

The Rest

Relationship Statistics

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DIVORCE - 2005

- There were 52,399 divorces granted in 2005. This is a decrease of 0.7% from 2004 and represents the fourth consecutive decline in the number of divorces since the record high of 55,330 granted in 2001 (see REST Vol. 2).
- Divorces granted in 2005 still represented, however, a 5.4% increase on 1995 (49,712) and a 31.6% increase on 1985 (39,830).
- The largest number of divorces was in New South Wales with 15,172 followed by Victoria with 12,512 and Queensland with 12,383. The ABS does not publish comparisons of divorce rates between states due to divorces often being granted by courts of one state or territory to residents of another state or territory (eg. to residents of NSW by the ACT Family Court).
- The percentage of marriages involving children under 18 stood at 49.8% in 2005 – down significantly from 60.6% in 1985. The total number of children under 18 involved in divorces granted in 2005 was 49,358 – still higher than the 46,800 children under 18 involved in divorces in 1985.
- There are various ways to measure divorce:
 - The first is the crude divorce rate (divorces per 1,000 people) which stood at 2.6 in 2005. This is a decline from 2001 when it was 2.9.
 - Another way is to measure the number of divorces per 1,000 married persons. The latest available figure for this measure of the divorce rate is from 2001 when it stood at 13.1.
 - A popular but often misconstrued way to measure divorce is likelihood to divorce. Following this method, if a newly-born group of babies were exposed to the 1997-99 rates of marriage, widowhood, divorce, remarriage and mortality, 32% of their marriages would end in divorce – up from 28% if 1985-87 rates were applied.
- The median age of divorce has continued to rise reflecting an increase in the age of first marriage and an increase in the interval between marriage and divorce. In 2005, the median age of divorce was 43.5 years for males (up from 43.0 years in 2004) and 40.8 years for females (up from 40.3 years in 2004). By way of comparison, it was 37.1 years for men and 34.4 years for women in 1985.
- The median duration from marriage to separation was 8.8 years in 2005 and the median duration from marriage to divorce was 12.6 years. These figures have increased from 7.6 years (marriage to separation) and 11 years (marriage to divorce) in 1995.
- Of all divorcing couples in 2005, 15.2% were married less than five years, 25% between five and nine years and 59.8% were married for 10 years or more. In 2005, 16.5% couples who divorced had been married for 25 years or more compared with 15.7% in 2004.
- In 2005, 40.8% of divorce applications were filed by the wife, 30.6% by the husband and 28.5% were filed jointly.

SOURCE:

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2006). Divorces, Australia, 2005. ABS Catalogue No.3307.0.55.001. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia.