

Changing impact of parental divorce and premarital cohabitation on marital dissolution in Flanders (Belgium)

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1/ RESEARCH QUESTION

In Belgium the increase of (*parental*) divorces developed faster than in the neighbouring countries but the level of *premarital cohabitation* recently still lags behind that of those countries. How does the different diffusion process of these two risk factors affect the marital dissolution risks *across first marriage cohorts* in Flanders (Flemish speaking part of Belgium)?

2/ DATA

Divorce in Flanders Survey: data collected among intact and non-intact first marriages (cohort 1971 to 2008).

3/ METHODOLOGY

Piecewise constant models were used.

4/ PARENTAL DIVORCE AND PREMARITAL COHABITATION ACROSS MARRIAGE COHORTS

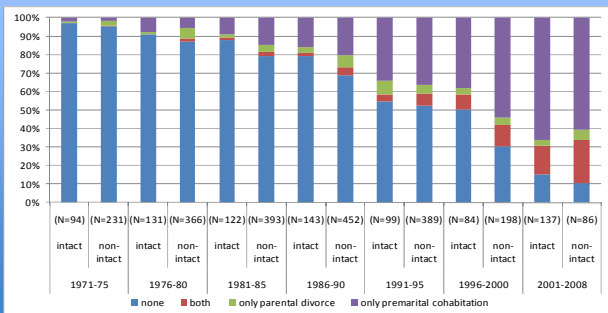


Figure 1 Prevalence of parental divorce and premarital cohabitation for men

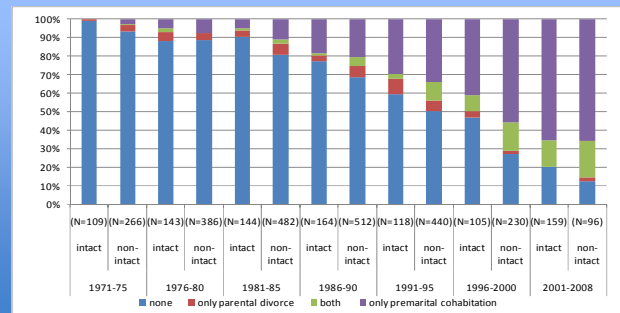


Figure 2 Prevalence of parental divorce and premarital cohabitation for women

5/ RESULTS MARITAL DISSOLUTION RISK

	Men				Women			
	1971-1980	1981-1990	1991-2000	2001-2008	1971-1980	1981-1990	1991-2000	2001-2008
First marriage cohort								
<i>Divorce in the family</i>								
Parental divorce before own marriage (ref.=no)	1.38	1.29	1.35	1.33	1.33	1.41	1.35	1.33
Sibling divorce (ref.=married but not divorced siblings)								
No siblings	0.95	1.43	1.39	1.30	1.03	1.06	1.03	0.98
No married siblings	1.20	0.94	1.23	1.18	0.90	1.13	1.43	1.10
Divorced siblings	1.13	1.04	1.26	1.16	1.07	0.90	1.16	1.46
Parental death before marriage (ref.=no)	0.90	0.80	1.05	1.03	1.03	1.08	0.78	1.01
<i>Premarital cohabitation</i>								
With marriage partner (ref.=no)	1.10	1.35	1.39	1.60	1.29	1.19	1.42	1.24
With another partner (ref.=no)	NA*	1.92	1.02	0.95	NA	2.60	1.41	1.20
*NA = Not applicable								
<i>Time and age</i>								
5 year cohort	1.22	1.53	1.35	NA	1.25	1.33	1.24	NA
Age at first marriage (ref.= between q1 and q3**)								
Younger	0.96	1.20	1.12	1.41	1.20	1.19	1.49	2.49
Older	0.68	0.71	0.71	0.91	0.78	0.85	0.73	1.14
** Per marriage cohort and gender								
Age heterogamy (>5 years)	1.75	1.83	1.74	2.52	1.37	1.03	1.41	1.09
<i>Children in the marriage</i>	0.49	0.37	0.40	0.33	0.58	0.41	0.35	0.28
<i>Education (ref. = lower level)</i>								
Medium educational level	1.17	0.77	1.01	0.88	0.95	0.95	0.91	0.48
Higher educational level	1.04	0.73	0.81	0.85	1.19	0.93	0.89	0.39
Educational heterogamy	1.13	1.05	0.94	0.66	1.09	1.14	0.99	0.89
<i>Religiosity (ref.=lower level)</i>								
Higher level	0.81	1.07	0.94	0.83	0.89	0.95	0.84	1.33
N (persons)	780	1061	731	215	867	1251	849	247
N (observations)	4572	5568	2818	356	5107	6559	3200	405
AIC	1789	2296	1651	377	2002	2711	1977	436

Table 1 Impact of parental divorce and premarital cohabitation on the divorce risk controlled for other factors, by marriage cohort and gender

- Control for other relevant factors only weakly changes the impact of a *parental divorce* and a *premarital cohabitation* on the marital dissolution risk.

- Only marriages from the 1980s – in which more than 10% but less than 40% experienced a parental divorce and/or a premarital cohabitation – were affected by *both* risk factors (as by a premarital cohabitation with another partner).

- No impact of *premarital cohabitation* on first marriages from the 1970s (with seldom a premarital cohabitation) and on those from the 2000s (with almost always a premarital cohabitation).

- Age* and *age heterogamy* at first marriage remain strong determinants.

- Children* reduce strongly the marital dissolution risks.