

# Marriage and Divorce: Australian trends

Throughout a person's life one can experience several different marital states. Some marry, others remain unmarried, some **divorce**, are widowed and then remarry.

A shift in marriage and divorce rates reflects the changing of family structures in Australia. This change is influenced by increased awareness for health and financial security, a decline in the traditional social institution for family and population growth.

The marriage and divorce trends discussed below allow us to better understand where there has been a shift, and whether it may affect you.

All statistics referred to below are drawn from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2018 Marriage and Divorce report.

# Trends in Marriage

## The introduction of Same Sex Marriage:

The change to the Marriage Act 1961 in 2017 gave same sex couples the option to be married. Following the change in the Marriage Act same-sex Marriages now constitute 6,538 (5.5%) of the total number of marriages 119,188 for 2018 (ABS).

One third of same-sex marriages for 2018 occurred in New South Wales (35.0%). However, as they they only accounted for 5.6% of all marriages in NSW in 2018 the Australian Jurisdiction with the highest number of same sex marriages was the Australian Capital Territory with 8.3%.

## An Aging population

As social norms shift the current median age for Marriage recorded the greatest increase in more than a decade. This medium has been primarily influenced by the introduction of same sex couples who's medium was considerably higher than opposite-sex couples.

As stated by the ABS, 'The median age of same-sex couples in 2018 was 44.9 years for males and 39.3 years for females (compared with 32.1 years for males and 30.2 years for females for opposite-sex couples).'

## Timing

The *Marriages and Divorces, Australia, 2018* showed that the most popular season to marry was spring (31.8 per cent of all marriages), and the most popular day to marry was Saturday 20 October, with 1,993 couples tying the knot.

# Trends in Divorce:

While the above trends indicate a change in the culture of marriage, in addition to marrying less there has been a decrease in divorce rates in Australia. In 2018 there were 119,188 Australians marriages and 49,404 divorces in Australia. The divorce rate was 2.0 divorces per 1,000 people in 2018, compared to 2.7 in 1998. The medium age for such divorces was 45.9 years of age for males and 43.2 for females. In addition to this, the medium duration of such marriages were 12.3 years and 47.3% of all divorces involved children.

If you'd like more information on **Family Law including Marriage, Divorce** or you wish to obtain

advice, you should **contact Andersons Solicitors**.

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The information in this article is general in nature and was accurate at the time of publication. Laws and circumstances can change. For advice specific to your situation, please seek professional legal advice.