



Detroit, Michigan

OUT LEADERSHIP

2024 State LGBTQ+ Business Climate Index



Purpose

Multinational companies face operational and reputational risks when they do business in places where the legal and/or social atmosphere makes it difficult for LGBTQ+ people to live openly. Discrimination against LGBTQ+ people creates serious challenges for talent mobility, retention, and development – and creates brand risk. Out Leadership's State LGBTQ+ Business Climate Index and CEO Business Briefs help leaders understand and respond to these risks and opportunities. Both this Business Climate Index and the individual State Briefs also inform and empower corporate executives to engage in conversations with economic development officials and other local stakeholders about why discrimination against LGBTQ+ people negatively impacts their ability to do business.

How to use the State LGBTQ+ Business Climate Index

As a business leader, you have the opportunity to improve the lives of LGBTQ+ people wherever you work – both within your organization and outside the walls of the company. The State LGBTQ+ Business Climate Index and CEO Briefs provide valuable information to inform your conversations with:

Staff: Ensure that staff at your company are aware of the laws and attitudes impacting LGBTQ+ people where they work and that they've adopted the appropriate internal policies, including legal support, HR training, and safety protocols for their location.

Government Leaders: In meetings with government leaders, particularly those focused on economic development, we encourage you to bring up a state's performance on the State Business Climate Index, as well as the details shared in the CEO Briefs. As employers in a state, you are an economic engine and driver – elected leaders listen. We hope that these tools can help you explain how LGBTQ+ inclusive policies are part of a company's best practices and acknowledged as intrinsic to global standards.

Business Partners: In conversations with business partners and vendors, when appropriate, ask them what they're doing to address LGBTQ+ inclusion, and then explain why inclusion positively impacts your ability to conduct business.

Uses Cases & Impact

In recent years, state officials and business leaders have increasingly sought guidance on implementing policies and fostering inclusion at the organizational level. Two notable examples are North Carolina and Arkansas:

- In 2022, **North Carolina** experienced a decline in their Climate Index score, prompting officials from Governor Roy Cooper's office to inquire about addressing policy barriers to LGBTQ+ inclusion. By the next Climate Index release in 2023, North Carolina made significant improvements due to the Governor's office's proactive measures. As a result, North Carolina experienced one of the highest score increases out of all U.S. states that year.
- In 2023, **Arkansas** had the lowest score, as it does this year. In response, a local business coalition, Northwest Arkansas, reached out to explore ways to create jobs and cultivate an inclusive internal culture despite state-level policies.

We encourage all leaders to do the same. Utilize this index to advocate for better environments for LGBTQ+ individuals both within and beyond your organization – in every state that your company operates or conducts business.



[Gov. Whitmer of Michigan](#)



[Gov. Hochul of New York](#)



[Gov. Cooper of North Carolina](#)



[Out Leadership's 2024 State LGBTQ+ Business Climate Index featured in USA Today](#)

USA Today 2023: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/2023/06/01/anti-lgbtq-hostility-before-pride-month-2023/70269895007/>

USA Today 2022: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/2022/06/01/best-worst-us-states-lgbtq-gay-inclusiveness-pride-month-2022/7454218001/>

MarketWatch: <https://www.marketwatch.com/story/pride-month-these-are-the-5-most-lgbtq-friendly-states-in-the-u-s-and-the-least-23c8be64>

CBS: <https://www.cbsnews.com/newyork/news/new-york-comes-in-on-top-of-2023-out-leadership-state-lgbtq-business-climate-index/>

Crain's New York: <https://www.craigslist.com/op-ed/new-york-beacon-economic-inclusivity-gov-kathy-hochul-says>

Select Local News:

AR: <https://www.5newsonline.com/article/news/community/arkansas-ranked-worst-state-lgbtq-equality/527-47887038-f349-4fc4-bed8-86b144183f0f>

NC: <https://www.wnct.com/news/north-carolina-ranks-second-highest-in-positive-progress-for-lgbtq-equality-on-new-index-scores/>

NY: <https://www.cbsnews.com/newyork/news/new-york-comes-in-on-top-of-2023-out-leadership-state-lgbtq-business-climate-index/>

PA: <https://penncapital-star.com/civil-rights-social-justice/pa-ranks-23rd-nationwide-for-its-lgbtq-business-climate-new-analysis-finds/>

TX: <https://siteselection.com/issues/2023/nov/the-2023-business-climate-rankings-cover.cfm>

VT: <https://vermontbiz.com/news/2022/june/08/vermont-ranks-5-2022-lgbtq-business-climate-index>

WA: <https://www.bothell-reporter.com/business/washington-ranks-13th-in-state-lgbtq-business-climate-index/>

Out Leadership Members

Out Leadership is the world's premier global platform for businesses to drive LGBTQ+ equality. We work closely with the world's leading companies to develop extraordinary talent, produce cutting-edge research, advance powerful advocacy, and improve business outcomes.

Thank you to our members as of June 1, 2024:

Member Investors



Member Companies





Rowena Crest , Mosier, Oregon

Introduction

Dear Leaders,

For over 13 years, Out Leadership has made the case that LGBTQ+ equality is a driving force for the global business community. Time and again, our research has demonstrated that businesses that operate in LGBTQ+-friendly environments benefit from stronger talent pools, see increased employee satisfaction and productivity, and enjoy robust customer loyalty. Put simply, inclusive states build strong economies. In the United States, we launched the Out Leadership **State LGBTQ+ Business Climate Index** 6 years ago to provide leaders with a business-lens roadmap of 20 LGBTQ+-related data points across the country, measuring each state's record and laws on LGBTQ+ equality.

As we enter an election year, the political and cultural environment in the United States has become increasingly polarized with LGBTQ+-friendly states becoming increasingly inclusive while the worst states for equality become evermore hostile to equality and freedom. **For the second year in a row, the average Out Leadership LGBTQ+ Business Climate Score across has declined, and for the third year running more states have become less friendly to LGBTQ+ Americans** – an incredibly dangerous trend.

The United States economy thrives in a predictable business environment. But with each anti-LGBTQ+ policy, state leaders sacrifice concrete financial benefits for cheap political points. These laws arbitrarily involve policymakers in the affairs of private enterprises, preventing managers from placing the best employees in the right roles and undermining both consumer and investor confidence. By targeting LGBTQ+ youth, these laws also impact families, forcing them to flee states (and leave their jobs) to keep their children safe. By enacting these discriminatory laws, state leaders are choosing risk over stability and stagnation over prosperity – an attack on our freedom to raise families and build businesses without the fear of unnecessary government intervention in our lives and work.

The **State LGBTQ+ Business Climate Index** provides CEOs, business leaders, employees, and government officials with the information, tools, and guidance to prioritize the rights and well-being of their LGBTQ+ employees, customers, and neighbors while simultaneously benefiting from the favorable business conditions created by a free and inclusive economy. We hope the Index will help leaders make informed decisions about where they want to conduct business, as well as how to leverage the economic power they command to push for equality in the states where they operate. We're proud that each year, the Out Leadership Index sparks strong engagement from local leaders – including legislators, administration officials, and grassroots activists – by shining a light on policy progress (and regress) as states compete for business and talent opportunities.

I'm very grateful to Out Leadership's member firms, who continue to support this important work, despite the current political environment when it's become much more difficult to do so. I also want to thank our incredible partners, the Williams Institute, the Movement Advancement Project, and the Gill Foundation, without whom this Index would not exist. Finally, I'm grateful to each of you reading this for taking the time to make well-informed, data-driven decisions to harness the power of your platform and your companies to drive LGBTQ+ equality forward.

Thank you,



Todd G. Sears
Founder and CEO
Out Leadership



Executive Summary

- **For the second year in a row, LGBTQ+ equality is decreasing across the United States.** The average score of all 50 states dropped from 63.48 in 2023 to 62.77 in 2024 – a 1.12% decrease.
- As Out Leadership's research has demonstrated over the past six years, **polarization across the United States continues to deepen** as states that excel in LGBTQ+ equality continue to thrive and states that demonstrate hostility to LGBTQ+ rights continue to jeopardize the LGBTQ+ community's ability to live and work.
- **New York is the highest-ranking state** in LGBTQ+ equality for the third year in a row, scoring 93.67 out of 100 points.
- **Arkansas is the lowest-ranking state** in LGBTQ+ equality for the second year in a row, scoring 27.00 out of 100 points. **This is the lowest score received by a state in the Index's six-year history.**
- The most significant changes in scores between 2023-2024 were driven by **Legal and Nondiscrimination Protections, Youth and Family Support, and Political and Religious Attitudes.** States with the largest score increases, such as Michigan, Georgia, and Oregon, adopted pro-LGBTQ+ legislation and had elected officials stand up for LGBTQ+ rights. On the other hand, decreases in scores were largely driven by ongoing anti-LGBTQ+ legislation in states such as Florida, Indiana, Kansas, and North Carolina.

Take Action

- **Ensure employee safety:** Work with your staff to implement internal policies and business practices to ensure the safety of LGBTQ+ employees at your company, especially for those located in states that have enacted anti-LGBTQ+ legislation.
- **Improve Business Outcomes:** Utilize the State LGBTQ+ Business Climate Index and CEO Business Briefs as tools to make informed decisions on where to conduct business and access the strongest talent pools.
- **Drive Return on Equality™:** Take advantage of these resources and talking points in conversations with staff, government leaders, and business partners to advocate for the business imperative of LGBTQ+ equality.

Rationale & Methodology

Out Leadership's Business Climate Index for the 50 United States is an assessment of states' performance on LGBTQ+ inclusion. It measures the impact government policies and prevalent attitudes have on LGBTQ+ people residing in each state, quantifying the economic imperatives for inclusion and the costs of discrimination. It equips business leaders and policymakers with a clear view of the most impactful steps they can take to make their states more hospitable to forward-thinking, innovative, inclusive businesses.

It is a multidimensional Index based on a broad array of markers of policies, attitudes, and measurements relating to LGBTQ+ inclusion. These markers are carefully chosen to accurately reflect the experiences of LGBTQ+ people in each state.

Societal marginalization of LGBTQ+ people, which can often be subtle and hard to measure, has real and serious economic costs. Major legislative efforts to extend further legal discrimination, such as the Religious Freedom Restoration (RFRA) law Mike Pence signed in Indiana in 2016, and North Carolina's passage of the HB2 "Bathroom Bill," damaged those states' reputations for being business-friendly and harmed tourism, resulting in significant economic losses. We see this also in the current attack on trans youth in over 100 bills proposed in 35 state legislations, as well as "Don't Say Gay" bills being signed into law in Florida and several other states.

But discrimination doesn't need to be headline news to be harmful, or to create real economic hardship for LGBTQ+ people. The Out Leadership State LGBTQ+ Business Climate Index combines verifiable data on LGBTQ+ people's lived experiences with economic data to help business leaders and policymakers understand the true cost of policies that create minority stress.

Research demonstrates that companies where LGBTQ+ people are supported enjoy increased profitability, stock prices, and employee productivity. Our Index suggests that a similar relationship exists on a state policy level and that states that aim to make LGBTQ+ people more welcome legally and culturally experience significant rewards for doing so, particularly in terms of residents' well-being and productivity.

Data Sources & Standards

In creating this Index, we required that data inputs be independently verifiable, as recent as possible, and available for each state. We also required that data be based on a sufficient sample for statistical analysis.

Data partners included The Movement Advancement Project (MAP), The United States Transgender Survey (USTS), and The Williams Institute. Other data not used in the Index were sourced from available online datasets tracking statewide economic data markers such as those from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), and a report published by the United States Treasury.

All data used in the scale are published online. USTS data are from the largest national survey of transgender individuals in the United States (2015). MAP data reflect current policies and practices as of April 15, 2024. Williams Institute data are from no earlier than 2017. Bureau of Labor Statistics data are from May 2018.

The Index was built so that the data can be updated as laws and attitudes measurably change. Please note that given the rapid nature of public policy, some analysis in this report and its accompanying CEO State Briefs may include legislative updates that occurred after April 15, 2024, and are not reflected in the scores provided by MAP at that time.



Measures

The Index consists of 5 sections: Legal and Nondiscrimination Protections, Youth and Family Support, Political and Religious Attitudes, Health Access and Safety, and Work Environment and Employment. Each section totaled 20 points and accounted for 1/5 of the Index total.

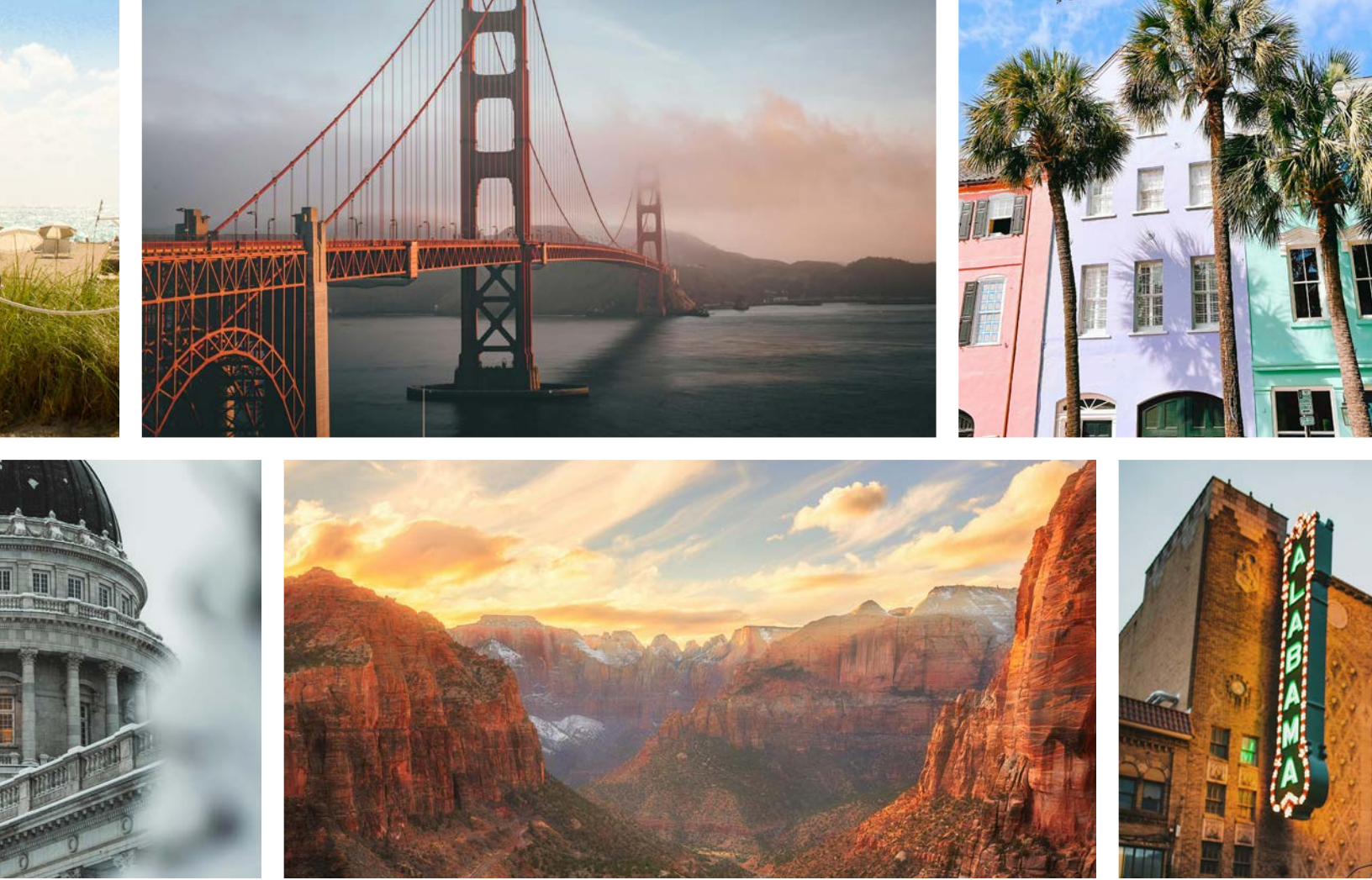


Legal and Nondiscrimination Protections

The Legal and Nondiscrimination Protections section includes two subsections:

The *Personal Legal Scale* assesses the state's laws directly impacting LGBTQ+ individuals. This scale includes: How difficult is it for transgender people to change their gender markers on birth certificates and driver's licenses? The process to change your birth certificate. The protections for individuals in housing, the workplace, public spaces, foster care, and more.

Two Nondiscrimination Protections Scales assess the extent to which LGBTQ+ people are protected under state law. One evaluates nondiscrimination laws related to employment (including any protections specific to state employees). The other evaluates any nondiscrimination laws related to housing, public accommodations, credit and lending, and includes an assessment of whether state law preempts cities from passing nondiscrimination laws – a significant, growing, troubling trend.



Youth and Family Support

The Youth and Family Support section contains three subsections:

The *Family Support Scale* measures how supportive the state is of LGBTQ+ people who are in or wish to start families. Elements of this scale include: the percentage of LGBTQ+ families raising children, and whether state family leave laws cover same-gender couples and allow workers to care for the children they are raising. In addition, it measures whether states allow second-parent adoption, if they provide adoption and foster care non-discrimination protections, and if state law allows recognition for parents using assisted reproduction.

The *Children and Youth Scale* assesses the resources available to LGBTQ+ children and youth in the state. It includes whether the state has non-discrimination laws and policies for LGBTQ+ students, whether anti-bullying laws and policies cover LGBTQ+ students, whether the state has any laws preventing schools or school districts from actively protecting LGBTQ+ students through non-discrimination or anti-bullying policies, whether the state has bans on healthcare for trans youth, and whether the state has enacted a ban on trans athletes participating on teams of their gender.

The *Targeted Laws* section evaluates states on whether they ban discussion of same-gender marriage in schools, and whether they ban conversion therapy for minors.



Political and Religious Attitudes

The Political and Religious Attitudes section contains two subsections, the Religious Protections Scale and the State Leadership Scores. Taken together, these scales assess the tone of the state's conversation around LGBTQ+ rights.

The *Religious Protections Scale* assesses the extent and impacts of a state's constitutional or statutory religious exemption laws, and whether state law provides for targeted religious exemption from laws governing child welfare services, private wedding services, and the provision of medical care. Finally, the scale assesses whether state law allows for state and local officials to claim a religious exemption in the provision of marriage licenses.

The *State Leadership Scores* are Out Leadership's unique measures evaluating the state's most senior elected officials – the Governor and the two U.S. Senators – and assessing how they've represented their views of LGBTQ+ people in speeches and in their political platforms, and in terms of how they've acted with regard to laws impacting LGBTQ+ equality.



Health Access and Safety

The Health Access and Safety section contains two subsections:

The *Health Scale* assesses LGBTQ+ people's access to insurance and medical care in each state, giving particular emphasis to the most economically precarious and vulnerable members of the community. It considers whether private insurance is covered by state non-discrimination protections, whether transgender care is covered by Medicaid, and whether health insurance providers are banned from excluding coverage for transgender-specific care. It also assesses whether state employees receive transgender-inclusive health benefits.

The *Safety Scale* is based on two significant laws protecting or criminalizing behaviors affecting LGBTQ+ people. It asks whether the state protects LGBTQ+ people in its hate crime laws. It also assesses whether the state criminalizes exposure to or transmission of HIV.



Work Environment and Employment

The Work Environment and Employment section contains two subsections:

The *Work Environment Scale* assesses transgender individuals' experiences at work, including incidences of verbal harassment, sexual assault, and other mistreatment (such as being forced to use a non-gender-matching restroom, being told to present in the wrong gender in order to keep a job, having someone at work share without consent private information about their gender).

The *Employment Scale* is based on assessments of LGBTQ+ employment in the state. This scale includes the percentage of LGBTQ+ people making less than \$24,000 annually (approximately the current Federal poverty line), and the differences in unemployment rates and food insecurity between LGBTQ+ and non-LGBTQ+ identified individuals.



Scoring

Our scoring process is transparent and meaningful. We gave positive scores to policies that provided protections or equal treatment for LGBTQ+ individuals; we gave negative scores to legislation or policy marginalizing or discriminating against LGBTQ+ people, as well as to instances where protections excluded LGBTQ+ people. We also gave credit to states for not enacting or approving discriminatory laws and regulations. For all components of the scale, 5 represented the top score, 1 represented the low score. The maximum score a state could receive is 100 points and the minimum score is 25.

Scoring Change Note: Starting in 2023, the State LGBTQ+ Business Climate Index assigns states a score of either 1 or 5 under the section "Conversion Therapy Ban," with a score of 1 indicating a lack of a statewide conversion therapy ban and a score of 5 indicating the presence of a statewide conversion therapy ban. Previous reports gave states a score of 2-4 for regional conversion therapy bans.

State Index Scores

State	2023 Total	2024 Total	Legal and Nondiscrimination Protections				Youth and Family Support			
			Change Birth Certificate	Change Driver's License	Emp Non-discrimination	Other Non-discrimination	Family Support	Youth Support	Conversion Therapy Ban	"No promo homo"
Alabama	39.90	37.90	0.00	1.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	1.40	1.00	1.00
Alaska	58.00	58.00	5.00	4.00	4.50	2.50	1.00	3.00	1.00	5.00
Arizona	58.03	59.88	0.00	2.00	4.50	3.50	1.33	1.75	1.00	5.00
Arkansas	32.00	27.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	2.20	1.00	1.00
California	86.50	86.67	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.67	5.00	5.00	5.00
Colorado	88.67	88.67	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.67	5.00	5.00	5.00
Connecticut	93.27	93.27	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.67	5.00	5.00	5.00
Delaware	70.83	72.43	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	2.83	3.60	5.00	5.00
Florida	50.60	45.20	5.00	0.00	4.50	3.50	1.00	1.40	1.00	1.00
Georgia	49.40	52.40	0.00	0.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	2.40	1.00	5.00
Hawaii	82.67	82.67	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	2.17	5.00	5.00	5.00
Idaho	48.77	44.07	5.00	2.00	1.50	2.50	1.67	1.40	1.00	5.00
Illinois	86.47	88.47	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.67	5.00	5.00	5.00
Indiana	48.27	42.67	1.00	3.00	3.50	2.50	2.17	1.40	1.00	1.00
Iowa	55.00	49.60	0.00	0.00	5.00	5.00	2.00	3.00	1.00	1.00
Kansas	58.30	52.30	0.00	0.00	4.50	3.50	1.00	2.40	1.00	5.00
Kentucky	39.85	39.50	0.00	0.00	4.50	3.00	2.00	1.40	1.00	1.00
Louisiana	33.50	31.50	0.00	0.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	1.40	1.00	1.00
Maine	87.42	88.67	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.67	5.00	5.00	5.00
Maryland	82.17	82.83	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	2.83	5.00	5.00	5.00
Mass.	92.67	92.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Michigan	73.20	78.07	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	2.67	4.20	5.00	5.00
Minnesota	88.17	88.33	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	2.33	5.00	5.00	5.00
Mississippi	37.87	35.27	3.00	1.00	1.00	2.00	1.67	1.40	1.00	1.00
Missouri	47.10	46.10	0.00	4.00	2.00	2.50	1.50	0.50	1.00	5.00

State Index Scores

State	Political and Religious Attitudes				Health Access and Safety				Work Environment and Employment			
	Governor Rating	Senator 1 Rating	Senator 2 Rating	Religious Exclusions	Health Support	State Employee Coverage	Hate Crimes Protections	HIV Criminalization	Safety at Work	Unemployment Differential	Food Insecurity Differential	Income Over 24k
AL	1.00	1.00	1.00	3.00	1.50	4.00	1.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	5.00	1.00
AK	1.00	5.00	3.00	5.00	2.00	3.00	1.00	3.00	3.00	1.00	3.00	2.00
AZ	5.00	3.00	5.00	3.80	1.00	3.00	3.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
AR	1.00	1.00	1.00	3.80	1.00	3.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	3.00	1.00	2.00
CA	4.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	5.00	4.00
CO	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	5.00
CT	4.00	5.00	5.00	4.60	4.00	4.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
DE	3.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	5.00	2.00	3.00	1.00	1.00	2.00
FL	1.00	2.00	1.00	3.80	1.00	3.00	3.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
GA	1.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	2.00	2.00	5.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	5.00	3.00
HI	3.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.50	3.00	5.00	5.00	2.00	5.00	1.00	4.00
ID	1.00	1.00	2.00	3.00	1.00	3.00	1.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	1.00	3.00
IL	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.80	5.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	2.00	5.00	3.00	3.00
IN	1.00	1.00	3.00	4.60	1.50	3.00	1.00	1.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	2.00
IA	1.00	3.00	2.00	4.60	2.00	4.00	3.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
KS	5.00	2.00	3.00	3.40	1.50	3.00	3.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	1.00	2.00
KY	4.00	1.00	1.00	4.60	1.00	3.00	3.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	1.00	1.00
LA	1.00	1.00	1.00	4.60	1.50	1.00	3.00	1.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	2.00
ME	5.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	5.00	2.00	3.00	5.00	3.00
MD	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	5.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	5.00
MA	4.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
MI	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.20	5.00	3.00	1.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
MN	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	2.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	5.00
MS	1.00	1.00	1.00	2.20	1.00	3.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	5.00	1.00
MO	1.00	1.00	1.00	4.60	1.00	3.00	5.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	3.00

State Index Scores

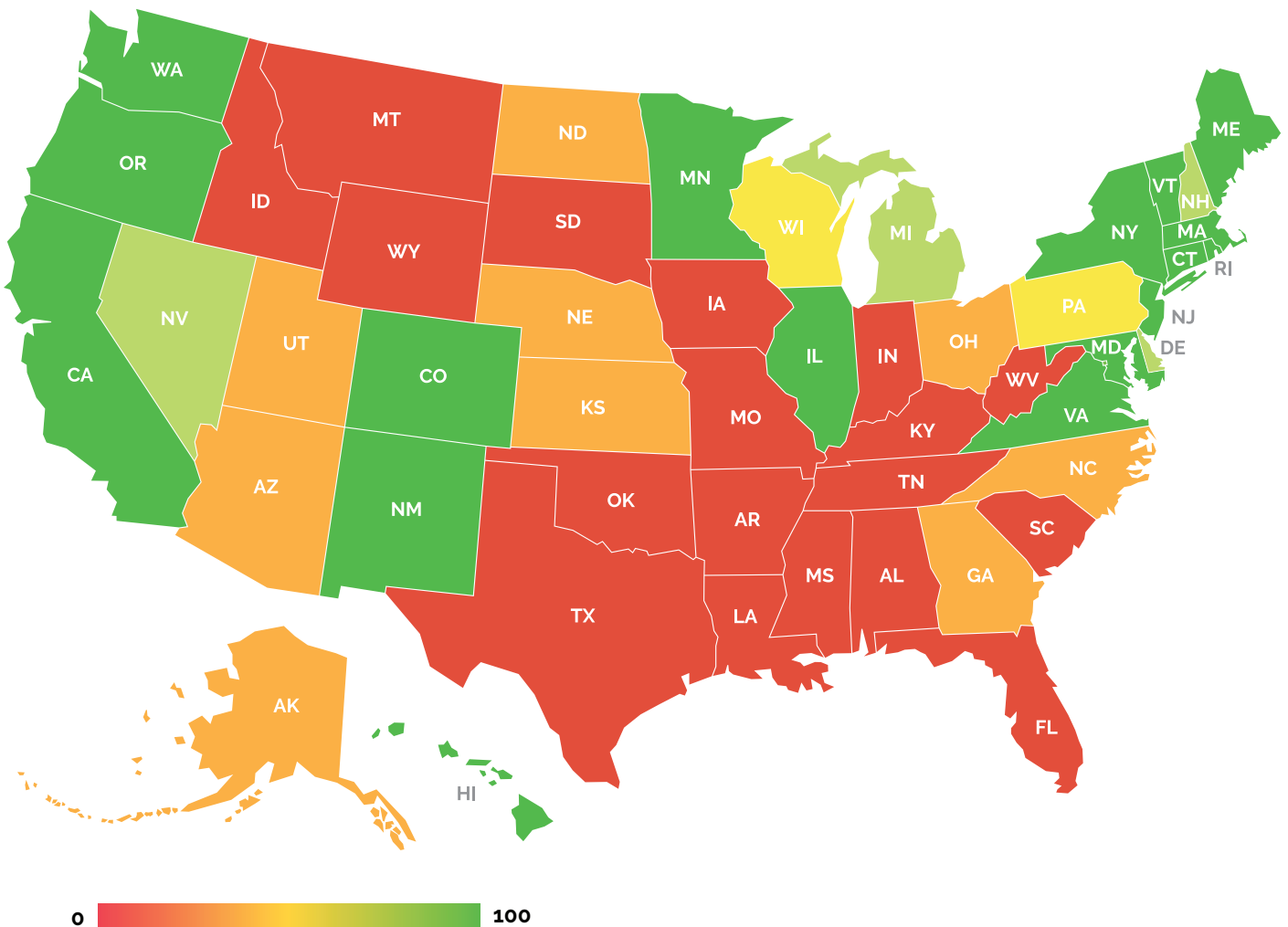
State	2023 Total	2024 Total	Legal and Nondiscrimination Protections				Youth and Family Support			
			Change Birth Certificate	Change Driver's License	Emp Non-discrimination	Other Non-discrimination	Family Support	Youth Support	Conversion Therapy Ban	"No promo homo"
Montana	45.17	43.37	0.00	1.00	3.00	2.00	2.17	1.40	1.00	5.00
Nebraska	51.25	51.90	0.00	3.00	4.50	3.00	1.00	2.40	1.00	5.00
Nevada	79.67	79.67	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.67	5.00	5.00	5.00
New Hamp.	78.33	78.33	0.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	3.33	5.00	5.00	5.00
New Jersey	90.00	90.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
New Mexico	85.77	85.77	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	2.67	5.00	5.00	5.00
New York	93.67	93.67	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.67	5.00	5.00	5.00
N. Carolina	58.85	52.55	5.00	4.00	3.50	2.25	2.00	2.20	1.00	1.00
N. Dakota	57.97	55.22	0.00	4.00	4.50	4.25	2.67	2.00	1.00	5.00
Ohio	50.35	50.35	3.00	4.00	4.50	4.25	2.00	1.40	1.00	5.00
Oklahoma	34.97	33.37	0.00	0.00	1.00	2.00	1.67	1.40	1.00	1.00
Oregon	84.75	87.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Pennsylvania	66.02	66.27	5.00	5.00	4.50	3.50	1.67	4.00	1.00	5.00
Rhode Island	85.60	85.70	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.50	4.60	5.00	5.00
S. Carolina	32.50	31.90	1.00	0.00	1.00	2.00	1.50	2.40	1.00	5.00
S. Dakota	34.97	34.80	1.00	1.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	0.50	1.00	5.00
Tennessee	34.40	34.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	1.00	2.00	1.40	1.00	5.00
Texas	44.70	44.70	3.00	0.00	4.50	2.00	1.00	1.40	1.00	1.00
Utah	54.25	53.50	0.00	2.00	5.00	3.00	1.00	2.20	5.00	5.00
Vermont	87.50	89.50	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.50	5.00	5.00	5.00
Virginia	81.47	81.67	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	1.67	4.20	5.00	5.00
Washington	85.83	85.83	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	2.83	5.00	5.00	5.00
West Virginia	51.60	49.90	5.00	3.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	1.80	1.00	5.00
Wisconsin	65.47	67.47	0.00	2.00	5.00	3.00	1.67	3.80	1.00	5.00
Wyoming	50.17	48.57	3.00	4.00	1.00	2.00	1.67	1.40	1.00	5.00

State Index Scores

State	Political and Religious Attitudes				Health Access and Safety				Work Environment and Employment			
	Governor Rating	Senator 1 Rating	Senator 2 Rating	Religious Exclusions	Health Support	State Employee Coverage	Hate Crimes Protections	HIV Criminalization	Safety at Work	Unemployment Differential	Food Insecurity Differential	Income Over 24k
MT	1.00	5.00	2.00	3.80	3.00	3.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	1.00	1.00
NE	1.00	2.00	1.00	5.00	1.00	4.00	3.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	4.00
NV	1.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	1.00	5.00	5.00	2.00	3.00	1.00	3.00
NH	3.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	1.00	3.00
NJ	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	5.00	4.00
NM	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.60	3.50	1.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	5.00	3.00
NY	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	4.00
NC	5.00	2.00	3.00	4.60	1.00	3.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	2.00
ND	1.00	1.00	1.00	3.80	2.00	3.00	1.00	2.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	4.00
OH	1.00	5.00	3.00	4.20	1.00	3.00	1.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	1.00	2.00
OK	1.00	2.00	2.00	3.80	1.50	2.00	1.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	1.00	3.00
OR	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	2.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	4.00
PA	4.00	5.00	3.00	4.60	4.00	3.00	1.00	2.00	3.00	1.00	3.00	3.00
RI	4.00	5.00	5.00	4.60	4.00	3.00	3.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	5.00	3.00
SC	1.00	1.00	1.00	3.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	1.00	3.00
SD	1.00	2.00	1.00	3.80	1.50	3.00	1.00	1.00	3.00	1.00	1.00	2.00
TN	1.00	1.00	3.00	2.60	1.00	1.00	3.00	1.00	1.00	3.00	3.00	2.00
TX	1.00	1.00	2.00	3.80	1.00	3.00	3.00	5.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
UT	2.00	3.00	2.00	3.80	1.50	3.00	5.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	3.00	3.00
VT	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
VA	1.00	5.00	5.00	3.80	4.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	5.00
WA	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	5.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	5.00
WV	2.00	3.00	2.00	4.60	1.50	3.00	1.00	5.00	2.00	1.00	3.00	1.00
WI	5.00	5.00	2.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	5.00	4.00
WY	2.00	3.00	1.00	5.00	1.50	3.00	1.00	5.00	2.00	1.00	3.00	2.00

Heat Map

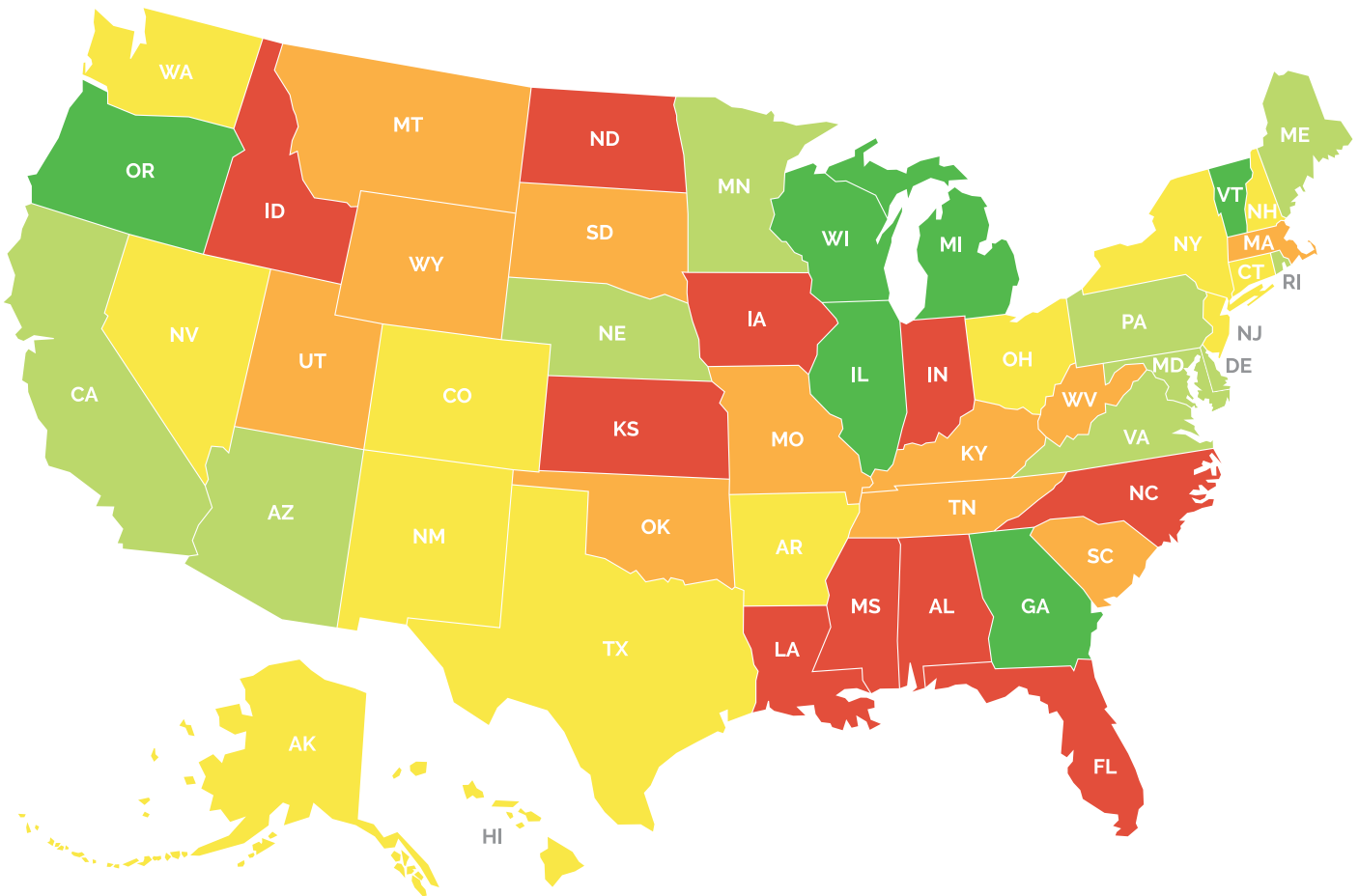
The legal and cultural situation for LGBTQ+ people varies widely across the country. This map, based on each state's total Business Climate Score, illustrates the states where LGBTQ+ people are empowered to participate more fully and openly in the economy, and the states that are lagging.



State Rankings

2024 Rank	State	2023 Score	2024 Score	Score Change
1	New York	93.67	93.67	0
2	Connecticut	93.27	93.27	0
3	Massachusetts	92.67	92.00	-0.67
4	New Jersey	90	90.00	0
5	Vermont	87.5	89.50	2
6	Colorado	88.67	88.67	0
7	Maine	87.42	88.67	1.25
8	Illinois	86.47	88.47	2
9	Minnesota	88.17	88.33	0.16
10	Oregon	84.75	87.00	2.25
11	California	86.5	86.67	0.17
12	Washington	85.83	85.83	0
13	New Mexico	85.77	85.77	0
14	Rhode Island	85.6	85.70	0.1
15	Maryland	82.17	82.83	0.66
16	Hawaii	82.67	82.67	0
17	Virginia	81.47	81.67	0.2
18	Nevada	79.67	79.67	0
19	New Hampshire	78.33	78.33	0
20	Michigan	73.2	78.07	4.87
21	Delaware	70.83	72.43	1.6
22	Wisconsin	65.47	67.47	2
23	Pennsylvania	66.02	66.27	0.25
24	Arizona	58.03	59.88	1.85
25	Alaska	58	58.00	0

2024 Rank	State	2023 Score	2024 Score	Score Change
26	North Dakota	57.97	55.22	-2.75
27	Utah	54.25	53.50	-0.75
28	North Carolina	58.85	52.55	-6.3
29	Georgia	49.4	52.40	3
30	Kansas	58.3	52.30	-6
31	Nebraska	51.25	51.90	0.65
32	Ohio	50.35	50.35	0
33	West Virginia	51.6	49.90	-1.7
34	Iowa	55	49.60	-5.4
35	Wyoming	50.17	48.57	-1.6
36	Missouri	47.1	46.10	-1
37	Florida	50.6	45.20	-5.4
38	Texas	44.7	44.70	0
39	Idaho	48.77	44.07	-4.7
40	Montana	45.17	43.37	-1.8
41	Indiana	48.27	42.67	-5.6
42	Kentucky	39.85	39.50	-0.35
43	Alabama	39.9	37.90	-2
44	Mississippi	37.87	35.27	-2.6
45	South Dakota	34.97	34.80	-0.17
46	Tennessee	34.4	34.00	-0.4
47	Oklahoma	34.97	33.37	-1.6
48	South Carolina	32.5	31.90	-0.6
49	Louisiana	33.5	31.50	-2
50	Arkansas	32	27.00	-5



-7 Score Decrease +6 Score Increase

Movement in Score

For the second year in a row, the average movement in scores was negative. The flood of anti-LGBTQ+, specifically anti-trans, legislation moved more states down in score than in the past 5 years of the Index. **We continue to see similar concerning trends: states with high scores continue to defend the rights of all LGBTQ+ individuals, while states with low scores are seeing increased anti-LGBTQ+ policies and cultural trends are moving in that same direction.** This impacts companies' abilities to do the best business, recruit and retain top talent, and put pressure on organizations to take a position on the constant stream of state-level legislation that impacts their employees, clients, and in some cases, products and services.

States with the most significant movement in score:

Score Change Rank	State	2023 Score	2024 Score	Score Change	Score Change Rank	State	2023 Score	2024 Score	Score Change
1	Michigan	73.2	78.07	4.87	17	Alaska	58	58.00	0
2	Georgia	49.4	52.40	3	17	Ohio	50.35	50.35	0
3	Oregon	84.75	87.00	2.25	17	Texas	44.7	44.70	0
4	Vermont	87.5	89.50	2	29	South Dakota	34.97	34.80	-0.17
4	Illinois	86.47	88.47	2	30	Kentucky	39.85	39.50	-0.35
4	Wisconsin	65.47	67.47	2	31	Tennessee	34.4	34.00	-0.4
7	Arizona	58.03	59.88	1.85	32	South Carolina	32.5	31.90	-0.6
8	Delaware	70.83	72.43	1.6	33	Massachusetts	92.67	92.00	-0.67
9	Maine	87.42	88.67	1.25	34	Utah	54.25	53.50	-0.75
10	Maryland	82.17	82.83	0.66	35	Missouri	47.1	46.10	-1
11	Nebraska	51.25	51.90	0.65	36	Wyoming	50.17	48.57	-1.6
12	Pennsylvania	66.02	66.27	0.25	36	Oklahoma	34.97	33.37	-1.6
13	Virginia	81.47	81.67	0.2	38	West Virginia	51.6	49.90	-1.7
14	California	86.5	86.67	0.17	39	Montana	45.17	43.37	-1.8
15	Minnesota	88.17	88.33	0.16	40	Alabama	39.9	37.90	-2
16	Rhode Island	85.6	85.70	0.1	40	Louisiana	33.5	31.50	-2
17	New York	93.67	93.67	0	42	Mississippi	37.87	35.27	-2.6
17	Connecticut	93.27	93.27	0	43	North Dakota	57.97	55.22	-2.75
17	New Jersey	90	90.00	0	44	Idaho	48.77	44.07	-4.7
17	Colorado	88.67	88.67	0	45	Arkansas	32	27.00	-5
17	Washington	85.83	85.83	0	46	Iowa	55	49.60	-5.4
17	New Mexico	85.77	85.77	0	46	Florida	50.6	45.20	-5.4
17	Hawaii	82.67	82.67	0	48	Indiana	48.27	42.67	-5.6
17	Nevada	79.67	79.67	0	49	Kansas	58.3	52.30	-6
17	New Hampshire	78.33	78.33	0	50	North Carolina	58.85	52.55	-6.3

Regional Rankings

Midwest

Regional Rank	State	2024 Total
1	Illinois	88.47
2	Minnesota	88.33
3	Michigan	78.07
4	Wisconsin	67.47
5	North Dakota	55.22
6	Kansas	52.30
7	Nebraska	51.90
8	Ohio	50.35
9	Iowa	49.60
10	Missouri	46.10
11	Indiana	42.67
12	South Dakota	34.80

Southeast

1	Virginia	81.67
2	North Carolina	52.55
3	Georgia	52.40
4	West Virginia	49.90
5	Florida	45.20
6	Kentucky	39.50
7	Alabama	37.90
8	Mississippi	35.27
9	Tennessee	34.00
10	South Carolina	31.90
11	Louisiana	31.50
12	Arkansas	27.00

Northeast

Regional Rank	State	2024 Total
1	New York	93.67
2	Connecticut	93.27
3	Massachusetts	92.00
4	New Jersey	90.00
5	Vermont	89.50
6	Maine	88.67
7	Rhode Island	85.70
8	Maryland	82.83
9	New Hampshire	78.33
10	Delaware	72.43
11	Pennsylvania	66.27

Southwest

1	New Mexico	85.77
2	Arizona	59.88
3	Texas	44.70
4	Oklahoma	33.37

West

1	Colorado	88.67
2	Oregon	87.00
3	California	86.67
4	Washington	85.83
5	Hawaii	82.67
6	Nevada	79.67
7	Alaska	58.00
8	Utah	53.50
9	Wyoming	48.57
10	Idaho	44.07
11	Montana	43.37

Key Developments

States are more polarized than ever on LGBTQ+ equality.

As we've seen over several years, polarization continues to grow amongst states. While the top states have begun to plateau in positive movement, a majority of states are static or declining in score.

Reductions in legal protections and increasing anti-LGBTQ+ legislators are driving score decreases across the board. Categories that saw the most significant change this year were **Legal and Nondiscrimination Protections, Youth and Family Support, and Political and Religious Attitudes**. While 16 states increased in score over the last year, a large majority of states experienced no change or a decrease in score (12 states had no change and 22 states had negative change) and the average score of all 50 states **decreased by 0.71 points**.

Anti-LGBTQ+ legislation remains on the rise. These bills, particularly ones impacting trans and nonbinary youth, continue to appear across the United States. These bills block trans people from receiving necessary healthcare access, education, legal recognition, and the right to publicly exist. In 2024 alone, **over 500 anti-LGBTQ+ have been introduced in 40 states** according to the ACLU. The majority of these bills restrict student & educator rights, weaken civil rights laws, and restrict access to healthcare. The largest decreases in scores were due to policy changes that prohibit trans and nonbinary individuals from updating legal documents such as birth

certificates and driver's licenses, in addition to the spread of "Don't Say Gay" bills across many states.

There is no more room for neutrality. Alongside the introduction of these bills, state governors and senators are taking stronger stances for or against LGBTQ+ rights through their votes and their rhetoric. Where there used to be some neutrality or nuance, increasing intensity of positions is the new standard. Polarization, once again, is driving movement in states' scores and will continue to do so during the 2024 elections.

Despite widespread negative movement, certain states are finding ways to move up. The highest mover was Michigan, with an increase of 4.87 points between 2023 and 2024. This was because Michigan implemented a statewide ban on conversion therapy, protecting 100% of the state's LGBTQ+ population. The second highest mover was Georgia, as a result of legislators preventing the passage of 20+ anti-LGBTQ+ bills in the state legislature, and support for pro-LGBTQ+ legislation from both of the state's senators.

We applaud the states that have shown positive momentum in the past year. We urge lawmakers to continue pushing for inclusive laws and practices, and we urge business leaders to use their economic platforms to call for change. Not only is this the right thing to do, but it also maximizes business potential, driving growth and prosperity.



Business Markers

To represent the business impact of statewide support or marginalization of LGBTQ+ identities, we calculated three additional business markers.

The first represents the benefit to state economies of having more inclusive nondiscrimination practices. A Williams Institute report suggests that adding nondiscrimination protections could result in a potential 3% gain in GDP. We reported this potential increase for each state and noted what the effect may have been in states where protections already exist for LGBTQ+ people.

The second is an assessment of the cost to businesses of employee turnover due to marginalizing state practices or discriminatory environments. Utilizing 2018 average annual salary data, we calculated the cost of replacement of a (general) worker in the state (20% of their salary) and the cost of replacement of an executive (213% of their salary).

As a third marker of state wellness, we calculated the difference in the number of married couples in each state, from 2013 to 2015, using tax data. We believe that couples were most likely to feel comfortable marrying in states with support, representation, and community. In turn, more marriages promote other individuals and couples choosing the state as a place to live and work. These data may serve as a beneficial marker of LGBTQ+ well-being in the community and at work.

Partners

Our partnerships make our work possible. The first State LGBTQ+ Business Climate Index released in 2019 was funded by a grant from the Gill Foundation. The Index is based on data graciously shared by the Movement Advancement Project and the Williams Institute. Ropes & Gray is our pro bono legal partner for the CEO Business Briefs globally, and their research informs this Index. FCB partnered with us to conduct original market research into American attitudes toward LGBTQ+ workplace inclusion, informing the Regional Context section of the State CEO Briefs. America Competes supported the development of the scoring for the Risk Assessments, particularly for the Future Risk score.



Special Thanks

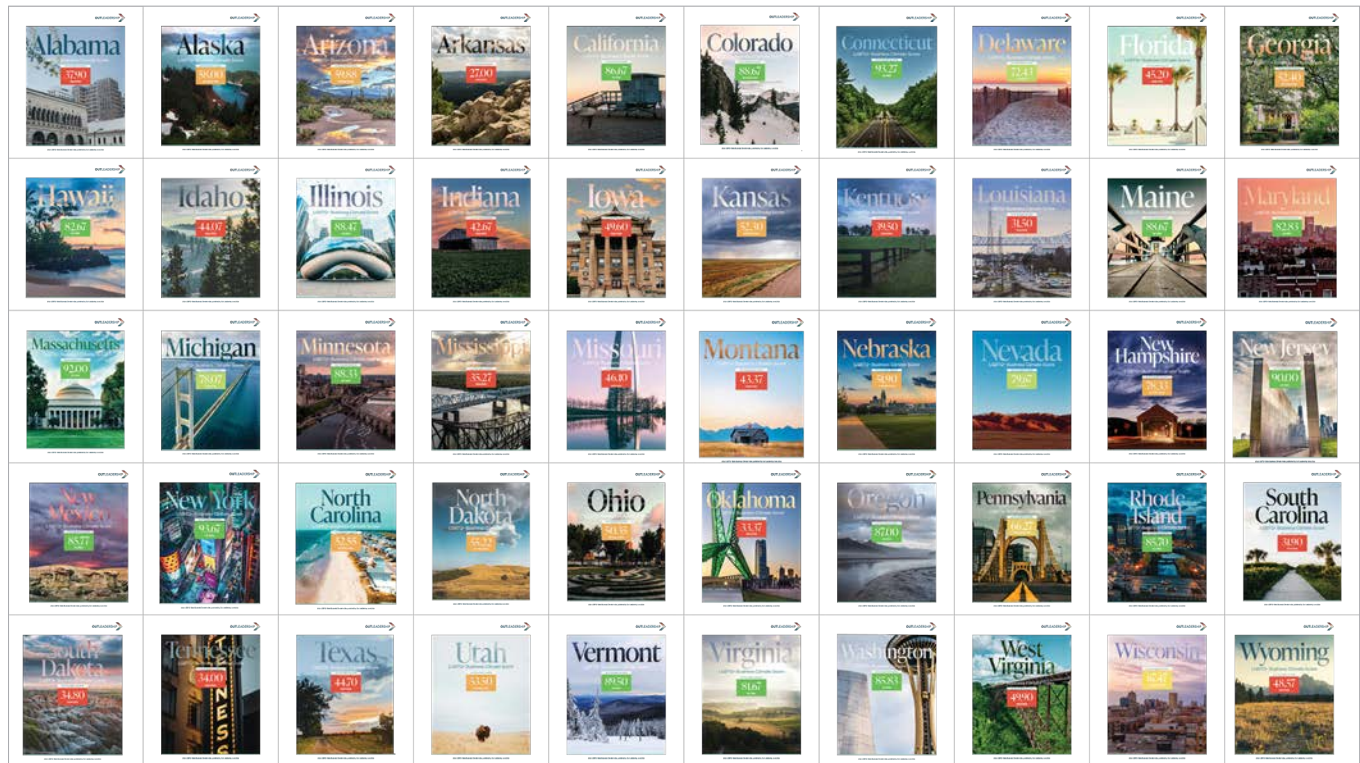
Thank you to Out Leadership's Global Advisory Board members, and our member companies' senior leaders, who have committed to using this Index.

Disclaimer

Out Leadership has made every effort to ensure that the information contained within this Index is accurate and up to date as of April 15, 2024. This Index is provided for educational and informational purposes only, and should not be construed as legal advice. The information is not guaranteed to be correct, complete, or current. If you would like to suggest an edit to this Index, please contact info@outleadership.com.

State CEO Business Briefs

To accompany the 2024 State LGBTQ+ Business Climate Index, Out Leadership has published [State CEO Business Briefs for all 50 States](#). These briefs assess the economic impact of discrimination on business, and equip business leaders and policymakers with a clear sense of the most impactful steps states can take to make themselves more hospitable to forward-thinking, innovative businesses.



Out Leadership Research

This piece of research is one of many published by Out Leadership. To learn more, here are resources that exist for you and your company to drive Return on Equality™:

Board Diversity

Out Leadership has created and led the global conversation around LGBTQ+ inclusion on corporate boards. We convene senior leaders, provide tools, resources and research for leaders to drive change in LGBTQ+ representation & disclosure on boards, and to amplify the need for dramatically increased board-level diversity.



Allyship

Allyship amongst business leaders has an enormous role to play in LGBTQ+ inclusion. Out Leadership has led the way in cultivating visible allies at all levels of businesses, and providing resources to companies proving the value and power of allyship.



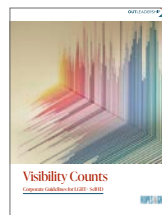
Next Gen Talent

Attracting and retaining talent is one of the most important problems facing companies today. Companies that focus on LGBTQ+ inclusion are better placed to attract talent than those that are not. It's a competitive advantage every company should explore.



Self-ID

Creating an inclusive working environment starts with understanding your company's LGBTQ+ community. Self-ID is a new way to recognize and celebrate diversity, and create a valuable data set companies can use to guide talent development, increase productivity, and prove to clients that they're being served by inclusive teams.



Gender Equality

Globally, women and nonbinary leaders are less visible, less connected, and less supported than men. The transgender community especially faces unique challenges. Out Leadership connects, celebrates, and elevates women and nonbinary business leaders, and equips companies with comprehensive toolkits to advocate for gender equality.



Out Leadership Research

[Policy Best Practices](#)

Out Leadership has crafted policies and tools that companies can use to drive LGBTQ+ equality and actionable change, ranging from OL-iQ, the world's first global LGBTQ+ inclusion Self-ID diagnostic tool, to guidelines for LGBTQ+ inclusion on corporate boards, to how to make the trans community feel seen and included.



[State LGBTQ+ Business Climate Index](#)

Business leaders must understand the state of LGBTQ+ equality in every place they do business. Out Leadership's US State CEO Briefs, and Business Climate Index are essential tools to help business leaders understand the climate for LGBTQ+ individuals in every US State.



[Global CEO Business Briefs](#)

These 25 country CEO briefs ensure that business leaders are aware of the laws and other regulations that impact LGBTQ+ people in country, so leaders can make informed decisions about doing business there.



[Harvard Business Review](#)

Published in May 2024 in Harvard Business Review, Out Leadership Founder & CEO Todd Sears joined Dr. Sylvia Ann Hewlett to advocate: "Why Companies Must Recommit to the Fight for LGBTQ+ Rights".



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