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SIENA COLLEGE, LOUDONVILLE, NY

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## Siena College Poll:

### **MLK Day 2020: Only One-Third of New Yorkers View Race Relations in the State as Excellent (5%) or Good (28%); In 2010, 51% Had Positive Views of Race Relations in NY**

Three-Quarters Say that Ethnic/Racial & Religious Minorities in NY Experience Discrimination; More than One-Third Say They've Been Treated Unfairly in Last Year Because of Their Race, Religion, Ethnicity, Gender or Sexual Orientation

**Loudonville, NY.** As New Yorkers commemorate the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr., only 33 percent of New Yorkers think race relations in the state are excellent (five percent) or good (28 percent) – compared to 64 percent who say they are fair (42 percent) or poor (22 percent), down a little from last year's Siena College poll, when 35 percent viewed race relations positively and 62 percent negatively, according to a new Siena College poll of New York State registered voters released today. In 2010, a majority of New Yorkers, 51 percent, had a positive view of race relations in the state.

Nearly three-quarters of voters (73 percent) say racial ethnic minorities who live in New York experience discrimination, up from 68 percent last year, while more than three-quarters (78 percent) say religious minorities experience discrimination, a new question this year in light of the numerous anti-Semitic acts of late.

“New Yorkers’ views on race relations today are nearly as negative as they have ever been over the last dozen years. Since 2008, only 2015 saw New Yorkers more negative about race relations in the state,” said Siena College pollster Steven Greenberg. “Interestingly, these negative views on the state of race relations in our state are across the board. At least 60 percent of whites, blacks, Latinos, upstaters and downstaters, liberals, moderates and conservatives all view race relations negatively.

“While 71 percent of white voters say that ethnic and racial minorities experience discrimination in New York, so do 81 percent of Latinos and 91 percent of black voters. Similarly, at least 70 percent of Jews, Catholics and Protestants, and blacks, whites, and Latinos say religious minorities in New York experience discrimination,” Greenberg said. “Although there is a partisan difference with Democrats more likely to think minorities face discrimination, a majority of Republicans think racial (54 percent) and religious (69 percent) minorities experience discrimination in New York.”

“More than one-third of New Yorkers – 35 percent – say that in the last year they have been treated unfairly because of their race, religion, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation. Last year, only 30 percent said they were treated unfairly, however, last year the wording of the question did not include religion,” Greenberg said. “Thirty percent of white voters say they were treated unfairly based on discrimination, compared to 39 percent of Latinos and 61 percent of black voters

“If 35 percent of 12 million New York voters were treated unfairly last year because of their race, religion, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation, that means that more than 4.2 million New Yorkers faced discrimination based on who they are or what they look like. That is certainly not a legacy that would make Dr. King proud,” Greenberg said.

### **Sexual Harassment in Workplace Remains a Significant Problem**

“Three-quarters of women and 69 percent of men agree that sexual harassment in the workplace in New York is a significant problem, compared to only 22 percent of men and 21 percent of women who say it’s not a significant problem,” Greenberg said. “Overall, 72 percent of New Yorkers think it’s a significant problem, up a little from 70 percent last year, while 22 percent say it’s not a significant problem.

“Nearly half of New York women – 45 percent – say that they have been a victim of sexual harassment at some point in their lives, unchanged from last year, compared to only 14 percent of men who say they’ve been victimized by sexual harassment,” Greenberg said. “While only about 28 percent of downstaters say they’ve been the victim of sexual harassment, 38 percent of upstaters say they’ve been subjected to sexual harassment.”

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## Siena College Poll Trends – January 2020

**Q. 30** 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 2020	5	28	42	22	3
January 2019	5	30	43	19	2
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
<b>HIGHEST EVER</b>	<b>7 (many)</b>	<b>48 (1/11)</b>	<b>44 (1/18)</b>	<b>28 (1/15)</b>	<b>3 (1/20, 1/18, 1/15, 1/08)</b>
<b>LOWEST EVER</b>	<b>3 (1/08)</b>	<b>27 (1/15)</b>	<b>33 (1/11)</b>	<b>8 (1/10)</b>	<b>1 (1/13)</b>

**Q. 31** Do you think minorities, including African-Americans, Hispanics and Asians who live in New York State experience racial or ethnic discrimination?

DATE	YES	NO	SOMETIMES/OCCASIONALLY/ DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
January 2020	73	18	9
January 2019	68	24	8
January 2018	68	22	10
<b>HIGHEST EVER</b>	<b>73 (1/20)</b>	<b>24 (1/19)</b>	<b>10 (1/18)</b>
<b>LOWEST EVER</b>	<b>68 (1/19, 1/18)</b>	<b>18 (1/20)</b>	<b>8 (1/19)</b>

**Q. 33** And what about you personally, can you think of any occasion over the last year when you were treated unfairly because of your race, religion, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation? (NOTE: "religion" added this year; not included previously.)

DATE	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
January 2020	35	63	2
January 2019	30	69	2
January 2018	29	70	1
<b>HIGHEST EVER</b>	<b>35 (1/20)</b>	<b>70 (1/18)</b>	<b>2 (1/20, 1/19)</b>
<b>LOWEST EVER</b>	<b>29 (1/18)</b>	<b>63 (1/20)</b>	<b>1 (1/18)</b>

**Q. 34** Turning to another issue in the news recently, how significant a problem do you think sexual harassment in the workplace is in New York?

DATE	VERY SIGNIFICANT	SOMEWHAT SIGNIFICANT	NOT VERY SIGNIFICANT	NOT AT ALL SIGNIFICANT	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
January 2020	23	49	17	5	6
January 2019	25	45	18	7	5
January 2018	29	45	14	6	5
<b>HIGHEST EVER</b>	<b>29 (1/18)</b>	<b>49 (1/20)</b>	<b>18 (1/19)</b>	<b>7 (1/19)</b>	<b>6 (1/20)</b>
<b>LOWEST EVER</b>	<b>23 (1/20)</b>	<b>45 (1/19, 1/18)</b>	<b>14 (1/18)</b>	<b>5 (1/20)</b>	<b>5 (1/19, 1/18)</b>

**Q. 35** And remembering that all of your responses are treated confidentially, would you say you have ever been the victim of sexual harassment?

DATE	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION
January 2020	31	68	1
January 2019	32	67	1
January 2018	25	74	1
<b>HIGHEST EVER</b>	<b>32 (1/19)</b>	<b>74 (1/18)</b>	<b>1 (1/20, 1/19, 1/18)</b>
<b>LOWEST EVER</b>	<b>25 (1/18)</b>	<b>67 (1/19)</b>	<b>1 (1/20, 1/19, 1/18)</b>

**Poll Trend Notes:** All surveys are of registered voters.  
Trends reflect questions asked at least twice since the first Siena College Poll in February 2005.  
Results listed here include all times questions have been asked.  
"Highest Ever" and "Lowest Ever" are provided at the bottom of each question.