

28 January 2002

Coverage

England and Wales

Theme

Population and Migration

Marriages in 2000: England and Wales

First statistics on marriages that took place in England and Wales in 2000 are released today by National Statistics.

These show that:

- There were 267,961 marriages in 2000, a rise of almost 2 per cent from 263,515 in 1999. This is the first year that the number of marriages has increased since 1992.
- The proportion of religious marriages fell again between 1999 and 2000, from 38 to 36 per cent of all marriages. This proportion has fallen markedly since 1990 when over half of all marriages were solemnised in a religious ceremony.
- More than one in four of all civil marriages in 2000 took place in approved premises (17 per cent of all marriages). In 1996 fewer than one in ten civil marriages took place in approved premises.
- The downward trend in the marriage rate for men continued in 2000, with 27.7 men marrying per 1,000 unmarried men in 2000, compared with 28.1 in 1999. Among women the rate has risen for the first time in eight years, from 25.6 women marrying per 1,000 unmarried women in 1999 to 25.8 in 2000.
- Marriages where both parties were marrying for the first time accounted for 58 per cent of all marriages in 2000, a fall of one percentage point compared with 1999. Remarriages of both parties accounted for 19 per cent of all marriages.
- The average (mean) age at marriage has increased again for both men and women. For men, it rose from 34.4 years in 1999 to 34.8 years, while for women the corresponding rise was from 31.8 years to 32.1 years. The average age for single men marrying in 2000 was 30.5 years and for single women 28.2 years.

Issued by
National Statistics
1 Drummond Gate
London SW1V 2QQ

Telephone
Press Office 020 7533 5702
Email: press.office@ons.gov.uk
Public Enquiries 020 7533 5888

Contact
Gayle Hindess 01329 813772
Email gayle.hindess@ons.gov.uk

Statfax – fax retrieval service
This release 0906 7360 234

Internet
www.statistics.gov.uk/releases

Next publication date
Spring 2002

BACKGROUND NOTES

1. Further statistics on 2000 marriages in England and Wales will be published in March 2002 as a Report in *Population Trends* 107.
2. Approved premises are buildings such as hotels and stately homes licensed by local authorities under the Marriage Act 1994, for the solemnisation of civil marriages. In addition, some local authorities have made accommodation available for civil marriage as approved premises in place of register offices.
3. The mean ages presented in this first release are not standardised for age and therefore take no account of the changing age structure of the population.
4. Details of the policy governing the release of data are available from the press office.
5. National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the National Statistics Code of Practice. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference. © Crown copyright 2002.