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DIVORCES, QUEENSLAND, 1988

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MAIN FEATURES

- During 1988, there were 7,690 divorces granted in Queensland, 11.2 per cent more than in the previous year. The crude divorce rate (divorces per 1,000 mean estimated resident population) also increased to 2.80 from the rate of 2.58 attained in 1987.
- The median duration of all marriages ending in divorce during 1988 was 10.4 years. This figure has shown little change in recent years, having been in the range between 10 and 11 years for each year since 1981. Similarly the median interval between marriage and final separation has ranged from 7 to 8 years over the same period. In 1988 the figure was 7.5 years.
- The median age of husbands who divorced in 1988 was 38.0 years (at the time of divorce) compared with 35.0 years for wives divorced in 1988. Median age at divorce has been increasing for several years. The tendency towards deferral of marriage by younger persons, and the growing proportions of people divorcing more than once, are contributing factors which have led to divorce at older ages.
- The proportion of second and further divorces has been increasing significantly over the last few years. Of those divorced in 1988, 15.9 per cent of males and 14.3 per cent of females had a marital status of divorced at the time of marriage. In 1978, the corresponding proportions for husbands and wives were much lower at 6.7 per cent and 6.8 per cent, respectively.
- There were 8,911 children, as defined by the *Family Law Act 1975*, who were dependants of persons divorcing in 1988, compared with 8,238 in 1987. The average number of children of couples divorced with children was 1.9 in 1988, a figure which has remained fairly steady over the last 10 years.

NOTES

This publication contains annual statistics of divorces granted in Queensland, supplementing those published in the national publication *Divorces* (Catalogue No. 3307.0). Similar publications are produced by other State Offices.

Explanatory Notes are located at the back of this publication.

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26 May 1989

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TABLE 1 - DIVORCES (a), QUEENSLAND

Particulars		1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
Divorces granted	No.	7,474	8,056	6,816	7,042	6,918	7,690
Median duration of marriage	years	10.95	10.61	10.57	10.71	10.29	10.39
Median interval between marriage and separation	years	7.93	7.73	7.55	7.56	7.39	7.52
Divorces involving children	No.	4,716	5,055	4,302	4,385	4,204	4,605
Proportion of total divorces	%	63.10	62.75	63.12	62.27	60.77	59.88
Average number of children	No.	2.00	1.99	2.00	1.93	1.96	1.94
Crude divorce rate (b)		3.01	3.19	2.65	2.68	2.58	2.80

(a) Including cases heard in Lismore (N.S.W.), numbering 139 in 1983, 233 in 1984, 305 in 1985, 345 in 1986, 371 in 1987 and 380 in 1988. (b) Number of divorces per 1,000 mean estimated resident population.

TABLE 2 - DIVORCES, QUEENSLAND

Particulars		1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
HUSBAND							
<i>Age-specific divorce rate (a)</i>							
Age group (years)							
Under 25		2.03	2.32	1.95	1.84	1.39	1.33
25-29		12.82	13.15	10.24	10.37	9.95	10.46
30-34		15.78	16.90	13.79	13.41	13.58	14.39
35-39		15.61	15.99	13.74	12.89	12.48	13.88
40-44		13.18	14.30	11.57	12.55	11.91	12.62
45-49		11.39	11.87	9.46	9.95	9.47	10.43
50-54		8.01	8.57	7.51	8.23	6.58	8.08
55 and over		3.07	3.14	2.69	2.67	2.64	2.80
<i>Marital status at marriage</i>							
Never married	No.	6,528	6,881	5,819	5,905	5,733	6,392
Widowed	No.	113	129	112	89	79	74
Divorced	No.	833	1,046	885	1,048	1,106	1,224
Median age at marriage	years	23.53	23.66	23.78	23.85	24.12	24.16
Median age at separation	years	33.84	34.04	34.27	34.66	34.77	35.04
Median age at divorce	years	36.65	36.75	37.15	37.62	37.71	37.99
WIFE							
<i>Age-specific divorce rate (a)</i>							
Age group (years)							
Under 25		4.49	4.75	3.78	3.73	3.34	3.18
25-29		16.75	17.11	14.24	13.86	13.48	14.46
30-34		15.75	17.42	13.98	13.93	13.47	14.62
35-39		14.98	15.28	12.72	12.34	12.17	13.51
40-44		12.32	13.53	10.69	11.28	10.41	11.27
45-49		9.45	9.78	8.19	9.25	8.17	8.60
50-54		5.54	5.82	5.23	5.39	4.78	5.66
55 and over		1.47	1.58	1.40	1.35	1.37	1.39
<i>Marital status at marriage</i>							
Never married	No.	6,539	6,896	5,819	5,942	5,808	6,469
Widowed	No.	133	154	127	108	94	123
Divorced	No.	802	1,006	870	992	1,016	1,098
Median age at marriage	years	20.84	21.05	21.13	21.25	21.48	21.57
Median age at separation	years	31.06	31.30	31.48	31.73	31.83	32.13
Median age at divorce	years	34.02	34.09	34.31	34.64	34.70	35.01

(a) The number of divorces, according to age, per 1,000 of the resident population of the same age and sex.

TABLE 3 - DIVORCES: RELATIVE AGES OF PARTIES AT MARRIAGE, QUEENSLAND, 1988

Age of husband (years)	Age of wife (years)									Total	Proportion (%)
	Under 20	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50 and over	Not stated		
Under 20	483	117	10	2	—	—	—	—	2	614	8.0
20-24	1,519	1,934	213	37	16	2	—	—	9	3,730	48.5
25-29	284	903	386	85	26	6	2	2	2	1,696	22.1
30-34	45	234	219	115	47	16	5	2	3	686	8.9
35-39	17	73	92	89	60	24	6	2	2	365	4.7
40-44	6	23	49	40	45	46	12	4	1	226	2.9
45-49	3	10	17	33	36	29	19	9	—	156	2.0
50 and over	3	9	10	12	28	30	39	70	4	205	2.7
Not stated	1	1	2	2	2	1	—	—	3	12	0.2
Total	2,361	3,304	998	415	260	154	83	89	26	7,690	100.0
Proportion	%	30.7	43.0	13.0	5.4	3.4	2.0	1.1	1.2	0.3	100.0

TABLE 4 - DIVORCES: RELATIVE AGES OF PARTIES AT DIVORCE, QUEENSLAND, 1988

Age of husband (years)	Age of wife (years)									Total	Proportion (%)
	Under 25	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55 and over	Not stated		
Under 25	169	34	7	4	—	—	—	—	—	214	2.8
25-29	382	698	100	18	13	1	—	—	3	1,215	15.8
30-34	69	665	663	107	26	5	3	2	1	1,541	20.0
35-39	16	160	540	603	101	25	4	2	5	1,456	18.9
40-44	6	53	169	477	473	63	7	5	4	1,257	16.3
45-49	1	11	48	121	319	249	37	10	1	797	10.4
50-54	—	12	16	47	89	177	141	26	3	511	6.6
55 and over	5	7	7	25	49	97	146	345	7	688	8.9
Not stated	1	1	3	1	3	—	—	—	2	11	0.1
Total	649	1,641	1,553	1,403	1,073	617	338	390	26	7,690	100.0
Proportion	%	8.4	21.3	20.2	18.2	14.0	8.0	4.4	5.1	0.3	100.0

TABLE 5 - DIVORCES: MARITAL STATUS OF PARTIES AT MARRIAGE BY DURATION OF MARRIAGE, QUEENSLAND, 1988

Duration of marriage (years)	Marital status of husband				Marital status of wife			
	Never married	Widowed	Divorced	Total	Never married	Widowed	Divorced	Total
1	41	4	27	72	47	3	22	72
2	253	8	100	361	261	13	87	361
3	359	4	101	464	350	11	103	464
4	396	8	114	518	416	4	98	518
5	414	7	123	544	415	13	116	544
6	422	6	122	550	452	6	92	550
7	354	2	95	451	344	5	102	451
8	300	5	100	405	308	5	92	405
9	274	8	80	362	284	8	70	362
10-14	1,104	10	224	1,338	1,110	24	204	1,338
15-19	1,045	7	83	1,135	1,054	13	68	1,135
20 and over	1,429	5	55	1,489	1,427	18	44	1,489
Not stated	1	—	—	1	1	—	—	1
Total	6,392	74	1,224	7,690	6,469	123	1,098	7,690

TABLE 6 - DIVORCES: NUMBER OF CHILDREN BY DURATION OF MARRIAGE, QUEENSLAND, 1988

TABLE 6 - DIVORCES: NUMBER OF CHILDREN BY DURATION OF MARRIAGE									
Duration of marriage (years)	Number of children of marriage					Total divorces		Total children	
	None	1	2	3	4 or more	Number	Proportion (%)	Number	Proportion (%)
1	56	9	3	2	2	72	0.9	29	0.3
2	265	74	17	2	3	361	4.7	126	1.4
3	309	98	45	9	3	464	6.0	232	2.6
4	299	127	79	12	1	518	6.7	325	3.6
5	275	150	86	27	6	544	7.1	432	4.8
6	250	134	124	32	10	550	7.2	520	5.8
7	167	103	139	32	10	451	5.9	518	5.8
8	139	89	131	39	7	405	5.3	498	5.6
9	104	67	144	36	11	362	4.7	511	5.7
10-14	292	218	536	211	81	1,338	17.4	2,268	25.5
15-19	116	187	481	248	103	1,135	14.8	2,330	26.1
20 and over	812	368	217	63	29	1,489	19.4	1,122	12.6
Not stated	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Total	3,085	1,624	2,002	713	266	7,690	100.0	8,911	100.0

EXPLANATORY NOTES

General

The *Family Law Act 1975* came into operation throughout Australia on 5 January 1976, repealing the Matrimonial Causes legislation which had been operative since 1961. Under this legislation the irretrievable breakdown of the marriage is the only ground on which a dissolution of marriage is granted. This ground is established by the husband and wife having lived apart for 12 months or more and there being no reasonable likelihood of reconciliation. Applications for nullity of marriage must be on the ground that the marriage is void because of a failure to meet a legal requirement, such as that neither party be already lawfully married to another person. There is no provision for judicial separation.

2. Successful applicants for a decree of dissolution of marriage are initially granted a decree nisi. This becomes absolute after 1 month unless it is rescinded, appealed against or the Court has not declared its satisfaction as to proper arrangements having been made for the welfare of children involved.

3. The statistics shown in this publication relate to calendar years and are compiled by the ABS from a statistical report completed by the Family Court in respect of each application which resulted in a decree absolute being granted. These reports are used by the ABS as input documents for computer processing after finalisation of court proceedings.

Definitions

4. Users requiring more detail than is shown in this publication should refer to *Demography* (Catalogue No. 3101.3). This publication contains detailed definitions of demographic terms.

Limitations of the Data

5. In the interpretation of divorces data it is important to bear in mind that the availability of judges and the complexity of the cases brought before them can affect the number of decrees made absolute or granted in any one year. A rise in numbers in one year may be due wholly or in part to the clearing of a backlog of cases from an earlier period.

6. The number of divorces shown is dependent on the number of cases heard in the Family Courts in Queensland. As there is no residential requirement under the legislation, applicants may be resident anywhere in Australia.

7. There are two registries in Queensland, one located in Brisbane and the other in Townsville. The Brisbane

Registry of the Family Court also arranges circuit courts from Brisbane to conduct hearings in Lismore in New South Wales and these divorces are included in the Queensland figures.

Related Publications

8. Users may also wish to refer to the following publications, which are available on request:

- Australian Demographic Statistics* (3101.0) - Quarterly (\$5.00)
- Divorces, Australia* (3307.0) - Latest issue: 1987 (\$5.00)
- Marriages, Queensland* (3304.3) - Latest issue: 1987 (\$5.00)
- Marriages, Australia* (3306.0) - Latest issue: 1987 (\$5.00)
- Demography, Queensland* (3101.3) - Latest issue: 1982; next issue: 1988 which will be released in early 1990.

9. Current publications produced by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications and Products* (Catalogue No. 1101.0) and those produced by the Queensland Office are listed in *List of Publications* (Catalogue No. 1101.3). A *Publications Advice* (Catalogue No. 1105.0) is issued on Tuesdays and Fridays which lists publications to be released in the next few days. These publications are available from any ABS Office.

Unpublished Statistics

10. The ABS can make available certain statistics on divorces which are not published. Where it is not practicable to provide the required statistics by telephone, they may be available in other forms, such as microfiche, photocopy, computer printout or clerically extracted tabulation. A charge may be made for providing unpublished statistics in these forms.

11. For further information on these unpublished statistics contact Ron Casey by telephoning Brisbane (07) 222 6068, or write to Information Services, Australian Bureau of Statistics, G.P.O. Box 9817, Brisbane, Q. 4001.

Symbols and Other Usages

- Not applicable.
- Nil or less than half the final digit shown.

12. Where figures have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

