# 1

# The Formation of Families

Switzerland can be considered a prototype of the Western European marriage pattern (Hajnal 1953; 1965), particularly regarding marital behaviour. Throughout its population history, Switzerland has shown comparatively high ages at marriage and high proportions of people remaining single. Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, until the 1980s, the Swiss marriage ratio was lower than that of most other European countries (Bickel, 1947; Meyer, 1952). Furthermore, the country is characterized by a traditionally very low rate of births out of wedlock. In contrast to countries with a persisting traditionalism, Switzerland underwent the demographic transition relatively early. In order to understand the particular trajectory of family formation in Switzerland, one must also take into account economic and political developments. Early industrialization and integration into the world market, driven by a dominant liberal doctrine, stimulated an early modernization of family and household structures. These processes were supported by the early implementation of comparatively modern family-orientated policies (see Introduction). Extending these policies into a full-fledged family policy system, however, could never be realized though important amendments (often compromises between political forces) were reached in the 1940s and since about 1970. Relevant factors influencing these developments are the principle of subsidiarity which is associated with the federalist organization of the state, in addition to corporatist structures and the frequent use of referenda which have prevented the implementation of welfare institutions.

Presumably, minimal state intervention has influenced family-related behaviours. The lack of governmental support for families means that families must find pragmatically their own solutions for the organization of family life, the division of labour, and child care. One might hypothesize that the contrast between the early modernization of family and household structures on the one hand, and the stability of family structures (e.g. the hesitating female labour force participation and the low rate of births out of wedlock) as well as the persistence of traditional values and attitudes on the other, reflects this pragmatism. The process of family formation therefore indicates accommodation strategies of couples rather than a fundamental conservatism in behaviours and beliefs.

## FAMILY LAW: FROM FREEDOM OF CONTRACTING TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY

Until the centralization of the cantonal legal systems (see Introduction), restrictions on marriage were common and had been expanded in the restoration phase (1815–30) to slow the rapid population growth and prevent pauperization. The rising discord between Catholic and Protestant cantons also led to new restrictions on marriage. In many cantons marriages of poor people or intermarriages between spouses of different religious denominations or citizenship (even of different cantons) were penalized.[1]

The struggle for a liberal family and marriage law on the federal level was burdensome (see Egger, 1944; Elsener, 1975; Steinauer, 1980, 1982; Steinauer and Dubler-Nuess 1991). In 1821 ten cantons adopted a concordat that allowed interdenominational marriages, but the federal constitution of 1848 did not contain any articles concerning marriage. In 1850, federal law prohibited marriage restrictions for spouses of different denominations, and in 1862, another federal law gave married couples of different denominations the right to divorce. Debates on the implementation of a family law started in 1865 and culminated in a new article in the revised federal constitution (1874: Art. 54) and corresponding federal law (1874) introducing civil marriage and abolishing almost all marriage restrictions. Doing away with marriage restrictions was followed by increasing marriage rates and decreasing extra-marital births (Bickel, 1947: 155f.). This legislation was included with only minor revisions in the Swiss civil code of 1912.

The Swiss civil code (*Zivilgesetzbuch,* ZGB) developed by Eugen Huber took into account both the demand for a standardized federal law as well as the particular interests of the cantons which are the basic units of a federalist society. It was acknowledged by all political actors as an outstanding legal work. The civil code reconsidered the institutional changes of the family which has lost the character of a production unit and tended towards a community of equal persons. The work therefore gave priority to the nuclear rather than the patriarchal family and was guided by the principles of individual legal responsibility (*evolutioniertes Individuum*) between spouses. It also provided broad rights to children, whether born within or outside of marriage (Steinauer, 1980, 1982; Steinauer and Dubler-Nuess 1991).

The ZGB shaped family law as community law (*Gemeinschaftsrecht*; see Gierke, [2]1954 and included comparatively progressive features. Whereas cantonal laws had deprived women of their legal rights upon marriage, the ZGB provided greater equality between men and women, granting the wife full legal status, the same parental authority and civil rights as her husband, and control over her income and fortune (*Sondergut*). It also belongs to the duties of both

parents to jointly maintain their children until attaining the age of majority or completing their education. The amount of parental support depends on the individual financial capacities of both spouses. Parental authority is given to the mother, if parents are not married. In the case of divorce it is given to father or mother dependent on the individual situation. The regulation of child support depends on jurisdiction or maintenance contracts. However, the 1912 matrimonial law defined the husband as head of the household and promoted the breadwinner/home-maker model of the modern nuclear family.

Based on the argument that only responsible persons should be entitled to marry, the ZGB raised the legal marriage age from 18 to 20 for men and from 16 to 18 for women. Persons under age and those without independent legal status (*Entmündigte*) required a guardian's consent. The marriage of mentally-ill persons was declared invalid, although this restriction, founded on eugenic considerations, was not enforced in practice.

In keeping with the idea of family as *Gemeinschaft*, the ZGB also guaranteed children's rights and protection. Parental authority could be revoked in certain cases, and children were given the right to an appropriate education. Children born out of wedlock were given the right to claim parental support until age 18 or the end of their education as well as the same inheritance rights as children of married couples. In order to assert the claim for parental support compulsory custodians were nominated for children born out of wedlock. The ZGB also adopted from the French legal tradition the concept of formal recognition of illegitimate children. A child born out of wedlock who is formally recognized by its unmarried father receives the same rights and duties as a child born to a married couple.

Divorce law traditionally differed between the Catholic and Protestant areas. Until 1874, divorce was prohibited by canonical law in the Catholic regions. Influenced by Zwingli, the liberal cantons had allowed divorce since 1525. A federal divorce law based on the liberal doctrine was introduced in 1874; it did not provide for legal separation but delegated the process to cantonal law. The federal civil law of 1912 extended the list of grounds. Grounds for divorce are adultery, maltreatment of the partner or children, dishonourable life of the partner, desertion, and marriage breakdown (*Zerrüttung*). In order to respect the interests of the Catholic cantons, legal separation was introduced, and the new civil law contained provisions regarding the divorce process (Egger, 1944: 237ff.).

Even if the Swiss family law and the divorce law of 1912 were deeply rooted in the ideas of liberalism, inspired by the idea of individual autonomy, and can be interpreted as comparatively modern, one cannot overlook the fact that equality between the genders was not fully guaranteed in its present-day sense.

The revisions of these parts of the ZGB since the 1960s aimed at improvements in this respect.

Whereas other civil law has been revised only on specific topics since the ZGB's introduction in 1912, family law has undergone a general revision in stages since the 1960s, with a new law on adoption in 1973, a revised children's law in 1978, and a revised marriage law in 1988. A revised divorce law came in force by 1.1.2000. Within this general revision, legal procedures had been improved by facilitating divorce by consent; gender-specific imbalances in the financial consequences of divorce were reduced; shared custody rights for both divorced partners were introduced; and the rights for children of divorced parents were improved through the use of hearings. A revision of the law on guardianship will complete the overhaul of family law (Steiger-Sackmann, 1993: 51–5).

The revised children's law of 1978 improved the execution of child maintenance by implementing institutions to advise or to assist those who assert the claim for child maintenance (see also Chapter 4). Furthermore, the legitimization of children born out of wedlock has been replaced by facilitating the formal recognition of these children. Even in the revised children's law, the legal status of an unmarried father of a child remained comparatively weak, a fact which has an impact on the low rate of births out of wedlock.

The revised marriage law of 1988 abolished the concept of a head of household, therefore contributing to gender equality by conceptualizing marriage as a partnership of equal persons. Concerning marital property rights, the former concept that normally defined the couple as an income and wealth community (*Gütergemeinschaft*) was replaced by the concept of a mutual claim on the earnings of both partners (*Errungenschaftsbeteiligung*). The new law also improved the legal status of the spouse in various aspects (e.g. name of the spouse, citizenship, etc.).

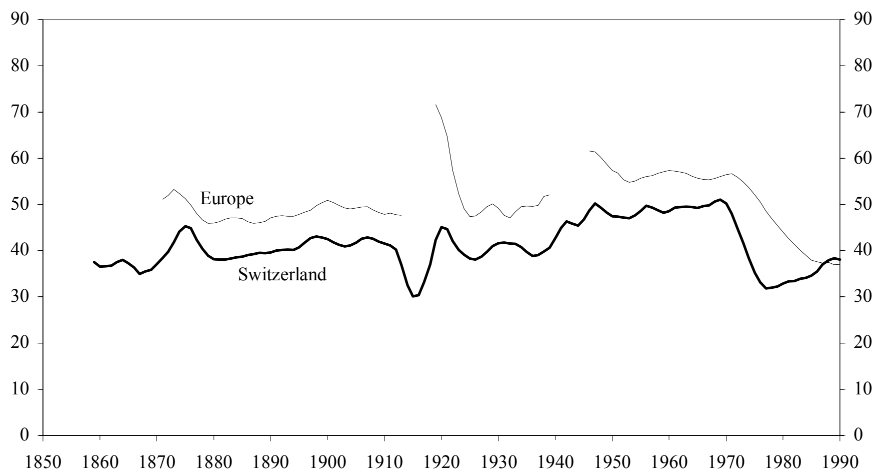
## MARRIAGE, DIVORCE, AND THE BIRTH OF CHILDREN: A MIXTURE OF MODERN AND TRADITIONAL BEHAVIOURS

Switzerland can be characterized by its early modernization of family and household structures as well as of marital and reproductive behaviour. This can in part be attributed to the early onset of industrialization based on highly decentralized industrial units (putting-out system) while the agrarian sector retained its relevance, but also to the doctrines of liberalism and Protestantism. Socio-economic and cultural factors favoured the nuclearization of the family (early demographic transition). Marriage rates were significantly lower than in most other European countries from the nineteenth century up to the 1980s.

Furthermore, Switzerland has shown comparatively high ages at marriage and high proportions of people remaining single (Bickel, 1947; Meyer, 1952). The same conditions have likely had an impact on the early diffusion of contraception (Perrenoud, 1979; Pfister, 1985) and on divorce behaviour, which was continuously higher than the European average. However, some evidence points to a certain traditionalism in the behaviour of Swiss families, at least at first glance. Family-related attitudes continue to exert an important influence on marital behaviour and childbearing, and are likely associated with traditionally low numbers of out-of-wedlock births.

At first glance, early modernization of household and family structures seems inconsistent with the more traditionalist epiphenomena such as familialist attitudes or few out-of-wedlock births. On closer analysis, however, one is inclined to assume that the latter observations in line with (1) the comparatively high proportions of single persons, (2) the increasing number of couples remaining childless, and (3) the high age at first marriage and at first birth are strongly influenced by the subsidiarity and fragmentation of the Swiss welfare state. Couples who are forced to develop accommodation strategies in order to comply with restrictive societal conditions seem to choose traditional solutions which often conceal the shift in the meaning of basic institutions such as marriage, parenthood, or the family.

FIGURE 1. Marriage rate, Switzerland and Europe*




* Number of persons marrying per 1,000 unmarried population 15 and over; moving averages.

*Source:* Eurodata.

Marital behaviour is also closely interrelated with economic cycles and patterns of reproductive behaviour (see Figure 1). Economic depression in the 1840s and 1850s together with the political restoration led to declining marriage rates, while the passage of civil marriage legislation in 1874 coincided with a short-term increase in marriages. Detailed demographic analyses show that this increase was caused by Catholic regions opposed to the new law: the number of marriages peaked in 1875, although the law did not go into effect until January 1876 (Bickel, 1947). However, a concurrent upswing in the propensity to marry can also be found in the European average.

From the late 1870s until around 1930, marriage rates remained relatively stable, except for a marked postponement of marriages during World War I. From the 1930s until the early 1970s, marriage rates show a continuous rise; in Switzerland, unlike many other European countries, World War II resulted in no significant postponement of marriages. During the post-war period, age at first marriage fell, and economic prosperity provided a favourable climate for marriage-based family types, resulting in the so-called ‘golden age of marriage’ (Festy, 1971).

The marriage rate dropped by nearly a third after 1971 due to a combination of economic, demographic, and socio-cultural factors: economic crisis following the world-wide oil shortage in 1972; the ‘echo’ effect of low birth rates in the late 1930s; the influence of the women’s movement with its criticism of the traditional breadwinner/home-maker family model and emphasis on women’s independence (promoted in particular by the ‘new women’s movement’); the new contraceptive technologies and less restrictive values of the ‘sexual revolution’, offering new options in partnership and living arrangements. As the baby-boom generation reached maturity, marriage rates began to increase again (Fux, 1994).

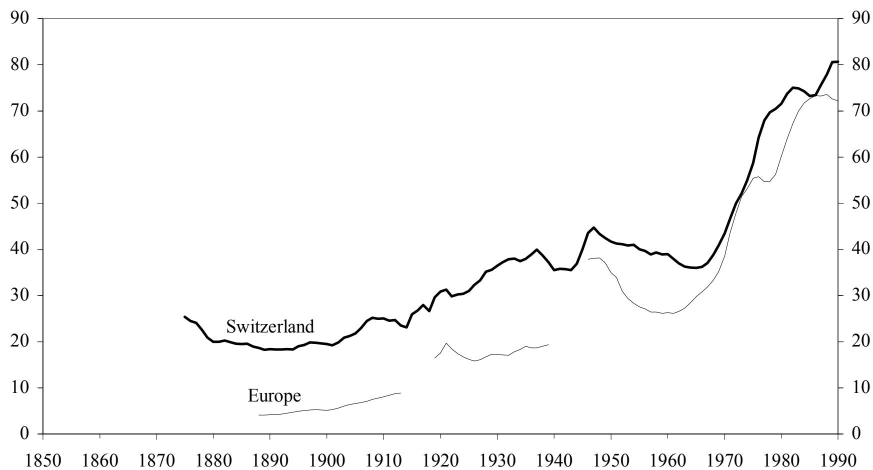
However, national averages conceal the great heterogeneity in marital behaviour among cantons. Whereas Catholic-populated central Switzerland traditionally had comparatively high proportions of married people, the decrease in marriage rates between 1970 and 1980 was greatest in both the Catholic and Protestant cantons of the French- and Italian-speaking regions (including the canton Berne), as well as the predominantly Protestant areas in the northeast, due to a marked temporal variation in the development of similar processes. Cantonal differences did not fade by the end of the nineteenth century (see Levy, 1984; Schaub and Sermier, 1984).

Marital behaviour in Switzerland therefore has generally followed the European pattern, though at a lower level and with three major exceptions: first, World War I led to postponement of marriage, although the drop in marriage rates as well as the peak after 1918 were much less dramatic than the European average. Second, World War II had no marked impact on neutral Switzerland, in

contrast to most other countries. Third, the drop in marriage rates during the 1970s was significantly steeper than in most European countries except for Denmark, The Netherlands, and Norway (Council of Europe, 1990: 114), and the upswing started earlier than the European average.

In striking contrast to the low marriage rate, the Swiss divorce rate was consistently higher than the European average until the Second World War (Figure 2), possibly as the result of the more liberal divorce law. Until the First World War divorce rates remained relatively constant, but increased during the inter-war period. Relative to the number of marriages, the number of divorces stabilized and even decreased in the 1950s and 1960s (Figure 2). After the second demographic transition, European divorce rates exploded, and the difference between Switzerland and the European average shrank. The drop in the European average curve around 1975 is associated with attempts to modernize divorce law in various countries while a revised divorce law in Switzerland came in force in 2000. The falling number of Swiss divorces in the first half of the 1980s is also influenced by the intermediate drop in Swiss fertility rates during the early 1950s ('echo' effect) reducing the population at high risk ages for divorce.

FIGURE 2. Divorce rate, Switzerland and Europe*




* Number of persons divorcing per 10,000 married population 15 and over; moving averages.

*Source:* Eurodata.

Like marriage, divorce too shows important regional variations. In the Catholic and Alpine cantons where divorce law has been interpreted according to the

tradition of canonical law, divorces are much less frequent than in the urban centres, the Protestant cantons, and in most French-speaking regions of Switzerland (Egger, 1944; Duss-von Werdt and Fuchs, 1980; Kellerhals and Troutot, 1984; Grossen, 1984).

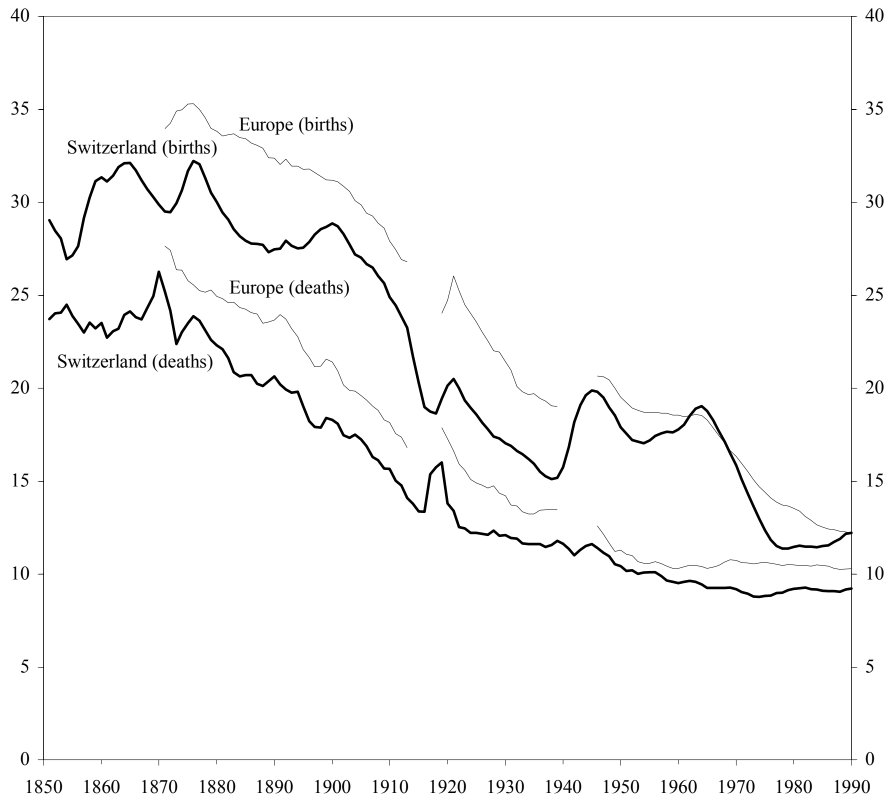
Although legal separation was introduced in 1910/12, it remains a marginal phenomenon (see section on family law). Reconstituted families (either remarriage or cohabitation with a new partner) after divorce are comparatively frequent. In 1994, the proportion of reconstituted families amounted to about 8% of all households with children (FSO Pressemitteilung 5/97: 2).

### *Fertility and Demographic Transition*

The theory of 'demographic transition' developed by Thompson (1929) and Notestein (1945), elaborated by various demographers (Hauser, 1974; Schmid, 1984; Coale and Watkins, 1986) and supplemented by the concept of the 'second demographic transition' (van de Kaa, 1987, 1989) remains an appropriate approach for describing interdependencies between socio-economic and cultural structures on the one hand, and demographic processes on the other. Even if this approach cannot fully explain facts such as the post-war baby boom, and even if opposing evidence regarding the supposed causal relation between fertility and mortality exists, the concept can easily be linked with theories that more explicitely take into account the socio-economic and historical particularities of a society (cf. Bickel, 1947; Mackenroth, 1953; Caldwell, 1982; Linde, 1984).

During the nineteenth century, fertility in Switzerland was comparatively low, mainly due to high ages at marriage and widespread celibacy; only France experienced lower birth rates at that time. In Switzerland, both marriage and birth rates started to fall in 1836, mainly due to crop failures and the deteriorating economic situation. Death rates, however, showed a marginal decrease only until 1870. But the demographic transition (Figure 3) had not yet started except in some urban areas, above all in Geneva, where the upper class had begun to restrict marital fertility already in the seventeenth century (Henry, 1956). Perrenoud (1979) has shown that contraception was in use among several classes in Geneva by the end of the eighteenth century, and the same holds true for the urban bourgeoisie of Zurich (Pfister, 1985).

FIGURE 3. Demographic transition, Switzerland and Europe*




* Number of live births and deaths per 1,000 pop. (crude birth and death rates); moving averages.
Source: Eurodata.

At the national level, the secular drop in fertility occurred between 1888 and 1949, interrupted only by the First World War. In some cantons, however, the long-term decline in the birth rate can be observed starting in 1866, probably also influenced by the war between Germany and France (1870/71) and the long economic depression starting in 1873. The introduction of civil marriage in 1874 stimulated marriages during the 1870s and produced a short-term increase in birth rates. Coincidentally death rates commenced to decrease with the exception of a short-term upswing in the early 1870s due to influenza epidemics.

There was no substantive time interval between declines in mortality and fertility; rates of both began to fall at about the same time. Both processes began in line with a period of economic prosperity. Foreign trade nearly doubled. In

terms of population growth, fertility rates rose after the turn of the century, helped by an increasing inflow of immigrants, accounting for 18% of the growth rate (Bickel, 1947). Crude death rates dropped continuously due to declining infant mortality, which again greatly differed between cantons.

Cantons differ in the onset and extent of the demographic transition due to both economic and religious factors. Catholic cantons show a higher level of fertility at the beginning and end of the decline and reached low birth rates later. Agricultural cantons generally show lower fertility rates than highly industrialized regions, a situation which was reversed in the twentieth century.

The period 1914–30 was the most unstable in Swiss population history, and the decline in fertility that followed the sharp upturn around the First World War spawned pro-natalist discussions in the late 1920s, inspired by similar movements in France and Belgium (see Chapter 5; Schultheis, 1988). The family protection movement was strongest in the French-speaking parts of Switzerland, where a *Pro Familia* league was founded in 1923 (canton Vaud); this movement spread to the other linguistic regions of the country in the early 1930s. Initially, the discussion focused on improving the social security of families, but it later took on a nationalistic and pro-natalist character.

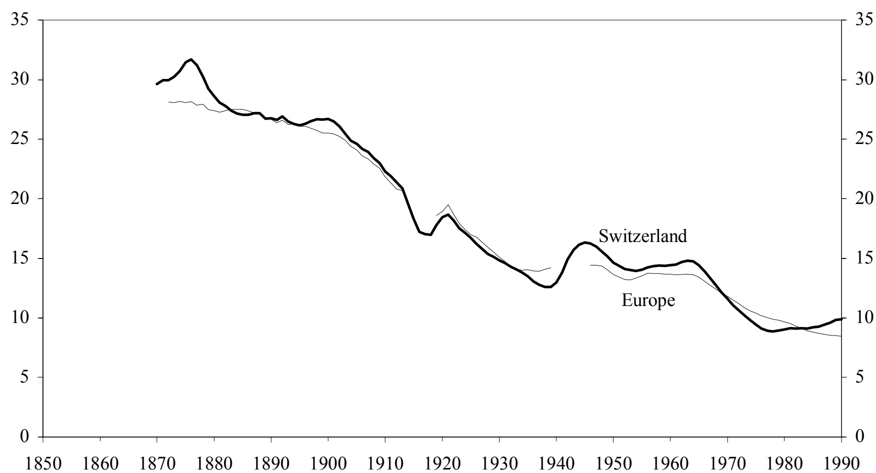
In contrast with the situation between 1914 and 1918, during the Second World War the outflow of foreigners was much lower, and many Swiss who had been living outside the country returned to Switzerland since it was not directly involved in the war. Therefore it saw neither an increase in mortality nor a postponement of marriages and births as did many other European countries. On the contrary, the 'post-war' baby boom started in Switzerland already around 1938. Important factors were higher marriage rates since 1936 and a strong nationalist ideology (*Landigeist*) opposed to the influence of German National Socialism.

From 1940 to 1965, the growth of the industrial and service sectors encouraged the spread of the breadwinner/home-maker family model and made it economically feasible for more men and women to marry and start families earlier. An intermediate decline in fertility in the mid-1950s, greater than the European average, can be explained as an 'echo' effect of the low fertility during the 1920s. A large influx of younger foreign workers, especially from 1950 to 1960, and an increasing proportion of mothers under age 25 produced the second peak of the Swiss post-war baby boom (*Kommission Bevölkerungspolitik*, 1985: 28). Since cohort-specific data give no evidence of an increase in fertility, one can argue that this peak was the result of timing (Fux, 1994). During the 1950s and 1960s average annual growth rates of fertility peaked, and the death rate continued to fall.

As in most other European countries, in Switzerland birth rates started to fall in 1965, although the drop was steeper and the recovery in the mid-1970s earlier

than the European average. This drop was apparently not caused by changes in nuptiality, because marriage rates remained stable until 1971 and decreased thereafter by about one-third. The fertility decline started several years before rates of divorce and legal separation rose, and out-of-wedlock births did not increase before the late 1970s. Therefore one can argue that the reason lies in women's improved access to education and the labour force, a postponement of marriages and births, and the use of new contraceptive technologies. The slight increase in fertility starting in the mid-1970s was apparently the result of the baby-boom generation reaching reproductive age. Death rates stabilized at a comparatively low level.

FIGURE 4. Marital birth rate, Switzerland and Europe*



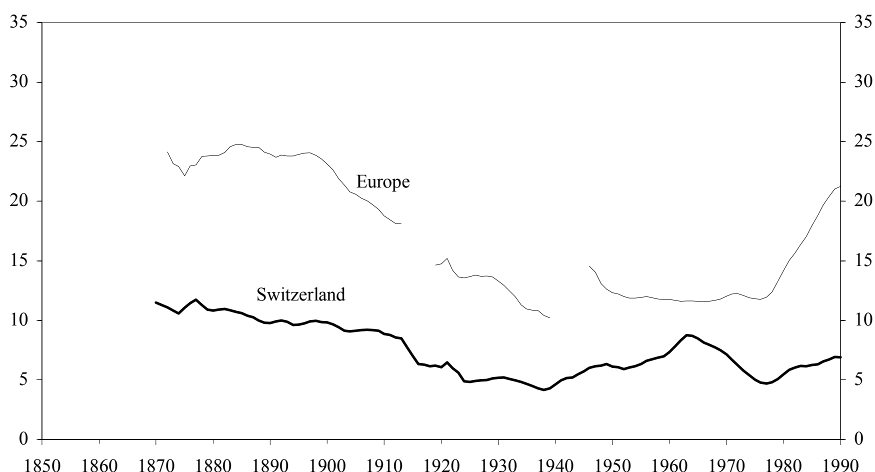

* Live births within marriage per 100 married women 15–44; moving averages.

*Source:* Eurodata.

The trajectory of marital birth rates (Figure 4) in Switzerland follows the European average very closely. Nevertheless, there are some significant differences to note. The implementation of civil marriage in 1874 created a momentum not only with regard to marital behaviour but also as concerns child-bearing. A second deviation happened during World War II. The baby boom commenced comparatively early and the upswing in marital fertility was to a lesser degree affected by the consequences of the war. A third characteristic of procreative behaviour among married couples is the intermediate drop in marital birth rates during the first half of the 1950s which is more prominent compared with most other European states. The second peak of the Swiss baby-boom is

associated with the marked influx of guestworkers showing quite different fertility patterns. Although the fertility decline around 1965—a major element of the second demographic transititon—coincided with similar processes in the European average, the gradient of the drop in Swiss fertility rates is steeper, and the rates recovered earlier than in most other countries.

FIGURE 5. Out-of-wedlock birth rate, Switzerland and Europe*




* Live births out of wedlock per 1,000 unmarried women 15–44; moving averages.

*Source:* Eurodata.

Along with the relatively low marriage rate, another consistent characteristic of Switzerland is the traditionally low number of children born out of wedlock. The corresponding rates (Figure 5) are much lower than in the rest of Europe prior to World War I. Because of the greater decline in extra-marital fertility in most other European countries, the differences between Switzerland and Europe shrank during the inter-war and baby-boom periods. In Switzerland out-of-wedlock childbearing peaked around 1965, whereas in Europe on average extra-marital childbearing has been on the rise since the mid-1970s, thus the divergence between Switzerland and Europe has increased. Nevertheless, one should not overlook that also in Switzerland, 54% of men and 60% of women out of the birth cohorts 1955 to 1964 start their family cycle by founding a consensual union (Fux and Baumgartner, 1997). Currently, couples frequently marry when they decide to become parents. The weak legal status of the father of a child born out of wedlock, intended to improve child protection (he has no parental authority even if he lives in a stable consensual union with the mother,

the child would receive the legal name and citizenship of the mother), strongly encourages the move from cohabitation to marriage. While in other countries, particularly in Scandinavia, parenthood of unmarried couples increased, one can observe in Switzerland rather a tendency towards a modification in the meaning of marriage. Marriage tends to be interpreted as an instrumental contract that easily regulates a bulk of incertainties.

Possible explanations for the traditional low levels of extra-marital fertility in Switzerland may also be found in societal norms. Although mores in both Catholic and Protestant cantons condemn illegitimacy, and although most cantonal laws discriminated against children born out of wedlock, laws differ in rigour, being generally less restrictive in liberal and Protestant areas. In some regions, traditional customs allowed unmarried couples to have sexual intercourse, but when the woman became pregnant the wedding was to take place without delay. This code of honour was strictly observed (van de Walle, 1977: 2–15).

If the low proportion of out-of-wedlock births can be taken as a behavioural outcome of thresholds and restrictions that couples are confronted with, the same is true for the comparatively high proportions of single persons, the high age at marriage and at first birth, and the increasing proportion of voluntarily childless couples.

During the entire nineteenth century celibacy in Switzerland was comparatively high, though again with strong regional differences. In the past, differently rigid marriage barriers had an impact on celibacy (see Introduction). Currently, the increase in single persons is influenced by modification in the normal life course. Particularly well-educated young professionals in urban areas remain single during a longer period of their lives. Even if for a huge proportion singlehood is only a transitory phase, the prolongation of this phase has an impact on the average age at marriage and the age at first birth. It also influences the increases in lifelong celibacy and childlessness.

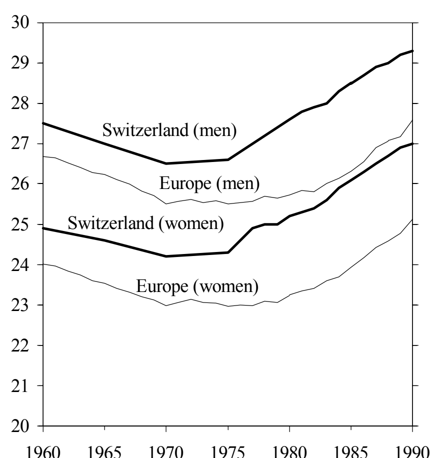
About one out of five women born in the nineteenth century (generations born 1811–1905) did not marry until age 50. Celibacy peaked among those women who came onto the marriage market during the 1920s. By contrast, celibacy among men continuously decreased from about 20% (generations born 1811–1825) to about 14% for those born at the turn of the century. A rapid drop in the proportions of never-married men and women is to be observed among the generations born 1911–1930 reaching a level of about 9% for both sexes. Celibacy is increasing since then (from birth cohort 1931 onwards).

Together with Sweden, Belgium, and The Netherlands, Switzerland is among the European countries with traditionally the highest ages at first marriage and birth of first child. The average age at first marriage (and at first birth) in Switzerland followed the general European development, falling until the early

1970s and then increasing again. However, age at marriage and childbirth has been consistently higher in Switzerland, and this difference has widened in the last two decades (Figures 6 and 7). Some evidence indicates that the lack of family-related policies tends to encourage postponing or even forgoing marriage (Fux, 2001).

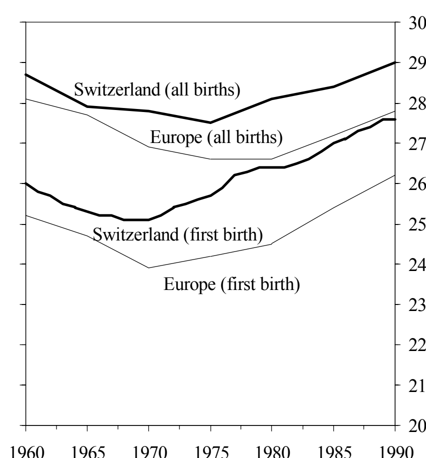
The proportion of women remaining childless shows a curvilinear development similar to the average age at first birth. If more than every fifth women born in 1933 (21.4%) did not give birth to a child, the proportion sank to 13.9% for women born in 1939 and 1940. Since then, childnessness has continuously increased, reaching a proportion of 21.2% for the birth cohort 1951 (Prioux, 1993: 235).

FIGURE 6. Age at first marriage, Switzerland and Europe 1960–1990




*Source:* Eurodata.

FIGURE 7. Mother's age at 1st childbirth, Switzerland and Europe 1960–1990*




* Married couples only.

*Conclusion*

Swiss demographic history is characterized by comparatively high stability. Only between 1914 and 1920 can one observe significant short-term fluctuations with regard to the basic indicators.

The country clearly follows the European marriage pattern: with regard to celibacy and marital behaviour, Switzerland has maintained the same position relative to the European average since 1850. Swiss marriage rates were always markedly lower than in most other countries, while divorce rates were consi-

stently higher than the European average. Men's and women's ages at first marriage and mother's age at first birth have always been higher than in the rest of Europe, and this difference has even grown in recent years.

Out-of-wedlock births have remained constant at a comparatively low level up to the present. Fertility displayed a secular decline beginning sometime before 1900 and ending during World War II, earlier than in most other European countries. Fertility has varied by language regions and religious denomination, though cantonal differences in family law have also played a role.

Some of the particularities in Switzerland, namely the low rate of out-of-wedlock births, the comparatively high and even increasing age at marriage and at first births as well as the increasing celibacy, and proportion of couples remaining childless, are influenced by the fact that couples have to accommodate barriers produced by a welfare state based on the concept of subsidiarity, therefore forcing couples to find individual solutions for the organization of family life. By contrast, the early modernization of household structures, the early onset of the demographic transition, and the traditionally low marriage rates and high divorce rates indicate the impact of a liberal society on the processes of family formation.

## HOUSEHOLD AND FAMILY STRUCTURES: NEW INTERPRETATIONS FOR AN OLD INSTITUTION

In Switzerland, no comprehensive official household statistics exist prior to the 1960 census (Buscher, 1986: 7), and since then some of the basic definitions have changed.[2] However, evidence indicates the emergence of certain trends since the late 1960s. As in most other European countries, one can discern trends towards smaller family sizes and away from multi-nucleus or extended families. Some growth in new living arrangements is apparent, although the increase in lone parents and unmarried cohabiting couples, in particular those with children, is less prominent than in many other countries. By contrast, the occurrence of consensual unions without children is comparatively high in Switzerland. New living arrangements have spread most among those under age 30 and after the early family phase due to increasing divorce rates. For those aged 30 and over, the marriage-based family remains the norm. Nevertheless, one has to notice a shift in the meaning given to marriage or, in other words, 'new wine in old wineskins'. An increasing proportion of cohabiting couples do not marry until they decide to become parents. Frequently instrumental or pragmatic considerations rather than the confidence in marriage as a basic institution determines a couple's decision to change its civil status. For example, marriage

seems to be the easiest way to contract most of the uncertainties (custody, legal name, citizenship, regulation of inheritance, etc.) faced by unmarried couples with children. As a result, the overall picture of persisting traditional household structures conceals important aspects of family change.

*Household Size and Composition*

The number of households has grown faster than the population as a whole, especially since 1960. The average size of households dropped continuously starting in 1860 (4.75) and continuing into the 1970s. Households with five or more persons declined from nearly 39% in 1920 to less than 7% in 1990, and the number of one- and two-person households increased to nearly two-thirds of all households (see Table 1). However, according to 1990 census data, 59% of all individuals live in households with three or more persons.

As we have seen, the mean household size decreased continuously during the century. The differences between various socio-economic groups show only marginal changes from 1960 to 1990 (Table 2), with a slight tendency towards convergence between these groups. The family size of lone mothers and lone fathers remained stable during the first two decades, but followed the decreasing trend during the 1980s. More than four out of five children live in households with a married or unmarried couple.

Nearly one-third of all private households in 1990 consisted of married couples with children, while 27% of all private households were married couples without children. As indicated in Table 3, more than four out of five couples are parents. Only a slight decrease in the proportion of couples with children can be observed, although childlessness in Switzerland is relatively high and has increased since the 1940 cohort (Prioux, 1993: 234f.; Höpflinger, 1991). The distribution of children in families indicates a concentration towards smaller family sizes (Table 4). In 1960, less than one-third of all families had two children (30%), but by 1990 the share of two-child families made up nearly half of all couples (47%). In particular the share of families with four or more children decreased during the past three decades.

TABLE 1. Private households by type and size, Switzerland 1960–1990 (% distributions)

| Private households | 1960 | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Private households by type* | | | | |
| *Non-family households* | *21.3* | *25.6* | *33.4* | *35.7* |
| One-person households: | 14.2 | 19.6 | 29.0 | 32.4 |
| male under 25 | 0.3 | 0.8 | 1.8 | 1.5 |
| male 25–64 | 2.6 | 4.0 | 7.1 | 9.6 |
| male 65 and over | 1.2 | 1.5 | 2.0 | 2.2 |
| female under 25 | 0.4 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 1.7 |
| female 25–64 | 5.3 | 6.1 | 7.6 | 8.8 |
| female 65 and over | 4.5 | 6.2 | 8.5 | 8.7 |
| Multi-person households | 7.1 | 5.9 | 4.4 | 3.3 |
| *Family households* | *78.7* | *74.4* | *66.6* | *64.3* |
| Households with couple: | 71.6 | 68.8 | 61.1 | 59.0 |
| without unmarried children | | | | |
| without other persons | 19.1 | 21.2 | 22.8 | 25.7 |
| with other persons | 5.2 | 3.0 | 1.1 | 1.0 |
| with unmarried children | | | | |
| without other persons | 35.8 | 38.3 | 34.5 | 30.6 |
| with other persons | 11.5 | 6.3 | 2.7 | 1.7 |
| Lone parents: | 6.2 | 5.2 | 5.1 | 5.1 |
| with children[a] | 4.1 | 4.0 | 4.4 | 4.6 |
| with children[a] and other persons | 2.1 | 1.2 | 0.7 | 0.5 |
| Multi-family households | 0.9 | 0.5 | 0.4 | 0.3 |
| *Total private households* | *100.0* | *100.0* | *100.0* | *100.0* |
| *Private households by size* | | | | |
| 1 person | 14.2 | 19.6 | 29.0 | 32.4 |
| 2 persons | 26.8 | 28.5 | 29.7 | 31.7 |
| 3 persons | 20.6 | 19.3 | 15.8 | 14.9 |
| 4 persons | 17.2 | 16.9 | 16.4 | 14.5 |
| 5 persons | 10.2 | 8.8 | 6.2 | 4.8 |
| 6+ persons | 11.0 | 6.9 | 2.9 | 1.7 |
| *Total private households* | *100.0* | *100.0* | *100.0* | *100.0* |
| *Private households (in 1,000)* | 1,581 | 2,052 | 2,450 | 2,842 |

[a] Including all unmarried children without age limits.

*Sources*: Population censuses 1960–1990 and computations by R. Tierbach and B. Fux.

TABLE 2. Mean size of households by socio-economic status and average number of children by family type, Switzerland, 1960–1990

| | 1960 | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Average household size* | | | | |
| all households | 3.41 | 3.04 | 2.59 | 2.40 |
| all private households | 3.26 | 2.93 | 2.52 | 2.33 |
| Employer/self-employed | 4.19 | 3.91 | 3.69 [1] | 3.04 |
| Employee | 3.16 | 3.00 | 2.66 [1] | 2.47 |
| Worker | 3.34 | 3.09 | 2.69 [1] | 2.55 |
| family worker | 3.46 | 3.26 | 3.17 | — |
| without profession | 1.95 | 1.88 | 1.69 | 1.66 |
| average family nucleus size | 3.33 | 3.31 | 3.13 | 2.74 |
| *Average number of children by family type* | | | | |
| all family nuclei | 2.09 | 2.01 | 1.90 | 1.77 |
| spouses | 2.16 | 2.06 | 1.93 | 1.81 |
| single fathers | 1.58 | 1.53 | 1.54 | 1.39 |
| single mothers | 1.60 | 1.55 | 1.59 | 1.43 |

[1] Data (estimations) are not strictly comparable with those of 1960, 1970, and 1990.

*Sources*: Census data 1960–1990 and computations by R. Tierbach and B. Fux.

The proportion of cohabiting couples (with and without children) was relatively low, at 5% of all private households, even though their number has tripled in the last decade (Federal Statistical Office: *Familien heute*, Bern 1994). Furthermore, the increase in cohabiting couples without children was markedly higher among heads of households with Swiss nationality. Between 1980 and 1990, cohabitation increased in urban centres by nearly 89% for unmarried couples with children, and by nearly 65% for couples without children. In towns of less than 2,000 residents, the increase was even higher: nearly 215% for unmarried couples with children and 278% for couples without children (Federal Statistical Office: *Familien heute*, Bern 1994). These census data, however, underestimate the number of cohabiting couples, whereas survey data show higher proportions. According to comparative survey data, Switzerland belongs to the countries with a high proportion of cohabiting couples without children, but to those countries with comparatively few consensual unions with children. According to a study based on comparative Family and Fertility Surveys, the proportions of cohabiting couples without children are only slightly lower than in Norway or Finland. The relative position of Switzerland is comparable with that of France, The Netherlands, or Austria. In 1994, the proportions of people living in consensual unions in Switzerland amounted to 25% among those aged 20–24, 20% among those aged 25–29, 11% among those aged 30–34, and 7% among those aged 35–39 (Klijzing and Macura, 1997). The proportion of respondents

living in a consensual union when they become parents are comparatively low, fluctuating around 5% in different age groups. These findings have also been registered in older surveys (Hoffmann-Nowotny and Fux, 1991: 49ff., 85f.; Fux, 1997).

TABLE 3. Families with children, Switzerland 1960–1990 (% distributions)

| Family types | 1960 | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Couples with children* | *88.4* | *89.6* | *88.0* | *86.6* |
| family nucleus only | 66.8 | 77.0 | 80.9 [a] | 81.9 |
| with grandparent(s) | 3.6 | 2.5 | 1.9 [a] | 1.1 |
| with other persons | 11.2 | 6.1 | 3.1 [a] | 2.3 |
| with 2 or more family nuclei | 6.7 | 3.9 | 0.8 [a] | 1.3 |
| *Mothers with children* | *9.3* | *8.6* | *8.1* [a] | *11.2* |
| family nucleus only | 6.4 | 6.8 | 7.2 [a] | 10.3 |
| with grandparent(s) | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.1 [a] | 0.1 |
| with other persons | 1.6 | 1.0 | 0.8 [ab] | 0.5 |
| with 2 or more family nuclei | 1.1 | 0.7 | x | 0.3 |
| *Fathers with children* | *2.4* | *1.9* | *1.3* [a] | *2.2* |
| family nucleus only | 1.4 | 1.2 | 1.0 [a] | 1.8 |
| with grandparent(s) | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 [a] | 0.0 |
| with other persons | 0.5 | 0.3 | 0.3 [ab] | 0.2 |
| with 2 or more family nuclei | 0.5 | 0.3 | x | 0.2 |
| *Total families with children* | *100.0* | *100.0* | *100.0* | *100.0* |
| | | in 1,000 | | |
| Couples with children | 748 | 914 | 911 | 919 |
| Lone mothers with children | 79 | 87 | 77 [b] | 122 |
| Lone fathers with children | 20 | 19 | 13 [b] | 23 |
| Households with children | 847 | 1,021 | 1,036 | 1,065 |

[a] Figures are based on households with children below age 25.
[b] Including households with two or more family nuclei.

*Sources*: Population censuses 1960–1990 and computations by R. Tierbach and B. Fux.

TABLE 4. Children in families, Switzerland 1960–1990 (% distributions)*

| Children by family type | 1960 | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Children in couples* | *91.1* | *92.0* | *90.3* | *89.0* |
| 1 child | 15.6 | 16.7 | 17.3 | 19.4 |
| 2 children | 27.8 | 31.5 | 40.2 | 42.4 |
| 3 children | 21.9 | 22.8 | 21.4 | 19.7 |
| 4 children | 12.6 | 11.5 | 7.6 | 5.6 |
| 5+ children | 13.3 | 9.5 | 4.0 | 1.9 |
| *Children with lone mothers* | *7.1* | *6.6* | *8.3* | *9.2* |
| 1 child | 2.8 | 2.7 | 3.4 | 4.2 |
| 2 children | 2.1 | 2.1 | 3.0 | 3.6 |
| 3+ children | 2.3 | 1.8 | 1.9 | 1.4 |
| *Children with lone fathers* | *1.8* | *1.4* | *1.4* | *1.7* |
| 1 child | 0.7 | 0.6 | 0.6 | 0.9 |
| 2 children | 0.5 | 0.4 | 0.5 | 0.6 |
| 3+ children | 0.5 | 0.4 | 0.3 | 0.2 |
| *Total children in families* | *100.0* | *100.0* | *100.0* | *100.0* |
| | | *in 1,000* | | |
| Children in couples | 1615 | 1886 | 1748 | 1673 |
| Children with lone mothers | 1256 | 135 | 160 | 174 |
| Children with lone fathers | 32 | 29 | 28 | 32 |
| *Total children in families* | *1711* | *2050* | *1936* | *1879* |

* 1980 = children below age 25, 1990 = children below age 20.

*Sources*: Population censuses 1960–1990 and computations by R. Tierbach and B. Fux.

The number of lone-parent households is comparatively low in Switzerland, at just over 5% of all private households in 1990 (Table 1). Of these, nearly 60% of lone fathers and 42% of lone mothers have never been married, while the rest are divorced or widowed. Lone parenting is most common among those under age 40. Between age 40 and 55, nearly 17% of lone fathers and 14% of lone mothers are divorced. Proportions differ most between widowed lone fathers (11%) and widowed lone mothers (40%), who make up the majority of lone parents from age 55 onwards. The number of children living in lone-parent households increased only slightly between 1960 and 1990 from about 9% to 11% (Table 4), and the decrease in average family size was greater among lone parents. In 1960,

> about 70% of lone mothers and about 67% of lone fathers had two or fewer children; by 1990 these figures had risen to 85% and 88%, respectively.

Both non-family and one-person households have grown since 1960, with increases highest during the 1970s (Table 1). Influenced by the expansion of the educational system and the integration of women into the labour market, the share of men and women under 25 living alone increased during the 1960s and 1970s, but decreased during the last decade. This is mainly due to the fact that people of younger cohorts remain longer in the parental home. Non-family and single households make up 53% of all households in urban areas, whereas the proportion of family households is much higher in rural areas.

Although all types of households with other persons (multi-person households, couples with other persons, couples with children and other persons, lone parents with other persons, multi-nucleus families) decreased, the decline was most drastic among couples with children and other persons, whose number dropped to one-tenth within 30 years. Arrangements in which (married or unmarried) couples or lone parents live together with grandparents, other persons, or in a multi-nucleus household became quite rare. About 95% of couples with children and 92% of lone mothers live in a one-nucleus family. The only exceptions (to some degree) are lone fathers, who more frequently cohabit with other persons or in households with two and more family nuclei.

Most living arrangements reveal strong life-cycle effects. Pluralization is highest between the age of 24 (when most individuals move out of the parental home) and around the mean age of any births (when most people have founded their own family or household). In later stages, due to increasing divorce rates, something like a re-pluralization can be found.

### *Conclusion*

Overall, we see only moderate changes in household composition in Switzerland. About two out of three persons currently start their family cycle within unmarried cohabitation. The proportion of consensual unions is only slightly lower than in the Scandinavian states except for Sweden, which is a outlier in this regard. By contrast, important thresholds (family law, lack of child-care institutions, work arrangements) prevent couples from combining unmarried cohabitation with parenthood. Lone parenting has not been as widespread as in other European countries for similar reasons. Marriage and parenting remain the choice of a majority of the population. However, evidence points to a shift in the meaning of marriage, which is on the way to becoming a contract among partners that easily solves various incertainties. Further characteristics of Switzerland are the comparatively high ages at marriage and at first childbirth. In

this respect, the gap between Switzerland and the European average has even widened over time. Also the proportion of Swiss women remaining childless is comparatively high and even increasing.

Based on these various developments one may conclude that Switzerland is experiencing a polarization between the shrinking family sector on the one hand and a rapidly developing non-family sector (new living arrangements) on the other (Dorbritz and Fux, 1997: 232ff.). The family sector has to deal with comparatively worse societal conditions and more severe (implicit or explicit) restrictions than the non-family sector (*strukturelle Rücksichtslosigkeit,* Kaufmann, 1992). Therefore such a polarization does not amaze. Since traditional household structures, however, facilitate the organization of family life, couples frequently move to a 'traditional' living arrangement when they decide to become parents. These accommodations of a couple's living arrangement often happen at comparatively high ages, are frequently motivated by instrumental considerations, and indicate a certain shift in the meaning of basic institutions such as marriage and the family. As a result, one should be aware that new wine is filled into old wineskins, even if the behavioural outcome in Switzerland appears to indicate only a relatively moderate change in household and family structures.

## FAMILY ATTITUDES: A TOLERANT BUT FAMILY-FRIENDLY CLIMATE

One must keep in mind that values, as fundamental orientations of collectives ('terminal values'; see Rokeach, 1970 and 1973), change imperceptibly over time and, from a methodological point of view, are not observable. However, they crystallize in cultural institutions such as the legal system, religious denominations, and political ideology. In this sense, family values were already a topic in the preceding sections. In this section, I shall look at Swiss attitudes as expressed in values surveys to attempt to determine underlying value orientations. It should be noted that data from such surveys are highly sensitive to methodology and contingent events, and that such surveys often report what is socially desirable rather than individuals' actual value orientations.

Only a few attitude surveys were carried out in the 1970s and early 1980s, and nearly all of them are samples restricted to particular segments of the population, such as married couples or divorced persons, or to particular geographic areas. The first representative polls that also focus on attitudes toward marriage, children, parenthood, divorce, and abortion were not carried out until the late 1980s. Switzerland did not participate in the first round of the European Value

Study Group, and as a result, it is hardly possible to document attitudinal change that could be interpreted to determine shifting values.

We assume that different cultural traditions influence attitudes and attitudinal change: liberalism favoured the spread of a concept of privacy in which the family is seen as largely autonomous and able to provide for itself. Liberalism certainly has had an impact on attitudes such as the acceptance of divorce, abortion, and new living arrangements, such as lone parenting. The liberal ideology is predominant in the traditionally Protestant cantons and cities.

The traditional counterpart of liberalism, namely the conservative ideology, is predominant in central Switzerland (*Zentral-* and *Urschweiz*) and some of the French-speaking cantons. It is linked with Catholicism and anti-etatism. Conservatives view the family as a fundamental institution and children an essential element. From this point of view, high scores are given to children (Value of Children scale). One would assume lower acceptance of abortion in conservative regions. While they do not approve of divorce and its consequences, they would not penalize them either, in contrast to other countries.

Social democratic and feminist ideologies are more common in the urban and economic centres and are often linked with post-materialist orientations, thus family and children are not major issues. It seems clear that leftist ideas are associated with a higher propensity to accept abortion and new living arrangements.

The main problem in analysing attitudes is the complex cross-cutting between most cleavages in Switzerland: Catholicism is predominant in some German-speaking cantons as well as in French-speaking and linguistically-mixed areas, and associations between economically more developed cantons and the configuration of denominations is fairly complex. We have therefore calculated figures by breaking down some family-related attitudes according to different variables such as the urban–rural axis, linguistic zones, gender, age groups, and religious denomination. The data derive from two surveys, namely a survey on population and welfare (*Bevölkerung & Wohlfahrt*)[3] and the Microcensus on Family Issues, conducted by the Federal Statistical Office in 1994/5.[4]

In 1992 (database: survey on population and welfare), a huge majority of the Swiss population aged 18 and older was not in favour of the increasing number of divorces in general. This development was evaluated by 43% of all respondents as bad and by another 41% as very bad. In the French-speaking region, among people aged 30 to 49 years old, in urban areas, and among respondents with no religious affiliation, the proportion of those who rated divorce very bad is smaller. Between men and women as well as between Protestants and Catholics there were no significant differences in this respect.

Nevertheless, divorce is widely accepted by the Swiss population. Out of a list of eight grounds (database: Microcensus on Family Issues, 1994/5), 54% of

those aged 18 to 50 would personally accept three or more as sufficient grounds for divorce. Breakdown of marriage ('the partner does not love me any longer', 73%), disharmony between spouses (59%), infidelity (56%), and alcoholism (49%) are most frequently mentioned. For 17% an unsatisfactory sex life would be a sufficient reason for divorce, while infertility of one's partner (6%), missing support by the partner (4%), and disagreement over the number of desired children (2%) are rated only by small minorities as sufficient grounds for divorce.

Acceptance of these grounds differs by gender, language regions, the urban–rural context, age, and religious denomination. Alcoholism is more frequently mentioned as grounds for divorce by women and French-speaking respondents, but comparatively seldom by Italian-speaking people. Women, respondents living in urban or in Latin areas, and younger people more often hold marriage breakdown as a sufficient reason. Again in the Latin areas, but also in rural areas and among Catholics, more people considered infidelity a legitimate reason for divorce. Grounds such as an unsatisfactory sex life or disagreement among spouses are more frequently mentioned by urban citizens and by people with no religious affiliation.

In the Microcensus survey, the respondents also had to evaluate six reasons that may justify abortion. Nine out of ten people (91%) considered the well-being of the mother and 61% the risk of bearing a handicapped child as legitimate reasons for abortion. About one out of four respondents mentioned that abortion is justified if the woman (26%) or the couple (24%) does not want a child, or if the mother is unmarried (15%). French-speaking respondents and those with no religious affiliation agreed with all items more frequently, while fewer Italian-speaking respondents agreed that the proposed items justified an abortion. There were no significant differences between Protestants and Catholics in this respect.

According to the Microcensus dataset, 47% of respondents had no objections to single women wanting to raise their own children alone. The proportion of respondents agreeing was slightly higher among women, French-speaking people, older age groups, urban residents, and respondents with no religious affiliation. No differences were found between Catholics and Protestants.

One in three respondents (31%) mentioned that parents should always 'sacrifice for the sake of their children'. The proportion agreeing with this item was significantly higher in the Latin areas and among men, while all other breakdowns showed only marginal variations.

By contrast, 75% of all respondents preferred the item 'parents must always be loved and respected by their children' rather than the alternative item, 'one cannot demand that children are always obedient to their parents'. The proportion agreeing with the first item was significantly lower in urban and

German-speaking areas, as well as among respondents without a religious denomination. The first item received the most support among French-speaking people.

The survey on population and welfare allows international comparisons of attitudes related to family, since similar surveys were conducted also in Austria, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, The Netherlands, and Spain. On the basis of reliability-tested scales, we can try to locate Switzerland in a broader European context (Dorbritz and Fux, 1997).

Comparatively many Swiss people accept recent demographic trends[5] and the spread of new living arrangements.[6] The degree of tolerance (range of scores: 0–16) towards these trends (Switzerland, mean: 7.2) is lower than in The Netherlands (mean: 9.5) and Spain (mean: 8.2; Spain is an outlier in many attitudinal surveys), but significantly higher than in the former Czechoslovakia (mean: 5.3), Austria (mean: 6.5), and Italy (mean: 6.6). Within Switzerland, French-speaking (mean: 6.9) and Italian-speaking people accept these trends to a lesser degree than do German-speaking people (mean: 7.2). However, intranational variation is smaller than international variation in this respect.

A similar structure can be found regarding the evaluation of children (value of children scale, range of scores: 1–14). Along with The Netherlands, Switzerland belongs to the countries with comparatively low scores while respondents in former socialist countries, in the south of Europe, and in Germany give significantly higher values to children. Again, a marked variation is to be observed within Switzerland. In the French- and Italian-speaking parts of the country, children seem to be more valued than in the German-speaking regions.

By contrast, attitudes and value orientations related to the family (familialism scale) show only a small variation, both between countries and within Switzerland. In all of the countries under observation, the family remains an important institution.

*Conclusion*

One can conclude from these findings that Switzerland is characterized by a comparatively high tolerance towards various family-related trends, though such openness to new family forms does not preclude a high appreciation for the family institution. The internal segmentation of Swiss society markedly influences individual attitudes. In the French-speaking regions and urban centres, and among those with no religious affiliation, acceptance of divorce and abortion is higher than in the German- and Italian-speaking areas. By contrast, differences between Protestants and Catholics are of minor importance. Regarding the spread of new living arrangements (familialism indicator), the German-speaking areas seem to be more tolerant while intergenerational relations and children are

more valued in the Latin areas than in the German regions. The linguistic cleavage seems to be the predominant factor explaining subnational variations in attitudes, though also on the urban–rural axis as well as among respondents without religious affiliation marked deviations are to be found. Catholics and Protestants, however, show mostly only minor differences. In an international perspective, Switzerland is more similar to The Netherlands than to their neighbouring countries Austria, Germany, or Italy.

## NOTES

[1] For example, in the 1830s men in the canton Appenzell-Innerrhoden who married a Protestant woman lost their cantonal citizenship. Intermarriages with women from other cantons (or even other cantonal regions) required certain minimum assets; brides were obliged to pay extra taxes or to ask for governmental allowances. Restrictions were highest for poor people.

[2] E.g. different age limits for the concept 'child'; varying categories for socio-professional groups; introduction of the concept 'consensual union' in 1980; since 1980 subtenants are dealt with as separate households; since 1990, it is possible to mention two heads of household. The fact that people were allowed to declare only one head of household until 1980 led to a marked underestimation of consensual unions.

Published data from censuses are based on different age definitions for children. In 1960 and 1970 the basis consisted of all children without any age restriction. Most official tables for 1980 limited children to those under age 25, and in 1990 children were limited to those under 20. R. Tierbach (University of Constance) has provided tables based on identical definitions for 1980 and 1990 for this study.

[3] A representative random sample of 2,800 respondents, carried out at the University of Zurich Spring-Summer 1991 (by Fux). This study is linked with the comparative project Population Policy Acceptance of the UN–ECE.

[4] A representative random sample of about 4,000 female and 2,000 male respondents, carried out by the Federal Statistical Office from autumn 1994 to spring 1995. This study is linked with the comparative project Family and Fertility Surveys in the UN–ECE region.

[5] Decrease in the number of marriages and births, increasing number of divorces.

[6] Spread of unmarried cohabitation, increasing childlessness, lone parenting, singlehood, and extra-marital fertility.