

# Court Users Survey 2023

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## FINAL REPORT

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# Executive Summary

The Ministry of Justice (the Ministry) commissioned the 2023 Court User Survey to measure New Zealanders' experience of, and satisfaction with, frontline services and facilities provided by the Ministry at fifteen courts. Kantar Public conducted 2,143 face-to-face interviews with members of the general public aged 16+ who visited one of fifteen courts from 8 to 21 June 2023. Key findings are presented below.

## Overall satisfaction

***High levels of satisfaction with court services and facilities have been maintained over time.***

- 76% are satisfied with the services and facilities provided in 2023; this is not significantly different from 2021 (80%) but is lower than in 2019 (82%).
  - Higher satisfaction exists among those visiting court for administrative matters or jury service, and for users of the Auckland High, Nelson, Wellington High, and Christchurch Courts. Of those who have an opportunity to speak in court, Asian peoples, older users, people in paid employment, and those with mid to high household incomes are also more satisfied than average.
  - Lower satisfaction is evident for users of Wellington District, Manukau, and Auckland District Courts. Those visiting for criminal (traffic and youth) cases, accused of an offence, or not given an opportunity to speak in court, are less satisfied than average. Likewise, satisfaction is lower among court users with lower household incomes, unemployed people, Māori, Pacific, and younger court users. However, satisfaction sits at 70% or higher for each of these groups.

We analysed how important each aspect of the court user experience is in driving overall satisfaction, and this was compared to how well each aspect is currently performing.

Aspects that are highly important drivers of overall satisfaction, but relatively low performing, are the priority for improvement.

The priorities for improvement include:

- waiting area/area outside court room
- availability of easily identifiable staff
- times that hearings start and finish
- ease of obtaining information about services
- individual circumstances being taken into account
- information received before coming to court.

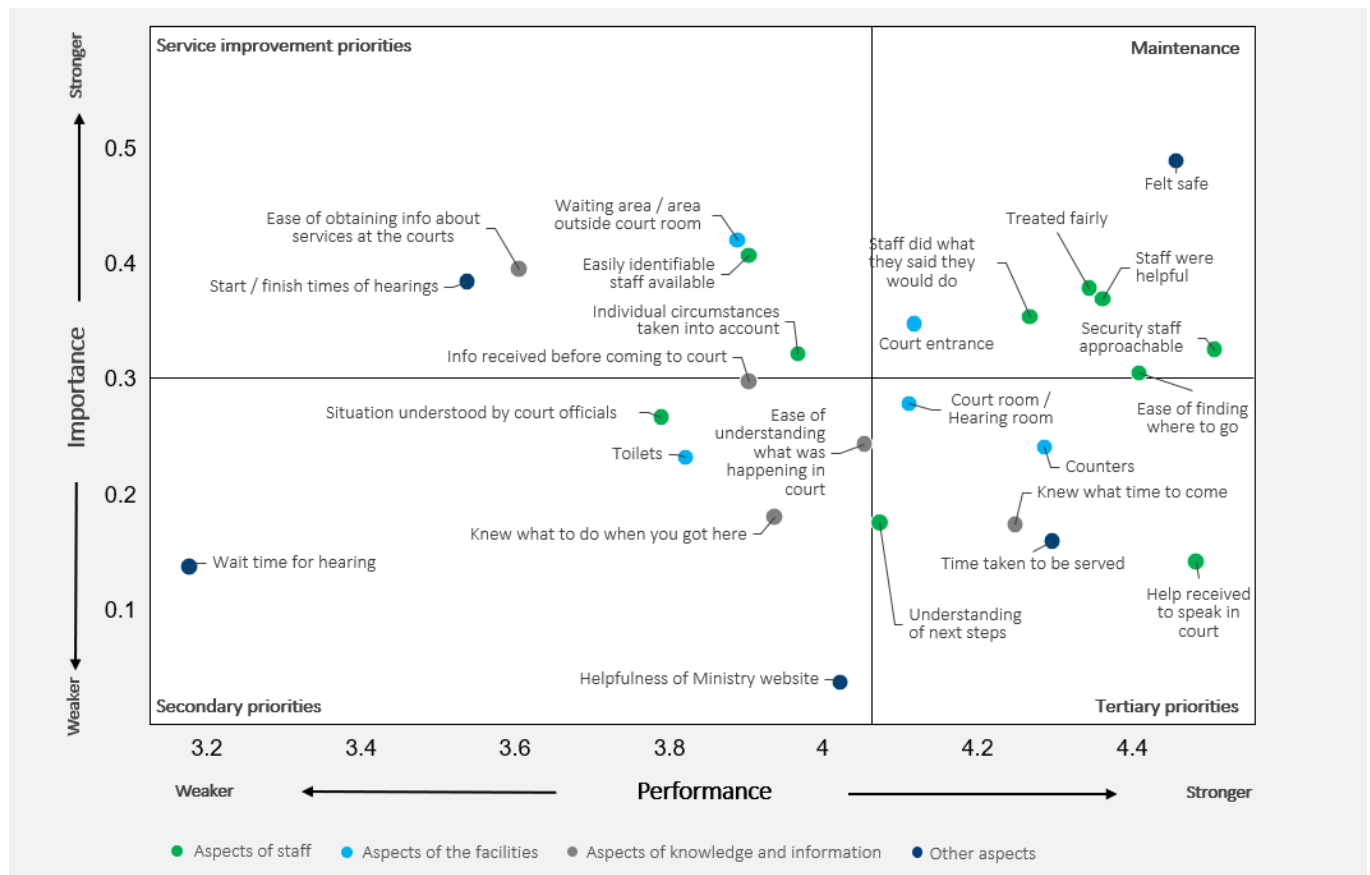
Aspects that are highly important drivers of overall satisfaction and high performing should be maintained. This will help prevent any further drop in satisfaction, and any efforts to further improve performance in these areas could help increase overall satisfaction.

The aspects to be maintained include:

- feelings of safety
- staff being helpful
- being treated fairly
- staff doing what they said they would do
- court entrance
- security staff being approachable
- ease of navigation around the courthouse.

The relative importance and performance of all aspects of the court user experience included in the survey are shown in the next chart. This is followed by more detailed findings in relation to specific aspects of the experience.

**Figure 1: Drivers of satisfaction plotted by relative performance rating**



## Staff

*Two thirds of court users had contact with court staff in 2023. The majority of court users rated staff highly. However, ‘very satisfied’ ratings have declined since 2021 for the overall quality of service provided by staff. Staff taking individual court user circumstances into account and ensuring staff are easily identifiable remain key areas for improvement.*

- 68% have contact with court staff during their visit, in line with 2021.
- 80% are satisfied with the overall quality of service from staff. However, ‘very satisfied’ ratings have dropped seven points from 48% in 2021 to 41% in 2023.
- As in 2021, most users who have had contact with staff agree they:
  - are helpful (89%)
  - treat them fairly (89%)
  - do what they say they would (83%).
- However, fewer agree that staff take their individual circumstances into account (68%), in line with 2021. While all staff attributes are important drivers of overall satisfaction, this last one is the only one of the four to sit in the improvement priority quadrant (top left quadrant in Figure 1). All others sit in maintenance (top right quadrant in Figure 1).
- 72% are satisfied that easily identifiable staff are available to deal with their queries, similar to 2021. This important driver of overall satisfaction remains a priority for improvement.

## Safety and security

***Feelings of safety at court have weakened, and security staff are slightly less approachable than in 2021.***

- 86% feel safe at court; this has declined significantly from 2021 when it was 91%.
- Court users at Auckland High, Wellington High, and Whanganui Courts are more likely to feel safe, while those at Manukau or Waitakere Courts are less likely to feel safe.
- Reasons for not feeling safe relate to 'the kinds of people that are there' (38%), being near the accused (17%), and not enough security (17%).
- Almost all court users see security staff at court (99%), in line with 2021 (99%). Visibility in the court entrance has declined (from 95% in 2021 to 88% in 2023). By contrast, visibility in customer service areas has increased (from 18% in 2021 to 21% in 2023). All other areas are in line with 2021.
- The proportion of court users who find security staff approachable has declined from 88% in 2021 to 85% in 2023.

## Facilities

***Perceptions of facilities have generally remained the same as in 2021, except for waiting areas where we see significant improvement.***

- Positive perceptions (ratings of at least 'good') are in line with 2021 for all courthouse facilities. Counters and the court entrance are the most highly rated facilities (83% and 77% respectively).
- Waiting areas are the second most important driver of satisfaction. Court users are more likely to rate waiting areas as 'very good' in 2023 (up five points since 2021). With the overall positive rating sitting at 66%, waiting areas remain a priority for further improvement.
- The overall rating of facilities is 70% (not significantly different to 2021).

## At court

***Higher levels of support are evident in 2023 in helping people speak in court, knowing what the next steps are in their case, and referring the court user to other support services. However, information and support remain an area to focus efforts as three in ten (or more) don't find it easy to know what is happening or what the next steps will be.***

- 70% of those who go into a court room find it easy to understand what is happening, in line with 2021.
- Just over half (55%) feel that court officials understand their situation. Those who speak in court are more likely to feel this way than those who do not (74% compared to 48%).
- 37% of users who have been inside a court room are given the opportunity to speak. Help from court officials to speak in court has increased (up 14 points since 2021 to 59%). This help is rated very highly, with 91% satisfied.
- 68% understand what the next steps are in their case, in line with 2021.
- Improvements since 2021 are evident in receiving information on next steps in their case (up seven points to 59%) and referrals to other services that could provide the court user with support (up 10 points to 34%).

***Hearing wait times remains the lowest performing aspect of the court user experience. Second lowest is the timing of hearings. These driver rankings have not changed from 2021. One in four would like to attend court via a video call.***

- 39% of court users visit a counter, lower than in 2021 (45%). The majority that do so get served immediately (60%), similar to 2019. Getting information on where to go remains the most common reason for visiting counters (26%).
- Average wait times appear to be slowly decreasing over time. However, 33% of those taking part in a case or hearing are made to wait over an hour, in line with 2021 (29%). Those who wait more than an hour have a lower overall satisfaction level, so it is important to keep wait times as short as possible.
- Just 56% are satisfied with the time court hearings start and finish, in line with 2021.

- Only 39% consider hearings held from 5pm to 8pm convenient, a drop of four points from 43% in 2021.
- While just over half prefer to attend court in person (56%), 25% of court users would prefer a video call, and 15% say they have no preference for remote or in-person attendance.

***Few have difficulty finding their way around the courthouse, or getting information or assistance.***

- 87% consider it easy to find where to go in the courthouse, in line with 2021.
- Only 12% experience difficulties getting information or assistance at court, the same as in 2021. Their main aim is to find out where to go, who to see, or legal advice.
- 59% consider it easy to get information about the services at the courts (while at the courthouse or before visiting), consistent with 2021.

## Knowledge and information before coming to court

***Most court users are satisfied with the information they receive from the court. While recall of receiving information from the court has increased since 2021, understanding of courts summons and knowledge of when to come to court have weakened. Nearly one in five of those who had a postponement/adjournment didn't understand why.***

- Recall of receiving information from the court before the visit has increased since 2021 (up five points to 86%). The main communications being a letter (31%), or a court summons (19%).
- Email remains the most preferred communication channel for court interactions (41%), followed by face-to-face contact at the court (32%).
- 71% are satisfied with the information the courts send, in line with 2021.
- Most say the information they receive before their visit is easy to understand. However, the ease of understanding court summons has declined from 2021 (down 10 points to 83% in 2023).
- Knowledge of what time to come to court has dropped five points since 2021 to 83%. Most court users know what to do when they get there (74%) and what to expect (63%).
- Half of those participating in a case had a postponement or adjournment; 80% of these people understand the reason for this and 18% don't.

***Two in five court users seek additional information. Speaking to someone continues to be the most helpful source of information.***

- 41% seek additional information about what they need to do, or what will happen at court.
- Their main source for further information is a professional such as a lawyer (32%), though this has declined from 42% in 2021. In addition, court users visit the Ministry's website (20%) or visit the courthouse beforehand (18%).
- The most helpful sources for court users seeking extra information are personal contacts, such as speaking with family and friends, a professional, or someone at the Citizen's Advice Bureau or a Community Law Centre.

## Access to a lawyer

Nearly eight in ten (79%) court users participating in a case (excluding support people and witnesses) had access to a lawyer and 16% did not. The most common reasons for lack of access relate to a legal aid lawyer not being available (26%), the person's preference to represent themselves (13%), and affordability (11%).

# Introduction

## Objectives

The Ministry commissioned Kantar Public to undertake the 2023 Court User Survey. The survey measures user experience of, and satisfaction with, frontline services and facilities provided by the Ministry across a range of court sites. This is the seventh time the survey has been carried out.

## Methodology

### Interview method and sample

2,143 face-to-face interviews were conducted with members of the public aged 16 years or older who visited one of fifteen courts during 8 to 21 June 2023. Quotas were set to ensure a minimum number of interviews were completed per court location. Final numbers achieved are shown in the table below.

**Table 1 – Sample sizes at each court location**

Court location	Sample size	Court location	Sample size
Auckland District Court	267	Palmerston North	102
Auckland High Court	103	Wellington District Court	214
Waitakere	126	Wellington High Court	105
Manukau	334	Nelson	84
Hamilton	147	Christchurch	267
Tauranga	128	Dunedin	36
Rotorua	87	Invercargill	42
Whanganui	101	<i>Total Sample</i>	<i>2,143</i>

The average interview length was 15 minutes, and the response rate to the survey was 40%.

Interviewers completed the surveys using Computer Assisted Personalised Interviewing (CAPI)<sup>1</sup>. Interviewers approached people waiting for their hearing or case to take place or when the user exited the court building. They interviewed members of the public attending court in relation to cases or seeking information from the court, and the people supporting them.

Further detail about the research method can be found in Appendix A, including desired targets relating to key case and court user types. Detailed profile information about the 2023 survey respondents is provided in the section of the report called 'Profile of survey respondents'.

As there is no population profile of court users in New Zealand, it's not possible to compare the profile of survey respondents with the total court user population. In addition, the survey only interviewed a sample of court users at a specific point in time, and at specific locations. The findings from the survey are therefore based on 'court user survey respondents' rather than 'all court users'.

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<sup>1</sup> This is a face-to-face data collection method in which the interviewer uses a tablet to record answers given during the interview.

## Analysis and reporting

### *Comparisons of 2017, 2019, and 2021, 2023 surveys*

#### *Weighting*

2017 survey results were unweighted because six fewer locations were included than in previous surveys and the difference in profiles between the surveys was considered minimal.

2019 survey results were weighted so the profile of 2019 respondents matches the profile of 2017 survey respondents by main reason for being at court.

2021 survey results were weighted so the profile of 2021 respondents matches the profile of 2019 survey respondents by main reason for being at court.

2023 survey results were weighted so the profile of 2021 respondents matches the profile of 2019 survey respondents by main reason for being at court.

#### *The use of symbols to indicate significant differences in this report*

All differences reported are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

Differences between the 2017 and 2019 survey results, between the 2019 and 2021, and between the 2021 and 2023 survey results, are shown in the figures as follows:

- A ↑ symbol indicates a statistically significant increase
- A ↓ symbol indicates a statistically significant decrease.

#### *Account for the difference in the court profile when testing for statistical significance between 2021 and 2023*

Two additional courts were surveyed in 2023, which were not surveyed in 2021 (replacing two courts that were surveyed in 2021 but not 2023). The remaining thirteen courts were surveyed in both 2021 and 2023. Any statistically significant differences take account of this change in profile. To help streamline the findings, the decision was made to only show differences that are statistically significant both when comparing the total 2021 and 2023 results **and** when comparing results for the courts surveyed in both the 2021 and 2023 surveys. This means that any differences noted in this report can be considered 'true' shifts, as opposed to being different due to changes in the courts surveyed.

When comparing results for the courts surveyed in both the 2021 and 2023 surveys, 2023 data was additionally weighted by court location to ensure that the profile matched that of the 2023 data.



This table displays the sample profiles in the 2017, 2019, 2021, and 2023 surveys.

**Table 2 – Sample profile comparisons 2017, 2019, 2021, and 2023 surveys**

	%	%	%	%
	2017 sample profile (n=2,044)	2019 weighted sample profile (n=2,055)	2021 weighted sample profile (n=2,009)	2023 weighted sample profile (n=2,143)
Male	55	56	53	56
Female	45	44	47	44
Under 30	40	37	32	30
30-49	40	39	39	41
Aged 50+	20	25	28	29
NZ-European	50	53	54	49
Māori	32	33	36	35
Pacific	13	13	13	14
Asian	9	10	9	10
Other	12	7	8	8
Attend a hearing/supporter/other	71	71	71	71
Bring/get paper relating to a case/fines	16	16	16	16
Jury service/spectator/general admin	13	13	13	13
Civil jurisdiction	15	12	13	8
Criminal jurisdiction	62	59	53	61
Family Court	17	11	15	13
Fine or reparation	5	4	4	5
Other	16	14	15	14

### *Subgroup analysis*

Additional analyses have been conducted to determine whether the survey results differ by frequency of attendance at the court, role at the court (e.g., attending a hearing, attending as a support person, dealing with administrative matters, etc.), jurisdiction (e.g., criminal, civil, Family Court, etc.), court location, and key demographic characteristics (such as age, gender, income and ethnicity). All differences between subgroups mentioned in this report are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

### *Other notes on reading figures within the report*

Please note that:

- Because only whole percentages are reported for survey findings, this means that due to rounding some single-coded questions do not always add up to exactly 100%.
- Where a result is greater than zero but less than one (e.g., 0.4%) it is recorded as ‘\*’ in tables. A proportion of 0% is recorded as ‘-’ in tables.
- Figures which contain rating statements have ‘nett’ scores on the far-right side of the chart for each rating statement. These nett scores combine the top two ratings within a scale. Sometimes when netts are created from two categories, such as merging ‘very satisfied’ and ‘fairly satisfied’ into ‘overall satisfied’ (a nett score), the percentages of the two individual categories may not add up to the percentage of the nett. This is because of rounding.

# Aspects of court user experience

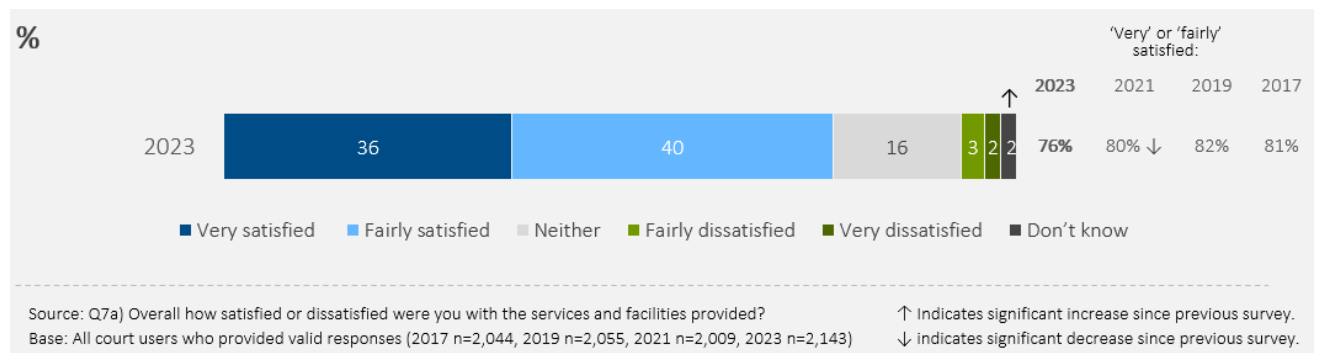
## Overall satisfaction and drivers of satisfaction

Overall satisfaction with the services and facilities

All respondents were asked for their overall satisfaction with the services and facilities provided. Results are displayed in the Figure below.

Around three quarters (76%) are either ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ satisfied, lower than previous measures but not statistically significant when location differences are accounted for.

**Figure 2 – Overall satisfaction with the services and facilities**



Groups more likely than average to be satisfied include those:

- visiting for administrative matters not related to a case (94%), jury service (85%), or ‘other’ reason aside from those listed (85%)
- visiting Auckland High (89%), Christchurch (86%), Nelson (90%), or Wellington High (90%) Courts
- who identify as Asian (83%)
- who have an annual household income between \$30,000 and \$100,00 (80%) or above \$100,000 (83%)
- aged 50 years or over (83%)
- in paid employment (80%) or retired (86%)
- who spoke in court (84%).

Groups less likely to be satisfied than average include those:

- visiting Wellington District (70%), Manukau (71%), or Auckland District (70%) Courts
- visiting to take part in a case (72%)
- visiting for a case which falls under the criminal (traffic and youth) jurisdiction (73%)
- aged 30 to 49 years old (74%)
- who identify as Māori (71%) or Pacific (71%)
- are unemployed (71%)
- who have an annual household income up to \$30,000 (71%)
- who are accused of an offence (70%)
- who did not speak in court (70%).

The proportion of court users at each court location who are ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ satisfied is shown in the table on the following page. Results from the 2023, 2021, 2019, and 2017 surveys are shown per location.

Auckland and Wellington High Courts and Nelson and Christchurch Courts achieve higher overall satisfaction than the average in 2023. The decrease overall satisfaction for Manukau Court since 2021 stems from fewer 'fairly satisfied' and 'don't know' ratings.

**Table 3 – Overall satisfaction by court location**

	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
	All respondents	Auckland District Court	Auckland High Court	Waitakere	Manukau	Hamilton	Tauranga	Rotorua	Whanganui	Palmerston North	Wellington District Court	Wellington High Court	Nelson	Christchurch	Dunedin	Invercargill
Base size 2023	(n=2,143)	(n=267)	(n=103)	(n=126)	(n=334)	(n=147)	(n=128)	(n=87)	(n=101)	(n=102)	(n=214)	(n=105)	(n=84)	(n=267)	(n=36)	(n=42)
Proportion who were either very or fairly satisfied	76	70	89	69	71↓	71	71	78	84	82	70	90	90	86	63	82
Base size 2021	(n=2,009)	(n=272)	(n=100)	-	(n=281)	(n=111)	(n=100)	-	(n=101)	(n=101)	(n=157)	(n=79)	(n=100)	(n=281)	(n=62)	(n=94)
Proportion who were either very or fairly satisfied	80	73	86	-	79	71↓	78	-	86	89	70	87	85	86	74↓	76
Base size 2019	(n=2,055)	(n=426)	(n=51)	-	(n=375)	(n=200)	-	-	-	-	(n=197)	-	(n=102)	(n=402)	(n=151)	-
Proportion who were either very or fairly satisfied	82	76↓	88	-	81	85↑	-	-	-	-	65↓	-	93	88	89	-
Base size 2017	(n=2,044)	(n=304)	-	-	(n=291)	(n=283)	-	-	-	-	(n=228)	-	-	(n=250)	(n=202)	-
Proportion who were either very or fairly satisfied	81	84↑	-	-	76	77↑	-	-	-	-	82	-	-	87↑	81	-

Red percentages are significantly lower than the average (for that particular year), green percentages are significantly higher than average (for that particular year). ↑↓ indicates a significant increase or decrease in overall satisfaction in that location since the previous period.

The proportion of court users who are 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied by type of case is presented in the table below.

Court users attending for a criminal (youth or traffic) case are less likely than average to be satisfied.

**Table 4 – Overall satisfaction by type of case**

		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
	All respondents	All those taking part in a hearing or case on day of interview	A criminal or traffic case	A Family Court case	A Tenancy or Disputes Tribunal	A civil case	A Youth Court case	Environment or Employment court	Another type of Tribunal case
Base size 2023	(n=2,143)	(n=1440)	(n=966)	(n=222)	(n=47)	(n=87)	(n=33)	(n=17*)	(n=9*)
'Very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied'	76	74	71	80	81	83	82	81	100
Base size 2021	(n=2,009)	(n=1,495)	(n=888)	(n=262)	(n=92)	(n=145)	(n=40)	(n=13*)	(n=6*)
'Very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied'	80	77	76	81	77	84	67	79	100
Base size 2019	(n=2,055)	(n=1,599)	(n=1,048)	(n=210)	(n=122)	(n=106)	(n=64)	(n=5*)	(n=23*)
'Very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied'	82	81	79	84	88	83	85	-	86
Base size 2017	(n=2,044)	(n=1,605)	(n=990)	(n=279)	(n=137)	(n=96)	(n=54)	(n=6*)	(n=21*)
'Very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied'	81	79	76	84	85	78	93	-	81

Red percentages are significantly lower than the average (for that particular year), green percentages are significantly higher than average (for that particular year). ↑↓ indicates a significant increase or decrease in overall satisfaction in that particular group since the previous period.

\*Caution: low base number, results are indicative only

The table below shows satisfaction by main reason for visiting court.

Those groups more satisfied than average include court users attending for jury service or an administrative reason not related to a case. In contrast, those visiting court to take part in a case or hearing are less satisfied than average.

**Table 5 – Overall satisfaction by main reason for visit**

	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
	All respondents	Take part in a case	Support person	Get info about a case	Bring info about a case	Fine or reparation	Jury service	Admin not related to a case	Spectator
Base size <b>2023</b>	(n=2,143)	(n=803)	(n=510)	(n=67)	(n=60)	(n=52)	(n=293)	(n=216)	(n=105)
'Very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied'	76	72	74	85	82	77	85	94	84
Base size <b>2021</b>	(n=2,009)	(n=753)	(n=586)	(n=79)	(n=79)	(n=61)	(n=109)	(n=248)	(n=77)
'Very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied'	80	76	79	75	82	82	89	95	90
Base size <b>2019</b>	(n=2,055)	(n=888)	(n=621)	(n=63)	(n=54)	(n=42)	(n=143)	(n=150)	(n=55)
'Very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied'	82	79	82	84	87	83	94	95	78
Base size <b>2017</b>	(n=2,044)	(n=802)	(n=609)	(n=138)	(n=82)	(n=111)	(n=79)	(n=147)	(n=36)
'Very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied'	81	77	80	80	87	88	86↓	93	83

Red percentages are significantly lower than the average (for that particular year), green percentages are significantly higher than average (for that particular year). ↑↓ indicates a significant increase or decrease in overall satisfaction in that particular group since the previous period.

The following table presents satisfaction by ethnicity. Asian peoples and those identifying with ‘other’ ethnic groups are more satisfied than average, while Māori and Pacific peoples are less satisfied than average.

**Table 6 – Satisfaction by ethnicity**

	%	%	%	%	%	%
	All respondents	NZ European	Māori	Pacific	Asian	Other
Base size <b>2023</b>	(n=2,143)	(n=1,065)	(n=680)	(n=286)	(n=251)	(n=189)
‘Very satisfied’ or ‘fairly satisfied’	76	78	71	71	83	85
Base size <b>2021</b>	(n=2,009)	(n=1,089)	(n=685)	(n=243)	(n=200)	(n=153)
‘Very satisfied’ or ‘fairly satisfied’	80	81	76	81	87	80
Base size <b>2019</b>	(n=2,055)	(n=1,074)	(n=670)	(n=275)	(n=204)	(n=136)
‘Very satisfied’ or ‘fairly satisfied’	82	83	81	79	85	86
Base size <b>2017</b>	(n=2,044)	(n=1,026)	(n=663)	(n=263)	(n=209)	(n=236)
‘Very satisfied’ or ‘fairly satisfied’	81	82↑	78	77	84	83

Red percentages are significantly lower than the average (for that particular year), green percentages are significantly higher than average (for that particular year). ↑↓ indicates a significant increase or decrease in overall satisfaction in that particular group since the previous period.

## Drivers of overall satisfaction with services and facilities

Further analysis of the data identifies aspects of service that explain and predict overall levels of satisfaction with the services and facilities. Known as ‘driver analysis’ it identifies aspects of service that are strongly associated with overall satisfaction (i.e., if they’re rated more positively, then overall satisfaction is also rated more positively, and if they’re rated less positively then overall satisfaction is also rated less positively). These are highly important factors, as any change in their performance will have the biggest impact on overall satisfaction.

The driver analysis includes all<sup>2</sup> of the variables with a 1 (very negative) to 5 (very positive) response scale (waiting time was also recalibrated as a response scale). Variables were entered into a statistical model to determine their influence on overall satisfaction. All aspects of service drive satisfaction to some degree, but some are stronger than others. The top 15 drivers of overall satisfaction are listed in the table below.

**Table 7 – Top 15 drivers of overall satisfaction with the services and facilities**

Ranking of importance	Service factor	Importance score <sup>3</sup>
1	Felt safe	0.49
2	Waiting area / area outside court room	0.42
3	Easily identifiable staff available	0.41
4	Ease of obtaining information about services at the courts	0.40
5	Start/finish times of hearings	0.39
6	Treated fairly	0.38
7	Staff were helpful	0.37
8	Staff did what they said they would do	0.36
9	Court entrance	0.35
10	Approachability of court security staff	0.33
11	Individual circumstances were taken into account	0.32
12	Ease of finding where to go in the courthouse	0.30
13	Information received before coming to the court	0.30
14	Court room / Hearing room	0.28
15	The court officers, incl. the judge, understood situation	0.27

The top drivers of satisfaction include court users feeling safe, the availability of the waiting areas, and the availability of easily identifiable staff. These are the same top drivers as in 2019 and 2021, albeit the order

<sup>2</sup> We removed two variables which strongly overlap with overall satisfaction, ‘overall satisfaction with the facilities’ and ‘overall satisfaction with the service provided by staff. This is because they can be considered ‘co-linear’ variables (that is they measure the same thing as ‘overall satisfaction with the services and facilities’ and are therefore not considered as drivers).

Some additional variables have been excluded from this analysis due to low base sizes (for example, less than 50 users provided a rating on the jury deliberation rooms, and as such this facility is unable to be included in this analysis).

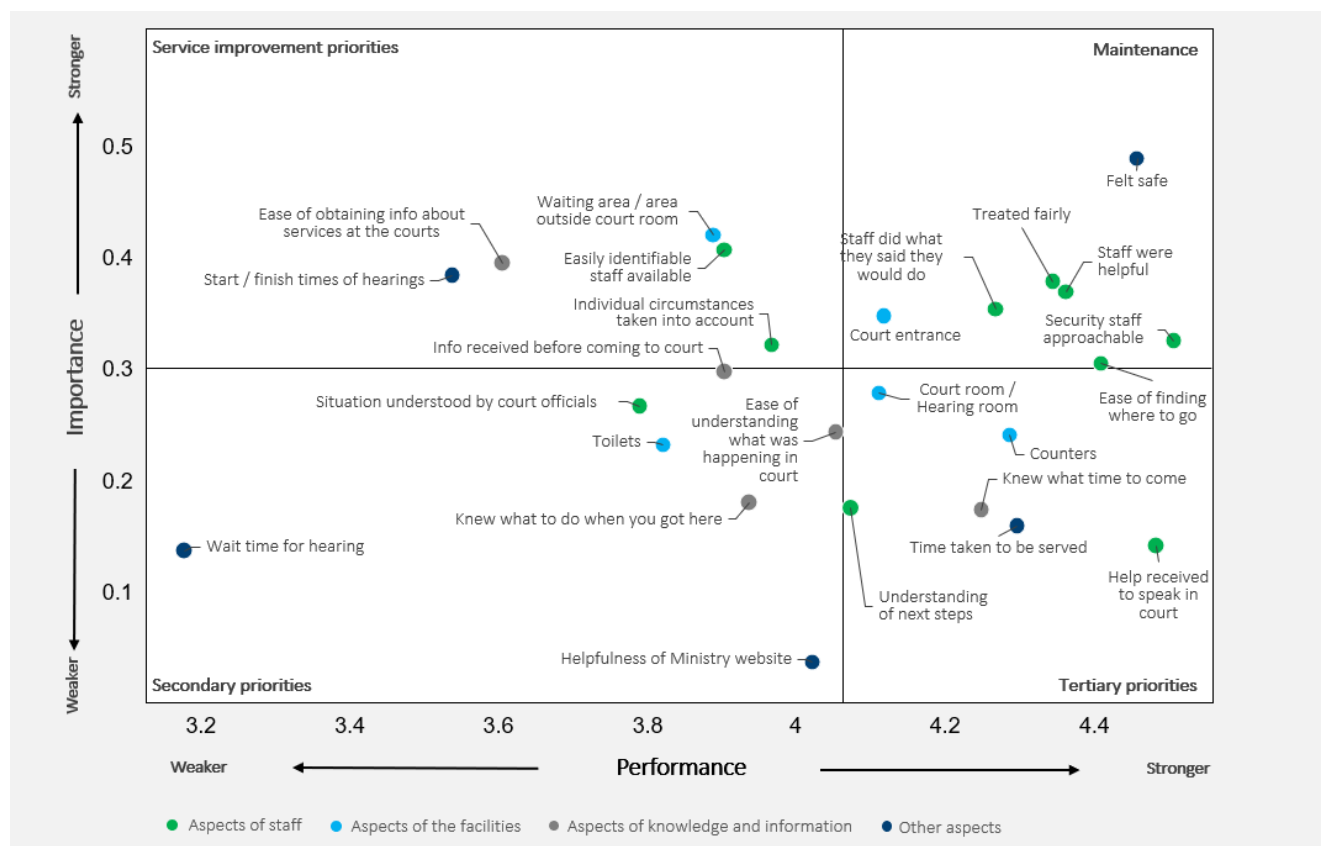
<sup>3</sup> Variables with high importance scores are strongly associated with overall satisfaction and change in these variables will have a higher impact on the satisfaction score. The importance score is calculated by multiplying the correlation coefficient and the regression coefficient for the variable. The correlation is the strength of relationship with overall satisfaction. A strong correlation means that, in general, higher scores on one variable tend to be paired with higher scores on the other and lower scores on the variable tend to be paired with lower scores on the other. A strong regression score is associated with a strong scaling impact of the predictor variable on overall satisfaction. When a variable has a strong regression relative to others, a change in that variable will result in a larger change in overall satisfaction (relative to other variables). In our analysis, data cells with missing values (because people were filtered out of the question because it was not relevant to them – for example, most respondents were not asked to rate the jury deliberation room) have been replaced with the mean answer for that variable. This was to ensure the analysis represents the views of the whole population, regardless of whether or not they used a particular facility or service.

has changed. As in 2021, many other aspects of court staff are highly important which reinforces the crucial role that staff have in the overall court user experience. In addition, the court entrance and ease of finding where to go are both in the top 15 drivers, highlighting the importance of easy wayfinding. The full range of drivers are plotted in a chart below.

### Examining importance alongside performance

The Figure below plots each aspect of court user experience on two key dimensions: how positively respondents rate each aspect of service (horizontal axis) and the relative importance of each aspect in driving overall satisfaction (vertical axis). The reason for plotting both importance and performance is to use the analysis for decision making about service improvements. The highest priorities for improvement are those in the top left area of the figure, as these are highly important aspects but relatively low performing.

**Figure 3 – Drivers of satisfaction plotted by relative performance rating**



### Identifying potential service improvement priorities: commentary on the relative positions of service aspects within the Performance-Importance chart

Decisions about what areas to focus on should not be based on this analysis alone, but upon a wider service improvement strategy. The role of this analysis is to contribute towards decision making because aspects of service that are both important, and also have a lower performance rating, are considered potential 'service improvement priorities'. Improvements in these specific areas should lead to notable increases in overall satisfaction.



Potential service improvement priorities (aspects that are both important and have a relatively lower level of performance):

These include:

- waiting area/area outside court room
- availability of easily identifiable staff
- times that hearings start and finish
- ease of obtaining information about services
- individual circumstances being taken into account
- information received before coming to court.

Although respondents rate the above aspects less positively than other aspects of the court experience, most respondents still rate them positively (the exact proportions are indicated later in the report). For these aspects of service there is most room for improvement, and they are strong drivers of overall satisfaction.

**Maintenance priorities (aspects that are important but already have a high performance):**

Aspects in the top-right corner of the Figure are also important drivers of overall satisfaction but are also service aspects which respondents already view positively (particularly if they are on the far-right side). For these areas, there is less room for improvement, but maintaining quality of service in these areas will be important for maintaining overall satisfaction levels.

Aspects of service to maintain include:

- feelings of safety
- staff being helpful
- being treated fairly
- staff doing what they said they would do
- court entrance
- security staff being approachable
- ease of navigation around the courthouse.

**Secondary priorities (aspects that are relatively less important and have a relatively lower level of performance):**

Aspects in the bottom-left corner of the Figure can be considered secondary priorities, as they have relatively low performance and importance. Improving these measures is likely to increase overall satisfaction, but at a lower rate (compared with improving measures located towards the top-left corner of the Figure).

Secondary priorities include:

- having situations be understood by court officials
- the helpfulness of the Ministry website
- ease of understanding what was happening in court
- toilets
- knowing what to do upon arrival at court
- waiting times for hearings.

**Tertiary priorities (aspects that are relatively less important and have a high performance):**

Aspects in the bottom-right corner of the Figure are tertiary priorities. They are rated positively by most (relative to other service aspects), however their impact on overall satisfaction is relatively small compared with other aspects.

Tertiary priorities include:

- counters
- court / hearing room
- respondents knowing what time to come to court
- the help received when speaking in court
- waiting time at counters
- understanding their next steps.

## Staff contact

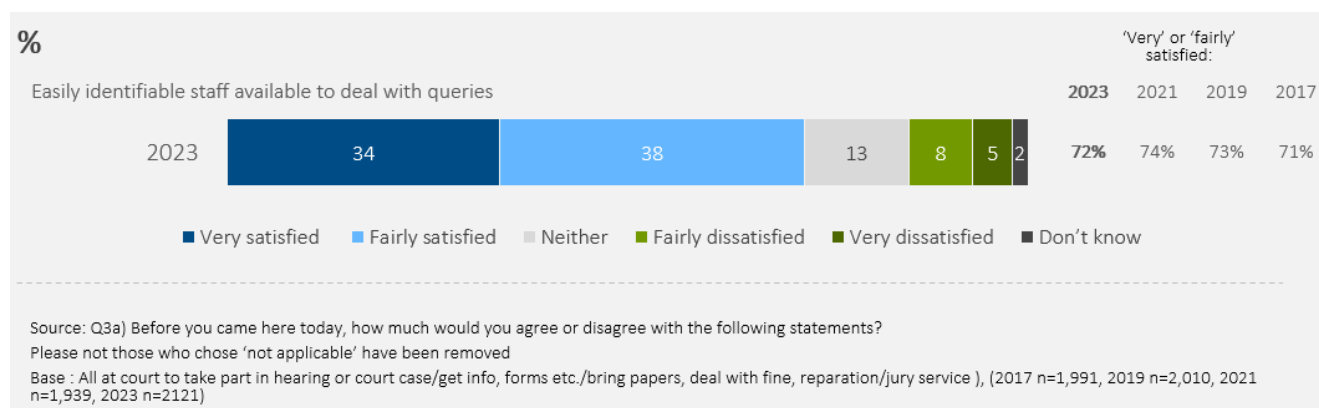
As mentioned in the previous section, the availability of easily identifiable staff is one of the most important drivers of court user satisfaction and is a top priority for improvement. Many other aspects of staff are also highly important drivers of satisfaction. This section explores court users' experience with staff in more detail.

### Availability of easily identifiable staff

Respondents were asked how satisfied they were that easily identifiable staff were available to deal with their queries. Results (excluding those who indicated it wasn't applicable to them) are presented in the Figure below.

Nearly three quarters (72%) are 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied that easily identifiable staff are available to deal with their queries. This is in line with results over the previous three measures.

**Figure 4 – Satisfaction there are easily identifiable staff available to help with queries**



Groups more likely than average to be satisfied include those:

- visiting Palmerston North (93%), Whanganui (93%), Invercargill (88%), Auckland High (83%), or Christchurch (82%) Courts
- visiting for administrative reasons not related to a case (90%), to get information related to a case (85%), or for jury service (84%)
- aged 50 years or older (76%)
- in paid employment (75%) or retired (80%)
- who identify as Asian (79%).

Groups less likely than average to be satisfied include those:

- visiting Wellington District (64%) or Waitakere (54%) Courts
- who identify as Pacific (66%) or Māori (67%)
- visiting as a support person (65%)
- who are unemployed (67%)
- who did not have an opportunity to speak in court (66%).

## Whether court users have contact with staff

Just over two thirds had contact with court staff during their visit (68%). This is in line with 2021 (69%).

Groups more likely than average to have had contact with court staff include those:

- visiting Whanganui (94%), Invercargill (100%), Palmerston North (87%), Nelson (100%), Auckland High (84%), or Christchurch (78%) Courts
- visiting in relation to a fine or reparation (87%)
- visiting for administrative reasons not related to a case (91%)
- visiting to bring information about a case (85%)
- visiting to get information about a case (85%)
- aged 50 years and above (73%)
- who identify as NZ European (74%)
- who have visited courts more than 12 times (76%)
- who have a household income up to \$30,000 per annum (73%).

Groups less likely than average to have had contact with court staff include those:

- visiting Hamilton (44%), Rotorua (47%), Manukau (55%), or Auckland District (59%) Courts
- visiting for a case which falls under the criminal (traffic and youth) jurisdiction (65%)
- who identify as Pacific (62%) or Asian (55%)
- visiting as a support person (56%)
- visiting as a spectator (57%)
- aged under 30 years (63%)
- who have not visited courts before (61%).

## Rating of staff contact

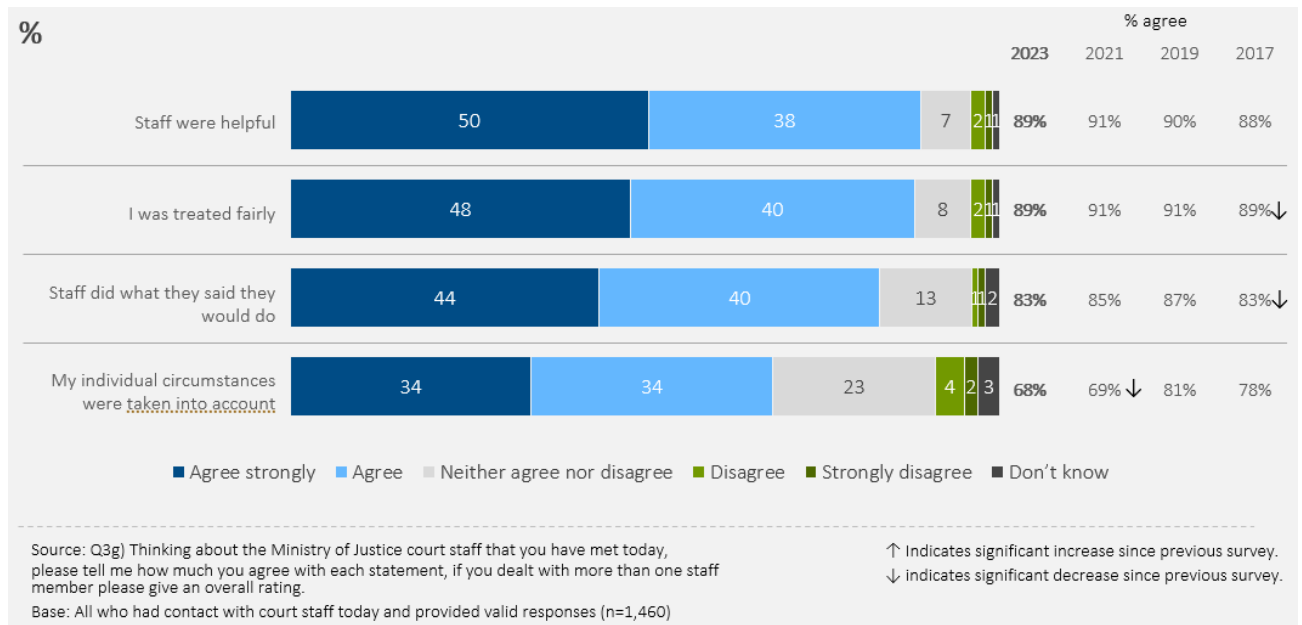
Respondents who had contact with staff were asked to agree or disagree with a number of statements about them. Results (excluding those who felt a particular statement was not applicable to them) are illustrated in the Figure below.

Most court users agree / strongly agree that staff:

- treat them fairly (89%)
- are helpful (89%)
- do what they say they would (83%)
- take their individual circumstances into account (68%).

All results are in line with 2021. The drop in positive ratings between 2019 and 2021 for staff taking individual circumstances into account has not bounced back in 2023.

**Figure 5 – Ratings of court staff**



Staff ratings by court location are presented in the table below. Staff at Tauranga Court are rated less positively than average across all attributes. Staff at Nelson Court are rated lower than average for treating users fairly and taking individual circumstances into account.

**Table 8 – Ratings of court staff by court location**

	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
	All respondents	Auckland District Court	Auckland High Court	Waitakere	Manukau	Hamilton	Tauranga	Rotorua	Whanganui	Palmerston North	Wellington District Court	Wellington High Court	Nelson	Christchurch	Dunedin	Invercargill
Base size	(up to n=1,460)	(up to n=159)	(up to n=87)	(up to n=84)	(up to n=189)	(up to n=67)	(up to n=85)	(up to n=38)	(up to n=95)	(up to n=90)	(up to n=141)	(up to n=67)	(up to n=84)	(up to n=208)	(up to n=24)	(up to n=42)
Agree that staff were helpful	89	85	96	85	85	91	75	90	88	95	90	85	96	93	83	100
Agree that they were treated fairly	89	86	92	88	88	94	79	95	90	93	92↑	95	70↓	90	79	98
Agree that staff did what they said they would	83	79	90	85	81	79	71	90	82	92	88	88	75	85	83	91
Agree that individual circumstances were taken into account	68	64	66	73	69	68	53	78	70	88	70	74	55	67	50	77

\* Base sizes per cell are sometimes slightly smaller than this due to some respondents saying each individual question is not relevant to them. Red percentages are significantly lower than the average, green percentages are significantly higher than average. ↑↓ indicates a significant increase or decrease in agreement in that particular group since the previous period.

The table below shows the same results but tabulated against the main reason for visiting. Those visiting in relation to administrative tasks (not related to a case) rate court staff more positively than average. In addition, those visiting for Jury service rate court staff more positively for being helpful, treating them fairly, and doing what they said they would. However, the same group rate court staff less positively for taking their individual circumstances into account.

**Table 9 – Ratings of court staff main reason for visiting court**

	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
	All respondents*	Take part in a case	Support person	Get info about a case	Bring info about a case	Fine or reparation	Jury service	Admin not related to a case	Spectator	Other***
Base size*	(up to n=1,460)	(up to n=532)	(up to n=284)	(up to n=57)	(up to n=51)	(up to n=45)	(up to n=209)	(up to n=197)	(up to n=60)	(up to n=21**)
Agree that staff were helpful	89	89	87	86	88	87	96	94	95	81
Agree that they were treated fairly	89	87	87	89	92	84	96	94	95	81
Agree that staff did what they said they would	83	84	77	84	88	82	90	91	90	76
Agree that individual circumstances were taken into account	68	69	63	81	61	62	62	84	75↑	57

\*Base sizes per cell are sometimes slightly smaller than this due to some respondents saying each individual question is not relevant to them. Red percentages are significantly lower than the average, green percentages are significantly higher than average. ↑↓ indicates a significant increase or decrease in agreement in that particular group since the previous period.

\*\*Caution: low base number, results are indicative only

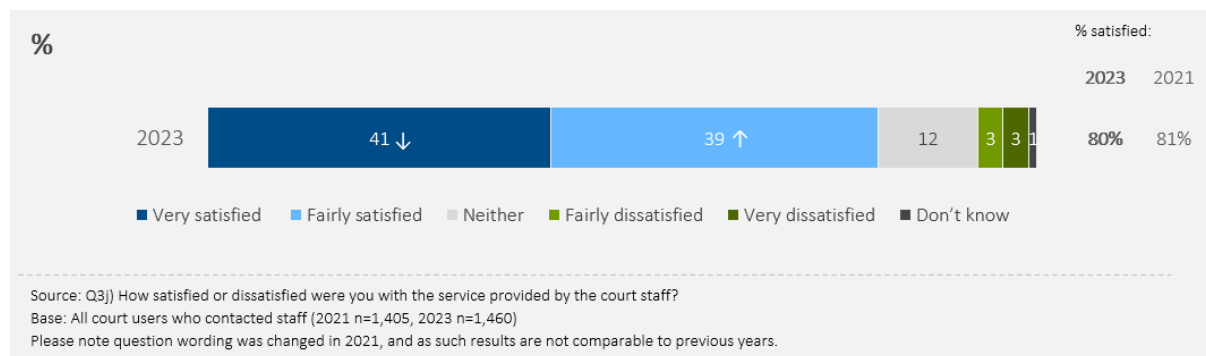
\*\*\*Other includes a range of reasons, but most commonly includes meeting with a lawyer or other justice sector worker.

## Overall satisfaction with quality of service from staff

All respondents who have contact with staff were asked to rate the overall quality of service delivery. Results are shown in the Figure below<sup>4</sup>.

Eight in ten (80%) court users are either 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the overall quality of the service they received from staff. This is in line with 2021. However, the proportion who were 'very satisfied' has declined significantly since 2021 (from 48% to 41%).

**Figure 6 – Quality of service from staff**



Groups more likely than average to be satisfied include those:

- visiting for administrative reasons not related to a case (94%) or jury service (86%)
- visiting for a case which falls under the civil jurisdiction (90%)
- visiting Auckland High (92%), Invercargill (95%), or Christchurch (87%) Courts
- who are aged 50 years and older (85%)
- who are in paid employment (83%) or retired (89%)
- with an annual household income over \$100,000 (88%).

Groups less likely than average to be satisfied include those:

- visiting Auckland District (68%) or Tauranga (65%) Courts
- whose work status is home duties (62%)
- who identify as Māori (75%)
- with an annual household income up to \$30,000 (75%).

<sup>4</sup> Question wording was changed in 2021 from "how satisfied were you with the overall quality of service delivery?" to "how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the service provided by the court staff?". This means that the results are not directly comparable to the previous surveys.



### *Some comments from court users about court staff*

*“Staff at customer enquiries are terrible, had the attitude of ‘if it’s not right, get it in front of a judge’ for their admin mistakes. It’s the most frustrating organisation I’ve ever dealt with. Every single time I have been in there, has been a clerical error.”*

**Administrative matters not related to a case, Auckland District Court**

*“Either you need more or better staff as it is always a battle either lodging documents or trying to get a hold of documents. Trying to ring a case officer is a complete waste of time and the chance of getting email responses is barely 50/50.”*

**Visiting to get information for a case, Tauranga Court**

*“There is a need for better communication. Staff need training on the purpose of the visit and not the amount of money involved in the fraud.”*

**Visiting to bring information for a case, Wellington District Court**

*“Good to have court staff around as points of contact to provide information.”*

**Visiting as a support person in a youth court case, Wellington District Court**

### *Some comments from court users about duty solicitors*

As identified in previous surveys, court users don’t necessarily distinguish between Ministry staff and non-Ministry staff when given the opportunity to provide further feedback via an open-ended question. Their comments about their overall court experience sometimes refer to duty solicitors, for example that there aren’t enough of them, and that some are unapproachable.

*“Need more legal staff, as hard to find a duty solicitor. Need more interview rooms so you’re not discussing details in public.”*

**Criminal case giving evidence, Wellington District Court**

*“It would be good to improve the waiting times, and to have a more precise idea of the waiting time for a duty solicitor.”*

**Visiting as a support person in a criminal case, Christchurch Court**

*“Duty lawyers to be available way earlier than they arrive or engage. Clearer information on the whole process and what’s to follow, and more interest from duty lawyers would be appreciated.”*

**Visiting as a support person in a criminal case, Manukau Court**

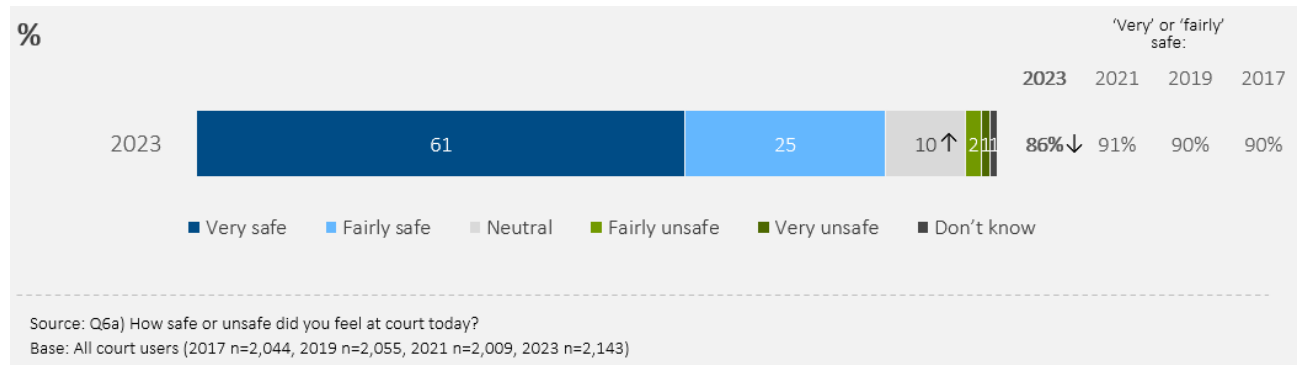
## Safety

### Overall feelings of safety

A sense of safety continues to be a key driver of court user satisfaction. This is also one of the highest performing aspects of the court user experience, so is important to maintain. All respondents were asked how safe or unsafe they felt at court. Results are illustrated in the Figure below.

A large majority (86%) feel 'very' or 'fairly' safe at court. This proportion has declined significantly between 2021 and 2023.

**Figure 7 – Feelings of safety**



Groups more likely than average to feel safe include those:

- visiting Auckland High (95%), Wellington High (98%), or Whanganui (97%) Courts
- visiting for administrative reasons not related to a case (98%) or for jury service (93%)
- aged 50 years or over (93%)
- with an annual household income over \$100,000 (95%)
- in paid employment (89%) or retired (95%).

Groups less likely than average to feel safe include those:

- visiting Manukau (81%) or Waitakere (79%) Courts
- aged 30 to 49 years (83%)
- who identify as Pacific (81%)
- whose employment status is home duties (74%)
- who were not given an opportunity to speak in court (82%).

The proportion of court users at each court location who feel ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ safe is presented in the table below. Court users are more likely than average to feel safe at Wellington High Court (98%), Whanganui Court (97%), and Auckland High Court (95%). Conversely, court users are less likely than average to feel safe at Waitakere (79%) and Manukau (81%) Courts. There is considerable variability across courts in the proportions who feel ‘very’ versus ‘fairly’ safe.

**Table 10 – Feelings of safety by court location**

	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
	All respondents	Auckland District Court	Auckland High Court	Waitakere	Manukau	Hamilton	Tauranga	Rotorua	Whanganui	Palmerston North	Wellington District Court	Wellington High Court	Nelson	Christchurch	Dunedin	Invercargill
Base size	(n=2,143)	(n=267)	(n=103)	(n=126)	(n=334)	(n=147)	(n=128)	(n=87)	(n=101)	(n=102)	(n=214)	(n=105)	(n=84)	(n=267)	(n=36)	(n=42)
Very unsafe	1%	2%	-	1%	1%	-	2%	2%	-	2%	1%	-	-	-	3%	-
Fairly unsafe	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%	3%	1%	2%	-	4%	1%	-	1%
Neutral – neither safe nor unsafe	10%	13%	4%	17%	11%	12%↑	13%	8%	-	3%	10%	2%	15%↑	10%	13%	5%
Fairly safe	25%	27%	19%	29%	29%	17%	33%	63%	1%↓	16%	32%↑	9%	12%	21%↓	34%	9%
Very safe	61%	55%	76%	51%	52%	68%↓	50%	26%	96%↑	78%	56%↓	88%	68%	67%	50%	83%
Don’t know	1%	1%	-	1%	5%	1%	1%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2%
NETT SAFE	86%	83%	95%	79%	81%	85%↓	84%	89%	97%	94%↓	87%	98%	81%↓	89%	84%	92%

Red percentages are significantly lower than the average, green percentages are significantly higher than average.

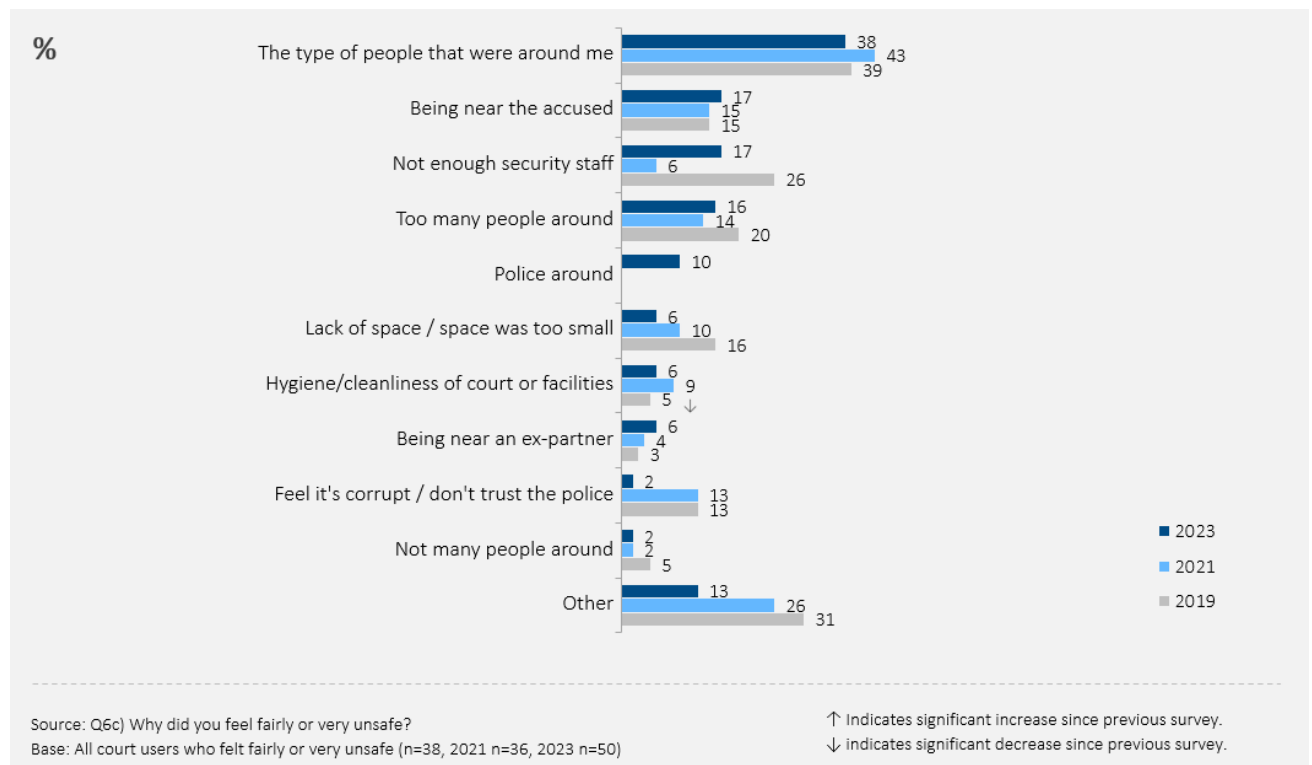
↑ or ↓ indicates whether there was an increase or decrease between that year and the previous year.

## Reasons for feeling unsafe

The 50 respondents who felt unsafe at court were asked why they felt that way. Their reasons are displayed in the Figure below.

Their main reasons for feeling unsafe include the kinds of people they were surrounded by (38%), being near the accused (17%), and a lack of security staff (17%). These results largely align with 2021. The increased proportion who feel unsafe due to a lack of security staff is not statistically significant. A new category was added in 2023 'police around'; 10% selected this as the reason for feeling unsafe.

**Figure 8 – Reasons for feeling unsafe**

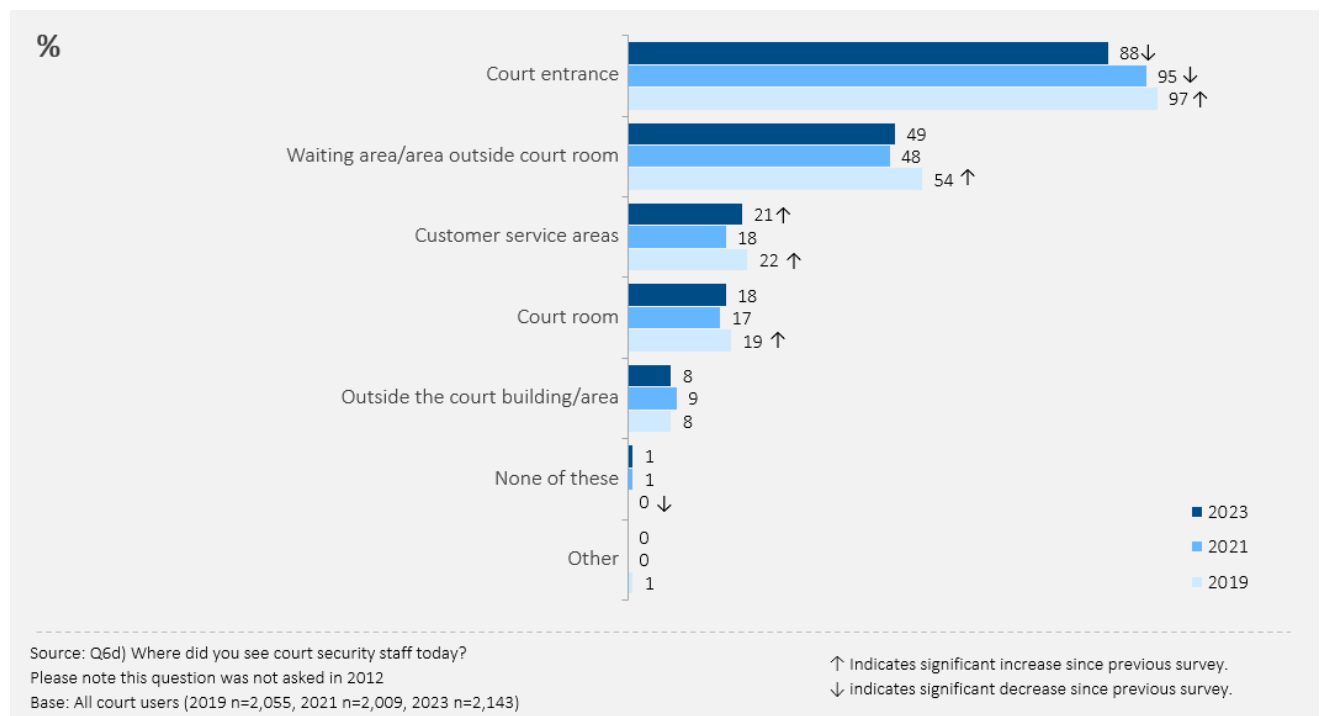


## Areas where security staff are visible

Respondents were asked where they saw court security staff. Results are shown in the following Figure.

Almost all court users notice security staff. This is in line with 2021. The most common places court users see security staff continue to be the court entrance (88%), and the waiting area (49%). In 2023 significantly fewer court users saw security staff at the court entrance (down seven points to 88%), while more saw them in customer service areas (up three points to 21%).

**Figure 9 – Where respondents saw court security staff**



Some variation by court location can be seen in the table below. There appears to be a stronger security presence in certain areas of Christchurch and Manukau Courts, and lower than average presence in the waiting areas and customer service areas of multiple courts.

**Table 11 – Respondents observing security staff by court location**

	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
	All respondents	Auckland District Court	Auckland High Court	Waitakere	Manukau	Hamilton	Tauranga	Rotorua	Whanganui	Palmerston North	Wellington District Court	Wellington High Court	Nelson	Christchurch	Dunedin	Invercargill
Base size	(n=2,143)	(n=267)	(n=103)	(n=126)	(n=334)	(n=147)	(n=128)	(n=87)	(n=101)	(n=102)	(n=214)	(n=105)	(n=84)	(n=267)	(n=36)	(n=42)
Court room	18%	19%	45%↑	22%	28%	6%↓	21%↑	2%	10%	14%	22%	14%	14%↑	10%	30%	14%
Waiting area/area outside court room	49%	42%↓	17%	43%	61%↓	47%↓	46%↑	8%	18%	17%	49%↑	22%	60%↑	91%↑	61%	18%
Customer service areas	21%	11%	5%	11%	28%	8%	16%↑	3%	5%↓	6%	9%↑	5%	10%	77%↑	24%	2%
Court entrance	88%	86%↓	94%	96%	68%↓	97%	65%↓	96%	99%	95%	97%	93%	100%	96%↓	61%	79%
Outside the court building/area	8%	6%	2%	13%	15%↓	3%	10%	1%	6%	5%	7%	2%	5%	10%	5%	4%
Other	*	-	1%	2%	-	-	-	-	-	-	1%	-	-	-	3%	-
None of these (i.e., did not see security staff)	1%	1%	-	-	3%	-	*	-	-	-	-	1%	-	*	-	13%

Red percentages are significantly lower than the average, green percentages are significantly higher than average.

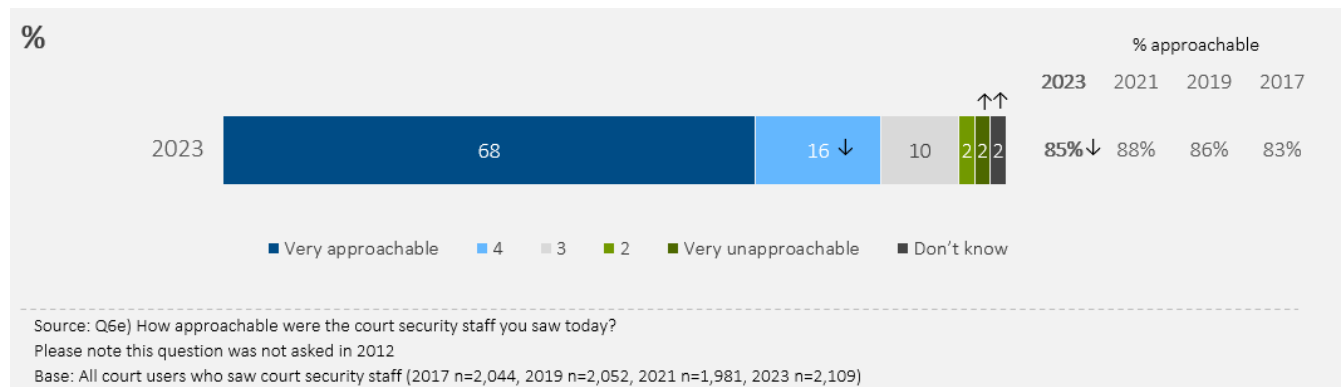
↑ or ↓ indicates whether there was an increase or decrease between that year and the previous year.

## Security staff approachability

Those who saw court security staff during their visit were asked how approachable or unapproachable they seem. Respondents answered using a five-point scale where 1 was very unapproachable and 5 was very approachable (or respondents could say 'don't know'). Results are displayed in the Figure below.

A large majority (85%) feel court security staff are approachable (4 or 5 out of 5 ratings), a decline of three points since 2021.

**Figure 10 – Approachability of security staff**



Groups more likely than average to rate staff as approachable include those:

- visiting Palmerston North (95%) or Whanganui (98%) Courts
- who are aged 50 years or older (89%)
- with an annual household income over \$100,000 (91%)
- visiting for administrative reasons not related to a case (96%).

Groups less likely than average to rate staff as approachable include those:

- who identify as Pacific (79%)
- visiting Manukau Court (74%)
- visiting to take part in a case (82%)
- who are accused of an offence (81%)
- who were not given an opportunity to speak in court (80%).
- visiting for a case which falls under the criminal (traffic and youth) jurisdiction (83%)
- who are on a sickness, invalid, or other benefit (75%).

### *Some comments from court users about safety and court security staff*

*“Carpark at the back. There needs to be more and also security needs to monitor the back. It’s a little bit scary without anyone else at the back there.”*

**Criminal case support person, Manukau Court**

*“The security that are paid to be at the courts are rude and unprofessional. They need training in people skills, how to approach people, have compassion and learn about what language is appropriate to use with people.”*

**Criminal case support person, Waitakere Court**

*“Witnesses need to be in a separate area as I’m getting to feel that my safety is at threat. I can’t use the toilet for fear the person would follow me.”*

**Criminal case witness, Manukau Court**

*“I am impressed with the level of safety measures that are present, and it is a beautiful facility. However, there is a lack of consideration for emotional and cultural safety. I was unimpressed with how my kaumatua was treated by security and the difficulty in obtaining information about how to navigate court.”*

**Criminal case support person, Christchurch Court**

*“Entrance and waiting areas aren’t fit for purpose. Especially in cases where victims are required to attend, safety concerns.”*

**Family court support person, Hamilton Court**



The proportion rating court security staff as 'approachable' is higher in Whanganui and Palmerston North Courts, and lower in Manukau Court.

**Table 12 – Approachability of security staff by court location**

	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
	All respondents	Auckland District Court	Auckland High Court	Waitakere	Manukau	Hamilton	Tauranga	Rotorua	Whanganui	Palmerston North	Wellington District Court	Wellington High Court	Nelson	Christchurch	Dunedin	Invercargill
Base size	(n=2,109)	(n=263)	(n=103)	(n=125)	(n=314)	(n=147)	(n=127)	(n=87)	(n=101)	(n=102)	(n=214)	(n=104)	(n=84)	(n=266)	(n=36)	(n=36)
Proportion rating security staff as 'approachable' (either 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale)	85%	82%	92%	86%	74%↓	88%	83%↓	87%	98%	95%	88%	91%	87%	83%	72%↓	89%

Red percentages are significantly lower than the average, green percentages are significantly higher than average.

↑ or ↓ indicates whether there was an increase or decrease between that year and the previous year.

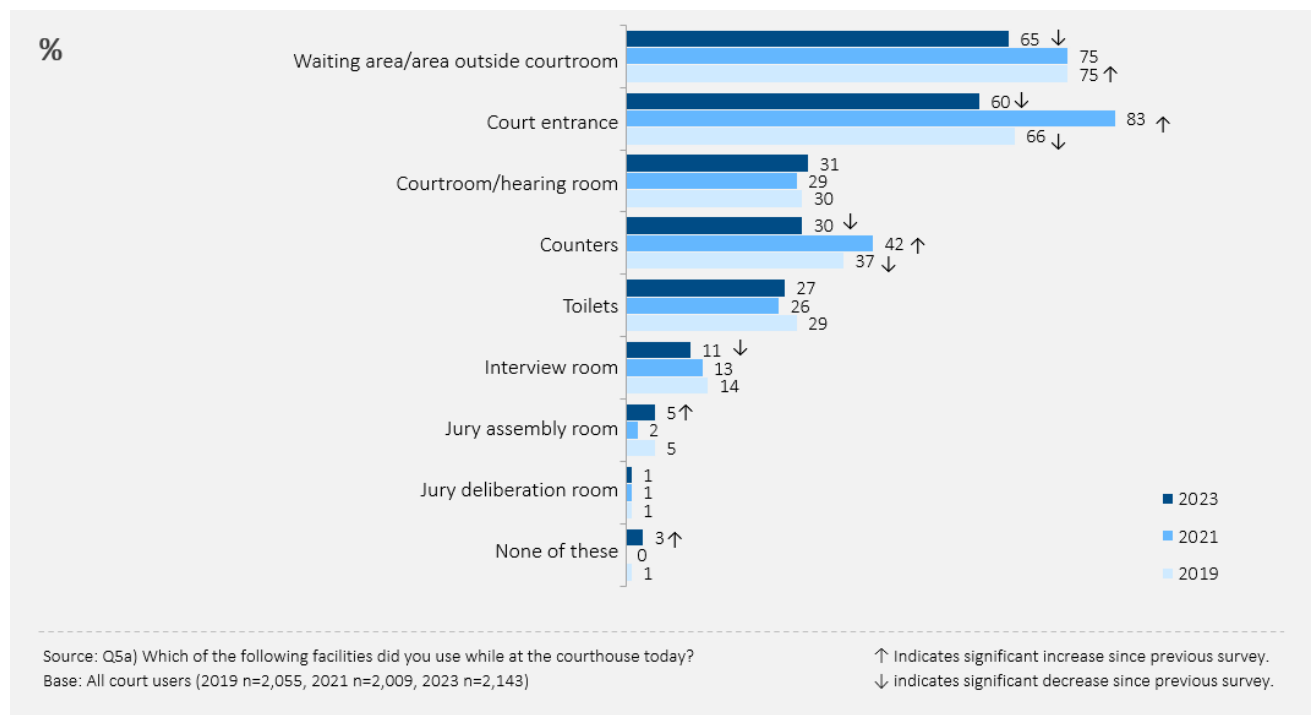
## Facilities at court

As outlined previously, court waiting areas are the most important driver of satisfaction and are a priority for improvement. There is also room to improve other facilities. Details are provided in this section.

### Facilities used

Respondents were asked what facilities they used at court. The results are presented in the Figure below. Court users are using fewer facilities during a visit in 2023 than in 2021. The proportions using the waiting area, court entrance, counters, and interview rooms have all declined since 2021.

**Figure 11 – Facilities used at court**



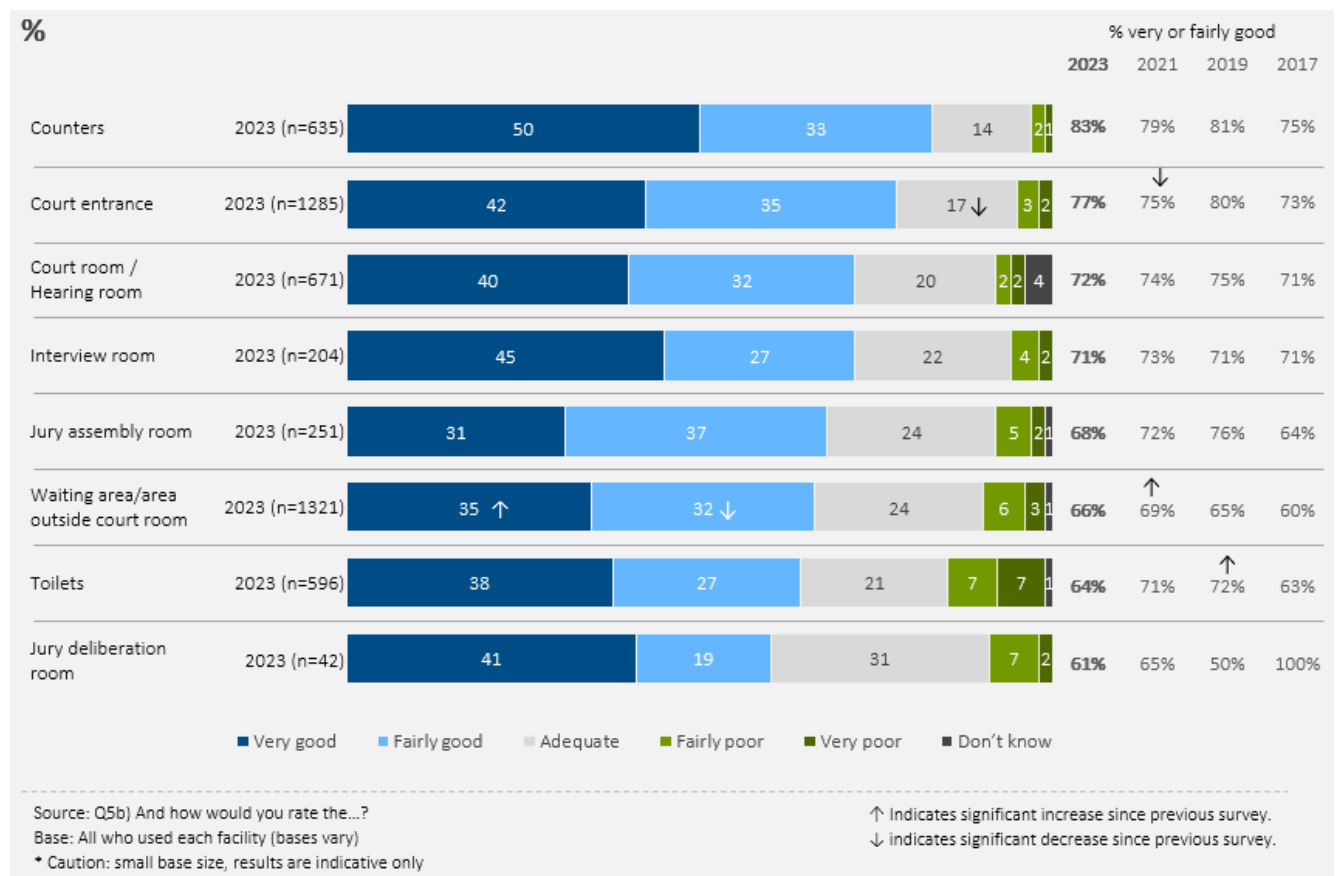
## Rating of individual facilities

Respondents who used each facility were then asked to rate them from 'very good' to 'very poor'. Full results are presented in the Figure below.

The facilities most likely to be rated favourably (i.e., very or fairly good) continue to be the counters (83%) and the court entrance (77%).

The shifts in the proportion rating very or fairly good are not significant once the court location and reason for visit have been held constant. However, perceptions of the waiting area have improved, with an increase in 'very good' ratings (up five points to 35%).

**Figure 12 – Rating of court facilities**



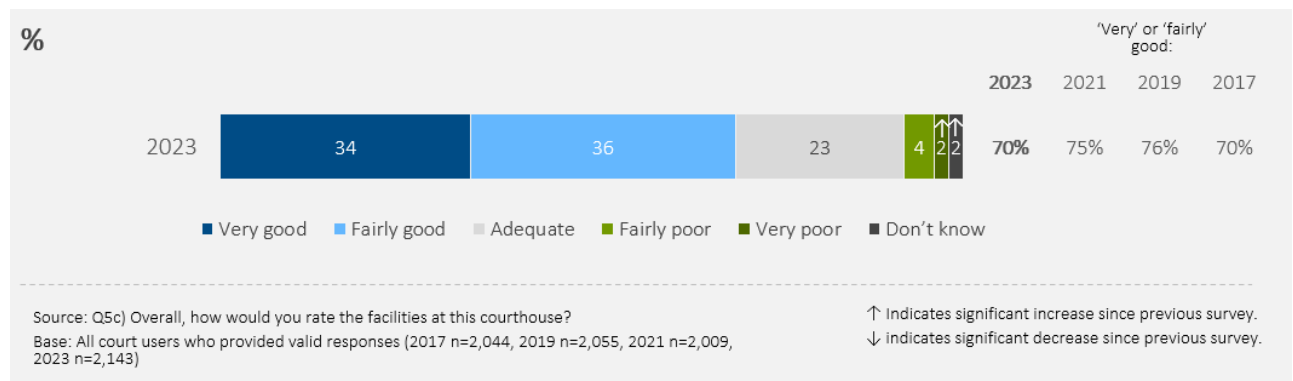
Please refer to Table 13 for ratings by court location.

## Overall rating of facilities

All respondents were asked to give the facilities at the courthouse an overall rating. Results are presented in the Figure below.

Seven in ten (70%) say the facilities are either 'very' or 'fairly' good overall. When holding constant court location and reason for contact, this is not significantly different from 2021.

**Figure 13 – Overall rating of facilities**



Groups more likely than average to give the facilities a good rating include those:

- visiting Auckland High (87%), Christchurch (91%), Palmerston North (88%), or Wellington High (92%) Courts
- visiting for a case which falls under the civil jurisdiction (79%)
- who identify as Asian (79%)
- visiting for jury service (76%) or for administrative reasons not related to a case (89%)
- visiting as a spectator (82%)
- in paid employment (74%)
- aged 50 years and over (74%)
- with a household annual income of \$100,000 or more (76%).

Groups less likely to give the facilities a good rating include those:

- visiting Wellington District (57%), Rotorua (39%), Waitakere (55%), or Auckland District (59%) Courts
- who have visited a courthouse more than twelve times (63%)
- visiting to take part in a case (67%)
- who are unemployed (65%) or on a sickness, invalids, or other benefit (58%)
- who are accused of an offence (65%)
- visiting for a case that falls under the criminal (traffic and youth) jurisdiction (67%)
- who identify as Māori (62%).

## Ratings of facilities (individual facilities and overall rating) by location

The proportions rating each facility as 'very' or 'fairly' good at each court location can be found in the table on the following page. Due to small numbers using some of the facilities at a location (for example, the jury deliberation room) we have put an 'x' in cells with fewer than ten respondents.

### *Some comments from court users about facilities*

*"Need to provide tables for work, sockets for charging devices, better coffee, supply lunch if staying the whole day, need to provide more comfortable chairs, need to provide some meeting room, better Wi-Fi."*

**Jury service, Auckland District Court**

*"The waiting areas need some separate private areas."*

**Family Court case, Christchurch Court**

*"Lack of parking, paid parking, waiting times are ridiculous."*

**Criminal case support person, Manukau Court**

*"The seats in the court room become very uncomfortable over the day, and add to the fatigue over the many days at court. Sore lumbar back after the first day."*

**Civil case support person, Wellington High Court**

*"Need more women's toilet facilities as at court recess everyone dashes for the toilets, and breaks are not long enough."*

**Criminal case support person, Whanganui Court]**

Individual facilities are generally rated higher at Auckland High and Christchurch Courts, and lower at Wellington District Court.

**Table 13 – Rating of facilities by court location**

	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Proportion rating 'very' or 'fairly' good	All respondents	Auckland District Court	Auckland High Court	Waitakere	Manukau	Hamilton	Tauranga	Rotorua	Whanganui	Palmerston North	Wellington District Court	Wellington High Court	Nelson	Christchurch	Dunedin	Invercargill
Base size	(Up to n=1,321)	(Up to n=152)	(Up to n=40)	(Up to n=85)	(Up to n=164)	(Up to n=142)	(Up to n=68)	(Up to n=59)	(Up to n=11)	(Up to n=26)	(Up to n=162)	(Up to n=55)	(Up to n=65)	(Up to n=243)	(Up to n=22)	(Up to n=27)
Courtroom/ hearing room	72	64	87	75	69↓	67	70	55	56	69	73	73	65	91	82	82
Waiting areas outside courtroom	66	60	85	62	63	67	62	39	42	63	49	93	72	85↑	57	78↑
Jury assembly room	68	74	69	X	70	61	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Jury deliberation room	61	58	74	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Interview rooms	71	58	69	60	77↓	X	67	X	X	X	34	X	80	94↑	X	X
Counters	83	75	100	87	73	X	X	X	81	88	67	95	93↑	91	X	83
Court entrance	77	69	98↑	70	83	45	65	30	89	78	67↑	87	89	87	X	89↑
Toilets	64	55	84	23	63	57	70	X	X	X	53	80	81	91	X	X
Base size	2,143	267	103	126	334	147	128	87	101	102	214	105	84	267	36	42
Overall rating of facilities	70	59	87	55	67	63	64	39	79	88	57	92	78	91	79	80

Red percentages are significantly lower than the average, green percentages are significantly higher than average. Responses with base sizes less than n=14 are not shown, indicated by 'X'.

↑ or ↓ indicates whether there was an increase or decrease between that year and the previous year.

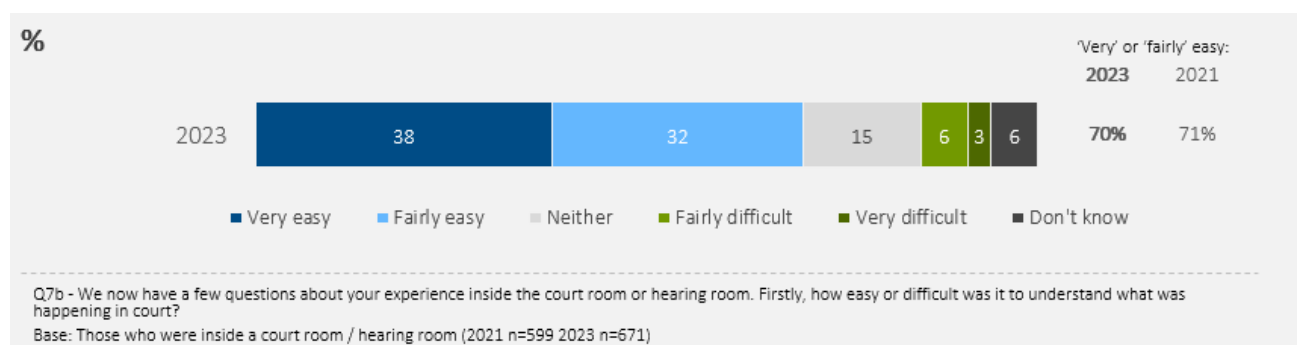
## Experience inside the court room / hearing room

New questions were asked in the 2021 survey to gain insight into court users' experiences inside court rooms / hearing rooms. These findings are detailed below.

### Ease of understanding what was happening inside the court room

Nearly one-third (31%) of respondents go inside a court room / hearing room. Those who go inside a court room / hearing room were asked how easy it is to understand what was happening. Seven in ten (70%) find it easy to understand, as shown in the Figure below. This is in line with 2021.

**Figure 14: Ease of understanding what was happening inside the court room**



Groups more likely than average to find it easy to understand what is happening in court include those:

- visiting the Auckland High Court (90%)
- visiting for a case that falls under the civil jurisdiction (84%)
- visiting for jury service (91%)
- identify as Asian (85%)
- who spoke in court (79%)
- who are in paid employment (75%)
- who have an annual household income of \$100,000 or more (85%).

Groups less likely than average to find it easy to understand what is happening in court include those:

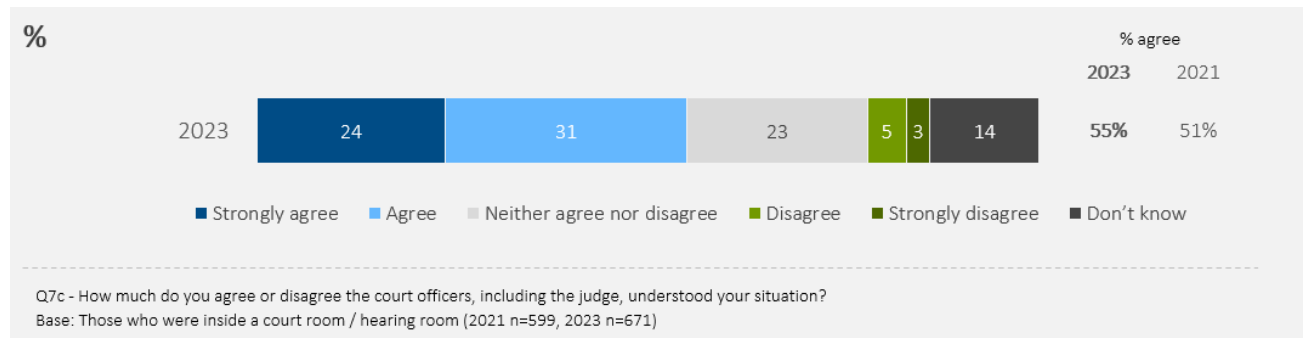
- who are accused of an offence (64%)
- who are unemployed (63%).

## Court officials' understanding of individual situations

Respondents who go inside a court room were asked to what extent they agree that their individual circumstances are understood by court officials (including the judge). The findings are presented in the Figure below.

Over half (55%) of users who go inside a court room agree that court officials understood their situation. This is in line with 2021. Only 8% disagree, with a high proportion remaining either neutral or not expressing an opinion. This may well indicate a lack of interaction with court officials for these individuals.

**Figure 15: Agreement that court officials understood users' situations**



Groups more likely than average to 'agree' or 'strongly agree' that court officials understood their situation include those:

- who visited Waitakere Court (68%)
- who spoke in court (74%)
- visiting to take part in a case (60%).

Groups less likely than average to 'agree' or 'strongly agree' that court officials understood their situation include those:

- visiting Wellington High Court (36%)
- who visited as a spectator (35%)
- who did not speak in court (48%).



## Speaking in court

Over one third (37%) of respondents who go inside a court room / hearing room are given the opportunity to speak in court. Half (49%) are not given the opportunity to do so, while 14% 'don't know.' The findings are consistent with 2021. These are outlined in the figure on the next page.

Groups more likely than average to get the opportunity to speak in court include those:

- visiting for a case that falls under the civil jurisdiction (55%)
- visiting Waitakere Court (60%)
- visiting to take part in a case (49%)
- who are accused of an offence (43%)
- who have visited the courts more than twelve times previously (47%)
- with an annual household income of up to \$30,000 (46%).

Groups less likely than average to get the opportunity to speak in court include those:

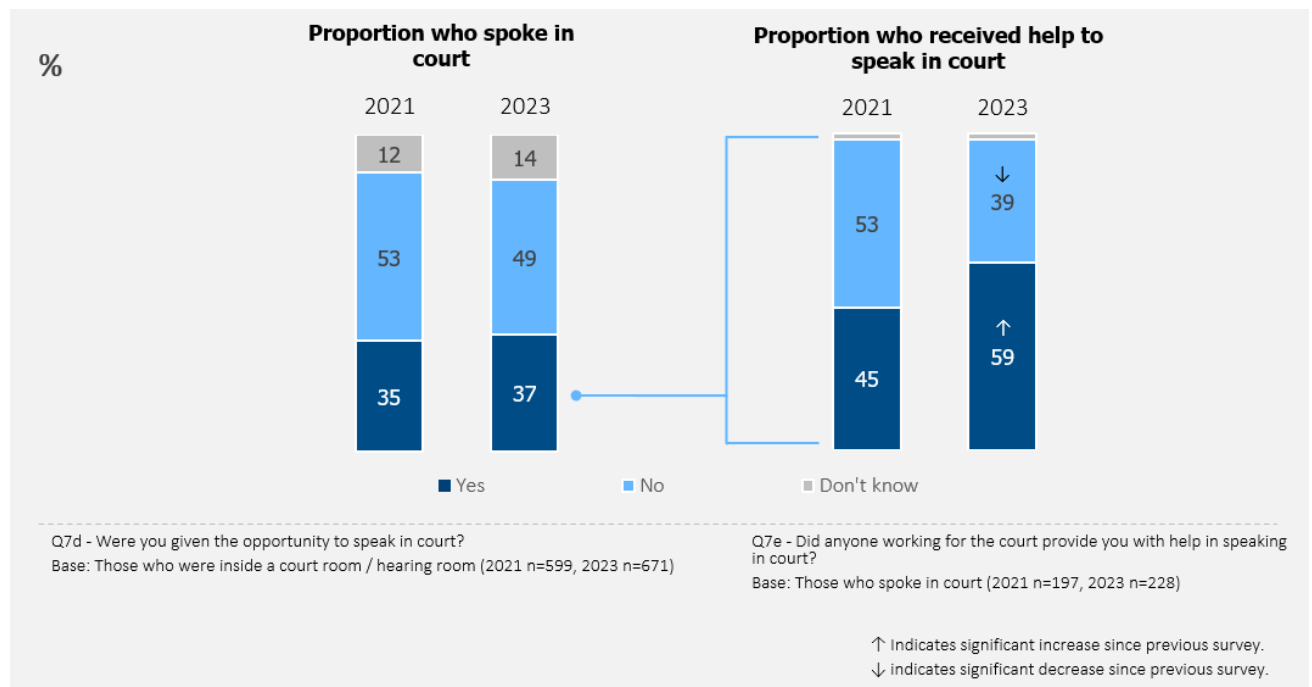
- visiting Auckland High (17%) or Wellington High (7%) Courts
- visiting as a support person (22%)
- visiting for jury service (15%)
- visiting as a spectator (6%).

## Help received to speak in court

Those with the opportunity to speak in court were asked if they received help to do so from any court staff. The findings are presented in the Figure below.

Three in five (59%) of these respondents received help from court staff. Receiving help has risen significantly since 2021 (up 14 points).

**Figure 16: Proportion of court users who spoke in court, and received help to do so**



Groups more likely than average to receive help with speaking in court include those:

- visiting Manukau Court (78%)
- who are accused of an offence (68%)
- aged under 30 years (71%)
- who identify as Māori (74%)
- visiting for a case which falls under the criminal (traffic and youth) jurisdiction (67%).

Groups less likely than average to receive help with speaking in court include those:

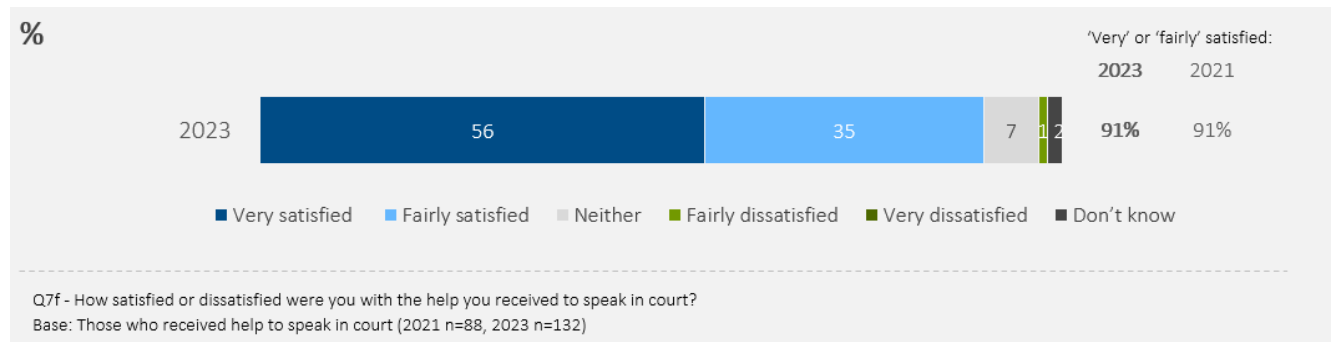
- aged 50 years and above (42%)
- visiting for a case which falls under the civil jurisdiction (30%).

## Satisfaction with the help received to speak in court

Respondents who received help with speaking in court were asked how satisfied they were with this help. The results are presented in the Figure below.

The majority of users who received help are happy with it – 91% said they were either ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied.’ This is consistent with 2021 findings.

**Figure 17 – Satisfaction with help received to speak in court**



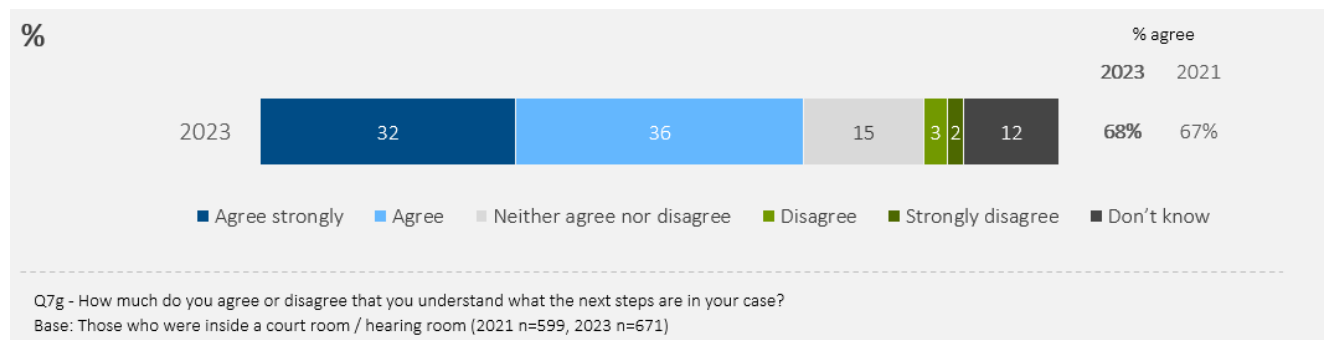
All demographic groups are broadly very positive (however many of these are on small base sizes).

## Understanding of next steps

Respondents who went inside a court room / hearing room were asked to what extent they agree that they understand the next steps in their case. The findings are presented in the Figure below.

Two-thirds (68%) say they either 'agree' or 'strongly agree' that they understand what the next steps in their case are. This is in line with 2021 findings.

**Figure 18: Understanding of next steps**



Groups more likely than average to agree that they understand what the next steps are include those:

- visiting Waitakere Court (88%)
- who spoke in court (86%)
- who are accused of an offence (77%)
- visiting to take part in a case (77%)
- visiting for a case which falls under the criminal (youth and traffic) jurisdiction (71%).

Groups less likely than average to agree that they understand what the next steps are include those:

- visiting Wellington High Court (21%)
- who were visiting as a support person (58%) or spectator (16%)
- who are students (51%)
- who were not given the opportunity to speak in court (63%).

## Receiving information on next steps

Respondents who went inside a court room / hearing room were then asked whether they have received any information on what the next steps in their case are.

More than half (59%) have received information on their next steps (up seven points from 52% in 2021).

Groups more likely than average to receive information on next steps include those:

- who spoke in court (75%)
- visiting Waitakere Court (76%)
- who are accused of an offence (74%)
- visiting to take part in a case (69%)
- visiting for a case which falls under the criminal (traffic and youth) jurisdiction (65%).

Groups less likely than average to receive information on next steps include those:

- visiting Wellington High Court (13%)
- who were not given the opportunity to speak in court (55%)
- visiting as a support person (44%) or spectator (10%).

## Referral to other support services

Respondents who went inside a court room / hearing room were also asked whether anyone has referred them to other services that could provide them with support. One third (34%) have received a referral, up 10 points since 2021 (24%).

Groups more likely than average to receive a referral include those:

- visiting Manukau (47%) or Tauranga (52%) Courts
- who are unemployed (44%)
- who spoke in court (43%)
- with an annual household income up to \$30,000 (43%)
- who are accused of an offence (42%)
- who identify as Māori (43%).

Groups less likely than average to receive a referral include those:

- visiting Wellington High (5%) or Auckland High (16%) Courts
- visiting for a case which falls under the civil jurisdiction (13%)
- who are visiting for jury service (17%) or as a spectator (8%)
- who identify as New Zealand European (27%)
- who are in paid employment (30%)
- who have an annual household income of \$100,000 or more (23%).

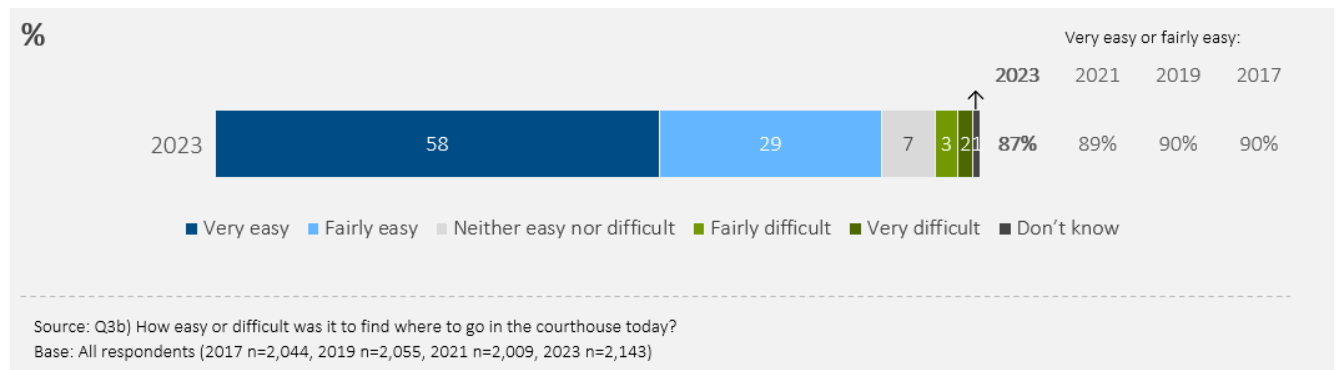
## Navigating around the court building and accessibility

### Ease of navigating around the court building

All respondents were asked how easy or difficult it was to find where they needed to go in the courthouse. Results are displayed in the Figure below.

Nearly nine in ten (87%) report it was either 'very' or 'fairly' easy to find where to go, in line with 2021.

**Figure 19 – Ease of navigating through the courthouse**



Groups more likely than average to find it easy to find their way around the courthouse include those:

- visiting Palmerston North (96%), Nelson (97%), Whanganui (97%), and Rotorua (97%) Courts
- visiting for jury service (94%) or for administration not related to a case (95%)
- who have visited courts more than twelve times previously (90%)
- who are in paid employment (90%) or retired (93%)
- who have an annual household income of \$100,000 or more (92%)
- who are aged 50 years or older (90%).

Groups less likely than average to find the courthouse easy to navigate include those:

- visiting Auckland District (80%), Manukau (81%), or Wellington (82%) Courts
- who are aged under 30 years (83%)
- have never visited the courts before (83%).

### *Some comments from court users about navigation around the court building*

*“Better signage with regards to dos and don'ts.”*

**Criminal case support person, Christchurch Court**

*“Before entering the building there are not clear signs or an indication of where to enter, or Exit signs. Once you enter there is no assistance for the newbies. A helper is needed for new people to give them the run down. More assistance is needed for someone new to using the court – they don't know how it all works.”*

**Criminal case accused, Waitakere Court**

*“Install better ways of finding signage – external and internal – so that you know exactly where to go without having to walk around and ask people.”*

**Administrative matters not related to a case, Waitakere Court**

*“I did not know where to go to get the information, so I went to the courthouse and was directed by staff. It would have been helpful if the building had signs on it. We are from out of town. It seems complicated here having a separate counter to the court.”*

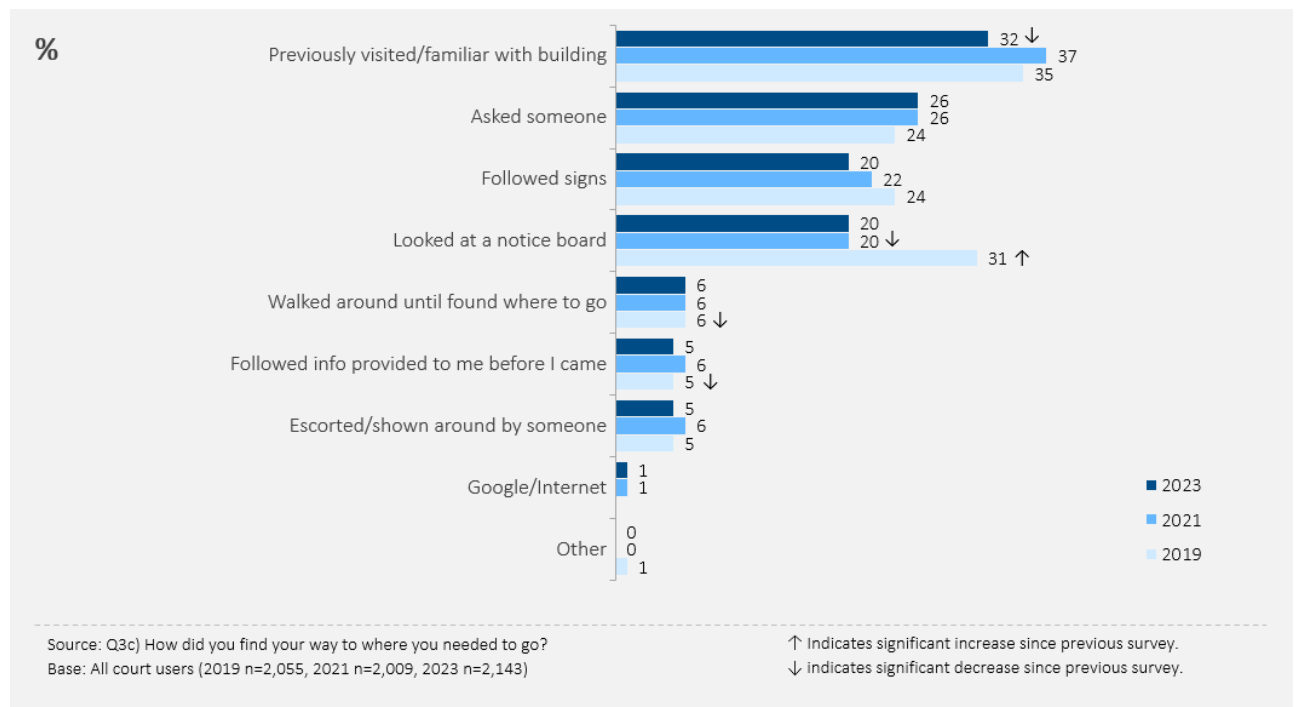
**Getting information about a criminal case, Invercargill Court**

## How court users find their way to where they need to go

All respondents were asked how they found their way to where they needed to go within the court building. Results are presented in the following Figure.

The main way in which court users navigate the courts is by drawing upon their own experience in the building (32%). This has significantly declined by 5 points since 2021 (37%). Other common sources court users rely on to navigate their way include asking someone (26%), following signs (20%), or looking at a notice board (20%).

**Figure 20 – How visitors find out where to go**





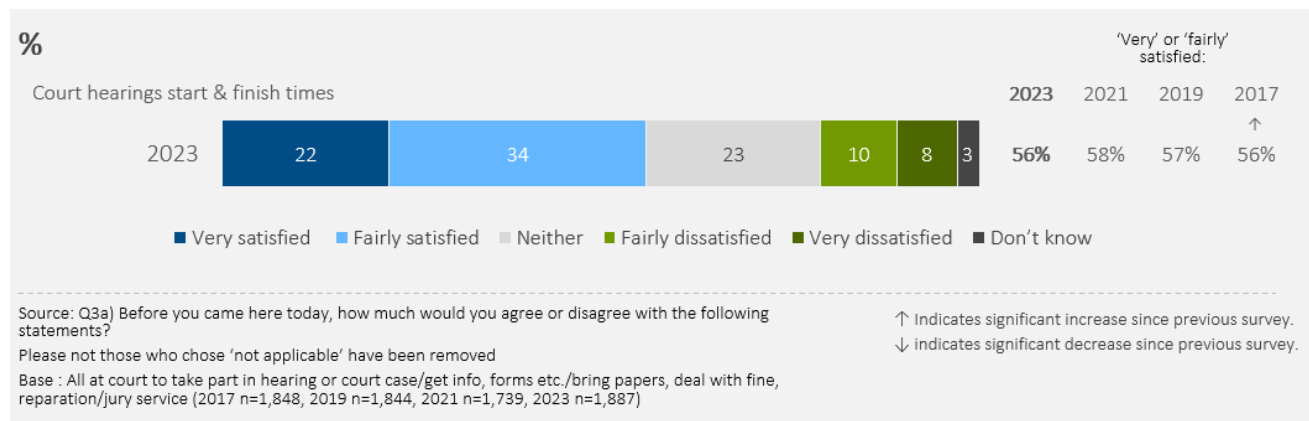
## Convenience of court hearing times

As seen in Figure 3, court hearing times is the second worst performing aspect of the court user experience but is a strong driver of overall satisfaction. It is therefore one of the priorities for improvement, and has remained so since 2021.

Respondents were asked to rate how satisfied they were with the time court hearings start and finish. Results (excluding those for whom this was not applicable) are shown in the Figure below.

56% are either 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied with the timing of court hearings; this is similar to 2021.

**Figure 21 – Satisfaction with the convenience of sitting times**



Groups more likely than average to be satisfied with the timing include those:

- visiting Invercargill (76%) or Auckland High (73%) Courts
- visiting for jury service (65%)
- aged 50 years and over (60%)
- who spoke in court (72%).

Groups less likely than average to be satisfied with the timing of court hearings include those:

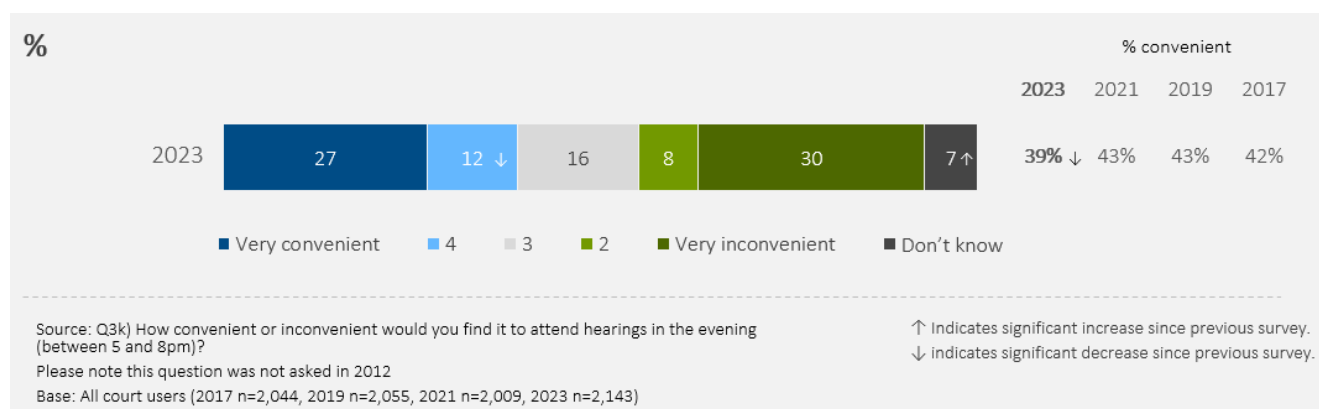
- who list home duties as their work status (44%)
- visiting Waitakere Court (45%).

## Convenience of evening hearings

Respondents were asked how convenient or inconvenient they would find it to attend hearings in the evening (between 5 and 8pm). They answered using a five-point scale where 1 is very inconvenient and 5 is very convenient (or they could say 'don't know'). Results are displayed in the Figure below.

Court users have mixed views; 39% would find evening hearings convenient (giving a rating of 4 or 5 out of 5) and 38% would consider them inconvenient (giving a rating of 1 or 2 out of 5). The decline in the proportion who would find this convenient is significant, dropping 4 points since 2021 (43%). A higher proportion say they don't know whether it would be convenient or not (2% said 'don't know' in 2021, 7% in 2023).

**Figure 22 – Convenience of evening hearings**



Groups more likely than average to consider evening hearings convenient include those:

- visiting Christchurch Court (49%)
- visiting to take part in a case (44%) or as a spectator (50%)
- who identify as NZ European (42%)
- in paid employment (43%)
- who are accused of an offence (45%).

Groups less likely than average to find them convenient include those:

- visiting for jury service (25%) or administration not related to a case (28%)
- visiting Whanganui (19%) or Manukau (32%) Courts
- who identify as Māori (36%)
- who list home duties as their work status (25%).

## Remote Attendance

A new question was added in 2023 asking whether court users would prefer to complete their visit remotely (via video call) or in person.

While more than half say they would prefer to attend in person (56%), one quarter (25%) would prefer to attend remotely via a video call. A further 15% say they have no preference, and the remainder don't know.

Groups more likely than average to prefer a video call include those:

- visiting Wellington District Court (31%)
- visiting for a case that falls under the criminal (youth or traffic) jurisdiction (28%)
- visiting to take part in a case (32%)
- who are unemployed (31%)
- who are accused of an offence (34%)
- who are aged 30-49 years (29%)
- who have visited the courthouse more than twelve times previously (30%).

Groups less likely than average to prefer a via video call include those:

- visiting Dunedin (9%), Palmerston North (6%), Wellington High (9%), and Whanganui (11%) Courts
- visiting for a case which falls under the family court jurisdiction (19%)
- visiting to bring information about a case (10%) or administration not related to a case (8%)
- visiting as a spectator (5%) or a support person (20%)
- who are aged 50 years or older (15%)
- who have not visited the courthouse before (19%)
- who are retired (10%).

## Waiting times

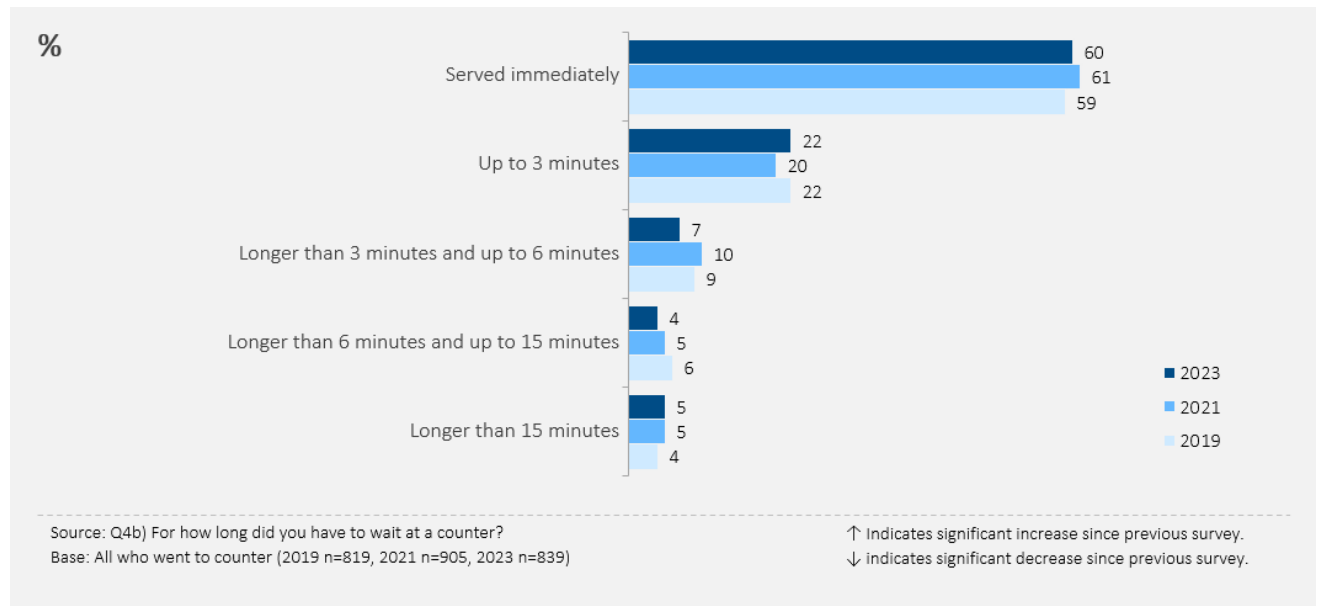
### Waiting at a counter

Two in five (39%) court users go to a counter; this is lower than the 45% who did so in 2021.

These respondents were asked how long they had to wait before being served. Results are presented in the Figure below.

The majority are served immediately (60%), in line with 2021.

**Figure 23 – Length of wait at a counter**



A relationship exists between wait time and overall satisfaction. The 5% of court users who waited more than 15 minutes to be served have a below average overall satisfaction level (41% are satisfied with the services and facilities vs. 76% of all court users).

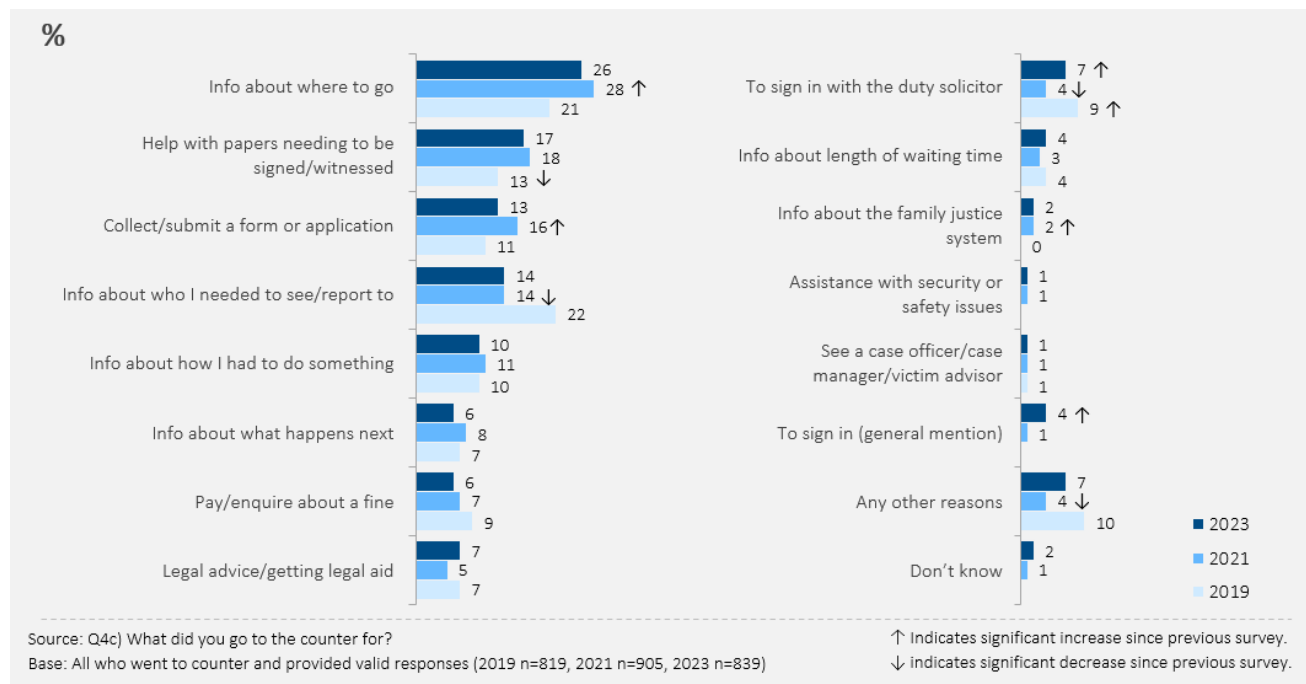
## Reasons for visiting counter

The Figure below displays the range of reasons why court users go to a counter.

The most common reason for using the counter is to find out where to go in court (26%). This is consistent with 2021. The second most common reason is to get help with papers needing to be signed / witnessed (17%).

The proportions visiting the counter to sign in with a duty solicitor, or to sign in generally, are small but have increased since 2021.

**Figure 24 – Reason for going to counter**



## Waiting times for a hearing or case

As seen in Figure 3, wait times for a hearing or case is the lowest performing aspect of the court user experience. As this aspect is a relatively weak driver of overall satisfaction it is only considered a secondary priority for improvement.

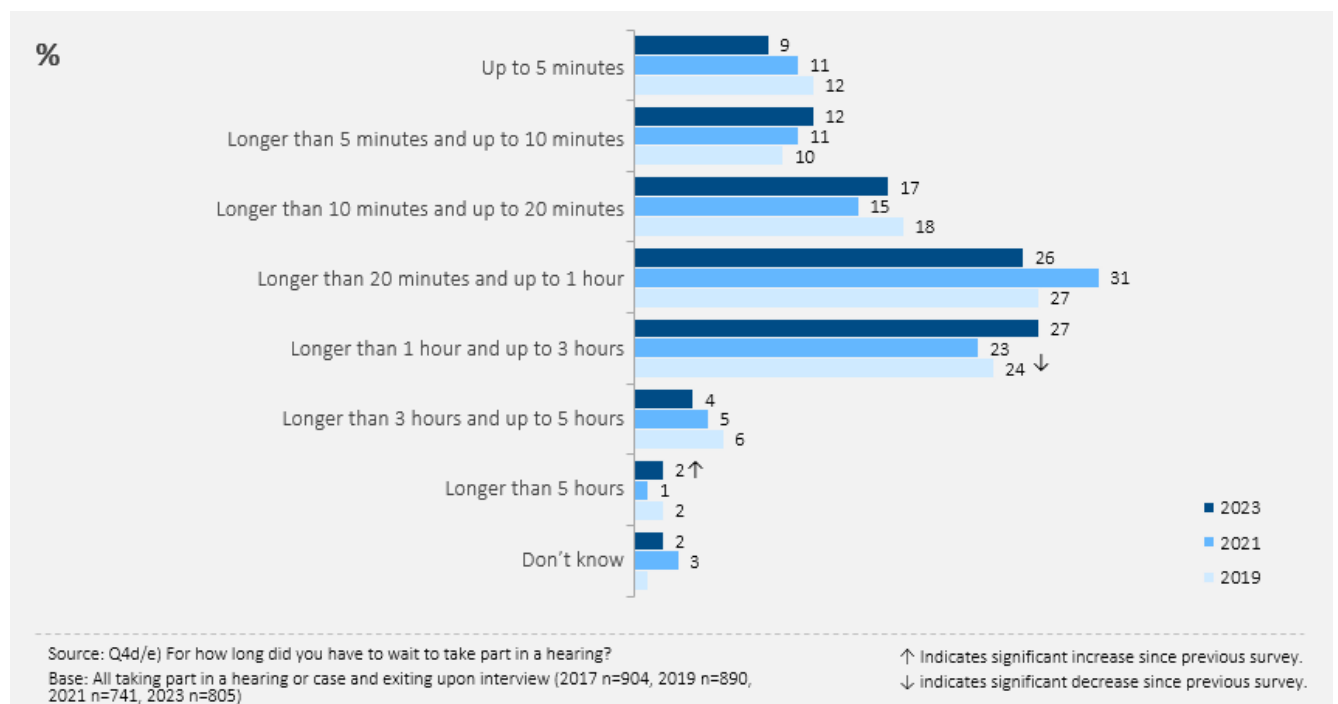
Those attending court to take part in a case or hearing were asked how long they waited to take part (one in five were still waiting at the time). Results are illustrated in the Figure below.

The vast majority wait more than 5 minutes (89%), similar to 2021 (86%). Three in ten (33%) wait longer than an hour (in line with 2021, 29%).

The average wait time (for respondents not still waiting at the time of being surveyed) is 61.5 minutes. This has been trending downwards since 2017 (the average wait time was 64.5 minutes in 2019, and 72.3 minutes in 2017).

As in previous years, longer wait times are associated with lower overall satisfaction. Those waiting more than one hour are less likely to be satisfied with the court's services and facilities (69% vs. 80% of all court users).

**Figure 25 – Length of wait for hearing or case**



### Some comments from court users about wait times

*"It would be good to improve the waiting times, and to have a more precise idea of the waiting time for a duty solicitor."*

Criminal case support person, Christchurch Court

*"I don't expect to be waiting longer, or all day, given the time I was given to appear."*

Criminal case-accused, Waitakere Court

*"I had to wait all day for my court case to be heard was told I would be heard at 9am and I'm still waiting at 3pm."*

Criminal case accused, Wellington District Court

## Information before coming to court

Respondents who were at court to take part in a hearing, get information for a case, bring information for a case, deal with a fine or reparation, or for jury service were asked a series of questions about court information.

Some visits to court are not directly initiated by the courts. Examples include spectators, attending court to support someone else, or attending for administrative matters not relating to a case, such as searching court records, or getting a document witnessed. Respondents who were visiting for these reasons were not asked questions about court information.

### Information received prior to court visit

#### *Type of information received*

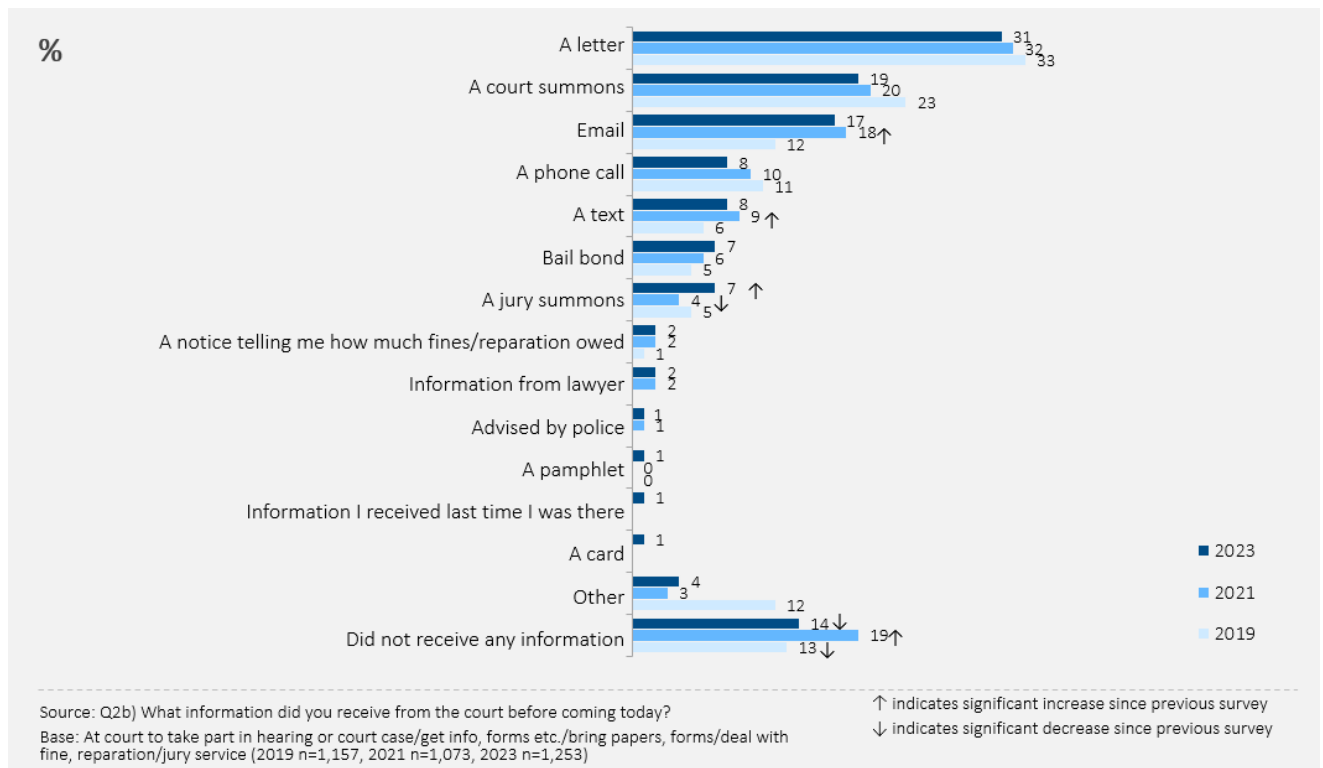
Respondents were asked what information they received from the court before their arrival. As the question is focused on information received before coming to court, sources of information primarily obtained at court (i.e., pamphlets) don't feature strongly in the survey results. The results are provided in the Figure below.

More court users recall receiving information in 2023 (86%) than in 2021 (81%), or

as in previous surveys, the most common types of communication court users receive is a letter (31%), or a court summons (19%).

There has been an increase in the proportion of court users who received a jury summons (7% in 2023 versus 4% in 2021).

**Figure 26 – Information received from court before visit**



Fairly low proportions of court users receive information from court in their ideal way. For example, before coming to court only:

- 50% of those who prefer to receive a letter recalled getting a letter from court (up from 45% in 2021).
- 27% of those who prefer email recalled receiving an email from court (in line with 28% in 2021).
- 14% of those who prefer a telephone call recalled receiving a phone call from court (in line with 19% in 2021).
- 15% of those who prefer text messages recalled getting a text message from court (in line with 17% in 2021).

Further details about court users’ ideal forms of communication are provided later in the report.

### *Information received by main reason for visiting court*

Information received varies by the main reason for visiting court, as shown in the table below.

Those taking part in a case or hearing are more likely to receive information from multiple communication channels.

**Table 14 – Information received before coming to court by main reason for visiting court**

	%	%	%	%	%	%
	All respondents	To take part in a case	Get info about a case	Bring info about a case	Fine or reparation	Jury service
Base size	(n=1,253)	(n=786)	(n=64)	(n=59)	(n=51)	(n=293)
A letter	31	28	20	19	35	65
A court summons	19	24	13	8	16	1↓
An email	17	18	6	19	8	24
A phone call	8	10	6	2	10	1
A text	8	11	5	2	2	1↓
A jury summons	7	1	-	-	2	65
Bail bond	7	10	3	-	4	-
A notice telling me how much fines or reparation I owe	2	1	-	5	14	*
Other	4	3	8	7	2	*
I did not receive any information	14	9	38	42↓	14	*

Red proportions are significantly lower than the average, green percentages are significantly higher than average.

↑ or ↓ indicates whether there was an increase or decrease between that year and the previous year.

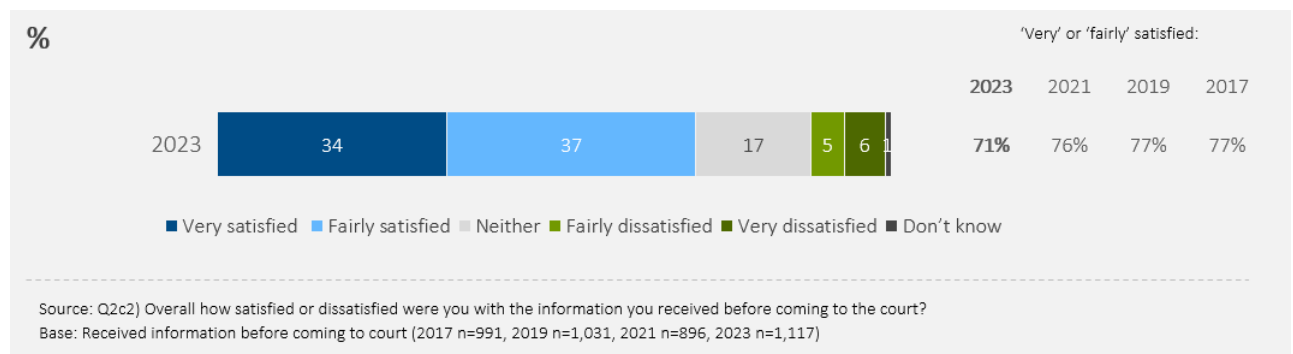


## Satisfaction with information received before coming to court

Respondents who received information from the court before their arrival were asked for their overall satisfaction with the information. Results are displayed in the Figure below.

Around seven in ten (71%) of those who receive information from court prior to their visit are either 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied with it. While this is lower than in 2021, it is not significant once court location and reason for visit are held constant across 2021 and 2023.

**Figure 27 – Satisfaction with information received before coming to court**



Groups more likely than average to be satisfied with the information they receive include those:

- visiting Auckland High Court (89%)
- visiting for jury service (89%)
- who have an annual household income between \$30,000 and \$100,000 (76%)
- who are in paid employment (79%)
- who spoke in court (80%).

Groups less likely than average to be satisfied with the information they receive include those:

- visiting Wellington District Court (59%)
- visiting to get information about a case (53%)
- who are unemployed (65%)
- who have an annual household income of up to \$30,000 (63%)
- who have been accused of an offence (68%).

## Ease of understanding information received

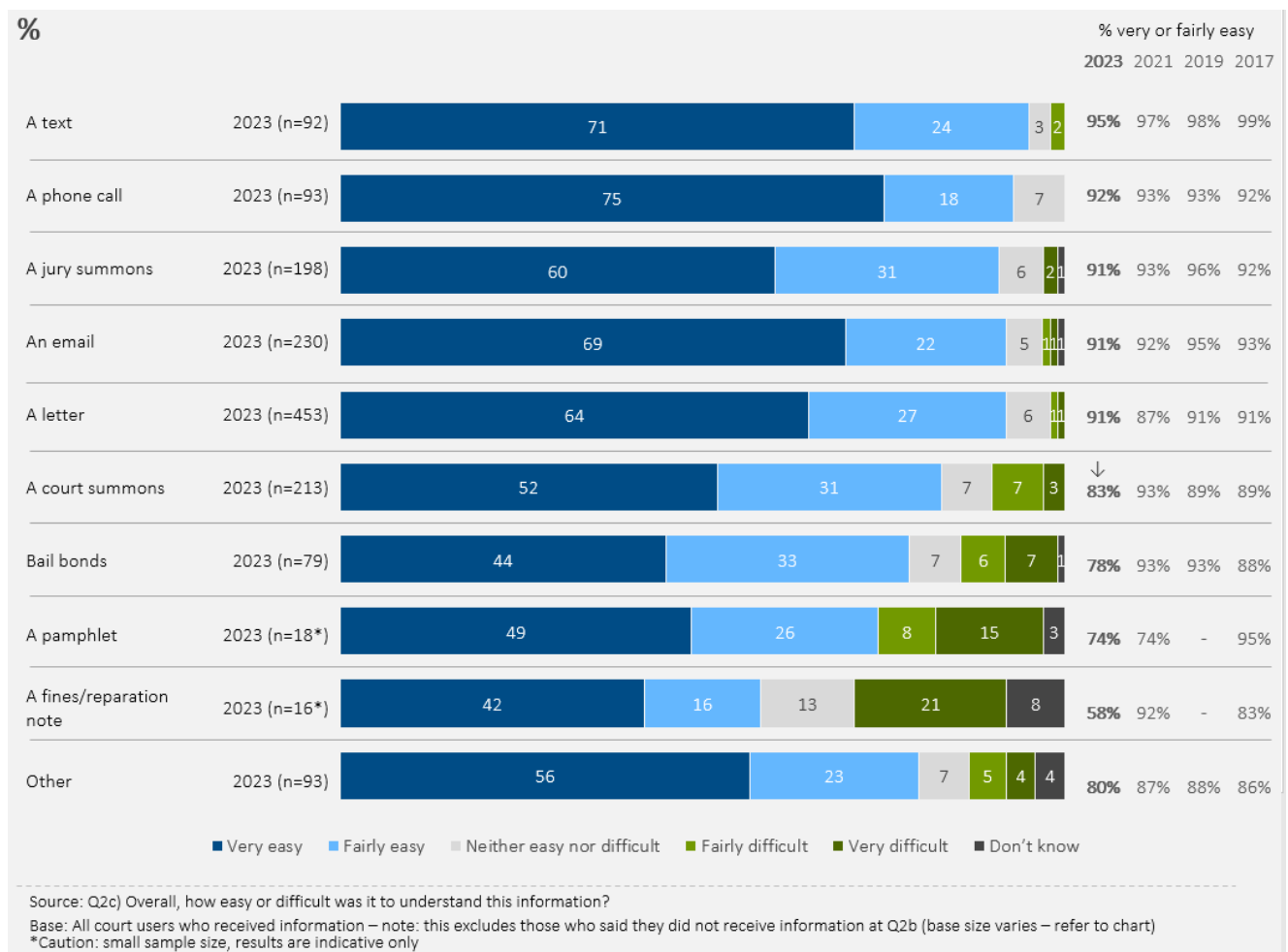
How easy or difficult it was for court users to understand the information they were given by the court is presented in the Figure below.

The vast majority find the information they receive from court easy to understand.

Communications most likely to be 'very' or 'fairly' easy to understand are texts (95%), phone calls (92%), jury summons (91%), email (91%), and letters (91%).

The proportion rating court summons as very or fairly easy to understand has declined from 93% in 2021 to 83% in 2023.

**Figure 28 – Ease of understanding information received**



**Some comments from court users about information received:**

*“As a support person I found it hard to get any information online about what you can and can’t do to support.”*

**Criminal case support person, Auckland High Court**

*“For first time court users, there needs to be more information before coming to court. For example, who they have to ask for and who they are seeing when they get here.”*

**Criminal case support person, Waitakere Court**

*“Bullet point information via email and outline the timing needed.”*

**Criminal case jury service, Auckland District Court**

*“The facilities available for older people could be improved. Information should be available by phone for people who have no internet access.”*

**Criminal case support person, Christchurch Court**

*“Finding information about the admissions process (to the bar) was mildly frustrating, but ultimately not an issue as I had to attend the court in person to file my documents regardless.”*

**Administrative reasons not related to a case, Auckland High Court**

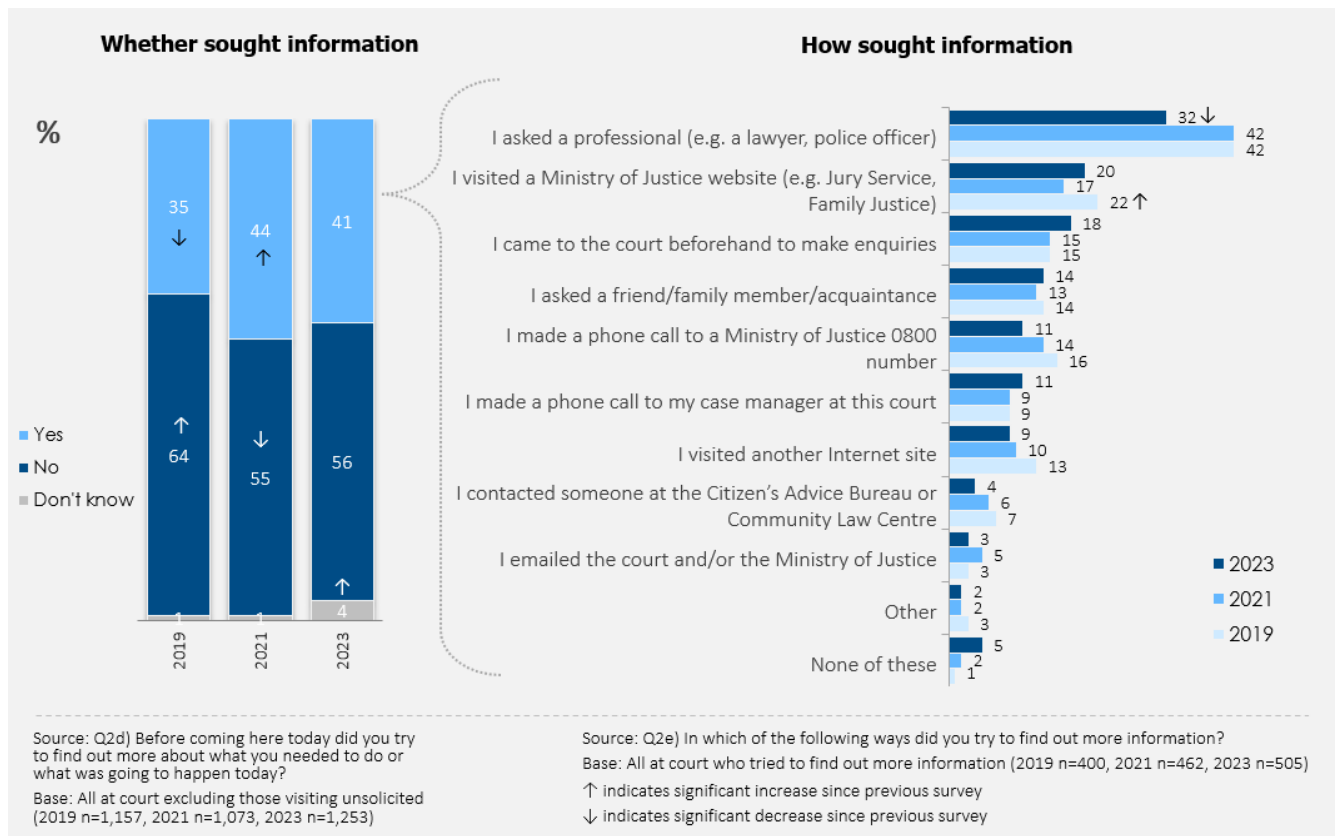
## Information sought prior to visit

Respondents (both those who received information before coming to court and those who didn't) were asked whether they tried to find out more about what they needed to do, or what was going to happen at court, and if so where they sought information from. Findings are shown in the Figure below.

Around four in ten (41%) court users in 2023 sought information themselves.

Fewer sought information from a professional in 2023 (32%, down from 42% in 2021). However, this remains the main source of information, followed by the Ministry of Justice website (20%) and coming to the court beforehand (18%).

**Figure 29 – Whether sought information before coming to court, and how information was sought**



Groups more likely than average to seek additional information include those:

- who have not visited a courthouse previously (50%)
- who identify as Asian (51%)
- who have an annual household income of \$100,000 or more (52%).

Groups less likely than average to seek additional information include those:

- who have visited a courthouse six to twelve times previously (30%).

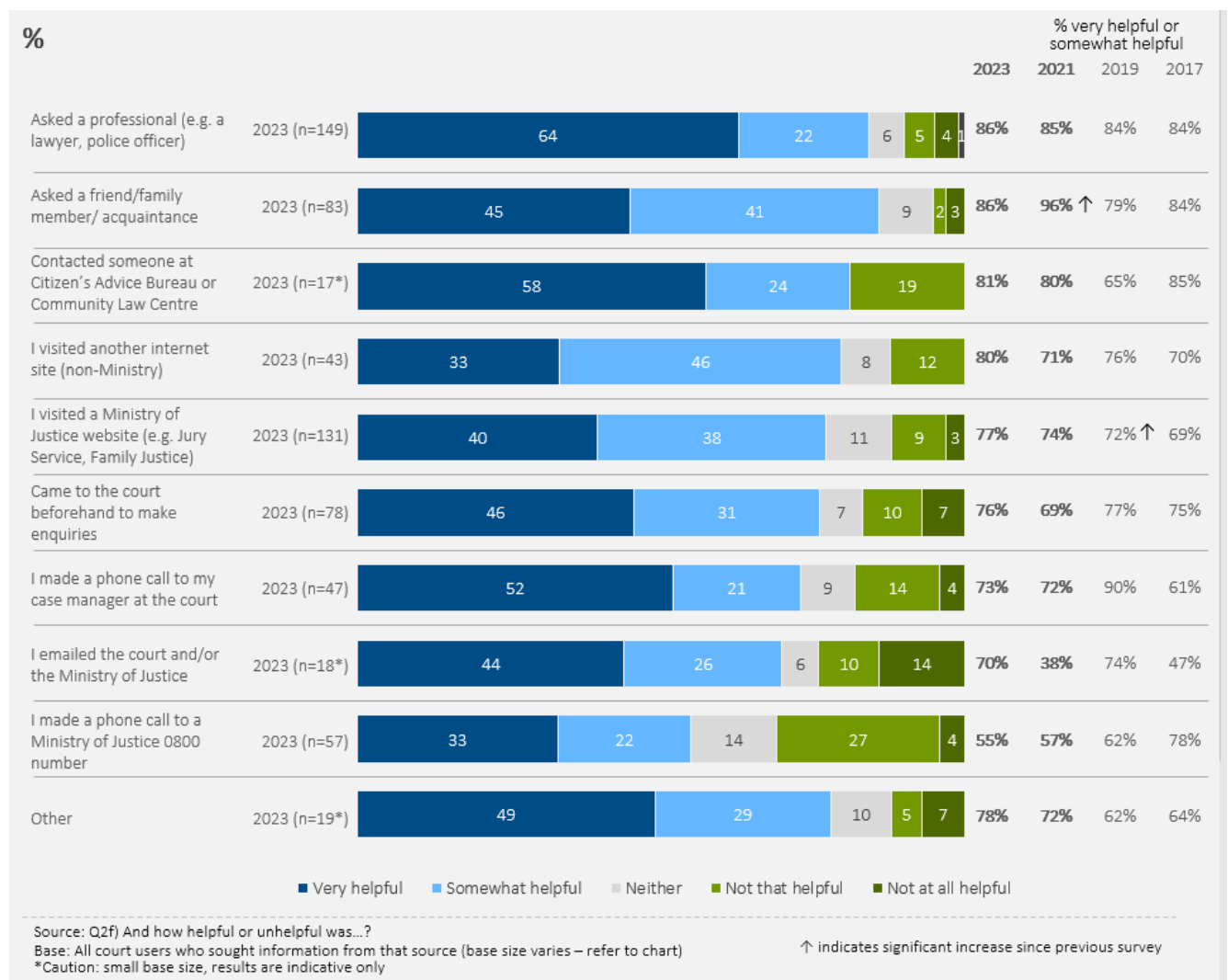
## Helpfulness of information sought

Respondents who sought information were asked to rate the helpfulness of each source they used. Findings are presented in the Figure below.

As in previous years, court users are most likely to consider channels that include personal contact to be 'very' or 'somewhat' helpful. These include:

- a friend, family member, or acquaintance (86%)
- a professional (86%)
- contacting someone at Citizen's Advice Bureau or a Community Law Centre (81%).

**Figure 30 – Helpfulness of information sought (by type of information sought)**



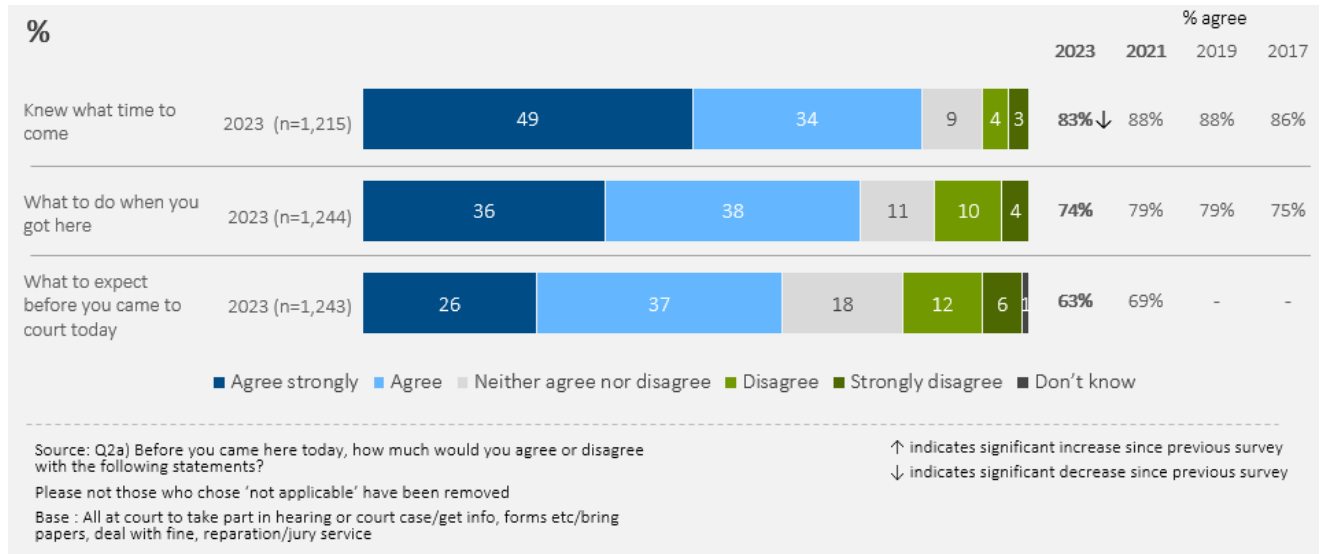
## Preparedness for visit to court

Respondents were instructed to think back to before they arrived at court that day and asked about their knowledge of what was going to happen at court. Results (excluding those for whom it was not applicable) are displayed in the following Figure.

Most court users say they knew what time to come (83%), but this has declined since 2021 (88%).

Most say they knew what to expect before coming to court, and what to do once they got there (these results are not significantly different from 2021).

**Figure 31 – Knowledge of what was going to happen before coming to court**



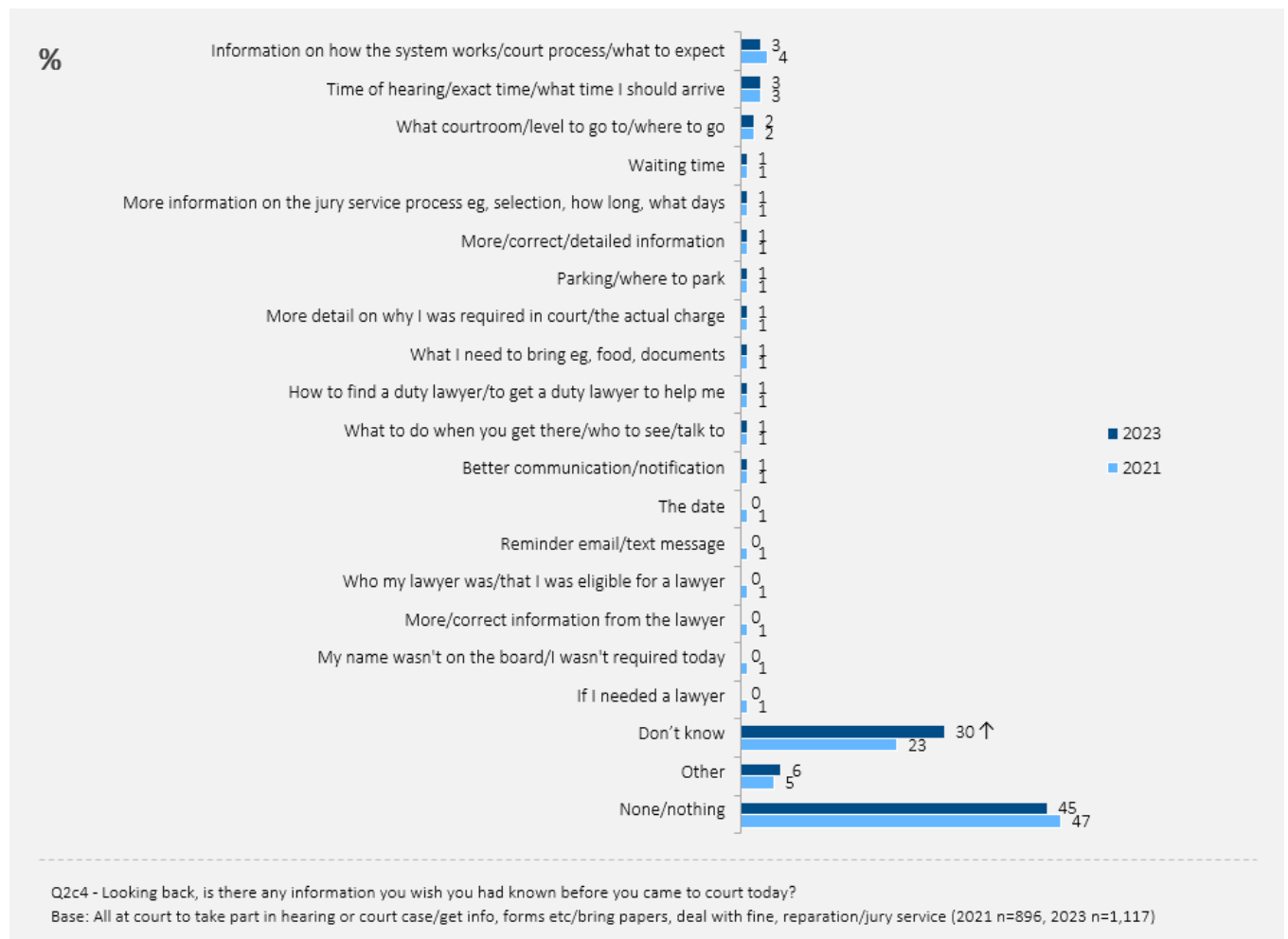
## Information court users wished to know before arriving at court

Respondents were asked to think back and consider if there was any information that they wished they would have known prior to coming to court. The findings are presented in the Figure below.

One quarter (25%) named some type of information they would have liked.

The most common pieces of missing information relate to how the system works and what to expect (3%), timings on hearings and when to arrive (3%), and instructions on where to go (2%). These are in line with 2021.

**Figure 32: Information court users wished to know before arriving at court**

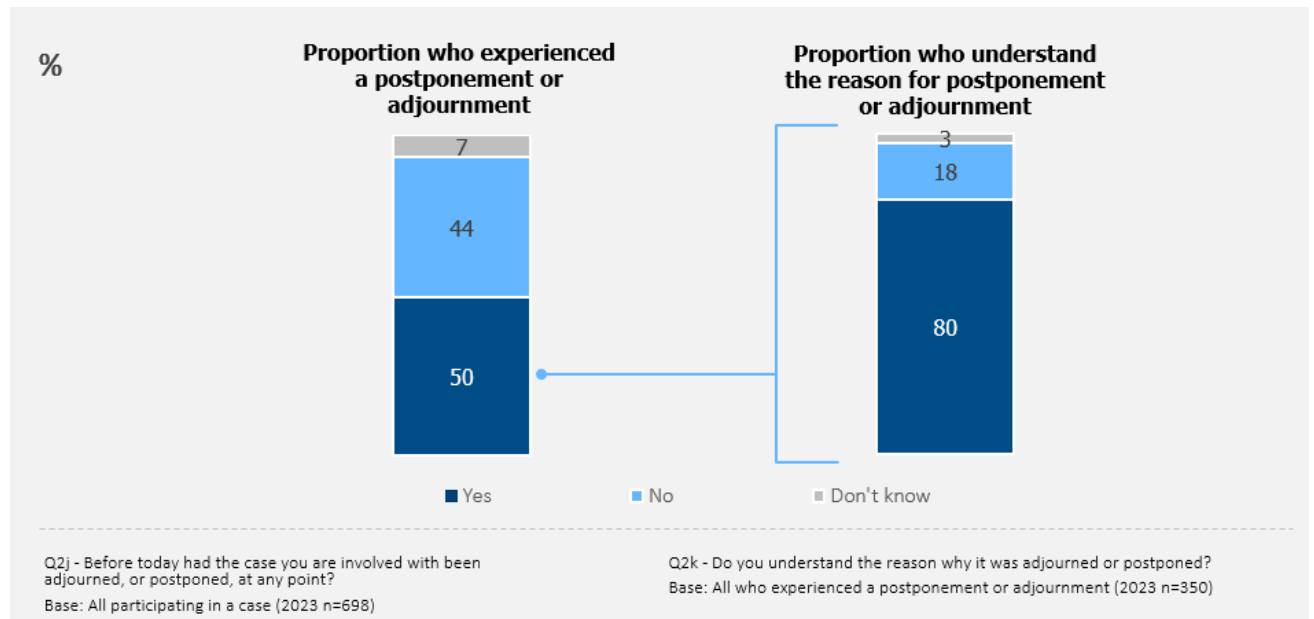


## Case postponements or adjournments

Two new questions were added in 2023 focused on case postponements or adjournments. These questions were asked only of those participating in a case.

Respondents were asked if the case they were involved with had been adjourned or postponed at any point. Half of those involved with a case had experienced an adjournment or postponement. These respondents were then asked if they understood the reason for the postponement or adjournment. Fewer than one in five (18%) did not understand the reason for delay.

Figure 33: Experience of a postponement or adjournment



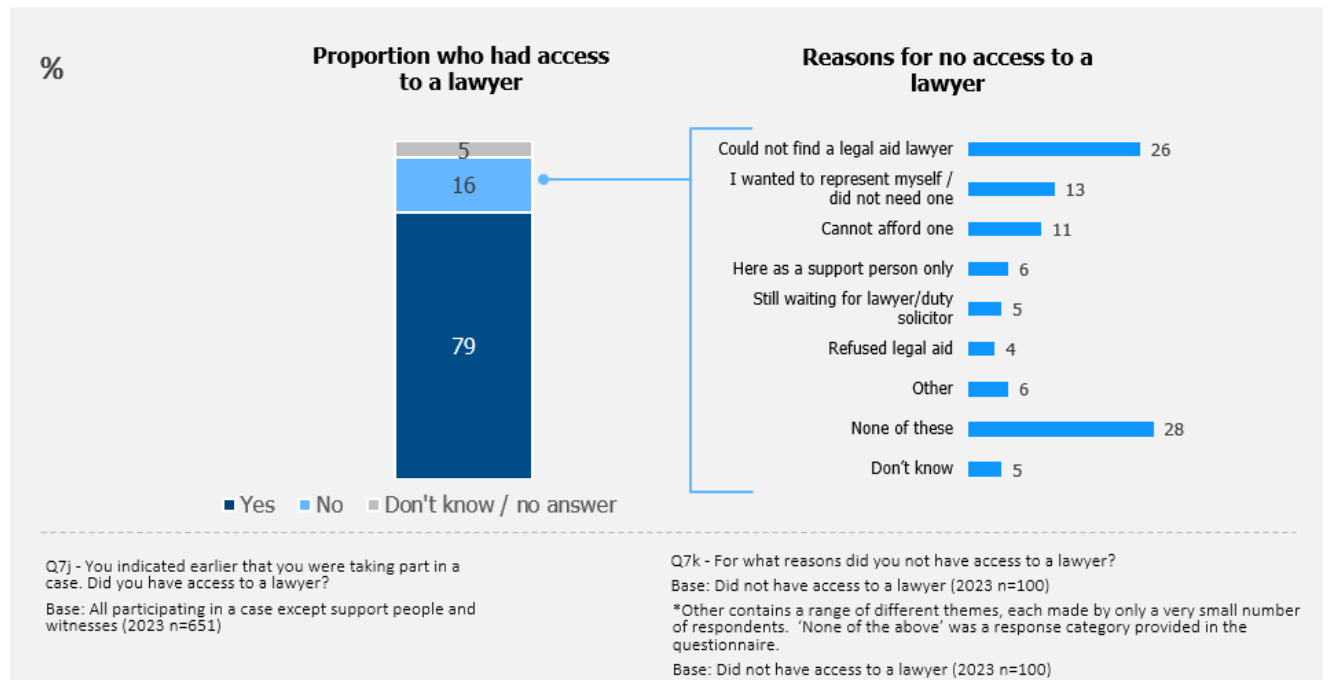


## Access to a lawyer

Two new questions were added in 2023 to measure access to a lawyer and reasons for any lack of access. These questions were asked only of those participating in a case (excluding support people and witnesses). The figure below shows the results.

Four in five (79%) of those involved in a case reported that they had access to a lawyer and 16% reported they did not have access. The main reasons given for lack of access relate to the unavailability of a legal aid lawyer (26% of those who lacked access), the court user wanting to represent themselves (13%), and being unable to afford representation (11%). Just 4% said they refused legal aid.

Figure 34: Access to a lawyer



Groups more likely than average to have access to a lawyer include those:

- who have visited the courthouse more than twelve times (85%)
- whose reason for visiting is to take part in a case (85%)
- who are accused of an offence (83%)
- who were given the opportunity to speak in court (87%)
- visiting Christchurch Court (97%).

Groups less likely than average to have access to a lawyer include those:

- visiting as a support person (48%)
- who have only visited the courthouse once (65%)

## Difficulties with information at court

### Difficulties getting information or assistance at court

All respondents were asked whether they had any difficulties getting information or assistance at court. Only 12% say they had difficulty (this excludes those for whom the question was not relevant). This is in line with 2021 (9%).

Groups more likely than average to say they had difficulties include those:

- visiting Tauranga (21%) and Rotorua (27%) Courts
- who identify as Māori (17%).

Groups less likely than average to say they had difficulties include those:

- visiting Auckland High (1%), Nelson (2%) or Christchurch (5%) Courts
- visiting for administrative reason not related to a case (5%) or jury service (3%)
- who identify as NZ European (9%)
- who are in paid employment (10%)
- who have an annual household income between \$30,000 and \$100,000 (10%) or over \$100,000 (8%).

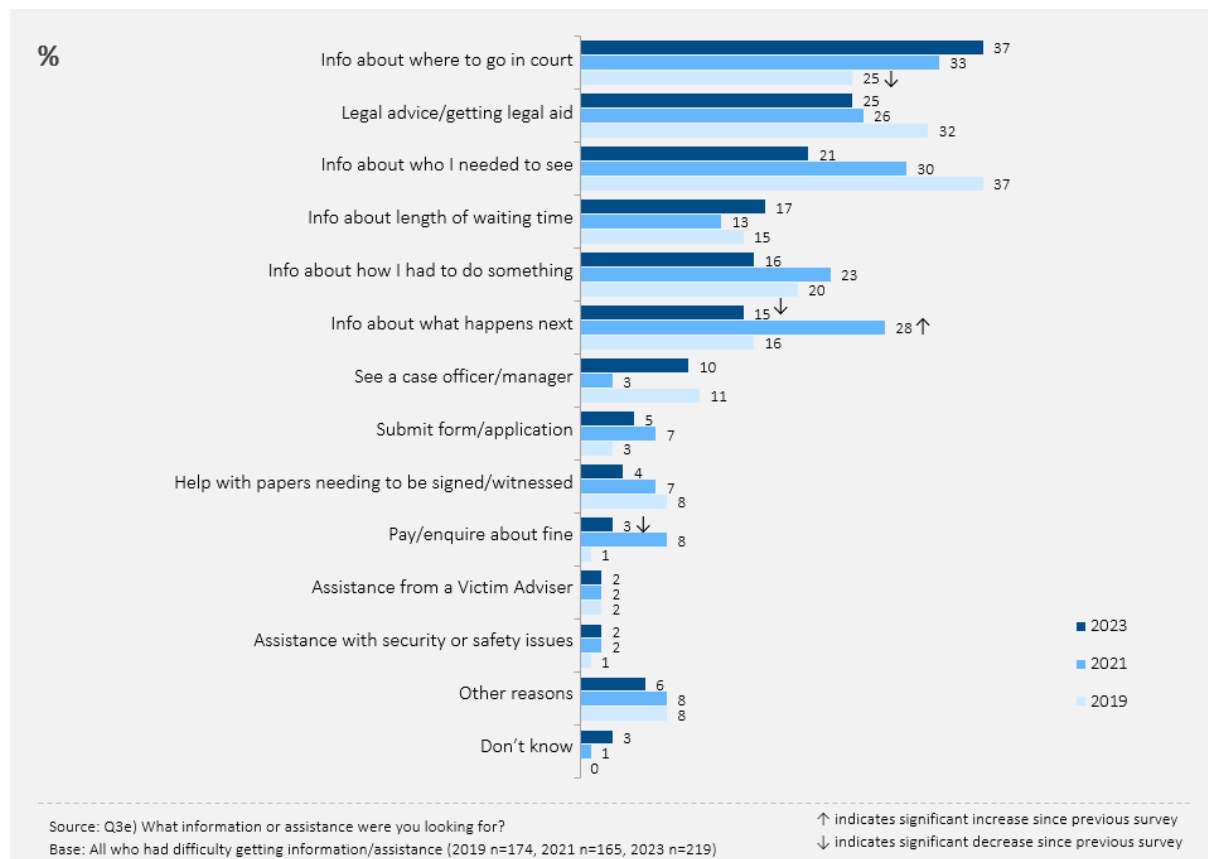
## Type of information or assistance sought when difficulties were encountered

Those who encountered difficulties were asked what type of information or assistance they were seeking at the time. Results are displayed in the Figure below.

The most common things these court users seek are information about where they need to go (37%), legal advice (25%), or who they need to see (21%).

Demand in 2023 for information about what to expect next is lower than in 2021 (and has reverted to the 2019 level).

**Figure 35 – Information or assistance sought when respondent encountered difficulties**



### Some comments from court users about difficulties encountered

*“The hearing loops do not work. The court system is not helpful at all if you’re self-representing – no support and judges uncaring to assist you through the system. They only appear to be interested in dealing with lawyers.”*

Family Court, taking part in a case, Christchurch Court

*“The shape of the jury deliberation room made it difficult to hear the speaker and also we had to move to see the TV screen.”*

Criminal case jury service, Auckland High Court

*“Accessibility on crutches is very difficult, coming up from the ground floor to level 3.”*

Family court, taking part in a case, Christchurch Court

*“The front desk told me I could enter the courtroom before proceedings began at 10am. I was then asked to leave by a Court Security Officer at 9.45am. The information was inconsistent.”*  
**Spectator, jurisdiction not specified, Dunedin Court**

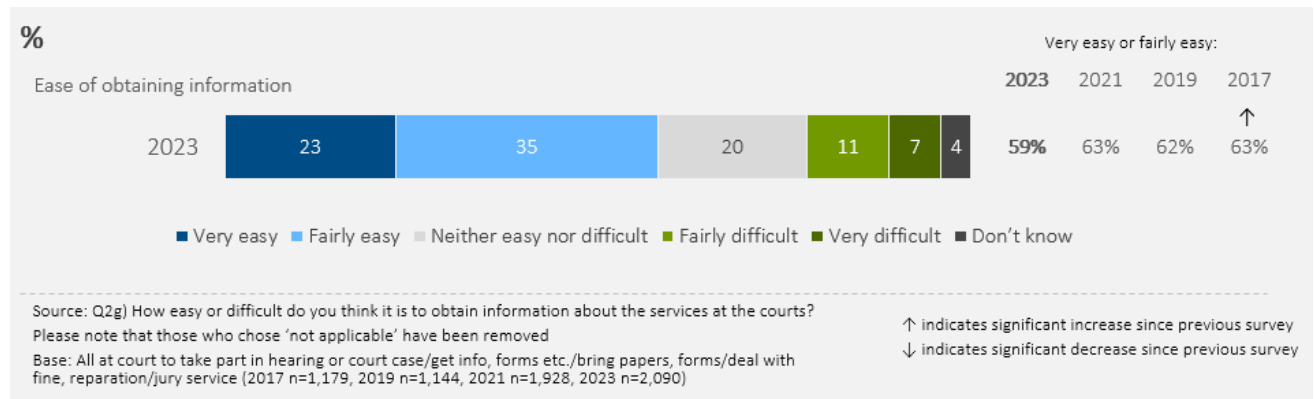
*“The door to the courtroom was locked and I couldn’t get into the hearing. I had to phone the lawyer to get the door opened and it was very stressful.”*  
**Criminal Case Support Person, Invercargill Court**

## Overall perception of accessibility of information

Respondents were asked to rate how easy or difficult they thought it was to obtain information about the services and facilities of the court. Results are displayed in the Figure below.

Nearly six in ten (59%) said it was either 'very' or 'fairly' easy. When court locations and reasons for visiting are held constant, the decrease between 2021 and 2023 is not significant.

**Figure 36 – Perceptions of accessibility of court information**



Groups more likely than average to find it easy to obtain information about the services or facilities include those:

- visiting for administrative reasons not related to case (79%) or jury service (73%)
- visiting Auckland High (74%), Palmerston North (71%), or Whanganui (77%) Courts.

Groups less likely than average to find it easy to obtain information include those:

- visiting Wellington District (50%) or Waitakere (43%) Courts
- taking part in a case (56%).

### Some comments from court users

*"Need to have a concierge. The information desk and website should have information about the ongoing cases."*

**Criminal case support person, Auckland High Court**

*"I understood that if you are stood down or excused you have to wait around with everyone for the next step. Today I was told I could have gone home immediately rather than wait. A suggestion would be when jurors get instructions in the assembly area, this possibility could be included then."*

**Criminal case jury service, Auckland high Court**

*"Clarity between defendant, courts, police, and community probation. Someone to take ownership of the flow of information."*

**Criminal case accused, Christchurch Court**

*"I require assistance and support services to understand my rights and revisit rulings made previously due to lack of information."*

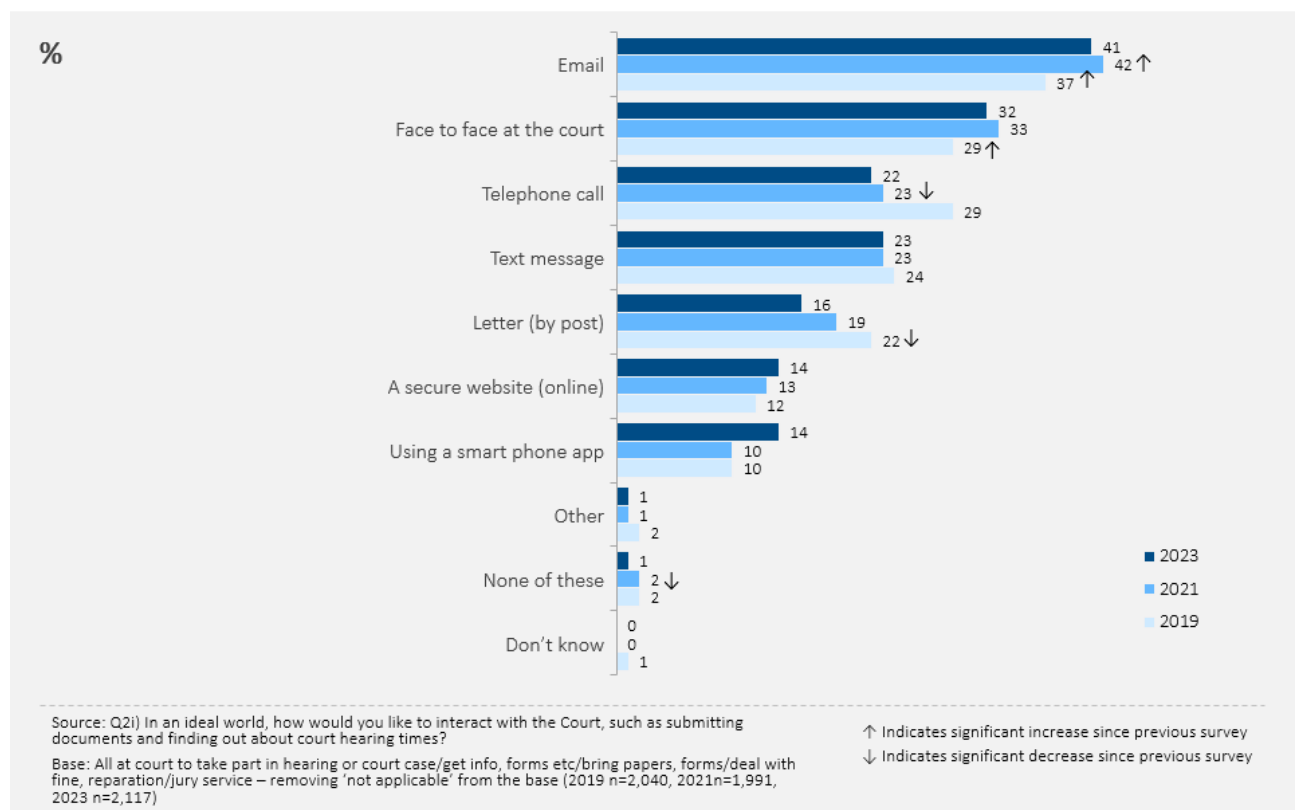
**Criminal case - other, Waitakere Court**

## Preferred communication channel

Respondents were asked for their preferred communication channel for court interactions (such as submitting documents and finding out about court hearing times). Results are shown in the Figure below.

Court users most often prefer to receive communications via email (41%). Preference for a letter has been trending downwards since 2017 (although the difference between 2023 and 2021 is not statistically significant).

**Figure 37 – Preferred communication channels**



In 2021 the preference for digital communications was higher among younger court users. However, in 2023 there is consistency in preference for digital communication across age groups except for using a smart phone app, which has higher preference among court users aged under 50 years.

Channel preference also varies by court location as illustrated in the table below.

Respondents visiting the Waitakere, Auckland High, Wellington District, and Wellington High Courts have a greater preference for digital communication than other courts. Meanwhile, respondents visiting some of the smaller courts (such as Rotorua, Whanganui, and Palmerston North Courts) have a greater preference for face-to-face contact.

**Table 16 – Channel preference by court location**

	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
	All respondents	Auckland District Court	Auckland High Court	Waitakere	Manukau	Hamilton	Tauranga	Rotorua	Whanganui	Palmerston North	Wellington District Court	Wellington High Court	Nelson	Christchurch	Dunedin	Invercargill
Base size	(n=2,117)	(n=263)	(n=102)	(n=125)	(n=324)	(n=147)	(n=126)	(n=87)	(n=101)	(n=101)	(n=213)	(n=104)	(n=83)	(n=263)	(n=36)	(n=42)
Letter (by post)	16	10↓	9	26	20	16	7	9	49↑	6	14	13	26	18	6	18
Face to face at the court	32	19↓	15	42	27	23	26	59	85↑	59	35↑	27	31	24	30	34
Telephone call	22	18↓	12	39	13↓	30↑	13	6	43	7	25	20	32	29↑	11	22
Text message	23	23	21	36	21↓	23	19	1	37↑	8	28	13	31	30	21	18
Email	41	42↓	52	53	35	37↑	35	18	59↑	24	49	53	53	44	35	29
A secure website (online)	14	18	41↑	10	12	11	10	1	25	11	17↑	37	5	10	7	9
Using a smart phone app	14	18	18↑	15	14	12↑	17	6	37↑	6	14	14	4	11	7	10

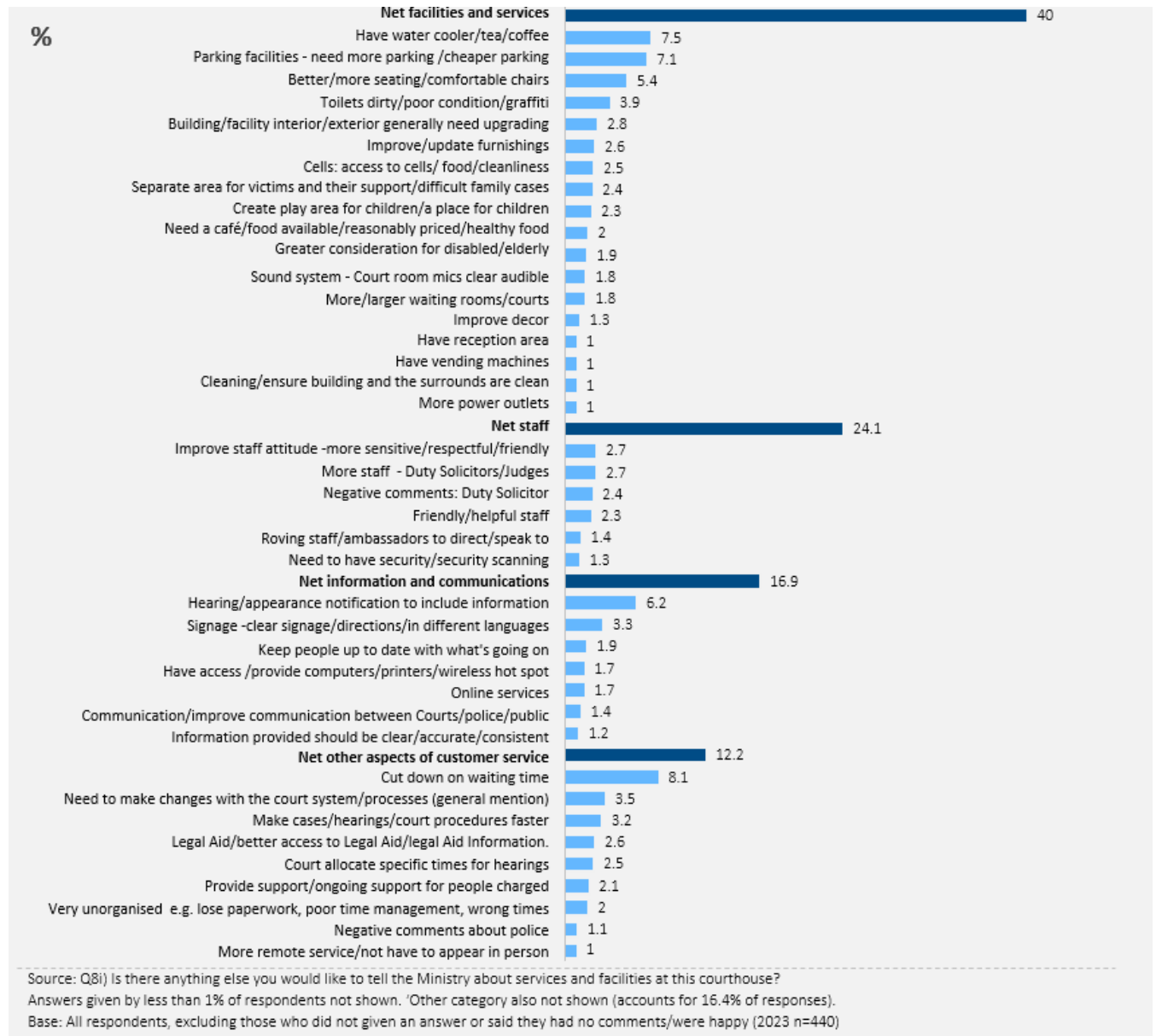
Red percentages are significantly lower than the average, green percentages are significantly higher than average.

↑ or ↓ indicates whether there was an increase or decrease between that year and the previous year

## Other comments given by respondents

All respondents were asked if there is anything else they would like to tell the Ministry of Justice about services and facilities at the courthouse. Seven in ten did not give an answer (70%). The results for the remainder are presented in the Figure below. The percentages are shown to once decimal place to differentiate between the large number of varied responses given by respondents.

**Figure 38 – Final comments to the Ministry about the services and facilities**





## Summary of significant changes since 2021

This section summarises the significant increases and decreases detailed earlier in the report. The analysis below shows only the differences that are significant at **both** the total level and based on the nine courts in common between the 2021 and 2023 surveys.

**Table 17: Significant changes between 2021 and 2023**

Topic	Measure	2021 (%)	2023 (%)	Change
Overall satisfaction with service delivery	% very satisfied	48%	41%	↓ Down 7 points
Difficulties in getting information/assistance	Difficulties in looking for information about what happens next	28%	15%	↓ Down 13 points
Areas observed court security staff	Court entrance	95%	88%	↓ Down 7 points
	Customer service area	18%	21%	↑ Up 3 points
Approachableness of security staff	% rate approachable (4 or 5 rating)	88%	85%	↓ Down 3 points
Safety	% rate overall feeling safe (rating of 4 or 5)	91%	86%	↓ Down 5 points
Facilities used	Court entrance	83%	60%	↓ Down 23 points
	Interview room	13%	11%	↓ Down 2 points
	Waiting area	75%	65%	↓ Down 10 points
	Counters	42%	30%	↓ Down 12 points
	Jury assembly room	2%	5%	↑ Up 3 points
	None	0%	3%	↑ Up 3 points
Rating of court facilities	Waiting area/area outside of court room – % rate very or fairly good	30%	35%	↑ Up 5 points
Whether visited a counter	Visited a counter	45%	39%	↓ Down 6 points
Reason for visiting counter	To sign in with duty solicitor	4%	7%	↑ Up 3 points
	To sign in (general)	1%	4%	↑ Up 3 points
Court user knew what time to come	% strongly agree or agree	88%	83%	↓ Down 5 points

<b>Information received before coming to court</b>	No information	19%	14%	↓ Down 5 points
	A jury summons	4%	7%	↑ Up 3 points
<b>Ease of understanding information received from court</b>	Court summons - % rate very or fairly easy	93%	83%	↓ Down 10 points
<b>Provision of help speaking in court</b>	Yes – help provided	45%	59%	↑ Up 14 points
<b>How visitors find out where to go</b>	Previously visited/familiar with building	37%	32%	↓ Down 5 points
<b>Convenience of evening hearings</b>	% would consider it convenient (rating of 4 or 5)	43%	39%	↓ Down 4 points
<b>Source additional information sought from</b>	Asked a professional	42%	32%	↓ Down 10 points
<b>Information given on next steps</b>	Yes – information given	52%	59%	↑ Up 7 Points
<b>Referrals to other support services</b>	Yes – referrals made	24%	34%	↑ Up 10 points
<b>Have been to the courthouse before</b>	Visited previously	82%	78%	↓ Down 4 points
	No – first visit	18%	22%	↑ Up 4 points
<b>Personal technology access</b>	Computer printer	25%	16%	↓ Down 9 points
	Computer scanner	20%	13%	↓ Down 7 points
	Other type of cell phone (i.e. not smart phone)	16%	12%	↓ Down 4 points
	Computer with broadband	50%	37%	↓ Down 13 points
	iPad / other tablet	25%	16%	↓ Down 9 points
<b>Reasons for visit</b>	Jury service	3%	6%	↑ Up 3 points
	Administrative things not related to a case	7%	5%	↓ Down 2 points
<b>Jurisdiction</b>	Civil jurisdiction	13%	8%	↓ Down 5 points
	Criminal jurisdiction	53%	61%	↑ Up 8 points

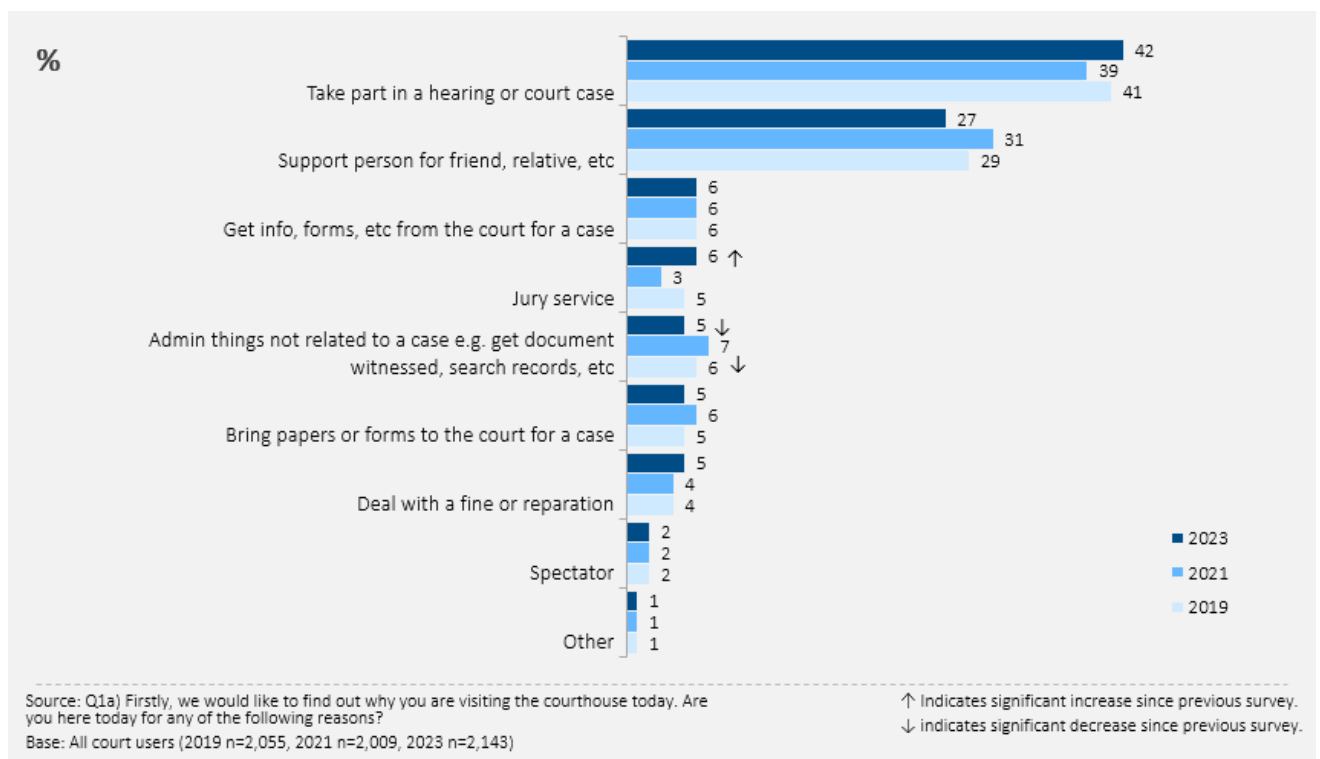
# Profile of survey respondents

This section of the report describes the profile of court users surveyed. Some of the variables included in this section – such as reason for visit, frequency of visit, age, gender, and ethnicity – are used throughout the report to analyse the main findings.

This section profiles survey ‘respondents’. This survey only represents a sample of court users (adjusted by interview targets that ensured minimum numbers of types of court users – see Appendix A), conducted at particular courts during the fieldwork period. We cannot verify whether the profile achieved is representative of all users at New Zealand courts and this should be borne in mind when interpreting the findings.

## Reason for using court

**Figure 39 – Main reason for being at courthouse today**



**Table 18 – Main reason for being at court today by court location**

	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
	All respondents	Auckland District Court	Auckland High Court	Waitakere	Manukau	Hamilton	Tauranga	Rotorua	Whanganui	Palmerston North	Wellington District Court	Wellington High Court	Nelson	Christchurch	Dunedin	Invercargill
Base size	(n=2,143)	(n=267)	(n=103)	(n=126)	(n=334)	(n=147)	(n=128)	(n=87)	(n=101)	(n=102)	(n=214)	(n=105)	(n=84)	(n=267)	(n=36)	(n=42)
Take part in hearing / court case	42	39	11↓	55	39	52↑	54	34	13	20	49↑	5↓	53	57↑	58	41
Support person for a friend, relative, etc.	27	32	21	23	30↓	35↓	24↓	35	18	11	26↓	16	8↓	33	32	32
To get info / forms from court for case	6	5	3	8	4	-	4	11	15	26↑	3	7	9	3	-	8
Bring papers / forms to the court for a case	5	3	3	3	3	1	7↑	4	5	13	7	28	9	2↓	-	12
To deal with a fine or reparation	5	4	3	4	4	3	4	8	8	8	7↑	2	7	4	5	4
Jury service	6	13↑	45↑	-	15↑	8	-	3	2	2	2	-	-	1	2	-
Admin not related to a case	5	2↓	6	4	1	-	5	1	38	19	2↓	8	12	-	-	3
Spectator	2	1	6	1	1	1	-	1	1	1	1↓	30	-	1	1	1
Other	1	1	2	2	3	-	2	2	-	-	2	3↓	4	-	-	-

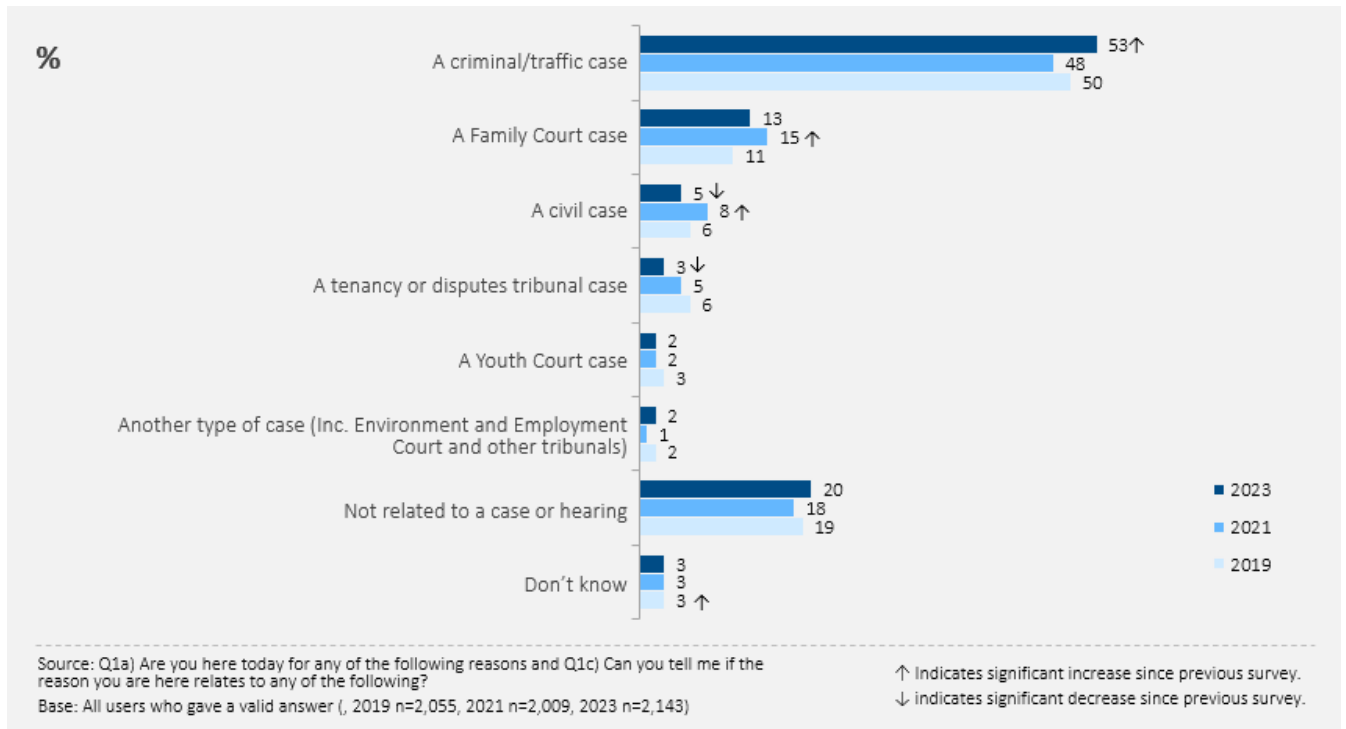
Red percentages are significantly lower than the average, green percentages are significantly higher than average.

↑ or ↓ indicates whether there was an increase or decrease between that year and the previous year

## Type of court case

All respondents who were at court for a case or hearing were asked what type of case they were involved with. In the Figure below, those who were present for jury service have been amalgamated with those who said they were at court for a criminal or traffic case (it is not possible to separate out criminal and traffic cases as these were one response code in the questionnaire).

**Figure 40 – Type of case or hearing**



**Table 19 – Type of case or hearing by court location**

	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
	All respondents	Auckland District Court	Auckland High Court	Waitakere	Manukau	Hamilton	Tauranga	Rotorua	Whanganui	Palmerston North	Wellington District Court	Wellington High Court	Nelson	Christchurch	Dunedin	Invercargill
Base size	(n=2,143)	(n=267)	(n=103)	(n=126)	(n=334)	(n=147)	(n=128)	(n=87)	(n=101)	(n=102)	(n=214)	(n=105)	(n=84)	(n=267)	(n=36)	(n=42)
Criminal/traffic case	53	57↑	26	63	37↓	61	63	65	37	31	59	7	51	68↑	66	70↑
A Family Court case	13	9↓	-	17	18	11	14	6	9	21	10	-	14	19	9	15
A Tenancy or Disputes Tribunal	3	2	-	2	2	1	2	-	-	10	7	2	1↓	3↓	-	4
A civil case	5	4	10	1	9	6	6	2	3	5	3	33	2	2↓	6	-
A Youth Court case	2	4	-	2	3	5	1	1	-	-	1	-	-	2	-	-
Another type of case (e.g., Environment and Employment Court and other Tribunals)	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	6	-	2	3	4	3	1	-	-
Not case related	20	21	62	12	25↑	12	11	16	49	29	15	49	25	5	11	11

Red percentages are significantly lower than the average, green percentages are significantly higher than average.

↑ or ↓ indicates whether there was an increase or decrease between that year and the previous year

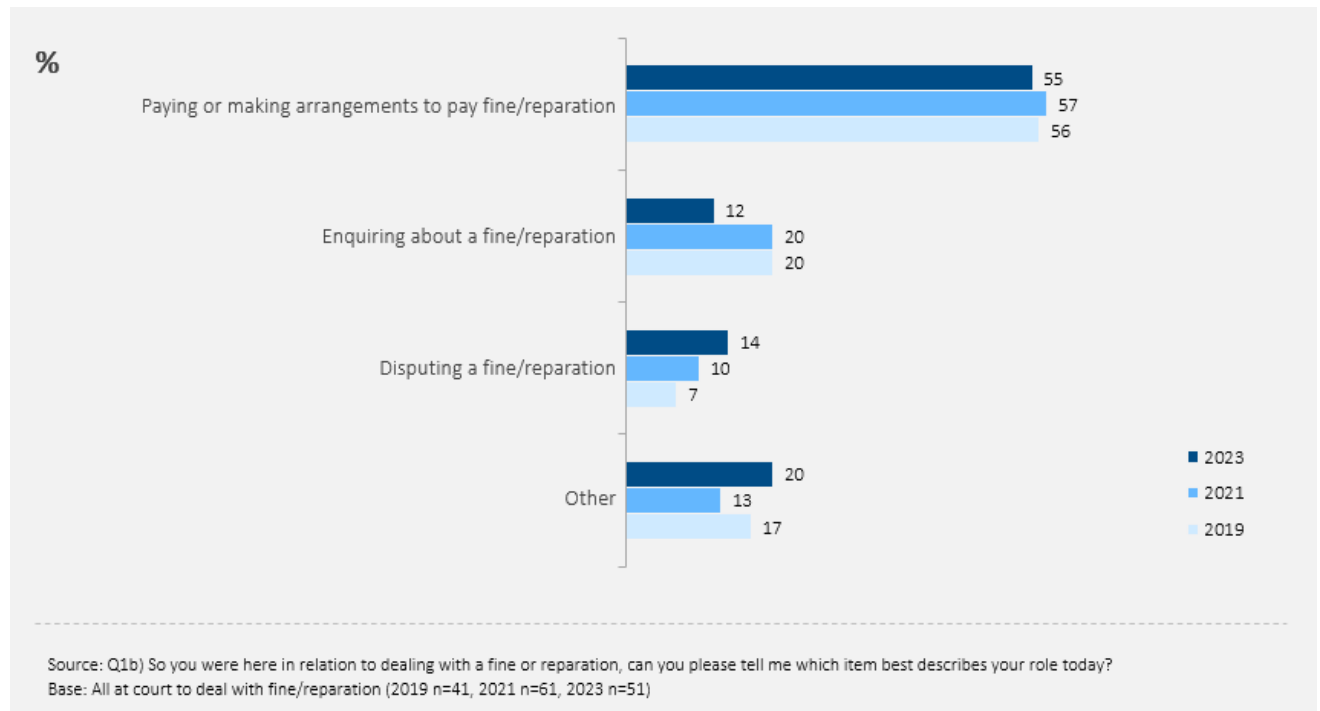
## More detail on reason for visit

Those who were visiting to pay a fine or reparation and those visiting for a criminal, traffic or youth case were asked for more detail about their visit.

### Visiting for a fine or reparation

Those visiting because of a fine or reparation were asked to describe their role (on the day of interview). Results are illustrated in the Figure below.

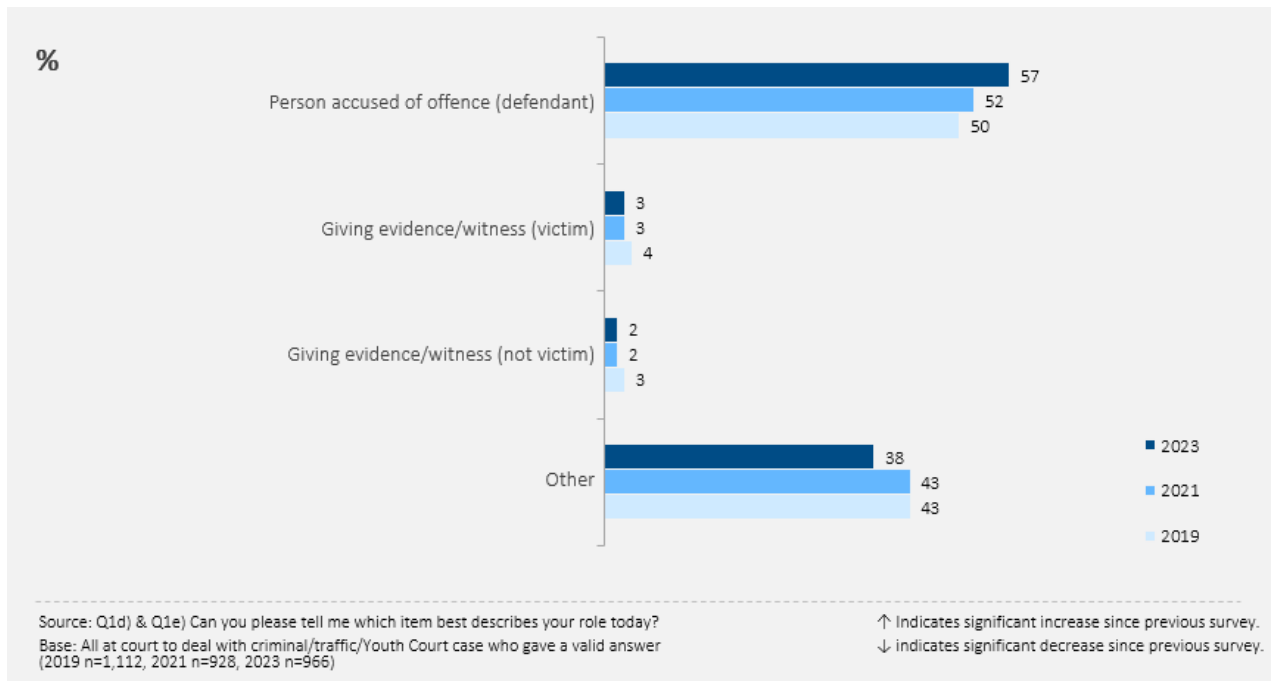
**Figure 41 – Details of the fine or reparation activity**



## Accused or giving evidence for criminal or traffic cases

Those who were in court for a criminal, youth or traffic case were asked for more detail about their reason for visiting. Due to small base sizes for Youth Court users these respondents have been merged with those involved in criminal or traffic cases for the analysis. Results are displayed in the Figure below.

**Figure 42 – Whether defendant or giving evidence (for criminal, traffic or Youth Court cases only)**





## Detailed reason for visit

At the analysis stage a new variable was created which combined three questions asking about the respondent's reason for visiting court<sup>5</sup>. This variable provides a number of categories which give detailed information about the reasons respondents were visiting court. Some categories, such as Youth Court, cannot be broken down further because of small base sizes. The proportion of court users in each category is presented in the table below.

**Table 20 – Detailed reason for visit**

Detailed reason for visit	2017 %	2019 %	2021 %	2023 %
Total sample	(n=2,022)	(n=2,055)	(n=2,007)	(n=2,142)
Criminal case – accused	28↑	26	25	31↑
Criminal case – witness – victim	1	2	1	1
Criminal case – witness – not victim	1	1	1	1
Criminal case – other – includes bringing papers or forms to the court for a case	18	21	20	19
Criminal case – jury service	4	5	3↓	6↑
Youth Court case	3↑	3	2	2
Family Court – participant	5	5	6	6
Family Court – supporter	5	4	5	4
Family Court – other – includes bringing papers or forms to the court for a case	3↑	2	4↑	3
Civil – participant	2↓	3	3	2
Civil – supporter	1↓	1	3↑	2
Civil – other – includes bringing papers or forms to the court for a case	1↓	2	2	2
Tenancy or Disputes Tribunal case	7	6	5	3↓
Another type of Court, Tribunal	2	2	1	2
Fines – to deal with a fine or reparation	5↓	4	4	5
Administrative things not related to a case	6↓	6	7↑	5↓
Spectator	2	2	2	2
Other	5	4	4	5

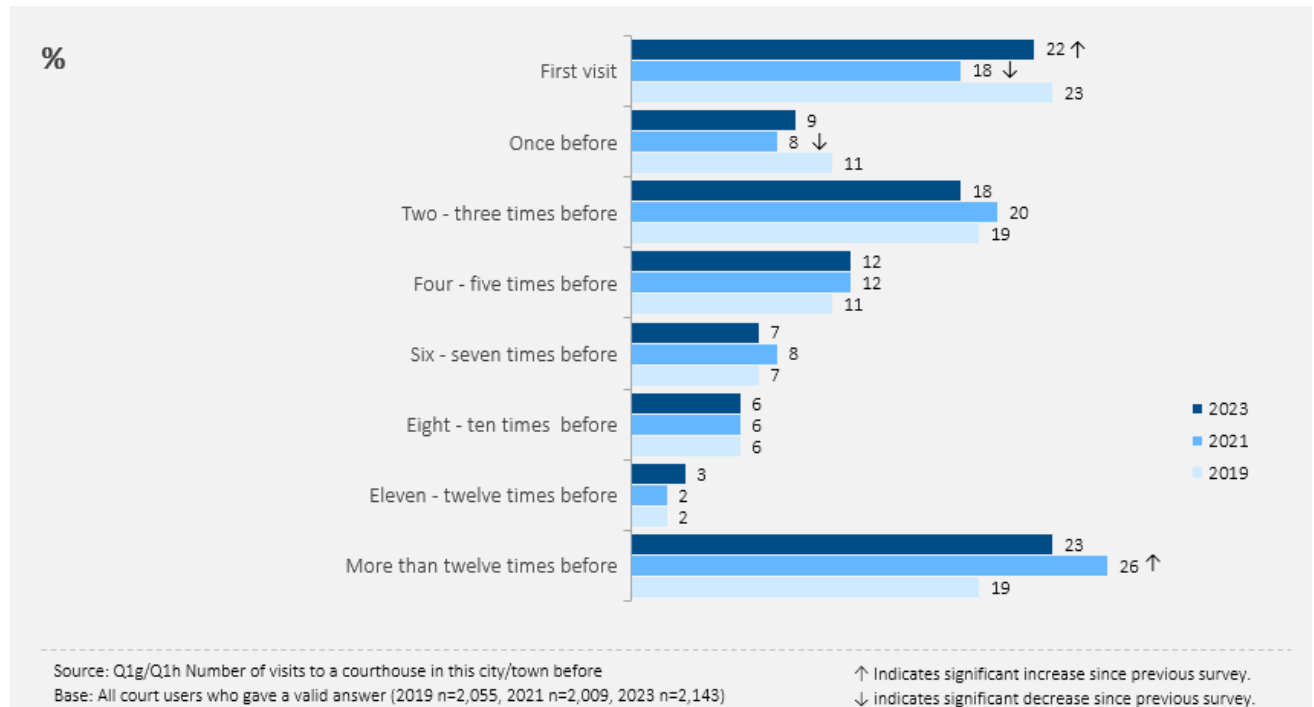
↑ or ↓ indicates whether there was an increase or decrease between that year and the previous.

<sup>5</sup> Q1a, Q1c, and Q1d were combined to create this variable.

## Frequency of visit

Respondents were asked how many times they had visited a courthouse in the city/town they were interviewed in. Results are shown in the following Figure.

**Figure 43 – Number of visits to a courthouse in same city/town before today**



## Classification information about court users

Respondents were asked a series of classification questions at the end of the survey. The results for all court users are outlined below.

### Gender and age

As shown in the table below, a wide range of ages was surveyed.

**Table 21 – Age group (by gender) 2023 survey only**

Age and gender	% All respondents (n=2,143)	% Male (n=1,152)	% Female (n=986)
16 to 17 years old	0	0	1
18 to 19 years old	4	5	3
20 to 24 years old	12	12	12
25 to 29 years old	14	15	12
30 to 34 years old	12	13	12
35 to 39 years old	12	12	12
40 to 44 years old	9	9	9
45 to 49 years old	8	7	9
50 to 54 years old	8	7	9
55 to 59 years old	6	5	8
60 to 64 years old	6	6	6
65 years and over	9	9	9

### Ethnicity

The ethnicity profile of court users surveyed is depicted in the table below. Please note that court users could choose more than one ethnicity which is why the column in the table adds up to more than 100%.

**Table 22 – Ethnicity**

Ethnicity	2017 % (n=2,044)	2019 % (n=2,055)	2021 % (n=2,009)	2023 % (n=2,143)
New Zealand European	50↓	52	53	48↓
Māori	32↓	33	36	35
Samoan	6	6	6	7
Cook Island Māori	4	3	3	4
Tongan	2	3	3	3
Niuean	1	1	1	1
Fijian Indian	1	1	1	*
Other Pacific Islands	1	*	1	1
Chinese	4↑	3	2	2
Indian	5↑	4	3	4
Other Asian	3↑	3	3	3
Other European	3	4	3	4
South African	-	*	*	1
Middle Eastern	*	*	*	*
Other	3	3	2	2

↑ or ↓ indicates whether there was an increase or decrease between that year and the previous

**Table 23 – Ethnic group by court location**

	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
	All respondents	Auckland District Court	Auckland High Court	Waitakere	Manukau	Hamilton	Tauranga	Rotorua	Whanganui	Palmerston North	Wellington District Court	Wellington High Court	Nelson	Christchurch	Dunedin	Invercargill
Base size	(n=2,143)	(n=267)	(n=103)	(n=126)	(n=334)	(n=147)	(n=128)	(n=87)	(n=101)	(n=102)	(n=214)	(n=105)	(n=84)	(n=267)	(n=36)	(n=42)
NZ European	49	40	51	35	18	48	61	36	60	56	53	66	66	66	80	67
Māori	35	34	9	39	37↓	43	42	60	38	34	30	21	35	32	14	29
Pacific	14	19	13	26	39↑	6	3	7	6	6	10	3	4	7	9	5
Asian	10	12	28	12	13	13↑	7↑	2	4	9	16↑	10	1	4↓	8	4
Other	8	9	9	18	5	2	3	7	11	14	8	13	12	11	3	0

Red percentages are significantly lower than average, green percentages are significantly higher than average.

↑ or ↓ indicates whether there was an increase or decrease between that year and the previous year

## Assistance in court

Very few (2%) respondents said they required an interpreter. Fewer than 1% required assistance from language line, induction or hearing loops, Braille or assistance getting around the courthouse (e.g., wheelchair, opening doors etc).

## Employment status

All respondents were asked about their employment status (they could only choose one category which best represented their employment status). The results are provided in the table below.

**Table 24 – Employment status**

Employment status	2017 % (n=2,044)	2019 % (n=2,055)	2021 % (n=2,009)	2023 % (n=2,143)
Currently in paid employment or self-employment	55	53	55	52
Retired	4	6	7	8
Home duties	5	4	4	5
Unemployed, receiving unemployment benefit	16↑	20	19	19
Unemployed, not receiving unemployment benefit	5	4	3	4
Receiving Supported Living Payment	1	1	2	3
Receiving other benefit	3	3	3	3
Student	9	8	6	4↓
Other	1	1	-	*
Refused	1	1	*	2↑

↑ or ↓ indicates whether there was an increase or decrease between that year and the previous year

Employment status varies by court location as shown in the next table.

**Table 25 – Employment status by court location**

	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
	All respondents	Auckland District Court	Auckland High Court	Waitakere	Manukau	Hamilton	Tauranga	Rotorua	Whanganui	Palmerston North	Wellington District Court	Wellington High Court	Nelson	Christchurch	Dunedin	Invercargill
Base size	(n=2,143)	(n=267)	(n=103)	(n=126)	(n=334)	(n=147)	(n=128)	(n=87)	(n=101)	(n=102)	(n=214)	(n=105)	(n=84)	(n=267)	(n=36)	(n=42)
Currently in paid employment	52	50↓	73	47	47	63↑	57	52	48	54	49	63	48	49↓	36	56
Retired	8	6	4↓	3	5	5	6	13	18	12	4	22	11	9	5	11
Home duties	5	3	1	4	7	5	3	5	15↑	6	6↑	4	2	3	3	2
Unemployed, receiving unemployment benefit	19	21	6	27	22	18	20	17	6↓	13	23	1	16	19	29	16
Unemployed, not receiving unemployment benefit	4	6	6	8	2	3	2	2	2	3	4	-	6	3	11	8
Receiving Supported Living Payment	3	2	-	3	4	*↓	2	3	1	5	3	1	4	5↑	3	-
Receiving other benefit	3	4	2	3	2↓	2	5	-	2	2	1	-	7	6	-	-
Student	4	4	7	4	3	2	2	4	3	3	8	10	3	3	7	2
Other	*	*	-	-	-	-	1	2	1	-	*	-	1	1	-	-
Refused	2	*	-	3	6↑	1	2	2	3	2	-	-	2	*	4	5

Red percentages are significantly lower than the average, green percentages are significantly higher than average.

↑ or ↓ indicates whether there was an increase or decrease between that year and the previous year

## Household income

Respondents were asked their annual household income before tax. All earnings including employment, money from the government, and income from other sources were included. The results are shown below.

**Table 26 – Household income (before tax)**

Household income	2017 % (n=2,044)	2019 % (n=2,055)	2021 % (n=2,009)	2023 % (n=2,143)
None/Loss	3↑	2↓	1	2
\$1 - \$5,000	3	3	2	2
\$5,001 - \$10,000	3	2↓	2	2
\$10,001 - \$15,000	6	6	4	2↓
\$15,001 - \$20,000	7	6	5	5
\$20,001 - \$25,000	4↓	4	4	4
\$25,001 - \$30,000	5	4	5	3↓
\$30,001 - \$35,000	3	3	3	3
\$35,001 - \$40,000	5	4	5	3↓
\$40,001 - \$50,000	9↑	6↓	7	5↓
\$50,001 - \$60,000	7	6	7	6
\$60,001 - \$70,000	5	5	5	6
\$70,001 - \$100,000	8	9	9	9
\$100,001 - \$150,000	5↓	8↑	7	6
More than \$150,000	5	6	7	7
Refused	5↑	4	6↑	10↑
Don't know*	19	22↑	19	24↑

↑ or ↓ indicates whether there was an increase or decrease between that year and the previous year

Cognitive interviewing that Kantar Public has conducted in the past suggests that some people do not know their household income for a number of reasons including not being on a fixed salary (for example, receiving income from temporary employment and/or other non-fixed salary income sources), receiving benefits as the main source of income but being unaware of the annual household income received from benefit, and living with parents or other carers. Around one in five were unable to give their household income in each of the surveys. Therefore, analysis by income only includes those who were able to estimate their household income and does not include 24% of respondents. This should be noted when interpreting results involving analysis by household income.

Household income was combined into a smaller number of groupings for the purpose of analysis throughout the report. Household income groupings vary by court location as can be seen in the table below.

**Table 27 – Household income groupings by court location**

	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
	All respondents	Auckland District Court	Auckland High Court	Waitakere	Manukau	Hamilton	Tauranga	Rotorua	Whanganui	Palmerston North	Wellington District Court	Wellington High Court	Nelson	Christchurch	Dunedin	Invercargill
Base size	(n=2,143)	(n=267)	(n=103)	(n=126)	(n=334)	(n=147)	(n=128)	(n=87)	(n=101)	(n=102)	(n=214)	(n=105)	(n=84)	(n=267)	(n=36)	(n=42)
Up to \$20,000	13	10	4	14	16	5↓	18	14	12	10	11	7	15	17	20	10
Over \$20,000 to \$30,000	7	3↓	3	10	4↓	2↓	11	9	20↑	19	5↓	12	7	8	14	6
Over \$30,000 to \$50,000	12	9↓	6	14	9↓	8	15	30	16	13	16	2	11	8↓	23	13
Over \$50,000 to \$100,000	21	21	30	22	19	12	19	33	21	20	19	20	20	25	9	26
More than \$100,000	14	18	34	14	6↓	12↑	13	8	14	7	18	45	6	9↓	9	16
Refused	10	8	4	7	10↑	51↑	10	1	3	7	3	3	4	7	8	14↑
Don't know	24	32↑	20	19	37↑	10↑	12↓	6	14↓	24	28↑	10	37	26↑	18	15

Red percentages are significantly lower than the average, green percentages are significantly higher than average.

↑ or ↓ indicates whether there was an increase or decrease between that year and the previous year



## Access to Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

Respondents were asked whether they had easy access to Information and Communication Technologies for their own personal use. The results are presented below.

**Table 28 – Easy access to Information and Communication Technology (ICT)**

Access to Information and Communication Technology in the home	2017 %	2019 %	2021 %	2023 %
	(n=2,044)	(n=2,055)	(n=2,009)	(n=2,143)
Telephone (landline)	30↓	24↓	20↓	17
iPhone/other smart phone	67↑	71↑	79↑	82
Other cell phone	24↓	25	16↓	12↓
Computer with broadband Internet access	44↓	53↑	50	37↓
Computer with dial-up Internet access	2↓	2	2	1↓
Printer	20↓	25↑	25	16↓
Scanner	17↓	19↑	20	13↓
iPad/other computer tablet	20↓	25↑	25	16↓
None of these	5↑	4	3↓	4↑

↑ ↓ indicates there was an increase or decrease between that year and the previous year.

The table below shows differences in access to ICT by reason for being at court.

**Table 29 – Information and Communication Technology (ICT) by main reason for being at court**

	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
	All respondents	Take part in a case	Support person	Get info on a case	Bring info about a case	Fine or reparation	Jury service	Admin not related to a case	Spectator
Base size	(n=2,143)	(n=803)	(n=510)	(n=67)	(n=60)	(n=52)	(n=293)	(n=216)	(n=105)
Telephone (landline)	17	15	19	18	22	19	15	23	13
iPhone/other smart phone	82	81	85↑	76	85	62	92↑	89	90
Other cell phone	12	13	11↓	16	7↓	8↓	9	9	7
Broadband Internet	37	30↓	38↓	36↓	57	35	51↓	62↓	68
Dial-up Internet	1	1	2	1	-	2↓	-	1	3
Printer	16	10↓	15↓	19	30	19	22	34	38
Scanner	13	8↓	13↓	13	27	13	16	29	27
iPad/other tablet	16	13↓	16↓	18	27	13	26	32	23
None of these	4	5	3	3	-	10	1	3	1

Red percentages are significantly lower than the average, green percentages are significantly higher than average.

↑ or ↓ indicates whether there was an increase or decrease between that year and the previous year

ICT access varies by court location as shown in the table below.

**Table 30 – Information and Communication Technology (ICT) by court location**

	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
	All respondents	Auckland District Court	Auckland High Court	Waitakere	Manukau	Hamilton	Tauranga	Rotorua	Whanganui	Palmerston North	Wellington District Court	Wellington High Court	Nelson	Christchurch	Dunedin	Invercargill
Base size	(n=2,143)	(n=267)	(n=103)	(n=126)	(n=334)	(n=147)	(n=128)	(n=87)	(n=101)	(n=102)	(n=214)	(n=105)	(n=84)	(n=267)	(n=36)	(n=42)
Telephone (landline)	17	14	13↓	17	24↑	9	21	13	38	17	18	17↓	21	13↓	13	11
iPhone/other smart phone	82	74↓	90	78	72	90↑	72	84	91	79	90↑	90	83	92	62	85
Other cell phone	12	14↑	9	24	16	8↓	12	2	1↓	9	10↓	6	10	10	23	13
Broadband Internet	37	34↓	65	34	18↓	21↓	25	14	67	37	51↓	74	50	47↓	13	47
Dial-up Internet	1	1	-	2	2	1	2	1	-	*	1	3	-	1↓	-	7
Printer	16	15↓	25↓	14	5↓	8↓	10	-	38	15↓	19↓	49	16↓	23↓	3	21
Scanner	13	8↓	22	12	5	7↓	7	*	33	10↓	16	39	10↓	19↓	3	15
iPad/other tablet	16	14↓	26	15	7↓	8↓	9	6	48	13	17	20	18↓	30	3	23
None of these	4	8↑	2	5	7	2	6	*	3	6	1	1	1	3↑	13↑	5

Red percentages are significantly lower than the average, green percentages are significantly higher than average.

↑ or ↓ indicates whether there was an increase or decrease between that year and the previous year

# Appendix A: Detailed Methodology

## Sample

All members of the public aged 16 years or older who visited one of the selected courts during the dates fieldwork was conducted were eligible for the survey. This included members of the public attending court in relation to cases or seeking information from the court, and the people supporting them. Judges, lawyers, court staff, probation officers, Police and the media were excluded from the survey. Those from non-government organisations that provide services to court users (for example, the Salvation Army) were also excluded from the survey.

All interviews were conducted face-to-face. During fieldwork for this survey interviewers approached people waiting for their hearing or case to take place or when the user exited the court building.

It should be noted that there is no population profile of court users in New Zealand which means there is no way to compare the profile of survey respondents with the total court user population. Additionally, the survey only interviewed a sample of court users at a particular point in time, and at particular locations. As a result the reader should keep in mind that findings from the survey are based on ‘court user survey respondents’ rather than ‘all court users’.

The research aimed for a minimum of 2,000 interviews. To ensure a minimum number of respondents in each court location, quotas were set to make sure we achieved a certain number of interviews in each location. The majority of these quotas were met or exceeded, although some courts had lower levels of foot traffic, and so targets were unable to be met.

Overall, we achieved 2,143 interviews (exceeding the target by nine interviews). Please note that some respondents did not answer every question, for this reason the base size for some questions asked to all respondents is less than 2,143.

The table below shows the number of interviews aimed for at each court location, compared to the actual number of interviews achieved.

**Table 31 – Target versus achieved sample sizes at each court location**

Court location	Target sample size	Achieved sample size
<i>Total sample</i>	<i>2,000</i>	<i>2,143</i>
Auckland District Court	250	267
Auckland High Court	100	103
Waitakere	100	126
Manukau	250	334
Hamilton	100	147
Tauranga	100	128
Rotorua	100	87
Whanganui	100	101
Palmerston North	100	102
Wellington District Court	150	214
Wellington High Court	100	105
Nelson	100	84
Christchurch	250	267
Dunedin	100	36
Invercargill	100	42

Because the survey was conducted in a manner that ensured minimum numbers of interviews per location, the spread of the sample may not directly reflect the number of users passing through each court.

Desired targets were also set for key case and court user types: jury service attendees, Family Court attendees, Civil Court users, people visiting for a fine or reparation, Tenancy and Disputes Tribunal users, Youth Court cases, and victims. Numbers fell short of a number of these desired targets as it became challenging to find enough respondents in these groups<sup>6</sup>.

The response rate (calculated by dividing the number of interviews by the number of court users approached) was 40%. This is a conservative estimate of the response rate as it assumes that all those who refused to take part in the survey would have been eligible to participate in the research. It is possible that the response rate would be higher than this if we could determine the eligibility of the people who refused to take part.

## Questionnaire

The Ministry and Kantar Public designed a questionnaire consisting largely of pre-coded response questions (i.e., the respondent chose their answer from a list). The questionnaire focused on various elements of the court user experience including reasons for attending, court user information provided and sought, navigation around the court building, and staff contact, waiting time, court facilities, safety, overall satisfaction, and demographics. The full questionnaire, which took 15 minutes to administer, can be found at Appendix B.

The 2023 questionnaire was largely the same as the 2021 questionnaire, with the following changes:

- Removed a series of questions asking if users' visits had been impacted by changes in COVID-19 Alert Levels, and the information that they had received from the Ministry about this (if any) (Q2f1 to Q2f3).
- Added a set of questions on whether the case users had been involved in was adjourned or postponed at any point, and if they understood the reasons for this (Q2i and Q2j)
- Added a question on whether users would prefer to have completed their visit remotely or in-person (Q3n)
- Added two questions of those participating in a case whether they had access to a lawyer, and if not the reasons they did not have access to a lawyer (Q7j and Q7k)
- In Q6b a response option was rephrased from 'iPhone / other smart phone' to 'Smartphone that connects to the Internet'.

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<sup>6</sup>293 interviews were achieved out of a desired target of 100 jury service attendees, 222 interviews were achieved out of a desired minimum target of 200 Family Court users, 134 interviews were achieved out of a desired 200 Civil Court users, 56 interviews were achieved out of a desired 200 Tenancy and Tribunal Court users, 33 interviews were achieved out of a desired minimum target of 50 Youth Court users, and 25 victims were interviewed out of a desired target of 50.

## Analysis and reporting

### *Treatment of open-ended data*

Answers to 'other-specify' questions were coded following completion of fieldwork. This process led to the creation of some new response codes which did not exist in the original questionnaire.

A final open-ended question was also included: 'is there anything else you would like to tell the Ministry of Justice about the services and facilities at this courthouse?'. The results to this question were coded (and can be found in the section on 'other comments given by respondents'). Some illustrative comments from the responses have been included in relevant places throughout the report. Where possible these comments are used to provide further context to the survey results. Please note that because the spontaneous open-ended question was asked at the end of the survey (rather than being tied to a specific question topic), it is not possible to obtain relevant comments for each section of the report (because there are no comments available for many subject matters). All comments have been checked to ensure they do not reveal the identity of respondents. Where information that can identify an individual was included in the original quote, this was edited to remove the identifying information (a fictitious example of this is replacing "Bill Smith at Queenstown court did a great job" with "[Court staff member] at Queenstown court did a great job". In this example, the person's name has been removed, but the location remains because it does not identify an individual).

### *Subgroup analysis*

Key analyses of the survey focus on frequency of attendance at the court, role at the court (e.g., attending a hearing, attending as a support person, dealing with administrative matters, etc.), jurisdiction (e.g., criminal, civil, Family Court, etc.), court location, and key demographic characteristics (such as age, gender, income and ethnicity).

The term 'jurisdiction' is used in some analysis. The following groupings were included in each jurisdiction category (criminal jurisdiction = court users attending for a criminal, traffic, or Youth Court case, or attending for jury service; civil jurisdiction = court users attending for a civil case or a Tenancy or Disputes Tribunal case; Family Court case = those visiting for a Family Court case; to deal with a fine or reparation = those visiting for a fine or reparation; Other = all those not attending for a case, or attending for an unusual type of case including Environment Court, Employment Court, the Coroner's office, or another type of Tribunal case or Authority case).

All differences between subgroups mentioned in this report are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

# Appendix B: Questionnaire

## INTRODUCTION

Good morning/afternoon. My name is ..... from Kantar Public, an independent market research company.

We are doing some important research for the Ministry of Justice today. We want to find out what people think about the services and facilities here at the courthouse.

The survey will only take about 15 minutes or so depending on your answers and is conducted in complete confidence.

**IF ASKED WHY WE ARE DOING THE SURVEY:** Your answers will help the Ministry improve the experience that people have when they visit a courthouse.

**IF NEEDS REASSURANCE:** We have an official letter from the Ministry of Justice you can look at which explains the research and the fact that we have been commissioned by the Ministry (**RESPONDENT CAN KEEP COPY OF LETTER IF THEY WISH**).

**IF SOMEONE WHO IS VISITING IN A PROFESSIONAL CAPACITY WANTS TO TAKE PART:** We just want to talk to people who are not at court in a professional capacity.

**IF SOMEONE ASKS WHAT 'CONFIDENTIAL' MEANS:** This means your answers will be anonymous and will be combined with others for analysis, so your individual responses will not be identifiable.

**IF RESPONDENT IS CONCERNED ABOUT THE PRIVACY OF THEIR ANSWERS, READ:** As this is market research, it is carried out in compliance with the Privacy Act. The information you provide will be used for research purposes only.

**IF RESPONDENT REQUESTS A COPY OF THEIR ANSWERS, READ:** Under the Privacy Act, you have the right to request access to the information you have provided. If you have any questions, please feel free to call Michael Allan on TBC.

S1. First, can I check which of these age groups you are in?

**SHOWCARD S1**

Under 16	01	CLOSE
16 to 17 years	02	
18 to 19 years	03	
20 to 24 years	04	
25 to 29 years	05	
30 to 34 years	06	
35 to 39 years	07	
40 to 44 years	08	
45 to 49 years	09	
50 to 54 years	10	
55 to 59 years	11	
60 to 64 years	12	
65 years and over	13	

**ASK THOSE WHO ARE INTERVIEWED IN CHRISTCHURCH, DUNEDIN, INVERCARGILL, HAMILTON, NELSON, ROTORUA, TAURANGA OR WHANGANUI (CODES 3, 4, 5, 8, 11, 13, 15 OR 16 @ COURT WHERE INTERVIEWED). OTHERWISE GO TO Q1a**

S2. Are you visiting the District or High Court today?

District Court	01
High Court	02
Don't know <i>[DO NOT READ OUT]</i>	03

**SECTION 1: REASON FOR ATTENDING**

I'd like to find out why you are visiting the courthouse today.

Q1a Are you here today for any of the following reasons?

**INTERVIEWER: SELECT ONE ANSWER ONLY.**

**IF RESPONDENT SAYS 'MORE THAN 1 REASON':** What is your main reason?

**SHOWCARD Q1a**

To take part in a hearing or court case – for example, if you are on the stand today	01	SKIP TO Q1c
As a support person for a friend, relative etc – if you are not going to be called into the trial itself today but supporting someone else	02	SKIP TO Q1c
To get information, forms etc from the court <u>for a case</u>	03	SKIP TO Q1c
To bring papers or forms to the court <u>for a case</u>	04	SKIP TO Q1c
To deal with a fine or reparation	05	ASK Q1b
Jury service	06	SKIP TO Q1g
Administrative things <u>not related to a case</u> – for example getting a document witnessed, to search court records, collect or pick-up forms/papers etc	07	SKIP TO Q1g
Spectator	08	SKIP TO Q1g
Other (please tell us)	09	SKIP TO Q1g
Don't know [ <b>DO NOT READ OUT</b> ]	99	SKIP TO Q1g

**ONLY ASK IF Q1a = TO DEAL WITH A FINE OR REPARATION (CODE 5).**

Q1b So you were here in relation to dealing with a fine or reparation, can you please tell me which item best describes your role today.

**INTERVIEWER: SELECT ONE ANSWER ONLY.**

**READ OUT IF NECESSARY:** And which item best fits your main reason?

**SHOWCARD Q1b**

Paying or making arrangements to pay a fine or reparation	1
Enquiring about a fine or reparation	2
Disputing a fine or reparation	3
Other	4



**ONLY ASK IF Q1a = CODE 1 – 4. OTHERWISE SKIP TO Q1g**

Q1c Can you tell me if the reason you are here relates to any of the following?

**INTERVIEWER: SELECT ONE ANSWER ONLY. IF THEY ARE SUPPORT PEOPLE WHAT TYPE OF CASE IS THE PERSON THEY ARE SUPPORTING HERE FOR?**

**READ OUT IF NECESSARY:** And what is your main reason?

**SHOWCARD Q1c**

A criminal or traffic case	01	ASK Q1d
A Family Court case	02	SKIP TO Q1g
A tenancy or disputes tribunal case	03	SKIP TO Q1g
A civil case	04	SKIP TO Q1g
A Youth Court case	05	SKIP TO Q1e
An Environment Court case	06	SKIP TO Q1g
An Employment Court case	07	SKIP TO Q1g
The Coroner's Court	08	SKIP TO Q1g
Another type of Tribunal case or Authority case (please tell us)	09	SKIP TO Q1g
Don't know <i>[DO NOT READ OUT]</i>	99	SKIP TO Q1g

**ASK IF Q1c = CRIMINAL OR TRAFFIC CASE (CODE 1). OTHERWISE SKIP TO Q1e**

Q1d So you were here in relation to a criminal or traffic case, can you please tell me which item best describes your role today.

**INTERVIEWER: SELECT ONE ANSWER ONLY.**

**READ OUT IF NECESSARY:** And which item best fits your main reason?

**SHOWCARD Q1d**

A person accused of an offence (a defendant)	1	SKIP TO Q1g
Giving evidence / a witness: victim of the offence	2	SKIP TO Q1g
Giving evidence / a witness: not victim of the offence	3	SKIP TO Q1g
Other	4	SKIP TO Q1g

**ASK IF Q1c = YOUTH COURT CASE (CODE 5). OTHERWISE SKIP TO Q1g**

Q1e So you were here in relation to a youth court case, can you please tell me which item best describes your role today.

**INTERVIEWER: SELECT ONE ANSWER ONLY.**

**READ OUT IF NECESSARY:** And which item best fits your main reason?

**SHOWCARD Q1e**

A person accused of an offence (a defendant)	1	SKIP TO Q1g
Giving evidence / a witness: victim of the offence	2	SKIP TO Q1g
Giving evidence / a witness: not victim of the offence	3	SKIP TO Q1g
Other	4	SKIP TO Q1g

**ASK ALL**

Q1g Have you been in a courthouse before?

**READ OUT**

Yes, or	1	ASK Q1h
No - this is your first time	2	SKIP TO Q2a
Don't know <i>[DO NOT READ OUT]</i>	3	SKIP TO Q2a

Q1h Not including today, how many times have you been in a courthouse before?

**IF NECESSARY:** This is how many times you have EVER been in a courthouse.

**SHOWCARD Q1h**

Once	1
Two – Three times	2
Four – Five times	3
Six – Seven times	4
Eight – Ten times	5
Eleven – Twelve times	6
More than twelve times	7
Don't know <i>[DO NOT READ OUT]</i>	8
Refused <i>[DO NOT READ OUT]</i>	9

**SECTION 2: INFORMATION**

ASK IF Q1a = 'TO TAKE PART IN A HEARING OR COURT CASE' (1), OR 'TO GET INFORMATION, FORMS ETC' (3), OR 'TO BRING PAPERS OR FORMS' (4), OR 'TO DEAL WITH A FINE OR REPARATION' (5), OR 'JURY SERVICE' (6). OTHERWISE SKIP TO Q2i

Next we would like to find out about the information relating to this court visit.

Q2a Before you came here today, how much would you agree or disagree with the following statements?

**SHOWCARD Q2a**

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know [Do Not Read Out]	N/A [Do Not Read Out]
1	You knew what time to come	5	4	3	2	1	6	7
2	You knew what to do when you got here	5	4	3	2	1	6	7
3	You knew what to expect before you came to court today	5	4	3	2	1	6	7

Q2b What information did you receive from the court before coming?

**READ OUT LIST CHECKING FOR AN ANSWER AT EACH ROW – SELECT ALL MENTIONS**

**INTERVIEWER: IF 'I DID NOT RECEIVE ANY INFORMATION' OR 'I CANNOT REMEMBER' CODE AND SKIP TO Q2d**

**SHOWCARD Q2b**

Q2c And how easy or difficult was it to understand the [...INTERVIEWER: ASK FOR EACH COMMUNICATION MENTIONED AT Q2b...]?

**INTERVIEWER: IS THAT VERY OR FAIRLY?**

**INTERVIEWER: CODE RESPONSE FOR EACH MENTION AT Q2b**

**SHOWCARD Q2c**

	Q2B: RECEIVED	Q2c					
		Very easy to understand	Fairly easy to understand	Neither easy nor difficult	Fairly difficult to understand	Very difficult to understand	Don't know [Do Not Read Out]
A letter	1	5	4	3	2	1	6
An email	11	5	4	3	2	1	6
A pamphlet	2	5	4	3	2	1	6
A phone call	3	5	4	3	2	1	6
A text	12	5	4	3	2	1	6
A court summons	4	5	4	3	2	1	6
A jury summons	5	5	4	3	2	1	6
Bail bond	6	5	4	3	2	1	6
A notice telling me how much fines or reparation I owe	7	5	4	3	2	1	6
Other (please tell us)	8	5	4	3	2	1	6

I did not receive any information	9	SKIP TO Q2d
Can't remember <i>[DO NOT READ OUT]</i>	10	SKIP TO Q2d

Q2c2 **Overall** how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the **information** you received before coming to the court?

**SHOWCARD Q2c2**

Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Don't know <i>[Do Not Read Out]</i>
5	4	3	2	1	6

Q2c4 Looking back, is there any information you wish you had known before you came to court today?  
**PLEASE TYPE IN**

Don't know

Q2d Before coming today did you try to find out more about what you needed to do or what was going to happen today?

Yes	1	ASK Q2e
No	2	SKIP TO Q2f1
Don't know	3	SKIP TO Q2f1

ASK IF Q2d = YES (CODE 1). OTHERWISE SKIP TO Q2f1

Q2e In which of the following ways did you try to find out more information?

INTERVIEWER: CODE 'NONE OF THESE' IF NOT RELEVANT AND SKIP TO Q2f1

SHOWCARD Q2e

Q2f And how helpful or unhelpful was [...INTERVIEWER: ASK FOR EACH SOURCE OF INFORMATION...]?

INTERVIEWER: CODE RESPONSE FOR EACH MENTION AT Q2e

SHOWCARD Q2f

		Q2e	Q2f				
			Very helpful	Some-what helpful	Neither helpful nor unhelpful	Not that helpful	Not at all helpful
1	I came to the court beforehand to make enquiries	01	5	4	3	2	1
2	I made a phone call to my case manager at this court	02	5	4	3	2	1
10	I used a Ministry of Justice website e.g. Jury Service, Family Justice, or Ministry of Justice	10	5	4	3	2	1
3	I used another internet site	03	5	4	3	2	1
4	I made a phone call to a Ministry of Justice 0800 number	04	5	4	3	2	1
11	I emailed the court and/or the Ministry of Justice	11	5	4	3	2	1
5	I contacted someone at the Citizen's Advice Bureau or Community Law Centre	05	5	4	3	2	1
6	I asked a professional (eg, a lawyer, police officer, probation staff, someone else in the legal profession)	06	5	4	3	2	1
7	I asked a friend/family member/acquaintance	07	5	4	3	2	1
8	Other (please tell us)	08	5	4	3	2	1
9	NONE OF THESE	09	SKIP TO Q2f1				

**ASK ALL**

Now we have a couple of questions about court information in general. This includes information you can get before coming to the courthouse, or at the courthouse itself.

Q2g How easy or difficult do you think it is to obtain information about the services at the courts?

**SHOWCARD Q2g**

**INTERVIEWER: IS THAT VERY OR FAIRLY?**

Very easy	Fairly easy	Neither easy nor difficult	Fairly difficult	Very difficult	Don't know <i>[Do Not Read Out]</i>	Not applicable <i>[Do Not Read Out]</i>
5	4	3	2	1	6	7

Q2i In an ideal world, how would you like to interact with the Court, such as submitting documents and finding out about court hearing times?

**INTERVIEWER: CODE ALL MENTIONS**

**USE SHOWCARD Q2i**

Letter (by post)	01
Face to face at the court	02
Telephone call	03
Text message	04
Email	05
A secure website (online)	06
Using a smart phone app	07
Other (please tell us)	08
None of these <b>[DO NOT READ OUT]</b>	09
Don't know <b>[DO NOT READ OUT]</b>	99

ASK THOSE PARTICIPATING IN A CASE (CODES 1-3 @ Q1D OR Q1E)

Q2i Before today had the case you are involved with been adjourned, or postponed, at any point?

**INTERVIEWER IF NEEDED: WHEN A CASE IS ADJOURNED IT IS SUSPENDED INDEFINITELY OR UNTIL A LATER STATED TIME.**

Yes	01
No	02
Don't know <b>[DO NOT READ OUT]</b>	99

ASK THOSE WHOSE CASE WAS ADJOURNED (CODE 1 @ Q2I)

Q2j Do you understand the reason why it was adjourned or postponed?

Yes	01
No	02
Don't know <b>[DO NOT READ OUT]</b>	99

**SECTION 3: WAY FINDING AND STAFF CONTACT**

Q3a Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with each of the following aspects of accessibility?

**SHOWCARD Q3a**

**INTERVIEWER: IS THAT VERY OR FAIRLY?**

		Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Don't know [Do Not Read Out]	Not applicable [Do Not Read Out]
2	The time the court hearings start and finish	5	4	3	2	1	6	7
3	Easily identifiable staff available to deal with queries.	5	4	3	2	1	6	7

Q3k How convenient or inconvenient would you find it to attend hearings in the **evening** (between 5 and 8pm)? Please answer using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is very inconvenient and 5 is very convenient.

**SHOWCARD Q3k**

Very convenient = 5	4	3	2	Very inconvenient = 1	Don't know [Do Not Read Out]
5	4	3	2	1	6

Q3n Would you prefer to have completed your visit today remotely (via videocall) or in person?

Prefer to attend remotely (via videocall)	01
No preference	02
Prefer to attend in person	03
Don't know <b>[DO NOT READ OUT]</b>	99

Q3b How easy or difficult was it to find where to go in the courthouse today?

**SHOWCARD Q3b**

Very easy	Fairly easy	Neither easy nor difficult	Fairly difficult	Very difficult	Don't know [Do Not Read Out]
5	4	3	2	1	6

Q3c How did you find your way to where you needed to go?

**INTERVIEWER: CODE ALL MENTIONS  
SHOWCARD Q3c**

Asked someone	01
Looked at a notice board	02
Followed signs	03
Walked around until I found where I needed to go	04
Previously visited/familiar with the building	05
Followed information provided to me before I came	06
Escorted/shown around by someone (including staff, or a friend or family member)	07
Other (please tell us)	08
Don't know / can't remember <i>[DO NOT READ OUT]</i>	99

Q3d Did you have difficulty getting information or assistance when you were in the courthouse today?

Yes	1	ASK Q3e
No	2	SKIP TO Q3f
Don't know/can't remember <i>[DO NOT READ OUT]</i>	3	SKIP TO Q3f
Not applicable <i>[DO NOT READ OUT]</i>	4	SKIP TO Q3f

**ASK IF Q3d = YES (CODE 1). OTHERWISE SKIP TO Q3f**

Q3e What information or assistance were you looking for?

**INTERVIEWER: CODE ALL MENTIONS  
SHOWCARD Q3e**

Information about where to go in court	01
Information about who I needed to see / report to	02
Information about the length of time I would have to wait	03
Information about how I had to do something	04
Legal advice / getting legal aid	05
Pay a fine or enquire about a fine	06
To submit a form or application	07
Help with papers that needed to be filed or signed / witnessed	08
Assistance from a Victim Adviser	09
Assistance with security or safety issues	10
To see a case officer / a case manager	11



Information about what happens next	12
Any other reasons (please tell us)	13
Don't know <b>[DO NOT READ OUT]</b>	99
Refused <b>[DO NOT READ OUT]</b>	98

**ASK ALL**

Q3f Did you have any contact with court staff today?

Yes	1	ASK Q3g
No	2	SKIP TO Q4a
Don't know/can't remember <b>[DO NOT READ OUT]</b>	3	SKIP TO Q4a

**ASK IF Q3f = YES (CODE 1). OTHERWISE SKIP TO Q4a**

Q3g Thinking about the Ministry of Justice court staff that you have met today, please tell me how much you agree or disagree with each statement? If you dealt with more than one staff member please give an overall rating.

**IF NECESSARY:** not including duty solicitors

**INTERVIEWER: SELECT ONE ANSWER PER STATEMENT ONLY.**

**INTERVIEWER: REMIND RESPONDENT DURING Q3g** 'Remember these questions are just about court staff not people like lawyers or judges'.

**SHOWCARD Q3g**

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know <b>[Do Not Read Out]</b>	N/A <b>[Do Not Read Out]</b>
2	Staff were helpful	5	4	3	2	1	6	7
3	Staff did what they said they would do	5	4	3	2	1	6	7
4	I was treated fairly	5	4	3	2	1	6	7
5	My individual circumstances were taken into account	5	4	3	2	1	6	7

Q3j How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the service provided by the court staff?

**SHOWCARD Q3j**

Very satisfied = 5	Fairly satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dis-satisfied	Fairly dis- satisfied	Very dis- satisfied	Don't know <i>[Do Not Read Out]</i>
5	4	3	2	1	6

**SECTION 4: WAIT TIME**

**ASK ALL**

Q4a Did you do any of these today?

**INTERVIEWER: CODE ONE ONLY**

**IF NECESSARY:** 'An information desk or booth is the same as a counter'.

**SHOWCARD Q4a**

Went to a counter	1	ASK Q4b
Took part in a hearing / going to take part in a hearing	2	SKIP TO Q4d
Both – went to a counter <b>AND</b> took part in a hearing	3	ASK Q4b
None of these	4	SKIP TO Q5a
Don't know <b>[DO NOT READ OUT]</b>	5	SKIP TO Q5a

**ASK IF Q4a = WENT TO A COUNTER OR BOTH (CODE 1 OR 3). OTHERWISE SKIP TO Q4d**

Q4b For how long did you have to wait at a counter?

**SHOWCARD Q4b**

I was served immediately	1
Up to 3 minutes	2
Longer than 3 minutes and up to 6 minutes	3
Longer than 6 minutes and up to 15 minutes	4
Longer than 15 minutes	5
Don't know <b>[DO NOT READ OUT]</b>	6

Q4c What did you go to the counter for?

**INTERVIEWER: CODE ALL MENTIONS  
SHOWCARD Q4c**

Information about where to go in court	01
Information about who I needed to see/report to	02
Information about the length of time I would have to wait	03
Information about how I had to do something	04
Legal advice/getting legal aid	05
Pay a fine or enquire about a fine	06
To collect/submit a form or application	07
Help with papers that needed to be filed or signed/witnessed	08
To get information about the family justice system	15
Assistance with security or safety issues	10
To see a case officer / case manager / victim advisor	11
To sign in with the duty solicitor	12
Information about what happens next	13
Any other reasons (please tell us)	14
Don't know <b>[DO NOT READ OUT]</b>	99
Refused <b>[DO NOT READ OUT]</b>	98

**ASK IF Q4a = TOOK PART IN A HEARING OR WENT TO A COUNTER AND TOOK PART IN A HEARING (CODE 2 OR 3).  
OTHERWISE SKIP TO Q5a**

Q4d For how long did you have to wait to take part in a hearing?

**SHOWCARD Q4d**

No wait, or a wait up to 5 minutes	1	SKIP TO Q5a
Longer than 5 minutes and up to 10 minutes	2	SKIP TO Q5a
Longer than 10 minutes and up to 20 minutes	3	SKIP TO Q5a
Longer than 20 minutes and up to 1 hour	4	SKIP TO Q5a
Longer than 1 hour and up to 3 hours	5	SKIP TO Q5a
Longer than 3 hours and up to 5 hours	6	SKIP TO Q5a
Longer than 5 hours	7	SKIP TO Q5a
I have not yet taken part in the hearing or case I am here for	8	ASK Q4e
Don't know <b>[DO NOT READ OUT]</b>	9	SKIP TO Q5a

Q4e How long have you been waiting so far?

**SHOWCARD Q4e**

Up to 5 minutes	1
Longer than 5 minutes and up to 10 minutes	2
Longer than 10 minutes and up to 20 minutes	3
Longer than 20 minutes and up to 1 hour	4
Longer than 1 hour and up to 3 hours	5
Longer than 3 hours and up to 5 hours	6
Longer than 5 hours	7
Don't know <i>[DO NOT READ OUT]</i>	9

**SECTION 5: FACILITIES**

**ASK ALL**

Q5a Which of the following facilities did you use while at the courthouse today?

**READ OUT LIST CHECKING FOR AN ANSWER AT EACH ROW**  
**INTERVIEWER: IF 'NONE OF THESE' CODE AND SKIP TO Q5c**  
**SHOWCARD Q5a**

Q5b And how would you rate the [...INTERVIEWER: ASK FOR EACH FACILITY MENTIONED AT Q5a...]?

**IF NECESSARY:** This is about the physical facilities, e.g. comfort and cleanliness

**INTERVIEWER: CODE RESPONSE FOR EACH MENTION AT Q5a**  
**SHOWCARD Q5b**

		Q5a: USED	Q5b					Don't know <i>[Do Not Read Out]</i>
			Very good	Fairly good	Adequate	Fairly poor	Very poor	
1	Court room / Hearing room	1	5	4	3	2	1	6
2	Waiting area/area outside court room	2	5	4	3	2	1	6
3	Jury assembly room	3	5	4	3	2	1	6
4	Jury deliberation room	4	5	4	3	2	1	6
5	Interview room	5	5	4	3	2	1	6
6	Counters	6	5	4	3	2	1	6
7	Court entrance	7	5	4	3	2	1	6
8	Toilets	8	5	4	3	2	1	6
9	NONE OF THESE	9	<b>SKIP TO Q5c</b>					

**ASK ALL**

Q5c Overall, how would you rate the **facilities** at this courthouse?

**SHOWCARD Q5c**

Very good	Fairly good	Adequate	Fairly poor	Very poor	Don't know <i>[Do Not Read Out]</i>
5	4	3	2	1	6

**SECTION 6: SAFETY**

Q6a Overall how safe or unsafe did you feel throughout your time in the courthouse today?

**SHOWCARD Q6a**

Very safe	5
Fairly safe	4
Neutral – neither safe nor unsafe	3
Fairly unsafe	2
Very unsafe	1
Don't know <i>[DO NOT READ OUT]</i>	6

**ASK Q6C IF FAIRLY UNSAFE OR VERY UNSAFE AT Q6A**

Q6c Why did you feel fairly or very unsafe?

**INTERVIEWER: CODE ALL MENTIONS**

**SHOWCARD Q6c**

Not enough security staff	01
Not many people around	02
Too many people around	03
The type of people that were around me	04
Lack of space/space was too small	05
Being near an ex-partner	06
Being near the accused	07
Hygiene/cleanliness of court or facilities	08
Other (please tell us)	09
Don't Know <i>[DO NOT READ OUT]</i>	99

Q6d Where did you see court security staff today?

**INTERVIEWER: CODE ALL MENTIONS**

**SHOWCARD Q6d**

Court room	01
Waiting area/area outside court room	02
Customer service areas	03
Court entrance	04
Outside the court building/area	05
Other (please tell us)	06
None of these	07
Don't know <i>[DO NOT READ OUT]</i>	09

**GOTO Q7A**

**GOTO Q7A**

**ASK IF CODES 1-6 AT Q6d**

Q6e How approachable were the court security staff you saw today? Please answer using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is very unapproachable and 5 is very approachable.

**SHOWCARD Q6e**

Very approachable = 5	4	3	2	Very unapproachable = 1	Don't know <i>[Do Not Read Out]</i>
5	4	3	2	1	6

**SECTION 7: EXPERIENCE OF COURT**

**ASK ALL THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN INSIDE THE COURT ROOM / HEARING ROOM (CODE 1 @ Q5A). OTHERWISE GO TO Q7A.**

Q7b We now have a few questions about your experience inside the court room or hearing room.

Firstly, how easy or difficult was it to understand what was happening in court?

**SHOWCARD Q7b**

Very easy	Fairly easy	Neither easy nor difficult	Fairly difficult	Very difficult	Don't know <i>[Do Not Read Out]</i>
5	4	3	2	1	6

Q7c How much do you agree or disagree the court officers, including the judge, understood your situation?

**SHOWCARD Q7c**

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know <i>[Do Not Read Out]</i>
5	4	3	2	1	6

Q7d Were you given the opportunity to speak in court?

Yes	1	ASK Q7e
No	2	SKIP TO Q7g
Don't know/can't remember <i>[DO NOT READ OUT]</i>	3	SKIP TO Q7g

**ASK IF GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK (CODE 1 @ Q7D). OTHERWISE GO TO Q7G**

Q7e Did anyone working for the court provide you with help in speaking in court?

This could include someone who explained to you what was going on, or who translated what was going on.

Yes	1	ASK Q7f
No	2	SKIP TO Q7g
Don't know/can't remember <i>[DO NOT READ OUT]</i>	3	SKIP TO Q7g

**ASK IF RECEIVED ASSISTANCE TO SPEAK (CODE 1 Q7E). OTHERWISE GO TO Q7G**

Q7f How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the help you received to speak in court?

**SHOWCARD Q7f**

Very satisfied = 5	Fairly satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dis-satisfied	Fairly dis- satisfied	Very dis- satisfied	Don't know <i>[Do Not Read Out]</i>
5	4	3	2	1	6

**ASK ALL OF THOSE PARTICIPATING IN A CASE (EXCLUDE SUPPORT PEOPLE AND WITNESSES) (CODE 1 @ Q1D OR Q1E)**

Q7j You indicated earlier that you were taking part in a case. Did you have access to a lawyer?

Yes	1	
No	2	
Don't know/can't remember <i>[DO NOT READ OUT]</i>	3	

**ASK ALL OF THOSE WHO DID NOT HAVE ACCESS TO A LAWYER (CODE 2 @ Q7J)**

Q7k For what reasons did you not have access to a lawyer?

**INTERVIEWER: CODE ALL MENTIONS**

**SHOWCARD Q7k**

Cannot afford one	01
Refused legal aid	02
Could not find a legal aid lawyer	03
I wanted to represent myself / did not need one	04
Other (please tell us)	05
None of these	06



Don't know <i>[DO NOT READ OUT]</i>	07
-------------------------------------	----

ASK ALL THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN INSIDE THE COURT ROOM / HEARING ROOM (CODE 1 @ Q5A). OTHERWISE GO TO Q7A.

Q7g How much do you agree or disagree that you understand what the next steps are in your case?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know [Do Not Read Out]
5	4	3	2	1	6

ASK ALL THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN INSIDE THE COURT ROOM / HEARING ROOM (CODE 1 @ Q5A). OTHERWISE GO TO Q7A.

Q7h Have you received any information on what the next steps in your case are?

Yes	1	
No	2	
Don't know/can't remember <i>[DO NOT READ OUT]</i>	3	

ASK ALL THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN INSIDE THE COURT ROOM / HEARING ROOM (CODE 1 @ Q5A). OTHERWISE GO TO Q7A.

Q7i Following your visit to the courtroom / hearing room has anyone referred to you to other services that could provide you with support?

Yes	1	
No	2	
Don't know/can't remember <i>[DO NOT READ OUT]</i>	3	

**SECTION 7A: OVERALL SATISFACTION**

ASK ALL

Q7a Please now think about your **entire** visit to the [INSERT COURT] today.

**Overall** how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the **services and facilities** provided?

SHOWCARD Q7a

Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Don't know [Do Not Read Out]
5	4	3	2	1	6

## SECTION 8: DEMOGRAPHICS

### ASK ALL

Q8a What is your gender?

#### SHOWCARD Q8a

Male	1
Female	2
Another gender (please tell us)	3

Q8b Which of the following do you have easy access to for your personal use?

#### INTERVIEWER: CODE ALL MENTIONS

#### SHOWCARD Q8b

Telephone (land line)	1
Smart phone that connects to the Internet	2
Other type of cell phone (normal cell phone)	3
Computer with broadband internet	4
Computer with dial up internet	5
Computer printer	6
Computer scanner	7
iPad / other computer tablet	8
None of these	9

Q8c Which ethnic group do you belong to? You can choose more than one group.

#### INTERVIEWER: CODE ALL MENTIONS

#### SHOWCARD Q8c

New Zealand European	01	
Māori	02	
Samoan	03	
Cook Island Māori	04	
Tongan	05	
Niuean	06	
Chinese	07	
Indian	08	
Other ethnic group	09	ASK Q8d
Don't know <i>[DO NOT READ OUT]</i>	99	

Refused <i>[DO NOT READ OUT]</i>	98	
----------------------------------	----	--

ASK Q8d IF Q8c = *OTHER ETHNIC GROUP (CODE 9)*. OTHERWISE SKIP TO Q8f

Q8d INTERVIEWER: DON'T ASK THIS QUESTION, ONLY RECORD ANSWER HERE IF VOLUNTEERED BY RESPONDENT AT Q8c – MULTICODING ALLOWED

Korean	01
Fijian Indian	02
Other Asian	03
Other European	04
Other group (please tell us)	05
Don't know <i>[DO NOT READ OUT]</i>	99
Refused <i>[DO NOT READ OUT]</i>	98

Q8f Do you require any of the following services?

INTERVIEWER: CODE ALL MENTIONS  
SHOWCARD Q8f

An interpreter	1
Induction loops or hearing loops (relay service)	2
Braille	3
Assistance to get around the courthouse (e.g., wheelchair, opening doors, etc)	4
Language line	6
I don't require any of these services	5

Q8g Which of the options on the showcard best describes your current employment status?

CODE ONE ANSWER ONLY  
IF NECESSARY: Which takes up most of your time?  
SHOWCARD Q8g

Currently in paid employment or self-employed	01
Retired	02
Home duties	03
Unemployed, receiving benefit	04
Unemployed, not receiving benefit	05
Receiving Supported Living Payment	06
Receiving other benefit	07
Student	08
Other (please tell us)	09
Don't know <i>[DO NOT READ OUT]</i>	99

Refused <i>[DO NOT READ OUT]</i>	98
----------------------------------	----

Q8h Which of these groups does your annual household income fall into? Please include all earnings including employment, money from the government, and income from other sources. Please tell us the rough figure before tax.

**IF NECESSARY: 'Before tax is gross'**  
**SHOWCARD Q8h**

\$0 / none / loss	01
\$1 - \$5,000	02
\$5,001 - \$10,000	03
\$10,001 - \$15,000	04
\$15,001 - \$20,000	05
\$20,001 - \$25,000	06
\$25,001 - \$30,000	07
\$30,001 - \$35,000	08
\$35,001 - \$40,000	09
\$40,001 - \$50,000	10
\$50,001 - \$60,000	11
\$60,001 - \$70,000	12
\$70,001 - \$100,000	13
\$100,001 - \$150,000	14
More than \$150,000	15
Don't know <i>[DO NOT READ OUT]</i>	99
Refused <i>[DO NOT READ OUT]</i>	98

Q8i Is there anything else you would like to tell the Ministry of Justice about the services and facilities at this court house?

**PLEASE TYPE IN**

Don't know <i>[DO NOT READ OUT]</i>	99	
Refused <i>[DO NOT READ OUT]</i>	98	
NO COMMENTS BOX HERE		

That is the end of the survey. As part of our quality control a percentage of our work is checked, so may I please have your name and phone number (a first name will do) for audit purposes?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**CLOSE:** Thanks very much for your time.  
 My name is ... from Kantar Public. If you have any questions at all about this research please feel free to contact the research team at Kantar Public on 0508 265 465.