

COMMONWEALTH BUREAU OF CENSUS AND STATISTICS

CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA

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SOCIAL STATISTICS : AUSTRALIA

NO. 73 : DIVORCE

MARCH QUARTER 1969



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 This Act provided a uniform law throughout Australia with respect to divorce and other matrimonial causes, and superseded the matrimonial causes laws of the States and Territories except in so far as the transitional provisions of the Act kept them in force for the purpose of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dissolution, nullity and judicial separation granted after that date included some decrees made on petitions under the superseded laws and were to that extent not uniformly based.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

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 -									
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
March 1969	1,286	565	363	300	263	99	18	41	2,935

(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 -				
						March 1968	June 1968	Sept. 1968	Dec. 1968	March 1969
Dissolution of marriage										
Husband petitioner	4,215	4,413	4,510	4,798	4,946	1,148	1,246	1,308	1,244	1,137
Wife petitioner	5,933	6,426	6,622	7,355	7,673	1,819	1,965	1,933	1,956	1,798
Total	10,148	10,839	11,132	12,153	12,619	2,967	3,211	3,241	3,200	2,935
Nullity of marriage -										
Husband petitioner	14	16	25	21	18	5	4	7	2	7
Wife petitioner	30	35	30	44	41	11	11	10	9	7
Total	44	51	55	65	59	16	15	17	11	14
Dissolution or nullity -										
Husband petitioner	5	15	9	9	7	1	4	1	1	4
Wife petitioner	12	10	12	11	19	1	4	8	6	2
Total	17	25	21	20	26	2	8	9	7	6
Judicial separation -										
Husband petitioner	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Wife petitioner	34	20	24	39	37	11	10	10	6	6
Total	34	21	25	39	37	11	10	10	6	7
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	1,154	1,254	1,316	1,247	1,149
Percent	41	41	40	39	39	39	39	40	39	39
By wife - Number	6,010	6,491	6,691	7,451	7,771	1,842	1,990	1,962	1,977	1,813
Percent	59	59	60	61	61	61	61	60	61	61
TOTAL	10,244	10,936	11,236	12,279	12,742	2,996	3,244	3,278	3,224	2,962

**TABLE 3. - PETITIONS FILED FOR DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE,
NULLITY OF MARRIAGE AND JUDICIAL SEPARATION : MARCH 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	458	239	140	114	108	53	12	13	1,137
Wife petitioner	828	326	223	186	155	46	6	28	1,798
<u>Total</u>	1,286	565	363	300	263	99	18	41	2,935
Nullity of marriage -									
Husband petitioner	5	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	7
Wife petitioner	3	..	1	2	..	..	1	..	7
<u>Total</u>	8	1	1	2	..	..	1	1	14
Dissolution or nullity -									
Husband petitioner	2	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	4
Wife petitioner	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
<u>Total</u>	3	2	..	1	..	..	..	..	6
Judicial separation -									
Husband petition	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1
Wife petitioner	3	..	1	..	1	..	..	1	6
<u>Total</u>	3	..	2	..	1	..	..	1	7
Total petitions -									
By husband - Number	465	241	141	115	108	53	12	14	1,149
Per cent	36	42	39	38	41	54	(a)	(a)	39
By wife - Number	835	327	225	188	156	46	7	29	1,813
Per cent	64	58	61	62	59	46	(a)	(a)	61
<u>TOTAL</u>	1,300	568	366	303	264	99	19	43	2,962

(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 -									
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
March 1969	1,143	519	373	209	239	67	15	34	2,599

(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 -				
						March 1968	June 1968	Sept. 1968	Dec. 1968	March 1969
Dissolution of marriage(a)-										
Husband petitioner	3,377	3,523	4,010	3,892	4,191	1,293	908	1,016	974	1,011
Wife petitioner	4,536	4,966	5,841	5,791	6,536	1,958	1,513	1,579	1,486	1,588
Granted on petitions of both	4	2	8	5	4	1	..	1	2	..
<u>Total</u>	7,917	8,491	9,859	9,688	10,731	3,252	2,421	2,596	2,462	2,599
Nullity of marriage (a) -										
Husband petitioner	11	10	18	16	18	8	6	1	3	2
Wife petitioner	33	25	32	34	26	11	4	6	5	6
<u>Total</u>	44	35	50	50	44	19	10	7	8	8
Judicial separation -										
Husband petitioner	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Wife petitioner	6	8	12	8	14	5	4	4	1	..
<u>Total</u>	6	8	12	8	14	5	4	4	1	1
Total decrees -										
For husband - Number	3,388	3,533	4,028	3,908	4,209	1,301	914	1,017	977	1,014
Per cent	43	41	41	40	39	40	40	39	40	39
For wife - Number	4,575	4,999	5,885	5,833	6,576	1,974	1,521	1,589	1,492	1,594
Per cent	57	59	59	60	61	60	60	61	60	61
Granted on petitions of both	4	2	8	5	4	1	..	1	2	..
<u>Total</u>	7,967	8,534	9,921	9,746	10,789	3,276	2,435	2,607	2,471	2,608

(a) Decrees absolute.

**TABLE 6. - DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE, NULLITIES OF MARRIAGE AND JUDICIAL
SEPARATIONS GRANTED : MARCH 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	406	208	146	83	125	28	5	10	1,011
Wife petitioner	737	311	227	126	114	39	10	24	1,588
<u>Total</u>	1,143	519	373	209	239	67	15	34	2,599
Nullity of marriage (a) -									
Husband petitioner	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Wife petitioner	..	2	1	3	..	..	..	..	6
<u>Total</u>	1	3	1	3	..	..	..	..	8
Judicial separation -									
Husband petitioner	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
<u>Total</u>	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
Total decrees -									
For husband - Number	407	209	146	83	125	28	5	11	1,014
Per cent	36	40	39	39	52	42	(b)	(b)	39
For wife - Number	737	313	228	129	114	39	10	24	1,594
Per cent	64	60	61	61	48	58	(b)	(b)	61
<u>TOTAL</u>	1,144	522	374	212	239	67	15	35	2,608

(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 : MARCH 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	547	269	164	60	90	30	3	10	1,173
Adultery	275	142	95	67	94	23	4	11	711
Separation	140	76	70	37	45	9	6	2	385
Cruelty	84	8	23	25	6	2	..	7	155
Drunkenness	21	1	9	2	2	..	..	..	35
Failure to pay maintenance	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Refusal to consummate	1	1	2	..	..	1	..	..	5
Frequent convictions	3	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	6
Other single grounds	2	..	1	2	..	..	..	..	5
Dual grounds -									
Desertion and adultery	12	9	3	4	..	1	..	1	30
Desertion and separation	6	5	4	7	..	1	..	..	23
Desertion and cruelty	17	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	19
Desertion and drunkenness	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Desertion and other grounds	2	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Adultery and cruelty	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	2
Cruelty and drunkenness	22	2	2	2	1	..	..	1	30
Other dual grounds	5	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	7
Three grounds or more									
	4	..	..	1	..	..	1	1	7
Total	1,143	519	373	209	239	67	15	34	2,599
NULLITY OF MARRIAGE (a)									
Bigamy	..	1	1	1	..	..	..	..	..
Incapacity to consummate	1	2	1	2	..	..	..	..	..
Total	1	3	1	3	..	..	..	..	8
JUDICIAL SEPARATION									
Cruelty	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
Total	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1

(a) Decrees absolute.

TABLE 8. - DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE GRANTED (a) : AGES OF PARTIES AT TIME OF DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE, AUSTRALIA, MARCH 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	..	73	7	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	81	3
25 - 29	1	156	241	14	3	..	..	..	..	..	415	16
30 - 34	..	19	216	202	18	5	..	..	1	..	461	18
35 - 39	..	2	48	168	137	21	6	1	..	..	383	15
40 - 44	10	53	151	161	21	8	5	2	411	16
45 - 49	5	16	46	106	130	26	4	2	335	13
50 - 54	1	3	10	53	93	72	11	3	246	9
55 - 59	1	7	11	24	56	28	10	137	5
60 & over	2	3	11	30	33	51	130	5
Total (No. wives)	1	250	528	458	374	360	285	193	82	68	2,599	..
(%)	..	10	20	18	14	14	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, MARCH 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	113	55	7	..	..	..	..	175	7	69
5 - 9	297	268	157	40	11	2	..	775	30	756
10 - 14	98	112	174	99	39	15	3	540	21	1,006
15 - 19	53	54	99	96	42	18	6	368	14	840
20 - 24	57	71	96	65	34	12	5	340	13	684
25 - 29	93	74	44	21	8	1	..	241	9	262
30 and over	116	29	14	1	..	..	..	160	6	60
Total marriages dissolved	No. 827	663	591	322	134	48	14	2,599	..	..
	% 32	26	23	12	5	2	..	..	100	..
Total number of children (b)	..	663	1,182	966	536	240	90	..	..	3,677

(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

15 AUGUST 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.