

# BI-NATIONAL SAME-SEX UNMARRIED PARTNERS IN CENSUS 2000: A demographic portrait

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

While current United States immigration policy is based primarily on family reunification, it does not provide any rights for unmarried partners of citizens. In order to inform current legislative debates about expanding the policy of family reunification to include same-sex couples, this report provides a demographic and geographic portrait of bi-national same-sex “unmarried partners” from Census 2000.

Key findings of this report include:

- Approximately 35,820 of the 594,391 same-sex unmarried partner couples (6%) counted in Census 2000 are bi-national couples.
- A larger percentage of same-sex couples (6%) than different-sex unmarried (5.2%) or married (4.6%) couples are bi-national. If the Uniting American Families Act were to pass and same-sex couples behaved as their married counterparts, then approximately 8,500 same-sex couples would likely seek immigration rights for the non-citizen partner.
- Mexico is the home country for 30% (10,766) of the non-citizens in same-sex bi-national couples, compared with 38% of all non-citizens in the United States. Canada, the second highest country of origin, is home to 6% (2,159) of the non-citizen partners in same-sex bi-national couples, followed by El Salvador, Germany, and the Philippines.
- Thirty-six percent of bi-national same-sex couples are comprised of a foreign born non-citizen and a foreign born citizen. The non-citizen and citizen in 82% of these couples share the same country of origin. In short, over 30% of all bi-national same-sex couples in the U.S. are comprised of partners who were both born in the same foreign country. (Fourteen percent of all bi-national same-sex couples in the U.S. are comprised of partners who were both born in Mexico.)
- California ranks first in the total number of same-sex bi-national couples. Nearly 30% of same-sex bi-national couples in the United States, more than 10,000 such couples, live in California.
- In 79% of bi-national same-sex couples, the non-citizen partner comes from a country that does not provide immigration rights to unmarried couples. For these couples, neither partner lives in a county that will allow the other partner to immigrate based on their relationship.
- Among bi-national couples, more than a third of same-sex male couples and 58% of female same-sex couples report having children under age 18 in the home.
- Children under age 18 being raised by bi-national same-sex couples are less likely to be citizens than children being raised by bi-national married couples. Ninety percent of children of bi-national married couples are citizens, compared with 83% of bi-national male-male couples and 87% of bi-national female-female couples.
- Same-sex bi-national couples are more likely to have been together at least five years (28% of male couples and 30% of female couples) than their different-sex unmarried counterparts (17%), but less likely to have been together five years than bi-national married couples (41%).

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

While current United States immigration policy is based primarily on family reunification, it does not provide any rights for unmarried partners of citizens. As a result, gay and lesbian couples that include a U.S. citizen and a non-citizen (referred to in this report as bi-national couples) can be forced to separate if the non-citizen partner is not able to legally remain in the country.

Currently, 16 countries recognize same-sex partnerships for immigration purposes: Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Israel, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, South Africa, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

In the U.S. Congress, the Uniting American Families Act (UAFSA) was introduced on June 21, 2005 by Representative Jerry Nadler (D-NY) and Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT). Previously known as the Permanent Partners Immigration Act (PPIA), the legislation would allow U.S. citizens and permanent residents in same-sex relationships to sponsor foreign partners for residency in the United States. The proposed legislation would insert “or permanent partner” after “spouse” in sections of the Immigration and Naturalization Act (INA) that establish the rules by which a U.S. citizen or permanent legal resident can sponsor a spouse for permanent residency. Permanent partners would be subject to the same restrictions, requirements of proof, and enforcement mechanisms as heterosexual married couples. Only couples who are unable to enter a marriage that is recognized under the INA would be eligible to qualify as a permanent partner under the proposed legislation. Thus, most unmarried different-sex couples would not qualify as “permanent partners” under UAFSA.

In order to inform the debate about the possible effects of changing U.S. immigration policy to accommodate same-sex couples, this research brief provides a demographic and geographic portrait of bi-national same-sex “unmarried partners” from Census 2000. The report shows characteristics of these bi-national same-sex couples and primarily compares traits to their different-sex unmarried and married counterparts. Comparisons between bi-national same-sex couples and other same-sex couples are also included.

## **II. DATA & METHODOLOGY**

Data for this report come from the Census 2000 Public Use Microdata Samples (PUMS). The 5% PUMS (used for the same-sex couples) represents a one in four sample of the approximately 20% of American households that filled out a census long-form. The 1% PUMS (used for the different-sex couples) represents a one in 16 sample of the approximately 20% of American households that filled out a census long-form. The long-form contains detailed information about all members of the household, including whether or not they are a citizen, their country of origin, and a variety of demographic and economic characteristics.

Same-sex couples are identified from the household roster that identifies how everyone in the household is related to the person filling out the census form (referred to as the “householder”). These same-sex couples are commonly understood to be primarily gay and lesbian couples even though the census does not ask any questions about sexual orientation, sexual behavior, or sexual attraction (three common ways used to identify gay men and lesbians in surveys). Rather, census forms include a number of relationship categories to define how individuals in a household are related to the householder. These fall into two broad categories: related persons (including husband/wife, son/daughter, brother/sister, and so on), and unrelated persons (including unmarried partner, housemate/roommate, roomer/boarder, and other nonrelative). Since 1990, the Census Bureau has included an “unmarried partner” category to describe an unrelated household member’s relationship to the householder. If the householder designates another adult of the same sex as his or her “unmarried partner” or “husband/wife”, the

household counts as a same-sex unmarried partner household (see Gates and Ost 2004 for a detailed explanation of counting same-sex couples).

One important issue regarding census tabulations of same-sex unmarried partners as a mechanism for accurately counting gay and lesbian couples involves the likelihood of an undercount. There are several potential reasons for suspecting an undercount. Concerns about revealing their sexual orientation (even indirectly) to the federal government may have led many gay and lesbian couples to indicate a status that would not indicate the true nature of their relationship. Other couples may have felt that “unmarried partner” or “husband/wife” does not accurately describe their relationship. A study of the undercount of same-sex unmarried partners in Census 2000 indicates that these were the two most common reasons that gay and lesbian couples chose not to designate themselves as unmarried partners (Badgett and Rogers 2003). Census tabulations also would not capture couples living in a household with someone else who filled out the census form. While determining the size of this undercount is challenging, estimates suggest that the true counts are 10 to 50% higher than the Census figures (Gates and Ost 2004).

In addition to undercounting the number of same-sex couples in the population, the Census may also erroneously include some different-sex couples in the same-sex couple population. Gates and Ost (2004) describe a measurement error resulting from different-sex married couples inadvertently checking the incorrect sex of one of the partners. This error, although thought to be small, may impact some of the characteristics of same-sex couples. For example, estimates of child-rearing among same-sex couples could be overstated due to this sample error because different-sex couples are more likely to have children. The magnitude of this error is not easily ascertained, but Gates and Ost suggest that while national unadjusted figures show that 28.2% of same-sex couples are raising children, a more accurate estimate that attempts to adjust for the presence of different-sex couples is 27.5%. The estimates of child-rearing in this report do not adjust for this form of error and thus may somewhat overstate this characteristic.

Another undercount issue involves how respondents report their citizenship status in the Census. Census data do not permit distinguishing between legal and non-legal U.S. residents. Respondents are only classified as citizens (native and naturalized) and non-citizens. Research suggests that as many as one-fifth of foreign-born non-citizens report themselves as naturalized citizens on their Census form (Passel and Clark 1998; Passel, Fix, and Sucher 2003). Further, absent any immigration rights, some unknown portion of same-sex bi-national couples likely choose to live outside of the United States and are not counted in the census.

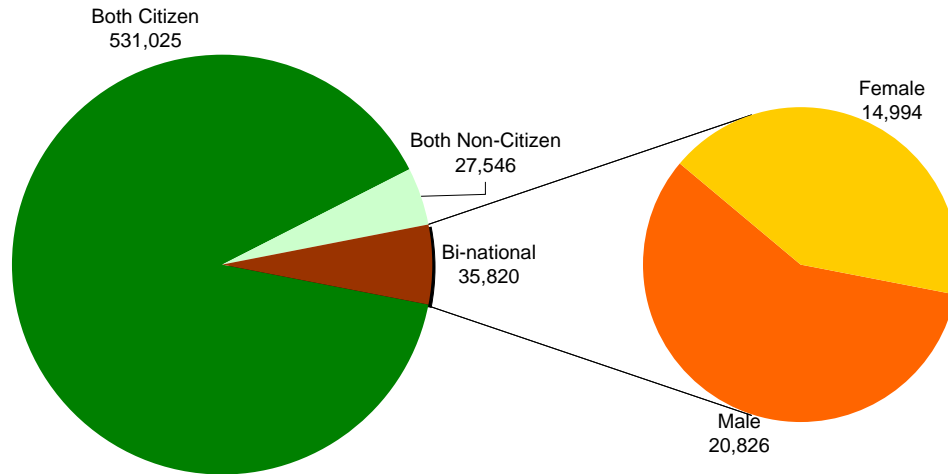
These undercount concerns suggest that counts of same-sex couples and non-citizens derived from census tabulations are best viewed as lower-bound estimates of the actual population.

### III. CHARACTERISTICS OF BI-NATIONAL COUPLES IN THE UNITED STATES

#### *Population counts*

Six percent of the 594,391 same-sex unmarried partner couples counted in Census 2000 are bi-national couples, approximately 35,820 couples (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1. Citizenship Status, Same-sex Couples**



By comparison, 4.6% of different-sex married couples and 5.2% of different-sex unmarried partners are bi-national (2,790,607 couples). This means that 1.3% of all bi-national couples in the United States are same-sex couples.

#### *Country of Origin*

A ranking of the country of origin for non-citizens in bi-national same-sex partnerships (see Table 1) shows that Mexico is the home country for more than 30% (10,766) of these non-citizens. Canada, the second highest country of origin, is home to 6% (2,159) of the non-citizen partners, followed by El Salvador, Germany, and the Philippines. The top 25 countries account for nearly three-quarters of the non-citizen partners within bi-national couples.

**Table 1. Top twenty-five countries of birth for non-citizens in bi-national same-sex couples compared to all non-citizens in the United States (Census 2000)**

Country of birth (bi-national same-sex couples)	% of non- citizens in bi- national same- sex couples	Estimated number of non- citizens from bi- national same-sex couples from the country	% of all non-citizens	Country of Birth (all non-citizens)
Mexico	30.06%	5,383	38.47%	Mexico
Canada	6.03%	1,079	3.44%	India
El Salvador	3.16%	566	3.33%	El Salvador
Germany	3.05%	547	2.84%	Philippines
Philippines	2.80%	502	2.83%	China
England	2.69%	482	2.49%	Dominican Republic
Dominican Republic	2.38%	425	2.49%	Canada
Cuba	2.02%	361	2.06%	Vietnam
United Kingdom	1.87%	335	1.94%	Guatemala
China	1.81%	324	1.88%	Korea
Colombia	1.79%	321	1.86%	Cuba
Jamaica	1.77%	316	1.58%	Columbia
India	1.71%	306	1.34%	Germany
France	1.65%	295	1.32%	Japan
Haiti	1.51%	271	1.32%	Jamaica
Japan	1.37%	246	1.21%	Haiti
Italy	1.31%	234	1.19%	Poland
Brazil	1.25%	225	1.17%	England
Guatemala	1.21%	218	1.03%	Russia
Poland	1.14%	204	1.01%	Honduras
Vietnam	1.13%	202	1.00%	Ecuador
Thailand	1.07%	191	0.93%	Peru
Ireland	0.97%	174	0.92%	Brazil
Trinidad & Tobago	0.94%	169	0.83%	Nicaragua
Peru	0.87%	156	0.78%	Ukraine
Other	25.30%	4,375	20.74%	Other

This distribution of the non-citizens within same-sex bi-national couples by country of origin does not differ substantially from the same distribution of all citizens. As indicated in blue on Table 1, the two groups share 19 of the top 25 countries. Statistically, the two rankings are highly correlated.<sup>1</sup>

Among same-sex bi-national couples, nearly 79% do not include a partner from a country that offers any immigration rights to non-married couples. These couples are most at risk for separation if both partners cannot get legal status either in the United States or their native countries.

Among bi-national couples where the citizen partner is a naturalized citizen, 82% of partners are from the same country of origin (see Table 2). This compares to 68% among comparable different-sex unmarried couples and 84% among married couples.

<sup>1</sup> The Spearman rank-order correlation coefficient was 0.84 (a correlation of 1.00 would mean the rankings are identical).

**Table 2. Citizenship status of the citizen partner within bi-national couples and percentage with the same country of origin by citizenship status, by couple type.**

	Same-sex couples		Different-sex unmarried partner couples		Different-sex married couples	
	Citizenship status of citizen partner	% with same country of origin	Citizenship status of citizen partner	% with same country of origin	Citizenship status of citizen partner	% with same country of origin
Born in the US	60%	0%	65%	0%	47%	0%
Born in a US territory	2%	0%	4%	0%	1%	0%
Born abroad	2%	74%	2%	49%	2%	74%
Naturalized	36%	82%	29%	68%	50%	84%

Of those couples with a partner who was either born abroad or naturalized and where both partners come from the same country of origin, the largest portion among all couple types come from Mexico (see Table 3).

**Table 3. Country of origin for bi-national couples with the same country of origin, by couple type.**

	Same-sex couples		Different-sex unmarried partner couples		Different-sex married couples	
1	Mexico	44.7%	Mexico	34.8%	Mexico	34.2%
2	Phillipines	4.8%	Dominican Republic	7.5%	India	5.3%
3	Haiti	3.9%	Cuba	5.5%	Phillipines	5.2%
4	El Salvador	3.3%	El Salvador	4.7%	Vietnam	4.3%
5	Dominican Republic	3.3%	Vietnam	4.6%	China	3.3%
6	China	3.2%	Haiti	3.8%	Korea	3.0%
7	Jamaica	3.0%	Jamaica	3.6%	Dominican Republic	2.7%
8	Vietnam	2.5%	Columbia	3.5%	Haiti	2.4%
9	Poland	2.4%	Phillipines	3.4%	El Salvador	2.2%
10	Columbia	1.8%	Poland	2.2%	Cuba	2.1%
	Other	27.1%	Other	26.5%	Other	35.2%

### *Geographic Distribution*

California ranks first in the total number of bi-national same-sex couples. Nearly 30% of bi-national same-sex couples in the U.S. live in California, more than 10,000 such couples. (Table 4) The top ten states shown in Table 4 account for well over three-quarters of the couples. Of note, the top ten states for all non-citizens are the same although the ranking differs slightly.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Rankings for states six through ten are Massachusetts, Arizona, Washington, and Georgia.

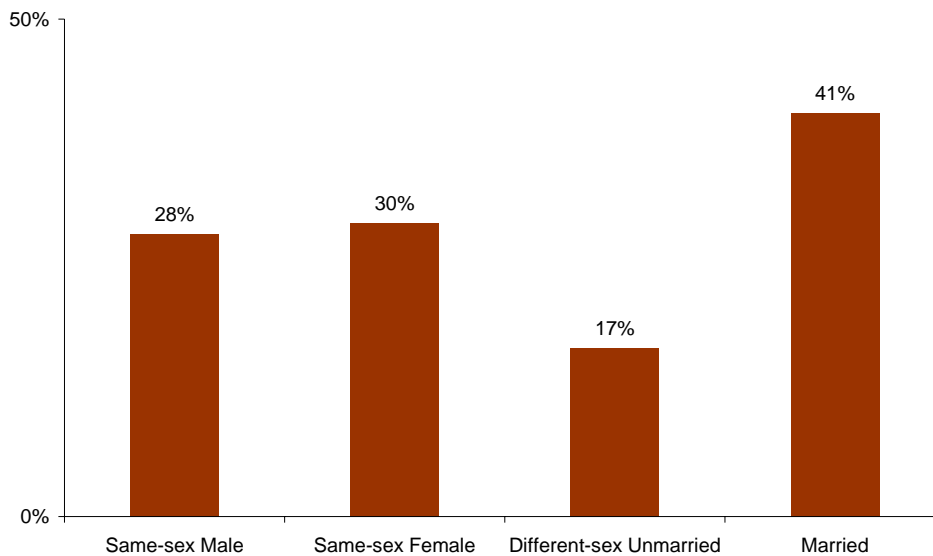
**Table 4. Top ten states with the largest number of same-sex bi-national couples.**

State	% of same-sex bi-national couples living in the state	Estimated number of bi-national same-sex couples in the state	Estimated number of male bi-national same-sex couples in the state	Estimated number of female bi-national same-sex couples in the state
California	28.9%	10,335	5,538	4,797
New York	13.9%	4,995	2,798	2,197
Texas	9.9%	3,560	2,016	1,545
Florida	8.1%	2,902	1,584	1,317
Illinois	5.0%	1,808	1,056	752
New Jersey	3.0%	1,088	507	580
Massachusetts	2.9%	1,048	525	523
Arizona	2.1%	769	390	379
Washington	1.9%	693	310	383
Georgia	1.8%	633	403	231
Others	22.3%	7,989	4,534	3,455

*Duration of residence*

Duration of residency, measured as the proportion of couples who report living together in the same home five years ago, provides some proxy for the stability of relationships. Same-sex bi-national couples are more likely (28% of male couples and 30% of female couples) than their different-sex unmarried counterparts (17%) and less likely than their married counterparts (41%) to be together at least five years (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2. Bi-national Couples Living in the Same Home > 5 Years by Couple Type**



Among all bi-national same-sex couples, nearly three in ten have lived together for at least five years, a figure below that for dual citizen couples (40%) and slightly higher than that for couples where both are non-citizens (27%).

*Sex*

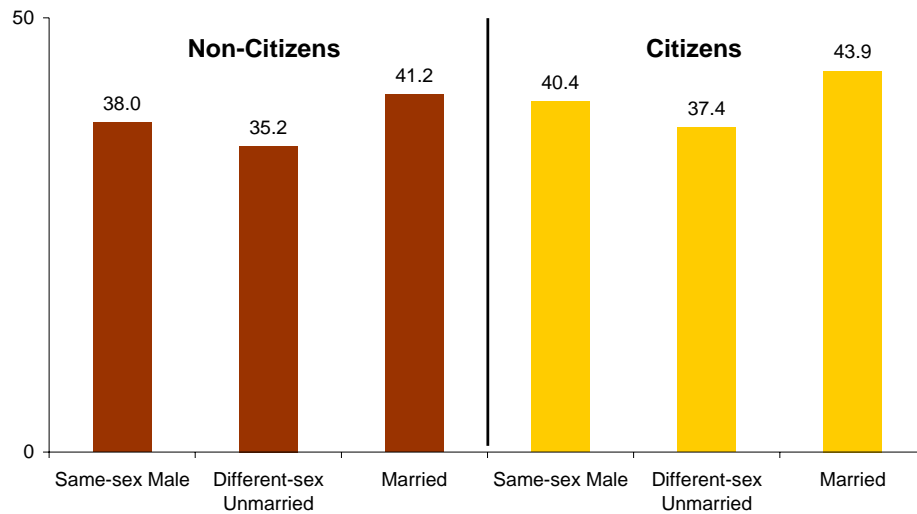
Of the 35,820 same-sex bi-national couples, 19,701 are male couples and 16,119 are female couples. In general, men represent the majority of foreign-born in the United States, so the higher proportion of

men is not surprising. Of course, this also means that 55% of the non-citizen partners in same-sex couples are male. The non-citizen partner in a married couple is most often female (57%), while the non-citizen in a different-sex unmarried couple is more often male (58%).

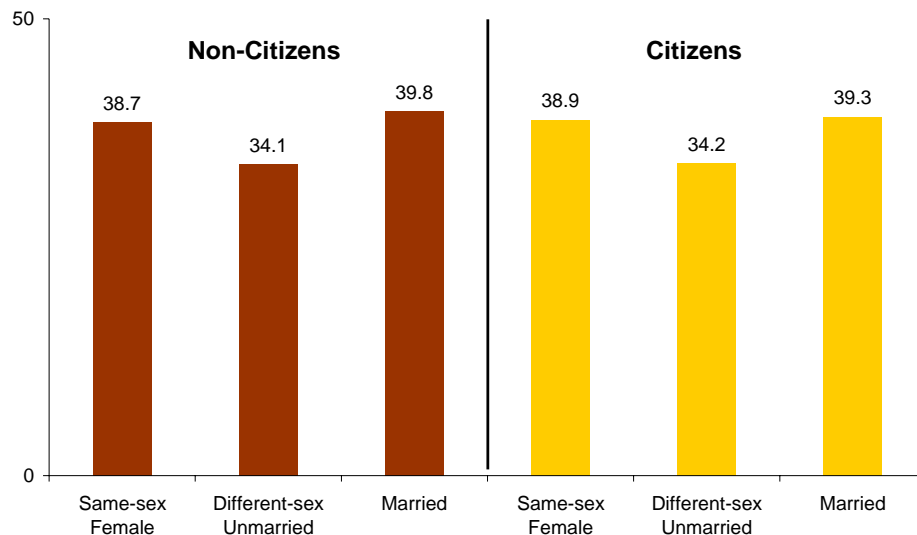
*Age*

Among all couple types, the non-citizen partner in a bi-national couple is on average younger than the citizen partner (see Figures 3 and 4). The average age of same-sex partners, regardless of citizenship status or sex, falls in between the average age of different-sex unmarried and married partners. Differences in age by citizenship status are more pronounced for men than for women. For men in all couple types, citizens tend to be about two years older than non-citizens. These differences are not observed for women.

**Figure 3. Average Age, Men in Bi-national Couples by Citizenship Status and Couple Type**



**Figure 4. Average Age, Women in Bi-national Couples by Citizenship Status and Couple Type**



Among different-sex bi-national couples, non-citizen women are on average younger than non-citizen men. However, among same-sex bi-national couples, female non-citizens are on average slightly older



than male non-citizens (38.7 vs. 38.0). The reverse is true for citizens, where men in same-sex couples are slightly older than their female counterparts (40.4 vs. 38.9).

Among same-sex couples, partners in a bi-national couple are on average younger than partners where both are citizens and older than partners where both are non-citizens (see Table 5).

**Table 5. Demographic characteristics of same-sex couples, by citizenship status.**

	Bi-national (citizen)	Bi-national (non-citizen)	Both citizen	Both non- citizen
Age (mean)	39.7	38.3	43.5	37.3
Annual wages and salary (mean)	\$29,123	\$23,468	\$28,470	\$15,586
% College degree	29%	25%	33%	14%
% Unemployed	4%	6%	3%	6%
% In labor force	75%	71%	75%	61%
% Full-time employed	73%	64%	69%	61%
% Veteran (US Military)	7%	3%	13%	1%
% Children under age 18 in home*	46%		31%	67%
% Living in the same house together for 5 years*	29%		40%	27%

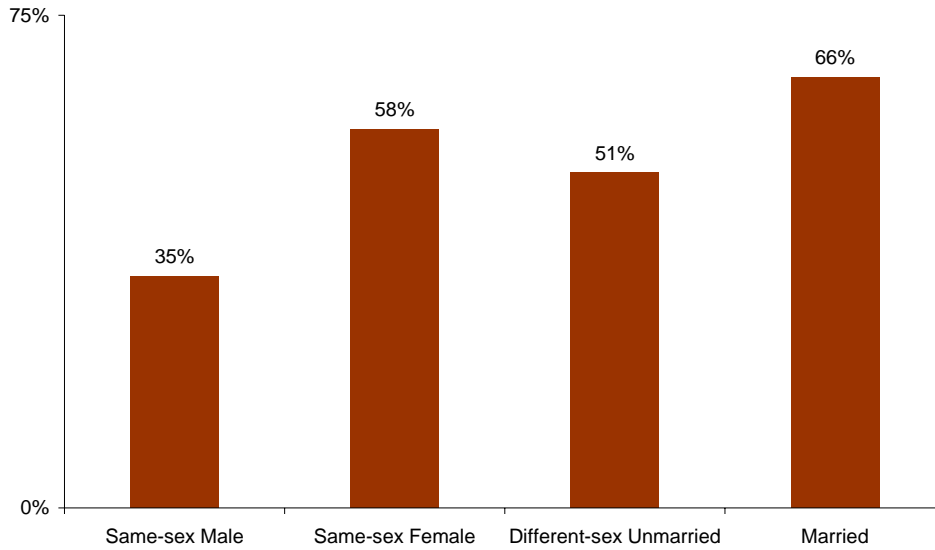
\*Household characteristics. All other characteristics in Table 5 are individual characteristics.

#### *Children in the home*

Approximately 46% of bi-national same-sex couples have children under 18 living with them in their home, a figure above that for dual citizen couples (31%) and below that of same-sex couples where both are non-citizens (67%). Notably, bi-national same-sex couples with children are at some economic disadvantage. Their median household income (\$43,300) is more than \$3,000 below that of comparable married couples (\$47,400).

Among bi-national couples, same-sex male couples are the least likely to have children (see Figure 5). Nevertheless, more than a third report having children under age 18 in the home. That figure is substantially higher than the proportion of all same-sex male couples with children, which is closer to one in five couples.

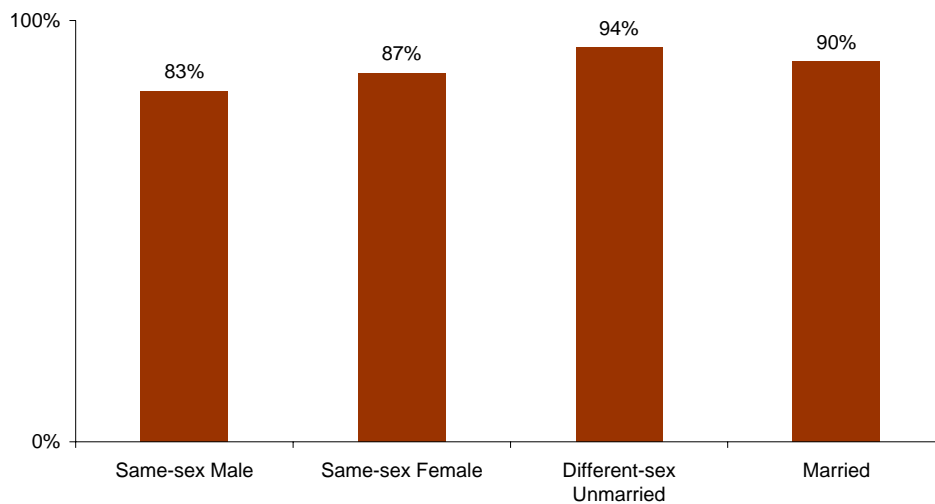
**Figure 5. Bi-national couples with children in the home  
by Couple Type**



Same-sex female bi-national couples are actually more likely than different-sex unmarried partners to be raising children, 58% versus 51%. Two-thirds of married bi-national couples are raising children.

Children under age 18 being raised by same-sex bi-national couples are less likely to be citizens than children being raised by similar different-sex couples (see Figure 6). Among children of same-sex male bi-national couples, 83% are citizens, compared to 87% of children being raised by female same-sex couples. The comparable figures for different-sex couples are 94% for children being raised by unmarried couples and 90% for children in married couple households.

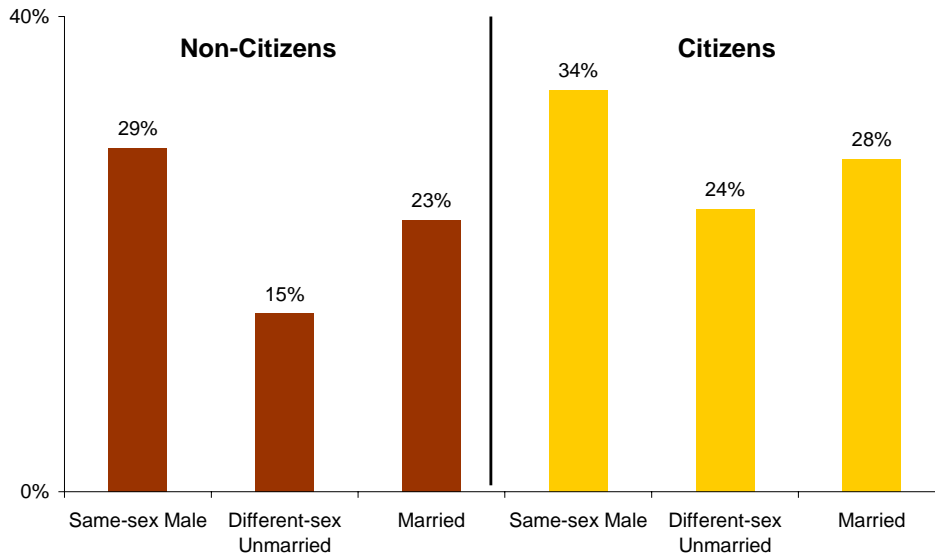
**Figure 6. Citizenship rates among children under age 18  
living with bi-national couples  
by Couple Type**



### *Education*

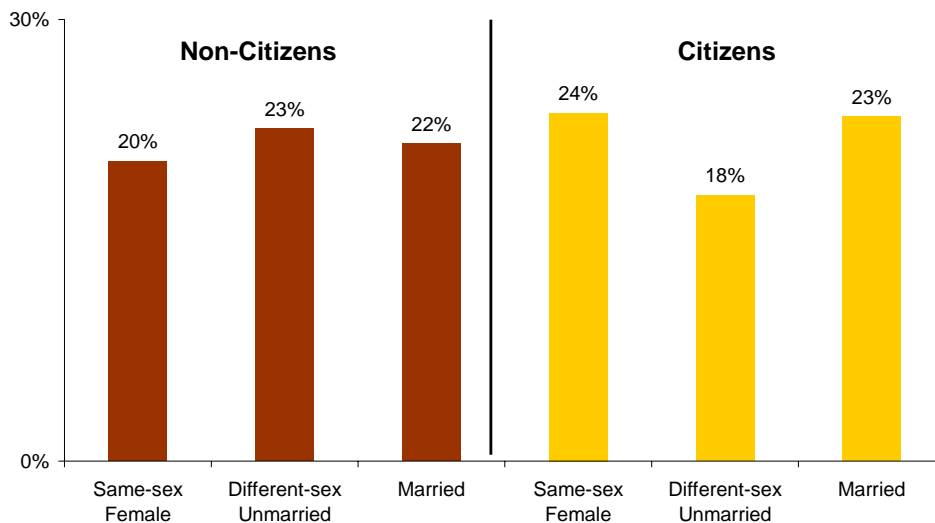
Men in same-sex bi-national couples report higher education levels than their married male counterparts (see Figure 7), although, as has been noted, they are also somewhat younger. Among non-citizens, 29% of men in same-sex couples have a college degree compared to only 23% of married men. Among the citizens in these couples, the same comparison is 34% versus 28%.

**Figure 7. Men in Bi-national Couples with a College Degree by Citizenship Status and Couple Type**



Education differences are not nearly as pronounced among women in bi-national couples. Among the non-citizens, 20% of women with a same-sex partner have at least a college degree, compared to 23% of those with a different-sex unmarried partner, and 22% of married women (see Figure 7). Among citizens, the comparable figures are 24%, 18%, and 23% respectively.

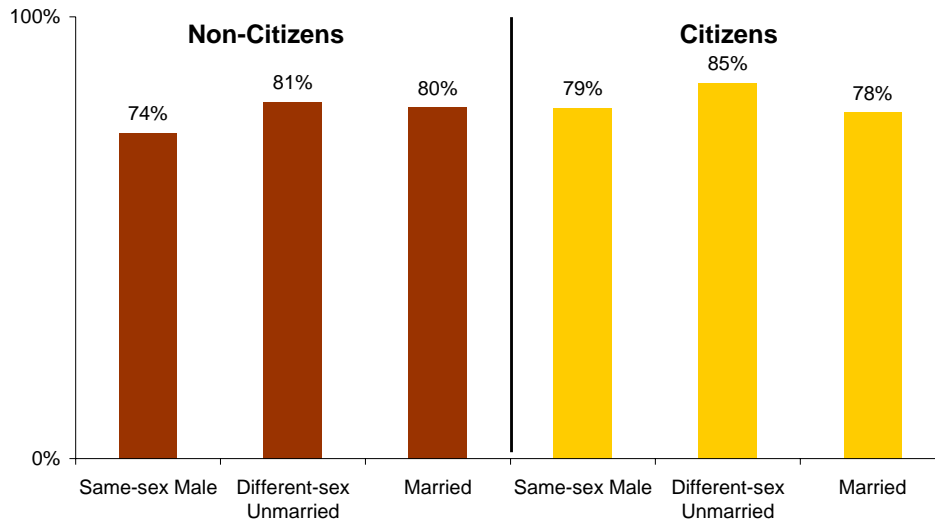
**Figure 8. Women in Bi-national Couples with a College Degree by Citizenship Status and Couple Type**



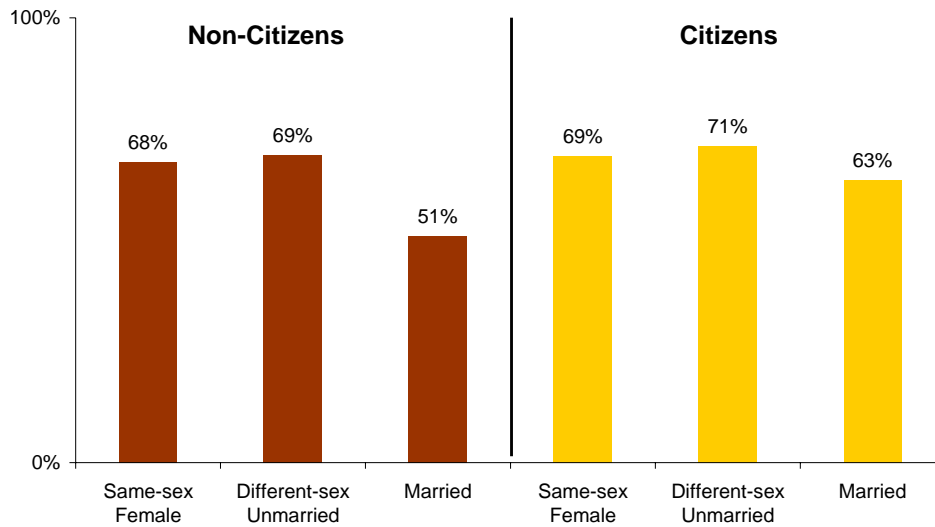
### *Employment Rates*

Labor force participation rates are higher for men than women and are also highest among different-sex unmarried partners (see Figures 9 and 10). This is likely a function of age. Different-sex unmarried partners are the youngest among the three couple types examined in this report and are the least likely to be retired. Among the non-citizen men, those in same-sex couples have the lowest labor force participation rate at 74%. This pattern does not hold for women, where those in unmarried partnerships, same- or different-sex, have substantially higher labor force participation rates, 68% and 69% respectively, than married women (51%).

**Figure 9. Men's Labor Force Participation, Bi-national Couples**  
by Citizenship Status and Couple Type



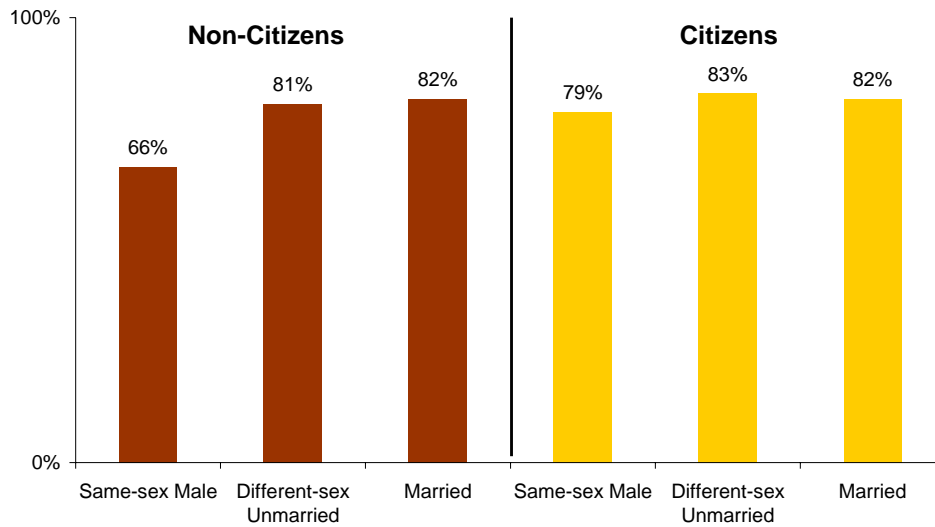
**Figure 10. Women's Labor Force Participation, Bi-national Couples**  
by Citizenship Status and Couple Type



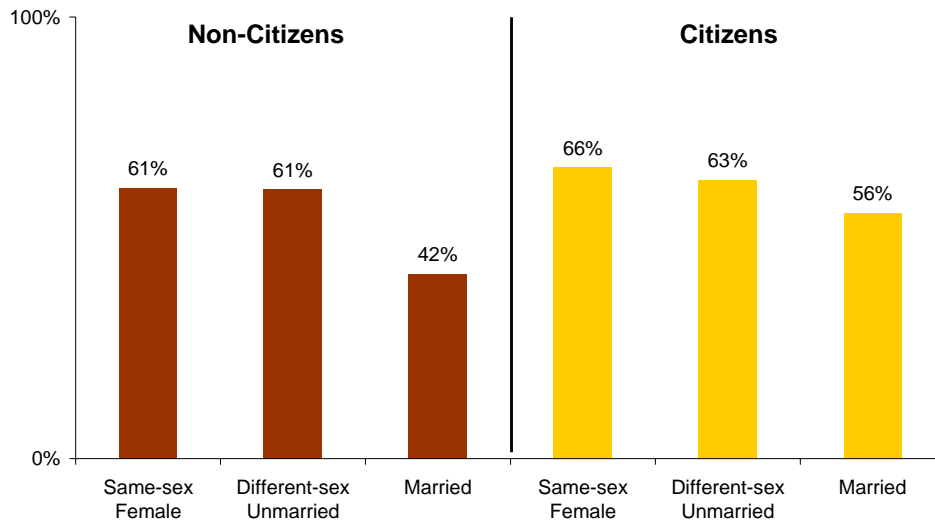
While citizens have the highest levels of labor force participation among those in same-sex couples, non-citizens in bi-national couples have substantially higher labor force participation (71%) than their counterparts coupled with other non-citizens (61%).

Non-citizens within same-sex male couples have relatively low levels of full-time employment compared to other men (see Figure 11). Only 66% of these men have full-time employment compared to more than 80% of men in other couple types. Non-citizens in female same-sex bi-national couples have higher levels of full-time employment (61%) than their married counterparts (see Figure 12).

**Figure 11. Full-time employment, Men in Bi-national Couples**  
by Citizenship Status and Couple Type



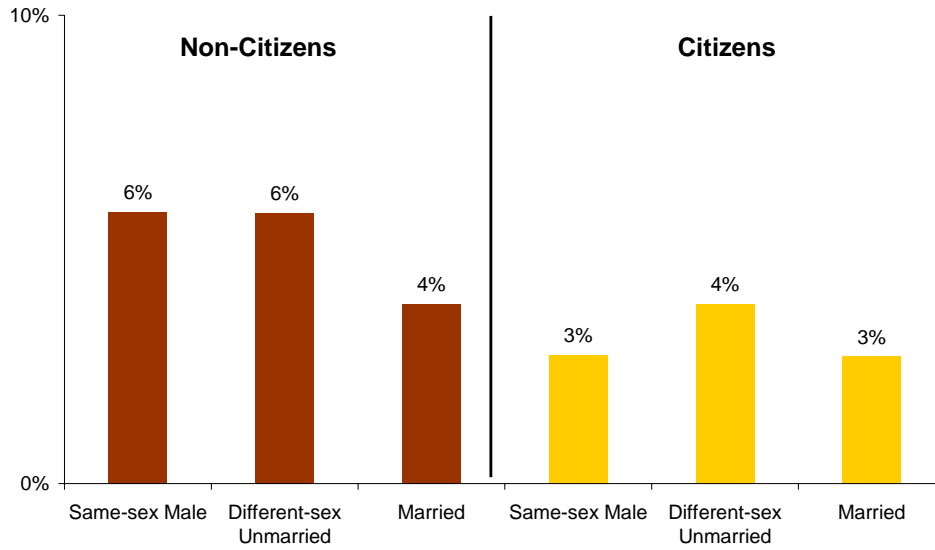
**Figure 12. Full-time employment, Women in Bi-national Couples**  
by Citizenship Status and Couple Type



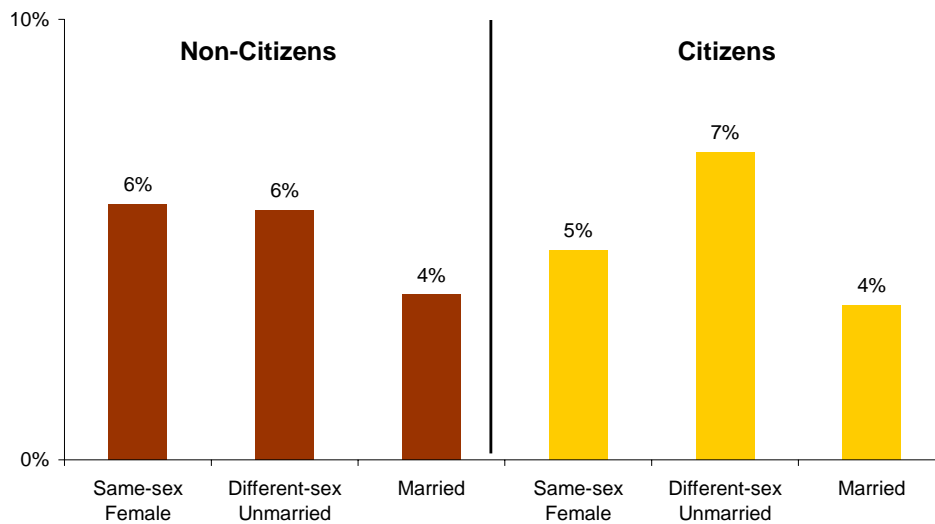
Citizens in bi-national couples are the most likely to be employed full-time (73%), a rate above that of dual citizen partners (which one might expect given that those in dual citizenship partnerships are older). Non-citizens in bi-national same-sex couples are more likely to be employed full-time (64%) than their counterparts coupled with other non-citizens (61%).

Unemployment rates among non-citizens in bi-national couples do not differ based on sex (see Figures 13 and 14). Among citizens in these couples, women report higher unemployment rates than men. Both male and female married non-citizens have lower unemployment rates than their counterparts in same-sex or different-sex unmarried partnerships.

**Figure 13. Unemployment rates, Men in Bi-national Couples by Citizenship Status and Couple Type**



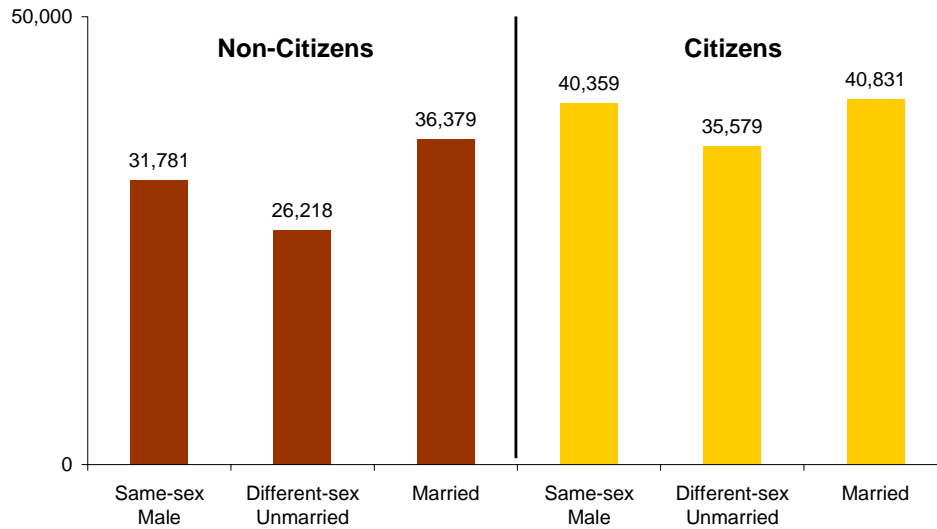
**Figure 14. Unemployment rates, Women in Bi-national Couples by Citizenship Status and Couple Type**



*Income*

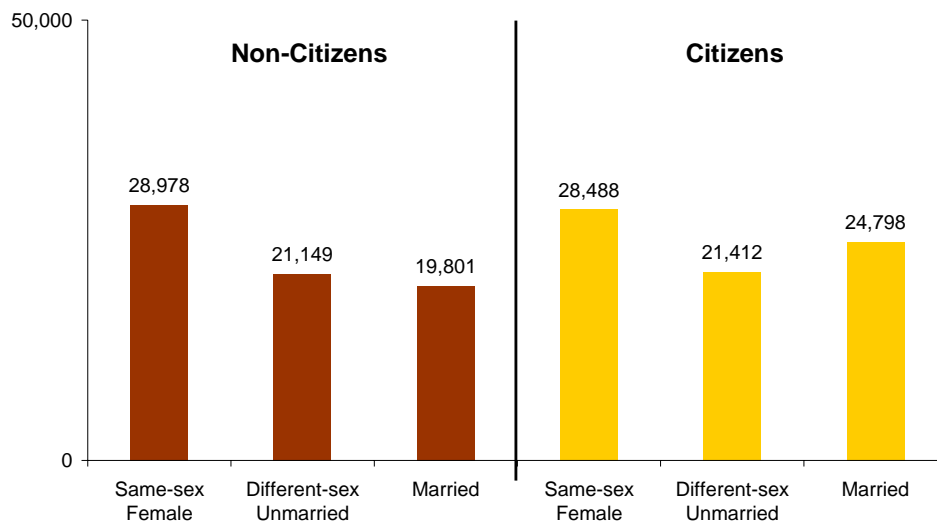
Married male citizens in the labor force have the highest average incomes (\$40,831) among those in bi-national couples (see Figure 15). Citizens in same-sex male couples fare second best in this group with an average income of \$40,359.

**Figure 15. Average Income, Men in Bi-national Couples by Citizenship Status and Couple Type (among those in the labor force)**



Despite similarities in education and age, women in bi-national same-sex couples who are in the labor force report substantially higher incomes than their counterparts coupled with men (see Figure 16). Both the citizen and non-citizen partner in same-sex female couples have average earnings above \$28,000. Among non-citizens, the women in same-sex bi-national couples have incomes that are on average nearly \$8,000 higher than unmarried women partnered with men and \$9,000 above married women.

**Figure 16. Average Income, Women in Bi-national Couples by Citizenship Status and Couple Type (among those in the labor force)**



In general, the citizens of bi-national couples tend to have higher incomes than their non-citizen counterparts. Same-sex female couples are the one exception to this pattern. Non-citizens in these couples have average earnings slightly above those of their citizen partners.

Among same-sex couples, non-citizens in bi-national couples have higher average earnings (\$23,468) than partners in dual non-citizen couples and lower earnings than their citizen partners or citizens in dual citizen couples (see Table 1). This could be in part a factor of education as non-citizen partners in bi-

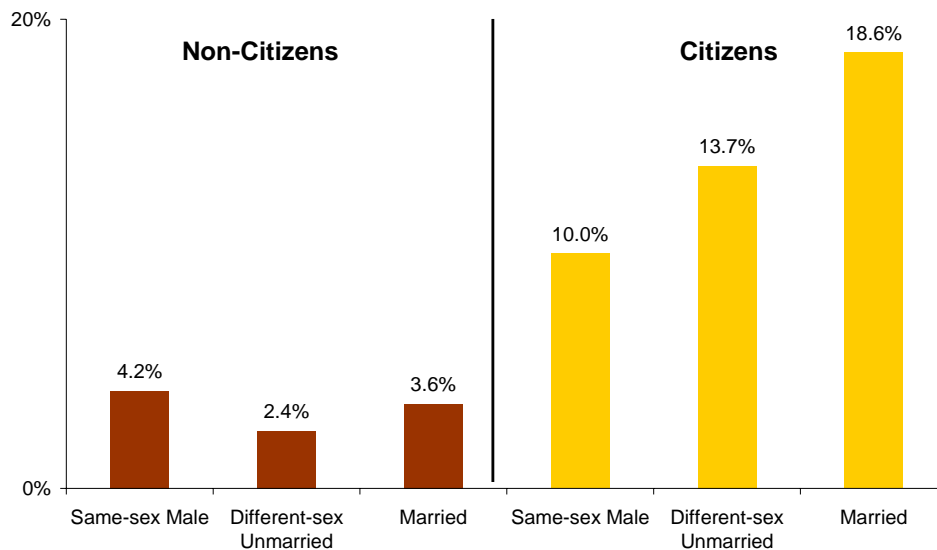
national couples have higher education levels than their counterparts coupled with non-citizens but have lower education levels than their citizen partners or citizens in dual citizen same-sex couples.

*Military service*

Among all same-sex bi-national couples, more than 3% of non-citizen partners report having served in the US military. This compares to 7% among citizens in bi-national couples. Only 1% of non-citizens coupled with other non-citizens report military service while 13% of citizens coupled with other citizens report being veterans.

Non-citizen men and women in bi-national same-sex couples are much more likely to be veterans than non-citizen men and women in different-sex couples (see Figure 17). More than 4% of non-citizen men in bi-national couples are veterans compared to 3.6% of married men and 2.4% of men in different-sex unmarried partnerships. These similar rates of military service stand in contrast to the male citizens in these couples, where married men are nearly twice as likely as their counterparts in same-sex couples to be a veteran. The pattern among the male citizens of bi-national couples is consistent with that seen in the broader population, where married men are the most likely to be a veteran.

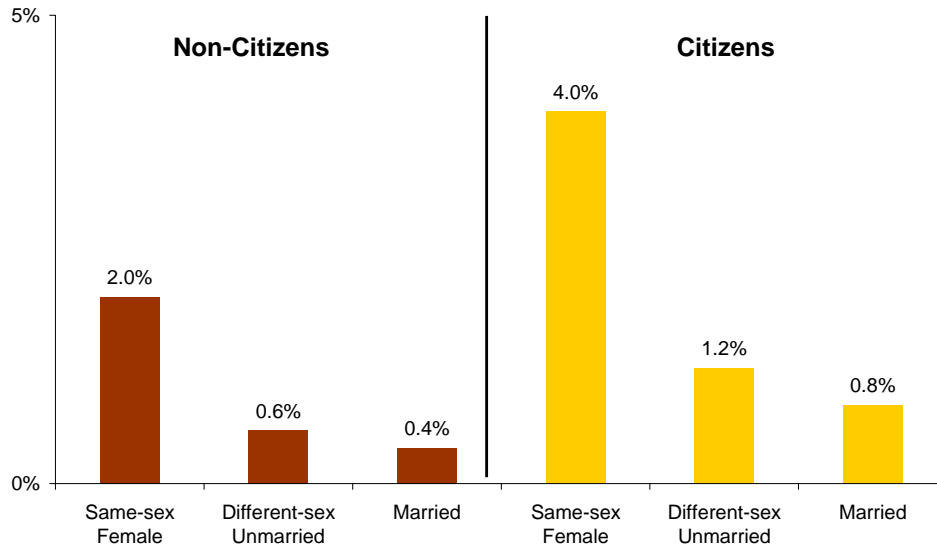
**Figure 17. Veterans among Men in Bi-national Couples by Citizenship Status and Couple Type**



Among non-citizen women in same-sex bi-national couples, 2% are veterans compared with less than 1% of non-citizen women in different-sex bi-national couples (see Figure 13). The pattern is even more dramatic among the citizen female members of these couples. The high rates of veteran service among same-sex female partners occur in the broader population as well.



**Figure 18. Veterans among Women in Bi-national Couples  
by Citizenship Status and Couple Type**



#### IV. CONCLUSION

Data from Census 2000 indicate that approximately 36,000 couples currently living in the United States could benefit from a law that would extend the United States' family reunification immigration policy to unmarried same-sex couples. However, the fact that 4.6% of married couples in the United States were bi-national in 2000 (compared with 6% of same-sex couples) indicates that many of these same-sex couples would not, or perhaps could not, immediately take advantage of a change in policy. If the Uniting American Families Act were to pass and same-sex couples behaved as their married counterparts (meaning 4.6% remained bi-national rather than 6%), then approximately 8,500 same-sex couples would likely seek immigration rights for the non-citizen partner. Of course, same-sex bi-national couples living abroad might also take advantage of the change in policy. Census data does not help in estimating the number of such couples.

#### Acknowledgments

Much of this research was originally conducted while Gates was at the Urban Institute in Washington, DC with support from Immigration Equality. Thanks to both organizations for assistance in reviews of draft versions of the report and their kind permission to release these important findings. Research assistance was provided by Jason Ost at the Urban Institute and Elizabeth Kukura at the Williams Project. Thanks also to Bradley Sears, Joseph Doherty, Lee Badgett, and William Rubenstein for helpful comments.

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## Glossary of Terms

*Bi-national couples:* same-sex or different-sex couples where one partner reports being a citizen of the United States while the other is not a citizen.

*Census 2000 Public Use Microdata Samples (PUMS):* publicly released samples of census long-form responses. One in six U.S. households receive a long-form census that includes detailed demographic, geographic, and employment information.

*Children in the home:* any home where at least one member of the household is below the age of 18. The relationship between the child and any parents present cannot always be ascertained as the child is only identified in terms of his or her relationship to the person who filled out the census form.

*Citizenship status:* respondents are asked if they are a citizen (born in the United States, one of its territories, or naturalized) or not. This is not an indication of a respondent's legal immigration status.

*Different-sex couples:* adult couples where one is male and one is female. They can be married or unmarried depending on how one partner is identified. He or she can be either the "husband/wife" or "unmarried partner" of the other.

*Duration of residence:* respondents indicate if they lived in the same home five years prior to the census. If both partners in a couple report living in the same home five years ago, it provides an indication that the couple has been together at least five years. This cannot capture the situation where a couple has been together for more than five years but moved into their home together in the past five years.

*Income/earnings:* individual annual wage and salary income reported for 1999. Averages shown in this report include only those in the labor force.

*Labor force participation:* respondent considers himself or herself to be part of the labor force (e.g. not retired, in the military, or a homemaker).

*Same-sex couples:* adult couples where both persons are of the same sex and one is identified as either the "husband/wife" or "unmarried partner" of the other. These are most likely comprised of gay male and lesbian couples. Note that those couples where one was identified as a "husband/wife" were recoded in census editing procedures so that all are actually coded as "unmarried partner" in the publicly released data.

*Unemployment:* respondent was unemployed at the time of the survey, but still considered himself or herself part of the labor force.

*Veteran:* respondent reports that they served on active duty in the past (this does not include guard or reserve training or service).