

# The Divorce Rate and the Great Recession

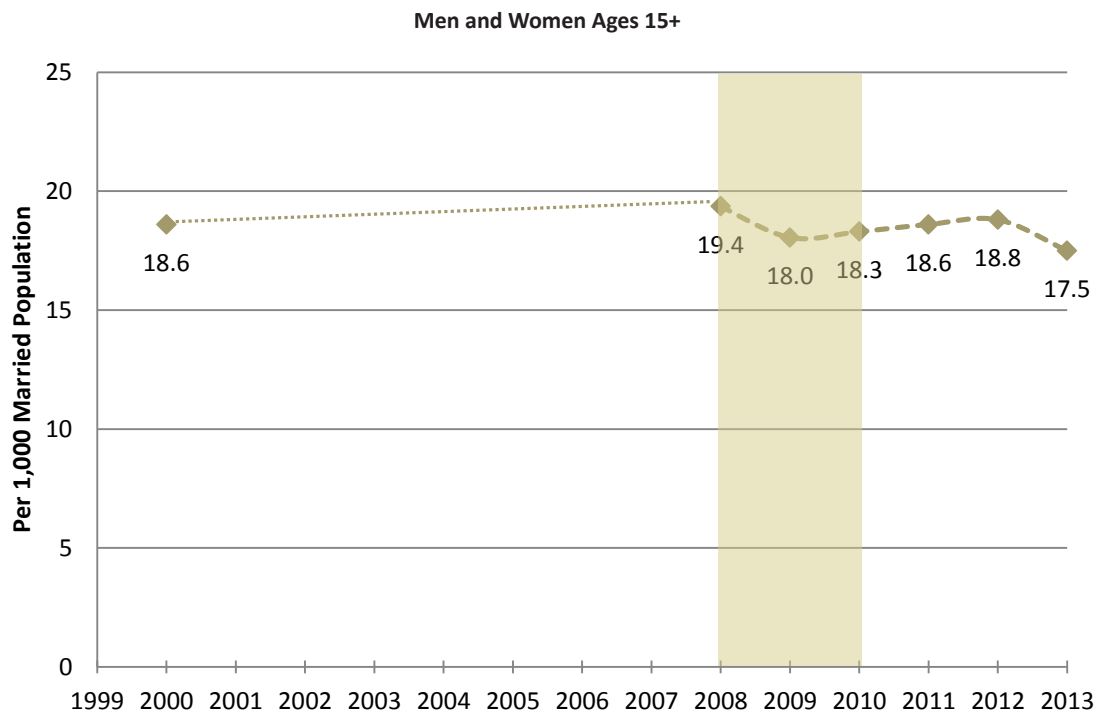
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Economic conditions are linked to divorce patterns. One recent study shows that the Great Recession of 2007-2009 was associated with reduced odds of divorce (Cohen, 2014). Using data from the American Community Surveys, 2008-2013, this profile examines changes in divorce rates among men and women ages 15 and older during and immediately following the Great Recession. Rates for 2008-2012 are also examined by race/ethnicity and educational attainment (information on divorces in the last year by race/ethnicity or educational attainment are not available on American Factfinder for 2013).

- The divorce rate decreased slightly between 2000 and 2013. In 2000, about 19 per 1,000 married men and women divorced, whereas in 2013, about 18 per 1,000 did so.
- A year-by-year examination reveals the divorce rate was increasing modestly during the years leading up to the Great Recession (2000-2008). This trajectory reversed in 2009 when the divorce rate dropped nearly 7% to 18 divorces per 1,000 married men and women. Then, the upward trend resumed beginning in 2010 to change course once again in 2013 dropping to a 13 year low.

Figure 1. Divorce Rates, 2000 - 2013



Sources: 2000 data - NVS; 2008-2013 - ACS, 1-Year Estimates

**References:**

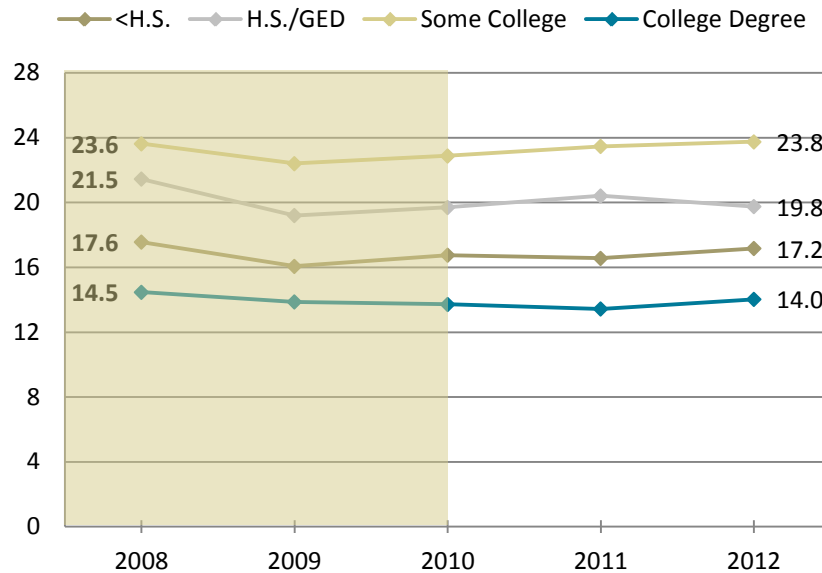
Cohen. P. N. (2014). Recession and divorce in the United States, 2008-2011. *Population Research and Policy Review*, 33(5), 615-628, doi:10.1007/s11113-014-9323-z.

Family Profiles examine topics related to NCFMR's core research themes. Data are presented at both the national and state levels using new data sources. Written for both researchers and broad communities, these profiles summarize the latest statistics on U.S. families.

## Educational Attainment

- Divorce rates were at their lowest in 2009 for all groups, except for those with a college education, who experienced further declines during 2010 and 2011.
- The most and the least educated consistently have the lowest rates of divorce. Those with a Bachelor's degree have the lowest overall divorce rate at all time points.

Figure 2. Divorce Rate by Educational Attainment, 2008 - 2012

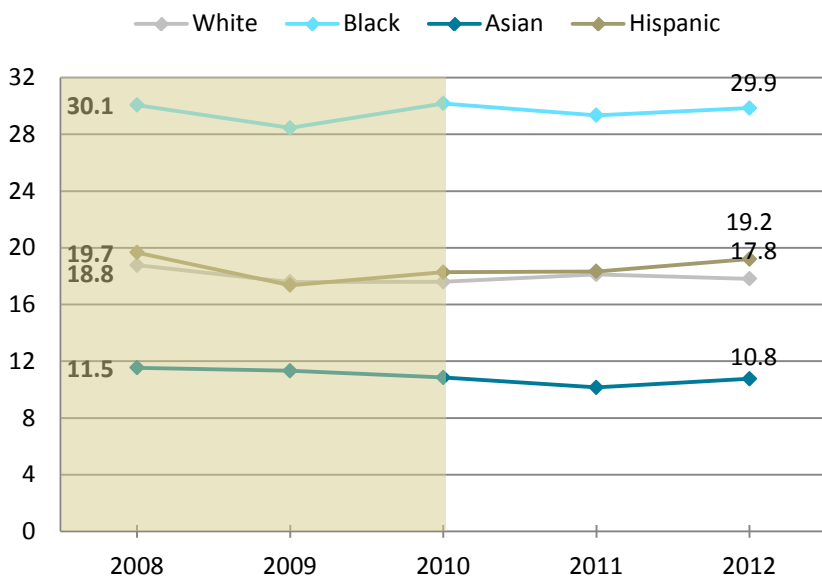


Sources: 2008-2012 - ACS, 1-Year Estimates

## Race & Ethnicity

- All race and ethnic groups (except Asians) experienced slight declines in their divorce rates from 2008-2009, with slight upticks in 2010. Asians experienced declines through 2011.
- Blacks consistently have the highest rates of divorce (about 30 per 1,000 married men and women), whereas Asians consistently have the lowest (around 11 per 1,000 married men and women). Divorce rates of Blacks are nearly three times that of Asians.
- Divorce rates for Hispanics and Whites are quite similar, consistently between 18 and 20 divorces per 1,000 married persons.

Figure 3. Divorce Rate by Race & Ethnicity, 2008 - 2012



Sources: 2008-2012 - ACS, 1-Year Estimates

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