



Family Profile No. 21, 2025

## Marriages to Same-sex and Different-sex Couples: 2019, 2021, & 2023

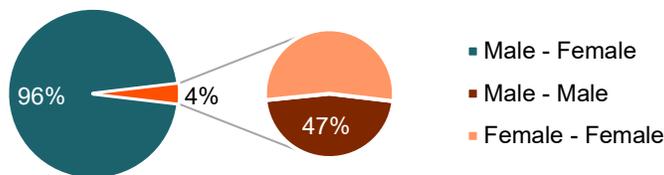
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Same-sex marriage became legal nationwide following the U.S. Supreme Court’s 2015 *Obergefell v. Hodges* decision. In 2019, the U.S. Census Bureau updated the American Community Survey’s (ACS) household roster to directly identify same-sex and different-sex married and cohabiting couples. Drawing on the American Community Survey, 2019, 2021, and 2023 1-year estimates from IPUMS USA ([Ruggles et al., 2024](#)), we provide the most recent estimates of trends in same-sex marriage formation. We compare same-sex and different-sex newlyweds by marital history, age, and education, limiting our analyses to householders and their spouses. Although "sex" and "gender" are distinct concepts, we use the term "sex" to align with ACS roster language, which classifies couples as "same-sex" or "opposite-sex" ([Kreider & Gurrentz, 2019](#)). This brief updates FP-23-09 ([Westrick-Payne & Manning, 2023](#)). Find our other family profiles on LGBTQ+ families [here](#).

### Sex Composition of Marriages in the Last Year

- In 2023, 72,835 marriages to same-sex couples were recorded, and the share of marriages to same-sex couples has been stable since 2019 (4%).
- Similar to prior years a slightly greater share of marriages to same-sex couples were to female couples (53%) than to male couples (47%).

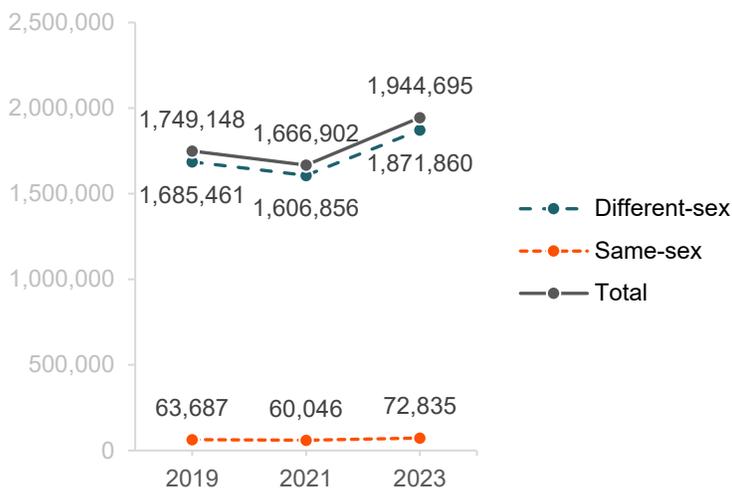
Figure 1. Sex Composition of Recently Married Couples, 2023



Source: NCFMR analyses of U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-year estimates 2023 from IPUMS USA, University of Minnesota, [www.ipums.org](http://www.ipums.org).

### Change in Marriages in the Last Year

Figure 2. Change in the number of marriages in the last year by couple sex composition, 2019, 2021 & 2023



- The total number of marriages increased between 2019 and 2023, with a slight dip during the COVID-19 pandemic (Julian et al., 2022).
- In 2019, an estimated 1,749,148 total marriages were reported, declining to 1,666,902 in 2021 and rising to 1,944,695 by 2023.
- There were 63,687 new marriages among same-sex couples in 2019, compared to 60,046 in 2021 and 72,835 in 2023.
- For different-sex couples, marriages grew from 1,685,461 in 2019, with a slight decline to 1,606,856 in 2021, and an increase to 1,871,860 in 2023.

Source: NCFMR analyses of U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-year estimates 2019, 2021, & 2023 from IPUMS USA, University of Minnesota, [www.ipums.org](http://www.ipums.org).

## Marital History Among Couples Who Married in the Last Year

- Similar to prior years, in 2023 about two-thirds of all marriages were between spouses who were both marrying for the first time—71% among same-sex couples and 67% among different-sex couples.
- Among same-sex couples who married in 2023, 6% involved spouses who had both been previously married, while 23% included one previously married spouse.
- For different-sex couples, 15% of marriages involved two previously married spouses, and 18% included only one spouse with a prior marriage.

Figure 3. First marriages and remarriages among couples who married in the last year, 2023

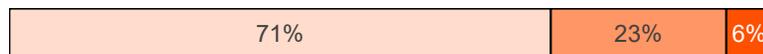
### Different-sex

□ Both First Marriage ■ First Marriage for One ■ Remarriage for Both



### Same-sex

□ Both First Marriage ■ First Marriage for One ■ Remarriage for Both



Source: NCFMR analyses of U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-year estimates 2023 from IPUMS USA, University of Minnesota, [www.ipums.org](http://www.ipums.org).

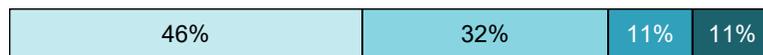
## Age of Younger Spouse Among Couples Who Married in the Last Year

- The mean age at first marriage is higher for same-sex than different-sex couples (Westrick-Payne & Manning, 2023).
- In 2023, the younger partner was under age 30 in 35% of marriages among same-sex couples and 46% among different-sex couples. This was a slight decline for same-sex couples compared to what was observed in 2021.
- Similar to prior years, higher shares of same-sex than different-sex couples married in the last year included at least one partner over age 40 (28% vs. 22%).

Figure 4. Age of younger spouse among couples who married in the last year, 2023

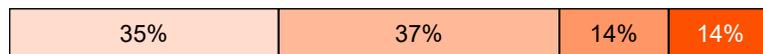
### Different-sex

□ 18-29 ■ 30-39 ■ 40-49 ■ 50+



### Same-sex

□ 18-29 ■ 30-39 ■ 40-49 ■ 50+



Source: NCFMR analyses of Community Survey, 1-year estimates 2023 from IPUMS USA, University of Minnesota, [www.ipums.org](http://www.ipums.org)

## Educational Attainment Among Couples Who Married in the Last Year

- Following the trend in prior years same-sex couples who married in 2023 had higher educational attainment levels than different-sex couples.
- In two-thirds (68%) of marriages among same-sex couples, at least one partner held a college degree compared to 58% among different-sex couples who married in 2023.

Figure 5. Educational attainment among couples who married in the last year, 2023

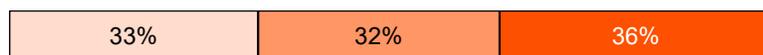
### Different-sex

□ Both H.S. or <H.S. ■ One College Degree ■ Both College Degree



### Same-sex

□ Both H.S. or <H.S. ■ One College Degree ■ Both College Degree



Source: NCFMR analyses of Community Survey, 1-year estimates 2023 from IPUMS USA, University of Minnesota, [www.ipums.org](http://www.ipums.org)

### Data Sources

Ruggles, S., Flood, S., Sobek, M., Backman, D., Chen, A., Cooper, G., Richards, S., Rodgers, R., & Schouweiler, M. (2024). *IPUMS USA: Version 15.0* [Dataset]. IPUMS. <https://doi.org/10.18128/D010.V15.0>

### References

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Kreider, R. M., & Gurrentz, B. (2019). Updates to collection and editing of household relationship measures in the Current Population Survey. U.S. Census Bureau. Retrieved from: <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/working-papers/2019/demo/SEHSD-WP-2018-30.pdf>.

Westrick-Payne, K. K., & Manning, W. D. (2023). Marriages to same-sex and different-sex couples: 2019 & 2021. *Family Profiles*, FP-23-09. Bowling Green, OH: National Center for Family & Marriage Research. <https://doi.org/10.25035/ncfmr/fp-23-09>

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