

Self-perceived health and marital status

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Overview

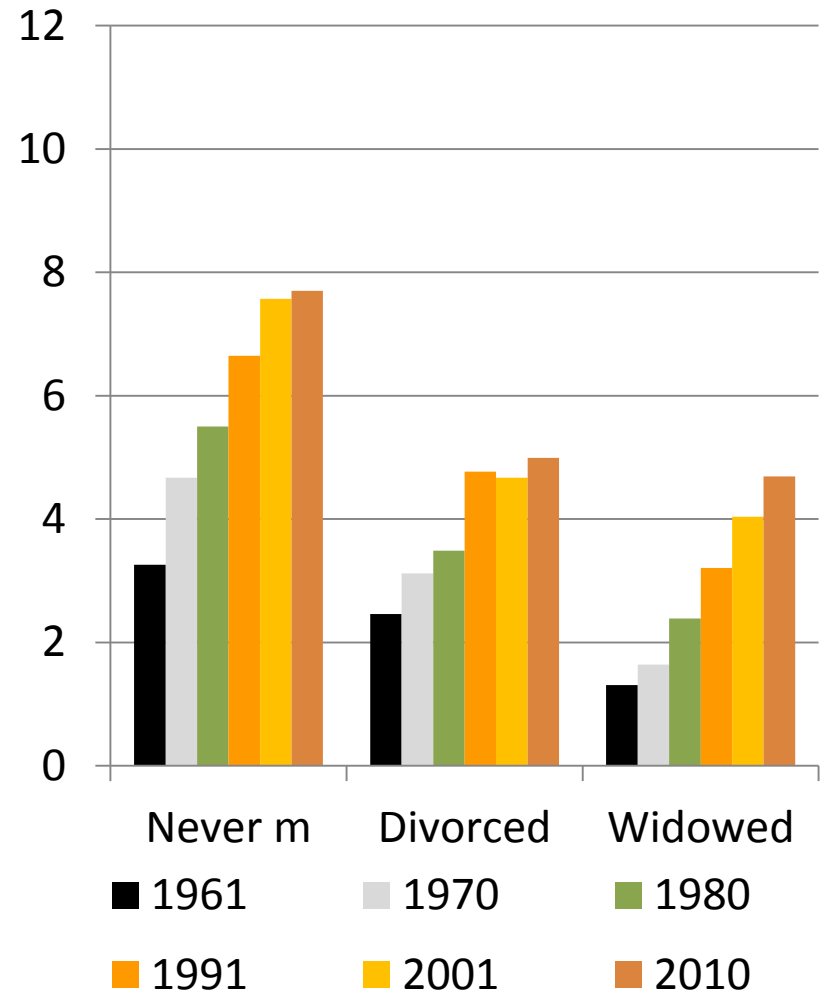
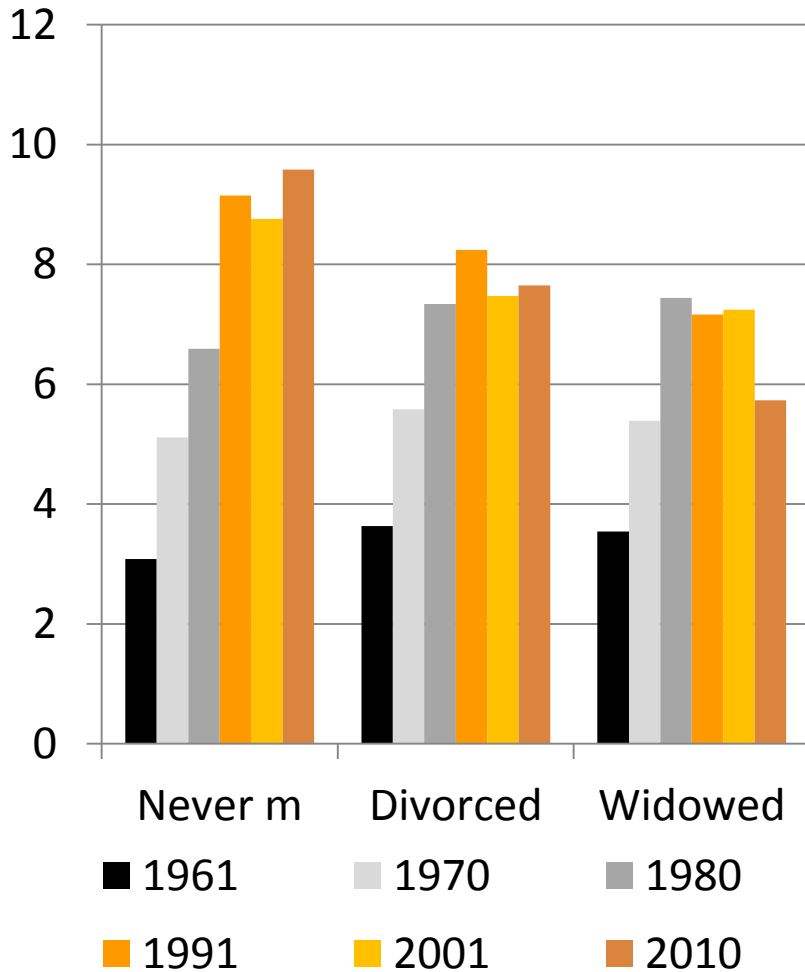
- Marital status is considered to be one of the strongest predictors of individual's well-being and health
- Large body of literature on marital status and
 - General health, various health measures, diagnoses, psychological measures
- Except for mortality, the link not systematically explored in the Czech context
 - Marital status sometimes used as a control
 - Mixed results
 - Some studies do not control for age

Research question

- Is there a link between (subjective) health and marital status in the Czech data?
- Hypothesis 1: Yes
 - Many processes similar to other countries
 - Marriage still held in high esteem
 - Differential mortality
- Hypothesis 2: But - the differences might be decreasing
 - Health care access not influenced by marital status
 - Population structure changed (significant increase of unmarried population)
 - Unmarried population much less selective

Life expectancy differentials by marital status (x married)

(Pechholdová & Šamanová, 2013, Demographic Research)



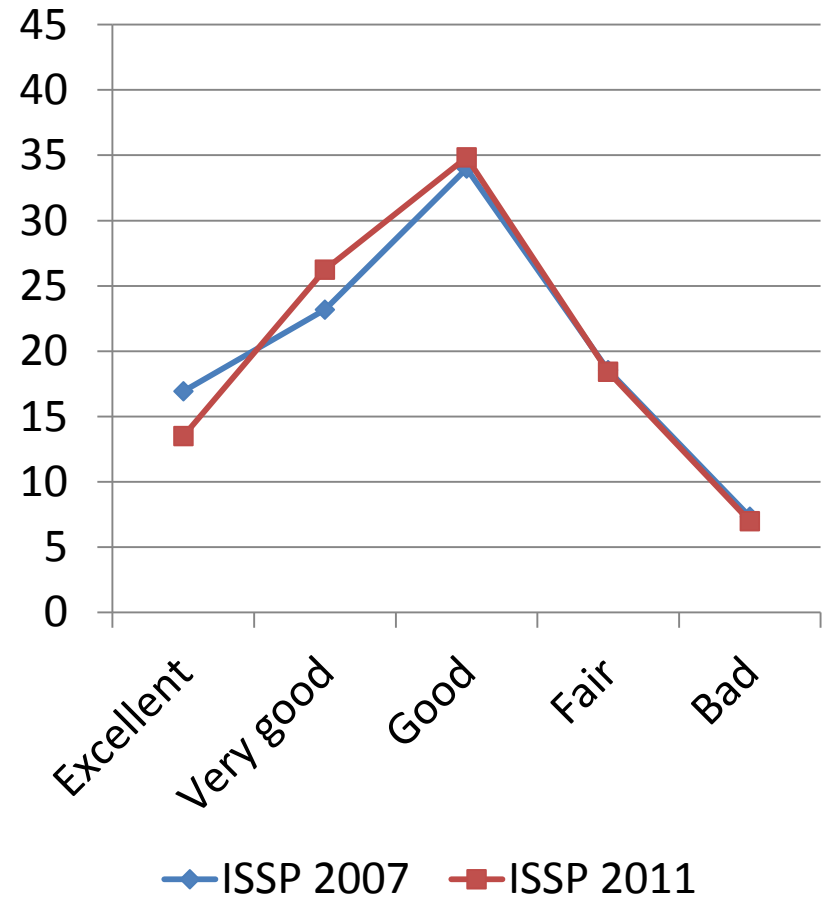
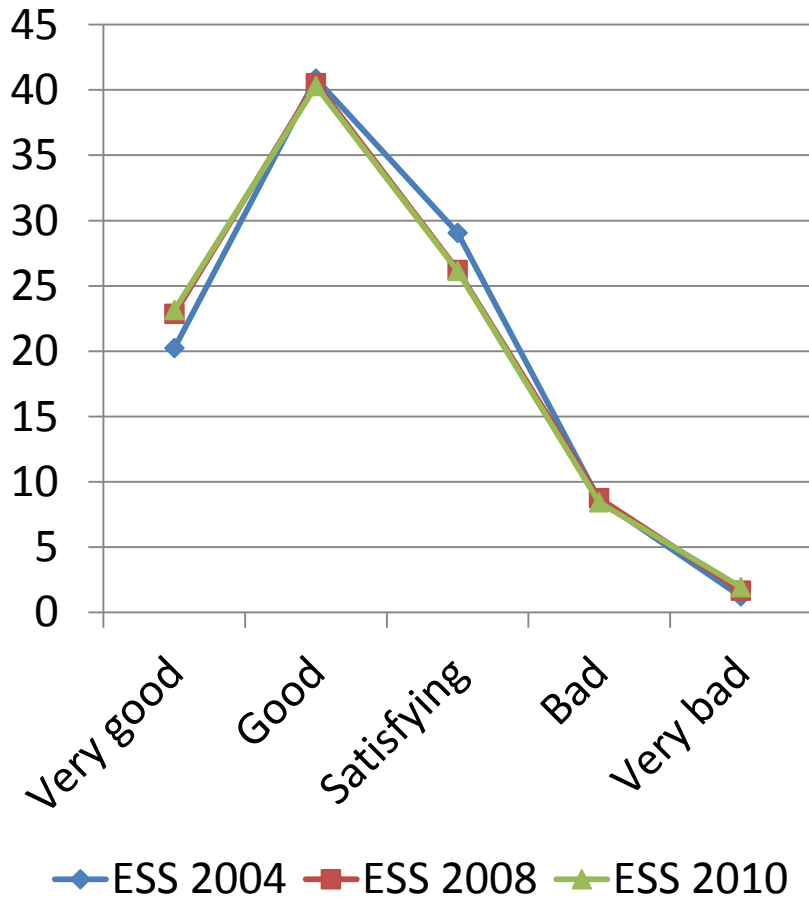
Subjective health

- Subjective health and self-reported limitations/chronic diseases frequently used in surveys
- What do they measure?
- Health is a complicated concept
 - Biomedical concept – health = lack of illness
 - Illness – pathological state with specific symptoms
 - WHO: health = complete physical, psychological, and social well-being
- Self-reported health – subjective evaluation of individual's own health
 - Only loosely correlated with diagnostic measures
 - But a very good predictor of mortality

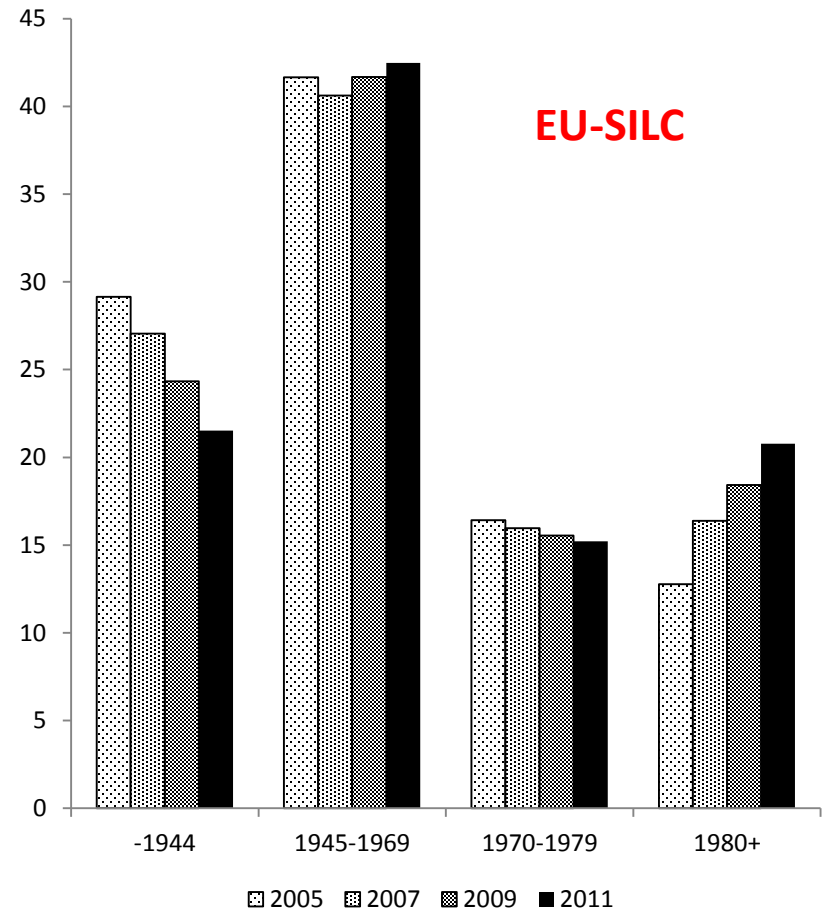
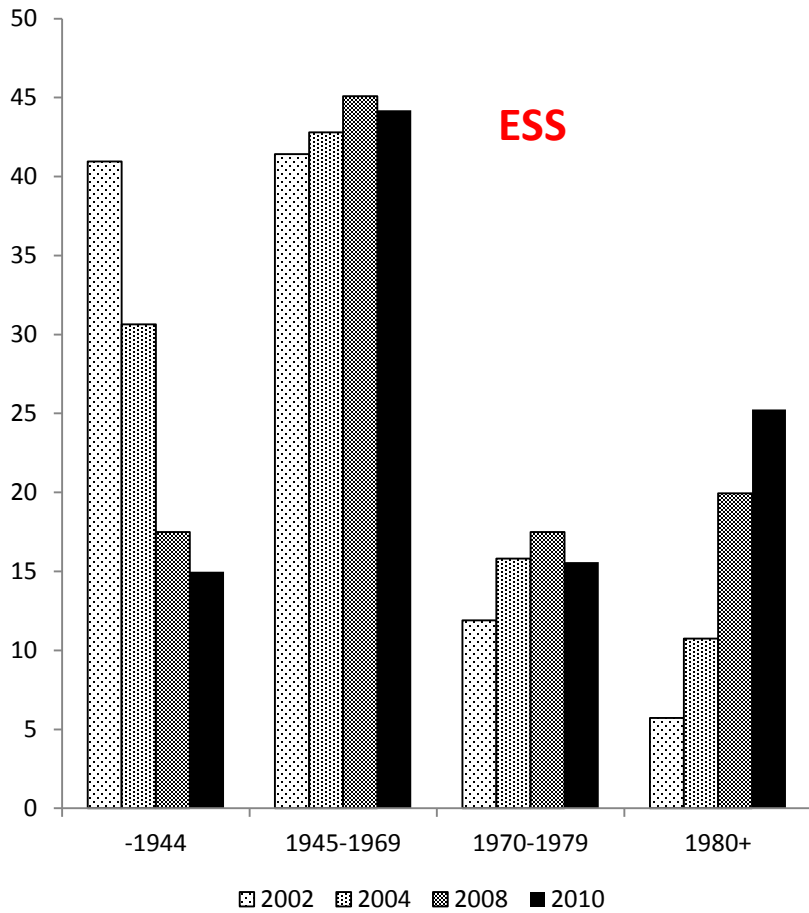
Data

- ISSP 2007, ISSP 2011/2012
- ESS 2002, 2004, 2008 & 2010
- EU-SILC 2005, 2007, 2009 & 2011
- All data sets include a measure of subjective health but these measures are not comparable
- Only cross-sectional data
 - Significant cohort replacement
- Time-series not long enough to make a cohort analysis

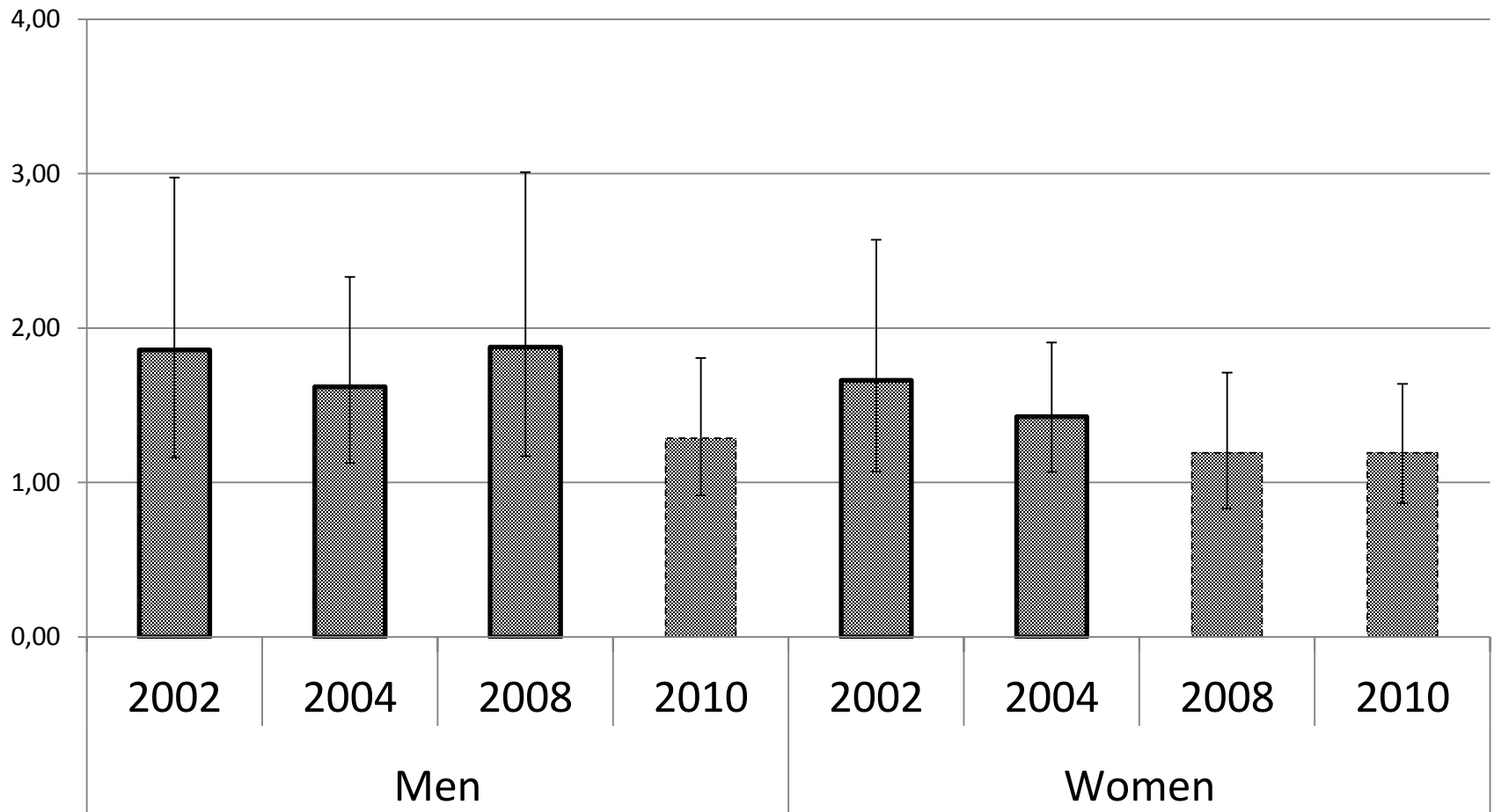
Subjective health in ISSP & ESS



Data age structure (ESS and ISSSP)

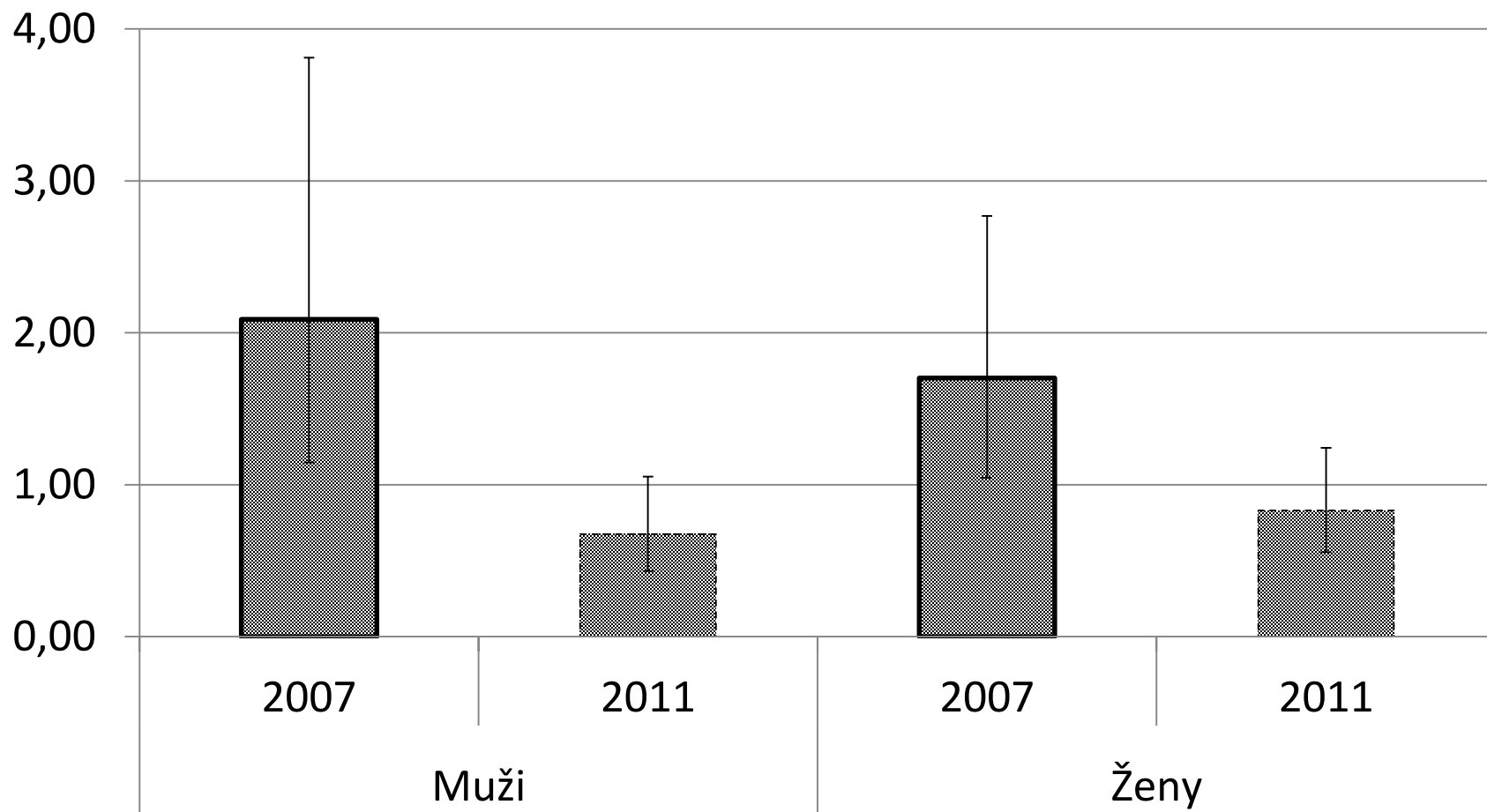


Odds of reporting good health by marital status (ESS), married versus single



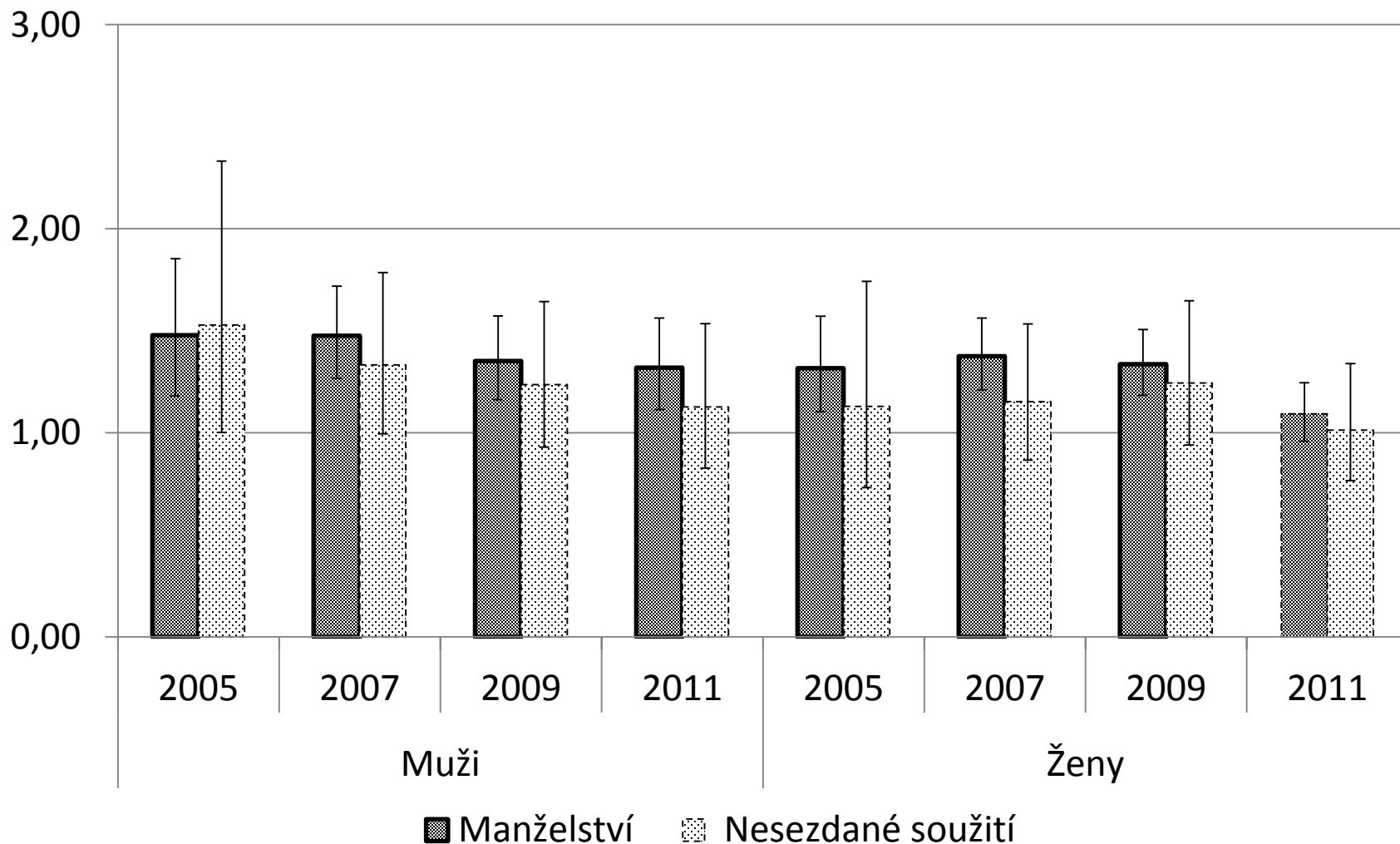
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Subjective health by marital status (ISSP), married versus single



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Subjective health by marital status (EU-SILC), married versus single/cohabiting



Conclusions

- The importance of marital status as a predictor of subjective health is decreasing in the Czech population
 - Unmarried population less selective
 - A relatively little difference in life style characteristics
 - Except for alcohol
- The same results do not seem to apply for psychological health
 - Measured by depressive symptoms (and binge drinking)