

Launch of the Family Research Network (FRN) and Forum on “Marriage and Fertility”

18 September 2008  
IPS Conference Room

# State of the Family in Singapore

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**Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports**





# State of the Family in Singapore



**Family Research Network  
18 September 2008**



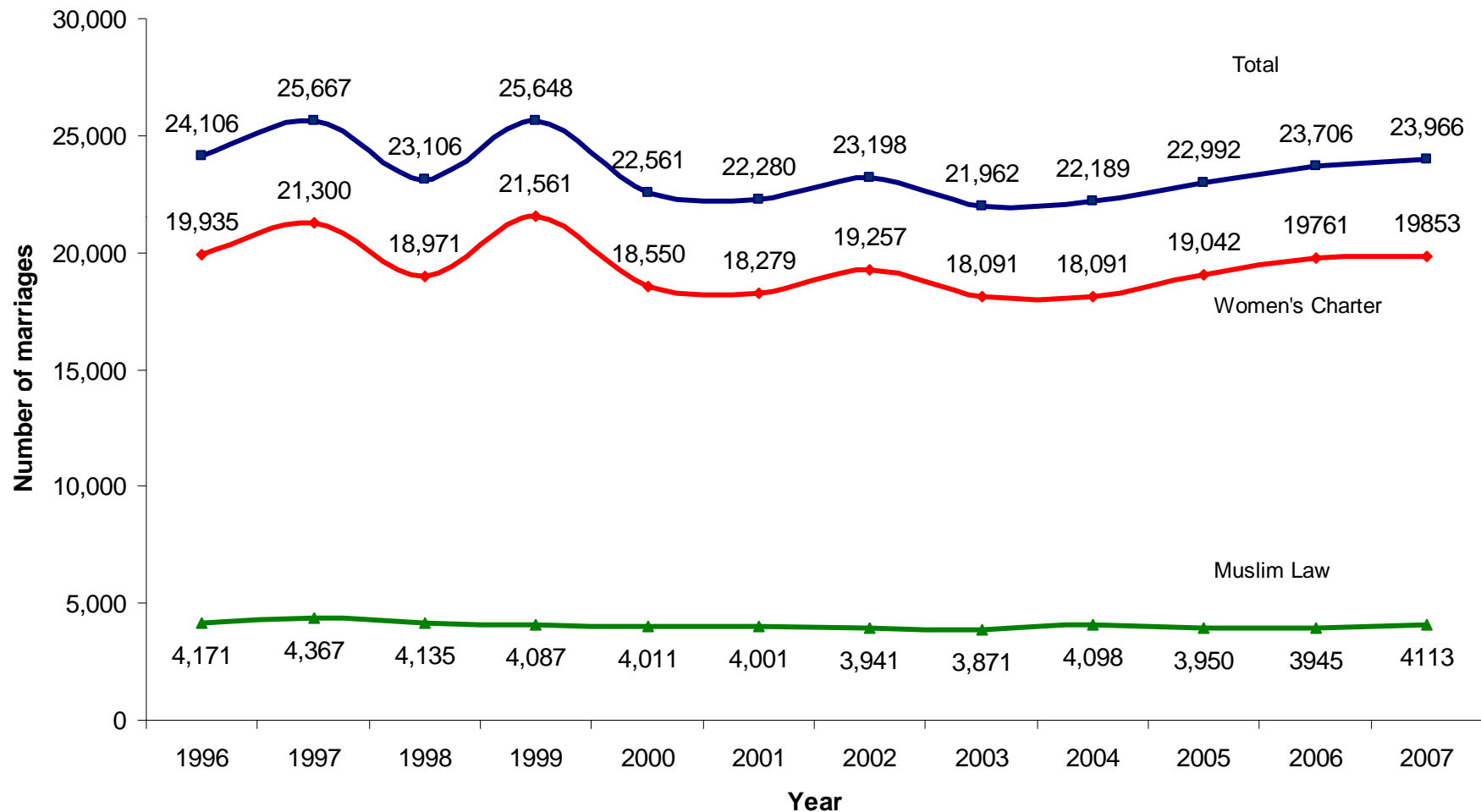
# State of the family today



## Marriage and Singlehood

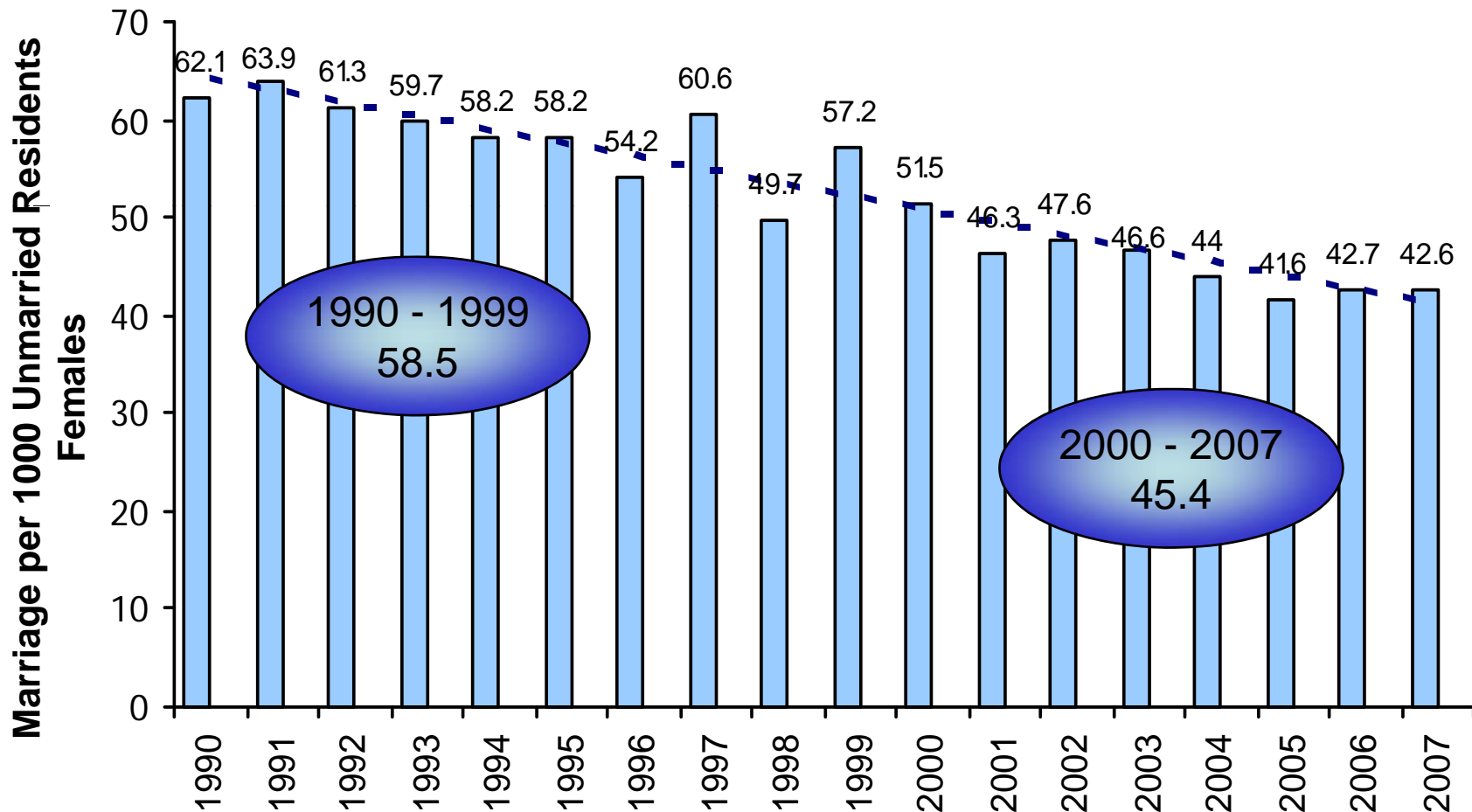
# State of the family today

## Number of marriages increasing, slowly



# State of the family today

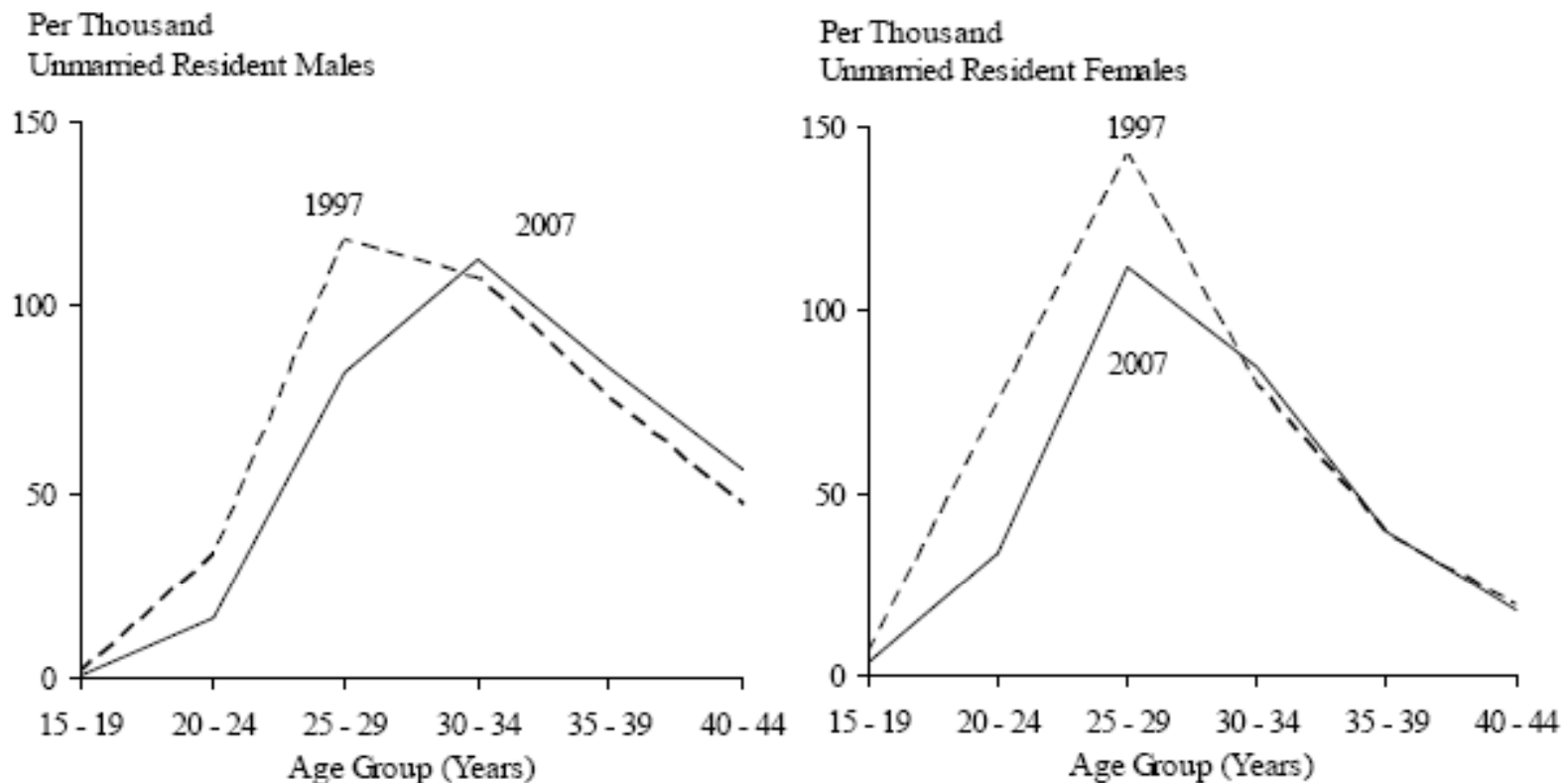
## Marriage rates are decreasing



# State of the family today

## Falling Marriage Rate among younger age groups

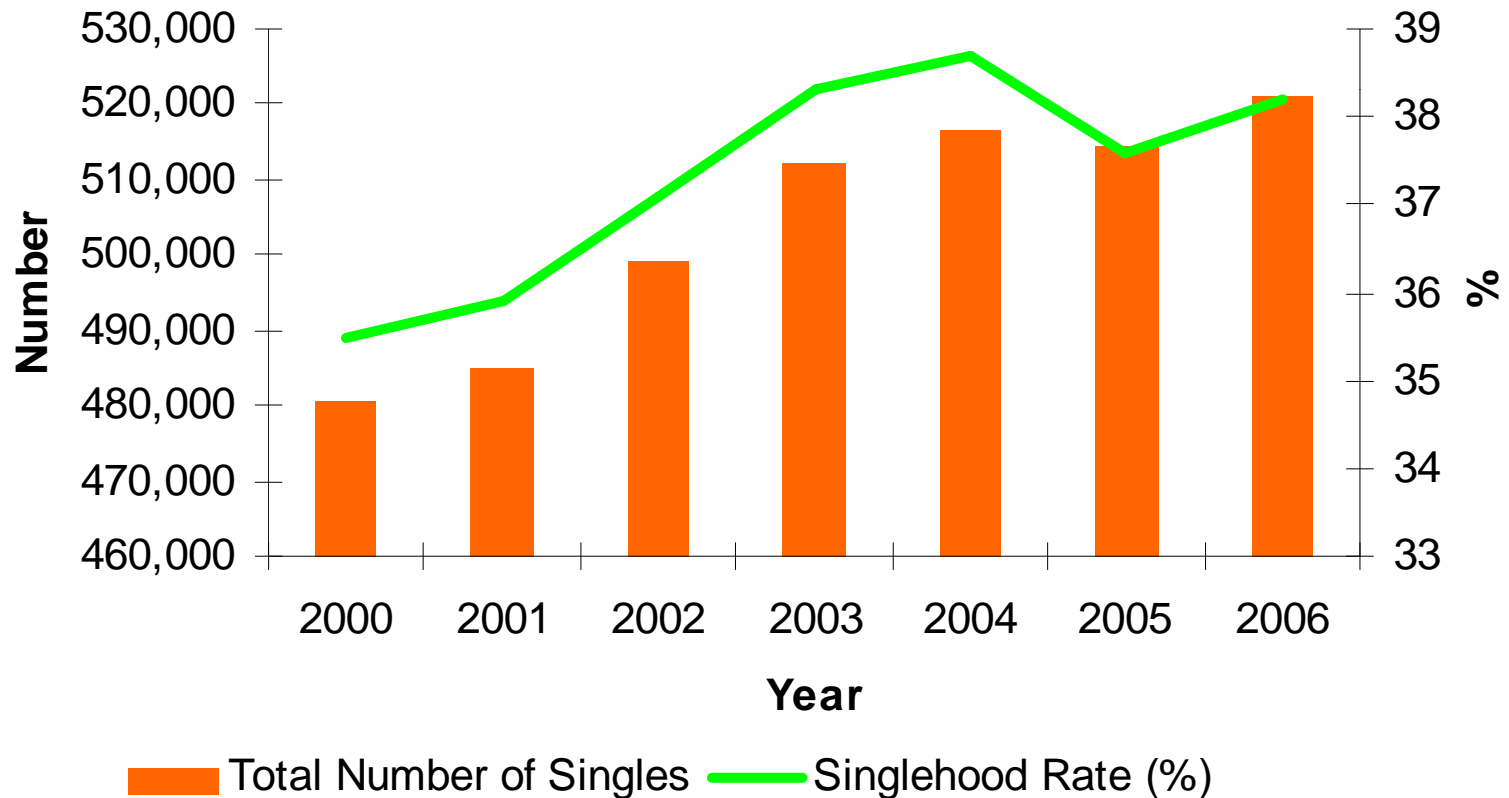
### Age-Sex Specific Marriage Rates



# State of the family today

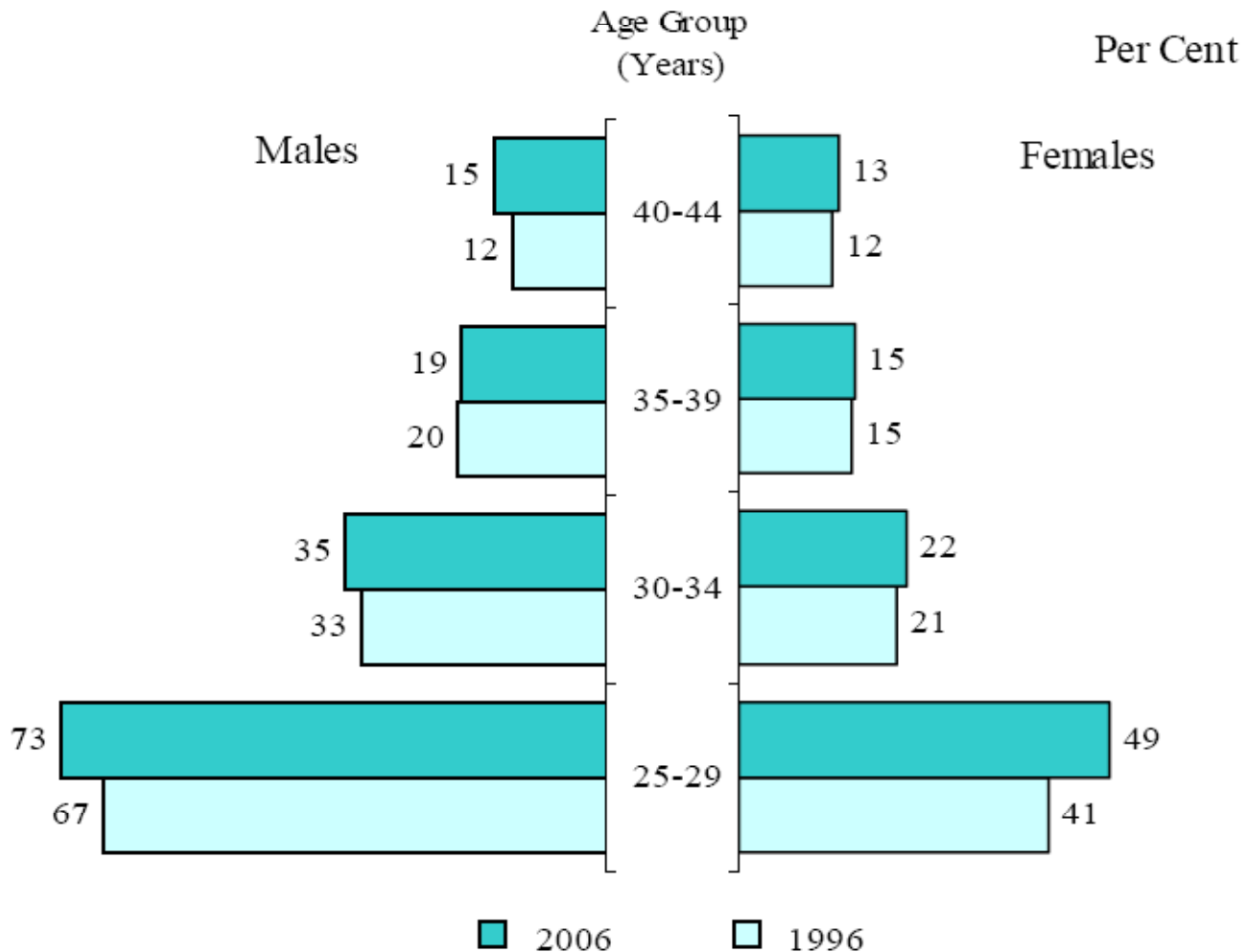
## Increasing Resident Singlehood Rate

Resident Singlehood and Singlehood Rates (20-44)



# State of the family today

## Rise in portion of Single among Resident Population

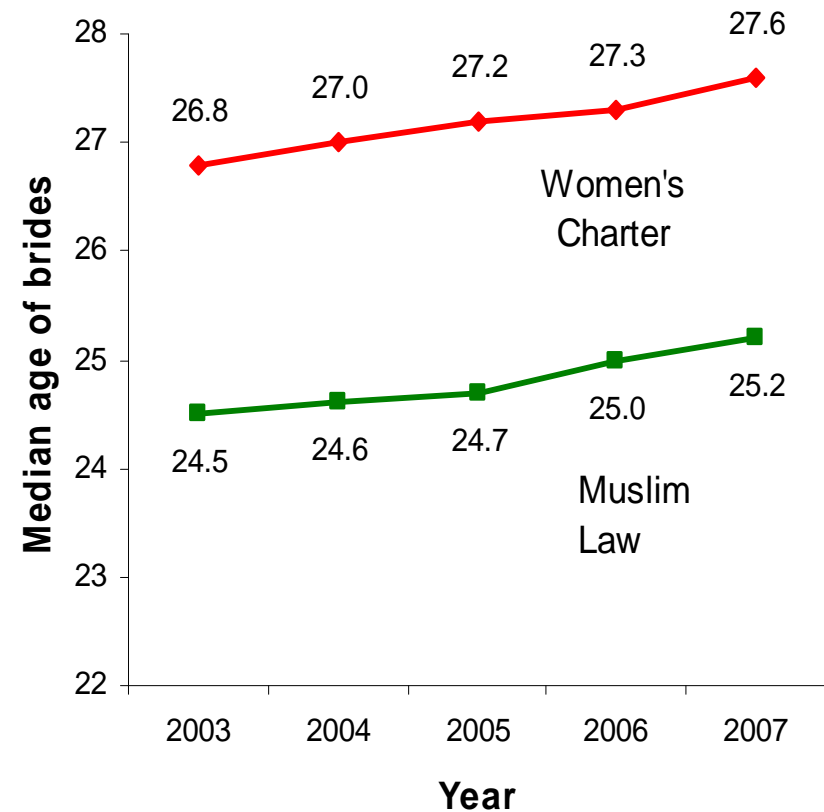
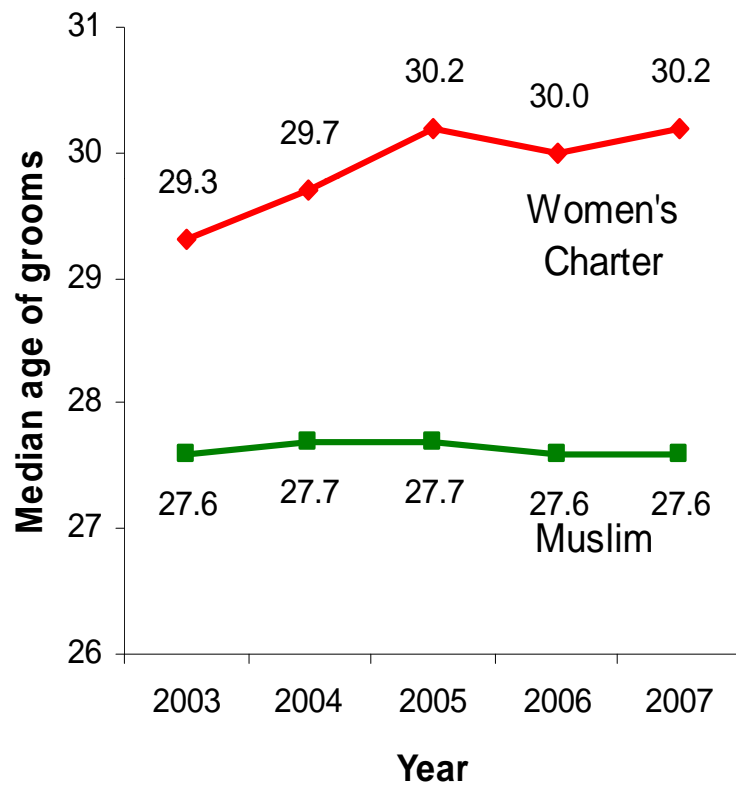


Source: Singapore Department of Statistics



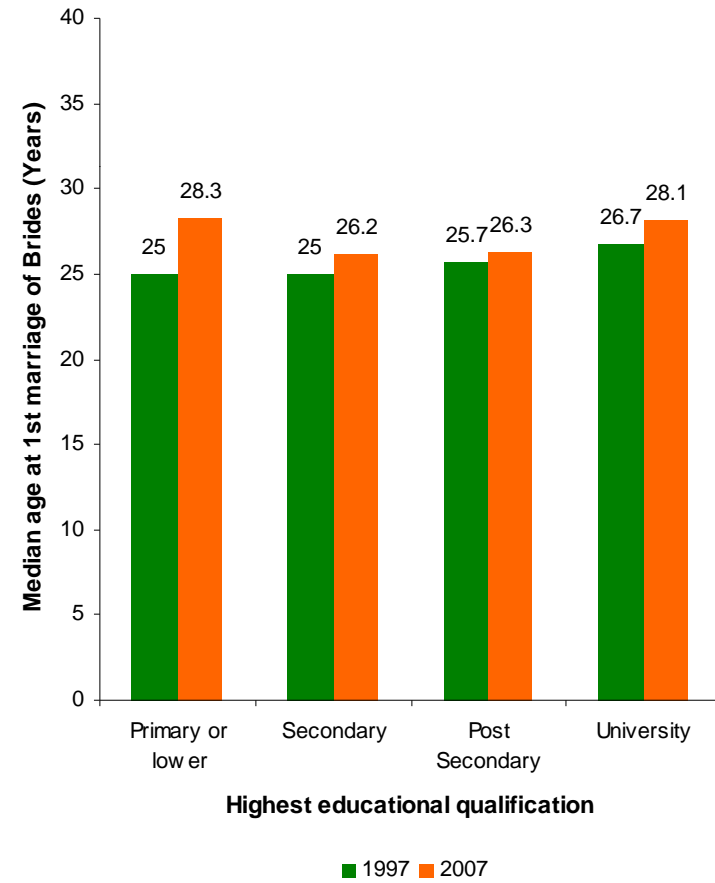
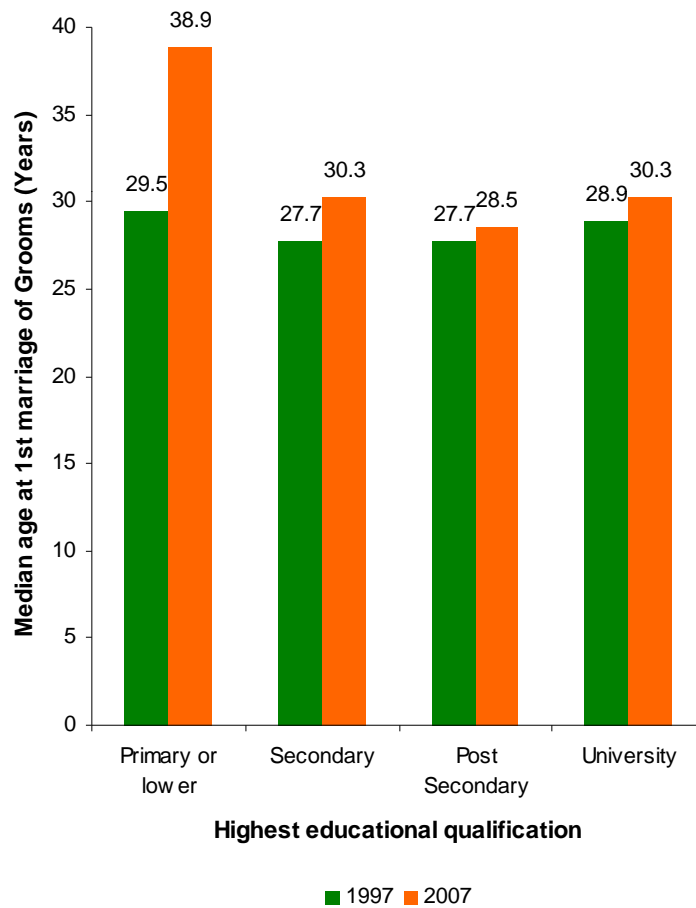
# State of the family today

**However, more men and women are getting married later**



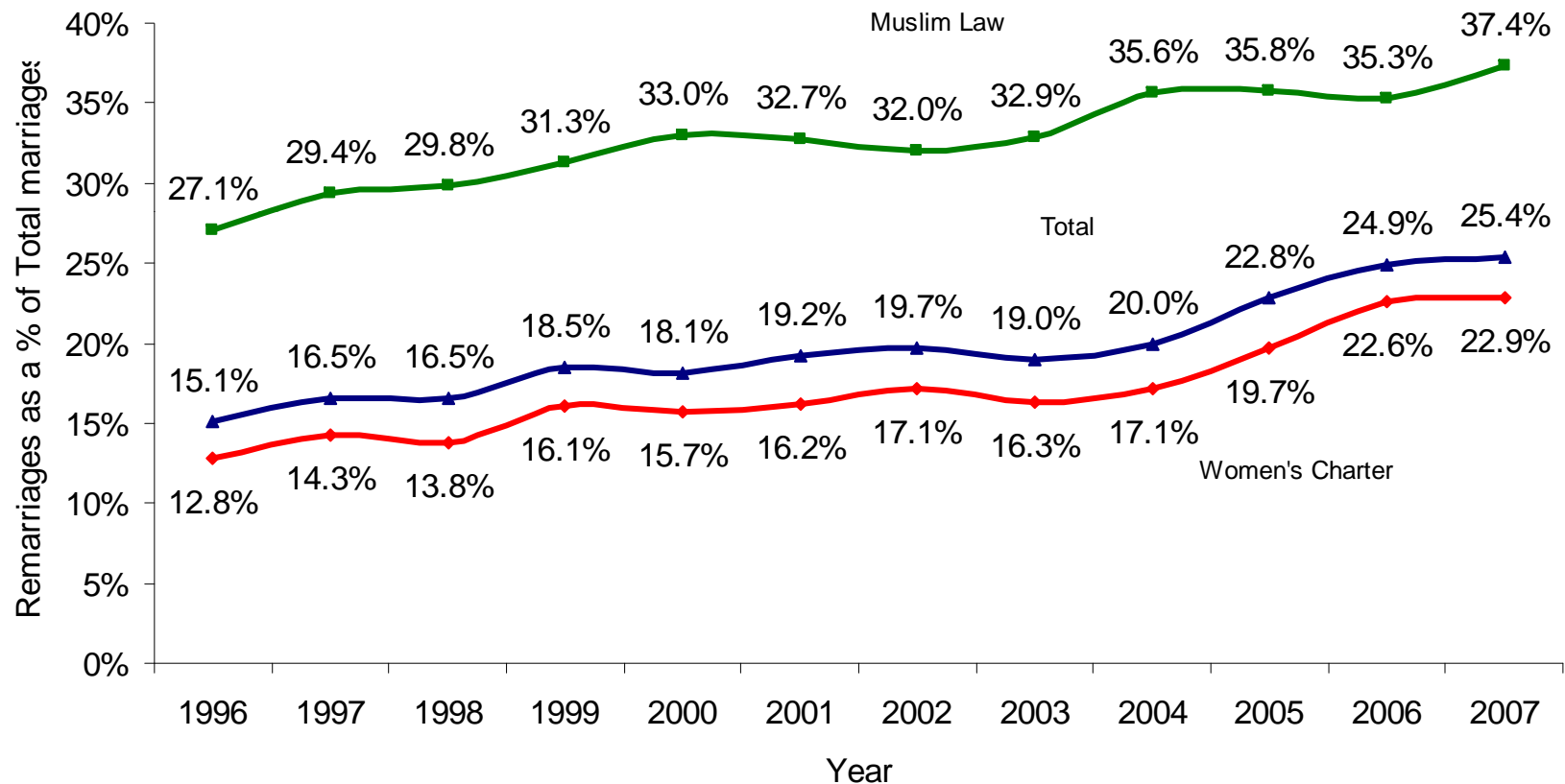
# State of the family today

## Higher age of 1<sup>st</sup> marriage among “Primary or Lower” educational group



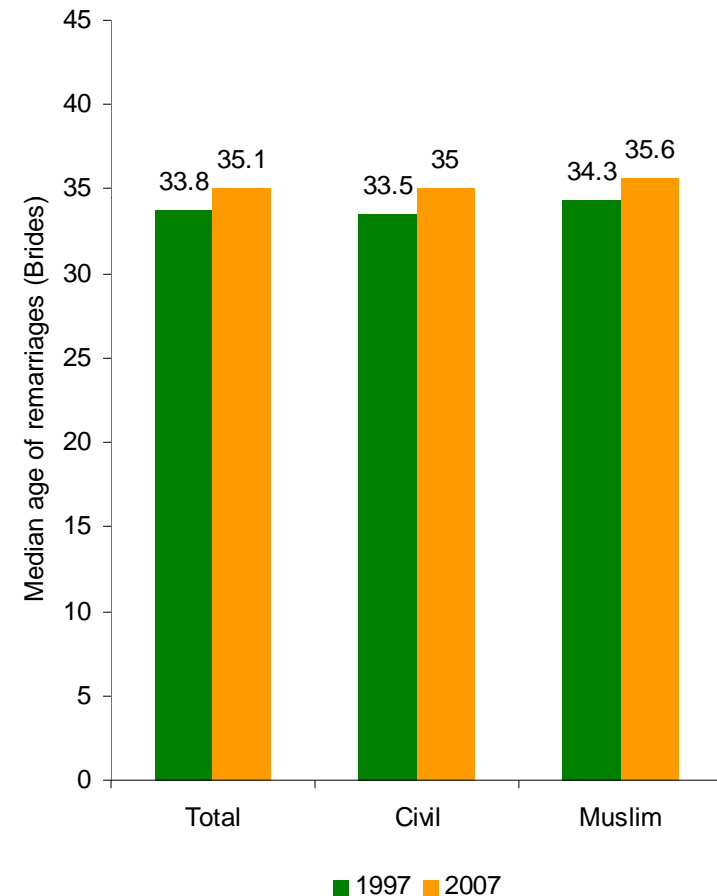
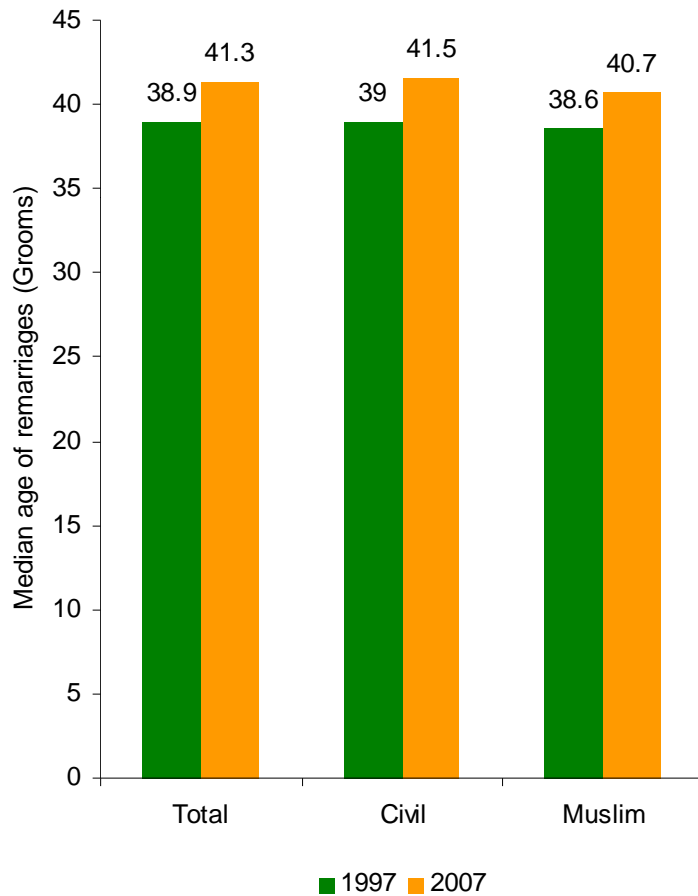
# State of the family today

## Remarriages are also on the rise



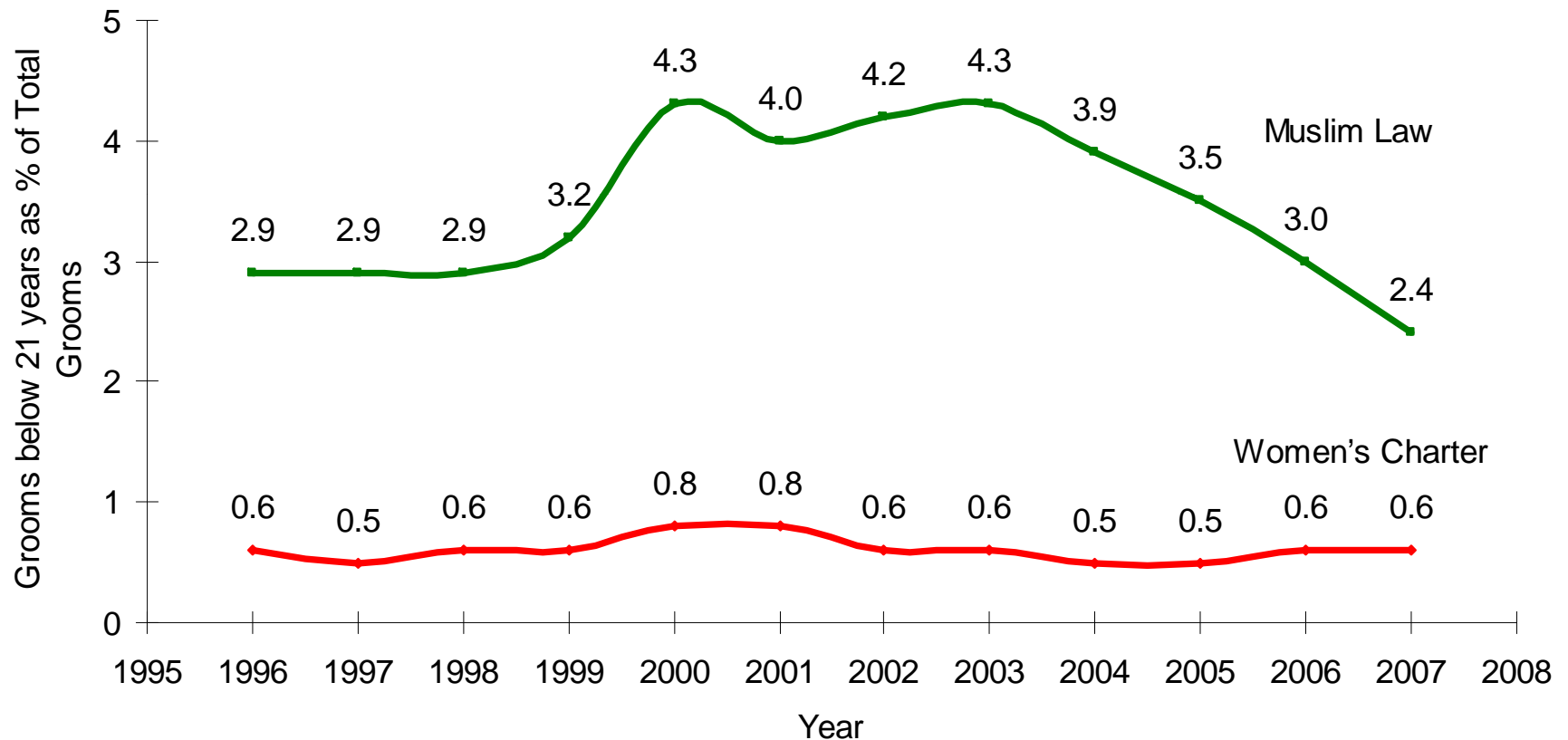
# State of the family today

## Increasing median age among remarriages



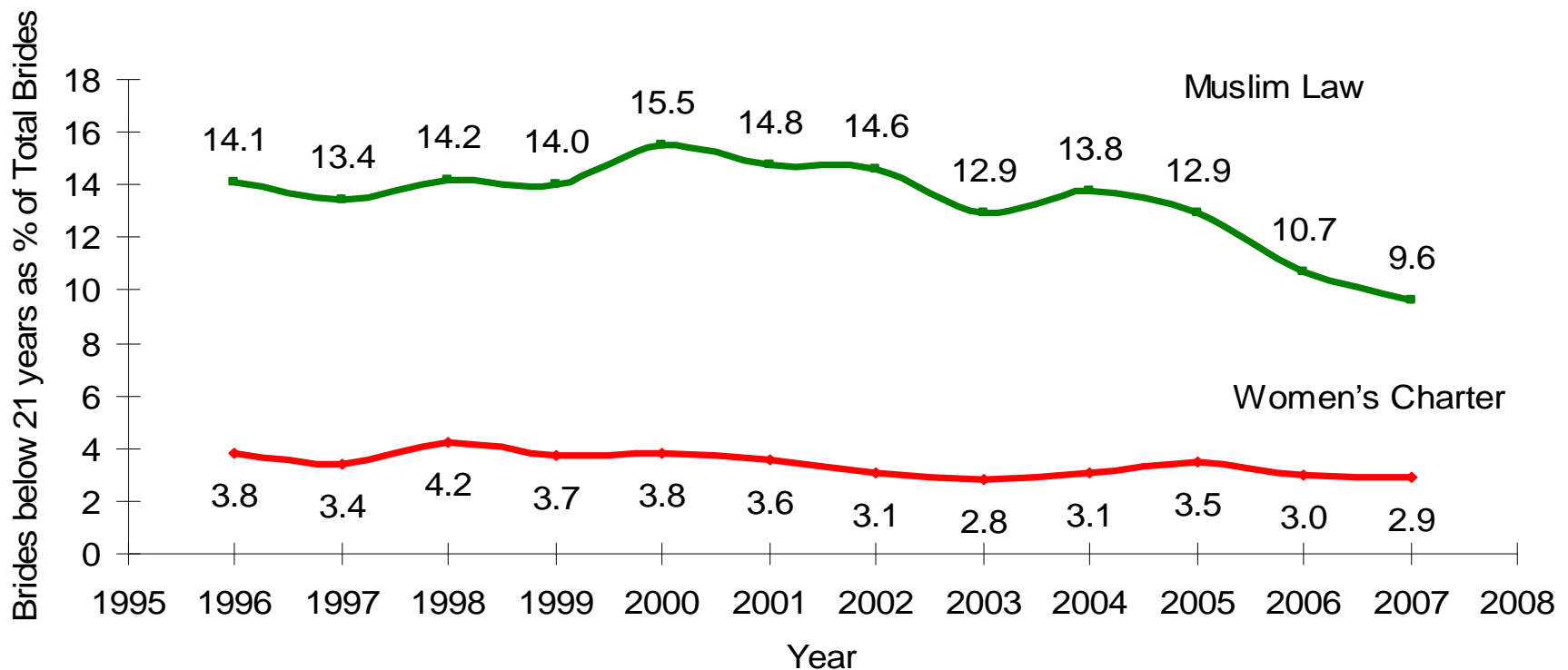
# State of the family today

## Marriages among minors are decreasing



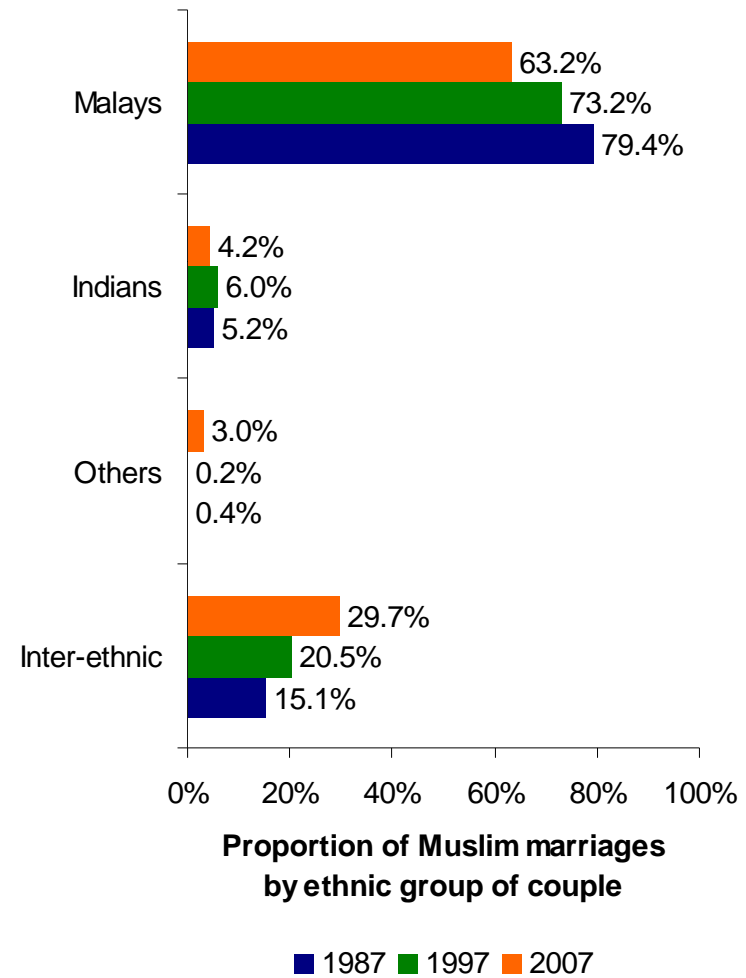
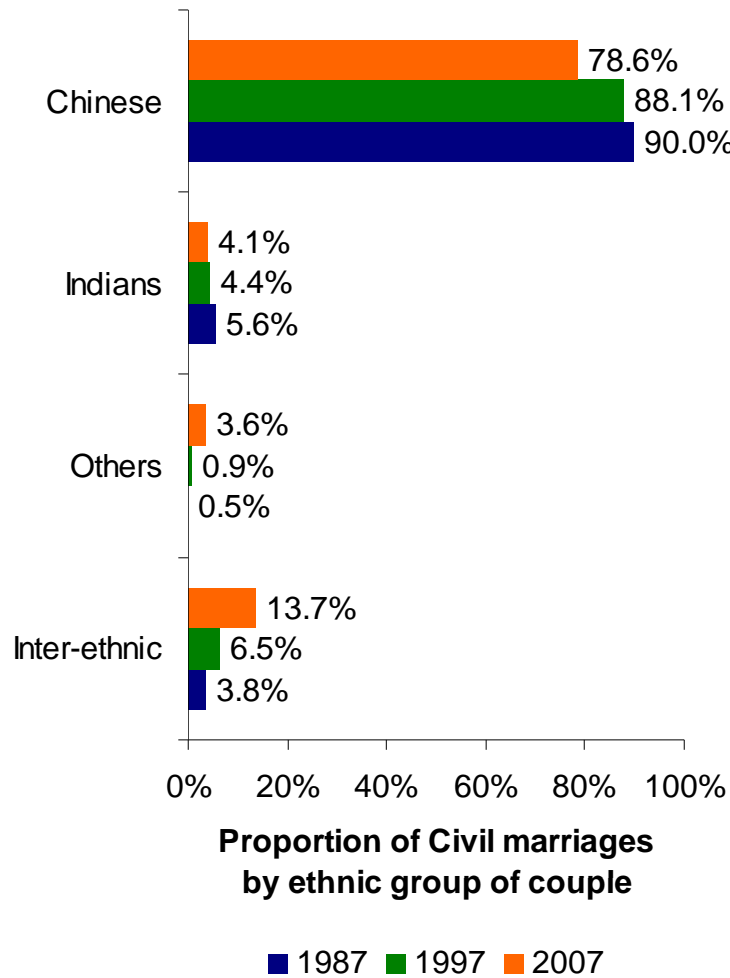
# State of the family today

## Marriages among minors are decreasing



# State of the family today

## More inter-ethnic marriages





# State of the family today

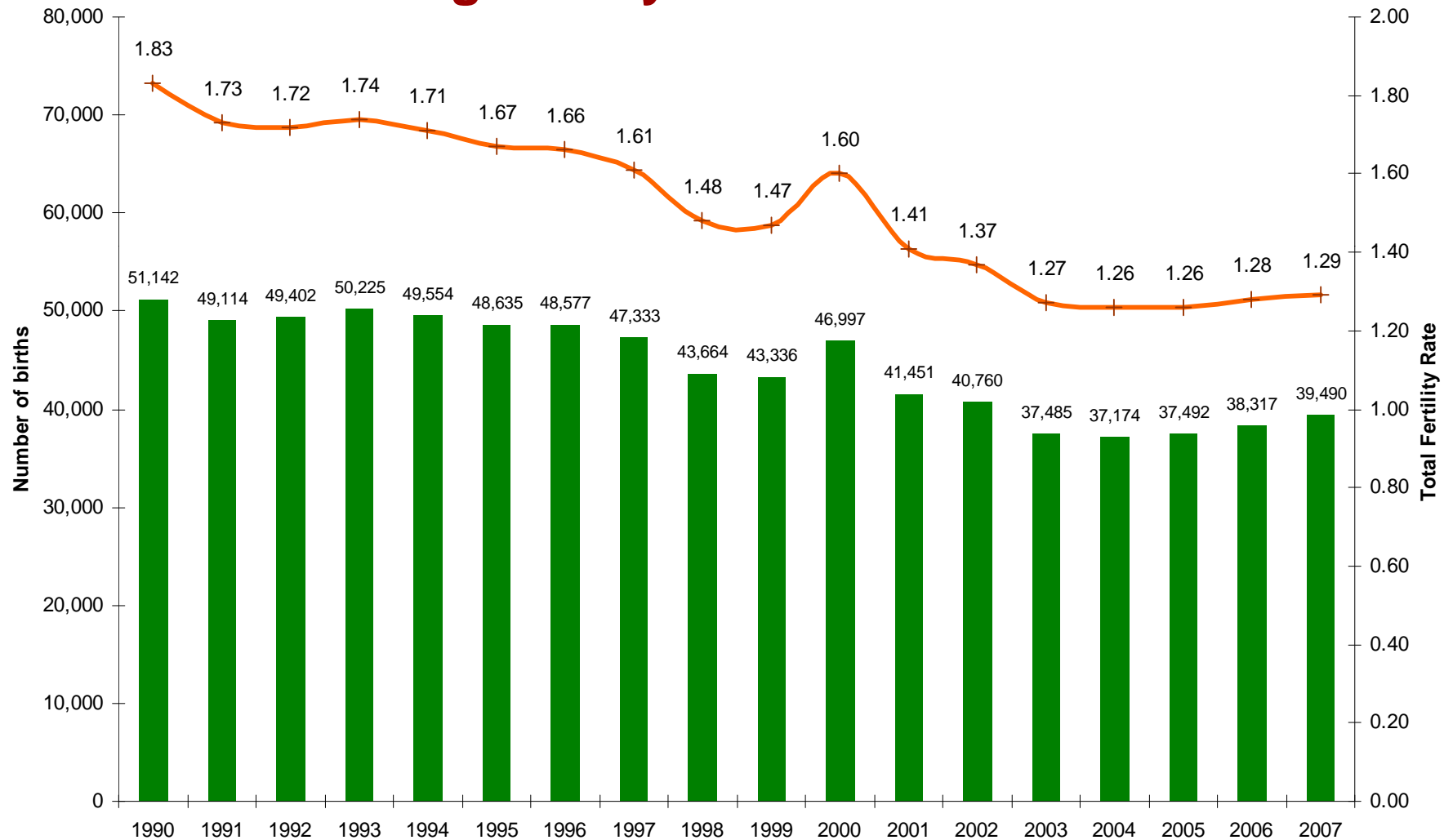


## Parenthood



# State of the family today

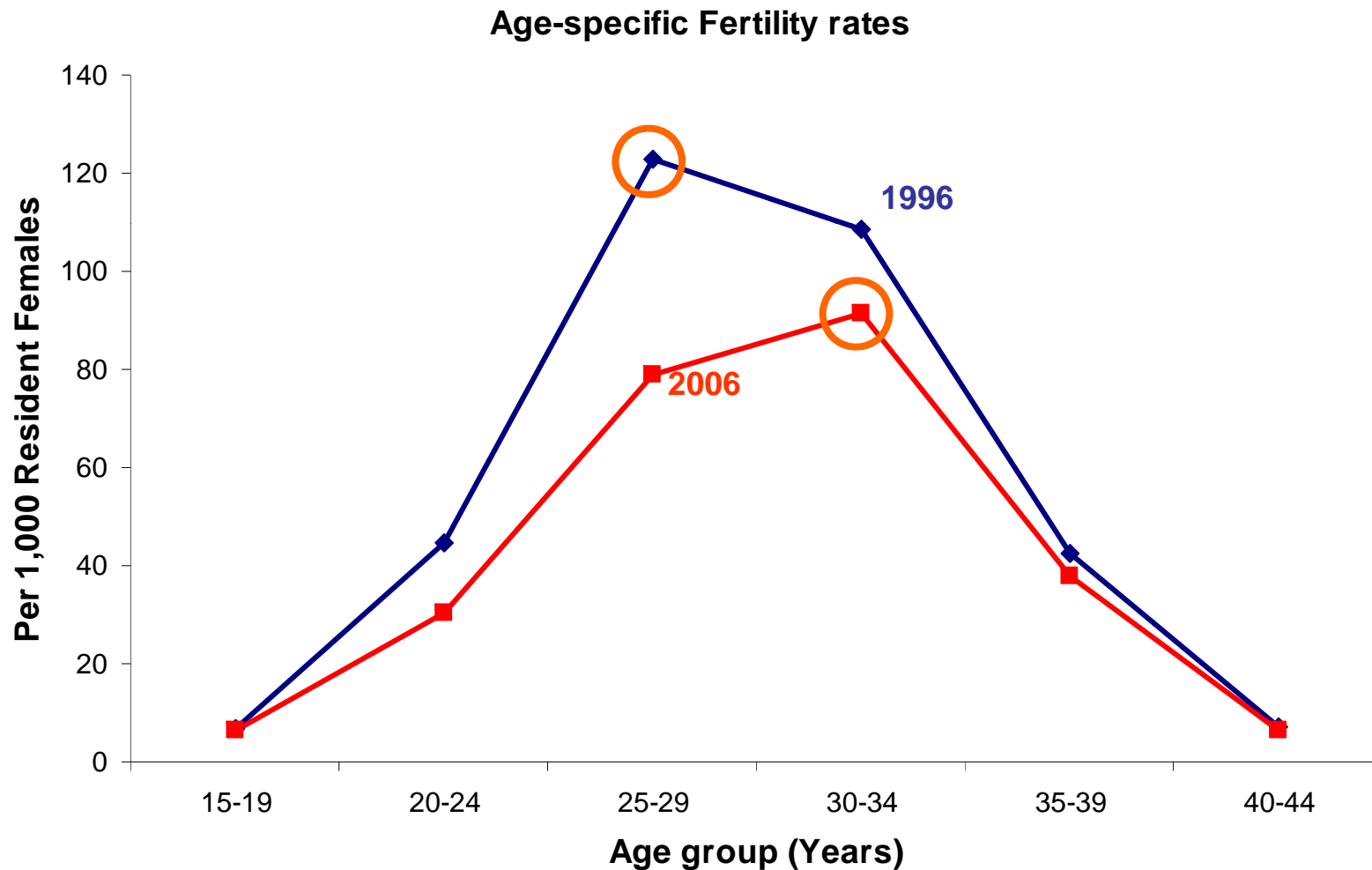
## Falling fertility rates and live births



Source: Singapore Department of Statistics  Total Live Births  Births per Woman

# State of the family today

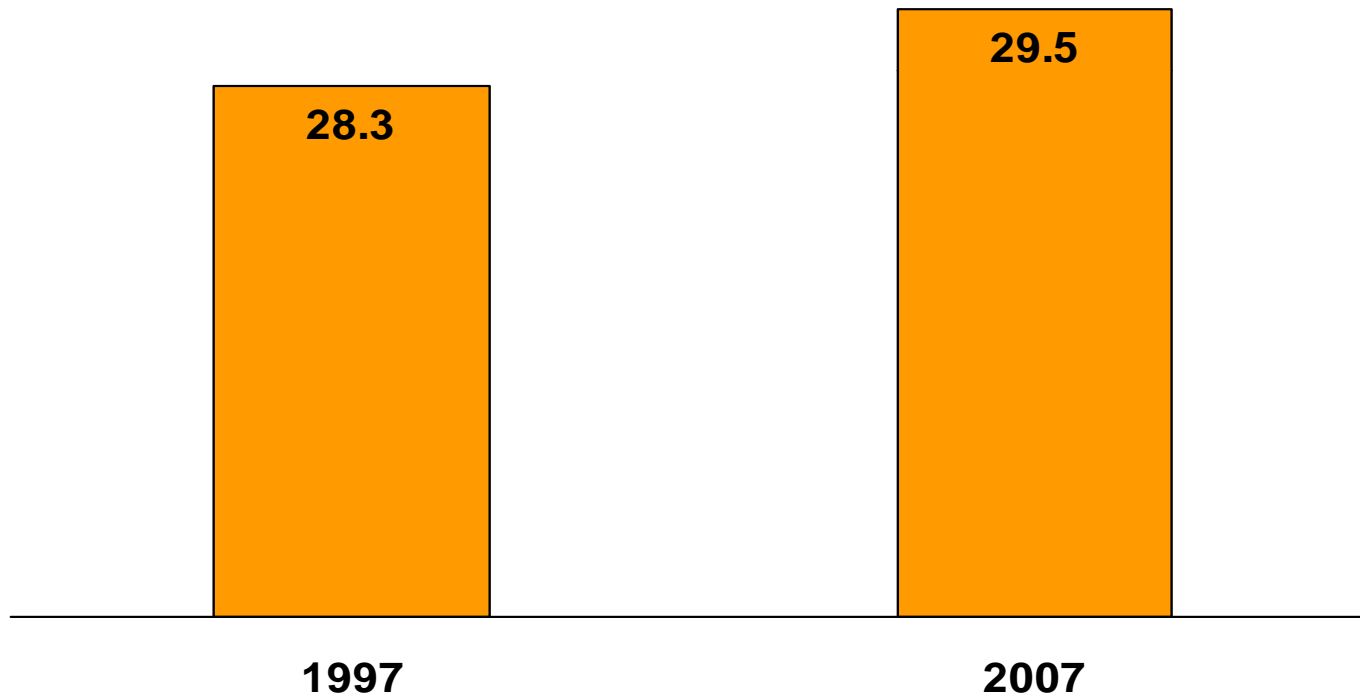
## Decreasing Total Fertility Rate among the young



# State of the family today

## More are having children later

Median age of females at first birth (years)



# State of the family today

## And having fewer children

Age group (Years)	Average number of children born to Resident Females		
	1990	2000	2006
<b>Total</b>	2.8	2.5	2.3
<b>15 – 29</b>	1.0	0.8	0.8
<b>30 – 39</b>	1.9	1.8	1.5
<b>40 – 49</b>	2.8	2.2	2.1
<b>50 and over</b>	4.7	3.9	3.2

# State of the family today

## Household sizes are declining

	1980	1990	2000	2005
<b>Chinese</b>	4.8	4.2	3.6	3.5
<b>Malay</b>	5.5	4.7	4.2	4.1
<b>Indian</b>	4.3	4.2	3.7	3.7
<b>Others</b>	4.0	3.8	3.4	3.4
<b>Overall</b>	4.7	4.2	3.7	3.6



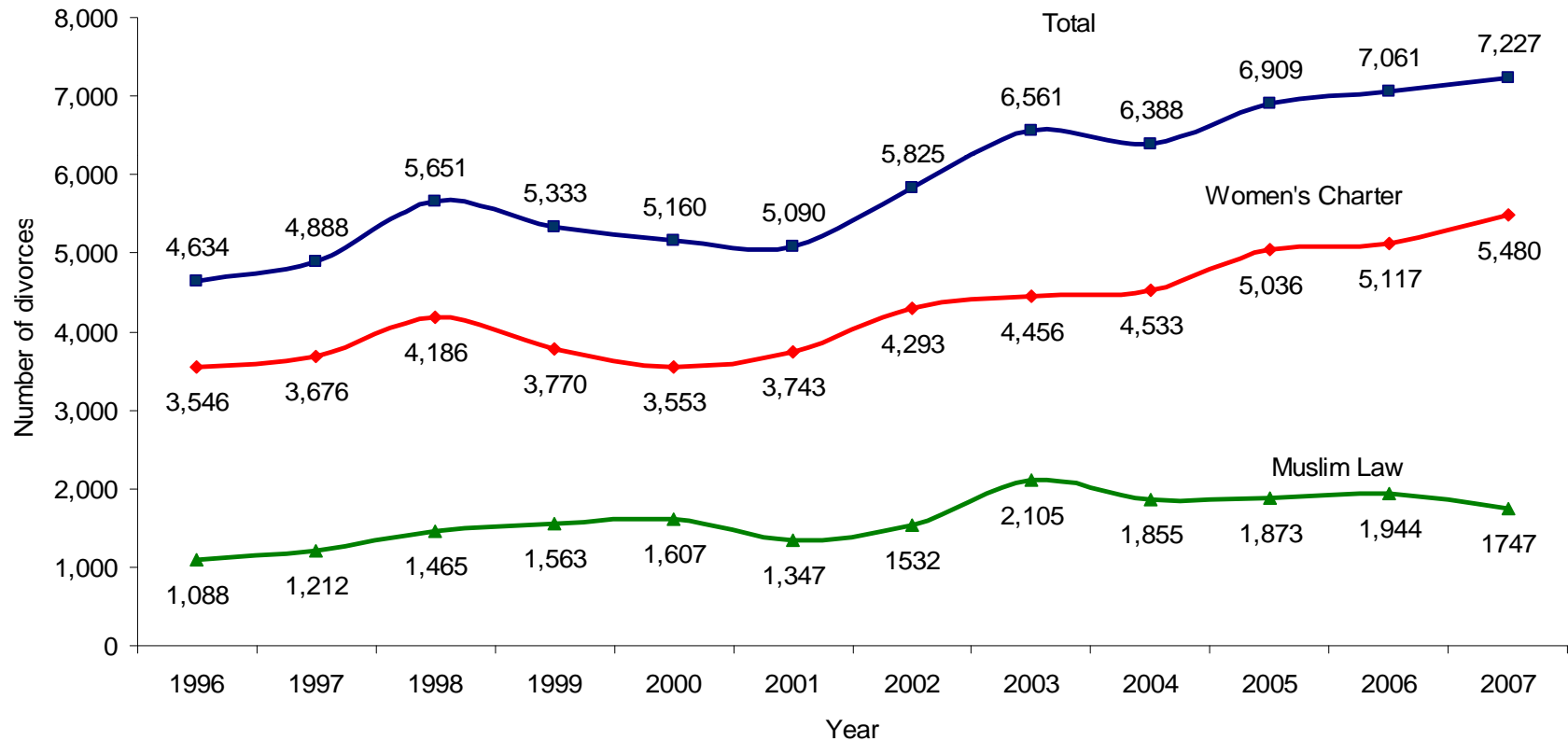
# State of the family today



## Divorce

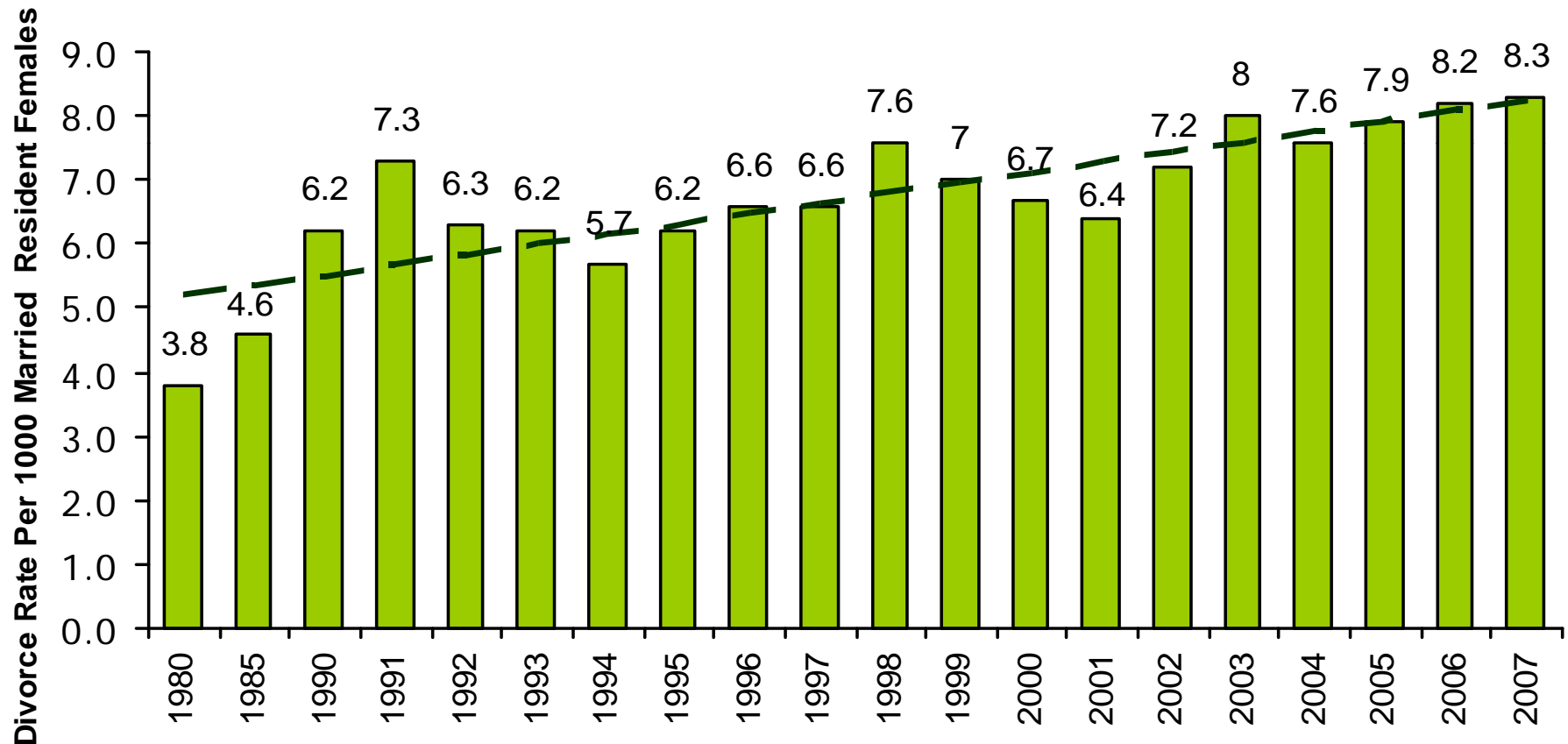
# State of the family today

## Increasing Number of Divorces



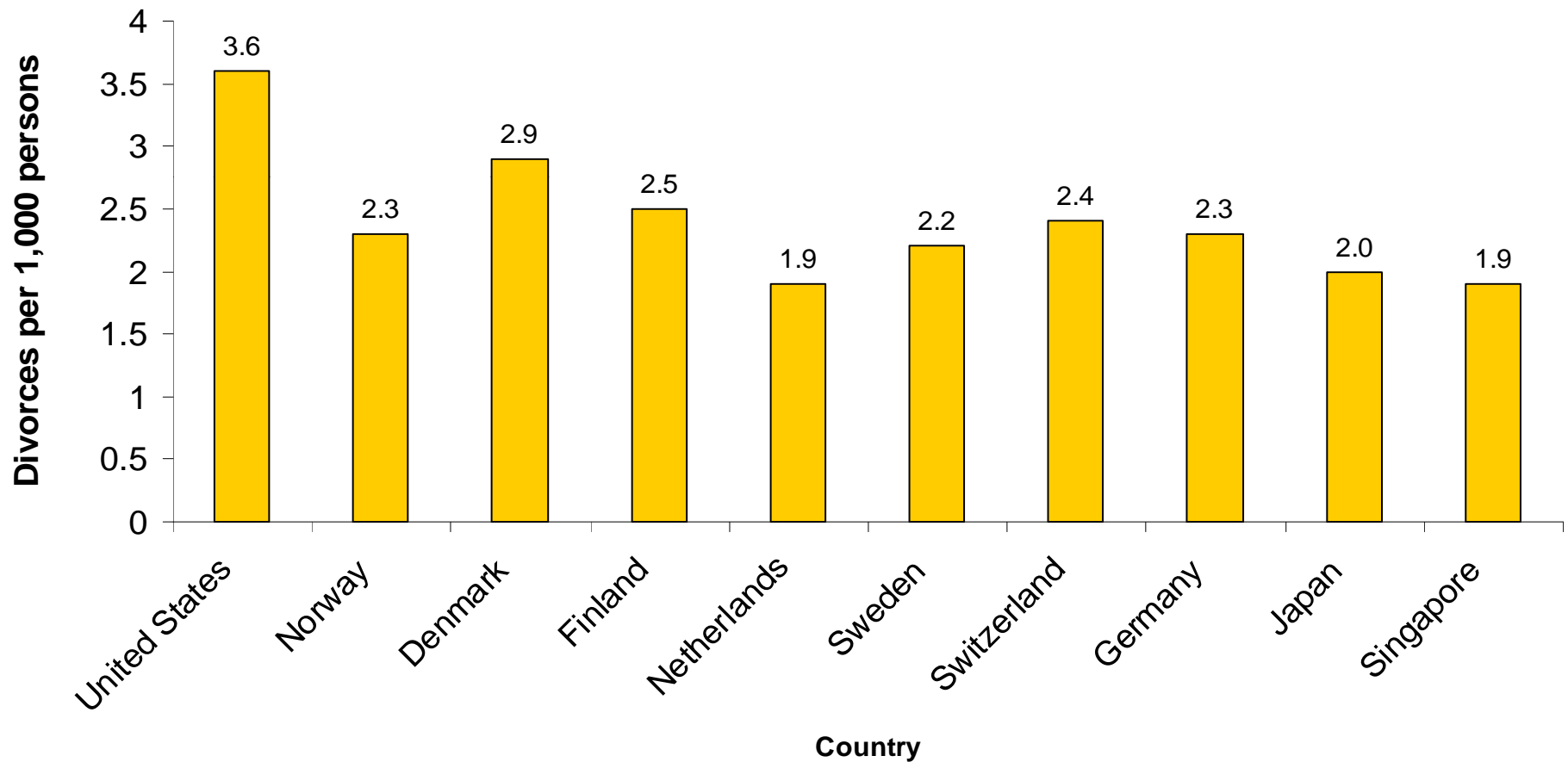
# State of the family today

## Divorces rates are also increasing



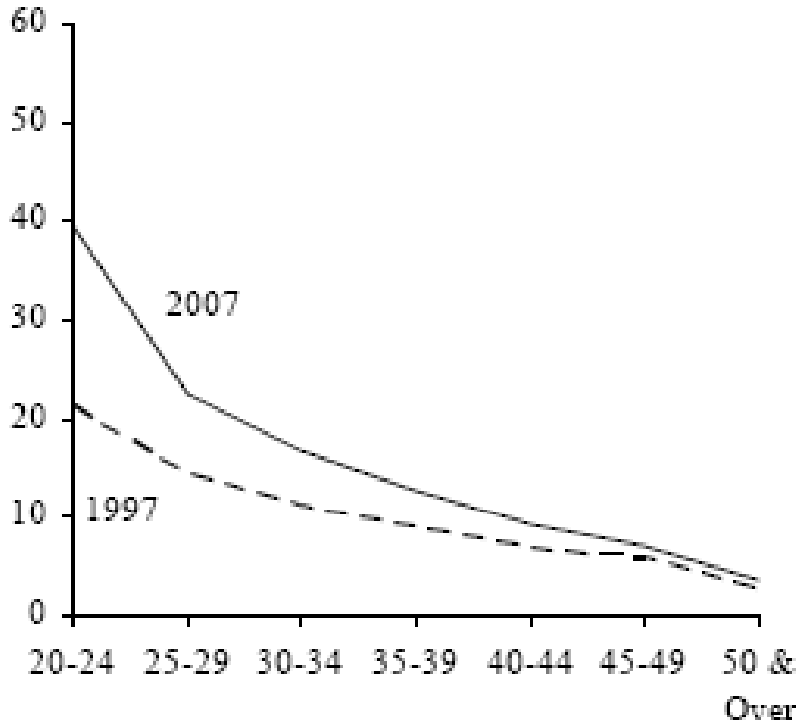


## Singapore's divorce rates lowest among OECD countries



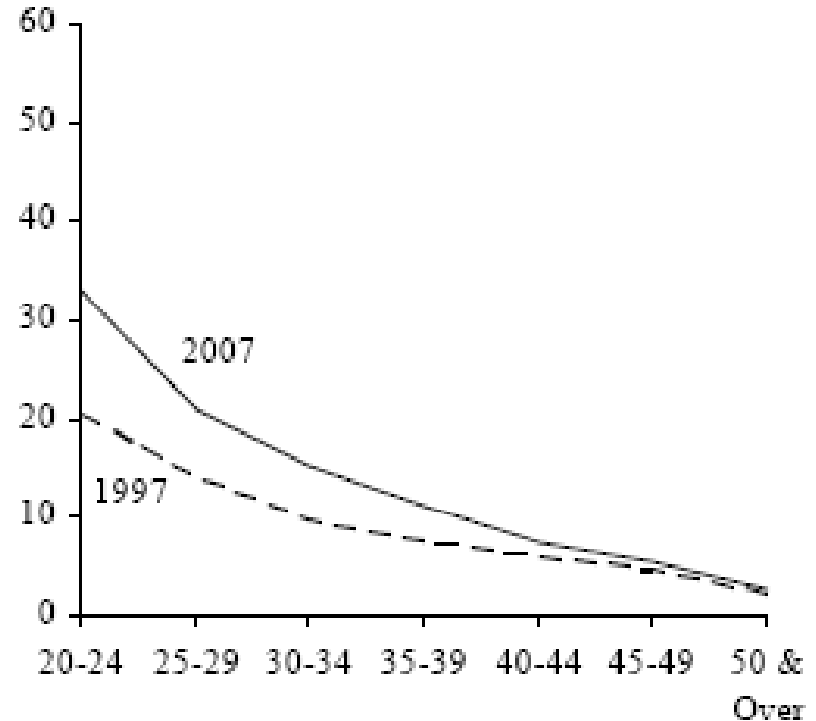
## Younger married persons more vulnerable to divorce

Per Thousand  
Married Resident Males



Age Group (Years)

Per Thousand Married  
Resident Females



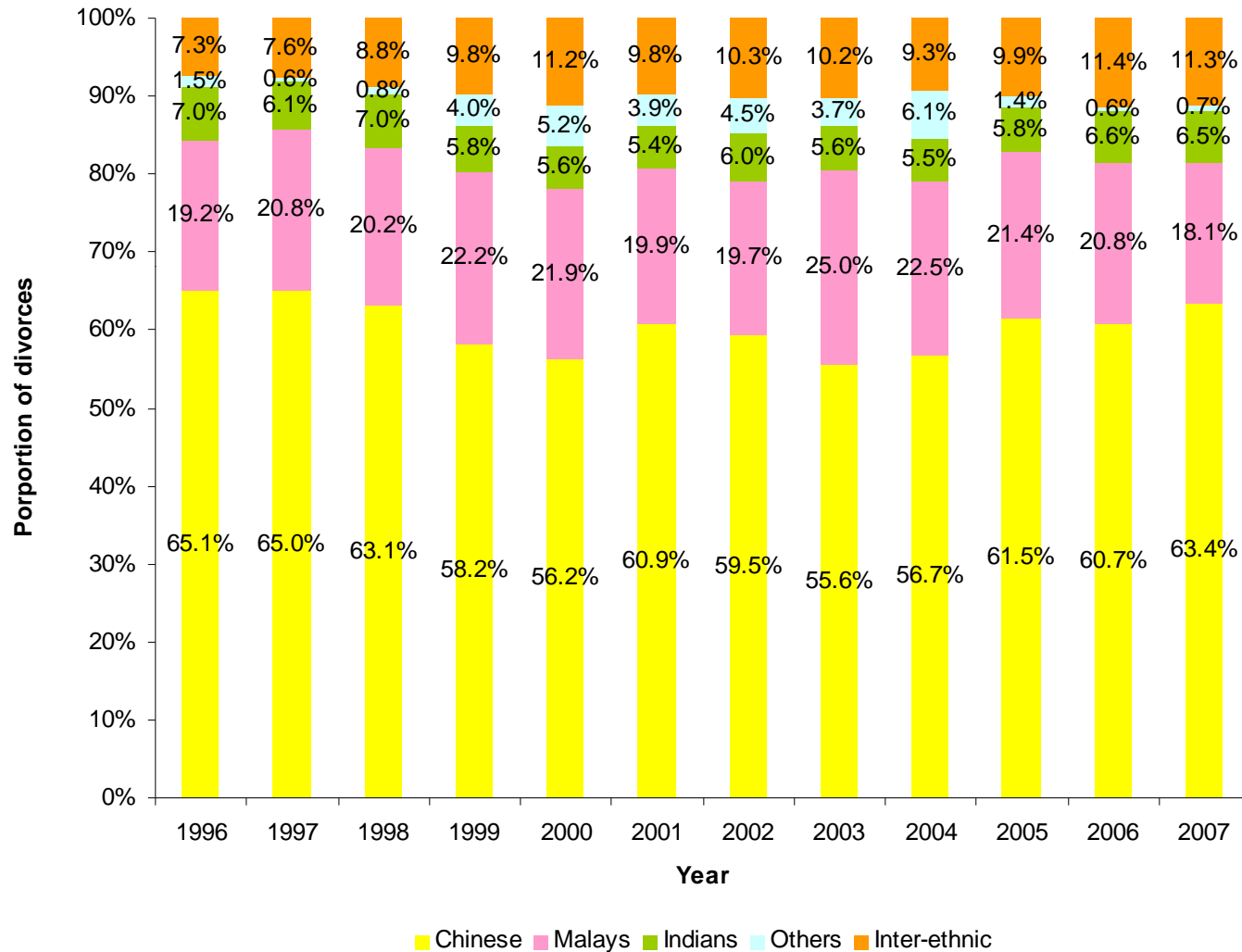
Age Group (Years)

### Age-Sex specific divorce rates

Source: Singapore Department of Statistics

# State of the family today

## Inter-ethnic divorces increasing

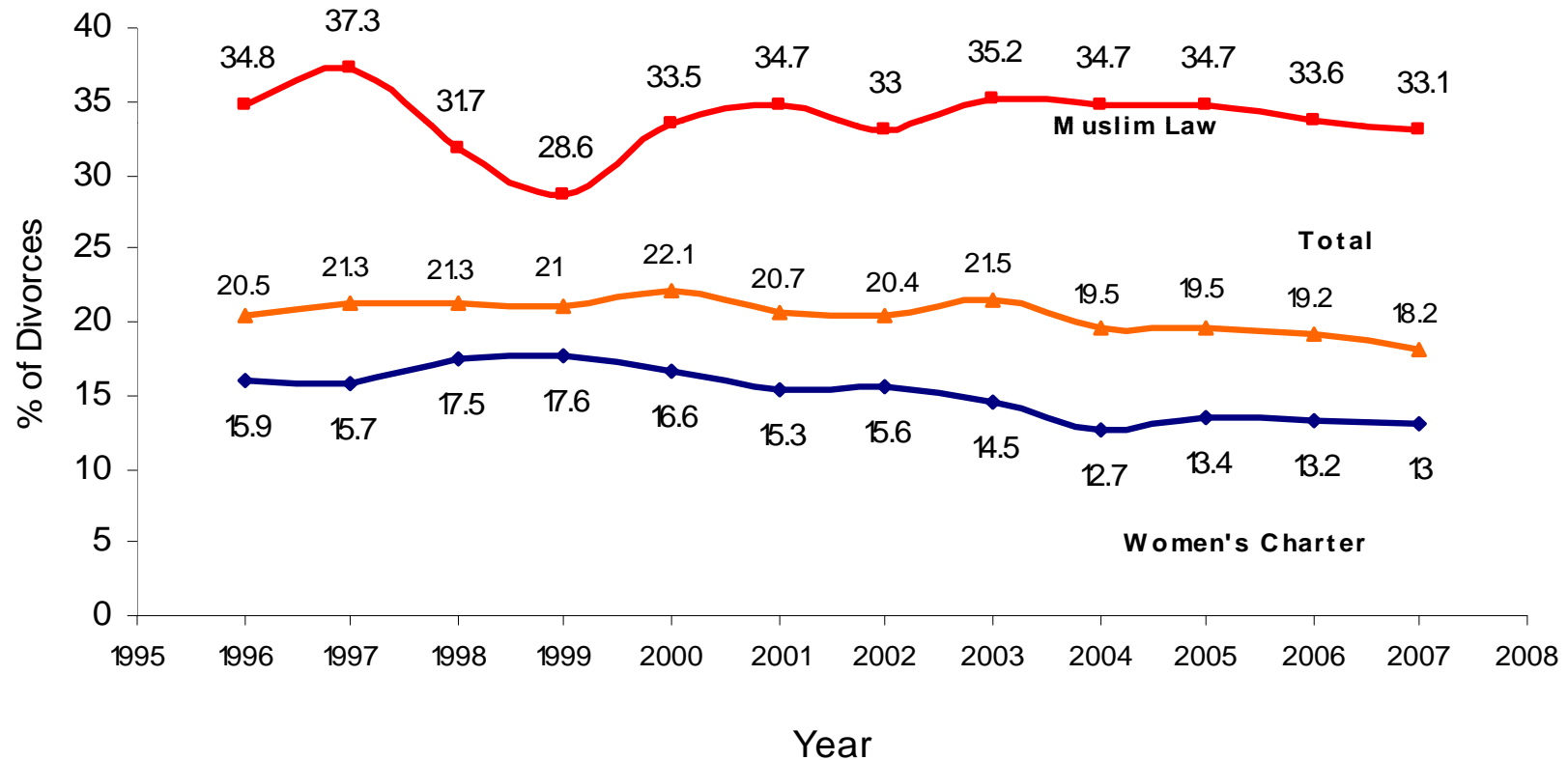


Source: Singapore Department of Statistics

# State of the family today

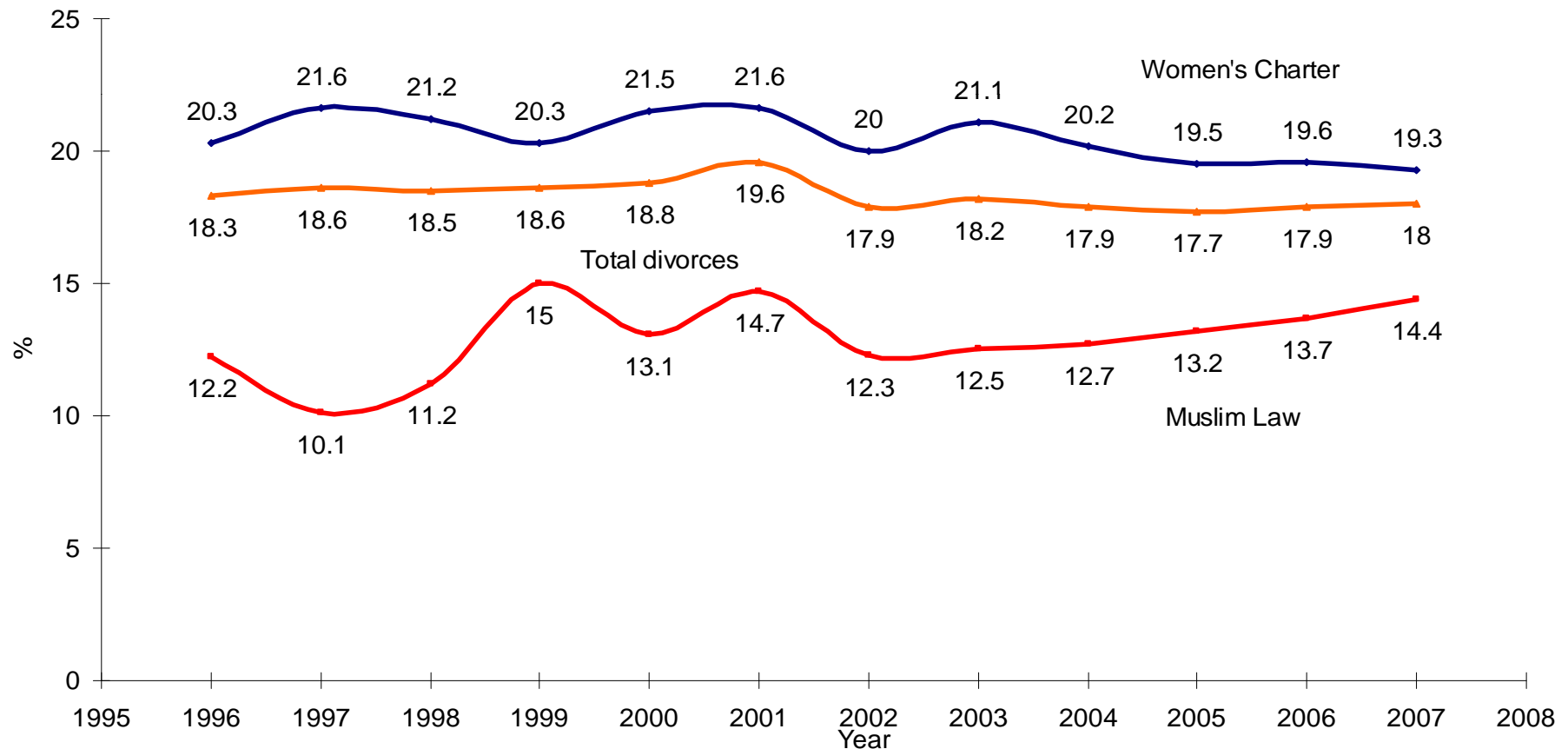
## Early divorces are of concern

Proportion of Divorces With Marriages Under 5 Years



## Divorces among older marriages

DIVORCES AMONG LONG LASTING MARRIAGES  
(20 YEARS OR MORE)





# State of the family today

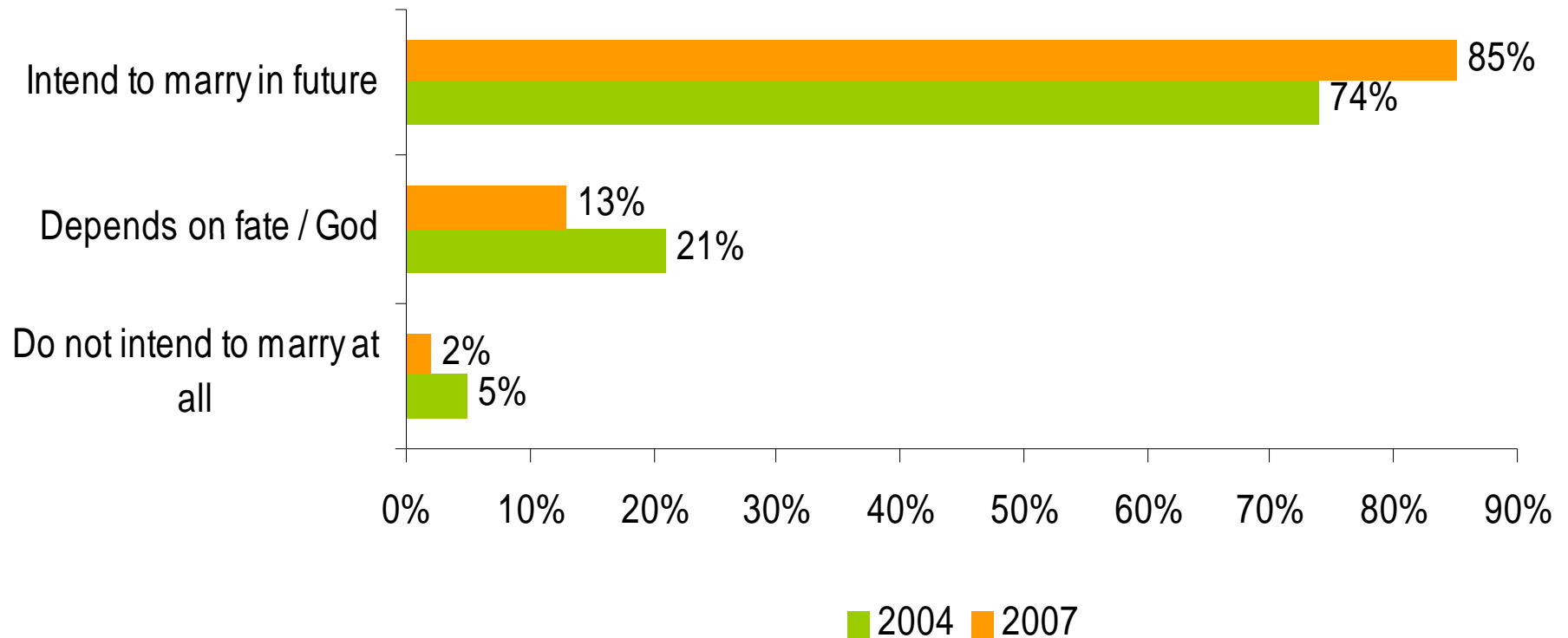


## Attitudes to Family

# State of the family today

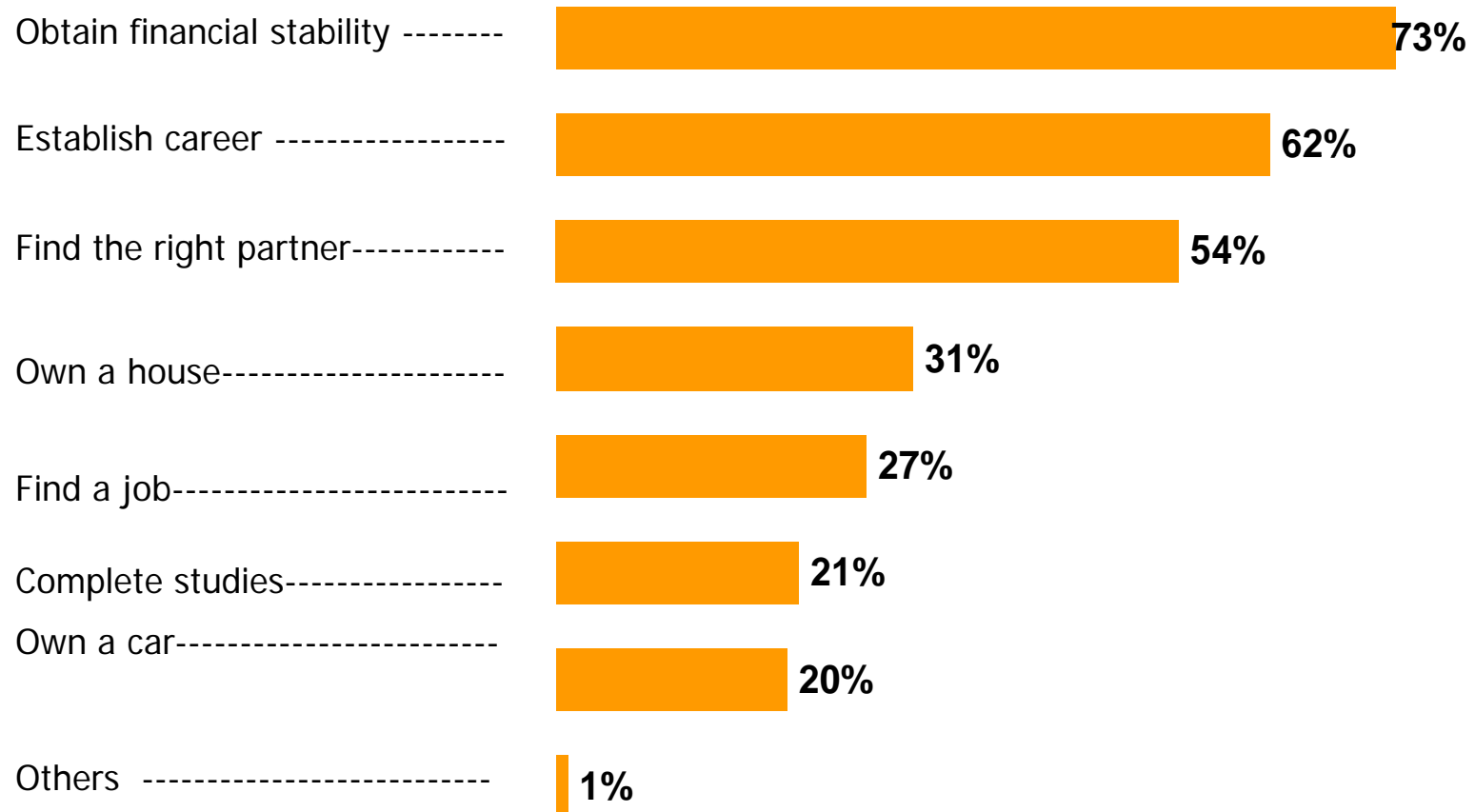
## Many still intend to get married

### Future Marriage Intention



# State of the family today

## However, singles still want to accomplish certain goals before marriage





# State of the family today

## But more desire 2 or 3 children

No. of Children	Total Married Respondents (%)			
	2004		2007	
	Intended*	Actual	Intended	Actual
0	7%	22%	2% ↓	19% ↓
1	14%	24%	15% ↑	28% ↑
<b>2</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>53%</b> ↑	<b>37%</b> ↑
<b>3</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>24%</b> ↑	<b>13%</b>
4 or more	5%	4%	7% ↑	4%
Mean	<b>2.0</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>2.2</b> ↑	<b>1.6</b> ↑

\*A small percentage of non-responses had been excluded from these columns.

\*\*Figures have been rounded up.

Source: Study on Marriage and Parenthood, 2007

# State of the family today

## Family ties remain strong

Statement	Percent who agree		
	2001	2003	2006
I have a close-knit family	97	93	96
My family members tell me their personal problems	88	86	91
When I am troubled, I would talk to one or more of my family members	88	85	91
People who are earning their own income should regularly give money (e.g., monthly allowance) to their family	98	93	99
I will give money to my family members if they are in need of financial support	99	98	99

# State of the family today

## Quality of family relationships

Statement	Percent who agree	
	2002	2005
I feel appreciated for who I am	93	89
We enjoy having dinner together and talking	80	85
The only time I'm being noticed is when I have a problem	23	15
We can't get along with each other	10	7

# State of the family today

## Conclusion

- Overall, a majority of Singaporeans still believe in marriage and want children
- The average Singapore family remains strong

## However, trends need to be addressed:

- Rising singlehood rates
- Singaporeans are getting married and having children later
- Couples are desiring and having fewer children
- Rising divorce rates, especially among the young
- Competing aspirations seem to affect marriage and parenthood decisions

**Thank you**