

Statistics on family disorder

This is a comment on a piece in Ed Feser's post [here](#).

@ jmhenry

"But when it comes to the percentage of births out of wedlock, Sweden actually surpasses the United States, 55% to 41%. France is at 53% and the United Kingdom at 45%, both higher than the U.S."

Thanks for the link, I stand corrected. It seems I chose about the worse possible example. Perhaps in Sweden people are so wealthy and social protection is so complete that people become careless and even frivolous.

Now from the point of view of natural law it is not so much wedlock that matters but having a normal family, and I see in the same source that the percentage of children in single parent homes (mostly single mother homes) is a huge 22% in Sweden but still better than the 29% in the US. These are abysmal numbers. I was not aware there is so much disorder in the world. And I understand most single parent families in the US are poor which only increases the tragedy.

Perhaps we could start by agreeing on what is a tragedy (and also a violation of the natural order): Abortion, divorce, and single parent families. And then discuss what causes these tragedies, which I take it is mainly lack of religiosity, lack of good education including lack of sexual education, and poverty. And finally discuss what a civilized society should do to diminish these tragedies. The first step is (ahem) to get one's facts right, and then study the correlations.

From [your source](#) here are the single parent statistics in the West from best to worse:

Italy 10
Germany 14
France 15
Poland 17
Spain 18
Sweden 22
Canada 22
UK 24
US 29

[Here are the divorce rates](#) per 1.000 population and per year:

Italy 3.6
Spain 3.6
France 3.8
UK 4.3
Canada 4.4
Germany 4.7
Sweden 5.3
Poland 6.0
US 6.8

It was difficult to find any good statistics on abortion, which is rather surprising given the importance of the subject. Sources are [the UN demographic yearbook](#), and [Eurostat's database](#). Below I copy data about number of induced abortions per 100 live births from [the Council of Europe's stats](#). Unfortunately the numbers are old, from 1996:

Spain 13
 Germany 14
 France 21
 UK 24
 Italy 25
 Canada 28
 Sweden 34
 US 38
 Poland 2 (these are legal abortions, in Poland illegal abortions are estimated of being 10 to 50 times more frequent – a mess)

[Guttmacher](#) is perhaps the most reliable source and the numbers are for 2008, but lacks info for some countries. Here is the number of induced abortions per 1,000 women in reproductive age per year:

Germany 7
 Italy 10
 France 16
 UK 17
 US 20
 Sweden 21

In all statistics US is close to worse place. Sweden does pretty badly too. Italy does very well, and Germany pretty well.

There must be an explanation for such big differences. Since data about religiosity, wealth and wealth distribution, general quality of education and in particular sexual education are available, one could relatively easily build a mathematical model that predicts the numbers of single parent families, divorce, and abortion and use it to improve the rates.

What's clear is that policy matters. Everybody who is interested in how policy can affect abortion rates should have a look at this graph I produced using Eurostat data with abortion numbers between the year 2000 and 2014. We see that Sweden and Spain are doing something wrong, but Germany and Italy are doing something right. :

Abortions per year per million population

source: Eurostat



