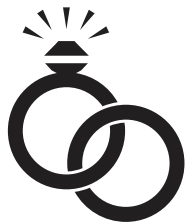




Marriages and Divorces, 2017

Statistics South Africa



3 types of marriages that are **recognised by law** are **civil marriages**, **customary marriages** and **civil unions**

The Department of Home Affairs (DHA) is responsible to manage registered marriages and unions under the following legislations:

Civil Marriages

Are administered through the Marriages Act, 1961 (Act No. 25 of 1961) as amended, and its associated regulations.

Customary Marriages

Are governed by the Recognition of Customary Marriages Act, 1998 (Act No. 120 of 1998) that came into effect on 15 November 2000.

Civil unions

The Civil Union Act, 2006 (Act No. 17 of 2006), which came into operation on 30 November 2006, governs civil unions (relationships between same-sex couples that are legally recognised by a state authority). The act accommodates persons who cannot or wish not to enter into a marriage under the Marriage Act, 1961.



Findings from 2017 marriage data

Marriages registered in 2017. What are the numbers?



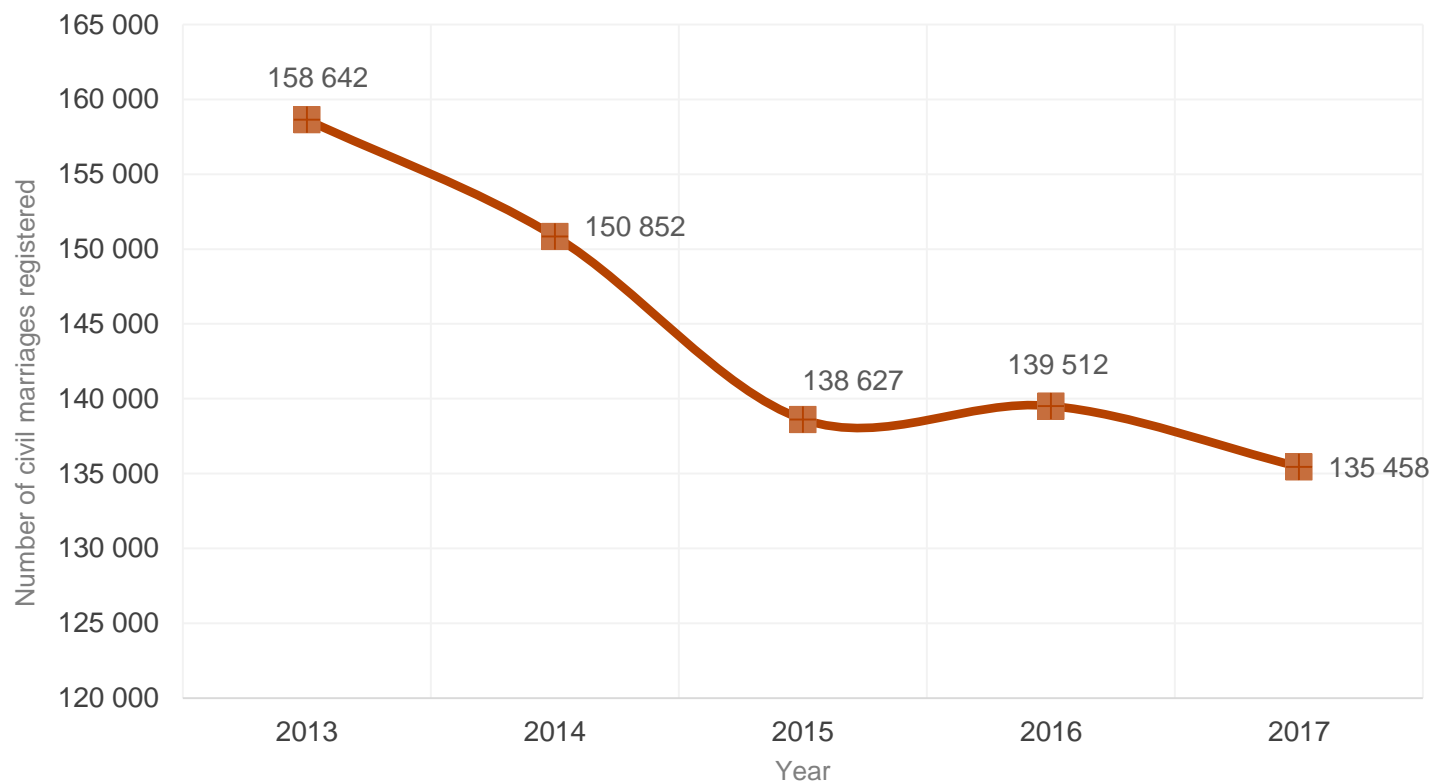
135 458 Civil Marriages

2 588 Customary Marriages

1 357 Civil Unions

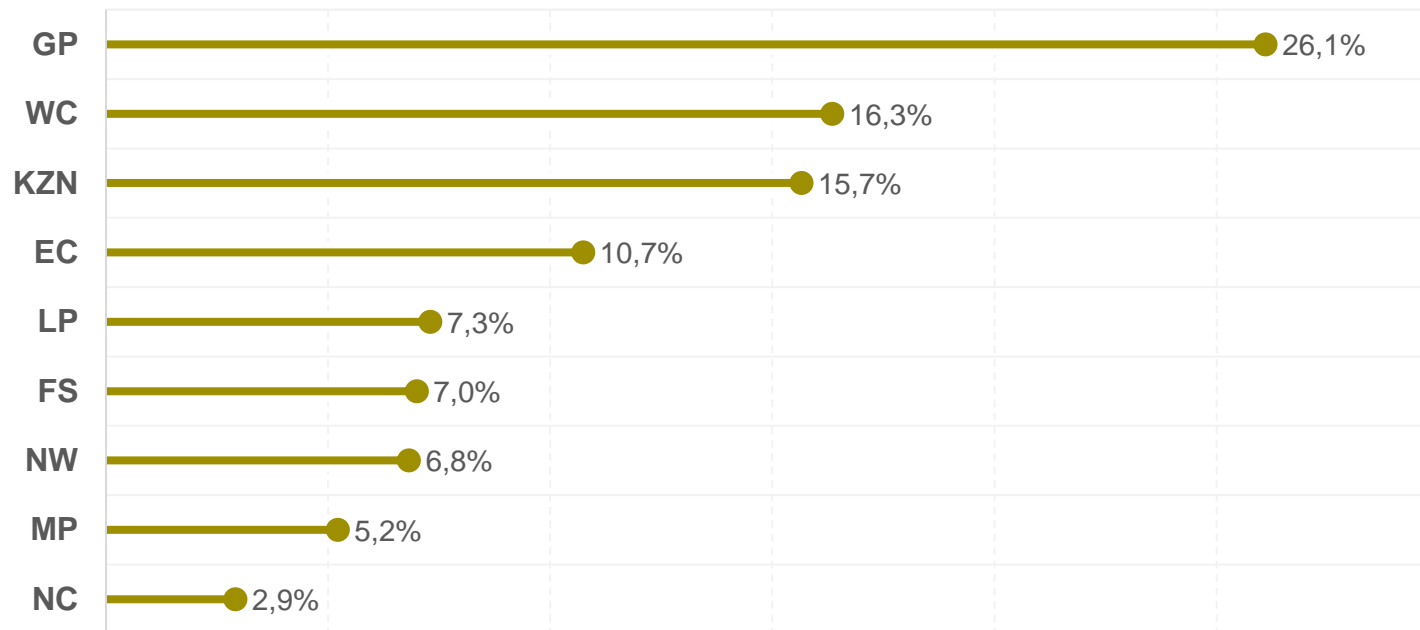
135 458 civil marriages of South African citizens and permanent residents were registered at the Department of Home Affairs in 2017. *The number has declined over the five-year period (2013 to 2017)*

Number of registered civil marriages, 2013–2017



The highest percentage of Civil marriages was registered in Gauteng and the lowest in Northern Cape.

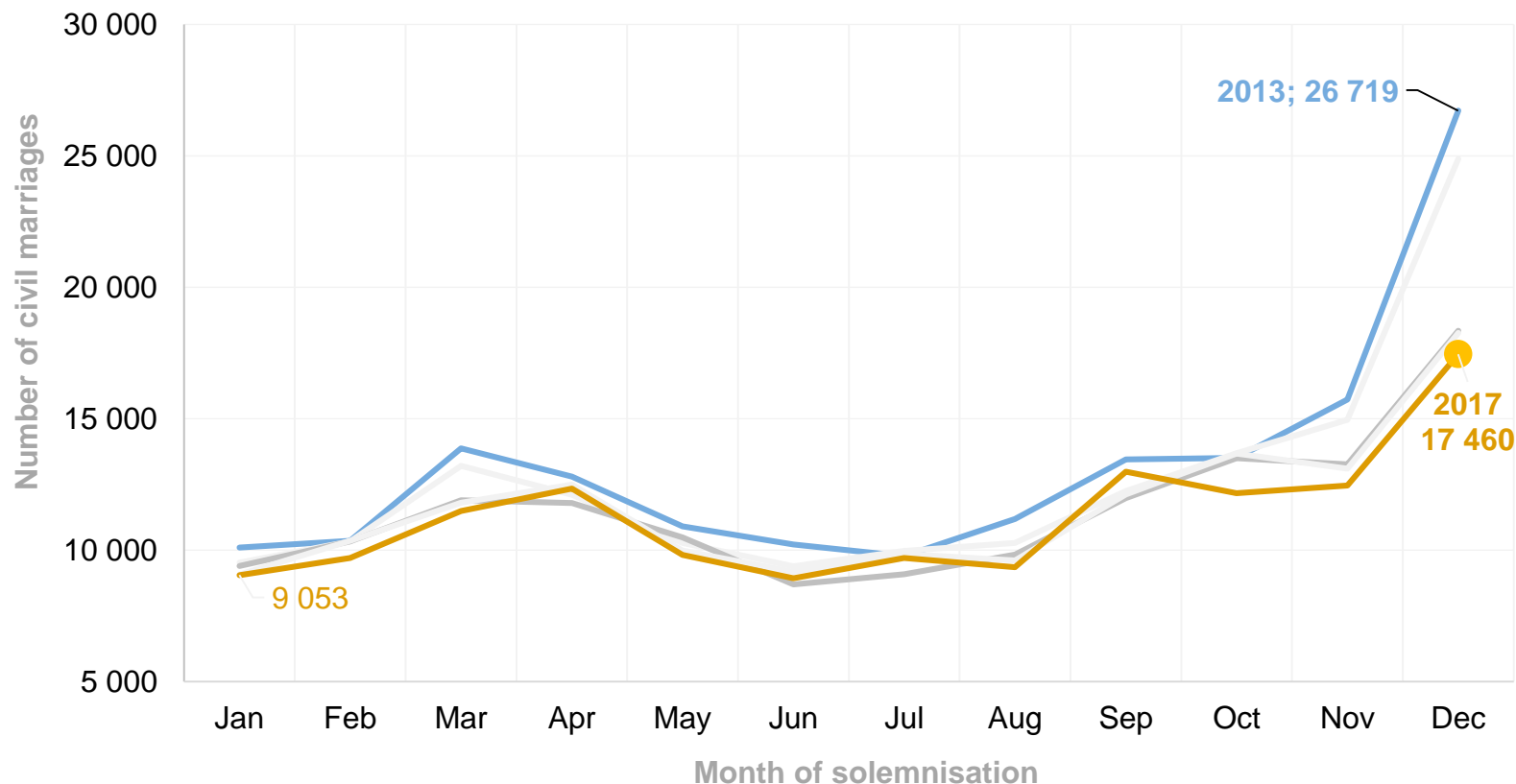
*Provincial distribution of
registered civil marriages, 2017*



** The province of registration is not necessarily the province of usual residence of the couple since couples could marry at any place of their choice.*

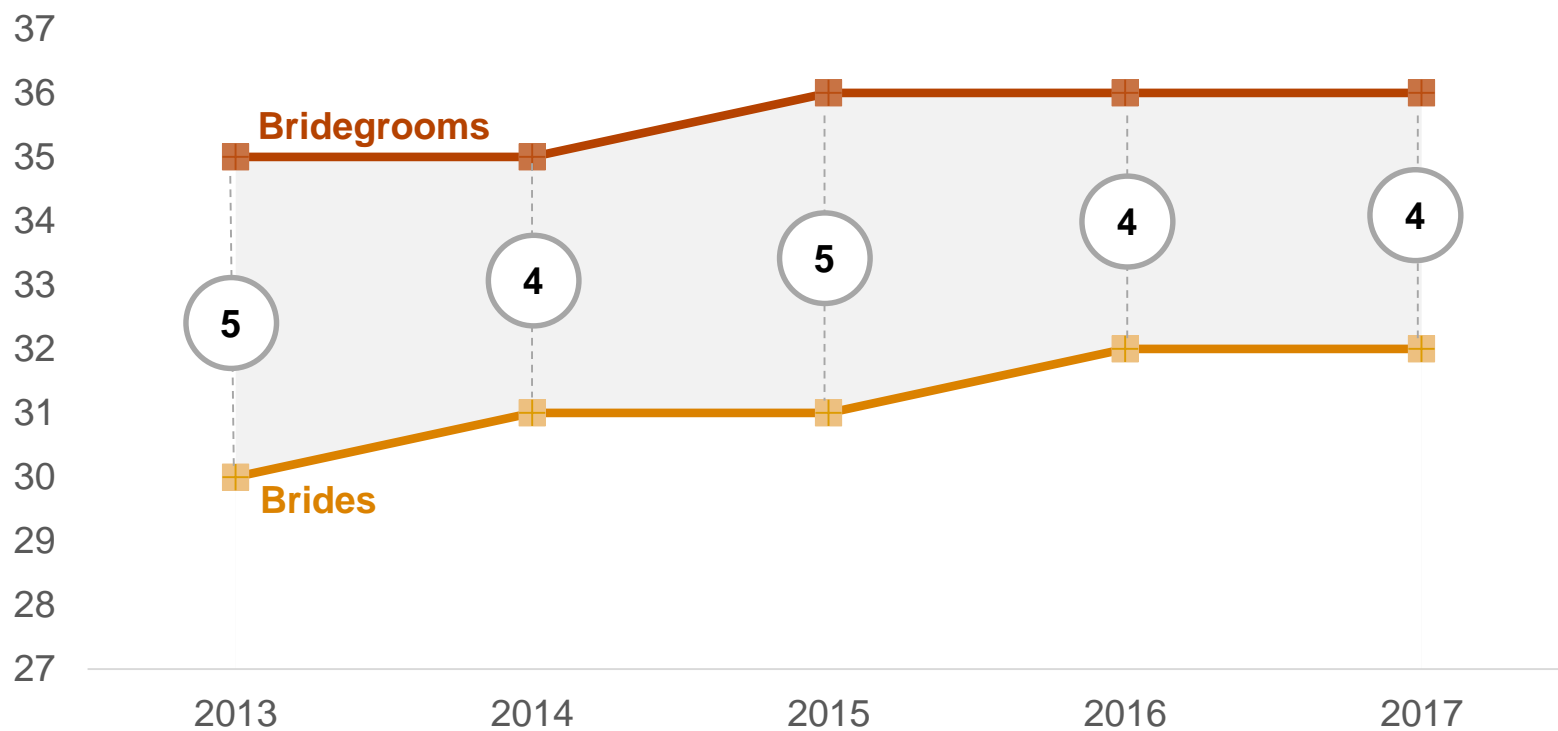
The warmer months (beginning from September and peaking in December) are the most popular months for solemnising marriages in South Africa. *A second peak occurs in March or April, depending on the month of the Easter holiday for that particular year.*

Number of civil marriages by month of solemnisation, 2013–2017



The median age of bridegrooms increased from 35 years in 2013 to 36 years in 2017 and that of brides increased from 30 years to 32 years over the same period. *The average age difference between brides and bridegrooms is 4 years.*

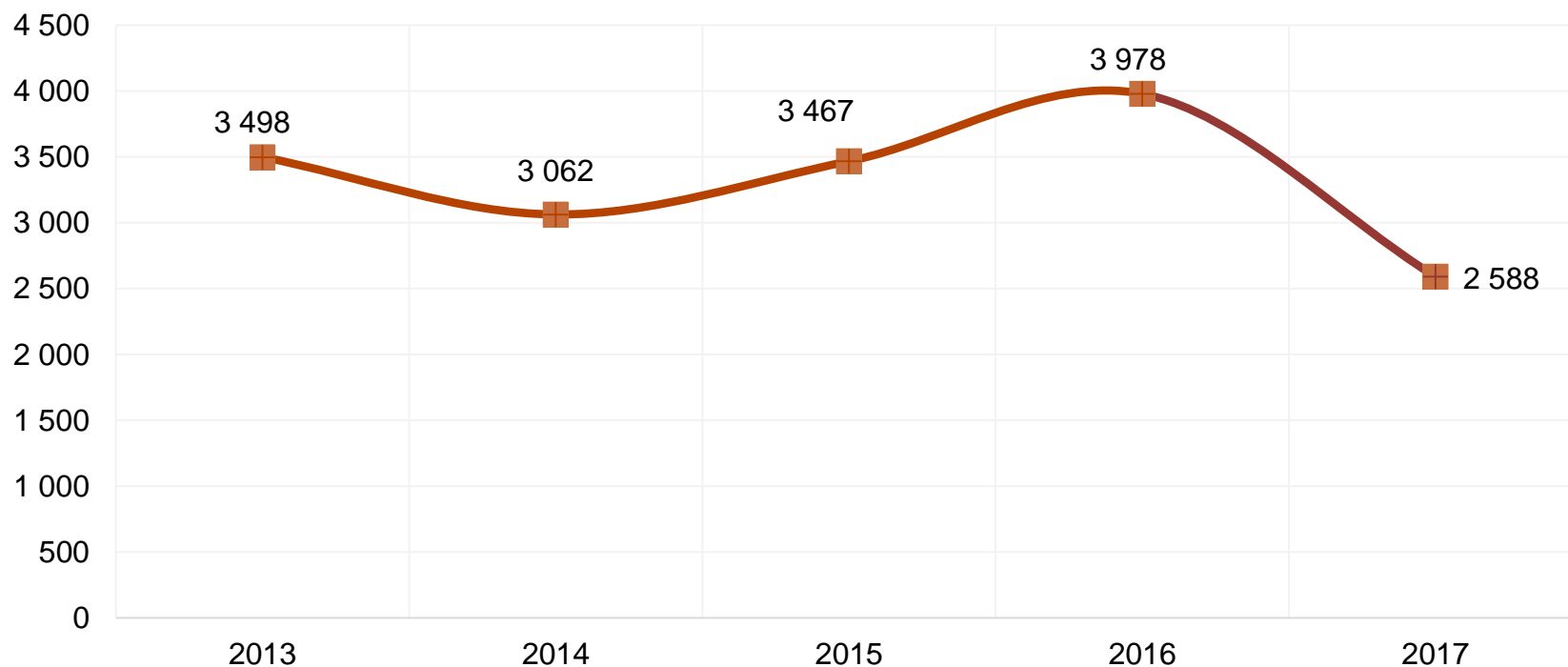
Median ages of bridegrooms and brides at the time of civil marriage, 2013–2017



There was a decrease of 34,9% in customary marriages registered in 2017.

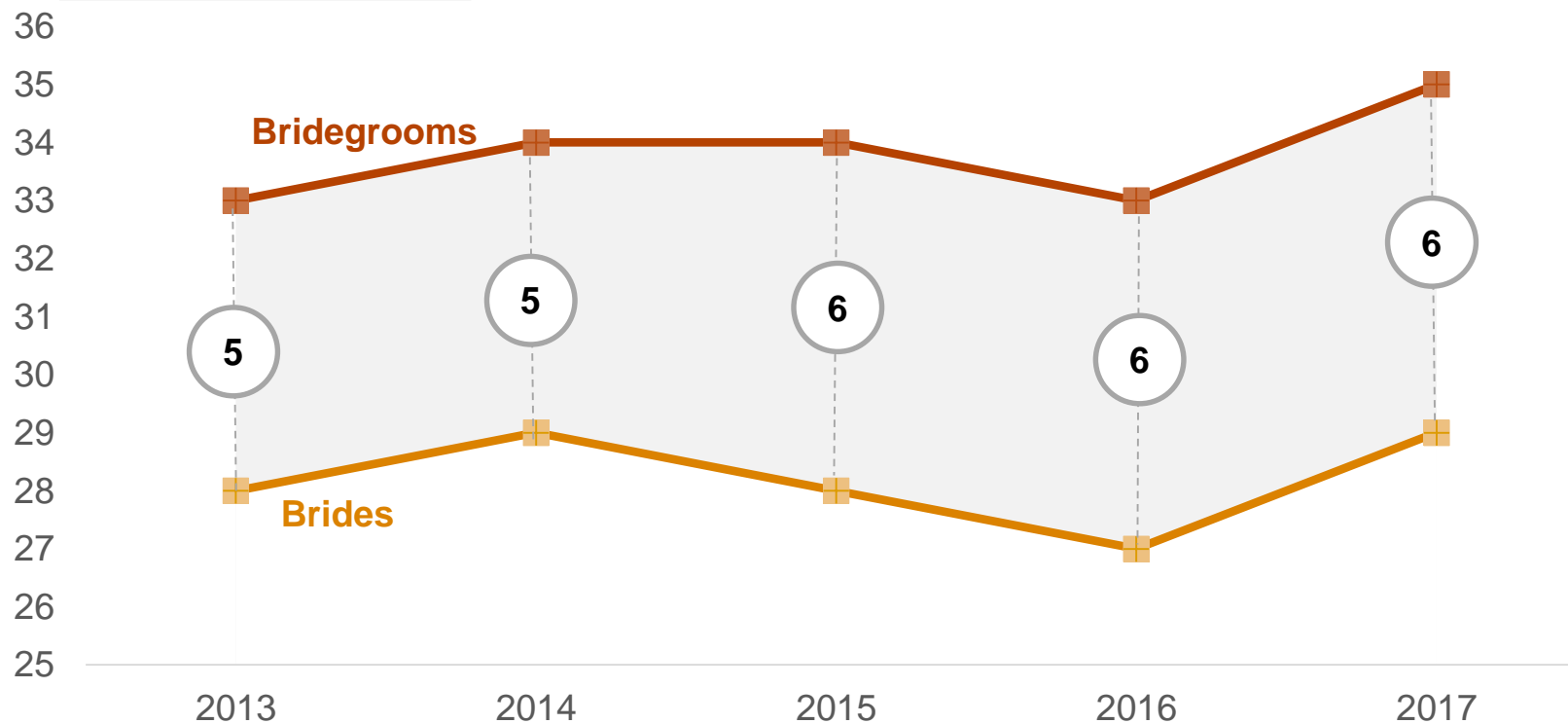
2 588 customary marriages were registered at the Department of Home Affairs in 2017, compared to 3 978 in 2016.

Number of registered customary marriages, 2013–2017



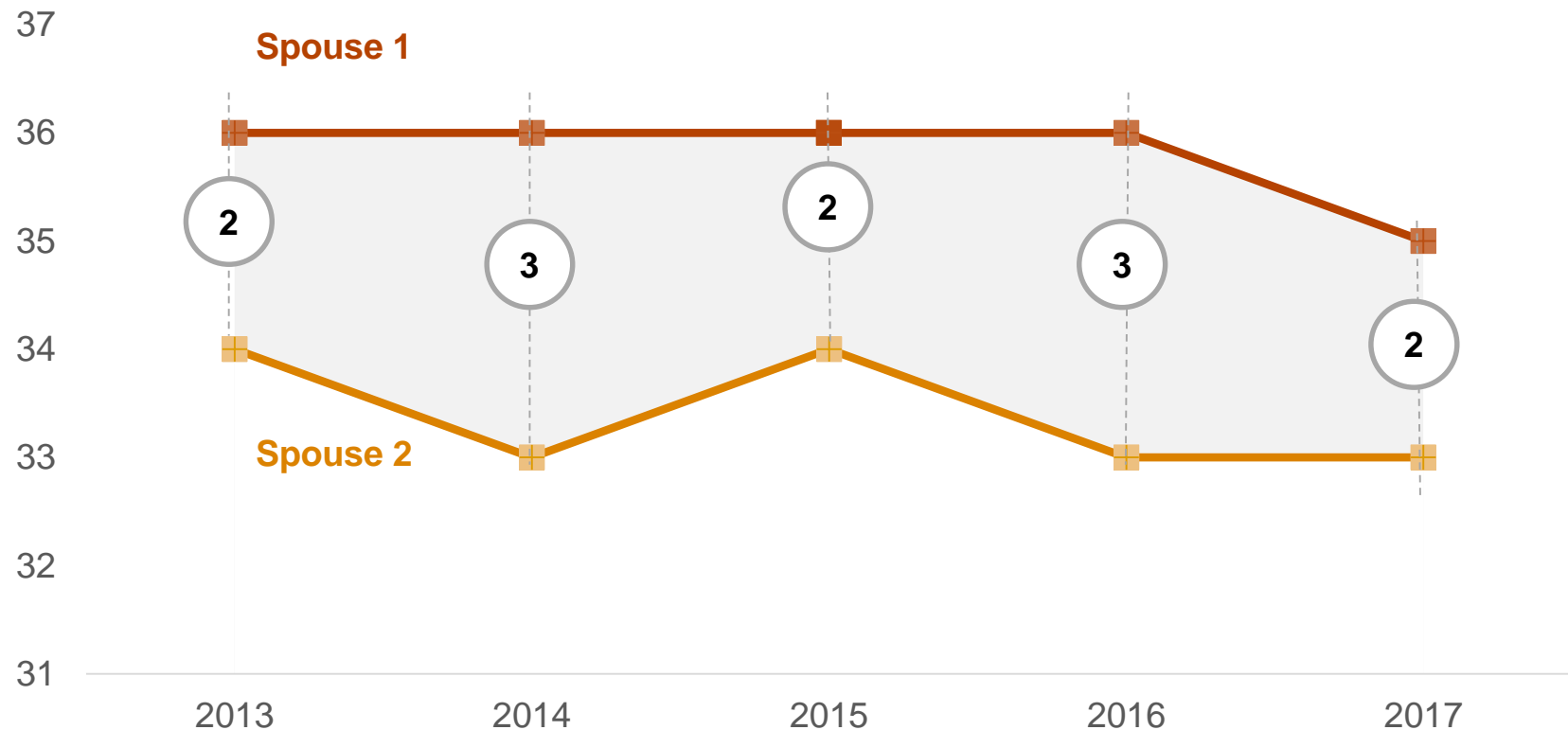
The median age of bridegrooms in Customary marriages increased from 33 years in 2013 to 35 years in 2017 whereas that of brides increased from 28 years to 29 years over the same period. The average age difference between brides and bridegrooms increased from 5 to 6 years.

Median ages of bridegrooms and brides at the time of customary marriage, 2013–2017



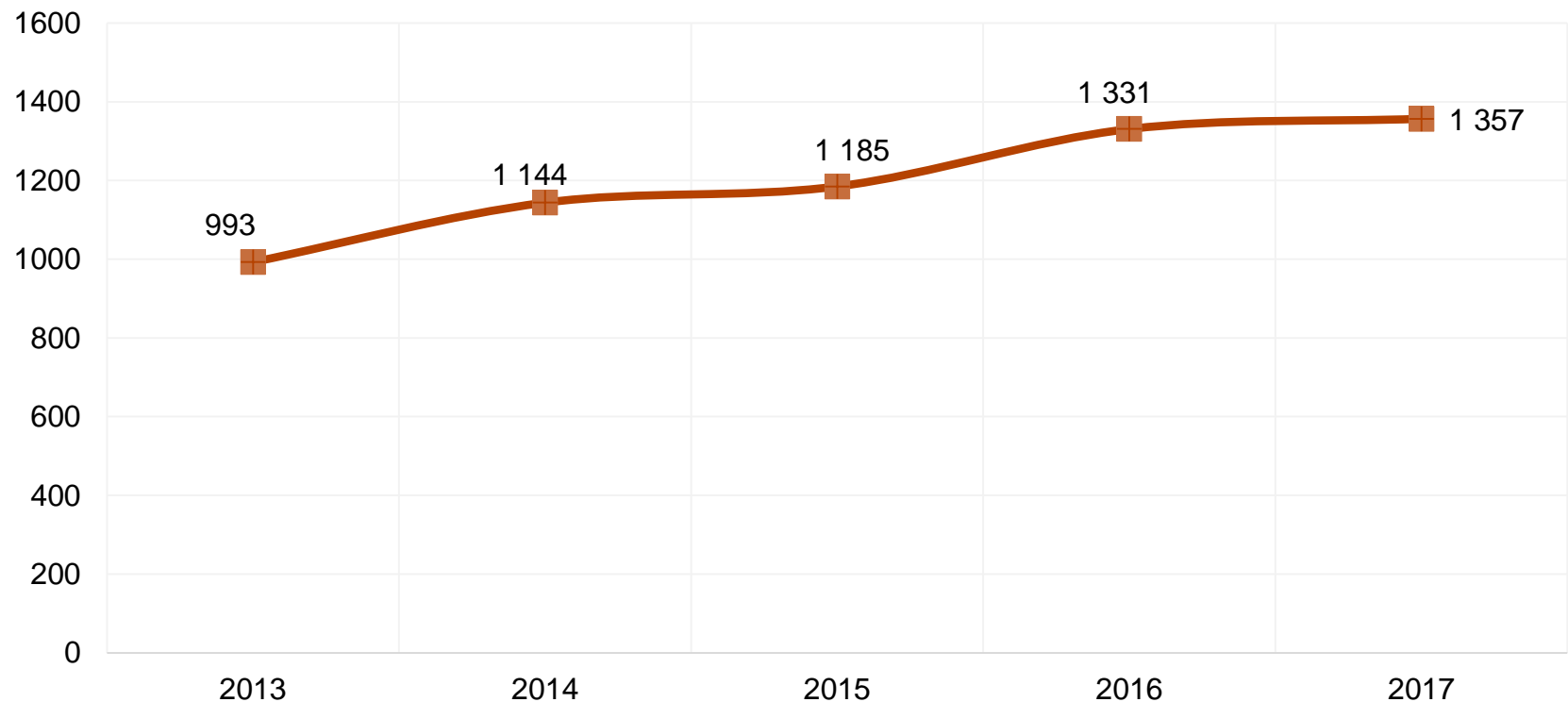
Over the five-year period, the yearly differences in the median ages of spouses-1 and spouses-2 ranged between two and three years. *The median age of spouses-2 remained the same at 33 years in 2016 and 2017.*

Median ages of spouses in civil unions, 2013–2017



The number of civil unions registered in South Africa increased over the five-year period.

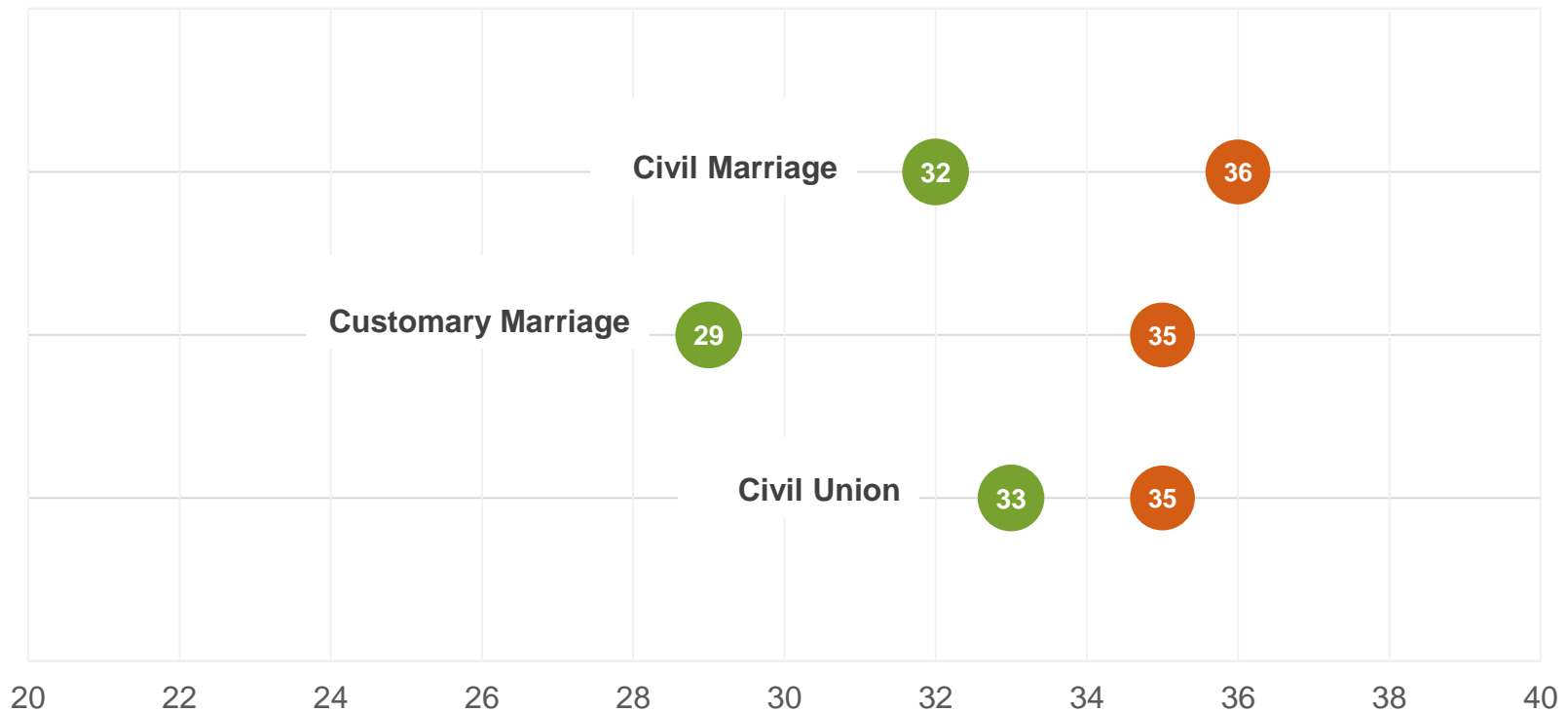
Number of registered civil unions, 2013–2017



The age gap in customary marriages is larger than Civil Marriages/Union.

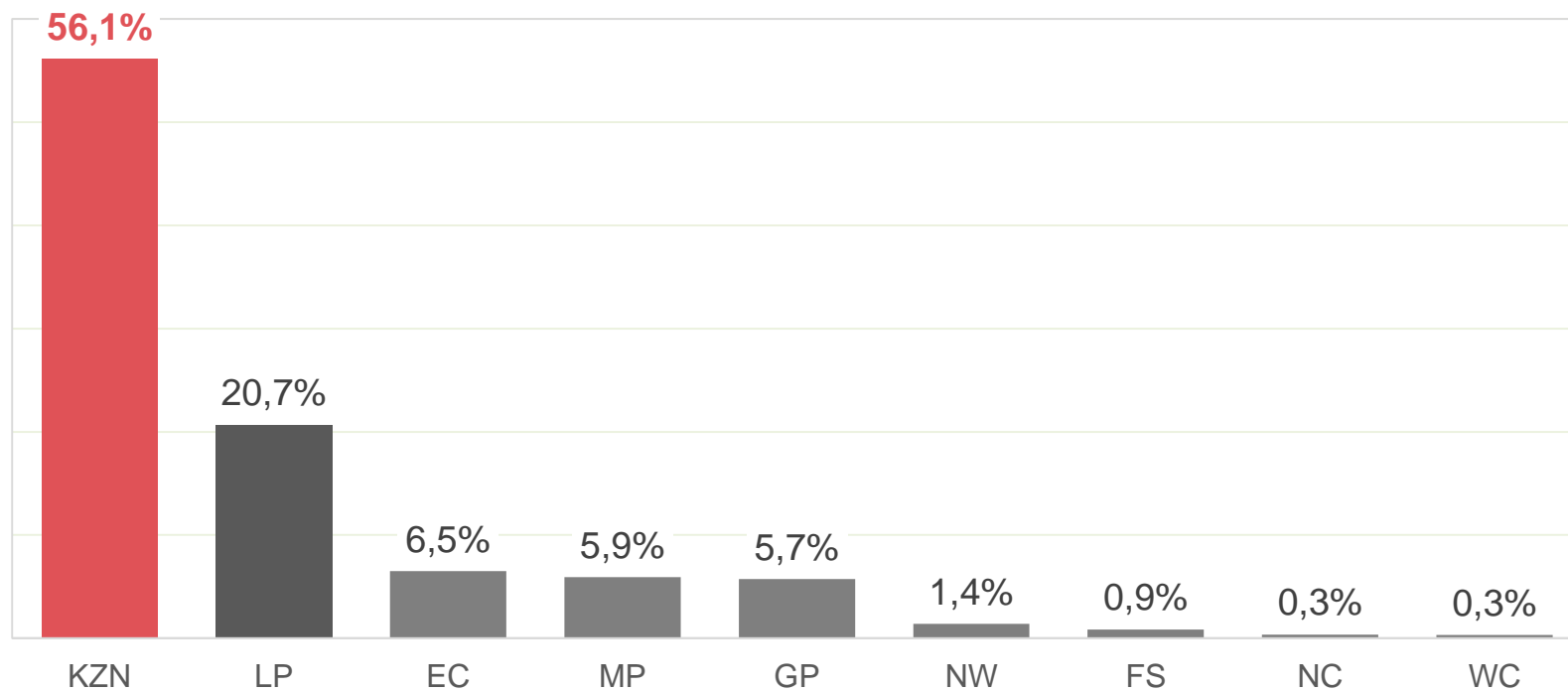
The median age of bridegrooms for civil marriages increased from 35 years in 2013 to 36 years in 2017.

**Median ages of married partners
2017**



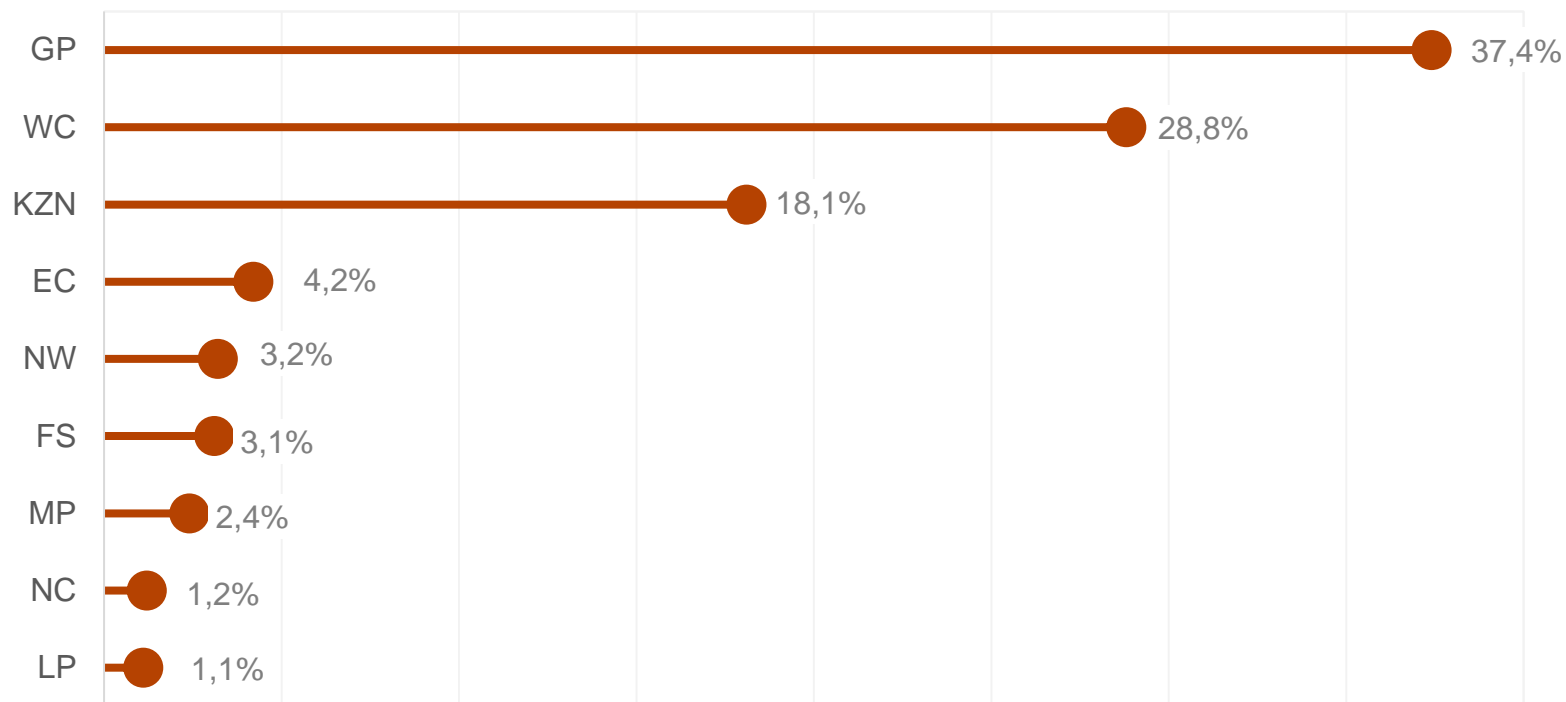
56,1% of customary marriages were registered in KwaZulu-Natal, followed by Limpopo. *The other seven provinces make up 21% of registered customary marriages.*

*Provincial distribution of
registered customary marriages,
2017*



The highest percentage of civil unions was registered in Gauteng and the lowest in Limpopo.

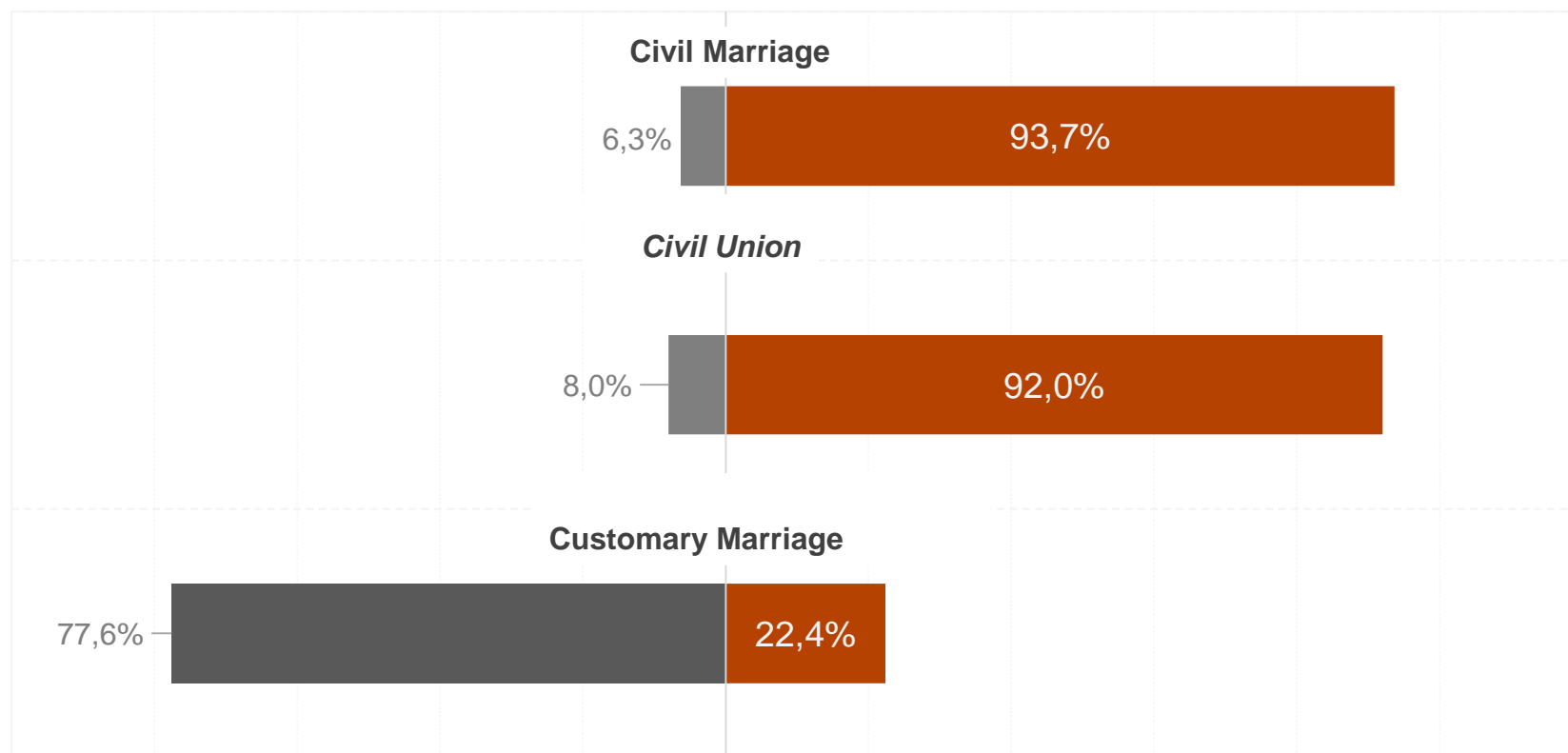
*Provincial distribution of
registered civil unions, 2017*



Couples who marry under customary marriages register their marriages later than the year of occurrence.

Later than year of marriage

Same year as marriage

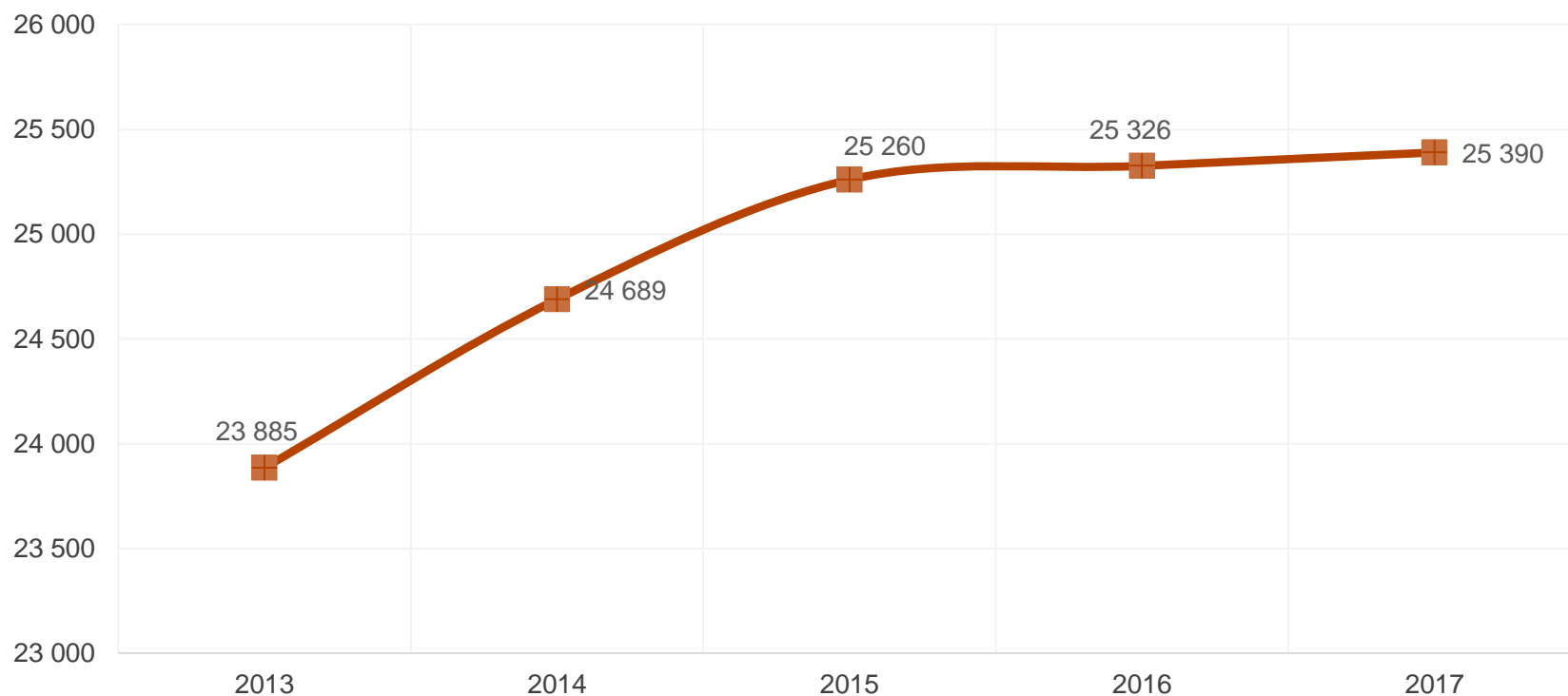




Findings from 2017 divorces data

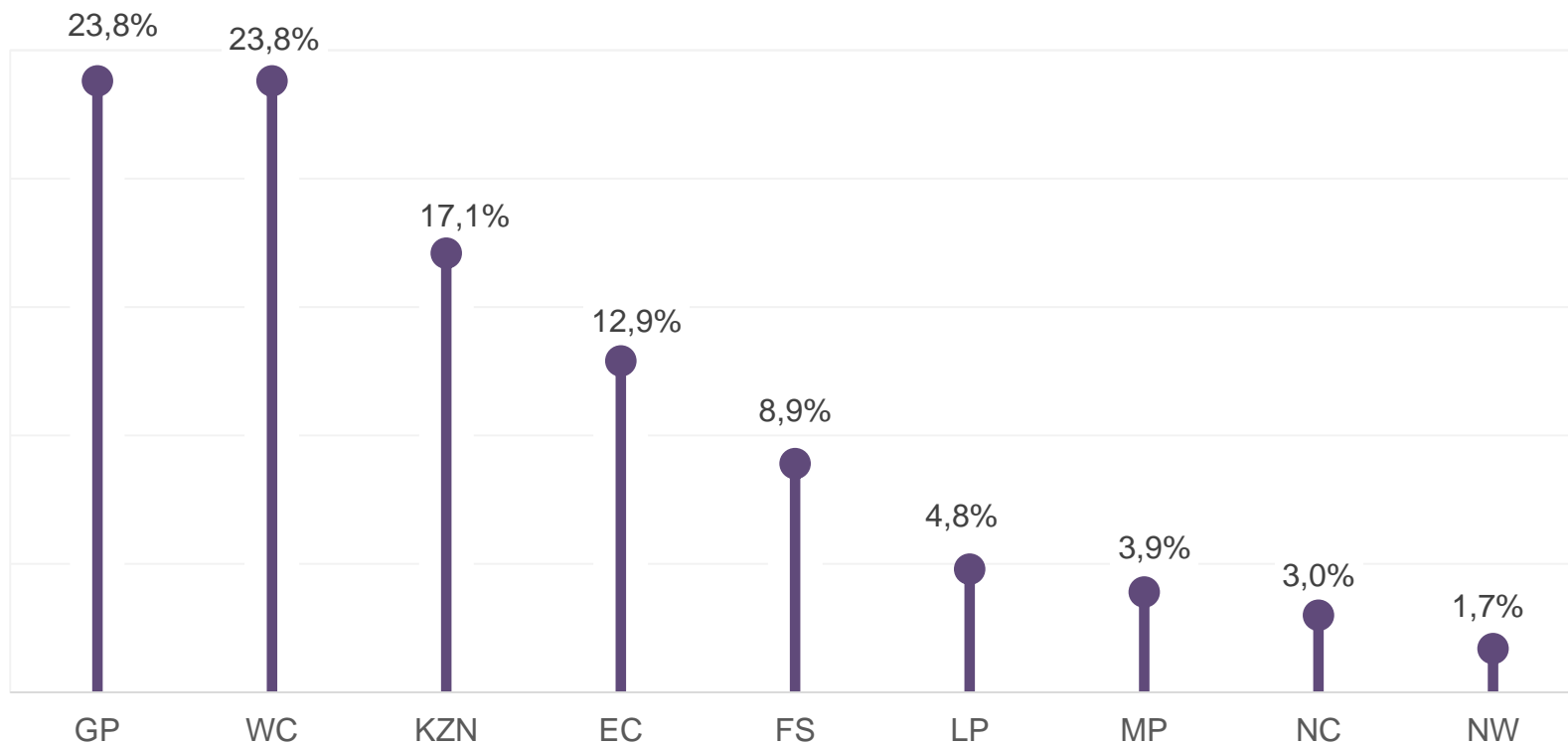
The number of granted divorces has been increasing between 2013 and 2017.

*Number of granted divorces,
2013–2017*



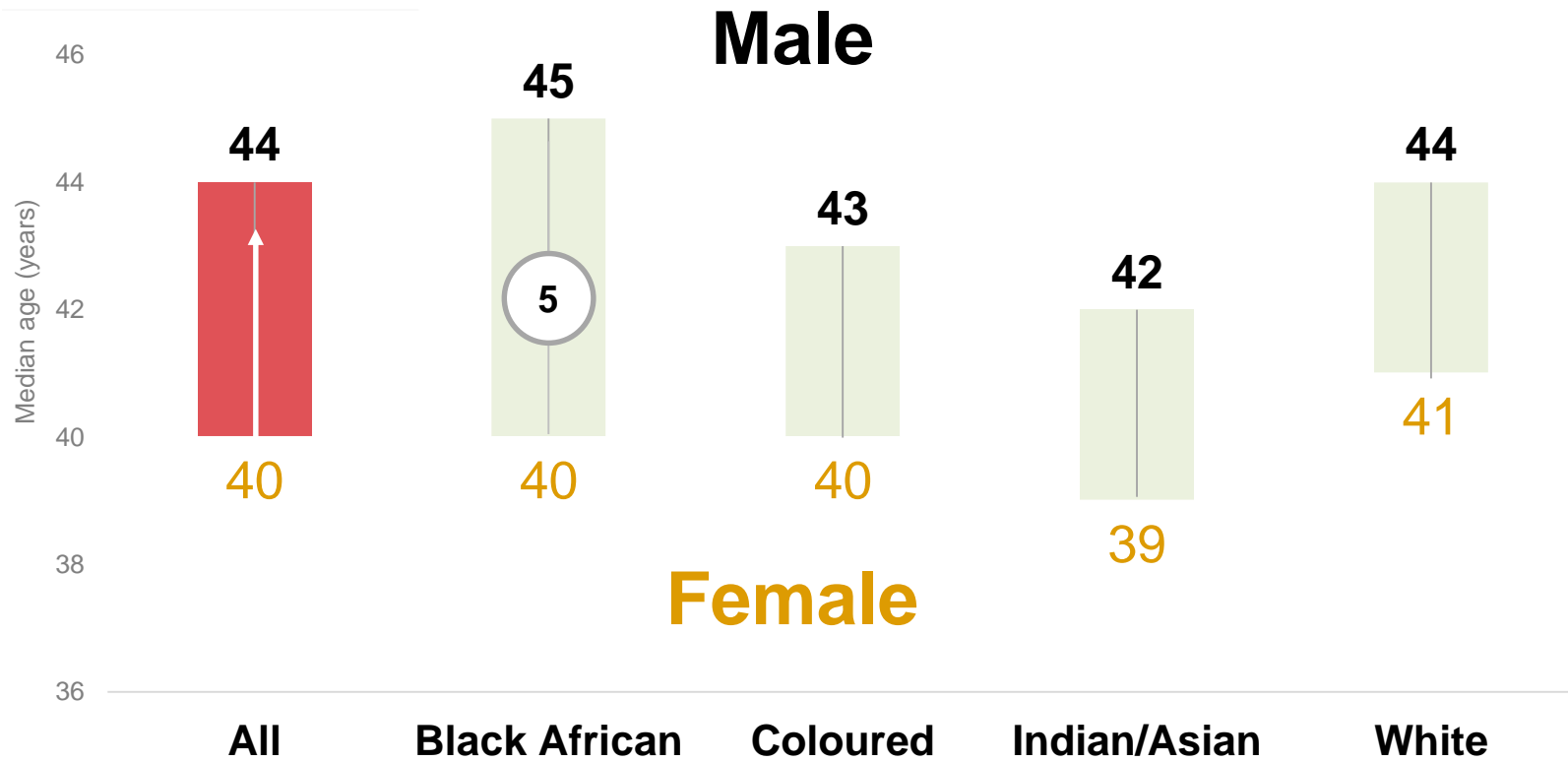
Western Cape, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape were the provinces with the highest number of divorces granted. *Together the four provinces contributed over three quarters (77,7%) of the divorces granted in 2017*

**Proportion of divorces granted
by province, 2017**



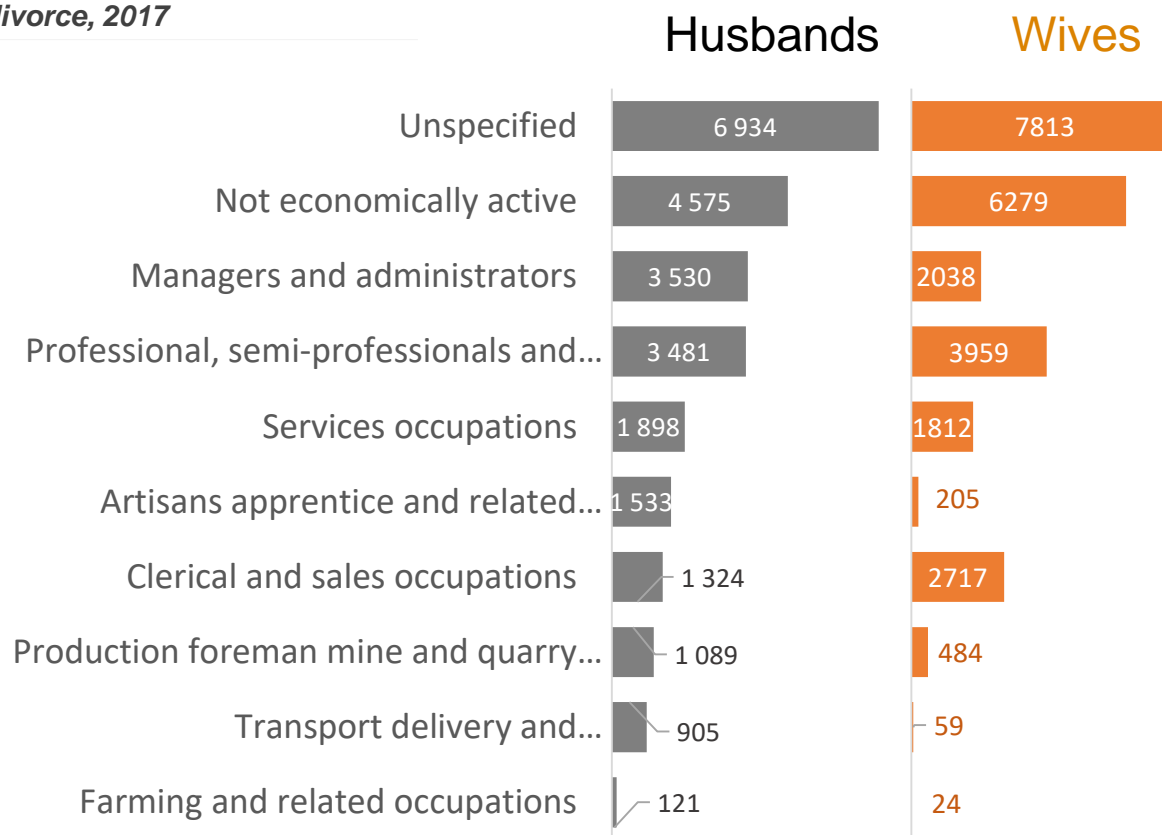
The difference in the median ages at the time of divorce between males and females was greater in the black African population group (5 years) compared to the other groups.

Median ages of male and female divorcees at the time of divorce, 2017



Most male divorcees were managers and administrators while female divorcees were largely in professional, semi-professional and technical occupations. *A high proportion of husbands and wives did not specify the type of occupation they were engaged in at the time of divorce.*

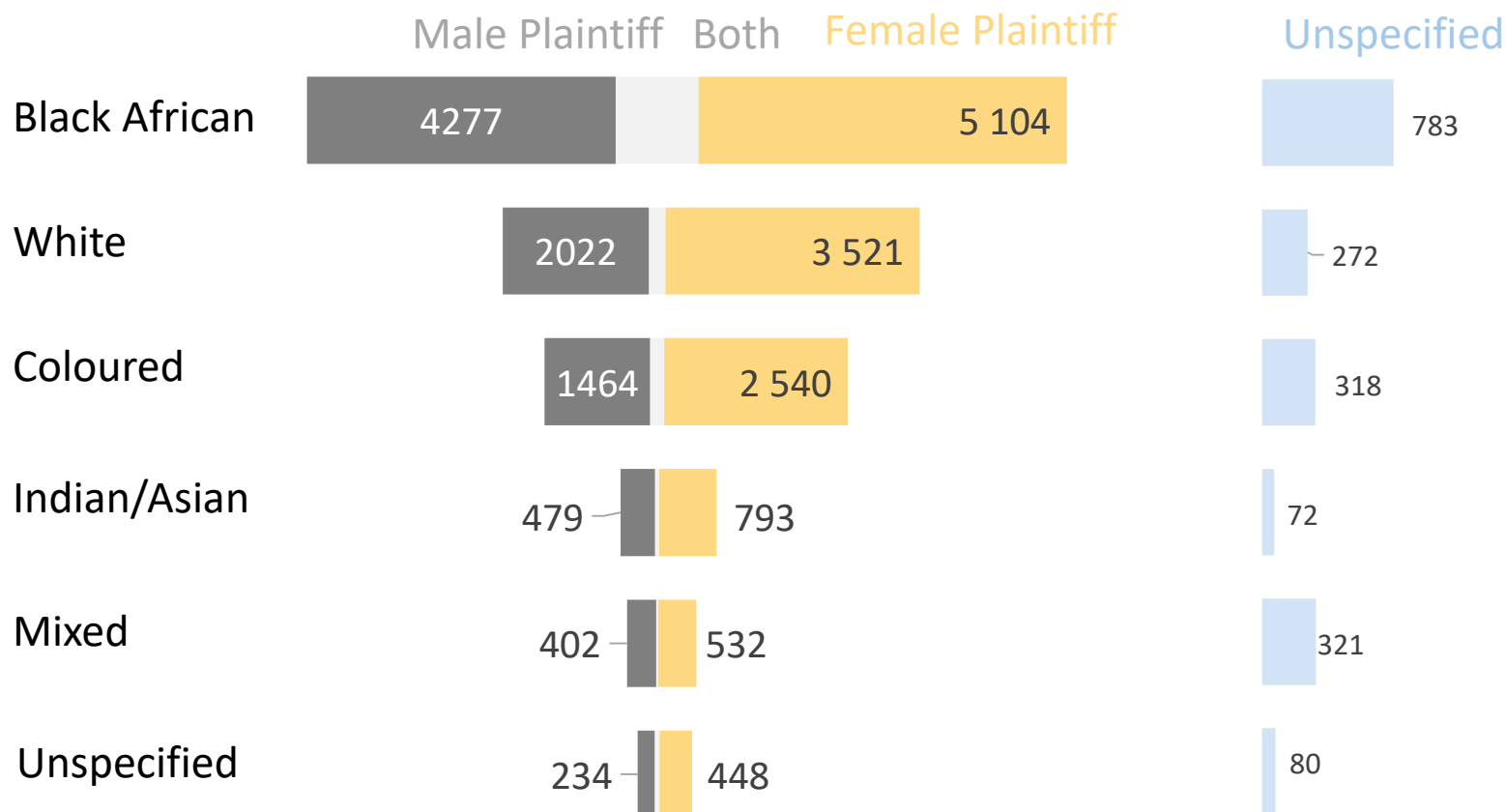
Number and percentage distribution of divorces by type of occupation at the time of divorce, 2017



More wives (51%) than husbands (35,0%) initiated divorce proceedings.

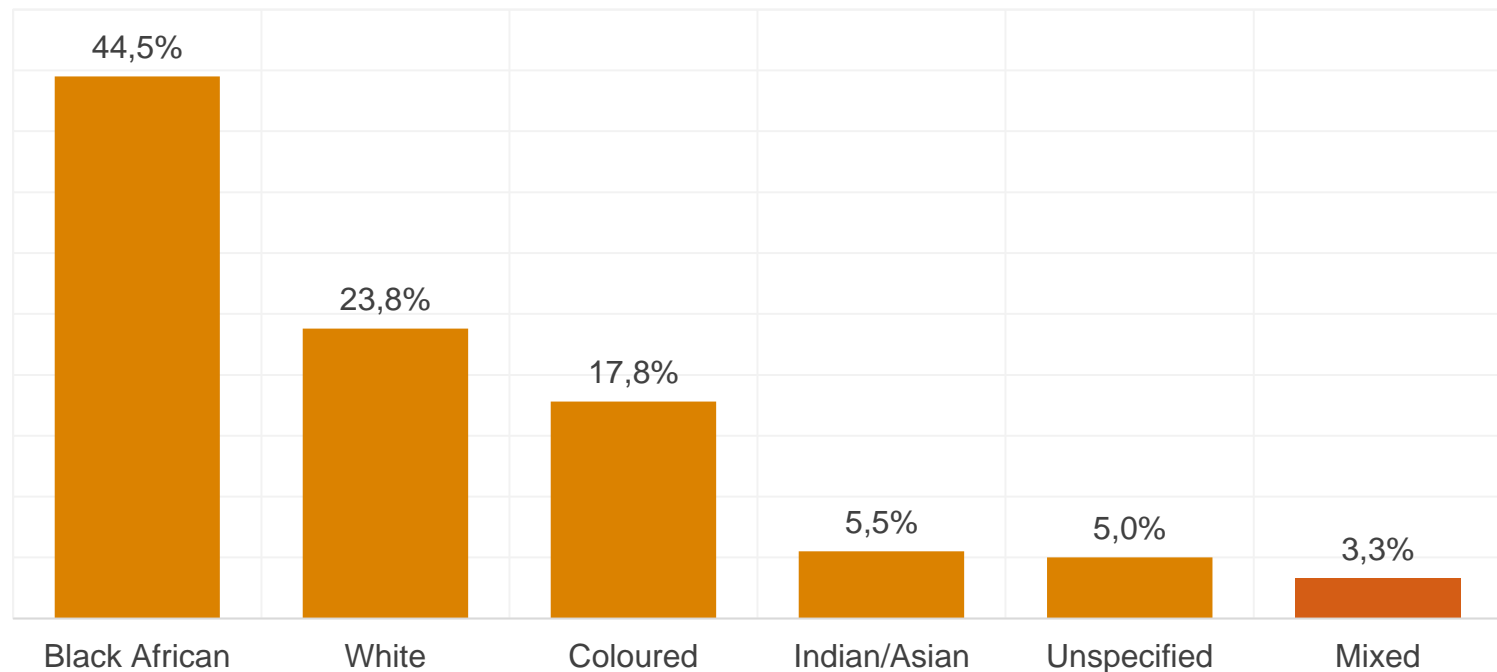
Women from the black African population had a lower proportion of plaintiffs (45,1%) compared to the other race groups who were above 50%.

Number of divorces by population group and plaintiff, 2017



The highest percentage of divorces were from the black African group at 44,5%. However, the crude divorce rate by population groups show that the white population had a the highest rate (1,3 per 1 000) across all population groups.

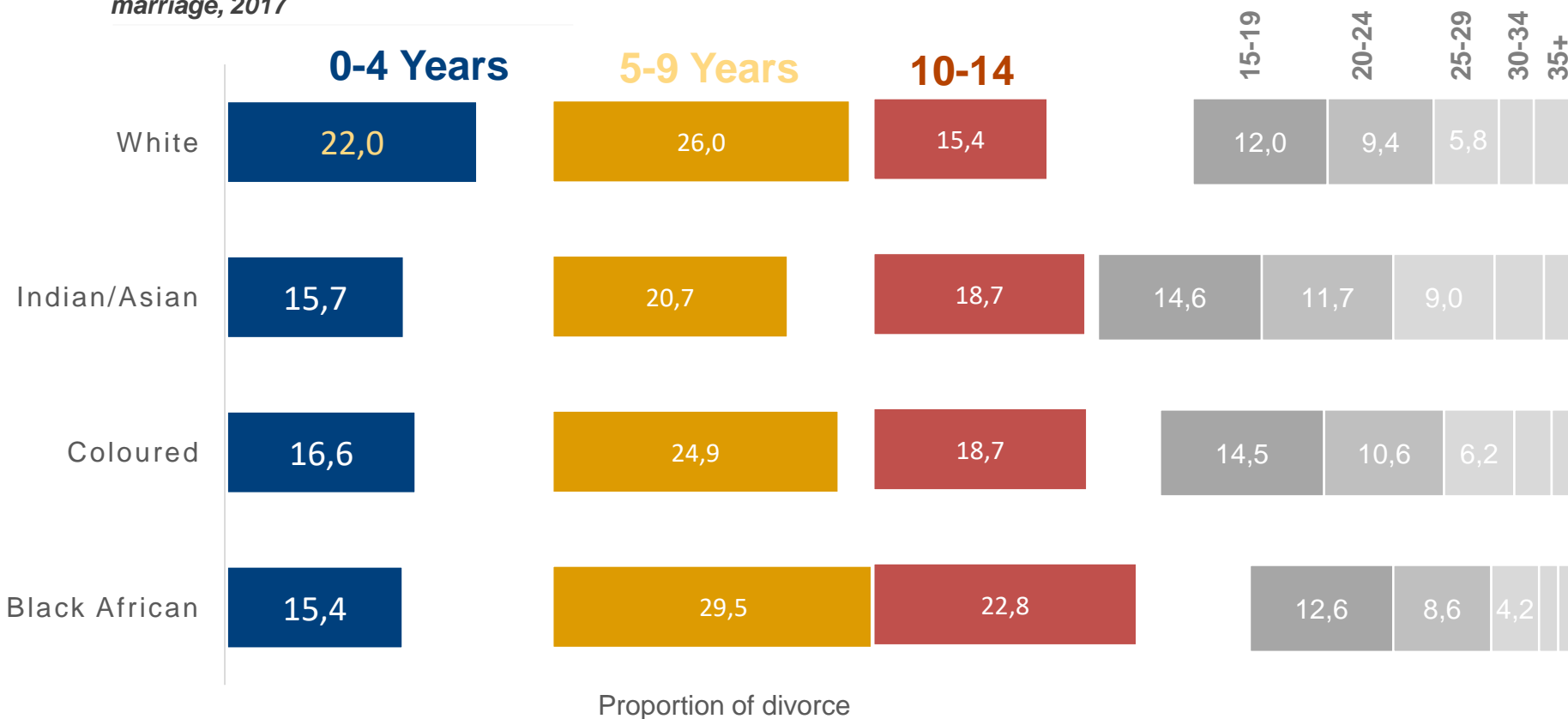
Proportion of divorces by race of couple, 2017



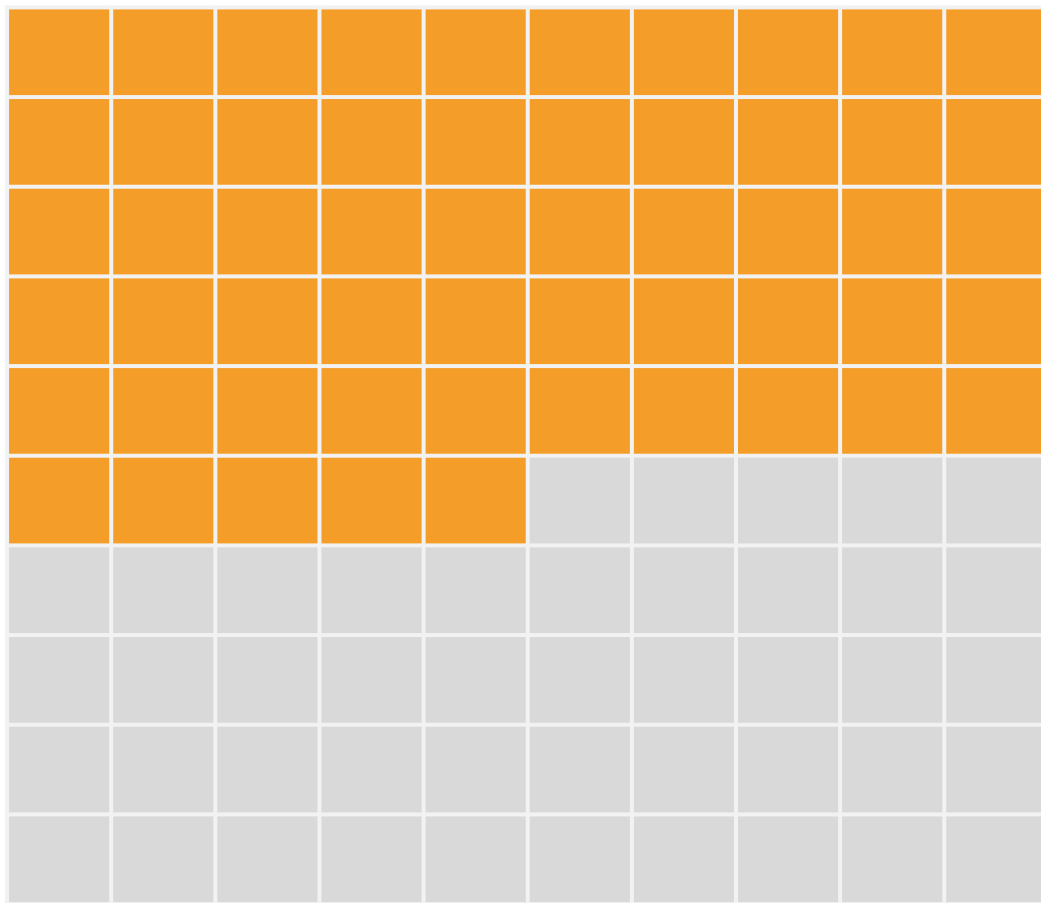
**Mixed – inter-racial marriage (e.g. marriage that is between black African and white)*

More than 50% of all divorces occurred within the first 14 years of marriage irrespective of population group.

The proportions of divorces by population group and duration of marriage, 2017



23 170 children aged less than 18 years were affected by divorces that took place in 2017.



55,6% of divorces involve children



THANK YOU