

Siegfried Gruber

Childhood in the Balkans

**4th European Social Science History Conference
27 February – 2 March 2002, The Hague**

Session: Modern Childhood II

Project “The 1918 Albanian Population Census: Data Entry and Basic Analyses”

<http://www-gewi.kfunigraz.ac.at/suedost/seiner>

email: gruber@gewi.kfunigraz.ac.at

Childhood in the Balkans

Introduction

Household structures have been a topic of scholarly interest for decades. The division of Europe in four distinct areas with the predominance of different types of households (Laslett 1983) has been a stimulus to further research in Eastern and Southeast Europe. Research on joint families in Southeast Europe was meant to prove or to reject the notion of the predominance of this kind of households in this part of Europe (e.g. Todorova 1993). Most of this research has been centred upon the household head or on the creation of new households through marriage or division of households. But there have been no attempts to investigate household structures from the point of view of the children. Besides the often used concept of the household as a static element there is also the concept of the household as something that is undergoing changes over time. New members are added to the household by birth or marriage and other members leave the household by death, marriage, migration, or the division of households. One model for such research is that of the family or household cycle. In this model there is a cyclical change in the composition of the household following the ageing of its members and the consequences of this ageing. Here the focus is on the household or the family as the unit of research. On the other hand there is the possibility to treat the individual person as the unit of research. Once again you can apply a cyclical approach in the concept of life cycles or you can use the approach of life course, which is more interested in transitions between stages during the life of the individual than on the different stages. Life-course analysis deals with the synchronisation of individual with family transitions, the interaction between life-course transitions and historical change, and the cumulative impact of earlier life-course transitions on subsequent ones (Hareven 1978).

J. Halpern has already applied this concept to Serbian data (Halpern 1986), but in a different way than the one applied in this paper. His article deals with different characteristics of the people throughout their life course, but all these characteristics are defined in relation to the person heading the household. S. Sovič has used relationship to household head and marital status by age-groups to investigate Slovene life courses (Sovič 2001). In this paper I shall use these characteristics concentrating on the respective person. I shall provide an example for the difference between these two approaches. J. Halpern is e.g. using the characteristic “son” in his article, which indicates that this person holds the position of “son of the household head” within the household. In this paper this person would bear the characteristic “living with his father”. In addition this person bears the following characteristics “being unmarried/married/widowed”, “living with his mother/not living with his mother”, “living with child(ren)/not living with child(ren)”, “living with siblings/not living with siblings”, etc. Instead of being only characterised as “son” this person can also be “father” in case it has at least one child or “brother” in case it has at least one sibling.

One of the problems for such research is that of the sources for such research. Censuses and census-like lists provide information about the composition of households at one point in time. You need to invest much time in record linkage for obtaining information about the composition of households in which the individual persons were living during their life-time. In this paper age-groups of three census lists will be used as hypothetical cohorts in investigating the life course of children in Serbia in the 19th century and in Albania at the beginning of the 20th century. It is clear that this usage of cross-sectional data is not without

troubles and possible biases. In using hypothetical cohorts one has to assume that the demographic characteristics of the people under consideration have been stable during at least the previous fifty years¹. In addition one has to assume that there has been no substantial migration or that in the case of substantial migration immigrants and emigrants are of the same number and share the same characteristics. These assumptions may not be true in the strict sense, but we can suppose that they may be fairly accurate. The creation of life tables and the computation of life expectancy is normally also done by using hypothetical cohorts and only very rarely by using real cohorts and therefore the usage of cross-sectional data in the research of the life course should have more advantages than disadvantages.

I shall use an age of 15 years as the terminal age of childhood in this paper, since there has to be a consistent terminal age for all data-sets in this paper. The questions of what childhood meant, whether there was a difference between childhood and youth or not, when there was this transition to youth, or whether there was something like youth in the perspective of the Balkan peasantry in the second half of the 19th century or not, will not be addressed here. In the absence of regular schooling and in a mostly peasant society, where there was a shift to regular agricultural work already at young ages and where young people normally did not leave their parental households for occupational purposes (there were almost no servants), the age of sexual maturity and first marriages can serve as a terminal age of childhood. An age of 15 years is convenient, since it is a round age and is approximately the age of sexual maturity at the end of the 19th century (Ehalt 1985) and the age of the youngest married people in the Serbian data-sets was 16 years. The Albanian data shows even younger married people, but it is not always reliable in this respect.

This paper is an expanded version of an article dealing with children and their parental households in Central Serbia in the 19th century (Gruber 2001). This article dealt only with data of the Serbian census of 1863, while the data base for this paper has been expanded to data of the Serbian census of 1884 and the Albanian census of 1918. This enables comparisons over time and therefore provides data about possible changes within about one generation. On the other hand there is the possibility of comparison between neighbouring societies and within the same society. This aspect has not been dealt with in the aforementioned article.

Used Data

The sources used for this article are the Serbian censuses of 1863 and 1884 for nine settlements of Jasenica County in central Serbia and the Albanian census of 1918. The census of 1863 has already been used in various publications by J. Halpern (e.g. Halpern 1972). These nine settlements are not the whole of this county, whose borders changed several times throughout the 19th century, but they always belonged to it. Table 1 shows the size of these settlements and the total number of the Serbian population for this study.

¹ Fifty years is only an approximate number, since the composition of the population reflects the whole demographic history of all people living at that point in time.

Table 1: Population of nine settlements in Jasenica County

	1863	1884
Orašac	1,083	1,322
Garaši	471	629
Jelovik	350	485
Bukovik	589	1,026
Topola	1,611	2,217
Vrbica	1,328	1,798
Kopljari	683	926
Markovac ²	369	
Stojnik	645	1,021
	7,129	9,424

Problems with the source

In the census returns of the Serbian census of 1863 the following characteristics of the people were recorded: first name, relationship to household head, and age. Additional information is available for the household heads: last name and occupation. In 1884 this information was extended to marital status and literacy. Other columns in the census forms were not always filled in. In addition special characteristics of people like disabilities, foreign citizenship etc. were reported.

In this paper the separated units in the census should be treated as households although some of them consisted only of children, which obviously should have lived in some relative's household. Therefore the share of people living in joint families was slightly higher than according to the figures in this paper. The focus of the research is on the individual child and the other members of its parental household and not on the family or household. The most important people besides the individual child and its siblings are the parents. Several troubles are connected with the data concerning research about the relatives of the individual child: There is no direct information about the marital status of the people in 1863 and there is very often no clear information about the parents of children, therefore we have to use indirect information.

Sample household 1:

Luka Joksimović, peasant, 30 years, wife Randjija 28 years, son Pavle 10 years, daughters Petrija 8 years, Milosava 6 years.

In a household like this it is obvious that both, Luka and Randjija, are married and that they are the parents of Pavle, Petrija, and Milosava. It is also clear that Pavle, Petrija, and Milosava are siblings. But it gets much more complicated in a case like the following:

Sample household 2:

Milić Ilić, peasant, 31 years, wife Milenija 30 years, son Spasoje 11 years, daughter Živana 1 year, brothers Milutin 34 years, Živko 27 years, Živan 22 years, brother's sons Dimitrije 5 years, Ranko 3 years, brother's daughters Spasenija 9 years, Stamenija 3 years, sisters-in-law Marta 30 years, Randjija 25 years, Stanica 22 years, mother Andjelija 60 years.

² Markovac was registered independently since 1827, but was not treated independently from Stojnik in the census of 1884.

In households like Sample household 2 there is no clear information about who is married with whom and who are the actual parents of a child (with the exception of Milić, his wife Milenija, his children Spasoje and Živana, and his mother Andjelija, which is also the mother of Milutin, Živko, and Živan). Therefore several rules had to be established to reconstruct families within households, i.e. groups consisting of parents or a widowed parent and their child or children. Sisters-in-law and daughters-in-law were registered under the same term (sna, snaha, snaja) and are assigned to brothers and sons according to their sequence in the source with the exception that their ages suggest a different order. Brothers and sons are considered to be married according to the number of their possible wives and according to their ages, i.e. beginning with the oldest one. If there is more than one possible pair of parents for the children in the household, the following rules will be observed:

- In case of an obvious sequence of children they are assigned according to this sequence (e.g. grandsons Sava 10 years, Svetozar 8 years, Dimitrije 4 years, Milisav 6 years, Milan 4 years, Mika 2 years, Jovan 2 years, Djurdje 4 years: Sava, Svetozar, and Dimitrije are obviously children of the first married man in the household, Milisav, Milan, Mika, and Jovan are children of the second married man in the household, and Djurdje is the son of the third married man in the household).
- According to the mean age at first marriage there is a minimum age for having children: 20 years for women and 22 years for men. If there is no couple within the household with this minimum age, the oldest couple will be considered to be the parents of the child(ren).
- If there are children of the same age, they will be considered as being children of different parents. Only in case of only one couple within the household they will be considered to be twins.

The percentage of clear parent-child relationships is 96.0 percent for the 1863 census and 99.2 percent for the 1884 census, therefore the share of questionable data in this respect is only 4.0 percent for the 1863 data and a mere 0.8 percent for the 1884 data and possible errors have not too much weight. According to all these rules the results should differ in the following ways from the actual situation in 1863 and 1884:

- The actual number of widowed people will be higher than calculated.
- The actual age difference between husband and wife will be higher than calculated.

In January 1916, almost the entire territory of Albania was occupied by the Austrian-Hungarian army with the exception of fringe areas in the south of the country, which were occupied by Bulgarian, French, Italian and Greek troops. The population census was taken on March 1st, 1918 after some preliminary censuses, which served as preparations for it. The activities of checking and processing of the data had to be stopped due to the planned withdrawal of the army in October. The order to destroy the entire census material was neglected with the exception of the district headquarters in Lushnja. Therefore, the material concerning the Berat, Fier, Lushnja and Shkrapar regions (89,142 persons) is missing (Seiner 1922b:5). The surviving material, which covers the major part of the country, is as follows: 435,075 out of the 803,959 (this figure was calculated too high) persons counted in 1923 (54 percent) or 20,096 square kilometers out of the country's total area of 28,748 square kilometers (70 percent). The military administration unit responsible for the delivery agreed to hand out the material to the Austrian Academy of Sciences along with the permission to publish and to work with it. The Academy asked the census director, Franz Seiner, to work out the basic statistics. These tables were published in 1922, supported by funds from the Albanian government (Seiner 1922b). Instructed by the Albanian government, Seiner also separately published the results of the census relating to the tribal areas of northern Albania. On the basis of these results, he prepared the first map on the distribution, size and borders of

the tribal territories (Seiner 1922a). One year earlier, the director of the Balkan Commission of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, Eugen Oberhummer, published first preliminary statistical results (Oberhummer 1921). At that time there were also plans to publish the village level data, but the Academy was not able to find adequate funding for the publication. The research project “The 1918 Albanian Population Census: Data Entry and Basic Analyses” aims at making the data of this census available for scholarly research.³ The research project started in August 2000, and we are still adding new data, which means that the results presented in this paper are still preliminary. This article is based on the details of 82,449 people who lived in 233 settlements in Albania. During the data entry, we divided the settlements into two groups: “normal” settlements and “deviant” settlements. Deviant settlements will be entered completely, while normal settlement will be entered in 5-percent-samples. The following criteria serve as markers for “deviant” settlements:

- ethnic minorities: more than 20 percent of the population is made up of non-Albanians.
- occupational structure: more than 20 percent of the population is engaged in non-agricultural activities or more than 150 people are engaged in non-agricultural activities.
- cities: settlements that are cities.
- sex ratio: more than 60 percent male or less than 40 percent male population.
- household size: the household size is more than 10 persons or less than 3.5 persons.
- size of the settlement: more than 2,000 inhabitants.
- Orthodox Christians: more than 20 percent of the population is made up of Orthodox Christians.

These criteria often overlap, e.g. size of settlement, occupational structure and cities.

Table 2: Data according to criteria

Criteria	Settlements	Persons
ethnic minorities	42	17,106
sex ratio	53	7,768
Household size	49	12,975
Orthodox Christians	57	20,206
Cities	6	18,650
Occupational structure	16	24,043
size of settlement	6	22,031
all “deviant” settlements	179	64,730
5-percent-sample	54	17,719
all settlements	233	82,449

These 82,449 persons represent according to the weighting factors (20 for the 5-percent-sample, 2.5 for cities, occupational structure, and size of settlement) 462,817 persons.

The effects of World War I

The census was taken in 1918, i.e. the last year of World War I and including both Balkan Wars the seventh consecutive year of war in the Balkans. Which effects can be seen from the

³ The team of the research project consists of Helmut Eberhart, Karl Kaser, Siegfried Gruber, Gentiana Kera, and Enriketa Papa. The research project is financed by the Austria Science Fund (Fonds zur Förderung der wissenschaftlichen Forschung). We are grateful to Beryl Nicholson, who has drawn our attention to this source and to the Austrian Academy of Sciences for the cooperation.

demographic data in 1918? The median age of the population was 23 years and with the exception of the rounding effects the largest age groups are to be found up to an age of 10 years. Up to an age of 8 years all the yearly age groups have almost the same size, which indicates a small drop in fertility or a slight increase in infant or childhood mortality or a combination of them. The age groups around ages 20 and 25 are smaller than those following them, which could be the effect of war casualties, but it appears for both sexes. Much more important is the effect of an increased mortality for all ages, which is not so evidently seen in the age-structure. It leads to lower numbers of siblings and a higher number of children, who have already lost parents or grandparents.

Structure of the population

Share of the children in the population

The structure of the Serbian population in 1863 was a very young one: half of the population (50.3 percent) was younger than 16 years in these nine settlements in Jasenica County. This age structure resembles much more the present day situation in Africa than the present day situation in Serbia. The age pyramid was actually a pyramid (see chart 1), the small basis is due to the fact that the first age group in this chart is smaller than the other age groups, which are made up of five years, whereas the first age group contains only the ages 0 – 2 years. The age groups used in this chart are different from the ones normally used, because there is much rounding in the ages recorded in the sources of that time. Most of the adult population was recorded with an age ending in the digits “0” or “5” and therefore the age groups have these digits in their centre (e.g. 8 – 12 years instead of 10 – 14 years), which leads to more accurate results. This is the reason why all the ages in this paper have to be considered as being approximate ages, although the younger ages should be more precise than the older ones.

20 years later, in 1884, the population had already become a bit older: 45.5 percent of the population were not older than 15 years. The Albanian population, recorded one generation later, shows a further decline in the percentage of children: 40.9 percent of the population belonged to this group. There was quite a range in the number of children in the different settlements: from 46.1 percent in Garaši to 53.7 percent in Jelovik in 1863 and from 39.7 percent in Kopljari to 47.8 percent in Vrbica. This reflects different developments in these settlements in Jasenica County in the second half of the 19th century. These figures are in line with published data about the age-structure of European populations around 1900: in all Balkan countries about 50 percent of the population were younger than 20 years (Sundhaussen 1989:116). These were the highest shares within Europe, only Russia had similar figures.

The high share of young people, i.e. children, within the population means that at that time people were seeing children everywhere in high numbers. Also in the eyes of children society must have consisted mostly of young people. The share of older people was much lower than nowadays: in Albania in 1918 only 9.0 percent of the population were at least 60 years old. The Serbian data shows even smaller numbers: 2.6 percent in 1884 and 1.7 percent in 1863. In some of the settlements these people were present in even lower numbers: 0.6 percent in Jelovik in 1863 and 1.2 percent in Vrbica in 1884. These numbers indicate a rather small chance for children to ever see their grandparents alive.

Sex ratio

The Balkans are an area with a traditional male majority within the population. The 1863 census of Serbia shows a ratio of 107.3 men for 100 women for these nine settlements. In

1884 it had become more equal: 102.6 men for 100 women. The ratios for the whole of Serbia were 106.5 men for 100 women in 1863 and 104.7 men for 100 women in 1884 (Sundhaussen 1989:80). In 1918 in Albania the ratio was in between these values: 104.3 men for 100 women. Sex ratios in childhood show differences to the whole population: the 1863 data show a higher inequality with 109.6 men for 100 women while the 1884 data has a female majority with 99.5 men for 100 women. The adult population on the other hand was female by majority in the 1863 data and male in the 1884 data. High inequalities in sex ratios for children could be the consequence of female underreporting, especially at very young ages. The Albanian data does not show higher sex ratios at younger ages, the pattern is rather consistent throughout childhood. The 1863 data has the highest inequalities for ages 9-11 years, which may be by chance or the effect of higher mortality within the last 10 years. The Albanian data has an extreme inequality with 119.9 men for 100 women. The Muslim majority (85.2 percent) in Albania fitted almost completely to the average of the whole country (119.2 men for 100 women), while the Roman Catholics of Northern Albania (11.5 percent) showed the highest inequality (129.7 men for 100 women) and the Christian Orthodox population in Southern Albania (3.2 percent) had an almost equal distribution of the sexes: 104.5 men for 100 women. The small number of Orthodox people in the data is due to the fact that most of the Orthodox Albanians were living outside of the territory occupied by Austro-Hungarian forces and that the data, which has been destroyed, covers a major part of the Orthodox population. There is much less difference between the urban and the rural population, where the urban population has a slightly more equal distribution than the rural one. The ethnic minorities also show a slightly more equal distribution of the sexes within the child population. The regional distribution of unevenness is accentuated by the fact that the region of Puka in the north, predominantly Roman Catholic, had the highest sex ratio for men: 135.8 men for 100 women of up to 15 years.

The following questions shall be addressed in the following pages:

- The high share of young people suggests that most of the children should have siblings. Were there also children without siblings?
- The small number of older people indicates high mortality rates and a low life expectancy. How many children experienced the death of their father or their mother or of both of their parents?
- Were there children living with grandparents despite the high mortality?
- In which types of households did these children live?

Living with siblings

Living in a society with half of the people under 16 years of age (1863) or under 23 years of age (1918) suggests that almost all of the children should have siblings. Charts 2-4 and 8-10 and table 3 show that this is actually true: the overwhelming majority of children had siblings. In the Serbian data more than 90 percent of the children had a least one sibling and in the Albanian data three fourth of the children had at least one sibling. In 1863 only two settlements and in 1884 only three settlements were below this percentage. The lowest percentages were to be found for children of 1 year of age⁴, which is clearly the effect of first children. The percentages rose to almost 100 percent for the following ages up to 15 years for the Serbian settlements, while there is a clear difference to the Albanian data. In the Albanian settlements the percentage reached at the most about 80 percent. Albanian children at the

⁴ There are no children of less than one year in the censuses of 1863 and 1884. It is not intended to discuss the consequences of this situation in this paper.

beginning of the 20th century experienced therefore to a much higher percentage living as a single child in contrast to the Serbian case. There were almost no differences between the ethnic and confessional groups, the cities and the villages. Regional differences were much more accentuated: in Southeast Albania the probability of living with siblings was 81.2 percent, while in Northwest Albania it was only 72.9 percent.

The mean number of siblings reflects this pattern: the children in Jasenica County in 1863 had on average 3 siblings, while Albanian children in 1918 had on average less than 2 siblings. There was always an increase in the number of siblings throughout childhood due to the effect of younger siblings being born, although it was by far less pronounced in the Albanian case. At the end of childhood the trend reversed due to the effect of older siblings marrying and leaving the parental household. This was almost universal the case with sisters, because married brothers tended to remain in the parental household. Divisions of households among brothers occurred normally some time after marriage.

In the Serbian cases it was only in the first years of the life of children that a considerable part (20 to 25 percent) was living with only one sibling. After this time at least half of the children were living with at least three siblings, while in Albania half of the children were living with at least two siblings.

There was considerable variation in the number of siblings between the settlements: from 2.47 siblings in Garaši to 3.44 siblings in Kopljari in 1863. In 1884 the differences had become less pronounced: from 2.31 siblings in Garaši to 2.98 siblings in Vrbica. The decline in the number of siblings was much higher in the settlements, which had the highest numbers in 1863. In the Albanian data we almost do not find differences between the religious groups and the number of siblings in villages and cities is exactly the same. The ethnic minorities have slightly higher numbers of siblings and the regional variation is much higher than the religious variation. The most marked difference can be seen between the various household types: in joint families children had only 1.61 siblings, in extended families 1.89 siblings, and in nuclear families they had even 2.25 siblings. The lowest number of siblings in joint families is the effect of younger brothers living in the households of older brothers or of sons living in the households of their fathers. These younger fathers had less children than their older brothers or fathers and therefore the number of siblings in their households was smaller, too.

In the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century living as a child in the Balkans meant therefore living with siblings and for a lot of the children living with several siblings. The experience of being a single child was almost absent at that time (with the exception of the first years of life for some of the children, e.g. the oldest one).

Table 3: Living with siblings

	Jasenica County 1863	Jasenica County 1884	Albania 1918
living with siblings, all children	92.7 percent	90.3 percent	74.9 percent
living with siblings, 1-year-olds	76.8 percent	75.1 percent	63.4 percent
living with siblings, 15-year-olds	94.8 percent	90.5 percent	69.6 percent
living with five or more siblings, all children	21.3 percent	16.3 percent	6.0 percent
average number of siblings, all children	3.01	2.76	1.85
average number of siblings, 1-year-olds	2.05	1.93	1.48
average number of siblings, 15-year-olds	3.36	2.96	1.67

Living with parents and without parents

In present time it is rather normal for children in Europe that their parents are alive. Living with both biological parents is not so common since rates of divorce have increased during the 20th century and before that it was rather uncommon or not even possible. In the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century not living with parents was in most of the cases due to the death of the father or the mother or of both of them. The small number of people of higher ages in the data for this paper suggests a high mortality rate and therefore a considerable proportion of children whose parents died while they were still children. Charts 2-4 show the decreasing percentage of children living with their father and their mother. In the first years of life more than 90 percent of the children still had both of their parents. The percentage was steadily decreasing throughout childhood. The 1884 data show the highest probability of living with one's parents while the Albanian data show the lowest probability. At an age of about 15 years only 72 percent of the Serbian children still had a father and only 83 percent of them still had a mother in 1884. 11 percent of the 15-year-olds had no parents at all since the death of the father and the death of the mother was neither occurring simultaneously nor completely separated. The higher percentage of mothers still alive may be resulting from the fact that in most of the married couples the husband was older than the wife (80 percent) and in an additional 15 percent they were of the same age. A further reason should be the higher percentage of widowers who married a second time as compared to remarried widows. In 1863 all these probabilities were about 5 to 10 percent lower, which may indicate higher mortality or less accuracy in the process of census taking. The data of 1863 showed much lower percentages for the village of Markovac and higher percentages for the village of Orašac. In 1884 these differences had almost disappeared.

In Albania in 1918 these figures were even lower and only three fourth of all children still had a father. At the end of childhood more than half of the children had already lost their father and one third of the children had already lost their mother. Christians had higher chances of living with their parents than Muslims. An urban environment or being a member of an ethnic minority had almost no positive effect on the probability of living with one's parents. The most marked regional variation was the low probability of living with one's father in the region of Puka. We have to take into consideration the effects of several years of

warfare in the Balkans when comparing this much lower percentages for Albanian children as towards Serbian children one or two generations before.

Table 4: Living with parents

	Jasenica County 1863	Jasenica County 1884	Albanian 1918
living with father, all children	85.0 percent	90.7 percent	74.0 percent
living with father, 15-year-olds	62.4 percent	72.0 percent	46.0 percent
living with mother, all children	89.7 percent	94.5 percent	86.0 percent
living with mother, 15-year-olds	74.0 percent	83.6 percent	65.1 percent
living with both parents, all children	80.2 percent	88.4 percent	69.9 percent
living with both parents, 15-year-olds	53.8 percent	66.8 percent	41.9 percent
living with at least one parent, all children	94.5 percent	96.7 percent	89.7 percent
living with at least one parent, 15-year-olds	82.7 percent	88.8 percent	69.3 percent

Comparative data from France in the 18th century show that at an age of 27 years half of the people still had a father and at an age of 32 years half of the people still had a mother (Le Bras 1973:26). In the beginning of the 20th century only 8 percent of the children in Germany had already lost their father at an age of 10 years and the percentage of children, who had already lost their mother was even lower (Lauterbach 1995:30f.). These data show much higher survival rates for parents than the data from the Balkans, which might be the effect of worse living conditions there.

Living with grandparents

Was it possible to live with grandparents despite the high mortality rate of that time? Charts 2-4 show the percentage of children of different ages of living with their grandparents. Despite the high mortality rate it was possible for about one third of the youngest children to live some time with at least one grandparent. In 1863 the possibility declined steadily to a mere 3 percent at age 15 and the possibility of living with a grandmother was always almost twice as high as that of living with a grandfather. The reason for it is the same like living with one's mother and with one's father. The possibility of living with a grandfather was less than 10 percent already at age 6 while it was only at age 9 for living with a grandmother. The possibility of living with both grandparents fell below 10 percent already at age 5 and of living with at least one grandparent at age 12. In 1884 the situation had already improved and now a quarter of all children was living with at least one grandparent and 10 percent were living with both grandparents. There were clear differences between the villages in 1863: only 2.1 percent of the children were living with their grandfather in Jelovik as contrasted to 17.9 percent in Orašac. The reason for this enormous difference is mostly the highest share of joint families in Orašac and the highest share of nuclear families in Jelovik. In 1884 the highest share of joint families was found in Kopljari and this village had also the highest

number of children living with their grandparents: 23.2 percent of them were living with their grandfather and 32.5 percent were living with their grandmother.

The Albanian data show a different pattern: the probability of living with one's grandmother was similar to the Serbian data of 1884 and the probability of living with one's grandfather was lower than in the Serbian data of 1863. One reason for such a difference larger than in the Serbian data is the higher age-difference among spouses in Albania at the beginning of the 20th century. There is almost no difference between the religious groups in Albania despite the fact that the Catholics had much more joint families. In cities children were living to a lesser degree with their grandparents than children in villages. Children of ethnic minorities were to a much lesser degree living with their grandmothers than ethnic Albanian children. The highest percentages of children living with their grandparents could be found in the region of Kruja, where one third of the children lived with their grandmother. The lowest percentage of children living with their grandparents could be found in Southeast Albania, where only 3.1 percent of the children lived with their grandfathers.

Table 5: Living with grandparents

	Jasenica County 1863	Jasenica County 1884	Albania 1918
living with grandfather, all children	9.3 percent	14.3 percent	7.2 percent
living with grandmother, all children	16.2 percent	23.4 percent	23.1 percent
living with both grandparents, all children	6.2 percent	10.8 percent	5.3 percent
living with at least one grandparent, all children	19.3 percent	26.6 percent	24.6 percent

Demographic research about France in the 18th century showed that only 16 percent of all new-borns had no living grandparent and that at an age of 10 years only 38 percent of the children had no living grandparent (Le Bras 1973:27). These figures are in contrast to the data about children in Jasenica County in the second half of the 19th century and in Albania at the beginning of the 20th century, where there is already at birth a majority of children without grandparents. But we have to be aware of the different measures here: in the data from the Balkans we are dealing with children living with grandparents and not with the probability of having living grandparents. This percentage was clearly higher since children were normally living with their paternal grandparents and therefore we have almost no information about maternal grandparents. Another point to consider is the effect of neolocal households or divisions of households: the grandparents could only reside with one child and therefore only one set of grandchildren could live with their grandparents, while the other sets of grandchildren were living without grandparents. But it does not seem reasonable to get rates as high as quoted for France in the 18th century.

Living with other members of the household

It is astonishing that the category of "other members of the household" accounted for the highest number of all categories in Jasenica County in 1884 and in Albania in 1918. Only in the Serbian data of 1863 the category "siblings" had more members than this category of

“others”. How was this possible and who were these people? This is the effect of the high number of joint families within the data and in these joint families always lived some people who were not close relatives to all other people. These joint families were also the largest ones and therefore the experience of such constellations had much more effect than constellations of smaller families, e.g. nuclear families. The most important dyadic relationships for these other members of the household were uncle/aunt-nephew/niece and cousin-cousin. Unrelated persons, like servants, were rather rarely found in these households.

Table 6: Living with other members of the household

	Jasenica County 1863	Jasenica County 1884	Albania 1918
average number of siblings, all children	3.01	2.76	1.85
average number of parents, all children	1.75	1.85	1.60
average number of grandparents, all children	0.26	0.37	0.30
average number of other members of the household, all children	2.71	2.81	3.61

Living in joint families

There was a lot of variation in mean household size according to the age of the children, but there was no clear trend towards increasing or decreasing household size during childhood. In 1863 in Jasenica County mean household size was in the range of 8 to 9.5 members per household, as experienced by the members of the household. In 1884 it was a bit lower and in Albania in 1918 it was in the range of 7.5 to 9 persons. It seems to be that there was a slight trend towards smaller households at the end of childhood. The increasing number of siblings during childhood was counterbalanced by the decrease in the number of parents, grandparents and other members of the household.

Charts 11-13 show the percentages of the three main types of households throughout childhood. Extended families were rather stable at about 10 percent in 1863 in Jasenica County. Nuclear families showed a tendency of increasing during childhood from 30 percent at birth up to 50 percent at age 13 where there was a reversal of the trend. Joint families showed as a consequence a tendency of decreasing from 57 percent at birth to 33 percent at age 13 where the percentage of children living in joint families started to increase again. Age 13 was according to this data the turning point to a rapid increase in the share of people living in joint families, which reached his maximum in the early twenties. This maximum suggests that it was the consequence of marriage without leaving the parental household. The subsequent decrease was the result of dying parents and divisions of households. The turning point already at age 13 is understandable by the already mentioned fact that most of the children had several siblings and so the oldest brothers were already marrying when their younger siblings were still children. Childhood was one of the two phases in the life course at that time where a considerable part of the people were living in nuclear households, the other one was the age around 40 years where the children were still unmarried.

In 1884 the trend was quite similar throughout childhood, but the proportion of extended families had risen to almost 14 percent. Nuclear families had their peak already at age 10 with 43 percent and joint families had at this point still almost 40 percent. The shift of the

turning point from 13 to 10 years is astonishing, but may also be the effect of more accurate data in 1884 since the charts show a much smoother development in the 1884 data as compared to the 1863 data. The Albanian children in 1918 experienced somehow different household constellations during their childhood: there was less variation in the share of the different types of households and these types were much more equal distributed among the children since extended households were twice as often than in the 1884 Serbian data and more frequent than nuclear families. These extended households increased from 20 percent to more than 30 percent during childhood. The peak for nuclear household was already at age 7 with almost 30 percent and afterwards the percentage decreased almost to 20 percent. The share of joint families was always more than 40 percent, with the exception of age 12, where it fell below it.

The highest share of joint families among children was in Orašac in 1863 and in Kopljari in 1884 with more than 60 percent. In Albania 55 percent of the Catholic children were living in joint families, while only 30 percent of the Orthodox children were living in joint families. The relative majority of the Orthodox children was living in nuclear households (almost 40 percent). In cities and among ethnic minorities nuclear families were dominating with more than 40 percent. The Catholic pattern is reflected in the higher share of joint families in Northern Albania, but also Muslim children were more often living in joint families in Northern Albania than in Southern Albania.

Table 7: Living in joint families

	Jasenica County 1863	Jasenica County 1884	Albania 1918
nuclear families, all children	39.0 percent	37.3 percent	26.6 percent
extended families, all children	10.5 percent	13.7 percent	26.8 percent
joint families, all children	47.9 percent	48.1 percent	43.8 percent

Experiencing marriage, birth, death, and household divisions

Major changes in the composition of households were due to vital events like the birth of new members of the household and the death of existing members of the household. Marriages led to the moving of young female adults from their parental household to the parental household of their husbands and divisions of households led to the reduction in size and complexity of households and the establishment of new households. Were these events also experienced by children within their parental household? It is clear that due to the high fertility and mortality rates of that time birth and death were common events and it is also clear that due to the high number of siblings most of the children should have experienced the birth of a younger sibling (with the exception of the youngest one). In addition children would very often experience the death of a sibling at young age due to the high infant and child mortality. About half of the children also experienced the death of at least one of their parents during childhood. In 1863 in Jasenica County the probability of losing one parent up to an age of 15 years was almost 50 percent and within the next twenty years it fell to almost one third. In Albania in 1918 almost 60 percent of the children lost one parent during childhood, which is much more than in the analysed Serbian data. In addition those 40 percent of the children which lived for some time with their grandparents saw most of their grandparents dying during their childhood. Therefore a clear majority of children had to cope with death among their closest kin during childhood. The number of children who saw an older brother or an older sister marrying is not easy to assess from this source. The same is true for the

proportion of children whose parental household was divided while they were still children. The slight trend to smaller households towards the end of childhood suggests divisions due to the fact that a considerable number of siblings were born in this time. The decreasing proportion of joint families during childhood also suggests divisions of households although the death of parents may have also led to simpler household structures. More sophisticated procedures will be necessary to find more precise answers for these questions.

Conclusion

Looking at households and their members from the point of view of children is a possibility of enhancing our knowledge about the structure and the temporal changes of households and of the environment in which children experienced the first phase of their life course. A similar useful task would be to look at older people and their households and to compare children, young adults, middle-aged people, and older people – always considering possible differences between men and women. Comparing life courses of children of different parity (first, second, ... last child) goes beyond the space of such a paper as is the case with in-depth comparisons over time and space. Nevertheless they should be one focus for future research. Another focus should be research about possible consequences of such events like the death of a parent or of a sibling for the future life of children. Although many of them were only at the beginning of their life and could not fully understand what was actually happening, it was happening at a much closer distance than nowadays: people were born at home and they were also dying at home.

Bibliography

Hubert Christian Ehalt (1985): Über den Wandel des Termins der Geschlechtsreife in Europa und dessen Ursachen. In: *Saeculum* 36, pp. 201-253.

Siegfried Gruber (2001): Children and their Parental Households in Central Serbia in the 19th Century. In: Slobodan Naumović, Miroslav Jovanović (Eds.), *Childhood in South East Europe: Historical Perspectives on Growing Up in the 19th and 20th Century (Zur Kunde Südosteuropas II/28, Udruženje za društvenu istoriju – Ideje 2)*. Belgrade, Graz, pp. 31-44.

Joel M. Halpern (1972): Town and countryside in Serbia in the nineteenth century, social and household structure as reflected in the census of 1863. In: Peter Laslett (Ed.), *Household and family in past time: Comparative studies in the size and structure of the domestic group over the last three centuries in England, France, Serbia, Japan and colonial North America, with further materials from Western Europe*. Cambridge, pp. 401-427.

Joel M. Halpern (1986): Life Course: A Balkan Perspective. In: *Current Perspectives on Aging and the Life Cycle* 2, pp. 211-235.

Tamara K. Hareven (1978): Introduction: The Historical Study of the Life Course. In: Tamara K. Hareven (Ed.), *Transitions: The Family and the Life Course in Historical Perspective*. New York etc., pp. 1-16.

Peter Laslett (1983): Family and household as work group and kin group: areas of traditional Europe compared. In: Richard Wall (Ed.), *Family forms in historic Europe*. Cambridge etc., pp. 513-563.

Wolfgang Lauterbach (1995): Die gemeinsame Lebenszeit von Familiengenerationen. In: *Zeitschrift für Soziologie*, vol. 24, no. 1, pp. 22-41.

Hervé Le Bras (1973): Parents, grand-parents, bisaïeux. In: *Population* 29, pp.9-38.

Eugen Oberhummer (1921): Mitteilung über die erste Volkszählung in Albanien. In: *Anzeiger der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien, philosophisch-historische Klasse* 57/1920. Wien, pp. 61-68.

Franz Seiner (1922a): *Die Gliederung der albanischen Stämme*. Graz.

Franz Seiner (1922b): *Ergebnisse der Volkszählung in Albanien in dem von den österr.-ungar. Truppen 1916-1918 besetzten Gebiete (Schriften der Balkankommission, Linguistische Abteilung XIII)*. Wien, Leipzig.

Silvia Sovič (2001): *Peasant Communities, Local Economies and Household Composition in Nineteenth-Century Slovenia*. PhD-thesis, University of Essex.

Holm Sundhaussen (1989): *Historische Statistik Serbiens 1834-1914. Mit europäischen Vergleichsdaten (Südosteuropäische Arbeiten 87)*. München.

Maria Todorova (1993): *Balkan Family Structure and the European Pattern: Demographic Developments in Ottoman Bulgaria*. Washington.

Chart 1: Age pyramid of nine settlements in Jasenica County in 1863

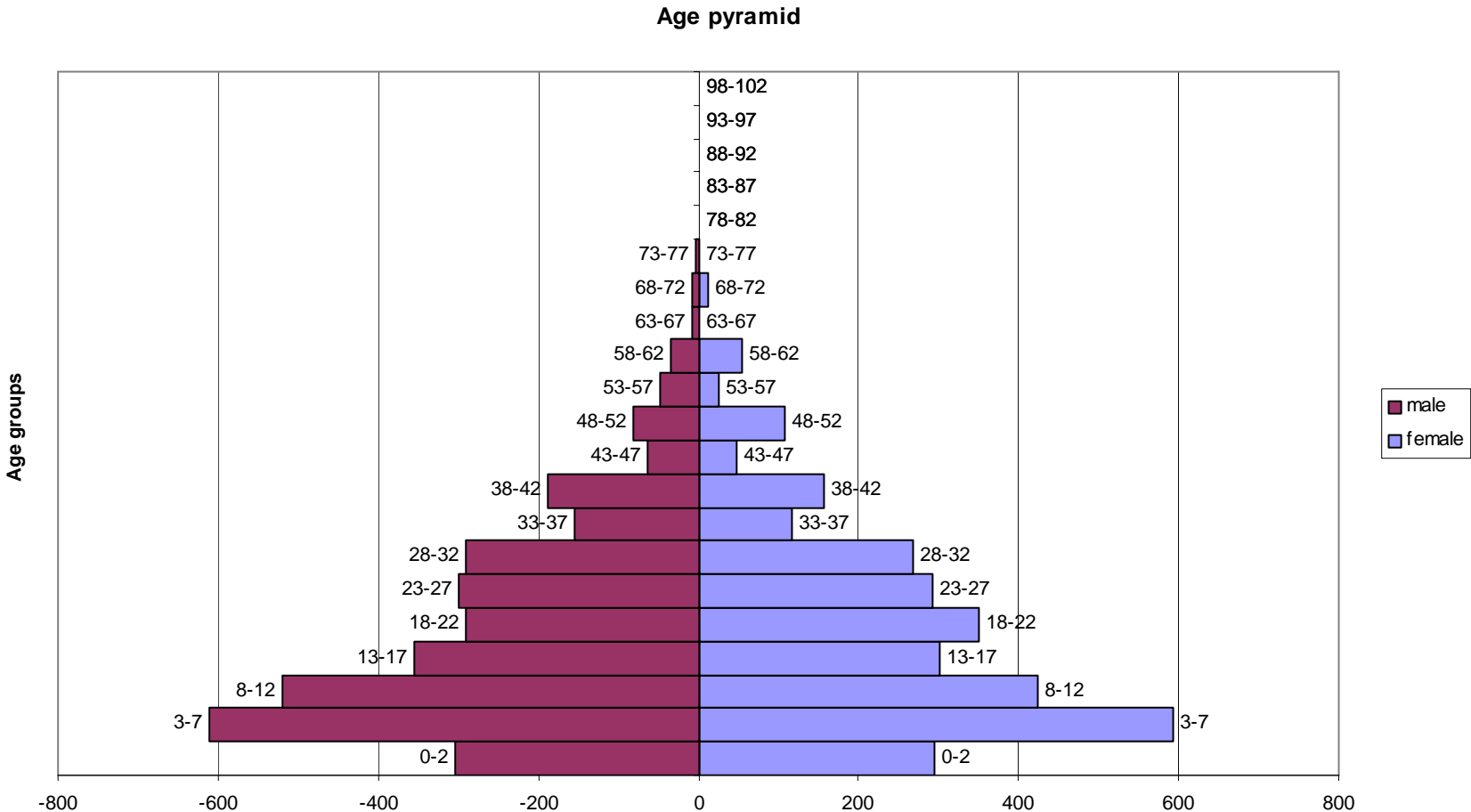


Chart 2

Jasenica County 1863

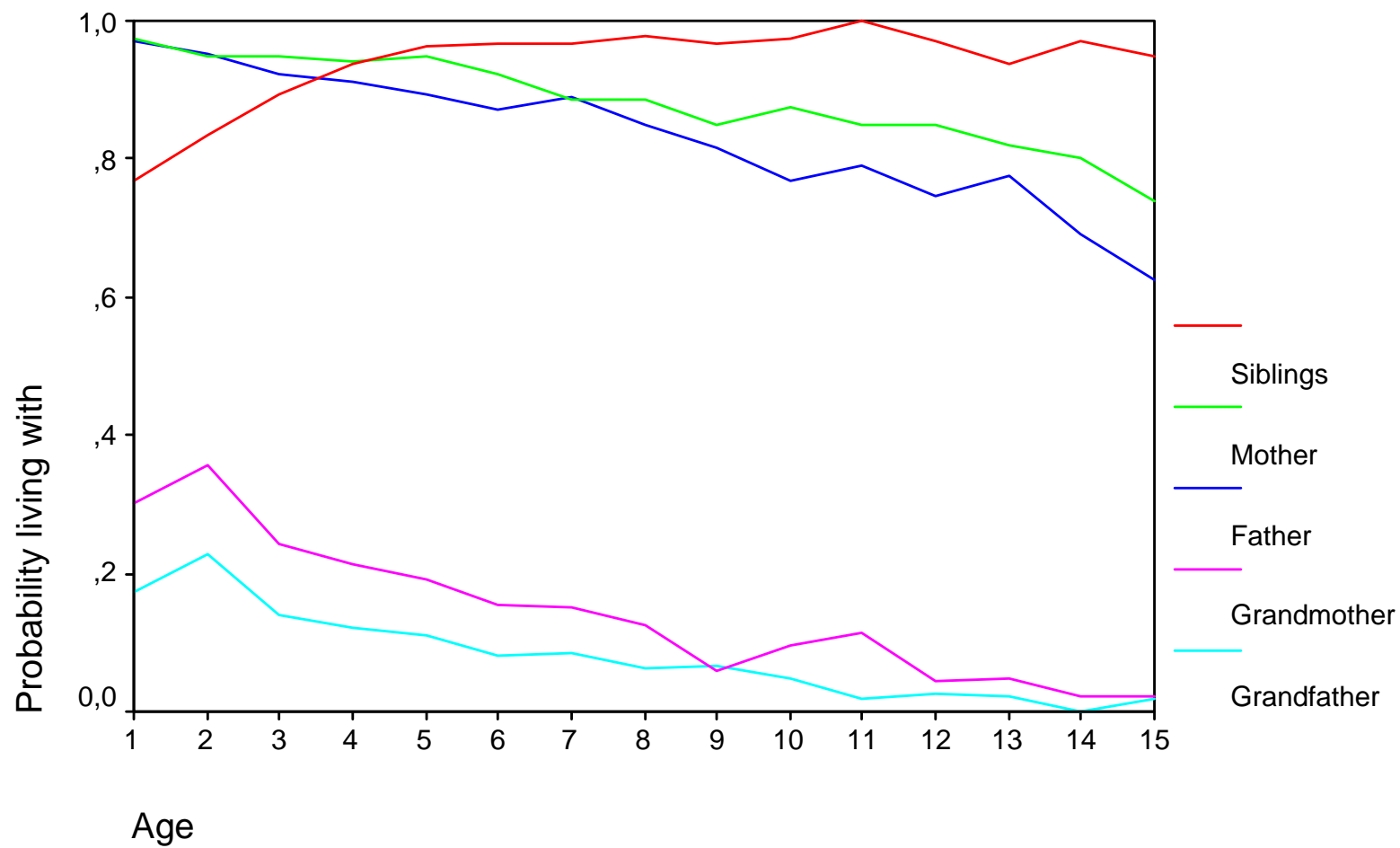


Chart 3

Jasenica County 1884

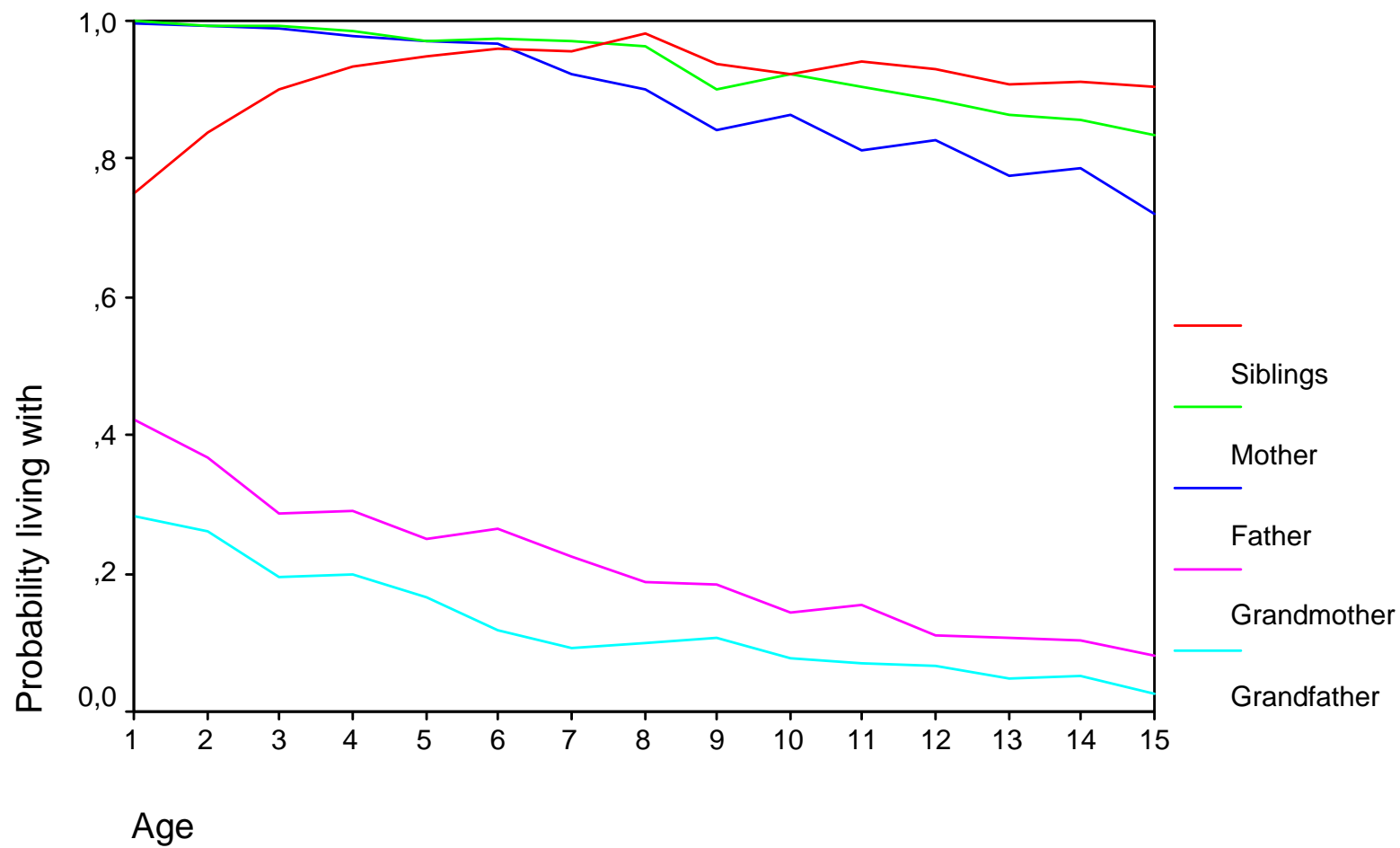


Chart 4

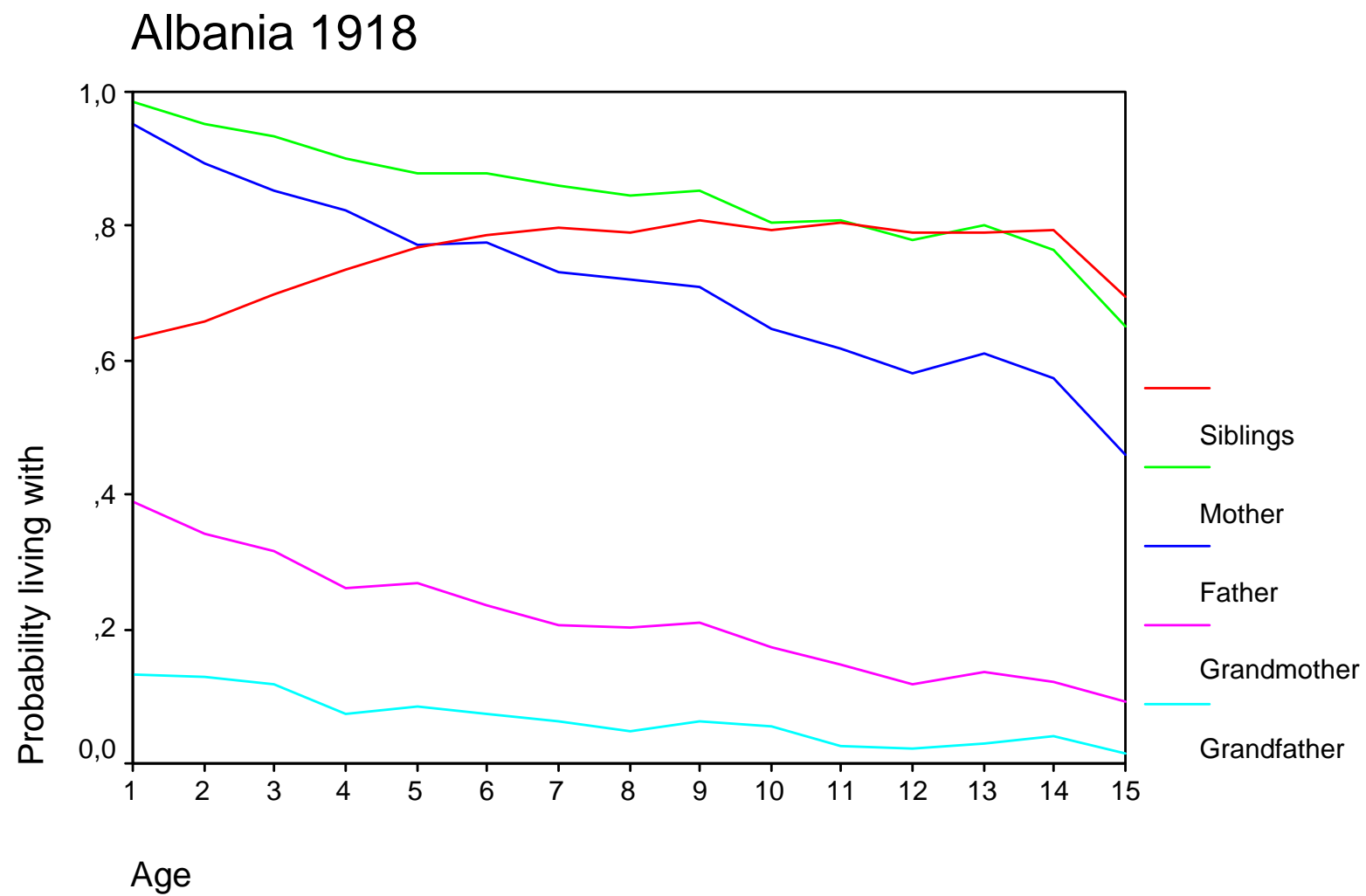


Chart 5

Jasenica County 1863

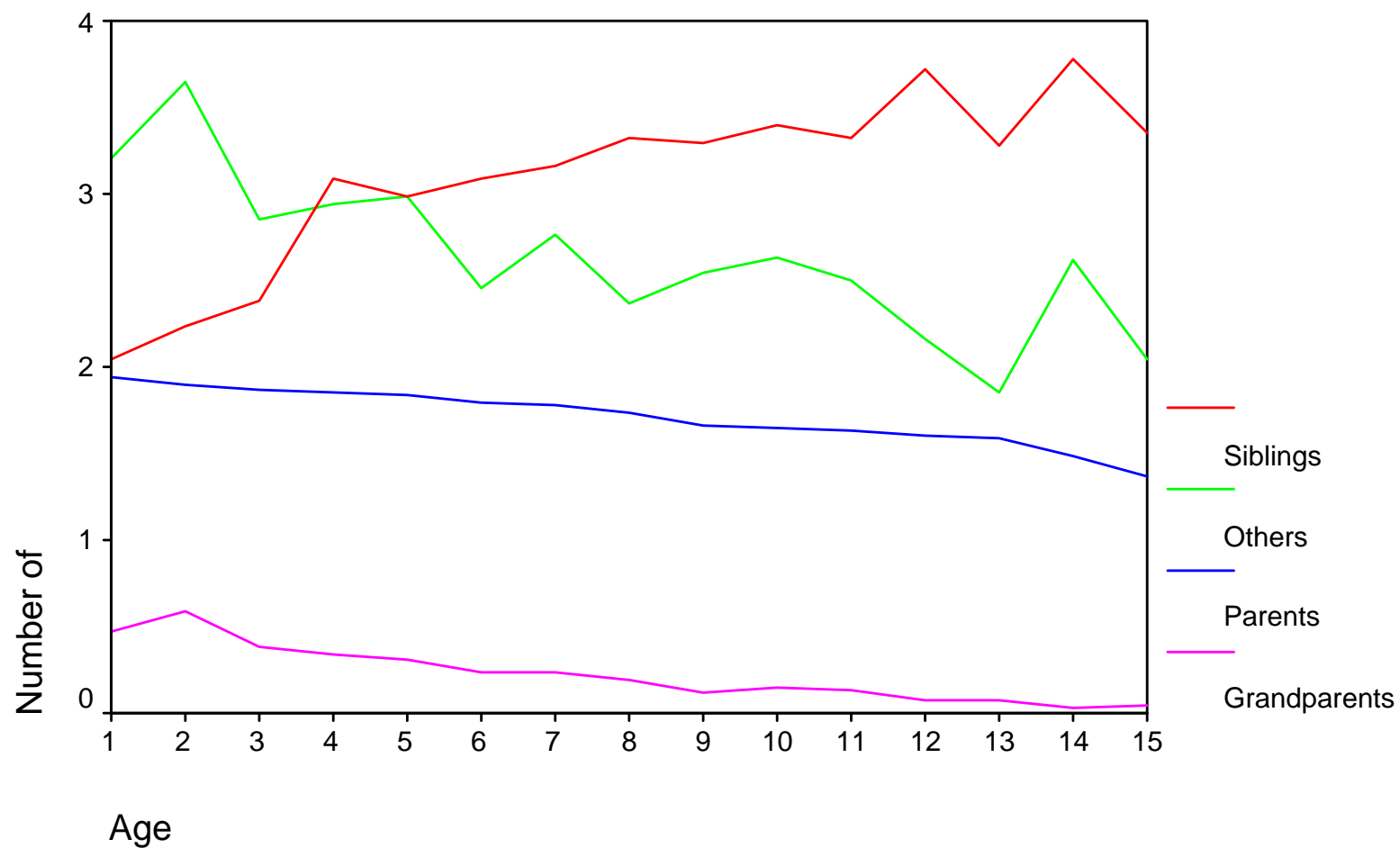


Chart 6

Jasenica County 1884

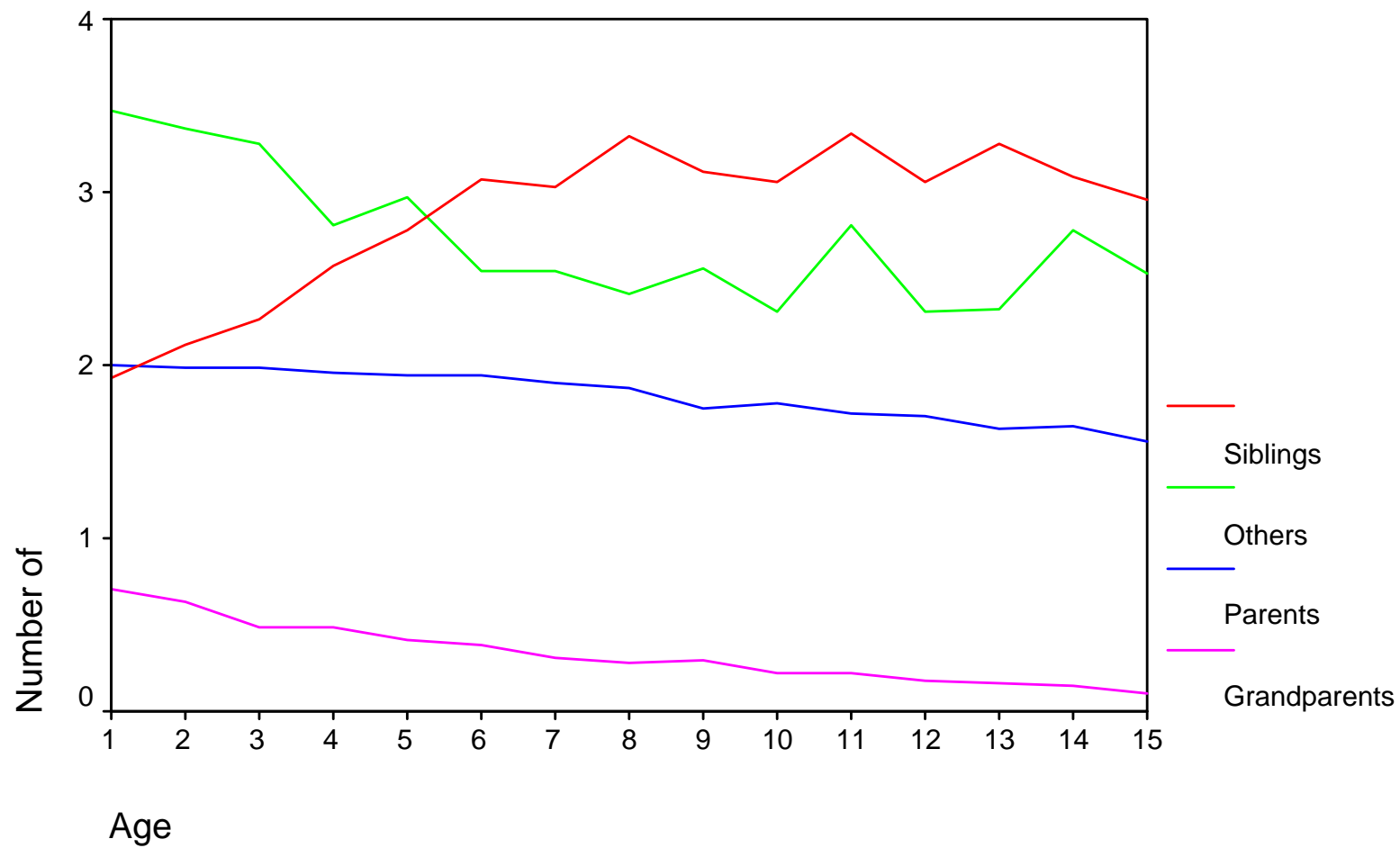


Chart 7

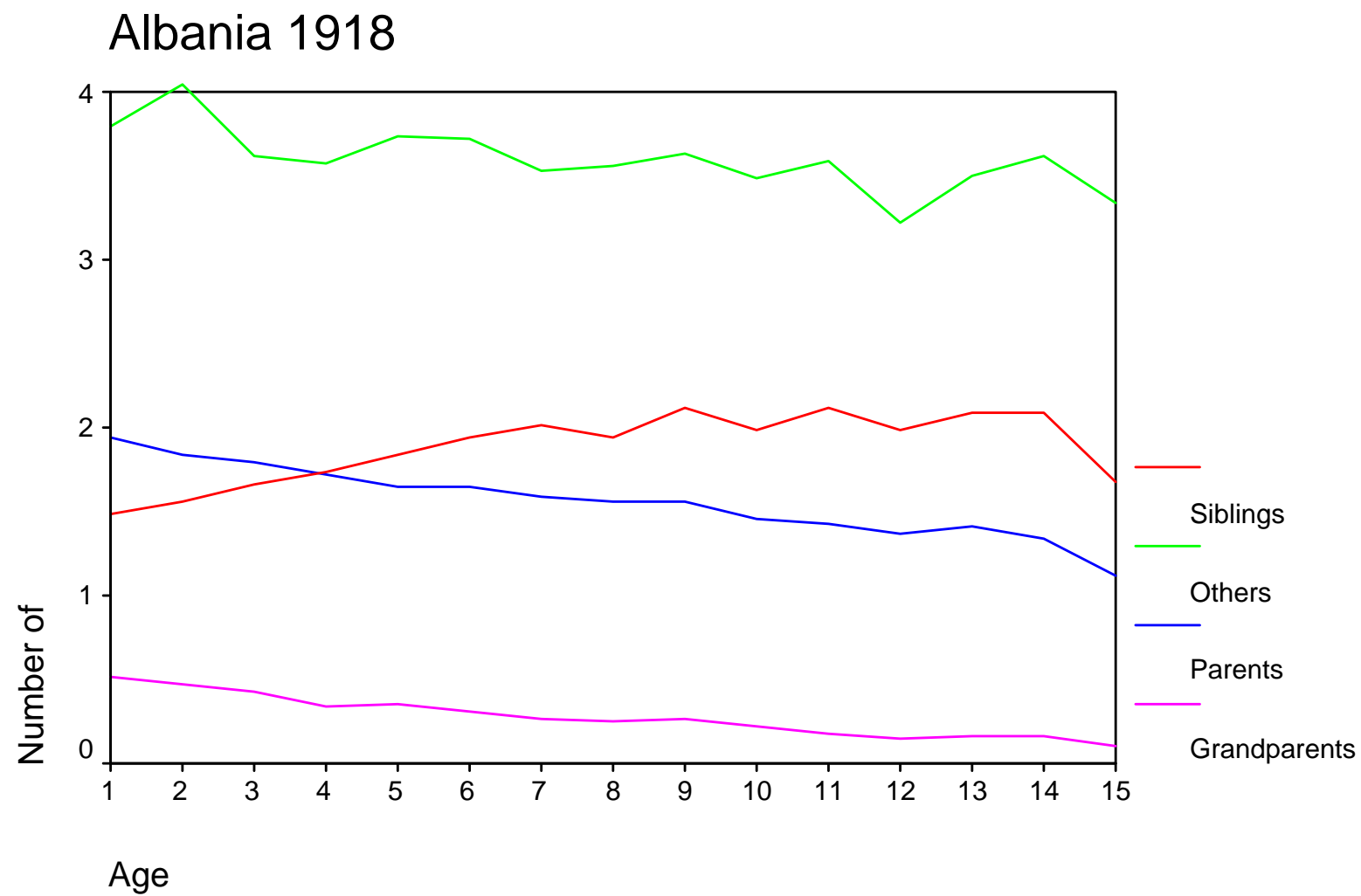


Chart 8

Jasenica County 1863

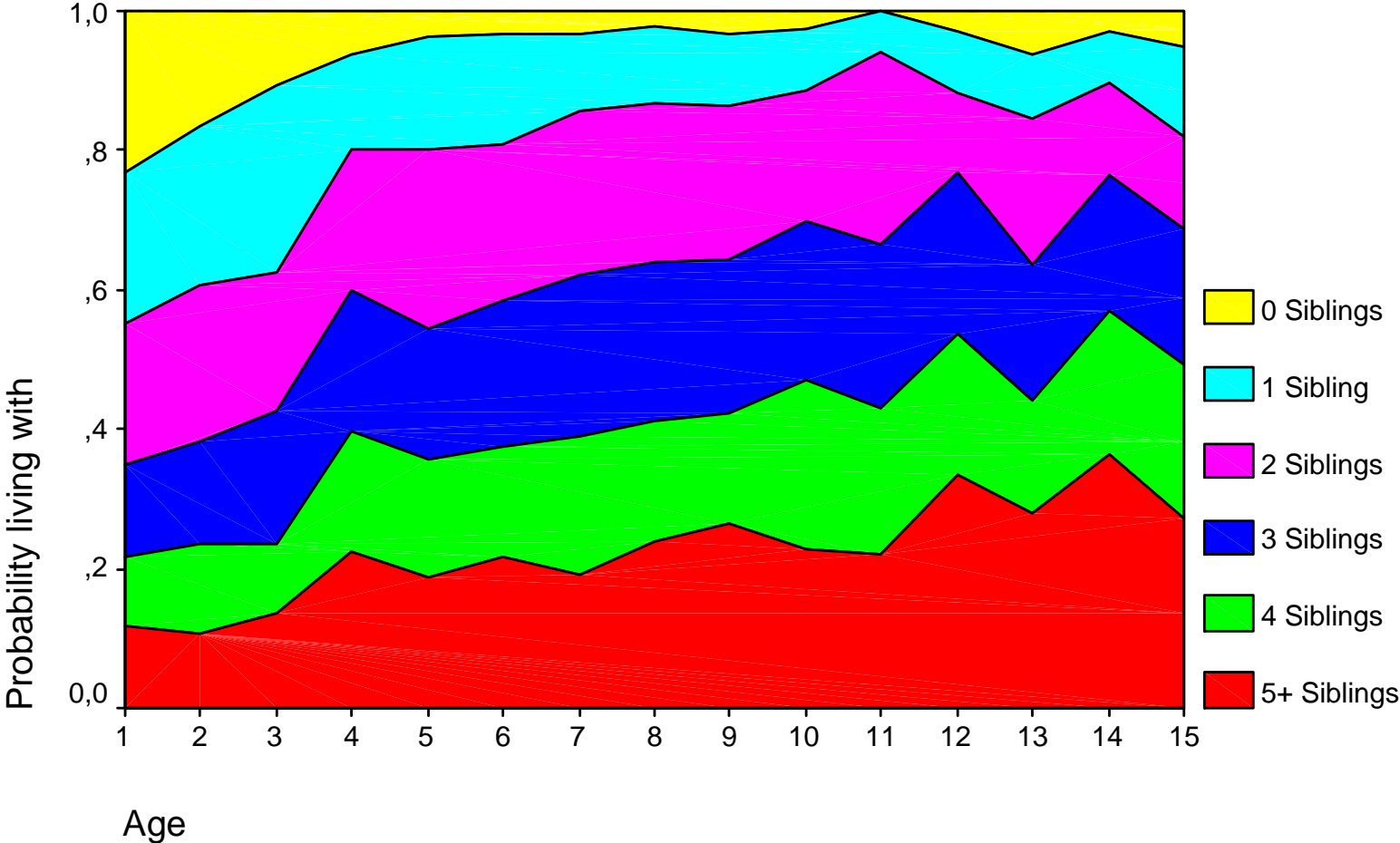


Chart 9

Jasenica County 1884

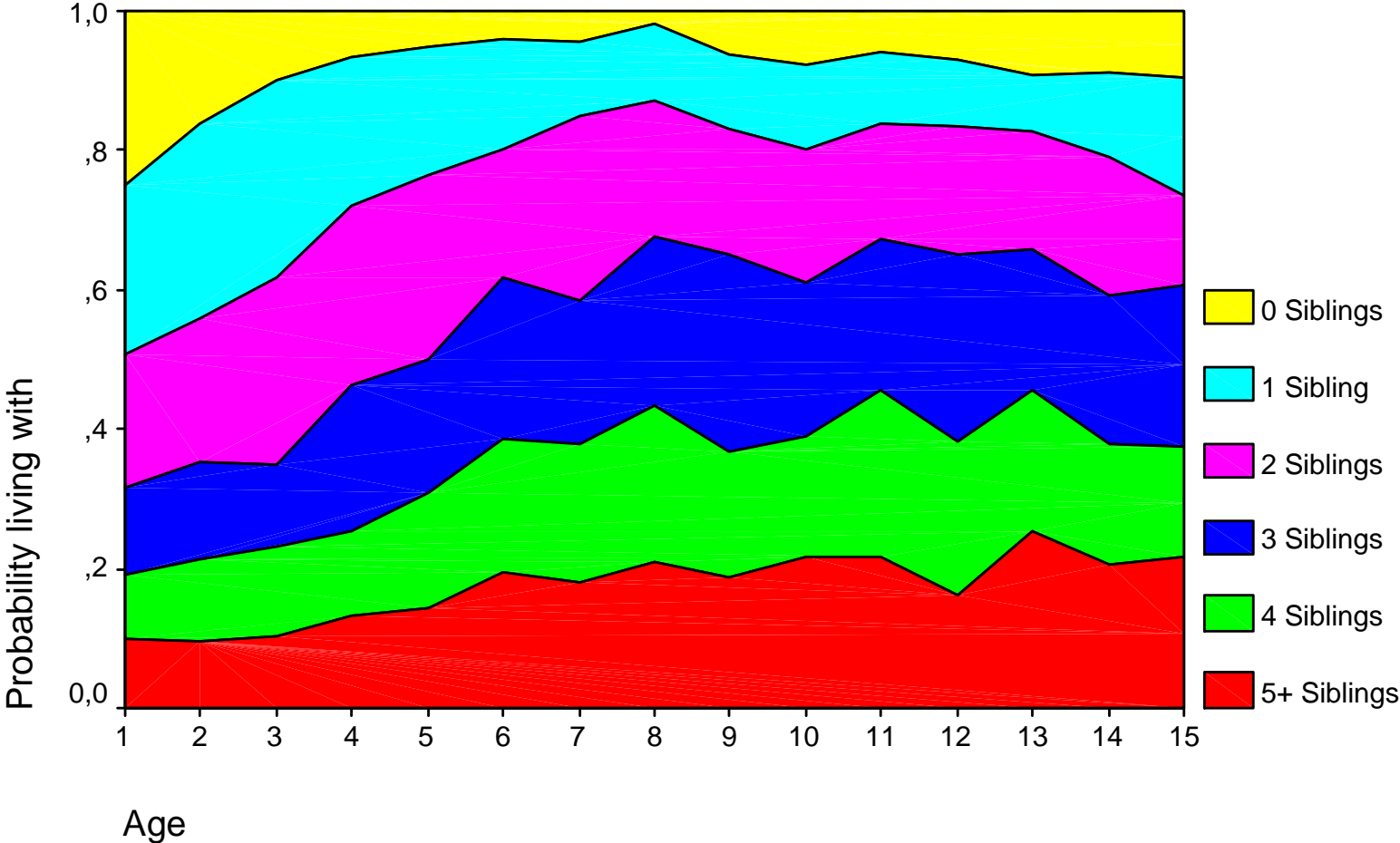


Chart 10

Albania 1918

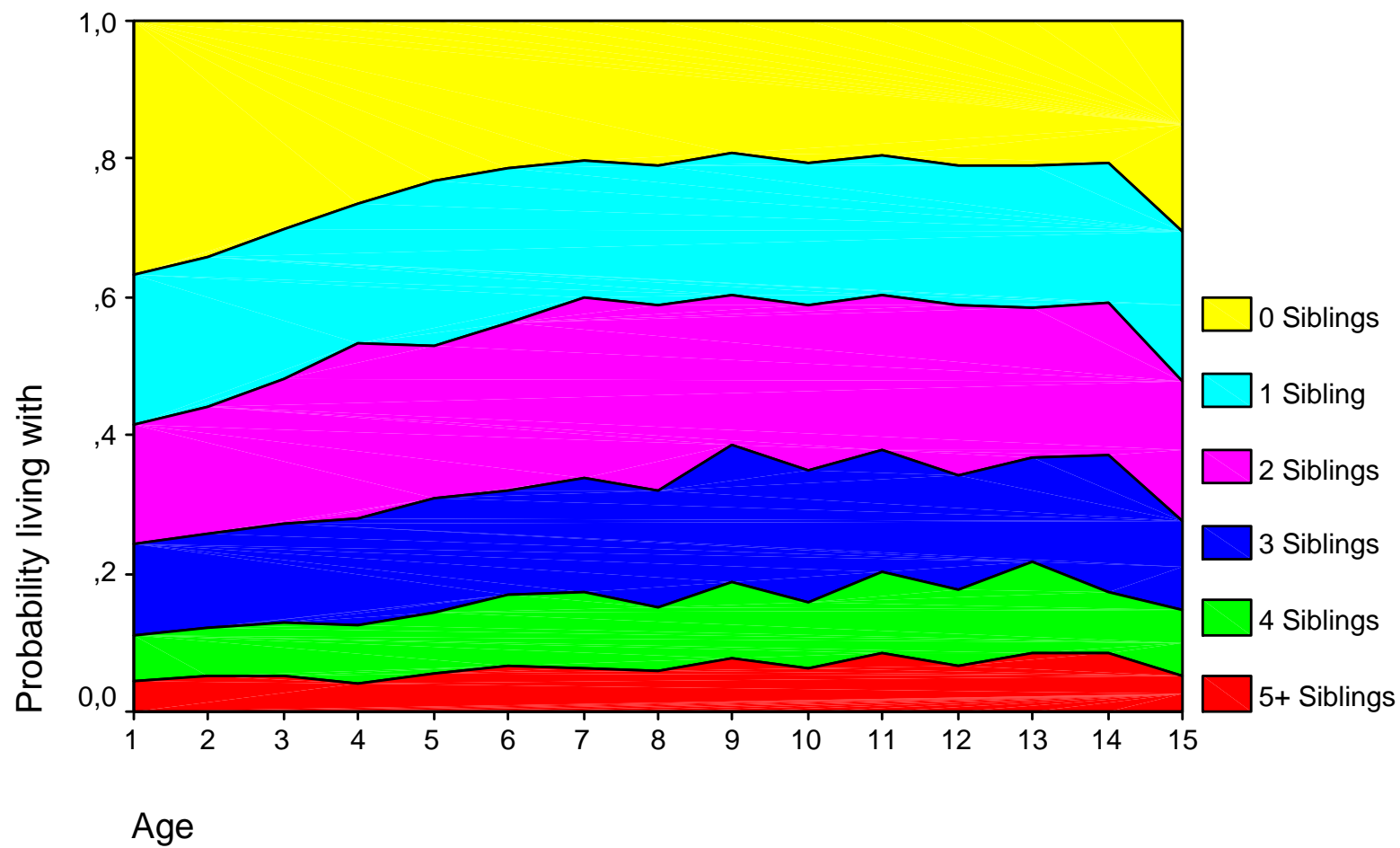


Chart 11

Jasenica County 1863

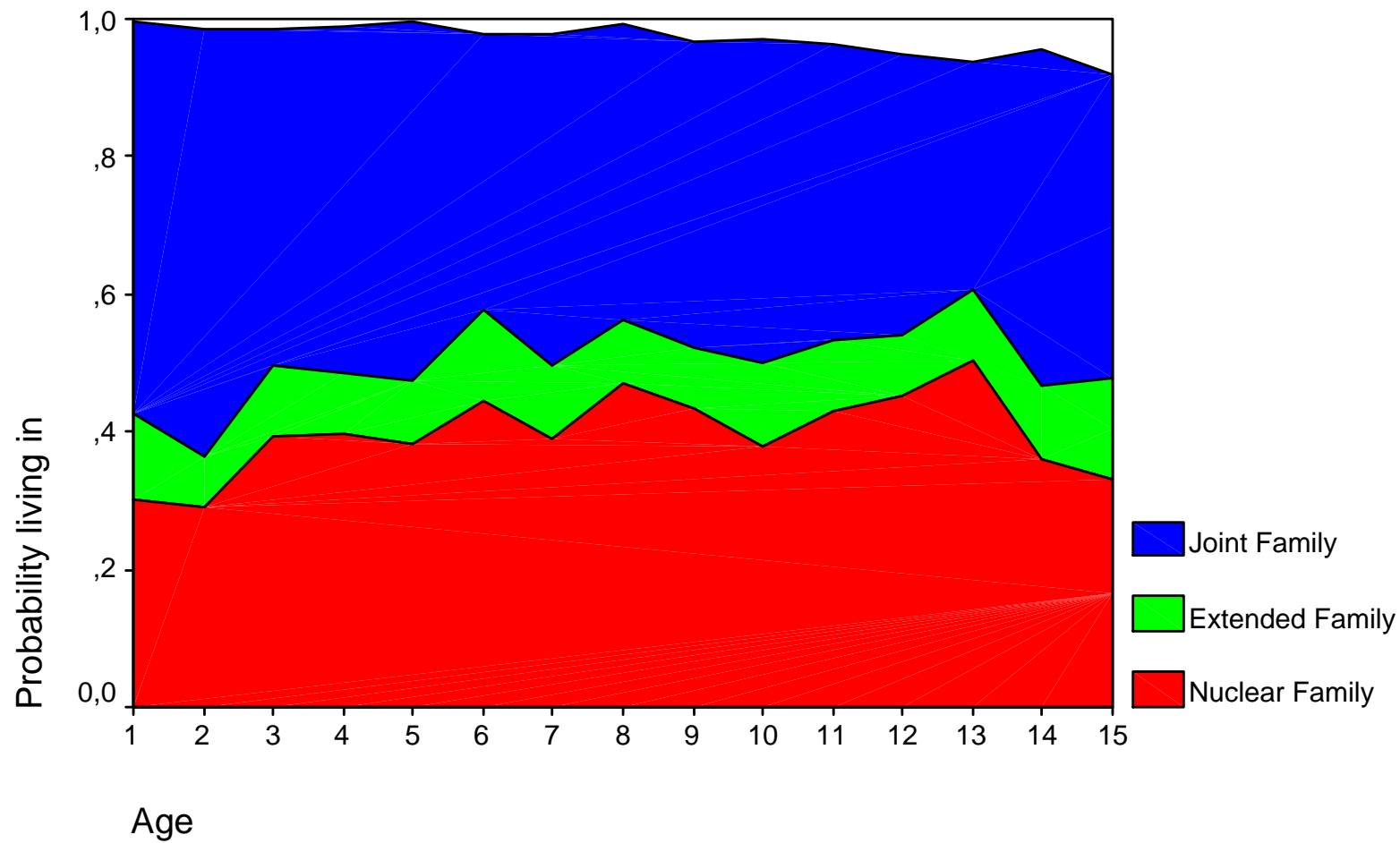


Chart 12

Jasenica County 1884

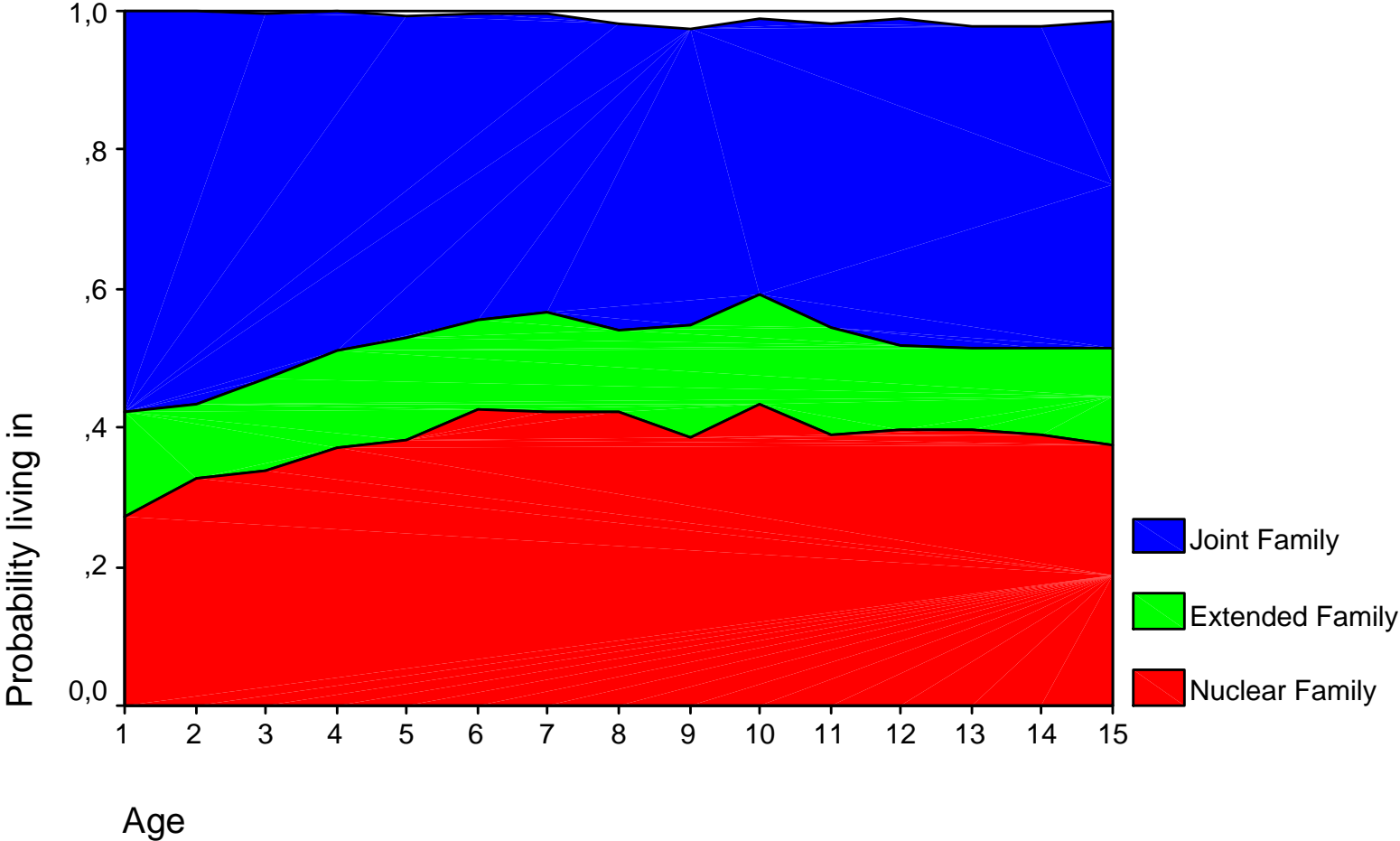


Chart 13

Albania 1918

