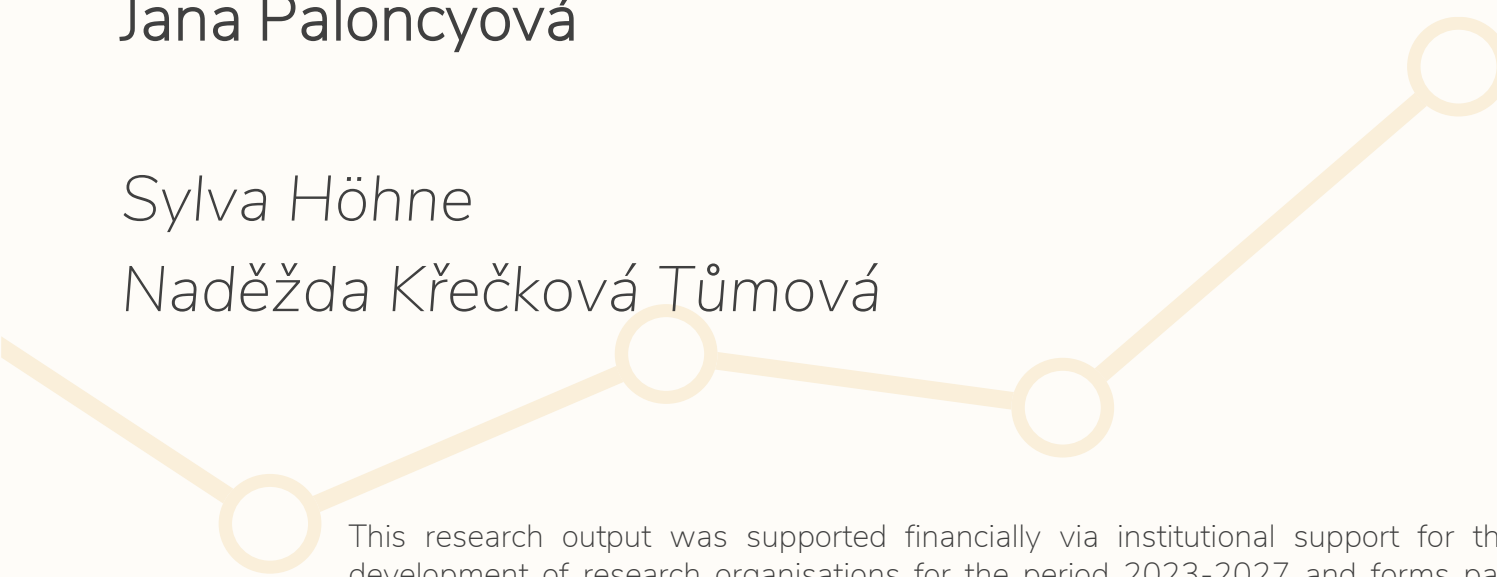


# Educational Challenges and Opportunities for Children from Low-Income Families in Czechia

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# Introduction

- Background : Child Guarantee – Action Plan for the Child Guarantee Implementation 2022–2030
- Identification of the target group by RILSA in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs with the aim of obtaining data for the evaluation of the action plan.



Families receiving child benefit



Living conditions of families receiving child benefit, with a focus on children's needs in care, upbringing, and education

# Focus and Objectives of the Research

- **Questionnaire survey**

- among child benefit recipients (June/July 2024):  
180,000 emails sent, online questionnaire, current/past applicants from the past 5 years
- **N = 20,715 respondents (families)**

- **In-depth interviews with parents (July/August 2024)**

- purpose: feedback, clarifications and explanations, special needs. e.g. disabilities
- **N = 12 interviews**

- **Child benefit data from OKsystem database (Q4 2023)**

- **176,575 households**

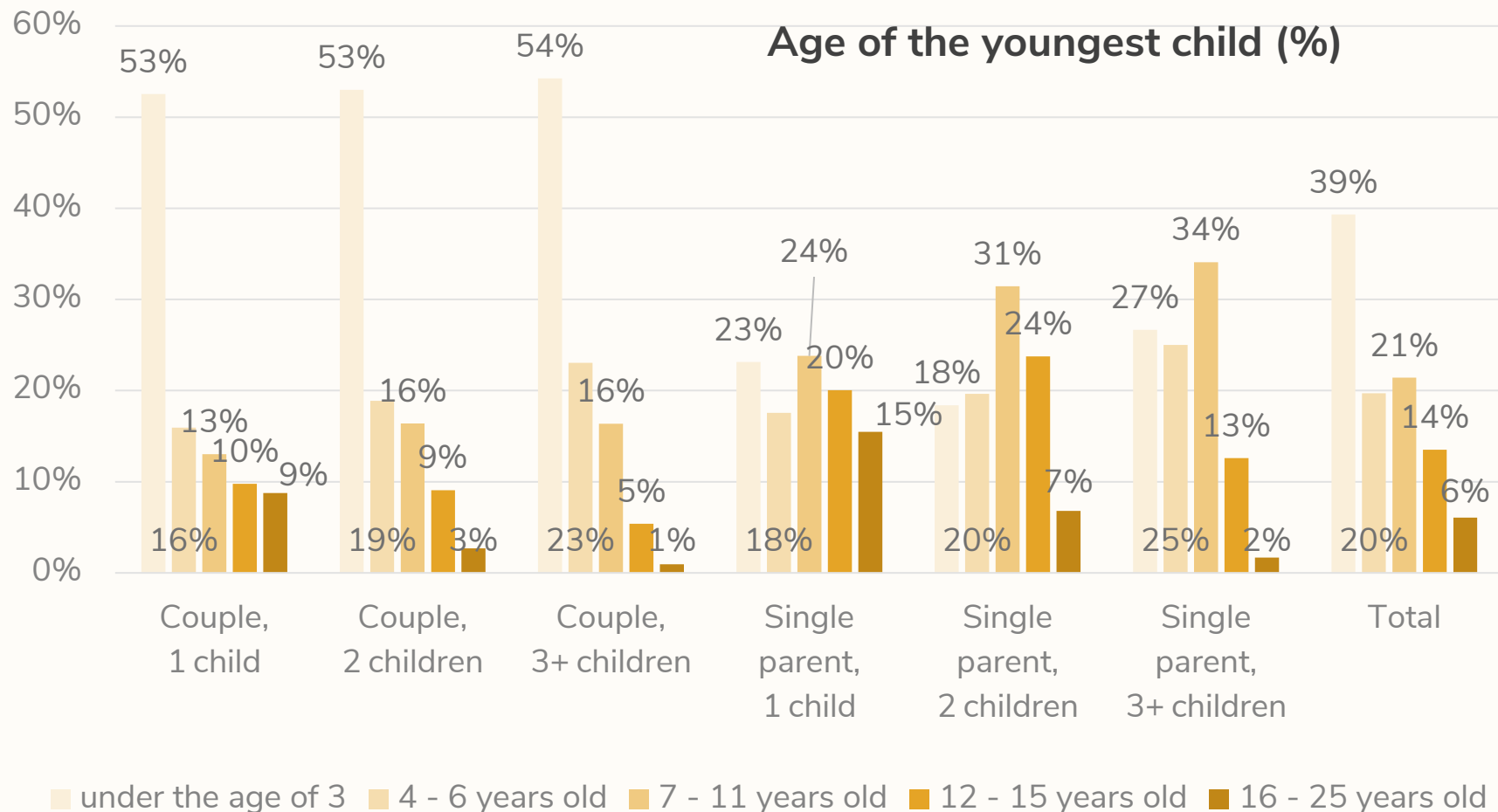
# Families Receiving Child Benefit

Comparison by family type and number of dependent children (vs. Census 2021)

%	Families receiving child benefit 2024	Census 2021
<b>Couple</b>	55,9	76,2
- one child	<b>9,2</b>	<b>33,1</b>
- two children	26,7	35,5
- three or more children	<b>20,0</b>	<b>7,6</b>
<b>Single parent family</b>	<b>44,1</b>	<b>23,8</b>
- one child	19,0	15,1
- two children	<b>19,3</b>	<b>7,2</b>
- three or more children	5,8	1,5
<b>Total</b>	100,0	100,0

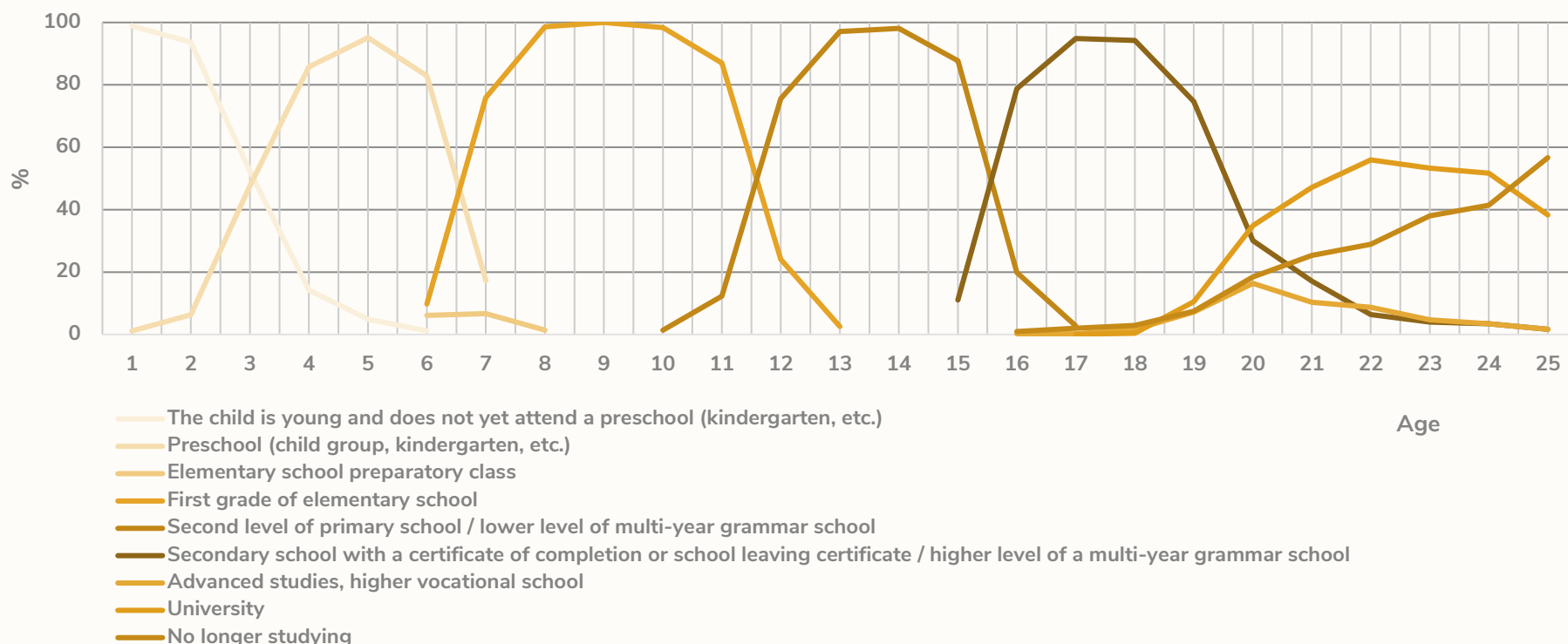
- 23% of two-parent families: both parents have the lowest education (vs. 17% Census 2021)
- Single parents less often have university education: women 18% vs. 26%, men 15% vs. 23% (Census 2021)

# Children in Families Receiving Child Benefit



# Childcare and Education

Children in families receiving child benefit by level of education at the time of the survey



- Main reason for non-participation in preschool: child's age and parent choice (84%)
- Children 2–3 years old: 20% experienced full preschool capacity
- Older children: related to special needs

# Children's Educational Trajectory

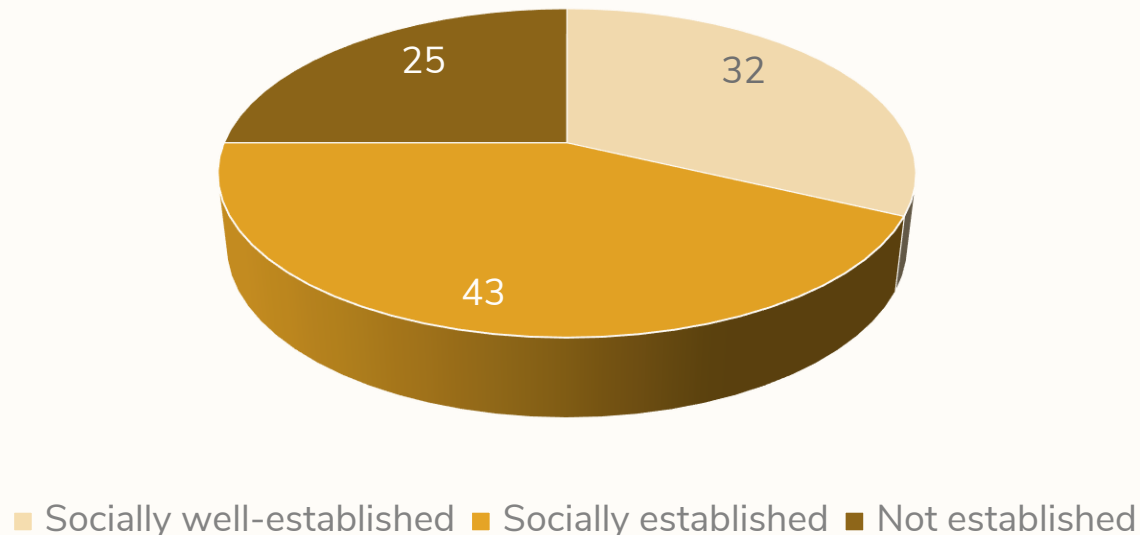
- 44% had deferred compulsory school attendance (mainly with low-educated parents)
- 6% repeated a school year, mainly low educated parents → 28% did not finish primary school (before 9th grade)
- 86% had all children in secondary school; 13% had some dropout
- 25% changed schools

## Reasons for school change (%)

	Couple	Single parent family
Family relocation	46,6	51,9
Dissatisfaction with the quality of the school	44,4	41,1
Academic problems at school	23,3	24,7
Parental separation/divorce	12,2	29,4
Health reasons	11,7	14,5

# Children's Social Background


Close friends and siblings (%)



- Children over 12: increase in parents stating their child lacks many friends (from 20% to 30%)
- Close friend: 35% definitely yes, 44% probably yes, 21% no
- Sibling relationships rated positively (51% definitely yes, 42% rather yes)



# Child-related expenses

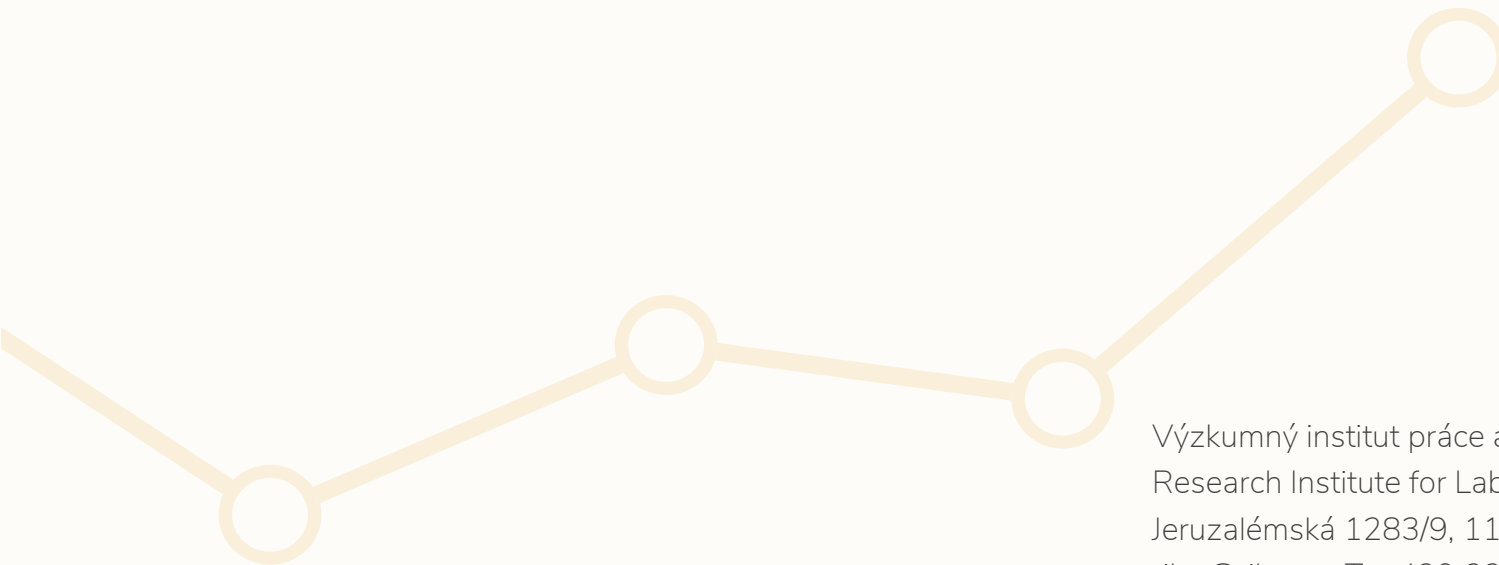
- Only **6%** of families can pay for or buy everything their children need x **18%** of families are not able to cover their children's needs financially
  - Manageable expenses:
    - related to child's health,
    - expenses associated with school or preschool attendance (without significant difficulty paid by 41% of single parents and 63% of parents living in a partnership)
    - 84% of partnered parents, but only 74% of single parents can pay for lunch at school
  - Difficult expenses:
    - one-off events for children:
    - one in four two-parent families can afford to pay it without difficulty, and less than one in ten for single parents
- 
- in 20% single parent families children are unable to participate in such activities, versus 10% two-parent families.

# Recommendations

- Support children's involvement in the team in various ways, for example, a contribution to children's leisure activities with the aim of eliminating their social disadvantage (in cooperation with the local government indirectly through the activity organizer), additional/higher support for children's physical activities by health insurance companies.
- Strengthen cooperation between families and the school (class teacher, school psychologist, social pedagogue) through methodological guidelines; emphasize mutual trust between the class teacher / school psychologist / social pedagogue and the parents, rather than relying on sanctions or stigmatizing the family.
- Urge school founders and providers of childcare and educational institutions to participate in programs that cover lunch costs for children from low-income families.
- Foster among pupils and students an atmosphere of engagement, in the sense of "not being indifferent to what is happening around me" (e.g., through homeroom sessions, civic education classes or their alternatives, trust boxes, or by appointing a designated school contact person).

# Thank you!

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