

Second child from international perspective

Abstract

The main aim of this thesis is a comparative analysis of the second child in Sweden, Finland, Netherlands, Austria, Czech Republic and Slovakia. The main tool of this analysis are period fertility tables for the years 1991–2007. Theories why people want children and factors influencing the decision of starting a family and its size are mentioned in the first part. Furthermore, the text focuses on the comparison of family conditions and environment in each country which turned out to be the most friendly in Sweden and the Netherlands. The main part, the analysis of the second child, shows more significant changes in the Czech Republic and Slovakia than in other countries during the period – both in shifting childbearing to higher age of women and reducing the levels of period and cohort fertility or in the probability of having a second child. The results point out the incipient signs of loss of the prominent position of the second child and two-child family, especially in the Central European counties.

Keywords: the second child, fertility, period fertility tables, the probability of having a second child, a family