

Subsection 5.—Marital Status

Next to the sex and age distribution of a population, that of marital status is probably most fundamental from a vital, economic and social viewpoint. The number of married females between 15 and 45 years of age is a most significant factor in the fertility of a population; if the proportion of females in this group is small, the expected proportion of births will also be small. In 1956, 64.3 p.c. of all married females were in the age group 15-44 years, as compared with 64.0 p.c. in 1951, 61.2 p.c. in 1941, and 63.5 p.c. in 1931. This trend indicates a movement towards conditions more favourable to a higher birth rate than those that existed during the period of world-wide depression.

The high birth rate of the period 1951-56, which has had such a considerable effect on the increase in the total population and on its age composition, has also been an influence on the increase of 15.7 p.c. in the single population. Most of this gain was in the population under 15 years of age. During the same period, the married population increased by 14.1 p.c., widowed by 10.5 p.c., and divorced by 14.9 p.c. Other striking statistics of marital status are the excess of married males over married females (largely owing to a preponderance of male immigrants whose wives had not yet joined them), the great preponderance of widows as compared to widowers and the large and increasing number of divorced persons.

12.—Marital Status of the Population, by Age Group and Sex, Census 1956

Age Group and Sex		Single	Married	Widowed	Divorced	Total
		No.	No.	No.	No.	No.
Under 15 Years.....	M.	2,663,819	—	—	—	2,663,819
	F.	2,561,391	—	—	—	2,561,391
	T.	5,225,210	—	—	—	5,225,210
15 - 19 "	M.	580,203	6,382	39	11	586,635
	F.	527,136	48,384	99	47	575,666
	T.	1,107,339	54,766	138	58	1,162,301
20 - 24 "	M.	409,245	157,574	186	174	567,179
	F.	248,766	311,640	858	667	561,931
	T.	658,011	469,214	1,044	841	1,129,110
25 - 34 "	M.	318,489	885,563	2,092	2,227	1,208,371
	F.	179,181	1,013,756	8,119	4,995	1,206,051
	T.	497,670	1,899,319	10,211	7,222	2,414,422
35 - 44 "	M.	140,684	926,988	6,751	3,955	1,078,378
	F.	110,532	914,906	28,368	7,600	1,061,406
	T.	251,216	1,841,894	35,119	11,555	2,139,784
45 - 54 "	M.	102,230	714,831	16,533	4,068	837,662
	F.	84,348	622,030	62,389	5,436	774,203
	T.	186,578	1,336,861	78,922	9,504	1,611,865
55 - 64 "	M.	70,075	480,954	33,951	2,645	587,625
	F.	57,006	392,000	115,309	2,221	566,536
	T.	127,081	872,954	149,260	4,866	1,154,161
65 - 69 "	M.	27,491	180,721	28,427	912	237,551
	F.	21,638	126,693	77,765	466	226,562
	T.	49,129	307,414	106,192	1,378	464,113
70 years or over.....	M.	43,344	233,628	106,743	944	384,659
	F.	40,561	130,623	223,582	400	395,166
	T.	83,905	364,251	330,325	1,344	779,825
All Ages.....	M.	4,355,580	3,586,641	194,722	14,936	8,151,879
	F.	3,830,559	3,569,932	516,489	21,832	7,928,912
	T.	8,186,139	7,146,673	711,211	36,768	16,080,791