

COMMONWEALTH BUREAU OF CENSUS AND STATISTICS

CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA

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SOCIAL STATISTICS : AUSTRALIA

NO. 46 : DIVORCE

JUNE QUARTER 1966

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EXPLANATORY NOTES

This bulletin contains statistics of divorce for the June quarter 1966 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 1965 were shown in "Social Statistics No. 43 - Divorce 1965", issued on 28th July 1966.

2. The Commonwealth Matrimonial Causes Act 1959 came into operation on 1st February 1961 and was amended in 1965. The 1959 Act provided a uniform law throughout Australia with respect to divorce and other matrimonial causes, and superseded the matrimonial causes laws of the States and Territories except in so far as the transitional provisions of the Act kept them in force for the purpose of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dissolution, nullity and judicial separation granted after that date include some decrees made on petitions under the superseded laws and are to that extent not uniformly based.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 1966, the number of such decrees had become insignificant.

3. Under the Matrimonial Causes Act 1959-1965, 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 counted as a separate petition.

## I. PETITIONS FILED

TABLE 1. - PETITIONS FILED FOR DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE.

## NULLITY OF MARRIAGE AND JUDICIAL SEPARATION : JUNE QUARTER 1966

Petition for-	N.S.W.	Vic.	Q'ld.	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
Dissolution of marriage -									
Husband petitioner	411	307	112	122	82	49	8	18	1,109
Wife petitioner	735	392	155	180	97	53	6	19	1,637
<u>Total</u>	1,146	699	267	302	179	102	14	37	2,746
Nullity of marriage -									
Husband petitioner	3	5	1	1	2	..	..	..	12
Wife petitioner	4	2	..	1	..	..	..	..	7
<u>Total</u>	7	7	1	2	2	..	..	..	19
Dissolution or nullity -									
Husband petitioner	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Wife petitioner	..	2	1	..	..	..	..	..	3
<u>Total</u>	..	3	1	..	..	..	..	..	4
Judicial separation -									
Husband petitioner	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Wife petitioner	5	..	2	..	..	..	..	2	9
<u>Total</u>	5	..	2	..	..	..	..	2	9
Dissolution or judicial separation -									
Husband petitioner	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Wife petitioner	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1
<u>Total</u>	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1
Total petitions -									
By husband - Number	414	313	113	123	84	49	8	18	1,122
- Per cent	36	44	42	40	46	48	(a)	(a)	40
By wife - Number	744	396	158	182	97	53	6	21	1,657
- Per cent	64	56	58	60	54	52	(a)	(a)	60
<u>TOTAL</u>	1,158	709	271	305	181	102	14	39	2,779

(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 -				
						June 1965	Sept. 1965	Dec. 1965	March 1966	June 1966
Dissolution of marriage -										
Husband petitioner	4,394	4,072	4,000	4,215	4,413	1,062	1,192	1,086	1,008	1,109
Wife petitioner	5,110	5,176	5,602	5,933	6,426	1,612	1,700	1,601	1,510	1,637
<u>Total</u>	9,504	9,248	9,602	10,148	10,839	2,674	2,892	2,687	2,518	2,746
Nullity of marriage -										
Husband petitioner	13	15	11	14	16	6	4	3	3	12
Wife petitioner	44	35	28	30	35	3	12	12	7	7
<u>Total</u>	57	50	39	44	51	9	16	15	10	19
Dissolution or nullity -										
Husband petitioner	3	6	5	5	15	3	6	5	3	1
Wife petitioner	4	5	10	12	10	2	1	3	2	3
<u>Total</u>	7	11	15	17	25	5	7	8	5	4
Judicial separation -										
Husband petitioner	2	2	3	..	1	..	1	..	..	..
Wife petitioner	9	18	26	34	20	6	2	6	4	9
<u>Total</u>	11	20	29	34	21	6	3	6	4	9
Dissolution or judicial separation -										
Husband petitioner	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Wife petitioner	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1
<u>Total</u>	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	1
Total petitions -										
By husband - Number	4,412	4,095	4,020	4,234	4,445	1,071	1,203	1,094	1,014	1,122
- Per cent	46	44	42	41	41	40	41	40	40	40
By wife - Number	5,167	5,234	5,666	6,010	6,491	1,623	1,715	1,622	1,523	1,657
- Per cent	54	56	58	59	59	60	59	60	60	60
<u>TOTAL</u>	9,579	9,329	9,686	10,244	10,936	2,694	2,918	2,716	2,537	2,779

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	328	61	161	10,839
Quarter ended -									
June 1965	1,140	616	302	309	160	89	13	45	2,674
September 1965	1,287	658	346	280	194	81	19	27	2,892
December 1965	1,138	661	315	253	178	81	14	47	2,687
March 1966	1,125	514	304	287	165	81	14	28	2,518
June 1966	1,146	699	267	302	179	102	14	37	2,746

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

## II. DECREES GRANTED

TABLE 4. - DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE,

NULLITIES OF MARRIAGE AND JUDICIAL SEPARATIONS GRANTED (a) :

JUNE QUARTER 1966

Decree for -	N.S.W.	Vic.	Q'ld.	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
Dissolution of marriage -									
Husband petitioner	244	183	98	87	59	30	2	7	710
Wife petitioner	425	256	72	136	51	38	3	8	989
Granted on petitions of both	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
<u>Total</u>	669	440	170	223	110	68	5	15	1,700
Nullity of marriage -									
Husband petitioner	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	2
Wife petitioner	3	2	1	2	1	..	..	..	9
<u>Total</u>	3	3	1	2	1	1	..	..	11
Judicial separation -									
Husband petitioner	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Wife petitioner	2	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	3
<u>Total</u>	2	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	3
Total Decrees -									
For husband - Number	244	184	98	87	59	31	2	7	712
Per cent	36	42	57	38	53	45	(b)	(b)	42
For wife - Number	430	258	73	139	52	38	3	8	1,001
Per cent	64	58	43	62	47	55	(b)	(b)	58
Granted on petitions of both	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
<u>TOTAL</u>	674	443	171	226	111	69	5	15	1,714

(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 -				
						June 1965	Sept. 1965	Dec. 1965	March 1966	June 1966
Dissolution of marriage -										
Husband petitioner	3,068	3,308	3,257	3,377	3,523	712	1,012	909	r984	710
Wife petitioner	3,643	3,935	4,216	4,536	4,966	1,026	1,424	1,313	1,430	989
Granted on petitions of both	1	2	3	4	2	..	..	..	3	1
<u>Total</u>	6,712	7,245	7,476	7,917	8,491	1,738	2,436	2,222	r2,417	1,700
Nullity of marriage -										
Husband petitioner	15	12	7	11	10	4	2	4	5	2
Wife petitioner	22	28	25	33	25	8	4	9	3	9
<u>Total</u>	37	40	32	44	35	12	6	13	8	11
Judicial separation -										
Husband petitioner	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Wife petitioner	2	3	7	6	8	3	1	4	1	3
<u>Total</u>	2	5	7	6	8	3	1	4	1	3
Total Decrees -										
For husband - Number	3,083	3,322	3,264	3,388	3,533	716	1,014	913	r989	712
- Per cent	46	46	43	43	41	41	42	41	41	42
For wife - Number	3,667	3,966	4,248	4,575	4,999	1,037	1,429	1,326	1,434	1,001
- Per cent	54	54	57	57	59	59	58	59	59	58
Granted on petitions of both	1	2	3	4	2	..	..	..	3	1
<u>TOTAL</u>	6,751	7,290	7,515	7,967	8,534	1,753	2,443	2,239	r2,426	1,714

(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	134	8,491
Quarter ended -									
June 1965	767	452	167	147	112	61	6	26	1,738
September 1965	1,064	593	260	245	152	76	10	36	2,436
December 1965	803	567	319	202	194	82	15	40	2,222
March 1966	r1,011	508	286	307	199	60	17	29	r2,417
June 1966	669	440	170	223	110	68	5	15	1,700

(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) : JUNE QUARTER 1966

Grounds	N.S.W.	Vic.	Q'ld.	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE									
Single grounds -									
Desertion	320	202	76	62	32	29	1	5	727
Adultery	120	102	30	77	39	12	1	4	385
Separation	127	120	50	44	29	19	2	1	392
Cruelty	39	8	6	27	3	1	..	1	85
Drunkenness	13	4	1	10	..	..	1	2	31
Frequent convictions	4	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	6
Non-compliance with restitution decree	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Refusal to consummate	1	..	1	1	..	1	..	..	4
Insanity	1	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	3
Imprisonment	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Presumption of death	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Dual grounds -									
Desertion and adultery	9	..	1	1	1	..	..	1	13
Desertion and separation	10	..	4	..	4	3	..	1	22
Desertion and cruelty	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6
Desertion and drunkenness	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
Desertion and other	2	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	3
Adultery and cruelty	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	2
Separation and failure to pay maintenance	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1
Separation and imprisonment	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Cruelty and drunkenness	8	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	9
Cruelty and failure to pay maintenance	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Three grounds or more	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
<u>Total</u>	669	440	170	223	110	68	5	15	1,700
NULLITY OF MARRIAGE									
Bigamy	2	..	..	2	1	1	..	..	6
Consent under duress or by fraud	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	2
Incapacity to consummate	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
<u>Total</u>	3	3	1	2	1	1	..	..	11
JUDICIAL SEPARATION									
Desertion	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Adultery	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Drunkenness	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1
<u>Total</u>	2	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	3

(a) Decrees absolute.

TABLE 8. - DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE GRANTED (a) : AGES OF PARTIES AT TIME OF DISSOLUTION  
OF MARRIAGE, AUSTRALIA, JUNE QUARTER 1966

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	Number	Per cent
Under 20	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
20 - 24	3	39	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	44	3
25 - 29	..	85	128	11	4	..	..	..	..	..	228	13
30 - 34	..	14	131	104	9	3	1	..	..	..	262	15
35 - 39	..	3	45	110	112	24	3	..	1	..	298	18
40 - 44	..	2	6	30	106	97	21	3	2	1	268	16
45 - 49	..	..	2	9	27	72	62	20	..	3	195	12
50 - 54	..	..	1	2	15	34	56	46	11	3	168	10
55 - 59	..	1	..	1	3	4	24	37	33	7	110	6
60 & over	..	..	..	..	..	3	12	24	30	58	127	7
Total (Number)	3	144	315	267	276	237	179	130	77	72	1,700	..
wives (Per cent)	..	8	19	16	16	14	11	8	4	4	..	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, JUNE QUARTER 1966

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	Number	Per cent	
Under 5	82	39	10	1	2	..	..	134	8	70
5 - 9	186	126	84	15	9	3	..	423	25	390
10 - 14	92	92	80	48	18	4	4	338	20	515
15 - 19	63	56	84	52	25	14	9	303	18	606
20 - 24	46	50	56	23	20	10	2	207	12	373
25 - 29	58	46	16	14	4	2	1	141	8	154
30 and over	125	22	5	2	..	..	..	154	9	38
Total (Number)	652	431	335	155	78	33	16	1,700	..	..
marriages dissolved (Per cent)	38	25	20	9	5	2	1	..	100	..
Total number of children (b)	..	431	670	465	312	165	103	..	..	2,146

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

(b) Living children under 21 at the time of petition. The term "children" used in the Commonwealth legislation refers to living "children of the marriage" under 21 years; for dissolutions granted on petitions filed under superseded legislation the term "children" was used differently.

J.P. O'NEILL.  
ACTING COMMONWEALTH STATISTICIAN

COMMONWEALTH BUREAU OF CENSUS AND STATISTICS

CANBERRA, A.C.T.

4 JANUARY 1967

NOTE. - Inquiries concerning these statistics may be made in Canberra by telephoning 49-6155 Extension 1 or, in each State capital, by telephoning the office of the Bureau of Census and Statistics.