

state's obligations. Pregnant women have eighteen weeks of paid leave, beginning with the thirty-fourth week of pregnancy. Prenatal leave is considered an obligation to safeguard the health of both the baby and the woman. Prior to the thirty-fourth week, the woman is permitted six full or twelve half-days of paid leave in order to visit her physician. For one year after returning to work she is allowed one day per month of paid leave to take the child for examinations.

Divorce was also simplified in the new Family Code, allowing women to leave marriages that were detrimental to their development and that of their children. As a way of supporting divorced women, attempts have been made to ensure alimony payments and to make it possible for single parents to work by providing daycare services. Since the revolution, divorce rates have gone up significantly, with an increase for every hundred marriages went from 8.3 in 1958 to 36.1 in 1973, and this trend continues to the present. This pattern is, of course, a worldwide phenomenon, but according to the *2000 United Nations Demographic Yearbook* (see the following table), Cuban divorce rates, like those in the U.S., are among the highest in the world.

Legislation supportive of women and changes in their roles have occurred since the revolution, but these developments were not radical departures from prior law. Many prerevolutionary laws were "progressive," supporting women's rights and equality. The difference was that the revolutionary leadership attempted to make all

Countries with the Highest Divorce Rates in the World

Rank	Country	Divorces by 1000 inhabitants per year
1	Maldives	8.0 (1996)
2	Belarus	4.71 (1999)
3	U.S.A.	4.0 (2000) The lowest in two decades.
4	Isle of Man	3.61 (2000)
5	Cuba	3.39 (2000) Falling for at least four years.

Cubans aware of the law by public discussion and publicity. Though the FMC, especially its lower ranks, was probably active behind the scenes in pushing for the laws, it was moderate in its outlook. Unity and support of the revolution took precedence over emphasizing goals of equality which might be divisive. Espin saw the FMC as feminine, not feminist. The FMC has become a massive organization. It reported to the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations in February 2003 that it had more than 3,800,000 affiliated women organized in 76,000 grass-root organizations. Over the years its principal interest was in providing services for women, not in developing political "clout." It educated and trained women to prepare them to be a part of the workforce and emphasized the importance of the daycare centers to that end. The government, however, has been unable to keep up with the need.