Marriages and divorces

Metadata

2022

Marriages and divorces, 2022

The data for marriages and divorces are in two separate files. The files are in flat ASCII, fixed format, with one line of given length per record. This format was chosen so as to make the data usable with as many statistical programs as possible, and thus accessible to as wide a range of people.

Other important information can be found in the following:
- ❖ Record layouts
  - ▪ civil marriages
  - ▪ customary marriages
  - ▪ civil unions
  - ▪ divorces
- ❖ Divorce Form (Form 07- 04)
- ❖ Marriages and divorces 2022 statistical release (P0307)
- ❖ Marriages and divorces 2022 portable file format
- ❖ Stats SA's website: www.statssa.gov.za

The data files

Each file contains the following information for each variable:

Description of variables

Descriptive name: This is a short description of the variable with the variable name in brackets.

Position of the variable: The position of a variable within a record is recorded in the format (@xxx y.). "@xxx "indicates the position that the variable starts at (i.e. column) xxx, and "y" indicates the length of the field. Variables are either numeric or character.

Code list: The range of valid values for variables is as expected from the form. For continuous variables it only reflects the upper and lower limits.

Missing value: The code for "missing"/"unspecified" values is given for each variable.

Note to users: Additional information for further clarity on questions.

Final code list: The range of valid values for variables after editing the file. For continuous variables it only reflects the upper and lower limits.

Legislations covering registration of marriages, civil unions and divorces

Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) publishes marriage data on citizens and permanent residents that are collected through the national civil registration systems. Data in Statistics South Africa's *Marriages and divorces*, statistical release P0307, are based only on registered marriages and divorces that are stipulated and governed by the country's legal frameworks. Management of registered marriages is the responsibility of the Department of Home Affairs (DHA).

Two main legislations cover the registration of civil marriages and customary marriages. Civil marriages are administered through the Marriage Act, 1961 (Act No. 25 of 1961). 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. An additional legislation is the registration of civil unions that is covered by the Civil Union Act, 2006 (Act No. 17 of 2006) that came into operation on 30 November 2006.

The dissolution of registered marriages and civil unions falls under the jurisdiction of the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (DoJ&CD); and Office of the Chief Justice (OCJ). This responsibility of the departments is mandated through the Divorce Act, 1979 as amended, and its associated regulations (Act No.70 of 1979) and the Jurisdiction of Regional Courts Amendment Act, 2008 (Act No. 31 of 2008) as amended which came into effect on 9 August 2010.

In addition to the above legislations, the Statistics Act, 1999 (Act No. 6 of 1999) prohibits the disclosure of information regarding individuals to any person concerned or the person's lawful representative, thus providing confidentiality to the marriages, civil unions and divorces data.

Methodology for civil marriages, customary marriages and civil unions

After the solemnisation ceremony of a marriage or a civil union, the marriage officer submits the marriage/civil union register to the nearest office of the DHA, where the marriage/civil union details are recorded in the National Population Register (NPR). With respect to customary marriages, the two spouses and their witnesses present themselves at a DHA office in order to register a customary marriage. Hence, the province of registration of marriages and unions is not necessarily the province of usual residence of the couple since registration of marriage can take place at any DHA office.

The target population is all civil marriages, customary marriages and civil unions recorded in the National Population Register in 2022 by the DHA.

Statistics South Africa requests electronic data on marriages and civil unions from DHA head office. Data on civil marriages, customary marriages and civil unions are received as three separate ASCII files. The three data sets are processed and analysed separately. Results are also published separately under the *Marriages* section of the *Marriages and divorces* release.

DATA FILE: CIVIL MARRIAGES

Name of Province (ProvinceCode) *(@1   2.)*

1.	Province
	01 = Western Cape
	02 = Eastern Cape
	03 = Northern Cape
	04 = Free State
	05 = KwaZulu-Natal
	06 = North West
	07 = Gauteng
	08 = Mpumalanga
	09 = Limpopo

Note to users

The variable provides information about the name of the province where the marriage was registered.

Final code list
01 = Western Cape
02 = Eastern Cape
03 = Northern Cape
04 = Free State
05 = KwaZulu-Natal
06 = North West
07 = Gauteng
08 = Mpumalanga
09 = Limpopo
98 = Outside RSA
99 = Unspecified

Month of Marriage (MarriageMonth) *(@3   2.)*

2.	Marriage Month
	01 = January
	02 = February
	03 = March
	04 = April
	05 = May
	06 = June
	07 = July
	08 = August
	09 = September
	10 = October
	11 = November
	12 = December

Note to users

The variable provides information about the month in which the marriage was registered.

Final code list

01 = January

02 = February

03 = March

04 = April

05 = May

06 = June

07 = July

08 = August

09 = September

10 = October

11 = November

12 = December

Year of Marriage (MarriageYear)   *(@5   4.)*

3.	Marriage Year

Note to users

The variable provides information about the year in which the marriage was registered.

Final code list
Valid code = 2022

Way of Solemnisation (SolemnisationCode)   *(@9   1.)*

4.	Solemnisation
	1 = Religious
	2 = DHA

Note to users

The variable provides information about the way the marriage was solemnised.

Final code list
1 = Religious
2 = DHA
9 = Unspecified

Marital status of Bridegroom (BridegroomStatusCode)   *(@10   1.)*

5.	Bridegroom Status
	1 = Never married
	2 = Divorcee
	3 = Widower

Note to users

The variable provides information about the marital status of the bridegroom before marriage.

Final code list
1 = Never married
2 = Divorcee
3 = Widower
9 = Unspecified

Marital status of Bride (BrideStatusCode)   *(@11   1.)*

6.	Bride Status
	1 = Never married
	2 = Divorcee
	3 = Widow

Note to users

The variable provides information about the marital status of the bride before the current marriage.

Final code list

1 = Never married
2 = Divorcee
3 = Widow
9 = Unspecified

Age of Bridegroom (BridegroomAge)   *(@12   3.)*

7.	Bridegroom's Age

Note to users

The variable provides information about the age of the bridegroom at the time of marriage.

Final code list
Valid range: 15–97
Unspecified: 999

Age of Bride (BrideAge)   *(@15   2.)*

8.	Bride's Age

Note to users

The variable provides information about the age of the bride at the time of marriage.

Final code list
Valid range: 12–91

Age difference between bridegroom and bride (AgeDiff)   *(@17   1.)*

9.	Age difference between the couple (Derived variable)

Note to users

The variable is derived from the difference between the *BridegroomAge* and the *BrideAge.* It provides information on the age difference between the bridegroom and the bride.

Final code list

0 = Spouses same age
1 = Bridegroom older
2 = Bridegroom younger
3 = Unspecified

DATA FILE: CUSTOMARY MARRIAGES

Name of Province (ProvinceCode) *(@1   2.)*

1.	Province
	01 = Western Cape
	02 = Eastern Cape
	03 = Northern Cape
	04 = Free State
	05 = KwaZulu-Natal
	06 = North West
	07 = Gauteng
	08 = Mpumalanga
	09 = Limpopo

Note to users

The variable provides information about the name of the province where the marriage was registered.

Final code list
01 = Western Cape
02 = Eastern Cape
03 = Northern Cape
04 = Free State
05 = KwaZulu-Natal
06 = North West
07 = Gauteng
08 = Mpumalanga
09 = Limpopo
97 = Unknown
98 = Outside RSA
99 = Unspecified

Year of Marriage (MarriageYear) *(@3   4.)*

2.	Marriage Year

Note to users

The question provides information about the year in which the customary marriage took place.

Final code list
Valid code = 1945–2022

Year of Registration (RegistrationYear) *(@7   4.)*

3.	Registration Year

Note to users

The question provides information about the year in which a marriage was registered.

Final code list
Valid code = 2022

Age of Bridegroom (BridegroomAge) *(@11   3.)*

4.	Bridegroom's Age

Note to users

This provides information about the age of the husband at the time of marriage.

Final code list
Valid range: 10–95
Unspecified: 999

Age of Bride (BrideAge) *(@14   3.)*

5.	Bride's Age

Note to users

This provides information about the age of the bride at the time of marriage.

Final code list
Valid range: 10–92
Unspecified: 999

Age difference between bridegroom and bride (AgeDiff) *(@17   1.)*

6.	Age difference between the couple (Derived variable)

Note to users

This is derived from the difference between the *BridegroomAge* and the *BrideAge*. It provides information on the age difference between bridegroom and bride.

Final code list
0 = Spouses same age
1 = Bridegroom older
2 = Bridegroom younger
9 = Unspecified

DATA FILE: CIVIL UNIONS

Name of Province (ProvinceCode) (@1 2.)

1.	Province
	01 = Western Cape
	02 = Eastern Cape
	03 = Northern Cape
	04 = Free State
	05 = KwaZulu-Natal
	06 = North West
	07 = Gauteng
	08 = Mpumalanga
	09 = Limpopo

Note to users

The question provides information about the name of the province where the civil union was registered.

Final code list
01 = Western Cape
02 = Eastern Cape
03 = Northern Cape
04 = Free State
05 = KwaZulu-Natal
06 = North West
07 = Gauteng
08 = Mpumalanga
09 = Limpopo
98 = Outside RSA
99 = Unspecified

Month of Registration (RegistrationMonth) (@3 2.)

2.	Registration Month
	01 = January
	02 = February
	03 = March
	04 = April
	05 = May
	06 = June
	07 = July
	08 = August
	09 = September
	10 = October
	11 = November
	12 = December

Note to users

This variable provides information about the month in which the civil union was registered.

Final code list
01 = January
02 = February

03 = March

04 = April

05 = May

06 = June

07 = July

08 = August

09 = September

10 = October

11 = November

12 = December

Year of Registration (RegistrationYear)   *(@5   4.)*

3.	Registration Year

Note to users

The variable provides information about the year in which the civil union was registered.

Final code list

Valid code = 2022

Age of Spouse-1 (Spouse1Age)   *(@9   2.)*

4.	Spouse-1Age

Note to users

This variable provides information about the age of spouse-1 at the time of union.

Final code list

Valid range: 19–89

Age of Spouse-2 (Spouse2Age)   *(@11   2.)*

5.	Spouse-2Age

Note to users

This variable provides information about the age of spouse-2 at the time of union.

Final code list

Valid range: 18–81

Age difference between Spouse-1 and Spouse-2 (AgeDiff)   *(@13   1.)*

6.	Age difference between the couple

Note to users

This variable is derived from the difference between *Spouse-1Age* and *Spouse-2Age*. It provides information on the age difference between spouse-1 and spouse-2.

Final code list

0 = Spouses same age

1 = Spouse-1 older

2 = Spouse-1 younger

DATA FILE: DIVORCES

Methodology

Divorce data are based on successful applications for divorces that have been issued with decrees. Data is then collected from the courts that deal with divorce matters using a standard structured form, prepared by Stats SA in collaboration with the DoJ&CD and OCJ. Once a decree of divorce is issued, the plaintiff completes the form and the registrar of courts signs and stamps it. The forms are consolidated and regularly mailed to Stats SA's Head Office. At Stats SA, the forms are sorted and captured according to the court's name and calendar month. Similarly, the forms are stored in boxes according to the court's name and calendar month. A quality assurance of the captured data is done. Data then gets analysed and published under the divorces section of the release.

The target population is all divorce applications that were concluded in 2022 i.e. which was finalised and issued with decrees of divorce in 2022 by DoJ&CD and OCJ.
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Name of Province (ProvinceCode)   *(@1   2.)*

1.	**Province**
	01 = Western Cape
	02 = Eastern Cape
	03 = Northern Cape
	04 = Free State
	05 = KwaZulu-Natal
	06 = North West
	07 = Gauteng
	08 = Mpumalanga
	09 = Limpopo

Note to users

The question provides information about the name of the province where the divorce was issued.

Final code list
01 = Western Cape
02 = Eastern Cape
03 = Northern Cape
04 = Free State
05 = KwaZulu-Natal
06 = North West
07 = Gauteng
08 = Mpumalanga
09 = Limpopo

Population group of husband (MaleRace)   *(@3   1.)*

2.	**The population group of the husband**
	☐ = African/Black
	☐ = Coloured
	☐ = Indian/Asian
	☐ = White
	☐ = Other (Specify)

Note to users

The variable provides information about the population group of the husband.

Final code list

1 = Black African

2 = Coloured

3 = Indian/Asian

4 = White

5 = Other

9 = Unspecified

Population group of wife (FemaleRace)   *(@4   1.)*

3.	**The population group of the wife**
	☐ = African/Black
	☐ = Coloured
	☐ = Indian/Asian
	☐ = White
	☐ = Other (Specify)

Note to users

The variable provides information about the population group of the wife.

Final code list

1 = Black African

2 = Coloured

3 = Indian/Asian

4 = White

5 = Other

9 = Unspecified

Population group of couple (CoupleRace)   *(@5   1.)*

4.	**The population group of the couple (Derived variable)**

Note to users

The variable is derived by comparing *MaleRace* to *FemaleRace* to determine whether the divorcing couple is in a mixed-race marriage. If the population group of the husband and the population group of the wife differ, then the couple is classified as being in a mixed-race marriage.

Final code list

1 = Black African

2 = Coloured

3 = Indian/Asian

4 = White

5 = Mixed

9 = Unspecified

Occupation of Husband (MaleOccupation) (*@6   2.*)

5.	Husband's occupation at the time of divorce

Note to users

The variable provides information about the occupation of the husband at the time of the divorce.

Final code list

00 = Not economically active / Unemployed

01 = Professional, semi-professional and technical occupations

02 = Managers and administrators

03 = Clerical and sales occupations

04 = Transport, delivery and communications

05 = Service occupations

06 = Farming and related occupations

07 = Artisans, apprentice and related occupations

08 = Production foreman, mine and quarry workers

99 = Unspecified

Occupation of wife (FemaleOccupation) (*@8   2.*)

6.	Wife's occupation at the time of divorce

Note to users

The variable provides information about the occupation of the wife at the time of the divorce.

Final code list

00 = Not economically active / Unemployed

01 = Professional, semi-professional and technical occupations

02 = Managers and administrators

03 = Clerical and sales occupations

04 = Transport, delivery and communications

05 = Service occupations

06 = Farming and related occupations

07 = Artisans, apprentice and related occupations

08 = Production foreman, mine and quarry workers

99 = Unspecified

Sex of plaintiff (PlaintiffSex) (*@10   1.*)

7.	**Sex of the plaintiff**
	☐ = Husband
	☐ = Wife

Note to users

The variable provides information about the sex of the plaintiff. It seeks to find out who filed for the divorce – the husband, wife or both husband and wife.

Final code list

1 = Male

2 = Female

3 = Both

9 = Unspecified

Marital status of husband (MaleStatus)   *(@11   1.)*

8.	**Husband's marital status at the time of marriage**
	☐ = Never married
	☐ = Widower
	☐ = Divorcee

Note to users

The variable seeks to find out the husband's marital status at the time of marriage; of particular interest is whether the previous marriage ended in divorce if the husband was previously married.

Final code list

   1 = Never married

   2 = Widower

   3 = Divorcee

   9 = Unspecified

Marital status of wife (FemaleStatus)   *(@12   1.)*

9.	**Wife's marital status at the time of marriage**
	☐ = Never married
	☐ = Widow
	☐ = Divorcee

Note to users

The variable seeks to find out the wife's marital status at the time of marriage; of particular interest is whether the previous marriage ended in divorce if the wife was previously married.

Final code list

   1 = Never married

   2 = Widow

   3 = Divorcee

   9 = Unspecified

Number of times husband married (MaleNoTimesMarried)   *(@13   2.)*

10.	**Number of times husband has married**

Note to users

The variable seeks to find out the number of times the husband has been married (including the current marriage).

Final code list
Valid range: 01–11
Unspecified = 99

Number of times wife married (*FemaleNoTimesMarried*)   (@15   2.)

11.	Number of times wife has married

Note to users
The variable seeks to find out the number of times the wife has been married (including the current marriage).

Final code list
Valid range: 01–11
Unspecified = 99

Age of husband (MaleAge)   *(@17   3.)*

12.	Age of husband

Note to users
The variable seeks to find out the age of the husband at the time of the divorce.

Final code list
Valid range: 20–102
Unspecified: 999

Age of wife (FemaleAge)   *(@20   3.)*

13.	Age of wife

Note to users
The variable seeks to find out the age of the wife at the time of the divorce.

Final code list
Valid range: 18–83
Unspecified: 999

Way of solemnisation (SolemnisationCode)   *(@23   1.)*

14.	Type of solemnisation of the present marriage
	☐ = Church
	☐ = Dept. of Home Affairs
	☐ = Magistrate's Office
	☐ = Mosque
	☐ = Synagogue
	☐ = Customary rites

	□ = Other religious buildings □ = Other

Note to users

The variable seeks to find out how the current marriage was solemnised.

Final code list
1 = Religious
2 = DHA
9 = Unspecified

Matrimonial property system (MarriagePropertySystem)   *(@24   1.)*

15.	**Matrimonial property system**
	□ = In community of property
	□ = Out of community of property
	□ = Out of community of property (excluding accrual system)
	□ = Out of community of property (including accrual system)
	□ = Other (Specify)

Note to users

The variable seeks to find out the type of matrimonial property contract the couple entered into at the time of the current marriage being dissolved.

Final code list
1 = In community of property
2 = Out of community of property
3 = Out of community of property (excluding accrual system)
4 = Out of community of property (including accrual system)
9 = Unspecified

Month of marriage (MarriageMonth)   *(@25   2.)*

16.	**Marriage month**
	01 = January
	02 = February
	03 = March
	04 = April
	05 = May
	06 = June
	07 = July
	08 = August
	09 = September
	10 = October
	11 = November
	12 = December

Note to users

The variable seeks to find out the month in which the marriage took place.

Final code list
01 = January
02 = February
03 = March

04 = April
05 = May
06 = June
07 = July
08 = August
09 = September
10 = October
11 = November
12 = December
99 = Unspecified

Year of marriage (MarriageYear)   *(@27   4.)*

17.	Marriage Year

Note to users

The variable provides information about the year in which the marriage was registered.

Final code list

Valid range: 1952–2022
Unspecified: 9999

Number of minor children involved (NoOfChildren)   *(@31   2.)*

18.	Number of minor children involved

Note to users

The variable seeks to determine the number of minor children (under 18 years) out of this marriage (i.e. the current dissolving marriage).

Final code list

Valid range: 00–07

Month of divorce (DivorceMonth)   *(@33   2.)*

19.	Divorce month
	01 = January
	02 = February
	03 = March
	04 = April
	05 = May
	06 = June
	07 = July
	08 = August
	09 = September
	10 = October
	11 = November
	12 = December

Note to users

The information is completed by the registrar. The variable seeks to find out the month in which the decree was issued.

Final code list

01 = January
02 = February

03 = March
04 = April
05 = May
06 = June
07 = July
08 = August
09 = September
10 = October
11 = November
12 = December

Year of divorce (DivorceYear) *(@35   4.)*

20.	Divorce year

Note to users

The information is completed by the registrar. The variable seeks to find out the year in which the decree was issued.

Final code list

Valid code: 2022

Duration of marriage (*DurationOfMarriage*) (@39   3.)

21.	Duration of marriage (Derived variable)

Note to users

The variable is the difference between *MarriageYear and DivorceYear.* It seeks to determine the number of years a couple have been married.

Final code list
Valid range: 00–55
Unspecified: 999

Type of marriage (*MarriageType*) (@42   1.)

22.	**Type of marriage**
	☐ = Civil marriage
	☐ = Customary marriage
	☐ = Civil union
	☐ = Other (Specify)

Note to users

The variable seeks to find out the type of marriage the couple had entered into.

Final code list
1 = Civil marriage
2 = Customary marriage
3 = Civil union
9 = Unspecified

19

Involved in polygamous marriage (*PolygamousMarriage*) (@43   1.)

23.	**Involved in polygamous marriage**
	☐ = Yes
	☐ = No

Note to users

The variable seeks to find out whether the couples were involved in polygamous marriage or not.

Final code list
1 = Yes
2 = No
9 = Unspecified

Main grounds for divorce (*GroundsForDivorce*) (@44   1.)

24.	**The main grounds for divorce**
	☐ = Adultery
	☐ = Desertion
	☐ = Financial difficulties
	☐ = Medical Insanity
	☐ = Imprisonment
	☐ = Abuse
	☐ = Other (Specify)

Note to users

The variable seeks to find the main cause of divorce between the couple.

Final code list
1 = Adultery
2 = Abuse
3 = Childlessness
4 = Desertion
5 = Financial difficulties
6 = Medical Insanity
7 = Imprisonment
9 = Unspecified