# Over two million trans Americans will no longer be counted in census



Over the past decade, tracking the number of Americans who identify as transgender has become increasingly viable, thanks largely to federal data initiatives. In 2014, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) incorporated gender identity questions into the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), marking a significant step forward in collecting reliable demographic information about transgender individuals. Subsequent inclusion of such questions in other federal surveys like the National Crime Victimization Survey has further enhanced researchers’ ability to understand the size and characteristics of this population. According to a recent analysis drawing from these data sources, approximately 2.1 million U.S. adults identify as transgender, with an additional 724,000 youths aged 13 to 17 identifying similarly. These estimates are crucial for shaping public policies, legal decisions, and societal understanding, including matters such as nondiscrimination laws and transgender individuals' access to public facilities. Notably, the U.S. Supreme Court has referenced these figures in rulings impacting transgender rights.

Yet, this progress faces a profound challenge. Under directives from the Trump administration, federal surveys have discontinued collecting data on gender identity, reverting to binary sex questions limited to 'male' or 'female' options. This rollback effectively erases the comprehensive data infrastructure that has enabled the estimation and analysis of the U.S. transgender population. Experts warn that it could be at least a decade before updated and reliable data on this demographic can be gathered again should policy priorities shift in the future. This hiatus poses serious risks, limiting the ability of researchers, policymakers, and advocates to monitor trends, assess the impact of policies such as gender-affirming care bans, and address the specific needs of transgender individuals.

Age remains a pivotal factor in transgender identification patterns, with younger cohorts more likely to identify as transgender than their older counterparts. The latest report shows a marked increase in identification among adults aged 18 to 24, rising to 2.7% from previous estimates of 0.7%. However, this does not indicate a sudden 'surge' in transgender youth but reflects evolving social acceptance and generational shifts in openness around gender identity. Data suggests that young people are also more likely to disclose their transgender identity on surveys, meaning older adults might be underrepresented in current statistics. As these younger generations age, researchers expect these age-based disparities to diminish.

The removal of federal gender identity questions is part of a broader, politically driven effort to erase 'gender ideology' from government programs. Since early 2025, agencies including the CDC have deleted public data pages related to HIV statistics, gender identity, and diversity, complying with executive orders that recognize only male and female sex. This action has alarmed health professionals and researchers, who emphasise that the loss of these data undermines the capacity to monitor health disparities and social outcomes among vulnerable groups, including transgender individuals. Washington-based researchers have described the sudden data deletions as a 'mad scramble,' raising fears about the future integrity and availability of critical health and demographic information.

These developments happen against a backdrop of legal and political contention. Policies restricting the collection of gender identity data and defunding of gender-affirming care have faced court challenges and public outcry from LGBTQ+ advocacy groups, underscoring the ongoing struggle over recognition and rights. Data previously collected also reveals the disproportionate victimization rates faced by transgender people, highlighting the importance of maintaining robust data to inform protective legislation and interventions.

Despite these setbacks, the transgender population remains a visible and vital part of American society, continuing to live, work, and participate across communities nationwide. However, without renewed commitment to inclusive data practices, efforts to understand and support this community will be severely hampered, compromising progress toward equity and respect. Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://theconversation.com/weve-been-tracking-the-number-of-americans-who-identify-as-transgender-soon-there-will-be-no-reliable-way-to-measure-them-263599> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/trans-adults-united-states/> - This report from the Williams Institute provides updated estimates on the number of adults and youth identifying as transgender in the United States. Using data from the CDC's Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System and the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, it estimates that over 1.6 million adults and youth identify as transgender, representing 0.6% of the population aged 13 and older. The study also highlights that youth aged 13 to 17 are significantly more likely to identify as transgender than adults aged 65 or older, with 1.4% of youth identifying as transgender compared to 0.3% of older adults. The racial and ethnic distribution of transgender individuals mirrors that of the general U.S. population, though transgender youth and adults are more likely to report being Latinx and less likely to report being White compared to the general population. The report underscores the importance of accurate data collection to inform policies and support the transgender community.
3. <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/us-health-agencies-scrub-hiv-other-data-remove-gender-ideology-2025-02-01/> - In February 2025, U.S. health agencies, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), removed webpages containing HIV statistics and other data related to gender identity and diversity. This action was taken to comply with executive orders from President Donald Trump, which directed the federal government to recognize only male and female sex and eliminate diversity and inclusion programs. The removal of these data has raised concerns among health professionals and advocates, who worry about the loss of critical information necessary for monitoring and responding to health crises, particularly for vulnerable populations such as transgender individuals.
4. <https://www.apnews.com/article/6a9ba7c01a42b72e2c0a119325ba3753> - Following President Trump's executive orders to remove 'gender ideology' language from government websites, federal agencies have deleted numerous public data pages, causing disruption among researchers who rely on these datasets. Amy O'Hara from Georgetown University described the situation as a 'mad scramble' to retrieve the deleted information. There are concerns that other politically sensitive data, like climate change or vaccine information, might also be affected. An expert panel at the CDC demanded a meeting to address why access to critical health data was restricted. While some datasets have been restored, important documentation and certain data columns remain missing. Researchers are alarmed by the precedent this sets, fearing it undermines data integrity and public trust.