LIBERIA INSTITUTE OF STATISTICS AND GEO-INFORMATION SERVICES (LISGIS)

Thematic Report on Trends and Levels of Nuptiality (Marriages) in Liberia

2022 Liberia Population and Housing Census

Dear Reader,

I am pleased to present this document as a highlight summary of the upcoming Thematic Report on Nuptiality (Marriage) from the 2022 Liberia Population and Housing Census (LPHC). This summary offers a snapshot of the key findings and insights that will be detailed in the final report.

Please note that the full report is currently undergoing finalization, which includes comprehensive editing, formatting, graphic designing, and proofreading. The finalized version will replace this document once it is completed.

We appreciate your patience and look forward to sharing the complete report with you soon.

Best regards,

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Outline

➡ Introduction

➡ Methodology

➡ Results

Introduction

- Nuptiality data is relevant in helping government understand the levels and patterns of mariiage for planning purposes

- Concept of nuptiality relates to marriage within a population - phenomenon and level of occurrence of marriages;

- It looks at how the mmarriages are dissolved, where necessary

- Levels and patterns of marriages; its influence on population growth and distribution, fertility levels, mortality and other demographic phenomena;

- How healthy marriages influence longevity; connection between marriage and health, especially in case of illness

Methodology: Methods for Data Collection and Analysis

- The data used in the report was collected from households during the 2022 census

- Rates, percentages, measure of central tendency and other demographic procedures.

- Data was 2022 NPHC, household level data were based on an individual's declaration – there was no probing for the legal, religious or customary rules and regulations relating to marital status

Crude marital rates by sex and residence per 1000 population

| Sex	Crude Marriage Rate (CMR)	General Marriage Rate (GMR)	Crude Divorce Rate (CDR)
Male	218	365	1.7
Female	236	398	2.5
Both sexes	227	381	2.1
Residence			
Urban	192	314	1.5
Rural	270	467	2.8

Crude rates by county per 1000 population

| County	Crude Marriage Rate (CMR)	General marriage Rate (GMR)	Crude Divorce Rate (CDR)
Bomi	258	447	3.8
Bong	235	406	2.6
Gbarpolu	266	446	3.8
Grand Bassa	278	487	4.1
Grand Cape Mount	300	476	5.3
Grand Gedeh	265	403	1.5
Grand Kru	259	430	0.7
Lofa	259	441	3.9
Margibi	205	349	1.8
Maryland	207	353	0.7
Montserrado	185	300	1.5
Nimba	241	448	1.7
River Cess	318	569	5.2
River Gee	286	473	1.3
Sinoe	256	420	0.8
Liberia	227	381	2.1

Marital status by urban and rural residence

Urban
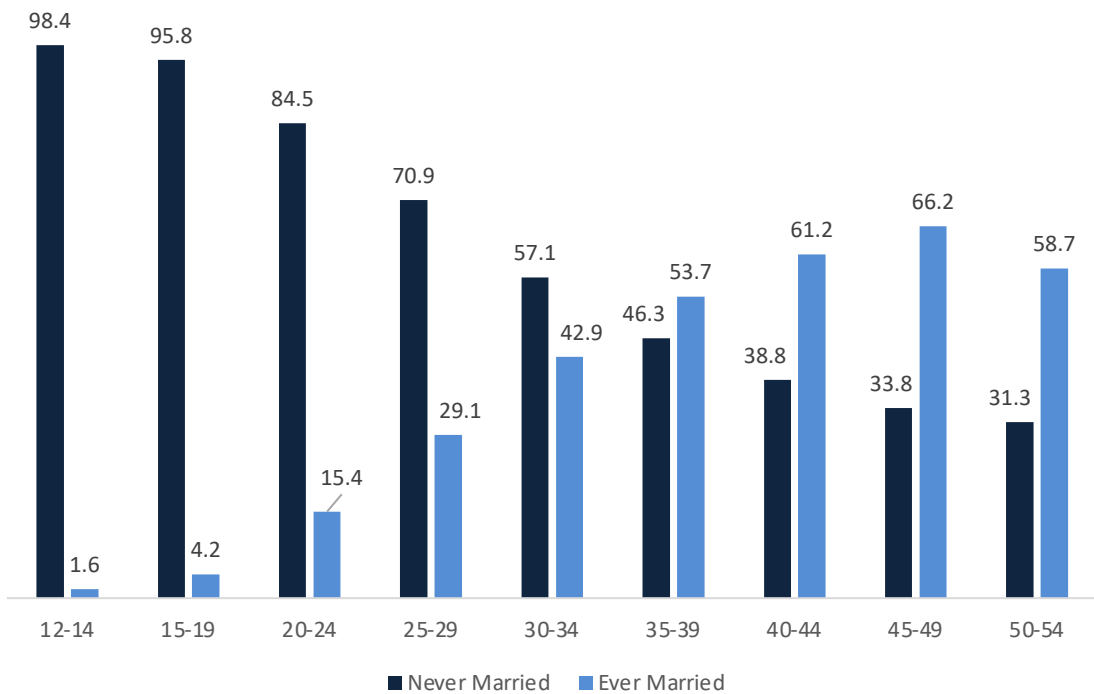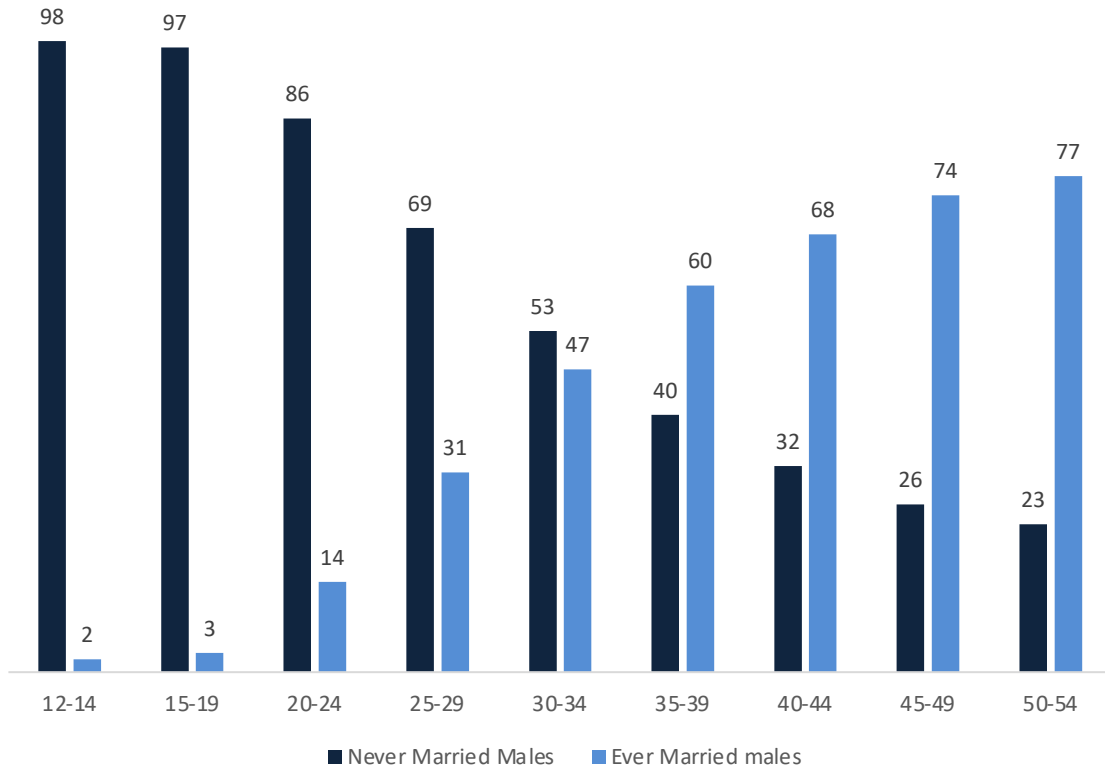
Rural
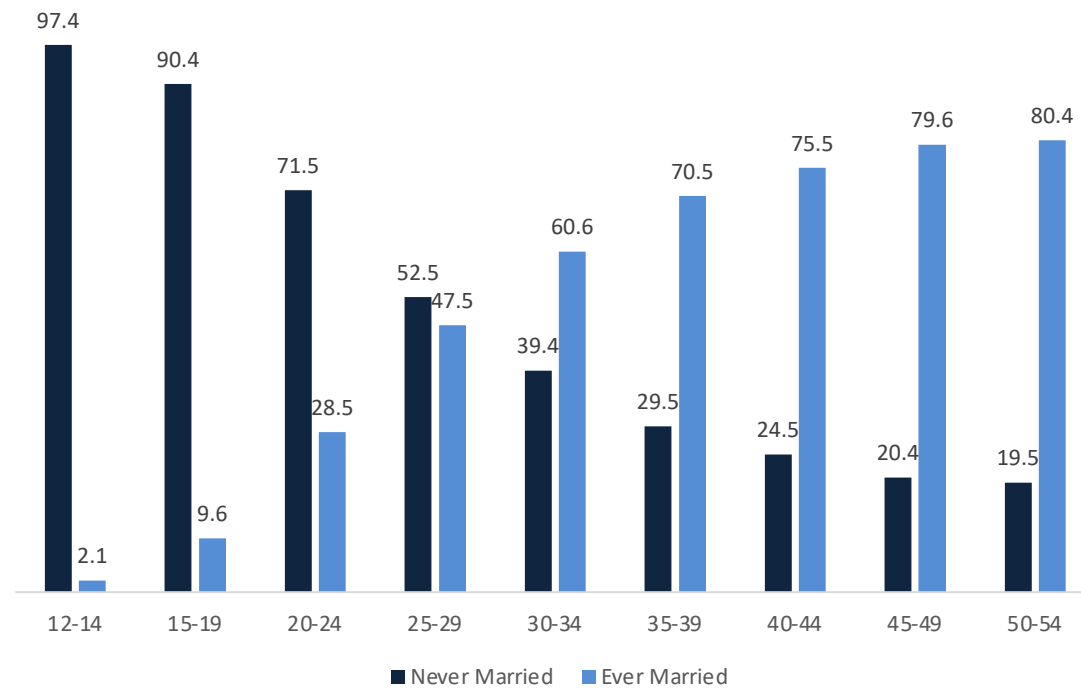
Higher early marriages in rural than urban areas
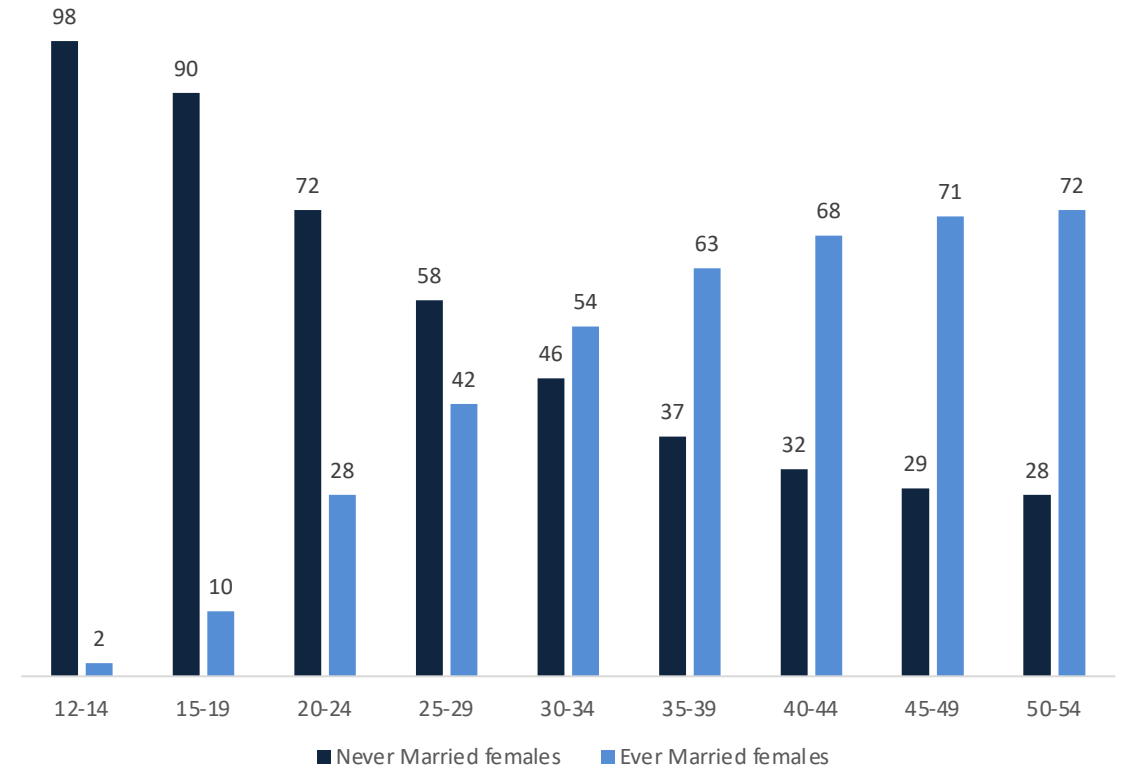
Marriages are higher in Rural than urban areas

Ever married and ever married by sex

Male

Never Married Males   Ever Married males

Females

Never Married females   Ever Married females

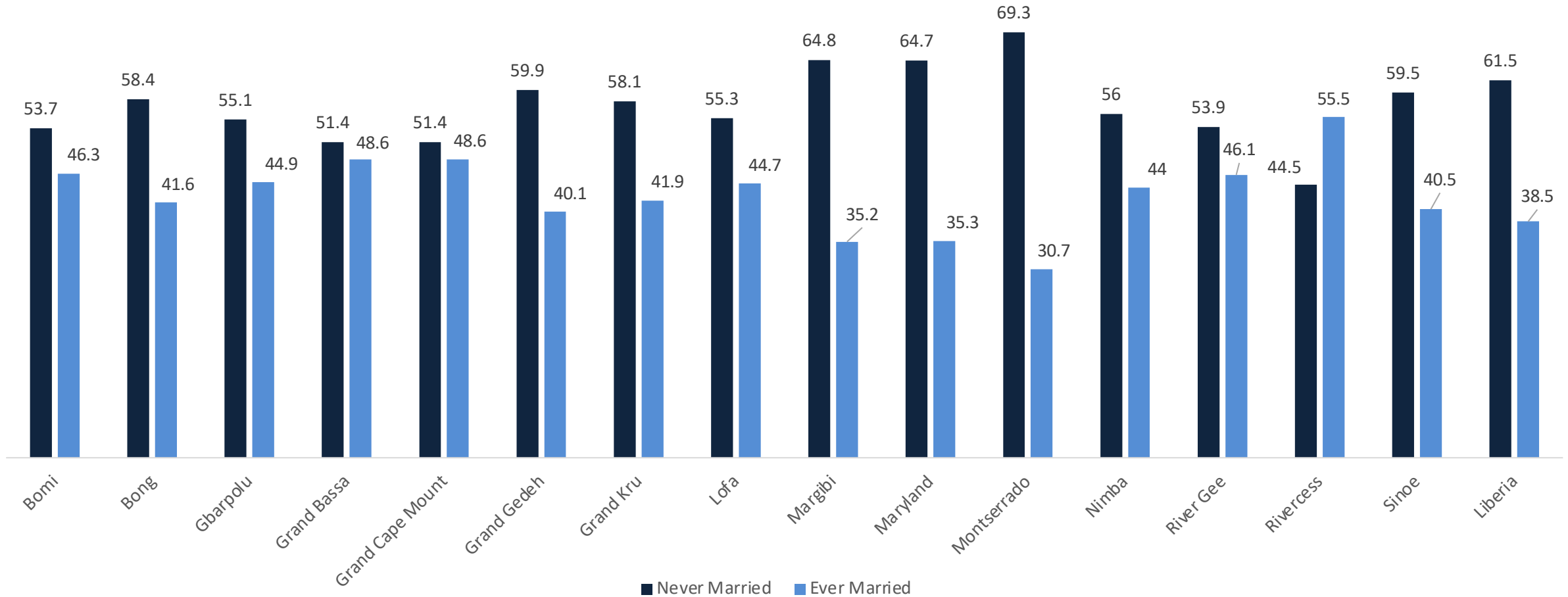Considering advance education, age 35-39 seem to be suitable for useful male marriages

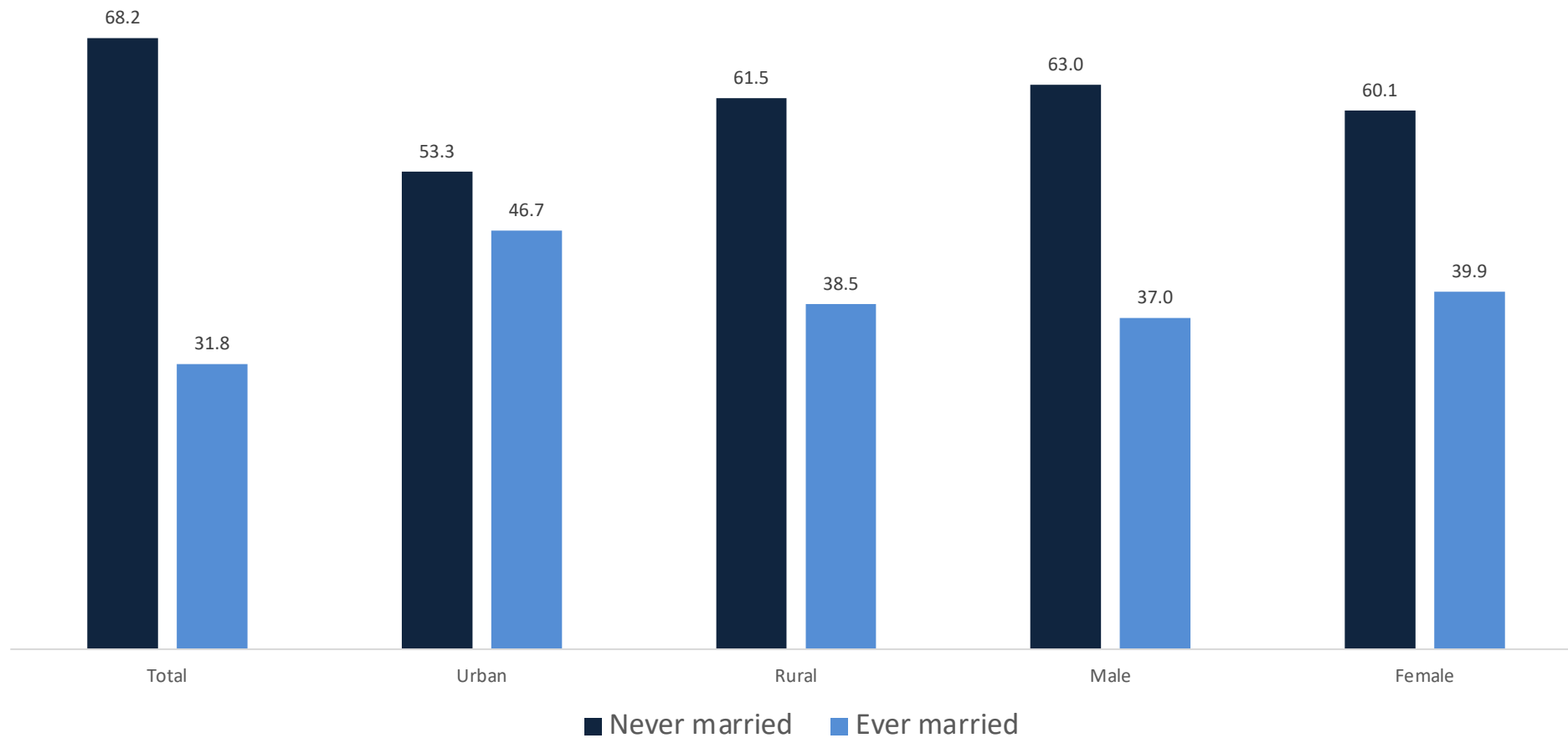Considering advance education, age 30-34 seem to be suitable for useful female marriages/ childbearing

Never and Ever married by County

Never Married ■ **Ever Married**

County	Never Married	Ever Married
Bomi	53.7	46.3
Bong	58.4	41.6
Gbarpolu	55.1	44.9
Grand Bassa	51.4	48.6
Grand Cape Mount	51.4	48.6
Grand Gedeh	59.9	40.1
Grand Kru	58.1	41.9
Lofa	55.3	44.7
Margibi	64.8	35.2
Maryland	64.7	35.3
Montserrado	69.3	30.7
Nimba	56	44
River Gee	53.9	46.1
Rivercess	44.5	55.5
Sinoe	59.5	40.5
Liberia	61.5	38.5

Ever married population is highest in Grand Cape Mount and Grand Bassa Counties, while Montserrado reported the lower
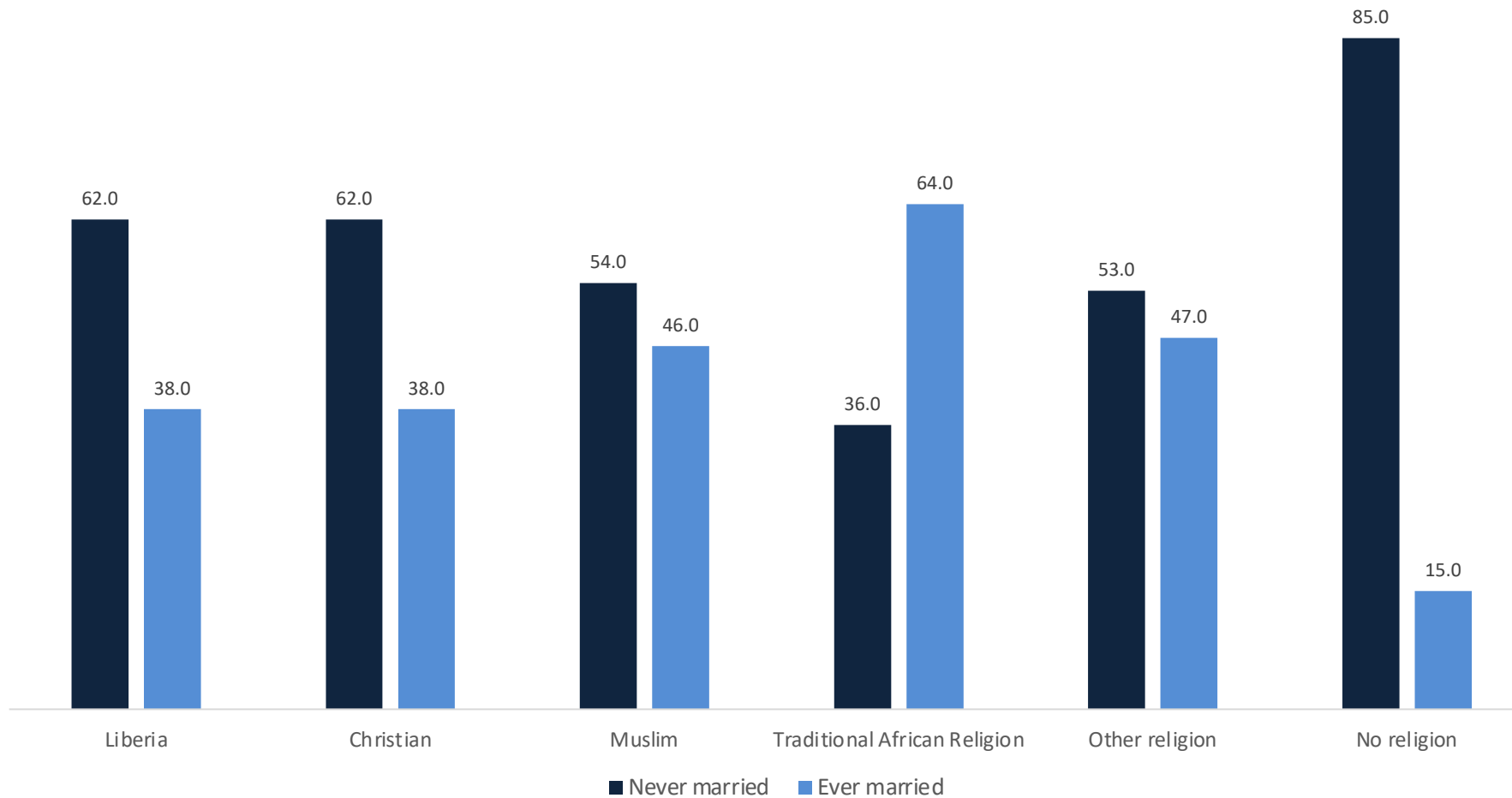
Marital status by sex and place of residence

Total — Never married: 68.2, Ever married: 31.8
Urban — Never married: 53.3, Ever married: 46.7
Rural — Never married: 61.5, Ever married: 38.5
Male — Never married: 63.0, Ever married: 37.0
Female — Never married: 60.1, Ever married: 39.9

Never married   Ever married

Marital status by religious affiliation

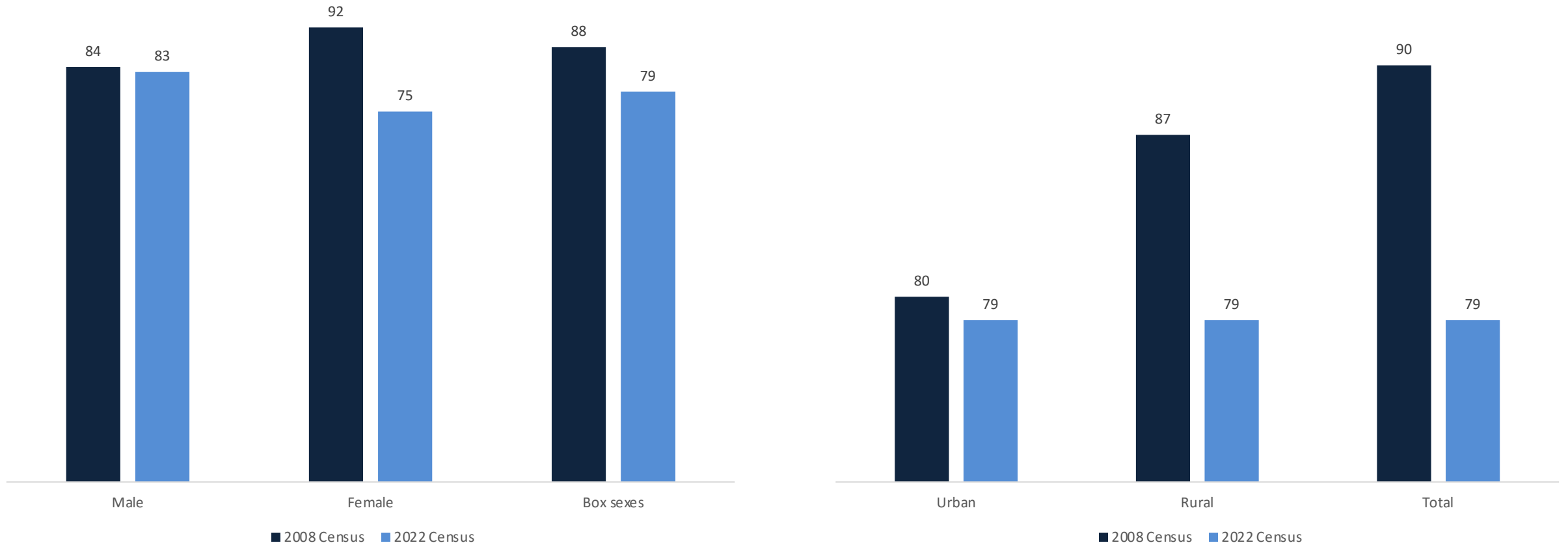|	Never married	Ever married
Liberia	62.0	38.0
Christian	62.0	38.0
Muslim	54.0	46.0
Traditional African Religion	36.0	64.0
Other religion	53.0	47.0
No religion	85.0	15.0

No religious affiliation had the highest never married status 85%

Tradional religion had the highest ever married (64%), followed by muslims

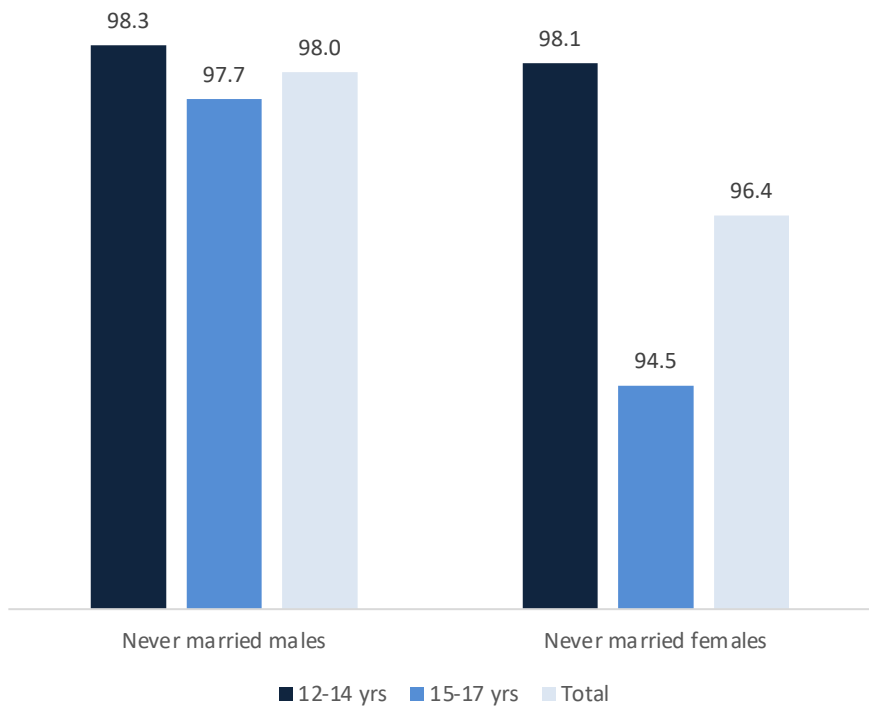Early entry age into child marriage: 2008-2022
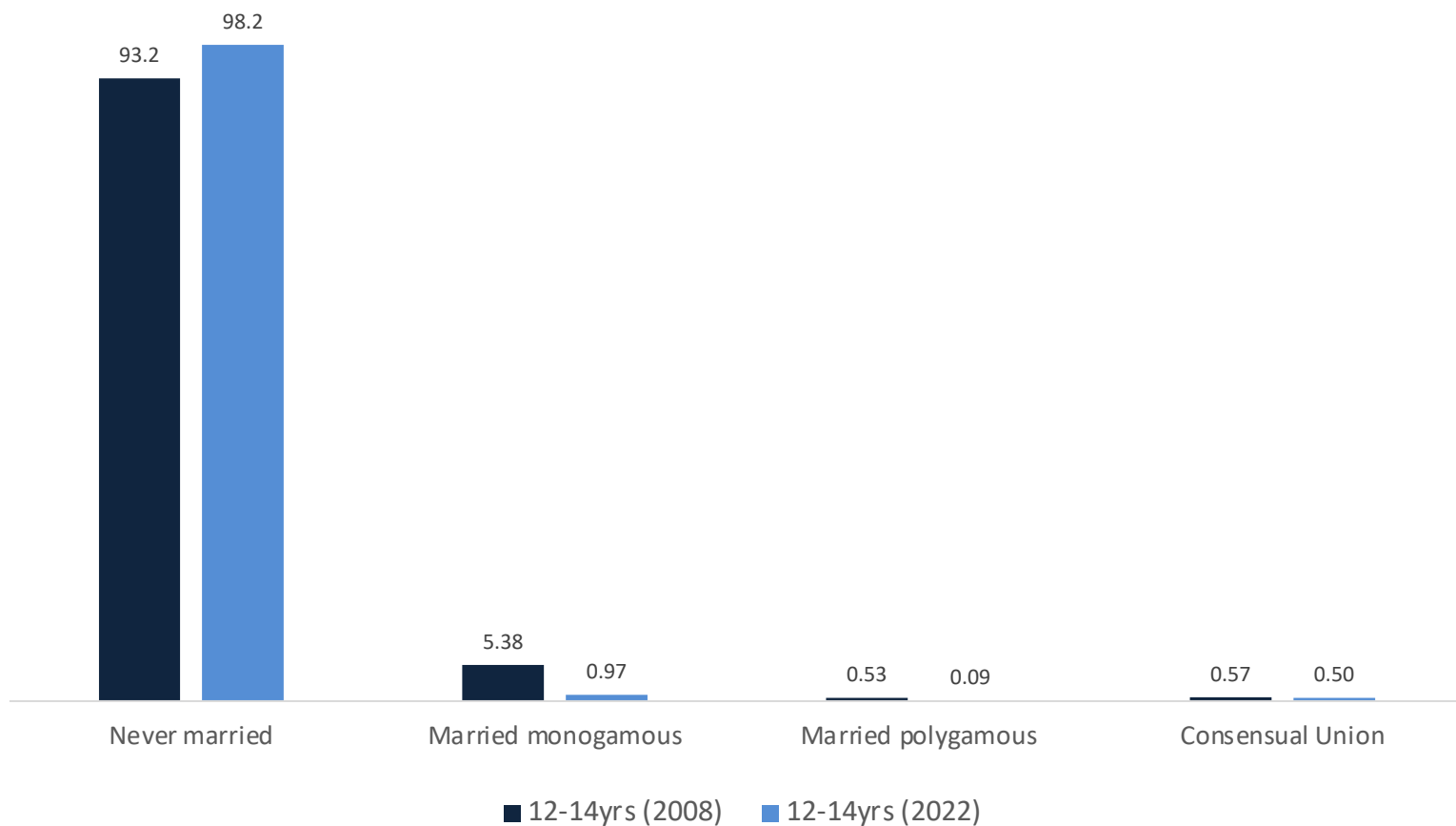
Child Never married population increased from 2008-2022

Child Monogamous and polygamous marriages declined from 2008 to 2022

Consensual marriages also declined from 2008 -2022

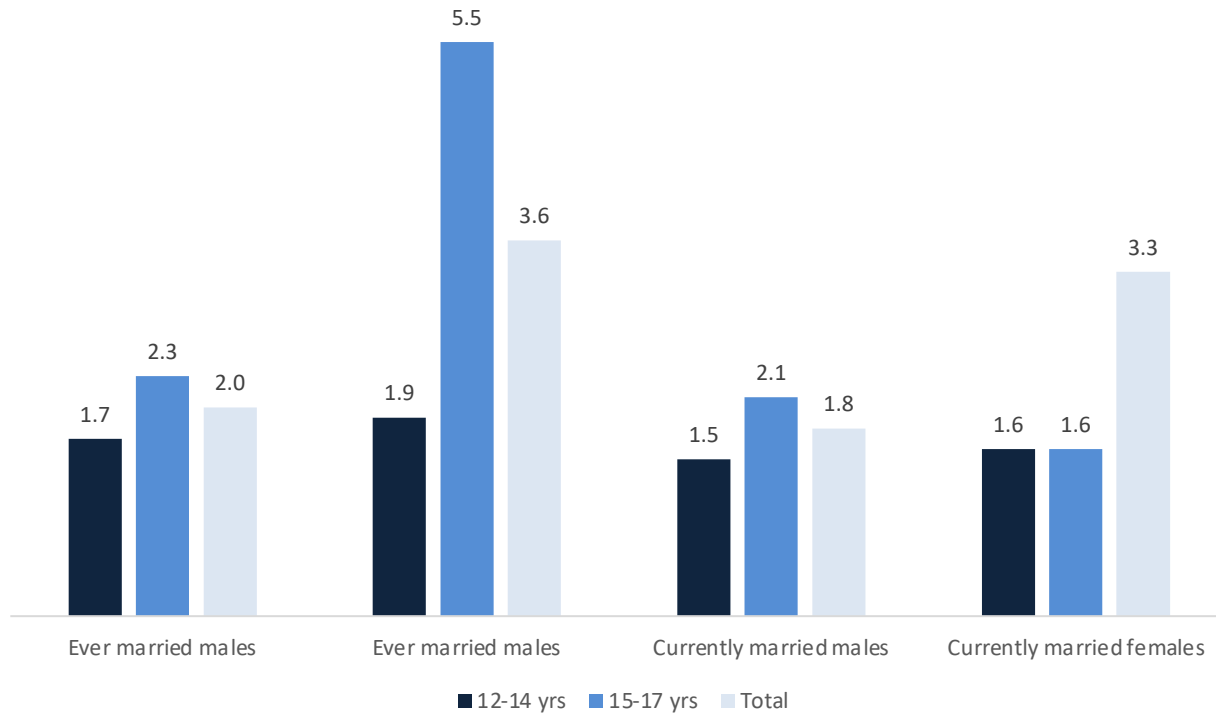|	Never married	Married monogamous	Married polygamous	Consensual Union
12-14yrs (2008)	93.2	5.38	0.53	0.57
12-14yrs (2022)	98.2	0.97	0.09	0.50

2022 LPHC | THEMATIC REPORT | NUPTIALITY (MARRIAGES)

Marital status of children by sex

Never married children

	Never married males	Never married females
12-14 yrs	98.3	98.1
15-17 yrs	97.7	94.5
Total	98.0	96.4

Males dominate never married children

Ever married and currently married children

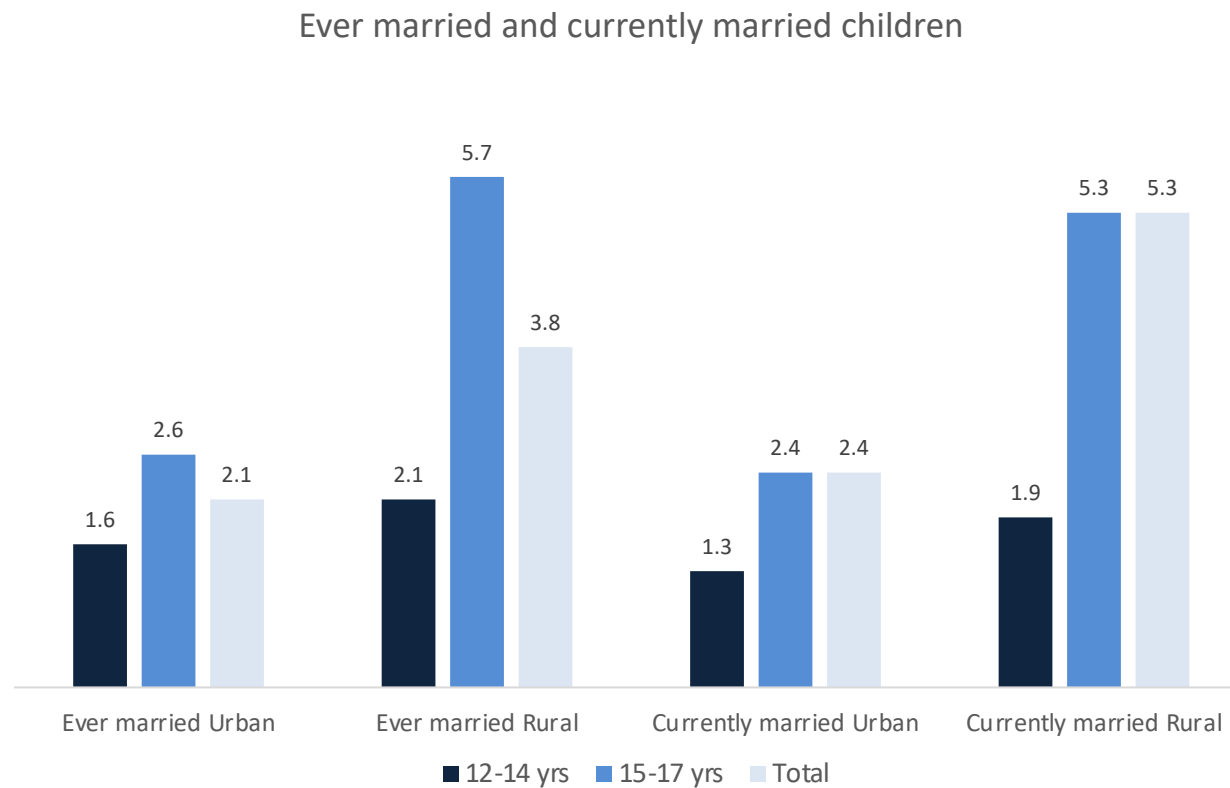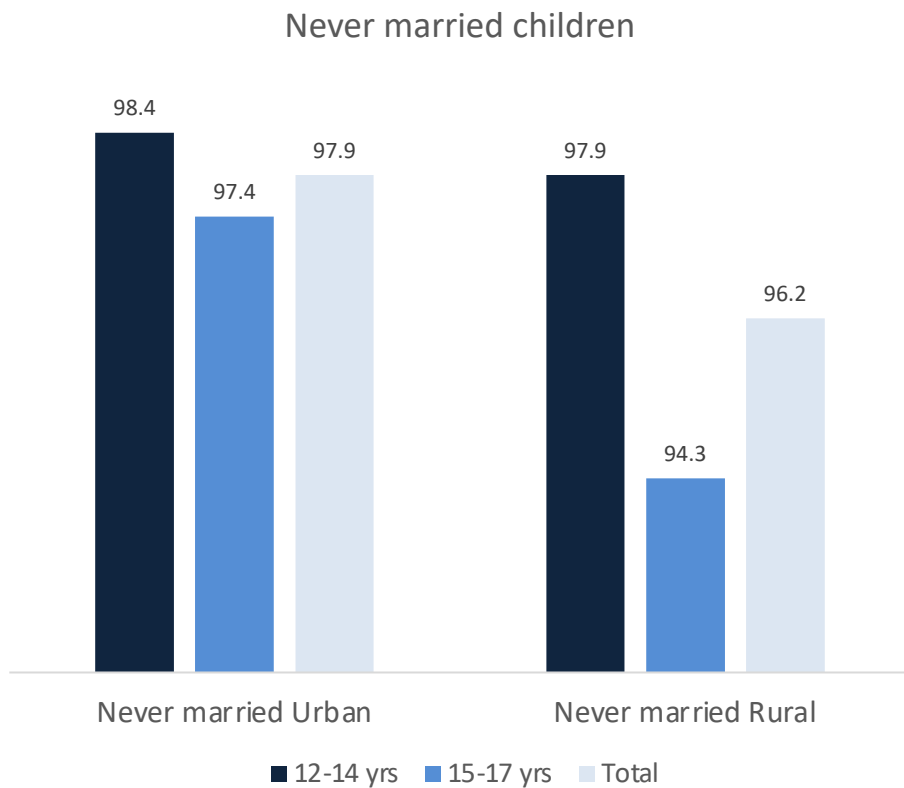|	Ever married males	Ever married males	Currently married males	Currently married females
12-14 yrs	1.7	1.9	1.5	1.6
15-17 yrs	2.3	5.5	2.1	1.6
Total	2.0	3.6	1.8	3.3

Females dominate ever married children

Females dominate currently married children

Marital status by residence

Never married children

- Never married Urban: 98.4 (12-14 yrs), 97.4 (15-17 yrs), 97.9 (Total)
- Never married Rural: 97.9 (12-14 yrs), 94.3 (15-17 yrs), 96.2 (Total)

Legend: 12-14 yrs, 15-17 yrs, Total

Ever married and currently married children

- Ever married Urban: 1.6 (12-14 yrs), 2.6 (15-17 yrs), 2.1 (Total)
- Ever married Rural: 2.1 (12-14 yrs), 5.7 (15-17 yrs), 3.8 (Total)
- Currently married Urban: 1.3 (12-14 yrs), 2.4 (15-17 yrs), 2.4 (Total)
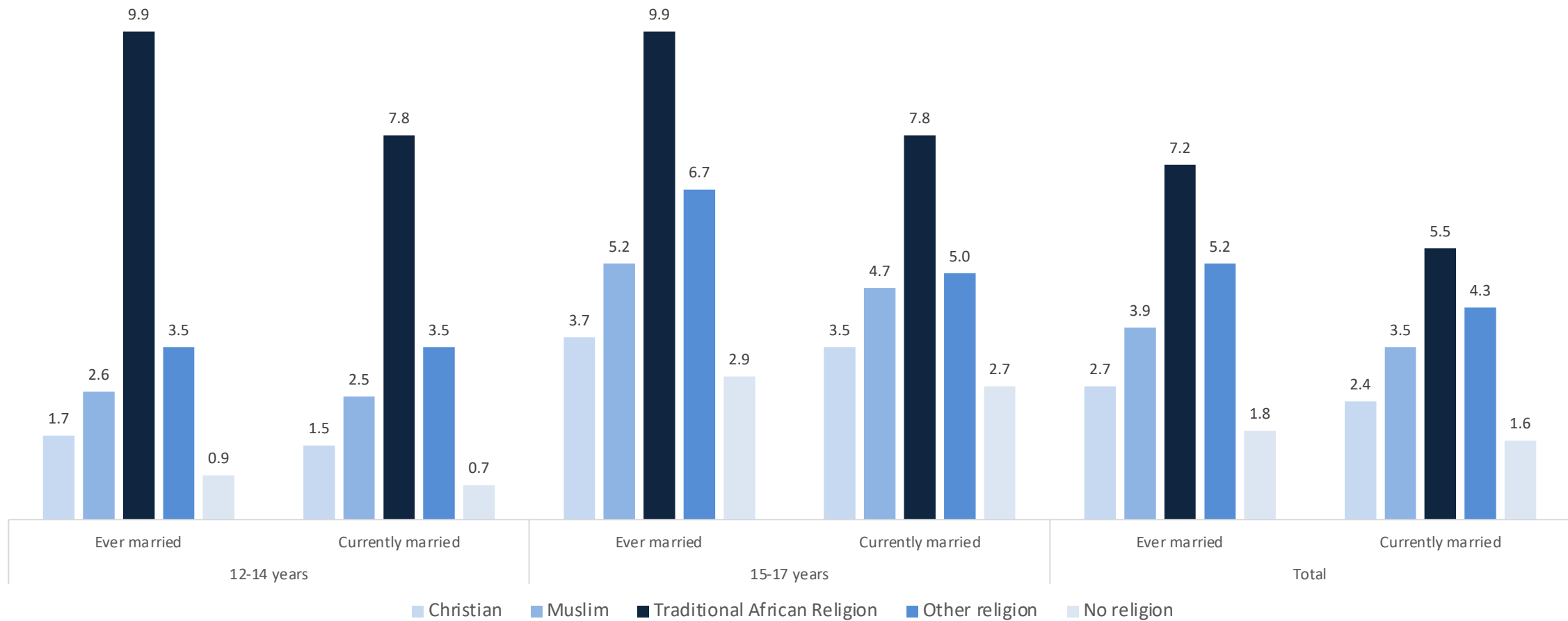- Currently married Rural: 1.9 (12-14 yrs), 5.3 (15-17 yrs), 5.3 (Total)
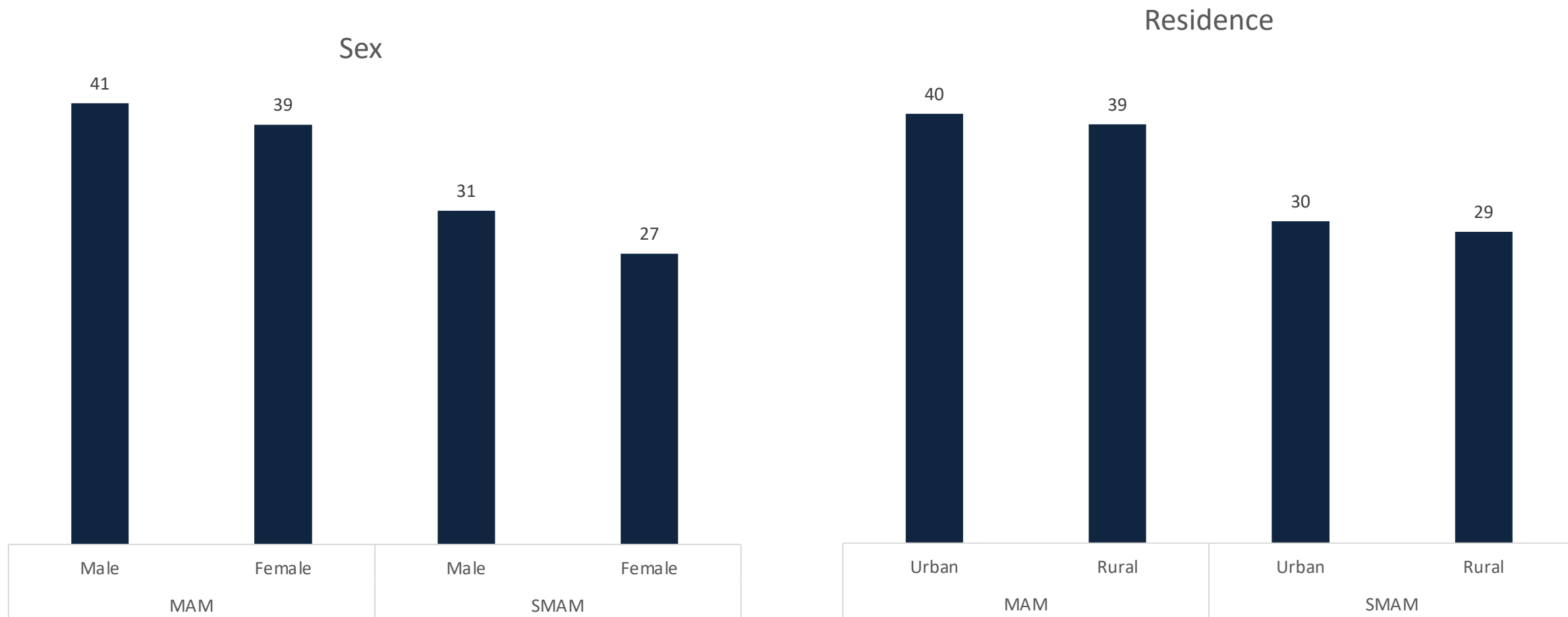
Legend: 12-14 yrs, 15-17 yrs, Total

Ever Married and Currently married children by religion

Mean and Medium age at married by sex and residence

Sex

41 — Male (MAM)
39 — Female (MAM)
31 — Male (SMAM)
27 — Female (SMAM)

Residence

40 — Urban (MAM)
39 — Rural (MAM)
30 — Urban (SMAM)
29 — Rural (SMAM)

Mean and Singulate mean age at marriage- County

County	MAM	SMAM
Bomi	39	28
Bong	33	28
Gbarpolu	39	29
Grand Bassa	40	26
Grand Cape Mount	39	27
Grand Gedeh	40	29
Grand Kru County	48	28
Lofa	40	26
Margibi	43	29
Naryland	40	29
Montserrado	43	31
Nimba	40	27
River Cess	38	24
River Gee	40	27
Sinoe	40	28

The highest mean age at marriage was in Grand Kru

The highest SMAM was found in Montserrado

Mean and Singulate mean age by Education and Religion

	MAM	SMAM
Educational level		
None	39	28
Pre-School	39	28
Primary	40	29
Secondary	40	31
University	42	20
Other Tertiary	42	20
Liberia	40	
Religious affiliation		
Christian	40	18
Muslim	39	18
Traditional African Religion	38	17
Other Religion	39	17
No Religion	38	NA
Total	40	

The highest mean age was among University level and higher

Christians had the highest mean age at marriage
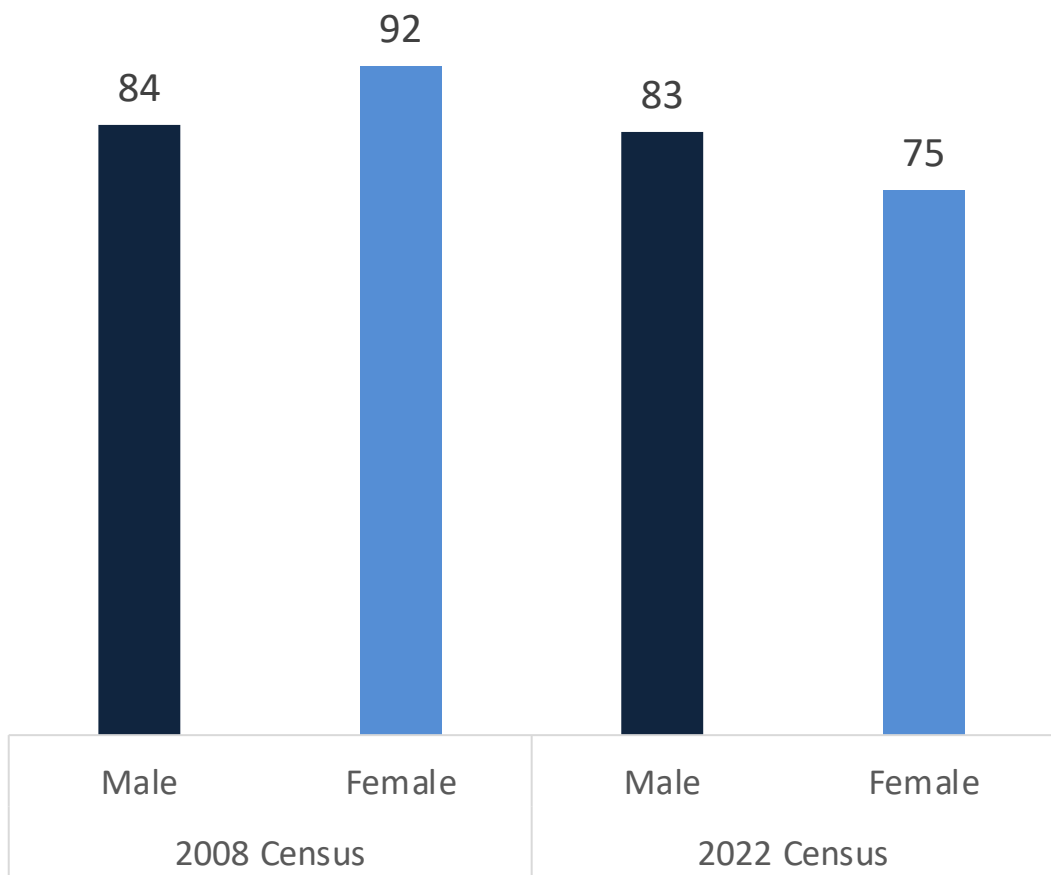
Singulate Mean age at Marriage -1962-2022
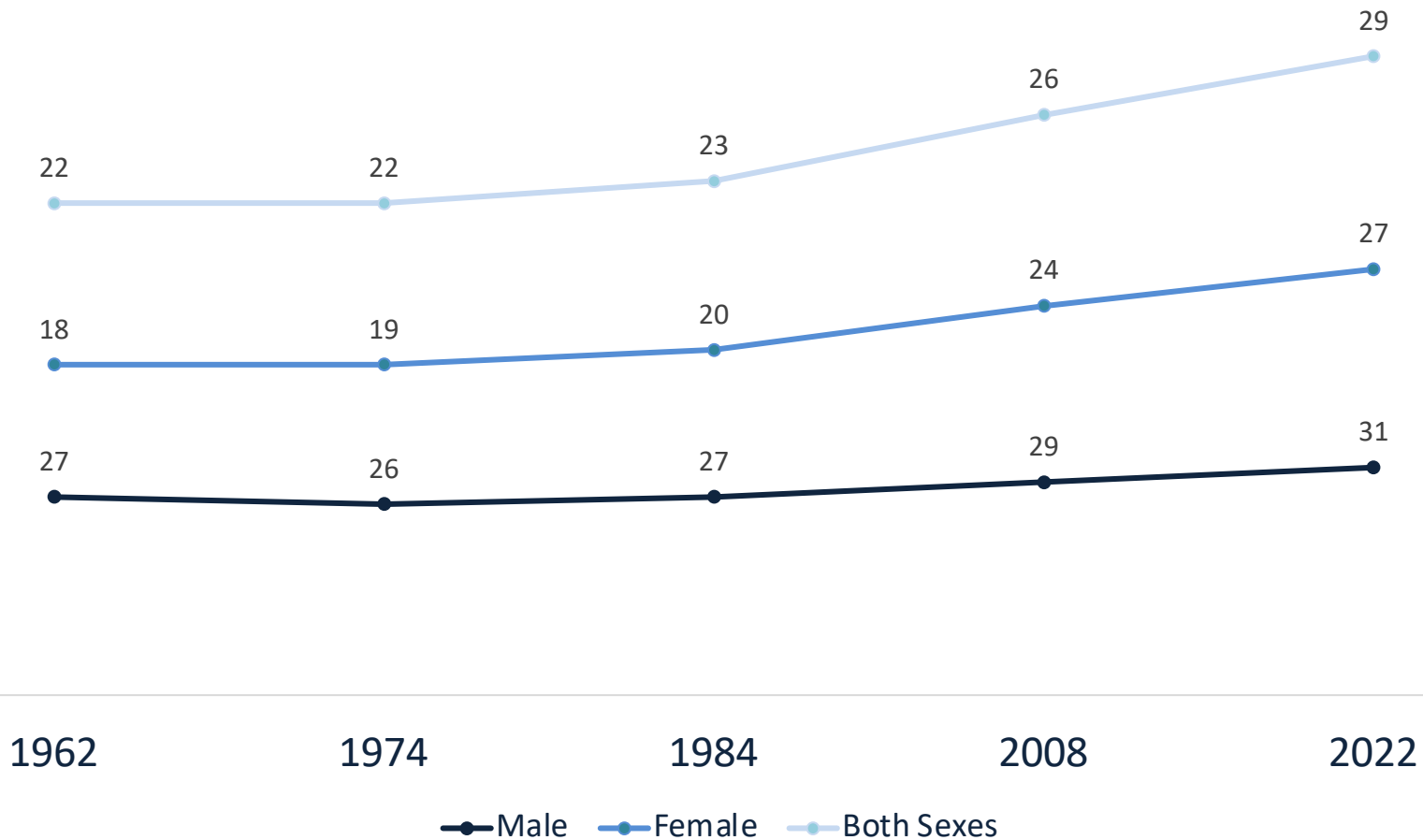
SMAM increased consistently from 1962 to 2022
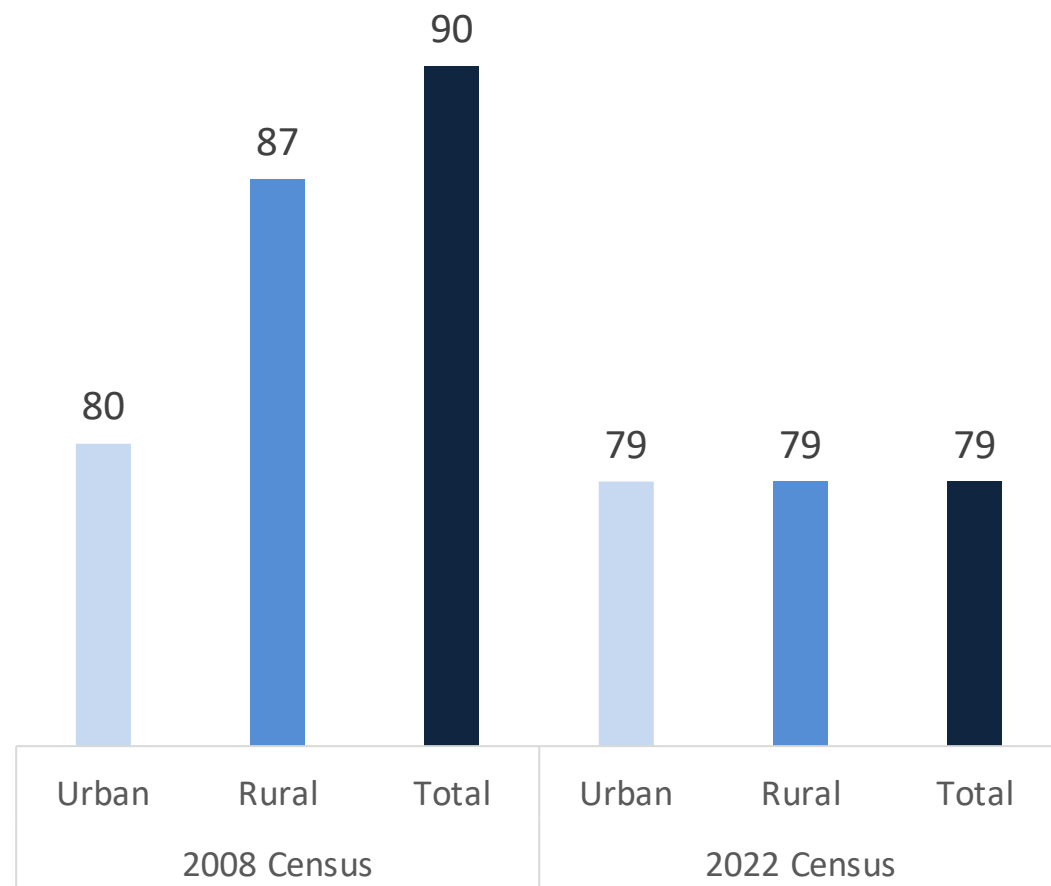
SMAM shows that females marry much earlier than males

Male   Female   Both Sexes

1962   1974   1984   2008   2022

Monogamous marriage by Religion and Education

Monogamous Marriage by Religious Affiliation

Christian	Muslim	Traditional African Religion	Other religion	No religion	Total
79	80	66	69	67	79
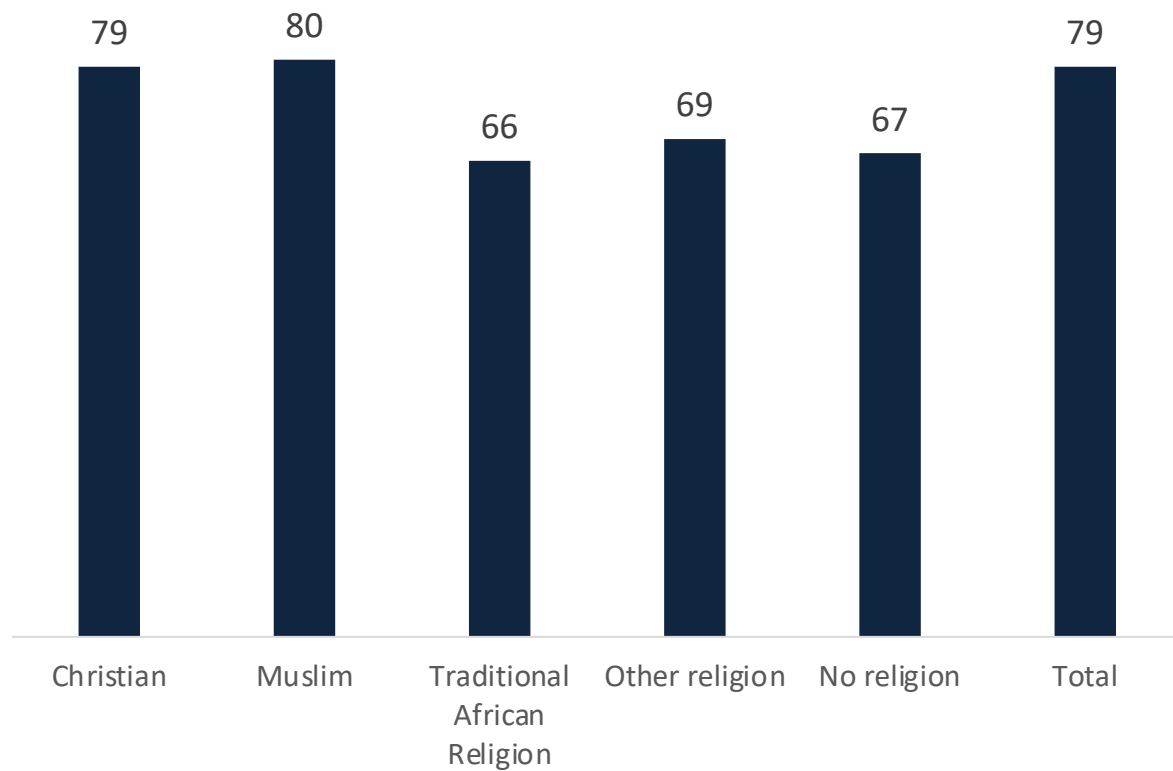
Monogamous Marriage by Educational Level

None	Preschool	Primary	Secondary	University	Other Tertiary
77	76	78	81	85	81

Monogamous marriage by County

Bomi: 90, 81
Bong: 88, 77
Gbarpolu: 91, 86
Grand Bassa: 93, 83
Grand Cape Mount: 89, 82
Grand Gedeh: 88, 81
Grand Kru: 92, 77
Lofa: 85, 74
Margibi: 90, 83
Maryland: 84, 80
Montserrado: 86, 80
Liberia: 88, 79
Nimba: 90, 72
Rivercess: 92, 85
River Gee: 92, 75
Sinoe: 92, 83

■ 2008 Census   ■ 2022 Census

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(MARRIAGES)

Polygamous marriage by Sex and Residence

2008 Census
- Male: 3.4
- Female: 5.2

2022 Census
- Male: 6
- Female: 4

2008 Census
- Urban: 3.4
- Rural: 5.2
- Total: 4.5

2022 Census
- Urban: 5
- Rural: 5
- Total: 5

2022 LPHC | THEMATIC REPORT | NUPTIALITY
(MARRIAGES)

Status of Polygamous marriage by Religion and Educational Level

Religion

- Christian: 4
- Muslim: 8
- Traditional African Religion: 7
- Other religion: 6
- No religion: 5
- Total: 5

Educational Level

- None: 7
- Preschool: 5
- Primary: 5
- Secondary: 5
- University: 5
- Other Tertiary: 5
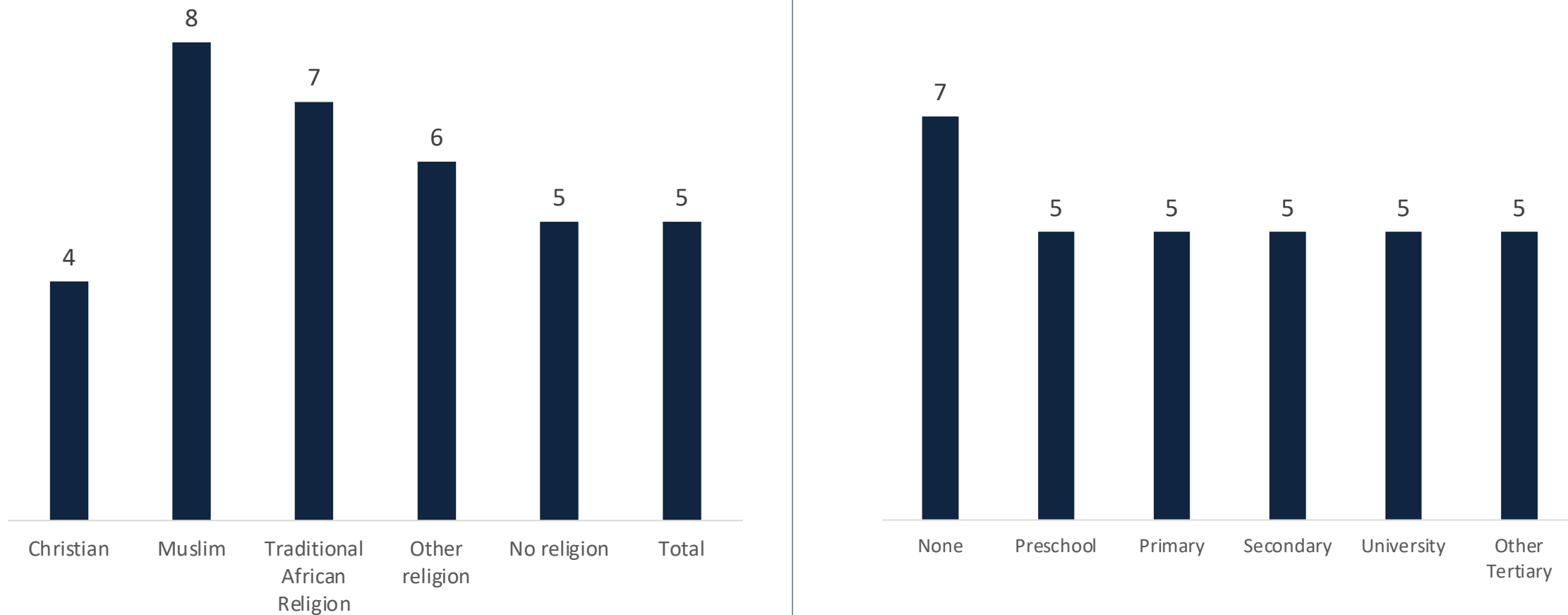
Comparative Analysis of Polygamy by County: 2008-2022

County	2008 Census	2022 Census
Bomi	4	5
Bong	3	3
Gbarpolu	3	3
Grand Bassa	4	4
Grand Cape Mount	9	7
Grand Gedeh	4	4
Grand Kru	6	5
Lofa	12	7
Margibi	3	4
Maryland	5	6
Montserrado	3	5
Liberia	5	5
Nimba	4	4
Rivercess	2	3
River Gee	4	6
Sinoe	4	7

■ 2008 Census   ■ 2022 Census

2022 LPHC | THEMATIC REPORT | NUPTIALITY
(MARRIAGES)
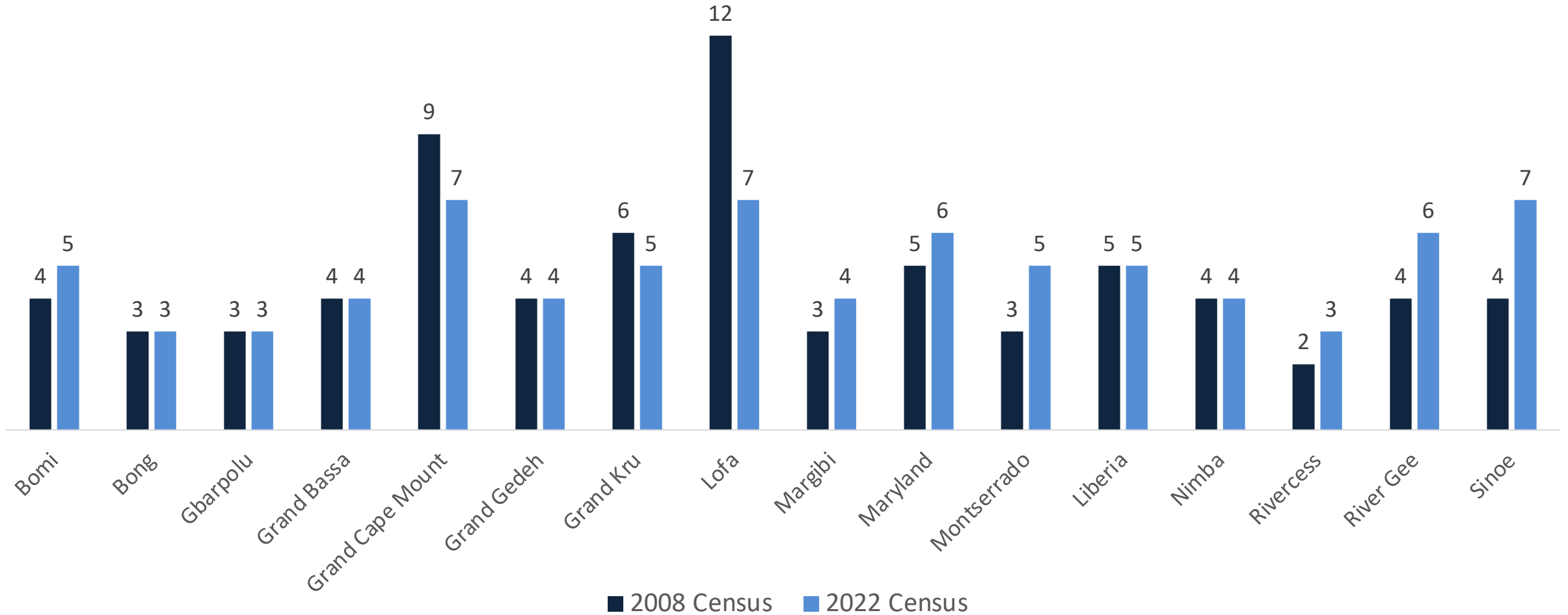
Separation by sex and residence: 2008-2022

Rise stagnated for males and females from 2008-2022

Rise was higher for rural than urban from 2008-2022

Rise was lowest for urban 2008-2022

Increasing separation from 2008-2022

Category	2008 Census	2022 Census
Male	0.6	3
Female	0.9	3
Both Sexes	0.7	3
Urban	0.6	2
Rural	0.9	4
Total	0.7	3

■ 2008 Census ■ 2022 Census
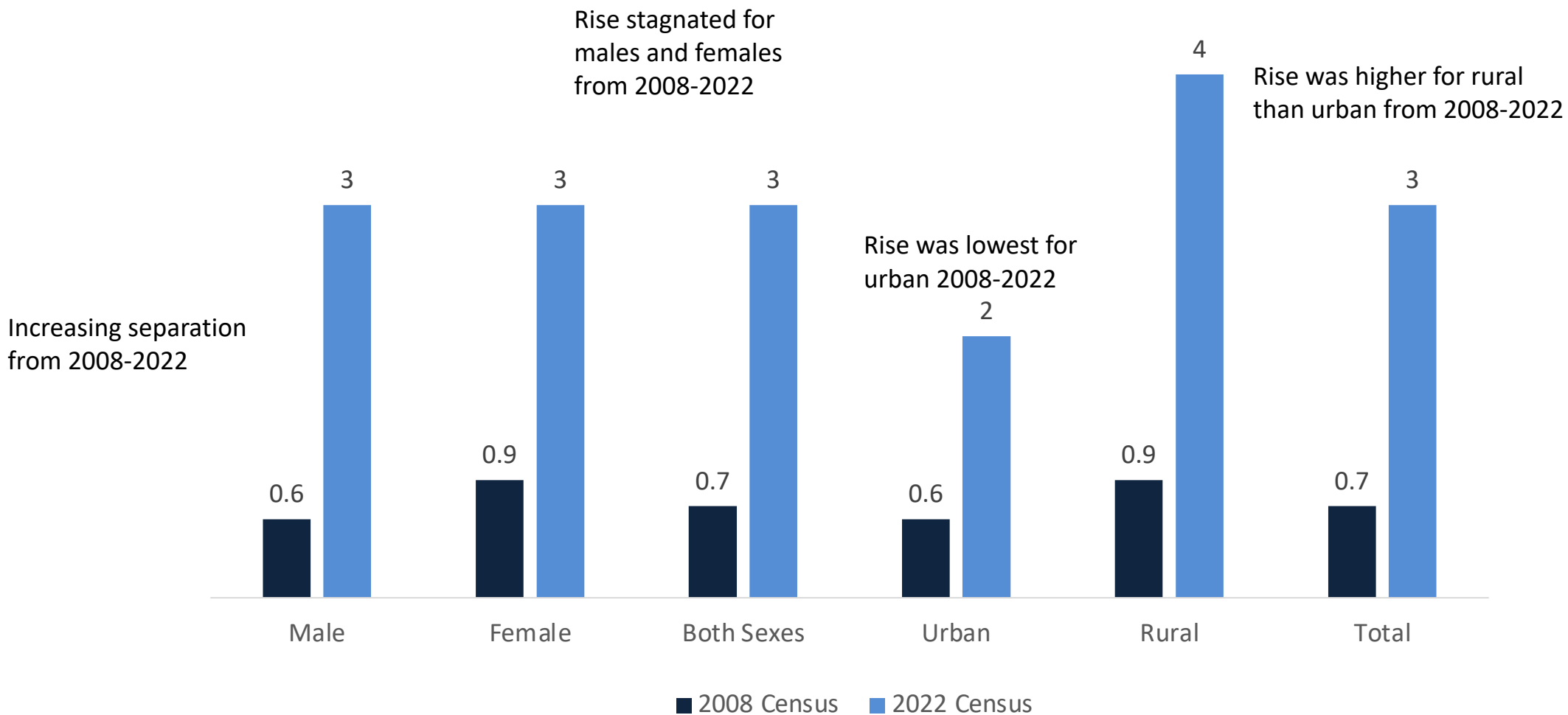
Separated marriage by Religion and Educational Level

Separation by Religious Affiliation
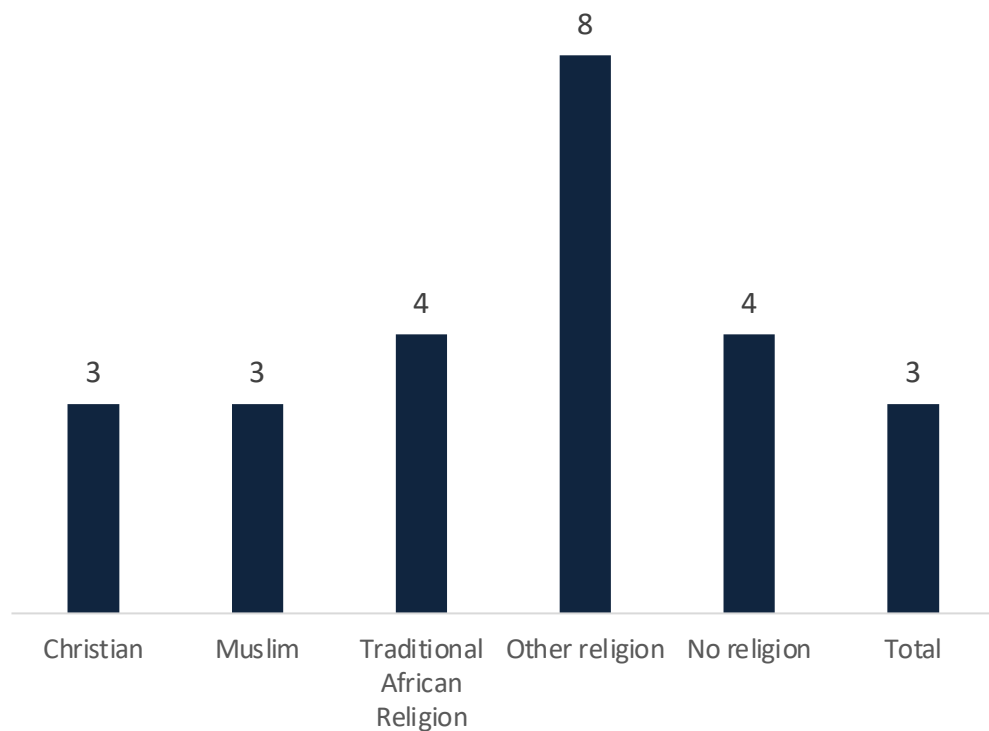
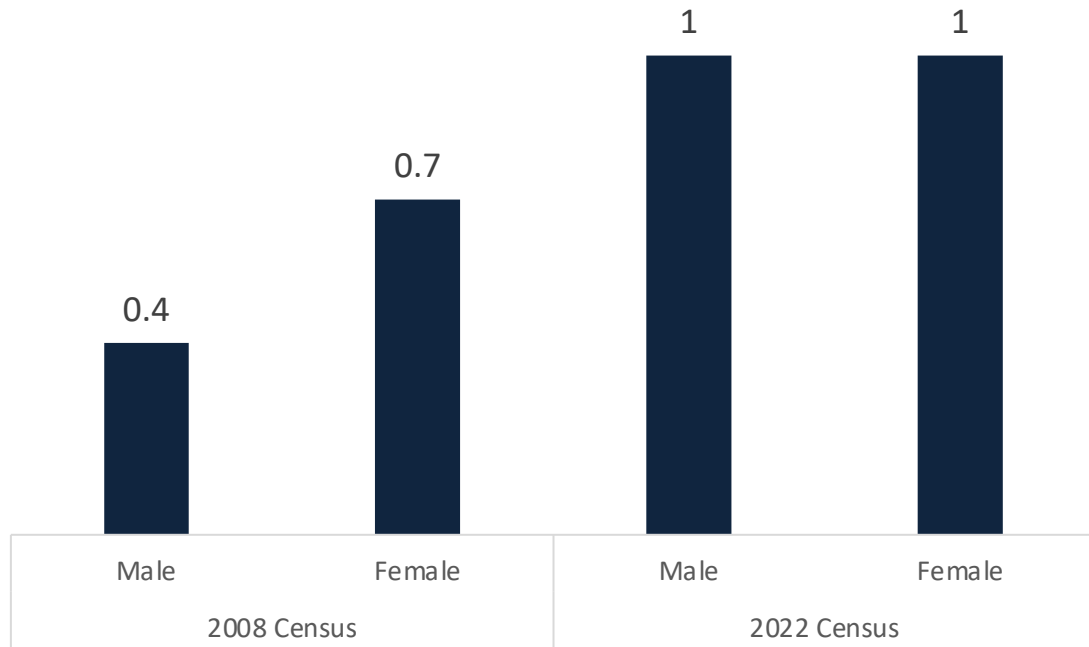Separation by Educational Level
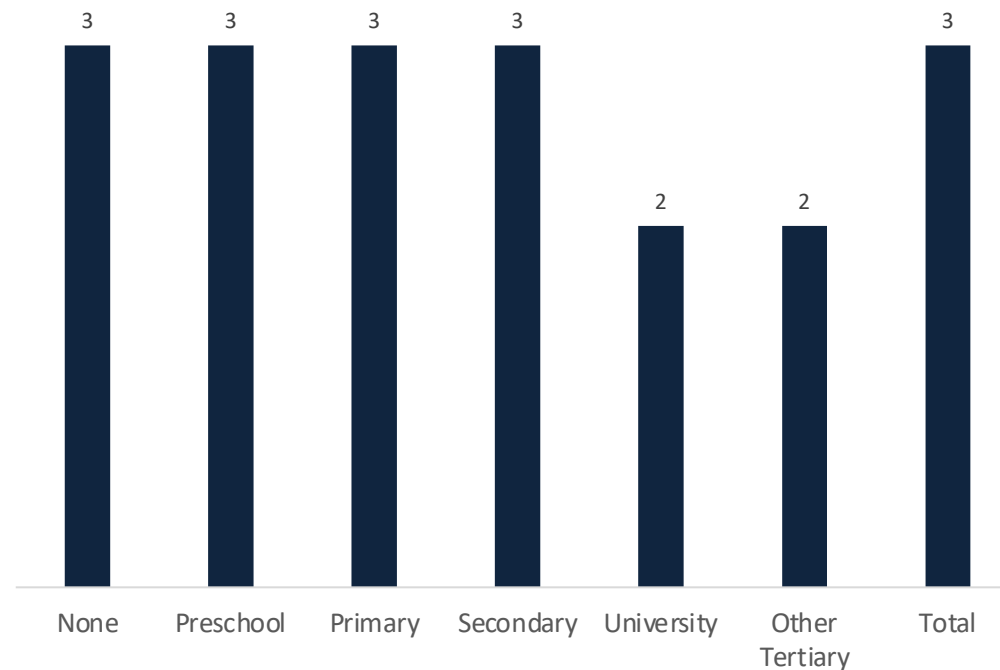
Separated marriage by County
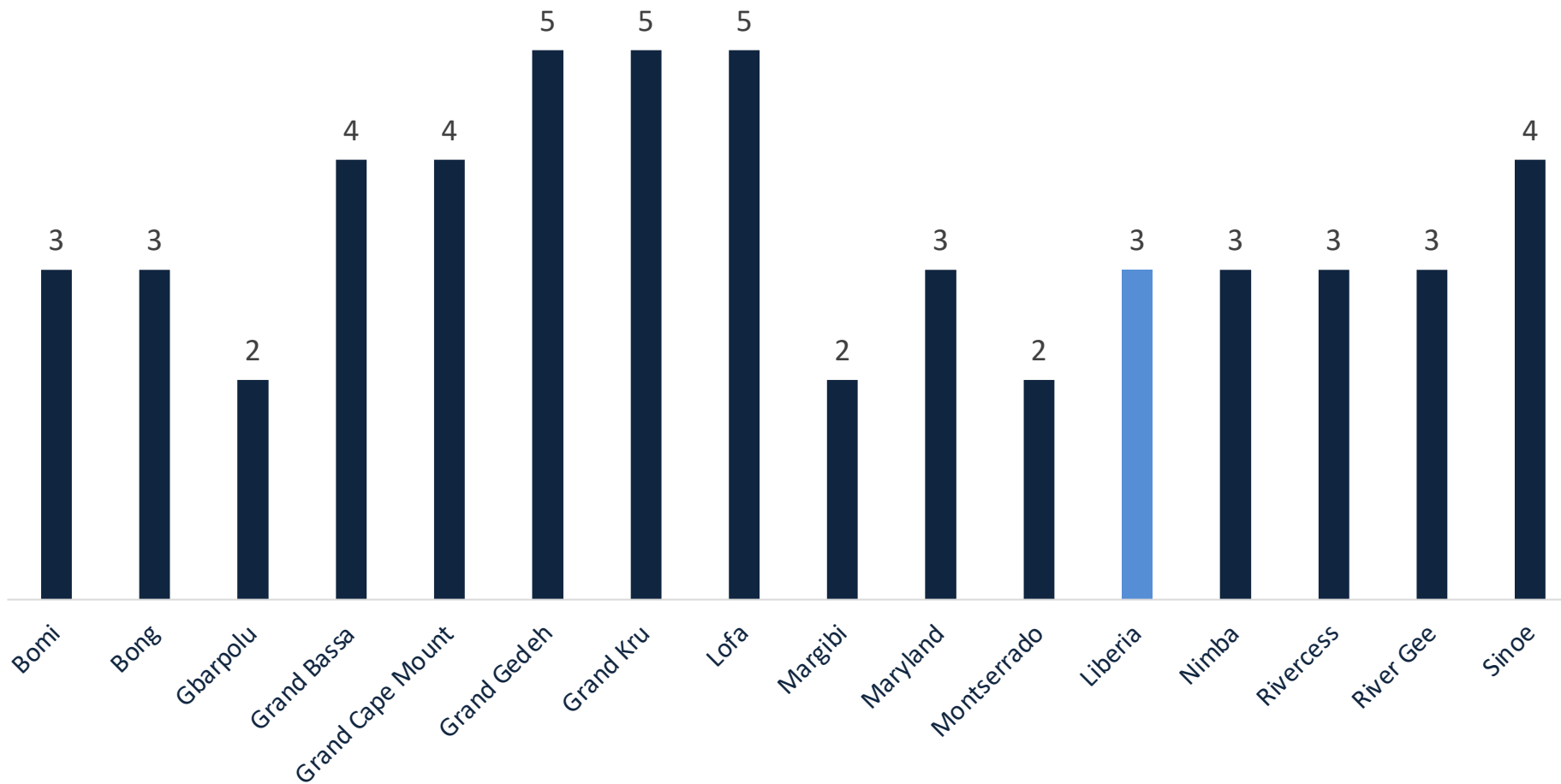
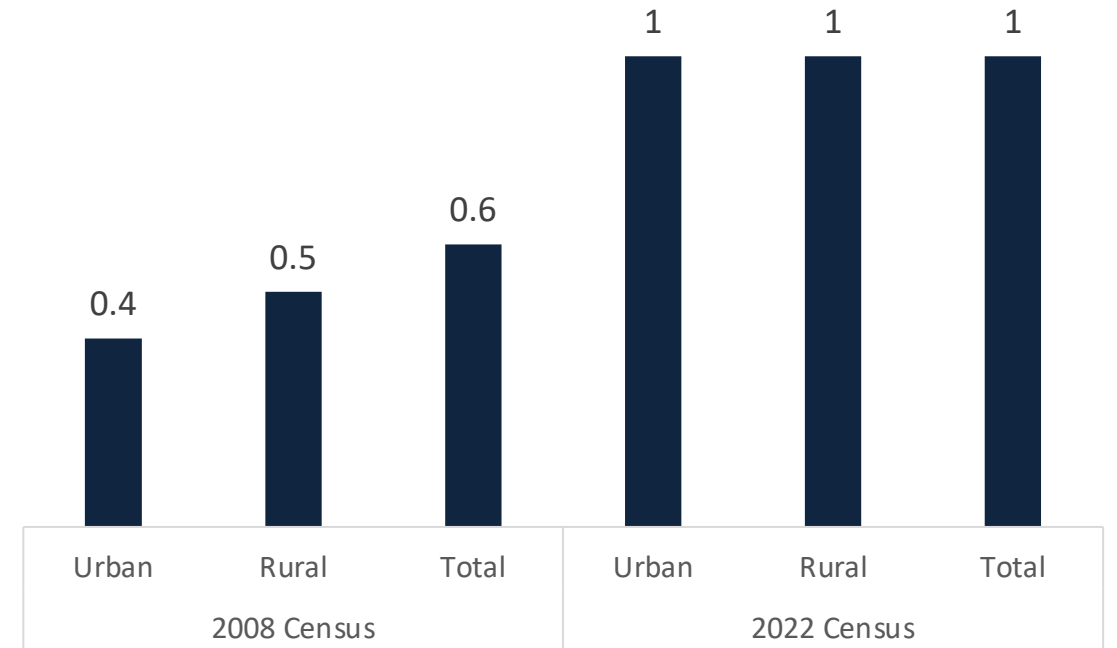
Rise stagnated for Grand Gedeh, Grand Kru and Lofa

Divorce by sex and residence

Divorce by Sex

Divorce increased more among males and in urban areas from 2008 to 2022

Divorce by Residence
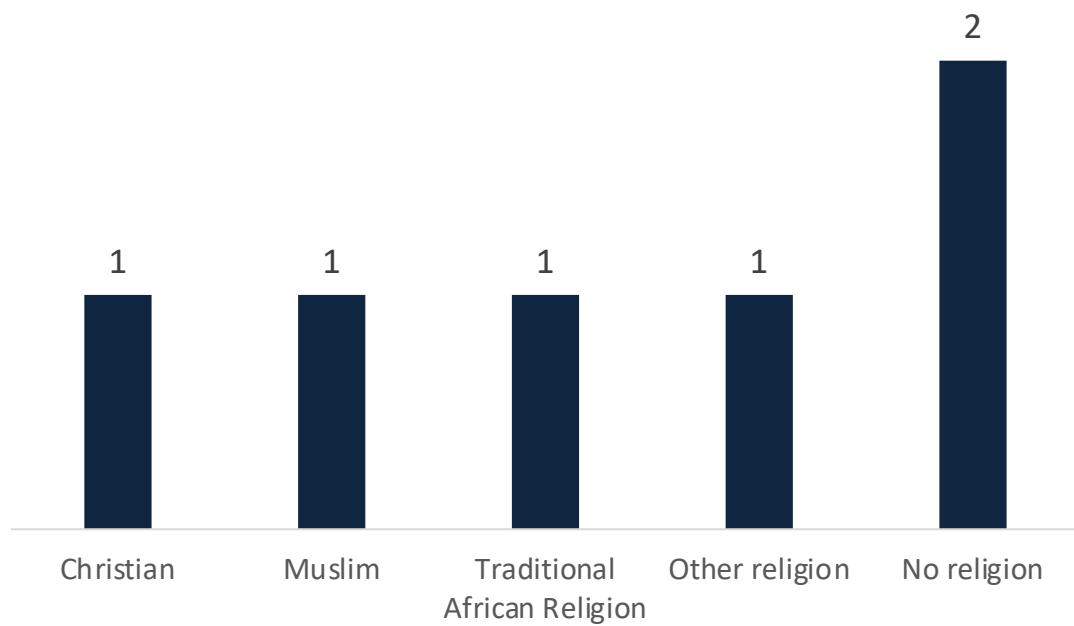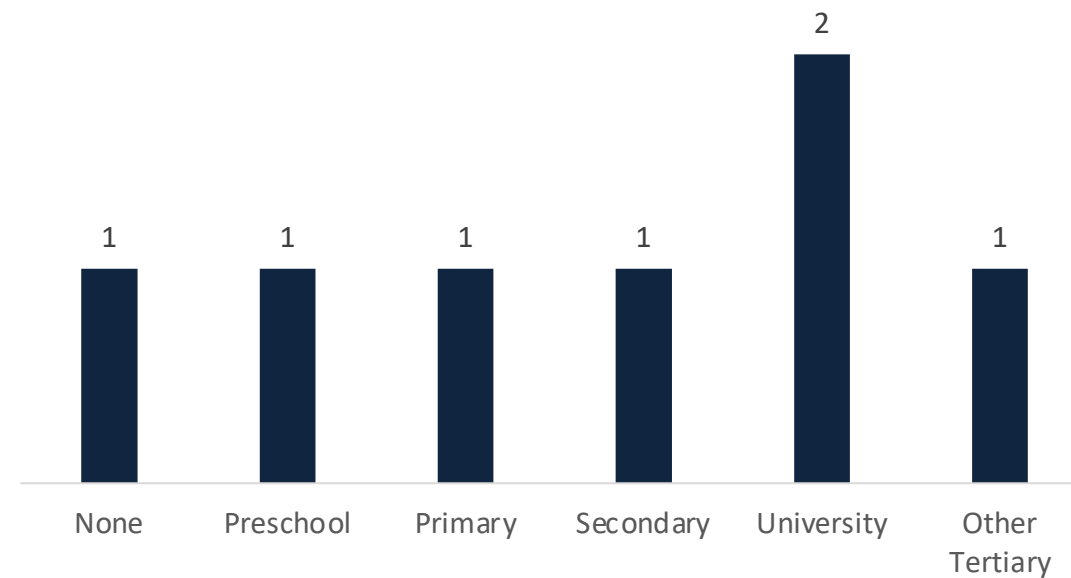

Divorce increased consistently from 2008 to 2022

Status of Divorce by County- 2022

Divorce level of population in 2022 by county
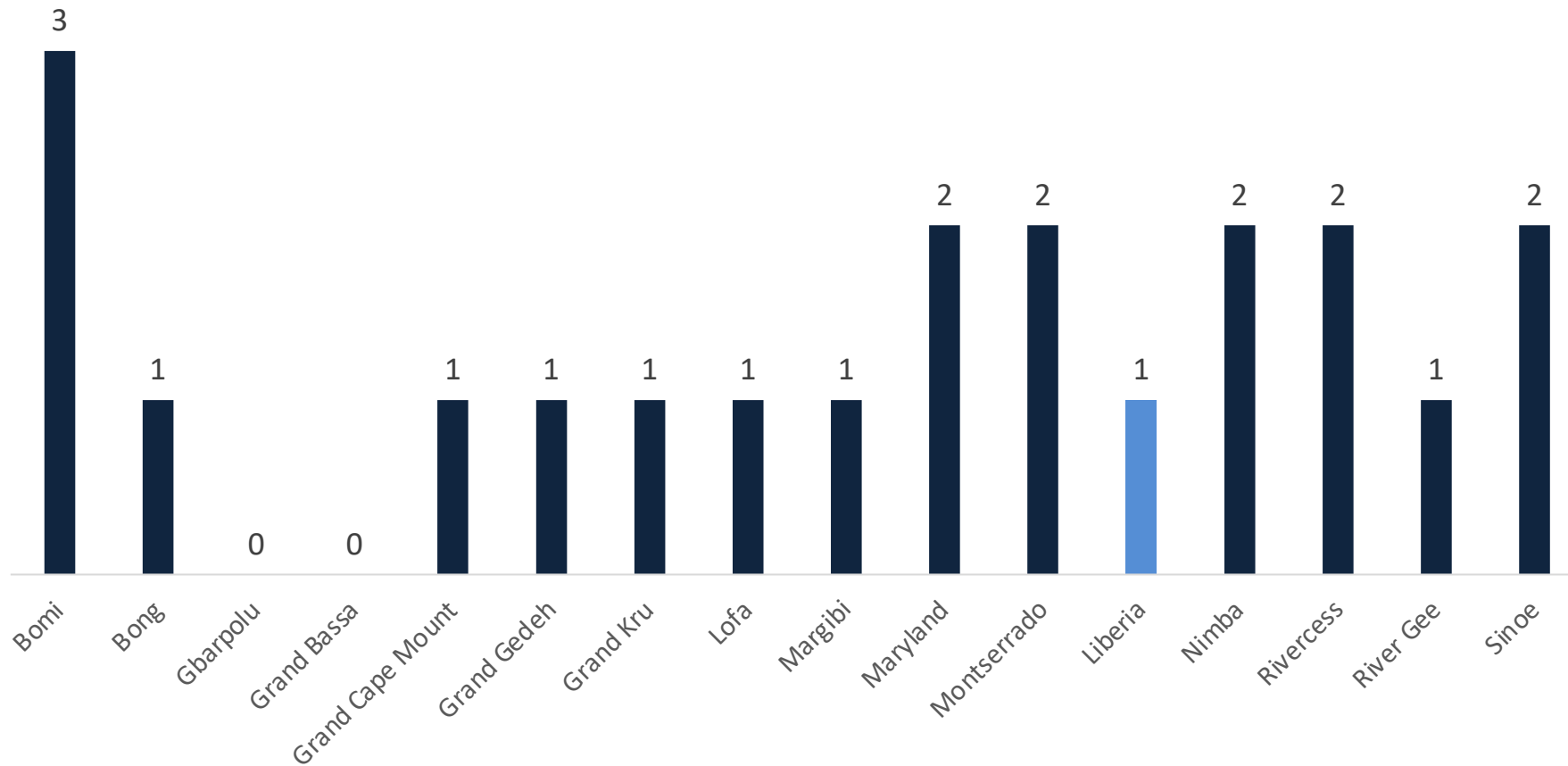
Highest divorce level is experienced in Bomi in 2022, followed by Maryland, Montserrado, River Cess and Sinoe

Status of Widowhood Population: 2008-2022

Widow by sex and residence
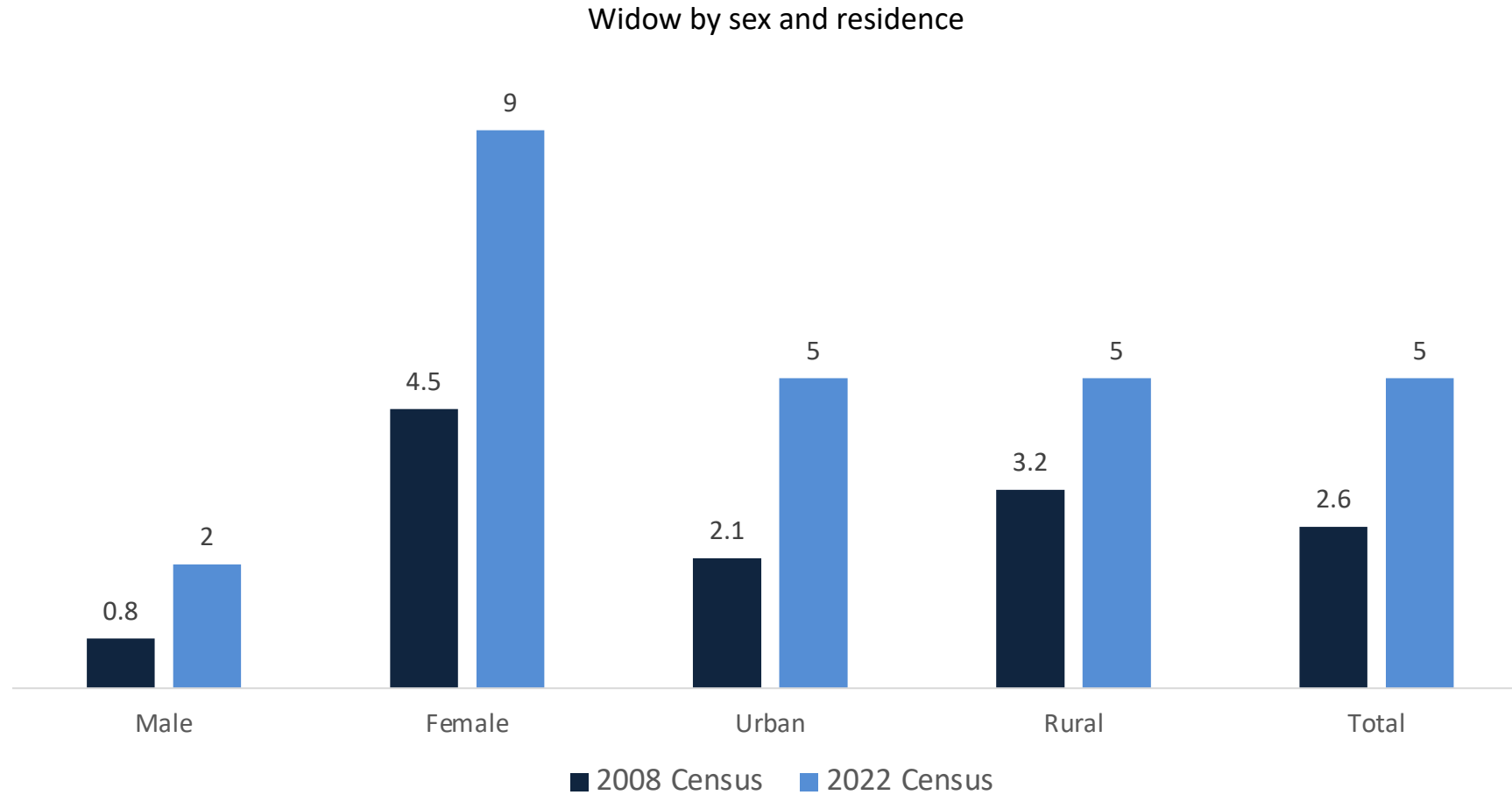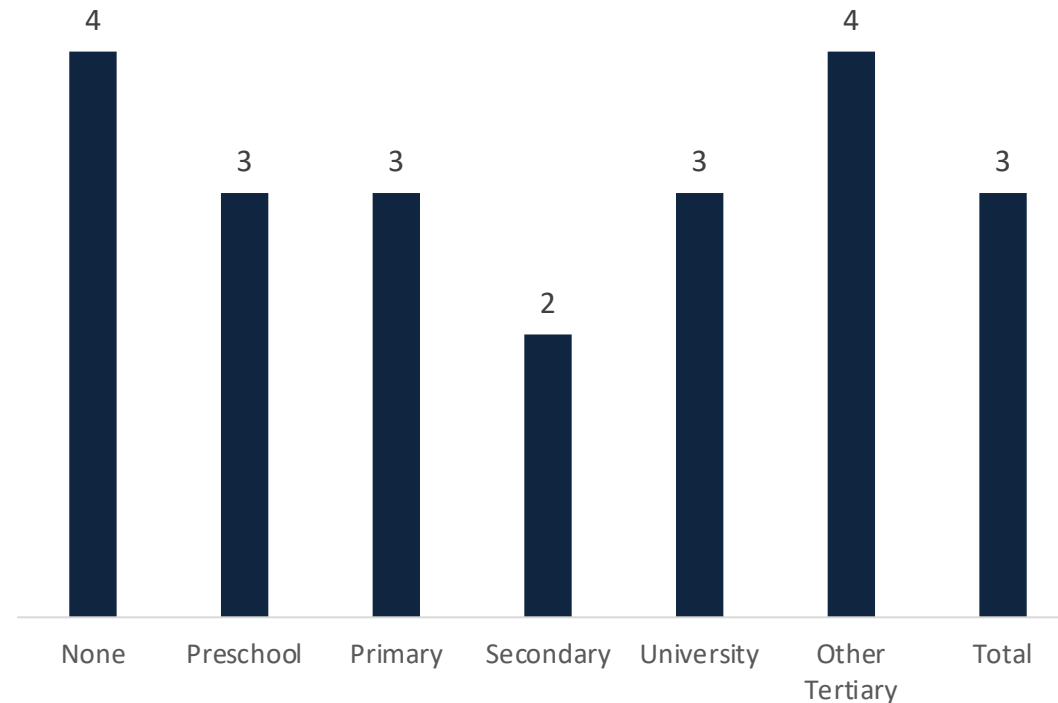
Widowhood by Religious Affiliation and Educational Level

Widowhood by religious affiliation

Widowhood by education level
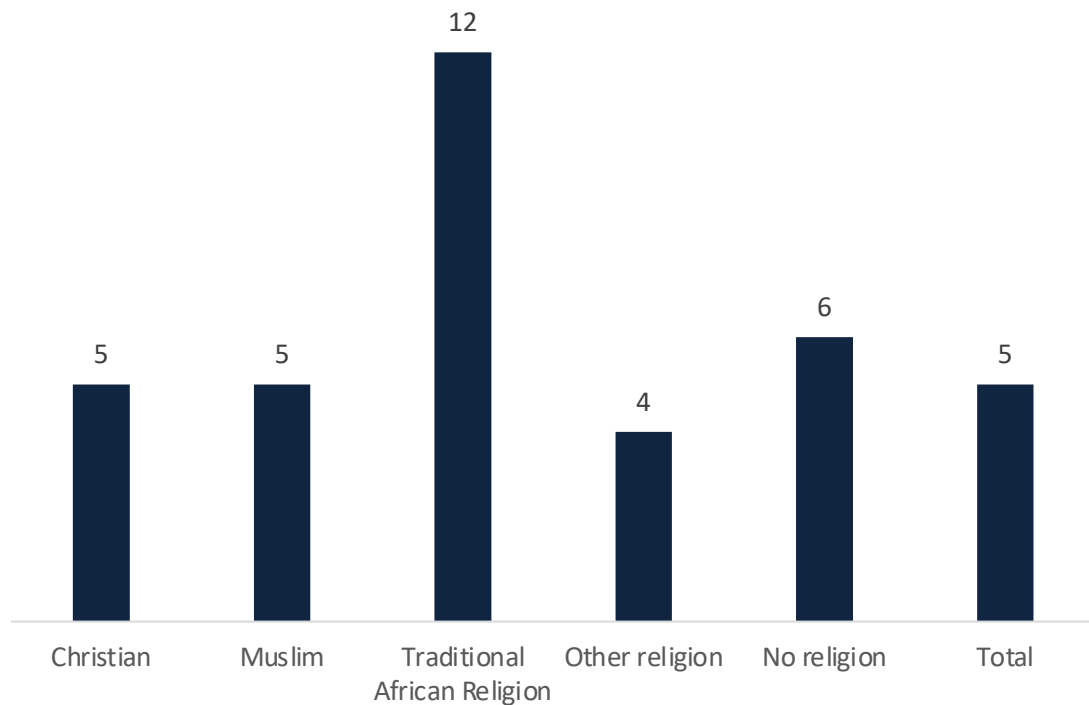
Highest widowhood among traditional religion group

Highest widowhood at none school and university level

Widowhood by County: 2008-2022

Trends of Widowhood: 2008-2022
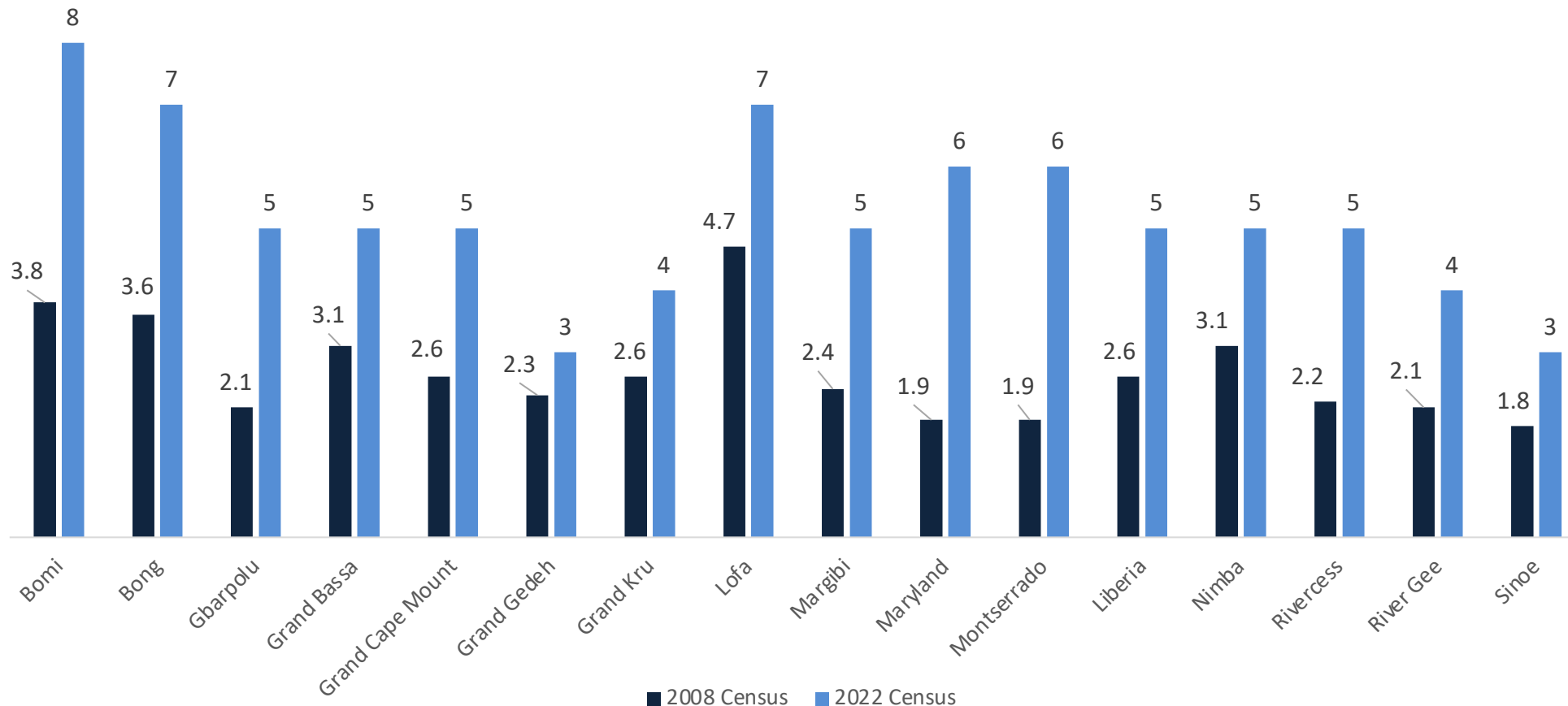
Bomi had the highest widowhood increment, followed by Bong and Lofa

County	2008 Census	2022 Census
Bomi	3.8	8
Bong	3.6	7
Gbarpolu	2.1	5
Grand Bassa	3.1	5
Grand Cape Mount	2.6	5
Grand Gedeh	2.3	3
Grand Kru	2.6	4
Lofa	4.7	7
Margibi	2.4	5
Maryland	1.9	6
Montserrado	1.9	6
Liberia	2.6	5
Nimba	3.1	5
Rivercess	2.2	5
River Gee	2.1	4
Sinoe	1.8	3

2008 Census ■ 2022 Census ■

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(MARRIAGES)

Consensual marriage by sex and residence: 2008-2022

Consensual marriage by sex and residence

Male: 5.2 (2008 Census), 6 (2022 Census)
Female: 1.3 (2008 Census), 7 (2022 Census)
Both sexes: 3.2 (2008 Census), 7 (2022 Census)
Urban: 4.1 (2008 Census), 8 (2022 Census)
Rural: 2.5 (2008 Census), 6 (2022 Census)
Total: 3.2 (2008 Census), 7 (2022 Census)

■ 2008 Census ■ 2022 Census

Consensual Marriage by County: 2008-2022

Consistent rise from 2008-2022

From 2008-2022, consensual marriage had its highest increment in Bomi, followed by Bong and Lofa

Consensual marriage increased consistently in all 15 counties

County	2008 Census	2022 Census
Bomi	3.8	8
Bong	3.6	7
Gbarpolu	2.1	5
Grand Bassa	3.1	5
Grand Cape Mount	2.6	5
Grand Gedeh	2.3	3
Grand Kru	2.6	4
Lofa	4.7	7
Margibi	2.4	5
Maryland	1.9	6
Montserrado	1.9	6
Liberia	2.6	5
Nimba	3.1	5
Rivercess	2.2	5
River Gee	2.1	4
Sinoe	1.8	3

■ 2008 Census ■ 2022 Census

Type of marriages by ethnicity

Ethnic group	Monogamy	Polyggamy	Separation	Divorce	Widowhood	Concensus
Bassa	82	4	3	2	6	4
Belle	76	4	2	1	4	12
Dey	79	6	3	2	7	4
Gbandi	78	6	3	1	6	4
Gio	75	4	3	1	5	12
Gola	80	5	3	1	7	3
Grebo	78	5	3	1	5	7
Kpelle	80	4	3	1	6	7
Kissi	78	5	4	2	7	4
Krahn	80	4	4	1	4	7
Kru	80	5	3	1	6	6
Lorma	76	5	3	1	6	9
Mandingo	81	10	2	1	4	3
Mano	72	5	3	1	5	14
Mende	81	5	4	1	3	6
Sapo	79	7	4	0	5	5
Vai	81	6	2	1	6	3
Other Liberian ethnic group	86	5	1	1	3	4
Other African tribe	83	8	2	1	2	4
Non African	87	5	2	1	1	4
Total	79	**5**	**3**	**1**	**5**	7

National Level: Types of marriages

Never married increased

Monogamy married dropped in 2022

Polygamy married slight increased in 2022

Consensual Union increased in 2022

88.0

77.0

50.0

60.0

4.5 5.0

4.9 7.0

Never married   Married monogamous   Married polygamous   Consensual Union

■ 12 yrs and above (2008)   ■ 12 yrs and above (2022)
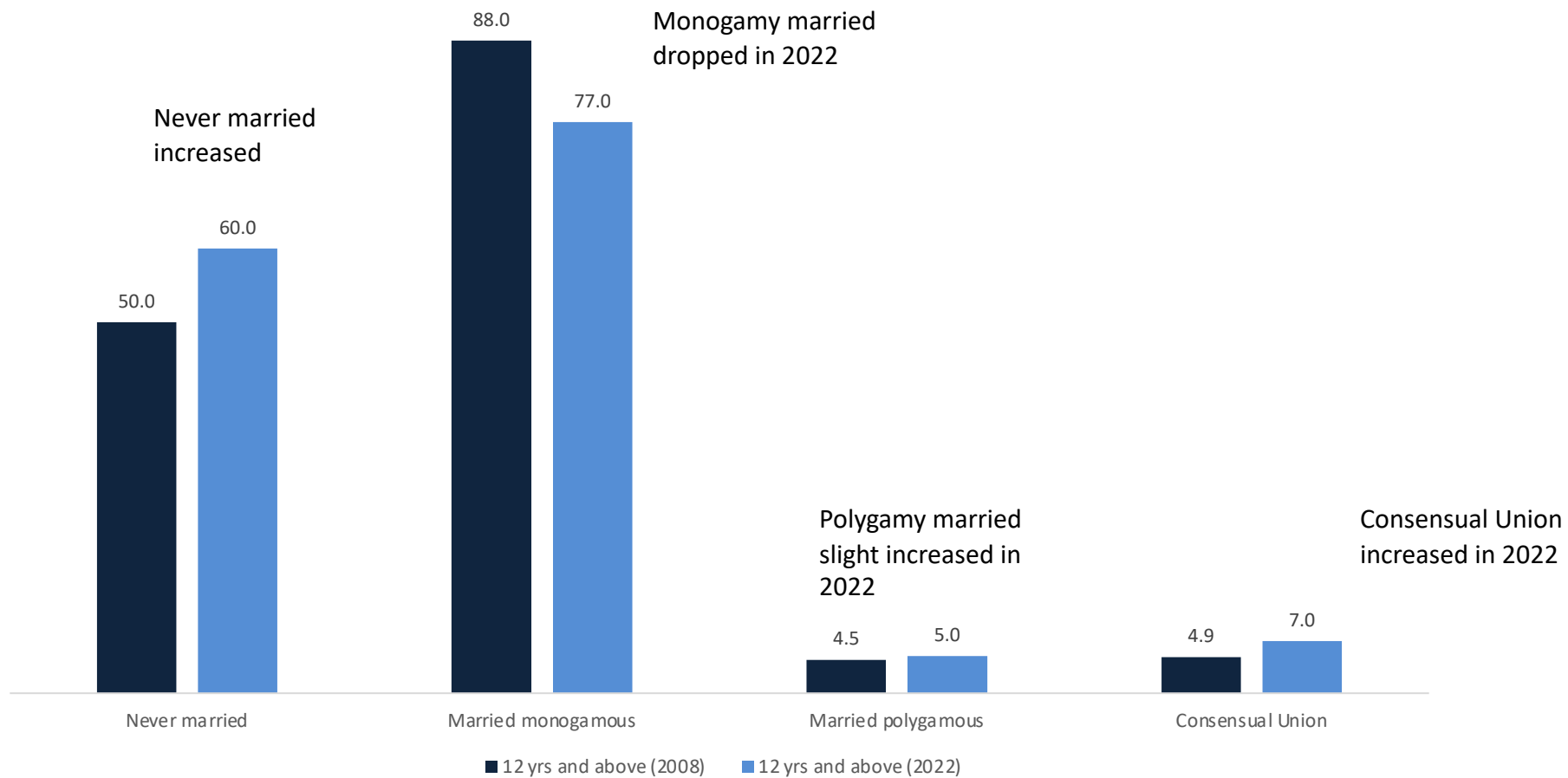
Policy Implication & Recommendations

- A huge percentage of the population is marrying before age 18, as low as age 12 years old. This has implications of promoting child marriage

- **Policy recommendation**: Government and partners should ensure delayed marriages to enhance the social and economic status of children, especially for education purposes. This is important because reducing child marriages is part of SDGs (goal 5) that government has to achieve by 2030

- Separation, divorce, and widowhood increased consistently from 2008-2022, which has implications for hampering sustainianble livelihood for the families affected by separation, divorce and widowhood

- **Policy recommendation:** Government and partners should provide job creation opportunities, social safety nets and scholarships to help sustain homes of divorcees and widows

- Polygamy and monogamy reduced over the 2008 period, which has implications for reducing fertility.

- The reduction in monogamy and polygamy should be supported through advocacy against more than one wife to indirectly reduce fertility.