



EEOC Charges Rise to Record High **Nick Birkenhauer**

The number of discrimination complaints received by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission rose to an all-time high last year, led by an increase in discrimination charges based on religion and national origin.

The EEOC announced that it received a record-high 99,947 private sector charges and obtained a record \$455.6 million in relief for discrimination claimants during fiscal year 2011.

Retaliation continued to be the most frequent type of complaint, accounting for about 37 percent of the total, followed by racial discrimination, at 35 percent, and sex discrimination, at 29 percent. Religious discrimination charges showed the largest increase, rising 9.2 percent to 4,151 charges. National origin discrimination charges rose about 4.6 percent, to 11,833 charges.

Many experts are saying that the increase in religious and national origin discrimination charges reflects the growing diversity of the nation's work force. "We're seeing more workers from India, Pakistan and other countries that bring additional religious complexity to the workforce," a former EEOC official told the Associated Press.

EEOC enforcement and litigation statistics are available on the agency's website at <http://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/statistics/enforcement/charges.cfm>