



For Immediate Release

New Benchmarking Tool and Report Reveals Widespread Gender Gap in Local Government Leadership

CivicPulse and ELGL release new interactive tools, report, and resources to track the gender diversity of leadership across the 21,000+ local governments in the United States

March 16, 2022 — **CivicPulse** and **ELGL** released a first-of-its-kind gender diversity benchmarking tool and report for the more than 21,000 local governments and their stakeholders across the country pursuing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives: the **Local Government Diversity Dashboard** (LGDD), DiversityDashboard.org. Built with groundbreaking data science and analysis, LGDD's interactive maps and charts and the "[2022 Local Government Leadership Gender Gap Report](#)" offer an unprecedented look at the gender composition of top appointed leaders across the country.

Key findings from 2022 Local Government Leadership Gender Gap Report:

- Fewer than one out of three (29%) local government top-appointed officials are women.
- The percentage of top appointed officials has been rising slowly since 2013. At that rate of change, U.S. local government leaders will not reach gender parity until 2048.
- Local governments with smaller populations are more likely to have women leaders.

"Historically, the United States has lacked centralized information on the hundreds of thousands of individuals leading our township, municipal, and county governments, undermining coordinated efforts to advance DEI initiatives," said Dr. Nathan Lee, Professor of Public Policy at Rochester Institute of Technology, and the Managing Director of CivicPulse, which led the research, design, and development of the LGDD. "With state-of-the-art data analysis tools, however, we can make this important information available."

For the report, CivicPulse leveraged recent developments in data collection and probabilistic name-based gender coding to develop a rigorous methodology that can provide dynamically updated benchmarks on the gender composition of top local government-appointed officials (e.g., manager, administrator, etc.) for all municipalities, townships, and counties with populations of 1,000 or more. More information on the methodology and plans for future data releases are available here: diversitydashboard.org/faq.

Key features of DiversityDashboard.org:

- [Compare local governments in your state or county](#) with the rest of the United States
- [Chart changes over time](#) by any state or Census region within the database
- [Look up your community](#) (city, county, or township) from more than 21,000 communities
- [Learn more](#) about the important DEI work in local governments nationwide

"We envision the Local Government Diversity Dashboard to be one-stop for tracking, visualizing, and sharing data and resources on the changing landscape of diversity in the local government workforce," said Kirsten Wyatt, Executive Director of the Engaging Local Government Leaders network (ELGL), a

network of local government leaders from across the country. “ELGL has championed the open and available collection and sharing of demographic data for local government leaders for years, and with this new tool we can finally provide the data to accelerate and track if local government leadership is representative of the communities they serve.”

With the launch of the Diversity Dashboard, ELGL will host a series of webinars, learning cohorts, and events, as well as invite local government leaders to share their perspectives: diversitydashboard.org/community. In addition, ELGL is already spearheading fundraising for the addition of fifteen more leadership positions to the Diversity Dashboard, from the top elected official, to head of law enforcement, to the head of public works.

About CivicPulse

[CivicPulse](#) is a nonprofit that generates high-quality, publicly available data and research to support effective local governance through sophisticated polling, advanced data collection, and unprecedented access to local leaders themselves. CivicPulse’s random-sample surveys now offer the most comprehensive and accurate representation of the views of the over 200,000 local government leaders in the United States. By combining these surveys with the latest advances in administrative data collection, CivicPulse offers research reports and benchmarks on a wide range of critical issues facing local governments today.

About ELGL

Engaging Local Government Leaders ([ELGL](#)) is an “accidental professional association” that began in Portland, Oregon in 2012 with a 16 member dinner group. Today, ELGL has grown to over 4800 members from all 50 states plus Canada, UK, Israel, and Australia. Focused on all levels of local government (from analysts to mayors; librarians to planners; and everyone in between), ELGL’s mission is to engage the brightest minds in local government by providing timely and relevant content through podcasts, blogs, webinars, social media, learning cohorts and conference gatherings, with the objective of fostering authentic and meaningful connections that are grounded in practices of equity and inclusion.

Press Contacts

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