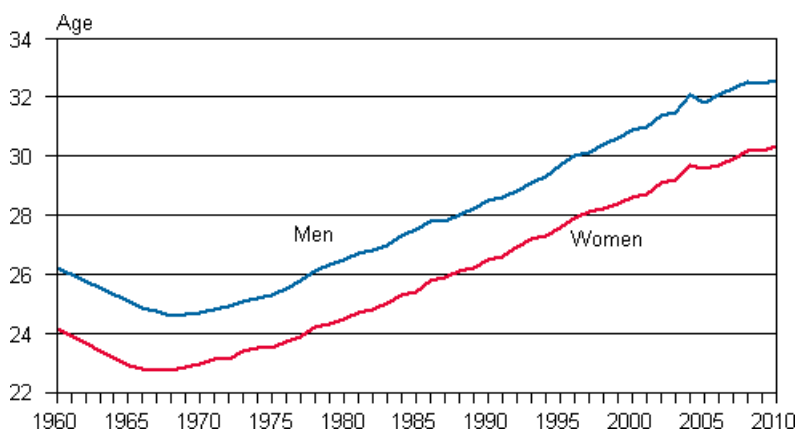


# Changes in marital status 2010

## Marriages are entered into at ever later age

According to Statistics Finland's data on population changes, women's average age at the time of entering first marriage was 30.3 years and men's 32.6 years in 2010. Year by year, first marriages are entered into at ever later age. In good four decades, women's average age at the time of entering first marriage has risen by around seven years and men's by some eight years.

### Average age at the time of entering first marriage by gender 1960–2010



In 2010, the number of contracted marriages remained almost unchanged from the previous year. A total of 29,952 marriages were entered into, which is 116 more than in the year before. The share of first marriages among all marriages has remained at 77 per cent throughout the 2000s.

The share of spouses born abroad has gone up in the past couple of decades. In 2010, eight per cent of the brides of men born in Finland who entered into marriage were born abroad, whereas in the early 1990s their share was only one per cent. Respectively, seven per cent of the grooms of women born in Finland were born abroad, but in the early 1990s also only one per cent.

Nearly the same number of divorces were granted in 2010 as in the previous year. Altogether 13,619 marriages ended in divorce, which is 52 more than one year previously. The number of divorces has been rising slightly since 2007. However, the increase has been so minor that the divorce rate has remained unchanged.

Seventy per cent of the marriages that ended in divorce in 2010 were first marriages for both spouses. In 1990, the corresponding share was still 80 per cent.

In 2010, the number of registered same-sex partnerships was 322. Of them, 124 were male couples and 198 female couples. In 2009, a total of 246 same-sex partnerships were registered. A total of 64 registered same-sex partnerships ended in divorce. Of them, 22 were of male couples and 42 of female couples. In 2009, a total of 53 registered same-sex partnerships ended in divorce.

### Changes in marital status and mean age of men and women at first marriage in 2001–2010

	Year									
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Contracted marriages	24 830	26 969	25 815	29 342	29 283	28 236	29 497	31 014	29 836	29 952
Divorces	13 568	13 336	13 475	13 234	13 383	13 255	13 224	13 471	13 527	13 619
Woman's mean age at first marriage	28,7	29,1	29,2	29,7	29,6	29,7	29,9	30,2	30,2	30,3
Man's mean age at first marriage	31,0	31,3	31,5	32,1	31,8	32,1	32,3	32,5	32,5	32,6
Registered partnerships	.	446	190	186	200	191	213	249	246	322
Divorces from registered partnerships	.	2	6	15	31	30	67	45	53	64

# Contents

## Tables

### Appendix tables

Appendix table 1. Marriages and divorces 1965–2010.....	4
Appendix table 2. Marriages contracted by month 2000–2010.....	5

## Figures

### Appendix figures

Appendix figure 1. Average age of women by first marriage and first live birth 1982–2010.....	6
Appendix figure 2. Marriage rate by age 1990, 2000 and 2010.....	6
Appendix figure 3. Divorce rate by age 1980, 1990, 2000 and 2010.....	6
Appendix figure 4. Accumulated divorces by the end of 2010 from marriages entered into in different years.....	7
Quality description, changes in marital status.....	8

## Appendix tables

**Appendix table 1. Marriages and divorces 1965–2010**

Corrected on 15 August 2011. The correction is indicated in red. Was previously 4,954.

Year	Marriages	Divorces
1965	36,214	4,594
1966	38,252	4,856
1967	41,273	5,209
1968	40,251	5,416
1969	40,910	5,895
1970	40,730	6,044
1971	37,925	7,175
1972	35,467	8,254
1973	34,883	8,831
1974	34,533	10,019
1975	31,547	9,358
1976	32,004	10,125
1977	30,966	10,107
1978	29,760	10,369
1979	29,277	10,191
1980	29,388	9,464
1981	30,100	9,497
1982	30,459	9,705
1983	29,474	9,770
1984	28,550	9,652
1985	25,751	9,064
1986	25,820	9,742
1987	26,259	10,110
1988	25,933	12,146
1989	24,569	14,365
1990	24,997	13,127
1991	24,732	12,820
1992	23,560	12,949
1993	24,660	12,753
1994	24,898	13,751
1995	23,737	14,025
1996	24,464	13,795
1997	23,444	13,507
1998	24,023	13,848
1999	24,271	14,030
2000	26,150	13,913
2001	24,830	13,568
2002	26,969	13,336
2003	25,815	13,475
2004	29,342	13,234
2005	29,283	13,383
2006	28,236	13,255
2007	29,497	13,224
2008	31,014	13,471

**Corrected** on 15 August 2011. The correction is indicated in red. Was previously 4,954.

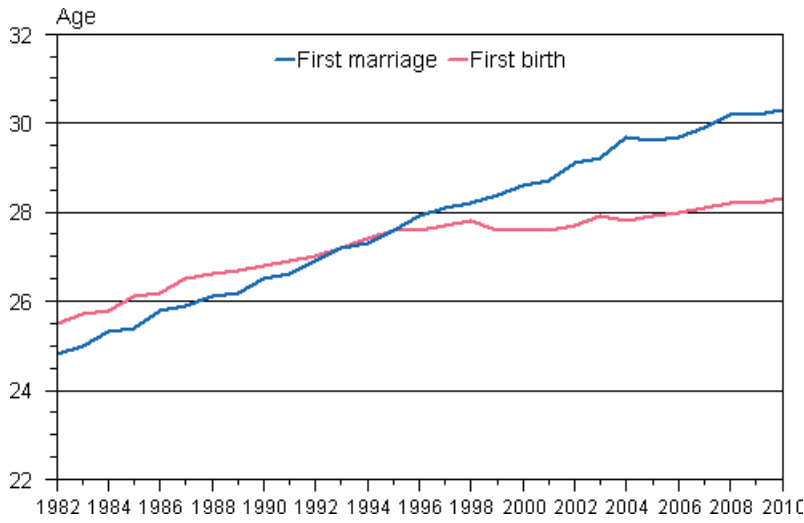
Year	Marriages	Divorces
2009	29,836	13,527
2010	29,952	13,619

**Appendix table 2. Marriages contracted by month 2000–2010**

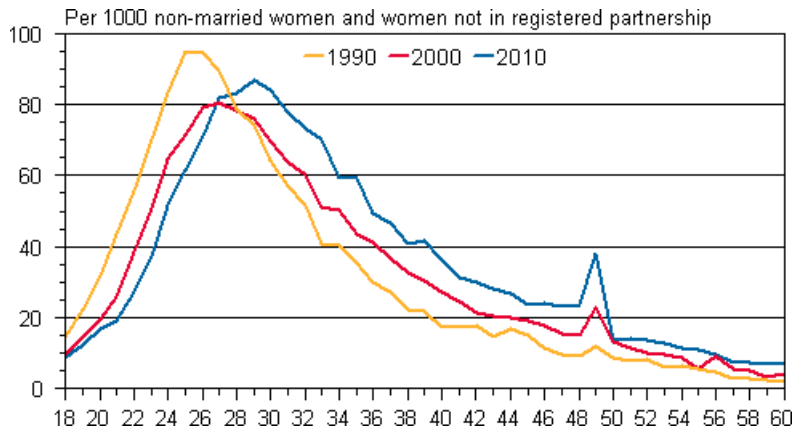
Month	Year										
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Total	26,150	24,830	26,969	25,815	29,342	29,283	28,236	29,497	31,014	29,836	29,952
January	1,162	1,146	802	904	1,162	1,351	1,192	1,163	1,095	1,348	1,395
February	1,334	1,131	1,743	1,305	1,609	1,538	1,609	1,616	2,091	1,867	1,694
March	1,247	1,245	1,388	1,427	1,346	1,471	1,441	1,631	1,570	1,400	1,364
April	1,455	1,237	1,128	1,240	1,838	1,513	1,464	1,426	1,446	1,600	1,472
May	1,760	1,682	2,022	2,008	2,106	2,647	2,008	1,937	2,240	2,201	2,220
June	3,301	3,759	3,990	3,493	3,520	3,187	3,459	3,700	3,565	3,448	3,156
July	5,710	4,604	4,948	4,555	6,231	6,019	5,436	6,282	4,876	4,703	5,890
August	3,961	3,893	4,767	4,639	4,395	4,406	4,225	4,373	6,890	5,217	4,377
September	2,344	2,158	1,983	1,939	2,344	2,491	2,829	2,752	2,358	3,224	2,394
October	1,124	1,204	1,258	1,450	1,665	1,559	1,422	1,470	1,751	1,679	3,076
November	986	1,012	1,144	1,143	1,117	1,133	1,165	1,217	1,228	1,254	1,184
December	1,766	1,759	1,796	1,712	2,009	1,968	1,986	1,930	1,904	1,895	1,730

# Appendix figures

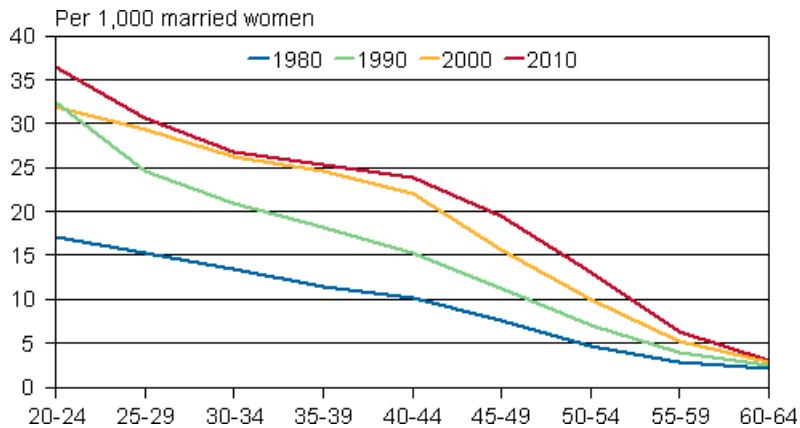
**Appendix figure 1. Average age of women by first marriage and first live birth 1982–2010**



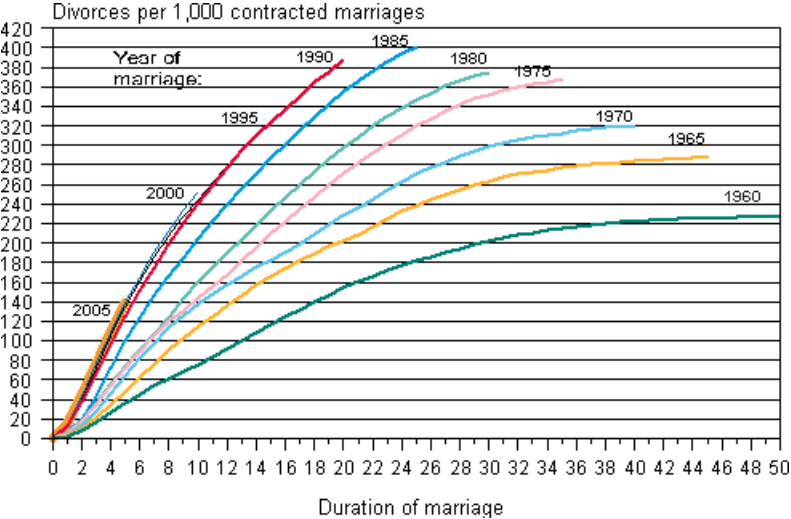
**Appendix figure 2. Marriage rate by age 1990, 2000 and 2010**



**Appendix figure 3. Divorce rate by age 1980, 1990, 2000 and 2010**



**Appendix figure 4. Accumulated divorces by the end of 2010 from marriages entered into in different years**



# *Quality description, changes in marital status*

## *1. Relevance of statistical information*

The main source used when producing Finnish population statistics is the Population Information System, which is maintained by the Population Register Centre and local register offices. Changes in the data on the vital events of the resident population are updated into the Population Information System continuously by local population register authorities. From 1975 Statistics Finland has obtained population data from the Population Register Centre.

The last population registration was carried out in Finland on 1 January 1989. After that the Population Information System has been updated by notifications of changes. The data stored in the Population Information System are specified in the act on Population Information System and the certificate services of the Population Register Centre (21 August 2009/661). Notifications on population changes for the past year are expected by the last day of January of the following year.

Statistics Finland's function is to compile statistics on conditions in society (Statistics Finland Act of 24 January 1992/48). These also include demographic statistics. Statistics Finland's Rules of Procedure defines the Population Statistics unit as the producer of demographic statistics (Statistics Finland's Rules of Procedure, TK-00-1469-10).

In accordance with the Act on the Municipality of Domicile, the municipality of domicile and the place of residence of individuals are recorded in the Population Information System. The municipality in which a person lives or the one construed by the inhabitant as the municipality of domicile on the grounds of residence, family ties, livelihood or other equivalent circumstances, or to which the inhabitant has close links due to the aforementioned circumstances is deemed the municipality of domicile. (Act on the Municipality of Domicile, 201/1994.) The population registered in the Population Information System is divided into those present and those absent. Those present are permanent residents of Finland, either Finnish nationals or aliens. Those absent are Finnish nationals who when emigrating from the country have reported that they intend to be absent from Finland for more than one year, with the exception of Finnish nationals who are diplomats and those working in development co-operation (Act on the Municipality of Domicile, 201/1994.) Only changes in the population resident in Finland on 31 December are taken into account when compiling statistics on vital events. Persons moving to Finland from abroad are classified in the population statistics if the place of residence they have declared as their municipality of domicile is later confirmed as their place of residence.

### *Divorces*

The divorce statistics are based on data on granted decrees of divorce transmitted to the Population Information System by district courts. The statistics also include cases where a permanent resident of Finland is granted a divorce by a foreign court. If the divorce is granted abroad, it must be reported to the register keeper for registration of divorce. Exceptions are divorces granted to Finnish citizens in Sweden, on which the Swedish register keeper notifies the Finnish counterpart directly.

A divorce granted to a Finnish citizen abroad usually requires validation by the Helsinki Court of Appeal before registration. Divorce decisions given in the Nordic Countries and in the EU countries as of 1 March 2001 can be registered without validation.

As of 1980 'divorces' refer to the divorces of females permanently resident in Finland, unless otherwise indicated.

The amendment to the Marriage Act (411/1987), effective from the first of January 1988, simplified divorce proceedings. Divorce figures began to rise towards the end of 1988, when the first divorces (after a reconsideration period of six months) became effective under the amendment to Marriage Act. The Marriage Act no longer has regulations on "cancellation of marriage" or "nullification of marriage". Before the amendment to the act came into force in 1988 these were in separate groups, now among divorces.

The key figures defined below can be calculated for women and men, although they are defined to be calculated for women only.



The tables of the publication show ratios describing the divorce rate. Not all of these ratios have a fixed name. The footnotes to the tables indicate the mean population of the part of the population used for dividing the number of cases each time. In the following only those ratios in the tables are defined that have a fixed name. The crude divorce rate refers to the number of divorces per 1,000 of the mean population. The age-specific divorce rate indicates the number of divorced women per 1,000 married women of the mean population in the age group in question. The total divorce rate is an index calculated from the divorces granted in one year. Ratios are calculated between the numbers of marriages contracted in different years and ending in divorce and the numbers of all marriages contracted the same year, respectively. For example, for couples divorced in 2008, a ratio is calculated between those married for 30 years and all couples married in 1978; between those married for 29 years and all couples married in 1979; and so on. The sum of these ratios, expressed per hundred, is the total divorce rate. It is interpreted indicating the percentage of marriages that would end in divorce if the divorce rate of the reference year remained the same during the entire marriage (Recent demographic developments in Europe, Council of Europe 1991). It can be shown that total divorce rate may receive values higher than 100. Hence it does not express the probability of divorce.

### *Marital status*

The marital status of a person refers to the status according to the Finnish Marriage Code (234/29). It should be noted that cohabiting is not a marital status. People representing all marital status categories may be cohabiting, including those who are still officially married.

Current divorce regulations no longer recognize the concept of legal separation. Those persons who are legally separated on the basis of the old divorce provisions prior to 1 January 1988 and still living apart have been slotted under married persons in the statistics.

The marital status classification is as follows: unmarried, married, divorced, widowed, partner in a registered partnership, dissolved registered partnership, widowed after a registered partnership.

### *Marriages*

‘Marriages’ refer to marriages contracted by females permanently resident in Finland, unless otherwise indicated. The number of males and females who contracted marriage is not equal because the number of marriages contracted between females permanently resident in Finland and males living permanently abroad differs from the number of marriages contracted between males permanently resident in Finland and females living permanently abroad. The key figures defined below can be calculated for women and men, although they are defined to be calculated for women only.

The tables of the publication show ratios describing the marriage rate. Not all of these ratios have a fixed name. The footnotes to the tables indicate the mean population of the part of the population used for dividing the number of cases each time. In the following only those ratios in the tables are defined that have a fixed name. The crude marriage rate refers to married women per 1,000 of the mean population. The age-specific marriage rate indicates the number of married women per 1,000 non-married women and women not in registered partnership of the mean population in the age group in question. The crude remarriage rate refers to the number of second or higher order marriages contracted by women per 1,000 previously married women of the mean population. The age-specific remarriage rate is calculated using the same principle as for the age-specific marriage rate.

The total marriage rate describes the proportion of women (generally per 100 or 1,000 persons) that contract marriage in their lives, on condition that none of them die and that the marriage rate in the pertinent cohort remains constant throughout the period when these women belong to the age groups of 15 to 49 years. It is computed by adding up the age-specific marriage rates of first marriages in the whole age period. Differing from the definition above, the age-specific marriage rate is here calculated in proportion to those having contracted marriage per all women of the age group.

### *Registered partnership*

“Registered partnership” refers to registered partnership of two persons of the same sex aged 18 or over (Act on Registered Partnerships of 9 Nov. 2001/950). Partnership is registered by an authority entitled to perform civil marriage ceremonies. Registered partnership is dissolved when one partner dies or is declared dead, or when it is dissolved by court order.

## **2. Methodological description of survey**

The main source used when producing Finnish population statistics is the Population Information System of the Population Information Centre. Local register office updates a Population Information System with information it gets from persons experiencing vital events and parishes of the Evangelical-Lutheran and Greek Orthodox churches. Hospitals send information of births in machine-language format to maintenance of Population Information System. Local courts take information of decisions of adoptions and divorces dealt in the court into the Population Information System. Statistics Finland receives the updated data on vital events in machine-language format on a weekly basis.

The deadline for delivering data to Statistics Finland on vital events in the statistical year is the end of January of the following year. The exception to this is the data on stillbirths, which were expected by the end of August. Data on population changes in statistical year delivered to Statistics Finland after this date are included in the data of the following year.

## **3. Correctness and accuracy of data**

In general, the Population Information System of the Population Register Centre can be considered very exhaustive as regards persons. In order that a person obtains a personal identity code, he or she has to be registered in the Population Information System. It is practically impossible to live in Finland without a personal identity code. A personal identity code is needed so that one can work legally, open a bank account, have dealings with authorities and so on. It can be safely assumed that Finland cannot have any substantial numbers of ‘moonlighters’ who receive their pay in cash for periods of over one year, for example. Staying in Finland for at least one year is the prerequisite for registering into the population of Finland.

After abolishment of yearly checking of domicile registers (January 1) in 1989 the Population Information System has been maintained only by notifications of changes to population information. Their correctness is determined by a reliability survey made on the addresses in the Population Information System.

The Population Register Centre charges Statistics Finland with the task of conducting yearly a sample survey on correctness of address information. Around 11,000 people are asked whether their address in the Population Information System is correct. In the 2010 survey, the address was correct for 99.0 per cent of the respondents.

In connection with municipal elections, returned notifications of voting sent to foreigners usually reveal around 1,000 persons who have moved from the country without giving notice and are thus still included in the Finnish population. The Population Register Centre removes them from the resident population in the Population Information System before the following turn of the year.

## **4. Timeliness and promptness of published data**

Final vital statistics are published yearly in May to June, except for those on stillbirths, which are released in September. Since 1999 the regional division used has been that of the first day of the following year. Thus the municipalities that unite on the first day of the new year are already combined in the statistics on the last day of the previous year. Information on the vital statistics of the united municipalities before the unification is available from 2003 onwards.

Preliminary population data by municipality are available by month. In addition, the electronic publication Quarterly Population Statistics containing preliminary data is released always at the end of the month following the previous quarter.

## ***5. Accessibility and transparency/clarity of data***

Basic population data are available in electronic form by municipality or with larger regional divisions than municipality in Statistics Finland's free 'Population' online service (Statistical databases) at:

[http://tilastokeskus.fi/tup/tilastotietokannat/index\\_en.html](http://tilastokeskus.fi/tup/tilastotietokannat/index_en.html)

The chargeable information service contains more specified information about the population by sub-area of municipality, for example. More information about Statistics Finland's chargeable services is available at: <http://tilastokeskus.fi/tup/vaestotilastopalvelu/index.html>

The Altika statistical service also includes municipality-specific population data from 1975 onwards.

## ***6. Comparability of statistics***

Comparable regional vital statistics series are available from 1987. The tables always indicate which regional division is used.

Vital statistics data on the numbers of births, deaths and marriages contracted are available free from 1749 onwards. From 1773 there are data about mothers having given birth by five-year age group and from 1936 about all children born by age of mother. After the statistical revision of 1877 collection of data on deaths was started by one-year age group, which made it possible to begin calculation of accurate mortality and lifetime tables from the 1880s onwards. On account of this statistical revision, annual collection of data on migration and divorces was also started.

Population data by municipality are available in electronic form in the Altika information service from 1975 onwards. The population time series in the free "Väestö" online service begin from the year 1980 or 1987. Vital statistics time series for the whole country is available from 1749.

## ***7. Coherence and consistency/uniformity***

Statistics Finland's other statistics use the data of demographic statistics as basic information on population. Consequently, Statistics Finland's other statistics correspond to demographic statistics.

---

Suomen virallinen tilasto  
Finlands officiella statistik  
Official Statistics of Finland

Population 2011

### Inquiries

Timo Nikander (09) 1734 3250

Director in charge:

Jari Tarkoma

[vaesto.tilasto@stat.fi](mailto:vaesto.tilasto@stat.fi)

[www.stat.fi](http://www.stat.fi)

Source: Population and Cause of Death Statistics. Statistics Finland