



Workplace Inclusion Barometer Snapshot December 2025 — March 2026

Paenga-whāwhā April 2026



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Workplace Inclusion Barometer

2026: Inclusion landscape

Key strengths

- High agreement on day-to-day respectful behaviours and manager inclusivity
- Majority personally endorse diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts, contributing to a positive inclusion climate

Key gaps

- Notable structural barriers remain for certain groups: lower scores for disabled and older people, people whose first language is not English, people with caring responsibilities, and younger employees, highlight ongoing inequities
- Leadership accountability and sustained action on inclusion are common concerns



Trust and belonging

66.7

Observed inclusion climate

68.8

Structural conditions

60.9

Lived experience

66.0

How to read this snapshot

- The Workplace Inclusion Barometer summarises how included people feel at work – scores reflect perceptions and lived experiences, not formal policy compliance.
- Results show a rolling national average based on a four-month window of survey responses, and all responses are unweighted.
- Scores are reported on a 0-100 scale, where higher scores indicate more inclusive workplace experiences. Scores around 65-70 suggest a moderately inclusive environment.
- Differences of around five points or more are generally considered meaningful, though context matters.
- The survey window for this snapshot is from 28 November 2025 to 31 March 2026. Four hundred people responded to the survey in this time period.
- See the full Workplace Inclusion Barometer methodology at Te Uru Tāngata Centre for Workplace Inclusion website.

Key insights and trends

The overall Workplace Inclusion Barometer stands at 65.6/100, with observed climate scoring highest, trust and belonging and lived experience not far behind, and structural conditions lagging. This snapshot aligns with heightened public discussion on diversity and recent legislative changes, such as pay equity updates in early 2026. These shifts may have slightly reduced lived experience scores, as some employees felt less comfortable voicing views amid polarised debates.

Participants who saw genuine efforts from their employers reported higher scores, particularly where workplaces celebrated cultural diversity or addressed bullying. Overall, the Workplace Inclusion Barometer shows a moderately inclusive national environment with strong interpersonal inclusion. To lift the Barometer further, focus should turn to structural equity, including transparent career pathways, leadership accountability, and improving outcomes for marginalised employees.

Leadership commitment

Many employees perceive strong support for inclusion from leaders (60.8 percent), including taking active and supportive steps, holding themselves accountable for progress, and sustaining inclusion efforts over time. A smaller number (13.9 percent) say their organisational leaders do not role model, talk about, or actively support inclusion, and are not held accountable. Around a quarter (25.3 percent) were not sure if their organisation was committed to workplace inclusion.

Positive observations in team climate

On a brighter note, day-to-day team interactions are broadly positive across industries. Nearly three quarters (72.9 percent) agreed that their immediate managers are inclusive and colleagues are respectful. The majority (82.1 percent) also say their team makes an effort to include colleagues with different perspectives. These strong interpersonal scores bolster the overall observed inclusion climate.

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Gaps in fairness for certain groups

Findings highlight uneven inclusion for specific demographics.

Gender

Women and gender-diverse participants reported slightly lower inclusion than men. Male respondents (approximately $n = 90$) recorded an overall Barometer score of around $68/100$, compared with about $65/100$ for female and gender-diverse respondents combined ($n \approx 310$), a gap of roughly three points.

This difference was most evident in the trust and belonging domain. Men were more likely to strongly agree that leadership is fair and that they feel a strong sense of belonging, resulting in higher trust and belonging scores. By contrast, women, and particularly non-binary participants, were less likely to strongly agree that they feel safe to speak up or that opportunities are equitable.

Overall, the gender gap is modest. Both groups reported generally positive inclusion experiences, with men scoring slightly higher on average.

Ethnicity

Clear disparities were evident by ethnicity. Māori (approximately $n = 50$) and Pacific Peoples ($n \approx 30$) recorded below-average inclusion scores, particularly in the trust and belonging and structural conditions domains. For example, Māori and Pacific Peoples respondents were five to eight points lower (on the $0-100$ scale) than Pākehā respondents in agreeing that their workplace respects Māori cultural values and Te Tiriti o Waitangi. This suggests greater scepticism about the authenticity of organisational cultural inclusion efforts.

Pākehā respondents, the largest group ($n \approx 280$), reported higher trust and fewer perceived barriers, including stronger agreement that people are treated fairly and that they feel a sense of belonging at work. As a result, Pākehā employees scored up to around eight points higher on the Barometer than their Māori and Pacific Peoples colleagues.

Age

Inclusion experiences differed by age. Younger employees (under 35, $n \approx 120$) reported lower overall inclusion, driven mainly by weaker lived experience scores. They were more likely to report incidents of bias or exclusion in the past year and less likely to feel psychologically safe. A notable share of this group agreed that they had witnessed or experienced unfair treatment at work.

In contrast, employees aged 55 and over ($n \approx 80$) recorded the highest inclusion scores of any age group, a few points above the national average. Older workers gave particularly strong ratings for the observed inclusion climate, often strongly agreeing that everyday interactions are respectful and inclusive, and that their

experience is valued. However, on perceptions of advancement barriers and organisational commitment to removing obstacles, this group scored closer to the average, with slightly lower structural conditions scores.

Disability

Employees identifying as having a disability (n ≈ 50) reported a substantially lower inclusion experience, around 10 points below the overall Barometer average. This gap was evident across multiple domains.

In the lived experience domain, disabled employees were far more likely to report bias, inadequate accommodations, or bullying and harassment linked to their identity. Psychological safety was a particular concern, with many indicating discomfort in reporting incidents, reflecting lower confidence in workplace support systems.

Disabled employees were also less likely to agree that opportunities are equitable, with many perceiving greater barriers to hiring and advancement. Neurodivergent employees reported similar challenges, including lower trust and safety, and greater discomfort arising from public debates on diversity and inclusion.

Intersectionality

The data show that overlapping identities can compound inclusion challenges. For example, younger women from ethnic-minority backgrounds recorded some of the lowest overall Barometer scores of any subgroup, with lower belonging, and higher reported rates of unfair treatment.

By contrast, individuals with multiple advantaged identities, such as middle-aged, Pākehā, non-disabled men, recorded the highest inclusion scores, often leading on domains such as trust and belonging and observed inclusion climate. These patterns highlight the importance of addressing multiple dimensions of identity together, rather than focusing on single characteristics in isolation.

Encouragingly, the survey also highlights strengths to build on. Most respondents indicated strong personal support for diversity and inclusion and reported actively valuing their organisation's efforts in this area. Harnessing this widespread commitment, alongside targeted action, provides a foundation for improving inclusion outcomes more consistently across all groups.