

brides and grooms marrying in the province of their birth are lowest in the territories, British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba and Ontario. These are the regions which have generally been subject to the largest net inflows of population in recent years.

Age and marital status. Table 4.50 shows that in 1972 the great majority of brides and grooms at time of marriage reported their previous marital status as single, with divorced and widowed following in that order. A total of 177,155 or about 88% of all brides in 1972, and the same proportion of all grooms, had previously never been married. The proportion of brides marrying in 1972 who were previously divorced was 7.7%, and widowed, 4.0%.

In 1972 the median age at marriage — the age above and below which half the marriages occurred — was 22.5 for bachelors and 20.7 for spinsters. In terms of averages, bachelors averaged 24.8 years of age, and spinsters 22.6.

Religious denomination. Some indication of the influence that religion has in selecting marriage partners is shown in Table 4.51. For example, close to 62% of all marriages in 1972 were between persons of the same religious denomination. Percentages were higher for such denominations as Jewish, Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox, and lower for others such as Anglican, Baptist, Presbyterian and United Church.

4.8.2 Dissolution of marriages

The number of decrees absolute granted in Canada has risen sharply as a result of the 1968 changes in divorce legislation. For Canada as a whole the number of divorces (granted under the new legislation) averaged about 28,000 a year over the three-year period 1969-71 as compared to an average of about 11,000 divorces over the previous three-year period 1966-68. Preliminary data for 1972 in Table 4.31 indicate a further increase to over 32,000 decrees absolute granted in Canada. Table 4.31 also shows that in 1972 Alberta recorded a divorce rate of 227.8 per 100,000 population, and British Columbia 224.1. These were the highest rates among the provinces. By comparison, Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island recorded the lowest rates, at 33.3 and 57.5, respectively.

Sex of petitioners. Table 4.52 shows that almost twice as many divorces were granted in 1972 to female petitioners (20,694), as to males (11,670). This represents a ratio of 56 divorces to male petitioners for every 100 to females. Among the provinces, Alberta showed the lowest ratio of male petitioners (39 to every 100 female) while New Brunswick and Quebec had the highest (64).

Grounds for divorce. A cause for divorce can be mentioned singly in a decree or in combination with others. Table 4.53 indicates that in 1972 "separation for not less than 3 years" was the most frequent cause of divorce, accounting for 34.6% of all causes reported. This was followed by adultery (29.6%), mental cruelty (14.7%), and physical cruelty (13.0%).

Dependent children. Of the 32,364 divorces in 1972 granted under the new legislation, 44.2% involved no dependent children. Table 4.54 shows a gradual increase since 1969 in the proportion of divorces involving dependent children from 45.1% in that year to 55.8% in 1972. Almost 40% of the latter cases involved one child only, and one third, two children.

Duration of marriage. The length of marriage in 15% of the divorces in Canada in 1972 was less than five years, and in 42% it was less than 10 years. The short-term trend over the past four years indicates a relative shortening of the average marriage period before divorce. For example, Table 4.55 shows that in 1969 only 10% of the divorces involved marriages of less than five years duration and 31% to those of less than 10 years. The median duration of marriage for 1969 divorces was 14.9 years, as compared to 12.1 for those in 1972.

Marital status. Table 4.56 shows that more than nine out of every 10 persons divorced in 1972 were single at the time of their marriage, i.e. representing a first divorce. Slightly over 5% of the divorces were to persons who were divorced at the time of their last marriage, and about 2% to those who were widowed.

4.9 Migration

The preceding Sections 4.5 to 4.8 were concerned with the vital components of population change (fertility, mortality, nuptiality). In addition to these factors, there are the flows of population across national borders (immigration and emigration) which also affect the country's growth and demographic structure. This Section provides recent data on the numbers and