Data Article

Cohort data on divorce among first, second and higher order marriages in Norway 1981 until 2013

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ABSTRACT

This article present prospective data on all Norwegian two sex-marriages that was formed from 1981 to 2013, all together more than 770 000 marriages, with yearly follow up for until 32 years. Four different categories of marriages and remarriages were investigated: First time for both spouses, first time for one and second time for the other, second time for both, and third time or more for at least one in the couple. The data stems from a special order from Statistics Norway and marriages formed within one calendar year are combined to cohorts where each couple were checked for each successive year if the same two individuals were still married to each other. The data holds the original population for each of the 33 cohorts and number of divorced couples for each year of follow up.

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Specifications Table

| Subject | Social Sciences |
|---|---|
| Specific subject area | Marriage, remarriage and divorce |
| Type of data | Table |
| How data were acquired | The data was acquired through a special order from Statistics Norway. |
| Data format | Raw |
| Parameters for data collection | All marriages formed in Norway from the beginning of 1981 until the end of 2013 were included. |
| Description of data collection | One statistician at Statistics Norway with access to data on every person and their marriage status performed the analysis to produce the dataset. |
| Data source location | Institution: Statistics Norway |
| Country: Norway | The primary data source contains data on every individual in Norway on several variables and are thus sensitive data. The primary data are only available for certified employers at Statistics Norway. However, researchers affiliated with an approved research institution by either The Research Council of Norway or Eurostat may by application request microdata. |
| Data accessibility | Repository name: Mendeley Data |
| Data identification number: | https://doi.org/10.17632/z2vh6gc7d3.1 |
| Direct URL to data: | Mendeley Data - Divorce and remarriage in Norway: First, second and higher order marriages 1981 until 2013 |
| Related research article | Zahl-Olsen, R., Thuen, E., & Espehaug, B. (2019). Divorce and remarriage in Norway: a prospective cohort study between 1981 and 2013. Journal of Divorce & Remarriage, 60(8), 600–611. |

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Value of the Data

- Even if marriage is thought of as a lifelong commitment, many experience divorce and prior research has identified higher risk of divorce for remarriages. However, remarriages vary on different aspects and this dataset provides data on three different remarriage types in comparison to first marriages.
- The present data can be useful to social scientists in Norway and other countries investigating committed relationships.
- The data are of considerable practical importance since it may be used for making cross-cultural comparisons as well as to investigate change over time in possible future studies on Norwegian marriages and cohabitants.

1. Data Description

The data file is an Excel file with four sheets. One sheet for each of the four categories of marriages. The data is also available as four files in csv format.

1. **First – first**, comprising all marriages where both spouses were married for their first time.
2. **First – second**, comprising all marriages where one of the spouses had been married once before.
3. **Second - second**, comprising all marriages where both spouses had been married once before.
4. **Third or more**, comprising all marriages where at least one of the spouses had been married twice or more before.

Each of these sheets present the data in the same way. Data for each of the cohorts (1981 until 2013) are presented in separate columns. The first line present the cohort, e.g., 1981. The second line present the total population of marriages in that category of marriage (e.g., First – First) for each cohort. The fourth to the 36th line present the accumulative number of divorced from that original population that was divorced by the end of each year of follow up (0- 32 years
from the year of marriage). To calculate divorce rate for a category of marriages in a specific cohort at ten year follow up you divide the number of divorces for the cohort at that follow up (line 14) by the total population (line 2). For the 1981 cohort this would be 2916/18341 = 16%.

2. Experimental Design, Materials and Methods

Each person living in Norway has a unique identification number in the database of Statistics Norway. If a person marries this information is linked to that number. If the person experience divorce this will also be registered and linked to that number. We used this data on the individuals to trace the married couples to see, not only if they were married for each successive year, but also to assure that they were married to the same person for each year. This method assured that we traced each marriage and identified any divorce even if a person experienced divorce and remarried the same year.

One thought example is Ove who married Mari in 1990. Both were married for their first time and their marriage is therefore one of the 16,673 First-First marriages formed in that year. Their marriage was investigated for each successive year. In 2010 their marriage ended by divorce. The same year, Ove remarried with Edith who had also been married before. Ove’s first marriage was in this dataset registered as ended by divorce in 2010 and his second marriage was followed until Ove and Edith divorced or to the end of data collection. If we would just observe if Ove was married for each year from his first marriage in 1990 we would not been able to identify that he had been remarried in 2010. This method to identify divorces among married couple were used in several studies [1,2].

The most common type of marriage throughout the period was first–first (80% in 1981 and 71% in 2013). Less common were remarriages of the type first–second (13% in 1981 and 18% in 2013), second–second (5% in 2013 and 8% in 2013), and third or more (2% in 1981 and 3% in 2013). The data indicate that the proportion of remarriages increased from 20% in 1981 to 29% in 2013.

Ethics Statement

Participant data are fully anonymized and are provided in compliance to data redistribution policies from Statistics Norway.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships which have or could be perceived to have influenced the work reported in this article.

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CRediT Author Statement

Rune Zahl-Olsen: Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing – original draft; Ben Shahar: Writing – review & editing.

References

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[2] Rune Zahl-Olsen, Frode Thuen, Birgitte Espehaug, Divorce and remarriage in Norway: a prospective cohort study between 1981 and 2013, J Divorce Remarriage 60 (8) (2019) 600–611, doi:10.1080/10502556.2019.1619378.