



# Marriage Statistics

Stats Brief | 2019



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## Preface

This statistical brief presents information on civil marriages that were registered in 2019. The Department of Civil and National Registration (CNR) of the Ministry of Nationality, Immigration and Gender Affairs is responsible for data collection through the registration service of vital events. Vital events are births, deaths and marriages. Customary and cultural marriages are not covered in this Brief and these will be included in future Marriage Stats Briefs when the data becomes available from CNR.

This brief gives descriptive statistics of civil marriages that occurred in 2019 as well as trends in civil marriages for the past 10 years. It also presents trends in the number of marriages, demographics and other dynamics amongst marrying partners.



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September 2020

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## 1.0 Background

Marriage is an event which is regulated by statute (under the Marriage Act of 2001) and about which information is collected for legal and statistical purposes. Marriage is an institution recognized in Botswana where two people of different sex are being united. The union may be done at the district administration offices or at a church.

### 1.1. Marriage Processes

A couple desiring to marry will normally appear before the registration officer of any district together with their witnesses where the information to publish the Marriage Banns is submitted. For re-marrying parties, documents like decree absolute, death certificates, in case the previous party is deceased or divorce certificate are required as proof for re-marrying.

A form for marriage banns is completed indicating, names, age, status, occupation, ID and residential addresses of the applicants. The form is signed by the parties before two witnesses whereby the notice would be sent to districts where both parties reside and their places of origin. The same notice may be sent to the church if the applicants intend to marry at the church.

The public notice or banns are publicised for 3 weeks to allow those who might object to show up before solemnization. If after three weeks there are no objections, the marriage will be solemnised by the District Officer or a marriage officer under the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development.

Parties desiring to marry by special licence appear before the administrative officer who shall satisfy himself that there are no legal impediments to the marriage of such parties. The licence is issued on payment of a fee amounting to P90.00 while the marriage after banns requires a P 40.00 fee.

### 1.2. Source and Coverage

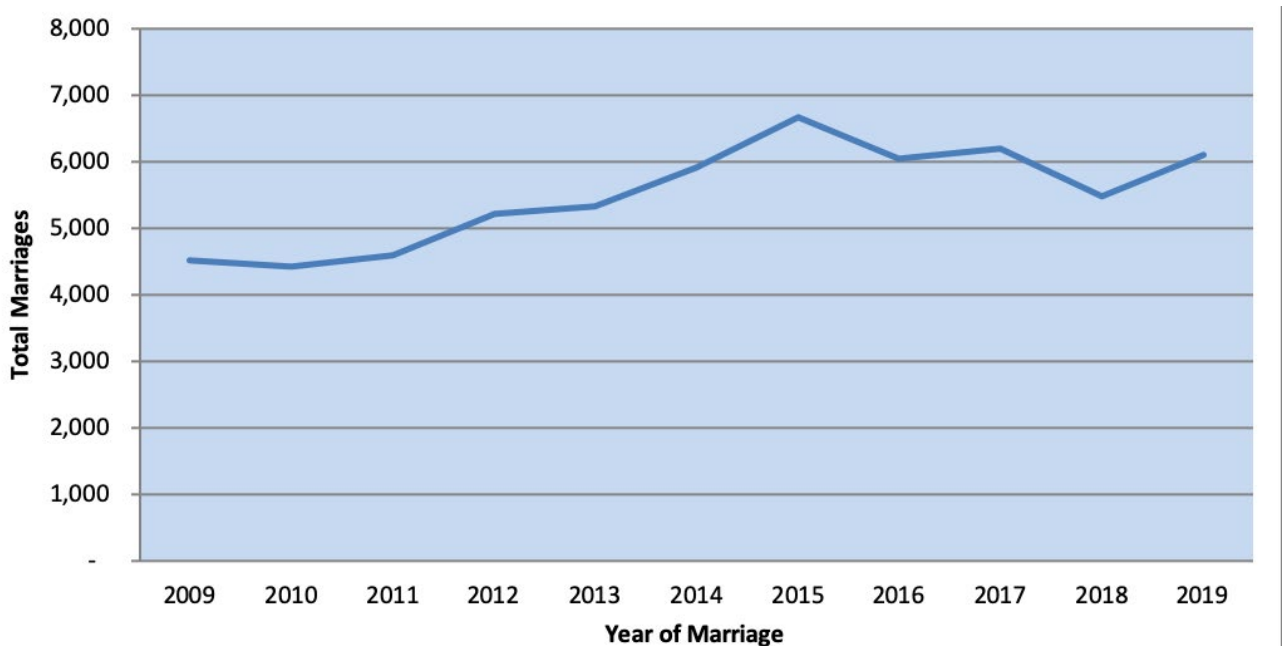
The Department of Civil and National Registration (CNR) is the custodian of all records of marriages solemnized in Botswana and this is supposed to include customary, religious, cultural and others. However up to now data that is available from CNR covers civil marriages only. Accordingly, civil marriages solemnised in the country for Batswana or Non-Batswana are included in the analysis.

## 2. Findings

### 2.1 Trends in Marriage (2009-2019)

The number of marriages has been increasing over the years, reaching a peak of 6,677 in 2015. The number then declined to a low of 5,489 in 2018 and rose to 6,097 in 2019. (see Figure 1)

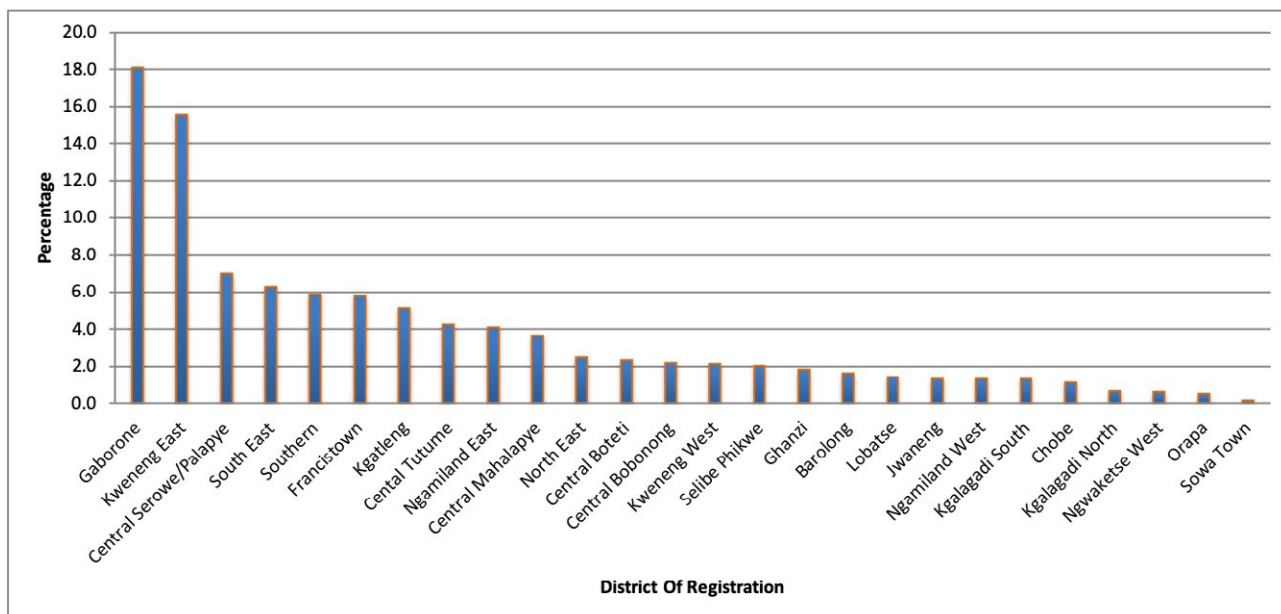
**Figure 1 Total number of marriages registered - 2009-2019:**



## 2.2 District of Registration

The district of registration is not necessarily the place of usual residence but can be any place chosen by the marrying couple. Figure 2 illustrates that the highest proportion of marriages (18.1 percent) was recorded in Gaborone District followed by Kweneng East District (15.6 percent). The lowest were recorded in Orapa and Sowa Town, at 0.5 percent and 0.1 percent respectively.

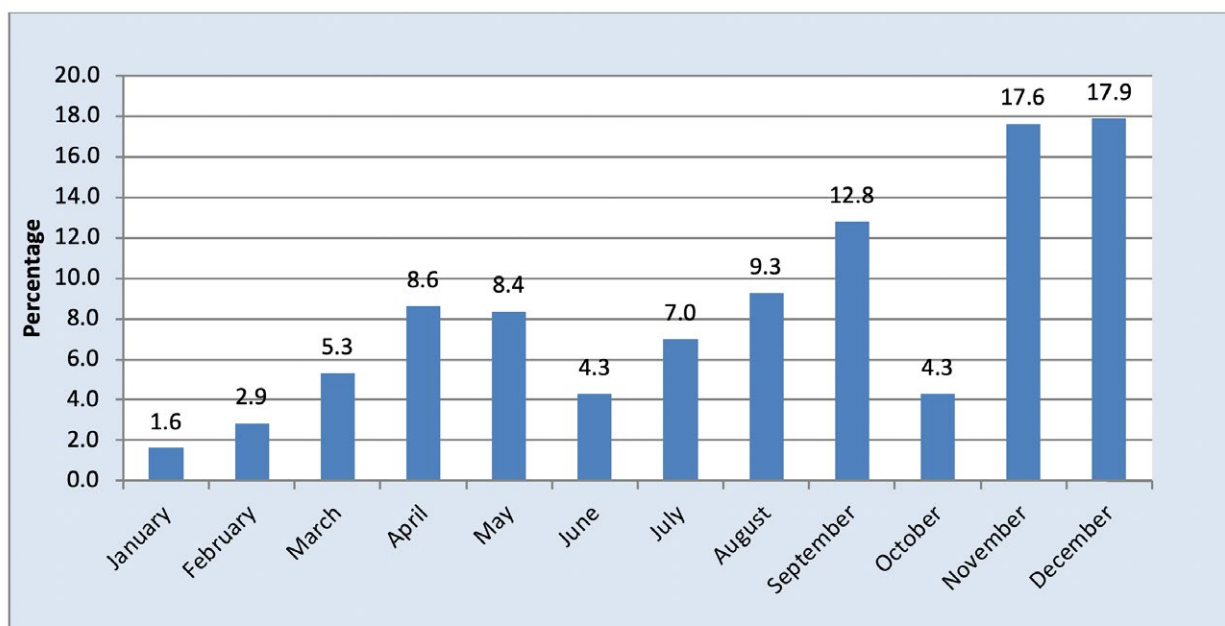
**Figure 2: Percentage distribution of registered marriages by registration district - 2019**



## 2.3 Month of Registration

The marriage season seems to align with the seasons of the year, with more marriages registered during the warmer seasons, starting August and rising into the month of December. The month of December tends to be more favourable for wedding celebrations as it falls within the school holidays and public holidays allowing more people to participate in wedding celebrations. Figure 3 shows that 17.9 percent of the 2019 marriages were registered in December, followed by 17.6 percent in November and 12.8 percent in September. In October the number of registered marriages dropped drastically to 4.3 percent from 12.8 percent in September probably due to the running of the country's elections. The lowest number of marriages were recorded in January (1.6 percent)

**Figure 3: Registered marriages by month of registration – 2019**

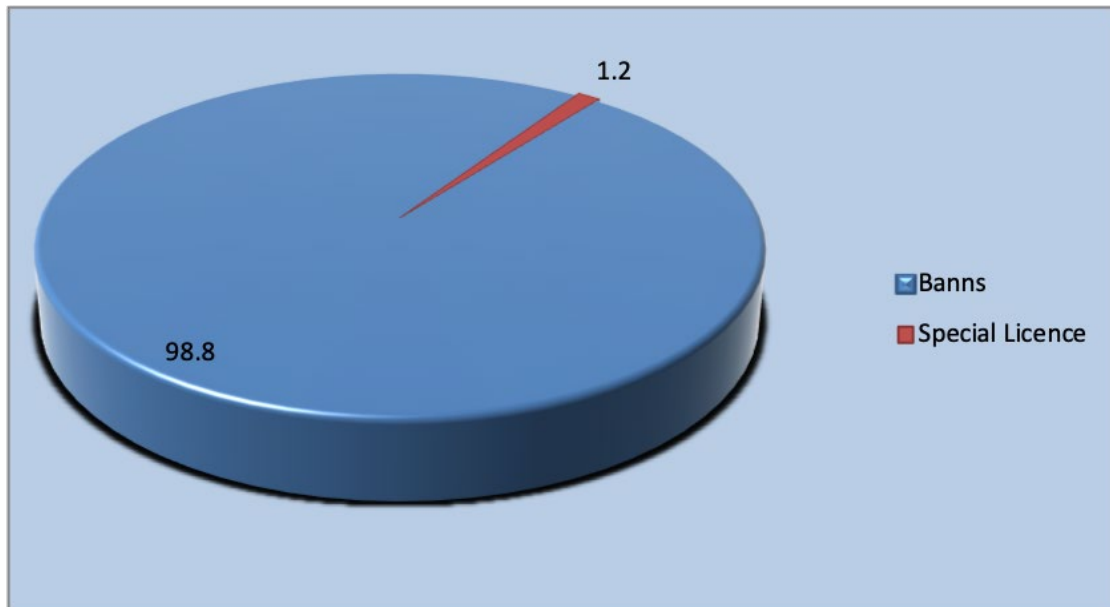


## 2.4 Type of Marriage

The marriage process requires that a public notice of intention to marry be publicised for a period of at least three weeks before solemnization and this is referred to as publishing of banns. The alternative would be to apply for a special license which allows one to marry without the public notice.

According to Figure 4, the Banns were the most common type of marriage with 98.8 percent of the registered marriages and the remaining 1.2 percent being Special License marriages.

**Figure 4: Percentage registered marriages by type of marriage - 2019**



## 2.5 Age at the Time of Marriage

According to the Marriage Act (2001), no minor or person below the age of 21 years not being a widower or widow may marry without the consent in writing of his or her parents or guardians. According to Table 2.2 there were twenty-one marriages (0.4 percent) in which the bride was aged less than 21 years and none of the grooms were aged less than 21. The age group with the highest percentage of marriages is the 35-39 and 30-34 age group for males and females respectively.

Table 2.1 shows the mean and median age at first marriage for bachelors and spinsters in the past three years. In 2019, the mean age at first marriage for Bachelors was 40 years and the comparable figure for Spinsters is 35.4 years. The high mean age at first marriage might be due to the "Re a Nyalana Program." This program encourages partners who have been living together without any formal documentation to formalize their union through the common law marriage. Most of these partners are elderly people and hence the high mean age at marriage. The suitable indicator would be the median age which unlike the mean age is not affected by outliers in the data. The median age for first marriage is 38 for males through the years 2017 to 2019 and the comparable figure for females is around 34 years for the same period (Table 2.1).

**Table 2.1: Mean and Median Age at First Marriage from 2017- 2019**

Year	Mean		Median	
	Bachelor	Spinster	Bachelor	Spinster
2019	40	35.4	38	34
2018	41	35.4	38	33
2017	40.9	35.9	38	34



Table 2.2: Registered marriages by age of husband and wife at marriage-2019

Age group	Male		Female	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
18	-	-	3	0
19	-	-	8	0.1
<b>18-19</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>0.2</b>
20	2	0	10	0.2
21	2	0	30	0.5
22	4	0.1	53	0.9
23	8	0.1	89	1.5
24	26	0.4	125	2.1
<b>20-24</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>5</b>
25	45	0.7	157	2.6
26	57	0.9	210	3.4
27	110	1.8	264	4.3
28	130	2.1	296	4.9
29	180	3	324	5.3
<b>25-29</b>	<b>522</b>	<b>8.6</b>	<b>1,251</b>	<b>20.5</b>
30	183	3	302	5
31	215	3.5	335	5.5
32	243	4	327	5.4
33	249	4.1	292	4.8
34	275	4.5	323	5.3
<b>30-34</b>	<b>1,165</b>	<b>19.1</b>	<b>1,579</b>	<b>25.9</b>
35-39	1,441	23.6	1,294	21.2
40-44	1,054	17.3	771	12.6
45-49	742	12.2	409	6.7
50-54	453	7.4	218	3.6
55-59	264	4.3	131	2.1
60-64	190	3.1	65	1.1
65+	224	3.7	61	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,097</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>6,097</b>	<b>100</b>

## 2.6 Age differentials

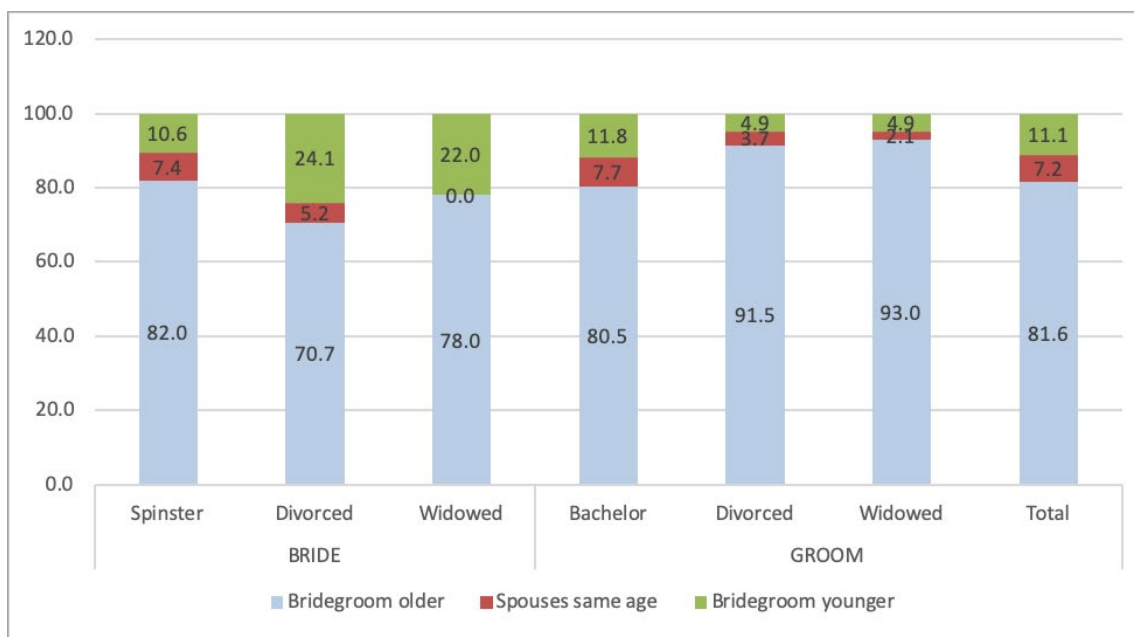
Table 2.3 shows that in the majority of marriages the groom is older than the bride accounting for 81.6 percent of the marriages, while 11.1 percent are those in which the groom is younger than the bride and in only 7.2 percent of the unions, partners are of the same age.

Table 2.3 Age differences between partners

	Age difference	No. of unions	Percent
Groom younger than bride	15+	9	0.1
	10-14	24	0.4
	5-9	114	1.9
	1-4	530	8.7
Same age	0	442	7.2
Groom Older than bride	1-4	1,867	30.6
	5-9	1,797	29.5
	10-14	850	13.9
	15-19	304	5
	20+	160	2.6
<b>Total</b>		<b>6,097</b>	<b>100</b>

Figure 5 also suggests that men tend to marry younger women irrespective of the marital status of the bridegroom at the time of marriage. It is however interesting to note that, compared to Spinsters, women who were previously married tend to marry men who are younger. For example, 10.6 percent of grooms were younger than their brides whose marital status was spinster at the time of marriage. The comparable figure for brides whose marital status was divorcee and widow was 24.1 and 22.0 percent respectively.

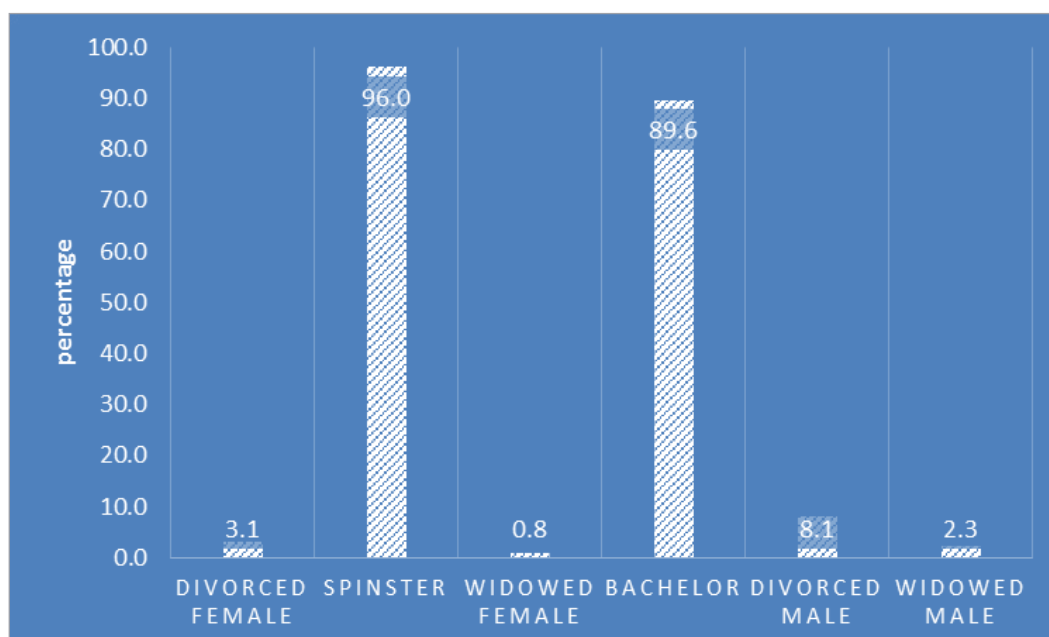
**Figure 5: Percent distribution of marriages by age differences between spouses and marital status at the time of marriage – 2019**



## 2.7 Previous Marital Status

Males who were getting married for the first time (Bachelors) amounted to 89.6 percent as compared to 96.0 percent for females. More men than women tend to re-marry after their first marriage as evidenced by a higher percentage of re-marriages of divorced and widowed men compared to women.

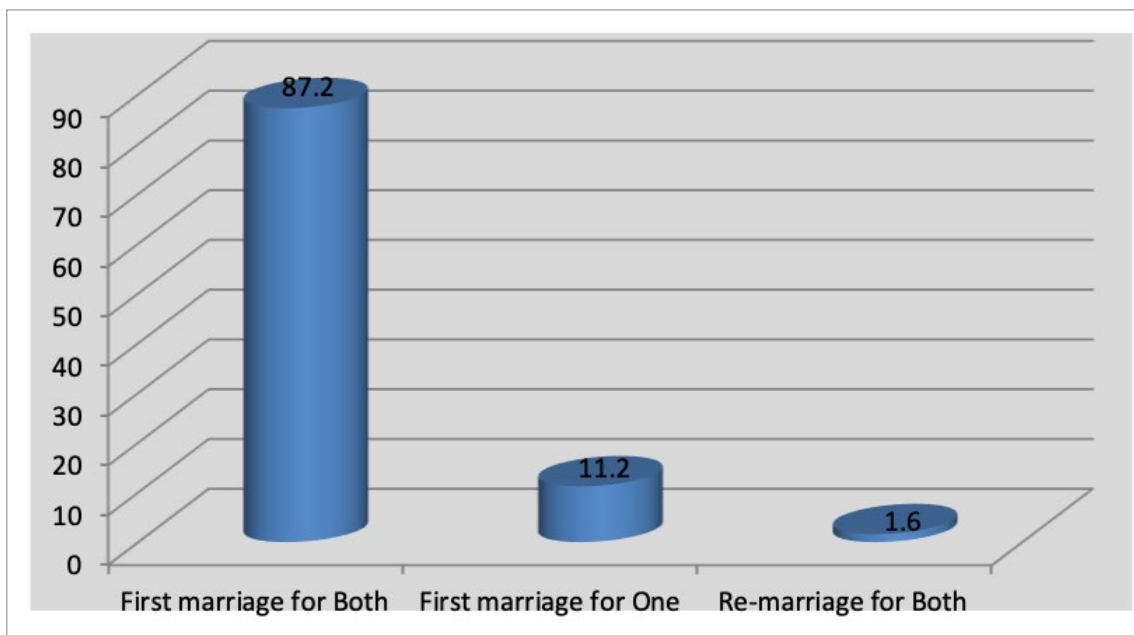
**Figure 6: Marriages by previous marital status – 2019**



## 2.8 First Marriages and Re-marriages

Figure 7 shows that 87.2 percent of marriages were between Spinsters and Bachelors, while 11.2% were first marriages for one partner and re-marriages for both accounted for the remaining 1.6 percent.

**Figure 7: First marriages and re-marriages – 2019**



## 2.9 Crude Marriage Rate

The crude marriage rate gives the number of persons marrying within a specified time period per a 1,000 population of all ages. Table 5.3 shows that the crude marriage rate for the year 2015 was the highest in the past ten years. The rate has increased from 4.80 in 2018 to 5.25 in 2019.

**Table 5.3: Crude Marriage Rate by year of Marriage-2019**

Year	Population	Marriages	Married persons	Crude Marriage rate
2009	1,798,372	4,521	9,042	5.03
2010	1,822,858	4,416	8,832	4.85
2011	2,024,904	4,601	9,202	4.54
2012	2,070,984	5,214	10,428	5.04
2013	2,128,597	5,333	10,666	5.01
2014	2,166,650	5,911	11,822	5.46
2015	2,185,903	6,677	13,354	6.11
2016	2,219,732	6,051	12,102	5.45
2017	2,254,021	6,203	12,406	5.5
2018	2,288,651	5,489	10,978	4.8
2019	2,323,493	6,097	12,194	5.25

Table M1: A Summary of Marriages-2010-2019

Year of marriage	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2107	2018	2019
<b>Total marriages</b>	<b>4,416</b>	<b>4,601</b>	<b>5,214</b>	<b>5,333</b>	<b>5,591</b>	<b>6,677</b>	<b>6,051</b>	<b>6,203</b>	<b>5,489</b>	<b>6,097</b>
<b>Quarterly Totals</b>										
Jan-March	437	481	515	563	491	603	608	1,042	652	597
Apr-June	837	740	878	846	1,004	1,292	1,186	1,229	1,094	1,299
July-Sept	1,345	1,362	1,568	1,654	1,810	2,216	1,560	1,919	1,568	1,774
Oct-Dec	1,797	2,018	2,253	2,270	2,286	2,566	2,697	2,013	2,175	2,427
Total	4,416	4,601	5,214	5,333	5,591	6,677	6,051	6,203	5,489	6,097
<b>Previous Marital Status -individuals</b>										
Males										
Bachelor	4,022	4,133	4,739	4,858	5,068	6,008	5,496	5,802	4,958	5,461
Divorced	298	352	354	347	401	482	395	299	428	493
Widowed	96	116	121	128	122	187	160	102	103	143
Total	4,416	4,601	5,214	5,333	5,591	6,677	6,051	6,203	5,489	6,097
Females										
Spinster	4,245	4,424	5,019	5,157	5,384	6,421	5,822	6,053	5,260	5,856
Divorced	124	124	142	128	165	186	173	114	183	191
Widowed	47	53	53	48	42	70	56	36	46	50
Total	4,416	4,601	5,214	5,333	5,591	6,677	6,051	6,203	5,489	6,097
<b>Previous Marital Status -No. of couples</b>										
First marriage for both	3,924	4,040	4,634	4,774	4,947	5,868	5,363	5,679	4,836	5,317
First marriage for one	419	477	490	466	558	693	592	497	546	683
Remarriage for both	73	84	90	93	86	116	96	27	107	97
Total	4,416	4,601	5,214	5,333	5,591	6,677	6,051	6,203	5,489	6,097
<b>Type of marriage</b>										
After Banns	4,401	4,440	5,093	5,278	5,479	6,546	5,969	6,190	5,454	6,026
Special License	12	161	121	55	112	131	82	13	35	71
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,416</b>	<b>4,601</b>	<b>5,214</b>	<b>5,333</b>	<b>5,591</b>	<b>6,677</b>	<b>6,051</b>	<b>6,203</b>	<b>5,489</b>	<b>6,097</b>

Table M2: Age in combination at marriage time-2019

	Bride's Age										Total	
	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64		65+
<b>Groom's Age</b>												
20-24	6	26	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	42
25-29	2	128	309	69	12	-	1	1	-	-	-	522
30-34	2	86	496	470	90	15	4	1	1	-	-	1,165
35-39	-	50	291	598	413	73	11	5	-	-	-	1,441
40-44	1	7	94	274	406	228	41	3	-	-	-	1,054
45-49	-	5	38	109	241	224	105	19	1	-	-	742
50-54	-	3	10	43	84	143	116	41	10	3	-	453
55-59	-	2	1	10	28	51	65	72	29	5	1	264
60-64	-	-	-	5	16	25	45	38	45	16	-	190
65+	-	-	2	1	4	12	21	38	45	41	60	224
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>1,251</b>	<b>1,579</b>	<b>1,294</b>	<b>771</b>	<b>409</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>6,097</b>

Table M3: Age at the time of by previous marital status and sex-2019

	Male Marital Status					Female Marital Status				
	Bachelor	Divorced	Widowed	Total	Percent	Spinster	Divorced	Widowed	Total	Percent
15-19	-	-	-	-	0	11	-	-	11	0.2
20-24	42	-	-	42	0.7	306	1	-	307	5.0
25-29	517	4	1	522	8.6	1,248	3	-	1,251	20.5
30-34	1,148	17	-	1,165	19.1	1,562	16	1	1,579	25.9
35-39	1,398	35	8	1,441	23.6	1,233	49	12	1,294	21.2
40-44	957	88	9	1,054	17.3	709	51	11	771	12.6
45-49	616	101	25	742	12.2	354	39	16	409	6.7
50-54	333	101	19	453	7.4	195	17	6	218	3.6
55-59	187	56	21	264	4.3	117	11	3	131	2.1
60-64	115	49	26	190	3.1	62	3	-	65	1.1
65+	148	42	34	224	3.7	59	1	1	61	1.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,461</b>	<b>493</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>6,097</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>5,856</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>6,097</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Percent</b>	<b>89.6</b>	<b>8.1</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>100</b>		<b>96.0</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>100</b>	

Table M4: Female age by District of Residence at the time of marriage-2019

	Bride Age group											Total
	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65+	
<b>District of Residence</b>												
Gaborone	2	77	304	303	216	119	52	19	6	7	1	1,106
Francistown	-	23	94	87	73	47	15	5	5	-	4	353
Lobatse	-	4	25	21	13	18	3	-	4	-	-	88
Selibe Phikwe	-	8	19	42	29	16	7	2	2	1	-	126
Orapa	-	-	6	8	13	4	2	-	-	-	-	33
Jwaneng	-	3	19	28	18	6	4	4	-	-	-	82
Sowa Town	-	-	1	5	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	9
Southern	1	16	57	75	73	50	33	26	11	9	10	361
Barolong	-	5	13	27	23	7	11	6	4	2	2	100
Ngwaketse West	-	2	6	5	6	8	4	2	1	2	2	38
South East	-	31	103	90	63	51	19	14	10	-	2	383
Kweneng East	4	51	188	243	221	110	73	23	24	10	4	951
Kweneng West	-	5	15	22	27	27	10	12	8	1	4	131
Kgatleng	-	17	57	85	67	28	22	12	10	8	8	314
Central Serowe/Palapye	1	12	69	109	87	71	36	22	8	7	5	427
Central Mahalapye	-	6	41	49	62	30	19	7	6	2	1	223
Central Bobonong	-	5	26	34	33	15	12	6	1	1	2	135
Central Boteti	1	2	28	49	28	18	6	6	1	2	3	144
Central Tutume	-	6	39	71	53	41	21	14	9	4	2	260
North East	-	9	29	35	33	17	14	9	4	1	3	154
Ngamiland East	-	10	45	70	61	36	12	10	5	3	1	253
Ngamiland West	-	1	13	28	21	9	2	5	1	-	1	81
Chobe	1	3	14	21	10	11	4	2	2	1	1	70
Ghanzi	-	5	17	21	28	10	12	8	6	1	3	111
Kgalagadi South	-	2	11	27	13	12	8	2	2	2	1	80
Kgalagadi North	-	1	7	12	14	4	1	1	-	1	-	41
Other Countries	1	3	5	12	8	5	6	1	1	-	1	43
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>1,251</b>	<b>1,579</b>	<b>1,294</b>	<b>771</b>	<b>409</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>6,097</b>

Table M5: Male age by District of Residence at the time of marriage-2019

District of Residence	Groom Age Group										Total
	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65+	
Gaborone	13	121	280	282	184	120	60	26	15	11	1,112
Francistown	2	35	82	102	62	43	22	9	4	5	366
Lobatse	1	5	17	22	15	8	2	1	2	2	75
Selibe Phikwe	-	10	25	29	24	14	11	4	2	3	122
Orapa	-	3	19	20	16	4	2	-	-	-	64
Jwaneng	2	12	31	42	22	9	13	3	1	1	136
Sowa Town	-	3	3	4	2	1	1	1	-	-	15
Southern	2	24	33	55	63	47	42	15	14	26	321
Barolong	2	7	7	18	21	15	7	5	7	6	95
Ngwaketse West	-	1	3	8	5	3	1	3	2	4	30
South East	3	41	73	76	58	39	18	12	9	7	336
Kweneng East	6	75	179	244	145	107	76	36	36	30	934
Kweneng West	-	10	34	30	26	29	16	9	12	12	178
Kgatleng	1	24	46	66	56	38	16	11	11	19	288
Central Serowe/Palapye	2	31	66	99	57	50	35	20	18	16	394
Central Mahalapye	1	22	19	36	37	30	28	19	6	10	208
Central Bobonong	-	8	18	26	20	21	11	8	9	8	129
Central Boteti	1	13	33	44	28	20	5	7	-	13	164
Central Tutume	3	16	26	40	45	26	28	20	18	15	237
North East	-	9	26	22	23	17	10	9	3	9	128
Ngamiland East	-	17	56	58	43	31	19	13	5	7	249
Ngamiland West	-	5	8	20	13	12	5	4	4	3	74
Chobe	1	12	13	13	12	13	3	6	-	2	75
Ghanzi	2	4	15	32	18	11	8	10	6	7	113
Kgalagadi South	-	3	10	17	14	12	4	5	-	2	67
Kgalagadi North	-	3	8	9	22	8	3	3	2	2	60
Other Countries	-	5	34	23	20	10	5	4	3	3	107
Not stated	-	3	1	4	3	4	2	1	1	1	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>522</b>	<b>1,165</b>	<b>1,441</b>	<b>1,054</b>	<b>742</b>	<b>453</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>6,097</b>

Table M6: Previous marital status of person marrying-2010-2019

Year of Marriage	Grooms Marital Status	Bride's Marital Status							
		Total	Percent	Spinster	Percent	Divorced	Percent	Widowed	Percent
2010	Bachelor	4,022	91.1	3,924	92.4	67	54	31	66
	Divorced	298	6.7	241	5.7	45	36.3	12	25.5
	Widowed	96	2.2	80	1.9	12	9.7	4	8.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>4,416</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4,245</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>100</b>
2011	Bachelor	4,133	89.8	4,040	91.3	67	54	26	49.1
	Divorced	352	7.7	289	6.5	48	38.7	15	28.3
	Widowed	116	2.5	95	2.1	9	7.3	12	22.6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>4,601</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4,424</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>100</b>
2012	Bachelor	4,739	90.9	4,634	92.3	71	50	34	64.2
	Divorced	354	6.8	282	5.6	60	42.3	12	22.6
	Widowed	121	2.3	103	2.1	11	7.7	7	13.2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>5,214</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>5,019</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>100</b>
2013	Bachelor	4,858	91.1	4,775	89.5	51	39.8	32	66.7
	Divorced	347	6.5	276	5.4	61	47.7	10	20.8
	Widowed	128	2.4	106	2.1	16	12.5	6	12.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>5,333</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>5,157</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100</b>
2014	Bachelor	5,068	90.6	4,947	91.9	94	57	27	64.3
	Divorced	401	7.2	331	6.1	62	37.6	8	19
	Widowed	122	2.2	106	2	9	5.5	7	16.7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>5,591</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>5,384</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100</b>
2015	Bachelor	6,008	90	5,868	91.4	101	54.3	39	55.7
	Divorced	482	7.2	398	6.2	65	34.9	19	27.1
	Widowed	187	2.8	155	2.4	20	10.8	12	17.1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>6,677</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>6,421</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100</b>
2016	Bachelor	5,496	90.8	5,363	92.1	97	56.1	36	64.3
	Divorced	395	6.5	322	5.5	62	35.8	11	19.6
	Widowed	160	2.6	137	2.4	14	8.1	9	16.1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>6,051</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>5,822</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>100</b>
2017	Bachelor	5,802	93.5	5,679	93.8	90	78.9	33	91.7
	Divorced	299	4.8	279	4.6	18	15.8	2	5.6
	Widowed	102	1.6	95	1.6	6	5.3	1	2.8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>6,203</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>6,053</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100.0</b>
2018	Bachelor	4,958	90.3	4,836	91.9	93	50.8	29	63.0
	Divorced	428	7.8	349	6.6	69	37.7	10	21.7
	Widowed	103	1.9	75	1.4	21	11.5	7	15.2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>5,489</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>5,260</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>100.0</b>
2019	Bachelor	5,461	89.6	5,317	90.8	114	59.7	30	60.0
	Divorced	493	8.1	415	7.1	65	34.0	13	26.0
	Widowed	143	2.3	124	2.1	12	6.3	7	14.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>6,097</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>5,856</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>





# Marriage Statistics

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