

PUBLIC SECTOR

# REPUTATION INDEX 2020



The Public Sector Reputation Index began in 2016 in response to demand from our public sector clients for rigorous, independent benchmarks of their reputation.

We took our globally validated reputation measurement framework, RepZ, and customised it to the needs of the New Zealand public sector.

## In 2020 we:

- Surveyed 2,750 New Zealanders
- 10-25 March 2020 (lockdown started on 25 March)
- Measured the reputation of 54 public sector agencies



# Uses our globally validated RepZ framework, customised to the New Zealand public sector, with reputation measured across four pillars.



## TRUST

- Listens to the public's point of view
- Uses taxpayer money responsibly
- Is trustworthy
- Can be relied upon to protect individuals' personal information



## SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

- Behaves in a responsible way towards the environment
- Is a positive influence on society
- Has a positive impact on people's mental and physical wellbeing



## LEADERSHIP


- Is a forward looking organisation
- Contributes to economic growth
- Is easy to deal with in a digital environment
- Is a successful and well-run organisation\*
- Prepares New Zealanders for the future challenges that we face as a nation\*



## FAIRNESS

- Treats their employees well
- Deals fairly with people regardless of their background or role
- Works positively with Māori to improve Māori wellbeing\*
- Works positively with Pacific peoples to improve Pacific wellbeing\*



A woman with long dark hair, wearing a black knit beanie with a pom-pom, a light grey coat over a black top, and a heart-shaped pendant necklace, is smiling and looking to her right. She is holding a black and white coffee cup in her left hand and a smartphone in her right hand. The background is a blurred city street with buildings and a tower in the distance.

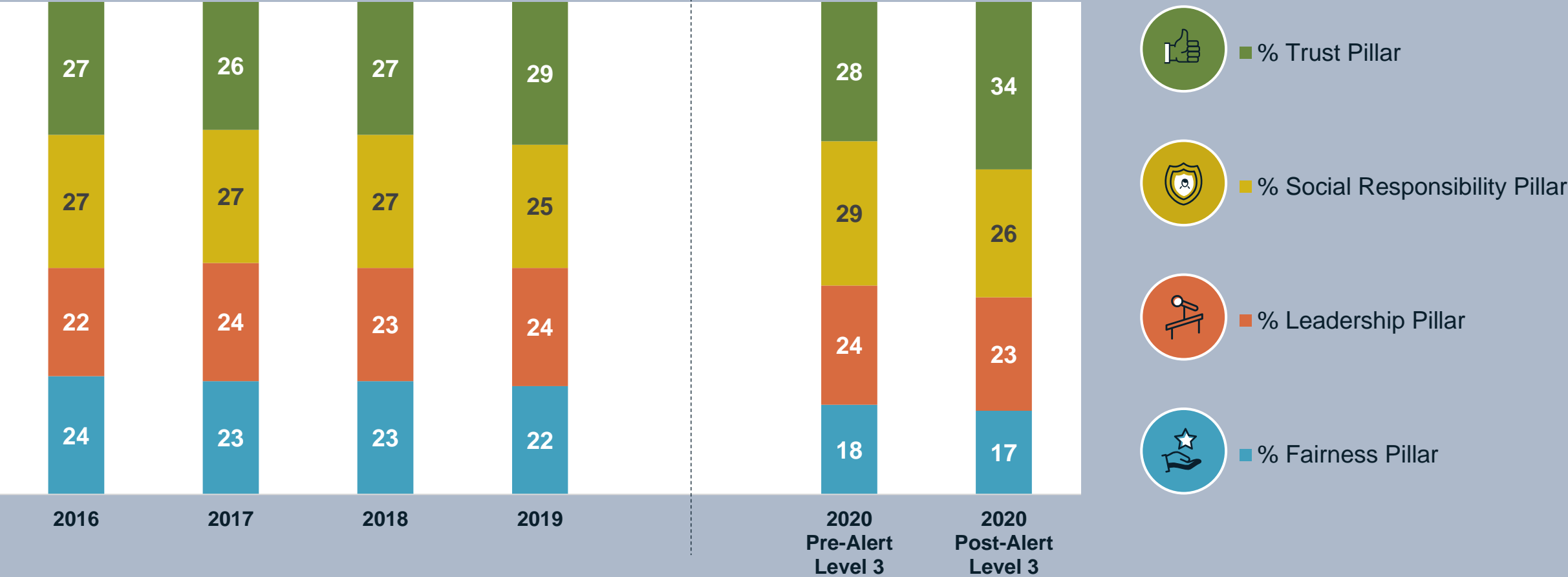
**What general  
reputation  
trends are we  
seeing?**

**In 2020, social responsibility had joined trust as a key driver of agency reputation, reflecting public focus on the environment and wellbeing.**



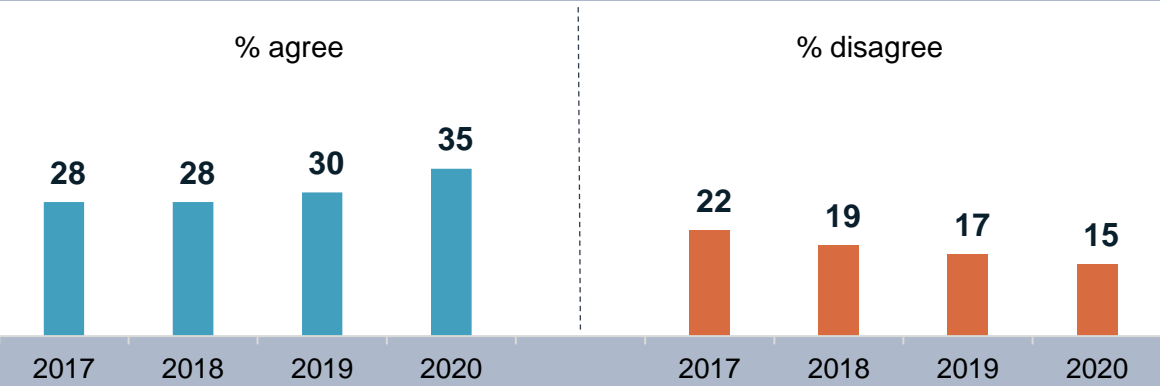
# However, in a COVID-19 environment trust becomes even more important.

## PILLAR IMPACT ON AGENCY REPUTATION

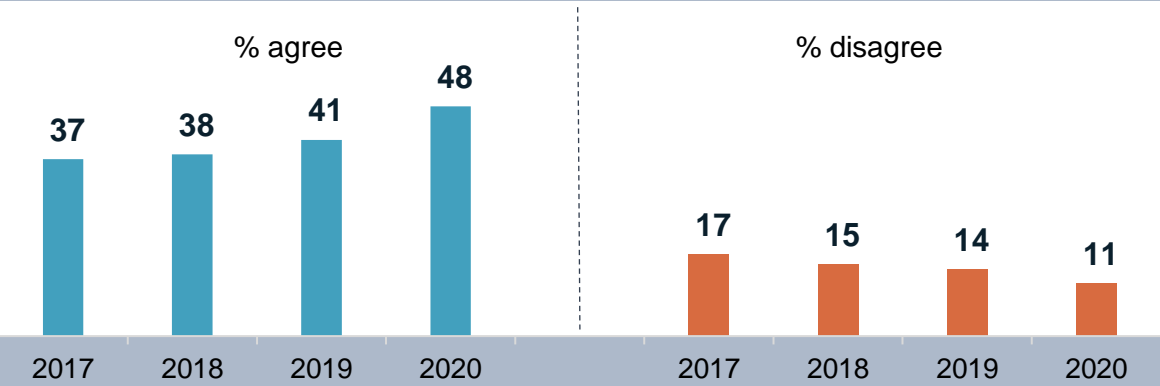


# In the lead in to COVID-19 Alert Level 4, New Zealand’s public sector agencies were favourably positioned with unprecedented levels of **trust**.

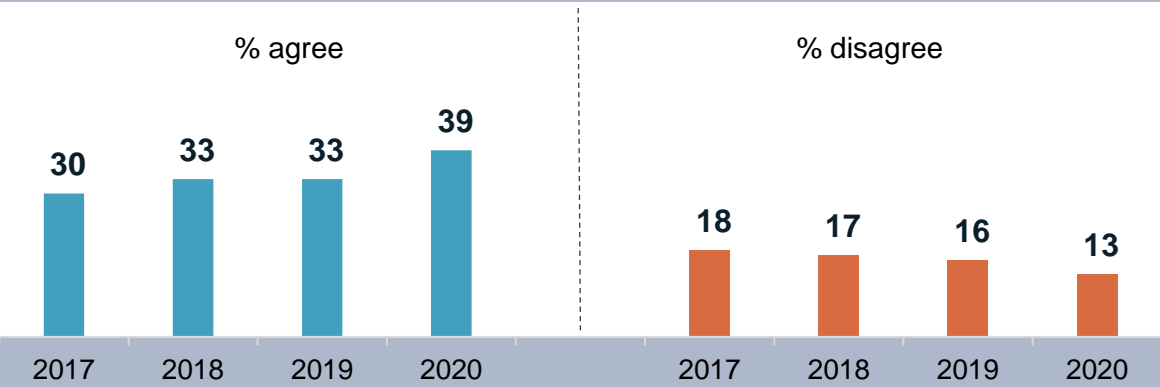
Listens to the public’s point of view



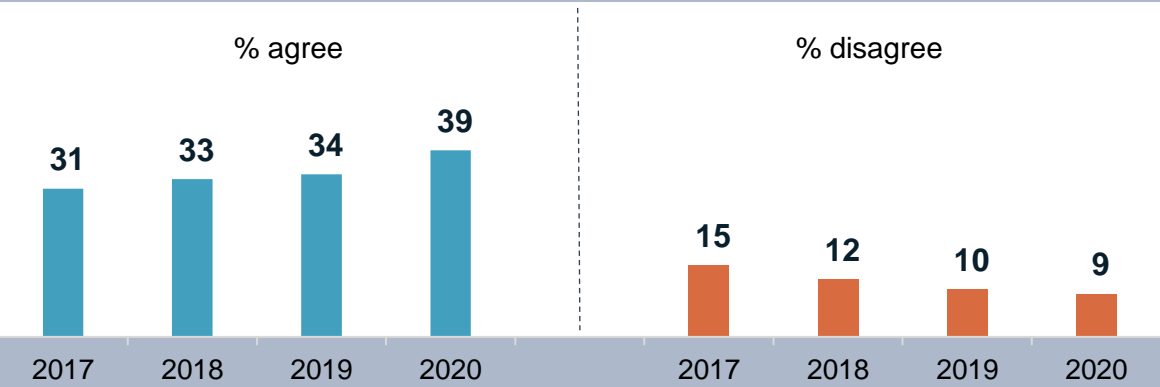
Is trustworthy



Uses taxpayer money responsibly



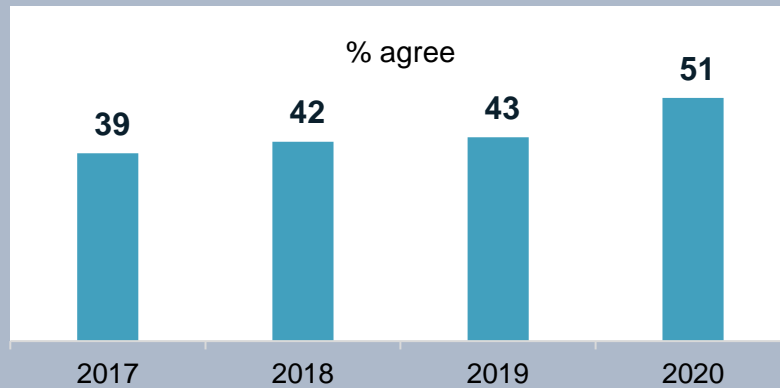
Can be relied upon to protect individuals’ personal information



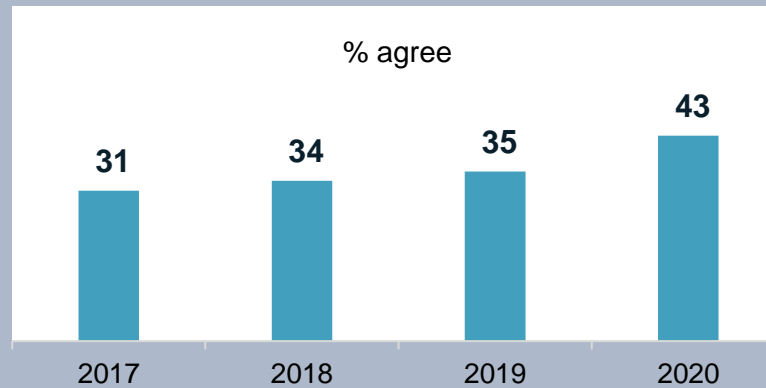
Footnote: average trust attribute scores for the 35 agencies who have been measured since 2017

# New Zealanders' perceptions of the public sector have notably improved across the other pillars. COVID has accelerated what was a more gradual trend in recent years.

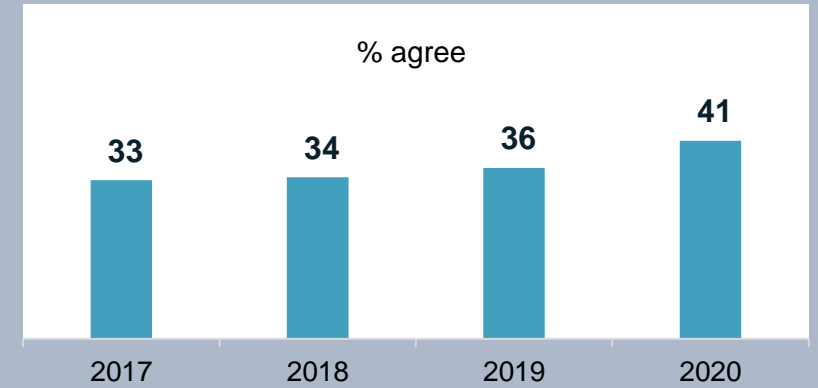
Is a positive influence on society



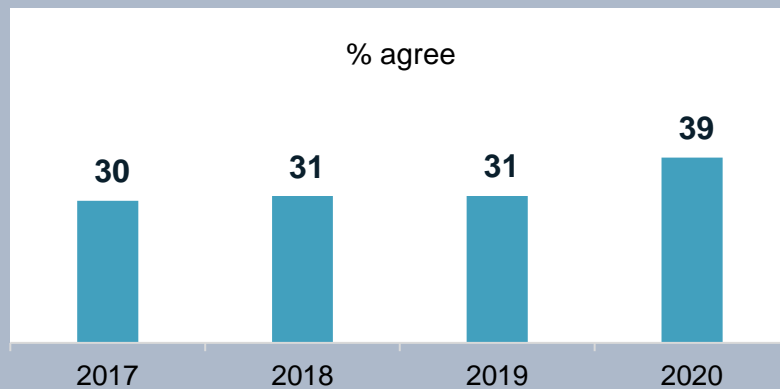
Contributes to economic growth



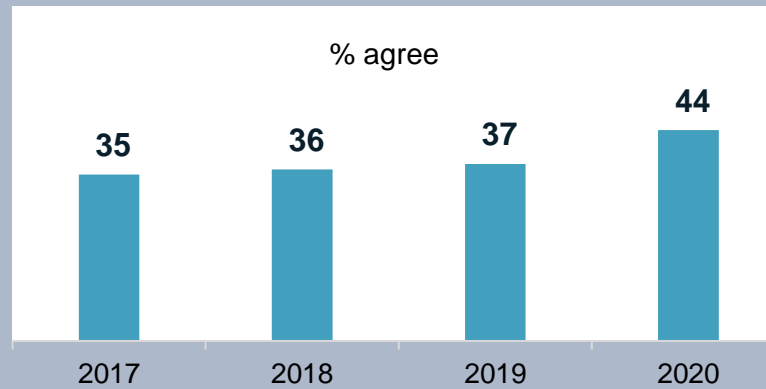
Deals fairly with people regardless of background or role



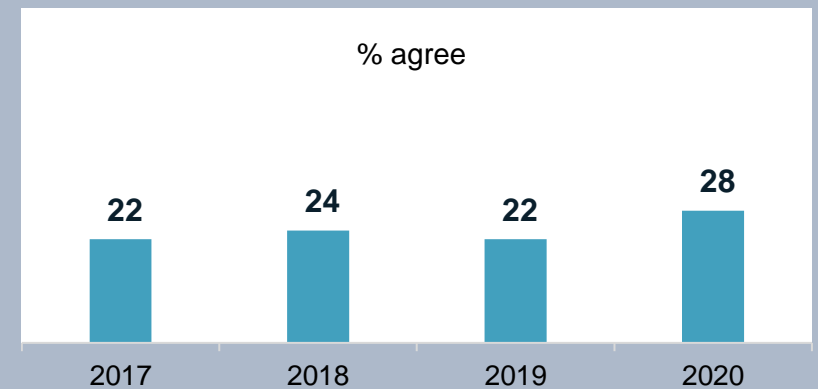
Behaves in a responsible way towards the environment



Is a forward looking organisation



Treats their employees well





# OVERALL REPUTATION

REPZ TOP 10

2020

- Fire and Emergency remains the benchmark agency when it comes to reputation.
- The Defence Force jumps from 10<sup>th</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> position.
- The Customs Service also moves up from 9<sup>th</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup>.

120



112



111



111



110



109



109



108



107



107



# TOP 5

ON EACH PILLAR

Highest scoring agencies on each of the four pillars



## TRUST



## SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



## LEADERSHIP



## FAIRNESS

1



2



3



4



5



PUBLIC SECTOR

REPUTATION  
INDEX 2020

A photograph of two women in a modern, brightly lit interior. The woman in the foreground, on the left, is out of focus, wearing a teal top and smiling. The woman in the background, on the right, is in focus, wearing a yellow floral dress, and is smiling while looking at a tablet computer she is holding. She is also holding a white card. The background features a light-colored wall and a modern lamp with a green shade.

# Customer Experience



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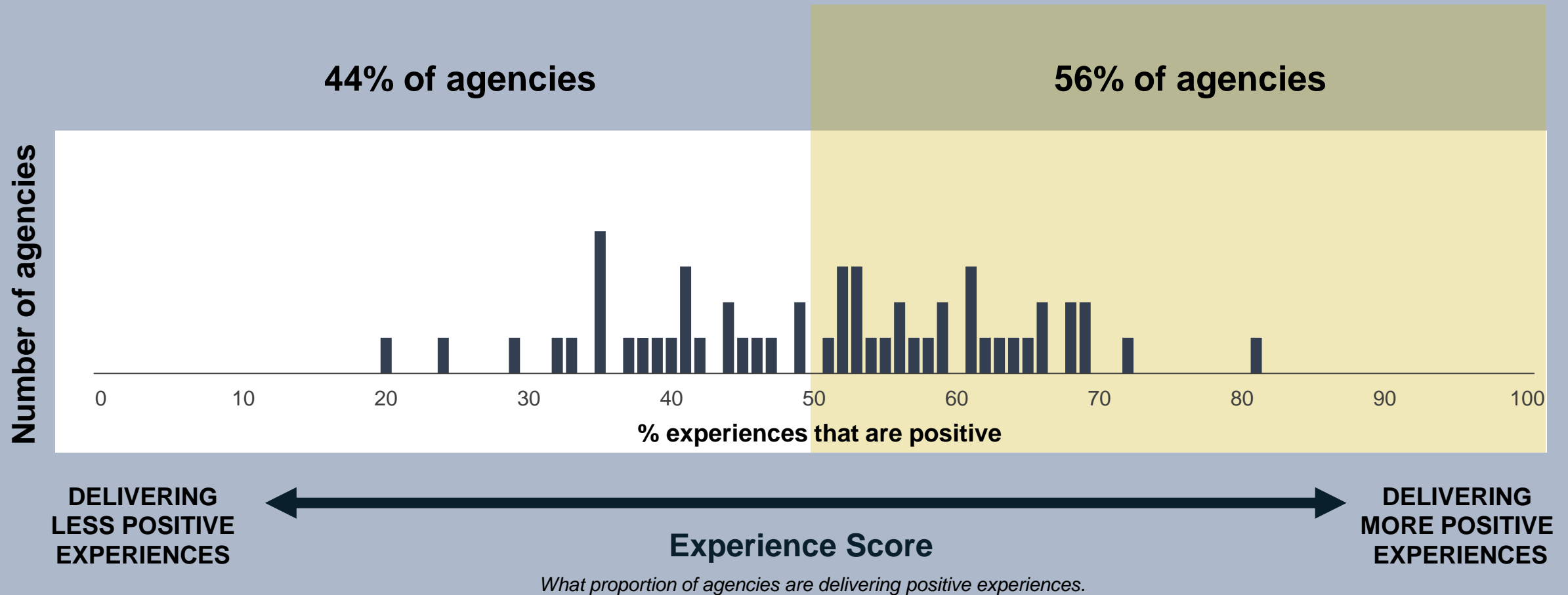
# Experiences matter



In 2019, we showed that the experience delivered by an agency to the public can have a significant impact on the proportion of advocates and critics.

Good experiences stick in people's memories and bad experiences are particularly damaging initially but linger for up to ten years.

The experience delivered by an agency to the public can have a significant impact on the proportion of advocates and critics. Yet many are still leaving a poor impression.





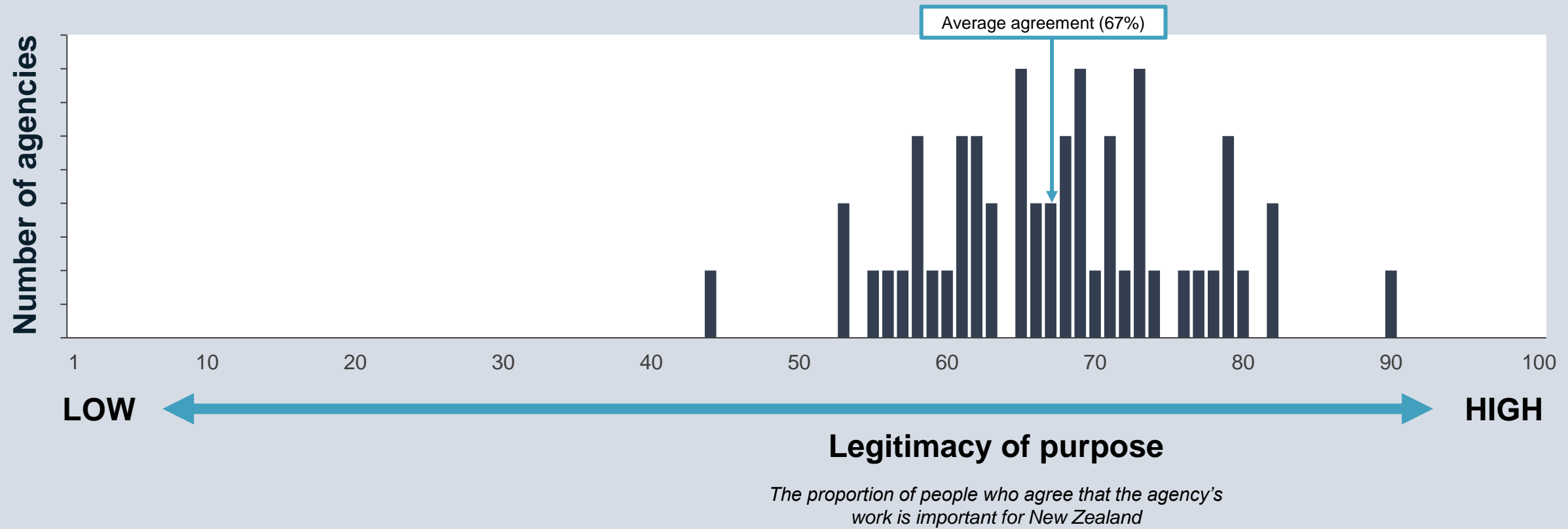
**Does public  
support for an  
agency's purpose  
impact their  
reputation level?**



Most agencies have majority support for their purpose, with ten agencies having support of at least 75% of adult New Zealanders.

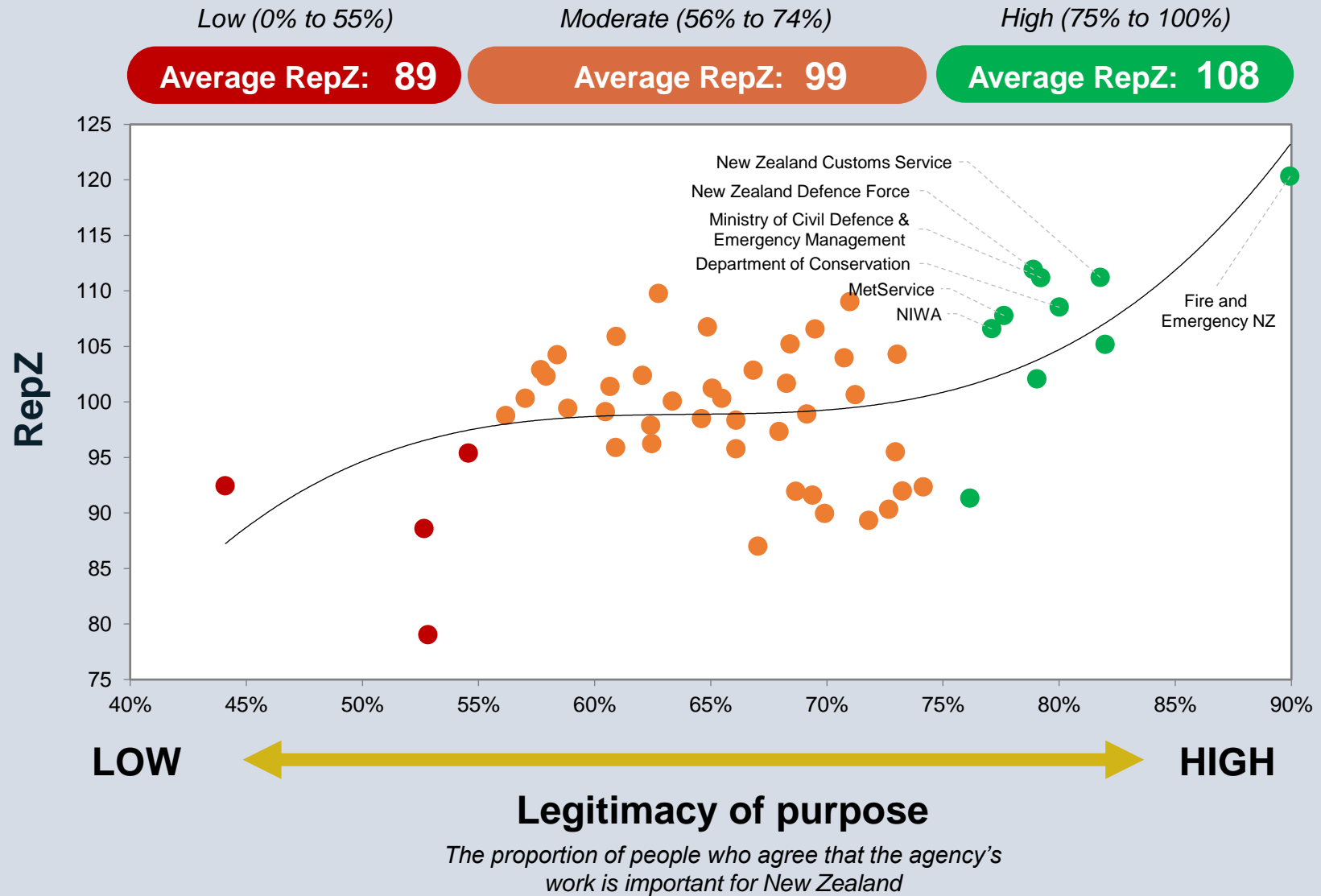
## New question in 2020:

How much do you agree or disagree that what the agency does is important for New Zealand?



Agencies which have clearly established their purpose in the eyes of the public are at an advantage.

However, it is still possible for agencies with moderate legitimacy of purpose to deliver a strong reputation performance, if they deliver on the four pillars.

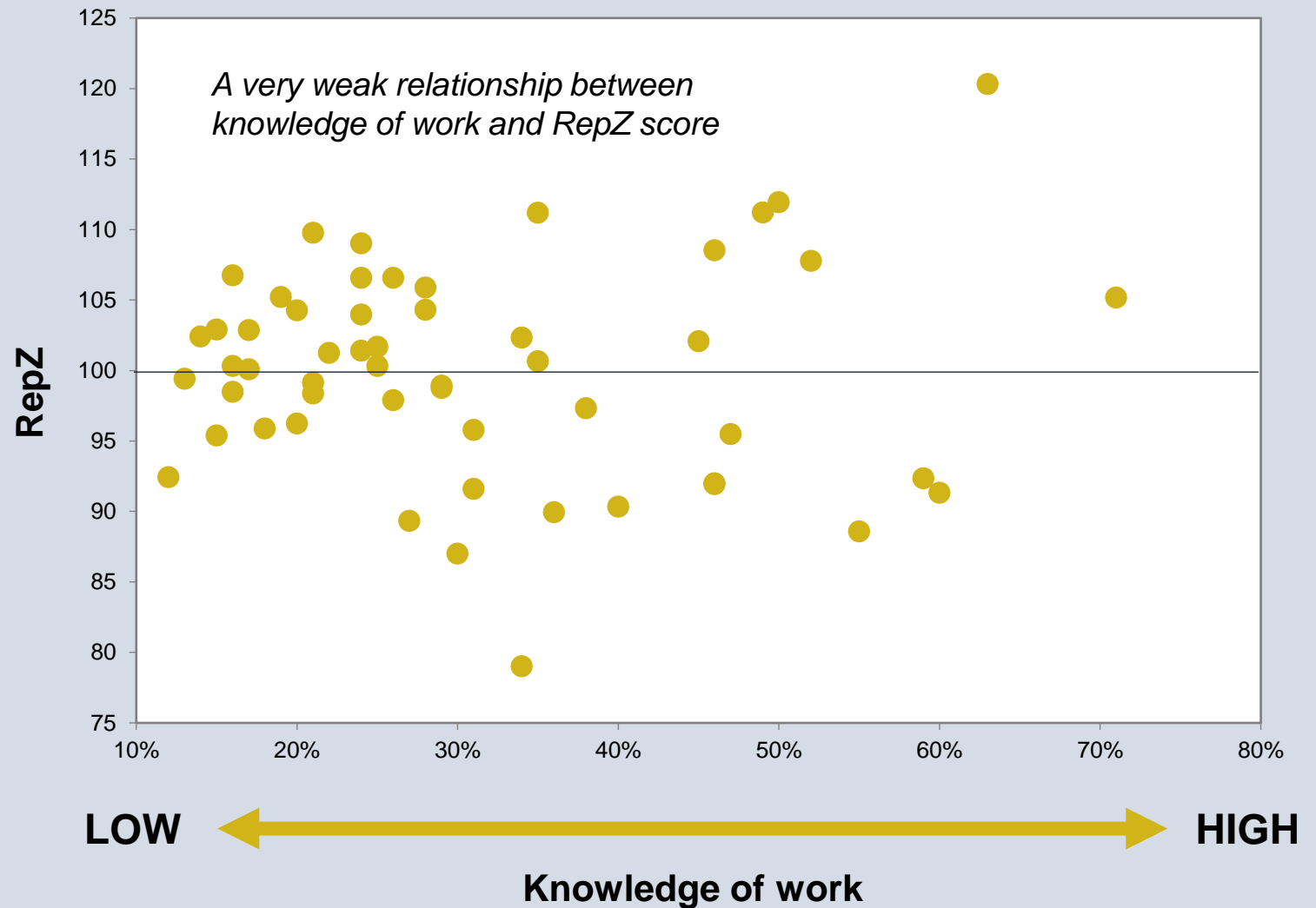


The public's impression of the importance of an agency's work is more important than the extent of their knowledge of what the agency does.

## New question in 2020:

Which of the following best describes what you know about each of the organisations below in terms of who they are and what they do?

- I've got a good understanding of what they do
- I've got a basic idea of what they do
- I have just seen or heard the name before



The proportion of people who have a “good understanding” of what the agency does



A photograph of a man and a woman in a kitchen. The woman, on the left, has long dark hair with a braid and is smiling while holding a red and white patterned mug. The man, on the right, has a beard and is also smiling, looking down at a piece of food he is holding. A green semi-transparent box is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the title text.

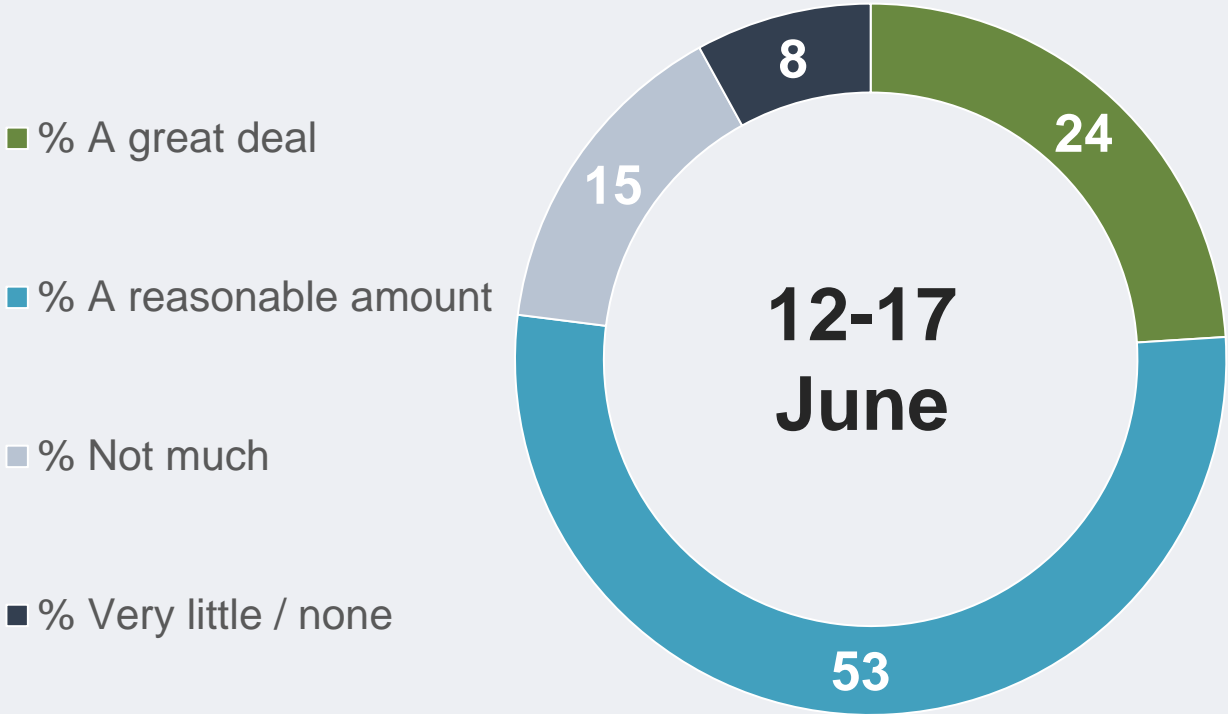
# How has **COVID** impacted reputation?



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# New Zealand's leaders have largely had a 'positive crisis', and their response has helped lift trust in government

How much trust do you have in the Government to deal successfully with national problems?



**'A great deal' or 'a reasonable amount' of trust in the Government:**

**59%**

Feb 2020

**86%**

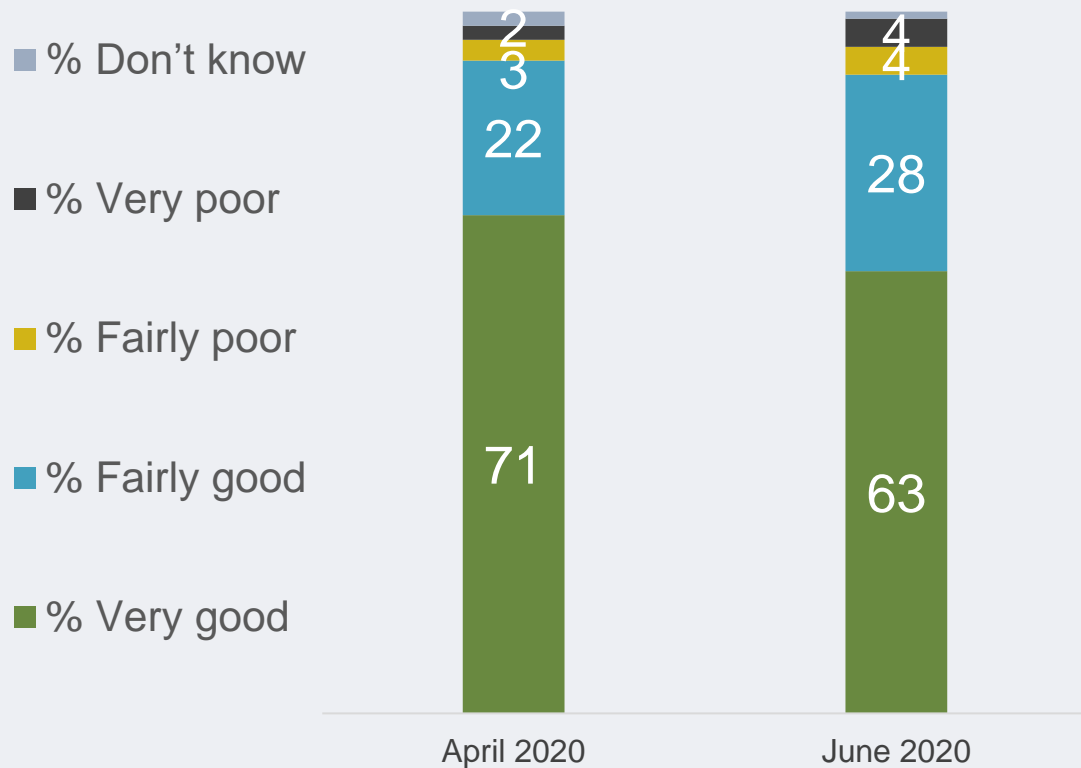
Apr 2020

**77%**

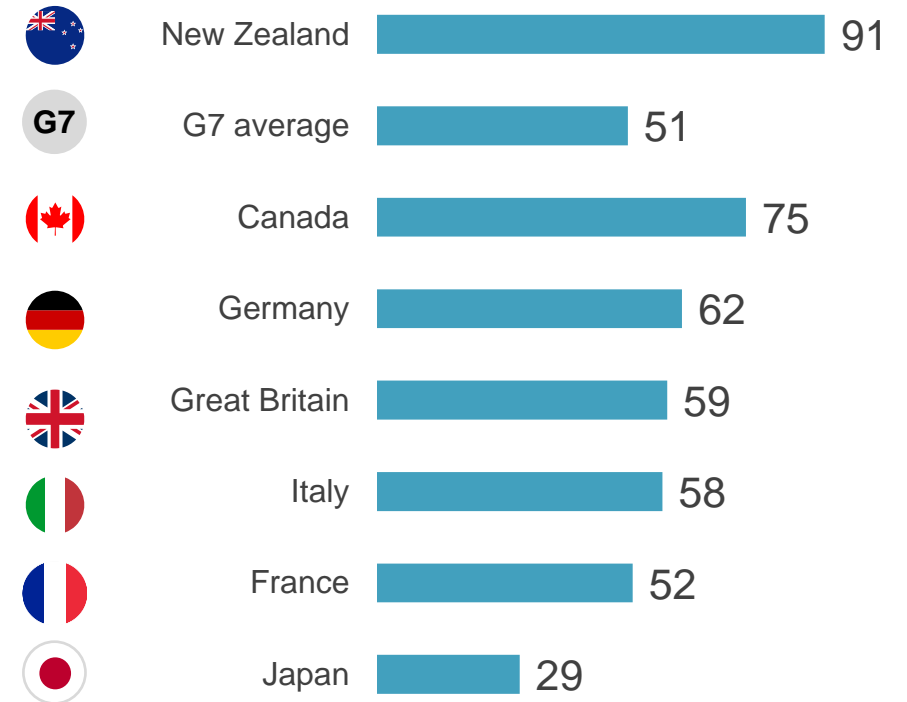
Jun 2020

# New Zealand has built trust through its communications. The Government's communications have been rated more highly than the G7.

How would you rate [YOUR COUNTRY'S] Government on how it is communicating information about the coronavirus outbreak?



## % fairly or very good





# Examples of what people said **they liked** about the **communication**

“

*I love the updates and feel like we have been told all we need to know and have had a great deal of information passed along.*

*The people fronting the public are presenting information in plain language which is shown in graphics. The message is consistently projected at the same time everyday in the same format. Questions are answered by the PM, Jacinda Ardern, or Dr Bloomfield to the best of what information they have. If they don't have that info they find out and share later. Other front people follow the same format - constant clarity, NO BS!*

*Daily updates that I can watch and interpret in my own way without a media slant.*

*It is always clear and concise and in language which is understandable without trying to over complicate things.*

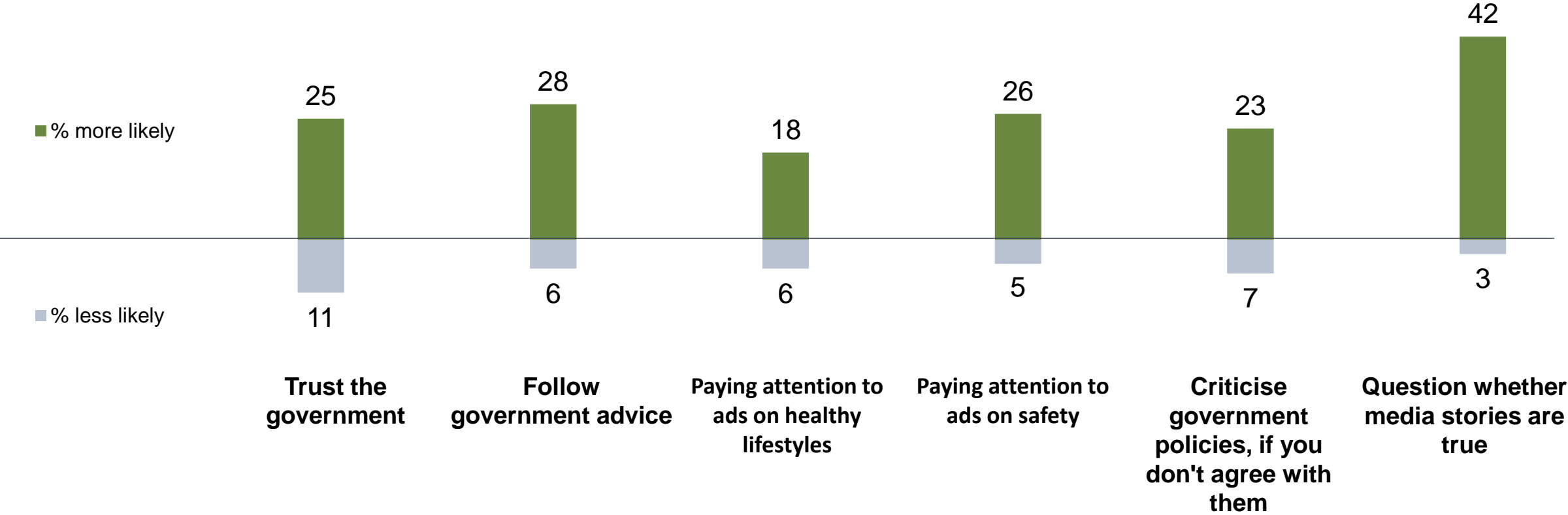
*The consistency with which they are giving information - on a daily basis. They don't try to tell us they are very good, just human, and they admit to mistakes which is rare in a government. The way they have tackled Covid-19 which has made us Covid-19 free for the present and have admitted it is probably going to come back.*

”



# New Zealanders are more open to hearing messages from the Government, but are also more likely to critically evaluate what they're hearing

Please indicate whether you are more likely to do each in the future than you were before the coronavirus outbreak?







# Key take-outs



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# KEY TAKE OUTS

- 1 Improved perceptions of the public sector provided a strong platform for the Government's COVID-19 response
- 2 Building legitimacy of purpose is essential
- 3 Delivering outstanding experiences will become even more critical in COVID-19 times



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