



**Australian
Bureau of
Statistics**

**1988
Divorces
Australia**

CATALOGUE NO. 3307.0

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**DIVORCES
AUSTRALIA
1988**

IAN CASTLES
Australian Statistician

AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS

CATALOGUE NO. 3307.0

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CONTENTS

<i>Table</i>	<i>Page</i>
.. Summary of Findings	1
1. Divorces: States and Territories, 1956 to 1988	3
2. Divorces: Crude divorce rates per 1,000 population, States and Territories, 1956 to 1988	3
3. Divorces: Age-specific divorce rates per 1,000 married population, Australia, 1976, 1981 to 1988	3
4. Divorces: Ages of parties at date of marriage, percentage distribution, Australia, 1983 to 1988	4
5. Divorces: Relative ages of parties at date of marriage, Australia, 1988	4
6. Divorces: Ages of parties at date decree made absolute, percentage distribution, Australia, 1983 to 1988	4
7. Divorces: Relative ages of parties at date decree made absolute, Australia, 1988	5
8. Divorces: Marital status of parties at date of marriage, percentage distribution, Australia, 1983 to 1988	5
9. Divorces: Median duration (years) of marriage and marital status of parties at date of marriage, Australia, 1983 to 1988	5
10. Divorces: Marital status of parties at date of marriage and duration (years) of marriage, Australia, 1988	5
11. Divorces: Percentage distribution and median duration (years) between date of marriage and date decree made absolute, and between date of marriage and date of final separation preceding divorce, Australia, 1983 to 1988	6
12. Divorces: Age at marriage and duration (years) of marriage, Australia, 1988	6
13. Divorces: Ages of parties at date of final separation and duration (years) of marriage between date of marriage and date of final separation, Australia, 1988	7
14. Divorces: Ages of parties at date decree made absolute and duration (years) of marriage, Australia, 1988	8
15. Divorces: Relative birthplaces of parties, Australia, 1988	9
16. Divorces: Percentage distribution of the number of children of the marriage and average number of children of parties, Australia, 1983 to 1988	10
17. Divorces: Number of children of the marriage, average number of children and duration (years) of marriage, Australia, 1988	10
.. Explanatory Notes	11

APPENDICES

A. List of divorce tables produced annually	13
B. Family Court of Australia Statistical Report	14

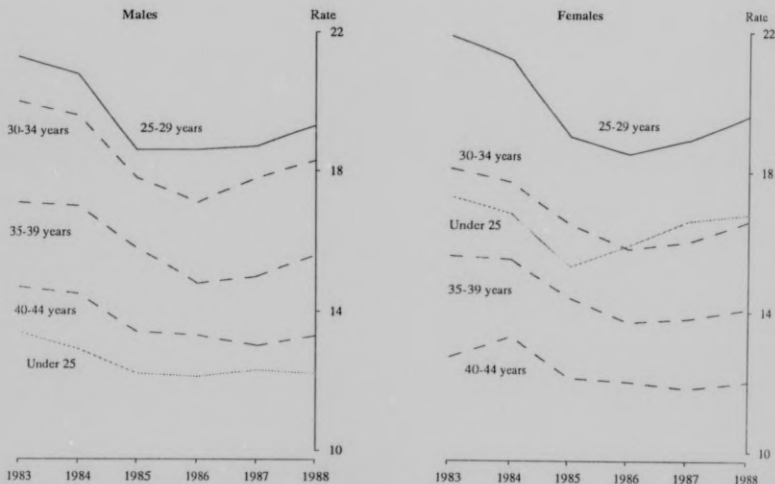
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

In 1988 there were 41,007 divorces granted throughout Australia. This is a 3% increase from 1987 (39,725).

Age specific divorce rates

Age and marital status specific divorce rates (per 1,000 married males or females) have shown only small changes from 1987. For males, the oldest (60 years and over) and youngest (under 25 years) groups have continued a slow decline, while all the other groups showed an increase on last year. The greatest change was in the 30-34 age group where the rate increased by 4.0%. For females, only the oldest (60 years and over) showed a fall in the divorce rate while all other age groups registered increases. Women in the 25-29 years and 30-34 years age groups showed the greatest increases of 3.7% and 3.8% respectively. The divorce rate was highest at ages 25-29, at 19.3 per 1,000 married males and 19.6 per 1,000 married females. The overall marital divorce rate rose slightly as did the crude divorce rate.

AGE AND MARITAL STATUS SPECIFIC DIVORCE RATES FOR MALES AND FEMALES,
AUSTRALIA: SELECTED AGE GROUPS
(Per 1,000 married males/females population)



Age at divorce and duration of marriage

The median ages at divorce in 1988 of males and females were 37.6 years and 34.8 years respectively, representing small increases of 0.1 years compared with 1986 and 1987. The median age at marriage of divorcing persons has continued to increase, in line with a general increase in the age at marriage in the population. In 1988, it was 24.4 years for husbands and 21.8 years for wives, again representing small increases compared with the previous 2 years.

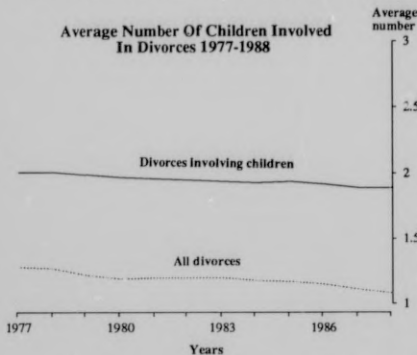
The median duration of marriage ending in divorce in 1988 was 10.1 years, a decrease from 10.6 years in 1986 and 10.2 years in 1987.

Children involved in divorces

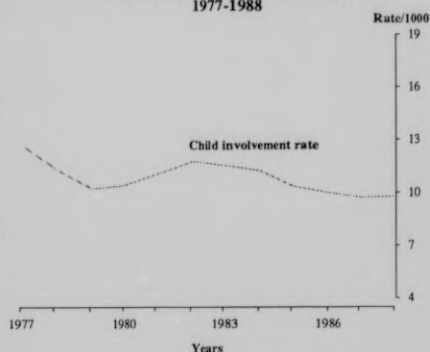
There were 44,400 children who were dependents of persons divorcing in 1988. The average number of children involved in divorces has remained relatively stable for the last few years at 1.9 children per divorce involving one or more children. However, the percentage of divorces which involve children has continued to fall from a high of 63.7% involving children in 1977 to the current level of 57.5% of all divorces.

The child involvement rate (the number of children under 18 years involved in divorces per 1,000 population under 18 years) in 1979 was 10.2 children per 1,000 involved in divorces. This rate rose to 11.8 in 1982 and since then steadily declined to 9.7 in 1987. In 1988, the rate was 9.8 per 1,000.

Average Number Of Children Involved In Divorces 1977-1988



Child Involvement Rate For Divorces 1977-1988



Persons divorcing with no children, tend to have married at a later age than those with children, as the median age of marriage for both males and females in this category is higher than for those with children. However, the median age at divorce does not differ as much between the two groups. In 1988, median durations for marriages were much shorter for those without children, 6.9 years compared with 12.0 years for those with children.

		Divorces with children	Divorces without children
			Years
Median age at divorce	M	35.6	37.6
	F	34.9	34.5
Median age at marriage	M	23.7	25.4
	F	21.2	22.8
Median duration of marriage		12.0	6.9
Divorces where:			Per cent
marriage lasted less than 7 years		52.3	23.1
marriage lasted less than 10 years		62.5	39.8
both partners never previously married		79.7	72.4
both partners previously married		5.6	9.8

TABLE 1. DIVORCES : STATES AND TERRITORIES (a) , 1956 TO 1988

	N.S.W.	Vic.	Old	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T. (b)	Australia
Annual averages -									
1956 - 1960	3,185	1,491	716	538	549	197	15	29	6,720
1961 - 1965	3,205	1,740	928	781	549	260	34	70	7,568
1966 - 1970	4,936	2,299	1,197	963	787	324	39	136	10,681
1971 - 1975	7,548	4,028	1,869	1,491	1,546	488	76	302	17,348
1976 - 1980	15,556	11,395	7,008	4,473	3,730	1,295	324	1,440	45,220
1981 - 1985	13,597	10,377	7,117	4,284	3,851	1,249	352	1,569	42,396
Annual totals -									
1983	14,023	10,663	7,474	4,451	3,822	1,359	371	1,382	43,525
1984	13,203	10,501	(c)8,056	4,114	4,069	1,185	325	1,671	43,124
1985	11,871	9,688	(c)6,816	4,216	4,039	1,169	301	1,730	39,830
1986	11,661	9,670	(c)7,042	3,776	4,001	1,245	381	1,641	39,417
1987	12,044	9,626	(c)6,918	4,050	4,044	1,115	328	1,600	39,725
1988	11,880	10,250	(c)7,690	4,031	3,964	1,220	275	1,697	41,007

(a) Figures relate to dissolutions only. See paragraph 7 of the Explanatory Notes. (b) Many divorces registered in the A.C.T. are to applicants normally resident in areas adjacent to the A.C.T. See footnote (b) of Table 2. (c) Includes 233 divorces heard in Lismore (N.S.W.) but registered in Queensland in 1984, 305 in 1985, 345 in 1986, 371 in 1987 and 380 in 1988. See paragraph 6 of the Explanatory Notes.

TABLE 2. DIVORCES : CRUDE DIVORCE RATES (a) PER 1,000 POPULATION, STATES AND TERRITORIES, 1956 TO 1988

	N.S.W.	Vic.	Old	S.A.	W.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T. (b)	Australia
Annual averages -									
1956 - 1960	0.9	0.6	0.5	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.7
1961 - 1965	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.8	1.0	0.7
1966 - 1970	1.1	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.6	1.2	0.9
1971 - 1975	1.6	1.1	1.0	1.2	1.4	1.2	0.8	1.7	1.3
1976 - 1980	3.1	3.0	3.2	3.4	3.1	3.1	3.1	6.7	3.2
1981 - 1985	2.5	2.6	2.9	3.2	2.8	2.9	2.6	6.6	2.8
Annual totals -									
1983	2.6	2.6	3.0	3.3	2.8	3.1	2.7	5.8	2.8
1984	2.4	2.6	(c)3.2	3.0	2.9	2.7	2.3	6.8	2.8
1985	2.2	2.4	(c)2.7	3.1	2.9	2.7	2.1	6.8	2.5
1986	2.1	2.3	(c)2.7	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.6	6.2	2.5
1987	2.1	2.3	(c)2.6	2.9	2.7	2.5	2.1	6.0	2.4
1988	2.1	2.4	(c)2.8	2.9	2.6	2.7	1.8	6.2	2.5

(a) Rates relate to dissolutions only. See paragraph 7 of the Explanatory Notes. (b) The crude divorce rate for the A.C.T. is not a statistically accurate reflection of the extent of divorce among A.C.T. residents. In 1988, 40% of divorces granted in the A.C.T. were to applicants normally resident in the A.C.T. The corresponding figures for 1984, 1985, 1986 and 1987 were 53%, 44%, 44% and 45% respectively. (c) See footnote (c) in Table 1 above.

TABLE 3. DIVORCES : AGE AND MARITAL STATUS SPECIFIC DIVORCE RATES PER 1,000 MARRIED POPULATION (a), AUSTRALIA, 1976, 1981 TO 1988

	Age group (years)									
	Under 25 (b)	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60 and over	Total
HUSBAND										
Census years										
1976	17.9	31.6	28.8	23.9	21.2	18.6	15.0	11.1	5.0	18.9
1981	13.8	22.4	18.9	16.2	13.5	10.9	8.3	5.4	2.3	11.9
Annual totals										
1983	13.4	21.3	20.0	17.1	14.7	11.6	8.5	5.7	2.4	12.2
1984	12.9	20.8	19.6	17.0	14.5	11.7	8.3	6.0	2.4	12.0
1985	12.2	18.6	17.8	15.8	13.4	10.7	7.7	5.6	2.1	10.9
1986	12.1	18.6	17.1	14.8	13.3	11.1	8.3	5.4	2.1	10.7
1987	12.3	18.7	17.8	15.0	13.0	10.8	7.8	5.1	2.1	10.6
1988	12.2	19.3	18.3	15.6	13.3	11.0	8.0	5.2	2.0	10.8
WIFE										
Census years										
1976	22.7	31.4	26.9	22.0	19.2	16.0	12.6	8.8	4.0	18.8
1981	18.0	22.0	16.9	14.7	11.8	8.9	6.2	4.1	1.7	11.9
Annual totals										
1983	17.3	21.9	18.1	15.6	12.7	9.7	6.4	4.1	1.8	12.2
1984	16.8	21.2	17.7	15.5	13.3	9.7	6.1	4.0	1.8	11.9
1985	15.3	19.0	16.5	14.4	12.1	9.0	5.7	3.8	1.6	10.9
1986	15.9	18.5	15.8	13.7	12.0	9.5	6.0	3.7	1.5	10.6
1987	16.6	18.9	16.0	13.8	11.8	9.2	5.7	3.5	1.5	10.6
1988	16.8	19.6	16.6	14.1	12.0	9.4	5.7	3.6	1.4	10.8

(a) Per 1,000 married men and women respectively, as at 30 June for each year shown. (b) For the purpose of calculating rates in this column, married persons aged between 15 and 24 have been included in the denominator.

TABLE 4. DIVORCES : AGE OF PARTIES AT DATE OF MARRIAGE, PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION, AUSTRALIA, 1983 TO 1988

	Age group (years)								Total number	Median age
	Under 20	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50 and over		
	HUSBAND									
1983	9.3	52.0	21.7	7.9	3.5	2.0	1.2	2.0	43,525	23.7
1984	8.9	50.7	22.1	8.3	3.9	2.4	1.4	2.0	43,124	23.9
1985	8.2	50.3	22.7	8.5	4.1	2.2	1.5	2.2	39,830	24.0
1986	7.6	49.0	23.0	9.3	4.5	2.3	1.7	2.2	39,417	24.2
1987	7.3	48.0	23.9	9.6	4.5	2.6	1.6	2.3	39,725	24.3
1988	6.9	47.7	24.2	9.5	4.8	2.7	1.7	2.4	41,007	24.4
	WIFE									
1983	35.0	43.9	10.9	4.4	2.2	1.4	0.8	1.1	43,525	21.1
1984	33.4	43.7	11.6	4.9	2.5	1.6	0.8	1.1	43,124	21.3
1985	31.9	44.0	12.1	5.3	2.7	1.5	0.9	1.2	39,830	21.4
1986	30.5	44.2	12.7	5.5	2.9	1.5	0.9	1.2	39,417	21.6
1987	28.8	44.7	13.5	5.8	3.2	1.6	1.0	1.1	39,725	21.7
1988	27.4	45.2	13.8	6.1	3.3	1.8	0.9	1.2	41,007	21.8

TABLE 5. DIVORCES: RELATIVE AGES OF PARTIES AT DATE OF MARRIAGE, AUSTRALIA, 1988

Age group of husband (years)	Age of wife (years)									Not stated	Total
	Under 20	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55 and over		
Under 20	2,200	544	56	12	4	—	—	—	—	9	2,825
20-24	7,226	10,866	1,116	236	58	12	—	—	—	45	19,562
25-29	1,461	5,244	2,433	544	166	40	14	—	—	24	9,929
30-34	231	1,300	1,245	724	251	89	21	5	3	12	3,881
35-39	69	356	490	506	344	139	26	12	—	8	1,951
40-44	23	117	190	248	250	179	60	19	7	8	1,101
45-49	9	55	68	127	140	142	79	43	14	3	680
50-54	3	23	22	48	67	69	91	65	26	5	419
55-59	3	9	11	20	32	41	44	41	47	5	253
60 and over	—	9	8	17	14	26	37	43	148	—	305
Not stated	26	22	10	16	10	7	—	3	—	5	101
Total	11,252	18,545	5,649	2,498	1,336	744	374	235	248	126	41,007

TABLE 6. DIVORCES : AGE OF PARTIES AT DATE DECREE MADE ABSOLUTE, PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION, AUSTRALIA, 1983 TO 1988

	Age group (years)									Total number (a)	Median age
	Under 25	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60 and over		
	MALE										
1983	4.2	18.0	21.9	19.0	13.1	8.9	6.3	4.1	4.1	43,525	36.3
1984	3.9	17.5	21.3	19.5	13.4	9.3	6.2	4.4	4.2	43,124	36.7
1985	3.7	16.8	20.7	20.1	14.0	10.0	6.1	4.5	4.3	39,830	37.2
1986	3.4	16.8	19.9	19.4	14.6	10.3	6.6	4.4	4.4	39,417	37.5
1987	3.1	16.4	20.7	19.2	15.3	10.2	6.3	4.0	4.6	39,725	37.5
1988	2.7	16.1	20.7	19.2	16.0	10.3	6.4	4.0	4.3	41,007	37.6
	FEMALE										
1983	11.4	22.9	21.0	17.1	10.8	7.0	4.4	2.7	2.5	43,525	33.7
1984	10.6	22.2	20.7	17.6	11.8	7.3	4.2	2.7	2.6	43,124	34.1
1985	9.9	21.5	20.8	18.3	12.0	7.5	4.2	2.8	2.6	39,830	34.4
1986	9.8	21.2	20.2	18.1	12.5	8.2	4.5	2.6	2.5	39,417	34.7
1987	9.2	21.4	20.5	17.9	13.2	8.1	4.3	2.5	2.6	39,725	34.7
1988	8.3	21.6	20.8	17.8	13.8	8.3	4.2	2.4	2.4	41,007	34.8

(a) Includes persons with age at date decree made absolute Not Stated.

TABLE 7. DIVORCES: RELATIVE AGES OF PARTIES AT DATE DECREE MADE ABSOLUTE, AUSTRALIA, 1988

Males age groups in years	Females, age groups in years											
	Under 25	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65 and over	Not stated	Total
Under 25	832	224	49	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	1,125
25-29	1,941	3,906	576	135	42	7	3	—	—	—	9	6,619
30-34	465	3,473	3,730	608	151	36	12	—	—	—	17	8,495
35-39	96	839	2,991	3,241	534	120	25	8	—	—	18	7,874
40-44	39	254	819	2,415	2,538	382	57	24	—	—	14	6,542
45-49	11	60	214	614	1,689	1,392	189	36	14	—	15	4,236
50-54	4	43	82	167	452	998	701	114	41	6	11	2,619
55-59	5	24	23	65	156	300	523	398	90	25	13	1,622
60-64	3	7	13	31	51	84	150	292	245	62	12	950
65 and over	3	5	6	14	33	55	71	120	186	325	7	825
Not stated	12	13	17	15	14	10	7	3	3	—	4	100
Total	3,411	8,848	8,520	7,315	5,662	3,386	1,738	997	581	423	126	41,007

TABLE 8. DIVORCES: MARITAL STATUS OF PARTIES AT DATE OF MARRIAGE, PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION, AUSTRALIA, 1983 TO 1988

	Husband				Wife			
	Never married	Widowed	Divorced	Total number (a)	Never married	Widowed	Divorced	Total number (a)
1983	87.3	1.3	11.4	43,525	87.5	1.7	10.9	43,525
1984	86.3	1.4	12.3	43,124	86.4	1.6	12.0	43,124
1985	85.3	1.8	13.0	39,830	85.8	1.9	12.3	39,830
1986	84.4	1.3	14.3	39,417	84.8	1.6	13.5	39,417
1987	83.8	1.2	15.0	39,725	84.6	1.4	14.0	39,725
1988	83.6	1.0	15.3	41,007	84.2	1.4	14.4	41,007

(a) Includes marital status Not Stated.

TABLE 9. DIVORCES: MEDIAN DURATION (YEARS) OF MARRIAGE AND MARITAL STATUS OF PARTIES AT DATE OF MARRIAGE, AUSTRALIA, 1983 TO 1988

	Husband				Wife			
	Never married	Widowed	Divorced	Total number (a)	Never married	Widowed	Divorced	Total number (a)
1983	11.5	6.8	5.8	10.6	11.4	7.1	6.2	10.6
1984	11.6	6.8	6.1	10.6	11.5	7.3	6.1	10.6
1985	11.8	6.6	6.3	10.6	11.7	7.2	6.5	10.6
1986	11.9	6.6	6.6	10.6	11.8	7.4	6.7	10.6
1987	11.5	6.8	6.7	10.2	11.4	7.1	6.8	10.2
1988	11.3	6.7	6.8	10.1	11.3	8.4	6.9	10.1

(a) Includes marital status Not Stated.

TABLE 10. DIVORCES: MARITAL STATUS OF PARTIES AT DATE OF MARRIAGE AND DURATION OF MARRIAGE, AUSTRALIA, 1988

Duration of marriage (years)	Husband				Wife			
	Never married	Widowed	Divorced	Total	Never married	Widowed	Divorced	Total
1 and under	357	11	158	526	361	17	148	526
2	1,751	55	597	2,403	1,787	66	550	2,403
3	2,205	41	654	2,900	2,224	43	633	2,900
4	2,266	49	627	2,942	2,314	45	583	2,942
5	2,172	35	606	2,813	2,203	51	559	2,813
6	2,070	27	566	2,663	2,131	31	501	2,663
7	1,764	19	465	2,248	1,756	27	465	2,248
8	1,561	23	436	2,020	1,593	36	391	2,020
9	1,357	28	391	1,776	1,370	33	373	1,776
10-14	5,891	65	1,142	7,098	5,859	112	1,127	7,098
15-19	5,405	33	365	5,803	5,409	63	331	5,803
20-24	3,640	18	152	3,810	3,659	28	123	3,810
25-29	2,008	8	68	2,084	2,006	13	65	2,084
30 and over	1,851	9	60	1,920	1,846	19	55	1,920
Not stated	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	34,299	421	6,287	41,007	34,519	584	5,904	41,007

TABLE 11. DIVORCES: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION AND MEDIAN DURATION (YEARS) BETWEEN DATE OF MARRIAGE AND DATE DECREE MADE ABSOLUTE, AND BETWEEN DATE OF MARRIAGE AND DATE OF FINAL SEPARATION PRECEDING DIVORCE, AUSTRALIA, 1983 TO 1988

	Duration of marriage (years)							Total number (a)	Median duration (years)
	Under 5	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30 and over		
Interval between date of marriage and date decree made absolute									
1983 r	20.3	26.9	20.5	13.3	8.6	5.4	5.0	43,525	10.6
1984 r	20.8	26.6	19.6	13.8	8.8	5.2	5.1	43,124	10.6
1985 r	21.2	26.4	18.7	14.1	9.2	5.2	5.1	39,830	10.6
1986	21.7	26.2	17.8	14.3	9.4	5.6	4.9	39,417	10.6
1987 r	22.1	26.9	17.3	14.4	9.2	5.2	4.9	39,725	10.2
1988	21.4	28.1	17.3	14.2	9.3	5.1	4.7	41,007	10.1
Interval between date of marriage and date of final separation									
1983 r	35.9	23.4	17.1	11.0	6.9	3.4	2.2	43,525	7.8
1984 r	36.4	22.8	16.9	11.1	6.8	3.5	2.3	43,124	7.8
1985 r	36.6	22.3	16.7	11.6	6.9	3.5	2.5	39,830	7.7
1986	37.6	21.5	16.0	11.7	7.2	3.7	2.3	39,417	7.6
1987 r	38.3	21.7	15.4	11.8	7.1	3.4	2.3	39,725	7.3
1988	38.5	22.1	15.1	11.8	6.8	3.4	2.4	41,007	7.3

(a) Includes Not Stated duration of marriage.

TABLE 12. DIVORCES: AGE AT MARRIAGE AND DURATION (YEARS) OF MARRIAGE, AUSTRALIA, 1988

Duration of marriage (years)	Age group (years)										Total	
	Under 20	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60 and over		Not stated
HUSBAND												
1 and under	14	133	132	73	53	34	27	14	12	27	7	526
2	55	811	617	325	199	109	89	60	46	80	12	2,403
3	105	1,060	798	351	241	115	83	58	32	45	12	2,900
4	132	1,155	799	337	206	117	75	50	28	30	4	2,942
5	118	1,189	727	347	190	94	64	31	25	29	9	2,813
6	130	1,102	714	335	152	98	60	30	19	18	5	2,663
7	117	977	568	257	137	81	53	24	16	14	4	2,248
8	129	869	512	228	108	78	38	28	17	7	6	2,020
9	100	775	446	199	115	45	34	28	13	17	4	1,776
10-14	630	3,489	1,605	669	286	183	104	63	31	23	15	7,098
15-19	564	3,422	1,189	339	119	82	38	25	9	5	11	5,803
20-24	388	2,271	821	185	81	38	16	5	—	—	—	3,810
25-29	193	1,182	515	131	36	18	5	—	—	—	—	2,084
30 and over	150	1,127	486	105	28	9	4	—	—	—	7	1,920
Not stated	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	2,825	19,562	9,929	3,881	1,951	1,101	680	419	253	305	101	41,007
WIFE												
1 and under	63	181	92	69	40	30	11	17	7	10	6	526
2	335	943	485	238	136	99	58	41	24	36	8	2,403
3	472	1,228	521	288	152	108	57	31	14	17	12	2,900
4	534	1,329	476	243	167	91	47	23	12	13	7	2,942
5	561	1,271	451	240	143	64	32	23	10	11	7	2,813
6	528	1,222	451	214	131	62	18	12	8	7	10	2,663
7	502	1,007	383	147	100	51	21	16	10	7	4	2,248
8	509	867	312	154	72	50	23	17	3	6	7	2,020
9	478	743	270	127	69	39	23	12	9	5	—	1,776
10-14	2,357	2,919	982	445	186	89	58	27	11	14	10	7,098
15-19	2,117	2,817	550	161	67	33	18	11	7	5	17	5,803
20-24	1,416	1,967	294	68	30	13	6	5	—	—	9	3,810
25-29	747	1,075	166	49	26	7	—	—	—	—	13	2,084
30 and over	633	976	216	55	17	8	—	—	—	—	14	1,920
Not stated	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	11,252	18,545	5,649	2,498	1,336	744	374	235	117	131	126	41,007

TABLE 13. DIVORCES: AGE OF PARTIES AT DATE OF FINAL SEPARATION AND DURATION OF MARRIAGE BETWEEN DATE OF MARRIAGE AND DATE OF FINAL SEPARATION, AUSTRALIA, 1988

Duration of marriage (years)	Age group (years)										Total	
	Under 20	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60 and over		Not stated
HUSBAND												
Under 1	76	886	792	422	285	152	141	77	63	102	34	3,030
1	38	1,078	1,209	559	308	177	92	73	40	75	14	3,663
2	3	761	1,315	592	271	161	100	76	29	66	8	3,382
3	—	433	1,338	598	274	160	97	53	31	38	8	3,032
4	—	235	1,179	619	302	158	87	52	26	34	5	2,698
5	—	87	939	623	286	145	79	57	26	32	8	2,282
6	—	18	731	618	283	118	80	40	31	29	4	1,952
7	—	5	527	619	296	124	77	32	34	34	5	1,753
8	—	—	332	671	293	129	62	41	28	30	—	1,586
9	—	—	189	688	323	121	77	36	19	18	—	1,473
10-14	—	—	128	2,338	2,448	736	265	116	65	85	7	6,188
15-19	—	—	—	83	1,968	1,923	567	148	74	64	—	4,829
20-24	—	—	—	—	81	1,112	1,104	341	92	48	—	2,779
25-29	—	—	—	—	—	33	542	591	169	56	—	1,391
30 and over	—	—	—	—	—	—	9	223	390	343	—	967
Not stated	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	120	3,503	8,679	8,430	7,418	5,249	3,379	1,957	1,117	1,054	101	41,007
WIFE												
Under 1	348	1,120	597	355	223	137	83	65	33	37	32	3,030
1	241	1,643	840	399	238	120	74	41	20	37	10	3,663
2	81	1,478	965	348	209	141	71	33	20	30	6	3,382
3	21	1,168	1,025	383	190	126	61	25	20	8	5	3,032
4	5	773	1,095	393	207	110	62	22	14	12	5	2,698
5	—	418	1,089	390	176	94	56	19	15	16	7	2,282
6	—	206	971	420	157	94	43	34	13	8	6	1,952
7	—	76	858	455	169	87	45	22	21	18	—	1,753
8	—	21	734	456	178	94	40	28	13	19	3	1,586
9	—	4	569	534	191	87	45	23	10	5	5	1,473
10-14	—	—	689	3,355	1,466	387	154	47	33	39	16	6,188
15-19	—	—	—	553	2,836	1,102	206	74	27	19	11	4,829
20-24	—	—	—	—	404	1,624	595	107	24	19	6	2,779
25-29	—	—	—	—	—	200	829	265	62	26	9	1,391
30 and over	—	—	—	—	—	—	66	350	326	223	—	967
Not stated	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	698	6,909	9,433	8,041	6,644	4,403	2,430	1,155	651	516	127	41,007

TABLE 14. DIVORCES: AGE OF PARTIES AT DATE DECREE MADE ABSOLUTE AND DURATION (YEARS) OF MARRIAGE, AUSTRALIA, 1988

Duration of marriage (years)	Age group (years)										Total	
	Under 20	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60 and over		Not stated
MALE												
1 and under	-	107	180	101	52	41	26	16	13	32	7	526
2	3	372	866	434	242	155	94	73	52	100	12	2,403
3	-	332	1,151	625	298	192	96	74	52	68	12	2,900
4	-	211	1,209	712	319	196	109	71	49	62	4	2,942
5	-	74	1,137	783	366	195	102	55	37	55	9	2,813
6	-	19	887	875	424	188	115	70	36	44	5	2,663
7	-	3	606	855	348	180	106	70	34	42	4	2,248
8	-	3	365	832	389	186	98	67	34	40	6	2,020
9	-	-	176	770	411	184	101	42	38	50	4	1,776
10-14	-	-	92	2,401	2,660	1,028	406	214	136	146	15	7,098
15-19	-	-	-	107	2,286	2,350	639	205	98	107	11	5,803
20-24	-	-	-	-	79	1,593	403	122	92	-	-	3,810
25-29	-	-	-	-	-	54	804	855	269	100	-	2,084
30 and over	-	-	-	-	-	-	21	404	651	837	7	1,920
Not stated	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	4	1,121	6,619	8,495	7,874	6,542	4,236	2,619	1,622	1,775	100	41,007
FEMALE												
1 and under	14	169	126	78	45	38	15	13	9	13	6	526
2	39	818	717	318	192	109	81	45	32	44	8	2,403
3	11	934	980	396	238	142	89	50	20	28	12	2,900
4	-	714	1,239	417	226	157	91	45	21	24	7	2,942
5	-	425	1,340	489	248	153	66	39	23	22	7	2,813
6	-	197	1,314	609	239	159	73	29	14	19	10	2,663
7	-	68	1,049	630	229	128	72	25	22	21	4	2,248
8	-	18	850	650	229	119	64	41	24	18	7	2,020
9	-	-	591	676	236	121	69	36	20	25	-	1,776
10-14	-	-	641	3,577	1,715	633	262	120	68	71	10	7,098
15-19	-	-	-	680	3,262	1,350	294	98	46	55	17	5,803
20-24	-	-	-	-	454	2,296	831	141	44	35	9	3,810
25-29	-	-	-	-	-	256	1,240	435	78	60	13	2,084
30 and over	-	-	-	-	-	-	139	621	576	569	14	1,920
Not stated	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	66	3,345	8,848	8,520	7,315	5,662	3,386	1,738	997	1,004	126	41,007

TABLE 15. DIVORCES: RELATIVE BIRTH PLACES OF PARTIES, AUSTRALIA, 1988

Country of Birth	Husband born in country shown and wife born in				Wife born in country shown and husband born in			
	Australia	Same overseas country	Different overseas country	Total wives	Australia	Same overseas country	Different overseas country	Total husbands
OCEANIA -								
Australia	24,160	—	4,080	28,240	24,160	—	5,572	29,732
New Zealand	381	414	150	945	301	414	211	926
Other	112	73	51	236	109	73	81	263
Total	24,653	487	4,281	29,421	24,570	487	5,864	30,921
AFRICA -								
Egypt	50	50	46	146	23	50	31	104
South Africa	47	42	29	118	42	42	50	134
Other	72	40	52	164	54	40	45	139
Total	169	132	127	428	119	132	126	377
AMERICA -								
Canada	62	10	21	93	45	10	33	88
U.S.A.	128	38	68	234	109	38	44	191
Other	44	136	69	249	44	135	83	263
Total	234	184	158	576	198	184	160	542
ASIA -								
China	21	72	51	144	12	72	53	137
Hong Kong	21	35	37	93	12	35	36	83
India	71	61	60	192	36	61	53	150
Lebanon	39	123	34	196	8	123	32	163
Malaysia	70	37	49	156	50	37	49	136
Philippines	28	125	10	163	192	125	140	457
Turkey	12	59	17	88	—	59	6	67
Vietnam	6	110	27	143	4	110	31	145
Other	217	209	178	604	144	209	194	547
Total	485	831	463	1,779	460	831	594	1,885
EUROPE -								
Austria	48	21	36	105	33	21	28	82
Germany	308	129	122	559	222	129	160	511
Greece	95	153	48	296	29	153	40	222
Hungary	44	51	56	151	16	51	26	93
Ireland	77	32	39	148	45	32	38	115
Italy	285	186	109	581	82	186	68	336
Malta	96	52	33	181	46	52	21	119
Netherlands	327	84	90	501	153	84	75	312
Poland	42	184	52	278	23	184	40	247
U.K.	2,501	1,795	544	4,840	2,020	1,795	498	4,313
U.S.S.R.	20	32	34	86	13	32	29	74
Yugoslavia	140	282	112	534	43	282	50	375
Other	159	154	133	446	118	154	108	380
Total	4,143	3,155	1,408	8,706	2,843	3,155	1,181	7,179
Other (a)	48	19	30	97	50	19	34	103
Total	29,732	4,808	6,467	41,007	28,240	4,808	7,959	41,007

(a) Includes Not Stated.

TABLE 16. DIVORCES : PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN OF THE MARRIAGE(a) AND AVERAGE NUMBER OF CHILDREN OF PARTIES, AUSTRALIA, 1983 TO 1988

	Number of children						6 or more	Total divorces	Total children	Average number of children (b)
	0	1	2	3	4	5				
1983	38.4	21.8	26.2	10.2	2.7	0.5	0.2	43,525	52,059	1.9
1984	39.1	21.6	26.2	9.8	2.6	0.5	0.2	43,124	50,713	1.9
1985	39.4	21.1	26.2	10.0	2.6	0.5	0.2	39,830	46,800	1.9
1986	40.3	21.2	25.8	9.5	2.5	0.5	0.2	39,417	45,231	1.9
1987	41.4	21.7	25.1	9.0	2.2	0.5	0.1	39,725	44,050	1.9
1988	42.5	21.5	24.7	8.7	2.2	0.4	0.1	41,007	44,395	1.9

(a) See paragraph 9 of the Explanatory Notes. (b) Divorces involving one or more children.

TABLE 17. DIVORCES: NUMBER OF CHILDREN OF THE MARRIAGE (a), AVERAGE NUMBER OF CHILDREN AND DURATION (YEARS) OF MARRIAGE, AUSTRALIA, 1988

Duration of marriage (years)	Number of children						Total divorces	Total children	Average number of children (b)
	0	1	2	3	4	5 or more			
1 and under	438	57	20	7	3	—	526	135	1.5
2	1,820	403	130	39	7	4	2,403	829	1.4
3	1,976	604	234	61	20	5	2,900	1,365	1.5
4	1,798	705	356	58	21	4	2,942	1,695	1.5
5	1,538	731	420	96	25	3	2,813	1,978	1.6
6	1,228	698	580	121	30	6	2,663	2,371	1.7
7	880	589	576	156	38	9	2,248	2,410	1.8
8	685	482	645	176	28	4	2,020	2,433	1.8
9	541	374	618	187	51	5	1,776	2,400	1.9
10 - 14	1,527	1,251	2,847	1,156	270	47	7,098	11,739	2.1
15 - 19	644	935	2,587	1,206	343	88	5,803	11,553	2.2
20 - 24	1,141	1,364	952	273	62	18	3,810	4,431	1.7
25 - 29	1,447	481	127	20	—	7	2,084	841	1.3
30 and over	1,758	123	31	6	—	—	1,920	215	1.3
Not stated	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	17,422	8,797	10,123	3,562	901	202	41,007	44,395	1.9

(a) See paragraph 9 of the Explanatory Notes. (b) Divorces involving one or more children.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Introduction

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 Family Law legislation the irretrievable breakdown of marriage is the only ground on which a divorce 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 under Family Law legislation must be on the ground that the marriage is void because of 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 under Family Law legislation.

2. Successful applicants for a divorce under Family Law legislation are initially granted a decree nisi. This becomes absolute after one 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. At the time of the introduction of the Family Law Act there were applications pending for divorce which had been previously filed under the Matrimonial Causes legislation. Family Law legislation provided that these cases could be continued under the superseded legislation or transferred and heard under the Family Law legislation. The publication *Divorces, 1976* (3307.0) differentiated between those cases in which a divorce was granted under Matrimonial Causes legislation and those cases in which a divorce was granted under Family Law legislation. Such differentiation is not made for subsequent years.

Statistics

4. The statistics shown in this publication relate to calendar years and are compiled by the ABS from a Statistical Report made out in respect of each application which resulted in a decree absolute being granted. Such reports are forwarded to the ABS on finalisation of proceedings. A reproduction of the Statistical Report used appears in Appendix B. Data for the ACT from August 1988 was processed and received on tape as a start to electronic collection of divorce statistics.

5. In the interpretation of 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. In addition, of course, legislative changes and the expectation of new legislation, rules and practices, may affect the number of applications.

State

6. The State classification in Tables 1 and 2 of this publication is based on the location of the Family Court where the divorce is granted and registered, with the exception of divorces granted at the Lismore (N.S.W.)

Family Court which are registered by the Brisbane registry and included in Queensland figures. The rates for States or Territories are also affected by persons applying to the nearest Family Court rather than the court in their State of residence. The Canberra Family Court is particularly affected as it serves, in addition to the A.C.T., a large area of south-eastern New South Wales.

Definitions

7. *Divorces*. The term divorce, as used in this publication, refers to decrees of dissolution of marriage. Prior to 1980 the term was used to include nullities of marriage and, where application was made before 5 January 1976, judicial separations granted. Details of nullities of marriage have not been collected since 1980. Figures in tables 1 and 2 of this publication have been revised to exclude nullities and judicial separations prior to 1980.

8. *Divorce rates*. In this publication several types of rates are shown. In all cases the rates are expressed per 1,000 of the appropriate population.

9. The *crude divorce rate* is the number of divorces per 1,000 of the mean population. (In the interpretation of this rate it must be kept in mind that a large varying proportion of the population used in the denominator is unmarried or below the minimum age of marriage.)

10. The *age-specific divorce rate (per 1,000 population)* relates to the number of divorces by age at decree made absolute to the population in specific age groups. Males under 18 and females under 16 are excluded from the population.

11. The *age and marital specific divorce rate (per 1,000 married population)* relates the number of divorces by age at decree made absolute to the married population in specific age groups. Those classified as *permanently separated* are included in the married population. Males and females under 15 are excluded from the population.

12. *Children* are *unmarried children of the marriage* who were aged under 18 years at the time of application for divorce. Under the *Family Law Act 1975*, these may include (in certain cases) adopted and ex-nuptial children and children from a former marriage. Children who are married or aged 18 years or more are not subject to custody and guardianship orders and are excluded.

13. *Duration of marriage* is the interval between the date of marriage and the date the decree was made absolute. In Tables 11 and 13, the interval between the date of marriage and the date of final separation is shown. *Date of final separation* is the date, given on the application for divorce, from which the period of living apart is calculated for the purpose of establishing the grounds for divorce. In determining the date of final separation, a single period of resumed cohabitation of less than three months may be ignored, provided the periods of living apart before and after resumed cohabitation amount to 12 months or more in total.

14. Data for duration of marriage and duration to final separation for 1983, 1984, 1985 and 1987 has been revised after a minor error was found in these calculations. Detailed information on microfiche is available on request.

Additional statistics available

15. In most cases, the ABS can also make available information which is not published. This information may be made available in one or more of the following forms: microfiche, photocopy, data tape, floppy disk, computer printout, clerically-extracted tabulation. Generally, a charge is made for providing unpublished information. A list of tables produced annually is attached in Appendix A.

State statistics

16. In this publication detailed statistics are provided for Australia but summary figures are given for States. More detailed State statistics are available in publications issued by the ABS State offices.

Related publications

Other ABS publications which may be of interest are:

Marriages, Australia (3306.0) - issued annually

Australian Demographic Statistics (3101.0) - issued quarterly

17. Current publications produced by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications, Australia* (1101.0). The ABS also issues, on Tuesdays and Fridays, a *Publications Advice* (1105.0) which lists publications to be released in

the next few days. The Catalogue and Publications Advice are available from any ABS office.

Symbols and other usages

- n.a. not available
- nil or rounded to zero
- break in continuity of series (where drawn across a column between consecutive figures)
- r figures or series revised since previous issue

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

Electronic Services

VIATEL. Key *656# for selected current economic, social and demographic statistics,

AUSSTATS. Thousands of up-to-date time series are available on this ABS on-line services through CSIRONET.

For further information phone the AUSSTATS Help Desk on (062) 52 6017.

TELESTATS. This service provides foreign trade statistics tailored to users' requirements.

Further information is available on (062) 52 5404.

Floppy disk services

Selected ABS statistics are available on floppy disk. Further information is available on (062) 52 6684.

APPENDIX A

LIST OF DIVORCE TABLES PRODUCED ANNUALLY

Table number	Description
DIVR0001	State of Registry by sex of applicant
DIVR0002	Month of outcome by State
DIVR0003	Ages of husband and wife at marriage
DIVR0004	Ages of husband and wife at date of divorce
DIVR0005	Ages of husband and wife at final separation
DIVR0006	Birthplace of husband by birthplace of wife
DIVR0007	Marital status of husband by marital status of wife (at time of marriage)
DIVR0008	Duration of marriage by marital status of husband and wife
DIVR0009	Age of husband at marriage by duration of marriage
DIVR0010	Age of wife at marriage by duration of marriage
DIVR0011	Age of husband at date of divorce by duration of marriage
DIVR0012	Age of wife at date of divorce by duration of marriage
DIVR0013	Duration of marriage by sex of applicant
DIVR0014	Duration of marriage by number of children under 18
DIVR0015	Age of youngest child by duration of marriage
DIVR0016	Age of youngest child by number of children under 18
*DIVR0017	Age of husband at final separation by duration of cohabitation
*DIVR0018	Age of wife at final separation by duration of cohabitation
DIVR0019	Month and year of application by month of outcome
DIVR0020	Interval between final separation and filing of application by State
DIVR0021	Interval between final separation and filing of application by duration of marriage

*NOTE: For the purpose of these tables, duration of cohabitation is the interval between date of marriage and date of final separation.

APPENDIX B

FAMILY COURT OF AUSTRALIA — STATISTICAL REPORT

Instructions

1. This report is to be made out in respect of applications for dissolution of marriage.

2. All fields should be right-justified with leading zeros (e.g. "4 March 1908" show as

Month

Year

0 3

0 8

show File Identification Details as

Year

Number

8 0

0 0 1 5 3)

REGISTRY

(See back of form for identifier)

FILE IDENTIFICATION DETAILS

DATE APPLICATION FILED

SEX OF APPLICANT

(Male 1, Female 2, Joint 3)

OCCUPATION OF HUSBAND

(Please write in details from Form 4)

OCCUPATION OF WIFE

(Please write in details from Form 4)

DATE OF MARRIAGE

(if date of marriage unknown enter 99 99)

MARITAL STATUS OF HUSBAND AT TIME OF MARRIAGE

(Bachelor 1, Widowed 3, Divorced 4)

MARITAL STATUS OF WIFE AT TIME OF MARRIAGE

(Spinster 1, Widowed 3, Divorced 4)

PLACE OF BIRTH OF HUSBAND

*Please code Australia or country (abbrvd) as per code list**— see back of form for common codes (if unable to code country, please write in any details available)*

DATE OF BIRTH OF HUSBAND

(if date of birth unknown enter 99 99)

PLACE OF BIRTH OF WIFE

*Please code Australia or country (abbrvd) as per code list**— see back of form for common codes (if unable to code country, please write in any details available)*

DATE OF BIRTH OF WIFE

(if date of birth unknown enter 99 99)

DATE OF FINAL SEPARATION

STATE OF USUAL RESIDENCE AT FINAL SEPARATION

(See back of form for identifier)

NUMBER OF CHILDREN OF THE MARRIAGE

*(AGED UNDER 18 AT TIME OF APPLICATION)**(if no children, please code 00)*

DATE OF BIRTH OF YOUNGEST CHILD OF THE MARRIAGE

*(if no children please leave code boxes blank)**(if date of birth unknown enter 99 99)*

DATE DECREE MADE ABSOLUTE

1

Year

Number

2 3

4 5

6 7

8

Month

Year

9 10

11 12

13

Month

Year

14 15

16 17

18

19

20 21

22

Month

Year

23 24

25 26

27 28

29

Month

Year

30 31

32 33

Month

Year

34 35

36 37

38

Number

39 40

Month

Year

41 42

43 44

Month

Year

45 46

47 48

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