

INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION NEW ZEALAND

WORKING IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE SURVEY 2022

FINAL REPORT
APRIL 2023



Institute of
Public Administration
New Zealand

BusinessDesk.



ALLEN + CLARKE

PERCEPTIVE

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BACKGROUND

The Institute of Public Administration New Zealand (IPANZ) teamed up with news agency BusinessDesk to undertake the Working in the Public Service Survey 2022 (the survey). Perceptive, a market research firm, conducted the survey. This survey was part of BusinessDesk's public sector project, which was established with taxpayer support from NZ on Air's Public Interest Journalism Fund.

Objective

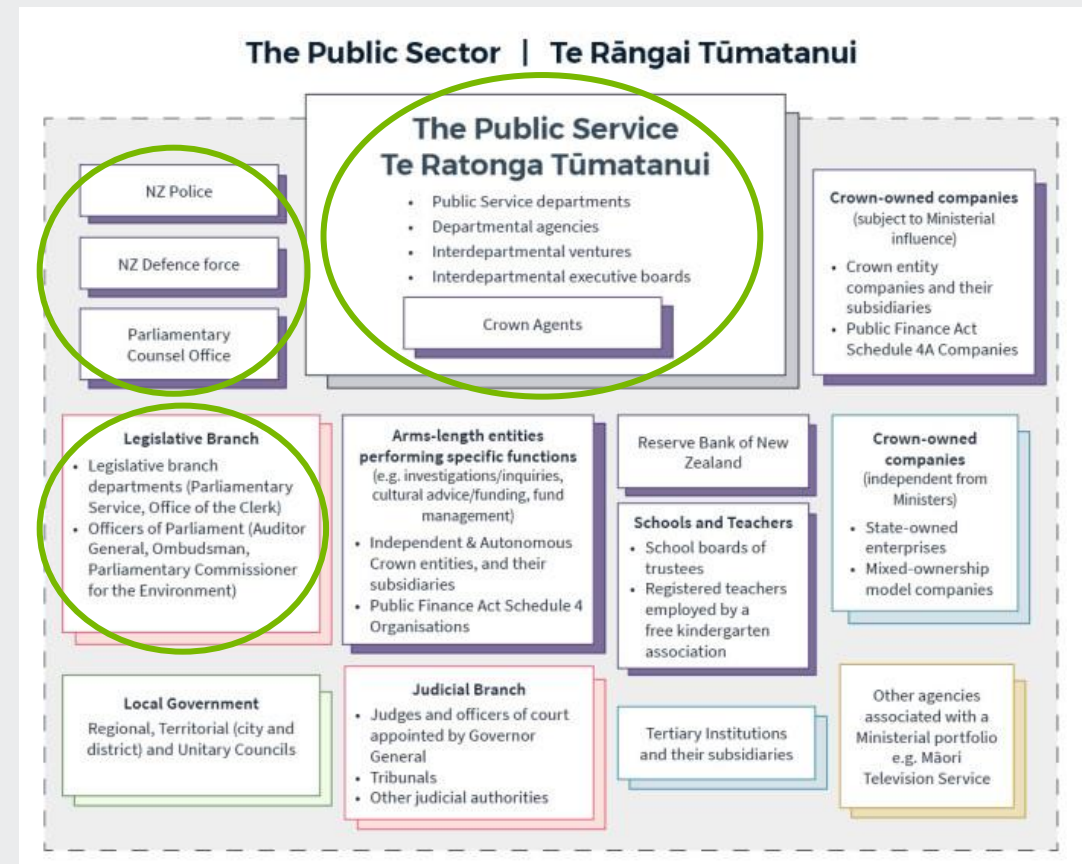
- + The descriptive survey provided an independent picture of working in central government, supplying data about how public service principles are put into practice and aspects of the workplace.

What the survey was about

- + The survey provided an overview of working in central government and employees' perceptions in order to supply data about:
 - + Public Service principles including political neutrality, free and frank advice, merit-based appointment, open government and stewardship.
 - + Aspects of the workplace including bullying and harassment, satisfaction with work-life balance, workplace relationships, and level of workplace stress were also explored.

Target respondents

- + The survey targeted employees of core central government organisations.
- + These are indicated in the diagram on the right (The Public Sector | Te Rāngai Tūmatanui).

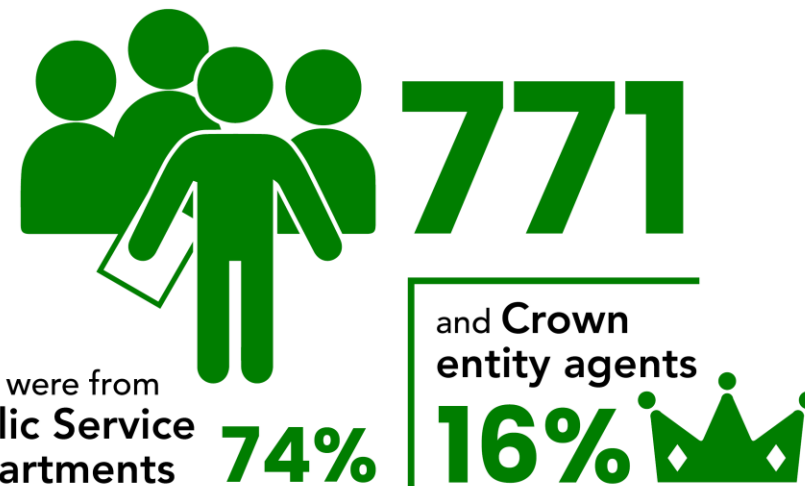


EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An overview of the 'Working in the Public Service' survey.

Survey respondents

This report is based on the perceptions of 771 public servants who responded to the survey.



Public service principles

- **Political neutrality:** public servants report that they have a strong understanding of what it means to be a politically neutral public servant.
- **Free and frank advice:** a large majority of public servants believe that free and frank advice is modelled by leaders.
- **Merit-based appointments:** most believe that people get jobs and promotions based on merit.
- **Open government:** respondents were evenly split about whether their organisation tends to hide or make a problem or failure look better than it is.
- **Stewardship:** respondents are relatively split on whether they believe they can usually devote enough time to longer-term matters rather than just short-term issues.

Aspects of the workplace

Working relationships with colleagues and direct managers were reported to generally be **very positive**.

22% reported having been personally **bullied or harassed in their workplace** in the past 12 months and out of these most did not report it.



24% of respondents indicated that in the past 12 months, they have personally witnessed someone working for their agency behaving in a way that they thought was a **breach of the code of conduct**.

OVERVIEW OF METHODOLOGY

INITIAL OUTREACH

In September 2022, an invitation to complete the online survey on an anonymised basis was emailed to central government employees who were in the BusinessDesk and IPANZ databases.

Privacy Measure: The questionnaires were not linked to individual email addresses in the dataset.

FOLLOW UP

Recipients were invited to complete the survey and to pass on the invitation to colleagues who work in central government.

Two reminder emails were sent over the following three weeks.

Total sample size: ~7,351*

TWO-PHASED ANALYSIS

Quantitative analysis: datasets showing the quantification of survey results and cross-tabulation datasets were analysed.

Qualitative analysis: the two open-text question responses were themed and quotes selected to illustrate common themes.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Comparative analysis was undertaken with past surveys.

Disclaimer: There was limited comparative analysis due to the lack of directly comparable data available.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

KEY LIMITATIONS AND CAVEATS

Not a representative sample

The sampling method did not include demographic, or other, weighting of survey respondents relative to the total number and proportions of public service employees (approx. 60,000 people). As a result, this is not a representative sample.

Low survey response

The survey was directly sent to 7,351 people via IPANZ and BusinessDesk's mailing lists. The total sample size is 771 people (10.5%). However, note that the survey was also posted on a public webpage on BusinessDesk's website, so the true response rate is unable to be determined. Given the small sample size, results should be interpreted as descriptive and indicative rather than definitive.

Rounding of decimal points

Due to rounding, some total percentages may add to slightly more or less than 100%.

Lack of comparative data

This survey was independent of previous surveys. Some research questions were based on previous work by academic researchers and agencies; data from these earlier survey questions were compared to identify trends. The validity of previous surveys was out of scope for this work.

The vast majority (74%) of responses were from people working in public service departments. Accordingly, we refer to respondents as public servants even though a small number of respondents worked in Offices of Parliament or departments of state outside the public service.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Terms of Reference

Comparing results over time

- + Only applicable where questions are similar and can be directly compared.
- + Previous studies and surveys used for analysis include the below:
 - + **Eichbaum, C. & Shaw, R.**
 - + Surveys conducted in **2005** and **2017** on public servants' perceptions of political advisers.
 - + **Te Kawa Mataaho | Public Service Commission (2021)** Te Taunaki Public Service Census
 - + **State Services Commission (2013)** Integrity and Conduct Survey
 - + **Statistics NZ (2018)** Survey of Working Life.
- + It's important to note that these comparator studies were conducted with **different methodologies and sample sizes**, and any comparisons should be read with this in mind.



For further information on the comparison studies, please see:

- Eichbaum, Chris & Shaw, Richard (2006). Enemy or Ally? Senior Officials' Perceptions of Ministerial Advisors before and after MMP, *Political Science*, 58:1, 3-22.
- Shaw, Richard & Eichbaum, Chris (2019). Still friends? Revisiting New Zealand public servants' perceptions of ministerial advisers, *Political Science*, 71:2, 123-139.

RESPONSE TO THE SURVEY



771 respondents
completed the survey

Most were from
Public Service
departments

74%

and Crown
entity agents

16%



Other respondents were
from Department
Agencies

2%

1%

Non-Public
Service
Departments

3%



District
Health
Boards

2%

Offices of
Parliament



and
Other

2%

Nature of respondents' positions:

Tier 1 or Tier 2

2%

i.e. Chief Executive
or first report to the
Chief Executive

Tier 3

11%

i.e. report to Chief
Executive through
a manager

Tier 4

25%

i.e. two managers
between them and
the Chief Executive

other: **6%**

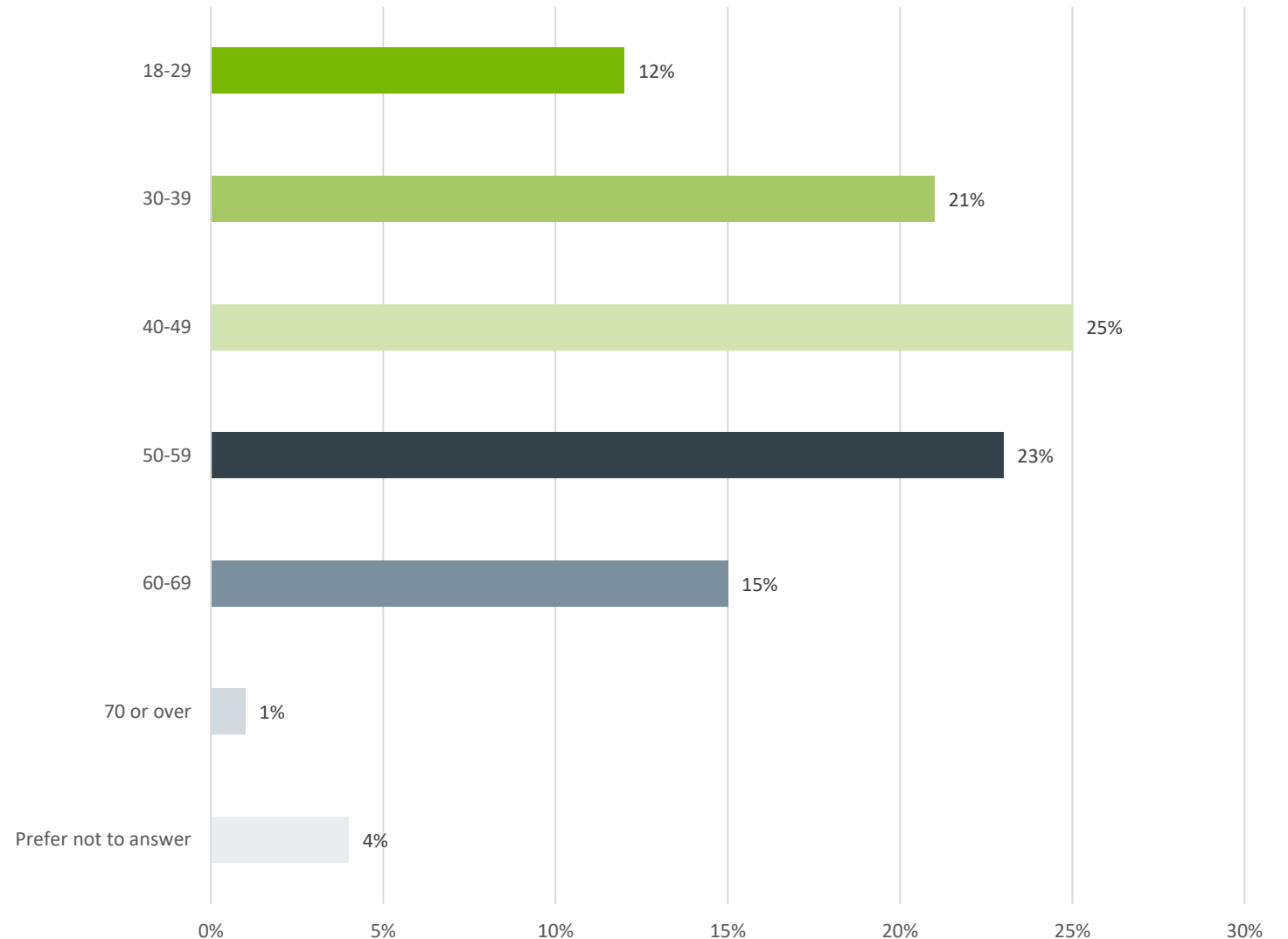
Tier 5 & below

56%

i.e. three or more
managers between them
and the Chief Executive

DEMOGRAPHICS

Age of respondents



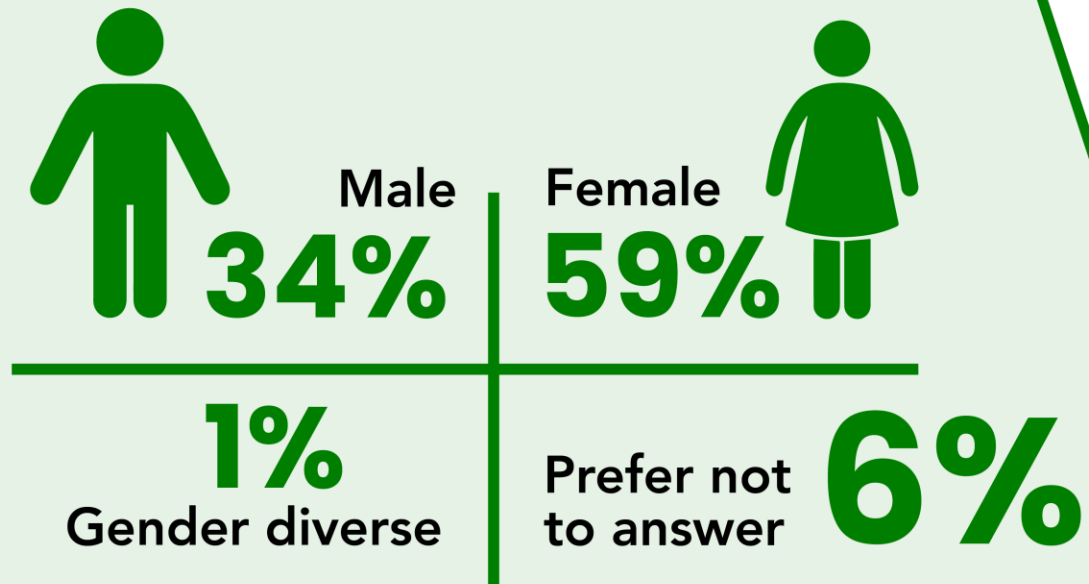
DEMOGRAPHICS

Ethnic groups of respondents to the BusinessDesk/IPANZ survey, compared with demographics of the public service as recorded in the 2021 Te Taunaki Public Service Census.

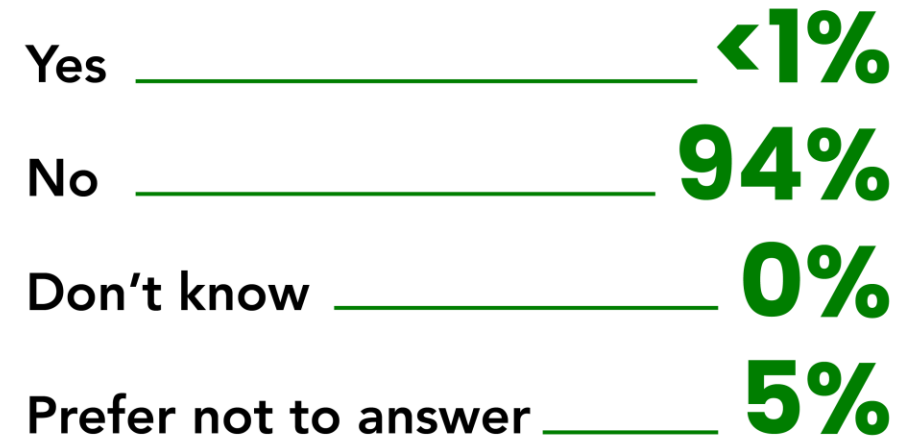
		BusinessDesk/IPANZ Survey 2022	Te Taunaki Public Service Census 2021
New Zealand European / Pākehā		73%	66.1%
Other European		9%	-
NZ Māori		9%	16.4%
Pacific Peoples	Samoan	1%	10.2%
	Cook Island Māori	1%	
	Tongan	<1%	
	Niuean	<1%	
	Tokelauan	<1%	
	Fijian	<1%	
	Other Pacific Island	<1%	
Chinese		2%	12%
Indian		2%	
Other Asian		3%	
MELAA (Middle Eastern, Latin American and African)	Middle Eastern	<1%	1.8%
	Latin American	1%	
	African	1%	
Other, please specify		4%	6.3%
Prefer not to answer		7%	-

DEMOGRAPHICS

Gender of respondents



Whether the respondent is transgender



LENGTH OF SERVICE

Most respondents to the survey (65%) have been employed in their agency for more than 3 years.

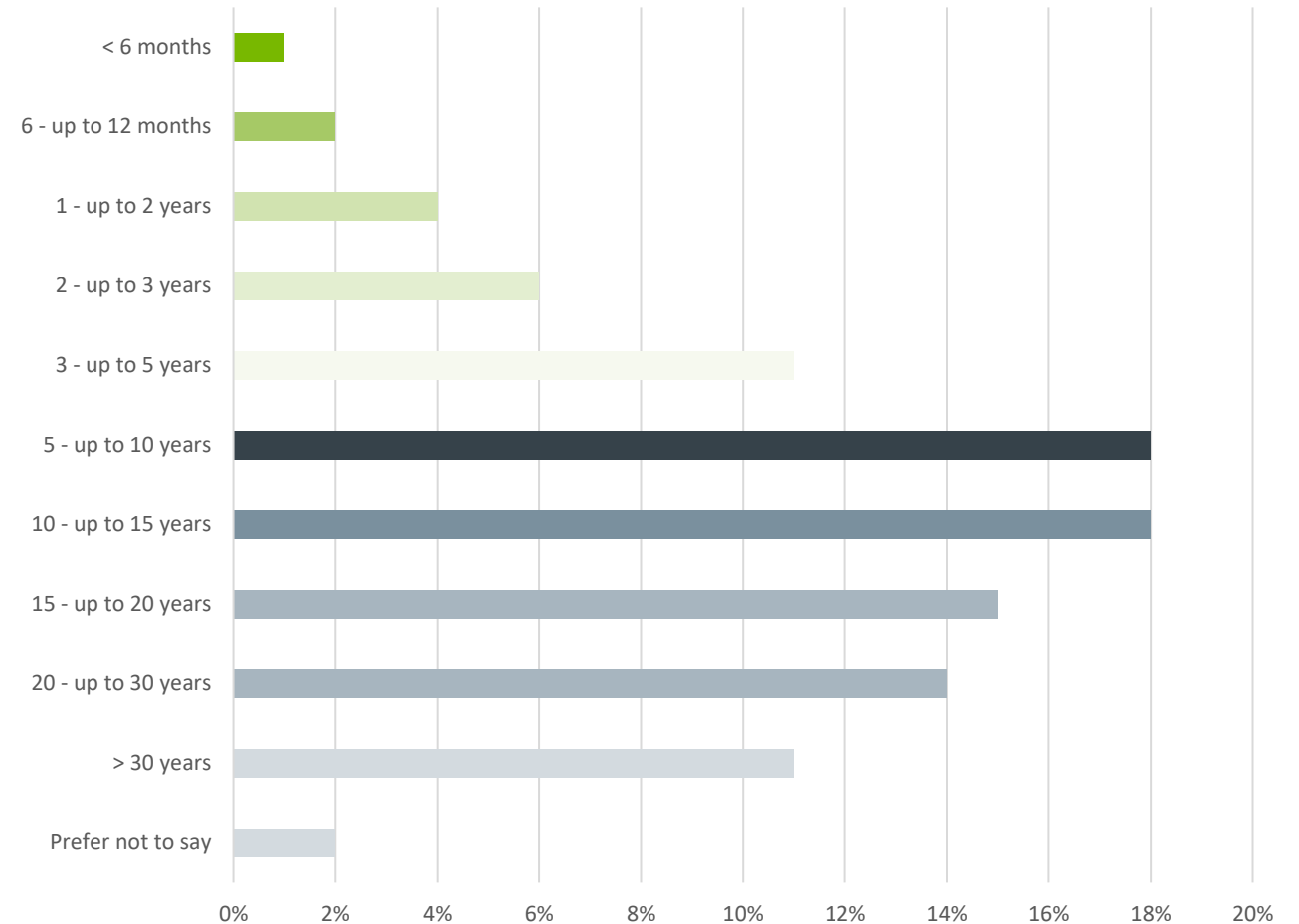
Duration employed in the agency

Less than 6 months	4%
6 months to less than 12 months	8%
1 year to less than 2 years	11%
2 years to less than 3 years	10%
3 years to less than 5 years	16%
5 years to less than 10 years	18%
10 years to less than 15 years	11%
15 years to less than 20 years	9%
20 years to less than 30 years	6%
30 years or more	5%
Don't know	0%
Prefer not to answer	2%

LENGTH OF SERVICE

Most respondents to the survey (74%) have been employed by the public sector for more than 5 years.

Analysis shows that respondents with short length of service self-selected away from answering the “is it getting better or worse” questions (see pages 15, 17, 20, 23, 25 and 31).

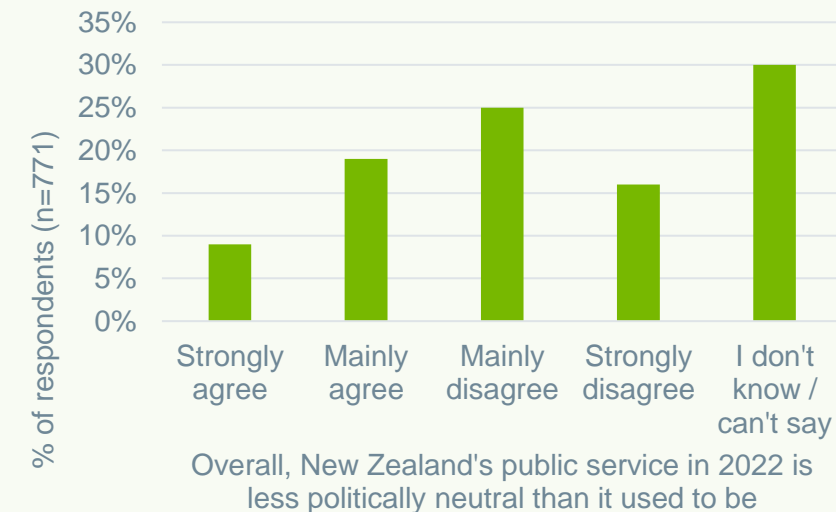
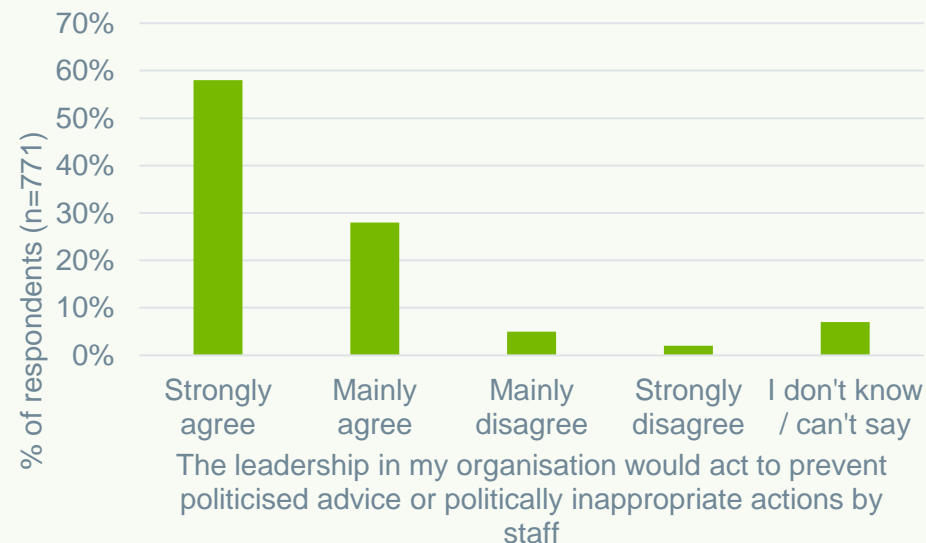


AN OVERVIEW OF RESPONSES: PUBLIC SECTOR PRINCIPLES

POLITICAL NEUTRALITY

Political neutrality means that public servants work for the government of the day regardless of their personal or political leanings, and in their work roles avoid any involvement in the competition between political parties.

Most respondents said they have a good personal understanding of what it means to be a politically neutral public servant. However, respondents were equally split on whether the public service is less politically neutral than it used to be.



FREE AND FRANK ADVICE

Free and frank advice is a public servant giving their advice based on the facts and merits of an issue, even when that advice may not be welcomed.

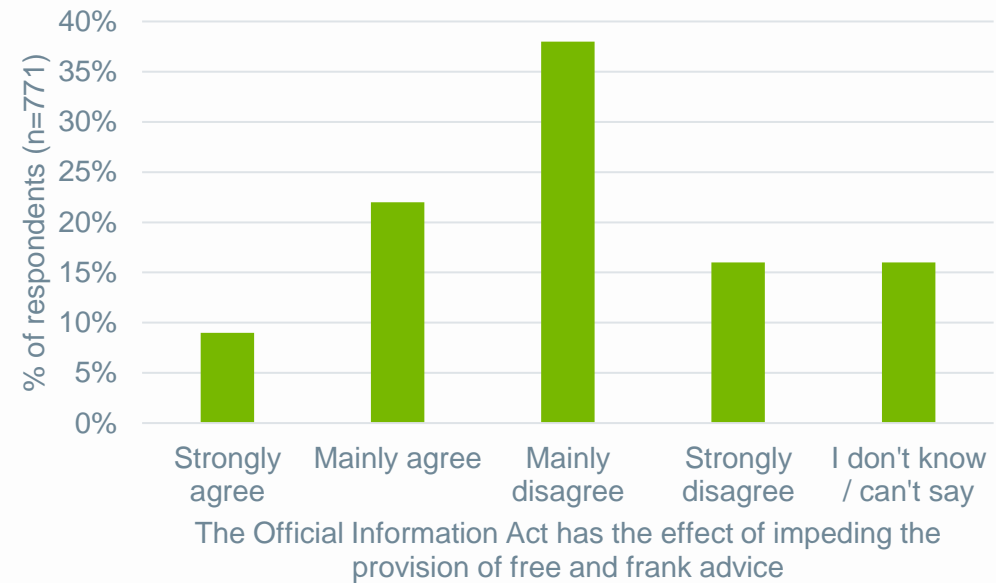
There is a strong perception that the practice of giving free and frank advice is modelled by leaders.



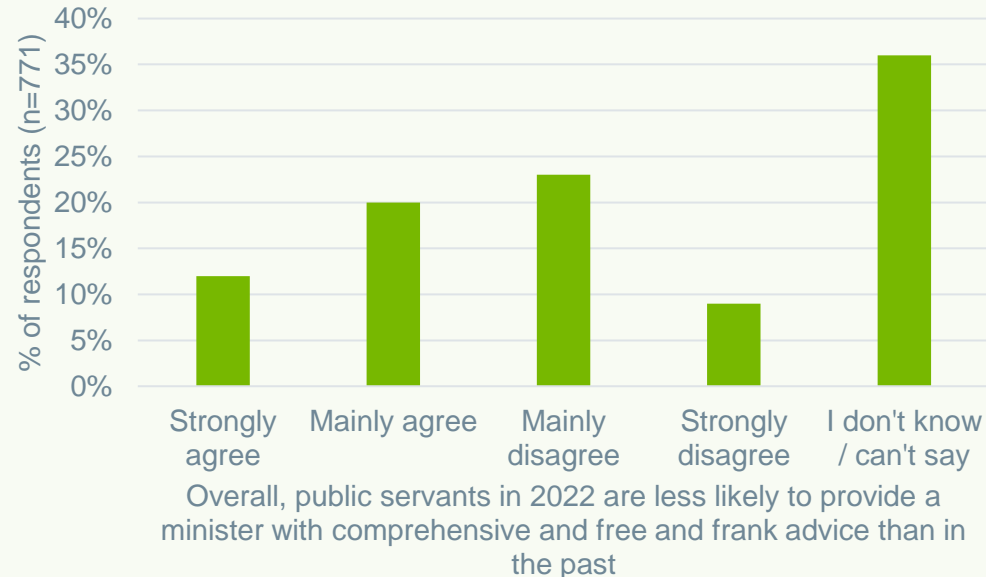
Most respondents could give their best advice without worrying whether it would be popular with their organisation or the government.

FREE AND FRANK ADVICE

Most respondents did not consider that the Official Information Act has the effect of impeding the provision of free and frank advice.



Continued.



A lot of respondents did not know whether public servants in 2022 are less likely to provide a Minister with comprehensive and free and frank advice than in the past.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ABOUT POLITICAL NEUTRALITY AND FREE AND FRANK ADVICE

Out of 771 total respondents, **98 respondents** made additional comments about political neutrality or the provision of free and frank advice.

Although most respondents overall answered that free and frank advice is usually modelled, those who provided additional comment disagreed.

- Of the 98 who commented, most reported that free and frank advice was **not** provided to Ministers for a range of reasons including:
 - a high concern for reputational risks amongst senior leadership
“We are encouraged not to put unpopular advice or insights on paper or email.”
 - constraints around the amount of time available to consider and provide appropriate advice
 - advice being constrained before it is even developed as some options are considered ‘non-starters’ or ‘out of scope’

- tailoring advice to suit a Minister’s preferences

“In a younger/ newer/ start up team/ organisation we need to provide to the Minister/s of the day that we are a useful and relevant entity to continue to receive funding. In this way, we can’t necessarily be 100% neutral or free/ frank because we have to tailor to our Minister/s.”

- A few respondents raised concerns about the impact that giving free and frank advice may have on their careers.

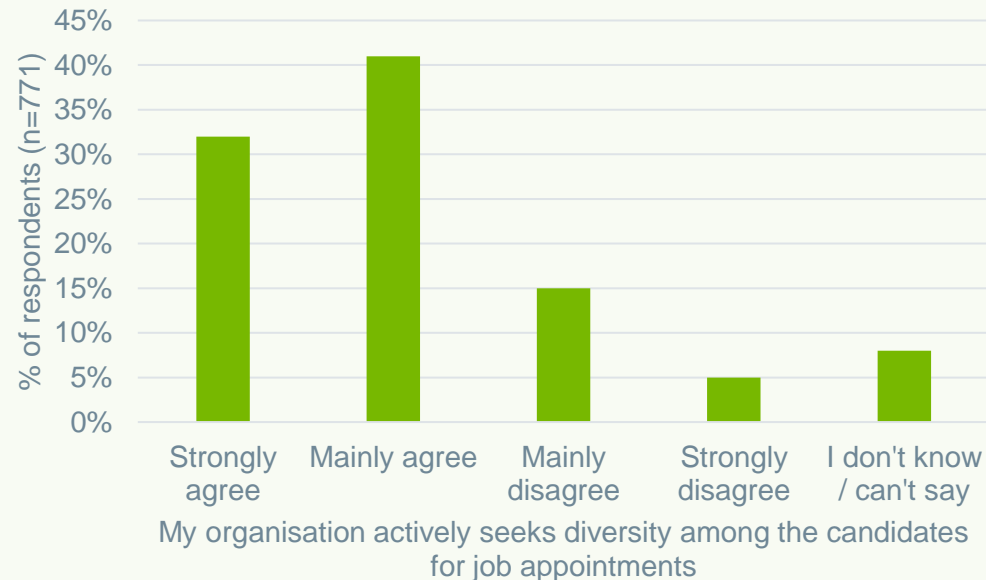
“multiple examples of experienced staff being forced out of their jobs or denied promotional opportunities for giving free and frank advice.”

- A few respondents mentioned that contractors or consultants didn’t always display public service values such as understanding the importance of free and frank advice.

MERIT-BASED APPOINTMENTS

Merit-based appointments means that the candidate best suited to the job is appointed, untarnished by favouritism, nepotism, political considerations, bias or discrimination.

Most respondents agree that in their organisation, people get jobs and promotions based on merit.

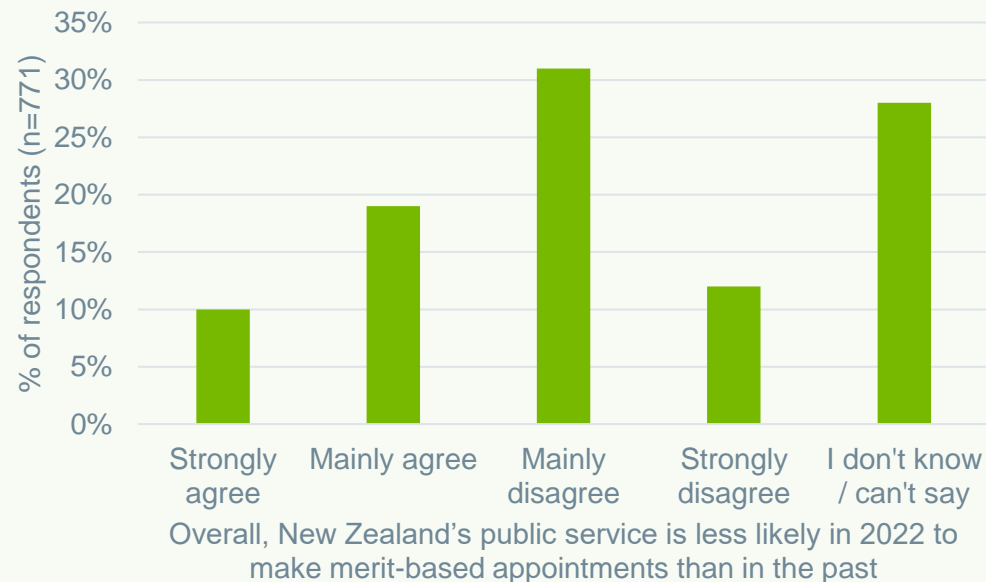
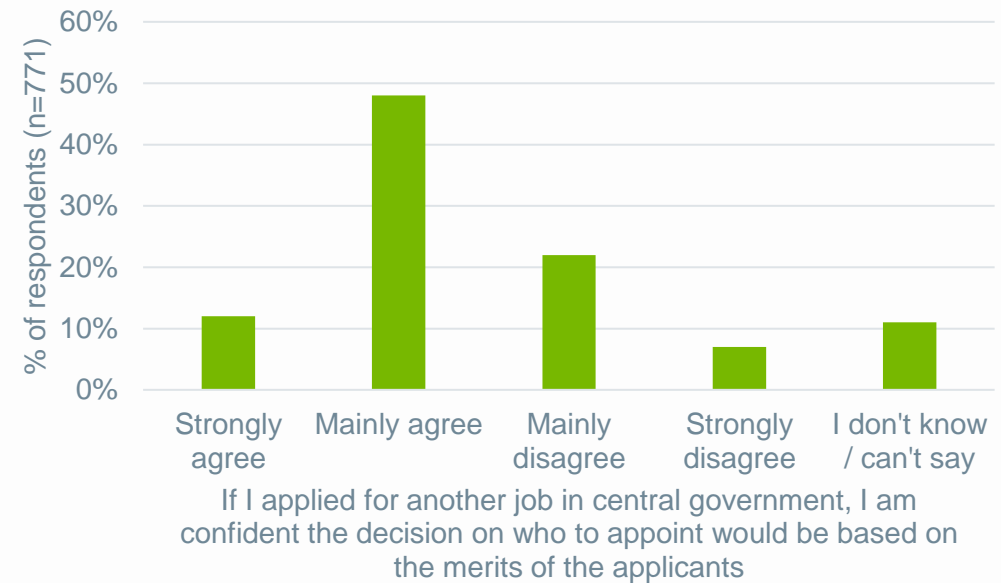


Most respondents agree that their organisation actively seeks diversity among the candidates for job appointments.

MERIT-BASED APPOINTMENTS

Continued.

Most respondents were confident that if they applied for another job, the decision on who to appoint would be based on the merits of the applicants.



Most respondents considered that overall New Zealand's public service is **either the same or more** likely to make merit-based appointments than in the past, however a lot did not know/couldn't say.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ABOUT MERIT-BASED APPOINTMENTS

Out of 771 total respondents, **69 respondents** made additional comments regarding merit-based appointments.

Although most respondents overall answered that merit-based appointments are being made, those who provided additional comment disagreed.

- Most of the respondents who provided additional comment felt that the New Zealand public service did not generally have a strong culture of merit-based appointments.

“Most Managers already know who would be appointed before they even start an interview process.”

- These respondents highlighted:
 - a lack of genuine diversity in appointments or consideration of merit only from a Western viewpoint.

“Merit-based appointments privilege those who are already privileged.”

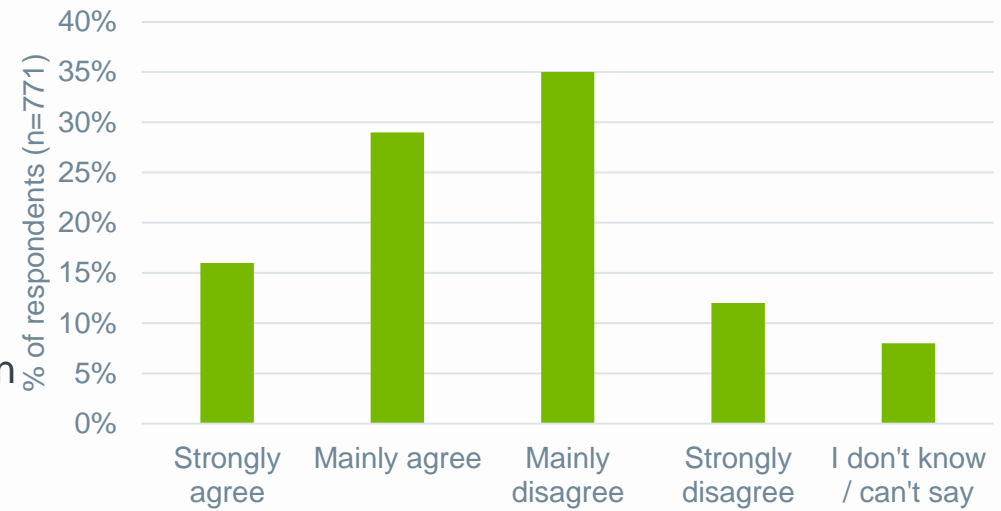
- a culture of nepotism and the continued existence of an ‘old boys club’
 - a reluctance to employ people outside of Wellington, particularly into senior or managerial positions.
- Many of the respondents commented specifically on the lack of merit-based appointments to management positions. They considered that people appointed to management roles:
 - didn’t have the necessary experience with people management
 - didn’t have the necessary technical skills required for policy decision making
 - were promoted through non-transparent processes or nepotism.
- A few respondents expressed that a concern for diversity in appointments was undermining merit-based appointments.

“Progressing the diversity agenda has been promoted above the consistent application of a fair, merit-based appointment process.”

OPEN GOVERNMENT

Open Government means that government is transparent and accountable, and that New Zealanders can contribute to and influence what government does and how it does it.

Respondents were evenly split about whether their organisation tends to hide or made a problem or failure look better than it is.



When there is a problem or failure in my organisation, there is a tendency to hide it or make the situation look better than it is

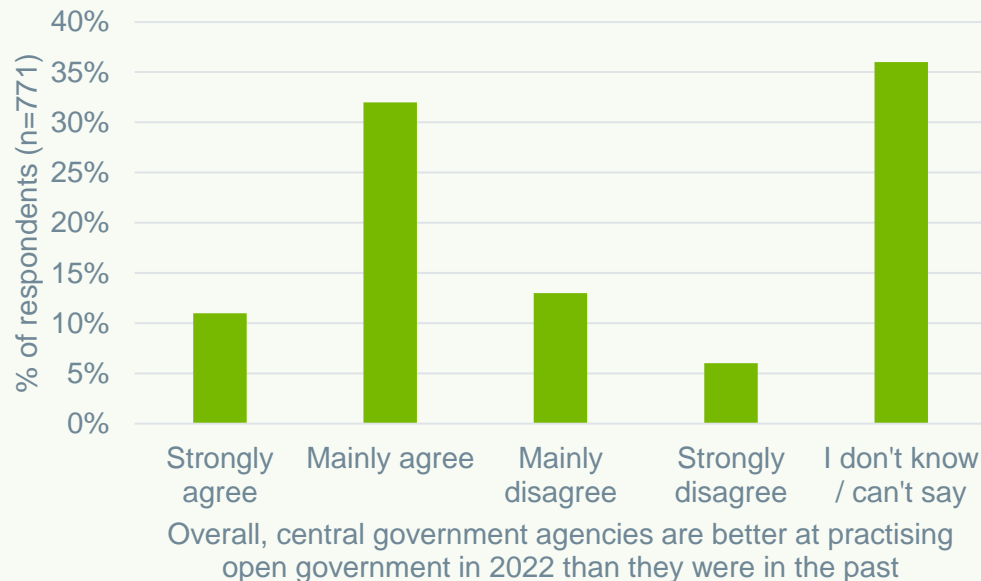


Respondents mostly agree that their organisation is genuinely open-minded when it engages or consults with the public.

OPEN GOVERNMENT

Continued.

Respondents mostly agree that their organisation practices and promotes the letter and spirit of the OIA.



Some respondents agree that central government agencies are better at practicing open government in 2022 than they were in the past, however, a lot did not know.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ABOUT OPEN GOVERNMENT

Out of 771 total respondents, **48 respondents** made additional comments about Open Government.

- Most respondents' comments related to Official Information Act (OIA) or proactive release processes, and overlapped with comments on free and frank advice and political neutrality.
- Some respondents commented that open government was being hindered by the media.

"The concept of journalism has been lost and influencing seems to be the new style of reporting."

"Open government is difficult with poor quality public discourse."

- Many respondents considered that there was room for improvement in proactive release processes.

- Many of the respondents who provided extra comment considered that significant improvements could be made to OIA processes. Key issues raised included:

- a lack of resourcing to efficiently respond to OIAs

"The OIA system prioritises public accountability over public service efficiency."

- responding to OIAs is increasingly difficult due to information management systems and movement of staff with relevant knowledge

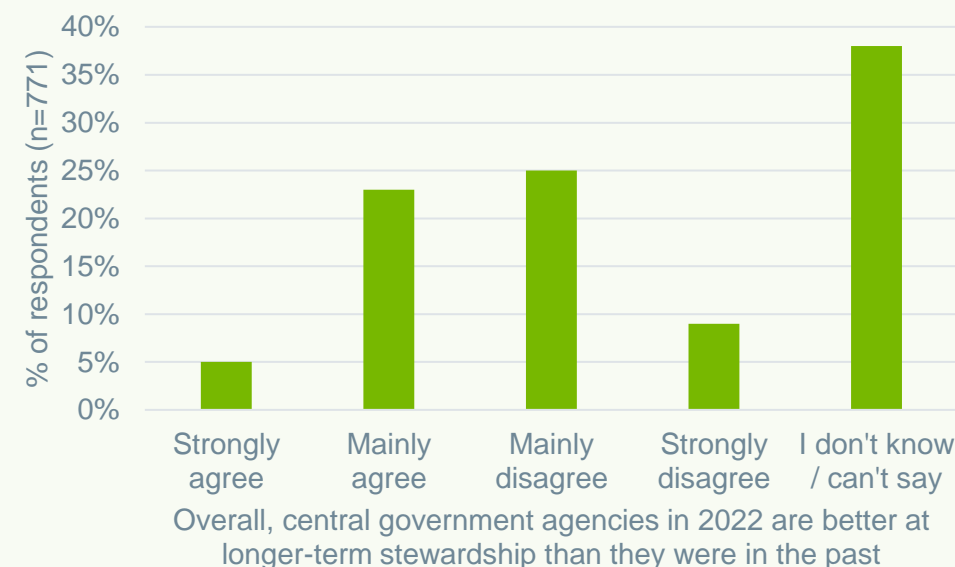
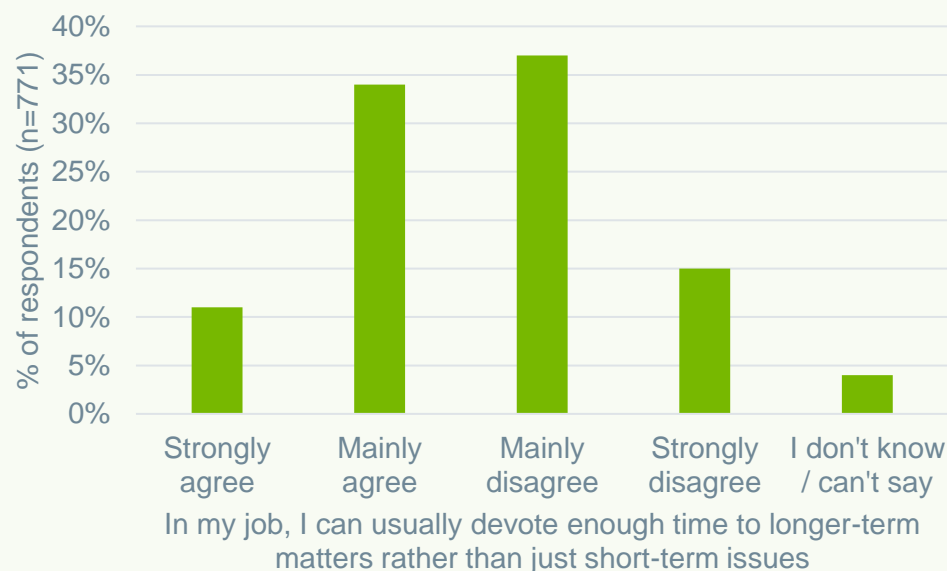
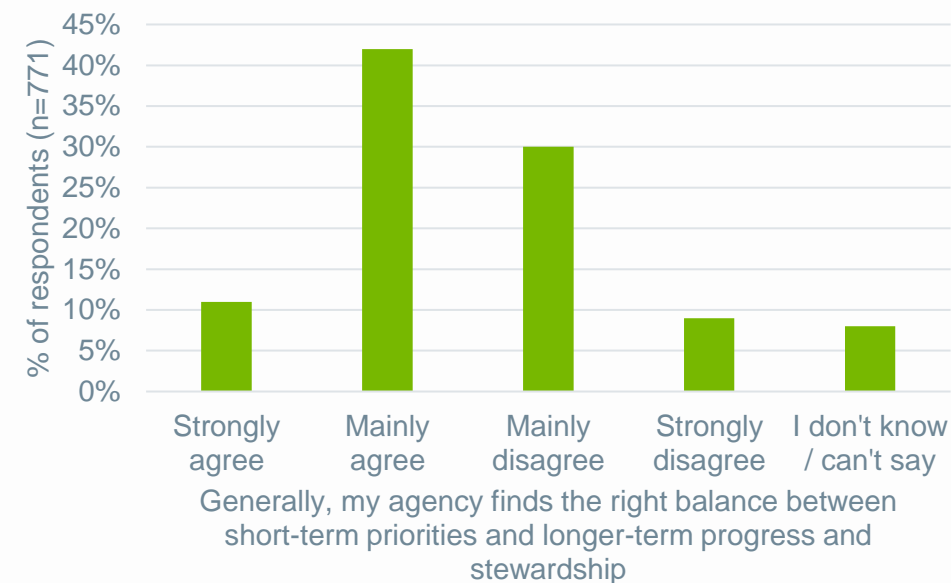
- fear from public servants around what might result from an information release.

"The intent/desire is there but resource constraints and more nervous political advisors/Ministers who are less willing to release information freely have made the whole OIA/proactive release process incredibly time-consuming and fraught."

STEWARDSHIP

Stewardship is maintaining and enhancing the capability to think, plan and manage in the interests of the citizens and government of the future. It includes knowledge, human capital, physical and financial resources, and keeping legislation up to date.

Most respondents agree that their agency finds the right balance between short-term priorities and longer-term progress and stewardship. However, many respondents could not say whether central government agencies are better at long-term stewardship than they have been in the past.



ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ABOUT STEWARDSHIP

Out of 771 total respondents, **89 respondents** made additional comments regarding stewardship in the public sector.

People and long-term capability, maintaining institutional knowledge and information

- Many respondents raised the public sector pay restraint as a significant area of concern. The pay restraint was seen as leading to a loss of experienced and capable people from the public sector and undermining perceptions of the value of public service.

“... notable loss of experienced staff from the public sector since the pay freeze.”

“... there appears to be an expectation that as public servants we should work harder and longer for less money.”

- Many respondents also raised concerns about high workloads and levels of burnout amongst public servants.

“My workplace is a highly pressured organisation and many of my colleagues have left due to burn-out and stress due to workload.”

Systems and processes

- Some respondents commented on the lack of long-term or strategic planning. Reasons given for this lack of longer-term stewardship included:

- lack of time and resources to devote to long-term thinking

“Stewardship is not possible with current staffing levels.”

- the influence of politics on priorities and planning

- lack of strategic decision-making, weak monitoring and evaluation of long term government programmes.

“The structures, incentives and understanding of longer term ‘mission’ are obscured by entrenched past practices.”

- A few respondents commented on the poor quality of the public services’ information management and technology systems and felt this did not promote long-term stewardship.

Assets

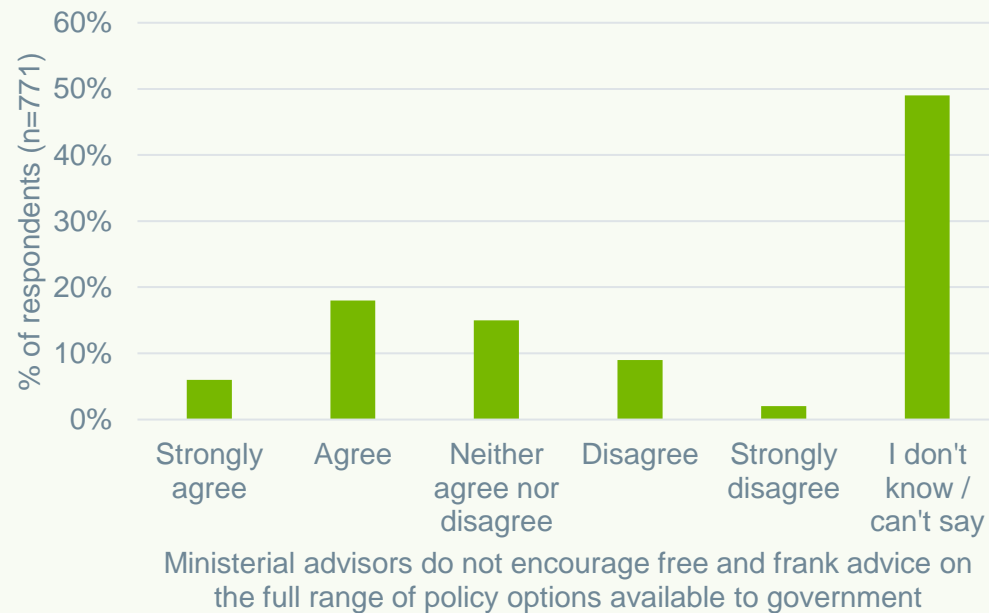
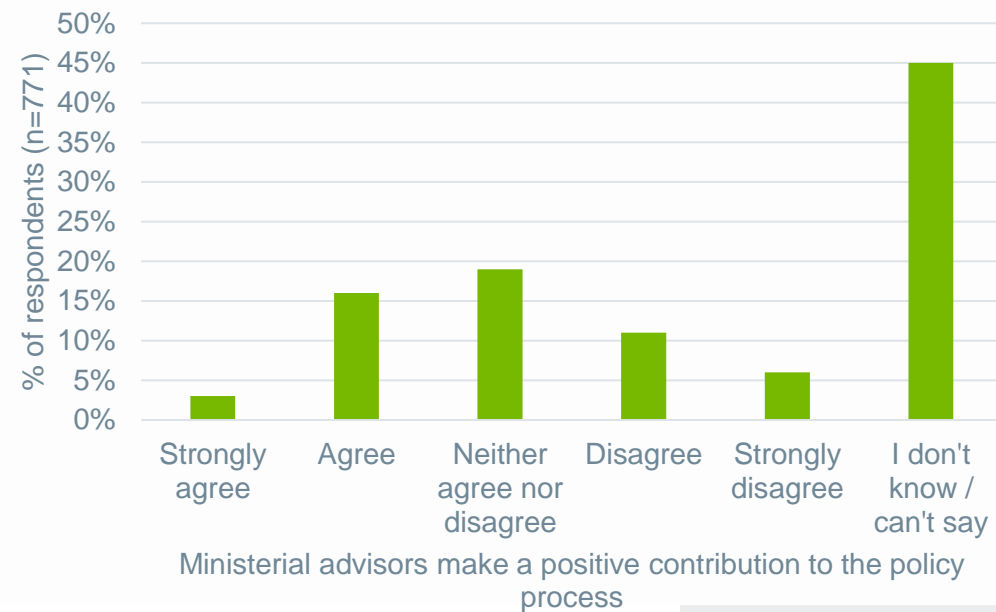
- One respondent noted there was a lack of financial resources to undertake long term investment in facilities.

AN OVERVIEW OF RESPONSES: POLITICAL ADVISORS

POLITICAL ADVISORS

In this section, the term **‘Ministerial advisors’** refers to politically-appointed advisers in Minister’s offices (not to public servants employed as private secretaries).

Respondents did not agree on whether Ministerial advisors make a positive contribution to the policy process. A lot did not know.



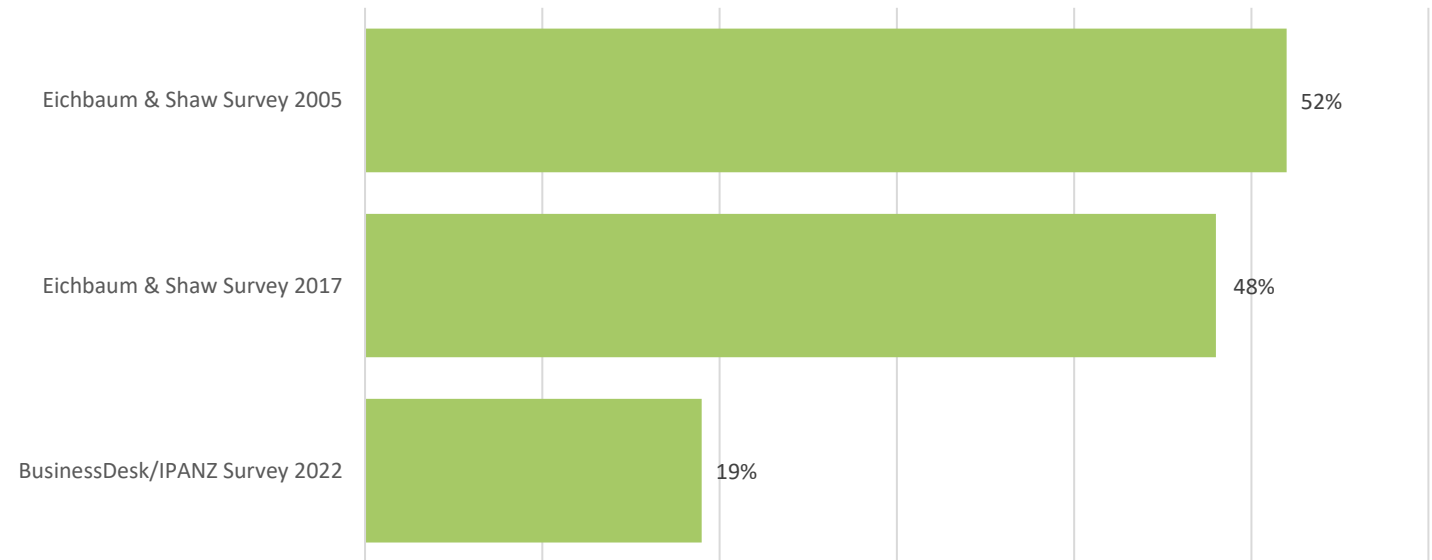
Some respondents agreed that Ministerial advisors do not encourage free and frank advice, however, a lot of respondents did not know.

COMPARISON TO OTHER STUDIES

THE RESPONSES TO THE 2022 BUSINESSDESK/IPANZ SURVEY HAVE BEEN COMPARED TO RESPONSES FROM PREVIOUS STUDIES

Fewer respondents agreed or strongly agreed that **Ministerial Advisors make a positive contribution** to the policy process than in previous years.

Ministerial Advisors make a positive contribution to the policy process
(% of respondents that strongly agree or agree)

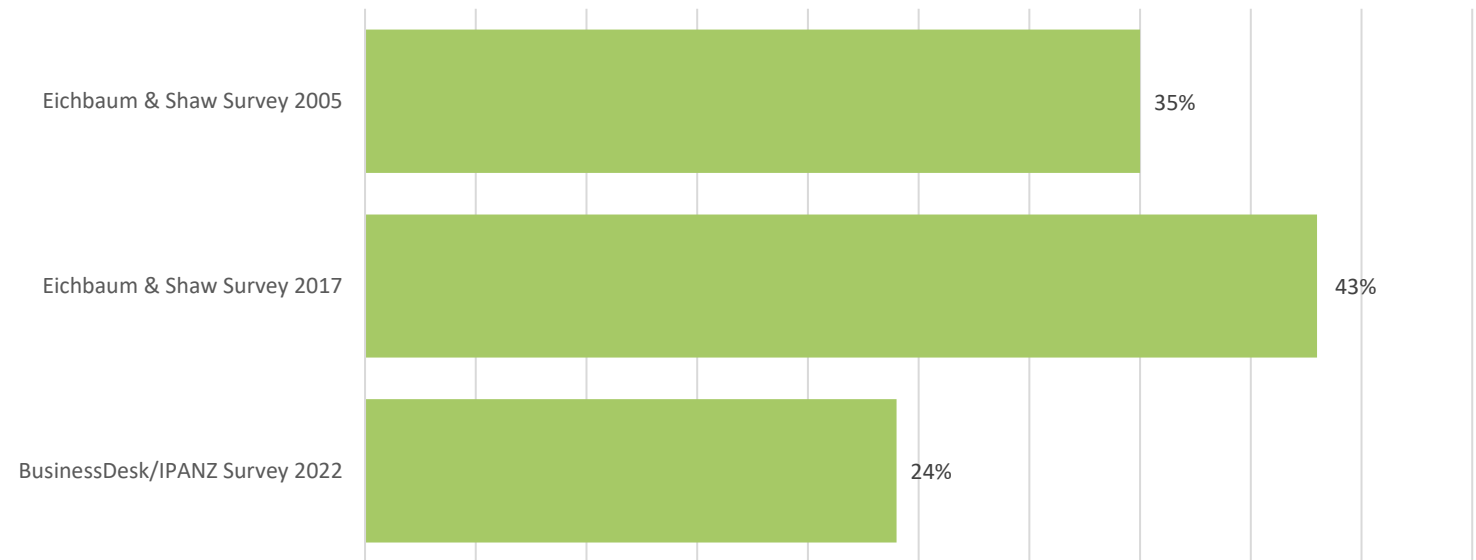


COMPARISON TO OTHER STUDIES

THE RESPONSES TO THE 2022 BUSINESSDESK/IPANZ SURVEY HAVE BEEN COMPARED TO RESPONSES FROM PREVIOUS STUDIES

Fewer respondents considered that **Ministerial Advisors do not encourage free and frank advice** on the full range of policy options than in previous years.

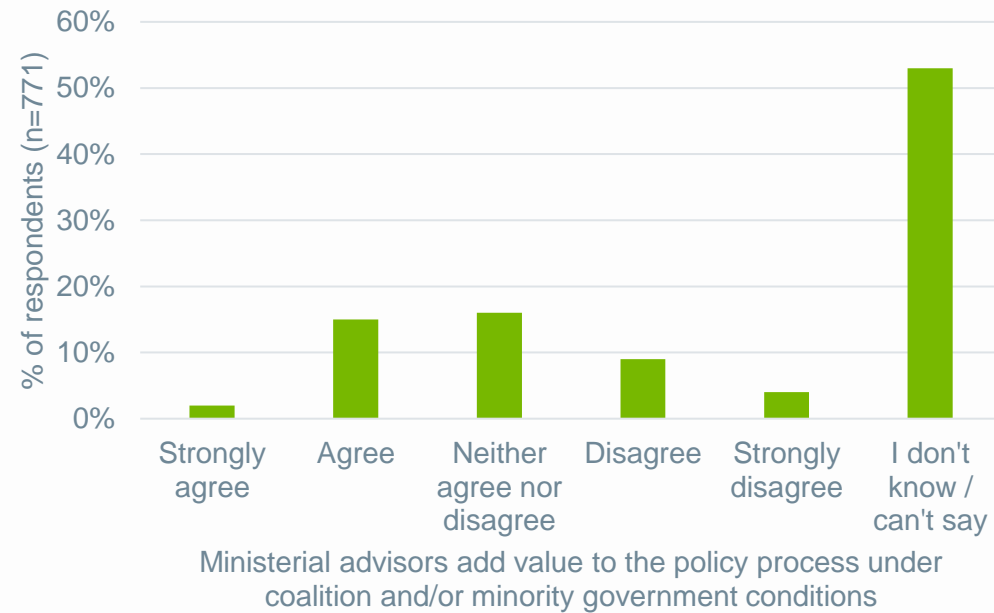
Ministerial Advisors do not encourage free and frank advice on the full range of policy options available to government
(% of respondents that strongly agree or agree)



POLITICAL ADVISORS

Continued.

Most respondents did not know whether Ministerial advisors add value to the policy process under coalition and/or minority government conditions.



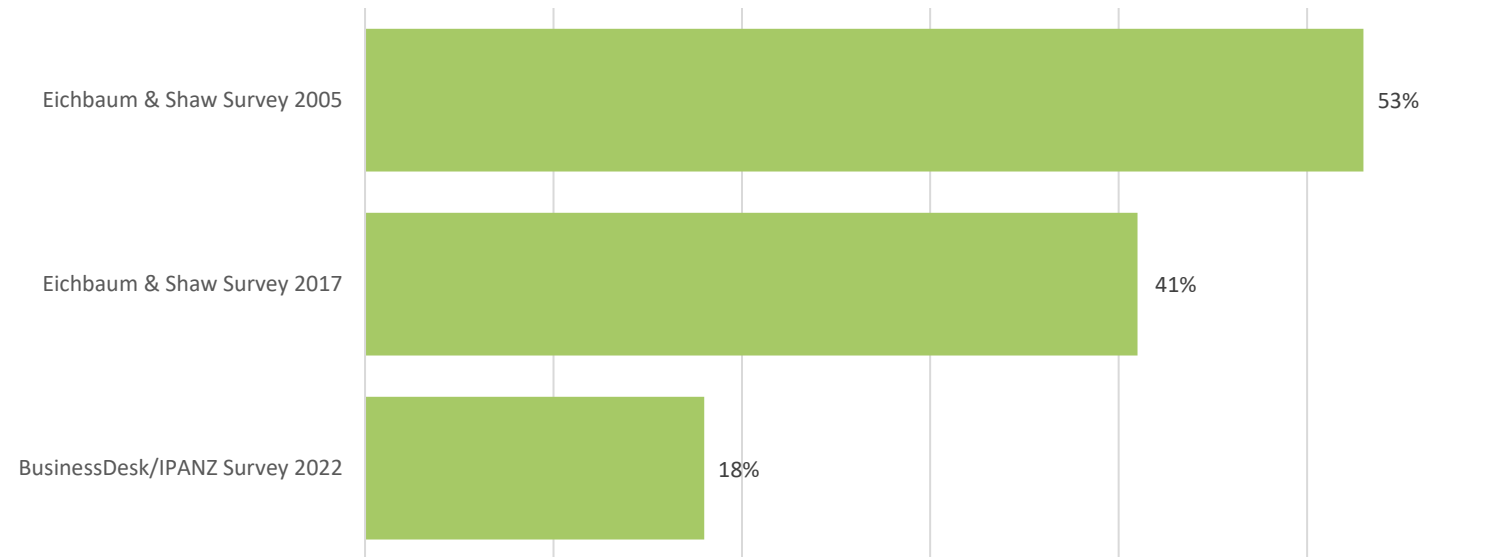
Most respondents did not know whether the risks posed by Ministerial advisors to the neutrality of the public sector has increased over time.

COMPARISON TO OTHER STUDIES

THE RESPONSES TO THE 2022 BUSINESSDESK/IPANZ SURVEY HAVE BEEN COMPARED TO RESPONSES FROM PREVIOUS STUDIES

Significantly fewer respondents agreed or strongly agreed that **Advisors add value to the policy process under coalition and/or minority government conditions** than in previous surveys.

Ministerial Advisors add value to the policy process under coalition and/or minority government conditions
(% of respondents that strongly agree or agree)



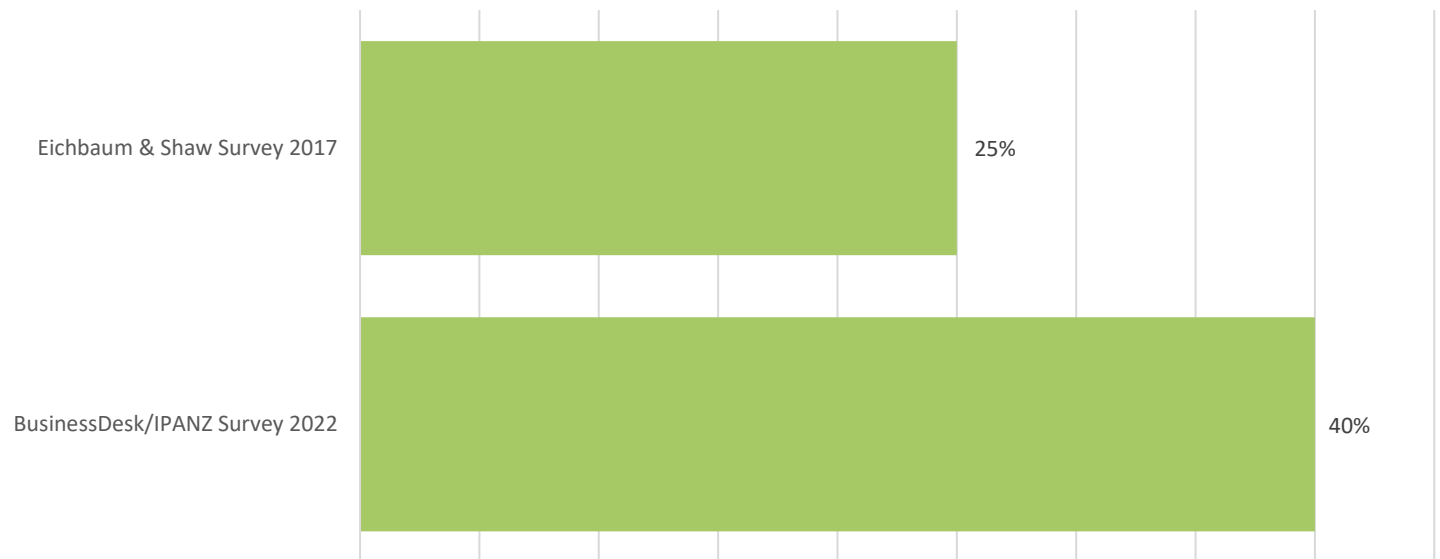
COMPARISON TO OTHER STUDIES

THE RESPONSES TO THE 2022 BUSINESSDESK/IPANZ SURVEY HAVE BEEN COMPARED TO RESPONSES FROM PREVIOUS STUDIES

Fewer respondents agreed or strongly agreed that **the risks posed by Ministerial Advisors to the neutrality of the public service has increased over time** than in a previous survey.

* Note that this question was not asked by Eichbaum and Shaw in 2005.

Overall, the rights posed by Ministerial Advisors to the neutrality of the public service has increased over time
(% of respondents that strongly agree or agree)



ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ABOUT POLITICAL ADVISORS

Out of 771 total respondents, **16 respondents** made additional comments about political advisors.

The majority of the comments about political advisors related to the provision of free and frank advice.

- The majority of the 16 respondents who commented considered that political advisors had a negative impact on the provision of advice to Ministers by asking for advice to be changed before it reached the Minister.
- A few respondents commented on negative workplace behaviour from political advisors towards public servants.

“Political advisers do not respect the public service and think they are better qualified to provide advice.”

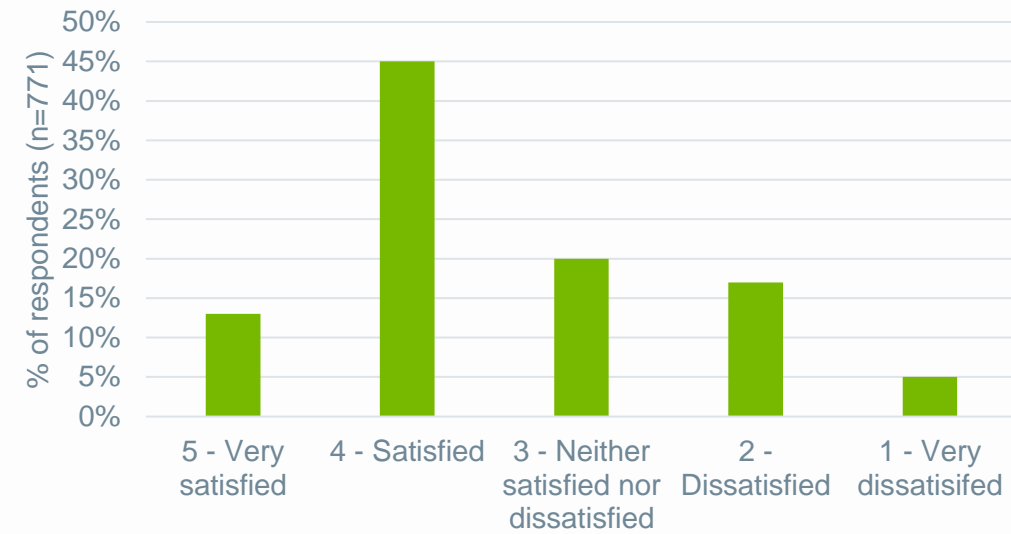
“Minister’s offices are ruthless and highly politicised. They do not seek or appreciate free and frank advice.”

“Ministerial Advisors are one of the biggest barriers in the policy process.”

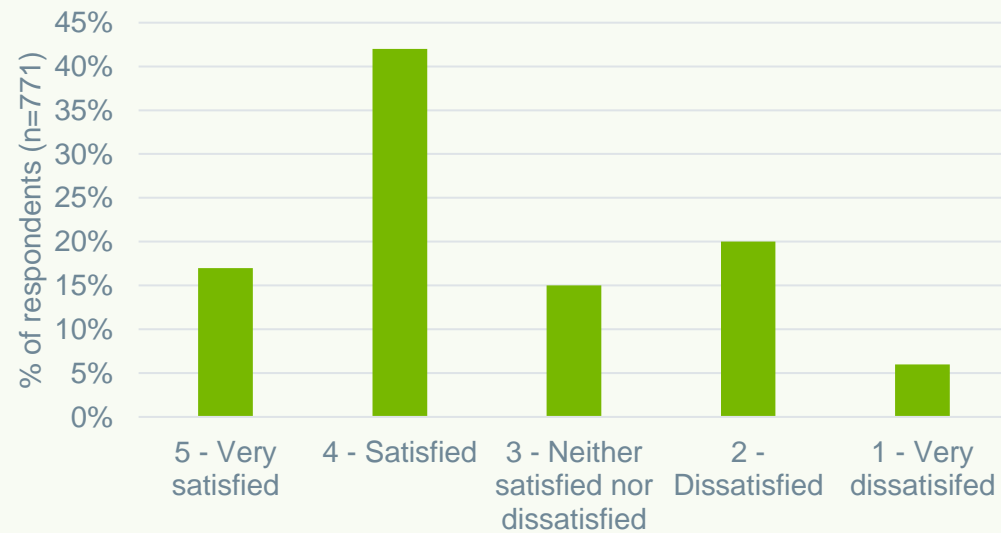
AN OVERVIEW OF RESPONSES: THE WORKPLACE

WORK AND LIFE

Most respondents are satisfied with their job.



On a scale 1 to 5 where 1 is Very dissatisfied and 5 is Very satisfied, how satisfied are you with your job?



Most respondents are satisfied with their work-life balance.

On a scale 1 to 5 where 1 is Very dissatisfied and 5 is Very satisfied, how satisfied are you with your work-life balance?

WORK AND LIFE

Most respondents found their work stressful to some extent in the last 12 months.



Most respondents had been too tired from work to enjoy life outside work to some extent in the last 12 months.

WORKPLACE RELATIONSHIPS

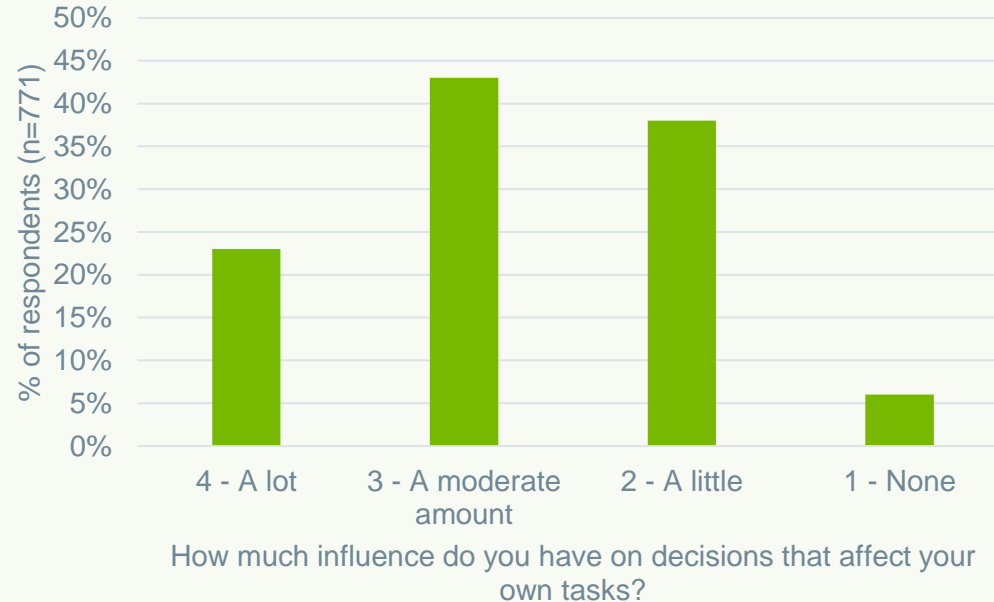
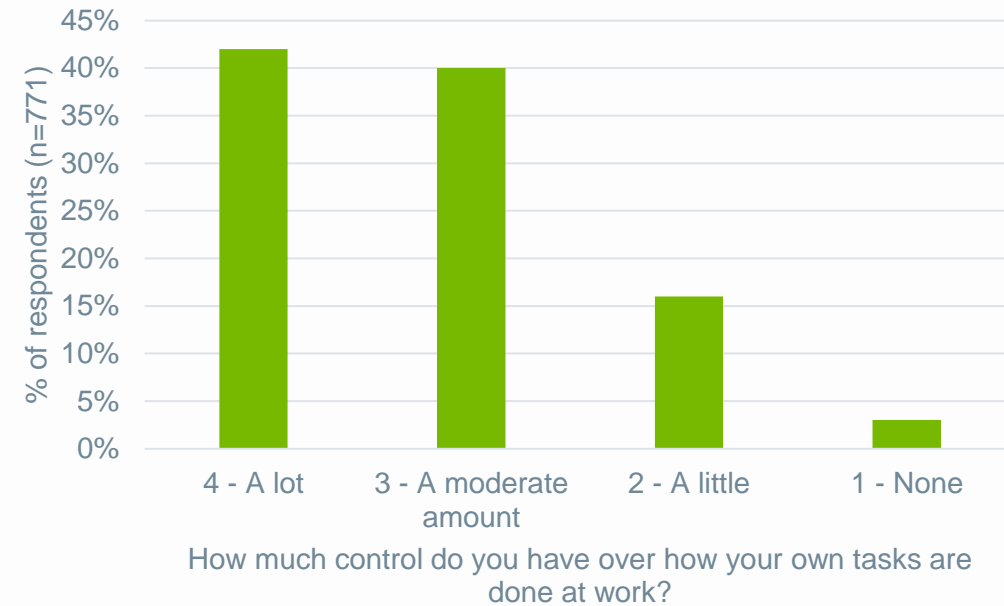
Most respondents reported having good working relationships with their colleagues.



Most respondents reported having a good working relationship with their direct manager.

WORKPLACE RELATIONSHIPS

A lot of respondents reported having a moderate or a lot of control over how their tasks are done at work.



A lot of respondents reported having a moderate amount of influence on decisions that affect their own tasks.

AN OVERVIEW OF RESPONSES: BULLYING / HARASSMENT

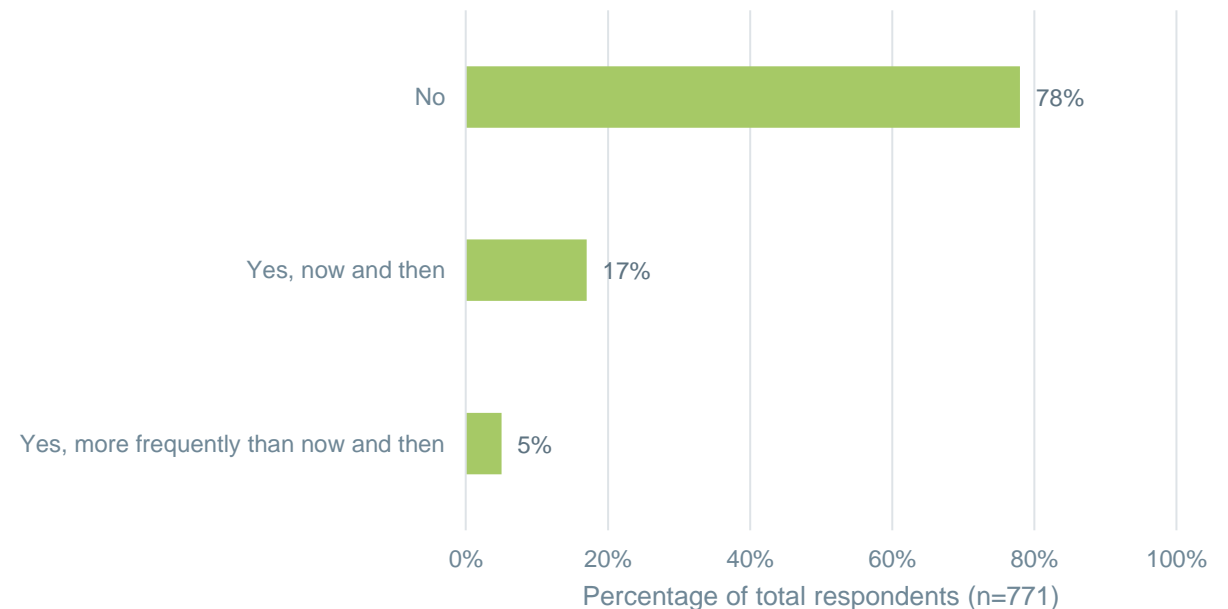
HOW COMMON IS BULLYING/HARASSMENT IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE?

Workplace bullying is **repeated and unreasonable behaviour** directed towards a worker or a group of workers that can cause physical or mental harm.

Bullying can be physical, verbal, psychological or social. This may include victimising, humiliating, intimidating, socially excluding or threatening a person.

Out of 771 total respondents, **22%** reported having been **personally bullied or harassed** in their workplace in the past 12 months.

In the past 12 months, have you personally been bullied or harassed in your current workplace?

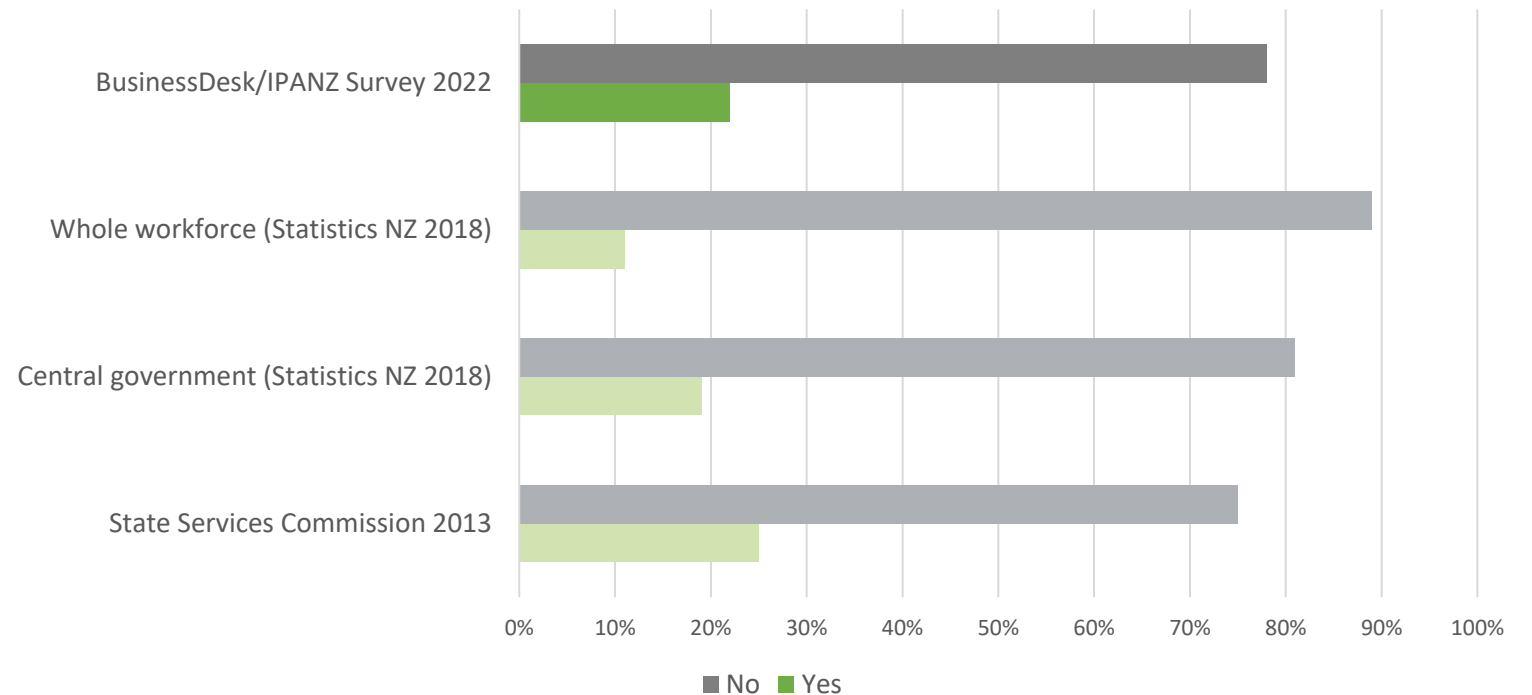


COMPARISON TO OTHER STUDIES

THE RESPONSES TO THE 2022 BUSINESSDESK/IPANZ SURVEY HAVE BEEN COMPARED TO RESPONSES FROM PREVIOUS STUDIES

Levels of **reported bullying and harassment** have remained **relatively stable** over time.

In the past 12 months, have you personally been bullied or harassed in your current workplace?



WHO IS MORE LIKELY TO BE A VICTIM OF BULLYING/HARASSMENT?

Although rates of bullying were largely consistent across all age groups, the **age of the public servant did correlate to a higher likelihood of experiencing bullying** in their current workplace. Of the 169 respondents who reported experiencing bullying:

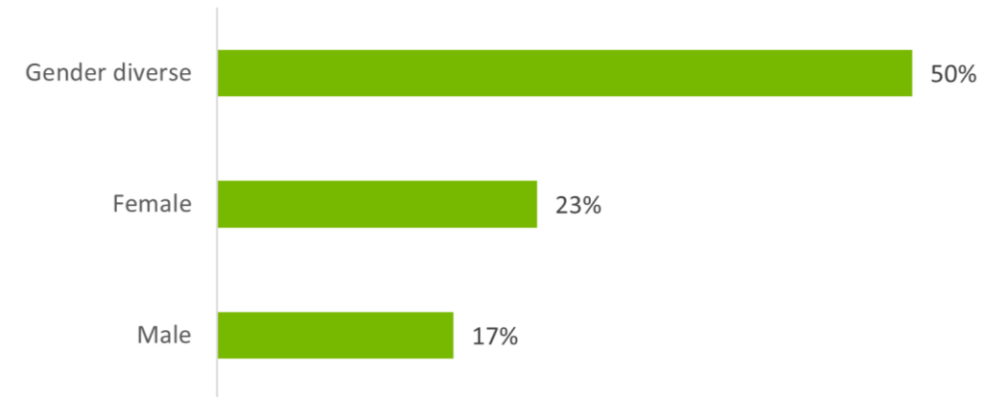
- **14% of the 18-29 age group** indicated that they had been personally bullied or harassed in their current workplace, compared to **20% of the 30-39 age group**, **23% of the 40-49 age group**, **24% of the 50-59 age group**, and **23% of the 60-69 age group**.

Of the respondents who had personally been bullied or harassed in the workplace in the last 12 months, **23% identified as women**, compared to **17% who identified as men**.

There were a low number of gender diverse respondents (n=4), however, **50% of those respondents** reported that they had experienced bullying or harassment in the workplace in the last 12 months.

Percentage of YES respondents within each respective gender category

Have answered YES ("yes, now and then" and "yes, more frequently than now and then") to being bullied or harassed in the workplace in the last 12 months



WHO IS MORE LIKELY TO BE A VICTIM OF BULLYING/HARASSMENT?

169 respondents reported experiencing bullying in the last 12 months.

Although a large number of respondents to the overall survey identified as Pākehā/European (82%), only **20% of those respondents** reported experiencing bullying/harassment in the workplace in the last 12 months.

Only 9% of overall respondents identified as NZ Māori, however **23% within this group** reported experiencing workplace bullying in the last 12 months.

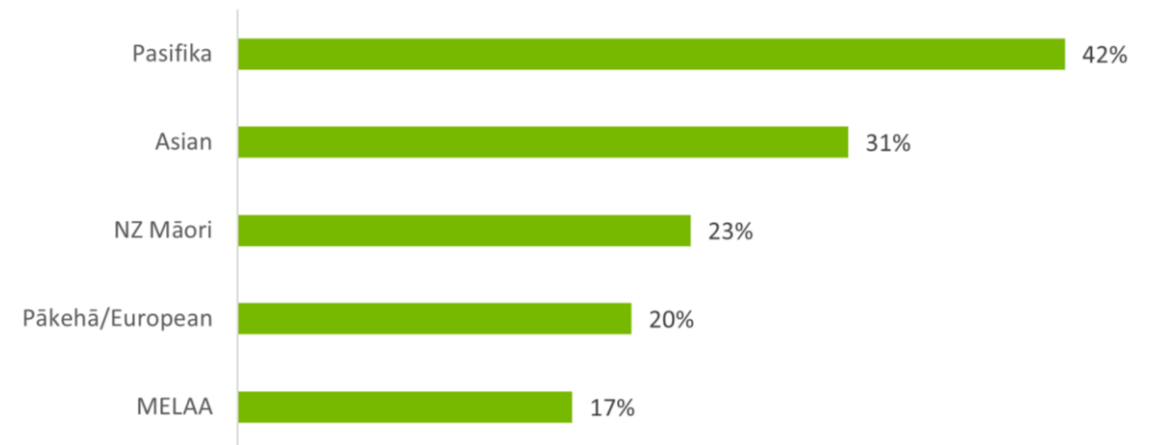
Only 7% of overall respondents identified as Asian, however **31% within the group** reported experiencing workplace bullying in the last 12 months.

Only 3-4% of overall respondents identified as Pasifika, however **42% within this group** reported experiencing workplace bullying in the last 12 months.

Only 3% of overall respondents identified as MELAA, however **17% within this group** reported experiencing workplace bullying in the last 12 months.

Percentage of YES respondents within each respective ethnic category

Have answered YES ("yes, now and then" and "yes, more frequently than now and then") to being bullied or harassed in the workplace in the last 12 months



WHO IS DOING THE BULLYING?

Out of the 169 respondents who said they had been bullied in the last 12 months, **most reported being bullied by a supervisor, immediate manager, or a colleague at a senior or similar level to themselves.**

Bullying/harassment was also attributed to perpetrators outside the public service including members of the public, Ministerial Advisors and sometimes news media representatives.

WHO HAS BULLIED OR HARASSED YOU?



* Note that respondents could choose more than one answer.

DID VICTIMS REPORT BULLYING/HARASSMENT?

Of the 168 respondents who had been bullied or harassed, **most (63%) did not report it**, for a variety of reasons.

Around a third of those who said they had been bullied **reported it (38%)**.

Although the rate of reporting was consistent across age groups, the outlier was the 60 to 69 age group where only 16% reported bullying or harassment.



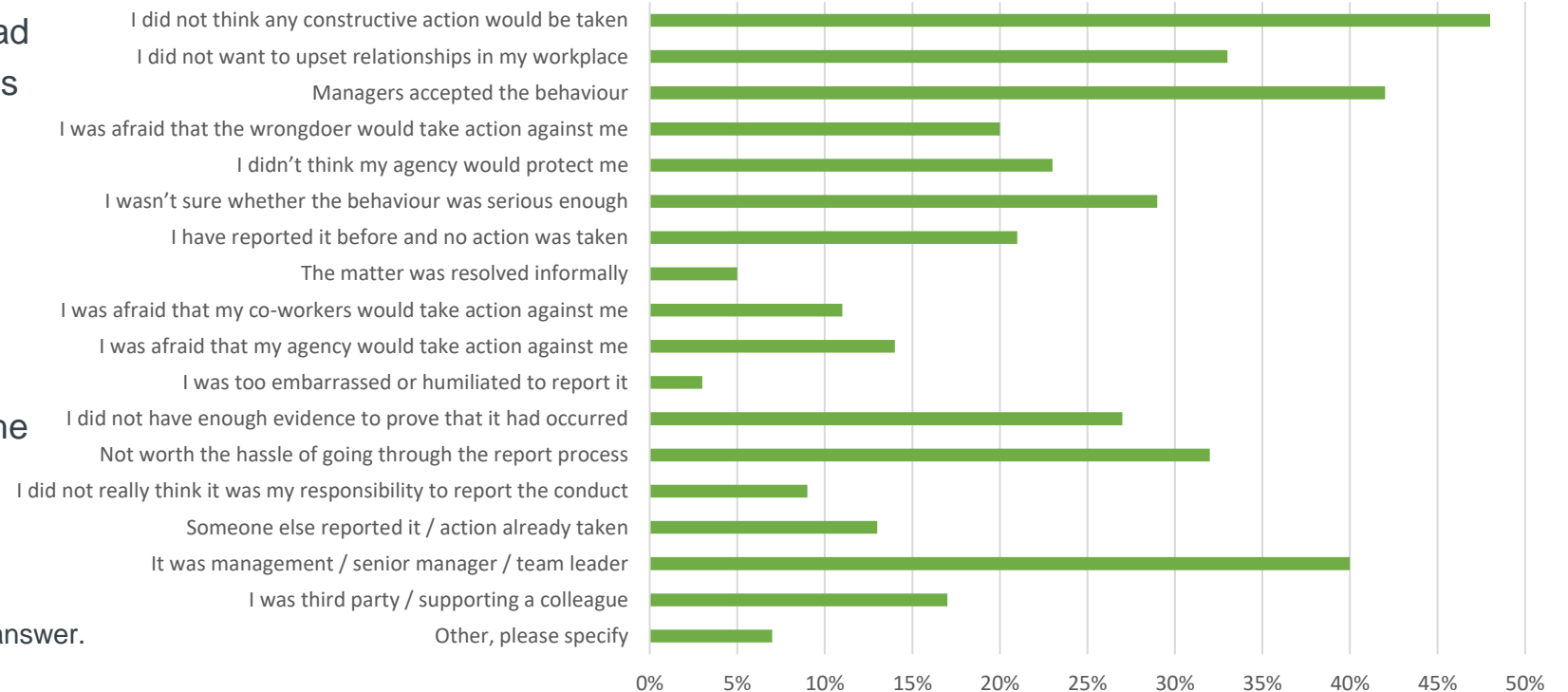
* Note that respondents could choose more than one answer.

FOR WHAT REASONS DID VICTIMS NOT REPORT BULLYING/HARASSMENT?

Of the 105 respondents who provided reasons for why they did not report they had been bullied or harassed, the main reasons provided included that they:

- did not think any constructive action would be taken
- did not think it was worth the hassle of going through the report processes
- did not want to upset relationships in the workplace.

For what reasons did you not report breaches you had witnessed?



* Note that respondents could choose more than one answer.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ABOUT BULLYING

Out of 771 total respondents, **99 respondents** made additional comments about bullying.

- Most of the 99 respondents commented on a toxic culture in the public sector or on specific instances of bullying they had seen or experienced.

“The New Zealand public service is toxic. Bullying is rife almost everyone I know has seen or experienced bullying.”

“[Bullying included] exclusion from team conversations, not cooperating with work or responding to my emails, comments about ethnic background, comments about being female.”

- Many respondents felt that contributors to cultures where bullying was accepted included:

- a lack of response or concern from management or Chief Executive level

“Senior managers are so risk averse and concerned with the reputation of the Ministry they are not prepared to deal with issues regarding behaviour.”

“Bullying is rife and never addressed, particularly when it might damage an organisation’s reputation.”

- underlying cultures of racism and sexism

“Staff are still racist to Māori [service users] and employees.”

- a lack of routes to report concerns about senior staff including the lack of 360-degree feedback

“many people just leave rather than lay a complaint.”

- lack of resourcing and workplace pressures creating stressful and unsafe working environments

- A few respondents considered that their workplace had a good culture and dealt well with bullying, or had showed noticeable improvement.

“My experience is my organisation has a strong culture of trying to do better”

- A few respondents noted that bullying was sometimes confused with performance management and considered that reports of bullying were overstated.

AN OVERVIEW OF RESPONSES: AGENCY CODE OF CONDUCT

AGENCY CODE OF CONDUCT

Agencies' codes of conduct generally require employees to be fair, impartial, responsible and trustworthy.

- This includes aspects like honesty, professionalism, responsiveness, making services accessible and effective, acting within the law, using resources and information appropriately, and not using one's position for personal gain.
- **24% of respondents** indicated that in the past 12 months, they have personally witnessed someone working for their agency behaving in a way that they thought was a breach of the code of conduct (66% had not; 10% didn't know).

AGENCY CODE OF CONDUCT

AN OVERVIEW OF RESPONSES

When asked what kind of breach they witnessed, out of the 24% of total respondents (n=189) who had observed a breach:

- 51% observed bullying
- 38% observed abusive or intimidating behaviour
- 34% observed statements made to others about significant work matters that are untrue or substantially inaccurate
- 33% observed discrimination e.g., gender, age, ethnicity, disability
- 23% observed significant negligence or incompetence
- 17% observed inappropriate use of agency resources.

When asked whether they reported breaches they witnessed, respondents were fairly evenly split (of those who had witnessed breaches, 51% did not report them, and 49% did).

When asked why they did not report breaches they had witnessed, the most common responses were:

- did not think any constructive action would be taken (48%)
- managers accepted the behaviour (42%)
- it was management/senior manager/team leader (40%)
- did not want to upset relationships in the workplace (33%)
- not worth the hassle of going through the report process (32%).

AN OVERVIEW OF RESPONSES: OTHER COMMENTS

CODE OF ETHICS

AN OVERVIEW OF RESPONSES

Out of 771 total respondents, **17 respondents** made additional comments regarding ethical issues which weren't covered by any survey question, or one of the other topics.

- Issues raised by respondents included:
 - feeling forced to take part in Christian prayers or karakia
 - a lack of appropriate processes to recognise and respond to conflicts of interest
 - public servants inappropriately speaking to or 'leaking' information to the media
 - frequent privacy breaches which were not dealt with appropriately.

TIKANGA MĀORI

AN OVERVIEW OF RESPONSES

The survey did not ask any questions on the place of tikanga Māori in New Zealand's public service, however, **27 respondents** made specific comments on tikanga Māori in the free-text section.

- The comments from respondents ranged widely:
 - expressing that not enough was being done to honour Te Tiriti, incorporate tikanga Māori or respond to racism

“Te Tiriti o Waitangi must be honoured and it is not. Tangata whenua and wahine Māori are not valued, paid in an equitable manner or at the decision-making tables.”

“Engagement with Māori is tokenistic and inauthentic.”

“There are continual assumptions made about the right way of doing things which are in direct conflict with Māori values and belief systems or what is valued and resourced within Crown structures, systems and processes.”

- commenting that positive changes were being made to incorporate tikanga Māori

“One positive aspect has been the step change approach to fulfilling our Treaty obligations – although this has just started it feels like we are on the right path.”

“slowly seen more Māori working in the public sector.”

- expressing concerns about current initiatives to incorporate tikanga Māori into the public service including a few respondents who commented they felt ‘forced’ into using te reo or participating in practices such as karakia.



The *Working in the Public Service* survey was conducted for the Institute of Public Administration New Zealand (IPANZ) and survey partner BusinessDesk by research firm Perceptive. *Allen + Clarke* prepared the data graphics and drafted this report.