

LGBTQ+ County Distributions: Implications for Health and Inclusion

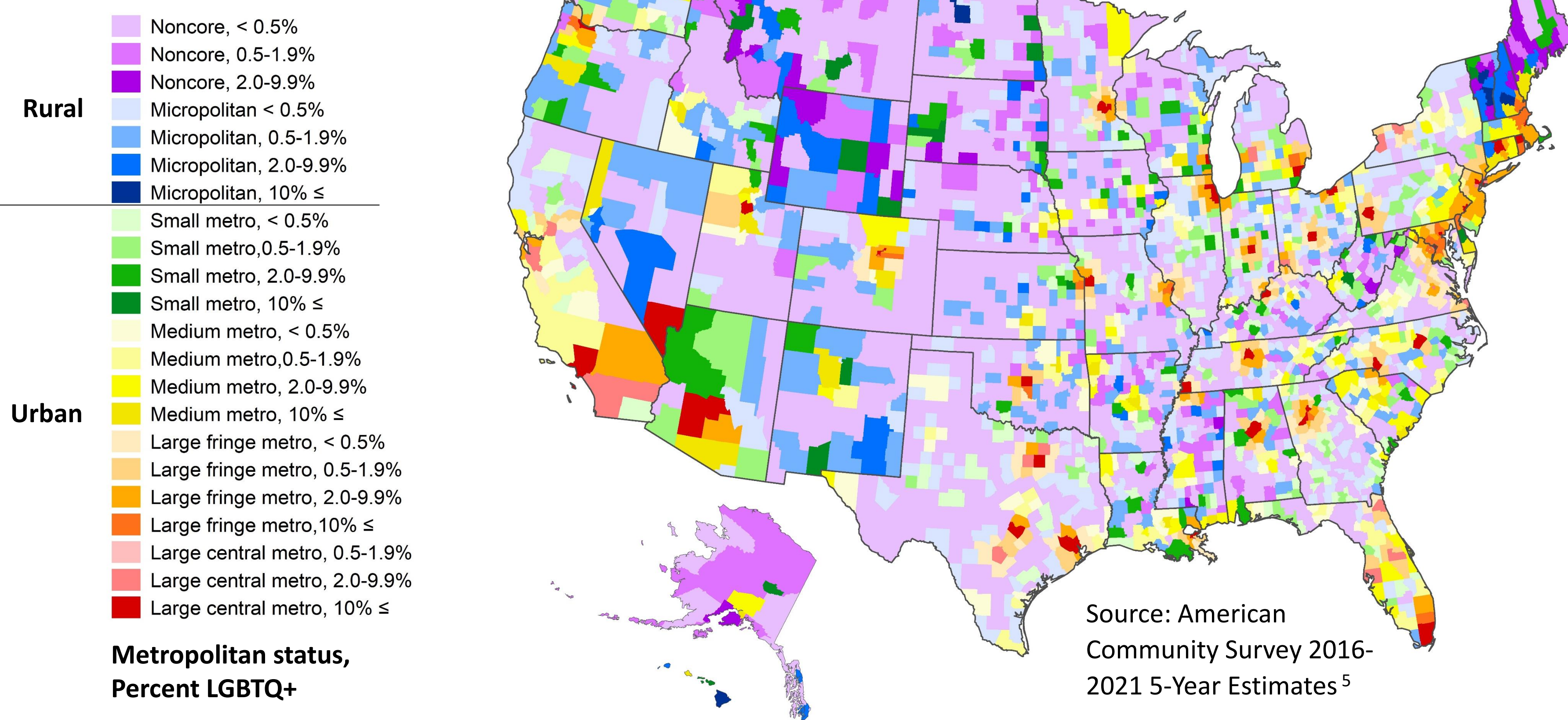


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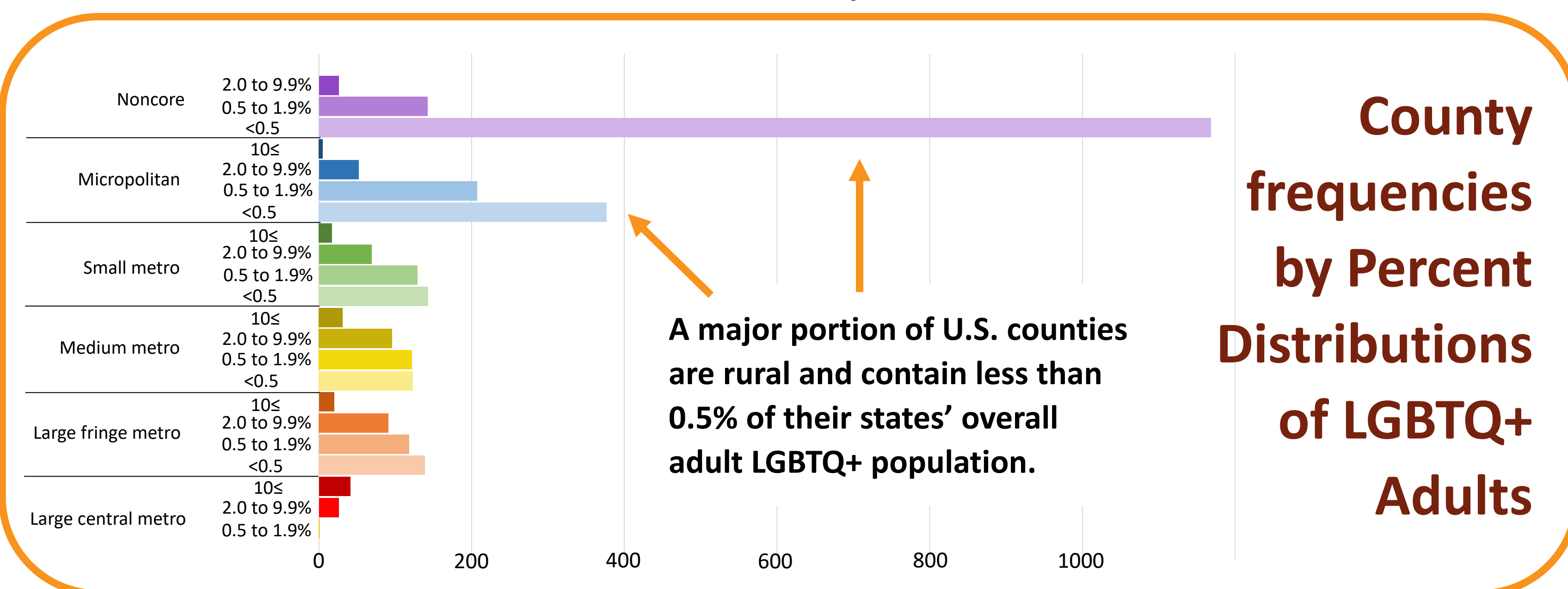
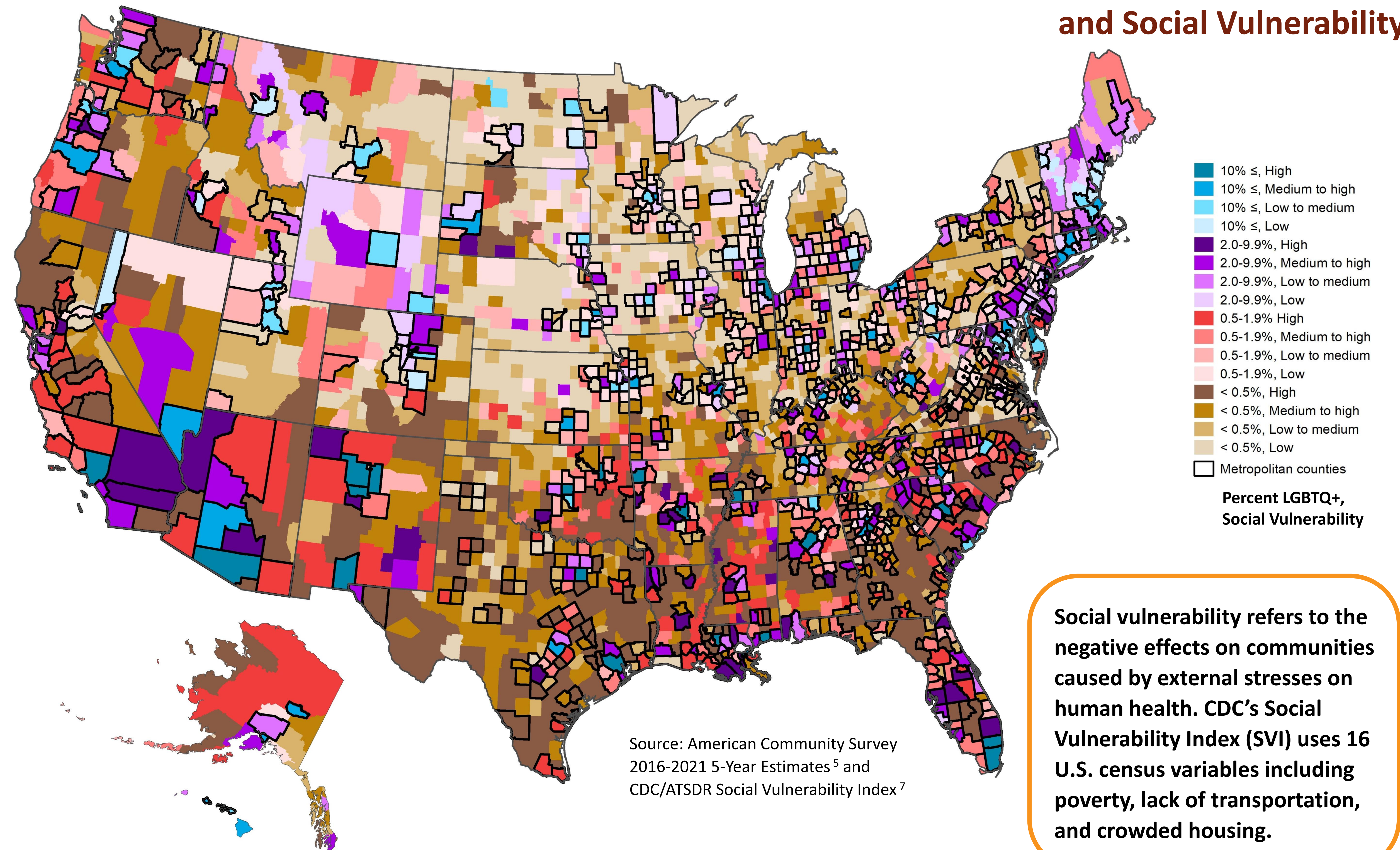
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Percent Distributions of Cohabiting LGBTQ+ Adults in Each U.S. State by County



Distributions of U.S. Counties by LGBTQ+ Adult Percentages and Social Vulnerability



Social vulnerability refers to the negative effects on communities caused by external stresses on human health. CDC's Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) uses 16 U.S. census variables including poverty, lack of transportation, and crowded housing.

BACKGROUND

For LGBTQ+ adults in the U.S., connecting with queer communities moderates the harmful effects of stigma and marginalization.¹ Additionally, much of the existing literature on LGBTQ+ place-making operates under the assumption that queer people are drawn away from rural areas to urban settings.^{1,2} Contemporary scholarship is beginning to unravel the complexities of queer rural experiences and to challenge metronormative empirical assumptions.³ Further, very little scholarship explores the intersectional health experiences of queer and trans people in rural areas.⁴ An accurate understanding of how LGBTQ+ people are represented both in the general population and within urban and rural locations is vital given the implications for social and health policy.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How are LGBTQ+ adults distributed throughout rural and urban U.S. counties?
2. To what extent do counties at high-risk of various health related concerns correspond to counties with high densities of LGBTQ+ adults?

DATA & METHODS

- Determined county-level distributions of cohabiting LGBTQ+ adults using American Community Survey (ACS) 2017-2021 5-Year Estimates⁵
- Calculated county-level estimates of all LGBTQ+ adults by applying ACS data to experimental state-level estimates from pooled Household Pulse Survey (Cycles 34-37: July – September 2021)⁶ data
- Cross-referenced new county demographic data with CDC/ATSDR Social Vulnerability Index⁷ data

MAJOR FINDINGS

- These data estimate that there are about 18.5 million LGBTQ+ adults in the U.S.
- 619 rural counties have 1,000-9,999 LGBTQ+ adult residents, and five rural counties have 10,000+.
- 114 counties contain 10% or more of their states' LGBTQ+ adult population.
 - These high LGBTQ+ density counties are most likely to be large central metro (36%), but many are large fringe metro (18%), medium metro (27%), small metro (15%).
- **In other words, large percentages of LGBTQ+ adults live in a variety of small to large urban and rural environments.**
- 33 counties have high risk SVI scores and high LGBTQ+ density (10% or more of the state total).

REFERENCES

- ¹ Agueli et al. 2022. *Front. Psychol.* 12.
- ² Newcomb et al. 2019. *LGBT Health* 6(4):139-45.
- ³ Conner and Okamura. 2022. *Sexualities* 25(8):1040-57.
- ⁴ Grundy et al. 2021. *J Health Care Poor Underserved* 32(4):1639-52.
- ⁵ U.S. Census Bureau. 2022. American Community Survey 2017-2021 5-Year Estimates Detailed Tables: Table B09019.
- ⁶ U.S. Census Bureau. 2021. Household Pulse Survey Cycles 34-37.
- ⁷ CDC/ATSDR. 2020. Social Vulnerability Index.

CONTACT & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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