

Monthly

VITAL STATISTICS REPORT

Summary Report

Final Marriage Statistics, 1973



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FROM THE

NATIONAL CENTER FOR HEALTH STATISTICS

In 1973 the marriage rate declined for the first time in 15 years. The rate was 10.9 per 1,000 population, down 0.9 percent from the 1972 rate of 11.0 per 1,000 population. Because the population grew proportionately more than the number of marriages, the rate decreased even though marriages increased slightly. From 1962 to 1972 the marriage rate increased 29 percent. The number of marriages increased rapidly during the sixties as the large numbers of children born during the forties reached maturity.

There were 2,284,108 marriages performed in 1973. This was 0.1 percent more than the number reported in 1972 and 45 percent more than the number reported in 1962. Provisional data indicate a decline in both the number and the rate for 1974.

The marriage rate for unmarried women aged 15-44 years also declined in 1973, reaching its lowest level of the decade. This rate increased from 138.4 in 1962 to 141.3 in 1972, with only occasional downward fluctuations, then it declined to 137.3 in 1973.

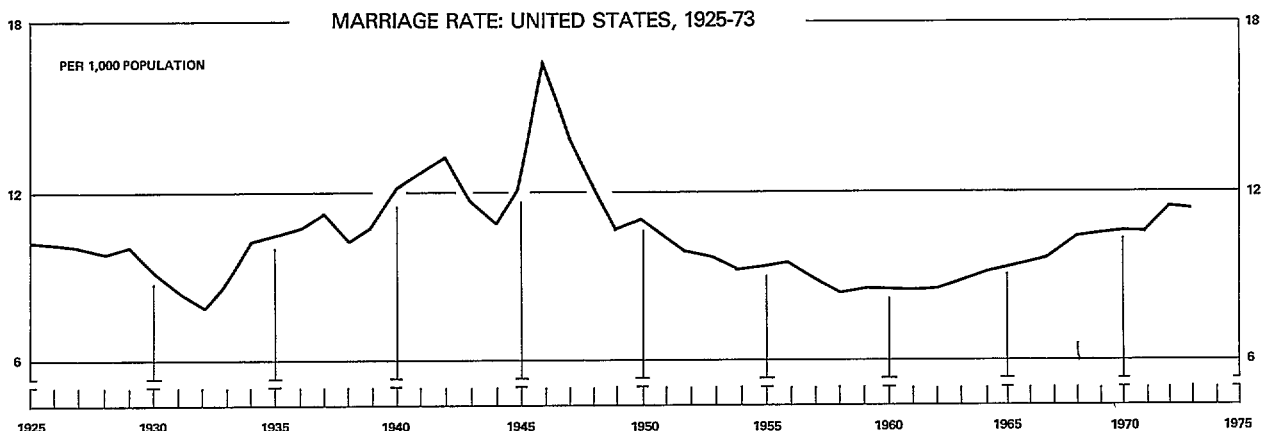
The number of marriages was higher in 1973 than in 1972 in 29 States, lower in 20 States and the District of Columbia, and remained the same in one State. About half the States with fewer marriages lie

along the eastern seaboard. In Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Michigan, and Tennessee the number of marriages increased while the marriage rates declined.

Marriage rates vary with age, sex, and previous marital status. In the marriage-registration area in 1973 the highest first marriage rates are those for brides and for grooms aged 20-24 years, 177.1 and 155.6 per 1,000, respectively. The remarriage rates are much higher, the highest being 394.0 per 1,000 previously divorced women under 25 years of age and

Table 1. MEDIAN AGES OF BRIDE AND GROOM BY PREVIOUS MARITAL STATUS, 1963-73

| Year | Median age of bride | | | Median age of groom | | |
|-----------|---------------------|----------------|------------|---------------------|----------------|------------|
| | Total | First marriage | Remarriage | Total | First marriage | Remarriage |
| 1973----- | 21.9 | 20.6 | 32.3 | 24.1 | 22.5 | 36.3 |
| 1972----- | 21.7 | 20.5 | 32.8 | 23.8 | 22.4 | 36.5 |
| 1971----- | 21.7 | 20.5 | 32.9 | 23.7 | 22.5 | 36.9 |
| 1970----- | 21.7 | 20.6 | 33.3 | 23.6 | 22.5 | 37.5 |
| 1969----- | 21.6 | 20.6 | 33.8 | 23.5 | 22.4 | 38.2 |
| 1968----- | 21.5 | 20.6 | 33.8 | 23.6 | 22.4 | 39.3 |
| 1967----- | 21.4 | 20.5 | 35.0 | 23.8 | 22.6 | 39.1 |
| 1966----- | 21.5 | 20.3 | 35.2 | 23.8 | 22.6 | 39.2 |
| 1965----- | 21.4 | 20.4 | 35.5 | 23.6 | 22.5 | 39.6 |
| 1964----- | 21.4 | 20.4 | 35.6 | 23.6 | 22.4 | 39.7 |
| 1963----- | 21.3 | 20.3 | 35.6 | 23.7 | 22.5 | 39.8 |



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431.3 for previously divorced grooms under 25 years of age.

In 1973 the median age at first marriage was 20.6 for brides and 22.5 for grooms, almost unchanged over a decade. In contrast to the consistent median age at first marriage, the median age at remarriage for both bride and groom moved steadily downward over the decade. It dropped 3.3 years for brides to 32.3 years of age and 3.5 years for grooms to 36.3 years of age. The median age of brides was 1.9 years younger than that of grooms at first marriage, 3.7 years younger at remarriage after divorce, and 7.2 years younger at remarriage after widowhood.

Table 2. MARRIAGES AND MARRIAGE RATES: UNITED STATES, 1958-73

[Data refer only to events occurring within the United States. Alaska included beginning 1959 and Hawaii beginning 1960]

| Year | Marriages | Rate per 1,000 ¹ | | |
|------|-----------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | | Total population | Unmarried women 15 years and over | Unmarried women 15-44 years |
| 1973 | 2,284,108 | 10.9 | 76.0 | 137.5 |
| 1972 | 2,282,154 | 11.0 | 77.9 | 141.3 |
| 1971 | 2,190,481 | 10.6 | 76.2 | 138.9 |
| 1970 | 2,158,802 | 10.6 | 76.5 | 140.2 |
| 1969 | 2,145,000 | 10.6 | 80.0 | 149.1 |
| 1968 | 2,069,000 | 10.4 | 79.1 | 147.2 |
| 1967 | 1,927,000 | 9.7 | 76.4 | 145.2 |
| 1966 | 1,857,000 | 9.5 | 75.6 | 145.1 |
| 1965 | 1,800,000 | 9.3 | 75.0 | 144.3 |
| 1964 | 1,725,000 | 9.0 | 74.6 | 146.2 |
| 1963 | 1,654,000 | 8.8 | 73.4 | 143.3 |
| 1962 | 1,577,000 | 8.5 | 71.2 | 138.4 |
| 1961 | 1,548,000 | 8.5 | 72.2 | 145.4 |
| 1960 | 1,523,000 | 8.5 | 73.5 | 148.0 |
| 1959 | 1,494,000 | 8.5 | 73.6 | 149.8 |
| 1958 | 1,451,000 | 8.4 | 72.0 | 148.3 |

¹Data are based on population enumerated as of April 1 for 1960 and 1970 and estimated as of July 1 for all other years.

SYMBOLS

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Data not available----- | --- |
| Category not applicable----- | ... |
| Quantity zero----- | - |
| Quantity more than 0 but less than 0.05----- | 0.0 |
| Figure does not meet standards of reliability or precision----- | * |

This report presents summary tabulations from the final marriage statistics for 1973. More detailed tabulations for 1973 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.

Table 3. MARRIAGES AND MARRIAGE RATES: UNITED STATES, EACH REGION, DIVISION, AND STATE, 1971-73

[By place of occurrence. Data are counts of marriages performed except as noted. Rates per 1,000 population in each area, estimated as of July 1]

| Region, division, and State | Number | | | Rate | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------|-------|-------|
| | 1973 | 1972 | 1971 | 1973 | 1972 | 1971 |
| United States----- | 2,284,108 | 2,282,154 | 2,190,481 | 10.9 | 11.0 | 10.6 |
| Northeast----- | 422,885 | 425,955 | 417,971 | 8.5 | 8.6 | 8.4 |
| North Central----- | 581,544 | 577,429 | 559,217 | 10.1 | 10.1 | 9.8 |
| South----- | 823,947 | 818,405 | 779,553 | 12.5 | 12.6 | 12.2 |
| West----- | 455,732 | 460,365 | 453,740 | 12.5 | 12.8 | 12.2 |
| Northeast: | | | | | | |
| New England----- | 106,426 | 107,111 | 104,913 | 8.8 | 8.8 | 8.7 |
| Middle Atlantic----- | 316,459 | 318,844 | 313,058 | 8.4 | 8.5 | 8.3 |
| North Central: | | | | | | |
| East North Central----- | 412,324 | 409,206 | 396,535 | 10.1 | 10.0 | 9.7 |
| West North Central----- | 169,220 | 168,223 | 162,682 | 10.1 | 10.1 | 9.8 |
| South: | | | | | | |
| South Atlantic----- | 398,544 | 394,392 | 377,111 | 12.3 | 12.4 | 12.1 |
| East South Central----- | 167,174 | 170,054 | 162,164 | 12.6 | 12.9 | 12.5 |
| West South Central----- | 258,229 | 253,959 | 240,278 | 12.7 | 12.7 | 12.2 |
| West: | | | | | | |
| Mountain----- | 211,738 | 209,980 | 193,416 | 23.1 | 23.6 | 22.6 |
| Pacific----- | 243,994 | 250,385 | 240,324 | 8.9 | 9.2 | 8.9 |
| New England: | | | | | | |
| Maine----- | 11,925 | 11,739 | 11,183 | 11.6 | 11.4 | 11.2 |
| New Hampshire----- | 9,557 | 9,752 | 9,771 | 12.1 | 12.6 | 12.8 |
| Vermont----- | 5,072 | 5,088 | 5,000 | 10.9 | 11.1 | 10.9 |
| Massachusetts----- | 46,640 | 48,189 | 47,535 | 8.0 | 8.3 | 8.3 |
| Rhode Island----- | 7,715 | 7,658 | 7,589 | 7.9 | 8.1 | 7.9 |
| Connecticut----- | 25,517 | 24,485 | 23,825 | 8.3 | 7.9 | 7.7 |
| Middle Atlantic: | | | | | | |
| New York----- | 155,660 | 161,872 | 161,864 | 8.5 | 8.6 | 8.8 |
| New Jersey----- | 59,723 | 58,476 | 56,531 | 8.1 | 8.0 | 7.7 |
| Pennsylvania----- | 101,076 | 98,496 | 94,663 | 8.5 | 8.3 | 8.0 |
| East North Central: | | | | | | |
| Ohio----- | 99,524 | 96,297 | 95,641 | 9.3 | 9.0 | 8.9 |
| Indiana----- | 58,428 | 61,262 | 58,076 | 11.0 | 11.6 | 11.0 |
| Illinois----- | 119,843 | 118,592 | 115,826 | 10.7 | 10.5 | 10.3 |
| Michigan----- | 94,486 | 94,447 | 92,134 | 10.4 | 10.5 | 10.2 |
| Wisconsin----- | 40,043 | 38,608 | 34,858 | 8.8 | 8.5 | 7.8 |
| West North Central: | | | | | | |
| Minnesota----- | 32,971 | 32,227 | 31,196 | 9.5 | 8.3 | 8.0 |
| Iowa----- | 27,544 | 26,803 | 25,819 | 9.5 | 9.2 | 9.1 |
| Missouri----- | 51,990 | 53,372 | 51,048 | 10.9 | 11.2 | 10.7 |
| North Dakota----- | 5,875 | 5,886 | 5,648 | 9.2 | 9.3 | 9.0 |
| South Dakota----- | 12,281 | 12,151 | 11,363 | 17.9 | 17.9 | 17.0 |
| Nebraska----- | 13,957 | 14,106 | 15,080 | 9.1 | 9.2 | 10.0 |
| Kansas----- | 24,592 | 23,878 | 22,528 | 10.8 | 10.5 | 10.0 |
| South Atlantic: | | | | | | |
| Delaware----- | 4,298 | 4,362 | 4,481 | 7.5 | 7.6 | 8.0 |
| Maryland----- | 48,168 | 49,324 | 50,824 | 11.8 | 12.3 | 12.7 |
| District of Columbia----- | 5,661 | 6,292 | 6,689 | 7.6 | 8.4 | 9.0 |
| Virginia----- | 58,431 | 55,863 | 52,159 | 12.1 | 11.7 | 11.1 |
| West Virginia----- | 18,199 | 18,270 | 16,987 | 10.1 | 10.2 | 9.7 |
| North Carolina----- | 46,951 | 48,766 | 48,971 | 8.9 | 9.3 | 9.5 |
| South Carolina----- | 56,876 | 59,983 | 58,034 | 20.9 | 22.3 | 22.1 |
| Georgia----- | 70,373 | 68,756 | 63,860 | 14.7 | 14.5 | 13.7 |
| Florida----- | 89,587 | 82,176 | 75,108 | 11.7 | 11.2 | 10.7 |
| East South Central: | | | | | | |
| Kentucky----- | 34,379 | 35,423 | 35,984 | 10.3 | 10.7 | 11.0 |
| Tennessee----- | 56,285 | 56,164 | 50,307 | 13.6 | 13.8 | 12.6 |
| Alabama----- | 47,997 | 49,764 | 48,276 | 13.6 | 14.1 | 13.9 |
| Mississippi----- | 26,513 | 26,703 | 27,597 | 12.5 | 12.7 | 12.4 |
| West South Central: | | | | | | |
| Arkansas----- | 25,202 | 25,202 | 24,065 | 12.4 | 12.6 | 12.4 |
| Louisiana----- | 39,498 | 38,981 | 36,648 | 10.5 | 10.4 | 10.0 |
| Oklahoma----- | 41,367 | 40,767 | 39,333 | 15.5 | 15.5 | 15.1 |
| Texas----- | 152,162 | 149,009 | 140,232 | 12.9 | 12.8 | 12.2 |
| Mountain: | | | | | | |
| Montana----- | 7,751 | 7,674 | 7,128 | 10.8 | 10.7 | 10.1 |
| Idaho----- | 12,236 | 12,086 | 11,356 | 15.9 | 16.0 | 15.5 |
| Wyoming----- | 5,506 | 5,357 | 4,772 | 15.6 | 15.5 | 14.0 |
| Colorado----- | 27,981 | 27,095 | 25,839 | 11.5 | 11.5 | 11.3 |
| New Mexico----- | 15,178 | 14,167 | 14,008 | 13.7 | 13.2 | 13.6 |
| Arizona----- | 26,180 | 23,318 | 20,865 | 12.7 | 11.9 | 11.3 |
| Utah----- | 14,818 | 13,935 | 12,037 | 12.8 | 12.4 | 11.0 |
| Nevada----- | 102,078 | 106,348 | 97,411 | 186.3 | 199.5 | 192.1 |
| Pacific: | | | | | | |
| Washington----- | 41,385 | 41,618 | 40,988 | 12.1 | 12.2 | 11.9 |
| Oregon----- | 19,661 | 19,265 | 18,100 | 8.8 | 8.8 | 8.4 |
| California----- | 169,320 | 175,924 | 168,049 | 8.2 | 8.6 | 8.3 |
| Alaska----- | 3,872 | 3,828 | 3,453 | 11.7 | 11.8 | 11.0 |
| Hawaii----- | 9,776 | 9,750 | 9,734 | 11.8 | 11.9 | 12.3 |

¹Includes marriage licenses issued for some counties.

²Marriage licenses issued.

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Table 4. MARRIAGES AND MARRIAGE RATES BY AGE, PREVIOUS MARITAL STATUS, AND COLOR OF BRIDE AND OF GROOM:
MARRIAGE-REGISTRATION AREA,¹ 1973

[By place of occurrence. Based on sample data. Rates per 1,000 population in specified group, estimated as of July 1, 1973. Figures for age not stated are distributed]

| Age and previous marital status | Bride | | | | | Groom | | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------------------------|-----------|-------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| | Total | | White | All other | Color not stated ³ | Total | | White | All other | Color not stated ³ |
| | Number | Rate ² | | | | Number | Rate ² | | | |
| ALL MARRIAGES | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total----- | 1,846,501 | 64.9 | 1,069,263 | 155,215 | 622,023 | 1,846,501 | 78.6 | 1,037,567 | 156,911 | 622,023 |
| 14-17 years----- | 192,577 | 27.9 | 123,593 | 16,740 | 47,244 | 32,849 | 4.5 | 24,170 | 2,184 | 6,495 |
| 18-19 years----- | 401,186 | 150.4 | 245,831 | 32,769 | 122,586 | 233,588 | 73.7 | 151,227 | 19,602 | 62,759 |
| 20-24 years----- | 672,771 | 194.1 | 376,071 | 55,544 | 245,356 | 769,114 | 165.0 | 444,086 | 64,549 | 260,679 |
| 25-44 years----- | 453,701 | 125.2 | 244,295 | 42,069 | 167,337 | 635,647 | 160.3 | 346,629 | 55,244 | 233,775 |
| 25-29 years----- | 230,710 | 176.2 | 121,491 | 20,832 | 89,327 | 340,973 | 190.6 | 185,031 | 28,337 | 127,575 |
| 30-34 years----- | 105,124 | 125.6 | 57,038 | 9,756 | 39,330 | 144,332 | 169.6 | 78,593 | 13,207 | 52,542 |
| 35-44 years----- | 117,867 | 79.6 | 63,766 | 11,421 | 40,630 | 150,342 | 113.5 | 85,014 | 13,670 | 53,658 |
| 45-64 years----- | 109,859 | 22.8 | 63,975 | 9,263 | 36,616 | 142,233 | 60.8 | 91,509 | 12,551 | 49,224 |
| 65 years and over----- | 16,407 | 2.4 | 10,498 | 1,025 | 4,894 | 33,020 | 16.6 | 19,948 | 2,931 | 10,091 |
| Median age----- | 21.9 | ... | 21.6 | 22.1 | 22.4 | 24.1 | ... | 23.8 | 24.2 | 24.6 |
| FIRST MARRIAGES | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total----- | 1,330,863 | 81.0 | 742,613 | 120,983 | 467,272 | 1,317,466 | 66.8 | 737,193 | 119,114 | 461,159 |
| 14-17 years----- | 187,850 | 27.2 | 124,894 | 16,259 | 46,709 | 32,143 | 4.4 | 23,634 | 2,044 | 6,465 |
| 18-19 years----- | 393,629 | 144.8 | 231,663 | 31,745 | 120,121 | 223,403 | 72.2 | 147,321 | 19,027 | 62,055 |
| 20-24 years----- | 573,733 | 177.1 | 307,049 | 48,385 | 217,602 | 776,336 | 155.6 | 398,464 | 60,733 | 247,139 |
| 25-44 years----- | 174,342 | 94.8 | 74,353 | 22,690 | 77,239 | 330,769 | 109.9 | 159,260 | 34,342 | 136,805 |
| 25-29 years----- | 121,615 | 135.7 | 54,615 | 13,893 | 53,022 | 235,159 | 153.1 | 117,960 | 21,701 | 95,498 |
| 30-34 years----- | 31,154 | 74.5 | 12,033 | 4,226 | 14,276 | 60,031 | 93.0 | 28,636 | 7,422 | 26,003 |
| 35-44 years----- | 21,573 | 41.1 | 7,685 | 3,667 | 10,021 | 35,548 | 41.4 | 15,024 | 5,219 | 15,305 |
| 45-64 years----- | 11,322 | 11.3 | 4,235 | 1,795 | 5,292 | 18,111 | 15.6 | 7,403 | 2,652 | 8,054 |
| 65 years and over----- | 792 | 1.0 | 432 | 110 | 250 | 1,705 | 3.6 | 749 | 316 | 640 |
| Median age----- | 20.6 | ... | 20.2 | 20.9 | 21.1 | 22.5 | ... | 22.1 | 22.8 | 23.0 |
| REMARRIAGES | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total----- | 497,843 | 40.6 | 305,121 | 31,295 | 151,427 | 502,993 | 133.3 | 310,432 | 34,721 | 157,846 |
| 14-19 years----- | 12,745 | * | 10,559 | 352 | 1,835 | 1,937 | * | 1,654 | 83 | 180 |
| 20-24 years----- | 89,219 | 4201.2 | 57,916 | 3,755 | 24,545 | 43,676 | 4293.5 | 34,102 | 2,286 | 12,278 |
| 25-44 years----- | 275,522 | 154.3 | 167,297 | 19,535 | 82,350 | 297,937 | 111.3 | 181,909 | 18,529 | 96,073 |
| 25-29 years----- | 109,671 | 269.1 | 65,005 | 6,594 | 25,014 | 100,223 | 339.9 | 63,276 | 6,121 | 31,532 |
| 30-34 years----- | 73,217 | 175.6 | 44,545 | 4,333 | 22,539 | 93,034 | 339.0 | 51,160 | 5,537 | 26,367 |
| 35-44 years----- | 95,714 | 100.2 | 37,749 | 7,483 | 30,497 | 113,914 | 244.5 | 67,479 | 9,270 | 39,174 |
| 45-64 years----- | 97,923 | 25.7 | 59,591 | 7,353 | 31,157 | 123,353 | 104.4 | 75,636 | 8,789 | 39,923 |
| 65 years and over----- | 15,441 | 2.5 | 9,966 | 900 | 4,570 | 31,129 | 20.6 | 19,134 | 2,615 | 9,377 |
| Median age----- | 32.3 | ... | 31.9 | 35.1 | 32.6 | 36.3 | ... | 35.6 | 38.7 | 37.1 |
| Previously widowed ⁵ ----- | 73,899 | 9.3 | 50,723 | 5,776 | 17,365 | 65,266 | 39.3 | 43,235 | 5,856 | 16,175 |
| 14-24 years----- | 2,811 | * | 2,055 | 235 | 520 | 537 | * | 465 | 52 | 20 |
| 25-44 years----- | 20,182 | 620.7 | 12,449 | 1,989 | 4,764 | 10,355 | 149.9 | 6,445 | 1,360 | 2,530 |
| 45-64 years----- | 39,668 | 16.5 | 26,845 | 2,912 | 3,601 | 32,431 | 77.3 | 21,506 | 2,757 | 8,218 |
| 65 years and over----- | 11,618 | 2.2 | 8,379 | 659 | 2,590 | 21,913 | 18.8 | 14,819 | 1,697 | 5,407 |
| Median age----- | 52.1 | ... | 52.3 | 49.9 | 52.7 | 59.3 | ... | 59.8 | 55.4 | 59.3 |
| Previously Divorced ⁶ ----- | 342,374 | 131.0 | 235,717 | 22,966 | 83,691 | 335,600 | 221.3 | 250,109 | 26,193 | 99,310 |
| 14-19 years----- | 10,810 | * | 9,562 | 323 | 625 | 1,623 | * | 1,500 | 78 | 50 |
| 20-24 years----- | 70,355 | 4294.0 | 52,450 | 3,341 | 14,564 | 40,625 | 431.3 | 31,605 | 2,122 | 6,907 |
| 25-44 years----- | 215,167 | 177.7 | 143,873 | 15,378 | 55,903 | 244,222 | 321.4 | 165,411 | 17,199 | 61,653 |
| 45-64 years----- | 44,063 | 46.1 | 29,539 | 3,728 | 11,736 | 73,804 | 117.3 | 49,129 | 6,155 | 19,520 |
| 65 years and over----- | 1,989 | 8.3 | 1,233 | 196 | 560 | 5,280 | 32.0 | 3,460 | 640 | 1,180 |
| Median age----- | 30.2 | ... | 29.7 | 32.9 | 31.1 | 33.9 | ... | 33.3 | 35.6 | 35.1 |
| Not stated if widowed or divorced ⁷ ----- | 71,600 | ... | 18,676 | 2,553 | 50,371 | 72,124 | ... | 17,091 | 2,672 | 52,361 |
| NOT STATED IF PREVIOUSLY MARRIED ⁸ ----- | 27,790 | ... | 21,528 | 2,937 | 3,324 | 26,036 | ... | 19,942 | 3,076 | 3,018 |

¹In 1973 the MRA consisted of the District of Columbia and all the States in the Union except 9; Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Texas, and Washington. It covered 80 percent of the marriages registered in the United States. Sampling errors of estimates for the MRA appear in table 5.

²Base populations exclude persons under 14 years of age. Rates for all marriages are based on the unmarried population; for first marriages, on the never-married population; and for remarriages, on the widowed and divorced populations.

³Figures include data for California, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New York, Ohio, and parts of Illinois; these areas did not require reporting of race or color.

⁴Rates are shown for ages 14-24 years.

⁵Data exclude remarriages in Michigan, Ohio, and South Carolina.

⁶Rates are shown for ages 14-44 years.

⁷Data include all remarriages in Michigan, Ohio, and South Carolina.

⁸Figures are included in all marriages.

TECHNICAL NOTES

Place and Time of Occurrence

Marriages are those performed during the year. Marriages and marriage rates for States and other areas are by place of occurrence. In table 3, however, figures for marriages shown for some States are by place and date the marriage license was issued.

Sources of Data

Figures in tables 2 and 3 are based on totals reported by States and counties. All other figures in the tables are based on data tabulated from probability samples of records selected in the National Center for Health Statistics from copies of the records sent in by States participating in the marriage-registration area. For 1971, 1972, and 1973, 41 States and the District of Columbia participated.

Marriage Sample

Records were sampled at different rates designed to give a sample of at least 2,500 records for each State except four, where less than 5,000 marriages were performed. For these States all records were included in the sample. Florida supplied a State-coded tape of its marriage records and 100 percent were used by NCHS. One-half of all records were included from seven States and the District of Columbia, one-fifth from nine States, one-tenth from 13 States, and one-twentieth from seven States. The total sample size was 287,241 marriages. Sampling errors shown in the following table are for frequencies which equal a specified percent of the MRA in 1973.

Sampling Errors

All statistics for the MRA are estimates based on the systematic sample of marriages described above; therefore,

APPROXIMATE SAMPLING ERRORS OF ESTIMATED NUMBERS OF MARRIAGES SHOWN IN TABLE 4.

| Total MRA marriages in 1973 | Percent of total MRA marriages in subclass | Sampling error |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------|----------------|
| 1,846,500 | 1 or 99 | 468 |
| | 2 or 98 | 659 |
| | 3 or 97 | 803 |
| | 4 or 96 | 922 |
| | 5 or 95 | 1,026 |
| | 7 or 93 | 1,201 |
| | 10 or 90 | 1,412 |
| | 15 or 85 | 1,681 |
| | 20 or 80 | 1,895 |
| | 25 or 75 | 2,038 |
| | 50 | 2,555 |

How to use the Sampling Error Table

For any estimate of marriage shown in table 4, determine its ratio to total MRA marriages. Then look in the appropriate row on the table for the percentage figures closest to the estimate to determine the sampling error. For example, there were 342,374 marriages to women who had been previously divorced or 18.5 percent of all MRA marriages. Since 18.5 percent is between 15 and 20 percent, the sampling error is between 1,681 and 1,895, or by interpolation, about 1,822 marriages. Chances are about 68 out of 100 that the actual number of marriages to divorcees is between 340,552 and 344,196 ($342,374 \pm 1,822$).

these statistics are subject to sampling errors. A sampling error is a measure of variations that occur by chance between sample estimates and the actual quantity being estimated. Chances are about 68 out of 100 that an estimate would differ from the true value by less than the sampling error, and about 95 out of 100 that the difference would be less than twice the sampling error.

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