When Marriage Ends
Economic and Social Consequences of Partnership Dissolution

Edited by Hans-Jürgen Andreß, Professor of Social and Economic Research, University of Cologne, Germany and Dina Hummelsheim, Researcher, Max Planck Institute for Foreign and International Criminal Law, Freiburg, Germany

‘This is a double-faced book, which should be read by everybody who is concerned about the societal effects of divorce. It shows that divorce has negative economic and social consequences, not only in the Anglo-Saxon countries, but also in the most generous welfare states of Europe, where divorce is widely accepted. Moreover, these effects are more negative for women than for men, even in the most gender-equalitarian welfare state. But it also shows that social policies can mitigate these negative consequences.’

– Jaap Dronkers, European University Institute, Italy

In recent decades the probability of divorce and separation among married and cohabiting couples has increased significantly in most European countries. Focusing on both economic and social aspects, this comprehensive volume explores the consequences of partnership dissolution at the individual level. The contributors use personal characteristics, properties of the partnerships and the institutional context to explain coping behaviours.

The book comprises reports on eight countries, which have tentatively been classified as: ‘the male breadwinner’ (Belgium and Germany), ‘the dual earner’ (Denmark, Finland and Sweden), ‘the market’ (Great Britain) and ‘the family’ model (Spain and Greece). It also contains four cross-national comparative studies addressing the wider impacts of divorce, including labour force participation, residential mobility and housing, household income, and poverty and lifestyle deprivation.

Complemented by the editors’ authoritative introduction, this timely study will prove invaluable to graduate students and researchers interested in the economics and sociology of the family. Legal and public policy practitioners will also find the book an insightful addition to the current literature.


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