

Marital Disruption and Economic Wellbeing: A Comparative Analysis

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ABSTRACT

We investigate recent trends in marital disruption based on the ECHP Survey (1994 to 2001). The main focus of the study is to investigate the relationship between marital disruption and economic wellbeing, and how this varies between gender, countries and welfare regimes. We consider the role of public policies as a means to “buffer” adverse economic consequences resulting from divorce. We provide both a descriptive analysis and an analysis of a more causal nature, the latter consisting of a Difference-in-Differences estimator combined with Propensity Score Matching techniques (DD-PSM). Normally economic wellbeing is analysed by considering family income or poverty status. In a comparative setting, due to differences in taxation and purchasing power, such measures of wellbeing become difficult. Using relative poverty overcomes some of these problems, but since poverty status is a poor proxy for wellbeing, we also derive several multidimensional measures of wellbeing (deprivation indices, avoiding the poor/non-poor dichotomy).

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