

Family life

Prepare by Thai Health Team

Seventeen percent of married women, or about 2.9 million women, are in marriages where the partners did not choose each other freely.

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Most people dream of having a happy marriage. However, marriage is often not founded on free choice. People are not able to choose their spouse, to register, or to live together.

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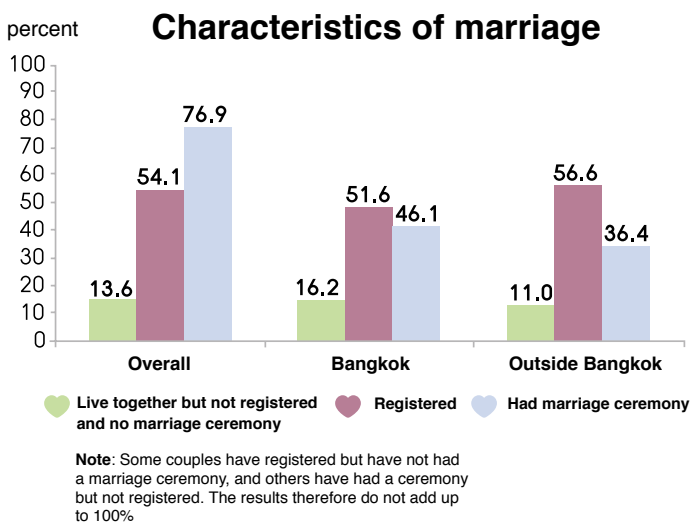
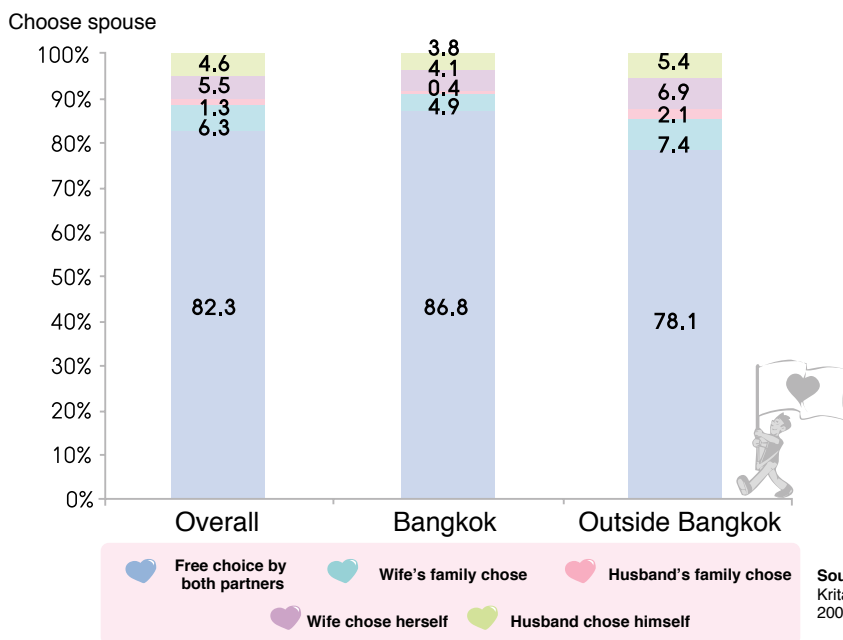
Most Thai marriages result from free choices by both male and female partners. However, in 7.1% of cases the decisions were by the families instead. In most such cases, it is the bride's family that makes the decisions. Among all couples living together, 13.5% have never had a marriage ceremony or officially registered. About one in three couples live with the parents or other relatives of the bride.

In 2004, there were approximately 18,905,400 households in Thailand. One third of these were composed of a father, a mother, and one or more children. Another third had at least one relative from another family living in the same household. Only 13.5% of households consisted of a husband and wife on their own. Only 11.6% consisted of a person on their own. Finally, 7.8% consisted of mothers or fathers living with children but no spouse. Data on high school children show that children living with only one parent are more likely to live with the mother than the father.

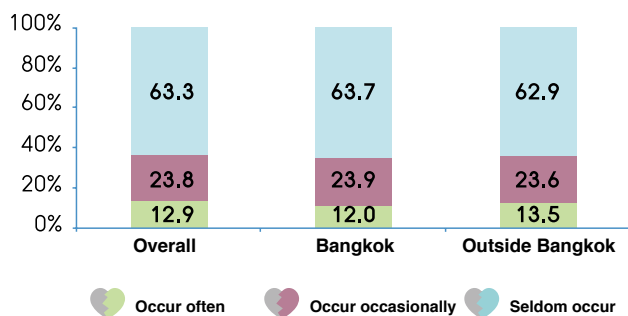
Only two - thirds of married or cohabiting women live close to one or more relatives. Three percent never see their relatives at all. Thirteen percent of women in partnerships have frequent arguments with their partners.



Choice of marriage partner (percent of women aged 15-49 years)



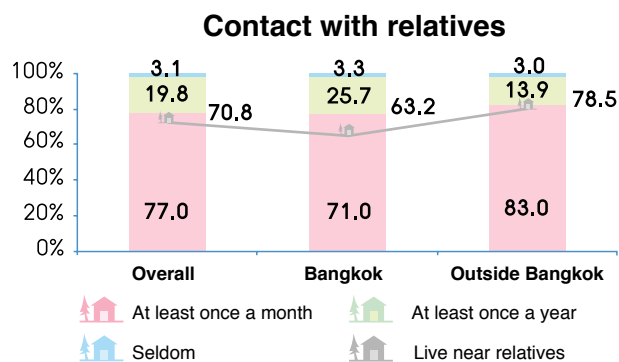
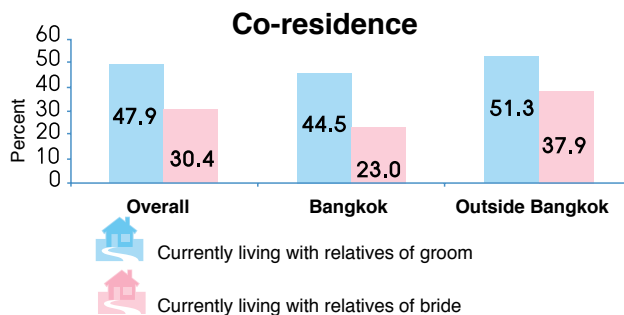
Arguments between husband and wife



Characteristics of households

	Percent			
	2001	2002	2003	2004
Nuclear family				
Husband and wife	12.5	13.4	13.5	13.5
Husband, wife, children	35.4	34.4	33.2	33.2
Husband or wife, children	8.3	7.7	7.8	7.8
Single person	11.5	11.8	11.6	11.6
One nuclear family, plus relatives (an extended family)	31.7	32.1	33.3	33.3
Unrelated individuals	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6

Source: Household Labor Force Surveys, 2001-2004 National Statistical Office,



Source: New tabulations from Kritaya Archavanitkul and others, 2000
Note: Only married woman