

Divorces and women's income: initial findings for the Czech Republic based on individual data

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Summary

- In most cases, divorce leads to a radical change in life situation with many consequences for both divorcees. Nowadays nearly half of all marriages in the Czech Republic end in divorce and so this has been and will continue to be part of life for a significant proportion of the country's population.
- The consequences of divorce are highly influenced by the division of labour within the couple prior to their separation. There is a high level of division in most Czech families. Women spend much more time caring for children, relatives and the home, while men are largely focused on paid employment.
- We estimate that married women aged 20 to 70 who are neither studying nor in receipt of an old-age pension would see their net incomes fall by 20 % if they ceased to share income within their household (e.g. as a result of divorce and separation).
- Households led by divorced women report some of the lowest incomes per household member. The average income in a female-led divorced household is one fifth lower than in married households and a quarter lower than in households led by divorced men.
- Divorced women are, however, more economically active than married women; this is probably a reaction to their loss of income following divorce. Nevertheless this difference could also suggest that women who are economically active are less attractive as partners (Bertrand, 2016).