

LOGICAL CONCLUSION

RESOLVING INCONSISTENCY WITH O.H.R.C. POLICY AND THE JAN 2022 D.E.I. REPORT

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COMMUNITY DEI EXPERIENCES REPORT

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Key Findings

Discrimination in Niagara

Diversity in Niagara continues to increase – particularly regarding Indigenous communities, visible minorities, linguistic diversity, and individuals with disabilities.

However, there has not always been the same increase in inclusivity. Discrimination, barriers, and a lack of appropriate support in organizations remain for a variety of marginalized groups.

According to the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Community Survey conducted throughout Niagara in December 2021, 66 per cent of participants indicated that they had experienced discrimination and 77 per cent indicated that they had witnessed discrimination.

The top five types of discrimination experienced by community survey participants as prohibited under the Ontario Human Rights Code were: gender (41 per cent); age (30 per cent); mental health (25 per cent); ethnicity (24 per cent); and ability/disability (23 per cent).

Twenty-four per cent of survey participants added that they experienced discrimination related to their “vaccination status”. However, according to the Ontario Human Rights Commission¹, vaccination status alone does not meet the definition of discrimination prohibited under the Ontario Human Rights Code and therefore it was not included in the final top five list. Under the Code, those who are unable to receive the COVID-19 vaccine for medical or disability-related reasons are to be reasonably accommodated unless it would significantly interfere with peoples’ health and safety.

1 Ontario Human Rights Commission. (2021). OHRC Policy statement on COVID-19 vaccine mandates and proof of vaccine certificates. Found at https://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/news_centre/ohrc-policy-statement-covid-19-vaccine-mandates-and-proof-vaccine-certificates

Grandson and Grandmother
Looking at a Tablet



The top five types of discrimination experienced were:

1. Gender

“So many landlords will not rent to males and it makes it impossible to find an affordable place to live! Every time I find something in my budget the ad specifically states “females only” super discriminatory, especially when they would have rented to me prior to my transition but now won’t because I present as male? I’m the same person, gender doesn’t determine how good of a tenant you are.”
– Community member

2. Age

“The discrimination against seniors is incredible. I’ve been told “I am just an old person, go home” ... told I am entitled, go to [the] back of line. I’ve been told to get off the road, I am going the speed limit.”
– Community member

3. Mental health

“For me, when I go in [to the hospital] and I have a physical ailment as opposed to a mental health [problem] then they treat me differently.”
– Community member

4. Ethnicity

“People from the BIPOC [Black, Indigenous, People of Colour] community in Niagara often face microaggressions in the community, education and workplace. A dichotomy of us versus them is still unfortunately prevalent.”
– Community member

5. Ability/disability

“The discrimination that I have experienced are related to access. I have had trouble getting into stores, older shops in the area because they are small and do not accommodate a person with physical disabilities or uses a wheelchair.”
– Community member

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Be It Resolved That:

DEI Staff produce a report, supplemental to the January 2022 Community Experiences document, wherein Datasets, Tables and Figures reflect the OHRC policy referenced in the footnote of the final DEI action plan, and all omitted data is separately tabulated.

Quality data collection creates greater transparency, accountability, and buy-in. It allows recommendations, and any changes to recommendations to be evidence-based leading to more effective results by highlighting progress over time.

It is important to note that the survey was conducted during the COVID-19 Pandemic, with multiple restrictions on public activities, as well as many employers restricting employment for individuals without proof of vaccination. This resulted in about a quarter of survey respondents including discrimination due to their vaccination status as part of their responses. Nine individuals provided inappropriate or illegitimate responses that were not related to the content of the survey and their responses were removed.

Experiences of Discrimination

Of the 1599 survey responses, 55% believe there is a lot of discrimination in Niagara, 40% believe there is some discrimination, and 4% believe there is no discrimination. Two-thirds of participants (66%, n=1048) had experienced discrimination, and 1193 participants (77%) had witnessed discrimination in Niagara.

The top ten types of discrimination respondents experienced:

1. Gender (41%)
2. Age (30%)
3. Mental health (25%)
- ~~4. Vaccination status (24%)~~
5. Ethnicity (24%)
6. Ability (23%)
7. Income level (23%)
8. Religion (18%)
9. Race (18%)
10. Sexual orientation (15%)

The top ten types of discrimination respondents witnessed:

1. Ethnicity (60%)
2. Mental health (48%)
3. Race (47%)
4. Ability (47%)
5. Gender (42%)
6. Sexual orientation (40%)
7. Income level (38%)
8. Religion (37%)
9. Age (36%)
10. Gender identity (33%)

TYPES OF DISCRIMINATION

Appendix D: Additional Data Tables

Table 16: Types of discrimination experienced

Rank	Type of discrimination experienced	Number of Cases	Percent of Cases
1	Gender	417	41%
2	Age	306	30%
3	Mental health	251	25%
4	Vaccination status	243	24%
5	Ethnicity	242	24%
6	Ability / disability	236	23%
7	Income level	236	23%
8	Religion	181	18%
9	Race	180	18%
10	Sexual orientation	156	15%
11	Housing status	138	14%
12	Education	133	13%
13	Gender identity	66	7%
14	Substance use	58	6%
15	Gender expression	55	5%
16	Indigenous identity	42	4%
17	Rural location	31	3%
18	Prefer not to answer	27	3%
Other descriptions			
19	Pandemic regulations	15	2%
20	Appearance	11	1%
21	Immigration	9	1%
22	Health concerns	8	1%
23	Social values	8	1%
24	Weight	7	1%
25	Marital status	7	1%
26	Language	6	1%
27	Political values	4	0%
28	Urban location	3	0%
29	Employment	3	0%
30	Family history	2	0%
31	Parenting	2	0%

Table 17: Types of discrimination witnessed

Rank	Type of discrimination witnessed	Number of Cases	Percent of Cases
1	Ethnicity	688	60%
2	Mental health	542	48%
3	Race	537	47%
4	Ability / disability	535	47%
5	Gender	482	42%
6	Sexual orientation	455	40%
7	Income level	436	38%
8	Religion	418	37%
9	Age	405	36%
10	Gender identity	371	33%
11	Gender expression	370	33%
12	Housing status	365	32%
13	Substance use	362	32%
14	Indigenous identity	344	30%
15	Education	266	23%
16	Vaccination status	188	17%
17	Rural location	87	8%
18	Prefer not to answer	28	3%
Other categories			
19	Pandemic regulations	17	2%
20	Social values	6	1%
21	Immigration	4	0%
22	Employment	3	0%
23	Language	2	0%
24	Health concerns	2	0%
25	Weight	2	0%
26	Political values	2	0%
27	Other	1	0%
Total		6918	607%

FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION

Table 18: Forms of discrimination experienced

Rank	Forms of discrimination experienced	Number of Cases	Percent of Cases
1	Insulting comments or actions	826	82%
2	Barriers to participation	598	59%
3	Teasing, mocking, or bullying	587	58%
4	Verbal abuse (targeted to you)	554	55%
5	Hate speech (targeted to your group)	526	52%
6	Threatening behaviour	409	41%
7	Sexual harassment	192	19%
8	Physical assault (being touched / pushed)	149	15%
9	Sexual assault	98	10%
10	Barriers to employment	25	3%
11	Prefer not to answer	17	2%
12	Other	15	2%
13	Microaggressions	12	1%
14	Exclusion	10	1%
15	Poor living conditions/Eviction	5	1%
16	Barriers to healthcare	3	0%
17	Extortion	2	0%
	Total	4028	399%

Table 19: Forms of discrimination witnessed

Rank	Forms of discrimination witnessed	Number of Cases	Percent of Cases
1	Insulting comments or actions	988	86%
2	Teasing, mocking, or bullying	804	70%
3	Hate speech (targeted to a group)	756	66%
4	Barriers to participation	731	64%
5	Verbal abuse (targeted to an individual)	724	63%
6	Threatening behaviour	535	47%
7	Physical assault (being touched / pushed)	259	23%
8	Sexual harassment	209	18%
9	Sexual assault	83	7%
10	Prefer not to answer	18	2%
11	Exclusion	14	1%
12	Barriers to employment	9	1%
13	Microaggressions	8	1%
14	Poor living conditions/Eviction	4	0%

Rank	Forms of discrimination witnessed	Number of Cases	Percent of Cases
15	Other	3	0%
16	Extortion	2	0%
Total		5147	450%

The top five forms of discrimination respondents experienced were: 1) insulting comments (82%); 2) barriers to participation (59%); 3) teasing, mocking and bullying (58%); 4) verbal abuse (55%); and 5) hate speech (52%). The top five forms of discrimination respondents witnessed were: 1) insulting comments (86%); 2) teasing, mocking or bullying (70%); 3) hate speech (66%); 4) barriers to participation (64%); and 5) verbal abuse (63%). The top five places of discrimination respondents experienced were: 1) businesses (60%); 2) work places (60%); 3) interpersonal (55%); 4) social media (42%); and 5) health care (42%). The top five places of discrimination respondents witnessed were; 1) businesses (67%); 2) interpersonal (62%); 3) work places (57%); 4) social media (57%); and public spaces (50%).

Sense of Belonging

Most of the survey participants (90%) felt accepted with their friends, the lowest places of feeling accepted were at school (65%) and in Niagara (68%). Populations that had lower levels of agreement to feeling accepted in Niagara were:

- Inuk (33%), West Asian (40%), and First Nations (43%)
- Two-spirit (13%), transfeminine (25%), and those that preferred to self-describe (29%)
- Unemployed due to COVID-19 (31%), stay at home participants (41%)

21. I have **experienced** discrimination on the basis of: (select all that apply)

- a. Ability/Disability
- b. Age
- c. Education
- d. Ethnicity
- e. Gender
- f. Gender Expression
- g. Gender Identity
- h. Housing status
- i. Income level
- j. Indigenous identity
- k. Mental health
- l. Race
- m. Religion
- n. Rural location
- o. Sexual orientation
- p. Substance use
- q. Other, please specify: _____
- r. Prefer not to answer

1. As a community member, have you witnessed or experienced anything that you would label as exclusion, discrimination or another barrier? If yes, please provide more information.
2. Did you tell anyone about the experience or formally report it? Please elaborate on your experience.
3. What obstacles or barriers have you or other community members faced when trying to access Regional services or programs?
4. What current initiatives or training that encourage diversity, equity, or inclusion that you think are going well in the region?



Figure 15: Most Common Vision Themes

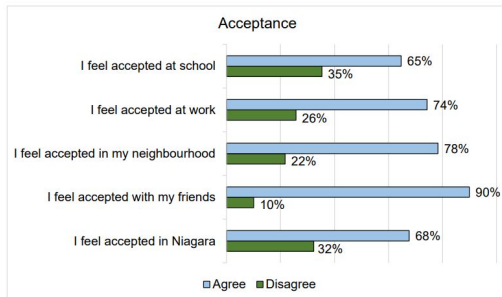


Figure 7: Areas of acceptance

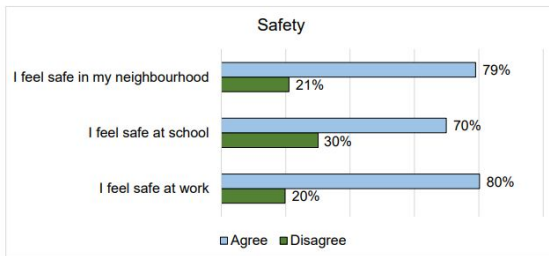


Figure 8: Areas of safety

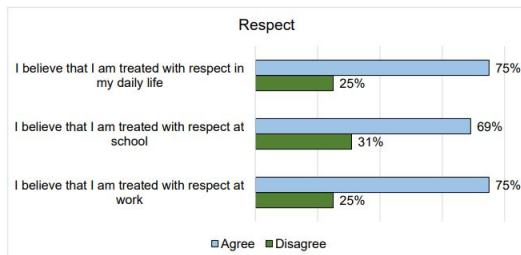


Figure 9: Areas of respect

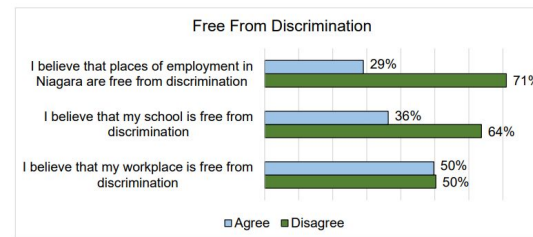


Figure 10: Free from discrimination

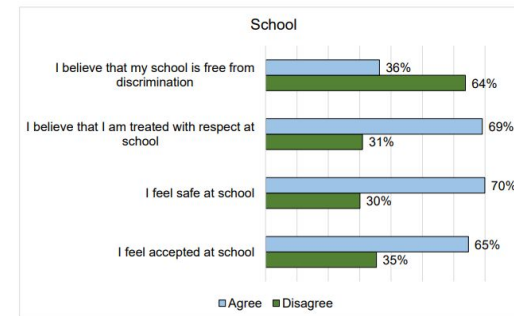


Figure 11: Sense of belonging at school



Figure 12: Sense of belonging at work places

External Goals	Goal: Increase per cent of community members that feel they are reflected and heard by locally elected officials by 20 per cent	Goal: Increase the knowledge, skills, and competencies of training participants in the community to achieve cultural humility by 10 per cent	Goal: Increase percentage of people that believe employers in Niagara do a good job of attracting, retaining, and promoting people of diverse backgrounds to leadership positions by 20 per cent	Goal: At least 70 per cent of program participants believe that the Niagara Region programs and services are meeting their needs	Goal: Decrease the percentage of people that experience discrimination in Niagara by 20 per cent	Goal: Eighty per cent of Niagara Region's communication platforms are inclusive and accessible for all community members
External Actions	AE1. Create and promote a DEI Inclusion Charter AE2. Establish and lead DEI Community of Practice AE3. Increase engagement opportunities between Councillors and diverse community groups AE4. Increase opportunities for diverse people to participate and be included in Council meetings AE5. Create program that recognizes community members who advance DEI	BE1. Develop a resource about human rights, addressing hate crimes, and interacting with police BE2. Partner with community organizations to develop and deliver DEI learning curriculum for community members BE3. Support community events with advisory committees on DEI topics	CE1. Promote the HR Guidebook: How to Increase Diversity and Inclusion in Recruitment, Hiring, and Promotion CE2. Promote the business case for DEI CE3. Provide learning opportunities for community organizations regarding DEI recruitment, hiring, and promotion best practices CE4. Partner with community organizations to expand intern and co-op opportunities	DE1. Report on periodic community DEI surveys that include evaluating the impact of Niagara Region programs and services DE2. Expand opportunities to work with communities on program and service planning and evaluation, incorporating people with lived experience	EE1. Facilitate Town Hall dialogues with diverse communities on discrimination issues EE2. Partner with community organizations to host anti-discrimination community engagement sessions and provide anti-discrimination public education EE3. Ensure Niagara Region programs and facilities are safe spaces for all people regardless of identity/diversity	FE1. Support events with community partners to recognize special days and events showcasing diversity FE2. Ensure all Niagara Region communication platforms are inclusive and accessible FE3. Ensure all materials are presented in plain language, are culturally appropriate, and depict the diversity of Niagara FE4. Ensure signage in Niagara Region facilities is accessible

Goal: Increase per cent of community members that feel they are reflected and heard by locally elected officials by 20 per cent

Goal: Decrease the percentage of people that experience discrimination in Niagara by 20 per cent

Goal: Increase per cent of community members that feel they are reflected and heard by locally elected officials by 20 per cent

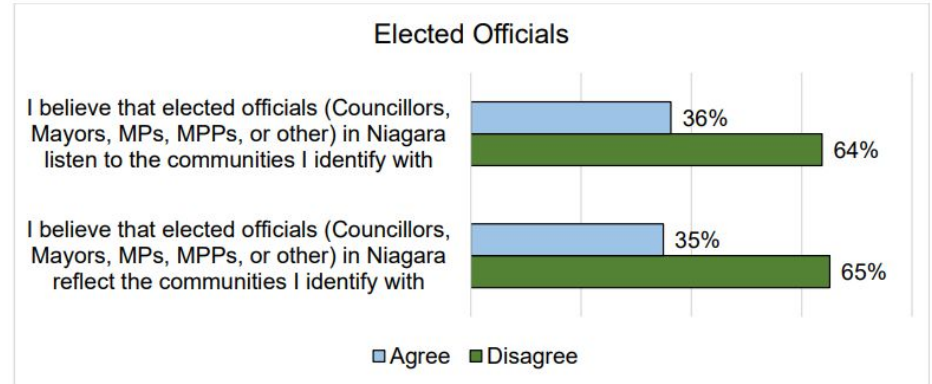


Figure 14: Elected officials

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