

COMMONWEALTH BUREAU OF CENSUS AND STATISTICS

CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA

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SOCIAL STATISTICS : AUSTRALIA

NO. 74 : DIVORCE

JUNE QUARTER 1969

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EXPLANATORY NOTES

This bulletin contains statistics of dissolutions of marriage (divorce), nullities of marriage and judicial separations for the June quarter 1969 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 1968 were shown in "Social Statistics No. 71 - Divorce 1968", issued on 22 July 1969.

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 This Act provided a uniform law throughout Australia with respect to divorce and other matrimonial causes, and superseded the matrimonial causes laws of the States and Territories except in so far as the transitional provisions of the Act kept them in force for the purpose of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dissolution, nullity and judicial separation granted after that date include some decrees made on petitions under the superseded laws and to that extent are not uniformly based. The number of such decrees is now 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.

5. Any discrepancies between totals and sums of components in percentages in tables are due to rounding.

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 -									
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
March 1969	1,286	565	363	300	263	99	18	41	2,935
June 1969	1,473	833	414	353	271	129	11	48	3,532

(a) This table excludes petitions filed for nullity of marriage, judicial separation and 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 -				
						June 1968	Sept. 1968	Dec. 1968	March 1969	June 1969
Dissolution of marriage										
Husband petitioner	4,215	4,413	4,510	4,798	4,946	1,246	1,308	1,244	1,137	1,327
Wife petitioner	5,933	6,426	6,622	7,355	7,673	1,965	1,933	1,956	1,798	2,205
Total	10,148	10,839	11,132	12,153	12,619	3,211	3,241	3,200	2,935	3,532
Nullity of marriage -										
Husband petitioner	14	16	25	21	18	4	7	2	7	7
Wife petitioner	30	35	30	44	41	11	10	9	7	8
Total	44	51	55	65	59	15	17	11	14	15
Dissolution or nullity-										
Husband petitioner	5	15	9	9	7	4	1	1	4	1
Wife petitioner	12	10	12	11	19	4	8	6	2	4
Total	17	25	21	20	26	8	9	7	6	5
Judicial separation -										
Husband petitioner	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
Wife petitioner	34	20	24	39	37	10	10	6	6	12
Total	34	21	25	39	37	10	10	6	7	13
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	1,254	1,316	1,247	1,149	1,336
Per cent	41	41	40	39	39	39	40	39	39	37
By wife - Number	6,010	6,491	6,691	7,451	7,771	1,990	1,962	1,977	1,813	2,229
Per cent	59	59	60	61	61	61	60	61	61	63
TOTAL	10,244	10,936	11,236	12,279	12,742	3,244	3,278	3,224	2,962	3,565

TABLE 3. - PETITIONS FILED FOR DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE,
NULLITY OF MARRIAGE AND JUDICIAL SEPARATION : JUNE QUARTER 1969

Petition for	N.S.W.	Vic.	Qld	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
Dissolution of marriage -									
Husband petitioner	539	298	164	109	134	56	8	19	1,327
Wife petitioner	934	535	250	244	137	73	3	29	2,205
<u>Total</u>	1,473	833	414	353	271	129	11	48	3,532
Nullity of marriage -									
Husband petitioner	1	2	1	1	2	..	..	..	7
Wife petitioner	5	2	1	..	..	..	..	..	8
<u>Total</u>	6	4	2	1	2	..	..	..	15
Dissolution or nullity -									
Husband petitioner	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Wife petitioner	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
<u>Total</u>	4	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	5
Judicial separation -									
Husband petition	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1
Wife petitioner	4	..	2	5	..	1	..	..	12
<u>Total</u>	4	..	2	6	..	1	..	..	13
Total petitions -									
By husband - Number	540	301	165	111	136	56	8	19	1,336
- Per cent	36	36	39	31	50	43	(a)	(a)	37
By wife - Number	947	537	253	249	137	74	3	29	2,229
- Per cent	64	64	61	69	50	57	(a)	(a)	63
<u>TOTAL</u>	1,487	838	418	360	273	130	11	48	3,565

(a) Percentage not shown because of small number of cases.

II. DECREES GRANTED

TABLE 4. - DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE GRANTED (a)

Petition for	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 -									
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
March 1969	1,143	519	373	209	239	67	15	34	2,599
June 1969	888	506	165	176	168	64	10	32	2,009

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

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

Decree for -	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	Quarter ended -				
						June 1968	Sept. 1968	Dec. 1968	March 1969	June 1969
Dissolution of marriage(a)-										
Husband petitioner	3,377	3,523	4,010	3,892	4,191	908	1,016	974	1,011	815
Wife petitioner	4,536	4,966	5,841	5,791	6,536	1,513	1,579	1,486	1,588	1,192
Granted on petitions of both	4	2	8	5	4	..	1	2	..	2
Total	7,917	8,491	9,859	9,688	10,731	2,421	2,596	2,462	2,599	2,009
Nullity of marriage (a) -										
Husband petitioner	11	10	18	16	18	6	1	3	2	3
Wife petitioner	33	25	32	34	26	4	6	5	6	4
Total	44	35	50	50	44	10	7	8	8	7
Judicial separation -										
Husband petitioner	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Wife petitioner	6	8	12	8	14	4	4	1	..	..
Total	6	8	12	8	14	4	4	1	1	..
Total decrees -										
For husband - Number	3,388	3,533	4,028	3,908	4,209	914	1,017	977	1,014	818
Per cent	43	41	41	40	39	40	39	40	39	41
For wife - Number	4,575	4,999	5,885	5,833	6,576	1,521	1,589	1,492	1,594	1,196
Per cent	57	59	59	60	61	60	61	60	61	59
Granted on petitions of both	4	2	8	5	4	..	1	2	..	2
Total	7,967	8,534	9,921	9,746	10,789	2,435	2,607	2,471	2,608	2,016

(a) Decrees absolute.

**TABLE 6. - DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE, NULLITIES OF MARRIAGE AND JUDICIAL
SEPARATIONS GRANTED : JUNE QUARTER 1969**

Decree for -	N.S.W.	Vic.	Qld	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
Dissolution of marriage(a)-									
Husband petitioner	355	211	67	60	77	29	5	11	815
Wife petitioner	532	294	98	116	91	35	5	21	1,192
Granted on petitions of both	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Total	888	506	165	176	168	64	10	32	2,009
Nullity of marriage (a) -									
Husband petitioner	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	1	3
Wife petitioner	3	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	4
Total	3	2	..	1	..	..	..	1	7
Judicial separation -									
Husband petitioner	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Wife petitioner	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total decrees -									
For husband - Number	355	213	67	60	77	29	5	12	818
Per cent	40	42	41	34	46	45	(b)	(b)	41
For wife - Number	535	294	98	117	91	35	5	21	1,196
Per cent	60	58	59	66	54	55	(b)	(b)	59
Granted on petitions of both	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Total	891	508	165	177	168	64	10	33	2,016

(a) Decrees absolute. (b) Percentage not shown because of small number of cases.

TABLE 7. - GROUNDS ON WHICH DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE, NULLITIES OF MARRIAGE
AND JUDICIAL SEPARATIONS WERE GRANTED : JUNE QUARTER 1969

Ground	N.S.W.	Vic.	Qld	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE (a)									
Single grounds -									
Desertion	369	231	88	57	56	21	2	9	833
Adultery	234	144	18	50	62	20	3	11	542
Separation	142	109	38	28	39	18	4	3	381
Cruelty	74	8	9	27	2	2	..	3	125
Drunkenness	6	2	..	6	3	..	..	..	17
Failure to pay maintenance	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	2
Refusal to consummate	4	1	1	..	..	1	..	..	7
Frequent convictions	2	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	4
Other single grounds	2	..	..	3	..	..	..	..	5
Dual grounds -									
Desertion and adultery	8	2	..	1	3	..	..	..	14
Desertion and separation	13	..	8	3	..	2	..	..	26
Desertion and cruelty	11	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	14
Desertion and drunkenness	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1
Desertion and other grounds	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Adultery and cruelty	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	2
Cruelty and drunkenness	18	4	1	..	..	..	1	5	29
Other dual grounds	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Three grounds or more	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	4
<u>Total</u>	888	506	165	176	168	64	10	32	2,009

NULLITY OF MARRIAGE (a)

Bigamy	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Incapacity to consummate	1	2	..	1	4
Nonage	1	1
<u>Total</u>	3	2	..	1	1	7

JUDICIAL SEPARATION

All grounds
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(a) Decrees absolute.

TABLE 8. - DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE GRANTED (a) : AGES OF PARTIES AT TIME OF DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE, AUSTRALIA, JUNE QUARTER 1969

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	1	55	6	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	63	3
25 - 29	..	129	157	16	..	..	..	..	..	..	302	15
30 - 34	..	16	172	142	19	6	..	1	..	..	356	18
35 - 39	..	3	47	122	116	18	3	..	1	..	310	15
40 - 44	8	41	103	133	29	3	2	..	319	16
45 - 49	..	1	..	13	33	104	98	23	1	..	273	14
50 - 54	1	3	8	22	65	46	15	4	164	8
55 - 59	1	7	9	16	40	26	9	108	5
60 & over	1	1	4	8	14	31	55	114	6
<u>Total</u> (No. wives)	1	204	391	339	288	296	219	127	76	68	2,009	..
	..	10	19	17	14	15	11	6	4	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, JUNE QUARTER 1969

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	95	45	6	2	1	..	..	149	7	67
5 - 9	216	190	110	24	5	1	..	546	27	507
10 - 14	95	93	124	88	27	9	2	438	22	770
15 - 19	38	59	86	69	31	11	5	299	15	650
20 - 24	66	49	80	60	27	12	8	302	15	615
25 - 29	77	31	23	14	8	1	1	155	8	163
30 and over	90	17	9	3	1	..	..	120	6	48
<u>Total marriages dissolved</u> (No. %)	677 34	484 24	438 22	260 13	100 5	34 2	16 1	2,009 ..	.. 100	.. ..
<u>Total number of children (b)</u>	..	484	876	780	400	170	110	..	..	2,820

(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

10 NOVEMBER 1969

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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.