



EQUALITY ELECTORATE: THE PROJECTED GROWTH OF THE LGBTQ+ VOTING BLOC IN COMING YEARS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

LGBTQ+ Americans are projected to become one of the fastest growing voting blocs in the country, growing at a scale, scope, and speed that will see LGBTQ+ voters wield significantly increased influence over electoral outcomes – fundamentally shifting the electoral landscape at the local, state, and federal levels. New analyses conducted by researchers at the Human Rights Campaign Foundation and Bowling Green State University indicate that by 2030 approximately one-in-seven voters will be LGBTQ+, representing a sharp increase over the current one-in-ten. The LGBTQ+ bloc is projected to continue surging in the decade following, nearing one-in-five voters by 2040, emerging as among one of the most influential voting constituencies in the country, whose impact will permanently transform and reshape the American electoral landscape.

KEY FINDINGS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- 1. In the 2022 Midterm election, LGBTQ+ identified people account for one-in ten (11.3%) people in the voting eligible population (VEP; defined as adults age 18+) in the United States.**
 - + Younger generations are much more likely to identify as LGBTQ+, including
 - 27% of Generation Z (born 1997-2003)
 - 15.6% of Millennials (born 1981 – 1996)
 - 7.6% of Generation X (born 1965 – 1980)
 - 4.6% of Boomers (born 1946 – 1964)
 - 4.9% of Traditionalists (born 1934 – 1945)
 - + For context, 2022 projections show a slight increase in the projected proportion of the VEP that identified as LGBTQ+ during the 2020 General Election (10.8%).
 - During the 2020 election, the vast majority of LGBTQ+ adults were registered to vote—and most of them showed up to the polls and voted. The 2020 General Election saw the highest proportion of voters identifying as LGBTQ+ recorded since tracking began in 1992.
 - + The LGBTQ+ electorate was pivotal in ensuring Joe Biden's victory in several key states—and, subsequently, in winning the Presidency. Had LGBTQ+ voters stayed home, it is likely Donald Trump would have won re-election.
- 2. By 2030, one-in-seven (14.3%) voters will be LGBTQ+ identifying, representing a sharp increase from the present day.**
- 3. The LGBTQ+ voting bloc is projected to continue to surge in the decade following, nearing one-in-five (17.8%) voters by 2040.**



4. The surge in LGBTQ+ voters is expected to transform the American electoral landscape, most critically tipping the scales in “red” states that are on the cusp of no longer being categorized as reliably “red” helping to push those states into firmly “purple” territory. In several consequential states, the proportion of LGBTQ+ voters will almost double between 2020 and 2040.

- + In Georgia, the proportion of the VEP identifying as LGBTQ+ is projected to grow from over one in ten (11%) in 2020, to almost one in five (19.2%) in 2040. Similar changes are projected for Texas (increasing from 11.6% to 19.9%) and Arizona (increasing from 12% to 19.4%).
- + Ohio is projected to see the largest percent change in the VEP identifying as LGBTQ+, increasing by over 86% from 9.5% in 2020, to 17.7% in 2040.

5. The impact of LGBTQ+ voters is projected to be most significant in areas where independent and swing voters have most sway – in terms of not only reorienting the battleground map by pushing those areas into more firmly “blue” territory, but in terms of also increasingly favoring pro-equality candidates in states and districts that are consequential in determining who wins control of the White House and Congress.

- + In both Nevada (21.3%) and Colorado (21.4%) the proportion of the VEP identifying as LGBTQ+ will exceed one in five by 2040.

INTRODUCTION

Much attention has been given to demographic shifts within the United States, and their implication for electoral politics. A Pew Research report noted, for example, that the percentage of eligible voters who are Asian-American more than doubled from 2.4% in 2000 to 4.7% in 2020. A report from Vox which used data from the Census Bureau found that the percentage of eligible voters identifying as Hispanic/Latinx increased by 4 percentage points in just 12 years (from 9% in 2008 to 13% in 2020), with Hispanic/Latinx eligible voters accounting for a large share of the electorate in key swing states such as Nevada, Arizona and Texas — and had a sizeable influence on the 2020 election.

One group that has remained understudied is LGBTQ+ voters — yet emerging evidence suggests that LGBTQ+ adults are not only already wielding significant power as a voting bloc, but that their influence and strength will only continue to grow in coming elections. Year over year, the proportion of US adults openly identifying as LGBTQ+ has steadily increased: in 2021, over 7.1% of all US adults (age 18+) on the Gallup Poll Social Surveys identified as LGBTQ+,¹ double that of less than a decade before (3.5% in 2012), and a more than 25% increase from 2020, when 5.6% of adults identified as LGBT.

This has largely been driven by increases in LGBTQ+ identification among younger generations, who are coming out and openly identifying as LGBTQ+ at younger ages than ever before, as well as identifying with more expansive sexual and gender identities than the ‘typical’ lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender. In the 2021 Gallup data, for instance, over one-in-five (20.8%) Generation Z adult respondents (age 18+) identified as a sexual and/or gender minority, as did more than one-in-ten (10.5%) Millennials, compared with less than one-in-twenty (4.2%) Generation X adults, and only 2.6% of Baby Boomers.

One of the reasons driving higher rates of LGBTQ+ identification among younger generations is that, against a backdrop of rising national support for pro-equality policies overall, on average, younger age groups hold more pro-equality, LGBTQ+ affirming attitudes and beliefs than older generations. At the same time, higher rates of LGBTQ+ identification among young people leads cisgender and heterosexual youth to be more familiar and comfortable with LGBTQ+ people, which has further implications for pro-equality views; previous research has consistently found that knowing LGBTQ+ people, particularly close friends and family, is associated with increased acceptance of LGBTQ+ people, and support for pro-equality policies such as same-sex marriage.

¹ In the Gallup survey, the percentage identifying as LGBTQ+ includes both those who identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and/or transgender (“which of the following do you consider yourself to be? You can select as many as apply. Straight or heterosexual; Lesbian; Gay; Bisexual; Transgender”), and those who volunteered another non-heterosexual/non-cisgender identity (e.g. queer; pansexual; non-binary; etc.)



Increased acceptance of LGBTQ+ people and pro-equality policies among Millennials and Generation Z have important implications for future elections. As the US population continues to age, both generations will increasingly account for larger shares of the population — and, subsequently, a larger share of the voting eligible population. In 2020, Pew Research Institute reported that Millennials had “surpassed Baby Boomers as the nation’s largest living adult generation,” whereas in 2021, Bloomberg reported that the number of Generation Z adults in the workforce is expected to triple by 2030. A report from the Center for American Progress estimated that six in ten (60%) eligible voters in 2036 will be either Millennials or Gen Z, with several key swing states such as Texas (64%), Colorado (64%), and Georgia (62%) seeing these generations account for even higher proportions of their VEP. Though Millennials and Gen Z have been portrayed as a low turnout voting bloc in elections, 2020 saw an 11 percentage point increase in voting among these generations, with half of 18-29 year olds casting votes in the 2020 election (versus 39% in 2016); even higher turnout levels were observed in key swing states such as Colorado (63%), North Carolina (55%), Florida (54%), Pennsylvania (54%), and Georgia (51%). As a result, higher LGBTQ+ identification among younger age groups has the potential to substantially impact national demographics in the coming years, with both LGBTQ+ people, and pro-equality allies in Generation Z and the Millennial generation, becoming an increasingly larger proportion of the voting eligible population.

THE LGBTQ+ VOTE

LGBTQ+ voters are not a monolith, but prior evidence suggests that they are substantially more likely to support pro-equality candidates for elected office. A 2022 survey from the Human Rights Campaign asked LGBTQ+ respondents which issues were the most important “when making your decision about who to vote for,” and found that reproductive rights and LGBTQ+ discrimination were the two most frequently selected issues, each selected by more than eight-in-ten respondents. More than six-in-ten selected transgender rights and safety concerns (66%) and racial justice (65%).

At the same time, poll research suggests the LGBTQ+ population is highly engaged in politics and votes in record numbers. GLAAD/Pathfinder found that 88% of LGBTQ+ adults surveyed were registered to vote prior to the 2020 Presidential election, with more than 93% casting a vote, a quarter for the first time. According to the National Election Poll 2020 exit poll, LGBTQ+ adults were over-represented among voters, accounting for 7% of all voters, despite representing only 5.6% of all adults. As a result, the power of the LGBTQ+ voting bloc is already emerging. 2020 saw the highest proportion of LGBTQ+ voters among the voting electorate, partially driven by higher LGBTQ+ identification among Millennials and Generation Z, who have been voting at increasingly higher levels. High voter participation among LGBTQ+ people in key swing states led several researchers to conclude in the Washington Post that “*had LGBT voters stayed home, Trump might have won the 2020 presidential election.*” For example, in Georgia, over half of non-LGBTQ+ voters (53%) voted for Trump, and 46% voted for Biden. However, with 88% of LGBTQ+ voters casting a vote for Biden, this was enough to narrowly flip the state to a win for Biden. Similar trends were observed in Arizona, Nevada, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin.

Given that LGBTQ+ people are growing as a share of the US population, largely driven by higher LGBTQ+ identification among younger generations, while, simultaneously, younger generations are becoming an increasingly large proportion of the voting eligible population (VEP), it is safe to assume that LGBTQ+ Americans are, and will increasingly continue to be, an important voting bloc in American elections. Yet, to date, future projections about the size of the LGBTQ+ voting bloc have not been made. Following, this report, which reflects a collaboration between researchers at the Human Rights Campaign and demographers at Bowling Green State University (see About the Authors below), utilizes publicly available Census Data and demographic population projections, to quantify the proportion of the VEP that is LGBTQ+, nationally and in 12 key states, through 2040.

LGBTQ+ IDENTIFICATION BY GENERATION

Nationally, LGBTQ+ identification among the U.S. Census Bureau’s Household Pulse Survey (HPS) respondents was highest for Generation Z, among whom, over a quarter (27%) identified as LGBTQ+ (Table 1). Identification was also high among Millennials, over one in seven (15.6%) of whom identified as LGBTQ+. Among older generations, LGBTQ+ identification was a bit lower, ranging from 7.6% of Generation X to a little less than one in twenty Boomers (4.6%) and Traditionalists (4.9%).



LGBTQ+ identification was relatively similar across 12 key states of interest (see Table 1), with a few notable exceptions. For the youngest generations (e.g., Gen Z and Millennials), Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, and Ohio all saw substantially higher LGBTQ+ identification than was seen at the national level. For Nevada and Colorado, this trend continued among older generations as well. In contrast, Ohio and Michigan saw much lower LGBTQ+ identification at the state level among Gen X and Boomers, relative to national estimates.

Table 1. Proportion of adults in the Household Pulse Survey (Phases 3.2 – 3.5) identifying as LGBTQ+, by Generation– nationally and in key states

	Pre-New Gen [±]	New Generation [±]	Gen Z	Millennial	Gen X	Boomer [*]	Traditionalist [*]
<i>Generation</i>	<i>X - 2015</i>	<i>2004-2014</i>	<i>1997-2003</i>	<i>1981-1996</i>	<i>1965-1980</i>	<i>1946-1964</i>	<i>1934-1945</i>
U.S. National	27.0%	27.0%	27.0%	15.6%	7.6%	4.6%	4.9%
Arizona	30.9%	30.9%	30.9%	17.7%	7.9%	5.3%	5.3%
Colorado	30.7%	30.7%	30.7%	19.5%	8.6%	4.8%	4.8%
Florida	26.3%	26.3%	26.3%	14.3%	8.0%	5.0%	5.0%
Georgia	29.3%	29.3%	29.3%	14.8%	7.0%	4.5%	4.5%
Michigan	22.8%	22.8%	22.8%	14.9%	5.9%	3.9%	3.9%
Nevada	33.0%	33.0%	33.0%	17.9%	9.9%	5.5%	5.5%
New Hampshire	23.7%	23.7%	23.7%	16.9%	7.6%	4.2%	4.2%
North Carolina	22.1%	22.1%	22.1%	13.7%	6.2%	4.6%	4.6%
Ohio	30.0%	30.0%	30.0%	13.7%	6.5%	3.4%	3.4%
Pennsylvania	26.7%	26.7%	26.7%	15.2%	6.9%	4.1%	4.1%
Texas	29.2%	29.2%	29.2%	15.5%	7.3%	4.8%	4.8%
Wisconsin	24.8%	24.8%	24.8%	15.6%	6.6%	4.3%	4.3%

± As the HPS survey was restricted to adults age 18 and over, there were no respondents from either New Generation (born 2004-2014) or Pre-New Generation (born 2015 or later). For these generations, the percentage of Generation Z respondents identifying as LGBTQ+ was used instead.

* For state level estimates, Boomers and Traditionalists were combined and a single % LGBTQ+ was estimated, to account for smaller sample sizes

LGBTQ+ AS A PROPORTION OF THE VOTING ELIGIBLE POPULATION

We estimate that approximately one-in-ten (10.8%) voting eligible adults in the United States identified as LGBTQ+ during the 2020 General Election (Table 2). This estimate is in line with prior estimates of the proportion of the voting eligible population (VEP) that is LGBTQ+.

In the upcoming 2022 midterms, the proportion of the national VEP that is LGBTQ+ will increase slightly to over one in ten (11.3%). In key individual states, LGBTQ+ adults remain approximately one-tenth or more of the VEP, ranging from 9.6% of all eligible voters in Michigan, to 13.5% of the VEP in both Colorado and Nevada.

By 2030 the proportion of the national VEP that identifies as LGBTQ+ will increase to approximately one in seven (14.3%). This is driven by the larger share of the VEP that is from younger generations (e.g. Millennials and Gen Z), who are substantially more likely to identify as LGBTQ+ than older age groups. In each of the key states, the proportion of the VEP that is LGBTQ+ will increase as well, with Georgia (15.2%), Arizona (15.7%), Texas (16%), Nevada (17.1%), and Colorado (17.4%) all expected to see a higher proportion of their VEP identifying as LGBTQ+ than the national average.

By the 2040 general election, the proportion of the national VEP identifying as LGBTQ+ will almost double from 2020 levels. Nationally, the proportion will approach one in five

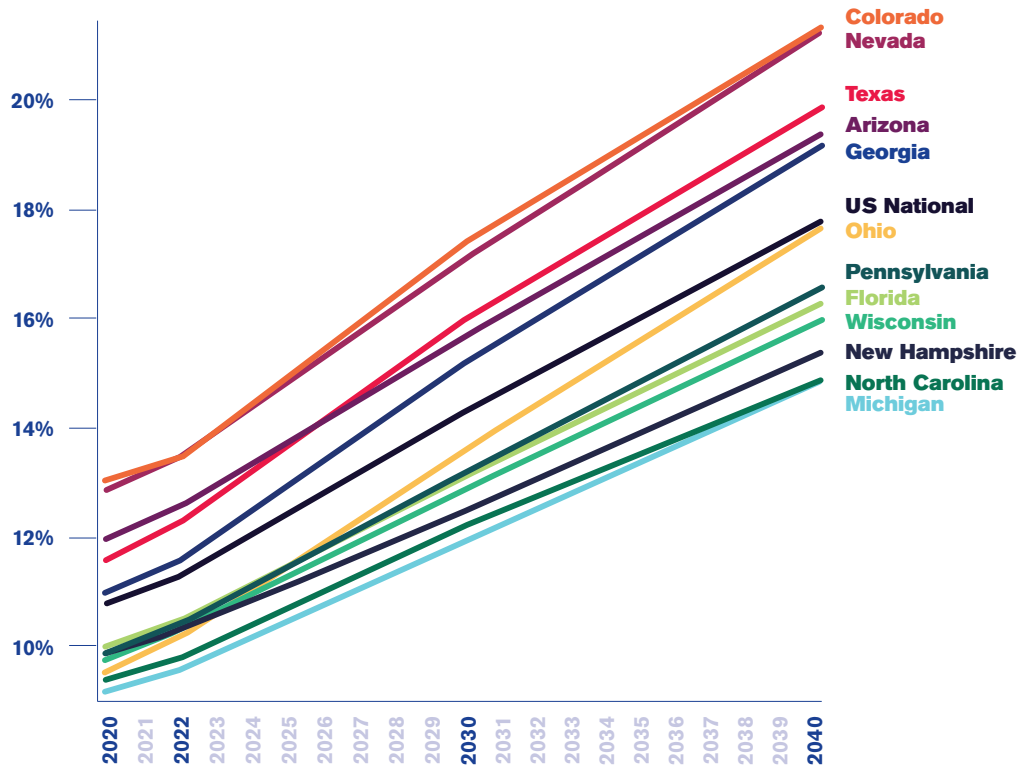


(17.8%). In several key states, including Georgia (19.2%), Arizona (19.4%), Texas (19.9%), Nevada (21.3%), and Colorado (21.4%), the proportion of VEP identifying as LGBTQ+ will exceed national levels.



Table 2. Estimated proportion of the Voting Eligible Population (VEP) that identifies as LGBTQ+ in 2020, 2022, 2030, and 2040.

	2020	2022	2030	2040
US National	10.8%	11.3%	14.3%	17.8%
Arizona	12.0%	12.6%	15.7%	19.4%
Colorado	13.0%	13.5%	17.4%	21.4%
Florida	10.0%	10.5%	13.1%	16.3%
Georgia	11.0%	11.6%	15.2%	19.2%
Michigan	9.2%	9.6%	12.0%	14.9%
Nevada	12.9%	13.5%	17.1%	21.3%
New Hampshire	9.9%	10.3%	12.5%	15.4%
North Carolina	9.4%	9.8%	12.2%	14.9%
Ohio	9.5%	10.2%	13.6%	17.7%
Pennsylvania	9.8%	10.4%	13.2%	16.6%
Texas	11.6%	12.3%	16.0%	19.9%
Wisconsin	9.8%	10.3%	12.9%	16.0%





CONCLUSION

LGBTQ+ people are not only currently a veritable and consequential force in determining the fate of national and state elections, but their power and influence will only continue to grow in the upcoming years, offering the potential to permanently transform and reshape the American electoral landscape.

LGBTQ+ voters currently represent a sizable proportion of the electorate, accounting for more than one in ten eligible voters as the nation approaches the 2022 midterms. Looking forward, LGBTQ+ Americans as a voting bloc will exert an even greater influence over electoral outcomes in the coming years, approaching one in five eligible voters nationally by 2040, as well as even higher levels in key swing states such as Arizona, Colorado, Georgia, Nevada, and Texas.

The impact of these trends could be immense. As LGBTQ+ adults continue to represent a much larger swath of the voting population, LGBTQ+ voters and their ballot decisions will have increasing sway in elections. In 2020, the LGBTQ+ vote was crucial in narrowly flipping several key states—and, ultimately, winning the presidency for Joe Biden. In coming years, the growing LGBTQ+ electorate stands to fundamentally alter prospects for candidates, ballot questions, and other items put before voters.

At the same time, LGBTQ+ growth as a voting bloc is being driven by higher levels of open LGBTQ+ identification among younger generations (e.g., Millennials and Gen Z), who are rapidly becoming a sizable proportion of the electorate. Given that younger generations are more likely to be accepting of LGBTQ+ people and hold pro-equality views, it is clear that equality issues will play an essential role in future elections for years to come.

Looking forward, it is essential that candidates understand the importance of LGBTQ+ voters, as well as pro-equality platforms, in ensuring electoral success. Candidates running on anti-LGBTQ+ platforms and demonizing LGBTQ+ people to rile up extreme members of the conservative base are using an out-dated playbook. They are on the wrong side of history, and also ignorant of the demographic realities of the American electorate—which is already the most accepting of LGBTQ+ rights as it has ever been, and will only continue to be more queer, and more LGBTQ+ affirming in the coming years.

METHODS

Estimates of the proportion of adults identifying as LGBTQ+ come from Phases 3.2-3.5 (inclusive) of the U.S. Census Bureau's Household Pulse Survey, collected between September 29, 2021 and August 8, 2022.

LGBTQ+ identification was defined as those who (a) selected "gay or lesbian"; "bisexual"; or "something else" as their sexual identity; and/or (b) selected "transgender" or "none of these" as their gender identity; and/or (c) selected a sex assigned at birth that differed from their gender identity (e.g. male sex assigned at birth, and female gender identity).

Proportions of each Generation identifying as LGBTQ+ were computed at the national level, as well for each of the 12 key priority states (see Table 1).

As the HPS survey was restricted to adults age 18 and over, there were no respondents from either New Generation (born 2004-2014) or Pre-New Generation (born 2015 or later) to derive an estimate of the percentage identifying as LGBTQ+. As a result, the percentage of Generation Z respondents identifying as LGBTQ+ was used for these generations. As we continue to see higher levels of LGBTQ+ identification, as well as earlier ages of coming out as LGBTQ+, in younger birth cohort, this is a conservative estimate of LGBTQ+ identification in these generations.

For state level estimates, due to small sample size among older generations, Boomers and Traditionalists were combined, and a single estimate of the proportion identifying as LGBTQ+ was computed for this combined generation.

These proportions were then applied to demographic projections of the US population through 2040, as estimated by the [University of Virginia Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service](#). More information on estimation and analytic approaches can be found in the Appendix at the end of this brief.



EQUALITY ELECTORATE: THE PROJECTED GROWTH OF THE LGBTQ+ VOTING BLOC IN COMING YEARS

Appendix: Methodology

DATA

Analyses were conducted using two data sources, the U.S. Census Bureau's [Household Pulse Survey \(HPS\)](#), and the University of Virginia [Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service Demographics Research Group's](#) (2018) population projections and estimates for 2020, 2022, 2030, and 2040.

The HPS was initiated during the pandemic to measure how the COVID-19 pandemic was affecting U.S. households. Respondents were interviewed online and are aged 18 and older. The HPS consists of "phases" that constitute week-based cycles. Phase 3.2 was the selected starting point as it was the first complete phase with questions about sexual and gender identity. For these analyses, we appended Phases 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5 together, utilizing data that began on July 21st, 2021 and ended on August 8th, 2022. As a result, the data consist of fifteen weekly time points and include 971,836 respondents. We restricted analyses to those who had a valid response on both the sexual and gender identity questions, and due to data issues, were born after 1933. The final analytic sample size was 944,572 individuals. Analyses were weighted using the HPS person-level weights assigned to each Phase. The HPS weights are designed to produce bi-weekly estimates for total persons 18 and older living in a housing unit while also adjusting for non-response, number of adults per household, coverage, and state-level demographics (age, race/ethnicity, and education). For more information on HPS methodology, see the [Technical Documentation](#) released by the U.S. Census Bureau.

The Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service Demographics Research Group (2018) at the University of Virginia has produced national and state population estimates for the years 2020, 2030 and 2040. These projections are based on assumptions about fertility, mortality, and migration patterns. The data include five-year age group estimates that are used to code generations (see more below). More information about the projections can be found here: [Methodology](#), [Projections](#), and [Estimates](#).

LGBTQ+ DEFINITION

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and other sexual and gender minority respondents were identified based on self-reported responses on the HPS to three questions:

- **Sexual identity:** Which of the following best represents how you think of yourself?
 - Gay or lesbian
 - Straight, that is not gay or lesbian
 - Bisexual
 - Something else
 - I don't know
- **Sex assigned at birth:** What sex were you assigned at birth, on your original birth certificate?
 - Male
 - Female



- + Gender Identity:** Do you currently describe yourself as male, female or transgender?
 - Male
 - Female
 - Transgender
 - None of these

LGBTQ+ individuals included those who responded to the sexual identity question as "gay or lesbian"; "bisexual," or "something else", and/or those who replied as "transgender" or "none of these" on the gender identity question. Additionally, we included those who had a sex assigned at birth that did not match their current gender identity (but did not identify as transgender or other) and who had a sex assigned at birth that was not imputed by HPS. The denominator for the percent estimates includes all adults who responded to the questions including those who replied, "don't know."

GENERATIONS

We used the respondents' birth year, as self-reported in the HPS, to create generations based on birth cohorts (Table A1).

Table A1. Definitions of Generations

Birth cohort	Years born	Age at survey
Pre-New Gen	2015 – Present	Not included
New Generation	2004 – 2014	Not included
Generation Z (Gen Z)	1997 – 2003	18 – 25
Millennials	1981 – 1996	26 - 41
Generation X (Gen X)	1965 – 1980	42 - 57
Boomers	1946 – 1964	58 – 75
Traditionalists	1934 – 1945	76 – 88

Respondents of the HPS were born in 2003 or earlier, therefore for our analysis of LGBTQ+ estimates of "Pre-New Gen" and "New Gen," we apply the Gen Z estimates of percent LGBTQ+, and assume no additional growth or decline in LGBTQ+ populations. Given prior increases in LGBT identification across subsequent generations as measured by Gallup, this represents a conservative estimate as there may be continued growth in the LGBTQ+ population in future generations.

We employed different generational category coding for national and state level analysis. For the national level analysis, we were able to disaggregate Boomers and Traditionalists. However, due to sample size restrictions, at the state level, we combined Boomers and Traditionalists, and assume similar estimates for these two generational categories.

COMPARISON TO GALLUP ESTIMATES

Gallup polling, first as the Daily Tracking Poll and now as the Poll Social Series, has been one of the only long term source for both national and state level estimates of the LGBT population, and is often used to draw inferences about the size and characteristics of the LGBT population.



For the present analysis, we chose to use the HPS, instead of Gallup data, to estimate LGBTQ+ identification across generations, as it offers more flexibility in measures of sexual orientation and gender identity, as well as the ability to combine multiple phases of data collection to obtain a large enough sample size to draw state level estimates.

As a validation check, we first determined whether the population estimates in the HPS corresponded with Gallup estimates. To do this, we compared the national share of the population that identified as LGBTQ+ (the current definition used in this report), as well as the share that identified as strictly LGBT (e.g. selected “Gay or lesbian” or “Bisexual” for their sexual identity; and/or selected “Transgender” for their gender identity; and/or selected a different gender identity from their sex assigned at birth), across generations in the HPS, to that reported in [Gallup 2021](#) (n=12,416 respondents). The HPS estimates for each generation were similar to Gallup estimates (Table A2). For example, 20.8% of Gen Z reported being LGBT according to Gallup, whereas in the HPS, 22.8% of Gen Z identified as LGBT. Similarly, 2.6% of Boomers in the Gallup estimates reported a LGBT identity, while 3.2% of Boomers in the HPS did so. The LGBTQ+ HPS estimates were higher than those reported by Gallup because the HPS employs a more expansive definition of LGBTQ+, which includes individuals who selected the category ‘something else’ as their sexual identity, as well as those who selected “None of these” for their gender identity. HPS estimates also included those who did not explicitly identify as “transgender” for their gender identity, but who did report a gender identity different than their sex assigned at birth (e.g. female gender identity and male sex assigned at birth). Individuals in the Gallup survey were not given the ‘something else’ gender identity option but may have volunteered another sexual or gender identity as an other/write-in.

Table A2. Comparisons of LGBT and LGBTQ+ identification, by generation, between Gallup (2021) and the Household Pulse Survey (2021-2022).

Cohort	LGBT, Gallup 2021	LGBT, HPS 2021-2022	LGBTQ+, HPS 2021-2022
Gen Z	20.8%	22.3%	27.0%
Millennials	10.5%	12.3%	15.6%
Gen X	4.2%	5.3%	7.6%
Boomers	2.6%	3.2%	4.6%
Traditionalists	0.8%	2.4%	4.9%

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Using the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, Demographics Research Group’s (2018) [national and state population](#) projections by age we estimated the projected LGBTQ+ populations by generational category for the years 2020, 2022, 2030 and 2040. The Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, Demographics Research Group (2018) projections are reported in five-year age groups, therefore each age group was divided by five to produce population projections by single-year ages. Because the generational categories represent birth cohorts (i.e. based on birth years), the single-year ages were then used to approximate the corresponding birth year. For example, those aged 25-29 in 2020 were assumed to be born in the years 1991 through 1995, and as such, considered part of the Millennial generation. Whereas in 2030 projections, those aged 25-29 were assumed to be born in the years 2001 through 2005 with three-fifths belonging to Gen Z and two-fifths to “New Gen.”

Once single birth year population projections were determined (e.g., the projected number of people in a given year who are a single year of age), all projected ages greater than 18 were summed across the relevant age ranges for each generation in that year: For example, in 2030, projections



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for ages 27 –33 were summed up to derive our base population estimates of voting eligible individuals for Generation Z. Next we multiplied the base population estimates for each generation, by the percentage of each generation identifying as LGBTQ+, to obtain estimates of the number of voting eligible people identified as LGBTQ+ for each generation. In our estimates, we assume similar LGBTQ+ identification levels among immigrant populations. Finally, the estimated number of voting eligible LGBTQ+ people for each generation were then summed together, and divided by the estimated number of voting eligible people overall, in order to derive a single estimate of the proportion of the VEP that is LGBTQ+ for a given year.

To obtain state-level estimates we applied the same strategy to state population projections. We advise using state-level estimates with caution as the sample sizes of LGBTQ+ population become small. In both instances, we do not report population numbers in this report, only proportions, as the Census cautions against using HPS to derive population counts.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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