



NEW ZEALAND LAW SOCIETY &  
NICHE CONSULTING GROUP

# Legal Salary Survey 2018



NEW ZEALAND  
LAW SOCIETY

NZLS EST 1869

**NICHE** Recruiting  
Specialists

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# Foreword

**This is the fifth survey the New Zealand Law Society has carried out on the salaries paid to employed lawyers working in-house and in private practice. We believe the provision of freely available information on remuneration, the hours worked, other benefits and charge-out rates is an important resource for the legal profession.**

The survey was sent out by the Law Society to all New Zealand-based lawyers who were employed by a law firm or who were working as in-house lawyers. It does not, therefore, include partners and directors of law firms or barristers sole (other than barristers who are employed by another barrister).

The response rate is the best we have had for any of our salary surveys. While any survey will always be indicative rather than conclusive, we are confident that the results provide an excellent guide to prevailing levels of salaries and employment conditions.

The survey found there were no distinguishable difference in the salaries paid to women and men in their first decade of practice. This is encouraging,

of course. It is important to note, however, that there are noticeable gender differences in hours worked, the level of salary increases, benefits and other employment conditions. Women also make up only one-third of the partners and directors in our law firms, which will mean that the overall average remuneration of a woman lawyer is below that of the average male lawyer. The survey indicates we have a good starting point, but that is what it is: a starting point. Continued implementation of the Law Society's Gender Equality Charter will mean we will have both a commitment from the signatories and also detailed research on measures to secure equality.

The Law Society greatly appreciates the involvement of Niche Consulting Group in carrying out this survey. Their expertise in analysis and their knowledge of legal recruitment and employment in New Zealand has resulted in the preparation of the most detailed report on legal salary surveys that we have been able to provide.

**Kathryn Beck**

*President, New Zealand Law Society*



# Introduction

**Niche Consulting Group is proud to partner with** the New Zealand Law Society to present this survey of salary and employment trends for 2018. As well as gathering salary information, we asked questions about benefits, part-time work, salary increases, job titles and charge out rates.

This survey was completed by over 2,500 members of the New Zealand Law Society with a broad distribution of experience levels, locations and practice types. This was a very pleasing response, though it should be noted that there was a relatively small response from lawyers with 5 to 9 years post qualification experience. This may correlate to the number of lawyers who are working overseas at this stage of their career.

While some reports in the media this year made claims of significant salary inequity between male and female lawyers, our raw data showed no distinguishable difference by gender in the 0 to 9 years PQE range. This group represents the largest number of respondents at 62%.

However, the 'Snapshot of the Profession' featured in the March 2018 edition of LawTalk shows

that male lawyers make up 39% of employees in multi-lawyer law firms, and partnerships are made up of 73% male lawyers. In other words, even though there are more women working in the legal profession, there are more men in senior, higher paying, roles. It would be hard to dispute that this has created a gender-based wage gap. We expect to see the gap close in coming years, as a generational shift occurs, and more women move into partnership and senior roles.

The parameters of this survey do not allow us to draw any conclusions about pay equity for the profession as a whole. We may expand the information gathered in future surveys to enable a more detailed analysis of gender pay equity.

The salary tables provide good insight into salaries in the legal profession, according to PQE level and across different locations and practice types. Nevertheless, we would caution against making salary decisions, or petitions for an increase, based solely on the survey data. In some instances, a low sample was received, and/or a very wide range was given. We would recommend the survey data being used in conjunction with market information



and, where appropriate, your existing salary data and remuneration strategy.

Please feel free to contact a consultant at Niche Consulting Group to discuss any specific queries.

We would like to thank all those who participated in the survey and we hope the information provides some useful insights.

**Jane Temel**

*Director, Niche Consulting Group*

# Part 1 – Number of responses

## TOTAL

**2579** Total | **2193** Complete  
 | **386** Partial, incomplete information

## BY GENDER

**1483** Women  
**702** Men  
**4** Other

## BY LOCATION

**807** Auckland  
**619** Wellington  
**226** Christchurch  
**47** Dunedin  
**96** Hamilton  
**62** Tauranga  
**195** Other North Island Centre  
**126** Other South Island Centre

## BY TITLE

**1013** Solicitor | **718** Solicitor  
 | **249** Senior Solicitor  
 | **46** Staff Solicitor  
**330** Associate | **189** Associate  
 | **141** Senior Associate  
**280** Counsel | **101** Legal Counsel  
 | **76** General Counsel  
 | **28** Senior Counsel  
 | **26** Special Counsel  
 | **23** Crown Counsel  
 | **15** In-house counsel  
 | **11** Counsel  
**105** Lawyer | **90** Lawyer  
 | **15** Senior Lawyer  
**90** Adviser | **63** Senior Legal Adviser  
 | **16** Legal adviser  
 | **11** Adviser  
**187** Other | **65** Manager  
 | **37** Barrister  
 | **32** Consultant  
 | **26** Principal  
 | **14** Head  
 | **13** Director

## Part 2 – Benefits

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**The survey found that 50% of respondents receive benefits.** As might be expected, the distribution of those who receive benefits increases with PQE level. Mobile phones and laptops/tablets are among the most commonly received benefits, along with 'bonus scheme' and 'flexible hours'. This seems to point to a new way of working which is more flexible, and outcome focused.

As organisations aim to improve attraction and retention in an increasingly talent driven market, we have seen many organisations move away from a 'cashed up' model and back to a 'salary plus benefits' model. This is reflected in the data, which shows that 33% of respondents receive car parking, 30% receive private health insurance and 20% have a social club. Other benefits such as gym membership and 'day off on your birthday' feature at 17% and 13% respectively.

Flexible working is offered quite evenly across all locations. However, some locations stand out for

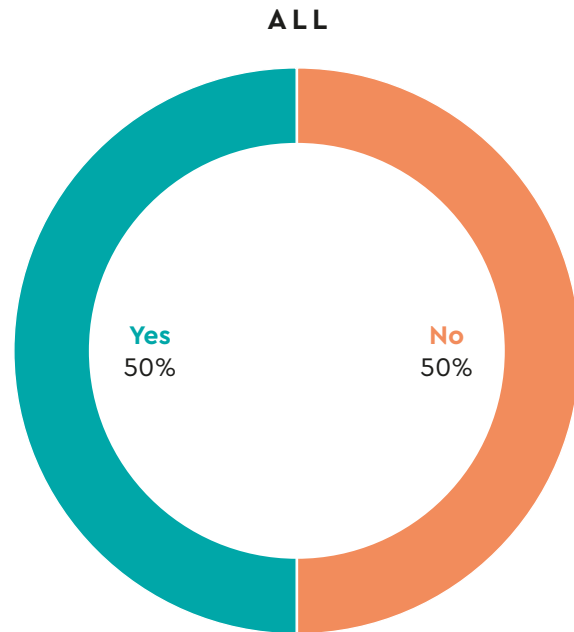
offering certain benefits e.g. Auckland for bonuses, Tauranga for mobile phones, Hamilton for parking and Dunedin for free/discounted legal work.

It is interesting to note that male lawyers are more likely to have a mobile phone, bonus scheme, parking, private health insurance and gym membership than their female counterparts. Female lawyers are more likely to receive flexible hours, a laptop/tablet, discounted/free legal work and a 'day for off for their birthday' than their male colleagues.

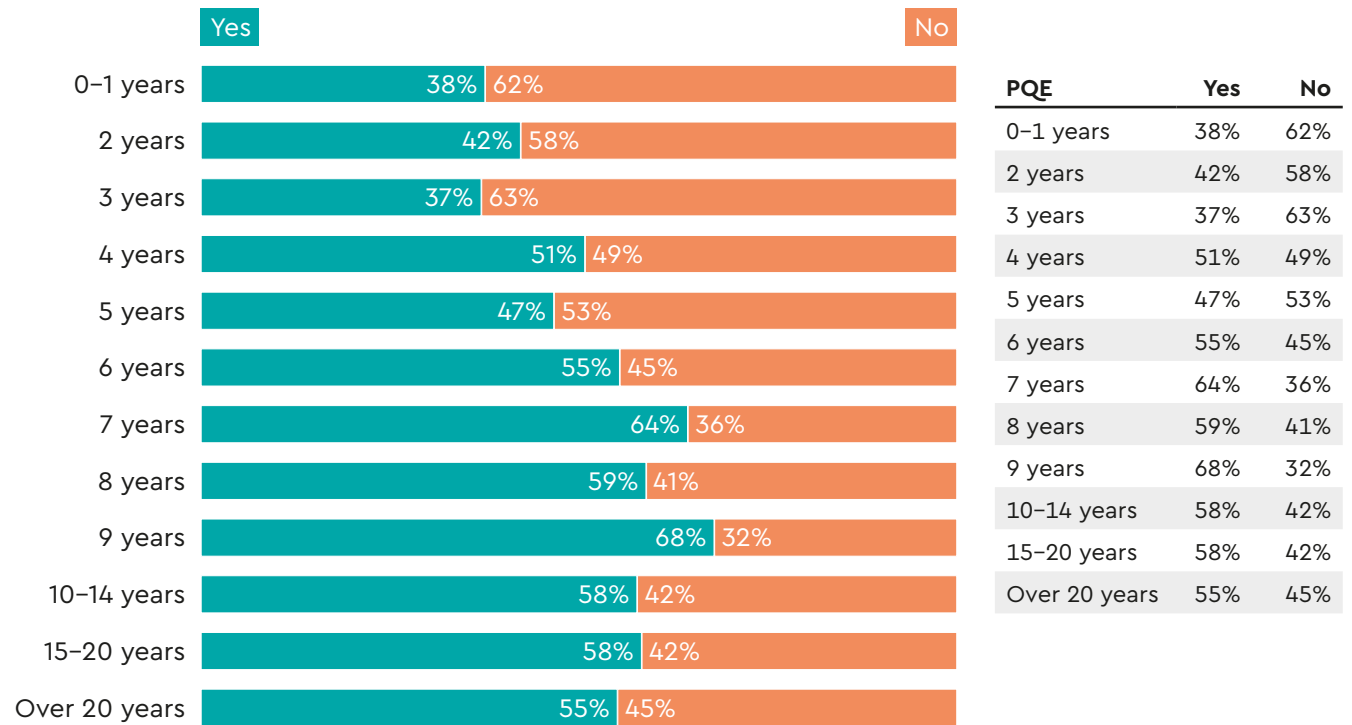
Of the 50% of lawyers that receive benefits, the value of benefits is under \$10,000 for most respondents (77%). A small number of respondents receive over \$40,000 in benefits (4%), with the highest percentage of respondents in this group located in Tauranga and Auckland.

The value of benefits is mostly even between male and female respondents, although there was a higher percentage of females in the lowest bracket (up to \$10,000), and a higher percentage of males in the highest bracket (over \$40,000).

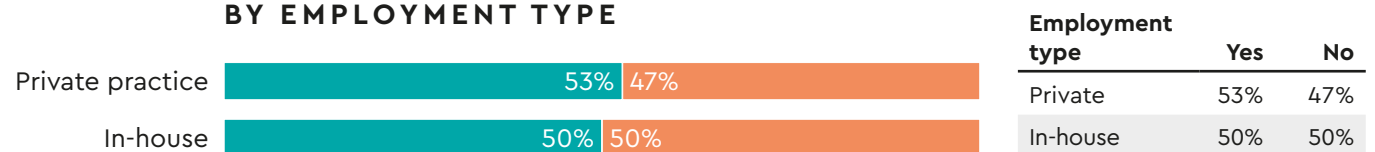
## Do you receive benefits in addition to your base salary?



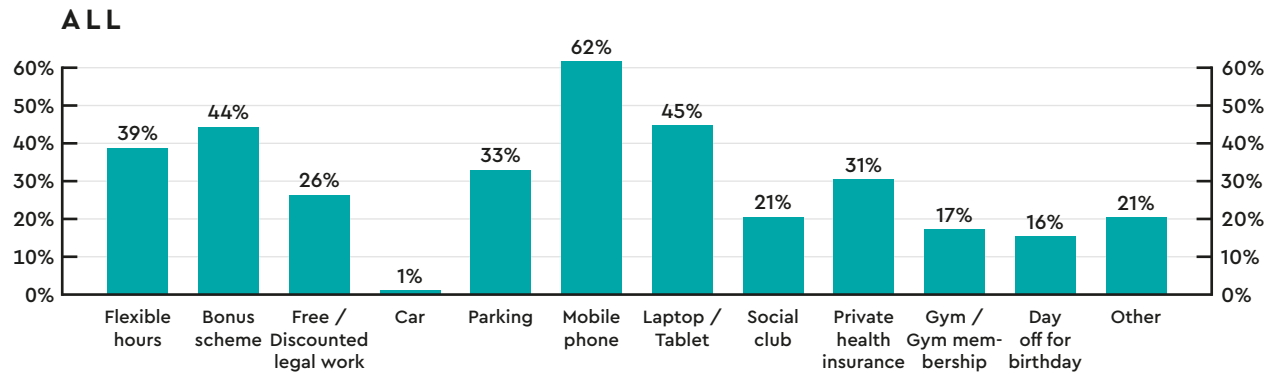
### BY YEARS OF POST-QUALIFICATION EXPERIENCE



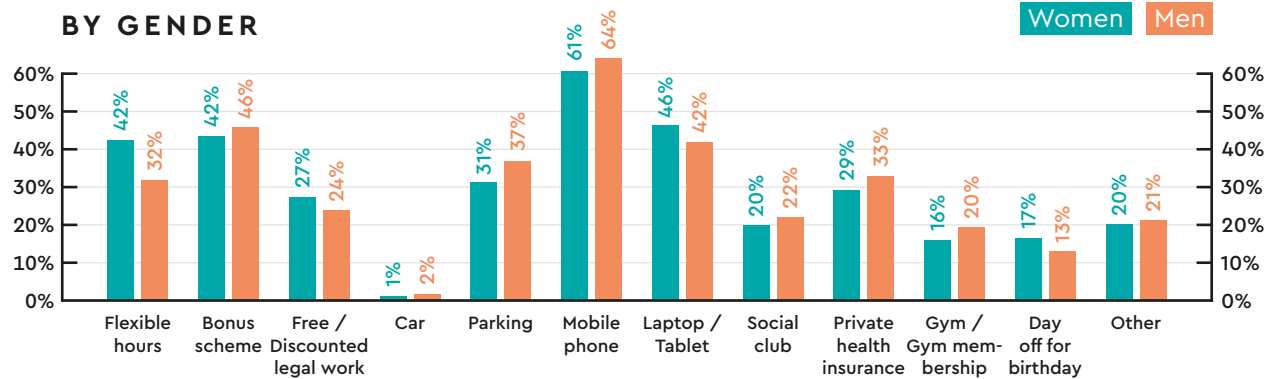
### BY EMPLOYMENT TYPE



## What benefits do you currently receive?

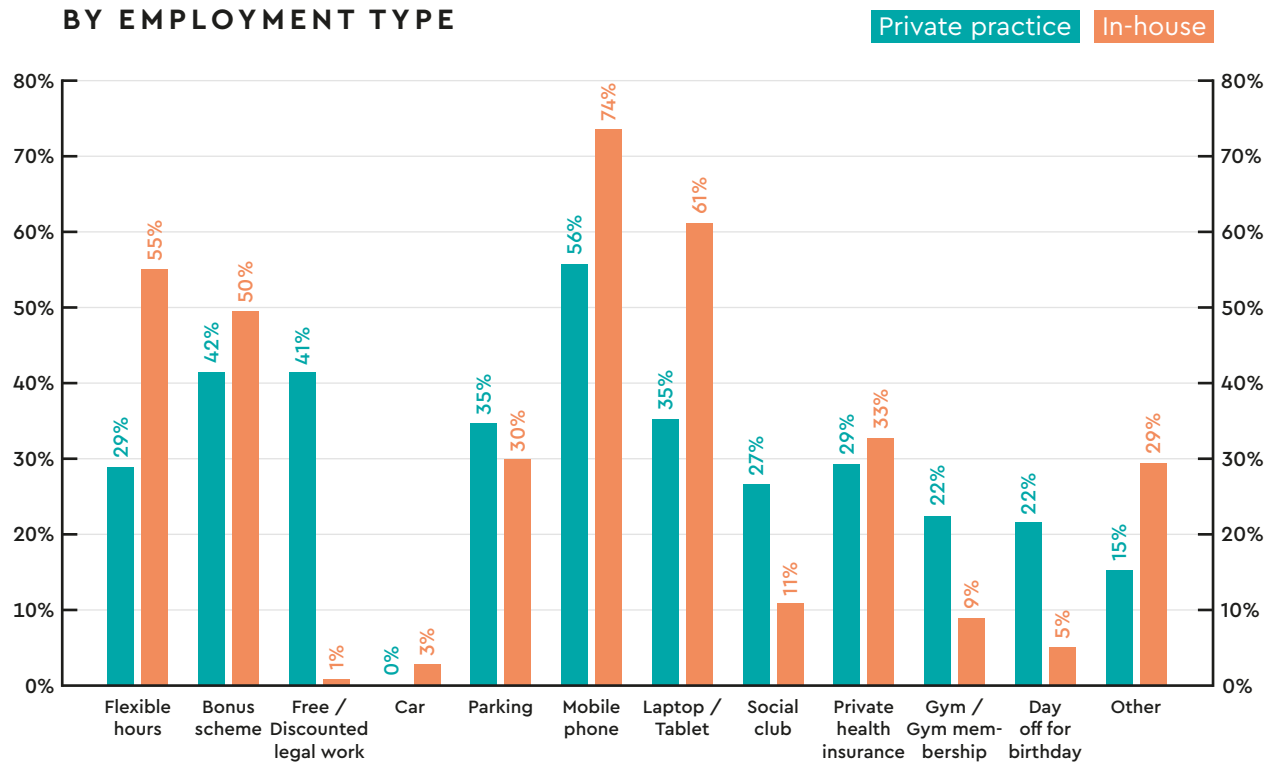


Benefit	All	Women	Men
Flexible hours	39%	42%	32%
Bonus scheme	44%	43%	46%
Free / Discounted legal work	26%	27%	24%
Car	1%	1%	2%
Parking	33%	31%	37%
Mobile Phone	62%	61%	64%
Laptop / Tablet	45%	46%	42%
Social Club	21%	20%	22%
Private health insurance	31%	29%	33%
Gym / Gym membership	17%	16%	20%
Day off for birthday	16%	17%	13%
Other	21%	20%	21%





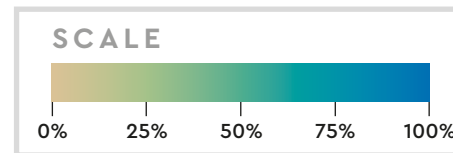
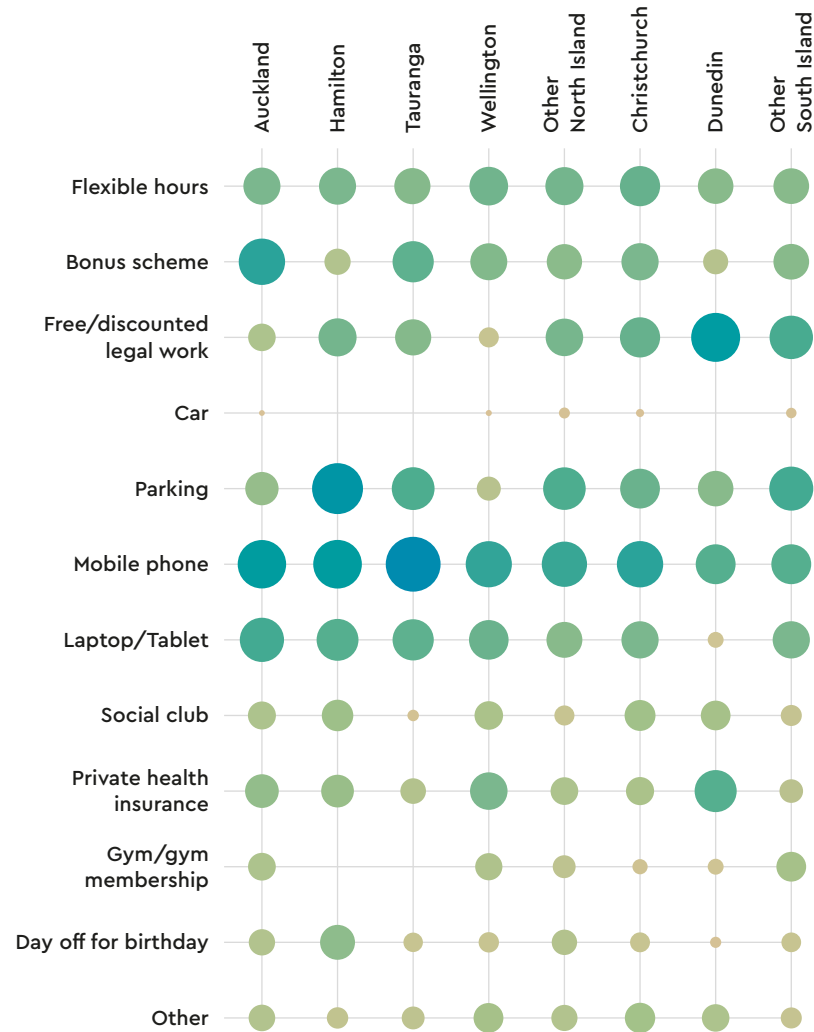
## What benefits do you currently receive?



Benefit	Private practice	In-house
Flexible hours	29%	55%
Bonus scheme	42%	50%
Free / Discounted legal work	41%	1%
Car	0%	3%
Parking	35%	30%
Mobile Phone	56%	74%
Laptop / Tablet	35%	61%
Social Club	27%	11%
Private health insurance	29%	33%
Gym / Gym membership	22%	9%
Day off for birthday	22%	5%
Other	15%	29%

# What benefits do you currently receive?

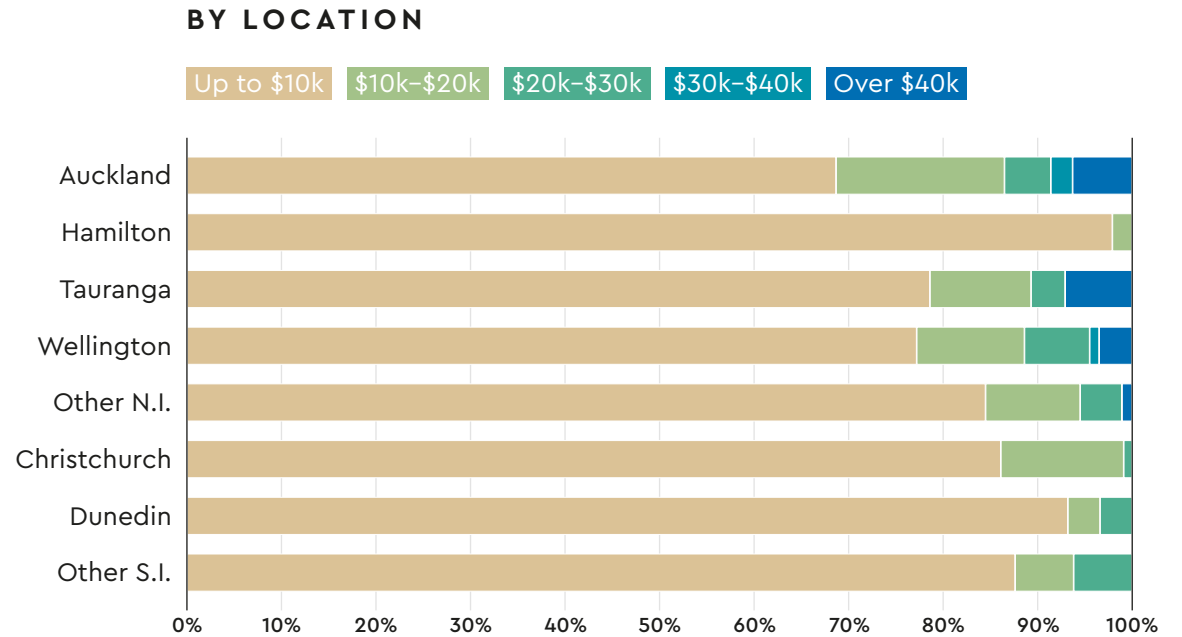
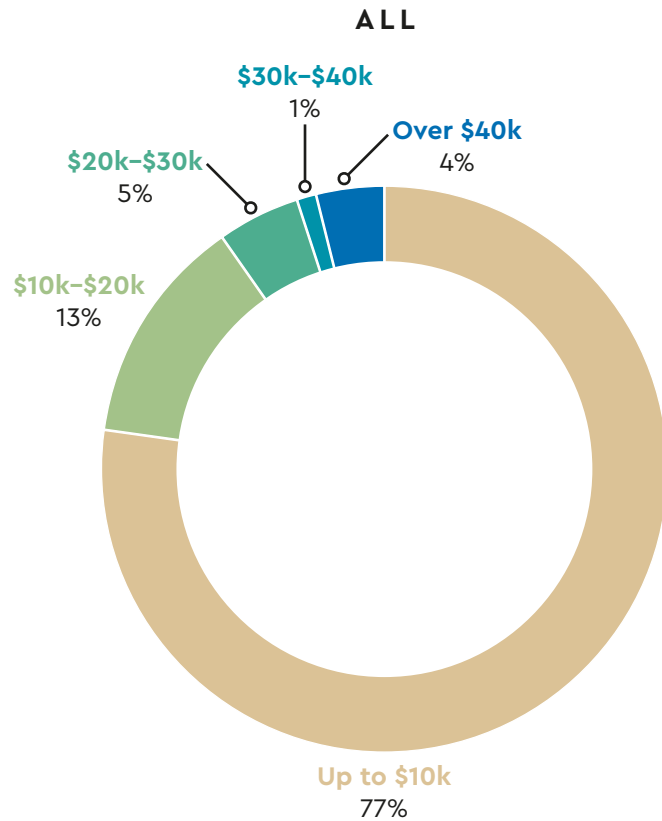
## BY LOCATION



The size and colour of each circle relates to the percentage of lawyers in each subset.

Benefit	Akl	Ham	Tga	Wlg	Oth. N.I.	Chch	Dun	Oth. S.I.
Flexible hours	38%	38%	36%	41%	40%	44%	35%	35%
Bonus scheme	59%	19%	46%	37%	34%	38%	17%	35%
Free/discounted legal work	21%	40%	36%	11%	39%	44%	66%	52%
Car	1%	0%	0%	1%	3%	2%	0%	3%
Parking	30%	71%	50%	16%	50%	43%	35%	53%
Mobile Phone	64%	65%	82%	58%	56%	59%	48%	74%
Laptop/Tablet	53%	48%	46%	43%	35%	38%	7%	38%
Social Club	21%	27%	4%	22%	11%	26%	24%	12%
Private health insurance	31%	29%	18%	38%	21%	22%	48%	15%
Gym/gym membership	21%	0%	0%	20%	14%	6%	7%	24%
Day off for birthday	19%	33%	11%	11%	18%	11%	3%	11%
Other	19%	13%	14%	24%	19%	25%	21%	12%

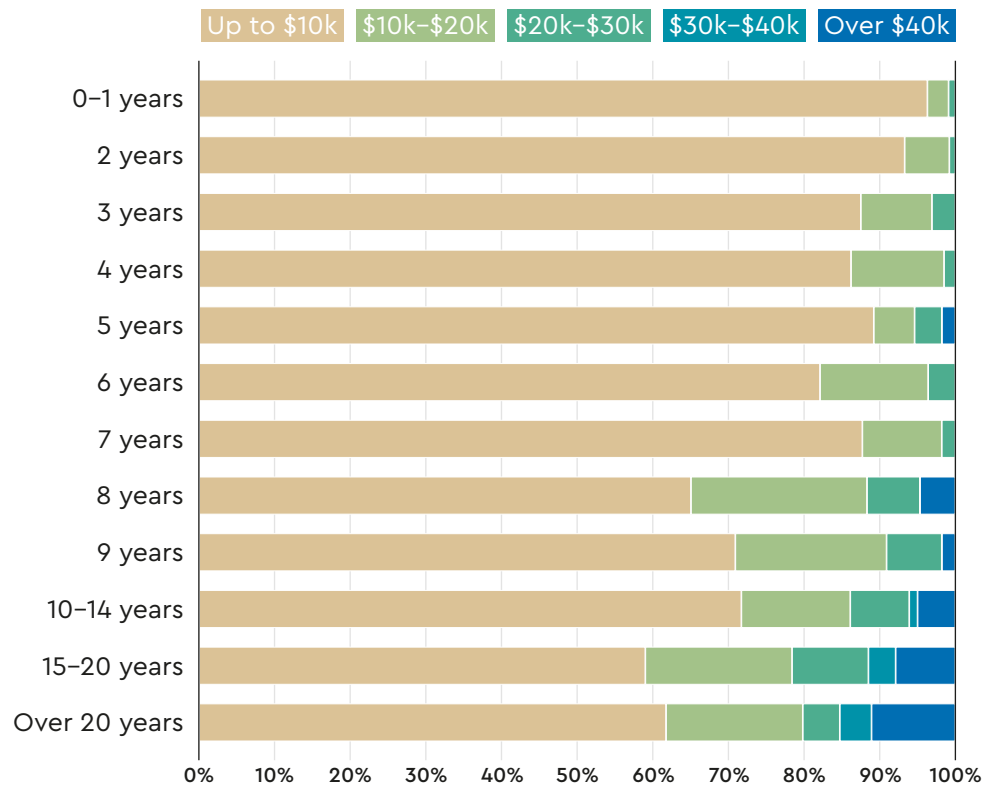
## What do you estimate is the annual value of the benefits you receive?



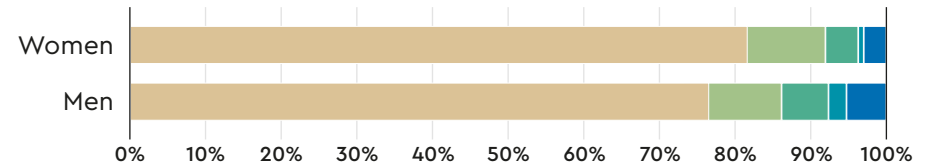
Location	Up to \$10k	\$10k - \$20k	\$20k - \$30k	\$30k - \$40k	Over \$40k
Auckland	69%	18%	5%	2%	6%
Hamilton	98%	2%	0%	0%	0%
Tauranga	79%	11%	4%	0%	7%
Wellington	77%	11%	7%	1%	4%
Other North Island centre	84%	10%	4%	0%	1%
Christchurch	86%	13%	1%	0%	0%
Dunedin	93%	3%	3%	0%	0%
Other South Island centre	88%	6%	6%	0%	0%

## What do you estimate is the annual value of the benefits you receive?

BY YEARS OF POST-QUALIFICATION EXPERIENCE



BY GENDER

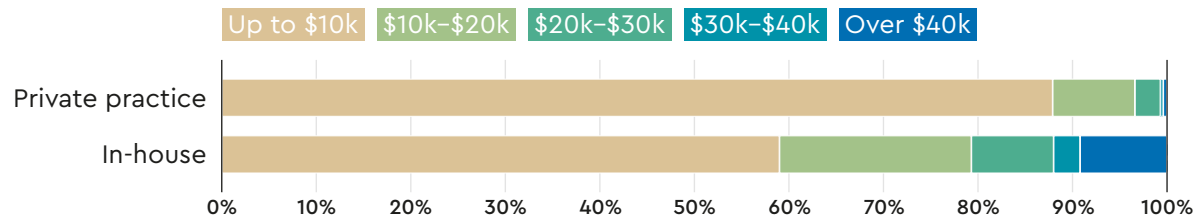


Gender	Up to \$10k	\$10k - \$20k	\$20k - \$30k	\$30k - \$40k	Over \$40k
Women	79%	13%	4%	1%	3%
Men	74%	13%	6%	2%	5%

PQE	Up to \$10k	\$10k - \$20k	\$20k - \$30k	\$30k - \$40k	Over \$40k
0-1 years	96%	3%	1%	0%	0%
2 years	93%	6%	1%	0%	0%
3 years	88%	9%	3%	0%	0%
4 years	86%	12%	2%	0%	0%
5 years	89%	5%	4%	0%	2%
6 years	82%	14%	4%	0%	0%
7 years	88%	11%	2%	0%	0%
8 years	65%	23%	7%	0%	5%
9 years	71%	20%	7%	0%	2%
10-14 years	72%	14%	8%	1%	5%
15-20 years	59%	19%	10%	4%	8%
Over 20 years	62%	18%	5%	4%	11%

## What do you estimate is the annual value of the benefits you receive?

### BY EMPLOYMENT TYPE



Employment type	Up to \$10k	\$10k - \$20k	\$20k - \$30k	\$30k - \$40k	Over \$40k
Private practice	88%	9%	3%	0%	0%
In-house	59%	20%	9%	3%	9%

## Part 3 – Part-time vs Full-time

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**The survey shows 85% of respondents work full-time** and 15% of respondents work part-time. 96% of men work full-time and 4% of men work part-time. 80% of women work full-time and 20% of women work part-time.

Of those working part-time, most are working between 21–30 hours per week, or more than 30 hours per week. This seems to support the most common reason for working part-time which was 'caregiving' at 72%, where there is a preference for working 3–4 days or school hours.

The number of lawyers working part-time increases significantly from 9 years PQE onwards.

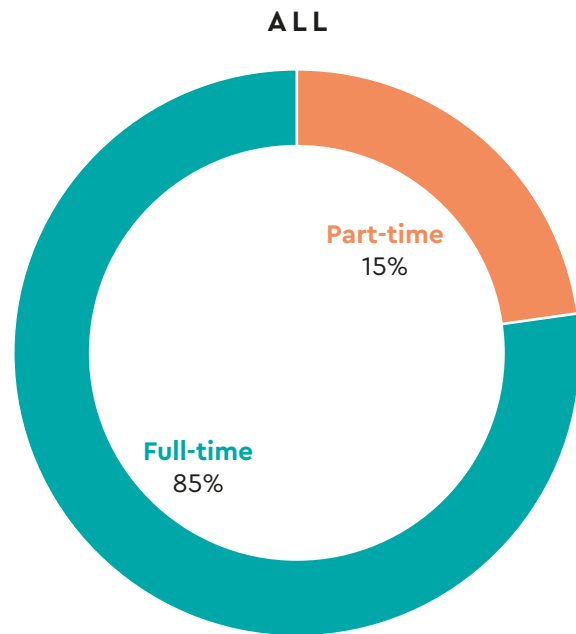
When analysed by gender, 77% of women and 10% of men work part-time to enable caregiving.

The main reasons for men choosing to work part-time are 'don't need to work full-time' (28%) and 'to pursue other interests and hobbies' (25%).

It was interesting to note that smaller centres offer the greatest percentage of part-time roles at 21% and 22% of roles in their centres. Part-time roles in Auckland and Wellington account for 13% and 12% of roles respectively.

The data confirms how challenging it can be for junior lawyers to secure their first role, with 50% of respondents in the 0–1 PQE range citing their reason for working part-time as 'can't find a suitable permanent role'. The other half of respondents in the 0–1 PQE group gave 'other' as the reason for working part-time, which may be due to continuing study.

## Do you work full-time or part-time?



### BY LOCATION



### BY GENDER

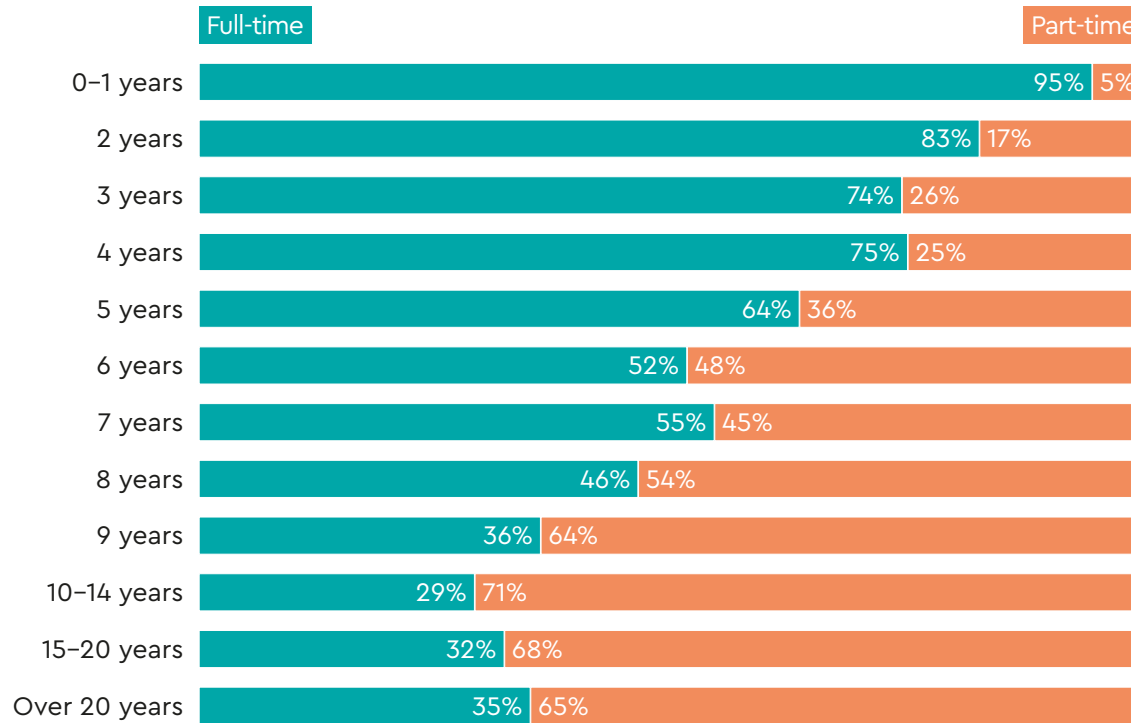


Gender	Full-time	Part-time
Women	80%	20%
Men	96%	4%

Location	Full-time	Part-time
Auckland	87%	13%
Hamilton	87%	13%
Tauranga	86%	15%
Wellington	87%	13%
Other North Island centre	79%	22%
Christchurch	82%	19%
Dunedin	81%	19%
Other South Island centre	78%	22%

## Do you work full-time or part-time?

### BY YEARS OF POST-QUALIFICATION EXPERIENCE



PQE	Full-time	Part-time
0-1 years	95%	5%
2 years	83%	17%
3 years	74%	26%
4 years	75%	25%
5 years	64%	36%
6 years	52%	48%
7 years	55%	45%
8 years	46%	54%
9 years	36%	64%
10-14 years	29%	71%
15-20 years	32%	68%
Over 20 years	35%	65%

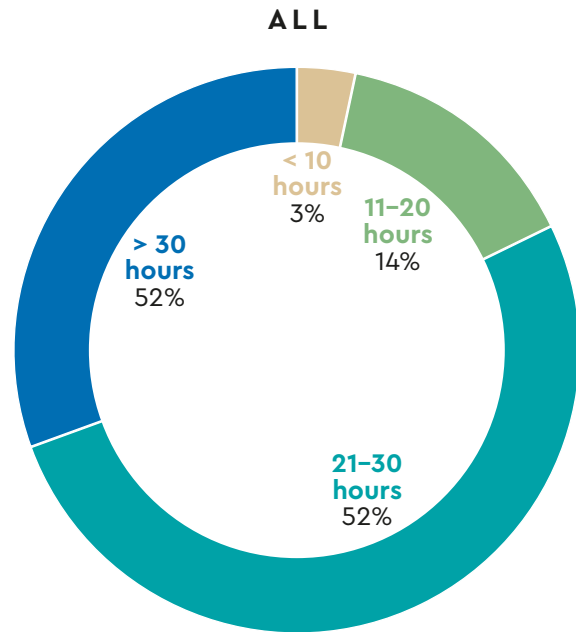
### BY EMPLOYMENT TYPE



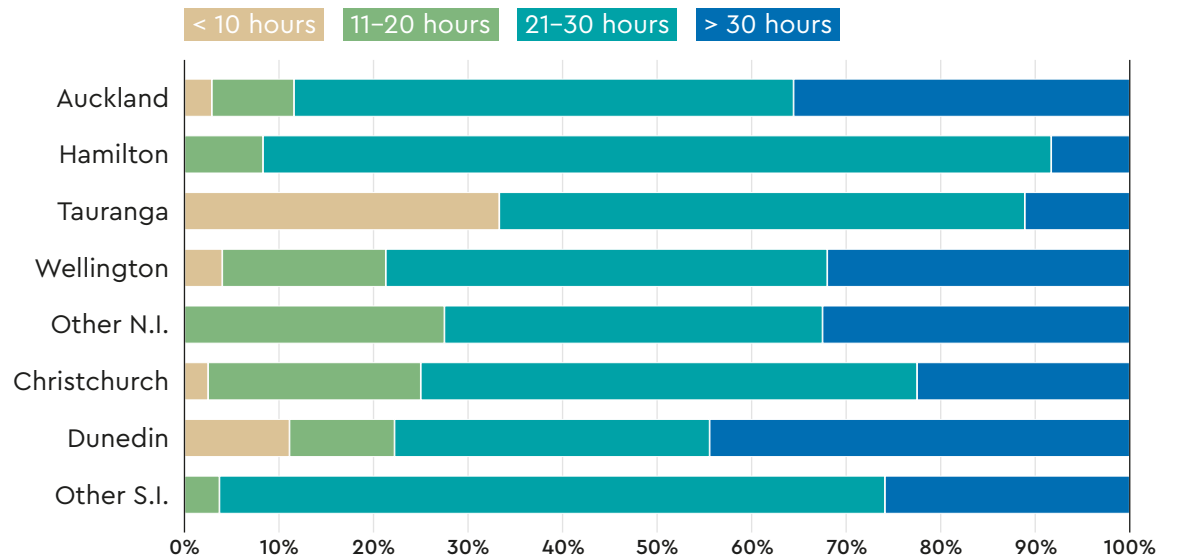
Employment type	Full-time	Part-time
Private practice	86%	14%
In-house	84%	16%



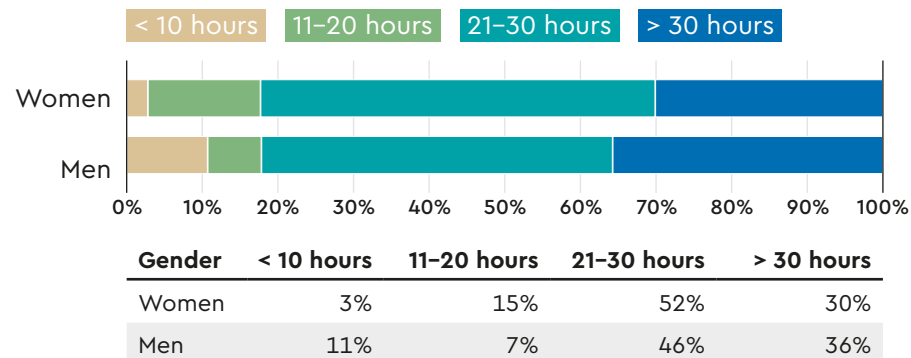
## What are your hours per week (on average) if you work part-time?



### BY LOCATION



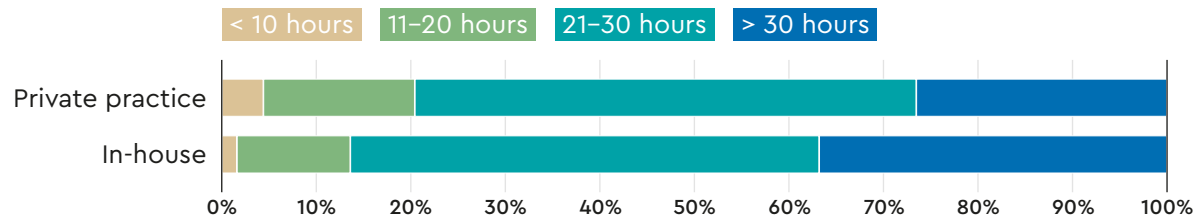
### BY GENDER



Location	< 10 hours	11-20 hours	21-30 hours	> 30 hours
Auckland	3%	9%	53%	36%
Hamilton	0%	8%	83%	8%
Tauranga	33%	0%	56%	11%
Wellington	4%	17%	47%	32%
Other North Island centre	0%	28%	40%	33%
Christchurch	3%	23%	53%	23%
Dunedin	11%	11%	33%	44%
Other South Island centre	0%	4%	70%	26%

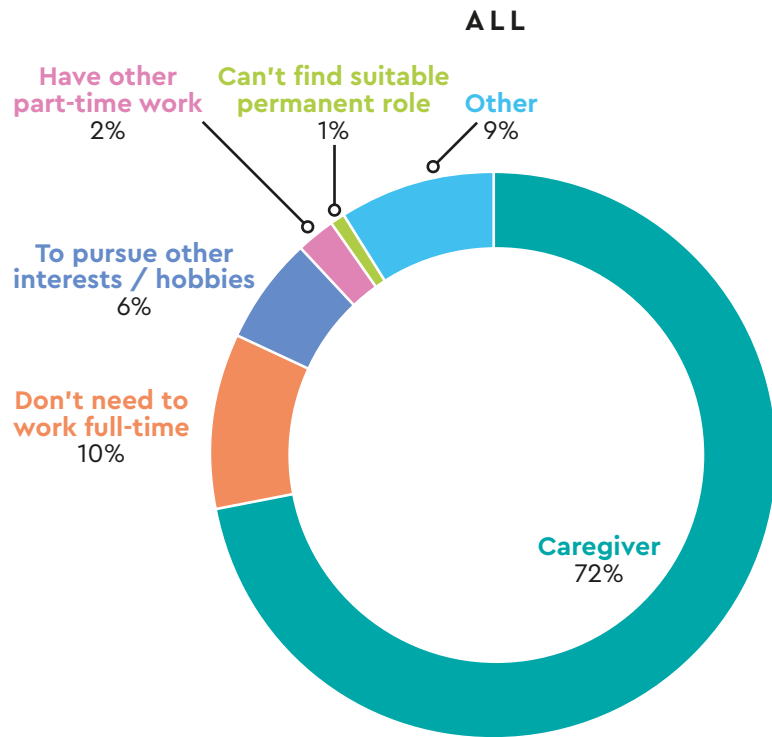
## What are your hours per week (on average) if you work part-time?

### BY EMPLOYMENT TYPE

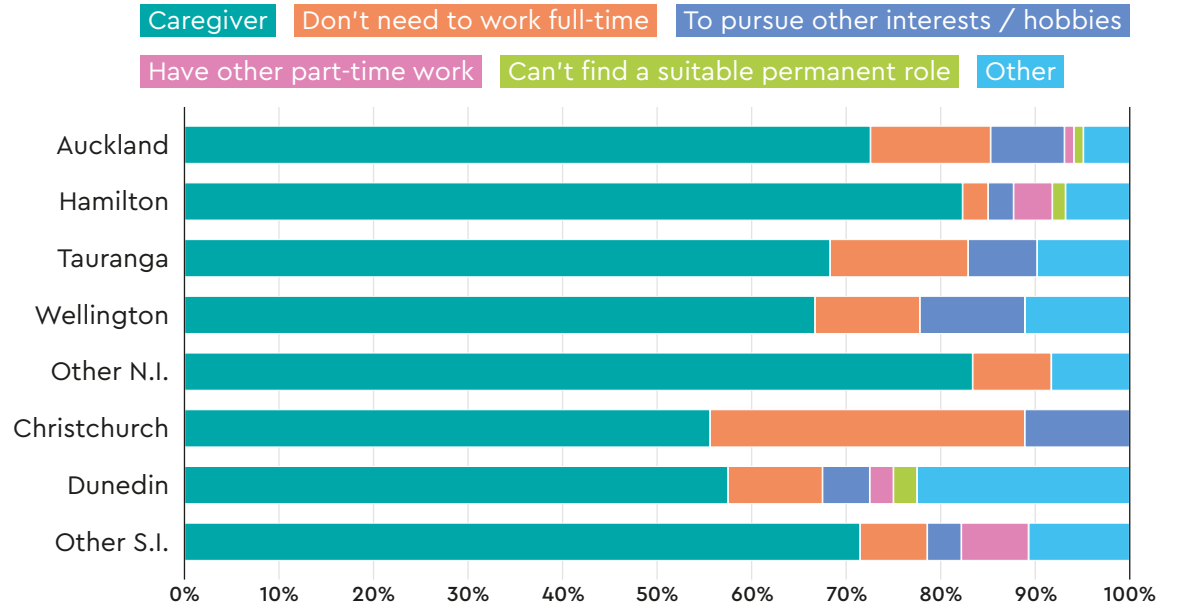


Employment type	< 10 hours	11-20 hours	21-30 hours	> 30 hours
Private practice	4%	16%	53%	27%
In-house	2%	12%	50%	37%

# What are your reasons for working part-time?



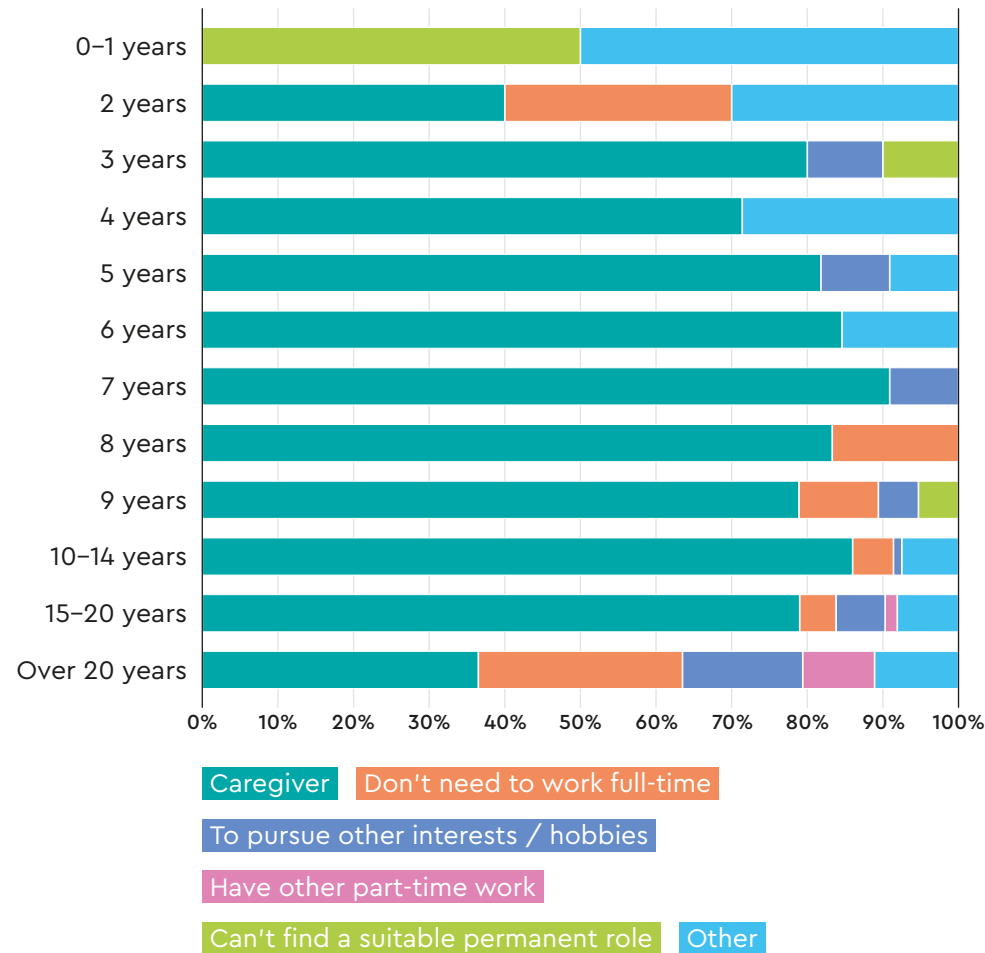
## BY LOCATION



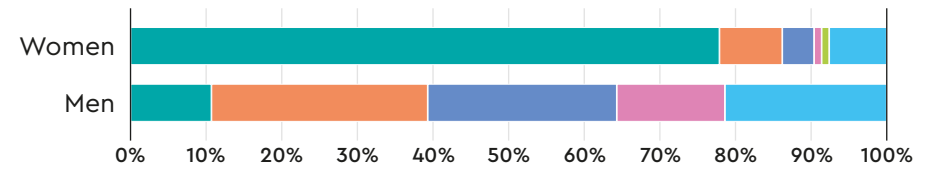
Location	Caregiver	Don't need to	Hobbies	Other P/T work	Can't find F/T	Other
Auckland	73%	13%	8%	1%	1%	5%
Wellington	82%	3%	3%	4%	1%	7%
Christchurch	68%	15%	7%	0%	0%	10%
Dunedin	67%	11%	11%	0%	0%	11%
Hamilton	83%	8%	0%	0%	0%	8%
Tauranga	56%	33%	11%	0%	0%	0%
Other North Island centre	58%	10%	5%	3%	3%	23%
Other South Island centre	71%	7%	4%	7%	0%	11%

## What are your reasons for working part-time?

BY YEARS OF POST-QUALIFICATION EXPERIENCE



BY GENDER

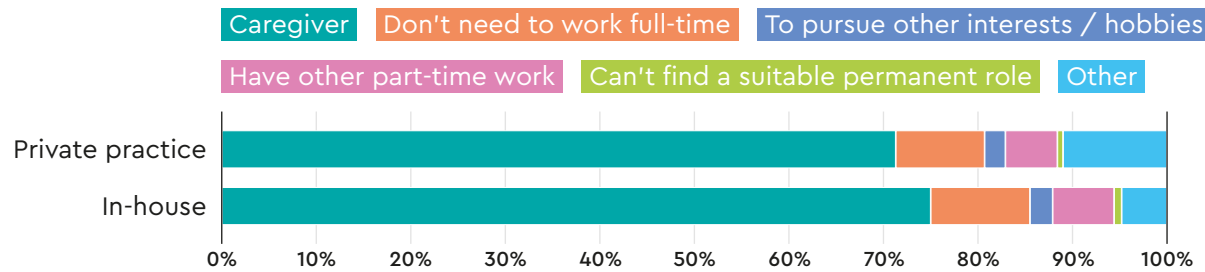


Gender	Care-giver	Don't need to	Hobbies	Other P/T	Can't find F/T	Other
Women	78%	8%	4%	1%	1%	8%
Men	11%	29%	25%	14%	0%	21%

PQE	Care-giver	Don't need to	Hobbies	Other P/T	Can't find F/T	Other
0-1 years	0%	0%	0%	0%	50%	50%
2 years	40%	30%	0%	0%	0%	30%
3 years	80%	0%	10%	0%	10%	0%
4 years	71%	0%	0%	0%	0%	29%
5 years	82%	0%	9%	0%	0%	9%
6 years	85%	0%	0%	0%	0%	15%
7 years	91%	0%	9%	0%	0%	0%
8 years	83%	17%	0%	0%	0%	0%
9 years	79%	11%	5%	0%	5%	0%
10-14 years	86%	5%	1%	0%	0%	8%
15-20 years	79%	5%	7%	2%	0%	8%
Over 20 years	37%	27%	16%	10%	0%	11%

## What are your reasons for working part-time?

### BY EMPLOYMENT TYPE



Employment type	Caregiver	Don't need to	Hobbies	Other P/T work	Can't find F/T	Other
Private practice	71%	9%	2%	6%	1%	11%
In-house	75%	11%	2%	7%	1%	5%

## Part 4 – Salary Increase

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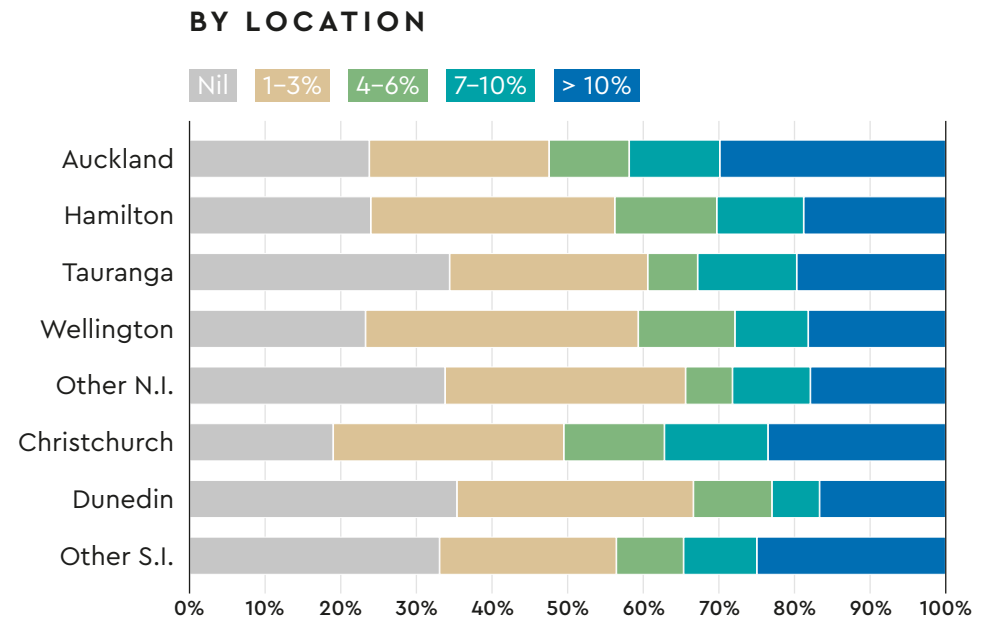
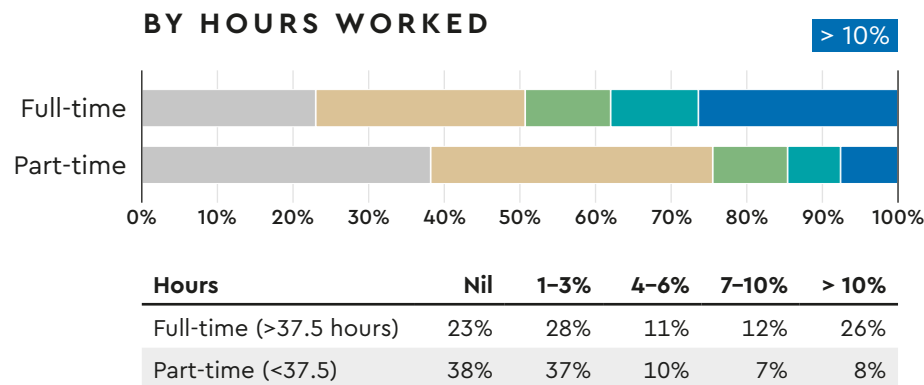
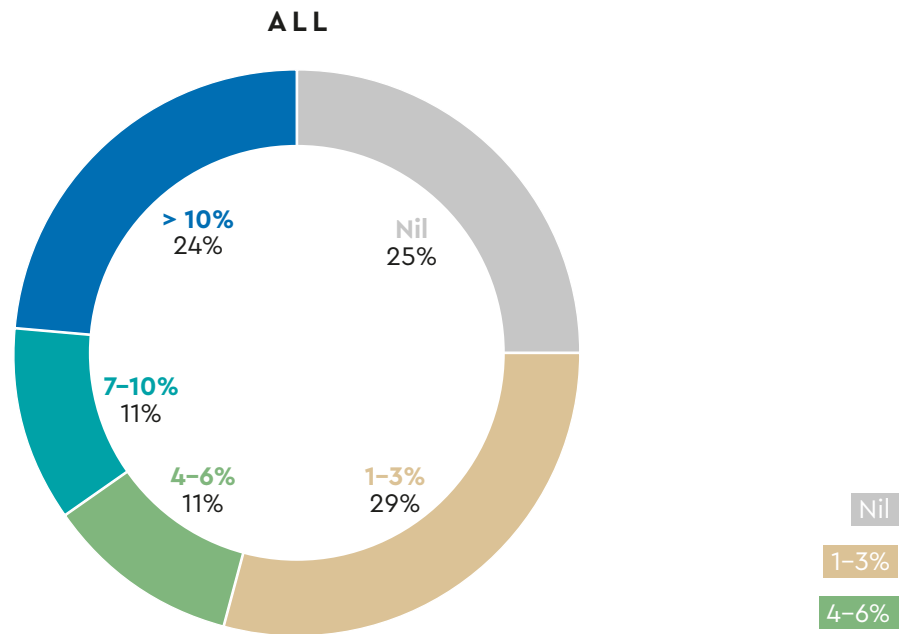
**In the last 12 months, the majority of respondents** received either no salary increase (25%) or 1–3% increase (29%).

A higher percentage of part-time workers compared to full-time workers received a nil or 1–3% increase, whereas a greater percentage of full-time workers compared to part-time workers received an increase of 7–10% or 'more than 10%'. This data suggests it is more difficult to achieve a good salary

increase as a part-time worker.

When salary increase is analysed by gender, we see that female lawyers registered 6 percentage points higher than male lawyers for a 1–3% increase and male lawyers registered 5 percentage points higher than female lawyers for a 'more than 10%' increase. This data, combined with the information relating to part-time workers, suggests that women could be significantly disadvantaged when it comes to achieving salary increases.

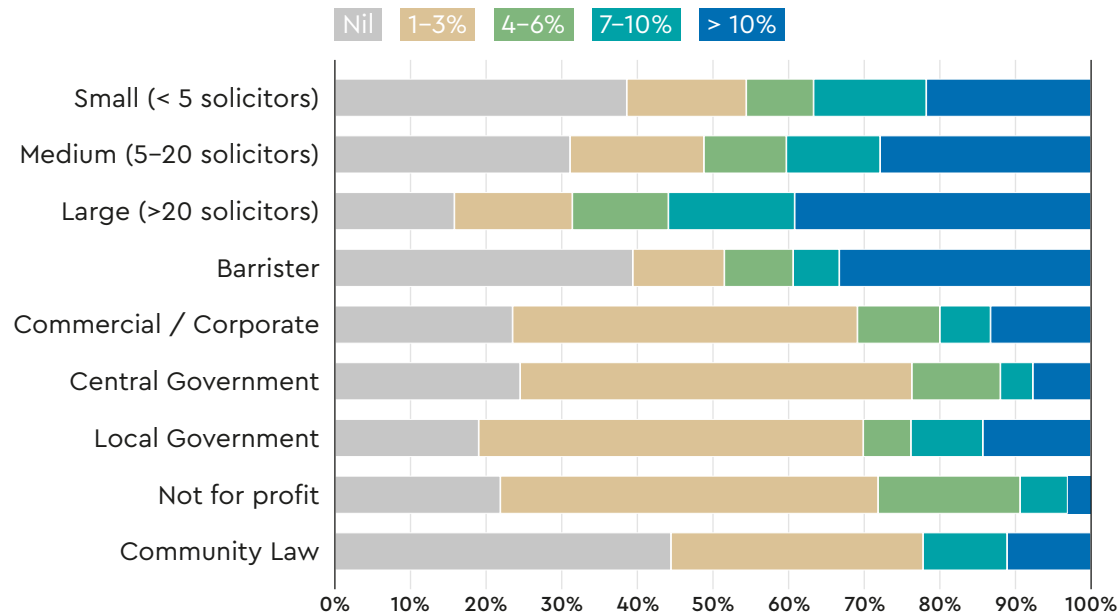
## Did your base salary increase in the last 12 months and if so, by how much?



Location	Nil	1-3%	4-6%	7-10%	> 10%
Auckland	24%	24%	11%	12%	30%
Hamilton	24%	32%	14%	12%	19%
Tauranga	34%	26%	7%	13%	20%
Wellington	23%	36%	13%	10%	18%
Other North Island centre	34%	32%	6%	10%	18%
Christchurch	19%	31%	13%	14%	24%
Dunedin	35%	31%	10%	6%	17%
Other South Island centre	33%	23%	9%	10%	25%

## Did your base salary increase in the last 12 months and if so, by how much?

### BY WORKPLACE



Workplace	Nil	1-3%	4-6%	7-10%	> 10%
Small (< 5 solicitors)	39%	16%	9%	15%	22%
Medium (5-20 solicitors)	31%	18%	11%	12%	28%
Large (>20 solicitors)	16%	16%	13%	17%	39%
Barrister	39%	12%	9%	6%	33%
Commercial / Corporate	24%	46%	11%	7%	13%
Central Government	25%	52%	12%	4%	8%
Local Government	19%	51%	6%	10%	14%
Not for Profit	22%	50%	19%	6%	3%
Community Law	44%	33%	0%	11%	11%



## Part 5 – Job Titles

### The most commonly occurring legal job titles are

Solicitor, Staff Solicitor and Senior Solicitor followed by Associate, Senior Associate, Legal Counsel, Senior Legal Counsel and Lawyer.

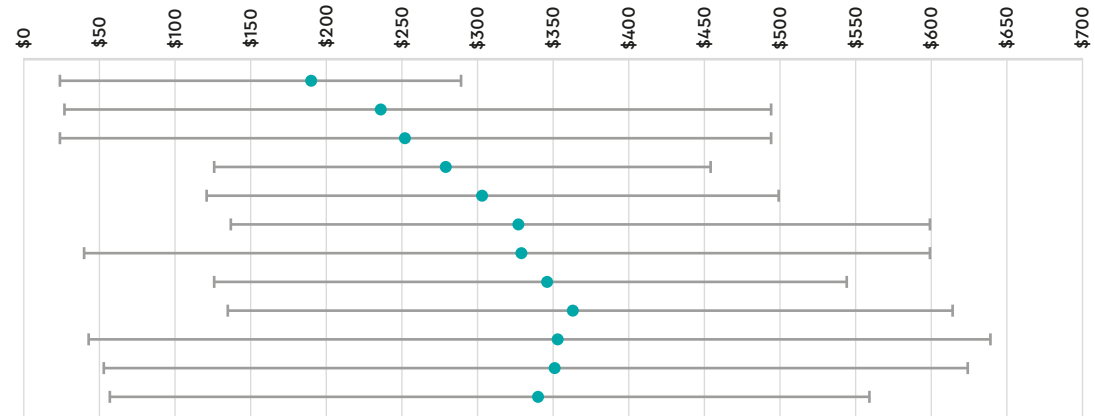
There were also a range of titles that included the word "Adviser", such as Legal Adviser and Chief Legal Adviser, and "Manager", such as Team Manager, Trust Manager and Senior Manager.

Title	Count	Average PQE	Average salary bracket
Solicitor	707	0–1 years	\$50,000–\$59,999
Senior Solicitor	249	10–14 years	\$100,000–\$109,999
Associate	166	10–14 years	\$80,000–\$89,999
Senior Associate	141	10–14 years	\$150,000–\$199,999
Legal Counsel	91	Over 20 years	\$80,000–\$89,999
Lawyer	64	Over 20 years	\$80,000–\$89,999
Barrister	49	2 years	\$50,000–\$59,999
General Counsel	32	15–20 years	\$150,000–\$199,999

# Part 6 – Charge out rates

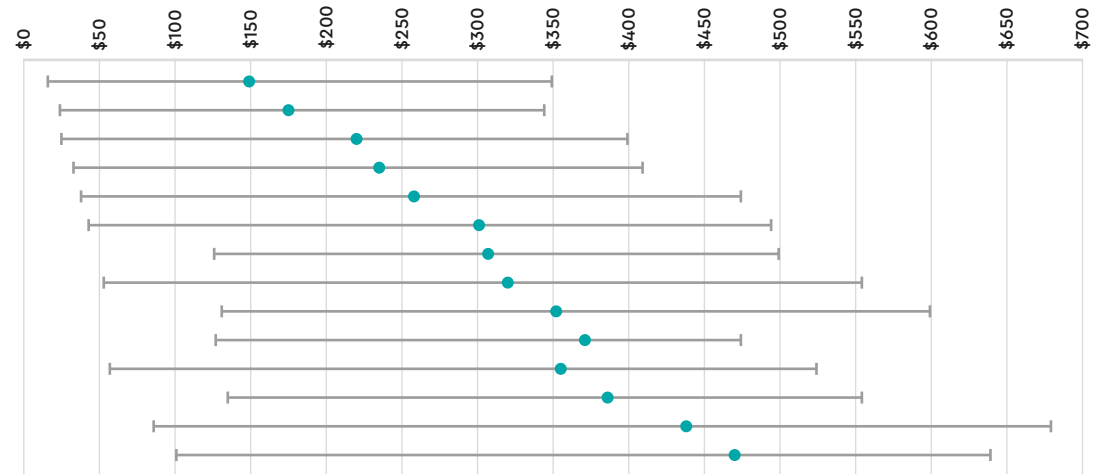
## BY YEARS OF POST-QUALIFICATION EXPERIENCE

PQE	Lower	Mean	Upper
0-1 years	\$23	\$190	\$290
2 years	\$26	\$236	\$495
3 years	\$23	\$252	\$475
4 years	\$125	\$279	\$455
5 years	\$120	\$303	\$500
6 years	\$136	\$327	\$600
7 years	\$39	\$329	\$680
8 years	\$125	\$346	\$545
9 years	\$134	\$363	\$615
10-14 years	\$42	\$353	\$640
15-20 years	\$52	\$351	\$625
20+ years	\$56	\$340	\$560



## BY SALARY

Salary	Lower	Mean	Upper
< \$40k	\$15	\$149	\$350
\$40k-\$49k	\$23	\$175	\$345
\$50k-\$59k	\$24	\$220	\$400
\$60k-\$69k	\$32	\$235	\$410
\$70k-\$79k	\$37	\$258	\$475
\$80k-\$89k	\$42	\$301	\$495
\$90k-\$99k	\$125	\$307	\$500
\$100k-\$109k	\$52	\$320	\$555
\$110k-\$119k	\$130	\$352	\$600
\$120k-\$129k	\$126	\$371	\$475
\$130k-\$139k	\$56	\$355	\$525
\$140k-\$149k	\$134	\$386	\$555
\$150k-\$159k	\$85	\$438	\$680
> \$200k	\$100	\$470	\$640



## Part 7 – Salary Guide

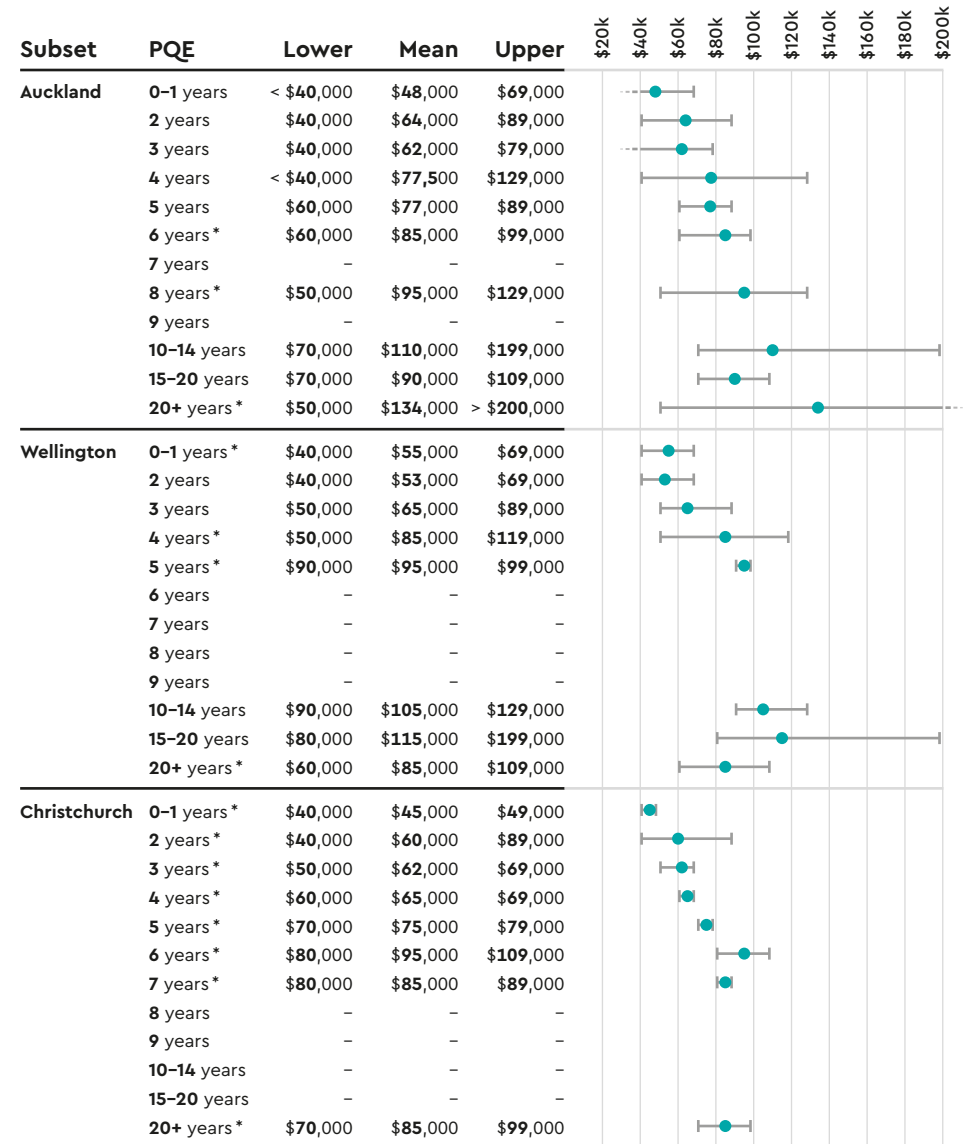
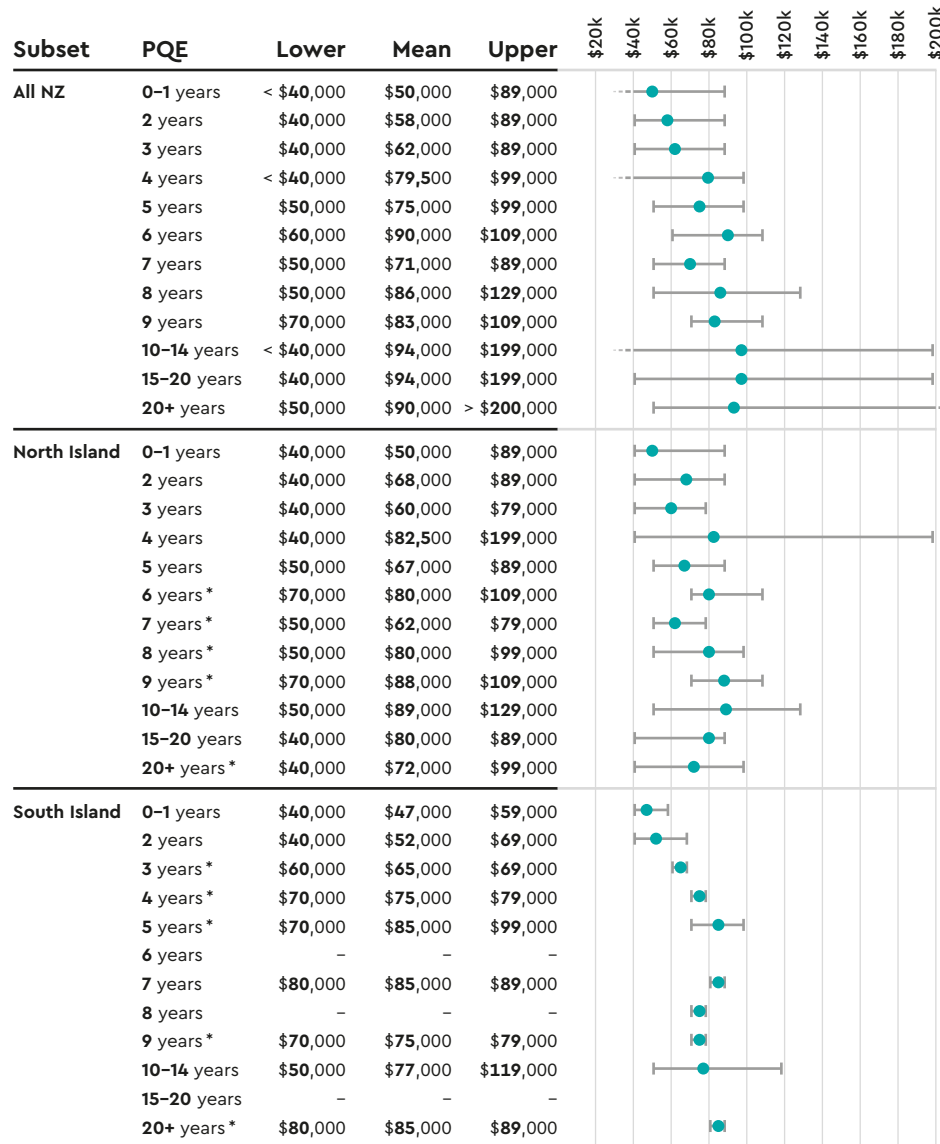
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**With around 2500 respondents, the salary tables** provide good insight into salaries in the legal profession, according to PQE level and across different locations and practice types.

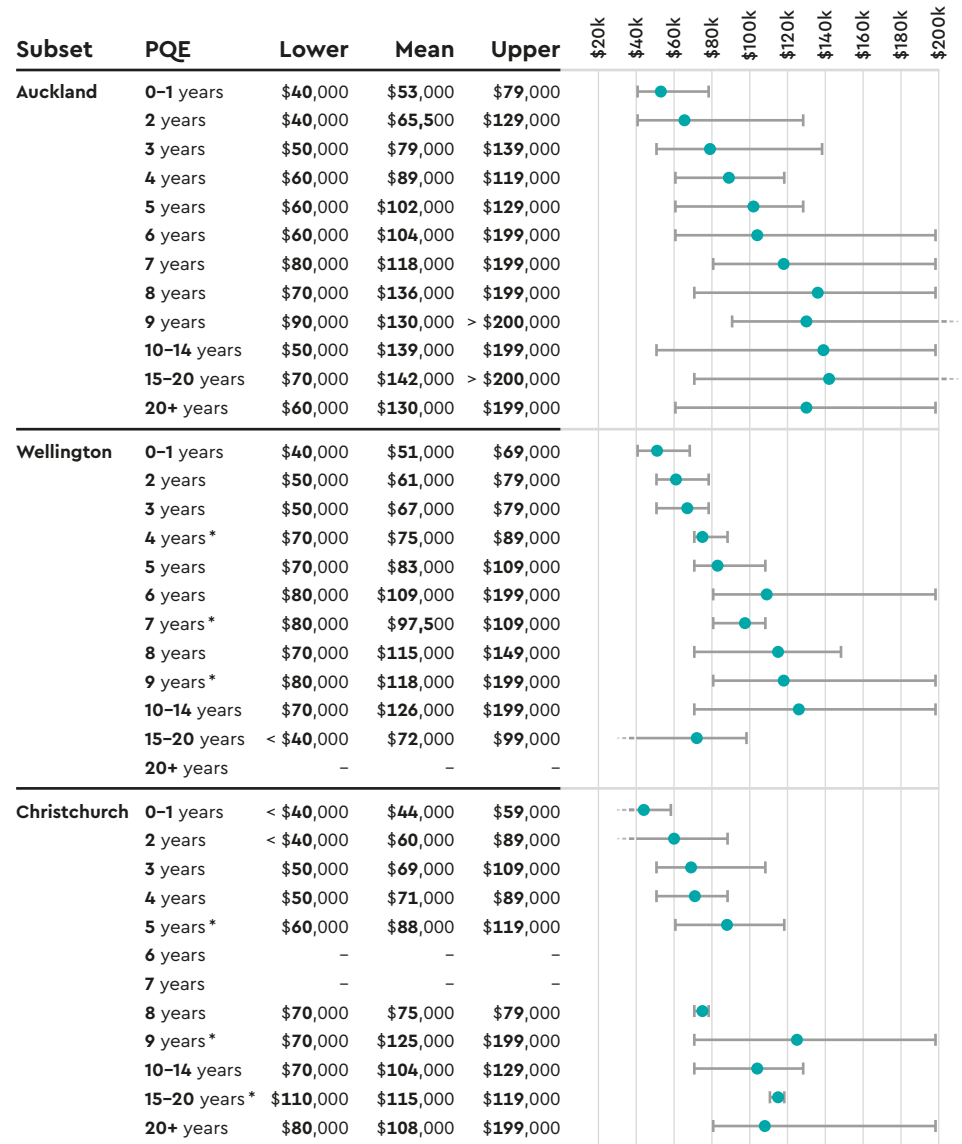
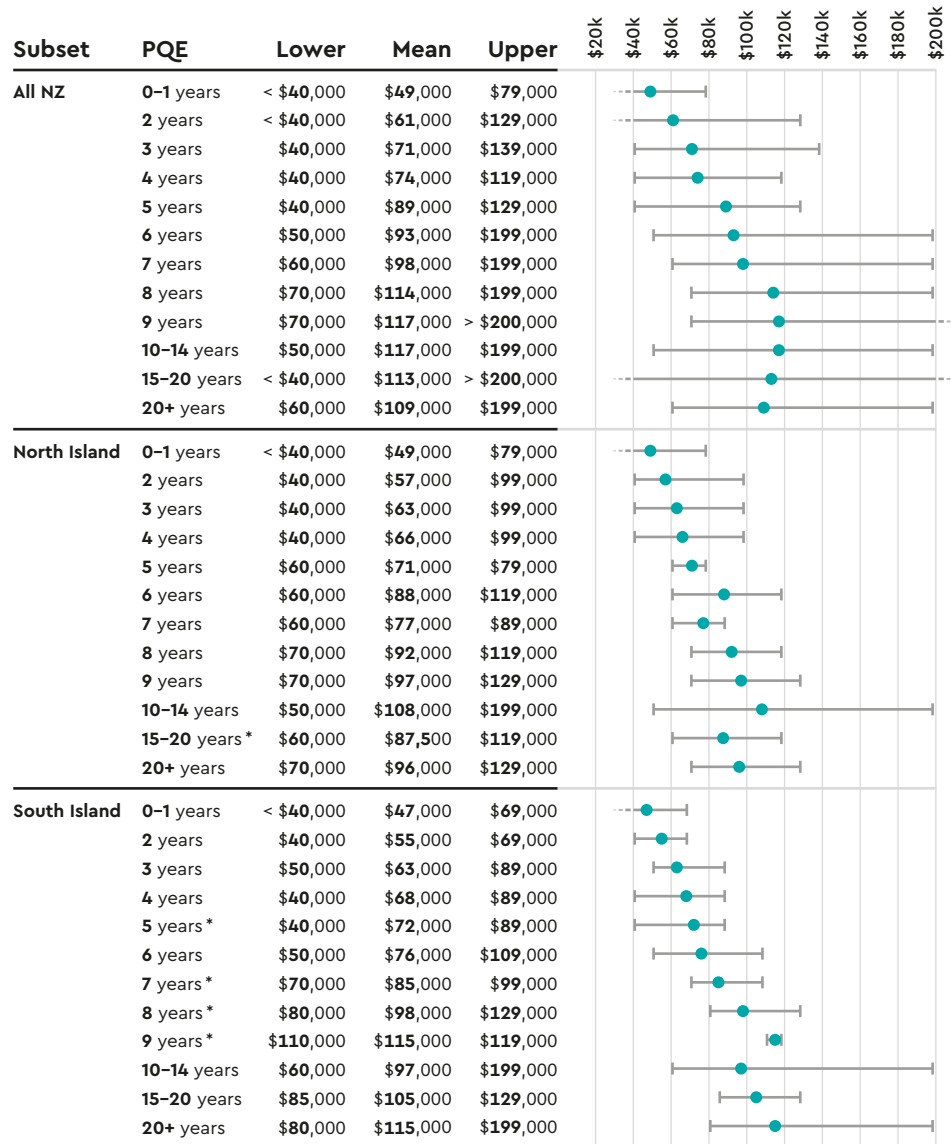
We would caution against making salary decisions, or petitions for an increase, based solely on the survey data, as in some instances a low sample was received, and/or a very wide range was given. We would recommend this data being used in conjunction with market information and, where appropriate, your existing salary data and remuneration strategy.

We would encourage you to contact a consultant at Niche Consulting Group to discuss any specific queries.

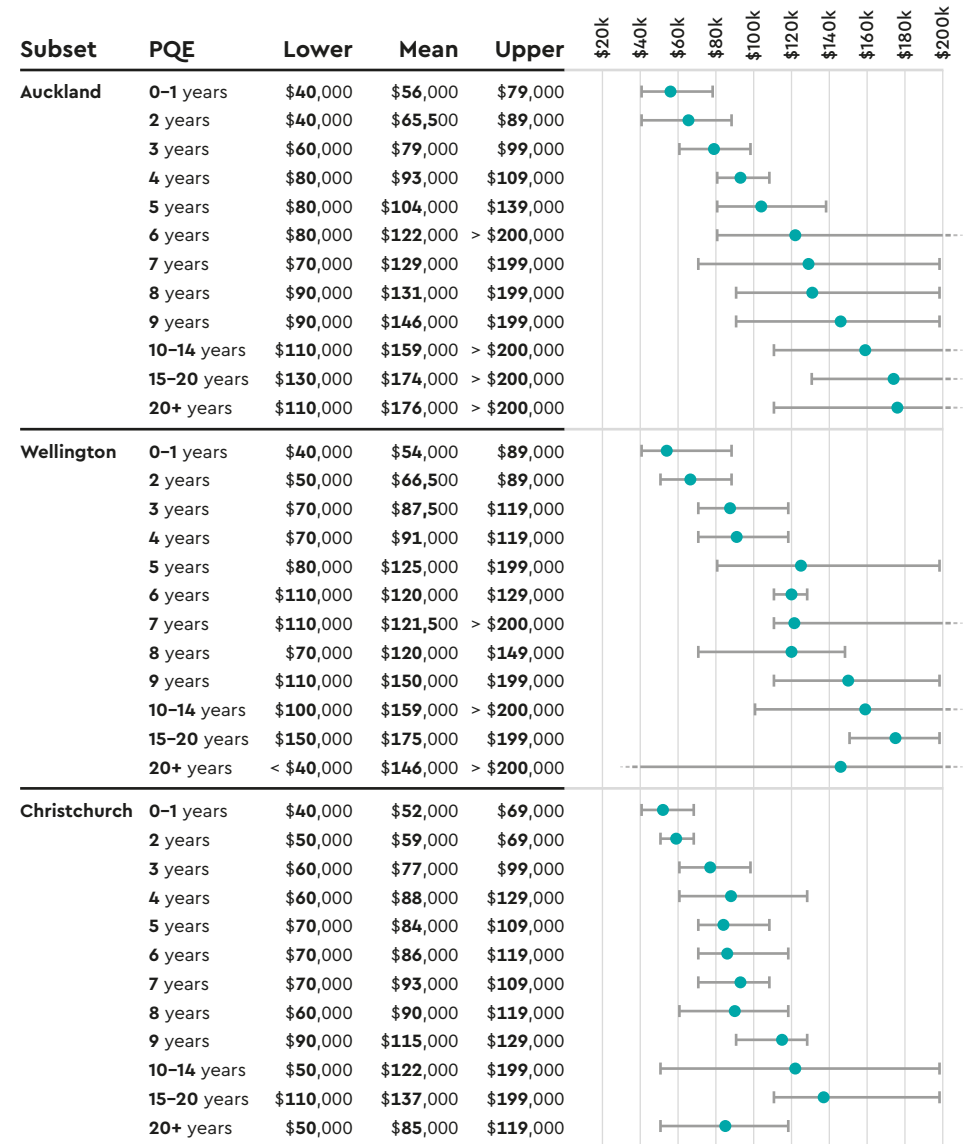
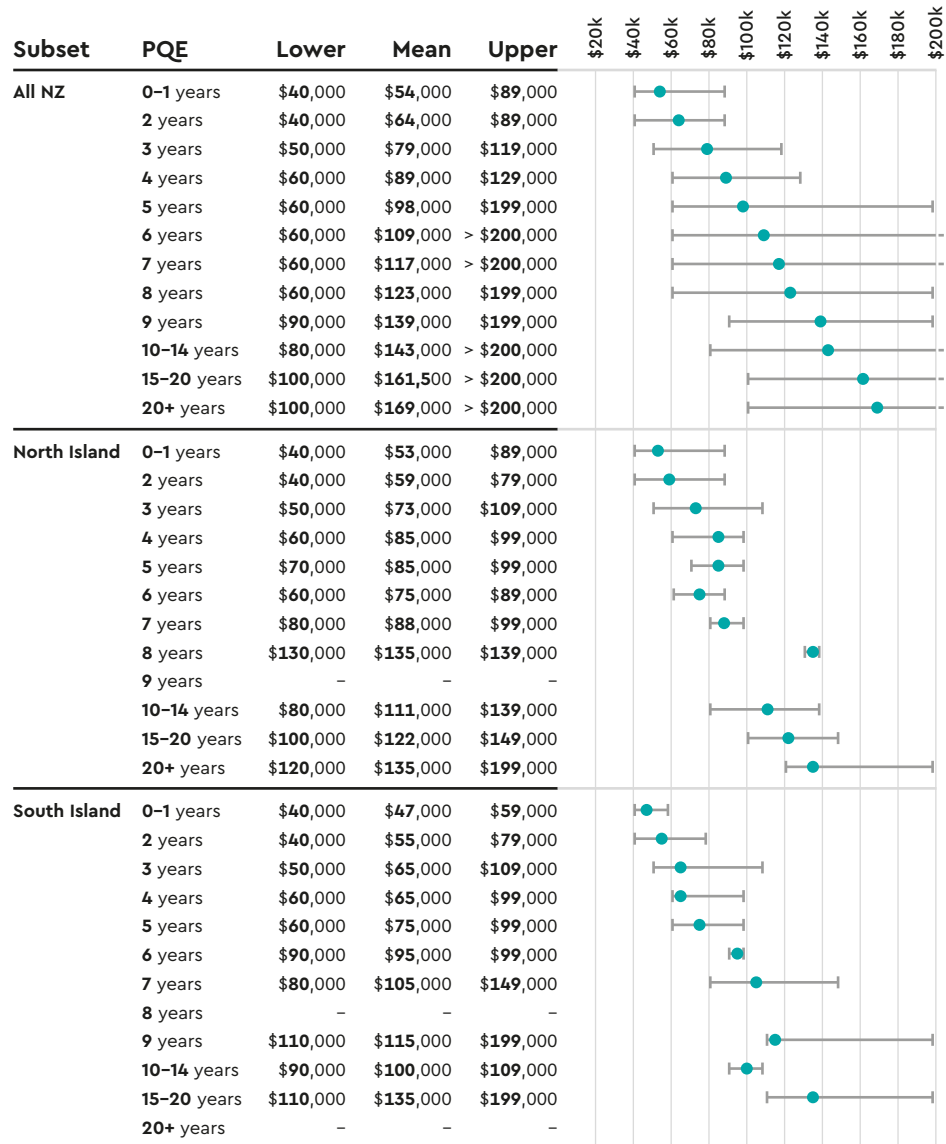
# Private Practice – Small firms (fewer than 5 lawyers) \* Fewer than 5 respondents



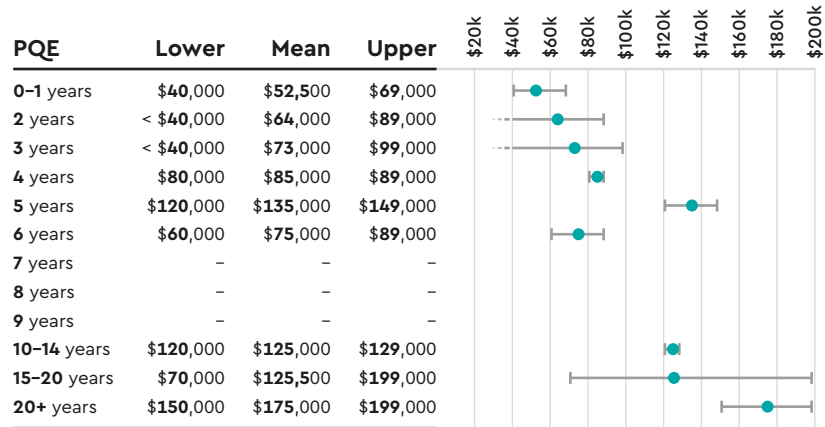
# Private Practice – Medium firms (5 to 20 lawyers) \* Fewer than 5 respondents



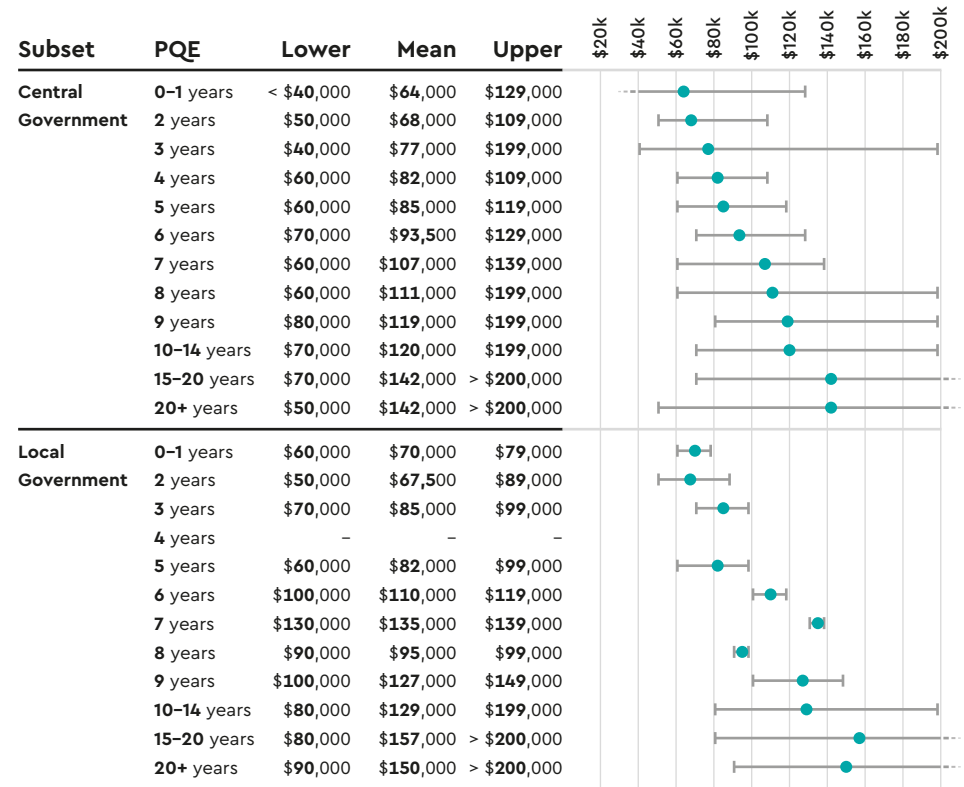
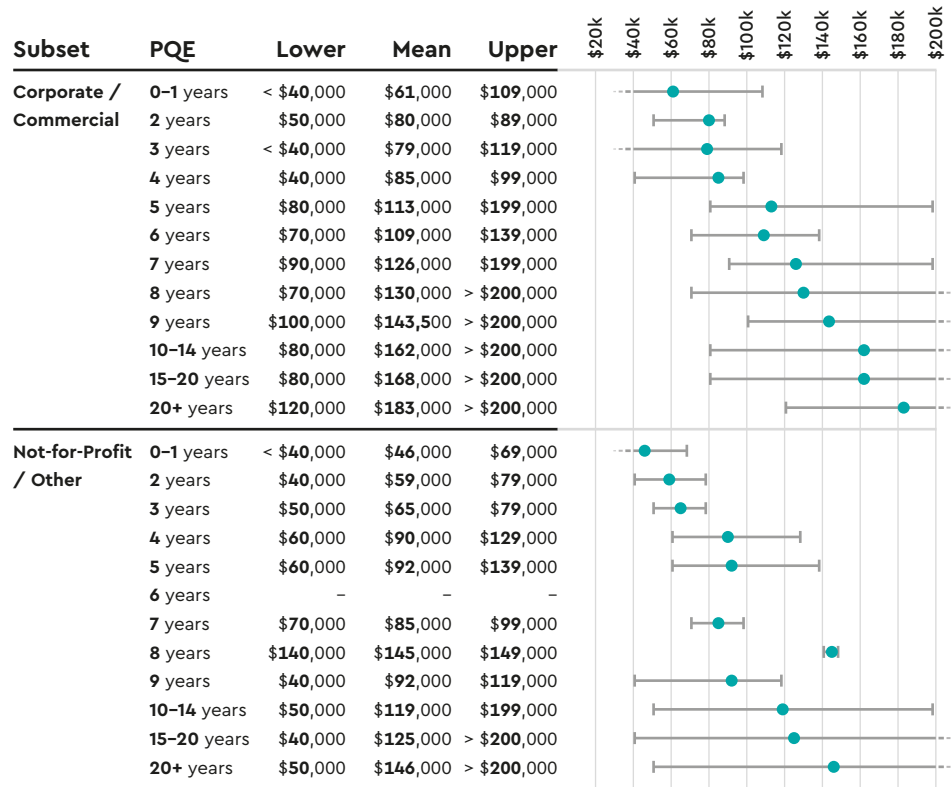
## Private Practice – Large firms (more than 20 lawyers)



## Private Practice – Barristers



# In-house







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