



The South Africa I know, the home I understand



Statistical release

P0307

Marriages and divorces

2012

Embargoed until:
15 December 2014
11:30

Enquiries:

User Information Services
012 310 8600 / 4892 / 8390

Forthcoming issue:

Marriages and divorces, 2013

Expected release date

9 February 2015

PREFACE

This statistical release presents information on civil marriages, customary marriages and civil unions that were registered in 2012 in the South African national marriage registration systems maintained by the Department of Home Affairs. It highlights trends in the number of marriages and unions as well as demographic and other characteristics of the couples. The release also reports on divorces that were granted in 2012 by the Department of Justice and Correctional Services. It focuses on trends in divorces; characteristics of plaintiffs; age at the time of divorce; duration of marriage at the time of divorce and divorces involving couples with minor children.

PJ Lehohla
Statistician-General

CONTENTS

PREFACE.....	1
LIST OF FIGURES	3
LIST OF TABLES	4
KEY FINDINGS	5
1. Introduction	5
2. Marriages.....	6
2.1 Civil marriages.....	6
2.1.1 Trends in the registration of civil marriages (2002 – 2012).....	6
2.1.2 Solemnisation of civil marriages.....	6
2.1.3 Marital status at the time of civil marriage	6
2.1.4 Age at the time of civil marriage	7
2.2 Customary marriages	8
2.2.1 Trends in the registration of customary marriages (2003 – 2012)	8
2.2.2 Marital status at the time of customary marriage	8
2.2.3 Age at the time of customary marriage	8
2.3 Civil unions	8
2.3.1 Trends in the registration of civil unions (2007 – 2012)	8
2.3.2 Marital status at the time of civil union	9
2.3.3 Age at the time of civil union	9
3. Divorces.....	9
3.1 Trends in divorces (2002 – 2012)	9
3.2 Characteristics of plaintiffs	9
3.3 Number of divorces by way of solemnisation of marriage	10
3.4 Number of times married.....	10
3.5 Age at the time of divorce	10
3.6 Duration of marriage of divorcing couples.....	10
3.7 Divorces involving couples with minor children.....	11
4. Summary and concluding remarks.....	11
EXPLANATORY NOTES	45
1. Purpose of the statistical release	45
2. Scope and coverage.....	45
3. Data	45
4. Limitations.....	45
5. Definitions of terms.....	45
6. Symbols	46
GENERAL INFORMATION.....	47

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.	Number of civil marriages by month of solemnisation, 2008 – 2012	12
Figure 2.	Number of civil marriages for bachelors and spinsters by age group, 2012.....	13
Figure 3a.	Median ages of bridegrooms and brides at the time of civil marriage, 2008 – 2012	14
Figure 3b.	Median ages of bachelors and spinsters at the time of civil marriage, 2008 – 2012	14
Figure 3c.	Median ages of widowers and widows at the time of civil marriage, 2008 – 2012	15
Figure 3d.	Median ages of male and female divorcees at the time of civil marriage, 2008 – 2012	15
Figure 4a.	Percentage distribution of civil marriages by age differences between spouses and marital status at the time of marriage (bachelors), 2012	16
Figure 4b.	Percentage distribution of civil marriages by age differences between spouses and marital status at the time of marriage (widowers), 2012	16
Figure 4c.	Percentage distribution of civil marriages by age differences between spouses and marital status at the time of marriage (male divorcees), 2012.....	17
Figure 5.	Percentage distribution of customary marriages by year of marriage and time it took to register the marriage, 2008 – 2012	17
Figure 6.	Median ages of bridegrooms and brides at the time of customary marriage, 2008 – 2012.....	18
Figure 7.	Percentage distribution of customary marriages by age differences between spouses at the time of marriage, 2008 – 2012	18
Figure 8.	Median ages of spouses in civil unions, 2008 – 2012.....	19
Figure 9.	Percentage distribution of civil unions by age differences between spouses at the time of union, 2008 – 2012.....	19
Figure 10.	Median ages of divorcees by sex and population group, 2012.....	20
Figure 11.	Proportion of divorcees by age group and population group (males), 2012.....	20
Figure 12.	Proportion of divorcees by age group and population group (females), 2012	21
Figure 13.	Proportion of divorcees by duration of marriage and population group, 2012.....	21

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.	Number of registered civil marriages in South Africa, 2002 – 2012.....	22
Table 2.	Number of civil marriages by way of solemnisation and province of marriage registration, 2012.....	23
Table 3.	Number of civil marriages for bridegrooms and brides by marital status at time of marriage and province of marriage registration, 2012.....	24
Table 4.	Number of civil marriages by marital status of bridegroom and age differences between spouses at the time of marriage, 2012.....	25
Table 5.	Number of marriages by marital status at the time of marriage and ages of bridegrooms and brides, 2012.....	26
Table 6.	Number of registered customary marriages in South Africa, 2003 – 2012	29
Table 7.	Number of customary marriages by ages of bridegrooms and brides at the time of marriage, 2012.....	30
Table 8.	Number of civil unions registered in South Africa by province of registration, 2007 – 2012.....	33
Table 9.	Number of civil unions by ages of spouses1 and spouses2 at the time of civil union, 2012	34
Table 10.	Number of published divorces in South Africa by population group, 2002 – 2012	37
Table 11.	Number of divorces by sex and population group of the plaintiff, 2012	38
Table 12.	Number of divorces by sex and type of occupation of the plaintiff, 2012.....	38
Table 13.	Number of divorces by population group and way of solemnisation of the marriage, 2012	39
Table 14.	Number of divorces by number of times married at the time of divorce, 2012	39
Table 15.	Number of divorces by age group and population group (male divorcees), 2012	40
Table 16.	Number of divorces by age group and population group (female divorcees), 2012	41
Table 17.	Number of divorces by duration of marriage and age group (male divorcees), 2012.....	42
Table 18.	Number of divorces by duration of marriage and age group (female divorcees), 2012.....	43
Table 19.	Number of divorces with and without children (aged below 18 years) by population group, 2012.....	44
Table 20.	Number and percentage distribution of children (aged below 18 years) affected by divorce, 2012.....	44

KEY FINDINGS

1. Introduction

There are three main sources of marriage and divorce statistics in South Africa: namely, 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 provide cross-sectional data on individuals' marital status (never married, divorced, widowed, etc.). Therefore, marriage and divorce in this context cover different types of marriages and associated divorces that took place at different periods in people's lives. However, not all types of marriages and divorces are registered.

Unlike census and surveys, registered marriages and divorces data are based on continuous recording of these events as they take place. Not all marriages can be registered in South Africa. By the end of December 2012, three types of marriages and unions were recognised by law namely: 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 Marriage 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 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, since 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 Correctional Services (DOJ&CS) 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), that 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 civil marriages (2002 – 2012)

Information provided in Table 1 on page 22, shows that a total of 161 112 civil marriages of South African citizens and permanent residents were registered at the Department of Home Affairs in 2012. This number includes 210 (0,1%) 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 2002 and 2008, after which there was a consistent decline. During the period 2002 to 2012, the highest number of marriages was recorded in 2008 (186 522) and the lowest number in 2012 (161 112). The 2012 figure of 161 112 civil marriages represents a decrease of 3,7% from the 167 264 marriages recorded in 2011.

The seasonal monthly variation in the registration of civil marriages is observed in Figure 1 on page 12. 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 tends to peak in either March or April depending on the month of Easter holidays for that particular year. In 2012, the highest number of marriages [27 138; (16,8%)] took place in December. July recorded the lowest number of marriages, [9 850; (6,1%)].

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 free of charge 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 23, shows the distribution of civil marriages registered in 2012 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. Table 2 indicates that 82 975 (51,5%) of the 161 112 marriages were solemnised by DHA marriage officers and 56 099 (34,8%) by 'religious' rites. The type of solemnisation rite was not specified in 22 038 (13,7%) 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 2012, the highest number of all marriages was registered in Gauteng [40 287 (25,0%)] and the lowest in Northern Cape [5 044 (3,1%)]. North West (76,1%) had the highest proportion of its marriages solemnised by civil marriage officers whereas Western Cape recorded the highest proportion (44,2%) of marriages solemnised by religious marriage officers. Wide differences of 'unspecified' way of solemnisation by province were noted. For example, the way of solemnisation of 27,8% of marriages in Mpumalanga was unspecified compared with 1,6% in North West.

2.1.3 Marital status at the time of civil marriage

Data presented in Table 3 on page 24 indicate that a majority of the marriages in 2012 for both bridegrooms and brides were first-time marriages. For bridegrooms, there were 133 509 (82,9%) bachelors, 5 363 (3,3%) divorcees and 2 144 (1,3%) widowers. For the brides, 140 771 (87,4%) were spinsters whilst 3 621 (2,2%) were divorcees and 1 664 (1,0%) were widows. The marital status of 20 096 (12,5%) bridegrooms and 15 056 (9,3%) brides was 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 90,2% and 90,8% respectively were spinsters at the time of marriage.

It is also observed from Table 4 on page 25, that irrespective of their marital status, men generally married women who had never been married (spinsters). Thus, 125 815 (94,2%) spinsters, 1 308 (1,0%) divorcees and 1 214 (0,9%) widows were married by bachelors. In addition, irrespective of the fact that more divorcees and widowers married spinsters, the proportion of male divorcees who married female divorcees (16,2%) was higher than the proportion that married widows (1,2%). Similarly, the proportion of widowers who married widows (15,0%) was higher than the proportion that married female divorcees (1,5%).

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 risk 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 2012, marriages of nine bridegrooms and 206 brides aged less than 18 years were registered. Seven of these bridegrooms and 193 of the brides were marrying for the first time (see Table 5 on page 26). Furthermore, Figure 2 on page 13 indicates that the highest number of bachelors [35 883 (26,9%)] were in the age group 30–34 years whereas the highest number of spinsters [46 559 (33,1%)] 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 14 shows that the median ages have remained constant for both bridegrooms (34 years) and brides (30 years), with a constant age difference of four years. Figures 3b to 3d on pages 14–15 further show that women generally entered marriage at younger ages than men with wide age gaps between men and women of the same marital status. For example, widowers were 19 years older than widows while bachelors were four years older than spinsters. 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 29 years respectively in 2012 (see Figure 3b). The median ages of brides remained at 29 years throughout the five-year period between 2008 and 2012, while for bridegrooms the median age was 32 years between 2008 and 2009 and increased to 33 years in 2010 through to 2012. For remarriages, the median ages for widowers and widows in 2012 (Figure 3c) were 49 years and 30 years respectively. The median ages for widowers consistently increased every year by one year from 45 years in 2008 to 49 years in 2012 whereas the median ages for widows were quite stable at 29 years in 2008, and increased to 30 years in 2009 until 2012. The median ages for divorcees are shown in Figure 3d. It is observed that the median ages for male divorcees were generally constant at 52 years over the five-year period from 2008 to 2012. In comparison, the median age of female divorcees increased from 46 years in 2008 to 47 years in 2012.

Despite the fact that men generally marry younger women, data in Table 4 indicate that in 2012, 23 855 (14,8%) bridegrooms were younger than their brides whilst 12 172 (7,6%) 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 on pages 16–17). However, the magnitude differs by the marital status of the spouses at the time of marriage. For example, 45,7% of bachelors who married divorcees were younger than their brides (Figure 4a) and 18,8% of male divorcees who married widows were also younger than their brides (Figure 4c). A relatively smaller percentage (6,7%) was observed for male divorcees marrying spinsters who were older than themselves (Figure 4c).

2.2 Customary marriages

2.2.1 Trends in the registration of customary marriages (2003 – 2012)

In 2012, 4 555 customary marriages were registered at the Department of Home Affairs, indicating a decline of 10,4% from 5 084 customary marriages registered in 2011. It is observed from Table 6 on page 29 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 2012 (4 555).

The Recognition of Customary Marriages Act, 1998 (Act No. 120 of 1998) prescribes that customary marriages entered into after the commencement of this Act must be registered within a period of three months after the conclusion of the marriage. Figure 5 on page 17 shows that the majority of customary marriages were registered later than the year of marriage. During the period from 2008 to 2012, the proportion of marriages that were registered the same year in which they took place ranged from 7,2% in 2008 to 15,1% in 2012, 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 in Table 7 on page 30. In 2012, there were 13 (0,3%) bridegrooms and 118 (2,6%) brides who were younger than 18 years. The median ages at the time of customary marriage are presented in Figure 6 on page 18. Similar to civil marriages, bridegrooms were generally older than brides, with a difference of about five to six years for customary marriages registered between 2008 and 2012.

For both bridegrooms and brides, median ages at the time of customary marriage increased gradually over time. Median ages of bridegrooms increased from 31 years in 2008 to 33 years in 2012 and those for brides increased from 25 years to 27 years during the same period. A further comparison of the ages of bridegrooms and brides shows that in 2012, 83,6% of bridegrooms were older than their brides whilst 10,4% were younger than their brides and 6,0% were of the same age (see Figure 7 on page 18). This distribution was generally the same over the five-year period.

2.3 Civil unions

2.3.1 Trends in the registration of civil unions (2007 – 2012)

Results presented in Table 8 on page 33 show that in 2012, 987 civil unions were registered (including the registration of 11 civil unions of South African citizens and permanent residents living outside South Africa). In general, the number of civil unions registered in South Africa increased from 80 in 2007 to 888 in 2010, then declined marginally to 867 in 2011 then increased by 13,8% to 987 in 2012. The provincial distribution of civil unions registered in 2012 indicates that Gauteng (425) and Western Cape (253) were the provinces with the highest number of registrations of civil unions. More than half (68,7%) of civil unions in 2012 were registered in these two provinces. Aside from civil unions that were registered outside South Africa, North West has

been recording the lowest number of registered civil unions since 2008. In 2012, 11 civil unions were registered in North West followed by 12 and 13 registered in Mpumalanga and Limpopo respectively.

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 on marital status is not available in the data.

2.3.3 Age at the time of civil union

Spouses are distinguished as spouse1 and spouse2. The number of civil unions classified by the ages of spouse1 and spouse2 at the time of the solemnisation of civil union is presented in Table 9 on pages 34. It is observed that there were two spouse1 and six spouse2 that were younger than 20 years old.

As observed from Figure 8 on page 19, the median ages of spouses1 and spouses2 at the time of solemnisation of the civil union have declined since 2008. Furthermore, the median ages of spouses1 were greater than those of spouses2. Over the five-year period, the yearly differences in the median ages of spouses1 and spouses2 ranged between two and four years. The median ages of spouses1 declined by two years from 38 years in 2008 to 36 years in 2012. Similarly, the median ages of spouses2 declined by two years from 35 years in 2008 to 33 years in 2012. Data in Figure 9 on page 19 further show that spouses1 were generally older than spouses2. In 2012, 63,1% of spouses1 were older than their spouses, whilst 29,0% were younger than their spouses and 7,9% were of the same age as their spouses.

3. Divorces

3.1 Trends in divorces (2002 – 2012)

The 2012 divorce data reported in this statistical release are based on 21 998 completed divorce forms that Stats SA had received and processed by the end of September 2014. The number (21 998) indicates an increase of 1 018 (4,9%) divorces from the 20 980 cases processed in 2011 (see Table 10 on page 37). The table shows that the total number of divorces generally fluctuated over the period 2002 to 2012, with the highest number observed in 2005 (32 484) and the lowest in 2011 (20 980).

Table 10 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 2002 to 2007; thereafter, the black African couples had the highest number of divorces up until 2012. In 2002, 45,2% of the divorcees were from the white population group whereas 22,5% came from the black African population group. By 2012, 33,2% of the divorcees were from the black African population group and 32,9% from the white population group. The proportions of the divorcees from the coloured and the Indian/Asian population groups were quite invariable during the eleven-year period. However, there was a notable increase in the proportions of divorcees from the coloured population group (from 16,6% in 2011 to 18,0% in 2012) which may have affected the results.

3.2 Characteristics of plaintiffs

The 2012 data presented in Table 11 on page 38 show that more wives 11 033 (50,2%) than husbands 7 335 (33,3%) initiated the divorce. The sex of the plaintiff was not specified in 3 630 (16,5%) of divorces. With the exception of women from the black African population who had a lower proportion of plaintiffs (40,7%), the proportion of women plaintiffs from the other population groups was above 50,0%. White population group 57,3%, coloured population group 54,7% and Indian/Asian population group 54,3% 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 (22,1%).

Table 12 on page 38 provides information on the occupation of the plaintiffs. It is noted that a high proportion of the plaintiffs (12,7% of the men and 19,4% of the women) did not indicate the type of occupation they were engaged in at the time of divorce. In addition, 27,4% and 30,3% of the men and women respectively were not economically active at the time of divorce.

In 2012, most plaintiffs were in clerical and sales occupations (11,1%); managers and administrators (10,4%) and 8,4% in professional, semi-professional and technical 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 clerical and sales occupations (17,3%).

3.3 Number of divorces by way of solemnisation of marriage

Data presented in Table 13 on page 39 show that 4 432 (20,1%) of the 2012 divorce cases were from marriages that were solemnised by religious rites and 16 629 (75,6%) by 'civil' rites. In comparison, the marriages that are eventually dissolved are mostly solemnised by civil rites, which also follows from the fact that most marriages are solemnised by 'civil' rites. A similar pattern was also found among all population groups, although the magnitude differs. Over 90% of divorces for the black African (91,2%) and the coloured (91,9%) population groups were solemnised by 'civil' rites, compared to 87,2% for Indians/Asians and 50,5% for the white population groups.

3.4 Number of times married

Results presented in Table 14 on page 39 show that the 2012 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 about 10,0% 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 2012 were 42 years for men and 38 years for women, indicating that generally, men were older than women, with a difference of about four years. The pattern of median ages in 2012 by population group (see Figure 10 on page 20) shows that black African men and men from the white population group had the highest median age of 42 years at the time of divorce while women from the Indian/Asian population group had the lowest median age (36 years). The difference in the median ages at the time of divorce for men and women was higher among the black African population groups (four years) than among the other population groups.

Detailed information on age by population groups and sex is presented in Figure 11 on page 20 for males and in Figure 12 on page 21 for females as well as in Tables 15 and 16 on pages 40 and 41 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 young (less than 25 years old) and the old (65 years and older) divorcees. For men, the peak age group at divorce was 30 to 34 for Indian/Asian population group while the peak for the black African, white and coloured population groups was 40 to 44 (Figure 11). In the case of women, the peak age group was generally at age group 35 to 39 except for the Indian/Asians population group which peaked at 30 to 34 (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 17 on page 42 and Table 18 on page 43 show the number of divorces by duration of marriage for divorces granted in 2012 for men and women respectively. The largest number

[6 129 (27,9%)] of the divorces were for marriages that lasted between five and nine years. This group is followed by marriages that lasted less than five years [4 637 (21,1%)]. Thus, almost half (48,9%) of the 21 998 divorces in 2012 were marriages that lasted for less than 10 years. According to results given in Figure 13 on page 21, irrespective of the population group, the highest proportion of divorces occurred to couples who had married for five to nine years. Thus 33,3% of divorces from the black African; 27,2% from the coloured and 26,6% from the white population groups were marriages that lasted between five and ten years. For the white population an equally high proportion (25,5%) 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 2012, 12 083 (54,9%) of the 21 998 divorces had children younger than 18 years (see Table 19 on page 44). Apart from the mixed population group, the coloured and the white population groups had the highest (64,4%) and the lowest (48,0%) percentages respectively. As provided in Table 20 on page 44, the distribution of the number of children affected by divorce shows that 35,5% were from the black African population group; 28,2% from the white population group and 22,0% from the coloured population group. There were 19 713 children affected by divorce indicating that, on average, there was one child per divorce.

4. Summary and concluding remarks

This statistical release provided information on civil and customary marriages, civil unions and divorces for 2012, 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 Correctional Services (DOJCS). The information on marriages and divorces is important for understanding the formation and dissolution of marriage relationships.

In total, 161 112 civil marriages were registered in South Africa in 2012, most of which were solemnised by DHA marriage officers. The highest number of civil marriages was registered in Gauteng, followed by KwaZulu-Natal and Western Cape, and the lowest was registered in Northern Cape. The majority of civil marriages in 2012 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 4 555 in 2012, which declined from a total of 5 084 recorded in 2011. 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. Less than one thousand (987) civil unions were registered in South Africa in 2012, most of which were registered in Gauteng and Western Cape, and lowest in North West. Spouses recorded as spouse1 were usually older than those recorded as spouse2.

With regard to divorces, the data from the 51 out of the 63 courts that deal with divorce showed that 21 998 divorces were granted in South Africa in 2012. Starting from 2007 to 2012, the data showed higher proportions of divorces from the black African population group than the white population group to the annual total divorces. The 2012 divorces were mainly from people who had married for the first time. More women than men initiated the divorce. Men generally divorced at a later age than women. About 19 713 children aged less than 18 years were affected by divorces that took place in 2012.

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 in order to reduce the data contained in the *unspecified* category of a number of variables for both the marriages and divorces data. Continuous interaction between Stats SA, DHA and DOJCD regarding feedback on data acquisition, processing and the production of the marriages and divorces statistics will contribute to improvement of the quality of data and the statistics produced from them.

Figure 1 – Number of civil marriages by month of solemnisation, 2008 – 2012

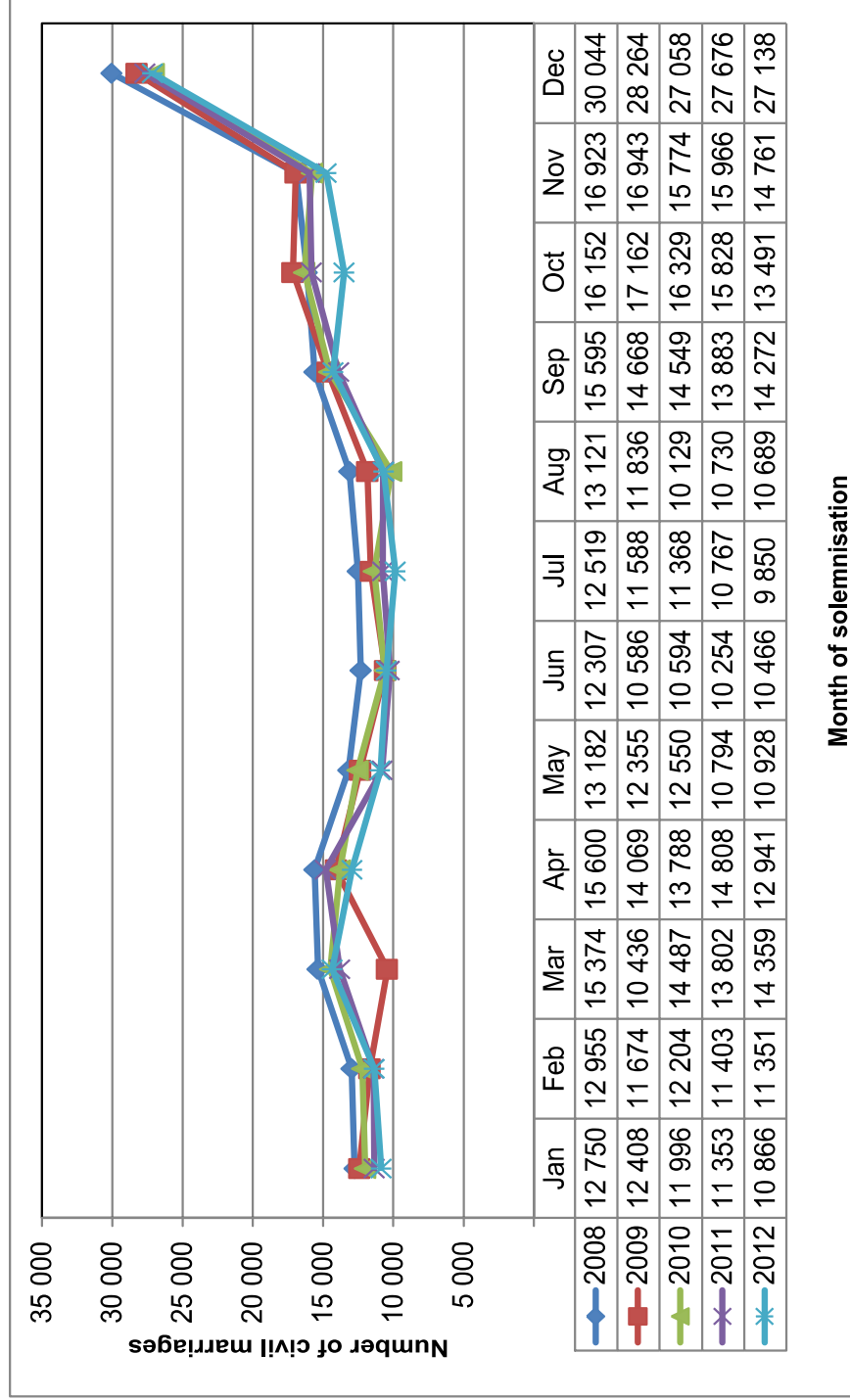


Figure 2 – Number of civil marriages for bachelors and spinsters by age group, 2012

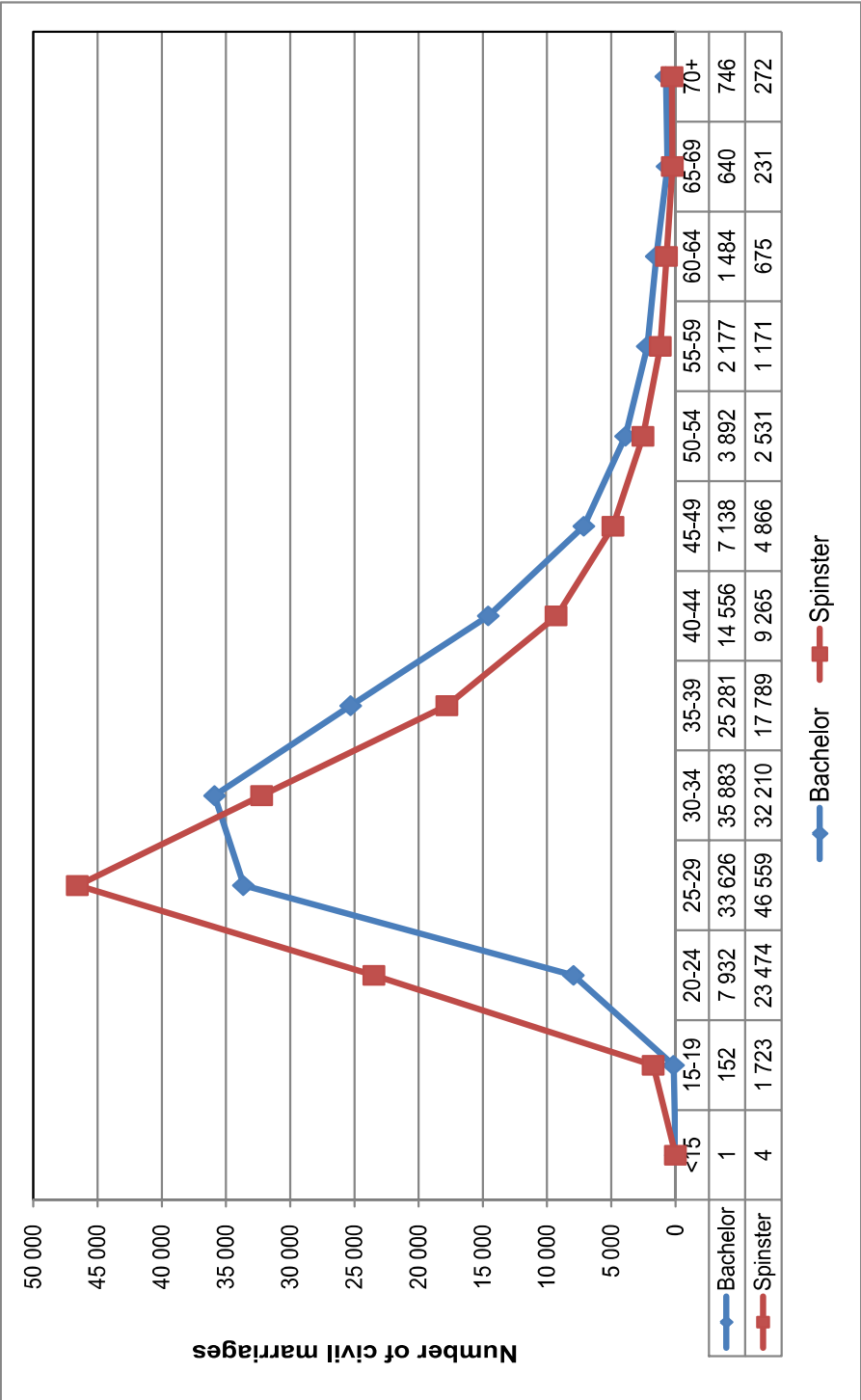


Figure 3a – Median ages of bridegrooms and brides at the time of civil marriage, 2008 – 2012

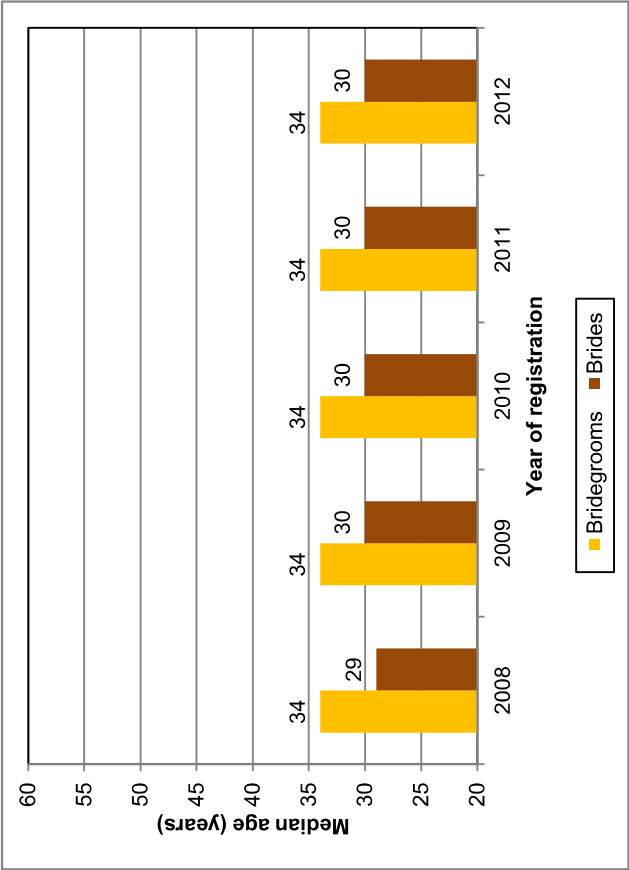


Figure 3b – Median ages of bachelors and spinsters at the time of civil marriage, 2008 – 2012

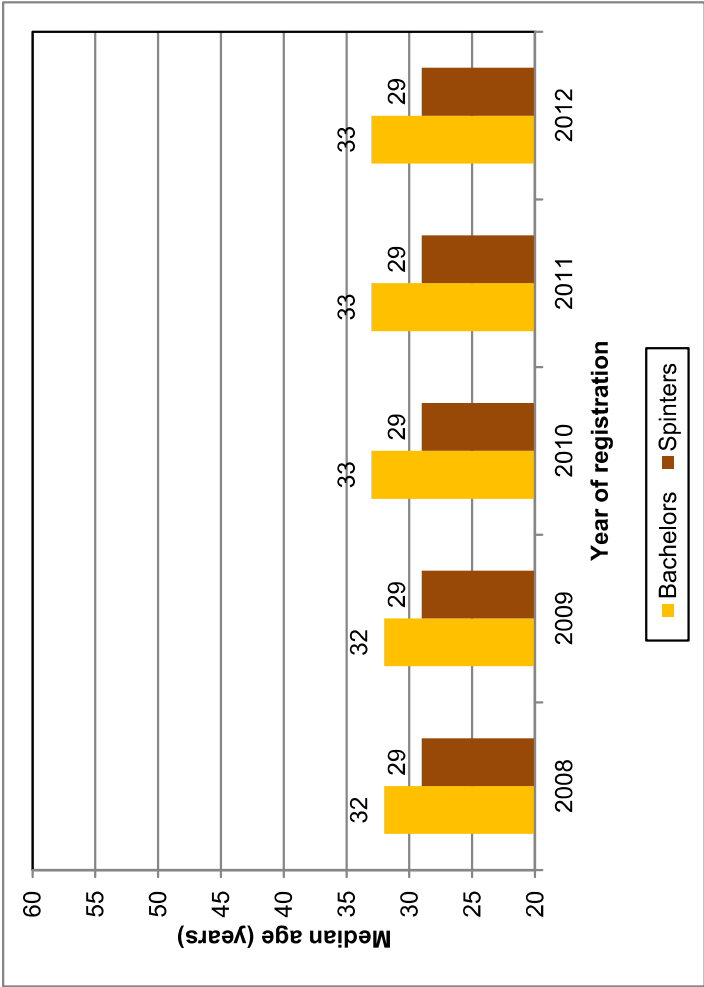


Figure 3c – Median ages of widowers and widows at the time of civil marriage, 2008 – 2012

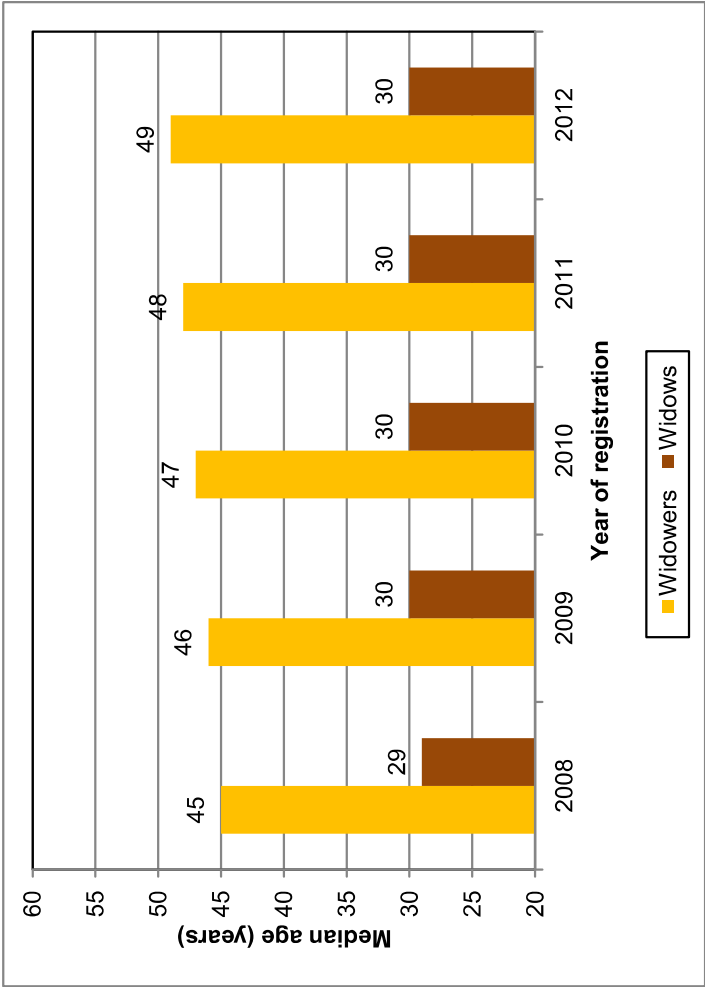


Figure 3d – Median ages of male and female divorcees at the time of civil marriage, 2008 – 2012

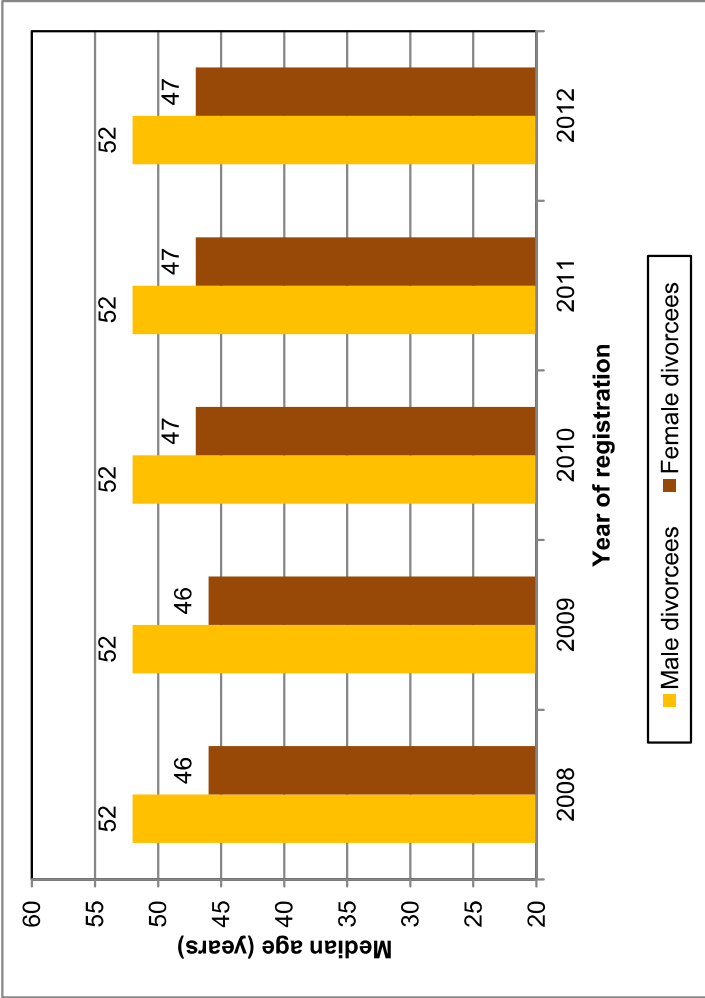
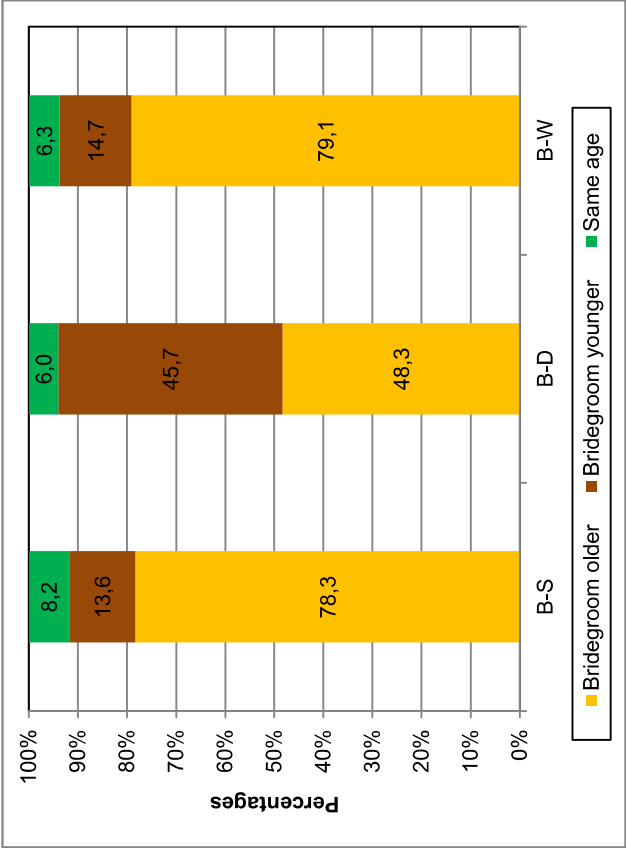
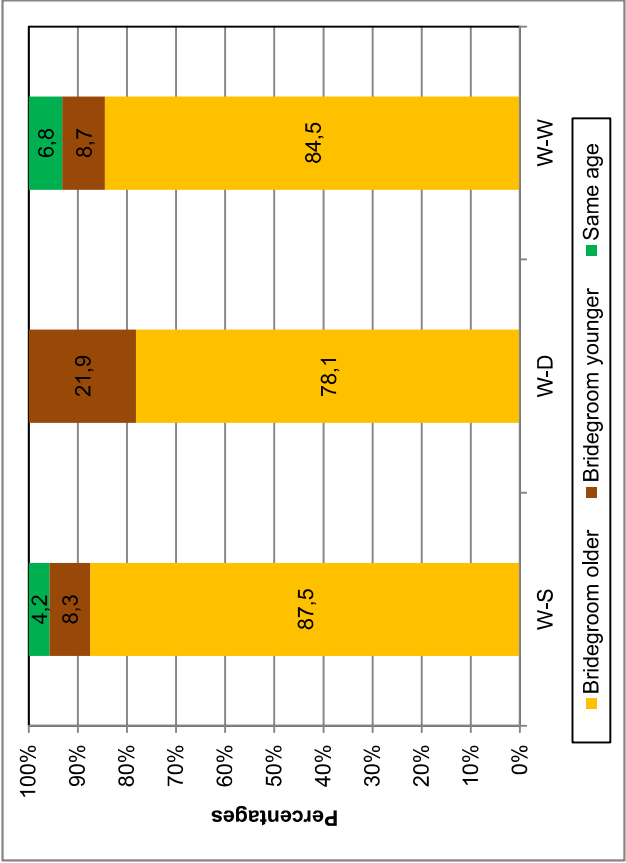


Figure 4a – Percentage distribution of civil marriages by age differences between spouses and marital status at the time of marriage (bachelors), 2012



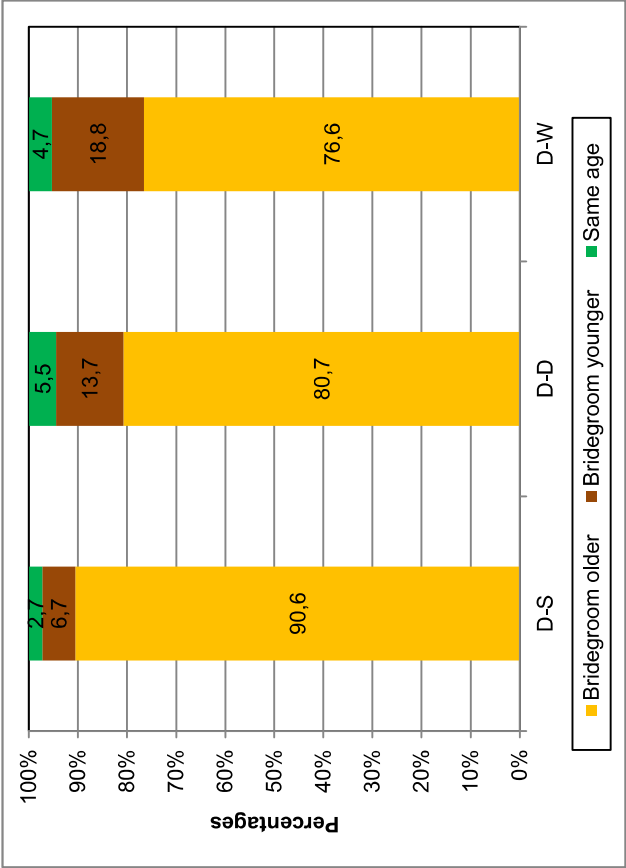
B – S = Bachelor to Spinster
B – D = Bachelor to Divorcee
B – W = Bachelor to Widow

Figure 4b – Percentage distribution of civil marriages by age differences between spouses and marital status at the time of marriage (widowers), 2012



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), 2012



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, 2008 – 2012

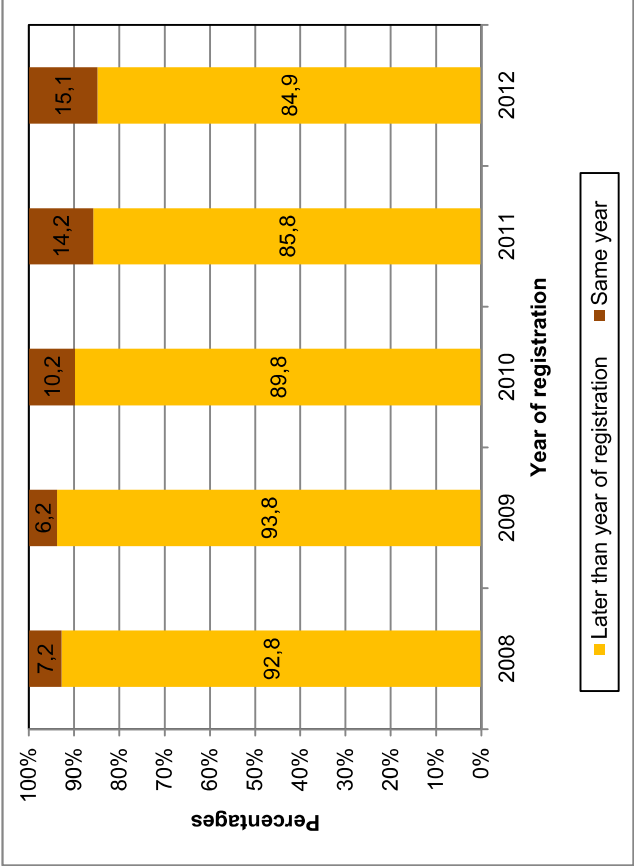


Figure 6 – Median ages of bridegrooms and brides at the time of customary marriage, 2008 – 2012

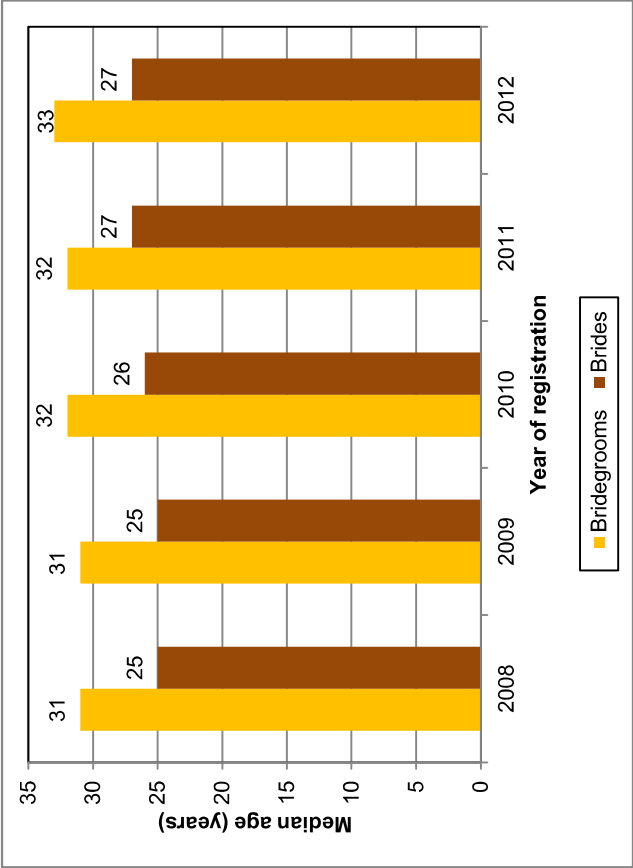


Figure 7 – Percentage distribution of customary marriages by age differences between spouses at the time of marriage, 2008 – 2012

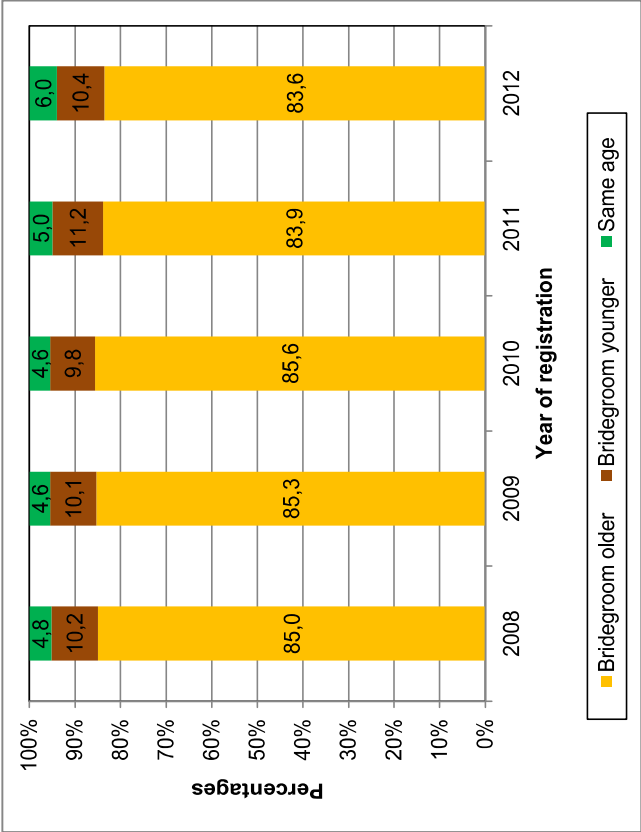


Figure 8 – Median ages of spouses in civil unions, 2008 – 2012

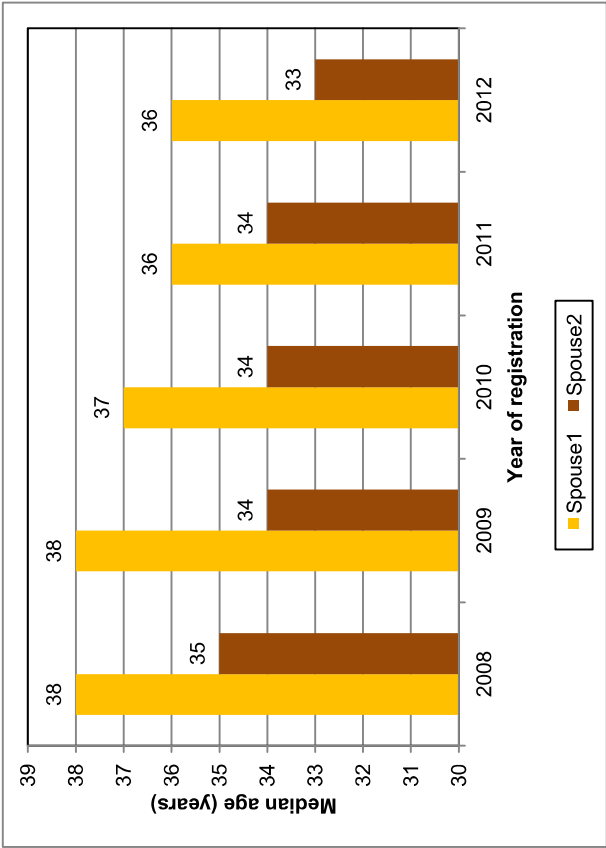


Figure 9 – Percentage distribution of civil unions by age differences between spouses at the time of union, 2008 – 2012

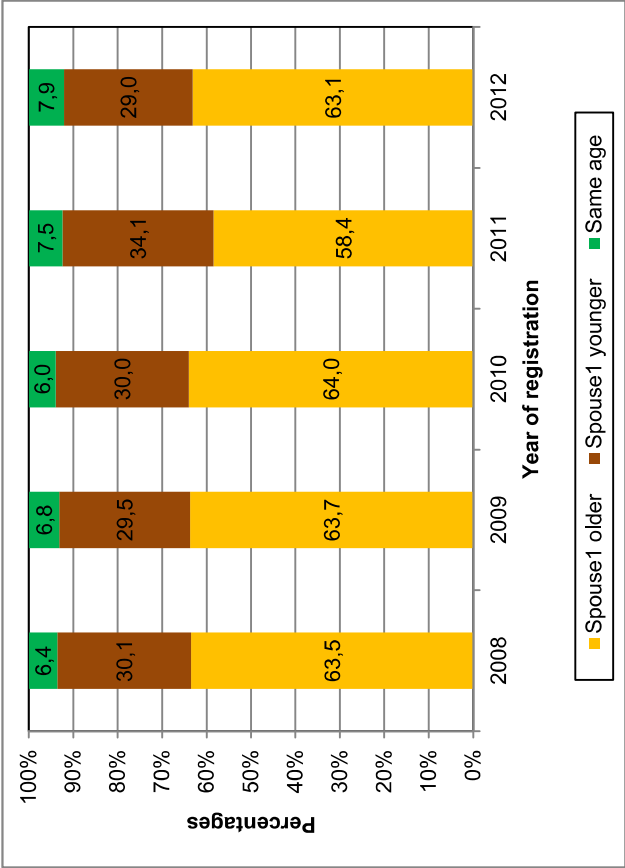


Figure 10 – Median ages of divorcees by sex and population group, 2012

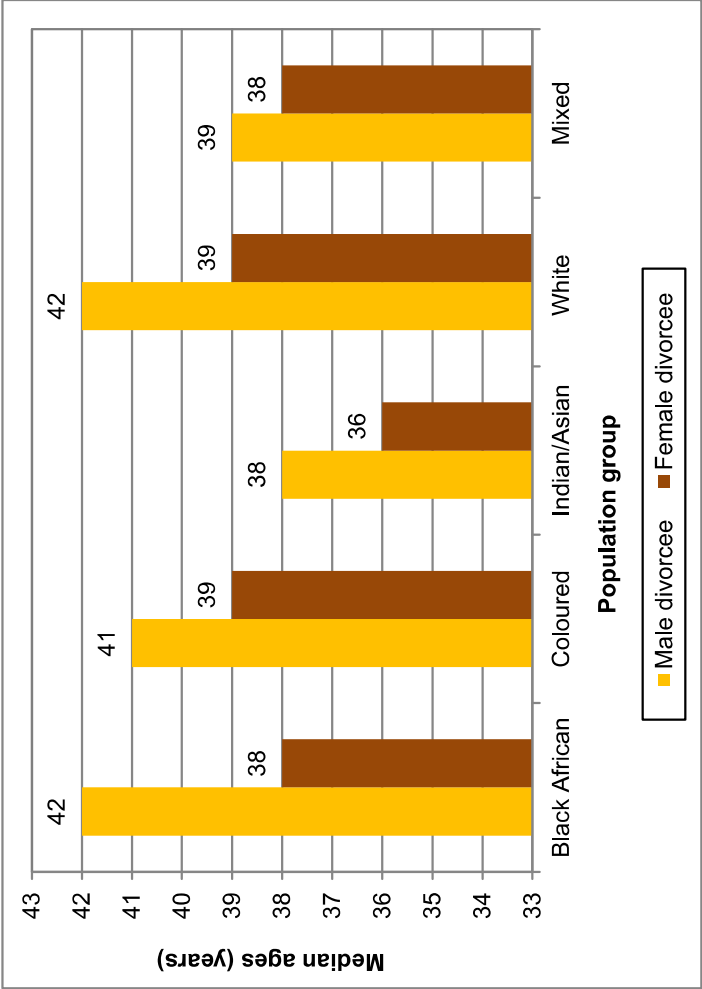


Figure 11 – Proportion of divorcees by age group and population group (males), 2012

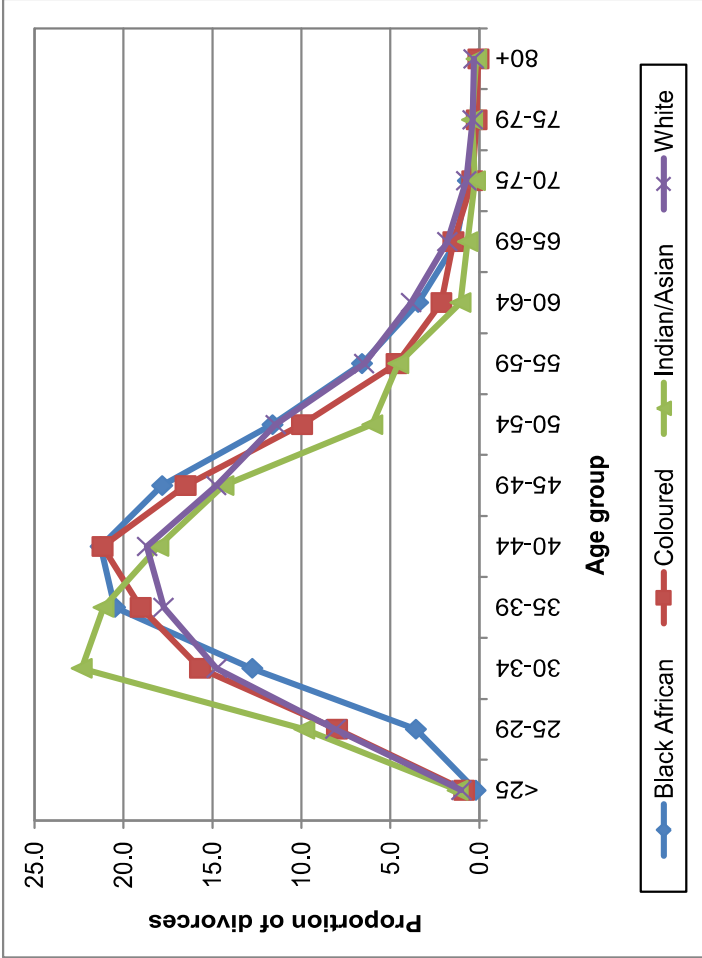


Figure 12 – Proportion of divorcees by age group and population group (females), 2012

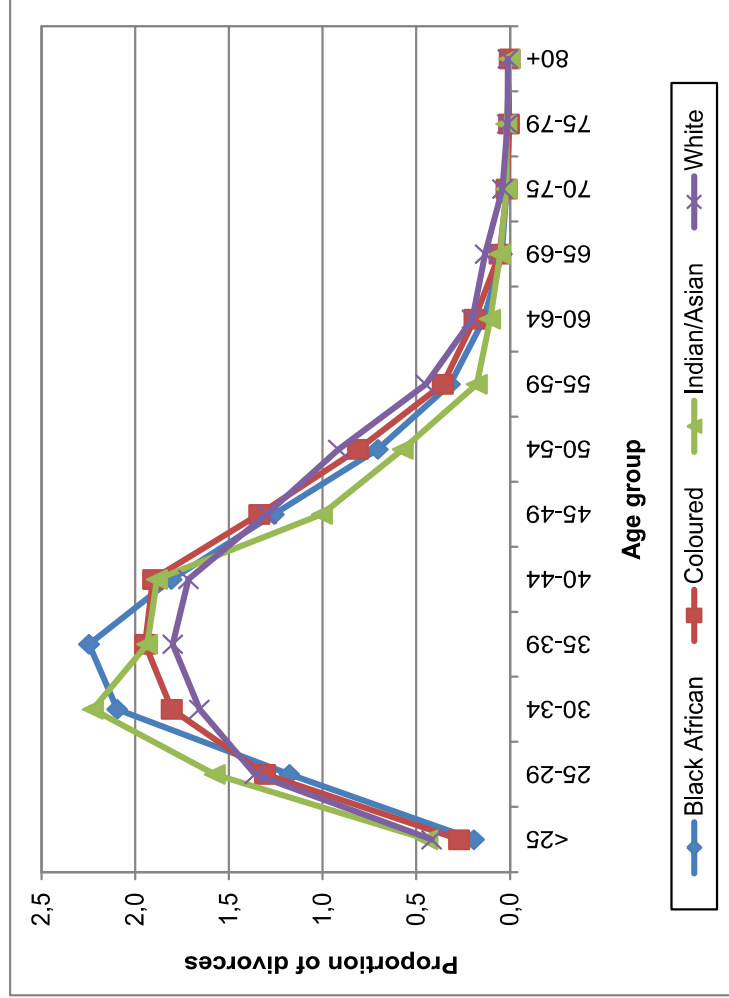


Figure 13 – Proportion of divorcees by duration of marriage and population group, 2012

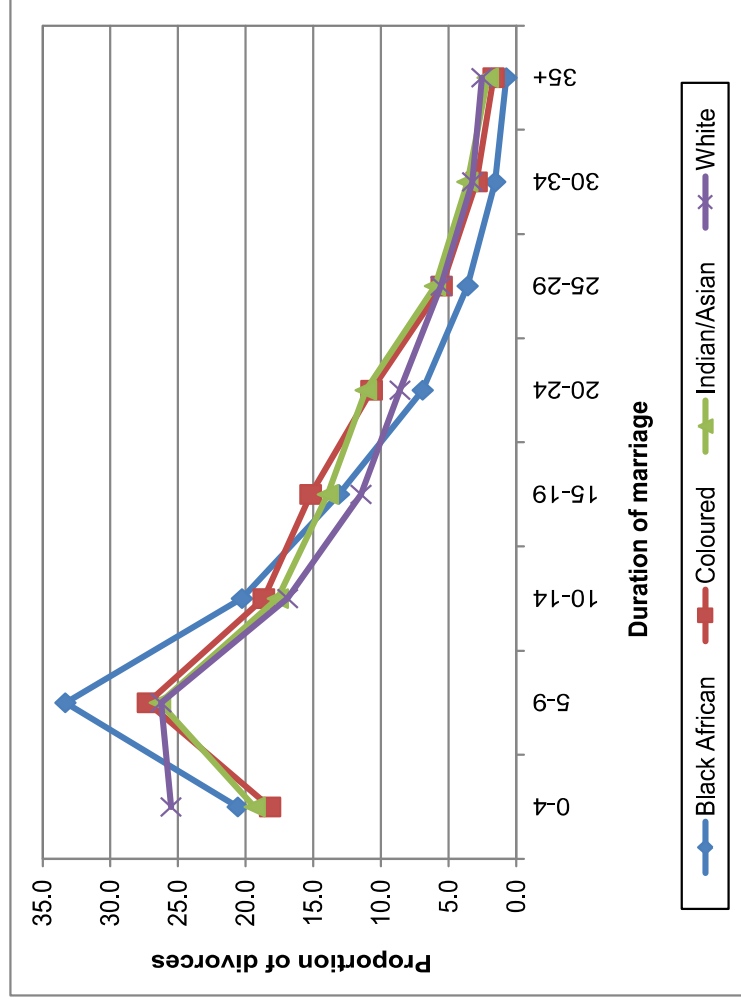


Table 1 – Number of registered civil marriages in South Africa, 2002 – 2012

Year of registration	Number of civil marriages
2002	177 202
2003	178 689
2004	176 521
2005	180 657
2006	184 860
2007	183 030
2008	186 522
2009	171 989
2010	170 826
2011	167 264
2012	161 112

Table 2 – Number of civil marriages by way of solemnisation and province of marriage registration, 2012

Province of registration	Way of Solemnisation				%			
	Total	DHA	Religious	Unspecified	Total	DHA	Religious	Unspecified
Total	161 112	82 975	56 099	22 038	100,0	51,5	34,8	13,7
Western Cape	26 632	11 732	11 778	3 122	100,0	44,1	44,2	11,7
Eastern Cape	18 311	8 340	6 954	3 017	100,0	45,5	38,0	16,5
Northern Cape	5 044	3 187	1 563	294	100,0	63,2	31,0	5,8
Free State	9 830	6 166	3 346	318	100,0	62,7	34,1	3,2
KwaZulu-Natal	27 231	13 399	10 360	3 472	100,0	49,2	38,0	12,8
North West	10 609	8 069	2 370	170	100,0	76,1	22,3	1,6
Gauteng	40 287	20 061	13 035	7 191	100,0	49,8	32,4	17,8
Mpumalanga	6 881	2 463	2 505	1 913	100,0	35,8	36,4	27,8
Limpopo	11 597	7 153	2 633	1 811	100,0	61,7	22,7	15,3
Outside RSA	210	189	20	1	100,0	90,0	9,5	0,5
Unspecified	4 480	2 216	1 535	729	100,0	49,5	34,3	16,2

Table 3 – Number of civil marriages for bridegrooms and brides by marital status at time of marriage and province of marriage registration, 2012

Province of registration	Bridegrooms					Bride				
	Total	Bachelor	Divorcee	Widower	Unspecified	Total	Spinster	Divorcee	Widow	Unspecified
Total	161 112	133 509	5 363	2 144	20 096	161 112	140 771	3 621	1 664	15 056
Western Cape	26 632	21 611	824	57	4 140	26 632	22 724	705	38	3 165
Eastern Cape	18 311	15 540	645	224	1 902	18 311	16 537	392	122	1 260
Northern Cape	5 044	4 254	200	49	541	5 044	4 498	145	29	372
Free State	9 830	8 231	394	153	1 052	9 830	8 645	270	179	736
KwaZulu-Natal	27 231	23 275	949	535	2 472	27 231	24 555	443	395	1 838
North West	10 609	8 883	354	94	1 278	10 609	9 399	237	73	900
Gauteng	40 287	32 298	1 238	590	6 161	40 287	33 827	931	518	5 011
Mpumalanga	6 881	5 588	261	146	886	6 881	5 907	199	98	677
Limpopo	11 597	9 861	364	210	1 162	11 597	10 532	206	116	743
Outside RSA	210	169	2	-	39	210	172	2	-	36
Unspecified	4 480	3 799	132	86	463	4 480	3 975	91	96	318

Table 4 – Number of civil marriages by marital status of bridegroom and age differences between spouses at the time of marriage, 2012

Age difference	Grand Total	Bachelor to				Divorcee to					
		Total	Spinster	Divorcee	Widow	Unspecified	Total	Spinster	Divorcee	Widow	Unspecified
Total	161 112	133 509	125 815	1 308	1 214	5 172	5 363	3 223	867	64	1 209
Bridegroom older	125 085	102 437	98 464	632	960	2 381	4 636	2 919	700	49	968
Bridegroom younger	23 855	20 204	17 054	598	178	2 374	517	217	119	12	169
Same Age	12 172	10 868	10 297	78	76	417	210	87	48	3	72

Age difference	Widower to				Unspecified to					
	Total	Spinster	Divorcee	Widow	Unspecified	Total	Spinster	Divorcee	Widow	Unspecified
Total	2 144	1 744	32	322	46	20 096	9 989	1 414	64	8 629
Bridegroom older	1 860	1 526	25	272	37	16 152	8 952	952	44	6 204
Bridegroom younger	185	145	7	28	5	2 949	730	374	11	1 834
Same Age	99	73	-	22	4	995	307	88	9	591

Table 5 – Number of marriages by marital status at the time of marriage and ages of bridegrooms and brides, 2012

Age	Bridegrooms					Brides				
	Total	Bachelor	Divorcee	Widower	Unspecified	Total	Spinster	Divorcee	Widow	Unspecified
Total	161 112	133 509	5 363	2 144	20 096	161 112	140 771	3 621	1 664	15 056
<18	9	7	1	-	1	206	193	-	10	3
18	27	26	-	1	-	459	445	2	9	3
19	125	121	-	4	-	1 133	1 090	1	37	5
18-19	152	147	-	5	-	1 592	1 535	3	46	8
20	332	325	-	7	-	1 979	1 933	4	34	8
21	748	741	-	7	-	3 243	3 165	2	63	13
22	1 343	1 311	-	29	3	4 683	4 564	4	89	26
23	2 243	2 211	2	23	7	6 241	6 109	6	89	37
24	3 396	3 344	2	37	13	7 869	7 703	7	88	71
20-24	8 062	7 932	4	103	23	24 015	23 474	23	363	155
25	4 743	4 641	5	67	30	8 864	8 658	8	91	107
26	6 071	5 957	3	69	42	9 883	9 634	15	87	147
27	7 394	7 255	3	62	74	10 154	9 843	30	66	215
28	7 957	7 769	11	64	113	9 752	9 385	24	68	275
29	8 260	8 004	9	55	192	9 497	9 039	41	63	354
25-29	34 425	33 626	31	317	451	48 150	46 559	118	375	1 098
30	8 584	8 270	21	41	252	8 840	8 356	41	48	395
31	7 946	7 608	21	43	274	7 593	7 079	55	44	415
32	7 817	7 404	27	45	341	6 981	6 390	54	26	511
33	7 060	6 586	29	36	409	6 090	5 453	70	18	549
34	6 573	6 015	46	30	482	5 580	4 932	72	32	544
30-34	37 980	35 883	144	195	1 758	35 084	32 210	292	168	2 414

Table 5 – Number of marriages by marital status at the time of marriage and ages of bridegrooms and brides, 2012 (continued)

Age	Bridegrooms					Brides				
	Total	Bachelor	Divorcee	Widower	Unspecified	Total	Spinster	Divorcee	Widow	Unspecified
35	6 583	5 970	60	30	523	5 143	4 426	84	20	613
36	6 143	5 457	74	24	588	4 700	3 981	103	20	596
37	6 114	5 296	107	21	690	4 380	3 634	93	10	643
38	5 425	4 545	94	21	765	3 781	3 055	102	8	616
39	4 875	4 013	108	13	741	3 471	2 693	115	8	655
35-39	29 140	25 281	443	109	3 307	21 475	17 789	497	66	3 123
40	4 976	3 987	137	14	838	3 220	2 509	110	7	594
41	3 940	2 950	126	10	854	2 573	1 837	102	4	630
42	4 014	3 013	134	3	864	2 594	1 837	127	1	629
43	3 410	2 423	147	18	822	2 359	1 600	128	6	625
44	3 222	2 183	159	49	831	2 231	1 482	138	15	596
40-44	19 562	14 556	703	94	4 209	12 977	9 265	605	33	3 074
45	2 759	1 731	180	42	806	1 782	1 149	124	20	489
46	2 520	1 481	178	68	793	1 700	1 063	121	24	492
47	2 455	1 482	156	55	762	1 674	1 006	118	28	522
48	2 298	1 296	158	80	764	1 480	875	118	33	454
49	2 129	1 148	203	73	705	1 367	773	130	43	421
45-49	12 161	7 138	875	318	3 830	8 003	4 866	611	148	2 378
50	2 056	1 030	189	88	749	1 233	694	99	28	412
51	1 630	789	146	72	623	998	517	103	35	343
52	1 639	791	154	69	625	948	524	86	32	306
53	1 453	609	161	85	598	815	420	85	42	268
54	1 400	673	158	76	493	720	376	87	40	217
50-54	8 178	3 892	808	390	3 088	4 714	2 531	460	177	1 546

Table 5 – Number of marriages by marital status at the time of marriage and ages of bridegrooms and brides, 2012 (concluded)

Age	Bridegrooms					Brides				
	Total	Bachelor	Divorcee	Widower	Unspecified	Total	Spinster	Divorcee	Widow	Unspecified
55	1 165	521	140	55	449	631	319	84	31	197
56	1 067	478	130	63	396	566	278	86	42	160
57	1 001	411	144	66	380	441	207	67	32	135
58	875	388	139	41	307	400	193	63	30	114
59	830	379	135	50	266	375	174	61	24	116
55-59	4 938	2 177	688	275	1 798	2 413	1 171	361	159	722
60	866	407	141	71	247	443	256	68	30	89
61	621	271	110	28	212	251	119	45	11	76
62	672	323	123	38	188	240	112	58	15	55
63	578	253	116	32	177	212	110	46	10	46
64	489	230	105	25	129	185	78	42	10	55
60-64	3 226	1 484	595	194	953	1 331	675	259	76	321
65	475	209	120	30	116	178	68	51	12	47
66	333	135	83	21	94	110	47	30	9	24
67	280	98	73	19	90	110	41	39	4	26
68	262	110	63	19	70	95	35	34	6	20
69	212	88	77	6	41	93	40	25	3	25
65-69	1 562	640	416	95	411	586	231	179	34	142
70+	1 717	746	655	49	267	566	272	213	9	72

Table 6 – Number of registered customary marriages in South Africa, 2003 – 2012

Year of registration	Number of customary marriages
2003	17 283
2004	20 301
2005	19 252
2006	14 039
2007	20 259
2008	16 003
2009	13 506
2010	9 996
2011	5 084
2012	4 555

Table 7 – Number of customary marriages by ages of bridegrooms and brides at the time of marriage, 2012

Age	Bridegrooms	Brides
Total	4 555	4 555
<18	13	118
18	12	144
19	34	192
18-19	46	336
20	72	232
21	105	243
22	141	227
23	180	268
24	182	245
20-24	680	1215
25	186	234
26	202	220
27	207	233
28	191	190
29	167	164
25-29	953	1041
30	176	202
31	177	144
32	177	136
33	167	123
34	151	136
30-34	848	741

Table 7 – Number of customary marriages by ages of bridegrooms and brides at the time of marriage, 2012 (continued)

Age	Bridegrooms	Brides
35	166	111
36	134	106
37	118	85
38	128	82
39	122	75
35-39	668	459
40	116	76
41	98	58
42	99	57
43	81	48
44	90	47
40-44	484	286
45	73	42
46	61	46
47	74	33
48	59	38
49	51	34
45-49	318	193
50	63	21
51	39	15
52	34	13
53	40	12
54	36	11
50-54	212	72

Table 7 – Number of customary marriages by ages of bridegrooms and brides at the time of marriage, 2012 (concluded)

Age	Bridegrooms	Brides
55	36	10
56	37	12
57	25	6
58	25	9
59	28	5
55-59	151	42
60	25	5
61	14	6
62	23	5
63	10	4
64	12	2
60-64	84	22
65	15	3
66	6	1
67	11	2
68	10	1
69	8	3
65-64	50	10
70+	45	15
Unspecified	3	5

Table 8 – Number of civil unions registered in South Africa by province of registration, 2007–2012

Province of registration	Number						%					
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Grand Total	80	732	760	888	867	987	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
Western Cape	16	191	227	261	238	253	20,0	26,1	29,9	29,4	27,5	25,6
Eastern Cape	-	41	30	24	29	38	0,0	5,6	3,9	2,7	3,3	3,9
Northern Cape	1	11	43	75	93	106	1,3	1,5	5,7	8,4	10,7	10,7
Free State	1	23	20	26	28	27	1,3	3,1	2,6	2,9	3,2	2,7
KwaZulu-Natal	8	74	87	79	63	91	10,0	10,1	11,4	8,9	7,3	9,2
North West	2	6	5	9	3	11	2,5	0,8	0,7	1,0	0,3	1,1
Gauteng	49	362	324	391	381	425	61,3	49,5	42,6	44,0	43,9	43,1
Mpumalanga	3	7	11	11	16	12	3,8	1,0	1,4	1,2	1,8	1,2
Limpopo	-	15	10	10	7	13	0,0	2,0	1,3	1,1	0,8	1,3
Outside RSA	-	2	3	2	9	11	0,0	0,3	0,4	0,2	1,0	1,1

Table 9 – Number of civil unions by ages of spouses1 and spouses2 at the time of civil union, 2012

Age	Spouses1	Spouses2
Total	987	987
17	-	1
18	-	1
19	2	4
17-19	2	6
20	6	13
21	2	21
22	12	29
23	19	26
24	35	34
20-24	74	123
25	25	39
26	30	39
27	27	40
28	41	43
29	32	50
25-29	155	211
30	41	52
31	42	45
32	27	52
33	56	38
34	46	33
30-34	212	220

Table 9 – Number of civil unions by ages of spouses1 and spouses2 at the time of civil union, 2012 (continued)

Age	Spouses1	Spouses2
35	45	32
36	26	40
37	39	34
38	49	29
39	30	27
35-39	189	162
40	38	30
41	23	19
42	14	23
43	25	23
44	31	18
40-44	131	113
45	27	18
46	27	19
47	19	18
48	18	11
49	12	8
45-49	103	74
50	18	15
51	8	7
52	14	6
53	9	8
54	8	4
50-54	57	40

Table 9 – Number of civil unions by ages of spouses1 and spouses2 at the time of civil union, 2012 (concluded)

Age	Spouses1	Spouses2
55	10	2
56	3	4
57	8	4
58	5	2
59	4	2
55-59	30	14
60	6	3
61	6	3
62	4	-
63	2	3
64	2	1
60-64	20	10
65	3	1
66	-	4
67	1	1
68	1	1
69	2	-
65-69	7	7
70+	7	7

Table 10 – Number of published divorces in South Africa by population group, 2002 – 2012

Year	Total	Numbers						%						
		Black African	Coloured	Indian/ Asian	White	Mixed	Unspecified	Total %	Black African	Coloured	Indian/ Asian	White	Mixed	Unspecified
2002	31 370	7 050	3 581	1 581	14 171	365	4 678	100,0	22,5	11,4	4,9	45,2	1,2	14,9
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

Table 13 – Number of divorces by population group and way of solemnisation of the marriage, 2012

Population group	Number				%		
	Total	Religious	DHA	Unspecified	Total	Religious	Unspecified
Total	21 998	4 432	16 629	937	100,0	20,1	4,3
Black African	7 311	359	6 669	283	100,0	4,9	3,9
Coloured	3 967	205	3 644	118	100,0	5,2	2,9
Indian/Asian	1 036	105	903	28	100,0	10,1	2,7
White	7 238	3 333	3 658	247	100,0	46,1	3,4
Mixed	22	5	15	2	100,0	22,7	9,1
Unspecified	2 424	425	1 740	259	100,0	17,5	10,7

Table 14 – Number of divorces by number of times married at the time of divorce, 2012

Number of times married	Number		%	
	Husbands	Wives	Husbands	Wives
Total	21 998	21 998	100,0	100,0
Once	17 457	17 623	79,4	80,1
Twice	2 501	2 194	11,4	10,0
Three or more times	454	390	2,1	1,8
Unspecified	1 586	1 791	7,2	8,1

Table 15 – Number of divorces by age group and population group (male divorcees), 2012

Age group	Population group						
	Total	Black African	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White	Mixed	Unspecified
Total	21 998	7 679	4 186	1 263	7 444	139	1 287
<25	151	15	35	15	74	3	9
25-29	1 396	269	331	121	595	15	65
30-34	3 153	964	649	275	1 085	27	153
35-39	4 141	1 547	787	260	1 305	27	215
40-44	4 340	1 608	876	222	1 373	25	236
45-49	3 499	1 347	683	177	1 087	12	193
50-54	2 350	878	412	74	841	5	140
55-59	1 322	498	192	56	476	3	97
60-64	683	259	88	13	282	6	35
65-69	314	97	60	8	132	1	16
70-74	131	49	16	3	54	1	8
75-79	58	18	6	5	27	-	2
80+	35	7	2	2	23	-	1
Unspecified	425	123	49	32	90	14	117

Table 16 – Number of divorces by age group and population group (female divorcees), 2012

Age group	Total	Black African	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White	Mixed	Unspecified
Total	21 998	7 661	4 359	1 150	7 377	49	1 402
<25	644	145	116	50	304	2	27
25-29	2 769	889	562	179	990	7	142
30-34	4 032	1 585	777	253	1 205	9	203
35-39	4 338	1 698	838	220	1 309	10	263
40-44	3 874	1 365	820	214	1 248	9	218
45-49	2 784	952	576	114	994	2	196
50-54	1 752	533	349	65	666	5	134
55-59	802	241	154	20	327	4	56
60-64	366	105	81	12	146	-	22
65-69	167	32	24	6	96	-	9
70-74	53	13	7	2	28	-	3
75-79	15	2	2	2	9	-	-
80+	8	1	-	-	7	-	-
Unspecified	394	100	53	13	98	1	129

Table 17 – Number of divorces by duration of marriage and age group (male divorcees), 2012

Age group	Duration of marriage									
	Total	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35+	Unspecified
Total	21 998	4 637	6 129	3 905	2 703	1 765	989	534	341	995
<25	151	131	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	10
25-29	1 396	942	385	11	1	-	-	-	-	57
30-34	3 153	1 203	1 509	292	11	-	-	1	-	137
35-39	4 141	863	1 647	1 150	326	15	1	-	-	139
40-44	4 340	558	1 099	1 152	968	363	8	-	-	192
45-49	3 499	368	626	624	673	718	301	9	1	179
50-54	2 350	225	341	322	368	399	405	182	7	101
55-59	1 322	130	193	149	165	141	166	222	92	64
60-64	683	73	92	76	77	60	64	80	117	44
65-69	314	24	58	39	38	22	20	15	79	19
70-74	131	14	26	22	15	8	6	9	24	7
75-79	58	12	16	5	5	4	4	3	5	4
80+	35	8	5	2	5	4	-	3	5	3
Unspecified	425	86	122	61	51	31	14	10	11	39

Table 18 – Number of divorces by duration of marriage and age group (female divorcees), 2012

Age group	Duration of marriage									
	Total	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35	Unspecified
Total	21 998	4 637	6 129	3 905	2 703	1 765	989	534	341	995
<25	644	526	86	3	1	-	-	-	-	28
25-29	2 769	1 424	1 143	95	1	-	-	-	-	106
30-34	4 032	984	1 988	809	84	2	-	1	-	164
35-39	4 338	629	1 318	1 365	740	100	2	-	-	184
40-44	3 874	434	706	858	969	649	74	1	-	183
45-49	2 784	276	400	371	480	605	461	62	1	128
50-54	1 752	172	229	191	229	246	302	265	37	81
55-59	802	68	100	78	84	80	85	141	118	48
60-64	366	33	45	40	32	35	32	34	94	21
65-69	167	15	19	19	21	11	12	10	58	2
70-74	53	6	2	6	6	7	-	2	19	5
75-79	15	4	2	2	2	2	1	-	2	-
80+	8	2	-	-	1	-	1	2	1	1
Unspecified	394	64	91	68	53	28	19	16	11	44

Table 19 – Number of divorces with and without children (aged below 18 years) by population group, 2012

Population group	Number				%		
	Total	Divorces with children	Divorces without children	Unspecified	Total	Divorces with children	Divorces without children
Total	21 998	12 083	9 911	4	100,00	54,9	45,1
African	7 311	4 283	3 028	-	100,00	58,6	41,4
Coloured	3 967	2 555	1 412	-	100,00	64,4	35,6
Indian/Asian	1 036	570	466	-	100,00	55,0	45,0
White	7 238	3 473	3 762	3	100,00	48,0	52,0
Mixed	22	9	13	-	100,00	40,9	59,1
Unspecified	2 424	1 193	1 230	1	100,00	49,2	50,7
							0,0
							0,0
							0,0
							0,0
							0,0
							0,0
							0,0
							0,0

Table 20 – Number and percentage distribution of children (aged below 18 years) affected by divorce, 2012

Population group	Total number of children involved	%
Total	19 713	100,0
African	6 993	35,5
Coloured	4 347	22,0
Indian/Asian	872	4,4
White	5 550	28,2
Mixed	17	0,1
Unspecified	1 934	9,8

EXPLANATORY NOTES

1. Purpose of the statistical release

The purpose of the statistical release is to provide information on the volume and some characteristics of registered marriages and unions as well as divorces that were granted by the regional courts. The marriages and unions were registered by the Department of Home Affairs whereas the divorces were granted by the Department of Justice and Correctional Services.

2. Scope and coverage

The data in this release cover civil marriages, customary marriages and civil unions that were registered in 2012. Data on divorces were collected from the regional courts that deal with divorce matters using the Divorce Form (Divorce Form 07-04) prepared by Stats SA, DOJCS and other main stakeholders. The forms were regularly completed as divorces were granted. The completed forms were compiled and mailed by post or courier to Stats SA's head office. Although marriages and unions; and the divorces were events that took place in 2012, the data sets are not linked. All the data sets were processed, analysed and presented separately.

3. Data

Stats SA downloaded the data on civil marriages, customary marriages and civil unions from the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) through State Information Technology Agency (SITA). The data were processed and analysed for publication. By the end of September 2014, Stats SA had received 21 998 completed divorce forms for 2012 from 51 out of the 63 regional courts. These completed forms were sorted and captured by month and court name. Captured data were quality assured and analysed for publication. Sorted and captured forms are well-labelled and kept in a dedicated store room for divorce forms.

4. Limitations

The release focuses on the demographic characteristics of the married and divorced persons. The information does not cover other relevant issues such as the causes and impact of divorce.

5. Definitions of terms

Civil marriages: is a marriage that is registered according to the Marriage Act, 1961 (Act No. 25 of 1961). In the release the term 'civil' is also used to differentiate marriages that were solemnised by licensed non-religious marriage officer from marriages that were solemnised by religious marriage officers.

Customary marriage: is a marriage that is 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).

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, 2012

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

© Statistics South Africa, 2014

Users may apply or process this data, provided Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) is acknowledged as the original source of the data; that it is specified that the application and/or analysis is the result of the user's independent processing of the data; and that neither the basic data nor any reprocessed version or application thereof may be sold or offered for sale in any form whatsoever without prior permission from Stats SA.

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

This publication is available on the Internet at www.statssa.gov.za

Stats SA products

A complete set of Stats SA publications is available at the Stats SA Library and the following libraries:

National Library of South Africa, Pretoria Division
National Library of South Africa, Cape Town Division
Natal Society Library, Pietermaritzburg
Library of Parliament, Cape Town
Bloemfontein Public Library
Johannesburg Public Library
Eastern Cape Library Services, King William's Town
Central Regional Library, Polokwane
Central Reference Library, Mbombela
Central Reference Collection, Kimberley
Central Reference Library, Mmabatho

Stats SA also provides a subscription service.

Enquiries:

Printing and distribution

Tel: (012) 310 8251
Fax: (012) 321 7381

User Information service

(012) 310 8600
(012) 310 8500 / 8495

Produced by Stats SA