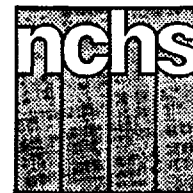


Monthly Vital Statistics Report



Final Data From the National Center for Health Statistics

Advance Report of Final Divorce Statistics, 1986

Divorces and divorce rates

The number of divorces in the United States fell 1 percent between 1985 and 1986, from 1,190,000 to 1,178,000. The historic trend in the number of divorces has been upward, with two major peaks. The first peak occurred in 1946, soon after World War II, when the number of divorces reached 610,000 (table 1). The second, higher peak occurred at the beginning of this decade. In 1981 the number of divorces reached a record high of 1,213,000. Since 1981, the total has fluctuated, dropping in 1982 and 1983, rising in 1984 and 1985, then dropping again in 1986.

The divorce rate per 1,000 population rose fairly steadily throughout the 1960's and 1970's, reaching peaks of 5.3 in 1979 and 1981. The rate stabilized from 1982 to 1986, fluctuating between 4.9 and 5.0; in 1986 the rate was 4.9.

The divorce rate per 1,000 married women 15 years of age and over, the population that is actually at risk of divorce, followed a similar pattern. It reached a record high of 22.8 in 1979, and has fluctuated between 21.2 and 21.7 since 1982; in 1986 it was 21.2. These rates mean that more than 2 percent of U.S. wives divorced in each of these years.

Although the divorce rates dropped in each region between 1985

and 1986, sharp differences among regions remained. Historically the divorce rates for the West and the South have been considerably higher than for the Midwest, and all three have been higher than the rate for the Northeast. This pattern continued in 1986. The rate for the West was 5.6 per 1,000 population—2 percent higher than the rate for the South (5.5), 27 percent higher than the rate for the Midwest (4.4), and 56 percent higher than the rate for the Northeast (3.6) (table 2).

The States with the highest numbers of divorces were Texas (98,405), Florida (78,114), New York (66,644), and Ohio (52,068). It is virtually certain that divorces in California exceeded those in Texas, but the data reported for California include an unknown number of legal separations in addition to decrees actually granted. Areas that reported the fewest divorces were North Dakota (2,261), the District of Columbia (2,326), Vermont (2,410), and South Dakota (2,584).

The divorce rates were highest in Nevada (13.9 per 1,000 population); Oklahoma (7.5); Arkansas (7.1); and Alaska, Arizona, and Wyoming (7.0 each). Divorce rates were lowest in North Dakota (3.3); Wisconsin, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts (3.4 each); and Maryland (3.5). Between 1985 and 1986, the divorce rate fell in 26 States and the District of

Columbia, rose in 9 States, and remained the same in 10 States. Comparisons could not be made for five States where data were incomplete in one or both years.

Data for the preceding discussion are from reports of the number of divorces provided annually by the 50 States and the District of Columbia. For the following discussions of children involved in divorce, ages at divorce and marriage, duration of marriage, and petitioner of divorce, detailed information comes from the 31 States and the District of Columbia that constitute the divorce-registration area (DRA). About 49 percent of the divorces in the United States in 1986 took place in the DRA.

Children involved in divorce

Three national measures based on data from the DRA document the involvement of children in divorce. They are the number of children involved in divorce, the average number of children per decree, and the rate per 1,000 children under 18 years of age (table 3).

More than 1 million children under 18 years of age have been involved in divorce in the United States every year since 1972 when there were an estimated 1,021,000 children. The number reached a record high of 1,181,000 in 1979 and has fluctuated, generally

downward, since then. In 1986 there were 1,064,000 children involved in divorce, 2 percent fewer than in 1985 (1,091,000).

Between 1950 and 1964 the average number of children per decree generally rose, peaking in 1964 with 1.36 children per divorce. The long-term trend since 1964 has been one of decline, dipping to 0.90 in 1986, the lowest it has been since 1954. The average number of children per decree has been declining over the past two decades, in part, because American families are becoming smaller.

Couples divorcing in recent years have fewer children, on the average, than couples divorcing earlier. However, children of today have a greater likelihood of being affected by a divorce than in former years. The number of children under 18 years involved in divorce per 1,000 children in the population has increased from 9.5 in 1966 to 16.8 in 1986. The rate per 1,000 children reached a historic high in 1981 (18.7). Between 1982 and 1985 the rate remained fairly steady, ranging from 17.2 to 17.6 (table 3). The 1986 rate of 16.8 was 3 percent lower than the rate in 1985 (17.3).

The distribution of the number of children of divorcing couples is shown in table 4. In the DRA, 47 percent of divorcing couples had no children under 18 years of age, 25 percent had one child under 18 years, and the remaining 27 percent had two children or more under 18 years. In 1966, when families were larger, only about 40 percent of divorcing couples had no children under the age of 18 years and 23 percent had one child under 18 years, but 37 percent had two children or more under 18 years. In 1986, the percent of divorcing couples with no children under 18 years ranged from 38 percent in Nebraska to 60 percent in the District of Columbia.

Age

Age-specific divorce rates, which indicate the likelihood of divorce among different age groups, have been calculated using data from 28 States and the District of Columbia where age at divorce was reported with sufficient

completeness to provide reliable rates (table 5).

The rates are based on population estimates prepared by the U.S. Bureau of the Census by age and marital status of men and women. As in the past, fewer men than women are reported as married. This causes the rate of divorce for married men to be higher than that for married women because the base population is smaller. The 1986 divorce rate per 1,000 married men was 19.2, slightly higher than the rate of 19.0 for women.

The age-specific divorce rate for women is highest for the youngest age group (50.9 per 1,000 married women aged 15–19 years). The rate then drops for each successively higher age group.

For men, the highest age-specific divorce rate was for those 20–24 years of age (49.9 per 1,000 married men). The rate for teenaged husbands was only slightly lower (49.8). Then, as with the women, rates taper off, dropping to 2.0 per 1,000 men 65 years of age and over. For every age group except teenagers rates for men were higher than rates for women, 7 percent higher at 20–24 years and increasing to 52 percent higher at ages 55–59 years. The difference between rates for women and men narrows again after the age of 60.

Divorces tend to be concentrated in early adulthood. Sixty-one percent of wives and 52 percent of husbands who divorced in 1986 were under the age of 35 (table 6). The incidence of divorce after the age of 59 is relatively uncommon; only 3.3 percent of divorcing men and 2.0 percent of women were 60 years and over.

Age at divorce has shifted upward since the late 1970's (table 7), reflecting the steady rise of age at marriage. Between the low points in the 1970's and 1986, the median age at time of divorce increased by 2.6 years for all divorcing men, 2.3 years for men divorcing from first marriages, and 1.8 years for men divorcing from remarriages. Wives tend to be a few years younger than their husbands, but the changes in the median ages of divorcing women were similar to those of men. For women, there was an increase of 2.6 years in the median age at time of divorce for all

marriages, and increases of 2.5 and 1.9 years for first marriages and remarriages, respectively. Although the mean ages at divorce are higher than the medians, the pattern of change has been similar.

The distribution of age at marriage for husbands divorcing in 1986 (table 8) shows that almost 14 percent had married as teenagers and about 41 percent had married at the ages of 20–24 years. Thus, the majority of divorcing husbands in 1986 married before the age of 25 years. More than two-thirds of divorcing wives married before the age of 25 years; nearly one-third had married as teenagers.

The median and mean ages of husbands and wives at time of marriage (table 9) summarize these distributions and show persistent increases for men and women since 1978. In 1986, the median age at marriage for divorcing husbands was 24.3 years—22.7 years for men divorcing from a first marriage, 31.6 years for second marriages, and 38.0 years for higher order marriages. For divorcing women, the median age at marriage was 22.0 years—20.6 years for women divorcing from a first marriage, 28.6 years for second marriages, and 34.7 years for higher order marriages. Mean ages are slightly higher than median ages.

The variation among States in age at marriage of divorcing husbands and wives and age at divorce is shown in table 10.

Duration of marriage

Most divorces occur relatively early in marriage. Almost 4 percent of divorcing couples had been married less than 1 year and 34 percent for 1–4 years.

Half the couples had been married less than 7 years, the median duration of marriage in 1986 (table 11). First marriages ending in divorce lasted about 8 years for husbands and wives, while remarriages ending in divorce lasted only 5 years. The median duration of second marriages was 5.5 years for husbands and wives, but the median duration for subsequent remarriages was less than 4 years.

Median duration of first marriages was shortest during the mid-1970's—7.3 years for husbands and 7.2 years for wives. After 1976 the median duration of first marriages gradually increased to a high of 8.4 years in 1983. Since 1983 the median has been declining; by 1986 it was 6 months (0.5 year) lower than in 1983. The median duration of remarriages, on the other hand, has increased fairly steadily since 1978 for husbands and wives regardless of marriage order.

There was considerable variation for duration of marriage among States (table 12). In 1986 the median duration ranged from 5.0 years in Alaska to 8.8 years in Maryland and Massachusetts.

Petitioner

Wives are more likely than husbands to be the petitioner of divorce (table 13). Wives petitioned 62 percent of all divorces in 1986 and husbands petitioned 33 percent. Although the proportion of jointly petitioned divorces doubled since 1975 when it was only about 3 percent, the proportion of jointly petitioned divorces in 1986 remains low at 6 percent. The presence of children under 18 years of age in the household had an effect on which spouse petitioned for divorce. When children were involved in the divorce, wives petitioned 66 percent of divorces compared with 57 percent when there

were no children under 18 years of age in the household. The presence of children had only a minimal effect on jointly petitioned divorces.

Although women traditionally have been more likely to petition for divorce, table 13 shows that the difference in the proportion of husbands and wives petitioning for divorce is slowly diminishing. Over the past 12 years the difference in the proportion of husbands versus wives as petitioner narrowed by 9 percentage points, from a difference of 38 percentage points in 1975 to 29 percentage points in 1986. This trend is observed regardless of the presence or absence of children.

Symbols

- - - Data not available
 - . . . Category not applicable
 - Quantity zero
 - 0.0 Quantity more than zero but less than 0.05
 - Z Quantity more than zero but less than 500 where numbers are rounded to thousands
 - * Figure does not meet standard of reliability or precision
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Table 1. Divorces and annulments and rates: United States, 1940-86

[Data refer only to events occurring within the United States. Alaska included beginning 1959 and Hawaii beginning 1960. Rates per 1,000 population enumerated as of April 1 for census years and estimated as of July 1 for all other years]

Year	Divorces and annulments	Rate per 1,000--	
		Total population	Married women 15 years and over
1986	1,178,000	4.9	21.2
1985	1,190,000	5.0	21.7
1984	1,169,000	5.0	21.5
1983	1,158,000	4.9	21.3
1982	1,170,000	5.0	21.7
1981	1,213,000	5.3	22.6
1980	1,189,000	5.2	22.6
1979	1,181,000	5.3	22.8
1978	1,130,000	5.1	21.9
1977	1,091,000	5.0	21.1
1976	1,083,000	5.0	21.1
1975	1,036,000	4.8	20.3
1974	977,000	4.6	19.3
1973	915,000	4.3	18.2
1972	845,000	4.0	17.0
1971	773,000	3.7	15.8
1970	708,000	3.5	14.9
1969	639,000	3.2	13.4
1968	584,000	2.9	12.5
1967	523,000	2.6	11.2
1966	499,000	2.5	10.9
1965	479,000	2.5	10.6
1964	450,000	2.4	10.0
1963	428,000	2.3	9.6
1962	413,000	2.2	9.4
1961	414,000	2.3	9.6
1960	393,000	2.2	9.2
1959	395,000	2.2	9.3
1958	368,000	2.1	8.9
1957	381,000	2.2	9.2
1956	382,000	2.3	9.4
1955	377,000	2.3	9.3
1954	379,000	2.4	9.5
1953	390,000	2.5	9.9
1952	392,000	2.5	10.1
1951	381,000	2.5	9.9
1950	385,000	2.6	10.3
1949	397,000	2.7	10.6
1948	408,000	2.8	11.2
1947	483,000	3.4	13.6
1946	610,000	4.3	17.9
1945	485,000	3.5	14.4
1944	400,000	2.9	12.0
1943	359,000	2.6	11.0
1942	321,000	2.4	10.1
1941	293,000	2.2	9.4
1940	264,000	2.0	8.8

Table 2. Divorces and annulments and rates: United States, each region, division, and State, 1976, 1985, and 1986

[Data are counts of decrees granted supplied by States except as noted. Figures for the divorce-registration States differ from those based on sample data shown in table 4. Rates per 1,000 population in each area estimated as of July 1]

Region, division, and State	Number			Rate		
	1986	1985	1976	1986	1985	1976
United States	1,178,000	1,190,000	1,083,000	4.9	5.0	5.0
Regions:						
Northeast	182,000	187,000	156,000	3.6	3.8	3.2
Midwest	263,000	267,000	273,000	4.4	4.5	4.7
South	1,458,000	1,458,000	394,000	5.5	5.6	5.6
West	1,275,000	278,000	260,000	5.6	5.8	6.6
Northeast:						
New England	47,962	49,853	43,722	3.8	3.9	3.6
Middle Atlantic	134,188	137,064	112,576	3.6	3.7	3.0
Midwest:						
East North Central	188,942	192,555	199,938	4.5	4.6	4.9
West North Central	73,597	74,330	72,959	4.2	4.2	4.3
South:						
South Atlantic	212,804	210,454	182,047	5.2	5.2	5.2
East South Central	87,257	86,156	79,328	5.7	5.7	5.7
West South Central ²	155,153	160,899	132,309	*	*	6.1
West:						
Mountain	86,111	89,880	75,534	*	7.0	7.5
Pacific	187,441	188,498	184,888	5.2	5.4	6.3
New England:						
Maine	5,627	6,086	5,540	4.8	5.2	5.1
New Hampshire	4,883	4,911	4,322	4.8	4.9	5.1
Vermont	2,410	2,355	1,905	4.5	4.4	3.9
Massachusetts	19,813	21,573	16,974	3.4	3.7	3.0
Rhode Island	3,684	3,699	3,276	3.8	3.8	3.4
Connecticut	11,545	11,229	11,705	3.6	3.5	3.8
Middle Atlantic:						
New York	66,644	67,616	54,229	3.7	3.8	3.0
New Jersey	27,669	29,295	21,816	3.6	3.9	3.0
Pennsylvania	39,875	40,153	36,531	3.4	3.4	3.1
East North Central:						
Ohio	52,068	53,016	59,251	4.8	4.9	5.5
Indiana ³	35,076	35,251	31,193	6.4	6.4	5.8
Illinois	45,852	48,917	51,810	4.0	4.2	4.6
Michigan	39,551	38,775	43,101	4.3	4.3	4.7
Wisconsin	16,395	16,596	14,583	3.4	3.5	3.2
West North Central:						
Minnesota	14,426	14,795	13,822	3.4	3.5	3.5
Iowa	10,324	10,526	10,817	3.6	3.7	3.7
Missouri	25,466	24,990	25,414	5.0	5.0	5.3
North Dakota	2,261	2,295	1,861	3.3	3.4	2.9
South Dakota	2,584	2,566	2,350	3.6	3.6	3.4
Nebraska	6,172	6,364	5,862	3.9	4.0	3.8
Kansas	12,364	12,794	12,833	5.0	5.2	5.6
South Atlantic:						
Delaware	3,093	2,991	3,233	4.9	4.8	5.5
Maryland	15,608	16,187	16,101	3.5	3.7	3.9
District of Columbia	2,326	2,659	3,092	3.7	4.3	4.4
Virginia	24,875	24,131	21,381	4.3	4.2	4.2
West Virginia	9,803	9,851	8,893	5.1	5.1	4.7
North Carolina	31,599	30,212	24,327	5.0	4.8	4.3
South Carolina	13,429	13,455	10,641	4.0	4.0	3.6
Georgia	33,957	33,423	31,156	5.6	5.6	6.1
Florida	78,114	77,545	63,223	6.7	6.8	7.3
East South Central:						
Kentucky	18,999	18,255	16,027	5.1	4.9	4.5
Tennessee	30,031	29,860	27,002	6.3	6.3	6.2
Alabama	25,356	25,012	24,056	6.3	6.2	6.4
Mississippi	12,871	13,029	12,243	4.9	5.0	5.0
West South Central:						
Arkansas	16,828	16,528	18,365	7.1	7.0	8.5
Louisiana ²	15,173	17,608	12,550	*	*	3.2
Oklahoma	24,747	26,369	21,489	7.5	8.0	7.6
Texas	98,405	100,394	79,905	5.9	6.1	6.2

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Divorces and annulments and rates: United States, each region, division, and State, 1976, 1985, and 1986—Con.

[Data are counts of decrees granted supplied by States except as noted. Figures for the divorce-registration States differ from those based on sample data shown in table 4. Rates per 1,000 population in each area estimated as of July 1]

Region, division, and State	Number			Rate		
	1986	1985	1976	1986	1985	1976
Mountain:						
Montana	4,307	4,258	4,850	5.3	5.2	6.4
Idaho	6,067	6,207	5,699	6.1	6.2	6.6
Wyoming	3,536	3,807	2,850	7.0	7.5	7.2
Colorado	18,951	19,193	17,520	5.8	5.9	6.7
New Mexico	² 8,129	⁵ 13,172	9,118	*	⁵ 9.1	7.6
Arizona	23,062	21,157	19,029	7.0	6.6	8.1
Utah	8,589	8,768	6,170	5.2	5.3	4.9
Nevada	13,470	13,318	10,298	13.9	14.2	15.9
Pacific:						
Washington	26,155	26,346	27,072	5.9	6.0	7.3
Oregon	15,774	15,736	16,070	5.8	5.9	6.8
California	⁴ 137,133	⁶ 137,524	133,824	⁶ 5.1	⁵ 5.2	6.1
Alaska	3,705	4,005	3,210	7.0	7.7	8.2
Hawaii	4,674	4,887	4,712	4.4	4.6	5.2

¹Figures include estimates; see Technical notes.
²Data are incomplete; see Technical notes.
³Some counties reported divorce petitions filed rather than decrees granted.
⁴Data are estimated.
⁵Divorce petitions filed.
⁶Data include legal separations.

Table 3. Estimated number of children involved in divorces and annulments, average number of children per decree, and rate per 1,000 children under 18 years of age: United States, 1950–86

[Data refer to children under 18 years of age and only to events occurring within the United States. Beginning in 1960, estimated from frequencies based on sample data; for 1950–59, estimated from total counts. For estimating method, see Technical notes. Population enumerated as of April 1 for census years and estimated as of July 1 for all other years]

Year	Estimated number of children involved	Average number of children per decree	Rate per 1,000 children under 18 years of age
1986	1,064,000	0.90	16.8
1985	1,091,000	0.92	17.3
1984	1,081,000	0.92	17.2
1983	1,091,000	0.94	17.4
1982	1,108,000	0.94	17.6
1981	1,180,000	0.97	18.7
1980	1,174,000	0.98	17.3
1979	1,181,000	1.00	18.4
1978	1,147,000	1.01	17.7
1977	1,095,000	1.00	16.7
1976	1,117,000	1.03	16.9
1975	1,123,000	1.08	16.7
1974	1,099,000	1.12	16.2
1973	1,079,000	1.17	15.7
1972	1,021,000	1.20	14.7
1971	946,000	1.22	13.6
1970	870,000	1.22	12.5
1969	840,000	1.31	11.9
1968	784,000	1.34	11.1
1967	701,000	1.34	9.9
1966	669,000	1.34	9.5
1965	630,000	1.32	8.9
1964	613,000	1.36	8.7
1963	562,000	1.31	8.2
1962	532,000	1.29	7.9
1961	516,000	1.25	7.8
1960	463,000	1.18	7.2
1959	468,000	1.18	7.5
1958	398,000	1.08	6.5
1957	379,000	0.99	6.4
1956	361,000	0.95	6.3
1955	347,000	0.92	6.3
1954	341,000	0.90	6.4
1953	330,000	0.85	6.4
1952	318,000	0.81	6.2
1951	304,000	0.80	6.1
1950	299,000	0.78	6.3

Table 4. Number of divorces and annulments and percent distribution by number of children under 18 years of age involved: Divorce-registration area and each registration State, 1986

[Based on sample data]

Area	All divorces and annulments Number	Number of children under 18 years of age involved						
		Total	None	1	2	3	4	5 or more
		Percent distribution						
Divorce-registration area.	574,280	100.0	47.2	25.4	19.7	6.0	1.3	0.4
Alabama.	25,440	100.0	49.4	25.0	18.3	5.8	1.3	0.3
Alaska.	3,702	100.0	50.1	23.5	19.2	5.4	1.3	0.5
Connecticut.	11,640	100.0	47.7	24.9	20.7	5.6	0.8	0.2
Delaware.	3,094	100.0	45.0	27.1	20.0	6.4	1.2	0.4
District of Columbia.	2,326	100.0	60.1	22.5	13.0	3.5	0.6	0.3
Georgia.	33,940	100.0	50.8	25.6	17.6	4.7	0.9	0.3
Hawaii.	4,660	100.0	47.0	24.7	19.3	6.6	1.6	0.7
Idaho ¹	6,084	100.0	48.9	24.3	18.0	6.2	1.8	0.8
Illinois.	45,841	100.0	47.2	25.1	19.3	6.3	1.6	0.5
Iowa.	10,326	100.0	40.9	25.6	23.1	8.5	1.6	0.4
Kansas.	12,424	100.0	43.9	24.6	22.0	7.5	1.5	0.5
Kentucky.	19,055	100.0	48.8	26.9	17.7	5.5	0.9	0.2
Maryland.	15,715	100.0	52.6	26.5	16.7	3.3	0.7	0.2
Massachusetts.	19,755	100.0	44.5	25.9	21.2	6.4	1.5	0.5
Michigan.	39,610	100.0	44.5	24.2	22.0	7.1	1.7	0.6
Missouri.	25,466	100.0	46.4	25.8	19.9	6.3	1.3	0.3
Montana.	4,321	100.0	44.3	23.3	23.0	6.9	2.0	0.5
Nebraska.	6,172	100.0	37.6	24.8	24.6	9.7	2.6	0.7
New Hampshire.	4,883	100.0	42.9	25.3	23.9	6.7	1.1	0.2
New York.	66,641	100.0	54.6	22.2	16.3	5.1	1.3	0.4
Ohio.	52,000	100.0	42.4	27.2	21.8	6.9	1.2	0.4
Oregon.	15,765	100.0	41.7	26.3	24.1	6.0	1.8	0.1
Pennsylvania.	39,880	100.0	44.6	27.2	21.4	5.4	0.9	0.4
Rhode Island.	3,684	100.0	43.3	26.2	23.1	6.1	1.0	0.2
South Carolina.	13,431	100.0	46.7	28.0	18.8	5.2	1.0	0.3
South Dakota.	2,585	100.0	39.8	26.6	22.3	8.7	2.0	0.5
Tennessee.	30,120	100.0	51.6	25.5	17.2	4.8	0.9	0.0
Utah.	8,580	100.0	39.4	24.0	20.6	9.7	4.1	2.2
Vermont.	2,346	100.0	39.1	25.3	25.4	7.8	1.7	0.6
Virginia.	24,875	100.0	51.1	26.6	17.1	4.3	0.7	0.2
Wisconsin.	16,385	100.0	40.1	25.7	24.1	7.9	1.7	0.5
Wyoming.	3,534	100.0	41.2	25.1	23.2	7.5	2.2	0.7

¹This State reports number of children affected by decree.

Table 5. Divorces and annulments by age of men and women at time of decree, 1986, and rates by age of men and women at time of decree, 1970, 1980, and 1982-86: Divorce-registration area

[Based on sample data. Prior to calculation of rates, figures for age not stated were distributed. Rates exclude data for Michigan, Ohio, and South Dakota. Rates per 1,000 married population in specified group enumerated as of April 1 for census years and estimated as of July 1 for all other years]

Age at time of decree	Number		Rate					
	1986	1986	1985	1984	1983	1982	1980	1970
Men								
All ages	574,280	19.2	19.4	19.2	19.3	19.4	19.8	14.2
15-19 years ¹	2,777	49.8	40.0	42.9	43.3	34.9	29.3	15.1
20-24 years	50,311	49.9	49.9	48.2	45.2	47.0	46.9	33.6
25-29 years	106,487	38.2	38.4	37.6	40.0	40.3	41.4	30.0
30-34 years	106,536	30.8	30.4	31.7	32.4	32.4	33.8	22.3
35-39 years	91,008	26.0	26.3	27.1	27.3	27.0	26.8	17.9
40-44 years	62,759	22.6	23.2	22.0	21.5	21.8	21.0	13.8
45-49 years	40,058	17.1	16.7	16.1	15.9	15.3	14.5	10.7
50-54 years	24,672	10.9	11.1	10.7	10.7	10.1	9.5	7.6
55-59 years	14,891	6.4	6.8	6.4	6.2	6.1	5.8	5.1
60-64 years	8,594	4.2	4.1	4.0	3.9	3.8	3.7	3.4
65 years and over	8,620	2.0	2.1	1.9	2.0	1.9	1.9	1.9
Not stated	57,567	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Women								
All ages	574,280	19.0	19.2	18.8	18.9	19.0	19.5	14.0
15-19 years ¹	10,245	50.9	48.4	45.5	48.1	45.6	42.4	26.9
20-24 years	83,521	46.6	46.8	44.4	43.3	44.5	47.2	33.3
25-29 years	116,997	35.1	35.6	35.0	35.7	35.9	37.8	25.7
30-34 years	101,554	27.7	28.6	28.1	27.7	28.5	29.2	18.9
35-39 years	83,432	23.7	23.4	23.5	23.9	22.9	23.3	14.8
40-44 years	52,094	19.1	19.6	18.5	18.2	17.7	16.7	11.9
45-49 years	29,860	12.8	12.6	11.8	12.1	11.8	10.8	8.5
50-54 years	16,554	7.7	7.4	7.4	7.3	6.8	6.6	5.6
55-59 years	9,177	4.2	4.2	4.3	4.1	4.0	3.9	3.5
60-64 years	5,483	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.3
65 years and over	4,745	1.5	1.6	1.4	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.3
Not stated	60,618	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

¹Includes divorces of persons under 15 years of age.

Table 6. Percent distribution of divorces and annulments by age of husband and wife at time of decree: Divorce-registration area, 1976-86

[Based on sample data]

Age of husband and wife at time of decree	1986	1985	1984	1983	1982	1981	1980	1979	1978	1977	1976
Husband											
All ages	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under 20 years	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.8	1.0	0.9	1.0
20-24 years	9.7	10.3	10.6	11.0	11.7	12.5	13.5	13.9	14.8	14.7	15.1
25-29 years	20.6	21.0	20.9	21.3	22.0	22.8	23.4	23.8	24.3	24.0	24.8
30-34 years	20.6	20.6	20.7	21.0	21.3	22.1	21.4	20.8	20.2	19.8	18.6
35-39 years	17.6	17.2	17.1	16.6	16.3	15.1	14.6	14.2	13.8	13.4	12.9
40-44 years	12.1	12.0	11.8	11.5	10.7	10.0	9.8	9.7	9.3	9.4	9.5
45-49 years	7.8	7.4	7.4	7.2	6.9	6.7	6.5	6.7	6.6	6.9	7.2
50-54 years	4.8	4.8	4.7	4.8	4.6	4.6	4.4	4.5	4.5	4.8	4.9
55-59 years	2.9	3.0	3.0	2.9	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.9	2.9
60-64 years	1.7	1.6	1.7	1.7	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.5	1.4	1.5	1.5
65 years and over	1.7	1.7	1.6	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.6	1.5
Wife											
All ages	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under 20 years	2.0	2.1	2.2	2.5	2.7	2.9	3.4	3.6	4.0	3.8	4.1
20-24 years	16.3	16.8	17.3	17.4	18.6	19.5	20.8	21.2	22.7	22.3	22.4
25-29 years	22.8	23.1	23.1	23.6	24.1	24.8	24.6	24.8	24.6	24.5	25.1
30-34 years	19.8	19.9	19.7	19.5	19.9	20.2	19.4	18.7	17.9	17.9	16.7
35-39 years	16.2	15.5	15.4	15.0	14.2	13.1	12.8	12.3	11.8	11.3	11.2
40-44 years	10.1	10.2	9.8	9.5	8.8	8.2	7.7	7.9	7.5	7.7	7.9
45-49 years	5.8	5.6	5.5	5.5	5.1	4.9	4.8	5.0	5.0	5.3	5.6
50-54 years	3.2	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.3	3.4	3.5
55-59 years	1.8	1.8	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.8	1.7	1.8	1.7	2.0	1.9
60-64 years	1.1	1.1	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	1.0	0.9
65 years and over	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.8

Table 7. Median and mean age of husband and wife at time of decree by number of this marriage: Divorce-registration area, 1970-86

[Based on sample data]

Year	Number of marriage of husband						Number of marriage of wife					
	All marriages	First* marriage	Remarriage				All marriages	First marriage	Remarriage			
			Total ¹	Second marriage	Third marriage or more	Number of marriage not stated			Total ¹	Second marriage	Third marriage or more	Number of marriage not stated
Median age in years												
1986	34.6	32.4 ^a	40.0	39.2	43.5	34.9	32.1	30.2	37.0	36.1	39.4	32.2
1985	34.4	32.2	39.8	38.8	43.0	34.5	31.9	30.0	36.8	36.0	39.1	31.8
1984	34.3	32.2	39.6	38.5	42.7	34.4	31.7	30.0	36.4	35.7	38.5	31.5
1983	34.0	32.1	39.3	38.3	42.6	34.1	31.5	29.8	36.3	35.5	38.9	31.3
1982	33.6	31.7	39.1	38.0	42.4	33.7	31.1	29.5	35.8	35.0	38.8	30.9
1981	33.1	31.4	38.5	37.4	42.4	33.4	30.6	29.1	35.3	34.5	38.5	30.6
1980	32.7	31.0	38.3	37.3	41.9	32.8	30.3	28.8	35.2	34.3	38.3	30.1
1979	32.5	30.8	38.4	37.3	42.4	32.5	30.1	28.6	35.3	34.4	38.5	29.9
1978	32.0	30.5	38.2	36.9	41.1	32.5	29.7	28.3	35.1	33.9	38.7	29.7
1977	32.4	30.5	39.3	38.0	43.8	32.5	29.9	28.2	35.7	34.6	40.1	29.9
1976	32.3	30.2	39.6	38.2	44.3	31.9	29.7	28.1	36.2	34.9	40.8	29.2
1975	32.2	30.1	39.9	38.3	44.9	32.8	29.5	27.9	36.4	35.1	40.8	29.7
1974	32.2	30.2	40.3	38.7	45.0	32.0	29.5	27.7	36.7	35.4	41.3	29.2
1973	32.4	30.4	40.8	39.3	45.8	31.7	29.7	27.8	37.3	36.0	42.0	28.7
1972	32.6	30.4	40.9	39.4	45.6	32.4	29.8	27.9	37.7	36.2	42.6	29.6
1971	32.9	30.5	41.5	40.0	46.3	32.6	29.8	27.7	37.9	36.5	42.2	29.6
1970	32.9	30.5	41.5	39.9	46.5	33.1	29.8	27.7	38.2	36.5	42.8	29.3
Mean age in years												
1986	36.5	34.4	42.1	41.0	45.2	36.6	33.9	32.2	38.6	37.8	41.1	33.8
1985	36.4	34.3	41.9	41.0	44.9	36.4	33.7	32.0	38.5	37.7	41.2	33.6
1984	36.2	34.2	41.6	40.7	44.6	36.4	33.6	31.9	38.2	37.5	40.5	33.6
1983	36.1	34.1	41.4	40.5	44.6	36.1	33.5	31.8	38.1	37.2	41.0	33.1
1982	35.7	33.7	41.3	40.3	44.6	35.8	33.1	31.4	37.9	37.0	40.7	32.9
1981	35.4	33.4	40.9	39.8	44.5	35.8	32.7	31.1	37.6	36.7	40.5	32.7
1980	35.1	33.2	40.6	39.6	43.7	35.3	32.4	30.8	37.4	36.5	40.4	32.3
1979	35.0	33.1	40.7	39.7	44.2	35.4	32.3	30.7	37.4	36.6	40.5	32.5
1978	34.8	32.9	40.5	39.5	43.8	35.0	32.1	30.5	37.2	36.2	40.5	32.1
1977	35.1	33.0	41.4	40.4	45.3	35.1	32.4	30.5	38.1	37.2	41.6	32.2
1976	35.1	32.9	41.7	40.4	45.6	34.6	32.3	30.4	38.3	37.1	42.2	31.8
1975	35.0	32.8	41.7	40.4	45.8	35.6	32.3	30.3	38.5	37.4	42.1	32.5
1974	35.1	32.9	42.1	40.9	46.1	35.1	32.3	30.3	38.8	37.6	42.6	32.1
1973	35.3	33.1	42.4	41.1	46.4	34.9	32.5	30.4	39.1	38.0	42.7	31.6
1972	35.4	33.2	42.4	41.1	46.4	35.3	32.6	30.5	39.3	38.0	43.4	32.4
1971	35.6	33.2	42.7	41.4	46.8	35.2	32.7	30.4	39.4	38.2	43.0	32.3
1970	35.6	33.2	42.8	41.4	47.1	35.4	32.7	30.4	39.3	38.1	43.4	32.2

¹Includes remarried, number not stated.

Table 8. Percent distribution of divorces and annulments by age of husband and wife at time of this marriage: Divorce-registration area, 1976-86

[Based on sample data]

Age of husband and wife at time of this marriage	Percent distribution											
	1986	1985	1984	1983	1982	1981	1980	1979	1978	1977	1976	
Husband												
All ages	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under 20 years	13.7	14.2	14.9	15.4	16.1	17.0	18.0	18.4	19.3	18.6	18.9	18.9
20-24 years	40.8	41.4	41.9	42.5	43.0	44.0	44.0	44.3	44.7	44.5	44.4	44.4
25-29 years	21.0	20.5	20.1	19.7	19.3	18.7	18.4	18.0	17.5	17.4	17.3	17.3
30-34 years	10.4	10.3	9.7	9.3	9.0	8.6	8.1	7.9	7.4	7.6	7.4	7.4
35-39 years	5.8	5.5	5.4	5.1	5.0	4.6	4.5	4.3	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.3
40-44 years	3.5	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.0	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9
45 years and over	4.9	4.8	4.9	4.7	4.7	4.5	4.2	4.3	4.1	4.7	4.8	4.8
Wife												
All ages	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under 20 years	31.7	32.6	34.0	35.1	36.6	38.3	39.9	41.0	42.8	42.2	42.5	42.5
20-24 years	36.4	36.7	36.4	36.3	36.2	35.9	35.5	35.1	34.2	34.0	33.8	33.8
25-29 years	14.8	14.4	13.8	13.3	12.7	12.1	11.4	11.0	10.5	10.7	10.3	10.3
30-34 years	7.6	7.2	6.8	6.7	6.2	5.8	5.6	5.4	5.0	5.2	5.2	5.2
35-39 years	4.4	4.0	4.0	3.7	3.6	3.2	3.1	3.1	2.8	3.0	3.1	3.1
40-44 years	2.3	2.3	2.1	2.1	2.0	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	2.0	2.0
45 years and over	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.7	3.0	3.1	3.1

Table 9. Median and mean age of husband and wife at time of this marriage by number of marriage: Divorce-registration area, 1970-86

[Based on sample data]

Year	Number of marriage of husband						Number of marriage of wife					
	All marriages	First marriage	Remarriage			Number of marriage not stated	All marriages	First marriage	Remarriage			Number of marriage not stated
			Total ¹	Second marriage	Third marriage or more				Total ¹	Second marriage	Third marriage or more	
Median age in years												
1986	24.3	22.7	33.2	31.6	38.0	24.6	22.0	20.6	30.0	28.6	34.7	22.1
1985	24.1	22.6	32.9	31.4	37.9	24.2	21.8	20.5	29.8	28.4	34.6	21.8
1984	24.0	22.5	32.7	31.3	37.5	24.2	21.7	20.4	29.6	28.3	34.0	21.6
1983	23.8	22.4	32.5	31.1	37.7	24.3	21.5	20.3	29.5	28.1	34.1	21.5
1982	23.7	22.3	32.4	31.0	37.6	23.9	21.3	20.2	29.2	28.0	34.3	21.4
1981	23.4	22.1	32.0	30.6	37.6	23.7	21.1	20.0	28.9	27.7	33.9	21.2
1980	23.3	22.0	31.8	30.4	37.1	23.7	20.9	19.9	28.8	27.4	33.9	21.0
1979	23.2	22.0	31.7	30.4	37.2	23.5	20.9	19.8	28.8	27.4	34.0	20.9
1978	23.0	21.9	31.5	30.1	37.1	23.2	20.7	19.7	28.5	27.1	34.1	20.6
1977	23.1	21.9	32.1	30.6	38.1	23.1	20.7	19.7	28.9	27.5	34.7	20.6
1976	23.1	21.9	32.5	30.7	38.6	22.8	20.7	19.7	29.3	27.6	35.2	20.4
1975	23.0	21.9	32.1	30.5	38.8	23.1	20.6	19.7	29.1	27.4	35.3	20.4
1974	23.0	21.8	32.6	30.8	39.1	23.1	20.6	19.6	29.3	27.7	35.5	20.4
1973	22.9	21.8	32.8	31.0	39.3	23.0	20.5	19.6	29.4	27.7	36.3	20.4
1972	23.0	21.8	32.7	30.8	39.0	22.9	20.5	19.5	29.5	27.7	36.8	20.4
1971	23.0	21.8	33.0	31.1	39.8	22.8	20.5	19.5	29.6	27.9	36.1	20.1
1970	23.0	21.8	33.0	31.1	39.8	22.7	20.4	19.4	29.6	27.7	36.8	19.9
Mean age in years												
1986	27.0	23.8	35.4	33.9	40.0	27.4	24.4	21.6	32.0	30.6	36.2	24.6
1985	26.9	23.7	35.3	33.8	39.8	27.3	24.3	21.5	31.9	30.6	36.4	24.3
1984	26.7	23.5	35.1	33.7	39.6	27.4	24.1	21.3	31.8	30.5	35.7	24.6
1983	26.6	23.4	34.9	33.5	39.5	27.2	24.0	21.2	31.7	30.4	36.2	24.2
1982	26.4	23.3	35.0	33.5	39.8	27.0	23.8	21.0	31.6	30.3	36.1	24.1
1981	26.1	23.1	34.6	33.2	39.6	26.9	23.5	20.9	31.4	30.1	35.9	23.9
1980	25.9	23.0	34.4	33.0	39.0	26.7	23.3	20.7	31.2	29.8	35.9	23.8
1979	25.8	22.9	34.5	33.1	39.2	26.6	23.2	20.6	31.2	29.9	35.9	23.6
1978	25.7	22.9	34.2	32.8	39.0	26.1	23.1	20.5	31.0	29.6	36.0	23.1
1977	25.9	22.9	34.9	33.5	40.0	26.0	23.3	20.5	31.6	30.2	36.6	22.9
1976	25.9	22.9	35.2	33.5	40.4	25.6	23.3	20.5	31.9	30.2	37.1	22.6
1975	25.8	22.9	35.0	33.4	40.5	26.2	23.2	20.4	31.8	30.3	37.0	23.0
1974	25.9	22.8	35.4	33.7	40.9	25.9	23.2	20.4	32.1	30.4	37.5	22.8
1973	25.9	22.8	35.5	33.8	40.9	25.9	23.2	20.3	32.1	30.5	37.6	22.7
1972	25.9	22.9	35.3	33.7	40.7	25.8	23.2	20.3	32.2	30.5	37.9	22.8
1971	26.0	22.9	35.6	33.8	41.3	25.3	23.2	20.2	32.3	30.6	37.7	22.3
1970	26.1	23.0	35.7	34.0	41.2	25.5	23.2	20.2	32.3	30.5	38.0	22.2

¹Includes remarried, number not stated.

Table 10. Mean ages of divorced husband and wife at time of marriage and at time of decree: Divorce-registration area and each registration State, 1986

[Based on sample data]

<i>Area</i>	<i>Mean age of husband</i>		<i>Mean age of wife</i>	
	<i>At decree</i>	<i>At marriage</i>	<i>At decree</i>	<i>At marriage</i>
Divorce-registration area	36.5	27.0	33.9	24.4
Alabama	35.3	27.5	32.6	24.8
Alaska	34.8	27.7	32.1	25.0
Connecticut	37.8	27.1	35.3	24.5
Delaware	36.3	26.6	33.8	24.0
District of Columbia	38.0	27.7	35.6	25.4
Georgia	35.3	27.2	32.6	24.6
Hawaii	36.3	27.6	33.6	25.0
Idaho	36.3	28.7	33.4	25.9
Illinois	36.4	27.2	33.8	24.6
Iowa	36.1	26.5	33.8	24.1
Kansas	35.1	27.2	32.6	24.7
Kentucky	35.1	26.8	32.3	24.1
Maryland	37.5	26.5	34.9	24.0
Massachusetts	37.7	26.3	35.2	23.8
Michigan	36.6	26.8	34.1	24.3
Missouri	36.1	27.3	33.4	24.6
Montana	36.7	28.2	33.8	25.3
Nebraska	35.9	26.4	33.4	23.9
New Hampshire	36.5	27.0	33.7	24.2
New York	37.8	27.7	35.3	25.2
Ohio	36.0	26.9	33.5	24.4
Oregon	38.0	28.7	35.2	25.9
Pennsylvania	37.2	25.9	34.6	23.4
Rhode Island	37.4	26.7	34.8	24.1
South Carolina	35.8	25.9	33.3	23.5
South Dakota	35.2	25.9	32.4	23.1
Tennessee	35.7	27.2	32.9	24.4
Utah	35.1	27.0	32.4	24.3
Vermont	37.2	26.7	34.5	24.0
Virginia	36.8	26.3	34.3	23.9
Wisconsin	36.5	26.3	33.9	23.7
Wyoming	35.1	27.4	32.2	24.6

Table 11. Median and mean duration of marriage at time of decree by number of this marriage of husband and wife: Divorce-registration area, 1970-86

[Based on sample data]

Year	Number of marriage of husband						Number of marriage of wife				
	All marriages	First marriage	Remarriage			Number of marriage not stated	First marriage	Remarriage			Number of marriage not stated
			Total ¹	Second marriage	Third marriage or more			Total ¹	Second marriage	Third marriage or more	
Median duration in years											
1986	6.9	7.9	5.1	5.5	3.9	6.9	7.9	5.0	5.5	3.6	6.9
1985	6.8	8.0	4.9	5.4	3.7	6.5	8.0	4.8	5.4	3.5	6.5
1984	6.9	8.3	4.8	5.2	3.6	6.5	8.2	4.7	5.2	3.4	6.5
1983	7.0	8.4	4.8	5.2	3.6	6.6	8.4	4.7	5.2	3.3	6.6
1982	7.0	8.2	4.6	5.0	3.4	6.8	8.2	4.5	5.0	3.2	6.9
1981	7.0	8.1	4.5	4.9	3.3	6.8	8.0	4.4	4.9	3.1	6.8
1980	6.8	7.8	4.4	4.8	3.2	6.6	7.7	4.4	4.8	3.2	6.6
1979	6.8	7.8	4.4	4.8	3.3	6.6	7.7	4.4	4.8	3.0	6.7
1978	6.6	7.5	4.3	4.6	3.2	6.3	7.5	4.3	4.7	3.0	6.4
1977	6.6	7.5	4.6	4.8	3.5	6.4	7.4	4.6	4.9	3.4	6.4
1976	6.5	7.3	4.5	4.8	3.5	6.1	7.3	4.5	4.9	3.4	6.2
1975	6.5	7.3	4.5	4.8	3.6	6.4	7.2	4.5	5.0	3.2	6.4
1974	6.5	7.3	4.6	5.0	3.6	6.4	7.2	4.6	5.0	3.5	6.5
1973	6.6	7.5	4.6	4.9	3.7	6.3	7.5	4.8	5.2	3.6	6.3
1972	6.7	7.5	4.7	5.0	3.8	6.2	7.4	4.8	5.2	3.7	6.3
1971	6.7	7.6	4.9	5.2	3.8	6.5	7.5	4.9	5.4	3.7	6.5
1970	6.7	7.6	4.8	5.1	3.9	6.5	7.6	4.9	5.3	3.8	6.5
Mean duration in years											
1986	9.6	10.7	6.7	7.2	5.3	9.4	10.7	6.7	7.2	5.0	9.5
1985	9.5	10.7	6.7	7.2	5.1	9.2	10.7	6.6	7.1	4.9	9.2
1984	9.5	10.8	6.5	7.0	5.1	9.1	10.8	6.5	7.0	4.8	9.2
1983	9.6	10.8	6.6	7.0	5.1	9.1	10.8	6.5	7.0	4.9	9.2
1982	9.4	10.5	6.4	6.9	4.8	9.3	10.5	6.3	6.8	4.7	9.3
1981	9.3	10.4	6.3	6.7	4.9	9.1	10.4	6.3	6.7	4.7	9.2
1980	9.2	10.2	6.2	6.6	4.8	9.2	10.2	6.3	6.8	4.7	9.2
1979	9.3	10.3	6.3	6.7	5.0	9.1	10.2	6.3	6.8	4.7	9.2
1978	9.1	10.1	6.3	6.7	4.9	8.9	10.1	6.3	6.7	4.6	9.0
1977	9.2	10.2	6.5	6.9	5.3	9.0	10.1	6.6	7.0	5.1	9.1
1976	9.2	10.1	6.5	7.0	5.2	8.9	10.1	6.6	7.0	5.2	9.0
1975	9.2	10.0	6.7	7.1	5.4	9.1	10.0	6.8	7.3	5.1	9.1
1974	9.3	10.1	6.8	7.2	5.2	9.3	10.1	6.8	7.2	5.2	9.4
1973	9.4	10.3	6.9	7.3	5.6	9.2	10.3	7.0	7.6	5.2	9.3
1972	9.5	10.3	7.1	7.5	5.8	9.2	10.3	7.1	7.6	5.6	9.3
1971	9.5	10.4	7.1	7.6	5.6	9.4	10.4	7.2	7.7	5.4	9.4
1970	9.5	10.4	7.1	7.4	5.9	9.4	10.4	7.1	7.7	5.5	9.5

¹Includes remarried, number not stated.

Table 12. Percent distribution of divorces and annulments by duration of marriage to decree, and median and mean duration of marriage to decree: Divorce-registration area and each registration State, 1986

[Based on sample data]

Area	Total	Percent distribution							Years ¹	
		Less than 1 year	1-4 years	5-9 years	10-14 years	15-19 years	20-24 years	25 years and over	Median	Mean
Divorce-registration area	100.0	3.8	33.6	26.9	14.6	9.3	5.7	6.2	6.9	9.6
Alabama	100.0	10.3	38.1	23.6	11.6	7.2	5.1	4.1	5.3	8.0
Alaska	100.0	5.9	43.7	27.4	11.0	6.2	3.4	2.4	5.0	7.1
Connecticut	100.0	1.6	29.7	26.2	15.7	11.3	7.9	7.6	8.0	10.8
Delaware	100.0	2.3	33.5	26.4	14.1	11.3	6.5	5.9	7.3	9.9
District of Columbia	100.0	1.2	32.5	28.0	15.1	9.9	6.0	7.4	7.4	10.3
Georgia	100.0	6.9	39.1	25.8	11.7	7.1	5.1	4.3	5.6	8.1
Hawaii	100.0	3.4	37.1	28.6	13.9	8.2	4.5	4.3	6.3	8.7
Idaho	100.0	6.9	38.2	27.8	11.3	7.1	4.4	4.3	5.6	8.1
Illinois	100.0	4.2	34.7	26.5	14.3	9.0	5.5	5.9	6.6	9.3
Iowa	100.0	2.6	33.7	27.3	15.4	8.9	6.1	6.1	7.0	9.7
Kansas	100.0	6.7	39.9	26.3	12.2	6.9	3.8	4.3	5.5	8.0
Kentucky	100.0	7.4	38.3	24.4	13.3	7.5	4.2	4.8	5.7	8.3
Maryland	100.0	0.4	24.4	30.5	17.1	11.6	7.4	8.5	8.8	11.5
Massachusetts	100.0	0.5	25.3	29.3	17.4	11.7	7.1	8.7	8.8	11.4
Michigan	100.0	3.0	31.3	27.4	15.1	10.7	5.9	6.6	7.5	10.0
Missouri	100.0	4.7	37.3	26.1	13.5	8.1	5.0	5.4	6.1	8.8
Montana	100.0	6.1	36.9	25.9	14.4	8.0	4.4	4.3	6.0	8.5
Nebraska	100.0	2.8	34.5	27.6	13.4	10.5	5.6	5.6	6.9	9.6
New Hampshire	100.0	1.9	32.8	27.5	15.0	10.6	6.3	5.9	7.3	10.0
New York	100.0	2.1	34.0	25.0	15.1	10.1	6.4	7.4	7.3	10.2
Ohio	100.0	4.3	33.8	28.2	14.2	8.7	4.7	6.1	6.7	9.3
Oregon	100.0	3.4	32.9	29.3	15.0	9.0	5.1	5.3	6.9	9.3
Pennsylvania	100.0	1.3	26.6	27.5	17.0	11.3	7.9	8.5	8.7	11.3
Rhode Island	100.0	0.7	29.0	28.7	16.6	11.4	6.4	7.2	8.2	10.7
South Carolina	100.0	1.8	31.7	29.0	15.8	10.1	5.6	6.0	7.4	9.9
South Dakota	100.0	3.5	37.7	26.5	14.1	8.5	4.5	5.2	6.3	8.9
Tennessee	100.0	7.8	37.0	24.6	13.0	7.7	4.2	5.6	5.7	8.5
Utah	100.0	7.0	38.6	25.5	13.1	7.9	3.9	4.1	5.6	8.1
Vermont	100.0	0.3	29.9	29.6	16.5	10.5	7.1	6.2	7.8	10.5
Virginia	100.0	0.7	30.0	29.1	16.3	10.4	6.8	6.7	7.9	10.5
Wisconsin	100.0	1.3	31.1	28.8	15.6	10.4	6.2	6.5	7.6	10.3
Wyoming	100.0	6.5	39.9	26.8	13.2	7.1	3.4	3.2	5.5	7.7

¹Medians and means computed on data by single years of duration.

Table 13. Percent distribution of divorces and annulments by petitioner, according to presence of children at time of decree: Divorce-registration area, 1975-86

[Based on sample data]

Year	All divorces and annulments ¹				Children present				Children not present			
	Total ²	Husband	Wife	Husband and wife	Total ²	Husband	Wife	Husband and wife	Total ²	Husband	Wife	Husband and wife
1986	100.0	32.6	61.5	5.9	100.0	28.4	65.7	5.9	100.0	37.3	56.9	5.8
1985	100.0	32.4	61.8	5.7	100.0	28.6	65.9	5.5	100.0	36.8	57.3	5.9
1984	100.0	32.3	61.7	6.0	100.0	28.5	65.7	5.7	100.0	36.6	57.2	6.3
1983	100.0	31.8	62.1	6.1	100.0	28.0	65.9	6.0	100.0	36.0	57.8	6.2
1982	100.0	31.3	62.5	6.2	100.0	27.2	66.8	6.0	100.0	35.7	57.6	6.7
1981	100.0	30.5	63.1	6.3	100.0	27.0	67.2	5.8	100.0	34.5	58.3	7.1
1980	100.0	30.2	63.4	6.3	100.0	26.9	67.0	6.1	100.0	34.2	59.0	6.7
1979	100.0	29.8	63.7	6.5	100.0	26.2	67.6	6.1	100.0	34.2	58.7	7.1
1978	100.0	29.6	63.5	6.8	100.0	26.4	67.4	6.2	100.0	33.6	58.7	7.7
1977	100.0	30.2	64.8	5.0	100.0	26.4	68.8	4.8	100.0	34.6	60.1	5.3
1976	100.0	29.4	65.4	4.6	100.0	25.7	69.6	4.4	100.0	33.9	60.5	5.1
1975	100.0	29.4	67.2	2.8	100.0	25.6	71.4	2.6	100.0	34.2	62.0	3.2

¹Includes cases where presence of children is not stated.
²Includes cases in the category "other person" as petitioner.

Technical notes

Definitions

Divorces include absolute divorces, annulments, and dissolutions of marriage. Data are tabulated by State where the decree was granted, not by State of residence. For the petitioner, however, State of residence is defined as the State where decree was granted, regardless of usual residence. Date of divorce is defined as the date the decree was granted.

Sources of data

Nationwide counts

Data in tables 1 and 2 come from the number of divorce decrees reported annually by States and counties to the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). When divorces are not reported for counties, the following criteria are applied for the data shown in table 2:

1. The State totals are published as reported even when there are nonreporting counties.
2. If the population of nonreporting areas in the latest available census is less than 1 percent of the State population, the State total does not have a footnote to indicate that the data are incomplete.
3. If the population of nonreporting areas is 1.0–9.9 percent of the State population, data for the State and division have the footnote "Data are incomplete." Rates are computed and no estimates are made for the missing data.
4. If the population of nonreporting areas is 10 percent or more of the State population, the State and division totals have the footnote "Data are incomplete," and the divorce rate is not computed. Estimates are made for inclusion in the totals for the region and for the United States, and rates are computed. Figures for the region and United States have the footnote "Figures include estimates."

Sample data

Information about the characteristics of divorcing couples is available only from States that participate in the divorce-registration area (DRA). Data in tables 3–13 come from a probability sample of divorce records from the States participating in the DRA. The DRA has expanded from 28 States in 1970 to 31 States and the District of Columbia in 1986. About 49 percent of the divorces in the United States in 1986 took place in the DRA.

Divorce sample

The probability sample of divorce records for 1986 was selected by using five different sampling rates. For the District of Columbia and for each State in the DRA, either 5, 10, 20, 50, or 100

percent of the divorce records were included. Sampling rates were selected so that the expected sample would contain at least 2,500 records for each State. This criterion required 100 percent sampling for Alaska, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Hawaii, Montana, New Hampshire, South Dakota, and Wyoming. One hundred percent of the divorce records also were included for eight additional States—Illinois, Missouri, Nebraska, New York, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Vermont, and Virginia. These States supplied State-coded data tapes of 100 percent of their divorce records through the Vital Statistics Cooperative Program.

The table on this page shows sampling errors for estimates that constitute 1, 10, 25, 50, 75, 90, and 99 percent

Sampling error of estimated percent: Divorce-registration area, 1976, 1985, and 1986, and each registration State, 1986

[Figures for Alaska, Delaware, District of Columbia, Hawaii, Illinois, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Vermont, Virginia, and Wyoming have no sampling errors in 1985 or 1986 because all records were tabulated]

Area and year	Sampling error of estimated percent			
	1 or 99	10 or 90	25 or 75	50
Divorce-registration area				
1986	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1
1985	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1
1976	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.2
Registration State, 1986				
Alabama	0.2	0.6	0.8	0.9
Alaska	...	...	...	...
Connecticut	0.1	0.3	0.4	0.5
Delaware	...	...	...	...
District of Columbia	...	...	...	...
Georgia	0.2	0.5	0.7	0.8
Hawaii	...	...	...	...
Idaho	0.1	0.4	0.6	0.6
Illinois	...	...	...	...
Iowa	0.1	0.3	0.4	0.5
Kansas	0.1	0.3	0.4	0.4
Kentucky	0.1	0.4	0.6	0.7
Maryland	0.2	0.5	0.7	0.8
Massachusetts	0.1	0.4	0.6	0.7
Michigan	0.1	0.5	0.7	0.8
Missouri	...	...	...	...
Montana	...	...	...	...
Nebraska	...	...	...	...
New Hampshire	...	...	...	...
New York	...	...	...	...
Ohio	0.2	0.6	0.8	1.0
Oregon	0.2	0.5	0.7	0.8
Pennsylvania	0.1	0.5	0.7	0.8
Rhode Island	...	...	...	...
South Carolina	...	...	...	...
South Dakota	...	...	...	...
Tennessee	0.2	0.5	0.7	0.9
Utah	0.1	0.3	0.5	0.5
Vermont	...	...	...	...
Virginia	...	...	...	...
Wisconsin	0.2	0.5	0.7	0.8
Wyoming	...	...	...	...

of the annual divorce totals. These sampling errors are shown for the DRA for 1976, 1985, and 1986 and for the District of Columbia and each DRA State for 1986.

Estimates of children involved in divorce

To make the national estimates of children involved in divorce, shown in table 3, it was assumed that the average number of children per decree for the United States was the same as the average in the DRA. This average was multiplied by the national divorce total to estimate the national number of children involved in divorce. For 1950-59 the average number of children per decree was calculated using data from all reporting States; for 1960, from a nationwide sample; for 1961-69, from

16 States; and, thereafter, from all DRA States.

Computation of rates, percent distributions, medians, and means

Divorce rates for 1986 are based on populations estimated as of July 1, 1986. (1,2) Percent distributions, means,

¹U.S. Bureau of the Census. State population and household estimates, with age, sex, and components of change: 1981-87. Current Population Reports; series P-25, no. 1024. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office. 1988.

²Unpublished estimates by marital status prepared by the U.S. Bureau of the Census consistent with United States population estimates by age, sex, and race: 1980 to 1987. Current Population Reports; series P-25, no. 1022. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office. 1988.

and medians exclude cases for which the pertinent information (number of children, duration of marriage, or age) is not stated. Mean and median age at marriage and at decree, and mean and median duration of marriage were computed using ungrouped data.

The mean and the median are measures of central tendency. The mean is computed by summing the values of the item under consideration and dividing this sum by the number of observations included. The median is the middle value of a set of observations that have been arranged in order of magnitude. There are equal numbers of observations above and below the median.

This report represents summary tabulations from the final divorce statistics for 1986. More detailed tabulations for 1986 will be published in *Vital Statistics of the United States, Volume III—Marriage and Divorce*. Prior to the publication of that volume, the National Center for Health Statistics will respond to requests for unpublished data whenever possible.

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