

Divorce laws and fertility decisions

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Abstract:

During the second half of the twentieth century, most European countries introduced changes in divorce laws in order to simplify the requirements to obtain the divorce, simultaneously birth rate dramatically fell. This paper empirically studies whether the shift in divorce laws influenced fertility. We find that the introduction of divorce law reforms leads to lower fertility levels, but this effect is not permanent. We observe that both marital fertility and out-of-wedlock fertility decrease after the implementation of divorce law reforms. Supplemental analyses indicate that the fall in fertility rate is due to an increase in abortions. Our results are robust even after controlling for the legalization of abortion. Our findings imply that divorce law effects should be considered when formulating policies that encouraging fertility.

Keywords: Fertility Rate, Divorce Laws, Abortion Laws.

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I. Introduction

It is well-known that total fertility rates of European countries have decreased over the last half of the twentieth century. This reality is reaching worrying levels for several European governments, because it is beginning to hamper the generational shift. Researchers have looked at several determinants of fertility such as female labour force participation (Alba et al. 2009; Gutierrez-Domenech, 2007; Hotz and Miller, 1988; Kalwij, 2000; Kogel, 2004), male employment (Ahn and Mira, 2001; Ahn and Mira, 2002; Gutierrez-Domenech, 2007), female and male earnings (Butz and Ward, 1979; Galor and Weil, 1996; Kramer and Neusser, 1984; DeCooman et al., 1987; Happel et al., 1984; Macunovich 1995; Ward and Butz, 1980; Wilkinson, 1973), labour market institutions (Adserà, 2004; Aizer and McLanahan, 2006; Doepke, 2004; Lalive and Zweim 2009; Manuelli and Seshadri, 2009), education (Bloemen and Kalwij, 2001; Breierova and Duflo 2004; Leon, 2004; McCrary and Royer 2005), public policies (Acs, 1996; Averett and Whittington, 2001; Demeny, 1986; Dickert-Conlin and Chandra, 1999; Fairlie and London, 1997; Gauthier et al., 1997; Georgellis and Wall, 1992; Hoem, 1990; Kearney, 2004; Manuelli and Seshadri, 2009; Milligan 2005; Walker, 1995; Whittington 1992; Whittington et al. 1990; Zhang, 1994), child mortality and life expectancy (Sah 1991; Soares 2005), marriage markets (South and Lloyd 1992), child care (Del Boca, 2002; Hank and Kreyenfeld 2003; Wilkinson, 1973), mass media (Willis, 1973) culture (Fernández and Fogli, 2009) and even religion (Lehrer, 1995).

In this paper, we argue that the implementation of new divorce laws that occurred in the second half of the twentieth century in several European countries has also an important role. Most papers, which analyse the impact of divorce on fertility, centred on the effect

of public policies that affect the aftermath of divorce, see for example Aizer and McLanahan (2006) who concentrated on the effect of child support enforcement on fertility, and Fairlie and London (1997) who studied how AFDC benefits affect fertility. Less work has been done on the analysis of the impact of divorce law reforms on fertility. Giuliano and Alesina (2007) showed that both the total fertility rate and the out-of-wedlock fertility decrease after the implementation of divorce law reform using data from the US. Drewianka (2008) also analyses the effect of the divorce law reforms on fertility finding that divorce law reforms has a meaningful effect on the drop of fertility rate.

From a theoretical point of view, the introduction of unilateral divorce contributes to reduce the value of marriage since it is easier to break it, so marriage rates should go down, (Giuliano and Alesina, 2007; Drewianka, 2008). Marital fertility should also go down, in the extent to which children are considerate marital capital (Becker, Landes and Michael, 1977). Therefore, we should expect a decline in marital fertility, while out-of-wedlock fertility remains constant or grows, since there are more single people who may wish to bear children. The effect on the whole fertility rate should be negative or not significant effect when out-of-wedlock fertility increases compensating the drop in marital fertility.

However, the decision to marry may be easier to take, especially if they are people in childbearing age, who want children within a family since the costs of divorce has been reduced after the liberalization of divorce laws (Giuliano and Alesina, 2007). We would expect a decrease in out of wedlock fertility, because couples that would have children without marrying with a more difficult divorce, may now try to have children within a marital setting. As a consequence, the effect on marital fertility is not clear. Some people get married in order to have children within marriage, which may increase

marital fertility, but others would not want to procreate until they ensure that their partner is forever. Therefore, whether the divorce laws impact fertility decisions seems to be an empirical issue.

Our research contributes to extend a growing literature on the impact of changes in divorce laws. To our knowledge, there is no any other research which focuses on the effect of divorce laws on fertility decisions using European data. Much of the recent literature on the changes of divorce laws has focused on the impact of divorce law reforms on divorce rates, generally finding a positive relationship between the permissiveness of the laws and the probability of divorce (Peters 1986, 1992; Gray 1998; Friedberg 1998; Wolfers 2006 for the US and González and Viitanen 2009 for Europe). Others have studied the effect of the shift in divorce laws on suicide, domestic violence and spousal homicides (Stevenson and Wolfers 2006; Dee 2003), marriage rates (Drewianka 2008; Mechoulan, 2006; Rasul, 2004), marriage specific investments (Stevenson, 2007), labour supply (Peters, 1986; Chiappori, Fortin and Lacroix, 2002; Gray, 1998) and children outcomes (Gruber 2004; Johnson and Mazingo, 2000).

In our empirical analysis, we construct a panel for 18 European countries spanning from 1950 to 1988 using data from Eurostat to analyze the effect of changes in divorce laws on fertility rates. Our results suggest that the introduction of divorce law reforms leads to lower fertility levels, but this effect is not permanent. We also explore how the divorce law reforms operate by analysing the effect that changes in divorce laws have on out-of-wedlock fertility and on marital fertility. We find that both marital fertility and out-of-wedlock fertility decrease after the introduction of divorce law reforms.

Additionally, we have also tested whether the timing of births is being influenced by divorce law reforms. To do that, we study the effect of divorce laws on marital fertility during the early years of marriage. Results show that the introduction of divorce law

reforms increase marital fertility in those years but this effect is reversed after 13 years of the introduction of divorce law reforms.

We further explore the impact of changes in divorce laws on abortion and pregnancy rates. Results suggest that the fall in fertility is due to an increase in abortions. We find that the impact of divorce laws on abortions is positive and it is not transitory. Finally, we also include controls for changes in abortion laws. This is problematic since the analysis of only one of those aspects of law relevant to fertility might in somehow obscure the impact of divorce law reforms on fertility rates. Thus, the empirical analysis used here may be confounding both effects. Results suggest that fertility rate do not permanently decrease after the adoption of divorce law reforms. Abortions considerably increase and the pregnancy rate is negatively affected in the short-run but it is observed statistically significant positive effect in the long run.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. The following section includes the empirical strategy. Section III describes the data. Section IV then focuses on the results of the total fertility rate obtained. In the section V, we extend our analysis to test other implications of changes in divorce laws on marital and out-of-wedlock fertility. Section VI adds the analysis of the effect of divorce laws on abortions. Section VII concludes.

II. Empirical Strategy

During the second half of the twentieth century, most European countries introduced changes in divorce laws in order to simplify the requirements to get divorce, simultaneously, birth rate dramatically fell. Our empirical approach makes use of the legislative history of divorce liberalization across European countries to identify the effects of those divorce law reforms on fertility rates. To capture this causal

relationship, we estimate the following expression, (see Friedberg, 1998 for a similar analysis on the impact of divorce laws on divorce rates):

$$Fertility\ rate_{s,t} = \beta Reform_{s,t} + \sum_s State\ fixed\ effects_s + \sum_t Time\ fixed\ Effects_t + [\sum_s State_s * Time_t + \sum_s State_s * Time_t^2] + \varepsilon_{s,t} \quad (1)$$

where *Reform* is a dummy variable that takes the value one when country *s* has implemented a divorce law reform, and zero otherwise. The parameter β is interpreted as the average change in the total fertility rate that can be assigned to the change in the legal system of divorce. It also includes state fixed effects and year fixed effects, the trend and quadratic trend to control for pre-existing differences in country-specific fertility probabilities, as well as for unobserved factors that affect fertility. Regressions are estimated by population-weighted least squares on an unbalanced panel.

As suggested by Wolfers (2006), this methodology that only picks up a discrete series break might be confounding pre-existing trends in fertility rates with the dynamic response to a policy shock. To tackle with that, we have also estimated the dynamic response of fertility rates to divorce law reforms as follows (see Wolfers 2006):

$$Fertility\ rate_{s,t} = \sum_k \beta_k Reform_{s,t,k} + \sum_s State\ fixed\ effects_s + \sum_t Time\ fixed\ Effects_t + [\sum_s State_s * Time_t + State_s * Time_t^2] + \varepsilon_{s,t} \quad (2)$$

with the variable *Reform_{s,t,k}* being a dummy sets equal to one when the country *s* has implemented a new divorce law regime in year *t* for *k* periods. These dummy variables are supposed to capture the entire dynamic response of fertility to the new legal regime while the state-specific time trends identifying pre-existing trends. This additional

specification also allows us to detect differences in the short-run and long-run effects of divorce law reforms on fertility rates.

III. Data

For the main analysis, we use the total fertility rate (TFR) for the period 1950-1988 which is the standard way of measuring fertility. The Eurostat, our source of data on TFR, defines the TFR as “the mean number of children that would be born alive to a woman during her lifetime if she were to pass through her childbearing years conforming to the fertility rates by age of a given year” It is therefore the completed fertility of a hypothetical generation, computed by adding the fertility rates by age for women in a given year (the number of women at each age is assumed to be the same).

In respect to the legislative history of divorce liberalization, the timing of the main reforms in no-fault and unilateral divorce, which occurred in the countries analysed from 1970, was summarized by Gonzalez and Viitanen (2009), see Table 1. This liberalization consisted on reforms to no-fault or to unilateral systems. Under no-fault laws, a couple may divorce for any reason, normally the “irretrievable” breakdown of the marriage or irreconcilable differences. It does not attribute blame to any party in a couple but mutual consent was usually necessary. Under the unilateral system, divorce required the consent of only one person, without any specified period of living apart. That is, one can instigate a divorce without the consent of the other spouse. In some countries, evidence of that couple have lived apart for a specified period was needed as requisite to divorce on request of either of spouses, separation system. Friedberg (1998) explains the difficulty in categorizing this situation, the separation system, as no-fault or unilateral divorce since the unilateral divorce was not introduced explicitly but was possible after a period of separation.

For Italy, Spain and Ireland, divorce was banned until 1970, 1981, and 1996, respectively. Italy approved divorce law in 1970, some years later, in 1975, no-fault divorce was introduced in his legislation, following the trend existed in other European countries. For the case of other southern European country, Portugal, divorce was not allowed for Catholic marriages until 1975, but divorce rate data for this country is available from 1930.

In summary, while the TFR was decreasing, four countries allowed divorce, six European countries passed no-fault divorce in the 1970s, eleven permitted divorce when a couple had lived apart for a specified period allowing unilateral divorce after separation considered as a proof of the irretrievable breakdown of the marriage in the 1970s and 1980s (2 allowed this ground in 1993 and another one in 2000), and others 2 recognized unilateral divorce, the right to divorce at the request of either spouse from the 1970s.

IV. Results

A. *Baseline Regression*

Table 2 reports the main results on the total fertility rate. As can be seen in the first column, a change in divorce laws is associated with a decline in the fertility rate. This specification controls only for country and year fixed effects. However, when country-specific time trends and country-specific quadratic trends are added to control for omitted factors, Columns (3) and (5), the effect of the introduction of divorce law reform is not statistically significant. This result suggests that fertility decisions were not affected by the implementation of divorce law reforms.

An alternative strategy used in the literature is to analyse the dynamic response of variables to changes in laws instead of studying the average change that the laws may produce in the variable of interest, Wolfers (2006). The specification in Column (2) only includes country and year fixed effects. The dynamic estimates show a negative response of fertility following the adoption of unilateral divorce appears to fade over the subsequent decade. Then, coefficients become statistically insignificant. Although, long-run estimates seem to be not quite robust, when more controls are added, the coefficients become more negative and statistically insignificant, see column (4) which include country-specific time trends. Intriguingly, when quadratic country-specific time trends are added there is no any dynamic response of fertility to the introduction of divorce law reforms. This fragility in our estimates after the introduction of country-quadratic time trends is a problem in our research, although our results are more robust when more controls are added.

We provide additional results using the crude birth rate as dependent variable which is defined as the ratio of the number of live births during the year to the average population in that year, Table 3. The value is expressed per 1000 inhabitants. Results presented in Table 3 are consistent with that obtained when we use the total fertility rate. All in all, it seems that divorce legal reforms that occurred in Europe have a negative effect on fertility, although it is not clear that this effect is permanent.

V. Marital Fertility and Out-of-wedlock Fertility.

In this section, we extend previous analysis by empirically testing how the divorce law reforms operate through marital and non-marital situations. As mentioned above, it is possible to observe different effects of divorce law reforms on marital fertility and on out-of-wedlock fertility. We would expect that the value of marriage decreases since it is easier to break it, so marriage rates should go down (Giuliano and Alesina, 2007; Drewianka, 2008). As a consequence, marital fertility should also go down, in the extent to which children are considerate marital capital (Becker, Landes and Michael, 1977). Therefore, we should expect a decline in marital fertility, while out of wedlock fertility remains constant or grows, since there are more single people who may wish to bear children. The effect on the whole fertility rate should be negative or not significant effect when out of wedlock fertility increase compensating the drop in marital fertility.

However, the decision to marry may be easier to take, especially if they are people in childbearing age, who want children within a family since the costs of divorce has been reduced after the liberalization of divorce laws (Giuliano and Alesina, 2007). We would expect a decrease in out of wedlock fertility, because couples that would have children without marrying with a more difficult divorce, may now try to have children within a marital setting. Therefore, the effect on marital fertility is not clear. Some people will marriage in order to have children within marriage, which would help to increase marital fertility, but others would not want to procreate until they ensure that their partner is forever.

Table 4 presents regression results of the β coefficients in equation (1), the full set of control variables are included. As can be seen in Columns (1) and (3), marital fertility

fell after the approval of divorce law reforms. In respect to the dynamic response of marital fertility, results suggest that the effect of introduction of divorce law reforms was not significant over the ensuing decade. Although, as in the main specification, those results are not quite robust to the introduction of country trends, but results are consistent when we introduce country-specific quadratic trends.

Table 5 shows results on non-marital fertility. Results suggest that what dominates is a decrease in the non-marital births. Although our results seem to be non quite robust to the introduction of country-quadratic time trends. However, by analysing the dynamic response of non-marital fertility, it is observed that the non-marital fertility persistently decreases.

Therefore, results suggest that the decrease in the total fertility rate is due to both a decrease in the marital fertility and a decrease in non-marital fertility. However, in this analysis we have omitted the possibility that what is being affected by the introduction of divorce law reforms is the timing of marital births. We would expect an increase in the number of births in the early marriage to increase the divorce costs as a reaction to the introduction of the laws that make easier the access to divorce. However, we could also expect a decrease in the number of births since couples would not want to procreate until they ensure that their partner is forever.

To probe this further, we rerun equations (1) and (2) by using as dependent variable the number of births per 1000 women married during less than one year, 2 years, ..., until five years in Tables 6 to 10. We find that marital fertility increase after the introduction of divorce law reforms, but this effect is reversed after 13 years of the introduction of those reforms. The transitory positive effect of divorce reforms on fertility is not maintained when we include births in the first year of marriage. In this case, we find a clear negative effect after 3 years of the adoption of divorce law reforms but as in

previous analysis the persistence of this effect is not observed when we include country-quadratic trends.

VI. Abortion Rates and Abortion Laws

Up until this point, we have only analysed the effect of divorce law reforms on births. In this section, we explore whether the decline in the fertility is due to an increase in the abortions. We focus on analysing whether the adoption of divorce law reforms may lead to a significant increase in the termination of pregnancy.

Our dependent variable is defined as the number of legal abortions produced in each country per 1000 inhabitants, from 1960 to 1988. This data comes from Eurostat. Table 11 presents regression results of the coefficients that capture the static and dynamic response of abortions to the introduction of divorce law reforms. As can be seen, all three specifications that capture the static effect, Columns (1), (3) and (5), suggest that abortions rose after the approval of unilateral divorce laws. The dynamic response of abortions to divorce laws also confirms the permanent effect of divorce laws on abortion rates. This finding suggests that the reduction in fertility generated by the adoption of divorce law reforms is due to a considerable increase in the abortions.

However, given that it seems that the effect of divorce laws on fertility is not permanent, it is interesting to study the effect of divorce laws on pregnancy rates. To do that, we add abortions and births data from Eurostat. Table 12 reports results on pregnancy rate. It is observed that the static effect of divorce laws on pregnancy rate is negative even after the introduction of the full set of controls. However, the dynamic analysis shows that the negative effect of divorce laws on pregnancy is transitory with

the impact of those reforms being reversed after a decade. Long-run effects do not seem to be quite robust, Columns (2), (4) and (6).

Interpretation of the results presented in this paper can be difficult because there could be other determinants of fertility decisions which may vary by country, but have little to do with the changes in divorce laws. The introduction of measures of economic performance in the estimations such as female labour force participation and female earnings, or other demographic variables may also produce problems of endogeneity since many of these measures of economic performance have not truly been exogenous, and so, we prefer not to use them.

The analysis presented in the previous sections has left out the legalization of abortions that occurs close to the time of divorce law reforms. This is problematic since the analysis of only one of those aspects of law relevant to fertility decisions might in somehow obscure the impact of unilateral reforms on fertility decisions. Thus, the empirical analysis used here may be confounding both effects. Empirically, it is unclear whether the dummy variables included in equation (1) and (2) to model the dynamic response of fertility decisions are only capturing the adjustment path of fertility decisions to unilateral divorce. Because dummy variables may pick up not only the entire response of fertility decisions to divorce law changes, but also the response of those fertility decisions to the legalization of abortion. To tackle this problem we have added controls for abortion laws, see Table 13. In Table 14, we include as dependent variable the total fertility rate. Results suggest that fertility rate only temporally response to divorce law reforms. Table 15 includes the analysis of abortions after controlling for abortion laws. Results confirm that abortions considerably increase after the adoption of divorce law reforms. Finally, we repeat the analysis with the pregnancy rate. Table 16 shows that although there is a negative static impact of divorce laws on

fertility, the dynamic response only confirms this negative effect in the short-run but it is observed statistically significant positive effect on pregnancy rate in the long run.

VII. Conclusions

In this paper, we study whether the implementation of new divorce laws that occurred in the second half of the twentieth century in several European countries had an impact in fertility decisions. To do that, we construct a panel for 18 European countries spanning from 1950 to 1988 using data from Eurostat to analyze the effect of changes in divorce laws on fertility decisions.

Our results suggest that the introduction of divorce law reforms leads to lower fertility levels, but this effect is not permanent. We also explore how the decrease in fertility operates by analysing the effect that changes in divorce laws have on out-of-wedlock fertility and on marital fertility. We find that both marital fertility and out-of-wedlock fertility decrease after the introduction of divorce law reforms.

Additionally, we have also tested if what is being influenced by divorce law reforms is the timing of the births. We study the effect of divorce laws on marital fertility during the early years of marriage. Results show that the introduction of divorce law reforms increase marital fertility in those years but this effect is reversed after 13 years of the introduction of divorce law reforms.

We further explore the impact of changes in divorce laws on abortion and pregnancy rates. Results suggest that the fall in fertility is due to an increase in abortions. We find that the impact of divorce laws on abortions is positive and it is not transitory. Finally, we also include controls for changes in abortion laws which can be relevant for fertility

decisions. Since the empirical analysis used here may be confounding both the effect of divorce law reforms and the effect of the legalization of abortion. Results suggest that fertility rate do not permanently decrease after the adoption of divorce law reforms. Abortions considerably increase and the pregnancy rate is negatively affected in the short-run but it is observed a statistically significant positive effect in the long run.

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Table 1.- Divorce Law Reforms from 1970

Country	(1)	(2)	(3)
	Year when divorce allowed	No-fault	Unilateral
Austria	Pre-1950	Pre-1950	1978 (6)
Belgium	Pre-1950	Pre-1950	1975 (10); 1983(5); 2000(2)
Denmark	Pre-1950	Pre-1950	1970 (3); 1989 (2)
Finland	Pre-1950	Pre-1950	Pre-1950 (2); 1988 (0)
France	Pre-1950	1976	1976 (6)
Germany	Pre-1950	Pre-1950	1977 (3)
Greece	Pre-1950	1979	1983 (4)
Iceland	Pre-1950	Pre-1950	1993 (2)
Ireland	1997	1997	No
Italy	1971	1975	No
Luxembourg	Pre-1950	Pre-1950	1979 (3)
Netherlands	Pre-1950	1971	1971 (2)
Norway	Pre-1950	Pre-1950	Pre-1950 (7); 1993 (2)
Portugal	1976	1976	1976 (3)
Spain	1981	1981	1981 (5)
Sweden	Pre-1950	Pre-1950	Pre-1950 (3); 1974 (0)
Switzerland	Pre-1950	Pre-1950	2000 (4)
United Kingdom	Pre-1950	1971	1971 (5)

Source: González and Viitanen (2009).

Table 2.- Baseline Regression: Static and dynamic effects of divorce law reforms.

(Dependent variable: Total Fertility Rate)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
No Fault Unilateral	-0.154*** (0.040)		-0.028 (0.037)		0.049 (0.034)	
No Fault Unilateral 1-2		-0.056 (0.049)		-0.040 (0.041)		0.031 (0.039)
No Fault Unilateral 3-4		-0.137*** (0.050)		-0.139*** (0.048)		0.016 (0.052)
No Fault Unilateral 5-6		-0.193*** (0.057)		-0.240*** (0.057)		-0.037 (0.068)
No Fault Unilateral 7-8		-0.228*** (0.064)		-0.330*** (0.069)		-0.064 (0.089)
No Fault Unilateral 9-10		-0.103 (0.073)		-0.354*** (0.085)		-0.056 (0.112)
No Fault Unilateral 11-12		-0.063 (0.082)		-0.409*** (0.100)		-0.096 (0.136)
No Fault Unilateral 13-14		-0.116 (0.094)		-0.533*** (0.119)		-0.124 (0.166)
No Fault Unilateral 15		0.077 (0.109)		-0.444*** (0.154)		-0.083 (0.215)
Constant	2.676*** (0.172)	2.691*** (0.168)	2.402*** (0.150)	2.384*** (0.145)	2.119*** (0.149)	2.148*** (0.151)
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Country FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
country*time	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
country*time ²	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Observations	486	486	486	486	486	486
R-squared	0.842	0.852	0.915	0.922	0.945	0.946

Note: Sample: 1950–1988, (unbalanced panel). Estimated using country population weights. . Standard errors in parentheses. ***Statistical significance at 1%. **Statistical significance at 5%. * Statistical significance at 10% level.

Table 3.- Robustness Check: Static and dynamic effects of divorce law reforms.*(Dependent variable: Crude Birth Rate)*

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
No Fault Unilateral	-0.818*** (0.222)		-0.915*** (0.208)		0.036 (0.176)	
No Fault Unilateral 1-2		-0.324 (0.262)		-0.316 (0.251)		0.118 (0.208)
No Fault Unilateral 3-4		-0.770*** (0.280)		-0.819*** (0.293)		-0.205 (0.261)
No Fault Unilateral 5-6		-0.997*** (0.305)		-1.109*** (0.355)		-0.440 (0.340)
No Fault Unilateral 7-8		-1.168*** (0.335)		-1.327*** (0.430)		-0.544 (0.435)
No Fault Unilateral 9-10		-0.192 (0.372)		-0.619 (0.529)		-0.331 (0.571)
No Fault Unilateral 11-12		0.137 (0.407)		-0.317 (0.627)		-0.394 (0.712)
No Fault Unilateral 13-14		-0.350 (0.469)		-0.729 (0.749)		-0.493 (0.888)
No Fault Unilateral 15		1.685*** (0.514)		1.043 (0.963)		-0.003 (1.245)
Constant	18.224*** (0.834)	17.790*** (0.533)	16.270*** (0.806)	16.157*** (0.779)	15.593*** (0.676)	15.670*** (0.674)
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Country FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
country*time	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
country*time ²	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Observations	606	606	606	606	606	606
R-squared	0.884	0.895	0.919	0.925	0.957	0.958

Note: Sample: 1950–1988, (unbalanced panel). Estimated using country population weights. . Standard errors in parentheses. ***Statistical significance at 1%. **Statistical significance at 5%. * Statistical significance at 10% level.

Table 4.-Marital Fertility: Static and dynamic effects of divorce law reforms.*(Dependent variable: Marital Birth Rate)*

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
No Fault Unilateral	-0.690*** (0.207)		-0.701*** (0.203)		-0.204 (0.154)	
No Fault Unilateral 1-2		-0.264 (0.245)		-0.021 (0.250)		-0.050 (0.177)
No Fault Unilateral 3-4		-0.677** (0.263)		-0.303 (0.301)		-0.394* (0.225)
No Fault Unilateral 5-6		-0.903*** (0.287)		-0.386 (0.374)		-0.632*** (0.294)
No Fault Unilateral 7-8		-1.024*** (0.317)		-0.317 (0.461)		-0.643* (0.379)
No Fault Unilateral 9-10		-0.059 (0.353)		0.683 (0.574)		-0.314 (0.501)
No Fault Unilateral 11-12		0.293 (0.398)		1.320* (0.692)		-0.200 (0.631)
No Fault Unilateral 13-14		-0.254 (0.446)		1.188 (0.829)		0.368 (0.781)
No Fault Unilateral 15		1.003** (0.493)		2.688** (1.079)		0.808 (1.093)
Constant	15.172*** (2.203)	15.228*** (2.117)	14.706*** (2.220)	15.161*** (2.125)	13.121*** (0.303)	13.031*** (0.298)
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Country FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
country*time	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
country*time ²	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Observations	518	518	518	518	518	518
R-squared	0.919	0.926	0.937	0.942	0.974	0.976

Note: Sample: 1950–1988, (unbalanced panel). Estimated using country population weights. . Standard errors in parentheses. ***Statistical significance at 1%. **Statistical significance at 5%. * Statistical significance at 10% level.

Table 5.-Non-marital Birth: Static and dynamic effects of divorce law reforms.
(Dependent variable: Non-marital Birth Rate)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
No Fault Unilateral	-0.131** (0.065)		-0.068* (0.036)		0.023 (0.033)	
No Fault Unilateral 1-2		-0.024 (0.070)		-0.039 (0.040)		-0.101*** (0.033)
No Fault Unilateral 3-4		-0.051 (0.076)		-0.098** (0.048)		-0.204*** (0.041)
No Fault Unilateral 5-6		-0.044 (0.083)		-0.155*** (0.059)		-0.328*** (0.054)
No Fault Unilateral 7-8		-0.094 (0.091)		-0.274*** (0.073)		-0.509*** (0.070)
No Fault Unilateral 9-10		-0.062 (0.101)		-0.341*** (0.091)		-0.690*** (0.092)
No Fault Unilateral 11-12		-0.042 (0.114)		-0.435*** (0.110)		-0.911*** (0.116)
No Fault Unilateral 13-14		0.051 (0.128)		-0.491*** (0.132)		-0.939*** (0.144)
No Fault Unilateral 15		0.991*** (0.142)		0.043 (0.171)		-0.739*** (0.201)
Constant	2.175*** (0.688)	2.153*** (0.609)	1.952*** (0.397)	1.901*** (0.338)	1.893*** (0.065)	1.819*** (0.055)
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Country FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
country*time	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
country*time ²	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Observations	518	518	518	518	518	518
R-squared	0.849	0.882	0.961	0.972	0.977	0.984

Note: Sample: 1950–1988, (unbalanced panel). Estimated using country population weights. . Standard errors in parentheses. ***Statistical significance at 1%. **Statistical significance at 5%. * Statistical significance at 10% level.

Table 6.-Marital Fertility (less than 1 year married): Static and dynamic effects of divorce law reforms.

(Dependent variable: Marital Fertility Rate <1 year married)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
No Fault Unilateral	0.866 (0.774)		1.852*** (0.656)		-0.994* (0.557)	
No Fault Unilateral 1-2		2.035** (0.821)		1.163 (0.749)		0.109 (0.653)
No Fault Unilateral 3-4		-0.490 (0.897)		-1.590* (0.899)		-2.445*** (0.896)
No Fault Unilateral 5-6		-1.871* (0.975)		-3.216*** (1.083)		-3.833*** (1.237)
No Fault Unilateral 7-8		-3.842*** (1.134)		-4.817*** (1.356)		-4.350*** (1.720)
No Fault Unilateral 9-10		-6.632*** (1.356)		-6.105*** (1.693)		-2.600 (2.315)
No Fault Unilateral 11-12		-9.595*** (1.589)		-8.265*** (2.084)		-0.860 (3.117)
No Fault Unilateral 13-14		-13.387*** (1.799)		-13.065*** (2.465)		-2.805 (4.004)
No Fault Unilateral 15		-16.055*** (2.287)		-14.597*** (2.952)		-0.236 (4.892)
Constant	24.829*** (1.865)	24.071*** (1.657)	20.395*** (2.233)	21.946*** (2.093)	23.823*** (2.255)	24.725*** (2.124)
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Country FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
country*time	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
country*time ²	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Observations	498	498	498	498	498	498
R-squared	0.556	0.656	0.761	0.785	0.861	0.881

Note: Sample: 1950–1988, (unbalanced panel). Estimated using country population weights. . Standard errors in parentheses. ***Statistical significance at 1%. **Statistical significance at 5%. * Statistical significance at 10% level.

Table 7.-Marital Fertility (2 years married): Static and dynamic effects of divorce law reforms.
(Dependent variable: Marital Fertility Rate 2 years married)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
No Fault Unilateral	1.170*** (0.395)		2.271*** (0.387)		0.443 (0.308)	
No Fault Unilateral 1-2		0.639 (0.438)		0.513 (0.389)	13.042*** (1.246)	0.391 (0.367)
No Fault Unilateral 3-4		1.084** (0.479)		0.692 (0.468)		0.892* (0.503)
No Fault Unilateral 5-6		1.379*** (0.520)		0.521 (0.564)		1.472** (0.695)
No Fault Unilateral 7-8		1.318** (0.605)		-0.142 (0.706)		1.737* (0.967)
No Fault Unilateral 9-10		1.390* (0.724)		-0.724 (0.881)		2.402* (1.301)
No Fault Unilateral 11-12		0.489 (0.848)		-3.220*** (1.084)		2.896* (1.751)
No Fault Unilateral 13-14		-3.790*** (0.960)		-8.608*** (1.283)		-0.075 (2.250)
No Fault Unilateral 15		-4.930*** (1.220)		-10.719*** (1.536)		0.040 (2.749)
Constant	17.974*** (0.952)	17.856*** (0.884)	9.688*** (1.317)	10.981*** (1.089)	13.042*** (1.246)	12.737*** (1.194)
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Country FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
country*time	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
country*time ²	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Observations	498	498	498	498	498	498
R-squared	0.642	0.697	0.743	0.820	0.869	0.884

Note: Sample: 1950–1988, (unbalanced panel). Estimated using country population weights. . Standard errors in parentheses. ***Statistical significance at 1%. **Statistical significance at 5%. * Statistical significance at 10% level.

Table 8.-Marital Fertility (3 years married): Static and dynamic effects of divorce law reforms.
(Dependent variable: Marital Fertility Rate 3 years married)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
No Fault Unilateral	1.215*** (0.319)		2.255*** (0.317)		0.788*** (0.249)	
No Fault Unilateral 1-2		0.554* (0.328)		0.488* (0.290)		0.603** (0.275)
No Fault Unilateral 3-4		1.189*** (0.359)		0.943*** (0.348)		1.436*** (0.377)
No Fault Unilateral 5-6		1.445*** (0.390)		0.893** (0.419)		2.125*** (0.521)
No Fault Unilateral 7-8		1.580*** (0.453)		0.537 (0.525)		2.671*** (0.725)
No Fault Unilateral 9-10		1.320** (0.542)		-0.309 (0.655)		2.978*** (0.975)
No Fault Unilateral 11-12		-0.018 (0.635)		-2.653*** (0.807)		3.170** (1.313)
No Fault Unilateral 13-14		-4.023*** (0.719)		-7.522*** (0.954)		0.384 (1.687)
No Fault Unilateral 15		-5.211*** (0.914)		-9.469*** (1.143)		0.321 (2.061)
Constant	13.691*** (0.770)	13.552*** (0.662)	4.474*** (0.813)	8.635*** (0.810)	7.903*** (0.528)	8.293*** (0.468)
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Country FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
country*time	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
country*time ²	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Observations	497	497	497	497	497	497
R-squared	0.632	0.733	0.729	0.844	0.866	0.897

Note: Sample: 1950–1988, (unbalanced panel). Estimated using country population weights. . Standard errors in parentheses. ***Statistical significance at 1%. **Statistical significance at 5%. * Statistical significance at 10% level.

Table 9.-Marital Fertility (4 years married): Static and dynamic effects of divorce law reforms.
(Dependent variable: Marital Fertility Rate 4 years married)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
No Fault Unilateral	0.760*** (0.260)		1.523*** (0.260)		0.528** (0.224)	
No Fault Unilateral 1-2		0.137 (0.257)		0.206 (0.232)		0.457** (0.228)
No Fault Unilateral 3-4		0.676** (0.281)		0.713** (0.278)		1.319*** (0.312)
No Fault Unilateral 5-6		1.126*** (0.305)		1.066*** (0.335)		2.300*** (0.431)
No Fault Unilateral 7-8		1.444*** (0.355)		1.110*** (0.420)		3.096*** (0.599)
No Fault Unilateral 9-10		1.319*** (0.424)		0.726 (0.524)		3.596*** (0.806)
No Fault Unilateral 11-12		0.040 (0.497)		-0.978 (0.645)		3.729*** (1.086)
No Fault Unilateral 13-14		-3.427*** (0.563)		-4.970*** (0.763)		1.290 (1.395)
No Fault Unilateral 15		-4.521*** (0.716)		-6.438*** (0.914)		1.209 (1.704)
Constant	10.187*** (0.628)	10.095*** (0.518)	6.970*** (0.884)	5.997*** (0.648)	8.682*** (0.905)	8.246*** (0.740)
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Country FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
country*time	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
country*time ²	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Observations	498	498	498	498	498	498
R-squared	0.661	0.773	0.748	0.861	0.850	0.903

Note: Sample: 1950–1988, (unbalanced panel). Estimated using country population weights. . Standard errors in parentheses. ***Statistical significance at 1%. **Statistical significance at 5%. * Statistical significance at 10% level.

Table 10.-Marital Fertility (5 years married): Static and dynamic effects of divorce law reforms.
(Dependent variable: Marital Fertility Rate 5 years married)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
No Fault Unilateral	0.265 (0.213)		0.769*** (0.208)		0.242 (0.195)	
No Fault Unilateral 1-2		-0.154 (0.212)		0.002 (0.195)		0.273 (0.193)
No Fault Unilateral 3-4		0.085 (0.232)		0.321 (0.235)		0.840*** (0.265)
No Fault Unilateral 5-6		0.554** (0.252)		0.869*** (0.283)		1.802*** (0.365)
No Fault Unilateral 7-8		0.862*** (0.294)		1.105*** (0.355)		2.509*** (0.507)
No Fault Unilateral 9-10		0.963*** (0.351)		1.182*** (0.443)		3.042*** (0.682)
No Fault Unilateral 11-12		-0.114 (0.412)		0.196 (0.545)		2.992*** (0.918)
No Fault Unilateral 13-14		-2.829*** (0.466)		-2.682*** (0.645)		0.962 (1.179)
No Fault Unilateral 15		-4.014*** (0.593)		-3.926*** (0.772)		0.414 (1.441)
Constant	5.748*** (0.705)	5.598*** (0.588)	6.289*** (0.708)	6.468*** (0.556)	5.075*** (0.413)	5.502*** (0.328)
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Country FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
country*time	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
country*time ²	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Observations	496	496	496	496	496	496
R-squared	0.667	0.773	0.763	0.856	0.834	0.898

Note: Sample: 1950–1988, (unbalanced panel). Estimated using country population weights. . Standard errors in parentheses. ***Statistical significance at 1%. **Statistical significance at 5%. * Statistical significance at 10% level.

Table 11.-Declared Legal Abortion: Static and dynamic effects of divorce law reforms.
(Dependent variable: Crude abortion rate)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
No Fault Unilateral	1.189*** (0.218)		0.961*** (0.166)		0.728*** (0.170)	
No Fault Unilateral 1-2		1.157*** (0.220)		0.775*** (0.203)		0.440** (0.171)
No Fault Unilateral 3-4		1.617*** (0.242)		1.210*** (0.248)		0.847*** (0.202)
No Fault Unilateral 5-6		2.361*** (0.283)		1.819*** (0.332)		1.283*** (0.273)
No Fault Unilateral 7-8		2.867*** (0.300)		2.178*** (0.405)		1.474*** (0.337)
No Fault Unilateral 9-10		3.241*** (0.334)		2.310*** (0.517)		1.065** (0.454)
No Fault Unilateral 11-12		3.438*** (0.372)		2.312*** (0.622)		0.550 (0.570)
No Fault Unilateral 13-14		3.860*** (0.423)		2.076*** (0.743)		0.117 (0.692)
No Fault Unilateral 15		4.095*** (0.468)		2.347** (0.968)		0.681 (0.952)
Constant	0.910* (0.532)	1.265*** (0.471)	3.160*** (0.723)	3.286*** (0.668)	2.810*** (0.545)	2.004*** (0.439)
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Country FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
country*time	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
country*time ²	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Observations	263	263	263	263	263	263
R-squared	0.766	0.826	0.880	0.901	0.919	0.943

Note: Sample: 1950–1988, (unbalanced panel). Estimated using country population weights. . Standard errors in parentheses. ***Statistical significance at 1%. **Statistical significance at 5%. * Statistical significance at 10% level.

Table 12.-Pregnancy: Static and dynamic effects of divorce law reforms.
(Dependent variable: Crude Pregnancy Rate)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
No Fault Unilateral	-1.270*** (0.371)		-1.432*** (0.221)		-0.580*** (0.219)	
No Fault Unilateral 1-2		-0.571* (0.340)		-0.514* (0.270)		-0.484* (0.254)
No Fault Unilateral 3-4		-0.438 (0.374)		-0.700** (0.330)		-0.813*** (0.300)
No Fault Unilateral 5-6		0.131 (0.437)		-0.439 (0.442)		-0.767* (0.405)
No Fault Unilateral 7-8		1.013** (0.464)		-0.095 (0.539)		-0.589 (0.501)
No Fault Unilateral 9-10		2.563*** (0.517)		0.802 (0.687)		-0.288 (0.674)
No Fault Unilateral 11-12		3.173*** (0.574)		1.115 (0.827)		-0.433 (0.847)
No Fault Unilateral 13-14		3.646*** (0.654)		1.722* (0.988)		-0.557 (1.027)
No Fault Unilateral 15		6.051*** (0.723)		4.134*** (1.288)		0.823 (1.414)
Constant	18.684*** (0.908)	19.707*** (0.728)	19.918*** (0.963)	19.633*** (0.889)	16.706*** (0.704)	15.196*** (0.652)
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Country FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
country*time	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
country*time ²	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Observations	263	263	263	263	263	263
R-squared	0.772	0.861	0.929	0.942	0.955	0.958

Note: Sample: 1950–1988, (unbalanced panel). Estimated using country population weights. . Standard errors in parentheses. ***Statistical significance at 1%. **Statistical significance at 5%. * Statistical significance at 10% level.

Table 13.-Abortion Law Reforms

Country	(1)	(2)	(3)
	Health grounds	Economic and social grounds	Available on request
Austria			1974
Belgium			1990
Denmark			1973
Finland		1970	
France			1979
Germany			
Greece	1978		1986
Iceland		1975	
Ireland			
Italy			1978
Luxembourg		1978	
Netherlands			1984
Norway		1975	1978
Portugal	1984		
Spain	1985		
Sweden			1975
Switzerland			
United Kingdom		1973	

¹ Source: United Nations Population Division; Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *Abortion Policies: A Global Review*.

Column 1: Year when abortion was first allowed for medical grounds (save the live of the women, preserve physical health, preserve mental health, rape or incest and/or foetal impairment included).

Column 2: Year when abortion was first allowed for economic and social grounds.

Column 3: Year when abortion was first available on request.

White cells correspond to years prior to 1950.

Table 14.-Fertility: Static and dynamic effects of divorce law reforms including abortion laws
(Dependent variable: Total Fertility Rate)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
No Fault Unilateral	-0.113*** (0.040)		-0.047 (0.035)		0.045 (0.034)	
No Fault Unilateral 1-2		-0.035 (0.048)		-0.042 (0.037)		-0.015 (0.037)
No Fault Unilateral 3-4		-0.097* (0.055)		-0.096** (0.047)		-0.048 (0.051)
No Fault Unilateral 5-6		-0.077 (0.065)		-0.106* (0.060)		-0.099 (0.068)
No Fault Unilateral 7-8		-0.105 (0.073)		-0.136* (0.075)		-0.194** (0.088)
No Fault Unilateral 9-10		-0.082 (0.082)		-0.129 (0.091)		-0.272** (0.112)
No Fault Unilateral 11-12		-0.094 (0.090)		-0.116 (0.108)		-0.376*** (0.137)
No Fault Unilateral 13-14		-0.259** (0.109)		-0.141 (0.133)		-0.477*** (0.172)
No Fault Unilateral 15		-0.243** (0.122)		0.182 (0.167)		-0.387* (0.231)
Constant	2.659*** (0.159)	2.611*** (0.156)	2.364*** (0.143)	2.177*** (0.131)	2.107*** (0.148)	2.315*** (0.141)
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Country FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
country*time	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
country*time ²	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Observations	486	486	486	486	486	486
R-squared	0.867	0.881	0.923	0.943	0.947	0.957

Note: Sample: 1950–1988, (unbalanced panel). Estimated using country population weights. . Standard errors in parentheses. ***Statistical significance at 1%. **Statistical significance at 5%. * Statistical significance at 10% level.

Table 15.- Declared Legal Abortion: Static and dynamic effects of divorce law reforms including abortion laws

(Dependent variable: Crude Abortion Rate)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
No Fault Unilateral	0.840*** (0.149)		0.798*** (0.124)		0.583*** (0.125)	
No Fault Unilateral 1-2		0.903*** (0.148)		0.633*** (0.135)		0.514*** (0.124)
No Fault Unilateral 3-4		0.954*** (0.182)		0.838*** (0.179)		0.743*** (0.167)
No Fault Unilateral 5-6		1.533*** (0.230)		1.445*** (0.254)		1.338*** (0.250)
No Fault Unilateral 7-8		1.884*** (0.253)		1.862*** (0.324)		1.815*** (0.330)
No Fault Unilateral 9-10		2.002*** (0.283)		2.019*** (0.401)		2.157*** (0.420)
No Fault Unilateral 11-12		2.127*** (0.309)		2.090*** (0.476)		2.459*** (0.519)
No Fault Unilateral 13-14		2.276*** (0.377)		1.892*** (0.578)		2.402*** (0.639)
No Fault Unilateral 15		1.280*** (0.431)		1.054 (0.748)		2.615*** (0.852)
Constant	0.161 (0.351)	0.442 (0.337)	3.034*** (0.507)	-2.566*** (0.737)	3.004*** (0.575)	0.449 (0.452)
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Country FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
country*time	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
country*time ²	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Observations	263	263	263	263	263	263
R-squared	0.903	0.934	0.942	0.965	0.958	0.977

Note: Sample: 1950–1988, (unbalanced panel). Estimated using country population weights. . Standard errors in parentheses. ***Statistical significance at 1%. **Statistical significance at 5%. * Statistical significance at 10% level.

Table 16.-Pregnancy: Static and dynamic effects of divorce law reforms including abortion laws

(Dependent variable: Crude Pregnancy rate)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
No Fault Unilateral	-1.199*** (0.321)		-1.132*** (0.202)		-0.543*** (0.192)	
No Fault Unilateral 1-2		-0.633** (0.298)		-0.477** (0.230)		-0.463** (0.218)
No Fault Unilateral 3-4		-0.658* (0.367)		-0.417 (0.304)		-0.524* (0.294)
No Fault Unilateral 5-6		0.032 (0.464)		-0.053 (0.432)		-0.311 (0.441)
No Fault Unilateral 7-8		0.747 (0.511)		0.222 (0.550)		-0.022 (0.584)
No Fault Unilateral 9-10		1.596*** (0.572)		0.955 (0.682)		0.692 (0.743)
No Fault Unilateral 11-12		2.073*** (0.624)		1.641** (0.808)		1.458 (0.917)
No Fault Unilateral 13-14		1.293* (0.763)		2.342** (0.982)		1.636 (1.129)
No Fault Unilateral 15		1.508* (0.872)		3.675*** (1.272)		2.742* (1.504)
Constant	18.369*** (0.755)	18.153*** (0.682)	20.001*** (0.820)	7.202*** (1.252)	20.945*** (0.886)	12.655*** (0.799)
Year FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Country FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
country*time	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
country*time ²	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Observations	263	263	263	263	263	263
R-squared	0.849	0.910	0.949	0.966	0.966	0.976

Note: Sample: 1950–1988, (unbalanced panel). Estimated using country population weights. . Standard errors in parentheses. ***Statistical significance at 1%. **Statistical significance at 5%. * Statistical significance at 10% level.