

Snapshot Series: LGBTQI+ Lived Reality in Philadelphia & Pennsylvania

How safe is Philadelphia for LGBTQI+ individuals?

Philadelphia is only a slightly safer, more accepting place for LGBTQI+ individuals than both Pennsylvania and the United States, according to the most recent results of the **F&M Global Barometers LGBTQI+ Perception Index (GBPI)**.

Based on responses from 243 LGBTQI+ Philadelphians, the city scored an average of 72%, one point above the state average, and two points above the national average. Scores by question were largely similar to the national and Northeast regional average; **Q2: Acceptance** typically scored the lowest across most age groups, and **Q5: Safety in Gathering** scored the highest across all age groups. **Q3: Fear of Police** and **Q4: Violence** scores also lagged behind other questions, suggesting that people are concerned about police abuse and violence in addition to societal acceptance.

The results generally varied by age group, with younger Philadelphians reporting a worse lived reality than older age groups; and with each older age group, overall scores improved respectively.

Created by the F&M Global Barometers in partnership with the Council for Global Equality, the GBPI is a **groundbreaking survey** that gauges the lived human rights reality of the global LGBTQI+ community. Launched on the anniversary of the Stonewall Riots in June 2022, the GBPI asked six questions on safety, acceptance, fear, and discrimination. It was available in four languages: Arabic, English, French and Spanish. Based on the responses, each country or state is assigned a letter grade (A-F) and assessed on a scale of 0-100% where A (100%) is the highest and F (0%) is the lowest.

GBPI (2022) Results in Philadelphia

All Respondents	Under 25	Between 25-35	Between 36-55	Over 55
Q1 (Safety) 73%	Q1 (Safety) 66%	Q1 (Safety) 70%	Q1 (Safety) 76%	Q1 (Safety) 83%
Q2 (Acceptance) 66%	Q2 (Acceptance) 64%	Q2 (Acceptance) 63%	Q2 (Acceptance) 66%	Q2 (Acceptance) 77%
Q3 (Fear of Police) 71%	Q3 (Fear of Police) 66%	Q3 (Fear of Police) 69%	Q3 (Fear of Police) 74%	Q3 (Fear of Police) 76%
Q4 (Violence) 69%	Q4 (Violence) 64%	Q4 (Violence) 67%	Q4 (Violence) 70%	Q4 (Violence) 80%
Q5 (Safety in Gathering) 77%	Q5 (Safety in Gathering) 76%	Q5 (Safety in Gathering) 75%	Q5 (Safety in Gathering) 78%	Q5 (Safety in Gathering) 85%
Q6 (Discrimination) 73%	Q6 (Discrimination) 71%	Q6 (Discrimination) 71%	Q6 (Discrimination) 73%	Q6 (Discrimination) 81%
Overall Score N=243 72%	Overall Score N=45 68%	Overall Score N=81 69%	Overall Score N=82 73%	Overall Score N=31 80%

NB: Not all respondents answered every question, and scores were rounded up to the nearest whole number.

“I am still largely closeted with a very thin connection to the community as a whole. The election of Trump and legislation against LGBT individuals across the country have been big motivators for me only really coming out to those within my inner circle.”

“The new appeal to stir up anti-gay feelings is anger toward transgender.” There is a general disgust the Republicans store up to make their electorate hate enough to vote for them.”

“My fear right now relates to the fact our Supreme Court contains members who are very conservative. ... I and my partner...are afraid of what could happen as an older couple going into retirement if suddenly we were declared to no longer be married.”

The State of LGBTQI+ Legislation in Pennsylvania

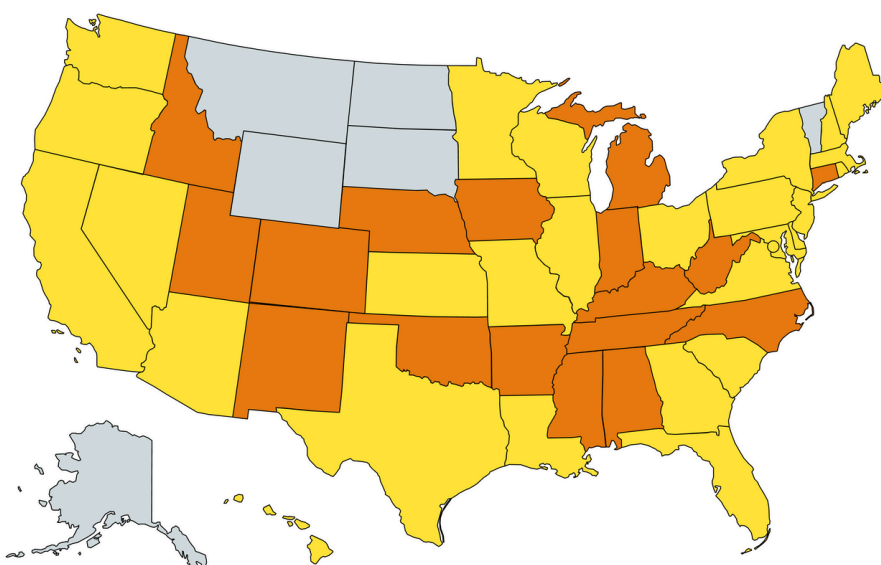
The GBPI results in both Philadelphia and statewide largely mirror the legislative reality in Pennsylvania. According to the Movement Advancement Project, Pennsylvania only scores a “Fair.” While LGBTQI+ Pennsylvanians are protected from employment discrimination through federal legislation, only 4 out of 67 counties prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity [1]. The state has yet to pass the Fairness Act, which would protect sexual orientation and gender identity minorities from discrimination in employment, housing, education, and public accommodations. Passed in the House, the bill is now in the Senate [2].

Pennsylvania also has yet to introduce any legislation to ban “panic defenses,” which enable defendants to use someone’s real or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity as a way to evade criminal responsibility and claim self-defense; to implement LGBTQI+ inclusive curriculum; or to protect LGBTQI+ students from bullying [3].

In recent years, like the rest of the country, Pennsylvania has seen an uptick in anti-LGBTQI+ rhetoric and proposed legislation. As of April 2024, four anti-LGBTQI+ bills are sitting in the House. These bills would impose barriers on trans-affirming healthcare and expression, ban transgender athletes from sports in public education institutions, and censor instruction in sexual orientation and gender identity for K-5th grade [4]. While Gov. Tom Wolf vetoed a bill that would’ve banned transgender athletes from playing sports [5], two school districts in Lancaster County enacted policies that require transgender students to adhere to their sex assigned at birth when playing sports or using bathrooms [6] [7]. Given both the proposed and passed measures, it is perhaps unsurprising that Q2, which asks how accepted participants feel, is the lowest-scoring question in both Philadelphia and Pennsylvania overall.

To see greater improvements in LGBTQI+ individuals’ sense of safety and acceptance, Pennsylvania lawmakers must codify additional LGBTQI+ discrimination protections, reject anti-LGBTQI+ rhetoric and laws designed to scapegoat transgender individuals, and support inclusive educational programming.

GBPI (2022) United States Results



Highest Scoring States

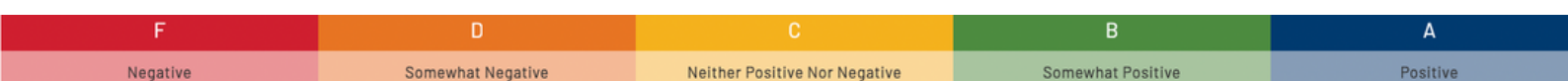
- 77% **Hawaii**
- 75% **Maine**
- 75% **Massachusetts**
- 72% **New Hampshire**
- 72% **Kansas**

Lowest Scoring States

- 63% **Idaho**
- 67% **New Mexico**
- 67% **Oklahoma**
- 67% **Tennessee**
- 67% **Utah**

N= 14,046

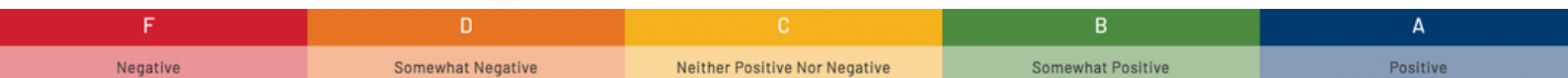
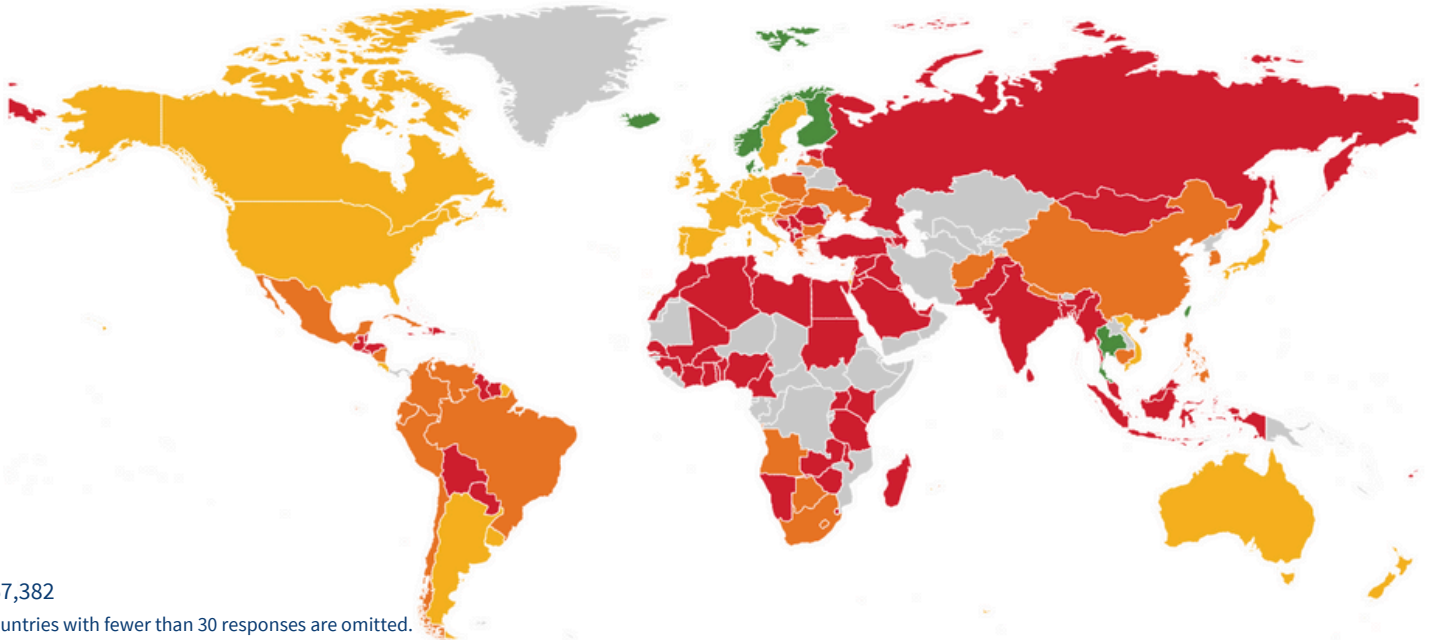
NB: States with fewer than 30 responses are omitted.









Works Cited

- [1] “Pennsylvania’s LGBTQ Policy Tally,” Pennsylvania’s Equality Profile, Movement Advancement Project, accessed April 15, 2024, https://www.lgbtmap.org/equality-maps/profile_state/PA.
- [2] “HB300-PA Fairness Act,” 2023-2024 House Bill 300 Bill Page, ACLU Pennsylvania, accessed April 15, 2024, <https://www.aclupa.org/en/legislation/hb-300-pa-fairness-act>.
- [3] “Pennsylvania’s LGBTQ+ Laws and Policies,” Pennsylvania’s Equality Profile, Movement Advancement Project, accessed April 15, 2024, https://www.lgbtmap.org/equality-maps/profile_state/PA.
- [4] “Mapping Attacks on LGBTQ Rights in U.S. State Legislatures in 2024,” Issues: LGBTQ Rights, ACLU, accessed April 15, 2024, <https://www.aclu.org/legislative-attacks-on-lgbtq-rights-2024?state=PA&impact=>.
- [5] “Wolf Vetoes Bills on Poll Watchers, Transgender Athletes,” *Associated Press News*, July 8, 2022, <https://apnews.com/article/education-pennsylvania-legislature-gender-identity-937f2bd62670b4ba717fe407e2c669a3>.
- [6] Maggie Mancini, “Lancaster County school district adopts athletic policy restricting trans students in sports,” *Philly Voice*, July 13, 2022, <https://www.phillyvoice.com/hempfield-school-district-lancaster-county-transgender-student-athletes-policy/>.
- [7] Ed Mahon, “‘Biological sex’ policy to begin this month in Eastern Lancaster County,” *WITF.org*, August 13, 2019, <https://www.witf.org/2019/08/13/biological-sex-policy-to-begin-this-month-in-eastern-lancaster-county/>.

GBPI (2022) Global Results



Visit/Contact Us:

-  www.fandmglobalbarometers.org  @FMBarometers
-  gbgr@fandm.edu  @fmgbgr
-  @fandmglobalbarometers  @fmgbgr

