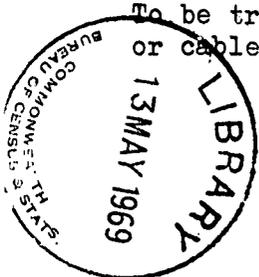


COMMONWEALTH BUREAU OF CENSUS AND STATISTICS

CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA

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SOCIAL STATISTICS : AUSTRALIA

NO.70 : DIVORCE

DECEMBER QUARTER 1968

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EXPLANATORY NOTES

This bulletin contains statistics of dissolutions of marriage (commonly known as divorce), nullities of marriage and judicial separations for the December quarter 1968 and some comparative figures for previous periods. For further statistics in respect of past periods, see previous issues in this series and the annual bulletin "Demography". Detailed statistics for 1967 were shown in "Social Statistics No. 63 - Divorce 1967", issued on 6 August 1968. Detailed statistics for 1968 will be issued in a separate bulletin in this series.

2. The Commonwealth Matrimonial Causes Act 1959 came into operation on 1 February 1961. This Act provided a uniform law throughout Australia with respect to divorce and other matrimonial causes, and superseded the matrimonial causes laws of the States and Territories except in so far as the transitional provisions of the Act kept them in force for the purpose of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dissolution, nullity and judicial separation granted after that date include some decrees made on petitions under the superseded laws and are to that extent not uniformly based. By 1968 the number of such decrees had become insignificant.

3. Under the Matrimonial Causes Act 1959-1966 a court may grant decrees of dissolution of marriage, judicial separation, nullity of marriage, restitution of conjugal rights and jactitation of marriage (i.e. that a person should refrain from making a false claim that a marriage has taken place between him and another person). Orders may be made for the custody and welfare of children, maintenance, the settlement of property and damages for adultery.

4. 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 counted as a separate petition.

I. PETITIONS FILED

TABLE 1. - PETITIONS FILED FOR DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE (a)

Period	N.S.W.	Vic.	Qld	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
Year - 1964	4,484	2,357	1,121	1,034	653	322	53	124	10,148
1965	4,679	2,501	1,266	1,107	736	328	61	161	10,839
1966	4,892	2,621	1,173	1,133	787	357	46	123	11,132
1967	5,427	2,700	1,424	1,178	888	319	55	162	12,153
1968	5,558	2,771	1,464	1,186	995	405	59	181	12,619
Quarter ended -									
December 1967	1,230	670	382	271	200	92	8	41	2,894
March 1968	1,379	573	348	276	252	83	11	45	2,967
June 1968	1,416	735	367	290	255	86	17	45	3,211
September 1968	1,400	735	371	312	238	122	18	45	3,241
December 1968	1,363	728	378	308	250	114	13	46	3,200

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

TABLE 2. - PETITIONS FILED FOR DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE,
NULLITY OF MARRIAGE AND JUDICIAL SEPARATION : AUSTRALIA

Petition for -	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	Quarter ended -				
						Dec. 1967	March 1968	June 1968	Sept. 1968	Dec. 1968
Dissolution of marriage										
Husband petitioner	4,215	4,413	4,510	4,798	4,946	1,139	1,148	1,246	1,308	1,244
Wife petitioner	5,933	6,426	6,622	7,355	7,673	1,755	1,819	1,965	1,933	1,956
Total	10,148	10,839	11,132	12,153	12,619	2,894	2,967	3,211	3,241	3,200
Nullity of marriage -										
Husband petitioner	14	16	25	21	18	4	5	4	7	2
Wife petitioner	30	35	30	44	41	11	11	11	10	9
Total	44	51	55	65	59	15	16	15	17	11
Dissolution or nullity -										
Husband petitioner	5	15	9	9	7	2	1	4	1	1
Wife petitioner	12	10	12	11	19	4	1	4	8	6
Total	17	25	21	20	26	6	2	8	9	7
Judicial separation -										
Husband petitioner	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Wife petitioner	34	20	24	39	37	15	11	10	10	6
Total	34	21	25	39	37	15	11	10	10	6
Dissolution or Judicial separation -										
Wife petitioner	1	..	3	2	1	..	..	..	1	..
Total	1	..	3	2	1	..	..	..	1	..
Total petitions -										
By husband - Number	4,234	4,445	4,545	4,828	4,971	1,145	1,154	1,254	1,316	1,247
Per cent	41	41	40	39	39	39	39	39	40	39
By wife - Number	6,010	6,491	6,691	7,451	7,771	1,785	1,842	1,990	1,962	1,977
Per cent	59	59	60	61	61	61	61	61	60	61
TOTAL	10,244	10,936	11,236	12,279	12,742	2,930	2,996	3,244	3,278	3,224

TABLE 3. - PETITIONS FILED FOR DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE,
NULLITY OF MARRIAGE AND JUDICIAL SEPARATION : DECEMBER QUARTER 1968

Petition for	N.S.W.	Vic.	Qld	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
Dissolution of marriage -									
Husband petitioner	469	315	162	113	117	49	6	13	1,244
Wife petitioner	894	413	216	195	133	65	7	33	1,956
<u>Total</u>	1,363	728	378	308	250	114	13	46	3,200
Nullity of marriage -									
Husband petitioner	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	2
Wife petitioner	6	2	1	..	..	..	..	..	9
<u>Total</u>	7	2	1	..	1	..	..	..	11
Dissolution or nullity -									
Husband petitioner	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Wife petitioner	2	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	6
<u>Total</u>	2	5	..	..	..	..	..	..	7
Judicial separation -									
Wife petitioner	..	2	..	..	2	1	..	1	6
<u>Total</u>	..	2	..	..	2	1	..	1	6
Total petitions -									
By husband - Number	470	316	162	113	118	49	6	13	1,247
Per cent	34	43	43	37	47	43	(a)	(a)	39
By wife - Number	902	421	217	195	135	66	7	34	1,977
Per cent	66	57	57	63	53	57	(a)	(a)	61
<u>TOTAL</u>	1,372	737	379	308	253	115	13	47	3,224

(a) Percentage not calculated.

II. DECREES GRANTED

TABLE 4. - DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE GRANTED (a)

Period	N.S.W.	Vic.	Qld	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
Year - 1964	3,024	2,130	981	887	542	229	31	93	7,917
1965	3,440	2,089	1,052	852	604	279	41	134	8,491
1966	4,515	2,131	1,031	1,069	637	317	58	101	9,859
1967	4,555	2,039	1,074	929	726	248	20	97	9,688
1968	4,880	2,515	1,135	915	812	302	23	149	10,731
Quarter ended -									
December 1967	1,138	336	299	213	196	69	4	17	2,272
March 1968	1,480	829	344	217	273	57	8	44	3,252
June 1968	1,379	477	171	189	108	70	1	26	2,421
September 1968	1,070	659	286	237	196	95	6	47	2,596
December 1968	951	550	334	272	235	80	8	32	2,462

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

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

Decree for -	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	Quarter ended -				
						Dec. 1967	March 1968	June 1968	Sept. 1968	Dec. 1968
Dissolution of marriage -										
Husband petitioner	3,377	3,523	4,010	3,892	4,191	913	1,293	908	1,016	974
Wife petitioner	4,536	4,966	5,841	5,791	6,536	1,359	1,958	1,513	1,579	1,486
Granted on petitions of both	4	2	8	5	4	..	1	..	1	2
Total	7,917	8,491	9,859	9,688	10,731	2,272	3,252	2,421	2,596	2,462
Nullity of marriage -										
Husband petitioner	11	10	18	16	18	3	8	6	1	3
Wife petitioner	33	25	32	34	26	10	11	4	6	5
Total	44	35	50	50	44	13	19	10	7	8
Judicial separation -										
Wife petitioner	6	8	12	8	14	3	5	4	4	1
	6	8	12	8	14	3	5	4	4	1
Total decrees -										
For husband - Number	3,388	3,533	4,028	3,908	4,209	916	1,301	914	1,017	977
Per cent	43	41	41	40	39	40	40	40	39	40
For wife - Number	4,575	4,999	5,885	5,833	6,576	1,372	1,974	1,521	1,589	1,492
Per cent	57	59	59	60	61	60	60	60	61	60
Granted on petitions of both	4	2	8	5	4	..	1	..	1	2
TOTAL	7,967	8,534	9,921	9,746	10,789	2,288	3,276	2,435	2,607	2,471

(a) Decrees absolute.

**TABLE 6. - DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE, NULLITIES OF MARRIAGE AND JUDICIAL
SEPARATIONS GRANTED (a) : DECEMBER QUARTER 1968**

Decree for -	N.S.W.	Vic.	Qld	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
Dissolution of marriage -									
Husband petitioner	335	227	139	105	113	44	5	6	974
Wife petitioner	615	322	195	167	122	36	3	26	1,486
Granted on petitions of both	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Total	951	550	334	272	235	80	8	32	2,462
Nullity of marriage -									
Husband petitioner	1	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	3
Wife petitioner	2	..	2	..	..	..	..	1	5
Total	3	..	3	..	..	1	..	1	8
Judicial separation -									
Wife petitioner	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
Total	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
Total decrees -									
For husband - Number	336	227	140	105	113	45	5	6	977
Per cent	35	41	42	39	48	56	(b)	(b)	40
For wife - Number	617	322	197	167	122	36	3	28	1,492
Per cent	65	59	58	61	52	44	(b)	(b)	60
Granted on petitions of both	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
TOTAL	954	550	337	272	235	81	8	34	2,471

(a) Decrees absolute.

(b) Percentage not calculated.

**TABLE 7. - GROUNDS ON WHICH DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE, NULLITIES OF MARRIAGE
AND JUDICIAL SEPARATIONS WERE GRANTED (a) : DECEMBER QUARTER 1968**

Ground	N.S.W.	Vic.	Qld	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE									
Single grounds -									
Desertion	428	240	166	110	77	24	4	10	1,059
Adultery	223	168	63	78	92	26	1	6	657
Separation	134	119	66	40	51	23	2	3	438
Cruelty	83	7	25	30	7	2	..	7	161
Drunkenness	23	6	3	6	4	2	..	..	44
Failure to pay maintenance	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	2
Refusal to consummate	3	3	1	1	..	..	..	..	8
Frequent convictions	1	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	3
Other single grounds	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	4
Dual grounds -									
Desertion and adultery	8	2	4	1	..	..	..	..	15
Desertion and separation	11	2	3	6	..	2	..	..	24
Desertion and cruelty	10	2	..	..	..	1	1	1	15
Desertion and drunkenness	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Desertion and frequent convictions	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Adultery and cruelty	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Cruelty and drunkenness	17	..	3	..	1	..	..	3	24
Other dual grounds	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Three grounds or more	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	3
<u>Total</u>	951	550	334	272	235	80	8	32	2,462
NULLITY OF MARRIAGE									
Bigamy	2	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	4
Invalid marriage	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1
Incapacity to consummate	..	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	2
Unsound mind	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
<u>Total</u>	3	..	3	..	..	1	..	1	8
JUDICIAL SEPARATION									
Desertion and adultery	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
<u>Total</u>	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1

(a) Decrees absolute.

TABLE 8. - DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE GRANTED (a) : AGES OF PARTIES AT TIME OF DISSOLUTION
OF MARRIAGE, AUSTRALIA, DECEMBER QUARTER 1968

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 & over	No.	%
Under 20	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
20 - 24	6	95	10	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	111	5
25 - 29	2	164	238	15	2	1	..	..	..	..	422	17
30 - 34	..	33	195	192	18	1	1	..	..	1	441	18
35 - 39	..	2	57	128	138	28	1	1	1	1	357	14
40 - 44	..	..	7	39	131	128	35	3	1	1	345	14
45 - 49	..	..	4	11	37	126	117	20	7	..	322	13
50 - 54	..	..	..	4	13	27	72	73	15	5	209	8
55 - 59	..	..	1	1	6	19	31	44	31	4	137	6
60 & over	..	..	1	1	..	..	12	28	22	54	118	5
Total (No. wives)	8	294	513	391	345	330	269	169	77	66	2,462	..
(%)	..	12	21	16	14	13	11	7	3	3	..	100

(a) Decrees absolute; 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, DECEMBER QUARTER 1968

Duration of marriage (years)	Dissolutions of marriage with -							Total marriages dissolved		Total number of children (b)	
	No children	1 child	2 children	3 children	4 children	5 children	6 or more children	No.	Per cent		
Under 5	164	93	17	6	1	..	..	281	11	149
5 - 9	229	223	175	59	10	3	..	699	28	805	
10 - 14	97	105	132	84	29	12	2	461	19	810	
15 - 19	64	64	79	82	35	10	12	346	14	736	
20 - 24	64	67	75	58	37	21	13	335	14	724	
25 - 29	80	64	30	15	2	2	1	194	8	193	
30 and over	115	19	6	4	2	..	..	146	6	51
Total marriages dissolved	No. 813	% 33	635	514	308	116	48	28	2,462
Total number of children (b)	..	635	1,028	924	464	240	177	..	..	3,468

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

(b) At time of petition. The term "children" refers to "children of the marriage" as defined in the Matrimonial Causes Act, living and under 21 years.

COMMONWEALTH BUREAU OF CENSUS AND STATISTICS

CANBERRA, A.C.T. 2600

13 MAY 1969

K.M. ARCHER

COMMONWEALTH STATISTICIAN

NOTE. Inquiries concerning these statistics may be made in Canberra by telephoning 63 9111 Extension 2268 or, in each State capital, by telephoning the office of the Bureau of Census and Statistics.