

# THE LITHUANIAN FAMILY: BETWEEN TRADITION AND NEW REALITIES

## Summary

Based on the data of the *Generations and Gender Survey (GGS)* and *Contextual Data Base*, this monograph presents a complex analysis of the changes in the Lithuanian family, the forms of the Lithuanian family, matrimonial and childbearing behaviour, and the transition to adulthood over the period of more than the past 5 decades; gives an evaluation of the rapidly changing family formation pattern and of the factors determining fertility and health status; provides an analysis of the generations and gender relationship; and assesses the attitudes of demographic behaviour.

The *GGS* is a longitudinal survey, repeated three times every 3 years. During the first wave of the survey, 10 thousand men and women aged 18–79 were interviewed in Lithuania. In the survey, a biographical approach to the events and the facts of the demographic behaviour of generations was used.

For the evaluation of the structural and value factors of demographic behaviour (family formation and dissolution, childbearing, and leaving the parental home) and of sociodemographic differences, modern statistical, mathematical and demographic methods (event history, logistic regression analysis, etc.) were applied. In the analysis of the demographic behaviour of individuals and families, the relationship between family members (intergeneration relations and gender roles in the family) was scrutinised. An evaluation was made of the impact of family and household wellbeing on demographic behaviour.

The monograph is composed of six parts: family formation patterns and forms, fertility and childbearing behaviour, gender roles, relationships between generations, social factors of health, and *GGS* methodology.

*Keywords:* generation, gender, family, fertility, partnership, marriage, cohabitation, solidarity between generations, gender roles, childcare, public health, transition to adulthood, family wellbeing.

## Part I . FAMILY FORMATION MODELS: CHANGES AND DIRECTIONS

### Chapter 1. Change in family formation patterns: a comparative analysis

On the basis of the findings of the *Generations and Gender Survey*, contextual information, and the fundamental ideas of the theories on historical (Hajnal, 1965) and modern family formation patterns (Lesthaeghe, Van de Kaa, 1986), an analysis is made of the changing family formation pattern in Lithuania against the background of other countries (France and Russia). In this chapter, an analysis of the changes in the timing and forms of family formation is made in the historical context. Matrimonial behaviour attitudes are studied.

The survey helps demonstrate that the 20<sup>th</sup> century family formation pattern of Lithuania was changing from the late, so-called “European marriage” pattern, with a large proportion of those who never married, to the traditional pattern noted for early marriages (the period of the “golden age of marriage”) and a low proportion of those who never married and to the modern pattern typified by late marriages, a large proportion who never marry, and a variety of family/partnership forms (Second Demographic Transition).

Although the family in Lithuania is changing very fast, the modernity level that has been achieved falls considerably behind that of Russia and, especially, of the Western countries represented by France. The family formation pattern in Lithuania still has the features of the traditional pattern.

*Keywords:* family formation, marriage, cohabitation, partnership, attitudes towards partnership forms, second demographic transition.

### Chapter 2. Cohabitation in Lithuania: a stage in family formation or “the new family”?

In Lithuanian society, the diffusion of cohabitation became obvious in the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Despite the importance of this phenomenon in the understanding of demographic and sociological family changes, it remained mostly under-researched due to the lack of reliable and complex data. One exception was the FFS dataset, but it recorded the diffusion of cohabitation in the beginning stages of this process. Thus the *Generations and Gender Survey* provided a unique opportunity to study the development, transitions, and structures of

cohabitation and family relations in cohabitation. All these issues are covered in this chapter.

Cohabitation has developed through four stages in Lithuanian society in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Till the 1970s, cohabitation was a rather marginal phenomenon, with a non-significant part of the population starting a partnership with cohabitation. The 2 successive decades are distinguished by the moderate but consistent diffusion of cohabitation. By the end of this period (end of the 1980s) almost one-fifth of partnerships started with cohabitation. The 1990s mark the acceleration of the diffusion process and by the end of this decade half of partnerships started with cohabitation. The first half of the 21<sup>st</sup> century reflects a new stage when significantly more partnerships begin with cohabitation than marriage.

Considering the transition from cohabitation to marriage, we observe an important shift between different birth cohorts. A prolonged period of transition is more common for the birth cohorts born after 1970, and thus the time spent in cohabitation becomes longer. Despite these developments, cohabitation is still accepted as a stage in the process of forming a family, and most cohabiting in their first partnership have the intention to marry. Along with the diffusion of cohabitation as a first partnership, cohabitation has become more acceptable as a way of family reconstitution. Differently from first partnerships, this type of cohabitation has fewer chances to be converted to marriage.

There is no significant difference between cohabiting and married couples regarding the social organization of family relations, i.e. sharing of household tasks and power and the quality of the partnership. The social meanings attached to relationships are not predetermined by the form of the partnership, and thus cohabitation is organized as a trial marriage.

*Keywords:* cohabitation, marriage, family relationships.

## Part II. SHIFTS IN FERTILITY AND CHILDBEARING BEHAVIOUR

### Chapter 3. Fertility behaviour and preferences: trends and determinants

On the basis of the *Generations and Gender Survey* data and different theories of fertility and demographic development, notably the theories of the first and second demographic transitions, an analysis of the

changes in fertility behaviour of the 1926–1987 birth cohorts of Lithuania has been made according to education, place of residence, and marital status; fertility preferences have been studied, and a logistic regression analysis of the factors determining fertility preferences has been made.

The results of the survey have revealed the still detectable influence of the first demographic transition and of the "European marriage" pattern on the fertility behaviour of the oldest analysed cohorts – those born in the twenties and thirties of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: the later debut of fertility behaviour and a higher proportion of women who never give birth. The fertility behaviour of the later birth cohorts of women (born in the 1940s–1960s) already have the features of the closing first demographic transition and the consolidating "golden age of marriage": stabilization of fertility level at a low level, but nevertheless at the level of replacement. The fertility behaviour of the cohorts born in the 1970s and later is marked by the features of the second demographic transition: decline of fertility below the replacement level, postponement of births to an older age.

The analysis revealed that the features of the new fertility preferences recently observed in the post-modern Western European societies are also visible in Lithuania: first, a drop in the desired number of children below the replacement level, which will lead to further depopulation.

*Keywords:* fertility transition, fertility behaviour, fertility preferences, first demographic transition, second demographic transition, socio-demographic differences of fertility.

### Part III. **GENDER RELATIONS: TRANSFORMATIONS AND CONTRADICTIONS**

#### Chapter 4. **Masculine and feminine domains of the family: structural determinants vs. identity strategies**

This chapter using *Generations and Gender Survey* data examines the impact of structural determinants on the division of domestic labour and paternal and maternal involvement in child care and decision-making in families. Seven classes of potential determinants were explored: age of respondents, time availability, incomes, education, family structure, children, and gender ideology. Analyses were performed separately for samples of males and females using multiple regression and polytomous

universal models. Findings indicate the most consistent predictor of the amount of domestic labour in the family are the education of both spouses and the gender ideology of the husband, while incomes, time availability, family structure, and children are less important structural determinants. For example, husbands' higher education and liberal attitudes toward traditional gender roles are associated with their lesser involvement with domestic chores. Liberal gender ideology and the similar socioeconomic status of spouses in terms of their employment, earnings and education do not lead to a more balanced division of labour at home as might be expected. Inconsistent results suggest that the traditional masculine and feminine engagements with domestic chores should be understood as strategies of the construction of gender identities.

*Keywords:* gender relations, gender identity, domestic labour, household division of labour, childcare.

#### **Chapter 5. Reconciliation of family and work lives: the conflict approach**

The newly emerging opportunities in the labour market have created new social tensions between the intensification of work on one hand and the increasing need to spend more time with children and other family members on the other. The role conflict limits career opportunities, in most cases for women, and it also has a negative impact on the quality of childcare, interpersonal relationships in families, and fertility rates. The work-family conflict is enforced by the impact of various political, legal, economic and cultural factors. The aim of this chapter is to analyze the experiences of the work-family conflict in Lithuania. Particular attention is paid to the factors that limit social change towards more egalitarian gender roles, family-friendly work organisation, and quality in childcare services. The analysis is based on the data of the international *Generations and Gender Survey*. The data reveal the attitudes of Lithuanians towards their personal experiences with the work-family conflict and how it is influenced by the organization of work and childcare, as well as by the distribution of roles between partners at home. The analysis shows that the widespread practices of work organization are not family friendly. Employers' goodwill towards employees' personal problems is conditional. There are no coherent organizational policies in this regard. Moreover, the increasing employment rates of women have not led to decisive changes in the

division of roles in families. The traditional gender roles do not provide parents with sufficient flexibility to manage the tensions that arise out of role conflict. The work-family conflict is emerging as one of the most important social issues in the country.

*Keywords:* role conflict, gender roles, gender inequality, organization of work, family friendly organization, childcare, procreation preferences.

#### **Part IV. GENERATIONS: SOCIAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC DIMENSIONS AND INEQUALITIES**

##### **Chapter 6. Transition to adulthood: trajectories and determinants of leaving the parental home**

This chapter deals with the transition to adulthood in Lithuania during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The main focus of the analysis is the timing of transitional events of a person such as the first time a person moves out of the parental home, the first cohabitation, the first marriage, and the birth of the first child. Transitional trajectories of young Lithuanians reveal different patterns during the period. Remarkable changes in transition trajectories were caused by the transformation of educational and employment structures and by the shifting system of cultural values in the contexts of WWII, post-war recovery, industrialization, and political changes at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The patterns of transition to adulthood are explored along two features. The first feature is generations (or different birth cohorts), and the second one is gender. Three generations (born before 1940, born in 1940–1960, born after 1960) reveal different models of transition to adulthood, because findings suggest the existence of three home leaving patterns in Lithuania from the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century till now. The first generation experienced late and prolonged home leaving, early and rapid home leaving is a remarkable feature of the second one, and the last generation exhibits postponed and delayed home leaving. Moreover, the different time that the transitional events take place for males and females has been historically determined by social expectations toward gender roles. The data of the “Generations and Gender Survey” are used in the analysis.

*Keywords:* adulthood, transition to adulthood, transitional events, leaving parental home, youth, cohorts, generations, gender.

### Chapter 7. Intergenerational solidarity and its predictors

Based on solidarity, conflict and ambivalence approaches different forms and predictors of solidarity are analysed. The analysis of *Generations and Gender Survey* data is divided into two stages. The solidarity of younger generations is discussed first, and that of older generations is discussed second. Two methods of data analysis are applied: multiple regression and descriptive statistics. The data allowed concluding that the older generation has a higher level of solidarity: structural opportunities for solidarity are more favourable, the evaluation of relationships with children is higher than it is for younger generations. Data analysis revealed that solidarity is influenced by whether the parents of the respondents live together or separately: the levels of solidarity and the predictors of solidarity are different in these two situations. The analysis of functional solidarity revealed that priority for emotional support provided and received is rendered for the members of non generational networks. The analysis of intergenerational expectations showed that the financial responsibility for dependant family members is mostly assigned to society, and responsibility for personal care is assigned to the family.

It is clear that the level of solidarity and predictors of it significantly change over the course of life. Thus, the necessity to consider different situations over the course of life is emphasized in this chapter.

*Keywords:* intergenerational solidarity, determinants of intergenerational solidarity.

### Chapter 8. Differences in well-being of generations, gender and families

This chapter describes the first attempts to measure the overall well-being of households in Lithuania. The data of *Generations and Gender Survey* are used in the analysis. The standpoint taken is based on Amartye Sen's *Capabilities Approach*, which enables creating an index by looking at resources, functioning and utilities. Four domain (or dimensions), specifically material welfare, health, employment and education, each consisting of a number of indicators, were combined to form an overall index of well-being.

For the weighting of the indicators within dimensions, the logistic regression method was employed, and for the aggregation of dimensions, normative judgments were made. Finally, in order to examine the

consistency of an index, a *Cronbach Alpha* reliability test and factor analysis were performed.

The overall index is examined by looking at different types of households (single person, couples, couples with children, and other household with children), at the number of children within the particular household, and at the age and gender of a respondent.

Some of the findings indicate that each younger generation has more welfare than the older ones. Not surprisingly, women show somehow lower index values than men. Concerning different household types, the lowest values of the well-being index are observed in households made up of a single person, whereas the highest rates are among couples and other households who have children.

The chapter ends with a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the index constructed and the methodology employed.

*Keywords:* well-being, well-being index, generations, gender, household.

## Part V . HEALTH, FAMILY, GENERATIONS AND GENDER

### Chapter 9. Determinants of health: the impact of family and gender relations on self-perceived health

This study is the first attempt to assess health determinants in Lithuania simultaneously using demographic, epidemiologic, and sociologic approaches. The first part of this chapter is devoted to socio-demographic determinants of health in Lithuania. Assessment of population health was performed using health expectancy, disability-free life expectancy, and life expectancy without long-standing (chronic) illnesses criteria, which are included on the list of EU structural indicators. The results suggest that the relatively high mortality in Lithuania is associated with the notable prevalence of bad health (such as chronic illnesses) among adults. In addition, there are particularly notable differences in the prevalence of perceived bad health, disability, and chronic illnesses according to education and the socio-economic characteristics of households. At the same time, relationships between health and marital status, place of residence, and ethnicity are much less pronounced.

The second aim of this chapter is to provide evidence about the impact of social capital, personal independence, and divided self on the risk of bad self-perceived health. Numerous studies have shown that

social capital comprises social networks, norms of reciprocity or social support, and social trust. In addition, there are many different forms of social capital or social networks that influence the self-perceived health. In this study, we analyze the impact of bonding social networks on the self-perceived health. The research results suggest that there are strong relationships between the risk of the bad self-perceived health in Lithuania and social capital and social networks. Closer social network, trust in other individuals, stronger social support, and no symptoms of a divided self were associated with a lower risk of bad health.

The data of the *Generations and Gender Survey* are used in the analysis.

*Keywords:* population health, sociodemographic determinants.

## Part VI. **GENERATIONS AND GENDER SURVEY METHODOLOGY**

### Chapter 10. **Generations and Gender Survey methodology, structure and organization**

This chapter presents a concise outline on the origin, organization, structure, basic methodological ideas, and scope of the accumulated information package of the *TEVAMO* project. The *TEVAMO* project run in Lithuania is part of the international *Generations and Gender Programme – GGP*. The *GGP* was initiated by the *Population Activities Unit of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe* in the year 2000.

The *GGP* comprises two parts: the *Generations and Gender Survey – GGS* and the *Contextual Data Base – CDB*. The *GGS* is longitudinal in character and is conducted in three waves.

In Lithuania both parts of the *GGP* have been carried out. The survey of the first wave of the *GGS* was conducted in 2006, and the *CDB* was prepared in 2006–2007. In Lithuania, the Demographic Research Centre of the Institute for Social Research has been conducting *GGP*, and the surveying has been done by the company *Baltic Surveys*. Within the course of the first wave of the *GGS*, 10,036 respondents aged 18–79 (born in 1927–1988) were interviewed.

The *GGP* is marked by innovative features and prospective attitudes, interdisciplinarity, comparability, a generational and gender approach, and the applicability of the information. In the survey, the life-course approach used enables researchers to better grasp the shifts in demographic behaviour in time – its past, present and future aspects.

The *GGJ* data provide information about demographic processes (fertility, family formation, and ageing), relationships (between parents and children, genders, household members, and relatives), intentions (to have children, start a family, leave parental home, study, work, and retire), and factors (structural and value).

*Keywords:* GGP, Lithuania, generations, gender, family, fertility.