

Media's coverage on corruption in the health sector in Viet Nam: The tip of the iceberg?

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Contents

- Changing nature of systemic corruption
 - Some reasons within health sector
- Corruption in the health sector receives special attention from society and the media
 - Six key media outlets reporting during 2008 and 2009
- Poor people, women and children – vulnerable groups that need protection and care
- Role of media – key

Media research methodology

- Conducted by UNDP together with a team of Vietnamese communication experts
 - Who prefer to remain anonymous!
- Search databases of 6 major media sources:
 - Lao Động, Thanh Niên, Tuổi Trẻ, Pháp Luật Tp HCM, Nhân Dân and VietnamNet
- Covering stories reported from 1 January 2008, to 30 September 2009

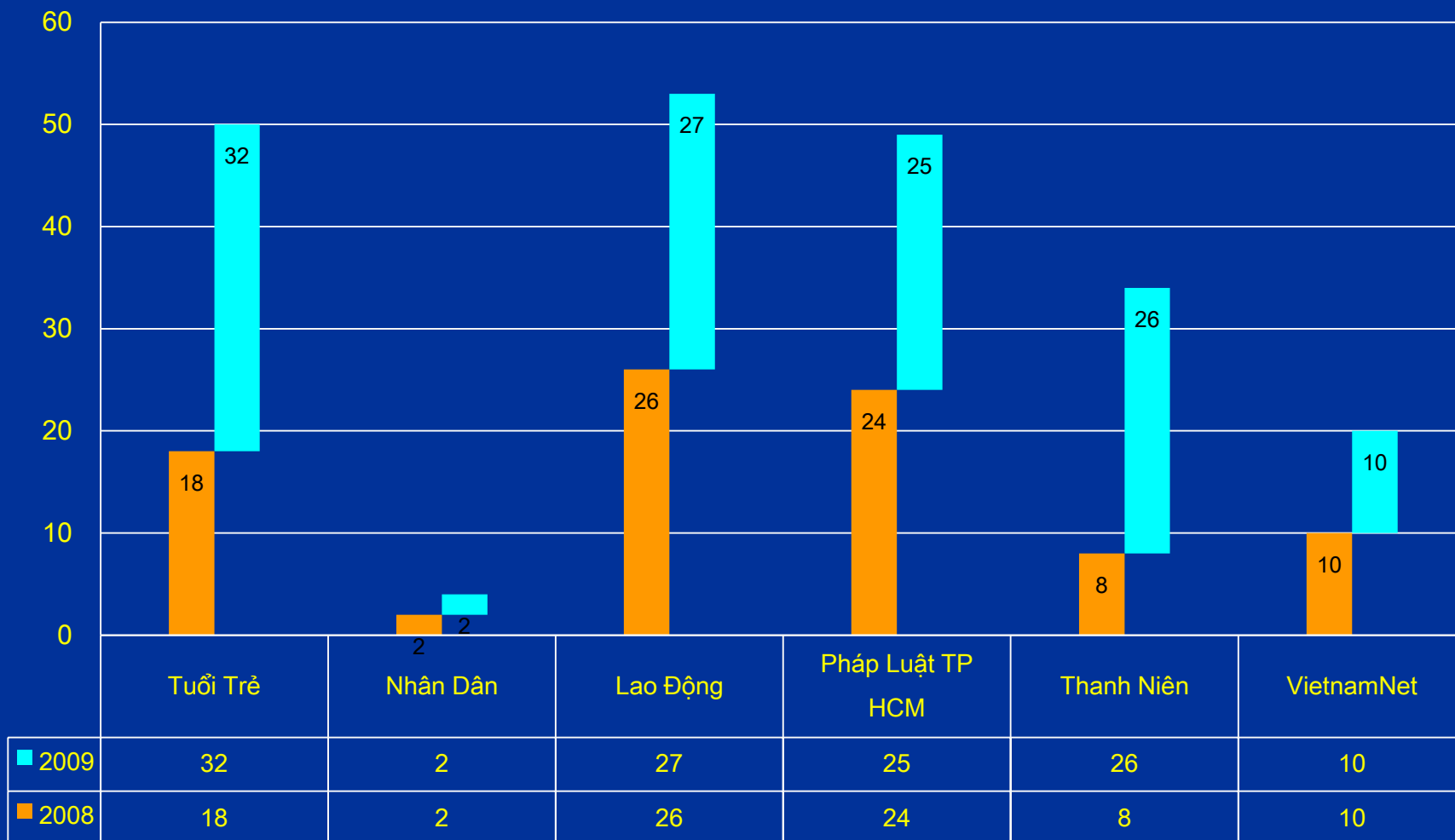
Some reasons leading to corruption in the health sector?

1. *Over-capacity of hospitals*
2. *Lack of professional competence*
 1. *Leadership ability and time dedicated to management of hospital directors*
 2. *Problems with medical ethics*
3. *Lack of legal guidance*
 1. *Lack of strict law enforcement*
 2. *Complicated administrative procedures*
4. *Professional ethics of drug suppliers and medical service suppliers who pay commissions.*
5. *Citizen ethics of the public in claiming fake health insurance claims*
6. *Weak investigation authorities*
7. *Low level of official allowances and benefits for medical staff members*

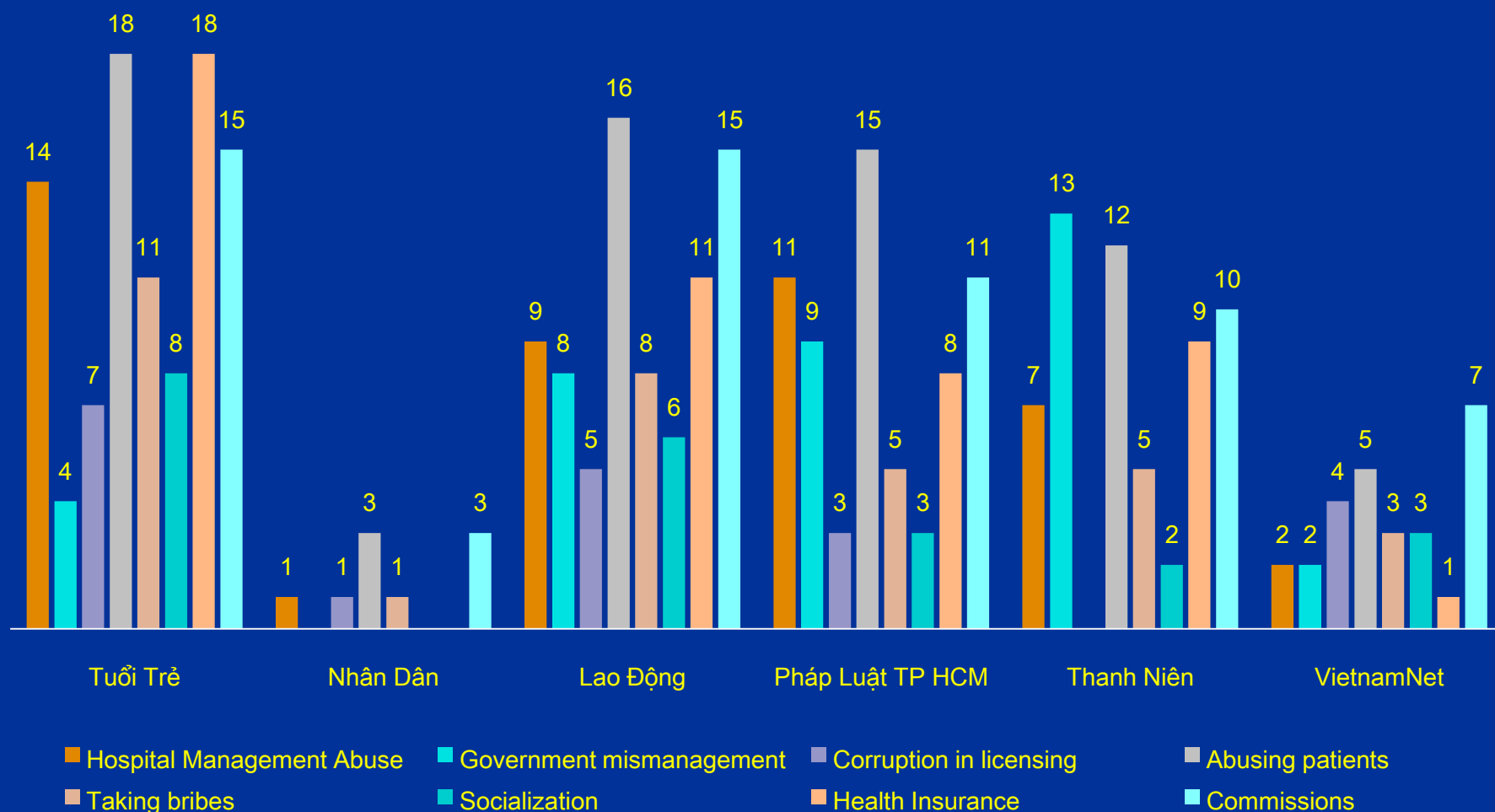
Main corruption issues reported

- Gaining commissions from medicines
- Personal gains from health insurance funds
- Corruption practices from “socialization” of public hospitals
- Demands for bribes
- Corruption from the issuing process of licensing
- Mis-management of public health properties/donations
- Medical establishments’ management abuse power.
- Corruption in personnel management

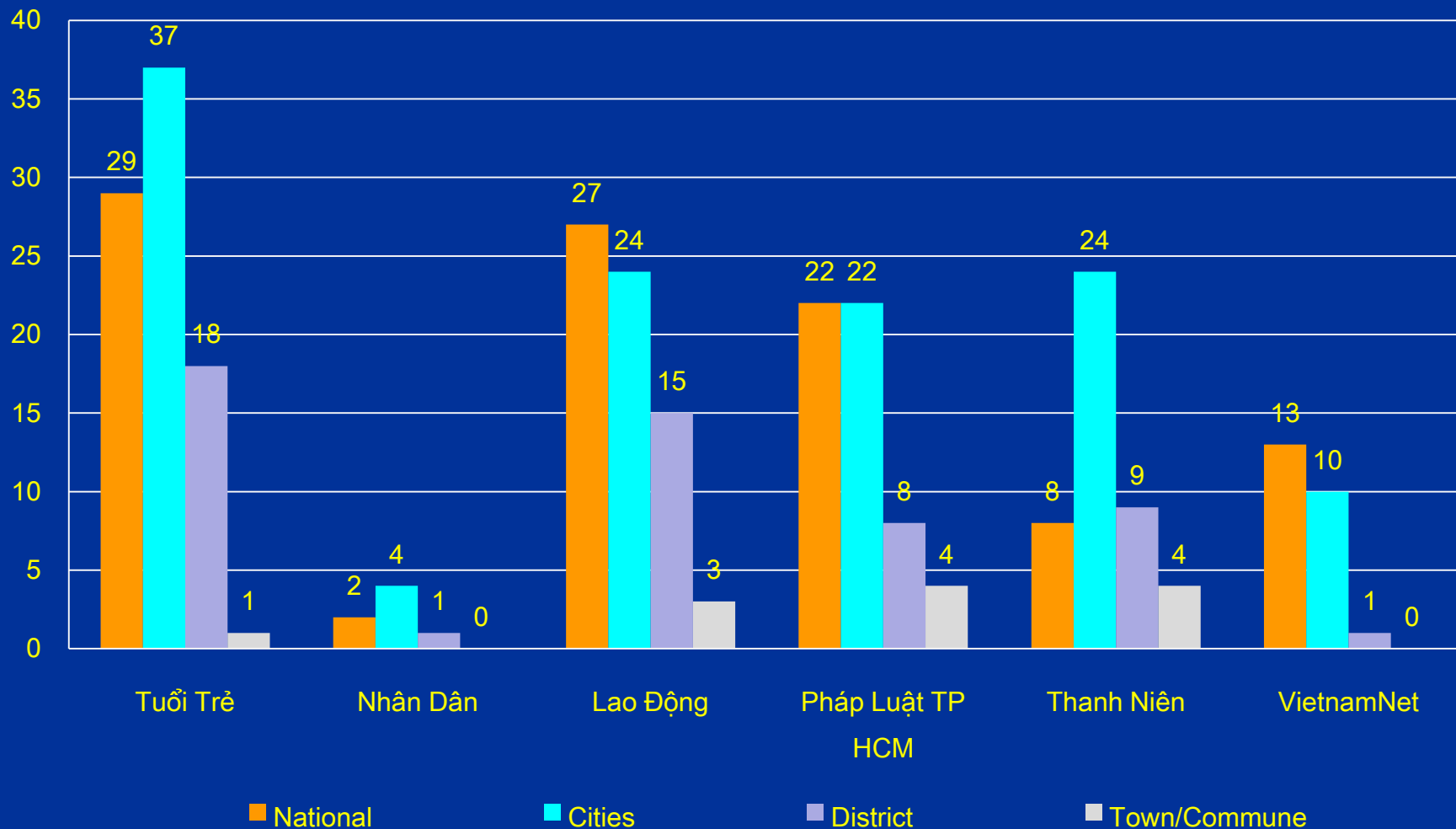
Corruption in the Health Sector: Stories Reported by Media (2008 – 2009)



Corruption in health: What is media reporting about it?

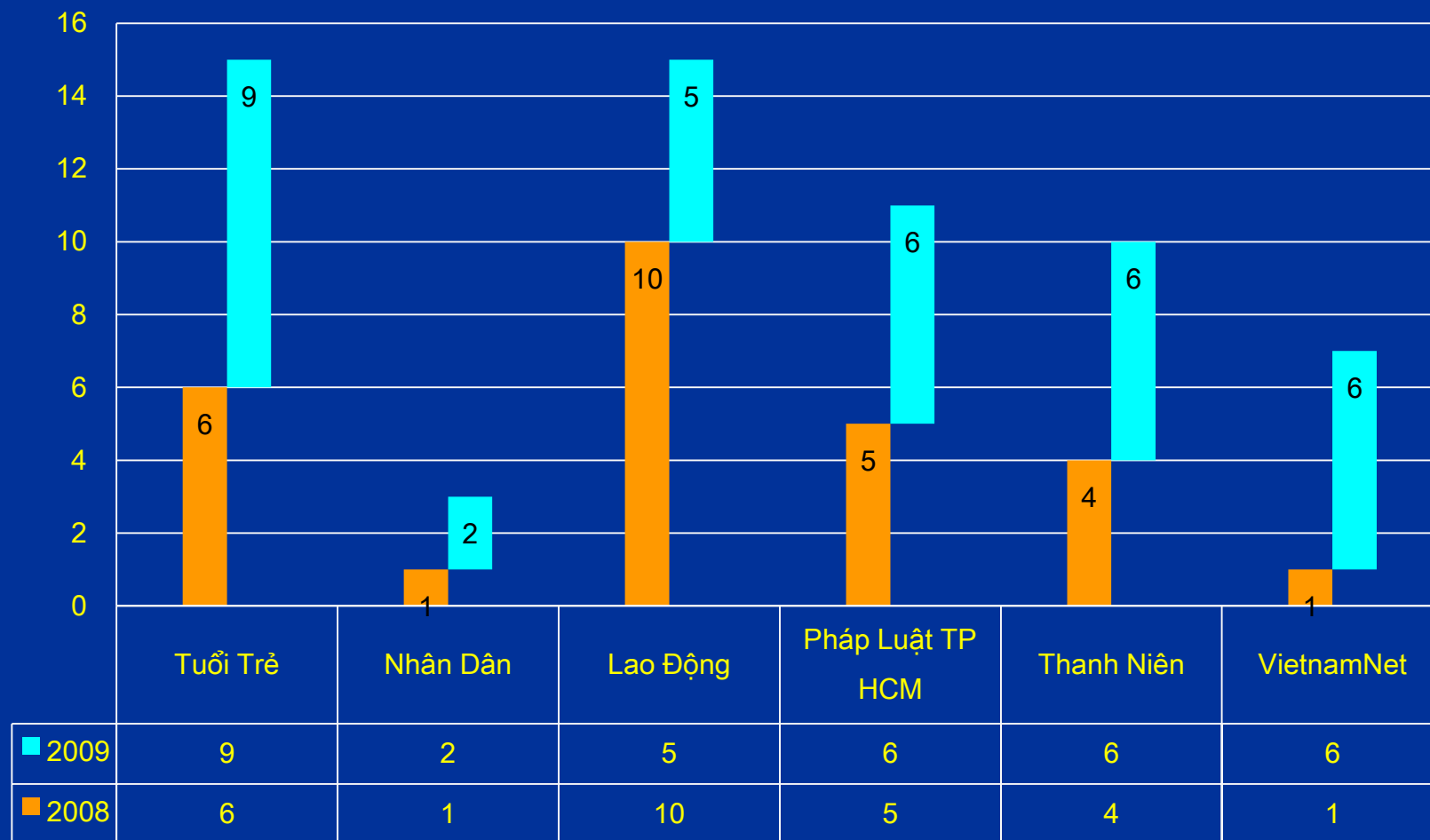


Corruption: Where does it exist?



Corruption by ...

raising medicine prices, to gain commission [1]

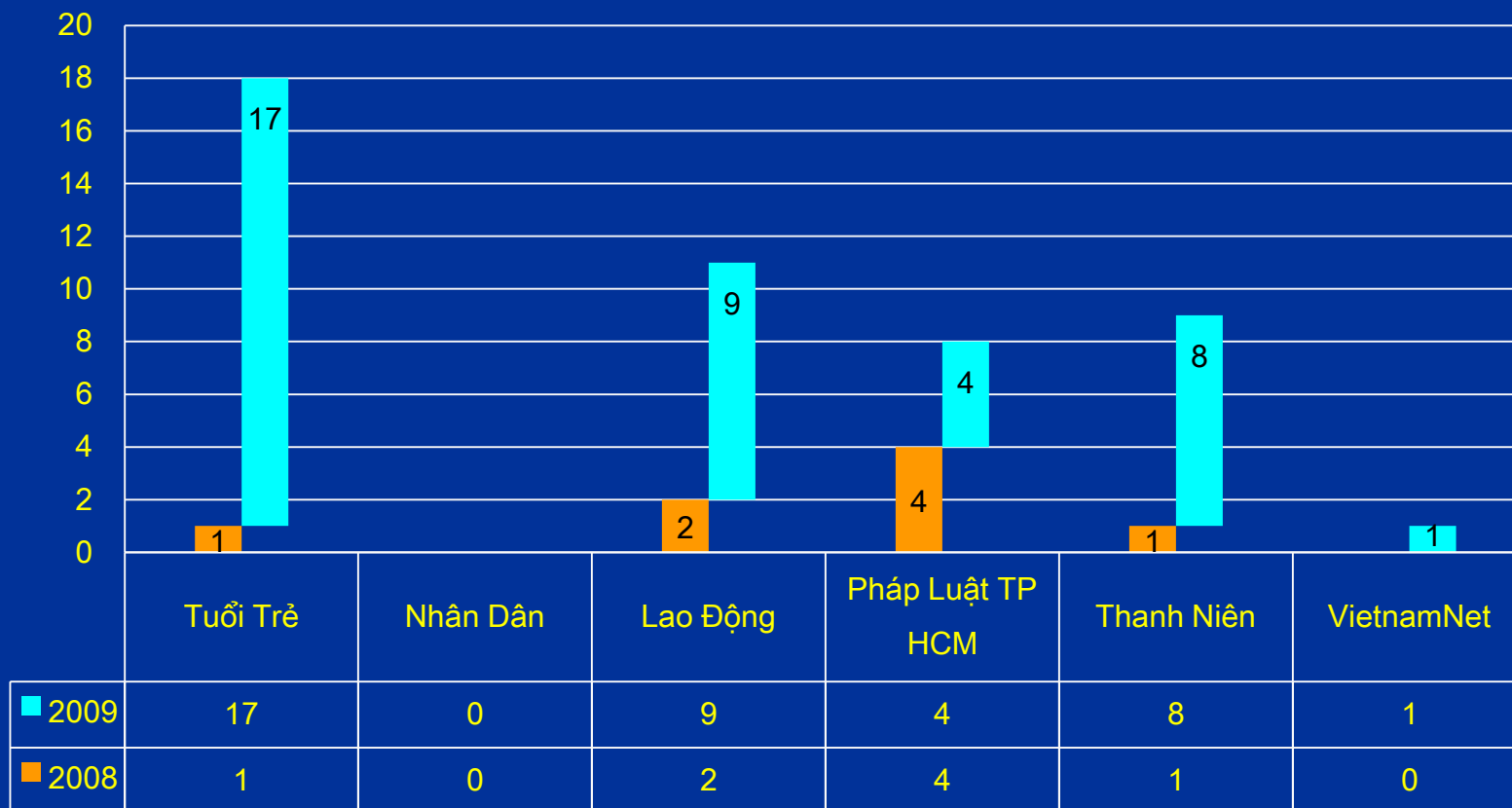


Corruption by ...

raising medicine prices, to gain commission [2]

- Head of Treatment Department, Ministry of Health (Lý Ngọc Kính): in 2008, statistics show medicine expenditures account for 45%-60% all hospitalisation costs. “*The deep cause is that health staff want to receive commissions from the drugs companies*” (Pháp luật, 29-08-2009).
- WHO warns each patient should not be treated with more than 5 types of medicines, but the Health Ministry’s investigation shows 41% patients are treated with combined antibiotics, 7,7% patients receive 3 types of antibiotics, 10% patients receive 11 – 15 types of medicine and 1,7% patients receive over 16 types of medicines (Pháp luật 28-05-2009).

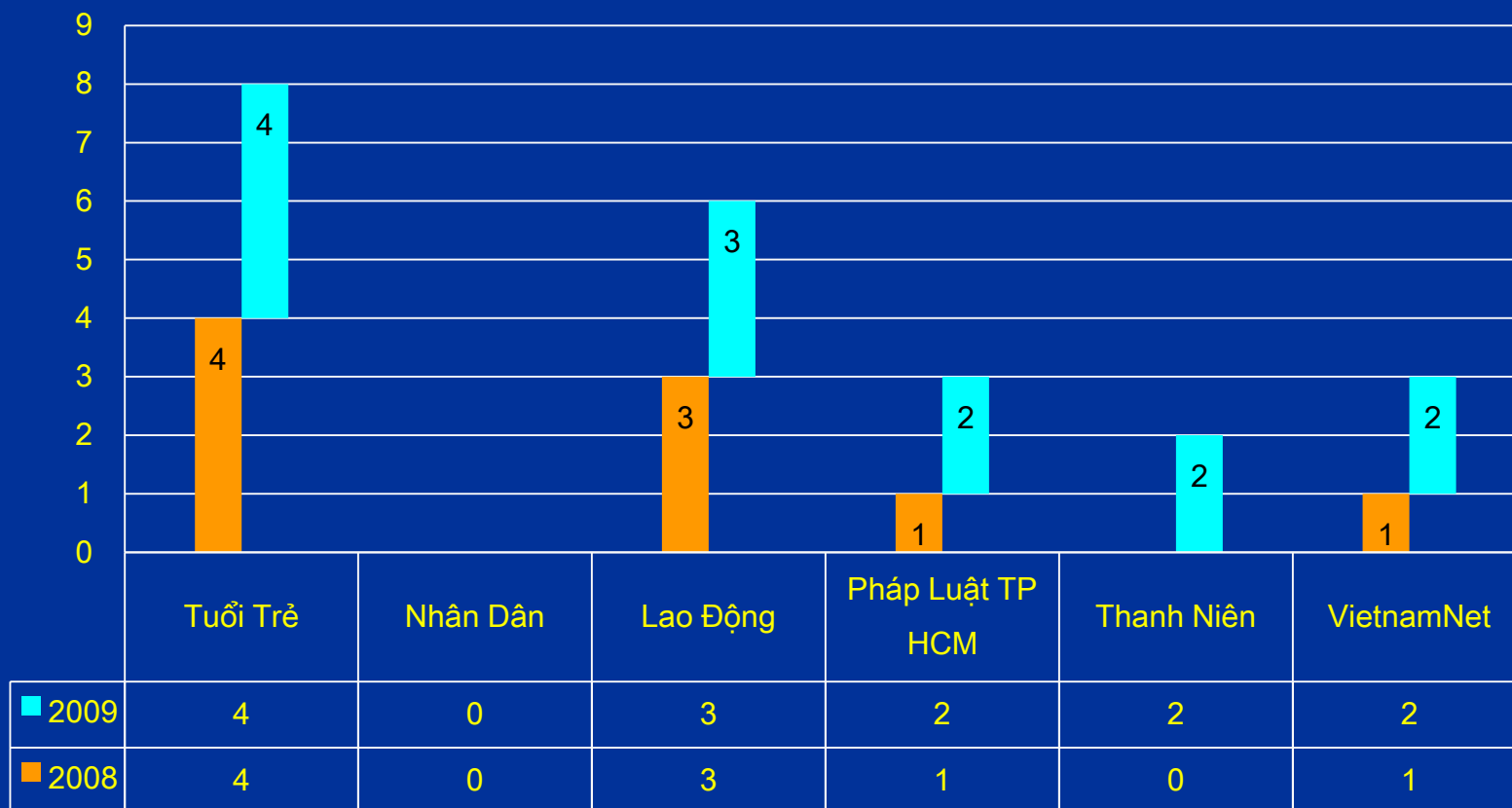
Corruption by ... health insurance funds [1]



Corruption by ... health insurance funds [2]

- Common corruption practices in relation to the Health Insurance Fund:
 - Raising medicine prices and excessive prescription of medicines
 - Faking medical files to obtain money from the health insurance fund by medical staff
 - Healthy people & medical personnel colluding with doctors to be examined and obtain medicines to further sell to market
 - Excessive prescription of diagnostic procedures and high-tech services

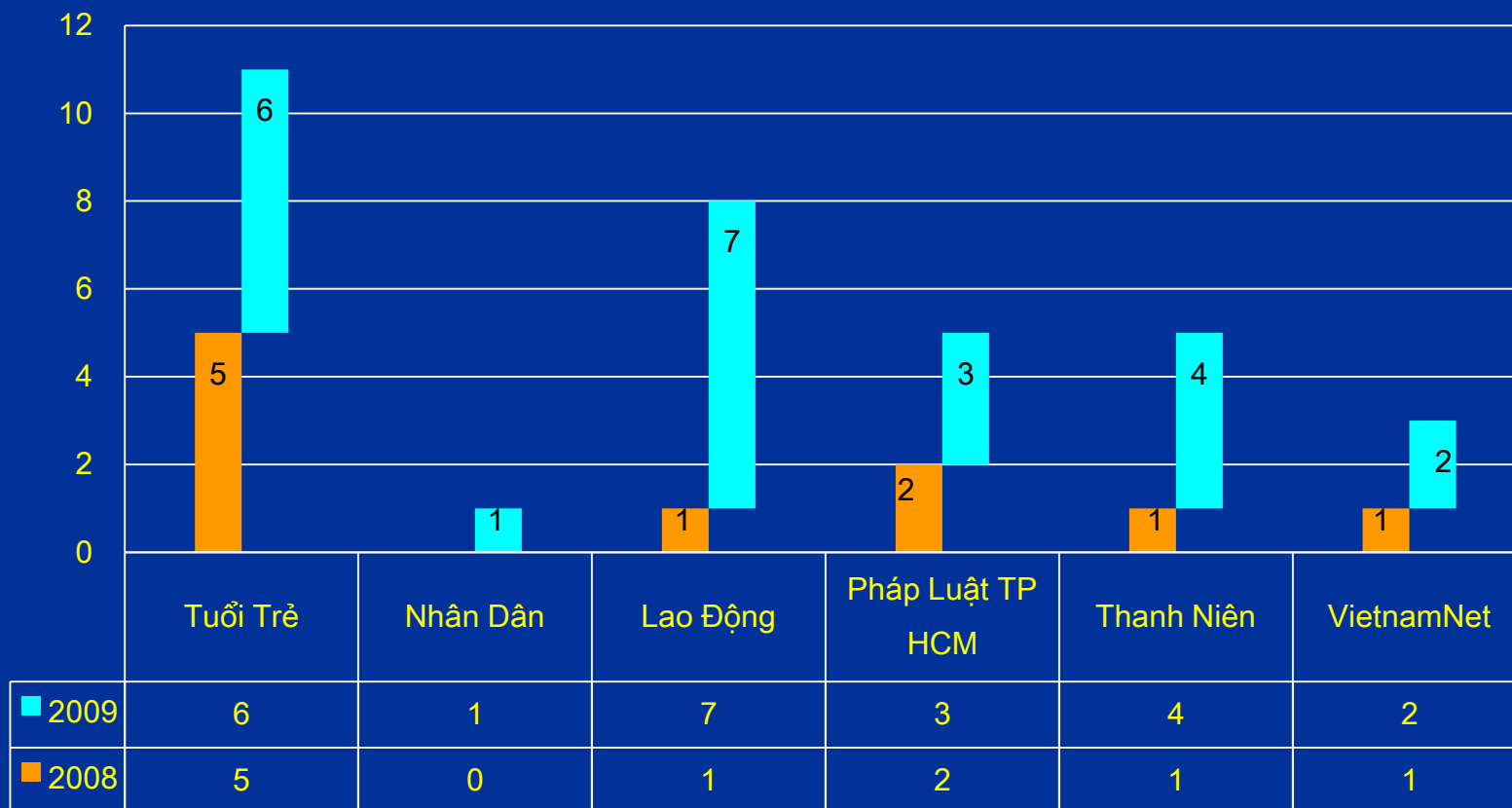
Corruption by ... socialization of the health sector [1]



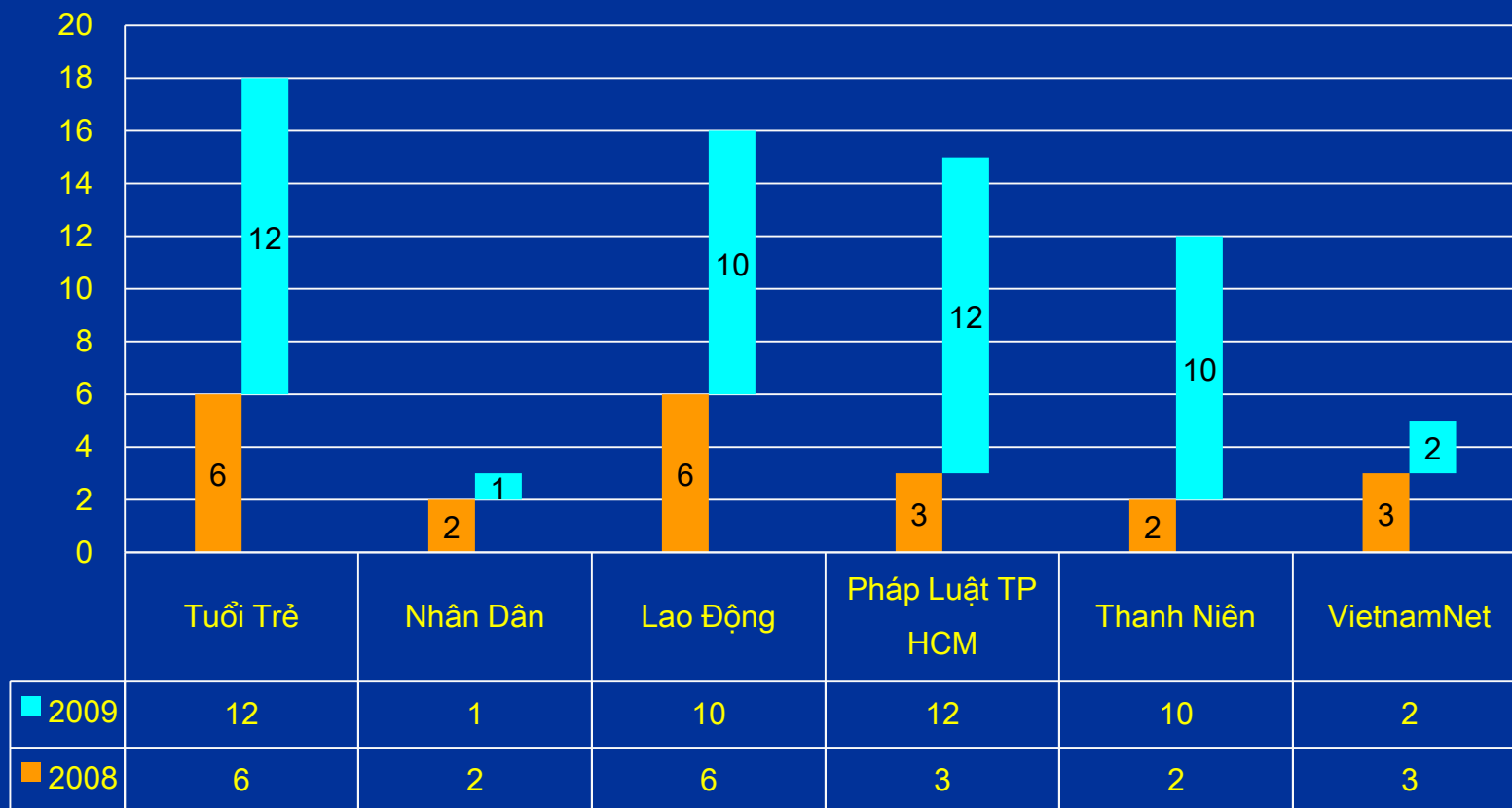
Corruption by ... socialization of the health sector [2]

- Raising medicine prices and over-describing medicines to benefit from commissions
- Faking medical files to obtain money from the health insurance fund by medical staff
- Healthy people colluding with doctors to be examined and obtain medicines to further sell to market
- Over-describing high-tech medical examinations to speed up return on investment of private machineries stationed in hospital (= issue of the “socialization” of the health sector)

Corruption by ... taking bribes from patients [1]



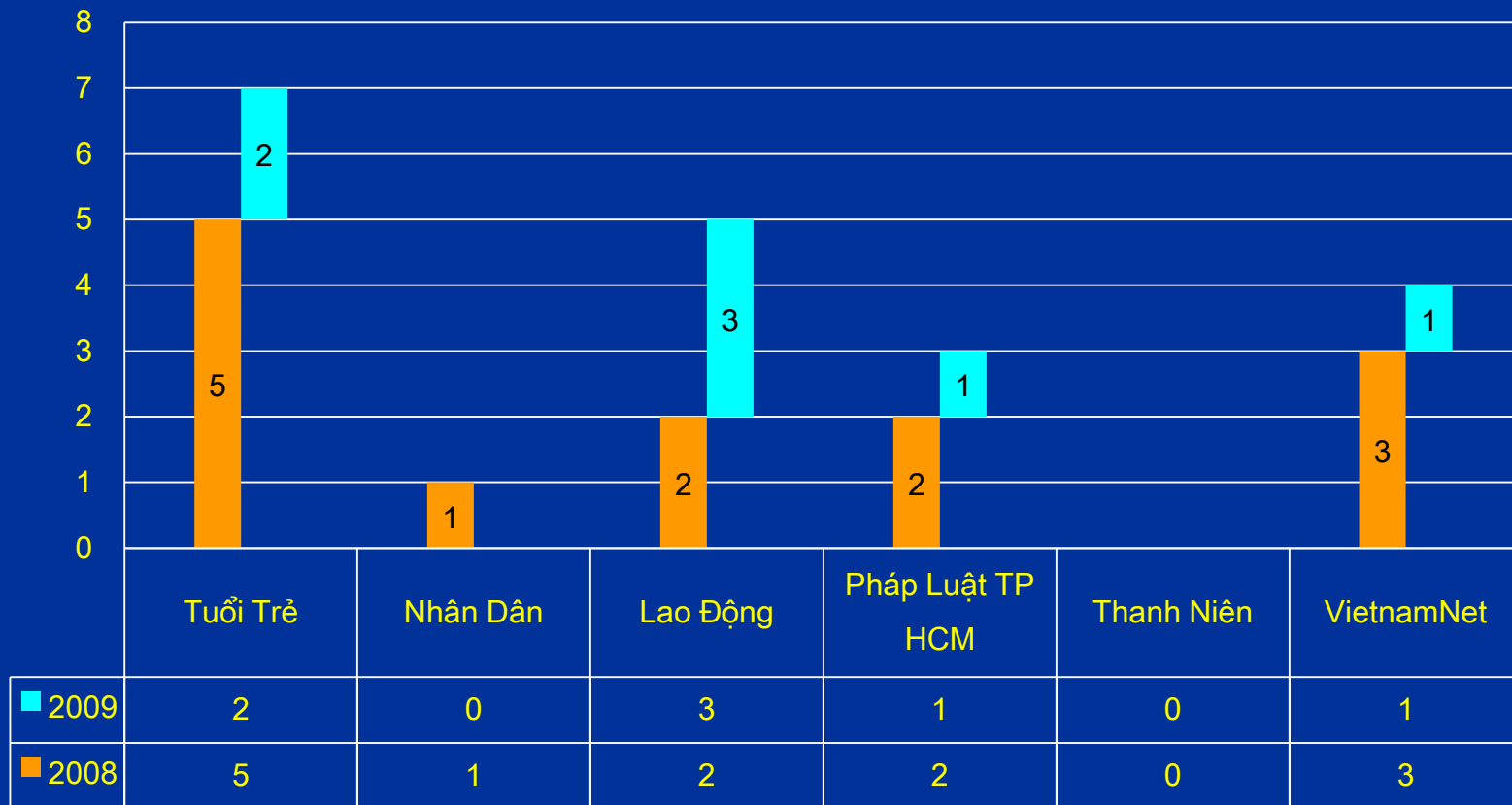
Corruption by ... using patients for private benefits [2]



Corruption by ... abusing patients [3]

- Over 70% of medical staff members interviewed admitted to they sometimes or often breach medical ethics. In the most common wrongdoings, requesting patients for bribes is one common action. More especially, the health sector still consider “thank-you” actions from patients do not account for breach of medical ethics (*Báo Tuổi Trẻ cuối tuần ngày 9.8.2009*).
- Research by Union of Science and Technology of Việt Nam done on 140 patients during 2009 shows 25% patients chose the medical establishments based on the fact whether they know someone from that establishment and the cost for presents to medical personnel account for 9% total cost of each treatment cycle ... (*Báo Pháp luật số ra 22-09-2009*).

Corruption by ... the process of granting licenses [1]

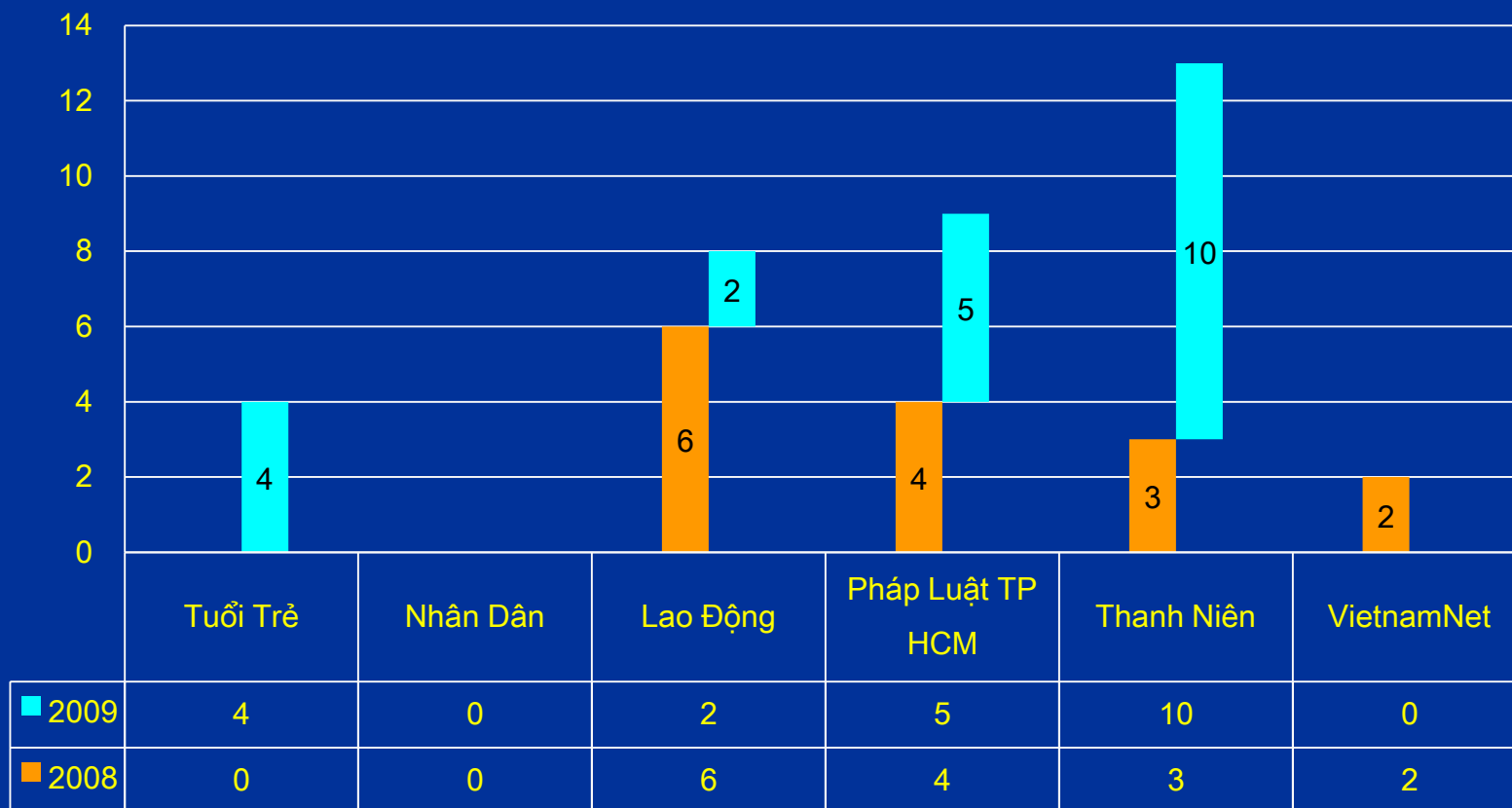


Corruption by ... the process of granting licenses [2]

- 215 out of 459 files to issue licenses to supplementary food at the Bureau for Food Safety need further documents. However, these products are allowed to be sold to the market (*Tuổi Trẻ* 12.7.2008)
- Within 2 years, in HCM City, thousands of tonnes of foodstuff not meeting safety standards when tested, out-of-date foodstuff ... are allowed to be imported into Vietnam and sold to consumers,... (*Lao Động* 17/07/2009)

Corruption by ...

Mis-management of government medical properties and donations [1]



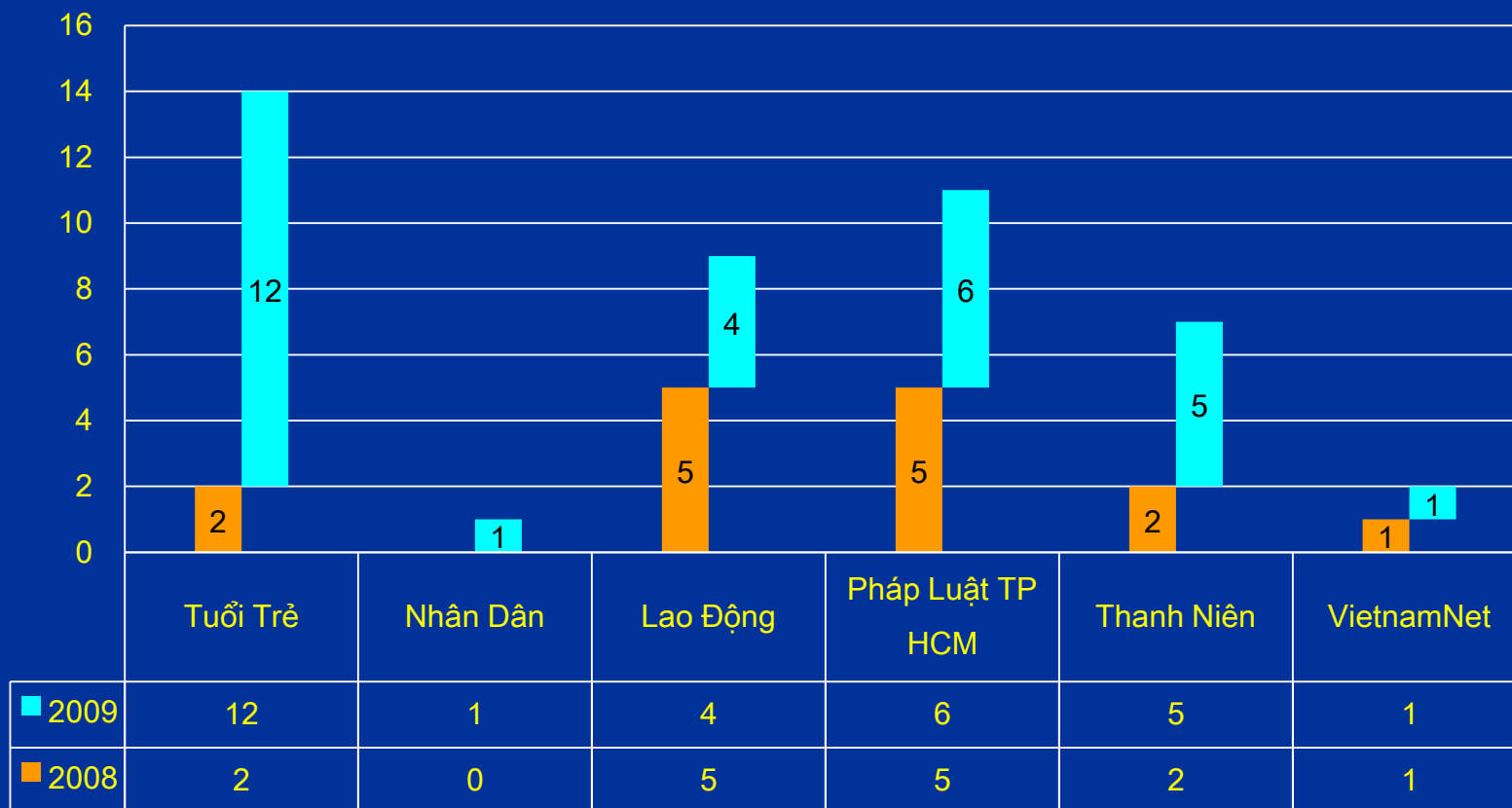
Corruption by ...

Mis-management of government medical properties and donations [2]

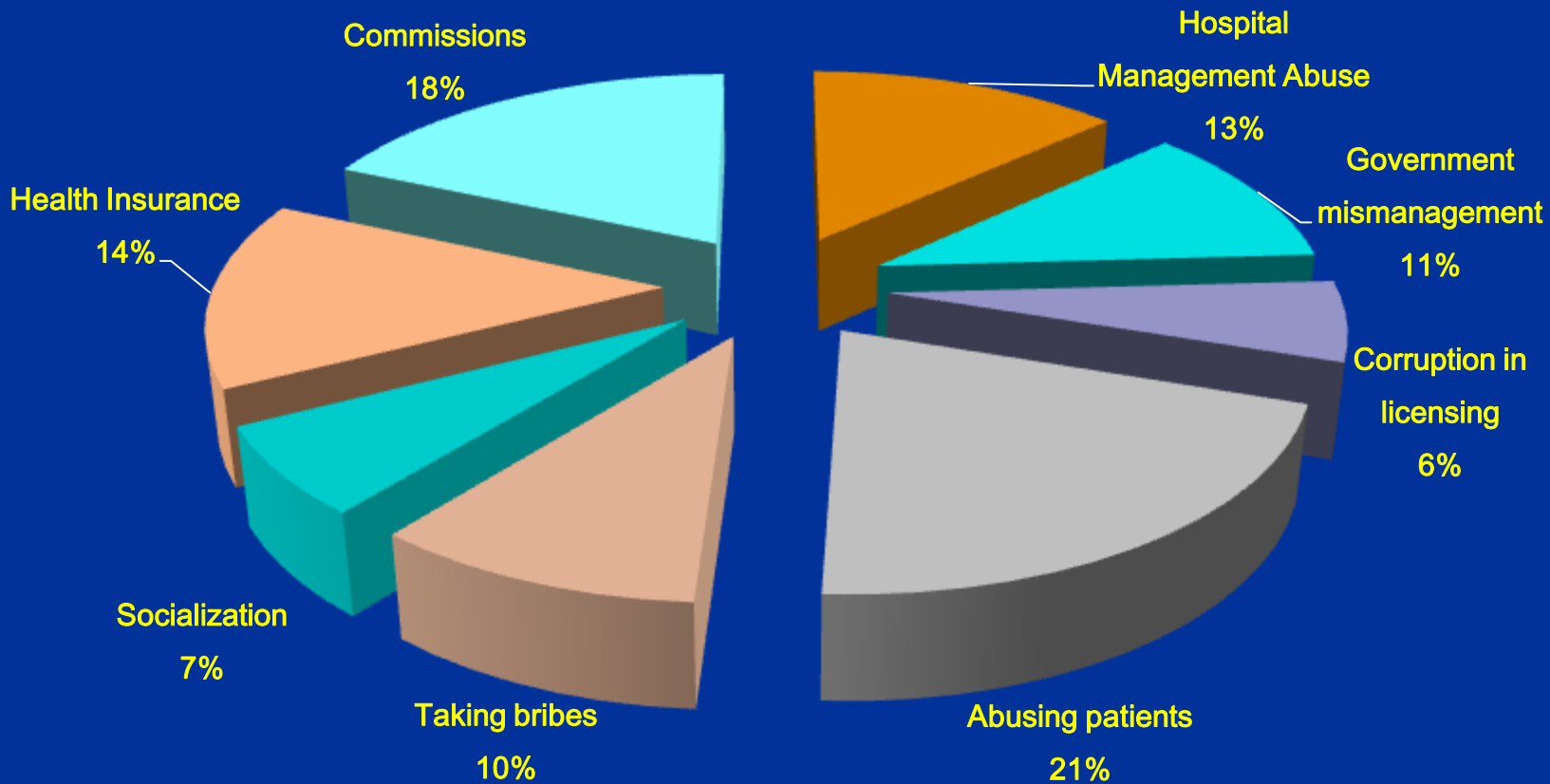
- For “emergencies” reasons such as H1N1, the purchases of equipment and printing communication materials do not follow bidding processes (*Lao Động, 8/5/2009*)
- Over 800 expensive medical boats bought for the Mekong Delta are wasted because they are not suitable (*Thanh Niên, 4-1-2009*)

Corruption by ...

Hospital management abuse power for their own benefits



Corruption by ... most vulnerable sectors within health?



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The views expressed in this presentation do not necessarily reflect the official views or positions of the United Nations or the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)