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# Pluralism under Pressure

Assessing a Core American Value

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# Introduction

**Americans are living in a moment of rapid demographic, technological, environmental, and social change.** It can sometimes feel as though the country is on the precipice of falling apart—but this is also a moment of possibility. There are countless examples of people and communities working together across dimensions of difference to tackle hard issues, revive our ability to self-govern, and create a world where everyone belongs. New Pluralists—a collaborative of funders, researchers, practitioners, innovators, and storytellers—calls this pluralism: a way we can build community together that embraces the beauty in our differences; welcomes complexity of thought; grants us the courage to heal and repair; and helps us negotiate our various priorities, freedoms, and needs in service of creating a society that works for everyone.

Since April 2021, New Pluralists has been working to understand what it takes to advance pluralism across the country. In early 2022, ORS Impact (ORS) joined New Pluralists as their learning and evaluation partner. Together, we sought to establish a baseline understanding of the pluralism landscape and to determine (among other things): *To what extent does a culture of pluralism exist in the US?*

**This report provides ORS’s qualitative assessment of the state of pluralism in the US through a literature scan of publicly available research on six conditions: belonging, social capital, diversity, geographic segregation, affective polarization, and hate crimes.<sup>1</sup>** This report is meant to be one input into a more extensive, field-wide conversation about pluralism in the US. Although it does not aim to comprehensively analyze all possible conditions related to pluralism or generate primary data, it does offer ecosystem actors a unique and valuable tool for understanding and making sense of the current state of pluralism through a subset of existing publicly available data.

To accomplish these objectives, we begin this report by defining pluralism and situating it in the context of culture change; then we offer background on our methodology, followed by a description of publicly available data for the six conditions of focus. We conclude with an assessment of the current state of pluralism in the US, along with evaluator observations and recommendations for New Pluralists and other ecosystem actors working to understand and advance the state of pluralism in the US.

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<sup>1</sup> These conditions were identified (among others) as important for enabling a culture of pluralism in society.

# Defining Pluralism

We define pluralism as both a worldview and a practice. As a worldview, pluralism is the belief that the coexistence of diverse opinions, ways of life, and value systems enriches all members of society, and all people deserve to be recognized, respected, accepted, and engaged based on their diversity. As a practice, pluralism invites us to work creatively and collaboratively with the diversity we encounter in life—across race, ethnicity, creed, religion, political affiliation, gender, sexual orientation, culture, socioeconomic status, individual experiences, beliefs, and actions. This practice is necessary for creating a society that works together to tackle today's most pressing issues.

Advancing pluralism requires a deep understanding of both the structures and conditions that promote togetherness and those that keep Americans apart. A culture of pluralism enables groups to manage the coexistence of diverse interests without breaking apart at the seams, using processes that bring people together to tolerate, learn, understand, share power, negotiate, and self-govern. By creating a culture of pluralism in the US, New Pluralists' work is focused on embracing the cultural conditions that enable pluralist practices and attitudes, and learning how to navigate the cultural conditions that challenge working together respectfully.

## Why Focus on Culture?

New Pluralists' specific focus on culture change—that is, changes in mindsets, values, skills, and behaviors that people enact individually and collectively—comes from the observation that structural changes (e.g., policy change) alone are insufficient to help advance pluralism in our democracy. For long-lasting change, the focus must also be on changing the waters that we swim in and must be tackled alongside policy and other structural work. Given New Pluralists' focus on culture change, we defined pluralism and approached this assessment from a cultural lens. **This means that we focused on understanding the data that speaks to the connection between the six conditions and advancing a culture of pluralism in the US.**

# Methodology

To assess the state of pluralism in the US, ORS conducted a literature scan from November 2023 to April 2024. The scan examined publicly available data across six conditions: belonging, social capital, diversity, geographic segregation, affective polarization, and hate crimes. This section describes the initial longer list of conditions we identified, the process we used to pare down the list to these six, and the focus group we facilitated to further reflect on the data collected against these six conditions.

**An initial list of 42 possible conditions that influence pluralism (Table 1) was generated** from an October 2023 document review of New Pluralists' commissioned knowledge products on pluralism, a scan of other organizations (and their knowledge products) that work in the pluralism ecosystem, and input from an advisory group.<sup>2</sup>

Table 1 | **Originating List of Conditions**

<b>Anti-hate/prejudice</b>	<b>Diversity</b>	<b>Pay disparities</b>
<b>Appreciation</b>	<b>Economic inequality</b>	<b>Peaceful protest/non-violent collective action</b>
<b>Attitudes about democracy</b>	<b>Egalitarianism</b>	<b>Political polarization</b>
<b>Authoritarianism</b>	<b>Emotional humility</b> (intellectual humility)	<b>Presence of philanthropic, community, and cultural organizations</b>
<b>Belonging</b>	<b>Empathy</b>	<b>Racial disparities</b>
<b>Civic engagement</b>	<b>Equal access to jobs and housing</b>	<b>Racism</b>
<b>Civil liberties and human rights</b>	<b>Hate crimes</b>	<b>Religious intolerance</b>
<b>Competition</b>	<b>Immigration</b>	<b>Respect</b>
<b>Conflict transformation</b>	<b>Immigration policy</b>	<b>Segregation</b>
<b>Curiosity</b>	<b>Listening</b>	<b>Social capital</b> (bridging and bonding)
<b>Dehumanization</b>	<b>Love for humanity</b>	<b>Social cohesion</b>
<b>Democracy</b>	<b>Meta perceptions</b>	<b>Threat, competition, and group-based relative deprivation</b>
<b>Democratic functioning at the institutional level</b>	<b>Moral outrage and civil dialogue on social media</b>	<b>Valued by society</b>
<b>Demographic changes</b>	<b>Partisan animosity</b>	<b>Violence</b>

<sup>2</sup> The advisory group consisted of New Pluralists staff as well as academics with expertise and interest in bridging research and practice within the ecosystem. The advisory group served as a touchstone throughout the literature scan process and engaged in helping ORS pare down the list of 42 conditions to six.

From this initial list of 42 possible conditions, ORS developed criteria and engaged the advisory group in several rounds of feedback to refine the list of conditions. The group agreed to move forward with eight conditions that met the following criteria:

- **From 2018 onward** to capture the most up-to-date knowledge on the topic.<sup>3</sup>
- **That was measurement-focused** or contained data that measured the state of that condition in the US.
- **From a trustworthy and reputable source**, provides well-researched and measured information, and is recognized by the research community.
- **Generalizable to the US** rather than containing data that only applies to specific regions/under particular contexts.

ORS then used the matrix that came out of the 2023 [Research to Impact](#) convening (see Appendix A) as inspiration to map the refined list of eight conditions to the matrix's three levels of cultural change: (1) cultural and institutional contexts, (2) behaviors and intergroup relations, and (3) individual attitudes and beliefs. Mapping the eight conditions within the matrix helped align the literature scan with existing knowledge about pluralism. Ultimately, ORS and the advisory group agreed to move the literature scan forward with six conditions—belonging, social capital, diversity, geographic segregation, affective polarization, and hate crimes—which provide a good representation of the three levels of cultural change necessary for creating a culture of pluralism in the US. The final list of six conditions is divided into three conditions associated with promoting pluralism (belonging, social capital, diversity) and three associated with inhibiting pluralism (geographic segregation, affective polarization, hate crimes). Taken together, these six conditions offer a reasonably good picture of where we see the most barriers to and opportunities for pluralism in our culture.

In April 2024, ORS facilitated a two-hour focus group of experts with backgrounds in social and political psychology, belonging, prejudice and disadvantage, intergroup contact, attitudes and relationships, polarization, violent extremism, peace, and inequality, with different focuses on gender, race, and social justice. The focus group aimed to supplement and further understand what the research says about each condition and clarify how each concept is connected to pluralism. Together, the review of publicly available data and focus group insights provided the foundation for ORS's assessment of the state of pluralism in the US.

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<sup>3</sup> To conceptualize conditions further, we also looked at formative theories that pre-date 2019.

# Summary of the Current State

Anchored in data from across the six conditions, the literature scan reveals concerning trends that threaten to foster a culture of pluralism in the US.

**Data suggests that a culture of pluralism in the US is under threat and is largely inhibited by the current state of belonging, social capital, geographic segregation, diversity, affective polarization, and hate crimes.**

Table 2 provides a high-level overview of the current status of the six conditions of focus for this literature scan. Across them, we see trends of non-belonging across different areas of life, declining rates of social capital, persistent rates of segregation, and rising rates of affective polarization and hate crime. Conditions are organized under three levels of change borrowed from the Research to Impact matrix (see Appendix A): individual attitudes and beliefs, behaviors and intergroup relations, and cultural and institutional contexts.

The findings summarized in Table 2 are described in more detail in the next section of this report, Summary of Conditions Data.

Table 2 | Summary of Current Status of Six Conditions in the US

Condition	Definition	Current status in the US
Individual Attitudes & Beliefs		
<div>1</div> <div>Belonging</div>	Belonging describes “more than a feeling of inclusion or welcome.” It’s “the subjective feeling of deep connection with social groups, physical places, and individual and collective experiences—[it] is a fundamental human need that predicts numerous mental, physical, social, economic, and behavioral outcomes” (Allen et al., 2021)	<b>The status of belonging hinders a culture of pluralism from flourishing in the US.</b> Data shows a pervasive sense of non-belonging across different areas of life (family, friendships, workplace, local community, and the nation), with the highest sense of non-belonging in local communities. In local communities, the Belonging Barometer (Argo & Sheikh, 2023) found a relationship between people with stronger belonging scores being more inclined to get to know others who differ from them, which is important for cultivating a culture of pluralism in the US.
<div>2</div> <div>Affective polarization</div>	Affective polarization describes both in-group partisan affinity and opposing or out-group partisan hostility. In this literature scan, we focus on partisan hostility. This type of hostility is often fueled by a deep sense of threat to one’s identity or ways of life (both perceived and real). It can include zero-sum or binary ways of thinking that may lead to dehumanization or severe “othering” (Roig, 2024).	<b>Increasing rates of affective polarization hinder a pluralistic culture from flourishing in the US</b> because it contributes to group animosity and division, which are two conditions that are antithetical to pluralism. Affective polarization can also provide a glimpse into the bias that keeps people apart.

Condition	Definition	Current status in the US
<b>Behaviors &amp; Intergroup Relations</b>		
<b>3</b> <b>Social capital</b>	<p>Social capital describes the “networks, norms, and trust that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives” (Putnam, 1995). It also describes “how involvement and participation in groups can have positive consequences for the individual and the community” (Aldrich &amp; Meyer, 2015).</p>	<p><b>A continued decline of social capital in the US hinders a culture of pluralism from flourishing.</b> Social capital is thought to be gained through social interactions and civic opportunities to congregate with others. Social engagement is also needed to cultivate a culture of pluralism in the US because it creates opportunities for collaboration. Given the two, declining rates of social capital hinder pluralism.</p>
<b>4</b> <b>Hate crimes</b>	<p>Hate crimes are lawfully defined as crimes that manifest evidence of prejudice based on race, gender or gender identity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or ethnicity (Hate Crime Statistics Act, 2017). Included in this definition are other aspects related to hate crimes, such as hate groups, hate group flyering, and assessing political violence.</p>	<p><b>Data shows an upward trend in hate crimes in the US since 2018.</b> Due to the underreporting of hate crimes, data captures only a fraction of actual victimizations, which, coupled with the rising presence of hate group propaganda, represents a rise in violent behaviors and actions that inhibit a culture of pluralism in the US.</p>



Condition	Definition	Current status in the US
<b>Cultural &amp; Institutional Contexts</b>		
<div>5</div> <div>Diversity</div>	<p>Diversity refers to the range of human difference across social identity groups, including age, gender, gender identity and expression, race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, immigration status, language, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and political diversity.</p> <p>A core value of pluralism is the embrace of diversity across difference, not simply the existence of diversity. Thus, diversity can also be understood through the lens of human perception, that is, how people perceive it, either as a threat to or as an enhancement of American society.</p>	<p><b>Data shows increased diversity across race and ethnicity, gender identity, and religion in the US.</b> However, data also shows that a significant percentage of Americans have negative perceptions about others with differing identities. This suggests that while diversity may be advantageous for creating a culture of pluralism, it may also increase negative perceptions about others.</p>
<div>6</div> <div>Geographic segregation</div>	<p>More broadly, segregation is defined as separating groups of people with differing characteristics or identities. Often, segregation serves as a means to codify unequal conditions or access, existing de jure (in law) or de facto (in practice). Geographic segregation is the primary lens utilized in this literature scan.</p>	<p><b>There continue to be high levels of geographic segregation in the US across race and ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and political affiliation, which threatens a culture of pluralism in the US.</b> Data confirms that the legacy of segregation is not only a thing of the past; it continues to permeate through various aspects of our lives. Segregation keeps people apart and feeds animosity between groups, which hinders pluralism.</p>

# Breakdown by Condition

This section summarizes the data related to the six conditions: belonging, social capital, geographic segregation, diversity, affective polarization, and hate crimes. Findings include a definition of each condition, its connection to pluralism, and a summary of the data. Conditions are organized under three levels of change borrowed from the Research to Impact matrix (see Appendix A): individual attitudes and beliefs, behaviors and intergroup relations, and cultural and institutional contexts. We also assess the overall status of conditions as either inhibiting or promoting pluralism, which is a modified version of the x-axis in the Research to Impact matrix.

## Individual Attitudes & Beliefs

Individual attitudes and beliefs describe mindsets, worldviews, and values that inform areas such as biases, tolerances, and intolerances. This section looks at belonging and affective polarization as conditions at the level of individual attitudes and beliefs.

### 1 Belonging

<b>Definition</b>	Belonging describes “more than a feeling of inclusion or welcome.” It’s “the subjective feeling of deep connection with social groups, physical places, and individual and collective experiences—[it] is a fundamental human need that predicts numerous mental, physical, social, economic, and behavioral outcomes” (Allen et al., 2021).
<b>Current Status in the US</b>	<b>The status of belonging hinders a culture of pluralism from flourishing in the US.</b> Data shows a pervasive sense of non-belonging across different areas of life (family, friendships, workplace, local community, and the nation), with the highest sense of non-belonging in local communities. In local communities, the Belonging Barometer found a relationship between people with stronger belonging scores being more inclined to get to know others who differ from them, which is important for cultivating a culture of pluralism in the US.
<b>Overall Assessment</b>	<b>Inhibiting pluralism</b> (i.e., low belonging)

## Definition and connection to pluralism

Belonging can be defined as “the subjective feeling of deep connection with social groups, physical places, and individual and collective experiences—[it] is a fundamental human need that predicts numerous mental, physical, social, economic, and behavioral outcomes” (Allen et al., 2021). The Othering and Belonging Institute further describes that “belonging describes more than a feeling of inclusion or welcome ... [it] means having a meaningful voice and the opportunity to participate in the design of political, social, and cultural structures that shape one’s life—the right to both contribute and make demands upon society and political institutions” (*Our Story*, n.d.).

In other words, belonging means engaging in cocreation and co-ownership in society and across communities. A sense of belonging is a core human need and is associated with positive outcomes on both individual and societal levels related to physical, social, and democratic well-being. Across communities, belonging is vital for a culture of pluralism to take hold, and a lack of belonging in society can sow seeds of division and fragmentation.

However, the Othering and Belonging Institute posits that although a sense of belonging is necessary, not all attempts to belong facilitate a culture of pluralism. In fact, “one way that people forge a sense of belonging is by othering members of other groups” (Argo & Sheikh, 2023, p. 2). These attempts to satisfy a stronger sense of belonging can create a relationship between “us” (in-group) versus “them” (out-group) (Powell & Menendian, 2016). This highlights the multidimensionality of belonging—simultaneously a core need that can enable a culture of pluralism through coexistence and mutuality among diverse groups, or one that can sabotage it through exclusion.

Current measures of belonging refer to the experience of it across different dimensions of life. As an experience, belonging is ultimately felt within but is reflected through people, community, cultural norms, and structures. Thus, the data in the following section situates belonging through the lens of individual attitudes and beliefs.

## Data about the current status

The Belonging Barometer (Argo & Sheikh, 2023) sought to understand belonging across family, friendships, workplace, local community, and the nation, and found that “nearly 20% of Americans—1 out of 5 people—report non-belonging across all five life settings.” Across these settings, they saw that non-belonging is pervasive: “A majority of Americans report non-belonging in the workplace (64%), the nation (68%), and their local community (74%). ... [Additionally,] 44% of Americans report non-belonging among their friends, and 40% of Americans say they experience non-belonging in their families.” Although these results may not be surprising, they found that “Across the life settings, Americans are more likely to report belonging if they see themselves as better off or much better off economically than the average American; are older; identify as a woman or a man (vs. another gender); or identify as heterosexual (straight) or homosexual (gay) rather than bi/pansexual, asexual, or queer” (Argo & Sheikh, pp. 24, 50). In local communities, the Belonging Barometer also found that people with stronger belonging scores are more inclined to get to know others who differ from them, which is important for cultivating a culture of pluralism in the US (p. 48).

Other sources, such as the Pew Research Center, corroborate these findings. Utilizing the World Values Survey, they shared that only 66% of Americans “feel close to people in their country” (Wike et al., 2023). Although these findings do not encapsulate every dimension of life we may find ourselves in, they indicate some worrisome realities about belonging that may inhibit a culture of pluralism in the US.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Other studies on belonging focus on smaller populations; thus, we only cite the Belonging Barometer (Argo & Sheikh, 2023), as it is generalizable to a broader population.

## 2 Affective Polarization

<b>Definition</b>	Affective polarization describes both in-group partisan affinity and opposing or out-group partisan hostility. In this literature scan, we focus on partisan hostility. This type of hostility is often fueled by a deep sense of threat to one's identity or ways of life (both perceived and real). It can include zero-sum or binary ways of thinking that may lead to dehumanization or severe "othering" (Roig, 2024).
<b>Current Status in the US</b>	<b>Increasing rates of affective polarization hinder a pluralistic culture from flourishing in the US</b> because this contributes to group animosity and division, which are two conditions that are antithetical to pluralism. Affective polarization can also provide a glimpse into the bias that keeps people apart.
<b>Overall Assessment</b>	<b>Inhibiting pluralism</b> (i.e., high affective polarization)

### *Definition and connection to pluralism*

For decades, the US has become an increasingly more polarized country (Boxell et al., 2020; Kleinfeld, 2023). Affective polarization describes both in-group partisan affinity and opposing or out-group partisan hostility—in other words, the tendency to feel positive emotions toward members of your own party and feel negative emotions toward members of the opposing party.

It is important to highlight that there are multiple kinds of polarization. Some are actually healthy; they enable us to distinguish and debate different worldviews, help activists and organizers mobilize, and serve as a catalyst to stimulate social change. In contrast, "toxic polarization," including affective polarization, can move toward a "dehumanizing" frame about those we consider "other" (Roig, 2024). It can look like "zero-sum thinking" that is oriented toward binaries and groupthink/herd mentality. Toxic polarization is often "fueled by a deep sense of threat to our identities and our way of life," both perceived and real (Roig, 2024). Although a culture of pluralism should enable groups to manage the coexistence of diverse interests or views (good polarization), data suggests that our views of other political parties often veer into toxic polarization and are a key social driver that often actively threatens a culture of pluralism and its foundational values.

To better understand the depth of affective polarization, it is important to elevate insights into how partisan groups perceive one another and, in turn, how those perceptions further impact negative attitudes about the other side. Partisanship arises from our social identities, meaning it is an expression of attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors that exist "outside of the political sphere" but then influence how we show up within that sphere (Iyengar et al., 2019; Mason et al., 2021). In other words, measuring affective polarization provides a glimpse into other enabling conditions for bias, not only for polarization but also for other views and feelings related to other kinds of out-group members. For the purposes of this literature scan, we focus on affective polarization as a negative form of polarization.

## *Data about the current status*

Americans themselves say that their country is more divided, holding pervasive negativity toward politics and elected officials (Pew Research Center, 2019), and a growing body of evidence suggests that American attitudes are becoming more toxic and permeating other aspects of life beyond politics. These kinds of attitudes also propagate other conditions, such as threats, political violence, and further fragmentation, preventing “progress on shared concerns and [undermining] Americans’ faith in democracy” (Yudkin et al., 2019).

One study in particular illustrates the rippling effects of affective polarization as affecting attitudes toward opposing or out-group people and percolating into attitudes about society. Voelkel et al. (2024) found that those with stronger partisan identities showed more significant levels of partisan animosity, including being more supportive of undemocratic practices and partisan violence, favoring undemocratic candidates, and, importantly, being more opposed to bipartisan cooperation (Voelkel et al., p. 101). This same study found that the strength of partisan identity plays a significant role in political attitudes. They highlight that “strongly identified Democrats” were more likely to maintain a social distance from those with opposing views, whereas “weakly identified Democrats” were more likely to have higher social distrust. Similarly, “strongly identified Republicans” were more likely to oppose bipartisan cooperation or cooperation with Democrats.

Other studies have offered more hopeful insights into the gaps in perceptions of out-group parties. In a 2019 report, More in Common found a significant perception gap between Democrats and Republicans. For example, Americans are less divided than they think they are, “overestim[ing] their opponents that hold extreme views by almost a factor of 2”—or, put another way, on average, they believe 55% of opponents held these views while in reality only 30% do (Yudkin et al., 2019). The inaccuracy in the perceptions, as this study suggests, emphasizes the “profound divisions that are undermining” our social fabric and simultaneously provides optimistic “insight into the extent of the misunderstanding of political opponents that deepen these divisions” (Yudkin et al., p. 50). Despite the challenge these attitudes pose to pluralism today, identifying when affective polarization plays a role in public discourse is important for considering what interventions may be needed to promote bipartisanship and encourage working across divides.

Affective polarization presents a significant barrier to pluralism in the US by fostering an environment of distrust, animosity, misunderstanding, and misperceptions between groups. Creating both real and perceived barriers to engagement, particularly cross-partisan engagement, undermines the core foundations of pluralism.

## Behaviors & Intergroup Relations

Behaviors and intergroup relations describe both actions and interactions within varying community contexts (e.g., neighborhood, local community, political party). This section looks at social capital and hate crimes as conditions at the behavior and intergroup relations level.

### 3 Social Capital

<b>Definition</b>	Social capital describes the “networks, norms, and trust that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives” (Putnam, 1995). It also describes “how involvement and participation in groups can have positive consequences for the individual and the community” (Aldrich & Meyer, 2015).
<b>Current Status in the US</b>	<b>A continued decline of social capital in the US hinders a culture of pluralism from flourishing.</b> Social capital is thought to be gained through social interactions and civic opportunities to congregate with others. Social engagement is also needed to cultivate a culture of pluralism in the US because it creates opportunities for collaboration. Given the two, declining rates of social capital hinder pluralism.
<b>Overall Assessment</b>	<b>Inhibiting pluralism</b> (i.e., low levels of social capital)

#### *Definition and connection to pluralism*

Connection across multiple facets of life is foundational for a culture of pluralism and has been linked to positive health outcomes for communities, including psychological well-being (Cohen, 2004; Umberson & Karas Montez, 2010). Despite the difficulties of measuring these connections, social capital illustrates characteristics of illuminating behaviors and intergroup relations. Social capital refers to “how involvement and participation in groups can have positive consequences for the individual and the community” (Aldrich & Meyer, 2015, p. 256). Putnam (1995) defines the concept as “networks, norms, and trust that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives.”

Claridge (2018) identifies three types of social capital: bonding, bridging, and linking.

- **Bonding** refers to the ties between individuals within a group (intragroup). These are stronger, close-knit relationships with more frequent interactions, like family, close friends, neighbors, or other community connections. Bonding is often based on location or association and is characterized by a sense of belonging and shared identity. Bonding can inform pluralism by illuminating the different degrees of seclusion and/or homogeneity across communities.
- **Bridging** refers to the ties between individuals that cross social divides (e.g., groups based on race, class, religion, and other social characteristics). These intergroup connections involve less frequent interactions compared to bonding. Bridging within the context of pluralism is often a site of intervention because it is defined through connections across difference.
- **Linking** is characterized by relationships between people interacting across explicit, formal, or institutionalized power or authority gradients in society, known as vertical relationships. As with bridging, linking is also a site of intervention because, for example, it can occur at the intersection of people with different levels of institutional power interacting with one another.

The nuance of social capital can be described as akin to scaffolding social connectedness or belonging. Although the data below does not always describe social capital through these specific categories, these distinctions are important to help define what is meant by the kinds of associations across different social networks and connections.

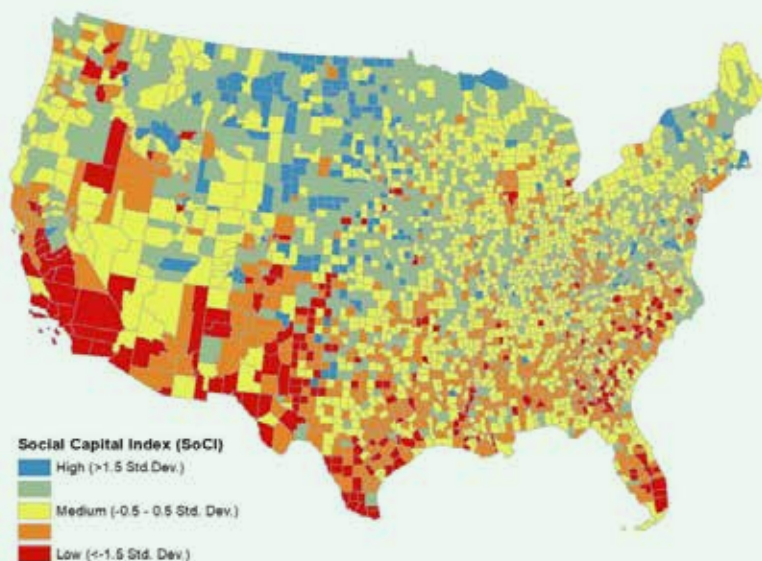
### Data about the current status

Findings from the Joint Economic Committee (2017) report echo Putnam's initial findings about social capital: "associational life" across family life, religion, community, and work are all declining in the US, meaning that opportunities to interact, especially bridging and linking, have also declined. Kyne and Aldrich (2020) found that the highest social capital values are in the West and North Regions, with some bright spots in the Midwest, while some of the lowest values for social capital were found in the South Region (see Figure 1).

This data also suggests that the counties with the highest overall social capital score tended to have higher

bonding and bridging scores. While the general data paints a less-than-desirable state of social capital related to a culture of pluralism, the abovementioned relationship between increased overall scores and bonding and bridging offers a hopeful area. These kinds of associations are at the core of catalyzing a culture of pluralism and magnify some of the other conditions that support this literature scan, such as belonging, geographic segregation, and affective polarization.

Figure 1 | **Social Capital Index (SoCI) for Contiguous Counties in the United States**



A study from the Pew Research Center discussed how social capital is anchored through interactions with neighbors (Parker et al., 2018). They found that about 30% of Americans reported knowing all or most of their neighbors, including around 40% of rural residents, 23% of urban residents, and 28% of suburban residents. Older residents (age 65+) reported knowing most of their neighbors compared to younger people, particularly within urban areas. Unsurprisingly, the study also found that neighbors perceive that they interact more with those who have a similar background across race, class, and education. Another study confirmed that racial diversity “is the most crucial factor that diminishes social capital in American society” in addition to economic inequality, especially when bridging and bonding social capital (Mi-son et al., 2020, p. 23).

Cultivating social capital requires an opportunity to engage with others through different civic opportunities, such as participating in mutual aid, and de Vries et al. (2024) report that there are significant disparities in the supply of civic opportunity for different groups of people across the US. For example, data shows that whiter, wealthier, and more educated communities have an increased likelihood of being provided certain civic opportunities than communities that are non-white, less wealthy, and less educated. These opportunities could come in the form of involvement in social, religious, and fraternal organizations (e.g., Rotary clubs, fraternities, and sororities), or in a broader range of nonprofit activities, including issue-specific, community-based, and professional, political, and research organizations.

While each data point does not encapsulate every aspect of social capital, these findings paint a complex and somewhat concerning picture of social capital in the US. The data reveals that though certain regions and communities have higher social capital than others, people still tend to engage with people most similar to them, structurally and by choice. While that is not inherently bad, a flourishing culture of pluralism would also have high social capital across difference. However, the continued decline of social capital in the US troubles a culture of pluralism.



## 4 Hate Crimes

<b>Definition</b>	Hate crimes are lawfully defined as crimes that manifest evidence of prejudice based on race, gender or gender identity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or ethnicity (Hate Crime Statistics Act, 2017). Included in this definition are other aspects related to hate crimes, such as hate groups, hate group flyering, and assessing political violence.
<b>Current Status in the US</b>	<b>Data shows an upward trend in hate crimes in the US since 2018.</b> Due to the underreporting of hate crimes, data captures only a fraction of actual victimizations, which, coupled with the rising presence of hate group propaganda, represents a rise in violent behaviors and actions that inhibit a culture of pluralism in the US.
<b>Overall Assessment</b>	<b>Inhibiting pluralism</b> (i.e., high levels of hate crimes)

### *Definition and connection to pluralism*

Hate crimes are defined as “crimes that manifest evidence of prejudice based on race, gender or gender identity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or ethnicity” (Hate Crime Statistics Act, 2017). Current measures of hate crimes are reported at the federal level in addition to other related aspects such as hate groups, hate group flyering, and assessing political violence. As manifestations of intolerance, hate crimes serve as one systemic indicator of definitive anti-pluralistic behaviors.

Hate crimes also link to underlying anti-pluralistic attitudes, such as discrimination and hate toward those that one might consider “other.” While hate crimes stem from anti-pluralistic attitudes, they are actions taken by one member of a group against another. For this reason, we have included hate crimes as a condition within the Behaviors and Intergroup Relations section.

### *Data about the current status*

According to the FBI Uniform Crime Reporting Program, recent hate crime statistics show an overall increase in single-bias incident hate crimes across recent years. The most recent data available (from 2022) shares that incidents motivated by race/ethnicity/ancestry accounted for 59.1% of crimes, followed by religion (17.3%) and sexual orientation (17.2%), with a total of 13,377 incidents (United States Department of Justice, 2024). While these numbers provide a snapshot of reports collected on a volunteer basis by law enforcement agencies across the country, they do not paint the whole picture because many hate crimes are unreported. From 2005 to 2019, a representative sample of hate crime victimizations across the US revealed that federal data only captures roughly 1 in 31 hate crimes (Sill & Haskins, 2023). Therefore, measuring and quantifying hate crimes holds challenges, primarily around reporting accuracy. Other efforts—such as the National Crime Victimization Survey, Movement Advancement Project, Southern Poverty Law Center, and the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project Conflict Index—help fill in some gaps in data.

Results from the National Crime Victimization Survey mirror federally reported hate crimes: an overall increase in the past decade. The majority are motivated by racial or ethnic bias as well as anti-Jewish violence and violence against people with disabilities and LGBTQ people, particularly Black transgender women (Movement Advancement Project, 2021). This survey helps illustrate a “vast and long-standing” disparity between victimizations that occur and those actually reported.

The Southern Poverty Law Center aims to uncover some of the enabling conditions for hate crimes by tracking far-right hate groups and their flyering (posting and distributing flyers to recruit, publicize, and intimidate).<sup>5</sup> For example, they found increased displays between 2018 and 2023, with an exponential increase in certain groups displaying racist or white nationalist propaganda (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2024). Similarly, the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project Conflict Index (Raleigh & Kishi, 2024) utilizes an ongoing political violence event data analysis. In 2023, they categorized the US as “turbulent” when describing Conflict Index rankings. While this data is situated in comparison with countries across the world ranked as “high” and “extreme,” a society with a culture of pluralism would indicate “low/inactive” levels when describing Conflict Index rankings.<sup>6</sup>

The overall increase in single-bias incident hate crimes, particularly those motivated by race, ethnicity, religion, and sexual orientation, combined with the significant underreporting of hate crimes, makes clear that substantial work remains to be done to foster a culture of pluralism. In addition, the prevalence of hate groups, alongside the “turbulent” presence of political violence, underscores the obstacles facing pluralism in the US.

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5 Hate flyering was quantified by public flyers, campus flyers, and banners.

6 The Conflict Index Scale ranges from “low/inactive,” moving to “turbulent,” then “high,” then “extreme.”

## Cultural and Institutional Contexts

Cultural and institutional contexts describe how conditions inform people's responses or interactions with the world around them. These include areas that are structural in nature and affect individual attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors, as well as intergroup relations. This section looks at diversity and geographic segregation at the cultural and institutional context level.

### 5 Diversity

<b>Definition</b>	<p>Diversity refers to the range of human difference across social identity groups, including age, gender, gender identity and expression, race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, immigration status, language, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and political diversity.</p> <p>A core value of pluralism is the embrace of diversity across difference, not simply the existence of diversity. Thus, diversity can also be understood through the lens of human perception, that is, how people perceive it, either as a threat to or as an enhancement of American society.</p>
<b>Current Status in the US</b>	<p><b>Data shows increased diversity across race and ethnicity, gender identity, and religion in the US.</b> However, how diversity is represented does not necessarily reflect that. Diversity is crucial to helping shape people's worldviews and providing opportunities for people to engage with others who are different from them. However, data also shows that a significant percentage of Americans have negative perceptions about others with differing identities. This suggests that while diversity may be advantageous for creating a culture of pluralism, it may also increase negative perceptions about others.</p>
<b>Overall Assessment</b>	<p><b>Mixed</b> (i.e., high levels of diversity, high levels of negative perceptions)</p>

## *Definition and connection to pluralism*

Inherent to the definition of pluralism is the idea that diversity is vital. In the US, our diversity includes a staggering and ever-evolving mix of different cultures and histories, political philosophies and values, religious and spiritual beliefs, traditions and ways of life. Across various settings (e.g., an organization, community), the level of diversity is most easily captured through data on our social identities—the groups to which we belong, by choice or by circumstance, that influence who we are, what we value, or with whom we associate. The focus on social identities “correspond(s) to societal differences in power and privilege and thus to the marginalization of some groups based on specific attributes—for example, age, gender, gender identity and expression, race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, immigration status, language, disability, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status. There is a recognition that people have multiple identities and that social identities are intersectional and have different salience and impact in different contexts” (American Psychological Association, 2023). As a core value of pluralism, diversity and attitudes toward diversity and difference are critical indicators for this literature scan. As such, the following section includes data in both areas.

## *Data about the current status*

Over the past several decades, US Census data indicates that by 2045, most of the country’s population will be non-white. These shifts are attributed to trends around growth among multiracial populations, immigrant populations, and Black people, as well as the decline of the white population through aging. At the intersection of race and age, Census data predicts that the demographic shifts will continue. However, older age groups (seniors age 60 and above) “will continue to be majority white after the year 2060,” even when compared to the white youth population (Frey, 2018).

Citing the 2018 American Values Survey, PRRI shared that “Nearly two-thirds (64%) of Americans say that the US becoming a majority non-white nation by 2045 will be a mostly positive change,” whereas “one-third (33%) of Americans say that the impact of this demographic shift will be mostly negative” (Vandermaas-Peeler et al., 2018). Another PRRI report found that 40% of Americans “say the growing number of newcomers from other countries threatens traditional American customs and values, compared with 55% who say it strengthens American society.” Among white Americans, 40% are likelier to say newcomers are a threat (PRRI, 2022). Another survey found that 38% of Americans preferred “a wide variety of religions” within the US (PRRI, 2021b).

According to their most recent polls, Gallup found that the percentage of US adults who identify as LGBTQ is rising, now at 7.6%. These increases are highest among younger generations (millennials and Gen Z). This data is consistent with past upward trends, which they suggest will continue (Jones, 2024). However, these trends are met with declining trends related to LGBTQ+ rights. Utilizing the annual Franklin and Marshall Global Barometers report, the US scored a C, marking it as a country “resistant” to LGBTQ+ rights. This score has not only declined from previous years, but is also the lowest among countries that have legalized same-sex marriage (Dicklitch et al., 2023; Chudy, 2023).

Related to religious diversity, PRRI’s analysis of 2020 census data found that 70% of Americans “identify as Christian, including more than four in 10 who identify as white Christian and more than one-quarter who identify as Christian of color. Nearly one in four Americans (23%) are religiously unaffiliated, and 5% identify with non-Christian religions ... including those who are Jewish (1%), Muslim (1%), Buddhist (1%), Hindu (0.5%), and those who identify with other religions (1%). Religiously unaffiliated Americans are those who do not claim any particular religious affiliation (17%) and those who identify as atheist (3%) or agnostic (3%)” (PRRI, 2021a). This same report found

that young Americans have the most religious diversity. This data offers a rich mosaic of some social identities that can enable changes in worldviews, perceptions about changes in diversity, or thinking across difference to animate further how a culture of pluralism exists.

Further illustrating this mosaic, voters are becoming more educated (24% increase in voters with a bachelor's degree or higher), more racially and ethnically diverse (increasing across both major political parties), older (about 60% are age 50 and older), and more religiously diverse (both less Christian and less religious across both major political parties). Over the past three decades, there has been little change to the ideological composition of voters, with more voters saying they are conservative (26%) or very conservative (10%) and fewer voters saying they are liberal (16%) or very liberal (8%). The majority of voters consider themselves moderate (36%), with more moderate Democrats (45%) than moderate Republicans (27%) (Pew Research Center, 2024).

Further contextualizing diversity through a lens of representation, data reveals underrepresentation across different areas. For example, women comprise only 25% of the US Senate, 28.5% of the US House of Representatives, 32.7% of state legislatures, and 24% of governors. While women's representation in US politics has grown over the past several years, "53% of Americans say there are still too few women in high political office ... and many see significant obstacles for women candidates" (Schaeffer, 2023). This growth in women's leadership trickles into other areas, such as Fortune 500 CEOs (10.6%), Fortune 500 board members (30.4%), and college and university presidents (32.8%). Across other professional occupations, Black (10%) and Latinx (9.8%) people are underrepresented, whereas Asian American/Pacific Islander (AAPI) workers are overrepresented (8.9%).<sup>7</sup> Representation provides yet another indicator to help understand how shifts in diversity across demographics are reflected in different facets of society. Paired with attitudes about changes in US demographics, this data can help direct what is needed to encourage and cultivate a culture of pluralism.

These findings suggest that while the US trends toward greater racial, ethnic, and religious diversity, attitudes and power structures lag. The gap between demographic realities and attitudes toward diversity indicates that concerted efforts are needed to bridge divides, promote understanding across difference, and ensure that diverse voices are heard and represented in all aspects of society. The gap between demographic realities and societal attitudes indicates that mere diversity is not enough; active efforts are needed to cultivate a truly pluralistic culture that embraces and leverages differences. The path toward a more pluralistic society will require addressing both attitudinal barriers and structural inequalities to create an environment where diversity is not just present but actively valued and integrated into the fabric of American life.

<sup>7</sup> Black workers account for 12.8% of the total workforce and Latinx workers account for 17.4%, whereas AAPI workers account for 7.4%.

## 6 Geographic Segregation

<b>Definition</b>	More broadly, segregation is defined as separating groups of people with differing characteristics or identities. Often, segregation serves as a means to codify unequal conditions or access, existing de jure (in law) or de facto (in practice). Geographic segregation is the primary lens utilized in this literature scan.
<b>Current Status in the US</b>	<b>There continue to be high levels of geographic segregation in the US across race and ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and political affiliation, which threatens a culture of pluralism in the US.</b> Data confirms that the legacy of segregation is not only a thing of the past—it continues to permeate through various aspects of our lives. Segregation keeps people apart and feeds animosity between groups, which hinders pluralism.
<b>Overall Assessment</b>	<b>Inhibiting pluralism</b> (i.e., high levels of geographic segregation)

### *Definition and connection to pluralism*

At its core, geographic segregation reinforces the separation of people and often further marginalizes groups that have been and continue to be most impacted by its societal consequences. As Barsa et al. (2022) write, geographic segregation compounds other “identity-based concerns” and facilitates less interaction with one another, where people “are less likely to have first-hand experience or familiarity with other groups.” They describe that segregation “allows for the acceptance of negative and exaggerated stereotypes about the other, and misinformation about their intentions or behaviors” (Barsa et al., p. 11). As an invitation for more homogenous interaction within the community, segregation, in this way, is a fundamental barrier to cultivating a culture of pluralism. Importantly, describing segregation through a cultural or institutional context alludes to how structural inequities influence culture and, in turn, attitudes and behaviors. While segregation frequently (and historically) refers to racialized segregation, it is important to describe how its outcomes are still prevalent today. This is evident in socioeconomic status, partisanship, and health inequities (Rothstein, 2018).

### *Data about the current status*

In a 2021 report, the Othering & Belonging Institute found that 53.8% of metropolitan regions across the US were more racially segregated in 2020 than they were in 1990. Additionally, 23.6% of metropolitan areas were more segregated in 2020 than in 2010 (Menendian et al., 2021). Breaking it down further, Logan and Stults (2021) found that “The average white, black, Hispanic, and Asian Americans live in very different neighborhood environments” and that white and Black people “remain [in] highly segregated” communities. This highlights how likely homogenous interactions are to occur.

Concerning socioeconomic status, neighborhood poverty rates are highest in more segregated communities of color (21%) compared to more segregated white neighborhoods (7%). This trickles into homeownership, where highly segregated white neighborhoods have 77% ownership compared to 59% in well-integrated neighborhoods and 46% in highly segregated communities of color. Additionally, household incomes and home values in white neighborhoods are nearly twice as high as those in segregated communities of color (Menendian et al., 2021). These results suggest a worrisome reality related to a culture of pluralism, one that confirms that the legacy of segregation prevails and continues to threaten it.

Although geographic segregation functions as the core lens to understanding this data, other relevant outcomes exist. For example, a report by the Trust for Public Land found significant disparities, both nationwide and within urban areas, in accessibility to outdoor spaces. Within “the 100 most populated cities, neighborhoods where most residents identify as Black, Hispanic and Latinx, American Indian/Alaska Native or Asian American and Pacific Islander have access to an average of 44 percent less park acreage than predominantly white neighborhoods and similar park space inequities exist in low-income neighborhoods across cities” (Chapman et al., 2021). Findings like these illustrate how other outcomes of geographic segregation can leak into other aspects of livelihood.

Data on segregation in the US presents a significant challenge to cultivating a pluralistic society. These kinds of structural separation exacerbate social division. As the data above illustrates, this includes inequitable access to public spaces such as parks, poverty rates, homeownership, and income levels. This reveals a society still grappling with deep-rooted divisions that pose significant obstacles to achieving a culture of pluralism. The persistent and, in some cases, worsening segregation suggests that concerted efforts are needed to break down these barriers and create more equitable opportunities for all communities.

# Across the Conditions

Taken together, the data from previous sections reveals just how siloed American society is. Focusing on social capital, we see that when people experience it, they tend to interact with those who are most similar to them. This is compounded when thinking about geographic segregation, where there may be inherently fewer opportunities to connect outside those who hold similar identities to you. However, feeling as though you belong within a homogenous group is not always aligned with a culture of pluralism and in some cases is even antithetical. As a cornerstone of pluralism, diversity (and positive attitudes toward difference) adds nuance to findings about social capital and belonging. For example, studies show that “diverse friendships are associated with higher levels of friendship belonging” (Argo & Sheikh, 2023, p. 46).

Reflecting on the findings alongside affective polarization offers insights into possible interventions. For example, regarding belonging to local communities, findings showed that a sense of local belonging is “associated with wanting to get to know people” from different backgrounds (Argo & Sheikh, 2023, p. 47). Working to unravel toxic polarization anchored in the community might generate space for good polarization, or polarization that may help mobilize and stimulate change. This may reinforce feelings of belonging, especially across difference. As the Belonging Barometer states, pairing belonging with diversity creates a “virtuous cycle” whereby each supports the other—together “[sparking] new configurations, ideas, solutions, and stories. Together, belonging and diversity are creative, generative, and transformative” (Argo & Sheikh, p. 46).

There is also a connection between hate crimes and belonging. The Belonging Barometer identifies social isolation as a risk factor for terrorism in the US. The report states that “a global review of the root causes for violent extremism found that a host of psychological states related to non-belonging—such as isolation, loneliness, depression, low self-esteem, personal alienation, friendlessness, and feeling like a misfit—appeared to make a person more vulnerable to radicalization” (Argo & Sheikh, 2023, p. 41). This suggests that with hate crimes on the rise, having a sense of non-belonging has the potential to ramp up a person’s disposition to commit them.

Although each condition helps highlight a particular facet of pluralism on its own, the reality of our world is that they all are happening simultaneously. As such, how they interact and/or mutually enforce one another illustrates important connections and contours of pluralism in addition to illuminating sites for intervention.



# Concluding Reflections on the Current Status

This report provided an opportunity to begin to understand the extent to which a culture of pluralism exists in the US. The data presented paints a somber picture that illustrates attitudes, behaviors, and contexts in stark opposition to a culture of pluralism across many dimensions of life. Pluralism is in peril and under threat, and concerted efforts across multiple levels are needed to safeguard and uphold the promise of pluralism as a core founding principle of American democracy. This section summarizes reflections on the data synthesized above from experts in the pluralism field and ORS as the external learning and evaluation partner.

## Expert Considerations

ORS facilitated a focus group in April 2024 with experts in the pluralism field to reflect on early drafts of the synthesized data and how to make sense of it. The following are some of their reflections and insights from that session.

- **It is important to understand how having different levels of status and power in society plays a role in determining individual attitudes and perceptions about the world and others.** One expert gave an example of how equality is experienced. For example, white people tend to see greater progress toward racial equality compared to people of color, particularly Black people, because of their reference point; white people may reference the past (e.g., look how far we have come), whereas people of color reference the future (e.g., look how far we have to go). Other data supports this insight; Lewis Jr. (2021) found that patterns of social stratification along the lines of power influence “how different groups of people perceive and make meaning of the world around them, including their understanding of concepts like equality.” Relatedly, intergroup salience and maintaining privilege—or, in other words, how and why people seek to exclude others from fully benefiting from American society—may provide insight into how relative levels of status and power influence a culture of pluralism.
- **Both institutional change and cultural change are necessary to enable a culture of pluralism in the US.** Unsurprisingly, changing individual attitudes and beliefs, as well as behaviors and intergroup relations, takes time. One expert wondered if institutional change (e.g., law and policy) may have a quicker, direct impact across the six conditions. For example, public and private school integration laws were a catalytic policy that had direct impacts on institutional and cultural contexts. Yet integrating schools did not immediately change individual attitudes about people of different races or intergroup relations—in fact, it may have worsened them in the near term. This example illustrates the interplay between the different levels of change. While institutional change may feel quicker in some ways, we cannot underestimate the relational and human dynamics needed for cultural change. As such, pairing institutional change with human-centered approaches and community engagement at multiple levels can help spur a true and lasting culture of pluralism.

- **There might be an opportunity to redefine the American identity.** Redefining the American identity through the “beauty of difference” or as “a mosaic and not a melting pot” could help emphasize a culture of pluralism through an embrace of the beauty of difference, rather than the assimilation of one true prototype of the American identity.
- **Consider the effects of the pandemic on American society and culture.** The pandemic shifted society toward greater dependence on technology and social media for human connection, both personally and professionally. People became more isolated from one another, and connections were fewer and farther between. While the country may not be where it was in 2020, work to advance pluralism is happening in an environment that is very different from pre-pandemic times.
- **Pluralism and democracy are inextricably linked.** While facets of the data in this scan describe these linkages (e.g., segregation and voter suppression), more considerations around pluralism and democracy are needed to build a comprehensive picture of a culture of pluralism. The considerations elevated can uncover who is and is not allowed to fully participate in our democracy, including the implications of historically rooted contexts. Additionally, how laws are enacted at the national, state, and local levels (as an institutional context) informs individual attitudes and beliefs as well as behaviors and intergroup relations.

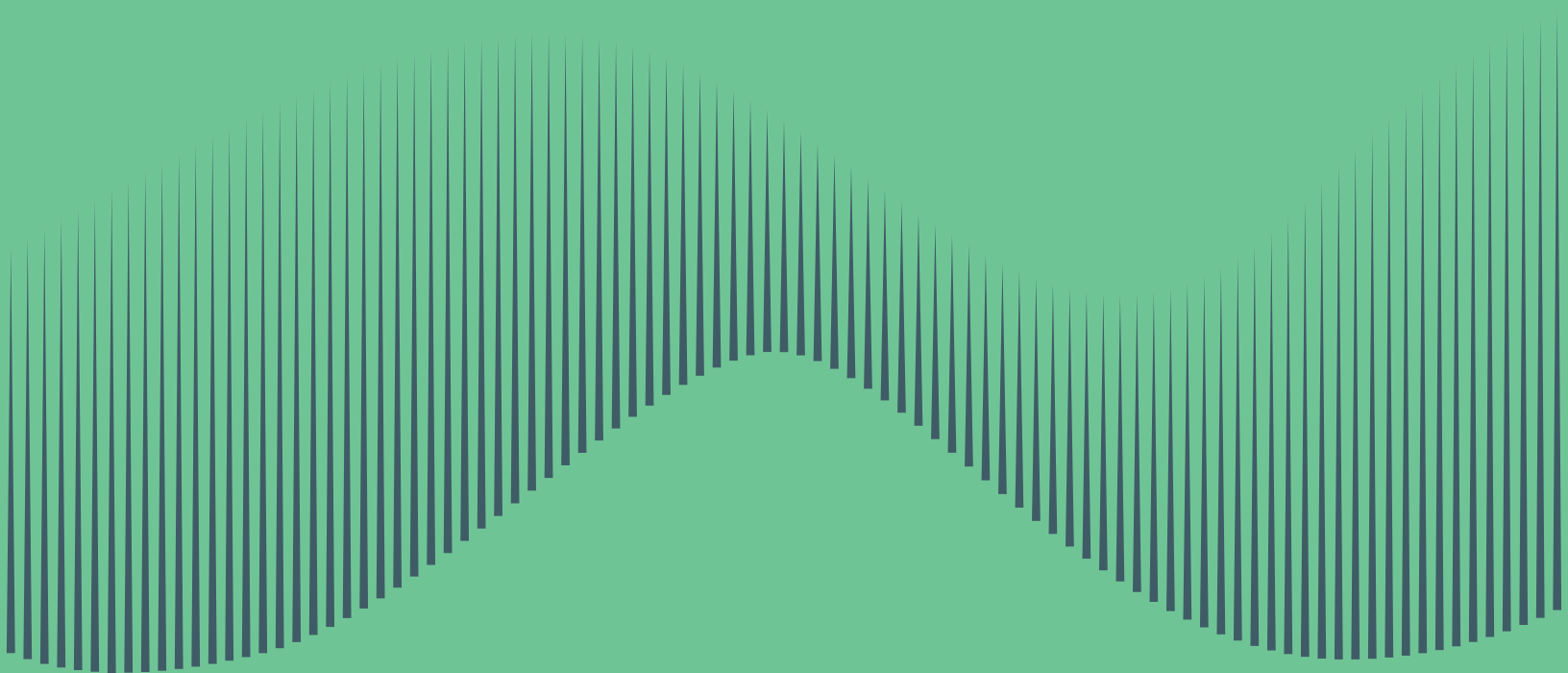
## Evaluator Observations

ORS Impact also has a few observations about the current state of pluralism. The following reflections on the findings are oriented toward New Pluralists and other funders and field leaders as they make sense of this literature scan and consider what it means for their work to advance a culture of pluralism in the US.

- **There is still work to do to advance a culture of pluralism in the US.** The data surfaced through this scan paints a picture where Americans feel a deep sense of non-belonging and toxic division, and have feelings of animosity toward each other, all while having unequal access to benefits (e.g., housing, income, occupation, health) and being affected by hate crimes. This picture points to many different areas of intervention that are needed to ripen the ground for pluralism to flourish. Given the depth and breadth of threats, actors in the ecosystem will benefit from coordinating their efforts so they can most effectively confront these threats. This will mean building relationships with one another, coordinating strategies, and sharing learnings about what’s working or not. It will be important to set realistic expectations for the timeline and extent of expected changes in conditions given the current state.
- **The underlying conditions that affect pluralism are complex and interrelated.** The data surfaced through this scan illustrates several points of intersection between conditions. Belonging, for example, has intersection points with diversity and hate crimes. For diversity, data showed that higher levels of diverse friendship outside the workplace were associated with higher levels of holding workplace relationships across difference. For hate crimes, having a sense of non-belonging has the potential to ramp up a person’s disposition to commit hate crimes. These two examples showcase the importance of belonging in pluralism work and remind us that in culture work, nothing happens in isolation, suggesting opportunities for interventions that mutually reinforce different conditions related to pluralism.

- **Narrative change work can address perception gaps and improve people's ability to connect and engage across difference.** Perceptions play an important role in pluralism work. In the context of diversity, data tells us that a rise in diversity could also lead to more negative perceptions about newcomers. In the context of affective polarization, data tells us that a perception gap exists between Republicans and Democrats. Segregation can also reinforce harmful stereotypes about racial/ethnic minorities. For the pluralism ecosystem, narrative change strategies that aim to complicate some of these perceptions may help promote pluralism by “allowing both people and stories of lived experience to have layers, nuance, with multiple identities and contexts that can be woven together” (Roig & Savage, 2023). A narrative change strategy—likely by and involving actors across the ecosystem—might begin exploring which narratives work to complexify perceptions and which strategies are most effective for disseminating them. It may also be helpful to perform a narrative power analysis to deconstruct existing narratives and identify points of intervention where they can be challenged.
- **Understanding the state of pluralism requires ongoing measurement.** This literature scan provides a baseline understanding for the ecosystem about the state of pluralism in the US through the review of data related to six conditions that affect the degree to which pluralism can flourish. While this scan does not describe every condition that influences a culture of pluralism, it does provide a starting point. It lays some of the empirical groundwork needed to assess the state of pluralism over time. An option to consider for future measurement is re-creating this literature scan in 3–5 years to see if new data shows improvements (or not) in overall trends. Other options could be to work with the Global Centre for Pluralism to perform a countrywide assessment for the US. Nonetheless, the ecosystem must maintain realistic expectations for what progress toward building a culture of pluralism might look like given the scale of the problem relative to the scale of investment.

# Appendix



## Appendix A

# Research to Impact Framework—What Enables or Inhibits Pluralism

The Research to Impact Framework on What Enables or Inhibits Pluralism (see Figure 2) served as an inspiration for mapping the conditions chosen for this literature scan, particularly the Y-axis, which describes different levels at which conditions are expressed in society: individual attitudes and behaviors, behaviors and intergroup relations, and cultural and institutional contexts. Table 2 shows how the six conditions in this literature scan map to the three levels from the Research to Impact Framework.

Figure 2 | Research to Impact Framework

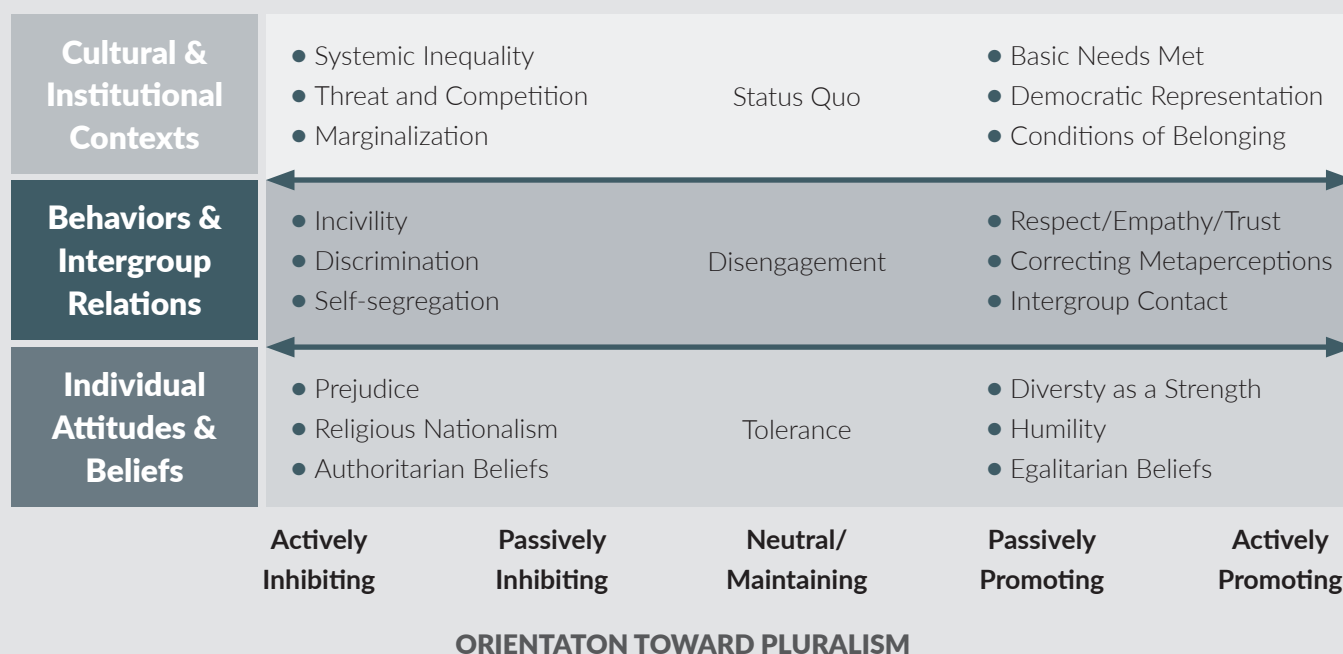


Table 2 | Crosswalk of Literature Scan Conditions and Research to Impact Framework

RESEARCH TO IMPACT LEVELS	LITERATURE SCAN CONDITIONS
Individual Attitudes & Beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Belonging</li> <li>• Affective Polarization</li> </ul>
Behaviors & Intergroup Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Capital</li> <li>• Hate Crimes</li> </ul>
Cultural & Institutional Contexts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diversity</li> <li>• Geographic Segregation</li> </ul>

## Appendix B

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