

# MUSLIMS' EXPERIENCES OF INCLUSION, DISCRIMINATION AND ISLAMOPHOBIA IN AOTEAROA NZ

**First Baseline Study**



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# Disclosure and Acknowledgements



This report is developed by a team of researchers. Their associated university, associations, employers or the funding association are not responsible for the content of the report.



The use of italics and quotation marks in this report show that the text is a direct response (quote) of a respondent.



The report is based on the data collected and does not reflect personal opinions of any of the research team members.



We thank our respondents those who took time to fill the survey, and those who participated in our face-to-face focus group discussions. This report was made possible because of their contributions.



We are grateful to the support of all those who reviewed the survey for us, thanks to Zainaa Hilal, for helping with the graphics, and edits.



We also appreciate the patience and support of our funder FIANZ.

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# Research Summary

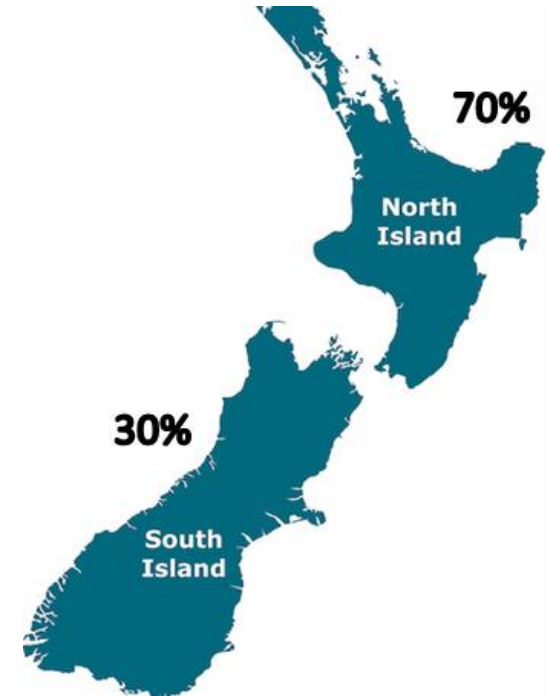
# About the Research and Participants

## A study done by Muslims with Muslims.

Based on extensive literature review and consultation with six Muslims, academics and non-academics. The study was conducted in 2023. Based on an online survey, and a focus group (conducted in Auckland) discussion with key informants.

The data collection through the survey completed before the 'War on Gaza' escalated.

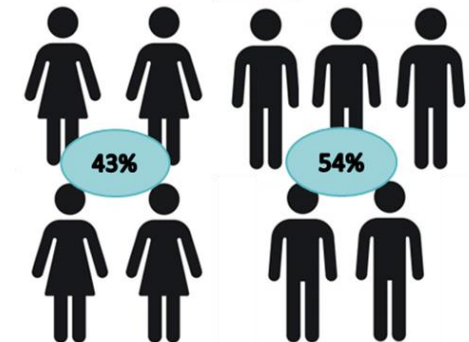
With a diverse sample, we had representation from all ages between 18 to 60 years and above. The survey was in English, majority of our respondents were formally educated.



83% were not born in Aotearoa New Zealand

31% of our respondents identified themselves first as Kiwis and then in any other way.

57% wore some form of religious clothing



# What we found about: Experiences of Discrimination

**40%**  
or more felt

- that a less qualified coworker was promoted ahead of them
- others assumed they were in a lower status job and treated them as such
- they have to work twice as hard as others
- where diverse opinions were beneficial, their opinion was not taken.

**35%**  
or more felt

- that they were more closely watched than others; and not taken seriously by their boss.

**28.5%**

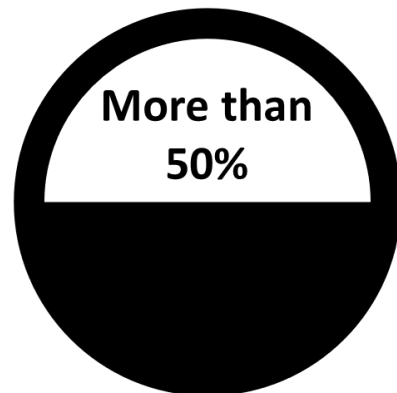
- stated that they feel uncomfortable making demands to the local authorities or government.

**10%**

- felt that their children are most of the time or always discriminated at educational institutions.

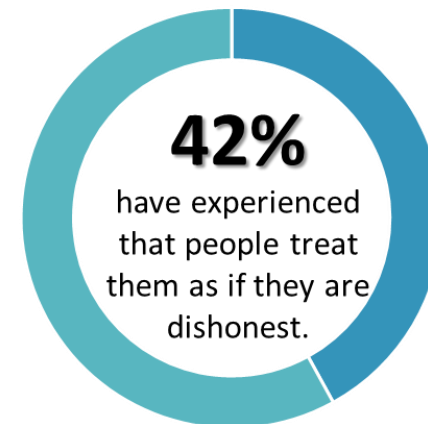
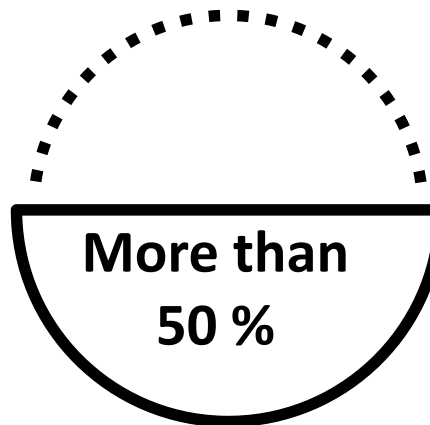
**58%**

felt that their child/children have been discriminated at school sometimes.



felt that others treated them as if they are not smart, or are afraid of them, and act as if they are better than the respondents.

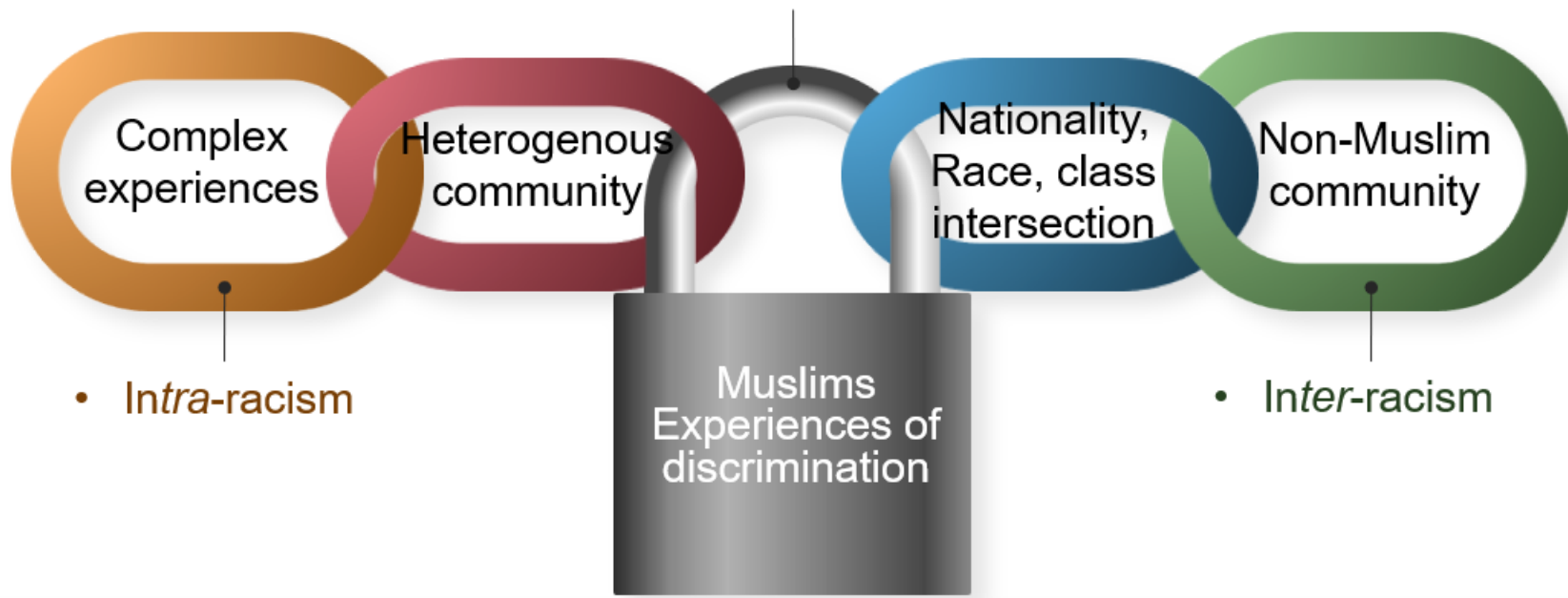
felt being treated with less respect and courtesy or received poorer service than others.



# Experiences of Discrimination

Survey and focus group discussions highlight that everyday experiences of discrimination could be passive or subtle – hard to clearly identify and respond to

Our respondents explained the nature of their experiences of discrimination





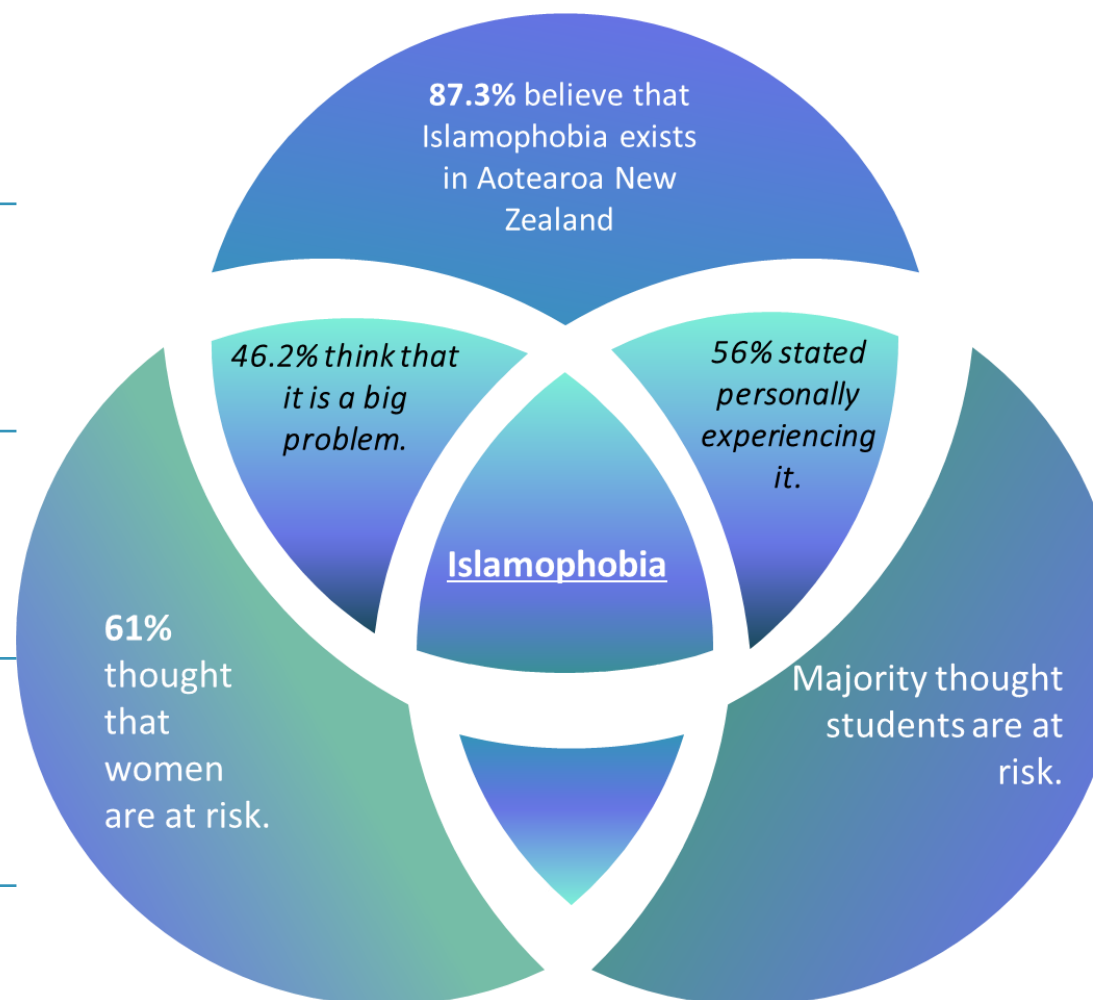
# What we found about: Islamophobia

**Majority** experienced or felt the presence of Islamophobia, after the 9/11 attacks, Christchurch attacks, some pointed towards upon arrival, or in day-to-day life.

Their experiences were at school, university, street or public places, or while dealing with authorities. Religious clothing was more targeted especially the thob and hijab.

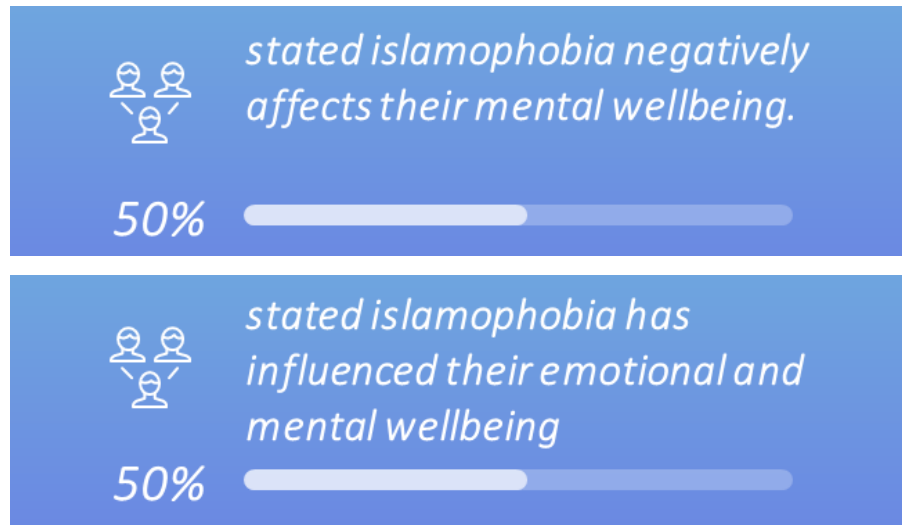
Dealing with Islamophobia: **Majority** of the respondents took the onus of getting involved and actively doing something to deal with Islamophobia upon themselves.

**Only 5 respondents** stated that we should not be doing anything because we are not the problem.



# What we found about: Wellbeing

Respondents selected religion and spirituality as being the most satisfying aspects of their life. They found least satisfaction in their sense of safety (average 6.7/10).



# Full Report

# Introduction and Background

- There have been numerous cases of discrimination against Muslims. Post Christchurch attacks, the need to research Muslims' experiences of discrimination and inclusion and the implications on their wellbeing became increasingly evident.
- During and after the several Hui arranged by the Government and Muslim organizations between 2021-2023, the need for a baseline study was formulated and crystalized.
- This study was conducted in 2023.
- This studied was funded by Federation of Islamic Associations of New Zealand (FIANZ).

# Study Scope

- This study was conducted in 2023. The data collection ended in October.
  - Therefore, the quantitative part of this study does not capture the Palestine conflict.
- The study was initiated for Muslims, by Muslims.
- It covers areas such as discrimination, daily experiences of exclusion, Islamophobia, feelings of heightened vigilance, social cohesion, relation/reporting to the authorities, and feelings of safety and wellbeing.
- Our study couldn't cover Muslims living on the margins of the socio-economic groups.

# Study Methodology

- The study evolved over the course of two years. Consultation was done with six Muslims including scholars, academics and community members, to review the content of the questions for the survey, their relevance, wording and language.
- The survey was then tested with five people to see that the questions were clear, and that the survey link worked.
- The survey was opened to all Muslims through social media, using a link and a QR code.
- The survey was completely anonymous and voluntary. There was no incentive offered for completing the survey.
- We also conducted a focus group discussion with key informants in Auckland.
- Ethics approval was attained through Massey University.

# Who responded to our research

- 352 people started the survey.
  - 346 attempted it.
  - 331 were over 18 years of age.
  - 323 identified as Muslims.
  - 319 lived in New Zealand.
- 319 Muslims completed the survey.**
- 13 people used the QR code, the remaining people used the link posted on social media and sent through chat groups and emails.
- Qualitative component**
- Focus group carried out in Auckland involving 18 participants
    - All identifying as Muslim, over 18 years of age and from varying ethnic/national backgrounds (including 'migrants', former refugees and 'locals').
    - Participants included 6 females and 2 males

# Demographics

All age groups responded. The largest group with 20% of participants was 36-40 years olds.

53.6% percent were men.

70% were from the North island.

64.7% had a bachelors degree or higher educational qualifications.

55.6% had over 100k household income.

83.2% were not born in Aotearoa.

68.2% were employed, and 7.1% were unemployed or not in the labour force.

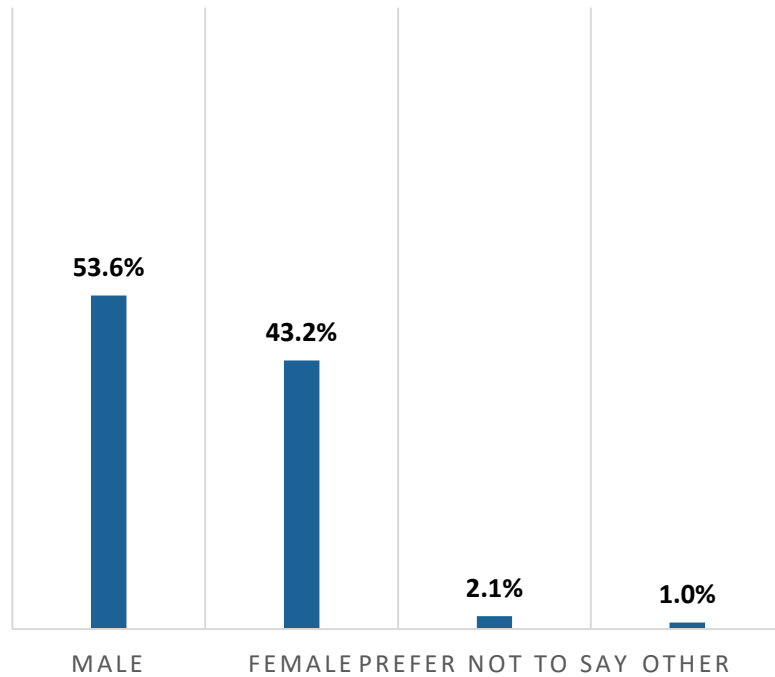
75.7% were married, amongst these 64% had children.

56.4 wore some form of religious clothing.

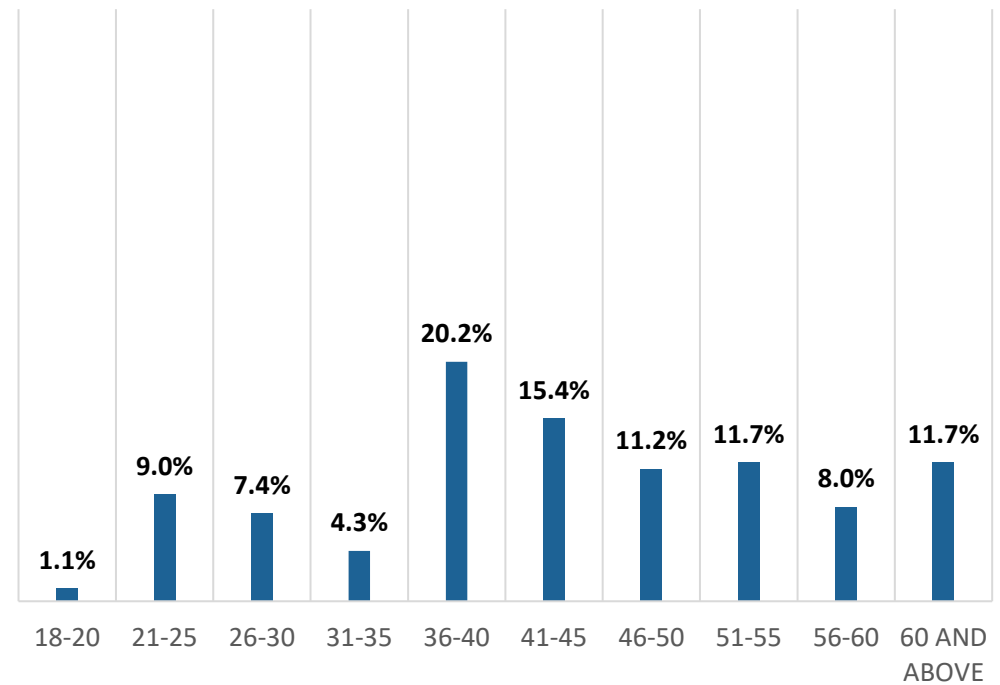


# Gender and Age of the Respondents

## GENDER

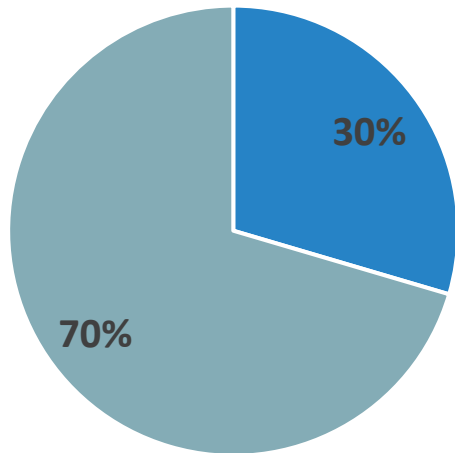


## AGE



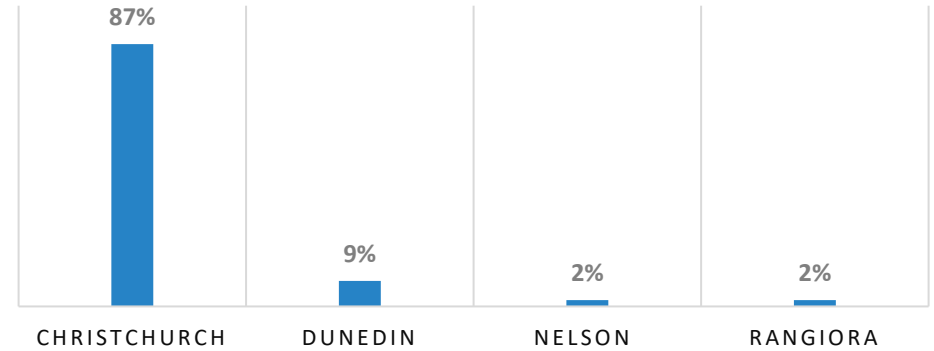
# Location

Respondents Location

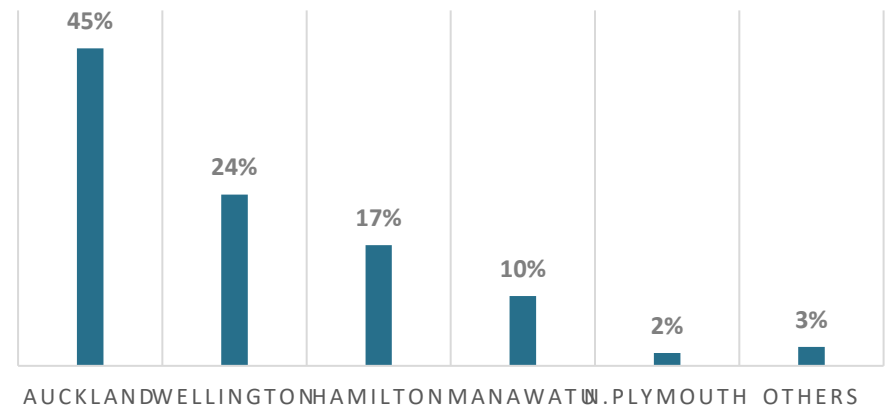


■ South Island ■ North Island

## SOUTH ISLAND



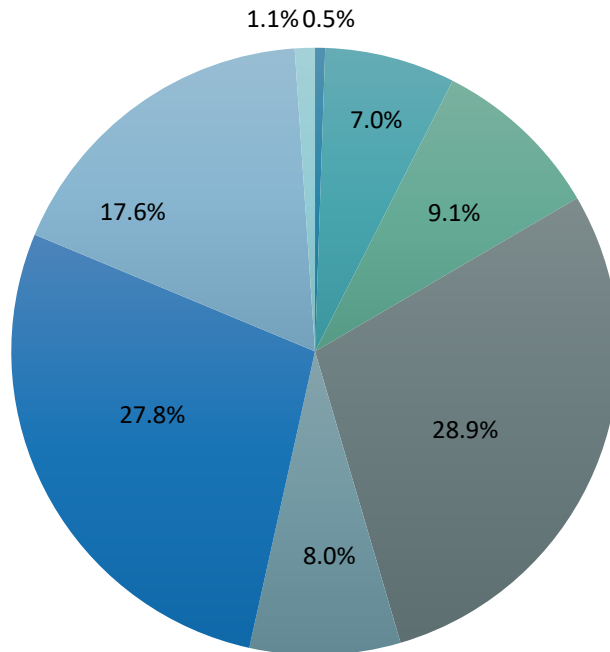
## NORTH ISLAND



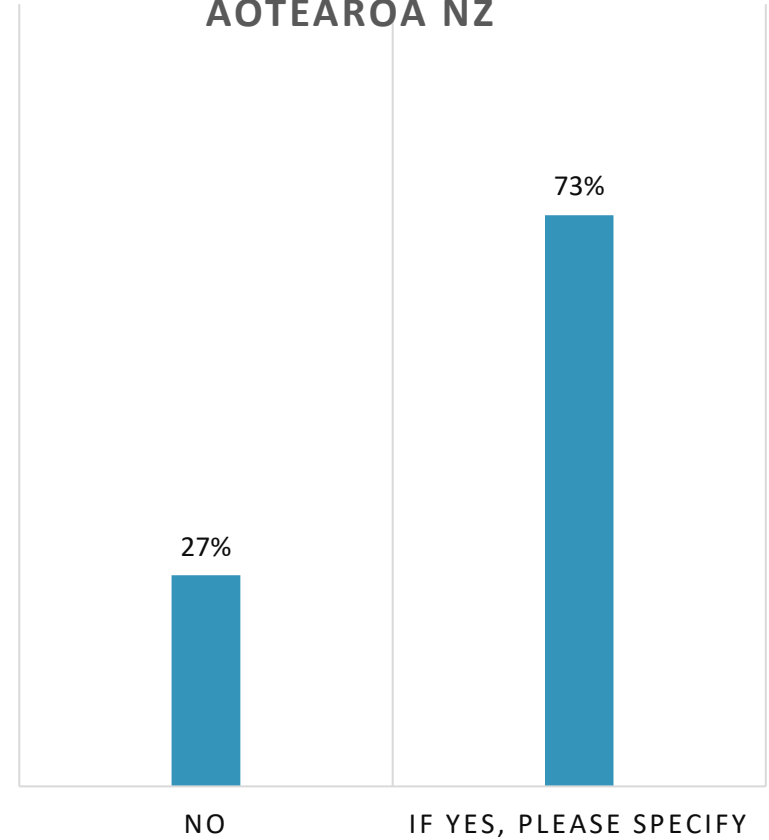
# Education

## Education level

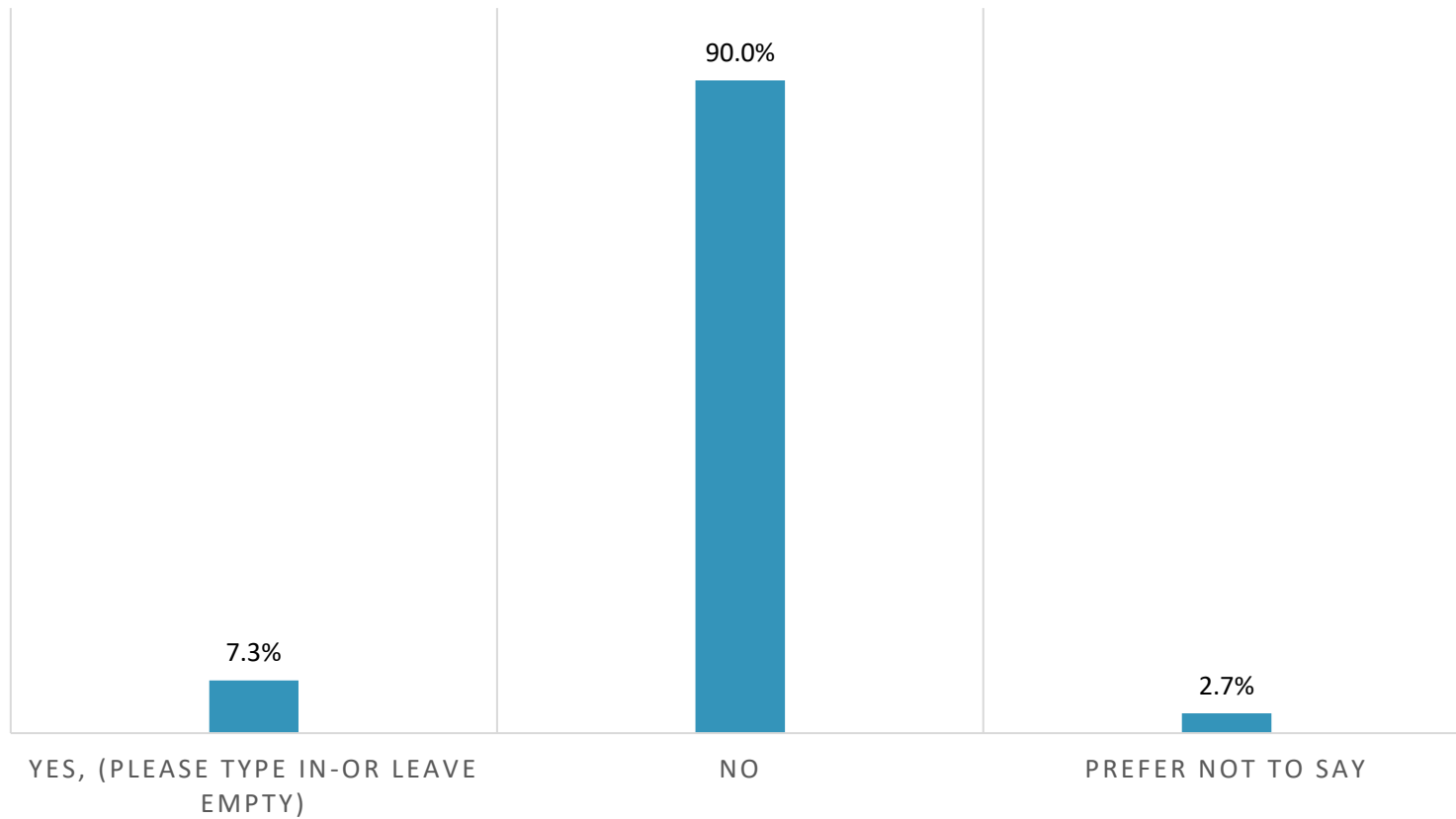
- Intermediate
- High school
- Certificate of Diploma
- Bachelor's degree
- Professional degree
- Master's degree
- Doctoral degree
- Prefer not to say



## IS ANY OF YOUR EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION FROM AOTEAROA NZ

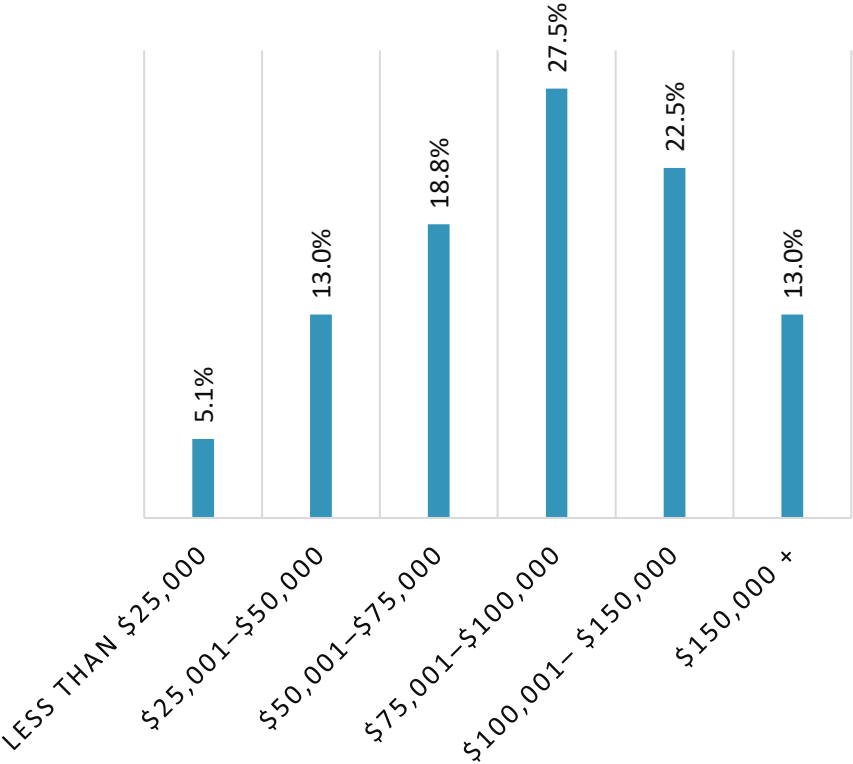


## DO YOU HAVE A DISABILITY?

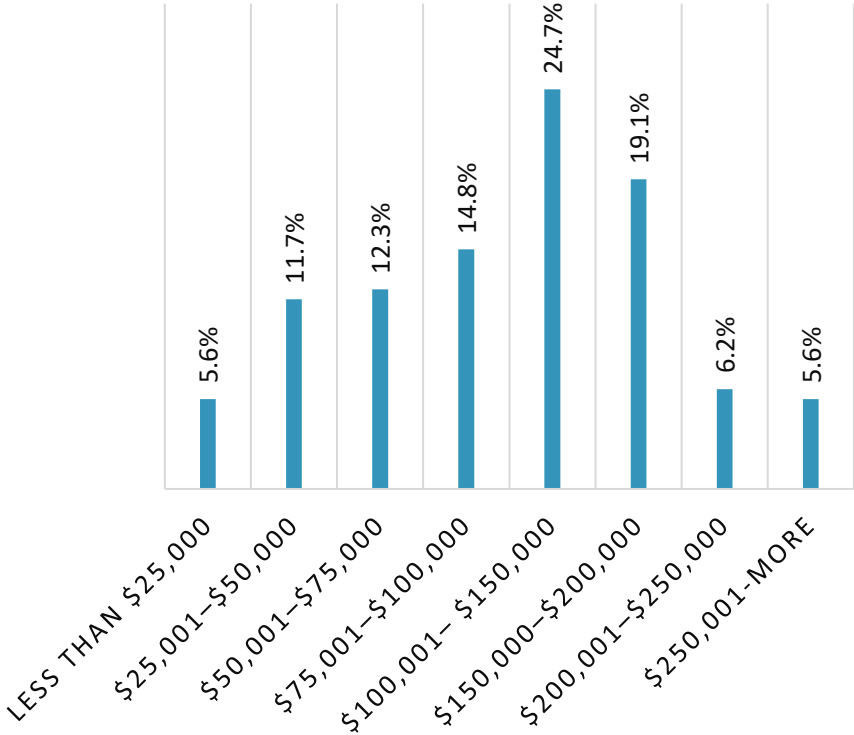


# INCOME

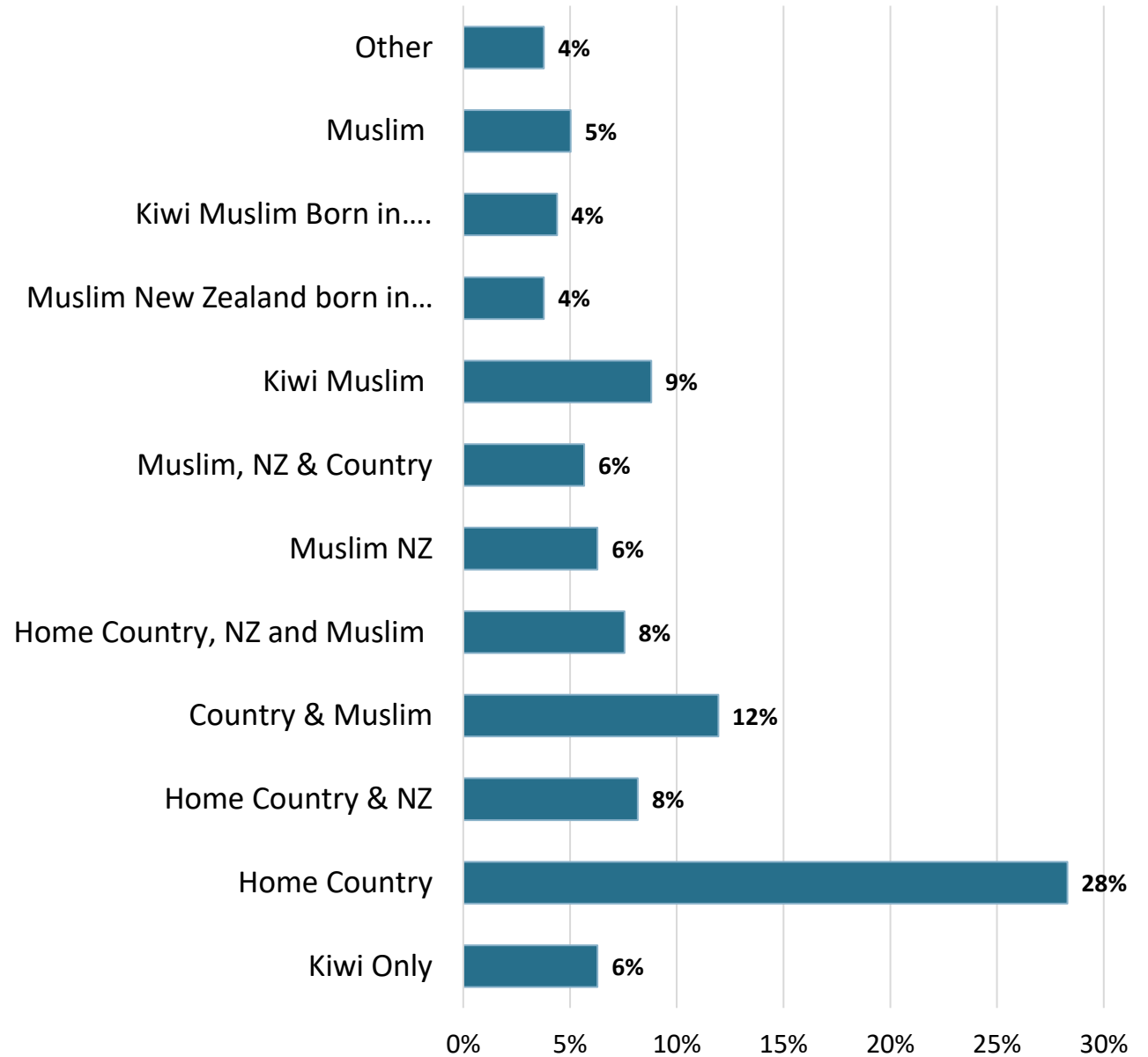
## YOUR INDIVIDUAL INCOME



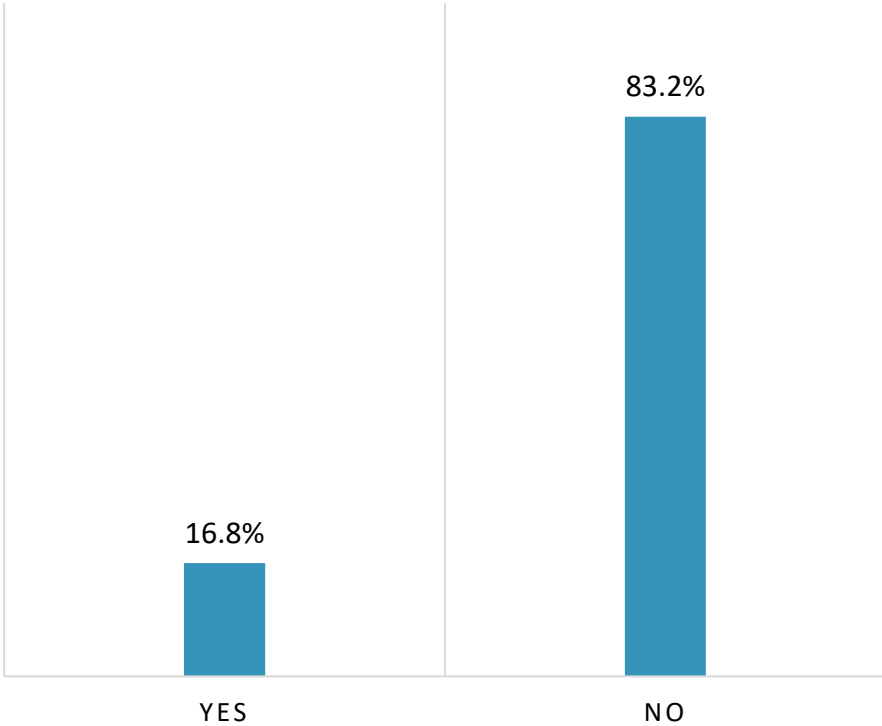
## YOUR HOUSEHOLD ANNUAL INCOME



31% of the respondents identified themselves, first as Kiwis and then in any other way

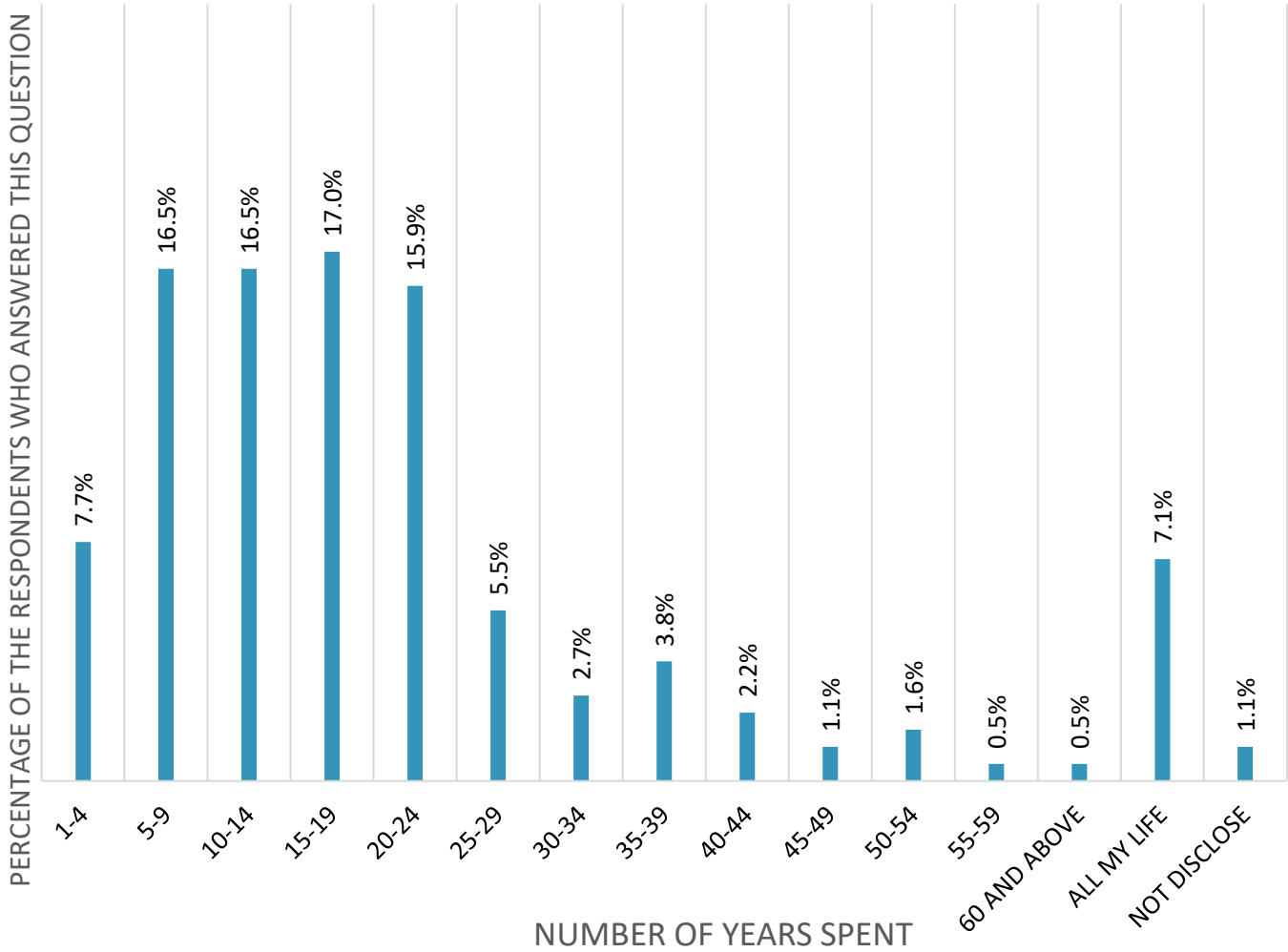


# WERE YOU BORN IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND



Born in Aotearoa New Zealand

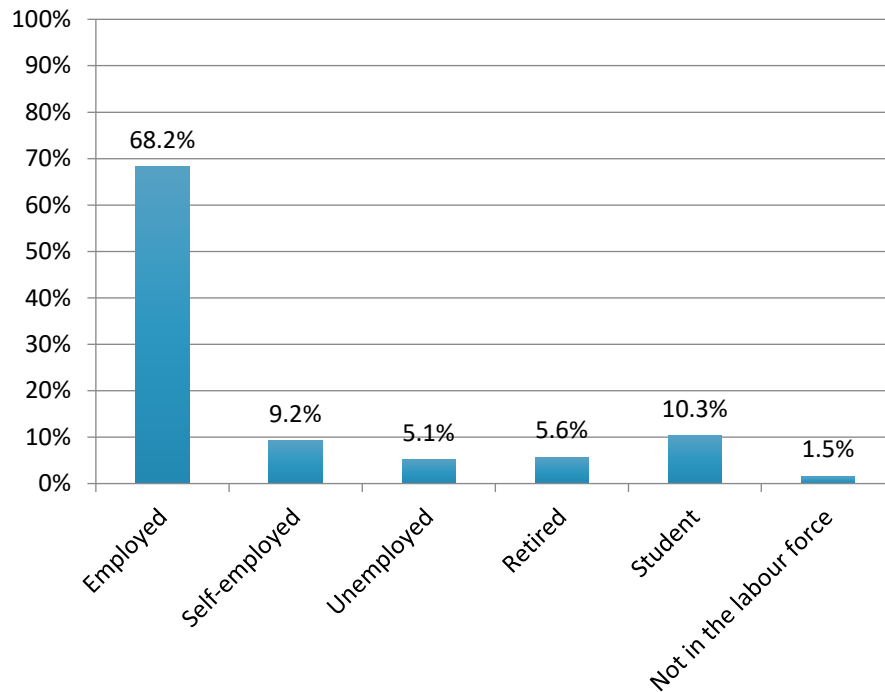
# NUMBER OF YEARS SPENT IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND



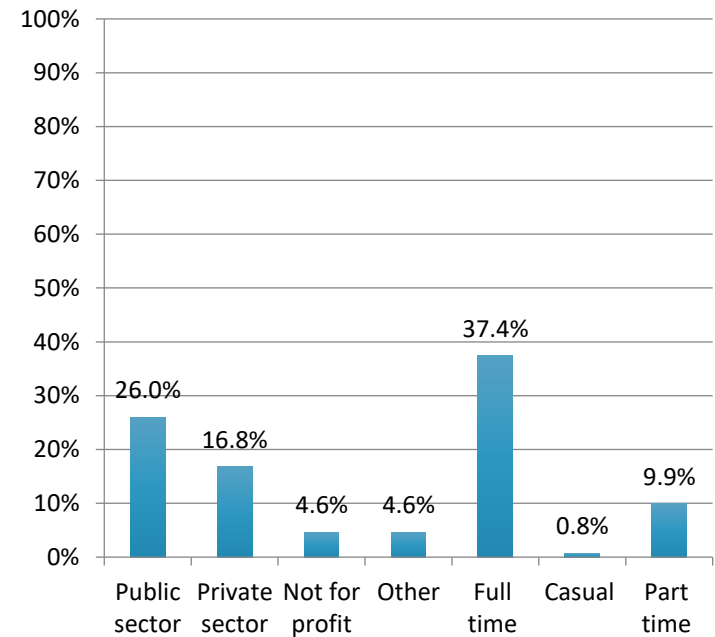


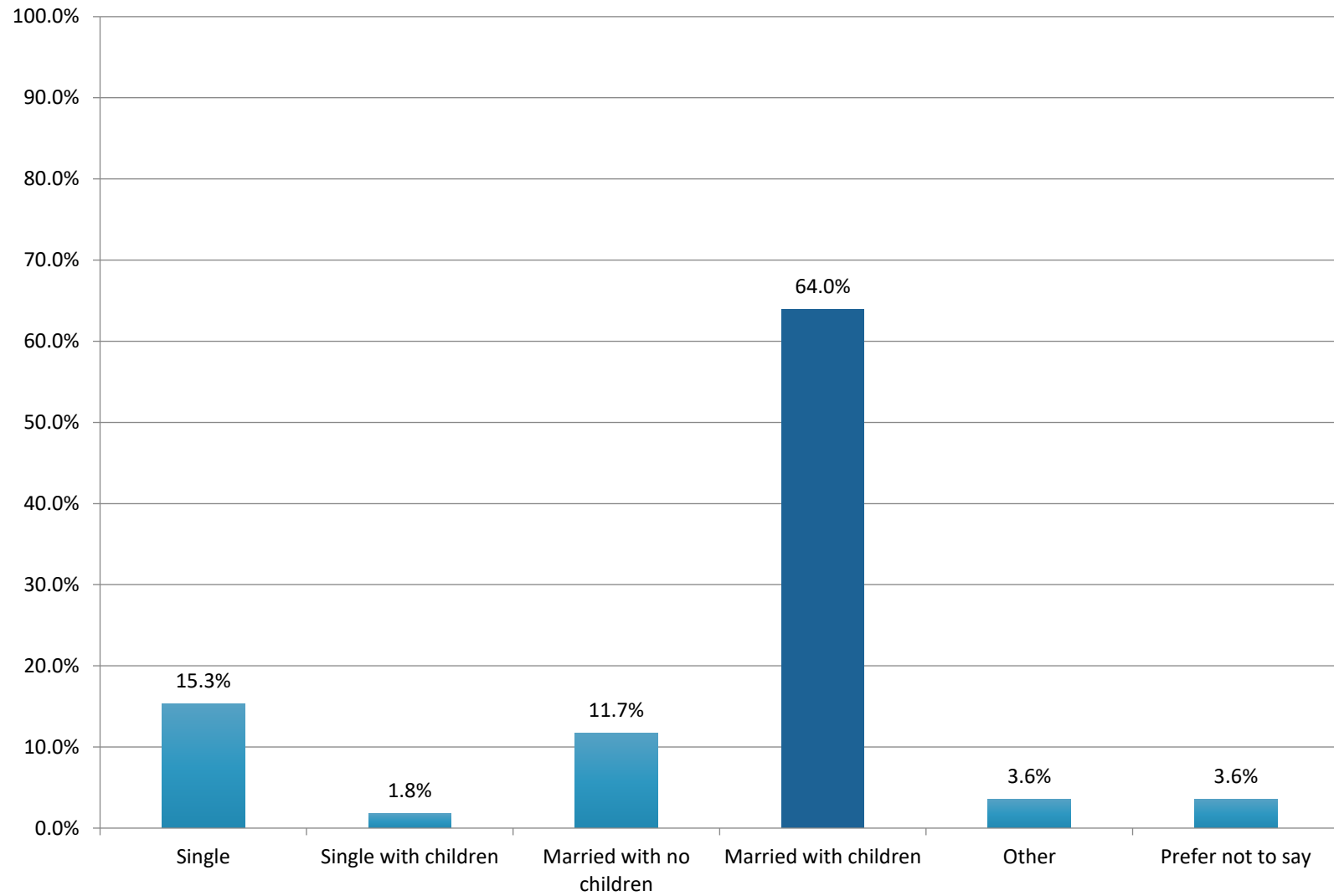
# Employment

## Employment Status

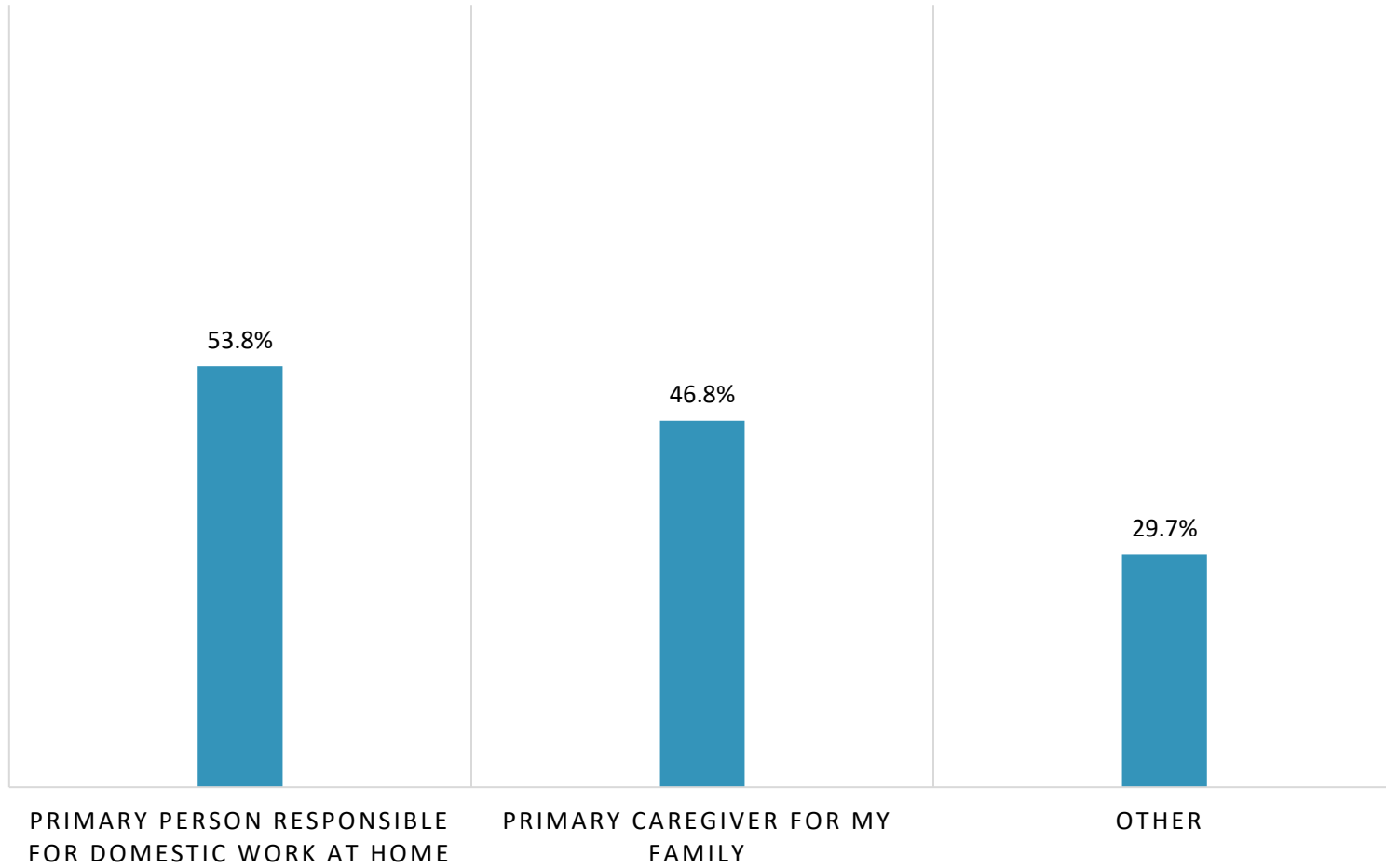


## Current nature or place of work

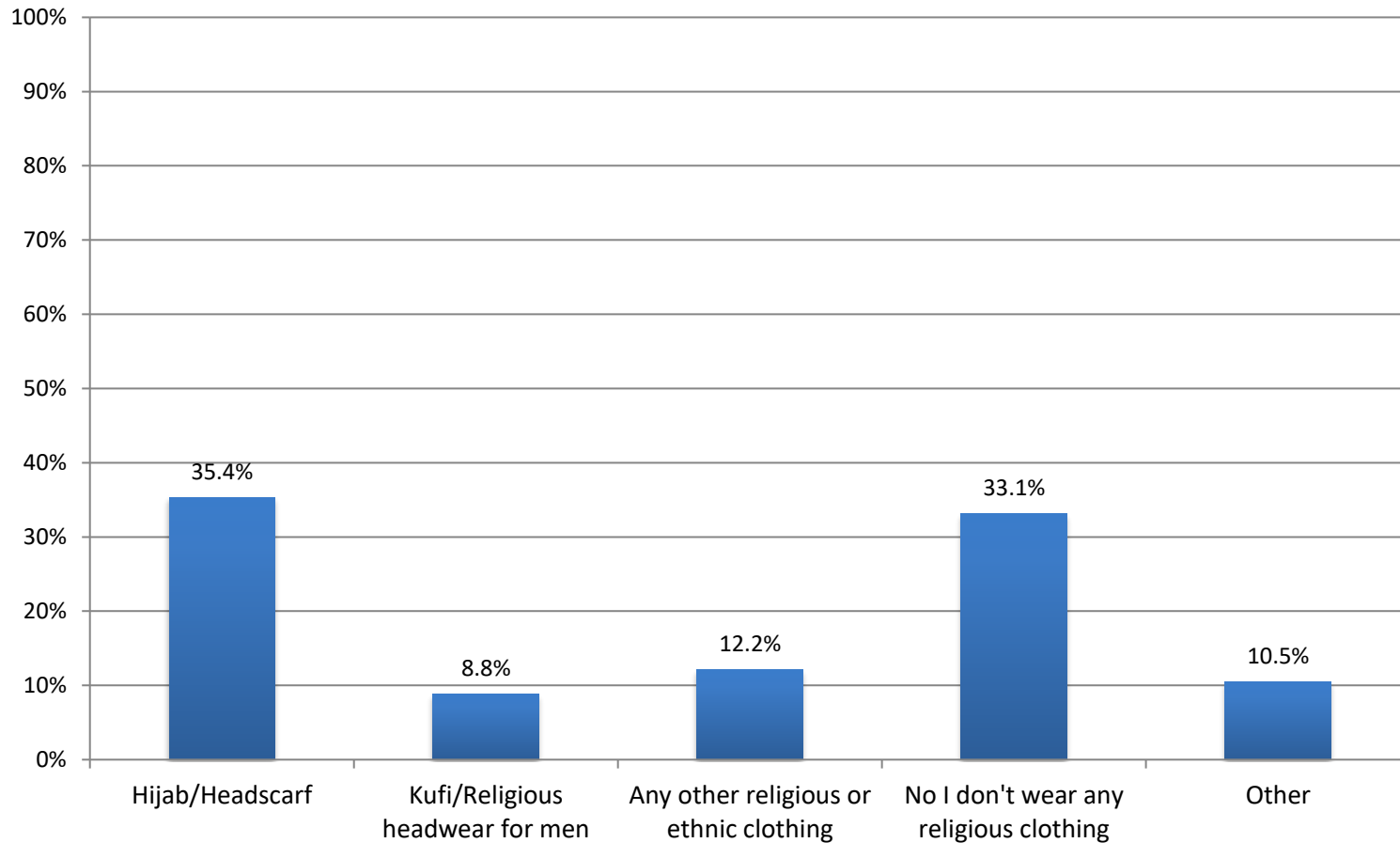




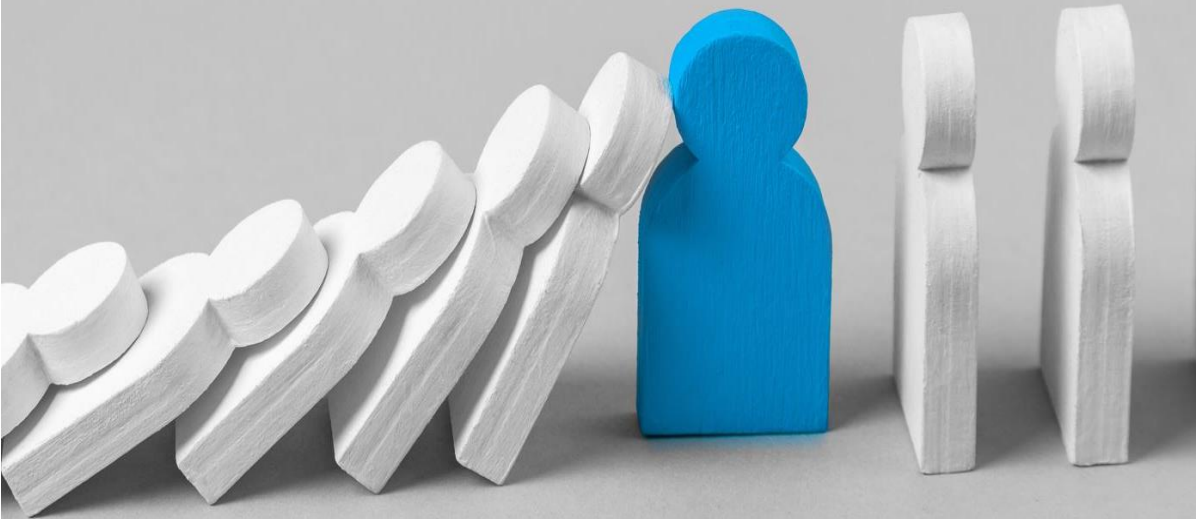
# CARE TAKING RESPONSIBILITIES



## Do you wear any of the following on a regular basis?



**DISCRIMINATION**



More than 50% of the respondents have felt that they have been treated with **less respect and courtesy** or received **poorer service than others**.

More than 50% had also felt that **others treated them as if they are not smart, or are afraid of them, and act as if they are better than the respondents**.

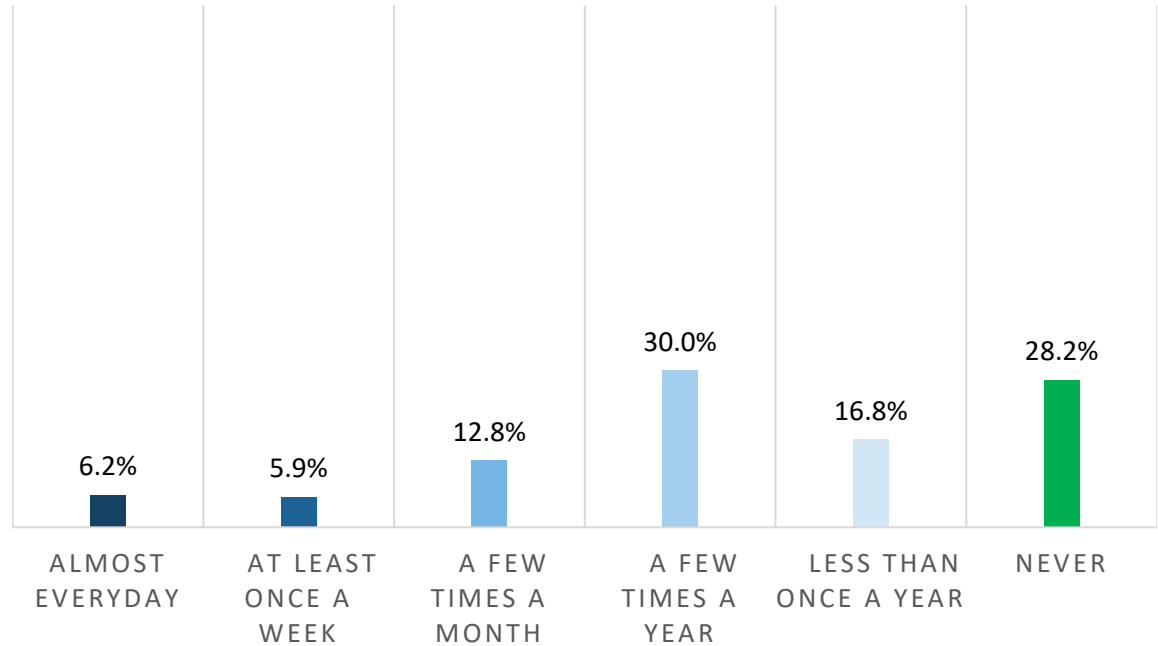
42% had experienced that people treat them as if **they are dishonest**.

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## Everyday Discrimination

# YOU ARE TREATED WITH LESS COURTESY THAN OTHER PEOPLE ARE

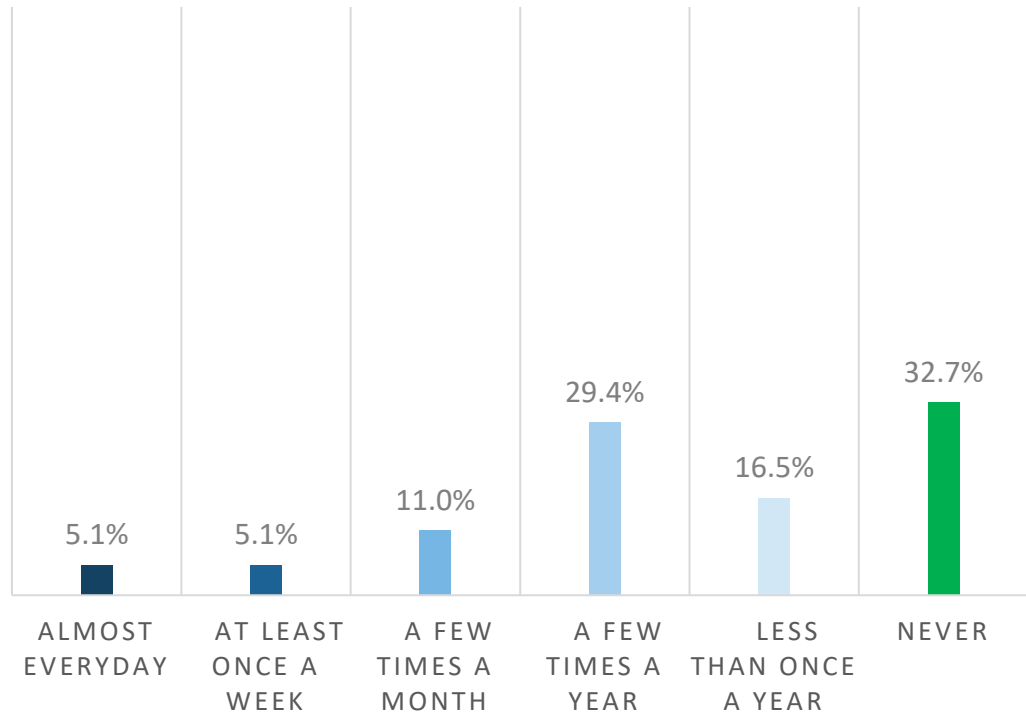
Almost everyday	6.2%
At least once a week	5.9%
A few times a month	12.8%
A few times a year	30.0%
Less than once a year	16.8%
Never	28.2%



**More than 50% of those who responded to this question have been treated with less courtesy than others, almost every day to a few times a year.**

# YOU ARE TREATED WITH LESS RESPECT THAN OTHER PEOPLE ARE.

Almost everyday	5.1%
At least once a week	5.1%
A few times a month	11.0%
A few times a year	29.4%
Less than once a year	16.5%
Never	32.7%

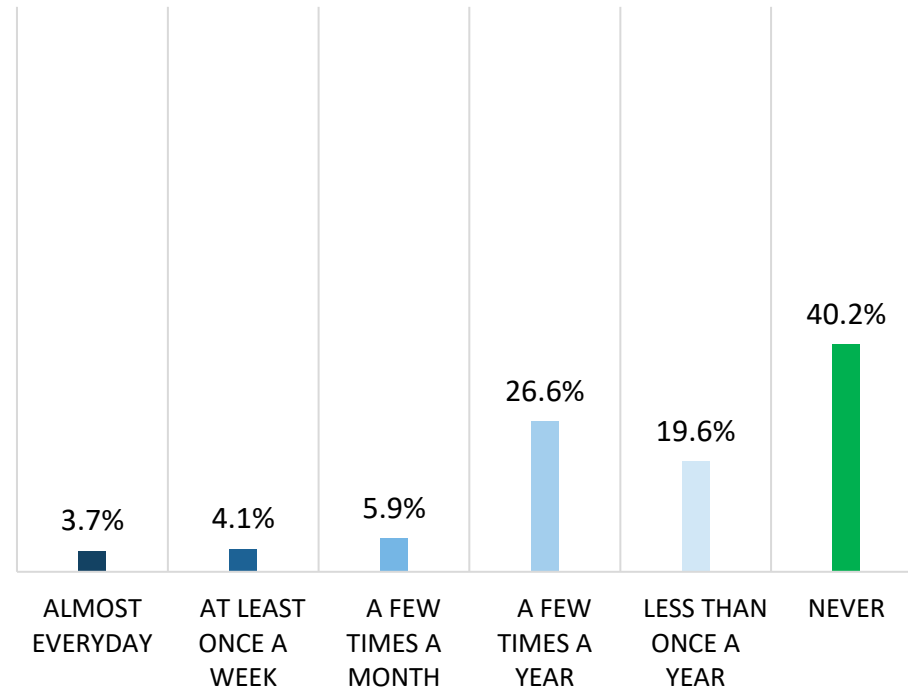




# YOU RECEIVE POORER SERVICE THAN OTHER PEOPLE

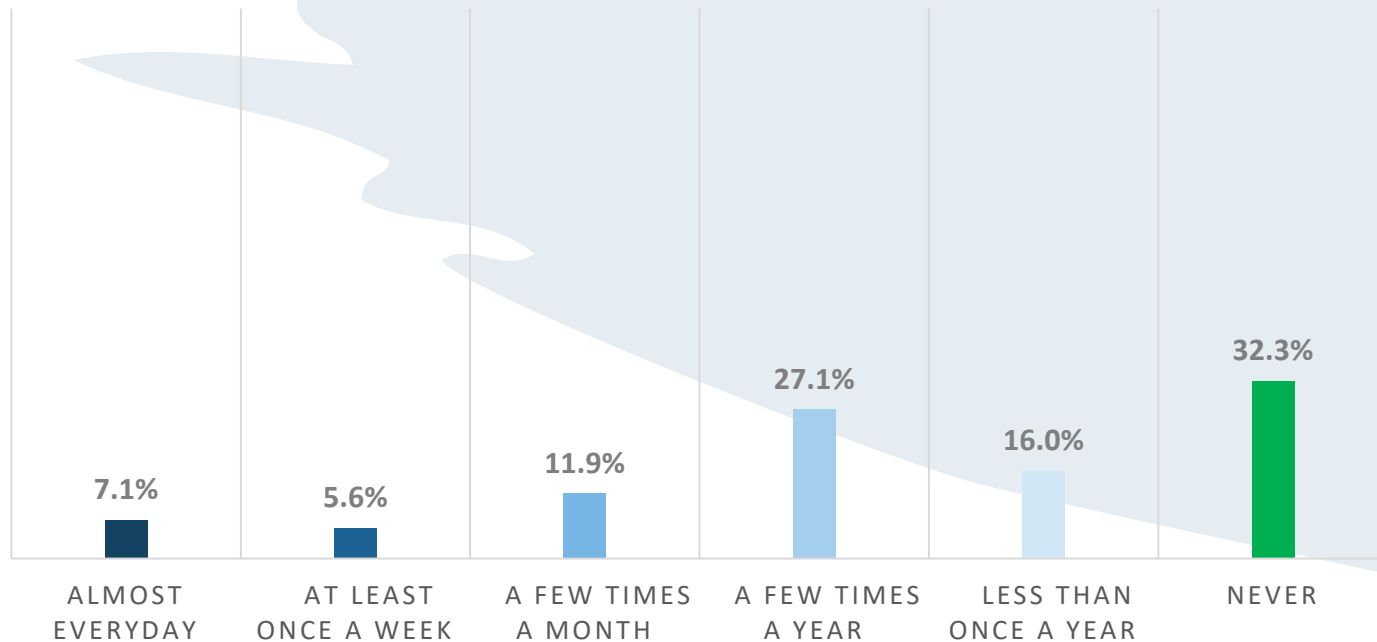
For example, at restaurants, stores, trade people.

Almost everyday	3.7%
At least once a week	4.1%
A few times a month	5.9%
A few times a year	26.6%
Less than once a year	19.6%
Never	40.2%



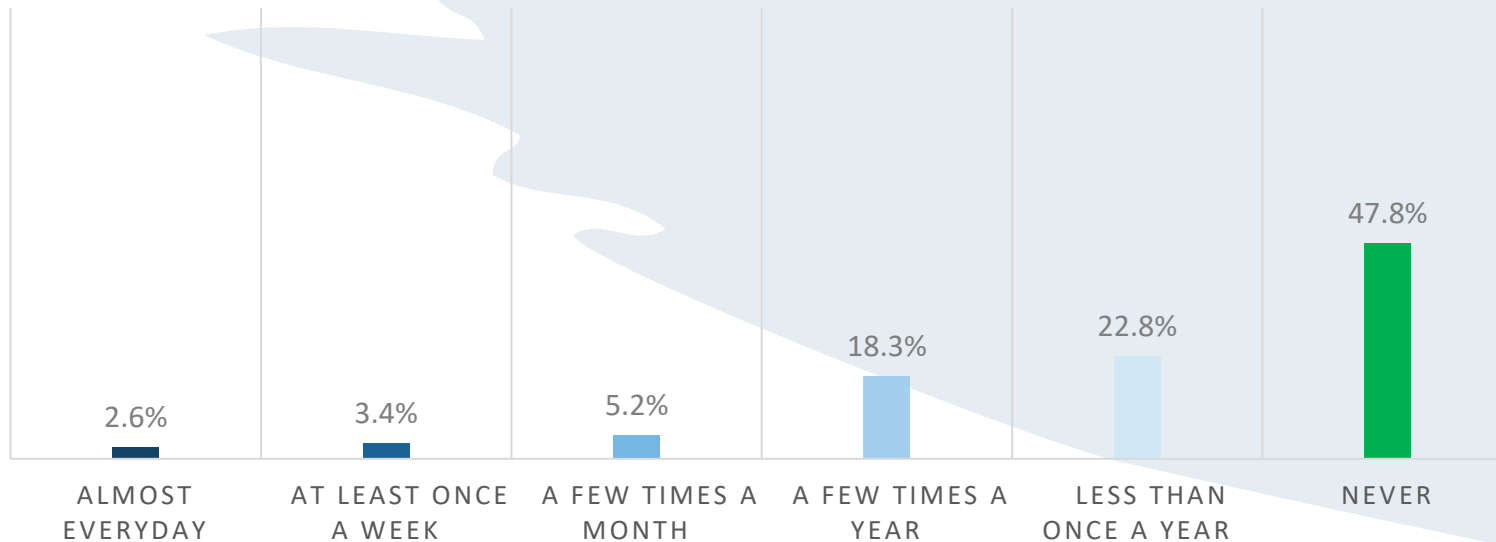
# People act as if they think you are not smart.

Almost everyday	7.1%
At least once a week	5.6%
A few times a month	11.9%
A few times a year	27.1%
Less than once a year	16.0%
Never	32.3%



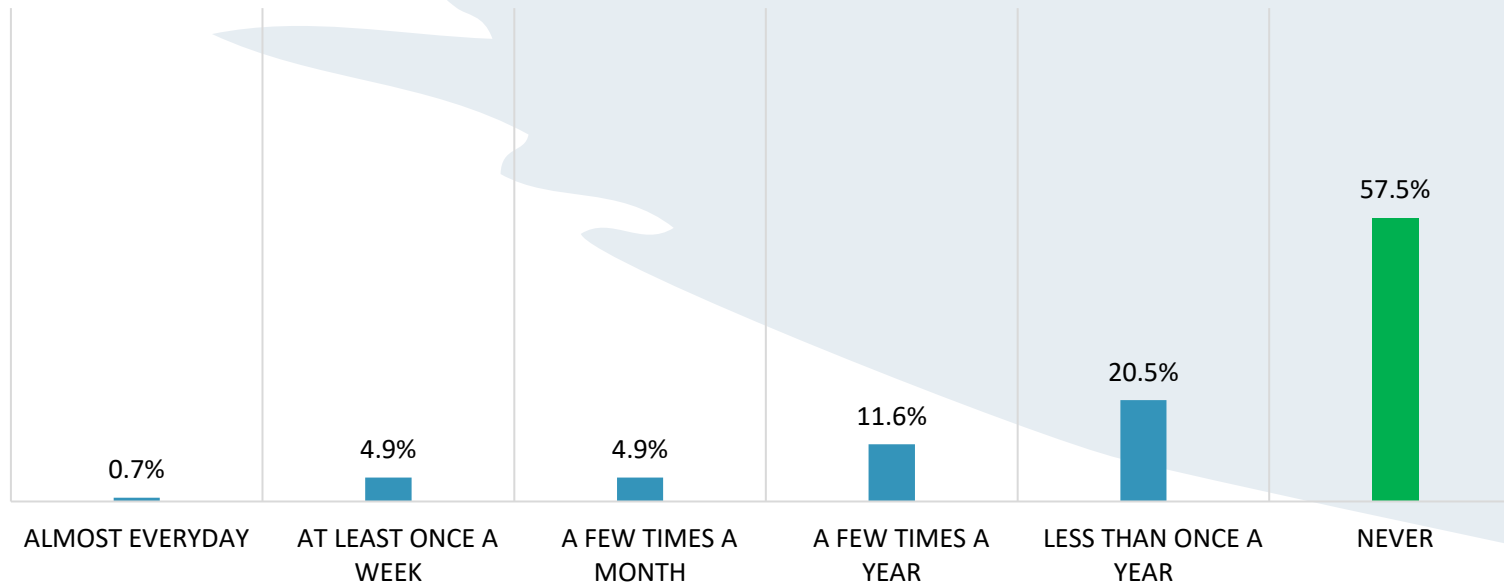
# People act as if they are afraid of you

Almost everyday	2.6%
At least once a week	3.4%
A few times a month	5.2%
A few times a year	18.3%
Less than once a year	22.8%
Never	47.8%



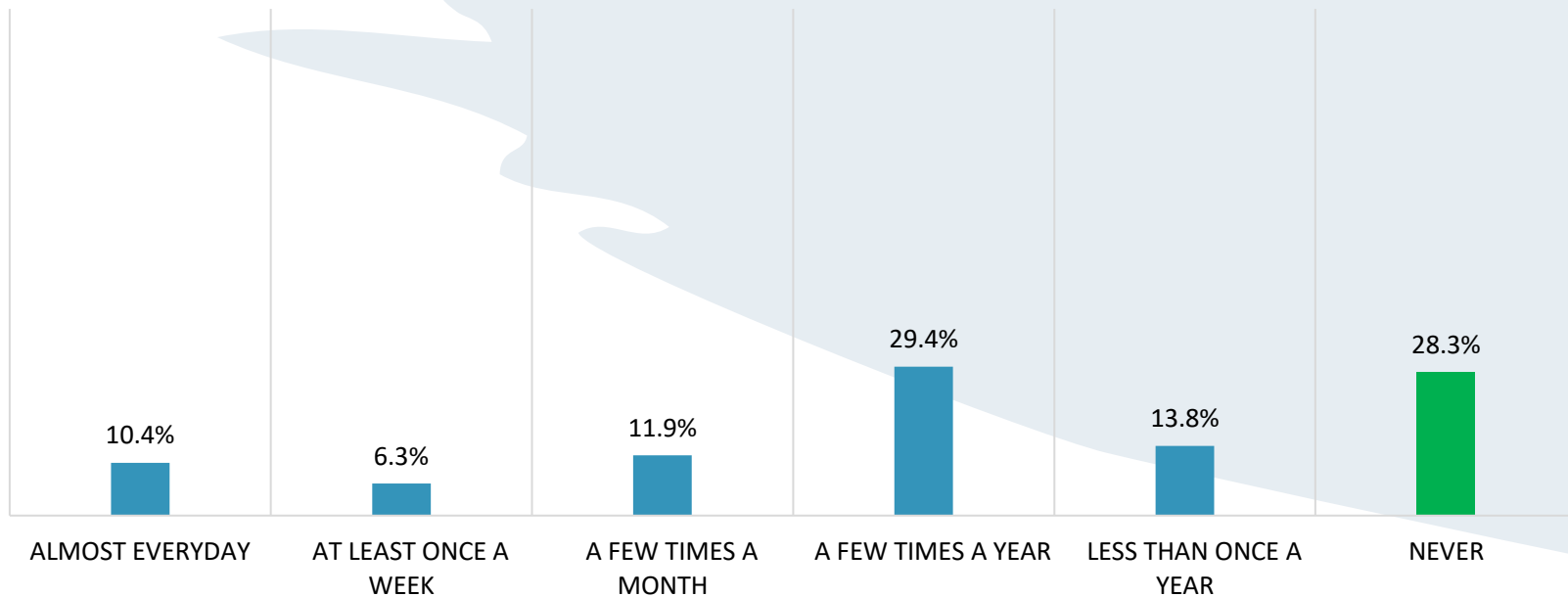
# People act as if they think you are dishonest

Almost everyday	0.7%
At least once a week	4.9%
A few times a month	4.9%
A few times a year	11.6%
Less than once a year	20.5%
Never	57.5%



# People act as if they are better than you


Almost everyday	10.4%
At least once a week	6.3%
A few times a month	11.9%
A few times a year	29.4%
Less than once a year	13.8%
Never	28.3%





# Experiences of Everyday Discrimination

- Participants in both the survey and focus group discussions reported that everyday experiences of discrimination could be passive or subtle – hard to clearly identify and respond to.
- Experiences of discrimination were also complex, as the Muslim community is diverse and heterogenous in terms of ethnicity, nationality and class. Therefore, some participants experienced both *inter-racism* (racism and discrimination from non-Muslims), but also *intra-racism* (racism and discrimination from within the Muslim community).



...It was inside the takeaway. This was Muslim by Muslim. We enter inside the shop, just buying the chips and I was telling the lady just to... we bought one chip, full pack, but then just to separate into two, because two kids can have their own. And she said, 'I can't do it because you people are thieves, so I can't allow you to come here' and she throw the chips at me and my kids and said, 'go away you are a thief'. Like why are you here? So, it comes with [being] Africans, and Muslims from Africa. These things are happening every now and then. Even though we are educated, as a Muslim...they take our religion like we are very low-key people and uneducated people.

I often have found I have sometimes been (kindly) discriminated by other Muslims who are quite culturally inclined. Because I am a revert and I don't wear hijab I often get looked at like I am not apart of the community. In saying this - I come across I'm happy and proud to say I am Muslim, is there a place to pray, I only eat Halal or fish options.

# Major Experiences of Discrimination

- **85% or more participants felt that they have NEVER:**
  - Been unfairly fired.
  - Been discouraged by a teacher or advisor from continuing their education.
  - Been prevented from moving into a neighbourhood because the landlord or a realtor refused to sell or rent them a house or apartment.
  - Lived in a neighbourhood where neighbours made life difficult for them or their family.
  - Been unfairly denied a banking facility, for example a credit card or a loan.
- **70% participants** felt that they have **never** been unfairly denied a promotion.

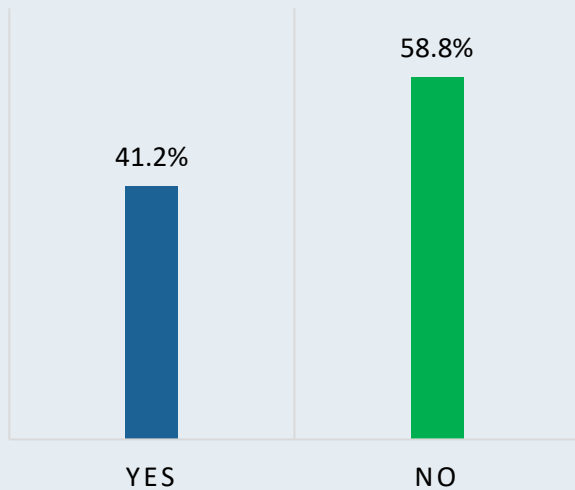


# Major Experiences of Discrimination

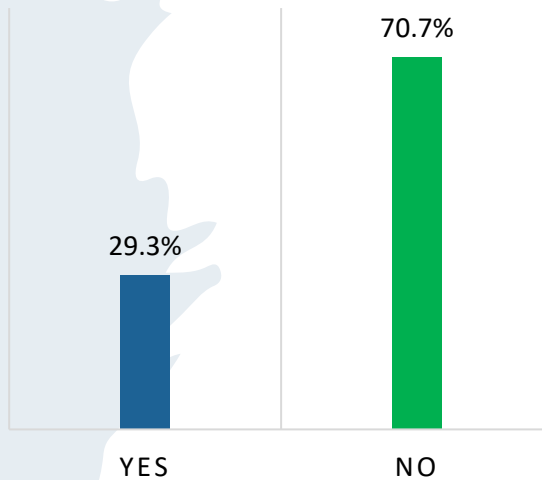
- **The quantitative data shows that overt discrimination towards an individual is less common, especially within the visible structures.**
- **The micro-aggressions\* and subtle ways of ostracism are more common.**
- \*Micro-aggressions are “brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults toward people of color” (Sue et al. 2007, p. 272).

# EMPLOYMENT RELATED EXPERIENCES

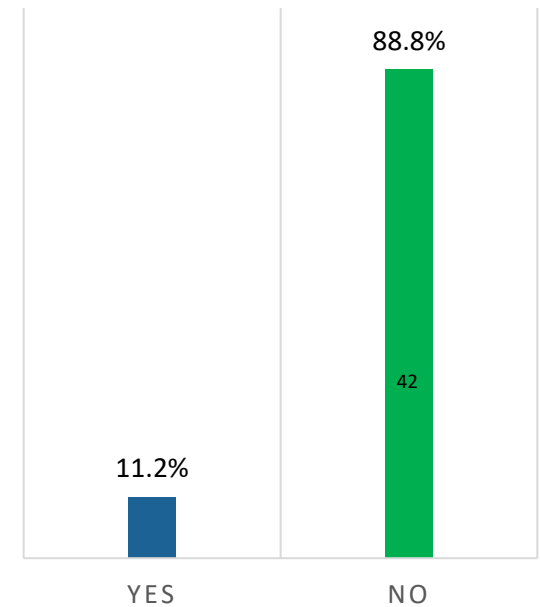
**YOU HAVE BEEN REJECTED UNFAIRLY FOR A JOB OPPORTUNITY**



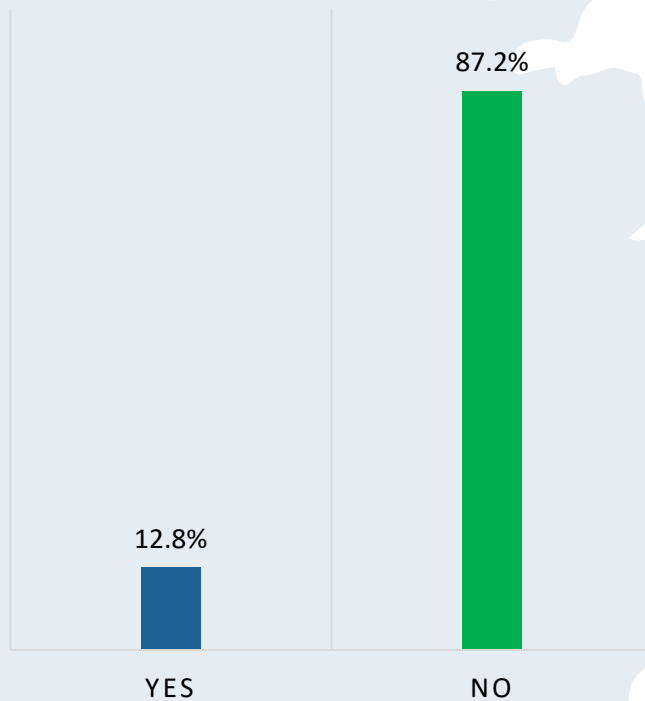
**YOU HAVE BEEN UNFAIRLY DENIED A PROMOTION**



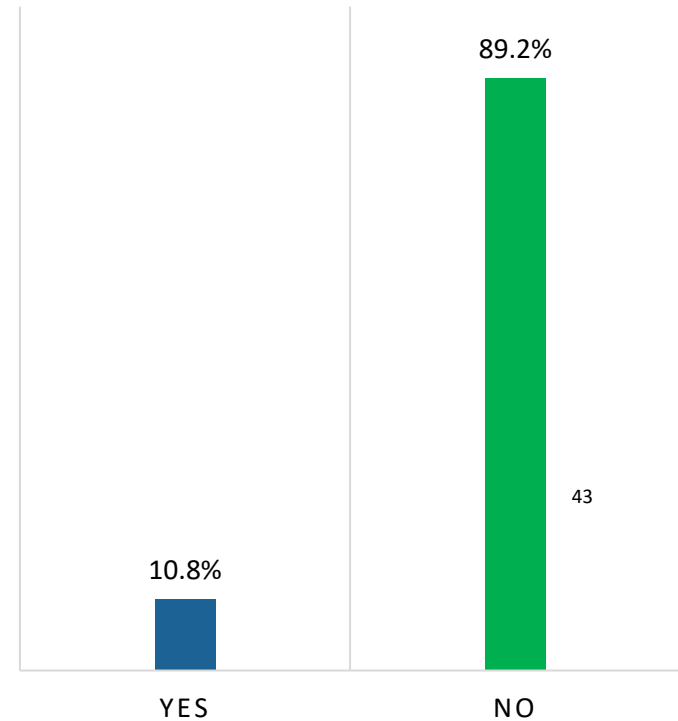
**YOU HAVE BEEN FIRED UNFAIRLY.**



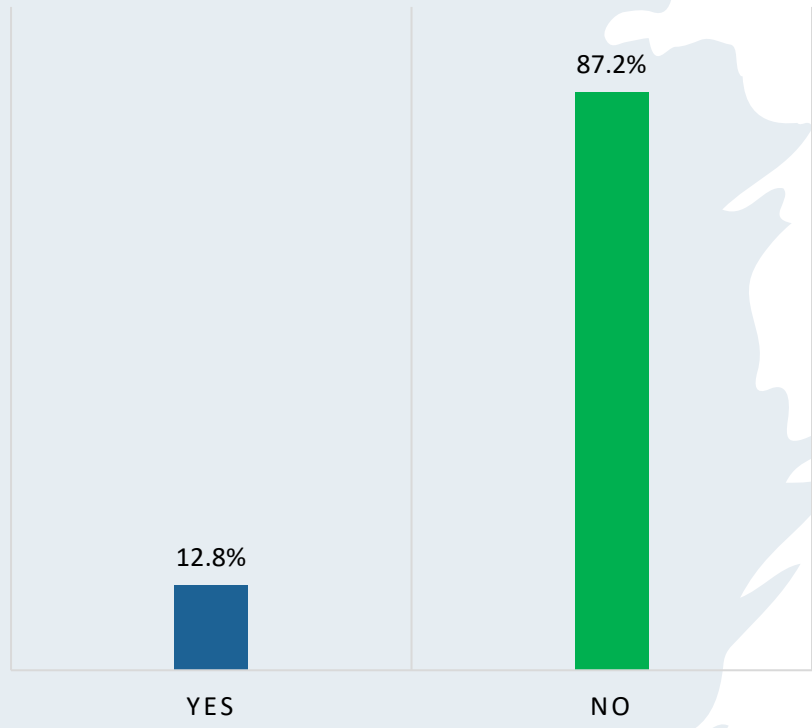
## YOU HAVE BEEN UNFAIRLY DISCOURAGED BY A TEACHER OR ADVISOR FROM CONTINUING YOUR EDUCATION



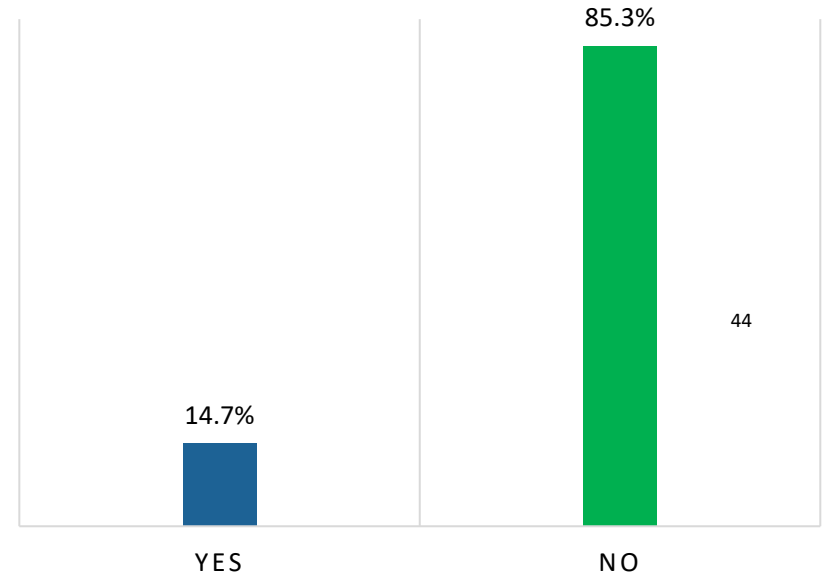
## YOU HAVE BEEN UNFAIRLY STOPPED, SEARCHED, QUESTIONED, PHYSICALLY THREATENED OR ABUSED BY THE POLICE



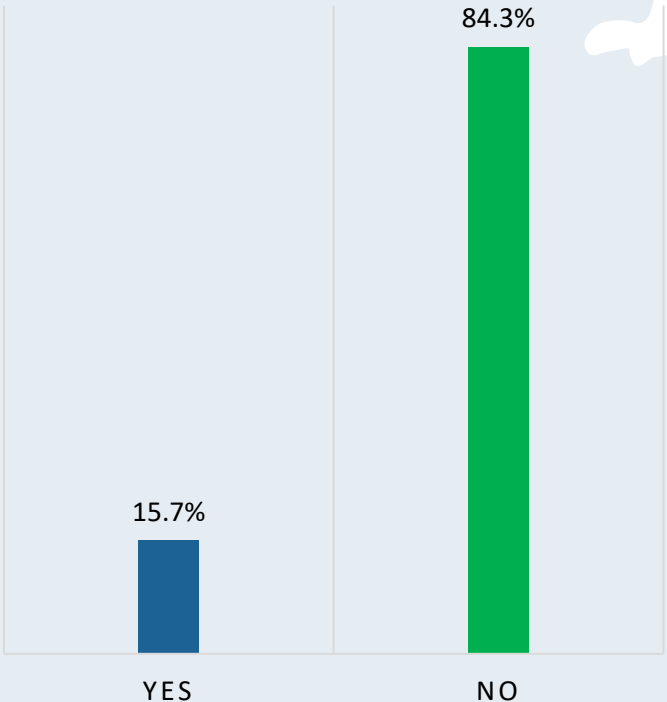
**YOU HAVE BEEN UNFAIRLY DISCOURAGED BY A TEACHER OR ADVISOR FROM CONTINUING YOUR EDUCATION**



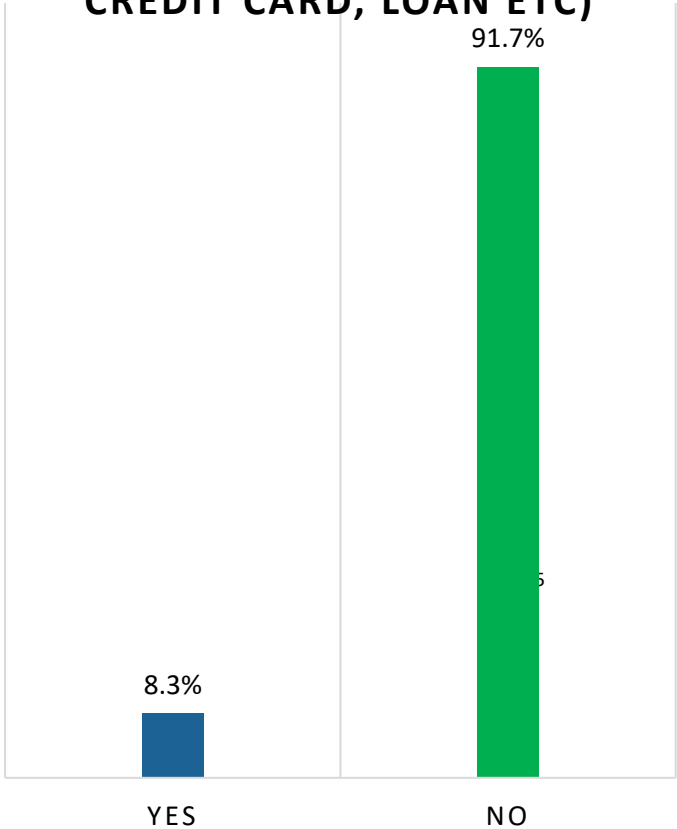
**YOU HAVE BEEN UNFAIRLY PREVENTED FROM MOVING INTO A NEIGHBOURHOOD BECAUSE THE LANDLORD OR A REALTOR REFUSED TO SELL OR RENT YOU A HOUSE OR APARTMENT**



**YOU HAVE LIVED IN A NEIGHBOURHOOD WHERE NEIGHBOURS MADE LIFE DIFFICULT FOR YOU OR YOUR FAMILY**



**YOU HAVE BEEN UNFAIRLY DENIED A BANKING FACILITY (FOR EXAMPLE, CREDIT CARD, LOAN ETC)**



# EXPERIENCES OF (OVERT) DISCRIMINATION

*“Every time visiting that government agency (name removed) you know, they look down on us. ‘Because you guys are refugees, you guys take up our people’s rights’. So, this one time I visit with my mum last week, and I asked for interpreter because my mum does not speak English. And they said ‘we do not sit here to provide interpreters for you guys. You know, if you need help just bring someone. We can’t provide it for you guys every time’.”*



*“The first time I enter inside the bus, there was..... people. And [they] started shouting at me and swear at me like I have to go back to my country, what am I doing here...why am I taking the knowledge.. that sort of things...they were saying like oh you don’t even have money, like nothing. Who are you? Why you are here? I just kept quite without saying anything.... “*

# Experiences of Discrimination



*“One of the major limitation I feel is the alcohol use, and bar culture in NZ, since my religion limits me about alcohol , I won't be bonding with them in their common gatherings in which alcohol consumption is high and I feel that is why a person (who doesn't drink) can easily be accepted by them a lot easier as they get the chance to know that person better and of course they already have no prejudice towards that kind of person.”*



*“I am someone who started to practice religion after many years... I felt like I should hide my beliefs so that I don't get harmed by them (referring to the people around)... after living among them for several years I have started to wear hijab and suddenly I became a target for a while .... now it is better at workplace but in shopping centers and all I still have the same feeling of people discriminating against me or not responding when I asked something .... my kids are born here but they still face discrimination by their teachers in school as their names are not English and they can easily be discriminated.”*

# RECENT EXPERIENCES OF DISCRIMINATION

260 respondents talked about work experiences

We asked : Here are some situations that can arise at work. Based on your work experience in the past 12 Months, please tell us how often have you felt...



# Recent Experiences of Discrimination

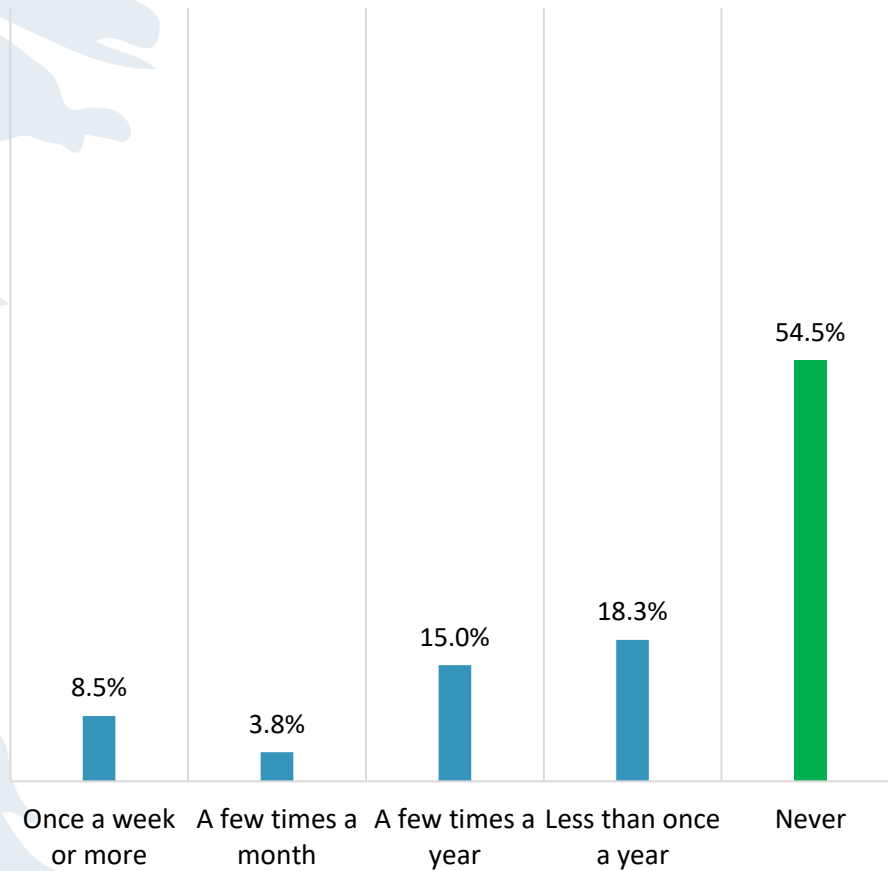
- **40 % or more felt that:**
  - A less qualified coworker was promoted ahead of them.
  - Others assumed they were in a lower status job and treated them as such.
  - They have to work twice as hard as others.
  - Where diverse opinions were beneficial, their opinion was not taken.
- **35% or more felt that they were:**
  - More closely watched than others.
  - Not taken seriously by their boss.

## **In overall comments we heard:**

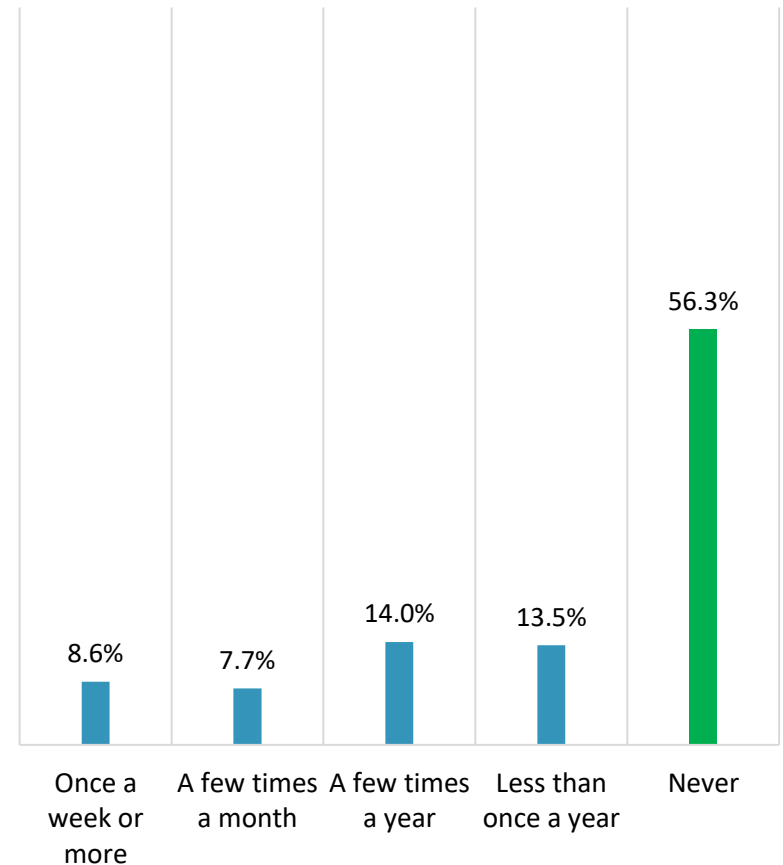
*Outright violence and verbal abuse is less common than when I was younger. But still heaps of silent discrimination in jobs and workplace. And our culture and values are not included or understood. Big inequities for our community in services access and efficacy.*

50

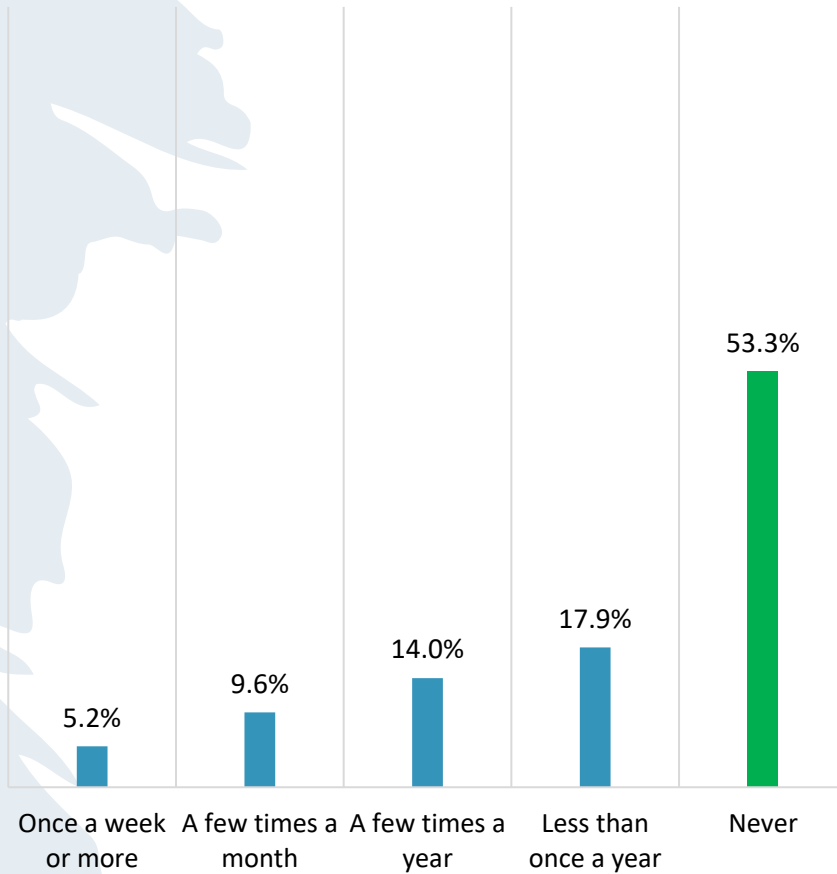
**A COWORKER WITH LESS EXPERIENCE AND FEWER QUALIFICATIONS HAS BEEN PROMOTED AHEAD OF YOU.**



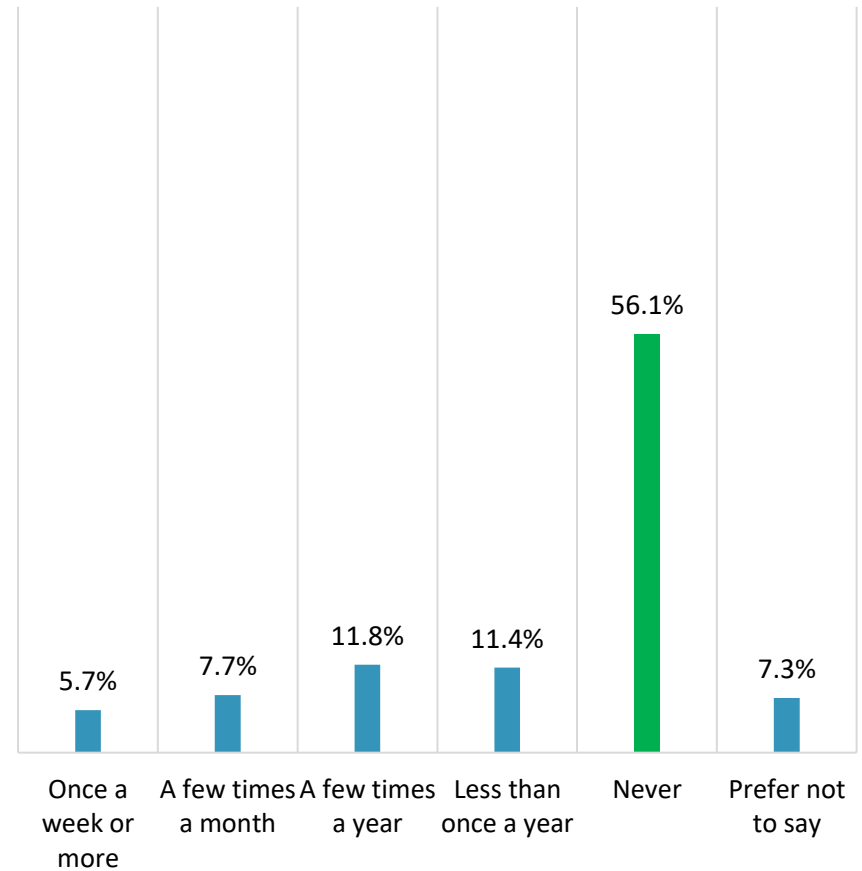
**OTHERS ASSUME THAT YOU WORK IN A LOWER STATUS JOB AND TREAT YOU AS SUCH.**



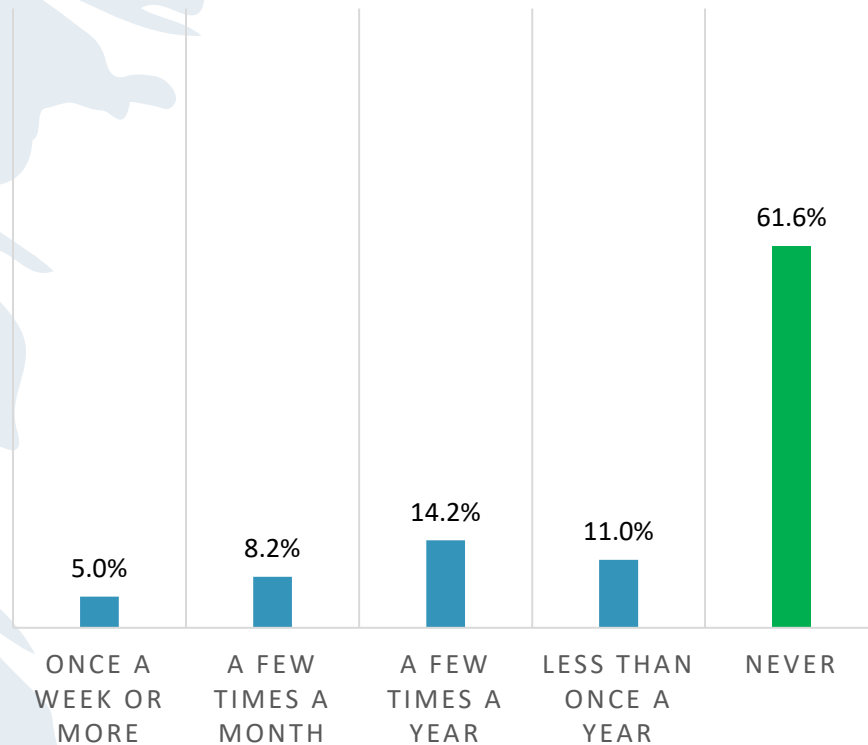
**AT WORK, WHEN DIFFERENT  
OPINIONS WOULD BE HELPFUL,  
YOUR OPINION IS NOT ASKED FOR.**



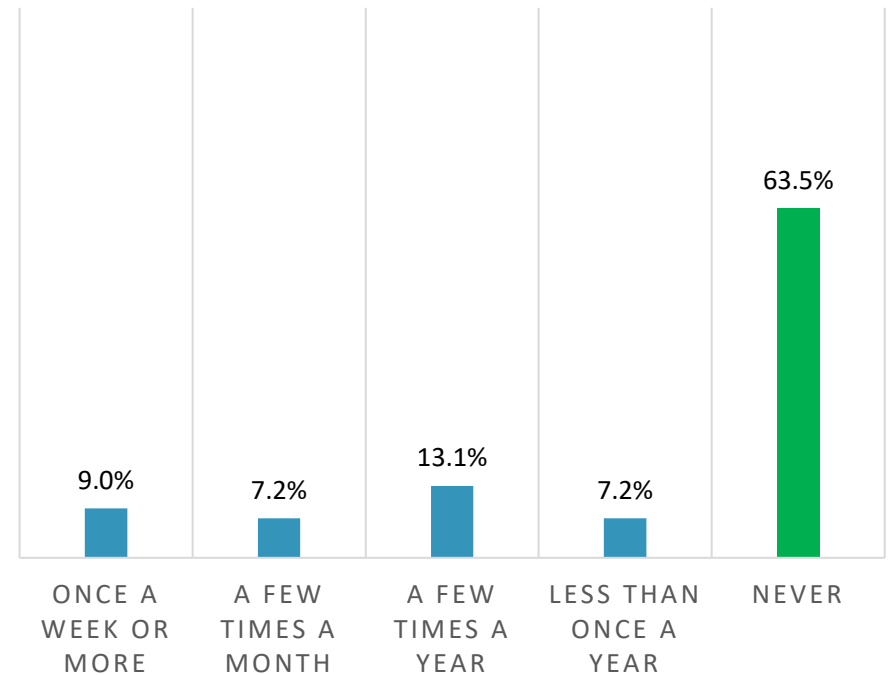
**YOU HAVE UNFAIRLY BEEN GIVEN  
JOBS THAT NO ONE ELSE WANTS  
TO DO.**



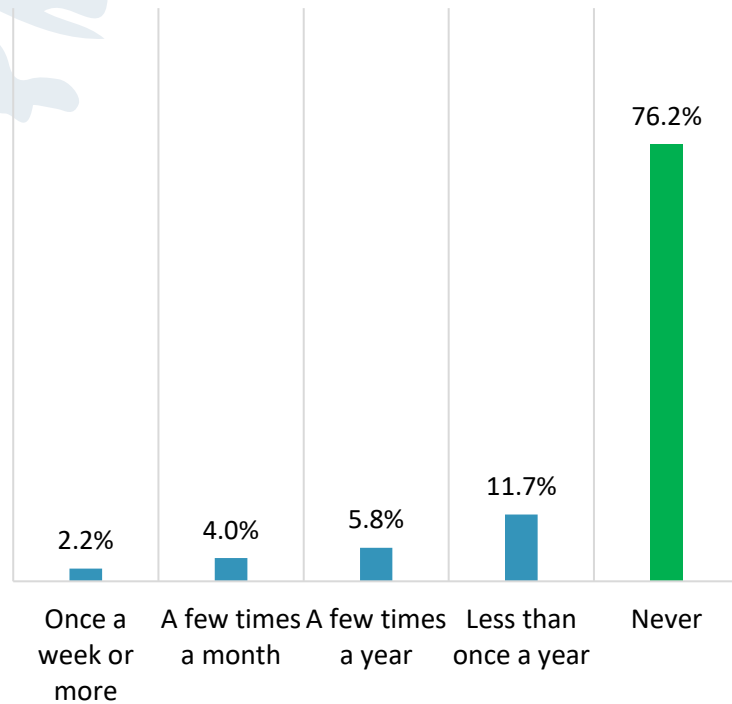
## YOU ARE WATCHED MORE CLOSELY THAN OTHERS.



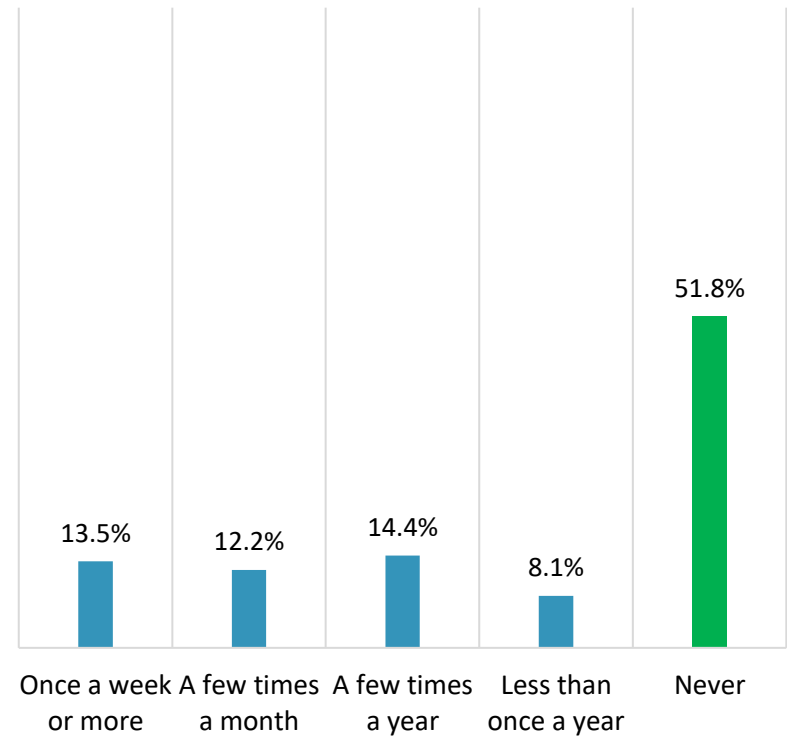
## YOU ARE IGNORED OR NOT TAKEN SERIOUSLY BY YOUR BOSS.



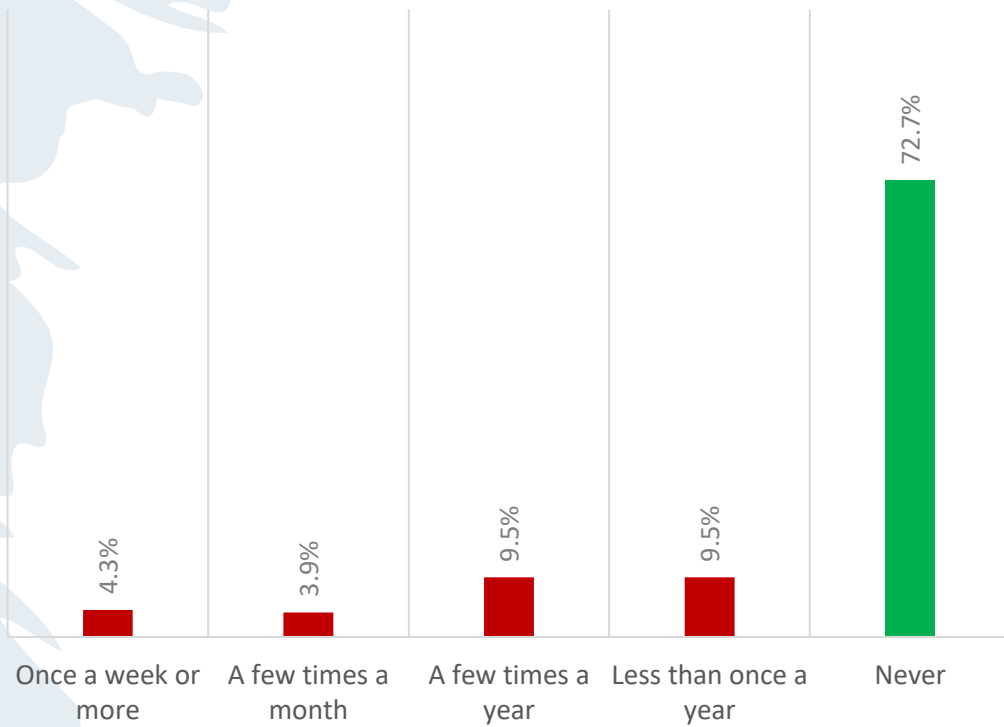
## YOU HAVE BEEN HUMILIATED IN FRONT OF OTHERS AT WORK.



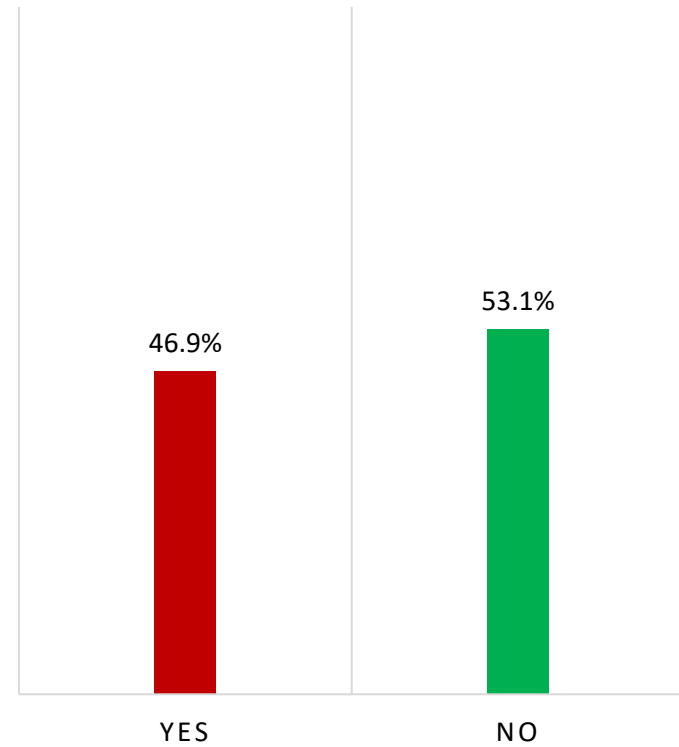
## YOU HAVE TO WORK TWICE AS HARD AS OTHERS WORK.



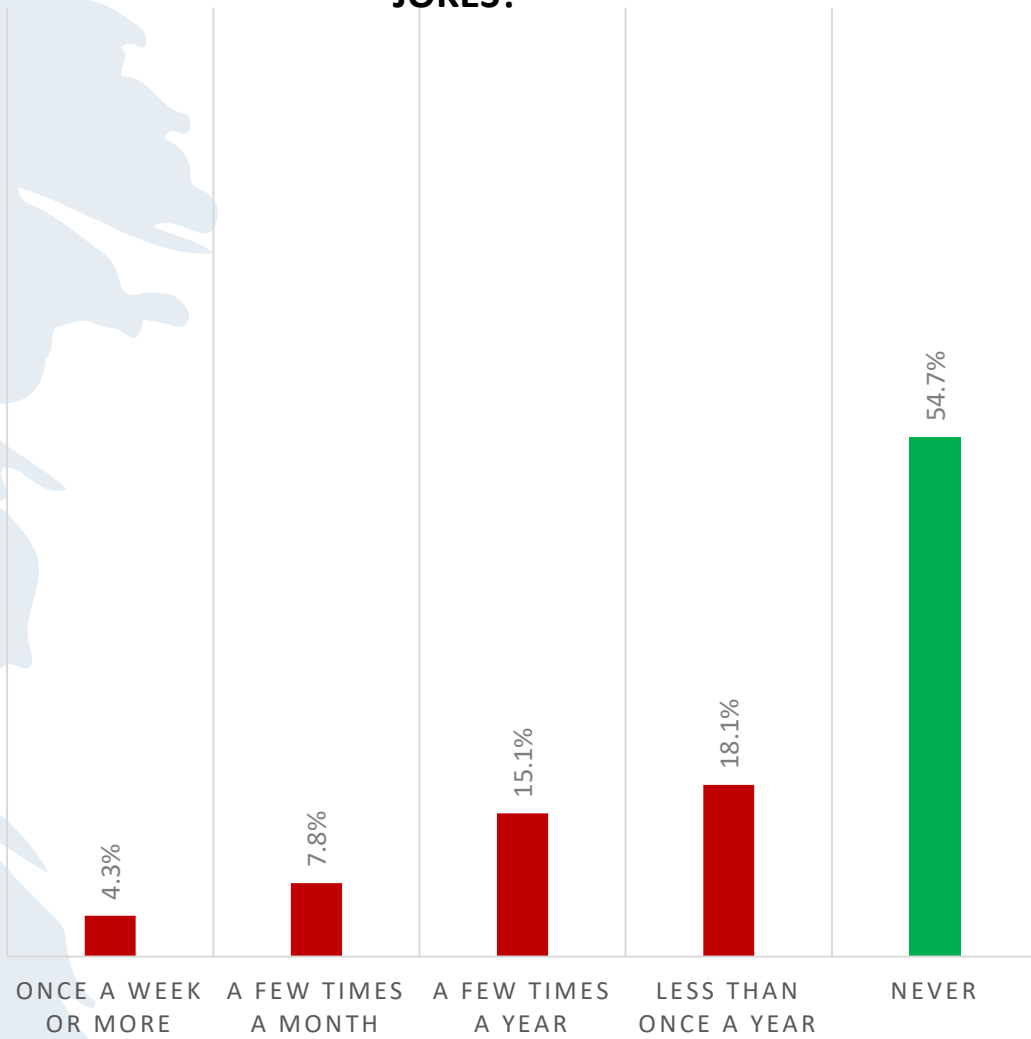
### How often do your supervisor or boss uses racial or ethnic slurs or jokes?



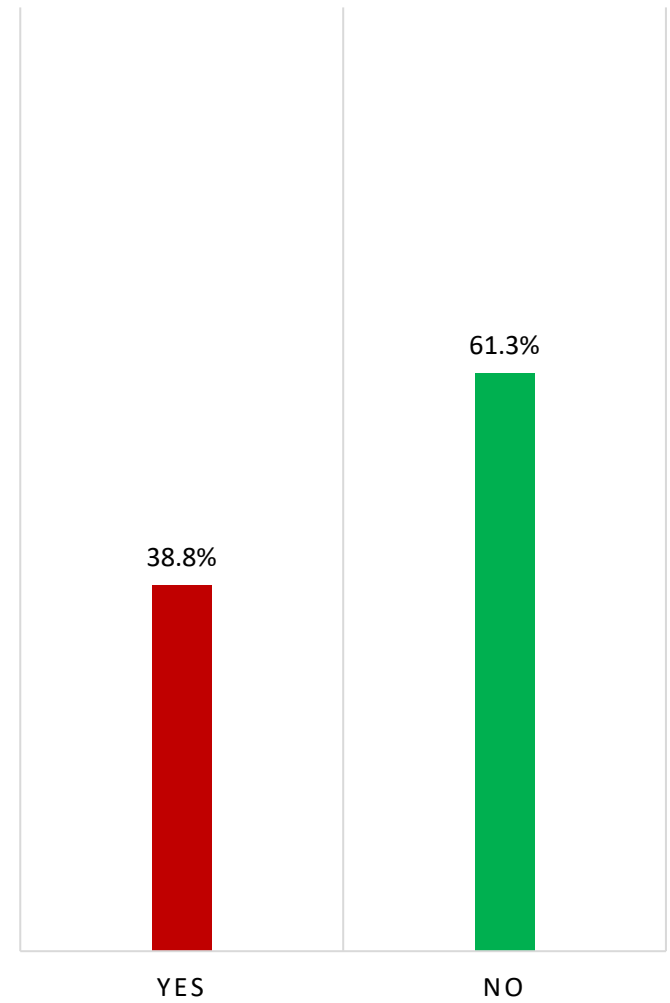
### Were they aimed at you?



## HOW OFTEN DO YOUR COWORKERS USE RACIAL OR ETHNIC SLURS OR JOKES?



## WERE THEY AIMED AT YOU?



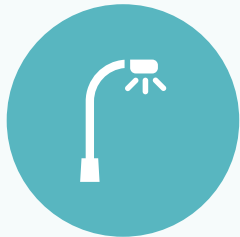


# In overall comments we heard:

I'd like to mention that I did not report my racist experience to authorities because people tend to be indirectly racist, for e.g. saying 'aren't you feeling hot in that' when referring to my hijab or just giving rude looks. This is also the experience of most Muslims I know.

Sometimes it [racism] is done in a subtle way, so it takes you a while to figure out...did they mean that? Did they mean that...? And by the time you do figure it out, like you said, the moment has passed.... yeah you question yourself....

# Recent Experience




*I remember coming out of the Masjid one day after Jummah and on an intersection, so there were streetlights and that, so I had to wait for the traffic, as I was crossing the road going back to my car, a car full of people ...one of them stuck their head out of the door and said, 'go back to where you come from!' . So, what they did was make me change the style...I've removed the hijab and I wear what I'm wearing today. So that was about me protecting myself.*



*I enter inside the shop, inside the mall. I was with my kids. Next day's Eid so I was just rushing to buy the clothes for them and myself, you know, a mother with little kids, sometimes we just go out as who we are. Once I enter inside the shop, the lady stopped me. 'You don't have to enter here', and I asked why? She said, 'just look at yourself, you can't afford anything in this shop'.*

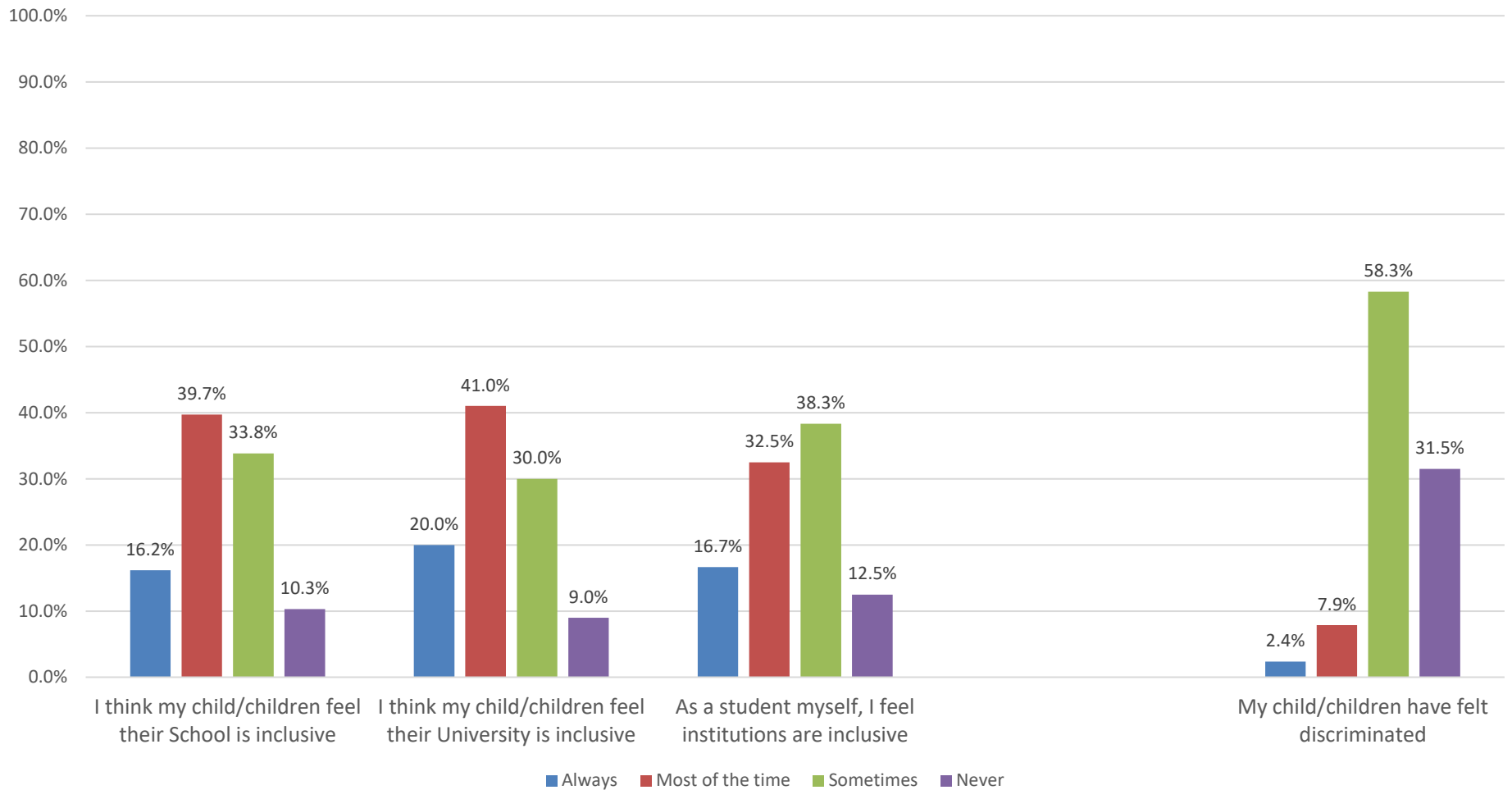
# **INCLUSION AND DISCRIMINATION AT INSTITUTIONS**



# INCLUSION AND DISCRIMINATION AT EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

- About 16-20% respondents felt that educational institutions are always inclusive.
- 38-41% felt that the educational institutions are inclusive most of the time.
- Another 30-38% felt that the educational institutions are only sometimes inclusive.
- 9-12.5% felt that the educational institutions are never inclusive.
- At the same time, 58% felt that their child/children have been discriminated at school sometimes, whereas approximately 10% felt that their children are most of the time or always discriminated at educational institutions.

# INCLUSION AND DISCRIMINATION AT EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

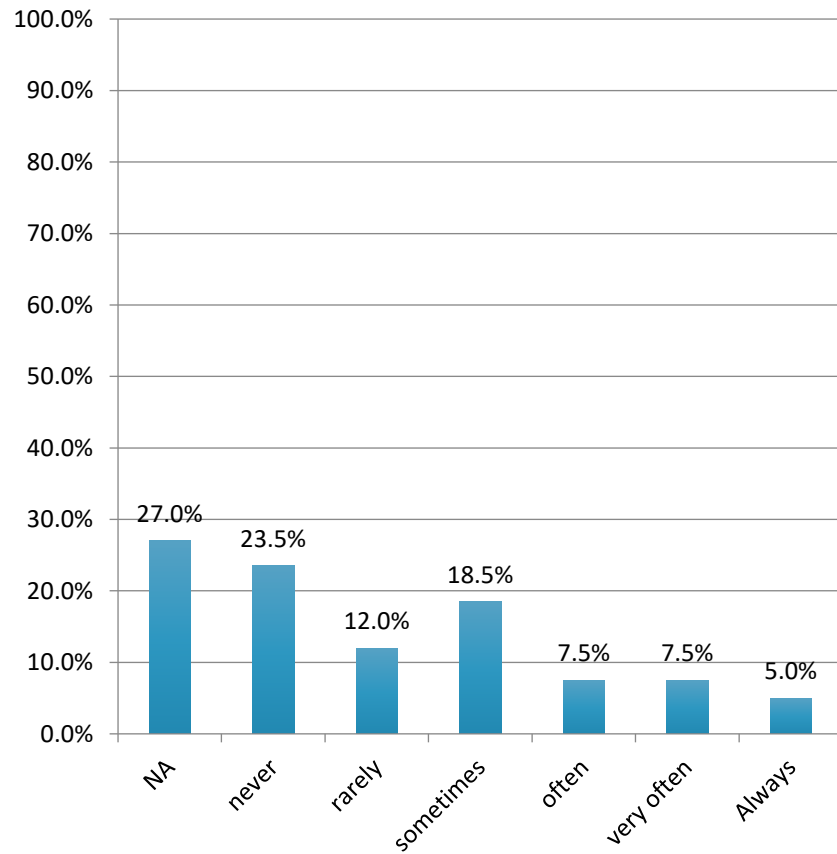




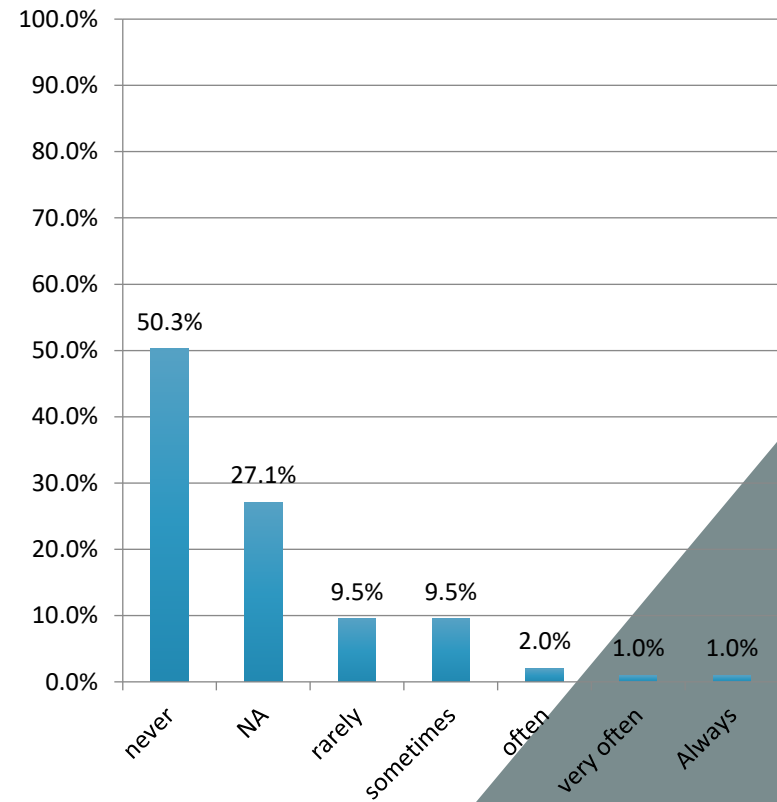
# AUTHORITIES AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

28.5 % stated that they feel uncomfortable making demands to the local authorities or government

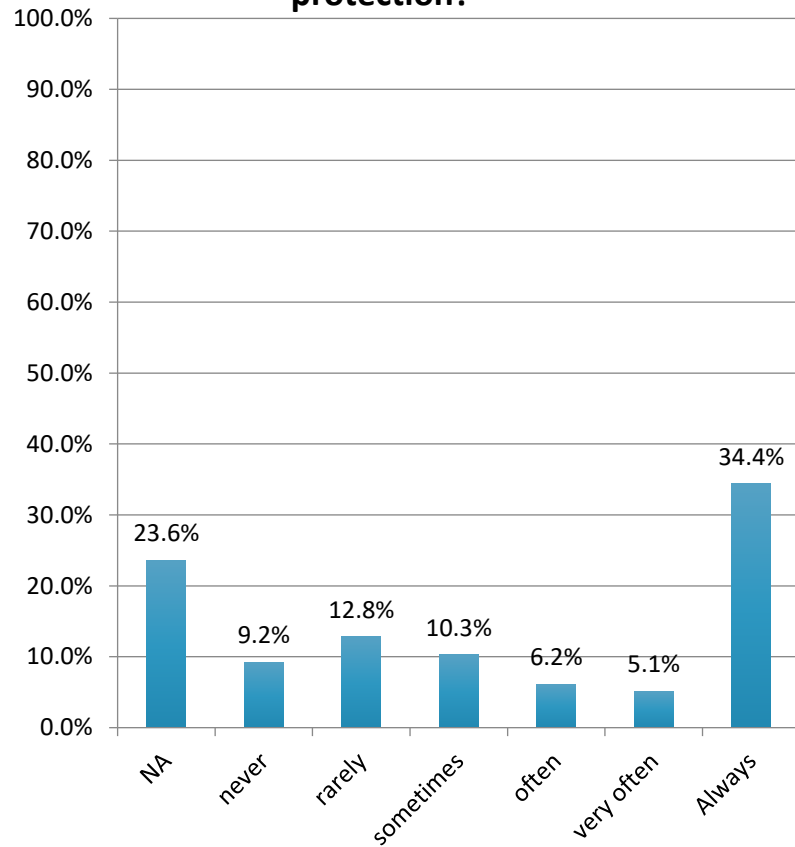
### How often do you feel uncomfortable making demands to your local authorities or government officials?



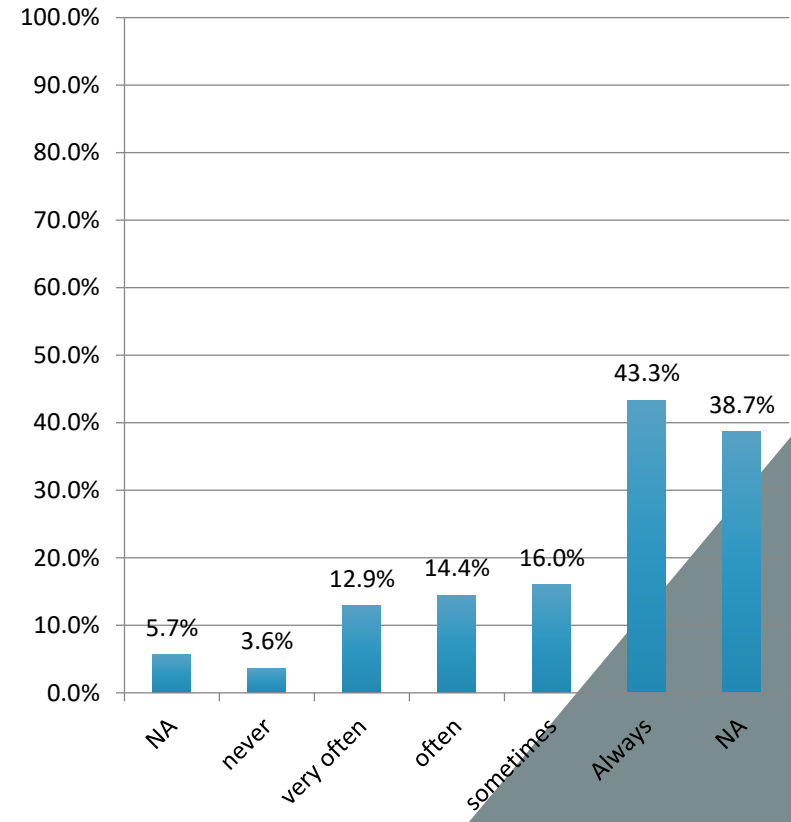
### Have you ever been treated unfairly by a law enforcement officer because of your religious identity?



**How often do you feel comfortable calling law enforcement for help or protection?**



**How often do you feel that you can safely access community or social public spaces (e.g., swimming pools, beaches, festivals, concerts, movie theatres)?**



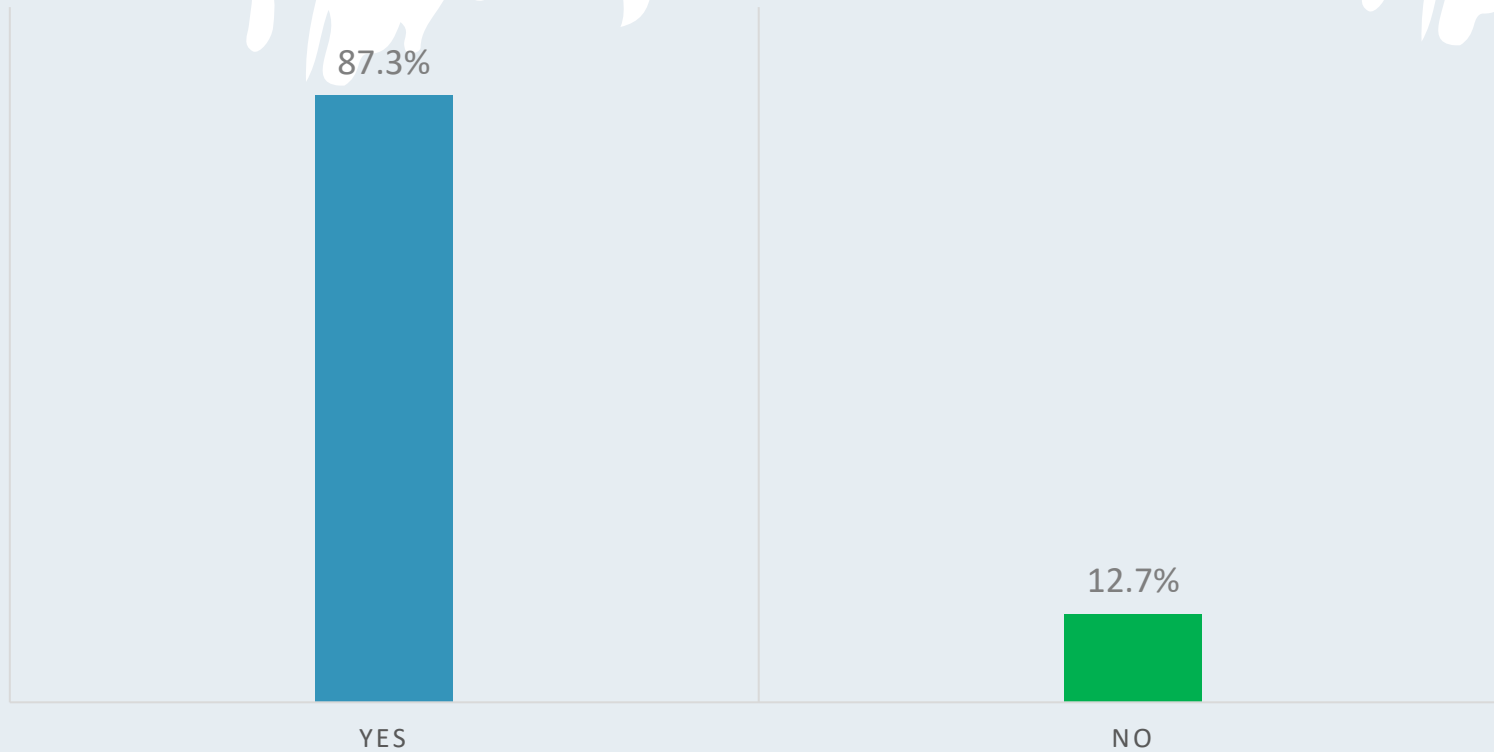


**ISLAMOPHOBIA**

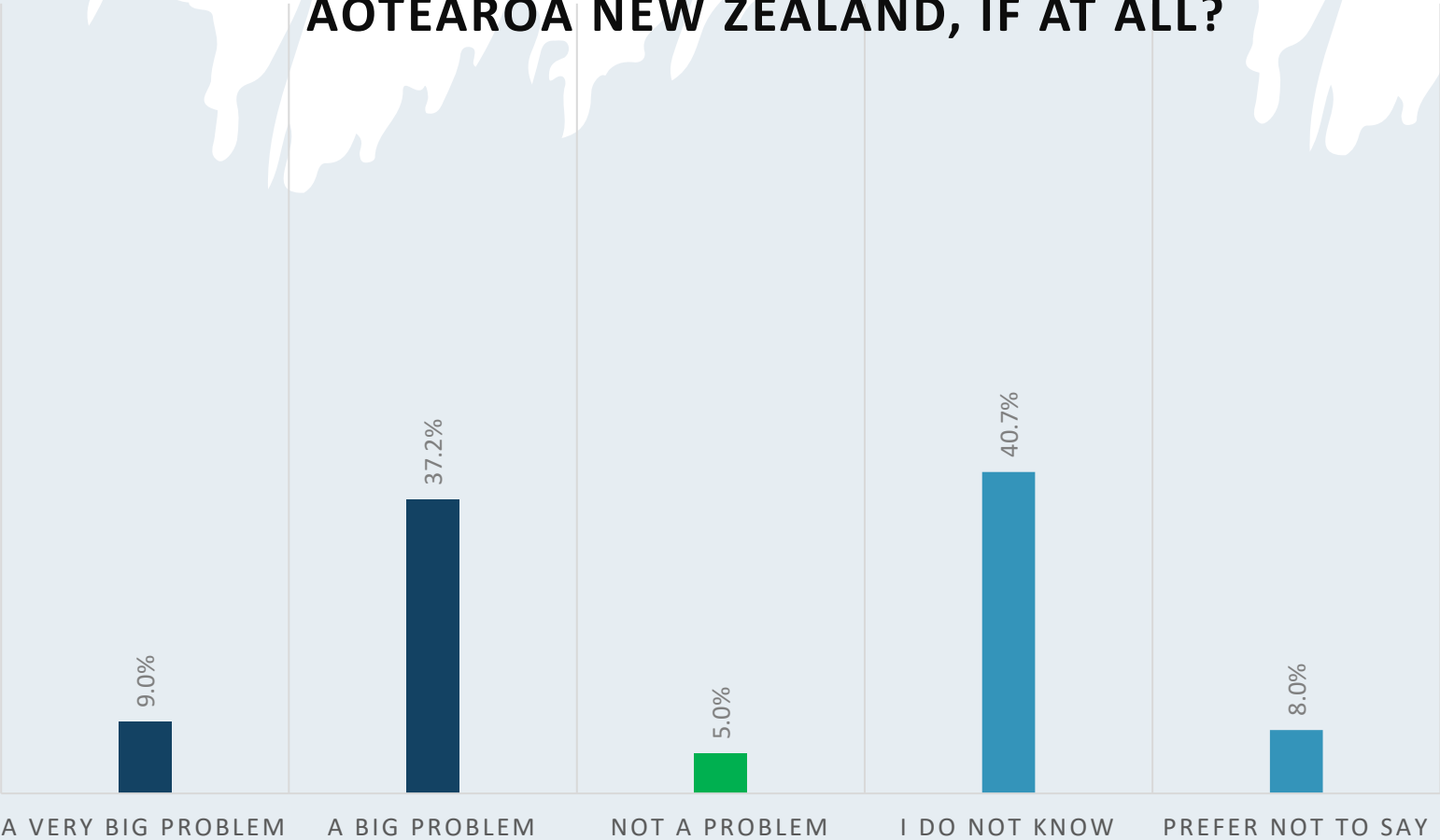
# ISLAMOPHOBIA

- 87.3% believe that Islamophobia exists in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- 46.2% think that it is a big problem.
- 61% thought that women are at risk.
- A majority thought students are at risk.
- 56% had personally experienced Islamophobia.

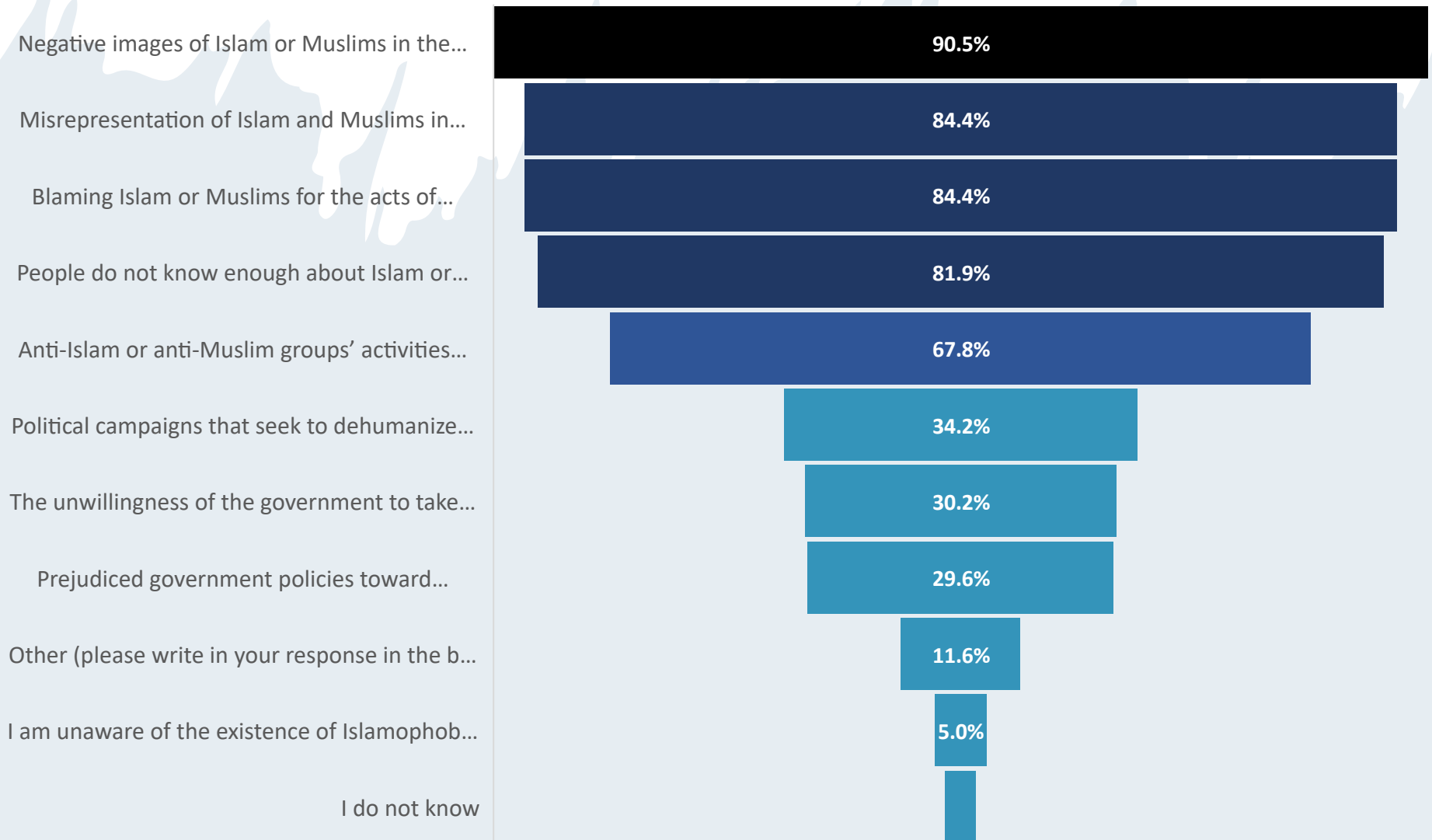
# DO YOU BELIEVE THAT ISLAMOPHOBIA EXISTS IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND?



# HOW BIG OF A PROBLEM IS ISLAMOPHOBIA IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND, IF AT ALL?



# I BELIEVE THAT ISLAMOPHOBIA EXISTS BECAUSE OF:



# WHEN AND HOW DID YOU FIRST NOTICE THE EXISTENCE OF ISLAMOPHOBIA IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

We asked open ended questions which the respondents replied to with either a little or a lot of detail. Some key themes that emerged related to:

Time such  
as after:

March 15 Christchurch attack

September 11, 2001

Arrival in NZ

In life such as being young kids or adolescents

Places  
such as:

School and University

Work

Street or public places

Dealing with authorities

Clothing  
such as:

Hijab, thob

# THEMES

31 mentioned the Christchurch attacks.

23 respondents mentioned noticing Islamophobia after 2001.

16 mentioned upon arrival in NZ or when visiting towns which are rural of white majority.

8 mentioned school while 5 mentioned at university.

7 commented about age. Islamophobia was experienced at when they were the age of seven to teens.

7 mentioned the hate by media such as Hindu propaganda, Social media and online.

5 mentioned being shouted at in the streets or public places, another 5 mentioned while dealing with authorities.

3 discussed the hijab and religious clothing.

2 mentioned after they reverted to Islam.

**WHEN AND HOW DID YOU FIRST NOTICE THE EXISTENCE OF ISLAMOPHOBIA IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND?**

# Q U O T E S

- *They're saying oh because you're Muslim.. And I question that you know, because she's [mum] wearing hijab, she's wearing abaya, so she's fully covered...wearing long dresses.. she's [government agency staff] like you guys always come here...they were giving examples of other people as well. Taking names. Like name shaming. Like 'these people came a while ago...you came here...' it's really traumatising. It's coming from a Government person you know?*
- *...the other incident was the Christchurch attack. I think the next day I was going somewhere early morning. One guy just stopped and yelled at me and swear at me like 'get lost' this and that like what's wrong with these people?*



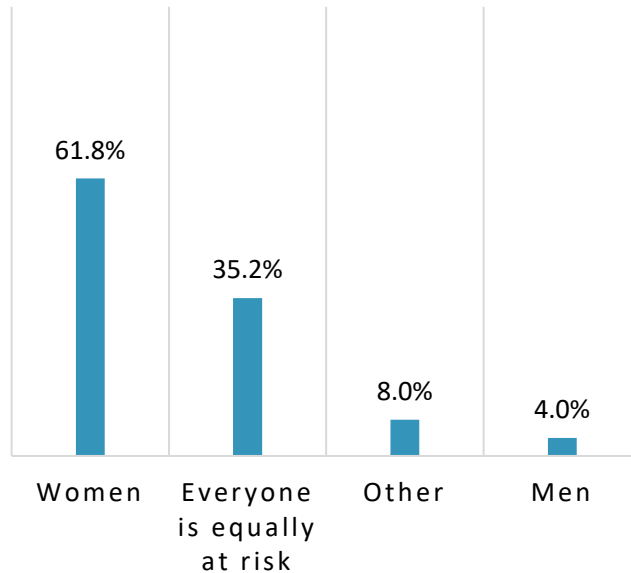
Who is at  
Risk?

**IN OUR SURVEY:**

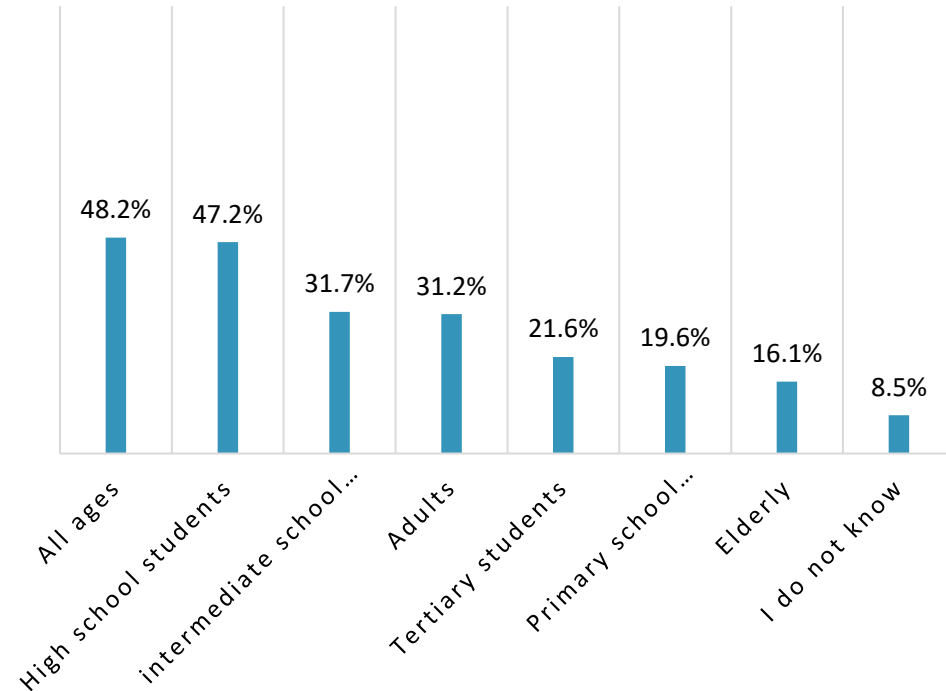
**STUDENTS AND  
WOMEN ARE  
CONSIDERED  
MOSTLY AT RISK**

# In Aotearoa New Zealand, who do you believe is more at risk?

Gender wise



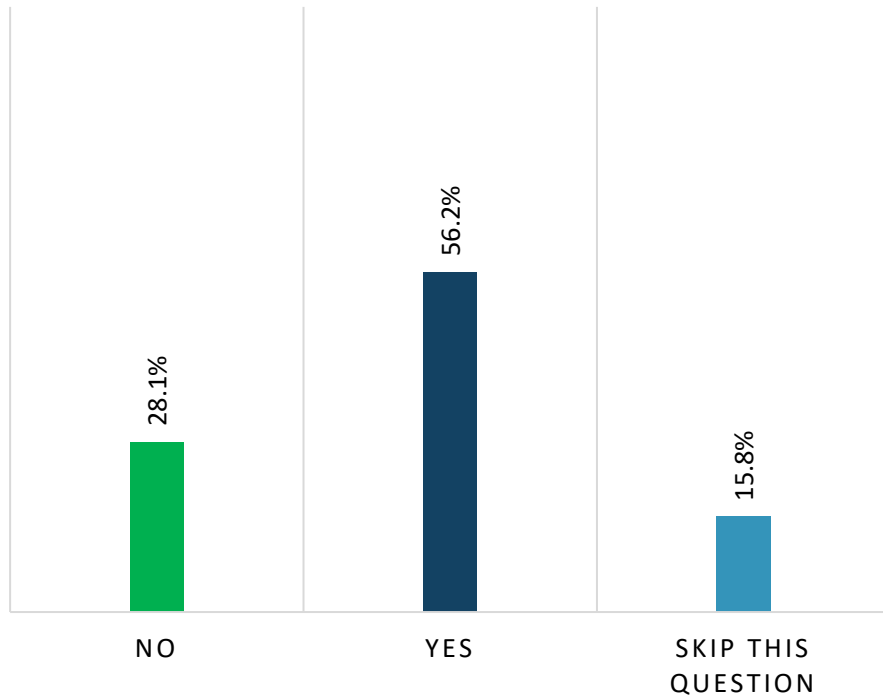
Age groups using educational brackets\*



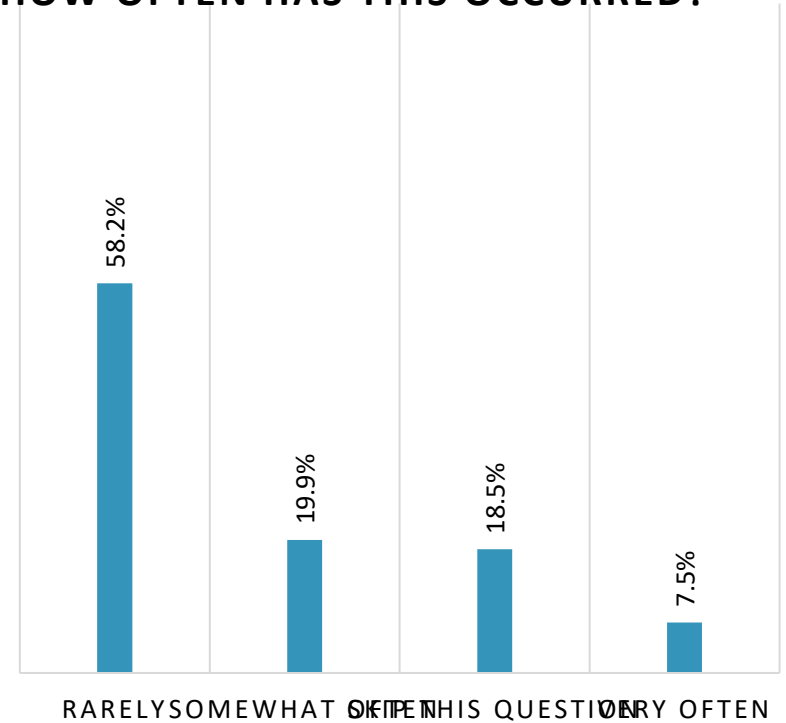
\*More than one choice could be selected in these questions

# PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

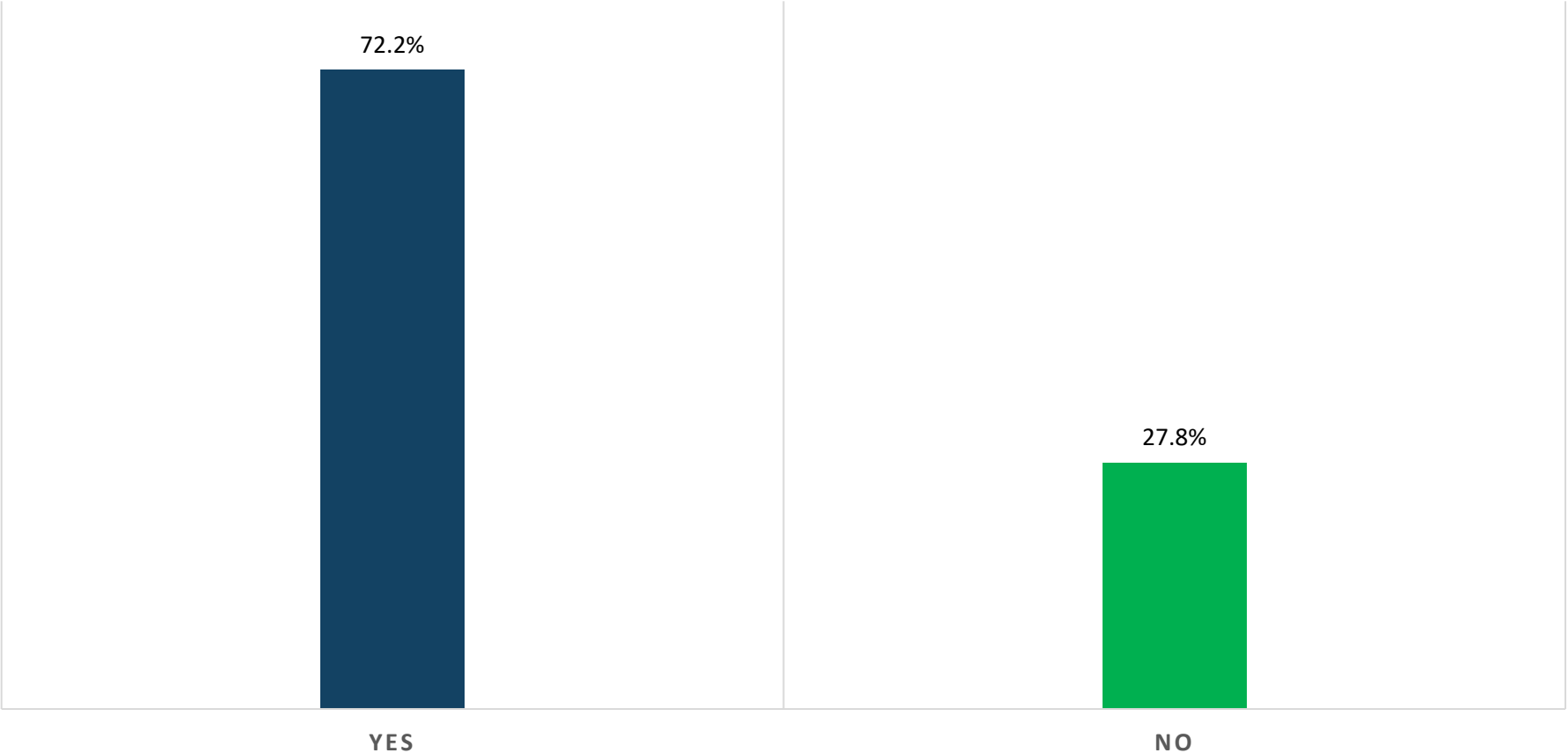
HAVE YOU PERSONALLY EXPERIENCED ISLAMOPHOBIA IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND?



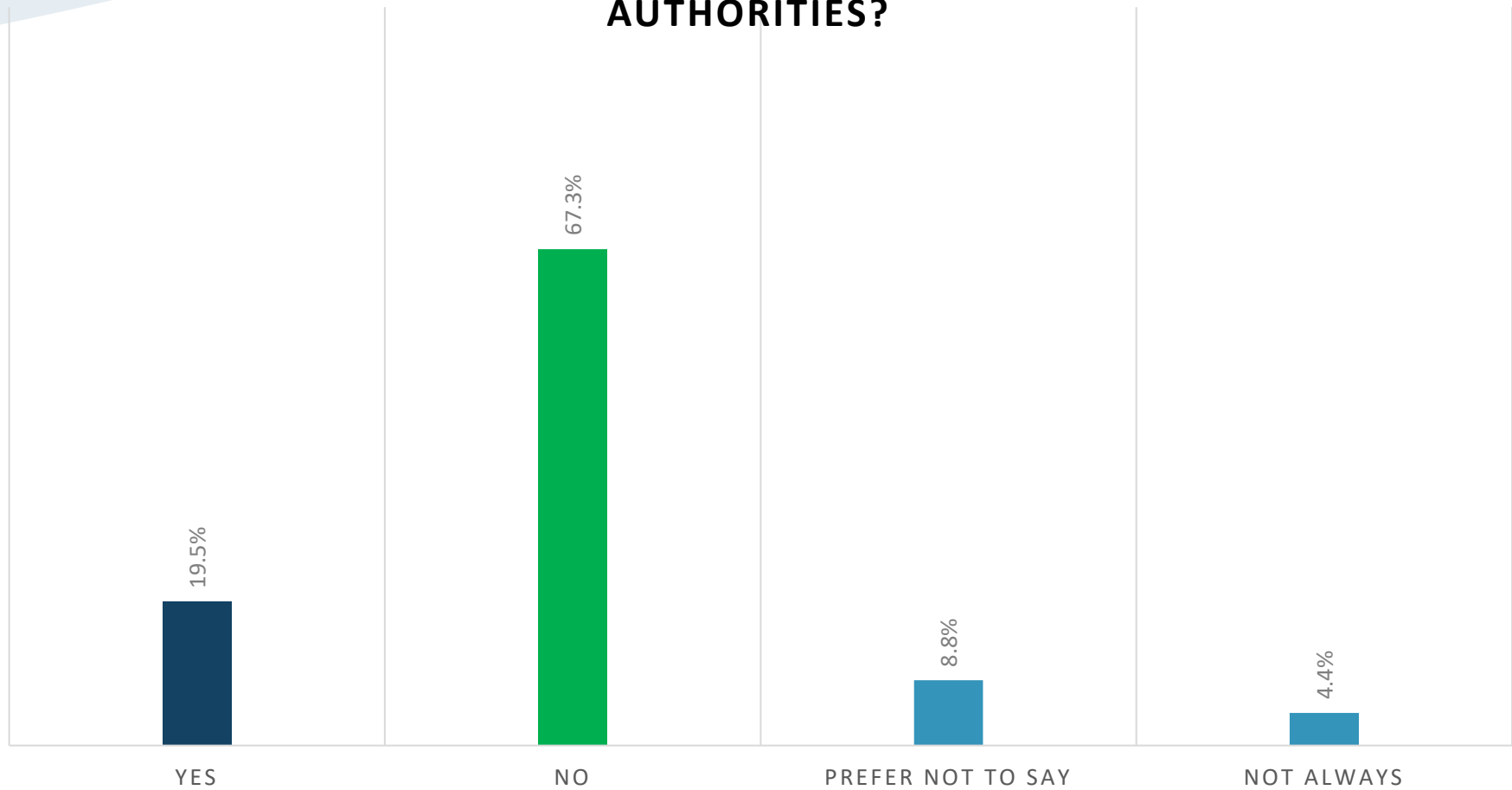
IF YOU HAVE DIRECTLY EXPERIENCED ISLAMOPHOBIA, HOW OFTEN HAS THIS OCCURRED?



**Have you, your family members, friends, or members of your community been affected by being disproportionately discriminated against**



# IF YOU HAVE PERSONALLY ENCOUNTERED AN ISLAMOPHOBIC INCIDENT, DID YOU REPORT THE INCIDENT TO THE AUTHORITIES?



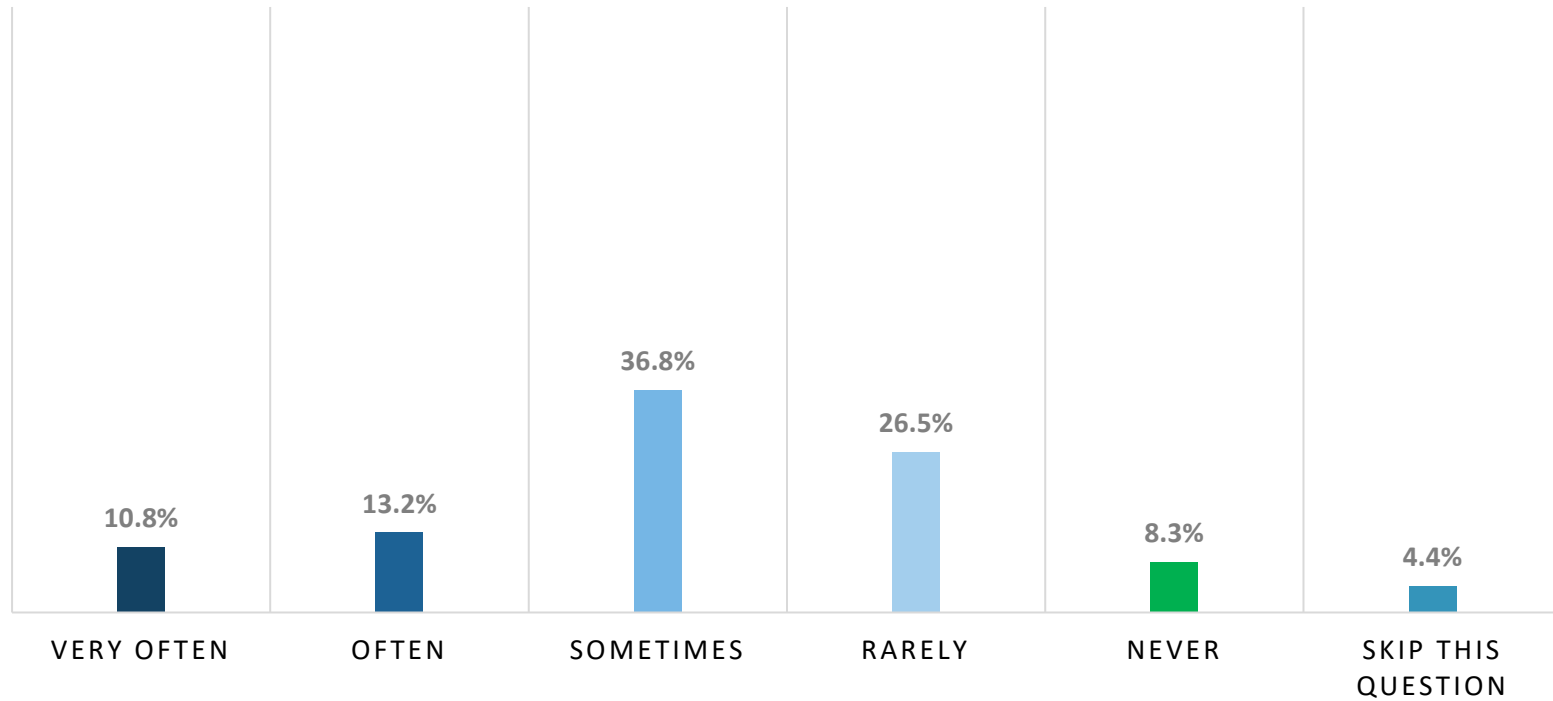
**WELLBEING**

**50%** stated islamophobia has influenced their emotional and mental wellbeing.

**50%** stated islamophobia negatively affects their mental wellbeing.

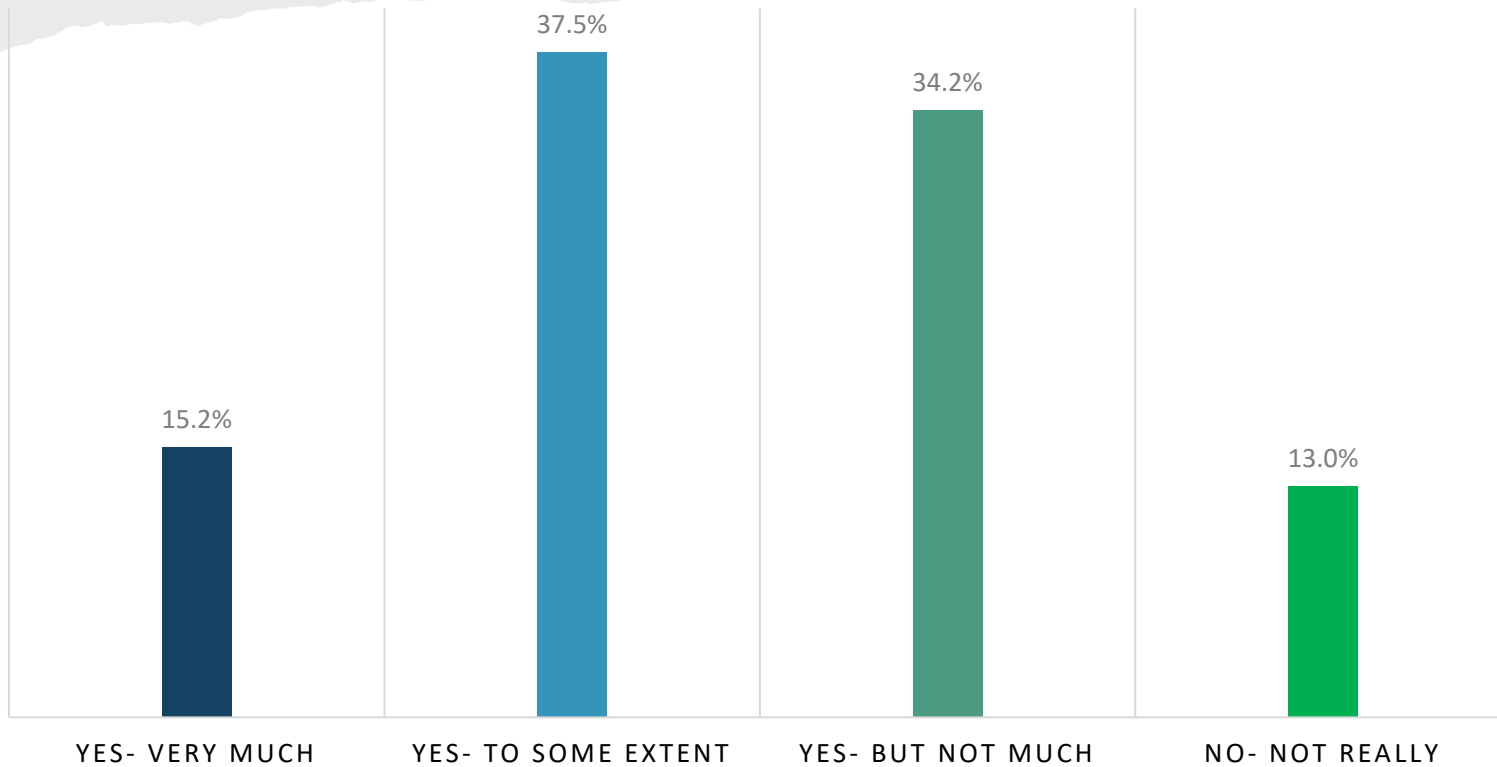
# ISLAMOPHOBIA AND WELLBEING

IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND, HOW OFTEN DOES ISLAMOPHOBIA AFFECT YOUR EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL WELL-BEING, IF AT ALL?





## DOES ISLAMOPHOBIA AFFECT YOUR EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL WELL-BEING NEGATIVELY?



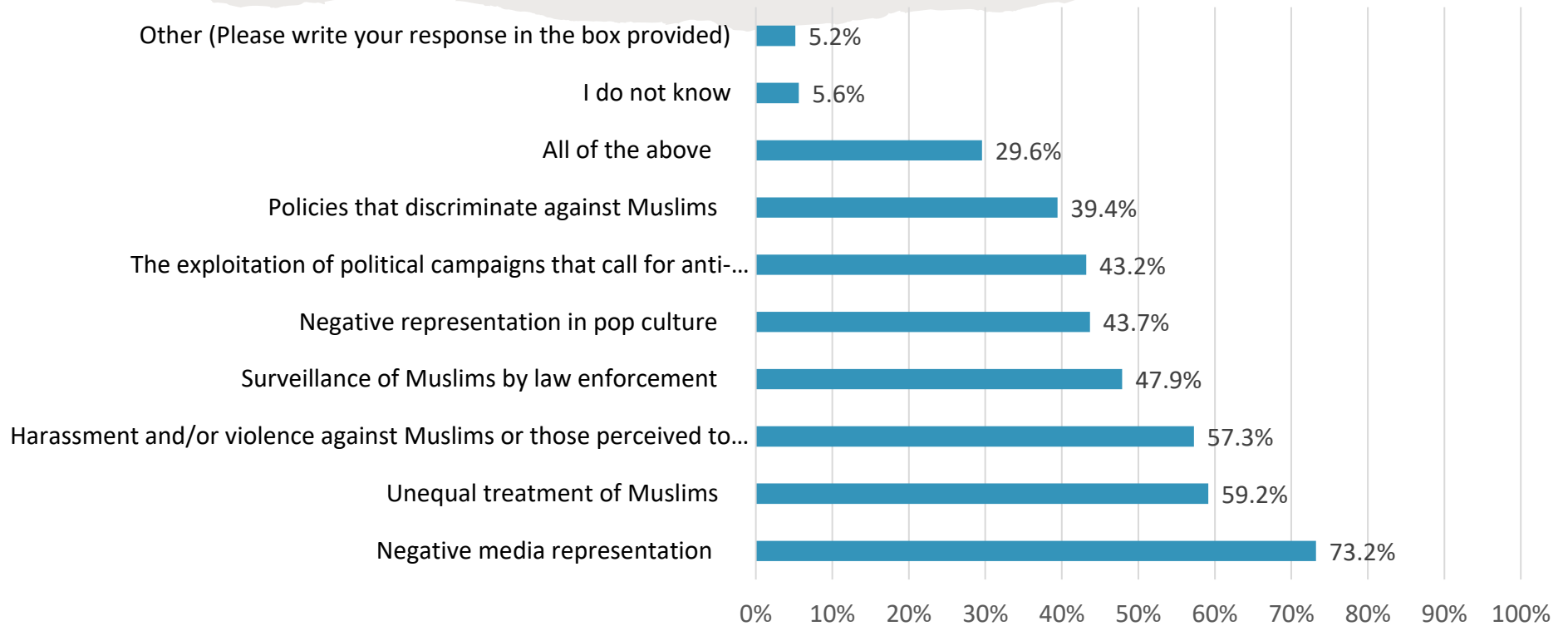
*...you have to stand for yourself. So when you stand for yourself then your children will learn how to stand for themselves. Then you will move into your community. You stand for them your children will support you. Then the community stand with you and everybody together and we can stand up as a Muslim. Yeah, that's where I get encouragement all the time.*

*I was the only hijabi [at school] at that time in 2017, when I was in year 7. So, I would get approached a lot and asked about like 'why are you wearing this?' In a nice way as well...'is it because you have to wear? Or are you forced to wear?' I said...I was so young at that time...I didn't know. But I said I'm not forced but wear it for like a reason. And I kind of enjoy wearing it cause I've seen a lot of people wearing it. And I see my mum, my grandma, my aunties all wear it. And I'm like I wanna be just like them as well. But that perspective changed a little bit. On how I dress as well. I'm like maybe if I change the way I wear my hijab or not wear it at all, maybe I'll be more accepted by them? Or like fit in? because I wanna make friends. But at that time, I was very shy, and I didn't want to talk to anyone. Cause I felt like I would be judged a lot. I was so sensitive about it as well. And I tried to accept it, like it's not a big deal. As long as I be true to myself, it will be alright. Also, the jokes as well. About how we dress. You know how the men wear thobe and we wear abaya or dress, and they would be like are you dressing up for Halloween? And I'm like no we just dress fancy. [laughs] yeah just some joke. So that's my way of standing up for myself. Kind of like empower how we wear and what we wear and make it into something that's not gonna put us down – or that would lower our standard. Because what we wear and what we do is important to us.*

# ISLAMOPHOBIA AND SOCIAL COHESION

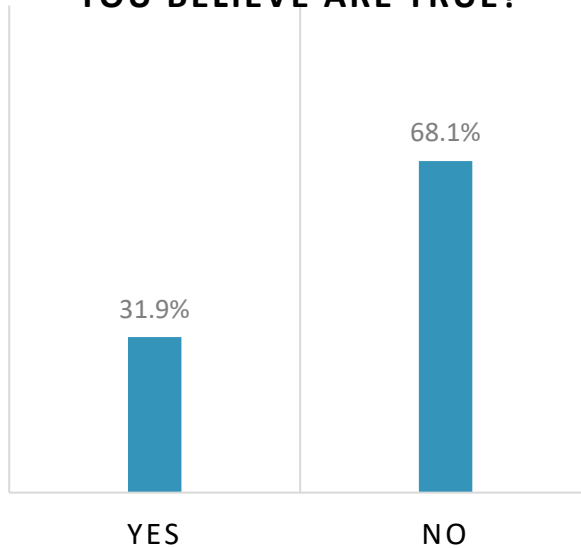
# SOCIAL COHESION AND ISLAMOPHOBIA

When you think about the impact(s) of Islamophobia, what comes to mind?

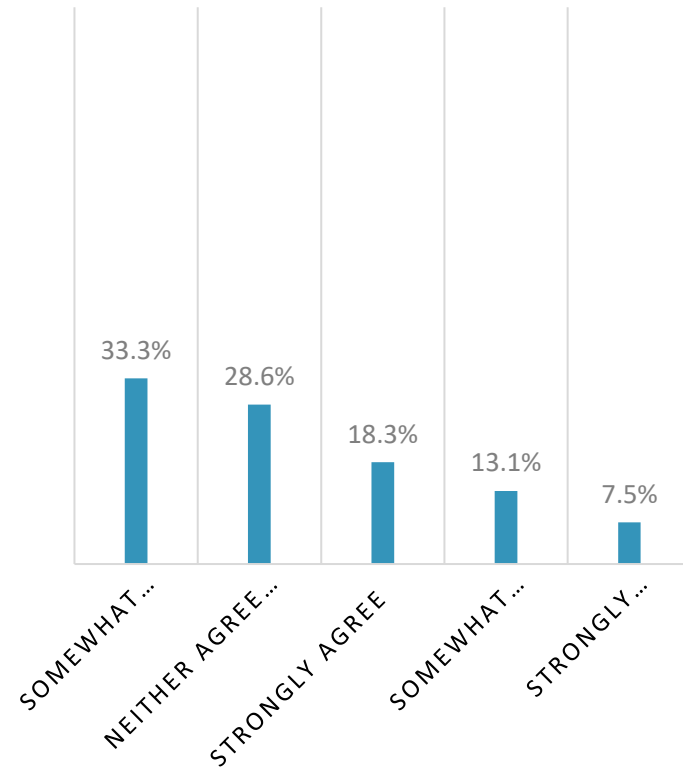


# MUSLIMS AND STEREOTYPES

HAVE YOU HEARD OF ANY STEREOTYPES ABOUT MUSLIMS THAT YOU BELIEVE ARE TRUE?



THE MAINSTREAM MEDIA'S PORTRAYAL OF MUSLIMS IN AOTEAROA NZ IS UNFAIR

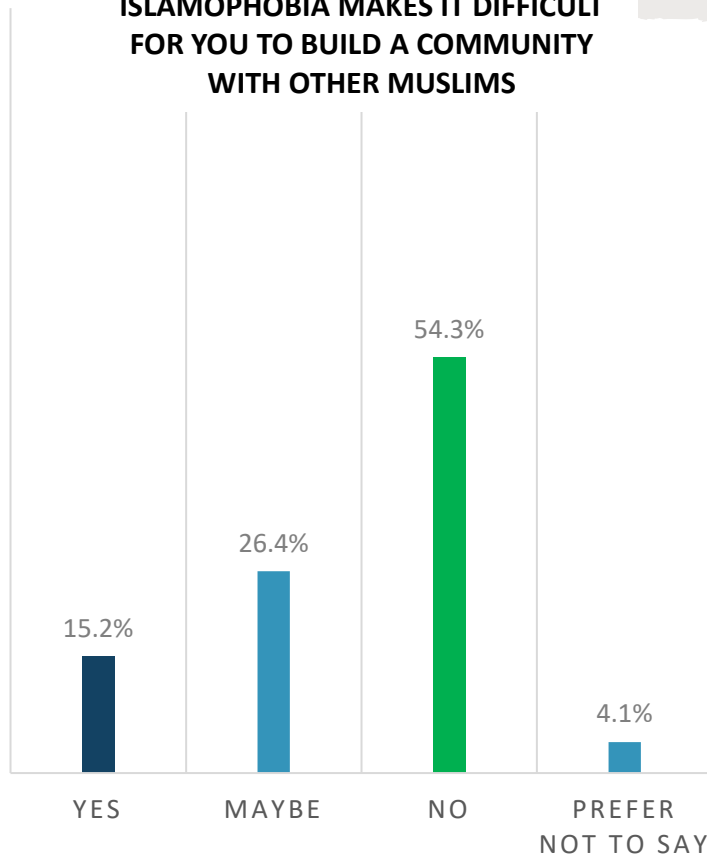


# QUOTE

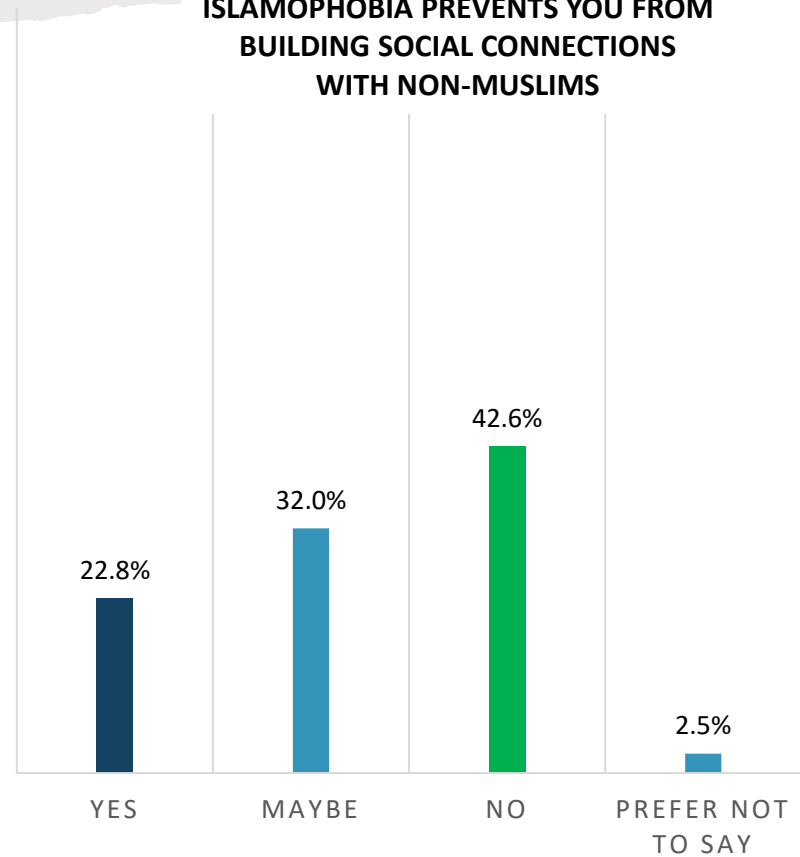
*Hijab means extremist...people think extremist as soon as they see a hijab. And me not wearing hijab was like reverse psychology... they had a chance to see me as a person first and see that we're not extremists.*

# SOCIAL COHESION AND ISLAMOPHOBIA IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

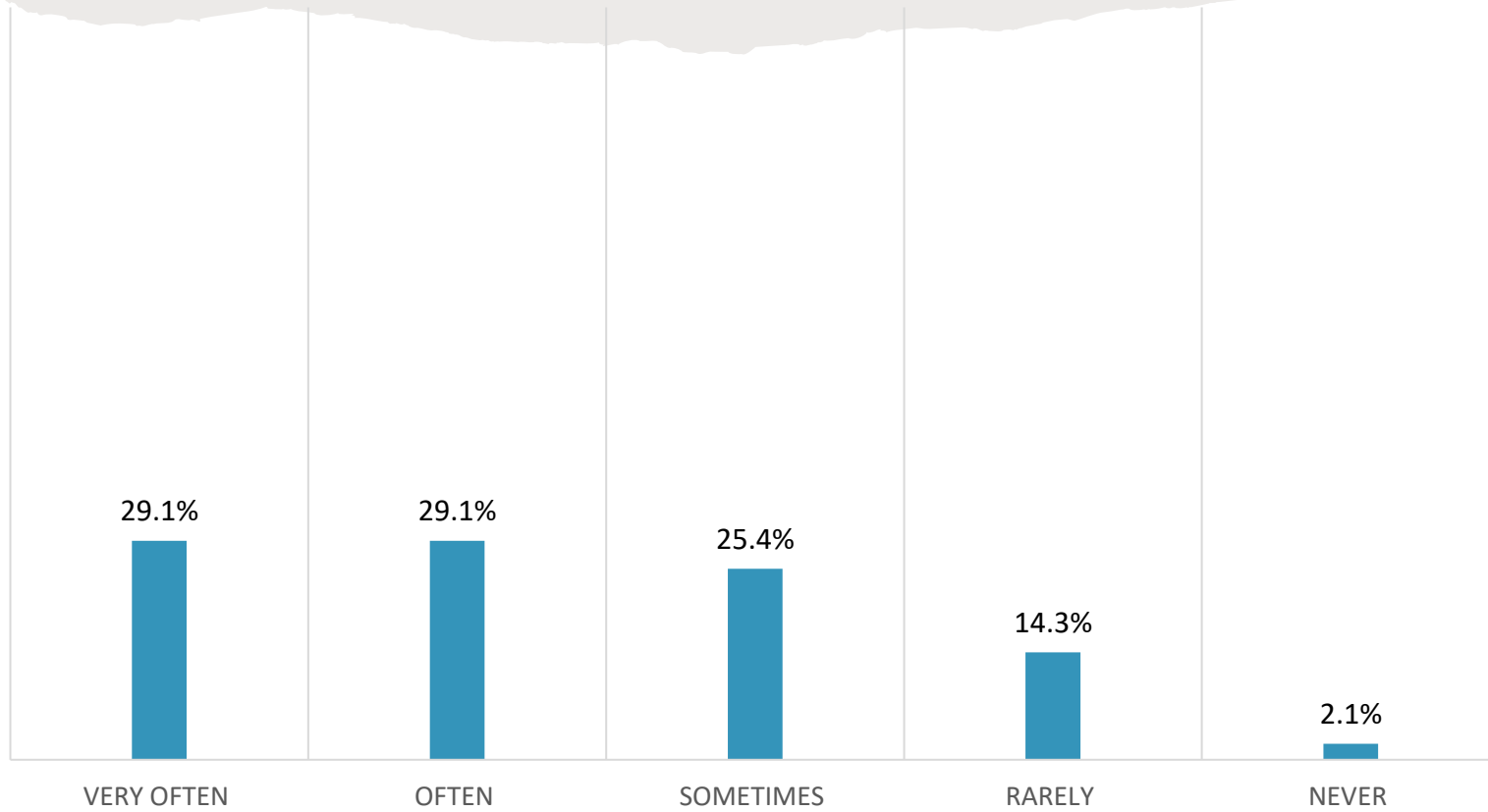
**ISLAMOPHOBIA MAKES IT DIFFICULT FOR YOU TO BUILD A COMMUNITY WITH OTHER MUSLIMS**



**ISLAMOPHOBIA PREVENTS YOU FROM BUILDING SOCIAL CONNECTIONS WITH NON-MUSLIMS**



## HOW OFTEN DO YOU SOCIALIZE WITH NON- MUSLIM GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS?



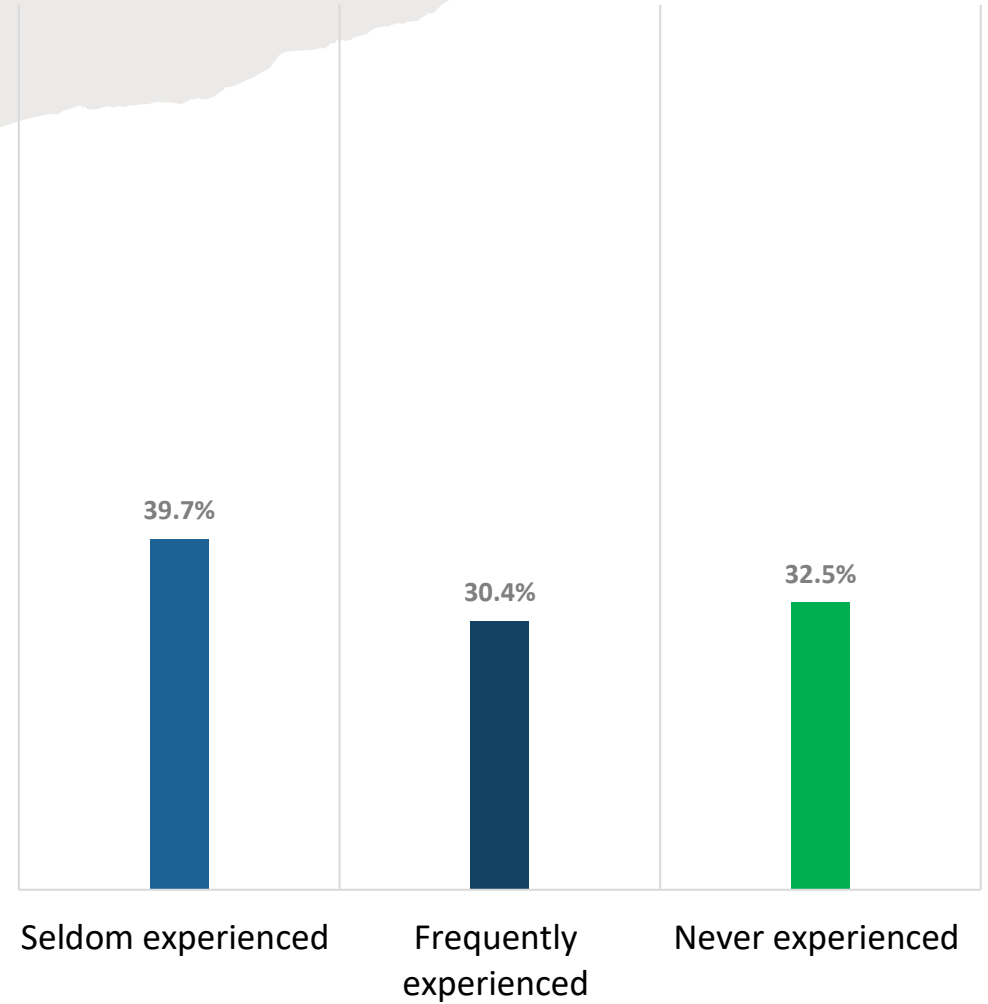
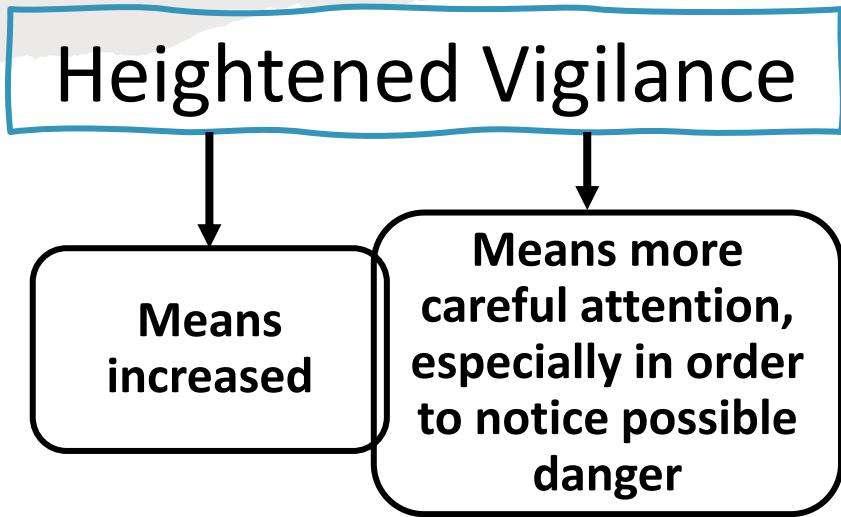


# HEIGHTENED VIGILANCE

The **preparation for, and anticipation of discrimination can lead to a heightened vigilance.**

- **40-50%** of the respondents of this question felt that they were in a state of heightened vigilance in their everyday interactions.

# OVERALL HEIGHTENED VIGILANCE



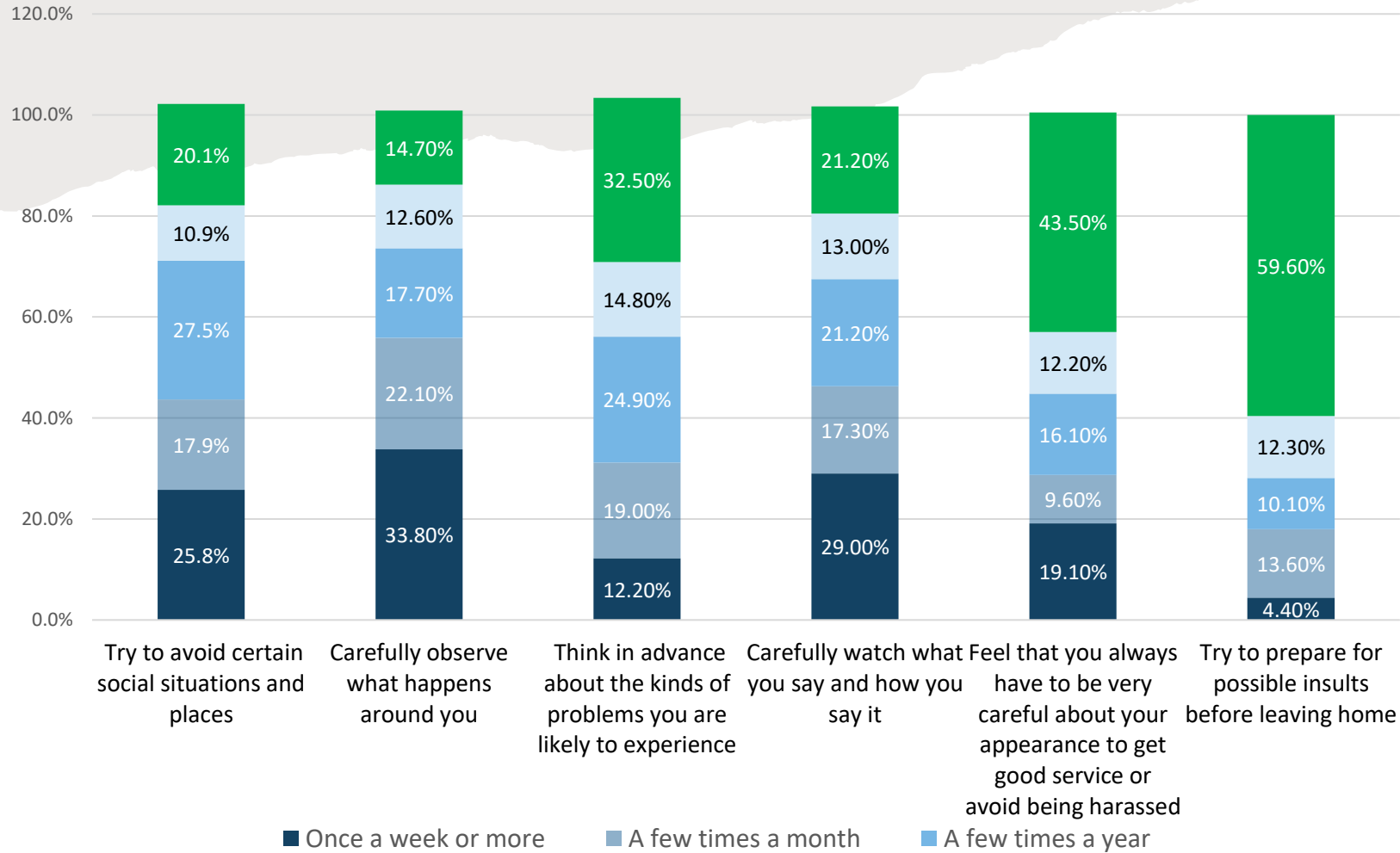
## IN RELATION TO HEIGHTENED VIGILANCE

About 80% had experienced that they:  
Try to avoid certain social situations and places.  
Carefully observe what happens around them.  
Carefully watch what they are saying and how they say it.

50% stated that they  
have to be careful about their appearance to get good service or avoid being  
harassed.

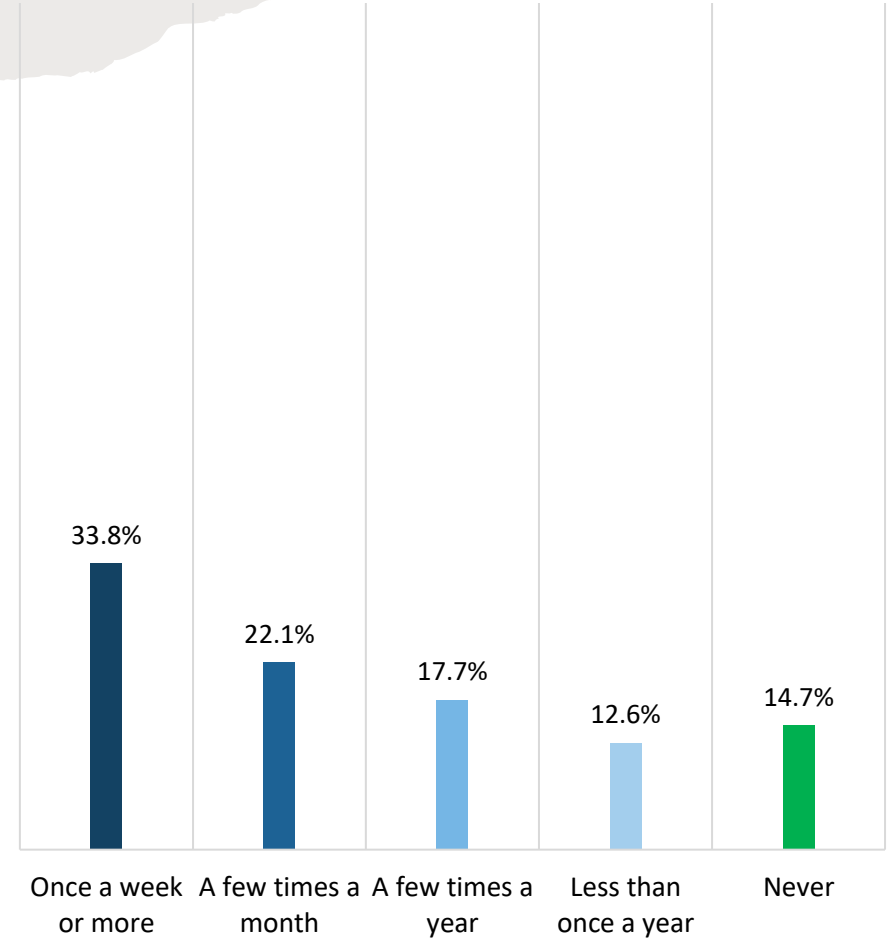
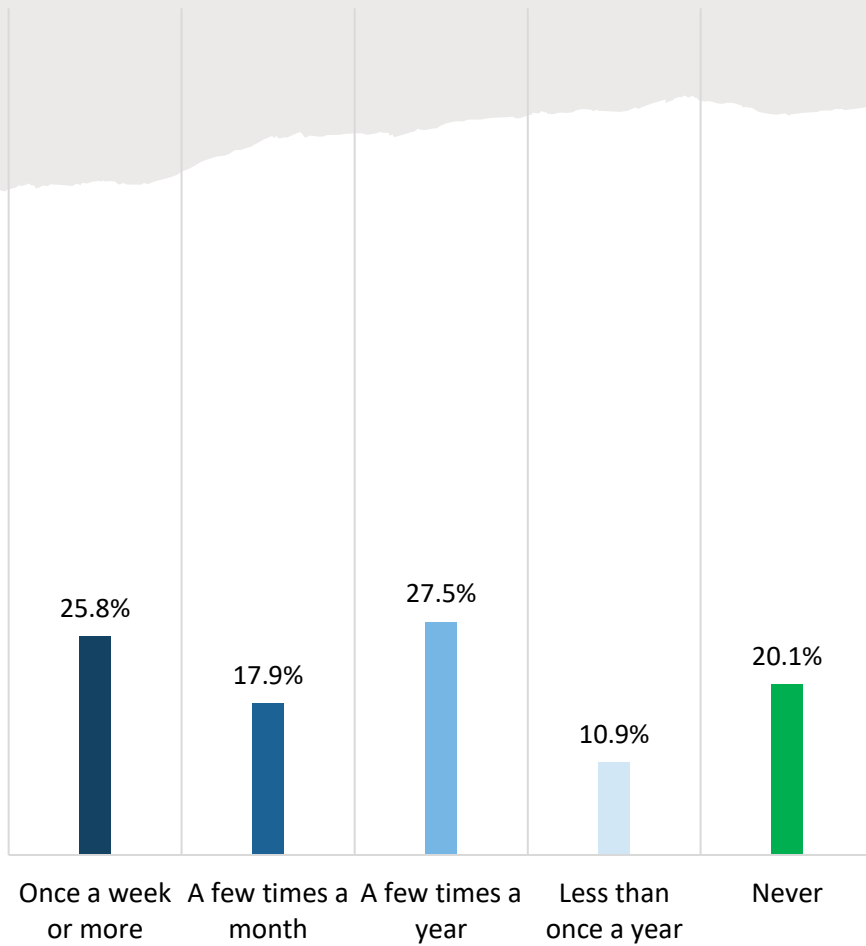
40% stated that they  
have tried to prepare for possible insults before leaving their homes.

# Heightened Vigilance



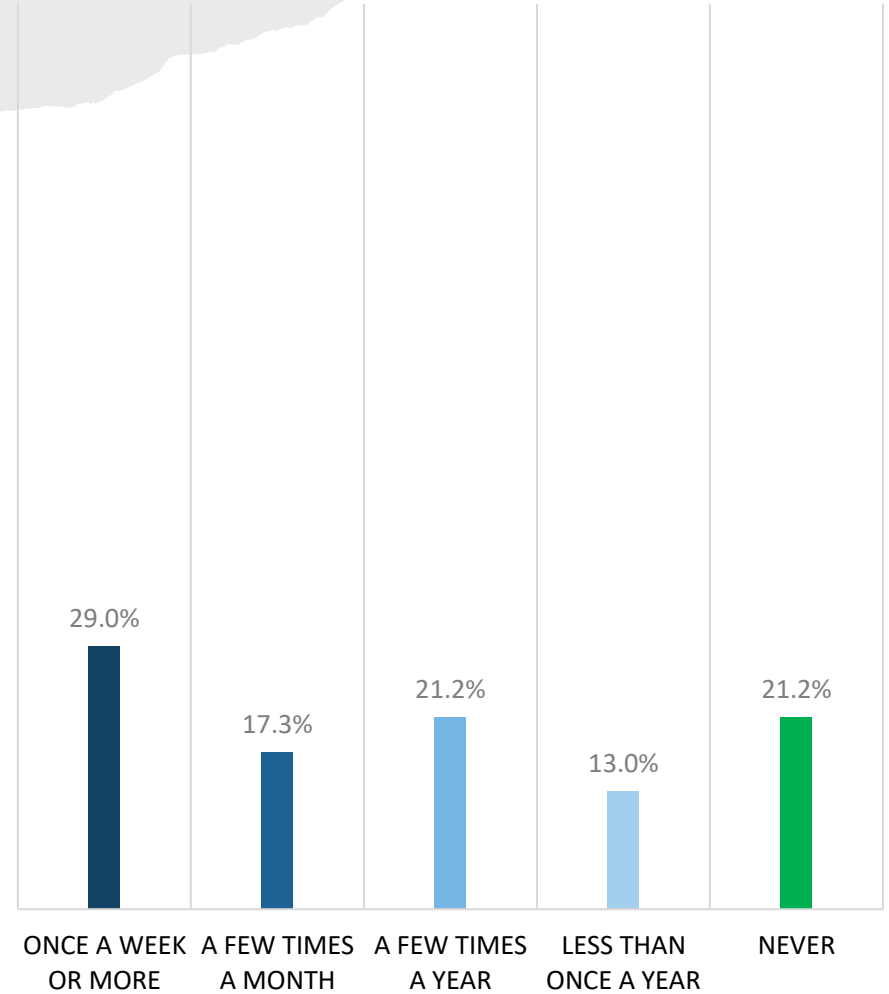
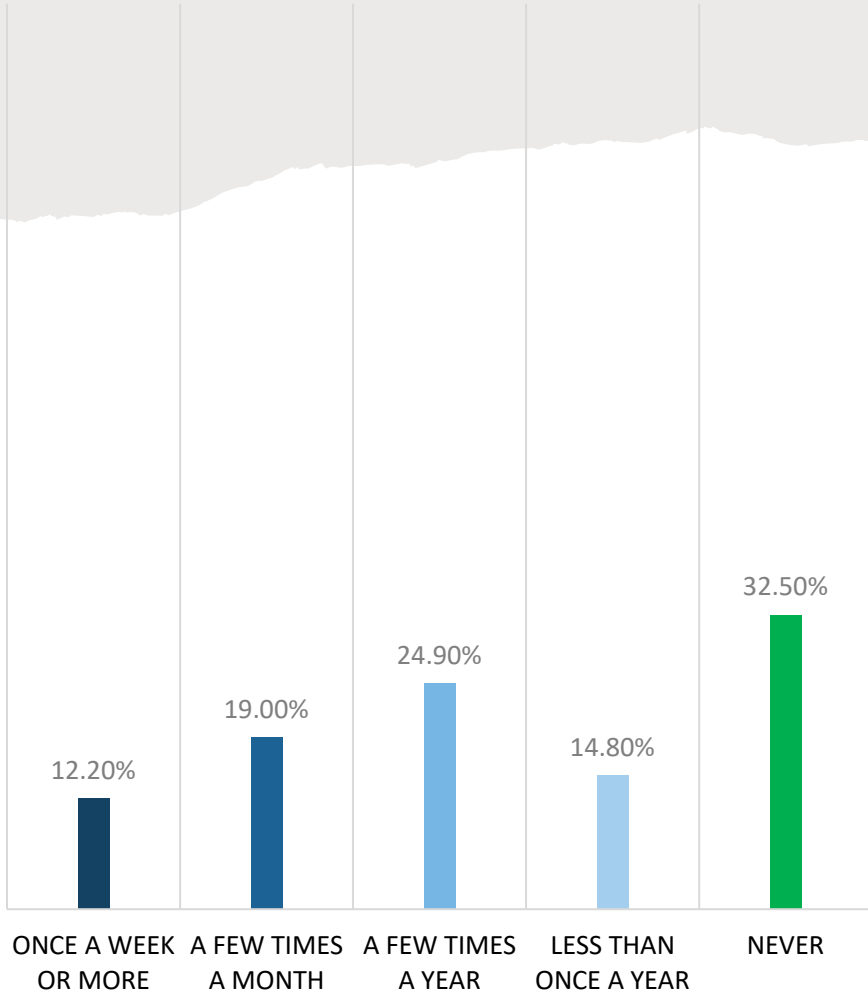
TRY TO AVOID CERTAIN SITUATIONS AND PLACES.

CAREFULLY OBSERVE WHAT HAPPENS AROUND YOU.



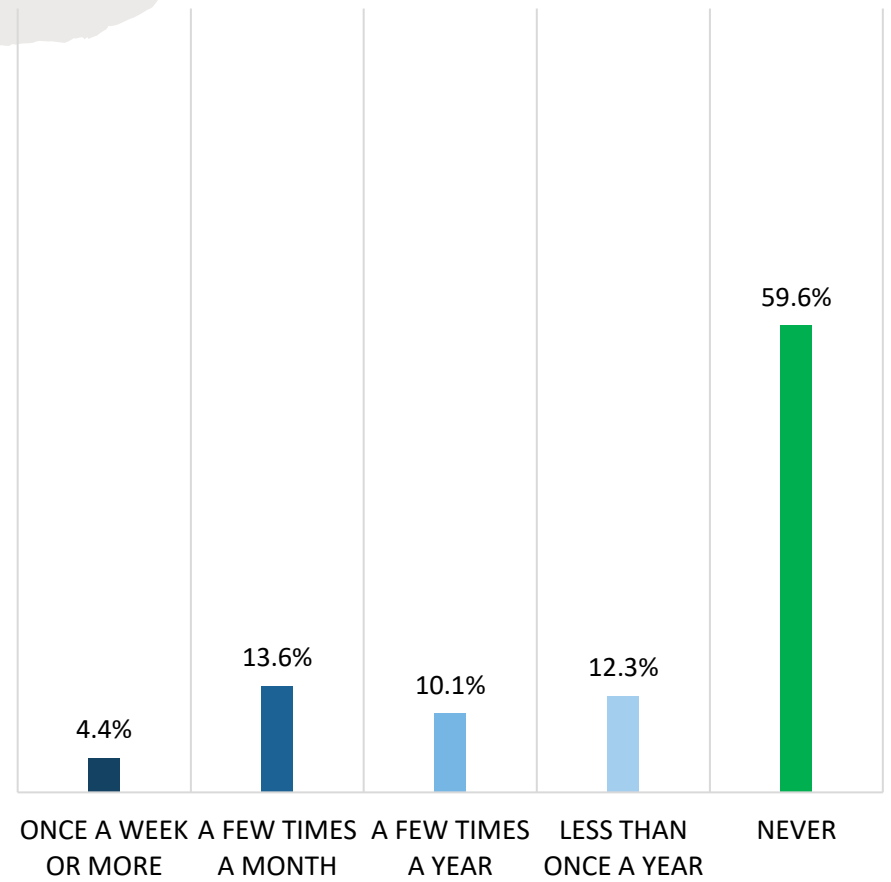
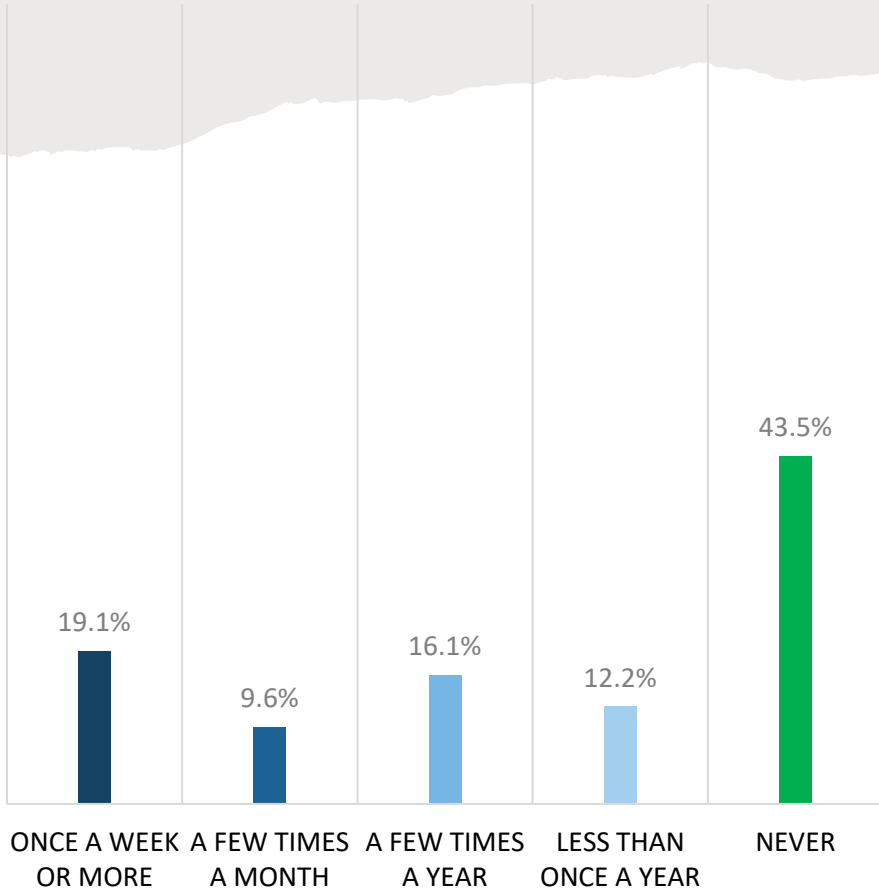
**THINK IN ADVANCE ABOUT THE KINDS OF PROBLEMS YOU ARE LIKELY TO EXPERIENCE**

**CAREFULLY WATCH WHAT YOU SAY AND HOW YOU SAY IT**



**FEEL THAT YOU ALWAYS HAVE TO BE VERY CAREFUL ABOUT YOUR APPEARANCE TO GET GOOD SERVICE OR AVOID BEING HARASSED.**

**TRY TO PREPARE FOR POSSIBLE INSULTS BEFORE LEAVING HOME.**

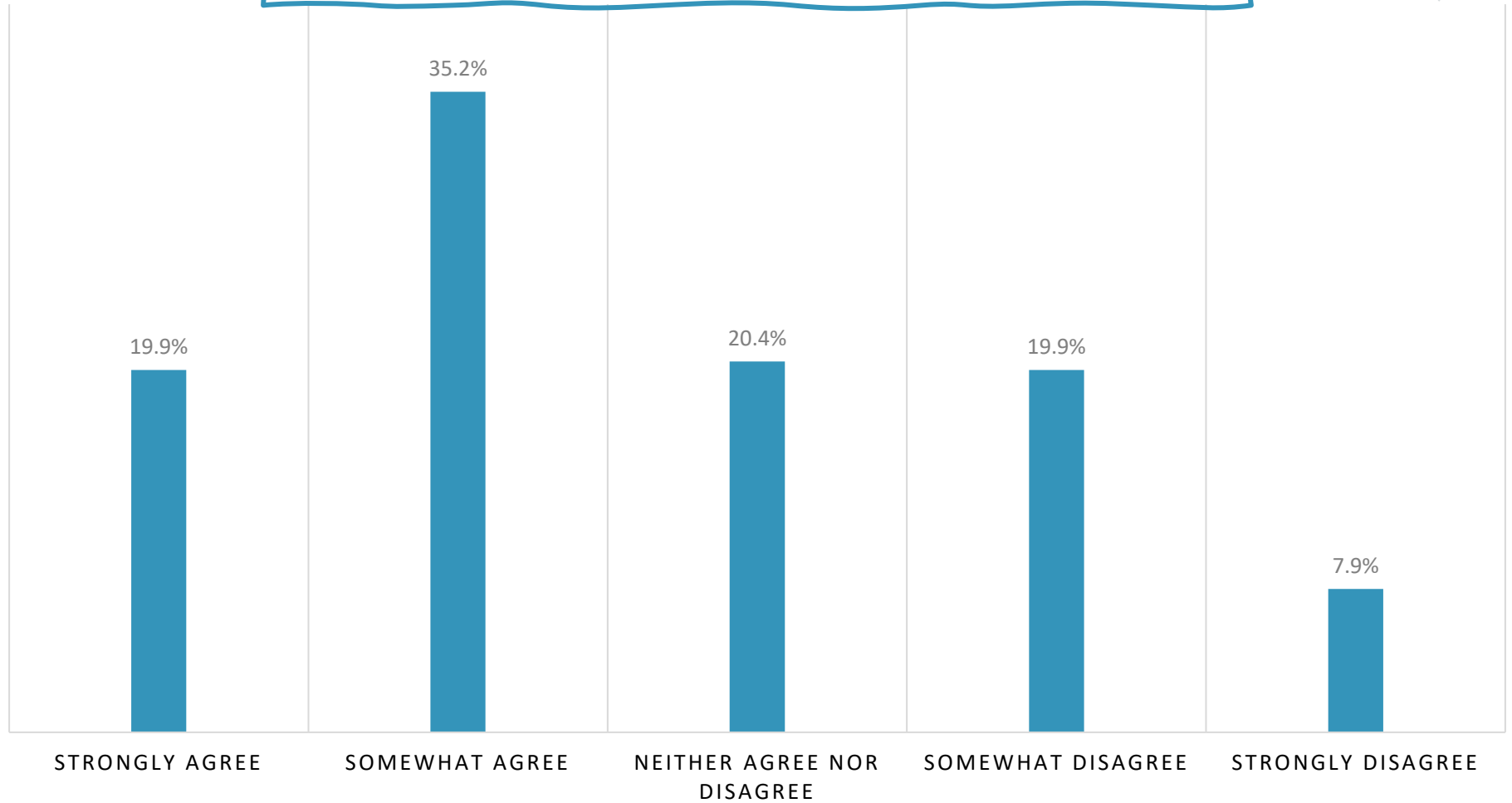


# VALUES CONGRUENCE

- More than 50% agreed that Islamic values are aligned with the values of Aotearoa New Zealand



# ISLAMIC VALUES ARE CONSISTENT WITH AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND VALUES



# COPING WITH DISCRIMINATION



Those who had responded to the questions related to experiences of discrimination, we further asked them:

How did you respond to this experience?



# COPING WITH DISCRIMINATION

Respondents scored it on a scale of 1-5.

As coping mechanisms, below is the highest to lowest chosen coping mechanisms:

Praying scored the highest points.

Next, coping mechanisms were working harder to prove them wrong, and seeking spiritual support

Many took it in their stride, accepted it or moved on as though nothing has happened.

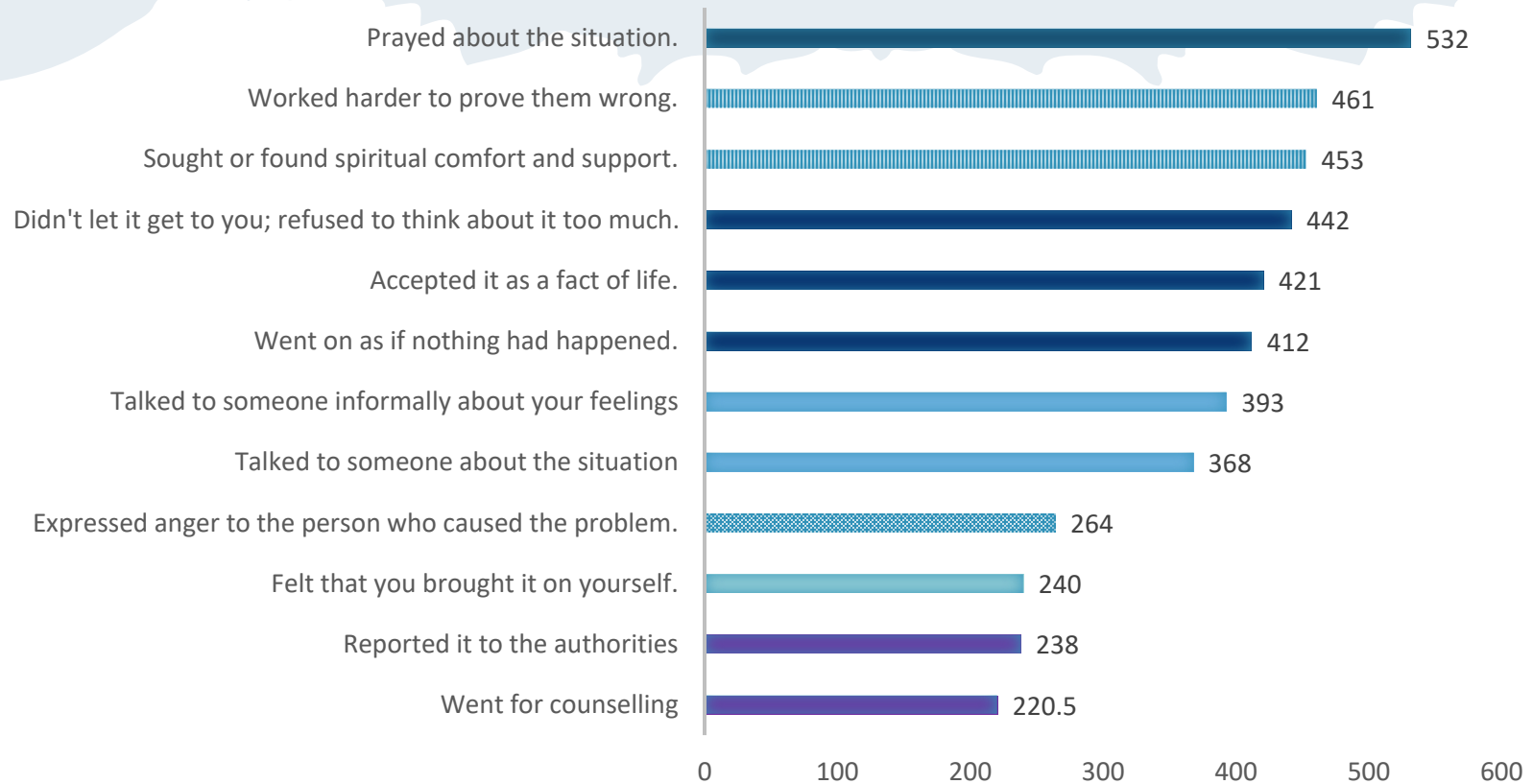
Some talked (informally) to others about it.

Expressing anger towards the person causing the discrimination was also a coping mechanism for a few.

Unfortunately, some blamed themselves for it.

The last was reporting to authorities or seeking counselling.

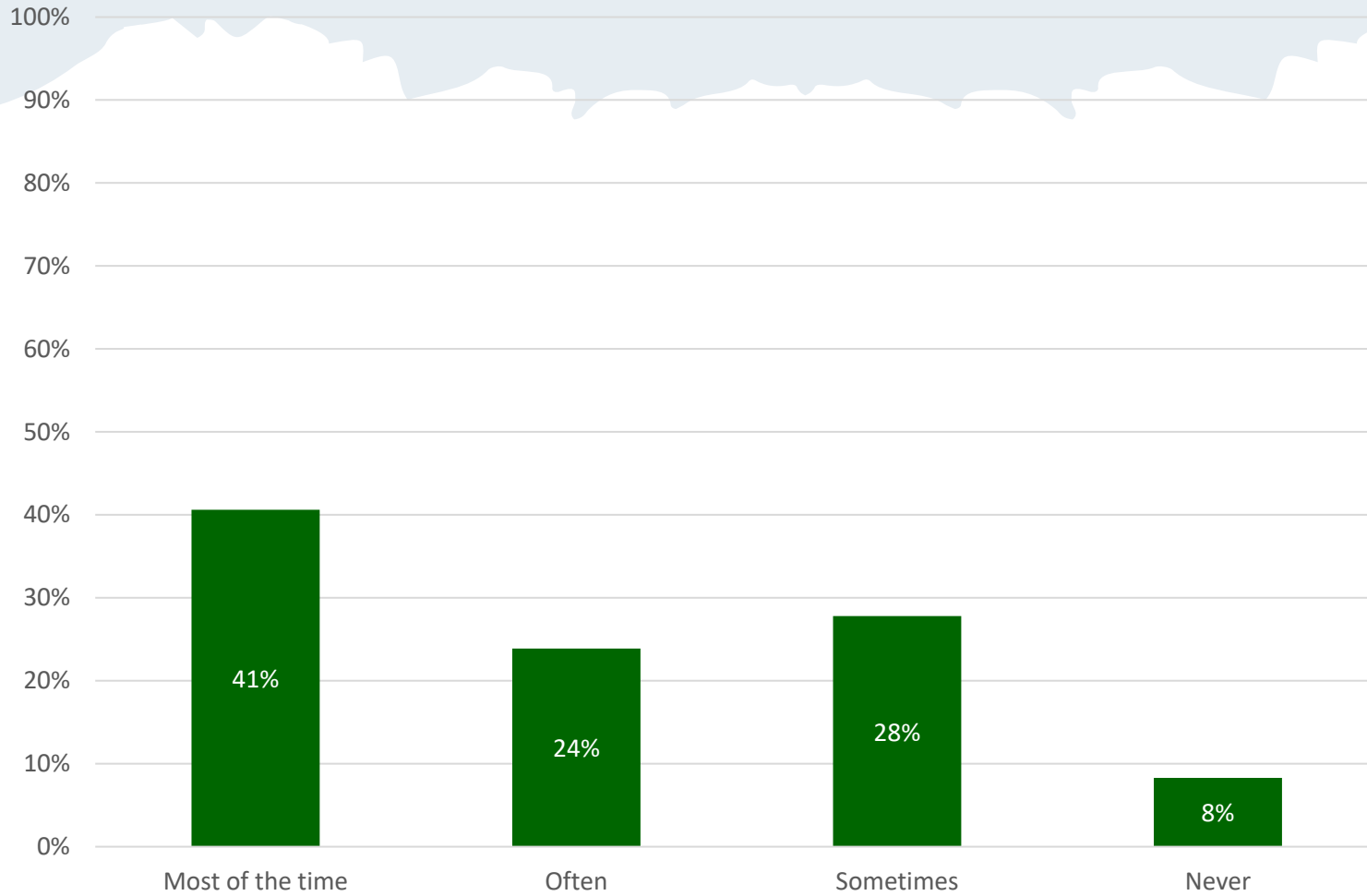
## IN RELATION TO YOUR EXPERIENCES OF DISCRIMINATION, YOU HAVE:



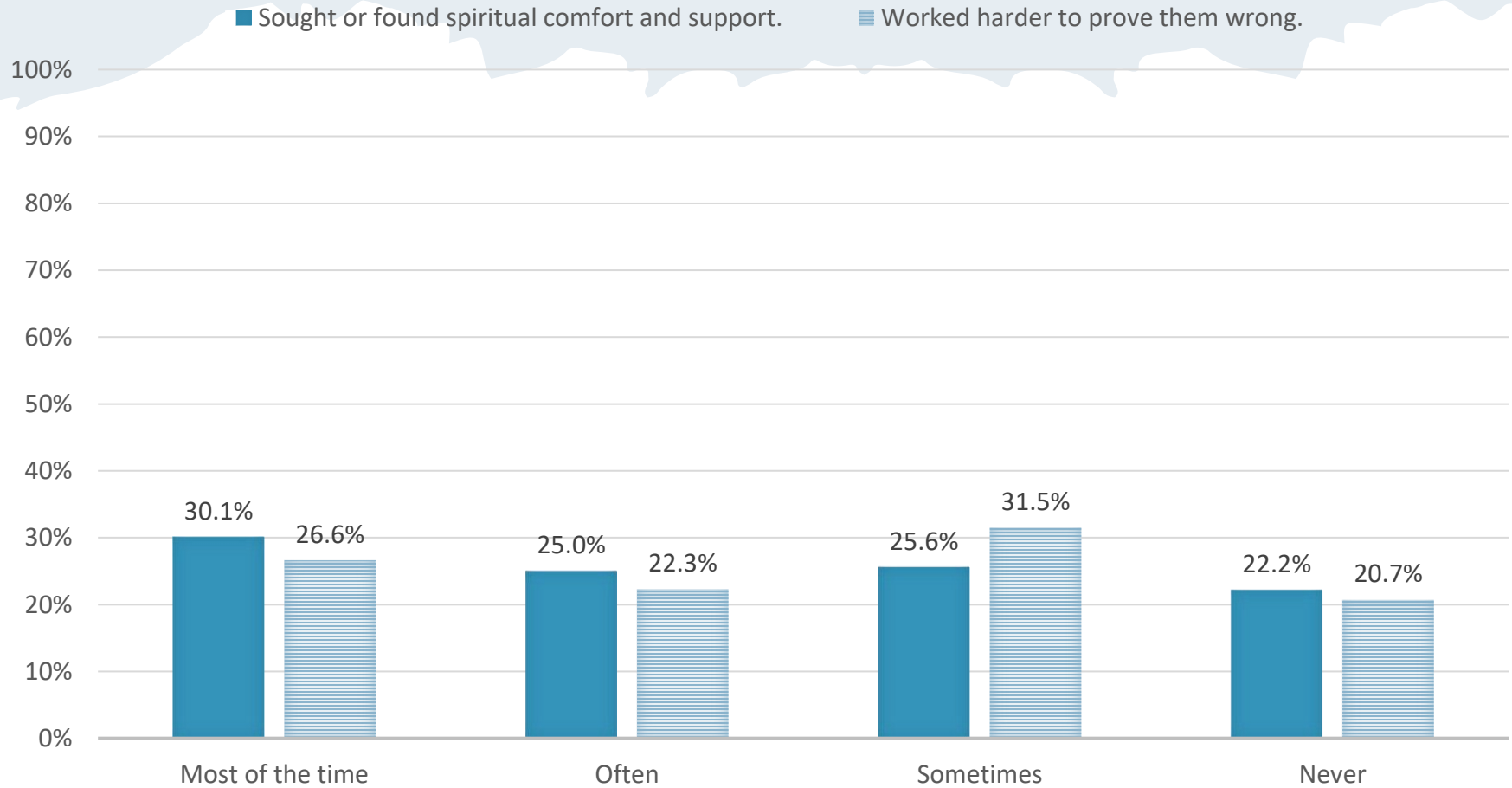
**Note:**

The above scores are the aggregated total of all respondents' choices, where the scored each of the above choice from 'All the time to Never'. In the next pages each coping mechanism is presented in detail.

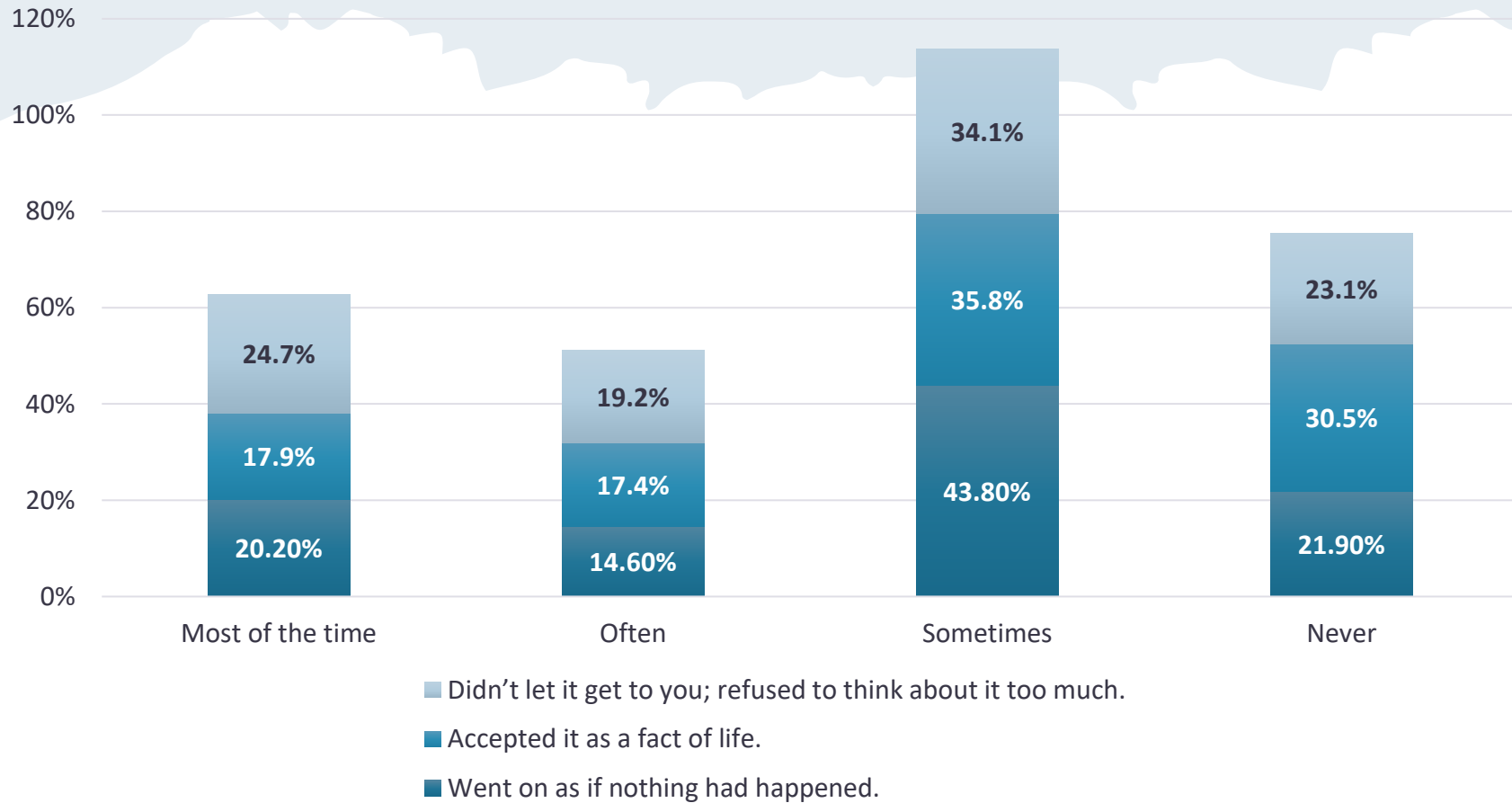
# Prayed about the situation



## WORKED HARDER TO PROVE THEM WRONG SOUGHT SPIRITUAL HELP

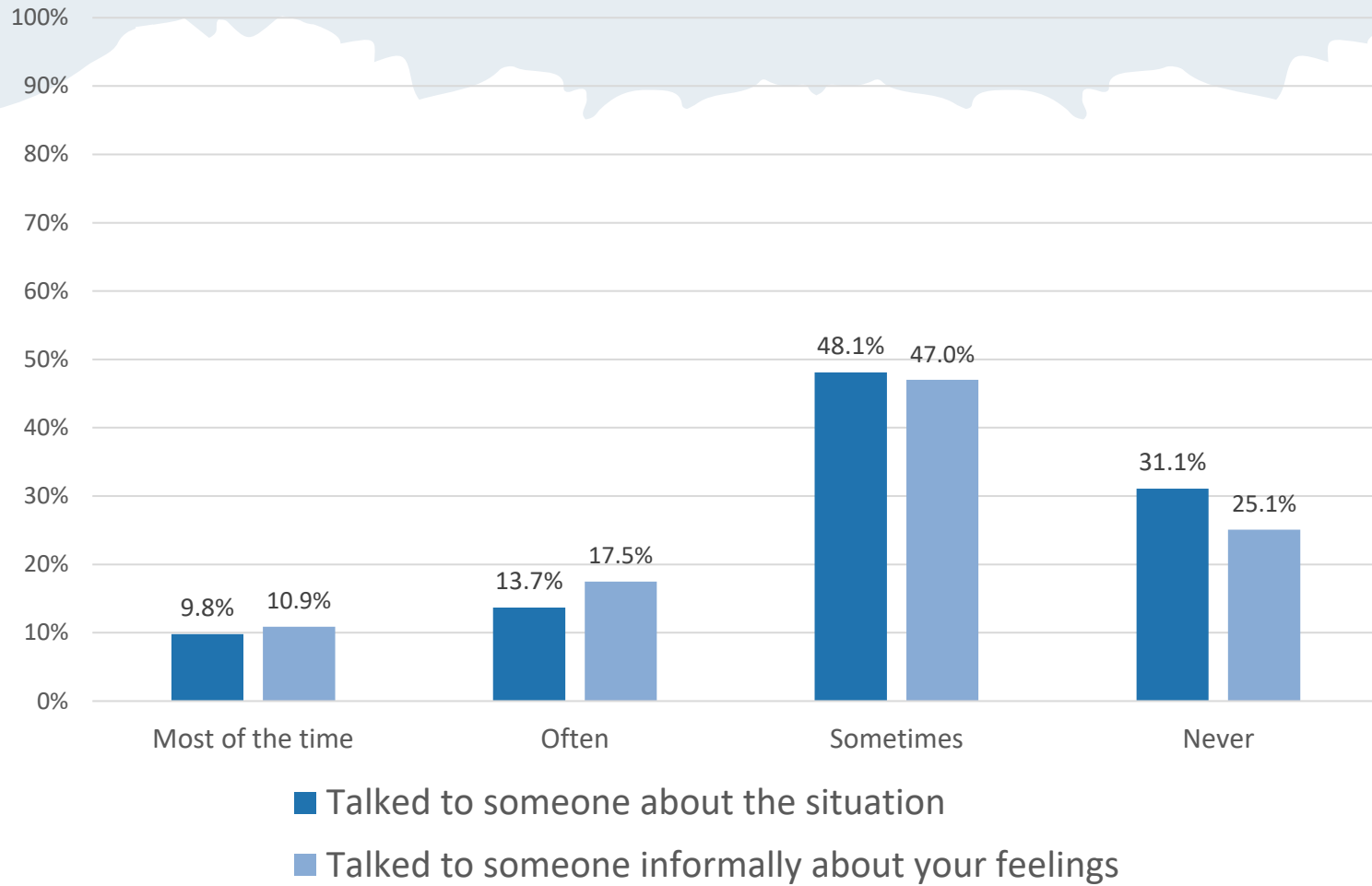


## Accepted and moved on



Note: In this question respondents could choose multiple options.

## Talked to someone about it



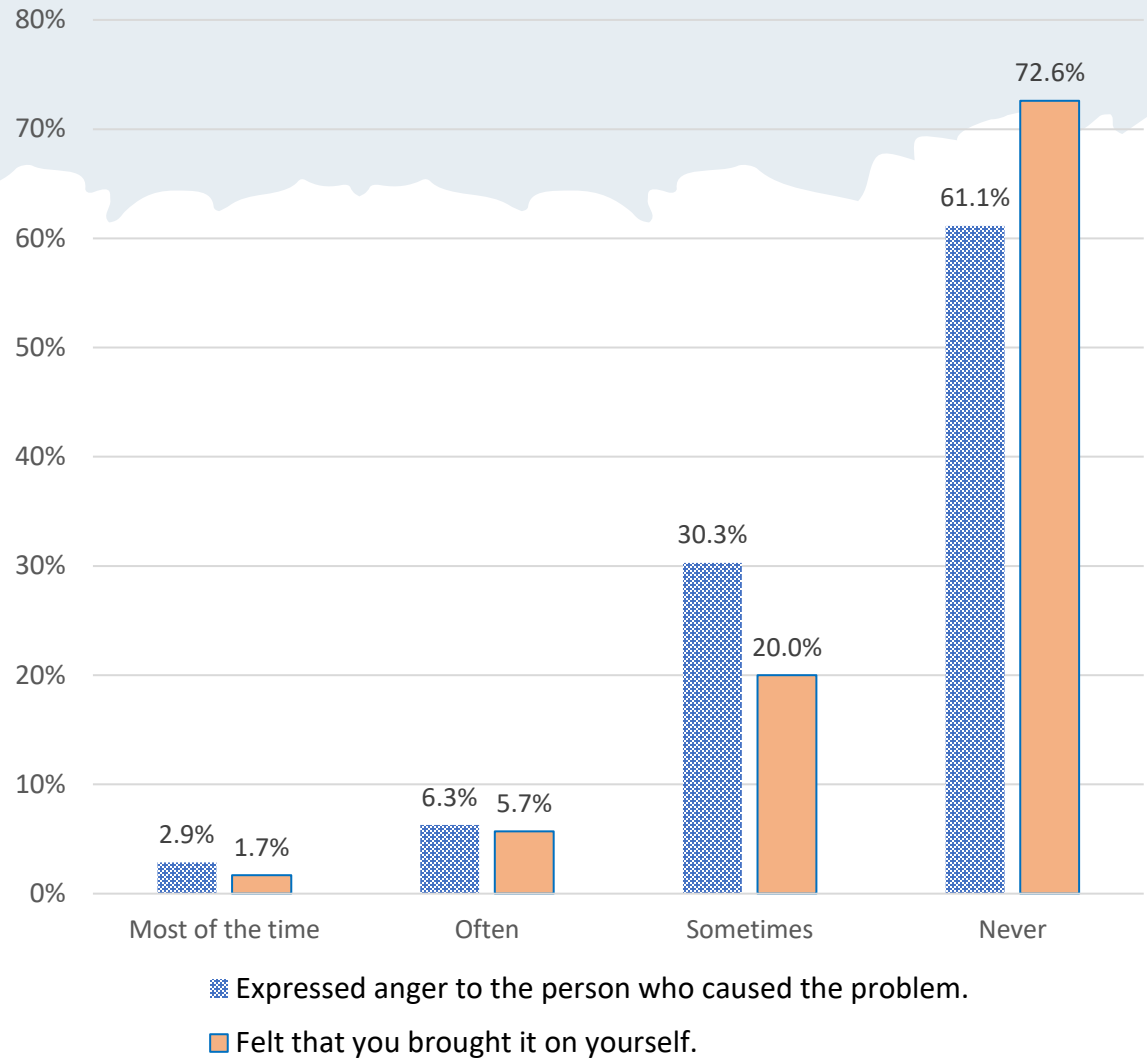


# COPING WITH DISCRIMINATION

Majority did not think that brought it on themselves and did not express anger towards the person.

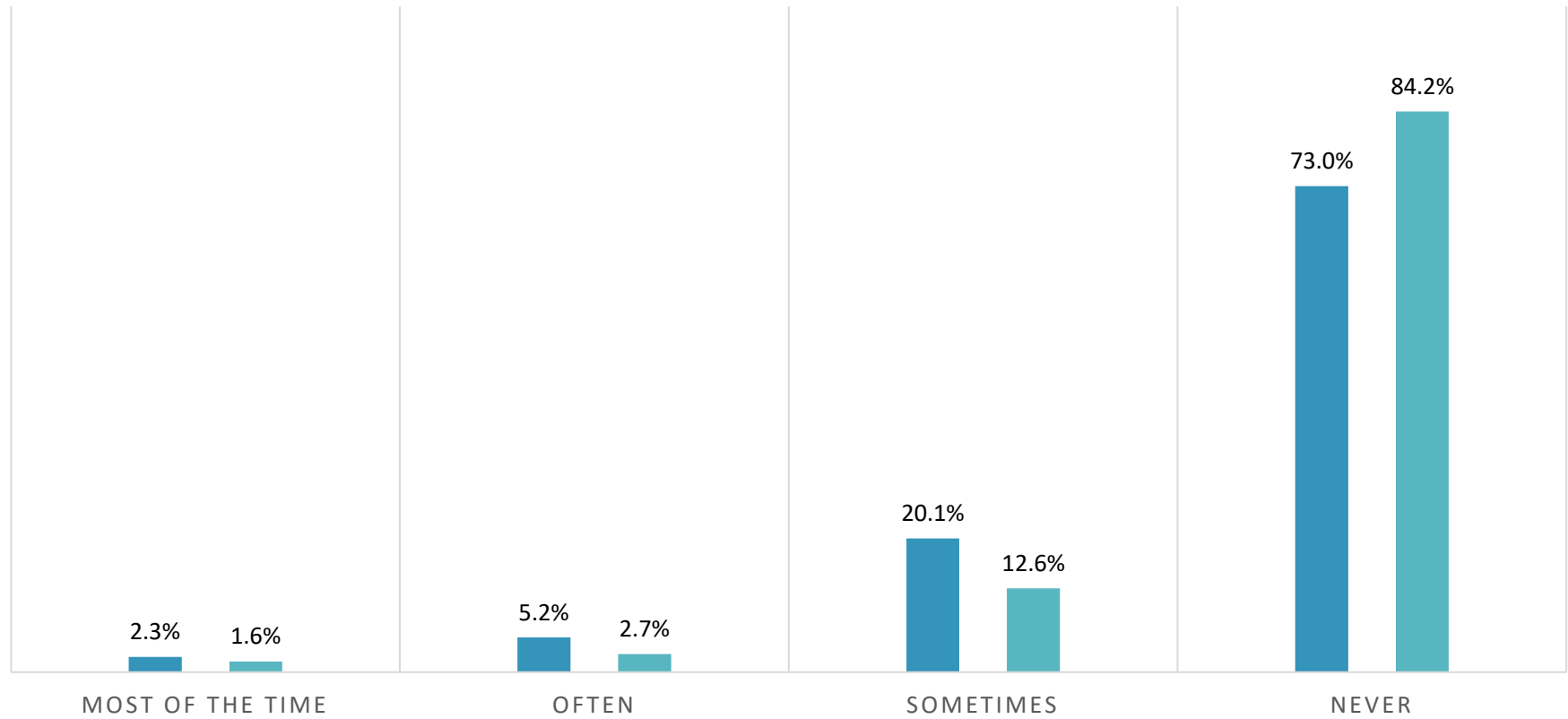
36% did express anger (often or sometimes) towards the person who caused the discrimination.

## Coping with Experiences of Discrimination



# REPORTING TO AUTHORITIES GOING FOR COUNSELLING

■ Reported it to the authorities   ■ Went for counselling

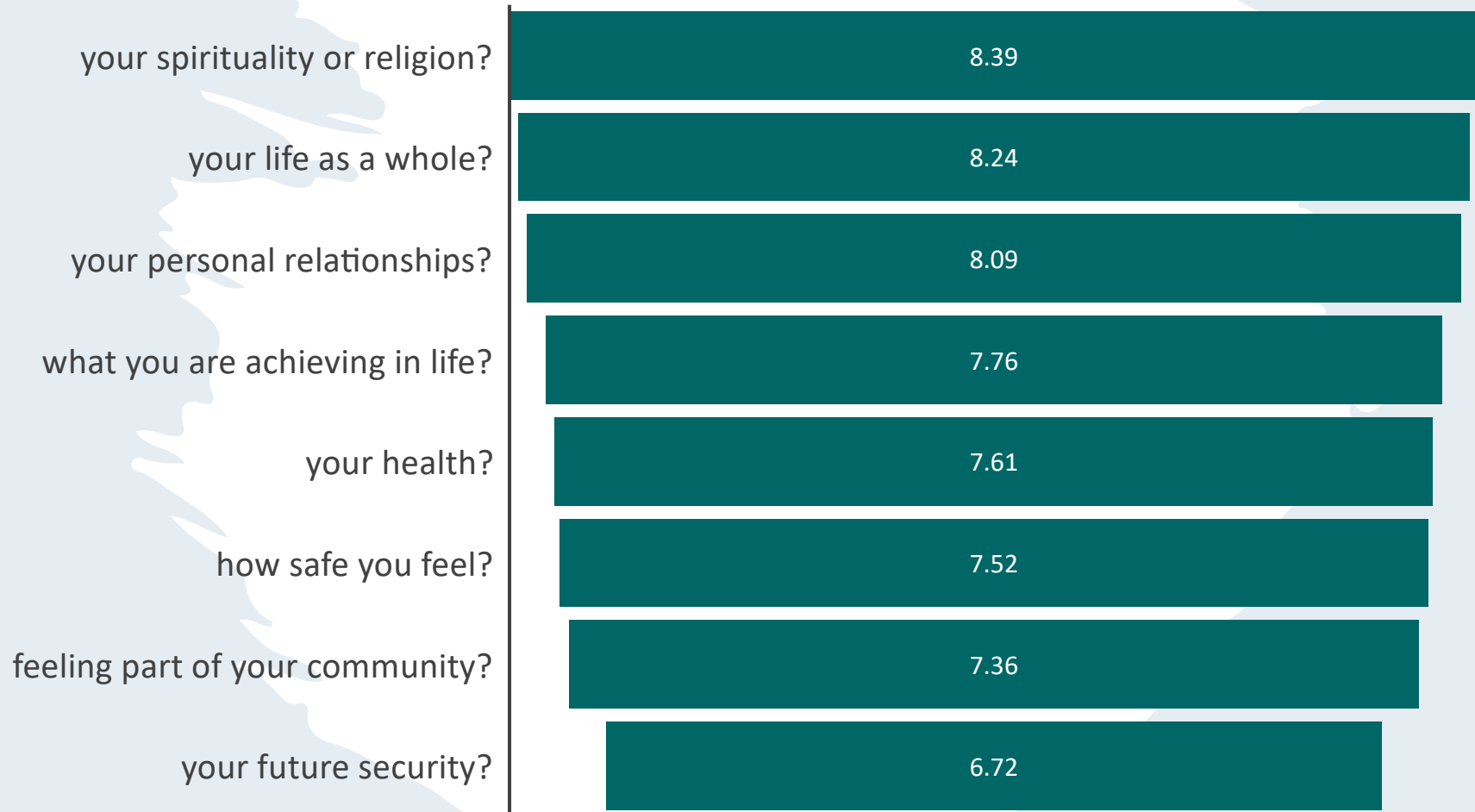




# LIFE SATISFACTION

- Our Respondents selected religion and spirituality as being the most satisfying aspects of their life.
- They found least satisfaction in their sense of safety.

## HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH:



# WE ASKED ABOUT: HOW TO COMBAT ISLAMOPHOBIA?

# HOW TO COMBAT ISLAMOPHOBIA?

Majority of the respondents took the onus of getting involved and actively doing something to deal with Islamophobia upon themselves.



Only 5 respondents stated that we should not be doing anything because we are not the problem.



*“This is the wrong question: it is not up to victims of discrimination to bear the burden of removing that discrimination. That burdens sits with wider society, government and local government, as well as civil society organizations.”*

# HOW TO COMBAT ISLAMOPHOBIA?

## INTERACTION WITH THE WIDER COMMUNITY

40 respondents' comments related to inviting and interacting with the wider community.

**16 focused on opening up to other communities by being a good model Muslim**

*“Open doors, have community events. Invite the local communities to come and meet the Muslim community. Reverts like me play a big part in showing the public that stereotypes is wrong.”*

*“Mix more with local population, open masjid for them to visit, open days.”*

# HOW TO COMBAT ISLAMOPHOBIA?

## INTERACTION WITH THE WIDER COMMUNITY

### Participants suggested:

- *Attending open days at other places to socialize.*
- *Modelling true Muslim behaviours is the right way for Dawa.*
- *Inviting public figures and governmental officials to mosques, Muslim festivals and events.*
- *(Having) Interfaith events and dialogues.*
- *Having open days at mosques.*
- *Inviting people to mosques or even homes for dinner/iftar and breaking the stereotypes.*



# HOW TO COMBAT ISLAMOPHOBIA?

## INTERACTION WITH THE WIDER COMMUNITY

*“More public awareness campaigns about Islam. Use times like Eid to help drive community and public support to Islamic events. Similar to what is done for the Chinese for example on Chinese new years or for the Indian community on Diwali. Make Eid's a time to celebrate being a Muslim and get the local communities and public involved.”*

# HOW TO COMBAT ISLAMOPHOBIA?

## AWARENESS

38 respondents discussed increasing awareness.

There were many ways that were suggested, the most common were 'explaining to people during interactions'.

Other suggestions were that government should take initiatives; schools should engage in reducing misinformation.

*“Be willing to sometimes go out of our way to explain why/how we do things and talk to people about Islam so that we can as a community challenge the stereotypes people have about us on a person-to-person level in the least. More research to support resources and services that encourage inter-group contact.”*

# HOW TO COMBAT ISLAMOPHOBIA?

## AWARENESS

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*...once I [walked towards the door] and said thanks to the driver and said thanks to them [the people making racist comments to her], they all were like 'oh why are you saying thanks?' And I just said 'that's our culture, and that's who we are. We have to thank whoever says something. Maybe you went through something which I don't know, that's why you end up doing this to me'. Then I left. [laughs].*

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*Eventually I got a chance [to respond]. There was one assignment where we had to choose our own topic and talk about it. And I decided to talk about myself and my culture, my outfit. That's how it started. And yeah...everybody laughed when I did my presentation. [I am ] very happy about the content how I explained why do I have to wear and how much...you know I can save [laughs]. Even I can wear my burqa on top of pyjama and come to school. No matter, nobody knows. It's very simple, and also scarf – I don't have to spend a lot of money to do my hair and you know, curly and...etc. and I'm not spending that much money. It's all beneficial for me [laughs]. Yeah ...then eventually people understand, and there were no questions.*

# HOW TO COMBAT ISLAMOPHOBIA?

## EDUCATION

- 24 comments related to education and information to be spread about Islamophobia.
- The comments covered a wide variety of suggestions such as:

*“The media should be careful and instead of sharing misinformation should share facts.”*

*“Muslims should first educate themselves on the Islamic values and then share it with others.”*

*“Adding (information) to school curriculum at school.”*

*“More dialogue and sharing of knowledge.”*

*“Government needs to have better policy (to combat Islamophobia).”*

# HOW TO COMBAT ISLAMOPHOBIA?

## EMPOWERMENT OF THE COMMUNITY

23 people suggested that empowering our communities is important. They suggested:

- By being united.
- We should educate ourselves to report incidences.
- as New Zealand citizens , we should hold the government accountable, rather than passively bearing things. thinking we should be thankful that we are allowed here.
- As citizens its our responsibility to be in public spaces, and media.
- Use the voting and economic power for collective good and not personal tokenistic gains.
- To be in media and public spheres.
- Government should have better inclusion policies.
- Leaders and mosques should support.

# HOW TO COMBAT ISLAMOPHOBIA?

## VISIBILITY

19 comments related to  
visibility.

Respondents pointed out that Muslims should be more visible in the media, public service, community events, mosques, and events.

More visibility will normalise interaction with Muslims and therefore possibly reduce Islamophobia.

# HOW TO COMBAT ISLAMOPHOBIA?

## OWNERSHIP OF MUSLIM IDENTITY

17 comments related to:

- owning Muslim identity,
- taking pride in being Muslim, and
- modelling true Muslim behaviours,
- being respectful, kind and living with peace.

*“Stop being afraid to express ourselves. The rest of the public will never know about our culture until we express it fully. One immediate action we can implement is broadcasting the Azaan on loudspeakers of all our Massajid, for all Salaahs. The public will learn how close by we actually are.”*

*“Teach about the beautiful things of Muslims culture so that there is no misinformation and lack of understanding.”*

*“Youth are in danger of compromising their identity and values as they wish to adopt the popular Kiwi culture.”*

# HOW TO COMBAT ISLAMOPHOBIA?

## INTEGRATION

**11 respondents specifically talked about New Zealand values and inclusiveness:**

- **Some talked about the community:**

*“It takes two to tango. Muslim community also needs to adapt to Kiwi ways of living without having to bend on Islamic rules.”*

*“Muslims need to be inclusive and united.”*

*“Discrimination between ethnicities within the Muslim community is affecting me (And many other muslims) much more than islamophobia.”*

- **Some were more critical such as:**

*“Make a more kiwi approach to Islam with the principles and ethics foremost, and less saudi funded salafi literalist interpretation, ie increase kiwi-ization and avoid Arabization.”*



# HOW TO COMBAT ISLAMOPHOBIA?

## Leadership and role of Mosques

Few respondents mentioned that Muslim leaders need to play a role, and that mosques need to support and be supported to help Muslims communities deal with Islamophobia.

*Give options to talk about good things for Muslims in NZ.*

*Overall, being a Muslim is great, but society is changing, and I feel those Muslims / teens who aren't close to the mosque are highly affected negatively.*

*Women and kids are our vulnerable populations, and they need support in many ways. We need new Muslim organizations and more democracy in our organisations.*

*Our own organizations do not accept democratic value of NZ and often work against it.*

# CONCLUDING REMARKS ON DEALING WITH ISLAMOPHOBIA

Some talked about government, media, leaders (Muslim and political), educational institutions, mosques; policies, events, and dialogues could also help reduce islamophobia.

A few discussed using their own votes and their citizenship rights, for standing up against it could help reduce islamophobia.

Only a handful stated that Muslims are not the problem, but are the victims, and the onus should not be on Muslims.

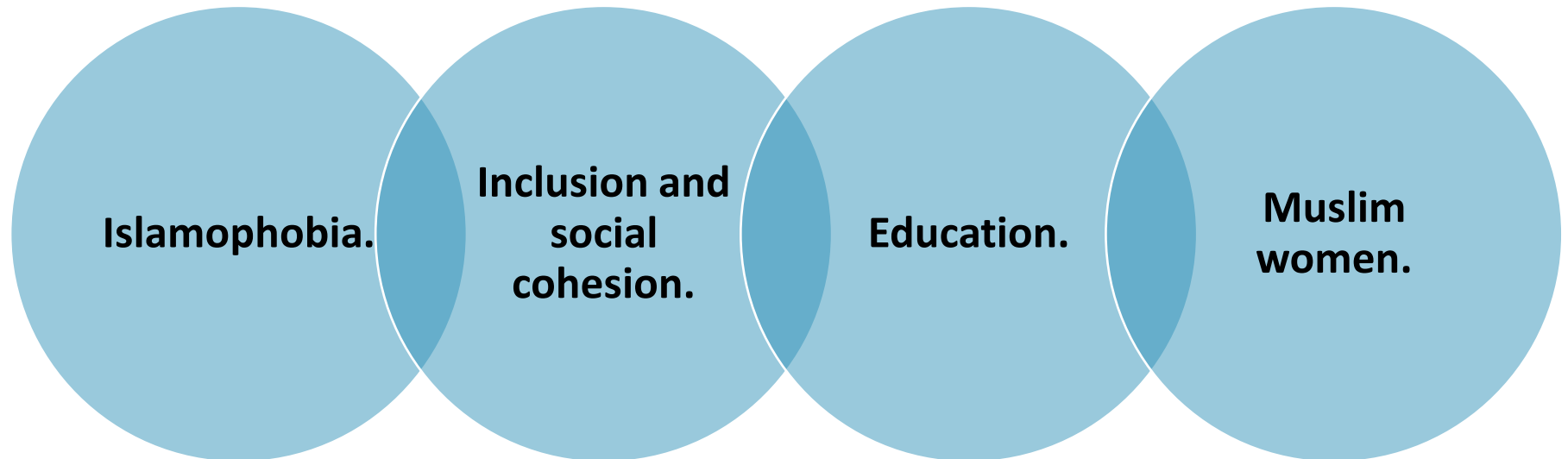


**FEEDBACK  
AND  
FEEDFORWARD**

# WHAT SHOULD WE FURTHER RESEARCH ON?

It was an open-ended question.

We collated the short and long answers in themes:



# Islamophobia

What should we further research on?

- *The links between online Islamophobia and real-life harassment and violence*
- *The actions Muslims are taking to combat Islamophobia around the country- with a focus on the history of key areas such as Mt Roskill as the case study.*
- *The drivers of Islamophobia. Stop doing research on Muslims, we are not the source of the problem.*
- *The impact of Muslim community leaders in defusing islamophobia in New Zealand.*
- *Islamophobia in sport. The barriers to participation and social integration.*
- *Muslim leadership and it's role in regards to countering Islamophobia. The dictatorial way of leadership in major Islamic organisations.*

*In my experience, non-Muslims have many incorrect ideas about us because of mainstream media. This makes it exhausting sometimes to be close to them, constantly have to explain yourself and overcome their negative perceptions of you. Perceptions that have nothing to do with you as an individual. Separately, Muslim communities are afraid of how they'll be treated so they prevent their children from participating in community events on their own or pursuing close friendships with non-Muslims. This needs to be addressed, possibly with more support and opportunities for children of different communities to mingle. I do think that if we had had the opportunity to have closer relationships with the mainstream community as children, it would increase cultural understanding and community between Muslims and non-Muslims.*

# Inclusion and social cohesion

- What should we further research on?

- *How society can be influenced to be more inclusive and socially cohesive for Muslims in NZ?*
- *Some kind of support for migrant Muslims to get involved and be included.*
- *What are the barriers for first generation Muslims in integrating with Aotearoa communities and values?*
- *Based on the experiences of our own community - what kind of community infrastructure, services, development work is needed?*
- *Exclusion (Rejections) of Muslim male and female students in industries such as aviation industry and others, and job social programs.*

# Education

- What should we further research on?

- *What is NZ Muslim Identity?*
- *Islamic education in New Zealand - secondary schools' curriculum*
- *For Muslims to learn about basics about how to talk to people and then look at something else. Manners bring people together.*



# Education

- What should we further research on?

*How Islam / tazkiya al nafs can heal NZ mental health epidemic. Psychologists in NZ are already recommending the Sufi/Rumi but that costs a large sum of money to be a part of. Why don't masjids do a similar program for free? When communities feel the peace and healing in Islam, they will know it for themselves, there is nothing to be afraid of. The problems are that Muslims are insular and have low self esteem and do not act like they know the worth or beauty of what they have.*

# Muslim women

- What should we further research on?

- *Muslim women, we are visibly Muslim, and it comes with its pros and cons, maybe look into this side of things too.*
- *On Muslim women wearing hijab.*
- *Maybe some work which includes the perspectives of people who are Muslim but do not typically 'look' Muslim - which is something I identify with a lot; I do not 'look' Muslim and am often disregarded in that sense so it often impacts my sense of identity - so that could be an interesting area to look into.*
- *Would be good to have a comparative study of Muslim women with hijab vs Muslim women without hijab - are opportunities different? Are they treated differently?*

# Any other comments or feedback

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Develop our communities.

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Muslim education for Muslim kids in schools.

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LGBTQ is against Muslim values; leaders should talk about it.

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The government policies are not inclusive for Muslims.

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Education about accepting differences for everyone.

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As Muslims we too need to be inclusive.

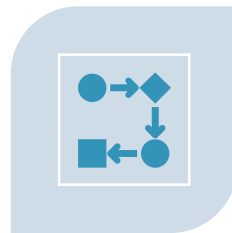
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Halal certification on products.

# FEEDBACK ON THE SURVEY DESIGN



THE  
QUESTIONNAIRE  
WAS LONG



IT SHOULD HAVE  
BEEN A PROGRESS  
BAR.



ALL QUESTIONS  
SHOULD HAVE  
HAD A NA  
OPTION.



APPRECIATION  
FOR OUR  
RESEARCH.



# AUTHORS PROFILES

**Dr. Fatima Junaid** is an experienced consultant and educator working within public and private sector for over a decade. Dr. Junaid has done extensive research with marginalized communities including refugees, women, migrants and fishers' communities. She focuses on developing mechanisms of support for better wellbeing outcomes. Currently she is a Senior lecturer at Massey University and a member of the several wellbeing (academic and professional) organisations. She also runs a social media support network group for Pakistani women in academia.

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**Jennifer Khan -Janif** is a Community Researcher and a highly skilled and experienced Community Development Practitioner specialising in working with ethnic communities. She has worked in various public sector roles in Aotearoa New Zealand since 1990. Most recently, she has been instrumental in bringing academic scholars, community leaders and policymakers together on three different community development projects supporting Muslim communities in Aotearoa New Zealand.

She is a graduate of Auckland University of Technology with Master in Human Rights with Honours and a post graduate Diploma in Arts and a Bachelor of Arts majoring in Sociology from University of Auckland.

# **MANY THANKS**

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