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FP-24-23 Homogamy in U.S. Marriages, 2022

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Family Profile No. 23, 2024

Homogamy in U.S. Marriages, 2022

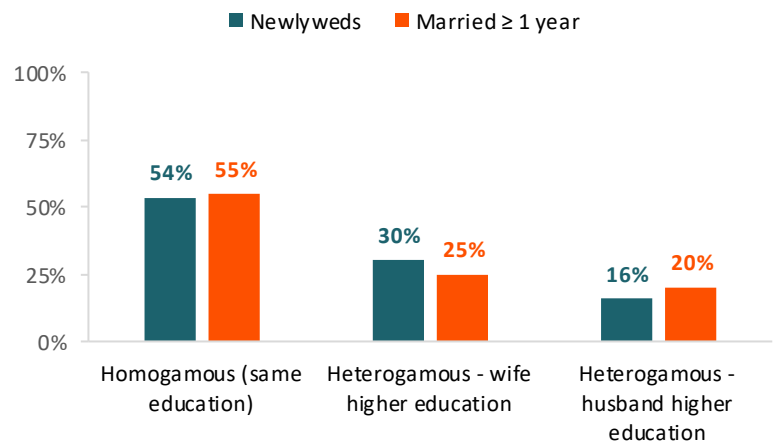
Author: Jaden Loo

Most married couples in the United States are homogamous, which means that the two spouses share similar demographic and/or socioeconomic characteristics. This Family Profile examines patterns of marital homogamy for newlyweds (married for less than a year) and couples that have been married for over a year. We explore variation in educational, racial/ethnic, age, and nativity status homogamy for different-sex married couples using 2022 American Community Survey data. This profile provides an update of the estimates from FP-21-06, FP-18-18, FP-15-16, FP-15-15, and FP-15-14.

Educational Homogamy

- Over half of both newlyweds (53.6%) and couples married for over one year (54.7%) are homogamous on education (the same level of educational attainment), but this share is slightly larger among couples married for more than one year.
- Among educationally heterogamous (different levels of educational attainment) married couples, wives have greater education than their husbands more often among newlyweds (30.5%) than couples married for more than one year (25.1%).
- Conversely, it is more common for couples married for more than one year to have husbands with greater education than their wives (20.3%) compared with newlyweds (15.9%).

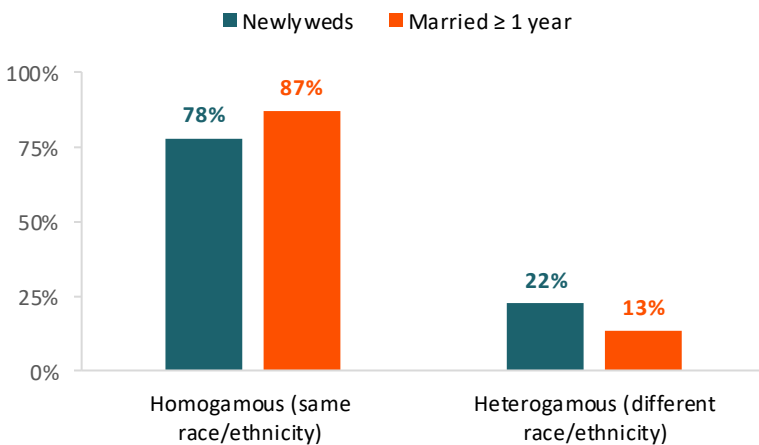
Figure 1. Educational Homogamy in U.S. Marriages, 2022



Source: NCFMR analyses of American Community Survey 1-year estimates (IPUMS USA University of Minnesota, www.ipums.org), 2022

Racial Ethnic Homogamy

Figure 2. Racial/Ethnic Homogamy in U.S. Marriages, 2022



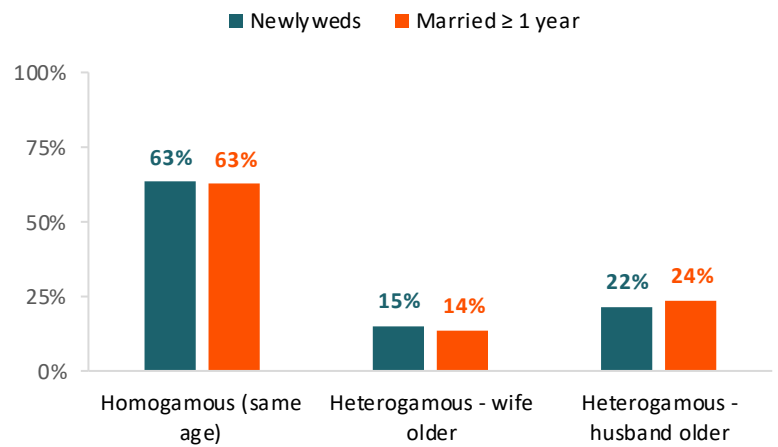
Source: NCFMR analyses of American Community Survey 1-year estimates (IPUMS USA University of Minnesota, www.ipums.org), 2022

- Although a majority of all married couples are racially/ethnically homogamous, this share is considerably lower among newlyweds (77.6%) compared to couples married for more than one year (86.8%). Racially/ethnically homogamous spouses both identify as belonging to the same racial/ethnic group (i.e., Non-Hispanic White only, Non-Hispanic Black only, Asian, American Indian, Hispanic, and multiracial/other race).
- Among newlyweds, the share of racially/ethnically heterogamous couples (22.4%) is nearly double the share among couples married for more than one year (13.2%).

Spousal Age Homogamy

- Most married couples in the U.S. are age homogamous (spouses no more than one year apart in age), with 63.2% of newlyweds the same age compared to 62.5% of couples married for over one year.
- Husbands are more commonly the older partner than wives for both newlyweds and those married for more than one year among couples with age heterogamy (one spouse is two or more years older than the other).
- The proportion of couples in which the wife is older than the husband is larger for newlyweds (15.2%) compared to those married at least one year (13.7%).

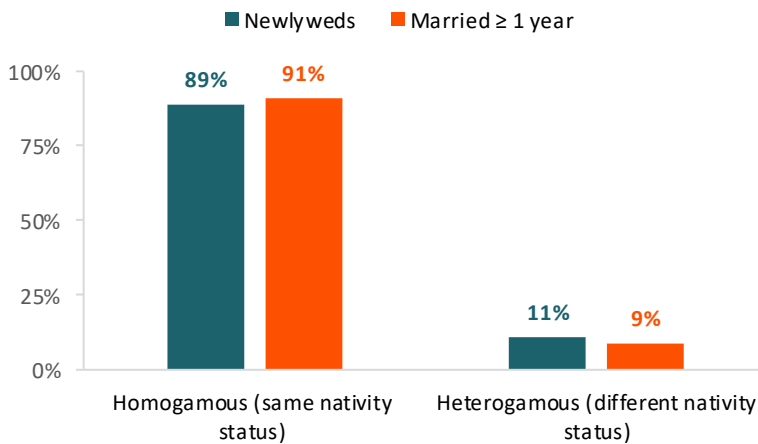
Figure 3. Age Homogamy in U.S. Marriages, 2022



Source: NCFMR analyses of American Community Survey 1-year estimates (IPUMS USA University of Minnesota, www.ipums.org), 2022

Nativity Status Homogamy

Figure 4: Nativity Status Homogamy in U.S. Marriages, 2022



Source: NCFMR analyses of American Community Survey 1-year estimates (IPUMS USA University of Minnesota, www.ipums.org), 2022

- Approximately 90% of all married couples in the US have nativity homogamy, meaning the spouses are either both foreign born or both native born.
- Newlyweds exhibit nativity status heterogamy (11.1%) more often than couples who have been married for more than one year (9.1%).

Data Source:

Flood, S., King, M., Rodgers, R., Ruggles, S., Warren, J. R., Warren, D., Chen, A., Cooper, G., Richards, S., Schouweiler, M., & Westberry, M. (2024). IPUMS USA: Version 15.0 American Community Survey. Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.18128/D010.V15.0>

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