

## Methodology

### The American Trends Panel survey methodology

#### Overview

Data in this report comes from Wave 160 of the American Trends Panel (ATP), Pew Research Center’s nationally representative panel of randomly selected U.S. adults. The survey was conducted from Jan. 8 to Jan. 19, 2025, among a sample of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender or Queer (LGBTQ) U.S. adults. A total of 3,959 eligible, LGBTQ adults responded out of 8,951 who were sampled, for a survey-level response rate of 62% (AAPOR RR3)<sup>1</sup>. This includes 585 respondents from the ATP, 2,297 from the SSRS Opinion Panel (OP) and 1,077 from the Ipsos Knowledge Panel (KP).

The cumulative response rate accounting for nonresponse to the recruitment surveys and attrition is 1%. The break-off rate among eligible panelists who logged on to the survey and completed at least one item is 2%. The margin of sampling error for the full sample of 3,959 respondents is plus or minus 2.2 percentage points.

SSRS and Ipsos conducted the surveys for Pew Research Center. SSRS conducted the ATP and OP surveys via online (n=2,821) and live telephone (n=62) interviewing. Ipsos conducted the KP survey online only. Interviews were conducted in both English and Spanish.

To learn more about the ATP, read “[About the American Trends Panel](#).”<sup>2</sup>

The Pew Research Center is a subsidiary of The Pew Charitable Trusts, its primary funder. This survey was made possible with support from the Trusts and from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

#### Panel recruitment

Since 2018, the ATP has used address-based sampling (ABS) for recruitment. A study cover letter and a pre-incentive are mailed to a stratified, random sample of households selected from the U.S. Postal Service’s Computerized Delivery Sequence File. This Postal Service file has been estimated to cover 90% to 98% of the population.<sup>3</sup> Within each sampled household, the adult with the next birthday is selected to participate. Other details of the ABS recruitment protocol have changed

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<sup>1</sup> The response rate is calculated as the number of eligible completes over the sum of eligible completes, breakoffs and nonrespondents, where it is estimated that 71% of nonrespondents would have been eligible if they responded.

<sup>2</sup> Learn more about the [SSRS Opinion Panel](#) and the [Ipsos KnowledgePanel](#).

<sup>3</sup> AAPOR Task Force on Address-based Sampling. 2016. “[AAPOR Report: Address-based Sampling](#).”

over time but are available upon request.<sup>4</sup> Prior to 2018, the ATP was recruited using landline and cellphone random-digit-dial surveys administered in English and Spanish.

A national sample of U.S. adults has been recruited to the ATP approximately once per year since 2014. In some years, the recruitment has included additional efforts (known as an “oversample”) to improve the accuracy of data for underrepresented groups. For example, Hispanic adults, Black adults and Asian adults were oversampled in 2019, 2022 and 2023, respectively.

### **Sample design**

The overall target population for this survey is noninstitutionalized persons ages 18 and older living in the United States who describe themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer. All active ATP members who had previously indicated that they were gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender were invited to participate in this wave.

The ATP was supplemented with samples from SSRS’ Opinion Panel (OP) and Ipsos’ Knowledge Panel (KP). For the OP sample, all active panel members who previously described themselves as any of the following were invited to participate: asexual, bisexual, gay or lesbian, intersex, nonbinary, pansexual, queer, same gender loving, transgender or two-spirit. For the KP sample, all panel members who had previously indicated that they were gay, lesbian or bisexual and married or living with a partner or previously indicated that they were transgender, nonbinary, or that their sex assigned at birth on their original birth certificate differed from their current gender identity.

At the start of the survey, potentially eligible respondents were asked a series of screening questions to confirm their eligibility to complete the survey. For the ATP and OP samples, respondents were considered eligible if they indicated they were lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer. Respondents from the KP sample were considered eligible if they indicated they were married or living with a partner and lesbian, gay or bisexual, or were transgender (regardless of marital status).

### **Questionnaire development and testing**

The questionnaire was developed by Pew Research Center in consultation with SSRS and Ipsos. The web program used for online respondents was rigorously tested on both PC and mobile devices by the SSRS and Ipsos project teams and Pew Research Center researchers. The SSRS and Ipsos project teams also populated test data that was analyzed in SPSS to ensure the logic and randomizations were working as intended before launching the survey.

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<sup>4</sup> Email [pewsurveys@pewresearch.org](mailto:pewsurveys@pewresearch.org).

## Incentives

All respondents were offered a post-paid incentive for their participation. ATP and OP respondents may receive the post-paid incentive in the form of a check or gift code to online merchants such as Amazon.com, Target.com or Walmart.com. Incentive amounts ranged from \$5 to \$20 for ATP respondents, and \$5 to \$10 for OP respondents, depending on whether the respondent belongs to a part of the population that is harder or easier to reach. Differential incentive amounts were designed to increase panel survey participation among groups that traditionally have low survey response propensities.

Ipsos operates an ongoing modest incentive program for KnowledgePanel to encourage participation and create member loyalty. The incentive program includes special raffles and sweepstakes with both cash rewards and other prizes to be won. Typically, panel members are assigned no more than one survey per week. On average, panel members complete two to three surveys per month with durations of 10 to 15 minutes per survey. An additional incentive is usually provided for longer surveys.

## Data collection protocol

The data collection field period for this survey was Jan. 8 to Jan. 19, 2025. Surveys were conducted via self-administered web survey or by live telephone interviewing.

**For panelists who take surveys online:**<sup>5</sup> Postcard notifications were mailed to a subset of ATP panelists on Jan. 8.<sup>6</sup> Survey invitations were sent out in two separate launches: soft launch and full launch. 902 panelists were included in the soft launch (60 from ATP, 593 from OP and, 249 from KP), which began with an initial invitation sent on Jan. 8. All remaining English- and Spanish-speaking sampled online panelists were included in the full launch and were sent an invitation on Jan. 9.

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### Invitation and reminder dates for web respondents, ATP Wave 160

	Soft launch	Full launch
Initial invitation	01/08/2025	01/09/2025
First reminder	01/11/2025	01/11/2025
Second reminder	01/13/2025	01/13/2025
Third reminder	01/15/2025	01/15/2025

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<sup>5</sup> The ATP does not use routers or chains in any part of its online data collection protocol, nor are they used to direct respondents to additional surveys.

<sup>6</sup> Postcard notifications for web panelists are sent to 1) panelists who were recruited within the last two years and 2) panelists recruited prior to the last two years who opt to continue receiving postcard notifications.

Final reminder                      01/18/2025                      01/18/2025  
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Panelists participating online were sent an email invitation and up to four email reminders if they did not respond to the survey. ATP panelists who consented to SMS messages were sent an SMS invitation with a link to the survey and up to four SMS reminders.

**For panelists who take surveys over the phone with a live interviewer:** Prenotification postcards were mailed to ATP panelists on Jan. 3. Soft launch took place on Jan. 8 and involved dialing until a total of 11 interviews had been completed. All remaining English- and Spanish-speaking sampled phone panelists' numbers were dialed throughout the remaining field period. Panelists who take surveys via phone can receive up to six calls from trained SSRS interviewers.

### **Data quality checks**

To ensure high-quality data, Center researchers performed data quality checks to identify any respondents showing patterns of satisficing. This includes checking for whether respondents left questions blank at very high rates or always selected the first or last answer presented. As a result of this checking, no respondents were removed from the survey dataset prior to weighting and analysis.

### **Weighting**

The survey was weighted in a process that accounts for multiple stages of sampling and nonresponse that occur at different points in the panel survey process. First, each panelist begins with a base weight that reflects their probability of recruitment into the panel. Base weights for OP and KP respondents were provided by SSRS and Ipsos respectively. Respondents from each sample were assigned to one of three sample groups and their base weights were combined and scaled to account for the sample design:

1. Transgender
2. Not transgender, and married or living with a partner and lesbian, gay or bisexual
3. All other lesbian, gay, bisexual or queer

The combined base weights were calibrated to align with the following estimated benchmarks for the population of U.S. LGBTQ adults: Sample group, lesbian/gay/bisexual status, gender, marital status, age, education, race/ethnicity, years living in the U.S. (among foreign born), volunteerism,

voter registration, frequency of internet use, religious affiliation, party affiliation, census region and metropolitan status.

Because there are no official benchmarks for this population, weighting parameters were estimated using the eligible respondents to W160 from the ATP sample. First, all ATP respondents who completed the screening questions were weighted to match the full set of ATP members who were sampled on the following dimensions: age, gender, education, race/ethnicity, years living in the U.S. (among foreign-born), volunteerism, voter registration, frequency of internet use, religious affiliation, party affiliation, census region and metropolitan status. These weights were then used to calculate weighting parameters based on ATP respondents to W160 who were screened as eligible.

In a final step, the weights were trimmed at the 1st and 99th percentiles to reduce the loss in precision stemming from variance in the weights. Sampling errors and tests of statistical significance take into account the effect of weighting.

The following table shows the unweighted sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey.

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### Sample sizes and margins of error, ATP Wave 160

Group	Unweighted sample size	Plus or minus ...
Total sample	3,959	2.2 percentage points
Gay or lesbian	1,618	3.5 percentage points
Bisexual	1,825	3.3 percentage points
Transgender	305	8.1 percentage points

Note: This survey includes oversamples of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and queer respondents. Unweighted sample sizes do not account for the sample design or weighting and do not describe a group's contribution to weighted estimates. See the Sample design and Weighting sections above for details. Figures based on those who are gay, lesbian and bisexual include only those who are not transgender. Transgender adults are of any sexual orientation. Queer adults who are not gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender are included in the total but not shown separately due to small sample size.

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Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request. In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

## Dispositions and response rates

### Final dispositions, ATP Wave 160

	AAPOR code	ATP	SSRS OP	IPSOS KP	TOTAL
Completed interview	1.1	585	2,297	1,077	3,959
Eligible panelist, but broke off before completing survey	2.10	4	57	16	77
Survey completed after close of the field period	2.27	0	0	0	0
Eligible, but other non-interview	2.30	0	0	0	0
Completed interview but was removed for data quality	2.90	0	0	0	0
Screenener not completed	3.20	78	2,766	450	3,294
Screened out	4.10	82	1,167	372	1,621
<b>Total panelists sampled for the survey</b>		<b>749</b>	<b>6,287</b>	<b>1,915</b>	<b>8,951</b>
Completed interviews	I	585	2,297	1,077	3,959
Partial interviews	P	0	0	0	0
Refusals	R	4	57	16	77
Non-contact	NC	0	0	0	0
Other	O	0	0	0	0
Unknown household	UH	0	0	0	0
Unknown other	UO	78	2,766	450	3,294
Not eligible	NE	82	1,167	372	1,621
<b>Total</b>		<b>749</b>	<b>6,287</b>	<b>1,915</b>	<b>8,951</b>
Est. eligibility rate among unscreened: $e = (I+P+R+NC+O)/(I+P+R+NC+O+NE)$		<b>88%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>71%</b>
AAPOR RR1 = $I / (I+P+R+NC+O+UH+UO)$		88%	45%	70%	54%
<b>AAPOR RR3 = <math>I / (I+P+R+NC+O+[e*(UH+UO)])</math></b>		<b>89%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>62%</b>

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**Cumulative response rate, ATP Wave 160**

	<b>ATP</b>	<b>SSRS OP</b>	<b>IPSOS KP</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Weighted response rate to recruitment surveys	11%	6%	10%	7%
% of recruitment survey respondents who agreed to join the panel, among those invited	73%	57%	61%	59%
% of those agreeing to join who were active panelists at start of Wave 160	35%	66%	27%	55%
Response rate to Wave 160 survey	89%	55%	75%	62%
<b>Cumulative response rate</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>

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