

MARRIAGE STATISTICS BRIEF 2020



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Marriage Statistics Brief 2020

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PREFACE

This statistical brief presents information on civil marriages that were registered in 2020. The Department of Civil and National Registration (CNR) is responsible for data collection through the registration service of vital events. It must be noted that this brief covers only marriages that have been registered with the CNR department. Customary and cultural marriages are not included.

This brief gives descriptive statistics of marriages that occurred in 2020 as well as trends in the number of marriages, demographics and other dynamics amongst marrying partners.



Dr Burton Mguni
Statistician General
August, 2021

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1.0 Background

Marriage is an event that is regulated by statute (under marriage Act 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 united. The union is normally solemnised at the district administration offices or at the church.

Marriage statistics provide insights on the formation of family units within Botswana. In most years changes in these statistics are minimal, highlighting gradual changes in the age at which people seek to marry for the first time, whether they would like to go through the normal process of publishing intent to marry or opt for a special license, whether they would like to marry in a church or at the administration office.

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. Documents such as the National Identity Card (Oman) or passport for foreign nationals, letter of consent from parents if under 18 years of age, Letter of confirmation from Kgosi that one is not married, or a letter of confirmation from the country of origin that one is not married, for foreign nationals. Decree absolute, death certificates are required as proof for remarrying parties.

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 is sent to the church if the applicant's intention is 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 raised, the marriage will be solemnised by the District Officer, under the ministry of Local Government and Lands, or any person appointed as a marriage officer.

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 P190.00 while the marriage after banns requires a P40.00 fee

1.2 Source and Coverage

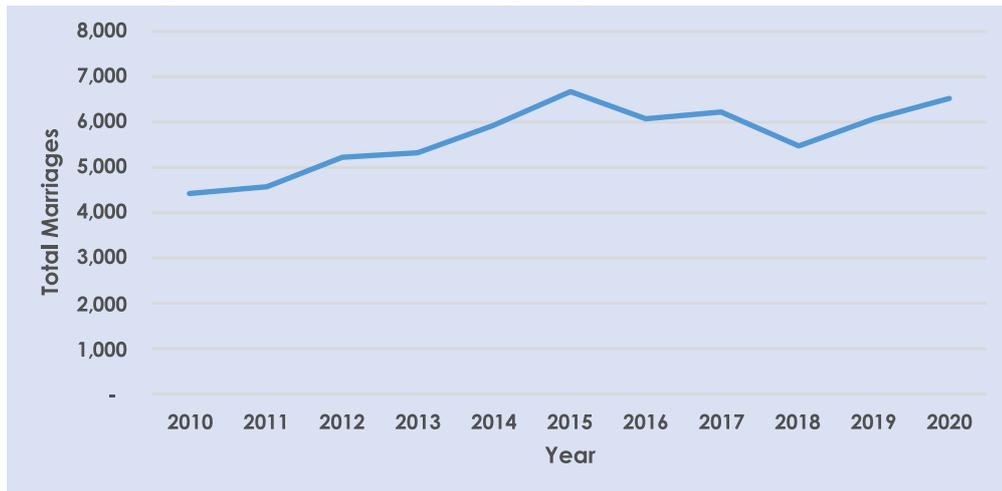
The Department of Civil and National Registration (CNR) is the custodian of all records of marriages solemnized in Botswana and this is supposed to include customary, religious, cultural and others. Currently only common law marriages can be obtained from CNR.

2. Findings

2.1 Trends in Marriage (2010-2020)

Figure 1 depicts a steady increase in the number of marriages since 2018. There was a percentage increase in the number of marriages of 11.1 from 2018 to 2019 and a further 6.9 percent from 2019 to 2020. The outbreak of the Covid 19 pandemic did not negatively affect marriage trends.

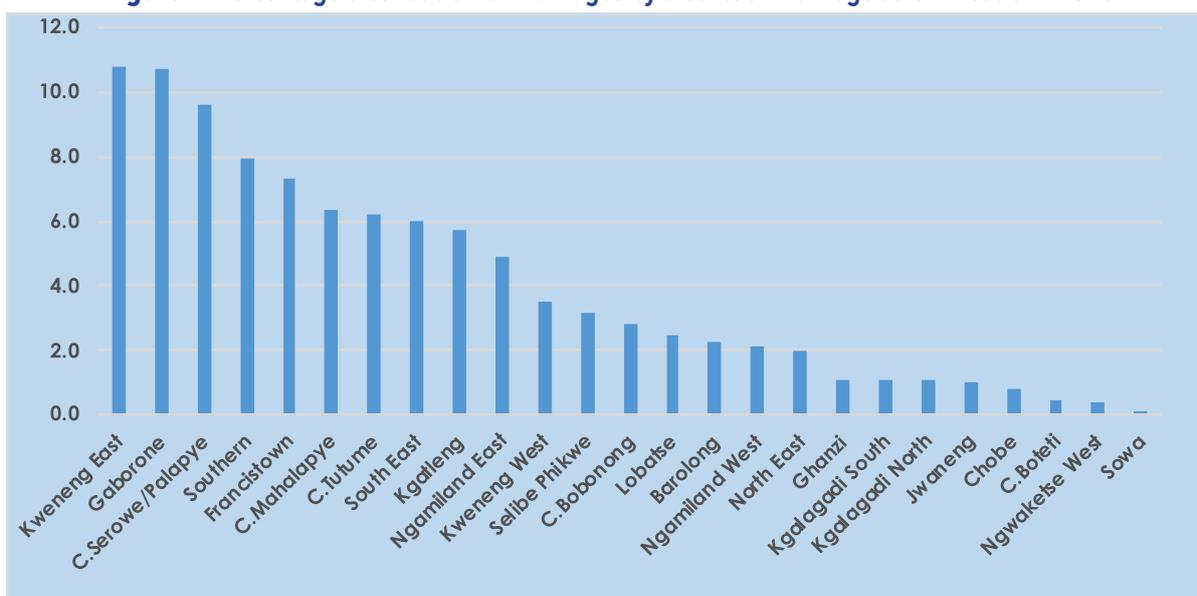
Figure 1: Total number of marriages registered - 2010-2020:



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. Gaborone and Kweneng east recorded the highest proportions of marriages with each recording 10.8 percent of all marriages in 2020. Sowa town registered the lowest number of marriages accounting for 0.1 percent of all marriages.

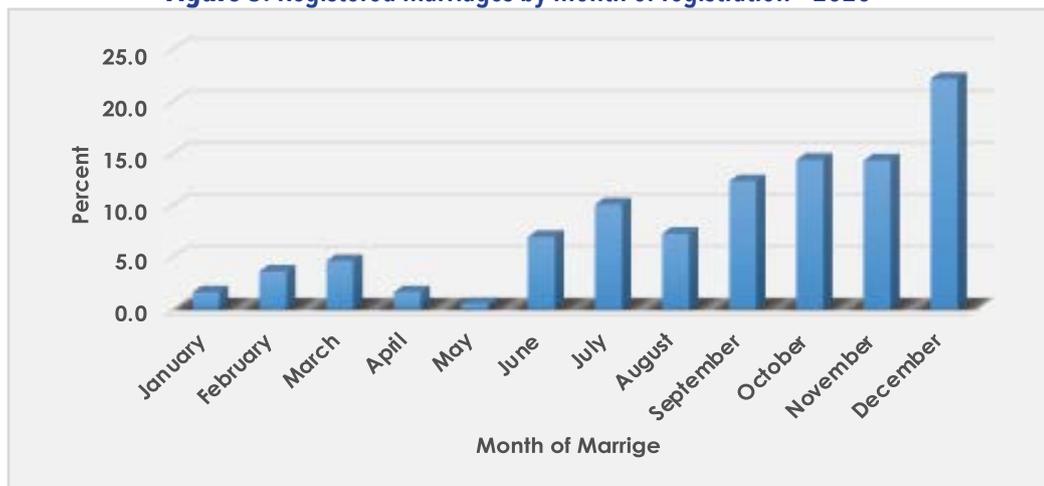
Figure 2: Percentage distribution of marriages by district of marriage solemnisation - 2020



2.3 Month of Registration

The pattern of marriages by month of occurrence during the year 2020 took a different shape compared to the previous years, with the first half of the year realizing low marriages and high number of marriages observed in the second half of the year. The World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a global pandemic in March 2020 and countries including Botswana started to put measures in place to curb the spread of the virus; these included social distancing requirements, size limits on gatherings, and restrictions on travel. These are all factors that would have forced couples to reconsider their wedding plans. The country was on complete lockdown during the months of April and May 2020 hence the low marriages during the months. The months of June to August experienced an increased number of marriages compared to the same period the previous year, probably due to deferred weddings from the months of April and May and the easing of restrictions for Covid-19 protocols.

Figure 3: Registered marriages by month of registration - 2020

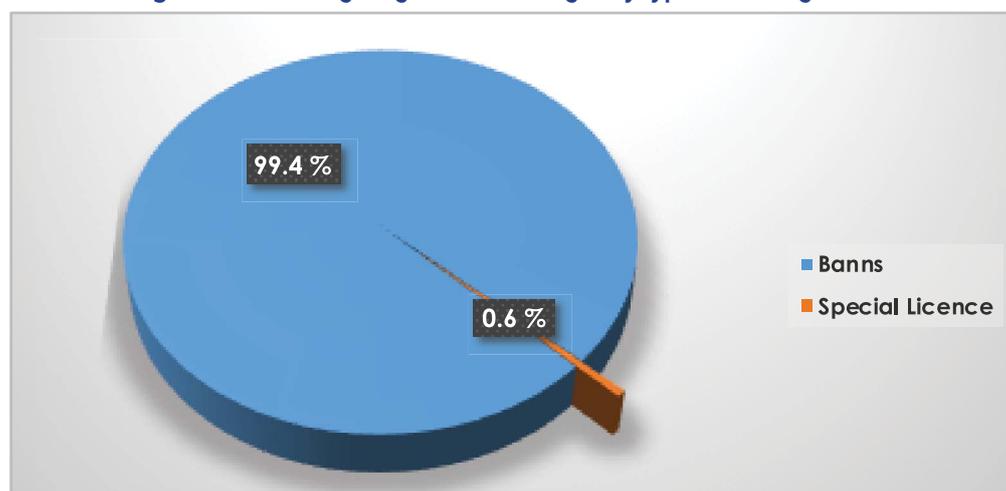


2.4 Type of Marriage

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

According to **Figure 4**, publishing of Banns prior to solemnization of marriages is the most commonly used of the two with 99.4 Percent of the registered marriages publicised in that way.

Figure 4: Percentage registered marriages by type of marriage - 2020



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 2.1**, there were twenty-five marriages (0.3 percent) in which the brides were 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**).

Figure 5 shows that more women than men married at younger ages (under 35 years) and more men than women married at older ages (35 years and over). This pattern reflects that, on average, men tend to form relationships with women younger than themselves.

Figure 5: Percentage of marriages by age of males and females - 2020

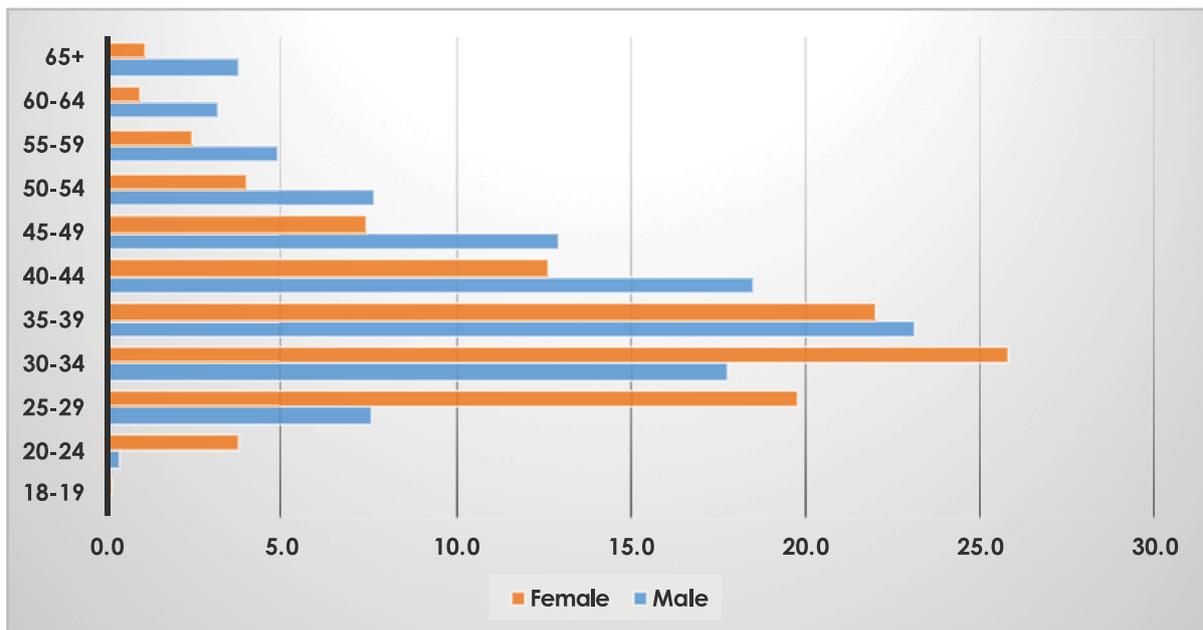


Table 2.1: Registered marriages by age of husband and wife at marriage-2020

Age	Male		Female	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
18	-	0.0	2	0.0
19	-	0.0	6	0.1
18-19	-	0.0	8	0.1
20	-	0.0	9	0.1
21	2	0.0	23	0.4
22	-	0.0	30	0.5
23	10	0.2	67	1.0
24	16	0.2	119	1.8
20-24	28	0.4	248	3.8
25	37	0.6	169	2.6
26	76	1.2	227	3.5
27	110	1.7	281	4.3
28	124	1.9	278	4.3
29	147	2.3	335	5.1
25-29	494	7.6	1,290	19.8
30	179	2.7	331	5.1
31	220	3.4	356	5.5
32	271	4.2	338	5.2
33	260	4.0	337	5.2
34	229	3.5	321	4.9
30-34	1,159	17.8	1,683	25.8
35-39	1,507	23.1	1,433	22.0
40-44	1,208	18.5	822	12.6
45-49	843	12.9	483	7.4
50-54	501	7.7	260	4.0
55-59	321	4.9	157	2.4
60-64	208	3.2	63	1.0
65+	249	3.8	71	1.1
Total	6,518	100	6,518	100

Table 2.2 shows the mean and median age at first marriage for bachelors and spinsters from 2017 to 2020. The mean age at first marriage for Bachelors increased from 40 to 42 years between the years 2019 and 2020 and the comparable figure for Spinster was 35 to 36 years. However, the median age at marriage in 2020 for males and females was 40 and 35 years respectively. 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 to establish the marrying age would be the median age, which unlike the mean age is not affected by outliers in the data. (**Table 2.2**).

Table 2.2: Mean and Median Age at First Marriage from 2017- 2020

Year	Mean		Median	
	Bachelor	Spinster	Bachelor	Spinster
2020	41.7	36.2	40	35
2019	40	35.4	38	34
2018	41	35.4	38	33
2017	40.9	35.9	38	34

2.6 Age differentials

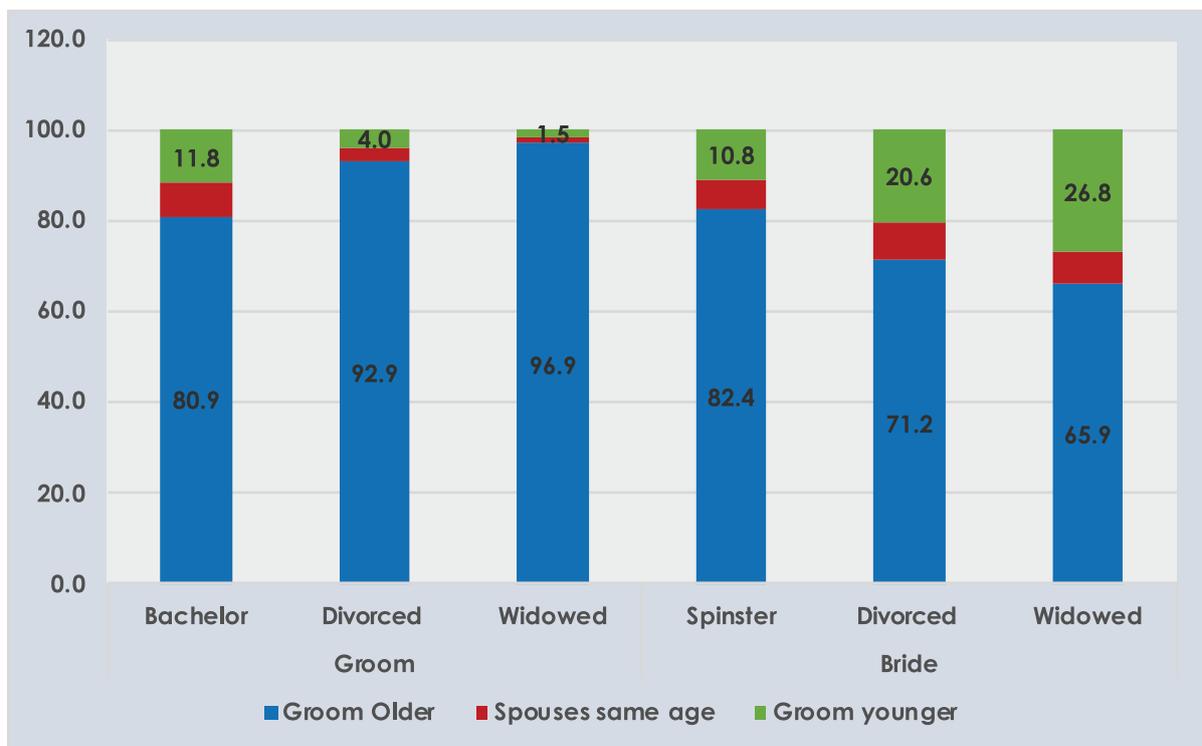
Table 2.3 shows that, in the majority of marriages, the groom is older than the bride accounting for 82.0 percent of the marriages, 11.1 percent are those in which the groom is younger than the bride and in only 6.9 percent of the unions, partners are of the same age.

Table 2.3: Age Differences between Partners- 2020

	Age Difference	No. Of Unions	Percent
Groom Younger than Bride	1-4	556	8.5
	5-9	127	1.9
	10-14	31	0.5
	15+	11	0.2
Same Age	0	450	6.9
Groom older than Bride	1-4	2,034	31.2
	5-9	1,851	28.4
	10-14	917	14.1
	15-19	339	5.2
	20+	202	3.1
	Total		6,518

Figure 6 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 than they. For example, 10.8 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 20.6 and 26.8 percent respectively.

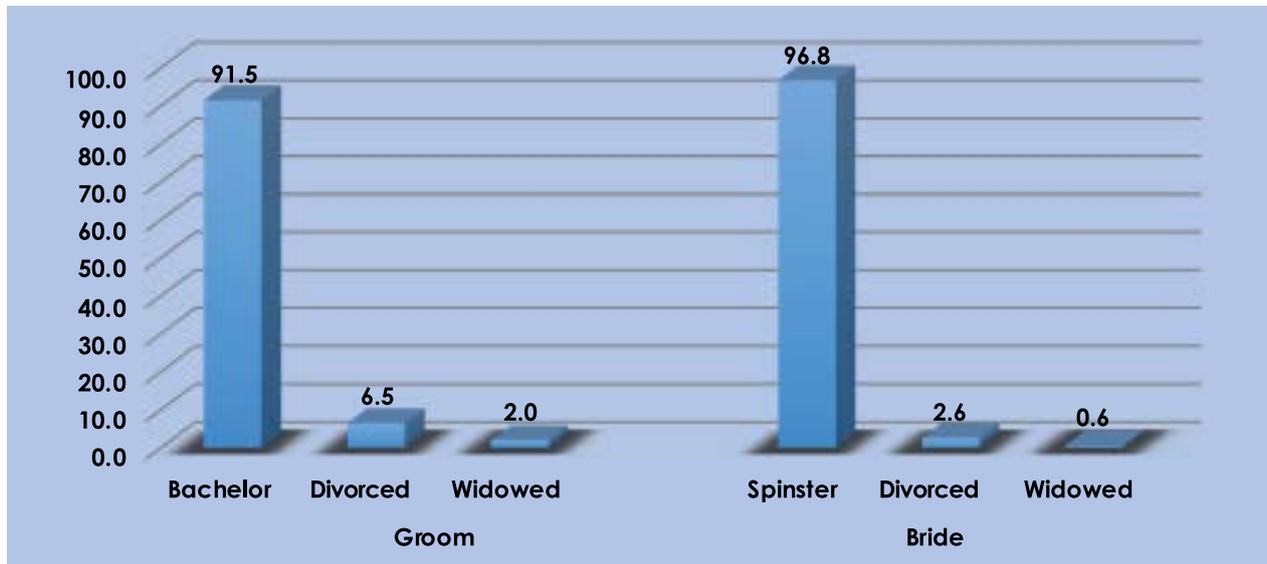
Figure 6: Percent distribution of marriages by age differences between spouses and marital status at the time of marriage - 2020



2.7 Previous Marital Status

Males who were getting married for the first time (Bachelors) amounted to 91.5 percent and spinsters accounted for 96.8 percent of all marriages. More men than women tend to opt for remarriage after their first marriage as evidenced by a higher percentage of remarriages of divorced and widowed men compared to women (**Figure 7**).

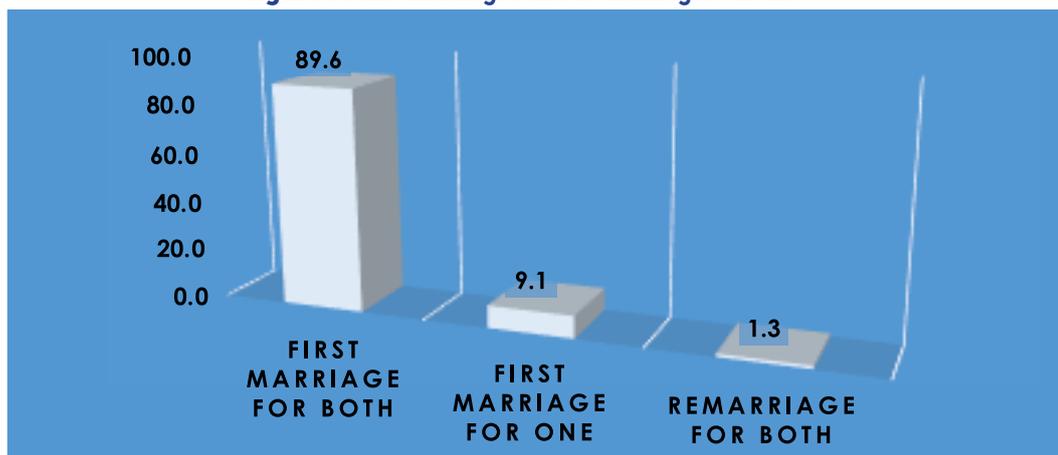
Figure 7: Marriages by previous marital status - 2020



2.8 First Marriages and Re-marriages

Figure 8 shows that 89.6 percent of marriages were first time marriages for both bride and groom, while 9.1 percent were first marriages for one partner. Remarriages for both partners accounted for the remaining 1.3 percent.

Figure 8: First marriages and re-marriages - 2020



2.9 Crude Marriage Rate

The crude marriage rate gives the number of persons marrying within a specified time per a 1,000 population of all ages. **Table 2.4** shows that the crude marriage rate has been fluctuating around 5 for the past 10 years with a high of 6 registered in the year 2015.

Table 2.4: Crude Marriage Rate by year of Marriage-2020

Year	Population	Marriages	Married persons	Crude Marriage rate
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	5.50
2018	2,288,651	5,489	10,978	4.80
2019	2,323,493	6,097	12,194	5.25
2020	2,358,445	6,518	13,036	5.53

Table M1: A Summary of Marriages-2011-2020

Year of marriage	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total marriages	4,601	5,214	5,333	5,591	6,677	6,051	6,203	5,489	6,097	6,518
Quarterly Totals										
Jan-March	481	515	563	491	603	608	1,042	652	597	652
Apr-June	740	878	846	1,004	1,292	1,186	1,229	1,094	1,299	600
July-Sept	1,362	1,568	1,654	1,810	2,216	1,560	1,919	1,568	1,774	1,942
Oct-Dec	2,018	2,253	2,270	2,286	2,566	2,697	2,013	2,175	2,427	3,324
Total	4,601	5,214	5,333	5,591	6,677	6,051	6,203	5,489	6,097	6,518
Previous Marital Status										
Males										
Bachelor	4,133	4,739	4,858	5,068	6,008	5,496	5,802	4,958	5,461	5,963
Divorced	352	354	347	401	482	395	299	428	493	425
Widowed	116	121	128	122	187	160	102	103	143	130
Total	40,601	5,214	5,333	5,591	6,677	6,051	6,203	5,489	6,097	6,518
Females										
Spinster	4,424	5,019	5,157	5,384	6,421	5,822	6,053	5,260	5,856	6,307
Divorced	124	142	128	165	186	173	114	183	191	170
Widowed	53	53	48	42	70	56	36	46	50	41
Total	4,601	5,214	5,333	5,591	6,677	6,051	6,203	5,489	6,097	6,518
Previous Marital Status										
First marriage for both	4,040	4,634	4,774	4,947	5,868	5,363	5,679	4,836	5,317	5,839
First marriage for one	477	490	466	558	693	592	497	546	683	592
Remarriage for both	84	90	93	86	116	96	27	107	97	87
Total	4,601	5,214	5,333	5,591	6,677	6,051	6,203	5,489	6,097	6,518
Type of Marriage										
After Banns	4,440	5,093	5,278	5,479	6,546	5,969	6,190	5,454	6,026	6,482
Special License	161	121	55	112	131	82	13	35	71	36
Total	4,601	5,214	5,333	5,591	6,677	6,051	6,203	5,489	6,097	6,518

Table M2: Age in Combination at Marriage Time-2020

Groom's Age	Brides Age Group											Total
	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65+	
20-24	5	13	9	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28
25-29	2	114	295	68	9	5	1	-	-	-	-	494
30-34	1	61	518	479	80	16	3	1	-	-	-	1,159
35-39	-	46	289	617	471	66	13	5	-	-	-	1,507
40-44	-	10	120	309	459	246	51	9	4	-	-	1,208
45-49	-	1	35	140	250	263	138	13	2	-	1	843
50-54	-	3	15	43	103	132	131	65	7	2	-	501
55-59	-	-	6	14	38	48	85	82	40	7	1	321
60-64	-	-	3	10	13	21	36	53	47	16	9	208
65+	-	-	-	2	10	25	25	32	57	38	60	249
Total	8	248	1,290	1,683	1,433	822	483	260	157	63	71	6,518

Table M3: Age at the Time of Marriage by Previous Marital Status and Sex-2020

Age Group	Groom's Marital Status					Bride's Marital Status				
	Bachelor	Divorced	Widowed	Total	Percent	Spinster	Divorced	Widowed	Total	Percent
15-19	-	-	-	-	0.0	8	-	-	8	0.1
20-24	27	1	-	28	0.4	247	1	-	248	3.8
25-29	494	-	-	494	7.6	1,287	3	-	1,290	19.8
30-34	1,150	8	1	1,159	17.8	1,664	15	4	1,683	25.8
35-39	1,468	38	1	1,507	23.1	1,395	33	5	1,433	22.0
40-44	1,128	71	9	1,208	18.5	769	44	9	822	12.6
45-49	729	97	17	843	12.9	439	36	8	483	7.4
50-54	400	82	19	501	7.7	231	24	5	260	4.0
55-59	248	56	17	321	4.9	144	8	5	157	2.4
60-64	148	38	22	208	3.2	58	4	1	63	1.0
65+	171	34	44	249	3.8	65	2	4	71	1.1
Total	5,963	425	130	6,518	100	6,307	170	41	6,518	100
Percent	91.5	6.5	2.0	100		96.8	2.6	0.6	100	

Table M4: Groom's Age by District of Residence at the Time of Marriage-2020

District of Residence	Groom's Age Group										Total
	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65+	
Gaborone	8	129	239	289	162	124	46	28	14	7	1,046
Francistown	1	32	88	101	62	37	20	5	5	1	352
Lobatse	1	5	16	27	14	18	5	3	7	-	96
Selibe Phikwe	1	9	22	30	32	23	14	6	-	1	138
Orapa	-	2	9	15	16	9	3	1	-	-	55
Jwaneng	1	6	18	36	16	14	7	2	2	2	104
Sowa	-	-	8	4	5	5	2	1	-	-	25
Southern	-	15	27	66	75	50	40	38	21	40	372
Barolong	-	11	13	23	24	20	14	10	4	12	131
Ngwaketse West	-	2	1	7	2	4	5	1	-	3	25
South East	2	42	87	70	76	44	30	12	11	10	384
Kweneneg East	5	76	175	210	159	117	83	45	35	40	945
Kweneng West	-	9	16	31	21	23	7	4	6	6	123
Kgatleng	2	24	61	62	62	44	18	16	10	16	315
C.Serowe/Palapye	2	20	76	90	107	60	37	28	19	24	463
C.Mahalapye	2	12	35	46	48	37	29	21	14	19	263
C.Bobonong	-	6	18	25	25	17	12	11	2	10	126
C.Boteti	-	17	47	59	51	32	13	9	4	6	238
C.Tutume	1	22	43	51	58	32	28	23	22	18	298
North East	-	7	21	37	36	18	13	6	4	3	145
Ngamiland East	1	21	54	99	71	37	30	23	14	15	365
Ngamiland West	-	3	21	38	23	21	17	4	4	5	136
Chobe	-	10	17	25	13	12	5	3	2	2	89
Ghanzi	-	6	13	17	25	18	6	4	2	2	93
Kgalagadi South	-	4	13	23	14	12	6	8	1	1	82
Kgalagadi North	1	1	7	19	11	9	7	6	2	6	69
Other Countries	-	3	14	7	-	6	4	3	3	-	40
Total	28	494	1,159	1,507	1,208	843	501	321	208	249	6,518

Table M5: Bride's age by District of Residence at the time of marriage-2020

District of Residence	Bride's Age Group											Total
	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65+	
Gaborone	2	52	267	282	201	114	51	21	8	2	2	1,002
Francistown	-	28	95	102	82	37	19	5	5	2	1	376
Lobatse	-	10	28	41	47	22	12	2	3	2	1	168
Selibe Phikwe	1	4	26	35	45	16	9	2	-	-	-	138
Jwaneng	-	1	10	24	16	3	5	3	1	-	1	64
Sowa	-	1	1	4	4	-	1	-	-	-	-	11
Southern	-	11	58	83	85	60	45	33	20	8	24	427
Barolong	-	7	20	30	35	12	19	7	4	2	7	143
Ngwaketse West	-	-	5	4	6	2	2	1	2	1	-	23
South East	-	11	105	93	74	49	27	16	4	5	3	387
Kweneng East	2	34	177	250	190	129	58	42	30	11	4	927
Kweneng West	-	3	15	30	23	19	8	7	6	2	2	115
Kgatleng	-	16	77	89	61	42	27	22	3	2	5	344
C.Serowe/Palapye	1	14	90	121	123	68	51	15	15	3	7	508
C.Mahalapye	-	6	49	72	59	41	28	22	17	7	7	308
C.Bobonong	-	3	32	32	33	23	6	2	6	2	-	139
C.Boteti	-	11	28	46	34	15	10	6	1	-	-	151
C.Tutume	2	8	44	83	70	34	29	14	13	5	4	306
North East	-	6	30	41	39	22	12	4	2	-	-	156
Ngamiland East	-	14	58	89	85	54	23	13	9	2	3	350
Ngamiland West	-	3	14	37	38	20	10	6	1	1	-	130
Chobe	-	1	18	31	18	4	5	2	-	1	-	80
Ghanzi	-	2	19	22	22	14	11	3	2	1	-	96
Kgalagadi South	-	1	8	19	24	7	6	4	2	1	-	72
Kgalagadi North	-	1	11	19	19	13	8	8	3	2	-	84
Other Countries	-	-	5	4	-	2	1	-	-	1	-	13
Total	8	248	1,290	1,683	1,433	822	483	260	157	63	71	6,518

Table M6: Previous marital status of person marrying-2012-2020

Year of Marriage	Grooms Marital Status	Total	Bride's Marital Status						
			Percent	Spinster	Percent	Divorced	Percent	Widowed	Percent
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
	Total	5,214	100	5,019	100	142	100	53	100
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
	Total	5,333	100	5,157	100	128	100	48	100
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
	Total	5,591	100	5,384	100	165	100	42	100
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
	Total	6,677	100	6,421	100	186	100	70	100
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
	Total	6,051	100	5,822	100	173	100	56	100
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
	Total	6,203	100	6,053	100	114	100	36	100
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
	Total	5,489	100	5,260	100	183	100	46	100
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
	Total	6,097	100	5,856	100	191	100	50	100
2020	Bachelor	5,963	91.5	5,839	92.6	96	56.5	28	68.3
	Divorced	425	6.5	358	5.7	61	35.9	6	14.6
	Widowed	130	2.0	110	1.7	13	7.6	7	17.1
	Total	6,518	100	6,307	100	170	100	41	100



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