



LAW SOCIETY OF SCOTLAND ANNUAL MEMBERS' SURVEY FEBRUARY 2024

Prepared by:



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BACKGROUND

Each year the Society surveys its membership to gain a better understanding of their views on the role and priorities of the Society and perceptions of current issues facing the profession.

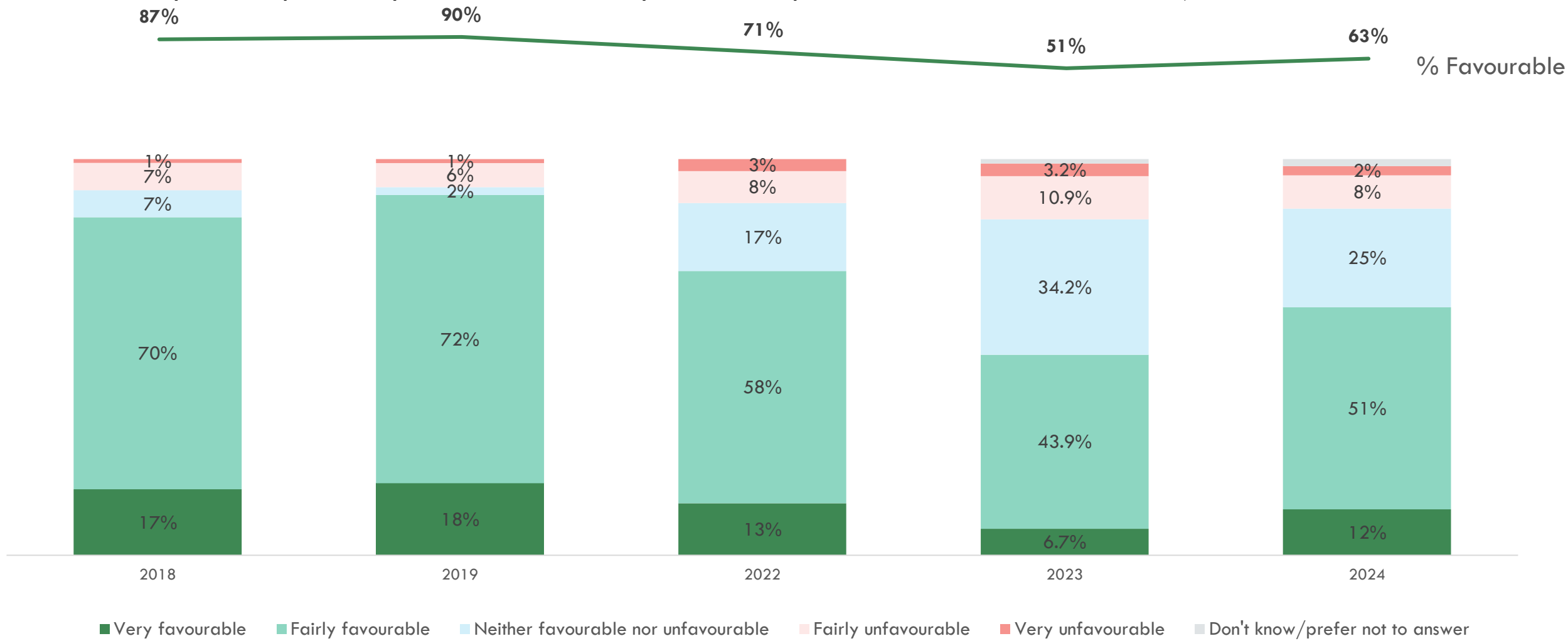
- The aim of the research was to explore members' perceptions of the Society, the service it provides and its priorities for the future
- Members were contacted via email from a database provided by the Society
- Interviews were conducted online from Wednesday 13 December 2023 to Thursday 11 January 2024
- In total, 1294 interviews were achieved. Weighting was applied to the data to ensure it was representative of the membership population.

Positivity towards the Society has increased all round since last year and the work of the Society is viewed much more favourably this year compared to last

- Usage of The Society's website has grown since last year to a greater extent than any other channel for finding out about services for Members
- All issues affecting the profession are deemed to be high priority by more members this year compared to last year
- The most widely held belief again this year is that the Society should continue to be responsible for representation, support and regulation of solicitors in Scotland and there is also a high level of agreement that the Society is an effective regulator
- Intervening in firms where a critical failure has been identified remains the highest priority again this year. Promoting fundamental principles such as human rights has become much more important this year. Providing quality training and CPD and providing resources and support on mental health and wellbeing are also of greater importance
- Very few members view Legal Aid as sustainable (particularly Criminal Legal Aid)
- Last year, 70% were aware of the Government's plans to bring forward new legislation regarding regulation. This year, 86% are aware of the legislation which is now before the Scottish Parliament and 29.5% are fully aware of this
- More than 4 out of 5 members (81%) are to some extent concerned about provisions in the legislation which would allow the Scottish Government to intervene directly

FAVOURABILITY - THE WORK OF THE SOCIETY

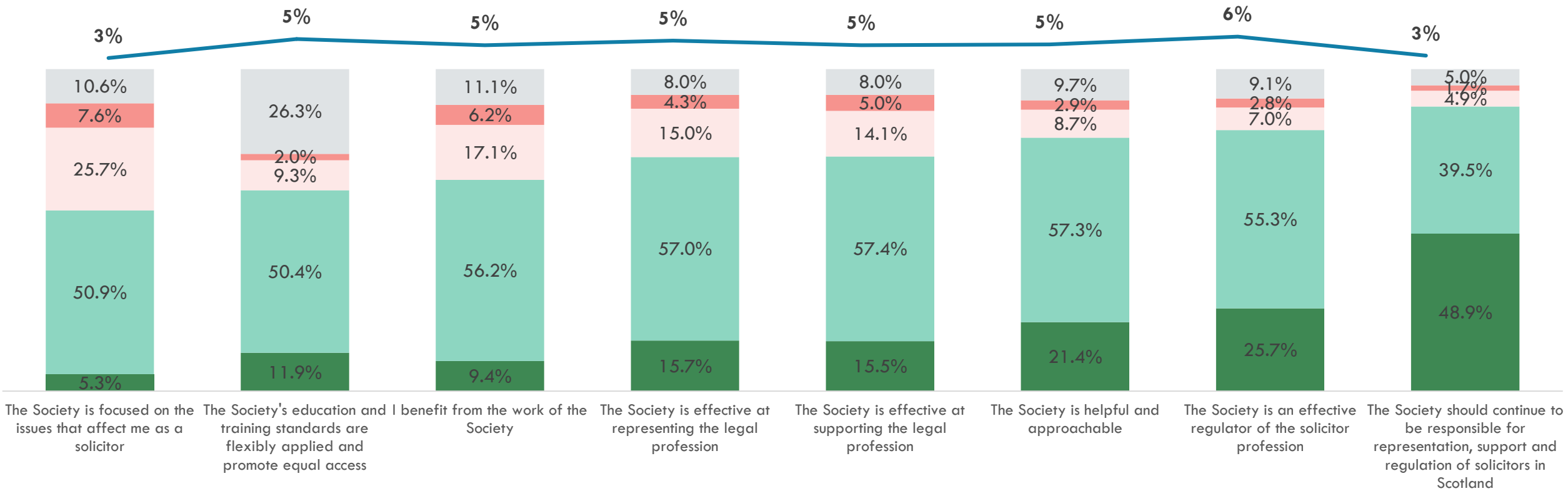
The work of the Society is viewed much more favourably this year compared to 2023 (although we are still viewed less favourably than in previous years which used a hybrid of telephone and online data collection)



PERCEPTIONS OF THE SOCIETY

The most widely held belief again this year is that the Society should continue to be responsible for representation, support and regulation of solicitors in Scotland and there is also a high level of agreement that the Society is an effective regulator. Positivity towards the Society has increased all round since last year

% Agreeing Change vs 2023

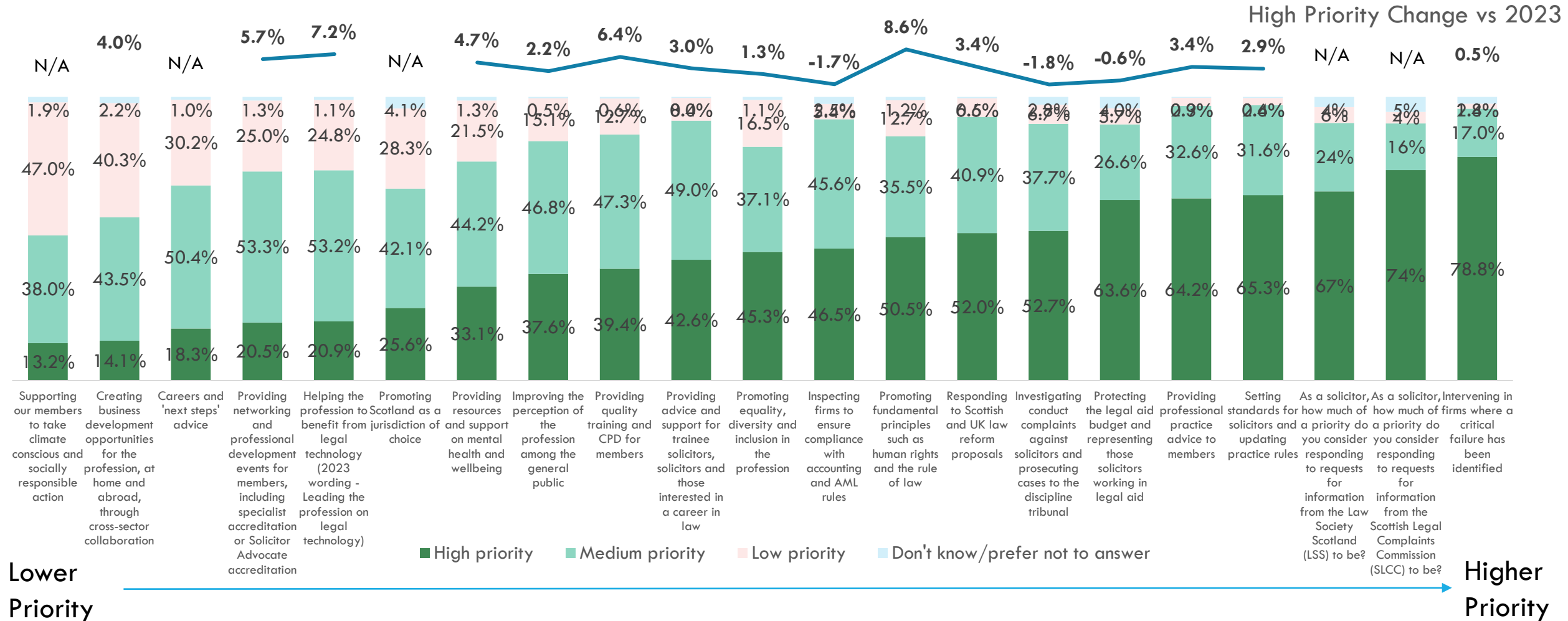


Lower Agreement Higher Agreement

■ Strongly agree
 ■ Tend to agree
 ■ Tend to disagree
 ■ Strongly disagree
 ■ Don't know/prefer not to answer

PRIORITIES – REPUTATION & REPRESENTATION

Intervening in firms where a critical failure has been identified remains the highest priority again this year. Promoting fundamental principles such as human rights has become much more important this year. Providing quality training and CPD and providing resources and support on mental health and wellbeing are also of greater importance

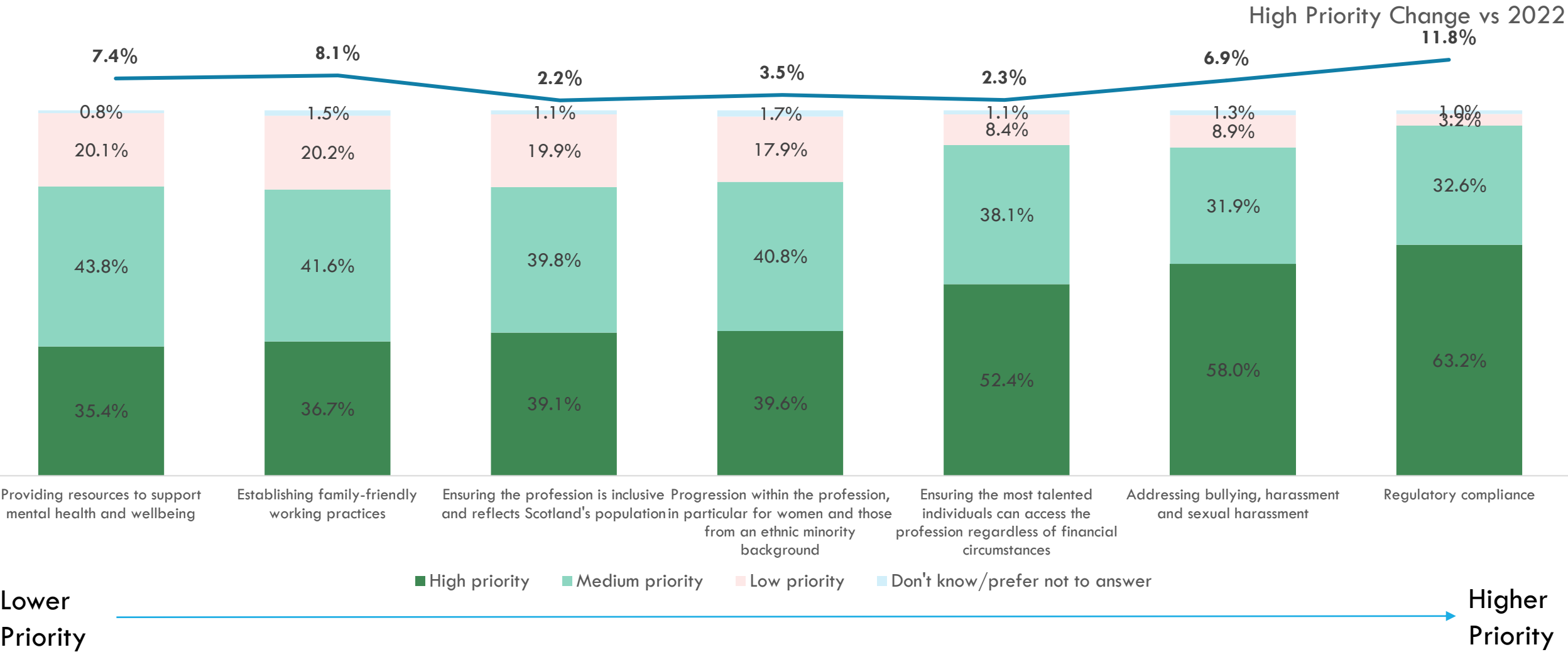


Lower Priority

Higher Priority

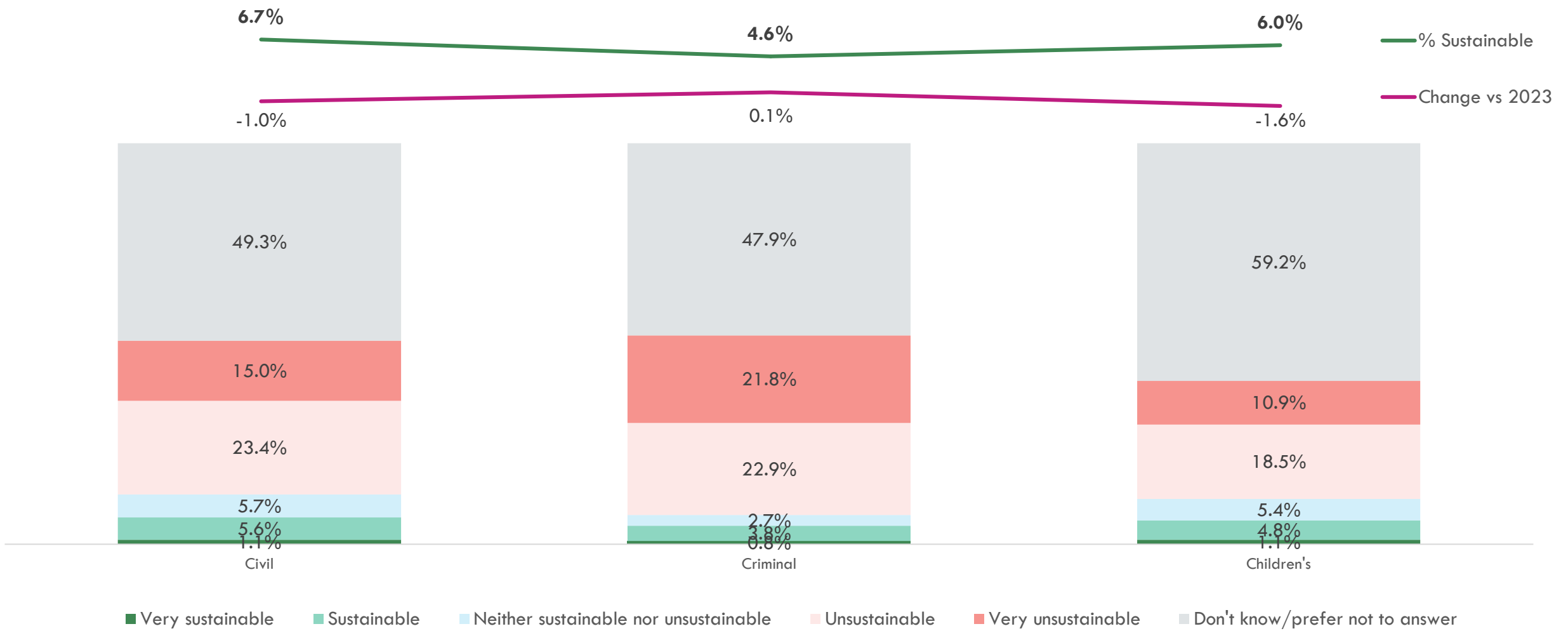
PRIORITIES – ISSUES AFFECTING THE PROFESSION

All issues affecting the profession are deemed to be high priority by more members this year compared to last year. Regulatory compliance remains the key high priority issue again this year and significantly higher numbers of members say it is now a high priority. Addressing bullying, harassment and sexual harassment remains the 2nd highest priority



LEGAL AID SUSTAINABILITY

Very few members view Legal Aid as sustainable (particularly Criminal Legal Aid) and the number of Members believing criminal and children’s legal aid to be sustainable have eroded further compared to last year

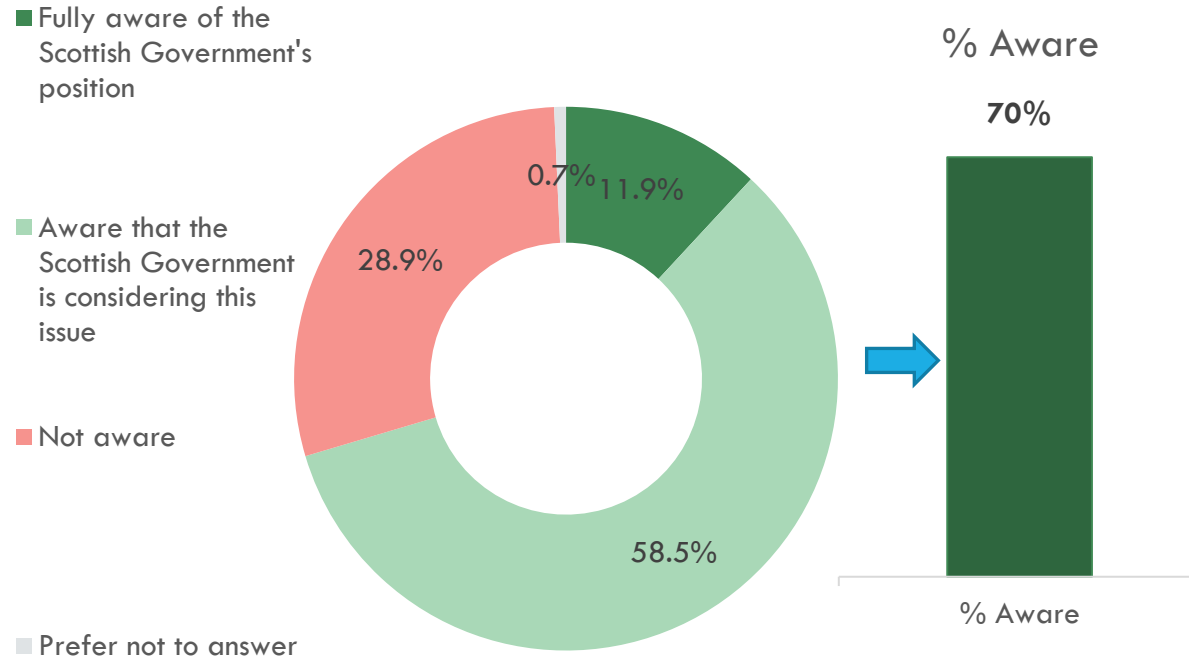


REGULATION OF LEGAL SERVICES

Last year, 70% were aware of the Government's plans to bring forward new legislation regarding regulation. This year, 86% are aware of the legislation which is now before the Scottish Parliament and 29.5% are fully aware of this

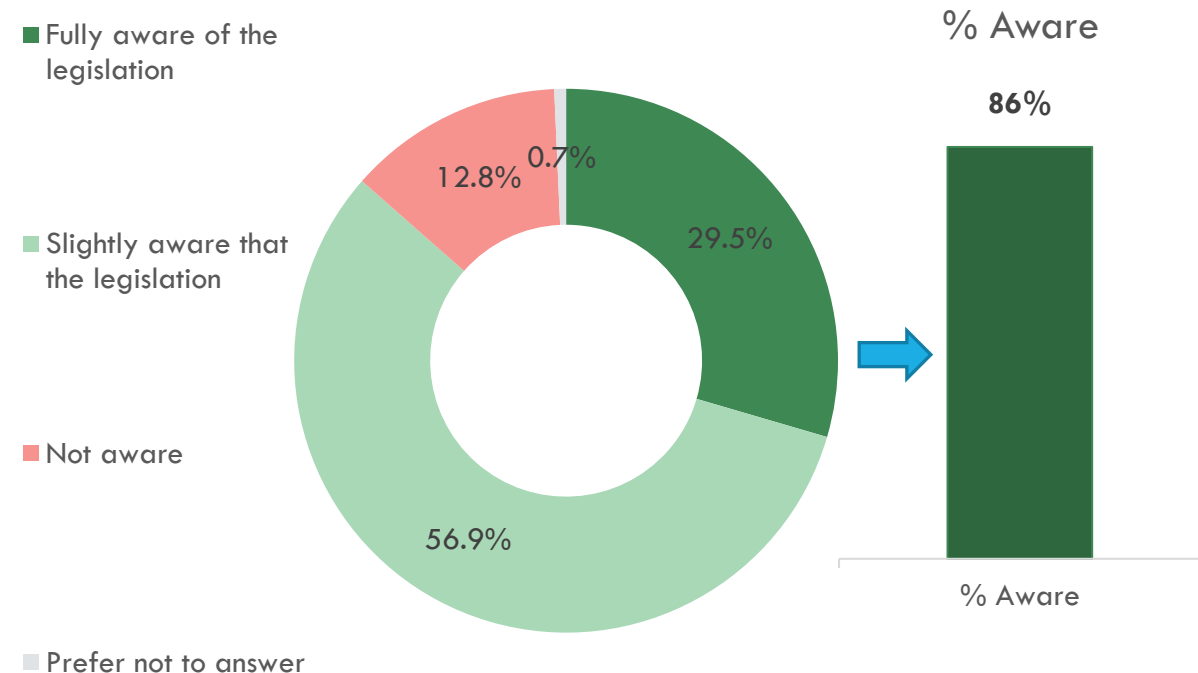
LAST YEAR

How aware are you of the Scottish Government's plans to bring forward new legislation to change the way solicitors are regulated?



THIS YEAR

How aware are you of the legislation before the Scottish Parliament which would change the way solicitors are regulated?



NOTE: QUESTION WORDING CHANGE

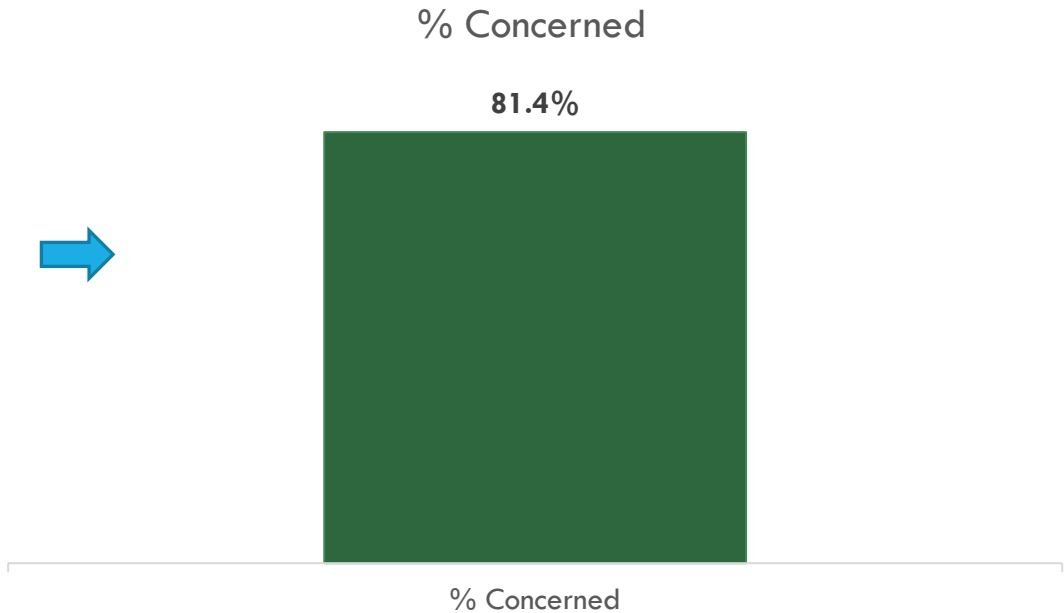
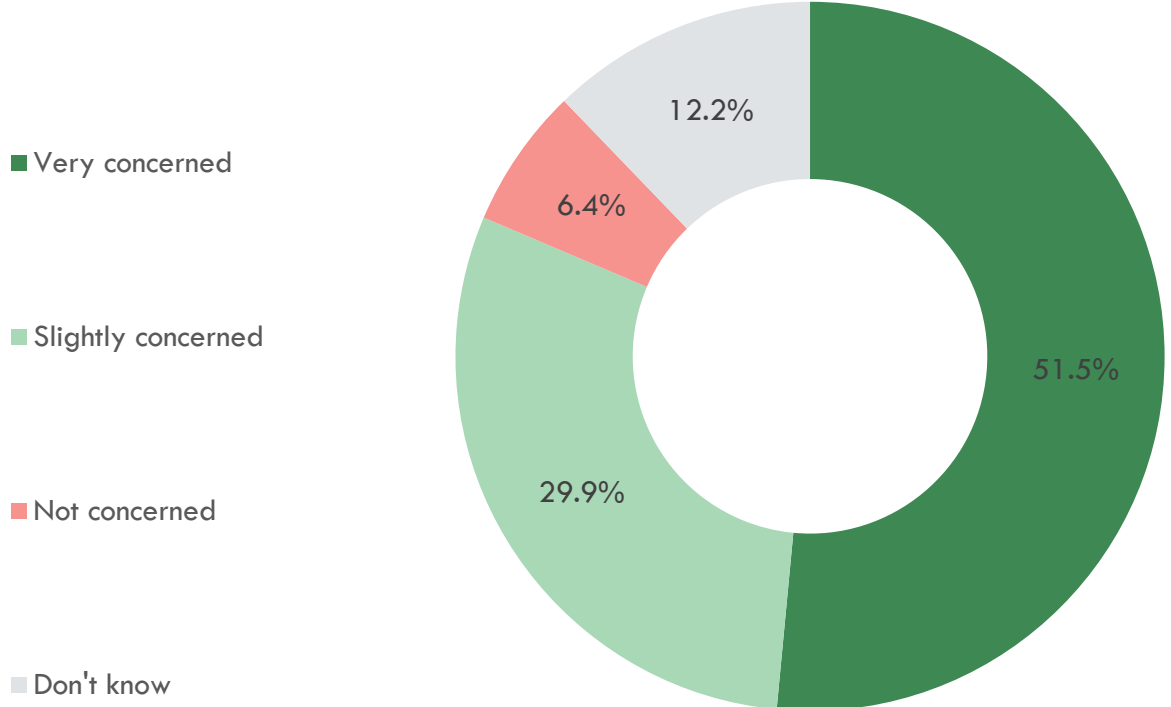
Last year Question - How aware are you of the Scottish Government's plans to bring forward new legislation to change the way solicitors are regulated?

This year Question - How aware are you of the legislation before the Scottish Parliament which would change the way solicitors are regulated?

REGULATION OF LEGAL SERVICES

More than 4 out of 5 members (81%) are to some extent concerned about provisions in the legislation which would allow the Scottish Government to intervene directly

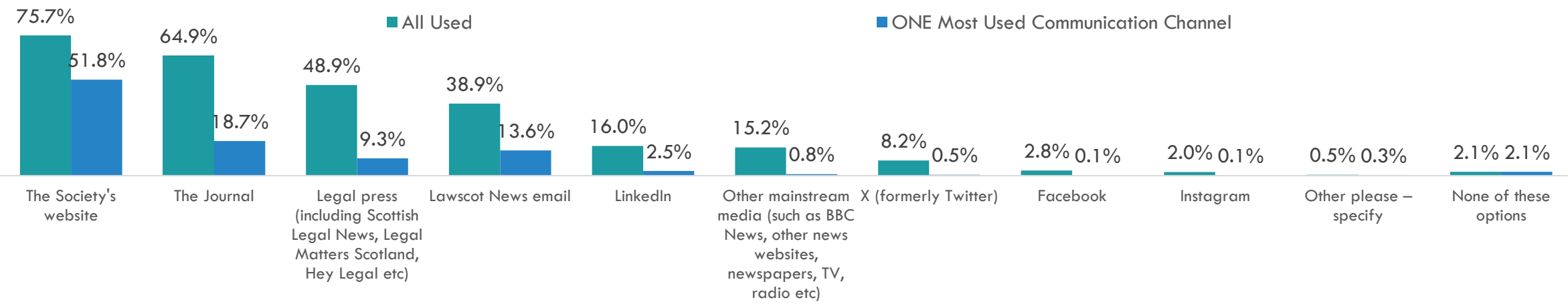
To what extent are you concerned about the provisions in the legislation that would allow the Scottish Government to intervene directly in the way solicitors are regulated?



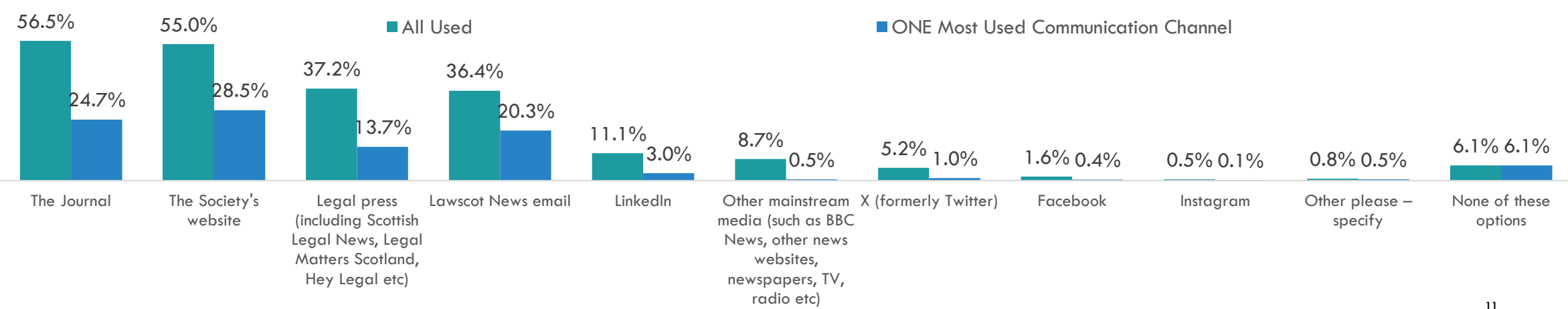
COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

The Society’s website is still the most critical communication channel for members finding out about services available to them and The Journal is also widely used (and to a greater extent than the website for members to find out about the work of the Society). There is also relatively high usage of the Lawscot News email and the legal press

TO FIND OUT ABOUT THE SOCIETY'S SERVICES FOR MEMBERS



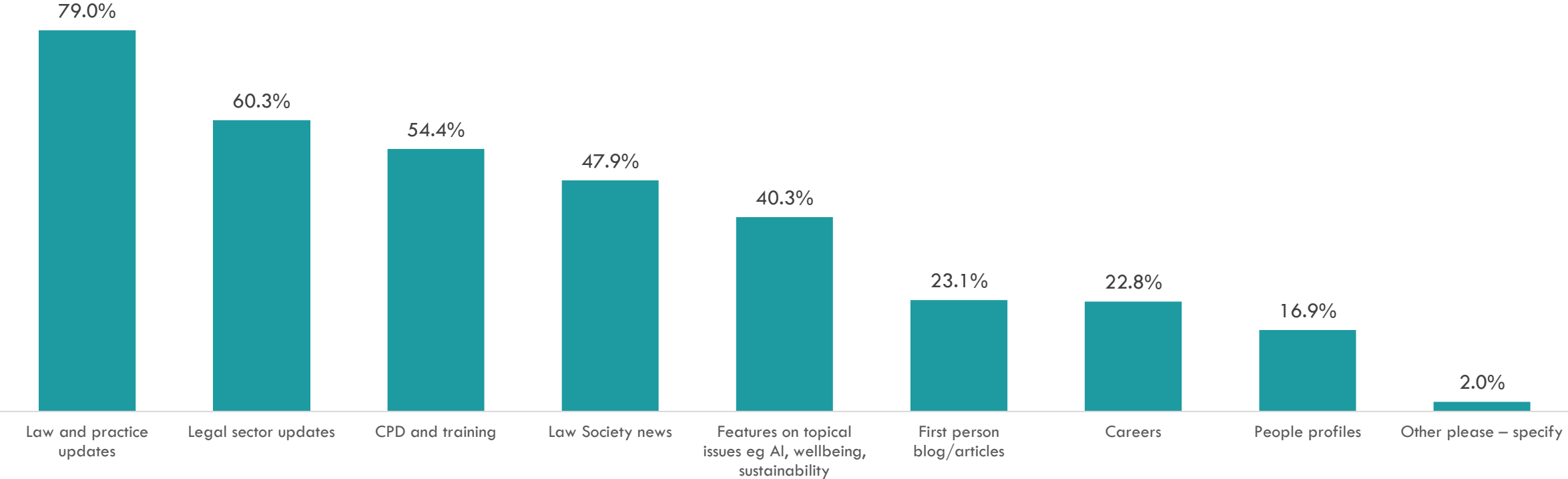
TO FIND OUT ABOUT CURRENT WORK THAT THE SOCIETY IS INVOLVED IN



LAW SOCIETY NEWS AND UPDATES

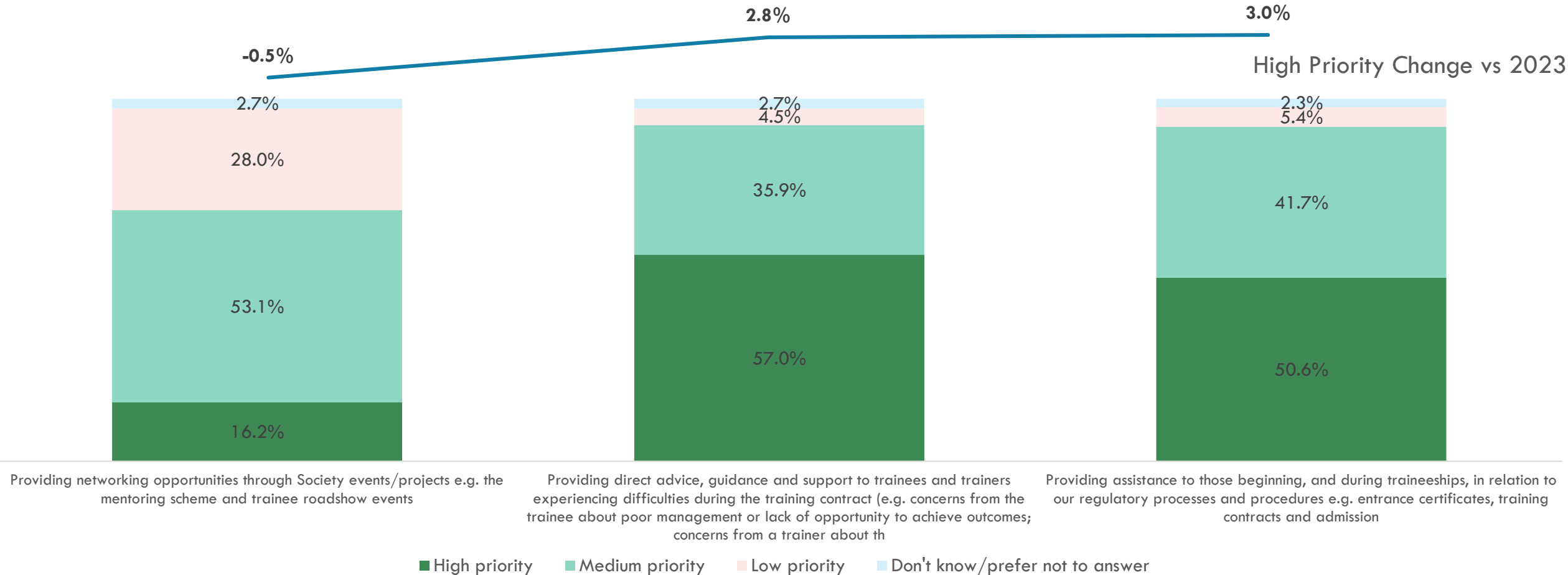
Law and practice updates are by far the most useful type of news from the Law Society, followed by legal sector updates and news about CPD and training

What type of news and updates from the Law Society and/or the Journal do you find useful?



PRIORITIES – SUPPORT FOR TRAINEE SOLICITORS AND THOSE WHO TRAIN THEM

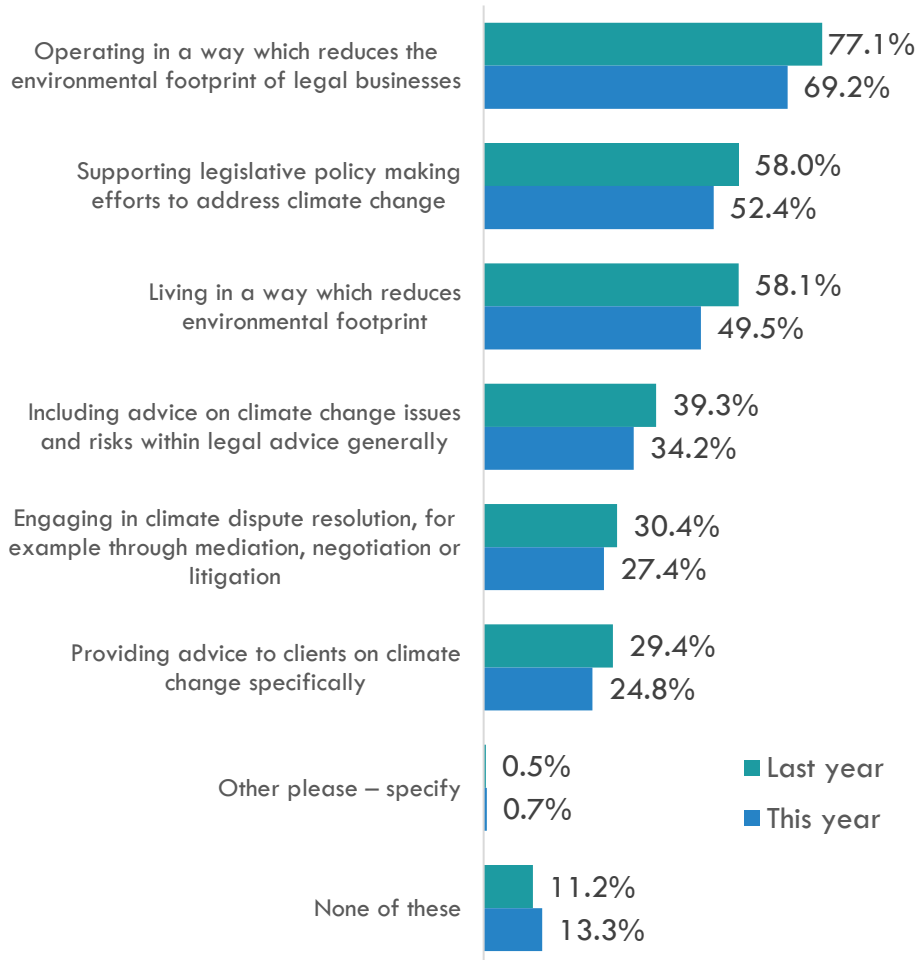
Priorities have become slightly more important around supporting trainee solicitors by providing direct advice guidance and support to those experiencing difficulties and on providing assistance to those beginning traineeships



CLIMATE CHANGE

The most widespread opinion again this year as last year is that the responsibility of the Society (in relation to climate change) is to operate in a way which reduces the environmental footprint. although these opinions are becoming more widespread among the profession

What do you consider is the responsibility of the profession in relation to climate change?



A common theme to emerge is that Member's don't believe it is the role of the Society to provide advice on climate change. The Society's role is more to be one of 'encouraging' the profession to be responsible by leading by example or supporting working practices which would benefit the environment



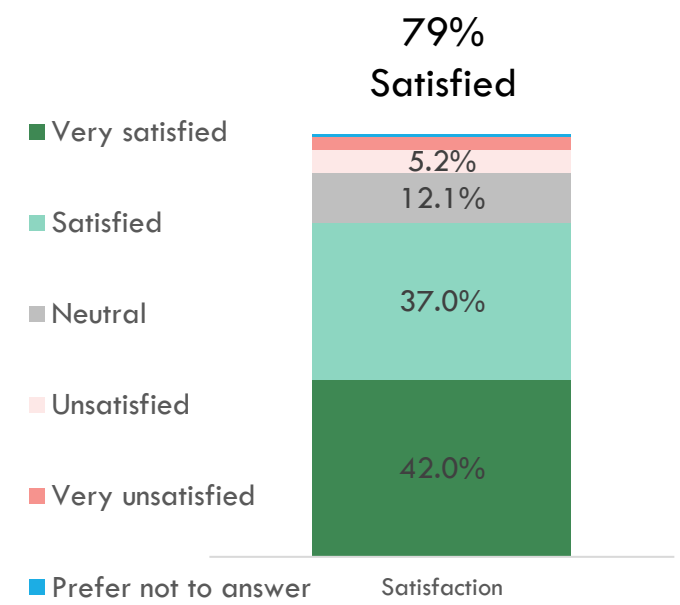
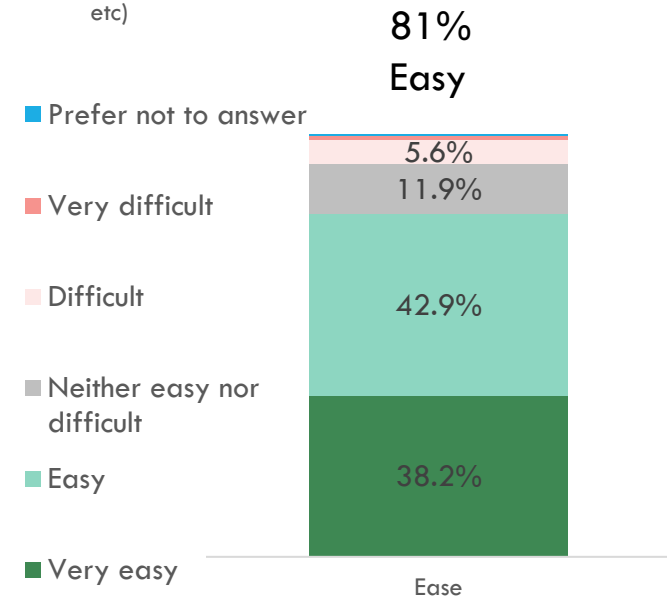
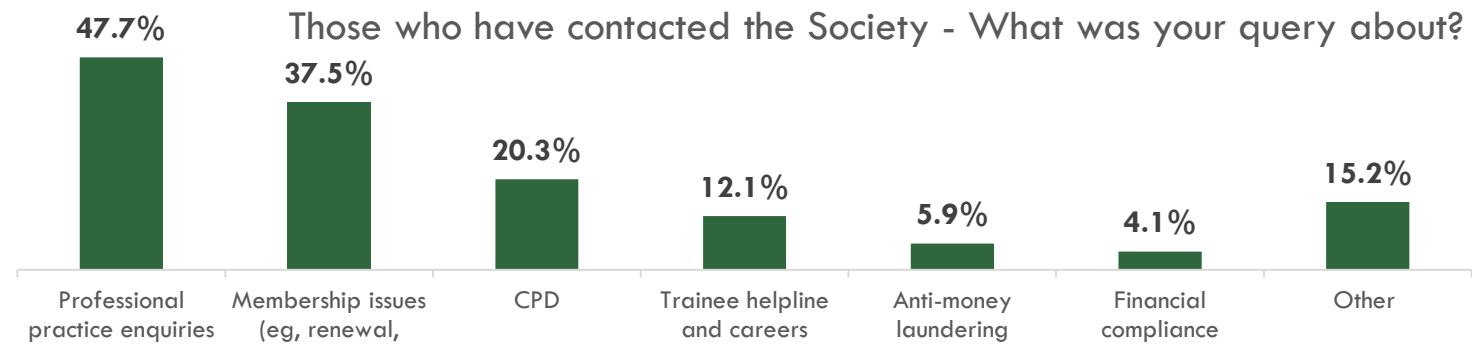
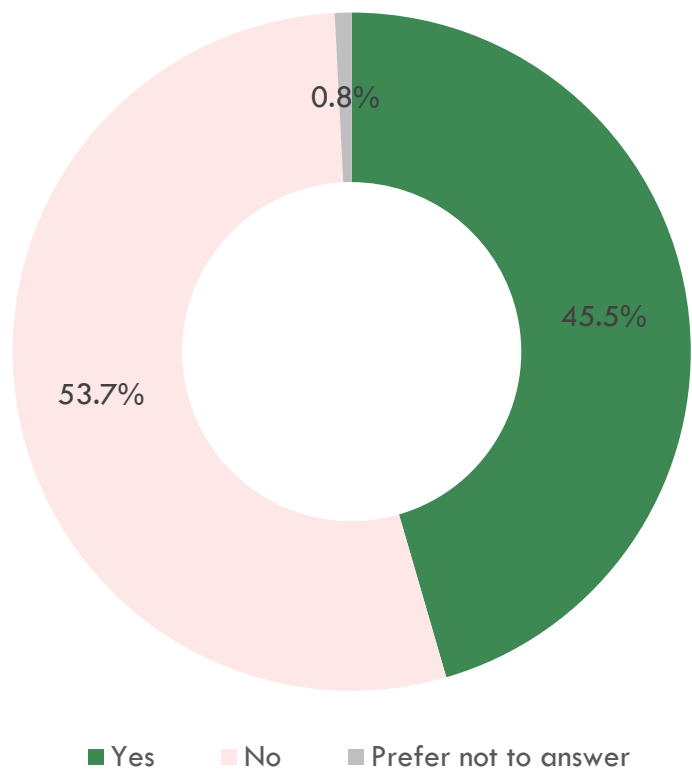
How might the Society help address the responsibilities of the profession on climate change?

(Answered by 108 respondents)

CONTACT WITH THE SOCIETY

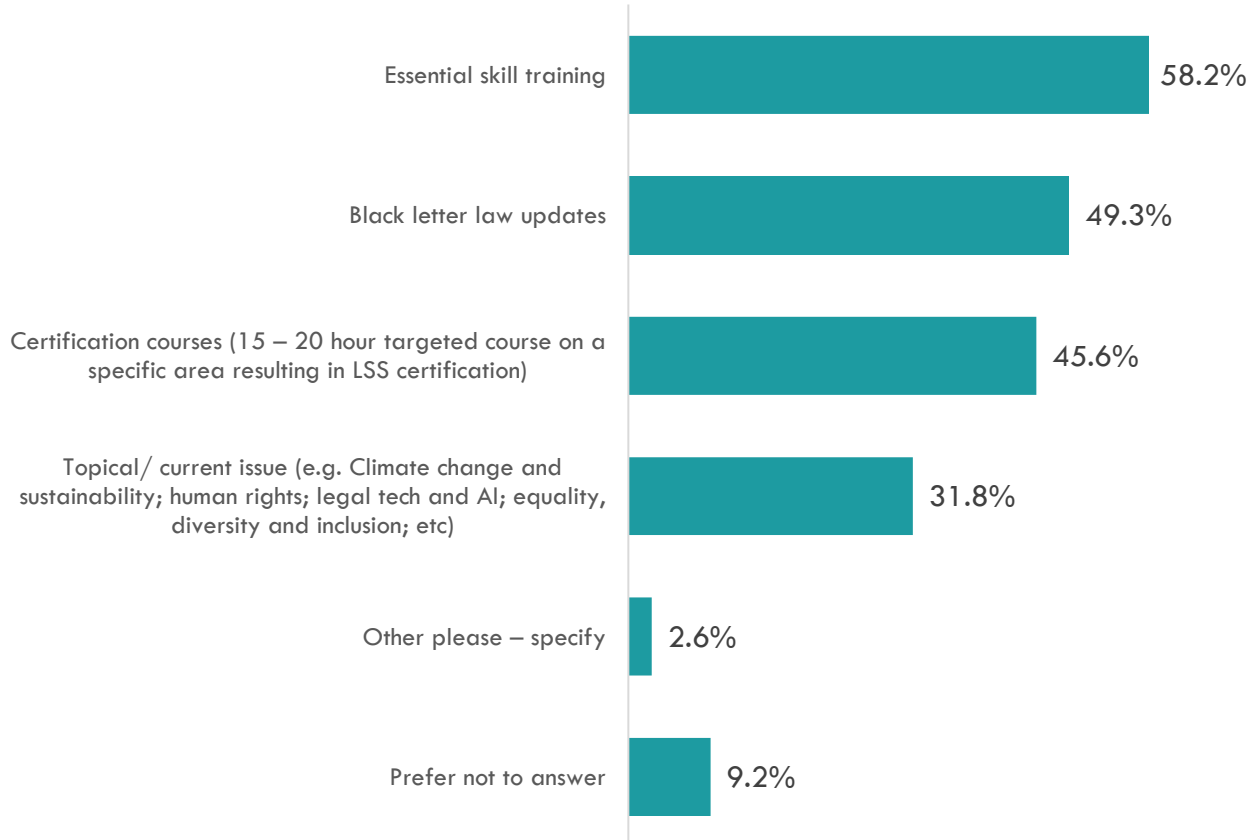
Just under half of members (46%) have contacted the society in the last year, primarily for a professional practice enquiry but also commonly for issues around membership or about CPD. For most, it was easy to contact the Society and they were satisfied with the experience

Have you had to contact the Society over the last year?

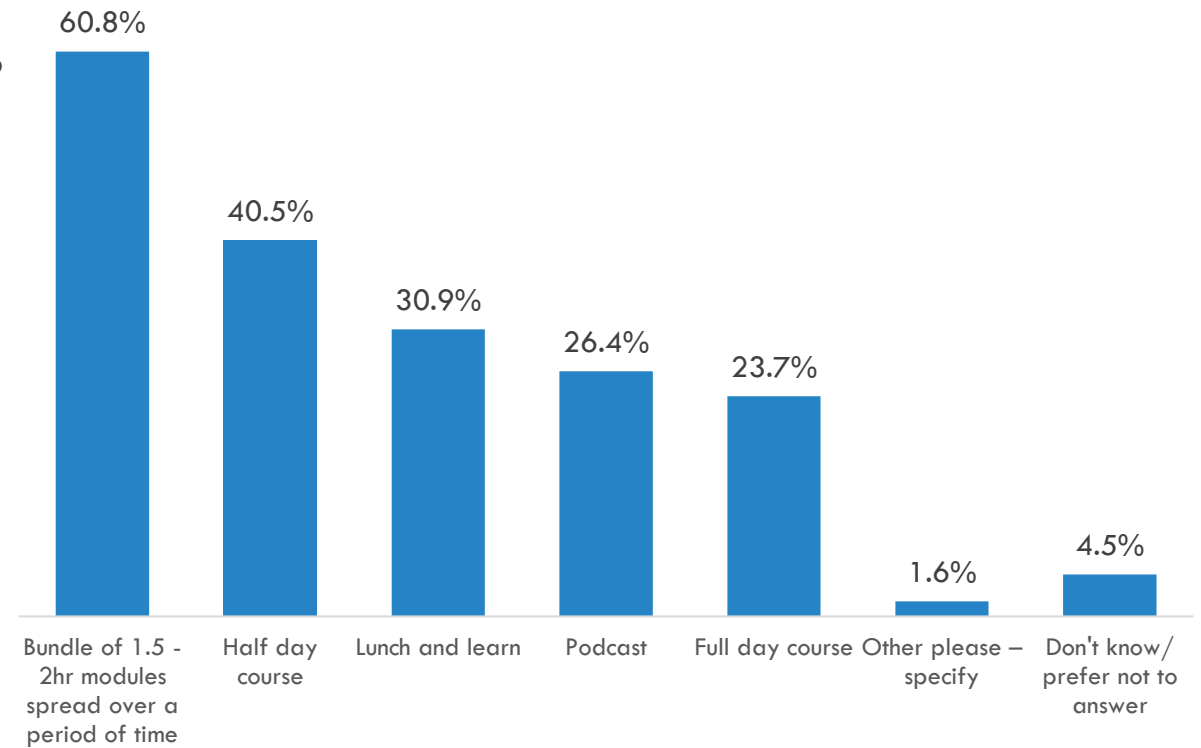


Essential skill training is the area Members most think should be enhanced, followed by black letter law updates and then certification courses. Training style preference is more for a modular bundle of sessions spread over time

What areas do you think LSS CPD should further enhance through their programme?



What is your preferred way of consuming online training?



THANK YOU

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February 2024



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