

## **HOUSEHOLD SCENARIOS FOR THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Paper submitted by Statistics Netherlands<sup>1</sup>

### **Summary**

1. This paper presents household scenarios for the European Union. Two different scenarios have been drawn up: the Individualisation Scenario and the Family Scenario. A third scenario, the Baseline Scenario, is the average of these two. The scenarios cover the period 1995-2025 and for each country they project both the number of persons in institutional households by sex and single year of age as well as the number of persons in four (private) household positions by sex and single year of age: persons living alone, living as a couple, living with one or both parents (children only) and the remainder. Persons without a partner who live with children or live with other persons belong to the category 'other'. The EU-regulated Labour Force Survey is the principal data source used for the analysis of trends in household positions. Consistency with national household projections, if any, was preferred.
2. A review of the literature on the background of recent household trends led to the identification of a number of demographic, economic, cultural and technological factors that are important for the future trends in households. The Individualisation Scenario assumes that long-term trends of individualisation, emancipation and secularisation will lead to higher proportions of people living alone and fewer people living in couples. Trends in mortality and fertility are such that they will also stimulate these future trends. In the Family Scenario it is assumed that the slowing down of secularisation, emancipation and individualisation together with a relatively high economic growth and relatively high fertility and life expectancy will lead to a growth in the number of couples at all ages.
3. Separate scenarios have been made for three clusters of countries: the Northern, the Central and Western, and the Southern cluster. In the scenarios, assumptions on convergence and divergence play an important role in the specification of the development of differences between and within these clusters.
4. The scenarios are consistent with the latest set of long-term European Population Scenarios and with the new Labour Force Scenarios. The combination with the Population Scenarios is very important. Trends in numbers of population by household position are not only caused by behavioural changes but also by changes in population size and structure. For several reasons with respect to assumptions on fertility and mortality the Individualisation Scenario, Family Scenario and Baseline Scenario are combined with the population size and structure of the Low, High and Baseline Population Scenario respectively.

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