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| 64 | 71 | 1 | Contact point in international agency | Organization: Social and Gender Statistics Section, UNSD  Email: [genderstat@un.org](mailto:genderstat@un.org) |
| 64 | 71 | 2 | International agreed definition | Marriage is defined as the act, ceremony or process by which the legal relationship of spouses is constituted. The legality of the union may be established by civil, religious or other means as recognized by the laws of each country.  Marriage statistics in this table, therefore, include both first marriages and remarriages after divorce, widowhood or annulment. They do not, unless otherwise noted, include resumption of marriage ties after legal separation. These statistics refer to the number of marriages performed, and not to the number of persons marrying.  Age is defined as age at last birthday, that is, the difference between the date of birth and the date of the occurrence of the event, expressed in completed solar years. The age classification used for brides in this table is the following: under 15 years, 5-year age groups through 90-94, and 95 years and over, depending on the availability of data. Age classification for grooms is restricted to: under 15 years, 5-year age groups from 15 to 59, and 60 years and over.  In an effort to provide interpretation of these statistics, countries or areas providing data on marriages by age of groom and bride have been requested to specify "the minimum legal age at which marriage can take place with and without parental consent". |
| 64 | 71 | 3 | Method of computation | Compiled by the United Nations Statistics Division and supplemented by data from the periodic country reports to the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and data published by the United Nations Population Division. |
| 64 | 71 | 4 | Importance of the indicator in addressing gender issues and its limitation | This indicator shows the legal age at which young women can enter marriage. Social expectations often put pressure on girls to marry and begin bearing children at early ages before they are emotionally and physically ready. Adolescent girls who are married often find it difficult to access reproductive health services, negotiate the use of family planning methods with their partners, and marriage to older men may make girls more vulnerable to sexually transmitted infections and HIV.  The fact that marriage is a legal event, unlike birth and death that are biological events, has implications for international comparability of data. Marriage has been defined, for statistical purposes, in terms of the laws of individual countries or areas. These laws vary throughout the world. In addition, comparability is further limited because some countries or areas compile statistics only for civil marriages although religious marriages may also be legally recognized; in other countries or areas, the only available records are church registers and, therefore, the statistics may not reflect marriages that are civil marriages only.  Because these statistics are classified according to age, they are subject to the limitations with respect to accuracy of age reporting. It is probable that biases are less pronounced in marriage statistics, because information is obtained from the persons concerned and since marriage is a legal act, the participants are likely to give correct information. However, in some countries or areas, there appears to be a concentration of marriages at the legal minimum age for marriage and at the age at which valid marriage may be contracted without parental consent, indicating perhaps an overstatement in some cases to comply with the law. |
| 64 | 71 | 5 | Sources of discrepancies between global and national figures |  |
| 64 | 71 | 6 | Process of obtaining data | Periodic review of data sources by UNSD |
| 64 | 71 | 7 | Treatment of missing values | N/A |
| 64 | 71 | 8 | Data availability and assessment of countries’ capacity | Data available for 147 countries and territories |
| 64 | 71 | 9 | Expected time of release | UNSD will monitor the availability of data from UNPD and CEDAW country reports and will provide periodic updates as required. |
| 64 | 71 | 10 | Source | Data: Demographic Yearbook 2019; https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/products/dyb/documents/dyb2019/Notes24.pdf  (Accessed on 21 June 2021) |