

## New in the *Insee Références* collection “Couples and families” - Edition 2015

This morning, INSEE has presented *a new publication* to the press: *Insee Référence* “Couples and Families”. It takes a look at **changes in couple and family life**: increase in cohabitation, children born outside marriage, rise in the number of step families, increase in shared custody for the children of separated parents, etc, **but it also looks at what is still permanent** both in couples (marriages are still in the majority) and families (there are still more “traditional families”, a couple and their children “).



### √ Couples and families: between permanence and breakups

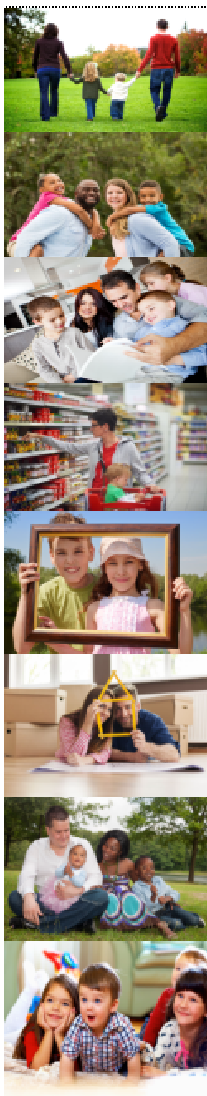
Despite the wide variety of ways in which people live in couples and in families, married couples with their children are still the most common families. **3 out of 4 children live with their two parents.**

2 out of 3 adults are in a couple: **73% are married**, 4% have declared a civil solidarity pact and 23% cohabit. 0.6% are in a couple with a partner of the same sex.

7.8 million families live with at least one child under 18 at home: **70% are “traditional families”** (2 parents, who may or may not be married, with the child(ren) they have had together). **Half of the families with child(ren) under 18 consist of a married couple with their children.**

Unions are becoming more and more vulnerable as can be seen from the increase in one-parent families; this is the type of family that has grown most, at the expense of traditional families: **one-parent families represented 16% of families with children under 18 in 1999 and 20% in 2011 (+4 points).** The majority of lone parents are lone mothers (85%). These families are particularly affected by poverty, and **40% of one-parent families with children under 18 are living below the poverty line.**

**In this publication, INSEE looks for the first time at the changes that have occurred in blended families in France:** between 1999 and 2011, the proportion increased slightly, from 8.7% to 9.3% of families with children under 18.



### Our experts say...

“The types of union are becoming more diversified although marriages are still in the majority”.

“Unions have become more vulnerable with a sharp rise in the share of one-parent families”.

*Isabelle Robert-Bobée, co-author,  
Head of the Department for  
Demographic Surveys and Studies,  
INSEE*

## √ One-parent families in Europe: 5 groups of countries for 5 ways of founding a family



In the countries of Northern Europe and France unmarried life is commonplace. These countries have relatively high levels of one-parent families (between 15% and 25%) and births outside marriage are more frequent.

In contrast, the countries of Eastern Europe appear to be very attached to the traditional family model with rates of one-parent families among the lowest (between 10% and 13%).

Countries in Southern Europe are in transition: the proportion of divorced mothers living alone with children at home is high, but in some of these countries marriage remains a vital institution to found a family.

Two groups of countries stand out: the British Isles which notably have a high rate of early motherhood and the Baltic States where the highest proportion of one-parent families in Europe are to be found.



### Our experts say....

**“Living as a couple is delayed but not rejected”**

**“Unions are getting shorter and shorter and so it is becoming more and more common to experience several unions in the course of a lifetime”**

*Vianney Costemalle, co-author, researcher, Department for Demographic Surveys and Studies, INSEE*

### √ Also included

**Two more reports:** “Custody and maintenance for children of separated parents: initial decisions and changes” and “Variations in standards of living for men and women following divorce or the breakup of a civil solidarity pact”

**36 fact sheets** providing key general data but also specific information on couples, families with children, couples and families in society and in employment, financial aspects and family policies, along with international comparisons

The full document is available online at [insee.fr](http://insee.fr)



### Our experts say....

**“In 15 years, the share of one-parent families in Europe has increased substantially, from 14% to 19%”.**

**“The significance and the configuration of one-parent families differ from one country to another, with 5 major groups of countries”.**

*Emilie Reynaud, co-author, Head of the Office for Young People and Families, DREES*

## √ Conjugal and family life events over the generations: first unions are occurring later and later and are also getting shorter

In 2013, 90% of 26-65 year-olds were cohabiting or had already cohabited as a couple.

The first cohabitation as a couple occurs later in life now, but living as a couple is no less frequent from one generation to another.

First unions are also getting shorter and shorter: 30% of people born between 1978 and 1987 have had a first cohabiting relationship which lasted less than 5 years compared with just 9% of those born 30 years earlier. After a separation, there are two main factors behind finding a new partner: age at separation and gender. Age is the most determining factor: the older you are, the less likely to live as a couple again, especially for women.

Of those who separated from partners between the ages of 25 and 50, half were living with new partners within 5 years of the separation. Women are less likely to start new relationships than men. 15 years after a separation, 25% of men and 36% of women have not formed another couple.



### Our experts say....

**“Two years after a divorce decision, child maintenance is paid regularly and in full in 8 out of 10 cases”**

**“Separation leads to a 3% drop in standards of living on average for men and 20% for women”**

*Marie Reynaud, Head of the Demographic and Social Studies Unit, INSEE*