

HRRCs

Snapshot Series: Legislative v. Lived Reality

Democracy cannot thrive unless the human rights of all its citizens are protected, including minorities that are often scapegoated, “othered” and targeted because of their sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics.

To this end, the F&M Global Barometers, in partnership with the Council for Global Equality, quantifies the legislative and lived realities of LGBTQI+ individuals across the world through two tools: the 2022 LGBTQI+ Human Rights Report Cards (HRRCs) and the F&M Global Barometers LGBTQI+ Perception Index (GBPI).

The HRRCs provide a concise measurement of core human rights protections for LGBTQI+ individuals, setting the collective standard for the 110 countries invited to the White House Summit for Democracy between 2020-2022. Countries are graded on three dimensions: Basic Rights, Protection from Violence, and Socio-Economic Rights.

The GBPI is a first-of-its-kind survey that documents the lived realities and perceptions of LGBTQI+ people. The survey was live from June to September 2022 and was available in four languages (Arabic, English, French, and Spanish). The GBPI asked six questions focused on safety, acceptance, and experience with discrimination.

Both projects use a grading scale from A-F, where “A” (100%) is the highest score or most protecting country, and “F” (0%) is the lowest score or least protecting country. Together, these two metrics allow for a robust, comprehensive analysis of global LGBTQI+ rights.



LGBTQI+ human rights scorecards on 110 democracies



Three dimensions:
Basic Human Rights
Protection from Violence
Socio-Economic Rights

GBPI



Innovative global survey on LGBTQI+ lived realities



167,000+ responses



Survey data from 136 countries

United States



HRRC (2022)

F
(57%)

Data from the HRRCs and GBPI show that LGBTQI+ Americans’ lived realities are more positive than the legislative reality.

While the United States’ HRRC score has increased each year (43% in 2020 and 53% in 2021), the United States still failed to robustly protect its LGBTQI+ citizens in 2022 (57%). HRRC Dimension 2 (Protection from Violence) most negatively affected the United States’ score. This dimension aligns with Q4 (Violence) on the GBPI, which asked respondents how likely they were to experience violence. The average score of Q4 was a 69% or “D.”

GBPI (2022)

C
(Neither Positive nor Negative)

One factor that may account for the discrepancy between legislation and lived reality is the differing experiences of individuals within the LGBTQI+ community. Gender identity minorities and intersex individuals responded more negatively on the GBPI than sexual orientation minorities. While gay and bisexual individuals reported the most positive lived realities, at 72% and 70% respectively, both transgender women and transgender men’s overall scores were an average of 60%. The average aggregate score for intersex and non-binary individuals was 62%. These data suggest that gender-conforming individuals may feel safer and more accepted and have fewer experiences with violence and discrimination than their gender non-conforming peers.

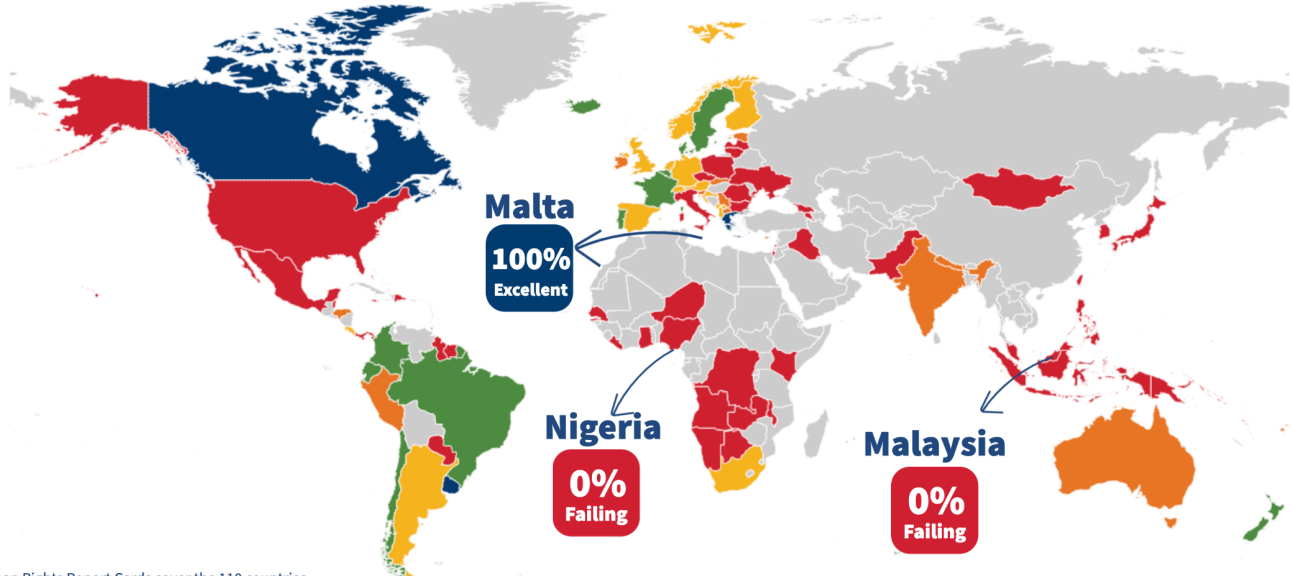


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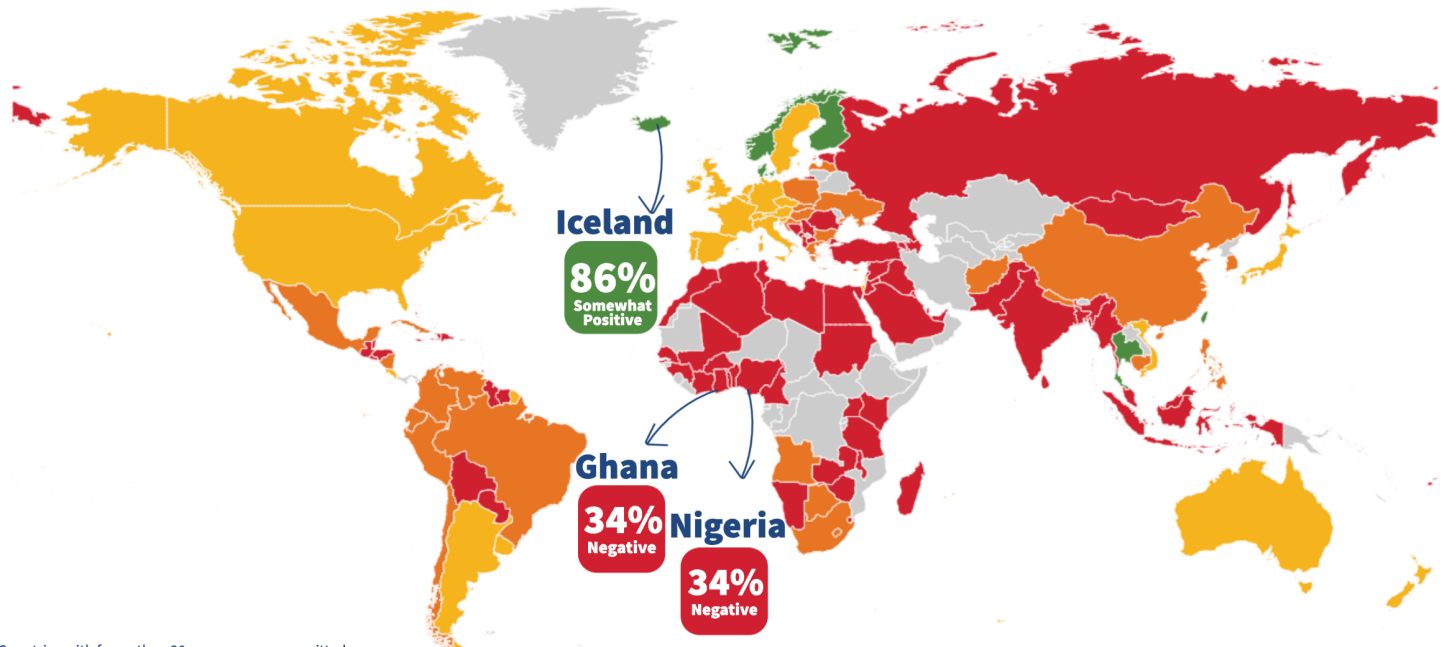
LGBTQI+ Human Rights Report Cards (2022)



NB: The LGBTQI+ Human Rights Report Cards cover the 110 countries invited to the White House Summit for Democracy.

0-59% - F	60-69% - D	70-79% - C	80-89% - B	90-100% - A
Failing	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent

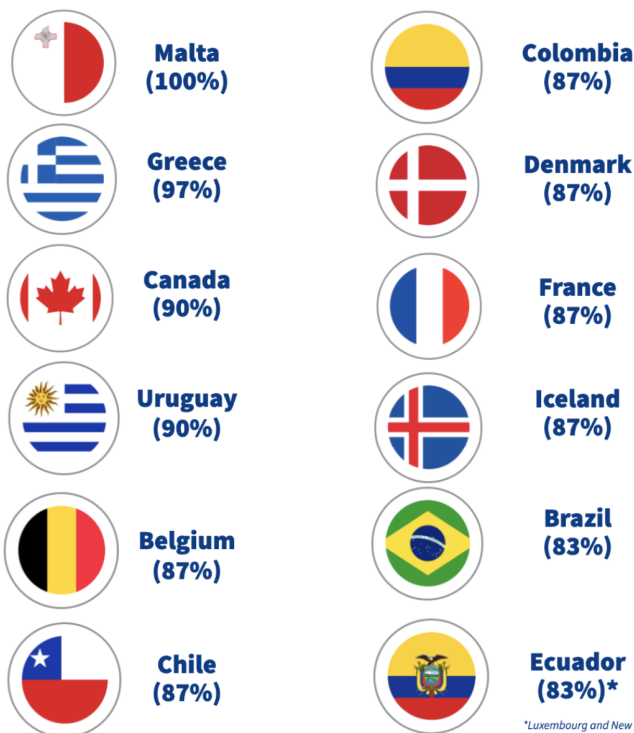
F&M Global Barometers LGBTQI+ Perception Index (2022)



NB: Countries with fewer than 30 responses were omitted.

F	D	C	B	A
Negative	Somewhat Negative	Neither Positive Nor Negative	Somewhat Positive	Positive

Highest Scoring HRRCs Countries (2022)



*Luxembourg and New Zealand also scored an 83%

Lowest Scoring HRRCs Countries (2022)



*Papua New Guinea, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Zambia also scored a 7%

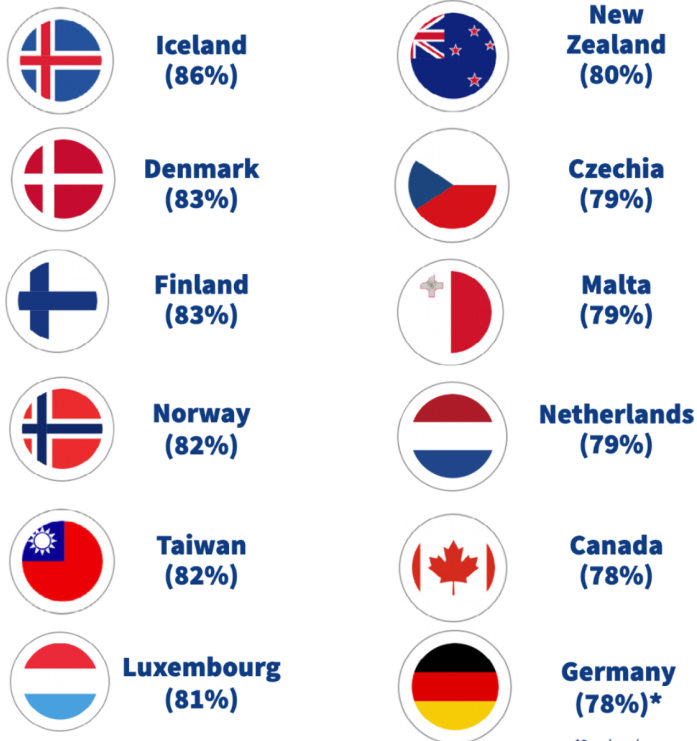
The 2022 LGBTQI+ Human Rights Report Cards demonstrate the changing landscape of LGBTQI+ rights and democracy. Across the three years tracked for the White House Summit for Democracy (2020-2022), 47 countries improved their scores, 52 stagnated, and 11 declined. On the whole, the majority of countries received an “F” or a failing grade on the HRRCs.

The decriminalization of homosexuality proved to be one of the most important levers of progress. Angola, whose score improved by 30% between 2020 to 2022, decriminalized in 2021, which also allowed for the inclusion of sexual orientation minorities in hate crimes and hate speech laws and anti-discrimination protections for access to employment, housing, and healthcare. Barbados, Botswana, and Saint Kitts and Nevis also recently decriminalized homosexuality and were among the top five countries to improve their score. Several countries also further protected the rights of gender identity minorities and intersex individuals. Chile banned medically unnecessary, non-consensual medical interventions and now allows citizens to use gender-neutral legal classifications, the latter of which was also implemented in the United States. New Zealand improved access to legal gender recognition by removing physiological alteration and psychiatric diagnosis requirements.

While 11 countries (Armenia, Belize, Ecuador, Georgia, Ghana, Jamaica, Kiribati, Palau, Serbia, Timor-Leste, and Tonga) experienced a reduction in their scores, they did so only by 3%. The majority of these countries declined due to negative indicators in Dimension 1 (Basic Human Rights); instances of arbitrary arrests were documented in Belize and Georgia while Armenia, Jamaica, Serbia, and Tonga had difficulties related to LGBTQI+ advocacy. Ghana is also poised to criminalize gender identity and expression.

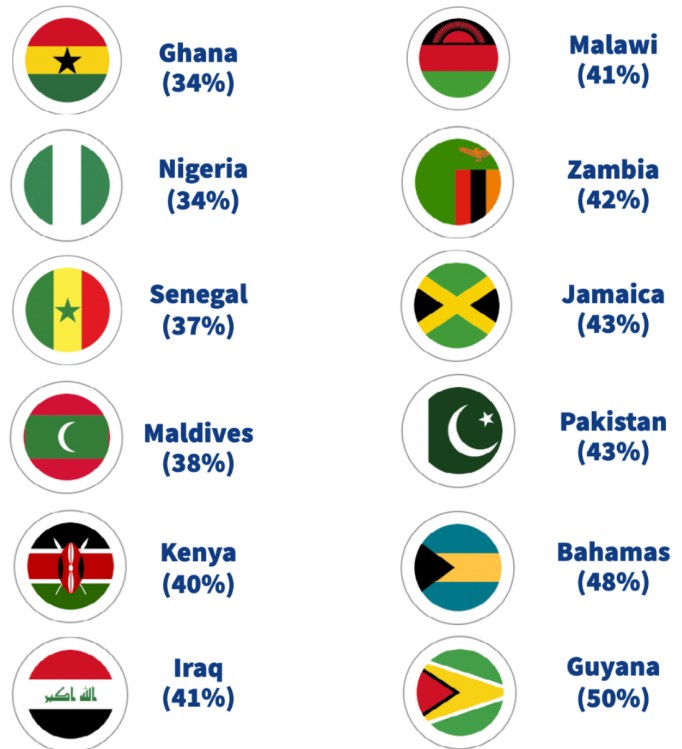
On the whole, while individual countries have made progress, indicators related to intersex individuals were the lowest, which signals the need to prioritize intersex human rights. As of 2022, only Greece, Kosovo, and Malta include sex characteristics in hate crimes legislation, and only 11 countries have banned medically unnecessary, non-consensual medical interventions.

Highest Scoring GBPI Countries (2022)



*Sweden also scored a 78%

Lowest Scoring GBPI Countries (2022)



NB: The highest and lowest scoring GBPI countries reflected here only include the 110 countries invited to the White House Summit for Democracy.

While no country scored a 100% (A) on the GBPI, the survey results make clear that democracy is a central component of ensuring that a state protects its LGBTQI+ population. Based on the EIU's Democracy Index (2023), all of the top-scoring GBPI countries -- with the exception of Czechia and Malta, which are considered "flawed" democracies -- are categorized as "full" democracies. The democratic landscape is more complicated for the lowest-scoring countries: these nations are considered "flawed" or "hybrid" democracies with the exception of countries not graded by the EIU and Iraq, which is classified as "authoritarian." Similarly, all of the countries that experienced backsliding on the HRRCs, with the exception of the countries that were not graded by the EIU, are also considered "flawed" or "hybrid" democracies [1]. It appears that the healthier the democracy, the better the lived human rights realities for LGBTQI+ individuals.

Out of the six survey questions, Iceland scored the highest on half. Norway scored narrowly higher than Iceland on Q3 (Fear of Police), and Finland and Taiwan scored the highest on Q4 (Violence) and Q5 (Safety in Gathering), respectively. At the other end of the spectrum, Nigeria scored the lowest on half of the questions. Senegal, Ghana, and Malawi scored the lowest on Q4 (Violence), Q5 (Safety in Gathering), and Q6 (Discrimination), respectively.

As noted with the data from the United States, when comparing the HRRCs and GBPI, discrepancies between legislative and lived reality emerge. While some countries, such as the Netherlands, only have a small or no disparity between HRRC and GBPI scores, others show a wider variation. Malta is the only HRRC country to receive a 100%; yet, it scores a 79% on the GBPI. A closer look at the GBPI results in Malta reveals that on average, Q2 (Acceptance) and Q4 (Violence) scored the lowest. These scores suggest that despite legislative protections, prejudice and bigotry still impact the lives of LGBTQI+ people, and as such, greater advocacy and policy work must be done in these areas in order to ensure LGBTQI+ individuals are able to fully participate in society.

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[1] Economist Intelligence Unit. (2023). "Democracy Index 2022: Frontline democracy and the battle for Ukraine." <https://www.eiu.com/n/campaigns/democracy-index-2022/>

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