

Canadians believe workplaces still have work to do when it comes to diversity and inclusion.



Introduction

Our latest Workplace Insights Survey took a deep dive into the sentiments of working Canadians and discovered women and members of visible ethnic minorities report experiencing or witnessing more judgement, misconduct and inequality in the workplace.

Canadians believe their workplaces have room to improve when it comes to issues of diversity and inclusion. Specifically, working Canadians who belong to a visible ethnic minority reported, at their current place of work, they have experienced or witnessed more judgement or misconduct based on ethnicity or skin colour, more negative impacts on their career and greater feelings of discomfort in the workplace.

However, there are some positives, as the survey also noted greater awareness of these issues among younger workers, with nearly half (47%) of employed Canadians aged 18 to 34 saying they would be more loyal to their organization if they took a stand, publicly, on diversity and inclusion.



Members of visible ethnic minorities more likely to state they witnessed problematic behaviours at work

Of those surveyed, thirteen per cent of all working Canadians agreed that they have witnessed or experienced judgement or misconduct at their current workplace based on ethnicity or skin colour. However, 31 per cent of working Canadians belonging to a visible ethnic minority reported such behaviours - twice the number of all working Canadians.

Moreover, respondents identifying as members of visible ethnic minorities also reported negative effects on their career advancement, with 32 per cent of respondents in this category believing their ethnicity has negatively impacted their career growth, and 19 per cent saying prejudice or lack of diversity and inclusion based on their ethnicity has influenced their decision to leave an employer.

Looking at gender, 19 per cent of working women reported witnessing or experiencing judgement or misconduct based on gender and 22 per cent believe their gender has negatively impacted their career advancement.

Tip: Create training and guidelines that clearly communicate what is and is not acceptable as well as the resources available to support employees in embracing your company's DEI values.

Resources

[Improving the employee experience through diversity](#)

[Equity, Diversity and Inclusion: An introduction for Canadian employers](#)

Diverse voices not being heard

A quarter (25%) of working Canadians don't feel comfortable expressing their opinions at work, those belonging to a visible ethnic or religious minority feel even less comfortable (31% and 39%, respectively). The same was true for women in the workplace, with twenty-seven per cent of working women saying they don't feel comfortable expressing their opinions at work.

Additionally, half of employed Canadians who belong to a visible ethnic minority (50%) believe their background is not represented within the make-up of their management team.

Younger workers more loyal to organizations who publicly support diversity and inclusion

Workers aged 18 to 34 and visible ethnic minorities were the most vocal when it came to issues of diversity and inclusion. Top asks from these groups include a more diverse leadership team at their organization (30% and 32% respectively), and more events

or initiatives that encourage cultural learning and inclusivity (29% and 27% respectively).

Nearly half of these younger workers (47%) also said they would feel more loyal to their organization if it publicly took a stand on diversity and inclusion, twice the response rate than that of the general working population (25%).

50% of working Canadians who belong to a visible ethnic minority believe their background isn't represented within their management team.

Resources

[Diversity and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Workplace — Trends for 2021](#)



Diversity and inclusion becoming a priority for workplaces around the country

As best practices, some employers are prioritizing policies and programs on diversity and inclusion. According to the survey, one-in-three working Canadians (32%) believe that diversity and inclusion are priorities for their organization.

When asked how diversity and inclusion were integrated into the corporate culture of their organization, Canadian workers identified composition of the workforce, onboarding and training, and surveys and employee feedback as the primary vehicles.

However, 36 per cent of survey respondents felt that while their organization is taking steps in the right direction, diversity and inclusion is still not considered a priority.

Tip: There is no one-size-fits-all approach to creating, or even, sustaining a diverse, equitable and inclusive organization. It requires constant education, employee feedback, legal compliance, and policy adjustments, meaning organizations must be willing to learn and adapt.

Resources

[Creating a Diverse, Equitable and Inclusive Workplace: Exploring today's best-in-class DEI strategies and practices, part 1](#)

[Creating a Diverse, Equitable and Inclusive Workplace: Exploring today's best-in-class DEI strategies and practices, part 2](#)

Regional findings



Atlantic Canada

1. 28% of Atlantic Canadians said public gatherings in their city and reports by the media generated the most dialogue within their organization relating to the Black Lives Matter movement.

Quebec

1. A majority (81%) of Québec respondents say they have never experienced or seen judgement or misconduct in their current place of work - the highest in the country.
2. Less than half (42%) of Québec employees were aware of diversity and inclusion policies in their organization, the lowest in the country.

Ontario

1. Over a third (36%) of Ontario employees feel it is their company's top priority to take steps to improve diversity and inclusion at their workplace.

2. More than half (53%) of Ontario employees are aware of policies that support diversity and inclusion at their workplace.

Prairies

1. Employed Canadians in the Prairies are most likely to have experienced or seen judgement or misconduct at their current place of work (29% vs 25% overall).
2. Compared to all working Canadians, workers in the Prairies are the least likely to feel they can voice a contrary without fear of negative consequences (65%).

Alberta and British Columbia

1. 29% of Alberta employees don't feel comfortable expressing their opinions at work.
2. 41% of participants from British Columbia think their organization is taking steps towards improving diversity and inclusion.

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Survey Methodology

An online survey of 1,546 working Canadians (including those working full and part time) was completed between October 23 and 29, 2020, using Maru/Blue's online panel. For comparison purposes, a probability sample of this size has an estimated margin of error (which measures sampling variability) of +/- 2.4%, 19 times out of 20.