

Snapshot of the Profession 2023

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This snapshot draws on information held by the New Zealand Law Society Te Kāhui Ture o Aotearoa as regulator of the practice of law. As at 30 June 2023, there were 16,735 lawyers with a current practising certificate, 15,640 in New Zealand and 1,095 overseas. This equates to 312 New Zealanders per lawyer, down from last year's 326. With overseas lawyers removed there are 331 New Zealanders per lawyer in the 2023 reporting year, compared with 334 New Zealanders per lawyer last year.

This year's notable changes include a much greater increase in the number of Asian, Pacific and Māori lawyers in the 0 – 7 PQE category. While the number

of Asian lawyers has been reflective of the population of Asian people in New Zealand for some time, it is pleasing the proportion of Pacific and Māori lawyers have increased. The gender balance in this cohort is also stabilising with women making up just over 64% of this group, higher than the 55.4% of women overall. Alongside this has been an increase in the number of languages lawyers speak. There has been a decrease in the number of lawyers in the Wellington region and an increase in the number of overseas lawyers, though these changes are not directly related to each other.

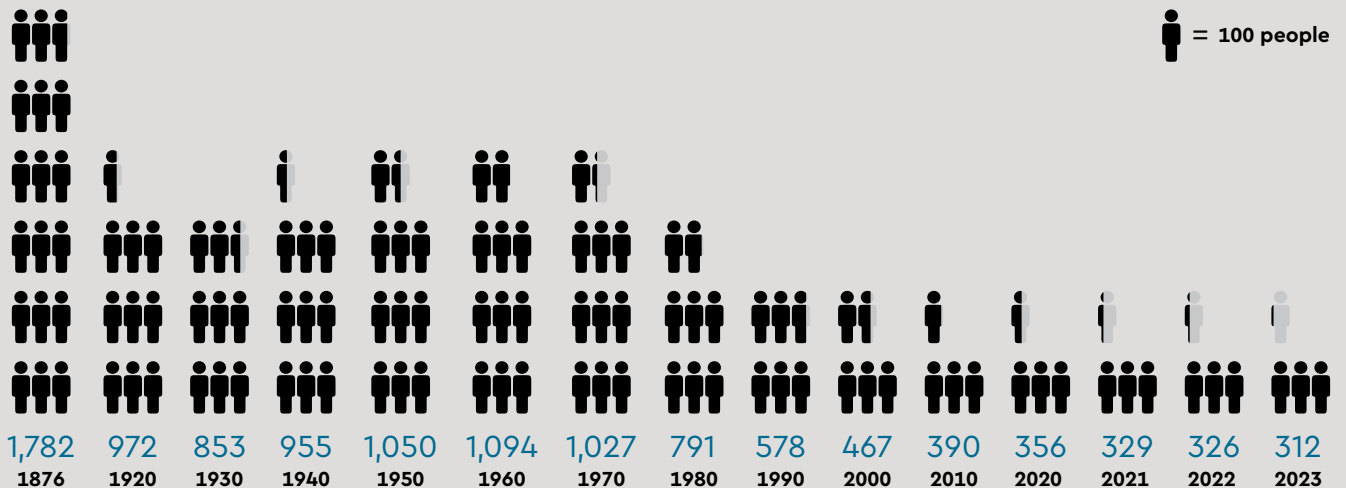
People per lawyer in New Zealand

LAWYERS BASED IN NZ
15,640

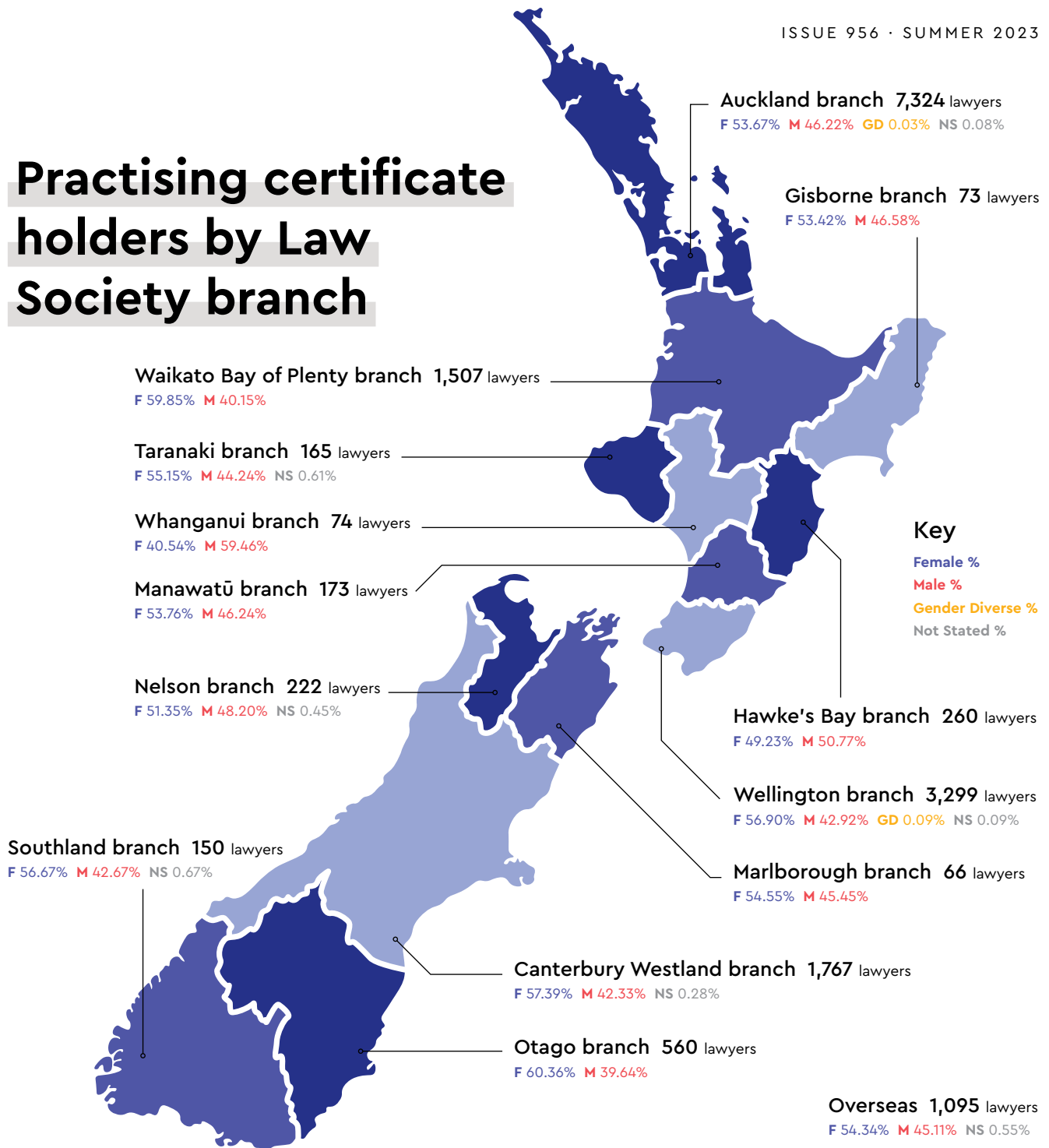
POPULATION
5,223,100

POPULATION PER LAWYER
312:1

PEOPLE PER LAWYER IN NEW ZEALAND



Practising certificate holders by Law Society branch



The number of New Zealand-based practising lawyers has grown to 15,792 compared with 15,593 in 2022. There is now one lawyer for every 331 people in New Zealand. The map organises New Zealand practising certificate holders by Law Society branches. Auckland continues to have the largest number of lawyers in the country with 7,324, an increase of just over one percent compared with last year. Of note this year,

is the 26 percent increase in the number of overseas lawyers to 1,095. The increase can be in part attributed to the reopening of New Zealand's borders following the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions.

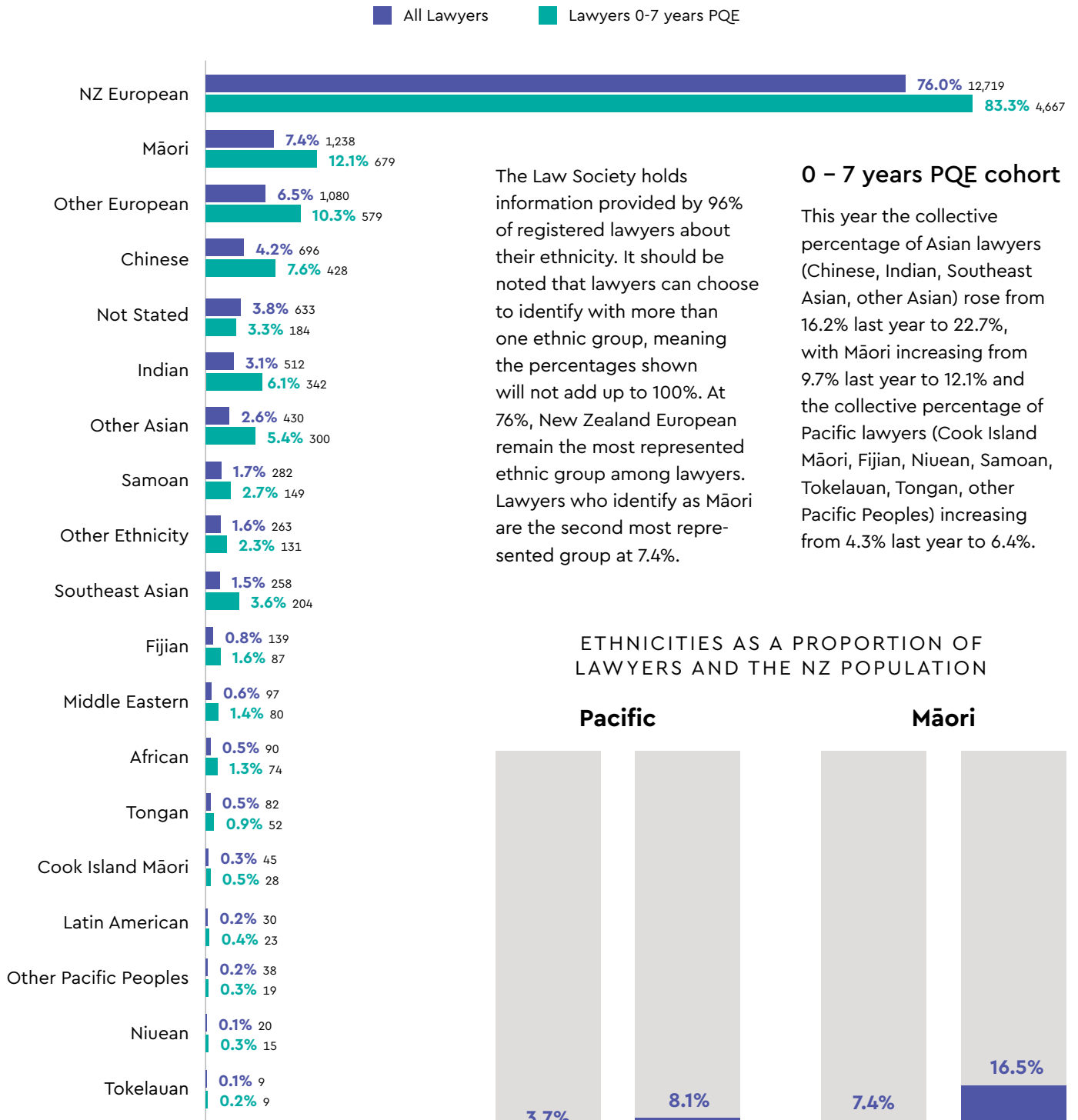
Also, of interest this year is a 36 percent drop in the number of lawyers in the central Wellington region (distinct from branch). The change to more flexible working arrangements may have contributed to lawyers moving to other areas of the region including the Hutt, Kapiti and Wairarapa, all of which have seen an increase. The opening of Transmission

Gully has provided another option for those who wish to work in Wellington but live further afield.

Lawyers leaving from this region may also have contributed to the increased number of overseas lawyers. The regions with the lowest numbers of lawyers are Coromandel (18 – a drop from 31 in 2022), and West Coast (21 – the same as the previous year).

Ethnicity

PROPORTION OF ALL LAWYERS AND LAWYERS 0-7 YEARS PQE BY ETHNICITY

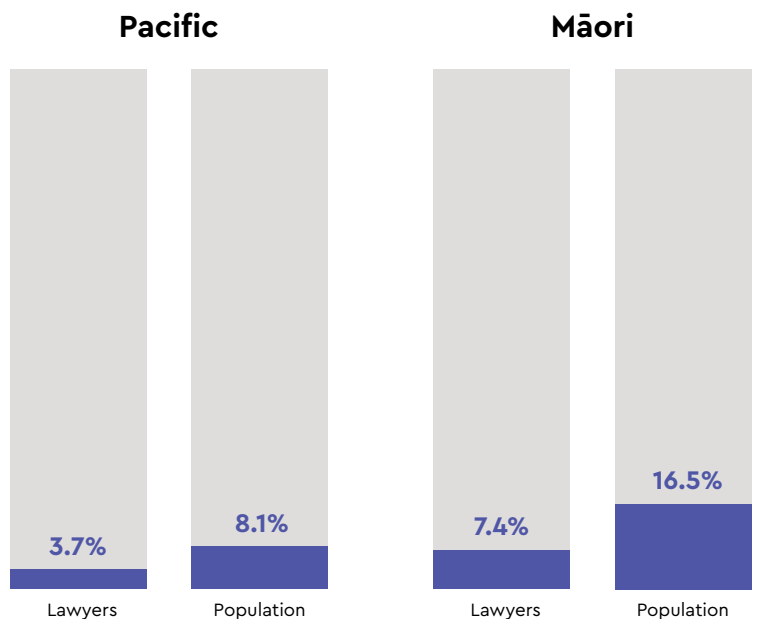


The Law Society holds information provided by 96% of registered lawyers about their ethnicity. It should be noted that lawyers can choose to identify with more than one ethnic group, meaning the percentages shown will not add up to 100%. At 76%, New Zealand European remain the most represented ethnic group among lawyers. Lawyers who identify as Māori are the second most represented group at 7.4%.

0 – 7 years PQE cohort

This year the collective percentage of Asian lawyers (Chinese, Indian, Southeast Asian, other Asian) rose from 16.2% last year to 22.7%, with Māori increasing from 9.7% last year to 12.1% and the collective percentage of Pacific lawyers (Cook Island Māori, Fijian, Niuean, Samoan, Tokelauan, Tongan, other Pacific Peoples) increasing from 4.3% last year to 6.4%.

ETHNICITIES AS A PROPORTION OF LAWYERS AND THE NZ POPULATION



620.5:1

Pacific Lawyers as a proportion of the Pacific Population

626.7:1

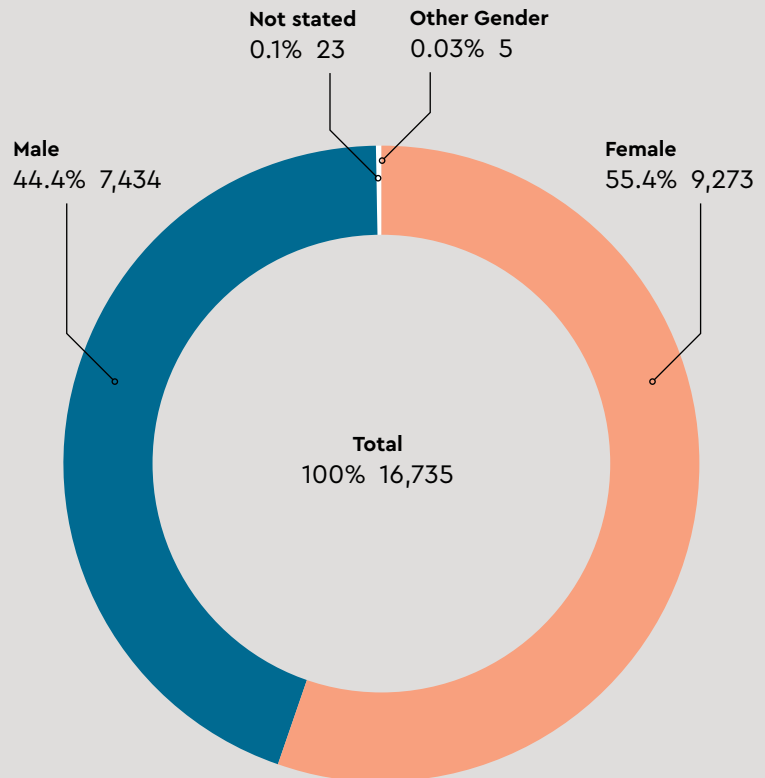
Māori Lawyers as a proportion of the Māori Population

Gender

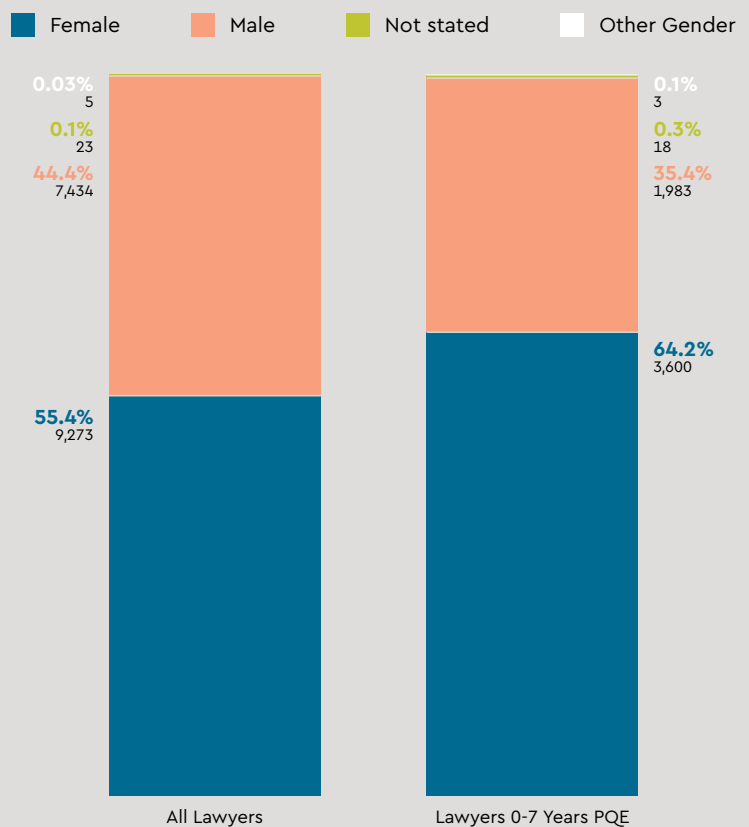
Lawyers can identify their gender as female, male and gender diverse, or they may choose not to state their gender. There are currently 9,273 female lawyers practising and they make up most of the profession at 55.4%. Male lawyers amount to 44.4% of the profession, with 7,434 lawyers being male. The gender balance has slowed its increase of females this year, females increasing only slightly, after a 1% rise in female lawyers every year for the last five years.

The trend of majority female lawyers will likely continue to increase with 64.2% of all lawyers with 0-7 years of post-qualified experience (0-7 PQE) being female. Although as already noted, this trend has slowed this year. We also anticipate gender diverse lawyers will increase with time, currently there are three. There are 55 more barristers this year compared to 2022, with 1.4% more females (45%) than last year (43.6%).

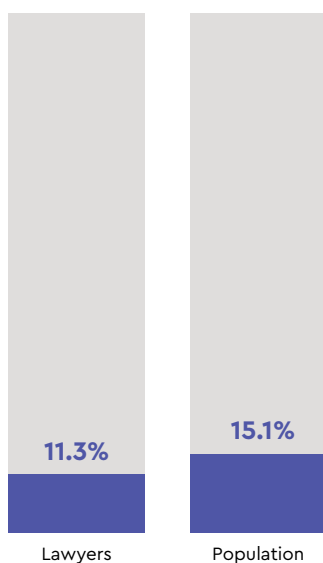
PROPORTION OF ALL LAWYERS BY GENDER



PROPORTION OF ALL LAWYERS BY GENDER COMPARED TO LAWYERS 0-7 YEARS PQE



Asian



373.2:1

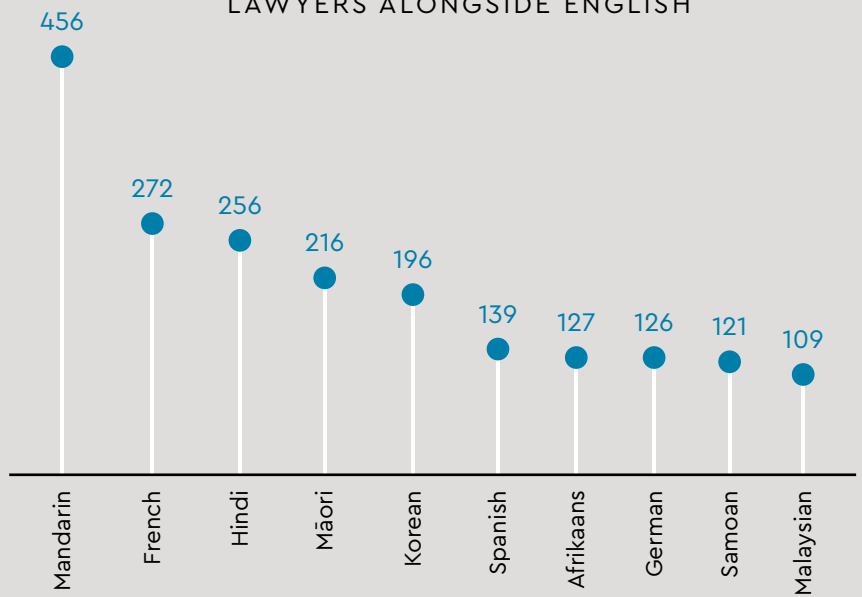
Asian Lawyers as a proportion of the Asian Population

Language

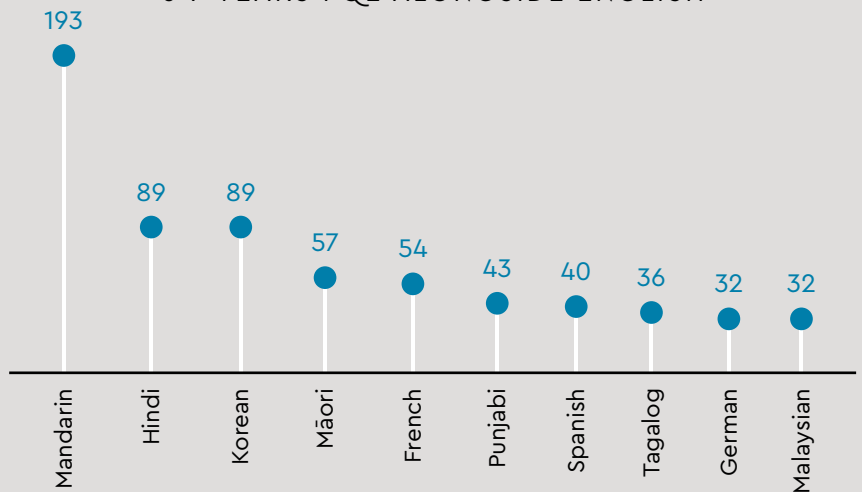
These graphs present the top ten languages spoken by lawyers alongside English. It is inferred that lawyers can speak English.

There has been a 38% increase in the number of te reo Māori-speaking lawyers from 156 to 216. Similarly, there has been increase in Mandarin speakers from 315 to 456. Other languages to see a marked increase include French, Hindi, Korean, New Zealand Sign Language, Spanish, German, Afrikaans, Cantonese, Samoan and Urdu. The increasing numbers of languages spoken reflects the increasing diversity of lawyers in New Zealand. However, this may also, in part be attributed to improved data collection, particularly related to new lawyers.

TOP TEN LANGUAGES SPOKEN BY ALL LAWYERS ALONGSIDE ENGLISH



TOP TEN LANGUAGES SPOKEN BY LAWYERS 0-7 YEARS PQE ALONGSIDE ENGLISH



LAWYERS WHO SPEAK TE REO MĀORI COMPARED TO THE NZ POPULATION OF TE REO MĀORI SPEAKERS

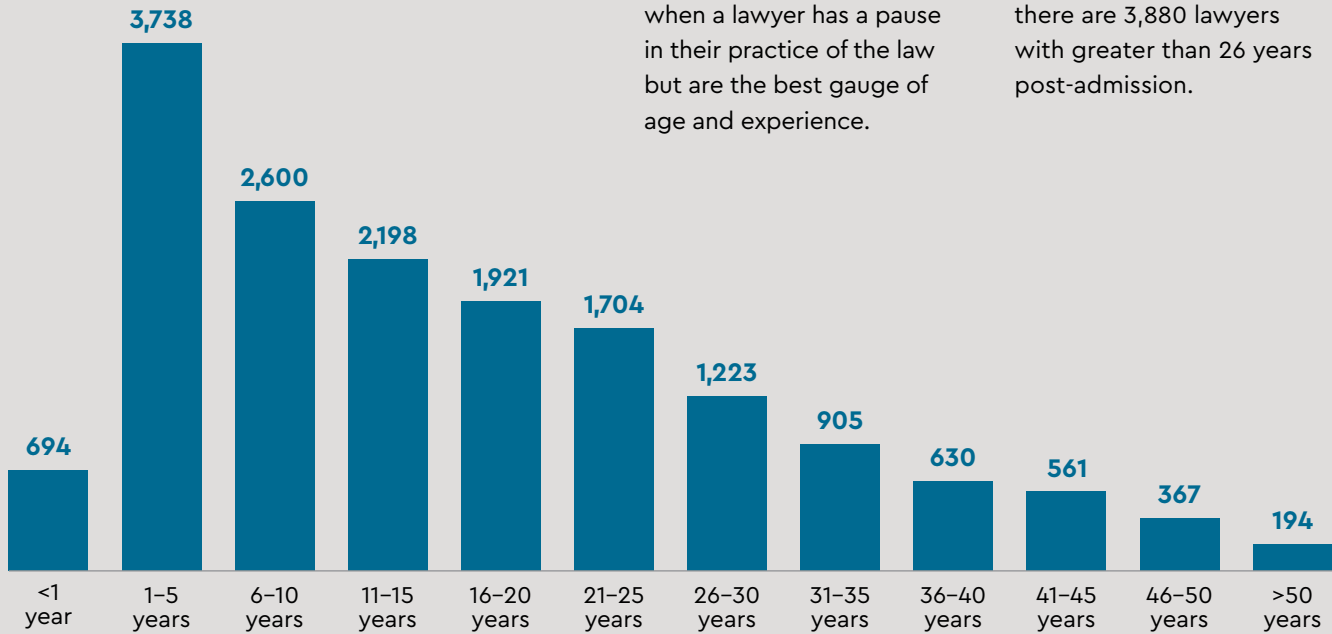
LAWYERS	POPULATION	RATIO
216	204,904	949:1

LAWYERS WHO USE NZ SIGN LANGUAGE COMPARED TO THE POPULATION OF NZ WHO COMMUNICATE IN NZ SIGN LANGUAGE

LAWYERS	POPULATION	RATIO
10	256,130	25,613:1

Time in practice

LAWYERS BY YEARS SINCE ADMISSION



The Law Society records years since admission for every registered lawyer. These figures do not necessarily represent years in practice or account for time when a lawyer has a pause in their practice of the law but are the best gauge of age and experience.

This data trends towards lawyers with fewer years in practice. New Lawyers (0-7 years post-admission) are in the majority with over 5,583 lawyers. By contrast, there are 3,880 lawyers with greater than 26 years post-admission.

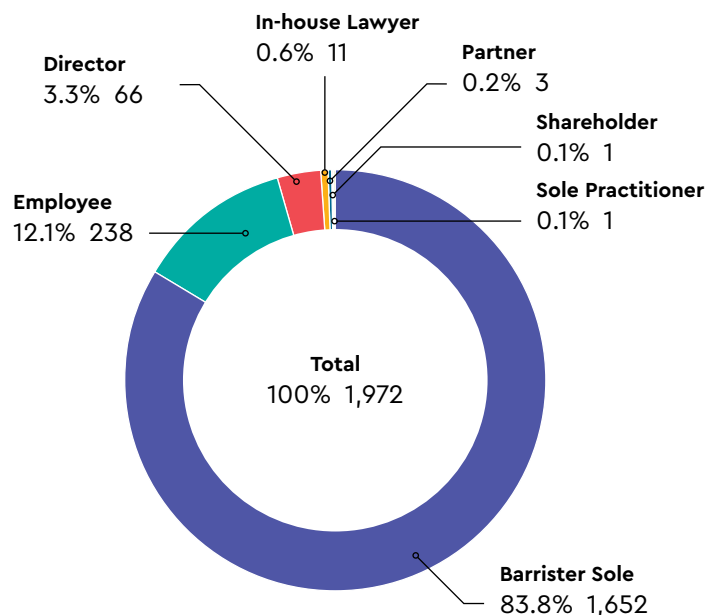
Types of practice

Lawyers may practise in three ways: as barristers and solicitors (providing services to the public), as barristers sole and as in-house lawyers (providing services to firms).

Barristers

As of 30 June 2023, there were 1,972 lawyers practising as barristers. This figure represents 11.7% of lawyers and is the same proportion as last year. Nearly ten percent of all lawyers, 1,648, are practising as barristers sole. This is slightly lower than last year's figure of 9.9%. Most barristers – at 83.8% – are sole practitioners. The number of barristers recorded as employees was 228, a slight increase compared to last year. There are 11 barristers holding an in-house position, up from only two last year.

PROPORTION OF POSITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT OF BARRISTERS



BARRISTERS COMPARED TO NEW ZEALAND BASED LAWYERS

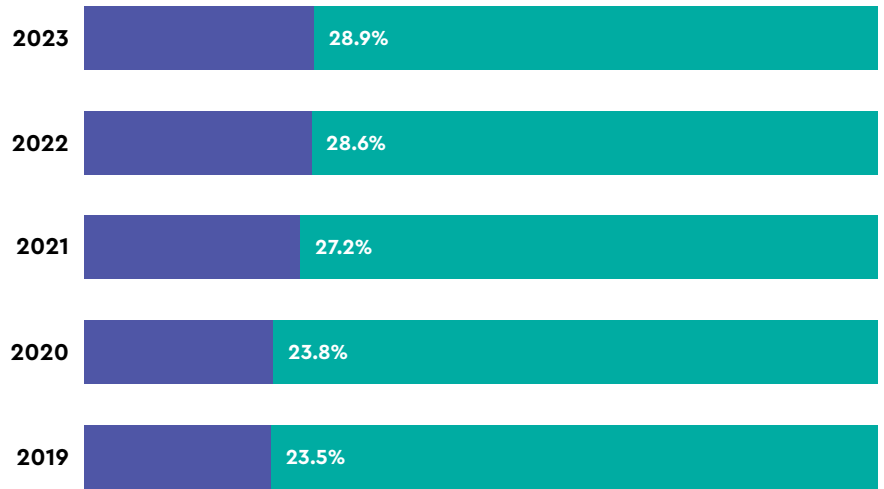
11.8%

Types of practice

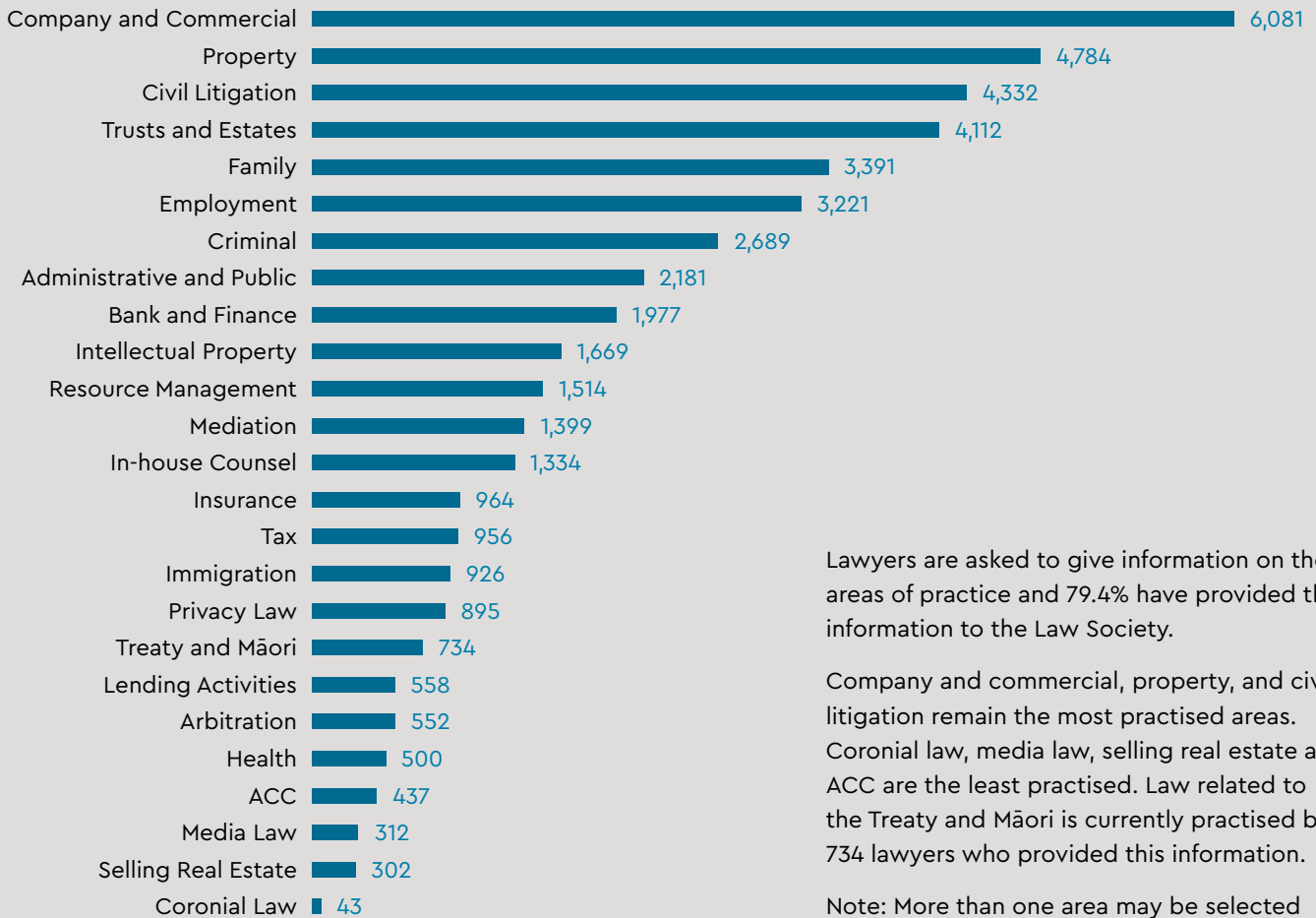
In-house lawyers

The trend of increasing numbers of in-house lawyers has continued this year, rising from 4,702 to 4,851 this year. In-house lawyers now account for 28.9% of the practising profession.

PROPORTION OF LAWYERS THAT PRACTISE AS IN-HOUSE LAWYERS



Areas of practice



Lawyers are asked to give information on their areas of practice and 79.4% have provided this information to the Law Society.

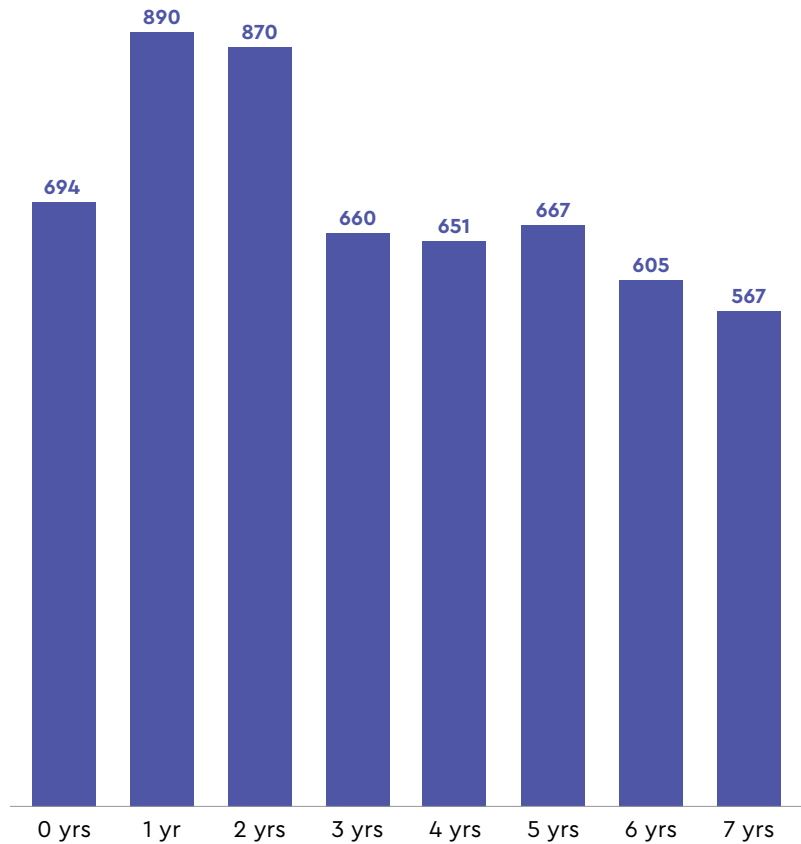
Company and commercial, property, and civil litigation remain the most practised areas. Coronial law, media law, selling real estate and ACC are the least practised. Law related to the Treaty and Māori is currently practised by 734 lawyers who provided this information.

Note: More than one area may be selected

New lawyers

PROPORTION OF LAWYERS 0-7 YEARS PQE BY YEARS SINCE ADMISSION

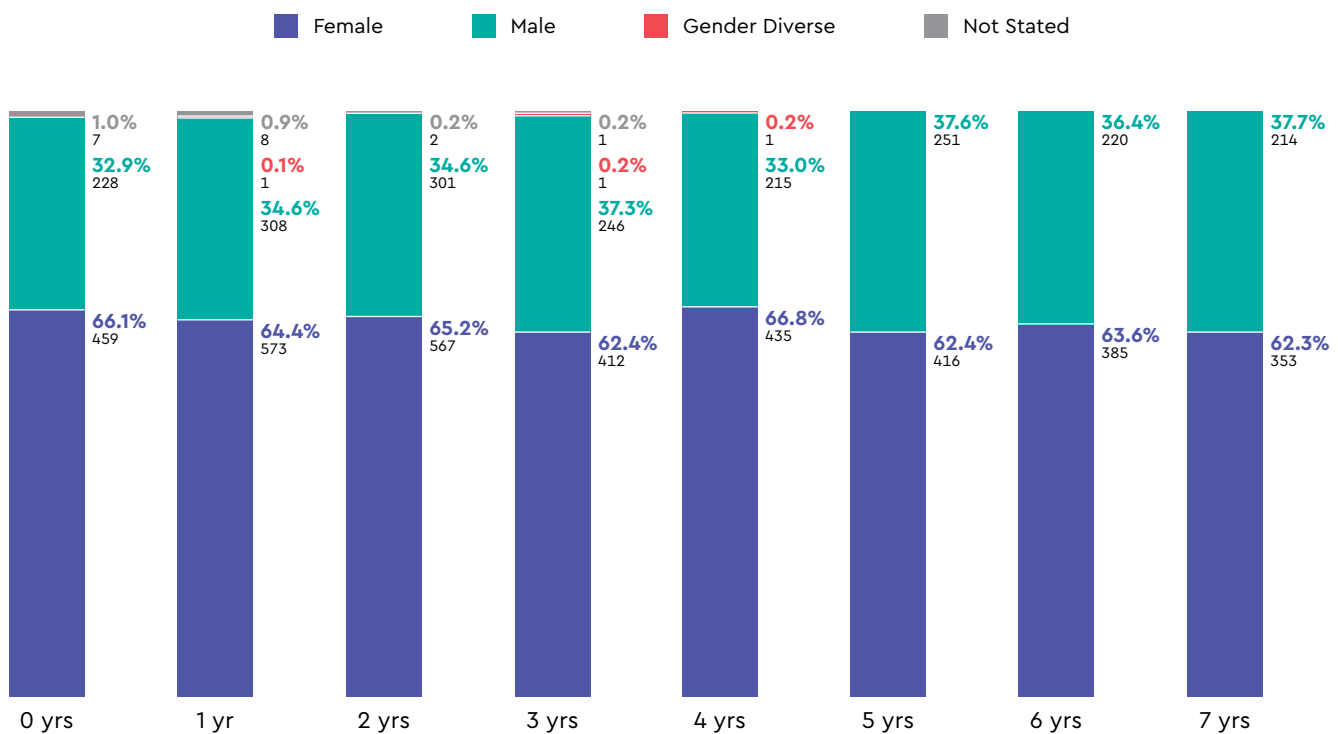
At the year ending 30 June 2023, the New Lawyers category comprised 5,583 lawyers of which 64.2% were female. The largest subset of the New Lawyers group was in the one-year post-admission category with a total of 890 lawyers. This was closely followed by 870 lawyers in the two-year category.



CENTRES WITH COUNT >100 PQE 0-7 LAWYERS

Main centre	Number
Auckland	2,289
Wellington	792
Christchurch	574
Overseas	434
Hamilton	243
Dunedin	102

GENDER OF NEW LAWYERS 0-7 YEARS PQE BY YEARS SINCE ADMISSION



Positions of employment

Slightly more than 98 per cent of lawyers have positions of employment. Employees make up the largest group of the profession at 5,734 lawyers, a decrease of 390 from the previous year. The two areas to see an increase in numbers year on year are directors and

shareholders, rising from 1,413 to 1,519 and 29 to 35, respectively. The majority of New Lawyers are employees and in-house lawyers. There are 35 New Lawyers employed as partners and 95 New Lawyers employed as barristers.

