

## NEW PARTNERSHIP AFTER FIRST DIVORCE – AN EVENT HISTORY ANALYSIS<sup>1</sup>

ERZSÉBET FÖLDHÁZI<sup>2</sup>

**ABSTRACT:** *New or altered family forms and their changing roles in the individual lifecycle is one of the most important factors affecting modern demographic behaviour. In Hungary – like other developed countries – the rate of marriage has decreased, the rate of divorce has increased and cohabitation has spread. On the basis of the first wave of the panel survey carried out in 2001 in the HCSO Demographic Research Institute (Turning Points of the Life Course) on a country-wide representative sample (more than 16,000 people, aged 18–75) the author examines the new partnerships of people after marriage break-up. Using event history analysis, she analyses the factors influencing the formation of new partnerships and differences between the two sexes. The basic difference between the two sexes is that men form a new cohabiting unit earlier and with a higher frequency than women. The break-up of the parental family during childhood increases the chances of forming new partnerships in every case, while cohabitation before marriage increases chances only for women. Over the course of time, the chances of forming a new partnership decreases for both sexes. For women, one child under the age of 18 in the household is not a serious impediment to forming a new partnership. At the same time, the burden of having two or more children under the age of 18 is not a sufficiently strong enough incentive for remarrying or starting to cohabit. Having several children in the household decreases chances of remarrying if at least one of the children is younger than 7. For men, these decreased chances refer only to cases where the youngest of the children living with the man is older than 6. Being more highly educated increases men's chances of finding a new partner, while it does the opposite for women.*

Changing partnership forms and the changing roles they play in the life of individuals are important factors in modern demographic behaviour.<sup>3</sup> In developed countries, propensity to marriage has decreased, divorce rates have increased and cohabitation has spread. The majority of marriages are preceded by cohabitation, but – contrary to expectations – instead of enhancing the stability of subsequent marriages it increases chances of marriage break-up.

<sup>1</sup> This study was supported by the research project “Change in forms of partnerships – transitions and/or stability”, funded by the Hungarian Scientific Research Fund (T049066).

<sup>2</sup> Senior researcher, Demographic Research Institute, Budapest, email: foldhazi@demografia.hu

<sup>3</sup> Henceforth, partnership means either marriage or cohabitation. In other words, any type of relationship where the partners live together in the same household.

These tendencies apply to Hungary too: over the last few decades the number of marriages has decreased, whereas divorce rates have increased. Therefore, the total divorce rate – the ratio of marriages made in a particular year that are likely to break-up under the divorce conditions of that year – is 25% for couples married in 1970 and 38% for couples married in 2000.

Remarriage by divorced people has also decreased dramatically: in 1970, 168 per 1,000 divorced men and 84 per 1,000 divorced women remarried. By 2000 these figures had reduced to 29 and 20 respectively. Over the same period of time the percentage of cohabitations barely reached 3% of all couples in 1970, yet by the end of the last century exceeded 10% (Demographic Yearbook 2000; Census 2001).

As a result of these changes, the dominant model of lifelong marriage has been replaced by a series of (often) less stable partnerships. What factors affect the formation of new partnerships? Who remains alone and who finds a new partner? Based on the first wave of a survey carried out by HCSO Demographic Research Institute in 2001, we examine how partnerships develop after divorce. The method of event history analysis is applied, to enable analysis of the factors affecting the formation of partnerships and gender differences.

## THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND THE RESULTS OF PREVIOUS RESEARCH

### *Theories on Partnership Formation*<sup>4</sup>

A person generally tries to satisfy certain needs, and has certain expectations and preferences when seeking out his/her partner. Decisions are made in the marriage market, where partner seekers, on the one hand, present their resources and, on the other hand, estimate different characteristics of potential partners. These characteristics may be of various types. In this study we focus primarily on economic, cultural and demographic factors. As regards divorced partner seekers, we take into consideration their relatively higher age and the possibility that they already have children.

The factors affecting partner selection change over time in society, and also through the life course of an individual. When the economic basis of a partnership is based on a traditional division of labour within the family, according to which the task of men is to provide sufficient income and the task of women is to take care of household chores, the best selection strategy is to match men's

<sup>4</sup> This section is based on two studies carried out by Kalmijn and Graaf, and on the theoretical overview by Bukodi (Kalmijn and Graaf 2000; Graaf and Kalmijn 2003; Bukodi 2004).

labour market status with women's knowledge about how to manage a household. We may suppose that this model has fundamentally changed over the last few decades as a result of women's increased labour market participation.

As a result of these changes, women's economic resources play an important role in the process of partner selection. In the early phase of the individual life course, parental background is one of the most important factors because no other reference points are yet available. After leaving school, the significance of formal education decreases in importance, and occupation, income and prestige increase in importance. We may assume that these latter factors have a stronger effect in the case of the divorced.

When considering the requirements and needs of partner seekers, we may also assume that people enter into new partnerships because it increases their financial, emotional and social welfare. The more one lacks these resources, the more likely one will be to form a new partnership. For instance, the majority of women find themselves in an adverse financial situation after the break-up of a partnership, especially when they are raising children. A possible egress is a new relationship. When a new earner joins a single parent family the financial welfare of that family increases. The new partner brings change not only in an economic sense: he or she also provides emotional support, companionship and expands the personal network of the individual.

The chances of founding a new partnership are higher when one is more attractive to the other sex, in other terms, "more marketable" in the second marriage<sup>5</sup> market. Attractiveness is influenced by numerous factors, such as appearance, education, social status, and so on. Attractiveness diminishes as time passes and therefore the probability of a partnership also decreases. However, occupation may have both positive and negative effects. Women of higher status may be more attractive in the marriage market, yet at the same time have less need of economic support (Sweeney 1995).

In the case of a second partnership, new factors may come into play, such as children from an earlier union. It is usually more difficult for individuals with children to find a new partner than those without children. Since such 'less attractive' individuals are acceptable to each other, they still may be able to form a new relationship. However, the more attractive have a wider circle to choose from, whereas the less attractive have fewer choices and finding a suitable partner therefore requires a longer period of time for them and their chances are reduced. The characteristics that increase the value of the potential partner may vary with age. As a result, they may play a different role among the divorced than in the total population. Education, income and labour market

<sup>5</sup> Of course, we refer here not only to marriages but also to cohabitations. However, since this term is widely used in the literature, we will stick with it.

skills may gain in importance, while the importance of physical attractiveness and adaptability may be decreased for them. Education may become less important too, while occupational position and financial status may matter more.

However, partnership patterns are defined not only by the needs and characteristics of partner seekers but also by the characteristics of the marriage market. Possibilities offered by the marriage market depend on macro-structural factors, such as the demographic and social composition of the entire population and on the characteristics of local marriage markets (settlements, smaller regions, neighbourhoods, religious groups, schools, workplaces, etc.).

Age and place of residence naturally factor into decision-making about new partners. For older individuals, the pool of potential partners is usually low, which restricts chances of the divorced from finding a partner. The three most important local marriage markets are neighbourhood, workplace and school, and each of these play different roles in the selection of a partner. The latter two are related more to performance, while the first one may play a role in homogamy. Two other important local marriage markets include the parental family's network of relationships and various voluntary organisations, communities and clubs. These markets are significantly narrowed down for the divorced: school and parental family may play a restricted role, or they may be totally irrelevant.

The cultural characteristics and value orientations of partner seekers may also influence partnership formation. Generally, cultural similarity is a prerequisite for two people to meet and get to know each other. It facilitates understanding of each other's behaviours and makes finding common activities more likely in the later stages of a partnership. It also increases the likelihood that partner seekers share values and have similar opinions on issues of importance.

Attitudes towards partnership and marriage also play a major role. It is hard to decide if a failed marriage motivates towards a new marriage or discourages it. For instance, divorced people may try to avoid marriage failure and the process of getting divorced by avoiding marriage altogether and opting to cohabit instead. It is generally recognised, however, that more emancipated, more individualistic and less religious people are less likely to marry or remarry. In this respect we have less information on cohabitation but we may suppose a reversed effect. In general, people with more modern values are less committed to partnerships; the more commitment is required, the more likely it is that they try to avoid a partnership. We may therefore suppose that they prefer cohabitation to marriage. In the case of religious people, the Church controls the life of its members through norms that limit individualism and sanctions the transgression of norms.

The likelihood of forming a new partnership also depends on the relationship density of the individual. The more frequently and the more people some-

one meets, the more likely he/she will find an adequate partner. In the case of re-partnering, this factor plays an even more significant role, as the marriage market is smaller and there are fewer places to meet for divorced people.

#### *Previous Results*

According to the results of previous research, basic demographic variables are very important during the formation of new partnerships. The pattern is *gender* specific: men enter new partnerships more frequently and within a shorter period of time after the ending of a previous relationship than women. Generally, children remain with their mother after divorce. Parallel with *ageing*, the likelihood of forming a new partnership decreases, especially for women. The marriage or partnership market shrinks with age. This is particularly relevant for women since they generally seek older partners. Opportunities for women become even worse when they reach the end of their fertile period (Graaf and Kalmijn 2003; Wu and Balakrishnan 1994; Haskey 1999; Parker 1999; Hughes 2000).

The situation in Hungary is similar. Based on data from the first wave of the above-mentioned panel survey, 33% of men and 23% of women partner (either cohabitation or marriage) within 2 years after the termination of first marriage. Four years after divorce, half of the men cohabit, whereas women need eight years to do so. Eleven per cent of men and 32% of women do not re-partner and stay alone.

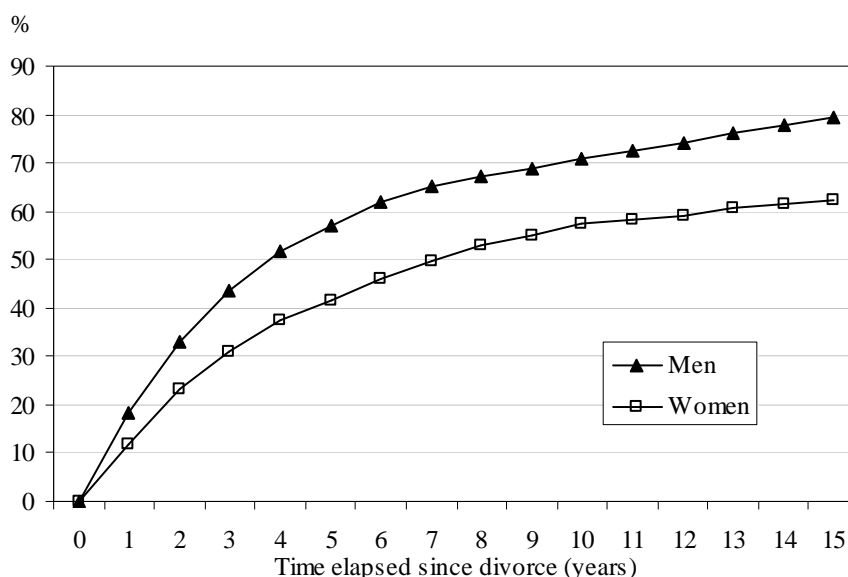


Figure 1  
*New partnerships among the divorced as a function of the length of time elapsed after the divorce, by sex (%)*

The effect of parental family on partner selection is unambiguously strong regarding the first marriage. This effect is reduced after getting divorced because the performance of the individuals involved becomes more important than family background (e.g. the financial and economic resources of the parents, the local marriage market). However, patterns, values and roles that people carry with them from the parental family still have a significant impact on expectations in regard to marriage and partnerships.

We know that parental divorce increases the likelihood that the future partnerships of children will break-up (Amato 1996). However, it is not known whether a similar effect can be found in the case of re-partnering. Children of divorced parents may have negative attitudes towards marriage, and children of single parents may also have less commitment to marry as they lack successful patterns to draw upon. Nevertheless, they may have a different attitude towards cohabitation. Sweeny (1995) found no significant link between remarrying and being raised in an intact parental family, and Bernhardt (2000) came to a similar conclusion when examining marriages and cohabitations.

The number of siblings may also influence the formation of new partnerships, as those raised together with more brothers and sisters may want to live

in a larger family. According to Bernhardt's results (2000), the likelihood of re-partnering is high even among lone children. A possible explanation for this is that the partner expands the existing family network in such cases.

It is generally accepted that people with children have lower chances of starting a new partnership, and the more children they have the stronger this effect is. The causes are manifold: children require time and commitment, and parents may consider their parental role as more important than the new partnership. For the new partner, a child/children mean(s) higher costs, and the complexity of the new stepfamily may be perceived as a potential source of conflict.

However, there is a strong economic incentive towards the formation of a new partnership for divorced women with more than one child, and this may increase their initiative (Bumpass et al. 1990). Moreover, the desire to have children may be a motivation for divorced and childless people to start a new relationship. Therefore, the child(ren) of the potential partner may actually be an attractive factor (Lampard and Peggs, 1999). Most research demonstrates the negative effect that children have on women's chances of starting a new partnership. However, Sweeny (1995) found no significant links between the number of children and likelihood of remarriage. There are contradictory results regarding men: according to some surveys it reduces the chances of new partnerships (Bernhardt 2000; Keij and Harmsen 2001; Ermisch 2002), whereas others claim that it has the opposite effect (Wu and Balakrishnan 1994 – the effect, however, was not significant); other researchers found no effect (Parker 1999; Hughes 2000; Stewart et al. 2003).

Marriage duration may influence the formation of new partnerships in several ways. Those who have lived in a relatively long marriage may tend to be more "marriage oriented", and may therefore decide to marry again sooner. However, it is also possible that those who have lived most of their adult life in a marriage predispose against being single. These people accumulate a particular "transferable marriage-specific human capital." Nevertheless, we may also suppose that such individuals find new partners later, as they have lost contact with the marriage market and are less likely have the skills necessary for finding a new partner (Bumpass et al. 1990; Bernhardt 2000).

While demographic effects are generally strong and consistent, the effects of socio-economic factors are less clear-cut (Graaf and Kalmijn 2003). Higher socio-economic status is usually accompanied by higher remarriage rates for men and lower rates for women. The latter effect is explained by the fact that women of lower social status are more dependent on their partner's support whereas women of higher status are less likely to need such help. Furthermore, highly qualified women can choose from fewer similarly highly qualified potential partners in the marriage market. At the same time, we may also suppose

that educational qualifications raise women's attractiveness. This may be due to a higher income that facilitates financial stability of the family, or because it has a stimulating effect on the partner with lower status (Bumpass et al. 1990).

Religiousness may run two contradictory mechanisms in the case of the divorced. On the one hand, we may suppose that religious people are more likely to remarry instead of remaining alone, since for them marriage is the most suitable form of an intimate new relationship. However, the Catholic Church discourages remarriage (even though this may have less effect nowadays). At the same time, religious people may reject cohabitation and they may be less likely to choose this type of partnership. Therefore, religious practices have a positive effect on remarriage and a negative effect on cohabitation (Graaf and Kalmijn 2003).

## DATA AND METHODS

### *Data*

This paper is based on data from the first wave of the "Turning point of the life course" panel survey (for a detailed description of the survey see Spéder 2002; Kapitány and Spéder 2004). Interviews took place at the end of 2001 and at the beginning of 2002 on a sample representing the entire Hungarian population aged 18–75. The sample size was 16,363.

We only examine new partnerships after the break-up of the first marriage and do not distinguish between its forms – whether they are marriages or cohabitations – during the event history analysis. Based on research on Swedish and Norwegian data, we assume that the majority of women prefer cohabitation as a second partnership. The spread of non-marital cohabitation seems to have contributed to the decrease or postponement of remarriage: in the case of women, one hardly finds any second marriage without prior cohabitation (Blanc 1987). Cohabitation after divorce is a quite general phenomenon (Graaf and Kalmijn 2003).

This paper examines 1,931 cases where first marriages were terminated by court resolution. We disregard new partnerships after widowhood and those cases where the person is still legally married but lives separately from the spouse, or where the respondent is single or in another partnership. (Excluded cases and the causes of exclusion are summarised in Table 1 of the Appendix).

A new partnership was formed in about 62% of the examined cases, whereas no such partnership was established for 29% of men and 43% of women.



The incidence and type of a new partnership varies according to the date of divorce. Some rough categories of the divorce dates demonstrate the decrease of remarriage and the gender differences (Table 1).

Table 1  
*New partnerships of divorced men and women by the period of the divorce*

Type of partnership by sex	Date of divorce				
	1969 and before	Between 1970–1979	Between 1980–1989	Between 1990–2002	Total
Men					
Marriage	84.4	66.4	41.4	11.3	40.7
Cohabitation	12.5	26.5	38.6	32.2	30.4
No new partnership	3.1	7.1	20.0	56.5	28.9
N (100%)	96	155	220	283	754
Women					
Marriage	67.5	51.4	28.9	10.7	33.2
Cohabitation	11.0	22.5	33.0	22.4	23.7
No new partnership	21.5	26.1	38.1	66.9	43.1
N (100%)	181	249	336	411	1177

When examining those divorced in 1969 or earlier, it seems that the majority of both sexes remarried. Hardly any cohabitation was established and a relatively small number of divorced people – mainly women – remained single.

Among those divorced in the seventies and the eighties for the first time, we observe a tendency towards decreasing remarriage and increasing cohabitation.

It is difficult to arrive at a conclusion regarding those divorced between 1990 and 2002 because of the relatively short period of time that has elapsed since the dissolution of the marriage. However, the data suggests that more people choose cohabitation than marriage. The ratio of re-partnering women is lower in all groups than for men.

Of course, a more accurate picture emerges if we take into consideration the duration of the first marriage and the time elapsed between divorce and the new partnership. These aspects were included in the subsequent event history analysis.

### *Variables*

Besides sex and age, other factors examined during the analysis were the number of siblings and whether one had been raised in an “intact” family dur-

ing one's childhood (in a traditional family with two parents and children). In regard to the terminated partnership, its type, duration and the year of divorce were taken into consideration. Religiousness was also included in the analysis.

Event history analysis allows construction of so-called time-varying variables. This means that we are able to tell the actual value of a variable at any given point of time – months in our case – within the observed time period. Age, education, the number of biological children under the age of 18 living with the respondent, the age of the youngest of these children, and the number of biological children under the age of 18 not living with the respondent belong to our time-varying variables (Table 2).

Table 2  
*Variables used in the analysis*

Definition of variable	Categories
Intact family before age 16	1 = yes 2 = no
How many brothers and sister was he/she raised with as a child	0 = no siblings 1+ = one or more siblings
Cohabitation before marriage	1 = no 2 = yes
Duration of marriage (years)	1 = 0–5 2 = 6–10 3 = 11–15 4 = 16+
Date of divorce	1 = 1948–1969 2 = 1970–1989 3 = 1990–2002
Religious?	1 = yes, follow the teachings of the Church 2 = yes, in his/her own way 3 = no
Age (years)	1 = –29 2 = 30–39 3 = 40–49 4 = 50–75
Number of biological children under 18 living with the respondent	0 = none 1 = one child 2 = two children 3+ = three or more children
Number of biological children under 18 not living with the respondent	0 = none 1 = one child 2+ = two or more children
Age of youngest biological child under 18 living with the respondent	1 = 0–6 2 = 7–12 3 = 13–17 4 = no children under 18 in the household
Education <sup>6</sup>	1 = primary or less 2 = vocational training 3 = secondary 4 = tertiary
Time elapsed since divorce (years)	1 = 0–2 2 = 3–5 3 = 6–10 4 = 11–15 5 = 16+

<sup>6</sup> Construction of a time-varying education variable rests on certain assumptions. The characteristics of the Hungarian educational system provided our starting point. We assume that respondents completed primary education at age 14, vocational school at age 17, grammar school at age 18, and there were no breaks in studies. Study discontinuities occur more frequently before starting tertiary education, therefore, we consider a five year period before obtaining a degree as the time spent in tertiary education.

Event history analysis was used for examining the social, economic and cultural determinants of establishing a new partnership. We tracked the process from the termination of the first marriage (the official annulation of divorce) until the establishment of a new partnership. The examined event is the formation of the second partnership. Results are relative risks, namely, we define the relative probability of a person with particular characteristics of starting a second partnership compared to the same probability of individuals who belong to the reference categories (the probability for the latter respondents equals 1). Models were estimated for men and women separately.

In Table 3 the occurrence of the event and exposure time (in percentage of the total exposure time) of entering a second partnership are summarised for both sexes separately.

Table 3  
*Exposure time and the occurrence of the event (a new partnership)*

Variable	Categories	Men		Women	
		Expo- sure time*	New part- ner- ship	Expo- sure time*	New part- ner- ship
Intact family in childhood	yes	92.3	474	90.9	577
	no	7.7	62	9.1	91
With how many siblings were raised together?	0	17.8	81	13.3	105
	1+	82.2	455	86.7	563
Cohabitation before marriage?	no	91.8	481	95.0	612
	yes	8.2	55	5.0	56
Duration of marriage (years)	0–5	34.0	239	26.4	290
	6–10	26.5	154	29.2	169
	11–15	16.3	75	15.7	95
	16+	23.2	68	28.7	114
Religious?	yes, following the teachings of the Church	14.6	59	20.2	102
	yes, in his/her own way	52.5	287	60.4	413
	no	32.9	190	19.5	153
Age (years)	–29	16.1	164	15.7	265
	30–39	35.0	237	28.7	266
	40–49	28.5	95	28.6	111
	50–75	20.3	40	27.0	26
Date of divorce	–1969	10.4	93	10.9	142
	1970–1989	48.1	320	49.6	390
	1990–2002	41.5	123	39.6	136
Number of biological children under 18 living with the respondent	0	82.5	441	51.9	220
	1	11.3	65	28.5	290
	2	5.0	23	15.3	121
	3+	1.2	7	2.6	37
Number of biological children under 18 not living with the respondent	0	60.1	291	98.2	646
	1	27.5	169	1.4	20
	2+	12.4	76	0.4	2
Age of the youngest child under 18 living with the respondent (years)	0–6	5.3	51	17.2	211
	7–12	6.0	23	17.8	180
	13–17	6.2	21	13.1	57
	no children under 18 in the household	82.5	441	51.9	220
Number of own underage children living with the respondent, age of youngest (years)	0	82.5	441	51.9	220
	1(+), 0–6	5.3	51	9.2	138
	1(+), >6	12.2	44	8.1	73
	2+, 0–6	–	–	21.0	152
	2+, >6	–	–	9.8	85
Education	primary or less	29.8	109	34.3	242
	vocational school	35.6	195	20.2	134
	secondary	22.0	143	33.8	231
	tertiary	12.7	89	11.7	61
Total exposure time and total no. of new partnerships		50671	536	120914	668

\* In percentage of total exposure time.

## RESULTS

Three models were tested during the analysis, on men and women separately. The first one included age and family background characteristics (whether the respondent lived in an intact family as a child and the number of siblings he/she was raised together with). In the second model, the characteristics of the terminated marriage were also entered: whether they cohabited prior to marriage, the duration of the marriage, the date of divorce and the characteristics of common children under the age of 18 (the number of biological children under the age of 18 who lived with the respondents and the age of the youngest of them, and the number of biological children under the age of 18 who did not live with the respondent).

In this model, entering an interaction term between the number of underage children living with the respondent and the age of youngest child raised the explanatory power the most, hence this model was retained. The number of common children and children living apart were grouped differently in the case of men and women. Bearing in mind child custody practices, we employed a more detailed categorisation of children living with women and children living apart from men. Finally, the third model incorporated religiousness and education.

Single variable effects are presented in Table 2 of the Appendix and the characteristics of particular models are summarised in Tables 4–5 for men and women respectively.

### *Men*

Regarding men, the inclusion of particular variable groups improved the fit of the subsequent models significantly, while the relative risks of particular variables remained practically unchanged. Therefore, we present the results of only the third, the most extended model.

There is a significant relationship between age and re-partnering after first divorce: the older the respondent is, the more difficult it is to find a new partner. The chances of forming a new partnership are less than half for those in the 40–49 age group than for respondents under the age of 30, and it is reduced by a third in the case of the oldest age group. This phenomenon may be explained by decreased attractiveness.

Family break-up experienced during childhood increases chances of starting a new partnership by 40% compared to those raised in intact families. Those raised with siblings are also more likely to find new partners than lone children.

Cohabitation before marriage and the duration of the marriage have no influence on partnership chances.

It is difficult to explain the result that the chances of finding a new partner decrease if divorce took place at a later period. For instance, those divorced between 1970 and 1989 have a 20% lower probability of finding a new partner compared to the reference category. We know that the remarriage rate among the divorced dropped considerably from the 1970s (mainly due to a significant decrease in the remarriage rate of men) (Szűcs 1996). However, cohabitation spread relatively rapidly in Hungary: while 2.1% of all families were cohabiting ones in 1970, this figure had increased to 4.3% in 1990 and to 9.5% by 2001 (Demographic Yearbook 2000). Due to the fact that both marriages and cohabitations were taken into consideration as second partnerships, this tendency can be explained by the fact that the increasing prevalence of cohabitation does not compensate for the decrease of remarriages. This is a realistic assumption, as the spread of cohabitation has accelerated over the last 10–15 years.

In the case of divorces between 1990 and 2002, we assume that intensified individualism – which could also have played a significant role in earlier periods – may have impeded decisions to commit to an intimate relationship. The spread of unmarried unions during this period also underscores this explanation. We also take into consideration the fact that many people live in so-called “living apart together” relationships.

If a divorced man lives with his own child who is older than 6, his chances of forming a new relationship are 40% lower than compared to a divorced man living alone or living with a small child. Whether one has underage children living separately has no influence.

Men who consider themselves religious but don't attend church and those who do not consider themselves religious have a 30% higher probability of starting a new partnership than those who attend church.

More educated men have significantly higher chances of re-partnering after divorce: the probability of men with tertiary education is two times higher than that of men with primary or lower education.

Time elapsed since divorce has a clear and significant effect: the more time elapses, the lower the chances of finding another partner. However, this decrease is not linear. For instance, chances are decreased by 13% 3–5 years after divorce compared to the first 2 years, and this ratio halves in the subsequent period. After 15 years, which seems to be a watershed, chances are reduced to a third compared to the immediate period after the divorce.

### *Women*

As for men, the effect of age is strong and significant. It is also more intense: chances of partnership of women aged 40–49 are less than a third of those belonging to the youngest age group, and for women older than 50 they

are minimal, only a tenth of those who fall into the youngest age category. In this case, we are faced with the widely acknowledged fact that appearance is more important in the case of women than men. However, this phenomenon may also be related to the fact that women reach the end of their fertile period in their forties.

Family break-up during childhood increases women's chances of developing a new partnership, though to less of an extent than for men.

Unlike men, women who cohabited with their future husbands before marrying them have a higher probability of entering a new partnership. We know that cohabitation before marriage increases chances of future divorce. A possible explanation could be that people who choose cohabitation prior to marriage have liberal attitudes about partnership and they therefore form partnerships later and more easily, but in a form requiring less commitment.

Marriage duration is related to the chances of finding a new partner: the risk is 25% lower for women divorcing after 6–10 years of marriage than for members of the reference group.

Like men, chances of starting a new partnership decrease with time from the earliest examined period to the present. However, this effect is weaker for women than for men: the probability of finding a new partner among people divorced between 1990 and 2002 is 25% lower for women and 50% lower for men. This relationship is in-line with the fact that remarriage became less frequent mainly among men.

The number of children has less impact on new partnerships than we expected. Only one family type has an impeding effect: single parent families living with many underage children (at least one of whom is aged 6 or younger). In other cases – such as mother with one underage child or with school aged children, – the probability of starting a new partnership is not decreased. Interestingly, children under the age of 18 living in a separate household significantly increase the probability – indeed, almost double it – compared to those not having any children under age 18 or having child(ren) under age 18 but not living together with them. This result can be explained only partly by the fact that there are no or only a few underage children in the household, since this factor was not significant by itself. In any case, this is a small and particular group.

Religiousness plays no role for women and the impact of education is in contrast to what we observe among men. Chances of women starting a new relationship with vocational or secondary education decreased by 14–16% compared to those with primary education – the same variables have a positive effect on men. There is no significant impact on women with tertiary qualifications.



The effect of time elapsed since divorce is also clear: the more time elapses, the less chances women have of finding a new partner. In accordance with the fact that women form fewer partnerships after divorce, probabilities also decrease and they reach their lowest levels sooner than men.

Table 4  
*Relative risk of entering a new partnership after break-up of the first marriage, men*

Variables	Categories	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
<i>Age and family background</i>				
Intact family in childhood (yes) <sup>†</sup>	no	1.36*	1.38*	1.4*
Number of siblings raised together (0)	1+	1.15	1.17	1.24^
Age, years (-29)	30-39	0.80*	0.86	0.81^
	40-49	0.45***	0.57**	0.53**
	50-75	0.32***	0.41**	0.37**
<i>Characteristics of the broken up marriage</i>				
Cohabitation before marriage (no)	cohabitation		1.14	1.19
Duration of marriage, years (0-5)	6-10		1.06	1.06
	11-15		1.07	1.08
	16+		0.97	1.02
Date of divorce (1948-1969)	1970-1989		0.84	0.78*
	1990-2002		0.56***	0.51***
Number of biological children under 18 living with the respondent x age of youngest <sup>††</sup> (years) (0)	1+, 0-6		1.07	1.02
	1+, >6		0.68*	0.66*
Number of biological children under 18 not living with the respondent (0)	1		0.92	0.92
	2+		0.93	0.95
<i>Other variables</i>				
Religiousness (yes, following the teachings of the Church)	yes, in his/her own way			1.36*
	no			1.33^
Education (primary or less)	vocational school			1.43**
	secondary			1.57**
	tertiary			2.03***
Time since divorce, years (0-2)	3-5	0.85***	0.84***	0.87***
	6-10	0.55***	0.53***	0.57***
	11-15	0.56***	0.47***	0.52***
	16+	0.41***	0.29***	0.34***
Log likelihood		-2881.04	-2868.28	-2854.08
Number of linearly independent factors		10	21	26

^ p<0.15 ^ p<0.1 \* p<0.05 \*\* p<0.01 \*\*\* p<0.001

<sup>†</sup> Reference categories are in parentheses. <sup>††</sup> Interaction of two variables.

Table 5  
*Relative risk of entering a new partnership after break-up of the first marriage, women*

Variables	Categories	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
<i>Age and family background</i>				
Intact family in childhood (yes) <sup>†</sup>	no	1.24 <sup>^</sup>	1.28*	1.27*
Number of siblings raised together (0)	1+	0.92	0.92	0.91
Age, years (–29)	30–39	0.63***	0.63***	0.65***
	40–49	0.33***	0.30***	0.31***
	50–75	0.11***	0.10***	0.10***
<i>Characteristics of the broken up marriage</i>				
Cohabitation before marriage (no)	cohabitation		1.28 <sup>^</sup>	1.29 <sup>^</sup>
Duration of marriage, years (0–5)	6–10		0.76*	0.75*
	11–15		0.99	0.97
	16+		1.13	1.09
Date of divorce (1948–1969)	1970–1989		0.96	0.96
	1990–2002		0.72*	0.73*
Number of biological children under 18 living with the respondent,* age of youngest <sup>††</sup> (years) (0)	1, 0–6		0.95	0.93
	2+, 0–6		0.77 <sup>^</sup>	0.76 <sup>^</sup>
	1, >6		1.01	1.01
	2+, >6		1.08	1.07
Number of biological children under 18 not living with the respondent (0)	1+		2.0**	1.93**
<i>Other variables</i>				
Religiousness (yes, following the teachings of the Church)	yes, in his/her own way			1.14
	no			1.20
Education (primary or less)	vocational school			0.84 <sup>^^</sup>
	secondary			0.86 <sup>^^</sup>
	tertiary			0.89
Time since divorce, years (0–2)	3–5	0.82***	0.81***	0.81***
	6–10	0.73***	0.70***	0.69***
	11–15	0.41***	0.39***	0.38***
	16+	0.39***	0.40***	0.38***
Log likelihood		–3898.8	–3881.14	–3878.65
Number of linearly independent factors		10	22	27

<sup>^^</sup> p<0.15 <sup>^</sup> p<0.1 \* p<0.05 \*\* p<0.01 \*\*\* p<0.001

<sup>†</sup> Reference categories are in parentheses.

<sup>††</sup> Interaction of two variables.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

As the proportion of different partnership types radically changes, it becomes increasingly important to examine their development and termination, and the factors that play a role in these processes – paying special attention to children and gender differences.

The investigation of new partnerships after the break-up of first marriage was carried out separately for men and women. However, the form of the new partnership (whether marriage or cohabitation) was not taken into consideration in the event history analysis.

The effect of demographic factors is generally strong and consistent. The consequences of economic and educational characteristics, however, are less clear-cut. Break-up of parental marriage in childhood increases the likelihood of new partnerships in all cases, while cohabitation before marriage has a significant effect only for women. The impact of respondents' children differs by sex: the probability of finding a new partner is reduced when a woman has children under the age of 18 and at least one of whom is aged 0–6, while the same risk is decreased where men have one or more children above the age of 6 living with them. Children living in a separate household have an effect for women only: it almost doubles their chances of finding a new partner. As regards the effect of the time elapsed since divorce, we can conclude that the likelihood of re-partnering decreases for both sexes as time elapses. Education has a significant effect on men but not on highly educated women; it increases the risk for men, whilst it decreases it for women. Religiousness plays a role only in the case of men: religious men who live in accordance with the regulations of the Church are less likely find a new partner.

Our results are mostly in accordance with earlier studies. However, in certain cases, especially for women, the outcomes are surprising.

The increased chances of more educated men re-partnering are consonant with resource theories, whereas we have found contradictory results in the case of women. Success in the marriage market justifies the fact that decreasing attractiveness as a result of ageing reduces the probability of both sexes finding a new partner. The effect of the number of children is not straightforward in the case of women. We arrived at two unexpected conclusions: firstly, one child under 18 does not seriously hamper finding a new partner, and secondly, the burden of having to support two or more children is not a sufficiently strong reason for forming a new partnership or remarrying. It was similarly surprising that a woman has better chances of re-partnering if she has child(ren) under the age of 18 who live in a separate household. One possible explanation is that the new partnership may have been established before divorce, and the respondent left her child more easily in order to stabilise the new relationship. Previous

research does not help explain the effect of marriage duration, namely that only marriages lasting 6–10 years reduce the probability of a new partnership, and we can only speculate on this. We suppose that children are born during this time period, therefore women who divorce 6–10 years after getting married are more likely to have children under the age of 6.

Evidently, our results need to be treated with caution. The analysis is restricted to divorced respondents whose first partnership was marriage or cohabitation, which later transformed into marriage. Taking into consideration this fact and the proliferation of cohabitations over the last two decades, we may suppose that our subsample includes respondents who are 'ore conservative' than average.

One should also note that the date of marriage break-up is defined as the date at which this was ruled and agreed upon by a court of law. However, we know from other studies that the majority of divorcing people separate before the judicial process is completed. Divorce is an extended process, and private and legal events hardly ever correspond (Becker 1993). It would have been more reasonable to treat separation as the termination of the marriage, but we have no data on the dates when married couples ceased to live in the same households. As a result of our procedure, we had to exclude those cases where a respondent already lived in a new partnership but the marriage had not been legally terminated. Therefore, we may underestimate the frequency of new partnerships – especially unmarried unions – established after separation but before legal divorce, in particular if the divorce took place after 1990. Finally, one should also note that even though only biological children under the age of 18 are considered, there are lots of missing data, especially regarding children who had been living separately from the respondent for a long time.

Retrospective data from the first wave of a panel survey were applied in the analysis, but we lack important information that might have facilitated better understanding of the phenomenon (for instance, we are not able to follow month by month changes in labour market status). The second wave of this panel survey will provide a rich database, and the inclusion of new variables into the models may fine-tune the conclusions of this paper. For example, it seems promising that we will be able to follow the partnership and family changes step by step among divorced people during the last 3 years. Examining homogamy in the case of terminated and new partnerships could be an interesting aspect, and the new data set will make this possible in the near future. Moreover, we will be able to analyse the role of children in partnership formation not only from the perspective of the respondents but also from the viewpoint of the children of potential partners (Goldscheider and Sassler 2006).

## REFERENCES

- Amato, P. R. 1996. Explaining the intergenerational transmission of divorce. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, Vol. 58, 628–640.
- Becker, G. S. 1993. *A Treatise on the Family*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts; London, England.
- Bernhardt, E. M. 2000. *Repartnering among Swedish men and women: A case study of emerging patterns in the second demographic transition*. Paper contributed to the FFS Flagship conference, Brussels, 29–31 May 2000. <http://www.unecce.org/ead/pau/flag/papers/bernhard.pdf>
- Blanc, A. K. 1987. The formation and dissolution of second unions: marriage and cohabitation in Sweden and Norway. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, Vol. 49, No. 2, 391–400.
- Bukodi, E. 2004. *Ki, mikor, kivel (nem) házasodik? Párvalasztás Magyarországon*. Andorka Rudolf Társadalomtudományi Társaság – Századvég Kiadó, Budapest.
- Bumpass, L., Sweet, J. and Martin, T. C. 1990. Changing patterns of remarriage. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, Vol 52, No. 3, 747–756.
- Census 2001. 10. A háztartások és a családok adatai. Budapest, 2003.
- Demographic Yearbook 2000. Központi Statisztikai Hivatal, Budapest.
- Ermisch, J. 2002. *Trying again: Repartnering after dissolution of a union*. Working Papers of the Institute for Social and Economic Research, paper 2002-19. Colchester: University of Essex.
- Graaf, P. M., de and Kalmijn, M. 2003. Alternative routes in the remarriage market: Competing-risk analyses of union formation after divorce. *Social Forces*, 81(4): 1459–1496.
- Goldscheider, F. and Sassler, S. 2006. Creating stepfamilies: Integrating children into the study of union formation. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, Vol 68, 275–291.
- Haskey, J. (1999): Divorce and remarriage in England and Wales. *Population Trends*, 1999 Spring, 18–22.
- Hughes, J. 2000. Repartnering after divorce. *Family Matters*, No. 55. 16–21.
- Kalmijn, M. and Graaf, P. M., de 2000. *Remarriage and cohabitation after divorce in Netherlands: Competing risks analyses of social, economic, and cultural determinants*. Paper to be presented at the conference „Population Studies in Britain and the Netherlands”, a joint conference of the „British Society of Population Studies” and the „Nederlandse Vereniging voor Demografie”, Utrecht, Netherlands, August 31 September 1, 2000.
- Kapitány, B. and Spéder, Zs. 2004. *Szegénység és depriváció. Társadalomszerkezeti összefüggések nyomában*. Műhelytanulmányok 4. KSH Népeségtudományi Kutatóintézet, Budapest.
- Keij, I. and Harmsen, C. 2001. „Repartnering”: living with a new partner after breaking up. Paper for the EAPS Population Conference, 7–9 June 2001, Helsinki, Finland. <http://www.vaestoliitto.fi/toimintayksikot/vaestontutkimuslaitos/eapskonferenssi/Papers/Theme%20B/Keij.pdf>

- Lampard, R. and Peggs, K. 1999. Repartnering: the relevance of parenthood and gender to cohabitation and remarriage among the formerly married. *British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 50 No. 3 443–465.
- Parker, R. 1999. Repartnering following relationship breakdown. *Family Matters* No. 53. 39–43.
- Spéder, Zs. (ed.) 2002. *Demográfiai folyamatok és társadalmi környezet. Gyorsjelentés. Műhelytanulmányok 1.* KSH Népeségtudományi Kutatóintézet, Budapest.
- Stewart, S. D., Manning, W. D. and Smock, P. J. 2003. Union formation among men in the U.S.: Does having prior children matter? *Journal of Marriage and Family*, Vol. 65, 90–104.
- Sweeney, M. M. 1995. *Remarriage of men and women: The role of socioeconomic prospects.* CDE Working Paper No. 95–08.
- Szűcs, Z. 1996. *Az élettársi kapcsolatban élő családok társadalmi, demográfiai jellemzői.* KSH Népeségtudományi Kutatóintézet Kutatási Jelentései, 56. Budapest.
- Wu, Z. and Balakrishnan, T. R. 1994. Cohabitation after marital disruption in Canada. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, vol. 56, No. 3, 723–734.

## APPENDIX

Table 1

*Cases excluded from the analysis and reasons for exclusion.  
Partnerships after break-up of the first marriage in Hungary among women  
and men born between 1926 and 1983*

Total number of records (respondents)	16 363
Exclusions	
Has never lived in cohabitation or marriage	3 005
Lives in first partnership	8 612
In first marriage and separated	151
Second partnership starts before the first ends	174
Separated or widowed	1 912
Missing data	578
Total number of exclusions	14 432
Total number of used cases	1 931
Number of second partnerships	1 204

Table 2  
*Relative risk of forming a new partnership after break-up of the first marriage,  
 univariate effects*

Variables	Categories	Men		Women	
		risk	signifi- cance	risk	signifi- cance
Intact family in childhood	Yes	1		1	
	No	1.36	*	1.39	**
Number of siblings raised together	0	1		1	
	1+	1.08		0.88	
Cohabitation before marriage	No	1		1	
	Yes	1.1		1.34	*
Duration of marriage (years)	0–5	1		1	
	6–10	0.84	^	0.61	***
	11–15	0.72	*	0.62	***
	16+	0.44	***	0.38	***
Religiousness	yes, following the teachings of the Church	1		1	
	yes, in his/her own way	1.24	^^	1.18	^^
	no	1.23		1.22	^^
Age (years)	–29	1		1	
	30–39	0.78	*	0.63	***
	40–49	0.44	***	0.32	***
	50–75	0.31	***	0.11	***
Date of divorce	1948–1969	1		1	
	1970–1989	0.75	*	0.79	*
	1990–2002	0.45	***	0.55	***
Number of biological children under 18 living with the respondent	0	1		1	
	1	0.91		1.27	*
	2	0.74		0.97	
	3+	0.8		1.72	**
Number of biological children under 18 not living with the respondent	0	1		1	
	1	1.08		2.21	***
	2+	1.07		0.69	
Age of the youngest child under 18 living with the respondent (years)	0–6	1		1	
	7–12	0.52	**	1.02	
	13–17	0.48	**	0.56	***
	no children under 18 in the household	0.8	^^	0.75	**
Education	primary or less	1		1	
	vocational school	1.35	*	0.83	^
	secondary	1.53	**	0.84	^
	tertiary	1.68	***	0.71	*

^^ p<0.15 ^ p<0.1 \* p<0.05 \*\* p<0.01 \*\*\* p<0.001

The significance of the variable is indicated next to the reference category.