



# Charting Marriage & Divorce in the U.S.: The Adjusted Divorce Rate

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Beginning in 2008, the U.S. Census Bureau began asking respondents of the American Community Survey about events experienced in the past 12 months including marriages and divorces. In the same year, they also began asking respondents to report on the number of times they had been married. In conjunction with information on respondents' marital status, the NCFMR has been calculating and reporting on marriage and divorce rates in the U.S. since these variables were first made available to the public. In a special release series, we provide single year estimates charting marriage and divorce rates spanning the years 2008-2017. In this release, we focus on the adjusted divorce rate.

## Adjusted Divorce Rate

The adjusted divorce rate is computed using the following equation:

$$\left[ \frac{\text{number divorced in the past 12 months}}{(\text{number divorced in the past 12 months} + \text{the currently married population aged 15 or older})} \right] \times 1,000$$

Table 1. Divorces in the Last Year and Divorce Rates: United States, 2008—17

Year	Number of Women <sup>1</sup>	Rate per 1,000 married women 15 years of age and over <sup>2</sup>	MOE	Number of Men <sup>1</sup>	Rate per 1,000 married men 15 years of age and over <sup>2</sup>	MOE	Total Number <sup>1</sup>	Rate per 1,000 married men and women 15 years of age and over <sup>2</sup>	MOE
2017 .....	1,075,500	16.1	+/- 0.28	974,618	14.6	+/- 0.23	2,050,118	15.3	+/- 0.18
2016 .....	1,098,805	16.7	+/- 0.26	994,183	15.1	+/- 0.24	2,092,988	15.9	+/- 0.18
2015 .....	1,110,579	16.9	+/- 0.26	1,008,778	15.3	+/- 0.24	2,119,357	16.1	+/- 0.18
2014 .....	1,145,110	17.6	+/- 0.26	1,017,815	15.6	+/- 0.26	2,162,925	16.6	+/- 0.19
2013 .....	1,197,095	18.5	+/- 0.28	1,071,278	16.5	+/- 0.28	2,268,373	17.5	+/- 0.20
2012 .....	1,265,277	19.6	+/- 0.30	1,141,769	17.6	+/- 0.26	2,407,046	18.6	+/- 0.20
2011 .....	1,251,239	19.4	+/- 0.34	1,143,621	17.7	+/- 0.27	2,394,860	18.6	+/- 0.21
2010 .....	1,250,086	19.4	+/- 0.30	1,108,188	17.2	+/- 0.29	2,358,274	18.3	+/- 0.21
2009 .....	1,219,656	19.1	+/- 0.28	1,098,959	17.0	+/- 0.25	2,318,615	18.0	+/- 0.19
2008 .....	1,309,921	20.5	+/- 0.32	1,178,915	18.2	+/- 0.29	2,488,836	19.4	+/- 0.22

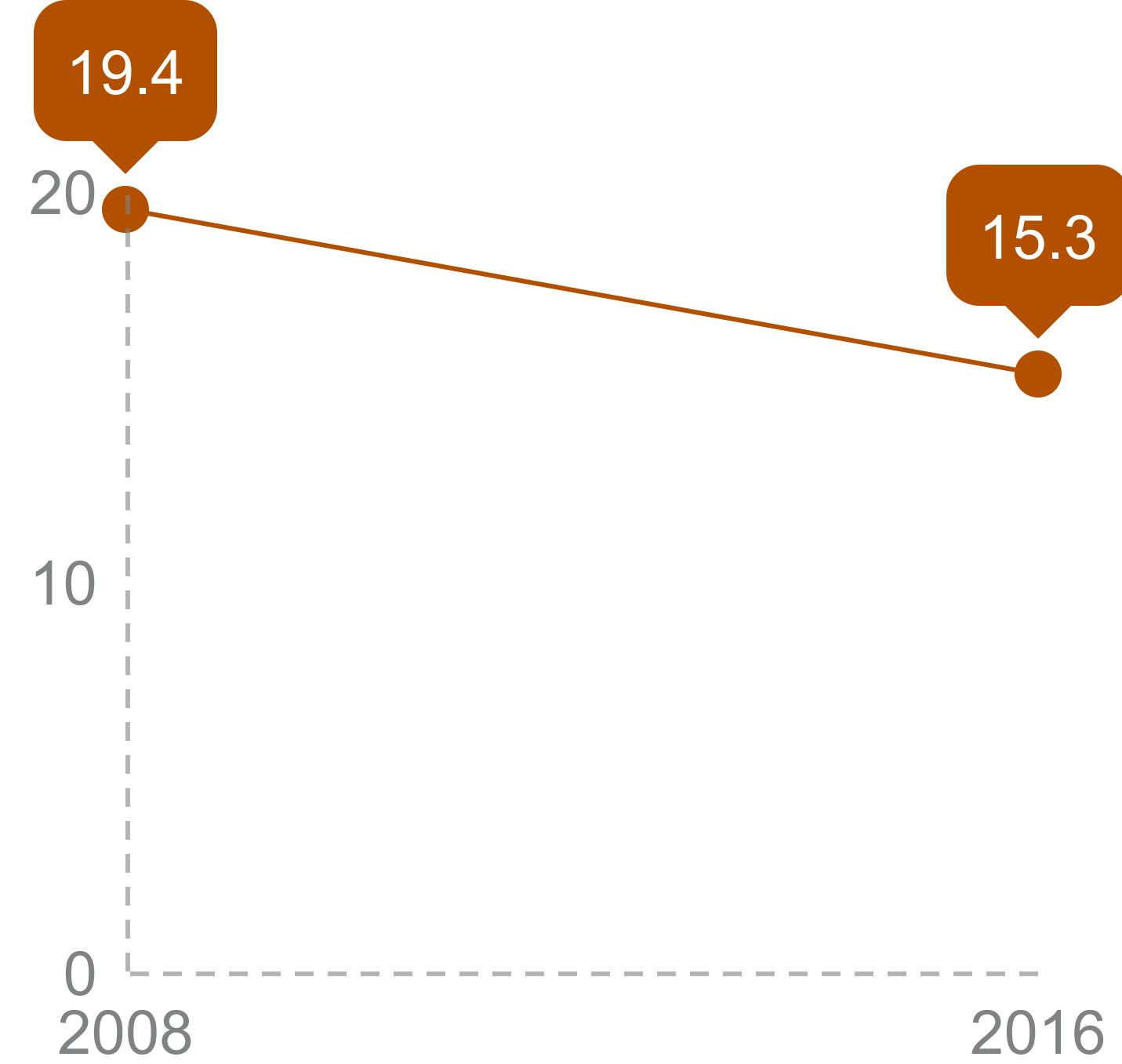
Note: MOE = Margin of Error. The MOE is a measure of sampling error and expresses the maximum range in which the rate is expected to differ from the actual population. The MOE is calculated for the derived estimates at the 90% confidence level.

Sources:

1. The numerator is from table B12503. DIVORCES IN THE LAST YEAR BY SEX BY MARITAL STATUS FOR THE POPULATION 15 YEARS AND OVER. Universe: Population 15 years and over. 2008-2017 American Community Survey, 1-year estimates
2. The denominator is from table B12001. SEX BY MARITAL STATUS FOR THE POPULATION 15 YEARS AND OVER. Universe: Population 15 years and over. 2008-2017 American Community Survey, 1-year estimates

The divorce rate has declined since 2008 for men and women aged 15 and older in the U.S.—a drop of 21.1% overall.

Figure 1. Adjusted Divorce Rate, 2008 & 2017



Source: American Community Survey, 1-year estimates, 2008 & 2017

**Data Citation:**

U.S. Census Bureau, 2008- 2017 American Community Survey, 1-year estimates, Table B12503. Divorces in the Last Year by Sex by Marital Status for the Population 15 Years and Over

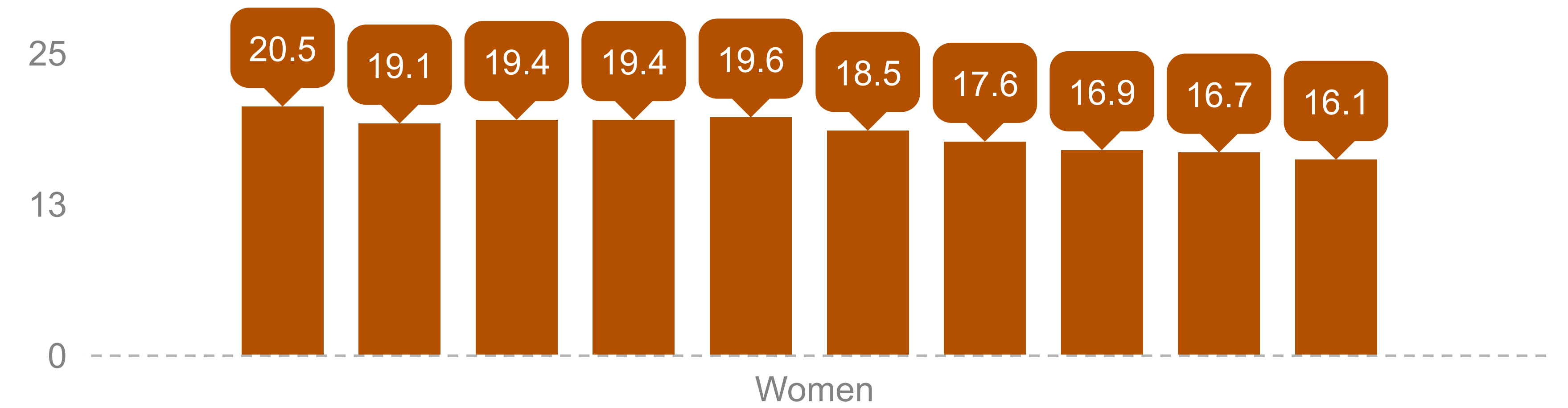
U.S. Census Bureau, 2008- 2017 American Community Survey, 1-year estimates, Table B12001. Sex by Marital Status for the Population 15 Years and Over

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## Women's Adjusted Divorce Rate

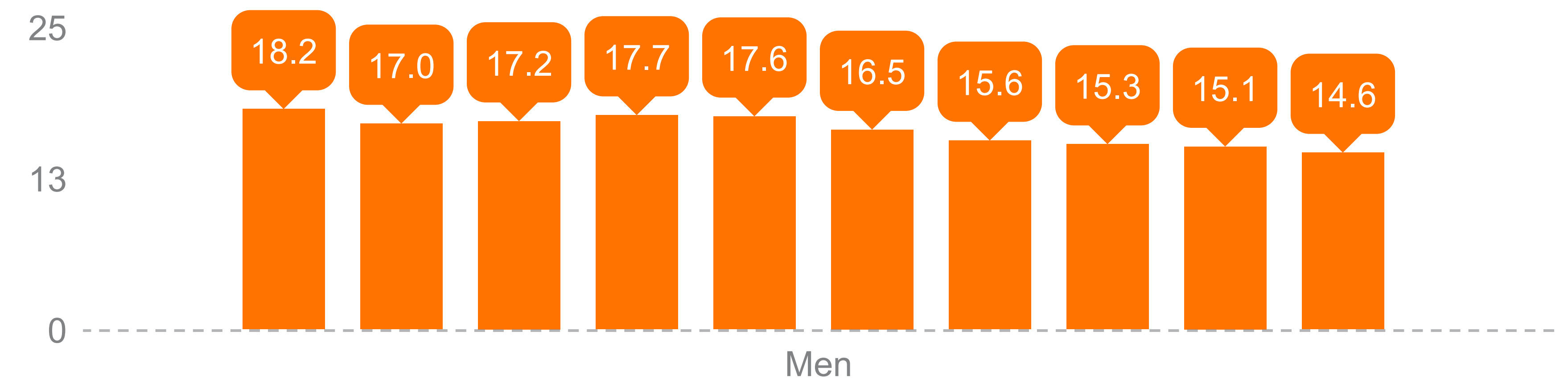
Figure 2. Women's Adjusted Divorce Rate, 2008-2017



Source: American Community Survey, 1-year estimates, 2008-2017

## Men's Adjusted Divorce Rate

Figure 3. Men's Adjusted Divorce Rate, 2008-2017



Source: American Community Survey, 1-year estimates, 2008-2017



National Center for Family & Marriage Research

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