

Multicultural Vojvodina: Influences on Formation and Dissolution of Marriage

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Vojvodina is Autonomous Province of Republic of Serbia where population is multinational with different religious beliefs. Serbian population and Christian Orthodox religion are most represented, but Hungarian population and Catholic religion are significant. There are also number of diverse nationalities, such as: Croatians, Slovaks, Montenegrins, Romanians, Ruthenian, Roma population etc. The census of population (2002) includes twenty nationalities.

In Vojvodina where Serbian legal system is in effect, civil marriage is obligatory, religion form of marriage exists but without legal consequences. Nowadays a significant number of marriages are concluded in religious form apart the civil ceremony. The most significant distinction comparing Christian Orthodox and Catholic marriage law concerns divorce, Orthodox church allows divorce, on the contrary to Catholic religion. The aim of this paper is to investigate if and in what way differences in nationality, religious beliefs, in particular distinctions in religious law, have influence on marriage and divorce in social context (marriage rates and divorce rates) in contemporary Vojvodina. Focus would be to investigate if divorce rate among Catholic population is lower then among Christian Orthodox, having in mind that Catholic church does not allow divorce and the fact that significant number of couples choose to conclude religious marriage apart from civil. The influence of religious law could be only as a matter of conscience and beliefs, but if such influence exists nowadays with the consequences in social context is questionable.