

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Statistics Division, Demographic and Social Statistics Branch

United Nations *Demographic Yearbook* review

National reporting of data on marriage and divorce
Implications for international recommendations

English only

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The Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat is a vital interface between global policies in the economic, social and environmental spheres and national action. The Department works in three main interlinked areas: (i) it compiles, generates and analyses a wide range of economic, social and environmental data and information on which Member States of the United Nations draw to review common problems and to take stock of policy options; (ii) it facilitates the negotiations of Member States in many intergovernmental bodies on joint courses of action to address ongoing or emerging global challenges; and (iii) it advises interested Governments on the ways and means of translating policy frameworks developed in United Nations conferences and summits into programmes at the country level and, through technical assistance, helps build national capacities.

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Preface

United Nations *Demographic Yearbook* review technical reports

The present report, on national reporting of age and sex-specific data, is one of a series of technical reports reviewing the United Nations *Demographic Yearbook* system. The system is designed to collect, store and disseminate official national demographic and social statistics at the international level, and provides a selection of these data to a wide range of users through print publications, such as the annual *Demographic Yearbook*, CD Rom on special topics¹, and the Internet².

Earlier drafts of these technical reports served as input to the United Nations Expert Group Meeting to Review the *Demographic Yearbook* System³ which aimed to assess the continued relevance and responsiveness of the system to the emerging needs of a variety of users. Information on the Expert Group Meeting can be found on the website of the United Nations Statistics Division at: http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/workshop/EGM_dyb/index.htm. The reports review the instruments used by the *Demographic Yearbook* system to collect data from national statistical offices in terms of how well they adhere to relevant international guidelines in terms of concepts, definitions and classifications used.

Furthermore, the technical reports review the experience of countries with regard to reporting of the requested data to the *Demographic Yearbook* system for the period 1961 to 2000, and relate national practices with respect to classifications to relevant international recommendations for the topics being reported. The main international recommendations that are the focus of the assessment are, as appropriate, the *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses, Revision 1*⁴, the *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System, Revision 2*⁵, and *Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration, Revision 1*⁶.

The reviews, as well as the discussion at the Expert Group Meeting, have highlighted a number of issues including the fact that the questionnaires for the *Demographic Yearbook* system need to be reviewed and revised to bring them in line with international guidelines in terms of concepts and classifications used as well as the content of the tables.

¹ Two CD-ROMs have so far been issued: the *Demographic Yearbook Historical Supplement*, which presents demographic statistics for the period 1948 to 1997, and the *Demographic Yearbook: Natality Statistics*, which contains a series of detailed tables dedicated to natality and covering the period 1980 to 1998.

² For example, data on capital cities and cities with population of 100,000 or more are available at <http://www.un.org/depts/unsd/demog/index.html>; and, data from the *Population and Vital Statistics Report* are available to subscribers at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/seriesa/index.asp>.

³ Held in November 2003, in New York.

⁴ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.98.XVII.8.

⁵ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.01.XVII.10.

⁶ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.98.XVII.14.

Furthermore, the review of reported data based on the experience of previous censuses has pointed to the need for a review and updating of international recommendations.

At its thirty-fifth session, the United Nations Statistical Commission⁷ recommended the formation of an Expert Group to consider critical issues related to planning the 2010 round of population and housing censuses, and to set plans for a world programme including use of common definitions, concepts, classifications, tabulations and dissemination mechanisms for population and housing censuses. This mandate requires a review and possible revision or supplementation of the current census recommendations which were developed for the 2000 census round. These technical reports contribute to that review. They also provide some indication of the capacity of countries and areas to report their national data to the *Demographic Yearbook* system.

⁷ *Report on the thirty-fifth session (2-5 March 2004)*. Economic and Social Council, Official Records 2004, Supplement No. 4. E/2004/24: E/CN.3/2004/33. <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/doc04/report-submitted.pdf>; paragraph 2 (a).

Executive Summary

The report aims to assess the effectiveness of the *Demographic Yearbook* system in the collection and dissemination of official national statistics on marriage and divorce. Effectiveness is judged by: (a) comparing concepts, definitions, classifications and tabulations relevant to marriage and divorce in *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires with the United Nations principles and recommendations; (b) assessing the level of response for the period 1961 to 2000 for each *Demographic Yearbook* table relevant to marriage and divorce; and (c) reviewing the pattern of dissemination of data on marriage and divorce since the *Demographic Yearbook* was first issued in 1948.

The report notes that in some cases the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires do not conform entirely to the United Nations principles and recommendations on population censuses and on vital statistics. The report also shows that the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires contain a number of tables that are either not consistent with the recommendations or not recommended in the latest United Nations principles and recommendations.

As regards the level of response, although most countries/areas have reported data on marriage and divorce at least once between 1961 and 2000, there are significant variations between tables. The report also reveals that although most data on marriage and divorce collected through the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires have been disseminated regularly through the *Demographic Yearbook*, data for a number of tables, such as marriages by month of occurrence, have not recently been disseminated.

Introduction

1. The Demographic and Social Statistics Branch has the responsibility for the collection, processing and dissemination of demographic and social statistics for the United Nations Statistics Division. The Statistics Division collects these data from national statistical offices through a series of questionnaires. It then disseminates these official national statistics through the *Demographic Yearbook* and other publications.

2. The Statistics Division sends six questionnaires to national statistical offices on a regular basis. These are:

- Population Census
- Population Census-Economic Characteristics
- Population Census-Household Characteristics
- Vital Statistics
- Population Estimates
- International migration and travel statistics

3. Of these six questionnaires, five are used to collect information relevant to the study of marriage and divorce. Only one questionnaire—the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on International migration and travel statistics—does not contain any questions relevant to marriages, divorces and marital status and is not further examined here.

4. The first three *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires —Population Census; Population Census-Economic Characteristics; and Population Census-Household Characteristics— collect and compile national data from censuses. These three questionnaires are sent on a periodical basis, after a country has completed a population and housing census.

5. The fourth questionnaire—the questionnaire on Vital Statistics—compiles data collected from civil and vital registers, while the fifth questionnaire—Population Estimates—draws information from multiple sources, including continuous population register, censuses, sample surveys, partial census or partial registration and non-censal counts. These two questionnaires are sent to countries on an annual basis.

6. Overall these questionnaires contain 27 tables relevant to the study of marriage and divorce. This represents roughly one quarter of all of the tables contained in the various *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires; an indication of the importance attributed to the topic of marital formation and dissolution in the *Demographic Yearbook* data collection system.

7. The questionnaire with the largest and most detailed number of tables on marriage, divorce, annulments etc. is the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics. These tables are:

- Table 1F Marriages;
- Table 1G Divorces and annulments;
- Table 1H Divorces;
- Table 1I Annulments;
- Table 24 Marriages by month of marriage;
- Table 25 Marriages by previous marital status of bride and groom;
- Table 26 Marriages by age of bride and groom;
- Table 26A Marriages by age of groom and bride at first marriage;
- Table 27 Marriages by age and previous marital status of bride and groom;
- Table 28 Divorces by duration of marriage;
- Table 29 Divorces by number of dependent children;
- Table 30 Divorces by age of husband and age of wife;
- Table 31 Divorces by duration of marriage and age of husband and wife;
- Table 3 Live births by legitimacy and sex;
- Table 5 Legitimate live-births by duration of marriage;
- Table 6 Live births by age of mother, sex of child, legitimacy and by urban/rural residence;
- Table 7 Live births by age of father and legitimacy;
- Table 16 Death by age, sex and marital status;
- Table 20 Late foetal deaths by age of mother and legitimacy.

8. The *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Population Estimates contains one table relevant to the topic of this paper:

- Table 4 Estimated population by marital status, age, sex and urban/rural residence.

9. The *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires on Population Census and on Population Census-Economic Characteristics each collect one table related to the marital status of the population. These tables are respectively:

- Table 7 Population by marital status, age, sex and urban/rural residence;
- Table 8 Population aged ___or over by type of activity, age, sex and marital status.

10. The *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires on Population Census-Household Characteristics contains five tables:

- Table 3 Households by age and sex and marital status of household head or other reference member;
- Table 4 Household by number of persons in household and relationship to head or other reference member of household by age and sex of head of household or other reference member;
- Table 5 Population by number of persons in household and relationship to head or other reference member of household by age and sex of head of household or other reference member;
- Table 6 Household by type of household, number of household members and presence of spouse by age and sex of head of household or other reference member;
- Table 8 Household population by relationship to householder, (head or reference person), age and sex.

A. Definitions and classifications relevant to marriage and divorce

11. Unlike birth and death, which are biological events, marriage and divorce are defined in terms of laws and customs and as such are less amenable to universally applicable statistical definitions. In the study of marital formation and dissolution these differences are particularly noteworthy. In some countries, for example, marriage is governed by civil law, which may or may not be supplemented with religious rites; in other countries, unions by mutual consent without ceremonial or legal rites constitute formal and legally binding contracts. Likewise, the laws and regulations relating to divorces range from total prohibition, to the granting of divorce in response to a simple statement of desire or intention (United Nations, 2001). Because of these differences, statisticians have had to define marriage and divorce in broad enough terms to account for the laws and customs of different countries or areas.

12. This section does not address the specifics of each country, but focuses primarily on two aspects. First, how do the various *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires compare to the most recent principles and recommendations? Second, how consistently are concepts and definitions used throughout the various *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires? Six key concepts and definitions are examined in this section. These are: marriage, divorce, annulment, separation, consensual union and legitimacy status.

i. Marriage

13. The current edition of the *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System* defines marriage as:

“an act, ceremony or process by which the legal relationship of husband and wife is constituted. The legality of the union may be established by civil, religious or other means as recognized by the laws of each country” (United Nations, 2001, para. 56).

It is interesting to note that this definition has changed over time. In the 1953 edition of the *Principles for a Vital Statistics System*, marriage was defined as the:

“legal union of persons of opposite sex” sanctioned by “civil, religious or other means recognized by the laws of each country” (United Nations, 1953, para 202).

14. The *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics defines marriage as:

“all legal unions of persons of opposite sex, established by civil, religious, or other means recognized by law”

in accordance with the older editions of the principles and recommendations. It appears that this definition needs to be undated to reflect the more recent definition of marriage given in the 2001 *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System*.

15. It is interesting to notice that the definition provided in the *Principles and Recommendations* is broad enough to accommodate the different practices of various countries and areas. Illustrations of this are provided by country responses to the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics. Panama, for example, provided data based on marriage licenses issued; Spain on civil marriages and Singapore excluded marriages previously officiated outside the country or under religious and customary rites (*Demographic Yearbook* database, 2004).

16. Likewise in a number of countries certain segments of the population are excluded. The data provided by Guyana⁸ through the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics, for example, refer exclusively to Christian marriages, excluding persons of Amerindian origin. The figures reported by Malaysia refer to non-Moslem civil marriages and Christian ritual marriages. Likewise, in Colombia data include only marriages recorded in Roman Catholic Church registers, with the exception of the city of Bogotá (*Demographic Yearbook* database, 2004).

ii. Consensual union

17. Neither the current edition of the *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System* nor the 1998 *Principles and Recommendations Population and Housing Censuses* explicitly define consensual unions. However, the importance of collecting such data is reiterated in both publications (United Nations, 1998 and 2001).

18. The difficulty of identifying a definition for consensual unions at an international level stems in part from the different attitude that countries and areas hold towards this type of event. While some countries, for example, recognize consensual unions granting them legal rights similar, or equal, to those accorded to marriages, other countries do not

⁸ Guyana provided data between 1948 and 1968.

recognize them at all. As earlier stated, these differences are reflected in the data, with some countries supplying information on consensual unions on a regular basis, others supplying data on persons in consensual unions in combination with other categories, and others still excluding this category from the tabulation on marital status altogether. In the latest issue of the *Demographic Yearbook* focused on marriage and divorce, which was published in 1990 (United Nations, 1990), 14 countries out of the 52 that provided data on population by marital status supplied data on persons living in consensual unions (see Table 2).

19. Consensual unions are not explicitly defined in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires.

iii. Divorce

20. Divorce is defined in the 2001 *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System* as:

“a final legal dissolution of a marriage, that is, that separation of husband and wife which confers on the parties the right to remarriage under civil, religious and/or other provisions, according to the laws of each country” (United Nations, 2001, para. 57).

21. This definition has remained virtually unchanged since the 1953 edition of the *Principles for a Vital Statistics System* (United Nations, 1953).

22. Although most countries recognize divorce as a legally sanctioned act, a number of countries do not. Consistently, these countries do not provide data on divorces to the *Demographic Yearbook* data collection system.

23. The *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires on Vital Statistics defines divorce as:

“All final, legal dissolutions of marriage which confer on parties the right to re-marry”⁹

Although this definition is not inconsistent with the 2001 *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System*, it would be recommendable to provide the more detailed version cited above in line with the present recommendations.

iv. Annulments

24. Countries that do not recognize divorce often collect data on annulments, which are defined in the 2001 *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System* as:

⁹ Annulment, which are voidings of marriage, should be included with divorce

“the invalidation or voiding of a marriage by a competent authority, according to the laws of each country, which confers on the parties the status of never having been married to each other” (United Nations, 2001, para. 57).

25. According to the *Demographic Yearbook* database, only eleven countries, (eight in Europe, two in South America and one in Asia) provided data on annulments over the past decade (*Demographic Yearbook* database, 2004). A number of countries, however, have provided data on annulments in combination with other categories. Tonga and Uruguay, for example, supplied data which combined annulments and divorces. Likewise, South Africa provided data on divorces that included legal separations and annulments (*Demographic Yearbook* database, 2004).

26. The *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires on Vital Statistics defines annulment simply as:

“voiding of marriages”

As mentioned above, a more detailed definition in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics in line with the present recommendations would be recommendable.

v. Separation

27. Separation is another interesting legal concept that has been defined in statistical terms as the:

“disunion of married persons, according to the laws of each country, without conferring on the parties the right to remarry” (United Nations, 2001, para. 57).

28. It is not uncommon for countries to combine divorces and separations in the tabulations they provide to the *Demographic Yearbook*. In the latest edition of the *Demographic Yearbook* focused on marriage and divorce (United Nations, 1990), for example, 10 countries out of the 52 countries that reported data on population by marital status combined the categories divorced and separated (see Table 2B). Likewise, eight countries and areas out of the 43 which reported data on households by sex and marital status of household head in the 1995 issue of the *Demographic Yearbook* provided data for a combination of separated and other categories such as married or divorced (see Table 2C).

29. Separations are not explicitly defined in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires.

vi. Legitimacy status

30. In the 1973 *Principles and Recommendations for Vital Statistics System*, legitimacy status was defined as follows:

“The status of the child or dead foetus with respect to being legitimate, that is, considered be the lawful issue of a couple within the particular culture concerned”.¹⁰
(Para. 21)

Although the concepts “legitimacy status”, “legitimate” or “illegitimate” are not explicitly defined in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires, it is probable that the 1973 *Principles and Recommendations* were used in designing the tables relevant to legitimacy.

31. In the 2001 *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System* a new set of definitions were introduced which shifted the emphasis from the child’s legitimacy status to the wedlock status of the mother. These changes were introduced to avoid the stigmatisation of the child (or individual).

32. According to the 2001 *Principles and Recommendations for Vital Statistics System*, therefore, live births or foetal deaths should be labelled as “born in wedlock” if the mother is married at the time of the birth or “born out of wedlock” if the mother is not married at the time of the delivery (United Nations, 2001). The *Principles and Recommendations* further recommend that the term “illegitimate” should not be used except as a statistical term for describing the number of out of wedlock births. It is unclear from these recommendations which changes should be incorporated in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires. It is interesting to notice, however, that in the latest *Principles and Recommendations* the categories “born in wedlock” and “born out of wedlock” are used instead of the categories “legitimate” and “illegitimate” in the tabulation *Live births by place of usual residence and age of mother and legitimacy status*.

vii. Marital status

33. Marital status is a demographic characteristic involving biological, social, economic, legal and in many cases religious aspects (Shyryock et al., 1971). As for the concepts described above, countries and areas have adopted different systems for classifying marital status.

34. The United Nations defined marital status in both the 1998 *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses* and in the 2001 *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System* as the “personal status of each individual with respect to the marriage laws or customs of the country” (United Nations, 1998, para. 2.96 and 2001, para. 168).

¹⁰ In the 1973 *Principles and Recommendations for Vital Statistics System* the categories “legitimate” and “illegitimate” are defined as:

- Legitimate: Persons born of parents who were married at the time of birth in accordance with the laws of the country or area.
- Illegitimate: Children of parents who according to national law, were not married at the time of birth, regardless of whether these children have been recognized or legitimised after birth.

35. It is interesting to notice, however, that the categories recommended in the two publications differ considerably (see Table 1 below). In the 2001 *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System*, for example, only the legally married are included in the category married, excluding consensually or religiously married persons, whereas in the 1998 *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses* this distinction is not made. Likewise, the 1998 *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses* includes both de jure and de facto separations in the category separated, while in the 2001 *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System* de jure separated are included under the category married (see Table 1 below).

Table 1: Categories of marital status in the most recent editions of the *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses* and the *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System*

CATEGORIES OF MARITAL STATUS IN:	
1998 Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses	2001 Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System
(a) Single	(a) Single (never married)
(b) Married	(b) Lawfully married
	(c) Religious married, consensual union and customary union
(c) Widowed and not remarried	(d) Widowed and not remarried
(d) Divorced and not remarried	(e) Divorced and not remarried
(e) Married but separated (both de jure and de facto)	(f) Married but legally separated (de jure only)

Source: United Nations (1998) and (2001)

The tabulations on population by marital status in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires generally follow the categories for marital status of the 2001 *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System*. Relatively few countries, however, are able to provide data according to these recommendations. Of the 75 countries and areas for which data on deaths by age and marital status were published in the 1996 *Demographic Yearbook*, only twelve countries reported data on consensually married persons (see Table 2A). Of these twelve countries, eight have continued reporting information on consensually married persons through the *Demographic Yearbook* data collection system. Of the eight, six are from South or Latin America¹¹ and two from Europe (United Nations *Demographic Yearbook* data base, 2004).¹² Two countries (Belgium and Luxembourg) no longer report deaths for consensually married persons. Finally two countries (Uruguay and Northern Mariana Islands) have not provided new figures on this topic since the ones published in the 1996 *Demographic Yearbook* (United Nations *Demographic Yearbook* data base, 2004).

¹¹ These are countries that provided data on deaths for the category consensually married are: Cuba (1994); Ecuador (1996, 1997 and 1998); El Salvador (1996, 1997 and 1998); Guatemala (1997); Mexico (1996, 1997 and 1998); and Venezuela (1996 and 1998).

¹² These are: Estonia (1995, 1996 and 1997); and Switzerland (1998). Luxembourg stopped reporting data on deaths for consensually married persons in 1998 after having provided these data in 1996.

Table 2: Number of countries and areas for which data were published on consensually married or separated persons in selected *Demographic Yearbook* tables

2A. Deaths by age and marital status	
	Questionnaire on Vital Statistics
Reported consensually married	Cuba (1991), Ecuador (1995), El Salvador (1992), Estonia (1994), Guatemala (1993), Luxembourg (1995), Mexico (1995), Northern Marina Islands (1989), Switzerland (1995), Uruguay (1990), Venezuela (1991)
Reported consensually married combined with another category	Belgium (1987) ¹³
Reported separated	Brazil (1994), Canada (1994), El Salvador (1992), Iceland (1995), Italy (1992), Luxembourg (1995), Malta (1995), Mexico (1995), New Zealand (1993), Norway (1992), Portugal (1995), Slovenia (1995), Uruguay (1990), Venezuela (1991), Zimbabwe (1986)
Report separated combined with another category	Denmark (1995) ¹⁴ , Greenland (1990) ¹⁴

Source: United Nations (1996)

2B. Population by age, sex, marital status, urban/rural		
	Questionnaire Population Census	Questionnaire Population Estimates
Reported consensually married	Bulgaria (1985), Mali (1987), New Caledonia (1989), Sweden (1985), Uruguay (1985), USSR (1989), Vanuatu (1989), Zaire (1984)	Bolivia (1988), Guatemala (1990), Haiti (1988), Pitcairn (1989)
Reported consensually married combined with another category	Niue (1986) ¹⁵	Luxembourg (1990) ¹⁵
Reported separated	Bulgaria (1985), Cayman Islands (1989), Channel Islands (1989), Equatorial Guinea (1983), Ireland (1986), Niue (1986), Norfolk Islands (1986), Northern Marina Islands (1980), Swaziland (1986), Uruguay (1985), Viet Nam (1989)	Haiti (1988), Iceland (1989), Norway (1990), Spain (1986), United States (1990)
Report separated combined with another category	Mali (1987) ¹⁶ , New Caledonia (1989) ¹⁶ , Tonga (1986) ¹⁶ , USSR (1989) ¹⁶ , Zaire (1984) ¹⁶	Bolivia (1988) ¹⁶ , Canada (1989) ¹⁴ , Denmark (1988) ¹⁴ , Falkland Islands (1986) ¹⁷ , Ireland (1988) ¹⁶ , Luxembourg (1990) ¹⁶ , Malta (1985) ¹⁶ , Netherlands (1987) ¹⁶

Source: United Nations (1990)

2C. Households by age and sex and marital status of household head or other reference member	
	Population Census questionnaire on Household Characteristics
Reported consensually married	Bahamas (1990), Canada (1991), Cayman Islands (1989), Denmark (1986), Finland (1990), Ireland (1991), Luxembourg (1991), Japan (1990), Mauritius (1990), Namibia (1991), Poland (1988), Portugal (1991), Republic of Korea (1990), Romania (1992), United States (1992), Uruguay (1985)
Reported consensually married combined with another category	New Zealand (1986) ¹³
Reported separated	Bahamas (1990), Belize (1991), Bermuda (1991), Canada (1991), Cayman Islands (1989), Central African Republic (1988), Cook Islands (1991), Cyprus (1992), Mauritius (1990), Namibia (1991), New Zealand (1991), Norway (1990), Portugal (1991), United States (1992), Uruguay (1985), Zambia (1990)
Report separated combined with another category	Benin (1992) ¹⁶ , Bolivia (1992) ¹⁶ , France (1990) ¹⁶ , Hong Kong (1991) ¹⁶ , Ireland (1991) ¹⁶ , Japan (1985) ¹⁶ , Poland (1988) ¹⁷ , Zimbabwe (1992) ¹⁶

Source: United Nations (1995)

¹³ Married and consensually married

¹⁴ Married and separated

¹⁵ Single and consensually married

¹⁶ Divorced and separated

¹⁷ Widowed, divorces and separated

36. Likewise, in the 1990 *Demographic Yearbook* dedicated to the special topic of marriage and divorce, 14 countries reported data for the category consensually married in the table on population by marital status, age and sex (see Table 2B). Of these fourteen countries, only four—Haiti (1990 and 1996); Pitcairn (1990, 1991, 1992 and 1993); Sweden (1990); and Uruguay (1996)—have continued reporting data for the category consensually married. Another seven countries have not supplied any new data since the publication of the 1990 *Demographic Yearbook* (Bulgaria, Guatemala, Mali, New Caledonia, Niue, Vanuatu and Democratic Republic of Congo). Luxembourg has continued reporting marital status combining the categories married and consensually married as one. Bolivia, on the other hand, modified the way in which it reports data on population by marital status to the *Demographic Yearbook* data collection system in 1992 when it merged the categories consensually married and married into one. Finally, some of the republics of the Soviet Union have maintained the category consensually married—such as Kyrgyzstan (1999)—while others have removed or merged it with the category married—such as Ukraine (1999) (United Nations *Demographic Yearbook* data base, 2004).

viii. Conclusions on definitions and classifications

37. As seen in this section, several changes would have to be introduced to make the definitions and classifications relevant to marriage and divorce in the various *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires consistent with the most recent editions of the *Principles and Recommendations*. The points below offer a summary of some of the main findings of this section.

38. First, the definitions of marriage and illegitimacy need to be updated in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics to reflect the most recent definitions cited in the *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System*.

39. Second, there is a lack of consistency between the definitions and classifications of marital status in the Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses, Rev. 1 and in the Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System.

40. Third, in the three *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires on censuses (Population, Economic Characteristics and Household Characteristics) marital status is defined according to the categories outlined in the *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System*. Given the *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses* were prepared to assist countries in conducting censuses, the definitions and classifications proposed in later perhaps should also be used in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires aimed at collecting national information from censuses.

B. Tabulations concerning on marriage and divorce in *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires

41. This section examines 27 tables contained in five different *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires. Because of the large number of tabulations relevant to marriage and divorce covered, this section is organised as follows: first a general introduction of each questionnaire and the various tables contained therein is given. Second, for each questionnaire, each table is compared with the appropriate tabulation recommended in past and present *Principles and Recommendations*.

42. In reviewing the tables included in *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires, it is important to recognise that the *Principles and Recommendations* represent precious guidelines. However, it is also important to acknowledge that the purpose for which they were developed; i.e., to assist countries in conducting their census and vital registration programmes, does not always coincide with that of the *Demographic Yearbook*.

I. Questionnaire on Vital Statistics

43. The *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics contains 19 tables relevant to the study of marital formation and dissolution. These tables are used to collect a wide range of information on marriage, divorce and marital status cross-tabulated by various social and demographic characteristics such as age, sex, number of children, occupational status, etc. Of the five *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires reviewed in this report, the questionnaire on Vital Statistics is the most important as it contains more than two-thirds of all relevant tabulations.

44. Many of the tabulations in the Vital Statistics questionnaire mirror the 1973 *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System*. The current *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire includes ten of the primary tabulations recommended in the 1973 *Principles and Recommendations* and three of the topics listed as first priority.

45. Comparing the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire to the 2001 *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System* it is clear that many of the tabulations in the questionnaires have not been recently updated. For example three of the tables, which were recommended in the 1973 *Principles and Recommendations*, are still included in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire, although they were removed from the minimum list of tabulations in the 2001 *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System*. Likewise, four of the tables included in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics have been modified in the most recent *Principles and Recommendations* and these changes have yet to be introduced in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire.

46. Of the five tables listed as first priority in the current *Principles and Recommendations*, only three are included in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire and two of these would need to be updated. For divorces, three tables out of seven are recommended in the 2001 *Principles and Recommendations*, although as for marriages one of these the definitions and classifications would have to be updated. It is interesting to observe that

one of the tables included in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire was never recommended in any edition of the *Principles and Recommendations*.

i. Vital Statistics Summary

47. Table 1-*Vital Statistics Summary* of the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics offers an overview of the marriages, divorces and annulments which took place over the last five years (United Nations, 2001). This table was included among the tabulations of primary importance for the first time in the 2001 *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System*. Comparing the table in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire with the recommendations in the 2001 *Principles and Recommendations*, it is clear that there are a two differences: first in the latter the categories “annulments and divorces” and “annulments” are not included in the tabulation; second information of deaths and marriages is cross-classified by place of usual residence. Following the 2001 recommendations it would be necessary to remove the two categories, namely “annulments” and “annulments and divorces” from the current questionnaire and add information on the place of residence of the husband or groom classified by: (i) total country; (ii) each major civil division; (iii) each minor civil division (optional). These categories should then be sub-classified into urban and rural.

ii. Marriages

48. There are currently five tables in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics which focus on marriages. These are examined below.

49. Table 24-*Marriages by month of marriage* shows the seasonal variation in marriages, information which is useful in socio-cultural studies and for the analysis and projections of consumption patterns. This tabulation has been recommended as part of the minimal list of tabulations since the 1953 *Principles for a Vital Statistics System*. It is important to note, however, that in the 2001 *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System* it was recommended that marriages be cross-tabulated by place of residence of groom and month of occurrence (see page 106). This modification was introduced to ensure that this table could be used as an administrative tool for checking on seasonal swings in workloads for registration offices in civil divisions (United Nations, 2001). Following these recommendations it would be necessary to explore the possibility of adding information on the place of residence of the groom classified by: (i) total country; (ii) each major civil division; (iii) each minor civil division (optional).

50. Table 25-*Marriages by previous marital status of bride and groom* provides information for the analysis of nuptiality patterns as well as an important indicator of family stability. It was indicated as a topic of first priority in the 1953 *Principles for a Vital Statistics System* and in the 1973 *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System*. However, since then it has been removed from the minimal list of tabulations on vital statistics (United Nations, 2001).

51. Table 26-*Marriages by age of bride and groom* is relevant to the study of age-specific patterns of family-formation as well as to the study of future fertility patterns (United Nations, 1973). In the current edition of the *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System* this table is still included among the minimal list, however, as for Table 24 it has been modified, with the introduction of information on place of residence of groom. As mentioned above place of residence of groom would include: (i) total country; (ii) each major civil division; (iii) each minor civil division (optional). The age groupings suggested in the current tabulation of the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire are in line with the most recent recommendations.

52. Table 26A-*First marriages by age of bride and groom* is the only table on marriages in *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics that does not appear in any of the list of tabulations presented in the various *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System*. It is possible to make two broad speculations about how this tabulation was introduced in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire in the first place. First, it was probably included for the computation of the mean age at first marriage, since it is the only tabulation of the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire that requests detailed information for the ages 16 to 24. Second, since part of the information gathered from this table (for the age groups 25-29 to 50-54) is also obtainable from Tables 27 for the category “single”, it is possible that this table was also used to check the accuracy of the data collected through the later tables. Given these considerations, it is recommended that the relevance of Table 26A be reviewed, keeping in mind ways of introducing more detailed age breakdowns for the lower age intervals in Table 27 of the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics.

53. Table 27-*Marriages by age and previous marital status of bride and groom: latest available year* has been recommended as part of the minimal list of tabulations on vital statistics since the 1953 *Principles for a Vital Statistics System*. Until the 1973 *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System* both this and Table 25-*Marriages by previous marital status of bride and groom* were included among the tabulations of primary importance. However, in the 2001 *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System* only Table 27 was included, since Table 25 can be derived from the category “all ages”. The age groupings cited in the current *Principles and Recommendations* correspond to those reported in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire. As mentioned above, it might be advisable to discuss ways of integrating the information collected from this table with that of Table 26A.

54. It is important to notice that two tables:

- Marriages by educational attainment of bride and groom
- Marriages by occupation of bride and groom

which are listed among the minimal set of tables in the 2001 *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System* are not included in the *Demographic*

Yearbook questionnaire on Vital Statistics. It is recommended that the feasibility of introducing these tables be considered based on the decisions concerning Tables 25, 26 and 26A.

iii. Divorces

55. There are four tables on divorces in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics and they differ somewhat from those recommended in the 2001 and 1973 *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System* and 1953 the *Principles for a Vital Statistics System*.

56. Table 28-*Divorces by duration of marriage*, for example, does not appear in any of the list of tabulations presented in the various *Principles and Recommendations*. Although this information is very useful for the study of marital instability, it is already being collected for Table 31, *Divorces by duration of marriage and age of husband and wife* from the category “all ages”. It is recommended, therefore, that the utility of duplicating this collection be discussed. In light of this discussion, it will be possible to take a decision on the suitability of including Table 28 in the questionnaire.

57. Likewise, Table 29-*Divorces by number of dependent children* an important tabulation for the study of the effect of dependent children on marital stability, does not take into consideration the duration of marriage. Although it has been recommended that this table be cross-classified by duration of marriage and number of dependent children since the 1953 *Principles for a Vital Statistics System*, the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire has not yet taken these recommendations into consideration. The categories used for enumerating the number of dependent children in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire is in line with the most recent *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System*.

58. Table 30-*Divorces by age of husband and wife*, is used to establish age patterns for divorced couples and study how age differences between husband and wife might contribute to the stability or instability of marriages (United Nations, 2001). This tabulation has been recommended as part of the minimal list of tabulations since the 1953 *Principles for a Vital Statistics System*. The classification for age used in this table is in line with the 2001 *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System*.

59. Table 31-*Divorces by duration of marriage and age of husband and wife* – is useful for the study of marital instability and in particular the effect of the later on the potential fertility of the population (United Nations, 2001). Table 31 has been recommended as part of the minimal list of tabulations on vital statistics since the 1953 *Principles for a Vital Statistics System*. It is important to note that Table 28 can be derived from this table, from the category “all ages”. The age groupings cited in the current *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System* correspond to those reported in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics. However, the classification for

duration of marriage is less detailed than the one indicated in the 1973 *Principles and Recommendations*. In the current *Principles and Recommendations* the category 20+ is divided into the following groups: 20-24, 25-29, 30 and over.

60. It is also important to note that a number of tables listed in the 2001 *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System* are not included in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics. Among these:

- Divorces by place of usual residence of husband
- Divorces by educational attainment of husband and wife
- Divorces by occupation of husband and wife
- Divorces by previous number of marriages of husband and wife

It is recommended that a discussion on the feasibility of introducing these tables in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire be considered, based on the outcome of the discussion on Tables 28 and 29.

iv. Legitimacy status

61. Information on births by legitimacy status is also relevant to the study of marital formation and dissolutions since, as seen in section A, legitimacy status of the child has been redefined in the most recent *Recommendations for Vital Statistics* in function of the mother's wedlock status. There are currently four tables on legitimacy in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics. However no definition of what constitutes a legitimate birth is provided.

62. Table 3-*Live births by legitimacy and sex* was included among the primary tabulations in the 1953 *Principles for Vital Statistics System* and in the 1973 *Principles and Recommendations for Vital Statistics System*. It was recommended because of its usefulness for ascertaining levels and changes in legitimate birth rates (United Nations, 1973)¹⁸. However, since then it has been removed from the minimum list of recommended tables and replaced by tabulations which further cross-classify legitimate live births by age of father and of mother.

63. As for Table 3, Table 5-*Legitimate live births by duration of marriage* was also included among the list of primary tabulations in the 1973 *Principles and Recommendations for Vital Statistics System*. However, since then it has been removed from the minimum list of recommended tables and no tabulation showing legitimate births cross-classified by duration of marriage is currently included in the 2001 *Principles and Recommendations for Vital Statistics System*.

¹⁸ It is also important to note that, compared to the tabulation listed in the 1973 *Principles and Recommendations*, in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire the column for legitimacy status is transposed.

64. Table 6-*Live births by age of mother, sex of child, legitimacy and by urban/rural residence* is an essential tabulation for the study of fertility and fertility differentials and is useful for the formulation of welfare and social policy. In this *Demographic Yearbook* table two tabulations recommended as topics of first priority in the 1973 *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System* seem to have been combined.¹⁹ In the most recent *Principles and Recommendations* this table has been replaced by two tables which do not make reference to the sex of the child:

- Live-births by age, place of usual residence and marital status of mother;
- Live-births by place of usual residence and age of mother and by legitimacy status.

Given these considerations, it would be useful to discuss if such changes should be taken into consideration in the revision of the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics.

65. Table 7-*Live births by age of father and legitimacy* is the only table on live births and legitimacy status which appears as a primary topic in all three *Principles and Recommendations for Vital Statistics*. It should be noted that although this table is listed among the minimum set of recommended tabulation in the 2001 *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System*, the detailed description was omitted from Annex C of the publication.

v. ***Deaths by marital or legitimacy status***

66. There are two tables in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics which relate to deaths cross-classified by marital or legitimacy status.

67. Table 16-*Death by age, sex and marital status* allows the calculation of age, sex and marital status-specific mortality rates and is important for the study of trends in widowhood (United Nations, 2001). This tabulation has been recommended since the 1973 *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System*. In the current *Principles and Recommendations*, the variable “place of residence of decedent” has been added to the tabulation.

68. The current tabulations included in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics differs from the 2001 *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System* in the following ways: first the classification of 5 year age-groups in the later stops at 84 while in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire the groups go to 95-99 and 100+; second, the *Principles and Recommendations* cross classify *Death by age, sex and marital status* by place of residence—total country; each major civil division; each minor civil division (optional).

¹⁹ Tables LB-5a Live births cross-classified by age of mother and by sex of child and Table LB-5c Live-births cross-classified by age of mother and by legitimacy status were joined into one table.

69. Table 20-*Late foetal deaths by age of mother and legitimacy* has also been recommended as a topic of primary importance since the 1973 *Principles and Recommendations for a Vital Statistics System*. It should be noted that both the 1973 and 2001 *Principles and Recommendations* cross-classify late foetal deaths by sex of the infant. Although this information is also included in the title of *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on *Vital Statistics*, the tabulation might be considered problematic by users, due to the fact that no space is reserved in the *Demographic Yearbook* table for disaggregating data on late foetal deaths by sex.

II. Population Census Questionnaire

70. The *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Population Census contains one table relevant to this report, Table 7-*Population by marital status, age, sex and urban/rural residence*. This table provides important information for the study of age at marriage, the frequency of celibacy, widowhood, divorce and the effect of these factors on population growth.

71. Table 7 has been designated as a tabulation of first priority since the 1958 *Principles and Recommendations for National Population Censuses*. It is important, however, to notice that the categories used in the *Demographic Yearbook* table to describe marital status are different from those presented in the 1958, 1970, 1980 and 1998 *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses*. It is also important to observe that, although the 1980 *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses* are cited as the source for the tabulations listed in the *Demographic Yearbook* Population Census questionnaire, the table on population by marital status in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire does not conform to these recommendations. First of all the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Population Census contains an additional category for marital status compared to the one reported in the *Principles and Recommendations*: the category “consensually married”. Second, the age-groups reported in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire are different from those presented in the 1998 *Principles and Recommendations*, the later being truncated at 85+ instead of the *Demographic Yearbook*’s 100+. A third difference is that in the 1998 *Principles and Recommendations* geographical divisions are presented as: (i) total country; (ii) each major civil division; (iii) each principal locality. The first two categories are then distinguished between urban and rural. Finally, the columns and rows of Table 7 are transposed compared to the tabulations presented in the various editions of the *Principles and Recommendations*.

72. It should also be noted that a series of additional tables, indicated in the 1998 *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses* as relevant to the study of marital formation and dissolution are not included in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire. These are:

- Female population 15 years of age and over in their first marriage/union group and number of children ever born alive
- Foreign born population by marital status, age and sex
- Total population 15 years of age and over, by type of disability, marital status, urban/rural area, age and sex

73. A review on the suitability of including these tables in the various *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires (migration, population census, households, etc.) might need to be undertaken.

III. Questionnaire on Population Estimates

74. The annual *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Population Estimates contains only one tabulation, Table 4-*Estimated population by age, sex, marital status and urban/rural residence* relevant to the topics analysed in this report. Since this tabulation is identical to Table 7 of the Population Census questionnaire the considerations made earlier can also be applied here.

IV. Population Census questionnaire on Economic Characteristics

75. The fourth questionnaire used to gather information on marriage, divorce and marital status is the *Demographic Yearbook* Population Census Questionnaire on Economic Characteristics. The information collected is based on one tabulation, Table 8-*Female population by type of economic activity, age and marital status* and is reported by five-year age groups. The source for the definitions and tabulations in this questionnaire is the 1969 *Principals and Recommendations for the 1970 Population Censuses*. As seen in section A, the categories for marital status in the 1969 *Principles and Recommendations* are for the most part consistent with the 1998 *Principals and Recommendations*.

76. Table 8 was recommended as a topic of secondary priority in the 1958 and 1964 *Principles and Recommendations for National Population Censuses*. In the 1969 *Principles and Recommendations* the tabulation “Female population ... years of age and over by type of activity, marital status and age” was included among the topics of first priority. The rationale for adding this table was that it provided material for the analysis of the relation of marital status to the economic activity of women (United Nations, 1969). As mentioned above, the tabulation in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire follows the 1969 recommendations, although it does not cross-classify the information by geographical division.

77. In the 1980 and 1998 *Principles and Recommendations*, the tabulation was modified to include both women and men and is now titled “Population... years of age and over, by usual (current) activity status, marital status, age and sex”. The *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire to be consistent with the 1998 recommendations would therefore, have to add the category “men” to the tabulation. The categories for activity status and age currently listed in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire are in line with the most

recent *Principles and Recommendations*, however, information on geographical division would have to be added.

78. It should be noted that two additional tables are included in the list of recommended tabulations in the 1998 *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses*. These are:

- Currently active population, by sex, main occupation, marital status and age;
- Usually (or currently) active population, by sex, main status in employment, marital status and age.

79. As mentioned for other tables, a review on the suitability of including these tables in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire should be undertaken.

V. Population Census questionnaire on Household Characteristics

80. The *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Household Characteristics contains five tables which cross-classify information on households and living arrangements by marital status and other socio-demographic characteristics. Although this questionnaire was originally designed to investigate household characteristics, at a later date three tables from the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Ageing were added. Of the nine tables currently in this questionnaire, five collect information relevant to the study of marital formation and dissolution.

81. Unlike the four questionnaires examined so far, which generally have been consistent with *Principles and Recommendations*, the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Household Characteristics contains only a few tables in line with past or present *Principles and Recommendations*. On the cover page of the questionnaire it is stated that the tabulations are in agreement with the 1980 *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses*. However, there are some discrepancies.

82. An example of this is provided by Table 3-Household by age, sex and marital status of head of household or reference member of household. Although a table on population in households cross-classified by marital status has been included among the primary tabulations on households since the *Principles and Recommendations for the 1970s Censuses*, the *Demographic Yearbook* table only marginally draws upon this recommended tabulation. The categories for marital status, for example, are different. In the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire they follow the *Principles and Recommendations for Vital Statistics Systems* instead of the appropriate census recommendations. Furthermore, information on the relationship to the head of household is not included in the *Demographic Yearbook* tabulation despite it being included in the 1998 and 1980 *Principles and Recommendations*. On closer observation, Table 3 appears to have greater similarities with Tables 7 and 4-Population by marital status, age and sex, of the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires on Populations Census and Population Estimates respectively. It appears that this approach was chosen to include information on the age

and sex of the head of household. The rationale for this choice should perhaps be more clearly stated in the questionnaire.

83. Table 4-Household by number of persons in household and relationship to head or other reference member of household by age and sex of head of household or other reference member and Table 5-Population by number of persons in household and relationship to head or other reference member of household by age and sex of head of household or other reference member are essentially the same table, although the former presents information on households and the later on population in households. Neither tabulation was recommended in past or present editions of the *Principles and Recommendations*. As for the previous tabulation, Table 4 and 5 seem to give great emphasis to the age and sex of the head of household, as well as the number of lone parents, married couples and couples with children. The categories “with spouse”, “without spouse”, “with child” appear to be taken from the 1980 *Principles and Recommendations* from the definition of a nuclear household. Both tabulations are visually and conceptually quite complex and would perhaps need to be simplified.

84. Table 6-Household by type of household, number of household members and presence of spouse by age and sex of head of household or other reference member, is very roughly based on Table P15–Multiperson households and population in such households, by type and size of households, indicated as a principal topic in prior editions of the *Principles and Recommendations*. However, as for Table 3, the original tabulation was modified to include information on age and sex of the head of household. Table 6 uses the same categories for household type as the 1980 and 1998 *Principles and Recommendations*. It appears that this tabulation was designed mainly to collect information on the number of households in which the spouse of the head of household is present. If this information is deemed to be truly relevant it should be further emphasised in the next edition of the *Principles and Recommendations*.

85. The last table examined in this section is Table 8-Household population by relationship to householder, (head or reference person), age and sex. This table is probably based on Table P11-Head or other reference member of households, by age and sex; and other household members, by age and relationship to head or other reference member of the 1980 *Principles and Recommendations*. Unlike the later table, however, which was designed to study the prevalence of multigenerational households and which for this purpose cross-classifies the age of the head of household by the age of other members, the Demographic Yearbook tabulation does not provide information on the age of any other household members besides the head. The categories used to describe the relationship to household head appear to be based on the 1980 *Principles and Recommendations*, although, it should be noted that the categories “siblings” and “grandparents” were not included in the 1998 *Principles and Recommendations* and the categories “children” and “grandchild” was indicated as “child” and “grandchild or great-grandchild” respectively. Finally the category “total living alone” perhaps should be expressed as “one-person household” in accordance with the 1980 and 1998 *Principles and Recommendations*.

VI. Conclusions on *Demographic Yearbook* tabulations on marriage, divorce and marital status

86. As seen in the above section, several changes would have to be introduced in the *Demographic Yearbook* tabulations on marriage, divorce and marital status to make them consistent with United Nations recommendations. Here is a list of the main issues which would need to be addressed.

Table 3: Tabulations included in *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires on Vital Statistics which are not currently recommended in *Principles and Recommendations*

Table number	<i>Demographic Yearbook</i> table title
1G	Divorces and annulments
1I	Annulments
25	Marriages by previous marital status of bride and groom
26A	Marriages by age of bride and groom at first marriage
28	Divorces by duration of marriage
3	Live births by legitimacy and sex
5	Legitimate live-births by duration of marriage

87. First, the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires are collecting information for a number of tables which are no longer recommended in the latest *Principles and Recommendations*. An appropriate decision on the suitability of including these tables in the *Demographic Yearbook* data collection process needs to be made. This decision should also take into consideration possible overlaps with other tables. An example of this is provided by the information collected through Table 25—*Marriages by previous marital status of bride and groom*, which can also be collected through Table 27—*Marriages by age and previous marital status of bride and groom: latest available year* for the category all ages. Other examples of these overlaps were discussed earlier in section B.

Table 4: Tabulations on marital formation and dissolution which require revision

Table number	<i>Demographic Yearbook</i> table title	Required modification
Vital Statistics-Table 29	Divorces by number of dependent children	Cross-classify by duration of marriage
Vital Statistics-Table 6	Live births by age of mother, sex of child, legitimacy and by urban/rural residence	Remove the cross-classification by sex of child
Population Census-Table 7 Population Estimates-Table 4	Population by marital status age and sex	Modify the categories of marital status; review the age groups
Economic Characteristics-Table 8	Female population by type of economic activity	Add the category men

88. Second, a number of *Demographic Yearbook* tabulations need to be modified to match United Nations guidelines. In some cases the changes are minor and may not be deemed necessary. An example of this might be adding place of residence in Tables 1F, 25 and 16

of the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics. Others differences, however, are quite substantial and need to be addressed. The list of tables requiring major modifications is indicated in Table 4.

89. A number of additional tables have been recommended in the most recent *Principles and Recommendations*. An appropriate, discussion on the suitability of including these tables in the various *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires would have to be undertaken. Examples of such tables are listed in Table 5.

Table 5: Tabulations on marital formation and dissolution which are recommended in the latest United Nations guidelines but are not included in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires

Vital Statistics
Marriages by educational attainment of bride and groom
Marriages by occupation of bride and groom
Divorces by place of usual residence of husband
Divorces by educational attainment of husband and wife
Divorces by occupation of husband and wife
Divorces by previous number of marriages of husband and wife
Live-births by age, place of usual residence and marital status of mother
Live-births by place of usual residence and age of mother and by legitimacy status
Population Census
Female population 15 years of age and over in their first marriage/union group and number of children ever born alive
Foreign born population by marital status, age and sex
Total population 15 years of age and over, by type of disability, marital status, urban/rural area, age and sex
Economic Characteristics
Currently active population, by sex, main occupation, marital status and age
Usually (or currently) active population, by sex, main status in employment, marital status and age

90. Finally, special considerations have to be made in relation to the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Household Characteristics. As mentioned above, the differences between the tabulations in the *Principles and Recommendations* and the tables included in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire are considerable. Given these findings, a specific discussion focused on the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Household Characteristics should probably be undertaken to best decide how to bring the two in line.

C. Collection of data on marriage and divorce through the *Demographic Yearbook*

91. Although most countries are able to provide basic data on marriage and divorce on a regular basis through the various *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires, considerable differences exist between countries in terms of the frequency, timeliness and completeness of the data provided. Furthermore, the more detailed the tabulation requested (such as

marriage by the age of bride and groom or marriage by previous marital status) the smaller the number of countries that are able to provide data.

92. This section analyzes country responses to various tables relevant to marriage and divorce in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires in relation to four dimensions: overall country response between 1961 and 2000, frequency, completeness and timeliness.

I. Overall country response: 1961-2000

93. Over the past four decades most countries have provided data on marriages at least once (see Tables 6 and 7). However, as Table 6 indicates, the percentage²⁰ of countries that reported information on marriage has decreased over the past four decades in four out of six regions. Particularly noteworthy is the case of Africa, where the percentage of reporting countries fell by nearly one half between 1961 and 2000. The number of countries reporting information on marriages has also decreased in North America, South America and Oceania.

Table 6: Percentage of countries and areas that reported data on marriage at least once, by decade and by continent

	1961-1970	1971-1980	1981-1990	1991-2000
Africa				
Percentage of countries and areas reporting	31	24	25	18
Total number of countries and areas	58	58	56	56
America, North				
Percentage of countries and areas reporting	94	92	92	84
Total number of countries and areas	36	37	37	37
America, South				
Percentage of countries and areas reporting	100	87	86	79
Total number of countries and areas	14	15	14	14
Asia				
Percentage of countries and areas reporting	40	58	58	66
Total number of countries and areas	47	45	43	50
Europe				
Percentage of countries and areas reporting	95	95	92	96
Total number of countries and areas	37	38	38	48
Oceania				
Percentage of countries and areas reporting	68	62	57	56
Total number of countries and areas	25	29	28	25
All countries and areas				
Percentage of countries and areas reporting	63	64	64	62
Total number of countries and areas	217	222	216	230

Source: *Demographic Yearbook* database (2002)

Note: The total number of countries is based on Table 3 of the *Demographic Yearbook*. The 1965, 1975, 1985 and 1995 issues were selected.

²⁰ This percentage was calculated by dividing the number of countries which have supplied information on marriages through the *Demographic Yearbook* Vital Statistics questionnaire by the number of countries in each continent for each decade.

94. Table 7 shows the percentage of countries, aggregated by continent that reported data on divorces at least once within each decade. It is interesting to observe that, as for Table 6, the percentage of country responses decreased between 1971 and 2000 in North America and Oceania, although it increased in Europe and in Asia.

Table 7: Percentage of countries and areas that reported data on divorces at least once, by decade and by continent

	1961-1970	1971-1980	1981-1990	1991-2000
Africa				
Percentage of countries and areas reporting	24	15	12	14
Total number of countries and areas	58	58	56	56
America, North				
Percentage of countries and areas reporting	89	92	86	81
Total number of countries and areas	36	37	37	37
America, South				
Percentage of countries and areas reporting	57	47	57	57
Total number of countries and areas	14	15	14	14
Asia				
Percentage of countries and areas reporting	32	51	53	58
Total number of countries and areas	47	45	43	50
Europe				
Percentage of countries and areas reporting	76	79	84	87
Total number of countries and areas	37	38	38	48
Oceania				
Percentage of countries and areas reporting	48	41	32	28
Total number of countries and areas	25	29	28	25
All countries and areas				
Percentage of countries and areas reporting	50	52	52	53
Total number of countries and areas	217	222	216	230

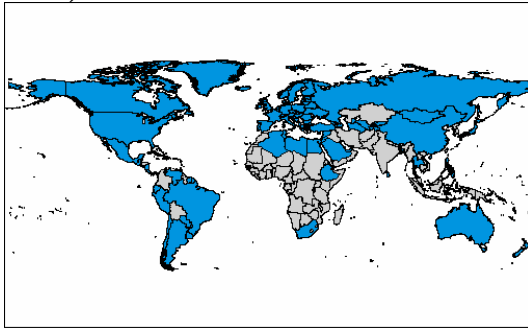
Source: *Demographic Yearbook* database (2002)



Note: The total number of countries is based on Table 3 of the *Demographic Yearbook*. The 1965, 1975, 1985 and 1995 issues were selected.

95. Table 7 also indicates that fewer countries provide information on divorces than on marriages. North America and Africa are the continents with the smallest gap between the two (3 percentage points for the former and 4 percentage points for the latter). In contrast, in South America, Asia, Europe and Oceania the gap is substantially wider, ranging from 28 to 8 percentage points.

96. Figure 1 and 2 provide an overview of the countries and areas which provided data on marriage and divorce to the *Demographic Yearbook* data collection system for the year 1991 to 2000.

Figure 1: Countries and areas that provided data on marriages at least once (1991-2000)

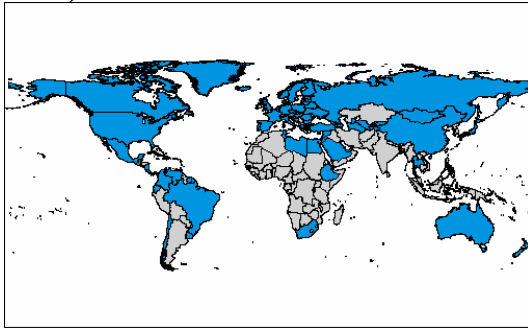




Legend:  Countries and areas that provided data at least once
 Countries and areas that never provided data

Source: *Demographic Yearbook* database (2002)

97. As these two figures indicate there are considerable differences between regions. While most countries and areas in North America, South America, Europe and Oceania provided data on marriages and divorces at least once between 1991 and 2000, there are a number of countries, particularly in central Africa and south Asia that have never supplied these data to the *Demographic Yearbook* data collection system. As a result, the *Demographic Yearbook* database contains no information on marriage and divorce for countries such as Afghanistan, India, Myanmar and Pakistan in Asia; and Cameroon, Kenya, Nigeria, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo in Africa for this period (*Demographic Yearbook* database, 2002).

Figure 2: Countries and areas that provided data on divorces at least once (1991-2000)



Legend:  Countries and areas that provided data at least once
 Countries and areas that never provided data

Source: *Demographic Yearbook* database (2002)

98. Figures 1 and 2 also indicate that fewer countries and areas have provided data on divorces than on marriages. Argentina, Paraguay and Peru in South America, as well as Algeria in north western Africa are just some examples of countries that provided data to the *Demographic Yearbook* data collection system on marriages but not on divorces.

99. Table 8 shows the level of coverage for selected tables published in the four issues of the *Demographic Yearbook* dedicated to the special topic of marriage and divorce. Coverage here refers to the number of countries and areas for which data were published for a given table of the *Demographic Yearbook* and can be viewed as a proxy for actual country response.

Table 8: Percentage of countries and areas covered at least once in the four issues of the *Demographic Yearbook* dedicated to the topic of marriage and divorce: selected tables

	1968	1976	1982	1990
Marriages by month of marriage				
Percentage of countries and areas covered	54	...	...	...
Total number of countries and areas	220	220	220	217
Marriages by previous marital status of bride and groom				
Percentage of countries and areas covered	42	40	37	34
Total number of countries and areas	220	220	220	217
Marriages by age and previous marital status of bride and groom				
Percentage of countries and areas covered	45	42	41	36
Total number of countries and areas	220	220	220	217
Marriages by age of bride and groom at first marriage				
Percentage of countries and areas covered	...	24	30	34
Total number of countries and areas	220	220	220	217
Divorces by duration of marriage				
Percentage of countries and areas covered	29	34	29	32
Total number of countries and areas	220	220	220	217
Divorces by number of dependent children				
Percentage of countries and areas covered	24	27	24	24
Total number of countries and areas	220	220	220	217
Divorces by age of husband and wife				
Percentage of countries and areas covered	23	27	29	28
Total number of countries and areas	220	220	220	217
Divorces by duration of marriage and age of husband and wife				
Percentage of countries and areas covered	22	18	25	23
Total number of countries and areas	220	220	220	217
Annulments				
Percentage of countries and areas covered	11	10	...	...
Total number of countries and areas	220	220	220	217
Population by marital status, age and sex				
Percentage of countries and areas covered	73	54	46	24
Total number of countries and areas	220	220	220	217

Source: *Demographic Yearbook* (1968, 1976, 1982 and 1990).

Note: The total number of countries is based on Table 3 of the *Demographic Yearbook*. The 1968, 1976, 1982 and 1990 issues were selected because they focus on the special topic of marriage and divorce.

100. As Table 8 indicates, country coverage appears to have declined for many of the tabulations. For example, the percentage of countries for which data were published on marriages by previous marital status of bride and groom fell from 42 per cent in 1968 to 34 per cent in 1990 (from 93 countries and areas to 74 in absolute terms). Likewise country coverage for marriages by age and previous marital status of bride and groom, declined between 1968 and 1990 from 45 to 36 per cent with the total number of reporting countries

falling from 100 to 79. There has also been a sharp decline in country coverage for data on annulments. Perhaps because of this, the table on annulments was excluded from the last two issues of the *Demographic Yearbook* dedicated to the topic of marriage and divorce.

101. According to Table 8, population by marital status, age and sex is the tabulation for which there has been the sharpest decline in country coverage. This decline is noteworthy not only because of its magnitude, but also because population by marital status, age and sex is necessary for the calculation of a number of derived indicators such as the proportion of population never married by age and sex; or first marriage rates by detailed age of bride and groom. The number of countries for which data were published fell by almost 50 per cent between the 1982 and 1990 issues of the *Demographic Yearbook*, with less than one quarter of all countries and areas providing data on the marital status of their population.

102. These findings are confirmed by Table 9, which provides an overview of country coverage for population by marital status for three census rounds—1970, 1980 and 1990. Despite the fact that in all regions except North America the proportion of countries and areas that have conducted a census increased between 1965 and 1994, country coverage for the table on population by marital status has declined in the *Demographic Yearbook*. The decline which took place between the 1980 and 1990 census round was so pronounced that it even outweighed the increase in country coverage for population by marital status that took place between the 1970 and 1980 census round. The sharpest declines were experienced in Oceania and North America, where the percentage of country and areas that provided data on marital status compared to those which conducted a census fell respectively from 100 to 50 per cent and from 94 to 64 per cent between the 1980 and the 1990 census rounds.

103. Although country coverage has decreased for a number of tables, it is important to note that this trend is far from homogeneous. For marriages by age of bride and groom at first marriage, for example, there has been a relatively high increase, with country coverage passing from 24 to 34 per cent between the 1976 and 1990 issues of the *Demographic Yearbook* (see Table 8). For other tables such as divorces by duration of marriage or divorces cross-classified by age of husband and wife country responses have fluctuated, making it difficult to determine whether or not an increase has taken place.

104. One trend that emerges, however, is that fewer countries are able to supply data for Table 8 compared to data on marriages and divorces presented in Tables 6 and 7. While in the latter approximately one half of all existing countries and areas provided data, in Table 8 this proportion is much lower. This difference should be noted as it offers an indication of subject areas where the *Demographic Yearbook* data collection system could be strengthened.

Table 9: Number of countries and areas for which data on population by marital status were published, by region for the 1970, 1980 and 1990 census rounds

	1965-1974	1975-1984	1985-1994
Africa			
Total number of countries and areas	55	55	56
Number of countries and areas that conducted a population census	38	49	55
Number of countries and areas that provided data to the DYB on marital status	22	38	29
America, North			
Total number of countries and areas	35	36	36
Number of countries and areas that conducted a population census	35	32	31
Number of countries and areas that provided data to the DYB on marital status	22	32	19
America, South			
Total number of countries and areas	14	14	14
Number of countries and areas that conducted a population census	12	13	13
Number of countries and areas that provided data to the DYB on marital status	10	11	11
Asia			
Total number of countries and areas	42	42	50
Number of countries and areas that conducted a population census	30	33	42
Number of countries and areas that provided data to the DYB on marital status	25	31	27
Europe			
Total number of countries and areas	38	38	46
Number of countries and areas that conducted a population census	34	34	42
Number of countries and areas that provided data to the DYB on marital status	30	32	35
Oceania			
Total number of countries and areas	19	19	22
Number of countries and areas that conducted a population census	18	19	22
Number of countries and areas that provided data to the DYB on marital status	16	19	11
All countries and areas			
Total number of countries and areas	203	204	224
Number of countries and areas that conducted a population census	167	180	196
Number of countries and areas that provided data to the DYB on marital status	125	164	132

Source: United Nations (1999)

II. Frequency of country responses

105. Although most countries supply data on marriage and divorce to the *Demographic Yearbook* on a fairly regular basis, considerable differences exist between the various tables. Table 10 provides an overview of the frequency²¹ of response to four selected tables of the *Demographic Yearbook* between 1991 and 2000.

Table 10: Number and percentage of countries and areas that provided data for selected tables of the *Demographic Yearbook* by frequency of response: (1991-2000)

	Frequency of response				Total responses
	0	1-3	4-7	8-10	
Marriages					
Number	88	23	34	85	230
Percentage	38	10	15	37	100
Divorces					
Number	108	21	25	76	230
Percentage	47	9	11	33	100
Marriage by age of bride and groom					
Number	129	28	44	29	230
Percentage	56	12	19	13	100
Divorce by age of bride and groom					
Number	162	30	38	0	230
Percentage	70	13	17	0	100
Annulments					
Number	219	3	7	1	230
Percentage	96	1	3	0	100

Source: *Demographic Yearbook* database (2004)

106. It is interesting to note that while most countries reported data on marriages eight to ten times, only one country provided data on annulments with the same frequency. Likewise the frequency of responses for marriages and divorces cross classified by age of bride and groom is lower than for marriages and divorces.

107. It is also worth noting that the frequency of replies has changed over time. As Table 11 indicates, the number of countries that provided data on marriages eight to ten times per decade decreased between 1961-1970 and 1991-2000. On the other hand, the number of countries that replied between four and seven times and less than three times increased over the same period.

²¹ Frequency is measured in this paper as the number of times a country responds to the annual *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire of Vital Statistics over a period of ten years. Four such periods are considered in this paper.

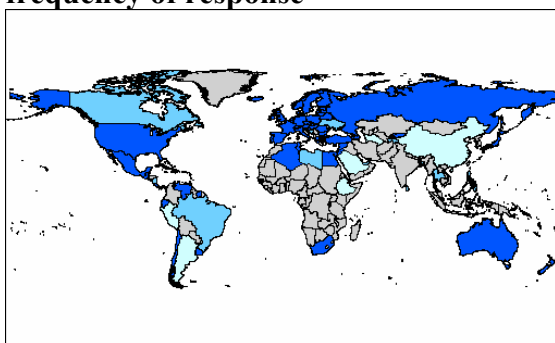
Table 11: Number and percentage of countries and areas that provided data on marriages by frequency of response (1961-2000)

	Frequency of response				Total responses
	0	1-3	4-7	8-10	
1961-1970					
Number	80	10	9	118	217
Percentage	37	5	4	54	100
1971-1980					
Number	81	20	17	104	222
Percentage	36	9	8	47	100
1981-1990					
Number	77	18	20	101	216
Percentage	36	8	9	47	100
1991-2000					
Number	88	23	34	85	230
Percentage	38	10	15	37	100

Source: *Demographic Yearbook* database (2002)

108. There are considerable regional differences in the frequency of responses. As figure 3 indicates, Europe has the highest frequency of responses with 78 per cent of countries replying 8 to 10 times (36 countries out of the total of 46 countries that provided data). In contrast, in Africa, North America, South America and Oceania only half of the countries which provided data on marriage did so on a regular basis (eight to ten times). Central Africa, the Arabian peninsula and south-central Asia have the greatest number of countries that did not report data on marriage through the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics or provided these data infrequently (less than three times) between 1991 and 2000.

Figure 3: Countries and areas that provided data on marriages (1991-2000) by frequency of response



Legend:
■ 8 to 10 ■ 1 to 3
■ 4 to 7 ■ No response

Source: *Demographic Yearbook* database (2002)

109. It is interesting to note that the frequency of response tends to be clustered around the extremes, with many countries reporting data on marriages every year for the period 1991-2000, and others reporting this data very rarely, if ever. In Africa, for example, of the 18 countries which supplied information on marriage in the decade 1961-1970, 11 provided this information annually. In contrast, only ten African countries supplied this

information between 1991 and 2000, and of these only two reported data on an annual basis.

110. For divorces, the number of countries that supplied data between eight and ten times increased between 1961-1970 and 1991-2000, as did the number of countries that provided data between four and seven times. It is interesting to note that the number of countries supplying data on a regular basis (eight to ten times) for divorces is currently higher than for marriages (see Table 12).

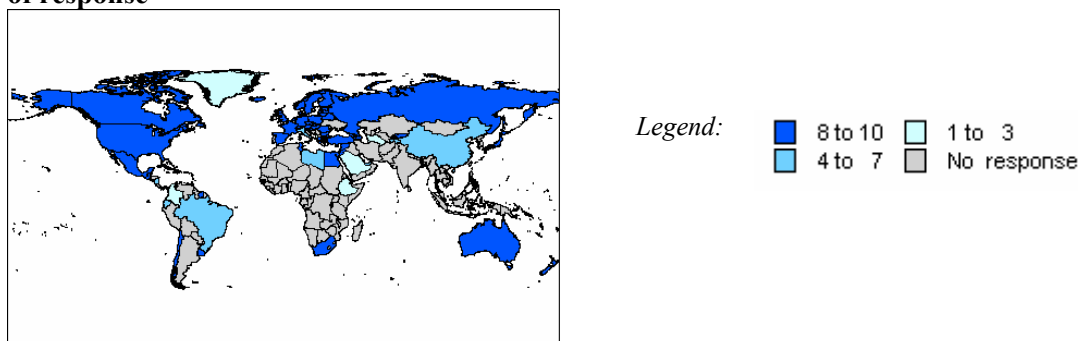
Table 12: Countries and areas that provided data on divorces by frequency of response (1961-2000)

	Frequency of response				Total responses
	0	1-3	4-7	8-10	
1961-1970					
Number	108	20	17	72	217
Percentage	50	9	8	33	100
1971-1980					
Number	107	21	23	71	222
Percentage	48	9	10	32	100
1981-1990					
Number	103	14	17	82	216
Percentage	48	6	8	38	100
1991-2000					
Number	108	21	25	76	230
Percentage	47	9	11	33	100

Source: Demographic Yearbook database (2002)

111. In all regions except South America, more than half of the responding countries supplied data on divorces on a regular basis (eight to ten times). A high proportion of countries also provided data four to seven times during the ten year period. As for marriages, many of the Gulf countries, as well as countries from south-central Africa and south-central Asia provided data on divorces less than three times during the period 1991 to 2000 (see figure 4).

Figure 4: Countries and areas that provided data on divorces (1991-2000) by frequency of response



Source: Demographic Yearbook database (2002)

III. Completeness of the data provided

112. Although more than half of all countries and area report data on marriages and divorces through the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires, in many cases the data provided do not meet the required level of detail. While many countries, for example, are able to provide the total number of marriages or divorces for a given year, a much smaller number supply this information disaggregated by age of bride and groom or by place of residence.

113. An example of this is provided by Table 13, which shows country coverage for the *Demographic Yearbook* table population by marital status, by sex and place of residence (urban/rural) for the 1970, 1980 and 1990 census rounds.

Table 13: Number of countries and areas for which data on population by marital status, by sex and by place of residence were published, by region for the 1970, 1980 and 1990 census rounds

	1965-1974	1975-1984	1985-1994
Africa			
Total	22	38	29
By sex	21	16	14
By sex and place of residence (urban/rural)	1	22	15
America, North			
Total	22	32	19
By sex	20	23	13
By sex and place of residence (urban/rural)	2	9	6
America, South			
Total	10	11	11
By sex	8	2	2
By sex and place of residence (urban/rural)	2	9	9
Asia			
Total	25	31	27
By sex	23	10	9
By sex and place of residence (urban/rural)	2	21	18
Europe			
Total	30	32	35
By sex	30	18	16
By sex and place of residence (urban/rural)	0	14	19
Oceania			
Total	16	19	11
By sex	16	14	7
By sex and place of residence (urban/rural)	0	5	4
All countries and areas			
Total	122	163	144
By sex	118	83	61
By sex and place of residence (urban/rural)	7	80	71

Source: United Nations (1999)

114. It is interesting to notice that while all countries for which data were published in the 1999 *Demographic Yearbook* Historical Supplement provided data on population by marital status disaggregated by sex, a much lower proportion provided data on population

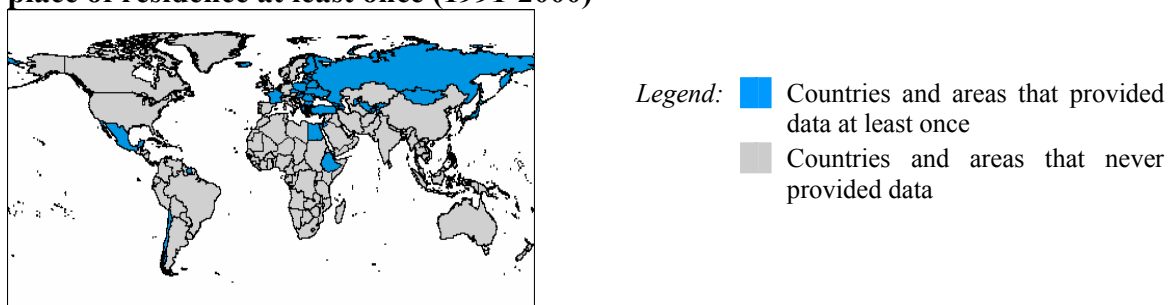
by marital status by both sex and place of residence. In the 1990 round, for example, only 71 out of the 144 countries and areas for which data on marital status were published in the 1999 *Demographic Yearbook* supplied data by both sex and place of residence (United Nations, 1999).

115. While the number of countries and areas that provide data on marital status disaggregated by both sex and place of residence is still relatively small, the proportion has increased over time. Since the 1970 census round, the number of countries and areas for which data were published on population by marital status by both sex and place of residence increased from 7 out of 122 to 71 out of 144.

116. It is also interesting to observe that this increase is mainly due to the fact that a number of countries and areas started providing more detailed data to the *Demographic Yearbook* data collection system. Countries and areas such as Chile, Iran, Hungary, New Zealand, Venezuela and Zambia that provided data on marital status only by sex in the 1970 census round, supplied data on marital status both by sex and place of residence in the 1980 and 1990 census rounds. It is also worth noting that a small number of countries and areas such as Argentina, Denmark, Finland and Spain, that provided data on marital status by sex and place of residence in the 1980 round stopped supplying this level of detail in the 1990 round.

117. The *Demographic Yearbook* tables on marriage and divorce disaggregated by place of residence (urban/rural) offer a second illustration of the incompleteness of data reported by countries. As figure 5 indicates, a much smaller number of countries have reported data on marriages disaggregated by place of residence (urban/rural) compared to figure 1. The majority of countries from North and South America, along with Africa, Asia and Oceania never provided data on marriages disaggregated by place of residence between 1991 and 2000. Only selected European countries, as well as Chile, Egypt, Ethiopia, Mexico, Mongolia and Suriname have ever provided these data.

Figure 5: Countries and areas that provided data on marriages disaggregated by place of residence at least once (1991-2000)



Source: *Demographic Yearbook* database (2002)

118. Table 14 offers a more detailed overview of the percentage of countries that provided data on marriages disaggregated by place of residence over the past four decades. The percentage was computed by dividing the number of countries that provided data on

marriages disaggregated by place of residence at least once, by the number of countries that provided data on marriages at least once in the considered time period.

Table 14: Percentage of countries and areas that reported data on marriages disaggregated by place of residence (urban/rural) at least once, by decade and by continent

	1961-1970	1971-1980	1981-1990	1991-2000
Africa				
Percentage of countries and areas reporting	17	21	14	30
Number of countries and areas that reported data on marriages	18	14	14	10
America, North				
Percentage of countries and areas reporting	12	18	11	17
Number of countries and areas that reported data on marriages	34	34	35	30
America, South				
Percentage of countries and areas reporting	0	15	31	20
Number of countries and areas that reported data on marriages	14	13	13	10
Asia				
Percentage of countries and areas reporting	11	41	52	56
Number of countries and areas that reported data on marriages	19	26	25	33
Europe				
Percentage of countries and areas reporting	44	41	45	52
Number of countries and areas that reported data on marriages	35	36	35	46
Oceania				
Percentage of countries and areas reporting	12	28	12	0
Number of countries and areas that reported data on marriages	17	18	17	13
All countries and areas				
Percentage of countries and areas reporting	19	29	29	36
Number of countries and areas that reported data on marriages	137	141	139	142

Source: Demographic Yearbook database (2002)

Note: The total number of countries is based on Table 3 of the Demographic Yearbook. The 1965, 1975, 1985 and 1995 issues were selected.

119. As Table 14 indicates, less than half of the countries that reported data on marriages in Europe and considerably fewer in Asia, North and South America, and Oceania provided these data disaggregated by place of residence. While the percentages in Table 8 seem to indicate some progress especially for Africa, South America and Asia, in reality country response has not greatly improved. In Africa only five countries have ever provided data on marriages disaggregated by place of residence. Of these five, two (Seychelles and Tunisia) stopped reporting such data in the 1970s. Likewise in Oceania, only five countries ever reported data on marriages by place of residence and of these three have not supplied any data for the periods 1981-1990 and 1991-2000. Only the Asian countries have shown a considerable increase in their reporting, with the number of countries providing data on marriage by place of residence climbing from two to fifteen.

120. Similarly, very few countries in Africa, North or South America, Asia and Oceania ever provided data on divorces disaggregated by place of residence (see Table 15). As Figure 6 indicates, the countries and areas that supply data for marriages disaggregated by place of residence also tend to provide data on divorces disaggregated by place of residence.

Table 15: Percentage of countries and areas that reported data on divorces disaggregated by place of residence (urban/rural) at least once, by decade and by continent

	1961-1970	1971-1980	1981-1990	1991-2000
Africa				
Percentage of countries and areas reporting	0	11	14	25
Number of countries and areas that reported data on divorces	14	9	7	8
America, North				
Percentage of countries and areas reporting	3	3	3	7
Number of countries and areas that reported data on divorces	32	34	34	28
America, South				
Percentage of countries and areas reporting	0	14	25	13
Number of countries and areas that reported data on divorces	8	7	8	8
Asia				
Percentage of countries and areas reporting	20	30	43	52
Number of countries and areas that reported data on divorces	15	23	23	29
Europe				
Percentage of countries and areas reporting	39	33	34	50
Number of countries and areas that reported data on divorces	28	30	32	42
Oceania				
Percentage of countries and areas reporting	0	8	0	0
Number of countries and areas that reported data on divorces	12	12	9	7
All countries and areas				
Percentage of countries and areas reporting	14	18	22	34
Number of countries and areas that reported data on divorces	109	115	113	122

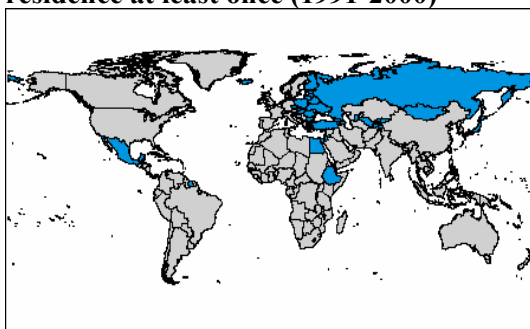
Source: Demographic Yearbook database (2002)

Note: The total number of countries is based on Table 3 of the Demographic Yearbook. The 1965, 1975, 1985 and 1995 issues were selected.

121. While the percentage of countries that reported divorces by place of residence has increased in most regions, the level of response is generally low (see Table 15). In Asia, the percentage of countries that provided data by place of residence more than doubled between 1961-1970 and 1991-2000, with 26 additional countries reporting data. In Europe the percentage of countries reporting divorces by place of residence over the total number of countries reporting divorces increased from 34 per cent in 1981-1990 to 50 per cent in 1991-2000 (from 11 to 21 countries) due in part to the dissolution of the former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia. In Africa and South America the absolute number of countries

reporting divorces by place of residence remains too small (only Egypt, Ethiopia and Suriname) to ascertain whether there has been an increase or not.

Figure 6: Countries and areas that provided data on divorces disaggregated by place of residence at least once (1991-2000)



Legend: ■ Countries and areas that provided data at least once
 ■ Countries and areas that never provided data

Source: *Demographic Yearbook* database (2002)

IV. Timeliness of the data provided

122. Evaluating the timeliness with which countries provide data can offer an indication of the difficulties countries encounter in processing and supplying data to the *Demographic Yearbook* system.

123. Timeliness is examined here by comparing the time lag between the source year and the reference year in the *Demographic Yearbook* database. In the case of marriages and divorces, the source year refers to the year in which the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics is dispatched to countries. The reference year, on the other hand, is the time period to which country data refer to according to national practices.

Table 16: Indicators of timeliness for three selected tables (1991-2000)

	Marriage by age of bride and groom	Divorces by age of bride and groom	Divorce by duration of marriage
Countries providing data	101	71	79
Average time lag per country	1.32	1.14	1.57
Countries reporting multiple reference years for a given source year	19	7	42
Average time lag excluding the above	1.22	1.10	1.14

Source: *Demographic Yearbook* database (2004)

124. Table 16 provides an overview of the timeliness of data collected through the *Demographic Yearbook* system for selected tables. It appears that on average countries provide data with a time lag of slightly more than one year. All three of the tables

considered—marriage by age of bride and groom; divorce by age of bride and groom; and divorce by duration of marriage—show very small time gaps between when the data were collected by the country and when they were submitted to the *Demographic Yearbook* system. This gap is further decreased when the multiple reference years for a given source year are excluded from the analysis.

V. Conclusions on data collection

125. For over five decades, publications such as the *Demographic Yearbook* have facilitated the exchange of demographic and social statistics at an international level, while highlighting differences in definitions, concepts and methods. This exchange is not only critical for sensitizing users about the inherent complexities of using international data, but also an important vehicle to inform countries about international standards.

126. This section identifies a number of important findings for demographers and social scientists interested in gaining a better understanding of the availability, completeness and timeliness of data on family formation and dissolution collected through the *Demographic Yearbook* system.

127. The first finding is that the percentage of countries that supply data relevant to marriage and divorce through the *Demographic Yearbook* system has generally declined over the past four decades, although for some tables—for example, divorces; and divorces by age of husband and wife—there has been an improvement in country responses.

128. The second finding is that country responses vary considerably from table to table. While more than 50 per cent of all countries and areas provide data on marriages and divorces, less than 35 per cent of countries provide data on marriages by age and previous marital status of bride and groom; marriages by age of bride and groom at first marriage; and divorces by duration of marriage. Even fewer countries (between 28 and 23 per cent) provide data on divorces by number of dependent children; divorces by age of husband and wife; divorces by duration of marriage and age of husband and wife; and population by marital status, age and sex. It is interesting to observe that when more disaggregated data are requested—as for example, marriages or divorces by place of residence—the percentage of countries able to provide data drops even further.

129. A third important result is that there are considerable differences in the level and frequency of country responses across regions. Europe, North America and Asia tend to have the highest level of country responses. In contrast, Africa and Oceania have the lowest level of country response, especially for the *Demographic Yearbook* tables on divorces; marriages by place of residence; and divorces by place of residence. Similar differences also exist with respect to the frequency of responses. While in Europe, for example, over seventy per cent of countries provided data on marriage 8 to 10 times over the past decade, in Africa, North America, South America and Oceania only half of the countries which provided data on marriage did so with the same frequency.

130. A final observation is that the timeliness of data on marriages and divorces provided by countries through the *Demographic Yearbook* system appears to be very good. The time lag between when countries collect the data on marriages and divorces and when the data are submitted through the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics is slightly over one year.

D. Dissemination of data on marriage and divorce through the *Demographic Yearbook*

131. As mentioned in the introduction, the United Nations Statistics Division is the main international organisation which collects, compiles and disseminates official national statistics on marriage, divorce and marital status. This section focuses on the dissemination of these data, collected from the five *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires.

132. With regard to dissemination, one of the major vehicles is the United Nations *Demographic Yearbook* a 54-year old publication that presents a collection of official national population, social and Vital Statistics from more than 200 countries and areas. Each year since 1948, some basic tables on population, natality, nuptiality, divorces and mortality have been published in the *Demographic Yearbook*. Alongside this basic information, the United Nations Statistics Division has also published a series of more detailed tables dedicated to a variety of topics including, among others, natality, international migration and population censuses. The special topics have been published on a periodical basis, with each special topic changing from year to year. Since 1997, the special topic tables have been published in a supplementary volume issued as a CD-ROM, while the regular tables have continued to be disseminated in paper format.

133. Besides the regular and special topic *Demographic Yearbooks*, data collected from *Demographic Yearbooks* questionnaires have also been disseminated through other United Nations Statistics Division publications and by other agencies.

134. Before beginning the analysis, it is important to observe that data collected through *Demographic Yearbooks* questionnaires can either be disseminated directly, following the same format of the various *Demographic Yearbooks* questionnaires, or can be further elaborated into rates, ratios, percentages or means.

I. Regular *Demographic Yearbooks* publications

135. Five tabulations relevant to the study of marital formation and dissolution are disseminated annually in the *Demographic Yearbooks*. Both marriages and crude marriage rates, for example, have been disseminated as part of the regular *Demographic Yearbooks* tables every year since 1948. Since 1968 this information has also been available disaggregated by urban/rural place of residence. Likewise, marriages by age of bride and groom have been disseminated every year since 1958, and in two previous editions (1948

and 1949/50). Finally, data on divorces have been disseminated every year since 1951, while crude divorce rates every year since 1952.²²

Table 17: Tables on marriage and divorce from the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics disseminated annually

Table number	<i>Demographic Yearbook</i> table title	Published since
1F	Marriages	1948
1F	Marriages by place of residence	1968
Derived	Crude marriage rates	1948
Derived	Crude marriage rates by place of residence	1968
26	Marriages by age of groom or age of bride	1958 ²³
1H	Divorces	1951
Derived	Crude divorce rates	1952

136. It is interesting to note that these tables are taken from the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics. Marriages by age of groom and age of bride, for example, is taken from Table 26 from the categories “all ages” of bride and “all ages” of groom. Likewise, *Marriages* is taken from Table 1F of the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics. Information on divorces is similarly based on Table 1H.

137. The two derived tables on marriage and divorce, disseminated on an annual basis in the *Demographic Yearbook*, are also computed from the questionnaire on Vital Statistics. Crude marriage and divorce rates are obtained by dividing the annual number of marriages and divorces taken from Tables 1F and 1H by the mid-year population.

II. Special issues of the *Demographic Yearbook* on marriage and divorce

i. Basic *Demographic Yearbook* tabulations

138. Besides these annual tabulations, which appear in every edition of the *Demographic Yearbook*, data on marriage, divorce and marital status have also been published in several special editions of the *Demographic Yearbook*. Most notable in this respect are the five special editions dedicated to the topic of marriages and divorces, published periodically between 1958 and 1990. The number of tables disseminated in these special editions has varied over the years. However, it is important to note that three tabulations of the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics (marriage, marriages by age of bride and groom, and divorce) have also been published as basic tables in the regular editions of the *Demographic Yearbook*, and are not further examined here (see section I. above).

139. Six tables of the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics have been disseminated in every edition of the *Demographic Yearbook* on the topic of marriage and divorce. Among these, Table 25-Marriages by previous marital status of bride and groom;

²² The information in this paragraph is taken from the *Demographic Yearbook* 1999, Subject Matter Index

²³ Also published in 1948 and 1949/50

and Table 27-Marriages by previous marital status of bride and Marriages by previous marital status of groom. The remaining 4 tables are: Table 29-Divorces by number of dependent children; Table 30-Divorces cross-classified by age of husband and wife; Table 31-Divorces by duration of marriage and age of husband and wife of the Demographic Yearbook questionnaire on Vital Statistics and Table 8-Population by marital status, age and sex of the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Population Census.

140. Among the tables which have rarely been disseminated the most notable is Table 24-Marriages by month of marriage of the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics, which was published only once in 1968. Likewise, Table 26A-Marriages by age of bride and groom at first marriage, which was first published in 1976, has only been disseminated three times. The reason why this table was not disseminated earlier is that it was introduced in the questionnaire on Vital Statistics in the 1970s.

141. There are three tables which have not been published in past three editions of the *Demographic Yearbook* on the special topic of marriage and divorce. These include: Table 1I-Annulments, which hasn't been disseminated since 1976, Table 15-Death by age, sex and marital status (both from the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics) and Table 8-Female population by type of economic activity, age, marital status (from the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Economic Characteristics), published respectively in the 1958 and 1968 editions of the *Demographic Yearbook*. It is important to note that, while the table on annulments has not been published in any other editions of the *Demographic Yearbook*, Tables 15 and 8 have been disseminated since then in the *Demographic Yearbook* on the special topics of censuses and mortality as indicated further on in this section. It is interesting to note that Table 1G, Annulments and divorces has never been published as a table itself, but is used to supplement data on divorces when necessary.

ii. **Derived *Demographic Yearbook* tabulations**

142. Besides the basic *Demographic Yearbook* tables taken directly from the various *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires, a number of derived tables presenting averages, percentages or ratios have also been disseminated. The tables most frequently disseminated include: First marriages rates by detailed age of bride and groom which is derived from Table 26A; Average annual marriage rates among marriageable population and Average annual divorce rates among marriageable population, derived respectively from Tables 26 and 30. Two other tables which have been disseminated in every edition of the *Demographic Yearbook* on the special topic of marriage and divorce are: Marriage rate by sex and age among marriageable population and Divorce rate for married couples which are also computed from Tables 26 and 30 respectively.

143. Among the least frequently disseminated tabulations, the most notable is Married female population by % and duration of marriage, which was published once in 1968. It is interesting to observe that First marriages rates by detailed age of bride and groom and

Crude annulment rates follow the dissemination pattern of the two tables from which they are derived (26A and 1I respectively).

III. Overall frequency of dissemination: all special topic issues

144. The rest of this section examines the frequency with which the various tables have been disseminated, regardless of the special topics of the *Demographic Yearbook* in which they were published. It is important to note that for tables, which were only disseminated in the *Demographic Yearbook* on the special topic of marriage and divorce, the frequencies correspond to those already discussed above. However, for several tables such as Population by marital status, age and sex this approach gives a more comprehensive picture of the actual dissemination pattern. Likewise, by focusing on the frequencies of dissemination rather than on specific special topics, it is possible to have a better overview of different tabulations relevant to the study of marital formation and dissolution such as the tables on legitimacy status or on households, which have never been included in the *Demographic Yearbook* on marriage and divorce.

145. As mentioned above, there is one tabulation, Table 1G-Divorces and annulments, of the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics which has never been disseminated. Two other tabulations have been disseminated only once. These are: Table 24-Marriages by month of marriage of the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics, which was disseminated once in 1968 and Table 8-Household population by relationship to householder, (head or reference person), age and sex, of the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Household Characteristics which was published for the first time in the 1991 *Demographic Yearbook* on the special topic of ageing.

146. All of the tabulations which were disseminated twice are taken from the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Household Characteristics. These were disseminated in the two issues of the *Demographic Yearbook* on the special topic on households and families published in 1987 and 1995. Data on first marriages, on the other hand, have only been disseminated three times because this tabulation was introduced in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire in the late seventies.

147. Five of the six tables that have been published five times were disseminated, as mentioned above, exclusively through the five editions of the *Demographic Yearbook* on the special topic of marriage and divorce. These are: Table 27-Marriages by age and previous marital status of bride and groom; Table 30-Divorces cross-classified by age of husband and wife; Table 28-Divorces by duration of marriage; and Table 29-Divorces by number of dependant children. All four of these tables are taken from the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics. Table 8-Female population by type of economic activity, age, marital status and place of residence (Urban/Rural), of the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Economic Characteristics was disseminated in five of the thirteen editions of the *Demographic Yearbook* on the special topic of censuses as well as in one edition on marriage and divorce.

148. Two of the tables which were disseminated six times (Tables 7 and 20 of the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics) were published in the *Demographic Yearbook* on the special topic of natality and fertility (six of the nine editions on natality contained this information). Only one table, Table 25-Marriages by previous marital status of bride and groom was predominantly disseminated through the *Demographic Yearbook* on the special topic of marriage and divorce, although the table also appeared in the 1949/50 edition of the *Demographic Yearbook* dedicated to the topic of natality. Likewise all three of the tabulations that were published seven times were disseminated mainly through the *Demographic Yearbook* on the special topic of natality.

149. Finally four tables have been disseminated eight times or more. Table 16-Death by age, sex and marital status of the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics was published eight times, six of which in the *Demographic Yearbook* on the special topic of mortality, one in the special topic on ageing and one in the *Demographic Yearbook* on marriage and divorce. Table 8-Female population by type of economic activity, age, marital status was published nine times, seven of which were in the *Demographic Yearbook* on the special topic of censuses, one in the *Demographic Yearbook* on Economic Characteristics and one in the *Demographic Yearbook* on marriage and divorce.

150. Table 5-Legitimate live-births by duration of marriage of the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics was disseminated ten times, appearing in all nine of the special editions of the *Demographic Yearbook* on the topic of natality, and once in the general *Demographic Yearbook*. Finally, Table 7-Population by marital status, age and sex of the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Population Census is the tabulation which has been disseminated most frequently (16 times) and has appeared in a variety of *Demographic Yearbook* publications on the topics of censuses, marriage and divorce, household and families, natality, etc.

IV. Time coverage

151. Time coverage represents an important aspect in analysing dissemination. Obviously for tables which have been disseminated only a few times in the past five decades, time coverage will be fairly incomplete. For tables, on the other hand, which have been published frequently, there will be few years for which no data have ever been made available to the general public.

152. It is important to observe that there are essentially two ways of presenting time coverage in the *Demographic Yearbook*. In the first, only the most recent data available at the time of publication are disseminated. In the second case, on the other hand, data are presented for a range of years. It is important to note that in this second case the completeness of the time series depends on national data availability and data sources. The fact that data may be available for a range of years does not imply that it is available for every year and for every country.

i. Regular *Demographic Yearbook* publications

The time coverage of tables on marital formation and dissolution disseminated in the regular editions of the *Demographic Yearbook* is impressive. As Table 18 indicates, the time coverage of these four tables exceeds 60 years. Information disaggregated by place of residence has also been made available to the general public for a prolonged period of time. For *Marriages* and *Crude marriage rates*, for example, time coverage is of 35 years.

Table 18: Time-coverage of the tables disseminated annually through the regular editions of the *Demographic Yearbook*

Table number in the <i>Demographic Yearbook</i> Questionnaire on Vital Statistics	<i>Demographic Yearbook</i> table title	Time coverage
1F	Marriages	1932-2000
Derived	Crude marriage rates	1932-2000
26	Marriages by age of groom and age of bride	1936-2000
1G	Divorces	1935-2000
Derived	Crude divorce rates	1935-2000

ii. Special edition *Demographic Yearbook*: Basic tabulations

153. The time coverage of tables exclusively published in special editions of the *Demographic Yearbook* is less homogeneous. For some tables there may be data for a wide range of years, while for others data may be available only a few points in time. Among the tables with the most incomplete time coverage Table 8-Household population by relationship to householder, (head or reference person), age and sex, is the most notable. Likewise for Table 24-Marriages by month of marriage, data were only disseminated for the interval 1963-67.

154. There are a number of tabulations for which time coverage is no longer as comprehensive as it used to be. Among such tables the most notable is Table 1I-Annulments of the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics, which was last published in 1976. Seven of the tables regularly published in the *Demographic Yearbook* on the special topic of marriage and divorce would also need to be updated (the last data published are from 1989). These include: Table 30-Divorces cross-classified by age of husband and wife; Table 28-Divorces by duration of marriage; Table 31-Divorces by duration of marriage and age of husband and wife; Table 29-Divorces by number of dependent children; Table 27-Marriages by age and previous marital status of bride or groom; Table 25-Marriages by previous marital status of bride and groom; and Table 26A-First marriage by age of bride and groom. Likewise, the most recent data for the three tables on legitimacy status are from 1985. These tables include: Table 20-Late foetal deaths by age of mother and legitimacy; Table 7-Live births by age of father and legitimacy; and Table 6-Live births by age of mother, sex of child, legitimacy and by urban/rural residence all taken from the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire on Vital Statistics.

155. Finally it is worth noticing that for some tables such as Table 5-Legitimate live-births by duration of marriage, or Table 7-Population by marital status, age and sex the time coverage is extremely comprehensive, ranging from 1936 to 1998 for the former and from 1948 to 1996 for the later.

iii. Special edition *Demographic Yearbook*: Derived tabulations

156. The time coverage of tables derived from the various *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires also varies considerably. For Married female population by % and duration of marriage, for example, data are only available for one year (1960-1961). On the other hand, for Marriage rate by sex and age among marriageable population the data coverage is from 1935 to 1989.

157. As mentioned above, there are a number of tabulations, which haven't been published recently in the *Demographic Yearbook*. Because of this, time coverage is also incomplete. The most recent data on Crude annulment rates, for example, are from 1975. Likewise, for Single population by age and sex %, the most recent information dates from 1970.

158. Seven derived tables on marriages and divorces also need to be updated. These are: Singulate mean age at first marriage; First marriages rates by detailed age of bride and groom; Marriage rate by sex and age among marriageable population; Average annual marriage rates among marriageable population; Proportion of population never married by sex and selected ages; Divorce rate for married couples; and Average annual divorce rates among marriageable population. The last year for which these data were published in the *Demographic Yearbook* is 1989.

159. Likewise, five tables on legitimacy status have not been updated since 1985. These are: Late foetal deaths by legitimacy status and % illegitimate; Late foetal deaths legitimate, rates; Legitimate late foetal deaths ratios specific by age of mother; Live births rates by age of father and legitimacy; and Legitimate birth rates by age of mother.

V. Conclusions on the dissemination of *Demographic Yearbook* tables on marriage, divorce and marital status

160. Having reviewed the dissemination of various tabulations on marital formation and dissolution, it is important to give an overall evaluation. 62 tables on this topic have been disseminated through the *Demographic Yearbook*. Of these, 43 are principal tables and 19 are derived tables. Of the 43 principal tables, the majority have been disseminated exclusively through special topic editions, most notably the *Demographic Yearbook* on marriage and divorce. However, as the above sections have shown, many tables relevant to marital formation and dissolution have also been published in the *Demographic Yearbook* on the special topics of censuses, natality, households and families and mortality.

161. Great differences exist in terms of the frequency and time-coverage with which the various tables are disseminated. Some, such as the annual tables published in the regular editions of the *Demographic Yearbook* have been disseminated over forty times, while others only once or twice. Likewise, some tables have been used to derive a number of related tables (percentages, rates, averages), which are then further disseminated. It is possible on the basis of these observations to identify the most important tables in the *Demographic Yearbook* from the standpoint of dissemination. Given that some tables are used to compute a number of derived tables this distinction is particularly relevant.

162. Table 19 presents a short list of the tables which were most frequently disseminated and from which the greatest number of derived tables was computed.

Table 19: The six most frequently disseminated *Demographic Yearbook* tables relevant to marital formation and dissolution

<i>Demographic Yearbook</i> table title	Frequency of dissemination	Latest year	Derived tables		
			Number	Frequency of dissemination	Latest year
Female population by type of economic activity, age, marital status	9	1994	0		
Legitimate live-births by duration of marriage	10	1999	1	4	1975
Population by marital status, age and sex	16	1997	9	1-8	1968 1990
Marriages by age of groom or age of bride	42	1999	1	10	1990
Divorces	49	1999	1	48	1999
Marriages	51	1999	1	51	1999

163. As Table 19 indicates, three tables have been disseminated over 40 times. The *Demographic Yearbook* Marriages, for instance, has been published nearly every year since 1948. Likewise, Divorces and Marriages by age of groom or age of bride have been included among the regularly disseminated tabulations since 1951.

164. These tables have also been used to compute a number of derived tables. Table 1F–Marriages was used to derive the table Crude marriage rate, which in turn was disseminated 51 times. Table 1H–Divorces was equally used to produce the table Crude divorce rates, which was disseminated 48 times. Table 7–Population by marital status, age and sex should also be noted because it is the tabulation from which the greatest number of derived tables is computed.

E. Overall Conclusions

165. This report is the first in a series aimed at examining the quality and frequency of data on marriage and divorce collected through the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires. Many conclusions can be drawn and many of them have already been summarized at the end of each section. However, some overall conclusions can be made.

166. The first conclusion relates to the lack of consistency between the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaire and the two most recent editions of the *Principles and Recommendations* for censuses and vital statistics. As shown in sections A and B, there are also discrepancies among the various *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires in terms of the categories used. It should be further noted that the questionnaires are not always up to date. A review of the categories for marital status adopted in the *Demographic Yearbook* questionnaires should be undertaken, keeping in mind the most recent *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses*.

167. With regards to data collection, one main conclusion can be drawn. There is a need to improve country responses especially for the special topic tables. This might entail undertaking a more active dialogue with National Statistical Offices to obtain more complete and timely responses.

168. With respect to dissemination, attention needs to be given to ensuring that all tables for which data are available are published. Likewise, especially for the special topic tables, more recent data have to be made available to the general public.

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Annex 1: Countries that provided data on marriages by frequency of responses and non-responses by region (1961-2000)

	1961-1970	1971-1980	1981-1990	1991-2000
AFRICA				
Algeria	...	...	5	10
Angola	10	1	...	...
Botswana	...	...	5	
Cape Verde	10	6	1	3
Comoros	1	...	...	...
Djibouti	2	...	...	...
Egypt	10	10	9	8
Equatorial Guinea	6	...	...	...
Ethiopia	...	...	...	1
Guinea-Bissau	10	1	...	...
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	8	10	8	6
Madagascar	2	2	...	...
Mali	...	...	1	...
Mauritius	...	...	3	10
Mozambique	10	4	...	...
Rwanda	6	8	2	...
Réunion	10	10	10	...
Saint Helena ex. dep.	10	9	9	9
Sao Tome and Principe	10	2	8	...
Seychelles	10	10	10	6
South Africa	...	...	...	8
Swaziland	2	...	4	...
Tunisia	10	10	10	9
Western Sahara	10	2	...	...
AMERICA, NORTH				
Anguilla	...	...	3	9
Antigua and Barbuda	5	8	6	5
Aruba	...	7	8	5
Bahamas	6	10	10	6
Barbados	10	10	10	5
Belize	10	10	10	9
Bermuda	10	10	10	8
British Virgin Islands	8	9	8	...
Canada	10	10	10	6
Cayman Islands	10	10	10	5
Costa Rica	10	10	8	10
Cuba	10	10	10	9
Dominica	9	...	8	9
Dominican Republic	10	10	6	7
El Salvador	10	10	9	9
Greenland	10	10	9	3

Grenada	9	3	4	...
Guadeloupe	10	10	6	2
Guatemala	10	10	10	8
Honduras	10	10	7	...
Jamaica	10	10	10	9
Martinique	10	10	10	3
Mexico	10	10	10	9
Montserrat	10	10	6	
Netherlands Antilles	10	10	5	9
Nicaragua	9	8	4	5
Panama	10	10	10	9
Puerto Rico	10	10	10	8
Saint Kitts-Nevis	10	2	...	...
Saint Lucia	10	10	10	8
Saint Pierre and Miquelon	8	9	4	1
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	10	7	5	8
Trinidad and Tobago	10	10	10	7
Turks Caicos Islands	8	9	3	...
United States	10	10	10	10
United States Virgin Islands	10	7	10	2
<hr/> AMERICA, SOUTH <hr/>				
Argentina	9	3	3	2
Bolivia	10	10	1	...
Brazil	10	9	10	6
Chile	10	10	10	9
Colombia	10	9	2	...
Ecuador	10	10	10	9
Falkland Islands (Malvinas)	10	10	2	...
French Guiana	10	9	10	7
Guyana	8	...	...	...
Paraguay	10	10	10	3
Peru	10	10	1	2
Suriname	2	1	2	10
Uruguay	10	10	10	8
Venezuela	10	10	10	9
<hr/> ASIA <hr/>				
Armenia	...	...	...	10
Azerbaijan	...	...	...	10
Bahrain	...	5	10	9
Bangladesh	...	1	10	6
Brunei Darussalam	10	10	10	9
China		1	2	2
China: Hong Kong SAR	6	10	10	10
China: Macao SAR	10	10	10	10
Cyprus	10	10	10	10

East Timor	...	...	...	1
Georgia	...	...	...	7
Indonesia	2	5	5	...
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	10	10	9	7
Iraq	10	7	4	...
Israel	10	10	10	9
Japan	10	10	10	10
Jordan	10	10	10	9
Kazakhstan	...	2	10	9
Korea (Republic of)	5	6	10	9
Kuwait	7	10	9	9
Kyrgyzstan	...	...	...	9
Lebanon	10	3	...	...
Maldives	...	8	6	2
Mongolia	...	3	8	7
Philippines	10	10	10	4
Qatar	...	4	10	7
Saudi Arabia	...	...	...	1
Singapore	10	10	10	10
Sri Lanka	10	10	10	5
Syrian Arab Republic	10	10	10	8
Tajikistan	...	...	...	5
Thailand	10	3	9	5
Turkey	10	8	10	8
Turkmenistan	...	...	...	1
United Arab Emirates	...	...	...	5
Uzbekistan	...	...	...	7
<hr/>				
EUROPE				
<hr/>				
Albania	10	5	10	3
Andorra		4	10	8
Austria	10	10	10	10
Belarus	...	...	...	9
Belgium	10	10	10	9
Bosnia and Herzegovina	...	...	...	4
Bulgaria	10	10	10	8
Channel Islands	9	10	9	4
Croatia	...	...	...	10
Czech Republic	...	...	...	9
Denmark	10	10	10	9
Estonia	...	...	...	10
Faeroe Islands	10	10	10	3
Finland	10	10	10	10
Former USSR	10	10	9	...
Former Yugoslavia	10	10	10	...
France	10	10	10	10

Germany	...	...	...	9
Germany: FRG	10	10	10	...
Germany: GDR	10	10	9	...
Gibraltar	10	10	10	7
Greece	10	10	10	10
Holy See	1	4	...	...
Hungary	10	10	10	10
Iceland	10	10	10	8
Ireland	10	10	10	10
Isle of Man	10	10	9	7
Italy	10	10	10	9
Latvia	...	...	...	9
Liechtenstein	10	10	8	5
Lithuania	...	...	...	10
Luxembourg	10	10	10	10
Malta	10	10	10	9
Monaco	8	9	2	7
Netherlands	10	10	10	9
Norway	10	10	10	9
Poland	10	10	10	10
Portugal	10	10	10	9
Republic of Moldova	...	...	...	8
Romania	10	10	10	10
Russian Federation	...	...	...	9
San Marino	7	9	9	6
Slovakia	...	...	...	10
Slovenia	...	...	...	9
Spain	10	10	10	10
Sweden	10	10	10	10
Switzerland	10	10	10	9
The Former Yugoslav Rep. of Macedonia	...	...	...	9
Ukraine	...	...	...	6
United Kingdom	10	10	10	9
Yugoslavia	...	...	...	8
<hr/>				
OCEANIA				
American Samoa	10	7	8	3
Australia	10	10	10	10
Christmas Islands	9	8	4	...
Cocos (Keeling) Islands	9	6	2	...
Cook Islands	1	9	8	7
Fiji	10	10	8	2
French Polynesia	6	2	9	7
Guam	10	10	10	8
Kiribati	1	1	...	...
Marshall Islands	...	...	...	1

Nauru	8	1	1	...
New Caledonia	10	10	10	8
New Zealand	10	10	10	9
Niue	9	5	7	...
Norfolk Island	10	9	5	1
Northern Mariana Islands	...	...	5	...
Pitcairn	...	1	...	1
Samoa	10	10	2	3
Tokelau	...	6	3	...
Tonga	8	3	10	8
Wallis and Fortuna Islands	3	...	...	...

Annex 2: Countries that provided data on marriages by frequency of responses and non-responses, by region and place of residence (1961-2000)

	1961-1970	1971-1980	1981-1990	1991-2000
AFRICA				
Egypt	1	10	9	8
Ethiopia	...	...	...	1
Mauritius	...	...	1	10
Seychelles	2	1	...	...
Tunisia	2	6	...	...
AMERICA, NORTH				
Antigua and Barbuda	...	5	...	...
Canada	4	...	...	...
Cuba	1	9	9	7
El Salvador	1	10	9	9
Mexico	...	2	3	8
Panama	9	10	9	8
Saint Lucia	...	...	...	4
Turks Caicos Islands	...	4	...	...
AMERICA, SOUTH				
Bolivia	...	6	...	...
Chile	...	...	8	9
Falkland Islands (Malvinas)	...	5	1	...
Suriname	...	...	2	3
Uruguay	...	...	1	...
ASIA				
Armenia	...	...	...	9
Azerbaijan	...	...	...	8
Bangladesh	...	1	4	...
Cyprus	...	3	9	1
Georgia	...	...	...	4
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	2	10	9	6
Israel	4	8	3	...
Japan	...	6	6	9
Jordan	...	5	8	6
Kazakhstan	...	...	4	9
Korea (Republic of)	...	...	5	8
Kyrgyzstan	...	...	...	9
Maldives	...	6	5	1
Mongolia	...	2	8	7
Tajikistan	...	...	...	4
Turkey	...	5	10	8
Uzbekistan	...	...	...	6
EUROPE				
Albania	6	4	10	1
Andorra	...	...	7	...
Austria	5	8	1	...
Belarus	...	...	...	9

Bosnia and Herzegovina	...	...	...	...
Bulgaria	5	10	10	6
Croatia	...	...	...	8
Czech Republic	...	...	...	9
Denmark	2	...	...	...
Estonia	...	...	...	7
Faeroe Islands	3	6	...	...
Finland	4	10	10	4
Former Yugoslavia	...	...	8	...
France	2	7	10	5
Greece	4	10	6	8
Hungary	4	10	10	9
Iceland	3	4	3	7
Isle of Man	2	...	...	...
Latvia	...	...	...	9
Lithuania	...	...	...	9
Luxembourg	...	8	...	...
Netherlands	5	...	8	...
Norway	6	10	...	...
Poland	6	10	10	9
Republic of Moldova	...	...	...	7
Romania	5	10	10	8
Russian Federation	...	...	...	5
San Marino	...	...	1	...
Slovakia	...	...	...	7
Slovenia	...	...	...	4
Switzerland	...	2	9	7
The Former Yugoslav Rep. of Macedonia	...	...	...	2
Ukraine	...	...	...	6
Yugoslavia	...	...	...	8
<hr/>				
OCEANIA				
<hr/>				
French Polynesia	...	2	...	...
New Caledonia	1	3	4	...
New Zealand	5	9	8	...
Niue	...	1	...	...
Samoa	...	1	...	...
<hr/>				

Annex 3: Countries that provided data on divorces by frequency of responses and non-responses, by region (1961-2000)

	1961-1970	1971-1980	1981-1990	1991-2000
AFRICA				
Angola	10	4	...	...
Cape Verde	1	3	...	...
Comoros	1	...	...	...
Djibouti	3	...	...	...
Egypt	10	10	9	9
Ethiopia	...	...	...	1
Guinea-Bissau	1	...	...	...
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	8	10	8	5
Mauritius	...	...	1	10
Mozambique	9	1	...	...
Réunion	10	10	10	...
Saint Helena ex. dep.	9	7	9	10
Seychelles	7	10	10	6
South Africa	...	...	...	8
Swaziland	1	...	...	...
Tunisia	10	10	9	8
Western Sahara	2	...	...	...
AMERICA, NORTH				
Anguilla	...	...	1	...
Antigua and Barbuda	5	7	7	3
Aruba	2	7	8	5
Bahamas	3	6	10	6
Barbados	10	10	9	2
Belize	6	1	10	8
Bermuda	9	10	10	8
British Virgin Islands	3	8	8	...
Canada	10	10	8	8
Cayman Islands	1	3	2	4
Costa Rica	10	9	6	7
Cuba	10	10	10	10
Dominica	...	...	4	9
Dominican Republic	10	10	6	8
El Salvador	10	10	10	10
Greenland	...	8	10	2
Grenada	3	4	4	...
Guadeloupe	10	9	8	2
Guatemala	10	10	10	9
Honduras	10	10	7	...
Jamaica	10	10	10	9
Martinique	10	8	10	3
Mexico	10	10	10	10

Montserrat	1	1	...	...
Netherlands Antilles	10	10	5	9
Nicaragua	5	5	7	5
Panama	10	10	9	9
Puerto Rico	10	10	10	9
Saint Kitts-Nevis	2	1	...	...
Saint Lucia	...	4	10	8
Saint Pierre and Miquelon	8	3	4	1
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	1	3	9	...
Trinidad and Tobago	10	10	10	7
Turks Caicos Islands	3	5	3	...
United States	10	10	10	8
United States Virgin Islands	10	7	10	2
<hr/> AMERICA, SOUTH <hr/>				
Brazil	...	...	9	5
Chile	...	4	10	8
Colombia	...	...	...	2
Ecuador	6	10	10	6
Falkland Islands (Malvinas)	4	9	2	...
French Guiana	9	8	9	7
Guyana	5	...	...	...
Peru	8	...	...	...
Suriname	2	1	2	9
Uruguay	10	10	10	10
Venezuela	10	10	10	7
<hr/> ASIA <hr/>				
Armenia	...	...	...	10
Azerbaijan	...	...	...	10
Bahrain	...	5	10	9
Brunei Darussalam	10	8	10	2
China	...	1	2	6
China: Hong Kong SAR	...	...	5	8
China: Macao SAR	8	7	10	9
Cyprus	8	10	10	10
Georgia	...	...	...	9
Indonesia	...	5	5	...
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	10	10	9	9
Iraq	10	7	1	...
Israel	10	10	10	8
Japan	10	10	10	9
Jordan	10	10	10	10
Kazakhstan	...	2	10	10
Korea (Republic of)	5	6	10	9
Kuwait	7	10	9	10
Kyrgyzstan	...	...	...	10

Lebanon	10	3	...	...
Maldives	...	4	6	2
Mongolia	...	3	8	7
Qatar	...	4	10	8
Saudi Arabia	...	...	...	1
Singapore	...	2	10	10
Sri Lanka	7	7	8	...
Syrian Arab Republic	10	10	10	9
Tajikistan	...	...	...	4
Thailand	5	2	4	3
Turkey	10	8	10	9
Turkmenistan	...	...	...	1
United Arab Emirates	...	...	...	5
Uzbekistan	...	...	...	7
<hr/>				
EUROPE				
<hr/>				
Albania	10	4	10	1
Austria	10	10	10	9
Belarus	...	...	...	9
Belgium	10	10	10	7
Bosnia and Herzegovina	...	...	...	3
Bulgaria	10	10	10	8
Channel Islands	7	10	8	1
Croatia	...	...	...	9
Czech Republic	...	...	...	9
Denmark	10	10	10	9
Estonia	...	...	...	10
Faeroe Islands	10	10	10	1
Finland	10	10	10	8
Former Czechoslovakia	10	10	10	...
Former Yugoslavia	10	10	10	...
France	10	10	10	8
Germany	...	...	...	9
Germany: Federal Republic of Germany	10	10	10	...
Germany: Former German Democratic Republic	10	10	9	...
Gibraltar	5	4	1	...
Greece	10	10	7	8
Hungary	10	10	10	9
Iceland	10	10	10	9
Isle of Man	1	10	9	7
Italy	...	10	10	5
Latvia	...	...	...	9
Liechtenstein	...	2	1	5
Lithuania	...	...	...	9
Luxembourg	10	10	10	9
Monaco	6	9	2	7

Netherlands	10	10	10	9
Norway	10	10	10	9
Poland	10	10	10	9
Portugal	10	10	10	7
Republic of Moldova	...	...	...	9
Romania	9	10	10	10
Russian Federation	...	...	...	9
San Marino	...	...	8	6
Slovakia	...	...	...	8
Slovenia	...	...	...	9
Spain	...	...	1	10
Sweden	10	10	10	10
Switzerland	10	10	10	8
The Former Yugoslav Rep. of Macedonia	...	...	...	8
Ukraine	...	...	...	7
United Kingdom	9	10	10	10
Yugoslavia	...	...	...	10
<hr/>				
OCEANIA				
American Samoa	9	4	4	3
Australia	10	10	10	10
Christmas Islands	...	1	...	...
Cook Islands	1	6	...	...
Fiji	10	3	...	...
French Polynesia	5	...	...	...
Guam	9	10	10	3
Marshall Islands	...	...	...	1
Nauru	1	...	...	...
New Caledonia	6	10	10	9
New Zealand	10	10	10	9
Niue	3	2	1	...
Norfolk Island	...	1	...	...
Northern Mariana Islands	...	...	4	...
Samoa	6	9	1	...
Tonga	8	3	7	8

Annex 4: Countries that provided data on divorces by frequency of responses and non-responses, by region and place of residence (1961-2000)

	1961-1970	1971-1980	1981-1990	1991-2000
AFRICA				
Egypt	...	10	7	8
Ethiopia	...	...	...	1
AMERICA, NORTH				
Bermuda	...	...	1	...
Cuba	1	8	10	1
Mexico	...	4	3	6
Panama	2	9	9	8
Saint Lucia	...	...	...	5
AMERICA, SOUTH				
Falkland Islands (Malvinas)	...	1	1	...
Suriname	...	...	2	1
AISA				
Armenia	...	...	...	9
Azerbaijan	...	...	...	8
Cyprus	...	...	9	9
Georgia	...	...	...	4
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	2	10	9	8
Israel	4	4	4	...
Japan	...	5	6	9
Jordan	...	5	4	6
Kazakhstan	...	...	4	9
Korea (Republic of)	...	...	4	9
Kyrgyzstan	...	...	...	9
Maldives	...	3	6	1
Mongolia	...	3	8	7
Tajikistan	...	...	...	2
Turkey	3	5	10	8
Uzbekistan	...	...	...	6
EUROPE				
Albania	1	4	10	1
Belarus	...	...	...	9
Bulgaria	5	10	10	5
Croatia	...	...	...	7
Czech Republic	...	...	...	9
Denmark	3	...	...	...
Estonia	...	...	...	7
Faeroe Islands	3	5	...	...
Finland	4	10	9	4
Former Czechoslovakia	...	...	7	...
Former Yugoslavia	...	...	4	...

Hungary	3	10	10	9
Iceland	...	7	2	7
Latvia	...	...	...	9
Lithuania	...	...	...	9
Luxembourg	4	4	...	...
Netherlands	2		8	...
Norway	6	9		...
Poland	5	8	10	8
Republic of Moldova				7
Romania	3	9	10	8
Russian Federation	...	...	...	4
Slovakia	...	...	...	7
Slovenia	...	...	...	4
Switzerland	...	...	6	7
The FYRM	...	...	...	2
Ukraine	...	...	...	7
Yugoslavia	...	...	...	8
<hr/>				
OCEANIA				
<hr/>				
Niue	...	1	...	...
<hr/>				