

CHANGES IN POPULATION DEVELOPMENT IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

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Abstract: *The article describes basic features of demographic development in the Czech Republic in the last 20 years. It analyses natural and total population growth, birth rate, marriage rate, divorce rate, mortality and abortion rate. The author explains the causes of the population boom of the recent years and in the conclusion he states its end.*

Keywords: *population boom, birth rate, abortion rate, ageing of population, demographic development*

1. Introduction

Socio-demographic structure and its development certainly belong to the basic grounds of community planning. The aim of this report is to provide a short insight into demographic development of the Czech Republic in the last two decades and the present state analysis resulting from it. The article is especially based on the newest published data of the Czech Statistical Office concerning the last year.

2. Socio-demographic structure of the Czech Republic - present state and development since 1990

Firstly, I define the basic features of the demographic development in the Czech Republic since 1990, secondly, I concentrate on individual indicators of the population development in the Czech Republic to the year 2008 and finally, I compare the first half of 2009 with the same period of the previous year.

2.1. Basic Features of the Population Development in the Czech Republic since 1990

- The birth rate decrease up to the year 1999, from 2000 there was a slight increase that was even more significant in 2007 and 2008
- Mortality was higher than birth rate between 1994 and 2005, only in the last three years the natural growth increment finally achieved positive values
- Decreasing fertility (both in men and women). Total female fertility had very low values and it was decreasing to the year 2000. Despite the fact that since then it slightly increased, it still achieved only the value of 1,5 in the record-breaking year of 2008 (the value of 2 children was last reached in 1966, and the value higher than “1,5 children” in 1993)
- The share of children born to unmarried couples has been rapidly increasing. From 1990 it multiplied four times, which means that in 2008 children born out of wedlock formed 36,3% of all live-born children in that year

- The absolute number of inhabitants was decreasing from 1994 to the year 2002, after that the total growth increment in the Czech Republic reached positive values again, mainly due to immigration growth
- The share of children's part in the population has been decreasing, in 2008 inhabitants under the age of 14 formed only 14,1% of the whole population in the Czech Republic
- The share of people older than 65 has been increasing, in 2008 this group formed 14,9% of all inhabitants in the Czech Republic
- Since 1990 the average age has increased by 4,3 years (from 36,2 years in 1990 to 40,5 years in 2008)
- The abortion rate decrease is considered a positive feature. The total abortion rate has been continuously decreasing (from 1,77 in 1990 to 0,54 in 2008)
- Newborn and infant mortality has been decreasing as well (from 10,8 dead children per 1000 live-born in 1990 to 2,8 children per 1000 live-born in 2008)
- The most numerous years were 1973 to 1979. People born in these years were active in reproduction at the beginning of this millennium, which resulted in the higher birth rate of the last five years
- Since 1990 mortality has been decreasing, especially among the middleclass and elderly people. Lifespan has been increasing in a longtime development and it achieved 74,0 years in men and 80,1 years in women
- The number and share of the post-productive part of the population in the Czech Republic increased significantly. The number and share of pre-productive part decreased. In 2007 for the first time the number of people older than 65 exceeded the number of people under the age of 14. In 2008 there were 106 retirees for every 100 children
- General demographic development is adversely affected by unemployment and the bad economic situation of families, especially young ones
- Even the immigration of foreigners that was more distinct in the years of 2007 and 2008 does not help much with the growth of population (in 2008 foreigners formed 4,2% of the population in the Czech Republic), therefore no changes in age structure can be expected
- The gradual ageing of the population is a serious consequence of population strategy. Nowadays it is the biggest population problem in the Czech Republic

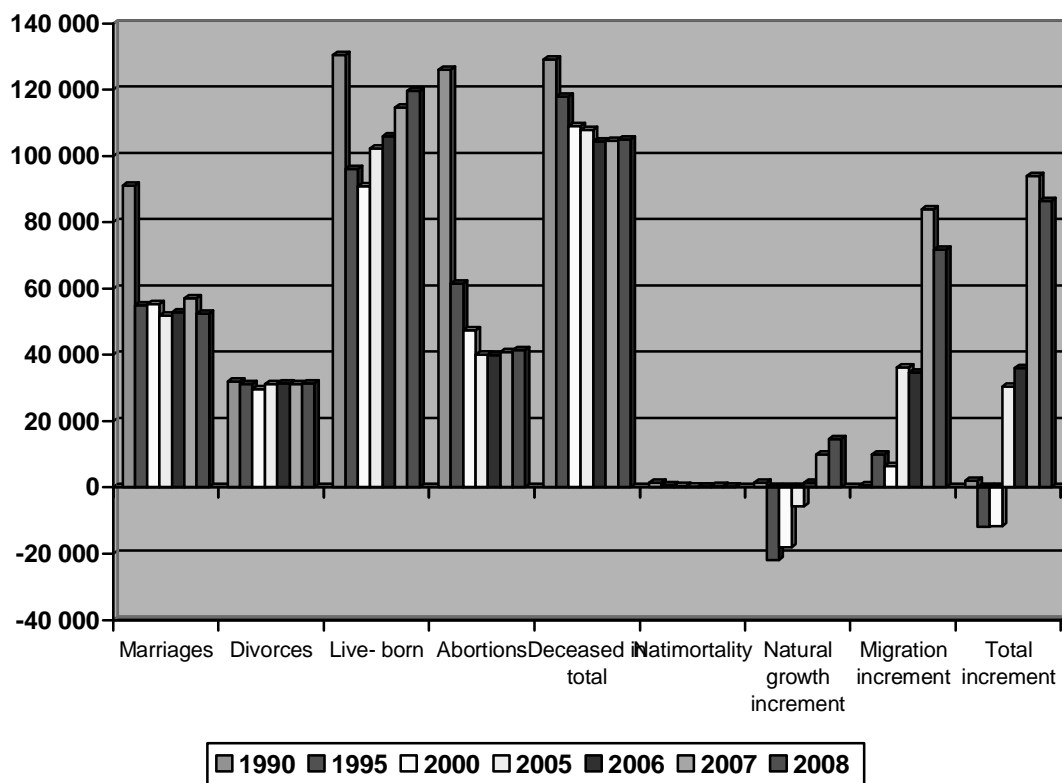
2.2. Population Development Indicators in the Czech Republic in the years 1990 to 2008

In the following chart and graph you can see the summary of basic population development indicators in the Czech Republic from 1990 to 2008

Table 1: Population development indicators in the Czech Republic

Absolute data	ČR						
	1990	1995	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008
Marriages	90 953	54 956	55 321	51 829	52 860	57 157	52 457
Divorces	32 055	31 135	29 704	31 288	31 415	31 129	31 300
Live- born	130 564	96 097	90 910	102 211	105 831	114 632	119 570
Abortions	126 055	61 590	47 370	40 023	39 959	40 917	41 446
Deceased in total	129 166	117 913	109 001	107 938	104 441	104 636	104 948
Natimortality	1 410	740	373	347	352	360	338
Natural growth increment	1 398	- 21 816	-18 091	- 5 727	1 390	9 996	14 662
Migration increment	624	9 999	6 539	36 229	34 720	83 945	71 790
Total increment	2 022	- 11 817	-11 552	30 502	36 110	93 941	86 412

Graph No.1: Population development in the Czech Republic from 1999 to 2008
(in absolute values)



Population decrease in the Czech Republic stopped in 2003 and in the last four years we can see population growth, especially evident in 2007. The natural growth increment was not significant to 2006 (from 1994 there was a continuous decrease) and it reached important values in 2007 and 2008. As far as population growth caused by immigration is concerned, migration increment is most significant in 2007. This foreign migration balance is the highest in Czech and Czechoslovak history for the time being.

There were 10 467 542 inhabitants in the Czech Republic at the end of 2008. The natural growth increment last achieved similar values in 1981. The total growth increment was the second highest from the beginning of 1950's thanks to the migration balance (the top number was achieved in 2007). The population has been continuously growing for the last 6 years. Foreigners living legally in the Czech Republic formed 4,2% of the whole population of the Czech Republic in 2008. (Czech Statistical Office 2009)

There were 91,000 **marriages** in 1990. Five years later there were only about 55,000 marriages. Although the marriage rate increased slightly in 2006 and 2007, in 2008 it decreased again and it did not achieve even 57% of the marriage rate of 1990. The reasons for the low marriage rate can be attributed to the changes in attitudes and thinking of younger and middle-aged generations. People tend to put their marriages off or they prefer living together without a formal union.

In 2008 the number of contracted marriages was 4700 lower than the previous year. The average age for a first time marriage increased slightly to 31,4 in men and 28,7 in women – 0,2 year more than in 2007. (Czech Statistical Office 2009)

The divorce rate is high and relatively stable and it keeps more or less at the same level, apart from a temporary decrease in 1999. If the number of marriages decreases and the divorce rate stagnates, it is obvious that the divorce index, which best defines marriage permanency, increases.

In 2008 the total divorce rate increased to 49,6% . The average length of a divorced marriage was 12,3 years and nearly one fifth of all marriages ended in divorce within in the first five years after marriage. Other 20% ended 5 to 10 years after the wedding. (CSO 2009). The birth rate was slightly increasing in the last seven years (most significantly in 2007), however, in 2008 it still did not reach the level from 1990 and it is almost certain that this increase was only temporary. The higher birth rate in the last few years was caused by the fact that the strong population years of 1973 to 1979 had children. Therefore the birth rate is likely to decrease again in the following years.

In 2008 the number of **live-births** was 4900 higher than in 2007. In comparison with 2007 the total fertility rate increased slightly (from 1,44 live-born children for one woman to 1,50), it still, however, is on a low level, and in the long-term plan it does not ensure the simple reproduction of the population.

The net reproduction ratio (the number of born girls per one woman who live to their mother's age at the time of childbirth) reached 0,72, which signifies the reproduction of the generation establishment to only 72% . The average mothers' age increased to 29,3 years in total in 2008 and to 27,3 years. (CSO 2009)

In comparison with the year 1990 the number of **abortions** certainly decreased (due to the lower number of pregnancies) and in the last five years it was relatively constant. However, if we look closer at this demographic indicator, there is one surprising (and maybe worrying) fact: since 2001 the share between interruptions and other abortions (due to health problems) has changed.

More details are provided in the following chart.

Table 2: Abortions in the Czech Republic in 2001- 2008

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Abortions in total	45057	43743	42304	41324	40023	39959	40917	41446
Interruptions	32528	31142	29298	27574	26453	25352	25414	25760
Difference	12529	12601	13006	13750	13570	14607	15503	15686

In the chart there is obvious evidence that the share of miscarriages with regard to the total number of abortions was increasing.

The growing tendency of miscarriages is also stated in the CSO report from 2009. In 2008 the number of spontaneous abortions increased (by 171) as well as the number of interruptions (by 346).

The level of the total abortion rate formed 0,54 abortions per 1 woman in 2008 and the level of the total interruption rate achieved 0,34. (CSO 2009)

The long-term **mortality** decrease is another feature of population development. Lifespan has been gradually increasing in the Czech Republic, in 2008 it achieved 74 years in men and 80,1 years in women. Decreasing **natimortality** can also be regarded as a positive feature (historically the lowest number of 338 children in 2008).

In 2008 by 312 more people died than in 2007 (the population increased by 86,400). Survival chances after birth increased by 0,3 a year in comparison with the previous period. The level of natimortality decreased further to 2,8 dead infants per 1000 live-born children. (CSO 2009)

2.3. Population Development in the first half year of 2009

In comparison with the same period in 2008 the number of live-born children decreased by 1597, the number of marriages and divorces also decreased, as well as the total number of abortions and interruptions. The natural growth increment was 0,8 compared with 1,1 in the first half of 2008 (that means 1811 fewer people in the total number). In comparison with the first half of 2008 there was a significant decrease in total population growth, which was, however, caused by a higher number of emigrants and mainly by a considerably lower number of immigrants.

Table 3: The Comparison of the first half year of the years 2008 and 2009

Indicator	Total number(the first half year)			Number per 1000 inhabitants	
	2008	2009	Difference 2009 - 2008	2008	2009
Marriages	21 552	18 659	-2 893	4,2	3,6
Divorces	15 778	14 878	-900	3,0	2,9
Live-born	59 608	58 011	-1 597	11,5	11,2
Out of wedlock	21 366	22 141	775	35,8	38,2
Deceased	53 662	53 876	214	10,4	10,4
By the age of 1	183	157	-26	3,1	2,7
Abortions	20 962	20 798	-164	4,1	4,0
Interruptions	13 139	12 787	-352	2,5	2,5
Immigrants	45 913	22 587	-23 326	8,9	4,3
Emmigrants	3 297	5 081	1 784	0,6	1,0
Natural growth	5 946	4 135	-1 811	1,1	0,8
Migration increment	42 616	17 506	-25 110	8,2	3,4
Total growth increment	48 562	21 641	-26 921	9,4	4,2
Number of the population by 30th June	10 429 692	10 489 183	59 491	x	x
Middle state of	10 406 147	10 478 452	72 305	x	x

In 2007 the number of live-born children was 8800 higher than in 2006 (the greatest growth since 1993). The number of live-born children in 2008 was only 4900 higher than the previous year, whereas in the first half of 2009 it was 1600 lower than in the same period in 2008.

These simple statistical facts clearly illustrate the end of the population boom in the Czech Republic.

3. Conclusion

The population boom in the Czech Republic that started in 2002 and culminated in 2007 did not achieve such numbers as the previous strong population growth of 1973-1979, 1946-1950 (after WWII), and in 1919-1925 (after WWI). However, it was very important for the population development in the Czech Republic because it will affect the functioning of many institutions and organizations in the near future. The main causes of its origin are as obvious as the causes of its end. Firstly, women of the previous population boom gave birth to their children and secondly, we can see the consequences of governmental populist, short-term policies. In the present the strong years of 1973 – 1979 have already children and the population atmosphere is negatively affected by the economic crisis as well.

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