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Siena College Poll:

On MLK Day, 39% of NYers Say Race Relations in NYS are Excellent or Good; Two-Thirds Believe Minorities Experience Racial or Ethnic Discrimination

29% Say They've Been Treated Unfairly in Last Year Because of Their Race, Ethnicity, Gender or Sexual Orientation

Three-Quarters Say Workplace Sexual Harassment is Significant Problem; 36% Are Aware of Harassment Where They Have Worked; 25% of NYers (36% of Women) Say They've Been Victim of Harassment

Loudonville, NY. While only 39 percent of New Yorkers think race relations in the state are excellent (four percent) or good (35 percent) – compared to 58 percent who say they are fair (43 percent) or poor (15 percent) – that is up from the 2015 Siena College Poll, which had 31 percent positive and 66 percent negative, including 28 percent poor, according to a new Siena College poll of New York State registered voters released today.

Sixty-eight percent say ethnic and racial minorities in New York experience discrimination, and 29 percent say in the last year, they've been treated unfairly because of their race, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation.

Among all voters, 74 percent say sexual harassment in the workplace is a significant problem (29 percent say 'very' significant) compared to only 14 percent who say it's not a very significant problem and six percent who say it's not at all significant. More than one-third are aware of sexual harassment where they have worked, and one-quarter of all voters – 36 percent of women – say they have been the victim of workplace sexual harassment.

"New Yorkers say race relations are a little better on Martin Luther King Day in 2018 than they were in 2015, but not by a lot. Fifty-seven percent of whites, 55 percent of Latinos and 71 percent of blacks say race relations are only fair or poor," said Siena College pollster Steven Greenberg. "With little regional or party differences, at least 54 percent of voters from every party and region of the state say race relations in New York are fair or poor.

"Nearly nine in ten blacks, nearly eight in ten Latinos and more than six in ten whites say that racial and ethnic minorities in New York experience discrimination, a sentiment shared by 82 percent of Democrats, 58 percent of independents and 52 percent of Republicans," Greenberg said.

“A staggering 29 percent of New Yorkers say they have been treated unfairly in the last year because of their race, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation. Let me say that again. Between one-quarter and one-third of New Yorkers claim to have been mistreated in the last year because of who they are,” Greenberg said. “While 18 percent of white men and 29 percent of white women say they’ve been treated unfairly, those numbers mushroom to 45 percent of black men and 48 percent of black women who say they’ve been treated unfairly in the last year.”

Sexual Harassment in Workplace is Significant Problem

“At least two-thirds of New Yorkers regardless of party, region, race, gender or age say sexual harassment in the workplace is a significant problem. Women, blacks, Latinos, Democrats, and younger voters are more likely to say it’s a ‘very’ significant problem,” Greenberg said. “In this era of the #MeToo movement, 36 percent of all New Yorkers, including 41 percent of women, say they are aware of sexual harassment at a workplace where they have worked.

One Quarter of New Yorkers – 36 Percent of Women – Have Been Victim of Sexual Harassment

“Just as a staggering 29 percent of New Yorkers say they’ve been treated unfairly based on race, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation, a comparable and equally staggering 25 percent say they’ve been the victim of sexual harassment,” Greenberg said. “Thirty-six percent of women say they’ve been victimized by sexual harassment at some point in their lives, while 10 percent say they’ve been victimized in the last five years. White women, 39 percent, are more likely to say they’ve been the victim of sexual harassment than black women, 28 percent.”

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This Siena College Poll was conducted January 7-11, 2018 by telephone calls conducted in English to 824 New York State registered voters. Respondent sampling was initiated by asking for the youngest male in the household. It has an overall margin of error of ± 4.0 percentage points including the design effects resulting from weighting. Sampling was conducted via a stratified dual frame probability sample of landline and cell phone telephone numbers (both from Survey Sampling International) from within New York State weighted to reflect known population patterns. Data was statistically adjusted by age, party, region and gender to ensure representativeness. The Siena College Research Institute, directed by Donald Levy, Ph.D., conducts political, economic, social and cultural research primarily in NYS. SCRI, an independent, non-partisan research institute, subscribes to the American Association of Public Opinion Research Code of Professional Ethics and Practices. For more information, call Steve Greenberg at (518) 469-9858. For survey cross-tabs: www.Siena.edu/SCRI/SNY.

Siena College Poll Trends – January 2018

Q. 33 Switching gears, as we look to the upcoming commemoration of Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday, how would you describe the state of race relations in New York State? Would you say they are excellent, good, fair, or poor?

DATE	EXCELLENT	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
January 2018	4	35	43	15	3
January 2015	4	27	38	28	3
January 2014	7	40	37	14	2
January 2013	7	47	35	11	1
January 2012	7	44	36	11	2
January 2011	7	48	33	10	2
HIGHEST EVER	7 (many)	48 (1/11)	44 (1/18)	28 (1/15)	3 (1/18, 1/15, 1/08)
LOWEST EVER	3 (1/08)	27 (1/15)	33 (1/11)	8 (1/10)	1 (1/13)