



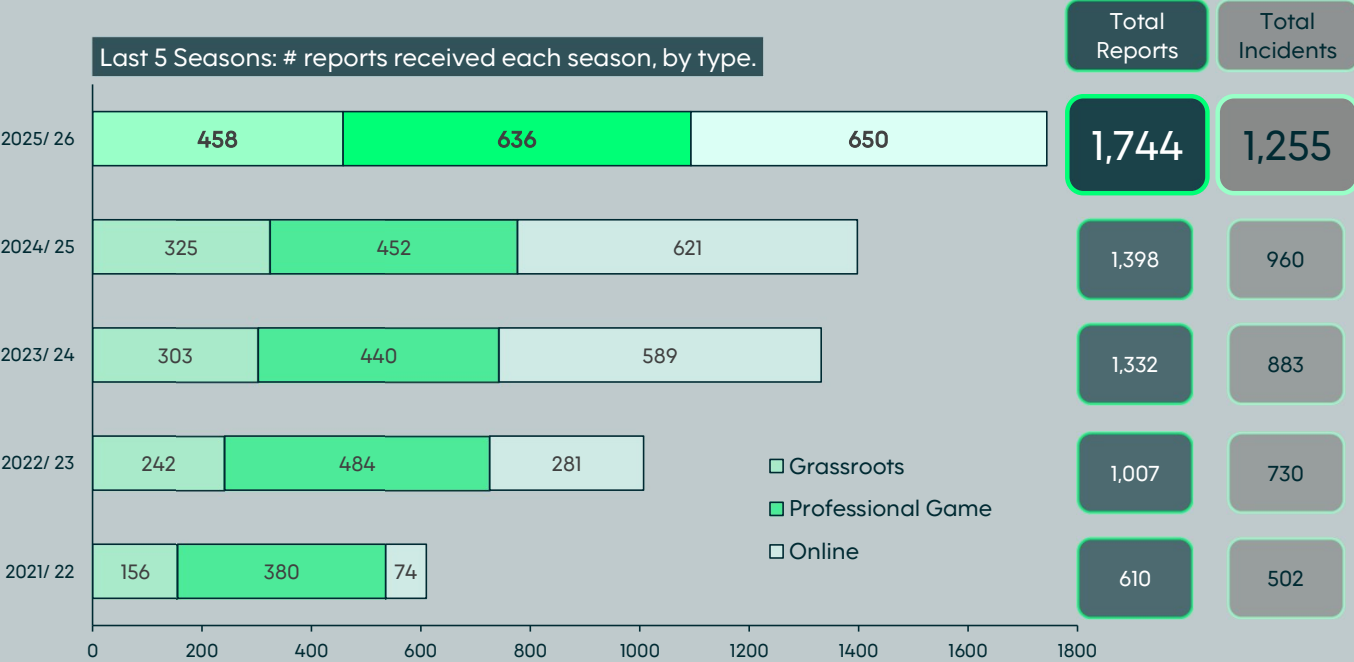
Incident Reporting

Full Season Review

2025 / 26

Reports Received 01/07/2025 to 30/06/2026

The 2025/26 season: Discrimination reports and incidents continue to rise



41% increase in reports from Professional football.

41% increase in reports from Grassroots football.

5% increase in reports from Online spaces.

25% overall increase from last season.



Kick It Out has received **1,744** reports of discrimination over the 2025/26 season, continuing the upward trend seen over the last five years. More incidents have been reported at all levels of the game than in any other season. The number of individual reports from Professional football, the Grassroots game and from Online spaces are each comfortably above last season's totals, and significantly higher than five years ago.

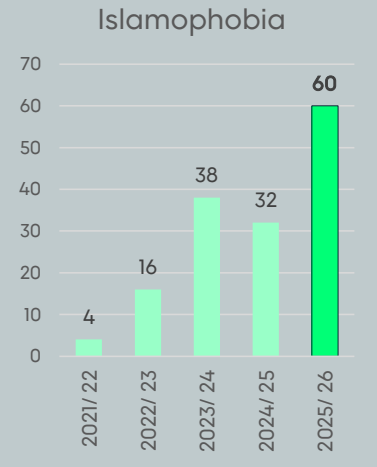
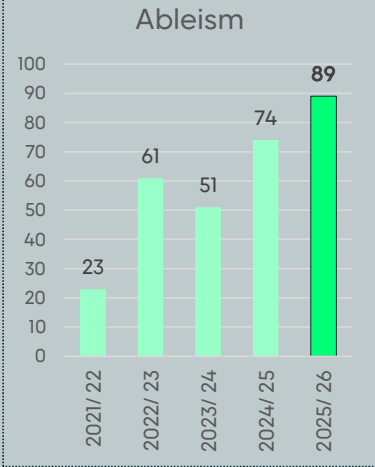
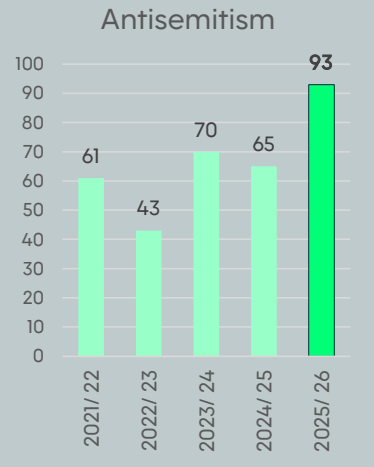
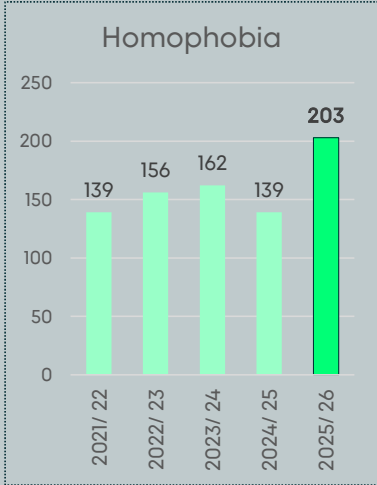
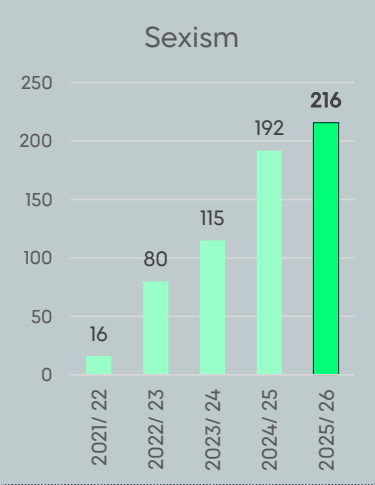
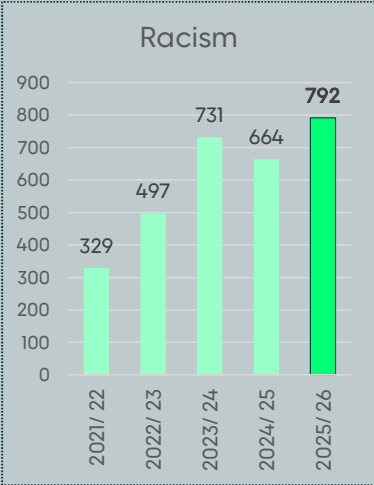
Within this increase, the highest number of reports in a season for:

- Islamophobia: an **88%** increase on 24/25
- Homophobia: a **46%** increase on 24/25
- Antisemitism: a **43%** increase on 24/25
- Ableism: a **20%** increase on 24/25
- Racism: a **19%** increase on 24/25
- Sexism: a **12%** increase on 24/25

It's not only Kick It Out that has seen an increase in reports of discrimination. The UK Football Policing Unit (UKFPU) and the EFL, have recorded rises in the number of discriminatory incidents last season. The FA's latest data for the 2024-25 grassroots season also shows a rise.

2025/26 is also the first season with over **1,000** separate incidents reported. The overall Reports per Incident (Rpl) metric for this season is **1.39** (1,744 reports of 1,255 incidents). This shows a consistent willingness for people to report when they see or hear discrimination.

Rises in discrimination reports continue for many communities



As the data to the left illustrates, there has been a steady rise in the six areas of discrimination over the last five seasons, culminating in the high numbers seen this year.

For the first time ever, Kick It Out has received more than 200 reports regarding a discrimination type other than racism: **216** sexist reports and **203** homophobic reports this season.

For these two areas specifically, Kick It Out has formed reporting partnerships, helping to drive up the number of reports of sexism and homophobia, and ultimately leading to more accountability.



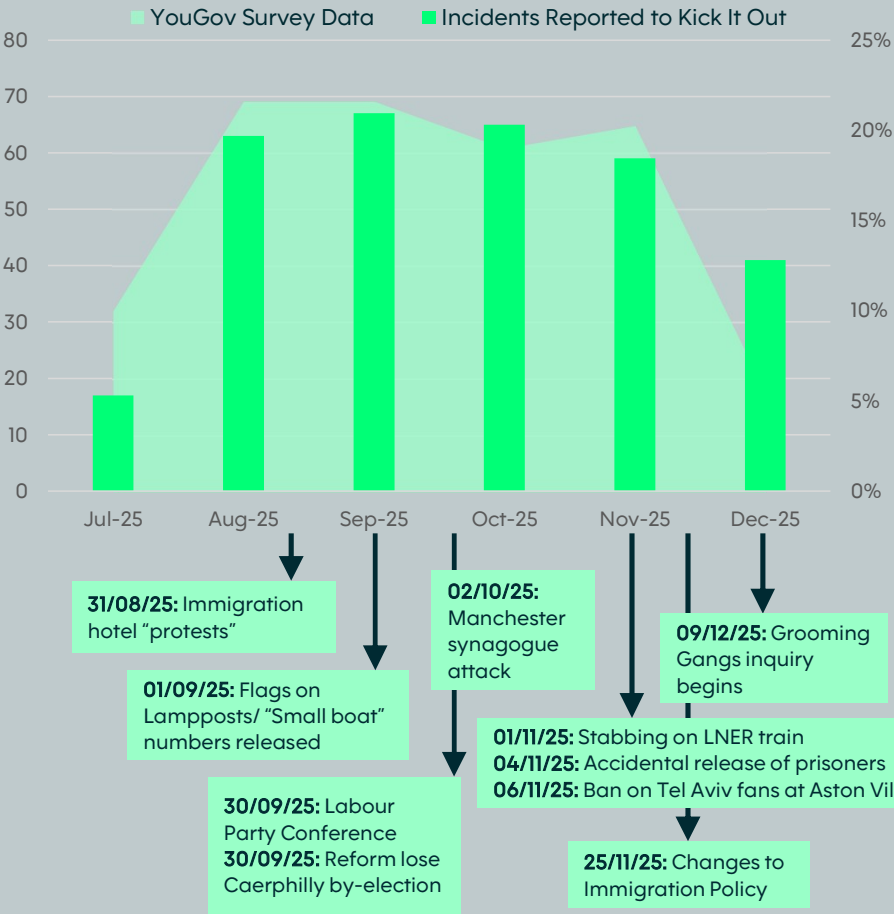
Reports via our partners accounted for nearly **6%** of this season's total. Kick It Out is committed to further building a network of reporting partners to increase visibility of all discrimination in all areas of the game.

Racism & faith-based abuse: Is football affected by outside events?

On a weekly basis, survey platform YouGov asks its audience to tell them about “one story they heard about the most in the news”.

Right-hand axis shows the percentage of respondents to YouGov surveys (from 1 July to 31 December 2025) mentioning domestic stories that had, or have, the potential to stir discriminatory responses. These stories focus on “immigration”, “UK political/ domestic news” and “major crime/ terror”.

Left-hand axis shows incidents of racism and faith-based discrimination reported to Kick It Out in the first six months of the 2025-26 season (from 1 July to 31 December 2025).



Sources:

- Kick It Out mid-season reporting data 2025-26 (01/07/25 to 31/12/25)
- YouGov article “What news stories did Britons hear most about in 2025?” (<https://yougov.co.uk/politics/articles/53796-what-news-stories-did-britons-hear-most-about-in-2025>)

“Keep politics out of football” is an often-used phrase, but for millions of people who participate, support or work in the game, it’s embedded in their lives as much as the politics we are surrounded by.

Many incidents reported to Kick It Out over the last few seasons can be linked to domestic and world events and responses to them.

Examples include the Supreme Court ruling on gender leading to The FA’s ban on transgender women in the women’s game, leading to a spike in transphobic abuse. The sensationalism of immigration by parts of the media and certain political parties has coincided with an increase in racist anti-immigrant reports. The 7th October attacks in 2023 that escalated the Israel-Palestine conflict led to a sharp rise in Antisemitic and Islamophobic reports.

However, correlation does not imply causation. Although plotting isolated YouGov data (left) alongside incidents reported to Kick It Out gives a visual representation of how the two could be related, it’s almost impossible to directly link the reasons behind an incident back to a specific event or headline.

Nonetheless, the similarities between timings of these headlines, and the numbers of incidents reported add weight to the belief that “what happens in the world, gets played out on the pitch”.

The fact that reports of racism, Antisemitism and Islamophobia in football are all at record levels this season perhaps comes as no surprise.

Race & Faith Discrimination: Anti-migrant sentiment & more chanting

Reports of racist mass-chanting are at a record high.

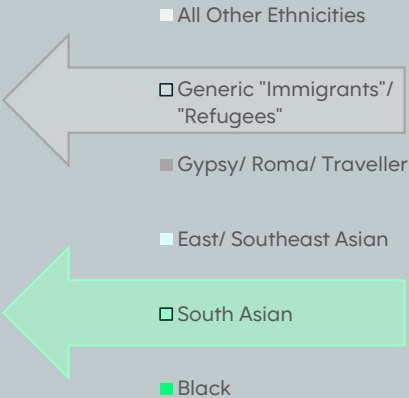
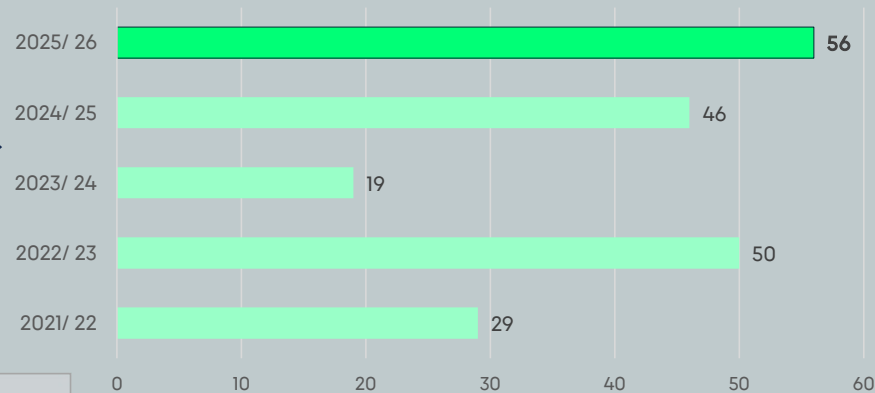
The bulk of this season's reports concern chants around the perceived size of black players' genitalia, and chants aimed at the Gypsy/ Roma/ Traveller community.

Reports of the use of anti-immigrant language has risen sharply this season. As many reports of this nature have been received in 2025-26 than in the last **two years combined** (39 vs 37). Language such as "stop the boats" and "send them back" has been reportedly shouted at players at all levels of the game

In terms of the ethnicity of victims, the biggest increase in racist reports aimed at participants is from South Asian heritage: **double** last year's figure of 8%. More reports of the use of South Asian specific racist terms/ phrases, specifically the p-word, were received this season than in the last **two years combined** (70 vs 51).



Racist Mass Chanting



The large number of reports of racism received by Kick It Out over the 2025/26 season are spread across the whole football landscape, including the professional game, grassroots and online spaces.

The most significant increase in racist reports is in the grassroots game: a **56%** increase on last year's figure: more than has ever been received at this level. Reports of faith-based discrimination is also at a 5-season high in grassroots football, with **five times** as many reports received as in 2024/25. Within this, reports of Antisemitism are also the highest ever.

Both the Antisemitism and Islamophobia Reports per Incident (Rpl) metric in isolation, surpass the overall Rpl for this season (1.39):

Antisemitism:
2.91

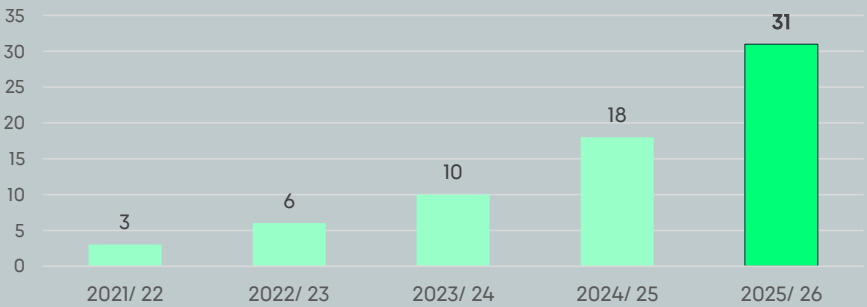
Islamophobia:
1.54

Where the ethnicity or nationality of the victim or intended victim of the report is identifiable (in 78% of racist reports), race discrimination towards black participants holds a majority, and this has increased to 59% from 50% last season.

Over **75%** of this is discrimination towards players, with a two-thirds vs one-third split between professional players and those at grassroots level.

Sexism: Women referees and pundits in the men's game targeted

Sexist Mass Chanting



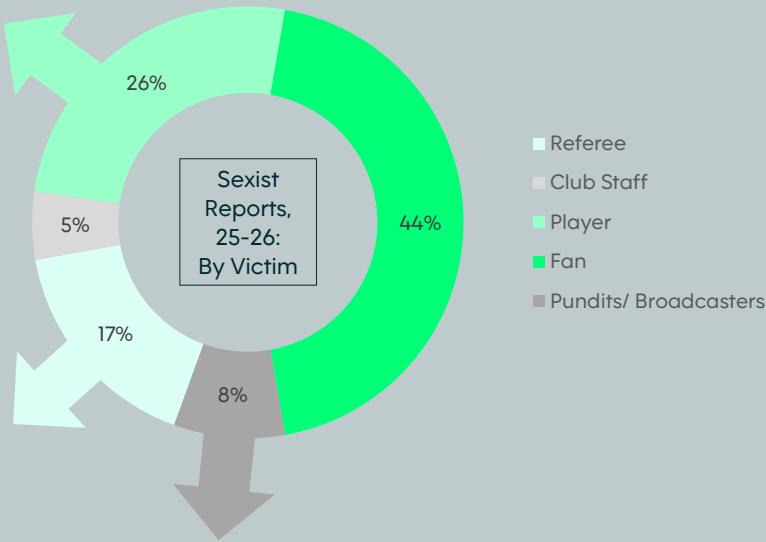
Reports of sexist mass-chanting are also at a record high – with more this year than in the last **two seasons combined**.

All these reports come from men's football – usually directed at women fans, with **87%** of them from EFL fixtures.

The proportion of sexist reports aimed at players has dropped from 45% last year.

47% of the discriminatory reports Kick It Out have received in the last 5 years aimed at referees, have come this season. Over a **1/3** of this season's total being sexist abuse to women officials. This is also over **double** the number reported last season.

For the first time in any season, a woman referee was the most targeted (specifically named) professional participant – with all **16** of these reports being sexist in nature.



94% of sexist reports this year aimed at women pundits/ broadcasters have come during the men's World Cup: Eight different women singled out for sexist/ misogynistic abuse.

Reports of sexism/misogyny in football have risen for **five straight seasons**, with this season's total being over **13 times** more than five years ago. **43%** of sexist reports this year came from the professional game, and all were from men's football. This is as many as received in the previous **three seasons combined**.

Two-thirds of the sexist reports received since 2021-22 have come in the last two years, highlighting a continuing trend in the game, now with the data to underline it. Kick It Out's Sexism & Misogyny campaign and partnership with Her Game Too (which led to 40% of the sexist reports this season) have brought this issue sharply into focus.

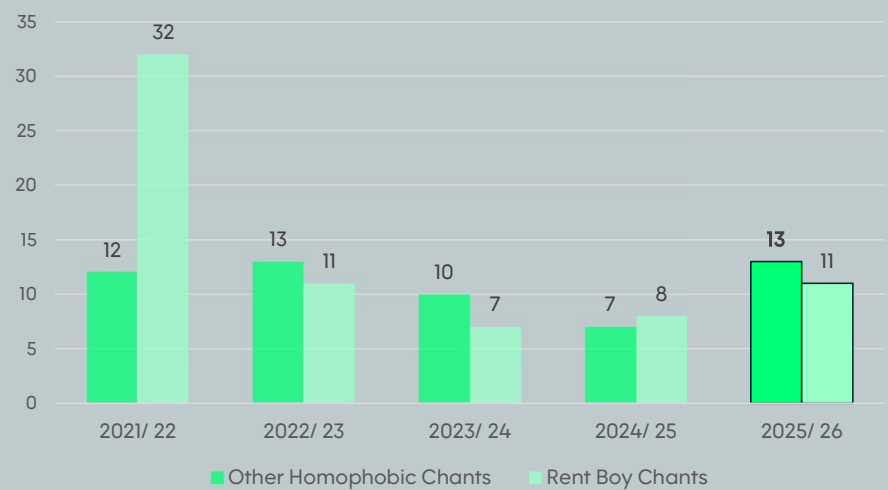
Continuing the trend from last year, the biggest proportion (**40%**) of these reports are men ridiculing women's place in the game, either as players, officials, fans or broadcasters.

A 5-season high numbers of lewd requests have been reported this season (**double** last year). as well as the reports of sexually degrading language, and exclusion because of gender – both at the highest level reported.

Worryingly, 2025/26 has also seen the most reports of violent and threatening behaviour/ language towards women recorded in a single season. These include threats of rape and sexual assault, and "jokes" about domestic violence.

Homophobia: More mass chanting, more abuse to players

Since the 2022 criminalisation of the “rent boy” chant predominately aimed at Chelsea FC players and fans, incidents of this chant dropped significantly. However, this chant, and other homophobic chants have once again been creeping back into the game. The combined 24 reports this season being the most in three years.

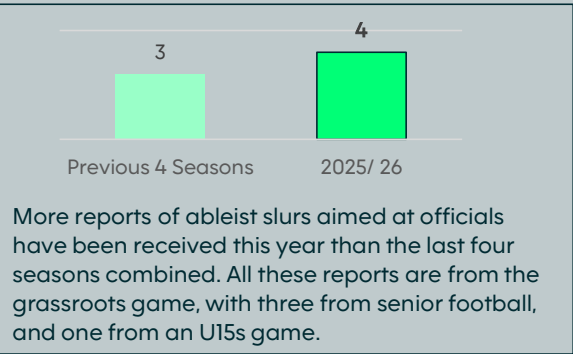


203 reports of homophobia were received this season, with increases from last campaign in the professional game (up 24%) and online spaces (up 23%).

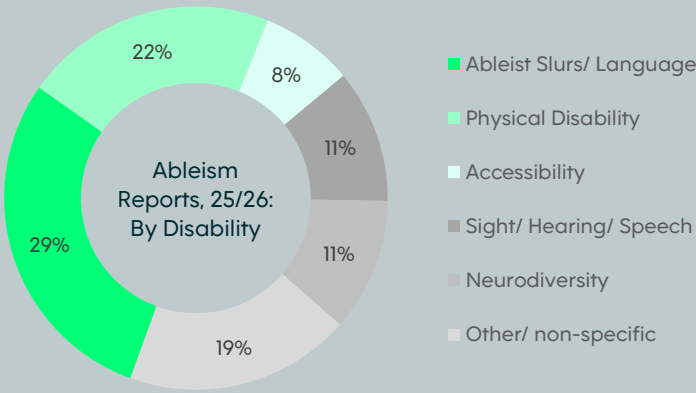
The grassroots game is where the bulk of the increase has occurred: 140% more reports than in the 2024/25 season. Three-quarters of these reports are from senior grassroots games, where the players are over 18.

For the first time, the single most reported incident of discrimination towards a professional player was of homophobia. This incident, involving comments on social media after a men’s player transfer, received 10 reports.

Ableism: Rises in abuse to fans with physical disabilities, and to officials:



More reports of ableist slurs aimed at officials have been received this year than the last four seasons combined. All these reports are from the grassroots game, with three from senior football, and one from an U15s game.

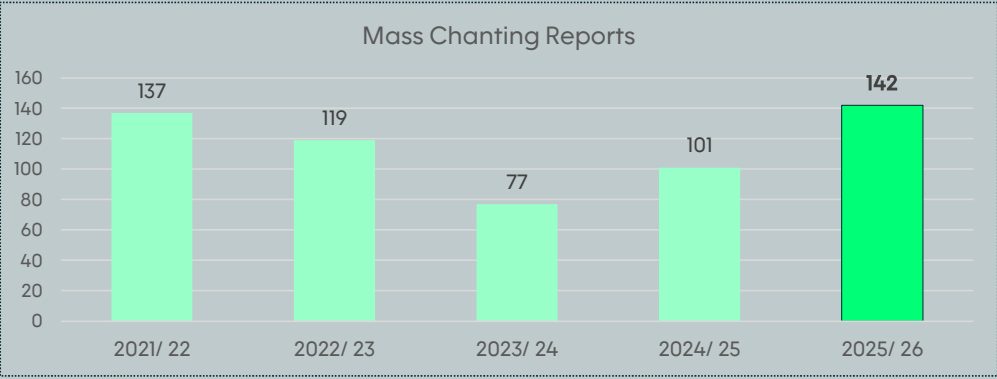


For the third season running, and the fourth in the last five, reports of ableist abuse have risen across the game. Up 82% in the professional game, and 94% online, with three-quarters of these reports being abuse received by fans.

Whilst reports of specific ableist slurs are down 15% compared to last season, reports of discrimination because of a physical disability are at the highest level in four years.

Accessibility issues were reported across the professional leagues, with incidents at Premier League stadiums, and each level down to the National League.

Mass Chanting & abuse of officials increases



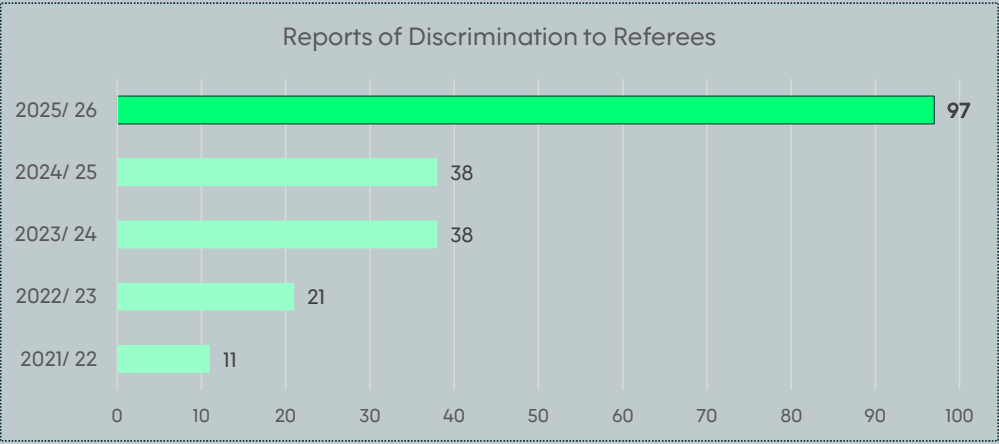
Mass chanting

Another 5-season high figure is the **142** reports of mass chanting received. As per the graph above, this represents a **41%** increase on last year, a steady climb from two seasons ago, and eclipses the previous high in 21/ 22.

As well as the already mentioned increases in racist, sexist and homophobic chants, Kick It Out has seen more reports of:

- **Transphobic chants:** as many as in the last five seasons combined.
- **Ableist chants:** More than in the last five seasons combined.
- **Pedophile chants:** Three times more than last season.

As well as the increases, this season has seen the **lowest** number of reports in five years of the Antisemitic “Y-word” chant, usually sung by Tottenham fans, but also used as a derogatory chant towards them.



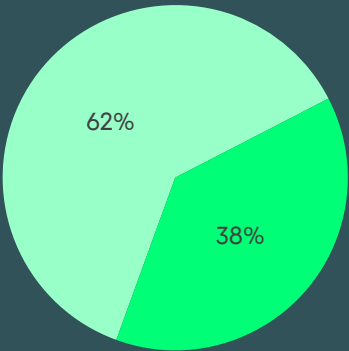
Referee abuse

Reports of discriminatory abuse towards officials have risen significantly this season, with as many as in the previous **three seasons combined**.

- **37%** of these reports are sexist in nature
- **24%** are racist
- **11%** are homophobic
- **4%** are ableist
- 24% of the reports are non-discriminatory:
 - i.e., rude/ abusive language.

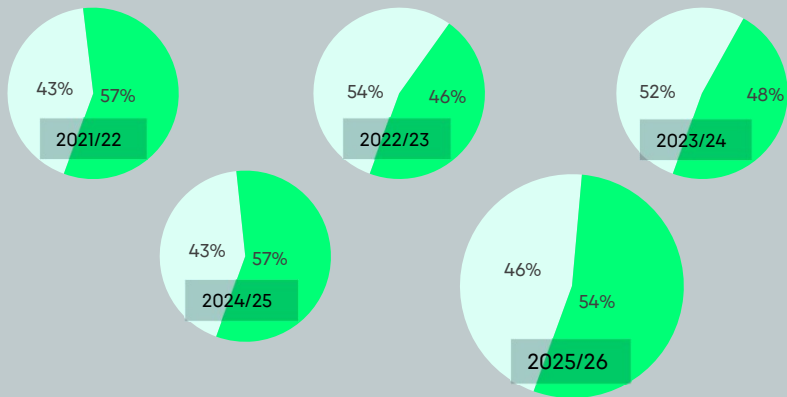
62% of discrimination towards officials is in the pro game, two-thirds of this is in stadiums and one-third online – and almost 100% from fans. Reports regarding a record **17** different professional officials were received this year (10 last season).

The other **38%** are reports from grassroots football, where the perpetrator is often a lot closer to the victim, either as a player or fan.

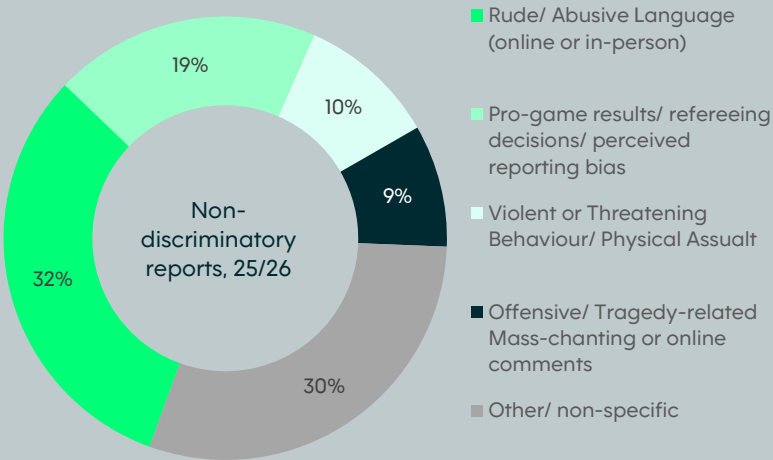


- Abuse to Professional Referees
- Abuse to Grassroots Referees

Discrimination in the youth game continues while abusive behaviour rises



Last five seasons: Proportion of grassroots reports
Senior / Youth



Youth Football

Reports from grassroots youth football (U18's and below) have risen for the fifth straight season. This year's total of **248** represents an increase of **1/3** on last season, and the most youth level reports **ever** received in a single season.

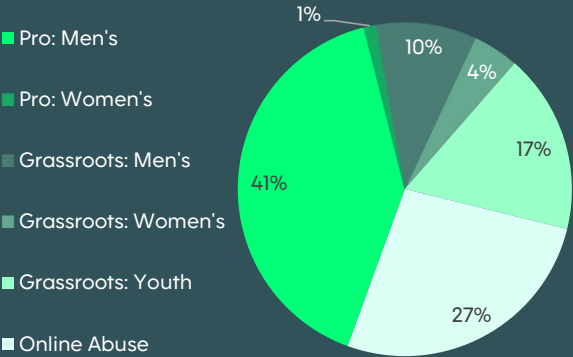
Almost every age group from under 9's to under 18's saw record numbers of reports of discrimination this year.

- **38%** increase in racist reports
- **90%** increase in homophobic reports
- **Fifteen times** as many reports of Antisemitism
- **44%** increase in "Other" reports (rude/ abusive language, threatening behaviour and physical assault)



"Other" Reports: Non-discriminatory incidents.

Kick It Out has received **247** reports this campaign that are not classed as discriminatory. This represents a **70%** increase on last year. These are from all levels of the game, as well as some that are non-football related.



Over **half** of these reports are from the men's game, with over a third of this being general rude and abusive language and insulting chanting.

A worrying 17% of these incidents happened at football played at U18's and below. A **50%** increase in rude/ abusive behavior on last season.

5-year data: Number of reports per discrimination type/ per season

		Age	Disability	Antisemitism	Islamophobia	Sectarianism	Other	Faith (Total)	Gender Re- assignment	Race	Sex	Sexual Orientation	Other	Total
2021/ 2022	Professional Game	0	8	48	3	19	1	71	2	183	8	107	1	380
	Grassroots	0	14	0	0	0	0	0	2	109	7	24	0	156
	Social Media	0	1	13	1	9	1	24	0	37	1	9	2	74
	Total:	0	23	61	4	28	2	95	4	329	16	140	3	610
2022/ 2023	Professional Game	5	23	33	4	21	1	59	2	261	23	75	36	484
	Grassroots	5	19	2	5	1	1	9	3	123	11	38	34	242
	Social Media	0	19	8	7	4	0	19	6	112	46	43	36	281
	Total:	10	61	43	16	26	2	87	11	496	80	156	106	1,007
2023/ 2024	Professional Game	4	19	31	6	4	0	41	2	223	30	68	53	440
	Grassroots	0	18	14	7	0	2	23	3	176	16	29	38	303
	Social Media	2	14	25	25	3	0	53	17	332	69	65	37	589
	Total:	6	51	70	38	7	2	117	22	731	115	162	128	1,332
2024/ 2025	Professional Game	0	17	11	11	14	3	39	4	245	38	68	41	452
	Grassroots	7	39	1	2	1	1	5	11	151	35	27	50	325
	Social Media	1	18	53	19	14	2	88	29	268	119	44	54	621
	Total:	8	74	65	32	29	6	132	44	664	192	139	145	1,398
2025/ 2026	Professional Game	0	31	24	26	8	4	62	5	258	93	84	103	636
	Grassroots	2	23	16	6	1	2	25	4	235	26	65	78	458
	Social Media	2	35	53	28	2	6	89	8	299	97	54	66	650
	Total:	4	89	93	60	11	12	176	17	792	216	203	247	1,744
5 Season Totals		28	298	332	150	101	24	607	98	3,012	619	800	629	6,091



**TOGETHER
WE CAN**

