

COMMONWEALTH BUREAU OF CENSUS AND STATISTICS
CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA

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SOCIAL STATISTICS : AUSTRALIA

NO. 34 : DIVORCE

QUARTER ENDED MARCH, 1965

<u>Table</u>	<u>CONTENTS</u>	<u>Page</u>
..	Explanatory Notes	2
	<u>I. PETITIONS FILED : DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE, NULLITY OF MARRIAGE AND JUDICIAL SEPARATION</u>	
1.	Petitions Filed : States, quarter ended March, 1965	3
2.	Petitions Filed : Australia, 1960 to March quarter, 1965	3
3.	Petitions Filed for Dissolution of Marriage : States, 1960 to March quarter, 1965	4
	<u>II. DECREES GRANTED : DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE, NULLITY OF MARRIAGE AND JUDICIAL SEPARATION</u>	
4.	Decrees Granted : States, quarter ended March, 1965	4
5.	Decrees Granted : Australia, 1960 to March quarter, 1965	5
6.	Dissolutions Granted : States, 1960 to March quarter, 1965	5
7.	Grounds on which Decrees were Granted : States, quarter ended March, 1965	6
8.	Dissolutions Granted : Ages of Parties at time of Dissolution, Australia, quarter ended March, 1965	7
9.	Dissolutions Granted : Duration of Marriage and Number of Children, Australia, quarter ended March, 1965.	7

EXPLANATORY NOTES

This bulletin contains statistics of divorce for the quarter ended March, 1965, and for previous periods. For further details in respect of past periods, see previous issues in this series and the annual bulletin "Demography".

2. Certain tables appearing in previous issues of this series and providing more detailed characteristics of divorces and divorced persons on a quarterly basis, will no longer be published in the quarterly issues. However, full details for each year will be published in a separate annual issue of the series. For 1964 details see "Social Statistics No. 33 Divorce, Quarter and Year Ended December, 1964", issued 24th August, 1965.

3. The Commonwealth Matrimonial Causes Act 1959 came into operation on 1st February, 1961. This Act provides a uniform law throughout Australia with respect to divorce and other matrimonial causes, and supersedes the Matrimonial Causes laws of the States and Territories except in so far as the transitional provisions of the Act keep them in force for the purpose of completing pending proceedings. Therefore, statistics of petitions filed since February, 1961, are on a uniform basis for all States and Territories, but statistics of decrees of dissolution, nullity and judicial separation granted since that date include some decrees made on petitions under the superseded laws and are to that extent not uniformly based. By 1965, the number of such decrees had dwindled to an insignificant number. Because of differences in legislation and also some variations from State to State in the bases of compilation of divorce statistics prior to the introduction of the uniform system, the figures for 1960 are not strictly comparable with those for later years.

4. Under the new legislation a court may grant decrees of dissolution of marriage (commonly known as divorce), judicial separation, nullity of marriage, restitution of conjugal rights and jactitation of marriage (i.e. that a person has falsely claimed to be another person's wife or husband). Orders may be made for the custody of children, the provision of maintenance, damages and the settlement of marriage property.

5. The statistics in this bulletin refer only to petitions filed and final decrees granted, for dissolution, nullity and judicial separation. Statistics of petitions filed relate only to the original petition in a suit, i.e. a cross-petition contained in an answer by the respondent is not taken as a separate petition.

I. PETITIONS FILED

TABLE 1. - PETITIONS FILED FOR DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE,

NULLITY OF MARRIAGE AND JUDICIAL SEPARATION : QUARTER ENDED MARCH, 1965

Petition for -	N.S.W.	Vic.	Q'ld.	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
Dissolution of Marriage -									
Husband Petitioner	413	249	154	84	107	41	9	16	1,073
Wife Petitioner	701	317	149	181	97	36	6	26	1,513
Total	1,114	566	303	265	204	77	15	42	2,586
Nullity of Marriage -									
Husband Petitioner	1	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	3
Wife Petitioner	4	3	..	1	..	..	..	..	8
Total	5	3	..	2	1	..	..	..	11
Dissolution or Nullity -									
Husband Petitioner	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Wife Petitioner	..	3	1	..	..	..	..	..	4
Total	..	4	1	..	..	..	..	..	5
Judicial Separation -									
Wife Petitioner	..	2	1	2	..	..	..	1	6
Total Petitions -									
Husband Petitioner No.	414	250	154	85	108	41	9	16	1,077
Per cent.	37	43	50	32	53	53	60	37	41
Wife Petitioner No.	705	325	151	184	97	36	6	27	1,531
Per cent.	63	57	50	68	47	47	40	63	59
TOTAL	1,119	575	305	269	205	77	15	43	2,608

TABLE 2. - PETITIONS FILED FOR DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE,

NULLITY OF MARRIAGE AND JUDICIAL SEPARATION : AUSTRALIA

Petition for -	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	Quarter ended -				
						March, 1964	June, 1964	Sept., 1964	Dec., 1964	March, 1965
Dissolution of Marriage -										
Husband Petitioner	3,709	4,394	4,072	4,000	4,215	954	1,115	1,046	1,100	1,073
Wife Petitioner	4,385	5,110	5,176	5,602	5,933	1,271	1,509	1,650	1,503	1,513
Total	8,094	9,504	9,248	9,602	10,148	2,225	2,624	2,696	2,603	2,586
Nullity of Marriage -										
Husband Petitioner	23	13	15	11	14	..	5	5	4	3
Wife Petitioner	32	44	35	28	30	8	6	6	10	8
Total	55	57	50	39	44	8	11	11	14	11
Dissolution or Nullity -										
Husband Petitioner	..	3	6	5	5	..	..	2	3	1
Wife Petitioner	..	4	5	10	12	3	1	5	3	4
Total	..	7	11	15	17	3	1	7	6	5
Judicial Separation -										
Husband Petitioner	7	2	2	3	..	..	..	..	..	..
Wife Petitioner	31	9	18	26	34	12	8	5	9	6
Total	38	11	20	29	34	12	8	5	9	6
Dissolution or Judicial Separation -										
Husband Petitioner	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Wife Petitioner	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..	..
Total	..	..	..	1	1	..	1	..	..	..
Total Petitions -										
Husband Petitioner No.	3,739	4,412	4,095	4,020	4,234	954	1,120	1,053	1,107	1,077
Per cent.	46	46	44	42	41	42	42	39	42	41
Wife Petitioner No.	4,448	5,167	5,234	5,666	6,010	1,294	1,525	1,666	1,525	1,531
Per cent.	54	54	56	58	59	58	58	61	58	59
TOTAL	8,187	9,579	9,329	9,686	10,244	2,248	2,645	2,719	2,632	2,608

TABLE 3. - PETITIONS FILED FOR DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE (a)

Period	N.S.W.	Vic.	Q'ld.	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
Year - 1960	3,746	1,798	863	791	560	274	26	46	8,094
1961	4,215	2,289	1,094	865	620	321	40	70	9,504
1962	4,093	2,148	1,083	910	651	276	39	48	9,248
1963	4,339	2,163	1,061	1,005	623	271	50	90	9,602
1964	4,484	2,357	1,121	1,034	653	322	53	124	10,148
Quarter ended -									
March, 1964	1,020	467	261	231	143	68	7	28	2,225
June, 1964	1,146	642	255	256	190	87	20	28	2,624
September, 1964	1,158	603	333	299	164	85	13	41	2,696
December, 1964	1,160	645	272	248	156	82	13	27	2,603
March, 1965	1,114	566	303	265	204	77	15	42	2,586

(a) This table excludes petitions filed for nullity of marriage, judicial separation and any petitions for two or more alternative types of relief.

II. DECREES GRANTED

TABLE 4. - DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE,
NULLITIES OF MARRIAGE AND JUDICIAL SEPARATIONS GRANTED (a):
QUARTER ENDED MARCH, 1965

Decree for -	N.S.W.	Vic.	Q'ld.	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
Dissolution of Marriage -									
Husband Petitioner	319	213	140	108	58	29	6	11	884
Wife Petitioner	463	263	166	149	88	31	4	21	1,185
Granted on Petitions of Both	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	2
Total	782	477	306	258	146	60	10	32	2,071
Nullity of Marriage -									
Wife Petitioner	1	2	..	1	..	..	..	..	4
Total Decrees -									
Husband Petitioner No.	319	213	140	108	58	29	6	11	884
Per cent.	41	45	46	42	40	48	60	34	43
Wife Petitioner No.	464	265	166	150	88	31	4	21	1,189
Per cent.	59	55	54	58	60	52	40	66	57
Granted on Petitions of Both No.	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	2
TOTAL	783	479	306	259	146	60	10	32	2,075

(a) Decrees absolute.

TABLE 5. - DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE, NULLITIES OF MARRIAGE
AND JUDICIAL SEPARATIONS GRANTED (a) : AUSTRALIA

Decree for	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	Quarter ended -				
						March, 1964	June, 1964	Sept., 1964	Dec., 1964	March, 1965
Dissolution of Marriage -										
Husband Petitioner	3,078	3,068	3,308	3,257	3,377	863	565	993	956	884
Wife Petitioner	3,555	3,643	3,935	4,216	4,536	1,124	743	1,287	1,382	1,185
Granted on Petitions of Both	..	1	2	3	4	1	2	1	..	2
Total	6,633	6,712	7,245	7,476	7,917	1,988	1,310	2,281	2,338	2,071
Nullity of Marriage -										
Husband Petitioner	26	15	12	7	11	3	2	2	4	..
Wife Petitioner	37	22	28	25	33	6	7	11	9	4
Total	63	37	40	32	44	9	9	13	13	4
Judicial Separation -										
Husband Petitioner	2	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Wife Petitioner	11	2	3	7	6	1	2	..	3	..
Total	13	2	5	7	6	1	2	..	3	..
Total Decrees -										
Husband Petitioner No.	3,106	3,083	3,322	3,264	3,388	866	567	995	960	884
Per cent.	46	46	46	43	43	43	43	43	41	43
Wife Petitioner No.	3,603	3,667	3,966	4,248	4,575	1,131	752	1,298	1,394	1,189
Per cent.	54	54	54	57	57	57	57	57	59	57
Granted on Petitions of Both	..	1	2	3	4	1	2	1	..	2
TOTAL	6,709	6,751	7,290	7,515	7,967	1,998	1,321	2,294	2,354	2,075

(a) Decrees absolute.

TABLE 6. - DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE GRANTED (a)

Period	N.S.W.	Vic.	Q'ld.	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
Year - 1960	3,243	1,296	696	610	540	210	5	33	6,633
1961	3,156	1,248	779	718	466	286	23	36	6,712
1962	3,113	1,615	920	685	582	248	38	44	7,245
1963	3,293	1,616	910	765	553	260	38	41	7,476
1964	3,024	2,130	981	887	542	229	31	93	7,917
Quarter ended -									
March, 1964	746	440	337	223	169	48	4	22	1,988
June, 1964	523	282	129	189	98	62	11	16	1,310
September, 1964	796	729	259	250	134	69	10	34	2,281
December, 1964	959	679	256	225	142	50	6	21	2,338
March, 1965	782	477	306	258	146	60	10	32	2,071

(a) Decrees absolute. This table excludes nullities of marriage and judicial separations granted.

TABLE 7. - GROUNDS ON WHICH DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE, NULLITIES OF MARRIAGE AND JUDICIAL SEPARATIONS WERE GRANTED (a) : QUARTER ENDED MARCH, 1965.

Ground	N.S.W.	Vic.	Q'ld.	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE									
Single grounds -									
Desertion	374	231	160	99	47	28	2	6	947
Adultery	189	130	65	53	43	16	4	14	514
Separation	117	100	64	53	42	10	1	..	387
Cruelty	37	5	4	31	5	..	1	2	85
Drunkenness	12	3	2	4	..	..	..	3	24
Failure to pay maintenance	..	..	..	1	3	..	..	..	4
Non-compliance with restitution decree	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
Refusal to consummate	1	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	3
Insanity	2	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	3
Frequent convictions	..	1	2	2	..	1	..	..	6
Dual grounds -									
Desertion and adultery	8	..	3	2	2	..	2	2	19
Desertion and separation	10	4	2	6	2	4	..	..	28
Desertion and cruelty	4	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	6
Desertion and drunkenness	2	..	..	2	..	..	..	1	5
Desertion and failure to pay maintenance	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	2
Adultery and cruelty	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	3
Cruelty and drunkenness	17	1	1	..	2	..	..	2	23
Other dual grounds	2	..	..	3	..	..	..	..	5
Three grounds or more	1	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	3
Total	782	477	306	258	146	60	10	32	2,071
NULLITY OF MARRIAGE									
Bigamy	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Incapacity to consummate	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	2
Total	1	2	..	1	..	..	..	..	4

(a) Decrees absolute.

JUDICIAL SEPARATION

NIL.

TABLE 8. - DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE GRANTED (a) : AGES OF PARTIES AT TIME OF DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE, AUSTRALIA, QUARTER ENDED MARCH, 1965

Age of Husband (Years)	Age of Wife (Years)											Total Husbands	
	Under 20	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60 and over	Not Stated	No.	Per cent
20-24	3	30	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	36	2
25-29	1	84	169	17	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	273	13
30-34	..	17	149	138	35	4	..	..	..	..	..	346	17
35-39	..	2	38	140	163	27	4	1	..	..	1	376	18
40-44	..	..	8	45	136	142	25	4	1	1	..	362	17
45-49	..	..	4	5	37	96	97	19	5	1	..	264	13
50-54	..	..	3	4	17	35	72	60	7	6	..	204	10
55-59	..	..	..	..	2	8	22	41	34	4	..	111	5
60 and over	..	..	..	..	3	4	8	18	16	46	1	96	5
Not stated	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	3	..
Total (No.)	4	133	376	349	395	316	231	143	63	58	3	2,071	..
Wives (%)	..	7	18	17	19	15	11	7	3	3	..	..	100

(a) Decrees absolute. This table excludes nullities of marriage and judicial separations granted.

TABLE 9. - DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE GRANTED (a) : DURATION OF MARRIAGE AND NUMBER OF CHILDREN OF MARRIAGE (b), AUSTRALIA, QUARTER ENDED MARCH, 1965

Duration of Marriage (Years)	Dissolutions of Marriage with -						Total Marriages Dissolved		Total Number of Children (b)
	No. Child-ren	1 Child	2 Child-ren	3 Child-ren	4 Child-ren	5 or more Children	No.	Per cent.	
Under 5	73	30	5	..	1	..	109	5	44
5 - 9	181	205	120	31	9	..	547	26	581
10 - 14	120	131	138	66	30	10	499	24	801
15 - 19	67	72	121	62	28	11	372	18	740
20 - 24	50	56	79	56	20	7	272	13	529
25 - 29	54	47	33	12	3	2	153	8	185
30 and over	85	19	12	1	1	..	119	6	56
Total (No.)	630	560	508	228	92	30	2,071	..	..
Marriages Dissolved (%)	30	27	25	11	5	1	100	..	..
Total Number of Children (b)	..	560	1,016	684	368	150	158	..	2,936

(a) Decrees absolute. This table excludes nullities of marriage and judicial separations granted. (b) Living children under 21 at time of petition. The term "children" used in the Commonwealth legislation refers to living "children of the marriage" under 21 years; but the table above includes a small number of dissolutions granted to petitions filed under old legislation in which the term "children" was used differently.

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COMMONWEALTH STATISTICIAN

COMMONWEALTH BUREAU OF CENSUS AND STATISTICS

CANBERRA, A.C.T. 2ND NOVEMBER, 1965.

NOTE: Inquiries concerning these statistics may be made in Canberra by telephoning 41971 Extension 71 or, in each State capital, by telephoning the office of the Bureau of Census and Statistics.