

# STATISTICS PRESS NOTICE – MARRIAGES, DIVORCES AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS IN NORTHERN IRELAND (2008)



Northern Ireland  
Statistics &  
Research  
Agency

## Friday 8<sup>th</sup> August 2008 Most Popular Day to Wed Last Year

9:30am – Thursday, 25th June 2009

The number of marriages registered in Northern Ireland in 2008 was 8,500, a small decrease on the 8,700 marriages registered in 2007, the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency said today.

The highest number of marriages ever recorded in Northern Ireland was in 1970 (12,300 marriages); in the following thirty years the number of marriages declined reaching a low of 7,300 marriages in 2001. Since 2001 the number of marriages has increased to 8,700 in 2007 with a small fall last year to 8,500 marriages recorded.

Last year Friday, 8 August 2008 was the most popular day to get married in Northern Ireland. There were 139 marriages on that day compared to 100 marriages on a typical summer Saturday. As well as 8 August being the most popular day, August was also the most popular month to get married last year with over 1,400 marriages taking place in that month.

Just under 2,800 divorces were registered in Northern Ireland in 2008, a decrease on the 2007 figure of 2,900 divorces which was the highest number of divorces recorded in Northern Ireland in a single year.

During 2008 there were 86 civil partnerships registered in Northern Ireland, this compares with 111 civil partnerships in 2007.

A NISRA spokesperson said that:

*“The statistics released today show 8,500 couples getting married in Northern Ireland in 2008. The statistics show the continued increase in ages of those getting married with, on average, both men and women today aged over 30 when getting married. This is significantly older than their counterparts three decades ago. The figures also show that just under 2,800 couples got divorced last year.”*

Some further key results and a number of attached tables are outlined below.

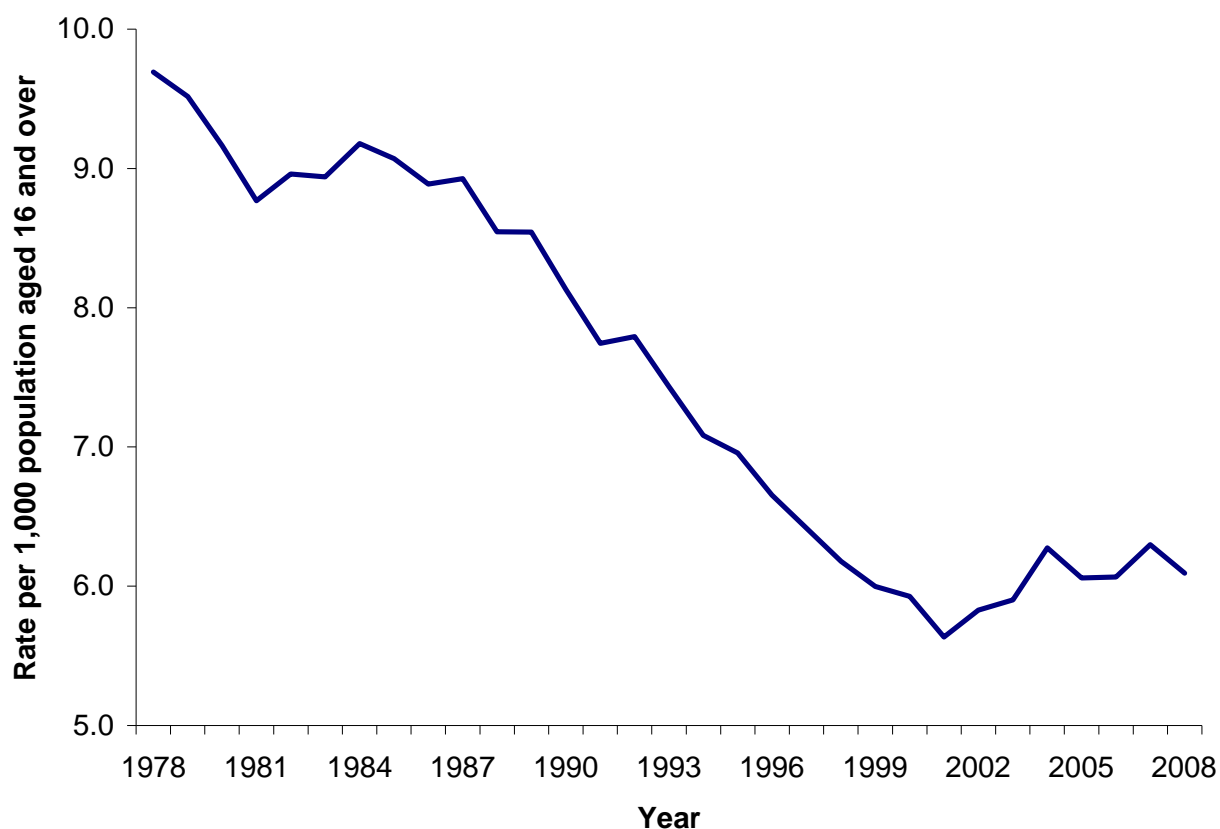
## Marriages registered in 2008

### *Number of Marriages*

- There were 8,510 marriages registered in Northern Ireland in 2008, a decrease of 177 marriages or 2% on the 2007 figure of 8,687 marriages; and
- the number of marriages registered in 2008 is significantly higher (17%) than the recent low of 7,281 marriages recorded in 2001, but shows a decrease from 1978 when 10,304 marriages were registered.

**Chart 1: Marriage Rate per 1,000 Population Aged 16 and Over (1978 to 2008)**

[non-zero Y axis]



### *Bride and Groom*

- Last year more than three-quarters (80%) of marriages were the first marriage for both the bride and groom, 13% of marriages were a first marriage for one partner and a remarriage for the other partner and the remaining 7% of marriages were a remarriage for both the bride and groom;

- over half (53%) of couples who married in 2008 lived at the same address before marriage, equal to the 2007 figure;
- the average age at marriage has increased markedly in the last two decades. The average age at marriage for all brides in 2008 was 31 (31.0 years) compared to 26 (25.6 years) in 1988. The average age for the groom in 2008 was 33 (33.3 years), compared to 28 (27.7 years) in 1988. Both first time brides and grooms are now on average five years older than their counterparts twenty years ago;
- of the 8,510 marriages in 2008, 7,664 (90%) were to couples where one or both partners lived in Northern Ireland. In the remaining 846 marriages (10%) neither partner lived in Northern Ireland; however the vast majority of these (76%) related to marriages where one or both partners were born in Northern Ireland, clearly relating to people returning home to get married; and
- overall in 71% (6,069 marriages) of marriages registered in 2008 both partners were born in Northern Ireland, in 24% (2,005 marriages) one partner was born in Northern Ireland and in only 5% (436 marriages) neither partner was born in Northern Ireland.

#### *Type of Ceremony*

- Of the 8,510 marriages registered in 2008, 6,039 were religious marriages and the remaining 2,471 were civil marriages;
- whilst the number of civil marriages has decreased from 2,555 in 2007 to 2,471 in 2008 over the longer term the popularity of civil marriage has been increasing. Civil marriages accounted for 29% of all marriages in 2008 compared to 14% (1,349 marriages) in 1988 and only 7% (498 marriages) in 1928;
- the number of religious marriages decreased from 6,132 marriages in 2007 to 6,039 marriages in 2008;
- religious marriages accounted for 71% (6,039 marriages) of all marriages in 2008 compared to 86% (8,611 marriages) in 1988 and 93% (6,766 marriages) in 1928; and

- of the 6,039 religious marriages in 2008, 53% were Roman Catholic ceremonies; 18% Presbyterian (including Free Presbyterian), 15% Church of Ireland, 4% Methodist and 9% 'Other denominations'.

### *Place of Ceremony*

- The Marriage (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 now allows civil marriage ceremonies to be conducted outside Registrar's Offices in a number of approved venues. In 2008, 1,056 civil marriage ceremonies (43% of all civil marriage ceremonies) were held in approved venues compared to 1,042 in 2007;
- in 2008, 426 religious marriage ceremonies (7% of all religious marriage ceremonies) were held outside of religious buildings compared to 378 such ceremonies in 2007;
- outside religious buildings and Registrar Offices most weddings took place in The Old Inn, Crawsfordsburn in 2008. In contrast Belfast Castle was most popular in 2007; and
- Belfast Registrar Office had the most weddings of all Registrar Offices in 2008 and St. Eugene's Cathedral in Derry Local Government District had the most weddings of all religious buildings.

### *Marriages by District*

- The new marriage legislation introduced in 2004 has less strict residency requirements; marriages celebrated in a particular district are not necessarily between residents of that district. There are marked differences in characteristics of marriage partners and ceremonies between districts – this is shown in Table 1(g);
- in 2008, most marriages took place in Belfast Local Government District (1,336 marriages) followed by Newry & Mourne Local Government District (538 marriages). Moyle Local Government District had the fewest marriages registered in 2008 (103 marriages); and

- the average ages of males and females at the time of marriage varies across Local Government Districts. Carrickfergus has the highest average ages at 33 for females and 35 for males compared to Magherafelt with the lowest average age for females at 29 and males at 31.

### *Marriage Day and Seasonality*

- Summer is the most popular time of year to get married. Over 40% of all marriages took place in the third quarter of 2008 (July-September), whilst only 12% of marriages took place in the first quarter (January-March);
- in 2008, the most common month to get married was August (1,486 couples) followed by July (1,072 couples);
- last year, the most common day of the week to get married was Saturday (38%). Only 55 marriages took place on a Sunday in 2008;
- Friday 8th August 2008 was the most popular day in 2008 to get married, with 139 couples getting married on that date;
- between January and March just under 40% of all marriages were civil ceremonies while in the second and third quarters of the year 26% of all marriages were civil marriages; and
- over the last five years just under 80% of marriages were first time marriages for both partners; however looking at the months January to March this falls to just over 70% of marriages.

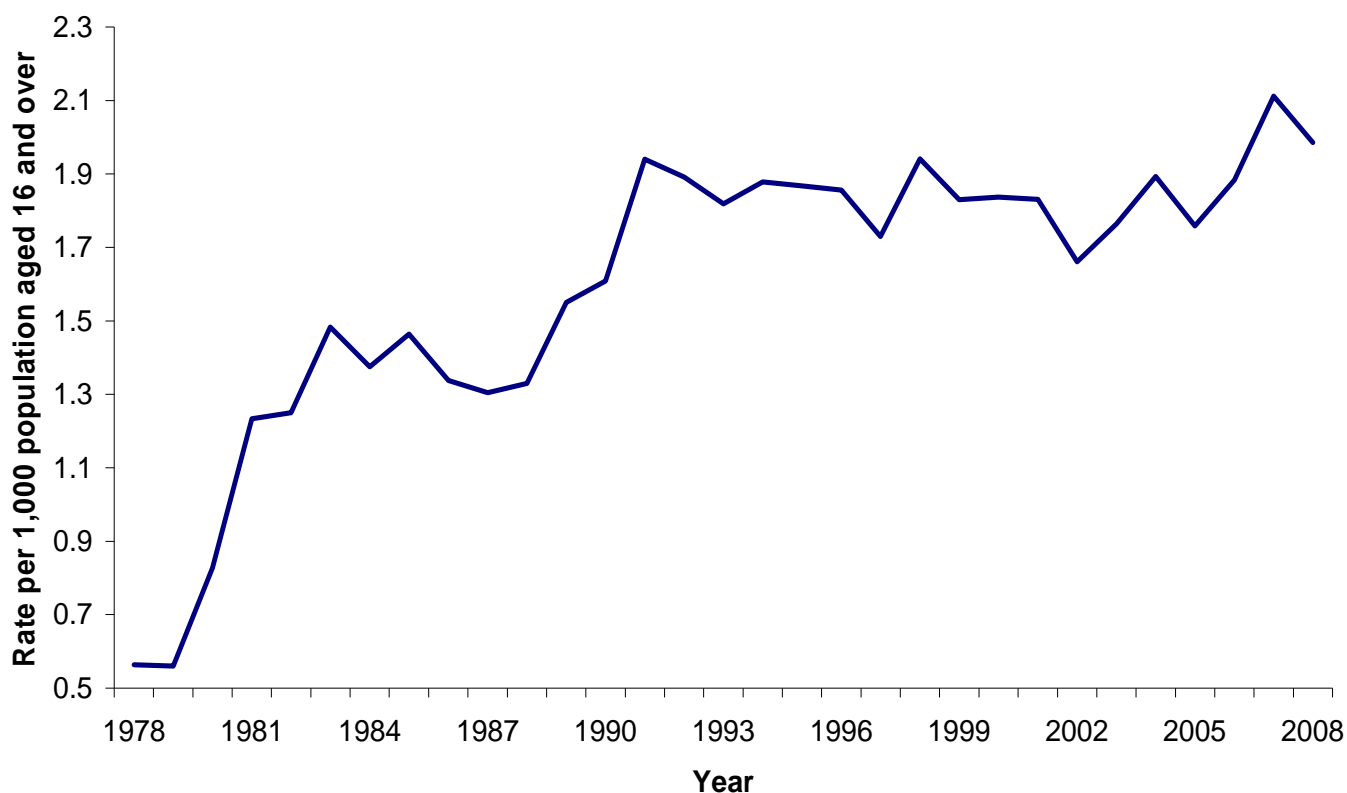
## Divorces granted in 2008

### *Number of Divorces*

- The number of marriages dissolved in Northern Ireland in 2008 was 2,773. This is a decrease of 140 divorces or 5% from last year's figure of 2,913 divorces;
- the number of divorces recorded in 2007 was the largest on record for Northern Ireland. During the last decade the number of divorces had stabilised with an annual average of around 2,400 per year;
- the average duration of marriage ending in divorce in 2008 was 17.6 years; and
- of the 2,773 divorces dissolved in Northern Ireland in 2008, 751 cases were lodged with the Northern Ireland Court Service in 2008, 1,273 in 2007 and 398 in 2006 with the remaining 351 being lodged prior to 2006.

**Chart 2: Divorce Rate per 1,000 Population Aged 16 and Over (1978 to 2008)**

**[non-zero Y axis]**



## *Divorcees*

- Last year 90% of people getting divorced had not been divorced before; however the proportion of people getting divorced who were previously divorced has been rising since the 1980s. This now accounts for over 9% of all new divorcees in 2008. People who were previously widowed at the time of their marriage accounted for less than 1% of people getting divorced; and
- just under 10% of male divorcees had left Northern Ireland or resided at an unknown address at the time of their divorce compared to just over 4% of female divorcees.

## *Other Issues*

- Non-cohabitation remains the most frequently recorded reason for divorce (77%), followed by behaviour (12%) and combined grounds (8%);
- in 2008, nearly two-thirds of divorces (63%) were filed for by the wife, 36% were filed for by the husband and less than 1% by both partners. These percentages have remained around this level over the last ten years;
- just over 30% of divorces were of marriages that had been celebrated in a Roman Catholic Church. Corresponding figures for Presbyterian (including Free Presbyterian), Church of Ireland, Methodist and Registrar's Office are 16%, 14%, 4% and 26% respectively;
- over the last three years 14% of divorces related to marriages which took place outside Northern Ireland. Of these divorces, a significant proportion leads to one partner living outside Northern Ireland at the time of their divorce; and
- in 2008, just under 4,800 children/stepchildren were affected by divorce; 2,800 children aged under 18 at the time of the divorce and 2,000 children aged 18 and over at the time of the divorce.

## **Civil Partnerships registered in 2008**

### *Number of Civil Partnerships*

- The Civil Partnership Act came into force in late 2005, enabling same-sex couples to obtain legal recognition of their relationship. During 2008 there were 86 civil partnerships registered in Northern Ireland, 43 male civil partnerships and 43 female civil partnerships. This is a decrease from the 2007 figure of 111 civil partnerships.

### *Marital Status of Partners*

- For 71 civil partnerships both partners were single, in the remaining 15 civil partnerships at least one partner had previously been married;
- for 36 of the 43 male civil partnerships both partners were single, while for the remaining 7 male civil partnerships at least one partner had previously been married. For 35 of the 43 female civil partnerships both partners were single; in the remaining 8 female civil partnerships at least one partner had previously been married;
- for male civil partnerships the average age of partners was just over 40 (40.6 years), this compares to just under 38 (37.9 years) for female civil partnerships; and
- 75 out of the 86 civil partnership couples in 2008 lived at the same address prior to their civil partnership being registered.

### *Place of Ceremony*

- In 2008, 65 civil partnership ceremonies were held in Registrar's Offices. The remaining 21 were held in an approved venue.

### *Civil Partnerships by District*

- Civil partnerships celebrated in a particular district are not necessarily between residents of that district. In 2008, Belfast Local Government District was the most popular district for civil partnerships (48 civil partnerships), with Derry Local Government District was the second most popular (9 civil partnerships); and
- in 2008, there were 20 civil partnerships registered where both partners were not resident in Northern Ireland.

### *Date of Civil Partnership*

- Last year, the most common day of the week for a civil partnership was Friday (31 civil partnerships).

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A number of tables are attached. These are listed below:

## **Marriage**

Table 1(a) Marriages, Numbers and Rates, Mean Age at Marriage and Percentages by Age at Marriage for Males, 1998 to 2008

Table 1(b) Marriages, Numbers and Rates, Mean Age at Marriage and Percentages by Age at Marriage for Females, 1998 to 2008

Table 1(c) Marriages, Percentages by Marital Status of Persons Marrying, 1998 to 2008

Table 1(d) Marriages (Numbers) by Method of Celebration, 1998 to 2008

Table 1(e) Marriages (Percentages) by Method of Celebration, 1998 to 2008

Table 1(f) Civil and Religious Marriages by Location, 2008

Table 1(g) Marriages by District and Health Board of Celebration, 2008

Table 1(h) Key Marriage Statistics by Quarter of Registration, 2003 to 2008

Table 1(i) Marriages by Age of Husband and Wife at Marriage, 2008

Table 1(j) Marriages by Country of Birth of Husband and Wife, 2008

Table 1(k) Marriages by Country of Residence of Husband and Wife, 2008

## **Divorce**

Table 2(a) Divorces, Numbers and Rates, Mean Duration of Marriage, Percentages by Marital Status and Percentage Filed by Wife, 1998 to 2008

Table 2(b) Divorces, Percentage by Grounds, 1998 to 2008

Table 2(c) Divorces, Percentage by Method of Celebration of Marriage, 1998 to 2008

Table 2(d) Divorcees by Area of Residence, 2008

Table 2(e) Divorces by Duration of Marriage and Number of Children/Stepchildren, 2008

## **Civil Partnerships**

Table 3(a) Civil Partnerships, Numbers, Mean Age and Percentage by Age at Civil Partnership, 2005 to 2008

Table 3(b) Civil Partnerships, Percentages by Marital Status of Persons Marrying, 2005 to 2008

Table 3(c) Civil Partnerships by Location, 2008

Table 3(d) Civil Partnerships by District and Health Board of Celebration, 2008

Table 3(e) Key Civil Partnership Statistics by Quarter of Registration, 2005 to 2008

Table 3(f) Civil Partnerships by Age of Both Partners at Civil Partnership, 2008

Table 3(g) Civil Partnerships by Age of Partners at Civil Partnership, 2008

These tables along with some additional tables and charts on marriages, divorces and civil partnerships can be found at:

<http://www.nisra.gov.uk/demography/default.asp25.htm>

**Table 1(a) Marriages, Numbers and Rates, Mean Age at Marriage and Percentages by Age at Marriage for Males, 1998 to 2008<sup>P</sup>**

Year	Number of Marriages	Male Marriage Rate <sup>1,2</sup>	Average Age at Marriage				Percentage of grooms aged under 25	Percentage of grooms aged 40 and over
			Husband's conjugal condition					
			Single	Widowed	Divorced	All		
1998	7,826	12.9	29.1	55.7	41.3	31.1	17.0	10.9
1999	7,628	12.5	29.2	57.2	42.1	31.4	16.1	11.7
2000	7,584	12.4	29.5	58.0	41.9	31.7	14.5	12.3
2001	7,281	11.7	29.7	57.5	42.7	31.8	13.9	12.6
2002	7,599	12.1	29.9	58.9	43.3	32.3	13.3	13.8
2003	7,757	12.2	30.1	56.7	43.5	32.3	12.1	13.5
2004	8,328	13.0	30.5	53.6	44.1	32.9	11.3	15.4
2005	8,140	12.5	30.5	59.0	44.4	32.7	10.8	15.1
2006	8,259	12.5	30.7	59.4	45.1	33.2	10.0	16.5
2007	8,687	13.0	31.0	56.8	44.7	33.2	9.0	16.2
2008 <sup>P</sup>	8,510	12.6	31.1	59.3	45.4	33.3	8.5	16.5

<sup>1</sup>Marriages per 1,000 male population aged 16 and over. (Note in previous releases this table calculated rates using both the male and female population)

<sup>2</sup>Rate for 2008 calculated using the 2008 population projection

**Table 1(b) Marriages, Numbers and Rates, Mean Age at Marriage and Percentages by Age at Marriage for Females, 1998 to 2008<sup>P</sup>**

Year	Number of Marriages	Female Marriage Rate <sup>1,2</sup>	Average Age at Marriage				Percentage of brides aged under 25	Percentage of brides aged 40 and over
			Wife's conjugal condition					
			Single	Widowed	Divorced	All		
1998	7,826	11.9	27.1	51.5	38.7	28.9	30.5	7.4
1999	7,628	11.5	27.4	52.9	39.3	29.2	29.7	8.1
2000	7,584	11.4	27.6	51.9	39.9	29.5	27.4	8.8
2001	7,281	10.8	27.8	51.1	39.6	29.5	26.0	8.6
2002	7,599	11.2	28.1	52.5	40.6	30.0	25.4	9.8
2003	7,757	11.4	28.2	51.1	40.8	30.1	24.1	9.3
2004	8,328	12.1	28.5	47.8	41.7	30.6	22.0	10.9
2005	8,140	11.7	28.6	54.6	41.4	30.4	21.3	10.1
2006	8,259	11.7	28.9	53.7	42.6	30.9	19.2	11.4
2007	8,687	12.2	29.0	50.8	42.2	30.9	18.6	10.9
2008 <sup>P</sup>	8,510	11.8	29.1	51.9	42.9	31.0	17.3	11.7

<sup>1</sup>Marriages per 1,000 female population aged 16 and over. (Note in previous releases this table calculated rates using both the male and female population)

<sup>2</sup>Rate for 2008 calculated using the 2008 population projection

**Table 1(c) Marriages, Percentages by Marital Status of Persons Marrying, 1998 to 2008<sup>P</sup>**

Year	Percentage of grooms who were			Percentage of brides who were			Percentage of couples marrying		
	Bachelors <sup>1</sup>	Widowers	Divorcees	Spinsters <sup>1</sup>	Widows	Divorcees	Neither partner previously married	One partner previously married	Both partners previously married
1998	85.5	1.6	13.0	86.5	1.6	11.9	79.1	13.8	7.1
1999	85.2	1.8	13.0	86.7	1.6	11.7	79.3	13.2	7.4
2000	85.2	2.0	12.7	86.2	1.5	12.3	79.3	12.8	7.9
2001	85.6	1.6	12.9	86.8	1.4	11.8	79.7	13.0	7.3
2002	84.3	1.8	13.9	85.9	1.7	12.4	78.1	14.0	7.9
2003	84.9	1.7	13.4	86.2	1.5	12.3	79.2	12.6	8.1
2004	84.0	2.2	13.8	85.4	1.8	12.8	77.6	14.0	8.4
2005	85.5	1.4	13.1	86.9	1.3	11.8	79.8	12.7	7.5
2006	84.5	1.5	14.0	86.2	1.4	12.3	78.6	13.5	7.9
2007	84.9	1.2	13.9	86.4	1.1	12.5	79.0	13.3	7.7
2008 <sup>P</sup>	85.6	1.2	13.2	86.7	1.1	12.3	79.8	12.7	7.5

<sup>1</sup>Includes some people who previously went through a form of marriage and whose previous marriage was annulled.

**Table 1(d) Marriages (Numbers) by Method of Celebration, 1998 to 2008<sup>P</sup>**

Year	Method of celebration - Numbers						
	All marriages	Religious denomination					Civil
		Roman Catholic	Presbyterian <sup>1</sup>	Church of Ireland	Methodist	Other denominations	
1998	7,826	2,973	1,260	1,056	236	447	1,854
1999	7,628	2,935	1,222	967	246	425	1,833
2000	7,584	2,885	1,218	986	253	332	1,910
2001	7,281	2,708	1,158	984	218	332	1,881
2002	7,599	2,830	1,135	1,005	204	312	2,113
2003	7,757	2,841	1,207	988	224	363	2,134
2004	8,328	2,978	1,172	916	224	414	2,624
2005	8,140	3,047	1,179	1,044	208	434	2,228
2006	8,259	3,031	1,191	929	210	452	2,446
2007	8,687	3,227	1,164	953	210	578	2,555
2008 <sup>P</sup>	8,510	3,202	1,116	922	238	561	2,471

<sup>1</sup> Including Free Presbyterian

**Table 1(e) Marriages (Percentages) by Method of Celebration, 1998 to 2008<sup>P</sup>**

Year	Method of celebration - Percentages						
	All marriages	Religious denomination					Civil
		Roman Catholic	Presbyterian <sup>1</sup>	Church of Ireland	Methodist	Other denominations	
1998	7,826	38.0	16.1	13.5	3.0	5.7	23.7
1999	7,628	38.5	16.0	12.7	3.2	5.6	24.0
2000	7,584	38.0	16.1	13.0	3.3	4.4	25.2
2001	7,281	37.2	15.9	13.5	3.0	4.6	25.8
2002	7,599	37.2	14.9	13.2	2.7	4.1	27.8
2003	7,757	36.6	15.6	12.7	2.9	4.7	27.5
2004	8,328	35.8	14.1	11.0	2.7	5.0	31.5
2005	8,140	37.4	14.5	12.8	2.6	5.3	27.4
2006	8,259	36.7	14.4	11.2	2.5	5.5	29.6
2007	8,687	37.1	13.4	11.0	2.4	6.7	29.4
2008 <sup>P</sup>	8,510	37.6	13.1	10.8	2.8	6.6	29.0

<sup>1</sup> Including Free Presbyterian

**Table 1(f) Civil and Religious Marriages by Location, 2008<sup>P</sup>**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Civil</b>	<b>Religious</b>	<b>Total</b>
Registrar's Office <sup>1</sup>	1,415	-	<b>1,415</b>
Religious Building <sup>1</sup>	-	5,613	<b>5,613</b>
<b>Other locations:</b>			
The Old Inn, Crawfordsburn	52	82	<b>134</b>
Belfast Castle, Belfast	73	58	<b>131</b>
Galgorm Manor Hotel, Ballymena	57	26	<b>83</b>
Malone House, Belfast	32	31	<b>63</b>
La Mon House Hotel, Castlereagh	23	23	<b>46</b>
Clandeboyne Lodge Hotel, Bangor	15	21	<b>36</b>
Ross Park Hotel, Ballymena	25	5	<b>30</b>
Carrickfergus Castle, Carrickfergus	19	10	<b>29</b>
Narrow Water Castle, Warrenpoint	26	3	<b>29</b>
Ballygally Castle Hotel, Ballygally	26	2	<b>28</b>
Kiltonga Hall, Newtownards	21	5	<b>26</b>
Lusty Beg Island, Kesh	24	2	<b>26</b>
Culloden Hotel, Holywood	11	14	<b>25</b>
The Templeton Hotel, Templepatrick	20	5	<b>25</b>
The Beech Hill Country House Hotel, Londonderry	21	2	<b>23</b>
The Tullylagan Country House Hotel, Cookstown	19	4	<b>23</b>
The Mill, Ballydugan	22	-	<b>22</b>
Slieve Donard Hotel, Newcastle	19	2	<b>21</b>
Magherabuoy House Hotel, Portrush	14	6	<b>20</b>
Clarion Hotel, Carrickfergus	12	7	<b>19</b>
Corrick House Hotel, Clogher	14	4	<b>18</b>
Crom Estate, Newtownbutler	15	3	<b>18</b>
Mount Stewart, Newtownards	14	4	<b>18</b>
Radisson Roe Park Resort, Limavady	17	1	<b>18</b>
Mussenden Temple, Downhill	11	6	<b>17</b>
Ramada Hotel, Shaws Bridge	14	2	<b>16</b>
Stormont Hotel, Belfast	12	4	<b>16</b>
Town Hall, Newtownards	16	-	<b>16</b>
<i>Remaining other locations</i>	412	94	<b>506</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,471</b>	<b>6,039</b>	<b>8,510</b>

<sup>1</sup> Includes a small number of marriages that took place in a prison or hospital.

**Table 1(g) Marriages by District and Health Board of Celebration, 2008<sup>P</sup>**

Area of celebration	Number of marriages	Percentage Civil Marriages	Average Age of Husband	Average Age of Bride	Percentage of couples where neither partner previously married	Percentage of couples living at same address before marriage	Percentage of couples resident outside NI	Most popular approved venue (count)
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>8,510</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>33.3</b>	<b>31.0</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>10</b>	
<b>Eastern Board</b>	<b>3,117</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>33.9</b>	<b>31.6</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>9</b>	
Ards	295	36	34.4	32.4	72	59	8	Kiltonga Hall (26)
Belfast	1,336	34	34.1	31.7	77	59	9	Belfast Castle (131)
Castlereagh	186	40	34.7	32.2	71	60	3	La Mon House Hotel (46)
Down	357	26	32.5	30.6	83	56	12	The Mill, Ballydugan (22)
Lisburn	463	35	33.2	31.0	77	55	7	The Balmoral Hotel, Dunmurry (11)
North Down	480	36	34.1	32.0	74	73	11	The Old Inn, Crawfordsburn (134)
<b>Northern Board</b>	<b>2,126</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>33.3</b>	<b>31.0</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>9</b>	
Antrim	262	45	32.8	30.5	77	64	8	The Templeton Hotel, Templepatrick (25)
Ballymena	375	46	33.8	31.4	73	50	8	Galgorm Manor Hotel (83)
Ballymoney	166	19	31.7	30.2	83	43	10	Lissanoure Castle, Loughguile (15)
Carrickfergus	158	51	35.4	32.9	66	70	3	Carrickfergus Castle (29)
Coleraine	291	41	34.3	32.0	74	59	16	Magherabuoy House Hotel, Portrush (20)
Cookstown	209	21	32.4	30.1	82	37	10	Tullylagan Country House Hotel (23)
Larne	138	39	34.1	31.4	74	63	16	Ballygally Castle Hotel (28)
Magherafelt	196	5	30.7	28.6	96	32	7	Ardtara Country House (5)
Moyle	103	17	33.7	30.9	83	40	14	Laragh Lodge, Glenariffe (6)
Newtownabbey	228	25	33.8	31.4	81	63	5	Sentry Hill (9)
<b>Southern Board</b>	<b>1,729</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>32.6</b>	<b>30.2</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>9</b>	
Armagh	350	19	32.8	30.4	84	43	9	Armagh City Hotel (3)
Banbridge	188	30	34.0	31.0	78	45	5	Belmont Hotel (13)
Craigavon	356	24	32.3	30.2	82	51	5	Seagoe Hotel, Portadown (10)
Dungannon	297	12	31.9	29.7	90	34	5	Corrick House Hotel, Clougher (18)
Newry & Mourne	538	25	32.6	30.3	85	45	15	Narrow Water Castle, Warrenpoint (29)
<b>Western Board</b>	<b>1,538</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>33.0</b>	<b>30.8</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>14</b>	
Fermanagh	424	31	33.8	31.9	80	50	20	Lusty Beg Island, Kesh (26)
Limavady	167	22	32.2	29.8	85	50	10	Radisson Roe Park Resort (18)
Derry	485	27	33.7	31.2	79	51	15	The Beech Hill Country House Hotel (23)
Omagh	275	9	31.4	29.7	92	44	9	Mellon Country Hotel (6)
Strabane	187	5	32.3	29.7	91	40	9	Fir Trees Hotel / The Hunting Lodge Hotel (1)

**Table 1(h) Key Marriage Statistics by Quarter of Registration, 2003 to 2008<sup>P</sup>**

Year and Quarter	Number of marriages	Percentage Civil Ceremony	Average age of Groom	Average age of Bride	Percentage of couples where neither partner previously married
<b>2003</b>					
January – March	817	40	33.5	31.2	71
April – June	2,210	27	32.4	30.2	79
July – September	3,297	23	31.6	29.4	82
October – December	1,433	31	33.2	31.0	77
<b>2004</b>					
January – March	822	41	33.9	31.6	69
April – June	2,414	31	32.7	30.5	77
July – September	3,485	27	32.3	29.8	81
October – December	1,607	36	34.1	31.6	74
<b>2005</b>					
January – March	948	39	33.7	31.5	72
April – June	2,238	27	32.9	30.5	80
July – September	3,515	24	32.0	29.7	83
October – December	1,439	30	33.7	31.2	78
<b>2006</b>					
January – March	928	37	34.4	31.9	71
April – June	2,287	30	33.3	30.9	78
July – September	3,528	25	32.4	30.2	83
October – December	1,516	34	34.1	31.8	75
<b>2007</b>					
January – March	956	38	34.6	32.2	72
April – June	2,389	31	33.2	30.9	79
July – September	3,791	25	32.5	30.3	82
October – December	1,551	33	33.9	31.6	75
<b>2008<sup>P</sup></b>					
January – March	1,118	37	34.7	32.5	73
April – June	2,208	29	33.3	31.0	80
July – September	3,612	24	32.6	30.3	83
October – December	1,572	34	34.0	31.7	77

**Table 1(i) Marriages by Age of Husband and Wife at Marriage, 2008<sup>P</sup>**

Age of Wife at Marriage	All Ages	Age of Husband at Marriage						
		Under 25	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50+
All Ages	<b>8,510</b>	<b>724</b>	<b>2,953</b>	<b>2,282</b>	<b>1,146</b>	<b>558</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>492</b>
Under 25	<b>1,470</b>	526	713	172	42	12	4	1
25-29	<b>3,408</b>	173	1,882	1,010	269	50	15	9
30-34	<b>1,836</b>	18	305	879	440	142	35	17
35-39	<b>801</b>	6	46	184	286	161	80	38
40-44	<b>434</b>	1	6	28	82	138	104	75
45-49	<b>267</b>	-	1	6	22	43	80	115
50+	<b>294</b>	-	-	3	5	12	37	237

**Table 1(j) Marriages by Country of Birth of Husband and Wife, 2008<sup>P</sup>**

Wife's Country of Birth	All Countries	Husband's Country of Birth				
		Northern Ireland	Rest of the UK	Republic of Ireland	A8 Countries <sup>1</sup>	All Other Countries
<b>All Countries</b>	<b>8,510</b>	<b>6,754</b>	<b>938</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>337</b>
Northern Ireland	<b>7,389</b>	6,069	776	309	4	231
Rest of the UK	<b>491</b>	352	99	24	1	15
Republic of Ireland	<b>202</b>	94	25	70	-	13
A8 Countries <sup>1</sup>	<b>81</b>	17	2	2	50	10
All Other Countries	<b>347</b>	222	36	15	6	68

<sup>1</sup> The A8 Countries include Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia

**Table 1(k) Marriages by Country of Residence of Husband and Wife, 2008<sup>P</sup>**

Wife's Country of Residence	All Countries	Husband's Country of Residence				
		Northern Ireland	Rest of the UK	Republic of Ireland	A8 Countries <sup>1</sup>	All Other Countries
<b>All Countries</b>	<b>8,510</b>	<b>7,372</b>	<b>689</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>99</b>
Northern Ireland	<b>7,595</b>	7,303	114	153	-	25
Rest of the UK	<b>601</b>	26	570	2	-	3
Republic of Ireland	<b>218</b>	20	3	193	-	2
A8 Countries <sup>1</sup>	<b>3</b>	2	-	-	1	-
All Other Countries	<b>93</b>	21	2	1	-	69

<sup>1</sup> The A8 Countries include Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia

**Table 2(a) Divorces, Numbers and Rates, Mean Duration of Marriage, Percentages by Marital Status and Percentage Filed by Wife, 1998 to 2008<sup>P</sup>**

Year of decree	Number of divorces	Divorce Rate <sup>1,2</sup>	Average Duration of marriage (in years)	Husbands - Marital status at time of marriage (Percentage)			Wives - Marital status at time of marriage (Percentage)			Percentage filed by wife
				Single	Widowed	Divorced	Single	Widowed	Divorced	
1998	2,459	1.9	15.3	93.2	0.6	6.3	93.1	0.9	6.1	67
1999	2,326	1.8	15.8	92.6	0.6	6.7	93.9	0.5	5.6	68
2000	2,350	1.8	16.2	91.4	0.9	7.8	92.4	0.9	6.7	66
2001	2,365	1.8	16.1	91.4	0.9	7.7	91.5	0.9	7.6	67
2002	2,165	1.7	16.4	91.9	0.4	7.7	91.6	1.0	7.3	65
2003	2,319	1.8	16.6	91.1	0.6	8.3	91.4	0.4	8.2	66
2004	2,512	1.9	16.7	91.8	0.5	7.7	91.5	0.7	7.8	66
2005	2,362	1.8	17.1	90.1	0.8	9.2	90.1	0.8	9.1	64
2006	2,565	1.9	17.7	91.2	0.4	8.4	91.3	0.7	8.0	65
2007	2,913	2.1	17.4	90.7	0.4	8.9	89.9	0.4	9.7	64
2008 <sup>P</sup>	2,773	2.0	17.6	90.3	0.4	9.3	90.0	0.4	9.6	63

<sup>1</sup>Divorces per 1,000 population aged 16 and over

<sup>2</sup>Rate for 2008 calculated using the 2008 population projection

**Table 2(b) Divorces, Percentage by Grounds, 1998 to 2008<sup>P</sup>**

Year of decree	Number of divorces	Grounds of divorce (Percentage)						
		Adultery	Behaviour	Desertion	Non-cohabitation		Combined grounds	Nullity of marriage
					2 years & consent	5 years		
1998	2,459	6.1	17.2	0.4	45.2	27.8	3.0	0.2
1999	2,326	8.2	18.2	0.7	42.0	27.6	3.1	0.0
2000	2,350	6.9	17.3	0.3	45.3	27.0	3.1	0.1
2001	2,365	5.9	17.4	0.2	44.5	28.2	3.6	0.1
2002	2,165	6.1	16.8	0.1	46.3	26.9	3.8	-
2003	2,319	4.8	16.6	0.4	45.9	27.7	4.4	0.2
2004	2,512	5.5	18.9	0.2	45.9	25.9	3.5	-
2005	2,362	3.9	13.2	0.1	44.7	27.2	10.7	0.2
2006	2,565	3.7	13.0	0.1	43.2	29.1	10.7	0.3
2007	2,913	3.4	12.3	0.1	47.1	27.1	9.7	0.2
2008 <sup>P</sup>	2,773	2.8	12.2	0.1	46.4	30.2	8.0	0.3

**Table 2(c) Divorces, Percentage by Method of Celebration of Marriage, 1998 to 2008<sup>P</sup>**

Year of decree	Method of celebration of marriage of divorcees (Percentage)						
	Number of divorces	Roman Catholic	Presbyterian <sup>1</sup>	Church of Ireland	Methodist	Other denominations <sup>2</sup>	Civil
1998	2,459	29.0	20.1	16.5	4.1	12.7	17.6
1999	2,326	30.3	20.7	16.9	3.8	10.7	17.5
2000	2,350	30.9	20.0	15.2	4.8	10.0	19.2
2001	2,365	31.3	20.7	15.1	4.1	9.2	19.6
2002	2,165	30.7	19.7	14.9	3.5	11.5	19.8
2003	2,319	31.0	19.8	13.7	4.0	10.7	20.8
2004	2,512	30.9	18.5	14.3	4.7	12.7	18.8
2005	2,362	30.3	18.9	14.4	4.4	9.2	22.8
2006	2,565	31.2	17.0	14.3	4.0	9.9	23.6
2007	2,913	28.5	16.7	15.6	4.1	10.1	25.1
2008 <sup>P</sup>	2,773	30.8	15.8	13.6	3.7	10.2	25.9

<sup>1</sup> Including Free Presbyterian

<sup>2</sup> Including not stated.

**Table 2(d) Divorcees by Area of Residence, 2008<sup>P</sup>**

<b>Area of Residence</b>	<b>Male Divorcees</b>	<b>Female Divorcees</b>	<b>All Divorcees</b>
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>2,509</b>	<b>2,659</b>	<b>5,168</b>
<b>Eastern Board</b>	<b>1,070</b>	<b>1,093</b>	<b>2,163</b>
Ards	137	153	290
Belfast	411	369	780
Castlereagh	97	116	213
Down	87	90	177
Lisburn	184	195	379
North Down	154	170	324
<b>Northern Board</b>	<b>678</b>	<b>741</b>	<b>1,419</b>
Antrim	74	76	150
Ballymena	106	120	226
Ballymoney	42	42	84
Carrickfergus	78	90	168
Coleraine	82	75	157
Cookstown	49	41	90
Larne	59	62	121
Magherafelt	40	43	83
Moyle	18	23	41
Newtownabbey	130	169	299
<b>Southern Board</b>	<b>437</b>	<b>473</b>	<b>910</b>
Armagh	59	80	139
Banbridge	67	74	141
Craigavon	141	146	287
Dungannon	54	53	107
Newry & Mourne	116	120	236
<b>Western Board</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>676</b>
Fermanagh	56	57	113
Limavady	37	43	80
Derry	132	151	283
Omagh	47	55	102
Strabane	52	46	98
Living outside NI / Unknown	264	114	378
<b>All divorcees</b>	<b>2,773</b>	<b>2,773</b>	<b>5,546</b>

**Table 2(e) Divorces by Duration of Marriage and Number of Children/Stepchildren, 2008<sup>P</sup>**

Duration of Marriage (years)	All Divorces	Number of Children/Stepchildren <sup>1</sup>					All Children
		0	1	2	3	4+	
All Divorces	<b>2,773</b>	<b>756</b>	<b>499</b>	<b>809</b>	<b>422</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>4,721</b>
0-4	<b>147</b>	112	25	6	2	2	<b>51</b>
5-9	<b>555</b>	271	124	114	29	17	<b>520</b>
10-14	<b>564</b>	152	121	184	75	32	<b>862</b>
15-19	<b>463</b>	80	85	170	86	42	<b>870</b>
20-24	<b>444</b>	47	74	161	95	67	<b>986</b>
25-29	<b>271</b>	37	40	89	57	48	<b>607</b>
30+	<b>329</b>	57	30	85	78	79	<b>825</b>

<sup>1</sup> As some divorces are lodged years prior to the dissolution of the divorce this figure includes children which have reached adulthood when the Decree Absolute is issued

**Table 3(a) Civil Partnerships, Numbers, Mean Age and Percentage by Age at Civil Partnership, 2005 to 2008<sup>P</sup>**

Year	Number of civil partnerships	Male Partners				Female Partners			
		Number of civil partnerships	Average age of partners	Percentage of partners aged under 25	Percentage of partners aged 40 and over	Number of civil partnerships	Average age of partners	Percentage of partners aged under 25	Percentage of partners aged 40 and over
2005 <sup>1</sup>	12	6	39.4	8	42	6	34.7	-	17
2006	116	65	42.7	3	52	51	39.5	8	49
2007	111	60	41.1	7	53	51	38.0	6	40
2008 <sup>P</sup>	86	43	40.6	3	57	43	37.9	6	29

<sup>1</sup> Civil Partnerships only introduced in December 2005

**Table 3(b) Civil Partnerships, Percentages by Marital Status of Persons Marrying, 2005 to 2008<sup>P</sup>**

Year	Percentage of couples in a Civil Partnership where		Percentage of male partnerships where		Percentage of female partnerships where	
	Both Single <sup>2</sup>	One or both partners previously married	Both Single <sup>2</sup>	One or both partners previously married	Both Single <sup>2</sup>	One or both partners previously married
2005 <sup>1</sup>	75	25	83	17	67	33
2006	78	22	88	12	67	33
2007	77	23	87	13	65	35
2008 <sup>P</sup>	83	17	84	16	81	19

<sup>1</sup> Civil Partnerships only introduced in December 2005

<sup>2</sup> Includes never previously married or in a civil partnership

**Table 3(c) Civil Partnerships by Location, 2008<sup>P</sup>**

Location	TOTAL
Registrar's Office	<b>65</b>
<b>Other locations</b>	
Hotel	7
Castle	5
Council Premises	3
<i>Remaining other locations</i>	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>86</b>

**Table 3(d) Civil Partnerships by District and Health Board of Celebration, 2008<sup>P</sup>**

Area of Celebration	Number of civil partnerships	Number of male civil partnerships	Number of female civil partnerships
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Eastern Board</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>25</b>
Belfast	48	24	24
Rest of Eastern Board	9	8	1
<b>Northern Board</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Southern Board</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>
Newry & Mourne	7	2	5
Rest of Southern Board	3	2	1
<b>Western Board</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>
Derry	9	3	6
Rest of Western Board	4	2	2

**Table 3(e) Key Civil Partnership Statistics by Quarter of Registration, 2005 to 2008<sup>P</sup>**

Year and Quarter	Number of civil partnerships	Number of male partnerships	Number of female partnerships	Average age of male partners	Average age of female partners	Percentage of couples where both partners were single
<b>2005<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>39.4</b>	<b>34.7</b>	<b>75</b>
October – December	12	6	6	39.4	34.7	75
<b>2006</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>42.7</b>	<b>39.5</b>	<b>78</b>
January – March	31	21	10	48.8	37.6	90
April – June	35	15	20	42.9	39.0	69
July – September	31	19	12	40.3	41.6	77
October – December	19	10	9	34.5	39.9	79
<b>2007</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>41.1</b>	<b>38.0</b>	<b>77</b>
January – March	22	12	10	42.6	37.7	91
April – June	29	17	12	43.9	39.5	76
July – September	38	18	20	38.1	37.7	71
October – December	22	13	9	40.1	37.3	73
<b>2008<sup>P</sup></b>	<b>86</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>40.6</b>	<b>37.9</b>	<b>83</b>
January – March	18	9	9	43.5	38.9	83
April – June	23	12	11	42.8	38.1	83
July – September	23	10	13	36.0	39.5	78
October – December	22	12	10	40.2	34.8	86

<sup>1</sup> Civil Partnerships only introduced in December 2005

**Table 3(f) Civil Partnerships by Age of Both Partners at Civil Partnership, 2008<sup>P</sup>**

Age of older partner	Age of younger partner							
	All Ages	Under 25	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50+
<b>All Ages</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
Under 25	-	-	..	..	..	..	..	..
25-29	<b>8</b>	4	4	..	..	..	..	..
30-34	<b>9</b>	2	3	4	..	..	..	..
35-39	<b>22</b>	1	3	8	10	..	..	..
40-44	<b>19</b>	1	2	3	6	7	..	..
45-49	<b>16</b>	-	1	-	4	8	3	..
50+	<b>12</b>	-	-	-	3	2	2	5

**Table 3(g) Civil Partnership by Age of Partners at Civil Partnership, 2008<sup>P</sup>**

Age of Partners at Civil Partnership	All Partners	Male Partners	Female Partners
<b>All Ages</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>86</b>
Under 25	<b>8</b>	3	5
25-29	<b>21</b>	5	16
30-34	<b>24</b>	13	11
35-39	<b>45</b>	16	29
40-44	<b>36</b>	24	12
45-49	<b>21</b>	16	5
50+	<b>17</b>	9	8

## NOTE FOR EDITORS

1. This information can also be accessed on the NISRA website:  
<http://www.nisra.gov.uk/>
2. The figures on marriages have been compiled from returns furnished by the local registrars. All 2008 statistics are provisional until final figures are published in the Annual Report of the Registrar General.
3. The figures on divorces have been compiled from returns of 'Decrees made Absolute' supplied by the Northern Ireland Court Service and include nullities of marriage. Information on the number of Decree Nisis is published by the Northern Ireland Court Service. A Decree Nisi does not terminate the marriage; a couple are still married until the Decree Absolute has been granted.
4. Corresponding information for England and Wales is published by the Office for National Statistics (London) and for Scotland by the General Register Office for Scotland (Edinburgh).
5. All media inquiries should be directed to the DFP Press Office  
Telephone: 028 9052 7374  
Fax: 028 9052 7149
6. Further information on the statistics provided in this publication can be obtained from NISRA Customer Services at:

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