



Married Same-Sex and Different Sex Couples: A Demographic Portrait

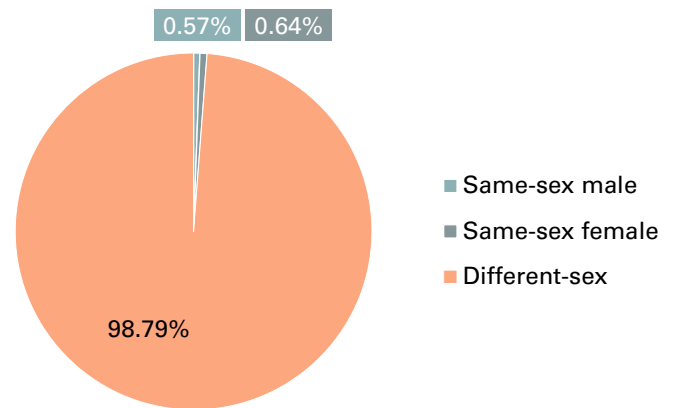
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The first state in the U.S. to legalize same-sex marriage was Massachusetts on May 17th, 2004, predating the federal ruling by eleven years. Marking 20 years since the landmark Massachusetts decision we present a demographic portrait of marriages to same-sex and different-sex couples with 2022 data from the American Community Survey 1-year PUMS files. We begin with an overview of married couples followed by comparisons of individuals in same-sex married couples to those in different-sex married couples based on their marital history, age, education and race/ethnicity. For information about newly married couples please check out our two previously published profiles [FP-23-27](#) and [FP-23-28](#).

Married Couples

- As of 2022 there were slightly more than 60.1 million different-sex married couples in the United States representing 98.79% of all married couples.
- There were over 700,000 same-sex married couples representing 1.21% of all married couples. Among married same-sex couples 47% were marriages among male couples and 53% were among female couples.
- On average, currently married couples of different sexes have been married longer with a median duration of 20 years. Married couples of the same sex have a median duration of 6 years.

Figure 1. Married couples by couple type, 2022

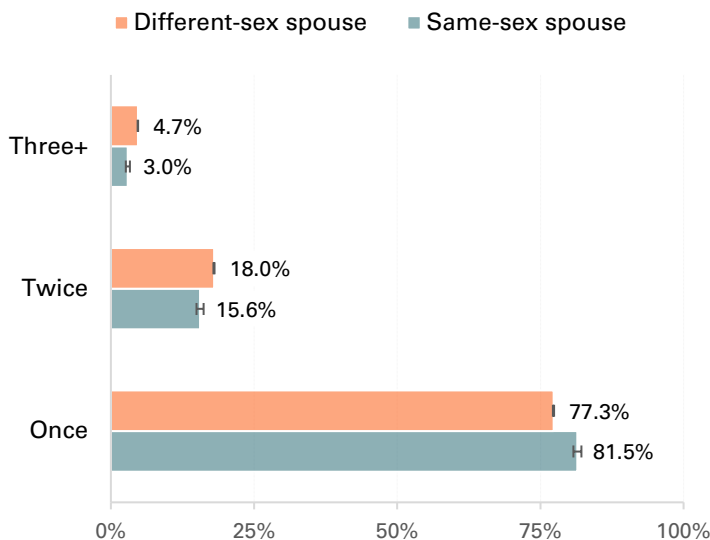


Source: NCFMR analyses of the American Community Survey, 1 year PUMS, 2022

Married Individuals

Number of times married

Figure 2. Number of times married by couple type, 2022



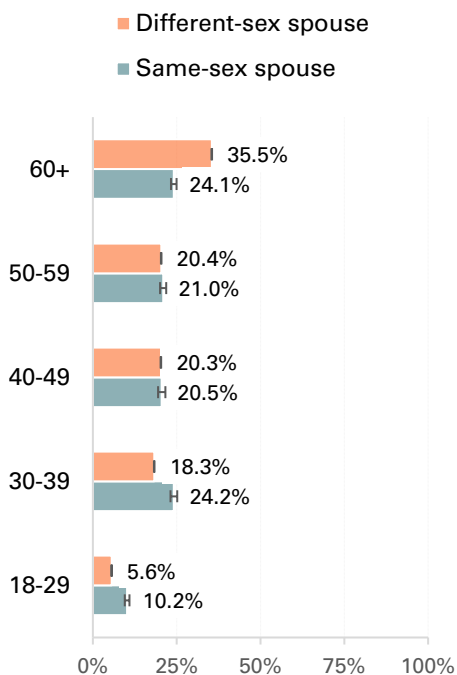
- Most currently married individuals had only been married one time. The share among those with a spouse of the same sex was slightly larger at 81.5% than among those with a spouse of a different sex at 77.3%.

Source: NCFMR analyses of U.S. Census Bureau, 2022 American Community Survey, 1-year PUMS

Age

- Individuals married to a same-sex spouse were younger on average than those married to a different-sex spouse.
- About one-quarter (24.2%) of individuals married to a same-sex spouse were in their thirties compared to 18.3% of individuals married to a different-sex spouse.
- Over one-third (35.3%) of individuals married to a different-sex spouse were over age 60 in contrast to 24.1% of those married to a same-sex spouse.

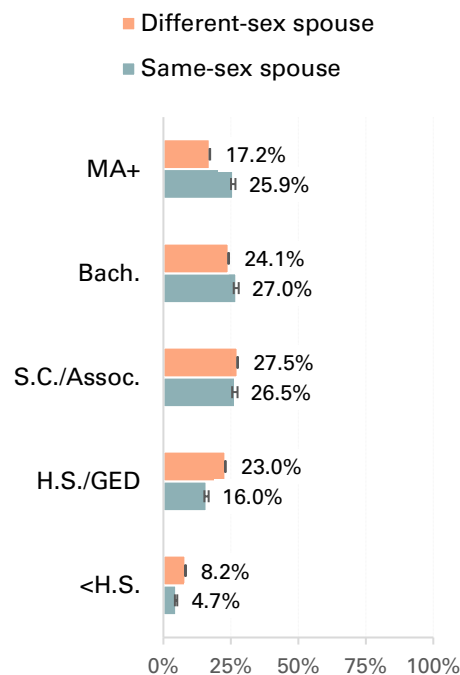
Figure 3. Age distribution by couple type, 2022



Educational Attainment

- Individuals married to same-sex spouses had higher levels of education than their counterparts married to different-sex spouses.
- The greatest educational difference existed at the lowest and highest education levels. One-quarter (25.9%) of individuals with a same-sex spouse had a master's degree in contrast to 17.2% of those married to a different-sex spouse.

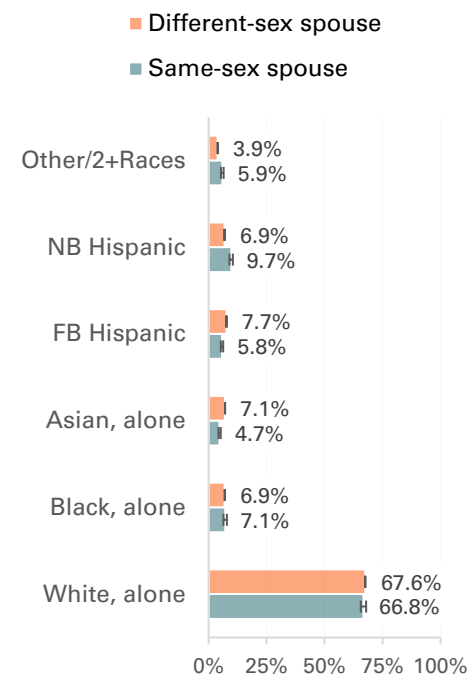
Figure 4. Educational attainment distribution by couple type, 2022



Race/Ethnicity

- Similar shares of individuals married to same-sex and different-sex spouses were White or Black.
- Greater shares of individuals married to a different-sex spouse were Asian or foreign born Hispanic than those married to a same-sex spouse.
- A larger share of individuals married to same-sex spouses were native-born Hispanic or labeled as 'other' or multiracial than those married to different-sex spouses.

Figure 5. Race/Ethnicity distribution by couple type, 2022



Source: NCFMR analyses of U.S. Census Bureau, 2022 American Community Survey, 1-year PUMS

Data Source:

United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-year Public Use Microdata Sample, 2022

References:

Westrick-Payne, K. K. & Manning, W. D. (2023). Recent marriages to same-sex and different-sex couples: Marital history and age at marriage, 2022. *Family Profiles, FP-23-27*. Bowling Green, OH: National Center for Family & Marriage Research. <https://doi.org/10.25035/ncfmr/fp-23-27>

Westrick-Payne, K. K. & Manning, W. D. (2023). Recent marriages to same-sex and different-sex couples: Mobility, region, home ownership, and household income, 2022. *Family Profiles, FP-23-28*. Bowling Green, OH: National Center for Family & Marriage Research. <https://doi.org/10.25035/ncfmr/fp-23-28>

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