# Same-Sex Marriage Legalization in U.S. Leads to Diminished Differences Between Spouses



A recent U.S. Census Bureau report reveals that many differences between same-sex and opposite-sex spouses have diminished since the nationwide legalization of same-sex marriage in 2015. Prior to legalization, same-sex spouses were generally younger, more educated, and more likely to be employed compared to their opposite-sex counterparts. These differences have largely disappeared post-legalization.

The American Community Survey data indicates that almost 1.5 million people lived with a same-sex spouse in the U.S. in 2022, double the number from before the 2015 Supreme Court ruling, which legalized same-sex marriage across all states.

Following the ruling, a significant number of same-sex marriages occurred swiftly, with 41% of such marriages recorded between 2015 and 2019. In contrast, only 14% of opposite-sex marriages happened in the same period. Analysis of marriages post-2015 shows that employment status, length of marriage, and education levels among women are notably similar between same-sex and opposite-sex spouses.

The report also highlights that same-sex couples who married after 2015 are older compared to their opposite-sex counterparts, a reversal from earlier trends. Nevertheless, some distinctions remain: opposite-sex spouses tend to have more children and larger households, while female same-sex spouses are more likely to have children than male same-sex spouses.

Overall, the report suggests that same-sex spouses and their households increasingly resemble those of opposite-sex spouses.