Kingdom of Lesotho

Statistical Reports

NO. 7: 2018

Vital Statistics Report (Divorces 2016)

Bureau of Statistics
PO Box 455, Maseru 100, Lesotho
Tel: +266 22 323 852 Fax: +266 310177
E-mail: itpd@bos.gov.ls
Website: www.bos.gov.ls

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 data users and producers.

Contents

BACKGROUND 3
1.1 Introduction 3
1.2 Data Limitations 3
2.1 Number of Divorces and Parties' Place of Residence 3
Figure1: Percentage Distribution of Divorces by District, 2016 4
2.2 Place of residence 4
Figure 2: Percentage Distribution of Divorces by District and Sex of Plaintiff,– 2016 4
2.3: Age 5
Figure 3: Percentage Distribution of Divorces by Age group and Sex of Plaintiff, 2016 5
2.3: Age group and Sex of Defendant 5
2.4 Reasons for divorce 6
Figure 4: Percentage Distribution of Reasons for Divorces, 2016 6
2.5: Place of Residence and Reasons for Divorce 6
Table 2: Percentage Distribution of Divorces by Place of Residence and Reason For Divorce, 2016 7
2.7: Duration of Marriage 8
Figure 5: Percentage Distribution of Divorces by Duration of Marriage, 2016 8
2.8: Type of Marriage 9
Figure 6: Percentage Distribution of Divorces by Type of Marriage, 2016 9

List of Tables

Table 1: Percentage Distribution of Divorces by Age Group of Defendant and Sex of Defendant, 2016 6
Table 2: Percentage Distribution of Divorces by Place of Residence and Reason for Divorce, 2016 7
Table3: Percentage Distribution of Divorces by Age Group of Plaintiff and Reason for Divorce, 2016 8

List of Figures

Figure1: Percentage Distribution of Divorces by District, 2016Figure 2: Percentage Distribution of Divorces by District and Sex of Plaintiff, 2016 4
Figure 2: Percentage Distribution of Divorces by District and Sex of Plaintiff, 2016 4
Figure 3: Percentage Distribution of Divorces by Age group and Sex of Plaintiff, 2016 5
Figure 4: Percentage Distribution of Reasons for Divorces, 2016 6
Figure 5: Percentage Distribution of Divorces by Duration of Marriage, 2016 8
Figure 6: Percentage Distribution of Divorces by Type of Marriage, 2016 9

BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

Vital registration is one of the main sources of population statistics and is a 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. The vital events of interest include among others: births, deaths, marriages, divorces and separations. This report presents data related to reported divorces only.

There could be various factors that contribute to a couple's decision to dissolve marriage and they include the following: infidelity (adultery), lack of (or poor) communication, non-fulfillment of conjugal rights, emotional and physical abuse, hazardous levels of alcohol consumption, desertion, and perhaps incompatibility as primary grounds for divorce. Thus, the factors stated above contribute in one way or another in making life intolerable to the partner who is being subjected to them.

The general objective of this report is to present the demographic characteristics of the divorced persons and to show the changing divorce patterns over time. Also, the objective is to show the main causes of divorce. This report presents statistical information on divorces that were granted in 2016 only by the High Court of Lesotho. These data is collected by the Bureau of Statistics from the High Court, it then compiles, processes, analyzes and publishes the analytical report.

Data on divorce is classified by the following variables: age of plaintiff and defendant, sex of plaintiff and defendant, parties' place of residence and duration of marriage. The plaintiff refers to the party who initiates a divorce suit in a court against the opposite party (defendant).

1.2 Data Limitations

The data on divorce relates only to marriages solemnized by civil law and not by customary law as there are cases of customary marriages that go unreported. The information does not cover other important issues such as the educational and employment status of the parties and the impact of divorce is also a crucial element but it is not included in this report because the primary data had initially been compiled for other administrative purposes.

2.1 Number of Divorces and Parties' Place of Residence

Figure 1 presents information on divorces by place of residence for 2016. The figure shows the ten districts of Lesotho where the highest percentage share of divorces was noticed in Maseru with 48.5 percent. The least percent was observed in Mokhotlong followed by Quthing at 1.2 and 2.4 percent respectively. Mohale's Hoek, Qacha's Nek and Thaba-Tseka were at 3.0 percent each.

Figure1: Percentage Distribution of Divorces by District, 2016

2.2 Place of Residence

This shows the place of residence of the plaintiff. Figure 2 presents the percentage distribution of divorces by place of residence and sex of plaintiff. It is observed that in Maseru, Botha-Bothe, Mafeteng, Mokhotlong, Qacha's Nek and Thaba-Tseka, there were more female plaintiffs than male plaintiffs. The graph further shows that, Maseru had the highest proportion of plaintiffs for both male and female than any other district. Mokhotlong had no male plaintiff and had the very low percentage of female plaintiffs at 2.4 percent.

Figure 2: Percentage Distribution of Divorces by District and Sex of Plaintiff, 2016

2.3 Age

The age composition of divorced people is important in establishing the age at which most couples dissolve their marriages.

Figure 3 represents the percentage distribution of divorces by age group and sex of plaintiff. The percentage of divorces among males reached a peak at ages 25 to 29 years with 37.8 percent, while that for females was at age group 20 to 24 with 43.7 percent. Thereafter, the cases of divorces began to decline gradually as age increased, with only 4.9 percent for males and 0.0 percent for females. Females filed divorces more than their male counterparts for age groups 15 to 19, 20 to 24 and 30 to 34 and for all other age groups males filed more than females. It is therefore observed that females mostly file divorces at younger ages of their marriage while their counterparts do that at older ages.

Figure 3: Percentage Distribution of Divorces by Age group and Sex of Plaintiff, 2016

2.3 Age group and Sex of Defendant

Table 1potrayes the percentage distribution of divorces by age group and sex of defendant as of 2016. Large proportions of divorces to defendants are concentrated at age groups 20 to 24 for females and 25 to 29 for males. The peak for both males and females is observed at age group 25 to 29 recording 34.9 percent. For all ages, male defendants have higher proportions than their female counter parts except in younger age groups of 15 to 19 and 20 to 24. Male peak was more than females with 41.4 percent while females had their peak of 40.2 percent. The overall observation is that divorces take a peak at age 25 to 29 for males then gradually decline as age increases reaching 2.4 percent at age 45 years and above.

Table 1: Percentage Distribution of Divorces by Age Group of Defendant and Sex of Defendant, 2016

Age Group	Male	Female	Total
15-19	1.1	14.6	7.7
20-24	20.7	40.2	30.2
25-29	41.4	28.0	34.9
30-34	17.2	9.8	13.6
35-39	12.6	4.9	8.9
40-44	3.4	1.2	2.4
45+	3.4	1.2	2.4
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**

2.4 Reasons for Divorce

There are many imaginary reasons that commonly contribute to the breakdown of marriages in the marital union. The report concentrates only on the most three reasons of divorce that happens in Lesotho. Almost half (50.3 percent) of the marriages in Lesotho are broken down due to Adultery. The other half happens between Constructive and Malicious Desertion at 26.0 and 23.7 percent respectively.

Figure 4: Percentage Distribution of Reasons for Divorces, 2016

2.5 Place of Residence and Reasons for Divorce

The percentage distribution of divorces by district and reasons for divorce is presented in Table 2. On the overall, the major cause of divorce in all the districts was adultery at 50.3 percent. Constructive Desertion at 26.0 percent was the next reason for divorce followed by Malicious Desertion at 23.7 percent. Maseru had the leading percentages for reasons for divorce amongst the reasons given with 48.5 and Adultery was most common in Maseru at 21.9 percent. There

were no marriage dissolution due to Constructive Desertion and Malicious Desertion in Quthing and Mokhotlong indicating that residents of these two districts only end their marriage due to Adultery. Amongst all the districts of Lesotho, Mokhotlong had the lowest reasons for divorce at 1.2 percent which is noticed as Adultery.

Table 2: Percentage Distribution of Divorces by Place of Residence and Reason for Divorce, 2016

	Reason For Divorce			
Place of Residence	**Adultery**	**Constructive Desertion**	**Malicious Desertion**	**Total**
Botha-Bothe	2.4	1.2	1.2	4.7
Leribe	5.9	4.1	3.0	13.0
Berea	7.1	1.8	3.0	11.8
Maseru	21.9	14.2	12.4	48.5
Mafeteng	5.3	2.4	1.8	9.5
Mohale's Hoek	1.8	0.6	0.6	3.0
Quthing	2.4	0.0	0.0	2.4
Qacha's Nek	0.6	1.2	1.2	3.0
Mokhotlong	1.2	0.0	0.0	1.2
Thaba-Tseka	1.8	0.6	0.6	3.0
Total	**50.3**	**26.0**	**23.7**	**100.0**

2.6 Age and Reasons for Divorce

Table 3 shows the percentage distribution of divorces by age group of plaintiff and reasons for divorce. It is evident from this table that, the age group where marriages were most dissolved was 20 to 24 at 37.3 percent. The most reason for the dissolution of marriage was Adultery with 41.2 percent followed by Malicious desertion at 40.0 percent. Age group 25 to 29 followed at 30.8 percent where Constructive Desertion was noticed mostly at 34.1 percent. The age group with the least incidences of marriage dissolutions is age group 45 and above at 2.4 percent.

Table3: Percentage Distribution of Divorces by Age Group of Plaintiff and Reason for Divorce, 2016

	Reason For Divorce			
Age Group	**Adultery**	**Constructive Desertion**	**Malicious Desertion**	**Total**
15-19	5.9	4.5	5.0	5.3
20-24	41.2	27.3	40.0	37.3
25-29	30.6	34.1	27.5	30.8
30-34	15.3	11.4	12.5	13.6
35-39	3.5	13.6	10.0	7.7
40-44	1.2	4.5	5.0	3.0
45+	2.4	4.5	0.0	2.4
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

2.7: Duration of Marriage

Figure 5 presents the percentage distribution of divorces by duration of marriage. Most marriages which were dissolved had between 5 to 9 years in marriage with 37 percent. Couples with 0 to 4 and 10 to 14 years in marriage followed with 22.0 and 21.0 percent respectfully. Couples which had long time in marriage had lower percentage, with 1.0 percent for those with 40 and above years in marriage and 2.0 percent for those with 35 to 39 years in marriage.

Figure 5: Percentage Distribution of Divorces by Duration of Marriage, 2016

2.8 Type of Marriage

The percentage distribution of divorces with respect to type of marriage reveals that couples who were married in Christian type are likely to divorce than other types of marriages. Of all marriages that were dissolved, Christian marriages constituted 51.5 percent. The termination of marriage for those who had Civil marriages followed with 47.9 percent while Muslim marriages only had about 0.6 percent.

Figure 6: Percentage Distribution of Divorces by Type of Marriage, 2016

Annex

Table 1: Number of Divorces by District, 2016

District	Divorces
Botha-Bothe	**8**
Leribe	22
Berea	20
Maseru	82
Mafeteng	16
Mohale's Hoek	5
Quthing	4
Qacha's Nek	5
Mokhotlong	2
Thaba-Tseka	5
Total	**169**

Table 2: Number of Divorces by District and Sex of Plaintiff, 2016

	Sex of Plaintiff	
District	**Male**	**Female**
Botha-Bothe	6	2
Leribe	9	13
Berea	7	13
Maseru	42	40
Mafeteng	8	8
Mohale's Hoek	1	4
Quthing	1	3
Qacha's Nek	3	2
Mokhotlong	2	0
Thaba-Tseka	3	2
Total	**82**	**87**

Table 3: Number of Divorces by Age group and Sex of Plaintiff, 2016

Age of Plaintiff	Male	Female
15-19	**1**	**8**
20-24	25	38
25-29	31	21
30-34	8	15
35-39	10	3
40-44	3	2
45+	4	0

Table 4: Place of Residence and Sex of Defendant, 2016

District	Male	Female
Botha-Bothe	2	6
Leribe	13	9
Berea	13	7
Maseru	40	42
Mafeteng	8	8
Mohale's Hoek	4	1
Quthing	3	1
Qacha's Nek	2	3
Mokhotlong	0	2
Thaba-Tseka	2	3
Total	**87**	**82**

Table 5: Number of Divorces and Reason for Divorce, 2016

Reason for Divorce	Number of Divorces
Adultery	85
Constructive Dissertion	44
Mallicious Dissertion	40
Total	**169**

Table 6: Number of Divorces by Age Group of Defendant and Reason for Divorce, 2016

	Reason For Divorce			
Age Group	**Adultery**	**Constructive Dissertion**	**Mallicious Dissertion**	**Total**
15-19	7	1	5	13
20-24	25	9	17	51
25-29	33	16	10	59
30-34	10	8	5	23
35-39	7	6	2	15
40-44	3	1	0	4
45+	0	3	1	4
Total	**85**	**44**	**40**	**169**