

DEMOGRAPHIC AND DEMOGEOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS OF THE DIVORCE RATE IN SLOVAKIA AND CZECHIA FROM 1993 TO 2019

Alžbeta Garajová

*Comenius University in Bratislava, Faculty of Natural Sciences, Department of Economic and Social Geography, Demography and Territorial Development,
e-mail: garajova29@uniba.sk*

Abstract: A stand-alone analysis of divorce is in demography one of the least frequented topics in Slovakia and Czechia. Despite the fact that a relatively large number of Slovak and Czech authors have focused their work on divorce in more complex demographic analyses, few have involved a deeper look into the issue of divorce. Divorce rates as a demographic process in comparison with other countries is equally rare. These are not only comparisons at the national level, but also comparisons at lower territorial levels. Therefore, the aim of this article is to evaluate and compare divorce rates as a demographic process not only on the level of Slovakia and Czechia as a whole, but also at the district level of both countries. We focus on the period from 1993 to 2019 in the article. We primarily draw on data from the databases of statistical offices of both countries, which are publicly accessible. We then processed the data using MS Excel and QGIS. The result is thus a more detailed analysis of the divorce rate of selected demographic indicators at the national and district levels in both countries. It can be concluded from the work that the number of divorces in both countries is decreasing and that the rate of decline varies depending on the indicator displayed. At the same time, in both countries we see a prolonging of marriages and a rise in the age of those getting divorced for both sexes.

Keywords: divorce, Czechia, Slovakia, demogeographic analysis, districts

1 INTRODUCTION

In both Slovakia and Czechia, the term divorce at present means the dissolution of a marriage by legal means during the lifetime of both spouses. In Slovakia, divorce is enshrined in Act No. 36/2005 on Family, while in Czechia, divorce is established by the new Civil Code of 2012.

In addition to being a legal act, divorce is also a demographic event, despite the fact that it has no direct impact on the reproduction of the population. In general, divorce is perceived as a negative demographic process, since as a result of divorce a family ceases to exist. On the other hand, divorce can also be seen positively, since

through divorce, individuals gain the opportunity to re-enter into a valid marriage and again establish a family. If we quantify this event, then this involves the process of divorce. In Slovakia and Czechia divorce is a process that is only relatively rarely assessed independently and compared internationally. This process is evaluated and compared even less often at a level lower than the nationwide level. Despite legislative and methodological differences, we believe that an assessment and comparison of this process should be an important part of the demographic analytical repertoire (Rochovská, Káčerová and Ondoš, 2014; Šprocha and Majo, 2015).

Thus, the aim of this article is to assess and compare divorce rates in Slovakia and Czechia from 1993 to 2019, taking into account the district territorial level. In the article, we will seek answers to the questions: “*Are there any common features of divorce in Slovakia and Czechia? Can the common features of divorce also be determined in space?*”

2 OVERVIEW OF THE LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Demographic analyses of divorce rates in Slovakia and Czechia are a common component of more complex demographic analyses. Such analyses at the national and regional levels of the Slovak Republic are available on the website of the Demographic Research Centre, where the analysis entitled *Population Development in the Slovak Republic* is regularly repeated. A brief analysis of divorce rates at the national level is always a part of this publication. The oldest publication with this title dates from the year 2000 and the most recent is from 2015. The divorce rate in Slovakia is analysed in relative detail in the publication *A Century of Population Development of Slovakia I* by the authors Majo and Šprocha (2016). Outputs related to divorce in Slovakia can also be found in publications of the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic. A brief analysis of the divorce rate at the district level in Slovakia is, for example, a part of the older publication *Demographic Analysis of Slovakia* by Mládek et al. (2006). The analysis offers a brief look of the development of divorce rates in Slovakia in the context of their development in other countries. The analysis also provides an overview of trends in divorce rate at the regional level. The current conditions in divorce trends at the regional level of Slovakia are presented, for example, by *Analysis of the Demographic Development of Areas and Municipalities by Statutes and Size in the Slovak Republic* by Bleha et al. (2020) or *Population Development in the Regions and Districts of Slovakia from the Beginning of the 21st Century* by Šprocha et al. (2019).

The divorce rate in Czechia is assessed in an analysis entitled *Population Development of the Czech Republic 1990 – 2002* by Pavlík and Kučera (2002). Trends in divorce are contained in the analysis in only one compact chapter; nevertheless, there is much to be learned from the analysis. The character of divorce in the regions of Czechia can be briefly learned from the work. A demographic analysis of the divorce rate in Czechia can also be found, for example, in one of the issues of the

magazine *Geografické rozhledy* [Geographic Views]. Here, three authors – Kocová, Kusovská and Šídlo (2015) – published an article entitled “Divorce in the Czechia”. The article not only includes a brief overview of changes in Czech divorce legislation, but also a regional analysis of divorce. The regional analysis in the article is elaborated at the district level. An analysis of the divorce rate is also a part of the article “Population Development in the Czech Republic in 2019” by Křest’ánová and Kurkin (2019). An overview of trends is produced for the whole of Czechia, and aside from the intensity of the divorce rate, the authors also briefly evaluate repeated divorces, divorces with regard to the number of children and the duration of marriage at the time of divorce. In addition to this, brief analyses of divorce rates can be found in publications of the Czech Statistical Office.

A comparison of the level of divorce in Slovakia and Czechia can be found, for example, in the older work *The Foundations of Population Geography* by Mládek (1992). A newer analysis, where the divorce rates in Slovakia and Czechia are compared, is called *20 years of Independence from the Viewpoint of Demography of the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic and Czechoslovakia*. The Slovak and Czech authors’ collective of Langhamrová et al. (2012) also prepared an analysis. In their work, both countries are first analysed separately and only then is the territory of both countries examined. The analysis is processed only at the national level. Šprocha and Šídlo (2018) also analyse marriage and divorce in Slovakia and Czechia in their article, where they provide a description of long-term trends in marriage and divorce in both countries from the beginning of the 20th century to 2016. The development of demographic processes is not compared in the article, but the graphic outputs of the article are comparable.

Forms of ending a partnership or marriage during the life of both partners have a long history. Likewise, great variability in the rules and patterns of conduct in relation to forms of marriage termination has been documented. Many authors have attempted to explain this relatively complicated and complex social phenomenon in their works. On the whole, such work can be grouped into three types of theories (Možný, 2006).

The goal of the first type of theory is to explain the dynamics of divorce, particularly in connection with significant social changes, such as the Industrial Revolution, or the “second divorce revolution” in the 1960s. However, this type of theory does not answer the question: *Why do some marriages end in divorce and others not?*

A second category of theory attempts to explain this question. Theories map out the internal mechanisms that lead a married couple to divorce. From the beginning, empirical research from the Chicago School in the mid-1930s played an important role in this area. The work of Burgess and Cottrell, *The Prediction of Adjustment in Marriage* from 1936 became especially significant. In brief, the result of the work is that external influences, such as position in the social group or the demographic characteristics of the partners, can affect the success of the marriage. The findings may seem a bit trivial today, but at that time these were real discoveries (Možný, 2006).

The third type of theory began to emerge after World War II. Finding the factors that lie behind divorce became the aim of the work. These usually involved empirical studies aimed at identifying variables that significantly correlate with divorce behaviour. From the viewpoint of the research outputs on this issue, those from the USA are probably the most significant. In works of this type, according to Možný (2006), variables, such as socioeconomic status, age at the time of marriage, children, ethnicity and race, the duration of marriage, the urban – rural view, religion, divorce inheritance and marriage order are the most frequently monitored.

3 DATA AND METHODS

The analysis in the article is based on data from the statistical offices of the Slovak and the Czech Republics. The Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic provides data on divorce rates primarily in two sources. We drew on divorce data at the national level of Slovakia from the Source Work – Divorces. Here a relatively broad range of differently sorted data can be drawn. Data are available from 1992 onwards. We acquired data at the regional level of Slovakia from the DATAcube database. Aside from the number of divorces and age structure of the population in the districts of Slovakia, some already calculated demographic indicators can also be found in the database. We used these indicators in the article. These are the mean age of the men and women at the time of divorce and the average duration of marriage at the time of divorce in the districts of Slovakia. Data from 1993 or from 1996 to 2020 are currently available in the database. The classification we used for the population by age was not available until 1996.

Various sorted data on divorce rates in Czechia can be found, for example, in demographic yearbooks and in the “Public Database”. Demographic yearbooks (“source works”) are currently available from 1919 to 2019. Using these yearbooks, we analysed the divorce rate at the national level of Czechia. A part of the data at the district level was available in the “Public Database” and in the “Demographic Yearbooks of Districts and Regions”. We mainly used data from the “Public Database” on the age structure of the population. Data from 1991 onwards were available. The “Demographic Yearbooks of Districts and Regions” from 2001 to 2019 are publicly available on the website of the Czech Statistical Office. We used the “Demographic Yearbooks of Districts and Regions” because they include data for the capital city of Prague. In addition to the data on the duration of marriage at the time of divorce, we also took some already calculated indicators from the yearbooks. This was the mean age of men and women at the time of divorce for the years 2001, 2011 and 2019. Some of the data for districts of Czechia that we processed and subsequently analysed is not public. The source of these data was the Czech Statistical Office.

From the above, it follows that the data are available for varying lengths of time. The data is patchy not only at the beginning, but also the end of the time period for which it can be processed. We created an analysis of divorce rates at the national level of Slovakia and Czechia for the period from 1993 to 2019. This period seemed

to us to be sufficient for the needs of assessing current divorce trends. We conducted a regional analysis at the district level of both countries for the time segments of 1996, 2001, 2011 and 2019. However, we analysed the average duration of marriages in the districts only in 2001, 2011 and 2019. The reason for shortening the analysed period to 1996 and 2001 was mainly the partial lack or complete absence of data from these years. In addition to the lack of data, the comparability of regional data between countries is complicated by the fact that the statistical office in Slovakia processes data for the permanently present population, while regional statistics in Czechia can be obtained only for the population with permanent residence, including foreigners with visas over 90 days (CZSO, 2021b).

In terms of comparability due to territorial changes, according to methodological notes, the data should be recalculated with respect to the current territorial structure in both countries; therefore, the data are comparable.

When selecting the relevant indicators, we had to consider the above-mentioned limitations and methodological differences in data processing; therefore, the number of analysed divorce rate indicators is limited to the following:

We used an *adjusted form of the crude divorce rate* as a basic indicator. The adjustment consisted in comparing the number of divorces to persons aged 16 and over to whom the process of divorce in both countries theoretically relates. Thus, the adjustment aims to guarantee greater accuracy of the indicator than in the case of the classical crude measure. At the same time, this rate is less accurate than the general divorce rate, which only applies to married persons. We could not construct a general rate of divorce, however, due to a lack of data at the regional level. Since the crude divorce rate as well as the adjustment we chose to make do not take into account changes in the age structure, we proceeded to an *indirect standardisation of the rate*. As the standard we chose the common Czechoslovak age structure of the population aged 16 and over for the calendar year 2019, so that the data on the intensity of divorce, particularly in the regions, would be as comparable as possible to the current situation. The final indicator is thus an *indirectly standardised crude divorce rate* indicating what the intensity of divorce per 1000 mid-year population would be in the case of the same age structure of the population in both countries. This indicator is the only analysed intensity indicator at the district level of Slovakia and Czechia (Pavlík, Rychtaříková and Šubrtová, 1986; Rochovská, Káčerová and Ondoš, 2014).

At the national level, we also analysed and compared other intensity indicators in addition to this one. More exact intensity indicators are the age-specific measure and total divorce rate of marriages. *Age-specific divorce rates* are calculated as the ratio of divorcing people at age x to the mid-year population in the same age category. From the age-specific rates, we subsequently calculated the *total divorce rate of marriage*, which is calculated as the sum of the age-specific divorce rates. The total divorce rate of marriage indicates the average number of divorces per person in the case of observing the conditions of unchanging age-specific divorce rate and zero mortality.

The *total divorce rate* is perhaps the most accurate measure. It arises from the sum of the reduced divorce rates. The *reduced divorce rates* are calculated as the ratio of the number of divorces after x years of marriage to the corresponding number of marriages from x years ago. The calculation does not consider other possibilities of ending a marriage, such as dissolution or death. In this work, we further analysed the *average marriage duration at divorce*. This indicator is calculated as a weighted arithmetic average of the number of years that marriages endured until the moment of divorce. The indicator is usually calculated for one calendar year. We also used the indicator in the analysis of divorce at the district level. In the article we analysed the age at divorce at the national and regional levels through the *mean age at divorce*. The indicator is calculated as a weighted arithmetic average of the number of years that persons lived up to the moment of divorce (Jurčová, 2005; Mládek et al., 2006).

We processed the calculations of demographic and statistical indicators using the program MS Excel. The map materials used in the article come from the Geoportal of the Czech State Administration of Land Surveying and Cadastre (ČÚZK) and the Slovak Geoportal. We created thematic maps using the QGIS program. With the creation of appropriate intervals in maps, we attempted to accept the natural breaks in the files.

4 LEVEL AND INTENSITY OF DIVORCE IN SLOVAKIA AND CZECHIA IN THE YEARS 1993 TO 2019

From a European-wide perspective, we can reveal Czechia to be among countries with a high divorce rate, much like, for example, the countries of Scandinavia. In contrast, Slovakia ranks in the pan-European context among the countries with a lower divorce rate. The crude divorce rates in Slovakia are at present closer in value to the countries of south-eastern Europe (Eurostat, 2021; Pavlík and Kučera, 2002).

Although Slovakia and Czechia have a relatively long common history, from Figures 1 to 4 it is evident that the divorce rates are markedly different in both countries. From the viewpoint of intensity, according to the for the monitored period, the indirectly standardised crude divorce rate in Slovakia is approximately 23% lower than that of Czechia. The remaining intensity indicators of divorce used in the analysis also have an equally lower value in Slovakia. If we look at the total divorce rate of marriage, on average, fewer than 0.3 divorces occurred per mid-year person in Slovakia in the observed period, and in Czechia this was on average more than 0.4 of divorces per mid-year person.

In the case of the total divorce rate, we state that the average values in Slovakia were about 27% lower than those in Czechia. On average, there were approximately 0.3 divorces per marriage in Slovakia during the observed period and up to 0.45 divorces per marriage in Czechia. From the various materials it is possible to understand that there are several reasons why the divorce rate in Slovakia is much lower than in Czechia. From the long-term development of the legislation on divorces and property rights of spouses, it is obvious that prior to the establishment of the second

Czechoslovak Republic divorce was to a great extent easier in Czechia than in Slovakia. For example, while in Slovakia during the first Czechoslovak Republic the institute of commonly acquired property was in force, in the Czech lands, the system of separate property of spouses with the possibility of various contractual arrangements was valid (Muránska, 2019). What's more, Pavlík and Kučera (2002) also present the liberal attitude of the population regarding divorce and the low religiosity of the population as additional reasons for the high divorce rate in Czechia.

In addition to the intensity of divorce, the two countries also differ in the development of trends since 1993. From 1993 to 2009, the divorce rate in Slovakia was continuously increasing. While in 1993 there were approximately 0.2 divorces per mid-year person in Slovakia, in 2009 it was more than 0.3 divorces per mid-year person. The total divorce rate in Slovakia in this period increased from just over 0.2 divorces per marriage to 0.42 divorces per marriage in 2009. Subsequently, after 2009, there was only a constant decrease in divorce rates in Slovakia. Thus, in 2019 the total divorce rate for marriage is approximately at the same level as in 1993, i.e. there were 0.24 divorces per mid-year person at the end of the observed period. When looking at the total divorce rate in Slovakia, the values in 2019 remain at a slightly higher level of 0.33 divorces per marriage.

In Czechia, there were 0.44 divorces per mid-year person at the beginning of the study period. The total divorce rate was slightly lower at a level of 0.36 divorces per marriage. The total divorce rate increased significantly until 2004. The year 1999 is an exception to these observations on divorce rates, as that year saw a drop in divorce due to legislative changes (Křest'ánová and Kurkin, 2019). With the entry into force of the "Family Act No. 91/1998" in Czechia, there was a simplification of the path to divorce for so-called "dead marriages". However, in the case of divorces of marriages with children a tightening of conditions occurred (Pavlík and Kučera, 2002; Šprocha and Šídlo, 2018). In 2004 in Czechia there were 0.48 divorces per mid-year person, and in terms of per marriage, this was almost 0.5 divorces. Subsequently, after 2004, the divorce rate decreased. In the case of the total divorce rate of marriage, the values are significantly lower than in 1993. In 2019, there were approximately 0.35 divorces per mid-year person in Czechia. If we look at the total divorce rate compared to 2004, only a minimal decrease can be seen, and there is still a rate of 0.45 divorces per marriage in Czechia.

Despite the differences in the representation of individual indicators, we can say that in recent years we can see a decline in divorce rates in both countries. This trend does not necessarily mean that the institution of marriage is stabilising, however. According to several authors, e.g. Coleman (2013), Šprocha and Majo (2016) and the ACMJ SR (2021), the trend is more related to a stronger acceptance of other forms of coexistence, such as cohabitation, which are often considered a substitute for marriage. At the same time, Možný (2006) in his publication states that divorce is far from being the only way to end a marriage and mentions as other possibilities: one of the partners leaving the family, cohabitation of the "empty shell family", the long-term absence of one of the spouses, termination of one of the functions of marriage – this is often referred to as so-called "parental marriages".

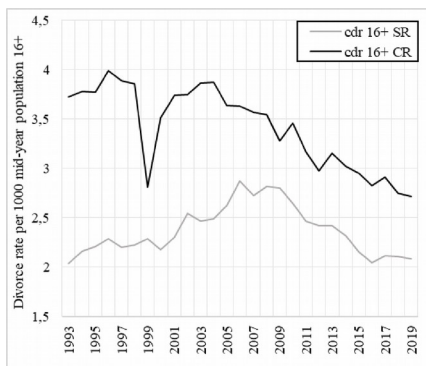


Figure 1 Divorce rate per 1000 mid-year population of age 16 + in Slovakia and in Czechia from 1993 to 2019. Source: SO SR (2021a), CZSO (2021a, c)

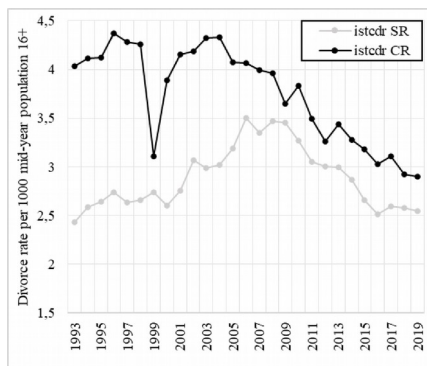


Figure 2 Indirectly standardised divorce rate per 1000 mid-year population of age 16 + in Slovakia and in Czechia from 1993 to 2019. Source: SO SR (2021a), CZSO (2021a, c)

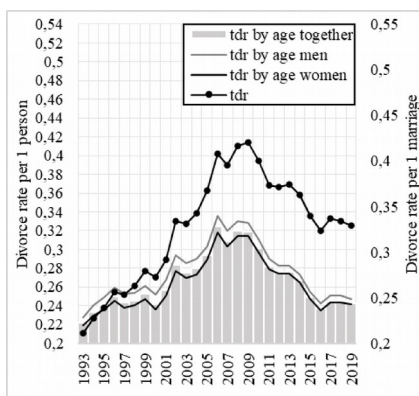


Figure 3 Total divorce rates in Slovakia from 1993 to 2019. Source: SO SR (2021a)

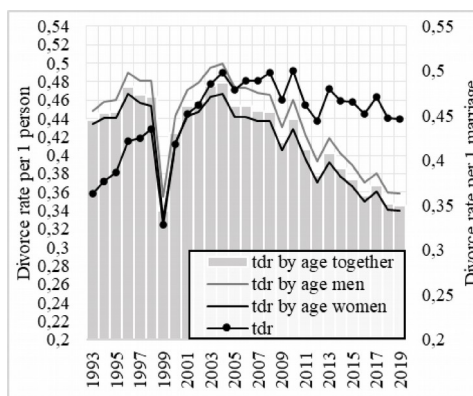


Figure 4 Total divorce rates in Czechia from 1993 to 2019. Source: CZSO (2021a, c)

5 THE TIMING OF DIVORCE AND CHANGE IN THE MEAN AGE AT DIVORCE IN SLOVAKIA AND CZECHIA FROM 1993 TO 2019

Changes in marital behaviour are expressed not only in changes in the intensity of divorce, but also in its timing in both countries.

As can be seen from Figures 5 to 8, in 1993 there was in both countries and for both sexes a sharp increase in divorce rates practically from the beginning of the period when getting married was possible. Given the more intensive divorce rate

among younger women in both countries, the maximums of age-specific rates for women were also evident at a younger age than they were for men. In 1993 women divorced the most intensively at the age of 25 in Slovakia. In Czechia, the maximum number in 1993 was recorded for women one year older (26 years old). In 1993, the most men in Slovakia divorced at the age of 29. In Czechia in 1993, the most men divorced two years earlier than in Slovakia, at the age of 27.

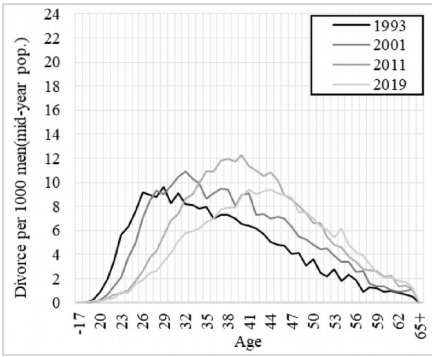


Figure 5 Age-specific divorce rate for men in Slovakia in years 1993, 2001, 2011 and 2019. Source: SO SR (2021a)

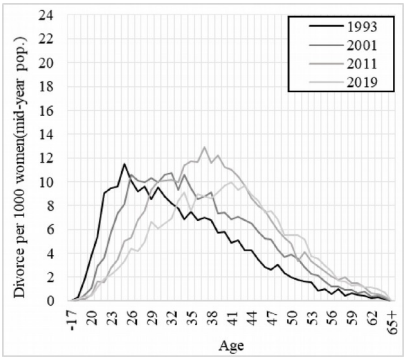


Figure 6 Age-specific divorce rate for women in Slovakia in years 1993, 2001, 2011 and 2019. Source: SO SR (2021a)

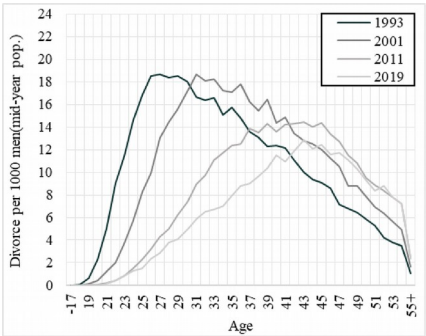


Figure 7 Age-specific divorce rate for men in Czechia in 1993, 2001, 2011 and 2019. Source: CZSO (2021a, c)

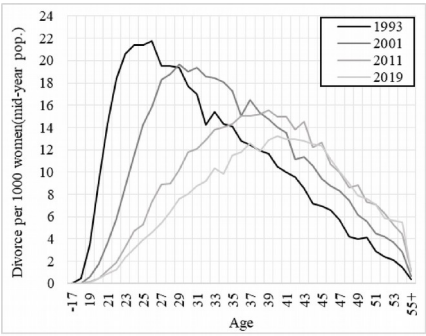


Figure 8 Age-specific divorce rate for women in Czechia in 1993, 2001, 2011 and 2019. Source: CZSO (2021a, c)

Compared to 1993, we can note that in 2019 the initial rise in divorce rates in both countries was delayed by about a year. The year 2019 is also marked by a slower initial rise in age-specific divorce rates. The shift is evident in both sexes

and in both countries. Given the slower increase in rates, 2019 saw a more even distribution as well as a shift in the maximum values of age-specific divorce rates to an older age. The age when the risk of divorce was highest rose significantly between 1993 and 2019. The average difference in both countries was 15.25 years. In Slovakia, in 2019, the most women divorced at the age of 41 and men at the age of 44. In Czechia, in the case of both sexes, persons one year younger than those in Slovakia divorced with the highest intensity. In addition to the increasing age when divorce rates are most intense, we can note that since 1993 both countries have seen an increase in the intensity of divorce rates for people over the age of 50.

Due to the change in the timing of divorce rates, it is also possible to observe changes in the mean age at the time of divorce in both countries. As can be seen from Figures 9 and 10, between 1993 and 2019, there is a gradual rise in the mean age at the time of divorce in both countries and for both sexes, with the increase more intense in Czechia, a result of which is a deepening of the differences in mean age between Slovakia and Czechia. Despite the rise, the differences between men and women in individual countries remain analogous throughout the period under review. In 1993, Slovak women divorced at an mean age of nearly 34 years, while in that year Slovak men divorced on average at the age of 36. In Czechia, the mean age at divorce was slightly lower than in Slovakia at the beginning of the observed period, and it differed more significantly for women. Czech women in 1993 divorced on average at the age of 33 and men, similarly to Slovakia, divorced on average at the age of 36. At the end of the observed period, women in Slovakia divorced on average at the age of almost 41 years old and men at almost 44 years old. In Czechia at the end of the observed period, we see women with an mean age of almost 43.5 years at the time of divorce and for men almost 46 years old.

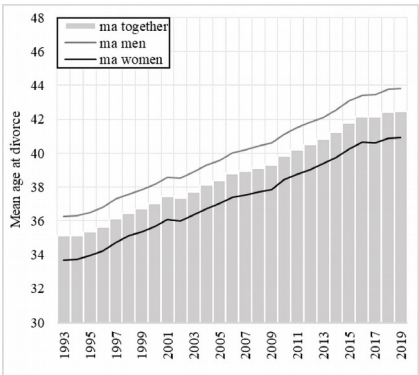


Figure 9 Mean age at divorce in Slovakia from 1993 to 2019.
Source: SO SR (2021a)

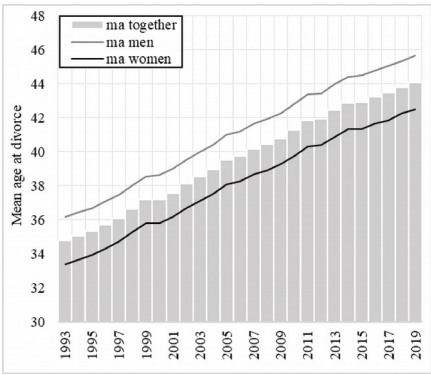


Figure 10 Mean age at divorce in Czechia from 1993 to 2019.
Source: CZSO (2021a, c)

6 CHANGE IN DURATION OF MARRIAGE AT THE TIME OF DIVORCE IN SLOVAKIA AND CZECHIA FROM 1993 TO 2019

As can be seen from Figure 11, at the beginning of the monitored period, in 1993, the average duration of a marriage at the time of divorce was relatively low in both countries at only about 10.5 years. The following years not only saw an increase in the mean duration of a marriage in both countries, but also a deepening of the differences between Slovakia and Czechia. While in Slovakia the average duration of marriage at divorce increased by more than five years, in Czechia, this was only about 3 years. Thus, marriages at present in Slovakia end in divorce on average after not quite 16 years and in Czechia after more than 13 years. The reasons for the extending of marriages need to be sought in the change in the intensity of divorce of long-term marriages (Šprocha et al., 2019).

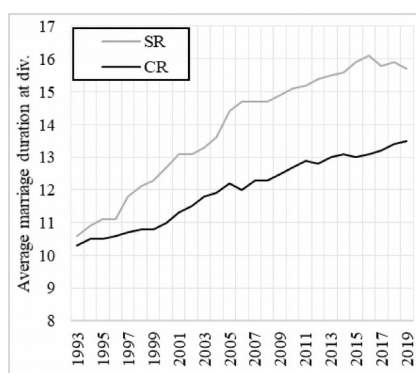


Figure 11 A comparison of the average duration of marriage at the time of divorce (in completed years) in Slovakia and in Czechia from 1993 to 2019. Source: SO SR (2021a), CZSO (2021a, c)

As can be seen from Figures 12 and 13, in 1993 the risk of divorce in the first few years after marriage was high in both countries. In 1993, more than 26% of all marriages in Slovakia ended in divorce within 4 years of the marriage. In Czechia, this share in 1993 was almost 31%. In the following years, we then see a reduction in the risk of divorce in both countries in the first years after marriage. On the other hand, an increasing risk of divorce in longer-lasting marriages occurred. According to Figures 12 and 13, these shifts in the intensity of divorce to a later period after the marriage began to be observed more significantly in both countries in 2011 and 2019. Perhaps the most significant changes in both countries can be seen with marriages lasting longer than 20 years. While in 1993 the share of such divorced marriages was about 14% in Slovakia, in 2019 it was almost 33%. In Czechia, the increase in divorce rates for marriages lasting more than 20 years was more modest,

but the category is also gaining weight there as well. While in 1993 the share of divorces of Czech marriages longer than 20 years was only about 13.5%, in 2019 it was nearly 29%.

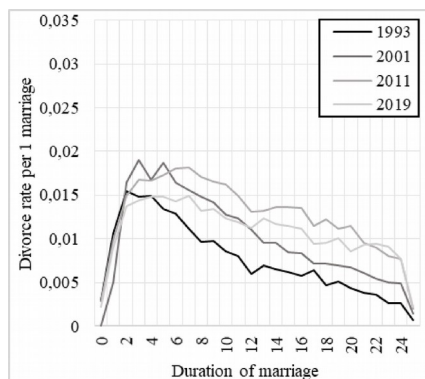


Figure 12 Character of divorce rate by duration of marriage in Slovakia in 1993, 2001, 2011 and 2019.
Source: SO SR (2021a)

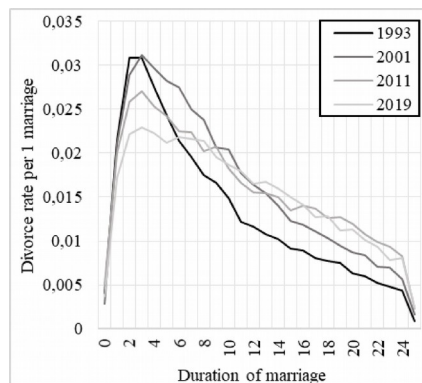


Figure 13 Character of divorce by duration of marriage in Czechia in 1993, 2001, 2011 and 2019.
Source: CZSO (2021a, c)

7 DIVORCE TRENDS IN THE DISTRICTS OF SLOVAKIA AND CZECHIA IN 1996, 2001, 2011 AND 2019

Slovakia and Czechia currently have a total of 156 districts, if we include Prague, the capital of Czechia. As can be seen from Figure 14, during the monitored period, the regions of both countries underwent a transformation of the indirectly standardised crude divorce rate. This transformation ultimately led to a gradual convergence of intensity divorce trends in the regions of both countries. The beginning of the monitored period, in 1996, was accompanied by two different trends in the intensity of divorce. We see in Slovakia a relatively low indirectly standardised crude divorce rate. Further, a certain east-west gradient also applies in Slovakia. The highest divorce rate in Slovakia in 1996 was in the Zvolen district, where the indirectly standardised crude divorce rate was almost 4‰. In 1996, people in selected districts of Bratislava, Košice and southern Slovakia also divorced at a more than above-average intensity, above the level of not quite 3‰. We recorded above-average divorce rates in 15 Slovak districts. The most frequent divorce rate in Slovakia in 1996 was 2.4‰, and we recorded the lowest values of the indirectly standardised crude divorce rate in 1996 in northern and north-eastern Slovakia. The lowest indirectly standardised divorce rates overall that we recorded in Slovakia in 1996 occurred in the Sabinov, Tvrdošín, Medzilaborce and Námestovo districts.

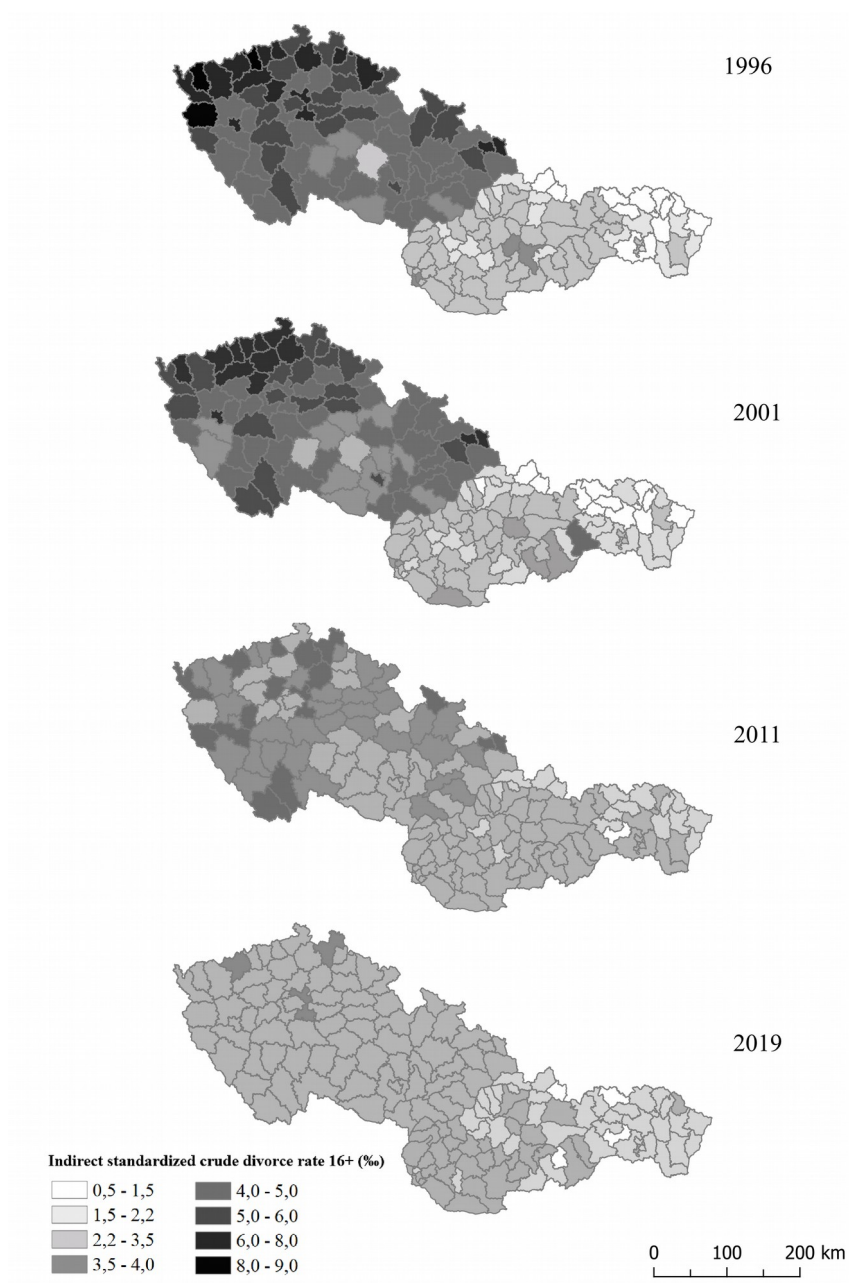


Figure 14 Intensity of divorce (‰) in the districts of Slovakia and Czechia in 1996, 2001, 2011 and 2019. Source: CZSO (2021b, c), Geoportal ČUZK (2021), Geoportal (SK) (2021), SO SR (2021b)

On the opposite side are Czech districts, where the divorce rate in 1996 was relatively high. An east-west gradient also applied in Czechia in 1996. We thus see the highest indirectly standardised crude divorce rates in the Tachov, Most, Sokolov, Česká Lípa, Ústí nad Labem, Karlovy Vary, Teplice and Prague-East districts. The indirectly standardised crude divorce rate exceeded 7‰ in these districts. Values significantly above the average, which was 5.3‰ in Czechia, occurred in 9 other districts in 1996. These are predominately districts in the eastern and northern parts of Czechia. A total of 22 districts were at approximately the level of the Czech average at the beginning of the observed period. Fourteen of them were located in the Středočeský, Liberecký and Ústecký regions. The fewest persons were divorced in 5 Czech districts in 1996: Pelhřimov, Havlíčkův Brod, Znojmo, Uherské Hradiště and Žďár nad Sázavou, which had the lowest divorce rate. The divorce rate in these districts was below 4‰.

By 2019, the divorce rates in both countries had fallen significantly. At the same time, the value differences between the two countries also narrowed. While in 1996 the difference between the average values of indirectly standardised crude divorce rates of both countries amounted to almost 3‰, in 2019 it was less than one per mille. Nevertheless, an east-west divorce gradient can still be perceived in both countries, and the differences between districts are much less pronounced than in 1996. This also follows from measurement of the indicator's variability in both countries. If we compare the standard deviation of the indirectly standardised crude divorce rate of both countries from 1996 with the present, we find that the values of the standard deviation are much closer to zero in both countries at the end of the observed period. Thus, at present, the divorce rate is again most pronounced in the western parts of both countries.

According to authors such as Pavlík and Kučera (2002), Jurčová et al. (2010) and Kocová, Kusovská and Šídlo (2015), it is necessary to seek causes in the regional differences in divorce in the regional differences themselves, which result from several factors. In general, the degree of religiosity of the population is mentioned as one of the main factors influencing the differences in divorce rates between regions. Furthermore, cultural influences, the economic development of an area, the demographic structure of the population and the previous development of marriage need to be taken into consideration. Thus, according to the above-mentioned authors, it is necessary to look for a high rate of divorce in more urbanised areas, in areas with heavy industry, in areas that underwent economic transformation after 1989, as well as in areas with lower religiosity or a certain ethnic population makeup. For example, almost all the districts of north-western Czechia fulfil the above characteristics. In Slovakia, districts in the western part of the country are in turn characterised by a more significant degree of urbanisation (Bleha et al., 2020).

As can be seen from Figure 15, during the observed periods, the mean age at the time of divorce is highest for both sexes almost always in the same districts. This trend also applies in reverse: in districts where women divorce at a relatively young age, the average age at divorce is almost always one of the lowest for men, too. It is also true for both countries that the difference between Slovakia and Czechia be-

came more pronounced during the observed period. In 1996 in Slovakia, on average, the oldest women divorced in the district of Bratislava V, where the mean age of women at the time of divorce was almost 38 years. The mean age at which men divorced in 1996 was also the highest in the Bratislava V district, where at the beginning of the monitored period men divorced on average at almost 40 years old. The youngest divorced persons in Slovakia in 1996, on average, occurred in the Detva district, where the mean age at divorce was 31 for women and 33 for men. In 1996, women on average divorced most often in Slovakia at the age of not quite 34 years old. Men in 1996 most often divorced in Slovakia at the age of not quite 37 years old.

In Czechia in 1996 the oldest persons getting divorced were in Prague and in the Brno-město city district. Women in these districts divorced at the age of about 36 years old and men at the age of about 39. On average, the youngest women getting divorced in 1996 were in the Plzeň-sever district, at only 32 years of age. The youngest Czech men getting divorced in 1996, on average, at an age of just under 35 years old, were in the Nymburk district. In 1996, women divorced most often in the Czech districts at the age of 34.5 years and men at the age of 38.

In 2019, the oldest persons on average getting a divorce in Slovakia were in the Poltár district. On average, women divorced here at the age of almost 46 years old and men at age 48 years old. In contrast, the youngest persons, on average, getting divorced in Slovakia in 2019 were in the Svidník district, where women divorced in this district at a mean age of 37.5 years old and men at the age of 40. In 2019, women most often divorced in the Slovak districts at an mean age of 41 years and men most often divorced at the end of the observed period at the age of not quite 44 years old.

In Czechia, in 2019, the oldest women on average getting a divorce were in the district of Prague, where the mean age of women at the time of their divorce was 45.5 years. In 2019, men were the oldest at the time of divorce in Czechia in the Jeseník or Nymburk districts. On average, men got divorced here when they were about 47 years old. Women in the Czech districts most often divorced at an mean age of 42 years old and men at an mean age of almost 46 years old in 2019.

As can be seen in Figure 16, in 2001, the highest average duration of marriage at the time of divorce occurred in Slovak districts such as Myjava and Medzilaborce. Marriages ending in divorce here lasted on average for more than 17 years. Marriages ending in divorce lasted on average more than 15 years in an additional 6 Slovak districts. Marriages in the Námestovo and Banská Štiavnica districts were on average the shortest in 2001, as the average duration of marriage at the time of divorce did not exceed 11 years.

In Czechia, the Jeseník and Chomutov districts on average had the longest duration of marriages at the time of divorce. In 2001, the average duration of a marriage there was about 13 years. The shortest duration of marriages at divorce occurred in the Jihlava and Tachov districts, where marriages lasted fewer than 10.6 years on average.

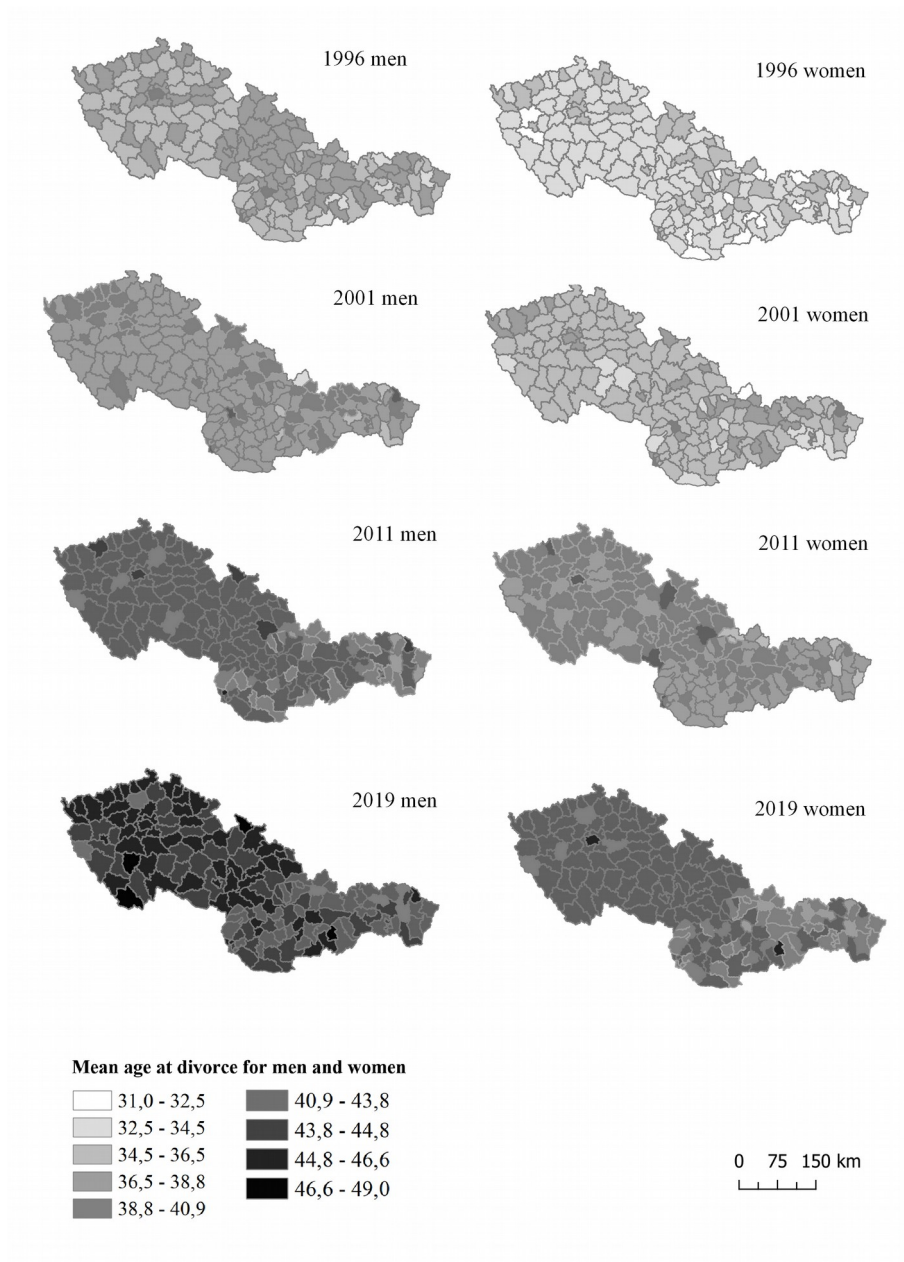


Figure 15 Mean age of spouses at the time of divorce in 1996, 2001, 2011 and 2019 in the districts of Slovakia and Czechia. Source: CZSO (2021b, c), Geoportal ČÚZK (2021), Geoportal (SK) (2021), SO SR (2021b)

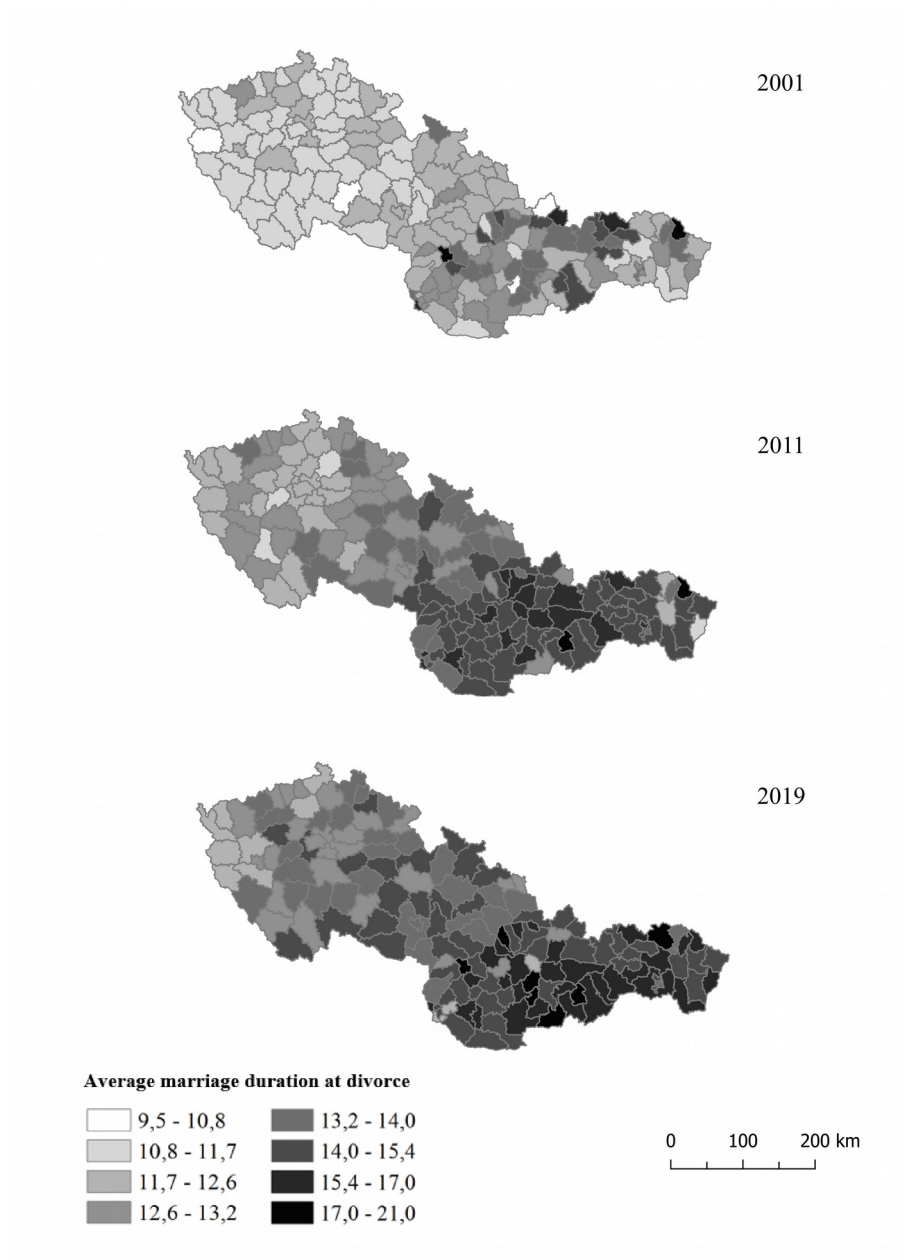


Figure 16 Average marriage duration at the time of divorce in the districts of Slovakia and Czechia in 2001, 2011 and 2019. Source: CZSO (2021b, c), Geoportal ČUZK (2021), Geoportal (SK) (2021), SO SR (2021b)

From the maps in Figure 16 we can also notice that the variability of the average duration of marriages at divorce in 2001 was more pronounced in Slovakia. This fact is also confirmed by the difference in standard deviations. In 2019, marriages ending in divorce in Slovakia lasted the longest in the Poltár district, up to 21 years, and in the Bardejov district, up to 18 years. Divorces on average endured the shortest time in the districts of Turčianske Teplice, Bratislava V and Senec. Marriages in these districts lasted an average of less than 12.5 years in 2019. According to the standard deviation, the degree of variability in the average duration of marriages at the time of divorce in Slovakia in 2019 was slightly higher than in 2001. Marriages in the Czech districts in 2019 were on average significantly shorter than those in Slovakia. The longest marriages were in the Uherské Hradiště and Hodonín districts, where the marriages endured on average for nearly 15 years. In contrast, marriages in the Domažlice, Plzeň-jih and Tachov districts endured the least amount of time in 2019. The average marriage duration at divorce here was around 12 years. According to the standard deviation, the values in the set for Czechia are again more similar than they are in the case of Slovakia.

8 CONCLUSION

Although Slovakia and Czechia have a relatively long common history, and both countries logically had relatively common legislation until recently, the divorce rate trends between the two countries are quite different in many respects. We can notice differences not only in the intensity indicators of divorce, but also in the development of the mean age and the average duration of marriage at the time of divorce. Intensity indicators of divorce are significantly lower in Slovakia than in Czechia. For example, when monitoring the total divorce rate, the difference between the mean values for the observed period was as high as 27%. In Slovakia, on average, approximately 0.3 divorces per marriage occurred during the observed period, while in Czechia, this was on average up to 0.45 divorces per marriage. Despite the differences, however, we must state that the intensity of divorce rates has been declining in both countries in the last several years. When comparing the mean age at divorce, we can likewise observe a constant increase in the values in both countries, and the differences between them are also constantly increasing. While at the beginning of the observed period, both countries had a similar mean age at divorce, both men and women now divorce more than 1.5 years later in Czechia than in Slovakia. Over the long run, the average duration of a marriage at the time of divorce is higher in Slovakia. The difference between Slovakia and Czechia in this regard is almost two years, on average. Despite the fact that the average duration of marriage increased during the monitored period, the differences between the two countries continue to widen.

Divorce trends also differ at the district level of both countries. In terms of the intensity of divorce, changes have occurred in both countries that ultimately led to the similarity of trends in Slovakia and Czechia. In addition, in both countries we

see an east-west divorce rate gradient, meaning that in both countries, the divorce rate is higher in the western-oriented districts. South-west Slovakia ranks among the most economically developed parts of Slovakia. In the case of north-western Czech Republic, there is a combination of factors, such as the specific ethnicity of the population, a higher rate of urbanisation and the occurrence of heavy industry in the area. The mean age at divorce is almost always in both sexes high or low. From a long term viewpoint, city inhabitants on average get divorced at the oldest age. In contrast, people living in less urbanised districts get divorced at a younger age. Districts in the eastern part of Czechia have a long-term higher average duration of marriage at the time of divorce. In Slovakia, it is possible to note selected districts in north-eastern Slovakia as those with the highest average marriage duration at the time of divorce over the long-term. At present, the districts in the southern part of central Slovakia are characterised by the longest average duration of marriages at the time of divorce.

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Demografická a demogeografická analýza rozvodovosti Slovenska a Česka v rokoch 1993 až 2019

Súhrn

Práca je zameraná na analýzu a porovnanie trendov rozvodovosti na Slovensku a v Česku. Okrem trendov rozvodovosti na národnej územnej úrovni v práci hodnotíme aj dáta na okresnej územnej úrovni. Ako prvé sme v práci zhodnotili literatúru. Zamerali sme sa predovšetkým na práce, kde boli analyzované trendy rozvodovosti na Slovensku a v Česku alebo boli tieto dve krajiny porovnávané. V úvode článku sme rovnako v stručnosti zhrnuli teórie týkajúce sa rozvodov manželstva.

Dáta potrebné k analýze boli do veľkej miery voľne prístupné. Našli sme ich na internetových stránkach štatistických úradov oboch krajín. Zdrojom údajov za Slovensko boli jednak Pramenné diela-rozvedy alebo databáza DATAcube. Časť údajov za Česko nebola verejne dostupná a bolo nutné si ich vyžiadať. Zdrojom údajov je „Český štatistický úrad“. Zvyšné dáta sme dohľadali na stránke štatistického úradu. Údaje sa nachádzali v Demografických ročenkách „České republiky“, „Demografických ročenkách krajů a okresů“. Na základe týchto dát sme buď dopočítali alebo prevzali nasledovné demografické ukazovatele: hrubá miera rozvodovosti 16+, nepriamo štandardizovaná hrubá miera rozvodovosti, úhrnná rozvodovosť manželstva, úhrnná rozvodovosť, priemerný vek pri rozvede a priemerná dĺžka trvania manželstva.

Výsledkom analýzy je, že trendy rozvodovosti na Slovensku a v Česku sú do značnej miery odlišné. V Česku je intenzita rozvodovosti do značnej miery vyššia. Na druhej strane môžeme podľa ukazovateľov rozvodovosti sledovať v posledných rokoch aj určitý pokles a priblíženie oboch trendov. V rámci krajín je možné za oblasti s najintenzívnejšou rozvodovosťou označiť juhozápadné Slovensko a severo-

západné a severné Česko. Naopak najnižšia rozvodovosť je na severe a východe Slovenska a na východe a juhu Česka. V prípade ukazovateľov ako priemerný vek a priemerná dĺžka trvania manželstva pri rozvode si môžeme všimnúť už len prehlbovanie rozdielov medzi Slovenskom a Českom. Priemerný vek pri rozvode je takmer vždy v prípade oboch pohlaví a krajín vysoký alebo nízky. Z dlhodobého hľadiska sa ako v priemere najstarší rozvádzajú obyvatelia miest. Naopak mladšie sa rozvádzajú osoby v menej urbanizovaných okresoch. V súčasnosti trvajú manželstvá v priemere najdlhšie na južnom Slovensku a vo východnom Česku.