

Transition to Adulthood, the Postponement of Childbearing and Ethnic Minority Status in The West Part of Romania

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The purpose of this paper – while taking into account the social and ethno-cultural background, as well as the ethnic Hungarian minority status – is to see how economic and demographic transformations take place in Romania, especially in the western part called Transylvania, and how this is reflected in the life strategies of young generations, in the prolonged youth lifecycle, in grounding a family and postponing events that are attached to it, especially shifting the age of childbearing.

Empirical sources

- The 2006-2007 research: *Life course events in Transylvania*, covering fourteen of Romania's western counties which have a consistent Hungarian minority, carried out among the 18-45 years old population. The research draws its methodology from the first wave of the International GGP research of a 2930 randomly selected representative sample.
- Vital statistics data from Romania, 1990-2006, INS .

Research questions

We are searching for answers to the following questions in relation to three events out of the life course events related to becoming an adult:

- The circumstances of leaving the parental home, when and at what age it takes place.
- Under what circumstances and at what age do young people finish their studies and get their first job, and how do social-demographic factor determine this?
- When do they have their first child?; For which age group is postponement characteristic and to what extent? As a result, what is the desired and actual number of children?

The theoretical framework of the research

The transition between young age and adulthood has an extensive sociological literature around the world. We chose as our frame of interpretation the population-based approaches. These can be distinguished in three main areas: the timing of transition, the stages of transition, and transitions as determinants of life path. We analyze the timing of passing from one cycle of life to another with focusing on the medium age when great life events generally occurred or occur to the population. The different changes between age groups occurring in

the timing of transition can be observed by making comparisons on cohorts as well as between them. Linda K. George has pointed out, that the transition/passage to life events characteristic of adulthood in the twentieth century occurs later for younger cohorts, in what concerns finishing school and enrolment in the first job. In the USA the last two three decades the average age of marrying has been prolonged to a later period (George 1993:359). They observed however that for those belonging to the same cohort, differences of social status prevailed: for those young people who were coming from lower class families, especially those with African American, Latin American origin, and those in the rural areas, the transition/passage to adulthood occurs earlier ((Hogan and Ashtone 1986), this being supported by Zinnecker (1986) and Chisholm (1990) observations on Europe.

Hogan and Ashtone point out that the length of youth lifecycle and the timing of passage to adulthood differ a lot in the USA according to social stratification, but there that can be delimited on ethnic-racial grounds too: They have shown that the majority of young women (non-married) in Detroit who got pregnant before marriage would come from a disadvantaged background. Among African American young women the rate of this early pregnancy and child rearing is unusually high, thus they enter adulthood directly from childhood (Hogan and Ashtone 1986. 125-126). We will try to test this hypothesis ourselves.

According to our hypothesis, ethnic belonging plays a less significant role in the timing of major life events, while social status, or broadly put, the position in the social structure (the type of settlement they inhabit) and the educational level play the bigger role. The transition from childhood to adulthood is filled out by a number of life events. These can be connected to the phases of becoming independent, and to demographic life events in broad terms, like establishing relationships, the first love, the first sexual experience, the (first) marriage or beginning of a stable relationship with a partner, conceiving the first child etc. all these life events occur generally when between 15 and 29. The question, at what age do young people actually go through these events belongs in the area of more complex approaches to youth life stage change. The youth life phase in Western Europe has gone through a considerable expansion that has more components, among them the analysts highlight the lengthening of schooling, the alteration of social reproduction, as well as the overvaluation of school-based knowledge. The direct surveillance institutions (family, work) regarding youth are in turn replaced by indirect ones like media, consumption industry, or at least there is a shift in tonality (see Gabor K. 1996:13). Another important component of this cycle change is introduced by the prolonged age at which young people leaving home, marry and the age of parents when rearing the first child. In the literature all these changes are called the second

demographic transition, labeled by the name of D.J. van de Kaa, and can be summed up as follows: (1) The 'golden age' of marriage is replaced by the 'dawn of living together' (2) the child-centric family model goes through transformations, now centered around the relationship itself. (3) The preventive use of prophylactics is replaced by the self fulfilling prophylactics (4) the united family model is being pluralized, more family models coexist accepted in the same society. The beginning of this transformation can be dated back on average at around 1965 in Western Europe (Van de Kaa 1987). These transformations have strong effects on the value changes that concern marriage, childrearing, and sexual life. Van de Kaa found similarities between these transformations and the shifts going from material values in the direction of post material values coined by Inglehardt. The first sexual experiences occur earlier, while childrearing is being prolonged in the case of both sexes, towards the age of thirty (the difference between sexes are still there). Child rearing outside marriage increases, and concubines replace the institution of marriage. But these processes did not occur at the same time or with the same intensity in all European Countries. In East-Central Europe the anachronistic population politics of Communist regimes did not support the evanescence of these processes. Moreover, in the background of family planning one has to note the profound social changes that could only emerge at the dawn of the nineties in the ex-communist countries, like mass education, getting acquainted and interiorizing modern family planning culture, the rise of the post material value system etc At the dawn of the nineties in East-Central Europe the demographic processes related to the family have rapidly changed. Especially fertility rates began to sink, and this on a larger scale than it would in the seventies in Western Europe. Together with this the first marriage age and age of first child rearing has also been prolonged. Between 1970 and 1984 the average age of getting married for women was 27,3 in Sweden, 24,4 in West-Germany, 23,9 in France, 21,1 in Czechoslovakia, for the other eastern countries this ranged from 21 to 22. There were similar differences of age in bearing the first child.

The conditions and context of the transition to adulthood have significantly changed in Romania as well during the last decades. The regime change has brought fundamental changes in both societies: restructuring of the economy from the point of view of ownership, reducing jobs in industrial branches at loss, due to the emergence of unemployment the first stages in becoming an adult – moving out of the parental home, the first job – have been postponed for many graduates. As a response, young people tried to stay for longer in the education system, which was possible for many of them due to the expansion of higher education, therefore the studying stage became longer. In Romania as well the age of

founding a family has also been postponed, cohabitation has also become more frequent among young people, fertility has dropped. (Spéder 2005). After the regime change, once the socialist apartment building structure disintegrated, the chance of buying an apartment had narrowed, the system of apartment allotment had ceased, apartments owned by local administrative authorities had been privatized and credit possibilities had narrowed. These changes made it very difficult for young people to establish separate and independent households.

In other countries of the region the situation is similar. In Hungary for ex. young people who started to work after 1990 had to face increasing difficulties. Employment conditions for young people searching for their first jobs have also become more flexible. The proportion of those who only work on temporary labour contracts because they have not found a permanent job is much higher than earlier. Flexible career start also exerts a significant influence on other, non demographic elements of the transition to adulthood. Also due to unsecure employment conditions, a much higher proportion of young people choose cohabitation. Occasional, contract jobs and the danger of unemployment do not allow young people to get married officially. Unsecure labour market conditions exert an even stronger influence on childbearing. For contract job employees and self-employed it is more difficult to have children than for those who have stable labour market positions and perspectives. (Róbert-Bukodi, 2005)

Leaving home

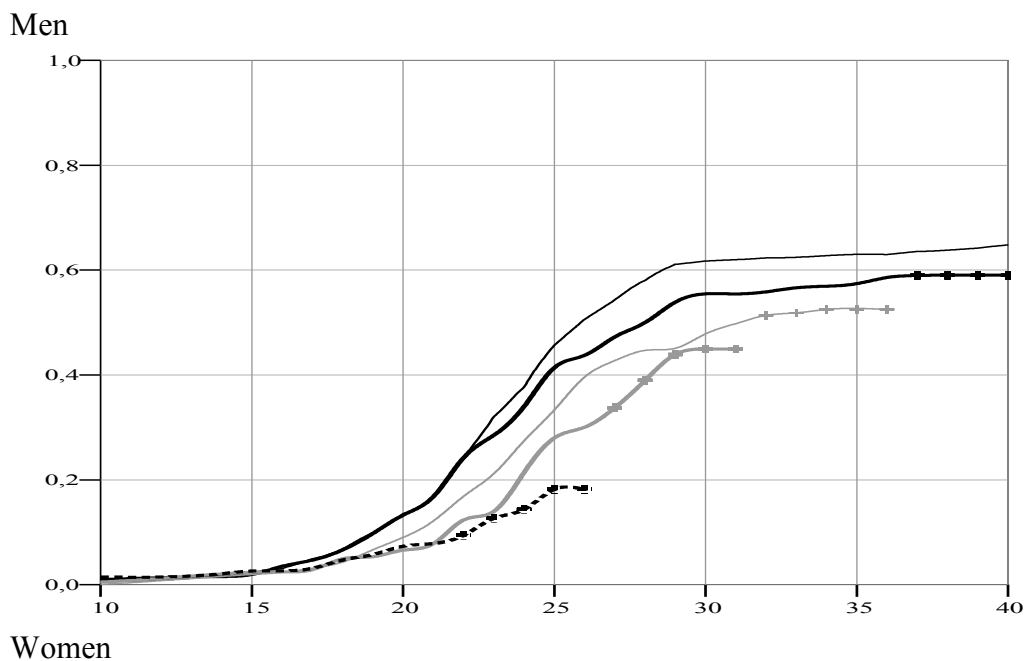
One of the main stages in the transition to adulthood is leaving the parental home. Specialty literature differentiates between two fundamental types of leaving home. (Buck—Scott 1993). The first one refers to the situation when a new household is established by moving out; this is what we call „leaving home”. The other type refers to the situation when the establishment of a new household is associated with moving together, either under the form of cohabitation or under the form of conventional marriage. There are also sub-types according to the following: this moving out takes place into one’s own apartment, into the apartment of one’s partner or into a rented home. Within the second main type moving out takes place into an institution, characteristically dormitory or workers hostels, barrack-rooms. We have analyzed the first type.

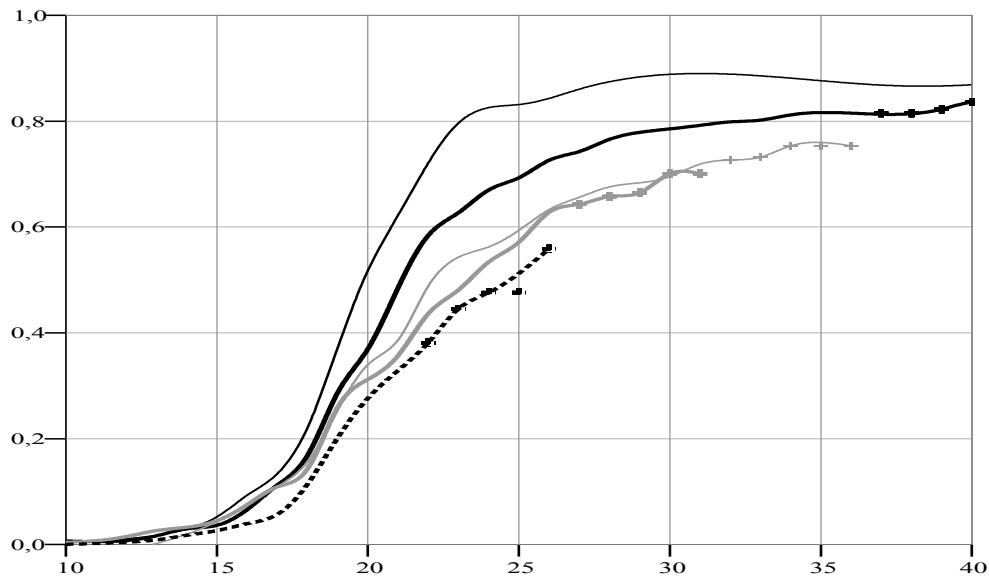
From the point of view of operationalization our questionnaire included the „When did you first leave the parental home?“ question. In the following we will use this question to analyze the date of the establishment of a separate, independent household.

Data related to the timing of leaving the parental home are retrospective – in a double sense. On the one hand, these are data collected retroactively: respondents have to recall the date of a past event from the perspective of many years or sometimes decades. On the other hand, there is also retrospection if we take into consideration that respondents have to recall and evaluate past events through their present experiences. This is especially important as during the retrospective construction of one’s life course these temporary moving outs, partial endeavours for independence may be reevaluated from the present perspective, their importance may decrease in time. The chances of acquiring information related to these short moving outs, ending with moving back or considered as insignificant later are small due to this double retrospective character of our data (Buck—Scott 1993).

In the following we will analyze the timing of the first moving out of the parental home, the differences according to gender and age group, as well as the relationship between leaving home and other important life course events. Socialization and later on maturization of successive age groups is embedded in different historical, social and economic contexts, therefore cohort influence is an important element in our analysis.

Figure 1. The average age of leaving the parental home according to specific ages by cohort (the cumulated ratio)





Source: Turning points in our lives in Transylvania, 2006 (ed by Murinkó L.)

The age limit above which every fourth respondent already lives in a separate household has increased relatively slightly. That is, a portion of the population has not been affected by this postponing attitude of the majority and they have left the parental home at a relatively young age. In Hungary, the age limit when a quarter of a those who belong to a given cohort already live in a separate household has increased from 21 to 24 in the case of men, and from 19 to 21 in the case of women. In Transylvania values for men are higher (age 23-25), while those for women are lower for those born after 1974 (age 19-20) than in Hungary.

In Romania, distortions in the age structure yielded by the introduction of the prohibition of abortion have fundamentally influenced the life course of the members of big cohorts: limited possibilities and positions have limited their possibilities, therefore continuing one's studies, obtaining one's first job, buying an apartment have become more difficult and they have even influenced partner selection and childbearing. For ex. for women born between 1967-72 the population of 3-4 years older men is significantly smaller because the cohorts born before 1967 are approximately half in size compared to those born after 1967, thus there are less potential partners to choose from. The difficulty of finding a spouse is also shown by the fact that, on average, age differences between spouses have become higher between 1967 and 1972 than before 1967. Thus, in Transylvania the postponing partner selection and childbearing attitude of Hungarian women born between 1965-69 is rather the result of a forced situation caused by a cohort influence, namely a sudden and

significant increase in the number of births. This was rendered more difficult by a specific period influence as well: the members of the cohorts were trying to enter a narrowing labour and apartment market in the second half of the '80-ies and at the beginning of the '90-ies.

The relationship between leaving home and other life events

After analyzing the timing of leaving home we will analyze the events that took place at the same time (during the same year) as leaving the parental home, those that leaving home preceded and those that it did not. When analyzing life events in pairs we also gather information on the extent to which leaving home is connected to other events or to what extent it is independent of those. *Figure 3* illustrates the tendencies by cohort, detailed data are to be found in the annexes (see Annex 1).

Figure 2. Average age of gaining material independence (apartment, school, first job) by cohort

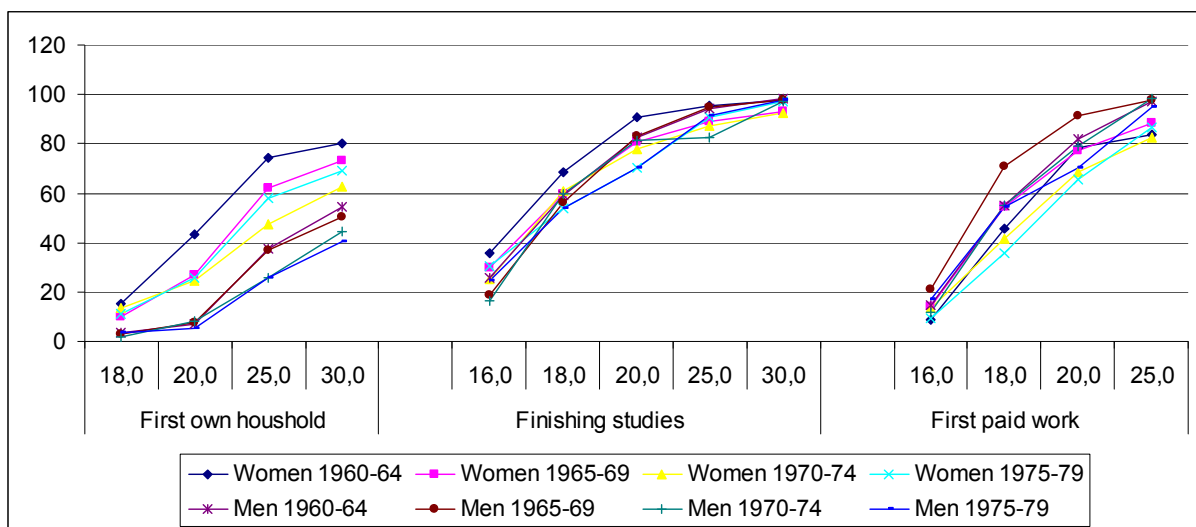
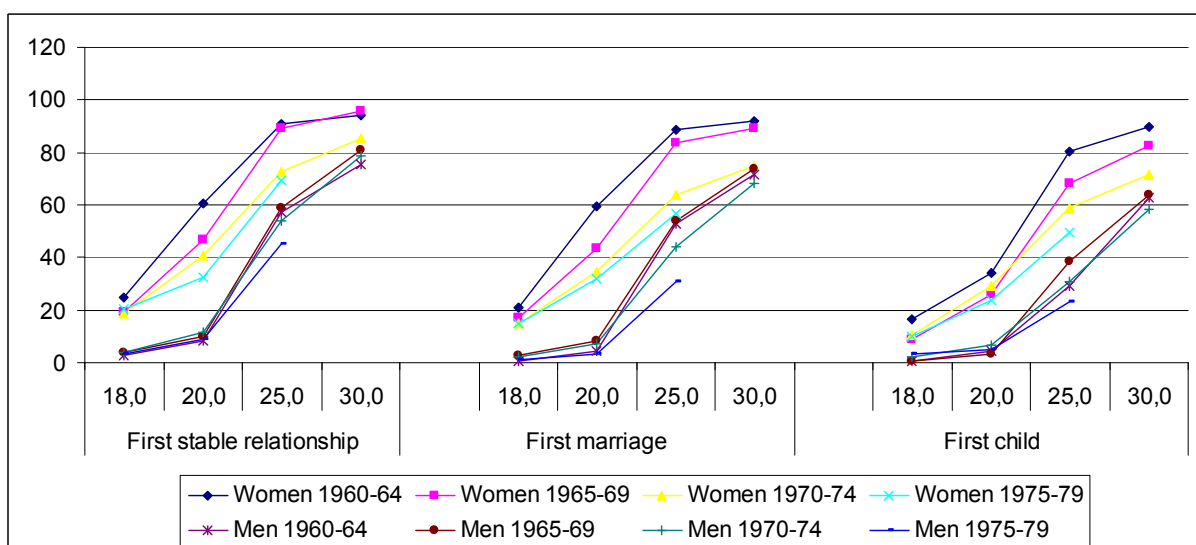


Figure 3. Average age of becoming an adult and family planning (cohabitation, marriage, first child) by cohort



Source: Turning points of our lives in Transylvania, 2006 (ed. by Murinkó L.)

More than two thirds of young people already live separately from their parents when their first child is born. Childbearing and leaving home are more often connected for women. The succession of life events shows that for half of our respondents leaving home only precedes childbearing by one or two years. Most frequently in every fourth case leaving home takes place the calendar year preceding childbirth, when the couple is most likely aware of the pregnancy or has plans about it.

According to cohorts, in Transylvania an increasing part of men still live with their parents when their first child is born: this proportion is 8% in the oldest cohort and 21% in the youngest cohort.

The special situation of women from Transylvania born between 1967-72 may also be observed here. In this cohort most frequently women were still living in the parental home when they established a relationship or got married (28%). For only 15% leaving home coincides with the birth of their first child, which is relatively a small proportion. It is this cohort in which the proportion of women whose first child was born before leaving home (16%), who started to work before leaving home (75%) and who left home before buying their own apartment (40%) is the highest, therefore getting an apartment and leaving the parental home was especially difficult for them.

Analyzing the timing of other life events related to the transition to adulthood, we may see that in their case not only leaving home has been postponed to a much later time. As compared to persons born earlier and later, the proportion of those who could have their own apartment at a relatively young age is smaller. The duration of studying had barely changed, but those born in the second half of the '60-ies started to work at an earlier age than any other cohort. The throughput of the education system has not increased and young graduates have been absorbed by the labour market. This was also the case with men. Moreover, characteristically women from the 1965-69 cohort got married or established relationships at an older age than those born in the first half of the '60-ies. As we have already pointed it out earlier, changes in the marriage market had a different effect on men and women: a higher proportion of men born between 1965 and 1969 got married and at younger ages than elder men. The birth of the first child had also been postponed for women from the analyzed cohort and as compared to women born at the beginning of the '70-ies, a smaller proportion gave birth by the age of 20. On the whole, the relationships of women from the numerous cohort of 1965-69 had not only been postponed by a relative lack of men, but also by the difficulties of

getting an apartment. As a result, childbearing was also postponed. In many ways this phenomenon is also similar to the situation from Hungary (see also Murinkó 2009).

Graduation and the timing of the first job

In both countries the average age of finalizing the highest educational degree is below 19 among the 20-46 year-old population and half of the respondents finalize their studies by the age of 18. The elimination of women’s discrimination in education is a relatively new phenomenon because the average age of getting the highest degree is smaller than for men, although the difference is not significant. For women dispersion is also higher than for men, which shows that postponing their studies, coming back to school after shorter or longer interruptions is more characteristic to women (Table 1, see also Veres-Murinkó 2009).

Table 1.
Timing the finalization of the highest educational degree

		Age of achieving the highest educational degree				
		Mean	Dispertion	Median	Range	N
Gender	Man	18,8	3,9	18	3	1041
	Women	18,6	4,4	18	4	966
	Total	18,7	4,1	18	3	2007

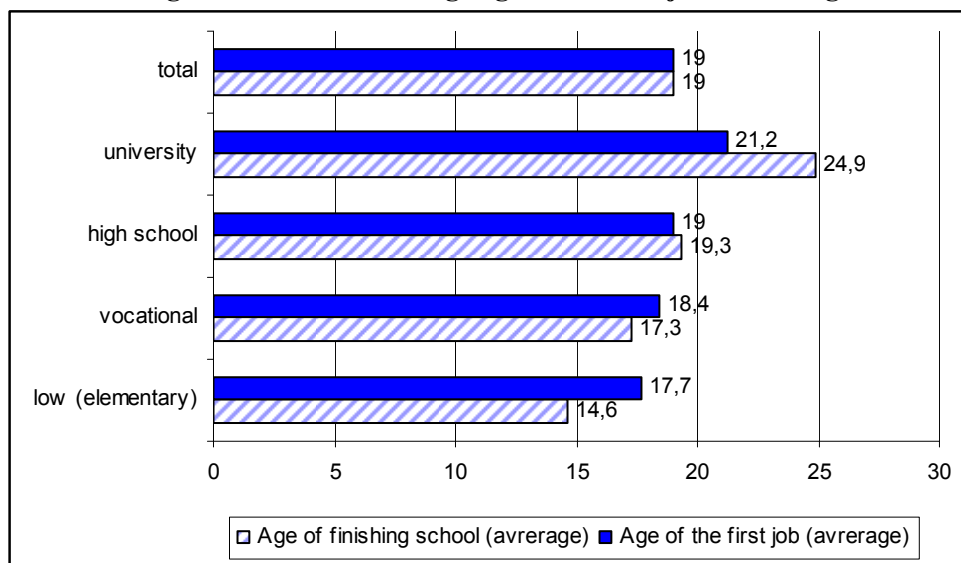
We have operationalized the average age of getting one’s first job by means of the question: „When, in which year did you begin your first regular paid job?” According to the answers the average age is 19. The average age of getting their first job is higher for women from Transylvania (19,4), (Table 2). This difference however may not be traced back to prolongation of the youth period according to Western patterns (Zinnecker, 2003), but to the timing of childbearing. The first child is born earlier in Transylvania, which often delays the entrance of women into the labour market. Higher dispersion values within women also lead to this conclusion.

Table 2. Timing one’s first regular paid job

		Age of starting the first regular paid job				
		Mean	Dispertion	Median	Range	N
Gender	Men	18,6	3,0	18	3	1089
	Women	19,4	3,6	19	2	938
	Total	19,0	3,3	18	3	2027

The timing of the first job is in accordance with finalizing one's studies: both the average age of obtaining the highest educational degree and getting the first job happen around 19. Interestingly enough, it is especially characteristic to university graduates to begin to work before obtaining their highest educational qualification. This could mean that they regularly undertake supplementary work besides studying in order to pay their expenses, but supposedly more frequently they turn back to school besides having a full time job to participate in distance or night education, thus improving their labour market chances. Those with maximum basic education can enter the labour market well after finishing school, on average three years later: at the age of 17. (However, it is possible that some of them continue their studies in high schools or vocational schools after finishing general school, but eventually they do not obtain a diploma, they drop out. The average age of finishing school for skilled workers and high school graduates (who have sustained their final examination) is relatively close. (figure 4.)

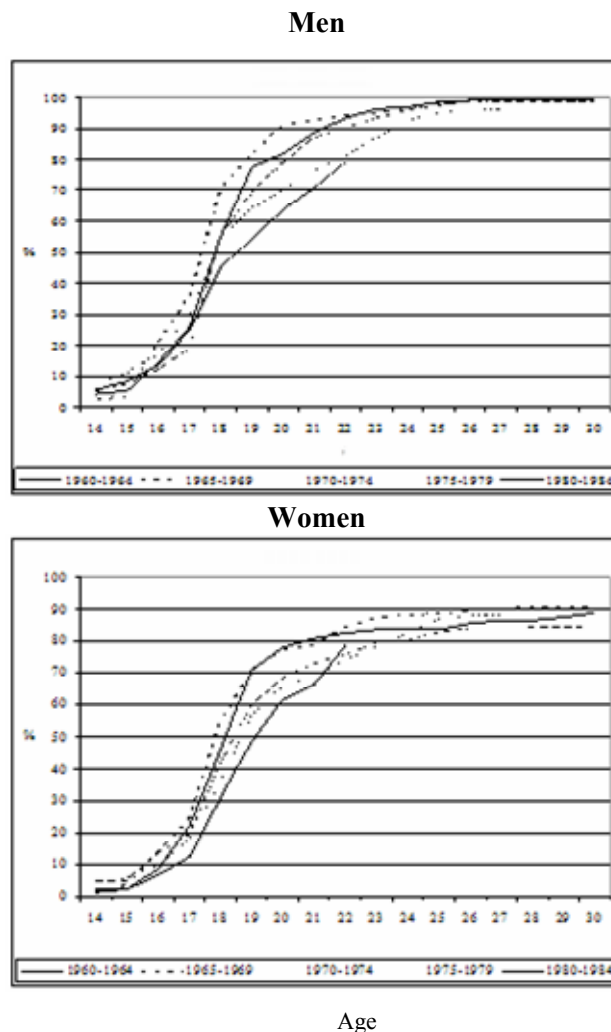
Figure 4. Finishing school and the average age of the first job according to level of education



In order to grasp changes in time, we have analyzed the timing of the first job from the point of view of cohorts as well. (figure 5.). In Hungary, we may observe postponement in timing the first paid job, especially for those born after 1975 and the level of employment does not reach the level characteristic to older cohorts. While 70-75% of the oldest respondents have already started to work by the age of 18, this percentage is only 40-46% in the case of the youngest respondents. In Transylvania the tendencies are less unequivocal: those born between 1965-69 started to work at the youngest ages and in the greatest numbers.

After this period a small postponement may be observed, especially within the two youngest cohorts. By the age of 18, 54-55% of men had started to work, except the 1965-69 cohort, where this percentage is 71%. 46% of women from the oldest cohort, 55% of women born between 1965-69 and only 36% of women from the youngest group had already worked at the age of 18.

Figure 5. Timing the first regular job by cohort (cumulated %)



Characteristically, Transylvanian women born before 1975 entered the labour market later and in less numerous numbers than for example their counterparts from neighbouring Hungary (see Veres – Murinkó). On the one hand, this is due to the fact that while in Hungary the level of employment, of employees approaches 100%, in Transylvania this is maximum 90% even by the age of 30, therefore maybe one tenth of women never enter the labour market but they become housewives or mothers.

Having the first child within the context of prospective events

We have examined the mean age of having one's first child within the context of the main events within the process of transition to adulthood by both sexes. We have examined the answers by age groups of 5 years, and we have received the following answers.

According to the answers – first we have looked at the life events that have already happened – the actually highest school education was completed at the age of 18 and 19 in each age group, but we should mention here that among the 18-24 year-old respondents half of the age group is still studying. This well illustrates the fact that the schooling life phase has been prolonged in Romania as well. As for starting to work, which also takes place around the age of 18-19, the difference is not big either, but there is a difference regarding the fact that about half of the 18-24 year-old respondents are still studying besides work. But the starting point of living together with a life partner has been transferred to a much earlier age, which reflects a higher degree of individualization and sexual freedom. The year of moving from the family is also transferred earlier, though we have to observe that the majority of the 18-24 year-old respondents has not left the family house yet, thus the answers only summarize a part of the population. (see table 3)

Table 3.

At what age did these life-events happen for the first time?

Life event	Gender	Age group				
		18 - 24	25 - 29	30 - 34	35 - 39	40 – 45
In which age do you received the highest degree of education?	Men	18.2	19.4	18.7	18.6	19.0
	Women	18.6	19.0	18.5	18.9	18.3
In which age are you started to have a job?	Men	18.5	19.1	18.6	18.2	18.5
	Women	19.0	19.6	19.5	19.1	19.7
In which age moved together with a permanent partner?	Men	19.6	20.6	22.2	26.8	26.5
	Women	18.8	20.8	21.5	27.1	21.8
The age of your moving from parental home	Men	19.5	23.0	24.1	23.4	23.7
	Women	19.5	20.7	21.0	21.9	20.4
The age of the marriage	Men	22.2	24.1	25.0	24.6	25.1
	Women	19.8	21.4	21.6	21.5	20.3
The age when had the first child	Men	21.1	24.7	25.7	26.3	26.4
	Women	20.2	22.3	22.8	23.0	23.0

Our survey also included opinion questions related to the prospective time different phases of the transition to adulthood. The questions referred to the age of marriage for women and for men separately, as well as to the “best” age recommended for having the first child. The answers reflect the postponement of these life events to a later age among members of younger generations. The biggest difference may be observed in women’s answers related to women: the most favourable average age of marriage for women is 22.5 years according to 40-45 year-old women, 24 years according to 18-24 year-old women, this is similar to the answers of 25-29 year-old women. As for the most favourable average age of having the first child for women, out of the respondents of both sexes, the oldest examined age group considers that this would be the age of 23.7 (8), while the youngest age group consider that the best age for having the first child is 25 years, the difference is about two years.

In the case of men, the differences regarding the most favourable average age of having the first child is smaller, 1 year, and there are no significant differences between the sexes either (see table 4).

Table 4

Perceptions about the ideal age of the first marriage and childbearing

	Gender	Age group				
		18- 24	25 - 29	30 - 34	35 - 39	40 - 45
What is the best age to get married for a women?	Men	23.7	23.3	22.5	22.8	22.6
	Women	24.0	24.0	23.7	23.6	22.5
What is the best age to get married for a men?	Men	26.5	26.5	25.7	25.6	25.4
	Women	26.6	27.0	26.5	26.8	25.5
What is the best age to have the first child for a women?	Men	25.3	24.6	24.2	24.0	23.7
	Women	25.0	25.1	24.4	24.6	23.8
What is the best age to have the first child for a men?	Men	27.8	27.6	27.1	26.7	26.6
	Women	27.7	28.1	27.4	27.8	26.7

We have analyzed the number of children Transylvanian men and women would like to have. The number of desired children and the average number of children for men is smaller than that for women, but this is valid especially for actual children because in Transylvania men have children at older ages than women (Table 5).

Table 5.

The number of desired children and the average number of children among the 20-24 year-old Hungarian population from Transylvania according to sexes

	Wanted total number of children (average)	Actual number of children (average)
<i>Gender</i>		
Women	1.98	1.24
Men	1.92	0.83

According to level of education the same correlation as in the case of women may be observed: men living in Transylvania who are university graduates and those with basic education are much behind in realizing their plans than the average.

This might be caused by the fact that men are less “sought” on the marital market. According to marital status 47% of those who have maximum 8 classes are not married and among them 22% live with their partner, another 22% have a partner and 56% are single, without a partner. Analyzing the number of children according to birth cohorts we may observe that half of the oldest cohort born between 1962-1966 do not have any children, while 42,3% have 3 or more children, thus there are only a few who have 1 or 2 children: one part of the population does not have any children, while the other part belongs to families with many children, a significant proportion of which are of Roma origin. 59% of this low educated population has never moved out of the parental home and this proportion is above 50% even for the two oldest 5 year old cohorts (those born in 1971 or earlier)!

Men with higher education degrees are significantly behind. While the average value of desired children is 1,98 for men of Hungarian ethnic origin belonging to this category and the actual number of children is 0,42, the national TFR value is 1,3 in Romania and 1,2 in Transylvania. According to marital status, more significant differences may be observed for those married. *Among married men* there are significant differences between the number of actual and desired Transylvanian Hungarian children: 2,1 respectively 1,40 (see table 6.).

Table 6.

The number of desired children and the average number of children among the 20-24 year-old Hungarian population from Transylvania according to different social criteria

	Men		Women	
	Wanted total number of children (average)	Actual number of children (average)	Wanted total number of children (average)	Actual number of children (average)
<i>Cohorts</i>				
1960-1964	1.95	1.59	2.09	1.96
1965-1969	1.93	1.24	1.82	1.52
1970-1974	2.10	0.97	2.06	1.27

1975-1979	1.99	0.32	2.04	0.88
1980-1984	1.87	0.02	1.82	0.27
<i>Marital status</i>				
Single	1.58	0.06	1.49	0.57
Coabitation	2.20	0.80	2.12	1.2
Marriage	2.14	1.40	2.07	1.6
<i>Education level</i>				
Low (elementary)	2.07	1,06	2.45	1.95
Vocational school	2.07	0,98	2.05	1.60
High school	1.87	0.79	1.79	0.94
University	1.98	0.42	1.90	0.52

It is worth analyzing if there is, and if there is – what is the extent of *voluntary childlessness*. That is, what is the proportion of those who do not have children in Transylvania and who answered that they do not want to have any children.¹ Generally, the phenomenon of voluntary childlessness is very uncommon. At a first glance it appears that the proportion of childless persons or those who do not plan to have children is smaller among women and higher among men (table 7).

In Transylvania we find relatively high proportions for each age group. Proportions are especially high among the two youngest cohorts (those between 20-29 years of age at the time of questioning). *Marital situation* is the most important cause of voluntary childlessness among Hungarians from Transylvania. (But we may not exclude that those living alone do not want to have children (yet) because this event is not likely in their situation) The other recruiting group is formed of schooled women: this refers to the fact that childbearing does not fit into their life objectives.

Table 7.

The ration between the childless population and the population that does not want to have children among the 20-44 year-old Transylvanian Hungarian population in 2005-2006

	Gender	
	Women	Men
<i>Cohorts</i>		
1960-1964*	8.4	11.2
1965-1969	7.3	9.4
1970-1974	6.9	8.4
1975-1979	7.0	13.1
1980-1984	14.9	16.5
<i>Marital status</i>		
Single	24,4	27,3
Coabitation	11,9	12,0
Marriage	3,4	2,9

¹ We are aware, of course, that intentions may change during one's life cycles.

<i>Education</i>		
Low (Elementary)	2,5	15,7
Vocational school	9,3	12,9
High school	11,3	14,2
University	10,2	8,3

Conclusions

Based on the results of our analysis we may assert that the dates of the transition to adulthood are postponed to older ages in the case of younger cohorts, but there are significant differences among different social groups. Thus, it may be seen that successive cohorts postpone to increasingly later times their moving out of the parental home in Transylvania, starting with the cohorts born in 1967. Postponing is more significant among women and at all ages a higher proportion of women live separately from their parents and they leave the parental home earlier than men. This is probably due to age differences between female and male members of different couples as well as to the fact that traditionally young couples move to the families of men if they can not establish individual households. However, as schooling for women and men started to become more and more similar and traditional female and male roles started to weaken, differences between sexes related to leaving the parental home started to decrease.

We may not only speak about postponement of the age of leaving home, but the heterogeneity of life courses has also increased. It seems that there are no unitary and socially expected practices for the establishment of individual households. Even more, there is no standard age for leaving home within younger cohorts from Transylvania.

In Transylvania, the life course of women born after 1967 was fundamentally influenced by being members of especially numerous cohorts. Due to difficulties in getting an apartment and the narrowing of the marital market, marriage and leaving the parental home have been postponed as compared to members of older cohorts.

The average age of getting the first job is 19 for Hungarians from Transylvania and for the entire Romania. Although the duration of their studies is similar, on average women from Transylvania get a job a year later than men and their level of employment is also lower by almost a tenth. This is due to the fact that a part of the women from Transylvania start to search for a job only after childbearing at a relatively young age. A smaller group remain permanently housewives, never entering the labour market.

During the last decades the beginning of regular jobs has been somewhat postponed in Transylvania, especially for those born after 1975. We explain this by the expansion of education and the narrowing of the labour market at the beginning of the 1990-ies.

The average age of childbearing for the youngest persons as compared to the oldest analyzed cohort has been delayed to different degrees according to sexes: 2 years for women and 1 year for men.

The childbearing practices and intentions of the female cohort born after the prohibition of abortion (between 1967-71) are special: they would like to have fewer children than younger and older cohorts. We explained their behaviour and endeavours by an overlap between periodic effects and imbalance of demand and supply on the labour market.

It seems that the endeavours of university graduate women are also specific: they would like to have fewer children, there are more women who plan childlessness, on average they have fewer children.

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