



# Corporate America One Year Post President Trump's Anti-DEI Executive Orders

January 2026



We empower the world's most inclusive and high-performing workplaces.



## Insight-Powered Solutions Trusted by Talent and HR Leaders

### TALENT SOURCING

**Identify, Engage, and Hire Top Early Career Talent**

Branding and recruiting platform that surfaces engaged, prepared candidates more efficiently, effectively, and at scale

### ASSESSMENT AND STRATEGY

**Uncover the Real Levers to Unlock Enduring Employee Engagement**

Actionable intelligence into the employee experience powered by innovative technology and over 40 years of workforce data and insights

### RESEARCH AND ADVISORY SERVICES

**Set Strong DEI Foundations and Build Adaptable Roadmaps**

Expert guidance rooted in research and experience to support and advance your strategic talent and DEI priorities in every environment

### LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

**Create a More Resilient, Connected Workforce**

Impactful content designed and delivered to inflect productivity and positive behavior change at every level

We partner with **600+** corporations, government entities, and nonprofits **globally**.

Including **~50%** of the Fortune 100 and **~25%** of the Fortune 500.

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Overall Impact
- 3 Inclusion Programming
- 4 Department Organization & Name Changes
- 5 Data Collection & Analysis
- 6 Looking Ahead
- 7 Key Findings



# Introduction

1



## Listening Sessions with CDOs and other corporate inclusion leaders

**November 19, 2024**  
**November 21, 2024**  
*Post-election EVSs*

**January 30, 2025**  
**February 12, 2025**  
**March 26, 2025**  
**June 6, 2025**  
**August 13, 2025**  
**January 13, 2026**  
*Post-inauguration  
EVSs*



## SAMPLE



### Participants

- The data consists of recorded responses from **7 EVs** with **over 400 CDOs and other senior DEI leaders**.
- Greater than **one-third** of participants are federal contractors.

## ANALYSES



### Quantitative Data

- The data was compiled and evaluated in a crosstab fashion. A column proportion test was run at the 95% confidence level against related groups.
  - For any segment where **n < 5**, data is not reported.
  - Numbers may add to **more than 100%** due to either rounding or allowance of multiple response options.
  - Analysis was conducted on the **total answering population** (i.e., if a participant did not answer a question, they are not included in the base).



### Qualitative Data

- The data was compiled and evaluated via an automated text analysis that references a lexicon of words typically associated with positive, negative, and neutral polarities and serves to cluster statements into thematic groups/topics. This text analysis was used to select quotations that assist in contextualizing quantitative output and summarizes sentiment of the group in aggregate.
  - Participant quotes in this document have been edited solely for spelling and grammar.



### Report

- All participants were assured of **anonymity and confidentiality** and that Seramount would be providing results only in aggregate.

# Major Themes

**1**

## **“Embassy” and “When in Rome” Approaches to DEI**

Given the hostile climate towards DEI, organizations have moved towards the “Embassy” and “When in Rome” approaches and away from the “Advocacy” approach.

**2**

## **Language Changes, But the Work Remains the Same**

Several leaders shared that while the language they use to discuss their work has changed, the work has largely remained the same.

**3**

## **Programmatic Changes Vary By Area**

Supplier diversity efforts were particularly hard hit by legal concerns in 2025. On the other hand, ERGs remain vital to inclusive workplaces.

**4**

## **The Future of Inclusion Hinges on Business Strategy**

Amid massive change to inclusion work, leaders see opportunity in embedding inclusion into the day-to-day work of how the business operates.



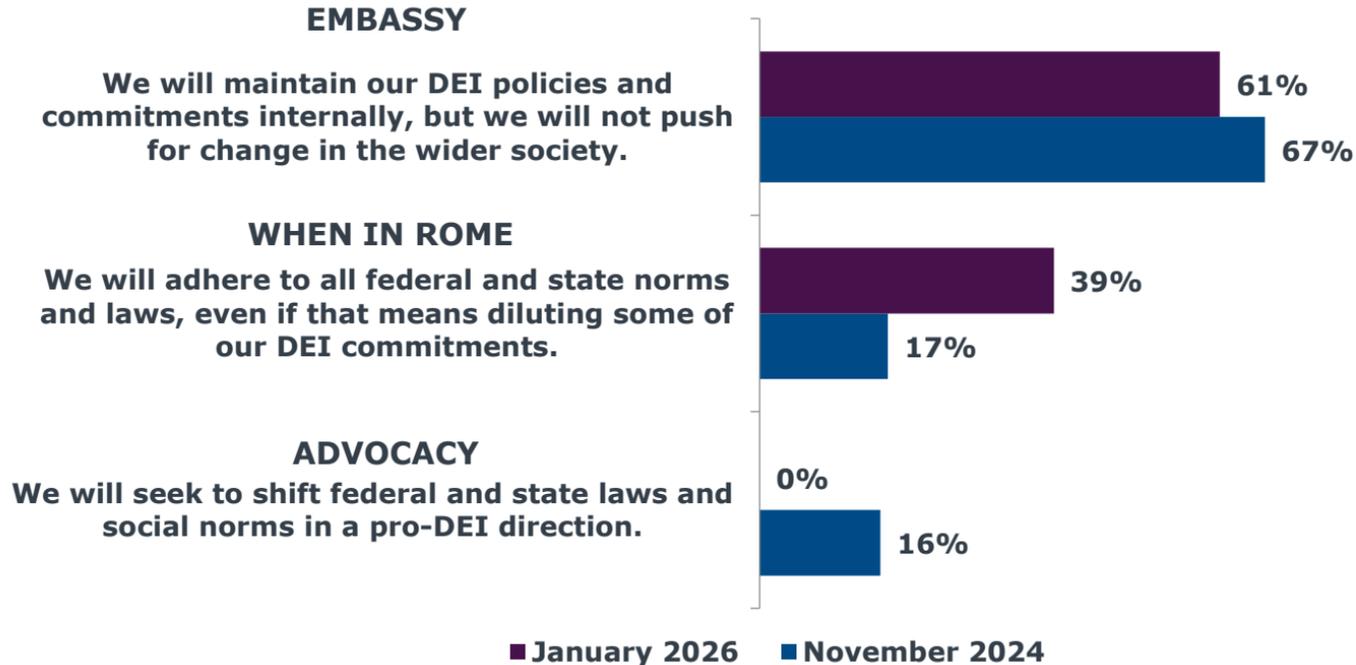
## Overall Impact

2



# Organizations Are Continuing to Move Towards “When In Rome”

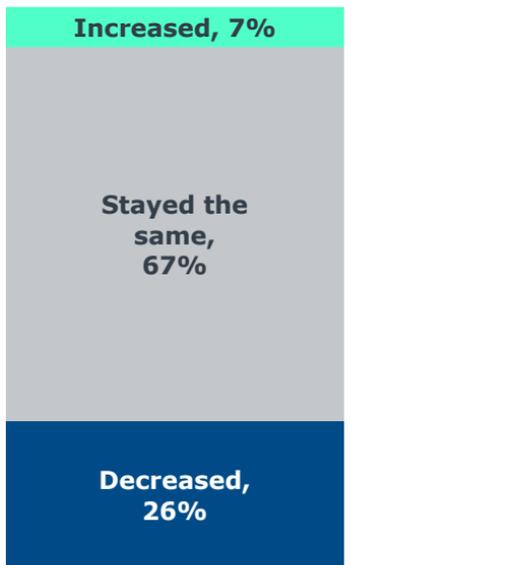
Assuming a hostile regulatory and legal environment for DEI moving forward, what direction do you believe your company is most likely to go in?



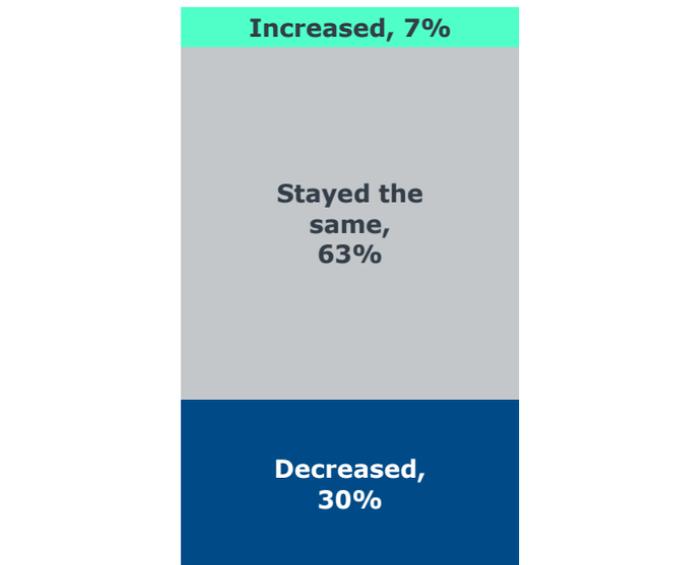
# Most Inclusion Team Sizes and Budgets Remain Steady



In the past year, how has the size of your inclusion team changed?



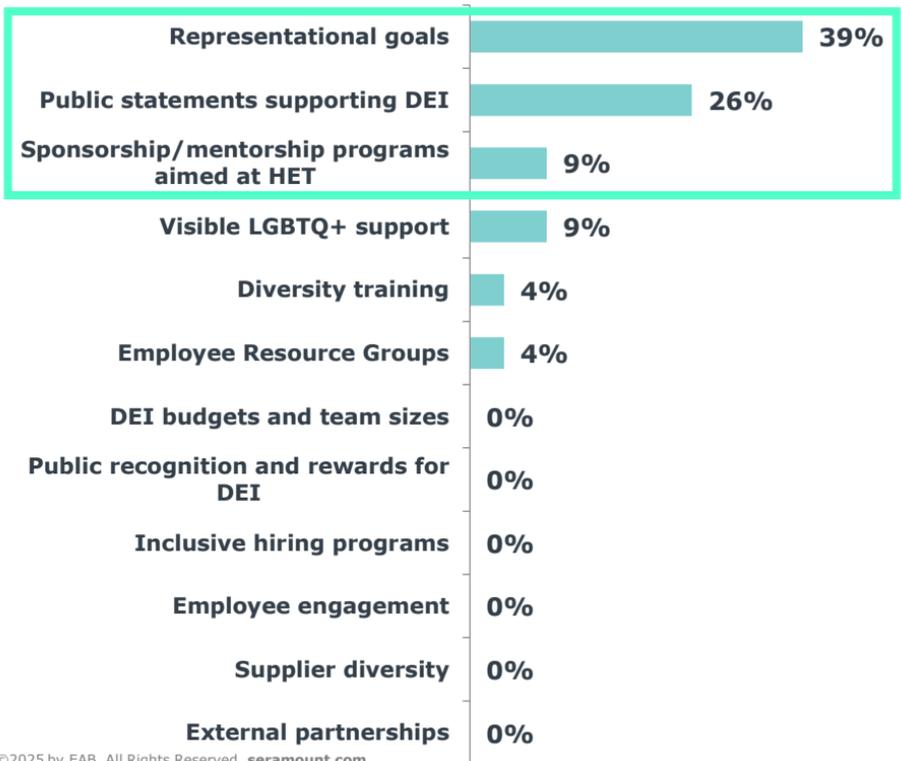
In the past year, how has the budget for your inclusion department changed?



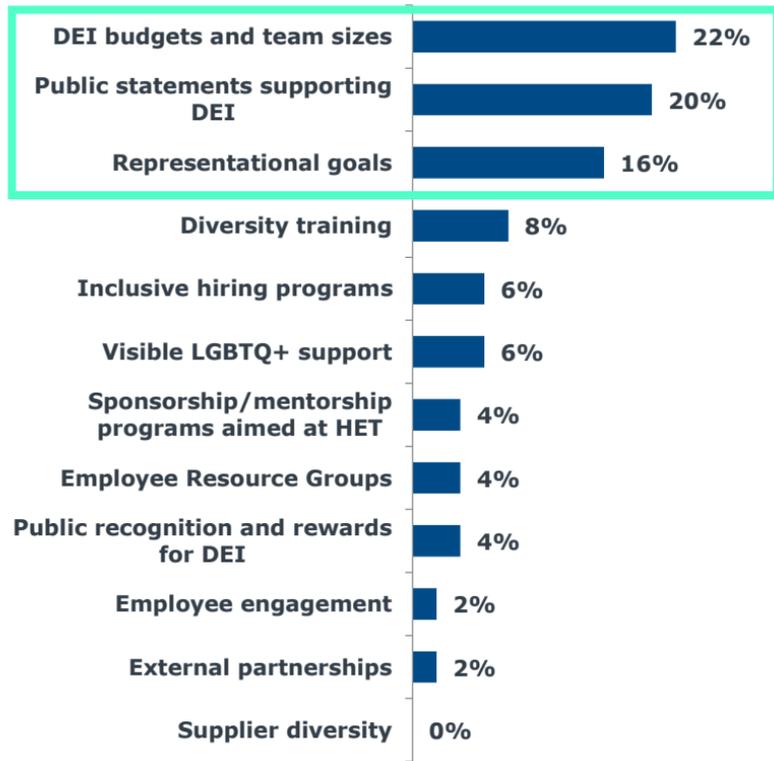
# Representational Goals and Public Statements Supporting DEI Have Been Most Negatively Impacted



**JANUARY 2026:** At your company, what area of DEI do you think has been most negatively impacted by the Trump administration's policies?



**NOVEMBER 2024:** At your company, what area of DEI do you think will be most negatively impacted by the Trump administration?



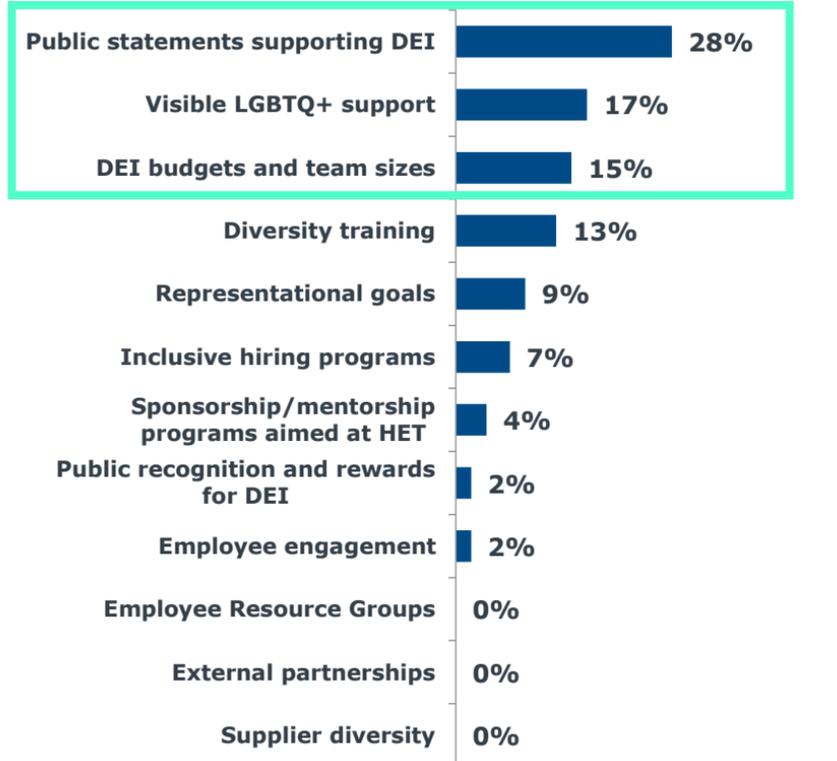
# Leaders See Budgets & Team Sizes Being Impacted Elsewhere



**JANUARY 2026:** In general, not specific to your company, what area of DEI do you think has been most negatively impacted by the Trump administration's policies?



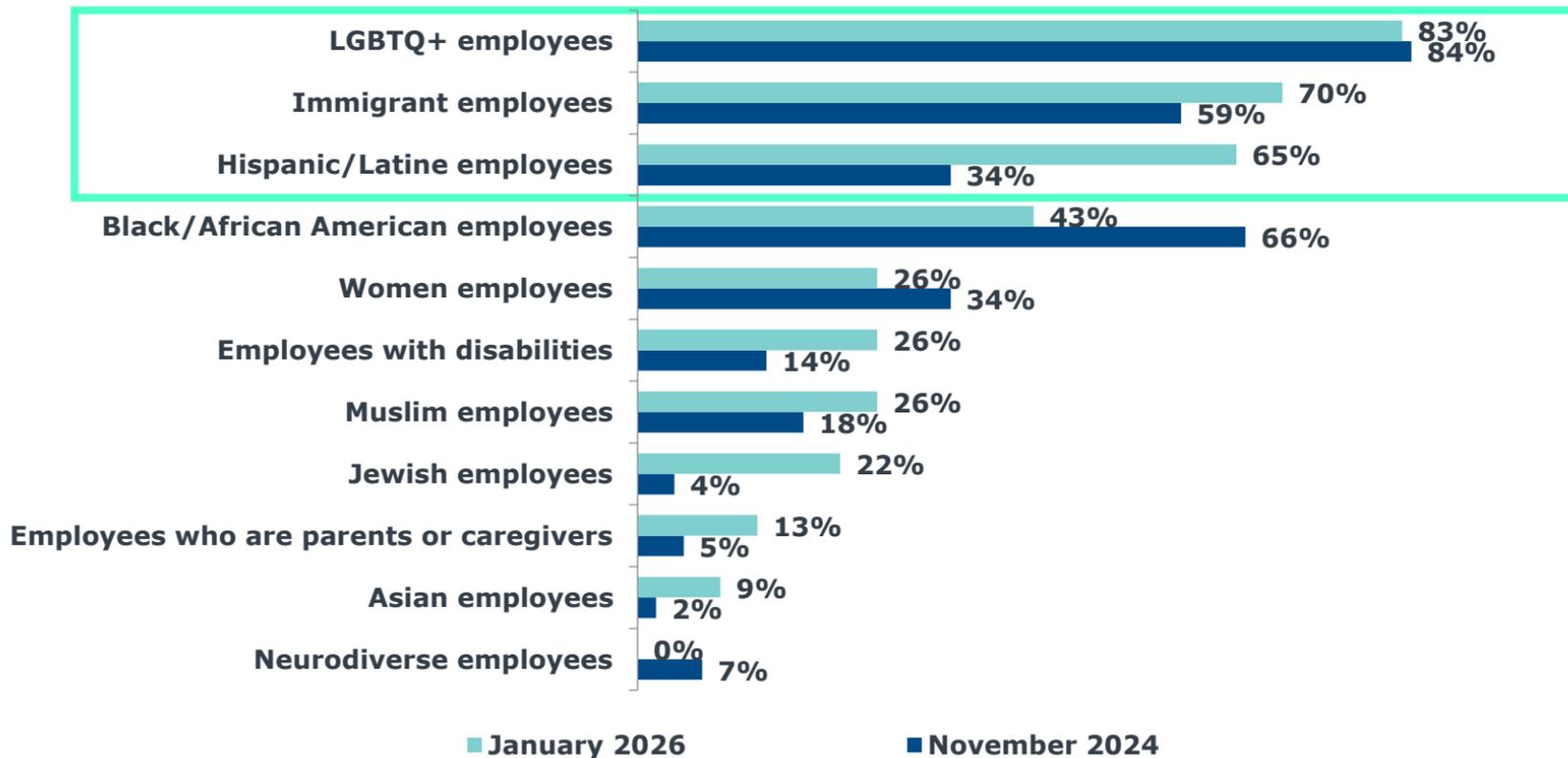
**NOVEMBER 2024:** In general, not specific to your company, what area of DEI do you think will be most negatively impacted by the Trump administration?



# CDOs See LGBTQ+ Employees, Immigrant Employees, and Hispanic Employees as Most Needing Private Sector Support



Which of the following employee groups do you think are most in need of support and safeguards from private industry? Please select the three groups you believe are most in need of support right now.



# 2025 Was Marked by Risk Aversity, Language Changes, and Tensions Between Global and US Work



## Themes from Qualitative Comments

### Risk Aversion

"We are doing a bit of **pre-compliance** and being very conservative"

"The **fear is driving some of our decision-making** as a federal contractor"

"Moving from culture carriers to **legal policy 'policing'**"

### Language Changes

"Our work hasn't changed much, just **the way we speak of it has changed**"

"The nomenclature and language changes but overall, **the work is the same**"

"Language changes has been **one of the biggest impact on our work**"

### Global vs. US Tensions

"The biggest struggle for my company was **balancing the executive orders in the USA with how the rest of the world was feeling**"

"Different responses [in the US vs. in other geographies] has been **read as hypocrisy**, which is understandable but difficult to navigate as the leader"

"With the 'pause' on the US work, **we have accelerated our work globally**"



# Inclusion Programming

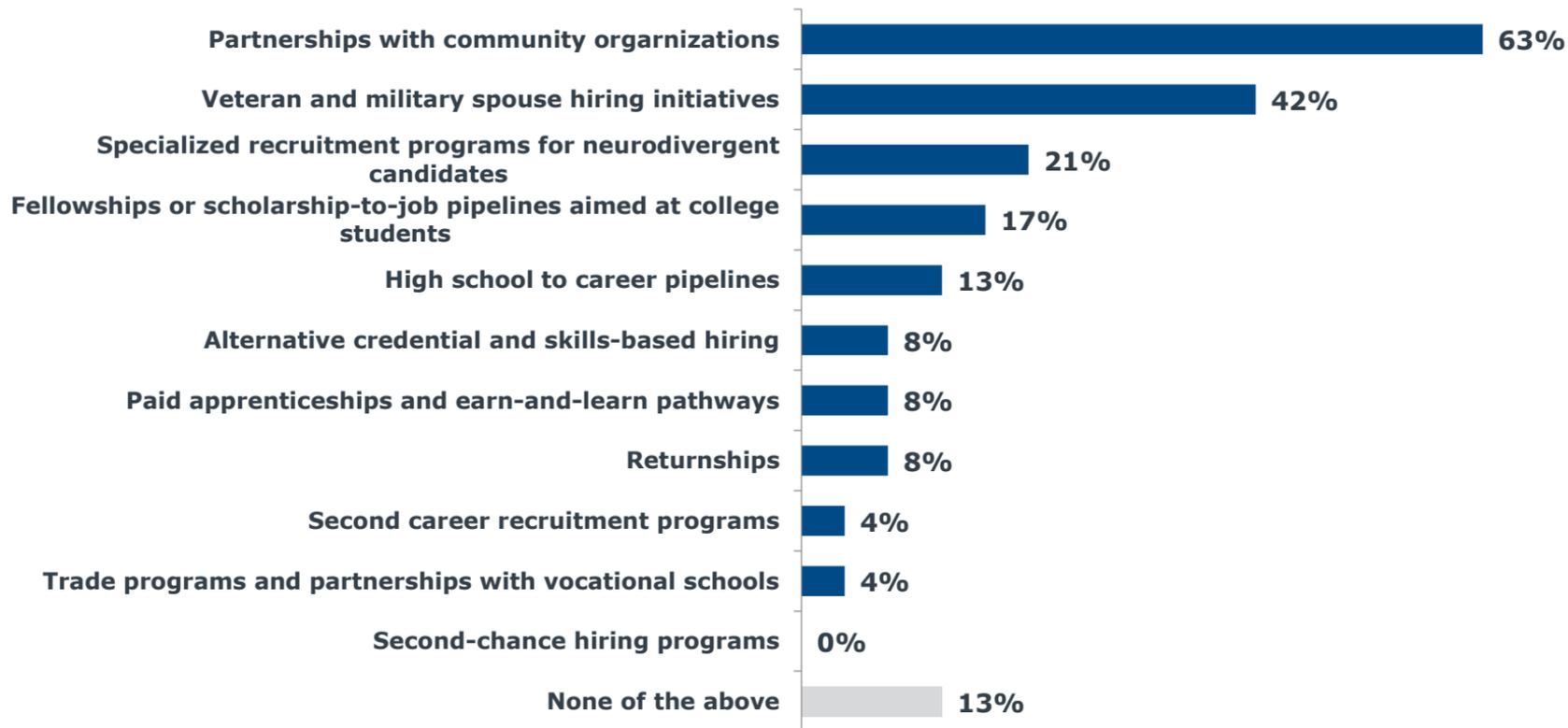
---

A horizontal bar with a blue-to-purple gradient, positioned above the number 3.

3

# About Two-Thirds of Organizations Maintain Recruitment Partnerships with Community Organizations

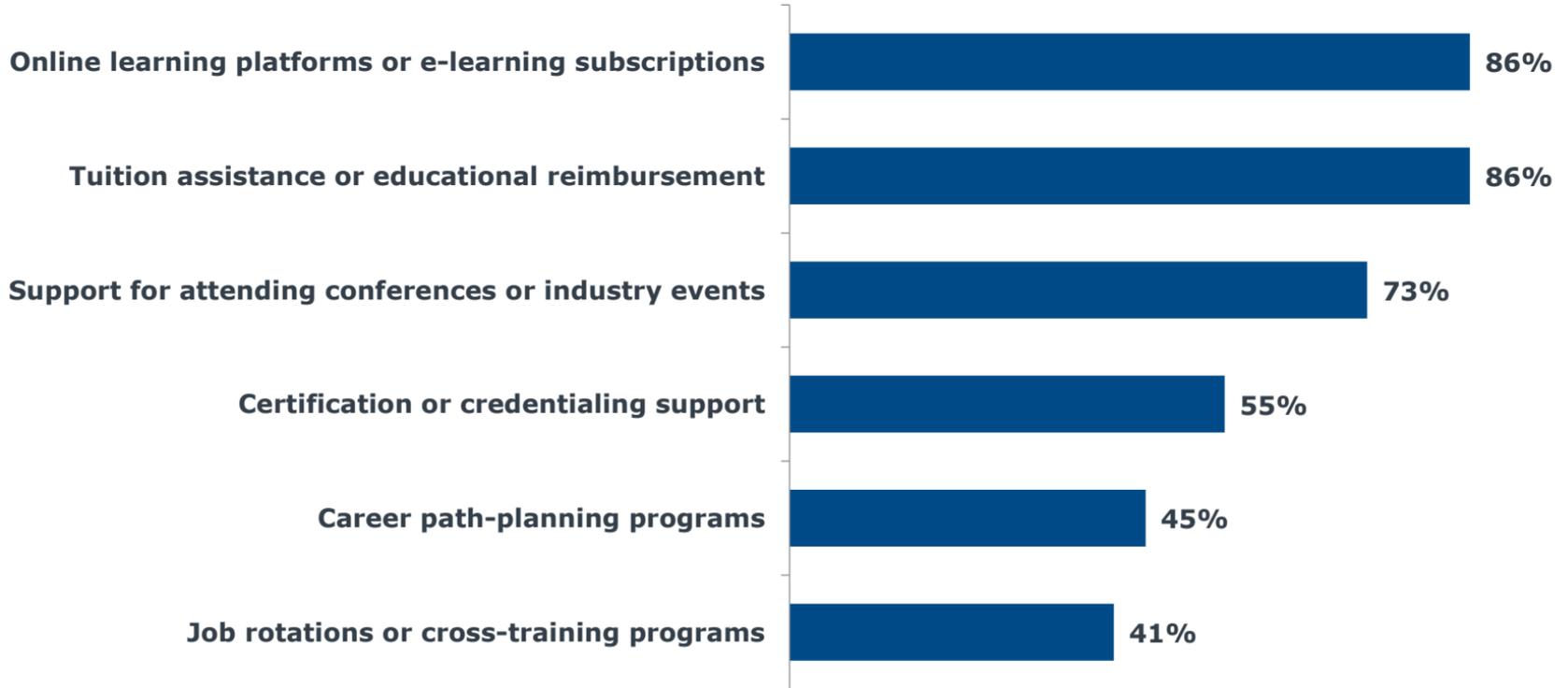
Which of the following nontraditional recruitment programs does your organization utilize?



# Professional Development Opportunities Focus on Education

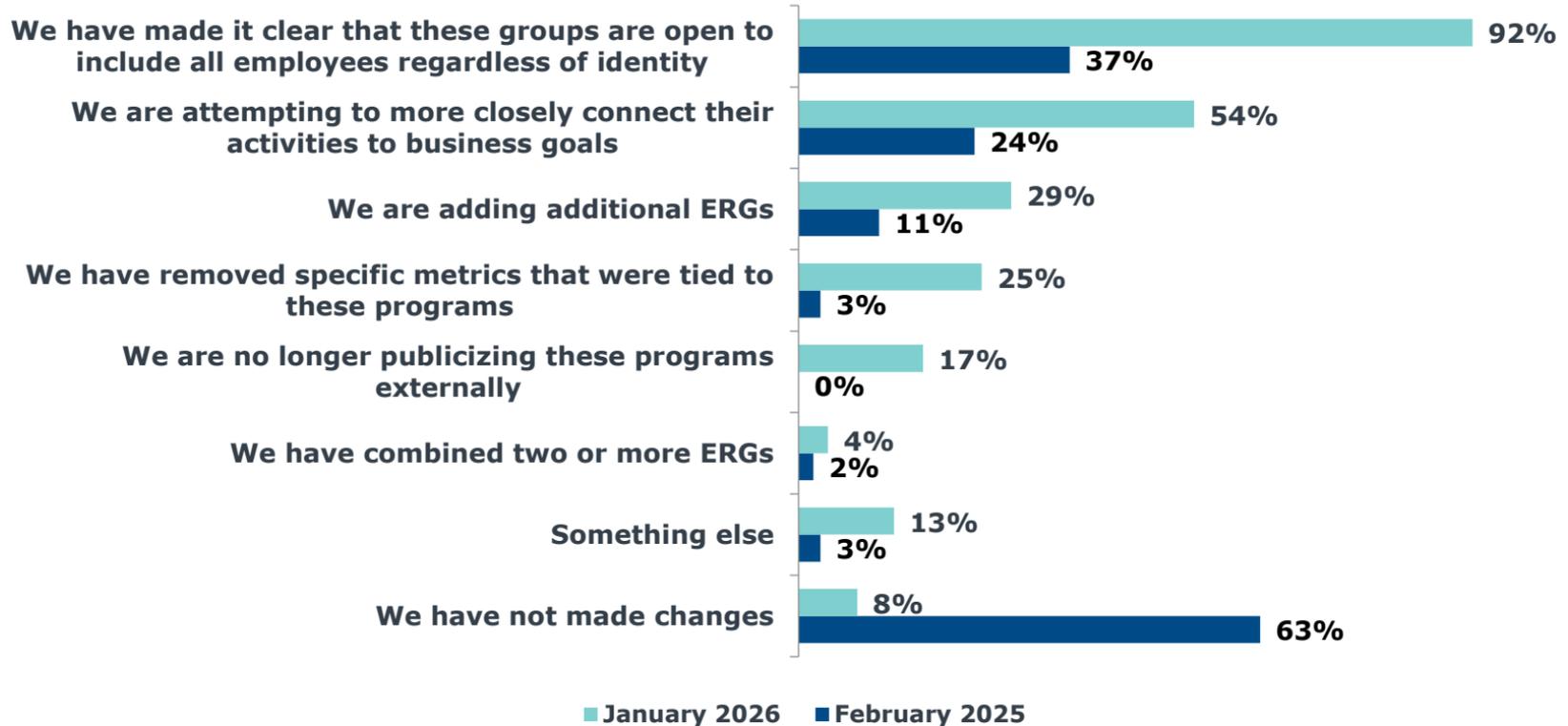


Which of the following professional development and learning opportunities does your organization offer to employees?



# Changes to ERGs, But No Evidence of Pulling Back

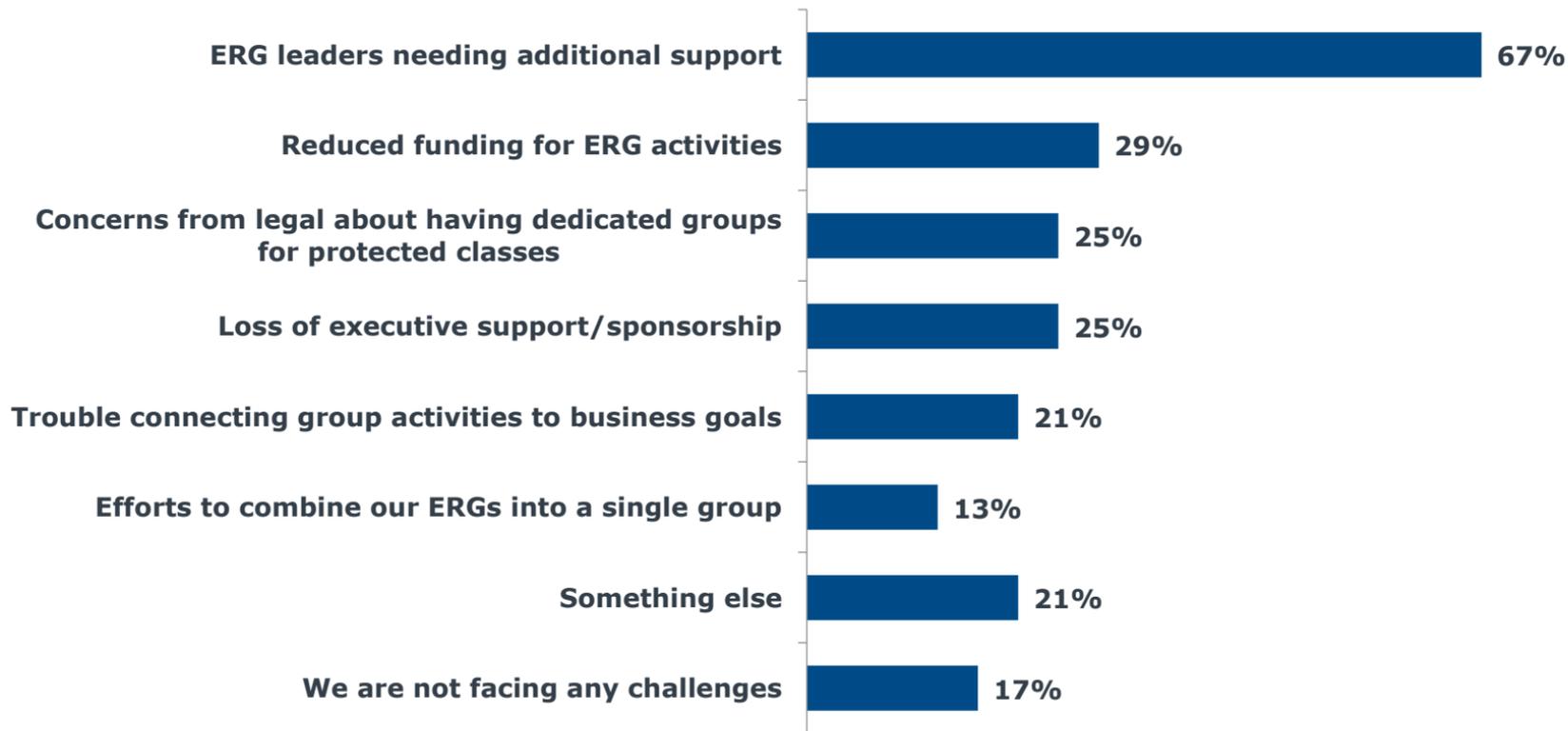
Have you made any changes to your ERGs?



# Two-Thirds Indicate ERG Leaders Need Additional Support



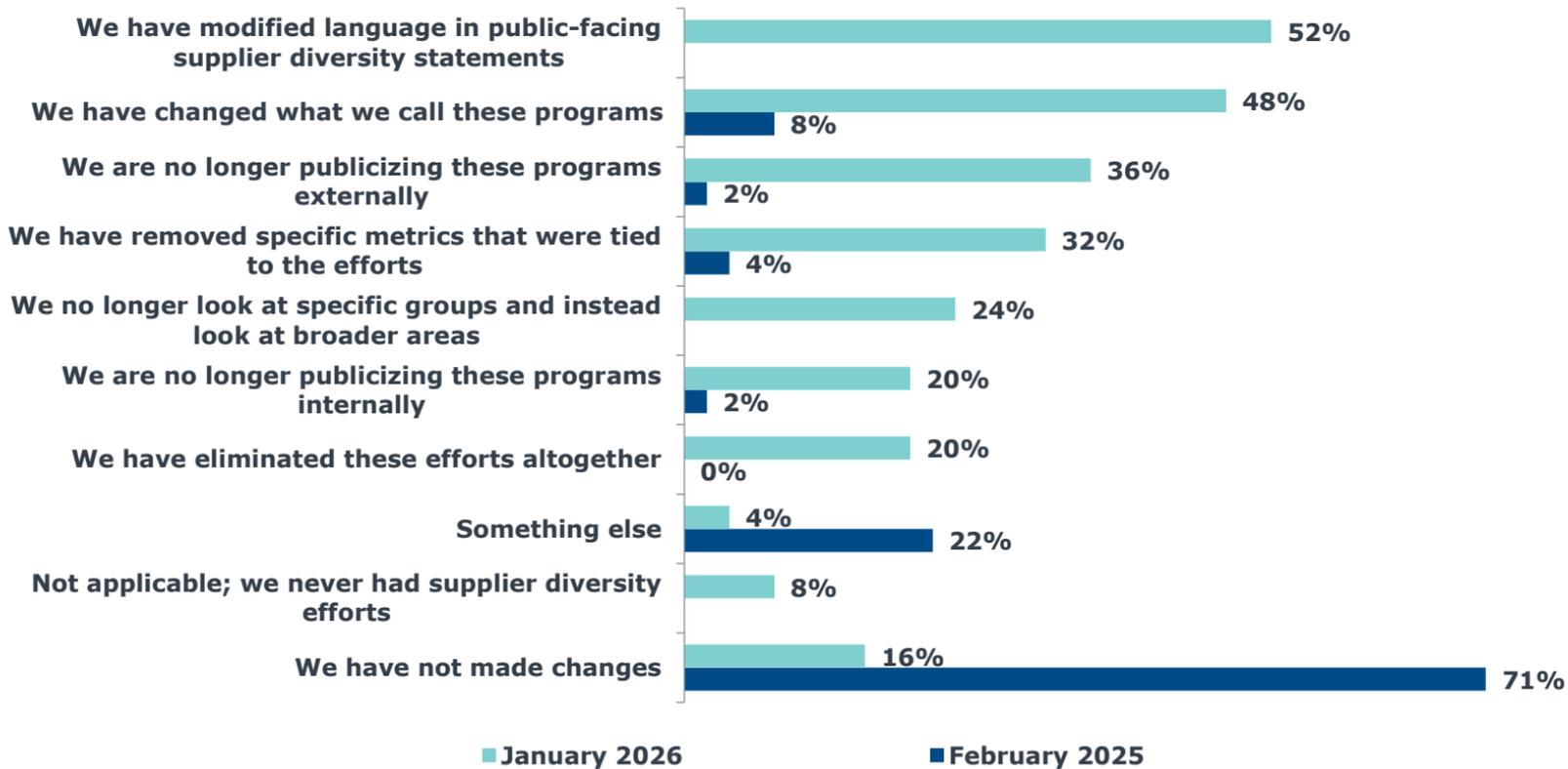
What challenges, if any, are you currently facing with your ERGs?



# Many Changes to Supplier Diversity Efforts, But Few Organizations Have Eliminated Them

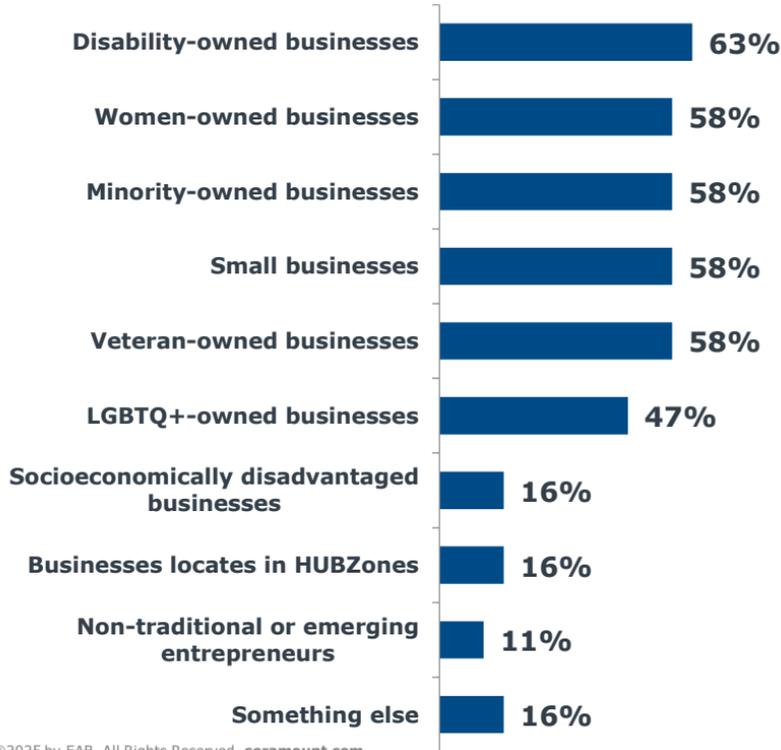


What changes, if any, have you made to your supplier diversity efforts?

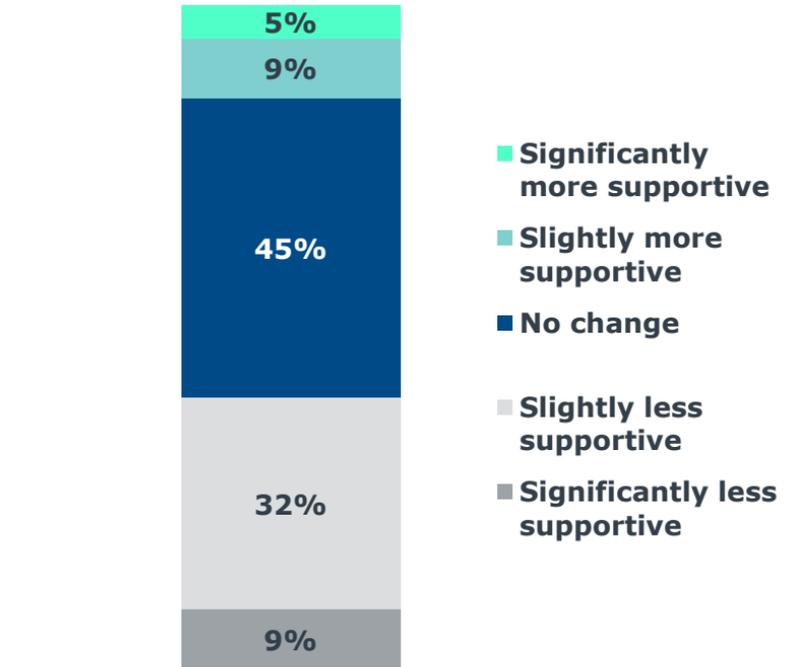


# About 4 in 10 Are Seeing Less Support for Supplier Diversity

**What groups does your organization currently include in your supplier diversity program? Select all that apply.**



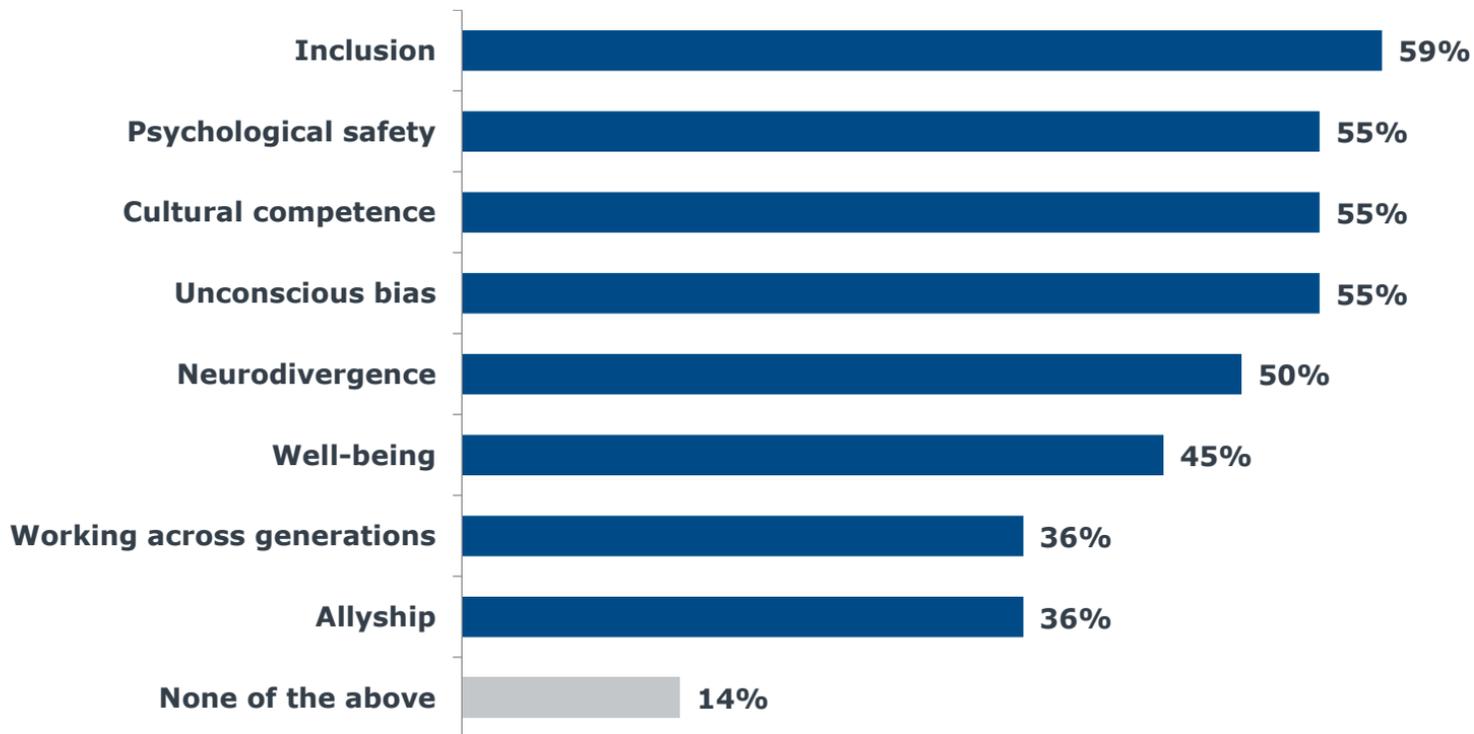
**How would you rate the level of support at your organization for supplier diversity today compared to two years ago?**



# Six in Ten Still Offer Inclusion Trainings



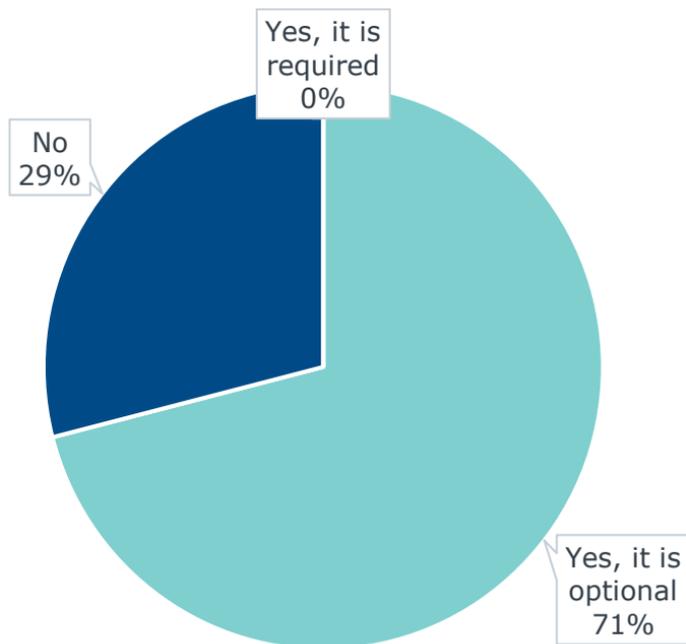
On which of the following topics do you currently offer DEI trainings or learnings?



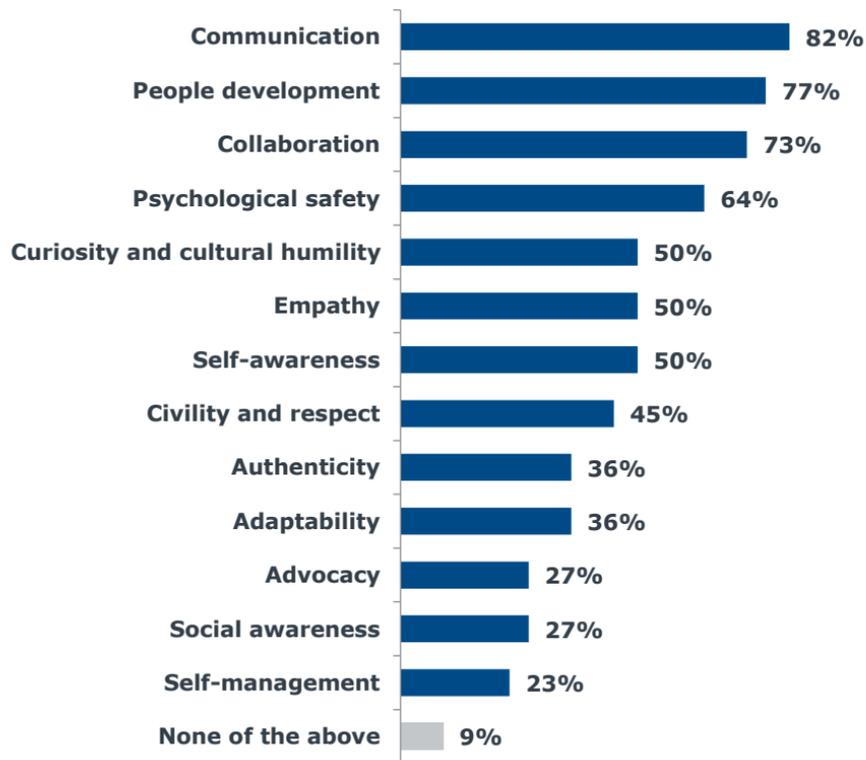
# Seven in Ten Offer Inclusive Leadership Training



Is inclusive leadership training offered to leaders within your organization?



Which inclusive leadership competencies are included in the training?





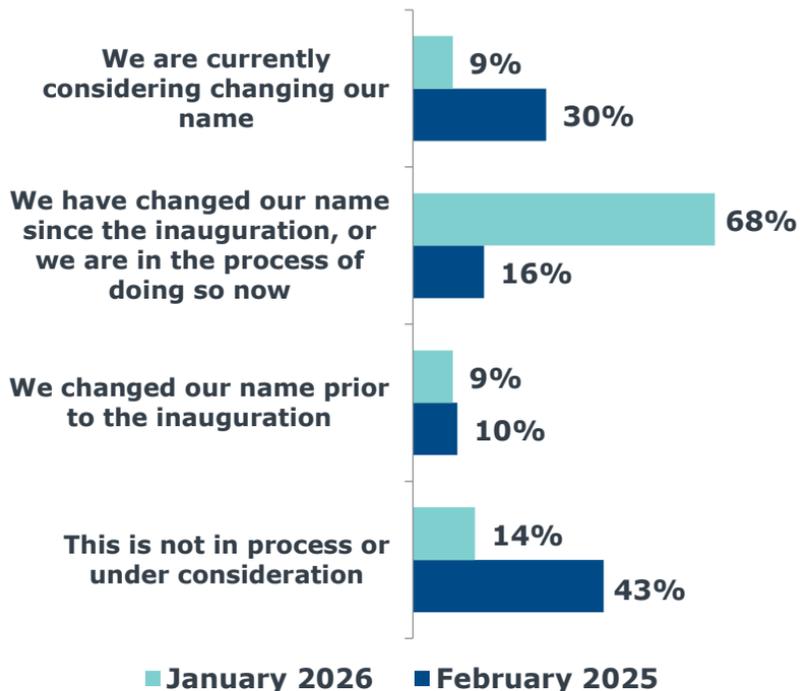
# Department Organization & Name Changes

4

# Three in Four Organizations Have Changed the Names of Their DEI Departments or Are Considering Doing So



Since the inauguration, have you had any conversations within your organization about changing the name of your DEI department?



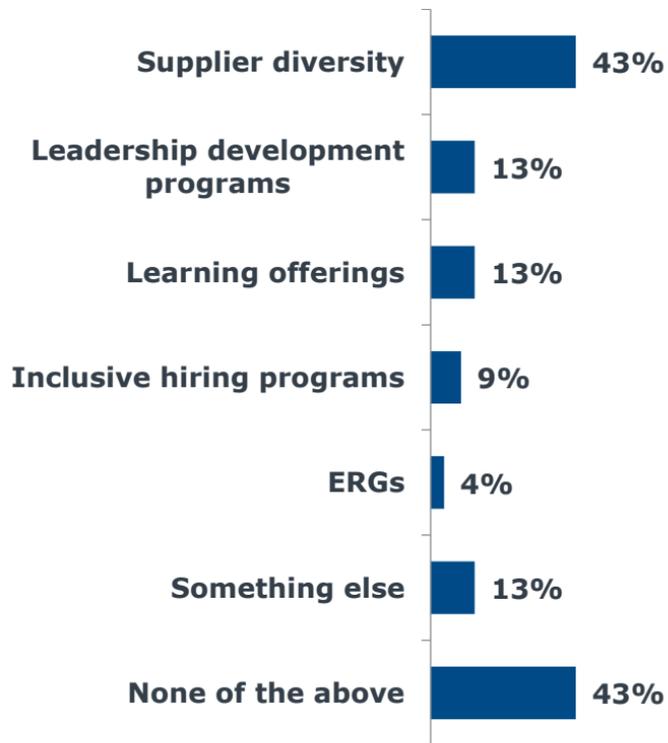
What is the name used by your organization for the office or department that performs inclusion work?

Diversity  
Community Impact  
Belonging  
**Inclusion**  
Inclusiveness  
Culture

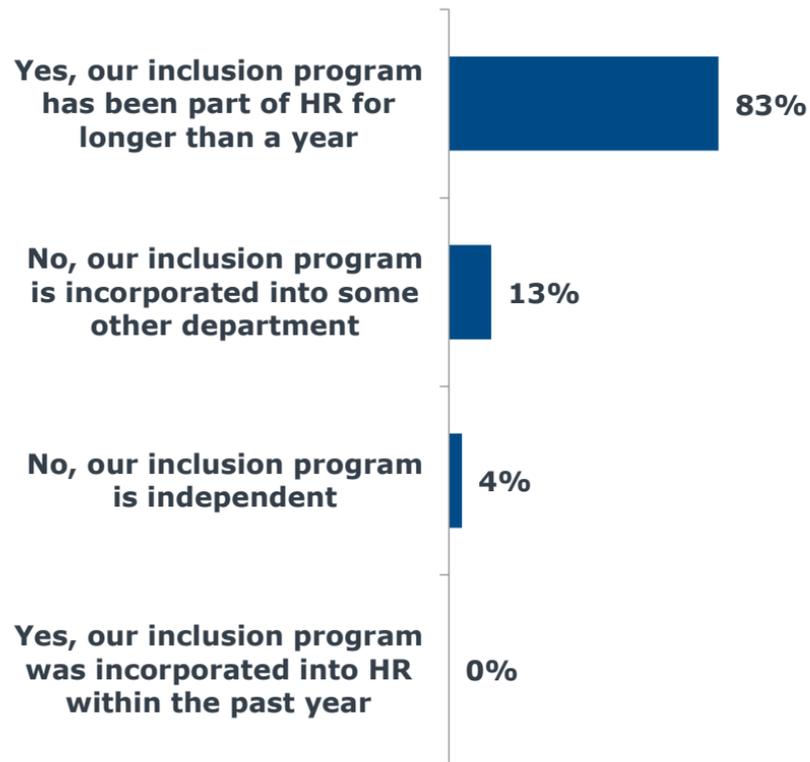
# Eight in Ten Indicate Their Inclusion Program is Part of HR



Which of your programs have changed names in the last six months?



Is your inclusion program part of HR?





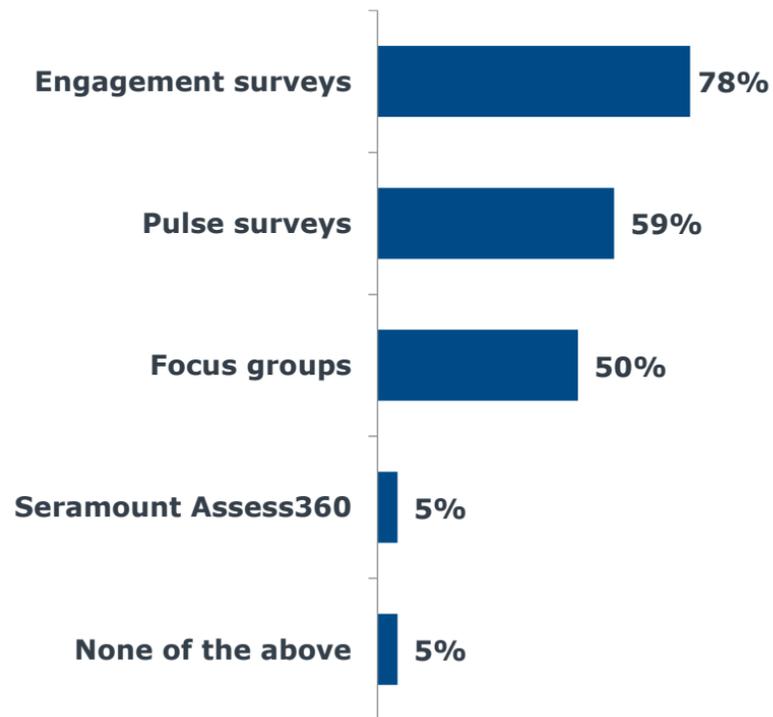
# Data Collection & Analysis

---

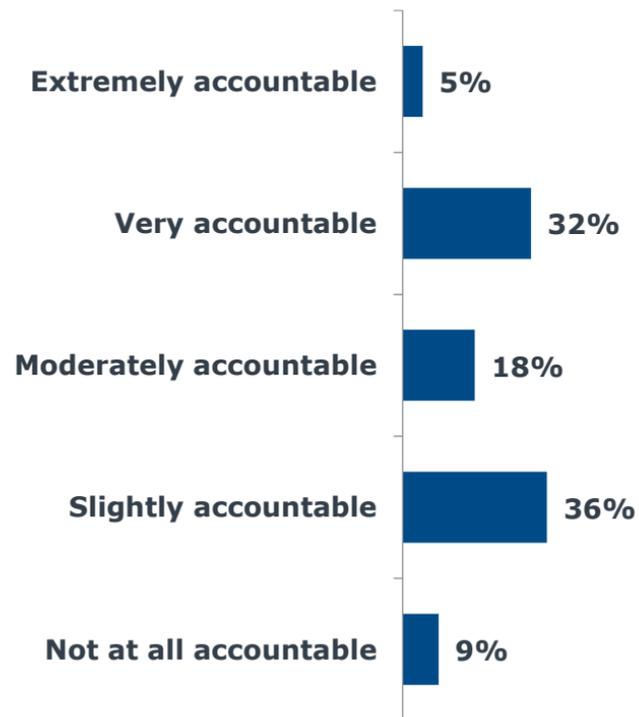
5

# Employee Listening Efforts Are Still Going Strong

Which of the following data collection methods does your organization utilize to learn about employees' opinions, perceptions, and experiences?



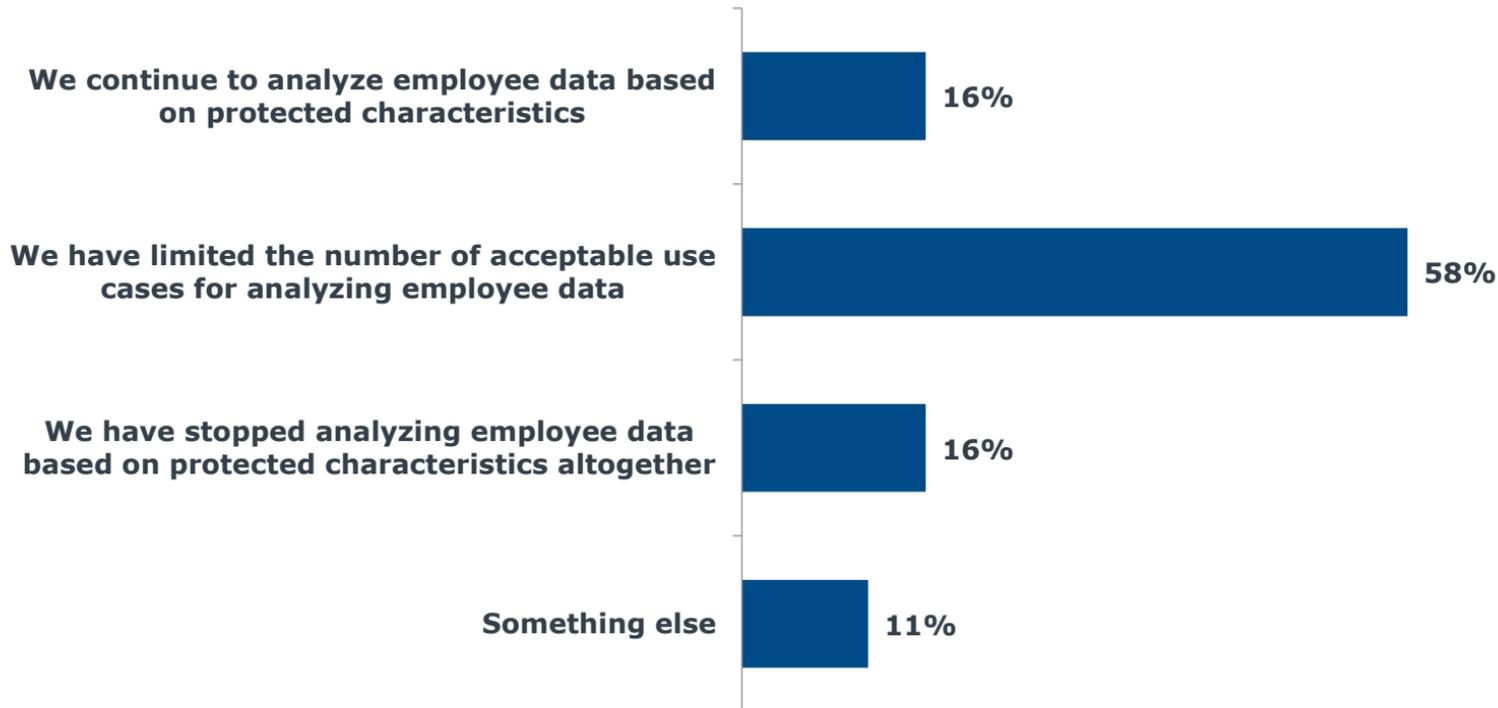
To what extent are managers at your organization held accountable for acting on employee engagement survey results?



# Few Organizations Have Stopped Analyzing Employee Data Based on Protected Characteristics



**Does your organization currently analyze employee data based on protected characteristics, such as race/ethnicity or gender?**





# Looking Ahead

---

A horizontal bar with a blue-to-purple gradient, rounded ends, and a slight shadow, positioned below the main title.

# 6

# Continuing Talent Programs is Biggest Legal Concern Right Now



From a legal perspective, what are your biggest concerns about inclusion work in 2026?



# Leaders See Opportunities and Challenges Ahead



## Themes from Qualitative Comments

### ERGs Vital But Strained

"Our ERG leaders are **worn down from the external rhetoric**"

"Managing identity-based ERGs in this current climate is **extremely challenging**"

"**Leaders of these groups are disengaged** since they feel their activities have been 'watered down' with the 'for all' focus"

### Opportunities for Change

"**Embedding inclusion** into all people processes and into our products and services"

"**Reconnecting our work to the business** and talent outcomes"

"I want our impact to **resonate with more employees**"

### Fatigue & Frustration

"**Fatigue, maintaining constant state of risk mitigation**"

"**Getting the organization's attention** on I&D – there is so much fatigue"

"Continuing to deliver outcomes and impact **with fewer resources**"



## Key Findings



# 7

# Key Findings



- Assuming a hostile regulatory and legal environment, **61 percent of inclusion leaders now believe their organizations will take an “embassy approach.”** They will maintain their DEI policies and commitments internally but will not push for change in wider society. There has been a shift towards the **“When in Rome” model: 39 percent** selected this option, up from 17 percent in November 2024.
- Most participants shared that their own inclusion **team sizes and budgets had remained steady** in the past year, with fewer than one-third experiencing cutbacks.
- **Department name changes are still top of mind**, with about three in four leaders indicating that their department has changed names since the inauguration or they are currently considering changing their name.
- **Supplier diversity has been hit hard**, but only 20 percent of organizations shared that they have eliminated these efforts altogether.
- In contrast, **few organizations are scaling back on ERGs**, and many are relying on them to support to employees who have been targeted by the Trump administration’s policies.
- **Inclusive leadership and inclusion trainings** have continued across a variety of topics, but they are largely optional.