes in partnership behaviour have crucial impact on children's experiences of family life
- The ratio of children born in cohabitation has increased from 3% to 35% since the 1980s
- The ratio of children experiencing the dissolution of their parents' relationship has doubled
- A general decrease in union stability
- Cohabitation and marriage have not diverged nor converged – but diverging destinies of direct marriages and marriages with prior cohabitation



# Thank you for your attention!

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