

# MARRIAGES AND DIVORCES BY REGIONS IN NORTH MACEDONIA, 2010, 2015 & 2020

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## Abstract

The subject of study in this paper is marriages and divorces in the Republic of North Macedonia. The main goal is to analyze their progress throughout the years 2010, 2015, and 2020, according to regions, where special emphasis is given to the causes and consequences created by divorces.

The population in RNM over the years has had changes in population structures and demographic processes, both at the state level and at the regional level. Marriage is a very important demographic process for society, which, in cases of dysfunction, leads to divorce as another social process. Divorce, as a global social problem, is growing rapidly even in RNM. The main causes of divorces are economic conditions, gender equality, etc. These two processes are dependent on the total number of genders, ethnicity, age structure, etc.

The methods used in this paper are: descriptive, analytical, statistical, graphic, and cartographic, where the data obtained from the state statistics agency of the RNM were analyzed.

The number of marriages in RNM for the analyzed years shows a decrease of 3877 marriages, while in divorces we see that from 2010 to 2015 we have an increase of 480 divorces, while in 2020 we see a decrease, both at the state and regional level.

Based on the fact that young people enter marriage at a later age, seeking a more stable standard of living and seeing the causes that lead to separation, we recommend that young people be provided with the basic conditions for life, safe jobs and are stimulated to continue their growth in the family. Therefore, through the paper, we intend to highlight the problems and consequences that arise as a result of a couple's divorce.

*Keywords:* marriage, divorce, population, region, North Macedonia.

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## 1. Introduction

North Macedonia is a country that is situated in southeastern Europe and is located in the central part of the Balkan Peninsula. The geographical position of the Republic of North Macedonia is appropriate for having a large number of marriages even with citizens of neighboring countries, since the language, culture, education and religion are almost the same. As a result, marriages between citizens of neighboring countries can occur.

The Republic of North Macedonia is divided into 8 statistical regions, such as: East, North-East, Pelagonia, Polog, Skopje, South-East, South-West and Vardar region.

The region of Pelagonia is larger in area and has more settlements 343. It has a population of 225 752 inhabitants and the smallest population density, 47.9 b/km<sup>2</sup>, while the region of Skopje is the largest with a population of 633 764 inhabitants and a density of 349 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>. It constitutes about 1/4 of the population in the state. Rural settlements are not evenly distributed and with different numbers in the regions. Most of the population lives in urban areas, which demonstrates an uneven distribution of population between regions.

## 2. Marriages and divorces in RNM

Every society encounters major changes, and society in our country is also going through the stages of its development. The changes that our society is going through have not left the demographic flows untouched, especially marriages and divorces. The age to enter into marriage is constantly postponed and the average age for entering into this process is over 25 years. [1]

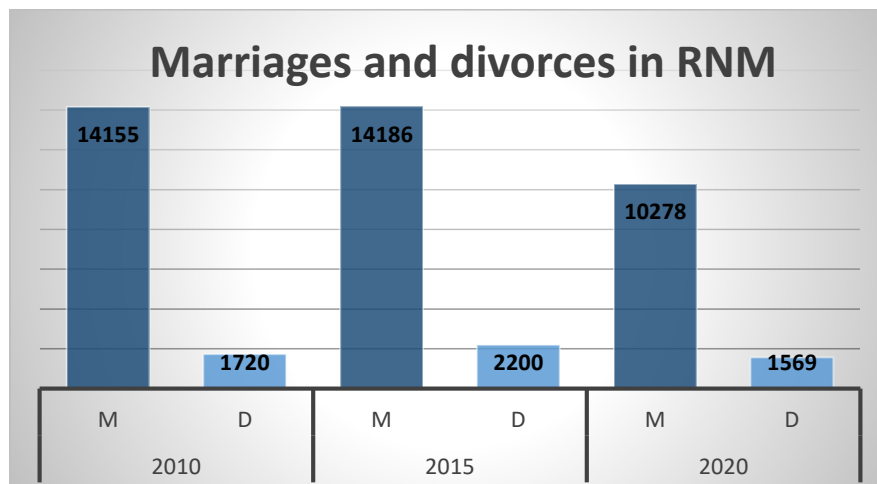
Divorce as a social problem affects all structures of the population, and as such there are cases that appear even in those marriages that have a duration of more than 20 years. The main causes that lead to divorce are different such as: adultery, emancipation, emigration, economic situation and other cases [3].

In the Republic of North Macedonia during 2010-2020, there were major changes in these processes and we have presented them in the following table:

**Table 1.** Marriages and divorces in the Republic of North Macedonia, 2010, 2015 & 2020

Year	2010		2015		2020	
	M <sup>3</sup>	D <sup>4</sup>	M	D	M	D
RNM	14155	1720	14186	2200	10278	1569

*Source ESRNM data (edited by the authors)*



**Figure 7.** Marriages and divorces in RNM, 2010, 2015 & 2020.<sup>5</sup>

From table number 1 we can see that from 2010 to 2015 the number of marriages and divorces has increased, while as in 2020 the number of these two processes has decreased, mainly as a result of the pandemic. The average age of crowned women is 25-28 years and for men 27-30 years.

## 3. Marriages and divorces in the regions of RNM

Marriage is considered a relationship recognized by law between two adult persons, male and female, and which includes certain rights and obligations. Divorce usually involves the annulment or rearrangement of the legal duties and responsibilities of marriage, thereby dissolving the bonds of marriage between a married couple under the rule of law of a country. [4]

<sup>3</sup> M- refers to marriages

<sup>4</sup> D - refers to divorces

<sup>5</sup> RNM- refers to Republic of North Macedonia

**Table 2.** Marriages and divorces in the regions of the RNM, 2010, 2015 & 2020

Regoins	2010		2015		2020	
	M	D	M	D	M	D
<b>Skopje R.</b>	4308	456	4040	657	3135	470
<b>Polog R.</b>	2796	362	2576	422	2198	232
<b>Eastern R.</b>	1036	153	1096	212	694	157
<b>Northeast R.</b>	1108	186	1151	101	801	54
<b>Pelagonia R.</b>	1453	176	1385	212	933	163
<b>Vardar R.</b>	937	112	1042	188	631	143
<b>Southwest R.</b>	1473	133	1623	206	1155	185
<b>Southeast R.</b>	1044	142	1273	202	731	165
<b>RNM</b>	14155	1720	14186	2200	10278	1569

Source ESRNM data (edited by the authors)

As mentioned above, North Macedonia is made up of 8 regions with different population numbers. The number of inhabitants is an important geographical element because in regions with a larger number of populations, we will have more marriages, but also a higher percentage of divorces. [2]

Matrimonies can usually take place after many months or years of marriage, and the act of marriage is related to the profession of the couple, their educational level, age, place of residence, etc. Marriages in our population usually take place in the summer and early spring months, which is related to free time and the arrival of young people from the outside world.

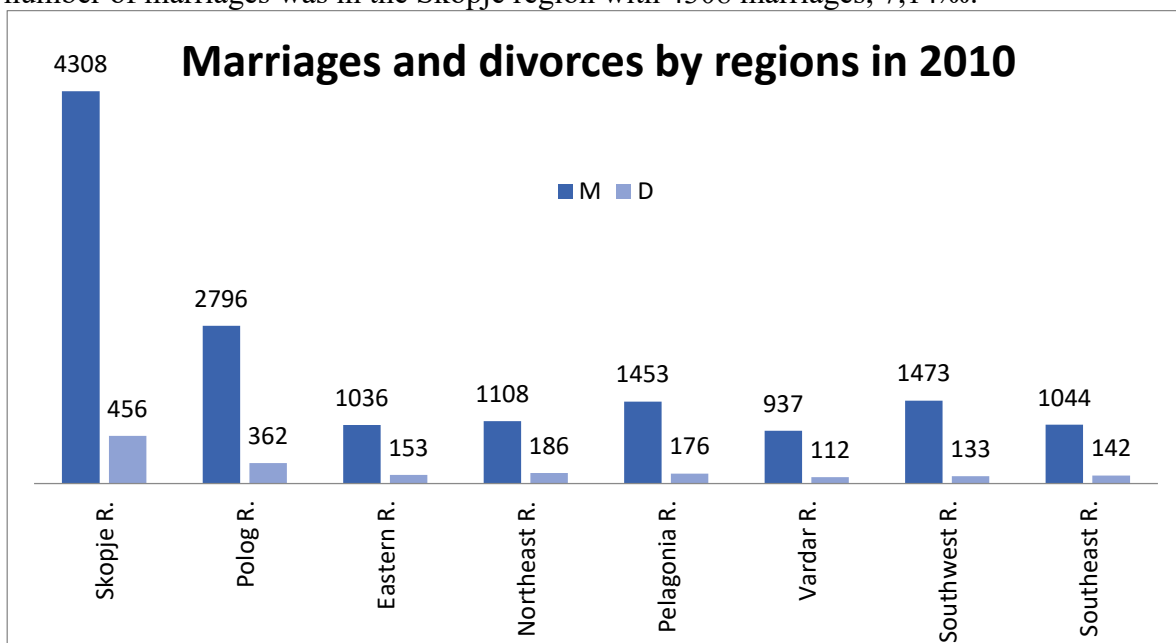
The largest number of marriages belong to the population of Macedonian and Albanian ethnicity, while more divorces are filed by Macedonian females who live in the Skopje and Eastern regions. Tables 2 and 3 are also presented through graphs (2010, 2015, 2020) and a map.

**Table 3.** Marriages and divorces, in the regions of the RNM, 2010, 2015 & 2020, presented in %

Marriages and divorces presented in %						
Regoins	2010		2015		2020	
	M	D	M	D	M	D
<b>Skopje R.</b>	7,14	0,75	6,52	1,06	4,94	0,74
<b>Polog R.</b>	8,88	1,14	8,05	1,31	6,81	0,71
<b>Eastern R.</b>	5,76	0,85	6,18	1,19	4,01	0,19
<b>Northeast R.</b>	6,32	1,06	6,53	0,57	4,56	0,30
<b>Pelagonia R.</b>	6,20	0,75	5,99	0,91	4,13	0,72
<b>Vardar R.</b>	6,09	0,72	6,80	1,22	4,18	0,94
<b>Southwest R.</b>	6,63	0,59	7,38	0,93	5,28	0,84
<b>Southeast R.</b>	6,03	0,82	7,33	1,16	4,24	0,95
<b>RNM</b>	6,88	0,83	6,85	1,06	4,95	0,75

Source ESRNM data (edited by the authors)

The data obtained from the State Statistics Office of the Republic of North Macedonia show that in 2010 the largest number of marriages was in the Skopje region with 4308 marriages, 7,14‰.

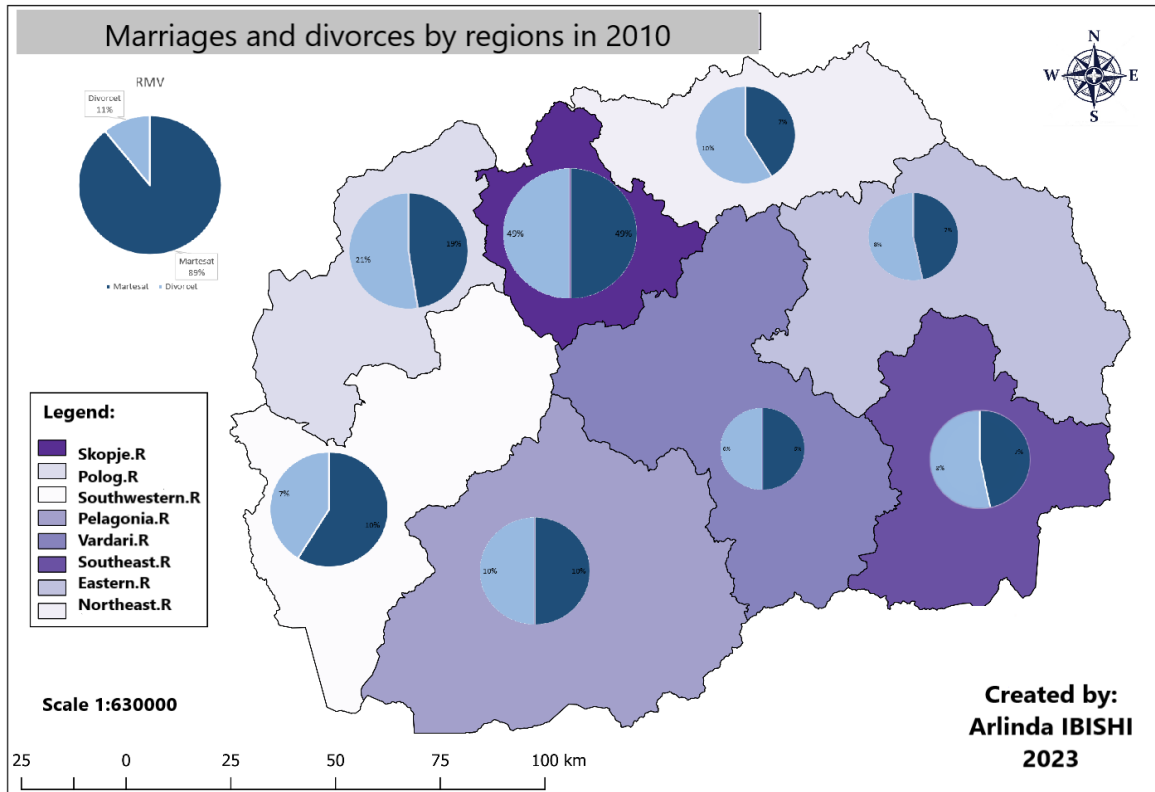


**Figure 8.** Marriages and divorces by regions in 2010

After that, the region with the largest number of marriages was the region of Polog, which at the regional level includes 2796 marriages, or 8,88‰. This high per mile is the result of the highest population in these regions, and we should also emphasize that Skopje is also the capital of RNM.

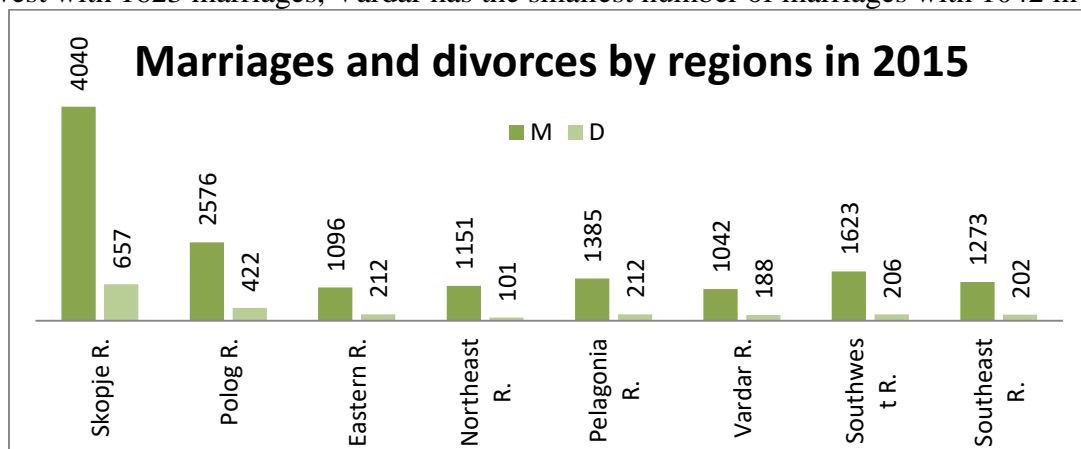
After these, the largest number of marriages is in the Southwest region with 6,63‰, then the Northeast region with 6,32‰, the Pelagonia region with 6,20‰, the Southeast region with 6,03‰, the East with 5,76‰, whereas the Vardar region has the smallest number of marriages with 937 marriages or 6,09‰.

The region of Skopje has the highest number of divorces with 456 or 0,75‰ in 2010 in RNM, and Polog with 362 divorces or 1,14‰ is considered to have a high number of divorces. The region of Vardar has the lowest number of divorces, 112 divorces or 0,72‰ in the state level.



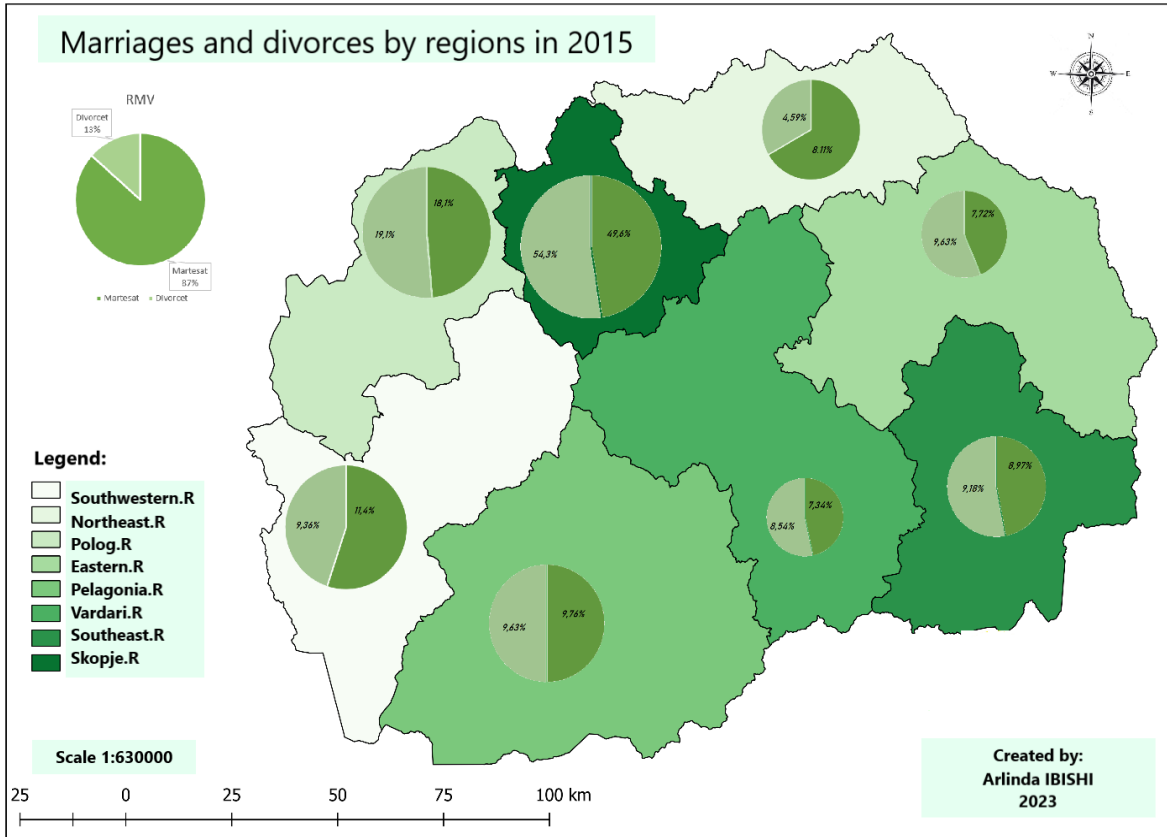
**Map. 1.** Map of marriages and divorces by regions in 2010

The data from ESMV shows that in 2015 the number of marriages in the Skopje region was 4040 marriages, which is the highest number compared to other regions in RNM. The Polog region is second with 8,05%, and the largest number of marriages were between the ages of 25-30. After Polog, the largest number of marriages is in the Southwest with 1623 marriages, Vardar has the smallest number of marriages with 1042 in 2015.



**Figure 9.** Marriages and divorces by regions in 2015

Compared to 2010, 2015 encountered an increase in the number of divorces at the state level from 11% to 13%, this shows that there are changes in the number of divorces in the regions of the RNM. The region of Skopje with 657 divorces and Polog with 422 divorces, had the most divorces in RNM in 2015, while the region of Vardari with 188 divorces, and the Northeast region with 101 divorces represent regions with fewer divorces.



Map. 2. Map of marriages and divorces by regions in 2015

Marriages in 2020 in the regions of the RNM have been lower compared to previous years. The main reason is presented to be the pandemic and the rules that the state established to stop the spread of the Covid-19 virus. The region of Skopje has the highest number of marriages this year with 3135 marriages (4,94%) and Polog with 2198 marriages 6,81%, less compared to the years 2010 and 2015. The Eastern region had the lowest number of marriages in 2020 with 694 marriages and Vardar with 631 or 4,18%.

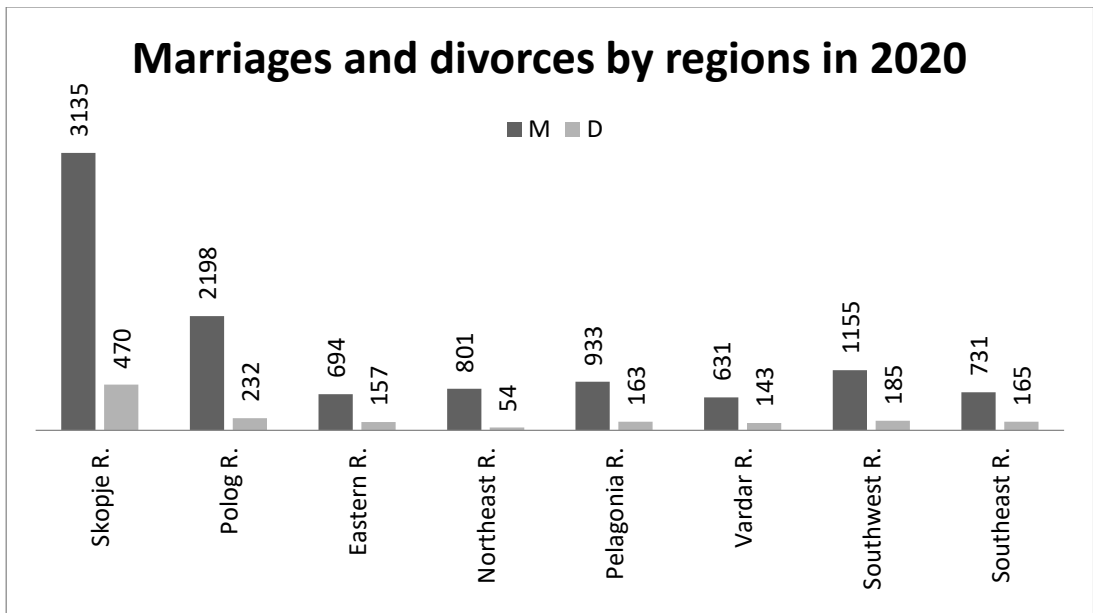
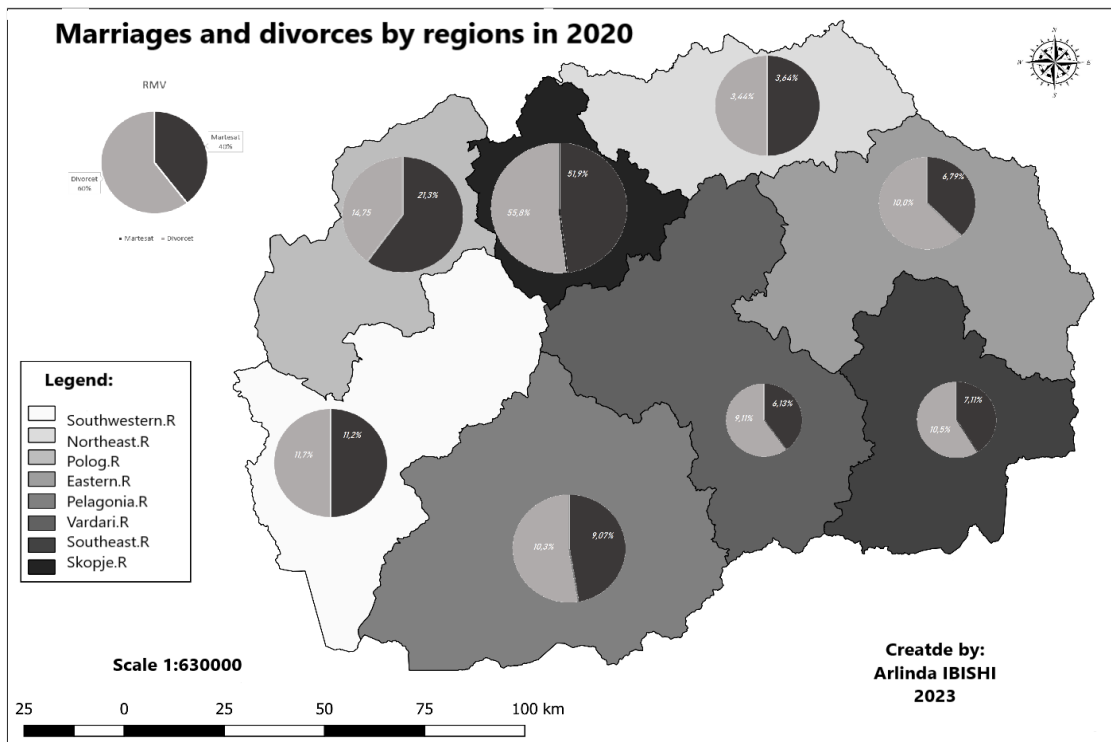


Figure 10. Marriages and divorces by regions in 2020

In 2020, there were a total of 1569 divorces in RNM, of which 470 divorces were in Skopje (0,74%), 232 in Polog (0,71%), the lowest number of divorces was in the Northeast region with 54 divorces (0,30%). The consequences of divorce are different, starting from psychological, physical, economic, social, etc. In some cases of divorce, the children are also affected by the consequences, since they must be under the guardianship of one of the parents and the meeting with the other parent is limited and by agreement. This also causes serious consequences in the psychology and life of the children, which can continue through their whole lives. [6]



Map. 3. Map of marriages and divorces by regions in 2020

#### 4. Conclusions

This paper focuses on the analysis of the progress of the number of marriages and divorces in the Republic of North Macedonia, as well as the causes and consequences created by divorce as a process opposite to the coronation, analyzing in detail these processes also at the regional level.

As a historical human phenomenon, the contracting of marriage, as well as the termination of marriage or the dissolution of the family, is widespread, repeated and unstoppable. There are certainly as many reasons for the dissolution of a marriage as there are for its contracting.

The population in RNM over the years has had changes in population structures and demographic processes, both at the state level and at the regional level. Marriage is a very important demographic process for society, which, in cases of dysfunction, leads to divorce as another social process. Divorce, as a global social problem, is growing rapidly even in RNM. The main causes of divorces are economic conditions, gender equality, etc. These two processes are dependent on the total number of gender, ethnic, age structure, etc.

The number of coronations in RNM for the analyzed years shows a decrease of 3877 coronations, while in divorces we see that from 2010 to 2015 we have an increase of 480 divorces, while in 2020 we see a decrease, both at the state and regional level.

During the years that have been researched and presented in the paper, it is seen that in the regions of RNM, the number of marriages is always higher compared to divorces, and this is positive and beneficial to society. Marriages at a young age bring responsibilities that couples did not think they would have and this is another reason why they go to court for a divorce action, but these two processes are present and unavoidable all over the world.

Divorce, unlike previous years where it was accepted in very rare cases, has recently been more pronounced and is carried out without problems and with the agreement of the couple. We must bear in mind that a large number of divorces in our country recently taken place also for reasons of emigration and to be able to obtain citizenship from European countries, with the aim of a better family life and economy.

Based on the fact that young people enter marriage at a later age, looking for a more stable standard of living and seeing the causes that lead to separation, we recommend that young people, especially young couples, are provided with the basic conditions for life, safe jobs through which the problems and consequences that arise as a result of a couple's divorces would be avoided, and the same would be stimulated to continue their growth in the family.



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