



Dating Scams

Finding Love Everywhere;
Being Scammed Everywhere

1 out of 4 Users of Dating Platforms Report Being Scammed

Dear reader,

Every year as Valentine's Day approaches, many singles reflect on their relationship status and try to look for love. A significant portion of these people will end up searching for companionship or love online. As of 2020, there were estimated to be more than 270 million dating app users globally. ScamAdviser conducted a survey that reveals that a shockingly large number of users of dating sites and apps end up falling victim to various scams.

25% of the participants lost money in a dating scam

1,829 participants from 140 countries answered the survey, mainly single, young (18-35) and male. A staggering 25% of them reported having lost money in a dating scam. The median amount lost was \$200 and the highest amount lost was over \$1.2 million. Men lose on average three times as much as women. The most named dating scams are fake profiles, investment scams, extortion scams, and unexpected requests for money.

On average, participants used 3 different dating sites or apps

The participants report having used 3 dating sites or apps on average within the last 12 months. The fact that the menace of dating scams is widespread throughout the entire online dating app landscape is brought to light as the number of different dating sites and apps named was huge. No single dating app or social media channel was named more than 5 times by the participants. It seems that there is no dating platform that is free from the risk of getting scammed.

Most participants are only moderately happy with their online dating experience

31% of the participants reported being unhappy with their online dating experience, while 32% said that they are moderately happy. 12% were happy and 25% were very happy. Surprisingly, the Corona pandemic did not have a huge effect on the use of dating sites and apps according to the participants. 36% reported using dating apps less while the same percentage stated using dating sites more.

Do men get scammed for sex; women for love?

42% of the participants visit dating sites with one reason in mind. The prejudice that male data for sex and women for love is not entirely true. 58% of the participants have several

goals in mind when dating online, looking for company is the most named reason, closely followed by a search for sex, data or life partner.

27% of the participants reported being confronted with fake profiles

The most named problem was that many of the profiles on dating sites are fake with 27% of the participants saying that they encountered fake profiles. The second most named problem was that they unexpectedly had to pay money to contact or chat. 40% did not encounter any issues.

37% did not report the scam at all

While only 7% of all scams are reported, this is not the case for Romance scams. More than a third of online dating scams went unreported. The victims did not inform any parties, such as the dating site or app, the bank, law enforcement, consumer protection organizations or online review websites. Those who did report the scam reported it mainly to the dating site or app or to the social media platform used. 77% reported the scam to multiple parties.

Romantic dating scams are one of the saddest forms of fraud. The victim not only loses his or her money, often feels the shame of being scammed but also is hurt to the bone by a person trusted and loved.

We hope with this annual survey more attention will be given to Romance scams; in any form they appear.

Jorij Abraham

Best regards,

Jorij Abraham
General Manager
Global Anti Scam Alliance & ScamAdviser

Who are we?



The Global Anti Scam Alliance (GASA) is a non-profit, bringing together law enforcement, consumer authorities, NGOs, brand protection, cybersecurity, and commercial organizations to share insights and knowledge surrounding scams.

ScamAdviser.com is a B2C brand and checks the likelihood of a website being legit or a scam for more than 100,000 consumers daily. More than 1 million new domains are added to our database monthly. Via our Data Partners we protect more than 1 billion consumers worldwide.

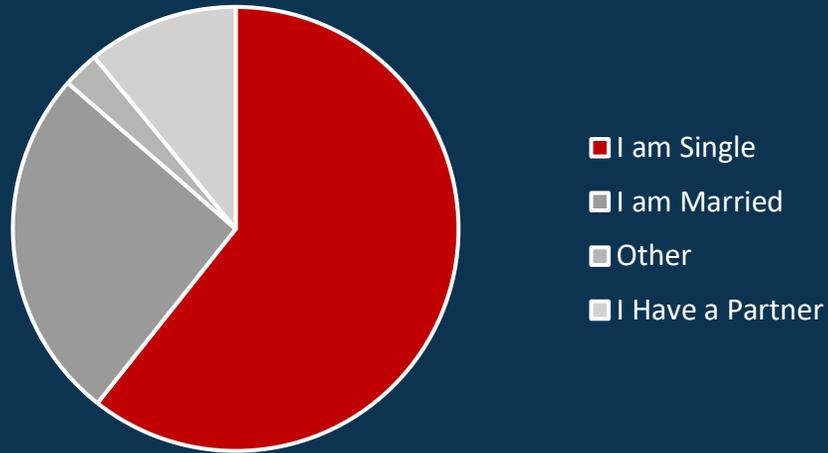


**Our Goal:
Help Consumers
Not Get Scammed**

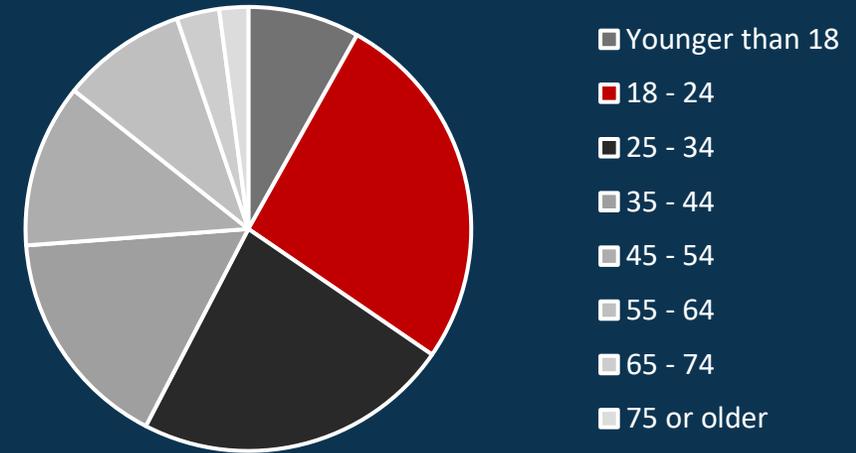


The 1829 participants were mainly single, young (18 – 35) and male

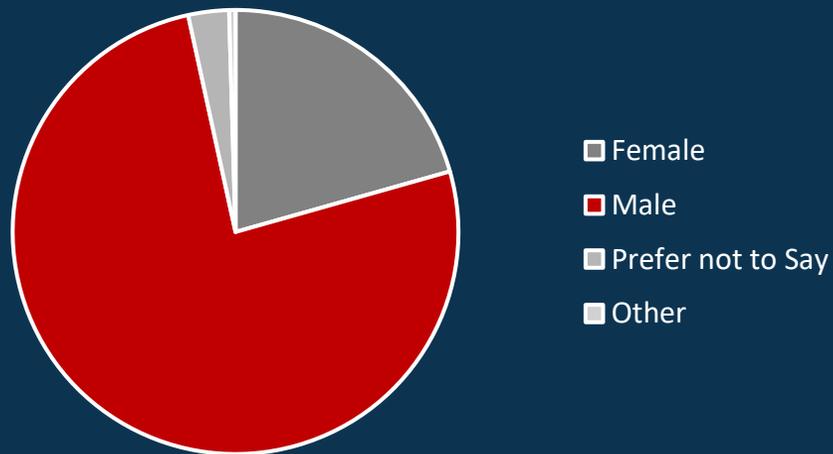
What is your current status?



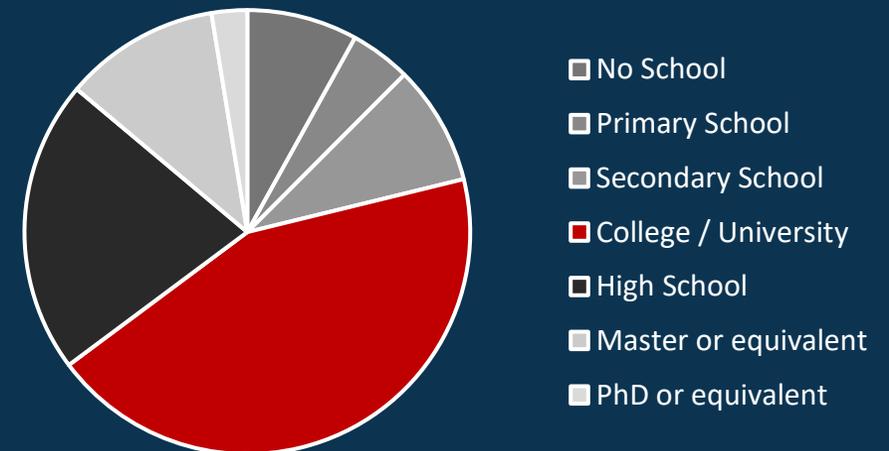
What is your Age?



What is your Gender?

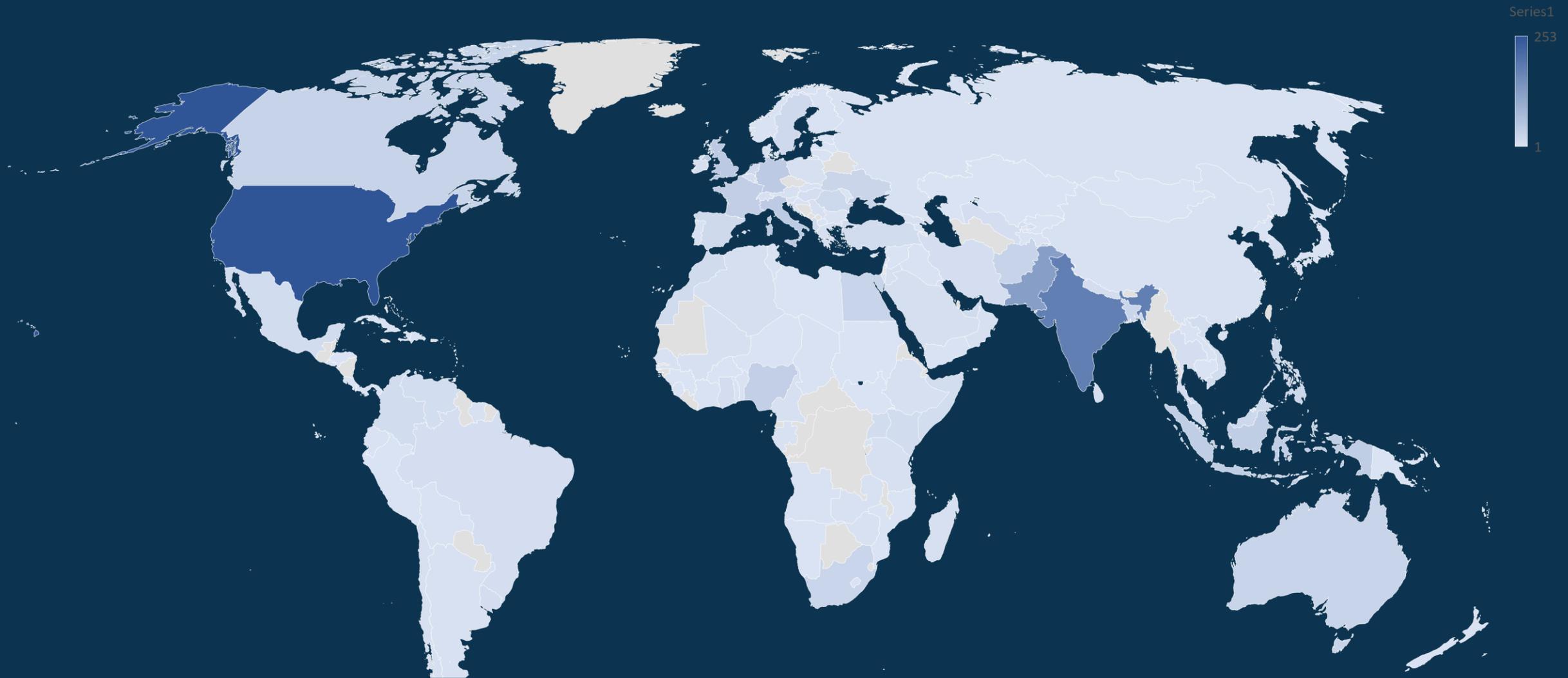


What is your highest education level?



The education level was relatively high (College / High School or University)

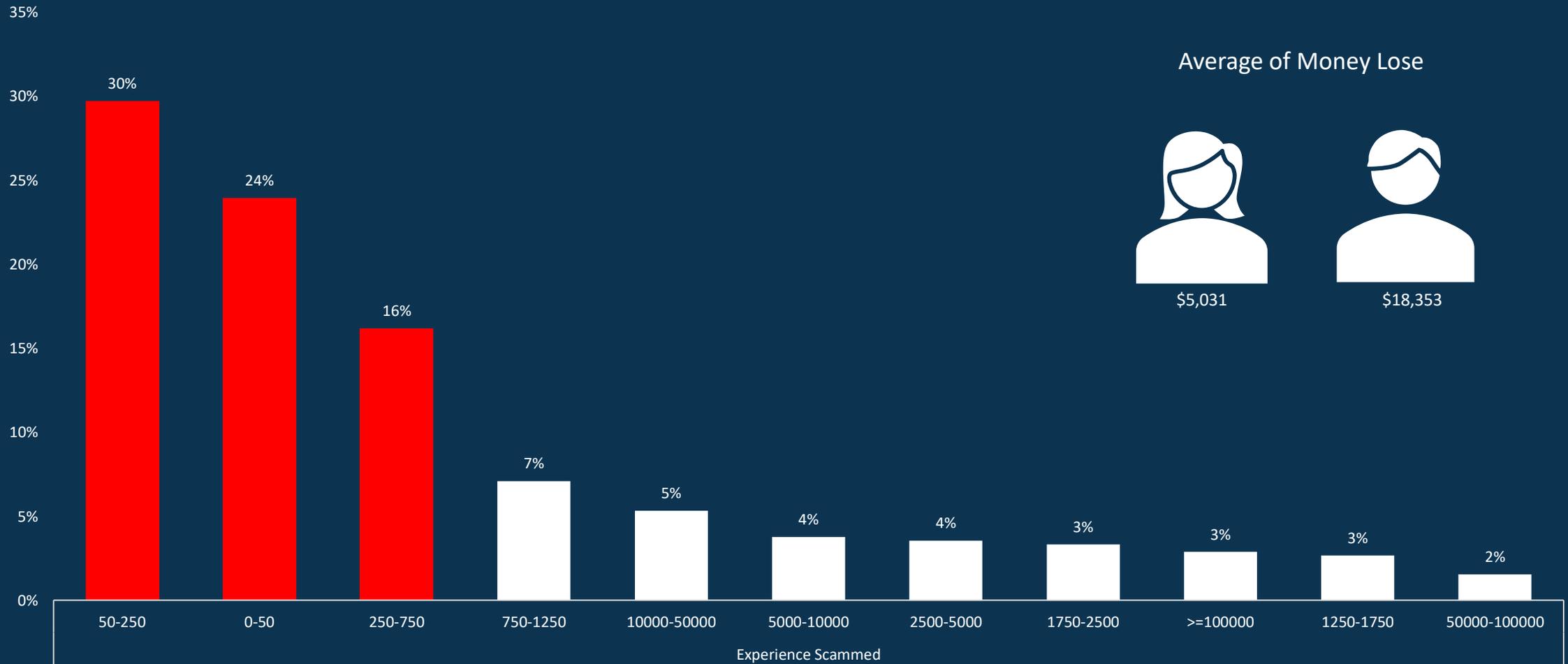
The participants came from 140 different countries



The most common countries were USA (15%), India (11%), Pakistan (7%) and France, Germany and the UK (each 3%)

25% of the participants lost money in a dating scam, men losing 3 times as much

Distribution of User losing Money

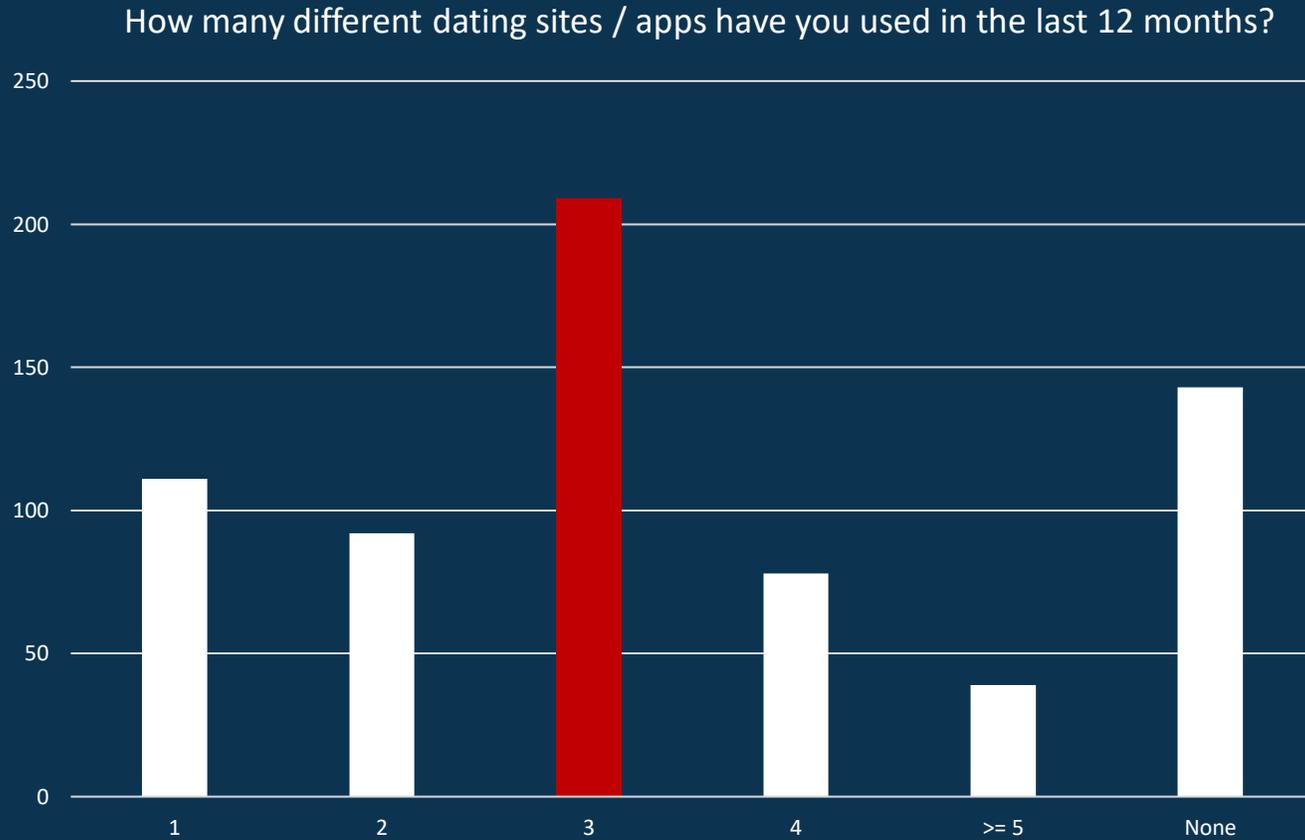


Average of Money Lose

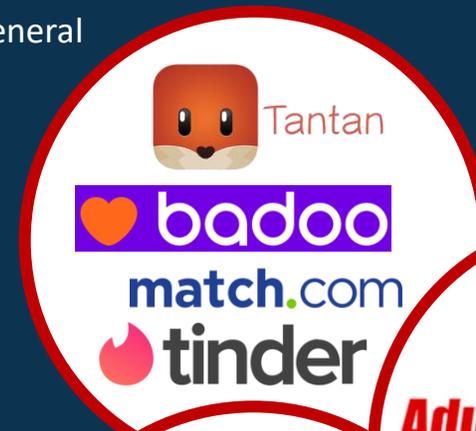


The median amount lost was \$ 200. The highest amount reported lost was over \$ 1.2 million

On average 3 different dating sites or apps were used by the participants



General



Niche

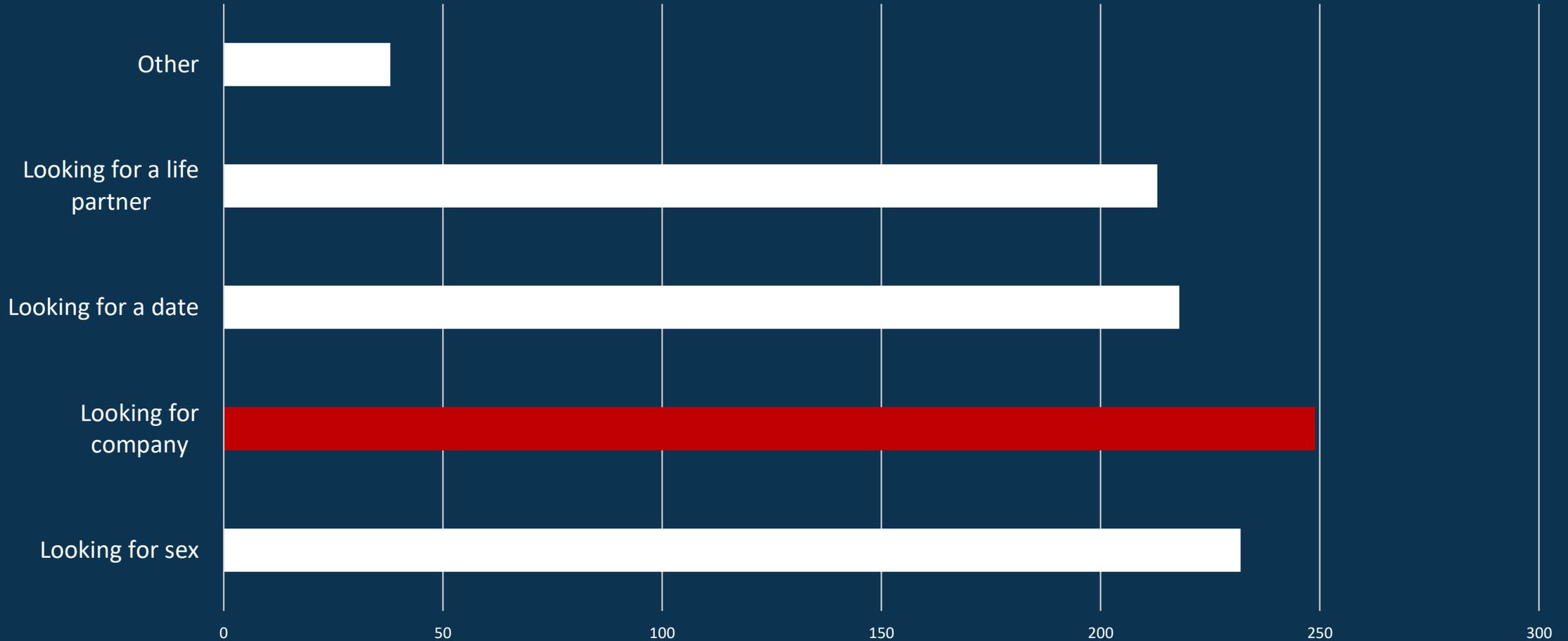


Social Media

The number of different dating sites & apps named was huge, no dating app or social medium was named more than 5 times

42% of the participants visit dating sites with one reason, 58% have several

For which purposes did you use the dating sites apps?



From looking for a lifelong partner to casual sex, most participants named several reasons to visit dating sites & apps
The ones looking for a life partner (women) and sex (men) were scammed the most

Most participants are only moderately happy with their online dating experience



17%



14%



32%



12%



25%

The Corona Pandemic did not have a huge effect on the use of dating sites and apps.
36% reported using dating apps less while 36% stated reporting dating sites more

The kinds of dating scams differ strongly

“Then some guy texts you telling you, you have wasted his girl’s time by implying your going to meet her and threatens you unless you pay.”

Extortion

“Bought gift cards for hookups. Never showed up.”

Fake Dating Profiles

“My partner, who I haven't met yet, wanted to convince me to register at a website to trade and invest.”

Romantic Investment Scam

“He was a soldier looking for soul mate. We talked a lot and then suddenly he was called for a mission. We always kept in touch, but he often told me to send him money for internet connection.”

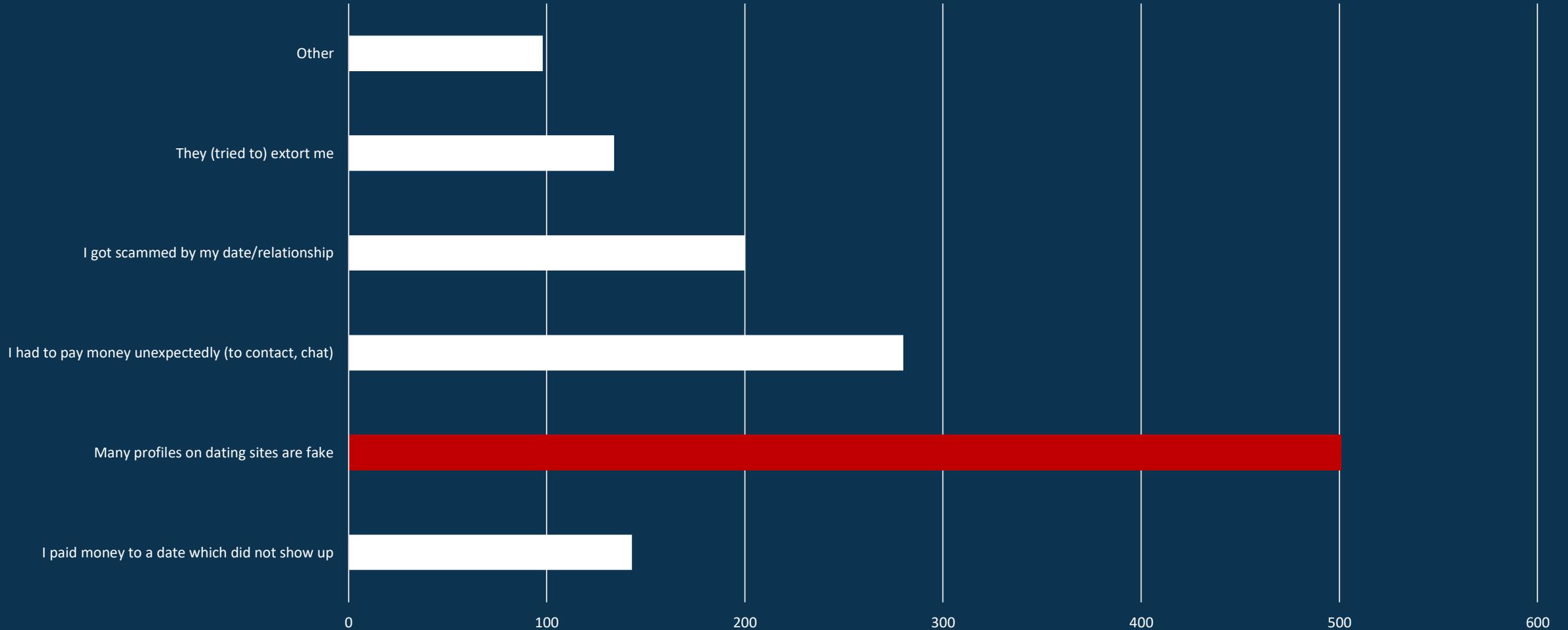
Scammed by date

I had a lot of women messaging me but if I wanted to see these messages, I had to upgrade my membership.

Pay money unexpectedly

27% of the participants reported being confronted with fake profiles

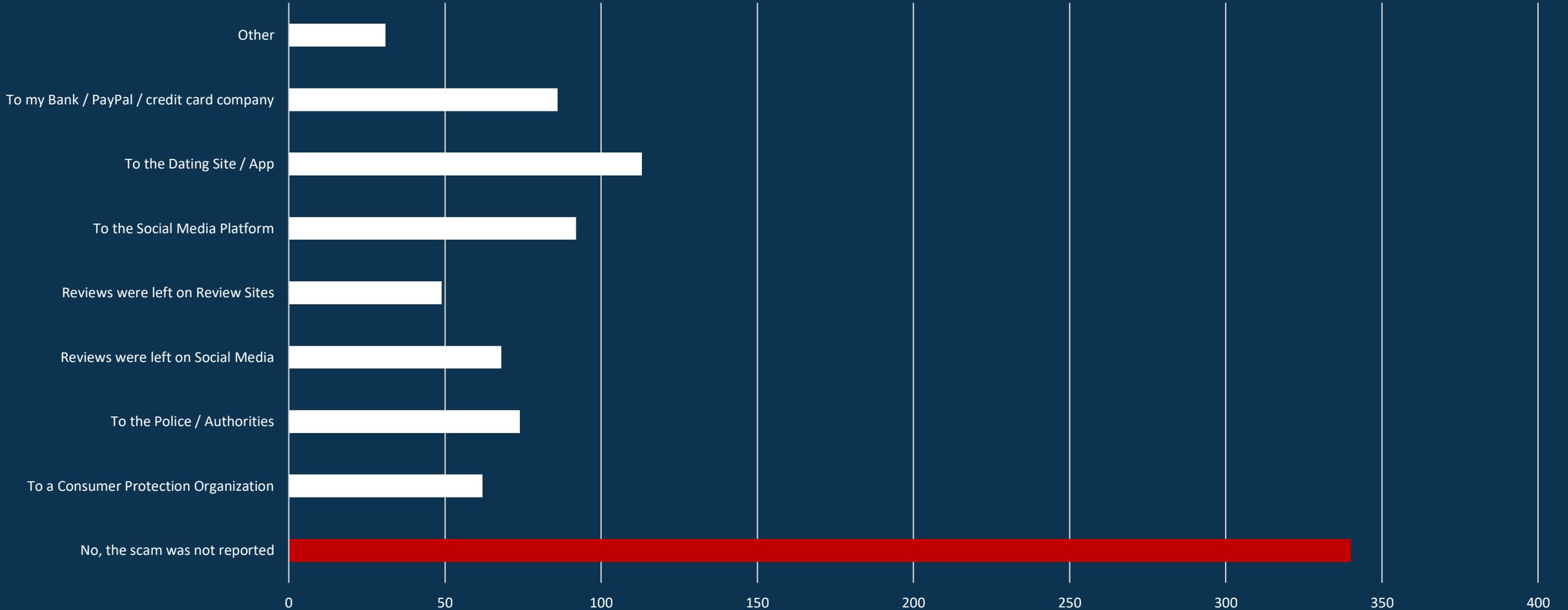
Which problems did you encounter in online dating?



40% did not encounter any issues while 11% reported being scammed by their date and mentioned they were (tried to be) extorted

37% did not report the scam at all

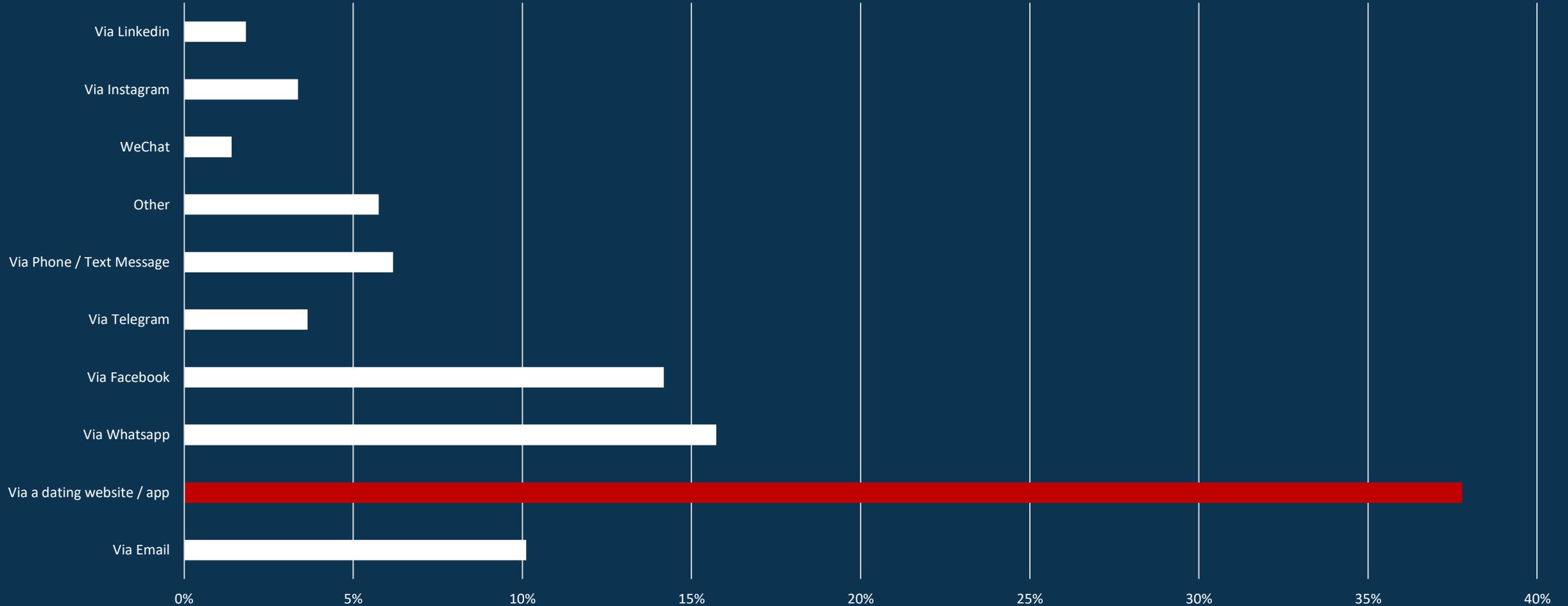
Did you report the scam and if so to whom?



Those who did report the scam, reported it mainly to the dating site or app or to the social media platform used.
77% reported the scam to multiple parties

Most scammers contact the victim first on the dating website or app

How did the scammer contact you the first time?



Contact continues mainly via one-to-one social media, especially Facebook and WhatsApp.
Skype, TikTok and Twitter were hardly named

Interested in becoming a Partner?

Contact us to join our fight against online scams!



Jorij Abraham

Managing Director

E: jorij@gasa.org

M: +31 6 52 84 00 39

Address:

Keurenplein 41

1069CD Amsterdam

The Netherlands

