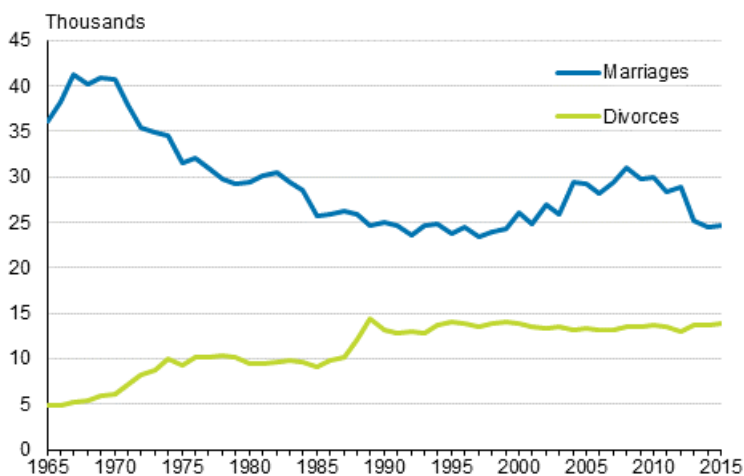


# Changes in marital status 2016

## Number of marriages contracted decreased slightly

According to Statistics Finland's data on population changes, the number of marriages entered into in 2016 went down slightly from the previous year. A total of 24,464 marriages were entered into, which was 244 fewer than in the year before. The marriage rate, i.e. the ratio of persons who have entered into marriage of those who could marry, has decreased nearly continuously since 2008. In 2016, the marriage rate decreased among persons aged under 40 compared with the previous year, while among older persons it was slightly livelier.

### Number of marriages and divorces 1965–2016



## People get married at an ever later age

In 2016, the rise in the average age of women and men entering into their first marriage continued. The average age of women increased by 0.2 years and that of men by 0.3 years from the year before. The average age of women entering into their first marriage was 31.4 years and 33.7 years for men. The average age of women entering into their second marriage was 44.8 years and 47.6 years for men.

The number and relative share of first marriages went down from the year before, while the number of remarriages was higher than in the previous year. However, the annual changes were so small that the share of first marriages in all marriages entered into is still three-quarters. The relative share has remained at the same level throughout the early 2000s. Twenty-one per cent of all marriages contracted were second marriages, and close on four per cent third marriages.

## Number of divorces decreased

In 2016, altogether 13,541 marriages ended in divorce, which is 398 fewer than one year previously. Since 2012, the number of divorces has increased and decreased in alternate years. The divorce rate, i.e. the number of divorces in relation to married persons, has remained the same for over 20 years. Changes by age in the divorce rate were minor compared with the previous year.

The average age of women in their first marriage was 40.5 when their marriage ended in divorce. The corresponding average age of men was 42.8 in 2016. The average age of women at the time of divorce rose from the year before by one-tenth, that of men remained unchanged. The average age of either sex has not had a clearly rising or falling trend in the last years.

## Clearly under one-half of first marriages still end in divorce

According to the divorce rate in 2016, first marriages end in divorce with a probability of 39 per cent. The drop in the divorce rate from the previous year was so small that the probability of first marriages to end in divorce stays at the same level as in the previous years. The median for the duration of first marriages ending in divorce was ten years as in the year before.

Sixty-nine per cent of the marriages that ended in divorce in 2016 were first marriages for both spouses. The share increased by one percentage point from 2015. In 1990, the corresponding percentage was still 80. Nine per cent of the marriages ending in divorce were at least second marriages for both spouses in 2016, in 2015 it was 11 per cent.

## Registration of partnerships decreased considerably, number of divorces almost unchanged

In 2016, the number of registered partnerships decreased by 21 per cent from the previous year. The probable reason for the drop in registrations is the amendment to the Marriage Act that entered into force at the beginning of March 2017 according to which same-sex couples can enter into marriage. It may be that some couples have decided to wait to March 2017 for the amendment. More information on this will be available from the monthly preliminary statistics on population changes.

In 2016, the registrations of partnerships numbered 251. Of these, 97 were male couples and 157 female couples. The number of partnership registrations by male couples only decreased by three from the previous year. By contrast, the number of partnership registrations by female couples decreased by 64, which corresponds to 29 per cent. The decrease in the number of partnership registrations was almost completely caused by the drop in registrations by female couples.

Slightly over 100 registered same-sex partnerships have ended in divorce annually in the four previous years. In 2016, the number of divorces was 127, which is five fewer than in the previous year.

### Changes in marital status, mean age of men and women at first marriage in 2007–2016

|                                       | Year   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
|---------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
|                                       | 2007   | 2008   | 2009   | 2010   | 2011   | 2012   | 2013   | 2014   | 2015   | 2016   |
| Contracted marriages                  | 29 497 | 31 014 | 29 836 | 29 952 | 28 408 | 28 878 | 25 119 | 24 462 | 24 708 | 24 464 |
| Divorces                              | 13 224 | 13 471 | 13 527 | 13 619 | 13 469 | 13 040 | 13 766 | 13 682 | 13 939 | 13 541 |
| Woman's mean age at first marriage    | 29,9   | 30,2   | 30,2   | 30,3   | 30,6   | 30,8   | 30,6   | 30,7   | 31,2   | 31,4   |
| Man's mean age at first marriage      | 32,3   | 32,5   | 32,5   | 32,6   | 32,9   | 33,1   | 32,8   | 32,9   | 33,4   | 33,7   |
| Woman's mean age at first divorce     | 40,5   | 40,3   | 40,0   | 39,9   | 40,4   | 40,0   | 40,0   | 39,9   | 40,4   | 40,5   |
| Man's mean age at first divorce       | 42,8   | 42,5   | 42,2   | 42,3   | 42,7   | 42,3   | 42,3   | 42,3   | 42,8   | 42,8   |
| Registered partnerships               | 213    | 249    | 246    | 322    | 333    | 329    | 373    | 333    | 318    | 251    |
| Divorces from registered partnerships | 67     | 45     | 53     | 64     | 85     | 103    | 101    | 109    | 133    | 127    |

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# Appendix tables

**Appendix table 1. Marriages and divorces 1965–2016**

| 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   |
| 2009 | 29,836    | 13,527   |

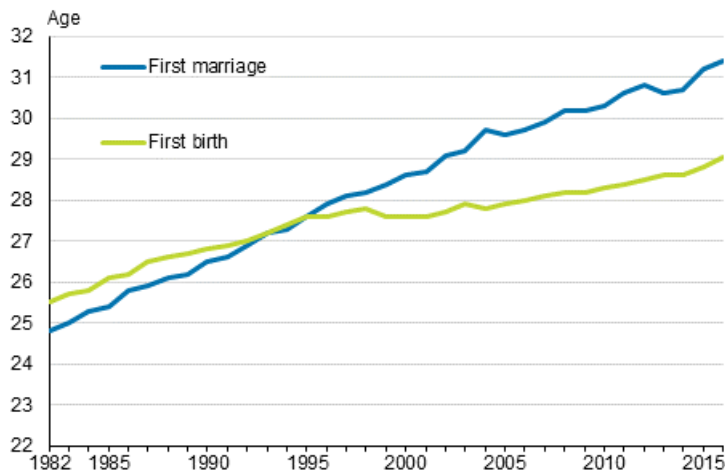
| Year | Marriages | Divorces |
|------|-----------|----------|
| 2010 | 29,952    | 13,619   |
| 2011 | 28,408    | 13,469   |
| 2012 | 28,878    | 13,040   |
| 2013 | 25,119    | 13,766   |
| 2014 | 24,462    | 13,682   |
| 2015 | 24,708    | 13,939   |
| 2016 | 24,464    | 13,541   |

**Appendix table 2. Marriages contracted by month 2006–2016**

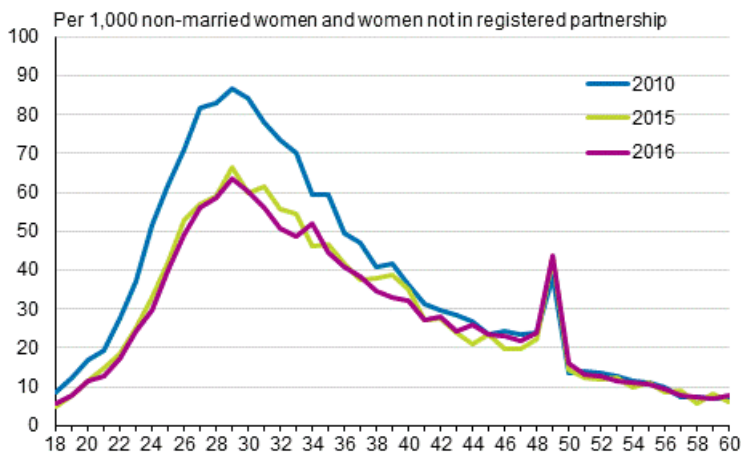
| Month     | Year   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
|-----------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
|           | 2006   | 2007   | 2008   | 2009   | 2010   | 2011   | 2012   | 2013   | 2014   | 2015   | 2016   |
| Total     | 28,236 | 29,497 | 31,014 | 29,836 | 29,952 | 28,408 | 28,878 | 25,119 | 24,462 | 24,708 | 24,464 |
| January   | 1,192  | 1,163  | 1,095  | 1,348  | 1,395  | 1,392  | 1,097  | 1,001  | 1,074  | 1,103  | 1,050  |
| February  | 1,609  | 1,616  | 2,091  | 1,867  | 1,694  | 1,653  | 1,784  | 1,241  | 1,525  | 1,432  | 1,482  |
| March     | 1,441  | 1,631  | 1,570  | 1,400  | 1,364  | 1,271  | 1,507  | 1,650  | 1,074  | 1,123  | 1,069  |
| April     | 1,464  | 1,426  | 1,446  | 1,600  | 1,472  | 1,457  | 1,350  | 1,119  | 1,511  | 1,244  | 1,325  |
| May       | 2,008  | 1,937  | 2,240  | 2,201  | 2,220  | 1,915  | 1,995  | 1,907  | 1,947  | 2,418  | 1,899  |
| June      | 3,459  | 3,700  | 3,565  | 3,448  | 3,156  | 3,033  | 3,525  | 3,123  | 3,132  | 2,762  | 2,825  |
| July      | 5,436  | 6,282  | 4,876  | 4,703  | 5,890  | 5,196  | 4,627  | 4,272  | 3,875  | 4,108  | 4,538  |
| August    | 4,225  | 4,373  | 6,890  | 5,217  | 4,377  | 4,172  | 4,370  | 4,405  | 4,330  | 4,380  | 3,981  |
| September | 2,829  | 2,752  | 2,358  | 3,224  | 2,394  | 2,394  | 2,495  | 2,040  | 2,011  | 2,109  | 2,345  |
| October   | 1,422  | 1,470  | 1,751  | 1,679  | 3,076  | 1,490  | 1,431  | 1,292  | 1,465  | 1,410  | 1,379  |
| November  | 1,165  | 1,217  | 1,228  | 1,254  | 1,184  | 2,741  | 1,237  | 1,175  | 1,022  | 1,082  | 963    |
| December  | 1,986  | 1,930  | 1,904  | 1,895  | 1,730  | 1,694  | 3,460  | 1,894  | 1,496  | 1,537  | 1,608  |

# Appendix figures

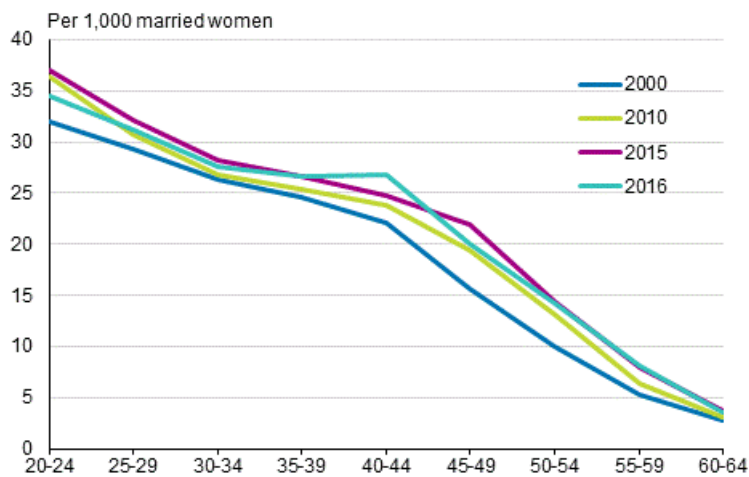
**Appendix figure 1. Average age of women by first marriage and first live birth 1982–2016**



**Appendix figure 2. Marriage rate by age 2010, 2015 and 2016**



**Appendix figure 3. Divorce rate by age 2000, 2010, 2015 and 2016**



# 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 and Social Statistics unit as the producer of demographic statistics (Statistics Finland's Rules of Procedure, TK-00-1743-16).

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". 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 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 probability of divorce for first marriages is produced by applying multistate life tables. The life tables are based on women's age-group specific marriage, mortality, widowhood and divorce rates in the statistical reference year regardless of the husband's age or whether the marriage is the first one or not for him.

### 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 figure defined below can be calculated for women and men, although it is defined to be calculated for women only.

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.

### 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. Data on events relating to the years statistical year – 4 through to statistical year – 1 and reported between February statistical year and January statistical year + 1 are included in the statistical year data.

## 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 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 2012 survey, the address was correct for 98.9 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 April to May, except for those on stillbirths, which are available 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.

[http://www.stat.fi/til/vamuu/tau\\_en.html](http://www.stat.fi/til/vamuu/tau_en.html).

#### 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)

Population statistics from 1750 to 2000 have been digitised into PDF format in the National Library's Doria service.

[Publications on Population structure in Doria \(in Finnish\)](#).

[Publications on Vital statistics in Doria \(in Finnish\)](#).

[Publications on Population censuses in Doria \(in Finnish\)](#).

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> (in Finnish).

#### 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.

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.

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Source: Changes in marital status 2016. Statistics Finland