

DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS OF MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE INDICATORS IN UZBEKISTAN

Chintemirova Diyora Shuxrat qizi

Student of Tashkent State University of Economics

E-mail: dchintemirova@gmail.com

ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0009-0001-0683-2938>

ABSTRACT

This article provides a scientific and demographic analysis of marriage and divorce indicators in the Republic of Uzbekistan. The study highlights the primary trends of these processes, their underlying causes, and factors influencing population demographics and socio-economic development. Based on the analysis, practical recommendations tailored to the context of Uzbekistan have been developed, aimed at increasing marriage rates and reducing the incidence of divorce.

Keywords: Demography, marriage, divorce, economic stability, statistical analysis, young family, social approach.

INTRODUCTION

A strong family serves as the fundamental cornerstone of any society. Stable family relationships play a crucial role in ensuring social stability, achieving economic prosperity, and fostering spiritual values on a national scale. While marriage constitutes the formal and legal basis for family formation, divorce represents the legal dissolution of that union.

In recent years, the decline in marriage rates and the rising trend of divorce indicators in Uzbekistan have emerged as pressing demographic issues. The dynamics of marriage and divorce directly impact not only social life but also economic processes and the demographic composition of the population. A high number of stable marriages provides a solid foundation for national development, the upbringing of future generations, and economic growth. Conversely, an increase in divorce rates can lead to social imbalance, the weakening of moral values, and the fragmentation of family incomes. Therefore, studying marriage and divorce processes through demographic analysis is of significant importance for making evidence-based policy decisions.

Marriage is the process of forming a husband-and-wife pair within a human population, which is evaluated in demographic analysis relative to a real or hypothetical generation. It is established according to law or custom between a man and a woman who have reached the legal marriageable age but are not yet wed. Divorce, on the other hand, is a demographic process resulting from the legal termination of an existing marriage during the lifetime of the spouses [2].

Maintaining a specific balance between marriages and divorces in society depends, on one hand, on the significance of the family as a social institution, and on the other, on the effectiveness of the social policies implemented by the state. In particular, to provide material and moral support to young families and create decent living conditions, the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. UP-60 dated January 28, 2022, "On the

Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022-2026,"¹ serves as a basis for implementing comprehensive measures focused on the development of the social sphere.

LITERATURE REVIEW

American economist and Nobel laureate Gary S. Becker, in his renowned work "A Treatise on the Family" analyzes the processes of marriage and divorce through an economic lens. According to the author, "marriage is an economic decision aimed at balancing benefits and costs, while divorce is a consequence that arises when this balance is disrupted" [3]. His perspective suggests that economically independent women are better positioned to protect their rights and may choose divorce rather than enduring unfavorable or abusive living conditions. While this may lead to an increase in the number of divorces, it is also evaluated as a positive trend associated with the strengthening of women's rights, quality of life, and gender equality. Becker's insights remain relevant today and serve as a theoretical foundation for numerous demographic and sociological studies.

Furthermore, A. Cherlin, in his work "The Marriage-Go-Round" links the changing dynamics of marriage and divorce with global demographic trends, emphasizing that the transformation of family values is directly related to societal progress. He provides a scientific basis for the argument that urbanization and the increasing economic activity of women have a significant impact on divorce rates [4].

Among local scholars, Q. Kh. Abdurakhmanov, in his textbook "Demography" evaluates marriage and divorce as vital demographic processes and highlights their direct connection not only to social factors but also to economic and cultural ones [2]. The author posits that the strength of the institution of marriage contributes to the demographic stability of society, whereas an increase in divorces negatively affects the social environment.

M. Shukurova, in her scientific article "Specific Characteristics of Divorce" argues that the rising divorce rate today is primarily driven by social factors rather than legal deficiencies. According to the author, the primary causes of divorce include the insufficient material, spiritual, and physical preparedness of young families, the lack of perception of marriage as a sacred value, hasty marriages, and character incompatibility [5].

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In the execution of this research, a variety of methods widely utilized in scientific research methodology were employed. During the study, methods such as observation, generalization, grouping, and comparison were applied to analyze demographic processes. Furthermore, to conduct a profound examination of the dynamics of marriage and divorce, extensive use was made of statistical analysis, graphical representation, forecasting, synthesis, and analytical methods. These methodologies facilitated the comparison of demographic processes across different regions, the identification of shifting trends, and the derivation of evidence-based scientific conclusions.

¹ the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. UP-60 dated January 28, 2022, "On the Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022-2026. <https://lex.uz/uz/docs/-5841063>

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The demographic transition in Uzbekistan is characterized by a notable divergence between population growth and family formation patterns. While the permanent population grew from 28.0 million in 2010 to 36.8 million in 2024, reaching an estimated 37.5 million by 2025 the institutions of marriage and divorce have followed contrasting trajectories.

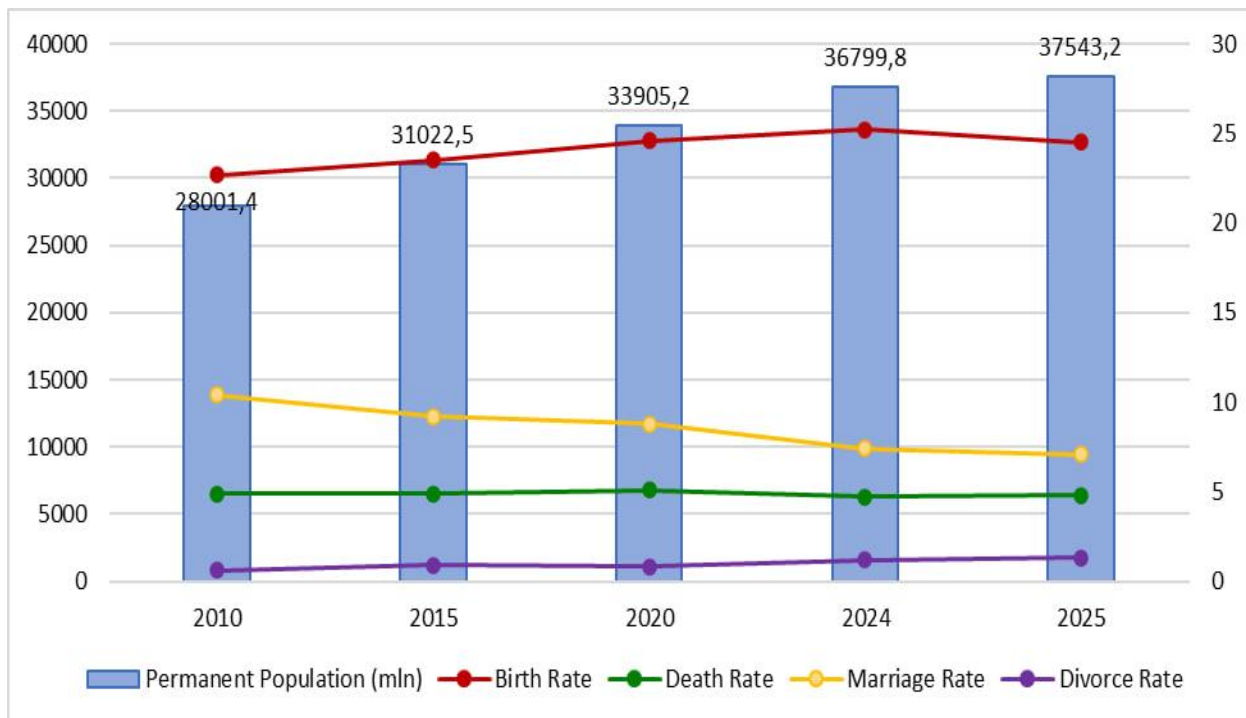


Figure 1. Main demographic indicators of Uzbekistan²

The data illustrated in the figure above reveals that despite rapid population growth, the number of registered marriages has fallen to its lowest level in 15 years. Specifically, in 2024, only 271,800 marriages were recorded compared to 292,300 in 2010, indicating that marriage rates are failing to keep pace with the increasing number of young people reaching marriageable age. This decline is further exacerbated by rising divorce trends, where the ratio of dissolutions has intensified from one divorce for every ten marriages in 2019 to approximately one in six by 2024. By 2025, the total number of divorces reached a significant peak of 46,900, marking a persistent upward trend that poses a direct threat to traditional family stability. Ultimately, these shifts negatively affect the national demographic structure and future birth rates, making the strengthening of the marriage institution a vital necessity for ensuring long-term socio-economic stability in the country.

The consistent growth of the national population, combined with significant regional disparities in marriage rates, underscores the urgent necessity for a profound demographic analysis of these processes.

² Source: Compiled by the author based on data from the National Committee on Statistics of the Republic of Uzbekistan. <https://stat.uz/uz/>

1-Table Number of Marriages by Region in 2024³

Regions	2024-year		
	Urban, %	Rural, %	Total number
Rep. of Karakalpakstan	46,2	53,8	13166
Andijan	51,3	48,7	23476
Bukhara	39,5	60,5	14954
Jizzakh	51,8	48,2	11165
Kashkadarya	40,2	59,8	29256
Navoi	52,7	47,3	7538
Namangan	65,8	34,2	22333
Samarkand	33,0	67,0	31425
Surkhandarya	34,2	65,8	23263
Syrdarya	45,1	54,9	6873
Tashkent region	56,3	43,7	20111
Fergana	54,3	45,7	29179
Khorezm	31,4	68,6	16282
Tashkent city	100	0	22755

As shown in the data from Table 2, the number of marriages in the Republic of Uzbekistan for the year 2024 reveals significant disparities across regions, as well as between urban and rural areas. Among the 14 regions, Samarkand (31,425), Kashkadarya (29,256), and Fergana (29,179) lead in the total number of marriages. This trend is attributed to high demographic density, active urbanization processes, and a larger proportion of young people in these territories. Following these are Andijan, Surkhandarya, Tashkent city, and Namangan, with an average of 22,957 recorded marriages. The lowest indicators were found in Syrdarya (6,873) and Navoi (7,538) regions, which is explained by their relatively smaller populations and higher migration rates.

A detailed analysis of urban versus rural distributions shows that in 2024, 51% of marriages were registered in cities, while 49% took place in rural areas. While 100% of marriages in Tashkent city are classified as urban, the city does not lead the republic in terms of the overall number of unions. In the Namangan region, the share of urban marriages reached 65.8%, demonstrating high activity among the city-dwelling population. Conversely, in the Khorezm, Samarkand, and Surkhandarya regions, the number of marriages recorded in rural areas was nearly double that of urban centers. In these specific regions, rural marriages averaged 67%, while urban marriages accounted for only 33%. These results indicate that demographic activity in Uzbekistan is characterized not only by regional differences but also by sharply contrasting marriage trends between urban and rural populations.

Furthermore, divorce rates are significantly increasing across every region of the country. This phenomenon is driven by various social, economic, and familial factors:

— Unemployment and material hardship: Financial instability is considered one of the primary causes of divorce, as material shortages often lead to domestic conflicts.

³ Source: Compiled by the author based on data from the National Committee on Statistics of the Republic of Uzbekistan. <https://stat.uz/uz/>

- Shifting lifestyles: Changes in living conditions and lifestyles across both urban and rural areas are contributing to the rising number of divorces.
- Women's empowerment: The increasing legal and economic independence of women is also influencing divorce dynamics.
- Erosion of values: The weakening of traditional family values and cultural gaps are further contributing to this negative trend.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Marriage and divorce indicators are vital factors that directly influence the nation's demographic stability, natural population growth, and socio-economic development. In recent years, the declining number of marriages alongside the rising incidence of divorces in Uzbekistan underscores the urgent need for focused attention on these issues. The reduction in marriages is attributed to fluctuations in economic stability, migration processes, shifting social values, and the transformation of youth perspectives regarding matrimony, while the increase in divorces is primarily linked to insufficient preparation for family life, poor psychological adaptation, hasty marriages, a lack of spiritual maturity, and financial difficulties, trends that are most pronounced in densely populated regions. In light of these findings, it is recommended to establish a comprehensive system for psychological and legal pre-marital preparation, implement regional preventive programs specifically in areas with high divorce rates, expand financial assistance and support mechanisms for young families, and enhance spiritual and educational policies aimed at reinforcing national family values. The systematic implementation of these measures will contribute significantly to the strengthening of the family environment, the stabilization of demographic development, and the overall improvement of the country's socio-economic competitiveness.

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