

# **CCISUA-wide Staff Survey on Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, Harassment and Abuse of Authority**



Coordinating Committee for International Staff Unions and Associations



# **Survey Results**

**Discrimination**

**Sexual Harassment**

**Harassment**

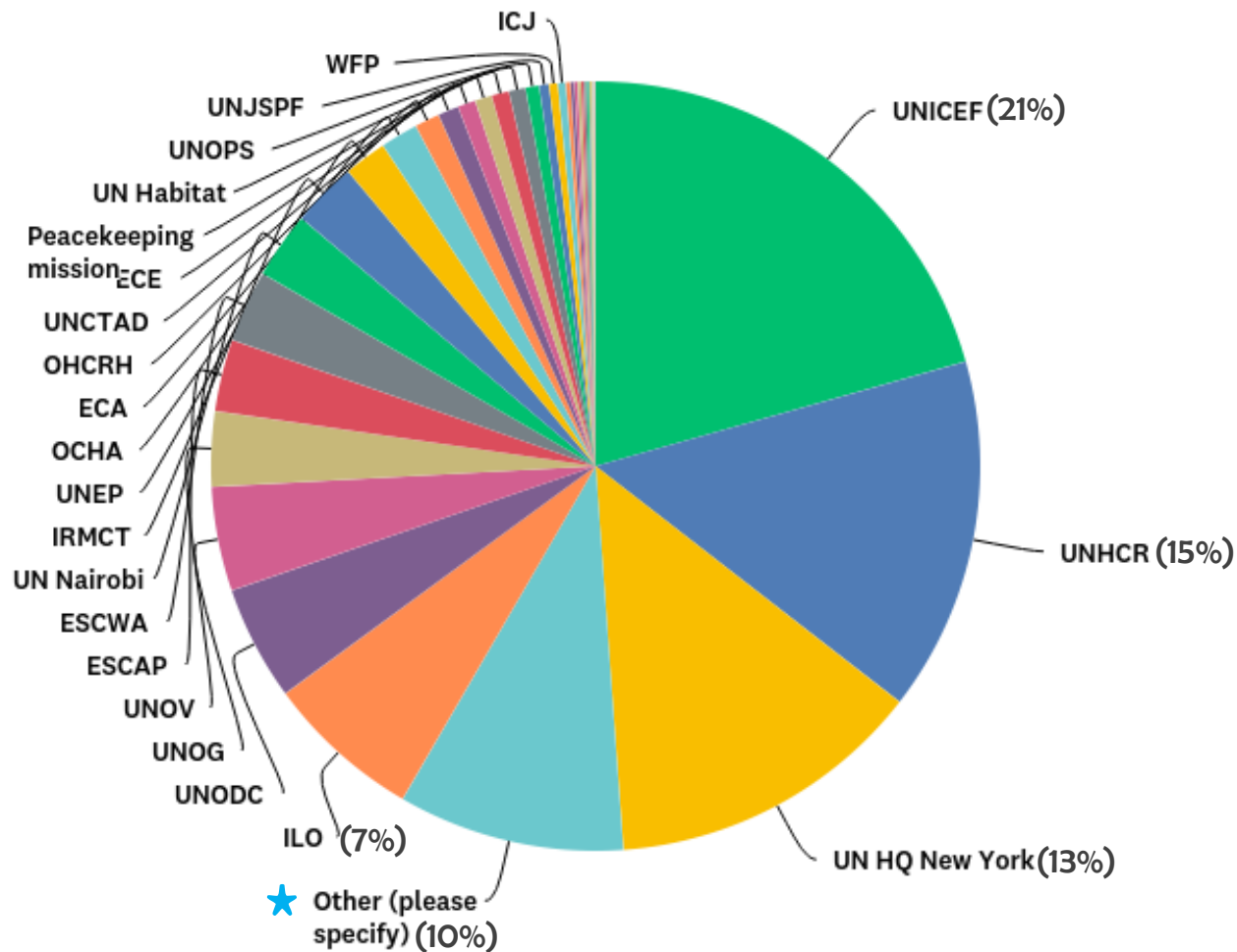
**Abuse of Authority**

# Overview

- CCISUA is pleased to present an overview of the results of the survey it recently ran on work place discrimination, sexual harassment, harassment and abuse of authority. The purpose of the survey is to better understand your experiences, particularly at a time when policies on these issues are under scrutiny, some under revision.
- We strongly believe that we must all make use of the opportunities to improve these systems, and ensure that policies are grounded in the real-life experiences of staff, and in their expectations. The need for improvement is even more evident when reviewing the results of the survey:
  - **40% of respondents state that they have been victims of discrimination**
  - **37% were victims of harassment**
  - **15% were victims of sexual harassment**
  - **44% were victims of abuse of authority**
- While these numbers are frightening, also very troublesome is the lack of confidence staff have in the reporting mechanisms. In all cases, fewer than 20% of staff reported the prohibited conduct; in the case of sexual harassment, only 10% did.
- Why? Because of a serious lack of confidence in the system, and the fear of reprisal. Of those who do file a complaint, very few see an investigation take place. And the results of the investigations are viewed with dissatisfaction.
- While reviewing the results, keep in mind that they reflect global trends. There are significant differences between the responding entities, some faring better than others.
- For reference purposes, the survey relies on the definitions of discrimination, sexual harassment, harassment and abuse of authority found in the UN Secretariat's document, [St/STB/2008/5](#).

# Overview

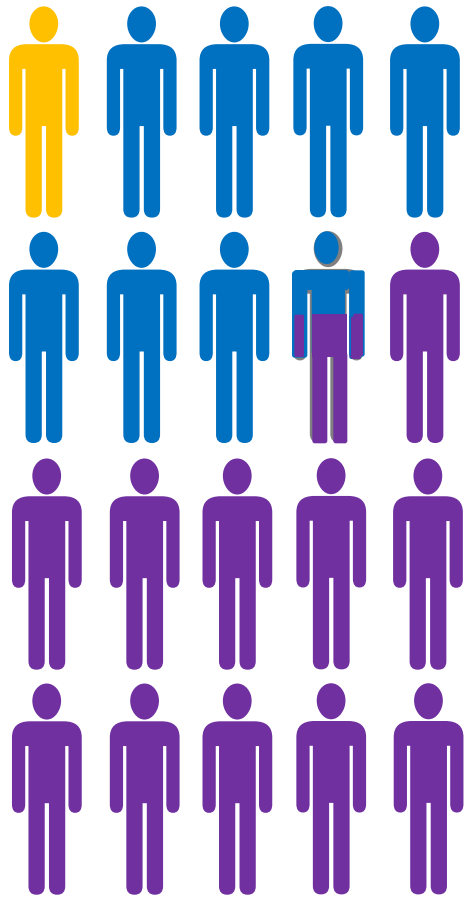
## Survey respondents



★ Non CCISUA members, e.g.:  
UNESCO, IOM, UNDP, UN  
Women, UNDSS, ICSC

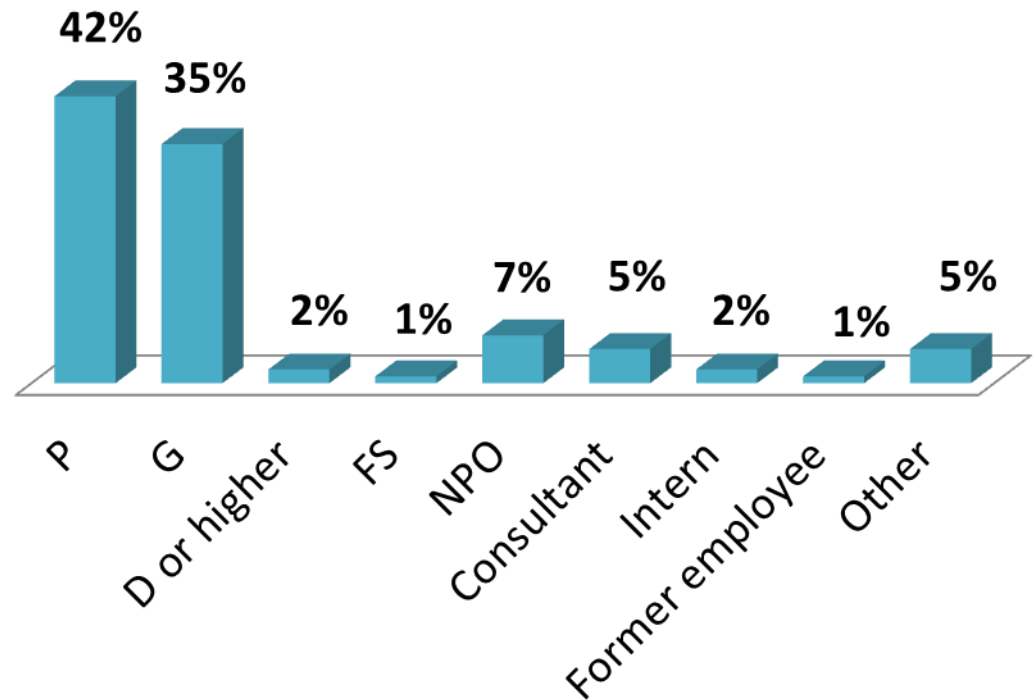
# Overview

Survey respondents



- 58% women
- 37% men
- 4% prefer not to say

More than 6,600  
Respondents



# Overview

All respondents:

Prohibited conduct

Discrimination

40%

Sexual  
harassment

16%

Harassment

37%

Abuse of  
authority

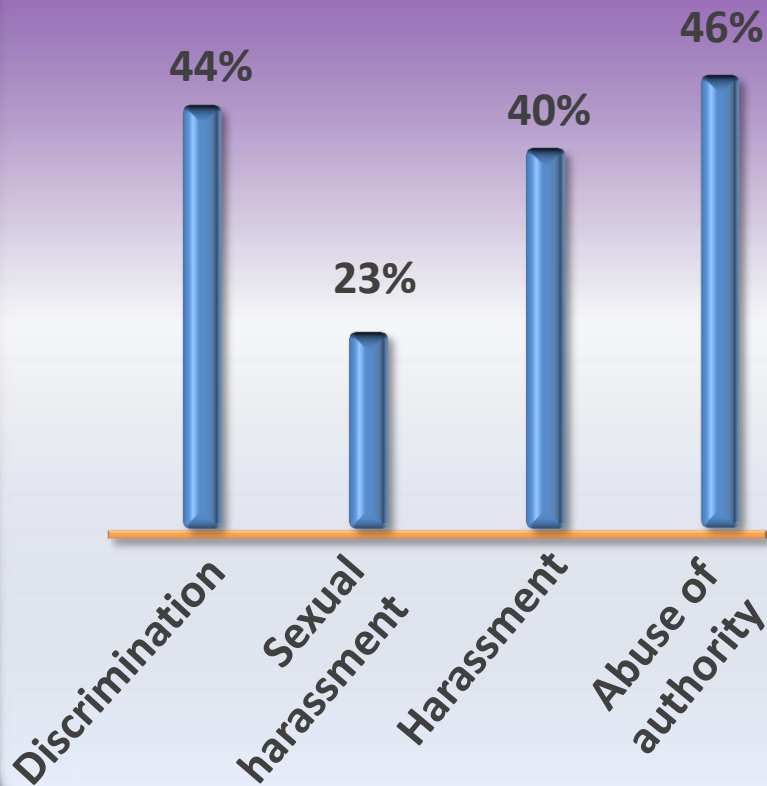
44%



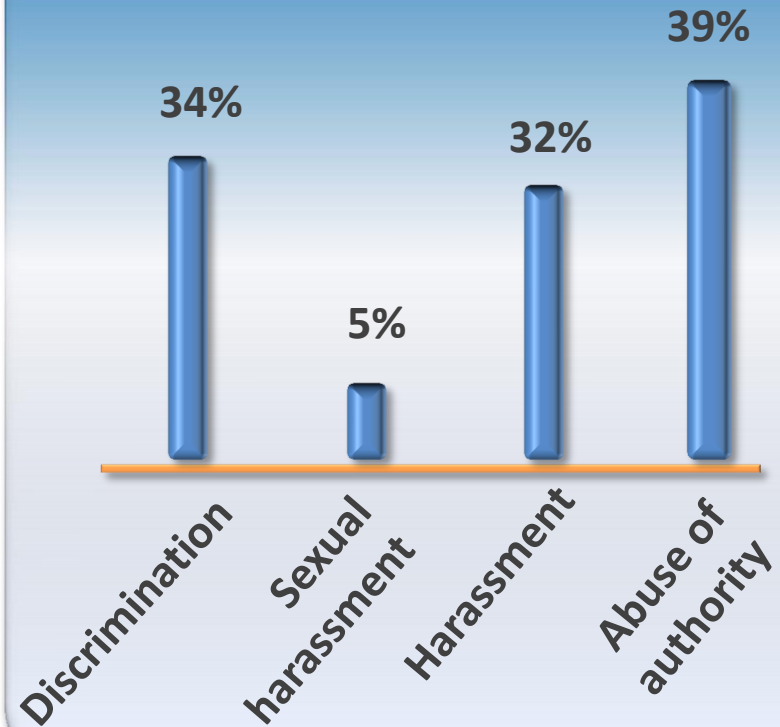
# Overview

Prohibited conduct

## Female respondents



## Male respondents





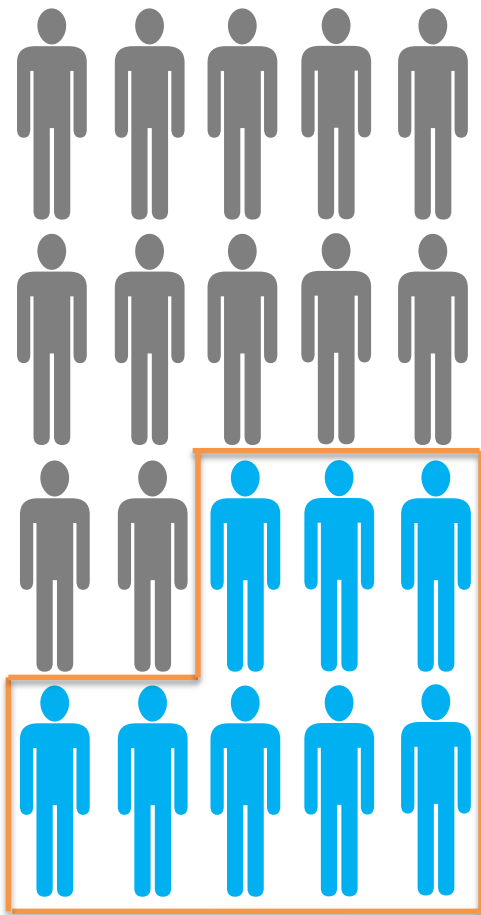
# Discrimination





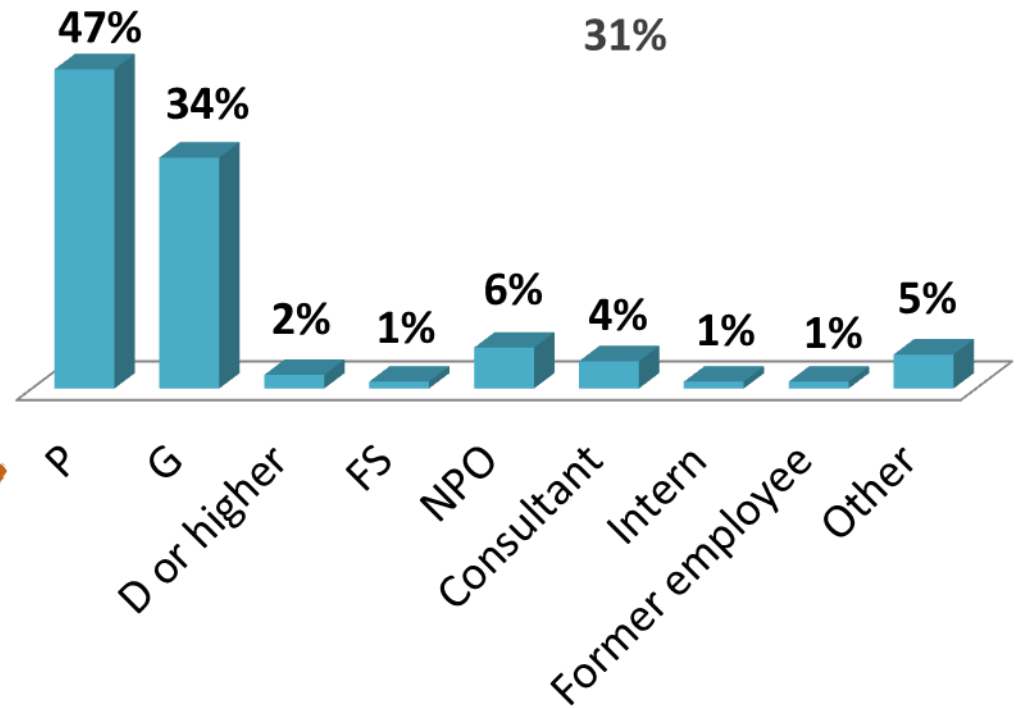
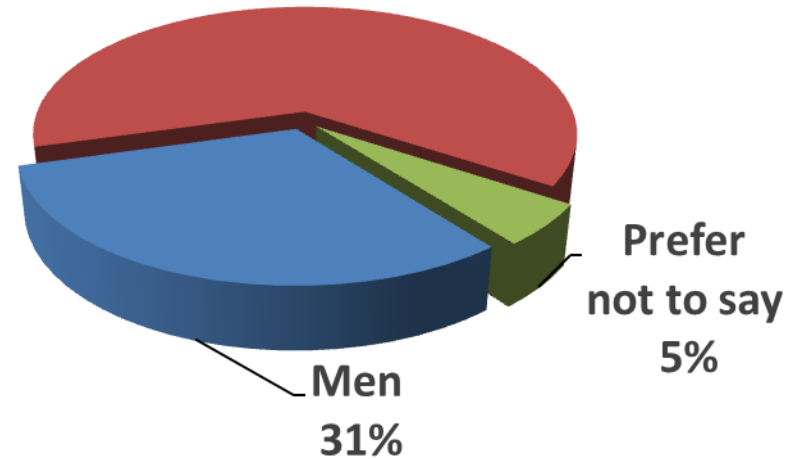
# Discrimination

Victims



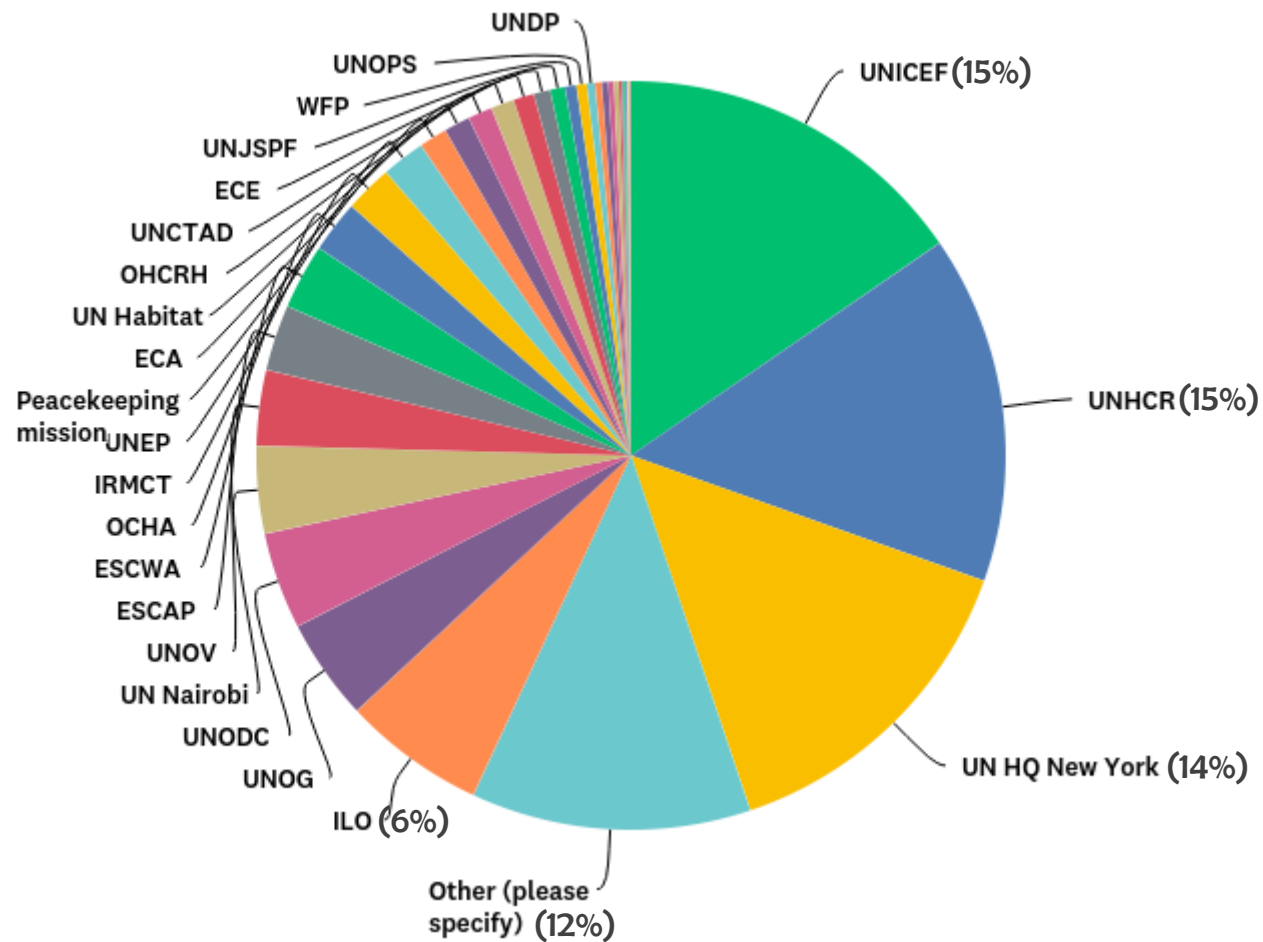
Victims of discrimination  
40%

Women  
64%



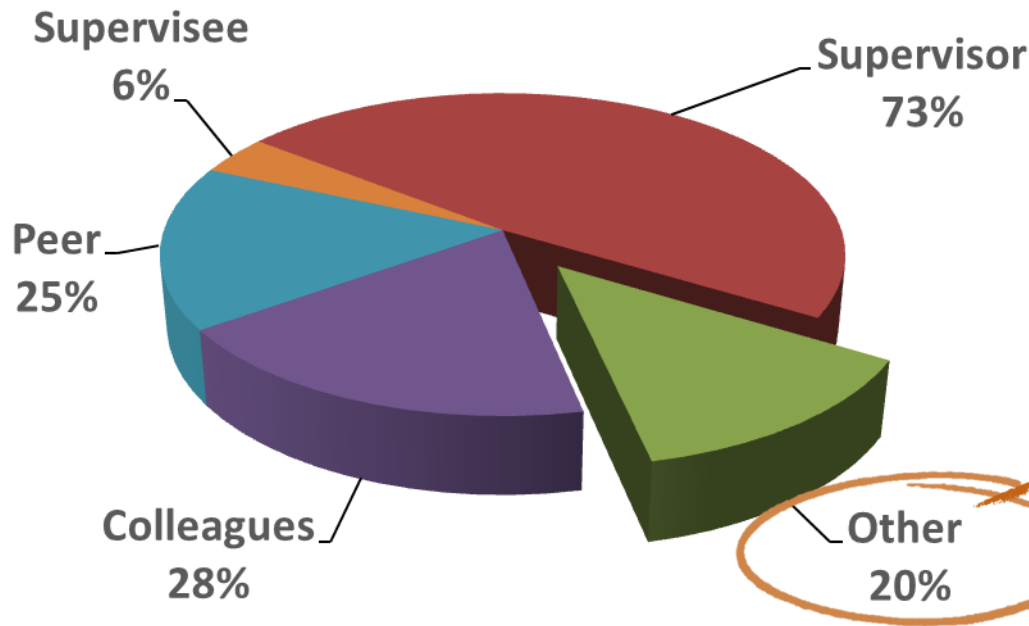
# Discrimination

## Organizations



# Discrimination

By whom



Human Resources

managers partners recruitment member

Senior management general UN agency HR

team staff recruiting management another  
group colleagues Senior culture Director panel

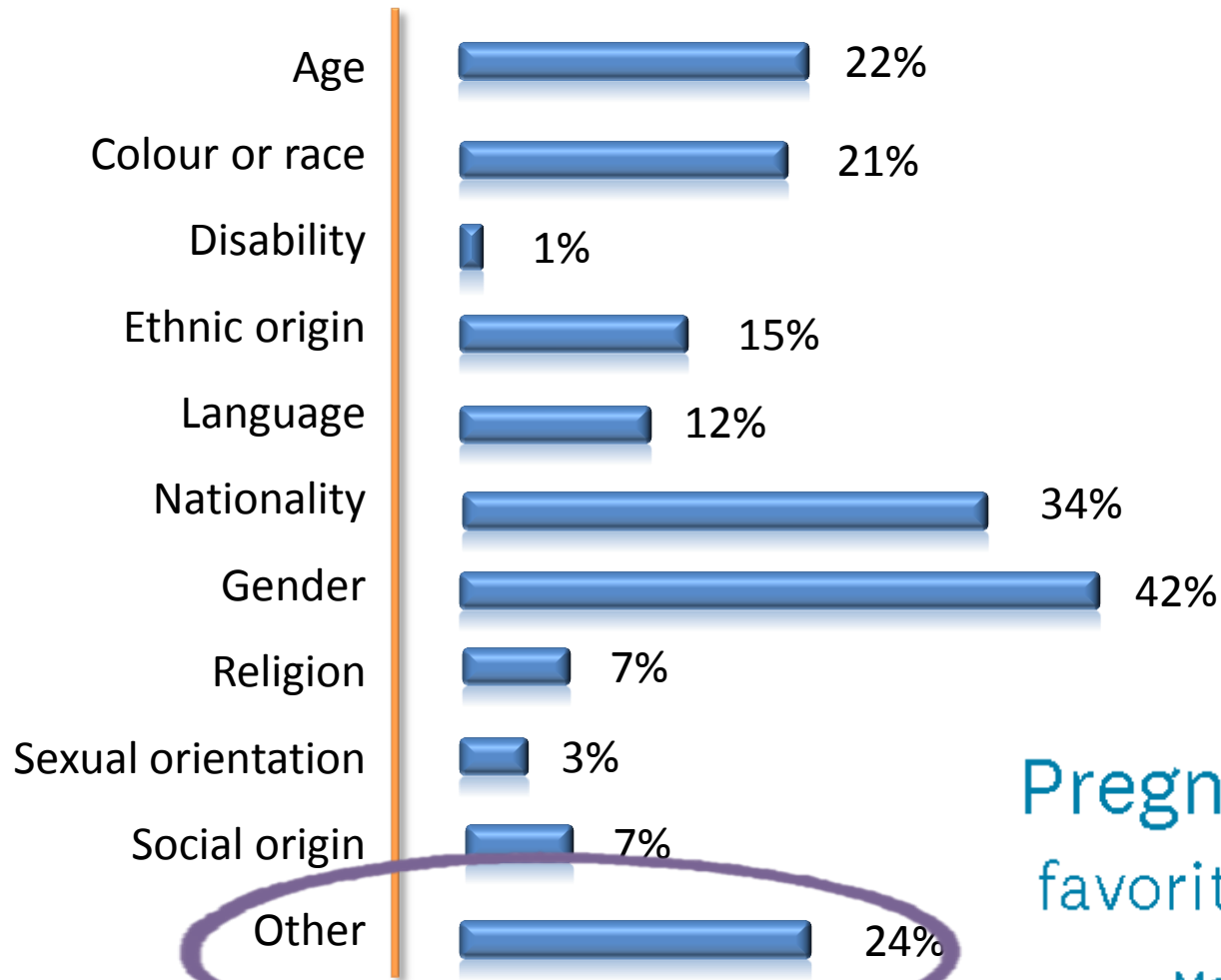
system Government Hiring managers clients

Deputy organization discriminatory section systemic

Head interview Hiring different head office interview panel

# Discrimination

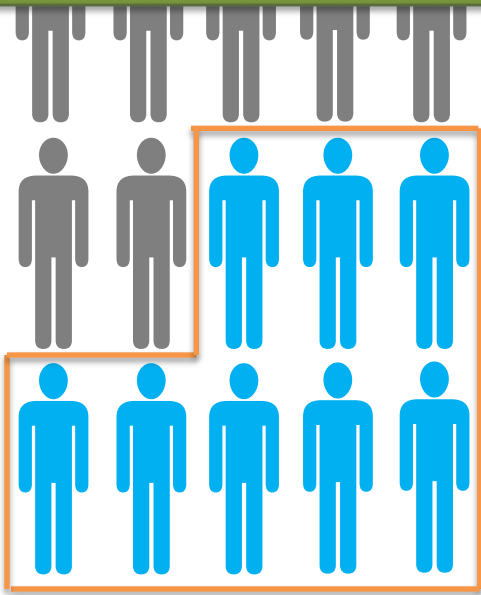
On what basis



Education  
Pregnancy Contract type  
favoritism Staff category  
Mental health Family status  
Marital status intern **consultant**  
nationality

# Discrimination

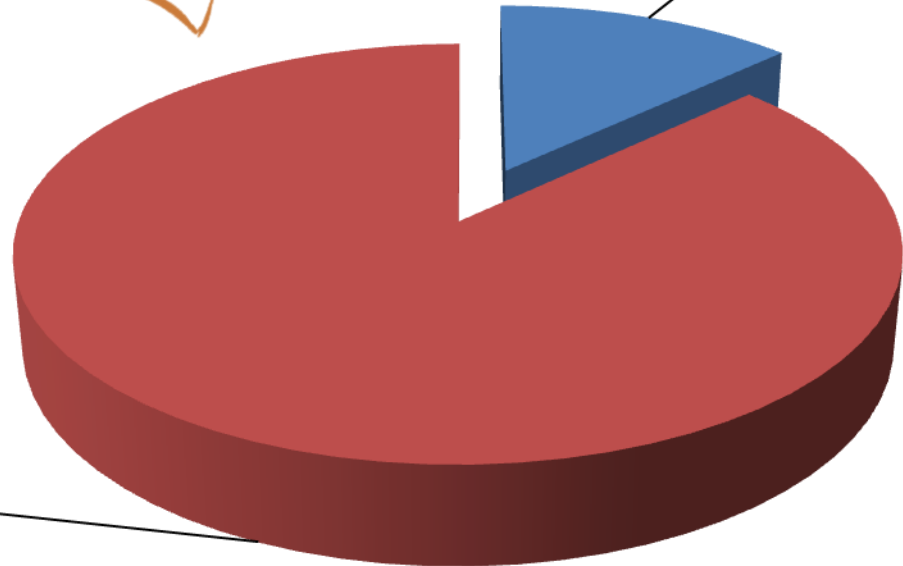
Complaint



Victims of discrimination  
40 %

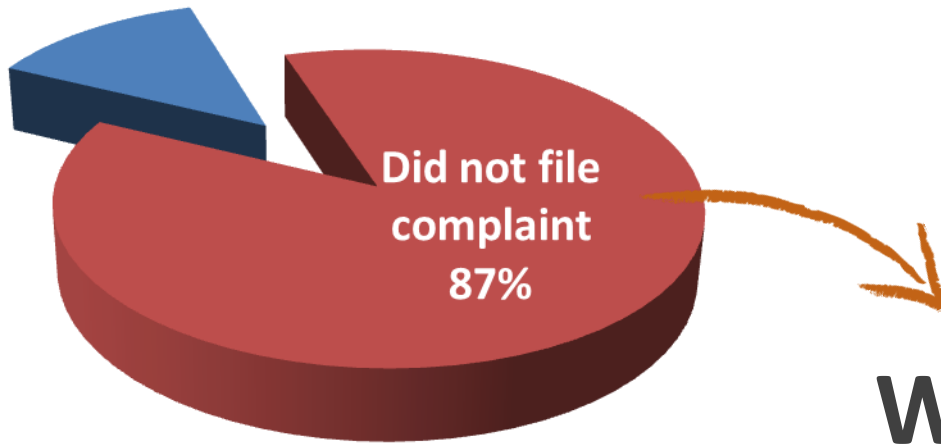
Did not file  
complaint  
87%

Filed  
complaint  
13%

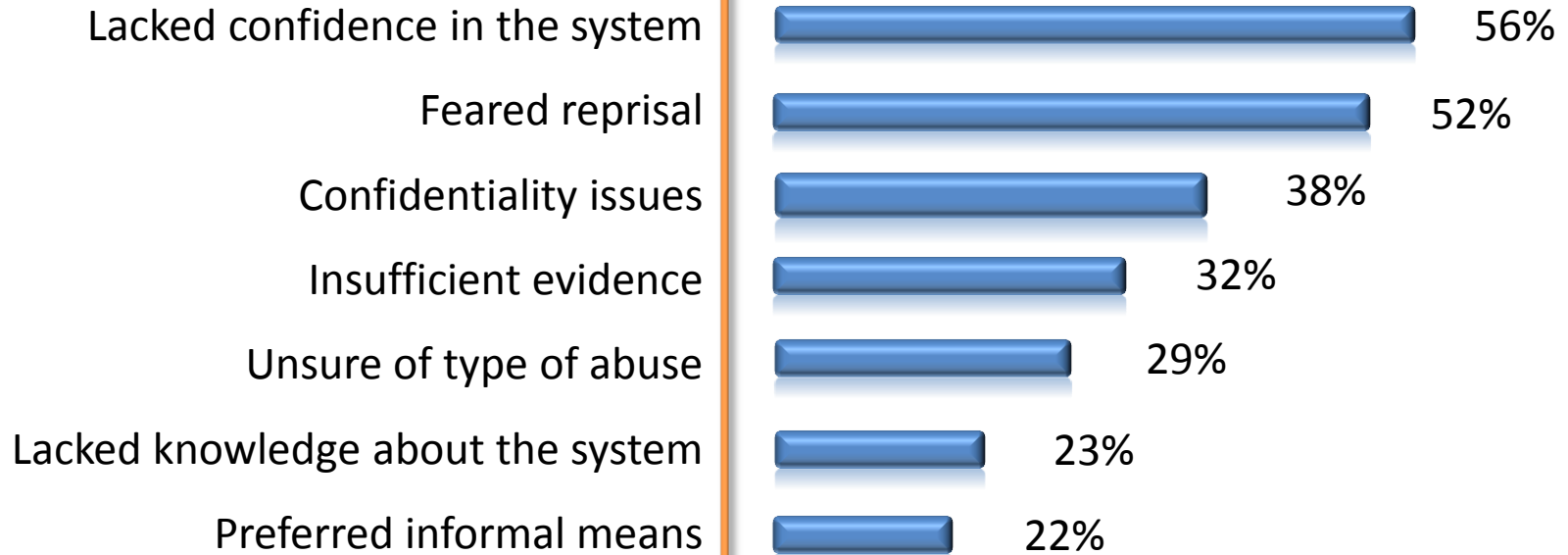


# Discrimination

No complaint

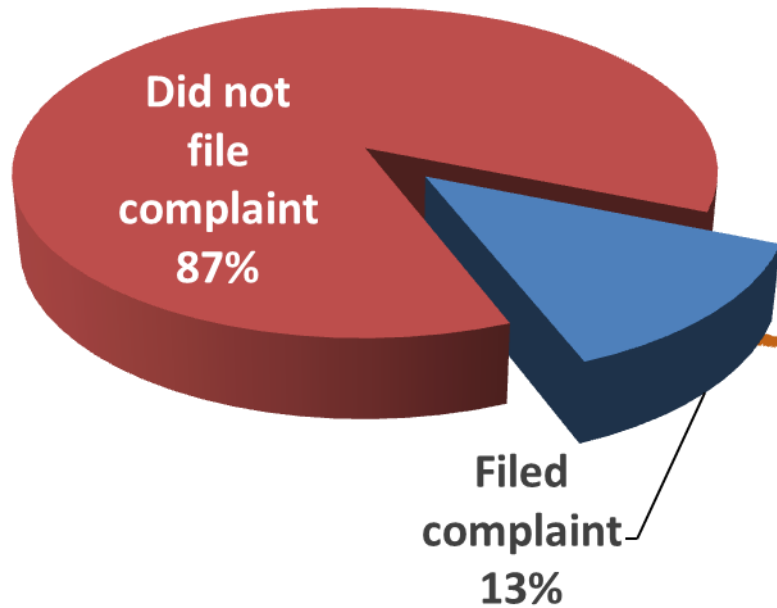


## Why?

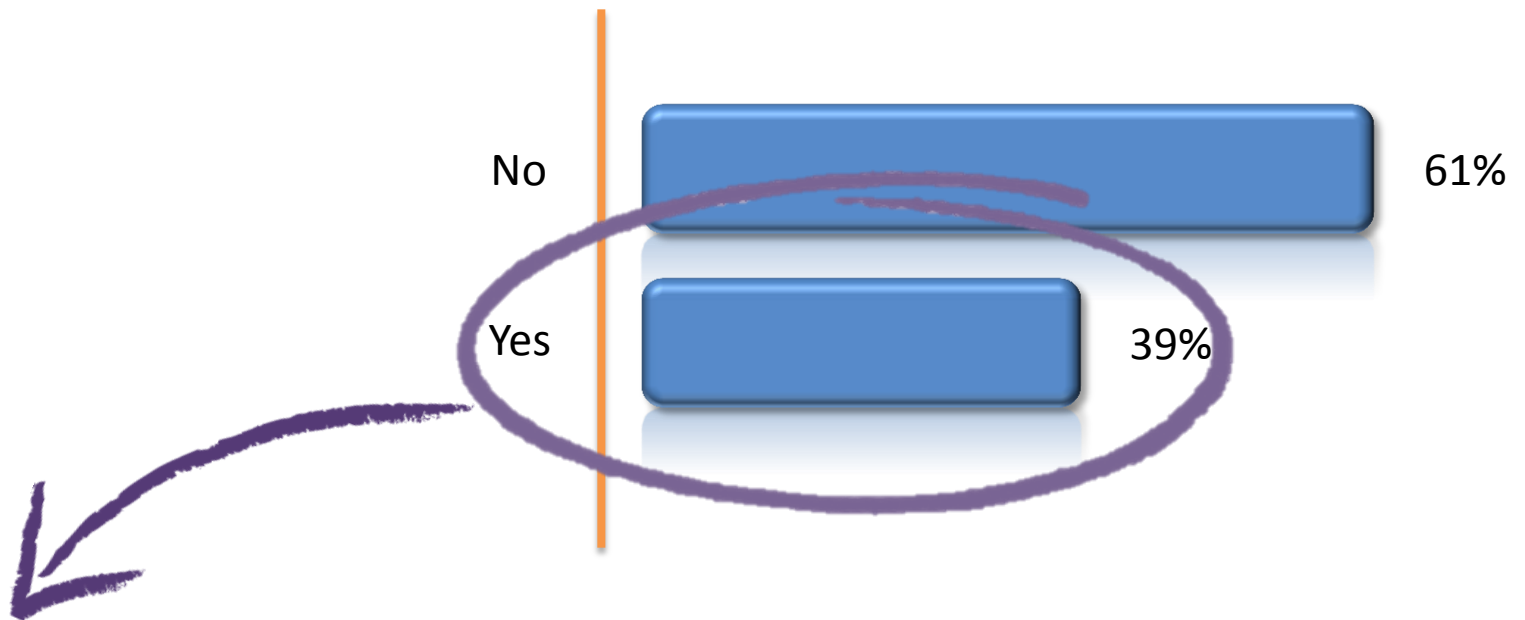


# Discrimination

Complaint



Was an investigation held?



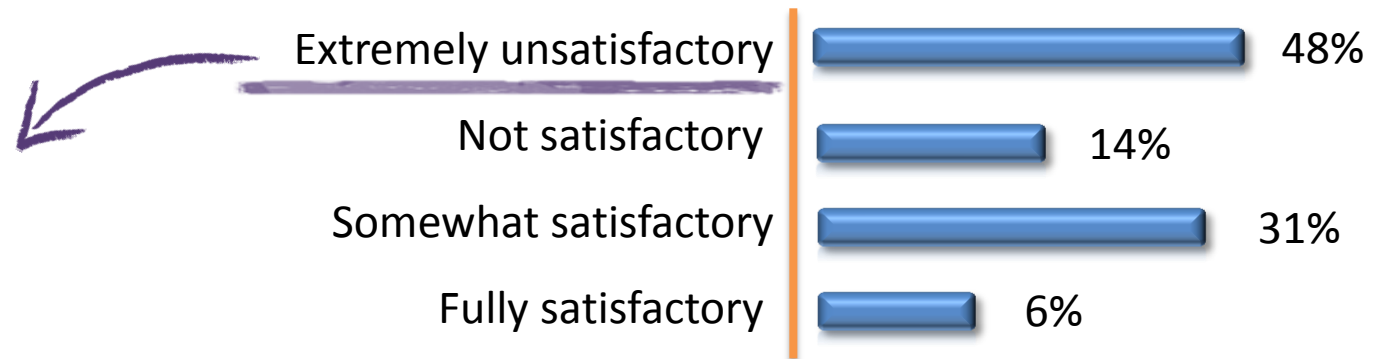


# Discrimination

Complaint



## Outcome of investigation



*"The perpetrator was recruited again in another agency"*

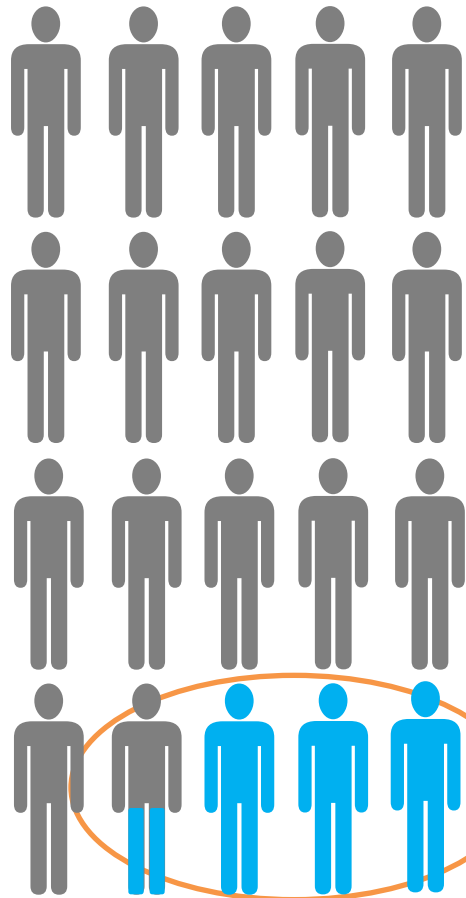
*"The outcome was fully satisfactory but it was not applied"*

# Sexual harassment



# Sexual harassment

Victims



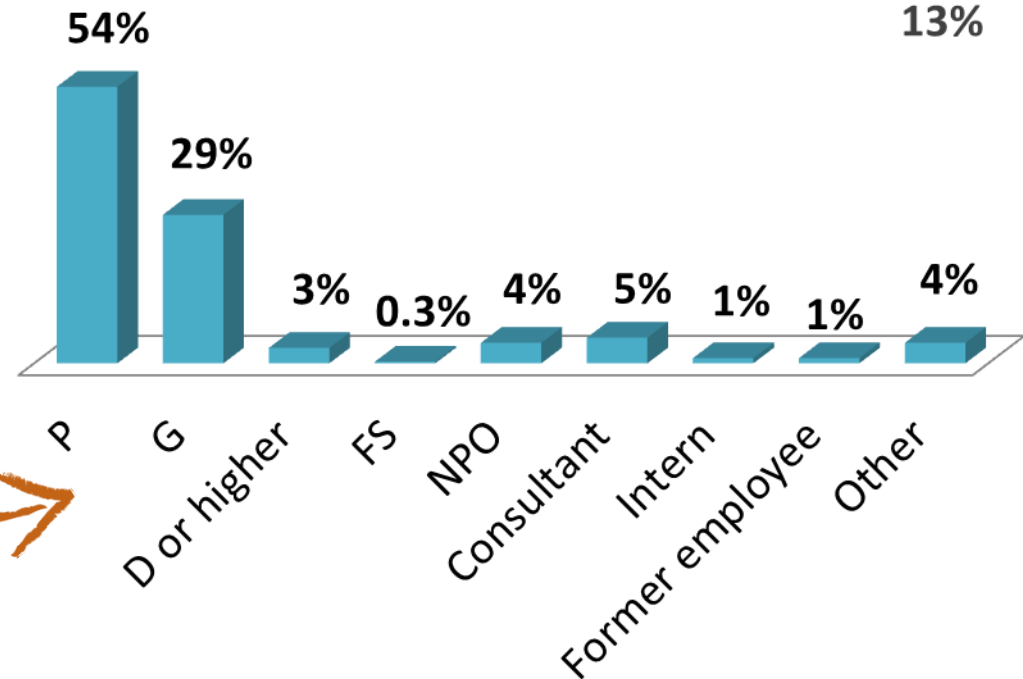
Victims of sexual harassment  
16%

Women

83%

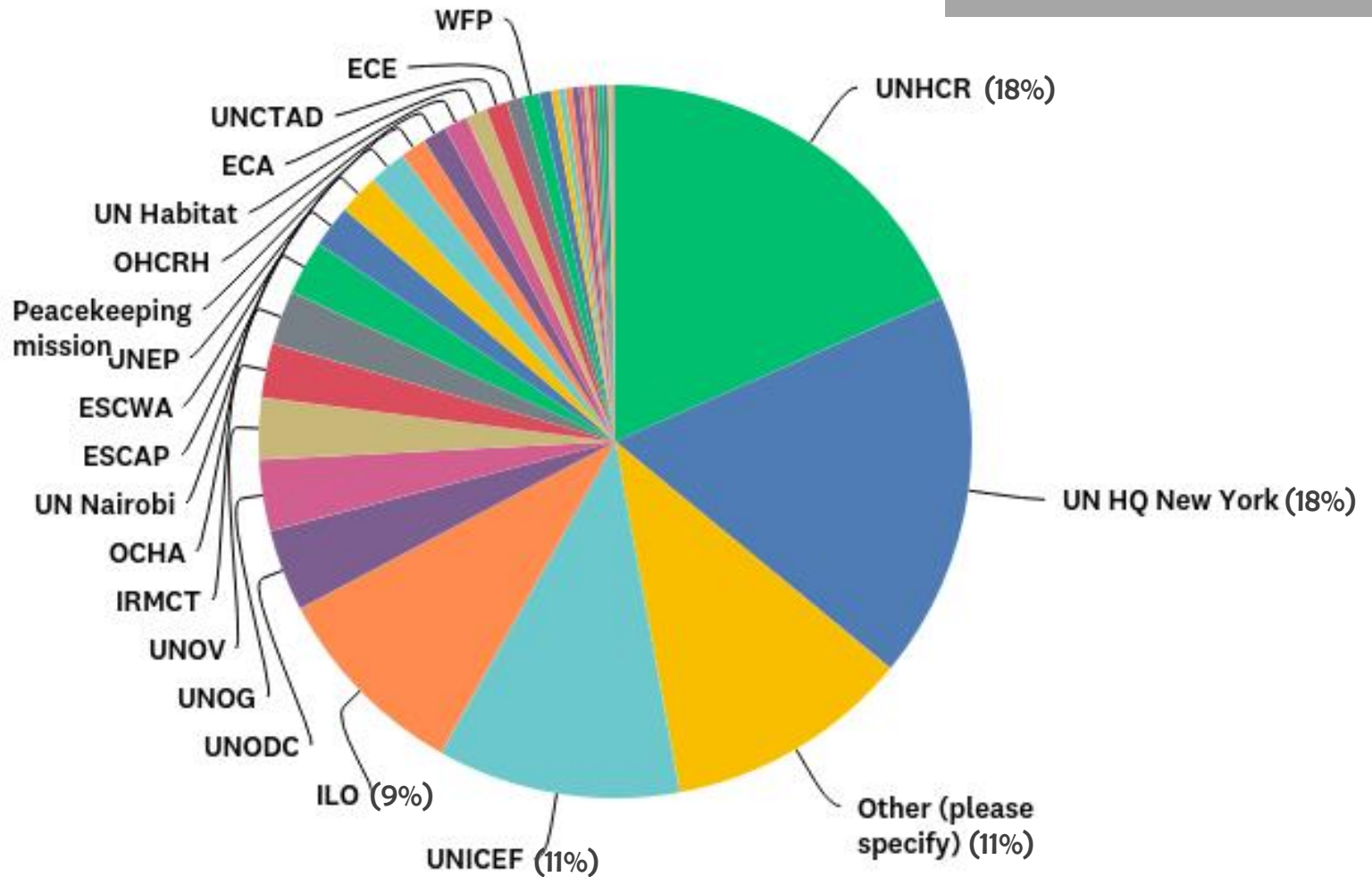
Prefer not  
to say  
4%

Men  
13%



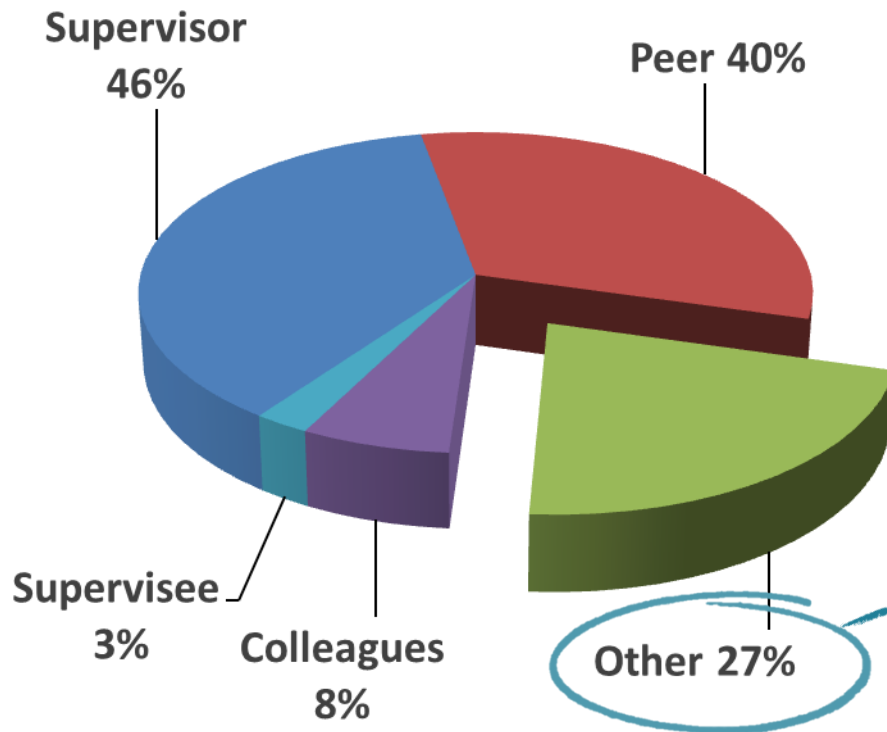
# Sexual harassment

## Organizations



# Sexual harassment

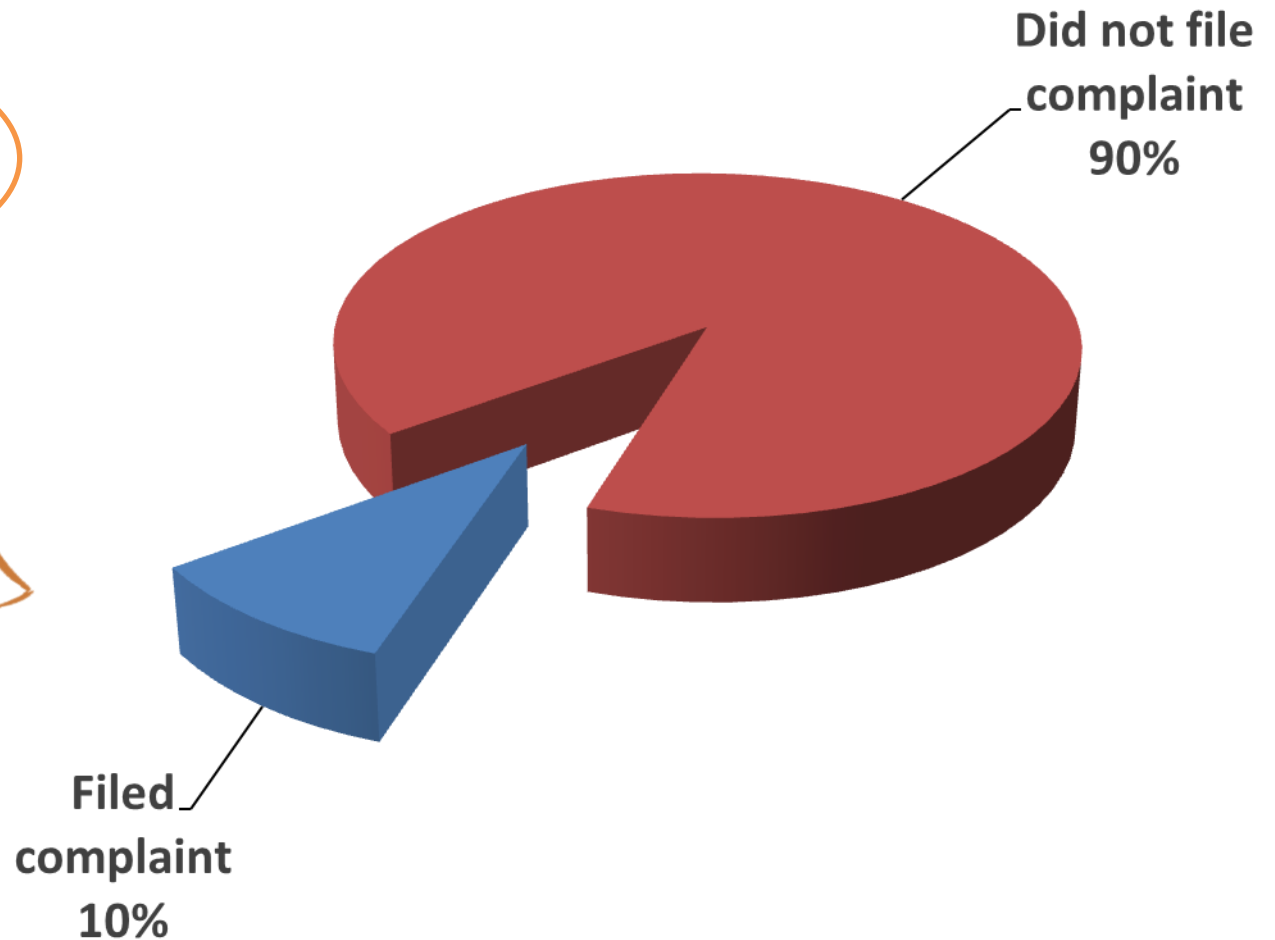
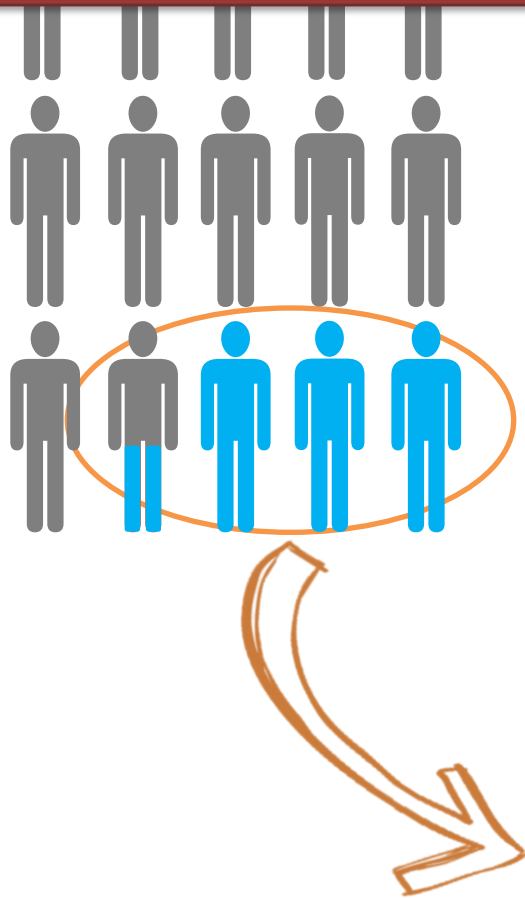
By whom



Higher  
Senior  
Uniformed  
colleague  
staff  
Consultant  
Manager  
peacekeepers  
government  
official  
Constituent  
staff, Higher  
ranking

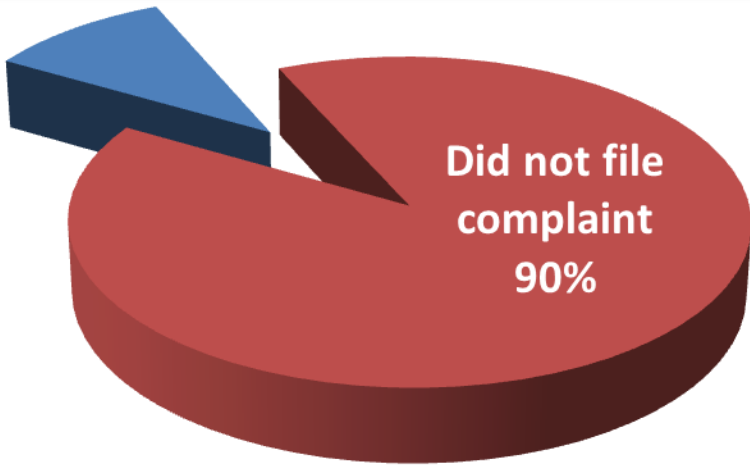
# Sexual harassment

Complaint

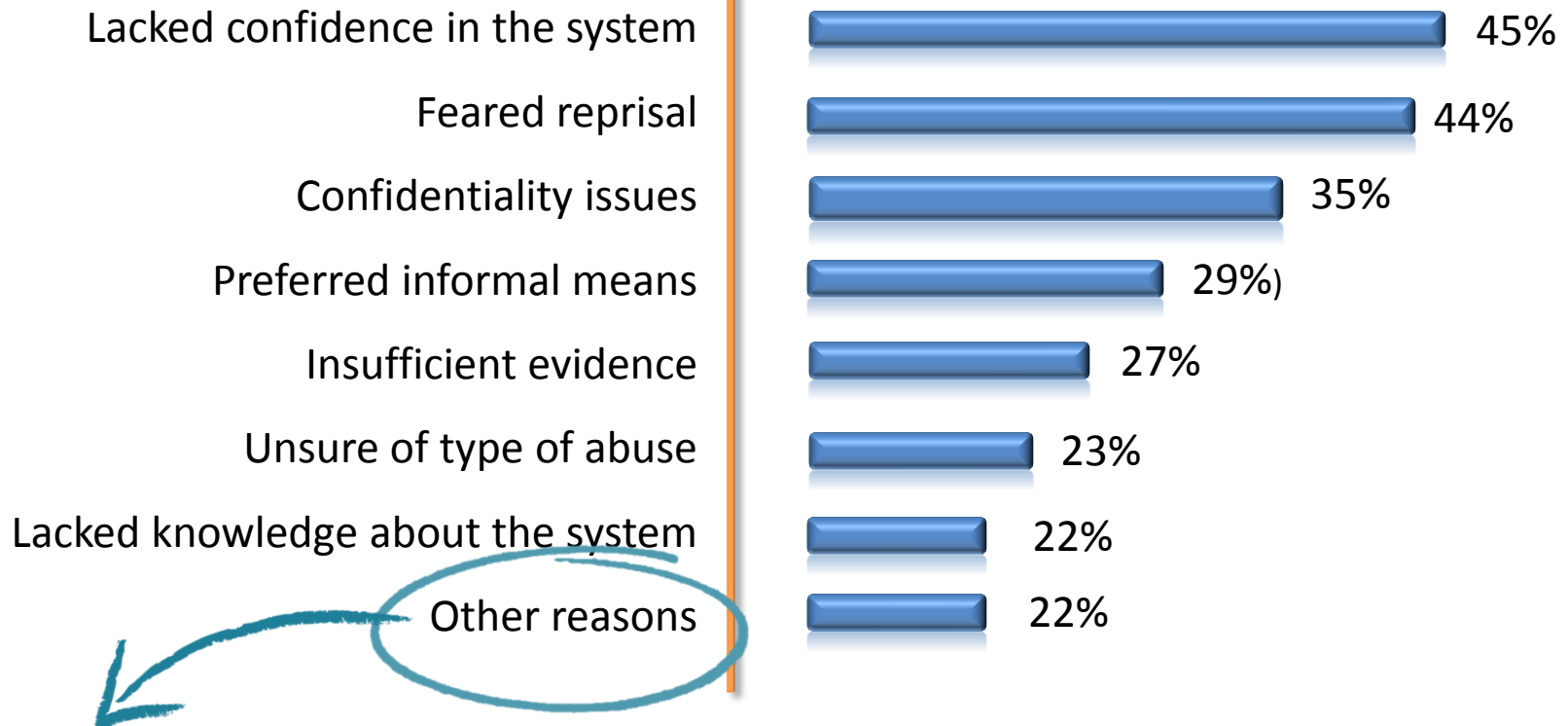


# Sexual harassment

No complaint




## Why?





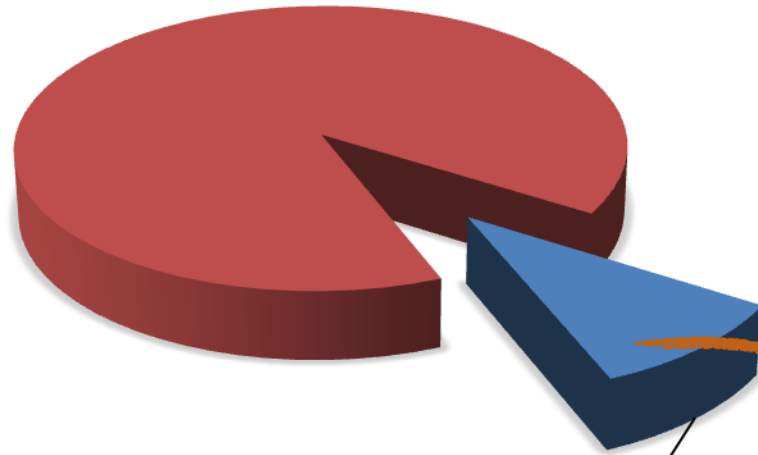
# Sexual harassment



“I was on a **short term contract** and my supervisor threatened to give me a low rating” “I was a **consultant**” *“I was not confident that anything would change”* “As a **man**, I was **ashamed** to complain” ““I feared that complaining would **damage** my **career**” “Lack of **confidentiality** in HR” “I was **discouraged**” *“A man is never taken seriously when sexually harassed by **women**”* “No mechanism to report an **external partner**” *“There were **no direct words** or acts; it was subtle, mainly with comments and invitations”*

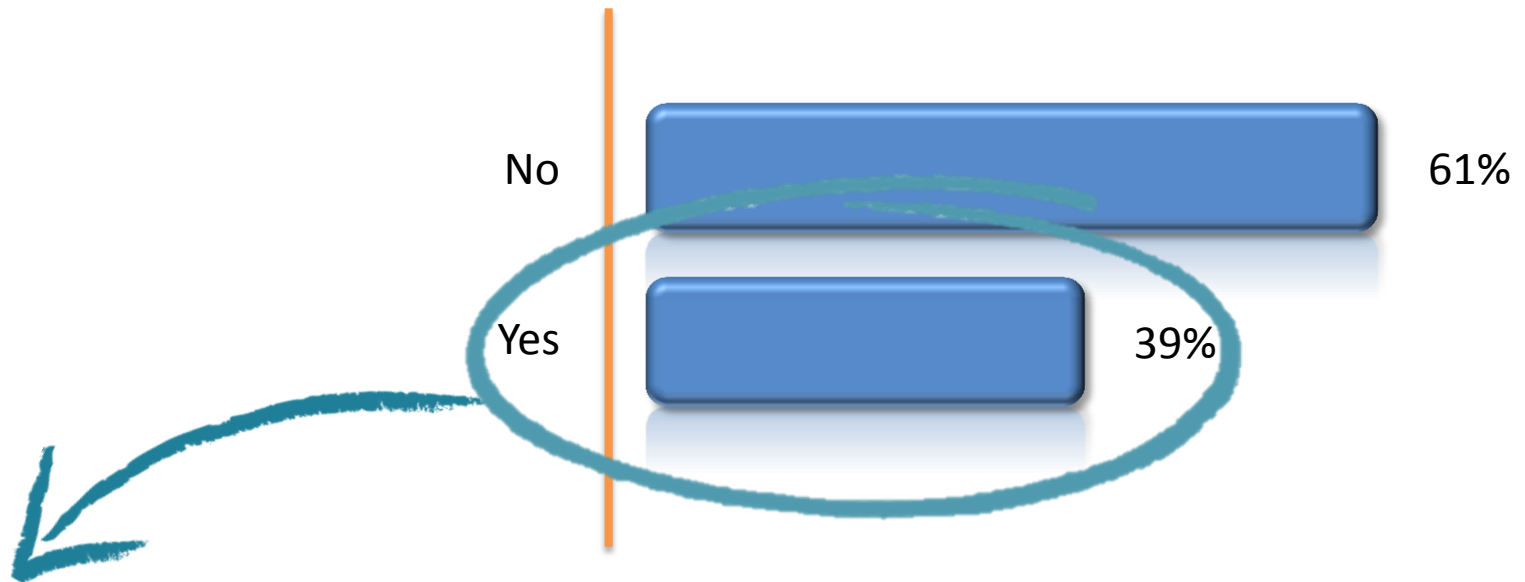
# Sexual harassment

Investigation



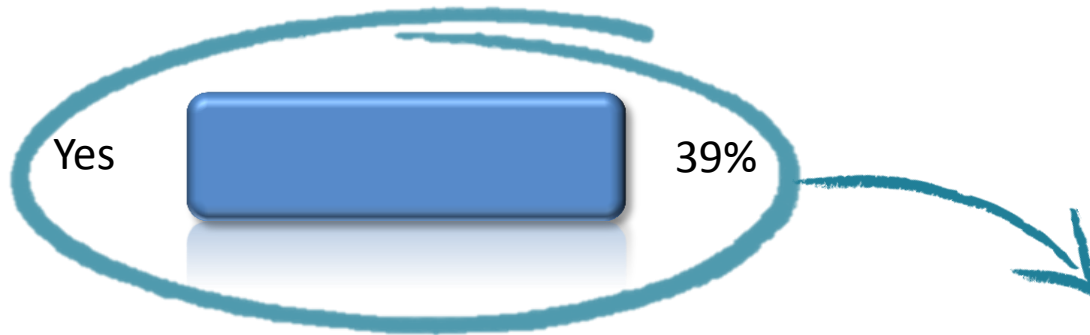
Filed  
complaint  
10%

**Was an investigation held?**

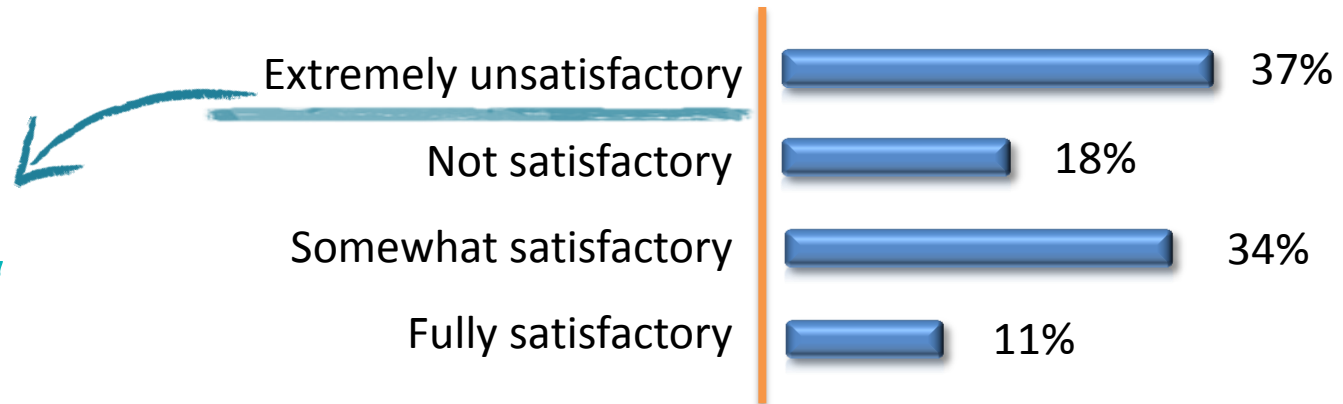


# Sexual harassment

## Investigation



## Outcome of investigation



*"No result"*

*"Poor communication"*

*"Traumatic experience"*

*"No protection for victims"*

*"Had to interact professionally with the abuser"*

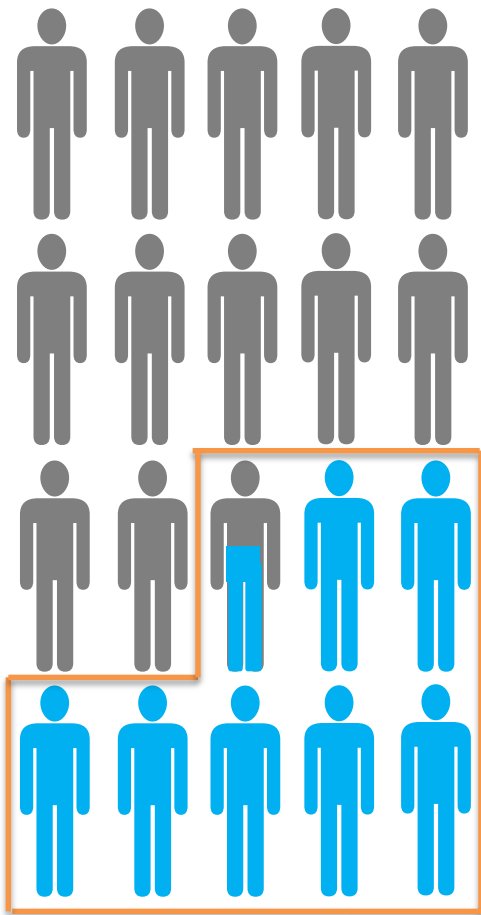
*"Perpetrator moved to another department but not fired"*

# Harassment



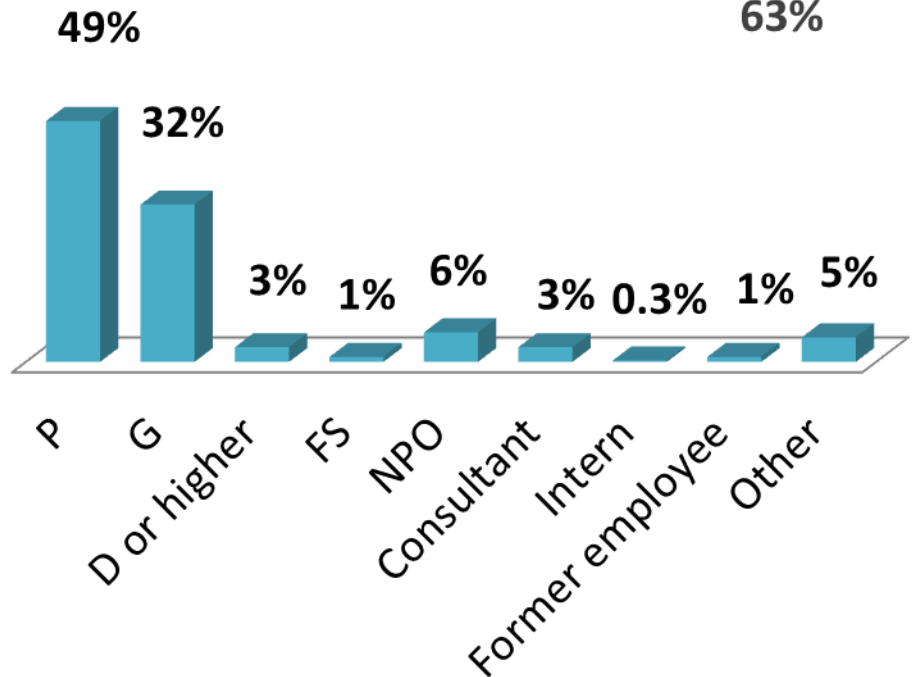
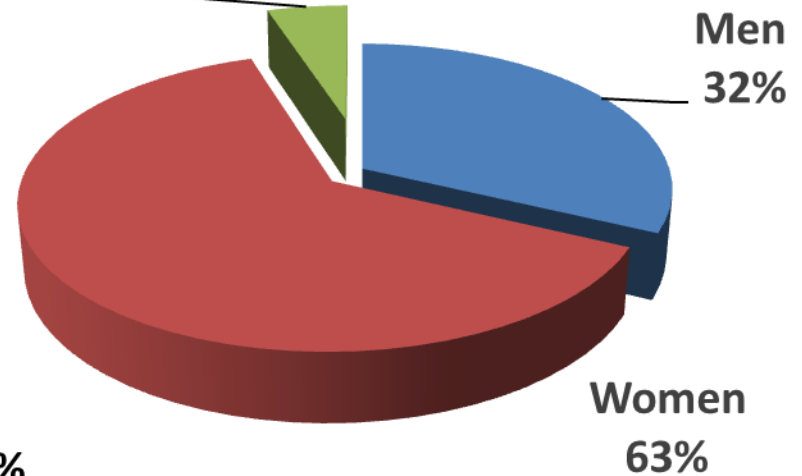
# Harassment

## Victims



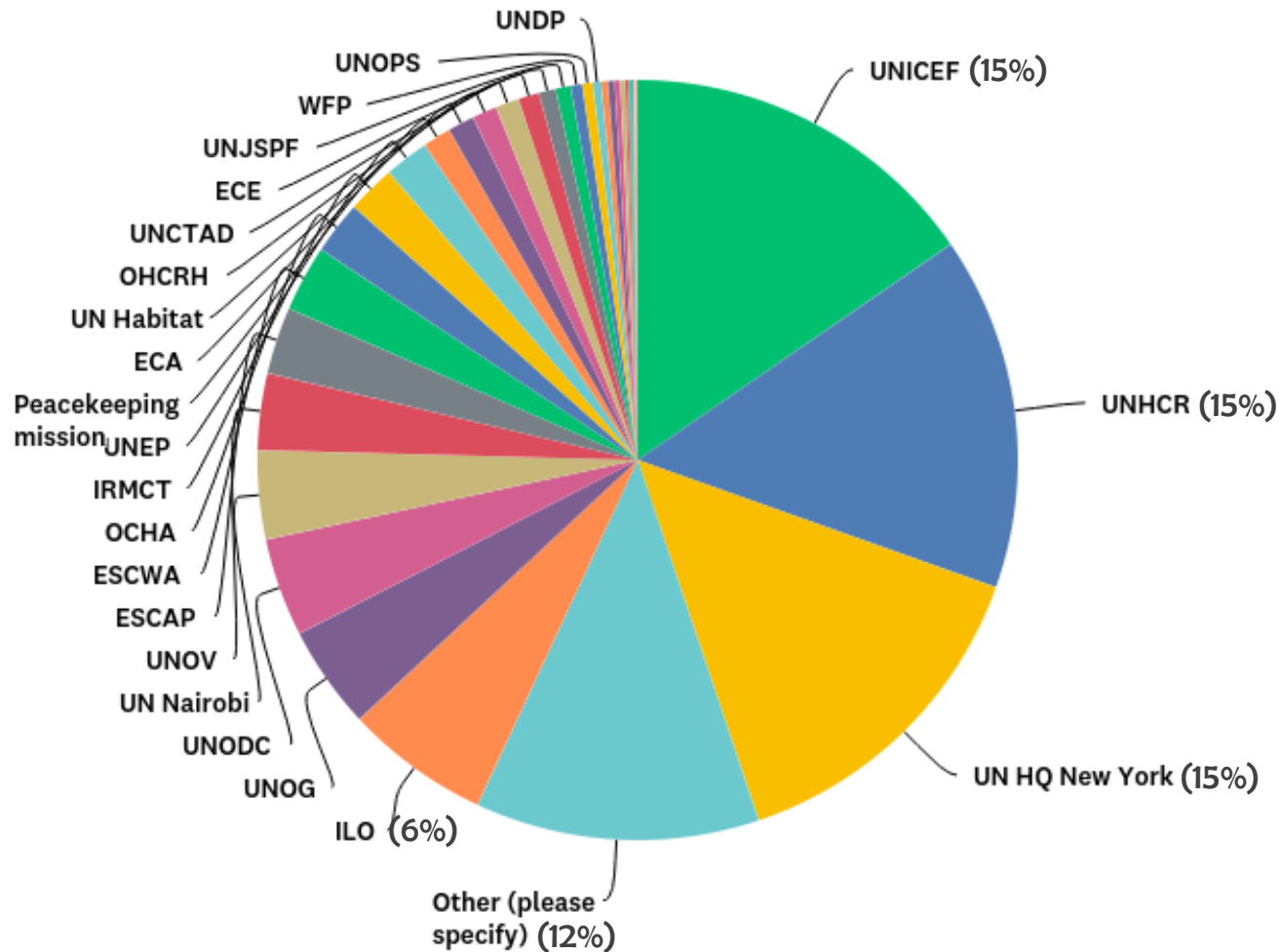
Victims of harassment  
37%

Prefer not  
to say  
5%



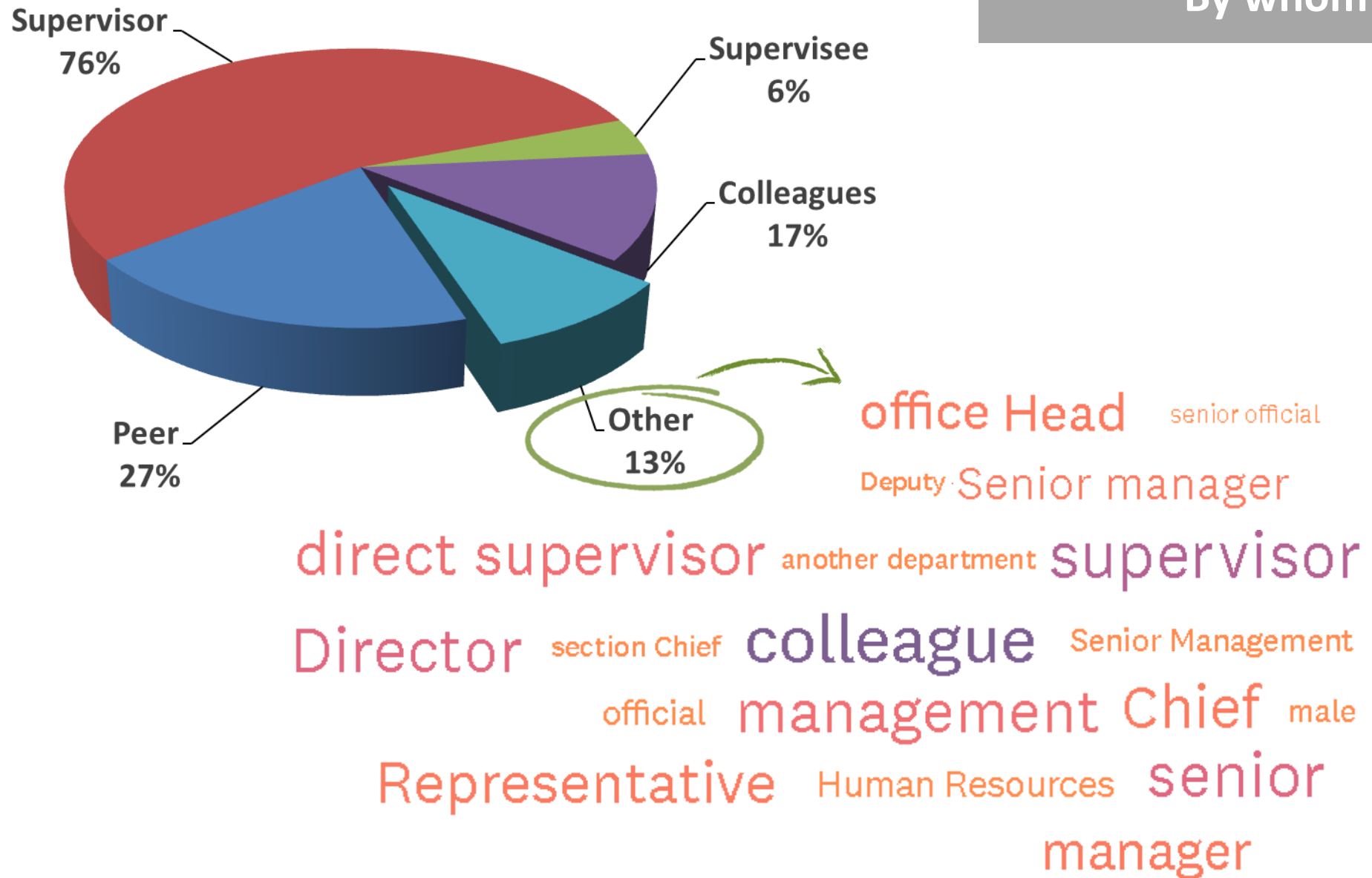
# Harassment

## Organizations



# Harassment

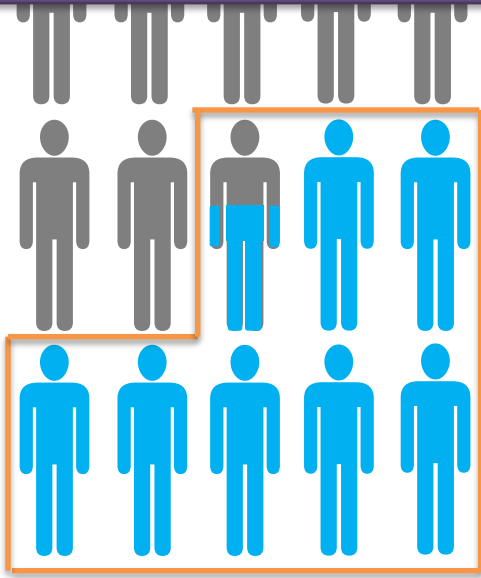
By whom



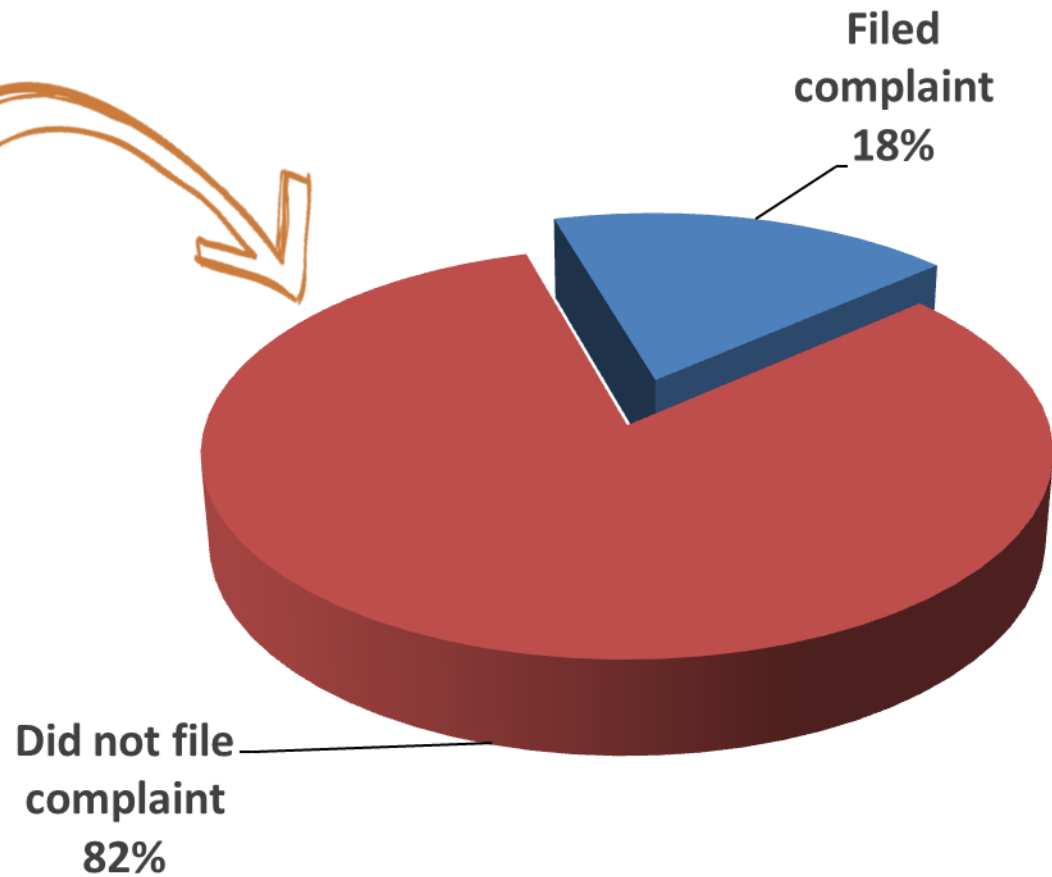


# Harassment

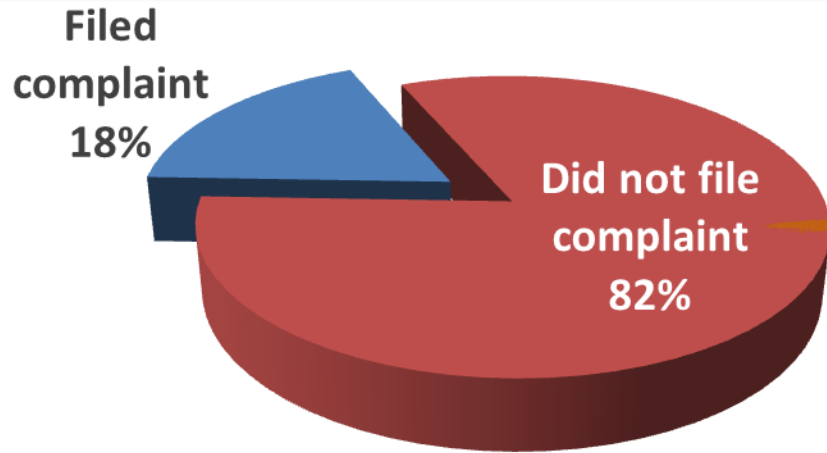
Complaint



**Victims of harassment**  
**37 %**

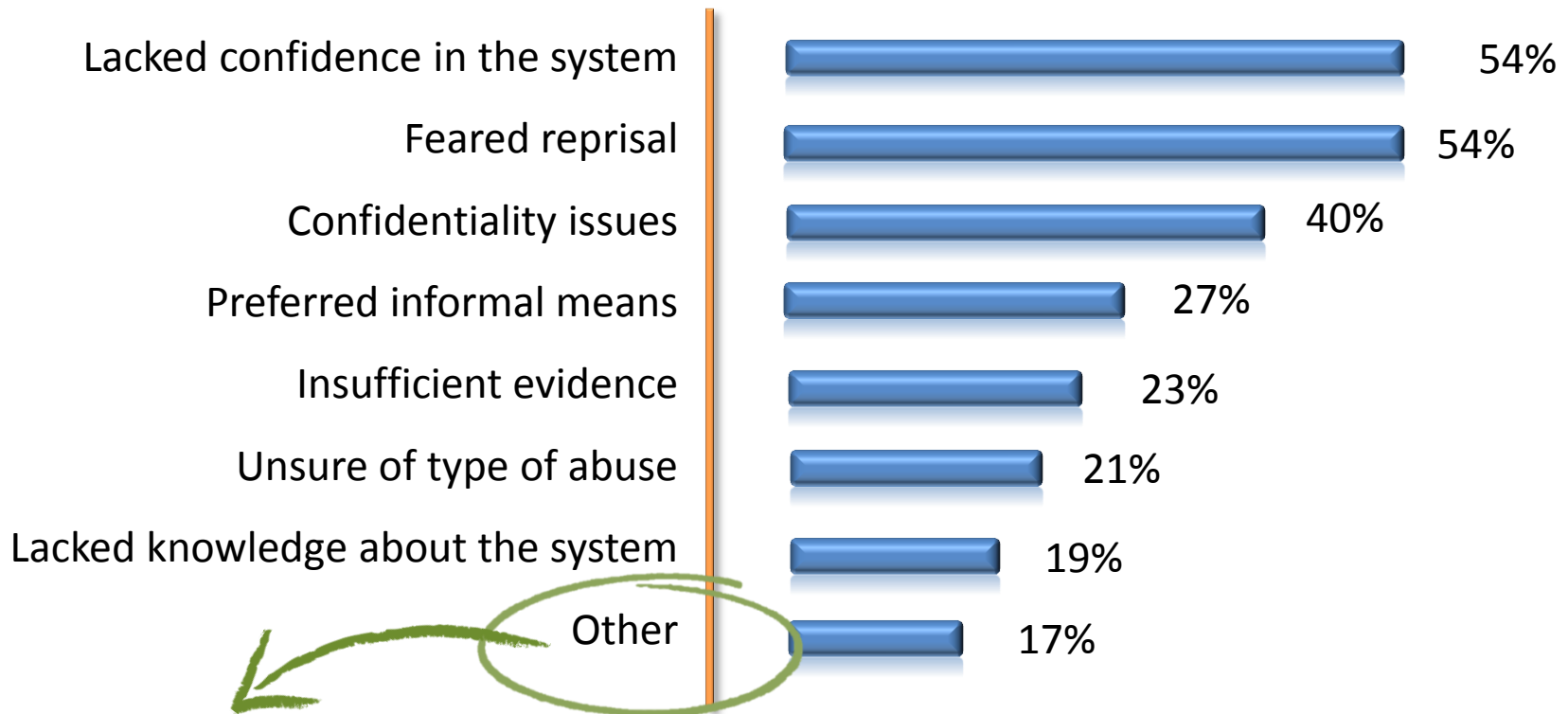


# Harassment



No complaint

## Why?



# Harassment

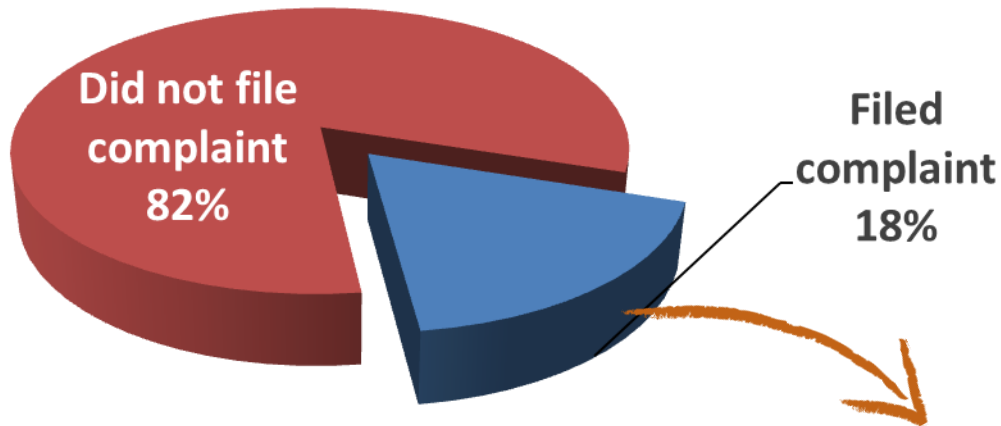


“I feel **threatened** by my supervisor. He already dismissed staff and local staff arbitrarily and there is no surveillance in the system on his actions.” “I am still **collecting evidence**.” “I’m **afraid** to lose my job. Being a **consultant** my position is not steady and the continuation of my contract depends on my supervisor.”  
*“I applied for another position in a different organization.”*

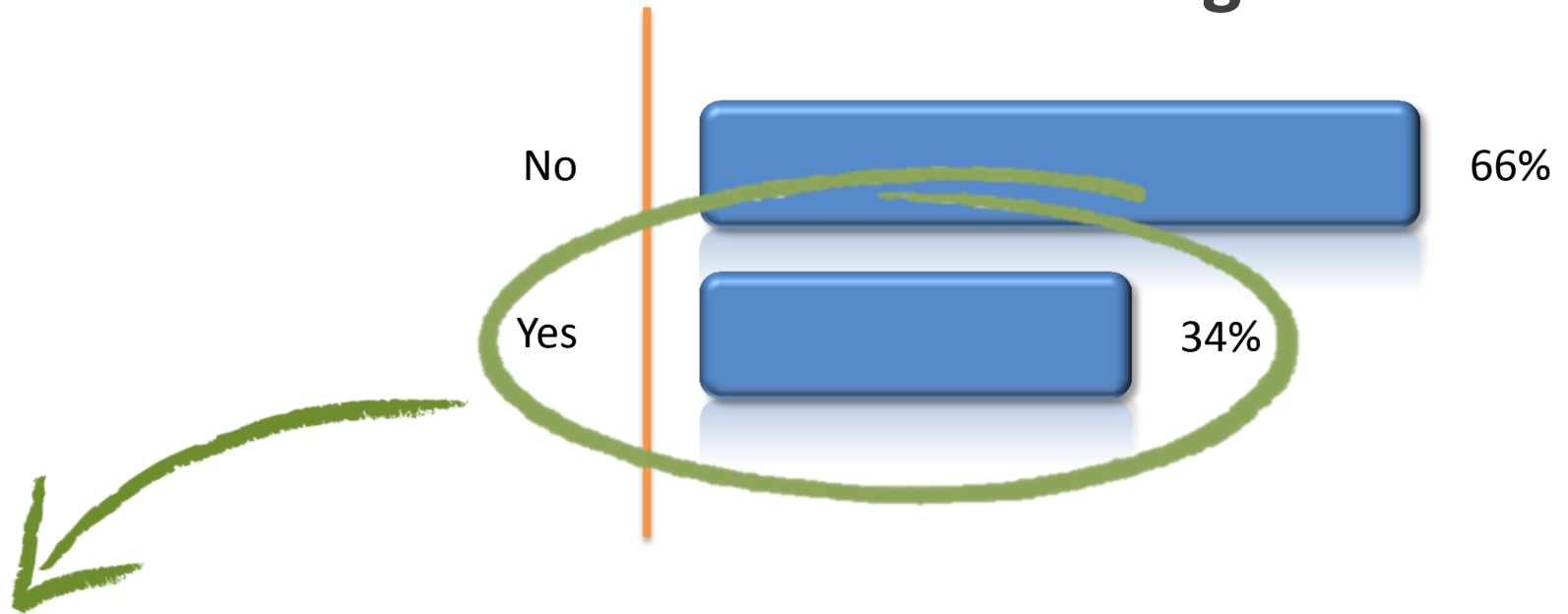
“I was **advised not to report** the harassment by the offender’s supervisor, as doing so would have been detrimental to my career.” “There is still **no formal mechanism** in place to deal with discrimination / harassment by **independent experts**.”  
“I was advised by HR to find another position/duty station rather than fighting back.” *“Filing a complaint labels you as a “trouble maker”*”  
“I was told by the Supervisor that he knows who goes to the Ombudsman, HR etc.”

# Harassment

## Investigation



**Was an investigation held?**

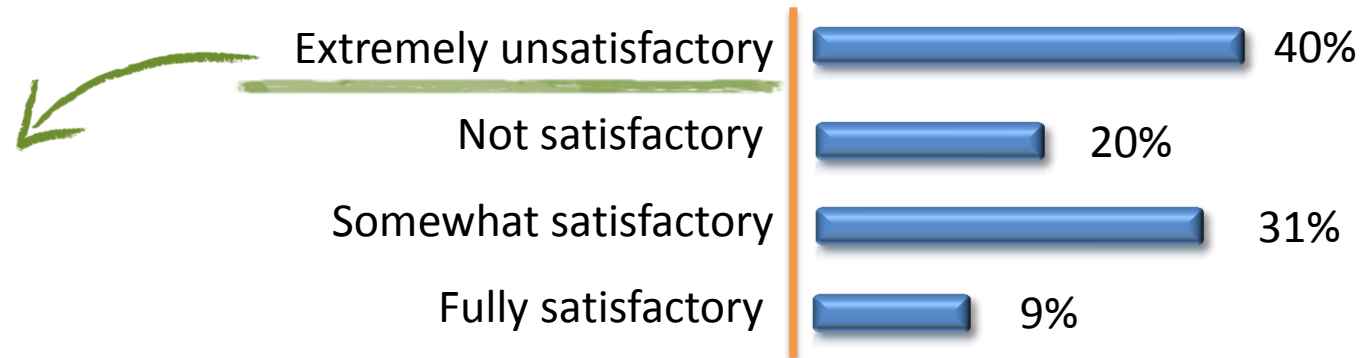


# Harassment

## Investigation



## Outcome of investigation



*"The harasser remains in the system and was promoted."*

*"I was pressured to drop the charges."*

*"Despite the case being referred for disciplinary action, nothing was done."*

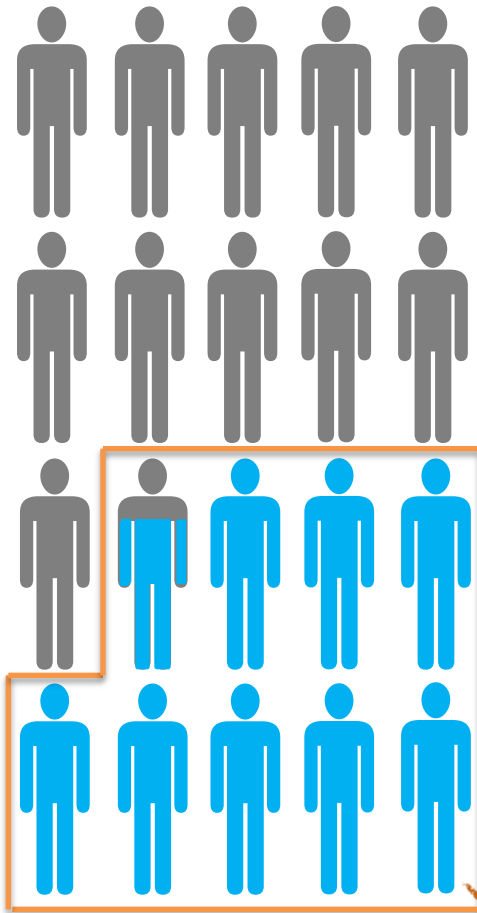
*"It took too long to get help. I felt abandoned."*

# Abuse of authority



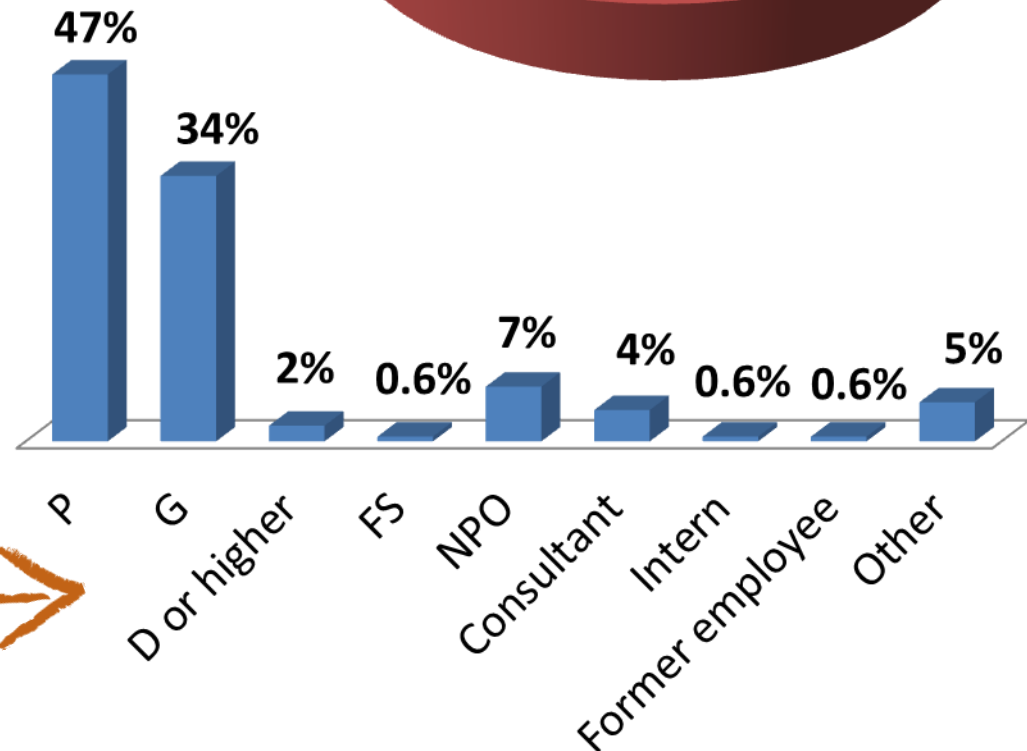
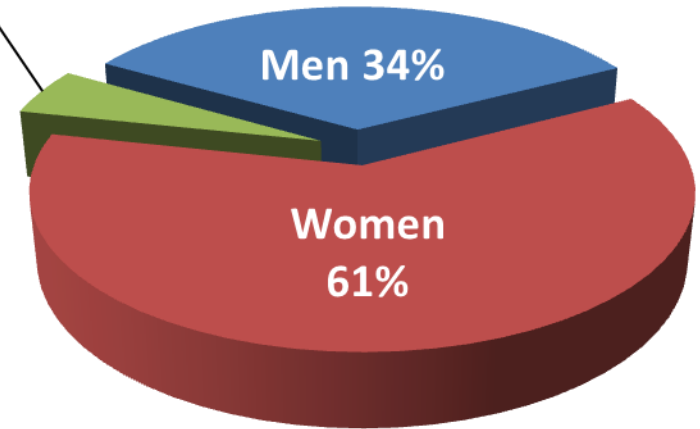
# Abuse of authority

Victims



Victims of abuse of authority  
44%

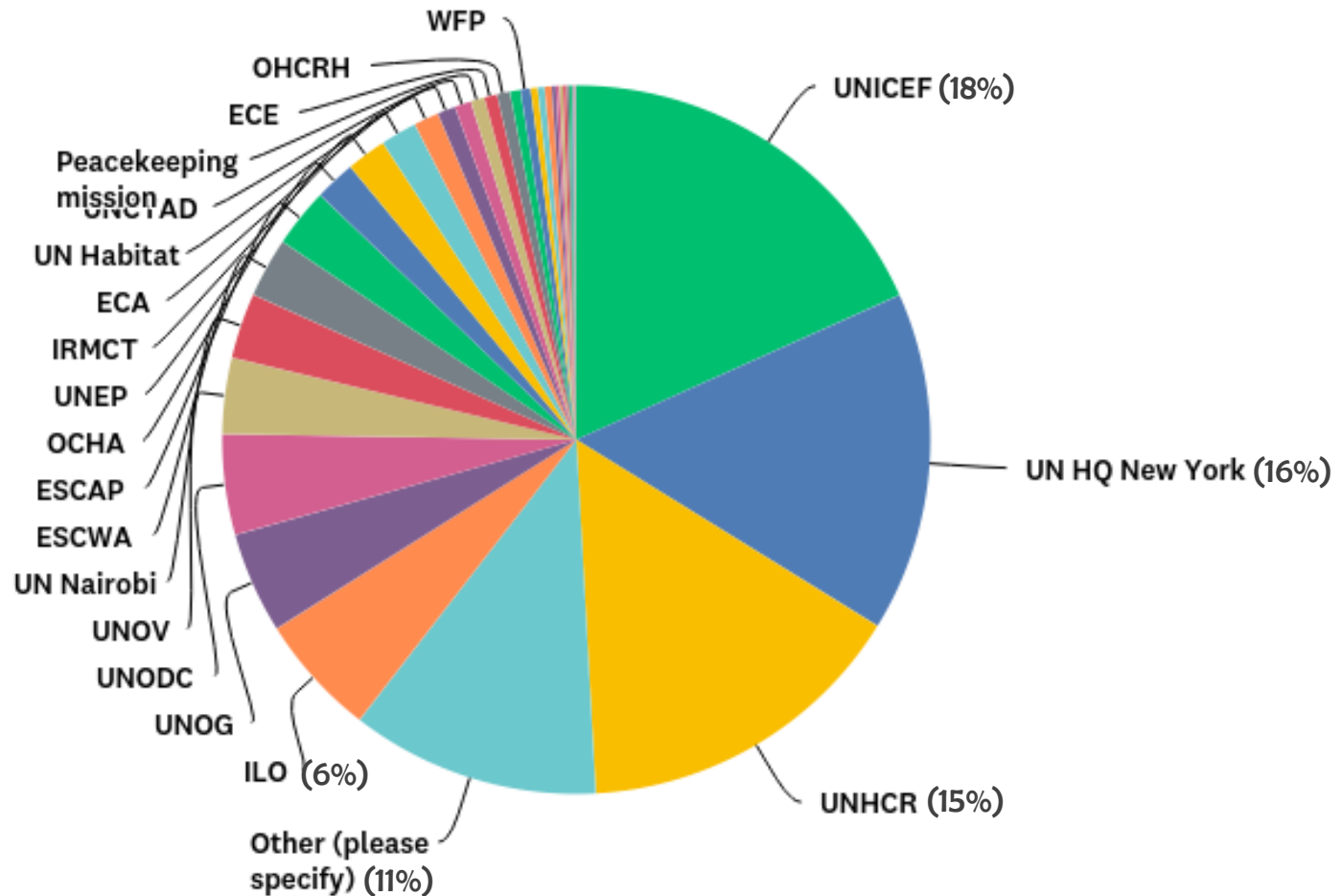
Prefer not  
to say  
5%





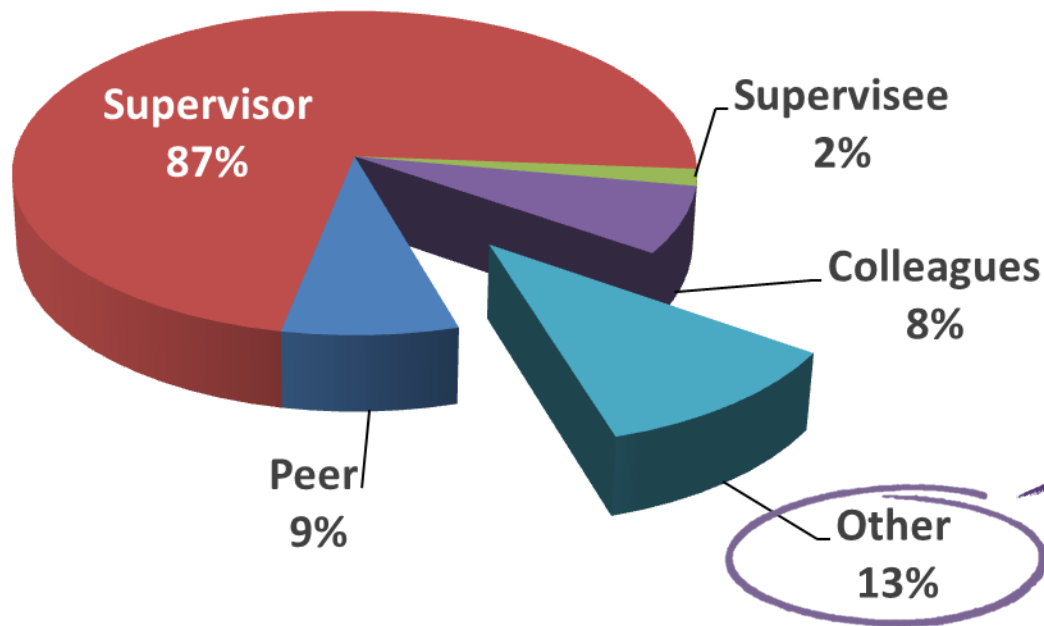
# Abuse of authority

## Organizations



# Abuse of authority

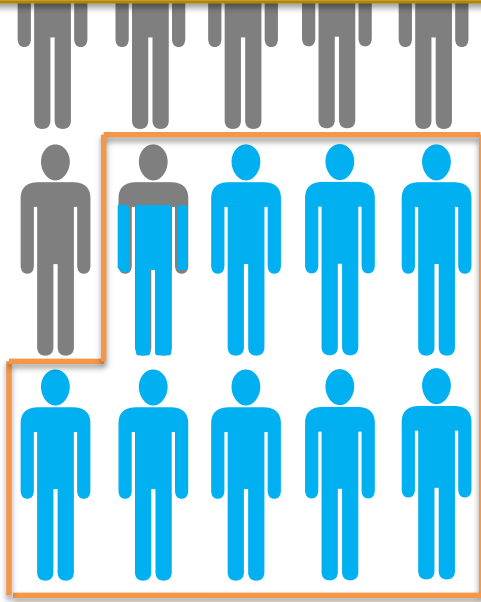
By whom



Executive Director  
Manager  
head office team Judge  
Representative Top management  
Administration Chief higher position colleague  
supervisor direct supervisor HR  
Human Resources official Director  
Senior management

# Abuse of authority

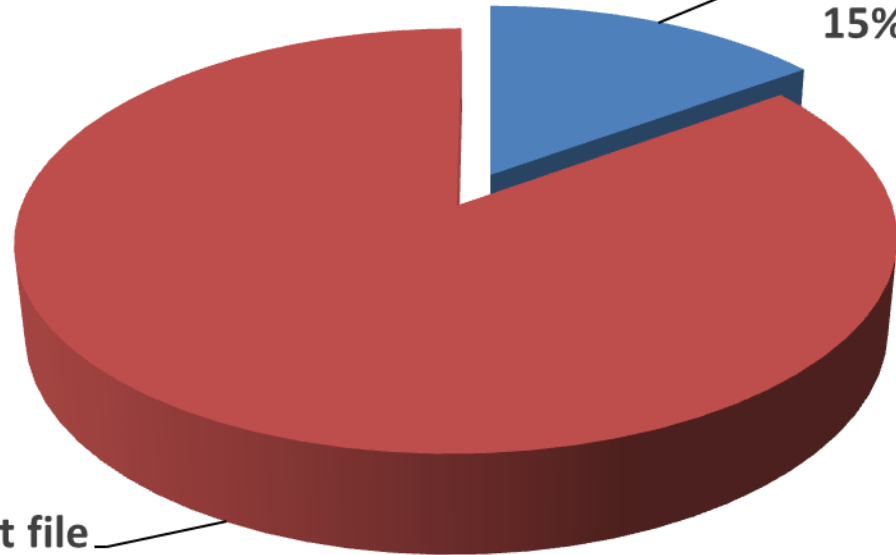
Complaint



**Victims of abuse of authority**  
44%

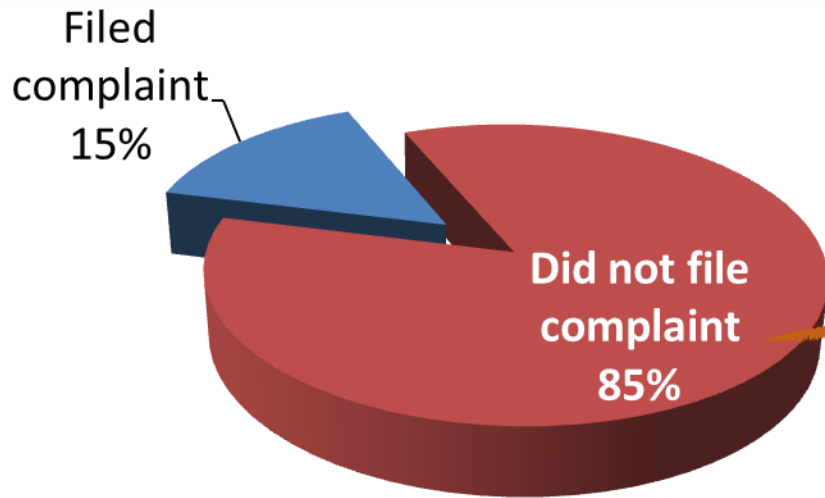
**Did not file  
complaint**  
85%

**Filed  
complaint**  
15%

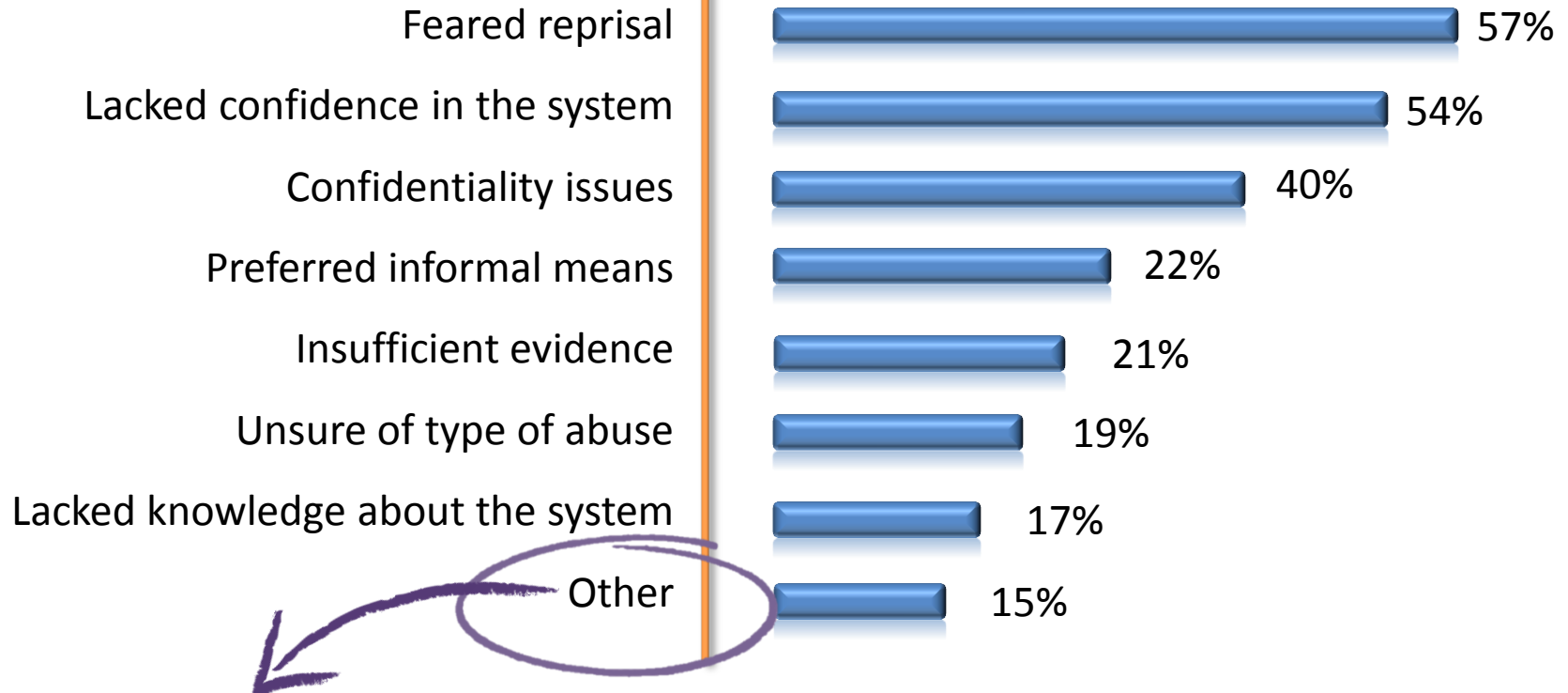


# Abuse of authority


No complaint



## Why?



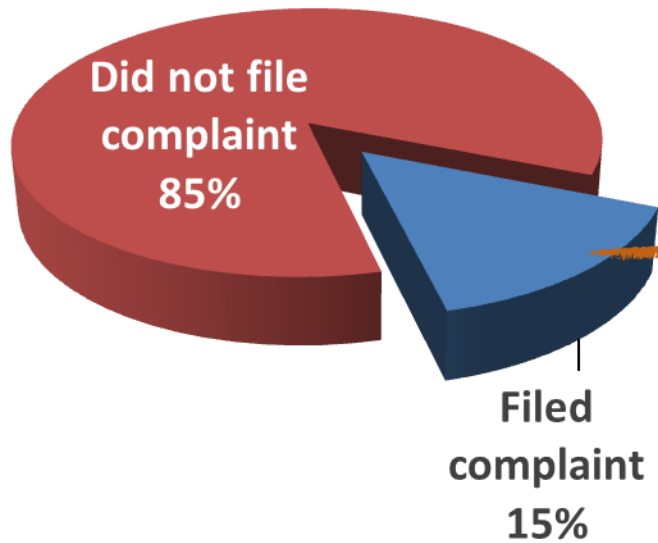
# Abuse of authority



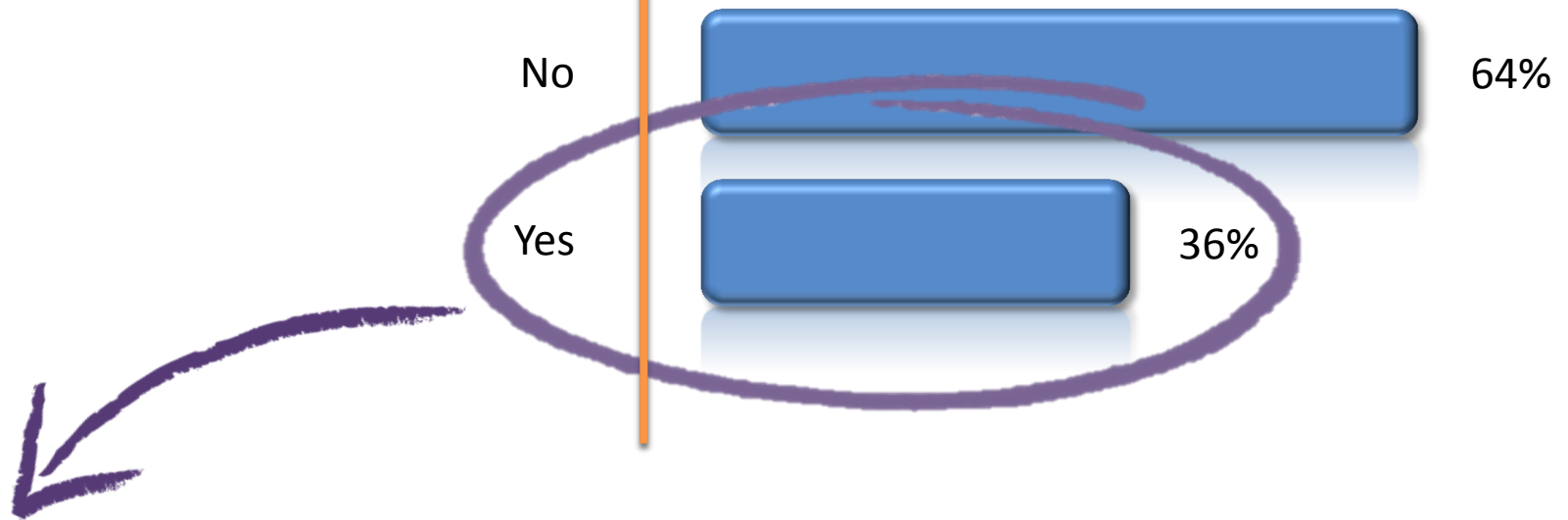
“I am **afraid** of the abuser. I hoped that by being nice to that person I could avoid trouble – turns out I couldn't.” “I am scared of the **non-renewal** of my contract.” “I **lacked confidence** in the senior leadership that they would take action.” “I don't know **how to file**.” *“As a GPO, it is hard to justify abuse of power because you are by definition in a lower position.”* “**Situation of vulnerability - short term contract**, extensions depending on supervisor.” “It was in verbal manner and also **without the witness**/presence of a third party.” “People in charge of complaints are **colluding with management** and harassers.” “**I was advised not to by my supervisor.**” “I was warned by my supervisor that my **EPAS** will not look nice and no one will hire me.”

# Abuse of authority

Investigation



Was an investigation held?

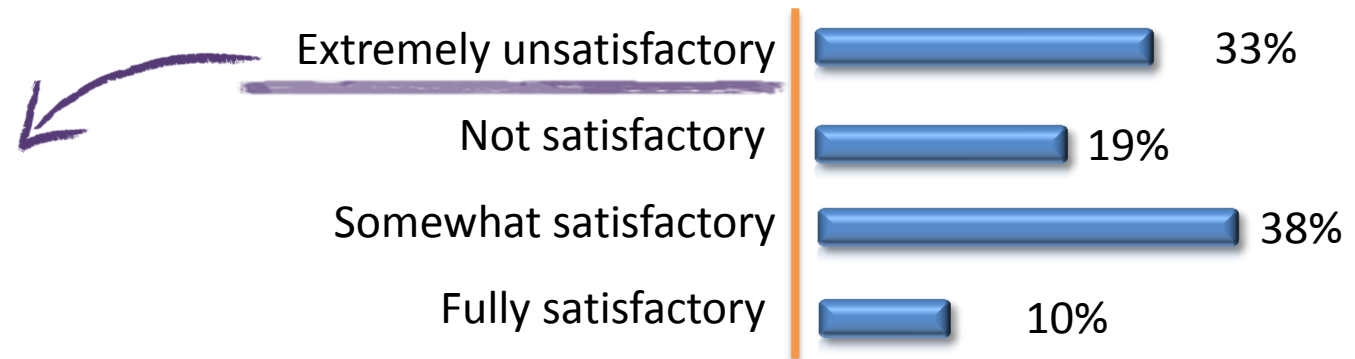


# Abuse of authority

Investigation



## Outcome of investigation



*"Nothing changed and the perpetrator didn't have to explain anything."*

*"Despite the case being referred for disciplinary action against the offender, nothing was done."*

*"The only penalty was to move the supervisor to another duty station."*

**We are grateful to the over 6,600 respondents from across the UN System for their time and efforts to help us better understand the experiences and concerns of UN employees.**

**CCISUA will share the results as widely as possible within the Organization to help us all prepare the way forward for a United Nations that is open, welcoming and above all, free of abuse.**



**Coordinating Committee for  
International Staff Unions  
and Associations**

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[secretariat@ccisua.org](mailto:secretariat@ccisua.org)**