

MARRIAGES AND CIVIL UNIONS | YEAR 2018

The first weddings increase, but at later age

 In 2018, 195,778 marriages celebrated in Italy, an increase of about 4,500 to the previous year (+ 2.3%).

The tendency to later marriages continued. Currently the grooms' age at their first wedding was 33.7 and the brides' age was 31.5 on average (respectively 1.6 and 2.1 years older than in 2008).

Second and subsequent marriages, after a phase of growth observed in recent years, also due to the introduction of the "Quick divorce", remained stable to the previous year. Their incidence on total marriages reached 19.9%.

50.1%

The percentage of civil marriages

In the North the share was 63.9%, in the South less than half (30.4%)

17.3%

The share of marriages with at least one foreign spouse

2,808

The number of same-sex couples

The prevalence of men couples (64.2%) and of the North-west as geographical area of constitution of unions (37.2%) was confirmed

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In the last four years, the decline of the first weddings has slowed down

The decline in nuptiality started in the second half of the Seventies and then markedly continued during the following decades. In over forty years of downward trend there have been brief fluctuations mainly linked to the effects on the short-term indicators of changes in the frequency of the phenomenon (periods of anticipation or postponement of marriages). Providing examples, a case of short-term increase in marriages has been observed in the year 2000 due to the attractiveness this date had on those who wanted to celebrate their wedding at the beginning of the new millennium. On the contrary, in the two-year period 2009-2011 a particularly marked decrease was observed due to the collapse of foreign citizens' marriage, discouraged by legislative changes aimed at limiting marriages of convenienceⁱ.

As for the most recent years, in the period 2015-2016 there was a slight increase in marriages also due to the effects of Decree Law 132/2014 (introduction of the extra-judicial process for consensual separations and divorces) and of Law 55/2015 ("Quick divorce")ⁱⁱ that have simplified and speeded up the possibility of ending the current marriageⁱⁱⁱ. The latter, allowed a higher number of couples to remarry.

Net of cyclical fluctuations, the decreasing trend in marriages was mainly due to the decline of the first weddings: taking the last ten years as a reference, unmarried and single marriages passed from over 210 thousand in 2008 to almost 157 thousand in 2018 (Figure 1). In 2017 there was the relative minimum of the first wedding (152.500), partly recovered in 2018. Between 2017 and 2018, the growth recorded in the total of marriages depended almost exclusively on the increase in the first weddings to 4,370 additional events, and 156,870 celebrations.

In most of the first weddings, both spouses were Italian citizens (86%) and it is right this type of marriage that is in sharp decline: from 185,749 first weddings in 2008 to 134.249 in 2018 (with a reduction of 51 thousand and 500 units). Also in this case, as already observed for the first weddings as a whole, after a particularly unpopular 2017, in 2018 there was a recovery of the first weddings with both Italian spouses of almost 3,000 units (about two thirds of the first weddings increase registered in the last year).

Net of these cyclical fluctuations, the important figure is that during the last four years the decrease in first-nuptiality has slowed down. Considering the first marriage rates, the levels observed in 2018 exceed those of 2014 (+10.6 percentage points for men and +1.4 for women), an important result considering that there are fewer and fewer young people at marriageable age.

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF MARRIAGES CELEBRATED IN ITALY

Years 2008-2018, absolute values and percentages

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF MARRIAGES	2008	2010	2012	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Total marriages	246,613	217,700	207,138	189,765	194,377	203,258	191,287	195,778
First marriages	212,476	186,045	174,583	159,127	160,798	165,316	152,500	156,870
Italian first marriages	185,749	168,610	153,311	139,697	140,748	144,643	131,349	134,249
Marriages with a least one foreign spouse	36,918	25,082	30,724	28,278	29,425	31,116	32,323	33,933
Foreign marriages with at least one resident spouse	6,535	3,492	5,610	4,195	4,165	4,074	4,890	5,451
Marriages with civil ceremony (%)	36.7	36.5	41.0	43.1	45.3	46.9	49.5	50.1
Italian first marriages with civil ceremony (%)	20.0	22.1	24.5	27.0	28.7	29.9	30.9	31.3
Male first-marriage rate	536.2	482.9	463.5	421.1	429.5	449.6	419.0	431.7
Female first-marriage rate	594.3	532.9	510.6	463.4	474.6	496.9	465.1	479.8
Mean age at first marriage Male (16-49 years)	32.1	32.5	32.7	33.1	33.3	33.4	33.6	33.7
Mean age at first marriage Female (16-49 years)	29.4	29.9	30.2	30.7	30.9	31.1	31.3	31.5

Less young people, less marriages

The contraction of births - which has affected our country since the mid-1970s - has led to the phenomenon of "dejuvenation"^{iv}, that is a clear reduction in the population between the age of 16 and 34 years: at 1 January 2018 there were almost 12 million, 1.2 million less than in 2008. This contraction contributed to the decrease in marriages of young people aged between 16 and 34 years. While in 2018 the incidence of the first marriage for young people was 59.7% among the spouses and 72.5% among the brides, in 2008 it was about 10 percentage points higher.

In analyzing the evolution of the phenomenon, it is therefore necessary to consider indicators that, take into account the composition by age of the population, and measure the variation of the propensity to marriage in the different age groups, net of the structural effects.

The propensity to the first marriage is measured through the calculation of the first-marriage rates. This method allows to connect spouses of a certain age to the male and female population: in 2018 432 first marriages were celebrated for 1,000 men and 480 for 1,000 women. These values, although lower than 19.5% and 19.3% of 2008, are higher both for men and for women to the previous year, even though not continuously during the last 4 years, but compared to the minimum value of 2014.

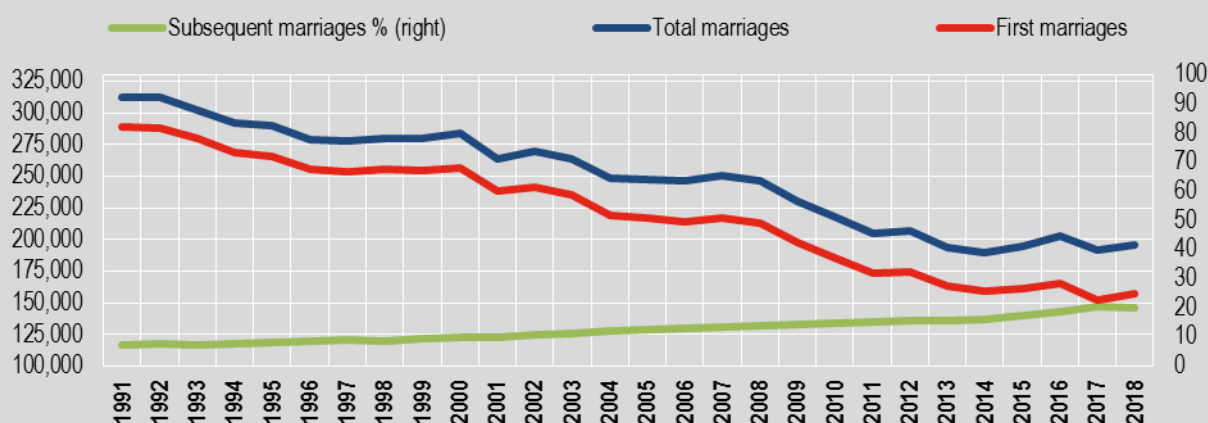
This recovery has countered the negative effect of "dejuvenation". This effect has been measured with a simulation applying to the average population of 2018 the first-marriage levels for 2008 (expressed by age-specific first marriage rates). Referring to the female population, in this way more than 194 thousand first marriages have been counted for 2018. Comparing this value with the 222 thousand marriages in 2008, there would still be a gap of over 28 thousand marriages only due to the change in the amount and structure by age of the female population between the aged between 16 and 49 ("structural effect"). To this factor is, therefore, due the 48.5% of the difference in first marriages observed between 2008 and 2018. The residue depends instead on the decrease in the first marriage that lasted until 2014.

More *de facto* relationships, less marriages

The decrease in the first marriages is to be related partly to the progressive spread of the *de facto* relationships. These, from 1997-1998 to 2017-2018, registered a quadruple increase, passing from around 329 thousand to 1.368 million. The increase was mainly due to the growth of the *de facto* relationships of unmarried men and women, from around 122 thousand to around 830 thousand^v.

This way of 'making family' is more and more common even in the case of families with children; the share of children born out of wedlock is constantly increasing: in 2017 almost one out of three children had unmarried parents^{vi}.

FIGURE 1. MARRIAGES BY ORDER. Years 1991-2018, absolute values and percentages



From generation to generation there is an increase in life paths that are more "flexible" than the traditional feature of a precise and socially regulated sequence of events. The first marriage and the birth of the first child are events that may increasingly not occur or occur not in the "traditional" sequence. If we consider for example women born between 1977 and 1986 who have experienced both the birth of their first child and their first marriage, in 14% of the cases the birth of the child preceded the marriage^{vii}. This proportion also tends to increase when the first child arrives at a later age: almost one in four born to women born at the turn of the seventies, and who became mothers for the first time after the age of 30. Thus the first marriage arrives in these cases to seal a long-established union and does not coincide with the formation of a new family.

The postponing-wedding trend does not stop

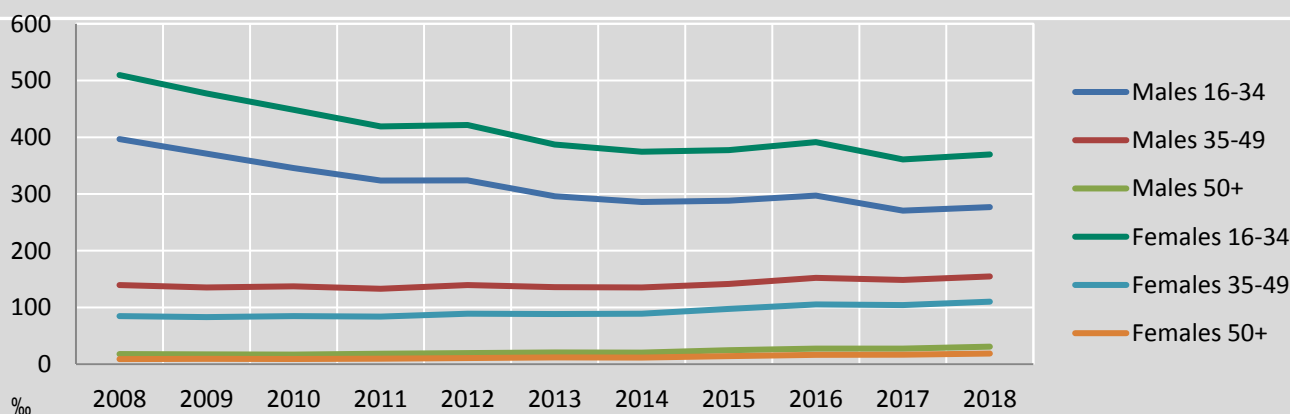
Together with choosing for *de facto* relationship as an alternative to marriage, premarital cohabitation is constantly increasing. This can have an effect on the postponement of the marriage to older ages (postponement of the first marriage). However the protracted permanence of the youth in the household of origin is the main cause that leads to the postponement of the first marriage. In 2018, 67.5% of males aged between 18 and 34 (over 3.7 million) and 56.4% of their peers (over 2.9 million) still lived in the household of origin. Particularly relevant is the increase over time of those who live in their families of origin, especially for women: compared to 2008, women who have not yet left their households of origin have increased by 3 percentage points while men have risen by 1.3.

The prolonged stay of young people in the family of origin is due to multiple factors: the widespread increase in education and the lengthening of training time, the difficulties encountered by young people in entering the world of work and the condition of precariousness of the job itself, to the difficulties of access to the housing market. The effect of these factors is amplified during periods of economic crisis, pushing young people to further delay, compared to previous generations, the stages of the paths towards adult life, including that of the formation of a family^{viii}.

Analyzing the first marriage rates, after the low levels of 2014, we observe a fluctuating trend also as a consequence of the legislative changes introduced concerning divorce. Comparing the average annual rate of first marriage in the 2015-2018 period with the rate observed in 2014, despite a slight increase in the indicator observed for the total population aged 16 to 49 (about 3% more for men and women), a substantial decrease in the first marriages of young people up to 34 years emerges. Instead, we observe an increase of 10.3% and 17.3%, respectively for men and women, of marriages between the ages of 35 and 49, an effect of the postponement of the event towards increasingly mature ages (Figure 2).

FIGURE 2. FIRST-MARRIAGE RATES BY SEX AND AGE GROUPS.

Years 2008-2018, values per thousand



As mentioned above, 2014 represents the last year in which the declining trend in marriages was observed in a continuous and regular manner; the average calculated over the 2015-2018 period makes it possible to mitigate the cyclical effects and to better examine the actual evolution of the first marriage by age. The comparison with 2008 shows the decrease in the propensity to marry at a younger age and the partial recovery in later ages (Figure 3).

In particular, between 2014 and 2015-2018, the share of the first marriages between the ages of 16 and 34 over the total of the first marriages celebrated up to 49 years is considerably reduced. The weight of the cumulative first-marriage rate of young people on the rate of total first-marriage, passed from 67.9% to 65.5% for spouses and from 80.8% to 78.2% for brides.

The postponement of the first marriage towards older ages is more and more accentuated. Currently, men who married for the first time between the ages of 16 and 49 have on average 33.7 years, women 31.5 (respectively 1.6 and 2.1 years more than in 2008).

Increasing marriages in which the first "yes" arrives at the age of 65 or over

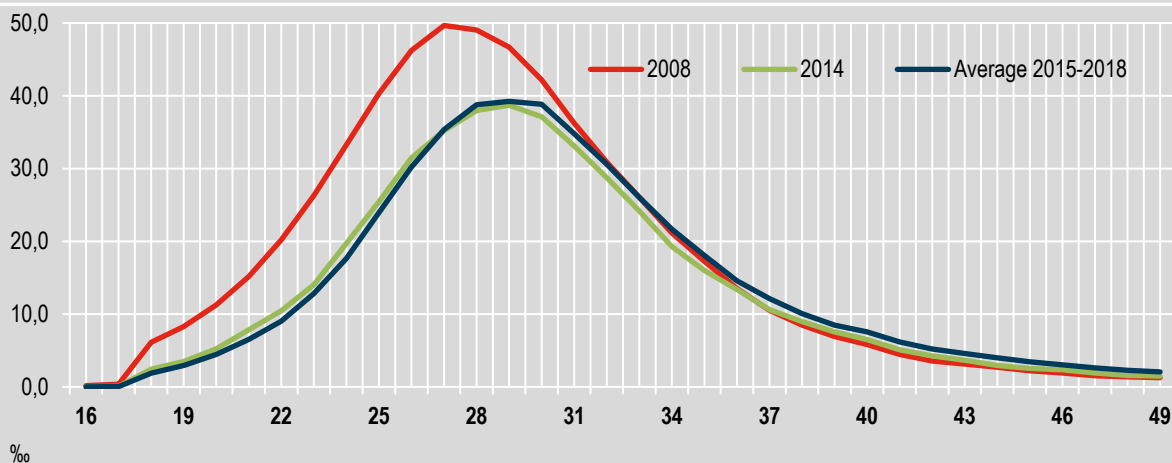
More and more often, marriage is celebrated with long-established relationships. In 2018 marriages in which at least one groom was 65 or older, still constitute a residual share of total marriages: 3.4% when the groom is over 64, 0.9% when is the bride. However, this proportion has more than doubled compared to 2008 for both men and women (they were respectively 1.4% and 0.4%).

The share of never married men, between spouses aged 65 and over, passed from 39.5% in 2008 to 43.7% in 2018; also in this age group the percentages of marriages of unmarried women increased, in 11 years, from 25.6% to 29.1%. When the groom is older than 64 the average age difference with the bride is 14, despite an average of 3 years when we consider all the spouses. If, on the other hand, the bride is at least 65 years old, greater homogamy was observed and the groom is frequently in the same age class as the woman. Marriages in which both spouses are at least 65 are also on the rise: in 2018, in one case out of five, they were first marriages (they were 16.2% in 2008).

Finally, considering the sum of specific rates for all ages (not considering only the 16-49 age range), the share of first marriages aged 65 and over is increasing: from 2008 to the 2015-2018 average value from 0.7% to 1.3% for spouses and from 0.2% to 0.4% for brides.

FIGURE 3. FEMALE FIRST-MARRIAGE RATES BY AGE.

Years 2008, 2014 and average 2015-2018, values per 1000 women



In the Center-north, almost a quarter of marriages have at least one foreign spouse

In 2018, 33,933 marriages were celebrated with at least one foreign spouse, 17.3% of the total number of weddings, a proportion slightly higher than the previous year.

The share of marriages with at least one foreign spouse is notoriously higher in areas where the settlement of foreign communities is more stable and rooted, as, for example, in the North and the Center. In this part of the country almost one marriage out of four has at least one foreign spouse, while in the South and the Islands there are proportions of less than 10%.

At the regional level, the autonomous province of Bolzano (30.1%), Tuscany (27.8%), Umbria (25.2%) and Veneto (24.5%) are at the top of the ranking. All regions of the South are below the national average (Figure 4).

Mixed marriages (in which one spouse is Italian and the other foreign) amount to over 24 thousand in 2018 (70.5%) and represent the largest part of marriages with at least one foreign spouse. In mixed couples, the most frequent type is that in which the groom is Italian and the bride is from abroad; this type of marriage concerns 9.1% of the total number of celebrations at the national average level (17,789 weddings celebrated in 2018) and reaches almost 12% in the Center-North. The Italian women who chose a foreign partner were 6,127 in 2018, 3.1% of the total of brides.

The cases both foreign spouses were 10,017 (5.2% of total marriages) and widely reduce if we consider only those in which at least one of the spouses is resident in Italy (5,451 marriages in total). Our country is an attraction for many citizens coming mainly from highly developed countries, who choose it as a place to celebrate weddings.

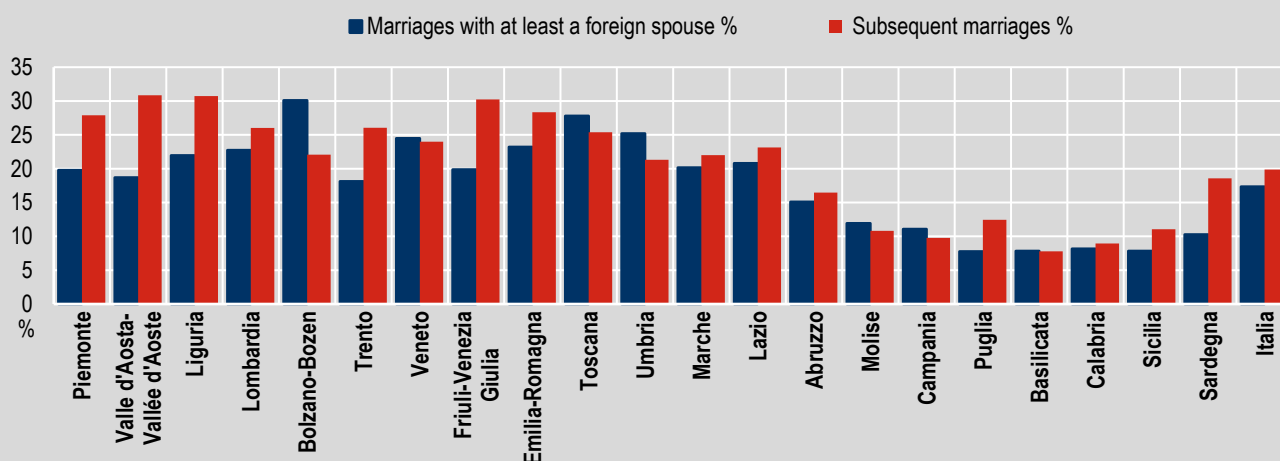
Men and women show a different propensity to marry with a foreign citizen not only in terms of frequency, but also as regards some important characteristics of spouses, such as citizenship.

The Italian men who married a foreigner in 2018 have a Romanian wife in 18.6% of cases, a Ukrainian one in 12.7%, a Brazilian one in 6.7% and a Russian one in 6.1%. Italian women who married a foreigner, on the other hand, chose men with Moroccan citizenship (15.0%), Albanian (10.0%) and Tunisian (5.2%) more often. Overall, in this type of couple, more than three foreign couples out of 10 are citizens of an African country.

Considering marriages of both foreigner spouses in which at least one is resident in Italy, the most common are Romanians (1,521 marriages in 2018, equal to 27.9% of total marriages between foreign spouses residing), followed by those between Nigerians (559 wedding, 10.3%) and Ukrainians (408 weddings, 7.5%). On the contrary, some foreign and as well numerous communities, marry in Italy less frequently: this is the case of Moroccan or Albanian citizens.

FIGURE 4. MARRIAGES WITH AT LEAST A FOREIGN SPOUSE AND SUBSEQUENT MARRIAGES BY REGION.

Year 2018, percentages



The reasons for these different wedding behaviors are to be found, probably, in the migratory projects and in the cultural characteristics of the different communities as well as in the male or female connotations that the communities present. In many cases, immigrant citizens get married in the country of origin and the spouses jointly face the migratory experience, or rejoin in our country when one of them has stabilized.

Comparing some of the main citizenships residing in Italy shows how the distribution by type of couple changes (Figure 5). In the case of Russian, Polish and Brazilian citizenships, there is a very large part of marriages between foreign women and Italian men. The opposite situation happens in the case of Egyptian, Senegalese and Pakistani citizenships where marriages between foreign spouses and Italian brides are clearly the most important.

A clear homogamy by citizenship distinguishes Nigerian citizens while marriages involving Albanian and Sri Lankan citizens are more evenly distributed among the various types.

Second weddings most frequent in the Center and in the North

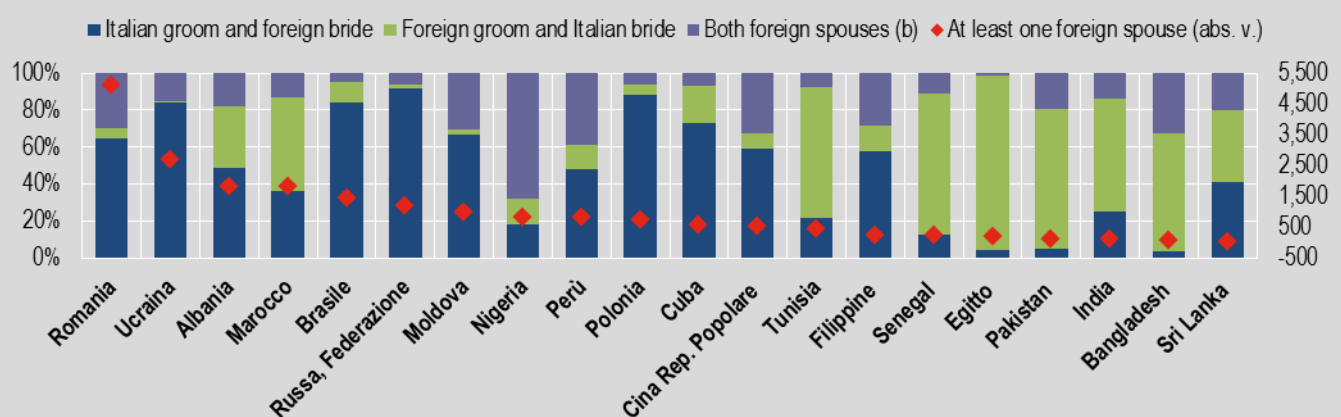
The increase in marital instability contributes to the spread of second marriages and reconstituted families composed of at least one person who has lived a previous marriage experience, generating new family types. The share of marriages in which at least one spouse has already been married is indeed growing progressively. In 2018, 19.9% of marriages involve at least one spouse in second marriages (or later), in 2008 it was 13.8%. The clear increase - especially in the 2015-2016 two-year period - derives strongly from the introduction of the short divorce; the value recorded in 2018, on the other hand, is quite similar to that of the previous year, thus assuming a substantial stabilization of the share of second marriages.

The most frequent type of marriages after the first is that in which the groom is divorced and the bride is single (13,597 weddings, 6.9% of marriages celebrated in 2018); the celebrations in which the bride is divorced and the groom is single follow (5.5% of the total) and those in which both spouses are divorced (5.4%) come in the third position.

Even the average age of the spouses at the second marriage shows a substantial increase between 2008 and 2018. The age of the spouses previously widowed has increased from 61.2 years to 67.9 and that of brides previously widowed from 48.4 years to 51.0. A similar trend for divorced spouses: in 2018 spouses who are already divorced have on average 55.0 years and already divorced brides 47.3 years (respectively +4.8 years for women and +6.9 for men). The postponement of the stages of the life cycle, accompanied by the increase in survival levels also involves those who have already had a union.

FIGURE 5. MARRIAGES WITH AT LEAST A FOREIGN SPOUSE BY TYPE OF COUPLE AND MAIN CITIZENSHIPS

(a). Year 2018, percentages



(a) Citizenships are the main ones based on the ranking of foreigners residing in Italy and / or that of marriages with at least one foreign resident. (b) Of which at least one resident in Italy.

The highest percentages of marriages with at least one spouse in the second marriage can be observed, in order, in Valle d'Aosta (30.8% of the total number of celebrations), Liguria (30.7%), Friuli-Venezia Giulia (30.2%), Emilia-Romagna (28.4%) and Piedmont (27.9%). The lowest incidences were found, instead, in Basilicata (7.8%), Calabria (8.9%) and Campania (9.8%), with percentages more than halved compared to the national average value (Figure 4). Marriages after the first are more common where the highest divorce rates were recorded, e.g. in the regions of the North and the Center.

Half of the celebrations take place in a civil ceremony

Another distinctive feature of the evolution of nuptiality is the sustained growth of the wedding celebrated with the civil ceremony, which went from 2.3% in 1970, to 36.7% in 2008 up to 50.1% in 2018 (98.182 celebrated weddings with civil ceremony, about 8 thousand more than in 2008). In the North the share is 63.9% while in the South it is less than half (30.4%).

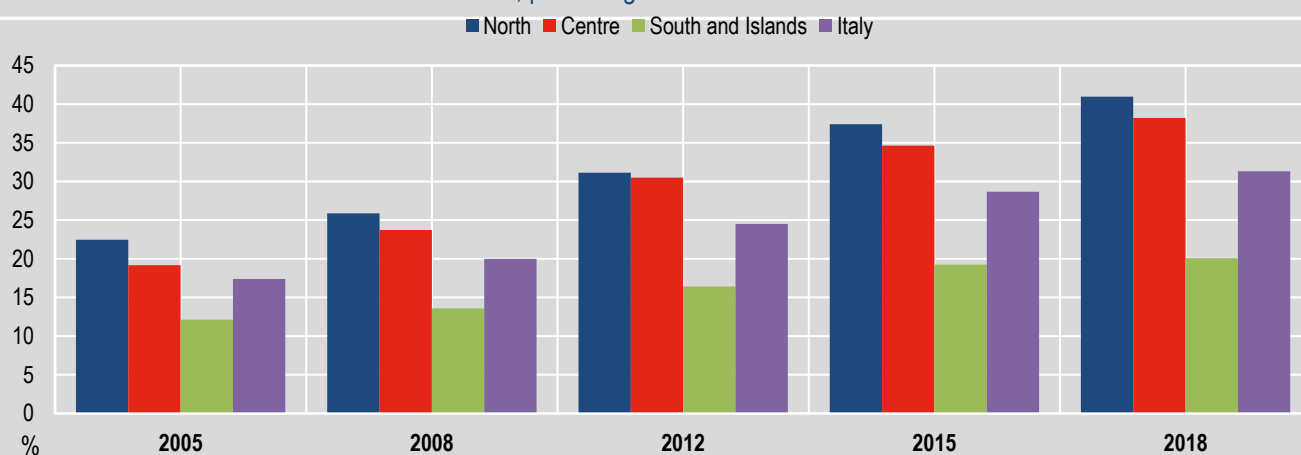
The second and subsequent marriages^{ix} (94.6%) and marriages with at least one foreign spouse (89.5%) are mainly celebrated with a civil ceremony. In the last decade both the share of marriages after the first (from 13.8% of the total number of marriages celebrated in 2008 to 19.9% in 2018) have increased and the share of marriages where at least one of the spouses is a foreigner (from 15% in 2008 to 17.3% in 2018). The increase in the civil ceremony, therefore, can be partly explained by the increase in the types of marriage that typically make use of them. However, the choice to celebrate the marriage with the civil ceremony is rapidly emerging even in the first marriages (from 27.9% in 2008 to 39.1% in 2018).

Considering the first marriages of both Italian spouses, accounting for 85.6% of the total of the first marriages, the average incidence of those celebrated with the civil ceremony is 31.3%. This quota - which can be read as an indicator of secularization - presents a marked territorial variability: from a minimum of 20% in the South to almost double percentages in the North and in the Center (respectively 41.0 and 38.2%) (Figure 6).

Another aspect is related to the age structure of both Italian spouses: among the young under 30 who marry for the first time we observe a more "traditional" behavior compared to those who marry in later ages; the share of first marriages celebrated with civil rite is, 24.8% for the youngest and 37.8% for those who get married for the first time at a more mature age. Furthermore, for the youngest, the territorial variability is more limited, while the North-South gradient is still evident (about 27% vs. 22.6% respectively). For those marrying from 30 years upwards, the territorial differential is even more marked. From 48.7% of the first wedding celebrated with a civil ceremony in the North, to 44.3% in the Center, compared to 21.6% in the South.

The choice of the asset separation regime is also a rapidly growing phenomenon. In 2008, the share of marriages under the property separation regime was 62.7% and in 11 years only it reached 72.9%.

FIGURE 6. ITALIAN FIRST MARRIAGES CELEBRATED WITH CIVIL CEREMONY BY GEOGRAPHICAL AREA OF RESIDENCE OF THE BRIDE. Years 2005-2018, percentages



Same-sex couples: widespread partnerships in the North-West and in large cities

In 2018, 2,808 civil unions (between same-sex couples) were registered at the civil registry offices of the Italian municipalities. These are in addition to those already established during the second half of 2016 (2,336), the year in which the Law of May 20, 2016, n. 76^x, and the year 2017 (4,376)^{xi}. As expected, after the peak which occurred immediately after the new law came into force, the phenomenon is now stabilizing.

The prevalence of pairs of men is also confirmed in 2018 (1,802 unions, 64.2% of the total), although in progressive reduction (73.6% in 2016, 67.7% in 2017).

37.2% of civil unions were celebrated in the North-West, followed by the Center (27.2%). At the top was Lombardy with 25%, followed by Lazio (15.1%), Emilia-Romagna (10.0%) and Tuscany (9.4%).

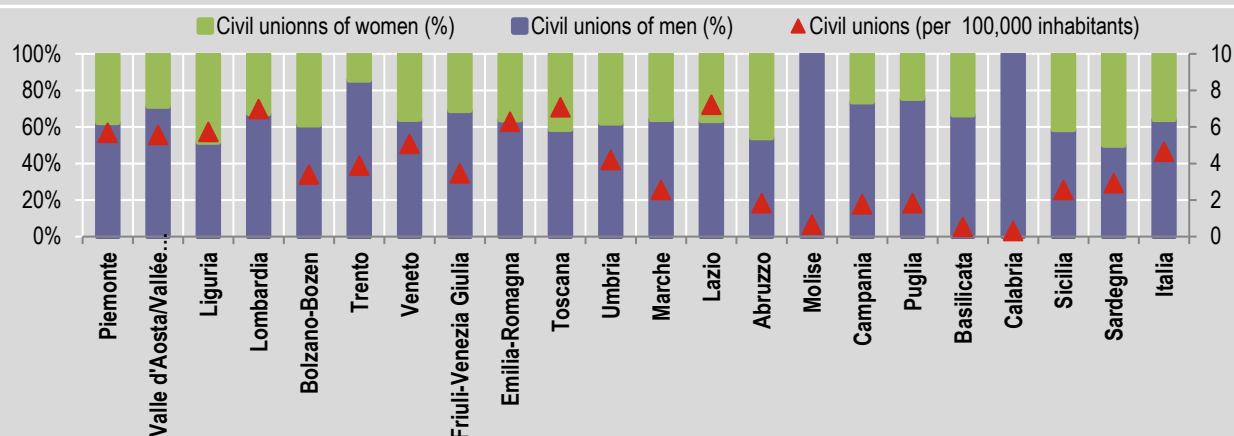
There are 4.6 civil unions in Italy in 2018: 7 from Lazio, Lombardy and Tuscany to around 0.5 per 100 thousand from Calabria, Basilicata and Molise (Figure 7).

The attractive role of some metropolises is particularly evident. In 2018 32.7% of civil unions in Italy were concentrated in the big cities: at the top of the list were Rome (290 unions, 10.3%) and Milan (257 unions, 9.2%); the share of civil unions of pairs of men was particularly high in Milan (75.5%) compared to Rome (66.9%).

Considering the incidence of civil unions over the total resident population, in 2018 18.7 civil unions per 100,000 inhabitants were in Milan, 10.1 civil unions per 100,000 inhabitants in Rome.

Among the cities of the South only Naples and Palermo showed values higher than 1 per 100 thousand inhabitants, similarly to what observed in the previous period.

FIGURE 7. CIVIL UNIONS BY SEX AND REGION. Year 2018, percentage composition and values per 100,000 inhabitants



Glossary

Absolute change: Difference between the total of a phenomenon at the end of the period considered and the one at the beginning.

Average annual percentage change (or average annual rate of change): Obtained by dividing the percentage change, with reference to a multi-year time period, by the number of years in the period.

Civil Unions: with the enactment of the law May 20, 2016, n. 76 on the “Regulation of civil unions between persons of the same sex and cohabitation discipline”, the institution of unions between persons of the same sex and of de facto cohabitation was introduced in Italy.

First marriage: Marriage in which the marital status of the bride/groom at the moment of the wedding is single.

First-marriage index (or rate): Sum of specific marriage-rate ratios calculated from the ratio, for each age class, of the number of first marriages to the average total annual population.

Marital status: condition of every citizen towards the state as regards marriage or civil union. A male or female citizen who has never contracted marriage or a civil union is defined as unmarried; married to a married citizen who has not obtained the dissolution or cessation of the civil effects of the marriage; divorced the married citizen who has obtained the dissolution or cessation of the civil effects of the marriage; widower / a citizen whose marriage has ceased due to the death of the spouse; civilly united the united citizen who has not obtained the dissolution of the civil union; already united (due to the dissolution of the union) the united citizen who obtained the dissolution of the civil union; already civilized (due to the death of the partner) the citizen whose union ceased due to the death of the partner.

Marriage rate (ratio): Ratio between number of marriages celebrated in a year and average total resident population (per 1000).

Marriage rite: Marriages can be celebrated before a registrar, a Catholic minister or minister of one of the other religions recognised by the Italian State. In the latter case, the marriage may in any case produce civil effects (termed *matrimonio concordatario*, that is, a marriage contracted in keeping with the Concordat).

Mean age at first marriage: It is the mean age of men or women at first marriage if subject throughout their lives to the age-specific marriage rates of first marriages only in a given year.

Mixed marriage: Celebration in which one of the two partners has foreign citizenship and the other has Italian citizenship.

Percentage change: The ratio between the absolute change and the initial total. It is then multiplied by 100.

Property regime: Marriage automatically establishes the property regime of community of property (legal community of property), introduced by the family law reform of 1975. With the separation of property regime (article 215, Civil Code), in contrast, each partner retains exclusive ownership of any property acquired during the marriage.

Simple index number: An index number is a number that expresses the change in intensity of a given phenomenon in different circumstances. A simple index number is the ratio between two numbers. The number placed as the denominator is called the index base.

Methodological note

Marriages

Aims and general framework

The survey of marriages from Civil Status registry offices data was established by Istat in 1926. The subject of the survey, which is individual and exhaustive, is all marriages of the present population, and makes it possible to analyse the phenomenon of nuptiality, by marriage order, in relation to the main socio-demographic characteristics of the spouses.

The survey has as its object all the concordat marriages and civil marriages celebrated in Italy. The data on marriages are collected by Istat at the time of the formation of the Marriage Act, according to the provisions of the Civil Status Regulation. Istat records both the total number marriages by distinguishing them in religious and civil marriages celebrated in each municipality, as well as individual data on marriage and spouses related to each individual event.

Among the main indicators produced, particular importance is given to the synthetic measures of intensity and cadence of first marriage, which allow the analysis of the evolution and geography of the behavior of men and women with respect to the formation of marital unions.

The survey is included in the National Statistical Program (code IST-00119).

Data collection is based on the Istat D.3 model compiled by the Civil Status Officer, or by his delegate, of the Municipality in which the marriage was celebrated (according to the provisions of the Civil Status regulation contained in the Presidential Decree of 3 November 2000, No. 396).

The model is divided into two parts: information about the marriage and information about the partners. For each event, in the section dedicated to the marriage, the following information is collected: date, type of ceremony (religious or civil), municipality of marriage and property regime chosen by the couple (community or separation of property). Information collected for each partner regards: date of birth, municipality of birth, municipality of residence at time of marriage, couple's future place of residence, previous marital status, level of education, occupational status, position within profession, branch of economic activity, and citizenship.

The most recent changes to the form were made in 1995, with the addition of the variable regarding property regime and in 1997 with more precise information regarding citizenship, asking in the case of Italian citizenship whether this is by birth or acquired.

The release of the main statistical information is released with increasing timeliness with respect to the date of reference of the events. For this purpose the information contained in Model D.7.A. (Survey of demographic events by registry office records) is also processed, providing – on a monthly basis and by the municipality in which the event occurred – the number of religious and civil marriages (provisional data, subject to correction when data from the individual surveys is made available).

Data process and methodologies

This is a continuous survey even if, in order to streamline the flows, data collection is measured on a monthly basis and the data analyzed, released and disseminated annually.

The structure of the current surveys on marriages (monthly and individual continuous summary) has only partially changed compared to the past; these still are exhaustive, the Municipality is also today the basic territorial unit, while the Government Territorial Offices (Prefectures) act as an intermediate monitoring and / or survey body. However, the contents have expanded and the methods of data provision have changed.

Starting from the 2018 survey year, the filling, acquisition and provision of the models takes place exclusively electronically by the Civil Status Officials, through a personalized user by connecting to the platform created ad hoc by Istat for the "Demographic surveys of Civil Status" and available at the link: <https://gino.istat.it/statocivile/>; previously the data was transmitted via the ISI-Istatel demographic data collection system, prepared by Istat in collaboration with ANCI-Ancitel.

Control of data coverage takes place considering both the monthly summary and the historical series of events for each Municipality. The correction of total and partial non-response occurs with mixed methods: deterministic in the case of systematic and probabilistic errors in the case of stochastic errors.

At the time of the release of the 2018 data, the new reconstructed series of data relating to marriages with at least one foreign spouse since 2013 is also disseminated. In fact, thanks to the acquisition of data through the new platform it has significantly improved the quality of the data acquired both in terms of internal consistency of the data and in terms of completeness.

Classifications and auxiliary information

In the survey are used ISTAT territorial classifications of the Municipalities, Provinces and Regions, Istat classifications of the Foreign States and the Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics - NUTS.

Some anticipations regarding marriages are available about 6 months later than the date of reference for the events. For this purpose, the information contained in model D.7.A. ((Survey of demographic events by registry office records)) which provide, monthly and by municipality of event, the number of religious and civil marriages (provisional data, subject to rectification when the data of individual surveys become available).

The survey of civil status events deals with data relating to civil status events (births - distinguished by vitality, affiliation and gender of birth - deaths, marriages, extra-judicial negotiation agreements assisted by lawyers pursuant to Article 6, extra agreements - judgments concluded and confirmed directly in front of the Civil Status Officer pursuant to Article 12 and the establishment of civil unions) which occurred in the Municipality during the survey period.

Data dissemination

At the end of each annual survey cycle, the main statistical information is released less than a year after the reference date for the events.

Annual summary data are also disseminated (at regional level) in the *Annuario statistico italiano (Italian Statistical Yearbook)* and Noi Italia.

The main results are available online by consulting the I.Stat datawarehouse at <http://dati.istat.it/> and Demo, the topic-based system, at <http://demo.istat.it/altridati/matrimoni/>.

Legislative references

Article. 1 paragraph 15 of law no. 94 of July 2009 has modified the art. 116 Civil Code. The purpose of the reform is to prevent the celebration of marriages of convenience. This rule applies to both mixed marriages and those with both foreign spouses.

The Constitutional Court in July 2011, with sentence n. 245/2011, considered the constitutionally illegitimate the art. 116, paragraph 1, of the Italian Civil Code, as amended by art. 1, paragraph 15, of Law no. 94 of 2009, limited to the words "as well as a document attesting the regularity of the stay in the Italian territory", since the general prohibition of celebrating the marriage of a foreigner not regularly residing in Italy represents a disproportionate instrument, unreasonably damaging to the fundamental right of every human being to contract marriage.

Civil unions

General framework and data sources

Following the enactment of the law May 20, 2016, n. 76 on the "Regulation of civil unions between persons of the same sex and cohabitation discipline" and the entry into force of the D.P.C.M. 23 July 2016, n. 144 "Regulation containing transitional provisions necessary for keeping records of the archive in the civil state, pursuant to article 1, paragraph 34, of the law May 20, 2016, n.76", Istat introduced in the Istat model D. 7.A year of 2017, the section on civil unions set up before the Civil Status Officer, distinguished by gender of the partners (both males or both females). Starting from 1 January 2018, Istat has also included this information in the monthly D.7.A form.

This report is therefore based on the survey of civil status events carried out by Istat through the monthly and annual Model D.7.A. The survey of civil status events deals with data relating to civil status events (births - distinguished by vitality, affiliation and gender of birth - deaths, marriages, extra-judicial negotiation agreements assisted by lawyers pursuant to Article 6, extra agreements - judgments concluded and confirmed directly in front of the Civil Status Officer pursuant to Article 12 and the establishment of civil unions) which occurred in the Municipality during the survey period. The survey is included in the national statistical program.

Starting from 1 January 2018, Istat has also started the individual survey of the civil partnerships established at the registry offices (code IST-02744). Through a specific statistical model (Mod. Istat D.3.U) the main information on the civil union and on the partners are reported with reference to all the civil unions established at the Civil Status Offices of the various Italian municipalities.

Both the summary surveys (D.7.A monthly and annual) and the individual survey take place through the acquisition and transmission of the models exclusively by electronic means by the Civil Status Officials, through a personalized user by connecting to the ad hoc platform created by Istat for the "Demographic Surveys of Civil Status" and available at the link: <https://gino.istat.it/statocivile/>.

Legislative references

Law of 20 May 2016, n. 76 on the "Regulation of civil unions between persons of the same sex and cohabitation discipline", in force since 5 June 2016.

D.P.C.M. 23 July 2016, n. 144 "Regulation containing transitional provisions necessary for keeping records in the archives in the civil status, pursuant to article 1, paragraph 34, of the law May 20, 2016, No. 76", in force since July 29, 2016.

Leg. 19 January 2017, n. 6 "Modifications and additions to regulations in criminal matters for the necessary coordination with the discipline of civil unions, pursuant to article 1, paragraph 28, letter c) of the law of 20 May 2016, n. 76 "in force since 11 February 2017.

ⁱ Article. 1 paragraph 15 of law no. 94 of July 2009 has modified the art. 116 CC. The purpose of the reform is to prevent the celebration of marriages of convenience. This rule applies to both mixed marriages and those with both foreign spouses. The Constitutional Court in July 2011, with sentence n. 245/2011, considered the constitutionally illegitimate the art. 116, paragraph 1, of the Italian Civil Code, as amended by art. 1, paragraph 15, of Law no. 94 of 2009, limited to the words "as well as a document attesting the regularity of the stay in the Italian territory", since the general prohibition of celebrating the marriage of a foreigner not regularly residing in Italy represents a disproportionate instrument, unreasonably damaging the fundamental right of every human being to contract marriage.

ⁱⁱ Articles 6 and 12 of Decree Law 132/2014 introduce the extra-judicial method of personal separation, cessation of civil effects or dissolution of marriage, modification of the conditions of separation or divorce as a further possibility offered to those who intend to separate or divorce consensually as an alternative to the procedure at the Court.

It was published in the Official Gazette 11 May 2015, n. 107 the so-called law on short Divorce (Law 6 May 2015, n. 55), which intervenes on the discipline of separation and divorce, reducing the time for the application for divorce from three years to twelve months in the case of judicial separations and at six months in the case of consensual separations (also in case of transformation from judicial into consensual).

ⁱⁱⁱ See Istat, Statistics Report, Marriages, separations and divorces. Year 2015.

^{iv} Rosina A., M. Caltabiano, M. Preda. 2009. "La geografia italiana del degiovanimento". In *Geografia del popolamento. Casi di studio, metodi e teorie*, a cura di G. Macchi. Siena: Fieravecchia.

^v See Istat, Indagine Aspetti della vita quotidiana. Anni vari

^{vi} See Istat, Statistics Report, Birth and fertility of the resident population. Year 2017

^{vii} See Istat, Survey Family, Social Subjects and Life Cycle, Year 2016

^{viii} See Istat, 2016 Annual Report - The situation in the country

^{ix} Marriages after the first one almost always take place with the civil ceremony; in fact, only those in which the first marriage was celebrated in the Municipality and those in which, in addition to the cancellation of the civil effects, the religious annulment of the marriage was obtained, can be celebrated with a religious rite.

^x Law of 20 May 2016, n. 76 on the "Regulation of civil unions between persons of the same sex and cohabitation discipline" and the entry into force of the D.P.C.M. 23 July 2016, n. 144 "Regulation containing transitional provisions necessary for keeping records in the archives in the civil status, pursuant to article 1, paragraph 34, of the law May 20, 2016, No. 76".

^{xi} See Istat, Statistiche Report, Popolazione residente per stato civile. Anno 2018.