

COMMONWEALTH BUREAU OF CENSUS AND STATISTICS

CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA

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SOCIAL STATISTICS : AUSTRALIA

NO. 65 : DIVORCE

MARCH 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 March 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.

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 This Act provided a uniform law throughout Australia with respect to divorce and other matrimonial causes, and superseded the matrimonial causes laws of the States and Territories except in so far as the transitional provisions of the Act kept them in force for the purpose of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dissolution, nullity and judicial separation granted after that date include some decrees made on petitions under the superseded laws and are to that extent not uniformly based.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 - 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
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
Quarter ended -									
March 1967	1,351	551	305	279	191	67	3	39	2,786
June 1967	1,520	731	345	321	245	87	26	37	3,312
September 1967	1,326	748	392	307	252	73	18	45	3,161
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

(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 -	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	Quarter ended -					
						March 1967	June 1967	Sept. 1967	Dec. 1967	March 1968	
Dissolution of marriage -											
Husband petitioner	4,000	4,215	4,413	4,510	4,798	1,112	1,284	1,263	1,139	1,148	
Wife petitioner	5,602	5,933	6,426	6,622	7,355	1,674	2,028	1,898	1,755	1,819	
<u>Total</u>	9,602	10,148	10,839	11,132	12,153	2,786	3,312	3,161	2,894	2,967	
Nullity of marriage -											
Husband petitioner	11	14	16	25	21	6	6	5	4	5	
Wife petitioner	28	30	35	30	44	9	13	11	11	11	
<u>Total</u>	39	44	51	55	65	15	19	16	15	16	
Dissolution or nullity -											
Husband petitioner	5	5	15	9	9	2	3	2	2	1	
Wife petitioner	10	12	10	12	11	1	3	3	4	1	
<u>Total</u>	15	17	25	21	20	3	6	5	6	2	
Judicial separation -											
Husband petitioner	3	..	4	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	
Wife petitioner	26	34	20	24	39	7	11	6	15	11	
<u>Total</u>	29	34	21	25	39	7	11	6	15	11	
Dissolution or judicial separation -											
Husband petitioner	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
Wife petitioner	..	1	..	3	2	1	1	..	..	..	
<u>Total</u>	1	1	..	3	2	1	1	..	..	..	
Total petitions -											
By husband - Number	4,020	4,234	4,445	4,545	4,828	1,120	1,293	1,270	1,145	1,154	
Per cent	42	41	41	40	39	40	39	40	39	39	
By wife - Number	5,666	6,010	6,491	6,691	7,451	1,692	2,056	1,918	1,785	1,842	
Per cent	58	59	59	60	61	60	61	60	61	61	
<u>TOTAL</u>	9,686	10,244	10,936	11,236	12,279	2,812	3,349	3,188	2,930	2,996	

TABLE 3. - PETITIONS FILED FOR DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE,  
NULLITY OF MARRIAGE AND JUDICIAL SEPARATION : MARCH 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	496	225	145	96	122	42	8	14	1,148
Wife petitioner	883	348	203	180	130	41	3	31	1,819
<u>Total</u>	1,379	573	348	276	252	83	11	45	2,967
Nullity of marriage -									
Husband petitioner	3	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	5
Wife petitioner	7	..	2	1	..	..	..	1	11
<u>Total</u>	10	1	3	1	..	..	..	1	16
Dissolution or nullity -									
Husband petitioner	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Wife petitioner	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
<u>Total</u>	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Judicial separation -									
Husband petitioner	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Wife petitioner	2	1	1	4	..	..	..	3	11
<u>Total</u>	2	1	1	4	..	..	..	3	11
Total petitions -									
By husband - Number	499	227	146	96	122	42	8	14	1,154
Per cent	36	39	41	34	48	51	(a)	(a)	39
By wife - Number	892	350	206	185	130	41	3	35	1,842
Per cent	64	61	59	66	52	49	(a)	(a)	61
<u>TOTAL</u>	1,391	577	352	281	252	83	11	49	2,996

(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 - 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
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
Quarter ended -									
March 1967	1,667	480	298	296	223	66	7	37	3,074
June 1967	673	430	165	185	114	50	2	19	1,638
September 1967	1,077	793	312	235	193	63	7	24	2,704
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

(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 -	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	Quarter ended -				
						March 1967	June 1967	Sept. 1967	Dec. 1967	March 1968
Dissolution of marriage -										
Husband petitioner	3,257	3,377	3,523	4,010	3,892	1,215	656	1,108	913	1,293
Wife petitioner	4,216	4,536	4,966	5,841	5,791	1,857	980	1,595	1,359	1,958
Granted on petitions of both	3	4	2	8	5	2	2	1	..	1
<u>Total</u>	7,476	7,917	8,491	9,859	9,688	3,074	1,638	2,704	2,272	3,252
Nullity of marriage -										
Husband petitioner	7	11	10	18	16	4	4	5	3	8
Wife petitioner	25	33	25	32	34	8	8	8	10	11
<u>Total</u>	32	44	35	50	50	12	12	13	13	19
Judicial separation -										
Husband petitioner	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Wife petitioner	7	6	8	12	8	1	2	2	3	5
<u>Total</u>	7	6	8	12	8	1	2	2	3	5
Total decrees -										
For husband - Number	3,264	3,388	3,533	4,028	3,908	1,219	660	1,113	916	1,301
Per cent	43	43	41	41	40	40	40	41	40	40
For wife - Number	4,248	4,575	4,999	5,885	5,833	1,866	990	1,605	1,372	1,974
Per cent	57	57	59	59	60	60	60	59	60	60
Granted on petitions of both	3	4	2	8	5	2	2	1	..	1
<u>TOTAL</u>	7,515	7,967	8,534	9,921	9,746	3,087	1,652	2,719	2,288	3,276

(a) Decrees absolute.

TABLE 6. - DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE, NULLITIES OF MARRIAGE AND JUDICIAL  
SEPARATIONS GRANTED (a) : MARCH 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	534	361	141	75	125	29	6	22	1,293
Wife petitioner	945	468	203	142	148	28	2	22	1,958
Granted on petitions of both	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
<u>Total</u>	1,480	829	344	217	273	57	8	44	3,252
Nullity of marriage -									
Husband petitioner	5	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	8
Wife petitioner	7	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	11
<u>Total</u>	12	7	..	..	..	..	..	..	19
Judicial separation -									
Husband petitioner	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Wife petitioner	3	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	5
<u>Total</u>	3	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	5
Total decrees -									
For husband - Number	539	364	141	75	125	29	6	22	1,301
Per cent	36	44	41	35	46	51	(b)	(b)	40
For wife - Number	955	472	204	142	148	28	2	23	1,974
Per cent	64	56	59	65	54	49	(b)	(b)	60
Granted on petitions of both	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
<u>TOTAL</u>	1,495	836	345	217	273	57	8	45	3,276

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

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

Grounds	N.S.W.	Vic.	Qld	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
<b>Single grounds -</b>									
Desertion	707	434	160	91	87	28	1	11	1,519
Adultery	285	187	57	55	107	16	3	21	731
Separation	276	176	82	31	61	11	..	5	642
Cruelty	125	12	28	28	7	..	1	4	205
Drunkenness	13	3	7	4	3	..	..	..	30
Failure to pay maintenance	1	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	3
Non-compliance with restitution decree	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	2
Refusal to consummate	5	6	..	1	..	..	..	..	12
Insanity	1	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	3
Frequent convictions	2	2	1	1	..	..	..	..	6
Rape	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Presumption of death	1	1	2	..	..	..	..	..	4
Other single grounds	2	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	3
<b>Dual grounds -</b>									
Desertion and adultery	17	1	4	1	1	..	..	..	24
Desertion and separation	7	..	..	1	1	1	2	..	12
Desertion and cruelty	8	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	10
Desertion and drunkenness	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Desertion and failure to pay maintenance	2	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	3
Desertion and frequent convictions	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Adultery and cruelty	2	1	1	1	..	..	..	..	5
Adultery and drunkenness	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	2
Cruelty and drunkenness	18	4	2	..	1	..	..	3	28
Three grounds or more	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
<u>Total</u>	1,480	829	344	217	273	57	8	44	3,252
<b>NULLITY OF MARRIAGE</b>									
Bigamy	6	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	7
Incapacity to consummate	6	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	12
<u>Total</u>	12	7	..	..	..	..	..	..	19
<b>JUDICIAL SEPARATION</b>									
Adultery	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	4
Cruelty and drunkenness	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1
<u>Total</u>	3	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	5

(a) Decrees absolute.

TABLE 8. - DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE GRANTED (a) : AGES OF PARTIES AT TIME OF DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE, AUSTRALIA, MARCH 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	Not stated	No.	%	
Under 20	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
20 - 24	..	66	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	72	2	
25 - 29	1	157	270	25	5	..	..	..	..	..	..	458	14	
30 - 34	..	32	266	213	29	5	..	2	..	..	..	547	17	
35 - 39	..	3	54	223	195	32	5	1	..	..	..	513	16	
40 - 44	..	2	13	68	187	196	41	5	2	..	..	514	16	
45 - 49	..	..	6	14	55	168	138	37	7	3	..	428	13	
50 - 54	..	1	2	1	15	56	113	94	16	7	..	305	9	
55 - 59	..	..	1	4	4	24	39	84	59	14	1	230	7	
60 & over	..	..	..	..	1	4	22	39	43	76	..	185	6	
Not stated	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
Total wives	(No.)	1	261	618	548	491	485	358	262	127	100	1	3,252	..
	(%)	..	8	19	17	15	15	11	8	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, MARCH QUARTER 1968

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		
								Number	Per cent		
Under 5	123	34	5	1	..	..	..	163	5	47	
5 - 9	385	305	186	41	8	4	1	930	29	858	
10 - 14	178	161	192	93	42	13	3	682	21	1,075	
15 - 19	105	85	137	108	43	10	10	498	15	968	
20 - 24	94	69	130	71	50	11	8	433	13	854	
25 - 29	121	75	55	21	15	..	3	290	9	327	
30 and over	204	34	13	3	2	..	..	256	8	77	
Total marriages dissolved	(No.)	1,210	763	718	338	160	38	25	3,252	..	..
	(%)	37	24	22	10	5	1	1	..	100	..
Total number of children (b)	..	763	1,436	1,014	640	190	163	..	..	4,206	

(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.

K. M. ARCHER  
COMMONWEALTH STATISTICIAN

COMMONWEALTH BUREAU OF CENSUS AND STATISTICS

CANBERRA, A.C.T. 2600 9 OCTOBER 1968

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.