

COMMONWEALTH BUREAU OF CENSUS AND STATISTICS

CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA

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SOCIAL STATISTICS : AUSTRALIA

NO. 66 : DIVORCE

JUNE 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 June 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 This Act provided a uniform law throughout Australia with respect to divorce and other matrimonial causes, and superseded the matrimonial causes laws of the States and Territories except in so far as the transitional provisions of the Act kept them in force for the purpose of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dissolution, nullity and judicial separation granted after that date include some decrees made on petitions under the superseded laws and are to that extent not uniformly based.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 -									
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
June 1968	1,409	735	367	290	255	86	17	45	3,204

(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 -				
						June 1967	Sept. 1967	Dec. 1967	March 1968	June 1968
Dissolution of marriage -										
Husband petitioner	4,000	4,215	4,413	4,510	4,798	1,284	1,263	1,139	1,148	1,240
Wife petitioner	5,602	5,933	6,426	6,622	7,355	2,028	1,898	1,755	1,819	1,964
Total	9,602	10,148	10,839	11,132	12,153	3,312	3,161	2,894	2,967	3,204
Nullity of marriage -										
Husband petitioner	11	14	16	25	21	6	5	4	5	4
Wife petitioner	28	30	35	30	44	13	11	11	11	11
Total	39	44	51	55	65	19	16	15	16	15
Dissolution or nullity -										
Husband petitioner	5	5	15	9	9	3	2	2	1	4
Wife petitioner	10	12	10	12	11	3	3	4	1	4
Total	15	17	25	21	20	6	5	6	2	8
Judicial separation -										
Husband petitioner	3	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Wife petitioner	26	34	20	24	39	11	6	15	11	10
Total	29	34	21	25	39	11	6	15	11	10
Dissolution or judicial separation -										
Husband petitioner	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Wife petitioner	..	1	..	3	2	1	..	..	..	..
Total	1	1	..	3	2	1	..	..	..	..
Total petitions -										
By husband - Number	4,020	4,234	4,445	4,545	4,828	1,293	1,270	1,145	1,154	1,248
Per cent	42	41	41	40	39	39	40	39	39	39
By wife - Number	5,666	6,010	6,491	6,691	7,451	2,056	1,918	1,785	1,842	1,989
Per cent	58	59	59	60	61	61	60	61	61	61
TOTAL	9,686	10,244	10,936	11,236	12,279	3,349	3,188	2,930	2,996	3,237

TABLE 3. - PETITIONS FILED FOR DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE,  
NULLITY OF MARRIAGE AND JUDICIAL SEPARATION : JUNE 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	516	292	139	101	118	44	10	20	1,240
Wife petitioner	893	443	228	189	137	42	7	25	1,964
<u>Total</u>	1,409	735	367	290	255	86	17	45	3,204
Nullity of marriage -									
Husband petitioner	1	2	..	..	1	..	..	..	4
Wife petitioner	4	..	..	4	1	1	..	1	11
<u>Total</u>	5	2	..	4	2	1	..	1	15
Dissolution or nullity -									
Husband petitioner	1	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
Wife petitioner	..	1	2	1	..	..	..	..	4
<u>Total</u>	1	4	2	1	..	..	..	..	8
Judicial separation -									
Husband petitioner	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Wife petitioner	2	1	1	4	1	..	..	1	10
<u>Total</u>	2	1	1	4	1	..	..	1	10
Total petitions -									
By husband - Number	518	297	139	101	119	44	10	20	1,248
Per cent	37	40	38	34	46	51	(a)	(a)	39
By wife - Number	899	445	231	198	139	43	7	27	1,989
Per cent	63	60	62	66	54	49	(a)	(a)	61
<u>TOTAL</u>	1,417	742	370	299	258	87	17	47	3,237

(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 -									
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
June 1968	1,379	477	171	189	108	70	1	26	2,421

(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 -				
						June 1967	Sept. 1967	Dec. 1967	March 1968	June 1968
Dissolution of marriage -										
Husband petitioner	3,257	3,377	3,523	4,010	3,892	656	1,108	913	1,293	908
Wife petitioner	4,216	4,536	4,966	5,841	5,791	980	1,595	1,359	1,958	1,513
Granted on petitions of both	3	4	2	8	5	2	1	..	1	..
<u>Total</u>	7,476	7,917	8,491	9,859	9,688	1,638	2,704	2,272	3,252	2,421
Nullity of marriage -										
Husband petitioner	7	11	10	18	16	4	5	3	8	6
Wife petitioner	25	33	25	32	34	8	8	10	11	4
<u>Total</u>	32	44	35	50	50	12	13	13	19	10
Judicial separation -										
Husband petitioner	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Wife petitioner	7	6	8	12	8	2	2	3	5	4
<u>Total</u>	7	6	8	12	8	2	2	3	5	4
Total decrees -										
For husband - Number	3,264	3,388	3,533	4,028	3,908	660	1,113	916	1,301	914
Per cent	43	43	41	41	40	40	41	40	40	40
For wife - Number	4,248	4,575	4,999	5,885	5,833	990	1,605	1,372	1,974	1,521
Per cent	57	57	59	59	60	60	59	60	60	60
Granted on petitions of both	3	4	2	8	5	2	1	..	1	..
<u>TOTAL</u>	7,515	7,967	8,534	9,921	9,746	1,652	2,719	2,288	3,276	2,435

(a) Decrees absolute.

TABLE 6. - DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE, NULLITIES OF MARRIAGE AND JUDICIAL  
SEPARATIONS GRANTED (a) : JUNE 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	493	190	69	69	50	30	..	7	908
Wife petitioner	886	287	102	120	58	40	1	19	1,513
Granted on petitions of both	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
<u>Total</u>	1,379	477	171	189	108	70	1	26	2,421
Nullity of marriage -									
Husband petitioner	3	1	..	2	..	..	..	..	6
Wife petitioner	2	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	4
<u>Total</u>	5	2	..	3	..	..	..	..	10
Judicial separation -									
Husband petitioner	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Wife petitioner	2	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	4
<u>Total</u>	2	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	4
Total decrees -									
For husband - Number	496	191	69	71	50	30	..	7	914
Per cent	36	40	40	37	46	43	(b)	(b)	38
For wife - Number	890	288	102	123	58	40	1	19	1,521
Per cent	64	60	60	63	54	57	(b)	(b)	62
Granted on petitions of both	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
<u>TOTAL</u>	1,386	479	171	194	108	70	1	26	2,435

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

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

Grounds	N.S.W.	Vic.	Qld	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
<b>Single grounds -</b>									
Desertion	663	235	85	56	36	26	1	8	1,110
Adultery	290	124	31	54	38	18	..	7	562
Separation	199	89	43	39	29	17	..	2	418
Cruelty	118	7	3	20	3	..	..	3	154
Drunkenness	25	5	6	7	..	..	..	..	43
Failure to pay maintenance	2	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	4
Non-compliance with restitution decree	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Refusal to consummate	4	4	1	..	..	..	..	1	10
Insanity	1	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	3
Frequent convictions	3	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	5
Rape	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Presumption of death	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Other single grounds	1	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
<b>Dual grounds -</b>									
Desertion and adultery	7	4	1	..	..	1	..	..	13
Desertion and separation	17	2	..	7	..	7	..	..	33
Desertion and cruelty	9	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	9
Desertion and drunkenness	3	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	5
Desertion and failure to pay maintenance	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Desertion and frequent convictions	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Adultery and cruelty	3	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	5
Adultery and drunkenness	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Cruelty and drunkenness	27	1	1	2	..	..	..	3	34
Other dual grounds	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Three grounds or more	2	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	4
<u>Total</u>	1,379	477	171	189	108	70	1	26	2,421
<b>NULLITY OF MARRIAGE</b>									
Bigamy	3	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	5
Incapacity to consummate	2	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	4
Invalid marriage	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1
<u>Total</u>	5	2	..	3	..	..	..	..	10
<b>JUDICIAL SEPARATION</b>									
Adultery	1	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	3
Cruelty	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
<u>Total</u>	2	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	4

(a) Decrees absolute.

TABLE 8. -- DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE GRANTED (a) : AGES OF PARTIES AT TIME OF DISSOLUTION  
OF MARRIAGE, AUSTRALIA, JUNE 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	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
20 - 24	1	54	9	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	64	3
25 - 29	..	148	216	14	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	381	16
30 - 34	..	29	194	157	18	4	..	..	..	..	..	402	16
35 - 39	..	5	46	143	134	31	10	1	..	..	..	370	15
40 - 44	..	1	14	48	152	128	34	3	2	1	..	383	16
45 - 49	..	..	5	18	42	131	109	25	4	..	..	334	14
50 - 54	..	..	4	1	6	36	76	67	21	1	..	212	9
55 - 59	..	..	1	..	8	11	31	37	41	10	..	139	6
60 & over	..	..	..	..	3	2	11	24	39	56	..	135	5
Not stated	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
<b>Total wives</b> (No.)	1	238	489	381	366	343	271	157	107	68	..	2,421	..
(%)	..	10	20	16	15	14	11	7	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 1968

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	Number	Per cent	
Under 5	129	47	8	3	..	1	..	188	8	77
5 - 9	282	224	155	29	3	3	1	697	29	655
10 - 14	122	104	118	76	31	7	1	459	19	733
15 - 19	67	86	123	77	33	10	11	407	17	816
20 - 24	65	61	102	58	29	6	8	329	13	645
25 - 29	93	35	38	18	5	..	1	190	8	192
30 and over	117	19	14	..	1	..	..	151	6	51
<b>Total marriages dissolved</b> (No.)	875	576	558	261	102	27	22	2,421	..	..
(%)	36	24	23	11	4	1	1	..	100	..
<b>Total number of children (b)</b>	..	576	1,116	783	408	135	151	..	..	3,169

(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.

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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.