

COMMONWEALTH BUREAU OF CENSUS AND STATISTICS

CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA

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SOCIAL STATISTICS : AUSTRALIA

NO. 38 : DIVORCE

QUARTER ENDED DECEMBER, 1965

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EXPLANATORY NOTES

This bulletin contains statistics of divorce for the quarter ended December, 1965, and for previous periods. For further details in respect of past periods, see previous issues in this series and the annual bulletin "Demography". Details for 1964 were shown in "Social Statistics No. 33 - Divorce, Quarter and Year Ended December, 1964", issued on 24th August, 1965. The detailed statistics for the year ended December, 1965, will be issued in a separate bulletin in this series, to be published at a later date.

2. The Commonwealth Matrimonial Causes Act 1959 came into operation on 1st February, 1961. This Act provides a uniform law throughout Australia with respect to divorce and other matrimonial causes, and supersedes the matrimonial causes laws of the States and Territories except in so far as the transitional provisions of the Act keep 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dissolution, nullity and judicial separation granted since that date include some decrees made on petitions under the superseded laws and are to that extent not uniformly based. By 1965, the number of such decrees had become insignificant.

3. Under this legislation a court may grant decrees of dissolution of marriage (commonly known as divorce), judicial separation, nullity of marriage, restitution of conjugal rights and jactitation of marriage (i.e. that a person should refrain from making the 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 taken as a separate petition.

## I. PETITIONS FILED

TABLE 1. - PETITIONS FILED FOR DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE,

NULLITY OF MARRIAGE AND JUDICIAL SEPARATION : QUARTER ENDED DECEMBER, 1965

Petition for -	N.S.W.	Vic.	Q'ld.	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
Dissolution of Marriage -									
Husband Petitioner	423	280	150	92	81	37	7	16	1,086
Wife Petitioner	715	381	165	161	97	44	7	31	1,601
<u>Total</u>	1,138	661	315	253	178	81	14	47	2,687
Nullity of Marriage -									
Husband Petitioner	..	1	..	1	..	1	..	..	3
Wife Petitioner	6	4	..	2	..	..	..	..	12
<u>Total</u>	6	5	..	3	..	1	..	..	15
Dissolution or Nullity -									
Husband Petitioner	1	3	..	1	..	..	..	..	5
Wife Petitioner	1	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
<u>Total</u>	2	5	..	1	..	..	..	..	8
Judicial Separation -									
Husband Petitioner	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Wife Petitioner	1	1	2	2	..	..	..	..	6
<u>Total</u>	1	1	2	2	..	..	..	..	6
Total Petitions -									
Husband Petitioner No.	424	284	150	94	81	38	7	16	1,094
Per cent.	37	42	47	36	46	46	(a)	(a)	40
Wife Petitioner No.	723	388	167	165	97	44	7	31	1,622
Per cent.	63	58	53	64	54	54	(a)	(a)	60
<u>TOTAL</u>	1,147	672	317	259	178	82	14	47	2,716

(a) Percentage not calculated.

TABLE 2. - PETITIONS FILED FOR DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE,

NULLITY OF MARRIAGE AND JUDICIAL SEPARATION : AUSTRALIA

Petition for -	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	Quarter ended -				
						Dec., 1964	March, 1965	June, 1965	Sept., 1965	Dec., 1965
Dissolution of Marriage										
Husband Petitioner	4,394	4,072	4,000	4,215	4,413	1,100	1,073	1,062	1,192	1,086
Wife Petitioner	5,110	5,176	5,602	5,933	6,425	1,503	1,513	1,611	1,700	1,601
<u>Total</u>	9,504	9,248	9,602	10,148	10,838	2,603	2,586	2,673	2,892	2,687
Nullity of Marriage -										
Husband Petitioner	13	15	11	14	16	4	3	6	4	3
Wife Petitioner	44	35	28	30	35	10	8	3	12	12
<u>Total</u>	57	50	39	44	51	14	11	9	16	15
Dissolution or Nullity -										
Husband Petitioner	3	6	5	5	10	3	1	3	1	5
Wife Petitioner	4	5	10	12	15	3	4	2	6	3
<u>Total</u>	7	11	15	17	25	6	5	5	7	8
Judicial Separation -										
Husband Petitioner	2	2	3	..	1	..	..	..	1	..
Wife Petitioner	9	18	26	34	20	9	6	6	2	6
<u>Total</u>	11	20	29	34	21	9	6	6	3	6
Dissolution or Judicial Separation -										
Husband Petitioner	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Wife Petitioner	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
<u>Total</u>	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total Petitions -										
Husband Petitioner No.	4,412	4,095	4,020	4,234	4,440	1,107	1,077	1,071	1,198	1,094
Per cent.	46	44	42	41	41	42	41	40	41	40
Wife Petitioner No.	5,167	5,234	5,666	6,010	6,495	1,525	1,531	1,622	1,720	1,622
Per cent.	54	56	58	59	59	58	59	60	59	60
<u>TOTAL</u>	9,579	9,329	9,686	10,244	10,935	2,632	2,608	2,693	2,918	2,716

r - Revised.

TABLE 3. - PETITIONS FILED FOR DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE (a)

Period	N.S.W.	Vic.	Q'ld.	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
Year - 1961	4,215	2,289	1,084	865	620	321	40	70	9,504
1962	4,093	2,148	1,083	910	651	276	39	48	9,248
1963	4,339	2,163	1,061	1,005	623	271	50	90	9,602
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	327	61	161	10,838
Quarter ended -									
December, 1964	1,160	645	272	248	156	82	13	27	2,603
March, 1965	1,114	566	303	265	204	77	15	42	2,586
June, 1965	1,140	616	302	309	160	88	13	45	2,673
September, 1965	1,287	658	346	280	r194	81	19	27	r2,892
December, 1965	1,138	661	315	253	178	81	14	47	2,687

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

## II. DECREES GRANTED

TABLE 4. - DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE,  
NULLITIES OF MARRIAGE AND JUDICIAL SEPARATIONS GRANTED (a) :

QUARTER ENDED DECEMBER, 1965

Decree for -	N.S.W.	Vic.	Q'ld.	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
Dissolution of Marriage -									
Husband Petitioner	290	252	143	75	89	38	9	13	909
Wife Petitioner	513	315	176	127	105	44	6	27	1,313
<u>Total</u>	803	567	319	202	194	82	15	40	2,222
Nullity of Marriage -									
Husband Petitioner	..	3	..	..	1	..	..	..	4
Wife Petitioner	4	2	2	1	..	..	..	..	9
<u>Total</u>	4	5	2	1	1	..	..	..	13
Judicial Separation -									
Husband Petitioner	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Wife Petitioner	..	..	3	..	..	..	..	1	4
<u>Total</u>	..	..	3	..	..	..	..	1	4
Total Decrees -									
Husband Petitioner No.	290	255	143	75	90	38	9	13	913
Per cent.	36	45	44	37	46	46	(b)	(b)	41
Wife Petitioner No.	517	317	181	128	105	44	6	28	1,326
Per cent.	64	55	56	63	54	54	(b)	(b)	59
<u>TOTAL</u>	807	572	324	203	195	82	15	41	2,239

(a) Decrees absolute. (b) Percentage not calculated.

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

Decree for -	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	Quarter ended -				
						Dec., 1964	March, 1965	June, 1965	Sept., 1965	Dec., 1965
Dissolution of Marriage -										
Husband Petitioner	3,068	3,308	3,257	3,377	3,524	956	r890	712	r1,013	909
Wife Petitioner	3,643	3,935	4,216	4,536	4,966	1,382	r1,203	r1,026	r1,424	1,313
Granted on Petitions of Both	1	2	3	4	2	..	2	..	..	..
<u>Total</u>	6,712	7,245	7,476	7,917	8,492	2,338	r2,095	r,1738	r2,437	2,222
Nullity of Marriage -										
Husband Petitioner	15	12	7	11	10	4	..	4	2	4
Wife Petitioner	22	28	25	33	25	9	4	8	4	9
<u>Total</u>	37	40	32	44	35	13	4	12	6	13
Judicial Separation -										
Husband Petitioner	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Wife Petitioner	2	3	7	6	8	3	..	3	1	4
<u>Total</u>	2	5	7	6	8	3	..	3	1	4
Total Decrees -										
Husband Petitioner No.	3,083	3,322	3,264	3,388	3,534	960	r890	716	r1,015	913
Per cent.	46	46	43	43	41	41	42	41	42	41
Wife Petitioner No.	3,667	3,966	4,248	4,575	4,999	1,394	r1,207	r1,037	r1,429	1,326
Per cent.	54	54	57	57	59	59	58	59	58	59
Granted on Petitions of Both	1	2	3	4	2	..	2	..	..	..
<u>TOTAL</u>	6,751	7,290	7,515	7,967	8,535	2,354	r2,099	r1,753	r2,444	2,239

(a) Decrees absolute. r - Revised.

**TABLE 6. - DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE GRANTED (a)**

Period	N.S.W.	Vic.	Q'ld.	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
Year - 1961	3,156	1,248	779	718	466	286	23	36	6,712
1962	3,113	1,615	920	685	582	248	38	44	7,245
1963	3,293	1,616	910	765	553	260	38	41	7,476
1964	3,024	2,130	981	887	542	229	31	93	7,917
1965	3,440	2,089	1,052	852	604	279	41	135	8,492
Quarter ended -									
December, 1964	959	679	256	225	142	50	6	21	2,338
March, 1965	r806	477	306	258	146	60	10	32	r2,095
June, 1965	r767	452	167	147	112	61	6	26	r1,738
September, 1965	r1,064	593	260	245	152	76	10	r37	r2,437
December, 1965	803	567	319	202	194	82	15	40	2,222

(a) Decrees absolute. This table excludes nullities of marriage and judicial separations granted. r - Revised.

**TABLE 7. - GROUNDS ON WHICH DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE, NULLITIES OF MARRIAGE  
AND JUDICIAL SEPARATIONS WERE GRANTED (a) : QUARTER ENDED DECEMBER, 1965**

Ground	N.S.W.	Vic.	Q'ld.	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
<b>DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE</b>									
Single grounds -									
Desertion	364	255	171	75	62	32	7	9	975
Adultery	159	149	60	59	70	19	6	10	532
Separation	142	138	61	38	50	23	1	8	461
Cruelty	53	11	6	26	5	1	1	4	107
Drunkenness	11	5	5	1	2	..	..	4	28
Refusal to consummate	1	5	2	..	1	..	..	..	9
Insanity	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Frequent convictions	3	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	4
Imprisonment	1	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	3
Other single grounds	2	1	..	1	1	..	..	..	5
Dual grounds -									
Desertion and adultery	16	1	5	..	..	3	..	..	25
Desertion and separation	14	1	1	..	1	4	..	1	22
Desertion and cruelty	10	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	12
Desertion and drunkenness	6	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	8
Cruelty and drunkenness	14	..	2	..	..	..	..	3	19
Other dual grounds	2	..	2	..	1	..	..	1	6
Three grounds or more	2	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	3
<u>Total</u>	803	567	319	202	194	82	15	40	2,222
<b>NULLITY OF MARRIAGE</b>									
Bigamy	2	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	4
Invalid marriage	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Incapacity to consummate	1	4	1	1	1	..	..	..	8
<u>Total</u>	4	5	2	1	1	..	..	..	13
<b>JUDICIAL SEPARATION</b>									
Adultery	..	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	3
Cruelty	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
<u>Total</u>	..	..	3	..	..	..	..	1	4

(a) Decrees absolute.

TABLE 8. - DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE GRANTED (a) : AGES OF PARTIES AT TIME OF DISSOLUTION  
OF MARRIAGE, AUSTRALIA, QUARTER ENDED DECEMBER, 1965

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	Not Stated	No.	Per cent.
Under 20	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
20 - 24	4	54	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	64	3
25 - 29	3	115	169	14	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	303	14
30 - 34	..	24	182	114	26	4	1	..	..	..	..	351	16
35 - 39	..	9	51	150	146	35	9	4	1	..	..	405	18
40 - 44	..	1	9	52	145	140	32	10	1	1	..	391	18
45 - 49	..	..	1	9	30	110	85	24	3	..	..	262	12
50 - 54	..	..	..	3	14	31	62	73	9	2	..	194	9
55 - 59	..	..	..	2	2	9	25	44	28	12	1	123	5
60 & over	..	..	..	1	2	4	11	19	34	54	..	125	5
Not stated	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	3	..
<b>Total (No. Wives)</b>	8	203	418	345	366	334	225	174	76	69	4	2,222	..
<b>(%)</b>	..	9	19	16	17	15	10	8	3	3	..	..	100

(a) Decrees absolute. This table 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, QUARTER ENDED DECEMBER, 1965

Duration of Marriage (Years)	Dissolutions of Marriage with -							Total Marriages Dissolved		Total Number of Children (b)
	No Child- ren	1 Child	2 Child- ren	3 Child- ren	4 Child- ren	5 Child- ren	6 or more Children	No.	Per cent	
Under 5	111	58	13	2	..	..	..	184	8	90
5 - 9	215	219	104	38	8	1	3	588	26	598
10 - 14	103	111	124	78	28	7	6	457	21	779
15 - 19	84	87	109	83	25	12	10	410	18	778
20 - 24	49	56	74	49	15	6	8	257	12	494
25 - 29	74	50	24	16	6	1	..	171	8	175
30 and over	123	21	5	2	2	2	..	155	7	55
<b>Total (No. Marriages Dissolved)</b>	759	602	453	268	84	29	27	2,222	..	..
<b>(%)</b>	34	27	21	12	4	1	1	..	100	..
<b>Total Number of Children (b)</b>	..	602	906	804	336	145	176	..	..	2,969

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

(b) Living children under 21 at time of petition. The term "children" used in the Commonwealth legislation refers to living "children of the marriage" under 21 years; but the table above includes a small number of dissolutions granted to petitions filed under old legislation in which the term "children" was used differently.

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COMMONWEALTH STATISTICIAN

COMMONWEALTH BUREAU OF CENSUS AND STATISTICS

CANBERRA, A.C.T. 27TH APRIL, 1966.

NOTE. - Inquiries concerning these statistics may be made in Canberra by telephoning 49-6155 Extension 30 or, in each State capital, by telephoning the office of the Bureau of Census and Statistics.