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Divorce as an aspect of demographic behavior of the Volyn region population

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Abstract. The article gives a general description and a detailed analysis of the divorce process of Volyn region population. The theoretical basis, demographic approaches to the study of divorce and divorce indicators in the region are analyzed. The importance of the divorces consequences and measures of demographic policy, which will be aimed at reducing them as

a result of modernization of social and economic life in the current regime of reproduction: low birth rate and increasing life expectancy. Divorces peculiarities of Volyn region population are determined, the main of which are: sociological, psychological and demographic groups of risk factors for divorce. The main stages of family crises and their symptoms are described. The main negative consequences of divorce, which have an impact on the general demographic situation in the region are low birth rate (unrealized childbearing of divorced women); increase in the number of single-parent families in which the child is brought up by one parent; increasing the number of people who do not want to marry again after divorce; decrease of labor activity; deteriorating health, increased morbidity and death rate; increase suicides rate; increased risk of mental illness. It was found out the perspective psychological, legal forms and other assistance in marriage and family. The reasons for the low efficiency of the implementation of specific steps to overcome the processes of divorce in Volyn region are highlighted. Indicators for estimation of divorcing in the region have been calculated. Spatial-temporal data analysis of divorces for the period of 1995–2020 is carried out, regional features of their manifestation are singled out. The maps that reflect the spatial-temporal data differences of divorces in the regions were created. There were identified the main factors and preconditions for divorce in the region.

Keywords: population, demographic behavior, divorces, regions of Ukraine, Volyn region.

Розлучення як аспект демографічної поведінки населення Волинської області

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Анотація. У статті наведено загальну характеристику та проведено детальний аналіз процесу розлучуваності населення Волинської області. Проаналізовано теоретичну базу, підходи демографії до вивчення розлучень та показники розлучуваності регіону. Обґрунтовано важливість наслідків розлучень і заходів демографічної політики, які будуть спрямовані на їх зменшення, як наслідок модернізації соціального і економічного життя в умовах сучасного режиму відтворення населення: низької народжуваності і зростаючої тривалості життя. Визначено особливості розлучень населення Волинської області, основними з яких є: соціологічні, психологічні та демографічні групи факторів ризику розвитку розлучення. Охарактеризовано основні стадії сімейних криз та їх ознаки. Виділено основні негативні наслідки розлучень, які мають вплив на загальну демографічну ситуацію в регіоні: низьку народжуваність (нереалізованість дітонародження розлучених жінок); збільшення кількості неповних сімей, у яких дитина виховується одним із батьків; збільшення кількості людей, які не бажають після розлучення вступати у повторний шлюб; зниження трудової активності; погіршення показників здоров'я, збільшення захворюваності та смертності; збільшення суїцидальних випадків; збільшення ризику психічних захворювань. З'ясовано перспективні форми психологічної, юридичної та інших видів допомоги з питань шлюбу та сім'ї. Висвітлено причини низької ефективності запровадження реалізації конкретних кроків щодо подолання процесів розлучуваності у Волинській області. Розраховано показники для оцінки розлучуваності на території регіону. Здійснено просторово-часовий аналіз розлучень за період 1995–2020 років, виділено регіональні особливості їх прояву. Розроблено картосхеми, що відображають просторово-часові відміни розлучень в районах області. Визначено основні чинники та передумови розлучень регіону.

Ключові слова: населення, демографічна поведінка, розлучуваність, регіони України, Волинська область.

Introduction

Demographic behavior is a system of actions and relationships through which the results of childbearing, marital status, health and life expectancy are considered. The main components of demographic behavior are: reproductive, matrimonial and self-preservation behavior. Reproductive behavior examines the system of actions and attitudes regarding the birth or refusal of a child, as well as the adoption and upbringing of a child. Matrimonial behavior is a system of actions and relationships that are aimed at registration or refusal to register a marriage, its preservation or its break. Self-preservation behavior is a system of actions and attitudes of people to save or refuse to save their own lives and health. All components of demographic behavior are closely related to each other and their harmonious combination testifies to a full-fledge life.

Divorce is the breakdown of a marriage, giving both partners the right to marry again, which is common in today's world. The process of divorce leads to the emergence of so-called single-parent families, in which, due to various reasons, a child (children) is raised by one parent. The increase in the number of single-parent families is directly related to the sphere of marital and family relations, in particular, changes in moral norms in the field of gender relations, premarital relations distribution, changes in traditional family roles of husband and wife, unpreparedness for marriage, increasing demands on marriage etc.

Single-parent families face a number of problems – socio-economic, material, pedagogical, medical, psychological, etc., the solution of which is quite urgent. In addition, the increase in the number of single-parent families has an impact on the demographic situation in the region. Much attention is paid to the study of the state of families in Ukraine, but, unfortunately, the demographic aspect of divorce is not widely researched. Thus, the problem of divorce is relevant and requires analysis not only in terms of law, economics, sociology or psychology, but also in social geography.

The purpose of this article is to identify spatial-temporal data differences of divorces in Volyn region for the period of 1995–2019.

To achieve this goal it is necessary to solve the following tasks: to analyze the divorce trends in the Volyn region; to establish features of marital behavior of the region population; to calculate indicators to assess divorce; to develop recommendations for improving demographic policies to reduce the consequences of divorce.

Materials and methods of research

Divorce is quite common in the modern world, so the study of divorce has been the focus of many

scholars, both in Ukraine and abroad. Lawyers, physicians, historians, philosophers, psychologists and educators, sociologists and economists, who study divorce in various respects and single out distinctive research subjects in their work, but the subject remains the same, have been working on the issues.

Researchers from the University of Oxford, Esteban Ortina-Ospina and Roser (Ortiz-Ospina and Roser, 2020) have been studying the spatial distribution of various economic and social phenomena and processes, demography and a wide range of related topics, such as marriage and divorce in the world and some countries and regions in particular.

The authors conclude that, the proportion of people who marry in most countries has declined significantly in recent decades and the average age of marriage has risen; cohabitation of spouses living together and not married is becoming more common; there has been a general trend of increasing divorce rates around the world since the 1970s, but this trend varies considerably between countries; the divorce rate is lower in younger age groups; in developed countries, the average duration of marriage before divorce has been relatively stable in recent decades, and in some cases it has even increased. For example, in the United Kingdom the average duration of marriage declined markedly between the 1970s and 1980s, declining from about 12 to 9 years, but increased again to 12 years from the early 2000s. This reflects what researchers have noted in data on the proportion of marriages ending in divorce: divorce rates increased significantly between the 1960s and 1970s until the 1990s, but have declined steadily since that time. Scientists note a similar pattern in the United States, New Zealand, Australia and Singapore. However, there are still significant differences between the countries.

Norwegian professors from the University of Oslo Ann Lise Ellingster and Karin Wiederberg (Ellingsæter and Forlag, 2012) in “The Family of Socially Prosperous Countries –New Sociological Perspectives” cover current research on family forms and family practices in the Norwegian social policy model that is a key area of public policy. The authors focus their own research on the following topics, in particular: changes in marital status; gender distribution of responsibilities in immigrant families; economic and social differences in the levels of population divorce; using different approaches to family policy in European countries.

Their Norwegian counterpart Helen Arset (Aarseth, 2011) explores the perspectives and current models of married life, as well as gender equality in modern Western societies, in her sociological and gender studies, including *Modern Family Life – Motivations for an Equal Family*. The author discusses the international

sociological perspectives of family modernization, but outlines a different picture of an equal family — with professional and career self-realization of both partners, in particular in the Norwegian and Scandinavian contexts, as opposed to leading American and British theories.

American authors Gene H. Starbuck and Karen Sossie Lundy (Starbuck and Lundy, 2015) in their book “Families in Context. Sociological Perspectives” provides accurate and modern scientific sociological research of families and family within large-scale socio-economic processes. The authors present the impact of economic trends, including industrialization and post-industrialization, on the prospects for change in American marriages and families, from partner selection, family planning and childbearing to family crises and divorces. Researchers also do not focus on the issue of affordable health care and the impact of new social media, poverty, education and social mobility on the family in the context of family issues.

Economists Betsy Stevenson and Justin Wolfers (2007) have examined in details the changes and driving forces of marriage and divorce in the United States. They suggest that the changes we see in divorce rates may partly reflect changes in marital expectations as women begin to gain mass employment and professional self-realization in a post-industrial society. Women who married to a significant increase in women’s employment found themselves married to those who fit in well with postwar American culture, but ended up being an unsuitable partner for living together based on contemporary gender roles in the aftermath of economic and sociocultural change in the United States. This may have been the driving force behind the rapid rise in divorces during the 1970s and 1980s, with 48% of American couples marrying in the 1970s divorcing over the next 25 years. However, since then, the probability of divorce has decreased. This is typical for couples married in the 1980s and 1990s, when the divorce rate declined and the length of marriage increased.

American demographers Sheila Kennedy and Steven Ruggles (2014), using new data from a survey of the American community and monitoring changes in the age of the married population, concluded that indeed there has been a significant increase in age-standardized divorce rates. USA for the last two decades. In particular, the divorce rate has doubled among people over 35. However, among the youngest couples, the divorce rate is stable or declining. If current trends continue, the overall age-standardized divorce rate may level off or even decline over the next few decades. The authors argue that the equalization of divorces among people born after 1980 probably reflects the growing selectivity for marriage. Fewer young people marry:

more than 40% of population did not marry before their 30th birthday in 2008, four times as many as in 1980. As public pressures on marriage decrease, people may be more selective with their partners, so it is thought that marriages can become more stable.

Divorce rates like the level of marriage vary by education, according to American demographer Andrew Cherlin (Cherlin, 2010). In his writings, he analyzed that in the 1960s and 1970s, there was a sharp increase in the level of divorce among Americans for all sections of the population, regardless of education. However, from then until today, the probability of divorce has decreased among married couples in which both couples have higher education, while the probability of divorce has remained approximately the same, or even increased for less educated or less educated categories of the population.

Chinese human geography researchers (Zaijun, Shuaibin and Zhifei, Weixuan, 2017) focus on the spatial picture of regional divorce rates, taking 31 Chinese administrative units at the provincial level as the object of study and combining traditional statistical methods and spatial econometric models. Heterogeneous spatial differentiation of divorce rates has been linked to specific regional contexts, such as economic development, culture and population structure. In particular, the level of urbanization, the level of education, the prevalence of the Internet and the size of the family had a significant impact on the divorce rate in the provinces, and the unemployment rate and widening income gap in urban and rural areas had a much smaller impact on the divorce rate.

Among the Ukrainian researchers Y.O. Korchak-Chepurkivsky, A. P. Khomenko, L. V. Chuyko, L.I. Slyusar, T.S. Pavlovska are worth mentioning. In particular, Y. Korchak-Chepurkivsky (Korchak-Chepurkivsky, 1970) and L. Chuyko (Chuyko, 1975) studied in details the characteristics of separation at certain stages of development of the country’s regions.

The best processes of divorce, their causes, problems of single-parent families in Ukraine are covered in the works of M. A. Rosenberg “Divorce as a socio-psychological phenomenon in Ukraine”, L.I. Slyusar “Divorce in Ukraine in the demographic dimension: past and present”, S. Nychyporenko “Problems of single-parent families in the context of demographic development”, “Demographic aspect of family policy in Ukraine”, T. Pavlovska “Urban population of Volyn region: resettlement and dynamics”, as well as K. Niemets, L. Niemets, K. Segida, T. Pohrebskyi, G. Golub in the works “Structural and dynamic features of the regional labor market of Ukraine”, “Formation of human potential of the region in the conditions of demographic crisis”

and “Demographic challenges in the context of human potential reproduction in the regions of Ukraine”.

To solve the tasks, there were used: historical approach (determining the state of the problem, consideration of the main aspects and features of divorce in dynamics), statistical method (calculations, creation of statistical materials), descriptive method (analysis and characterization of primary information about the causes and motives of divorce), comparative method (ratio of region and country), analytical method (isolation of certain socio-economic factors), cartographic method (creation of maps), program-target method (isolation of the main areas of problem solving).

Results and analysis

Analysis and systematization of the features of divorce practice allowed researchers to identify certain groups of factors and causes of divorce as a socio-psychological phenomenon. M. A. Rosenberg identifies four groups of risk factors for divorce: personal risk factors; factors due to the history of the family;

unfavorable conditions for the functioning of the family; factors due to social change (Rosenberg, 2009).

There are also demographic factors of divorce, among which the main place belongs to the age of the spouses (age of marriage, age of divorce, the difference in age of the spouses (men and women)), as well as the duration of marriage. Each of these measures has its own specific impact on the duration of marriage and the reasons for divorce. The second important demographic factor in divorce is the length of the marriage. Another factor is the number of children in the family. Studies show that divorces are more likely to be in families without children or with one child. Of course, the level of divorce also depends on religion, folk traditions, marriage and family law (Pidgorny, Samotoenkova, Olvinska and Vitkovska, 2016).

Socio-demographic studies reveal the most common causes of divorce. The highest share belongs to: alienation in family relations, conflict of interest; alcohol abuse, family violence, drug use; conflicts due to residential and financial problems (Fig. 1).

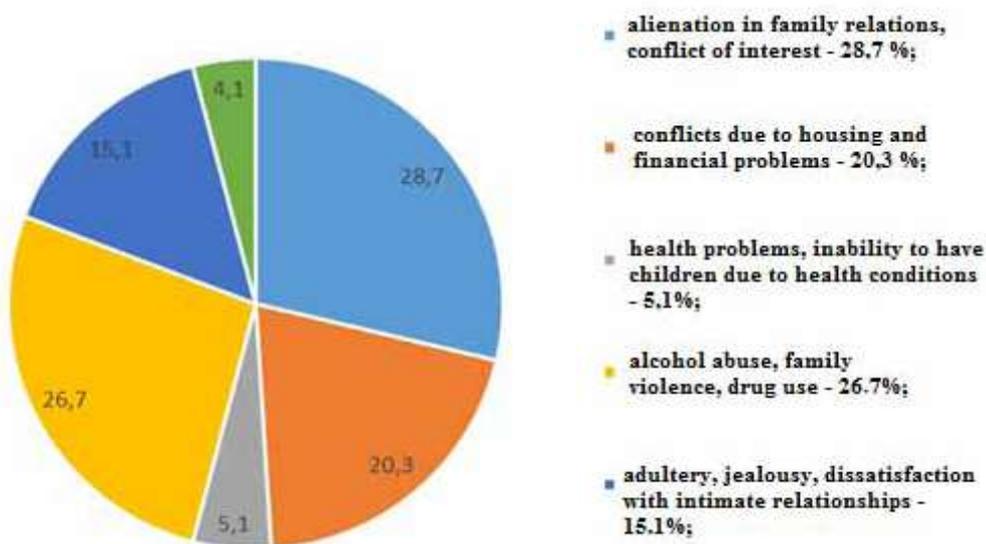


Fig. 1. The main reasons for the divorce,% Source: Marriage, family and childbearing orientations in Ukraine, 2019

According to Ukrainian sociologists, the main conditions that determine divorce are the spread of urban lifestyles, migration, industrialization of the country, women emancipation. These factors reduce the level of social control, make people’s lives largely anonymous, they atrophy the sense of responsibility, lasting commitment, mutual care for each other.

However, each divorce has its own main and concomitant causes and motives. However, it all stems from the unpreparedness of the couple for family life

and their inability to overcome the problems that arise throughout the life of the family. Sociology most often speaks of the four life cycles of the family (marriage; birth of a child; upbringing of children and their separation from parents; the appearance of the first grandson and the death of the spouses). However, it is not enough to single out and analyze only family life cycles to explain the reasons for divorce. To do this, we need to consider in more detail the main stages of family crises and their symptoms, which result in divorce.

The family crisis leads to misunderstandings, emotional alienation, unwillingness to seek jointly a way out of the situation. There are seven stages of a family crisis: marital responsibilities; birth of the first child; socialization of the child; adolescence of the child; children’s independence; “Empty nest”; death of one of the spouses (Nichiporenko, 2006).

Analysis of views on the causes of divorce and risk factors for their occurrence leads to the following conclusion: the divorce process is due to a number of marital and premarital factors that directly overlap with family crises in married life and join the general individual characteristics of people who eventually become problems of general socio-economic condition of the state.

In Volyn region, the number of registered divorces is the lowest among all regions of Ukraine is 2956 units (2019) (the average in Ukraine is 5750 units). Accordingly, the total divorce rate, according to the State Statistics Service, in 2019 was 2.9‰ (in Ukraine – 3.6‰). It is also worth noting that the share of single-parent families in the region is only 7%, the share of

illegitimate births – 10.7% (Demographic Passport – Volyn region, 2021).

The number of divorces in the Volyn region did not have a constant trend of change in 1995–2019 (Fig. 2). The dynamics of indicators can be described as abrupt. Peak values were observed in 2000, 2005, 2011 and 2018. The number of divorces increased during periods of relative social, economic and political stability. Conversely, during the aggravation of crises in the financial sphere, social and political life, the population was less inclined to make major changes in personal life. Since the mid-2010, the divorce registration procedure has been changed in accordance with the Law of Ukraine “On the State Registration of Civil Status Acts” as of July 1, 2010 No 2398-VI, so the data for this year are not sufficiently correct. However, in general, the number of divorces has begun to decline recently due to a decrease in the number of marriages and a more balanced approach to their creation. It can also be assumed that it is probably not related to the real strengthening of the family, but to the growth of “fashion” for unregistered marital partnerships.

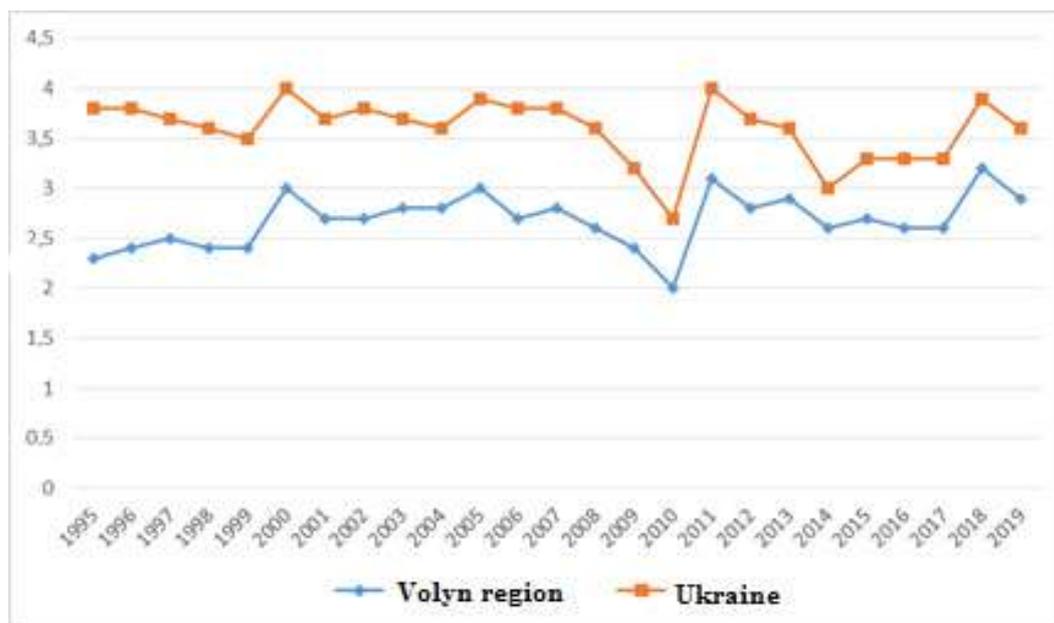


Fig. 2. Dynamics of the number of divorces in the Volyn region in 1995–2019 Source: Demographic passport – Volyn region

The largest number of divorces is observed in cities, where the divorce rate is from 3.6‰ (Volodymyr-Volynskiy) to 5.2‰ (Novovolynsk), in rural areas this figure is 1.8‰. The highest divorce rate, except for cities of regional significance, was recorded (excluding divorces in cities) in Rozhysche (2.75‰), Kovel (2.62‰), Horokhiv (2.54‰) and Volodymyr-Volynskiy

districts (2.51‰), the smallest is typical for Kamin-Kashirsky district (0.69‰) (Fig. 3).

Divorce has a direct relationship with fertility, and the indirect impact of marital instability on fertility cannot be ignored. A great portion of divorces has a psychological effect on young people, keeping some from getting married.

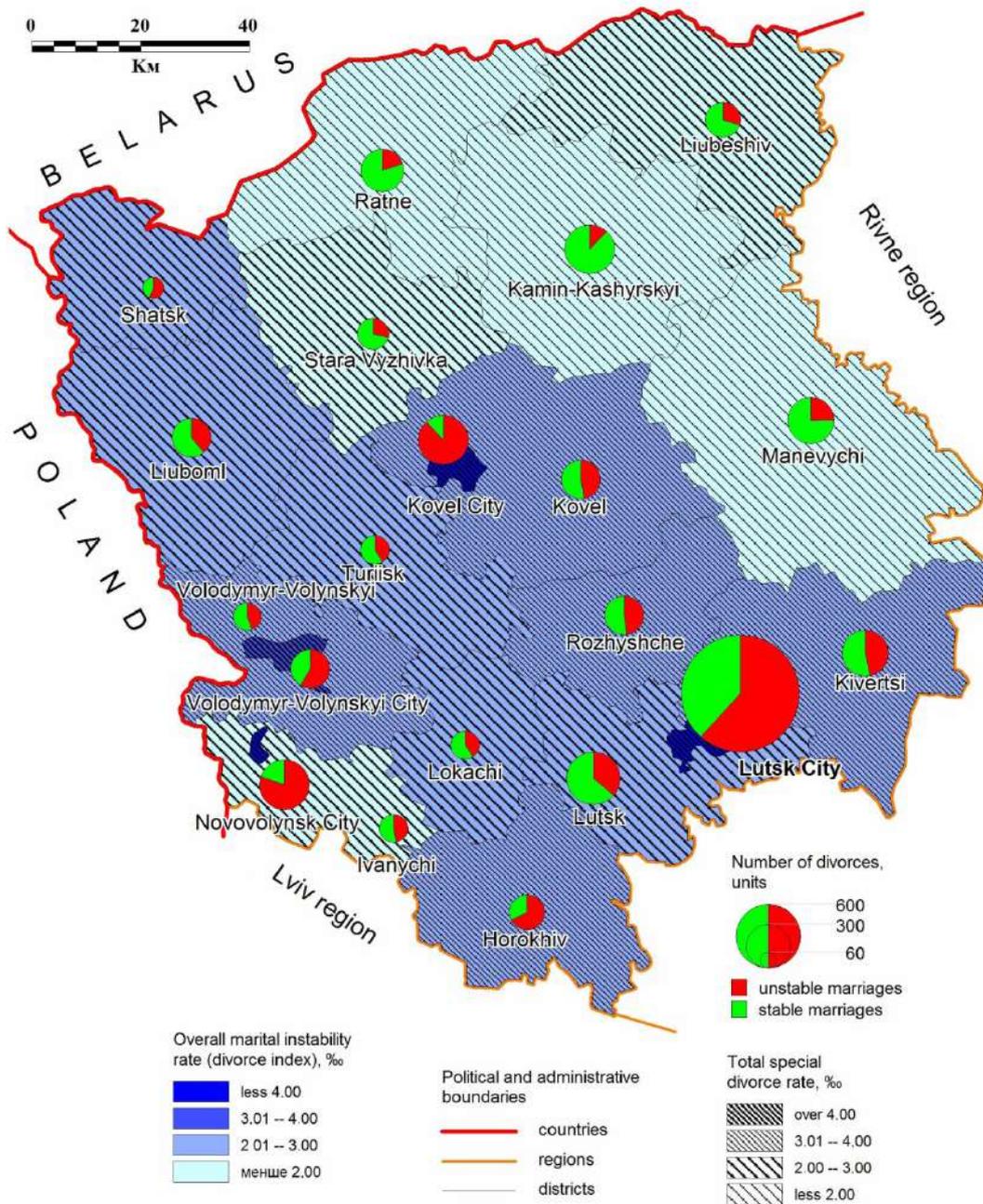


Fig. 3. The number of registered cases of divorce in the Volyn region, 2019 Source: Demographic passport – Volyn region

Under the conditions of an unstable family, the potential for its dissolution, a special climate of marital relations is formed and many couples are in no hurry to have children, because in case of divorce childless or young, easier to remarry, less alimony, less and moral responsibility for their behavior. It is well known that couples who do not have children or have only one child are prone to divorce. Therefore, in areas with

a high divorce rate, the birth rate is low. For example, Novovolynsk has the highest number of divorces (5.2‰) and one of the lowest birth rates (7.5‰).

Divorce, as a typical pattern, is observed in couples whose marriage duration is 1–4 and 5–9 years, which is associated with the couple experiencing a number of family crises (Fig. 4).

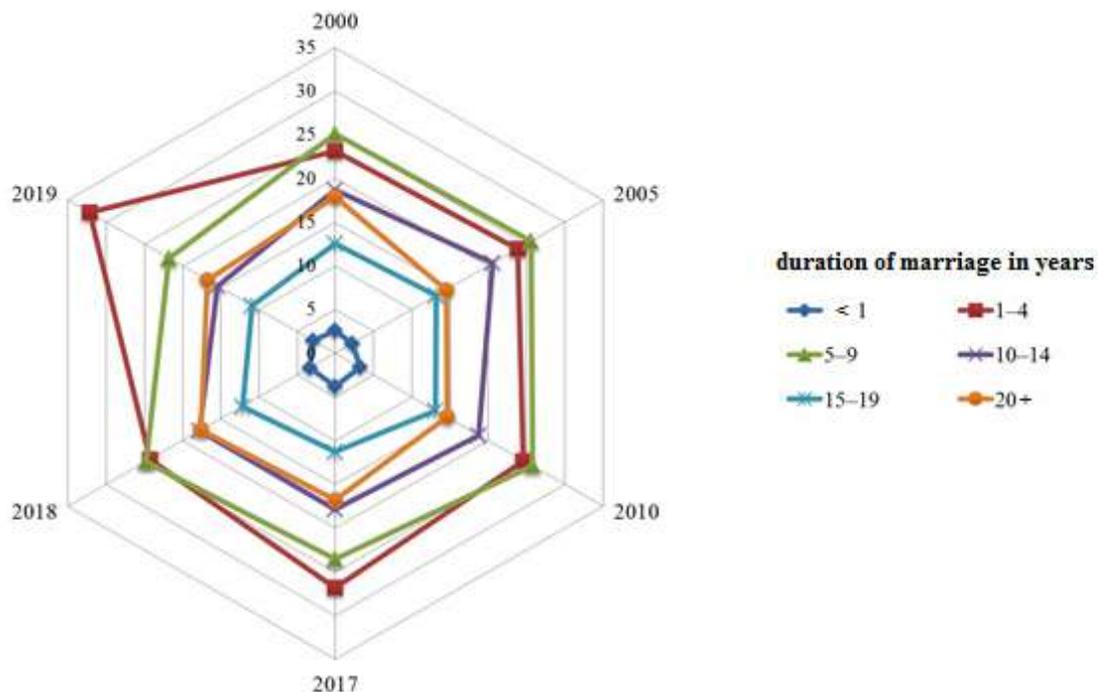


Fig. 4. Distribution of divorces by duration of marriage in Volyn region, %

Source: Statistical Yearbook Volyn 2020

The total divorce rate in the region at the end of 2019 was 2.9‰. The general special divorce rate (the number of the current population excluding children) is 3.6. It is the highest in Kovel (5.00‰), Ivanychi (4.68‰) and Lutsk (4.77‰) districts, the lowest – in Kamin-Kashirsky (0.91‰), Ratne (1.04‰) and Manevychi (1.78‰) districts. The overall marital instability ratio (divorce index) is 48.71%. It is highest in Kovel (72.82%), Ivanychi (71.15%) and Horokhiv (67.37%) districts.

During the Covid-19 quarantine in March-May 2020, 46 couples divorced and 412 married in Volyn region. Many couples felt tense when they found themselves locked in four walls with their families. Childcare, household chores, work, health care, finances and world events have all caused a crisis in families. The couple's biggest controversy was over the new division of domestic work. People tried to work and take care of the children at the same time, which led to a lack of perception of reality.

In general, divorces in terms of demographic behavior in Volyn region are characterized by their insufficient impact, as the region has a very favorable situation among other regions of Ukraine and has one of the lowest overall divorce rates. However, one should not ignore the problems that society faces as a result of divorces and their overall impact on the demographic situation in the region.

Thus, the main negative consequences of divorce, which have an impact on the general demographic situation in the region are: low birth rate (failure of

children of divorced women); increase in the number of single-parent families in which the child is brought up by one parent; increasing the number of people who do not want to marry again after divorce; reduction of labor activity; deteriorating health, increased morbidity and mortality; increase in suicides; increased risk of mental illness.

The demographic situation in the region is characterized by high mortality and low birth rates, the growth of alcoholism – the need to strengthen the family. To improve the situation, it is necessary to stimulate the economic potential of the family, increase its level of economic independence, autonomy and responsibility. The main means of fulfilling these tasks should be the family income policy, the use of levers of tax and credit policy. In combination with the increase in the economic well-being of the family, social benefits and social protection programs for low-income families should be developed. In addition, educational, informational, ideological activities aimed at solving social problems of different categories of families should be carried out. These tasks should be implemented in a complex, be a part of a comprehensive state program of family support, which will be implemented by all interested central and local executive bodies, as well as NGOs whose activities are aimed at improving the situation of various categories of families, providing them with social services (Ellingsæter and Forlag, 2012).

At the legislative level, it is necessary to carry out informational and educational work with families, to

improve the forms of psychological, legal and other types of assistance in matters of marriage and family. Legislation in the field of prevention of domestic violence needs to be improved to prevent violence; create organizations for social support of such families; create an effective system of assistance to victims of domestic violence, etc.

The implementation of certain steps will contribute to the creation of optimal socio-economic conditions for the establishment of a well-off, physically and spiritually healthy, socially prosperous family, ensuring the family's basic functions, especially educational and demographic, as well as positively affect marriage and reduce the number of divorces.

Conclusions

The spread of divorce is one of the main characteristics of the matrimonial behavior of the population not only in Volyn region, but also the population of the world, which is a consequence of the modernization of social and economic life of modern society. Emancipation, gender equality, and social insecurity are the causes of low birth rates and increasing life expectancy.

The process of divorce is due to a number of marital and premarital factors that directly overlap with the existence of family crises in married life, as well as join the general individual characteristics of people, which eventually become problems of the general socio-economic state. Over the past 25 years, the number of

marriages has decreased by 1.5 times. In 2019, 6069 marriages were officially registered, while in 1995 — 9067. Over the last year, the number of marriages decreased by 2%. This was probably influenced by quarantine, although the trend towards a reduction in marriages has been observed before.

The number of registered divorces and the number of single-parent families in Volyn region is the lowest among all regions of Ukraine. Intra-regional differences are characterized by a higher divorce rate in urban settlements and administrative districts of the southern part of the region. The total divorce rate in Volyn region is 2.9‰, the total special divorce rate is 3.6‰, and the overall marital instability rate (divorce index) is 48.7%.

The consequences of divorce are primarily negative and create a number of problems that can significantly affect the demographic situation in the region, so it is important in demographic policy to focus on supporting the socio-economic situation of families and psychological support of spouses in various aspects.

Further study of all aspects of the separation of the population is relevant, but it is impossible without full statistical information about this process, and especially the restoration of statistical reporting on the characteristics of married couples who are divorced in court. In the inter-census period, sample demographic surveys are needed to provide additional information on this complex and controversial process.

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