



Kingdom of Lesotho

Statistical Report

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Vital Statistics Report – Births and Deaths 2016



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Mission: To coordinate the National Statistical System (NSS) and produce accurate, timely and reliable culturally relevant and internationally comparable statistical data for evidence-based planning, decision making, research, policy, program formulation and monitoring and evaluation to satisfy the needs of users and producers.

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1.0 Introduction

As defined, *vital statistics system* is the total process of (a) collecting information by civil registration or enumeration on the frequency of occurrence of specified and defined vital events, as well as relevant characteristics of the events themselves and of the person or persons concerned, and (b) compiling, processing, analyzing, evaluating, presenting and disseminating these data in statistical form, (United Nations, 1998). In Lesotho, vital events that are collected by the Bureau of Statistics (BOS) for compilation are births, deaths, marriages and divorces. The main source of vital statistics for deaths and births are records of vital events from the custodian of civil registration who is the Ministry of Home Affairs and Public Safety (MoHAPS).

Civil registration is the system developed by countries in which a continuous and complete record of births, deaths and the marital status of their people are kept. Civil registration plays a vital role in monitoring the number of births that occur by sex as reported and ensures the legal protection to the people of any country together with the social and economic development of the nation through creation of a permanent demographic database. (UN Principles and Recommendations, *Rev2:2005*)

The current Act of Births and Deaths registration of 1973 stipulates that every person is enforced and obliged to register a birth or a death at the earliest time possible, to meet the requirements and objectives of the vital events data collection. However, there are other events that are still not reported hence the report reflects only reported events.

Vital Registration statistics serves many needs that are recording of the facts associated with births, deaths, marriages, divorces and related occurrences. The basic facts about each vital event are of importance to the individuals involved as well as to their Governments and other organizations in their society. In addition, vital events are of great value both to Government and to its citizens and noncitizen residents. For individuals, vital records provide legal proof of identity, civil status, age and citizenship, upon which a variety of rights depend. Vital statistics of births are provided by the chiefs but the statistics are not reliable. Alternatives are taken into consideration in order to contribute to the improvement of the lives of Basotho through timely provision of reliable data for development planning.

1.1 Method of Collecting Births and Deaths Data

The incidence of birth or deaths was reported to the village chief who would then fill the forms with the assistance of the responsible family member. There were problems encountered when using this system, therefore, in 2010, BOS in collaboration with the Ministry of Local Government and Chieftainship which was the custodian of births and deaths then, and the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, adopted a new method of recording births of children aged less than one year at the clinics and hospitals. For this activity, the BOS engaged clerical staff mainly for collection of birth forms and data entry

in Maseru district whereas in other districts, collection of birth statistics was done by the BOS field staff responsible for data collection. A lot of work concerning data collection was done at district level and that posed a challenge in collecting birth statistics which were done every day at hospitals and clinics. Following an initiative by the Government of Lesotho to reallocate the task of civil registration from the Ministry of Local Government and Chieftainship Affairs (MoLGCA) to the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) under the department of National Identity and Civil Registration (NICR) in 2011, there have been some changes in the system by MoHA. However, the Bureau of Statistics (BoS) remains the principal agency responsible for compilation of official statistics including vital statistics.

The MoHA registers among other vital events such as births, deaths and marriages but this report is confined to registration of births and deaths only. The 2015 report reflects information generated in the new system where data is readily available for analysis in electronic form as opposed to what used to be the case where information was extracted from the forms by BoS data entry clerks.

1.2 Live Birth

A live birth is defined as a complete expulsion, of a product from its mother's conception, irrespective of the duration of pregnancy, which after such separation breathes or shows any evidence of life, such as breathing, beating of the heart, pulsation of the umbilical cord, or definite movement of voluntary muscles, whether or not the umbilical cord has been cut or the placenta is attached: each product of such is considered live-born. (Henry S. Shryock, Jacob S. Siegel, Elizabeth A. Larmon, 1976).

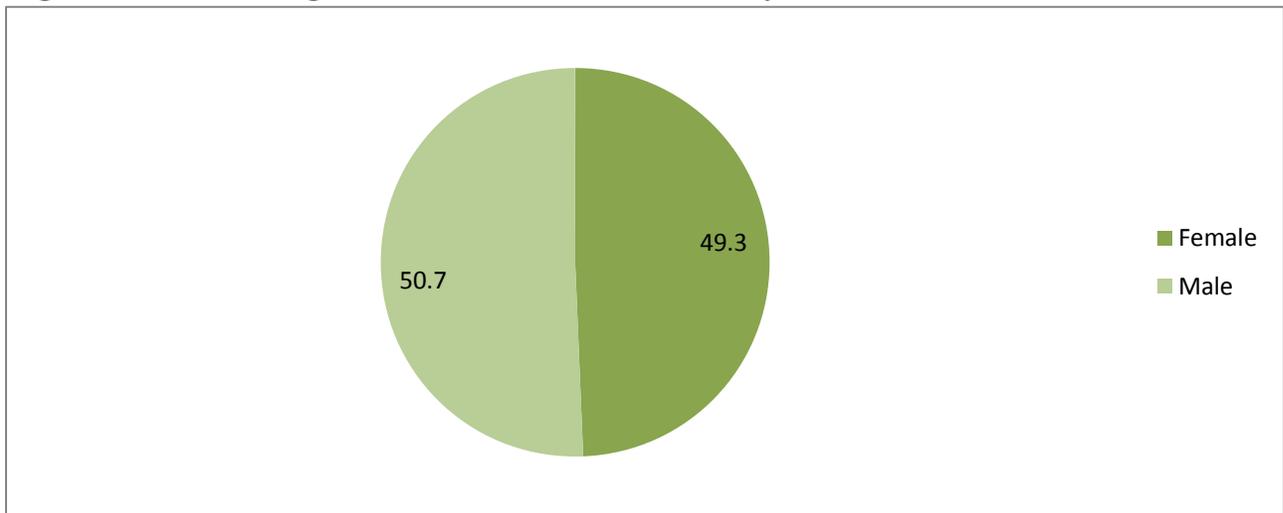
Table 1.1 shows the number of reported births by district for 2016. There were 9,655 numbers of reported births in 2016. Maseru had the highest reported number of births recording 4,644 followed by Mohale's Hoek with 1,108 births. Qacha's Nek had the least number of births amongst all the districts with 147 births.

Table 1.1: Number and Percentage of Reported Births by District, 2016

District	Number	Percent
Botha-Bothe	618	6.4
Leribe	552	5.7
Berea	834	8.6
Maseru	4,642	48.1
Mafeteng	380	3.9
Mohale's Hoek	1,108	11.5
Quthing	248	2.6
Qacha's Nek	248	2.6
Mokhotlong	147	1.5
Thaba-Tseka	878	9.1
Total	9,655	100.0

In assessing and analyzing vital events as they occur, it is important to disaggregate the population of interest by sex or gender. Figure 1.1 depicts the percentage distribution of births by sex of the child. Among all births that occurred in 2016, male births were highest with 50.7 percent compared to their female counterparts with 49.3 percent. Therefore, the figure illustrates that more male children were born in 2016 as opposed to the females.

Figure 1.1: Percentage Distribution of the Births by Sex of the Child, 2016



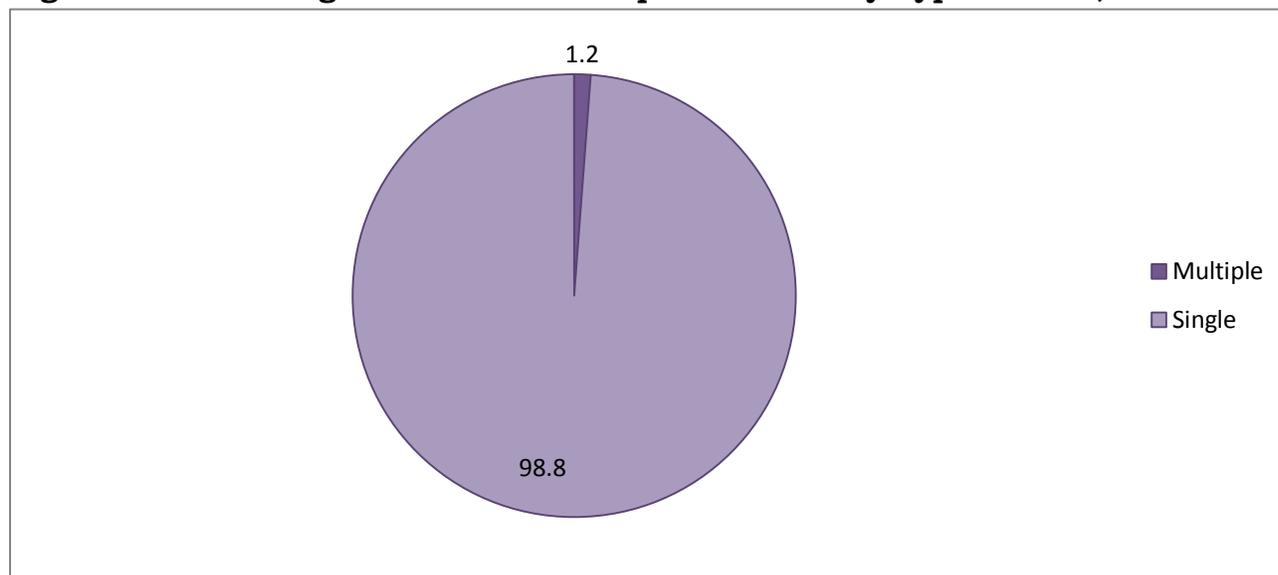
It is important to know how many births occurred in each month. Table 1.2 shows the number of reported birth by birth month of the child. The results reveal that most births occurred in March with 952 births reported followed by those who were born in May with 904 births. December had the lowest reported number of births with 391 births.

Table 1.2: Number and Percentage of Reported Births by Birth Month of the Child, 2016

Month of birth	Number	Percent
January	864	8.9
February	863	8.9
March	952	9.9
April	889	9.2
May	904	9.4
June	867	9.0
July	773	8.0
August	807	8.4
September	834	8.6
October	859	8.9
November	652	6.8
December	391	4.0
Total	9,655	100

It is also important to analyse births by type of birth, that is whether it was a single birth or multiple births and it is illustrated in Figure 1.2. Single births had occurred to 98.8 percent of the children in the year 2016, while twins were only 1.2 percent of the total births.

Figure 1.2: Percentage Distribution of Reported Births by Type of Birth, 2016



The Health Facilities are the ideal places for the actual births to occur as there is assistance by trained health personnel to reduce the risk of maternal mortality and other consequences that may be encountered during unattended deliveries. Given the above factor a need to look into deliveries by the place where they happened is taken into consideration. Data suggests that, most births occurred at the hospitals with 93.5 percent while births that occurred at home were only 6.5 percent.

Table 1.3: Number and Percentage of Reported Births by Place of Birth, 2016

Place of birth	Number	Percent
Health Facility	9,023	93.5
Home	632	6.5
Total	9,655	100

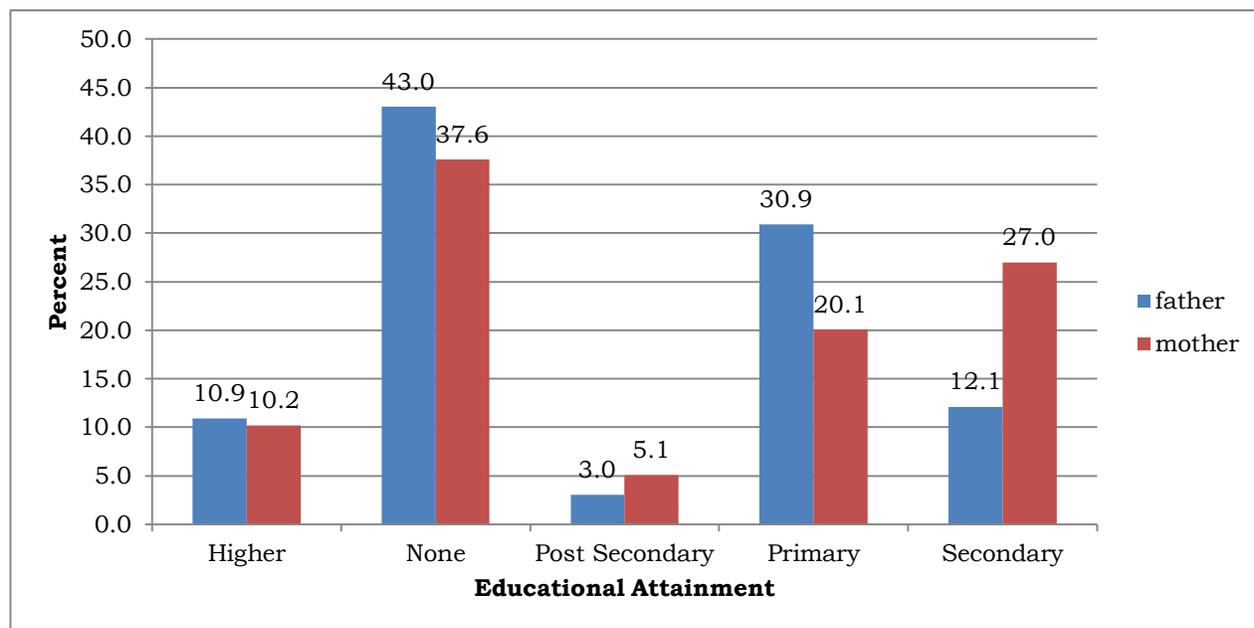
Citizenship of parents plays important role in analyzing the number of births. Therefore Table 1.4 shows the total number of reported births by citizenship of parents. The number of children whose fathers were Basotho was highest at about 9,507. Twenty eight of the children were fathered by South Africans. Regarding mothers, 9,584 births were reported as those born from Basotho women.

Table 1.4: Number and Percentage of Reported Births by Nationality of the Parents, 2016

Citizenship	Father		Mother	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Lesotho	9,507	98.5	9,584	99.3
South Africa	28	0.3	10	0.1
Other countries	120	1.2	61	0.6
Total	9,655	100.0	9,655	100.0

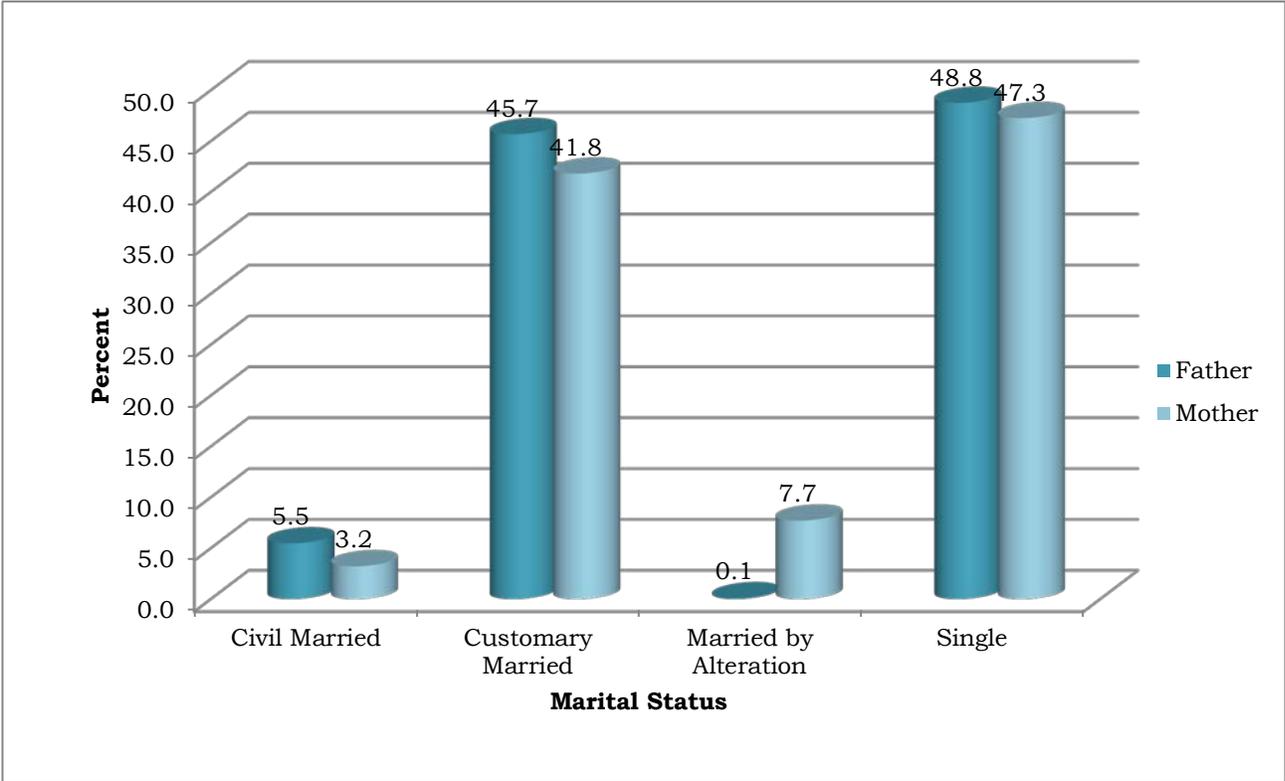
Figure 1.3 displays the percentage distribution of reported births by educational attainment of parent. From the figure, it can be seen that the distribution of births who were fathered by fathers with no educational attainment were more (43.0 percent) than those births whose mothers had no educational attainment (37.6 percent). Mothers who attained secondary were higher than their male counterparts.

Figure 1.3: Percentage Distribution of Reported Births by Educational Attainment of Parents, 2016



The percentage distribution of births by marital status of parents is illustrated in Figure 1.4. The proportion of children whose fathers were single were slightly more than those whose mothers were single. Only 7.7 percent of fathers were married on alteration while for mothers constituted 0.1 percent.

Figure 1.4: Percentage Distribution of Reported Births by Marital Status of Parents, 2016



2.0 Reported Deaths

According to the United Nations (UN, 2003) definition, a death is the permanent disappearance of all evidence of life at any time after live birth has taken place (postnatal cessation of vital functions without capability of resuscitation). The foetal death that is death prior to the complete expulsion or extraction from its mother of a product of conception, irrespective of the duration of the period of gestation is therefore excluded in the definition. This section therefore, deals with reported deaths that occurred across the country in 2016.

Death is a vital event and as such should be recorded to monitor the levels of mortality as one of the three components of population change and to monitor whether or not the health system of the country is improving. Reported events occurring within districts determine the rate of recording as well as to measure the force of mortality at sub national level that is at district level.

Table 2.1 below shows number of reported deaths occurred by districts for 2016. There were 13,768 deaths in total and those that died in RSA were 769. Maseru had the highest reported deaths with 4,088 deaths, followed by Leribe with 2,048 deaths and Qacha's Nek had the least with 307 deaths.

Table 2.1: Number and Percentage of Deaths reported by Districts, 2016

District	Number	Percent
RSA	769	5.6
Berea	1,742	12.7
Botha-Bothe	775	5.6
Leribe	2,048	14.9
Mafeteng	1,585	11.5
Maseru	4,088	29.7
Mohale's Hoek	971	7.1
Mokhotlong	436	3.2
Qacha's Nek	307	2.2
Quthing	616	4.5
Thaba-Tseka	431	3.1
Total	13,768	100.0

Sex is one of the most important demographic variables used in population statistics and it is used almost universally in statistical and administrative data collections relating to people. Figure 2.1 shows that, 51.3 percent of deaths in 2016 were males and 48.5 percent were females.

Figure 2.1: Percentage Distribution of Deaths by Sex of the Deceased, 2016

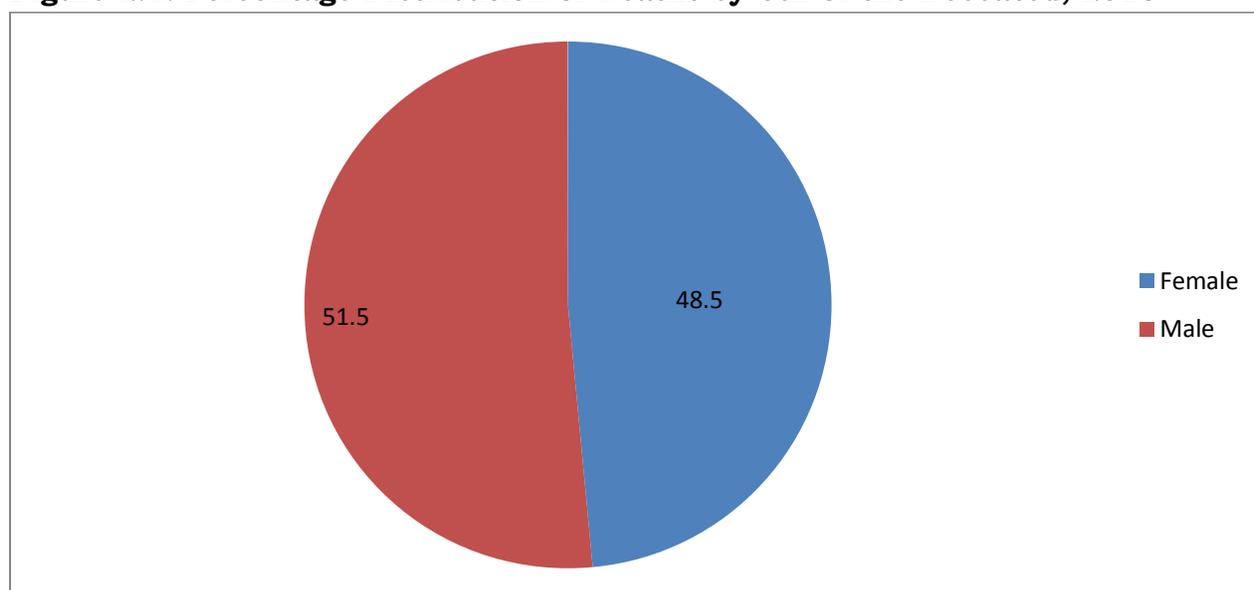


Table 2.2 shows the number of deaths by relationship between the person reporting the deaths and the deceased. Deaths reported by sons of the deceased were highest amongst the reported deaths recording 2,910 deaths, followed by deaths reported by brothers with 1,923. Deaths reported by guardians were the least with 13 deaths.

Table 2.2: Number and Percentage of Deaths by Relationship to the Person reporting, 2016

Relationship	Number	Percent
Uncle/ Aunt	1,160	8.5
Brother	1,923	14.0
Daughter	1,726	12.5
Father	895	6.5
Grand father	194	1.4
Grand mother	228	1.7
Guardian	13	0.1
Husband	709	5.1
Mother	746	5.4
Neighbour	38	0.3
Not-related	45	0.3
Other relative	1,271	9.2
Sister	1,048	7.6
Son	2,910	21.1
Wife	862	6.3
Total	13,768	100.0

Table 2.3 below shows the number of deaths by month of reporting. It is also important to know which month of the year has the highest death rate. July had the highest number of 1,292 reported deaths, followed by August with 1,237 reported deaths. Deaths reported in February had the least number of deaths at 1,016. The difference between the reported deaths by months is 2.0 percent because the percentages range from 7.4 to 9.4.

Table 2.3: Number and Percentage of Deaths by month of reporting, 2016 Deaths

Month of death	Number	Percent
January	1,220	8.9
February	1,016	7.4
March	1,099	8.0
April	1,088	7.9
May	1,186	8.6
June	1,188	8.6
July	1,292	9.4
August	1,237	9.0
September	1,128	8.2
October	1,129	8.2
November	1,061	7.7
December	1,124	8.2
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Annex

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Table1.5: Number and Percentage of the Births by Sex of the Child, 2016

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Female	4,763	49.3
Male	4,892	50.7
Total	9,655	100.0

Table1.6: Number and Percentage of the Births by Type of Birth, 2016

Type of Birth	Frequency	Percent
Multiple	113	1.2
Single	9,542	98.8
Total	9,655	100

Table 1.7: Number of Reported Births by Educational Attainment of Parents, 2016

Educational attainment	Father	Mother
Higher	1,053	987
None	4,155	3,629
Post Secondary	293	493
Primary	2,984	1,938
Secondary	1,170	2,608
Total	9,655	9,655

Table 1.8: Number of Reported Births by Marital Status of Parents, 2016

Marital Status	Father	Mother
Civil Married	529	310
Customary Married	4,410	4,037
Married by Alteration	8	744
Single	4,708	4,563
Widowed	0	1
Total	9,655	9,655

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