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FP-12-07 Median Age at First Marriage, 2010

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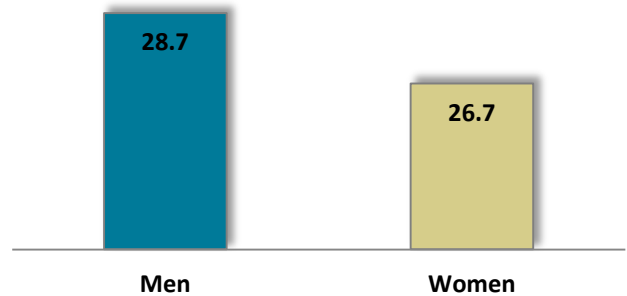
Median Age at First Marriage, 2010

The upward trend in the median age at first marriage in the United States began in the mid 1950s and continues today, according to estimates by the U.S. Census Bureau using the Current Population Survey. Rising from a low of 22.5 among men and 20.1 among women, the median age at first marriage has increased 30% since 1956. Over this same time period, the gender gap in the median age at first marriage has fluctuated by only about a year, remaining between 1.6 and 2.7 years.

This profile uses direct measures of age at first marriage from the American Community Survey among men and women who first married in 2010.

- The median age at first marriage among men—or the age at which half of all men married—in 2010 was 28.7. Among women, the median age at first marriage was 26.7.
- In 2010, the gender gap was 2.0 years.

Figure 1. Median Age at First Marriage by Sex, 2010

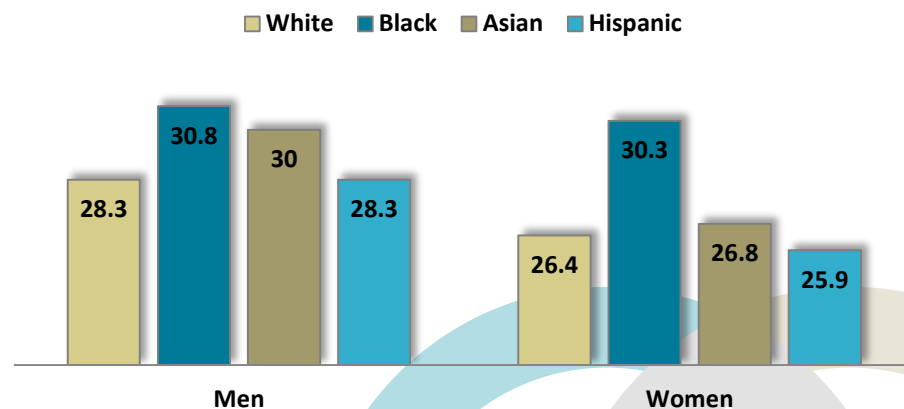


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates, 2010

Race and Ethnicity

- The median age at first marriage varies by race and ethnicity.
 - Black men and Black women have the highest median ages at 30.8 and 30.3, respectively. They also have the smallest gender gap—approximately 6 months—of all the racial and ethnic groups examined.
 - Hispanic (as well as White) men and Hispanic women have the lowest median ages at 28.3 and 25.9, respectively.
 - The largest gender gap is found among Asians—the median age at first marriage is over 3 years higher for Asian men compared to Asian women.
- Variation in the age at marriage among race and ethnic groups is greater for women than men.
 - The median age at first marriage for Black women is nearly 4.5 years higher than the median age for Hispanic women.
 - Among men, there is only a 2.5 year difference between Black men and Hispanic and White men.

Figure 2. Median Age at First Marriage by Race and Ethnicity, 2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates, 2010

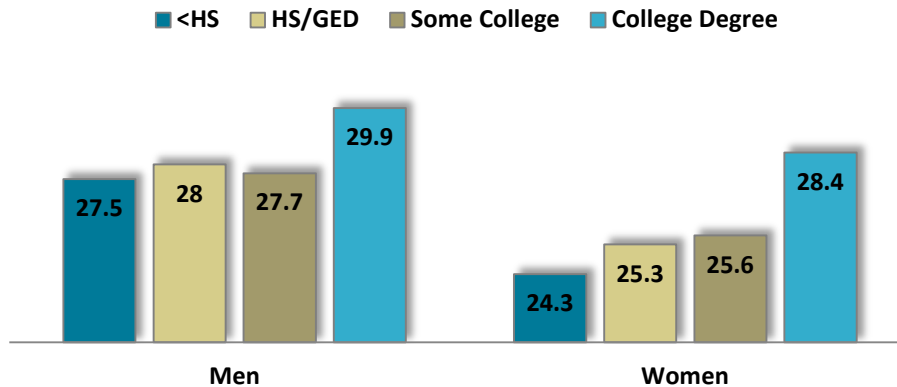
Family Profiles examine topics related to NCFMR's core research themes. Data are presented at both the national and state levels using new data sources. Written for both researchers and broad communities, these profiles summarize the latest statistics on U.S. families.

Educational Attainment

- Men and women with less than a high school education have the lowest median age at first marriage at 27.5 years and 24.3 years, respectively. Median age at first marriage is highest for those who have completed a Bachelor’s degree, 29.9 among men and 28.4 among women.
- Variation among educational attainment groups is greater among women than men.
 - On average, women with a college degree marry 4 years later than women with less than a high school education and about 3 years later than women with a high school/diploma or some post high school education but have not earned a Bachelor’s degree (‘some college’).
 - For men, there is little variation among those without a college degree. Men with a college degree consistently marry about 2 years later than all other men.
- A negative association exists between education and the gender gap in age at first marriage. The gender gap in age at marriage among those with less than a high school education is about 3 years. Among those with a college degree the gender gap is only 1.5 years.

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Figure 3. Median Age at First Marriage by Educational Attainment, 2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates, 2010

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