

Marriage and divorce statistics

Statistics Explained

Data extracted in March 2025

Planned article update: 20 March 2026

Highlights

In 2023, the highest crude marriage rates within the EU were reported in Romania (5.8 marriages per 1 000 persons) and Latvia (5.6).

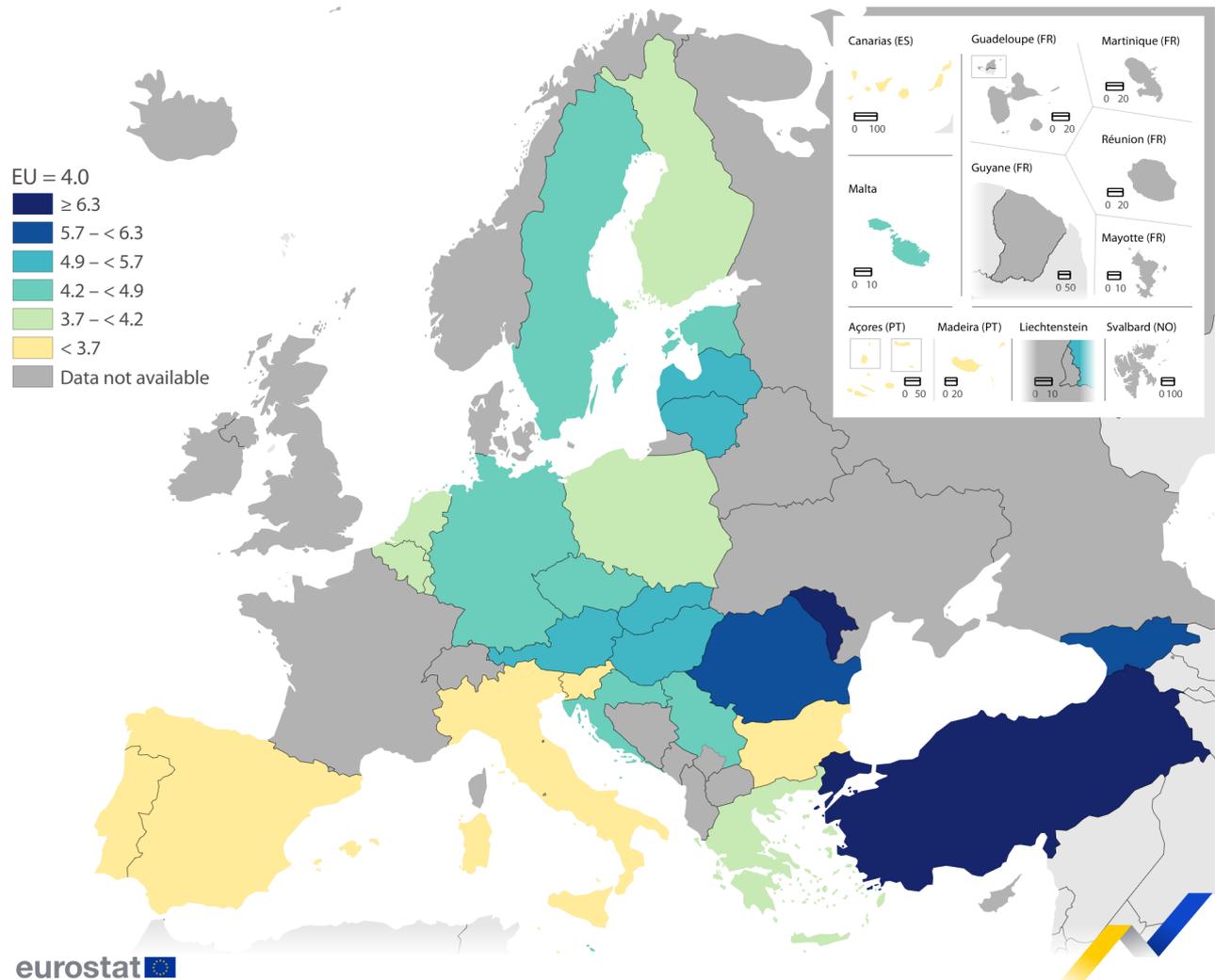
The lowest crude marriage rates within the EU in 2023 were reported in Slovenia (3.0 marriages per 1 000 persons) and Italy (3.1).

In 2023, the highest crude divorce rates within the EU were reported in Latvia (2.8 divorces per 1 000 persons), Lithuania (2.5) and Finland (2.1).

In 6 EU countries (Bulgaria, Portugal, France, Sweden, Slovenia and Estonia), births outside marriage outnumbered births inside marriage in 2023.

Marriage indicators (2023)

Crude marriage rate



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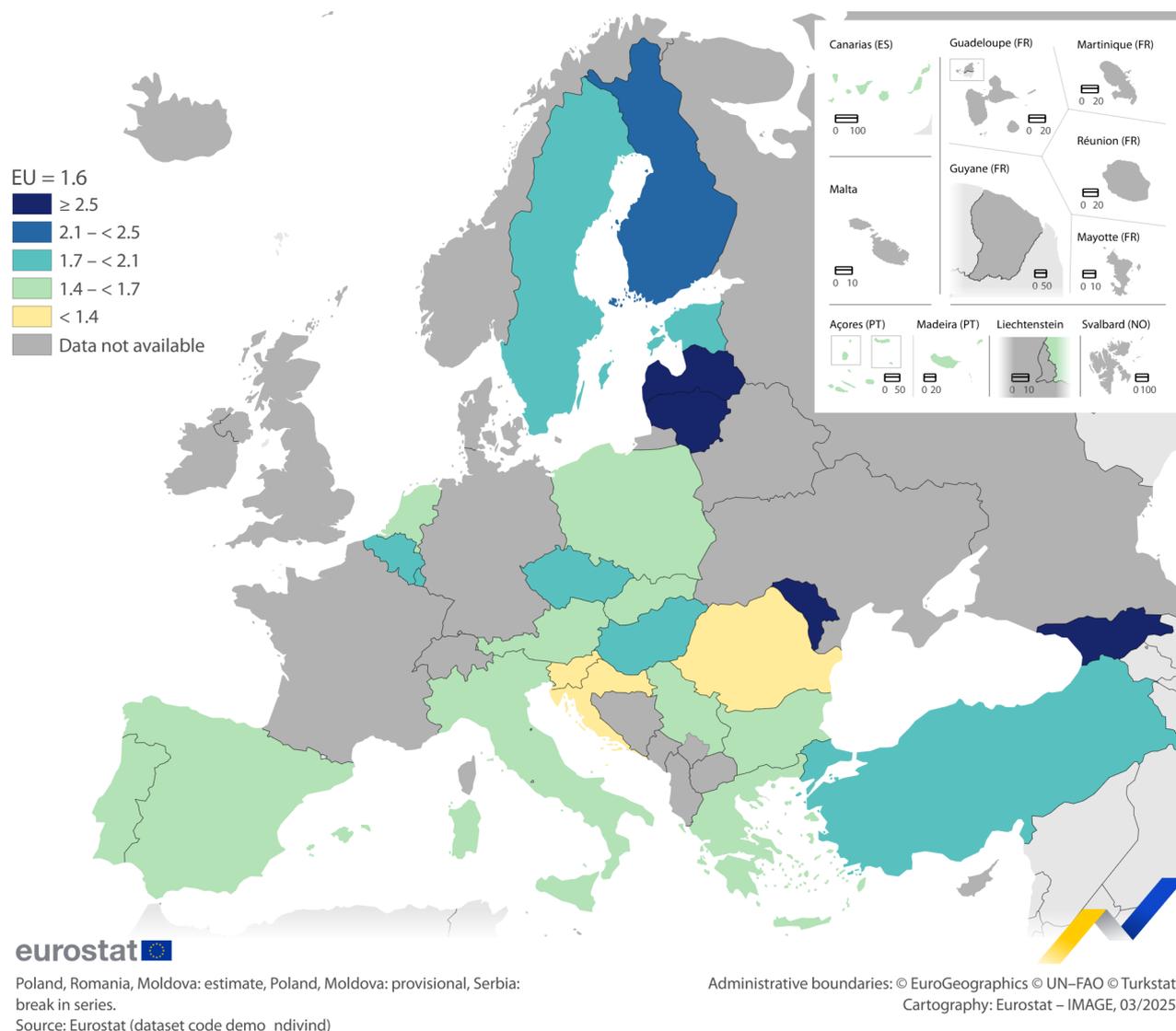
Poland, Romania, Moldova: estimate, Poland, Moldova: provisional, Serbia:
 Break in series.
 Source: Eurostat (dataset code demo_nind)

Administrative boundaries: © EuroGeographics © UN-FAO © Turkstat
 Cartography: Eurostat – IMAGE, 03/2025

Map 1: Marriage indicators (2023) Crude marriage rate Source: Eurostat (demo_nind)

Divorce indicators (2023)

Crude divorce rate



Map 2: Divorce Indicators (2023) Crude divorce rate Source: Eurostat (demo_ndivind)

This article presents developments that have taken place in relation to family formation and dissolution through an analysis of [marriage](#) and [divorce](#) indicators. Marriage, as recognised by the law of each country, has long been considered as marking the formation of a family unit. However, an analysis of trends in family formation and dissolution based just on marriage and divorce data does not offer a full picture. Legal alternatives to marriage, such as registered partnership, have become more widespread and national legislation has changed to confer greater rights on unmarried couples.

The number of marriages per 1 000 persons decreased within the EU in recent decades, while the number of divorces increased. However, both of these trends seem to have slowed in recent years. An increase in the proportion of children who are born to unmarried couples was also observed.

Fewer marriages, fewer divorces

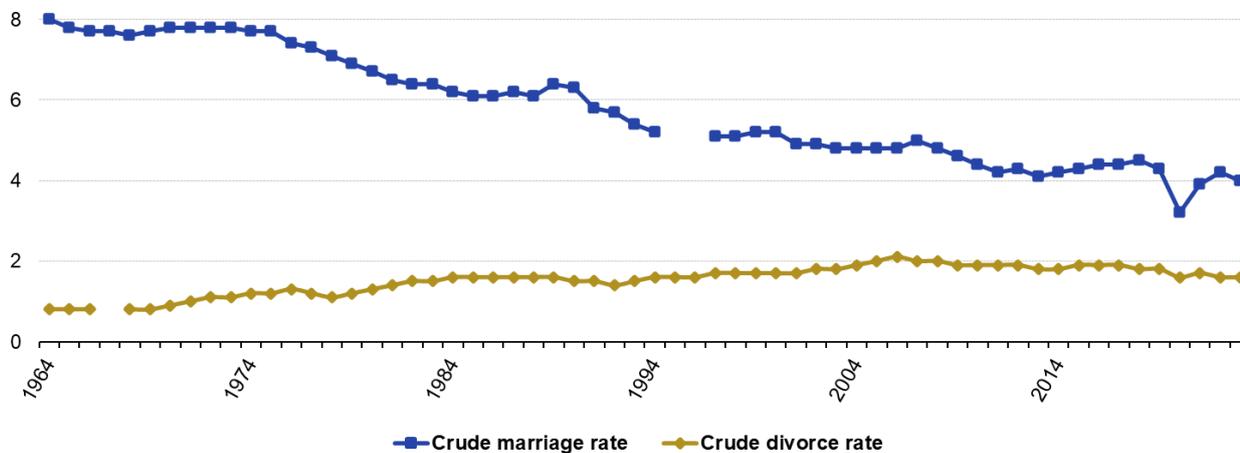
Some 1.8 million marriages and an estimated 0.7 million divorces took place in the EU in 2023. These figures may be expressed as 4.0 marriages for every 1 000 persons (in other words the [crude marriage rate](#)) and 2.0 divorces

for every 1 000 persons (in other words the [crude divorce rate](#)).

Since 1964 (the first year for which data are available), the crude marriage rate in the EU has declined by 50 % in relative terms (from 8.0 per 1 000 persons in 1964 to 4.0 in 2023). The downward trend was interrupted by some intermediate peaks in 1989 (6.4), 2000 (5.2), 2007 (5.0) and 2018 (4.5). The substantial decrease observed between 2019 (4.3 per 1 000 persons) and 2020 (3.2) in the crude marriage rate could be interpreted as an effect of the COVID-19 pandemic, representing a fall of almost 25%. Since then, and from 2021 onwards, a significant uptick can be observed in the crude marriage rate reaching 4.0 in 2023. Over the same extended period, the crude divorce rate has essentially doubled, increasing from 0.8 per 1 000 persons in 1964 to 2.0 in 2023. The divorce rate peaked in 2006 (2.1) and has been declining slightly since then. Part of this increase may be due to the fact that divorce was legalised in several EU countries during this period (for example, in Italy, Spain, Ireland and Malta). The beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic seems to have impacted the divorce rate as well, as can be seen by the slight drop taking place between 2019 and 2020. Nevertheless, the decrease in the crude divorce rate was far less pronounced (about 10 %) than the one observed for the crude marriage rate. Since then that value has remained almost unchanged.

Crude marriage and divorce rates in the EU, 1964–2023

(per 1 000 persons)



Note the lack of data for 1995 and 1996 on marriages and 1967 for divorces. Up to 1990: excluding French overseas departments.
 Crude marriage rate 2023: estimated, includes Cyprus data from 2019, Denmark and Ireland 2021, France 2022.
 Crude divorce rate 2023: estimated, includes Cyprus data from 2019, Ireland 2017, France 2016, Denmark and Germany 2021, Malta 2022.
 Source: Eurostat (online data codes: demo_nind and demo_ndivind)



Figure 1: Crude marriage and divorce rates in the EU, 1964–2023 (per 1 000 persons) Source: Eurostat (demo_nind) and (demo_ndivind)

In 2023, the highest crude marriage rates were in Romania (5.8 marriages per 1000 persons), Latvia (5.6) and Hungary (5.2) (Table 1). The lowest crude marriage rates were reported in Slovenia (3.0 marriages per 1 000 persons), Italy (3.1) and Bulgaria (3.4). Between 2022 and 2023 the indicator decreased in 20 of the available EU countries and was constant in two (Luxembourg and Portugal)

Crude marriage rate, selected years, 1964-2023

(per 1 000 persons)

	1964	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
EU (*)	8.0	7.8	6.7	6.3	5.2	4.4	4.3	3.2	3.9	4.2	4.0
Belgium	6.9	7.6	6.7	6.5	4.4	3.9	3.9	2.8	3.5	4.2	4.0
Bulgaria	8.1	8.6	7.9	6.9	4.3	3.3	4.2	3.2	3.9	3.9	3.4
Czechia	8.3	9.2	7.6	8.8	5.4	4.5	5.1	4.2	4.5	5.1	4.4
Denmark	8.4	7.4	5.2	6.1	7.2	5.6	5.3	4.9	4.7	:	:
Germany	8.5	7.4	6.3	6.5	5.1	4.7	5.0	4.5	4.3	4.7	4.3
Estonia	8.5	9.1	8.8	7.5	3.9	3.8	5.1	4.6	4.8	5.3	4.7
Ireland	5.6	7.0	6.4	5.1	5.0	4.5	4.1	1.9	3.3	:	:
Greece	8.9	7.7	6.5	5.8	4.5	5.1	4.4	2.9	3.9	4.2	3.9
Spain	7.4	7.3	5.9	5.7	5.4	3.6	3.5	1.9	3.1	3.7	3.5
France (‡)	:	:	:	:	5.0	3.9	3.3	2.2	3.2	3.6	:
Croatia	8.5	8.5	7.2	5.8	4.9	5.0	4.9	3.8	4.6	4.7	4.5
Italy	8.1	7.3	5.7	5.6	5.0	3.7	3.1	1.6	3.1	3.2	3.1
Cyprus (‡)	4.4	8.6	7.7	9.7	13.4	7.3	8.9	:	:	:	:
Latvia	8.6	10.2	9.8	8.9	3.9	4.4	6.7	5.6	6.0	6.3	5.6
Lithuania	8.6	9.5	9.2	9.8	4.8	6.0	7.0	5.5	6.0	5.7	4.9
Luxembourg	6.6	6.4	5.9	6.1	4.9	3.5	3.5	2.9	3.0	3.8	3.8
Hungary	8.7	9.3	7.5	6.4	4.7	3.6	6.7	6.9	7.4	6.6	5.2
Malta	6.4	7.9	8.8	7.1	6.7	6.3	5.3	2.2	4.4	4.8	4.2
Netherlands	8.5	9.5	6.4	6.5	5.5	4.5	3.7	2.9	3.2	4.0	3.8
Austria	8.0	7.1	6.2	5.9	4.9	4.5	5.2	4.4	4.6	:	5.0
Poland (‡)	7.4	8.6	8.6	6.7	5.5	6.0	4.8	3.8	4.5	4.2	4.0
Portugal (‡)	8.1	9.4	7.4	7.2	6.2	3.8	3.2	1.8	2.8	3.5	3.5
Romania (‡)	9.0	7.2	8.2	8.3	6.1	5.7	6.6	4.2	6.0	6.2	5.8
Slovenia	9.0	8.3	6.5	4.3	3.6	3.2	3.2	2.5	2.8	3.2	3.0
Slovakia	7.0	7.9	7.9	7.6	4.8	4.7	5.4	4.4	4.8	5.4	4.9
Finland	7.6	8.8	6.1	5.0	5.1	5.6	4.0	4.0	3.5	3.9	3.7
Sweden	7.6	5.4	4.5	4.7	4.5	5.3	4.7	3.6	3.7	4.6	4.2
Iceland	8.3	7.8	5.7	4.5	6.3	4.9	:	5.0	:	:	:
Liechtenstein	7.6	5.9	7.1	5.6	7.2	5.0	:	:	:	:	:
Norway	6.8	7.6	5.4	5.2	5.0	4.8	4.0	3.3	:	:	:
Switzerland	7.6	7.6	5.7	6.9	5.5	5.5	4.5	4.1	:	4.7	:
Montenegro	:	:	:	:	:	5.9	5.7	3.3	5.2	:	:
Moldova (‡)	:	:	:	:	:	7.4	:	:	:	:	6.4
North Macedonia	9.1	9.0	8.5	8.3	7.0	6.9	6.7	5.0	6.8	:	:
Georgia	:	:	:	:	:	7.8	6.3	:	:	7.0	6.0
Albania	7.2	6.8	8.1	8.9	8.4	:	7.9	6.2	7.0	6.8	:
Serbia (‡)	:	:	:	:	5.7	4.9	5.1	3.4	4.8	4.9	4.8
Türkiye	:	:	8.2	:	:	8.0	6.6	5.8	:	6.8	6.6

(*) 2020 - 2023: estimated. Includes Cyprus data from 2019, Denmark and Ireland 2021, FR 2022.

(‡) 2023: break in series.

(§) up to 1990: excluding French overseas departments. 2021 and 2022: provisional.

(¶) up to and including 2002: data refer to total marriages contracted in the country, including marriages between non-residents; from 2003 onwards: data refer to marriages in which at least one spouse was resident in the country; 1980: break

(*) 2023: estimate, provisional.

(¶) 2021 and 2022: break in series, provisional.

(¶) 2020 to 2023: estimated, 2023: provisional.

(¶) 2023: estimate, provisional.

(¶) 2023: break in series.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: demo_nind)

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Table 1: Crude marriage rate, selected years, 1964–2023 (per 1 000 persons) Source: Eurostat (demo_nind)

For divorces, in 2023 the lowest crude rates in the EU were registered in Slovenia (1.0 divorces per 1 000 persons), Croatia (1.1) and Romania (1.2) (Table 2). By contrast, divorce rates were highest in Latvia (2.8 divorces per 1 000 persons), Lithuania (2.5) and Finland (2.1). Between 2022 and 2023 the indicator decreased in 7 of the EU countries for which data are available, was constant in 9 EU countries and increased in the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Finland and Austria.

Crude divorce rate, selected years, 1964-2023

(per 1 000 persons)

	1964	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
EU (*) (²)	0.8	0.9	1.3	1.5	1.7	1.9	1.8	1.6	1.7	1.6	1.6
Belgium	0.6	0.7	1.5	2.0	2.6	2.7	2.0	1.8	1.9	1.7	1.7
Bulgaria	1.1	1.2	1.5	1.3	1.3	1.5	1.6	1.3	1.5	1.4	1.4
Czechia	1.5	2.2	2.6	3.1	2.9	2.9	2.3	2.0	2.0	1.9	1.8
Denmark	1.4	1.9	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.6	1.8	2.7	2.2	:	:
Germany	1.1	1.3	1.8	1.9	2.4	2.3	1.8	1.7	1.7	:	:
Estonia	2.5	3.2	4.1	3.7	3.0	2.2	2.1	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9
Ireland (²)	:	:	:	:	0.7	0.7	:	:	:	:	:
Greece	0.4	0.4	0.7	0.6	1.0	1.2	:	:	:	:	1.5
Spain (²)	:	:	:	0.6	0.9	2.2	1.9	1.6	1.8	1.7	1.6
France (²)	:	:	:	:	1.9	2.1	:	:	:	:	:
Croatia	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.0	1.2	1.5	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.1
Italy (²)	:	:	0.2	0.5	0.7	0.9	1.4	1.1	1.4	1.4	1.4
Cyprus	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.6	1.7	2.3	2.6	:	:	:	:
Latvia	2.3	4.6	5.0	4.0	2.6	2.4	3.1	2.7	2.5	2.9	2.8
Lithuania	0.9	2.2	3.2	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.1	2.7	2.8	2.6	2.5
Luxembourg	0.4	0.6	1.6	2.0	2.4	2.1	3.1	2.3	2.2	1.9	2.0
Hungary	1.9	2.2	2.6	2.4	2.3	2.4	1.8	1.5	1.9	1.8	1.8
Malta (²)	:	:	:	:	:	:	0.7	0.5	0.6	0.9	:
Netherlands	0.5	0.8	1.8	1.9	2.2	2.0	1.7	1.7	1.5	1.3	1.4
Austria	1.2	1.4	1.8	2.1	2.4	2.1	1.8	1.7	1.6	1.5	1.6
Poland (²)	0.7	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.6	1.7	1.4	1.6	1.6	1.6
Portugal (²)	0.1	0.1	0.6	0.9	1.9	2.6	2.0	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.6
Romania (²)	1.9	0.4	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.6	1.6	1.2	1.4	1.2	1.2
Slovenia	1.0	1.1	1.2	0.9	1.1	1.2	1.2	0.8	1.1	1.0	1.0
Slovakia	0.5	0.8	1.3	1.7	1.7	2.2	1.7	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5
Finland	1.0	1.3	2.0	2.6	2.7	2.5	2.4	2.4	2.2	2.0	2.1
Sweden	1.2	1.6	2.4	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.3	2.1	2.0
Iceland	0.9	1.2	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.8	:	1.9	:	:	:
Liechtenstein	:	:	:	:	3.9	2.4	:	:	:	:	:
Norway	0.7	0.9	1.6	2.4	2.2	2.1	1.9	1.8	:	:	:
Switzerland	0.8	1.0	1.7	2.0	1.5	2.8	2.0	1.9	:	1.8	:
Montenegro	:	:	:	:	:	0.8	1.4	1.3	1.2	:	:
Moldova (²)	:	:	:	:	:	3.2	:	:	:	:	3.9
North Macedonia	0.4	0.3	0.5	0.4	0.7	0.8	1.0	0.8	1.0	:	:
Georgia	:	:	:	:	:	1.1	3.0	2.1	:	:	3.7
Albania	0.6	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.7	:	2.1	1.5	1.1	:	:
Serbia (²)	:	:	:	:	:	0.9	1.6	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.5
Türkiye	:	:	:	:	:	1.6	1.9	1.6	:	2.1	2.0

(¹) 2019-2023: estimated. Includes figures from previous available year for Cyprus, Germany, Ireland, Greece, France, Denmark and Malta, when missing.

(²) up to 1990: excluding French overseas departments.

(³) divorce was not possible by law in Italy until 1970, in Spain until 1981, in Ireland until 1995 and in Malta until 2011.

(⁴) 2023: estimate, provisional.

(⁵) 2021, 2022: break in series, provisional.

(⁶) 2020 to 2023: estimate.

(⁷) 2023: estimate, provisional.

(⁸) 2023: break in series.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: demo_ndivind)

eurostat 

Table 2: Crude divorce rate, selected years, 1964–2023 (per 1 000 persons) Source: Eurostat (demo_ndivind)

A rise in births outside marriage

The proportion of **live births outside marriage** has shown an increasing trend in the past decades, more than doubling since 1993 (17.7 %) when these data were first available in the EU. In 2023 this proportion was estimated at 41.1 % (Table 3), meaning that 58.9 % of children were born inside marriage. This share reflects changes in patterns of family formation alongside the more traditional pattern where children were born within marriage. Extramarital births occur in non-marital relationships, among cohabiting couples, to lone parents and in registered partnerships.

Extramarital births outnumbered births inside marriage in six of the EU countries for which data are available, notably Bulgaria (where 59.7 % of births occurred outside marriage), Portugal (59.5 %), France (58.5 %), Sweden (57.4 %), Slovenia (56.5 %) and Estonia (53.8 %). Greece was at the other end of the spectrum where more than 90 % of births occurred within marriage.

Live births outside marriage, selected years, 1960-2023

(share of total live births, %)

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
EU (*) (²)					25.4	36.5	42.7	41.9	41.8	42.2	41.1
Belgium	2.1	2.8	4.1	11.6	28.0	45.7	:	:	:	:	:
Bulgaria	8.0	8.5	10.9	12.4	38.4	54.1	58.4	59.6	59.9	59.9	59.7
Czechia	4.9	5.4	5.6	8.6	21.8	40.3	48.2	48.5	48.5	48.2	47.1
Denmark	7.8	11.0	33.2	46.4	44.6	47.3	54.1	54.2	54.7	:	:
Germany	6.3	5.5	7.6	10.5	23.4	33.3	33.3	33.1	32.8	33.5	33.1
Estonia	:	:	:	27.2	54.5	59.1	53.7	56.8	54.7	55.0	53.8
Ireland	1.6	2.7	5.9	14.6	31.5	33.8	38.1	38.4	41.4	:	:
Greece	1.2	1.1	1.5	2.2	4.0	7.3	12.4	13.8	16.5	19.2	9.7
Spain	2.3	1.4	3.9	9.6	17.7	35.5	48.4	48.4	37.1	49.3	50.1
France (²)	:	:	:	:	43.6	55.0	61.0	62.2	63.5	65.2	58.5
Croatia	7.4	5.4	5.1	7.0	9.0	13.3	21.5	22.8	23.6	24.8	26.1
Italy	2.4	2.2	4.3	6.5	9.2	21.8	35.4	33.8	38.1	39.6	40.5
Cyprus	:	0.2	0.6	0.7	2.3	15.2	21.2	:	:	:	:
Latvia	11.9	11.4	12.5	16.9	40.4	44.4	38.4	39.5	37.6	38.4	37.3
Lithuania	:	3.7	6.3	7.0	22.6	25.7	26.8	27.0	25.6	26.2	27.3
Luxembourg	3.2	4.0	6.0	12.8	21.9	34.0	40.4	41.6	40.8	40.7	39.0
Hungary	5.5	5.4	7.1	13.1	29.0	40.8	38.7	30.4	26.7	25.0	24.4
Malta	0.7	1.5	1.1	1.8	10.6	25.3	:	:	:	:	:
Netherlands	1.4	2.1	4.1	11.4	24.9	44.3	52.4	53.5	55.6	42.1	42.1
Austria	13.0	12.8	17.8	23.6	31.3	40.1	40.6	41.2	41.5	41.4	40.0
Poland	:	5.0	4.8	6.2	12.1	20.6	25.4	26.4	26.7	28.1	28.7
Portugal	9.5	7.3	9.2	14.7	22.2	41.3	56.8	57.9	60.0	60.2	59.5
Romania	:	:	:	:	25.5	27.7	31.0	32.5	33.3	34.2	33.9
Slovenia	9.1	8.5	13.1	24.5	37.1	55.7	57.7	56.5	57.7	57.3	56.5
Slovakia	4.7	6.2	5.7	7.6	18.3	33.0	40.1	40.7	41.0	41.2	41.6
Finland	4.0	5.8	13.1	25.2	39.2	41.1	45.4	46.1	47.7	48.6	48.4
Sweden	11.3	18.6	39.7	47.0	55.3	54.2	54.5	55.2	:	57.8	57.4
Iceland	25.3	29.9	39.7	55.2	65.2	64.3	69.4	71.3	:	:	:
Liechtenstein	3.7	4.5	5.3	6.9	15.7	21.3	25.8	19.8	:	:	:
Norway	3.7	6.9	14.5	38.6	49.6	54.8	57.6	58.5	:	63.1	61.2
Switzerland	3.8	3.8	4.7	6.1	10.7	18.6	26.5	27.7	:	:	:
Montenegro	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
Moldova	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	18.4
North Macedonia	5.1	6.2	6.1	7.1	9.8	12.2	12.4	13.0	13.7	:	:
Georgia	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	37.9
Albania	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
Serbia	:	:	:	:	20.7	24.0	26.9	28.9	30.0	30.4	30.0
Türkiye	:	:	:	:	:	2.6	2.8	2.8	:	3.0	3.1

(¹) 2018-2023: estimated. Includes figures from previous available year for Belgium, Denmark, Ireland, Cyprus and Malta, when missing.

(²) up to 1990: excluding French overseas departments.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: demo_find)

eurostat 

Table 3: Live births outside marriage, selected years, 1960-2023 (share of total live births, %) Source: Eurostat (demo_find)

Looking at the latest available data, extramarital births increased in 5 of the available EU countries in 2023 compared with 2022, remaining unchanged in the Netherlands. On the other hand, the indicator decreased between 2022 and 2023 in 16 EU countries, with the highest decrease being observed in Greece (-9.5 percentage points from 19.2 % in 2022 to 9.7 % in 2023).

Source data for tables and graphs

- [Marriage and divorce statistics: tables and figures](#)

Data sources

Eurostat compiles information on a wide range of demographic data, including data on the number of marriages by sex and previous marital status and statistics relating to the number of divorces. The most recent data available for marriages for Cyprus are from 2019. Moreover, for 2023, no data on marriages were available for Denmark, Ireland and France. On the other hand, for divorces the latest data for Cyprus were available in 2019, 2017 for Ireland, and 2016 for France. In addition, in 2023 no data on divorces were available for Denmark, Germany and Malta. Data on the number of [live births](#) according to the mother's marital status may be used to produce an indicator that shows the proportion of births outside marriage. The most recent data available for Belgium is 2018, for Cyprus 2019 and for Malta 2017. Moreover, no data on live births outside marriage were available for Denmark and Ireland.

Context

The family unit is a changing concept: what it means to be a member of a family and the expectations people have of family relationships vary with time, making it difficult to find a universally agreed and applied definition. Legal alternatives to marriage, like registered partnerships, have become more widespread and national legislation has changed to confer more rights on unmarried and same sex couples. Alongside these legal forms, other forms of non-marital relationships have appeared, making it more difficult for statisticians to collect data within this domain that can be compared across countries.

Due to differences in the timing and formal recognition of changing patterns of family formation and dissolution, these concepts have become more difficult to measure in practice. Analysts of demographic statistics therefore have access to relatively few complete and reliable data sets with which to make comparisons over time and between or within countries.

The EU has been going through a period of demographic and societal change. The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, in 2020, will have a lasting impact on the way we live and work together. The outbreak came at a time when Europe had already been going through a period of profound demographic and societal change. On 17 January 2023, the European Commission published the Staff Working Document on [The impact of demographic change in a changing environment](#) which provides further analysis of the demographic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. More information of the work of the European Commission 2024-2029 can be found in the [European Commission dedicated pages](#) .

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