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Preface

This statistical release presents information on civil marriages that were registered by the Department of Home Affairs in 2007. The release also reports on the 2007 divorces that were granted by the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development through its divorce courts that had reached Stats SA at the time of publication.

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KEY FINDINGS

1. Introduction

There are two main sources of marriage and divorce statistics in South Africa namely those compiled from censuses and surveys and those compiled from vital registration and administrative records. The data from each of these sources give different aspects of information on marriages and divorces in a given population. Census and survey data are by nature, subjective individual information that provide cross-sectional data on individuals' marital status (single, married, divorced, widowed, etc). Therefore marriage and divorce in this context cover different types of marriages and associated divorces that took place at different periods in the people's lives.

However, not all types of marriages and divorces are registered. The specific types of marriage and divorce that can be registered are stipulated and governed by legal frameworks. Unlike surveys, data collection is based on continuous recording of events (marriages and divorces) as they take place.

The *Marriages and divorces statistical release (P0307)* publishes annual marriage and divorce data that are collected through administrative records / registration systems and not through censuses / surveys. The marriage data currently cover civil marriages that are administered by the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) through the Marriage Act, 1961 (Act No. 25 of 1961). The Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (DoJ&CD) is mandated through the Divorce Act, 1979 (Act No. 70 of 1979) to handle with matters of dissolution of civil marriages. Data on granted divorces (from civil marriages) are obtained from DoJ&CD, through its divorce courts.

The current information is based on the 2007 marriages and divorces data. The findings of the data are presented in two separate sections. It is important to note that although both the marriage and divorce data were collected in the same year, they are not linked to each other. Marriages are civil marriages that were recorded in 2007. Divorces are the divorce cases whose application for divorce was granted in 2007.

2. Marriages

2.1 Trends in marriages (1998-2007)

In 2007, 183 030 marriages were registered. This number includes 438 marriages of South African citizens solemnised outside the borders of South Africa but were registered in South Africa. Information provided in Table 1 shows that the number of registered marriages has generally been increasing over the last ten years (1998–2007). In 1998, 146 741 marriages were registered. This number had increased to 183 030 in 2007 showing an increase of 36 289 (24,7%). However, there were observed annual fluctuations particularly the sudden declines in 1999 and 2001 as well as the sharp increase in 2002. The 2007 figure of 183 030 shows a decline of 1 830 (1,0%) from 184 860 marriages recorded in 2006.

As shown in Figure 1, the summer months, beginning from September and peaking in December, continue to be the most popular months for marriages. In 2007, the highest number of marriages, 30 505 (16,7%), took place in December compared to June that recorded the lowest, 9 587(5,2%).

2.2 Solemnisation of marriages

Only licensed marriage officers are required by the Marriage Act to solemnise civil marriages. Civil marriages are generally solemnised at the offices of the DHA and at chapels or religious buildings. In Table 2, these types of marriages are grouped under 'civil' i.e. marriages solemnised by lay persons and 'religious' marriages solemnised by priests / religious persons. The 2007 data show that 89 112 (48,6%) of the 183 030 marriages were solemnised by civil rites and 93 828 (51,3%) by religious rites. The type of solemnisation rite was not specified in 90 marriages.

After the solemnisation ceremony, the marriage officer issues the couple with an unabridged marriage certificate (BI-27) free of charge and submits the marriage register to the nearest DHA office for the recording of the marriage particulars in the National Population Register (NPR). Therefore the place (e.g. municipality or province) of registration of the marriage is not necessarily the place of usual residence of the couple. In 2007, the highest number of marriages solemnised by civil rites were registered in Gauteng and the lowest in Northern Cape. The highest number of marriages solemnised by religious rites were recorded in Gauteng and the lowest in Limpopo.

2.3 Marital status at the time of marriage

Data presented in Table 3 indicate that most of the marriages in 2007 were first time marriages. Overall, 149 556 (81,7%) men and 156 118 (85,3%) women had never been married. Among those who were remarrying, there were 5 392 (3,0%) male divorcees and 4 046 (2,2%) widowers. In the case of brides, there were 4 172 (2,3%) divorcees and 3 425 (1,9%) widows. The marital status of 24 036 (13,1%) bridegrooms and 19 315 brides (10,6%) was not recorded. The data show that half (50,1%), of the 9 438 remarrying men were divorcees but the proportion of divorcees among the 7 589 women who were remarrying was slightly above half (4 172 or 55,0%). Irrespective of their marital status men married partners who had never been married (see Tables 4). Thus, 92,6%, 52,9% and 79,8% never married men, divorcees and widowers respectively married women who had never married.

2.4 Age at the time of marriage

Demographers are interested in the age at first marriage or union because of its theoretical link to exposure to the risk of pregnancy, childbearing and ultimately to fertility. This link tends to be weakened in populations where pre-marital fertility is quite widespread. Nevertheless, age at first marriage or union continues to be a good proxy for measuring not only fertility but other health and socio-economic indicators relating particularly to the role and status of women in society. The importance of this indicator is underscored in South Africa through the Marriage Act that puts restrictions on marriage (with respect to civil marriages) involving minors (persons under 21 years old). These minors (provided they have married before) require parental or guardian consent before entering into a civil marriage. Furthermore, boys younger than 18 years and girls younger than 15 years, in addition to the consent of the parents or guardians, require the consent of the Minister of Home Affairs before they can marry. In 2007, the marriage of 794 men and 6 170 women younger than 21 years were registered. As expected, there were insignificantly low numbers of registered marriages of men (16) younger than 18 years and women (19) younger than 15 years.

As observed from Figure 2, women continue to enter marriage for the first time at younger ages than men. In 2007, the median age for grooms was 34 years compared to 30 years for brides. Major differences however, are observed when the marital status at the time of current marriage is considered (see Figures 3b, 3c and 3d). For first time marriages, the median age for bachelors was 32 years and that of spinsters was 29 years giving a difference of three years. The age at first marriage for both men and women has remained the same as 2006. For remarriages, the median age of divorced men was 51 years compared to 45 years for their female counterparts yielding an age gap of five years. The median ages for widowers and widows were 43 years and 29 years respectively resulting in a 14 years' gap. Despite the fact that men tend to marry younger women, in 2007 15,0% of bridegroom were younger than their brides whilst 7,1% were of the same age (see Tables 4).

3. Divorces

3.1 Trends in divorces (1998-2007)

The published data (by Stats SA) on divorces presented in Table 6 indicate that the number of granted cases has been fluctuating between 35 792 and 29 639 per annum in the past decade (1998-2007). The distribution of couples divorcing by population groups shows that there were more divorces among the White population group compared to the other groups. This finding does not necessarily indicate high divorce among that population. Rather, a possible reflection that the published divorce data are divorces from civil marriages and not other types of marriages. Despite the general fluctuations, the proportions of divorces from the mixed and the African groups have been increasing whilst that of the White group has been declining in the past ten years. Thus in 1998 the mixed, African and White groups made up 0,7%; 18,6% and 40,4% of the number of divorces respectively. However, the current data indicate that the contribution of the mixed and the African groups have increased to 2,9% and 30,6% respectively whilst that of the White group has declined to 33,5%.

3.2 Plaintiff

The 2007 data reveal that there were more female (54,0%) than male (43,9%) plaintiffs (see Table 7). However, there were significant differences among population groups. In the African group, more husbands (53,1%) than wives (44,6%) initiated the divorce. This is in sharp contrast to the other population groups, particularly among the Coloured (62,7%) and the White (60,4%) whereby most divorces were initiated by women.

Table 8 provides information on the occupation of the plaintiffs. Even though a high proportion of the plaintiffs did not indicate the type of occupation they were engaged in at the time of divorce, the highest percentage of wives (22,0%) were in clerical and sales occupations whereas husbands (14,5%) were in managerial and administrative occupations. Very few plaintiffs were in farming and related occupations.

3.3 Solemnisation

It is observed from Table 9 that 49,4% of all the divorce cases were from marriages that were solemnised by religious rites and 42,8% by civil rites. A similar pattern was also found among all population groups except among the White population group whereby only 20,7% of divorces were from marriages solemnised by civil rites.

3.4 Number of times married

The 2007 divorce cases were mainly from first marriages. The pattern of remarriages among husbands was quite similar to that of the wives (see Table 10). Slightly fewer (75,7%) husbands were from first marriages compared to 76,4% of wives. About 2,0% of husbands and wives were getting divorced for at least the third time.

3.5 Age at the time of divorce

The median age at divorce in 2007 was 43 for men and 39 for women. Figure 5 shows that African men and women from the mixed group had the highest (44 years) and lowest (35 years) median age at divorce respectively. Detailed information on age by population groups are presented in Figure 6 and Figure 7 as well as Table 11 and Table 12.

3.6 Duration of marriage of those divorcing

The median duration of marriage in 2007 was 10 years. Detailed information on the distribution of the number of divorces by age groups for husbands and wives are given in Table 13 and Table 14 respectively. The largest number of divorces (8 001 or 27,0%) were from marriages that lasted five to nine years. This group is followed by marriages that lasted less than five years (6 230 or 21,0%). Thus, almost half 48,0 % of the 29 639 divorces in 2007 were from marriages that lasted less than 10 years. As the duration of marriages increased the number of divorces decreased. For example, 93,5% and 81,3% of divorces of women and men aged younger than 25 years lasted for less than 5 years respectively. Divorces were particularly fewer among those who had been married for 35 years or more. Irrespective of the population group of the divorcees (see Figure 8), the distribution of divorces continues to be skewed towards earlier years of marriage.

3.7 Divorces involving couples with children

In 2007, there were 28 480 children (younger than 18 years old) involved in divorce. It is observed from Table 15, that 16 892 (57,0%) of the 29 639 divorces had children younger than 18 years indicating that, on the average, there was between one and two children per divorce. Overall, 27,0% (7 991) of the divorces with children had only one child whereas 2,4% had at least four children at the time of the divorce.

Figure 1: Marriages by month, 2007

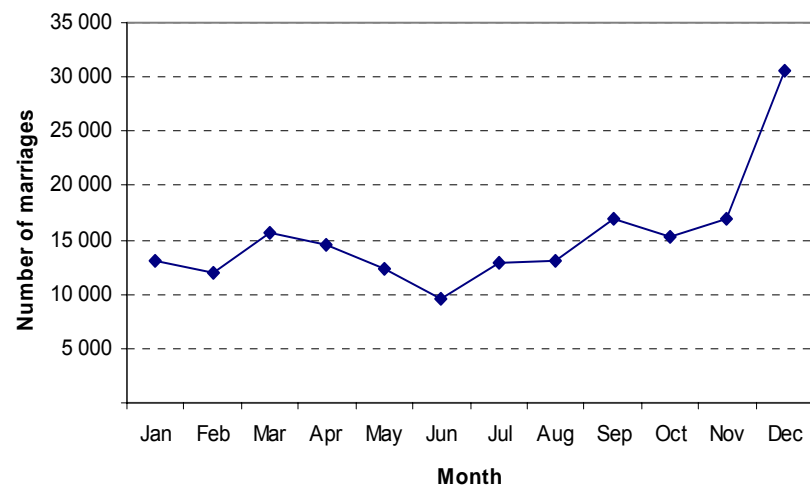


Figure 2: Age at first marriage for bachelors and spinsters, 2007

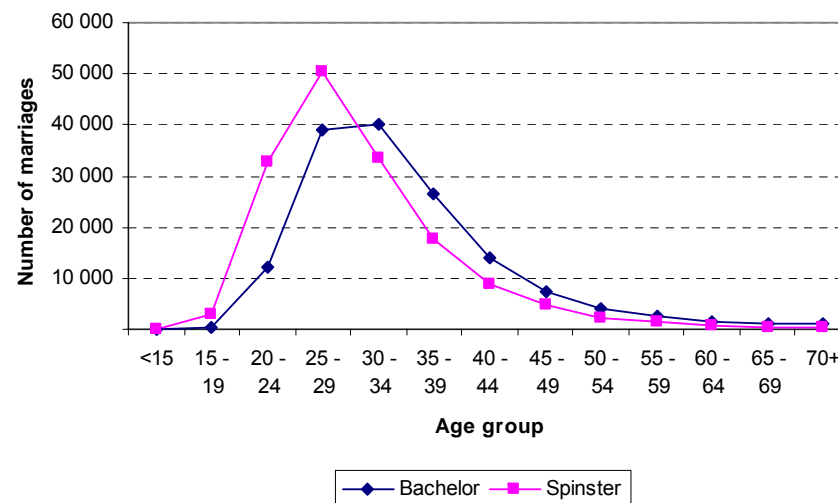


Figure 3a: Median age of bridegrooms and brides, 2003-2007



Figure 3b: Median age of bachelors and spinsters, 2003-2007

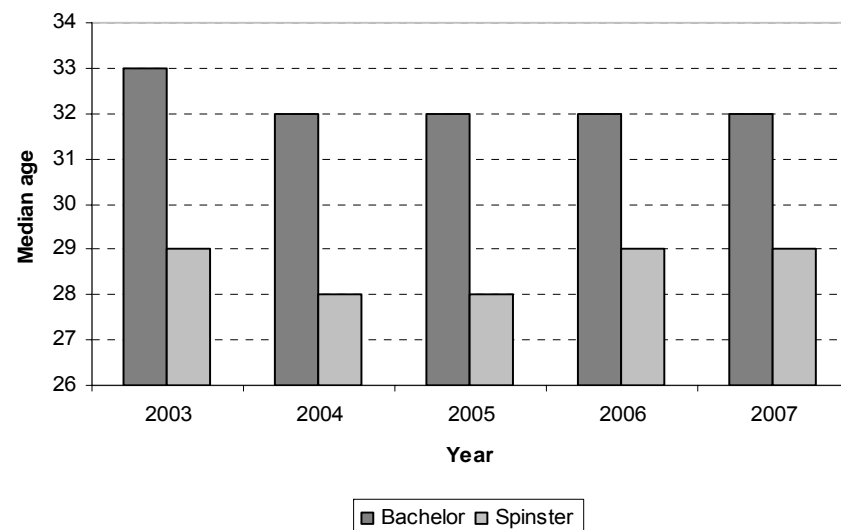


Figure 3c: Median age of widowers and widows, 2003-2007

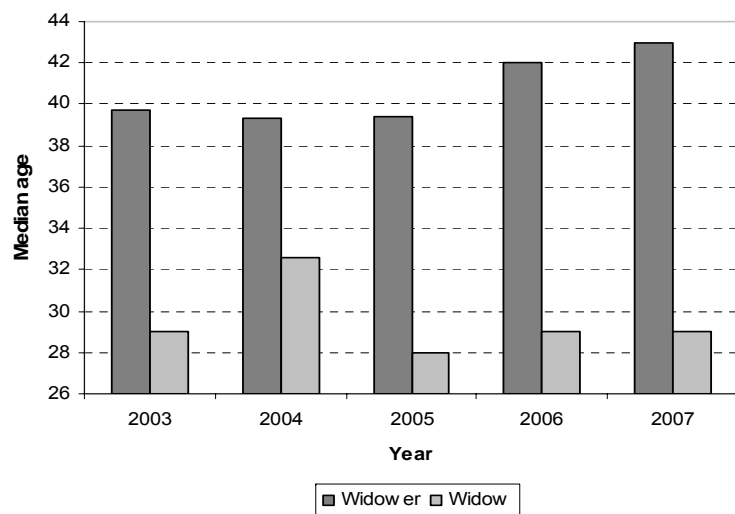


Figure 3d: Median age of male and female divorcees, 2003-2007

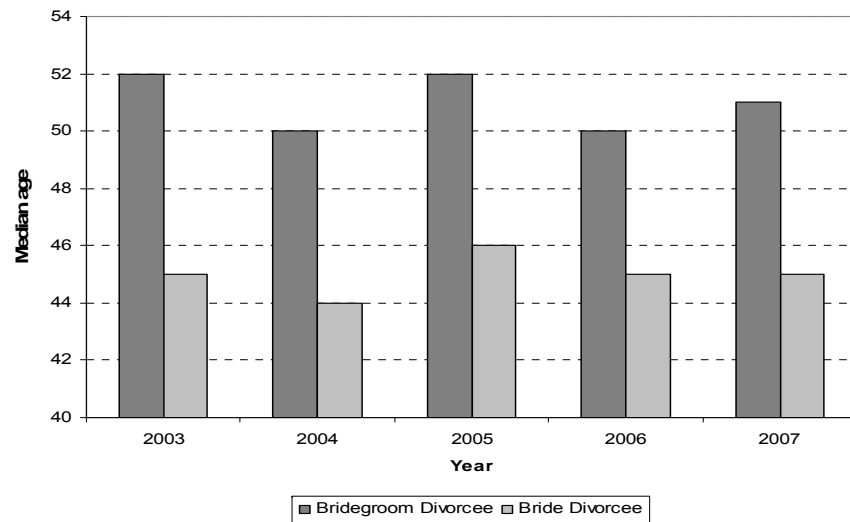
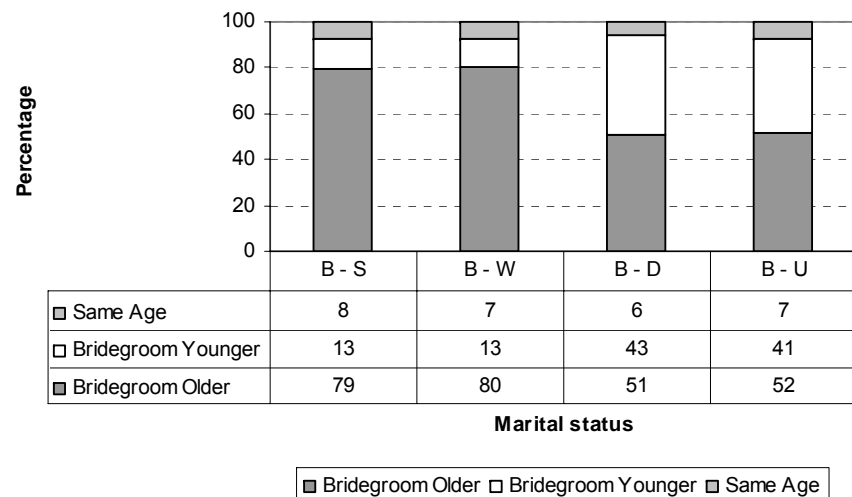
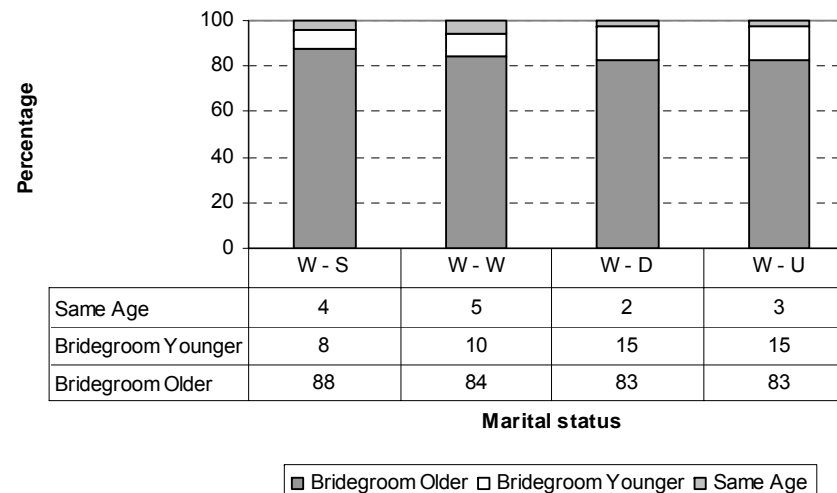


Figure 4a: Age difference among bachelors and their brides at the time of marriage, 2007



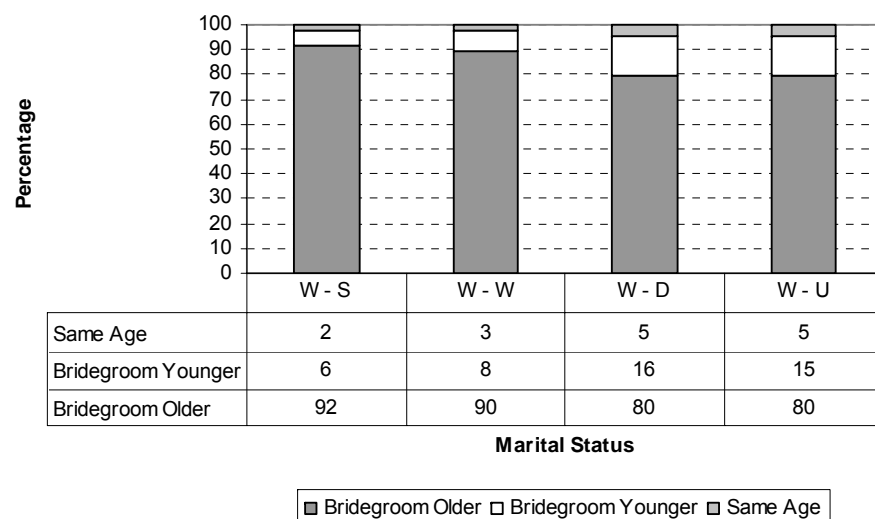
B - S = Bachelor to spinster B - W = Bachelor to widow
 B - D = Bachelor to divorcee B - U = Bachelor to unspecified

Figure 4b: Age difference among widowers and their brides at the time of their latest registered marriage, 2007



W - S = Widower to spinster W - W = Widower to widow
 W - D = Widower to divorcee W - U = Widower to unspecified

Figure 4c: Age difference among divorcees and their brides at the time of their latest marriage, 2007



W – S = Widow to spinster W – W = Widow to widow
 W – D = Widow to divorcee W – U = Widow to unspecified

Figure 5: Median age of divorcee by population group and gender, 2007

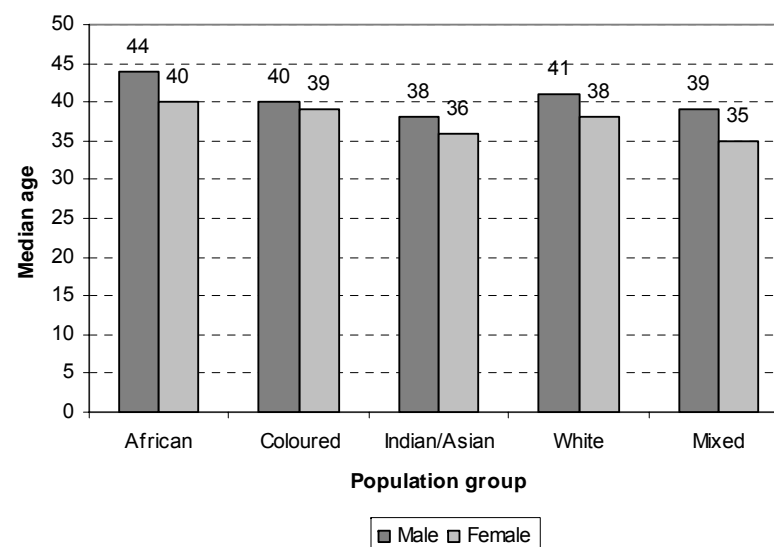


Figure 6: Divorces by age group and population group (males), 2007

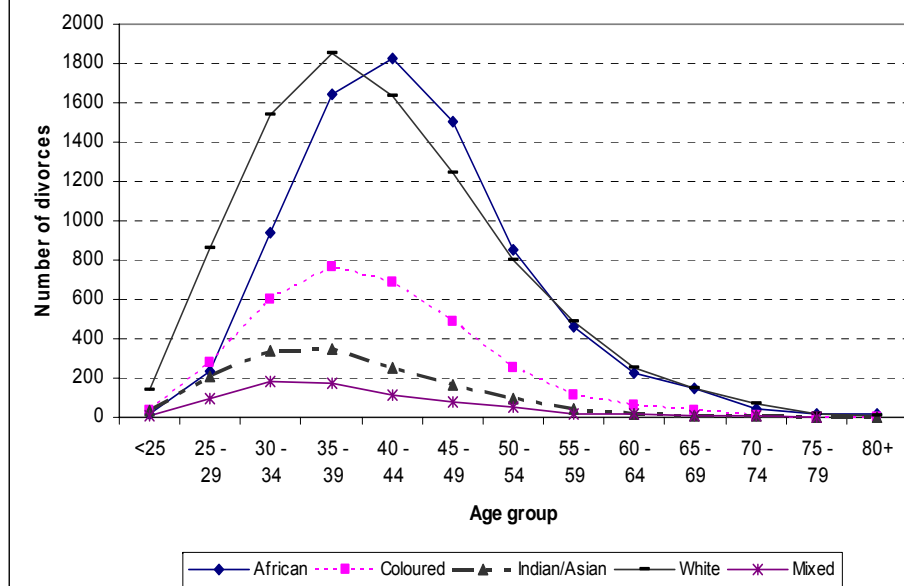
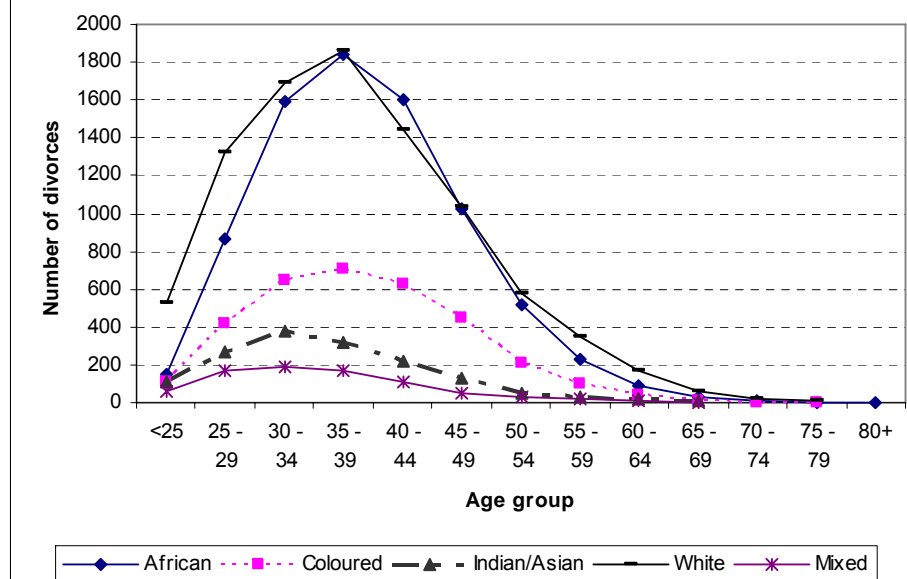


Figure 7: Divorces by age group and population group (females), 2007



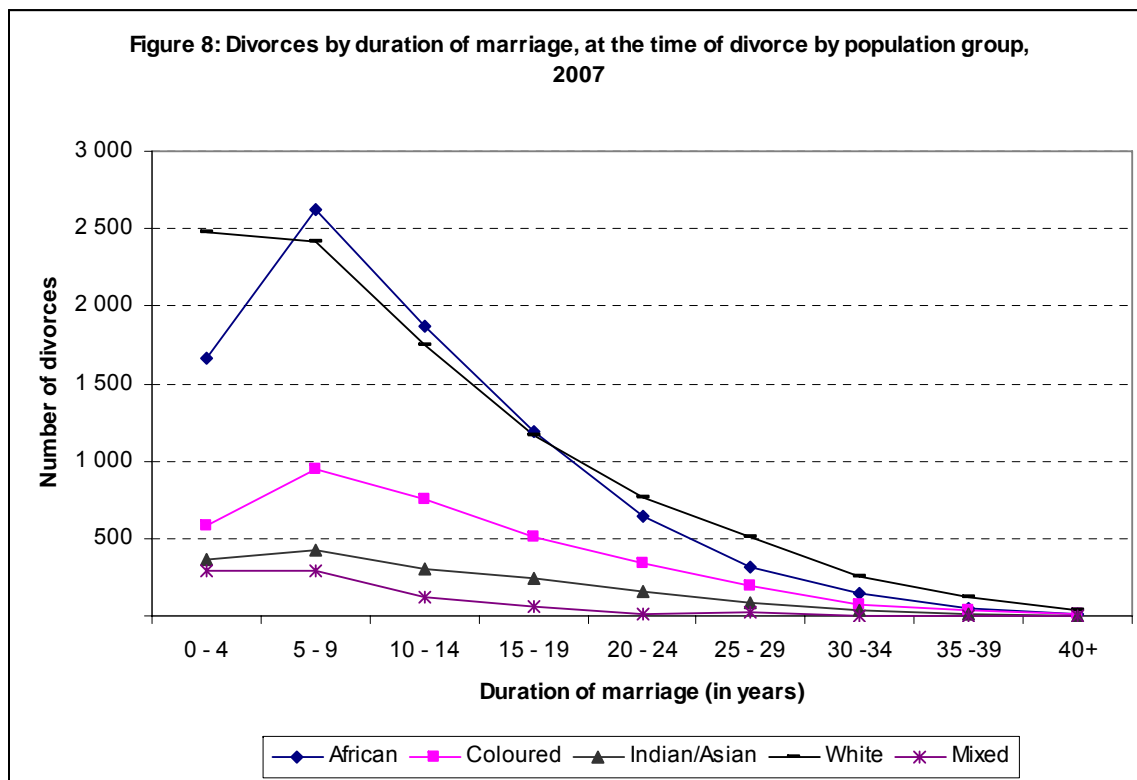


Table 1. Number of registered marriages in South Africa, 1998-2007	
Year	Registered marriages
1998	146 741
1999	140 458
2000	143 391
2001	134 581
2002	177 202
2003	178 689
2004	176 521
2005	180 657
2006	184 860
2007	183 030

Table 2. Number of marriages by way of solemnisation and province				
Province	Total	Way of solemnisation		
		Religious	Civil	Unspecified
Total	183 030	93 828	89 112	90
Western Cape	29 818	17 923	11 894	1
Eastern Cape	21 508	10 603	10 832	73
Northern Cape	5 052	3 193	1 859	-
Free State	13 752	5 038	8 713	1
KwaZulu-Natal	28 858	19 741	9 111	6
North West	13 572	4 639	8 932	1
Gauteng	45 622	21 802	23 815	5
Mpumalanga	9 405	6 127	3 275	3
Limpopo	9 571	3 181	6 390	-
Unspecified	5 434	1 549	3 885	-
Marriages Outside SA	438	32	406	-

Table 3. Number of marriages by marital status and province

Province	Marital status at the time of marriage									
	Bridegrooms					Brides				
	Total	Bachelor	Divorcee	Widower	Unspecified	Total	Spinster	Divorcee	Widow	Unspecified
Total	183 030	149 556	5 392	4 046	24 036	183 030	156 118	4 172	3 425	19 315
Western Cape	29 818	23 960	950	126	4 782	29 818	25 007	853	89	3 869
Eastern Cape	21 508	18 346	611	425	2 126	21 508	19 235	388	306	1 579
Northern Cape	5 052	4 141	202	91	618	5 052	4 330	184	71	467
Free State	13 752	11 506	455	375	1 416	13 752	11 989	298	376	1 089
KwaZulu-Natal	28 858	24 677	743	786	2 652	28 858	25 602	453	631	2 172
North West	13 572	11 226	416	266	1 664	13 572	11 917	290	185	1 180
Gauteng	45 622	35 423	1 324	1 085	7 790	45 622	37 121	1 096	1 028	6 377
Mpumalanga	9 405	7 606	285	304	1 210	9 405	8 013	199	223	970
Limpopo	9 571	8 147	196	397	831	9 571	8 571	115	281	604
Unspecified	5 434	4 195	200	190	849	5 434	4 019	285	234	896
Marriages Outside SA	438	329	10	1	98	438	314	11	1	112

Table 4. Age difference of bridegrooms and brides by marital status at the time of marriage									
Age difference	Total	Bachelor to				Widower to			
		Spinster	Widow	Divorcee	Unspecified	Spinster	Widow	Divorcee	Unspecified
TOTAL	183 030	138 536	2 515	1 295	7 210	3 229	695	47	75
Bridegroom Older	143 465	109 785	2 011	662	3 737	2 827	587	39	62
Bridegroom Younger	26 575	18 115	324	559	2 949	262	70	7	11
Same Age	12 986	10 633	180	73	524	140	38	1	2
Unspecified	4	3	-	1	-	-	-	-	-

Table 4. Age difference of bridegrooms and brides by marital status at the time of marriage (concluded)									
Age difference	Total	Divorcee to				Unspecified to			
		Spinster	Widow	Divorcee	Unspecified	Spinster	Widow	Divorcee	Unspecified
Total	183 030	2 852	78	979	1 483	11 501	137	1 851	10 547
Bridegroom Older	143 465	2 613	70	780	1 183	10 267	106	1 194	7 542
Bridegroom Younger	26 575	173	6	153	228	840	25	540	2 313
Same Age	12 986	66	2	46	72	394	6	117	692
Unspecified	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 5. Marital status at the time of marriage by ages of bridegrooms and brides										
Age	Bridegrooms					Brides				
	Total	Bachelor	Widower	Divorcee	Unspecified	Total	Spinster	Widow	Divorcee	Unspecified
Total	183 030	149 556	4 046	5 392	24 036	183 030	156 118	3 425	4 172	19 315
<15	3	3	-	-	-	19	14	1	-	4
15	1	1	-	-	-	20	18	1	-	1
16	5	4	1	-	-	110	98	3	1	8
17	7	7	-	-	-	338	289	23	6	20
18	53	50	1	-	2	898	826	39	7	26
19	202	191	4	-	7	1 749	1 619	65	10	55
20	523	491	10	4	18	3 036	2 806	104	13	113
21	1 173	1 124	15	1	33	5 081	4 800	128	21	132
22	2 145	2 060	39	6	40	7 239	6 850	181	32	176
23	3 549	3 413	69	8	59	8 821	8 409	197	29	186
24	5 152	4 972	95	7	78	10 472	10 024	187	28	233
25	6 715	6 482	120	7	106	11 577	11 044	184	33	316
26	7 638	7 351	122	13	152	11 128	10 581	172	32	343
27	8 492	8 161	127	20	184	11 097	10 441	165	38	453
28	9 035	8 653	121	21	240	10 360	9 662	150	62	486
29	8 916	8 461	116	25	314	9 303	8 579	116	63	545
30	9 219	8 644	125	26	424	8 847	8 079	110	59	599
31	9 373	8 708	97	32	536	8 149	7 332	78	73	666
32	9 113	8 337	90	51	635	7 775	6 891	55	93	736
33	8 427	7 634	72	62	659	6 996	6 016	62	90	828
34	7 879	6 939	65	78	797	6 294	5 307	48	114	825
35	7 845	6 762	58	88	937	5 730	4 766	42	108	814
36	6 629	5 531	49	87	962	4 632	3 636	37	99	860
37	6 776	5 574	44	130	1028	4 593	3 580	38	113	862
38	5 646	4 482	56	147	961	4 023	3 043	28	131	821
39	5 462	4 271	77	147	967	3 732	2 788	41	121	782
40	4 681	3 411	119	143	1008	3 042	2 108	51	112	771

Table 5. Marital status at the time of marriage by ages of bridegrooms and brides (concluded)										
Age	Bridegrooms					Brides				
	Total	Bachelor	Widower	Divorcee	Unspecified	Total	Spinster	Widow	Divorcee	Unspecified
41	4 274	3 009	111	126	1 028	2 817	1 937	56	123	701
42	3 958	2 724	141	134	959	2 702	1 775	60	127	740
43	3 792	2 512	141	165	974	2 445	1 635	72	122	616
44	3 541	2 222	171	148	1 000	2 306	1 463	78	143	622
45	3 228	1 957	161	161	949	1 965	1 215	67	114	569
46	2 551	1 417	136	140	858	1 715	1 002	70	91	552
47	2 629	1 494	130	145	860	1 685	923	88	134	540
48	2 218	1 205	121	136	756	1 408	756	87	119	446
49	2 246	1 214	146	152	734	1 344	784	78	124	358
50	1 998	1 034	111	147	706	1 156	613	67	108	368
51	1 756	920	105	143	588	967	485	62	133	287
52	1 524	753	86	141	544	869	476	41	94	258
53	1 459	765	95	131	468	754	407	48	78	221
54	1 261	658	85	150	368	713	391	44	96	182
55	1 326	704	85	125	412	679	359	34	103	183
56	950	439	61	115	335	455	240	20	46	149
57	1 111	577	77	140	317	537	290	32	76	139
58	948	461	68	125	294	408	202	11	81	114
59	837	419	56	139	223	394	204	24	67	99
60	739	337	43	125	234	381	218	17	72	74
61	637	298	41	105	193	274	139	20	51	64
62	515	245	24	85	161	257	128	12	60	57
63	481	210	25	109	137	215	115	5	51	44
64	427	200	25	84	118	215	104	9	47	55
65	635	386	38	92	119	183	98	4	45	36
66	373	178	23	92	80	135	55	2	45	33
67	425	240	10	93	82	174	103	2	47	22
68	298	138	11	97	52	104	52	-	34	18
69	274	140	7	69	58	99	38	1	38	22
70+	1 956	979	20	675	282	609	302	8	214	85
Unspecified	4	4	-	-	-	4	3	-	1	-

Table 6. Number of published divorces in South Africa, 1998- 2007													
Year	Total	Numbers						Unspecified	Percentages				
		African	Coloured	Indian/ Asian	White	Mixed	African		Coloured	Indian/ Asian	White	Mixed	Unspecified
1998	35 792	6 673	3 760	1 753	14 443	250	8 913	18,6	10,5	4,9	40,4	0,7	24,9
1999	37 098	6 823	3 938	1 976	14 785	357	9 219	18,4	10,6	5,3	39,9	1,0	24,8
2000	34 145	7 623	3 365	1 746	15 211	444	5 756	22,3	9,9	5,1	44,5	1,3	18,2
2001	34 045	7 860	3 872	1 672	14 718	470	5 453	23,1	11,4	4,9	43,2	1,4	16,0
2002	31 370	7 050	3 581	1 525	14 171	365	4 678	22,5	11,4	4,9	45,2	1,2	14,8
2003	31 566	7 657	3 911	1 508	12 639	532	5 319	24,3	12,4	4,8	40,0	1,7	17,2
2004	31 768	8 965	3 300	1 648	12 437	594	4 824	28,2	10,4	5,2	39,1	1,9	15,2
2005	32 484	8 672	3 568	1 635	11 582	538	6 489	26,7	11,0	5,0	35,7	1,7	19,9
2006	31 270	9 113	3 451	1 676	11 079	613	5 338	29,1	11,0	5,4	35,4	2,0	17,1
2007	29 639	9 055	3 558	1 715	9 935	865	4 511	30,6	12,0	5,8	33,5	2,9	15,0

Table 7. Number of divorces by gender and population group of the plaintiff

Population group	Total	Husband	Wife	Unspecified
Total	29 639	13 015	15 991	633
African	9 055	4 812	4 039	204
Coloured	3 558	1 284	2 232	42
Indian/Asian	1 715	687	997	31
White	9 935	3 780	6 002	153
Mixed	865	392	456	17
Unspecified	4 511	2 060	2 265	186

Table 8. Number of divorces by gender and type of occupation of the plaintiff				
Type of occupation	Total	Husband	Wife	Unspecified
Total	29 639	13 015	15 991	633
Professional, Semi Professional and Tech Occupations	2 438	873	1 555	10
Managers and Administrators	3 254	1 881	1 363	10
Clerical and Sale Occupations	4 691	1 162	3 522	7
Transport, Delivery and Communications	628	585	43	-
Service Occupations	2 600	1 295	1 294	11
Farming and Related Occupations	108	87	21	-
Artisans, Apprentice and Related Occupations	1 381	1 166	212	3
Production Foreman, Mine and Quarry Worker	1 112	820	290	2
Not Economically Active	4 755	1 587	3 142	26
Unspecified	8 672	3 559	4 549	564

Table 9. Number of divorces by population group and way of solemnisation of the marriage

Population group	Total	Way of solemnisation		
		Religious	Civil	Unspecified
Total	29 639	14 626	12 680	2 333
African	9 055	2 845	5 703	507
Coloured	3 558	2 337	1 126	95
Indian / Asian	1 715	489	1 108	118
White	9 935	7 169	2 059	707
Mixed	865	296	528	41
Unspecified	4 511	1 490	2 156	865

Table 10. Number of times married at the time of divorce

Number of times married	Husband	Wife
Total	29 639	29 639
1	22 440	22 652
2	3 255	3 015
3 and above	529	470
Unspecified	3 415	3 502

Table 11. Number of divorces by age group and population group (males)

Age group	Population group						
	Total	African	Coloured	Indian/ Asian	White	Mixed	Unspecified
Total divorces	29 639	9 055	3 558	1 715	9 935	865	4 511
< 25	261	21	37	39	141	8	15
25-29	1 850	235	276	212	865	93	169
30-34	4 048	942	598	339	1 542	184	443
35-39	5 345	1643	767	347	1 848	171	569
40-44	5 071	1822	684	248	1 636	113	568
45-49	3 870	1503	486	166	1 245	77	393
50-54	2 310	855	251	94	804	52	254
55-59	1 269	460	115	44	485	20	145
60-64	641	227	57	20	255	16	66
65-69	383	145	34	8	149	8	39
70-74	148	46	10	6	68	5	13
75-79	43	16	3	1	17	2	4
≥ 80	34	17	2	1	11	-	3
Unspecified	4 366	1 123	238	190	869	116	1 830

Table 12. Number of divorces by age group and population group (females)							
Age group	Population group						
	Total	African	Coloured	Indian/ Asian	White	Mixed	Unspecified
Total divorces	29 639	9 055	3 558	1 715	9 935	865	4 511
< 25	1 041	147	109	108	526	60	91
25-29	3 382	870	420	270	1 323	165	334
30-34	5 067	1 593	647	383	1 693	185	566
35-39	5 473	1 841	709	314	1 863	165	581
40-44	4 485	1 599	622	223	1 439	108	494
45-49	3 048	1 025	449	132	1 035	45	362
50-54	1 569	519	212	52	582	32	172
55-59	824	232	102	33	353	21	83
60-64	354	86	43	17	171	7	30
65-69	121	30	10	7	63	1	10
70-74	32	7	4	-	20	-	1
75-79	13	1	1	-	9	-	2
≥ 80	1	1	-	-	-	-	-
Unspecified	4 229	1 104	230	176	858	76	1 785

Table 13. Duration of marriage by age group of husband

Husband age group	Total	Duration of marriage in years									
		0 - 4	5 - 9	10 - 14	15 - 19	20 - 24	25 - 29	30 - 34	35 - 39	=>40	Unspecified
Total	29 639	6 230	8 001	5 633	3 762	2 277	1 310	596	264	67	1 499
< 25	261	244	17	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
25 – 29	1 850	1 203	625	22	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
30 – 34	4 048	1 441	1 960	627	20	-	-	-	-	-	-
35 – 39	5 345	1 085	1 936	1 687	628	9	-	-	-	-	-
40 – 44	5 071	665	1 206	1 367	1 270	541	22	-	-	-	-
45 – 49	3 870	421	691	711	771	860	398	18	-	-	-
50 – 54	2 310	227	362	344	362	379	433	203	-	-	-
55 – 59	1 269	138	202	165	154	138	196	192	84	-	-
60 – 64	641	75	92	87	87	60	61	69	94	16	-
65 – 69	383	53	66	54	52	30	32	21	39	36	-
70 – 74	148	39	28	27	14	11	8	8	8	5	-
75 – 79	43	8	10	5	7	5	5	1	1	1	-
≥ 80	34	9	6	6	4	2	3	-	2	2	-
Unspecified	4 366	622	800	531	393	242	152	84	36	7	1 499

Table 14. Duration of marriage by age group of wife											
Wife age group	Total	Duration of marriage in years									
		0 - 4	5 - 9	10 - 14	15 - 19	20 - 24	25 - 29	30 - 34	35 - 39	=>40	Unspecified
Total	29 639	6 230	8 001	5 633	3 762	2 277	1 310	596	264	67	-
< 25	1 041	848	193	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
25 - 29	3 382	1 666	1 549	167	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
30 - 34	5 067	1 227	2 322	1 352	166	-	-	-	-	-	-
35 - 39	5 473	799	1 483	1 793	1 214	182	2	-	-	-	-
40 - 44	4 485	515	839	996	1 146	836	153	-	-	-	-
45 - 49	3 048	280	442	428	536	706	579	77	-	-	-
50 - 54	1 569	173	232	200	194	202	299	269	-	-	-
55 - 59	824	87	109	101	76	82	91	131	147	-	-
60 - 64	354	44	45	48	38	27	34	26	52	40	-
65 - 69	121	24	13	12	15	9	11	9	12	16	-
70 - 74	32	7	2	4	5	2	3	2	5	2	-
75 - 79	13	6	4	1	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
≥ 80	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Unspecified	4 229	554	768	531	372	230	136	82	48	9	-

Table 15. Divorces with and without children by population group and number of children involved

Population group	Total divorces	Divorces without children	Divorces with children	Unspecified	Total children involved
TOTAL	29 639	12 721	16 892	26	28 480
African	9 055	3 568	5 482	5	9 346
Coloured	3 558	1 052	2 499	7	4 350
Indian/Asian	1 715	699	1 016	-	1 644
White	9 935	4 719	5 208	8	8 489
Mixed	865	512	351	2	560
Unspecified	4 511	2 171	2 336	4	4 091

EXPLANATORY NOTES

1. Purpose of the statistical release

The purpose of the statistical release is to document trends in civil marriages and divorces granted in a particular year by civil courts. This statistical release presents information on the 2007 civil marriages that were registered by the Department of Home Affairs. The release also reports on the 2007 divorces that were granted by the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development through divorce courts, which had reached Stats SA at the time of publication.

2. Scope and Coverage

The data on marriages currently cover civil marriages in South Africa. Data on customary marriages and same-sex unions is not currently available. The divorce data covers only cases where application for divorce has been granted. Undocumented cases of abandonment do not appear in this statistics or divorces that have been granted by religious or traditional authorities outside the civil courts.

3. Data

Stats SA downloads the data on civil marriages from the Department of Home Affairs (DHA). The data are then processed and analysed for publication.

Data on divorces are collected from the divorce courts of the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (DoJ & CD) using a standard structured questionnaire prepared by Stats SA. The questionnaires are completed by the courts and posted regularly to Stats SA where they are sorted and the data captured and analysed.

4. Limitations

The release focuses on presenting the demographic characteristics of the married and divorced persons. The information does not cover other important issues such as the causes and impact of divorce; and annulment, which is another way in which a marriage contract is dissolved.

The marriages and divorce data can not be correlated, since we report on current marriages and divorces (i.e. marriages that were registered in a particular year and the divorces that were granted in the same year).

5. Glossary of terms

Civil marriage: the term broadly covers marriages solemnised by marriage officers. In this release it is also used in the tabulations to distinguish between 'religious marriages' and 'civil marriages' i.e. marriages solemnised by religious and lay marriage officers respectively.

Mixed population group: refers to couples with different racial backgrounds

Occupation: occupation is coded using the Standard Classification of Occupations, Report No 09-90-01, first Edition, 1986 published by Stats SA.

6. Symbols

-	= Nil
>	= Less than
≥	= Equal to and greater than

GENERAL INFORMATION

Stats SA publishes approximately 300 different statistical releases each year- It is not economically viable to produce them in more than one of South of South Africa's official languages- Since the releases are extensively, not only locally but also by international economic and social-scientific communities, Stats SA releases are published in English.

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