

The Williams Institute is the leading research center on sexual orientation and gender identity law and public policy in the U.S.

In the 3rd UPR cycle, the U.S. supported recommendations to eliminate discrimination and prevent violence against LGBT people (4), combat racism and xenophobia (35), and protect immigrants and asylum seekers (23). The U.S. has regressed in most respects. It has removed protections, legislated discrimination, and deleted federal data, increasing the risk of harm to LGBT people, especially transgender people and those from racial minority and immigrant communities.

CURRENT SITUATION

Discrimination

LGBT people in the U.S. receive lower wages and experience higher rates of job loss, unemployment, food insecurity, homelessness, and poverty. Black, Latino, Asian, and Indigenous LGBT people experience higher rates of workplace discrimination, harassment, and poverty.

In 2025 and 2026, the U.S. revoked anti-discrimination protections and reversed rights-based public policies, including:

- Suspending passports that match the gender identity of transgender and nonbinary citizens
- Banning transgender people from the military and firing those currently serving
- Banning transgender prisoners and homeless people from facilities that match their gender identity
- Canceling federal research grants focused on areas such as LGBT and racial minority health
- Banning access to evidence-based health care and sports for most transgender children and youth
- Harassing youth gender clinics until they stop providing services

In 2026, the U.S. Supreme Court issued a ruling allowing conversion therapy for LGBT minors. Conversion therapy is linked with nearly twice the rate of suicidal thoughts and attempts among LGB people and with suicidal thoughts in 85% of transgender people.

Violence

- LGBT people are nine times more likely than non-LGBT people to be victims of violent hate crimes and five times more likely to be victims of any violent crime, with Black LGBT people experiencing the highest rates.
- The number of reported hate crime incidents against transgender people nearly tripled between 2018 and 2024.

Immigration

- When detained, LGBT immigrants and asylum seekers face sexual and physical violence, disproportionate use of solitary confinement, refusals of necessary medical care, and a ban on placing transgender immigrants in facilities that match their gender identity (i.e., requiring transgender women to be placed in men's facilities).
- LGBT-specific ICE detention standards on housing, safety, medical care, and mandatory risk assessments have been eliminated.
- The U.S. has deported at least 12 LGBT asylum seekers — 11 of them to countries that criminalize LGBT people. Nine had withholding protections. Seven have been returned to the countries from which they fled. At least two more transgender women, a lesbian, and a gay man are reportedly facing removal.

SOGI Data, Monitoring, and Accountability

- Federal agencies have removed sexual orientation and gender identity measures from more than 360 data collections — primarily gender identity measures, but also sexual orientation measures, despite no direct order.
- Data sets include the National Crime Victimization Survey, Office of Refugee Resettlement collections serving unaccompanied children and survivors of torture and trafficking, and ICE detention data on gender identity, despite a Congressional mandate.

Foreign Assistance

- In early 2025, the U.S. abruptly withdrew life-saving humanitarian aid that it had committed to countries around the world. Countries relied, in good faith, on this aid to organize their health systems in partnership with the U.S., and key population-led health responses were decimated.
- Vulnerable communities, including children and adults living with HIV, abruptly lost health care, medicines, and nutrition. LGBT community organizations saw deep cuts, which left them without funding for services, advocacy, or support.
- As of 2026, an estimated 700,000+ people have died worldwide as a result of these cuts. More than 14 million additional deaths, including 4.5 million children, are projected by 2030.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Discrimination

1. Adopt legislation that ensures legal recognition of gender identity at the federal level and prohibits discrimination based on sex, sex characteristics, sexual orientation, and gender identity with respect to public accommodations, employment, housing, and in federally funded programs and services.
2. Adopt and fund a National Action Plan to combat discrimination and violence against sexual and gender minorities with regular and transparent reporting.

Violence

3. Implement nationwide efforts to address the underreporting of and impunity for hate crimes based on sexual orientation and gender identity and report on progress.
4. Fund the National Action Plan on Gender-Based Violence and ensure that it includes transgender, intersex, lesbian, and bisexual women, women of color, and immigrant women.

Immigration

5. Allow independent human rights monitoring of immigration detention conditions and institute urgent measures to ensure the safety of LGBT people and people with HIV and other health conditions held in these centers.
6. Halt third-country deportations and establish oversight against refoulement.
7. Create safe and confidential systems for reporting mistreatment and prompt redress.
8. Ensure asylum officers and other personnel within CBP and USCIS who conduct credible/reasonable fear determinations, as well as immigration judges, are adequately trained in competent interview methods for LGBT people.

Monitoring and Accountability

9. Restart systematic collection of research data on sexual orientation and gender identity in government research that collects demographic information, with a focus on reducing disparities and complying with stringent protections against misuse and unauthorized disclosure of such data.

Foreign Assistance

10. Develop safeguards against causing harm to vulnerable communities through withdrawals of foreign aid, cooperate with independent human rights mechanisms to assess impacts of the 2025 aid cuts, and restore support to community-led health programs.

LGBT people are a minority of the U.S. population

- **13.9 million LGBT adults** (5.5% of adult population)
- **2.14 million adults identify as transgender** (0.8% of adult population)
- **724,000 youth identify as transgender** (3.3% of population aged 13-17)
- People of Black, Latino, Asian, and Indigenous descent make up **40% of U.S. LGBT adults**.

KEY QUESTIONS FOR THE U.S.

1. What is the U.S. doing to end discrimination, hate crimes, and other violence against LGBT people?
2. How is the U.S. ensuring that immigration detention facilities meet the safety and health needs of sexual and gender minorities?
3. With most SOGI data collection stopped, how will the U.S. track progress in ensuring the political, civil, and socioeconomic rights of LGBT people?
4. After dismantling humanitarian aid programs, how is the U.S. addressing the impact on health infrastructure and provision, and on LGBT and other community-led health and human rights programs?



This document highlights key issues and recommendations from our UPR submission on the United States. Scan this QR code to view the full submission for more information and citations.
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