

Same-sex Couples in Texas: A demographic summary



by Gary J. Gates
September 2014

Introduction

This research brief offers analyses of data from the US Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) to describe the characteristics of same-sex couples and their families in Texas compared to their different-sex married counterparts.

Same-sex couples are identified in the ACS when an adult in the household is identified as either the "husband/wife" or "unmarried partner" of the person who filled out the survey, referred to as the householder, and both partners or spouses are of the same sex. These analyses combine ACS Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) files from 2010, 2011, and 2012, yielding sample sizes of:

- 1,061 same-sex couples
- 357 children under age 18 being raised by same-sex couples
- 144,331 different-sex married couples
- 124,448 children under age 18 being raised by different-sex married couples

Same-sex couples

Tabulations from Census 2010 show that there are 46,401 same-sex couples living in Texas. These couples were identified in 87% of Texas's counties. The majority of same-sex couples are female (52%).¹

Age

The average age of individuals in same-sex couples in Texas is more than five and a half years younger than that of different-sex married couples—43.1 and 48.7 years old, respectively. Table 1 shows the percentages of adults in same-sex and different-sex married couples by age group. The lowest percentage of same-sex couples is in the 65 and over group (5%) while the lowest percentage of different-sex married couples is in the youngest age group of those under age 30 (9%).

Table 1. Individuals in couples, by age (2010-2012 ACS)

Age	Same-sex	Different-sex married
<30	15%	9%
30-49	55%	45%
50-64	26%	30%
65+	5%	16%

¹ Gates, GJ, Cooke, A (2011). *Texas Census Snapshot: 2010*. Los Angeles, CA: The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. Retrieved from: http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Census2010Snapshot_Texas_v2.pdf.

Race/Ethnicity

A smaller percentage of individuals in same-sex couples than in different-sex married couples are members of racial or ethnic minorities. Table 2 shows that, in Texas, 31% of individuals in same-sex couples and 46% of individuals in different-sex married couples are racial or ethnic minorities.

Table 2. Individuals in couples, by race/ethnicity (2010-2012 ACS)

Race/ethnicity	Same-sex	Different-sex married
White	68.8%	55.8%
African-American	6.5%	7.2%
Latino/a	22.3%	30.9%
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.7%	4.8%
Am. Indian/AK Native	0.6%	0.3%
Other	1.1%	0.9%

Same-sex couples with children

More than one in five same-sex couples in Texas (23%) are raising children under age 18 in their homes. An estimated 10,864 same-sex-couple households in the state are raising 18,671 children.

Nearly six in ten of the children being raised by same-sex couples in Texas are biologically related to one member of the couple (58%), 18% are adopted children, and 4% are stepchildren. This implies that same-sex couples in the state are raising an estimated 10,785 biological children, 3,401 adopted children, and 796 stepchildren. An additional 20% of children being raised by same-sex couples in Texas, or 3,689 children, are identified as grandchildren, siblings, other relatives, foster children, or other children.

Among couples with children, same-sex couples in Texas are nearly seven times more likely than their different-sex married counterparts to be raising an adopted child. More than 18% of same-sex couples with children have an adopted child, compared to less than 3% of different-sex married couples with children. Further, while more than 18% of the children of same-sex couples in Texas are adopted, less than 2% of the children of different-sex married couples are adopted.

Same-sex couples are also more likely to be fostering a child in Texas. Among couples with children, same-sex couples in Texas are nearly seven and half times more likely than their different-sex married counterparts to be fostering a child. Nearly 2% of

same-sex couples with children have a foster child, compared to 0.2% of different-sex married couples with children. An estimated 2% of the children of same-sex couples in Texas are fostered, compared to 0.2% of the children of different-sex married couples.

Race/ethnicity

Nearly one in three individuals in same-sex couples who are members of racial or ethnic minorities (31%) are raising a child under age 18, compared to 20% of their White counterparts.

Income

The median annual household income of same-sex couples with children under age 18 in the home is slightly lower than the median annual household income of comparable different-sex married couples (\$73,005 versus \$73,429).

About the author

Gary J. Gates, PhD is the Williams Distinguished Scholar and a national expert in the demographic, geographic, and economic characteristics of the LGBT population.

About the Institute

The Williams Institute on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Law and Public Policy at UCLA School of Law advances law and public policy through rigorous, independent research and scholarship, and disseminates its work through a variety of education programs and media to judges, legislators, lawyers, other policymakers and the public. These studies can be accessed at the Williams Institute website.

For more information

The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law
Box 951476
Los Angeles, CA 90095-1476
(310)267-4382
williamsinstitute@law.ucla.edu
<http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu>

Suggested citation

Gates, G.J. (2014). Same-sex Couples in Texas: A demographic summary. Los Angeles, CA: The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. Retrieved from: <http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/TX-same-sex-couples-demo-sept2014.pdf>