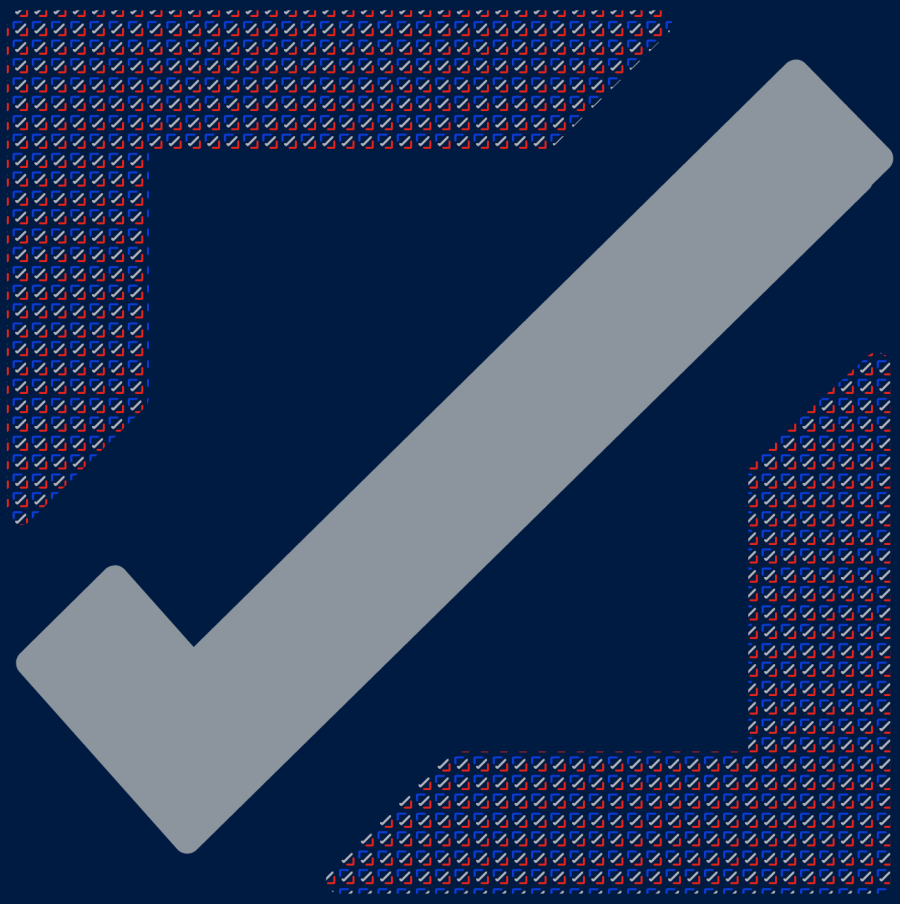


2025

Data Notes

STATE OF THE NATION

Data Notes

Children and Families

Child Mortality

Child mortality data for the US are available through the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) WONDER data system. Mortality data are produced by the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) at the CDC by relying on the cause of death and demographic information in death certificates. Their "Underlying Cause of Death" data are broken up into three different databases – 1968-2016: Compressed Mortality; 1999-2020: Underlying Cause of Death by Bridged-Race Categories; 2018-2022: Underlying Cause of Death by Single-Race Categories. Within the Compressed Mortality database are 4 separate databases: Mortality Archives – previous data releases for the years 1979-2015, Mortality for 1968-1978 with ICD 8 codes, Mortality for 1979-1998 with ICD 9 codes, Mortality for 1999-2016 with ICD 10 codes. To construct a trendline for 1990-2022, we used 1990-1998 data from the Compressed Mortality database, 1999-2017 data from the Underlying Cause of Death Bridged-Race database, and 2018-2022 data from the Underlying Cause of Death Single-Race database.

The main difference between the Compressed Mortality data used and the two Underlying Cause of Death databases is the version of the International Classification of Disease (ICD) codes used – ICD 9, rather than the updated ICD 10. The CDC documentation also notes small differences in the methodology of the Compressed Mortality database, namely in rounding procedures for the age-adjusted rates and the population denominator data. The main difference between the two Underlying Cause of Death databases is that the former can be broken up into 6 race categories, and the latter, which is now discontinued, can be broken up into only 4 race categories. However, since this measure is of total national child mortality, not disaggregated by population areas or demographics, the differences between these databases do not impact our ability to construct a consistent trendline. Additionally, overlapping years between the databases were checked, and the child mortality rates calculated match exactly between the databases in the overlapping years.

The data are reported yearly for various age groups. We downloaded the number of deaths and the total population for the age groups "less than 1 year old" and "1 to 4 years old." The number of deaths and total population for these age groups were combined to get the child mortality rate for children under 5. While data for children in other age groups are available, we

decided to report for only children under 5 to align with the data reported from our international data source.

International Data Notes:

International data for child mortality are available from the World Health Organization's (WHO) Global Health Observatory (GHO) data system. The WHO reports the under 5 mortality rate, which they define as the probability of dying by age 5 per 1,000 live births. This indicator is part of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) target 3.2: "By 2030, end preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age, with all countries aiming to reduce neonatal mortality to at least as low as 12 per 1,000 live births and under-5 mortality to at least as low as 25 per 1,000 live births."

The percentage of countries the US outperforms is listed for 2022, the most recent year of data available from the WHO. For the international rank trend, the 2022 percentage is compared to 1990. The international rank trend is listed as decreasing, dropping from 78 percent in 1990 to 57 percent in 2022. The US was compared to 115 other countries that had data for both 1990 and 2022 from the WHO.[1]

Low Birthweight

Birthweight data for the US are available through the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Vital Statistics System (NVSS), accessible through the CDC's WONDER data system. Natality data are produced by the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) at the CDC by relying on the birth certificates of children born to US residents from 1995-2023. Low birthweight is defined by the CDC (as well as our international data source,

[1] The US was compared to the following countries: Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kuwait, Latvia, Libya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Namibia, Nauru, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Palau, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Russia, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, and Uruguay.

described below) as less than 2500 grams. From the CDC, we are able to calculate the prevalence of live births weighing 2499 grams and below.

The natality data are broken up into four separate databases: Natality for 1995-2002, Natality for 2003-2006, Natality for 2007-2023, and Natality for 2016-2023 (expanded). To construct a trendline from 1995-2023, we used 1995-2002 data from the first database, 2003-2006 data from the second database, and 2007-2023 data from the third database. The low birthweight prevalence was calculated by taking the total number of live births weighing 2499 grams and below divided by the total number of live births.

The main differences between the databases are the variables available and the level of disaggregation available. For example, in 2003, the NCHS revised the US Standard Certificates of Live Birth and Death (refer to the CDC's documentation of these revisions for more information). However, the CDC's "User Guide to the 2007 Natality Public Use File" notes on page 12 that "many data items (e.g., maternal age, birth order, marital status, attendant at birth, birthweight, gestational age) are common to both the 1989 and 2003 standard birth certificates and are considered directly comparable between revisions." Similarly, additional disaggregations of the data have been added to the more recent versions of the databases, such as race, birthplace, and maternal education categories. Birthweight categories also change over time, but we are always able to group these categories together into a low birthweight (0-2499 grams) category. Since this measure is of total national low birthweight prevalence, not disaggregated by population areas or demographics, the differences between these databases do not impact our ability to construct a consistent trendline. Additionally, overlapping years between the databases were checked, and the low birthweight rates calculated match exactly between the databases in the overlapping years.

International Data Notes:

International data for low birthweight prevalence is available through the LBW Database, a collaboration between the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO). The low birthweight prevalence is calculated as the number of live births weighing below 2500 grams divided by the total number of live births.

The percentage of countries the US outperforms is listed for 2020, the most recent year of data available from the LBW Database. For the international rank trend, the 2020 percentage is compared to 2000, the first year in the LBW Database. The international rank trend is listed as having no change because the US only dropped one rank from 2000 to 2020. A changing trend is

only noted if the US changes rank by more than one place. The US was compared to 100 other countries that had data in both 2000 and 2020 in the LBW Database.[2]

Youth Depression

There are two measures of youth depression reported in the trend graph. The first comes from the CDC's Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), a nationally representative survey which has been administered to 9th-12th graders every other spring semester since 1991. The only exception occurred in 2021, when the YRBS was administered in the fall semester due to COVID-related disruptions. To broadly measure rates of youth depression, YRBS has asked for a yes/no response to the following question since 1999: "During the past 12 months, did you ever feel so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that you stopped doing some usual activities?" This is a measure of the experience of depressive symptoms rather than actual diagnoses of depression.

To create a nationally representative measure across public and private high schoolers, YRBS provides a weight variable based on students' sex, race/ethnicity, and grade level that is applied to each survey response. This weight also corrects for nonresponse and oversampling of Black and Hispanic students. The survey was designed as a three-stage cluster sample with strata for racial/ethnic concentration and Census-designated Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) status. The primary sampling units (PSUs) were counties, which also includes sub-areas of large counties and the aggregation of smaller, adjacent counties. Variables for stratum and PSU were also provided in the metadata. For more information about the YRBS methodology, refer to their Data User's Guide.

The second source comes from the 2021 Global Burden of Disease Study, published by the University of Washington's Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME). The trend

[2] The US was compared to the following countries: Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Czechia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Palau, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Russia, San Marino, Serbia, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, St. Lucia, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, and Uruguay.

line for prevalence of depressive disorders for children aged 10-19 during 1990-2021 is reported in the graph. IHME collects and synthesizes US depression data across government and academic sources to produce its estimates, relying primarily on the CDC's National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) for mental health data.

In the data, depressive disorders are measured through two subcomponents– major depressive disorder, and dysthymia. Major depressive disorder is defined as, "An episodic mood disorder involving the experience of one or more major depressive episodes" (IHME, p. 1). Similarly, dysthymia is characterized as, "A mood disorder consisting of chronic depression, demonstrating less severe but longer-lasting symptoms than major depressive disorder" (IHME, p. 1). NSDUH survey respondents are asked about their experience of each of the symptoms used to diagnose these two conditions in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM).[3]

For a respondent to be identified as having major depressive disorder, the DSM-IV-TR requires, "The presence of at least one major depressive episode, which is the experience of either depressed mood or loss of interest/pleasure, for most of everyday, for at least two weeks." Additional requirements include observable impaired functioning across multiple domains, and the presence of at least four of the following symptoms: change in eating, appetite, or weight; excessive sleeping or insomnia; agitated or slow motor activity; fatigue; feeling worthless or inappropriately guilty; trouble concentrating; repeated thoughts about death. For dysthymia in children, symptoms include experiencing a chronically depressed mood, most of the day, most days, for at least one year. In the same year, children with dysthymia should experience at least two of the following symptoms: poor appetite or overeating; insomnia or hypersomnia, low energy or fatigue; low self-esteem; poor concentration or indecisiveness; feelings of hopelessness. Note that cases where depressive disorders could be attributed to a general medical condition or substance use were excluded from the data.

IHME depression prevalence estimates tend to be narrower due to its strict diagnostic criteria, and are better aligned with estimates from sources such as the CDC's National Survey of Children's Health, which relies on parent-reported diagnoses of depression rather than the experience of one or more symptoms.

[3] Several versions of the DSM were accepted: DSM-III, DSM-III-R, DSM-IV, DSM-IV-TR, DSM-5, and DSM-5-TR. The following codes were used to identify major depressive disorder in the DSM-IV-TR: 296.21-24, 296.31-34. The following code was used to identify dysthymia in the DSM-IV-TR: 300.4.

International Data Notes:

IHME's Global Health Data Exchange provides internationally comparable depression prevalence estimates for youth aged 10-19 for 1990-2021. To standardize definitions of depression across countries, IHME relies on the International Classification of Diseases (ICD) for equivalent diagnostic criteria for major depressive disorder and dysthymia.[4]

The percentage of countries the US outperforms is listed for 2021, the most recent year of data available from the IHME. For the international rank trend, the 2021 percentage is compared to 1990, the first year of data available. The international rank trend is listed as decreasing, dropping from 10 percent in 1990 to 1 percent in 2021. The US was compared to 111 other countries that had data for both 1990 and 2021.[5]

Children Living With Single Parent

This measure comes from the "Living Arrangements of Children Under 18 Years Old" series of the *Current Population Survey's Annual Social and Economic Supplement* (CPS ASEC). Data were downloaded for 1990-2023 for the United States. The CPS defines a person's own child as a child by birth, marriage, or adoption. A child can be classified as living with two parents, one parent (mother only), one parent (father only), no parents (other relatives), and no parents (non-relatives). We report the trend for children living with one parent (mother only) and one parent (father only).

[4] Several versions of the ICD were accepted: ICD-9, ICD-10, and ICD-11. The following codes were used to identify major depressive disorder in the ICD-10: F32.0-9, F33.0-9. The following code was used to identify dysthymia in the ICD-10: F34.1.

[5] The US was compared to the following countries: Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Latvia, Libya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Namibia, Nauru, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Palau, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Russia, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, and Uruguay.

Beginning in 2007, the CPS ASEC changed their methodology to be able to identify children living with two unmarried parents. However, an unmarried partner is not considered the child's parents unless that partner has adopted the child. Therefore, it is important to note that children classified as living with a single parent can be in a living arrangement where there is more than one adult caretaker, such as an unmarried partner or grandparent.

International Data Notes:

International data were downloaded from the OECD Family Database, which provides family outcome indicators for member countries and EU member states for 2001-2018. The OECD defines parents to include biological parents, step-parents, and adoptive parents. A child living with a single parent means that child is living with one adult who is considered a parent under this OECD definition. A child can be classified as living with two married parents, two cohabitating parents, a single parent, or "other."

The percentage of countries the US outperforms is listed for 2017, the most recent year of data available from the OECD with at least 25 countries reporting data in that year. For the international rank trend, the 2017 percentage is compared to 2007, the first year that the US reports data to the OECD on this measure. The percentage of countries the US outperforms was 6 percent in 2007, and 3 percent in 2017. The international rank trend is listed as having no change because the US only dropped one rank from 2007 to 2017. A changing trend is only noted if the US changes rank by more than one place. The US was compared to 30 other countries that had data for both 2007 and 2017.[6]

[6] The US was compared to the following countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, and the United Kingdom.

Citizenship and Democracy

Voter Participation

US data for voter participation are available from the US Census Bureau's Current Population Survey (CPS). Data are collected for both congressional and presidential elections on registration and participation. The data reported here reflect the percent of the voting-age US citizen population who voted in each election. These percentages were calculated by the US Census Bureau in the Historical Reported Voting Rates Tables A-4 and A-6.

International Data Notes:

International data for voter participation are available from the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance's (International IDEA) Voter Turnout Database. International IDEA collects data on both presidential and parliamentary elections for various countries. They report voter turnout in terms of all registered voters as well as just the voting-age population (VAP). We rely on the latter, the percent of the voting-age population who voted, as it is more comparable to our voter participation definition used for the national trendline.

In many countries, presidential and parliamentary elections can occur at the same time. There can also be multiple of the same type of election in the same year. Therefore, if a presidential and parliamentary election occur on the same day, we count this as only a presidential election, not a parliamentary election. If there were multiple presidential or multiple parliamentary elections in the same year, we keep only the voter turnout for the most recent election (i.e. if a parliamentary election occurred in October and November of the same year, we refer to the November turnout). Additionally, there are elections which show a voting-age population turnout of over 100%. We assume this is due to errors in the census of that voting-age population and drop these observations from the data.

Since countries' election cycles are different, and we want to maximize the number of countries to compare the US against, we include countries in the comparison if they had an election within 4 years (inclusive) of the corresponding US election. For example, we compare the voter turnouts of the 1992 and 2020 US presidential elections. If a country had a presidential election in any year from 1988 to 1996 as well as 2016 to 2024, we include this country in the comparison. Countries can have multiple elections within this range. Therefore, we choose the year closest to the US election year. If there are two elections equally close to the US election year (e.g. 1991 and 1993, 2019 and 2021), we choose the oldest year for the older election (e.g. 1991) and the most recent year for the more recent election (e.g. 2021).

The percentage of countries the US outperforms for presidential elections is listed for 2020, the most recent US presidential election in the data. For the international rank trend, the 2020 percentage is compared to 1992. The international rank trend is listed as increasing, having risen from 25 percent in 1992 to 57 percent in 2020. The US was compared to 43 other countries that had presidential election data within 4 years of both 1992 and 2020 in the Voter Turnout Database.[7] In 15 of these countries, voting is compulsory for at least one year in the comparison.[8]

The percentage of countries the US outperforms for parliamentary elections is listed for 2018, the most recent US parliamentary election in the data. For the international rank trend, the 2018 percentage is compared to 1990. The international rank trend is listed as increasing, having risen from 2 percent in 1990 to 16 percent in 2018. The US was compared to 82 other countries that had parliamentary election data within 4 years of both 1990 and 2018 in the Voter Turnout Database.[9] In 17 of these countries, voting is compulsory for at least one year in the comparison.[10]

[7] The US was compared to the following countries: Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Guatemala, Iceland, Iran, Lithuania, Mexico, Moldova, Mongolia, Namibia, North Macedonia, Palau, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovenia, South Korea, Ukraine, and Uruguay.

[8] Voting is compulsory in the following countries and years: Argentina (1989, 2019), Brazil (1994; 2022), Bulgaria (2021), Chile (1992), Costa Rica (1990, 2022), Cyprus (1993), Dominican Republic (1990), Ecuador (1992, 2021), Gabon (1993, 2023), Mexico (1994, 2018), Panama (1994, 2019), Paraguay (1993, 2018), Peru (1990, 2021), Singapore (1993, 2023), Uruguay (1994, 2019).

[9] The US was compared to the following countries: Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Colombia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kuwait, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, San Marino, Singapore, Slovakia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Ukraine, and the United Kingdom.

[10] Voting is compulsory in the following countries and years: Argentina (1989, 2017), Australia (1990, 2019), Belgium (1991, 2019), Brazil (1990, 2018), Bulgaria (2017), Cyprus (1991, 2016), Ecuador (1990, 2017), Fiji (1992), Greece (1989, 2019), Italy (1992), Liechtenstein (1989, 2017), Luxembourg (1989, 2018), Mexico (1991, 2021), Peru (1990, 2020), Singapore (1991, 2020), Thailand (2019), Turkey (1991, 2015).

Belief in Democracy

Data for the US and international comparisons on belief in democracy are available from the World Values Survey (WVS) time series dataset, version 3.0. The WVS has been conducted in seven waves since 1981. The trend line reports data for each wave by the midpoint year of each of the following waves: wave 3 (1995-1998), wave 4 (2000-2004), wave 5 (2005-2009), wave 6 (2010-2014), and wave 7 (2017-2022). The US did not report data for wave 2 (1990-1992). Though not a panel dataset, WVS is nationally representative of the adult population in each country and each wave. Participant countries provide an original sampling weight along with their data to correct for minor deviations in demographic distributions such as sex, age, and education. Weight decisions are at the discretion of each participant country. Though other weight variables were available in the WVS data, this original country weight was used to calculate trends and rankings. For more information on sampling weights, see the WVS documentation.

We report the percent of US population who believe the following options are "very good" or "fairly good" political systems to govern the country:

1. Having a strong leader who does not have to bother with parliament and elections
2. Having experts, not government, make decisions according to what they think is best for the country
3. Having the army rule
4. Having a democratic political system

The percentage of countries the US outperforms is reported for wave seven (2017-2022). For the international rank trend, wave seven is compared to wave five (2005-2008), which is the first data year with at least 25 countries reporting on this measure. The international rank trend is listed as increasing, having risen from 13 percent in wave five to 33 percent in wave seven. The US was compared to 29 other countries that reported data in both waves.[11]

[11] The US was compared to the following countries: Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Cyprus, Germany, Great Britain, Guatemala, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Peru, Romania, Russia, Serbia, South Korea, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, Uruguay.

Polarization

US data on polarization are available from Pew Research Center. Pew conducts several surveys a year through their American Trends Panel (ATP), a random sample of US adults. Prior to the ATP, Pew conducted phone surveys of US adults. To measure polarization, we use Pew's survey question, "Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of each of the following?" where the options include the Republican Party and the Democratic Party. Respondents can answer "very favorable," "mostly favorable," "mostly unfavorable," "very unfavorable," or "no answer." Pew also asks respondents which political party they are affiliated with, allowing us to disaggregate the results by the political party of the respondent. Specifically, Pew asks, "In politics today, do you consider yourself a…?" where the options include "Republican," "Democrat," "Independent," "other," "don't know/refused," and, in some years, "no preference." Using these questions and Pew's survey weights, we calculated the percent of Democrats/Republicans who have an unfavorable view or a mostly unfavorable view of Republicans/Democrats. We sum these two results (mostly unfavorable and very unfavorable) for this report.

In some years, Pew asks this question in several surveys. Where this is the case, we take the simple average of the weighted responses of those surveys to get one data point for the year. To determine which Pew surveys have the relevant question, we refer to the ATP Wave 130 Topline Results, which lists the dates and results of other surveys that include this polarization question for comparison. We downloaded all of these survey data available.

International Data Notes:

International data comes from the Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Institute's V-Dem Dataset. V-Dem estimates various concepts by country and year by aggregating expert judgements. One of these concepts is political polarization. V-Dem asks the question, "Is society polarized into antagonistic, political camps?" They further clarify the question by noting, "Here, we refer to the extent to which political differences affect social relationships beyond political discussions. Societies are highly polarized if supporters of opposing political camps are reluctant to engage in friendly interactions, for example, in family functions, civic associations, their free time activities and workplaces." Countries can fall into one of five categories each year: "not at all," "mainly not," "somewhat," "yes, to a noticeable extent," "yes, to a large extent." We use these categories to rank countries. However, since many countries can fall into the same category, there are large ties in the rankings.

The percentage of countries the US outperforms is listed for 2023, the most recent year in the V-Dem data. For the international rank trend, the 2023 percentage is compared to 1990. The international rank trend is listed as decreasing, beginning at 57 percent in 1990 to 0 percent in 2023 (i.e. moving from "mainly not" polarized to "yes, to a large extent" polarized). The US was compared to 91 other countries that had data for both 1990 and 2023 in the V-Dem dataset.[12]

[12] The US was compared to the following countries: Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Hungary, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Latvia, Libya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Mongolia, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, and Uruguay.

Civil Liberties

Freedom of the Press

US data on press freedom violations since January 1, 2017 are available through the US Press Freedom Tracker's Incident Database. The US Press Freedom Tracker was started in 2017 as a project of the Freedom of the Press Foundation (FPF), the Committee to Protect Journalists, and other press freedom organizations. It is the first attempt to centralize data on violations against journalists by compiling tips directly from journalists, individuals, and a wide network of professional organizations. Their documentation notes, "Our journalists follow Freedom of the Press Foundation's editorial guidelines and make every attempt to contact those directly involved with the press freedom violation for inclusion in the article. Only incidents that can be verified by first-person accounts or cross-referenced by multiple news sources will be included in the database."

The Tracker utilizes a functional definition to identify journalists, which focuses only on whether the person at the center of the incident was performing an act of journalism at the time of the incident. A violation occurs when a journalist's right to collect and publish information was violated during the course of their work or as an outcome of their work. However, a journalist who is acting as a private citizen at the time of the incident– such as a journalist participating in a protest rather than documenting it– will not be included in the database. Further, a journalist is not considered a private citizen if that individual self-identifies as a journalist and has a record of journalistic work.

The Tracker maintains a database of press freedom violations in the US by type of attack, which includes 11 of the most common categories: Arrest/Criminal Charge[13], Assault[14], Border

[13] Arrest/Criminal Charge is defined as, "Journalists detained, arrested and/or charged with a crime in the course of or as a result of their work."

[14] Assault is defined as, "Journalists who face physical violence, either as the result of a targeted attack by a public or private individual or in the course of their work. If a journalist is hit by rubber bullets or bean bag rounds, it will be counted in this category." Note also that, "Damage to equipment is counted in a separate 'Equipment Damage' category but may be also listed in this Assault category if the damage occurs with an attack. Journalists affected by tear gas, pepper spray or other mass riot control agents will be counted if the individual suffers serious injury or appears to have been specifically targeted. Incidents that fall outside these parameters and in which multiple journalists were affected by riot control agents may be counted in the 'Other' category."

Stop[15], Chilling Statement[16], Denial of Access[17], Equipment Damage[18], Equipment Search or Seizure[19], Leak Case[20], Prior Restraint[21], Subpoena/Legal Order[22], and Other Incidents.[23] An incident can be classified under more than one category, but the trend line in this report avoids double-counting of such incidents. Some broader incidents are not included in the database– such as online harassment, abusive lawsuits, and illegal denials of public records requests– but the Other Incidents category does attempt to capture major examples of these types of incidents.

[15] Border Stop is defined as, "Journalists stopped at the border and subjected to secondary screening, which can include prolonged or invasive questioning about their journalistic work, electronic device searches or demands for device passwords." Note also that the Tracker counts an incident as a border stop, "Even if we are unable to draw a direct connection between the stop and the journalist's work activities, because the resistance of US authorities to provide information makes it extremely difficult to identify the motive and because invasive questioning or device searches could jeopardize source confidentiality no matter the motive. Not every stop at the border is a press freedom violation, but we believe it is essential to capture patterns related to these stops. This category also includes cases where journalists are prevented from entering the country if it appears that their inability to enter the country is related to their work."

[16] Chilling Statement is defined as, "Select public threats made to reporters and media organizations by US politicians and other public figures, which can have a chilling effect on journalism."

[17] Denial of Access is defined as, "Denial of access to government events that are traditionally open or attended by the press and where the denial of access either deprives the public of significant information, appears to be retaliatory, or is done without meaningful justification." The Tracker also notes, "Concrete changes in policy or practice to restrict or deny access may also be included in this category. Denial of access to individuals in some cases, such as where the available space limits the number of journalists allowed to attend or where individuals arguing for access do not meet reasonable standards for credentials, can be seen as meaningful justifications and will not be included."

[18] Equipment Damage is defined as, "Equipment damaged or stolen in the course of a journalist's work."

[19] Equipment Search or Seizure is defined as, "Journalists' equipment searched or seized by law enforcement in the course of their work."

[20] Leak Case is defined as, "Government employees or contractors investigated or prosecuted for disclosing information to journalists or media platforms."

[21] Prior Restraint is defined as, "News organizations or journalists who are ordered by a judge not to publish information under threat of punishment."

[22] Subpoena/Legal Order is defined as, "Subpoenas or legal orders requiring journalists to testify in court or produce journalistic records or work product." The Tracker also notes, "This category also includes orders targeted at third parties who have access to journalistic records or work products. Because many subpoenas are not publicly reported and legal orders for journalist records are conducted with high levels of secrecy, the numbers in this category are likely to underestimate actual cases."

[23] Other Incidents are defined as, "Incidents that fall outside the scope of other categories, but reach a threshold of concern as determined by editorial discretion." The Tracker also notes, "This category is not meant to be comprehensive, but aims to highlight emblematic threats and harassment, vandalism and clearly abusive lawsuits."

International Data Notes:

International data comes from the Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Institute's V-Dem Dataset for 1990 and 2023. The rankings reflect the simple average of six questions for each country with responses scored on an ordinal scale from 0-4. These six questions cover measures of government censorship[24], criticism of the government by print/broadcast media[25], representation of broad perspectives by print/broadcast media[26], media self-censorship[27], media bias[28], and media corruption.[29] They are a subset of V-Dem's broader Freedom of Expression and Alternative Sources of Information Index, which aims to measure, "The extent to which the government respects press and media freedom, the freedom of ordinary people to discuss political matters at home and in the public sphere, as well as the freedom of academic and cultural expression" (Coppedge et al., p. 46).

V-Dem data creates estimates on measures of democracy by aggregating judgments from a pool of over 4,000 country experts globally. Five country experts are typically consulted on a variety of topics per country-year observation. V-Dem then employs a measurement model to adjust for uncertainty and bias in these expert ratings. Finally, V-Dem transforms the resulting point estimates into the original ordinal scale that experts originally used to classify their country-level judgments. We rank countries based on this final ordinal scale. For more information, see V-Dem's methodology documentation.

The percentage of countries the US outperforms is listed for 2023, the most recent year in the V-Dem data. For the international rank trend, the 2023 percentage is compared to 1990. The international rank trend is listed as decreasing, having tied for first place with 16 other countries

[24] Government censorship is defined by the survey question, "Does the government directly or indirectly attempt to censor the print or broadcast media?"

[25] Criticism of the government by print/broadcast media is defined by the survey question, "Of the major print and broadcast outlets, how many routinely criticize the government?"

[26] Representation of broad perspectives by print/broadcast media is defined by the survey question, "Do the major print and broadcast media represent a wide range of political perspectives?"

[27] Media self-censorship is defined by the survey question, "Is there self-censorship among journalists when reporting on issues that the government considers politically sensitive?"

[28] Media bias is defined by the survey question, "Is there media bias against opposition parties or candidates?"

[29] Media corruption is defined by the survey question, "Do journalists, publishers, or broadcasters accept payments in exchange for altering news coverage?"

in 1990 to only outperforming 66 percent of countries in 2023. The US was compared to 91 other countries that had data for both 1990 and 2023.[30]

[30] The US was compared to the following countries: Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Latvia, Libya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Mongolia, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, and United Kingdom.

Economy

Economic Output

National and international GDP data were downloaded from the World Bank's World Development Indicators (WDI). The World Bank reports GDP data yearly. Both inflation- and not inflation-adjusted values are available. However, the inflation-adjusted series calculated by the World Bank is not in terms of 2023 US dollars, which is the standard used in this report for inflation-adjusted national data. Therefore, we downloaded the nominal data for the US from the World Bank and adjusted to constant 2023 US dollars using the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Consumer Price Index for all urban consumers research series (R-CPI-U-RS). The gray shading in the national trend graph marks US recessions, using the same dates as the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis Economic Data system (FRED), which relies on the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER).

International Data Notes:

For the international comparisons, we used the World Bank's inflation-adjusted series set to constant 2021 international dollars (PPP). The percentage of countries the US outperforms is listed for 2023, the most recent year of data available. For the international rank trend, the 2023 percentage is compared to 1990. The international rank trend is listed as having no change, as the US only dropped one rank. We only note a change in the rank trend if the ranking changes by two or more places. The US was compared to 106 other countries that had data for both 1990 and 2023 in the World Development Indicators.[31]

[31] The US was compared to the following countries: Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Latvia, Libya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Mongolia, Namibia, Nauru, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Palau, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, and Uruguay.

Productivity

Productivity national data were downloaded from the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development's (OECD) Productivity Levels Database. The OECD reports productivity as GDP per hours worked. While other data sources exist for US productivity data, the OECD's data had a longer trendline (going back to 1990). We also preferred the OECD's measure of productivity, as opposed to an index, for clarity and alignment with the international data source. Both inflation- and not inflation-adjusted GDP per hour values are available from the OECD. However, the inflation-adjusted series is not in terms of 2023 US dollars. Therefore, we downloaded the nominal data for the US from the OECD and adjusted to constant 2023 US dollars using the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Consumer Price Index for all urban consumers research series (R-CPI-U-RS). The gray shading in the nation trend graph marks US recessions, using the same dates as the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis Economic Data system (FRED), which relies on the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER).

International Data Notes:

The international data were downloaded from the International Labor Organization's (ILO) Modeled Estimates. Both inflation- and not inflation-adjusted series are available from the ILO. The inflation-adjusted series, set to constant 2017 international dollars (PPP), was used in this report. The percentage of countries the US outperforms is reported for 2023. For the international rank trend, the 2023 percentage is compared to 2005, the earliest year in the ILO data. The international rank trend is listed as increasing, having risen from 83 percent to 88 percent (and by more than one rank) from 2005 to 2023. The US was compared to 101 other countries that had data for both 2005 and 2023.[32]

[32] The US was compared to the following countries: Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Latvia, Libya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, and Uruguay.

Education

Academic Test Scores

8th grade NAEP score data are funded and managed by the US Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). NAEP's sampling includes public and private schools. There are two NAEP datasets to choose from: the Main NAEP and the Long Term Trends (LTT) NAEP. Both can be downloaded from NAEP's Data Explorer.

We chose to rely on the Main NAEP data, rather than the LTT NAEP, because it offers data on more subjects, and it includes more data points in the time period studied. The Main NAEP's date ranges depend on subject, with math score data going back the furthest (to 1990). The 8th grade subjects tested include civics, geography, math, music, reading, science, technology and engineering literacy, US history, visual arts, vocabulary, and writing. In the graphs above, we include just civics, math, reading, science, and US history. The LTT NAEP has data going back to 1970, however it only tests math and reading.

The decision to focus on the Main NAEP does not likely influence the results because, in 2004, the LTT NAEP assessment was changed to align more with the Main NAEP. According to NAEP's 2004 Bridge Study, the trendlines are comparable: "It was therefore concluded that, bearing in mind the differences in the populations of students assessed (accommodated vs. not accommodated), future assessment results could be compared to those from earlier assessments based on the original version."

Each subject is scored on a different scale. For example, the math Main NAEP data can be shown on the composite scale or on the algebra scale, data analysis, statistics, and probability scale, geometry scale, measurement scale, or the number properties and operations scale. The graphs above reflect data for all students on the "composite" or "overall" scale, if more than one scale was available. NAEP results are reported as average scores on either a 0-500 scale or 0-300 scale. Math, reading, and US history use the 0-500 scale, while civics and science use the 0-300 scale. Since these scales are not comparable across subjects, we placed each subject on a separate graph to indicate that subject test levels cannot be compared with one another.

In 2009, NAEP's science testing was updated, resulting in two science frameworks: the 1996 framework and the 2009 framework. Results from the two frameworks cannot be compared to each other (for more information, see NAEP's Comparison of the 1996-2005 and 2015 Frameworks). Only the data for the 2009 framework is included in the figure.

NAEP also reports certain scores with the footnote "accommodations were not permitted for this assessment." In their History of Inclusion Policy, they note that "prior to 1996 NAEP did not allow accommodations for students with disabilities (SD) or for English learners (EL). This resulted in the exclusion of some students who could not meaningfully participate in the assessment without accommodations." Some years have only the "without accommodations" score, most years report just the "with accommodations" score, and a few years report both a "without accommodations" and "with accommodations" score.

International Data Notes:

The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) is an international assessment that measures students' reading, mathematics, and science literacy at age 15 across 80 countries. The test is coordinated globally by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and administered domestically by the National Center of Education Statistics (NCES). Beginning in 2000, the PISA has been conducted every three years, except for a COVID-related delay between 2021 and 2022.

China was excluded from these rankings due to inconsistencies in the provinces included in the calculation of their scores between PISA years. For example, China reports four provinces in 2015: Beijing, Shanghai, Jiangsu, and Guangdong. In 2018, China replaced Guangdong for Zhejiang province and saw an increase of at least 60 scaled points in all three main PISA subjects. Russia is excluded because it only had data for a single year (2018). We note that Russia ranked above the US in Math in that year but below the US in Reading and Science. More information, including the OECD's PISA reports, PISA assessment frameworks, and international data files, are available at the OECD website.

The percentage of countries the US outperforms is reported for 2022, the most recent round of PISA testing. For the international rank trend, the 2022 percentage is compared to 2003 for Math, 2000 for Reading, and 2006 for Science. These are the years in which each subject test respectively became a major domain for the first time. For Math, the international rank trend is listed as having no change, with the US outperforming 27 percent of the 32 other countries that reported data in both 2003 and 2022. The international rank trends for Reading and Science are listed as increasing. For Reading, the US outperformed 65 percent of countries in 2000 and 86 percent of countries in 2022, with 36 other countries reporting data in both years. For Science,

the US outperformed 47 percent of countries in 2006 and 74 percent of countries in 2022, with 46 other countries reporting data in both years.[33]

Average Years of Education

This measure comes from the *Current Population Survey's Annual Social and Economic Supplement* (called the March Supplement until 2002) is available yearly from the US Census Bureau. Data are reported in terms of grade level finished or degree received. These data do not include the precise number of years but rather place people into the categories below. To calculate the average years of education, we assigned years to each grade/degree as follows:

- No school: 0 years
- 1st- 4th grade: 2.5 years
- 5th- 6th grade: 5.5 years
- 7th- 8th grade: 7.5 years
- 9th grade: 9 years
- 10th grade: 10 years
- 11th grade: 11 years
- High school graduate: 12 years
- Some college, no degree: 13 years
- Associate's degree, occupational: 14 years
- Associate's degree, academic: 14 years
- Bachelor's degree: 16 years
- Master's degree: 18 years
- Professional school degree: 19.5 years
- Doctorate degree: 21 years

[33] The US was compared to the following countries: (Math) Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Czechia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, Turkey, and Uruguay; (Reading) Albania, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Czechia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Mexico, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Romania, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and Thailand; (Science) Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Mexico, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, United Kingdom, and Uruguay.

International Data Notes:

Prime-age educational attainment and labor force data for all countries were obtained from the ILO Data Explorer for 2015 and 2022. All data were calculated using the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 11) classification.

ISCED 2011 has nine total levels of education, from level 0 to level 8:

- 0: Early childhood education
- 1: Primary education
- 2: Lower secondary education
- 3: Upper secondary education
- 4: Post-secondary non-tertiary education
- 5: Short-cycle tertiary education
- 6: Bachelor's or equivalent level
- 7: Master's or equivalent level
- 8: Doctoral or equivalent level

In the data, these are combined into groups as shown below. We also show the number of years of education we attributed to each category:

- 0-2 (code: L0T2) - Below upper secondary education: 6 years
- 3-4 (code: L3T4) - Upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education: 13 years
- 5 - Short-cycle tertiary: 14 years
- 6 - Bachelor's or equivalent education: 16 years
- 7 - Master's or equivalent education: 18 years
- 8 - Doctoral or equivalent education: 21 years

Some countries were excluded from the sample because of data quality issues or missing data. The percentage of countries the US outperforms is listed for 2022, the most recent year of data available. For the international rank trend, the 2022 percentage is compared to 2015, the earliest year in the ILO data with at least 25 countries reporting in that year. The international

rank trend is listed as having no change, outperforming 86 percent of countries in both years. The US was compared to 27 other countries that had data for both 2015 and 2022.[34]

Young Adults Employed or in School

Data for the US and international comparisons for youth aged 18-24 who are either employed or in school were downloaded from the ILO Data Explorer for 1995-2023. The ILO sources US data from the Current Population Survey.

The percentage of countries the US outperforms is listed for 2023, the most recent year of data available. For the international rank trend, the 2023 percentage is compared to 2009, the earliest year in the ILO data with at least 25 countries reporting in that year. The international rank trend is listed as increasing, beginning at 47 percent in 2009 and increasing to 56 percent by 2023. The US was compared to 56 other countries that had data for both 2009 and 2023.[35]

[34] The US was compared to the following countries: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Czechia, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, and the United Kingdom.

[35] The US was compared to the following countries: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Mongolia, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Panama, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, United Kingdom, and Uruguay.

Environment

Net Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Data for the US on greenhouse gas emissions are available from the US Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Greenhouse Gas Inventory Data Explorer. Data are reported annually and by type of emission: carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, fluorinated gases, land use and forestry carbon stock change. The measure of net greenhouse gas emissions includes all of these types, netting out emissions and removals from land use, land-use change, and forestry (LULUCF).

International Data Notes:

International data are available from Climate Watch. Climate Watch, managed by the World Resources Institute, publishes annual data on gross and net greenhouse gas emissions for several countries, making data across countries comparable. The EPA also cites data from Climate Watch in their Global Greenhouse Gas Overview. We report their data on all greenhouse gas emissions including land-use change and forestry (LUCF). Both total and per capita values are published – we rely on the total values for international comparison.

The percentage of countries the US outperforms is listed for 2021, the most recent year of data available. For the international rank trend, the 2021 percentage is compared to 1990, the earliest year of data available in Climate Watch. The international rank trend is listed as having no change, having been ranked last in 1990, and second-to-last in 2021. We report a changing trend only if the rank changes by two or more places. The US was compared to 113 other countries that had data for both 1990 and 2021 in Climate Watch.[36]

[36] The US was compared to the following countries: Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Latvia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Namibia, Nauru, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Palau, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, and Uruguay.

Air Quality

Population-weighted trend data for the US on air particulate matter (PM2.5) concentrations come from the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for 2000-2023. As mandated by the Clean Air Act, the EPA reports ambient air quality trends for several key air pollutants, including carbon monoxide, lead, nitrogen dioxide, ozone, particulate matter (PM10), particulate matter (PM2.5), and sulfur dioxide. PM2.5, or particle pollution, is defined by the EPA as small inhalable particles smaller than 2.5 micrometers in diameter (µg/m3). We report the seasonally weighted annual average of PM2.5 air quality, which is based on 356 monitoring sites throughout the country.

In addition to air quality trends, the EPA reports Air Quality Design Values– a measure of air quality that does not account for exceptional events.[37] Therefore, it is important to note that the air quality trends reported here are a measure of actual air quality, and concentration values do reflect exceptional events such as wildfires and dust storms.

International Data Notes:

International data for 2010 and 2020 were downloaded from the WHO Ambient Air Quality Database, Sixth Version. The WHO aggregates data on ground pollution for participating countries from several sources, including regional, national, and subnational reports, governments, and health agencies. It aims to represent an average air quality of cities and towns in general, rather than the air quality of a particular monitoring station.

The WHO notes several crucial limitations when using these data. First, data must be representative of interseasonal variability, covering at least 75% of the data year to be included. To reduce bias from seasonal fluctuations or sampling from a non-representative data year, monitoring data must be collected frequently throughout the year, for multiple years. Exceptions were made for low- and middle-income countries with very limited data, but those countries are not included in our comparison.

Second, extreme concentrations of particulate pollution– hot spots, industrial areas, extremely busy roadways, power plants, etc.– were excluded from measurement because they tend to represent an area's maximum concentration value rather than the mean exposure of most residents of an area. The WHO warns against drawing conclusions from a single source of

[37] The EPA defines exceptional events as, "unusual or naturally-occurring events that affect air quality but are not reasonably controllable using techniques that tribal, state, or local air agencies may implement."

pollution, rather than a wide area. However, this could lead to an underestimation of an area's PM2.5 concentration.

Data from the WHO should not be used to rank cities based on pollution levels or draw direct comparisons between countries due to large heterogeneity in the methods used to collect primary data. We use population-weighted emissions data to create relative comparisons of national pollution averages between the US and other upper-middle and high-income countries. This is to prevent misinterpretation of results that can lead to counterproductive conclusions, especially with respect to lower-income countries.[38] Further, we excluded any upper-middle or high-income country that only had data for one reporting site within the entire country in a given data year.[39] For more information about the database's limitations, refer to this study.

The percentage of countries the US outperforms is listed for 2020, the most recent year of data available with at least 25 countries reporting data to the WHO. For the international rank trend, the 2020 percentage is compared to 2010, the first year the US reports data to the WHO. The international rank trend is listed as decreasing, dropping from 80 percent in 2010 to 73 percent in 2020. The US was compared to 29 other countries that had data for both 2010 and 2020.[40]

[38] Note that the 2018 update of the WHO Ambient Air Quality Database reported lower levels of urban air pollution in high-income countries relative to the high levels of pollution found in low- and middle-income countries, and some high-income countries in Latin America.

[39] The countries excluded from our comparison because they had only one reporting site in either 2010 or 2020 include: Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Greece, Malaysia, Mongolia, Paraguay, and Singapore.

[40] The US was compared to the following countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

Inequality

Income Inequality

The Gini coefficient is a measure of income inequality that compares the actual income distribution to a perfectly equal income distribution. While many sources report the Gini coefficient ranging from 0-1, we follow the World Bank and report the range from 0-100 to align with other measures that use this same range. A value of 0 means perfect equality and 100 means perfect inequality.[41] The Gini coefficient data are from the World Bank's Poverty and Inequality Platform (PIP). These data were used for the US trend graph and the international comparison. The World Bank uses survey data from each country to calculate the Gini coefficient. For the US, they rely on the federal government's Current Population Survey (CPS).

The US Gini coefficient increased sharply from 1992 to 1993. This increase should be interpreted with caution. In 1993, the US Census Bureau changed the way they collected income data, allowing respondents of the CPS to report higher income levels than in previous years. While this change in methodology most likely contributed to the increase in the Gini coefficient, it is not known how much of the increase is due to this change. For more information, refer to the Census Bureau's report "The Changing Shape of the Nation's Income Distribution: 1947-1998" (page 1).

Depending on the country and survey data available, the World Bank uses either consumption or income for calculating the Gini. For example, some surveys ask the population about how much money they spend or consume, while other surveys ask how much money the population brings in as income. The first type of survey provides a measure of consumption to calculate the Gini from, while the second provides a measure of income. The World Bank prefers consumption estimates, arguing that these are closely linked to immediate well-being. (see chapter 5.4 of the Methodology Handbook). However, they note that inequality based on income is often higher than when it is based on consumption (see chapter 2.1 of the Methodology Handbook). The US Gini coefficient is calculated using income net of taxes and government transfers (see chapter 2.1 of the Methodology Handbook).

The percentage of countries the US outperforms is listed for 2021. For the international rank trend, the 2021 percentage is compared to 1996. The international rank trend is listed as

[41] The World Bank provides more detail on the Gini coefficient definition and calculation in their DataBank Glossary: https://databank.worldbank.org/metadataglossary/world-development-indicators/series/SI.POV.GINI

decreasing, dropping from 41 percent in 1996 to 22 percent in 2021. The US was compared to 26 other countries that had data for both 1996 and 2021 in PIP.[42] Of these 26 countries, 10 countries have Gini calculated with consumption (rather than income) in at least one of the comparison years, and two countries have a Gini calculated with only the urban population (rather than the total population).[43]

Poverty

Poverty data for the US are available through the US Census Bureau's Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplements (CPS ASEC) (Table B-2). While the CPS ASEC reports both the Official Poverty Measure (OPM) and Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM), we report the percentage of the population living in poverty as measured by the SPM. Unlike the OPM, the SPM accounts for "several government programs that are designed to assist low-income families but are not included in official poverty measure calculations. The SPM also accounts for geographic variation in housing expenses when calculating poverty thresholds and includes federal and state taxes, work expenses, and medical expenses" (see the Census Bureau's "Poverty in the United States: 2023" report). While the Census calculates the OPM going back to 1959, they only calculate the SPM going back to 2009.

The Census SPM trend line has three breaks, one in 2013, another in 2017, and one more in 2019. For these three years, the Census reports two values. The 2013 break is due to redesigned questions in the CPS ASEC for income and health insurance coverage. All of the 98,000 address samples were eligible to receive the redesigned questions, however, they were only posed to a subset of the sample (chosen using a probability split panel design). Around 30,000 addresses received the redesigned questions, while the remaining addresses received questions similar to the previous version. The 2017 break is due to the implementation of an updated processing system. The 2019 break is due to a revised SPM methodology. The Census

[42] The US was compared to the following countries: Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Brazil, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Czechia, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, France, Georgia, Indonesia, Ireland, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Poland, Russia, Slovakia, Spain, Thailand, United Kingdom, and Uruguay.

[43] The following countries calculate Gini using consumption: China (1996, 2021), Georgia (1996, 2021), Indonesia (1996, 2021), Jamaica (1996, 2021), Kazakhstan (1996, 2021), Lithuania (1996), Poland (1996), Russia (1996), Thailand (1996, 2021).

The following countries calculate Gini using only the urban population: Argentina (1996, 2021), Uruguay (1996).

notes in the SPM's Technical Documentation (page 4) that "at each break, consecutive years are no longer comparable."

The data for 1990 through 2008 is from Columbia University's Center on Poverty and Social Policy. Columbia researchers used Census data and definitions to construct their historical SPM series. For more details on their data and methodology, please refer to "Waging War On Poverty: Historical Trends In Poverty Using The Supplemental Poverty Measure" (Fox et. al. 2015).

While Columbia's SPM dataset is calculated through 2020, we chose to rely on Census estimates, when available. Comparing Columbia's SPM and the Census' SPM in the years that they overlap, the difference between the two sources is always less than a percentage point. The break between the Columbia data and the Census data, as well as the breaks within the Census data itself, result in five separate trend lines reported.

International Data Notes:

Data used for the international comparison are from the Luxembourg Income Study Database (LIS). LIS contains several poverty and inequality metrics for many high- and middle-income countries, calculated for the purpose of cross-national comparisons. We report LIS's relative poverty rate, where the poverty line is 40% of the median income in that country. LIS offers multiple versions of this metric, calculated using different income definitions. We report LIS's poverty rate calculated with disposable income, defined below:

> Disposable Household Income (DHI) is defined as the sum of monetary and non-monetary income from labor, monetary income from capital, monetary social security transfers (including work-related insurance transfers, universal transfers, and assistance transfers), and non-monetary social assistance transfers, as well as monetary and non-monetary private transfers, less the amount of income taxes and social contributions paid. (see LIS's methods for more detail)

Disposable income was chosen for this report as it most closely matches the definition of income used in the US Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM).

The percentage of countries the US outperforms is listed for 2020. While more recent US data is available in LIS, there are not enough other countries with more recent data in LIS to create a meaningful comparison after 2020. For the international rank trend, the 2020 percentage is compared to 2004. The international rank trend is listed as having no change, remaining at 25

percent in both 2004 and 2020. The US was compared to 19 other countries that had data for both 2004 and 2020 in LIS.[44]

[44] The US was compared to the following countries: Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Colombia, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Luxembourg, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Paraguay, Poland, Russia, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

Life Satisfaction

Satisfaction with Current Life

US and international data on life satisfaction are available through the Gallup World Poll and were analyzed by Carol Graham and co-authors for this report. Data are collected through the Gallup World Poll annually, going back to 2006. The survey asks participants "to evaluate their current life as a whole using the image of a ladder, with the best possible life for them as a 10 and worst possible as a 0. Each respondent provides a numerical response on this scale, referred to as the Cantril ladder" (for more detail, please refer to the 2024 Gallup World Happiness Report, page 13). Responses are weighted to construct a nationally representative average index of life satisfaction.

Gallup conducts the same survey in several countries. The percentage of countries the US outperforms is listed for 2022, the most recent year of data received. For the international rank trend, the 2022 percentage is compared to 2006, the earliest year of data available from Gallup. The international rank trend is listed as decreasing, dropping from 89 percent in 2006 to 70 percent in 2022. The US was compared to 43 other countries that had for 2006 and 2022 from Gallup.[45]

Social Isolation

US and international data on social isolation are available through the Gallup World Poll and were analyzed by Carol Graham and co-authors for this report. The survey asks participants to answer the following question with either a "yes" or a "no": "If you were in trouble, do you have relatives or friends you can count on to help you whenever you need them, or not?" (for more detail, please refer to the 2024 Gallup World Happiness Report, page 21). Responses are weighted to construct a nationally representative average, showing the percent of the population who answered "yes." Since we are focused on the negative responses to this question, we report the percent of the population who answered "no."

[45] The US was compared to the following countries: Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Botswana, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Guatemala, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Latvia, Lithuania, Malaysia, Moldova, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Russia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Korea, Switzerland, Thailand, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, and Uruguay.

Gallup conducts the same survey in several countries. The percentage of countries the US outperforms is listed for 2022, the most recent year of data received. For the international rank trend, the 2022 percentage is compared to 2006, the earliest year of data available from Gallup. The international rank trend is listed as decreasing, dropping from 95 percent in 2006 to 66 percent in 2022. The US was compared to 43 other countries that had for 2006 and 2022 from Gallup.[46]

[46] The US was compared to the following countries: Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Botswana, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Guatemala, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Latvia, Lithuania, Malaysia, Moldova, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Russia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Korea, Switzerland, Thailand, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, and Uruguay.

Mental Health

Depression and Anxiety

Data on US prevalence of depressive disorders in adults age 18 and older for 2011-2022 are available through the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS). National mean prevalence of depression was calculated using state-level crude prevalence estimates for 48 states and the District of Columbia and weighted based on state population size. New Jersey and Florida were excluded for missing data. Underlying survey data asks respondents to report if they have ever been told they had a depressive disorder, including depression, major depression, dysthymia, or minor depression. For more information on how depression is measured, see BRFSS's documentation.

Data on US prevalence of past-month anxiety in adults age 18 and older for 2012-2021 are available through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) National Surveys on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH). The NSDUH is administered annually to collect nationally representative estimates on substance use and mental health disorders in the noninstitutionalized population age 12 and older. The survey employs rigorous and widely accepted medical diagnostic criteria, such as the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, to convert self-reported symptoms into estimates of mental health disorder prevalence.

The trend line reported above reflects the percent of respondents who answered, "All of the time," or "Most of the time," to the following question: "During the past 30 days, how often did you feel nervous?" This question is one of six items on a scale known as the K6, which measures the frequency of psychological distress adults experience in the past month. In addition to feeling nervous, the scale also asks about other distress symptoms: feeling hopeless, feeling restless or fidgety, feeling so sad or depressed that nothing could cheer one up, feeling that everything was an effort, feeling down on oneself, no good, or worthless. We report the single item on nervousness to capture anxiety alone, rather than relying on a threshold to determine general psychological distress, similar to other studies of adult anxiety. For more information on the NSDUH, see their documentation.

International Data Notes:

International data on prevalence of depressive and anxiety disorders come from the 2021 Global Burden of Disease Study, published by the University of Washington's Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME). IHME collects and synthesizes global health data across

government and academic sources to produce its estimates, relying primarily on the CDC's National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) for US mental health data.

In the data, depressive disorders are measured through two subcomponents– major depressive disorder, and dysthymia. Major depressive disorder is defined as, "An episodic mood disorder involving the experience of one or more major depressive episodes" (IHME, p. 1). Similarly, dysthymia is characterized as, "A mood disorder consisting of chronic depression, demonstrating less severe but longer-lasting symptoms than major depressive disorder" (IHME, p. 1). NSDUH survey respondents are asked about their experience of each of the symptoms used to diagnose these two conditions in the DSM.[47]

For a respondent to be identified as having major depressive disorder, the DSM-IV-TR requires, "The presence of at least one major depressive episode, which is the experience of either depressed mood or loss of interest/pleasure, for most of everyday, for at least two weeks." Additional requirements include observable impaired functioning across multiple domains, and the presence of at least four of the following symptoms: change in eating, appetite, or weight; excessive sleeping or insomnia; agitated or slow motor activity; fatigue; feeling worthless or inappropriately guilty; trouble concentrating; repeated thoughts about death. For dysthymia in adults, symptoms include experiencing a chronically depressed mood, most of the day, most days, for at least two years. In the same year, adults with dysthymia should experience at least two of the following symptoms: poor appetite or overeating; insomnia or hypersomnia, low energy or fatigue; low self-esteem; poor concentration or indecisiveness; feelings of hopelessness. Note that cases where depressive disorders could be attributed to a general medical condition or substance use were excluded from the data.

IHME characterizes anxiety disorders as the combination of physiological symptoms and intense fear or distress. A respondent is classified as having a clinically diagnosable anxiety disorder according to the DSM and International Classification of Diseases (ICD) if they exhibit symptoms consistent with panic disorder, agoraphobia, specific phobia, social phobia, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), or generalized anxiety disorder (GAD). GAD comprises overanxious disorder in childhood, separation anxiety disorder,

[47] The following codes were used to identify major depressive disorder in the DSM-IV-TR: 296.21-24, 296.31-34. The ICD-10 codes F32.0-9 and F33.0-9 were also used to identify major depressive disorder. The following code was used to identify dysthymia in the DSM-IV-TR: 300.4. The ICD-10 code F34.1 was also used to identify dysthymia. Several versions of the DSM were accepted: DSM-III, DSM-III-R, DSM-IV, DSM-IV-TR, DSM-5, and DSM-5-TR. ICD-9, ICD-10, and ICD-11 codes were also accepted.

and other unspecified anxiety disorders.[48] IHME documentation notes, "Anxiety disorders were modelled as a single cause for 'any' anxiety disorder to avoid the counting of individuals meeting criteria for more than one anxiety disorder" (IHME, p. 1). Cases where anxiety disorders could be attributed to a general medical condition or substance use were excluded from the data.

The percentage of countries the US outperforms for depressive and anxiety disorders is listed for 2021, the most recent year of data available from the IHME. For the international rank trend, the 2021 percentage is compared to 1990, the earliest year of data available. The international rank trend is listed as decreasing for both depressive disorders and anxiety disorders. For depressive disorders, the US outperformed 27 percent of countries in 1990 and 12 percent in 2021, with 113 other countries reporting data in those years. For anxiety disorders, the US outperformed 17 percent of countries in 1990 and 10 percent in 2021, with 114 other countries reporting data in those years.[49]

Fatal Overdoses

Fatal overdose data for the US from 1999-2022 are available through the CDC National Vital Statistics System (NVSS) Mortality Database, accessible through the CDC's WONDER data system. The trend line reflects the crude rate of fatal drug overdose deaths per 100,000 people, rather than the age-adjusted rate, for consistency with international data.[50] Data for 1999-

[48] The following codes were used to identify anxiety disorders in the DSM-IV-TR: 300.0-300.3, 208.3, 309.21, 309.81. The following codes were used to identify anxiety orders in the ICD-10: F40-42, F43.0, F43.1, F93.0-93.2, and F93.8. Several versions of the DSM were accepted: DSM-III, DSM-III-R, DSM-IV, DSM-IV-TR, DSM-5, and DSM-5-TR. ICD-9, ICD-10, and ICD-11 codes were also accepted.

[49] The US was compared to the following countries: Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Latvia, Libya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Namibia, Nauru, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Palau, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Russia, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, and Uruguay.

[50] Differences between the age-adjusted death rate and the crude death rate are less than one percent in each data year.

2018 comes from the 1999-2020 Multiple Cause of Death bridged race mortality files, while data for 2018-2022 comes from the Multiple Cause of Death single race mortality files.[51]

International Data Notes:

International data for the rate of fatal overdoses come from the IHME's 2021 Global Burden of Disease Study. The IHME uses country-level data from vital registration, autopsy, and surveillance sources to classify fatal overdose deaths as deaths caused by drug use disorders in the population aged 15 and older. Data from some countries were excluded for data quality issues.

The IHME's documentation warns of the particular challenges associated with identifying drug use deaths. One such challenge is reclassifying input data submitted under ICD "garbage codes." Garbage-coded deaths are those deaths that are assigned an incorrect or vague cause, masking the true distributions of underlying causes of death in the population. This issue is partly a result of the ICD requirement of reporting only one underlying cause of death, which is defined as, "the disease or injury that initiated the chain of events leading to death" (Johnson et al., pp. 1-2). The IHME notes that the following ICD "garbage" codes are most applicable to overdose fatalities: accidental poisonings (X40-44, X49), exposure to unspecified factors (X59), and external causes of undetermined intent (Y34). Supplementing with the CDC's Multiple Cause of Death records, the IHME then uses an algorithm that considers the death risk of different drugs

[51] The following ICD-10 Underlying Cause of Death codes were used to identify fatal overdose deaths: X40 (Accidental poisoning by and exposure to nonopioid analgesics, antipyretics and antirheumatics); X41 (Accidental poisoning by and exposure to antiepileptic sedative-hypnotic, antiparkinsonism and psychotropic drugs, not elsewhere classified); X42 (Accidental poisoning by and exposure to narcotics and psychodysleptics [hallucinogens], not elsewhere classified); X43 (Accidental poisoning by and exposure to other drugs acting on the autonomic nervous system); X44 (Accidental poisoning by and exposure to other and unspecified drugs, medicaments and biological substances); X60 (Intentional self-poisoning by and exposure to nonopioid analgesics, antipyretics and antirheumatics); X61 (Intentional self-poisoning by and exposure to antiepileptic, sedative-hypnotic, antiparkinsonism and psychotropic drugs, not elsewhere classified); X62 (Intentional self-poisoning by and exposure to narcotics and psychodysleptics [hallucinogens], not elsewhere classified); X63 (Intentional self-poisoning by and exposure to other drugs acting on the autonomic nervous system); X64 (Intentional self-poisoning by and exposure to other and unspecified drugs, medicaments and biological substances); X85 (Assault by drugs, medicaments and biological substances); Y10 (Poisoning by and exposure to nonopioid analgesics, antipyretics and antirheumatics, undetermined intent); Y11 (Poisoning by and exposure to antiepileptic, sedative-hypnotic, antiparkinsonism and psychotropic drugs, not elsewhere classified, undetermined intent); Y12 (Poisoning by and exposure to narcotics and psychodysleptics [hallucinogens], not elsewhere classified, undetermined intent); Y13 (Poisoning by and exposure to other drugs acting on the autonomic nervous system, undetermined intent); Y14 (Poisoning by and exposure to other and unspecified drugs, medicaments and biological substances, undetermined intent).

and drug combinations to redistribute these garbage-coded deaths. For more information on IHME methodology, see the Drug Use Disorders Appendix.

The percentage of countries the US outperforms is listed for 2021, the most recent year of data available from the IHME. For the international rank trend, the 2021 percentage is compared to 1999. The international rank trend is listed as decreasing, having outperformed 3 percent of countries in 1999, and outperforming zero countries (ranking in last place) in 2021. The US was compared to 114 other countries that had data for both 1999 and 2021 from the IHME.[52]

Suicide Rate

Suicide rate data for the US are available from the CDC Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS), which pulls data from the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). Data are available from 2001 to 2022, where the crude suicide rate is the total number of deaths by suicide divided by the total population, expressed as the number of suicides per 100,000 people. The CDC identifies suicides using the International Classification of Diseases Tenth Revision (ICD-10) codes X60-X84 (intentional self harm), Y87.0 (sequelae of intentional self-harm), and *U03 (terrorism intentional suicide).

International Data Notes:

International data on suicide rates are available from the World Health Organization (WHO). The WHO tracks countries' crude suicide rates as part of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target 3.4: "By 2030, reduce by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being."

[52] The US was compared to the following countries: Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Latvia, Libya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Namibia, Nauru, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Palau, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Russia, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, and Uruguay.

The percentage of countries the US outperforms is listed for 2019, the most recent year of data available from the WHO. For the international rank trend, the 2019 percentage is compared to 2000, the first year of data available. The international rank trend is listed as decreasing, having dropped from 48 percent in 2000 to 16 percent in 2019. The US was compared to 105 other countries that had data for both 2000 and 2019 from the WHO.[53]

[53] The US was compared to the following countries: Albania, Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Latvia, Libya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, and Uruguay.

National Security

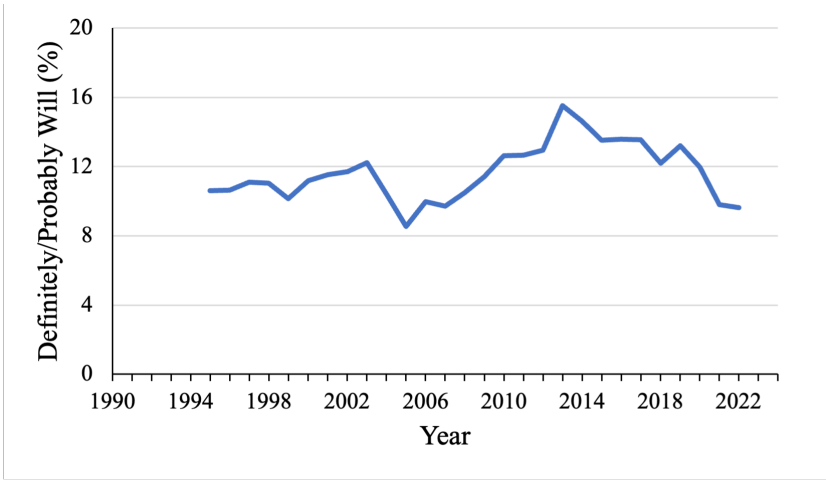
Military Interest and Recruitment

Data for the US on interest in joining the military are from the University of Michigan's Monitoring the Future (MTF) project, and available for download through the National Addiction & HIV Data Archive Program (NAHDAP). The MTF survey has been administered to high school seniors annually since 1975 and began surveying 8th and 10th graders in 1991. It aims to collect trend data on youth values, behaviors, and lifestyles by asking questions across several topics, such as drug use, religion, career aspirations, self-esteem, violence, etc.

The survey is designed to be nationally representative of all 8th, 10th, and 12th graders in each year. It employs a multistage sampling design, with geographic areas as the primary sampling unit. Schools within PSUs and students within those schools are the next stages of the sampling design. We utilize MTF's recommended survey weights, which originally varied by school but have since been modified to protect confidentiality.

We restrict our data to only 12th graders, who are asked the following question: "How likely is it that you will do each of the following things after high school? Serve in the military (armed forces)." We report the proportion of high school seniors who respond that they "definitely will" or "probably will," with other response options being "definitely won't" and "probably won't."

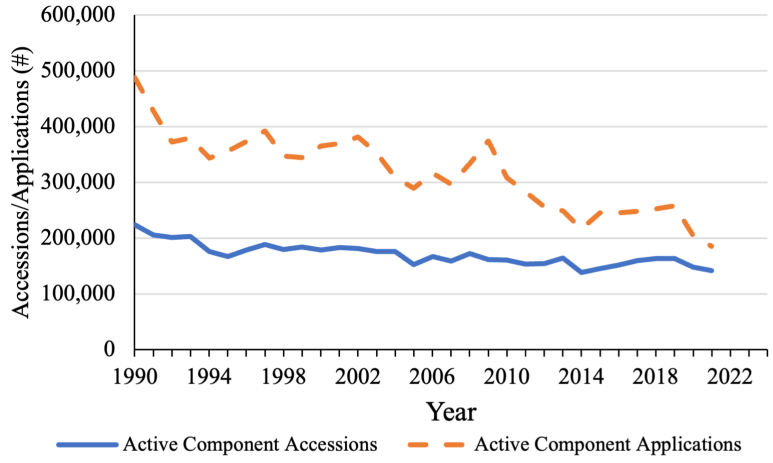
Interest in Military: National Trend



Data for the US on active component military applications and accessions is available from the Office of the Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness. The Senate Committee on Armed Forces has mandated a Population Representation in the Military Services report annually since 1974. This report provides current and historical data on personnel trends in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, and US Coast Guard. These data include the demographic characteristics of all applicants, accessions, enlisted personnel, and officers, which is usually sourced from the Department of Defense Manpower Data Center.

An applicant becomes an accession once they have successfully completed all steps to become an enlisted member. Applicants are not accessed, or are disqualified for enlistment, for several reasons: they did not pass the Armed Forces Qualifying Test (AQFT), have medical conditions rendering them ineligible, they simply opted not to join, or other reasons. Note that we only report accessions for Non-Prior Service applicants, which are applicants who have either never served in the military or served less than 180 days on active duty. We do not report applications and accessions to the reserve component of the military, though the data shows a similar trend line between reserve and active component accessions.

Recruitment to Military: National Trend



NATO Expenditure

Data on the share of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) members meeting the required 2 percent defense expenditure[54] threshold is available from NATO. Members of the Alliance committed to contributing 2 percent of their national GDP to defense spending in 2014, in response to Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and other regional sources of instability. This replaced an earlier 2006 commitment between NATO Defense Ministers to contribute 2 percent of GDP.

Each year, NATO publishes financial, personnel, and economic data related to defense for all member countries, including their defense expenditures as a percentage of total GDP. Numbers are based on NATO's definition of defense expenditure, and only those payments made or to be made during the fiscal year. Values are based on current year prices, using the US dollar as the common currency denominator.[55] We report the percentage of countries between 1990 and 2023 who have met the two percent threshold as a share of total contributing members in each year.[56] The number of NATO members varies between years[57], but we allow for that variation in the trend line.[58]

[54] NATO defines defense expenditure as, "Payments made by a national government (excluding regional, local, and municipal authorities) specifically to meet the needs of its armed forces, those of Allies or of the Alliance. For the purposes of this definition, the needs of the Alliance are considered to consist of NATO common funding and NATO-managed trust funds."

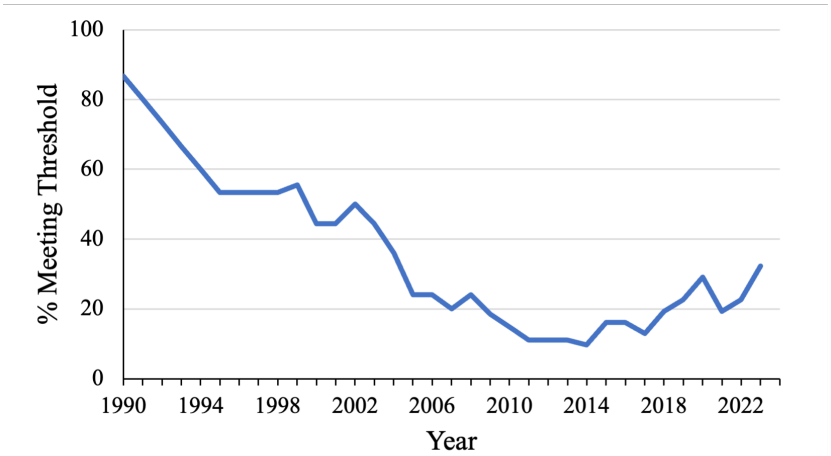
[55] The exchange rate applied to each member country is the average annual rate published by the International Monetary Fund.

[56] The following countries have implemented national laws or political agreements calling for annual defense spending of 2 percent GDP or more and are therefore expected to more consistently meet this target in the future: Czechia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and Romania. NATO documentation notes that these countries may have met the 2 percent threshold in the past, but official records are based on the GDP data that were available at the time of calculation.

[57] In 1990, NATO members included: Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany (West Germany until 1990, when East Germany was welcomed into the Alliance), Greece, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom, and the United States. In 1999, Czechia, Hungary, and Poland joined the Alliance. In 2004, the Alliance added Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia. Albania and Croatia joined in 2009, Montenegro joined in 2017, and North Macedonia joined in 2020. Most recently, Finland became a NATO member in 2023, followed by Sweden in 2024.

[58] Even though Iceland became a member of the Alliance in 1949, it has no armed forces and therefore is not included in these calculations.

NATO Expenditure: National Trend



Bipartisan Congressional Support of Defense Bills

Data on the share of bipartisan support for passing the annual National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) comes from the Library of Congress and the US Senate. The NDAA is a bill that has passed with bipartisan Congressional support every year since 1990 and is necessary to authorize appropriations for the Department of Defense, the Department of Energy's nuclear weapons program, and other defense-related activities. However, the NDAA itself does not provide Congress with the actual defense-related appropriations, as these must be separately authorized.[59]

We attempted to capture only the roll call votes in the House and the Senate related to passage of the NDAA bill. However, in certain years, records of the passage vote are not always available. In those cases, the roll call vote on agreeing to the conference report is substituted. The conference report is the final version of the bill that both chambers of Congress have agreed to and is subject to floor debate but is not amenable. The bill goes to the President for approval if the conference report is agreed to.[60]

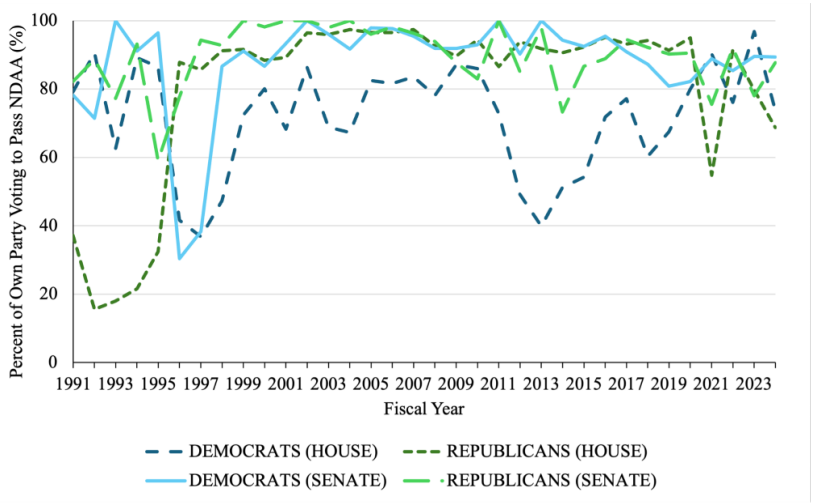
[59] The Congressional Research Service notes that the NDAA has historically "provided a fairly reliable indicator of Congressional sentiment on subsequent appropriations for particular programs."

[60] The following fiscal years reflect Congressional votes on agreeing to the conference report, rather than the passage of the NDAA: 1994, 1995, 2016, 2019, and 2023. For fiscal year 2010, the Senate voted by unanimous

In the House of Representatives, Congressional seats are classified as Democratic, Republican, or Independent, regardless of whether they are occupied. During a roll call vote, each member occupying a Congressional seat can vote one of four ways: yea, nay, present, or not voting. The Senate roll call votes are similarly structured, excluding the option to vote present. For Democrats and Republicans, we report the share of own party members voting to pass the NDAA over the total number of own party members in each chamber of Congress in a given year. The total number of party members in each chamber of Congress accounts for those members not voting or voting present. Totals do not sum to 100 percent due to the exclusion of members of Congress identifying as Independent.

The NDAA bill was initially vetoed by the President for fiscal years 1996, 2008, 2016, and 2021. For these years, we report the post-veto vote totals in the House and Senate. For more information on the legislative process for passing the NDAA, see the Congressional Research Service's Defense Primer.

Bipartisan Congressional Support of Defense Bills: National Trend



consent to pass the NDAA, and no roll call vote was recorded. For fiscal years 2013 and 2014, the Senate did not hold a final passage vote on the Senate NDAA bills. Instead, the House introduced a combined bill that incorporated elements from both chambers' versions of the NDAA bill. Senate votes in these years reflect votes on the combined bills.

Physical Health

Life Expectancy

National and international data on life expectancy are available from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Data Warehouse. UNICEF's Data Warehouse pulls this series from the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs' World Population Prospects 2024 assessment. While US data on life expectancy is also available from US government sources, the UN data is available for more years and is also the data we relied on for the international comparisons.

The percentage of countries the US outperforms is listed for 2023, the most recent year of data available. For the international rank trend, the 2023 percentage is compared to 1990. The international rank trend is listed as decreasing, having dropped from 79 percent in 1990 to 62 percent in 2023. The US was compared to 116 other countries, the maximum number of countries we include for comparisons, as every possible comparison country has data for both 1990 and 2023 from the UN.[61]

[61] The US was compared to the following countries: Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kuwait, Latvia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Namibia, Nauru, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Palau, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Russia, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, and Uruguay.

Social Capital

Volunteerism

US data on volunteering are available through the US Census Bureau's Current Population Survey (CPS) Volunteering and Civic Life Supplement. The Volunteering and Civic Life Supplement is now conducted every other September. It used to be conducted every September, known as just the September Supplement, with data going back to 2002. Following the same methodology as other government publications (for example, see AmeriCorps' 2024 Volunteering and Civic Life Research Summary), we combine the answers of two questions in the supplement to calculate the percent of the civilian non-institutionalized population (i.e. the surveyed population) who have volunteered in the past year.

For survey years 2017, 2019, 2021, and 2023, the survey questions are the following:

1. PES16: "In the past 12 months, did [you/[NAME]] spend any time volunteering for any organization or association?"
    a. Possible responses:
        i. No answer
        ii. Refusal
        iii. Do not know
        iv. Not in universe (i.e. not asked)
        v. Yes
        vi. No
2. PES16a: "Some people don't think of activities they do infrequently or for children's schools or youth organizations as volunteer activities. In the past 12 months (have you/has she/has he) done any of these types of activities?"
    a. Possible responses:
        i. No answer
        ii. Refusal
        iii. Do not know
        iv. Not in universe (i.e. not asked)
        v. Yes
        vi. No

For survey years 2002 to 2015, the survey questions are the following:

1. PES1: “Since September 1st of last year, have you done any volunteer activities through or for an organization?”
    a. Possible responses:
        i. Don’t know
        ii. Not in universe (i.e. not asked)
        iii. Yes
        iv. No
2. PES2: Sometimes people don't think of activities they do infrequently or activities they do for children's schools or youth organizations as volunteer activities. Since September 1st of last year, have you done any of these types of volunteer activities?”
    a. Possible responses:
        i. Don’t know
        ii. Not in universe (i.e. not asked)
        iii. Yes
        iv. No

In the most recent survey version, PES16a is only asked to those who responded with “no answer,” “do not know”, or “no” to PES16. Similarly, in the previous version, PES2 is only asked to those who responded with “don’t know” or “no” to PES1. Therefore, we are able to combine “yes” answers for the two questions in each year while being sure we are not double counting anyone.

The wording of the questions in the most recent survey version differs slightly from the previous version. Most notably, the more recent version asks participants about activities in the past 12 months, whereas the previous version asked participants about activities since September 1st of the previous year. However, since the survey is conducted in September, we consider the two versions comparable enough to construct a consistent trendline. Responses are weighted to construct a nationally representative value for the percent of the population who volunteer.

International Data Notes:

International data on volunteering are available through the International Labor Organization’s (ILO) Work Statistics 19th ICLS (WORK) database. Data are reported annually by volunteer type: organization-based, direct, and total. Organization-based volunteering is coordinated through an organization, whereas direct volunteering is done directly for other households (for more detail, see the ILO website). Data for the US are from the CPS, the same source we use for our national simple trend graph. Because the CPS measures only organization-

based volunteering, we restrict the ILO data to only organization-based volunteering as well, in order to be comparable to the US.

The percentage of countries the US outperforms is listed for 2015. While other years are available in the ILO database, the number of other countries we would be able to compare to is minimal (ranging from 5 to 7). Therefore, we report only the percentage of countries the US outperforms and no international rank trend. The US was compared to 34 other countries that had data for 2015.[62] Most countries' data pertains to the population aged 16 and over. However, South Korea, which we include in the comparison, reports their volunteerism data in terms of the population aged 13 and over.

Trust in Other People

US data on trust in neighbors comes from the General Social Survey (GSS) from NORC at the University of Chicago. The survey question of interest is, "Generally speaking, would you say that people can be trusted or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?" We report the weighted proportion of respondents who answer, "Can trust," rather than, "Can't be too careful," or "Depends." Data for this survey question was available in the GSS 1972-2022 Cumulative Data File during the period 1990-2022, with the exception of 1992, odd-numbered years after 1994, and the 2020 data year.

As of the third and most recent data release in 2022, GSS provides post-stratification sampling weights to adjust for population controls– rather than design-adjusted weights– and ensure a nationally representative sample. The recommended weight variables for the 1972-2022 Cumulative Data File are *WTSSPS* and *WTSSNRPS.* The former is the default weight for all data available through the GSS Data Explorer, accounting for all sampling selection stages in all data years. The latter weight further corrects for non-response bias and is only available for 2004-2022. *WTSSNRPS* is the preferred weight for any year that it is available. Therefore, we employed *WTSSPS* for the years 1990-2003 and used *WTSSNRPS* for 2004-2022. Variables for stratum and PSU were also provided in the metadata. For more details regarding this recommendation, please refer to GSS Methodological Report 137.

[62] The US was compared to the following countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

International Data Notes:

International data on trust in neighbors comes from the World Values Survey (WVS) Longitudinal Time Series Dataset for 1981-2022. WVS conducts international surveys in a period of waves, where each wave covers a period of 3-5 calendar years. The first wave of interest is wave 2, which covers 1990-1994, and the most recent wave is wave 7, covering 2017-2022. The survey question of interest is, "Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you need to be very careful in dealing with people?"

Note that the GSS survey question underlying the US trend line and the WVS survey question used in the international comparison are identical, however there is slight variation between the possible response choices. The GSS offers three response options, "Can trust," "Can't be too careful," and "It depends." WVS offers the following response options: "Most people can be trusted," "Need to be very careful," and "Don't know." The percentage of countries the US outperforms was calculated and compared to other countries for the response option, "Most people can be trusted," since it is most similar to the GSS option of "Can trust."

WVS reports several variations of survey weights– a preserving weight provided and determined by the participant country, a population-balanced weight for a desired N=1000, and a population-balanced weight for a desired N=1500. To construct international rankings of the trust in neighbors measure, we applied the original weights provided by participant countries. The variable *S017* corrects for small deviations necessary to render the country's data reliable across demographic dimensions and data collection waves. For more information, refer to the WVS documentation on weighting.

The percentage of countries the US outperforms is listed for wave seven (2017-2022), the most recent data year available from the WVS. For the international rank trend, wave seven is compared to wave five (2005-2009), the earliest year of data available with at least 25 countries reporting data in that wave. The international rank trend is listed as having no change, outperforming 70 percent of countries in wave five and 73 percent in wave seven—the equivalent of one rank. We only note a change in the rank trend if the ranking changes by two or more places. The US was compared to 29 other countries that had data for both waves five and seven.[63]

[63] The US was compared to the following countries: Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Cyprus, Germany, Great Britain, Guatemala, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Peru, Romania, Russia, Serbia, South Korea, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, and Uruguay.

Trust

Trust in Local Government

Data for the US on trust in the federal government are from Gallup. Each year, Gallup conducts their Gallup Poll Social Series (GPSS) to survey US adults on their social, economic, and political views. As part of their Governance survey, Gallup asks respondents, "How much trust and confidence do you have in the local governments in the area where you live when it comes to handling local problems -- a great deal, a fair amount, not very much or none at all?" The trendline reflects the combination of the top two response options, "a great deal" and "a fair amount," beginning in 2001. Data was not available for 2002 or 2006. International data on this measure were also not available.

Trust in Federal Government

Data for the US on trust in the federal government are from Gallup. Each year, Gallup conducts their Gallup Poll Social Series (GPSS) to survey US adults on their social, economic, and political views. As part of their Governance survey, Gallup asks respondents, "Now I'd like to ask you several questions about our governmental system. First, how much trust and confidence do you have in our federal government in Washington when it comes to handling [international problems/domestic problems] -- a great deal, a fair amount, not very much or none at all?" Responses are weighted to create a nationally representative sample. We combine the top two answers, "a great deal" and "a fair amount," to construct our trendlines of trust in the federal government, beginning in 2000.

International Data Notes:

International data on trust in the federal government are available from OECD's How's Life? Well-being database via the OECD Data Explorer. Underlying survey data for this indicator comes from the Gallup World Poll. Gallup samples around 1,000 people per country each year, and samples are ex ante designed to be nationally representative of the population aged 15 and older. We calculate country rankings based on the share of the population responding "yes" to the following item: "In this country, do you have confidence in each of the following, or not?...How about the national government?" Other response options included "no," and "don't know." For more information, see the OECD's How's Life? Well-being documentation.

The percentage of countries the US outperforms is listed for 2023, the most recent year of data available. For the international rank trend, the 2023 percentage is compared to 2006, the earliest year of data available from the OECD. The international rank trend is listed as decreasing, dropping from 44 percent in 2006 to 6 percent in 2023. The US was compared to 35 other countries that had data for both 2006 and 2023 from the OECD.[64]

Trust in Police

Data for the US on trust in police are from Gallup. Each year, Gallup conducts their Gallup Poll Social Series (GPSS) to survey US adults on their social, economic, and political views. Since 1993, Gallup has asked the following question about trust in the police: "Now I am going to read you a list of institutions in American society. Please tell me how much confidence you, yourself, have in each one -- a great deal, quite a lot, some or very little?" Responses are weighted to create a nationally- representative sample. We combine the top two answers, "a great deal" and "quite a lot," to construct our trendline of trust in the police.

International Data Notes:

Data for international comparisons on trust in police are available from the World Values Survey (WVS) time series dataset, version 3.0. The WVS has been conducted in seven waves since 1981, with the last five waves occurring between 1990 and 2023: wave 3 (1995-1998), wave 4 (2000-2004), wave 5 (2005-2009), wave 6 (2010-2014), and wave 7 (2017-2022). Though not a panel dataset, WVS is nationally representative of the adult population in each country and each wave. Participant countries provide an original sampling weight along with their data to correct for minor deviations in demographic distributions such as sex, age, and education. Weight decisions are at the discretion of each participant country. Though other weight variables were available in the WVS data, this original country weight was used to calculate trends and rankings. For more information on sampling weights, see the WVS documentation.

Countries are ranked on the percent of the population who have "a great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence in the police. Other response options included "not very much," and "none at

[64] The US was compared to the following countries: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, and the United Kingdom.

all." The percentage of countries the US outperforms is listed for wave seven (2017-2022), the most recent data year available from the WVS. For the international rank trend, wave seven is compared to wave five (2005-2009), the earliest year of data available with at least 25 countries reporting data in that wave. The international rank trend is listed as having no change, outperforming 69 percent of countries in wave five and 66 percent in wave seven—the equivalent of one rank. We only note a change in the rank trend if the ranking changes by two or more places. The US was compared to 28 other countries that reported data in both waves.[65]

Trust in Criminal Justice System

Data for the US on trust in the criminal justice system are from Gallup. Each year, Gallup conducts their Gallup Poll Social Series (GPSS) to survey US adults on their social, economic, and political views. Since 1993, Gallup has asked the following question about trust in the criminal justice system: "Now I am going to read you a list of institutions in American society. Please tell me how much confidence you, yourself, have in each one -- a great deal, quite a lot, some or very little?" Responses are weighted to create a nationally- representative sample. We combine the top two answers, "a great deal" and "quite a lot," to construct our trendline of trust in the criminal justice system.

International Data Notes:

Data for international comparisons on trust in the criminal justice system are available from the World Values Survey (WVS) time series dataset, version 3.0. The WVS has been conducted in seven waves since 1981, with the last five waves occurring between 1990 and 2023: wave 3 (1995-1998), wave 4 (2000-2004), wave 5 (2005-2009), wave 6 (2010-2014), and wave 7 (2017-2022). Though not a panel dataset, WVS is nationally representative of the adult population in each country and each wave. Participant countries provide an original sampling weight along with their data to correct for minor deviations in demographic distributions such as sex, age, and education. Weight decisions are at the discretion of each participant country. Though other weight variables were available in the WVS data, this original country weight was used to calculate trends and rankings. For more information on sampling weights, see the WVS documentation.

[65] The US was compared to the following countries: Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Cyprus, Germany, Great Britain, Guatemala, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Peru, Romania, Russia, Serbia, South Korea, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, and Uruguay.

Countries are ranked on the percent of the population who have "a great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence in the justice system/courts. Other response options included "not very much," and "none at all." The percentage of countries the US outperforms is listed for wave seven (2017-2022), the most recent data year available from the WVS. For the international rank trend, wave seven is compared to wave five (2005-2009), the earliest year of data available with at least 25 countries reporting data in that wave. The international rank trend is listed as decreasing, dropping from 64 percent in wave five to 39 percent in wave seven. The US was compared to 27 other countries that reported data in both waves.[66]

Trust in Universities

Data for the US on trust in universities are from Gallup. Each year, Gallup conducts their Gallup Poll Social Series (GPSS) to survey US adults on their social, economic, and political views. As part of this survey, Gallup asks respondents, "Now I am going to read you a list of institutions in American society. Please tell me how much confidence you, yourself, have in each one -- a great deal, quite a lot, some or very little?" In 2015, 2018, and 2023, they included higher education in this list of institutions. Responses are weighted to create a nationally representative sample. We combine the answers "a great deal" and "quite a lot" to construct our trendline of trust in universities.

International Data Notes:

Data for international comparisons on trust in universities are available from the World Values Survey (WVS) time series dataset, version 3.0. The WVS has been conducted in seven waves since 1981, with the last five waves occurring between 1990 and 2023: wave 3 (1995-1998), wave 4 (2000-2004), wave 5 (2005-2009), wave 6 (2010-2014), and wave 7 (2017-2022). Though not a panel dataset, WVS is nationally representative of the adult population in each country and each wave. Participant countries provide an original sampling weight along with their data to correct for minor deviations in demographic distributions such as sex, age, and education. Weight decisions are at the discretion of each participant country. Though other weight variables were available in the WVS data, this original country weight was used to

[66] The US was compared to the following countries: Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Cyprus, Germany, Great Britain, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Peru, Romania, Russia, Serbia, South Korea, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, and Uruguay.

calculate trends and rankings. For more information on sampling weights, see the WVS documentation.

Countries are ranked on the percent of the population who have "a great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence in universities. Other response options included "not very much," and "none at all." The percentage of countries the US outperforms is listed for wave seven (2017-2022), the most recent data year available from the WVS. For the international rank trend, wave seven is compared to wave six (2010-2014), the earliest year of data available with at least 25 countries reporting data on this measure. The international rank trend is listed as decreasing, dropping from 21 percent in wave six to 11 percent in wave seven. The US was compared to 27 other countries that reported data in both waves.[67]

Trust in Science

Data for the US on trust in science are from the General Social Survey (GSS) from NORC at the University of Chicago. GSS asks respondents, "I am going to name some institutions in this country. As far as the people running these institutions are concerned, would you say you have a great deal of confidence, only some confidence, or hardly any confidence at all in them?" They include the scientific community as one of these institutions. We look at only the response "a great deal of confidence" to construct our trendline of trust in science.

GSS provides post-stratification sampling weights to adjust for population controls – rather than design-adjusted weights – and ensure a nationally representative sample. The recommended weight variables for the 1972-2022 Cumulative Data File are *WTSSPS* and *WTSSNRPS.* The former is the default weight for all data available through the GSS Data Explorer, accounting for all sampling selection stages in all data years. The latter weight further corrects for non-response bias and is only available for 2004-2022. *WTSSNRPS* is the preferred weight for any year that it is available. Therefore, we employed *WTSSPS* for the years 1990-2003 and used *WTSSNRPS* for 2004-2022. Variables for stratum and PSU were also provided in the metadata. For more details regarding this recommendation, please refer to GSS Methodological Report 137.

[67] The US was compared to the following countries: Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Brazil, Chile, China, Colombia, Cyprus, Ecuador, Germany, Iraq, Japan, Kazakhstan, Libya, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Peru, Romania, Russia, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, and Uruguay.

International Data Notes:

Data for international comparisons on trust in science are available from the World Values Survey (WVS) time series dataset, version 3.0. The WVS has been conducted in seven waves since 1981, with the last five waves occurring between 1990 and 2023: wave 3 (1995-1998), wave 4 (2000-2004), wave 5 (2005-2009), wave 6 (2010-2014), and wave 7 (2017-2022). Though not a panel dataset, WVS is nationally representative of the adult population in each country and each wave. Participant countries provide an original sampling weight along with their data to correct for minor deviations in demographic distributions such as sex, age, and education. Weight decisions are at the discretion of each participant country. Though other weight variables were available in the WVS data, this original country weight was used to calculate trends and rankings. For more information on sampling weights, see the WVS documentation.

The trust in science measure comes from the following survey question: "Science and technology are making our lives healthier, easier, and more comfortable." Responses are scored on a scale of 1-10, where 1 means completely disagree, and 10 means completely agree. We rank countries based on the share of the population reporting the most agreement with that statement, or response options 8, 9, and 10. The percentage of countries the US outperforms is listed for wave seven (2017-2022), the most recent data year available from the WVS. For the international rank trend, wave seven is compared to wave five (2005-2009), the earliest year of data available with at least 25 countries reporting data on this measure. The international rank trend is listed as increasing, beginning at 14 percent in wave five and rising to 32 percent in wave seven. The US was compared to 27 other countries that reported data in both waves.[68]

[68] The US was compared to the following countries: Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Brazil, Chile, China, Colombia, Cyprus, Ecuador, Germany, Iraq, Japan, Kazakhstan, Libya, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Peru, Romania, Russia, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, and Uruguay.

Violence

Murder Rate

Data for the US on the rate of murder and nonnegligent manslaughter for 2004-2023 come from the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program annual 2023 Crime in the United States (CIUS) report. These data are available for download through the FBI's Crime Data Explorer (CDE). Historical murder rate data for 1990-2003 are available through the Brennan Center for Justice's Analysis of FBI Crime Statistics report. The FBI's database defines murder and nonnegligent manslaughter as the willful killing of one human being by another. This does not include deaths by negligence, suicides, or accidents. It also excludes justifiable homicides, which is limited to the killing of a felon by a line-of-duty officer, or the killing of a felon in the commission of a crime by a private citizen. Terrorist attacks and hate crimes are also tabulated separately.

Historically, the FBI has collected crime data through voluntary reporting from law enforcement agencies via the Summary Reporting System (SRS), which provides simple summary statistics of each year's reported crime data. It also applies the hierarchy rule, in which only the gravest offense is counted in each incident. In 2015, the FBI announced a transition from the SRS to their lesser-used National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) by 2021. NIBRS tracks more detailed information about each crime, allows for more types of crime to be tracked, and does not apply the hierarchy rule. For 2021, only data submitted through the NIBRS by law enforcement agencies was counted. As a result, less than 11,000 of more than 18,000 law enforcement agencies reported their crime statistics to the FBI in 2021, covering only 65% of the population (down from 90-95% coverage before the NIBRS transition). In 2022, that number increased to 15,000 agencies when the FBI allowed agencies that have not yet transitioned to NIBRS to report their crime data through SRS for that year. To mitigate the risks associated with low agency participation in 2021, the FBI released a trend study in 2022 that compares 2020 and 2021 crime data using a selection of the new NIBRS data.

The FBI has also developed an NIBRS estimation procedure to compensate for significant missing data. Though some form of estimation has been used on these data for the last 50 years, those estimations were performed on summary data, making it a simpler process. Now, with significantly lower sample sizes and incident-based raw data, the estimation procedure is significantly more complex. They apply this estimation procedure retroactively to all records housed in their new Crime Data Explorer. The NIBRS-estimated data will take time to be fully accurate, as they will receive more agency data and update their estimation procedure.

In the meantime, the CDE compiles NIBRS and SRS data to present the most comprehensive and accurate data possible, given the reporting limitations in recent years. Institutes such as the Brennan Center for Justice rely on the annual CIUS report to track long-term crime trends. The CIUS allows for tracking throughout time and reporting procedure changes, though these numbers may vary slightly from the raw incident-based data housed on the CDE. For more information, see the CDE's documentation.

International data notes:

International data was downloaded from the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The UNODC's definition of intentional homicide comes from the definition of homicide articulated in the International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes (ICCS), a global standard since 2015. The three criteria for intentional homicide are 1) causing the death of a person, 2) intentionality, and 3) unlawfulness. It captures incidents such as, "domestic disputes that end in a killing, interpersonal violence, violent conflicts over land resources, inter-gang violence over turf or control, and predatory violence and killing by armed groups." It does not include deaths from armed conflict, which is defined by the level of organization of the killing and its perpetrators. For this reason, UNODC advises caution when interpreting homicide rates in countries affected by armed conflict, as estimates can appear unusually inflated or unusually low.

The UNODC's data come from two main sources: national police authorities or public health systems. Preference is given to criminal justice data over health data because the former usually accounts for all three criteria provided by ICCS, while the latter can only account for the first two criteria. Public health systems cannot account for the unlawfulness of a homicide, but if there are objective reasons to prefer a country's health data, that data is used to produce a country's estimates. For the US, the UNODC's estimates closely align with the FBI's data. For more information on conceptual definitions and data sources, see the International Homicide Statistics Methodology page.

The percentage of countries the US outperforms is listed for 2020, the most recent year of data available with data from both China and Russia. For the international rank trend, the 2020 percentage is compared to 1995, the earliest year of data in which China and Russia report data to the UNODC alongside the US. The international rank trend is listed as decreasing, dropping

from 34 percent in 1995 to 30 percent in 2020—the equivalent of three rankings. The US was compared to 69 other countries that reported data to the UNODC in 1995 and 2020.[69]

Shootings and Gun Violence

Data on shootings and gun violence in the US come from the Gun Violence Archive, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the Washington Post Fatal Force Tracker.

The Gun Violence Archive is an independent research organization established in 2013 that collects daily data on gun violence incidents in the US from more than 7,500 sources, including law enforcement, media, government, and commercial entities. Every incident in the database is verified first by researchers, and again through secondary processes. Only incidents that can be verified are included in the totals; the GVA does not use an estimation process. GVA documentation notes that this results in differing incident counts than the FBI or CDC, two major government sources of gun violence data that both "rely on a sampling of sources and extrapolate those numbers to provide aggregate totals that reflect the calculations within their methodologies."

The database lists all fatal and non-fatal gun violence incidents in real-time since January 1, 2015, except for gun suicides and defensive gun uses, which are only reported quarterly and annually by law enforcement partners. However, gun suicides and defensive gun uses are listed on their annual summary ledger, and therefore included in the total count of shooting incidents. The inclusion of gun suicides, gun accidents, and more accurate police shooting counts puts the rate of fatal shooting incidents above the FBI's documented murder rate. Each incident in the database can be classified by up to 120 potential incident variable types associated causes, such as murder, suicide, hate crime, domestic violence, gang involvement, police action, etc. Data is also available by age group. We report totals across age groups and incident types.

[69] The US was compared to the following countries: Albania, Antigua and Barbuda, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Barbados, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom, and Uruguay.

CDC data on fatal shootings come from the National Vital Statistics System (NVSS) Mortality Files for 1999-2020 and 2018-2022. The CDC fatal shootings trend line between 1999-2014 reflects CDC data on gun deaths from terrorism, assault, intentional self-harm, undetermined intent, and legal intervention.[70] The CDC and Washington Post trend line between 2015-2022 reflects all of the above CDC data, excluding deaths from legal intervention. According to the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health's annual 2022 Gun Violence in the US report, the CDC potentially undercounts deaths from legal intervention, otherwise known as law enforcement officer-involved deaths. Therefore, we augment 2015-2022 CDC data with data from the Washington Post's Fatal Force Tracker.

The Fatal Force Tracker documents every fatal shooting in the US by a law enforcement officer in the line of duty since January 1, 2015. Data is sourced from local news reports, law enforcement websites, social media, other independent databases, and additional reporting by The Post. As a result, the Tracker has recorded more than twice the number of fatal shootings by police since 2015, on average, as compared to the CDC and FBI.

International data notes:

Data for international comparisons on the rate of fatal gun violence per 100,000 population comes from the 2021 Global Burden of Disease Study, published by the University of Washington's Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME). Fatal gun violence as defined in these data include incidents of physical violence by firearm, police conflict and executions, self-harm by firearm, and unintentional firearm injuries. Data covers all age groups.

The percentage of countries the US outperforms is listed for 2021, the most recent year of data available from the IHME. For the international rank trend, the 2021 percentage is compared to 1990. The international rank trend is listed as increasing, having risen from 3 percent in 1990

[70] The ICD-10 Underlying Cause of Death (UCD) codes used to identify fatal gun deaths are as follows: U01.4 (Terrorism involving firearms); W32 (Handgun discharge); W33 (Rifle, shotgun and larger firearm discharge); W34 (Discharge from other and unspecified firearms); X72 (Intentional self-harm by handgun discharge); X73 (Intentional self-harm by rifle, shotgun and larger firearm discharge); X74 (Intentional self-harm by other and unspecified firearm discharge); X93 (Assault by handgun discharge); X94 (Assault by rifle, shotgun and larger firearm discharge); X95 (Assault by other and unspecified firearm discharge); Y22 (Handgun discharge, undetermined intent); Y23 (Rifle, shotgun and larger firearm discharge, undetermined intent); Y24 (Other and unspecified firearm discharge, undetermined intent); Y35.0 (Legal intervention involving firearm discharge).

to 10 percent in 2023. The US was compared to 114 other countries that reported data to the IHME in both 1990 and 2023.[71]

[71] The US was compared to the following countries: Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Latvia, Libya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Namibia, Nauru, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Palau, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Russia, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Thailand, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, and Uruguay.

Work and Labor Force

Employment-to-Population Ratio (EPOP)

Prime-age (25-54) EPOP data is available through the Current Population Survey (CPS) and was downloaded from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). The BLS reports the data monthly, and the above graph reports the calculated yearly average. We used the non-seasonally adjusted values as this should not affect the annual figures. The gray shading in the national trend graph marks US recessions, using the same dates as the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis Economic Data system (FRED), which relies on the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER).

International Data Notes:

Data for the international comparisons of the prime age EPOP were downloaded annually from the ILO Data Explorer for 1990-2023. The percentage of countries the US outperforms is listed for 2023, the most recent year of data available. For the international rank trend, the 2023 percentage is compared to 1992, the earliest year of data available from the ILO that Russia reports data. The international rank trend is listed as decreasing, dropping from 68 percent in 1992 to 26 percent in 2023. The US was compared to 33 other countries that had data for both 1992 and 2023.[72]

Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR)

Prime age (25-54) LFPR data is gathered in the Current Population Survey (CPS) and was downloaded from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). The BLS reports the data monthly and both seasonally adjusted and not seasonally adjusted. We report the calculated yearly average of the not seasonally adjusted series. The gray shading marks US recessions, using the same dates as the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis Economic Data system (FRED), which relies on the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER).

[72] The US was compared to the following countries: Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Singapore, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, and the United Kingdom.

International Data Notes:

The international data was downloaded from the International Labor Organization's (ILO) Labor Force Statistics (LFS) database. The ILO reports labor force participation rates annually by age group, including prime age (25-54 year olds). The percentage of countries the US outperforms is listed for 2023, the most recent year of data available. For the international rank trend, the 2023 percentage is compared to 1992, the earliest year of data available from the ILO that Russia reports data. The international rank trend is listed as decreasing, dropping from 73 percent in 1992 to 23 percent in 2023. The US was compared to 39 other countries that had data for both 1992 and 2023 from the ILO.[73] Of these countries, two reported data for only urban areas in 1992.[74]

Long-Term Unemployment Rate

Data for the US and international comparisons for prime age long-term unemployment were downloaded from the ILO Data Explorer for 1990-2023. Long-term unemployment in this measure is defined as unemployment lasting for a period longer than 6 months. The long-term unemployment rate for 25-54 year olds was calculated as the number of prime age long-term unemployed individuals as a percent of the total prime age labor force. The gray shading in the national trend graph marks US recessions, using the same dates as the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis Economic Data system (FRED), which relies on the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER).

The percentage of countries the US outperforms is listed for 2023, the most recent year of data available. For the international rank trend, the 2023 percentage is compared to 1994, the earliest year of data available from the ILO with at least 25 countries reporting reliably in that data year. The international rank trend is listed as having no change, outperforming 88 percent of countries in 1994 and 84 percent of countries in 2023—the equivalent of one rank. We only note

[73] The US was compared to the following countries: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Cyprus, Denmark, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Mauritius, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Paraguay, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Singapore, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom, and Uruguay.

[74] Paraguay and Uruguay report labor force participation rate data for only urban areas in 1992.

a change in the rank trend if the ranking changes by two or more places. The US was compared to 24 other countries that had data for both 1994 and 2023.[75]

Hourly Earnings Growth

Average hourly earnings data for the US are collected by the Current Employment Statistics (CES) survey and available through the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). The BLS reports the data monthly and nominally. The data are available for different groups of employees. Ideally, we would report only the average hourly earnings growth rate for all private sector employees from BLS. However, this data only goes back to March 2006. Therefore, we also report the average hourly earnings growth rate for production and nonsupervisory employees in the private sector from BLS, which goes back to 1964. Both seasonally and not seasonally adjusted values are reported from BLS – the not seasonally adjusted values were downloaded. The monthly data were adjusted to constant 2023 US dollars using the BLS Consumer Price Index for all urban consumers research series (R-CPI-U-RS). The growth rates reported in our graph are the calculated year-over-year real change from January to January.

International Data Notes:

International data for average hourly earnings are available from the International Labor Organization's (ILO) Wages and Working Time Statistics (COND) database. While average hourly earnings in local currencies is one of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicators and available in the ILO's SDG database, we are interested in the inflation-adjusted series set to constant 2021 PPP, saved in the ILO's COND database, for international comparison. Using this series, we calculated the growth rate from one year to the next where data in consecutive years was available and comparable. The ILO identifies breaks in data series where the methodology was revised – using this identifier in the data, we do not calculate a growth rate between two years where there was a break in series. This ultimately led to a smaller group of countries to compare the US to.

The percentage of countries the US outperforms is listed for 2022 (or the growth rate from 2021 to 2022). For the international rank trend, the 2022 percentage is compared to 2015. The international rank trend is listed as increasing, beginning at 35 percent in 2015 and rising to

[75] The US was compared to the following countries: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Slovakia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, and the United Kingdom.

70 percent by 2022. The US was compared to 19 other countries where growth rates could be calculated for 2015 and 2022.[76] While we could have chosen other years to compare to get 25 countries in the comparison, the years would have been closer together. We chose to prioritize a longer time period for comparison.

[76] The US was compared to the following countries: Brazil, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Iceland, Indonesia, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Mongolia, Panama, Paraguay, Portugal, Slovakia, South Korea, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, and the United Kingdom.