

MARIST POLL

Marist College Institute for Public Opinion

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Widespread Discrimination Against LGBT Athletes Exists, Say Most Americans

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This Marist Poll Reports:

Eight in ten Americans, 80%, think gay, lesbian, or bisexual athletes face at least some degree of discrimination from their professional teammates. Included here are 35% of residents nationally who believe LGBT athletes suffer from a lot of discrimination from those on their team, and 45% who think they experience at least some discrimination. 12% of Americans do not think LGBT athletes experience any discrimination from their fellow team members.

Opinion on this issue is similar across most segments of the nation with the exception of race. A majority of African Americans, 51%, say gay, lesbian, or bisexual athletes experience a great deal of discrimination from their fellow players. This compares with 31% of whites and 37% of Latinos who share this view.

This Marist Poll has been conducted in conjunction with the Marist College Center for Sports Communication.

“Sports fans have a perception of the discrimination endured by LGBT athletes, something likely driven by high profile events,” says Keith Strudler, Director of the Marist College Center for Sports Communication. “It’s critical for professional and amateur sports teams and leagues to continue to create an accepting space for all athletes, but they also need to communicate those efforts with the public -- something many leagues are working hard to do.”

Most Americans, 80%, also believe that gay, lesbian, or bisexual athletes are discriminated against by sports fans. This includes 35% who believe LGBT athletes experience a lot of discrimination and 45% who report they face a little discrimination from sports fans. 14% think they are not discriminated against at all.

Again, race is somewhat of a factor in Americans' opinions, but this time age plays a role, too. 48% of African Americans and 44% of Latinos perceive sports fans to discriminate a lot against LGBT athletes. 32% of whites agree. Younger Americans, those under 45 years of age, 42%, are also more likely than their older counterparts, 29%, to believe these athletes face a lot of discrimination from sports fans.

When it comes to signing a transgender athlete to a professional sports team, nearly six in ten Americans, 58%, either strongly favor, 14%, or favor, 44%, such agreements. 29% either oppose, 24%, or strongly oppose, 5%, these signings. 13% are unsure.

Here, there is little difference with regard to race or age. Women, 64%, though are more likely than men, 50%, to favor the signing of transgender athletes to professional sports teams.

How the Survey was Conducted

Nature of the Sample: Marist Poll of 1,062 National Adults

This survey of 1,062 adults was conducted March 22nd through March 27th, 2017 by The Marist Poll, in partnership with The Marist College Center for Sports Communication. Adults 18 years of age and older residing in the contiguous United States were contacted on landline or mobile numbers and interviewed in English by telephone using live interviewers. Mobile telephone numbers were randomly selected based upon a list of telephone exchanges from throughout the nation from Survey Sampling International. The exchanges were selected to ensure that each region was represented in proportion to its population. Mobile phones are treated as individual devices. After validation of age, personal ownership, and non-business-use of the mobile phone, interviews are typically conducted with the person answering the phone. To increase coverage, this mobile sample was supplemented by respondents reached through random dialing of landline phone numbers from ASDE Survey Sampler, Inc. Within each landline household, a single respondent is selected through a random selection process to increase the representativeness of traditionally under-covered survey populations. The samples were then combined and balanced to reflect the 2013 American Community Survey 1-year estimates for age, gender, income, race, and region. Results are statistically significant within ± 3.0 percentage points. There are 906 registered voters. The results for this subset are statistically significant within ± 3.3 percentage points. The error margin was not adjusted for sample weights and increases for cross-tabulations.

		National Adults	National Registered Voters
		Col %	Col %
National Adults		100%	
National Registered Voters		85%	100%
Party Identification	Democrat	n/a	34%
	Republican	n/a	29%
	Independent	n/a	36%
	Other	n/a	1%
Political Ideology	Very liberal	n/a	8%
	Liberal	n/a	21%
	Moderate	n/a	34%
	Conservative	n/a	30%
	Very conservative	n/a	7%
Gender	Men	49%	48%
	Women	51%	52%
Age	Under 45	47%	44%
	45 or older	53%	56%
Age	18 to 29	22%	18%
	30 to 44	25%	26%
	45 to 59	27%	28%
	60 or older	26%	28%
Race	White	62%	64%
	African American	11%	10%
	Latino	14%	14%
	Other	12%	12%
Region	Northeast	18%	18%
	Midwest	21%	22%
	South	37%	36%
	West	24%	24%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	48%	46%
	\$50,000 or more	52%	54%
Education	Not college graduate	58%	54%
	College graduate	42%	46%
Interview Type	Landline	33%	35%
	Cell phone	67%	65%

Marist Poll National Adults. Interviews conducted March 22nd through March 27th, 2017, n=1062 MOE +/- 3.0 percentage points. National Registered Voters: n=906 MOE +/- 3.3 percentage points. Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Marist Poll National Tables

		National Adults			
		Just your impression, how much discrimination do you think gay, lesbian, or bisexual athletes face from their professional teammates:			
		A lot	A little	None at all	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %
National Adults		35%	45%	12%	9%
National Registered Voters		35%	45%	11%	8%
Party Identification^	Democrat	44%	43%	7%	5%
	Republican	22%	48%	19%	11%
	Independent	35%	47%	9%	9%
Political Ideology^	Very liberal-Liberal	55%	37%	4%	5%
	Moderate	33%	52%	9%	6%
	Conservative-Very conservative	24%	46%	18%	12%
Region	Northeast	39%	45%	9%	7%
	Midwest	32%	47%	14%	8%
	South	37%	42%	9%	11%
	West	29%	49%	16%	6%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	35%	45%	13%	8%
	\$50,000 or more	35%	47%	11%	7%
Education	Not college graduate	35%	44%	13%	8%
	College graduate	34%	47%	10%	10%
Age	Under 45	36%	47%	11%	6%
	45 or older	33%	44%	12%	11%
Age	18 to 29	35%	49%	11%	5%
	30 to 44	36%	45%	11%	7%
	45 to 59	40%	41%	13%	6%
	60 or older	26%	47%	12%	15%
Race	White	31%	46%	12%	10%
	African American	51%	39%	5%	5%
	Latino	37%	41%	16%	6%
Gender	Men	31%	49%	14%	7%
	Women	38%	42%	10%	10%
Interview Type	Landline	30%	44%	12%	15%
	Cell phone	37%	46%	12%	5%

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	Independent	37%	47%	13%	3%
Political Ideology^	Very liberal-Liberal	53%	39%	5%	3%
	Moderate	35%	50%	11%	4%
	Conservative-Very conservative	21%	50%	21%	8%
Region	Northeast	40%	43%	12%	5%
	Midwest	34%	50%	15%	2%
	South	34%	45%	12%	9%
	West	34%	44%	17%	6%
Household Income	Less than \$50,000	35%	44%	14%	7%
	\$50,000 or more	35%	47%	14%	4%
Education	Not college graduate	36%	44%	14%	6%
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Age	Under 45	42%	39%	15%	4%
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		National Adults				
		Now thinking about professional sports teams, would you strongly favor, favor, oppose, or strongly oppose a professional sports team signing a player who is transgender?				
		Strongly favor	Favor	Oppose	Strongly oppose	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %
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