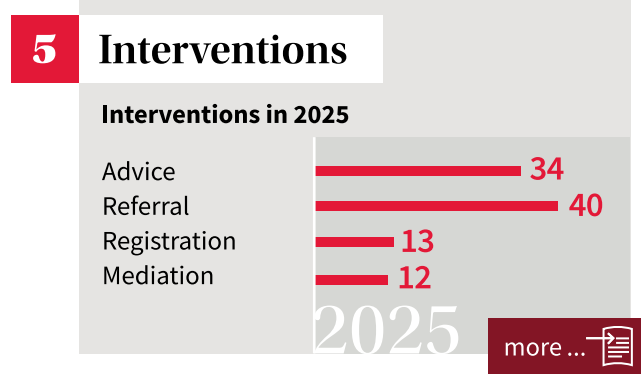
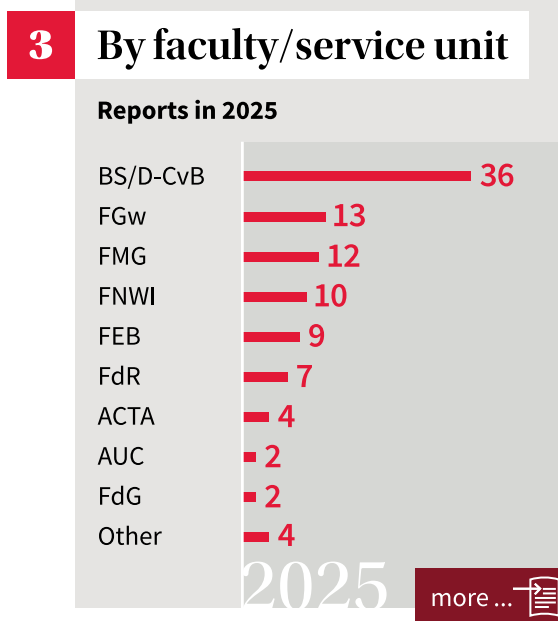
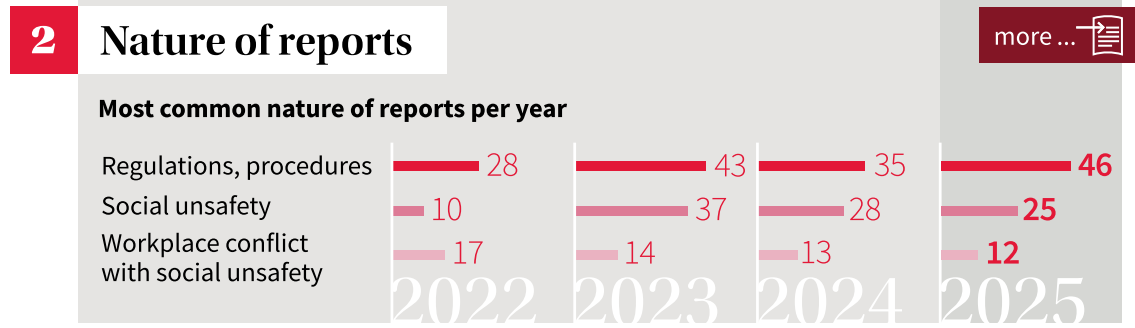
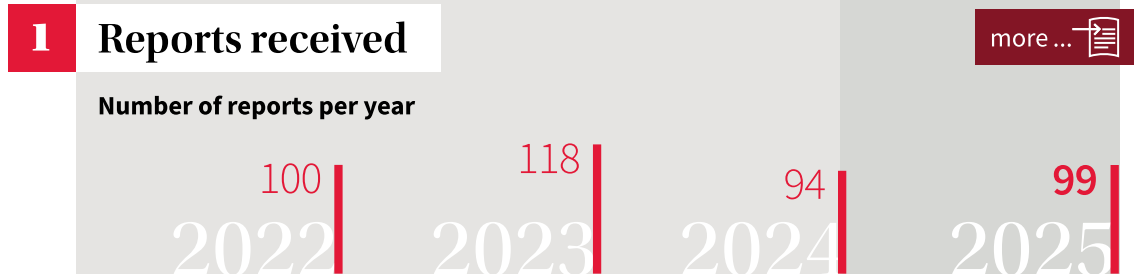


2025

# The Ombudsperson in 2025

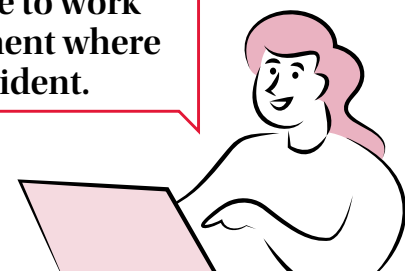


The Ombudsperson handles reports, identifies patterns and makes recommendations. In this overview, insights are shared with the aim of contributing to a socially safe and learning UvA.



- ### 6 Recommendations
- The Ombudsperson makes recommendations in several areas:
- 1 Invest in leadership and supervisors.
  - 2 Improve the Complaints Committee process.
  - 3 Investigate and improve the support provided to Examination Boards.
  - 4 Focus on the implementation of earlier recommendations.
- [more ...](#)

Together, we continue to work towards an environment where social safety is self-evident.



1

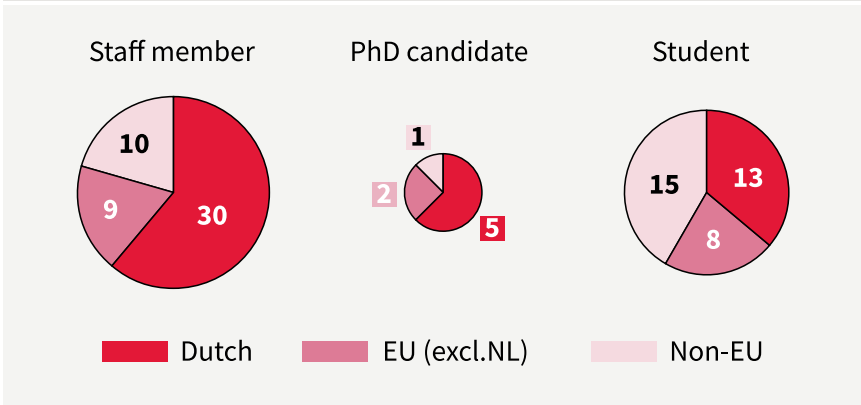
# Reports received

In 2025, the Ombudsperson received **99** reports, **49** of which were from staff, **36** from students and **8** from PhD candidates (as well as **6** reports in the 'other/external' category). The number of reports was slightly higher than in 2024, when 94 were received.

Profile of reporting parties per year					
Year	Staff member	Student	PhD candidate	External	Other/unknown
2022	43	39	12	–	6
2023	59	35	17	–	7
2024	49	32	13	–	–
<b>2025</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>

The number of reports from students in particular continued to be remarkably low, given the total number of students. Of the **99** reports received, **48** were made by international staff or students. International staff and students were proportionally overrepresented.

## Reports from Dutch and Internationals in 2025



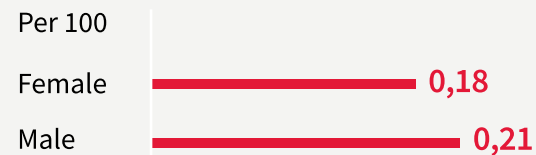
In 2025 – as in previous years – more women than men made reports to the Ombudsperson, but the difference has decreased significantly. In 2025, we saw a **21%** decrease in the number of reports from women compared with 2024, and a **43%** increase in the number of reports from men compared with 2024.

Gender of reporting parties per year				
Year	Female	Male	Non-binary	Unknown/not specified
2022	60	39	–	1
2023	78	37	2	1
2024	66	26	1	1
<b>2025</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>–</b>

## 1

Relative to the total population, more men than women made a report to the Ombudsperson in 2025 (see figure below). In 2025, the Ombudsperson received one report from a person identifying as non-binary.

## Biological sex of reporting parties per 100 in 2025



Of the **36** reports from students, **23** reports (**64%**) were made by international students.

Most reports from international students were made by students from outside the EU (**15** of the **23** reports from international students were made by students from outside the EU).

## Reports from Dutch and international students per year

Year	International	Dutch
2022	18	21
2023	19	15
2024	16	16
<b>2025</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>13</b>

The profile of accused parties changed in 2025 compared with previous years. There were still more reports about academic staff than support staff, but the difference was much smaller. The number of reports about academic staff has decreased compared with previous years, while the number of reports concerning support and management staff has increased.

Reports with the 'Other/unknown' profile are those where the subject of the report is not an individual person, but staff in general in departments involved in the implementation of regulations, procedures and policies.

## Profile of accused parties per year (2022-2025)

Year	Academic staff	Support and management staff	Student	Other/unknown
2022	54	23	4	19
2023	55	16	3	43
2024	43	12	2	37
<b>2025</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>44</b>

## 2

## Nature of reports

As in previous years, most reports in 2025 were about the perceived incorrect application of regulations, procedures and policies, followed by a perceived structural lack of social safety, with many reports involving a combination of complaints.

In 2025, the Ombudsperson received **46** reports involving the perceived incorrect application of regulations, procedures and policies. This was a **31%** increase from 2024.

In 2025, the Ombudsperson received **25** reports relating to a perceived structural lack of social safety, mainly from staff. Most of these reports were about a perceived socially unsafe culture within a team, research group, or department.

In 2025, the Ombudsperson also received a number of reports of workplace discrimination where the individuals reporting experienced an unjustified distinction being made between different staff members. **10** reports concerning perceived discrimination were received, of which **2** had discrimination as the primary complaint and **8** had discrimination as a supplementary complaint (in most cases, the primary complaint was a structural lack of social safety or an escalating conflict in the workplace).

Of the reports received in 2025 about perceived discrimination, discrimination on the basis of age was the most common, followed by gender and nationality. A number of the reports about discrimination involved multiple grounds of discrimination.

We see that social safety is increasingly prioritised within the UvA.



Reports by grounds of discrimination in 2024/2025

Year	Origin	Gender	Age	Nationality	Political affiliation	Sexual orientation	Religion	Worldview
2024	8	3	1	3	3	–	–	–
<b>2025</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

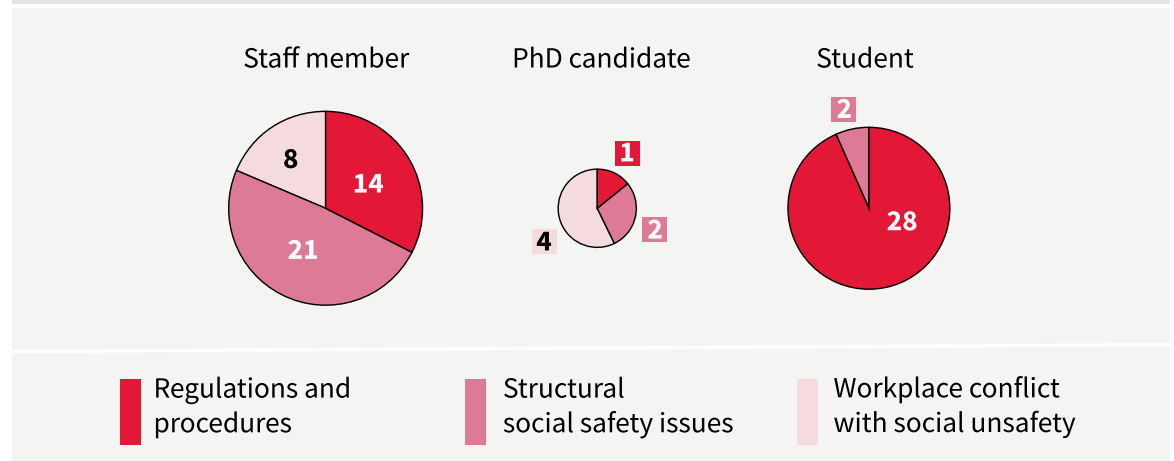
# 2

### Most common nature of report by faculty/ service unit in 2025

Nature	BS/D - CvB	FGw	FMG	FNWI	FEB	FdR	ACTA	AUC	FdG	Other
Regulations and procedures	20	6	6	–	7	3	1	–	2	1
Structural social safety issues	13	1	2	4	1	3	–	1	–	–
Workplace conflict with social unsafety	2	3	1	3	–	1	1	1	–	–

Most reports from staff concerned a perceived lack of social safety, followed by the incorrect application of regulations, procedures and policies and conflicts in the workplace combined with a lack of social safety. Most reports from students concerned the perceived incorrect application of regulations, procedures or policies.

### Profile of reporting parties by most common nature of report in 2025



**3**

## By faculty/service unit

The reports came from a range of faculties and service units, with a fluctuating picture. There was a clear decrease in the number of reports from the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences (FMG) in 2025. Conversely, there was a notable rise in the number of reports relating to the Executive Staff and service units (some of which were also directed at the Executive Board) partly due to an increase in reports about a perceived lack of social safety arising from the application of regulations, procedures and policies.

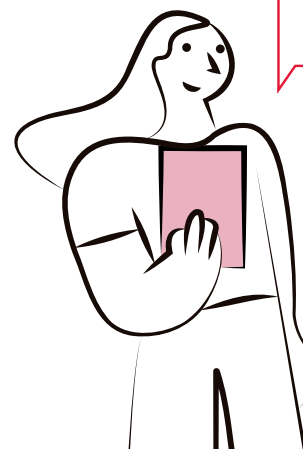
Reports concerning Executive Staff/service units/Executive Board

Year	StS	FS	UB	BS	JZ	AC	CvB	CDO	AZ	ICTS
2022	3	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-
2023	1	2	4	-	-	1	-	3	-	1
2024	-	1	5	1	-	4	-	1	2	-
<b>2025</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

Reports by faculty/ service unit per year (2022-2025)

Year	BS/D-CvB	FGw	FMG	FNWI	FEB	FdR	ACTA	AUC	FdG	Other
2022	5	17	19	20	6	8	11	2	5	7
2023	12	19	31	11	11	11	8	11	3	1
2024	14	10	25	13	10	5	9	5	0	3
<b>2025</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>

We encourage each other to speak up about difficult situations to promote a socially safer UvA.



## 4

## Reporting Point SVI

Since 1 October 2025, the Office of the Ombudsperson has been formally designated as the Reporting Point for Social Safety & Integrity (SVI). Students and staff who do not know where to turn for help can make a report to this independent and confidential reporting point. The Reporting Point SVI acts as a central point of contact for reports and questions about social safety and integrity. The reporting point registers the report, provides information and advice and – if desired – ensures that the report is forwarded directly to the appropriate person to handle it.

Between 1 October and 31 December 2025, **21** reports were received.

### Reports by profile and faculty/service unit

	Student	Staff member	PhD candidate	Former student	External
FGw	5	2	1	1	–
FEB	3	1	–	–	–
FNWI	3	1	–	–	–
FMG	1	1	–	–	–
FdR	1	–	–	–	–
Other	–	–	–	–	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

The Reporting Point SVI received **2** reports of perceived discrimination on the basis of origin and political beliefs (which fall into the category of unwanted behaviour).

## 4

Categories of reports to the Reporting Point SVI (multiple categories possible)		
Category	Category indicated by reporting party	Category assigned by Reporting Point SVI
Unwanted behaviour	13	15
Patterns of social unsafety	10	–
Suspected integrity violation	8	–
Internal procedures and regulations	5	2
Suspected abuses	3	–
Scientific integrity	3	1
Concerning behaviour	–	1
Social safety + employment conflict	–	1

## Type of follow-up selected by the reporting party

Follow up	Times chosen
The reporting point informs you about the options, and you may then contact the relevant channels yourself. For example, because you are still unsure whether (and how) you want your report to be followed up.	13
The reporting point forwards your report to the appropriate place, and you will be contacted from there.	8

The Reporting Point SVI aims for a maximum processing time of four working days, i.e. the report is followed up by the reporting point with advice or a referral within four working days.

## Most common referral

Referrer	Number
Confidential adviser	10
Safety and security	3
Programme director	2
Study adviser	2

## 5

## Interventions

Interventions per year (2022-2025)					
Year	Advice	Referral	Registration	Mediation	Investigation
2022	32	34	19	9	–
2023	46	23	30	17	2
2024	30	28	22	13	1
<b>2025</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>–</b>

The role of the Ombudsperson is twofold. First, the Ombudsperson is responsible for handling, investigating and – where possible – helping to resolve reports of a possible structural pattern of undesirable behaviour. Second, the Ombudsperson has the task of signaling issues for the Executive Board and the Deans: based on the reports received, the Ombudsperson identifies patterns that may lead to follow-up in the form of policy changes, revision of existing procedures or further investigation.

The handling of reports is always customised, and appropriate interventions are implemented depending on the content, context and help request. About half of all reports of undesirable behaviour were dealt with by the Ombudsperson giving advice to the parties involved or through mediation. It is worth noting that some reporting parties felt the need to protect their identity, so follow-up was not always possible. Some reports were closed after the report was registered. In these situations, the reporting parties chose to have their report registered without immediate follow-up, so that if multiple similar reports are made, the Ombudsperson can undertake (or commission) an investigation at a later stage should it be determined that there is a structural situation involving a lack of social safety.

The Ombudsperson will refer a reporting party to another service within the social safety network if that service is better suited to handle the report. In principle, the Ombudsperson does not deal with individual reports that explicitly fall within the remit of a specific committee, such as the Academic Integrity Committee, the Complaints Committee or an Examinations Board.

In 2025, around **40** of the **99** reporting parties were referred. Referrals are made with due respect for the necessary confidentiality, diligence and follow-up care.

## 6

## Recommendations

The recommendations stem from identified patterns and each contributes to promoting social safety.

### 1 Invest systematically in supervisors at all levels.

- Focus on the further development of good leadership and managerial skills, with a focus on promoting social safety within teams. Supervisors have an important role and responsibility in promoting desirable behaviour and setting standards, making it easier to talk about behaviour and to speak to staff or students in situations involving undesirable behaviour.
- Conduct annual consultations, rehabilitation interviews and exit interviews with staff in a systematic way and use these to facilitate discussions about social safety and (un)desirable behaviour.
- Supervisors also have an important responsibility for the follow-up to reports or notifications of a lack of social safety. A transparent process and effective follow-up for each notification or report contributes to trust in the organisation and to the willingness to discuss behaviour.

- Ensure that staff and students are supported in discussing behaviour, including those who find themselves in the role of bystander, for example through active bystander training and practising with case studies.

### 2 Improve the process of the Complaints Committee (based on the 2021 Regulations for the Handling of Complaints from Staff and Students).

- The current way of working undermines the trust of staff and students in the institution and creates a barrier to making a complaint. Ensure compliance with the legal processing time for complaints and provide timely and proactive communication about the process, including any delays, the new time frame and the next steps.
- Acknowledge in the decisions made on complaints when things have gone wrong and apologise if necessary, focusing on restorative action and follow-up care.
- Collectively learn from complaints that have been handled – identifying what insights, interventions or process adjustments they have led to – and communicate these lessons within the organisation.

## 6

**3 Investigate the facilitation of Examinations Boards and the safeguarding of their independence and implement improvement measures where necessary.**

- Investigate the composition, facilitation and working methods of Examinations Boards, with specific attention to the legal protection of students, transparency and communication about procedures, compliance with legal time frames and the independence of Examinations Boards from management and the Executive Board.
- Update the UvA guide for Examinations Boards and invest in improving the quality of their annual reports, strengthening the PDCA cycle and safeguarding the implementation and follow-up of the recommendations made by Examinations Boards.

**4 Focus on the implementation of previous recommendations by the Ombudsperson:**

- a** Arrange the necessary safeguards for the vulnerable position of student assistants.
- b** Invest in raising awareness among students regarding desirable and undesirable behaviour and the available services, for example through accessible videos.
- c** Improve the provision of accessible information and adequate support and guidance for international students, PhD candidates and staff, and invest simultaneously in the intercultural competence of staff who regularly interact with international students or staff.

- d** Implement the UvA's Code of Conduct in daily practice by translating it into the specific study and work context, for example through conversation guidelines and a communication campaign on appropriate behaviour.
- e** Evaluate the implementation of job classification procedures in relation to the Outline Memorandum on Lecturer Policy and implement improvement measures where necessary (with specific attention to processing time, the procedure itself, transparency and communication with those involved, and clarity regarding the criteria applied).
- f** Develop a clear legal framework regarding the position of representative advisory bodies to provide support in actual or potential conflicts involving undesirable behaviour, clarifying roles, responsibilities, and a clear escalation route.
- g** Improve administrative information and governance ("UvA in good order") by ensuring an adequate information position and clear roles, ownership and accountability at both central and decentralised levels.
- h** Provide a PhD mentor in all faculties and/or research units and ensure that education and training relating to social safety is available for PhD candidates and supervisors. Make professional development for supervisors mandatory as a condition for supervising PhD candidates.