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The Contemporary Situation and Preferences of the Ukrainian Rural Family*

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to determine the family situation and family preferences in rural parts of the Ukraine. This study investigates social integration of people in various types of municipalities and size characteristics of families. The results were compared with Ukrainian urban families and Czech rural and urban families. Besides the statistical data, results of a questionnaire survey were organised by means of social networks were used. The results suggested that relations between people and their community life and their social integration are influenced by the cultural context, historical aspects and the economic level. The differences between the contemporary Czech and Ukrainian rural families can be observed in different pathways and in a different part of the job market.

Keywords: rural areas, household size, generation, urbanization, municipalities, population, family

Introduction

The rural way of life in European countries quickly changes in relation to the transformation from the productive to the post-productive (consum-

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ing) society. In the post-USSR countries, the process is completed with the transformation from the central planned to the market economy. Although rural areas are more resistant against globalisation tendencies, global development impacts upon the countryside in a massive extent. Technological changes in agriculture, transport, communications and other branches are drawing the countryside closer to urban areas. Unfortunately, not only positive changes but also problems of the urban milieu (including changes in demographic and family behaviour) impact upon rural regions.

The changes mentioned do not act equally in the whole territory of the country. Rural areas in the vicinity of regional centres are impacted differently than the peripheral areas. Differences among individual types of the countryside are hence arguably more important than general rural/urban differences. Although the importance of the family seemingly decreases amongst the preferences of (young) people, families remain to be basic social entities. Their socialisation function is irreplaceable and we should ask that other roles of the family in contemporary urbanisation processes change?

The paper is aimed at an initial analysis of the situation and preferences of contemporary Ukrainian rural families in comparison with Czech rural families and with urban families in both the countries.

Contemporary Rural Family in Europe

A big part of references concerning rural families, especially in developing countries deals with a traditional farm family. However, realistic portions of agricultural families in rural areas rapidly decrease in developed countries.

To compare it with the traditional rural family, the contemporary European family loses at least a majority of its original functions. The economic function of the family is weakened by the emancipation of women who are not more dependent on the old patriarchal mode of the family life. Some of the functions are taken over by the state, especially in the field of education and social care. In contrast to the past, the family is no longer bound to the farm.

Individual members are free to engage in any other industry and in any other place of the world. However, the family keeps its socialisation function as it means to prepare children for life in society. Moreover, a well-functioning family can be a refuge for their members in all trials of life

like economic, health or interpersonal problems. It then follows that the contemporary family – although different from the traditional one – is still the main aggregate of the society. These processes running in contemporary families were described by Walsh (2016).

Some aspects of the family life are connected to the second demographic transition (Lesthaeghe, 2014). Let us hence name the retreat of multigenerational coexistence, decreasing the average number of children, late marriages and the birth of their first child, non-marital childbearing or a continuing high rate of divorces. In this relationship, Schwartz (2009) mentions that marital instability can strengthen the intergenerational ties of the whole family.

The share of the households of individuals grows rapidly and some young people do not make a family at all (defined as at least one parent and at least one child regardless of whether the marriage was closed). The share of incomplete families also grows. On the other side, the education level and mobility of the rural population increases although they do not reach urban levels. The levels of education also conditions demographic behaviour. Higher fertility is probably less connected with the traditional way of life, but it is more influenced with the lower educational level of rural women. Vobecká and Piguet (2012) explain the differences in fertility between urban–suburban and rural areas in Czechia with the effect of education and residential context.

Although there are many similarities across Europe, differences among countries can also be found. Mönkediek and Bras (2014) emphasise the difference between Northern Europe, with weaker family ties, and Southern Europe with stronger ones. Sobotka (2008) explains the particularities of the deep decrease in fertility rates in the post-socialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe. As a rule, communist regimes have suppressed traditional family motivations connected with religion. On the other side, they supported fertility financially and in relation to housing policy, while limiting other priorities like families (business, travelling) and the contraception pills.

After the fall of communism, pro-family politics disappeared whereas a traditional family way of life did not exist more. It can be considered for the main reason of a very quick downfall of the fertility and related indicators. The peasant family strategies (the preparedness to take a risk of independent entrepreneurship) in post-Soviet countries were investigated

by Wegren (2008). Čikić and Petrović (2015) admit some re-traditional trends among Serbian rural families as a strategy for coping with increasing uncertainty in the transitional period.

The transformation of Ukrainian agricultural structures in regional context was analysed by Schubert (1997). However, contemporary countryside is not only the agriculture. The Ukrainian rural development has been investigated; for instance, by Plotnikova (2015). She shows the counter-migration rural-to-urban and urban-to-rural in the same time. This fact underlines increasing differentiation of the Ukrainian countryside. Family problems are then closely connected with demographic development, which was elaborated by Panteley (2009). Unfortunately, she analysed the situation according to regions (області) which seem to be overly large territorial units for the rural analysis.

In the Ukrainian economy, external (partly temporary) outmigration also plays a role. In this regard, Vianello (2013) points out the consequences of people leaving behind their families. Tolstokorova (2009) investigated the following functions of Ukrainian families: reproductive, socialising, economic and recreational in the light of labour migration. Perelli-Harris (2008a) has tried to explain a new family behaviour within the transition of the social system of the country.

Material and Methods

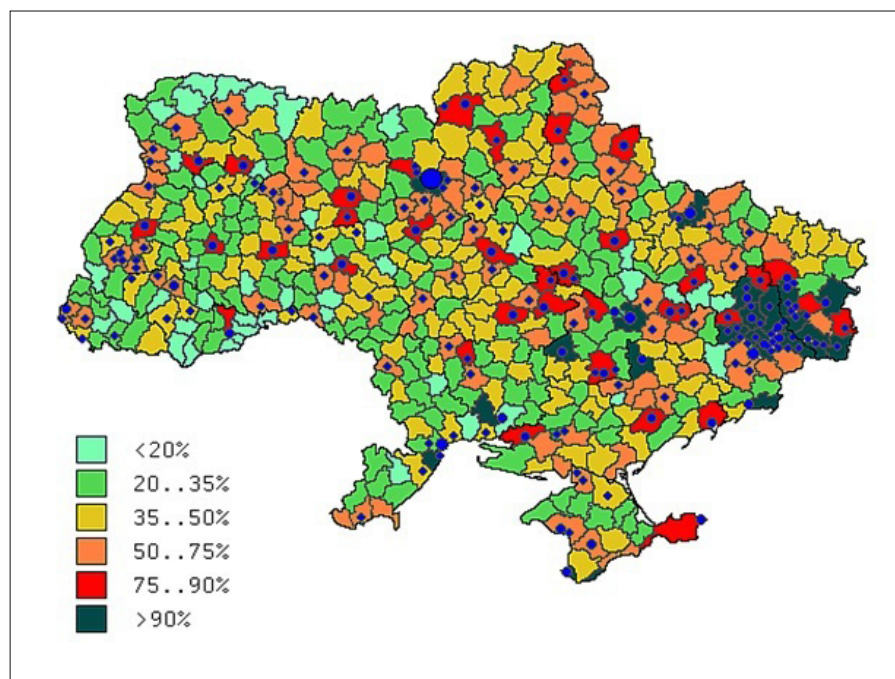
As it has been mentioned, rural Ukraine is the main subject of the study. In general, 32.8% of population was classified with rural in 2001¹. The level of urbanisation is in Fig. 1. The eastern and southern parts of the country are predominantly rural and they belong among the poorest areas of the country at the same time. The total number of villages and rural-type settlements in Ukraine is hence 28,621.

The Ukrainian demographic development after gaining the independence is sometimes marked as a crisis due to having one of the worst fertility rates. This situation is considered as a complex process with no single explanation for the second demographic transition and economic

¹ The last population census took part in Ukraine in 2001. The next census is expected in 2020.

uncertainty being the main players. According to Perelli-Harris (2008b), the Ukrainians alternate between embracing new, individualistic, Western-oriented values and maintaining conventional, Soviet-dominated ideology. The legal equality of family farms as regular players in the market is still under discussion (Ivchenko 2016).

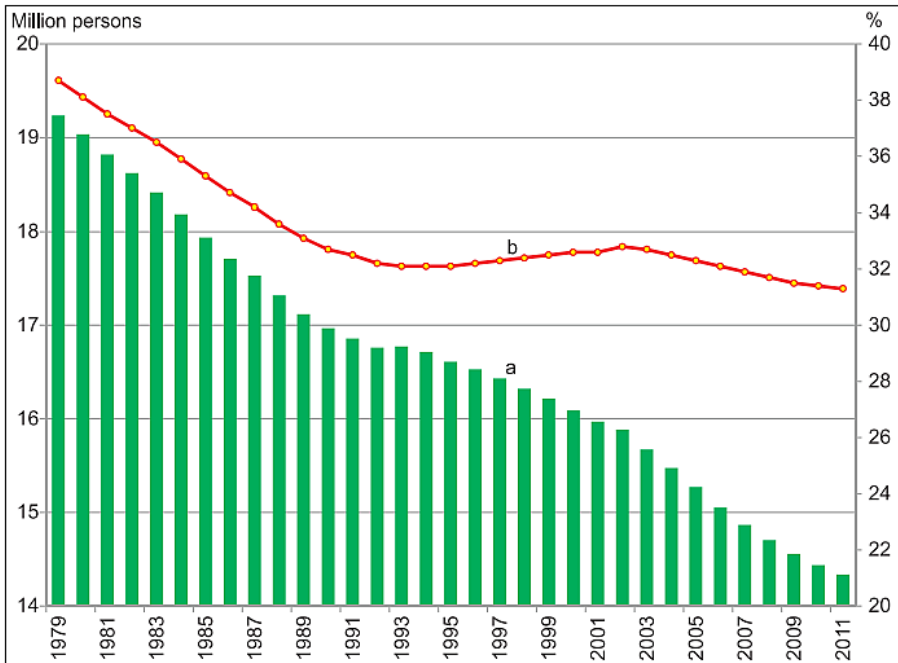
Figure 1. Level of urbanisation in Ukraine 2011 (the quotient of urban population according to districts – райони). Source: State Statistics Service of Ukraine, Kiev



However, rural Ukraine (in 2016) had a much higher fertility rate (1.64) than the urban Ukraine (1.36). It can be connected with lower educational level of rural women because educated women have less time for reproduction and more life priorities, although the formal education of Ukrainian rural population is relatively high but lower than in the cities. The rural Ukraine is characterised with a significant population decline (Fig. 2). The portion of rural population to the national population number can

be characterised by a rapid decrease at the end of the Soviet period, with a slight increase between 1993 and 2002 and slight decrease since that time. The Ukrainian countryside is hence not homogenous. The classification of Ukrainian rural areas was elaborated by Karacsony (2008, Table. 1).

Figure 2. The decline of the rural population in Ukraine: a) total rural population, b) the portion of rural population. Source: Skryzhevskya and Karácsonyi (2012).



Statistical data and secondary sources were used to characterise the Ukrainian population regarding family situations. The data comes from the Population Yearbook of Ukraine which allows us to distinguish urban and rural population and to differentiate the situation according to the regions (oblast').

Table 1. Classification of Ukrainian rural areas

Type	Subtype			Number of elements
I		Classic agricultural Ukraine		
	I.a	Agricultural areas of high fertility but low socio-economic intensity in crisis situation, with the highest population loss and ageing society, a broken socio-economic structure and interrupted development in the 20 th century	K4	152
	I.b	Classic agricultural areas of relatively favourable demographic pattern with very depressive economic conditions depressive economic conditions, but high entrepreneurial activity	K2	82
II		Inner peripheral steppe Ukraine. Overwhelmingly very sparsely populated peripheries struck by outmigration, but with less unfavourable natural population change and economic conditions	K5	110
III		Areas of giant villages with favourable demographic pattern and unfavourable economic conditions		
	III.a	The poorest agricultural areas with the highest population density and relatively favourable conditions for farming	K3	28
	III.b	Sparsely populated peripheral areas of overwhelmingly recent agricultural colonisation with unfavourable natural conditions	K7	30
IV		Areas with a higher degree of urbanisation, urban zones of gravity. Areas with favourable demographic pattern and economic conditions with a sizeable rural population	K6	30
V		Rural areas in mountain regions. Areas with environmental conditions unfavourable for farming, thus radically differing from those typical of Ukraine and adversely affecting settlement pattern and economic conditions	K1	19

As can be seen in Fig. 3, the survey took place in all almost types of Ukrainian villages. The majority of respondents (38%) were from cluster K4, which is the most typical cluster for Ukraine.

To discover some details, the family situation and family preferences were investigated by a questionnaire survey. To create a questionnaire, we used several questions from the European Social Survey (Výrost, 2008). As it is seen from the Fig. I, the survey took place almost in all types of Ukrainian villages. The majority of respondents (38%) were from cluster K4, which is the most typical cluster for Ukraine.

One of the blocks of the questions was about social integration of people in different types of municipalities.

Gerson et al. (1977) have identified four types of ties that link the individual to the community:

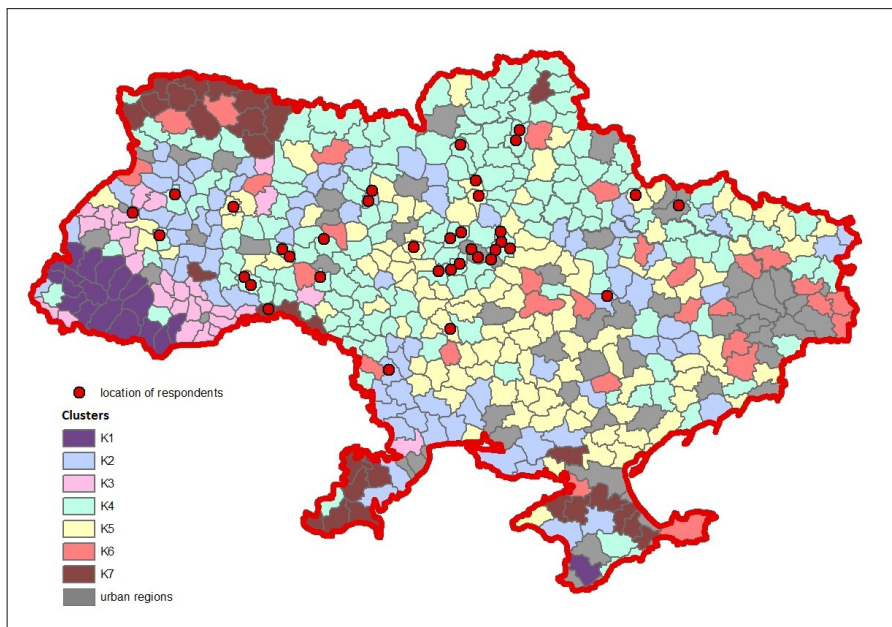
- institutional ties, such as churches, work;
- social activity;
- local intimates;
- effective attachment.

Furthermore, authors consider that voluntary ties – for example, neighbouring – is more important than institutional ties. They also think that local involvements are necessary for neighbourhood satisfaction.

The next block was focused on the size and related characteristics of families, such as the number of children, the size of household and the number of generations living in each household. The users of social nets became the respondents of the survey. A social net allows filter individual respondents by their municipality. The survey then tried to select people from different regions and districts.

To this goal, randomly selected people from randomly selected municipalities were asked to answer the questions with an electronic version of questionnaire (the full version is available on <http://www.survio.com/survey/d/J6L8H9I4P0F5U5I9D>). People from temporarily occupied territories, the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and of the anti-terrorist operation zone (Donetsk and Luhansk region) were excluded from the questionnaire survey. The overall number of addressed respondents was 860, the number of completed questionnaire is 100 and the questionnaire return rate was 11.6%. The rural-urban proportion of respondents is 50:50.

Figure 3. Location of respondents on the background map with the differentiation of the Ukrainian countryside according to Karascony (2008)



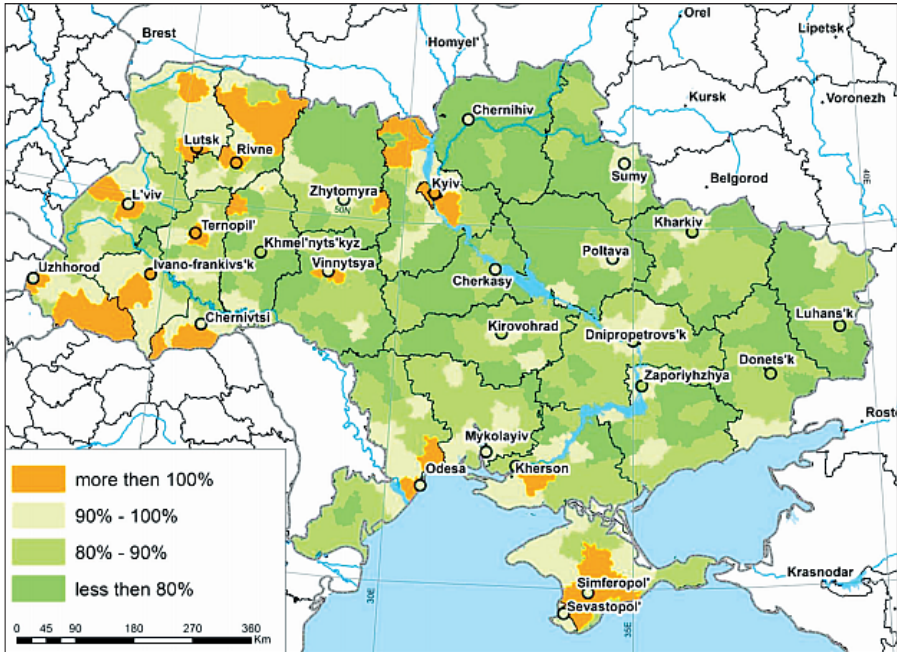
Results

Statistical evaluation

The demographic development in Ukraine is negative in general. The country loses population by the natural decrease whereas the permanent migration has a slightly positive balance in the last period (not taking into account temporal outmigration for work). Whereas regional centres gain some population by migration, the peripheral areas are losers in the demographic sense. Taking into account that preliminary young and educated people migrate, this trend probably means not only a decrease of the population number in peripheral rural regions, but also a worsening of their demographic and relative educational structure.

However, looking at the map of the population development, the East/West gradient can be observed. It seems that the Eastern part of the country loses population more quickly than its Western part (Fig. 4).

Figure 4. Population dynamics of Ukraine 1989–2009. Source: Karachurina and Mkrtychyan (2015)



In 2015, the migration balance for Ukraine was positive. The most attractive regions are the largest cities (Kyiv, Charkiv, L'viv) and with some distance Ivano-Frankiv region. The highest outmigration marked regions of Donetsk, Lugansk and with some distance Zakarpattia, Dnipropetrovsk and Zhitomir. The immigrants come mostly from Russia, Moldova, Turkmenistan, Georgia and Belarus.

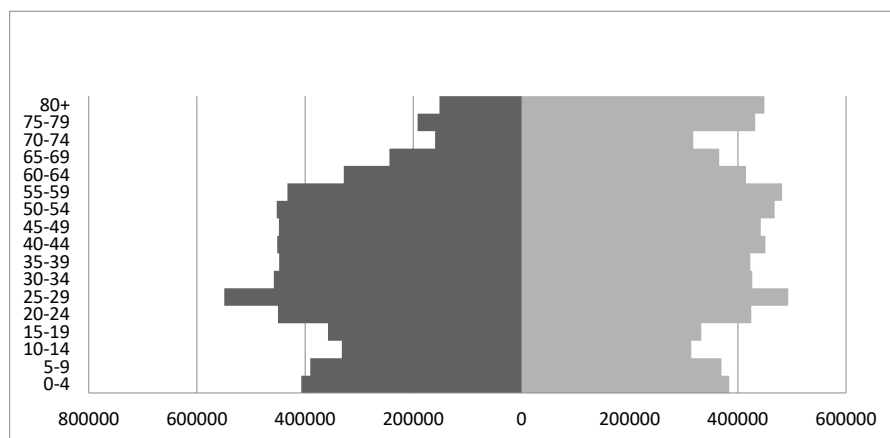
According to the State Statistical Service of Ukraine (2016), of 15 million of Ukrainian households, 4.6 million (30%) are classified as rural ones (households which own or use the land and their residence is registered in rural settlements²). The average household has 1.22 ha of land at their disposal. The average age of the household's head is 56 years for men and 62 years for women. In 53.8% of cases, women are the heads of rural

² It is a difference with the Czech definition which classifies as rural all the households with permanent residence in rural municipalities.

households. However, the portion of women living in the countryside decreases which does not answer to the imagination about aging of rural population. The preliminary rural regions are Zakarpattia (63% of rural population), Chernivtsi (57%), Ivano-Frankivsk (56%), Ternopil' (55%) and Rivne (52%) – all in the Eastern part of the country.

The age structure of Ukrainian rural population is seen in the Fig. 5. Two characteristic are worth to mention. First, the ground of the pyramid shows an increasing number of live-born children in Ukrainian rural areas. It is a relatively optimistic view. The high end of the pyramid shows a predominance of women, which is quite usual. However in the Ukrainian case, senior women significantly dominate in the highest years which points to some disproportion in the demographic structure of the Ukrainian countryside. It probably focuses future attention on certain aspects of the Ukrainian family life, like care for senior women or using senior women for the care for children.

Figure. 5. Age pyramid of the Ukrainian rural population in 2015. Source: Population of Ukraine 2015, elaboration the authors



There are some regional differences, of course. The youngest regions (according to their average age, 2015) can be classified as rural regions Zakarpattia (36.8 years), Rivne (37.0 years) and Volyn (37.6 years) etc. On the other side, Lugansk (43.7 years), Doneck (43.3) and Chernihiv (43.2 years) are the oldest ones. It seems that the West/East gradient counteracts the

urban/rural differences. The same can be observed in the general population development. The Doneck, Dnipropetrovsk and Charkiv regions lose the population.

Zakarpatia and Volyn marked minimal decrease and Rivne region had even positive population balance. It also concerns the rural population. The total fertility rate was 1.51 in Ukraine (2015) –1.71 for the urban population and 1.39 for the rural one. The rural population in Rivne Oblast had a total fertility rate of 2.28, which means that the region had the only population which fully reproduces. The rural Volyn region had the same value of 1.98.

In 2015, there were 299,038 marriages and 129,373 divorces in Ukraine. The main age category for marriages is 20–24 years for men and women both in the city and the countryside. It is relatively early in comparison with European countries. The next age category is 25–29 years and then the number of marriages rapidly decreases.

According to the last Ukrainian Population Census (2001) and sample surveys from 2008–2011 period, almost 90 percent of the Ukrainian population lives in families. A one-child family is the most common (76.0%), while every fourth family has two children (21.4%). The share of families with three or more children does not exceed 3%, where it is about 250,000 families.

The proportion of such families was more than 8% in 1989 and in 2001 it was 5.4%. Actual statistic data about households' characteristic in the national average is represented in Table 2, excluding the temporarily occupied territories of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol³.

Table 2. Household characteristics (according to Ukrstat.org)

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014 ⁵	2015 ³	2016 ³
Average size of household, persons	2,59	2,59	2,58	2,58	2,58	2,59	2,58
Average size of household per conventional adult, persons	2,12	2,11	2,11	2,11	2,10	2,11	2,11

³ Although Sevastopol is situated in Crimea, the city has its special administrative status (similar to Kiev).

Table 2. Household characteristics (according to Ukrstat.org)

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014 ⁵	2015 ³	2016 ³
Households, by number of persons in it	percent						
one person	23,4	23,6	22,4	22,6	22,8	20,3	19,7
two persons	28,3	27,9	30,0	29,1	29,6	32,5	32,3
three persons	25,5	25,8	25,0	26,9	25,3	25,9	26,9
four persons and more	22,8	22,7	22,6	21,4	22,3	21,3	21,1
Share of households with children under 18 years old (%)	37,9	38,0	38,0	38,0	38,0	38,2	38,2
Share of households without children (%)	62,1	62,0	62,0	62,0	62,0	61,8	61,8
Households with children (%), by number of children within it							
one child	73,6	74,9	75,6	75,4	73,6	75,7	76,0
two children	23,4	22,5	21,8	22,4	23,3	21,2	21,4
three children and more	3,0	2,6	2,6	2,2	3,1	3,1	2,6

⁵ Excluding part of the anti-terrorist operation zone.

Despite the fact that multiple-child families were always typical for Ukrainian villages, a one-child tendency has increased even in Ukrainian rural areas. Now experts suggest that the number of multiple-child families in rural areas is declining steadily due to the difficult life. Such a statement is questionable. The experience of other countries shows that people with the hardest life conditions have often the biggest families. A more probable explanation is that the second demographic transition has arrived in the Ukrainian countryside with some delay, but this does not mean that Ukrainian rural families do not need some support from the society.

Moreover, the problem of extra-marital birth of children should be mentioned. According to the National Research University, the “Higher School of Economics”, the proportion of children born out of wedlock was 21.2% in 2009. It is interesting that the extra-marital birth form 19.5% in

Ukrainian cities whereas 22.6% in the Ukrainian countryside. The share of mothers under 20 years of age is 4.0% in Ukrainian cities and 9.7% in the countryside. Moreover, the number of single-parent families increases each year. Every fifth family with children is incomplete (*The concept of the state target social family support programme until 2016*).

Survey

The next table gives the results of the survey for different types of Ukrainian rural areas. Understandably, the structure of the respondent was influenced by the organisation of the survey. Social networks (especially in rural areas) are used more with younger and educated people with access to modern information technologies. Families with 3–4 members, 1–2 generations and 1–2 children were represented most frequently. According to statistical information, a two-person household is the most typical for Ukraine (32.3%), while the share of Ukrainian households without children was 61.8% in the year 2016.

Table 3. Results of survey

Questions	Answers	Types				
		K2	K3	K4	K5	K7
Household size	1	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	2	50%	0%	5%	0%	0%
	3–4	25%	0%	58%	71%	100%
	5 and more	25%	100%	37%	29%	0%
Generations in household	1	25%	0%	32%	43%	0%
	2	75%	100%	37%	14%	100%
	3 and more	0%	0%	32%	43%	0%
Number of children	0	75%	0%	74%	29%	1%
	1	25%	0%	16%	29%	0%
	2	0%	100%	11%	29%	0%
	3 and more	0%	0%	0%	14%	0%

Table 3. Results of survey

Questions	Answers	Types				
		K2	K3	K4	K5	K7
„If you had to leave this area, what would you miss most of all?“	nothing	25%	0%	5%	0%	0%
	“My community”	0%	0%	16%	0%	0%
	Friends/ relatives/ neighbours	50%	100%	58%	100%	0%
	House/ flat	0%	0%	5%	0%	100%
	Land	0%	0%	5%	0%	0%
	Countryside	0%	0%	5%	0%	0%
	Family graves/ church	25%	0%	5%	0%	0%
Membership in organizations	Yes, active membership	50%	0%	16%	29%	100%
	Yes, formal membership	0%	0%	5%	14%	0%
	No	50%	100%	79%	57%	0%
Church attendance	At least once a month	25%	100%	32%	0%	100%
	Less than once a month	75%	0%	56%	57%	0%
	Never	0%	0%	12%	43%	0%
Participation in community events	Often/always	0%	0%	5%	29%	100%
	Occasionally	100%	100%	74%	71%	0%
	Never	0%	0%	21%	0%	0%

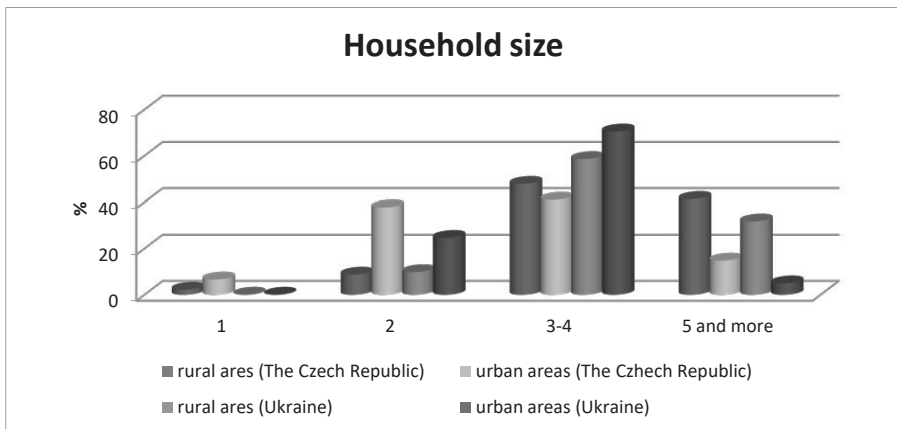
The differences among individual types in the countryside are not representative due to the small absolute numbers of respondents of individual types. The important information to take into account here is that all types of the Ukrainian countryside were involved in the survey.

It seems that the strongest tie of rural people in Ukraine connecting them with their original locality are friends and relatives. This means that social aspects of the rural milieu are more important for the respondents than material aspects. The involvement of rural Ukrainians in social organisations is less frequent, whereas their religious life and their participation in community events is more or less occasional.

The comparison

In order to evaluate the results, the comparison method was used. The results for the Ukrainian families were first compared with the Ukrainian urban areas (rural/urban comparison) and with Czech rural and urban areas, divided from Ukraine by the Hajnal (1965) line⁴. The following opinions were found out.

Figure 6. Household size



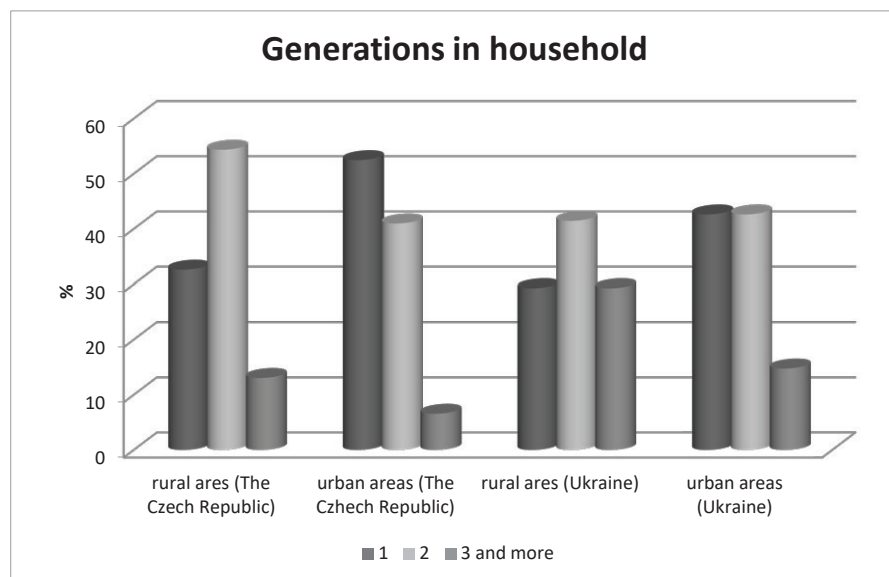
From the bar chart in the Figure 6, it is clear that one-person household is not typical for no-one from the monitored groups of respondents.

⁴ According to Hajnal, the line linking between St. Petersburg and Trieste divides European marriage patterns: to the west of the line, marriage rates and thus fertility were comparatively low and a significant minority of women married late or remained single. To the east of the line and in the Mediterranean and select pockets of North-western Europe, early marriage was the norm and high fertility was countered by high mortality

Although in reality it is represented in absolute and relative numbers very seriously), it has the highest representation in Czech towns (7%). A two-person-household is more typical for urban areas (Czech towns – 38%, Ukrainian towns – 25%), while three- and four-person households are the most popular size for all types of settlement. It can then be seen that larger households are more typical for rural areas (Czech villages – 41%, Ukrainian villages – 32%). Therefore, the hypothesis that in rural settlements live households with higher number of members is partially confirmed.

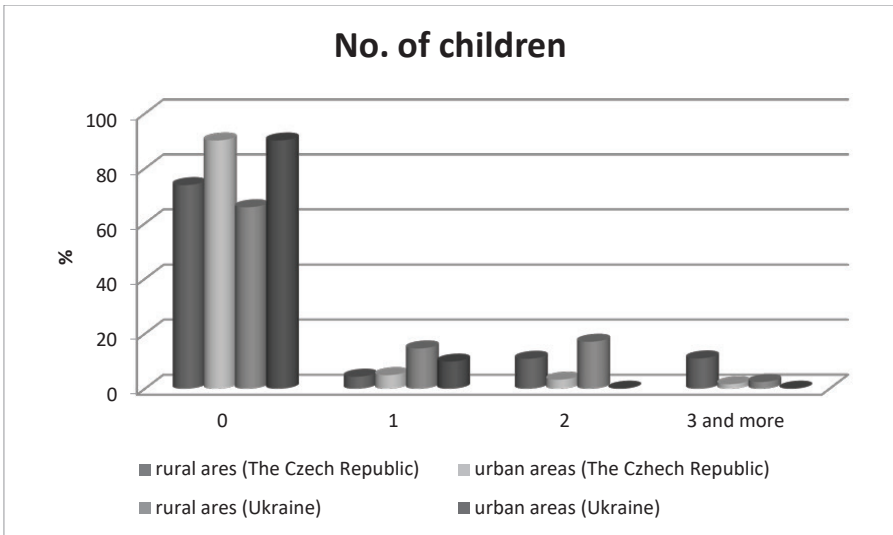
The household size is connected with the number of generations in one household. The household with two generations is the most typical model for Ukrainian and Czech villages (Czech villages – 54%, Ukrainian villages – 41% (Fig. VII). Households with one and three generations are represented in Ukrainian rural areas in the same proportion (43%). On the other hand, a household with three generations is the least represented in all types of settlements in Czechia (rural areas 13%, towns 7%). A household with one generation was the most popular answer in Czech towns (51%).

Figure 7. Generations in household



As is shown in the diagram (Fig. 8), most of the respondents do not have children yet. This fact can be explained by a young age of the respondents. Nowadays, people have a tendency to postpone parenthood.

Figure 8. Number of children



The existing theory is that the level of fertility is higher in rural areas than in towns. Furthermore, a greater proportion of married people live in in smaller towns and rural areas, which tend to be closer connected to parenthood (Hank 2002). Cultural factors may also explain the differences in fertility between urban and rural areas (Snyder 2006). Nevertheless, this theory is only partially revealed in the results.

The engagement in community life was the main aim of the questionnaire survey. It reflects the relation of the inhabitants to their municipality, village, natural environment and neighbours.

As Fig. 9 shows, most of the respondents are not members of the local community organizations (Czech countryside 83%, Czech towns 80%, Ukrainian towns 90%). Formal membership in the local social organisations dominates only in Ukrainian villages (51%); in Czech villages it is only 2%, but where a larger proportion has an active membership, it is 15%. The high percentage of formal membership in Ukrainian villages can be explained

by the historical aspect. The emphasis placed in the former Soviet Union affected the formal integration of all its citizens in different organisations, usually linked closely to the state socialist apparatus while an inhibited development of civil society in Ukrainian rural areas contributed to the high formal membership there.

Figure 9. Membership in organizations

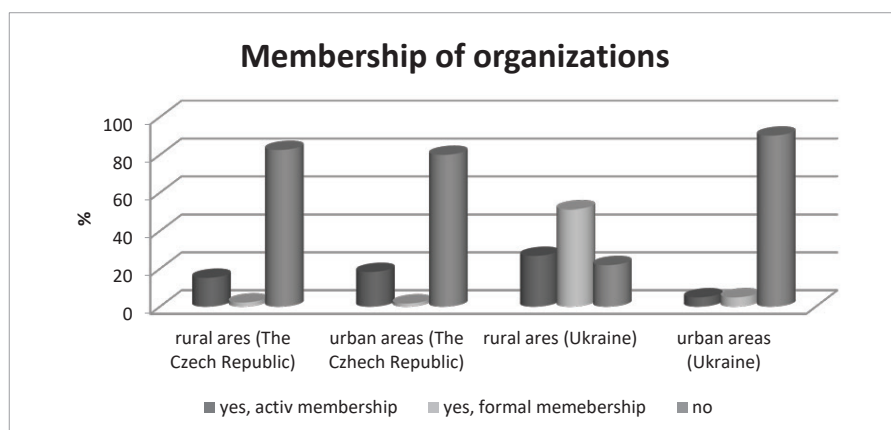
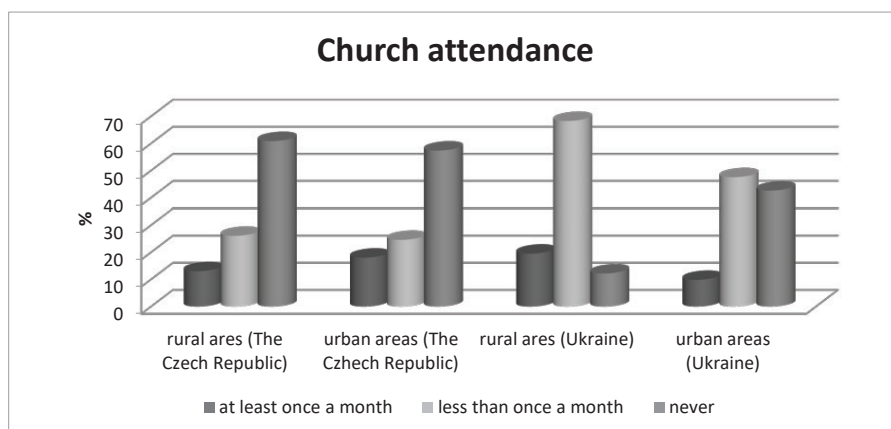


Figure 10. Church attendance



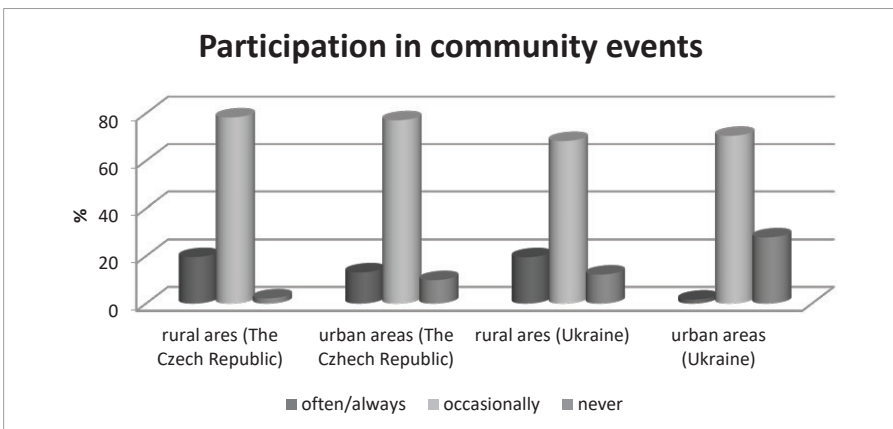
Besides, membership in secular organisations, church life can be next institutional tie which connects inhabitants to the formal sphere of community life. Therefore the respondents were asked about their church attendance.

The predominance of believers in Ukraine can be seen in the diagram on the Fig. 10. Moreover, the portion of believers in villages is higher than in towns, where most of their citizens attend church less than once a month. The situation in the Czech countryside and in the cities is similar. The majority of Czech respondents never attend churches/chapel (rural areas 61% and city 57%).

The inhabitants of Ukrainian villages uphold traditions than townspeople and church attendance is one of the Ukraine’s national traditions, which is observed in Ukraine more than in Czechia. In any case, the Ukraine has a higher percent of believers than Czechia. Moreover there is a closer relation between membership of a community organisation and church attendance in Ukraine, so regular church attendees were more likely to be members of community organisations.

The graph (Fig. 11) points to a trend that people in rural areas participate in social activities more often than people in cities. This finding can be explained by the fact that rural people try to keep local traditions and participate in local events more often than people from urban areas.

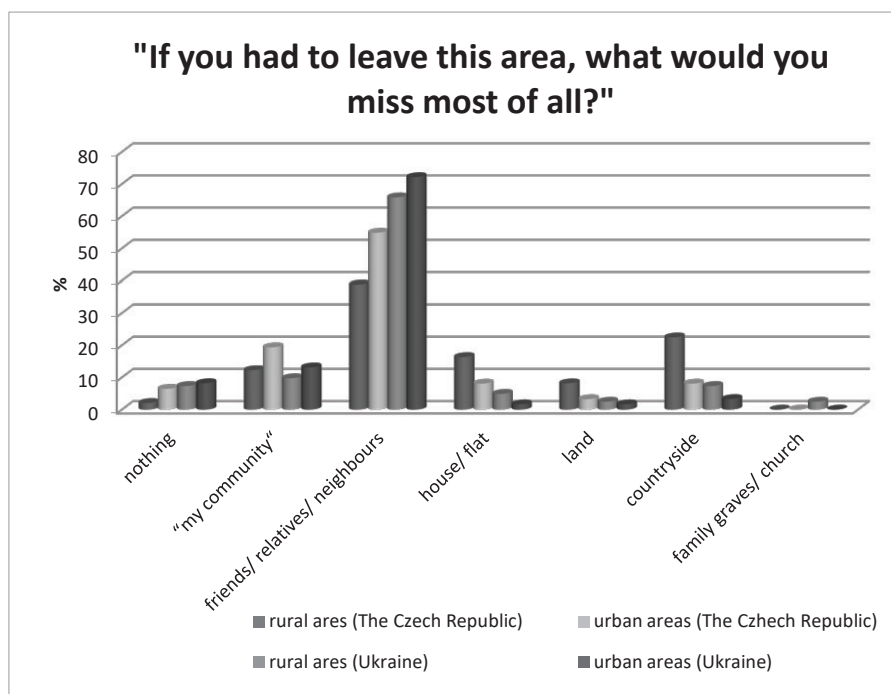
Figure 11. Participation in community events



However, in all the groups of respondents the predominant answer is “sometimes”. The most active respondents are from the Czech countryside, while only 2% of respondents never participate in social activities. Moreover, there is a relationship between the presence of organisations and participation in community events.

The last question was about respondents’ emotional ties to their community. To determine these ties, the respondents asked the question: „If you had to leave your settlement, what would you miss most of all?”

Figure 12. „If you had to leave your settlement, what would you miss most of all?”



The survey showed that in their settlements, respondents are most tied to friends, relatives and neighbours (Fig. 12). Their country would be missed, according to 22% of Czech respondents and 7% of Ukrainian respondents. These differences can be explained by a low economic level of most Ukrainian rural areas, which were studied. The concept of “my community is of major importance for 12% of inhabitants of rural villages

and 19% of the inhabitants of Czech towns. In fact, only a few respondents answered that they would miss nothing, so most of the respondents had at least one attachment to their communities.

Conclusion and Discussion

This paper has aimed to conduct an analysis of the contemporary stay of Ukrainian rural family and its comparison with other families. It can be understood as a study seeking to probe into the problem, but deeper investigation is necessary. Although Ukrainian statistics are very good in some fields, the post-Soviet character of the country manifests itself in an emphasis on the productive function of life, where the countryside is still understood as a space for the agriculture. In addition, the 2010 census did not take place and results of the 2000 census are outdated in relation to big social changes in the country. On the other hand, the differences between urban and rural population are captured very well.

It is more or less clear that the family situation differs not only within an international (Ukrainian/Czech) comparison, but also in the rural/urban context and according to different rural regions. The results of the questionnaire survey suggest that relations between people, their community life and their social integration are influenced by the cultural context, historical aspects and economic level. It seems that the West/East gradient⁵ can be also very important for the development of Ukrainian families.

The differences between the contemporary Czech and Ukrainian countryside can be observed in a different fashion. At the present time, both countries have very different levels of unemployment which results in temporary or permanent outmigration. Chreneková et al. (2016) reveal a high level of informal employment, which is relatively high in the poorest Ukrainian rural regions in the West and South. These facts impact upon the family situation.

⁵ In general, Right-bank Ukraine, Left-bank Ukraine (divided by the Dnieper river with the special position of Kyiv) is usually mentioned. The division relates to the Truce of Andrusovo which divided Ukraine between Russia and the Polish-Lithuanian Union in 1667. From this history, it follows that the division has been projected into the cultural sphere (Catholic/Orthodox) and into family rituals.

By the way, Ukrainians are the most frequent nationality among immigrants to Czechia (before Slovaks). There were 104 thousands of Ukrainians living in Czechia, with permission for more than 12 months (2015). They are concentrated in big cities and in regions with jobs in manufacturing industries, which is why the family behaviour of Czech Ukrainians will be of interest in the future. In our opinion, the Ukrainians will probably accept the way of life of the Czech majority but also family life. In 2015, 917 children were born to Ukrainians in Czechia and 642 Ukrainians died. Altogether, 263 Ukrainian women got married to Czech partners, while 205 were divorced. In the same period, 75 Ukrainian men got married Czech women and 86 divorced.

A prolongation of contemporary demographic trend is another question. It seems that the second demographic transition will end – similar to the first one. Goldscheider et al. (2015) are of the opinion that the fertility rates and the union of families will improved with finishing the gender revolution in the sense of higher men's home engagement. Salamana et al. (2016) hence see a new rurality connected with educated women settling in the countryside.

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