



STATISTICAL BRIEF

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Violent Victimization by Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, 2017–2020

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During the 4-year aggregate period of 2017 to 2020, the rates of violent victimization were significantly higher for persons age 16 or older who self-identified as lesbian, gay, or bisexual than for those who identified as straight, according to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS).¹ Persons who identified as lesbian or gay experienced 43.5 victimizations per 1,000 persons age 16 or older, more than twice the rate among persons who identified as straight (19.0 per 1,000) (figure 1).² Violent victimization includes rape or sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault.

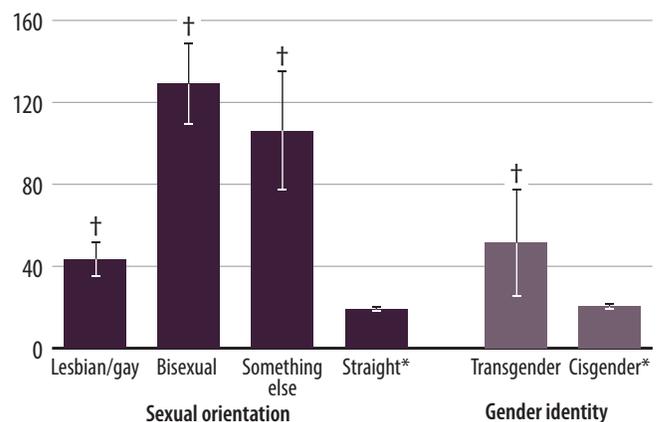
Based on 2017–20 population data from the NCVS, 1.4% of persons age 16 or older self-identified as being lesbian or gay and 0.7% identified as being bisexual. (See appendix table 9.) The rate of violent victimization was significantly higher among bisexual persons

¹In the NCVS, categories of sexual orientation include lesbian or gay, bisexual, straight, and something else. See *Terms and definitions*.

²In this report, statistical significance is at the 90% or 95% confidence level for all comparisons. See figures and tables for testing on specific findings.

FIGURE 1
Rate of violent victimization, by sexual orientation and gender identity, 2017–20

Rate per 1,000 persons age 16 or older



Note: Figure shows 95% confidence intervals. See table 1 for violence definition, appendix table 1 for rates and standard errors, and appendix table 9 for populations. See *Terms and definitions*.

*Comparison group.

†Difference with comparison group is significant at the 95% confidence level.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, 2017–20.

Highlights

During 2017 to 2020—

- The rate of violent victimization of lesbian or gay persons (43.5 victimizations per 1,000 persons age 16 or older) was more than two times the rate for straight persons (19.0 per 1,000).
- The rate of violent victimization against transgender persons (51.5 victimizations per 1,000 persons age 16 or older) was 2.5 times the rate among cisgender persons (20.5 per 1,000).
- About 58% of violent victimizations of lesbian or gay persons were reported to police.
- Domestic violence was eight times as high among bisexual persons (32.3 victimizations per 1,000 persons age 16 or older) and more than twice as high among lesbian or gay persons (10.3 per 1,000) as it was among straight persons (4.2 per 1,000).
- Violent victimizations of bisexual persons (31%) were less likely to be reported to police than violent victimizations of straight persons (45%).
- The violent victimization rate for bisexual females (151.2 victimizations per 1,000 persons age 16 or older) was eight times the rate for straight females (19.2 per 1,000).

(129.1 victimizations per 1,000 persons age 16 or older) than lesbian or gay persons (43.5 per 1,000) or persons who identified as straight (19.0 per 1,000) during 2017–20. Persons who identified as “something else” experienced violent victimization at a higher rate (106.2 per 1,000) than lesbian or gay persons.³

According to the NCVS, 0.11% of persons age 16 or older identified as transgender during 2017–20.⁴ (See appendix table 9.) During this period, the rate of violent victimization was 2.5 times as high for persons who identified as transgender (51.5 victimizations per 1,000 persons age 16 or older) as persons who identified as cisgender (20.5 per 1,000). (See

³The NCVS includes “something else” as a response option for the sexual orientation question. Write-in responses are not collected for this category. Therefore, additional information about what is included in this category is unknown.

⁴In the NCVS, categories of gender identity include transgender and cisgender. See *Terms and definitions*.

Measurement of sexual orientation and gender identity in the National Crime Victimization Survey and Terms and definitions.)

During 2017–20, the victimization-to-population ratio for persons who identified as lesbian or gay was 2.2, meaning that the percentage of violent victimizations for persons who identified as lesbian or gay (3.0%) was about two times the percentage of lesbian or gay persons in the population (1.4%). (See appendix table 6.) The victimization-to-population ratio was 6.4 for bisexual persons (who accounted for 0.7% of the population and 4.7% of violent victimizations) and 0.9 for straight persons.

The victimization-to-population ratio for transgender persons also exceeded their share of the population. Transgender persons accounted 0.3% of violent victimizations during 2017–20, for a ratio of 2.5.

Terms and definitions

Cisgender person—An individual whose gender identity (internal sense of gender, that is, being male or female) is the same as their sex assigned at birth.

Gender identity—An individual’s internal sense or perception of their own gender, which can be the same as or different from their sex assigned at birth.

Sex—A characteristic measured in two ways in the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS): 1) household respondents are asked to identify each person living in the household as male or female, and 2) respondents age 16 or older are asked to self-identify their sex assigned at birth, on their original birth certificate. The Bureau of Justice Statistics typically uses the first measure in reports analyzing NCVS data.

Sexual orientation—An individual’s sexual identity or how an individual self-identifies as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or straight. Sexual orientation has three main components: sexual attraction, sexual behavior, and sexual identity. Sexual attraction or behavior refers to an individual’s attraction to, or engagement in sexual activities with, members of the same sex, the opposite sex, or both sexes. Sexual attraction or behavior does not define a demographic population, and same-sex attraction or behavior does not always coincide with gay, lesbian, or bisexual identity. The NCVS uses sexual identity for measuring sexual orientation to meet the survey’s objective of estimating victimization among demographic populations.

Transgender person—An individual whose gender identity (internal sense of gender, that is, being male or female) is different from their sex assigned at birth.

The rate of violent crime excluding simple assault against lesbian or gay persons was two times the rate for straight persons

The rate of violent victimization varied significantly by sexual orientation during 2017–20. The rate of rape or sexual assault against persons who identified as bisexual (27.6 victimizations per 1,000 persons age 16 or older) was 18 times the rate for persons who identified as straight (1.5 per 1,000) (table 1). The rate of rape or sexual assault was also higher for lesbian or gay persons (3.1 per 1,000) than straight persons (1.5 per 1,000).

During 2017–20, the rates of robbery against bisexual persons (15.7 victimizations per 1,000 persons age 16 or older) and lesbian or gay persons (6.4 per 1,000) were greater than the rate among straight persons (1.8 per 1,000). This pattern held for rates of total assault, simple assault, and violent crime excluding simple assault. The rate of aggravated assault against bisexual persons (16.4 per 1,000 persons age 16 or older) was higher than the rate among straight persons (3.4 per 1,000).

Bisexual persons experienced domestic violence at eight times the rate that straight persons did

Domestic violence includes violent victimizations committed by current or former intimate partners or family members. Compared to the rate of domestic violence against straight persons (4.2 victimizations per 1,000 persons age 16 or older), the rate among bisexual persons was about eight times as high (32.3 per 1,000) and the rate for lesbian or gay persons (10.3 per 1,000) was more than twice as high. The rate of intimate partner violence (domestic violence victimizations committed by current or former intimate partners only) was higher for bisexual persons (20.9 victimizations per 1,000 persons age 16 or older) than straight persons (2.5 per 1,000).

For stranger violence, the rate among bisexual persons (55.0 victimizations per 1,000 persons 16 or older) and lesbian or gay persons (23.4 per 1,000) was higher than the rate among straight persons (7.6 per 1,000). This pattern also held for rates of violent crime involving an injury and violent crime involving a weapon.

TABLE 1
Rate of violent victimization, by sexual orientation and type of crime, 2017–20

Type of crime	Rate per 1,000 persons age 16 or older			Standard error		
	Lesbian/gay	Bisexual	Straight*	Lesbian/gay	Bisexual	Straight
Violent crime^a	43.5 †	129.1 †	19.0	4.40	10.25	0.67
Rape/sexual assault ^b	3.1 ‡	27.6 †	1.5	0.93	4.23	0.12
Robbery	6.4 †	15.7 †	1.8	1.53	3.35	0.15
Assault	34.1 †	85.8 †	15.6	3.82	8.24	0.59
Aggravated assault	5.0	16.4 †	3.4	1.32	3.41	0.22
Simple assault	29.1 †	69.3 †	12.2	3.65	7.67	0.52
Violent crime excluding simple assault^c	14.5 †	59.8 †	6.8	2.36	6.89	0.34
Selected characteristics of violent crime						
Domestic violence ^d	10.3 †	32.3 †	4.2	1.88	4.70	0.24
Intimate partner violence ^e	3.4	20.9 †	2.5	0.99	3.66	0.17
Stranger violence	23.4 †	55.0 †	7.6	3.04	6.38	0.36
Violent crime involving injury	10.8 †	35.7 †	4.2	1.93	4.98	0.24
Violent crime involving a weapon	7.9 †	22.0 †	4.2	1.60	3.77	0.24

Note: Categories of violent crime include threatened, attempted, and completed occurrences of rape or sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault. See *Measurement of sexual orientation and gender identity in the National Crime Victimization Survey*. Estimates for persons who identified as “something else” are not shown due to the small number of sample cases. See appendix table 2 for 95% confidence intervals, appendix table 3 for numbers of victimizations, and appendix table 9 for populations.

*Comparison group.

†Difference with comparison group is significant at the 95% confidence level.

‡Difference with comparison group is significant at the 90% confidence level.

^aExcludes homicide because the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) is based on interviews with victims.

^bSee *Methodology* for details on the measurement of rape or sexual assault in the NCVS.

^cIncludes rape or sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated assault.

^dIncludes the subset of violent victimizations that were committed by intimate partners or family members.

^eIncludes the subset of violent victimizations that were committed by current or former spouses, boyfriends, or girlfriends.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, 2017–20.

Measurement of sexual orientation and gender identity in the National Crime Victimization Survey

The 2013 Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act, the 2009 Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, and other federal laws established protections for violent crime victims who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender. In July 2016, sexual orientation and gender identity measures were added to the demographic section of the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS).⁵ These measures provide a way to estimate criminal victimization by sexual orientation and gender identity.

Sexual orientation

There are three components of sexual orientation: sexual attraction, sexual behavior, and sexual identity.⁶ The NCVS sexual orientation question measures sexual identity, which is how an individual self-identifies as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or straight. The NCVS question is based on a question in the National Center for Health Statistics' National Health Interview Survey. The question also aligns with the Sexual Minority Assessment Research Team's recommendations for measuring sexual orientation.⁷ The question and response options in bold are read aloud to the respondents by interviewers:⁸

⁵Martinez, M., Henderson, A., Luck, J., & Davis, M. C. (2017). *Cognitive pretesting of the National Crime Victimization Survey Supplemental Victimization Survey*. U.S. Census Bureau. <https://www.census.gov/library/working-papers/2017/adrm/rsm2017-03.html>.

⁶Federal Interagency Working Group on Improving Measurement of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in Federal Surveys. (2016). *Current measures of sexual orientation and gender identity in federal surveys*. Office of Management and Budget, Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology. https://nces.ed.gov/FCSM/pdf/current_measures_20160812.pdf.

⁷Sexual Minority Assessment Research Team (SMART). (2009). *Best practices for asking questions about sexual orientation on surveys*. The Williams Institute, <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Best-Practices-SO-Surveys-Nov-2009.pdf>.

⁸See the NCVS-1 for specific interviewer instructions when reading response options for sexual orientation and gender identity questions at https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/ncvs20_bsq.pdf.

Which of the following best represents how you think of yourself?

- **Lesbian or gay**
- **Straight, that is, not lesbian or gay**
- **Bisexual**
- **Something else**
- **I don't know the answer**
- Refused

Gender identity

Gender identity is defined as an individual's internal sense or perception of their own gender, which can be the same as or different from their sex assigned at birth.⁹ The NCVS uses a two-step approach to ask questions about sex assigned at birth and current gender identity, similar to the 2016 Survey of Prison Inmates, National Adult Tobacco Survey, and California Health Interview Survey. Responses to these questions are used to classify persons as transgender (gender identity is different from their sex assigned at birth) or cisgender (gender identity is the same as their sex assigned at birth). This method has identified transgender individuals more successfully than a single question has.^{10,11,12} The two-step approach allows for transgender individuals who identify as male or female but not transgender to report their gender identity and be classified as transgender for statistical analysis.

Continued on next page

⁹Federal Interagency Working Group on Improving Measurement of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in Federal Surveys. (2016). *Current measures of sexual orientation and gender identity in federal surveys*. Office of Management and Budget, Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology. https://nces.ed.gov/FCSM/pdf/current_measures_20160812.pdf.

¹⁰Gender Identity in U.S. Surveillance (GenIUSS) group. (2014). *Best practices for asking questions to identify transgender and other gender minority respondents on population-based surveys* (J. L. Herman, Ed.). The Williams Institute. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/geniuss-trans-pop-based-survey>.

¹¹Federal Interagency Working Group on Improving Measurement of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in Federal Surveys. (2016). *Evaluations of sexual orientation and gender identity survey measures: What have we learned?* Office of Management and Budget, Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology. https://nces.ed.gov/FCSM/pdf/Evaluations_of_SOGI_Questions_20160923.pdf.

¹²Beatty, L. G., & Snell, T. L. (2021). *Profile of prison inmates, 2016*. Bureau of Justice Statistics. <https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/ppi16.pdf>.

Measurement of sexual orientation and gender identity in the National Crime Victimization Survey (continued)

Interviewers read the two questions aloud to respondents (response options are shown to interviewers but not read to respondents; for current gender identity, interviewers code “Refused” and “Don’t know” responses)—

What sex were you assigned at birth, on your original birth certificate?

- Male
- Female
- Refused
- Don’t know

Do you currently describe yourself as male, female or transgender?

- Male
- Female
- Transgender
- None of these

The NCVS also uses a confirmation question to check for potential coding errors in the Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) program and responses where the respondent’s current gender identity is different from their sex assigned at birth. The CAPI program automatically populates with the respondent’s answers to the sex assigned at birth and current gender identity questions. If the respondent indicates that an error was made in recording their responses to either sex assigned at birth or current gender identity, then the interviewer fixes the recorded response.

Interviewers read the gender identity confirmation question aloud to respondents (response options are shown to interviewers but not read to respondents)—

Just to confirm, you were assigned (male/female) at birth and now (describe yourself as male/ describe yourself as female/ describe yourself as transgender/ do not describe yourself as male, female, or transgender). Is that correct?

- Yes
- No
- Refused
- Don’t know

Responses to sex assigned at birth and current gender identity are combined into a measure of gender identity.

For this report, persons were identified as transgender if their responses to sex assigned at birth differed from their current gender identity, unless they reported “None of these.” Those who reported “None of these” were excluded from the transgender estimates because the NCVS does not collect write-in responses for this response category that support classifying these individuals as transgender.

Among persons age 16 or older identified as transgender because their responses to sex assigned at birth differed from their current gender identity during 2017–20, about 54% were assigned male or female at birth and identified as transgender, and 46% either were assigned male at birth and identified as female or were assigned female at birth and identified as male.

The rate of violent victimization of transgender persons was 2.5 times the rate for cisgender persons

During 2017–20, there were 53,100 violent victimizations of persons age 16 or older who self-identified as transgender. (See appendix table 5.)

Transgender persons experienced 51.5 victimizations per 1,000 persons age 16 or older (table 2). This was 2.5 times the violent victimization rate among persons identifying as cisgender (20.5 per 1,000). Transgender persons also experienced simple assault (32.5 per 1,000) at significantly higher rates than cisgender persons (13.0 per 1,000).

TABLE 2
Rate of violent victimization, by gender identity and type of crime, 2017–20

Type of crime	Rate per 1,000 persons age 16 or older		Standard error	
	Transgender ^a	Cisgender ^{*b}	Transgender	Cisgender
Violent crime ^c	51.5 †	20.5	13.33	0.70
Violent crime excluding simple assault ^d	19.0	7.4	8.07	0.36
Simple assault	32.5 ‡	13.0	11.00	0.54

Note: Categories of violent crime include threatened, attempted, and completed occurrences of rape or sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault. See appendix table 4 for 95% confidence intervals, appendix table 5 for numbers of victimizations, and appendix table 9 for populations.

*Comparison group.

†Difference with comparison group is significant at the 95% confidence level.

‡Difference with comparison group is significant at the 90% confidence level.

^aAn individual whose gender identity is different from their sex assigned at birth. Includes respondents who reported identifying as transgender (54% of all transgender persons) or as a gender different from their sex assigned at birth (46%). See *Measurement of sexual orientation and gender identity in the National Crime Victimization Survey*.

^bAn individual whose gender identity is the same as their sex assigned at birth.

^cExcludes homicide because the National Crime Victimization Survey is based on interviews with victims.

^dIncludes rape or sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated assault.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, 2017–20.

Bisexual females experienced violent victimization at a rate eight times the rate among straight females

During 2017–20, the rate of violent victimization of gay males (38.3 victimizations per 1,000 persons age 16 or older) was two times the rate among straight males (18.7 per 1,000) (table 3). Bisexual males had the highest rate (64.5 per 1,000) among male victims. The pattern was similar among female victims. Bisexual females experienced violent victimization at eight times (151.2 per 1,000) and lesbian or gay females at 2.6 times (50.3 per 1,000) the rate that straight females did (19.2 per 1,000). Among bisexual persons, the rate of violent victimization was higher for females (151.2 per 1,000) than males (64.5 per 1,000).

Among white persons, those identifying as lesbian or gay experienced violent victimization (49.0 victimizations per 1,000 persons) more than twice as often as those identifying as straight (19.2 per 1,000).

Among Asians, Native Hawaiians or Other Pacific Islanders, American Indians or Alaska Natives, and persons of two or more races, those identifying as lesbian or gay had a higher violent victimization rate (49.4 per 1,000) than those identifying as straight (20.1 per 1,000). For each racial and ethnic group in this analysis, bisexual persons experienced violent victimization more often than straight persons.

During 2017–20, the rate of violent victimization of persons ages 18 to 24 was six times as high for those identifying as bisexual (198.7 victimizations per 1,000 persons) as for those identifying as straight (32.8 per 1,000). Among persons ages 25 to 34, lesbian or gay persons (81.4 per 1,000) and bisexual persons (97.2 per 1,000) had higher rates of violent victimization than straight persons (24.1 per 1,000). Among lesbian or gay persons, the violent victimization rate was higher for those ages 25 to 34 (81.4 per 1,000) than for those ages 18 to 24 and 35 or older.

TABLE 3
Rate of violent victimization, by sexual orientation and demographic characteristics, 2017–20

Demographic characteristic	Rate per 1,000 persons age 16 or older			Standard error		
	Lesbian/gay	Bisexual	Straight*	Lesbian/gay	Bisexual	Straight
Total	43.5 †	129.1 †	19.0	4.40	10.25	0.67
Sex^a						
Male	38.3 †	64.5 †	18.7	5.07	11.99	0.82
Female	50.3 †	151.2 †	19.2	6.50	12.37	0.82
Race/Hispanic origin						
White ^b	49.0 †	130.8 †	19.2	5.44	12.11	0.77
Black ^b	26.6 †	96.4 †	18.5	8.12	21.26	1.25
Hispanic/Latino	29.1	107.8 †	18.1	7.39	19.09	1.11
Other ^{b,c}	49.4 †	193.2 †	20.1	14.59	31.78	1.49
Age						
16–17	31.0 †	80.2 †	22.2	20.87	19.30	2.24
18–24	41.0	198.7 †	32.8	9.24	18.24	1.86
25–34	81.4 †	97.2 †	24.1	10.60	14.60	1.32
35–49	30.7	114.2 †	21.0	6.14	20.62	1.09
50–64	29.2 ‡	48.3 ‡	17.4	5.99	17.24	0.96
65 or older	22.0 †	13.7 †	6.2	7.97	13.46	0.52

Note: Includes rape or sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault. Excludes homicide because the National Crime Victimization Survey is based on interviews with victims. See *Measurement of sexual orientation and gender identity in the National Crime Victimization Survey*. Estimates for persons who identified as “something else” are not shown due to the small number of sample cases. See appendix table 7 for 95% confidence intervals and appendix table 10 for populations.

*Comparison group.

†Difference with comparison group is significant at the 95% confidence level.

‡Difference with comparison group is significant at the 90% confidence level.

! Interpret data with caution. Estimate is based on 10 or fewer sample cases, or coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

^aBased on data collected on the household roster for the sampled household. This measure asks the household respondent to identify each person living in the household as male or female.

^bExcludes persons of Hispanic/Latino origin (e.g., “white” refers to non-Hispanic white persons and “Black” refers to non-Hispanic Black persons).

^cIncludes Asians, Native Hawaiians or Other Pacific Islanders, American Indians or Alaska Natives, and persons of two or more races. Categories are not shown separately due to the small number of sample cases.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, 2017–20.

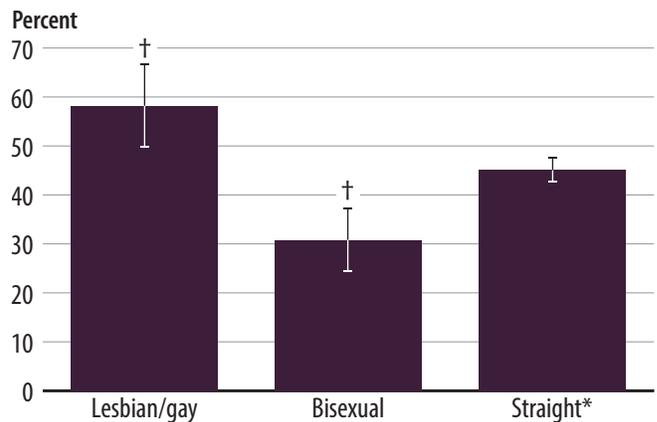
During 2017–20, about 58% of violent victimizations against lesbian or gay persons were reported to police

The NCVS provides statistics on crimes reported and not reported to police and on the reasons why a crime was not reported to police. During 2017–20, violent victimizations against persons who identified as lesbian or gay were more likely to be reported to police (58%) than violent victimizations of persons who identified as straight (45%) or bisexual (31%) (figure 2).

Reporting to police may occur during or immediately following a criminal incident or at a later date. Police may be notified by the victim or a third party (including witnesses; other victims; household members; or nonpolice officials, such as school officials or workplace managers), or police may have been at the scene of the incident.

Lesbian or gay persons chose not to report their violent victimization to police for a variety of reasons. Some of the most common reasons included considering the crime to be minor or unsuccessful, believing the crime to be a private or personal issue, not wanting to get the offender in trouble with the law, or believing police would be ineffective (not shown in figure). For persons identifying as bisexual or straight, the most common reasons for not reporting the victimization to police were because they reported it to another official or believed the crime to be a private or personal issue (not shown in figure).

FIGURE 2
Percent of violent victimizations reported to police, by sexual orientation, 2017–20



Note: Figure shows 95% confidence intervals. Estimates for persons who identified as “something else” are not shown due to the small number of sample cases. Violent victimization includes threatened, attempted, and completed occurrences of rape or sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault. See *Measurement of sexual orientation and gender identity in the National Crime Victimization Survey*. See appendix table 8 for estimates and standard errors.

*Comparison group.

†Difference with comparison group is significant at the 95% confidence level.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, 2017–20.

Methodology

Survey coverage in the National Crime Victimization Survey

The Bureau of Justice Statistics' (BJS) National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) is an annual data collection carried out by the U.S. Census Bureau. The NCVS is a self-report survey that is administered annually from January 1 to December 31. Annual NCVS estimates are based on the number and characteristics of crimes that respondents experienced during the prior 6 months, excluding the month in which they were interviewed. Therefore, the 2020 survey covers crimes experienced from July 1, 2019 to November 30, 2020, with March 15, 2020 as the middle of the reference period. Crimes are classified by the year of the survey and not by the year of the crime.

The NCVS is administered to persons age 12 or older from a nationally representative sample of U.S. households. It collects information on nonfatal personal crimes (rape or sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, simple assault, and personal larceny (purse snatching and pocket picking)) and household property crimes (burglary or trespassing, motor vehicle theft, and other types of theft).

The survey collects information on threatened, attempted, and completed crimes. It collects data on crimes both reported and not reported to police. Unless specified otherwise, estimates in this report include threatened, attempted, and completed crimes. In addition to providing annual level and change estimates on criminal victimization, the NCVS is the primary source of information on the nature of criminal victimization incidents.

Survey respondents provide information about themselves (including age, sex, race, Hispanic origin, marital status, education level, and income) and whether they experienced a victimization. For each victimization incident, respondents report information about the offender (including age, sex, race, Hispanic origin, and victim-offender relationship), characteristics of the crime (including time and place of occurrence, use of weapons, nature of injury, and economic consequences), whether the crime was reported to police, reasons the crime was or was not reported, and experiences with the criminal justice system.

Household information, including household-level demographics (e.g., income) and property victimizations committed against the household (e.g., burglary or trespassing), is typically collected from the reference person. The reference person is any responsible adult member of the household who is unlikely to permanently leave the household. Because an owner or renter of the sampled housing unit is normally the most responsible and knowledgeable household member, this person is generally designated as the reference person and household respondent. However, a household respondent does not have to be one of the household members who owns or rents the unit.

In the NCVS, a household is defined as a group of persons who all reside at a sampled address. Persons are considered household members when the sampled address is their usual place of residence at the time of the interview and when they have no primary place of residence elsewhere. Once selected, households remain in the sample for 3.5 years, and eligible persons in these households are interviewed every 6 months, either in person or over the phone, for a total of seven interviews.

First interviews are typically conducted in person, with subsequent interviews conducted either in person or by phone. New households rotate into the sample on an ongoing basis to replace outgoing households that have been in the sample for the full 3.5-year period. The sample includes persons living in group quarters, such as dormitories, rooming houses, and religious group dwellings, and excludes persons living on military bases or in institutional settings such as correctional or hospital facilities.

Measurement of crime in the NCVS

NCVS data can be used to produce several types of estimates, including victimization, incident, and prevalence rates. Victimization rates measure the extent to which violent and property victimizations occur in a specified population during a specified time. Victimization numbers show the total number of times that persons or households are victimized by crime. For crimes affecting persons, NCVS victimization rates are estimated by dividing the number of victimizations that occur during a specified time (T) by the population at risk for those victimizations and then multiplying the rate by 1,000.

$$\text{Victimization rate}_T = \frac{\text{Number of victimizations experienced by a specified population}_T}{\text{Number of unique persons (or households) in the specified population}_T} \times 1,000$$

For *victimization rates*, each victimization represents one person (for personal crimes) or one household (for property crimes) affected by a crime.¹³ Every victimization experienced by a person or household during the year is counted. For example, if one person experiences two violent crimes during the year, both are counted in the victimization rate. If one household experiences two property crimes, both are counted in the victimization rate. Victimization estimates are presented in figures 1 and 2, tables 1 through 3, and appendix table 6 in this report.

Incident rates are another measure of crime. The number of incidents is the number of specific criminal acts involving one or more victims. If every victimization had one victim, the number of incidents would be the same as the number of victimizations. If there was more than one victim, the incident estimate is adjusted to compensate for the possibility that the incident could be reported several times by multiple victims and thus be overcounted. For example, if two persons were robbed during the same incident, this crime would be counted as one incident and two victimizations. Incident rates are not included in this report.

Prevalence rates are a third measure that reflect a population's risk of experiencing one or more criminal victimizations. They describe the level of victimization, like victimization rates, but are based on the number of unique persons or households in the population experiencing at least one victimization during a specified time. Prevalence rates are not included in this report.

The key distinction between a victimization rate and a prevalence rate is whether the numerator consists of the number of victimizations or the number of unique victims. For example, a person who experienced two robberies within the past year would be counted twice in the victimization rate but only once in the prevalence rate. Prevalence rates are estimated by dividing the number of unique victims or victimized households in the specified population by the total number of persons

¹³In the NCVS, personal crimes are personal larceny (purse snatching and pocket picking) and violent victimizations (rape or sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault). Homicide is not included because the NCVS is based on interviews with victims. Property crimes are burglary or trespassing, motor vehicle theft, and other theft.

or households in the population and multiplying the rate by 100, yielding the percentage of the population victimized at least once in a period.

$$\text{Prevalence rate}_T = \frac{\text{Number of unique victims (or victimized households) in a specified population}_T}{\text{Number of unique persons (or households) in the specified population}_T} \times 100$$

For more information about measuring prevalence in the NCVS, see *Measuring the Prevalence of Crime with the National Crime Victimization Survey* (NCJ 241656, BJS, September 2013).

Nonresponse and weighting adjustments

The 2020 NCVS data file includes 138,327 household interviews. Overall, 67% of eligible households completed interviews. Within participating households, interviews with 223,079 persons were completed in 2020, representing an 82% response rate among eligible persons from responding households.

Victimizations that occurred outside of the United States were excluded from this report. In 2020, about 0.4% of the unweighted victimizations occurred outside of the United States.

NCVS data are weighted to produce annual estimates of victimization for persons age 12 or older living in U.S. households. Because the NCVS relies on a sample rather than a census of the entire U.S. population, weights are designed to adjust to known population totals and to compensate for survey nonresponse and other aspects of the complex sample design.

NCVS data files include person, household, victimization, and incident weights. Person weights provide an estimate of the population represented by each person in the sample. Household weights provide an estimate of the household population represented by each household in the sample. After proper adjustment, both person and household weights are also typically used to form the denominator in calculations of crime rates.

For personal crimes, the incident weight is derived by dividing the person weight of a victim by the total number of persons victimized during an incident, as reported by the respondent. For property crimes measured at the household level, the incident weight and the household weight are the same, because the victim of a property crime is considered to be the household as a whole. The incident weight is most frequently used to calculate estimates of offenders' and victims' demographics.

Victimization weights used in this report account for the number of persons victimized during an incident and for high-frequency repeat victimizations (i.e., series victimizations). Series victimizations are similar in type to one another but occur with such frequency that a victim is unable to recall each individual event or describe each event in detail. Survey procedures allow NCVS interviewers to identify and classify these similar victimizations as series victimizations and to collect detailed information on only the most recent incident in the series.

The weighting counts series victimizations as the actual number of victimizations reported by the victim, up to a maximum of 10. Doing so produces more reliable estimates of crime levels than counting such victimizations only once, while the cap at 10 minimizes the effect of extreme outliers on rates.

According to the 2020 data, series victimizations accounted for 1.1% of all victimizations and 2.7% of all violent victimizations. For more information on the enumeration of series victimizations see *Methods for Counting High-Frequency Repeat Victimization in the National Crime Victimization Survey* (NCJ 237308, BJS, April 2012).

The 2020 NCVS weights include an additional adjustment to address the impact of modified field operations due to COVID-19. For more information on the weighting adjustments applied in 2020, see *Source and Accuracy Statement for the 2020 National Crime Victimization Survey* in the NCVS 2020 Codebook (<https://www.icpsr.umich.edu/web/NACJD/studies/38090/datadocumentation>) and *National Crime Victimization Survey, 2016: Technical Documentation* (NCJ 251442, BJS, December 2017).

Beginning in 2020, BJS incorporated an additional factor to moderate the contribution of outlier weights on NCVS estimates. For more information, see *Source and Accuracy Statement for the 2020 National Crime Victimization Survey* in the NCVS 2020 Codebook (<https://www.icpsr.umich.edu/web/NACJD/studies/38090/datadocumentation>) and *National Crime Victimization Survey: Assessment of Outlier Weights* (NCJ 302186, BJS, October 2021).

Standard error computations

When national estimates are derived from a sample, as with the NCVS, caution must be used when comparing one estimate to another or when comparing estimates over time. Although one estimate may be larger than

another, estimates based on a sample have some degree of sampling error. The sampling error of an estimate depends on several factors, including the amount of variation in the responses and the size of the sample. When the sampling error around an estimate is taken into account, the apparent difference between estimates may not be statistically significant.

One measure of the sampling error associated with an estimate is the standard error. The standard error may vary from one estimate to the next. Generally, an estimate with a smaller standard error provides a more reliable approximation of the true value than an estimate with a larger standard error. Estimates with relatively large standard errors have less precision and reliability and should be interpreted with caution.

For complex sample designs, there are several methods that can be used to generate standard errors around a point estimate (e.g., numbers, percentages, and rates). These include direct variance estimation and generalized variance function (GVF) parameters.

In this report, GVF parameters were used for variance estimation. The U.S. Census Bureau produces GVF parameters for BJS, which account for aspects of the NCVS's complex sample design and represent the curve fitted to a selection of individual standard errors, using a specialized version of Balanced Repeated Replication (BRR) based on Fay's method (see explanation below).

GVFs express the variance as a function of the expected value of the survey estimate.¹⁴ The GVF parameters are generated by fitting estimates and their relative variance to a regression model, using an iterative weighted least-squares procedure where the weight is the inverse of the square of the predicted relative variance. For more information, see *National Crime Victimization Survey, 2016: Technical Documentation* (NCJ 251442, BJS, December 2017). GVF parameters are available in the codebooks published with the NCVS public-use files through the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data (www.icpsr.umich.edu/nacjd).

Although not used in this report, another method to produce standard errors for NCVS estimates is through a specialized version of BRR estimation using Fay's method.¹⁵ BRR estimation is a type of direct replication variance estimation. Under replicate variance estimation, a set of replicate weights (e.g., the NCVS typically has a set consisting of 160 replicate

¹⁴Wolter, K. M. (2007). *Introduction to variance estimation* (2nd ed.). Springer.

¹⁵Ibid.

weights) is used to capture the sampling variance. Fay's method is used for surveys that have rare outcomes in which the entire sample is necessary to properly estimate the variance.

Although prevalence estimates are excluded from this report, BJS uses BRR and Taylor Series Linearization (TSL) methods to generate standard errors around these estimates. The TSL method directly estimates variances through a linearized function by combining variance estimates from the stratum and primary sampling units (PSUs) used to sample households and persons.¹⁶ In the NCVS, the design parameters used for computing TSL variances are PSEUDOSTRATA (stratum) and HALFSAMPLE (PSU). These design parameters are available for all years except the first half of 1993 and all of 2016. Therefore, BRR methods must be used for 2016 prevalence estimates.

Direct variance estimation—BRR or TSL—is generally considered more accurate than GVF's in terms of how closely the variance estimate approximates the true variance. With direct variance estimation, each estimate is generated based on the outcome being estimated rather than being generated based on a generalized function.

BJS conducted statistical tests to determine whether differences in estimated numbers, percentages, and rates in this report were statistically significant once sampling error was taken into account. Using statistical analysis programs developed specifically for the NCVS, all comparisons in the text were tested for significance. The primary test procedure was the Student's t-statistic, which tests the difference between two sample estimates. Findings described in this report as increases or decreases passed a test at either the 0.05 level (95% confidence level) or 0.10 level (90% confidence level) of significance. Figures and tables in this report should be referenced for testing on specific findings.

Estimates and standard errors of the estimates provided in this report may be used to generate a confidence interval around the estimate as a measure of the margin of error. The following example illustrates how standard errors may be used to generate confidence intervals:

According to the NCVS, the rate of violent victimization of persons identifying as straight was 19.0 victimizations per 1,000 persons age 16 or older during 2017–20. (See table 1.) Using the GVF's, BJS determined that the estimated victimization rate has

a standard error of 0.67. (See table 1.) A confidence interval around the estimate is generated by multiplying the standard error by ± 1.96 (the t-score of a normal, two-tailed distribution that excludes 2.5% at either end of the distribution). Therefore, the 95% confidence interval around the 19.0 estimate for 2017–20 is $19.0 \pm (0.67 \times 1.96)$ or (17.67 to 20.31). (See appendix table 2.) In other words, if BJS used the same sampling method to select different samples and computed an interval estimate for each sample, it would expect the true population parameter (rate of violent victimization of persons identifying as straight) to fall within the interval estimates 95% of the time.

Confidence intervals for flagged estimates should be interpreted with caution, as large standard errors may result in a lower-bound estimate less than zero. For this report, BJS also calculated a coefficient of variation (CV) for all estimates, representing the ratio of the standard error to the estimate. CV's (not shown in tables) provide another measure of reliability and a means for comparing the precision of estimates across measures with differing levels or metrics.

NCVS measurement of rape or sexual assault

The NCVS uses a two-stage approach to screen and classify criminal victimization, including rape or sexual assault. In the first stage, survey respondents are administered a series of short-cue screening questions designed to help respondents think about different experiences they may have had during the reference period. (See NCVS-1 at https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/ncvs20_bsq.pdf.)

This design improves respondents' recall of events, particularly for incidents that may not immediately come to mind as crimes, such as those committed by family members and acquaintances. Respondents who answer affirmatively to any of the short-cue screening items are subsequently administered a crime incident report (CIR) designed to classify incidents into specific crime types. (See NCVS-2 at https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/ncvs20_cir.pdf.)

First stage of measurement. Two short-cue screening questions are specifically designed to target sexual victimization. The questions in the following section on rape or sexual assault victimization come directly from the NCVS instrument:

¹⁶Ibid.

1. (Other than any incidents already mentioned,) has anyone attacked or threatened you in any of these ways—
(Exclude telephone threats) –
 - a. With any weapon, such as a gun or knife
 - b. With anything like a baseball bat, frying pan, scissors, or stick
 - c. By something thrown, such as a rock or bottle
 - d. Include any grabbing, punching, or choking
 - e. Any rape, attempted rape, or other type of sexual attack
 - f. Any face to face threats
OR
 - g. Any attack or threat or use of force by anyone at all? Please mention it even if you are not certain it was a crime.
2. Incidents involving forced or unwanted sexual acts are often difficult to talk about. (Other than any incidents already mentioned,) have you been forced or coerced to engage in unwanted sexual activity by—
 - a. Someone you didn't know
 - b. A casual acquaintance
OR
 - c. Someone you know well?

With regard to sexual victimization, respondents may screen into a CIR if they respond affirmatively to other short-cue screening questions. For instance, a separate screening question cues respondents to think of attacks or threats that took place in specific locations, such as at home, work, or school. Respondents who recall a sexual victimization that occurred at home, work, or school and answer affirmatively would be administered a CIR even if they did not respond affirmatively to the screening question targeting sexual victimization.

Second stage of measurement. The CIR is used to collect information on the attributes of each incident. The key attributes of sexual violence that are used to classify a victimization as a rape or sexual assault are the type of attack and physical injury suffered. Victims are asked “Did the offender hit you, knock you down, or actually attack you in any way?”; “...TRY to attack you?”; or “...THREATEN you with harm in any way?” The survey participant is classified as a victim of rape or sexual assault if they respond affirmatively to

one of the three questions and then respond that the completed, attempted, or threatened attack was—

- rape
- attempted rape
- sexual assault other than rape or attempted rape
- verbal threat of rape
- verbal threat of sexual assault other than rape
- unwanted sexual contact with force (grabbing, fondling, etc.)
- unwanted sexual contact without force (grabbing, fondling, etc.).

If the victim selects one of the following response options to describe the attack, they are also classified as a victim of rape or sexual assault if the injuries suffered as a result of the incident are described as—

- raped
- attempted rape
- sexual assault other than rape or attempted rape.

Coercion. The CIR does not ask respondents if psychological coercion was used or make any explicit reference to the victim being unable to provide consent (e.g., in incidents involving drug or alcohol use). One screening question targeted to rape and sexual assault asks respondents if force or coercion was used to initiate unwanted sexual activity.

Classification of rape and sexual assault in the National Crime Victimization Survey

Measure	Element of sexual violence
Completed rape	Type of attack = rape Type of injury = rape
Attempted rape	Type of attack = attempted rape Type of injury = attempted rape
Threatened rape	Type of threat = verbal threat of rape with weapon Type of attempted attack/threat = verbal threat of rape
Sexual assault	Type of attack = sexual assault other than rape or attempted rape Type of injury = sexual assault other than rape or attempted rape Type of attempted attack/threat = unwanted sexual contact with force Type of attempted attack/threat = unwanted sexual contact without force Type of attempted attack/threat = verbal threat of sexual assault other than rape

Note: A victim is determined to be present in all measures of rape and sexual assault.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, 2020.

The final classification of incidents by the CIR results in the following definitions of rape and sexual assault used in the NCVS:

Rape. Coerced or forced sexual intercourse. Forced sexual intercourse means vaginal, anal, or oral penetration by the offender(s). This category could include incidents where the penetration was with a foreign object such as a bottle. It includes attempted rape, threatened rape, victims of any sex or gender, and incidents involving victims and offenders who are the same sex or different sex or gender.

Sexual assault. A wide range of victimizations, separate from rape, attempted rape, or threatened rape. These crimes include attacks or threatened attacks involving unwanted sexual contact between the victim and offender. Sexual assaults may or may not involve force and include such things as grabbing or fondling.

Sexual orientation and gender identity data in the NCVS

Data collection

Sexual orientation and gender identity measures were added to the NCVS demographic section in July 2016. Upon implementation, questions pertaining to sexual orientation and gender identity were administered to all respondents age 16 or older at their first, third, fifth, and seventh interviews. If questions were not asked in a previous interview, they were asked at the following interview. From July 2019 through December 2021, administration of these items was restricted to victims age 16 or older. During this period, victims were asked these questions once while they were in the sample. Beginning in January 2022 (OMB No. 1121-0111), these items have been administered to all respondents age 16 or older at their first, third, fifth, and seventh interviews or if they had not been asked the questions before. These items are not asked to proxy respondents.

The NCVS sexual orientation question measures sexual identity, which is how an individual self-identifies as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or straight. For gender identity, a two-step approach that asks questions about sex assigned at birth and current gender identity is used. When the respondent's current gender identity is different from their sex assigned at birth, the NCVS uses a confirmation question to check for potential coding errors. During 2017–20, about 9% of respondents who were asked this question indicated that the information was incorrect, and the interviewer fixed the recorded response (table 4).

Sample sizes

Persons age 16 or older who identify as sexual and gender minorities make up a small portion of the U.S. population. (See appendix tables 9, 10, and 11.) Given that NCVS data are derived from a sample of persons, the relatively small sizes of certain population groups compared to the overall U.S. population can pose measurement challenges. In addition, the relatively rare occurrence of violent victimization in the population can compound these measurement challenges, often leading to even smaller sample sizes for particular demographic groups, including sexual and gender minorities. Although 4 years of NCVS data were aggregated for this report, sample sizes remain small when examining sexual orientation and gender identity categories by crime type and other victim and incident characteristics. The statistical estimates for sexual orientation and gender identity categories in this report are shown at the most detailed level supportable by the quantity and reliability of the available data.

Population adjustments

NCVS person weights provide an estimate of the U.S. population represented by each person in the sample. After proper adjustment, person weights are used to form the denominator in the calculation of crime rates. Because persons are interviewed every 6 months, NCVS data are weighted to represent the entire U.S. population age 12 or older during each 6-month period of the year (i.e., first and second quarters, and third and fourth quarters). When reporting annual NCVS estimates, person weights are divided in half so as to not double the U.S. population age 12 or older for that year.

TABLE 4
Unweighted number and percent response to gender identity confirmation item, 2017–20

	Unweighted number	Percent
Total	1,680	100%
1 – Yes, correct	1,400	83.3
2 – No, not correct	150	8.9
3 – Refused	90	5.4
4 – Don't know	40	2.4

Note: Unweighted counts are rounded according to the U.S. Census Bureau Disclosure Review Board Special Rounding Rules for unweighted numbers. Unweighted percentages are calculated based on rounded values. The U.S. Census Bureau reviewed this data product for unauthorized disclosure of confidential information and approved the disclosure avoidance practices applied to this release. CBDRB-FY22-POP001-0078.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau internal interim processing data, National Crime Victimization Survey, 2017–20.

Due to the changes in the universe of persons administered the sexual orientation and gender identity items between July 2019 and December 2020 (see *Data collection*), population estimates by sexual orientation and gender identity for persons age 16 or older are unavailable for this period. Adjustments were applied to the available data to estimate the population of persons age 16 or older by sexual orientation and gender identity for the third and fourth quarters of 2019 and all of 2020.

Sexual orientation and gender identity data were collected from all persons age 16 or older for the first and second quarters of 2019. Therefore, NCVS population estimates are available for this period. These weighted population estimates were used to represent the 2019 annual estimates. The 2020 population data in this report were estimated using the percentage change in the NCVS population of persons age 16 or older from 2019 to 2020. The population of persons age 16 or older increased 0.45% from 2019 to 2020. An adjustment factor of 0.45% was applied and added to the 2019 sexual orientation and gender identity estimates to approximate the expected increase in these populations for 2020. The 2020 population was calculated for each sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) category as follows:

$$P = X + \left(X \times \left(\frac{A - B}{B} \right) \right)$$

Where—

P = estimated 2020 population for persons age 16 or older by each SOGI category

X = weighted population for persons age 16 or older by each SOGI category for first and second quarters of 2019

A = weighted population for all persons age 16 or older in 2020

B = weighted population for all persons age 16 or older in 2019.

Appendix tables 9 through 11 present population estimates by SOGI categories. Population totals in appendix tables 10 and 11 differ from population totals in appendix table 9. Respondents' refusals to answer the sexual orientation or gender identity questions were classified as valid responses in appendix table 9. Appendix tables 10 and 11 excluded these responses from the population totals.

Item nonresponse

Item nonresponse to the sexual orientation and gender identity questions was low compared to other questions in the NCVS. Less than 2% of respondents refused to answer the sexual orientation question (table 5). This nonresponse category combined with other missing responses to the sexual orientation question (i.e., “don’t know” and where respondents were eligible, or in-universe, but had a missing response) accounted for 2.41% of all respondents age 16 or older. Less than 1% of respondents refused to answer the gender identity questions. The refusal nonresponse category combined with other missing responses to the gender identity questions accounted for 0.84% of all respondents age 16 or older. Comparatively, about 26% of NCVS respondents answered “don’t know” or refused to answer a question about household income.

TABLE 5
Percent of nonresponse to sexual orientation and gender identity items, 2017–20

Item	Refusal nonresponse	Total nonresponse ^a
Sexual orientation	1.91%	2.41%
Gender identity ^b	0.52	0.84

^aIncludes all nonresponse, including refusal, “don’t know,” and in-universe missing (respondents that were eligible, or in-universe, but had a missing response).

^bIncludes combined responses to sex assigned at birth and current gender identity questions. Nonresponse is based on sex assigned at birth question. Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, 2017–20.

APPENDIX TABLE 1

Rates and standard errors for figure 1: Rate of violent victimization, by sexual orientation and gender identity, 2017–20

Sexual orientation/gender identity	Rate per 1,000 persons age 16 or older	Standard error	95% confidence interval	
			Lower bound	Upper bound
Sexual orientation				
Lesbian/gay	43.5 †	4.40	34.9	52.2
Bisexual	129.1 †	10.25	109.0	149.2
Something else ^a	106.2 †	14.91	77.0	135.5
Straight*	19.0	0.67	17.7	20.3
Gender identity				
Transgender ^b	51.5 †	13.33	25.4	77.7
Cisgender ^c	20.5	0.70	19.1	21.9

Note: Violent victimization includes threatened, attempted, and completed occurrences of rape or sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault. See *Measurement of sexual orientation and gender identity in the National Crime Victimization Survey*. See appendix table 9 for populations.

*Comparison group.

†Difference with comparison group is significant at the 95% confidence level.

^aIncluded as a response option for the sexual orientation question in the NCVS. Write-in responses are not collected for this category. Therefore, additional information about what is included in this category is unknown.

^bAn individual whose gender identity is different from their sex assigned at birth. Includes respondents who reported identifying as transgender (54% of all transgender persons) or as a gender different from their sex assigned at birth (46%).

^cAn individual whose gender identity is the same as their sex assigned at birth.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, 2017–20.

APPENDIX TABLE 2

Confidence intervals for table 1: Rate of violent victimization, by sexual orientation and type of crime, 2017–20

Type of crime	95% confidence interval					
	Lesbian/gay		Bisexual		Straight	
	Lower bound	Upper bound	Lower bound	Upper bound	Lower bound	Upper bound
Violent crime	34.92	52.16	109.05	149.24	17.67	20.31
Rape/sexual assault	1.27	4.91	19.33	35.91	1.29	1.76
Robbery	3.38	9.39	9.17	22.31	1.53	2.11
Assault	26.58	41.56	69.62	101.93	14.49	16.80
Aggravated assault	2.40	7.60	9.74	23.12	3.01	3.89
Simple assault	21.92	36.21	54.32	84.37	11.17	13.22
Violent crime excluding simple assault	9.85	19.10	46.29	73.30	6.12	7.46
Selected characteristics of violent crime						
Domestic violence	6.59	13.94	23.08	41.52	3.69	4.62
Intimate partner violence	1.44	5.33	13.70	28.04	2.19	2.85
Stranger violence	17.41	29.34	42.48	67.50	6.86	8.26
Violent crime involving injury	7.03	14.62	25.89	45.41	3.74	4.68
Violent crime involving a weapon	4.71	11.00	14.62	29.41	3.73	4.67

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, 2017–20.

APPENDIX TABLE 3

Number of violent victimizations for table 1, by sexual orientation and type of crime, 2017–20

Type of crime	Number			Standard error			95% confidence interval					
	Lesbian/gay	Bisexual	Straight*	Lesbian/gay	Bisexual	Straight	Lesbian/gay		Bisexual		Straight	
							Lower bound	Upper bound	Lower bound	Upper bound	Lower bound	Upper bound
Violent crime^a	567,960 †	888,600 †	17,380,220	61,488	82,215	618,844	447,446	688,478	727,461	1,049,743	16,167,286	18,593,154
Rape/sexual assault ^b	40,290 †	190,060 †	1,396,890	12,190	30,426	109,011	16,400	64,184	130,424	249,694	1,183,228	1,610,552
Robbery	83,270 †	108,320 †	1,665,630	20,313	23,731	134,245	43,461	123,087	61,803	154,829	1,402,514	1,928,754
Assault	444,400 †	590,230 †	14,317,700	52,806	63,328	544,212	340,895	547,895	466,103	714,349	13,251,040	15,384,352
Aggravated assault	65,220 †	113,070 †	3,155,710	17,492	24,186	205,249	30,935	99,505	65,664	160,472	2,753,424	3,557,998
Simple assault	379,180 †	477,160 †	11,161,990	50,042	57,907	480,480	281,092	477,258	363,659	590,657	10,220,245	12,103,725
Violent crime excluding simple assault^c	188,790 †	411,440 †	6,218,240	31,703	51,505	313,931	126,649	250,925	310,494	512,394	5,602,931	6,833,539
Selected characteristics of violent crime												
Domestic violence ^d	133,870 †	222,240 †	3,805,190	25,008	34,049	217,892	84,855	182,889	155,498	288,972	3,378,119	4,232,255
Intimate partner violence ^e	44,200 †	143,600 †	2,306,330	13,063	26,088	155,096	18,592	69,800	92,468	194,732	2,002,339	2,610,315
Stranger violence	304,960 †	378,370 †	6,917,880	41,442	47,460	328,237	223,729	386,181	285,346	471,390	6,274,538	7,561,228
Violent crime involving injury	141,200 †	245,310 †	3,851,310	25,824	36,192	219,691	90,582	191,812	174,371	316,243	3,420,712	4,281,900
Violent crime involving a weapon	102,430 †	151,480 †	3,844,540	21,311	26,944	219,427	60,659	144,197	98,668	204,288	3,414,460	4,274,616

Note: Details may not sum to totals due to rounding and missing data. Estimates include persons age 16 or older. Categories of violent crime include threatened, attempted, and completed occurrences of rape or sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault. See *Measurement of sexual orientation and gender identity in the National Crime Victimization Survey*. Estimates for persons who identified as “something else” are not shown due to the small number of sample cases.

*Comparison group.

†Difference with comparison group is significant at the 95% confidence level.

^aExcludes homicide because the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) is based on interviews with victims.

^bSee *Methodology* for details on the measurement of rape or sexual assault in the NCVS.

^cIncludes rape or sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated assault.

^dIncludes the subset of violent victimizations that were committed by intimate partners or family members.

^eIncludes the subset of violent victimizations that were committed by current or former spouses, boyfriends, or girlfriends.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, 2017–20.

APPENDIX TABLE 4

Confidence intervals for table 2: Rate of violent victimization, by gender identity and type of crime, 2017–20

Type of crime	95% confidence interval			
	Transgender		Cisgender	
	Lower bound	Upper bound	Lower bound	Upper bound
Violent crime	25.39	77.65	19.12	21.86
Violent crime excluding simple assault	3.16	34.82	6.74	8.15
Simple assault	10.96	54.10	11.99	14.11

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, 2017–20.

APPENDIX TABLE 5

Number of violent victimizations for table 2, by gender identity and type of crime, 2017–20

Type of crime	Number		Standard error		95% confidence interval			
	Transgender ^a	Cisgender ^{*b}	Transgender	Cisgender	Transgender		Cisgender	
					Lower bound	Upper bound	Lower bound	Upper bound
Violent crime ^c	53,100 †	19,563,300	14,513	671,162	24,656	81,548	18,247,818	20,878,772
Violent crime excluding simple assault ^d	19,570 †	7,104,320	8,509	344,043	2,896	36,252	6,429,991	7,778,641
Simple assault	33,530 †	12,458,980	11,759	518,275	10,480	56,576	11,443,160	13,474,798

Note: Estimates include persons age 16 or older. Categories of violent victimization include threatened, attempted, and completed occurrences of rape or sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault.

*Comparison group.

†Difference with comparison group is significant at the 95% confidence level.

^aAn individual whose gender identity is different from their sex assigned at birth. Includes respondents who reported identifying as transgender (54% of all transgender persons) or as a gender different from their sex assigned at birth (46%). See *Measurement of sexual orientation and gender identity in the National Crime Victimization Survey*.

^bAn individual whose gender identity is the same as their sex assigned at birth.

^cExcludes homicide because the National Crime Victimization Survey is based on interviews with victims.

^dIncludes rape or sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated assault.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, 2017–20.

APPENDIX TABLE 6

Violent victimizations, by population, sexual orientation, and gender identity, 2017–20

Sexual orientation/gender identity	Population	Number of violent victimizations ^a	Percent of population	Percent of violent victimizations ^a	Victimization-to-population ratio of percentages
Sexual orientation^b					
Lesbian/gay	13,044,640	567,960	1.39%	3.02%	2.2
Bisexual	6,880,800	888,600	0.73	4.72	6.4
Straight	915,151,140	17,380,220	97.32	92.27	0.9
Gender identity					
Transgender ^c	1,030,730	53,100	0.11%	0.27%	2.5
Cisgender ^d	954,777,240	19,563,300	99.77	99.73	1.0

Note: Details may not sum to totals due to rounding and missing data. Estimates include persons age 16 or older. Population estimates exclude refused and in-universe missing, that is, respondents who were eligible, or in-universe, but had a missing response. During 2017–20, 2.44% of all persons age 16 or older refused to answer the sexual orientation question and 0.64% refused to answer the gender identity questions. Data on sexual orientation were missing for 0.20%, and data on gender identity were missing for 0.28% of all persons age 16 or older.

^aCategories of violent crime include threatened, attempted, and completed occurrences of rape or sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault. About 10% of persons experienced multiple violent victimizations during this period and therefore may be counted more than once.

^bSee *Measurement of sexual orientation and gender identity in the National Crime Victimization Survey*. Estimates for persons who identified as “something else” are not shown due to the small number of sample cases.

^cAn individual whose gender identity is different from their sex assigned at birth. Includes respondents who reported identifying as transgender (54% of all transgender persons) or as with a gender different from their sex assigned at birth (46%).

^dAn individual whose gender identity is the same as their sex assigned at birth.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, 2017–20.

APPENDIX TABLE 7

Confidence intervals for table 3: Rate of violent victimization, by sexual orientation and demographic characteristics, 2017–20

Demographic characteristic	95% confidence interval					
	Lesbian/gay		Bisexual		Straight	
	Lower bound	Upper bound	Lower bound	Upper bound	Lower bound	Upper bound
Total	34.92	52.16	109.05	149.23	17.67	20.31
Sex						
Male	28.32	48.19	40.96	87.96	17.13	20.35
Female	37.52	62.98	126.99	175.48	17.62	20.83
Race/Hispanic origin						
White	38.34	59.66	107.10	154.59	17.67	20.69
Black	10.63	42.47	54.71	138.04	16.01	20.89
Hispanic/Latino	14.56	43.54	70.41	145.23	15.90	20.25
Other	20.84	78.02	130.92	255.50	17.23	23.06
Age						
16–17	0.00	71.87	42.33	118.00	17.77	26.57
18–24	22.88	59.09	162.93	234.45	29.17	36.47
25–34	60.58	102.15	68.58	125.81	21.47	26.64
35–49	18.65	42.73	73.81	154.65	18.86	23.12
50–64	17.43	40.91	14.52	82.10	15.55	19.30
65 or older	6.36	37.60	0.00	40.11	5.17	7.19

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, 2017–20.

APPENDIX TABLE 8

Estimates and standard errors for figure 2: Percent of violent victimizations reported to police, by sexual orientation, 2017–20

Sexual orientation	Percent	Standard error	95% confidence interval	
			Lower bound	Upper bound
Lesbian/gay	58.2% †	4.38	49.66	66.83
Bisexual	30.8 †	3.30	24.35	37.28
Straight*	45.1	1.29	42.59	47.63

Note: Estimates include persons age 16 or older. Estimates for persons who identified as “something else” are not shown due to the small number of sample cases. Violent victimization includes threatened, attempted, and completed occurrences of rape or sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault. See *Measurement of sexual orientation and gender identity in the National Crime Victimization Survey*.

*Comparison group.

†Difference with comparison group is significant at the 95% confidence level.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, 2017–20.

APPENDIX TABLE 9

Population of persons age 16 or older, by sexual orientation and gender identity, 2017–20

Sexual orientation/ gender identity	Number of persons age 16 or older					Percent of persons age 16 or older				
	2017	2018	2019 ^a	2020 ^a	2017–20 ^a	2017	2018	2019 ^a	2020 ^a	2017–20 ^a
Total	240,132,640	240,634,920	241,017,460	242,104,360	963,889,380	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Sexual orientation										
Lesbian/gay	3,168,030	3,237,550	3,312,070	3,327,000	13,044,640	1.32%	1.35%	1.37%	1.37%	1.35%
Bisexual	1,579,150	1,640,540	1,826,440	1,834,670	6,880,800	0.66	0.68	0.76	0.76	0.71
Something else ^b	497,250	442,980	506,290	508,570	1,955,080	0.21	0.18	0.21	0.21	0.20
Straight	227,548,630	228,641,590	228,964,190	229,996,730	915,151,140	94.76	95.02	95.00	95.00	94.94
Don't know	812,560	752,600	872,800	876,740	3,314,710	0.34	0.31	0.36	0.36	0.34
Refused	6,527,030	5,919,660	5,535,680	5,560,640	23,543,010	2.72	2.46	2.30	2.30	2.44
Gender identity										
Transgender ^c	272,140	213,230	272,070	273,290	1,030,730	0.11%	0.09%	0.11%	0.11%	0.11%
Cisgender ^d	237,322,020	238,297,260	239,039,990	240,117,970	954,777,240	98.92	99.10	99.25	99.25	99.13
None of these	229,650	172,380	218,860	219,840	840,720	0.10	0.07	0.09	0.09	0.09
Don't know	178,740	76,470	60,050	60,320	375,580	0.07	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.04
Refused	1,917,210	1,709,230	1,266,180	1,271,890	6,164,510	0.80	0.71	0.53	0.53	0.64

Note: Details may not sum to totals due to rounding and missing data. Estimates exclude in-universe missing, that is, respondents who were eligible, or in-universe, but had a missing response. During 2017–20, data on sexual orientation were missing for 0.20% and data on gender identity were missing for 0.28% of all persons age 16 or older.

^aDue to changes in the administration of the sexual orientation and gender identity items in the NCVS, the 2019 population was estimated as the population for persons age 16 or older in the first and second quarters of the year. The 2020 population was adjusted using the first and second quarters of 2019. See *Methodology*.

^bIncluded as a response option for the sexual orientation question in the NCVS. Write-in responses are not collected for this category. Therefore, additional information about what is included in this category is unknown.

^cAn individual whose gender identity is different from their sex assigned at birth. Includes respondents who reported identifying as transgender (54% of all transgender persons) or as a gender different from their sex assigned at birth (46%). See *Measurement of sexual orientation and gender identity in the National Crime Victimization Survey*.

^dAn individual whose gender identity is the same as their sex assigned at birth.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, 2017–20.

APPENDIX TABLE 10
Population of persons age 16 or older, by sexual orientation and demographic characteristics, 2017–20

Demographic characteristic	Number of persons age 16 or older					Percent of persons age 16 or older				
	Lesbian/gay	Bisexual	Something else ^a	Straight	Don't know	Lesbian/gay	Bisexual	Something else	Straight	Don't know
Total	13,044,640	6,880,800	1,955,080	915,151,140	3,314,710	1.39%	0.73%	0.21%	97.32%	0.35%
Sex^{b,c}										
Male	7,297,450	1,751,730	783,620	441,481,580	1,383,330	1.61%	0.39%	0.17%	97.52%	0.31%
Female	5,747,190	5,129,070	1,171,460	473,669,570	1,931,370	1.18	1.05	0.24	97.13	0.40
Race/Hispanic origin^b										
White ^d	8,837,100	4,432,200	1,268,660	578,881,730	1,765,700	1.48%	0.74%	0.21%	97.26%	0.30%
Black ^d	1,426,450	738,610	183,510	109,637,860	460,840	1.27	0.66	0.16	97.50	0.41
Hispanic/Latino	1,982,550	1,087,890	258,930	150,942,000	587,380	1.28	0.70	0.17	97.47	0.38
Other ^d	798,550	622,100	243,980	75,689,550	500,780	1.03	0.80	0.31	97.22	0.64
Asian/Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander ^d	489,870	285,730	141,990	58,363,560	398,690	0.82	0.48	0.24	97.79	0.67
American Indian or Alaska Native/persons of two or more races ^d	308,680	336,370	101,990	17,325,990	102,090	1.70	1.85	0.56	95.33	0.56
Age^a										
16–17	214,990	744,790	142,260	27,316,650	269,290	0.75%	2.60%	0.50%	95.22%	0.94%
18–24	1,823,880	2,570,880	451,690	99,336,110	619,240	1.74	2.45	0.43	94.78	0.59
25–34	3,237,960	1,837,070	489,230	157,696,410	485,180	1.98	1.12	0.30	96.31	0.30
35–49	3,302,840	968,580	323,110	221,595,440	547,840	1.46	0.43	0.14	97.73	0.24
50–64	3,281,150	534,030	358,680	225,998,930	696,810	1.42	0.23	0.16	97.89	0.30
65 or older	1,183,820	225,450	190,110	183,207,610	696,340	0.64	0.12	0.10	98.76	0.38

Note: Details may not sum to totals due to rounding and missing data. Estimates exclude refused and in-universe missing, that is, respondents who were eligible, or in-universe, but had a missing response. During 2017–20, data on sexual orientation were missing for 0.20% of all persons age 16 or older and 2.44% refused to answer the question. Percentages in this table do not match those in appendix table 9 because refusals were excluded from this table.

^aIncluded as a response option for the sexual orientation question in the NCVS. Write-in responses are not collected for this category. Therefore, additional information about what is included in this category is unknown.

^bBased on data collected on the household roster for the sampled household.

^cThis measure asks the household respondent to identify each person living in the household as male or female.

^dExcludes persons of Hispanic/Latino origin (e.g., “white” refers to non-Hispanic white persons and “Black” refers to non-Hispanic Black persons).

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, 2017–20.

APPENDIX TABLE 11

Population of persons age 16 or older, by gender identity and demographic characteristics, 2017–20

Demographic characteristic	Number of persons age 16 or older				Percent of persons age 16 or older			
	Transgender ^a	Cisgender ^b	None of these	Don't know	Transgender ^a	Cisgender ^b	None of these	Don't know
Total	1,030,730	954,777,240	840,720	375,580	0.11%	99.77%	0.09%	0.04%
Race/Hispanic origin^c								
White ^d	647,920	604,631,360	505,890	235,540	0.11%	99.77%	0.08%	0.04%
Black ^d	100,880	114,597,800	78,660	49,480	0.09	99.80	0.07	0.04
Hispanic/Latino	184,710	156,450,530	122,920	54,180	0.12	99.77	0.08	0.03
Other ^d	97,220	79,097,550	133,260	36,390	0.12	99.66	0.17	0.05
Asian/Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander ^d	39,680	60,762,330	86,410	34,940	0.07	99.74	0.14	0.06
American Indian or Alaska Native/persons of two or more races ^d	57,540	18,335,220	46,850	1,450!	0.31	99.43	0.25	0.01!
Age								
16–17	90,430	28,915,070	40,310	7,490!	0.31%	99.52%	0.14%	0.03%!
18–24	216,870	106,021,610	140,960	26,970	0.20	99.64	0.13	0.03
25–34	271,730	165,987,440	198,800	67,270	0.16	99.68	0.12	0.04
35–49	206,960	229,973,150	155,500	87,620	0.09	99.80	0.07	0.04
50–64	139,040	235,035,540	176,750	76,640	0.06	99.83	0.08	0.03
65 or older	105,710	188,844,440	128,400	109,590	0.06	99.82	0.07	0.06

Note: Details may not sum to totals due to rounding. Estimates exclude refused and in-universe missing, that is, respondents who were eligible, or in-universe, but had a missing response. During 2017–20, data on gender identity were missing for 0.28% of all persons age 16 or older and 0.64% refused to answer the questions. Percentages in this table do not match appendix table 9 because refusals were excluded from this table.

! Interpret data with caution. Estimate is based on 10 or fewer sample cases.

^aAn individual whose gender identity is different from their sex assigned at birth. Includes respondents who reported identifying as transgender (54% of all transgender persons) or as a gender different from their sex assigned at birth (46%). See *Measurement of sexual orientation and gender identity in the National Crime Victimization Survey*.

^bAn individual whose gender identity is the same as their sex assigned at birth.

^cBased on data collected on the household roster for the sampled household.

^dExcludes persons of Hispanic/Latino origin (e.g., “white” refers to non-Hispanic white persons and “Black” refers to non-Hispanic Black persons).

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, 2017–20.



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