MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE

Both marriage and divorce rates have increased in the Asia/Pacific region since 2000 (Figure 3.7 and Figure 3.8). Crude marriage rates of Asia/Pacific countries are almost twice as high as the average across OECD countries whilst crude divorce rates are half of the OECD average. Crude marriage rates are highest at over nine marriages per 1,000 adults in China, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan; they are around four marriages per 1,000 adults in Australia, New Zealand and Thailand. Since 2000, crude divorce rates have increased in most Asia/Pacific countries, but not among the OECD countries in the Asia/Pacific region (Australia, Japan, Korea and New Zealand). Overall, countries with higher crude marriage rates tend to have higher crude divorce rates.

Across the Asia/Pacific the mean age of first marriage has increased by 3 years on average since 1990 (Figure 3.9). In 1990, the mean age at first marriage across the selected Asia/Pacific economies was 23.5 years for women and 26.1 years for men. By 2016, this average age had increased to 26.6 years for women and to 29.1 years for men, still some 3 to 4 years below the OECD average for men and women. A strong tendency of postponing marriages is observed across Asia/Pacific economies, but large cross-national differences remain: since 1990, the mean age at first marriage has increased by more than five years among men and women in Korea and Viet Nam, while change was much more limited in Azerbaijan and Tajikistan, where the mean age of first marriage for women increased by less than a year.

Definition and measurement

The crude marriage rate is defined as the number of legal civil unions or marriages each year per 1,000 people. The crude divorce rate (CDR), defined as the number of legal civil unions or marriages that are dissolved each year per 1,000 people.

The mean age at first marriage is defined as the mean average age in years of marrying persons at the time of first marriage. This measure is disaggregated by gender with separate averages for men and women.

The crude marriage rate is the number of marriages formed each year as a ratio to 1,000 adults; similarly, the crude divorce rate is the number of marriages dissolved in a given year as related to the total adult population. The data were taken from the 2006 and 2016 UN Demographic Yearbook of the UN department of Economic and Social Affairs Statistics Division.
3. GENERAL CONTEXT INDICATORS

**Figure 3.7. In most countries, marriage rates increased since 2000**
Crude marriage rates, per 1,000 persons, 2000 and 2016 or the latest year

![Graph showing marriage rates for various countries](https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/dyb/default.htm)


**Figure 3.8. In most countries, divorce rates increased since 2000**
Crude divorce rates, per 1,000 persons, 2000 and 2016 or the latest year

![Graph showing divorce rates for various countries](https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/dyb/default.htm)


**Figure 3.9. The mean age of first marriage has increased by 3 years since 1990**
The mean age of first marriage, 1990 and 2016 or the latest year

![Graph showing mean age of first marriage for various countries](https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/dyb/default.htm)

Note: All countries are in 1990 except Estonia (1992) and Poland (1993), and Chile, France, Latvia, Mexico, and Slovak Republic are not included in OECD average. All countries are in 2016 except Mexico (2014), Chile, France, Ireland, Israel, and United Kingdom (2015). Canada and Iceland are not included in OECD average.


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