

# FATHERHOOD: PARENTHOOD AND FAMILY ROLES FOR MEN

ZSUZSANNA MAKAY – ZSOLT SPÉDER

## MAIN FINDINGS

- » The total fertility rate for men in 2016 was 1.36 (estimate), while the mean number of children among men aged 25 years and over was 1.43.
- » 90% of men aged between 20 and 29, and a quarter of men aged between 40 and 49 are childless.
- » The fathers of 45% of children born in 2016 were aged 35 or over. Older male fertility at age 45 and over grew somewhat between 2000 and 2016, but only 5% of children were born to fathers that old. Fertility past the age of 50 continues to be rather rare.
- » The proportion of children born with officially unknown fathers decreased between 2000 and 2016; in the same period, the number of children born outside marriage grew from 29% to 47%. The proportion of children born without an officially identified father was 14% in 2000 and 11% in 2016 (i.e. nearly 10,000 children).
- » Where a father is not registered at birth, mothers are typically unmarried, young and less educated. In 2016, 70% had completed at most the eight grades of primary school. At the same time, 15% had completed secondary school or had a diploma from tertiary education. Clearly, diverse life circumstances underlie the phenomenon.
- » The number of children differs substantially for men and women, depending on level of education. The difference is largest among those with the lowest level of education: in 2016, 100 low-educated women aged over 25 had 211 children altogether; meanwhile, 100 such men had 169 children. Men with a secondary school diploma have the lowest number of children: in 2016, there were 121 children born to 100 men with only secondary education.
- » Among men aged 35–44 with only primary-school education, childlessness is exceptionally high: 1 man in every 2 is childless, whereas among men with higher education the proportion is 25%.
- » The social expectation that men should fulfil the ‘traditional’ father’s role of ‘breadwinner’ and provide financial security for the family continues to be virtually unanimous. Over half of society, however, expects men also to participate actively in the life of the family and to care for the children. Overall, two-fifths of the population

find both roles important, and so formulate a dual expectation with regard to the family role of men.

» Few household chores are solely the province of men: the overwhelming majority of tasks are undertaken by women. However, in a significant proportion of childless couples, a large part of the chores (about 40%) are done by both men and women in common. Household tasks are less equally divided among couples bringing up children, even when both parties have earnings from employment.

» As the children grow up, there is an increased chance of their parents' relationship being dissolved, so that they are brought up in a household without their father.

» Over half of children under the age of 19 who live apart from their fathers meet their father every week, and sleep regularly at his place. However, 9% never meet their fathers. Time elapsed since the separation and proximity of the father's residence have a considerable effect on the frequency of meetings.

## INTRODUCTION

Mainly for practical reasons, demographic and fertility analyses focus almost exclusively on women: since women give birth to children, it is their family and demographic attributes (age, number of children, official marital status, etc.) that can be treated as reliable information at the time of the birth of the child. We often do not have sufficient information about fathers, however; for example, in 2016 (as in 1990), no information about the father was recorded at the time of the registration of 11% of children born in Hungary. As a result, calculating the classical demographic and fertility indicators for men is more difficult.

Nevertheless, demography has recently started dealing in greater depth with the fertility of men and changes in the roles of fathers. This is partly due to the fact that, as a result of the greater fragility of relationships, the life courses of women and men diverge more frequently, and the analysis of women's fertility gives an increasingly inaccurate picture of the fertility of fathers (though the two never overlapped completely). A growing number of women and men live in a series of consecutive relationships in the course of their lives, and the number of partners and relationships can vary greatly between the two sexes; thus, the number of their children also differs. It is also important to emphasize that ideally in a relationship, the decision to have children is a joint one – not one taken solely by the woman; this provides a further reason for analysing the fertility of men.

In decades gone by, gender research rightly emphasized the importance of the perspective of women on different aspects of life, such as employment, social roles and, within that, family roles. The conflicting roles of women in the workforce are constantly present in scientific analyses, and naturally

in demographic studies as well. It is also well known that living in a single-parent family carries heightened risks for the mother bringing up the child, as well as for the maturing child – whether in terms of the risk of poverty, social and intellectual development, or the behaviour of the child. In the meantime, less attention has been devoted to men in terms of family relationships. Staying with this last example, what does all this mean for a father who lives separately? We can be certain that demographic changes have not left the social roles of men unaffected either. For this reason, it has become increasingly urgent to present and interpret the family roles of men.

For the sake of brevity and analytical purposes, we have limited our objectives. First, we have undertaken to present from a demographic point of view some attributes of men's fertility and becoming a father, including births where the father is officially not known at the time of the child's birth. Secondly, we present certain elements of men's family roles in Hungary. We provide an overview of the expectations placed on men, and then focus on two aspects of fatherhood in practice: in the case of fathers living with a partner, we examine the division of labour within the household; and where fathers live apart from their children, the focus is on their relationship with their children.

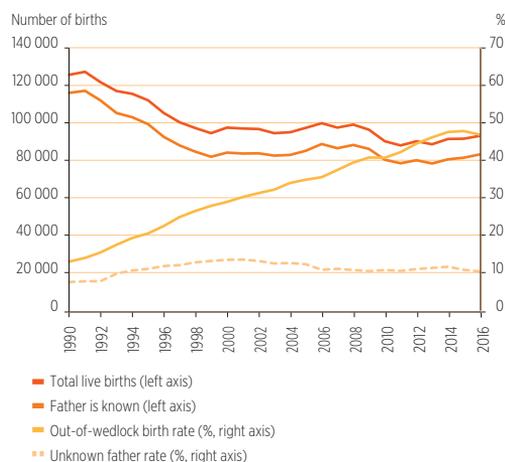
Many other chapters of the present volume also deal in part with men, whether it be the number of children they plan to have ('Fertility'), the employment of men at the age when they might be expected to have children ('The Family Support System and Female Employment'), or their relationship behaviour ('Partnerships and Marriage'). Here, we do not refer to these in every instance; further information on each subject can be found in the corresponding chapter.

## THE FERTILITY OF MEN

The chapter entitled ‘Fertility’ addresses Hungarian fertility trends in detail. One of the elements to note in this regard is that, although over half of all children (53% in 2016) are born within marriage, the other half are born to parents who have not married. While children born to married parents are automatically considered the offspring of the married couple, the father of a child born out of wedlock must file a voluntary acknowledgement of paternity in order to acquire paternal status.<sup>1</sup> A man may file this acknowledgement either during the pregnancy or at any subsequent time; he gains parental rights and responsibilities once the declaration becomes fully effective. If the father is not officially established at the time the child’s birth is registered, his details are not entered in the register: instead the registrar records *unknown father*<sup>2</sup> at the time of the birth of the child,<sup>2</sup> even if the mother is perfectly well aware of his identity, and even if the father is aware of the birth of his child. To calculate male fertility indicators, it is essential to know how the trend in the number of unknown fathers is developing.

At the time of the regime change, approximately 8% of children were born officially with fathers unknown. The proportion began to grow from 1992, peaking in 2000 at about 14% (*Figure 1*). In 2016, the fathers of 10.6% of the children born were officially not known at birth. This is only 3 percentage points higher than the figure 26 years earlier, even though the proportion of children born out of wedlock has increased from 14% to nearly 50%. A decisive majority of children born to unmarried parents are acknowledged by their fathers, suggesting that they are born to parents in stable cohabiting partnerships (though we have no more accurate data in this regard).

*Figure 1: Number of live births; number of live births where the father is known; proportion of live births out of wedlock; and proportion of live births where the father is officially not known, 1990–2016*



Source: Hungarian Central Statistical Office (HCSO), Demographic Yearbooks.

Difficulties in analysing the fertility of men are strongly correlated to the lack of data related to fathers. Though unidentified fathers are included in the total male population (population at risk) when fertility indicators are calculated for men, they are not included among parents. The number of live births is attributed to fewer men than the number who have actually had children: those men who father a child but are not included in the statistics are added to the number of men who are childless. This, for example, is one of the factors that distort the age distribution of fathers, the *age-specific fertility rate*<sup>3</sup>, as well as the *total fertility rate (TFR)*<sup>4</sup>, which is calculated from it. A man who becomes a father, but whose data are missing, shows up in the statistics as not having become a father in the given year. The total male fertility rate calculated on the basis of the official data available (which disregard the data for the missing

<sup>1</sup> Act V of 2013 on the Civil Code, §. 4:98.

<sup>2</sup> The law formulates it thus: ‘If there is no person who must be considered the father of the child ...’ (Act V of 2013, § 4:150).

men) was therefore only 1.2 in 2016, whereas the corrected indicator was 1.36 (for women it was 1.46 in the same year).

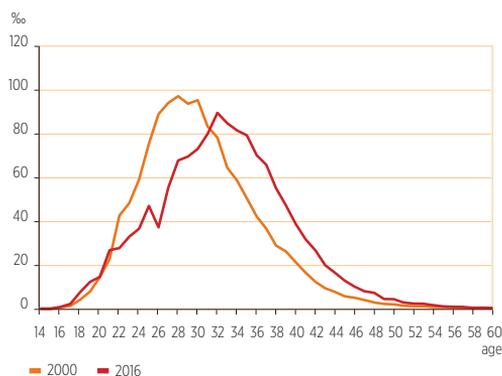
In order to overcome this difficulty – that is, in order to be able to plot the exact age distribution of men who become fathers and calculate their fertility rate – we used a simple method to supply the missing data in the case of births where we do not have information on the father's age. First, in cases where we do have information about new fathers, we examined the average age difference between the mother and the father by the mother's age and educational level. Then, wherever the father's data were missing, we used this average age. It then becomes possible to outline the adjusted age-specific fertility rate of men and to calculate the total fertility rate.

The results show that between 2000 and 2016, fertility was postponed to a later age among men as well, and the age dispersion has grown somewhat (*Figure 2*). The modal age of fertility among men in 2000 was 28; 16 years later, it was 32. In the same period, fertility among the under-30s dropped sharply: the number of children born to 26-year-old men, for example, halved. At the same time, in 2016 the propensity to have children was higher than at the turn of the millennium, from the age of 32 right up to the age when men cease to father children, which for the vast majority of men is around the age of 50. Very few children are born to men older than that, and this situation has not changed since the turn of the millennium.

Adding together the age-specific fertility rates gives us the total fertility rate (TFR). Using the corrected data, the total fertility rate for men in 2000 was 1.31, which barely lagged behind the total fertility rate for

women (1.33). In 2016, however, the situation was quite different: the TFR for men stood at 1.36, whereas for women it was 1.49. The difference can presumably be explained by the excess of men between the ages of 15 and 50, which was far more pronounced in 2016 than 16 years earlier.<sup>3</sup>

*Figure 2: Age-specific fertility rates for men in Hungary, corrected data, 2000, 2016*

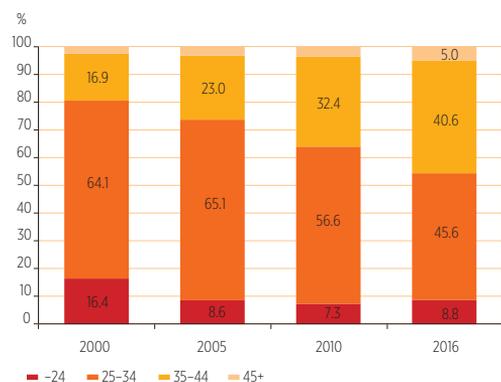


Source: HCSO, Vital statistics; authors' calculations.

The distribution of live births by age of the father can be tracked in the case of known fathers. In 2000, 16% of fathers were younger than 25 at the birth of their child; in 2016, by contrast, the figure was only half that (*Figure 3*). At the turn of the millennium, close to two-thirds of fathers were aged 25–34 at the birth of their child, and approximately 20% were 35 or older. By contrast, in 2016 fathers were at least 35 years old in 45% of births. Fertility at a more advanced age – after 45 (but typically before 50) – grew somewhat between 2000 and 2016: in 2016, 5% of fathers were that old when their child was born.

<sup>3</sup> In 2000, the number of men aged 15–50 exceeded the number of women by 30,920; in 2016 the excess was 79,081. So the larger population of men had as many children as the lower population of women, which meant that the number of children per capita among women was higher in that year.

Figure 3: Distribution of live births by age of father, among fathers officially known, 2000–2016



Source: HCSO, Vital statistics; authors' calculations.

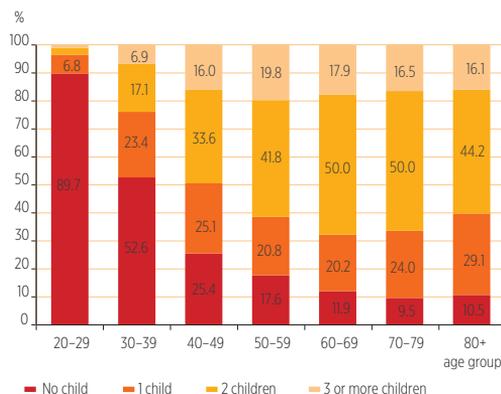
## DISTRIBUTION OF MEN BY NUMBER OF CHILDREN

The spread of the relatively late fertility pattern can also be seen in the distribution of men aged over 20 by the number of children. In 2016, 90% of men aged 20–29 did not have any children yet (and 79% of women); although this proportion decreases with age, the proportion of the childless is still 25% among men aged 40–49 (14% among women) (Figure 4). Among males, a quarter of this age group has one child; a third have two; and 16% have three or more children. However, as described earlier, fertility after the age of 45 is quite rare – even among men – which makes it highly unlikely that the high proportion of childless individuals will decrease noticeably.

The age groups between 60 and 80 show a similar distribution by the number of children: about a tenth are childless; every second male has two children; and about 17% have three or more. These indicators are lower than among the 50–59 age group, of whom a fifth had three or more children. At the same time, in the age group 50–59 (i.e. an age at when men are unlikely to have any more children),

childlessness is also quite high (17.6%). In an overall comparison of the age groups 40–59 and 60+ it is apparent that the distribution by number of children is more polarized among middle-aged men: there is a larger proportion both of men without children and of men with three or more children.

Figure 4: Distribution of male population aged 20 and over, by age group and number of children, 2016



Source: HCSO, Vital statistics; authors' calculations.

Level of education has a marked effect on the number of children fathered. If we examine the number of children among men who have completed their education and are at the most likely age to have children (35–44) by level of education, it is clear that males with the least education (having completed at most eight years of primary school) are far more likely to be childless than are other groups: in 2016, 55% did not (yet) have children (Figure 5). It is a fact that men with a very low level of education are typically at a disadvantage on the relationship 'market', as women favour partners who are at least as well educated as they are; in addition, a very low level of education normally also means poor integration into the labour market and lower earnings, which may limit the number of planned children. At the same time, it is also true that the proportion of men with many

children is higher in this group. In other words, polarized fertility behaviour can be observed here: many are childless, and there are almost as many men in the group with three or more children as the combined total of those with one or two.

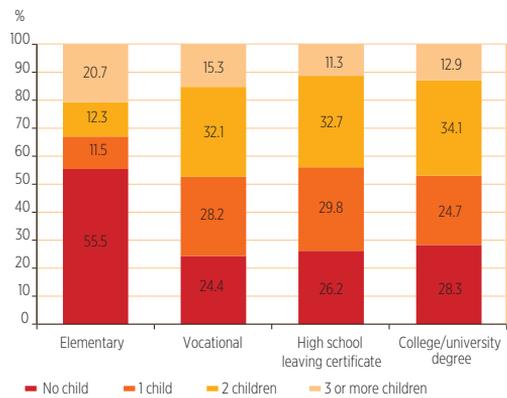
Though there are differences in the extent of childlessness between those groups educated to levels higher than primary, they are not significant: the greatest difference (of a mere 4 percentage points) is between men with vocational education and those with a tertiary diploma: 24% of the former and 28% of the latter were childless in 2016. An important universal link between educational level and age of parenthood is that the first child is typically planned to follow the completion of education and the securing of a position on the labour market. Since this only happens at a later age in the case of those with higher education, fertility begins later for them (and is of shorter duration) than in the case of those with mid-level education. Yet the age-specific fertility rate is highest in their case at age 35 and above (see the chapter entitled ‘Fertility’). We therefore have good reason to suppose that among those 35–44-year-olds with tertiary education, the number of children will continue to grow, and there will be a decrease in childlessness.

If we look at the mean number of children by educational level, it also becomes apparent that education has a different effect on the fertility of women and men. This is especially spectacular at lower levels of education: in 2016, whereas 100 women aged 25 and over with no more than eight years of primary education had 211 children, the same number of men with the same level of education had only 169 (Figure 6).

For those with a vocational level of education, 100 women had 176 children, while 100 men had 146. In the case of men

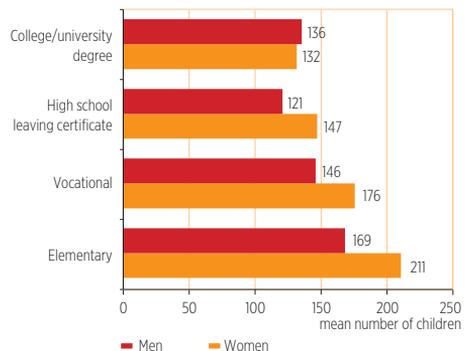
who completed secondary education and gained a school leaving certificate the proportion of children is lower than in any other educational group (121 per 100 men). Among men with tertiary education, the mean number of children slightly exceeds the mean number for women with a similar level of education: 136 per 100 men, compared to 132 per 100 women.

Figure 5: Distribution of men aged between 35 and 44, by highest level of education and number of children, 2016



Source: HCSO, Microcensus 2016; authors’ calculations.

Figure 6: Number of children per 100 women and men aged 25 and over, by level of education, 2016



Source: HCSO, Microcensus 2016; authors’ calculations.

## THE CHILDREN OF OFFICIALLY UNKNOWN FATHERS

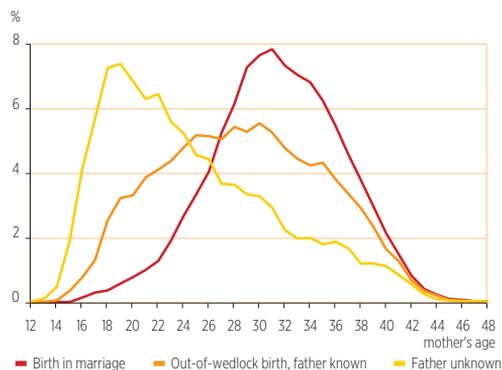
In 11% of live births, the father of the child is unknown, and so we only have information about the mother at the time of registration of the child's birth and his/her statistical debut. These mothers are considered to be single parents; but it must be emphasized that the true real-life situation and parental circumstances are not known. It is possible that the father rejects fatherhood; or he may not even know of the child's existence, not having close ties to the mother. In certain cases, the mother may not even know who the father of her child is. But it is also possible that the father had simply not filed a voluntary acknowledgement of paternity by the time of the child's birth, but will do so soon after. We have no data on any of these speculations, and so the underlying factors can only be guesswork.

An interesting overview emerges from the various types of births (married parents, out of wedlock with a known or an unknown father) by age of the mother. In the largest proportion of births where the father is unknown, the mothers are aged 18–19; and in about 80% of cases where the father is

unknown, the mother is under 30. Most of the births within marriage occur when the mother is aged 30–31, and in 70% of such births the mother is aged 25–35. In the case of mothers who are not married but the father is known, there is a wider dispersion by age of the mother: about half of the births occur between the ages of 20 and 30, while the mother is over 30 in 45% of cases (*Figure 7*). It is probable that a great diversity of life situations underlies the different 'types' of parenthood patterns.

It is worth examining more closely the attributes of mothers who do not declare the identity of the father at the birth of their child. Comparing them with mothers who have partners, we can establish that this is a very different group (*Table 1*). Where the father is unknown, in 95% of cases mothers have never been married (unsurprising, given that when a mother is married, the husband is automatically considered to be the father of the child). Mothers in groups where the 'father is unknown' are also typically younger: over a quarter are under 20 when the child is born, and 76% are under 30. By contrast, where the father is known, only 4% of mothers are under 20, and 55% are over 30. They typically have much higher levels of education: 37% have tertiary education, while this is only true of 4% of mothers who have a child without a known father. In their case, the proportion of those with eight years of primary education at most is extremely high, at 70%. The divergence in the two groups can also be seen in the economic activity of the mother: where the father is known, 73% of the mothers are active (only temporarily away from their employment); where the father is not known, however, this can only be said of less than a quarter of the mothers. This group has a much higher proportion of unemployed, students, mothers on parental leave and others who are economically inactive. It is also apparent that in those cases where the father is unknown, the largest

*Figure 7: Distribution of various types of births, by mother's age, 2016*



Source: HCSO, Vital statistics; authors' calculations.

*Table 1: Distribution of characteristics of mothers in cases where the father is known, and where he is not, 2016*

	(%)	
	Father known	Father unknown
<b>Marital status of mother</b>		
Never married	37.2	95.2
Married	59.3	0.3
Widowed	0.1	0.3
Divorced	3.4	4.2
<b>Mother's age group</b>		
Under 20	4.2	26.9
20–24	12.8	30.4
25–29	26.1	19.6
30–34	31.6	12.5
35–39	20.5	7.7
40+	4.8	2.9
<b>Mother's educational level</b>		
8 years of primary education at most	15.2	69.2
Vocational	12.1	11.3
Secondary	34.7	12.9
Tertiary	36.8	3.7
Unknown	1.2	2.9
<b>Which child</b>		
1st child	47.5	42.2
2nd child	33.4	24.8
3rd child	13.2	14.7
4th or subsequent child	5.9	18.3
<b>Economic activity of mother</b>		
Active	73.0	23.9
Unemployed	6.1	16.4
Parental leave	12.5	31.3
Student	1.5	6.4
Other inactive	5.7	18.5
Unknown	1.2	3.5
<b>County of child's birth</b>		
Budapest	30.8	15.1
Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén	6.1	16.4
Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg	6.2	12.3
Rest of the counties <sup>a</sup>	56.9	56.2
<i>Number of births</i>	83,221	9,842

Source: HCSO, Vital statistics; authors' calculations.

<sup>a</sup> The figure varies from 1.0% (Vas County) to 8.1% (Hajdú-Bihar County) in the case of unknown fathers, and from 1.0% (Nógrád County) to 6.4% (Hajdú-Bihar County) in the case of known fathers.

proportion of children (16%) are born in Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County, while only 6% of births occur there if the father is known. Another 12% are born in Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County; this is double the proportion of children with known fathers.<sup>4</sup> Surprisingly, mothers often give birth to their second or subsequent child with the father unknown. In close to a fifth of instances, the mother's fourth or subsequent child has an unknown father (although that is most common with first children).

It may therefore be observed that in those cases where there is no acknowledged father at the time of the birth of the child, mothers are in a rather disadvantaged position: typically young, never married, with a low level of education, and more often living in underdeveloped regions.

In the following section, we focus on paternal roles within the family, and examine society's expectations of fathers today.

## PATERNAL ROLES AND SOCIETY'S EXPECTATIONS

Gender roles within the family bear the marked influence of labour market conditions – especially the equal or unequal participation of men and women in the labour market – and particular features of the institutional system. At the same time, there is no question that the influence of traditions and expectations with regard to roles is also strong. What else could explain the strong prevalence of the model of the 'male breadwinner' in current Hungarian society, half a century after female employment attained almost virtual parity with male? We assume that beliefs and ideologies with regard to family gender roles can in themselves have a substantial

<sup>4</sup> Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén and Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg are the most disadvantaged counties in Hungary.

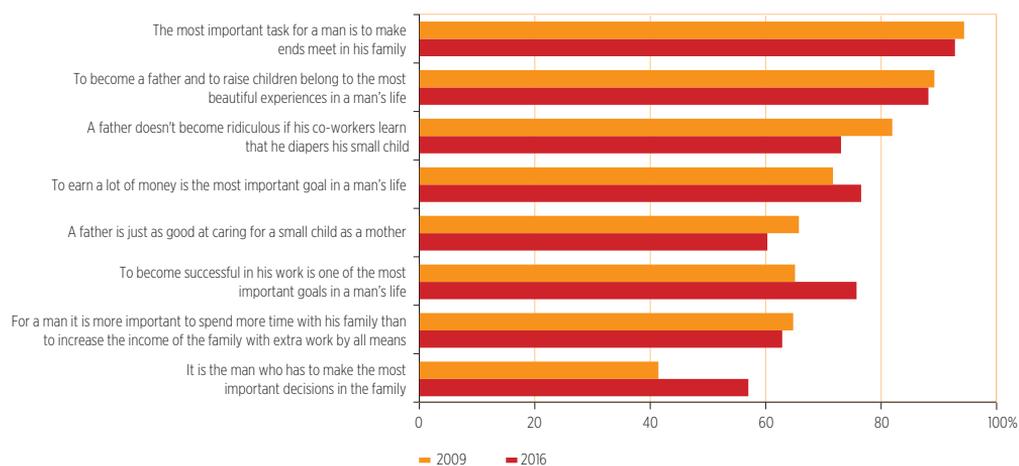
influence on how we shape paternal and maternal roles. It is well worth keeping track of them.

The list of survey statements formulated to describe and measure the transformation of paternal role expectations is intended to assess the degree to which the population supports the ‘traditional’ father role or the ‘new type’ of family-centred male role. The former can be identified with the *breadwinning father* role. The defining trait of the breadwinning father’s role is that the most important task for the male is to create security and to guarantee financial stability. The position and earning potential of the male as an employee is decisive in realizing this role. Further expectations with regard to this role are that the man should have the final say in all matters concerning the family, and that in a partnership the man should take the initiative. By contrast, in the context of expectations of the family-centred, modern father – the ‘caring father’ – the woman and the man should jointly ensure the livelihood of the family,

and the man should take an active part in performing the everyday chores within the family. In this case, paternal behaviour that involves the expression of feelings is assessed positively.

Four of the eight statements were intended to reflect identification with the breadwinning father role, and four with that of the family-centred father. The simple distribution of the preference for individual traits (Figure 8) unequivocally indicates universal approval for – and unvaried endurance of – the traditional father’s role in ensuring financial security. In 2016, over nine-tenths (94%) of the population aged 20–44 either somewhat or completely agreed that ‘*The most important task for a man is to make ends meet in his family.*’ At the same time, there are also clear signs of support for the family-centred, participatory father role, with nearly two-thirds (65%) of responders agreeing that ‘*For a man it is more important to spend more time with his family than to increase the income of the family with extra work by all means.*’

Figure 8: Number of those in agreement with given statements on the roles of fathers in the Hungarian population aged 20–44, 2009, 2016



Source: HDRI Data: Family Values Survey 2009; Fatherhood 2016; authors' calculations.

While there has been no substantial realignment of opinions over time, proportional changes suggest a consolidation of the expectation regarding the man's breadwinning role. Surprisingly, there has been a growth in support for two statements that can plainly be considered the building-blocks of the traditional male role (*'It is the man who has to make the most important decisions in the family'* and *'To become successful in his work is one of the most important goals in a man's life'*).

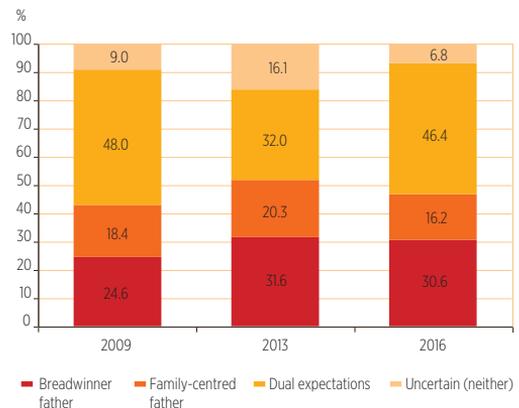
The distribution of support for the above role characteristics obviously indicates that some groups of the population aged 20–44 support traditional paternal roles, while there must also, at the same time, be others who have 'dual expectations' of men. However, from the figure above we are not able to read any information about whether there is any support – and if so, how strong it is – for an exclusively family-centred type of paternal role. To answer this question, we have identified four family roles that can be delineated on the basis of approaches that support or reject the above statements. In addition to the two types already mentioned ('breadwinner father', 'family-centred father'), we developed two mixed types. Responders with 'dual expectations' of men expect men to ensure the livelihood of the family and to take an active part in the everyday chores of looking after the children. Finally, responders with 'uncertain expectations' have no fixed expectations of men.

Though our crude distributions in *Figure 8* suggest that support for the traditional paternal role is universal, the picture becomes more nuanced on the basis of the typologies we have developed, as 'dual expectations' is the most widespread among 20–44-year-olds. Since there is hardly any difference by sex, we can state

that men's expectations of themselves and women's expectations of their partners are mostly (among two-fifths of respondents) that men should both provide financial security and be hands-on fathers. In 2016, three-tenths (30.6%) of the surveyed age group supported the 'breadwinner father' role set and one-sixth (16.2%) supported that of the 'family-centred' father. The group with 'uncertain expectations' is the smallest.

In terms of changes over time, clearly the proportions of the three most common sets of expectations change in relation to each other; but no directional transformation emerges over the seven years observed. What is clear is that not only have the traditional expectations towards men not disappeared, but they have not even become any less popular.

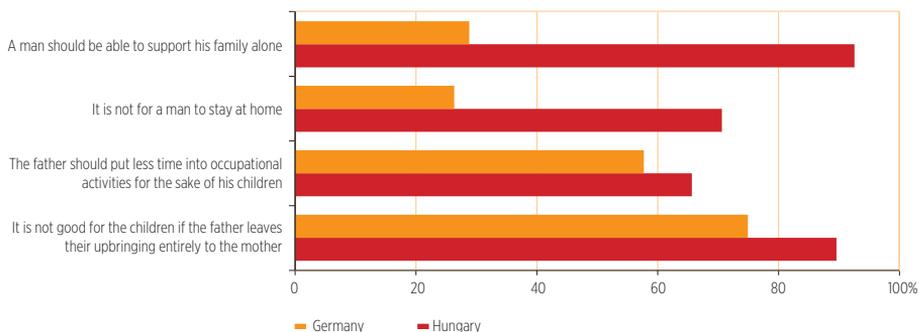
*Figure 9: Support for expectations of roles of men in the population aged 20–44, 2009, 2013, 2016*



Source: HDRI Data: Family Values Survey 2009 and Fatherhood 2016; ISSP2013 Plus; authors' calculations.

Some attitudes can also be compared with German data; here significant differences can be observed between the countries. Expectations that fathers should be family oriented (*'The father should put*

Figure 10: Proportion of those in agreement with the given statement among the population aged 20–44 in Germany (2012) and Hungary (2016)



Source: Germany: Lück (2015); Hungary: HDRI: Fatherhood 2016; authors' calculations.

less time into occupational activities for the sake of his children' and 'It is not good for the children if the father leaves their upbringing entirely to the mother') are present and supported in both Hungary and Germany, and there is no significant difference between Hungarian and German popular opinion on this question. However, unlike in Germany, being family oriented in Hungary does not mean that the father should be a 'stay-at-home dad' (Figure 10): over two-thirds of Hungarians (71%) believe 'It is not for a man to stay at home', whereas only just over a quarter of Germans (26.4%) think that. There is also a marked difference in opinion about whether 'A man should be able to support his family alone': 93% of Hungarians think he should, but only a little over a quarter of Germans share this opinion. So Hungarians posit a far more equivocal expectation towards men on this issue. We may presume on these grounds that dual expectations are more widespread in Hungary. In Germany, the expectation that a father should be family oriented is accompanied by an easing of the classical expectation that he should provide financial security.

## FATHERS LIVING IN PARTNERSHIP: DIVISION OF HOUSEHOLD CHORES IN FAMILIES WITH AND WITHOUT CHILDREN

Insofar as expectations are concerned, while it may be an important phenomenon that a significant segment of the population supports the new, participatory and caring paternal role, our observations suggest that in fact it may be more the case that the roles are divided along traditional lines, with the primary task of men being to ensure financial wellbeing. Thus, the burden of housekeeping is left more to women, while the men concentrate primarily on professional matters and on prioritizing income. Below, we present the way in which labour within the household is divided between couples with and without children, by comparing two clearly different family life situations.

This thought experiment involves comparing the typical division of labour in two groups with different 'family profiles': 1) a (married) couple living in a childless, two-person household, with both parties aged between 20 and 35;<sup>5</sup> and 2) a family where

<sup>5</sup> The age of the woman responding is relevant, the age of the partner is not considered.

the parents live with their two children (aged between 10 and 18) in a four-person household (the age of the parents has no significance in this case). In both of the groups illustrated, the great majority of both women and men are employed: among young and childless couples – 89% of both men and women; among couples rearing children – 80% of women and 81% of men are employed in full-time jobs.

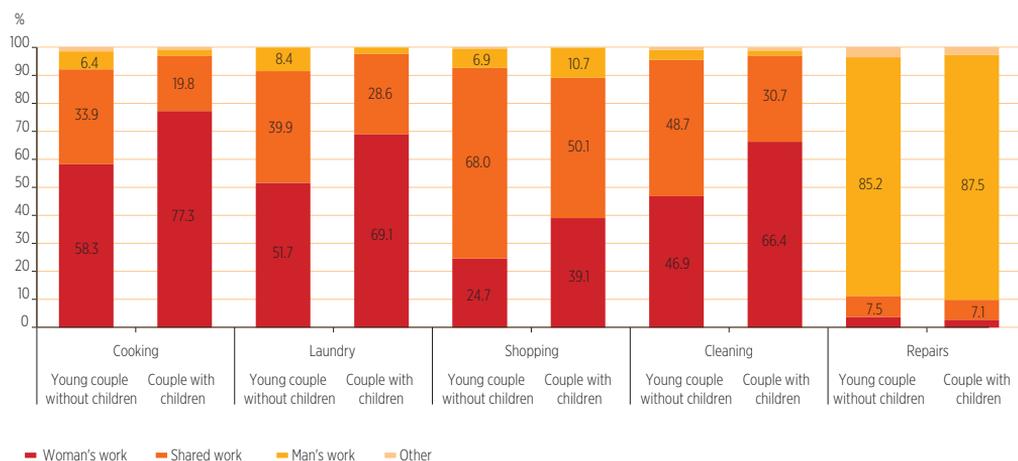
Our starting point is the fact that Hungarian mothers typically stay at home for a few years after the birth of their child, in order to raise and care for it. Though the household chores may have been divided more equally between the partners prior to parenthood, the division of labour changes during the period when the mother stays at home, turning traditional (or more traditional). It does not revert, however, even when the children are older and the mother returns to the labour market. The employment of two breadwinners would seem to require the division of unpaid labour at home to become more equal (again), or at least reminiscent of the period preceding parenthood. But in fact, in keeping with the approach of economics, it would seem that the participation of women in household chores remains greater, because they are more practised and manage the household work more efficiently. Based on a different logic: the division of labour in the household becomes fixed while they are caring for the children at home and does not become more evenly balanced between the parties even after the woman's return to the labour market. And so women must contend with the 'second shift' so comprehensively described by Hochschild: after the tasks completed on the formal labour market, the work to be done at home is also largely left to women (Hochschild 1989).

International experience suggests that it is not realistic to expect Hungarian women

and men to take on equal amounts of unpaid labour. For, in spite of the fact that the division is more equal in a number of countries than prior to the 1980s, women essentially do more household labour than men everywhere (Altintas and Sullivan 2016; Bianchi et al. 2000; Bianchi et al. 2012). The situation is the same even in Sweden, where an extremely heavy emphasis is placed on equality of the sexes: according to data from the 2011 time-use surveys, women spend 45 minutes more a day on household work than do men – even though since 2000 the amount done by women has decreased, and the amount undertaken by men has increased (SCB 2011). In Great Britain, women spend on average twice as much time on cooking, child-rearing and household work as do men, according to the time-use survey of 2015 (Office for National Statistics 2016). In 2009-2010 in Hungary, women spent on average 160 minutes a day on cooking, laundry and cleaning, while men spent 32 minutes a day (HCSO 2012).

Comparing the two family types in our thought experiment, it also emerges that in Hungary, household labour is not divided equally even in the case of the childless, two-person household. Cooking, laundry and cleaning are primarily tasks for women: they perform these chores in more than half the cases. Tasks that men undertake independently (i.e. the tasks are performed by them alone) do not reach 10% in any activity. At the same time, tasks are handled together by the couples in 40-50% of cases, though this depends on the activity concerned: cooking is shared in nearly a third of cases; cleaning in nearly 50%; and shopping in two-thirds of cases. And so it is clear that women's commitment to household work is much higher than men's; but it is clear, too, that men also take part in it, though they do little of the work on their own (*Figure 11*).

Figure 11: Division of labour in the case of couples without children and rearing children, 2012



Source: HDRI GGS Turning Points of the Life-course survey, 2012; authors' calculations.

What is the approach to the division of labour among couples who have passed the child-minding stage and whose children are bigger? Among (married) couples living in this family structure and bringing up two children over the age of 10, the share of household work undertaken by women is even greater for each type of chore. They do 77% of the cooking; 70% of the laundry; and 66% of the cleaning. They also do the shopping in 40% of cases, but men also do the shopping independently in 11% of cases. The inequality of labour in household work has grown, in spite of the fact that a large proportion of these women are also working. The proportion of chores carried out together has shrunk, and in its place the part done by women has grown. In couples without children, cleaning is done by the woman in 47% of cases; in the case of families bringing up older children, that proportion rises to two-thirds, and the same tendency is apparent in every type of household chore.

So, all the signs are that, having reared their children, when women re-join the workforce, the part played by men decreases and more of the housework is left to women than was

the case before the birth of the children. One exception to the above comes in the form of repairs and mechanical work around the house: in 85% of cases, that is the exclusive province of men.

More detailed studies involving the labour market, income and other factors are needed to interpret the division of family responsibilities and tasks, and the dynamics.

## SEPARATED FATHERS: CONTACT WITH CHILDREN

Among those households with at least one child aged 24 or under, the proportion of single-parent households was 22% in 2016 (see the chapter on 'Household and Family Structure' in this volume). Women make up a clear majority of those bringing up children without a live-in partner (in 2016, the share was 86% women and 14% men); overall, fathers live alone with their child (or children) in only 2.6% of families, which means approximately 72,000 single-parent fathers in 2016 (see Figure 2 of the chapter on 'Household and Family Structure').

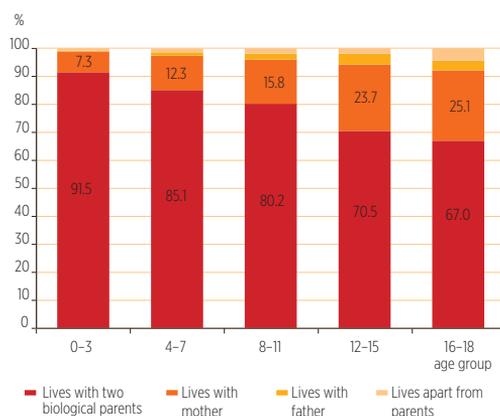
On the basis of the Turning Points of the Life-course survey, we can also look at the family structure surrounding children at various ages, breaking the figures down by age group. If we consider the nearly 7,000 children aged under 19 in the sample, it becomes clear that as time goes by there is a substantial rise in the chances that a child will not grow up in a classical family. Whereas over 90% of children aged under four live with both their biological parents, this proportion drops by 10 percentage points among 8–11-year-olds, and only two-thirds of 16–18-year-old children are being raised by both their parents. A clear majority of children who live with only one of their parents stay with their mother: 7% of those aged under four and a quarter of those at the end of childhood; meanwhile, those living with their father do not exceed 4% in either age group.<sup>6</sup>

Research has shown that in terms of the development of the child, the role of the father is significant even after the dissolution of the partnership, and even if the child does not live with him in the same household. Children who meet their fathers frequently achieve demonstrably better grades at school, have higher social aptitude and suffer less from the dissolution of the relationship and the separation of the parents (Radl et al. 2017).

How often do children in Hungary meet their separated father, and how does this change, depending on the age of the child and other factors?

Over two-thirds of children aged under 19 who live apart from their father meet their father at least every week or every two weeks.<sup>7</sup> At the same time, close to a quarter of them meet him once a month at most; and 9% never meet him (*Table 2*).

*Figure 12: Distribution of children under 19 by age and whether they live with their biological parents, 2012*



Source: HDRI GGS Turning Points of the Life-course survey, 2012; authors' calculations.

*Table 2: Distribution of children aged under 19, living in a household separate from their fathers, by frequency of meetings with their father, 2012*

Meeting with father	
Frequency	Distribution, %
Weekly	53.9
Fortnightly	14.4
Once a month	12.3
Less	10.8
Never	8.8
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Source: HCSO GGS Turning Points of the Life-course survey, 2012; authors' calculations.

Note: Case number: 348; weighted data.

In addition, half of the children (52%) regularly sleep at their father's place. Unsurprisingly, this is most frequent among those who meet their fathers frequently: close to a third of the children who meet their father every week also sleep over regularly; among those who do not even

<sup>6</sup> Only living with biological parents counts. This may mean that the child lives in a single-parent family, or is being brought up in a blended family.

<sup>7</sup> The group is quite small: a total of 367 children can be found in our database, belonging to 267 responder fathers.

*Table 3: The frequency of contact with their separated father among children aged under 19, depending on various factors, 2012*

	Weekly	Fortnightly	Once a month	Less	Never	Total	Number of cases
(%)							
<b>Length of time separated</b>							
0–4 years	63.5	12.4	14.5	7.9	1.7	100	165
5–9 years	54.6	18.4	9.2	7.1	10.7	100	111
10 or more years	29.9	12.0	11.9	24.0	22.2	100	72
<b>Age of the child</b>							
Under 5	51.5	12.4	17.9	15.2	2.9	100	37
Aged 5–9	49.5	23.4	12.6	8.2	6.3	100	78
Aged 10–14	53.5	17.1	12.1	6.6	10.7	100	107
Aged 15–18	57.2	7.8	10.4	14.4	10.2	100	126
<b>Proximity of father</b>							
Same town	78.8	5.7	6.0	5.1	4.4	100	184
Elsewhere in the country	24.4	25.6	20.2	15.9	13.9	100	158
Abroad	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	6

Source: HCSO GGS Turning Points of the Life-course survey, 2012; authors' calculations.

see their father every month, 29% sleep over (results not shown here).

What are the factors determining how frequently children meet their father (*Table 3*)? According to the descriptive results, it depends primarily on how long they have lived apart: the longer it has been, the rarer the meetings. Among those children who have lived apart from their fathers for four years at most, close to two-thirds meet their father weekly; this is only true of 30% of those children who have lived separately for 10 years or more (and nearly 20% of this group never meet their fathers).

The child's age does not have such an obvious effect: over half of the children meet their father weekly, irrespective of their age. At the same time, those aged over 14 are considerably more likely to see their father even less than once a month, or never meet him at all.

Another factor that has a major influence on contact is physical proximity. If the father

lives in the same town as the child, they meet weekly in 80% of cases. However, if the father lives in a different town, the figure drops to a quarter of the children.<sup>8</sup>

We also seek to answer the question of how satisfied fathers are with the relationship they have with their child who lives apart. It appears that, on the whole, 58% of fathers are very satisfied with the relationship they have with their child; however, every fifth father (21%) is not satisfied (the rest are semi-satisfied). Without positing a causal link, we can say that satisfaction and the frequency of meetings are not unrelated factors. About 90% of satisfied fathers meet their child every one or two weeks; only 17% of fathers who are not satisfied meet their offspring that regularly.

It is certain that contact between father and child is of outstanding importance from the point of view not only of the child's development, but also of the father's satisfaction with life.

<sup>8</sup> According to the results of the analysis using multiple variables, physical proximity (more frequent meetings if they live in the same town than if they live further away from each other) and the time since separation (if shorter, meetings are more frequent) affect the relationship between father and child, while the age of the child has no effect.

## GLOSSARY

*Age-specific fertility rate:* Fertility can be calculated for men of certain ages, in order to describe or compare changes in fertility behaviour by age. The term is usually given per mille (‰). The basis of comparison is the mid-year figure for the population of the same age or age group as the father.

*Total fertility rate (TFR):* The number of children who would be born per woman or man (or per 1,000 women or men) if she/they were to pass through the child-bearing years bearing children according to a current schedule of age-specific fertility rates.

*Unknown father:* A father about whom we have no data at the time of the birth of the child, because he does not live in a marriage with the mother, and his identity cannot be established officially when the child is registered. The HCSO's 2017

*Népmozgalmi kézikönyve (Demography Handbook)* gives the following instructions to registrars with regard to the registration of new-born children: 'A record of "father unknown" should only be entered if the identity of the father is really unknown and cannot be established. In such cases, the birth date of the father should also be entered as "father unknown", and the rest of the questions in regard to the father should be left blank' (HCSO 2017: 56).

## REFERENCES

- Altintas, E. – Sullivan, O. (2016): Fifty years of change updated: Cross-national gender convergence in housework. *Demographic Research*, 35(16): 455–470.
- Bianchi, S. M. – Milkie, M. A. – Sayer, L. C. – Robinson, J. P. (2000): Is Anyone Doing the Housework? Trends in the Gender Division of Household Labor. *Social Forces*, 79(1): 191–228.
- Bianchi, S. M. – Sayer, L. C. – Milkie, M. A. – Robinson, J. P. (2012): Housework: Who Did, Does or Will Do It, and How Much Does It Matter? *Social Forces*, 91(1): 55–63.
- Hochschild, A. R. (1989): *The Second Shift*. Avon Books, New York.
- Hungarian Central Statistical Office (HCSO) (2012): *Időmérleg 2009/2010. Összefoglaló adattár [Time-Use Survey 2009/2010. Summary Database]*. HCSO, Budapest.
- Hungarian Central Statistical Office (HCSO) (2017): *Népmozgalmi kézikönyve [Demography Handbook]*. HCSO, Budapest. [Manuscript].
- Lück, D. (2015): Vaterbilder: Ernährer und Erzieher? In Schneider, N. F. – Diabaté, S. – Ruckdeschel, K. (eds.): *Familienleitbilder in Deutschland. Kulturelle Vorstellungen zu Partnerschaft, Elternschaft und Familienleben*. Verlag Barbara Budrich, Opladen: 227–246.
- Office for National Statistics (2016): *Women shoulder the responsibility of 'unpaid work'*. 10 November. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentand-labourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsand-workinghours/articles/women-shoulder-the-responsibility-of-unpaid-work/2016-11-10>
- Radl, J. – Salazar, L. – Cebolla-Boado, H. (2017): Does Living in a Fatherless Household Compromise Educational Success? A Comparative Study of Cognitive and Non-cognitive Skills. *European Journal of Population*, 33(2): 217–242.
- SCB (2011): *The Swedish time survey 2010: Men increase their share of unpaid housework*. <http://www.scb.se/en/finding-statistics/statistics-by-subject-area/living-conditions/living-conditions/the-swedish-time-use-survey/pong/statistical-news/the-swedish-time-use-survey-2010/>
- Takács J. (2017): Aktívan törődő apák Magyarországon. [Actively caring fathers in Hungary] *Szociológiai Szemle*, 27(3): 104–126.