

ELGL DIVERSITY DASHBOARD

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION



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Introduction

Today the discussions around and research on diversity continues to be of the utmost importance. This report reviews literature to better understand specific markers of diversity, as well as, understand how the concepts of representative bureaucracy and intersectionality impact diversity measures and decision making at the state and local government level. The literature review serves as a testament to both the value of diversity in local government and to the dire need for robust, quality data on the subject.

Quantifying the importance of diversity has proven to be challenging. Currently, there is a lack of reliable data regarding diversity within state and local government. Originally inspired by the lack of growth of women in local government, Engaging Local Government Leaders (ELGL) developed the Diversity Dashboard to provide timely and relevant content for local leaders regarding diversity. After launching the Diversity Dashboard in 2017, ELGL contracted with the University of Oregon to help analyze the data collected through the Diversity Dashboard from 2017-2018 and to gain an outsider perspective regarding ELGL's work. This report provides detailed recommendations for ELGL regarding these topics.

Methodology

In order to better understand the goals of ELGL, as well as, their evolution, strengths, and challenges we conducted an interview with Kirsten Wyatt, the co-founder and Executive Director of ELGL. The interview provided our team with the information necessary to conduct a formal literature review. The focus of the literature review was the four indicators of diversity (race, age, gender, & veteran status) originally measured by the ELGL survey, through the lens of representative bureaucracy and intersectionality. Although ELGL has added sexual orientation and disability diversity markers to the 2019 Diversity Dashboard survey, these elements are not discussed in this report due to lack of ELGL data availability at this time. The final element of the project was to perform data analysis based on the results of the 2018 survey. Each of these elements contributed to the recommendations presented in this report.

ELGL Background

ELGL was established to provide support and empowerment to the brightest minds in local government through:

- “Providing timely, relevant, real content
- Fostering authentic, meaningful connections
- Expecting equity and inclusion
- Encouraging joy in public service
- Welcoming new ideas and technology” (ELGL website).

ELGL hopes to create a community of local government leaders that spans across city, state, and county lines. ELGL believes that strengthening community will lead to improvements in government including communication within communities, joy, and diversity.

When ELGL co-founder and executive director, Kirsten Wyatt recognized that the number of women in local government leadership had not grown over the past 30-years, she was inspired to create the Diversity Dashboard. In 2017, the Diversity Dashboard platform was created and pilot tests were run by the University of Northern Carolina. The survey was launched nationwide in 2018. Although initially inspired by gender distribution within local government, ELGL broadened their scope of the Diversity Dashboard to help better understand diversity trends within all levels of local and state government management. The categories ELGL researches today are: gender, race, age, veteran status, sexual orientation, and disability.

Currently, a link to the diversity survey is sent directly to key stakeholders, as well as, made available on ELGL's website. Although there is a great need for diversity data collection, ELGL has had difficulty with survey participation rates across states and local governments around the country. At this time, ELGL distributes the Diversity Dashboard survey link to the Chief Administrative Officers (CAO) of state and local governments. ELGL asks each CAO to either take the survey for their organization or to pass along the link to those in leadership positions. With no means to enforce compliance and limited personal connection to survey recipients, ELGL has run into challenges when obtaining organizational data. As ELGL becomes better known throughout the U.S., we anticipate better survey response ratings, that in turn will be able to more accurately analyze diversity trends within all levels of government.

Literature Review

Measuring the impacts of diversity is changing due to the complexity of social systems, interactions, and social life. Researchers have spent years developing ways to measure diversity and models to predict how diversity will impact various situations. Prior to 2000, two theories dominated thinking around the impact of diversity in the workplace (Wegge & Schmidt, 2009). In 1971, Byrne's Similarity-Attraction Theory proposed that humans seek homogeneous affiliations (Wegge & Schmidt, 2009). This means humans seek others they perceive to be similar to themselves. Building on Byrne's theory, Tajfel and Turner published the Social Identity Theory in 1986 (Wegge & Schmidt, 2009). This theory stated one's social identity and self-esteem are tied to the groups which they belong based on their physical appearance and attributes (Wegge & Schmidt, 2009). In being tied to a group, people who are not considered part of the in-group are often excluded and shunned in some manner. This system can create a social hierarchy based on exclusive similarities and in turn create an "echo chamber" where beliefs are reinforced by repetition and alienation. Since the early 2000's, diversity researchers

have pursued a different angle when measuring the impact of diversity in the workplace (Wegge & Schmidt, 2009). The new angle examines the information processing and decision making of teams (Wegge & Schmidt, 2009). Multiple studies have shown that increased team diversity fosters more elaborate analysis of problems, greater information sharing, and higher quality decision making (Wegge & Schmidt, 2009). In addition, research shows that a diverse team also ensures that the voices of different communities are represented in the decision-making process.

In line with the modern diversity research, ELGL examines the four different indicators of diversity; race, gender, veteran status, and age, and seeks to aid government bodies to understand their own diversity in comparison to other governing bodies and to the populations they serve. The concept of governing bodies mirroring the population they serve is known as representative bureaucracy. Representative bureaucracy states that a bureaucracy should roughly resemble and represent the demographic and social composition of the area being served (Nishishiba, 2012). This framework is foundational to the work done by ELGL. The representative bureaucracy framework will be used in examining each of the four measures of diversity discussed below. To better understand the literature around race, gender, veteran status, and age diversity this report dives briefly into each of the four diversity indicators used by ELGL. While race and gender provided the most robust information, age and veteran status have provided insight into aspects of diversity that are often overlooked.

Race

Research on racial diversity is dominated by two common frameworks used by both institutions and organizations. The first framework is the colorblind approach and the second framework is the multicultural approach (Stevens, Plaut, & Sanchez-Burks, 2008). The colorblind approach “focuses on ignoring cultural group identities or realigning them with an overarching identity” (Stevens et al., 2008). Realignment refers to the assimilation and breaking down of one’s own identity into the identity of that designated by the organization or institution. Although this method is known for reducing conflict in the workplace, it has also been seen as a form of whitewashing and fostering the groupthink mentality. In contrast to the colorblind approach, the multicultural approach emphasizes the benefits of a diverse workforce and views those differences as a source of strength (Stevens et al., 2008). By embracing racial diversity instead of eliminating it, research found that work products improved, as did job satisfaction.

When engaging with this material from the viewpoint of local government it is important to consider representative bureaucracy. The colorblind approach does not take into consideration representative bureaucracy. In fact, the colorblind approach often creates a governing body

that is homogeneous. No population is homogeneous and creating homogeneity ideology and beliefs in government often result in actions that are not in line with ideologies and beliefs of the population being impacted.

In examining the multicultural approach, it is clear that representative bureaucracy is fostered in this model. The multicultural approach seeks to foster diversity that is present within the population being served. Research has shown that representative bureaucracy reduces the risk of groupthink and exclusion by using ethnic backgrounds to create a more balanced perspective. Moreover, Nishishiba states: diversity may benefit organizations by “enhancing service delivery through better communication and understanding for the needs of a community” (Nishishiba, 2012, pg. 63). Further highlighting the immense need for diversity with government, not only to support representation of all races and ethnicities, but also to foster healthier communication within the community as it pertains to the needs and wants of the community.

Gender

Women make up 51 percent of the population today. While percentages vary widely across government sectors, employment of women within government has been less than 50 percent for the past 20 plus years (Baitinger, 2018). Most information about women in government is gathered at the federal level. Although there have been variable increases in employment for women within the lower levels of federal government, the gender gap is most prominent within the highest ranks of the federal workforce (Baitinger, 2018). The inequality this represents shows that for generations men have dominated governmental leadership roles while women have struggled to gain equal representation. This unequal representation of women in government hinders the ability for women to be represented in decision making roles and provides men a louder voice within positions of power.

During the early 1990's there was a notable increase of women mayors within cities with populations over 30,000. Even with this increase only 20 percent of the mayors within these cities were women during this time and this number plateaued towards the end of the 1990's and has not grown since (Holman, 2017). This stagnant growth shows an inability to cultivate diversity within government organizations and indicates a lack of representative bureaucracy. The lack of representation of women within government means there is a lack of equal opportunity for 51 percent of the population to become strategic actors. Over time this creates unbalanced policies and procedures that do not embody the overall population (Holman, 2017).

Underrepresentation of women is known to create differences in budgeting priorities and policy development. Studies have shown that an increase in gender equality within government

changes budgeting allocation. The trends suggest that when there is gender equity within government there is an increase in funding for social service programs (Holman, 2014). This shift in policy only occurs when there is a significant representation of women within the agency (Ferreira & Gyourko, 2014). Today there is no required documentation regarding gender diversity which makes further analysis of gender impact on policy and governance challenging.

A majority of local government employment is outside of the mayoral offices yet, most of the information gathered on local government has been at the mayoral level. There are more positions outside the mayoral offices including appointed positions and those within city and county government. Today, there is a lack of data regarding gender diversity related to the make up of these government positions and limited conclusions can be drawn. What is known, is that a greater number of women occupy lower level positions than men and more men in the federal workforce than women (Holman, 2017). This lack of accurate data regarding the exact ratio of men to women at various levels is what inspired the creation of ELGL and the Diversity Dashboard data collection efforts.

Veteran status

Veteran status is a common indicator of diversity in government at all levels due largely to the veteran hiring preference program. Across the U.S., all fifty states have veteran hiring preference policies. Of these, five states give veterans an absolute preference over more qualified candidates, while the remaining states use a preference point system that provides veterans with additional points (Lewis & Pathak, 2014). While numbers are not available for the percentage of veterans in local government, nationwide, veterans comprise less than 10 percent of our population (Bialik, 2017). Using the representative bureaucracy framework, it would be ideal if veterans in all levels of government made up approximately the same percentage of the workforce as they do in the population.

A recent study examined whether state and local governments employ veterans at higher rates than private sector employers. This study used census data from 1980-2011 to determine the sectoral employment of veterans. Findings suggest that veterans are significantly more likely to take advantage of veteran preference hiring protocols by state and local government when the pay is equal to or higher than private sector jobs and that it is a predominantly male profession (i.e. firefighter or police officer). Hiring veterans does not appear to positively impact the diversity composition of the state and local government workforce in terms of gender and racial diversity. Less than 18 percent of the military is women; furthermore, minorities are underrepresented across all branches of the military (Renolds & Shendruk, 2018). White, heterosexual males make up much of the military and therefore the preference tends to reinforce existing racial and gender dynamics (Lewis & Pathak, 2014).

Age

The final indicator of diversity examined in this paper, is that of age. Age diversity in the workplace has been on the rise as people tend to forego retirement and stay in the workforce until later in life. “Between 1997 and 2007, the labor force participation rates of adults who were aged 55–64 years increased from 54.1 percent to 61.8 percent in the United States” (Parry, Emma, Tyson et al., 2011, p. 80). This social change has created two new realities pertaining to age and the workforce. The first key change is a larger number of older people in the workforce (Parry, et al., 2011). Secondly, a greater age gap exists between the youngest and oldest employees (Parry, et al., 2011). These changes have impacted the workplace by creating an increase in age diversity and changing previous norms.

A study which examined age diversity within the private sector, found that greater age diversity brings higher levels of corporate performance (Ferrero-Ferrero, Fernández-Izquierdo, & Muñoz-Torres, 2015). These results can be directly translated to performance levels within governments. Greater age diversity harbors the passage of knowledge and experiences between multiple generations and in so generates a higher level of performance while harboring an environment that allows unique viewpoints into situations (Ferrero-Ferrero et al., 2015). The authors detail how age diversity can strengthen performance in many sectors, from public policy to business, the authors also highlight the need to explore this topic in future research.

Although research has shown that age diversity in the workplace can both be beneficial and lead to conflict, having greater age diversity is very important for representative bureaucracy (Pitt-Catsouphes, Matz-Costa, Brown, 2011). The U.S. population has a large level of age diversity that is important and challenging to represent within government leadership. Very few people under 40 are in positions of power within the government, yet those under 44 years old represented 36.5 percent of the population according to the 2010 census. Having people of all ages involved in the shaping of government is important as each age bracket provides unique perspectives and should have a voice in the shaping of our communities.

Intersectionality

Having discussed the importance of race, gender, veteran status, and age diversity, as well as, the importance of each element from the perspective of representative bureaucracy it is important to consider the role of intersectionality. The concept of intersectionality deals with the fact that people never check just one diversity box. Many people are both women and non-white. Others have veteran status, are women, and are non-white. Knowing that people are not just one element of diversity, but actually span many, how does this impact their perspectives and

societal contributions? No one knows how the intersection of different diversity indicators impacts an individual or their employer, but when measuring diversity, it is important to note the role intersectionality has in shaping a person's perspective and the insight they will have as compared to others.

Conclusion

The benefits of diversity lies in the ability for diverse groups to work together in union when solving problems; maximizing and capitalizing on their individuality to produce outcomes that are outside the box (Herring, 2009). While the white male perspective dominates our governance structure, there is added benefit to diverse perspectives and differing points of view. Increasing insight from a diverse group is vital to creative problem solving and inclusive governance. Having voices other than those that have been historically present during the governance process is important to ensure that our democracy is representative of the population it serves. In addition, a diverse governing body can actively and meaningfully engage all constituents. Furthermore, increasing racial diversity decreases the chances of racial and ethnic biases being reproduced by the governmental structure.

According to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) of the United States, "the communities we serve are diverse" and "Diversity and inclusion increases an agency's capacity to serve and protect people who have different experiences and backgrounds..." (US Office of Personnel Management, n.d.). Therefore, it is the best practice to have a governing population that accurately and proportionally represents those being served.

Unfortunately, the representative equality highlighted by OPM is not present in the U.S. today. The exact state of diversity and how close local governments are to achieving representative bureaucracy today is unknown. The state of diversity remains unknown due to the lack of data that is accurately and consistently collected on the topic. Representative bureaucracy needs to be explored and the data regarding diversity within government needs to be collected to ensure all communities are heard in the governing process. The collection of accurate diversity data will help ensure that no one voice is more powerful than the rest. With growing diversity and continually changing population composition, the need for leadership that represents those governed is more important now than it has been in the history of this country. Understanding diversity within society and local government is integral in increasing equality throughout the U.S. ELGL strives to do this through data collection and analysis with the goal of improving representative diversity within local government leaders.

Analysis of ELGL and the Diversity Dashboard

The literature review unveiled the understanding that there is a significant lack of knowledge of diversity within local government. This conclusion was drawn by ELGL and inspired the creation of the Diversity Dashboard. Our group was tasked to download the Diversity Dashboard data and perform a comprehensive analysis of the diversity indicators within local government leadership. As we began to analyze the data, inaccuracies within the data became apparent. The data inaccuracies included, small sample sizes and high non-response rates. As these problems became apparent, our team further examined ELGL's data collection methods and compared these to the best practices for exploratory research data collection. After conducting this research, the team did not feel comfortable analyzing and reporting data that was problematic and decided to focus on aiding ELGL in refining the data collection process. This report focuses on ELGL's current methods, introduce best practices for research and provide recommendations to help ELGL improve data quality. The goal is to assist ELGL in improving their data collection practices so when conclusions are drawn, they are as accurate as possible. It is important to note that ELGL is researching meaningful information that has the potential to both expose and fill gaps regarding diversity in local government. The implication of the ELGL data collection is significant for the future of local government and the data needs to be of the highest quality. When ELGL systemizes their methods, the data will help local governments understand their own diversity, or lack thereof, which can help increase diversity within leadership positions and further harbor representative bureaucracy.

Data Analysis

Data is a powerful tool that can portray realities within a study area, as well as, perpetuate misinformation. In order to gain accuracy within social science research, established methods and analysis performed must be as clear and disciplined as hard science. Consequences from faulty or misrepresented data can result in many issues such as wasted resources, compromising public policy decisions, and possible harm. Although well-intentioned ELGL shows high potential for inaccurately collecting data and representing findings. The issues identified within the ELGL research process are: survey question structure, data collection methods, representative sampling errors, and data reporting errors. Each of these areas of concern are addressed in the following sections. When examining the raw data, issues regarding validity became apparent. Due to these concerns this report contains no specific data analysis findings and focuses on issues and recommendations for ELGL in order to gain reliable and valid data.

Survey Question Structure

The ELGL survey is comprised of 29 questions in total, asking for information both on the office's Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and Assistant Chief Administrative Officer (ACAO). Many of the questions used by ELGL are pulled from the U.S. Census. Survey respondents receive feedback after completing each question, reporting how many of the other participants that year had responded the same way.

After reviewing the survey as displayed on the website, it was determined by the team that several of the questions would benefit from revision or removal to aid in accurate data collection. Appendix A and B provide a detailed review of the survey questions and the corresponding recommendations made by the team.

Data Collection Methods

Established data collection methods are a major component of receiving accurate and reliable survey data. Data collection should be both rigorous and ethical. A clear methodology and defined variables is necessary to collect accurate and reliable data. The following should be recorded and published on the Diversity Dashboard in order to gain clarity of information:

- "How, where, how many times and by whom potential respondents were contacted?"
- How many people were approached and how many agreed to participate?
- How did those who agreed to participate differ from those who refused?
- How was the survey administered?
- What was the response rate (ie number of usable data sets as a proportion of the number of people approached)?" (Kelley, 265).

Answering these questions creates a methodology that shows diligence and accuracy. Without a detailed methodology, it is difficult to decipher the difference between accurate data and skewed data from the very beginning of the study. The methodology should be provided in an easy to find location within the Diversity Dashboard website to ensure transparency.

The ELGL website gives a non-descriptive methodology that states:

"ELGL distributes a demographics survey to all local governments with a chief administrative officer (CAO) or assistant chief administrative officer (ACAO) in the United States and Canada...We are collecting data on all forms and types of local governments. We know that leaders in local government are working in different organizations and there's no one way to define a "leader."

ELGL does not explicitly define "leader". This lack of definition potentially leads people to participate in the survey who do not fit the criteria and thus skewing the results. The lack of clearly defined eligibility may also result in qualified individuals abstaining to take the survey

because they are uncertain whether or not they qualify. The open-ended definition of leadership, and unreported methodology creates an initial uncertainty of the data results.

Representative Sampling

ELGL is performing exploratory research where there is a large amount of uncertainty coupled with a great potential for discovery. In order to help ensure that the results drawn from the ELGL data are viable it is important to refine the sampling process. Best practice for this type of research include the use of non-random targeted sampling method, where the subjects are deliberately targeted within a population (Kelley, 264). To do so requires an understanding of how many people within local government are considered leaders. This is a daunting task and we recommend focusing efforts to an individual state before expanding the Diversity Dashboard project to additional locations. Although time consuming and difficult, targeting the appropriate population to study will increase accuracy levels within the data collected and increase data reliability.

During the ELGL informational interview, it was apparent that the distribution of the survey relies heavily on grassroots networks and does not yet have the support from government leaders needed to be truly successful in their mission. Currently, ELGL distributes the survey through to those paying members of ELGL, as well as, through any personal connections. The website states that the data collection is based on “the more people taking the survey the better.” The purpose behind this is to gain as many respondents as possible in order to show trends and statistics about local government leadership. While gaining a large number of respondents is important, it is also important that ELGL monitor who is taking the survey and how they came to be taking the survey. Our team recommends that ELGL focus on creating reliable distribution pathways through more formal channels to help ensure the survey reaches enough people and those defined as a leader.

Currently the ELGL efforts suffer from a high number of non-respondents. This high level of non-response rates creates a high potential for bias. (Kelley, 264). Both subjects taking the survey who skip questions and subjects who qualify for the survey but actively do not want to participate in the survey, have the potential to significantly skew the data. To gain an accurate sample size the following main factors must be considered:

- What resources are available?
- What is the ultimate aim of the study?
- What statistical quality is needed for the survey? (Kelley, 264).

We recommend seriously considering the above points and redesigning the study to mandate response to all questions upon starting the survey. In addition, if ELGL scales back to focus on a few already supportive states the potential for ELGL to become a job requirement similar to the Federal Viewpoint Survey is much higher. If the survey is incentivized and/or mandated by a few states sampling and data collection accuracy will improve, as well as, ELGL's reputation as they seek to expand to other states in the future.

Data Reporting

ELGL provides real time reporting through weekly data updates. This is not a recommended best practice as it significantly increases the levels of inaccuracy in data reporting.

Mathematically, the smaller the sample size, the higher the weight each respondent receives until an adequate sample is acquired. Therefore, during the first few months of every year, the reported data is extremely skewed because the data does not reflect the general population. Specific examples related to this issue can be found in Appendix C of this report.

Presenting data in a clear, functional and concise format is crucial to help readers interpret data properly. ELGL allows readers to toggle between data visualization tools giving the reader freedom to see all data values in pie chart, horizontal stacked chart, tree map, line graph, bar graph, and map form. Many of these visualization tools create poor, inaccurate representations of the data. This freedom to choose how the data will be visualized also creates misleading and inaccurate representations of the information. Specific examples related to this issue can be found in Appendix C of this report.

ELGL has great intentions with the Diversity Dashboard to increase knowledge and understanding of diversity within local government leaders. Although well intentioned, at this time ELGL struggles to create a platform that produces trusted results. The following section outlines recommendations to increase reliability and accuracy within their data collection and reporting.

RECOMMENDATIONS

ELGL Diversity Dashboard Recommendations

Revise Data Collection Methods

We have compiled a detailed list of suggestions to improve the survey itself, including the wording of several questions. This feedback is provided in Appendix A and B of this report. Overall, ELGL should review the survey and their outreach method to ensure they are being intentional, effective, and integral in their data collection methods.

Non-Random Targeted Sampling

Best practices indicate that for this type of data collected and the goals of ELGL, the organization should use a non-random targeted sampling method. To adopt this method, ELGL should begin with establishing the number of individuals per state and per county that qualify for their survey. From that point, they will be able to determine what response rate is necessary to be able to provide accurate and representative data on the status of diversity in local government leadership. This is a daunting task and we recommended focusing efforts to an individual state before expanding. Although time-consuming and difficult, targeting the appropriate population to study will increase accuracy levels within the data collected and aid in building ELGL's reputation as they expand their survey area.

Transition to Stagnant Reports

Publishing reports on a quarterly, semi-annually, or annual basis has several key benefits. First, this requires that ELGL set firm dates for data collection which will provide public managers with clear deadlines. This may help with response rates. Secondly, to address the issues associated with real-time data feedback, ELGL should determine the best method of visualization for each data point analyzed. This will help remove interpretation bias when understanding the information being presented.

PUBLIC MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Consume All Data with a Critical Eye

The Government Accountability Office published a list of best practice recommendations for effective approaches of public management. Their top recommendation was to provide useful data with the intention of enabling managers to track their individual progress against organizational goals (Hill and Lynn, 2016, pg 383). On a large scale, this is also the goal of ELGL. However, in the age of information, public managers must consume information carefully and responsibly. Public managers must look closely at the methodology and quality of any data set before using it to inform decision making. Otherwise, it is all too easy to allow data to influence decision making through psychologically bias lenses (Hill and Lynn, 2016).

Strive to Promote Diversity Among Staff at all Levels

Multiple studies have shown that increased team diversity fosters more elaborate analysis of problems, greater information sharing, and higher quality decision making. Diversity research is limited by the complexity of social structure discussed in the literature review section of this report, as well as, by the previous lens in which diversity was studied and the lack of quality data available on diversity. However, representative bureaucracy is shown to provide greater

communication between parties and strengthens the services delivered by those parties via the communication from representation. Moreover, representative bureaucracy is something that any democratic government should strive for, it is a representation of the whole population as reflected within the levels of government, and the benefits are limitless.

Look for Opportunities to Collaborate & Participate in Benchmarking Projects Like ELGL

While there is much to improve regarding ELGL's data collection and presentation methods, their work is critical for public managers. ELGL's Diversity Dashboard aims to fill a glaring hole in the public administration knowledge base. However, to provide public managers with high quality, reliable and meaningful information they must secure significant buy-in. Public Managers that are committed to increased diversity should seek out research and data collection opportunities such as the ELGL Diversity Dashboard and prioritize them via mandated participation among those they supervise. The better response rates these studies receive, the more information public managers will possess to lead effectively.

Summary

While the literature regarding representative bureaucracy does indicate that diversity has a possible impact on local government and leadership, public managers currently cannot rely on the ELGL Diversity Dashboard in its current state to guide their creation of a more diverse workforce. In sum, the Diversity Dashboard has noble goals and ambitious aspirations. However, they currently have bitten off more than they can chew and overestimates the impact and value of the data collected and presented on the Diversity Dashboard. The project has great potential but needs to scale back and develop a solid methodology and data collection foundation before attempting to scale to the national or international level. Once this foundation is solidified, ELGL needs to expand slowly and deliberately to ensure the data is of high quality and reliable.

APPENDIX

Appendix A. ELGL Survey Recommendations

After a detailed revision of the survey, we have developed the following recommendations with clarity for the user, ease for the user and reduction in data entry error in mind. The questions are numbered in the order in which they appear on the survey provided at this link: <https://publicinput.com/diversity>. A transcribed version of the survey has also been provided in the appendix for the convenience of the reader when reviewing these recommendations.

Question 1.

Change sliding scale to a Likert system for more measurable data points. In its current state, the scale is not clear nor measurable.

Question 2.

Consider removing. For additional information see questions 10 and 11.

Question 3.

- Need better definitions on who/what a CAO or ACAO is. Furthermore, need a better description of who is and is not eligible to take the survey and why ELGL has made that determination.
- Remove option c.
- Consider a write-in question that allows them to input their title so you know better who is

taking the survey and common position titles across states/local governments. This could be in lieu of question 10.

Question 4.

We are curious about the decision to record the survey participant's identifying contact information. The website indicates that the data is de-identified. Are the collected email addresses and names utilized and necessary? Could it perhaps deter individuals from participating?

Question 5.

Consider removing or better explaining why this information is requested. The map feature is not well explained and could deter participation.

Question 8.

The quartile language is a little confusing. Furthermore, these ranges are excluding New York and Los Angeles. Consider revising the categories for this question.

Question 10 and 11.

These seem repetitive. Consider removing in favor for a checkbox at the bottom of question 4 stating “are you taking this survey on behalf of someone else?” if yes, then an additional field populates to collect Q 10 and 11. Otherwise, it can be assumed they are taking it on their own behalf. This information will also be sufficient to answer Question 2 as well.

Question 14.

Remove the definition of veteran. It is both confusing and unnecessary as the other categories are not defined. Those who are veterans will be able to identify themselves without the definition provided.

Questions 18-25.

Remove. We recommend having one individual’s information per survey to be collected.

Overall:

- Have a clear explanation provided on the eligibility to take the survey after the respondent clicks the “take survey” button. Right now, anyone can take the survey and it is not explicitly stated who it is designed for.
- Definitions around CAOs and ACAO’s need to be clearer from the outset. Furthermore, more why only CAOs and ACAOs are being surveyed for the diversity dashboard, as opposed to all local government workers.
- Remove real-time feedback based on other respondents. It is not useful to the survey taker nor does it give accurate or reliable feedback. Please see the data visualization section of the report for more information on best practices.
- Move the survey higher up on ELGL’s main page so it is easier to spot. Perhaps consider having it the website navigation panel.
- The website the hosts the survey and the diversity dashboard have different names than the ELGL website. Consider reconfiguring how these sites are hosting to increase the perceived legitimacy of the information and make the connection and ownership of the survey and dashboard clear.
- Make all diversity indicators in the survey mandatory for the survey taker. Currently, the respondent is not required to complete any of the questions. This is part of the reason for the high non-response rate for some categories. Making responses mandatory will improve the overall quality of the data being collected.
- Create a clear deadline for survey responses. As per our other recommendations, if ELGL produces stagnant reports, the website should clearly state when is the deadline for

survey respondents to complete the survey by to be included in the next report. A tracking system should be in place to see who takes the survey repeatedly for every report and who are new participants. This will allow growth and trends to be more accurately mapped.

Appendix B. Survey Transcription

1. Is the collection of local government leadership demographic data important?
 - a. Scale response. Not clear measurable markers
 - b. Yes, it is the most important thing we can do
 - c. No, lets focus on work
2. Who are you completing the survey for?
 - a. Myself- I'm the CAO or ACAO
 - b. My organization- I work for the local government
3. Please select the positions you're completing this survey for today:
 - a. CAO Only- Mayor, City Manager, County Administrator, Town Manager, Village Manager
 - b. ACAO only- Deputy, Assistant or Assistant to the CAO
 - c. Both CAO and ACAO

Click Continue / end of step 1 start of step 2

4. Who's reporting this info
 - a. Name fill in blank
 - b. Email fill in blank
5. Please share location of organization
 - a. Google map feature.
6. Organization name
 - a. Fill in blank
7. Community Type
 - a. City
 - b. County
 - c. Town
 - d. Village
 - e. Other (please specify)
8. Community Population
 - a. Quartile 1: 0-875
 - b. Quartile 2: 876-2925
 - c. Quartile 3: 2,926-13,000
 - d. Quartile 4: 13,001-2,700,000
9. Form of Government
 - a. Mayor-Council
 - b. Council-Manager
 - c. Commission
 - d. Other (please specify)

Hit next page/end of step 2 start of step 3

10. CAO Title (please select your title, or the title that most closely matches yours)

- a. Manager
 - b. Administrator
 - c. Mayor
 - d. Executive
 - e. Elected Official
11. CAO Information
- a. Name
 - b. Email
 - c. Phone
12. CAO Race/Ethnicity
- a. American Indian or Alaskan Native
 - b. Asian/Pacific Islander
 - c. Black or African American
 - d. Hispanic/Latinx
 - e. White
 - f. Prefer not to answer
 - g. Other (please specify)
13. CAO Gender Identity
- a. Male
 - b. Female
 - c. Transgender Male
 - d. Transgender Female
 - e. Non-binary
 - f. Not listed (please specify)
14. Is the CAO a Veteran (a veteran is a person who served in the active military, naval, or air service and who was discharged or released therefrom under conditions other than dishonorable.)
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Prefer not to answer
 - d. Other (please specify)
15. CAO Birth Year
- a. Drop down menu of years starting at 1938
16. Does the CAO identify as a member of the LBGQT+ community?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Prefer not to answer
17. Does the CAO qualify for protected status under the Americans with Disabilities Act?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Prefer not to answer

- d. Commission

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18. ACAO Title (please select your title, or the title that most closely matches yours)
 - a. Assistant/ Deputy Manager
 - b. Assistant/Deputy Administrator
 - c. Director
 - d. Elected Official
 - e. Deputy Mayor
19. ACAO Information
 - a. Name
 - b. Email
 - c. Phone
20. ACAO Race/Ethnicity
 - a. American Indian or Alaskan Native
 - b. Asian/Pacific Islander
 - c. Black or African American
 - d. Hispanic/Latinx
 - e. White
 - f. Prefer not to answer
 - g. Other (please specify)
21. ACAO Gender Identity
 - a. Male
 - b. Female
 - c. Transgender Male
 - d. Transgender Female
 - e. Non-binary
 - f. Not listed (please specify)
22. Is the ACAO a Veteran (a veteran is a person who served in the active military, naval, or air service and who was discharged or released therefrom under conditions other than dishonorable.)
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Prefer not to answer
 - d. Other (please specify)
23. ACAO Birth Year
 - a. Drop down menu of years starting at 1938
24. Does the ACAO identify as a member of the LBGQT+ community?
 - a. Yes

- b. No
 - c. Prefer not to answer
25. Does the ACAO qualify for protected status under the Americans with Disabilities Act?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Prefer not to answer

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26. Do you have any other comments, questions or concerns about the Diversity Dashboard?
- a. Text box that says “share your thoughts and ideas...”
 - b. “Add Private Comment” button
27. Would you like to be considered to be publicly profiled for your participation with the Diversity Dashboard project? ELGL may contact you for a blog profile, podcast interview, or social media promotion to highlight your dedication to local government diversity.
- a. Yes
 - b. No

Appendix C. Data Reporting Errors

The following are examples of problematic data reporting that were identified throughout the ELGL website. The images are directly from the Diversity Dashboard visualization module.

Real Time Reporting

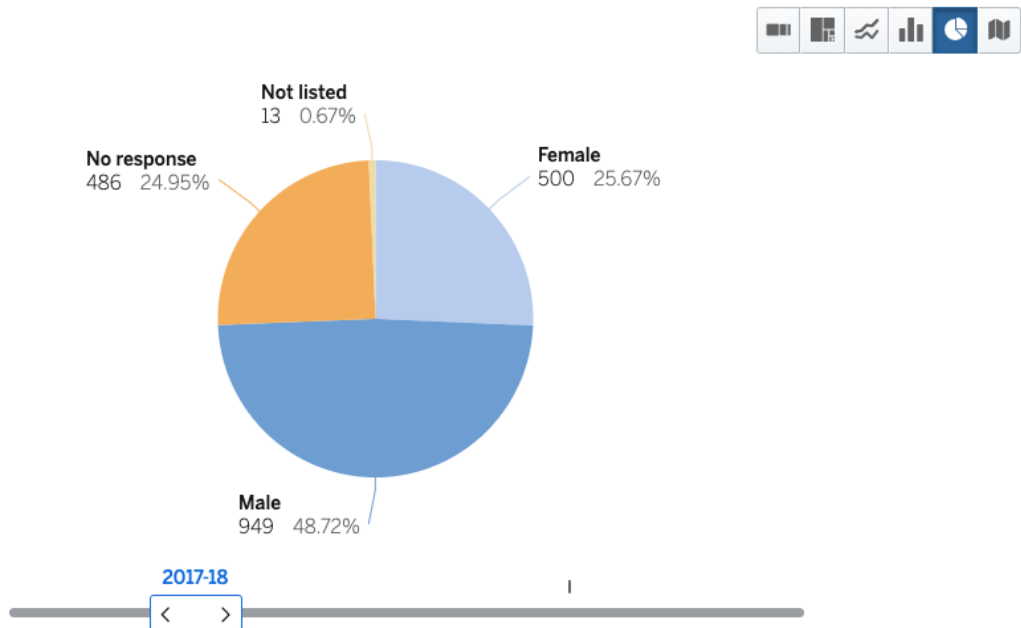
The following example shows the difficulty of performing real time reporting. This data shows the gender identity responses between 2017-18 (Graph1) and 2018-19 (Graph 2). Graph 1 shows males occupying approximately 48 percent of the local government leadership across the US and females occupying approximately 25 percent. Graph 2 suggests 33 percent of respondents chose not to respond while 66 percent of respondents chose male. This is a significant change from one year to the other. This is explained through the problem with real time reporting. Graph 2 only has 3 respondents total which skews that data and no way can be representative of all local government leaders within the because the sample size is too small.

Non-Response Rates

These pie charts also so the problem with a high non-response rate. In Graph 1 Approximate 24% of survey respondents declined to answer. Although this is the survey respondent's prerogative, It is difficult to draw an accurate conclusion because that 25% could make a huge difference in amount of females or males are in leadership positions.

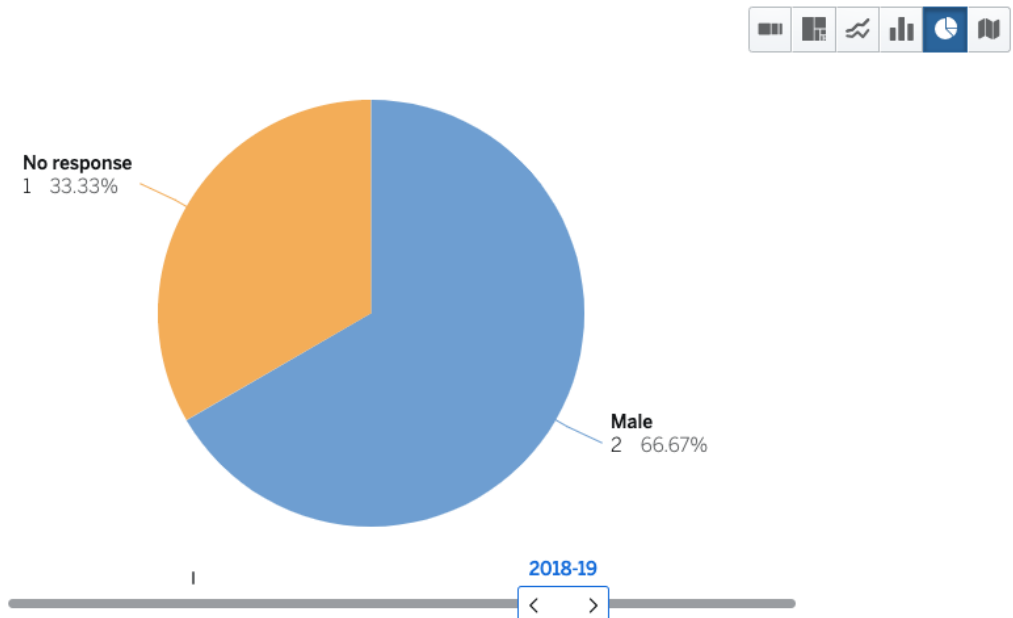
Graph 1, ELGL Gender Identity, 2017-18

▼ VISUALIZATION



Graph 2, ELGL Gender Identity, 2018-19

▼ VISUALIZATION

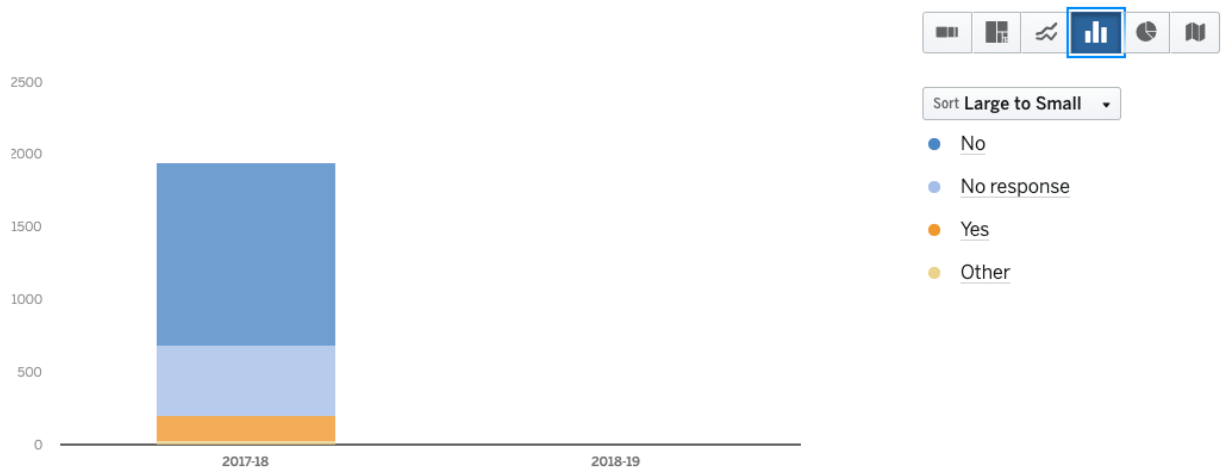


Variation in visualization formatting

Graphs 3, 4 and 5 a bar graph, pie chart and a line graph exemplifying the same information. Line graphs show change over time while pie charts are percentages of whole while the bar graph is displayed as stacked rather than individual entities. This information answers different types of questions and can confuse the reader from understanding the ultimate goal.

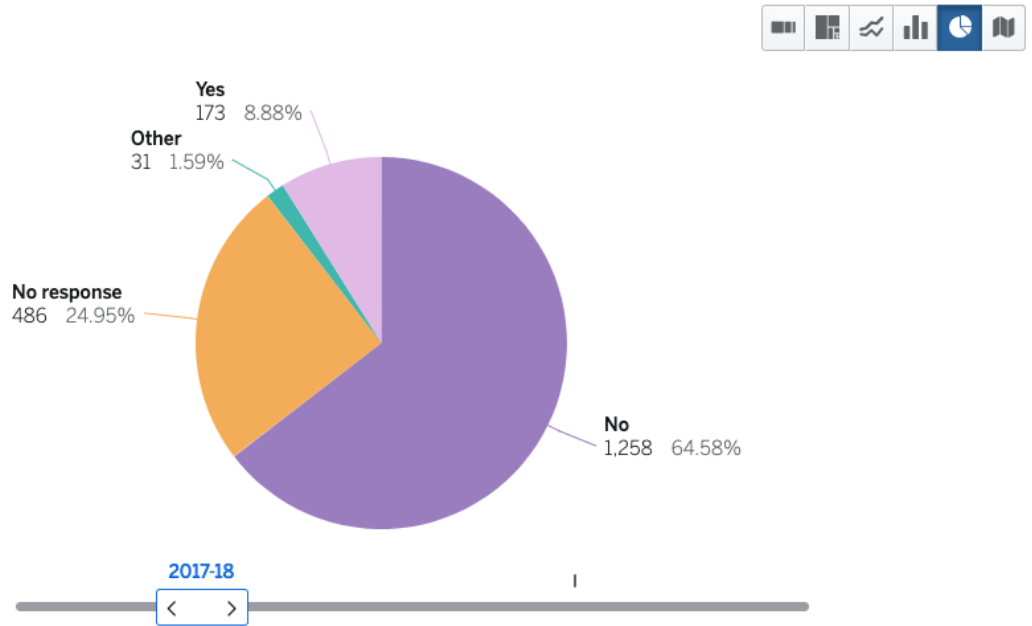
Graph 3, ELGL Veteran Status Bar Graph, 2017-18

▼ VISUALIZATION



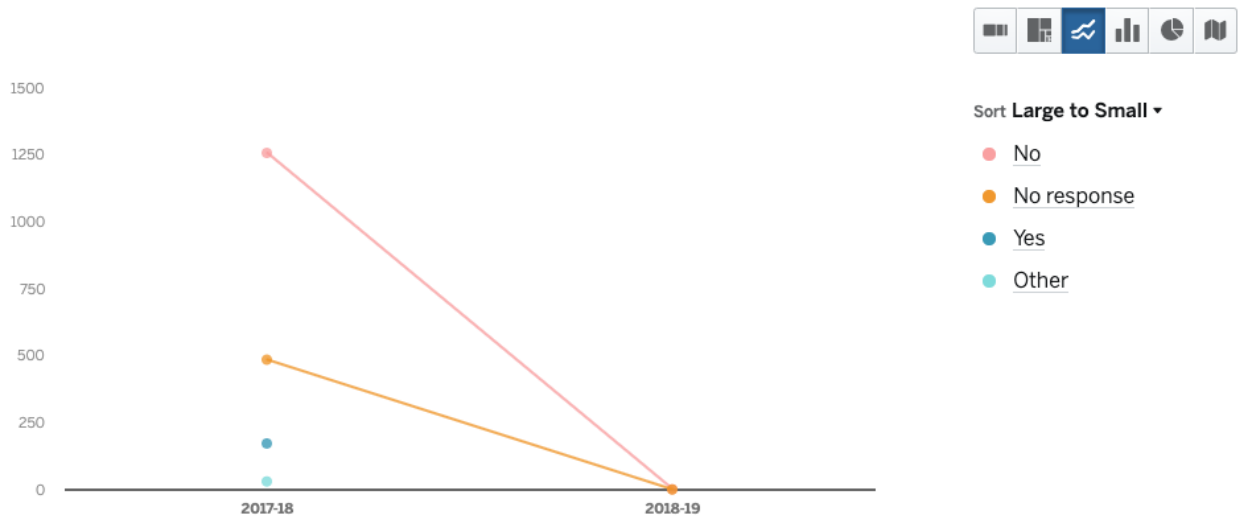
Graph 4, ELGL Veteran Status Pie Chart, 2017-18

▼ VISUALIZATION



Graph 3, ELGL Veteran Status Line Graph, 2017-18

▼ VISUALIZATION



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