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## Risks of Social Exclusion in Connection with Natality and Nuptiality in Slovakia after 1990

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Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach dozwolonego użytku.

Veronika Žilová

## Risks of Social Exclusion in Connection with Natality and Nuptiality in Slovakia after 1990

Even though it may appear that reproduction behaviour has, at first sight, little to do with social exclusion, the opposite is true. This will have a significant influence on society behaving in this manner, in the senior age. It is the aim of this paper to point out one area of reproductive behaviour of the Slovak population of young people, characteristic for the current development in the respective region, in all economically developed countries and the risks associated with it in the social sphere.

### – Natality

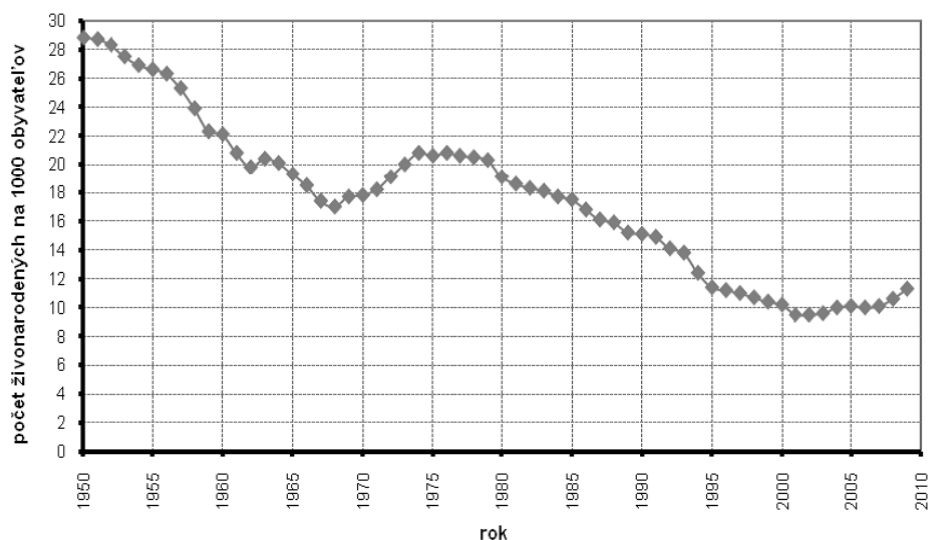
In the demographic development of Slovakia, we may perceive phenomena, which have no past history in Slovakia and require the attention of political institutions of Slovakia as well as of the whole Slovak society. The natality rate in Slovakia has been worryingly low for more than a decade. Such a drastic drop in natality is unprecedented. This low natality rate is even more worrying, when we realize that it is the strong generation of the so-called “Husák children”, who is reaching parental age, born by the end of the seventies. They were part of the “state real socialism”, when the state introduced a policy for a beneficial social development, to ensure a future growth of a population that would be able to perform labour and of future soldiers (Fialová, Hamplová, Kučera, Vymětalová, 2000). This generation bore very few children. Such a significantly decreased natality brings along changes in the age structure of the Slovak population. Prognoses expect a growth in average natality rate up to 1,6 until 2025, but no more. The most significant statement from the 2007 prognosis is that concerning the average natality rate: “With a high degree of certainty, Slovakia can no longer expect to reach a maintenance value”.

In discussions about the possible causes of such a radical decrease in natality, it is necessary to realize the obvious difference in the number of children people have and the number of children they would like to have. There is some sociological

research performed in Slovakia and in Europe which says that people consider a significantly higher number of offspring than that they really have to be ideal. This fact indicates that the problem of low natality may not be explained by a simple statement that people have as many children as they want to have. According to Jurčová (2005: 17-18), child birth is a complete expulsion or extraction of the new-born baby from the body of the mother, except for cases of abortion. Extra-marital birth is a birth of a child from a single mother (single, widow, divorced), which is currently becoming a more common fact. Marital birth is a birth of a child from a married mother. Natality shall further mean the birth of children, understood as a social demographic phenomenon. In anglophonic literature, the term birth of fertility is often used. Natality is shown in the below chart.

**Chart1.** Gross natality in Slovakia, 1950–2009

**Hrubá miera živorodenosti v SR, 1950-2009**



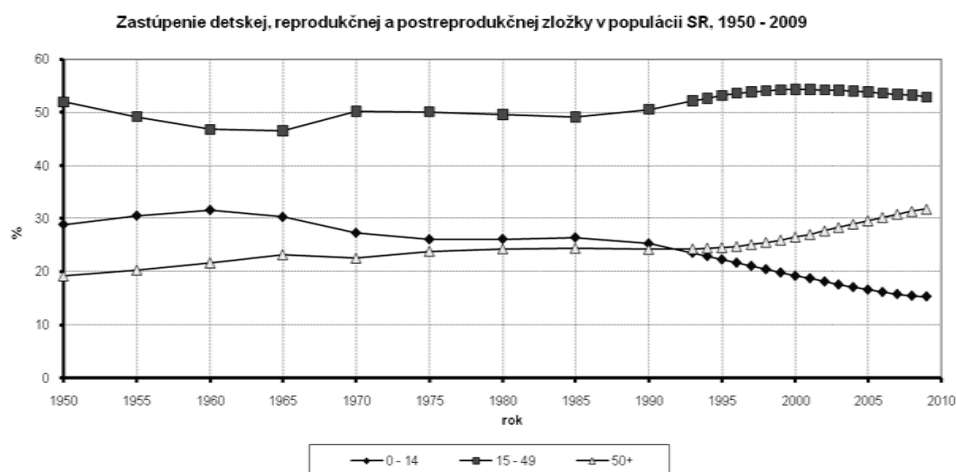
No. of life-born per 1000 inhabitants.

Source: VDC (Slovak Demographic Research Centre, [www.infostat.sk](http://www.infostat.sk), 2011).

Net reproduction rate (NRR) is the average number of life-born girls, which would have been born to one woman in the course of her whole reproductive period, maintaining fertility and mortality of the respective year. If the NRR equals one, we speak about simple reproduction. If the NRR is lower than one, we speak about lowered reproduction. Fecundity is the biological ability of a man, woman or a couple to incept or give birth to children. In French, fecundity is

called fertilité. Crude birth rate is the number of life-born children in relation to the median value of the population, usually in one year. It is usually expressed in ‰. It is also called Crude life-birth rate. If we consider all life and dead born, it is called crude total birth rate. Gross reproduction rate is the average number of life-born girls who would have been born to one woman in the course of her whole reproduction period (ages 15 to 49), maintaining the fertility rate of the respective year and presuming zero mortality. In a longitudinal sense, it expresses to what extent the respective generation cares for its replacement, if there were no mortality. From a transversal point of view, it expresses in what manner the respective population would reproduce, maintaining the fertility regime of the period. Child-woman ration is the index of the number of children aged 0-4 in relation to the median number of women of reproductive age. It is usually expressed in ‰. It is used in countries with an incomplete record of life-born children. Completed fertility rate is the average number of life-born children to one woman of the same generation, presupposing zero mortality of women during the whole reproductive period. The sum of generation fertility rates. Mean age at childbirth is the mean age of mothers, usually in a year. It is calculated from fertility rates according to age. Special attention is paid to the mean age of the mother at first childbirth. Reproductive age is the age, in which a woman is able to give birth. Generally, it covers ages 15-49, sometimes 15-44. Age of mother at birth is the age of the mother at birth. Especially the age of first birth is recorded.

**Chart 2.** The percentage of children reproductive and post-reproductive component in the Slovak population, 1950–2008



Source: VDC (Slovak Demographic Research Centre, [www.infostat.sk](http://www.infostat.sk), 2011).

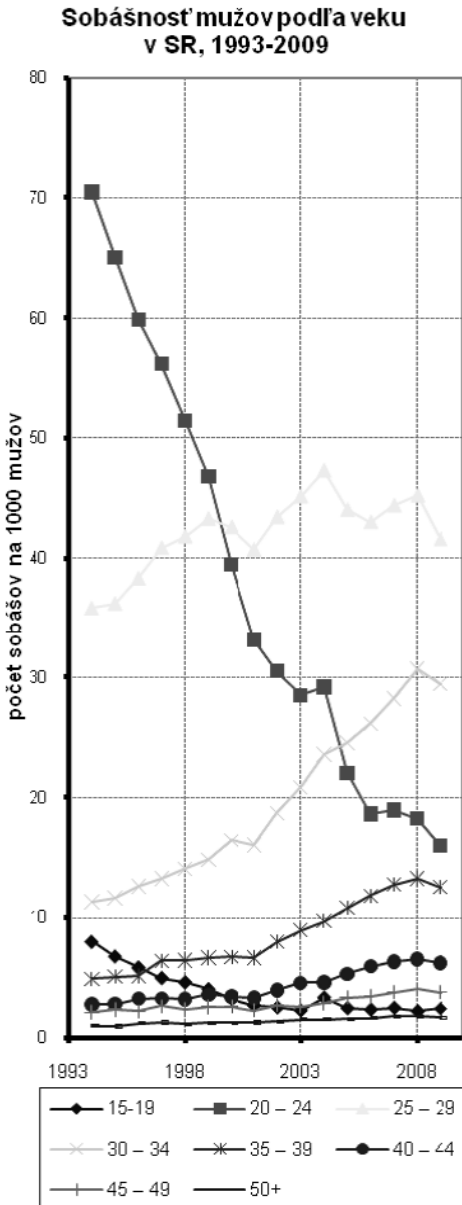
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### – Nuptiality

The family as a network of relationships par excellence and as a place of reproductive life and protection of its development finds in itself, based on these very two grounds, the imperative for the application of moral norms and values. If relationships are concerned, these cannot lack ethical norms for their individual and mutual regulation (Matoušek, 1993). Jurčová (2005: 13-15) defines marital status as a demographic, social, legal and statistical trait, which marks the status of a person, based on its position towards a family and marriage. Divorced persons are those, the marriage of whom had legally ceased. Crude nuptiality rate is the number of marriages to the median state of the population, usually in a year. It is usually expressed in ‰.

Cohabitation, consensual union, non-marital union is the union of a man and a woman without wedlock. Cohort marriage rate is the average number of marriages per one person of a respective generation. It is usually expressed in per cent. The indicator is calculated for 49 year old persons, separated by sex. A married couple includes partners of opposite sex living in wedlock. Marriage. Minimum age at marriage is the lowest age marriage is legally allowed. In Slovakia, it is 18 years of age, i.e. adulthood, or 16 years of age with judicial consent. Marriageable population is a set of a population, which meets all conditions for marriage in a society. In Slovakia, these include single, divorced and widowed persons, having reached at least the minimum marriage age, who are legally able and who are not related in any way (ancestors, descendants, siblings). Mean age of marriage is the average age in which people get married. It is calculated from nuptiality rates according to age, separated by sex, for persons aged 15-49. Mean age at first marriage is the average age at which single persons get married. It is calculated from nuptiality rates based on age, for persons aged 15-49. A legally and socially approved relationship between two partners of the opposite sex. The following charts show male and female nuptiality according to age (charts no. 5 and 6).

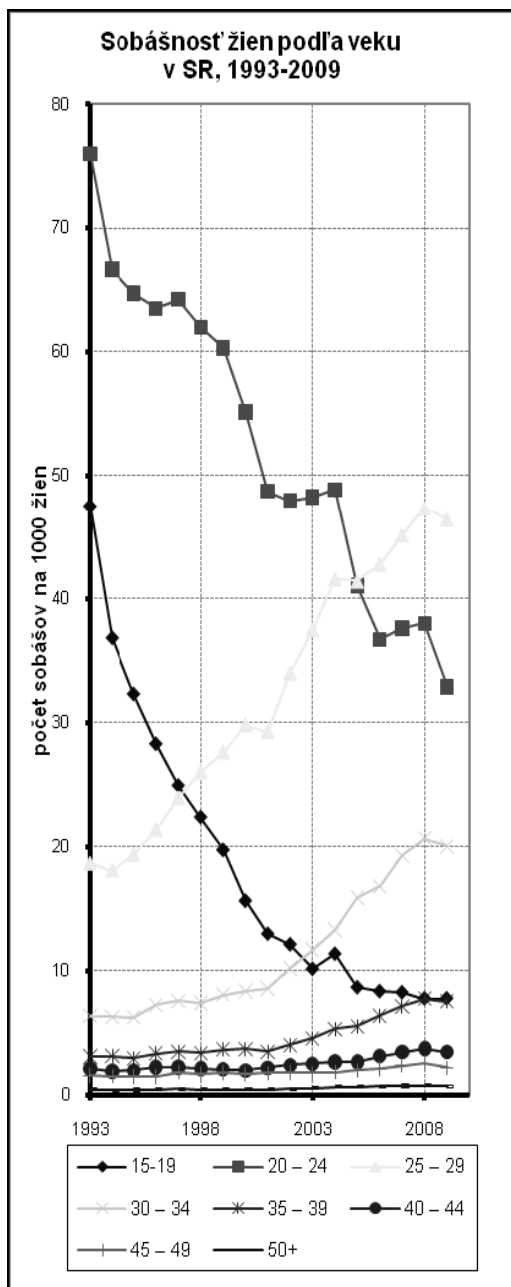
Chart 3. Male nuptiality rate according to age in Slovakia, 1993–2009



Number of marriages per 1000 males.

Source: VDC (Slovak Demographic Research Centre, [www.infostat.sk](http://www.infostat.sk), 2011).

Chart 4. Female nuptiality rate according to age in Slovakia, 1993–2009

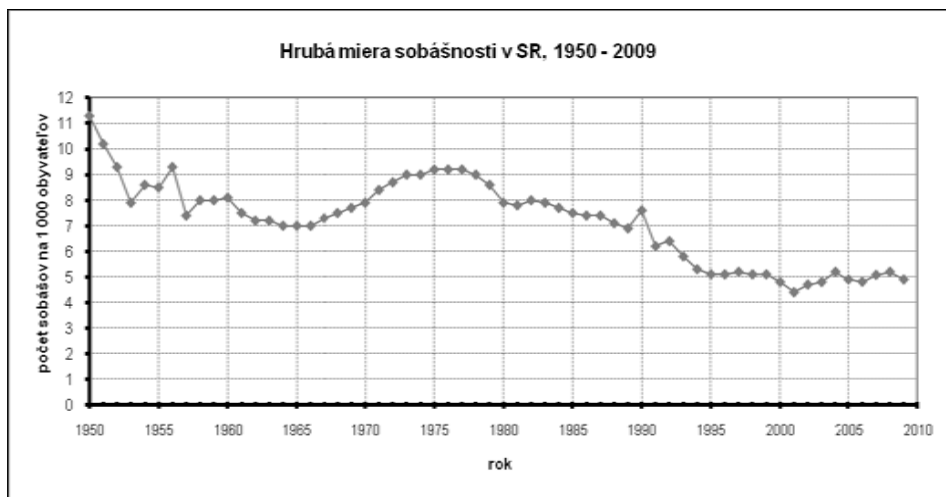


Number of marriages per 1000 females.

Source: VDC (Slovak Demographic Research Centre, [www.infostat.sk](http://www.infostat.sk), 2011).

A more detailed description of the presented charts is given in Table no. 7 in the appendix. For a marriage to take place, it is natural that today, young people first present themselves publicly as a couple and as an engaged couple – spouses, as partners, who decided to get married. Marriage is a legal act, by the power of which marriage is entered into. Nuptiality is the number of marriages, treated as a global demographic phenomenon. A separation according to sex is also observed. Total first marriage rate (TFMR) is the average number of first marriages, which one man (woman) would enter into in his/her life at the age of 50, presuming no change in nuptiality and zero mortality. It is a mean first marriage rate based on age, calculated per capita. The indicator is calculated for persons aged 15–49, separated by sex, usually in one year. General marriage rate is the number of marriages to the median state of a population, able to get married, generally in one year. It is usually expressed in ‰. It is calculated separately for both sexes. Chart no. 7 shows this indicator.

**Chart 5.** Gross nuptiality rate in Slovakia, 1950–2009



Number of marriages per 1000 inhabitants.

Source: VDC (Slovak Demographic Research Centre, [www.infostat.sk](http://www.infostat.sk), 2011).

Crude divorce rate is the number of divorces to the median state of the population, usually in one year. Usually, it is expressed in ‰. The divorce index is the number of divorces per new marriages, usually in one year. It is usually expressed in per cent. The duration-specific divorce rate is the number of divorces



in a given year, according to the duration of the marriage to the bases number of marriages. For example, the number of divorces of marriages to have lasted for three years is divided by the number of marriages from three years ago, etc. The calculation does not take into account mortality rates and migration.

Age specific divorce. Number of divorces at a certain age to the median state of men or women at the same age, usually in a year. Normally, it is designated as the specific divorce rate. It is calculated separately for both sexes. It is usually expressed per 1000 persons. The sum of divorce rates according to age is expressed in the average divorce rate per one person. Divorce means the divorce of marriage as a complex demographic phenomenon. Total divorce rate is the average number of divorces per one marriage. It is the sum of divorce rates according to the length of marriage. Divorce rate for married persons is the number of divorces to the number of existing marriages (usually to the median state of married men or women), usually in one year. It is usually expressed in ‰. It is calculated separately for both sexes. It is sometimes called the marriage divorce rate.

Dissolution of marriage is the termination of marriage by divorce or death of one of the spouses or when one spouse is proclaimed dead. For statistical purposes, dissolved marriages also include those marriages, which the court annulled. The development of the dissolution of marriage by divorce is presented in Chart no. 8.

**Chart 6.** Gross divorce rate in Slovakia, 1950–2009



Number of divorces per 1000 inhabitants year

Source: VDC (Slovak Demographic Research Centre, [www.infostat.sk](http://www.infostat.sk), 2011).

The area of values of individuals as an integrating force of personality is similarly in a state of chaos or ambiguity. The German sociologist Horst Helle

(1994), in his typology of family cultures points to this fact and proposes a solution: What in the past seemed to be alternative life concepts, today, many people try to combine in different ways... with no regard to the fact that many of these components are mutually exclusive and hence create tension, often almost unbearable, ...For example, if a life-long monogamous marriage is the highest value (to prevent the fact that one person is replaceable by someone else), then a maximisation of sexual satisfaction cannot be at the same time the highest value, as experience teaches us that sexuality progresses through various phases during a long-term marriage. When we, for example, take three components: fertility, sexual satisfaction and irreplaceability of the individual, we can presume that we will have to make decisions and choices (Helle, 1994). If we try and combine that which cannot be combined in an effort to make use of every alternative to the fullest for oneself, chaos is created in the value system and there may be very severe personal and social consequences.

In connection with possible real risks of the demographic and reproductive behaviour of the Slovak population, the Slovak society must prepare for:

- an increase in share of older people,
- an increasing weakening of family solidarity,
- an integration of a larger number of foreigners,
- a mode obvious migration of families due to work,

and hence for:

- new approaches to family, social, economical and migration policy,
- a closer international cooperation in the stated areas of social policy.

In the area of cultural heritage and current reality (especially in the field of values), it is necessary the society prepare for changes:

- in the creation of conditions for combining family and work life,
- in terms of a shift in social and moral norms and values,
- in the creation of sufficient resources for parents taking care of children or children taking care of their parents for them to be able to realize their personal preferences and career expectations, by means of providing services purchased for a market value,
- and the formation of a relationship towards migrants and the countries of their origin,
- in terms of tension, which may lead to conflicts of civilizations, in a clash of traditional and new individualist culture etc. (according to: Žilová, V.: *Pronatálna politika v novej sociálnej politike na Slovensku po roku 2004*, rigorosum thesis and according to: Novotná, A. - Žilová, V.: *Pôrodnosť a reprodukčné správanie v populácii Slovenskej republiky*).

### Risks of the stated demographic development of the Slovak population

- From a medium-term and long-term point of view, prognoses say that a constantly changing natality will bring about major problems. The number of economically active citizens determines the sustainability of pension systems and social security systems.
- Low natality today means less labour force in the economy in twenty years and thus lower income of the social security organisation, which means lower pension guaranteed by the state.
- A similar situation may be seen in the area of health care. A higher number of pensioners will mean an increase in the number of probable users of the health care system and at the same time, low natality means a drop in the number of those, who will pay for the services. This means a drop in the level of quality of health care for Slovak citizens.
- The deterioration of macro-economic indices of Slovak economy will cause:
  - an increase in the demand for social services for the elderly, as a result of their growth in numbers, especially in the area of the third sector,
  - a possible problem with the provision and maintaining and possible control of standards of quality in social services,
  - an increase in intensive immigration from abroad, etc.

The measure of the state influencing family life depends on specific life conditions of families and their members, from value systems, from national traditions, from citizen demands. This process is stringy influenced by social consensus. It may be presumed that each of the measures may have an influence of the reproductive behaviour of the population and the overall demographic development.

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