

Appendix 3

Reporting on families

In this publication we have used Statistics Sweden's population register to illustrate children's family relationships. Information from different sample surveys has been used to show the different aspects of children's living conditions, presented by types of family relationships.

Statistics Sweden's population register

The population register cannot give a complete picture of family conditions for all the population, but it does provide considerable information on families with children. The register is based on information from the population records.

Living with natural parents

In recent years, information on natural parents has become available for the production of statistics. This has made it possible to determine if children are registered as living on the same property as both their natural parents, living with only their mother, living with only their father, or living with neither of them.

Parents can of course be registered as living on the same property, but live in different flats within the property. However, we assume that this seldom occurs, so that in practice, it should not be a problem to interpret the results.

Single and cohabiting parents

Just because a child is registered only with the mother or the father does not necessarily mean that the child lives together with a single parent. This only means that the mother does not live together with the child's father. The mother or the father could be *married* with someone other than the child's natural parent, and information on this is available through the kinship records between married couples. This means that we can obtain the actual family situation for all married families.

If the mother or the father is *cohabiting* with someone other than the child's natural parent, there is only information if the couple also have children together. A number of cohabiting families can thus be identified, these being families that have children together. Besides having children together, families may also consist of children that the man or woman has from previous relationships.

Other cohabiting families where all children are from previous relationships are wrongly classified as families with single parents.

A comparison of information from the population register with information from the sample survey HEK (which is described below) gives an idea of the errors in the register's estimations of the number of children in different types of families.

Children aged 0-17 by parents' form of cohabitation

Form of cohabitation	According to the population register		According to HEK	
	Number (1000s)	Percentage	Number (1000s)	Percentage
Children of cohabiting adults	1 516	78,1	1 606	80,9
of which:	Married	1 085	55.9	1 096 55.2
Cohabiting couples with children together	430	22.2	457	23.0
Cohabiting couples with children from previous relationships only	52	2.6
Children of single men	66	3.4	70	3.5
Children of single women	354	18.2	309	15.5
Moved from home or incomplete information	5	0.3	.	.
All children	1 941	100.0	1 985	100.0

Children of cohabiting adults that only have children from previous relationships, 50 000 according to HEK's estimation, are recorded as children of single men or single women in the population register. Most of these children are found in the group of children of single mothers, which includes 45 000 more children in the information from the register.

A detailed account of the problem in reporting single and cohabiting persons based on the population register is described in the article "Single and cohabiting in the population register, taxation and reality" by Åke Nilsson, published in the report "Välfärd och ofärd på 90-talet" in the series on living conditions.¹

Children under age 1

A special problem exists when reporting on the youngest of family members. It appears that there is an overestimation in the numbers of children under age 1 that only live with their mothers, when using the population register as a source. This is due to two reasons. Parents that have recently moved in together may not have made a change of address before the end of the year. Another explanation could be that there was not sufficient time to get all the information on both of the parents' personal registration numbers. Cohabiting couples are required to report the paternity, and it may take some time before this is done and reported. If there is no report on paternity, the woman will be listed as single in the statistics. Here we have tried to avoid errors of this kind by waiting with information on the personal registration number of the father until 31 March 2003 for those children that were born in 2002. By that time we

have information on fathers for most of the children.

Taking all things into consideration, we still have a rather large overestimation in the percentage of children with single mothers. This is especially so for first-born children. The errors are most probably caused by delays in making address changes after moving. Large sample surveys such as LCS and LFS show that the share of children under age 1 with single mothers is probably 3-6 per cent and not almost 10 per cent as shown in the population register.

Living where one is registered

When producing family statistics from the population register, we have assumed that the population register reflects where people actually live. This ought to be the case in most situations. But of course errors can occur. Registration conditions do not always reflect the actual living situation.

Sometimes, even very young children in the register appear to be living on their own. We have assumed that this is an error in registration when listing all children under age 16 as living at home. Children between 16-21 can live with their parents but do not appear to live at home. One such group of children includes certain young people who immigrated after the age of 18. These people often lack information about their parents. Even if they live with one parent, this is not shown in the register. A greater error is that many young people move away from home without reporting this in the population register, and thus they still appear to be living at home.

The population register is deficient in that it lacks information on children living alternately with separated parents. Children are only registered with one of the parents, even though

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they spend just as much time with their mother as with their father. In 2000/2001 (LCS) 4 per cent of all children aged 0-17 were estimated to live alternately with each parent.

Sample surveys

In the sample surveys, we find out the composition of families by questions asked directly to chosen individuals. In most of the surveys, only adults can be sample persons. In the Living Conditions Survey (LCS), however, children from the age of 10 have been included as sample persons since 2000.

Since sample persons answer themselves about the composition of families, the sample surveys do not have the same deficiency as the population register regarding information on cohabiting adults with children from other relationships. On the other hand, we also have random errors, partly due to a limited sample size, and partly due to non-response. Non-response can distort the results. Appendix 5 "Surveys used - implementation and estimation methods" gives a technical description of the surveys.

Labour Force Surveys (LFS)

Each month, LFS are conducted to illustrate the situation on the labour market. The sample from surveys of all the twelve months is used for statistics on children.

Sample persons inform if they are married, cohabiting or single, and also inform on the number of children living at home with child's year and month of birth. In this way, information is obtained on the number of children living at home of different ages, and the percentage living with cohabiting parents (married or cohabiting), or with single mothers or fathers. Labour Force Surveys have an individual sample. Any information on husband/wife or cohabiting adult is not collected. In other words, information on both parents in the family is not obtained. Estimations from the LFS refer to the mean value during the year.

Parents Survey (PS) 2002

Childcare Surveys were previously conducted in 1980, 1983, 1986-1996, 1999 and 2002. Data collection is carried out by Statistics Sweden on behalf of the National Agency for Education. The

sample was taken from the Total Population Register (TPR) on 30 June 2002. The sample unit consists of children, and a sample of 71 935 children was taken from the younger children's group (aged 1-5), consisting of 429 348 children in total.

Sample probability (the number of those chosen divided by the total number in the population) varies greatly between different municipalities. In Stockholm municipality, 1% of the children were chosen, while in Bjurholm municipality in Västerbotten county, 97% of the children were chosen. The group for older children (6-12 years) consisted of 814 473 children, from which a sample of 11 000 children was taken.

The weighted response rate is 90.4 per cent among preschool children (1-5 years), and 86.8 among the older children (6-12 years).

Data was collected by a questionnaire with follow-up of non-response by telephone. The form was directed to the guardian of the child and was translated into six languages.

The questions refer to conditions in September 2002. The questionnaire provides the following information: Family composition, employment of guardian(s), how childcare is taken care of, if childcare is satisfactory or not, which form of childcare is not satisfactory, preferences for childcare and reasons why family does not have their preferred childcare, and finally if the child has attended municipal open preschool (for younger children) or if the child has attended preschool (the older children). The answers to the questionnaire have been supplemented with information from the Education Register (parents' level of education and educational orientation) and from the Total Income Register (household's disposable income, social assistance and housing allowance). The Total Population Register provided information on municipality of residence, civil status, date of immigration, country of birth and citizenship.

The Household Economy Survey (HEK)

HEK is an annual sample survey which aims to illustrate income and expenditures of households. Income data in the HEK concern the full year and are taken from various registers. Information on the family situation of the sample persons is gathered from telephone interviews that are conducted at the beginning of the year

following the income year. Family situation concerns the end of the previous year, i.e. the income year. Incomes are reported for the "full year population", i.e. for households where all adults were registered in the country both at the beginning and the end of the income year. Questions and register data concern all family members living together. For the children's part, however, data is taken on both the mother's and the father's circumstances.

The Living Conditions Survey (LCS)

The LCS measures and follows trends in living conditions in Sweden. The interviewees are asked about the composition of the households they belong to. They are also asked a number of questions on conditions of their husband/wife, such as employment and living conditions of children living at home regarding childcare. For the children's part, data is taken on both the mother's and the father's circumstances.

In 2000/2001, there was an in-depth section concerning family circumstances. In these two years, there are questions on alternate living and access to child/children for the parent living apart. Interviews are spread out over a whole year, and estimations refer to mean values during the year. When presenting the results, two years are often added together to obtain more certain estimations. When two years of LCS are used, the estimations refer to a mean value for the two years.

Statistics sources, summary

Kinship between children and adults

Different statistical sources give more or less detailed information on children's families. In the Total Population Register (TPR), we can obtain statistics about the percentage of children registered with both parents, one or neither of their natural/adoptive parents. Usually, this information cannot be obtained from sample surveys, since the question of biological kinship within the family is not taken up. One exception is the LCS where this is asked when the area of social relations and family is studied in-depth. This last occurred in 2000/2001 and will reoccur in 2008/2009.

Married couples, cohabiting couples, single persons

The population register does not provide information on cohabiting couples that have children from previous relationships. This information must be obtained from the individuals themselves. This is done in sample surveys. When it comes to the youngest children in particular, these surveys provide important information, since the population register significantly overestimates the percentage of children with single parents.

Choice of source

The choice of source depends on the area of usage. In some situations, it is preferable to be able to present the information for each age group separately or on a municipality level. In that case, information from registers that includes the whole population is needed. At other times, it may be preferable to see conditions for the broad age intervals and the whole country. In such situations, it might be best to use information from sample surveys. These surveys have a broader content than that which can be obtained from the total register, among other things because it is possible to estimate the number of children with cohabiting parents with or without children of their own. On the other hand, sample surveys are marred by random errors and sometimes also by non-response.

Number of children and young persons living at home, by parents' form of living, according to different sources.

Age Sex	Cohabiting adults			Single			All
	Married	Cohabitees	Total	Father	Mother	Total	
Total Population Register 2002							
under 1 yr	42 835	43 821	86 656	291	8 974	9 265	96 026
1-5 yrs	238 717	154 579	393 296	6 302	58 662	64 964	458 853
6-12 yrs	458 074	167 439	625 513	29 582	159 787	189 369	816 146
13-17 yrs	345 832	64 357	410 189	29 965	126 590	156 555	569 885
0-17 yrs	1 085	458 430	196 1	515 654	66 140	354 013	420 153
Labour Force Surveys 2002							
under 1 yr	-	-	82 100	400	4 500	4 900	87 000
1-5 yrs	-	-	422 100	16 800	47 000	63 800	485 900
6-12 yrs	-	-	714 100	58 700	128 700	187 400	901 500
13-17 yrs	-	-	454 900	36 300	97 800	134 100	589 000
0-17 yrs	-	-	1 673	400 112	600 278	000 390	600 2
Living Conditions Survey 2002							
under 1 yr	35 000	30 400	65 400	0	3 800	3 800	69 100
0-17 yrs	1 085	458 430	196 1	515 654	66 140	354 013	420 153
0-17 yrs	6 085	458 430	196 1	515 654	66 140	354 013	420 153
0-17 yrs	13 085	458 430	196 1	515 654	66 140	354 013	420 153
0-17 yrs	1 085	458 430	196 1	515 654	66 140	354 013	420 153
0-17 yrs	1 085	458 430	196 1	515 654	66 140	354 013	420 153
Total Population Register 2001							
under 1 yr	41 189	41 885	83 074	0	8 223	8 470	91 653
0-17 yrs	1 085	458 430	196 1	515 654	66 140	354 013	420 153
0-17 yrs	6 085	458 430	196 1	515 654	66 140	354 013	420 165
0-17 yrs	13 085	458 430	196 1	515 654	66 140	354 013	420 57
0-17 yrs	0 085	458 430	196 1	515 654	66 140	354 013	420 676
HEK 2001							
under 1 yr	-	-	82 340	0	7 185	7 185	89 524
0-17 yrs	-	-	1 673	400 112	600 278	000 390	600 2
0-17 yrs	-	-	6 673	400 112	600 278	000 390	600 2
0-17 yrs	-	-	13 673	400 112	600 278	000 390	600 2
0-17 yrs	-	-	0 673	400 112	600 278	000 390	600 2
Parents Survey 2002							
under 1 yr	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
0-17 yrs	-	-	0 673	400 112	600 278	000 390	600 2
0-17 yrs	-	-	0 673	400 112	600 278	000 390	600 2

The TPR and HEK present family situations at the end of the year. The Labour Force Surveys and Living Conditions Survey present family situations at the time of the interview, i.e. as a practical kind of mean value over the year. The Parents Survey refers to the family situation at the time of the interview in autumn of 2002.

Information on how the number of children of different ages is calculated in the LFS, LCS, HEK and PS is found in Appendix 2 "Reporting on the number of children". In the "Total" column of the figures from TPR, children not living at home and children with incomplete information in the register are also included. There are about 5 000 children aged 0-17 in this category.

Per cent of children and young persons by parents' cohabitation form according to different sources.

Age Sex	Cohabiting adults			Single			All
	Married	Cohabitees	Total	Father	Mother	Total	
Total Population Register 2002							
under 1 yr	45	46	90	0	9	10	100
0-17 yrs	52	34	86	1	13	14	100
0-17 yrs	56	21	77	6	20	23	100
0-17 yrs	61	11	72	13	22	27	100
0-17 yrs	56	22	78	0	18	22	100
Labour Force Surveys 2002							
under 1 yr	-	-	94	0	5	6	100
0-17 yrs	-	-	87	3	10	13	100
0-17 yrs	-	-	79	7	14	21	100
0-17 yrs	-	-	77	6	17	23	100
0-17 yrs	-	-	81	5	13	19	100
Living Conditions Survey 2002							
under 1 yr	51	44	95	0	5	5	100
1-5 yrs	51	37	88	0	11	12	100
6-12 yrs	59	24	83	0	15	17	100
13-17 yrs	59	18	77	0	18	23	100
1-17 yrs	57	25	83	0	15	17	100
0-17 yrs	57	26	83	0	15	17	100
Total Population Register 2001							
under 1 yr	45	46	91	0	9	9	100
1-5 yrs	52	33	85	0	13	15	100
6-12 yrs	57	20	77	0	20	23	100
13-17 yrs	62	10	73	0	22	27	100
0-17 yrs	57	22	78	0	18	21	100
HEK 2001							
under 1 yr	-	-	92	0	8	8	100
1-5 yrs	-	-	86	2	12	14	100
6-12 yrs	-	-	78	3	18	22	100
13-17 yrs	-	-	77	5	18	23	100
0-17 yrs	-	-	80	3	16	20	100
Parents Survey 2002							
under 1 yr	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1-5 yrs	-	-	89	1	10	11	100
6-12 yrs	-	-	82	4	14	18	100

The TPR and HEK present family situations at the end of the year. The Labour Force Surveys and Living Conditions Survey present family situations at the time of the interview, i.e. as a practical kind of mean value over the year. The Parents Survey refers to the family situation at the time of the interview in autumn of 2002.

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