

# Career Day – ECR Survey Results

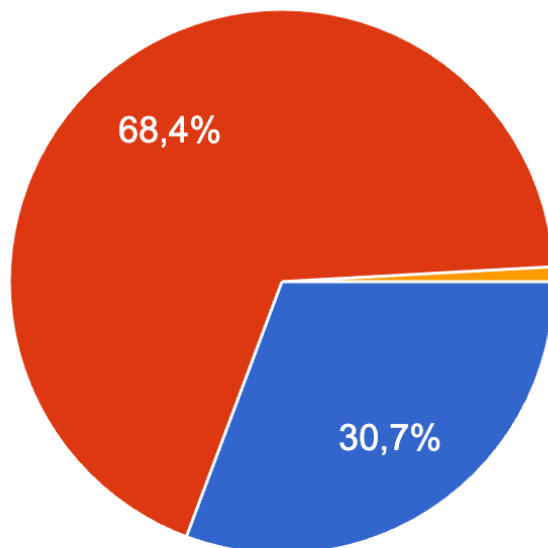
July 24, 2025

Dresden, Rossendorf, Germany



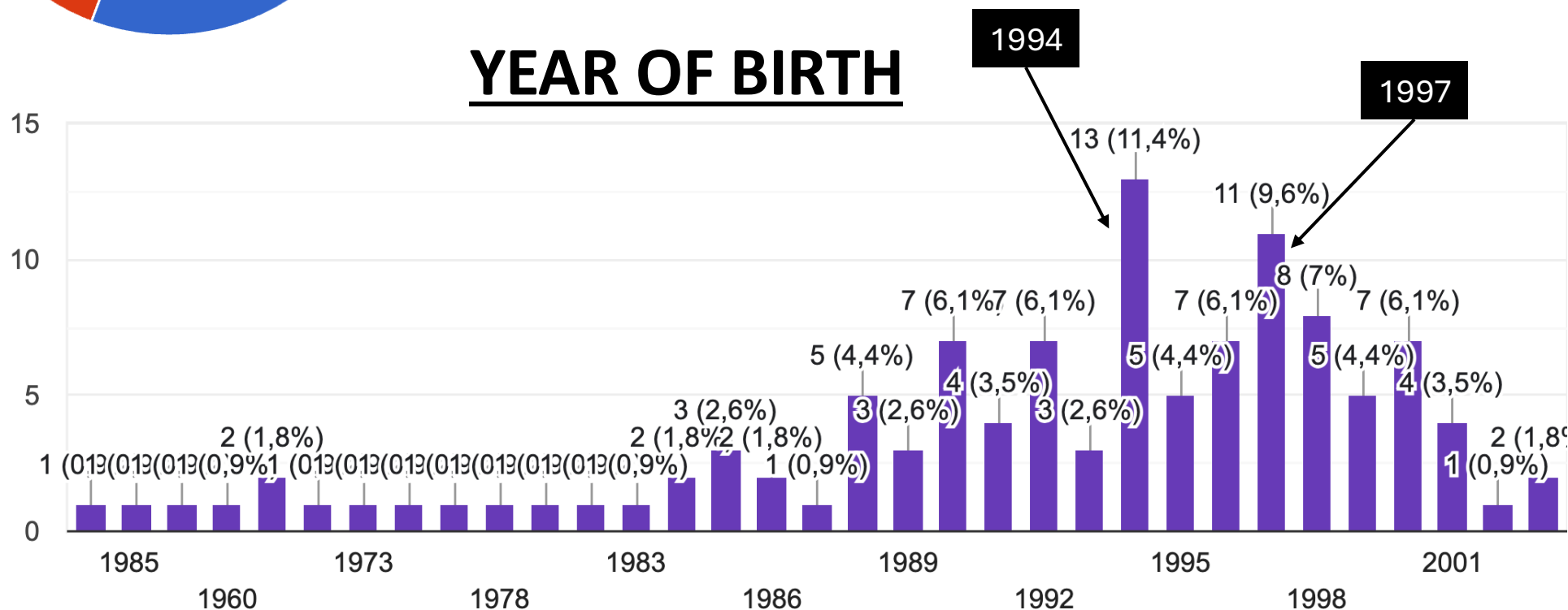
# GENDER

- Female
- Male
- Non-binary
- Other
- Prefer not to say

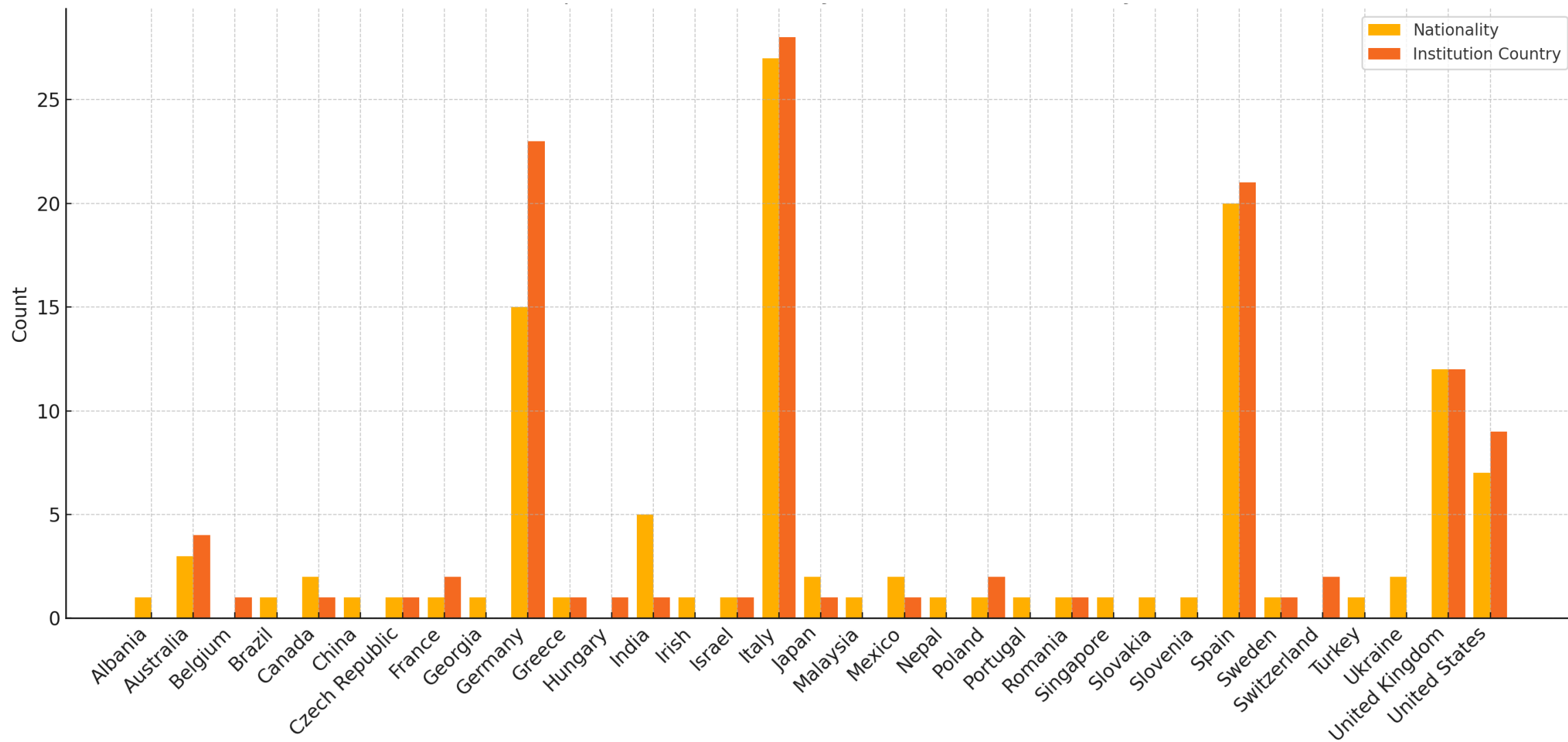


114 participants

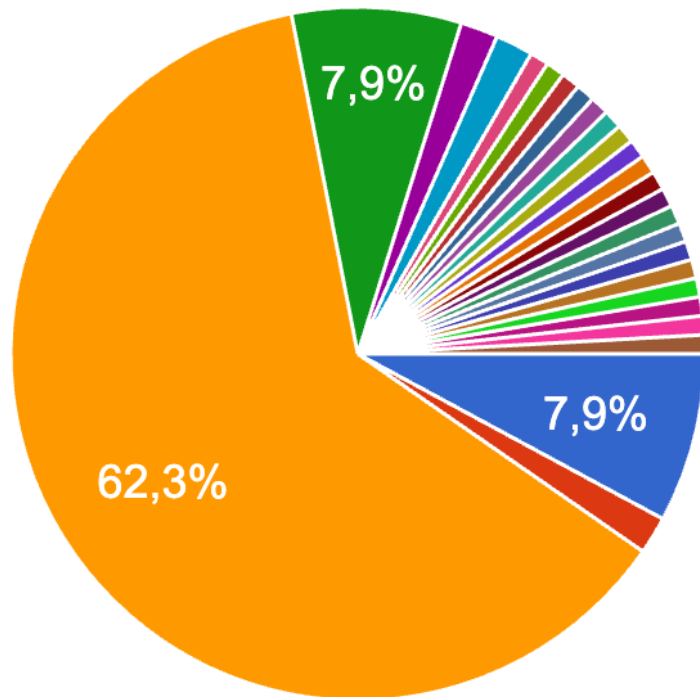
# YEAR OF BIRTH



# NATIONALITY AND COUNTRY OF INSTITUTION

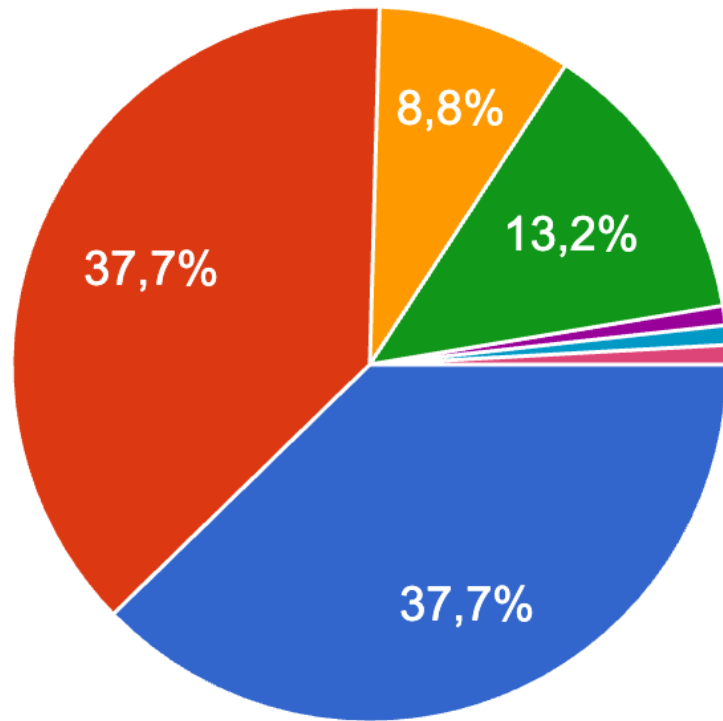


# FIELD OF RESEARCH



- Astrophysics (model)
- Astrophysics (observations)
- Nuclear physics (experiment)
- Nuclear physics (theory)
- Cosmochemistry
- Medical Physics
- Radiation Protection
- Particle astrophysics (dark matter)

# CURRENT CAREER STAGE

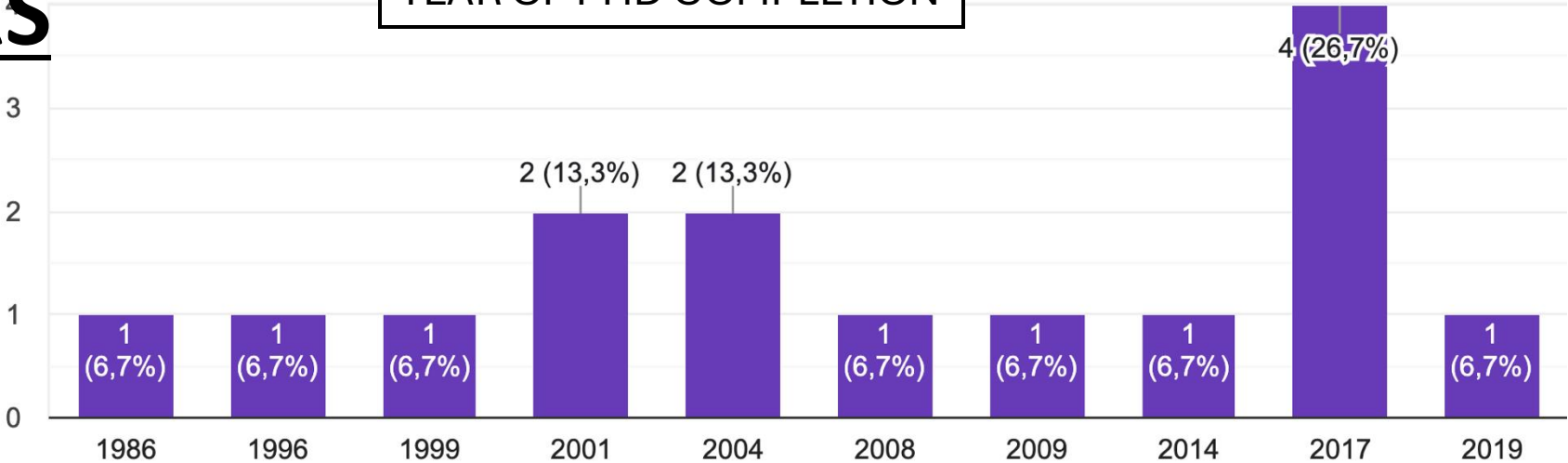


- PhD student
- PostDoc
- Junior research leader/fellow/tenure-track
- Senior/Group leader
- Associate Professor
- Senior, not Group leader
- Master's Student

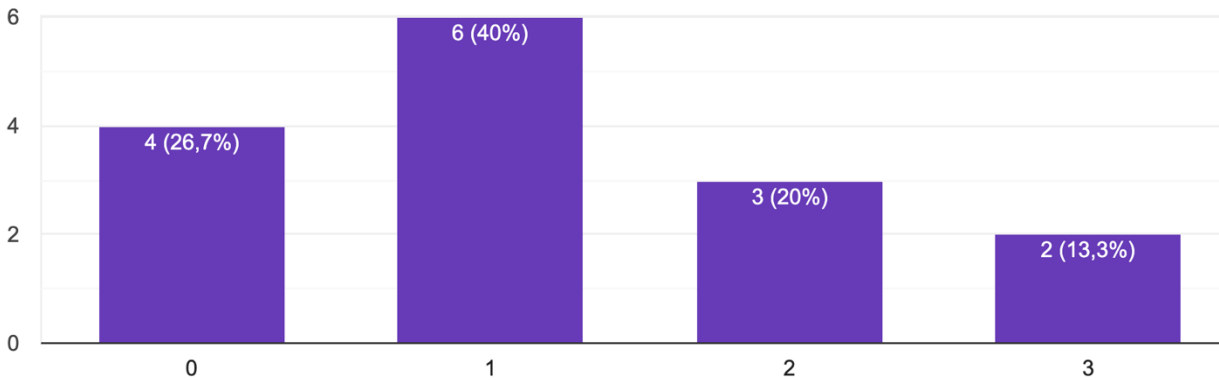
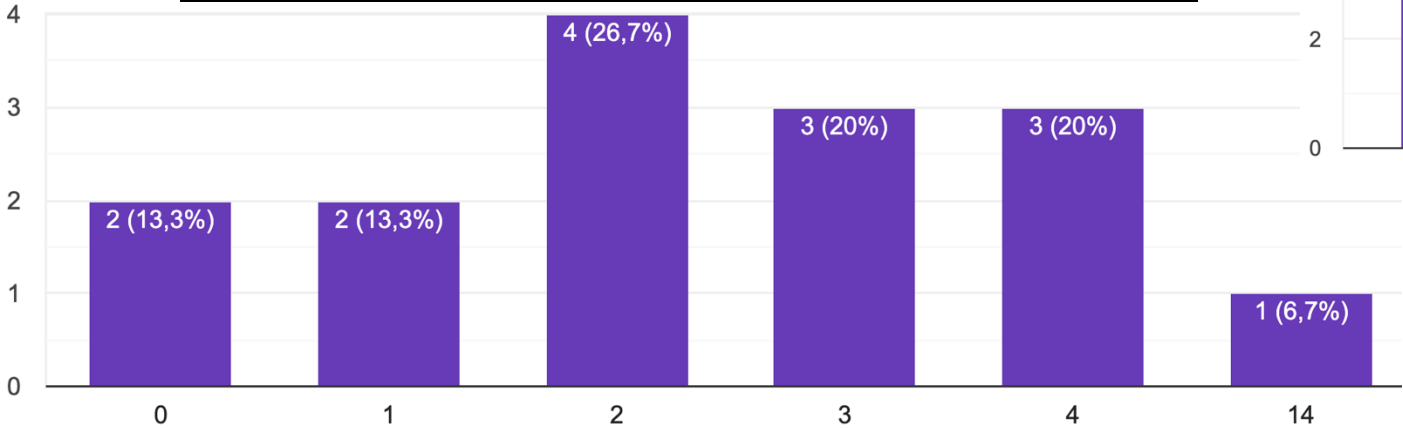
# GROUP LEADERS

15 answers

YEAR OF PHD COMPLETION



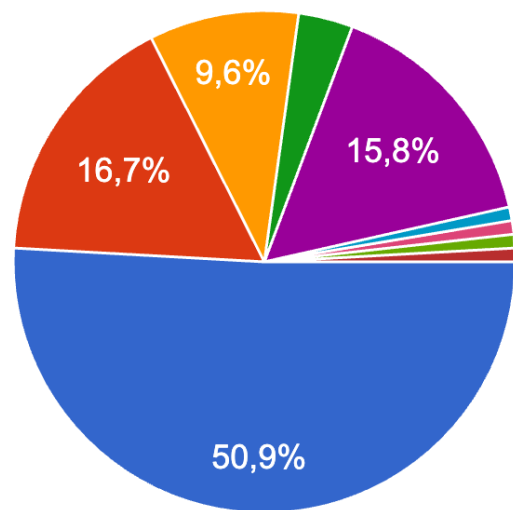
NUMBER OF PHD CANDIDATES IN THE GROUP



NUMBER OF POSTDOCS IN THE GROUP

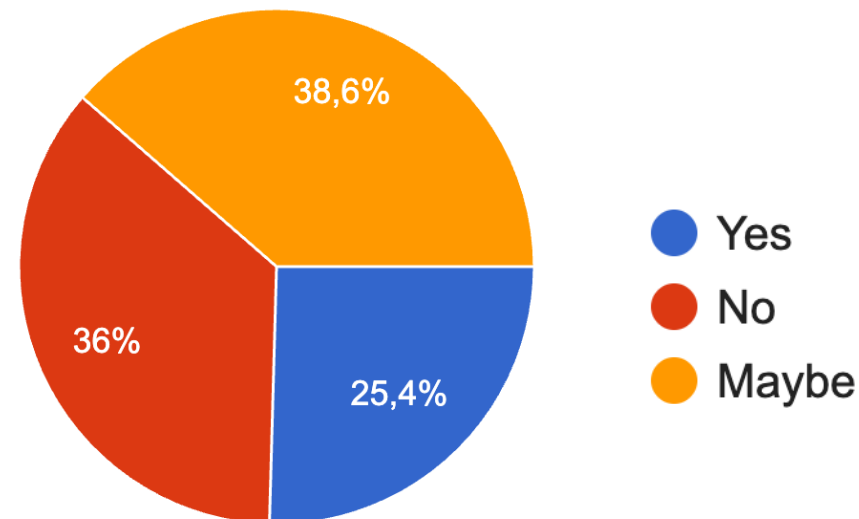
# FUNDING

Source of funding



- National funding agency
- European/international funding (e.g. Marie Curie, ERC)
- Institutional grant
- Personal fellowship
- University
- scholarship
- PNRR funds
- National funding agency (INFN) and U...
- Government sponsorship

Do you plan to apply for ERC/Marie Curie or equivalent in the near future?



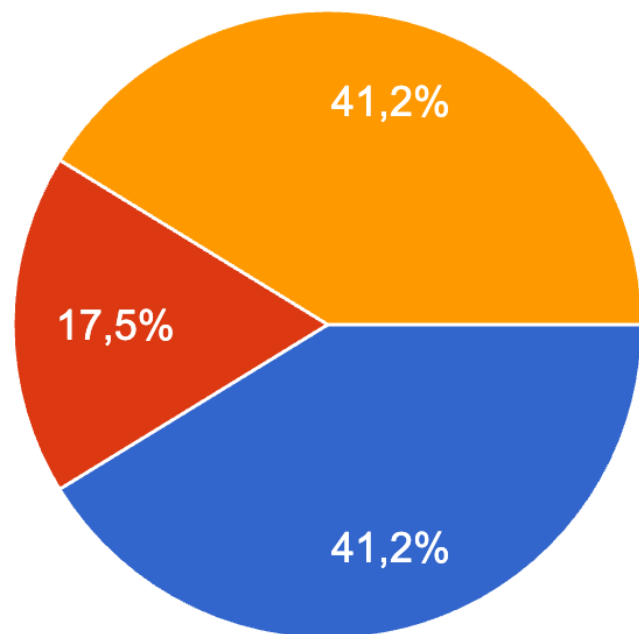
- Yes
- No
- Maybe

Main difficulties in securing funding

- High competitiveness
- Low success rate
- Lack of opportunities/positions
- Multiple rejections
- Funding cuts/ not enough funding

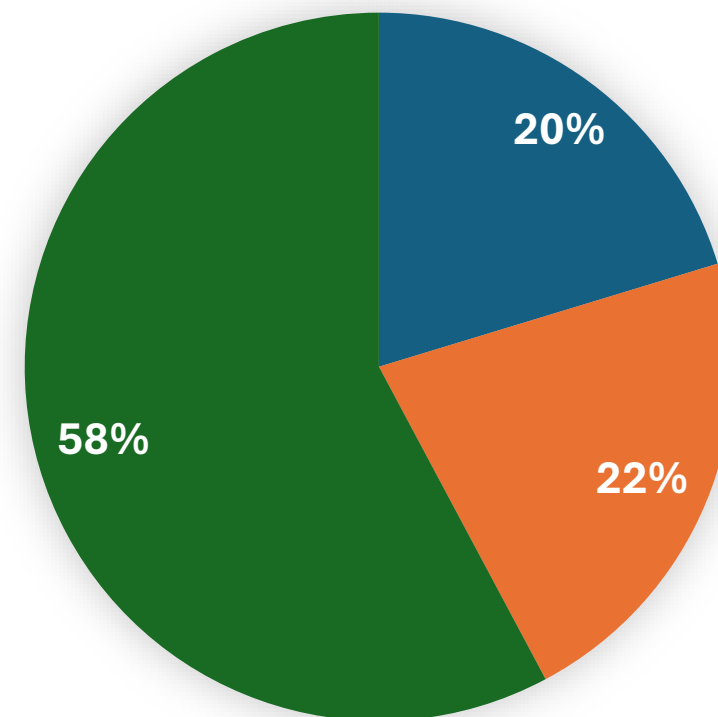
# INTERNATIONAL RELOCATIONS

Have you relocated internationally for your career?



- Yes, in the last 5 years
- Yes, more than 5 years ago
- No

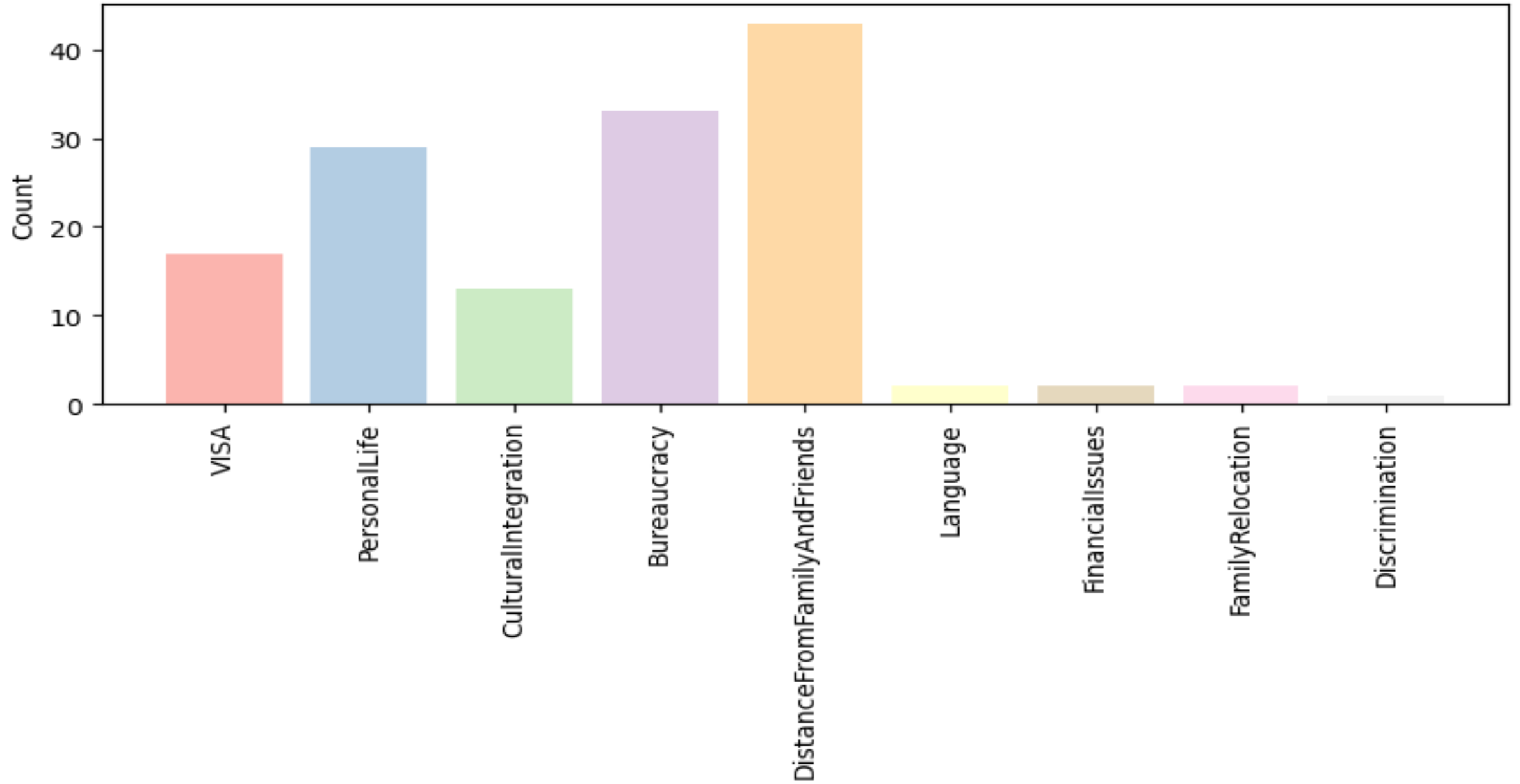
If yes, do you plan to go back to your country of origin?



- Yes
- No
- Not sure

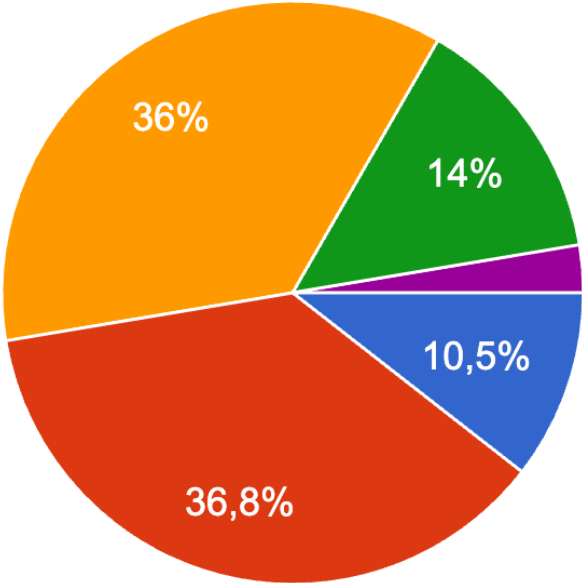


## Major difficulties when moving abroad



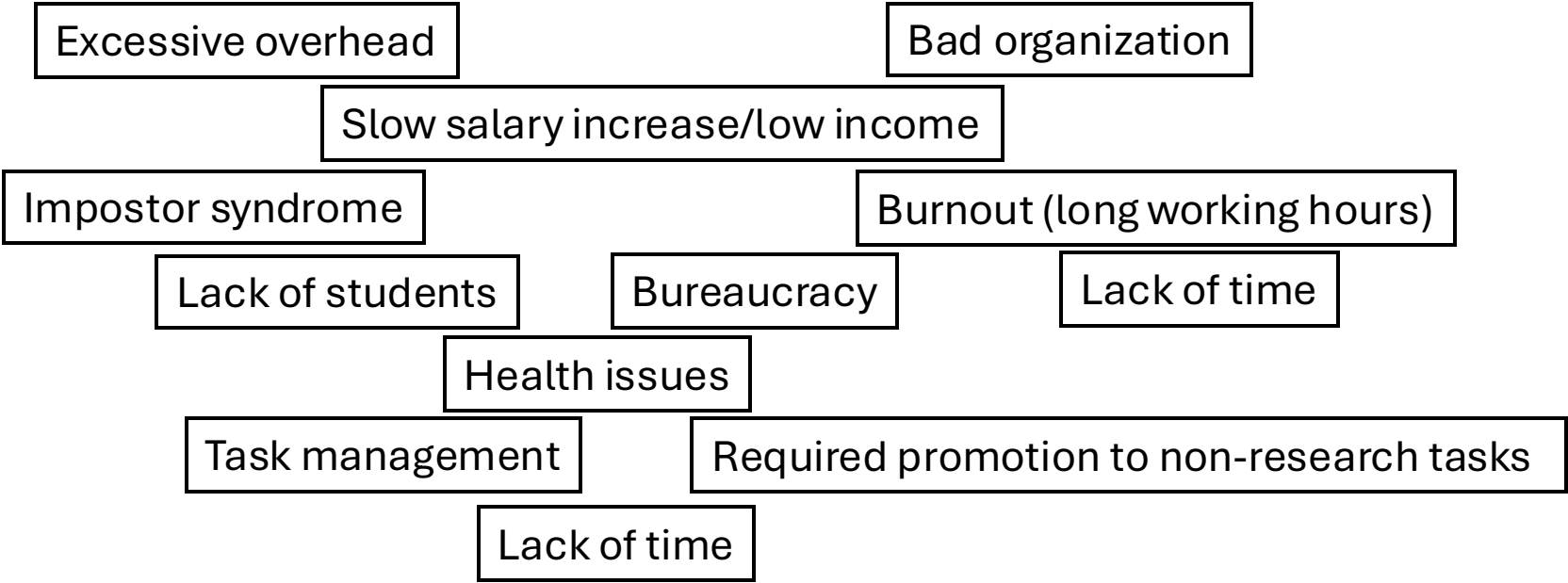
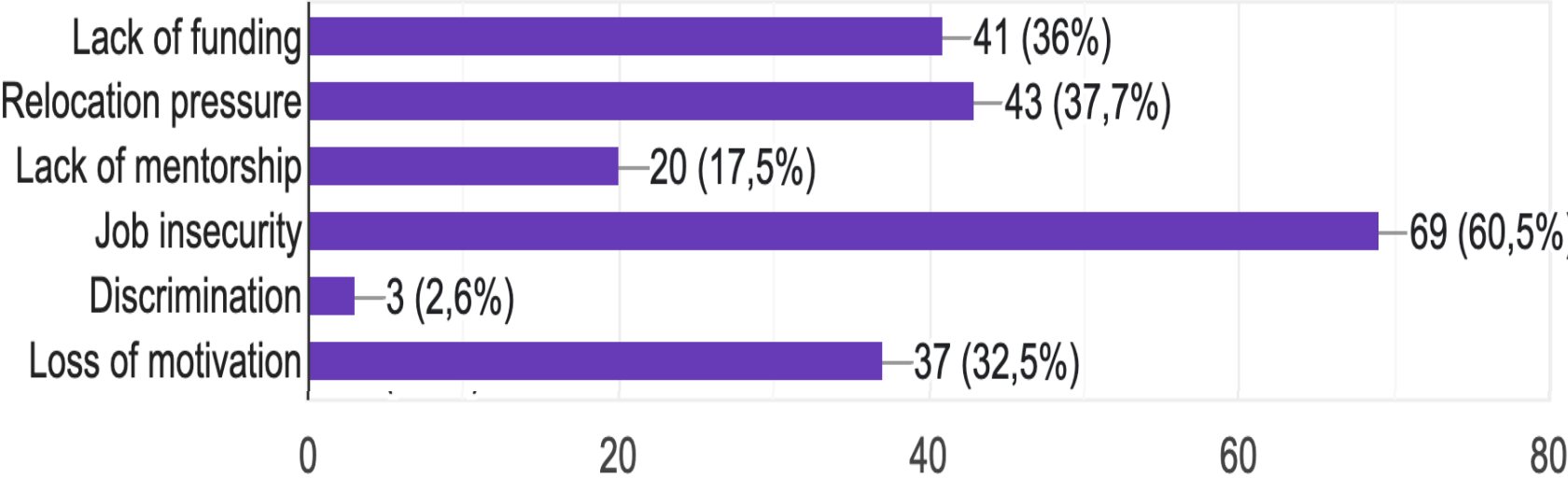
# WORK-LIFE BALANCE

How would you rate your work-life balance?

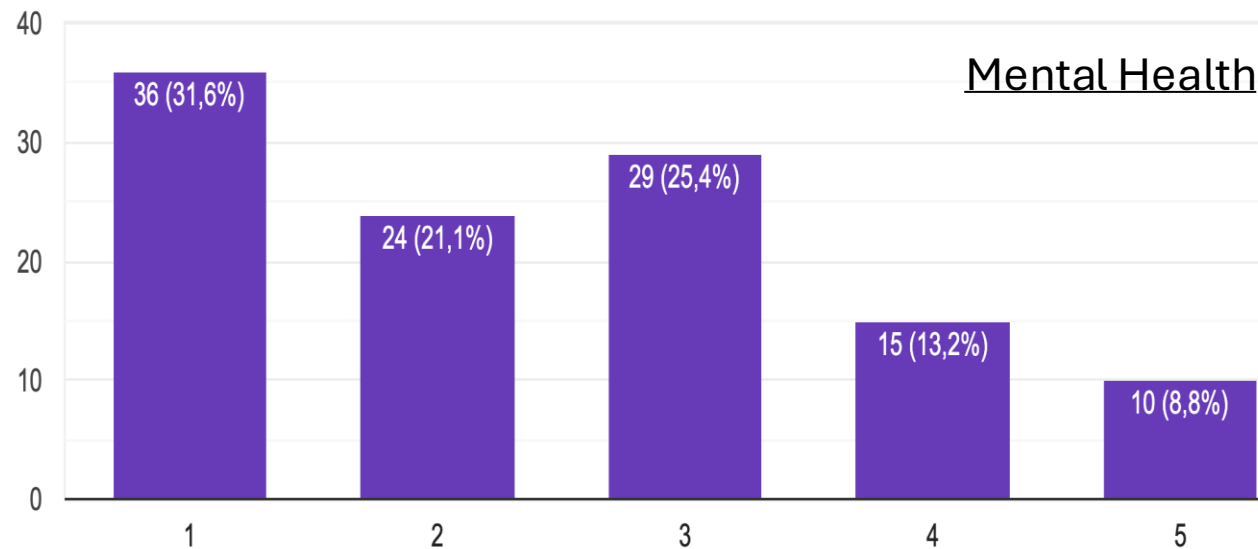
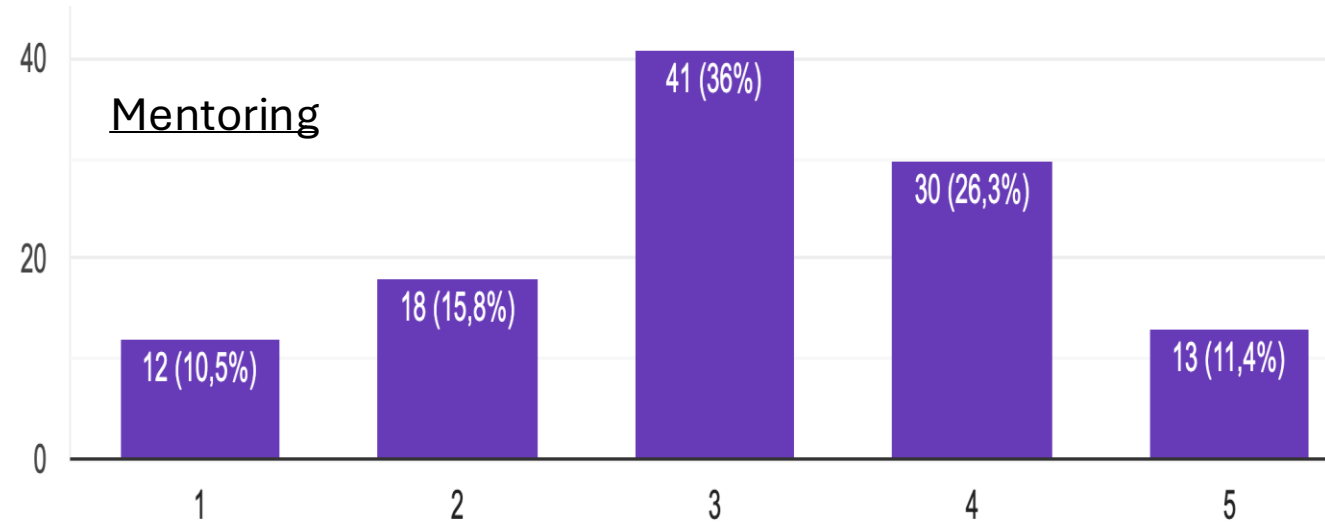
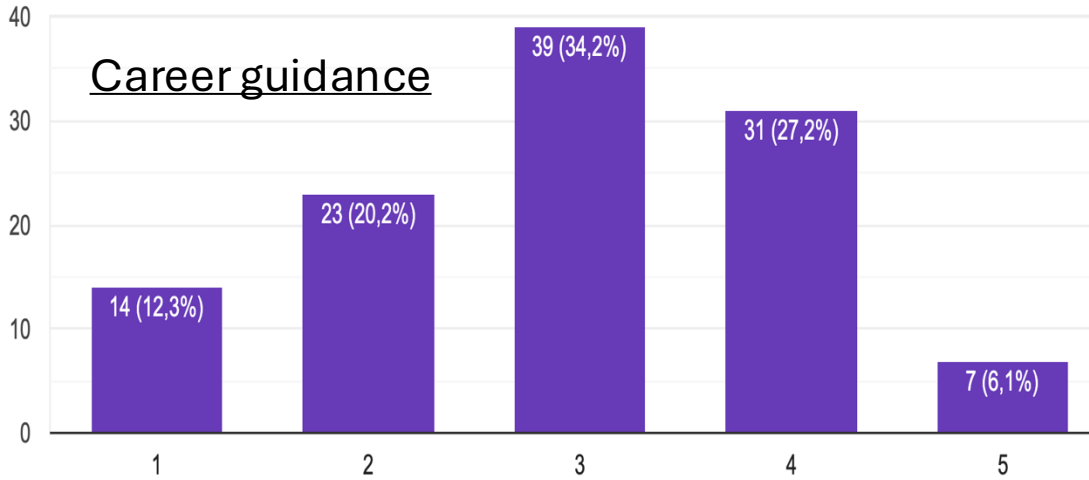


- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Very poor

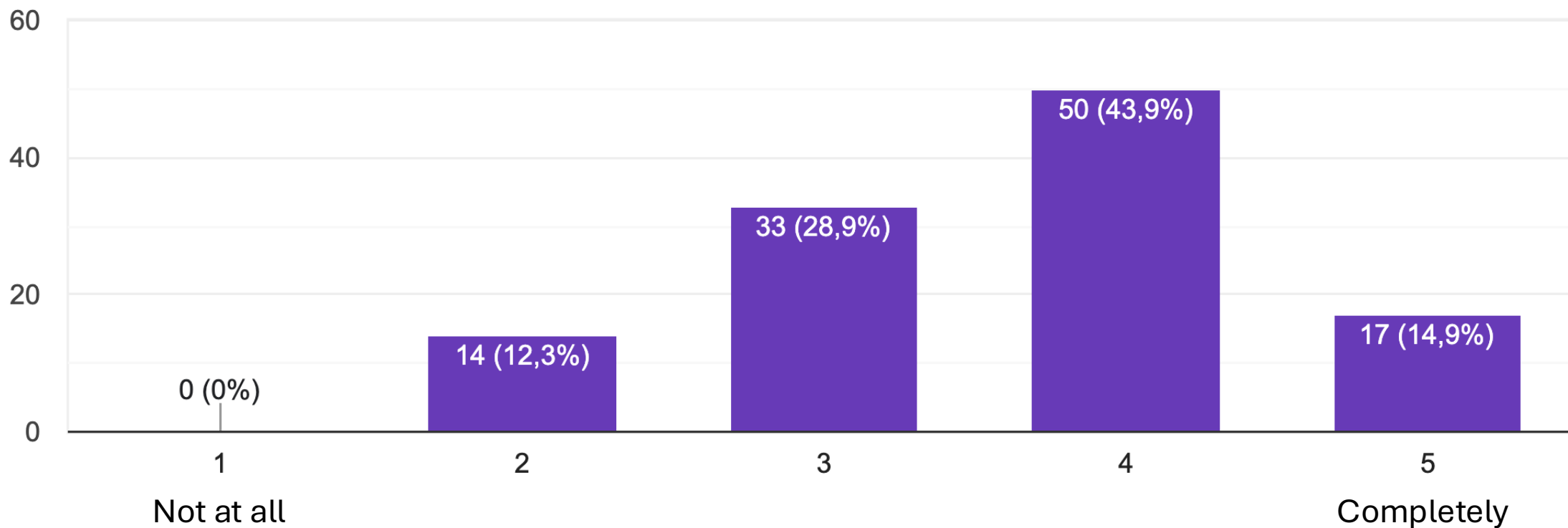
What are the biggest challenges you currently face in research?



How would you rate from 1 (**no support**) to 5 (**excellent support**) the support system offered by your institution for...



## How much do you feel integrated and supported in the research community?



# SUPPORT TO ECRs

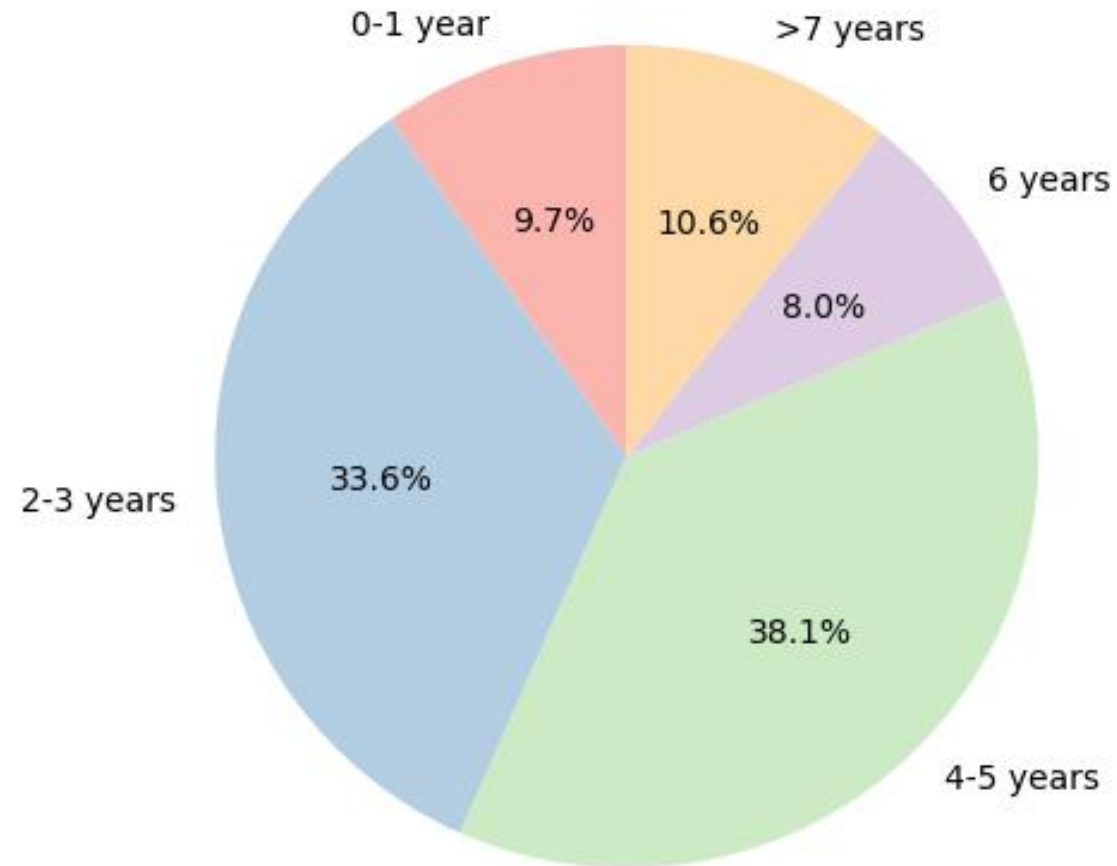
## Most helpful career development support tools



## Some other ideas on how institutions can support ECRs:

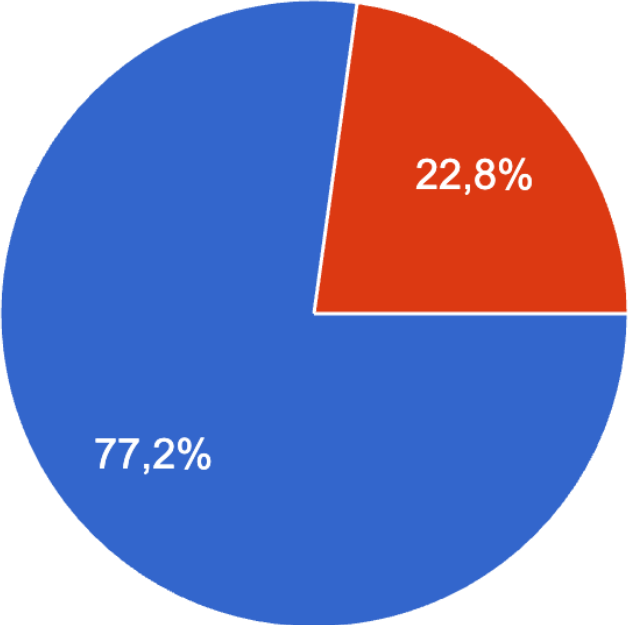
- Support in international relocation
- More funding opportunities/ long term positions
- Constructive feedback
- Training and guidance
- Improve mental health support and work-life balance
- Encourage and support development of independent research

**What is the maximum number of years of ‘job insecurity’  
(temporary/fixed-term contracts) you consider acceptable  
after completing a PhD?**



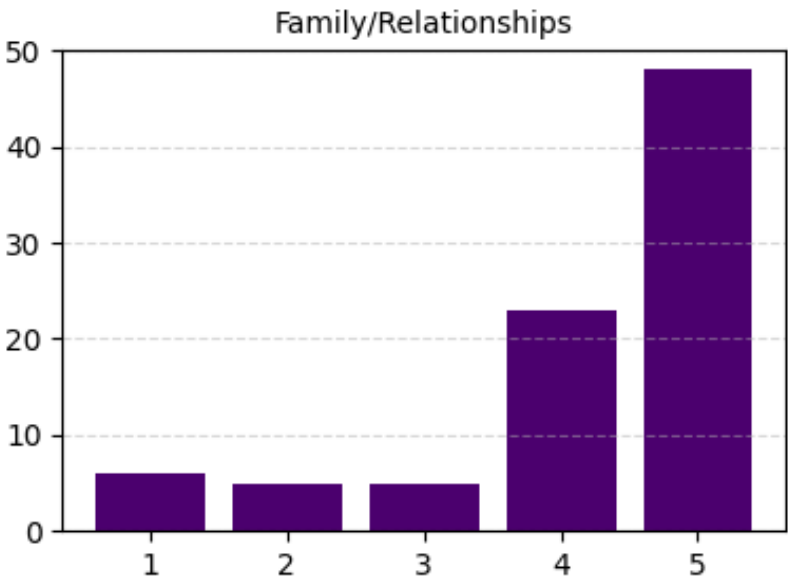
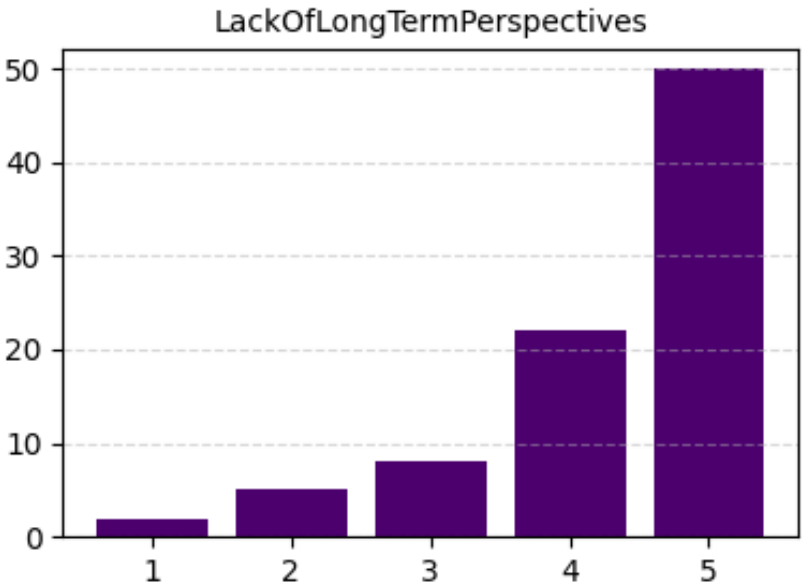
# LEAVING RESEARCH

Have you ever considered leaving research?



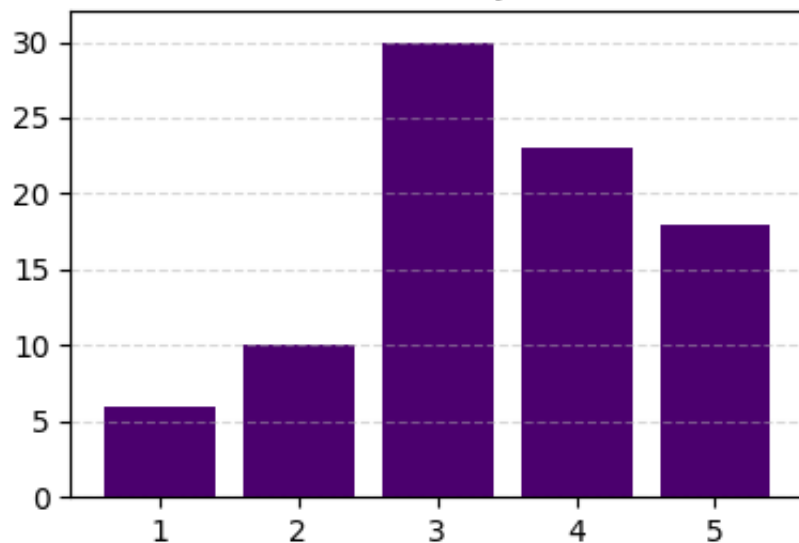
● Yes  
● No

Motivation for leaving research

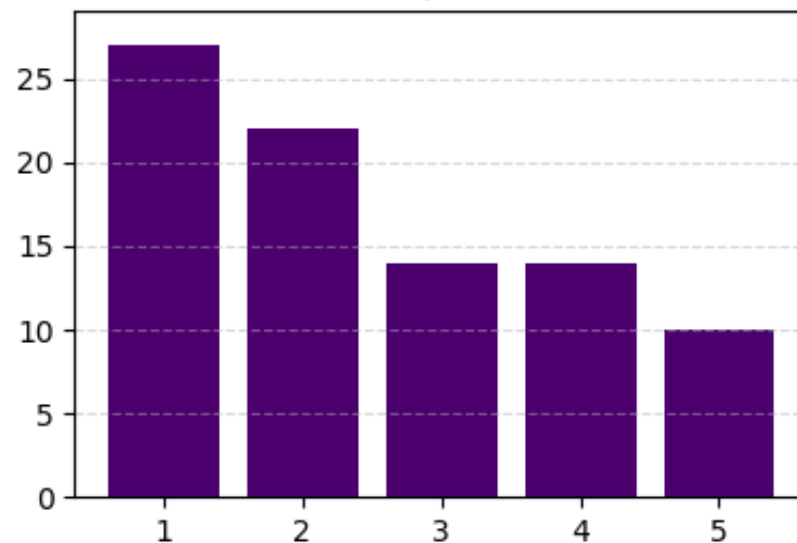


## Motivation for leaving research

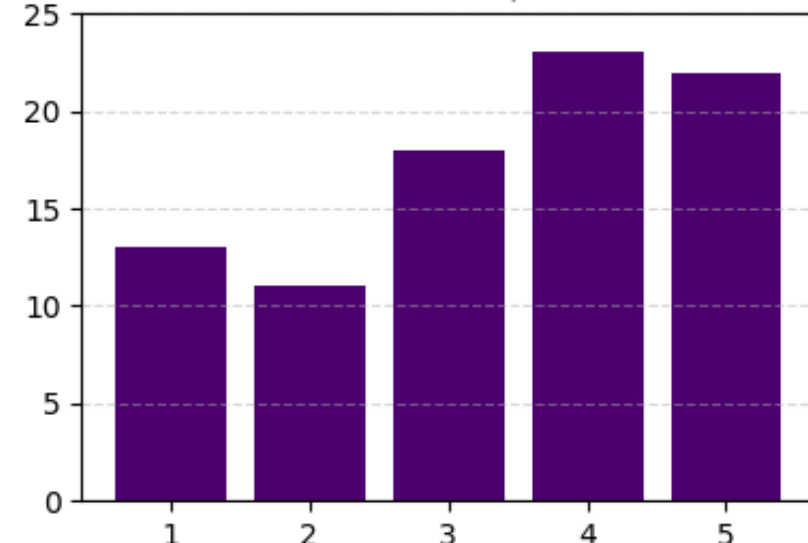
LowSalary



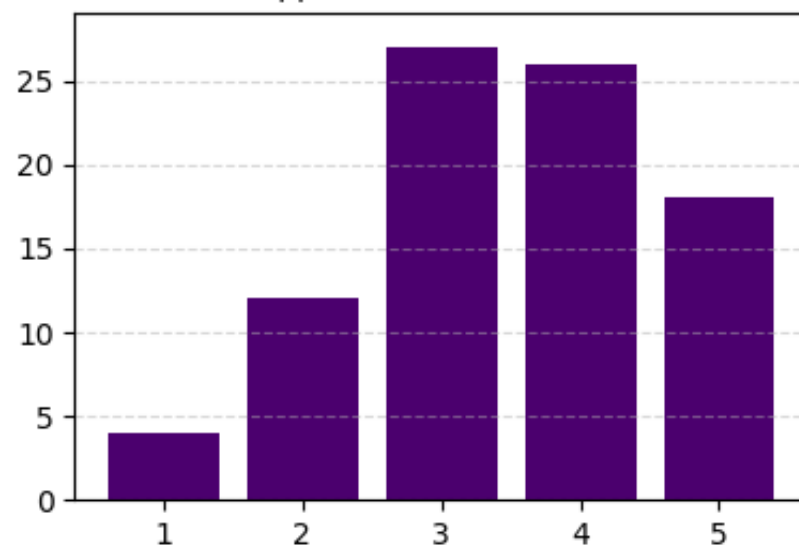
Discrimination/LackOfInclusion



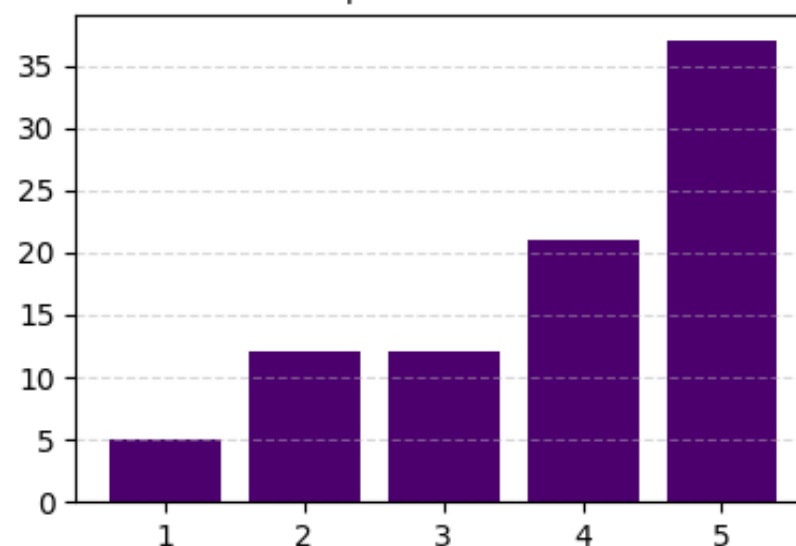
LossOfMotivation/Interest



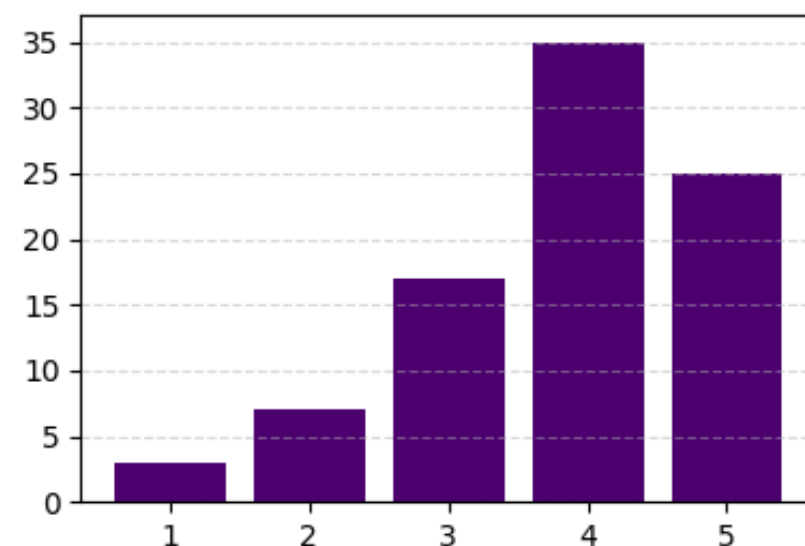
BetterOpportunitiesOutsideAcademia



FrequentRelocations



LackOfWorkLifeBalance





# Motivation for leaving research

Feeling of not having control over my career path, due mostly to funding insecurity

Impostor syndrome

To try something different

Competitiveness

Difficulty to be independent

Not having a mentor

Stress

Organization

Publication pressure

Lack of appreciation

No sense of own research

High standards

## Possible alternatives to research

- Industry (mainly tech)
- Data analysis/data science
- Research in private sector
- Software developer
- R&D
- Science communication
- Teaching
- Nuclear energy
- Nuclear medicine

## Difficulties in finding job outside academia

- Differences in application and hiring process → lack of preparation
- Age
- Too high qualifications
- Lack of experience

# FEEDBACK

Assegni di ricerca and borse di studio are slavery.

Politicians who decide on laws should have more insight into how research actually works before they make

Make senior people who don't is the point of people sitting people if there are so many people own fund

Contribute meaningfully retire! What saying that we need more young scientists? Th over 70 who

I think we should be working on closer ties to private industry to ensure that there are more funding opportunities and to also provide a route back into academic research. As well as focusing on paying current academic research staff a reasonable wage and not spreading funding too thin.

Things are changing in the US, the community needs to examine the future.

Please, don't see academic community uses a very bad way to communicate with as failure! For a stable one PhD student or tech community, use much more academic newsletters. Other communities, such as

Our work must not come with such uncertainty and a permanent position difficult I find the

I've enjoyed hopping around from place to place. This is not for everyone, and in particular it would be very difficult

It is crucial to a more open system, both in the public and feels boring and unmotivating to me projects that are far behind the

Acknowledging our difficulties and the pressures that exist on ECRs to network and present research in often stressful and unfamiliar environments. I think acknowledging this tension will help to (1) make ECRs feel more understood and comfortable and (2) remind faculty / later career researchers that they too were once scared ECRs. Avoid this shift, the more quantitative important that we as a community also but who wish to return, if provided with competitive salaries as industry, but the agendas are almost unachievable features this career shift again, to the utmost benefit of the community. Furthermore, it's a path for industry never provide as much and research centers. The longer we stay in positions that could be enough motivation for researchers to make