The Divorce rate in the pandemic year of 2020 in Czechia

Abstract:

The year 2020 was unprecedented in terms of changes in the functioning of both individuals and institutions. This thesis aims to evaluate the impact of anti-epidemic measures implemented to reduce the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic on the divorce rate. It mainly focuses on changes in intensity and structure of divorce rate during the periods of the state of emergency when courts could have been limited in their ability to function properly. Analysis of data from the Czech Statistical Office pointed to a decrease in the total divorce rate in the spring of 2020, at a time of the first pandemic wave. A similar and temporary drop in the divorce rate was already observed in Czechia at the end of the 1990s. The cause behind that decrease was a change in legislature, which made it more difficult for marriages with underage children to get a divorce. Therefore, the decrease in divorce rate intensity occurred only in the group of marriages with underage children. Compared to that, the decrease in 2020 happened almost identically between marriages with underage children present and marriages without underage children present. This divorce rate drop, seen in the spring of 2020, was not sufficiently compensated by the increased divorce rate in the summer, and due to that, the total divorce rate in Czechia in 2020 dropped below the average of the last few years.

Keywords: Covid-19 pandemic, divorce rate, seasonality, Czechia