

HOUSEHOLD AND FAMILY STRUCTURE

JUDIT MONOSTORI – LÍVIA MURINKÓ

MAIN FINDINGS

- » In 2016, 98% of the Hungarian population lived in a private household, with the remaining 2% living in an institution.
- » At the same time, there were 4.02 million private households – 84,000 fewer than five years earlier, at the time of the 2011 census. This brought an end to a trend that had been going on for several decades: namely, the process of so-called household fragmentation.
- » There are several factors behind the decrease in the number of private households: one is the falling number of one-person households and another is the rising number of couple-type families/households.
- » Despite the positive change in the fertility rate over the past few years, the proportion of households with children has not changed significantly over the five years between 2011 and 2016; however, the dynamic decrease in the proportion of households with children has stopped.
- » Among households with children, the proportion of those with two minors decreased between 1990 and 2011, but from 2011 to 2016 this trend also stopped.
- » The number of children in the household strongly correlates with the educational level of the parents. The proportion of one-child families is highest among parents with secondary education, while the proportion of families with three or more children is lowest within the same group. The two-child model is most typical of individuals with higher education, while the proportion of families with three or more children is highest among those with primary education at most.
- » The spread of cohabiting relationships means that the proportion of families with children in which the parents are not married has also increased. In 2016, 18% of children aged 24 or under had cohabiting parents.
- » The proportion of single-parent households shows no clear trend following 1990. Among households with at least one child aged 24 or under, the proportion of single-parent households was 21% in 1990, 20% in 2001, 25% in 2011 and 22% in 2016. The overwhelming majority of parents raising their children alone are women (86% in 2016).

- » Among those households with children, the proportion of blended families has shown neither a clearly increasing nor a clearly decreasing trend since 2001. In 2016, 13% of households with children aged 24 or under could be considered blended.
- » The fact that younger generations become independent later has an effect on household structure, since today significantly more adult children live with their parents than a few decades ago. The proportion of those returning to live with their parents is also significant. Of those grown-ups living with their parents as a child – without a partner or a child of their own – two-thirds are men, and most are under the age of 35. Among the younger age groups, we tend to find mostly never-married individuals who have a better social status than the population as a whole; among people aged 50–64, many are divorced or have never had a partner, and their educational level is often low. With regard to educational level, labour market and health status, the situation of middle-aged men living with their parents is the least favourable.
- » The proportion of one-person households continued to rise for a number of decades. This trend has ceased in recent years, but there are still more individuals living in one-person households now than in 1990: in 2016, 30% of households consisted of one person.
- » Most of those who have been living alone since the age of 30 or under have never been married; this group contains more men than women. The proportion of divorced persons or individuals living apart from their spouses is highest among those who have lived alone since the age of 30–69; and it is almost exclusively widow(er)s who have lived alone since the age of 70 and over. Among younger people who have not yet established a family, people with higher education live alone most often. Meanwhile, the educational level of those who have lived alone from a later age is lower than for the population as a whole.

COMPOSITION OF HOUSEHOLDS AND FAMILIES

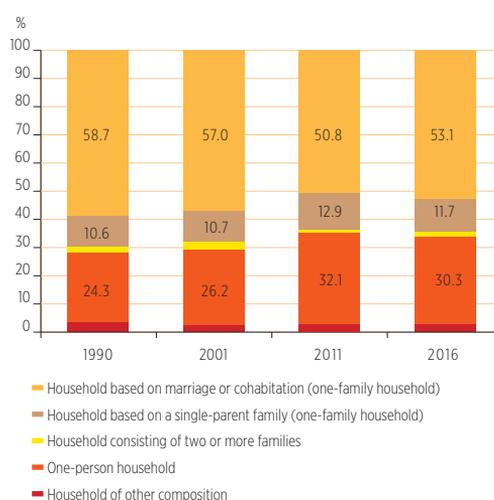
The majority of the Hungarian population lives in a *private household*^G, and only 2% live in an *institutional household*^G. At the time of the 2016 micro-census, there were 4.02 million private households in Hungary – 84,000 fewer than five years previously, at the time of the 2011 population census. This basically signals the end of a decades-long trend towards so-called household fragmentation. There are two main reasons for this development: the declining proportion of *one-person households*^G and the increasing proportion of couple-type households. Among the latter group, the proportion of childless couples who are married or in cohabitation increased. In 1990 and 2001, an average of 2.6 individuals lived in one household; by 2011, this figure had dropped to 2.4 and since then has not changed much.

The overwhelming majority (70% in 2016) of households are so-called *family households*^G, meaning that one or more families live in a household with or without relatives. In the majority of cases (53%), the household is occupied by only one family, based on some kind of partnership that may be marriage or cohabitation. Some of these households also include children. The other group of *one-family households*^G are *single-parent families*^G. In 2016, 12% of households fell into this category. The majority of *non-family households*^G are one-person households. During the 2010s, their share was around 30% (*Figure 1*).¹ According to the findings of the 2016 micro-census, 12% of the population – i.e. approximately 1.2 million individuals – lived in such households.

In 2016, 7.768 million individuals (81% of the Hungarian population) lived in 2.743 million *families*^G. Between 1990 and 2011, the number of families steadily decreased, by

a total of 182,000. However, between 2011 and 2016 the number increased by 30,000. As has already been mentioned, this is due to the increasing number of couple-type families with no children. Whereas in 2011, 34.5% of families belonged to this category, by 2016 their share was 37.4% (*Figure 2*). The increase applies to families based on both marriage and cohabitation.

Figure 1: Distribution of households by household composition, 1990–2016



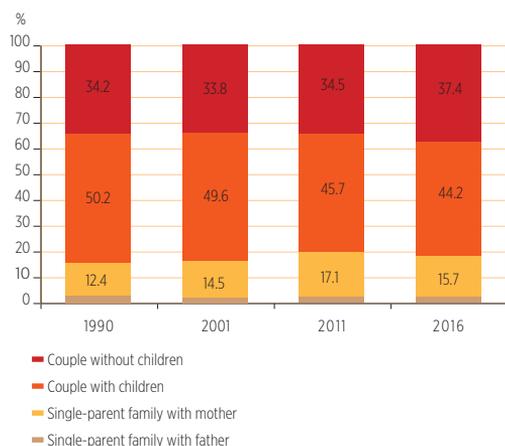
Source: HCSO, Microcensus 2016. Part 2: Main characteristics of the population and the dwellings, 2017.

There has been a continuation of the previous trend toward a dynamic increase in the proportion of non-marital unions among *couple-type families*^G – from 18.6% in 2011 to 21.6% in 2016.

Between 2011 and 2016, both the number and the share of single-parent families fell. Although the drop is not significant, it still brought to an end the slowly increasing trend that began in 1990. In the overwhelming majority of single-parent families – 86% in 2016 – mothers live with their children.

¹ Since the proportion of multi-family households and *households of other composition*^G is insignificant, in the majority of households the terms family and household can basically be used interchangeably.

Figure 2: Distribution of families by family composition, 1990–2016



Source: HCSO, Microcensus 2016. Part 2: Main characteristics of the population and the dwellings, 2017.

Note: Calculations are based on the notion of ‘child’ as defined by the census, which does not consider the age of the child, but rather his/her status within the family, together with the criterion that the marital status of a ‘child’ must be ‘never married’.

Changes in the basic structure of families and households can best be understood if changes in the more detailed aspects of household structure are closely observed and analysed in relation to demographic tendencies. Accordingly, it is important to note that household structure is also analysed according to the age of the children living within a given household: while the proportion of households with minors has steadily decreased since the change of regime, the share of families with adult children has increased. This may be related to the fact that younger generations are gaining their independence at a later age: that is, they either leave the parental household at a later stage in their lives or else return there. (On the delayed transition to adulthood and the so-called ‘hotel mama’ phenomenon, see Monostori and Murinkó 2015.)

Several definitions of *child*⁶ are used in this chapter, in order to observe the various phases of the family life cycle. Hence, we deal with households with children aged 18

and 24 years or under, while the age limit for households with small children was set at 6 years.

One of the most important factors influencing changes in household structure is fertility. In recent decades, the fertility rate has declined steadily, despite a positive change over the past five years. However, it has not affected the distribution of the Hungarian population by household structure. In 1990, 44% of households had children aged under 25, while this figure was 41% in 2001, 34% in 2011 and 32% in 2016. A similar tendency applies to the change in the proportion of those with children aged 18 or under. With regard to the most recent period since the 2011 population census, the share of households with small children has not increased either: the proportion of households with children aged 0–6 was 12.4% in 2011 and 11.8% in 2016. This might be because the share of households with children is not determined by the fertility rate exclusively, but also by changes in the age structure of the population (e.g. the increasing proportion of elderly individuals) and by the fact that the increase in the number of births primarily does not stem from the birth of first children.

One of the most important features of the five years between 2011 and 2016 was the decreasing proportion of one-person households. This is primarily due to changes among the under-65s: whereas in 2011, individuals aged under 65 and living alone constituted 18.5% of households, in 2016 this figure was 16.5% (Table 1). This decrease can be observed within various age groups under 65, and so there is no single age group that is responsible for the change.

Another change – partially related to the previous phenomenon – that occurred between 2011 and 2016 is the increased proportion of households where couples live without children. This increase is apparent in younger and older generations alike (Table 1).

9. HOUSEHOLD AND FAMILY STRUCTURE

Table 1: Distribution of households, 1990, 2001, 2011, 2016

Household and family structure	1990	2001	2011	2016	
				Ratio, %	Number of households, in thousands)
I. Individuals in one-person households	24.2	26.2	32.1	30.3	1 217.3
1. Lives alone, aged under 65	14.5	14.0	18.5	16.5	663.6
2. Lives alone, aged 65 and over	9.7	12.2	13.6	13.8	553.6
II. One-family households					
II.1. Couples without children	22.1	21.7	20.6	23.4	941.7
3. Couple without children, both aged under 65	13.9	12.7	11.8	12.9	518.0
4. Couple without children, at least one member aged 65 or over	8.2	9.0	8.8	10.5	423.7
II.2. Couples with child(ren)	38.3	37.5	30.9	30.4	1 226.5
5. Couple with one child aged under 19	11.2	9.2	8.2	7.8	315.5
6. Couple with two children aged under 19	13.4	9.7	6.6	6.8	274.9
7. Couple with three or more children aged under 19	3.3	3.4	2.7	2.7	110.2
8. Couple with one child under 19 and one child aged 19 or over	2.4	3.0	2.0	1.9	76.0
9. Couple with three or more children, at least one aged under 19 and at least one aged 19 or over	1.0	1.6	1.4	1.5	60.4
10. Couple with child(ren) aged 19–24	4.0	5.9	4.3	4.1	165.4
11. Couple with child(ren) aged over 24	3.0	4.7	5.7	5.6	224.1
II.3. Single-parent households	12.5	13.0	14.5	13.6	544.5
12. One parent with one child aged under 19	3.9	3.0	3.0	2.6	102.6
13. One parent with at least two children aged under 19	2.8	1.7	1.9	1.5	62.1
14. One parent with at least two children, at least one aged under 19 and at least one aged 19 or over	0.8	1.1	1.3	1.1	42.4
15. One parent with child(ren) aged 19–24 or with additional child(ren) aged over 24	1.5	2.3	2.2	2.0	78.8
16. One parent with child(ren) aged over 24	3.5	4.9	6.1	6.4	258.6
III. Multi-family households	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3	13.0
IV. Other household forms	2.5	1.4	1.7	1.9	78.4
Total (rows I–IV)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	4 021.3

Source: HCSO 1990, 2001, 2011 Population Censuses; HCSO, Microcensus 2016; authors' calculations.

Notes: 1. The table contains data about individuals living in private households. 2. We considered those individuals to be 'children' if the respondents indicated that they had child status: that is, a person who lives with at least one parent and does not live with a partner or own child. In population censuses, only those people are considered 'children' whose marital status is 'never married'; however, we did not apply this criterion. Therefore, the proportion of individuals living in families with children is somewhat higher according to our calculations than in population census reports. 3. Our own calculations might sometimes differ slightly from data published in population census reports as a consequence of minor data errors being dealt with differently.

HOUSEHOLDS BASED ON MARRIAGE OR COHABITATION

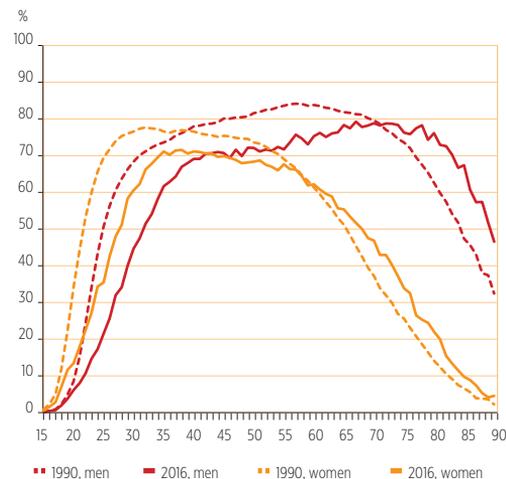
One important factor influencing changes in household structure is the shifting share of the partnered population. Between 1990 and 2011, the proportion of one-family households with a family based on either marriage or cohabitation dropped from 60% to 52%, before rising by 2 percentage points from 2011 to 2016 to stand at 54% (Table 1). In 2016, 24% of such households had no child and the couple was aged under 65; in 20% of cases, the couple had no child and was aged over 65; and in 57% of cases the couple had children.

Analysis of long-term trends reveals that among young and middle-aged individuals, the proportion of those living in a relationship was higher in 1990 than in 2016. However, among the older age groups – aged over 60 in the case of women and over 70 in the case of men – the indicator was higher in 2016: that is, the proportion of partnered individuals had increased among the elderly.

Changes among the younger age groups may be related to delayed independence and postponement in starting a family; in the case of middle-aged persons, the increasing fragility of relationships might explain the phenomenon. Since women tend to establish their first long-term partnership a few years earlier than men, and also get married sooner, more women aged under 40–45 live in marriage or cohabitation (Figure 3). However, the figure was higher for men aged over 40 in 1990 and over 45 in 2016 (Figure 3), because women are widowed more often and are less likely to remarry than are men. With regard to older generations, the difference in life expectancy between the two sexes still plays an important role: men can expect to live for fewer years than women. Also, the fact that usually women are younger than men in a relationship further increases the period

of time that women have to spend alone after their partner’s death. Nonetheless, the fragility of relationships is of ever-increasing significance among the elderly. A study of the household structure of the elderly revealed that between 1990 and 2011, the proportion of divorced individuals increased among those aged over 60 and living alone. Whereas in 1990, 9% of women aged over 60 and living alone were divorced, in 2011 their share was 17%. The relevant indicator for men rose from 17% to 31% (Monostori 2017).

Figure 3: Proportion of men and women living in marriage or cohabitation, by age, 1990, 2016



Source: HCSO 1990 Population Census, HCSO, Microcensus 2016; authors’ calculations.

HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN

As mentioned above, in parallel with the declining fertility rate and the demographic ageing of society, the share of households with minors (aged 0–18) and young people (aged 0–24) has decreased in recent decades. Even the rise in the fertility rate between 2011 and 2016 could not reverse this tendency. The proportion of households with children aged under 19 was 39% in 1990,

27% in 2011 and 26% in 2016. In the majority of cases (80% in 2016), children were being raised by parents living in a relationship, but every fifth household was a single-parent household with child(ren) (*Table 1*).

From a long-term perspective, the decrease in the proportion of households with children is not as significant if the ceiling for childhood is set at 24 years. Children of this age were present in 44% of households in 1990, 34% in 2011 and 32% in 2016. The more moderate decrease is due to the delayed independence of younger generations: in 2016, a higher proportion of individuals aged 18–24 lived with their parents as ‘children’ than in previous years.

Among households with children aged under 19, the proportion of those with two children fell between 1990 and 2011. This trend stopped between 2011 and 2016. The proportion of households with two children of this age was 42% in 1990, 33% in 2011 and 34% in 2016. The share of one-child households increased until 2011 (from 47% to 54% between 1990 and 2011), but this trend had halted by 2016. Among households considered here, the proportion of those with one child was 53% in 2016. However, the share of households with three or more children has steadily increased since the change of regime, although the increase has been very moderate: from 11% in 1990 to 13% in 2016.

Number of children in a household shows a strong correlation with the educational level of the parents. The proportion of one-child households is highest among those with secondary education, while the share of households with three or more children is lowest in this educational group. The two-child model is most typical of individuals with higher education, while the proportion of households with three or more children is most prevalent among individuals with primary education at most.

Three-generational households are rare among households with children: only a

tenth of households with children aged under 25 fell into this category, and there have been no significant moves in this regard since the change of regime. The proportion of three- or multi-generational households was higher among single-parent households than couple-type households with children (*Table 2*). The share of households based on the relationship of parents without older relatives living in the household was approximately 70% between 1990 and 2016. This indicator was lowest in 2011 and highest in 2016. The proportion of single-parent households with no relatives ranged from 17% to 21%, with no apparent trend – either increasing or decreasing. There was a more significant increase between 2001 and 2011 in the proportion of single-parent households, but this was followed by a decrease from 2011 to 2016 (*Table 2*).

With cohabiting unions becoming more and more common, the proportion of households with children in which parents are not married to each other has increased. In 1990, 78% of children aged under 25 lived with married parents, but by 2016 the figure was only 62%. The share of children living in households based on cohabitation increased from 4% to 18% during the same period (*Figure 4*).

Households with children can also be analysed from the perspective of the parents. Delayed childbearing and postponed transition to adulthood have obvious effects on the lives of parents: those who have children become parents later in life; however, the parental phase for those with children then becomes longer and ends later. Having said that, being a parent does not necessarily mean living with one’s children: if a relationship breaks down, the majority of children continue to live with their mother; meanwhile men may become single, return to the parental household, live alone or find another partner. Establishing

Table 2: Distribution of households with children aged 24 and under, by household structure, 1990, 2001, 2011, 2016

Household structure	1990	2001	2011	2016
I. Parents living in a relationship without older relatives	71.0	71.1	67.1	71.8
1. Couple with one child aged under 19	22.1	19.5	21.4	22.4
2. Couple with two children aged under 19	27.1	21.1	17.6	19.9
3. Couple with three or more children aged under 19	6.8	7.5	7.1	8.0
4. Couple with two children, one aged under 19 and one aged 19 or over	4.8	6.5	5.3	5.4
5. Couple with at least three children, at least one aged under 19 and at least one aged 19 or over	2.1	3.3	3.9	4.2
6. Couple with child(ren) aged 19–24	8.1	13.2	11.8	11.9
II. Single-parent households without older relatives	17.6	16.5	21.3	19.1
1. One parent with one child aged under 19	7.3	5.5	7.1	6.6
2. One parent with at least two children aged under 19	5.6	3.5	4.8	4.2
3. One parent with one child aged under 19 and one older child	1.7	2.4	3.5	2.9
4. One parent with child(ren) aged 19–24	3.0	5.1	5.9	5.4
III. Extended and multi-family (grandparental) households	11.5	12.4	11.5	9.2
1. Couple living in relationship with children and grandparent(s) in the household	8.6	9.1	7.8	6.1
2. Single-parent family with grandparent(s) in the household	2.9	3.3	3.7	3.1
Total (rows I–III)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

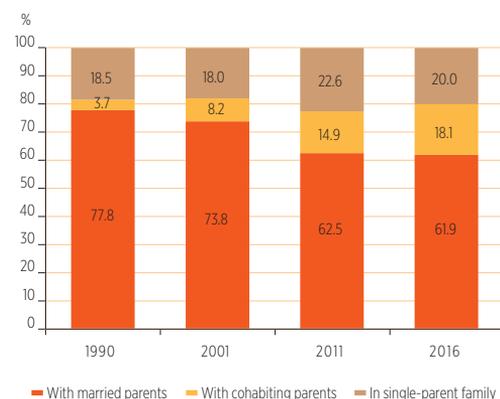
Source: HCSO 1990, 2001, 2011 Population Censuses; HCSO, Microcensus 2016; authors' calculations.

Note: Households which contained several families with children were categorized according to the features of one family. If, in at least one of the families, the parents lived in a relationship, then the household was included in the category of households in which parents lived in relationship; however, if there were only single-parent families living together, they were included in the category of single-parent households. In any case, the proportion of such households is so insignificant that their categorization does not affect the overall picture.

a new family after divorce might also mean that somebody becomes a parent by virtue of living with his/her non-biological children (or not even having biological children). Consequently, if we consider the proportion of individuals from different age groups who live in households where they act as parents to the children living there, there are significant differences between men and women (Figure 5). The difference between the sexes in 2016 stems from discrepancies in the 25–50 age group: while 12% of men and 24% of women of those aged 25–29 had parental status, among those aged 30–39 the figure was 40% of men and 59% of women; and among those aged 40–49, the figures were 57% for men and 69% for women. These gender differences might also indicate that the majority of divorced men do not establish a new relationship, enter a family in which they function as step-

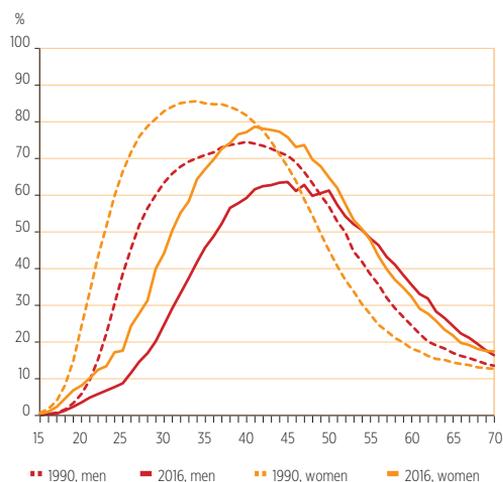
fathers or have children. They only act as parents towards their biological children who live apart from them.

Figure 4: Distribution of children under 24, by relationship between parents, 1990–2016



Source: HCSO 1990, 2001, 2011 Population Censuses; HCSO, Microcensus 2016; authors's calculations

Figure 5: Proportion of men and women acting as parents, by age, 1990, 2016



Source: HCSO 1990 Population Census; HCSO, Microcensus 2016; authors' calculations.

Note: The diagram includes individuals who have parental status within a household, regardless of whether their children are biological, step or adopted.

SINGLE-PARENT HOUSEHOLDS

As has already been mentioned, if we take all households where children are present, the change in the proportion of single-parent households shows no definite tendency: among households with at least one child aged 24 or under, the proportion of single-parent households was 20.5% in 1990, 19.8% in 2001, 25% in 2011 and 22.2% in 2016. The overwhelming majority of individuals raising their children without a partner are women (86% in 2016).

The official marital status of parents does not reveal how a particular family was established, since the family status of someone who has come to parenthood from a broken cohabiting relationship could be anything. Having said that, it is noteworthy that the proportion of widowed individuals is higher among men: 16% of single-parent fathers and 11% of single-parent mothers

had been widowed (Table 3). This allows us to conclude that single-parent households with a father predominantly come about with the death of the mother, while the proportion of never-married mothers is higher among single-parent families with a mother. There may be several reasons for this: on the one hand, in the majority of cases children stay with their mother when a partnership breaks up; on the other hand, some mothers raise their child(ren) alone from birth. Among both fathers and mothers who raise their child(ren) alone, the share of married individuals is not insignificant. Obviously, the majority are in the process of divorcing; however, there may be several different explanations for why a parent's family status is 'married', and yet he/she is raising his/her child(ren) alone. In fact, the lack of a cohabiting union does not necessarily mean that the parents are not in a partnership. Our earlier calculations reveal that among women with a tertiary qualification and raising their child(ren) alone, the proportion of individuals in a *living apart together (LAT) relationship*⁶ is relatively high.

In terms of education, those parents who are raising their child(ren) alone tend to have a lower level of education than do those living in a relationship. This applies to both fathers and mothers: while 23% of fathers living in a relationship have a degree, the figure among single fathers is below 16%. Among mothers, the figures are 30% and 24%, respectively. Conversely, the proportion of those with only primary education is higher among single parents (Table 3).

The average number of children raised by single parents is lower than in the case of parents living in a relationship. Nevertheless, it must be said that there is a difference between the number of children being raised by fathers and by mothers: there are more children living in the households of lone mothers than in the households of

lone fathers. While close to 50% of parents living in a relationship have only one child, this is true of 63% of single mothers and 72% of single fathers (*Table 3*). Single fathers

raise older children. This is probably due to the fact that after a divorce or break-up, children tend to stay with their father if they are older.

Table 3. Socio-demographic characteristics of parents raising their child(ren) aged 24 or under alone and of their child(ren), 2016

	Parents raising their child(ren) alone		Parents raising their child(ren) with a partner	
	women	men	women	men
<i>Age of parent</i>				
16–29	6.9	3.1	10.0	5.5
30–39	25.5	11.3	36.7	29.2
40–49	47.0	44.6	41.3	43.4
50+	20.6	41.3	12.0	21.8
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>
<i>Educational level</i>				
At most 8 years of primary education	19.3	19.1	15.3	13.6
Vocational school	21.0	38.5	19.3	35.0
Secondary school	35.8	26.6	35.0	28.0
Tertiary education	23.9	15.8	30.3	23.3
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>
<i>Marital status</i>				
Never married	27.6	18.4	17.7	18.3
Married	12.1	15.7	76.9	76.9
Widowed	11.1	16.2	0.4	0.2
Divorced	49.2	49.7	5.2	4.6
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>
<i>Number of children aged 24 and under</i>				
1	63.1	71.5	46.9	46.9
2	27.5	22.7	37.6	37.6
3 and more	9.4	5.8	15.5	15.5
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>
<i>Age of the youngest child</i>				
0–5 years	19.4	7.7	36.7	36.7
6–14 years	37.6	29.2	35.1	35.1
15–18 years	16.7	21.6	11.5	11.5
19–24 years	26.3	41.4	16.7	16.7
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Source: HCSO, Microcensus 2016; authors' calculations.

BLENDED FAMILIES²

A blind spot for empirical research on household structure is the study of *blended families*⁶. Although one of the fundamental claims of theories dealing with changing forms of living arrangements is that over recent decades blended families have become more widespread, this has not been supported by empirical evidence. The main reason is that there are few long-term data collections (none in Hungary) that consider whether or not the children living in a family are the biological children of the parents.

Blended families are families where there is at least one child who has only one biological parent living in the given household. Blended families are usually formed when one or (possibly) two families with children break up, and when a new family is established by one or both parties bringing their respective children into the new family. In such families, common children might be born later.

The proportion of blended families can be calculated from population census data, although the census does not directly ask whether the parents living in a family/household are the biological parents of the children. Nonetheless, we know the birth dates of children living in the household and of the biological children of the couple; by comparing the two sets of information, we can give an estimate of blended families. By applying this approach, we were able to determine that in 2016 some 23% of households with at least one child aged 24 or under were blended families (*Table 4*).

As we would like to investigate the socio-demographic characteristics of parents,

the proportion and features of blended families are presented from the parents' perspective. Accordingly, we can state that the change in the proportion of parents living in a blended family has not shown any clear increasing or decreasing tendency since 2001. Some 14% of parents raising at least one child aged 24 or under live in a blended family (*Table 4*). The lower a parent's educational level, the more likely it is for them to live in a blended family. The primary reason for this is the higher likelihood of union dissolution among those with low qualifications. Consequently, the pool of potential blended families is bigger.

There are significant differences between mothers and fathers with regard to the structure of the family they live in. A higher proportion of fathers living in families with children aged 24 and under live in *intact families*⁶ (i.e. where all children are the biological children of both parents), compared to mothers, a higher proportion of whom live in a blended family.

Almost half of parents who live in a blended family cohabit, while the share of unmarried partnerships is much lower in intact families (*Table 5*).

Common children can also be born in blended families. When only one partner has brought children into the new family, there is a higher chance of having common children. According to our own calculations, common children were born in over 40% of blended families. Given that in many cases both parents bring their children from previous relationships into the new family, blended families tend to be the most populous.

² In the case of blended families, the terms 'family' and 'household' are used as synonyms, since the proportion of multi-family households where all households have children is insignificant. Also, the term 'blended family' itself has become so commonly used in both academic literature and everyday speech that we have decided to employ it likewise, even though we use household-based data. If there are two families both with children living in the same household, we categorized them according to the features of one of the families.

Table 4: Distribution of households and parents with children aged 24 or under, by household composition, 2001, 2011, 2016

	Households			Parents		
	2001	2011	2016	2001	2011	2016
Intact family	68.2	65.6	64.8	75.6	75.1	73.0
Single-parent family	11.3	8.6	12.5	12.5	10.1	14.0
Blended family	20.5	25.8	22.7	11.9	14.8	13.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Source: HCSO 2001, 2011 Population Censuses; HCSO, Microcensus 2016; authors' calculations.

Table 5: Family structure of mothers and fathers raising their children aged 24 and under, 2016

		Mothers		Fathers	
In an intact family	In marriage	66.7	53.8	80.6	65.0
	In cohabitation		12.9		15.6
In a blended family	In marriage	12.8	6.9	15.5	8.4
	In cohabitation		5.9		7.1
In a single-parent family		20.5		4.0	
<i>Total</i>		<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Source: HCSO, Microcensus 2016; authors' calculations.

GRANDPARENTS IN THE HOUSEHOLD

In relation to the entire population, the proportion of households in which three or more generations live together has been decreasing for several decades. This is partly because there have been significant changes in the age structure of the population. Low fertility means that the share of households with children is decreasing, which evidently leads to a declining proportion of households shared by three or more generations, since these are most commonly to be found in households with children.

We can draw a different picture if not all households are taken into consideration, but only those with children (aged 0–24). As mentioned above (see Table 2), the share of households with grandparents did not change significantly following the change of regime: depending on the year

under consideration, grandparents lived in 9–12% of households with children aged 24 or under. The proportion of three- or multi-generational households is higher among single-parent households than couple-type ones: in 2016, the figure was 7.9% for couple-type parental households, but 13.9% for single-parent households.

There is a higher proportion of grandmothers than grandfathers living in three- or multi-generational households. This is because the majority of such households are not *multi-family households*⁶, but are so-called extended households, with only one grandparent, usually the grandmother. It is much less frequent for a family with children to share a household with a grandparent couple, who themselves form a separate family. There may be several reasons for this. One is that in recent decades the mortality of elderly men has been much more unfavourable than that of women:

Table 6: Distribution of households with children aged 24 and under, depending on whether grandparents live in the household, by educational level of parents, 2016

Educational level of parents	(%)				
	Neither	Only grandmother	Only grandfather	Both	Total
At most 8 years of primary education	88.3	6.6	1.8	3.2	100.0
Vocational education	88.1	7.7	1.6	1.2	100.0
Secondary education	89.8	6.5	1.2	2.5	100.0
Tertiary education	94.3	3.8	0.7	1.3	100.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>90.8</i>	<i>5.9</i>	<i>1.2</i>	<i>2.2</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Source: HCSO, Microcensus 2016; authors' calculations.

Note: The parent with the higher qualification was taken into consideration when determining the educational level of parents.

that is, elderly men in a multi-generational household died sooner than elderly women; as a consequence, the grandmother continued to live in the multi-generational family without a partner. Another reason might be that following the grandfather's death, some grandmothers move in with the family of their children. A third reason might be that children being raised by a single mother are more likely to establish their own family in the parental house. A final reason might be that younger generations are more likely to move back to a single mother's household following a divorce, rather than to a single father's – primarily because the latter type of household is very rare.

Calculations based on the educational level of parents reveal that the proportion of those living with grandparents is lowest among parents with a degree. The share of three- or multi-generational households was only 6% among those with tertiary education; however, it was 12% among those with at most primary education (*Table 6*).

ADULTS WITH CHILD STATUS

A new phenomenon following the change of regime is the delayed independence of younger generations. This is apparent in their living arrangements, as today more young adults live with their parents

than was the case a few decades ago. The proportion of those returning to the parental house is also significant. The lengthening of the period of living with child status is also indicated by calculations that reveal the proportion of individuals with child status within a family by age. With regard to younger age groups, 47% of those aged 20–24 were living with child status in 1990, while in 2016 the figure was 68%. The same indicator for the age group 25–29 increased from 18% to 43% during the same period.

There are significant gender differences in the proportion of those living with child status – that is, together with their parents and without a partner and their own (or step-) children. As can be seen from *Figure 6*, a higher proportion of men than women belong to this category in the case of the young and middle-aged adult population. This phenomenon can be explained by three factors that affect the various stages of life differently. One is that men become independent later. Another is that following a divorce or separation, a higher proportion of men than women return to the parental household (usually without children). Finally, the proportion of individuals no longer in their 20s and 30s who have never left their parents and have never had a cohabiting relationship is higher among men than among women.

The analysis of grown-ups with child status is based on data from the *Turning Points of the Life-course* survey of 2016. According to this, at the turn of 2016 and 2017, 12.2% of respondents aged 22–64 – 7.2% of women and 17.6% of men – lived in the parental household with child status (i.e. without a partner and children). (There were no such individuals among older respondents.) The main findings are illustrated in *Table 7*.

The majority have never married: this is more typical of younger age groups, although a third of middle-aged (50–64) women and half of men of that age have never been married. This does not necessarily mean that they have never had a lasting relationship: 15% of never-married men and 23% of never-married women living with child status have cohabited. The proportion of divorced individuals (and those living apart from their spouse) is especially high among women aged 50–64 living with child status (58%); it is 42.5% in the case of men from the same age group. Women with children who return to the parental household following their divorce are not included in these calculations (they belong to three-generational or extended family households), unless their children are adults and have established their own household.

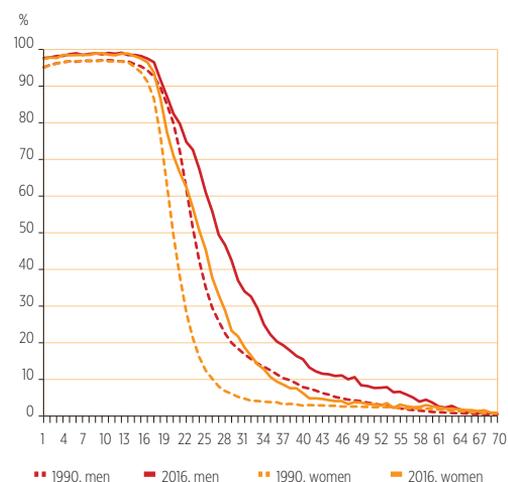
Of those adults with child status – despite not living in marriage or cohabitation – 38% of women and 24% of men have a partner living separately. The younger the respondent, the more likely it is for them to have a LAT partner, and this proportion is higher among women in all age groups. Not only is the proportion of men without a LAT partner higher than the proportion of women, but lifelong singlehood is also more common among men: every other man aged 50–64 with child status (and every fourth woman) has never been married or had a cohabiting partnership.

Individuals aged under 50 with child status typically do not have children. There are some fathers living apart from their children (17%) among men aged 35–49, and half of middle-aged (50–64) men and women have children living apart from them.

Approximately a third of any given age group (and 42–43% of middle-aged individuals over 50) have already lived in a separate household from their parents; that is, they can be considered as returners.

The educational level of those aged under 35 and with child status is somewhat higher compared to the population as a whole, whereas it is somewhat lower among individuals aged 35–64 and with child status. There are relatively many adults aged under 35 and with child status who have general secondary education, some of whom are probably still studying. There are more individuals with low qualifications and fewer with a degree among the older age groups. The educational level of men with child status

Figure 6: Proportion of men and women with child status, by age, 1990, 2016



Source: HCSO 1990 Population Census; HCSO, Microcensus 2016; authors' calculations

– especially those aged over 50 – is lower than that of women.

The majority of individuals aged under 50 and with child status are in work, which is true of only half of the middle-aged group. Students form a significant group (11–15%). The proportion of unemployed individuals and disability pensioners is higher in the entire population across all age groups, but is especially apparent among men aged 50–64 (11% unemployed and 22% disability pensioners).

The cohabitation of adult children and their parents is further motivated by the fact that both parties might suffer from health problems and be in need of assistance. Fewer women than men with child status report health problems – a difference that is most apparent among middle-aged individuals: 4% of women and 31% of men are hampered in their everyday tasks by some kind of health problem. It is more common for women aged 50–64 to move in with their sick parents in order to support them.

Table 7: Distribution of individuals with child status, by sex, age group and main socio-demographic characteristics, 2016

	Women				Men				Total
	22–34	35–49	50–64	Total	22–34	35–49	50–64	Total	
	years old				years old				
Marital status									
Never married	97.7	87.4	37.8	90.1	98.5	82.9	51.9	89.5	
Married living separately	2.3	5.1	12.1	3.8	0.2	2.3	0.0	0.8	
Divorced	0.0	7.5	46.3	5.8	1.3	14.7	42.5	9.2	
Widower	0.0	0.0	3.8	0.4	0.0	0.0	5.6	0.5	
Partnership and family experience									
Has a partner living separately	44.2	28.8	14.6	38.3	31.7	14.1	7.4	24.3	
Has already lived with a partner or spouse	21.1	43.0	74.8	30.5	13.1	36.5	55.0	23.9	
Has had children	2.3	1.4	55.0	7.0	2.7	17.3	49.6	11.5	
Has left the parental household at some time	27.5	42.5	41.5	31.9	24.6	35.8	42.4	29.6	
Educational level									
At most 8 years of primary education	3.9	18.4	29.0	9.2	9.9	18.3	21.1	13.4	
Vocational education	9.4	24.6	19.0	13.4	27.1	44.3	53.2	34.6	
Secondary education	59.1	30.5	35.1	51.0	48.4	28.8	23.1	40.2	
Tertiary degree	27.5	26.5	16.9	26.3	14.6	8.7	2.6	11.8	
Labour market status									
Employed	75.0	68.5	42.7	70.7	77.0	88.5	58.2	78.5	
Old-age/widow's pensioner	0.0	1.4	42.7	4.2	0.0	0.0	9.2	0.9	
Disability pensioner	1.7	13.4	7.0	4.6	1.7	6.8	22.1	5.1	
Unemployed	6.8	8.4	3.9	6.8	8.0	4.3	10.5	7.2	
Student	15.4	0.0	0.0	10.8	11.1	0.0	0.0	6.8	
Other inactive	1.2	8.3	3.6	2.9	2.2	0.5	0.0	1.5	
Limited in their everyday activities by some kind of health-related physical or mental problem	5.3	17.5	4.1	7.7	6.9	15.2	30.6	11.6	

Source: HDRI GGS Turning Points of the Life-course survey, Wave 5 (2016–2017); authors' calculations.

Table 8: Distribution of individuals with child status who have already left the parental household, by sex, age group and why they have returned to live with their parent(s), 2016

	Women				Men				(%)
	22-34	35-49	50-64	Total	22-34	35-49	50-64	Total	
	years old				years old				
Divorce or separation	22.2	54.0	28.9	31.8	27.6	48.6	71.1	41.0	
Financial problems, unemployment	22.9	26.2	10.1	22.3	13.2	11.5	4.4	11.4	
Changes in life circumstances (e.g. new work, return from abroad)	21.0	6.8	0.0	14.6	15.6	15.4	4.3	14.0	
Studies	25.8	5.1	7.1	17.9	17.7	4.0	6.4	11.3	
Looking after parent, keeping them company	3.3	2.9	31.4	6.6	4.4	7.5	6.3	5.7	
Housing problems	2.1	5.0	0.0	2.7	11.6	6.1	4.1	8.6	
Other reason, no answer	2.6	0.0	22.6	2.7	10.0	6.9	3.5	8.0	
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>								

Source: HDRI GGS Turning Points of the Life-course survey, Wave 5 (2016–2017); authors' calculations.

Differences according to age group show that child status has different causes at various stages of one's life. Among younger generations, it is primarily because of delayed independence – prolonged studies, the later establishment of a long-term relationship and delayed childbearing – and is more typical of better-qualified individuals. However, there is a higher proportion of individuals among the older generations who return to the parental household after divorce or separation, or who have never lived with a partner. Within this group, the proportion of those with a low educational level and who have been excluded from the labour market is high. The circumstances of middle-aged men with child status are the least favourable.

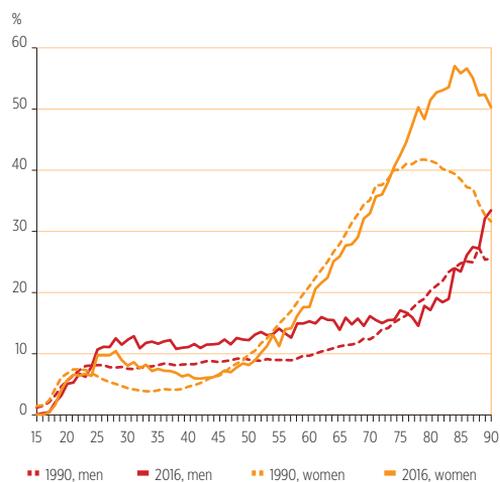
We have seen that approximately a third of those currently living with their parents as children (i.e. with child status) left the parental home to live separately for a while. Both sexes referred to the dissolution of a previous relationship as the primary reason for their return (Table 8). Apart from the

issue of partnerships, younger people mainly return to their parents because of financial problems, unemployment, studies or other circumstances that have led to housing problems. While financial problems and unemployment are the most common factors in the case of women aged 35–49, other circumstances prevail among men. Besides relationship dissolution, looking after and supporting parents was the main reason for middle-aged women to return; among men, divorce and separation are still the most significant reasons.

ONE-PERSON HOUSEHOLDS

The proportion of one-person households was on the increase for several decades. Although this trend has ceased in recent years, there are still more individuals living in single-person households today than in 1990. The increase is visible in several age groups, but is most significant among women aged 70–75 (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Proportion of men and women living in one-person households, by age, 1990, 2016



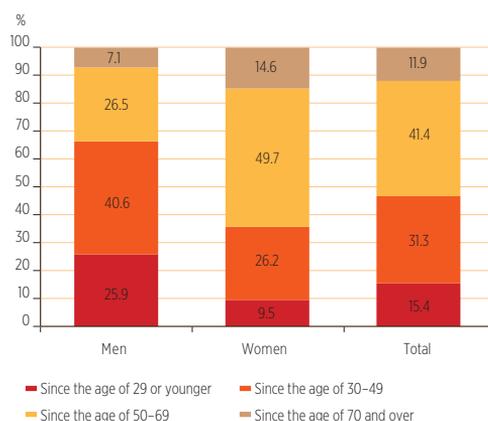
Source: HCSO 1990 Population Census; HCSO, Microcensus 2016; authors' calculations.

People living alone cannot be considered a uniform group: they have different family life trajectories and their socio-demographic status is also varied. At any age, the situation may be short term and temporary; but it could also persist for several decades. There are many possible reasons for establishing a one-person household. Some start to live alone following a separation, after becoming widowed or when their adult children fly the parental nest. Others have left the parental household but have not (yet) established a family of their own: they may start to live alone right away, or else live with others (relatives, friends, etc.) or in an institutional household (e.g. dormitory, workers' hostel) first and then move on to establish a one-person household. Adults in the parental household with child status – i.e. without a partner or children – may also go on to live alone after the death of their parents.

In the following, we present the main characteristics of individuals living in one-person households, based on data from the Turning Points of the Life-course panel survey of 2016.

The proportion of individuals who have lived alone from a young age (from age 29 at the latest) is relatively low (15%) (Figure 8). Every third person has lived alone since the age of 30–49; 41% since the age of 50–69; and 12% since the age of 70 and over. There are significant differences between the sexes: while a quarter of men started to live alone before the age of 30 and two-thirds before the age of 50, women rather tend to start living in one-person households after the age of 50. Of course, this has to do with the age of respondents: individuals from younger age groups can only have lived alone from a younger age. Due to differences between the sexes in terms of mortality, a higher proportion of elderly women than of elderly men have lived alone for longer. In the case of middle-aged individuals, it is rather men who have lived in one-person households for longer.

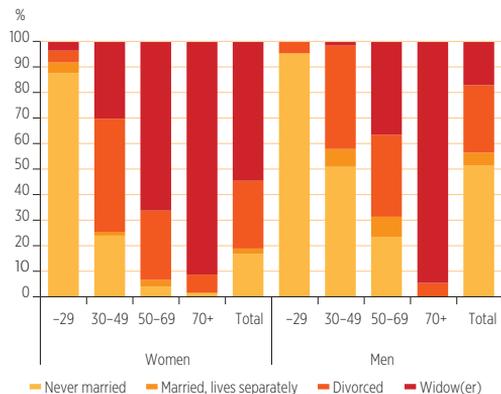
Figure 8: Composition of men and women living in one-person households, according to the age from which they have lived alone, 2016



Source: HDRI GGS Turning Points of the Life-course survey, Wave 5 (2016–2017); authors' calculations.

Almost all men – and the majority of women – who have lived alone from an early age have never been married (Figure 9). The marital statuses of ‘divorced’ and ‘married but separated’ are the most common among women who have lived alone since the age of 30–49 and 50–69, while the proportion of widow(er)s becomes significant among those aged over 50. It is almost exclusively widow(er)s who have been living alone since the age of 70 or over. If we also consider those who used to have a cohabiting partner, then there are significantly more individuals among younger age groups who live alone and have had a long-term relationship (Figure 10).

Figure 9: Distribution of men and women living alone by marital status and according to the age from which they have lived alone, 2016

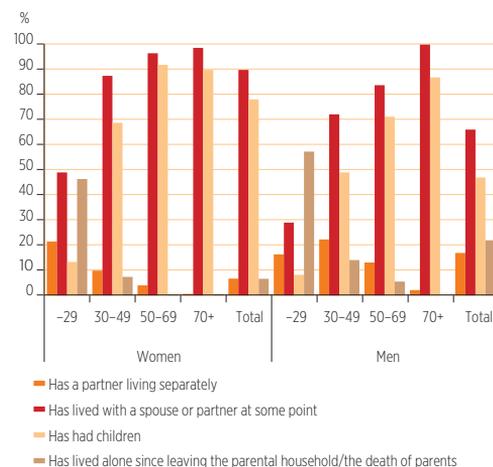


Source: HDRI GGS Turning Points of the Life-course survey, Wave 5 (2016–2017); authors’ calculations.

Although people who live alone do not have a spouse or cohabiting partner, this does not necessarily mean they do not have a relationship: 7% of women and 17% of men living in a one-person household have a partner living separately (Figure 10).

LAT partnerships are more common among people living alone from a younger age. Every other man and three-quarters of women who live alone have children who have either themselves grown up and left the parental household or live with the other parent (usually the mother) following divorce or separation.

Figure 10: Distribution of men and women living alone, according to their family life trajectory and the age from which they have lived alone, 2016



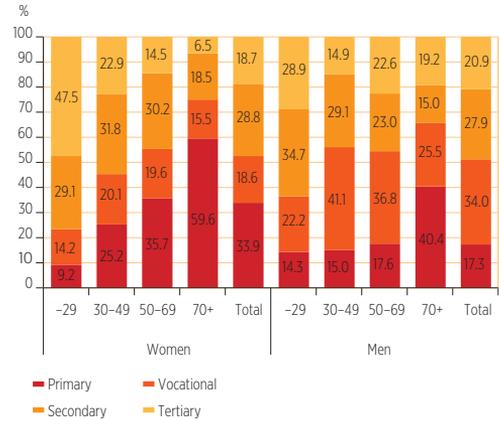
Source: HDRI GGS Turning Points of the Life-course survey, Wave 5 (2016–2017); authors’ calculations.

Some 7% of women and 22% of men living in a one-person household have lived alone ever since leaving the parental household or the death of their parents (Figure 10). This is typical of those who have lived alone from an early age (46% and 57% of the group); however, in the case of men who have lived alone since the age of 30–49, the proportion is also 14%. In the case of individuals who have always lived alone, the proportions of those who have lived alone for at most 4 years, for 5–19 years and for at least 20 years are identical. There

are significant gender differences within the group of people who have always lived alone: women tend to have lived alone for a longer period (46% of women and 23% of men have lived alone for 20 years or more, for example).

The relative social status of individuals living in one-person households is also affected by how long they have been living alone. In Hungary it is relatively uncommon for younger persons who have not yet established a family to live alone, and it is more typical of highly qualified individuals. Consequently, somebody who has lived alone from an early age is likely to be better qualified (e.g. half of women who have lived alone since the age of at most 29 have a degree), while the educational level of individuals who have lived alone from a later age is lower than the level of the population as a whole (*Figure 11*).

Figure 11: Distribution of men and women living alone, according to educational level and the age from which they have lived alone, 2016



Source: HDRI GGS Turning Points of the Life-course survey, Wave 5 (2016–2017); authors' calculations.

GLOSSARY

Blended family: A family in which children live with two parents, and there is at least one child who is not the biological child of one of the parents.

Child: Census reports on household and family structure only consider individuals who have never been married to be children. Individuals of child status who have been married at some point are considered 'other relatives'. In the present study, we use a broader definition of the term: all persons are considered children who are indicated as being of child status by the respondent – that is, anybody who lives with at least one of their parents. Consequently, the two approaches categorize married, divorced and widowed children in two different types of family.

Family: The family is the narrowest circle of persons living together as spouses, cohabiting partners or kin. According to census definitions, the family may be: a) *couple-type*, including a married or cohabiting couple with never-married children or without children, or b) a lone parent with never-married children (*single-parent family*). In our own calculations throughout the chapter, we have not taken into consideration whether an individual of child status has or has not ever been married. However, we have categorized those of child status according to age, and have differentiated between children aged 18, 24 and younger and over 24.

Family household: A household consisting of one or more families. If the household consists of one family, then basically the family and the household are identical, and it is a *one-family household*. If more than one family shares the household, it is a *multi-family household*.

Institutional household: In such a household (for example, a dormitory, old people's home, prison), residents live in a collective setting and possibly receive some kind of catering.

Intact family: A family in which all children are the biological children of both parents.

Living apart together (LAT) relationship: A long-lasting monogamous relationship in which the couple does not live in a common household, but presents itself as a couple to the outside world. For alternative definitions of the term, see Kapitány (2012).

Non-family household: A household without family relations. These are the following: a) *one-person household*, consisting of one person; b) *household of other composition*, which includes individuals that do not constitute a family. The latter might include relatives (for example, siblings or a grandparent with a grandchild of any marital status) living together, but not constituting a family; or a household of non-relatives (such as friends).

Private household: Such a household includes individuals living together who share the same home (or at least part of it) and – at least partially – share living expenses (for example, food and daily needs).

Single-parent family: A family in which children are raised by one parent: that is, there is only one parent in the household.

REFERENCES

- Kapitány, B. (2012): 'Látogató párkapcsolatok' Magyarországon ['Living-apart-together relationships' in Hungary]. *Szociológiai Szemle*, 22(1): 4-29.
- Monostori, J. (2017): Stabilitás és változás az idősek háztartásszerkezetében [Stability and change in the household structure of the elderly]. *Demográfia*, 60(1): 105-137.
- Monostori, J. and Murinkó, L. (2015): Family and household structure. In J. Monostori, P. Óri and Zs. Spéder (eds): *Demographic Portrait of Hungary 2015*. HCSO Hungarian Demographic Research Institute, Budapest: 151-168.