

Current Population Reports

Population Characteristics

Marital Status and Living Arrangements: March 1997 (Update)

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C E N S U S B U R E A U

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DATA HIGHLIGHTS

Detailed tabulations are now available which provide statistics on the marital status and living arrangements of people in the United States, based on the March 1997 Current Population Survey. These tables provide information such as:

- In 1997, 109.2 million adults (55.9 percent of the adult population) were married and living with their spouse.
- The median age at first marriage was 26.8 years for men and 25.0 years for women.
- Among people age 25 to 34 years old, 13.9 million had never been married, representing 34.5 percent of all people in the age group. For Blacks in this age group, 54.2 percent had never been married.
- In 1997, 19.3 million adults were currently divorced, representing 9.9 percent of this population.
- Nearly half (46.3 percent) of women 65 years old and over were widowed. Of the elderly widows, 70 percent lived alone.
- There were 4.1 million unmarried couple households. Over one-third of these households (35.6 percent) had children under 15 present.
- About 19.8 million children under 18 lived with one parent (27.9 percent of all children under 18).
- The majority of children who lived with a single parent in 1997 lived with their mother (84.5 percent). About 40 percent of these children lived with mothers who had never been married. Children who lived with their father only were more likely to be living with a divorced father (45.1 percent).
- In 1997, 20.7 percent of married-couple households were women. Before 1980, the husband was always designated as the householder.

DETAILED TABULATIONS

The tables include 9 detailed tables (75 pages), 12 historical tables, 3 summary tables, and 1 state table, and provide demographic characteristics on the marital status of the population and on the living arrangements of children and adults. The electronic version of these tables is available on the Internet in portable document format using the Adobe Acrobat reader, at the Census Bureau's World-Wide Web site (<http://www.census.gov>). Once on the site, click on "Subjects A-Z", then on "M" for Marital Status.

A paper version of these tables, is available as PPL-90 for \$29.00. To receive a paper copy, send your request for "PPL-90, Marital Status and Living Arrangements: March 1997 (Update)," along with a check or money order in the amount of \$29.00 payable to Commerce-Census-88-00-9010, to U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, P.O. Box 277943, Atlanta, GA 30384-7943, or call our Statistical Information Office on 301-457-2422. A copy of these tabulations will be made available to any existing CPR P20 subscriber without charge, provided that the request is made within 3 months of the issue date of this update. Contact our Statistical Information Office on 301-457-2422.

For additional information on this topic, contact the Fertility and Family Statistics Branch, on 301-457-2465, or via Internet E-mail (tlugaila@census.gov).

The data in the detailed tables are from the March 1997 Current Population Survey. All survey data are subject to sampling variability as well as survey design flaws, respondent classification errors, and data processing mistakes. The Census Bureau has taken steps to minimize errors. However, because of methodological differences, use caution when comparing these data with data from other sources. For information on the source of the data, the accuracy of the estimates, the use of standard errors, and the computation of standard errors for estimates, see the section on "Source and Accuracy" on the Internet (<http://www.bls.census.gov/cps/ads/1997/ssrcacc.htm>). For additional information, contact Andrew Zbikowski, Demographic Statistical Methods Division, on 301-457-4214 or via Internet E-mail (andrew.a.zbikowski@cmail.census.gov).

NOTICE TO USERS

In order to keep you informed of the major findings from the Current Population Survey about the marital status and living arrangements of the population, short data updates will be made available in both printed and electronic forms for years when full reports are not produced. Additionally, the detailed tabulations that have been part of the printed reports will be updated annually in electronic form on the Internet. If you wish to obtain the new tabulations for March 1997, updating the prior report, Marital Status and Living Arrangements: March 1996 (Current Population Reports, P20-496), please see the "Detailed Tabulations" section.

Our decision to modify the format of the P20 series is based on a variety of factors. Ultimately, we hope this decision will provide users with more timely data on a wider variety of topics. If you have comments about this change or the P20 series in general, please contact us on the Internet at: pop@census.gov, or write to: Chief, Population Division, U.S. Bureau of the Census, Washington, DC 20233.