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# Statistical release

## P0307

# Marriages and divorces

## 2014

**Embargoed until:**

**09 February 2016  
13:00**

Enquiries:

**User Information Services  
012 310 8600 / 4892 / 8390**

Forthcoming issue:

**Marriages and divorces, 2015**

Expected release date

**December 2016**

**PREFACE**

This statistical release presents information on civil marriages, customary marriages and civil unions that were registered in 2014 in the South African national marriage registration systems maintained by the Department of Home Affairs (DHA). It highlights trends in the number of marriages and unions as well as demographic and other dynamics amongst married partners. The release also reports on divorces that were granted in 2014 by the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (DOJ&CD). It focuses on trends in divorces; demographic and occupational characteristics of the plaintiffs; age at the time of divorce; duration of marriage at the time of divorce and divorces involving couples with minor children.

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## KEY FINDINGS

### 1. Introduction

There are three main sources of marriage and divorce statistics in South Africa; namely, those compiled from population censuses; household sample surveys and administrative data (i.e. those compiled from vital registration systems and administrative records). The data from these sources give different aspects of information on marriages and divorces in the country. Census and survey data are by nature subjective individual information that provides cross-sectional data on individuals' marital status (never married, married, divorced, widowed, etc). Therefore, marriages and divorces in this context cover different types of marriages and associated divorces that took place at different periods in people's lives. However, not all types of marriages and divorces are registered.

Unlike in census and survey data, registered marriages and divorces data are based on continuous recording of these events as they take place. Not all marriages are registered in South Africa, as some are not recognised by law. The three types of marriages that are recognised by law are civil marriages, customary marriages and civil unions. The management of registered marriages and unions is the responsibility of the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) under the following legislations:

- Civil marriages are administered through the Marriages Act, 1961 (Act No. 25 of 1961) as amended, and its associated regulations.
- Customary marriages are governed by the Recognition of Customary Marriages Act, 1998 (Act No. 120 of 1998) that came into effect on 15 November 2000.
- The Civil Union Act, 2006 (Act No. 17 of 2006) governs civil unions and it came into operation on 30 November 2006.

Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) publishes data on marriages for South African citizens and permanent residents that are collected through the civil registration systems of DHA. Before 2008, the data in the annual release *Marriages and divorces* (P0307) covered only civil marriages. However in 2009, Stats SA started publishing available data on customary marriages and civil unions. The registration of customary marriages and civil unions began in 2003 and 2007 respectively.

The Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (DOJ&CD) is responsible for handling matters relating to the dissolution of registered marriages (civil and customary) and civil unions. This responsibility of the department is mandated through:

- The Divorce Act, 1979 (Act No.70 of 1979), as amended; and
- The Jurisdiction of Regional Courts Amendment Act, 2008 (Act No. 31 of 2008), which came into effect on 9 August 2010.

Data on divorces are obtained from the various regional courts that deal with divorce matters. The data are based on successful divorce cases that have been issued with a decree of divorce. Divorce cases came from marriages that were registered in different years as well as divorce cases that were filed in different years but whose divorce decrees were granted in the same year. It should be noted that although both the data on the marriages and divorces are collected in the same year, the data sets are not linked to each other.

## 2. Marriages

### 2.1 Civil marriages

#### 2.1.1 Trends in the registration of civil marriages (2003–2014)

Information provided in Table 1 on page 19 shows that a total of 150 852 civil marriages of South African citizens and permanent residents were registered at the Department of Home Affairs in 2014. This number includes 567 (0,4%) marriages of South African citizens and permanent residents that were solemnised outside the borders of South Africa but subsequently registered in South Africa. The table further shows that the number of registered marriages fluctuated between 2003 and 2008, after which there was a consistent decline. During the period 2003 to 2014, the highest number of marriages was recorded in 2008 (186 522) and the lowest number in 2014 (150 852). The 2014 figure of 150 852 civil marriages shows a decrease of 4,9% from the 158 642 marriages recorded in 2013. In 2014, the crude civil marriage rate was 2,8 per 1 000 estimated resident population<sup>1</sup>.

The seasonal monthly variation in the registration of civil marriages is observed in Figure 1 on page 9. Generally, the warmer months (beginning from September and peaking in December) are the most popular months for solemnising marriages. The results also show that solemnisation of marriages tend to peak in either March or April depending on the month of Easter holidays for that particular year. In 2014, the highest number of marriages [24 892 (16,5%)] took place in December compared to June, which recorded the lowest number of marriages, [9 384 (6,2%)].

#### 2.1.2 Solemnisation of civil marriages

The Marriage Act, 1961 (Act No. 25 of 1961) requires that only licensed marriage officers solemnise civil marriages and issue a marriage certificate. Civil marriages are generally solemnised by civil marriage officers at the offices of the DHA and by religious marriage officers at chapels or religious buildings. After a solemnisation ceremony, the marriage officer issues the couple with an abridged hand-written marriage certificate, at no cost, and submits the marriage register at the DHA office where he/she is registered, for the recording of the marriage particulars in the National Population Register (NPR).

Table 2 on page 20 shows the distribution of civil marriages registered in 2014 according to the way in which the marriage was solemnised. Under 'way of solemnisation' the terms: (i) 'DHA' is used for marriages solemnised by civil marriage officers and (ii) 'Religious' for marriages solemnised by priests/religious persons who are marriage officers. It is observed that more than half, 77 473 (51,3%) of the 150 852 marriages were solemnised by DHA marriage officers and 55 028 (36,5%) by 'Religious' rites. The type of solemnisation rite was not specified in 18 351 (12,2%) marriages.

The table also provides information on the province of marriage registration. The province of registration is not necessarily the province of usual residence of the couple since couples could marry at any place of their choice. The results further indicate that, in 2014, the highest number of marriages was registered in Gauteng [39 213 (26,0%)] and the lowest in Northern Cape [5 778 (3,8%)]. North West (74,1%) had the highest proportion of marriages solemnised by civil marriage officers whereas Western Cape recorded the highest proportion (49,1%) of marriages solemnised by religious marriage officers. Wide differences of 'unspecified' way of solemnisation by province were noted. For example, 33,7% of marriages in Mpumalanga had unspecified way of solemnisation compared with 1,9% in Free State.

<sup>1</sup> The crude civil marriage rate refers to the number of civil marriages per 1 000 persons in the population

### 2.1.3 Marital status at the time of civil marriage

Data presented in Table 3 on page 21 indicate that a majority of the marriages in 2014 for both bridegrooms and brides were first-time marriages. For bridegrooms, there were 124 627 (82,6%) bachelors, 5 193 (3,4%) divorcees and 1 659 (1,1%) widowers. For the brides, 131 040 (86,9%) were spinsters whilst 3 486 (2,3%) were divorcees and 1 425 (0,9%) were widows. The marital status of 19 373 (12,8%) bridegrooms and 14 901 (9,9%) brides were unspecified. Provincial distribution shows that all provinces had the highest proportion of both bridegrooms and brides marrying for the first time, particularly brides in KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo where 89,8% and 91,5% respectively were spinsters at the time of marriage.

It is also observed from Table 4 on page 22 that irrespective of their marital status, men generally married women who had never been married (spinsters). Thus 117 196 (94,0%) of bachelors married spinsters, 1 202 (1,0%) married divorcees and 1 059 (0,8%) married widows. In addition, irrespective of the fact that more divorcees and widowers married spinsters, the proportion of male divorcees who married female divorcees (16,5%) was higher than the proportion that married widows (0,9%). Similarly, the proportion of widowers who married widows (16,2%) was higher than the proportion that married female divorcees (1,7%).

### 2.1.4 Age at the time of civil marriage

Population scientists are interested in the age at first marriage or union because of its theoretical link to exposure to the possibility of pregnancy, childbearing and ultimately to fertility. This link tends to be weakened in populations where pre-marital fertility is 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, to some extent, underscored in South Africa through the marriage legislations that put restrictions on marriages involving minors (persons under 18 years old). These minors require the consent of a parent, a guardian or a Commissioner of Welfare before entering into a marriage. In addition to the above consent, boys under 18 years and girls under 16 years of age require the consent of the Minister of Home Affairs before they can marry.

In 2014, marriages of 10 bridegrooms and 131 brides aged less than 18 years were registered, with 10 bridegrooms and 125 brides marrying for the first time (see Table 5 on page 23). Furthermore, Figure 2 on page 10 indicates that the highest number of bachelors [34 021 (27,3%)] were aged 30–34 years whereas the highest number of spinsters [41 750 (31,9%)] were aged 25–29 years. There were more spinsters compared to bachelors at younger ages (less than 30 years) and vice versa at older ages (30 years and older).

The overall median ages by year of registration presented in Figure 3a on page 11 shows that the median ages have remained constant for bridegrooms (34 years) during the years 2010 to 2012 and increased by one year in 2013 and 2014 whilst the median ages remained the same for brides (30 years) during 2010 to 2013 and increased by one year in 2014. Figure 3a to Figure 3d further show that women generally entered marriage at younger ages than men, with wide age difference between spouses depending on the marital status of couples at the time of current marriage. In addition, the median ages at current marriage was lowest for those marrying for the first time, followed by those widowed and highest for divorcees.

For first time marriages, the median ages for bachelors and spinsters were 33 years and 30 years respectively in 2014, giving an age difference of three years (see Figure 3b). The median ages of brides remained at 30 years throughout the four-year period between 2010 and 2013, and increased by one year (31 years) in 2014, while for bridegrooms the median ages was 34 years between 2010 and 2012 and increased to 35 years in 2013 and 2014. For remarriages, the median ages for widowers and widows in 2013 (Figure 3c) were 49 years and 29 years respectively, resulting in a 20-year age gap. The median ages for widowers consistently increased every year from 47 years in 2010 to 50 years in 2013 and dropped by a year in 2014. The median ages for widows were quite stable at 30 years from 2010 to 2013 and dropped by a year in 2014. Median ages at marriage for divorcees are



shown in Figure 3d. It is observed that the median ages for male divorcees remained the same at 52 years between 2010 and 2012 and increased by one year to 53 years in 2013 and another year to 54 years in 2014. In comparison, the median age of female divorcee showed only one year increase from 47 years in 2010 to 48 years in 2014. There was a five-year age difference in the median ages between male and female divorcees in 2014.

Despite the fact that men tend to marry younger women, data in Table 4 on page 22 indicate that in 2014, 23 400 (15,5%) bridegrooms were younger than their brides whilst 11 832 (7,8%) were of the same age as their brides. This observed age pattern is the same irrespective of the marital status of the bridegroom at the time of marriage (see Figures 4a to 4c). However, the magnitude differs by the marital status of the spouses at the time of marriage.

For example, 44,3% of bachelors who married divorcees were younger than their brides (see Figure 4a) and 14,9% of male divorcees who married widowed women were also younger than their brides (see Figure 4c). A relatively smaller percentage (6,2%) was observed for male divorcees marrying spinsters who were older than them (Figure 4c).

## **2.2 Customary marriages**

### **2.2.1 Trends in the registration of customary marriages (2003–2014)**

In 2014, 3 062 customary marriages were registered at the Department of Home Affairs, indicating a decrease of 12,5% from 3 498 customary marriages registered in 2013. It is observed from Table 6 on page 26 that the number of registered customary marriages fluctuated between 2003 and 2007 after which there was a consistent decline. The highest number of registered customary marriages was recorded in 2004 (20 301) whilst the least number was recorded in 2014 (3 062). The crude customary marriage rate was 0,1 per 1 000 estimated resident population in 2014<sup>2</sup>.

The Recognition of Customary Marriages Act, 1998 (Act No. 120 of 1998) prescribes that customary marriages that were entered into after the commencement of this Act must be registered within a period of three months after the conclusion of the marriage and those entered before the Act to be registered within 12 months of the commencement of the Act. Figure 5 on page 14 shows that the majority of customary marriages were registered later than the year of marriage. During the period from 2010 to 2014, the proportion of marriages that were registered in the same year they took place, ranged from 10,2% in 2010 to 24,0% in 2014, indicating a modest increase over time.

### **2.2.2 Marital status at the time of customary marriage**

Since the Customary Marriages Act of 1998 recognises polygyny, a husband who has registered his marriage under the Act is permitted to register additional marriages under the Act provided he adheres to the regulations under the Act regarding his property. That is, at his own cost, the husband has to get an order from a competent court that will regulate his future matrimonial property system. It would be of interest to distinguish between first-time spouses and those who have married before (i.e. those in polygynous marriages, divorcees, widows and widowers). However, in the absence of data on marital status at the time of the registration of customary marriage, this distinction cannot be made.

### **2.2.3 Age at the time of customary marriage**

The age distribution of bridegrooms and brides at the time of customary marriage is presented on Table 8 on page 28. In 2014, there were 7 (0,2%) bridegrooms and 46 (1,5%) brides who were younger than 18 years. The median ages at the time of customary marriage are presented in Figure 6 on page 15. Similar to civil marriages, bridegrooms were generally older than brides, with an age difference of about five to six years for customary marriages registered between 2010 and 2014.

<sup>2</sup> The crude customary marriage rate refers to the number of customary marriages per 1 000 persons in the population

For both bridegrooms and brides, median ages at the time of customary marriage increased gradually over time. Median ages of bridegrooms increased from 32 years in 2010 to 34 years in 2014 and those for brides increased from 26 years to 29 years during the same period. A further comparison of the ages of bridegrooms and brides (see Figure 7 on page 15) shows that in 2014, 85,0% of bridegrooms were older than their brides whilst 10,4% were younger than their brides and 4,5% were of the same age.

The results presented in Table 7 on page 27 show that in 2014, the highest number of customary marriages was registered in KwaZulu-Natal [2 001 (65,3%)], followed by Eastern Cape [234 (7,6%)] and Mpumalanga [222 (7,3%)]. The lowest number of customary marriages was recorded in Northern Cape [7 (0,2%)]. Limpopo recorded the highest number of bridegrooms older than their brides [188 (89,1%)].

## **2.3 Civil unions**

### **2.3.1 Trends in the registration of civil unions (2010–2014)**

Data in Table 9 on page 31 show that in 2014, 1 144 civil unions were registered (including the registration of three civil unions of South African citizens and permanent residents living outside South Africa). In 2014, the crude civil union rate was 0,02 per 1 000 estimated resident population<sup>3</sup>. In general, the number of civil unions registered in South Africa decreased from 888 in 2010 to 867 in 2011, then increased by 15,2% from 993 in 2013 to 1 144 in 2014. The provincial distribution of civil unions registered in 2014 indicates that Gauteng (452) and Western Cape (314) were the provinces with the highest number of registrations of civil unions. In total, 67,0% of civil unions in 2014 were registered in these two provinces. The lowest number of registered civil unions was recorded in North West from 2010 to 2012 while Mpumalanga recorded the lowest in 2014, with nine civil unions registered.

### **2.3.2 Marital status at the time of civil union**

It would be of interest to distinguish between first time spouses and those who had married before (i.e. divorcees, widows and widowers) and the type of marriage relationship they were in. However, this information is not available at the DHA.

### **2.3.3 Age at the time of civil union**

Spouses are distinguished as spouse-1 and spouse-2, based on the information completed by the spouses at the time of civil union registration. The number of civil unions classified by the ages of spouses-1 and spouses-2 at the time of the solemnisation of civil union is presented in Table 10 on page 32. It is observed that there were two spouses-1 and four spouses-2 that were younger than 20 years old.

As observed in Figure 8 on page 16, the median ages of spouses-1 and spouses-2 at the time of solemnisation of the civil union decreased since 2010. Furthermore, the median ages of spouses-1 were greater than those of spouses-2. Over the five-year period, the yearly differences in the median ages of spouses-1 and spouses-2 ranged between two and three years. The median ages of spouses-1 declined by one year from 37 years in 2010 to 36 years in 2014. The median ages of spouses-2 was fluctuating between 33 years and 34 years in 2010 to 2014. Data in Figure 9 on page 16 further show that spouses-1 were generally older than spouses-2. In 2014, 60,5% of spouses-1 were older than their spouses, whilst 31,2% were younger than their spouses and 8,3% were of the same age as their spouses.

<sup>3</sup> The crude civil union rate refers to the number of civil unions per 1 000 persons in the population

### 3. Divorces

#### 3.1 Trends in divorces (2003 – 2014)

The 2014 divorce data reported in this statistical release are based on 24 689 completed divorce forms that Stats SA received and processed by the end of December 2015. The crude divorce rate was 0,5 divorces per 1 000 estimated resident population in 2014<sup>4</sup>. The number (24 689) indicates an increase of 804 (3,4%) divorces from the 23 885 cases processed in 2013 (see Table 11 on page 35). The table shows that the total number of divorces generally fluctuated over the period 2003 to 2014, with the highest number observed in 2005 (32 484) and the lowest in 2011 (20 980).

Table 11 further provides data on divorces classified by population group and the year in which the divorce was granted. Couples from the white population group dominated the number of divorces from 2003 to 2007; thereafter, the black African couples had the highest number of divorces up until 2014. In 2003, 40,0% of the divorcees were from the white population group whereas 24,3% came from the black African population group.

By 2014, 37,1% of the divorcees were from the black African population group and 28,2% from the white population group. The proportions of the divorcees from the coloured and the Indian/Asian population groups were quite invariable during the twelve-year period. However, there was a notable increase in the proportions of divorcees from the coloured population group (from 16,3% in 2013 to 20,2% in 2014) which may have affected the results.

#### 3.2 Characteristics of plaintiffs

The 2014 data presented in Table 12 on page 36 show that more wives 12 769 (51,7%) than husbands 8 499 (34,4%) initiated the divorce. The sex of the plaintiff was not specified in 3 421 (13,9%) of divorces. With the exception of women from the black African population who had a lower proportion of plaintiffs (44,1%), the proportion of women plaintiffs from the other population groups was above 50,0%. White population group 57,8%, coloured population group 56,9% and Indian/Asian population group 54,6% were women. However, it should also be noted that the black African population group had a much higher proportion of divorces with unspecified sex of the plaintiff (17,3%).

Table 13 on page 36 provides information on the occupation of the plaintiffs. It is noted that a high proportion of the plaintiffs (28,2% of the men and 30,9% of the women) did not indicate the type of occupation they were engaged in at the time of divorce. In addition, 15,2% and 22,1% of the men and women respectively were not economically active at the time of divorce.

In 2014, most plaintiffs were in professional, semi-professionals and technical occupations (12,0%); managers and administrators (9,3%) and 9,2% in clerical and sales occupations. Some differences were observed regarding the type of occupation of men and women. The men who initiated the divorce were largely managers and administrators (14,5%) while the women were mainly in professional, semi-professionals and technical occupations (14,3%).

#### 3.3 Number of divorces by way of solemnisation of marriage

Data presented in Table 14 on page 37 show that 12 506 (50,7%) of the 2014 divorce cases were from marriages that were solemnised by religious rites and 10 048 (40,7%) by civil rites. Almost three quarter (72,4%) of divorces from white population group were from marriages that were solemnised by religious rites followed by coloured population group with 68,5%. Most divorces from black African and Indian/Asian population groups were from marriages that were solemnised by civil rites, 64,0% and 56,9% respectively.

<sup>4</sup> The crude divorce rate refers to the number of divorces per 1 000 persons in the population

### 3.4 Number of times married

Results presented in Table 15 on page 37 shows that the 2014 divorce cases for both men and women were mainly from individuals who had married once. About 80,0% of divorces for men and women were from first-time marriages compared to 12,4% of men and 10,9% of women from second-time marriages. Around 2,0% of men and women were getting divorced for at least the third time.

### 3.5 Age at the time of divorce

The median ages at divorce in 2014 were 43 years for men and 40 years for women, indicating that generally, men were older than women, with a difference of about three years. The pattern of median ages in 2014 by population group (see Figure 10 on page 17) shows that black African and white men had the highest median age of 44 years while women from the other population group had the lowest median age (33 years). The difference in the median ages at the time of divorce for men and women was higher among the other population group (ten years) than among black African, coloured, Indian/Asian and white population groups.

Detailed information on age by population groups and sex is presented in Figure 11 on page 17 for males and in Figure 12 on page 18 for females as well as in Tables 16 and 17 on pages 38 and 39 respectively. Although there were differences in the ages at which most men and women from the various population groups divorced, the age patterns were quite similar. The data reveal that there were fewer divorces among the younger (less than 25 years old) and the older (65 years and older) divorcees. For men, the peak age group at divorce was 40 to 44 for all population groups (Figure 11). In the case of women, the peak age group for coloured and white population groups was 40 to 44 and the black African and Indian/Asian was 35 to 39 (Figure 12).

### 3.6 Duration of marriage of divorcing couples

Statistics from the annual divorce data do not give a comprehensive picture of the number of marriages ending in divorce. However, the annual divorce Table 18 on page 40 and Table 19 on page 41 show the number of divorces by duration of marriage for divorces granted in 2014 for men and women respectively.

The largest number [6 751 (27,3%)] of the divorces were for marriages that lasted between five and nine years. This group is followed by marriages that lasted between ten and fourteen years [4 623 (18,7%)] and marriages that lasted for less than five years [4 553 (18,4%)]. Thus 45,7% of the 24 689 divorces in 2014 were marriages that lasted for less than 10 years.

According to results given in Figure 13 on page 18, irrespective of the population group, the highest proportion of divorces occurred to couples who had been married for five to nine years. Thus 32,6% of divorces from the black African; 25,6% from both coloured and white; 24,4% from the Indian/Asian population groups were marriages that lasted between five and nine years. For the white population an equally high proportion (23,7%) of divorces occurred in the first five years. Furthermore, for all population groups, after nine years of marriage, the proportion of divorces declined as the duration of marriage increased.

### 3.7 Divorces involving couples with minor children

In 2014, 13 676 (55,4%) of the 24 689 divorces had children younger than 18 years (see Table 20 on page 42). The coloured and the white population groups had the highest (64,9%) and the lowest (46,2%) percentages respectively. As provided in Table 21 on page 42, the distribution of the number of children affected by divorce shows that 39,1% were from the black African population group; 24,9% from the coloured population group; 23,3% from the white population group and 5,6% from the Indian/Asian population group.

## 4. Summary and concluding remarks

This statistical release provided information on civil and customary marriages, civil unions and divorces for 2014, based on data from the South African national marriage registration systems of the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) and data of divorces granted by the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development. The information on marriages and divorces is important for understanding the formation and dissolution of marriage relationships.

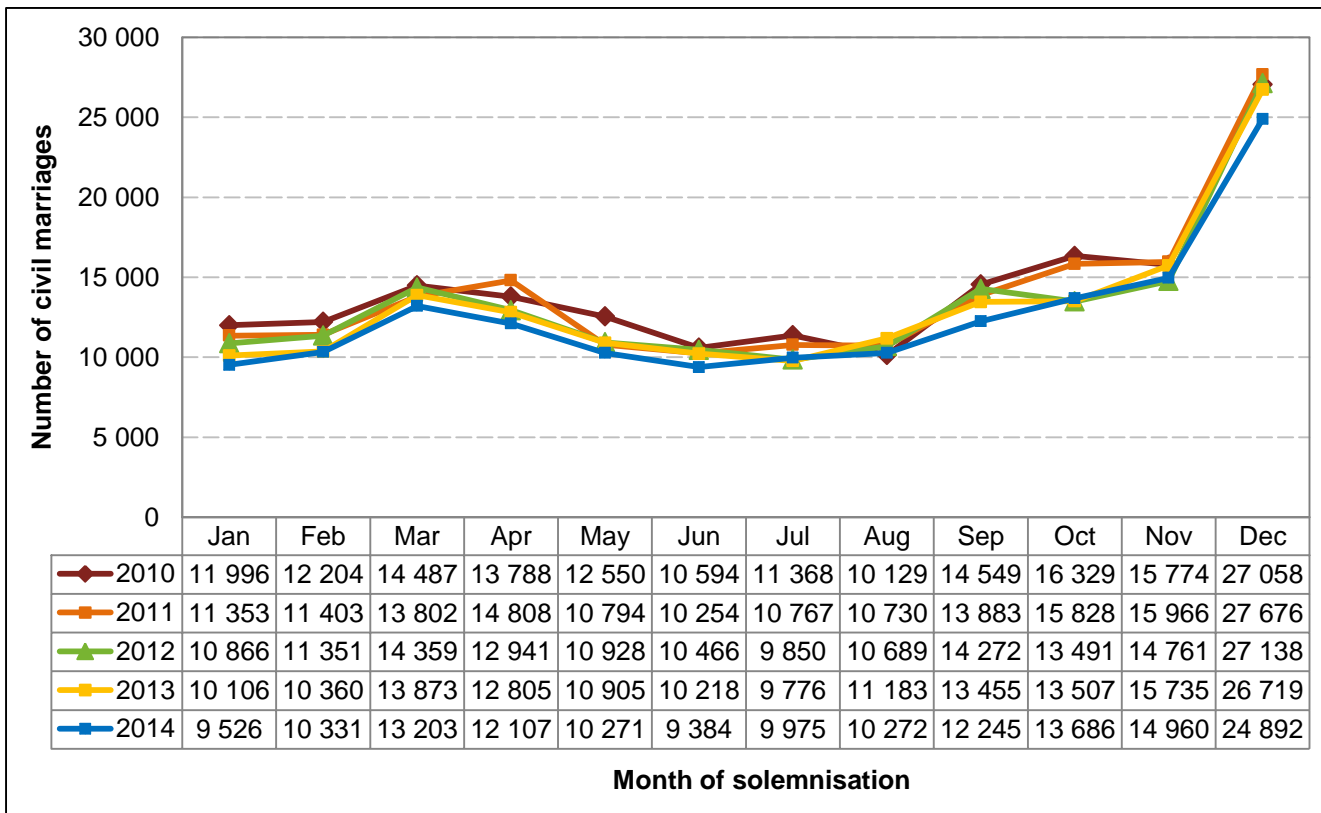
In total, 150 852 civil marriages were registered in South Africa in 2014, most of which were solemnised by DHA marriage officers. The highest number of civil marriages was registered in Gauteng, followed by Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal, and the lowest was registered in Northern Cape. The majority of civil marriages in 2014 for both brides and bridegrooms were first time marriages, with women generally entering into marriage at younger ages than men.

The number of registered customary marriages was 3 062 in 2014, which declined from a total of 3 498 recorded in 2013. The majority of bridegrooms were older than their brides, with the gap in median ages at registration of customary marriage much wider for customary marriages than other types of marriages. The number of registered civil unions in South Africa in 2014 was 1 144, most of which were registered in Gauteng and Western Cape, and lowest in Mpumalanga. Spouses recorded as spouse-1 were usually older than those recorded as spouse-2.

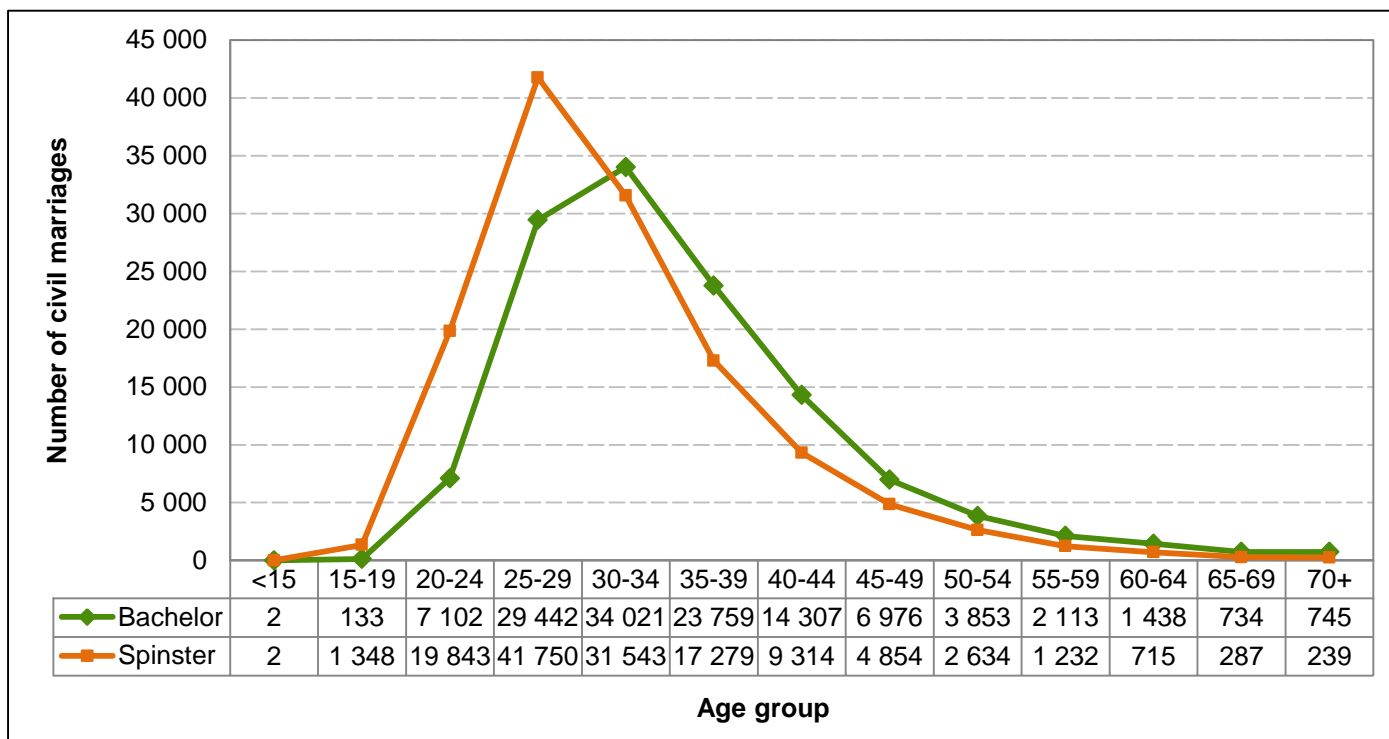
With regard to divorces, the data from the 55 out of the 62 courts that deal with divorce showed that 24 689 divorces were granted in South Africa in 2014. Generally, there was an increase in the proportion of divorces for black Africans and decline for white population group from 2003 to 2014. Divorces were mainly from people who had married for the first time. There were more female than male plaintiffs although males generally divorced at a later age than females. About 22 218 children aged less than 18 years were affected by divorces that took place in 2014.

Overall, the information provided in this release showed fluctuations over time in the number of marriages, unions and divorces in the country. Areas of improvement in the quality of data were noted, particularly relating to completeness of information pertaining to unspecified province of registration, way of solemnisation and marital status at time of marriage for the data on marriages and civil unions; and unspecified population group and occupation of plaintiff for the divorces data. Concerted efforts are needed from the public, the Department of Home Affairs, the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development and Statistics South Africa to improve the quality and content of information on marriages and divorces in South Africa.

Figure 1 – Number of civil marriages by month of solemnisation, 2010–2014

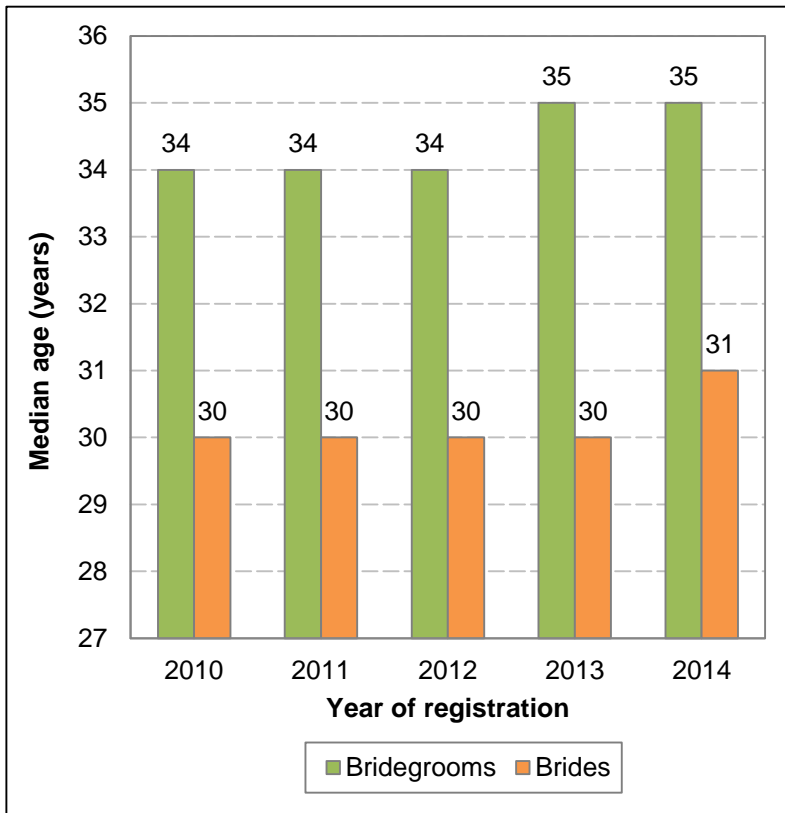


**Figure 2 – Number of civil marriages for bachelors and spinsters by age group, 2014**

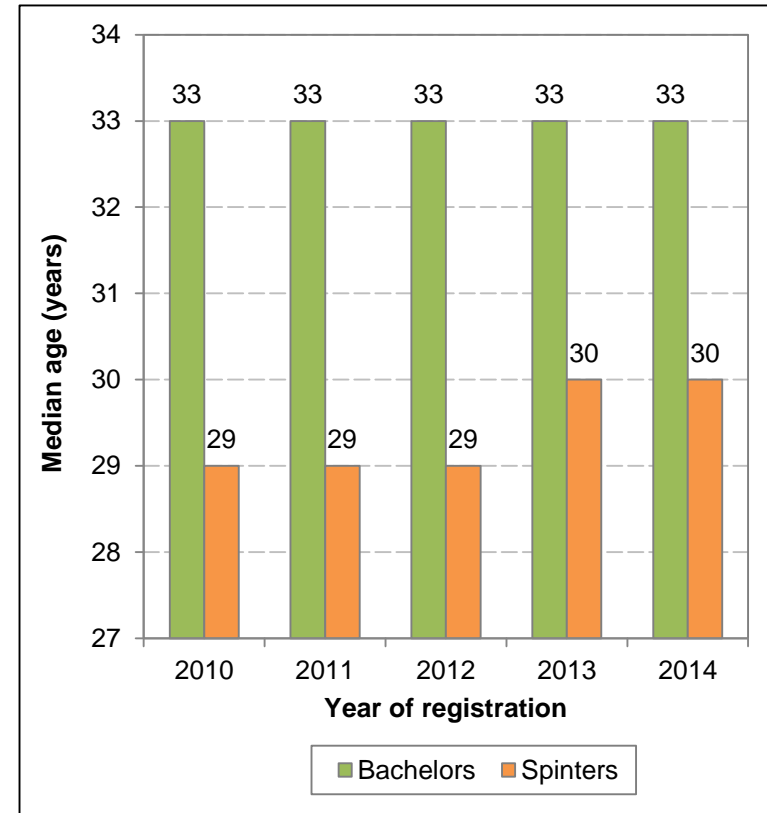


Excluding two cases with unspecified bachelors age

**Figure 3a – Median ages of bridegrooms and brides at the time of civil marriage, 2010–2014**

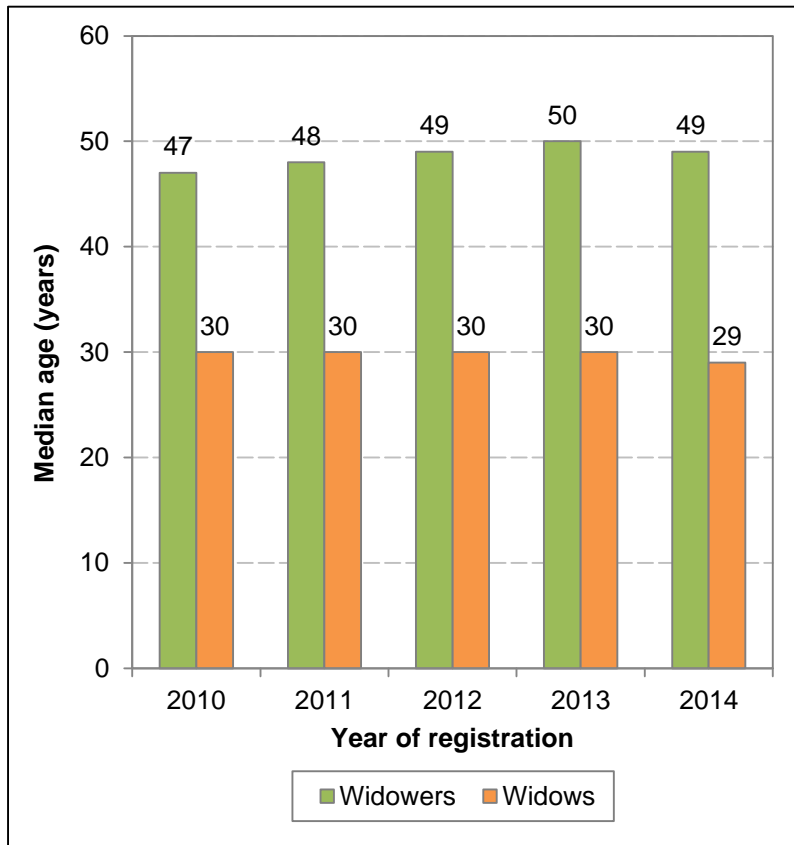


**Figure 3b – Median ages of bachelors and spinsters at the time of civil marriage, 2010–2014**

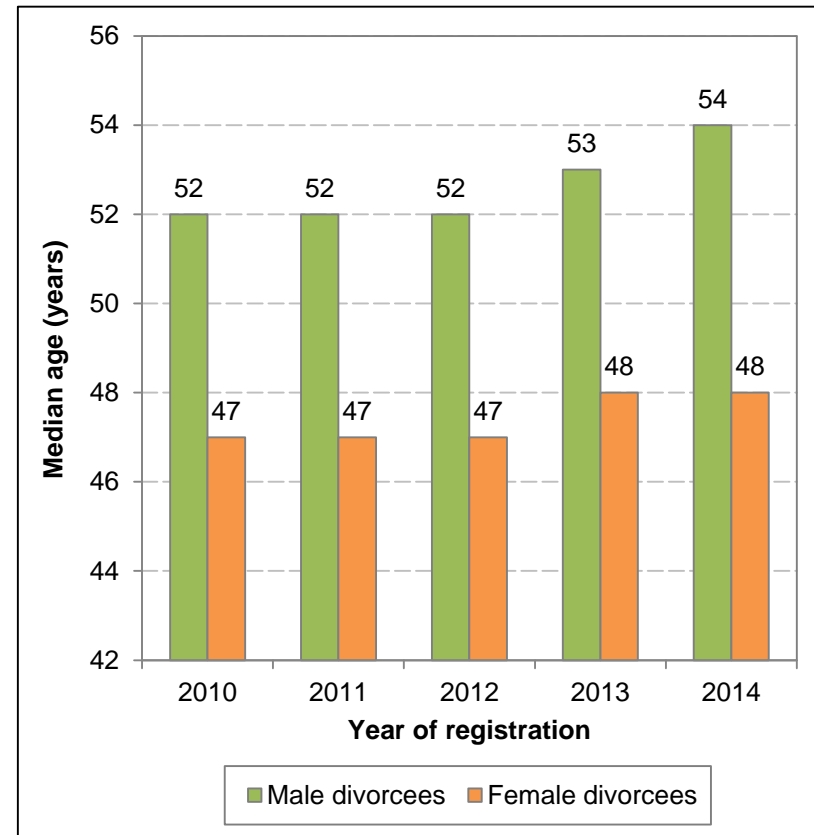




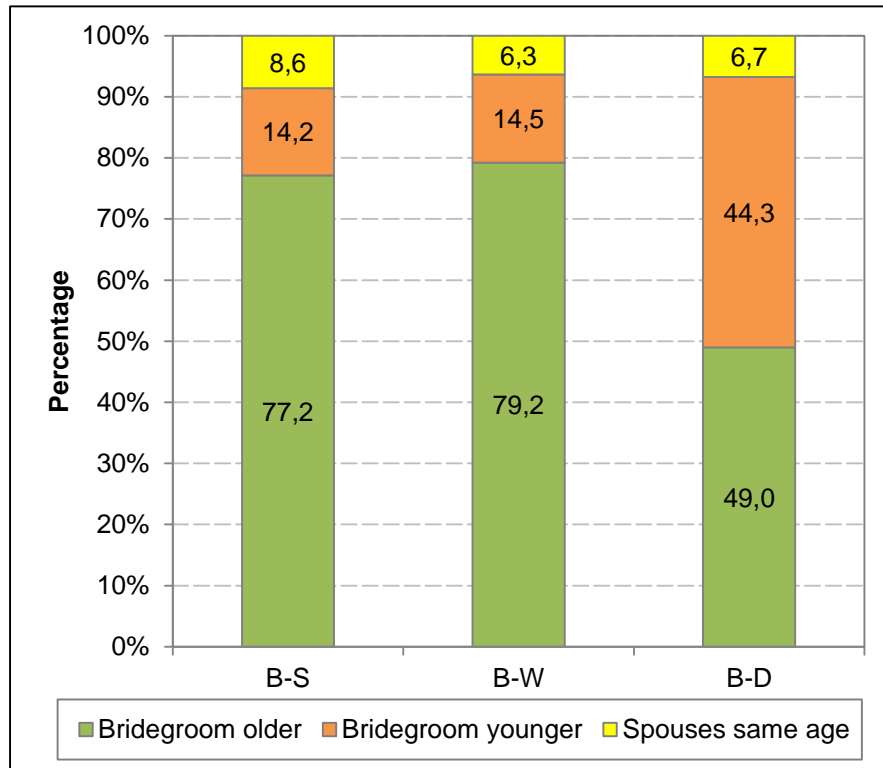
**Figure 3c – Median ages of widowers and widows at the time of civil marriage, 2010–2014**



**Figure 3d – Median ages of male and female divorcees at the time of civil marriage, 2010–2014**

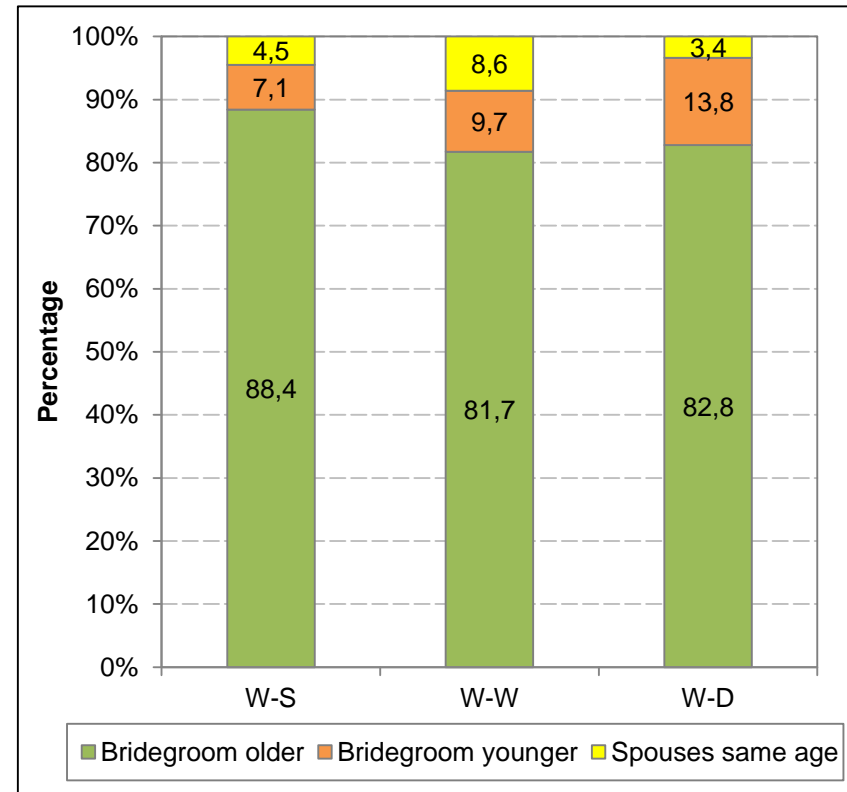


**Figure 4a – Percentage distribution of civil marriages by age differences between spouses and marital status at the time of marriage (bachelors), 2014**



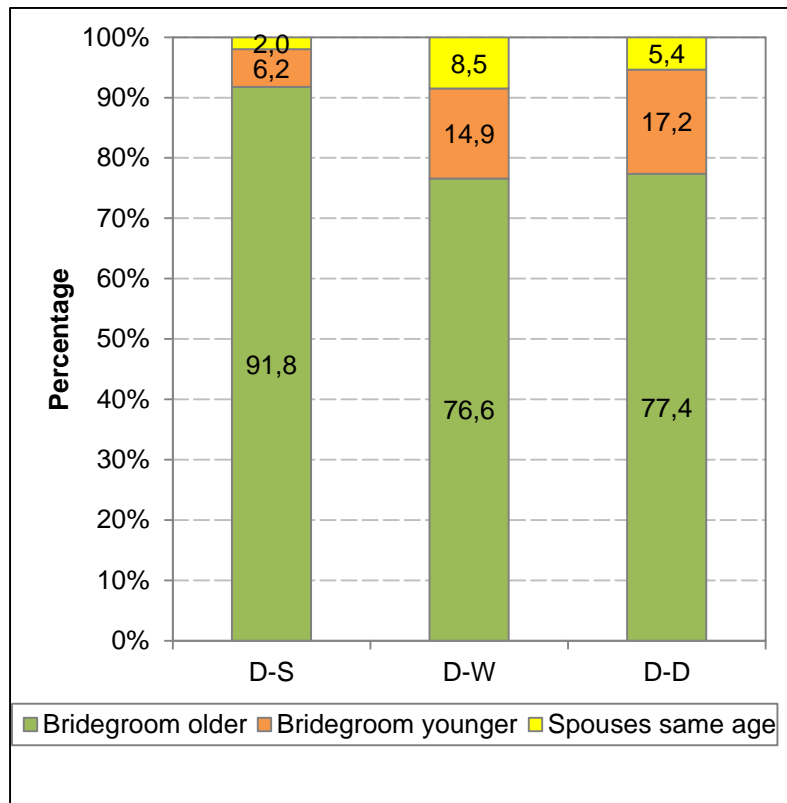
B – S = Bachelor to Spinster  
 B – D = Bachelor to Divorcee  
 B – W = Bachelor to Widow

**Figure 4b – Percentage distribution of civil marriages by age differences between spouses and marital status at the time of marriage (widowers), 2014**



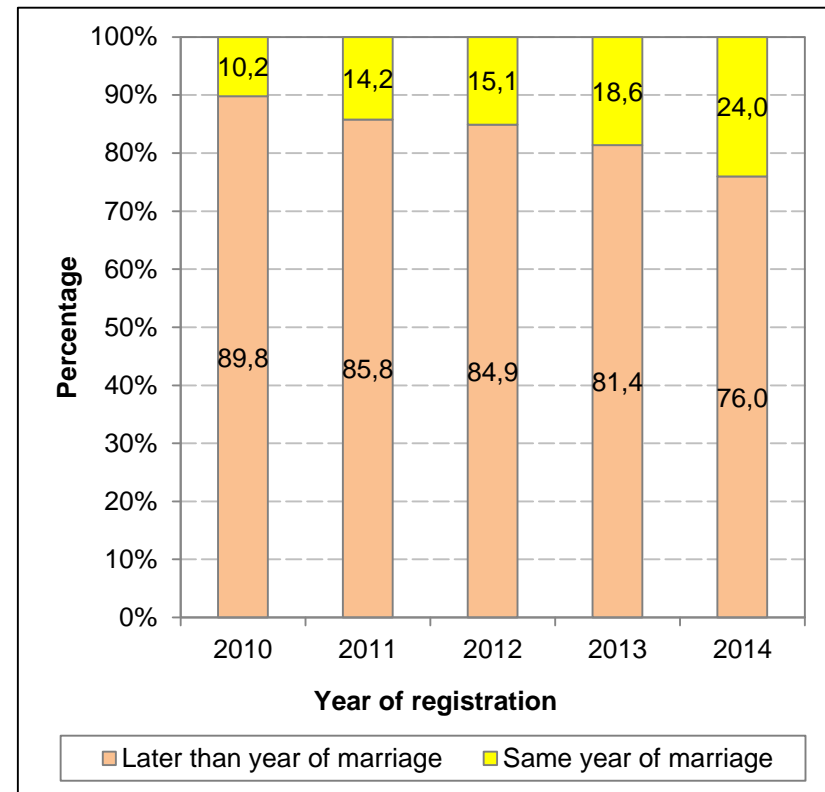
W – S = Widower to Spinster  
 W – D = Widower to Divorcee  
 W – W = Widower to Widow

**Figure 4c – Percentage distribution of civil marriages by age differences between spouses and marital status at the time of marriage (male divorcees), 2014**

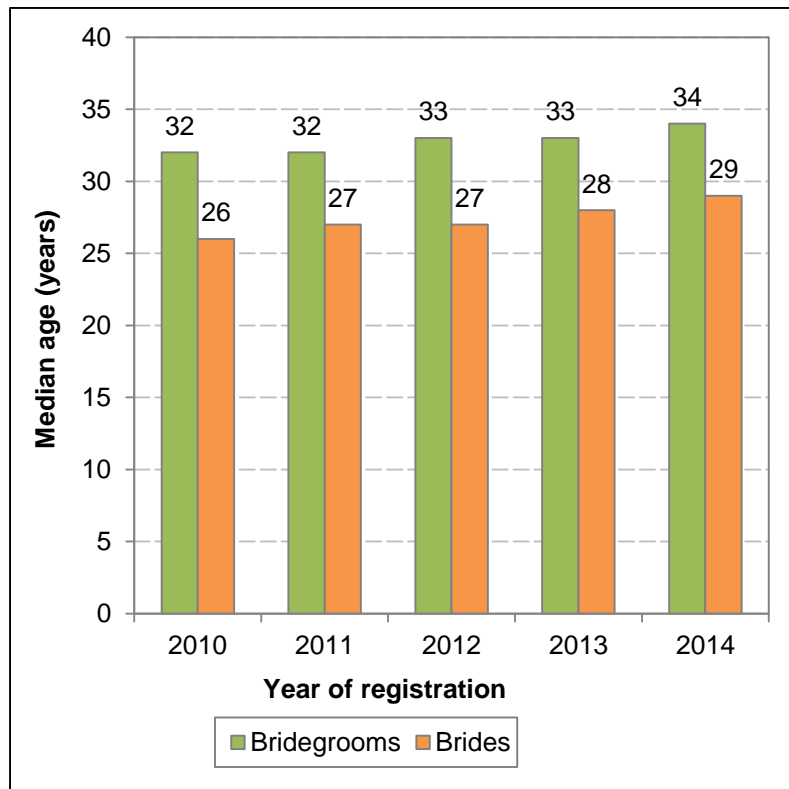


D – S = Divorcee to Spinster  
 D – D = Divorcee to Divorcee  
 D – W = Divorcees to Widow

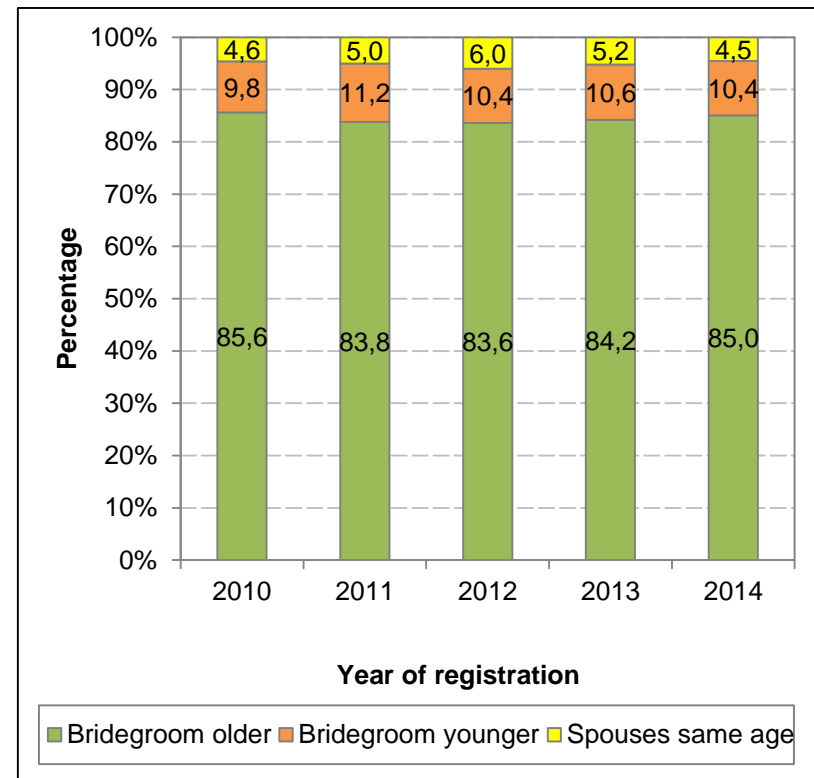
**Figure 5– Percentage distribution of customary marriages by year of marriage and time it took to register the marriage, 2010–2014**



**Figure 6 – Median ages of bridegrooms and brides at the time of customary marriage, 2010–2014**

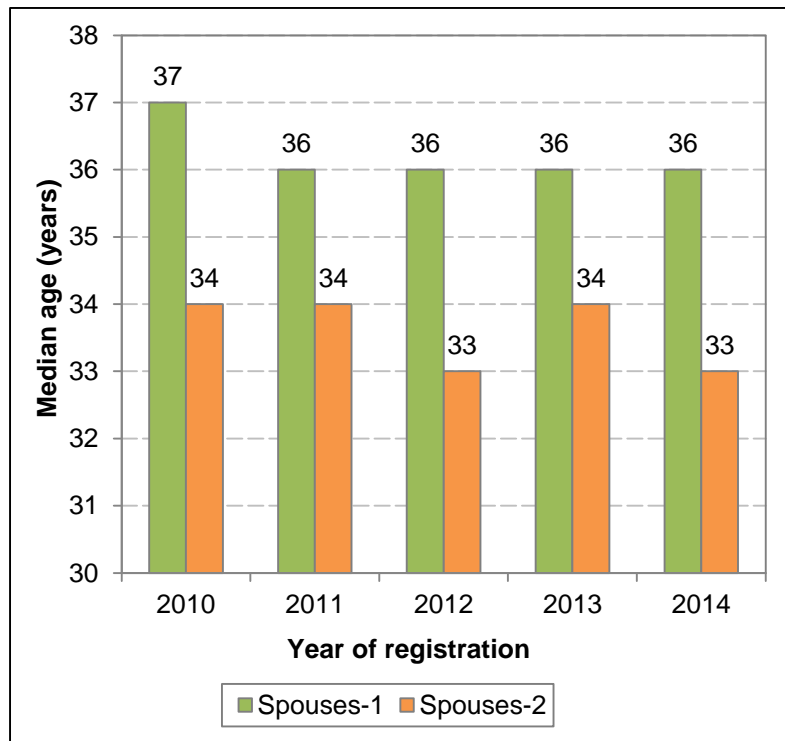


**Figure 7 – Percentage distribution of customary marriages by age differences between spouses at the time of marriage, 2010–2014**



Excluding 0,1% of unspecified age difference in 2014

**Figure 8 – Median ages of spouses in civil unions, 2010–2014**



**Figure 9 – Percentage distribution of civil unions by age differences between spouses at the time of union, 2010–2014**

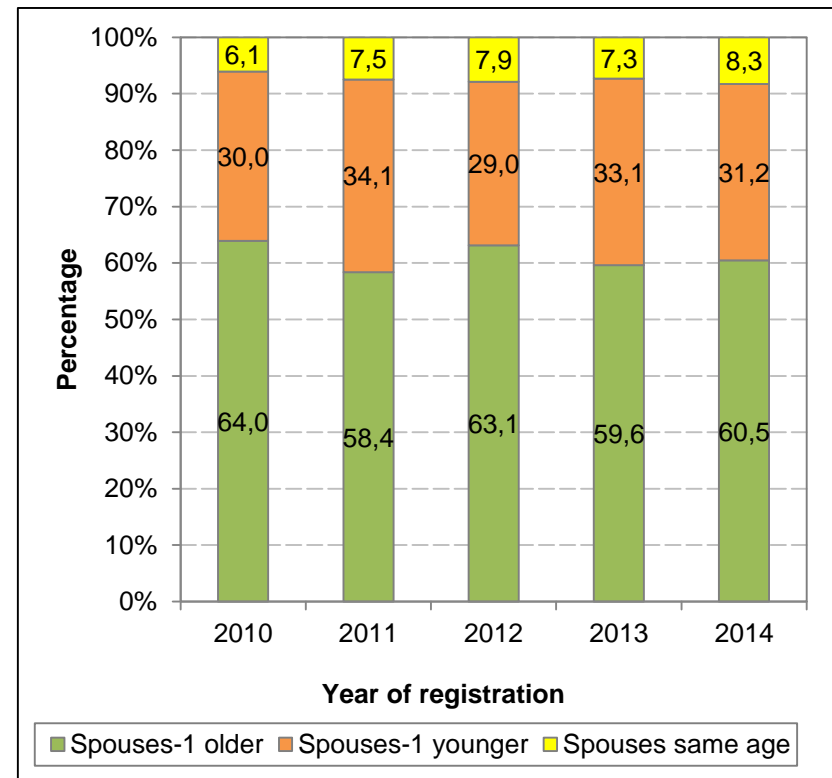


Figure 10 – Median ages of divorcees by sex and population group, 2014

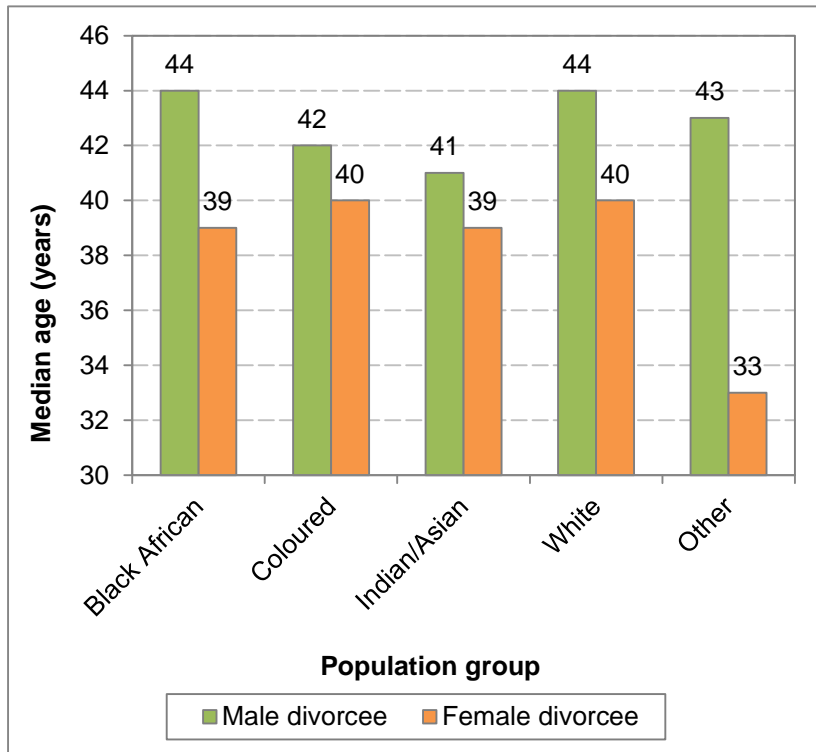
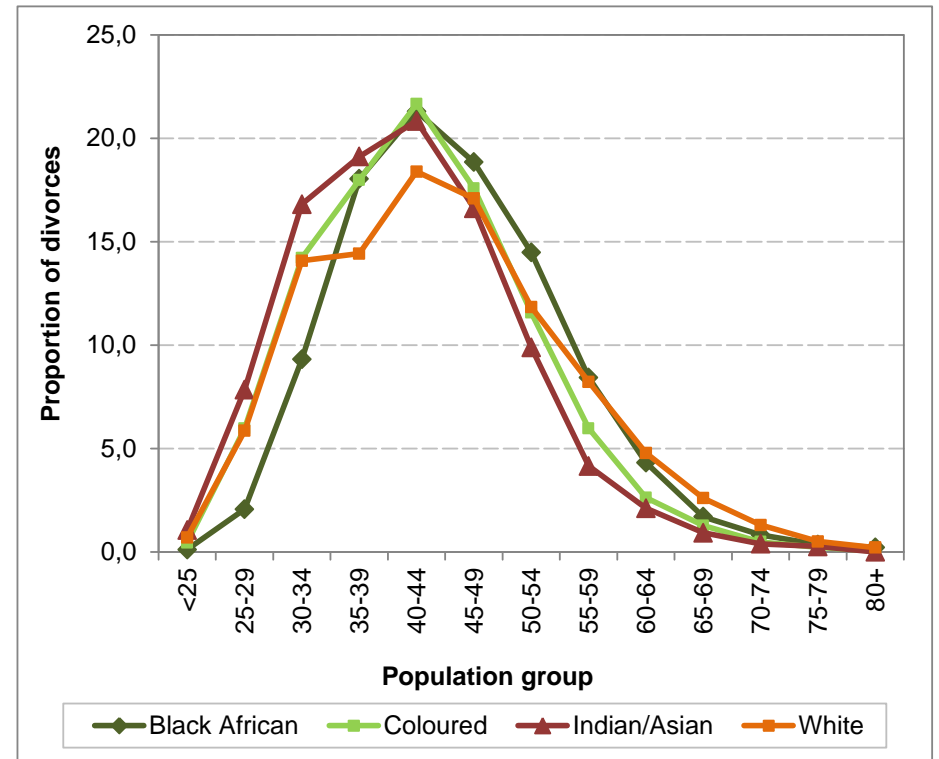
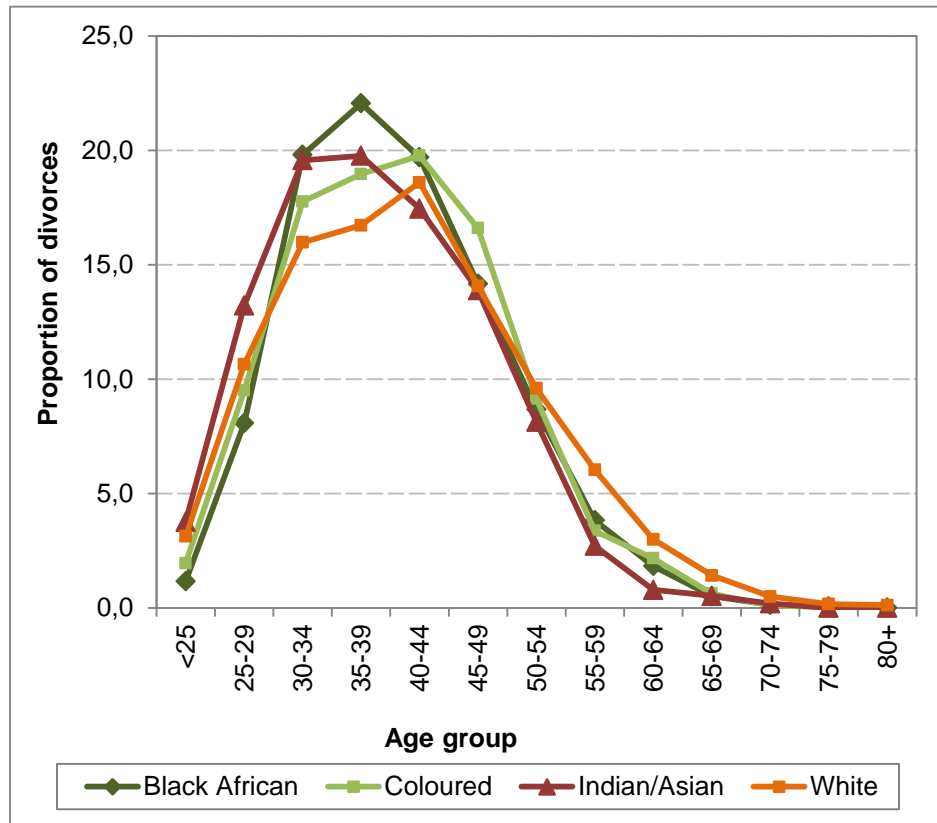


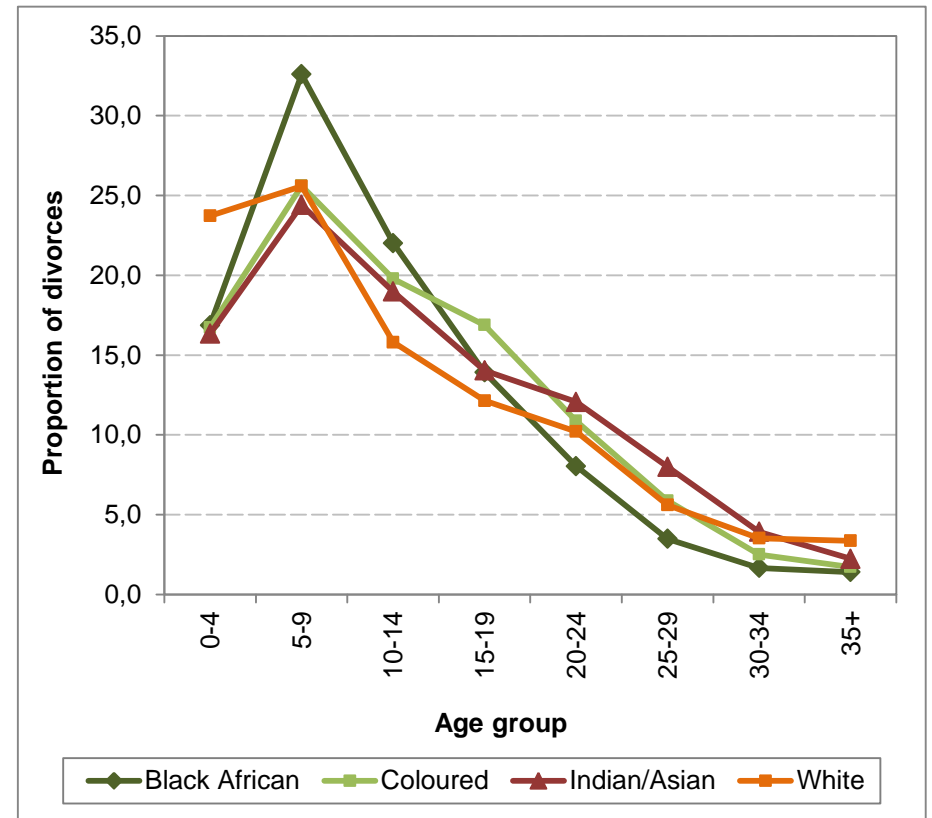
Figure 11 – The proportions of divorces by age and population group (males), 2014



**Figure 12– The proportions of divorce by age group and population group (females), 2014**



**Figure 13 – The proportions of divorces by duration of marriage and population group, 2014**



**Table 1 – Number of registered civil marriages in South Africa, 2003–2014**

<b>Year of registration</b>	<b>Number of civil marriages</b>
<b>2003</b>	178 689
<b>2004</b>	176 521
<b>2005</b>	180 657
<b>2006</b>	184 860
<b>2007</b>	183 030
<b>2008</b>	186 522
<b>2009</b>	171 989
<b>2010</b>	170 826
<b>2011</b>	167 264
<b>2012</b>	161 112
<b>2013</b>	158 642
<b>2014</b>	150 852



**Table 2 – Number of civil marriages by way of solemnisation and province of marriage registration, 2014**

Province of registration	Way of solemnisation				%			
	Total	DHA	Religious	Unspecified	Total	DHA	Religious	Unspecified
<b>Total</b>	<b>150 852</b>	<b>77 473</b>	<b>55 028</b>	<b>18 351</b>	<b>100,0</b>	<b>51,3</b>	<b>36,5</b>	<b>12,2</b>
Western Cape	25 865	10 653	12 711	2 501	100,0	41,2	49,1	9,7
Eastern Cape	16 020	7 290	6 691	2 039	100,0	45,5	41,8	12,7
Northern Cape	5 778	3 834	1 721	223	100,0	66,4	29,8	3,9
Free State	8 909	5 352	3 391	166	100,0	60,1	38,1	1,9
KwaZulu-Natal	24 146	12 263	8 862	3 021	100,0	50,8	36,7	12,5
North West	9 709	7 195	2 325	189	100,0	74,1	24,0	2,0
Gauteng	39 213	18 278	15 104	5 831	100,0	46,6	38,5	14,9
Mpumalanga	7 533	3 029	1 969	2 535	100,0	40,2	26,1	33,7
Limpopo	10 202	7 266	1 405	1 531	100,0	71,2	13,8	15,0
Outside RSA	567	472	74	21	100,0	83,3	13,1	3,7
Unknown	1 170	560	497	113	100,0	47,9	42,5	9,7
Unspecified	1 740	1 281	278	181	100,0	73,6	16,0	10,4

**Table 3 – Number of civil marriages for bridegrooms and brides by marital status at time of marriage and province of marriage registration, 2014**

Province of registration	Bridegroom					Bride				
	Total	Bachelor	Divorcee	Widower	Unspecified	Total	Spinster	Divorcee	Widow	Unspecified
<b>Total</b>	<b>150 852</b>	<b>124 627</b>	<b>5 193</b>	<b>1 659</b>	<b>19 373</b>	<b>150 852</b>	<b>131 040</b>	<b>3 486</b>	<b>1 425</b>	<b>14 901</b>
Western Cape	25 865	20 897	848	34	4 086	25 865	21 799	722	16	3 328
Eastern Cape	16 020	13 459	639	166	1 756	16 020	14 276	362	133	1 249
Northern Cape	5 778	4 756	307	45	670	5 778	5 067	191	37	483
Free State	8 909	7 442	345	111	1 011	8 909	7 742	251	168	748
KwaZulu-Natal	24 146	20 638	818	327	2 363	24 146	21 684	440	272	1 750
North West	9 709	8 138	352	81	1 138	9 709	8 532	228	78	871
Gauteng	39 213	31 344	1 220	511	6 138	39 213	32 906	914	439	4 954
Mpumalanga	7 533	6 204	307	116	906	7 533	6 566	168	105	694
Limpopo	10 202	8 777	265	202	958	10 202	9 336	141	125	600
Outside RSA	567	473	10	4	80	567	503	11	5	48
Unknown	1 170	977	35	11	147	1 170	1 034	27	7	102
Unspecified	1 740	1 522	47	51	120	1 740	1 595	31	40	74

**Table 4 – Number of civil marriages by marital status of husband and age differences between spouses at the time of marriage, 2014**

Age difference	Grand Total	Bachelor to					Divorcee to				
		Total	Spinster	Divorcee	Widow	Unspecified	Total	Spinster	Divorcee	Widow	Unspecified
<b>Total</b>	<b>150 852</b>	<b>124 627</b>	<b>117 196</b>	<b>1 202</b>	<b>1 059</b>	<b>5 170</b>	<b>5 193</b>	<b>3 058</b>	<b>858</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>1 230</b>
<b>Bridegroom older</b>	<b>115 618</b>	<b>94 223</b>	90 419	589	839	2 376	<b>4 502</b>	2 806	664	36	996
<b>Bridegroom younger</b>	<b>23 400</b>	<b>19 802</b>	16 688	532	153	2 429	<b>530</b>	191	148	7	184
<b>Same age</b>	<b>11 832</b>	<b>10 600</b>	10 087	81	67	365	<b>161</b>	61	46	4	50
<b>Unspecified</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Age difference	Widower to					Unspecified to				
	Total	Spinster	Divorcee	Widow	Unspecified	Total	Spinster	Divorcee	Widow	Unspecified
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 659</b>	<b>1 320</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>19 373</b>	<b>9 466</b>	<b>1 397</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>8 459</b>
<b>Bridegroom older</b>	<b>1 447</b>	1 167	24	219	37	<b>15 446</b>	8 367	931	40	6 108
<b>Bridegroom younger</b>	<b>128</b>	94	4	26	4	<b>2 940</b>	765	381	7	1 787
<b>Same age</b>	<b>84</b>	59	1	23	1	<b>987</b>	334	85	4	564

**Table 5 – Number of marriages by marital status at the time of marriage and ages of bridegrooms and brides, 2014**

Age	Bridegrooms					Brides				
	Total	Bachelor	Divorcee	Widower	Unspecified	Total	Spinster	Divorcee	Widow	Unspecified
<b>Total</b>	<b>150 852</b>	<b>124 627</b>	<b>5 193</b>	<b>1 659</b>	<b>19 373</b>	<b>150 852</b>	<b>131 040</b>	<b>3 486</b>	<b>1 425</b>	<b>14 901</b>
<b>&lt;18</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>-</b>
18	32	32	-	-	-	357	341	1	15	-
19	95	93	-	2	-	914	884	2	27	1
<b>18-19</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1 271</b>	<b>1 225</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>1</b>
20	285	281	-	3	1	1 467	1 407	2	52	6
21	592	575	-	15	2	2 641	2 557	2	71	11
22	1 255	1 227	-	24	4	3 983	3 874	5	85	19
23	2 015	1 985	-	19	11	5 372	5 243	7	84	38
24	3 097	3 034	-	48	15	6 922	6 762	7	94	59
<b>20-24</b>	<b>7 244</b>	<b>7 102</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>20 385</b>	<b>19 843</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>133</b>
25	4 339	4 269	3	47	20	7 858	7 691	10	77	80
26	5 301	5 199	2	60	40	8 453	8 233	6	83	131
27	6 127	6 003	2	63	59	8 876	8 622	21	64	169
28	6 945	6 785	6	46	108	9 061	8 755	29	39	238
29	7 374	7 186	6	43	139	8 829	8 449	22	47	311
<b>25-29</b>	<b>30 086</b>	<b>29 442</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>366</b>	<b>43 077</b>	<b>41 750</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>929</b>
30	7 590	7 333	13	42	202	8 260	7 815	23	27	395
31	7 670	7 328	25	36	281	7 587	7 042	41	48	456
32	7 525	7 155	10	32	328	7 286	6 712	55	29	490
33	6 743	6 333	23	32	355	5 857	5 235	71	23	528
34	6 416	5 872	35	36	473	5 377	4 739	84	16	538
<b>30-34</b>	<b>35 944</b>	<b>34 021</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>1 639</b>	<b>34 367</b>	<b>31 543</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>2 407</b>

**Table 5 – Number of marriages by marital status at the time of marriage and ages of bridegrooms and brides, 2014 (continued)**

Age	Bridegrooms					Brides				
	Total	Bachelor	Divorcee	Widower	Unspecified	Total	Spinster	Divorcee	Widow	Unspecified
35	6 139	5 647	32	20	440	4 959	4 355	60	14	530
36	5 538	4 910	68	12	548	4 448	3 779	87	9	573
37	5 369	4 708	75	19	567	4 046	3 433	63	7	543
38	5 088	4 364	75	20	629	3 566	2 921	74	9	562
39	4 938	4 130	94	10	704	3 457	2 791	90	9	567
<b>35-39</b>	<b>27 072</b>	<b>23 759</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>2 888</b>	<b>20 476</b>	<b>17 279</b>	<b>374</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>2 775</b>
40	4 482	3 637	99	5	741	3 197	2 387	108	7	695
41	3 991	3 155	104	6	726	2 745	2 076	106	8	555
42	3 970	2 993	133	5	839	2 672	1 962	107	2	601
43	3 134	2 193	124	7	810	2 079	1 361	125	1	592
44	3 286	2 329	142	2	813	2 262	1 528	128	1	605
<b>40-44</b>	<b>18 863</b>	<b>14 307</b>	<b>602</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>3 929</b>	<b>12 955</b>	<b>9 314</b>	<b>574</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>3 048</b>
45	2 746	1 791	139	14	802	1 903	1 214	129	6	554
46	2 705	1 720	152	25	808	1 827	1 139	122	10	556
47	2 162	1 255	155	39	713	1 471	897	107	11	456
48	2 122	1 184	152	45	741	1 419	853	98	15	453
49	1 920	1 026	162	54	678	1 341	751	120	21	449
<b>45-49</b>	<b>11 655</b>	<b>6 976</b>	<b>760</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>3 742</b>	<b>7 961</b>	<b>4 854</b>	<b>576</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>2 468</b>
50	1 949	989	203	52	705	1 310	752	107	20	431
51	1 776	883	167	62	664	1 092	611	119	31	331
52	1 639	808	151	65	615	1 039	548	118	30	343
53	1 304	600	137	48	519	798	348	73	27	350
54	1 317	573	150	46	548	779	375	107	36	261
<b>50-54</b>	<b>7 985</b>	<b>3 853</b>	<b>808</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>3 051</b>	<b>5 018</b>	<b>2 634</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>1 716</b>

**Table 5 – Number of marriages by marital status at the time of marriage and ages of bridegrooms and brides, 2014 (concluded)**

Age	Bridegrooms					Brides				
	Total	Bachelor	Divorcee	Widower	Unspecified	Total	Spinster	Divorcee	Widow	Unspecified
55	1 148	481	153	44	470	657	311	93	23	230
56	1 193	519	166	47	461	596	305	70	33	188
57	1 006	419	160	42	385	492	238	81	24	149
58	938	361	161	45	371	417	210	62	26	119
59	778	333	130	33	282	367	168	63	31	105
<b>55-59</b>	<b>5 063</b>	<b>2 113</b>	<b>770</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>1 969</b>	<b>2 529</b>	<b>1 232</b>	<b>369</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>791</b>
60	832	374	140	51	267	419	219	61	22	117
61	699	308	141	44	206	319	169	53	20	77
62	683	301	143	41	198	267	123	56	19	69
63	522	214	121	30	157	212	94	51	13	54
64	528	241	105	28	154	221	110	49	12	50
<b>60-64</b>	<b>3 264</b>	<b>1 438</b>	<b>650</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>982</b>	<b>1 438</b>	<b>715</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>367</b>
65	507	223	114	30	140	163	69	33	5	56
66	411	178	113	15	105	152	70	45	7	30
67	336	117	95	21	103	145	68	42	4	31
68	323	115	97	20	91	117	44	40	6	27
69	228	101	72	11	44	99	36	40	5	18
<b>65-69</b>	<b>1 805</b>	<b>734</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>483</b>	<b>676</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>162</b>
<b>70+</b>	<b>1 732</b>	<b>745</b>	<b>643</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>568</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>104</b>
<b>Unspecified</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

**Table 6 – Number of registered customary marriages in South Africa, 2003–2014**

<b>Year of registration</b>	<b>Number of marriages</b>
<b>2003</b>	17 283
<b>2004</b>	20 301
<b>2005</b>	19 252
<b>2006</b>	14 039
<b>2007</b>	20 259
<b>2008</b>	16 003
<b>2009</b>	13 506
<b>2010</b>	9 996
<b>2011</b>	5 084
<b>2012</b>	4 555
<b>2013</b>	3 498
<b>2014</b>	3 062

**Table 7 – Number of customary marriages by age difference and province of marriage registration, 2014**

Province of registration	Number					%				
	Total	Bridegroom Older	Bridegroom Younger	Spouses same age	Unspecified	Total	Bridegroom Older	Bridegroom Younger	Spouses same age	Unspecified
<b>Total</b>	<b>3 062</b>	2 603	317	139	3	<b>100,0</b>	85,0	10,4	4,5	0,1
<b>Western Cape</b>	<b>63</b>	48	10	5	-	<b>100,0</b>	76,2	15,9	7,9	0,0
<b>Eastern Cape</b>	<b>234</b>	199	31	4	-	<b>100,0</b>	85,0	13,3	1,7	0,0
<b>Northern Cape</b>	<b>7</b>	6	1	-	-	<b>100,0</b>	85,7	14,3	0,0	0,0
<b>Free State</b>	<b>27</b>	22	2	3	-	<b>100,0</b>	81,5	7,4	11,1	0,0
<b>Kwazulu-Natal</b>	<b>2 001</b>	1 687	212	100	2	<b>100,0</b>	84,3	10,6	5,0	0,1
<b>North West</b>	<b>53</b>	46	6	1	-	<b>100,0</b>	86,8	11,3	1,9	0,0
<b>Gauteng</b>	<b>112</b>	99	10	3	-	<b>100,0</b>	88,4	8,9	2,7	0,0
<b>Mpumalanga</b>	<b>222</b>	191	19	12	-	<b>100,0</b>	86,0	8,6	5,4	0,0
<b>Limpopo</b>	<b>211</b>	188	17	5	1	<b>100,0</b>	89,1	8,1	2,4	0,5
<b>Unknown</b>	<b>129</b>	114	9	6	-	<b>100,0</b>	88,4	7,0	4,7	0,0
<b>Unspecified</b>	<b>3</b>	3	-	-	-	<b>100,0</b>	100,0	0,0	0,0	0,0



**Table 8 – Number of customary marriages by ages of bridegrooms and brides at the time of marriage, 2014**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Bridegrooms</b>	<b>Brides</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>3 062</b>	<b>3 062</b>
<b>&lt;18</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>46</b>
18	3	71
19	17	103
<b>18-19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>174</b>
20	27	128
21	52	138
22	74	146
23	99	154
24	92	162
<b>20-24</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>728</b>
25	119	136
26	114	163
27	136	114
28	112	140
29	114	150
<b>25-29</b>	<b>595</b>	<b>703</b>
30	129	120
31	133	115
32	113	125
33	90	82
34	112	63
<b>30-34</b>	<b>577</b>	<b>505</b>

**Table 8 – Number of customary marriages by ages of bridegrooms and brides at the time of marriage, 2014 (continued)**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Bridegrooms</b>	<b>Brides</b>
35	120	90
36	93	82
37	105	71
38	77	51
39	80	62
<b>35-39</b>	<b>475</b>	<b>356</b>
40	84	57
41	71	51
42	81	56
43	59	36
44	69	36
<b>40-44</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>236</b>
45	72	39
46	54	34
47	48	30
48	41	21
49	48	21
<b>45-49</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>145</b>
50	38	27
51	43	16
52	31	19
53	28	17
54	21	9
<b>50-54</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>88</b>

**Table 8 – Number of customary marriages by ages of bridegrooms and brides at the time of marriage, 2014 (concluded)**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Bridegrooms</b>	<b>Brides</b>
55	22	8
56	20	11
57	17	9
58	18	5
59	18	5
<b>55-59</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>38</b>
60	24	8
61	22	9
62	22	3
63	15	4
64	19	3
<b>60-64</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>27</b>
65	9	4
66	11	3
67	5	1
68	4	1
69	2	-
<b>65-69</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>70+</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Unspecified</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>

**Table 9 – Number of civil unions registered in South Africa by province of registration, 2010–2014**

Province of registration	Number					%				
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>888</b>	<b>867</b>	<b>987</b>	<b>993</b>	<b>1 144</b>	<b>100,0</b>	<b>100,0</b>	<b>100,0</b>	<b>100,0</b>	<b>100,0</b>
<b>Western Cape</b>	261	238	253	320	314	29,4	27,5	25,6	32,2	27,5
<b>Eastern Cape</b>	24	29	38	37	54	2,7	3,3	3,9	3,7	4,7
<b>Northern Cape</b>	75	93	106	87	81	8,4	10,7	10,7	8,8	7,1
<b>Free State</b>	26	28	27	21	32	2,9	3,2	2,7	2,1	2,8
<b>KwaZulu-Natal</b>	79	63	91	81	161	8,9	7,3	9,2	8,2	14,1
<b>North West</b>	9	3	11	10	28	1	0,3	1,1	1	2,5
<b>Gauteng</b>	391	381	425	411	452	44	43,9	43,1	41,4	39,5
<b>Mpumalanga</b>	11	16	12	16	9	1,2	1,8	1,2	1,6	0,8
<b>Limpopo</b>	10	7	13	6	10	1,1	0,8	1,3	0,6	0,9
<b>Outside South Africa</b>	2	9	11	4	3	0,2	1,0	1,1	0,4	0,3

**Table 10 – Number of civil unions by ages of spouses-1 and spouses-2 at the time of civil union, 2014**

Age	Spouses-1	Spouses-2
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 144</b>	<b>1 144</b>
<b>&lt;18</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>
18	1	1
19	1	2
<b>18-19</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
20	2	6
21	8	12
22	9	23
23	12	28
24	30	44
<b>20-24</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>113</b>
25	30	40
26	25	51
27	34	58
28	48	53
29	49	52
<b>25-29</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>254</b>
30	63	54
31	56	55
32	56	55
33	44	51
34	37	32
<b>30-34</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>247</b>

**Table 10– Number of civil unions by ages of spouses-1 and spouses-2 at the time of civil union, 2014 (continued)**

Age	Spouses-1	Spouses-2
35	42	43
36	45	33
37	48	28
38	46	47
39	29	30
<b>35-39</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>181</b>
40	41	28
41	32	33
42	27	22
43	35	28
44	22	23
<b>40-44</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>134</b>
45	15	25
46	23	20
47	22	19
48	19	19
49	21	19
<b>45-49</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>102</b>
50	26	21
51	19	11
52	14	6
53	10	3
54	9	8
<b>50-54</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>49</b>

**Table 10 – Number of civil unions by ages of spouses-1 and spouses-2 at the time of civil union, 2014 (concluded)**

Age	Spouses-1	Spouses-2
55	7	8
56	18	3
57	10	7
58	5	6
59	4	1
<b>55-59</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>25</b>
60	5	6
61	8	3
62	4	4
63	2	2
64	6	6
<b>60-64</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>21</b>
65	5	2
66	6	2
67	2	1
68	2	-
69	2	3
<b>65-69</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>70+</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>

**Table 11 – Number of published divorces in South Africa by population group, 2003–2014**

Year	Total	Numbers						%						
		Black African	Coloured	India/Asian	White	Mixed	Unspecified	Total	Black African	Coloured	India/Asian	White	Mixed	Unspecified
2003	31 566	7 657	3 911	1 508	12 639	532	5 319	100,0	24,3	12,4	4,8	40,0	1,7	16,9
2004	31 768	8 965	3 300	1 648	12 437	594	4 824	100,0	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	100,0	26,7	11,0	5,0	35,7	1,7	20,0
2006	31 270	9 113	3 451	1 676	11 079	613	5 338	100,0	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	100,0	30,6	12,0	5,8	33,5	2,9	15,2
2008	28 924	10 110	3 057	1 802	9 481	902	3 572	100,0	35,0	10,6	6,2	32,8	3,1	12,3
2009	30 763	10 528	4 016	1 610	9 981	2 912	1 716	100,0	34,2	13,1	5,2	32,4	9,5	5,6
2010	22 936	8 169	3 189	1 294	6 995	31	3 258	100,0	35,6	13,9	5,6	30,5	0,1	14,2
2011	20 980	7 517	3 473	1 359	6 730	-	1 901	100,0	35,8	16,6	6,5	32,1	0,0	9,1
2012	21 998	7 311	3 967	1 036	7 238	22	2 424	100,0	33,2	18,0	4,7	32,9	0,1	11,0
2013	23 885	8 656	3 888	1 425	7 561	24	2 331	100,0	36,2	16,3	6,0	31,7	0,1	9,8
2014	24 689	9 167	4 994	1 522	6 970	842	1 194	100,0	37,1	20,2	6,2	28,2	3,4	4,8



**Table 12 – Number of divorces by sex and population group of the plaintiff, 2014**

Population group	Number				%			
	Total	Husbands	Wives	Unspecified	Total	Husbands	Wives	Unspecified
<b>Total</b>	<b>24 689</b>	8 499	12 769	3 421	<b>100,0</b>	34,4	51,7	13,9
Black African	<b>9 167</b>	3 540	4 038	1 589	<b>100,0</b>	38,6	44,1	17,3
Coloured	<b>4 994</b>	1 450	2 840	704	<b>100,0</b>	29,0	56,9	14,1
Indian/Asian	<b>1 522</b>	517	831	174	<b>100,0</b>	34,0	54,6	11,4
White	<b>6 970</b>	2 310	4 025	635	<b>100,0</b>	33,1	57,8	9,1
Mixed	<b>842</b>	265	435	142	<b>100,0</b>	31,5	51,7	16,9
Unspecified	<b>1 194</b>	417	600	177	<b>100,0</b>	34,9	50,3	14,8

**Table 13– Number of divorces by sex and type of occupation of the plaintiff, 2014**

Occupation	Number				%			
	Total	Husbands	Wives	Unspecified	Total	Husbands	Wives	Unspecified
<b>Total</b>	<b>24 689</b>	8 499	12 769	3 421	<b>100,0</b>	34,4	51,7	13,9
Professional, semi-professionals and technical occupations	<b>2 967</b>	1 140	1 827	-	<b>12,0</b>	13,4	14,3	-
Managers and administrators	<b>2 299</b>	1 230	1 069	-	<b>9,3</b>	14,5	8,4	-
Clerical and sales occupations	<b>2 270</b>	491	1 779	-	<b>9,2</b>	5,8	13,9	-
Transport delivery and communications	<b>337</b>	304	33	-	<b>1,4</b>	3,6	0,3	-
Services occupations	<b>1 671</b>	744	927	-	<b>6,8</b>	8,8	7,3	-
Farming and related occupations	<b>62</b>	50	12	-	<b>0,3</b>	0,6	0,1	-
Artisans apprentice and related occupations	<b>623</b>	471	152	-	<b>2,5</b>	5,5	1,2	-
Production foreman mine and quarry worker	<b>575</b>	383	192	-	<b>2,3</b>	4,5	1,5	-
Not economically active	<b>4 115</b>	1 288	2 827	-	<b>16,7</b>	15,2	22,1	-
Unspecified	<b>9 770</b>	2 398	3 951	3 421	<b>39,6</b>	28,2	30,9	100,0

**Table 14 – Number of divorces by population group and way of solemnisation of the marriage, 2014**

Population group	Number				%			
	Total	Religious	DHA	Unspecified	Total	Religious	DHA	Unspecified
<b>Total</b>	<b>24 689</b>	<b>12 506</b>	<b>10 048</b>	<b>2 135</b>	<b>100,0</b>	<b>50,7</b>	<b>40,7</b>	<b>8,6</b>
<b>Black African</b>	<b>9 167</b>	2 748	5 871	548	<b>100,0</b>	30,0	64,0	6,0
<b>Coloured</b>	<b>4 994</b>	3 423	1 281	290	<b>100,0</b>	68,5	25,7	5,8
<b>Indian/Asian</b>	<b>1 522</b>	438	866	218	<b>100,0</b>	28,8	56,9	14,3
<b>White</b>	<b>6 970</b>	5 044	1 239	687	<b>100,0</b>	72,4	17,8	9,9
<b>Mixed</b>	<b>842</b>	320	461	61	<b>100,0</b>	38,0	54,8	7,2
<b>Unspecified</b>	<b>1 194</b>	533	330	331	<b>100,0</b>	44,6	27,6	27,7

**Table 15– Number of divorces by number of times married at the time of divorce, 2014**

Number of times married	Number		%	
	Husbands	Wives	Husbands	Wives
<b>Total</b>	<b>24 689</b>	<b>24 689</b>	<b>100,0</b>	<b>100,0</b>
Once	20 220	20 563	81,9	83,3
Twice	3 050	2 685	12,4	10,9
Three or more	522	395	2,1	1,6
Unspecified	897	1 046	3,6	4,2

**Table 16– Number of divorces by age and population group (male divorcees), 2014**

Age group	Population group						
	Total	Black African	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White	Other	Unspecified
<b>Total</b>	<b>24 689</b>	<b>9 432</b>	<b>5 225</b>	<b>1 736</b>	<b>7 136</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>1 035</b>
<25	99	10	22	16	47	-	4
25-29	1 019	179	296	119	392	-	33
30-34	2 798	806	705	255	942	5	85
35-39	3 851	1 561	892	290	965	7	136
40-44	4 634	1 844	1 074	316	1 230	15	155
45-49	4 051	1 631	872	252	1 143	6	147
50-54	2 888	1 254	574	150	792	5	113
55-59	1 729	730	296	63	550	2	88
60-64	901	374	130	32	320	2	43
65-69	417	147	63	14	174	2	17
70-74	199	71	24	6	87	-	11
75-79	84	31	11	4	34	-	4
80+	38	19	2	-	14	1	2
Unspecified	1 981	775	264	219	446	80	197

**Table 17– Number of divorces by age group and population group (female divorcees), 2014**

Age group	Population group						
	Total	Black African	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White	Other	Unspecified
<b>Total</b>	<b>24 689</b>	<b>9 466</b>	<b>5 370</b>	<b>1 648</b>	<b>7 085</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>1 091</b>
<25	481	102	99	57	207	-	16
25-29	2 184	710	483	200	704	3	84
30-34	4 132	1 742	902	296	1 056	6	130
35-39	4 470	1 940	963	299	1 105	2	161
40-44	4 412	1 732	1 004	264	1 229	2	181
45-49	3 374	1 246	843	210	930	2	143
50-54	2 101	763	464	123	634	-	117
55-59	1 006	337	171	41	399	1	57
60-64	501	161	110	12	198	1	19
65-69	188	45	32	8	94	-	9
70-74	57	12	5	3	33	-	4
75-79	21	6	2	-	11	-	2
80+	10	-	2	-	8	-	-
Unspecified	1 752	670	290	135	477	12	168

**Table 18– Number of divorces by duration of marriage and age group (male divorcees), 2014**

Age group of husband	Total	Duration of marriage								
		0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35+	Unspecified
<b>Total</b>	<b>24 689</b>	<b>4 553</b>	<b>6 751</b>	<b>4 623</b>	<b>3 324</b>	<b>2 248</b>	<b>1 180</b>	<b>616</b>	<b>503</b>	<b>891</b>
<25	99	85	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
25-29	1 019	699	285	4	1	-	2	-	-	28
30-34	2 798	1 094	1 378	224	8	-	2	7	-	85
35-39	3 851	761	1 687	1 032	238	6	1	2	4	120
40-44	4 634	577	1 204	1 344	1 042	306	8	1	9	143
45-49	4 051	372	736	809	870	852	240	4	15	153
50-54	2 888	251	432	422	493	552	487	146	15	90
55-59	1 729	149	229	222	240	230	233	250	98	78
60-64	901	83	129	109	116	97	69	103	152	43
65-69	417	37	64	48	56	41	34	29	88	20
70-74	199	24	26	30	21	14	13	13	49	9
75-79	84	20	11	6	12	2	6	3	17	7
80+	38	6	6	6	3	3	2	6	6	-
Unspecified	1 981	395	557	367	224	145	83	52	50	108

**Table 19– Number of divorces by duration of marriage and age group (female divorcees), 2014**

Age group of wife	Duration of marriage									
	Total	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35+	Unspecified
<b>Total</b>	<b>24 689</b>	<b>4 553</b>	<b>6 751</b>	<b>4 623</b>	<b>3 324</b>	<b>2 248</b>	<b>1 180</b>	<b>616</b>	<b>503</b>	<b>891</b>
<25	481	388	69	-	-	-	-	-	-	24
25-29	2 184	1 151	910	52	-	-	4	-	-	67
30-34	4 132	1 089	2 106	755	42	-	-	12	-	128
35-39	4 470	654	1 465	1 480	687	59	-	-	5	120
40-44	4 412	408	830	1 070	1 188	689	63	1	10	153
45-49	3 374	296	477	517	651	802	447	40	21	123
50-54	2 101	171	252	242	316	343	381	277	34	85
55-59	1 006	67	108	111	130	120	126	159	145	40
60-64	501	36	58	57	58	49	50	45	124	24
65-69	188	18	19	19	16	8	15	13	72	8
70-74	57	2	8	6	5	5	5	6	15	5
75-79	21	3	2	1	-	2	2	2	9	-
80+	10	3	3	2	-	-	-	-	2	-
Unspecified	1 752	267	444	311	231	171	87	61	66	114

**Table 20– Number of divorces with and without children (aged below 18 years) by population group, 2014**

Population group	Number			%		
	Total	Divorces with children	Divorces without children	Total	Divorces with children	Divorces without children
<b>Total</b>	<b>24 689</b>	<b>13 676</b>	<b>11 013</b>	<b>100,0</b>	<b>55,4</b>	<b>44,6</b>
Black African	9 167	5 411	3 756	100,0	59,0	41,0
Coloured	4 994	3 239	1 755	100,0	64,9	35,1
Indian/Asian	1 522	823	699	100,0	54,1	45,9
White	6 970	3 221	3 749	100,0	46,2	53,8
Mixed	842	396	446	100,0	47,0	53,0
Unspecified	1 194	586	608	100,0	49,1	50,9

**Table 21 – Number and percentage distribution of children (aged below 18 years) affected by divorces, 2014**

Population group	Total number of children involved	%
<b>Total</b>	<b>22 218</b>	<b>100,0</b>
Black African	8 680	39,1
Coloured	5 527	24,9
Indian/Asian	1 254	5,6
White	5 187	23,3
Mixed	643	2,9
Unspecified	927	4,2

## EXPLANATORY NOTES

### 1. Purpose of the statistical release

The purpose of the statistical release is to provide information on marriages, unions and divorces recorded in South Africa in 2014. The data on marriages and unions was gathered from the Department of Home Affairs while information for divorces came from the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development through divorce courts, based on the number of divorce forms that had reached Stats SA by end of December, 2015.

### 2. Scope and coverage

The data on marriages currently cover registered civil marriages, customary marriages and civil unions in South Africa. The divorce data cover cases for filed divorces from registered marriages and unions that had been granted; and forms on them received by Stats SA. Undocumented cases of abandonment or divorces that had been granted by religious or traditional authorities are not reported in the release.

### 3. Data

Stats SA obtains data on civil marriages, customary marriages and civil unions directly from the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) head office. Data on divorces are collected from divorce courts using a standard structured questionnaire (Divorce Forms) prepared by Stats SA. The 2014 data came from both the old and the revised Divorce Forms since some of the courts have not switched to the revised Form. The questionnaires are regularly completed by the courts as divorce decrees are granted. In 2014, 27 868 divorces were granted by DOJ&CD from 66 regional courts. Out of these 27 868 divorce cases, Stats SA received and processed 24 689 Divorce Forms from 55 regional courts.

### 4. Limitations

Due to the few variables collected on married couples and divorcees, background information on couples and divorcees is limited. Therefore the release focuses on presenting the demographic characteristics of the married and divorced persons.

### 5. Definitions of terms

**Civil marriages:** these are marriages registered according to the Marriage Act, 1961 (Act No. 25 of 1961). In the release the term 'civil' is used to differentiate marriages that were solemnised by licensed DHA marriage officers from marriages that were solemnised by religious marriage officers.

**Customary marriages:** these are marriages that are negotiated, celebrated or concluded according to any of the systems of indigenous African customary law which exist in South Africa as prescribed in the Recognition of Customary Marriages Act, 1998 (Act No. 120 of 1998).

**Civil unions:** refers to the voluntary union of two persons who are both 18 years of age or older, which is solemnised and registered by way of either a marriage or a civil partnership, in accordance with the procedures prescribed in the Civil Union Act, 2006 (Act No. 17 of 2006). Spouse-1 and Spouse-2 are used because the data do not specify the sex of the spouse.

**Mixed population group:** refers to couples with different population groups.

**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

Marriages and divorces, 2014

Published by Statistics South Africa, Private Bag X44, Pretoria 0001

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