WORKPLACE EXPERIENCES

Bright Spots and Progress

Many are employed and making contributions to the economy.

- Nearly 4 in 5 participants 18 and older reported full-time employment, part-time employment, or being self-employed.

Of those who are employed, there is a significantly higher rate of awareness of antidiscrimination policies in their workplace, compared to TRO’s previous study conducted in 2005.

- Over two-thirds reported awareness of their employers’ antidiscrimination policy regarding sexual orientation — an increase of 22.6% over the rate reported in 2005.
- Nearly half reported awareness of their employers’ antidiscrimination policy regarding gender identity — an increase of 23.1% over the rate reported in 2005.

Many are reporting lower rates of negative experiences in the workplace so long as they are aware of antidiscrimination policies in place.

- Of participants who said their employers had antidiscrimination policies in place regarding sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression, a significantly lower rate reported that they have taken actions to avoid discrimination — such as feeling as though they had to quit their job (6.3% vs. 12.0% among those who did not say their workplaces had all 3 policies) and feeling as though they had to stay in the closet (26.1% vs. 44.7%).

Other findings identify the negative experiences of many in the SGM community...
Challenges

Despite gains over the past 15 years, a high percentage of participants reported that their employers do not have, or that they are unaware of, antidiscrimination policies regarding sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression — indicating that there is room for improvement among employers to adopt such policies and ensure that employees are aware of them.

High rates of SGM employees have taken actions in the past 3 years to avoid discrimination in the workplace.

- Overall, nearly half of respondents reported taking at least one of the listed actions to avoid discrimination in the workplace in the last 3 years.
- 13.7% quit their job and 42.6% had to stay in the closet. These rates are higher among those who did not report that their workplaces had all 3 antidiscrimination policies.

A lower but not insignificant rate of participants reported perceived acts of discrimination in the workplace in the past 3 years.

- 5-7% perceived that they were forced to resign, transfer to a different department, or were removed from direct contact with clients or customers.

The survey indicates important priorities moving forward:

Regarding the most important services needed for SGM individuals:

**Adults** indicated preferences for:
- mental health and counseling services
- advocacy at the state legislature
- physical and medical health services
- public awareness about LGBTQ+ issues

**Youth** indicated preferences for:
- mental health and counseling services
- public awareness about LGBTQ+ issues
- programs for LGBTQ+ youth
- sexual health education

We hope readers will consider committing their resources, influence, and networks to come up with creative solutions to the persistent challenges faced by sexual and gender minorities so that we can continue making progress together as one community.