

2022

FP-22-14 Single and Living Alone in Midlife, 2021

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Wiborg, Corrine E., "FP-22-14 Single and Living Alone in Midlife, 2021" (2022). *National Center for Family and Marriage Research Family Profiles*. 283.

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Family Profile No. 14, 2022

Single and Living Alone in Midlife, 2021

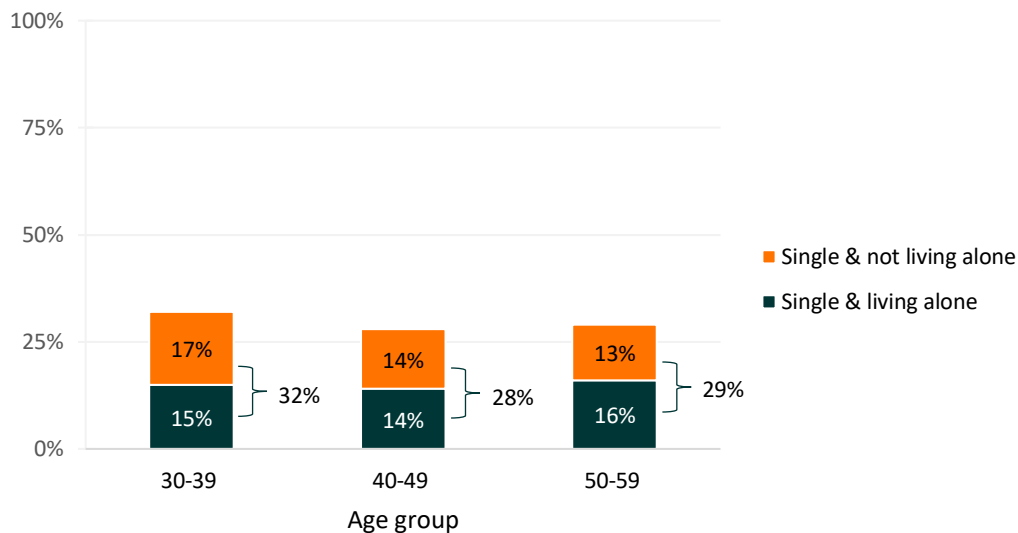
Author: Corrine E. Wiborg

The share of adults who live alone is on the rise (Vespa, Lewis & Kreider, 2013), in part due to changes in marriage and divorce in the United States (FP-21-24). This Family Profile examines sociodemographic variation among single adults living alone in midlife (ages 30-59) in 2021 using data from the 2021 ASEC Current Population Survey from IPUMS-CPS. We begin with single adults who are not married or cohabiting and focus on those who are living alone (excluding those living with other adults such as parents, siblings, roommates, etc.). We begin by showing the share of adults 30-59 who are single and their living arrangements by age group, and then present marital status and home ownership variation by age group and gender among single adults living alone.

Living Arrangements among Single Adults 30-59

- Three in 10 adults aged 30-59 were single.
 - There was little variation in the share of middle-aged adults who were single, ranging from 28% to 32% among the age groups examined.
- About half of single adults in midlife were living alone and this percentage increased slightly with age.
 - Among singles aged 30-39, 47% were living alone compared to 50% of those aged 40-49 and 55% of those aged 50-59.
- Roughly one in seven mid-life adults were single and living alone with little variation by age: 15% of those aged 30-39, 14% of those aged 40-49, and 16% of those aged 50-59.

Figure 1. Percentage of Single Adults Living and Not Living Alone by Age Group, 2021



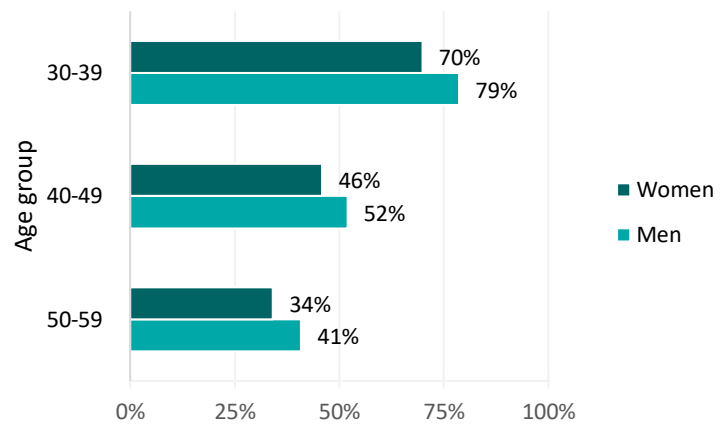
Source: NCFMR analyses of ASEC Current Population Survey, 2021 from IPUMS CPS, University of Minnesota, www.ipums.org

About half of single adults in midlife were living alone in 2021.

Single and Living Alone and Never Been Married

- Among men and women who were single and living alone the share who had never been married declined with age.
 - Among single women living alone aged 30-39 70% had never been married while about one in three (34%) of those aged 50-59 had never been married.
 - Over three-quarters (79%) of single men living alone aged 30-39 had never been married, in contrast to about two in five (41%) among men aged 50-59.
- At each age group, the share of adults never married was higher for men than women
 - The gender gap narrowed from nine percentage points among those aged 30-39 to seven percentage points among those aged 50-59.

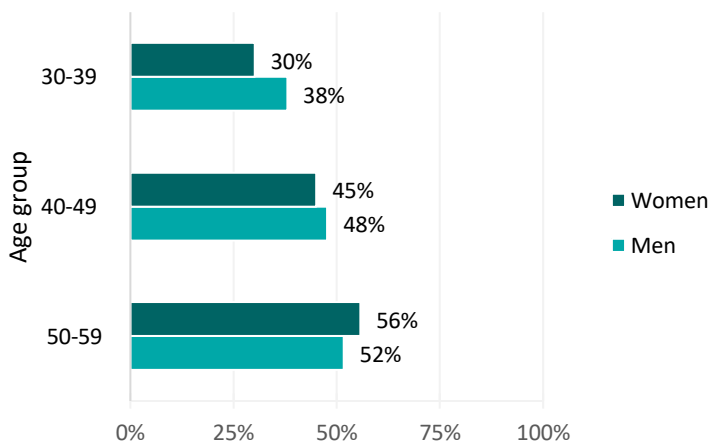
Figure 2. Percentage of Single Men and Women Living Alone and Never Married, 2021



Source: NCFMR analyses of ASEC Current Population Survey, 2021 from IPUMS CPS, University of Minnesota, www.ipums.org

Single and Living Alone by Homeownership

Figure 3. Percentage of Single Men and Women Living Alone and Homeownership, 2021



Source: NCFMR analyses of ASEC Current Population Survey, 2021 from IPUMS CPS, University of Minnesota, www.ipums.org

- Homeownership increased with age among mid-life men and women who were single and living alone.
 - Among those aged 50-59, just over half of single adults living alone were homeowners regardless of gender.
- Larger shares of men were homeowners among those aged 30-39 and 40-49.
- The gender gap in homeownership was reversed among those aged 50-59.
 - Among those aged 50-59, a slightly larger share of single women living alone reported being a homeowner (56%) compared to single men (52%).

Data Sources:

Flood, S., King, M., Rodgers, R., Ruggles, S., Warren, J. R., & Westberry, M. (2021). Integrated Public Use Microdata Series: Current Population Survey: Version 9.0 [dataset]. Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS. <https://doi.org/10.18128/D030.V9.0>

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Payne, K. P. (2021). Marital experiences in the U.S., 1996 & 2018. Family Profiles, FP-21-24. Bowling Green, OH: National Center for Family & Marriage Research. <https://doi.org/10.25035/ncfmr/fp-21-24>

Vespa, J., Lewis, J. M., & Kreider, R. M. (2013). America's families and living arrangements: 2012. Current Population Reports, 20-570, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, D.C. Retrieved from <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2013/demo/p20-570.pdf>

Suggested Citation:

Wiborg, C. E. (2022). Single and living alone in midlife, 2021. *Family Profiles*, FP-22-14. Bowling Green, OH: National Center for Family & Marriage Research. <https://doi.org/10.25035/ncfmr/fp-22-14>