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1. Introduction
This document accompanies the published divorce statistics and provides information on the data used. We produce divorce statistics which are published under the National Statistics logo, the designation guaranteeing that those outputs have been produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, and have been produced free from any political interference.

A marriage may be either:
- dissolved, following a petition for divorce and the granting of a decree absolute
- annulled, following a petition for nullity and the awarding of a decree of nullity

A decree absolute is known as a dissolution of marriage, and a decree of nullity is an annulment of marriage. In our statistics, the term divorce includes both types of decrees.

The divorce tables are published as a set of packages:
- Number of divorces, age at divorce and marital status before marriage
- Age at marriage, duration of marriage and cohort analyses
- Children of divorced couples

The latest data tables are available on our website. The tables provide statistics on divorces that took place in England and Wales during the latest available data year. Some tables also provide data back to 1858. Other tables provide a more limited history.

The metadata tab at the front of the relevant set of tables has more information relating to the specific packages.

Divorces quality and methodology information provides overview notes which pull together important qualitative information on the various dimensions of quality as well as providing a summary of methods used to compile the output.

Comparable statistics for England and Wales for earlier years are published as follows:
- from 1974 to 1994 in the annual reference volume Marriage and Divorce Statistics (series FM2)
- from 1995 to 2007 in Marriage, divorce and adoption statistics (series FM2)
- prior to 1974 in the Registrar General’s Statistical Review of England and Wales

Historical statistics for England and Wales have also been published in the volume Marriage and Divorce Statistics (Series FM2 No. 16). This covers divorce statistics from 1858 (the first year during which a decree of divorce could be petitioned for and granted in a civil court within England and Wales) up to 1983.

Annual divorce figures for the UK and constituent countries can be found in the Population and Health Reference tables. Scottish Government provides divorce statistics for Scotland. Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency provides divorce statistics for Northern Ireland.

Divorce statistics on case progression are available from the Ministry of Justice in Family Court Statistics Quarterly.

2. Legislation
The Divorce Reform Act 1969 came into effect in England and Wales on 1 January 1971. The Act introduced a solitary ground for divorce – that of the irretrievable breakdown of marriage. The Act, subsequently consolidated in the Matrimonial Causes Act 1973, made it possible for the first time for divorce to be petitioned for on the couple’s separation.

The Act attempted to remove the concepts of the guilty party and the matrimonial offence by introducing a single ground for divorce - the irretrievable breakdown of marriage. Such a breakdown can be established by the petitioner proving 1 or more of 5 facts; the first 3 of which — adultery, unreasonable behaviour, and desertion — are the former matrimonial offences. On the other hand, the 2 separation criteria — which allow
divorce either by mutual consent or on the application of the petitioner alone – were introduced for the first time by the Act, and so have no analogues among the grounds for divorce under former legislation.

The Matrimonial and Family Proceedings Act 1984 came into effect in England and Wales on 12 October 1984. The Act made 2 changes, the first replaced the discretionary time bar (minimum time interval between the date of marriage and being able to file a petition for divorce) of 3 years by an absolute time bar of 1 year. No petition can now be filed within the first year of marriage. The second change meant the Act no longer required courts to try to place the divorced spouses in the financial position they would have enjoyed, had the marriage not broken down.

The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 enabled same sex couples in England and Wales to marry from 29 March 2014. It also has a number of related provisions, including for those in a civil partnership to convert that relationship to a marriage if they choose to do so and provisions that will enable a person to change their legal gender without ending their existing marriage. These other provisions came into force on 10 December 2014. The Act does not remove the availability of civil partnerships for same sex couples. Statistics on divorces of same sex couples will be published from the 2015 data year.

3. Information collected
From 2013 onwards, divorce data have been extracted from HM Courts and Tribunals Service's (HMCTS) FamilyMan case management system and sent to us electronically on a monthly basis. Prior to the 2013 data year, divorce statistics for England and Wales were derived from data provided on the D105 form used to record decree absolutes. These paper forms were sent to us by the courts.

A copy of part of the form used to record a decree absolute, D105, which provides statistical information, is reproduced in Appendix 1.

While most information is supplied by the petitioner, some is also provided by the respondent to the court. Information on the original marriage is usually derived from a copy of the marriage entry.

The data analysed in the tables are summarised below:
Supplied by petitioner and respondent:
- date of marriage
- age at marriage (in years)
- marital status at marriage
- date(s) of birth of any children aged under 18
- number of children aged 18 or over

The length or duration of the marriage and the age at divorce are derived from the date of marriage, age at marriage, and date of decree absolute. The age of child at petition is derived from date of birth of child and date of petition.

Supplied by the court:
- date petition filed and date of decree absolute
- facts proven and class(es) of decree

The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) has responsibility for policy and legislation on divorces. Demographic information collected by HMCTS is analysed and published by us and MoJ relies on these analyses to inform policy decisions, financial decisions and workload decisions.
4. Accuracy of information
The information on the divorce form is supplied by the petitioner and respondent in fulfilling the legal requirements for filing a petition. Since the information is required for a legal process it may be presumed that the quality of the data is good, especially as the petitioner has to swear an affidavit that the information supplied is correct. There is no routine independent statistical verification of the data, but editing checks are carried out to detect clerical, coding and keying errors.

We conduct quality assurance tasks throughout the year on the dataset in preparation for the release of annual figures. These checks pick up courts from which there may be missing records. Checks are carried out to look for inconsistencies within the dataset to ensure there are minimal internal errors. During the quality assurance of the annual dataset, further checks are carried out on the data, including frequency checks and comparisons with previous year’s data as well as checks for duplicates.

MoJ also publish a summary of divorce figures as part of their Family Court Statistics Quarterly. MoJ analyses divorce data electronically through the HMCTS FamilyMan system.

The number of divorces, as indicated by ONS and MoJ statistics, while similar, do not match exactly. For example, in 2013 our total divorce figure was 114,720, compared with the MoJ figure of 115,176, a difference of 456 (0.4%). From the 2013 data year we have compiled divorce statistics from electronic extracts of divorces taken directly from the FamilyMan system used by the courts. This has helped to minimise the difference between the 2 sets of statistics, however some differences remain because we do not count precisely the same cases. For example:

- our divorce figures include annulments while MoJ figures do not; the number of annulments in 2013 published by MoJ was 365
- since 2007 divorce figures published by MoJ have included dissolutions of civil partnerships, which are not included in our figures; the number of civil partnership dissolutions in 2013 published by ourselves was 974, further information civil partnerships and civil partnership dissolutions can be found on our website

Using figures which are as comparable as possible (totals including annulments and civil partnership dissolutions), would result in figures of 115,694 and 115,541 being reported by us and MOJ respectively, a difference of only 153 (0.1%).

Prior to the 2013 data year, some other differences also existed from the way data were collected and processed. These include:

- differences in the number of late divorce records excluded from both MoJ and our annual datasets
- differences in the process to remove duplicate records
- differences between the number of records entered onto the FamilyMan system and the number of paper records received by us from courts

In June 2012, together with MoJ we published a joint statement on differences between these figures that existed at the time and worked closely together to reconcile the 2 sets of statistics as far as possible.

Prior to the 2013 data year when divorce records began to be received electronically, each year a certain number of divorces were not included in the published figures. This was because the decree absolute paper forms were received later than the date on which the annual dataset was taken. Table 1 shows the difference between the number of divorces stored on our database and the number included in our publications each year for 2000 to 2012. Although this meant that some divorces were not included in the statistics, it was a compromise which had to be taken in order to publish timely data. The electronic receipt of data now means that all divorces in a year are now received in time for our annual publication.
Table 1: Divorce decrees made absolute not included in the published data, 2000 to 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of decree absolute</th>
<th>Database</th>
<th>Published tables</th>
<th>Differences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>141,223</td>
<td>141,135</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>143,854</td>
<td>143,818</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>147,791</td>
<td>147,735</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>153,073</td>
<td>153,065</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>152,926</td>
<td>152,923</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>141,326</td>
<td>141,322</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>132,147</td>
<td>132,140</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>128,138</td>
<td>128,131</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>121,720</td>
<td>121,708</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>114,149</td>
<td>113,949</td>
<td>200i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>119,669</td>
<td>119,589</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>117,575</td>
<td>117,558</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>118,320</td>
<td>118,140</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

i Counts taken on 9 November 2015
ii 194 decree absolute forms for 2009 were received in April 2011 after the publication of our 2009 divorce statistics on 17 February 2011. Our divorce statistics for 2009 have not been revised to incorporate these late divorce forms since the number is relatively small (less than 0.2% of all decree absolutes for 2009) and the impact on statistics is negligible.

The Divorces quality and methodology information provides overview notes which pull together important qualitative information on the various dimensions of quality as well as providing a summary of methods used to compile the output.

5. Derived information
Some information used in the tables is not part of the basic data supplied, but is derived as follows:

- age at divorce – is derived from age at marriage as given in the marriage entry; as this is the age last birthday, six months is added to obtain an estimate of the age at marriage and this is then added to the duration of marriage, which is calculated as the difference between the date of divorce and the date of marriage (in months and years). From this an estimated age last birthday at the date of divorce is derived
- dependent children – in the tables an upper age limit of 16 has been used
- age of child at petition – is derived from date of birth of child and date of petition
- duration of marriage to decree absolute is derived from date of marriage and date of decree absolute

6. Missing information and corrections
In cases, where one or more of the items of information collected is found to be missing, the procedure adopted in such cases is as follows:

- age at marriage – the figure is imputed using a series of look-up tables, depending on whether the age of one or both parties is missing
- marital status at marriage – bridegrooms are assumed to be single men who have never been married, and brides are assumed to be single women who have never been married
- date of marriage – is very rarely missing. Table 2 in the Number of divorces, age at divorce and marital status before marriage package shows the number of not stated age at divorce, this is due to missing information about date of marriage

Table 2 below shows the level of imputation required for age at marriage and marital status at marriage.
Table 2: Level of imputation required for certain variables, 2001 to 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of decree absolute</th>
<th>Age of husband and/or wife</th>
<th>Marital status of husband</th>
<th>Marital status of wife</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>3.4% of records</td>
<td>4.2% of records</td>
<td>4.1% of records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>3.6% of records</td>
<td>4.2% of records</td>
<td>4.0% of records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>4.0% of records</td>
<td>4.4% of records</td>
<td>4.0% of records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>4.2% of records</td>
<td>4.6% of records</td>
<td>4.2% of records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>4.0% of records</td>
<td>5.1% of records</td>
<td>4.4% of records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>4.0% of records</td>
<td>5.3% of records</td>
<td>4.7% of records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>4.3% of records</td>
<td>5.7% of records</td>
<td>5.1% of records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>5.1% of records</td>
<td>6.6% of records</td>
<td>5.9% of records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>5.7% of records</td>
<td>7.1% of records</td>
<td>6.3% of records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>6.2% of records</td>
<td>8.0% of records</td>
<td>7.2% of records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>7.8% of records</td>
<td>10.3% of records</td>
<td>9.3% of records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>8.4% of records</td>
<td>12.4% of records</td>
<td>11.3% of records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>8.1% of records</td>
<td>13.0% of records</td>
<td>11.8% of records</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The level of imputation for age at marriage and marital status at marriage has been increasing over recent years. During the divorce process these fields are taken from the marriage certificate supplied by the petitioner. Some marriage certificates relating to marriages which took place outside of England and Wales do not contain these fields. Marital status and age at marriage are also not mandatory fields in the divorce process and consequently are not always collected by the courts.

7. General notes

7.1 Coverage
The divorces analysed are decrees of dissolutions and annulments of marriage granted in England and Wales in each calendar year.

7.2 Base populations
Following a consultation surrounding the population estimates by marital status in summer 2014, there has been a change in the methodology used to produce the estimates for England and Wales, for the years 2002 onwards. The new method involves using the marital status distribution from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and applying this to published population estimates (by 5-year age group and sex) for England and Wales. Annex B in the consultation response document provides more information on the new methodology. Population estimates by marital status for the years 2002 to 2010 were revised and published in July 2015 alongside new population estimates by marital status for the years 2011 to 2014. As a result of the change in the methodology, revised divorce rates for England and Wales back to 2002 were published in November 2015.

The population estimates used are the most up-to-date when rates are published. The population estimates used to calculate rates are detailed alongside the published tables. The quality and methodology information and the Population Estimates by Marital Status and Living Arrangements information document provide more detail on the new methodology.

The differences resulting from the change in methodology are explained in the bulletin Population Estimates by Marital Status and Living Arrangements – England and Wales, 2002 to 2014 and within the associated tables.

7.3 Analyses by area
We do not produce divorce statistics by area of residence. This is because divorce data provided to us by the courts does not contain information on the area of residence of the parties. Information on the location of
the court is available from the Ministry of Justice in Family Court Statistics Quarterly, but this is not a good indicator of where the parties lived either before or after separation, as the 2 parties may choose the court they wish to use and courts are not evenly spread around England and Wales.

7.4 Rates
Rates have been calculated using the most appropriate estimates of the population – Table 3 shows the denominator used.

Table 3: Denominators used in calculating rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Release / Table</th>
<th>Rate</th>
<th>Denominator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual divorce release: Number of divorces and age at divorce – tables 3a and 3b</td>
<td>Males divorcing per 1,000 married males, by age group. Females divorcing per 1,000 married females, by age group</td>
<td>Married males by age group. Married females by age group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ Vital Statistics: Population and Health reference tables ] Annual time series data table - This provides divorce numbers and rates for the UK and its constituent countries</td>
<td>Persons divorcing per 1,000 married population. Males divorcing per 1,000 married male population. Females divorcing per 1,000 married female population.</td>
<td>Persons married. Married males. Married females.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.5 Cohort analyses
Most divorce statistics are presented on the basis of the calendar year in which the divorce was granted. An alternative approach is to present divorce statistics on the basis of the year of marriage or the year of birth. In this case a cohort is a group of people either married in the same year or born in the same year. Such tables can provide estimates of the proportion of people married or born in a particular year who divorce by a particular anniversary or age.

Age at marriage, duration of marriage and cohort analyses - Table 2: Cumulative percentage of marriages ending in divorce by year of marriage and by anniversary
To produce Table 2, the number of marriages in a given year is used as the denominator and the numbers of divorces in subsequent years to couples married in the original year are used as the numerators. Duration of marriage is estimated by differencing the year and month of marriage and the year and month of divorce, as this gives a more precise measure of duration than just differencing the years.

For example, the proportion of marriages in 1990 ending in divorce up to the fifth anniversary is calculated as follows:

- The number of couples divorcing in England and Wales between 1990 and 1995 who married in 1990 and who had not reached their 5th anniversary before they divorced
Divorce Statistics: Metadata

Table 2 is based on several assumptions which should be borne in mind when using the figures:

- Couples marry in the country in which they are resident (for example there are (a) no marriages abroad or in Scotland or Northern Ireland by couples resident in England and Wales and (b) no marriages in England and Wales to non-residents). In practice the estimated number of marriages abroad or in the rest of the UK by couples resident in England and Wales has exceeded the estimated number of marriages to non-residents over the past decade. Estimated marriages abroad are taken into account in population estimates by marital status but not in this cohort table, as estimated divorces abroad are not available. This could lead to over-estimation of the proportion of marriages ending in divorce as couples marrying abroad would be included in the divorce figures if they divorce, but would not be included in the marriage figures.

- Zero migration to and from England and Wales for example those resident in England and Wales have not emigrated since marrying; and no married couples migrate to England and Wales and then divorce in England and Wales.

- A marriage can only end in divorce or by the death of one of the partners. Table 2 does not take into account that some marriages have ended by death and are thus no longer at risk of ending in divorce. This will have most impact at the longer marriage durations, where spouses are likely to be older. For example if 25% of couples marrying in a particular year had divorced by 40 years later, that does not imply that 75% are still married, as a proportion of individuals will have been widowed.

7.6 Cumulative percentage of marriages ending in divorce

The cumulative percentage of marriages ending in divorce or death by anniversary is a table which we periodically produce. The table uses mortality and divorce rates for a single calendar year to produce a single figure for the percentage of marriages ending in divorce. The most recent version of the table was published in Divorces in England and Wales, 2012 (Age at marriage, duration of marriage and cohort analyses – Table 2a). The table was produced using 2010 mortality and divorce rates. A similar table using 2005 rates is available on our website.

This period table takes divorce rates at all years of marriage from a calendar year of divorces data and provides a single figure summarising the proportion of marriages ending in divorce for that calendar year. The table differs from cohort table 2 published annually which uses all years of marriage and divorce data available and provides the proportion of marriages ending in divorce by year of marriage.

A complex method was used to calculate the period table showing the cumulative percentage of marriages ending in divorce. Firstly, the married population by duration of marriage was calculated for 2010. This involves the following stages:

1. Obtain the married population by sex and single year of age from published 2001 mid-year marital status estimates. The 2001 mid-year estimates are the closest to the 2001 census base and should therefore be the best estimate of the population by marital status. Then allocate the 2001 married population to the year they married according to the number of marriages that occurred in each year before 2001 (by sex and age). This creates a married population for mid-2001 by year of marriage (that can therefore be presented by duration of marriage).

2. This married population is then moved on 1 year at a time from 2002 to 2010 by:
   - ageing the married population on by 1 year, each year. For example a married person aged 16 in 2001 would be 17 in 2002, 18 in 2003 and so on.
   - adding marriages and removing divorces for each year since 2001 according to the year they took place, the age and sex of such people
   - allocating marriages ending due to death across all years of marriage according to the married population distribution (by sex and age).

This method does not account for migration or marriages abroad since 2001.
The result is a married population for 2010 by sex, age and year of marriage which is then converted to duration of marriage. Because we know the year a person married, we know how long they have been married. This married population is the denominator for the table.

A multi-decrement life table technique is then used to analyse the proportion of marriages ending in divorce and death. This is a table for a hypothetical population living their life in 2010. Unlike a standard mortality life table, which is calculated by age, this life table uses different durations of marriage (or anniversaries, see column (a) in the table). There are 2 ways that a married individual can leave the married population, divorce or death, because the life table assumes no migration. The probability of either event happening, columns (b) and (c), is calculated using 2010 divorce and mortality data as the numerator. The denominator for this calculation is the 2010 married population.

For divorce, the duration of marriage is calculated using the date of marriage and date of divorce from D105 forms from courts. For death, both the person dying and the surviving partner are considered because neither individual remains in the married population (as one is deceased and the other becomes widowed).

As outlined above, an age-sex structure is calculated for each year of marriage. Age-sex specific death rates are then used to calculate death rates by each year of marriage for 2010.

Given a starting number of 100,000 marriages, column (d) in the table shows the number of marriages that will survive to the stated anniversary. Columns (e) and (f) show the number that will end in divorce or death before the next anniversary. This then allows the calculation in columns (g) and (h) of the cumulative percentage of marriages ended before the next anniversary, and column (i) which shows the cumulative percentage of marriages surviving. Finally, column (j) shows the average number of years of life of marriage remaining. For example, couples celebrating their 30th anniversary can expect to be married, on average, for a further 22 years. This assumes that divorce and mortality rates remain unchanged from 2010.

It is also important to note that civil partnerships are not included in the above figures. Also, the results of the 2011 Census (such as the age and sex distribution of the married population) have not been incorporated into the calculations.

8. Other useful links and divorce related articles

Further statistics on marriages, civil partnership formations and dissolutions and families and households are available on our website. Data on Population estimates by marital status provide the estimated population by age group, sex and marital status (single, married, civil partnered, divorced, and widowed) for England and Wales.

Other related articles include:
- The number of people age 60 and over getting divorced has risen since the 1990s (2013)
- What percentage of marriages end in divorce? (2013)
- Age differences at marriage and divorce, part of Population Trends 132, pp 17–25 (summer 2008)
- The proportion of marriages ending in divorce, part of Population Trends 131, pp 28–36 (spring 2008)
- Divorce and remarriage in England and Wales, part of Population Trends 95, pp 18–22 (spring 1999)
- Children who experience divorce in their family, part of Population Trends 87, pp 5–10 (spring 1997)
- Divorce and children: fact proven and interval between petition and divorce, part of Population Trends 84, pp 28–32 (summer 1996)
- First marriage, divorce and remarriage: birth cohort analyses, part of Population Trends 72, pp 24–33 (summer 1993)
- Patterns of marriage, divorce and cohabitation in the different countries of Europe, part of Population Trends 69, pp 27–36 (autumn 1992)

International publications of interest include the United Nation's Demographic Yearbook (New York), and Population - issued 4 times a year by INED (Institut National d’Etudes Démographiques, Paris).
9. Further information

General enquiries on divorce statistics should be addressed to:
Vital Statistics Outputs Branch
Office for National Statistics
Segensworth Road
Titchfield
Fareham
Hants PO15 5RR
Telephone: 01329 444110
email: vsob@ons.gsi.gov.uk

The ONS charging policy is available on our website. In line with the ONS approach to open data, all ad hoc data requests will be published onto the website.

Special extracts and tabulations of divorce data for England and Wales are available to order (subject to legal frameworks, disclosure control, resources and agreement of costs, where appropriate). Enquiries should be made to the postal or email address above.

We welcome feedback from users on the content, format and relevance of this release. Please send feedback to the postal or e-mail address above.

10. Glossary

**Annullment**
An annulment of marriage occurs following a successful petition for nullity. It declares that the marriage itself is void (that no valid marriage ever existed) or voidable (was legal at time of registration but is no longer legal).

**Decree Absolute**
Granted upon a dissolution of marriage, following a petition for divorce, a decree absolute ends a valid marriage. See Dissolution.

**Decree Nisi**
Following the grounds for divorce being proven, the district judge grants a decree nisi as a provisional measure. Six weeks later the petitioner can apply for a decree absolute.

**Decree of Nullity**
Granted upon an annulment of marriage following a petition for nullity, a decree of nullity declares that the marriage itself is void and that no valid marriage ever existed. See Annullment.

**Department of Constitutional Affairs (DCA)**
Prior to 9 May 2007, the DCA was responsible, among other things, for the administration of the court system in England and Wales through the Court Service. See Her Majesty's Court service.
| **Dissolution** | A dissolution of marriage occurs following a successful petition for divorce and ends a valid marriage. Dissolution of marriage covers nullity and divorce. See Decree Absolute. |
| **Facts Proven** | A petitioner must prove one or more of five facts (adultery, unreasonable behaviour, desertion, and separation, either with or without consent of the respondent), in order to establish the irretrievable breakdown of the marriage. |
| **Her Majesty’s Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS)** | Her Majesty’s Courts and Tribunals Service is an executive agency of the Ministry of Justice and is responsible for the running of most of the courts and tribunals in England and Wales. HMCTS supplies information on divorces to ONS. |
| **Judicial Separation** | This is an alternative to divorce and does not dissolve the marriage, but absolves the parties from the obligation to live together. This procedure might, for example, be used if religious beliefs forbid or discourage divorce. |
| **Lord Chancellor’s Department (LCD)** | Prior to 12 June 2003 and constitutional reforms, the LCD was responsible for the administration of the court system in England and Wales through the Court Service. |
| **Ministry of Justice (MoJ)** | Following constitutional reforms, the Ministry of Justice was created on 9 May 2007 replacing the DCA. It is responsible, among other things, for the administration of the court system in England and Wales through the Court Service. |
| **ONS** | Since 1 April 2008, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) is the executive office of the UK Statistics Authority. |
| **OPCS** | Office of Population Censuses and Surveys – joined with Central Statistical Office in 1996 to become ONS. |
| **Petitioner** | The person seeking a dissolution or annulment. |
| **Respondent** | The person to whom a petition for divorce has been served. |
| **VSOB** | Vital Statistics Outputs Branch within ONS. |
# Appendix 1
Form used by the courts to record a divorce decree absolute (Form D105)

**FORM 105 DECREE ABSOLUTE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPC3 CODE</th>
<th>OPC3 NUMBER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Court Name

## Surname of Marriage

## Forename(s) of Spouse obtaining Decree

## Forename(s) of other Spouse

## Number of Matter

## Date Petition Filed
(Inset full date: DD/MM/YY)

## Date of Decree Absolute
(Inset full date: DD/MM/YY)

## Class(es) of Decree
(Inset A,B,C,D,E, etc. or combinations as appropriate. If nullify enter "N")

## Please enter Y (for Yes) or N (for No)
as appropriate, for each question

## Date of Marriage
(Inset full date: DD/MM/YY)

## Age at Marriage in years

## Status at Marriage
(Inset M, F, B, or W as appropriate)

## Date of Birth of Children under 18
(oldest first)

## Number of Children aged 18 or over

## Alternative or present Surname of Spouse obtaining Decree

## Alternative Forename(s) of Spouse obtaining Decree

## Alternative or present Surname of other Spouse

## Alternative Forename(s) of other Spouse

## Husband's occupation

## Wife's occupation

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**SPECIMEN**