

DIVORCE AND SEPARATION

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MAIN FINDINGS

- » The two main types of partnership are marriage and – increasingly – cohabitation. Marriages are dissolved by divorce and cohabitations end in separation. There are accurate statistical data on divorce, meanwhile research studies provide information on the dissolution of cohabitations.
- » The number of divorces has been fluctuating between 22 and 26 thousand annually from the 1990s, and reached its highest values between 1998 and 2008. After a four-year steady decline from 23,873 in 2010 it fell – by more than four thousand – to 19,500.
- » The number of marriages fell by 46% between 1990 and 2010, from 66,405 to 35,520. In 2011 alongside the fall in the number of divorces, the number of marriages started to increase and it nearly reached 39 thousand in 2014.
- » The total divorce rate that indicates the percentage of marriages ending in divorce has been increasing since 1990 and reached its highest value so far (0.46) in 2008. A decline has been observed since 2011: out of five marriages contracted in 2013 or after it is expected that two will end in divorce.
- » The age of divorcees has been steadily rising since 1990. In 2013 the average age of women getting divorced was 40.1 years, men were three years older. The rate of increase was somewhat slower in the last three years compared to the previous three years.
- » The average length of dissolved marriages has been increasing since 1991, however this halted in the last three years and it seems to have stabilised around 13 years. The share of marriages ending in divorce before the fifth wedding anniversary decreased within the total number of divorces and the share of marriages dissolved after 20 years or longer increased.
- » Just under 60% of marriages ending in divorce have minor children. The share of those without minor children is increasing among people getting divorced meanwhile the percentage of those with three or more minor children is declining among them.
- » A large number of cohabitations turn into marriage within the first few years of the relationship. Marriages resulting from cohabitation that started between 1990 and 2000 are only slightly more likely to end in divorce than direct marriages. On the contrary, marriages following premarital cohabitation

after the turn of millennium were much more stable than direct marriages.

» Cohabitations that do not turn into a marriage break up sooner and more often

than either direct marriages or marriages following premarital cohabitation and this trend is stronger for partnerships that started after 2000.

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE

Only people who are married can get divorced, therefore to examine divorce marriage must also be considered. However, taking into account that the majority of couples living together are cohabiting *partners*^G, it is also necessary to include *cohabitations*^G in the analysis, although this is more challenging than marriages.

Apart from divorce, a marriage can also end with the death of one of the spouses: since the 2000s on average two out of three marriages have ended with the death of a spouse and one with divorce. This chapter focuses on divorce only.

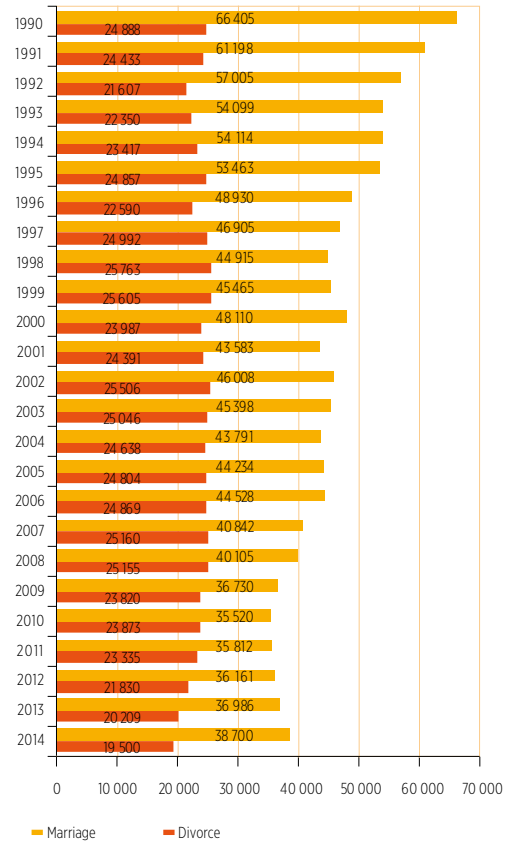
Divorce is the legal dissolution and annulment of a marriage by a valid decision of a judge. Divorce obviously does not apply to cohabitation, here the end of the relationship is marked by separation and moving apart. (Married couples can also move apart either before or after the divorce, and can even separate without getting a divorce. These will be examined later in the chapter.) The analysis mainly focuses on divorce on which detailed statistical data are available. The initiation and dissolution of cohabitation can be examined using data from survey research.

The number of marriages has declined significantly over the past more than two decades: in 1990 more than 66 thousand couples got married meanwhile in 2011 less than 36 thousand. However, since 2011 there has been a slow but steady increase and in 2014 just under 39 thousand marriages were contracted.

There was a smaller fluctuation in the number of divorces between 1990 and 2011, their number exceeded 20 thousand but remained below 26 thousand in each year. There were 23,305 divorce decrees granted in 2011 that fell to 20,209 by 2014 representing its lowest value in the studied

period. Thus, marriage and divorce move in opposite directions: more marriages, fewer divorces (*Figure 1*).

Figure 1: Number of marriages and divorces, 1990–2014

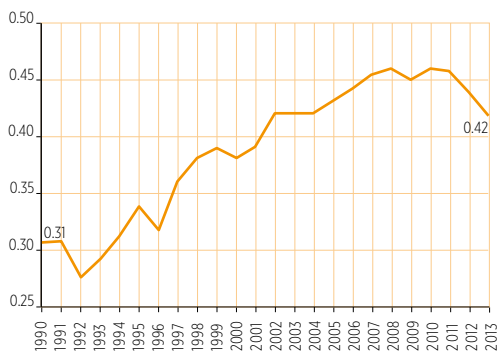


Source: HCSO, Demographic Yearbooks 2000–2013.

The frequency of divorce can be measured in a variety of ways. The *total divorce rate*^G takes into account the number and duration of marriages, therefore it eliminates bias arising from their annual fluctuation. This indicator compares the number of divorce decrees granted in a given year to the number of marriages registered in the same year, and it estimates what percentage of marriages will end in divorce. The calculation is based on divorce rates by duration of marriage in the given

year. This rate was 0.31 in 1990, therefore approximately one in three marriages was expected to end in divorce. The highest rate so far – 0.46 – was registered in 2008 for the first time and then again in 2010 and 2011: nearly half of the marriages were anticipated to end in divorce. The rate shows some signs of improvement in the last two years data are available for: in 2012 it was 0.44 and in 2013 0.42 (Figure 2). The decline in the total divorce rate is in line with the increase in the number of marriages and the decrease in the number of divorces in the same period. Many different factors play a role in the high divorce rate: the growing social acceptance of divorce and the fact that it has become easier from a legal point of view, as well as the fact that the main expectation of marrying couples towards marriage is the fulfilment of emotional needs and if this is considered inadequate they end the marriage.

Figure 2: Total divorce rate, 1990–2013



Source: HCSO, Demographic Yearbooks 2000–2013.

The total divorce rate is also the most appropriate indicator for the international comparison of the frequency of divorce (Table 1). For a long time the divorce rate was above the European average in Hungary, however more recently it has been

ranking in the middle. The frequency of divorce increased in nearly all countries between 1990 and 2013, however it has declined in some countries over recent years: in Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Norway by 3–5%, while in Finland, Latvia, Germany, Sweden and Slovakia by 1–2%. Among the Scandinavian countries traditionally characterised by high divorce rates, the earlier decrease continues in Norway, in Sweden there was a slight drop in 2009–2010, while in Denmark the declining trend observed few years ago has turned into an increase recently. The divorce rate is lowest in Southern European countries (Bulgaria, Cyprus, Italy, Greece, and Romania) and Poland. More recent data – where available – indicate some increase in these countries as well, nevertheless the propensity to divorce remains relatively low. Spain was characterised by a low divorce rate in the mid-2000s, however by the end of the decade the frequency of divorce increased substantially and reached 51% in 2012, therefore it is now considered a high-divorce country.

There is variation in the development of the propensity to divorce in Eastern and Central European countries. Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia have been characterised by a decline over recent years. In Slovakia it decreased from 39% to 37%, while in the other two countries the baseline was higher, however the decrease was also greater. The divorce rate has increased slightly in Poland and more substantially in Bulgaria, nevertheless both countries still have a relatively low divorce rate.

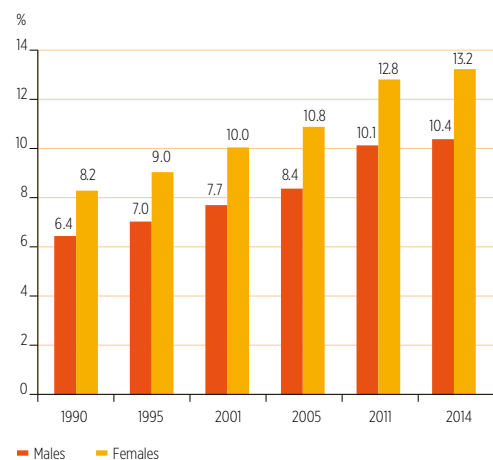
The propensity to divorce in European countries is influenced – among other factors – by different economic development, the legal regulation of divorce, different levels of religiosity, and also the social acceptance of divorce.

Table 1. Total divorce rate in some European countries

Country	1990	1995	2000	2004-2005	2009-2010	2012-2013
Austria	0.33	0.38	0.43	0.46	0.43	0.40
Belgium	0.31	0.55	0.45	0.56 ^{a)}	0.62	NA
Bulgaria	0.17	0.18	0.21	0.31	0.28	0.34
Cyprus	0.07	0.15	0.21	0.24	0.27	0.30
Czech Republic	0.38	0.38	0.41	0.49	0.50	0.45
Denmark	0.44	0.41	0.45	0.47	0.40	0.45
United Kingdom	0.37	0.40	NA	0.44	NA	0.42 ^{f)}
Estonia	0.46	0.66	0.47	NA	0.41	0.45
Finland	0.42	0.48	0.51	0.50	0.49	0.48
France	0.32	0.36	0.38	0.43 ^{c)}	0.45	NA
Greece	0.12	0.15	NA	NA	0.20 ^{e)}	NA
Netherlands	0.30	0.36	0.38	0.35	0.35	0.43
Poland	0.15	0.14	0.17	0.23	0.26	0.28
Latvia	0.44	0.35	0.34	0.36	0.56	0.54
Lithuania	NA	0.30	0.39	0.45	0.42	0.46
Luxembourg	0.36	0.33	0.47	0.49	0.50	NA
Hungary	0.31	0.34	0.38	0.42	0.46	0.42
Germany	0.29	0.33	0.41	0.46	0.43	0.42
Norway	0.43	0.45	0.45	0.49	0.44	0.40
Italy	0.08	0.07	0.12 ^{b)}	NA	0.17	NA
Russia	0.40	0.50	NA	NA	NA	NA
Portugal	0.12	0.16	0.26	0.33	0.36 ^{d)}	0.43
Romania	0.19	0.20	0.19	0.21 ^{a)}	0.20	NA
Spain	0.10	0.15	NA	0.31	0.47	0.51
Sweden	0.44	0.52	0.55	0.52	0.55	0.54
Slovakia	NA	NA	0.27	0.33	0.39	0.37
Slovenia	0.15	0.14	0.21	0.25	0.25 ^{e)}	0.31

Source: Eurostat; author's calculation ; ^{a)} Data from 2003; ^{b)} Data from 2001; ^{c)} Data from 2002; ^{d)} Data from 2007; ^{e)} Data from 2008 ^{f)} Data from 2011.

3. ábra. Divorcees in the total population, by sex



Source: HCSO, Demographic Yearbooks 2000-2013; Population Census 1990, 2001, 2011.

The distribution of the population by marital status mainly depends on the rate of marriage and divorce, however it is also influenced by the rate of widowhood and remarriage. The rate of divorced people in the total population has been steadily increasing since the 1990s, on the one hand due to the high number of divorces, and the low propensity to remarry on the other. The rate of divorced women is always higher than that of men, because women are less likely to remarry than men (Figure 3). This can be attributed to a number of factors, among others the steady decline in the number of men with age - due to the higher mortality rate of men compared to women. However, being divorced does not necessarily mean that the individual

lives alone: cohabitation is very common among divorcees. The increase in the share of divorcees among men and women continued after 2011; in 2014 divorced men represented 10% and divorced women 13% of the population.

DISSOLVED MARRIAGES

The main characteristics of marriages that end in divorce are: the age of divorcees at the time of divorce, the length of time between the registration of the marriage and divorce and its distribution (and the frequency of divorce in shorter or longer marriages) and the number of children affected by the divorce.

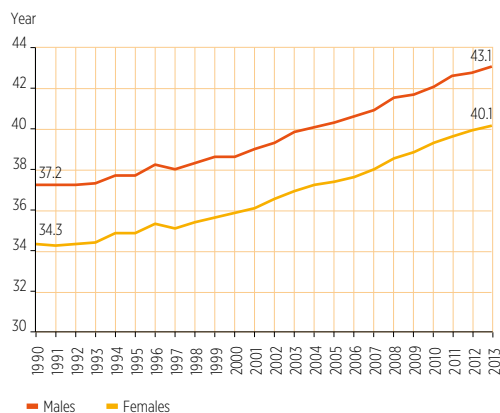
Average age at divorce has been steadily increasing: the mean age at divorce was 37.2 years for men and 34.3 years for women in 1990. By 2013 the mean age increased by around six years; to 43.1 years for men and 40.1 years for women (Figure 4). However, the increase was somewhat slower in recent years: compared to 1.2–1.3 year for both sexes between 2007 and 2010, it was only 0.5 year between 2011 and 2013. This trend runs parallel to the increase of age at marriage, although before 2000 this was growing faster than the age at divorce.

The difference in the mean age at divorce between men and women is surprisingly constant: it fluctuated between 2.8 and 3.0 years in the last quarter of a century. This can potentially be attributed to the stability of social expectations around the spousal age gap.

The average length of time between the registration of marriage and divorce – the length of dissolved marriages – has been steadily increasing since 1991: from 10.7 years then to 13.1 years in 2012; an increase of nearly 2.5 years (there was a slight decline of 0.2 years at the beginning of the studied period between 1990 and 1991). However, in the last three years stagnation can be

observed: the average length of marriages that ended in divorce was 13 years in both 2011 and 2013.

Figure 4: Mean age at divorce for males and females, 1990–2013



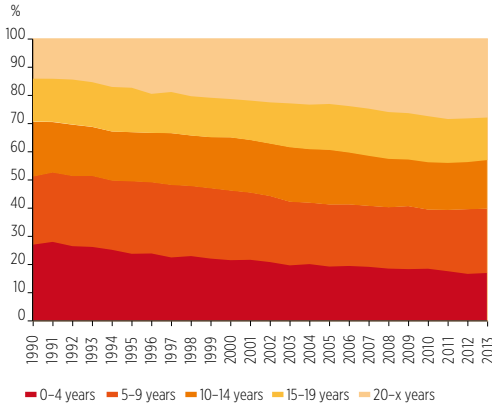
Source: HCSO, Demographic Yearbooks 2000–2013.

This change is due to the redistribution in the length of marriages ending in divorce (Figure 5). The decline in the percentage of marriages ending in divorce after a shorter period of time has continued: the percentage of divorce by the fifth wedding anniversary declined from 19% in 2010 to 17% in 2013. The share of medium-length marriages increased somewhat: marriages ending in divorce between the fifth and ninth wedding anniversary increased from 21% to 23% and those between the 10th and 14th wedding anniversary from 17% to 18%. However, the percentage of marriages dissolved between the 15–19th wedding anniversary fell from 16% in 2010 to 15%, meanwhile share of marriages dissolved after more than 20 years remained 28%.

The dissolution of a marriage can affect children born in the marriage particularly sensitively. Therefore it is especially important to examine marriages where the divorcees (also) have minor children. It is well-known that after divorce mothers get custody of minor children in the majority of cases. At the same time, single-parent

families are one of the most disadvantaged social groups.

Figure 5: Marriages dissolved in a given year by duration, 1990–2013



Source: HCSO, Demographic Yearbooks 2000–2013.

The share of divorces affecting joint minor children within the total number of divorces fell from 67% in 1990 to 58% in 2013 (Table 2). The percentage of those getting divorced with one minor child decreased from 36% to 32% in the same period, and it has fluctuated around 32–33% since 2005. The share of those with two minor children also declined: in 1990 one in four dissolved marriages were in this category, in 2013 only one in five. Only 5–7% of couples getting a divorce have three or more minor children. Their percentage varied in the period under consideration: it was highest in 2006 and 2007 (7%), and values of 5% or lower were registered only in the mid-1990s. In the last three years, in 2011–2013 it was consistently around 6% that is the lowest values since 2004. The earlier increase in the share of marriages without minor children within all divorces has continued. These are couples who not yet or no longer have minor children. The increase is due, on

the one hand, to the rising age of parents at the birth of their first child – many married couples get divorced before they have a child – on the other hand, to the increasing number of couples who are getting divorced at an older age, following a longer marriage and often with grown-up children.

Table 2: Distribution of divorces by the number of joint minor children, 1990–2013

	(%)			
	No child	1 child	2 children	3 or more children
1990	32.7	36.4	25.6	5.3
1991	33.6	35.8	25.4	5.3
1992	31.7	37.2	25.9	5.2
1993	33.3	37.1	24.7	4.9
1994	34.5	37.2	23.8	4.5
1995	34.8	36.4	23.8	5.0
1996	39.6	34.1	21.6	4.8
1997	35.7	36.1	22.7	5.5
1998	36.4	35.6	22.6	5.3
1999	36.5	35.9	22.2	5.5
2000	37.8	35.4	21.6	5.2
2001	38.7	35.3	21.1	4.9
2002	39.5	34.6	20.7	5.1
2003	37.9	35.1	21.6	5.3
2004	39.3	34.0	21.1	5.6
2005	38.9	32.8	21.7	6.5
2006	39.3	32.9	20.8	7.0
2007	39.5	32.8	20.8	7.0
2008	40.5	32.3	20.6	6.7
2009	39.6	32.8	21.0	6.5
2010	40.5	32.0	21.1	6.4
2011	42.2	32.5	19.8	5.5
2012	42.0	32.2	20.3	5.5
2013	42.3	32.1	20.1	5.5

Source: HCSO, Demographic Yearbooks 2000–2013.

MARRIED COUPLES LIVING APART

When considering the dissolution of relationships, the situation when the couple is not (yet) divorced but (already) living apart should not be overlooked. It is well-known that the majority of divorcees separate before getting a divorce (see Földházi 2012), therefore separation/living apart can be viewed as the period preceding the divorce. However, there are many other reasons for marital separation. Couples who do not want to get a formal divorce

– due to financial or other reasons – might also decide to live apart and one of the spouses might be blocking divorce as well. Couples can also be found living apart at the early stages of the marriage for various reasons (e.g. lack of joint housing, working abroad etc.). Therefore married couples can live apart for a variety of reasons and motivations; separation in itself does not necessarily indicate the intention of divorce.

In the total population the percentage of married couples living apart was 8% in 1990, 3% in 2001 and 5% in 2011. (Married couples who live apart but maintain a

Table 3: Married people above 15 according to whether they live together or not with their spouses or have partners, by sex and age, 1990, 2001, 2011

Age group	Married			Married, not living together (As a percentage of the married population)			Married, not living together, has a partner (As a percentage of the married population)		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1990									
15–24	92,531	203,966	296,497	21.6	17.5	18.7	3.4	4.1	3.8
25–34	480,260	547,540	1 027,800	11.4	10.2	10.7	5.2	5.7	5.4
35–44	605,971	615,013	1 220,984	8.2	7.9	8.0	6.9	7.2	7.0
45–54	492,893	496,506	989,399	6.2	6.0	6.1	8.9	8.2	8.6
55–64	453,667	409,295	862,962	4.9	5.0	5.0	8.7	5.9	7.3
65+	390,600	253,434	644,034	4.7	5.9	5.2	7.2	4.0	5.8
Total	2 515,922	2 525,754	5 041,676	7.7	8.1	7.9	6.6	6.0	6.3
2001									
15–24	33,556	85,155	118,711	4.7	4.7	4.7	8.2	10.6	9.9
25–34	358,496	444,814	803,310	3.3	3.7	3.5	16.9	15.6	16.1
35–44	451,658	483,080	934,738	2.9	3.3	3.1	24.6	19.8	22.0
45–54	545,417	545,445	1,090,862	2.9	3.2	3.1	23.8	15.6	19.5
55–64	402,366	380,096	782,462	2.2	2.5	2.3	21.0	8.8	14.8
65+	422,272	293,359	715,631	1.5	2.5	1.9	13.5	3.4	8.1
Total	2,213,765	2,231,949	4,445,714	2.6	3.2	2.9	20.6	14.1	17.0
2011									
15–24	6,002	17,899	23,901	11.1	10.3	10.5	5.0	10.9	9.3
25–34	179,003	264,866	443,869	6.5	6.7	6.6	7.8	8.0	7.9
35–44	413,730	445,340	859,070	5.3	6.0	5.6	11.0	10.0	10.4
45–54	381,428	399,702	781,130	5.3	5.5	5.4	13.0	10.3	11.6
55–64	458,167	443,645	901,812	4.6	4.6	4.6	12.0	5.7	8.9
65+	438,903	320,878	759,781	3.1	3.3	3.2	7.9	2.0	5.3
Total	1,877,233	1,892,330	3,769,563	4.8	5.2	5.0	10.7	8.0	9.3

Source: Population Census 1990, 2001, 2011.

matrimonial community are not considered separated.) The size of this population fluctuated between 130 and 400 thousand people according to data from the last three population censuses, so it is a sizeable group. Evidently, the difference between men and women is very small and it might be the result of migration. The share of those living apart declines with age according to all three censuses: it is highest in the youngest age groups and lowest among those aged 65 or over.

Some people who live apart from their spouses already have new partners (only cohabitation is considered here): 6-17% were cohabiting at the time of data collection. The percentage of marital couples living apart from their spouses was the lowest during the 2001 Population Census (out of the three censuses included in this analysis), however the percentage of those living in cohabitation was the highest then. Generally, men were much more likely to start cohabitation when living apart from their spouse, although in 1990 the difference was negligible. The percentage of those living in cohabitation tends to be higher among the middle aged that also includes those aged 55-64 years for men.

DIVORCE AND DISSOLUTION OF COHABITATION

The separation of cohabiting partners – with a few exceptions (see boxed text “*The dissolution of cohabitation*”) – is not registered by official statistics, therefore it can only be examined by using research data. It is useful to consider both marriage and cohabitation (see *Chapter 1*) because the aim is not simply to describe the dissolution of partnerships but also to consider differences and similarities. The analysis includes first time relationships.

Both the type and stability of a relationship are related to the historic period the relationship was established in: generally, the earlier the period, the more likely it is that the relationship lasts and the partners live together as a married couple.

Based on earlier data, it is established that cohabitation tends to be shorter and are more likely to break up than marriage. In terms of marriages, it is useful to distinguish between direct marriages that are not preceded by a period of cohabitation with the future spouse and marriages that evolve from cohabitation. It can be assumed that the frequency of break-down differs by the type of the marriage. Marriages that follow cohabitation can be less stable than direct marriages because people who choose cohabitation might have a more liberal approach to relationships and are more likely to end the marriage if they do not find it satisfactory. However, this argument applies rather to societies and historic periods when cohabitation is (or was) less widespread. Once cohabitation without marriage becomes common, it is more likely to work as “trial marriage” and has a stabilising effect on future marriage (Dourleijn-Liefbroer 2006).

The following will examine when and to what extent cohabitation turns into marriage and then consider the likelihood of break-down for the different types of relationship – direct marriage, marriage following cohabitation and cohabitation without marriage – in relation to the length of the relationship. Relationships established in different periods have different characteristics due to changes in the socio-economic situation and values, therefore relationships established in 1990-2000 and 2001-2013 are examined separately.

Considering the period as a whole – between 1990 and 2013 – partners are likely to get married within the first few years of cohabitation, then this likelihood decreases and it reaches a plateau

DISSOLUTION OF COHABITATION

Cohabitation makes up an increasingly large proportion of co-residential relationships: the majority of young people tend to choose it as first-time partnership and it is also common among divorcees. However, it is more difficult to examine cohabitation than marriages because the start and the end date of the relationship are often not known and vital statistics are not available. This might change by some new legislation introduced since 2009.

There are three types of cohabiting partnerships in Hungary: similar to marriage but an unmarried couple and their children living together; *civil partnership*⁶; and registered partnership.

The least data are available on cohabitation without legal registration: population censuses, micro censuses and research studies provide data about their prevalence, meanwhile only research studies provide information about their dissolution. In these cases the dissolution of cohabitation is simply a separation of partners without any legal procedures.

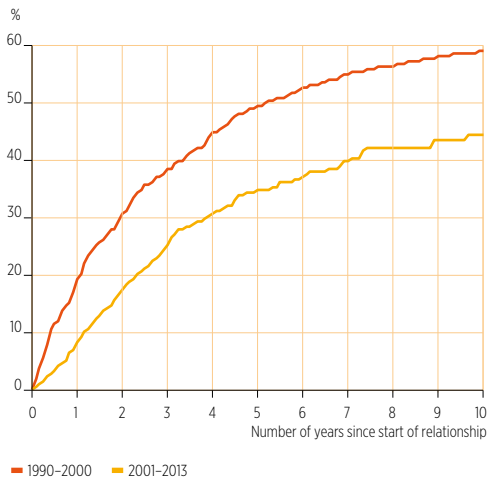
Since July 1, 2009 civil partnerships – only between same-sex partners – have been granted by registrars and have had similar legal effects to marriage with some exceptions (for example civil partners are not permitted to change their name or adopt children). Civil partnership can end with the death of a partner, or legal separation granted by a court or public notary. If the civil partners both agree

to the dissolution of the partnership and they have made the necessary financial arrangements, dissolution can also be granted by a notary. The number of civil partnerships was between 30 and 80 annually in the years 2009–2013, and a total of 263 civil partnerships were contracted. In the 2011 Census 171 people indicated civil partnership as their marital status, therefore their number is negligible within the total. No statistics are available on their dissolution yet: divorced or widowed civil partners are not distinguished in the vital statistics, and no one reported either of these marital status in the 2011 Census.

Since January 1, 2010 both same- and different-sex partners have been allowed to *register their relationship*⁶ by making a statement to a notary about their relationship. The primary purpose of this is to provide a proof of the existence of the relationship in case of disputes. The application to register their partnership must be made jointly by the partners. Either partner can make a statement about the non-existence of the partnership. If the notary registers the non-existence of the partnership based on a statement from only one of the partners, the other partner is sent an official notification. The register of cohabiting partnerships is maintained by the National Chamber of Notaries (Közjegyzői Kamara). The 2011 Population Census did not include a question about registered partnership, therefore there is no publicly available data (data can be obtained only from the National Chamber of Notaries).

(Figure 6). The percentage of marriages increases dynamically in the first four years of the relationship in both periods, however there are some major differences. Among those who started cohabitation between 1990 and 2000 more than 40% are married by the end of the fourth year, meanwhile in the period 2001–2013 only 30%. The percentage of marriages reaches 60% within 10 years in the group that started their cohabitation in the earlier period, while it remains below 45% in the group that started it in the later period.

Figure 6: Percentage of cohabitation turning into marriage by time (year) from the start of the relationship^{a)}



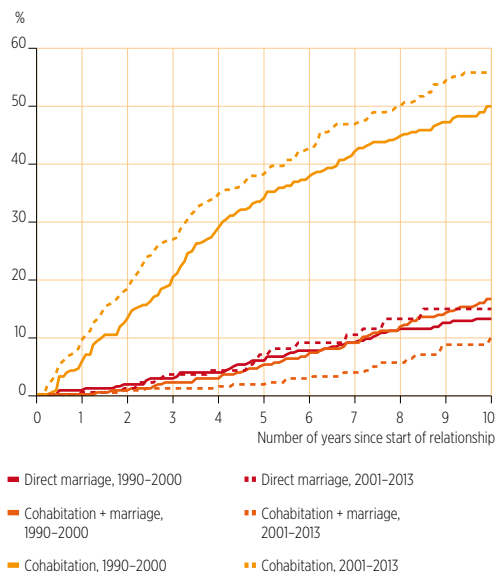
Source: HDRI GGS: Turning Points of Life Course panel study, 4th Wave, new sample of 18–49 year olds; author's calculation (survival curves). ^{a)} First-time relationships of 18–49 year olds established between 1990–2013.

The likelihood of break-down in the first ten years of the relationship for direct marriages and marriages following cohabitation differs in the two time periods considered here (Figure 7). In the decade following regime change there was hardly any difference in the fragility of direct marriages and marriages following

premarital cohabitation: the share of dissolved marriages was 6–7% in the fifth year and only 15–16% even in the tenth year. The frequency of divorce is slightly higher in marriages following premarital cohabitation from the eighth year. In terms of marriages contracted between 2001 and 2013, marriages following premarital cohabitation are substantially less likely to break down than direct marriages: the gap is already visible in the second and third year and it increases gradually and it reaches five percentage points by the tenth year. A possible explanation is that the effect of premarital cohabitation on the stability of marriage depends on how widespread cohabitation is in a given country. Where these are less widespread, marriages following premarital cohabitation are more likely to break down than direct marriages. The underlying factor is that those who choose cohabitation are more likely to have a liberal approach to relationships and therefore end the marriage when problems arise. In countries where cohabitation is generally accepted – and Hungary is now one of these countries – premarital cohabitation is more likely to have a stabilising effect: the couple can adjust to each other and therefore fewer problems are expected to arise during the marriage. Thus, in conclusion first time cohabitation was more likely to turn into marriage in 1990–2000 than in 2001–2013, however these marriages in the latter period were more stable.

Cohabiting relationships are clearly much more likely to end than marriages. However, it is important to note that this only includes cohabitation that did not turn into marriage, since in the latter case a strong selection effect works (Figure 7). Nevertheless the analysis of these relationships can help us estimate the continuity of cohabitation and to

Figure 7: Relationship break-down by type of relationship and number of years since the start of the relationship^{a)}



Source: HDRI GGS: Turning Points of Life Course panel study, 4th Wave, new sample of 18–49 year olds; author's calculation (survival curves). ^{a)} First-time relationships of 18–49 year olds established between 1990–2013.

what extent it replaces marriage as a form of partnership. A large proportion of cohabitation that does not turn into marriage end: 30–35% of partners no longer live together by their fourth anniversary. After this, the dynamics of separation slows down somewhat, however it is still around 50–55% by the end of the tenth year. Cohabitation that started in the later period tends to end sooner and more often than those from the earlier period.

It is important to note that regarding the breakdown of direct marriage, marriage following premarital cohabitation and cohabitation, the key difference is between marriage and cohabitation. If factors other than the type of relationship were included in the analysis we could get a much more detailed picture about the fragility of different types of cohabitation. However, this goes beyond the scope of this study.

GLOSSARY

Cohabitation: Family consisting of two unmarried individuals living together in a marriage-like relationship without being married. (Consensual partnership according to HCSO's nomenclature).

Partners: People in a long-term cohabiting partnership without marriage, regardless of their marital status. In population surveys it is not a requirement that those in a self-reported partnership live in the same property or household with their partner. However, in examinations by

marital status, or in household or family surveys only cohabiting partners are registered as partners (HCSO).

Civil partnership: Civil partnership is granted if two people aged over 18 of the same sex make a joint declaration in front of a public registrar of their intention to register a civil partnership with each other. Civil partnership provides nearly the same rights as marriage except for example civil partners are not permitted to adopt children together or use each other's name (Act CLXXVII of 2009).

Registration of partnership: Since January 1, 2010 both same- and different-sex partners have been allowed to register their relationship. The primary purpose of this is to provide proof of the existence of the relationship in case of disputes.

Total divorce rate: The total divorce rate shows the number of divorces over the

number of marriages contracted in the observed period (usually one year) if the divorce rate by duration of marriage remained unchanged. The procedure is based on the assumption that people who get married in the given year face the same risk of divorce in each year of their marriage as couples do – after different lengths of marriage – in the given year.

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