



# PUBLIC SECTOR

Reputation Index 2021

Waka Kotahi

PUBLIC SECTOR REPUTATION INDEX 2021

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 and customised it to the needs of the New Zealand public sector.

## In 2021, we have...

- Surveyed more New Zealanders than ever before
- Included four new agencies
- Examined New Zealanders' perceptions of each agency's contribution to the COVID-19 recovery



# 3500

**interviews conducted  
to reflect the views of  
all New Zealanders**

Nationally representative sample  
by age, gender, region, ethnicity  
and income by household size





























































Online surveys  
conducted from  
18 February to  
12 March 2021



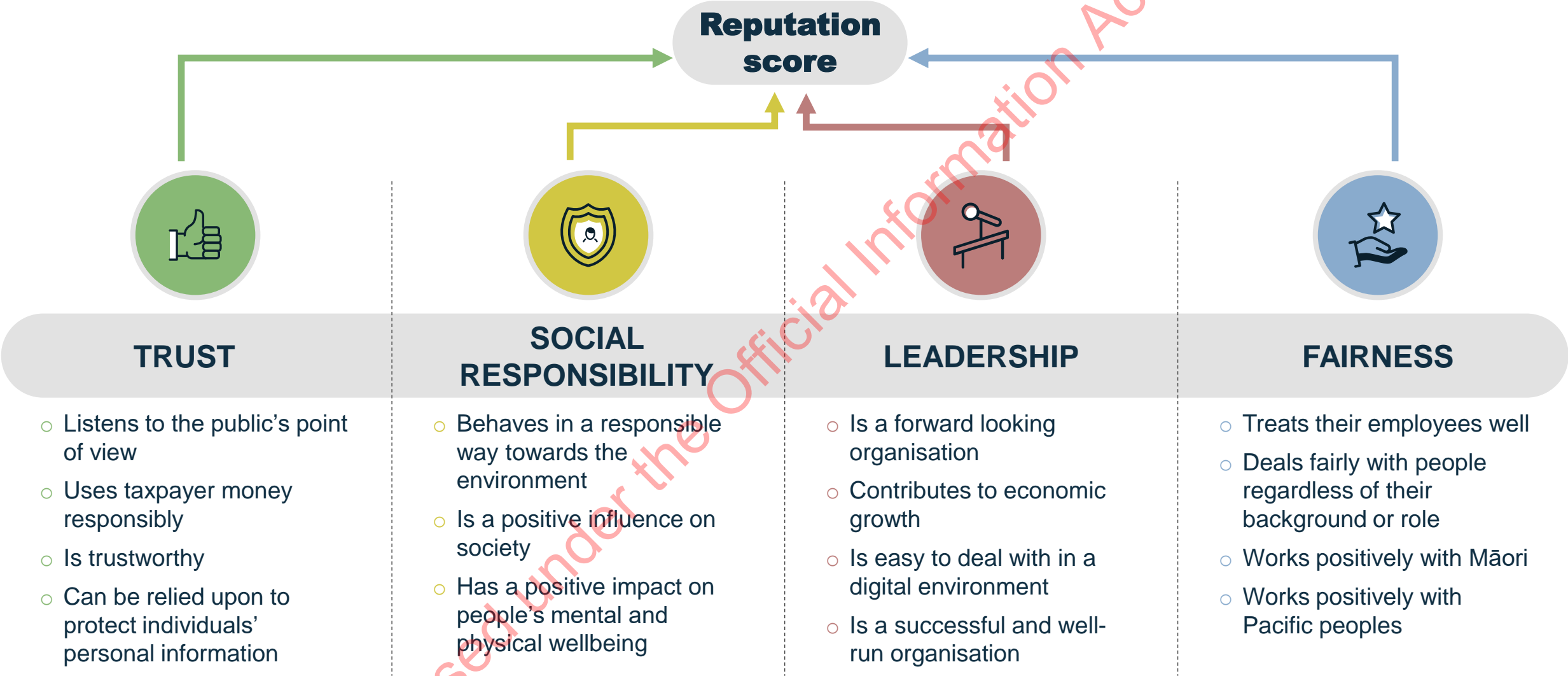
# 58

## New Zealand public sector agencies

New agencies in 2021 are Aviation Security Service, Land Information New Zealand, Managed Isolation and Quarantine (MIQ) and Ministry of Housing and Urban Development.

 Te Kapereihana Āwhina Hunga Whero		 Aviation Security Service Kaitiaki Takekōwhiri	 BROADCASTING STANDARDS AUTHORITY TE MANA WHANONGA KAIPĀHO	 Callaghan Innovation New Zealand's Innovation Agency	 CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY TE MANA WHAKAATU		 COMMERCE COMMISSION NEW ZEALAND Te Komihana Tauhokohoko	 TE MANA WHAKAATU Classification Office	 creative nz ARTS COUNCIL OF NEW ZEALAND - TE AO TEOHĀO
 New Zealand DEFENCE FORCE Te Ope Kaitiaki o Aotearoa	 Department of Conservation Te Papa Atawhai	 DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS ARA POUTAMA AOTEAROA	 Te Tari Taiwhenua Internal Affairs	 EQC EARTHQUAKE COMMISSION Kaitiaki Takekōwhiri	 ELECTRICITY AUTHORITY TE MANA HIKO	 Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority Te Tari Tikaki Pūngao	 FINANCIAL MARKETS AUTHORITY TE MANA TIKAI HOKOHOKO - NEW ZEALAND	 FIRE EMERGENCY NEW ZEALAND	 GNS SCIENCE TE PŪ AO
 hpo health promotion agency	 Inland Revenue Te Tari Taake	 Kāinga Ora Homes and Communities	 Land Information New Zealand Iaitu te whenua	 MARITIME NEW ZEALAND	 MetService	 ORANGA TAMARIKI Ministry for Children	 MANAGED ISOLATION AND QUARANTINE	 MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT HIKINA WHAKATUTUKI	 Manatū Taonga Ministry for Culture & Heritage
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Reputation is measured across 15 attributes, under four pillars, which are combined into a single reputation score, and an index created with the average being 100.



1

# What trends are we seeing?

PUBLIC SECTOR REPUTATION INDEX 2021

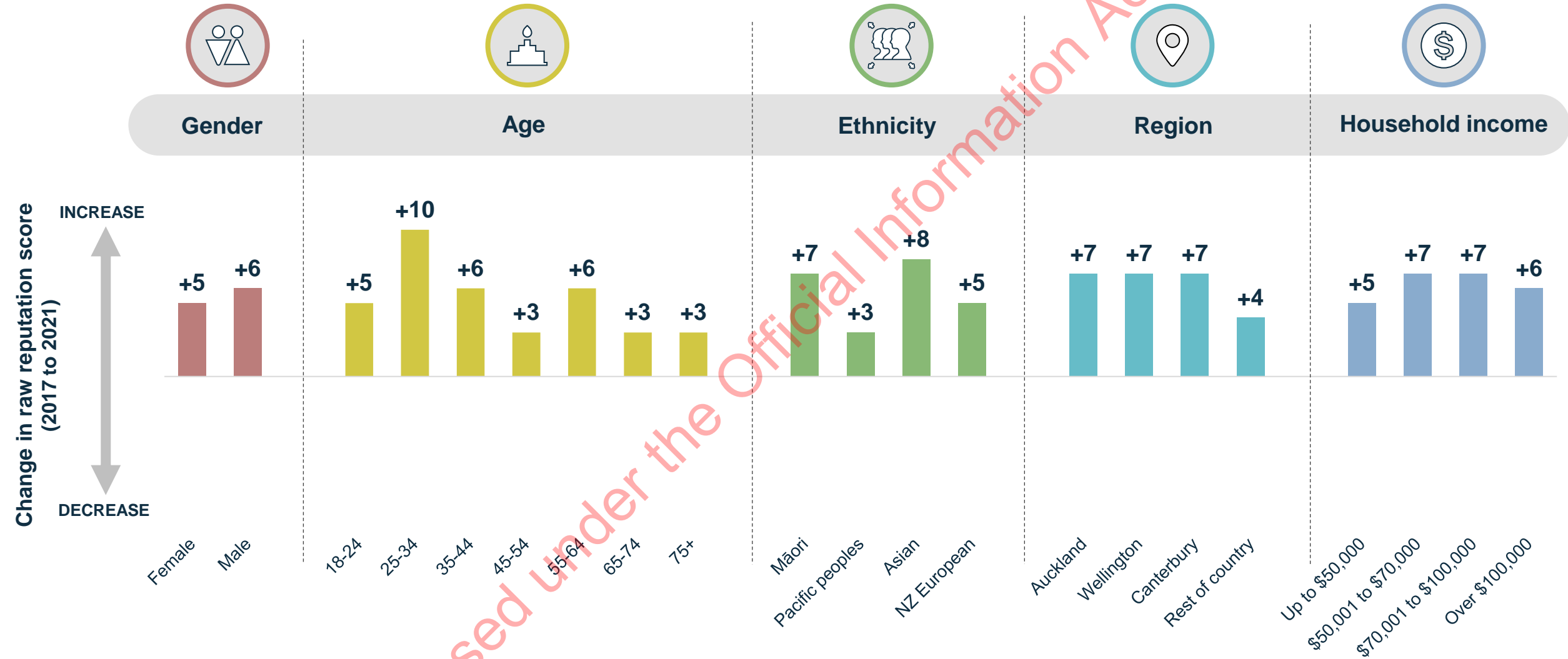
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Every year we've seen an overall improvement in the public sector's reputation – with the exception of this year which has been a consolidation on last year's big jump.



# The public sector's reputation has improved across all demographic groups since 2017.



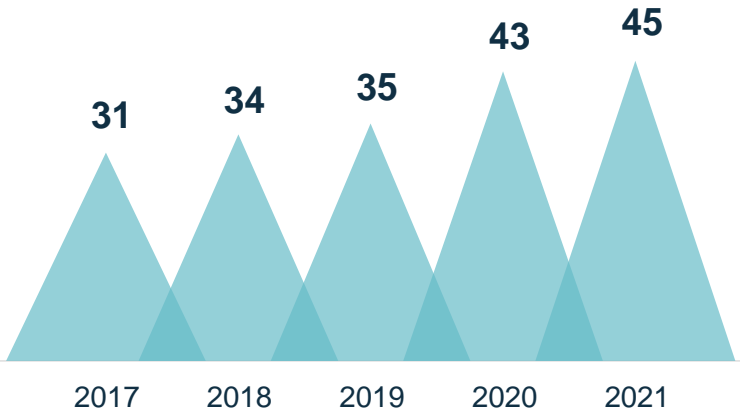


# Some attributes continue to improve, despite the pause in the overall reputation score.



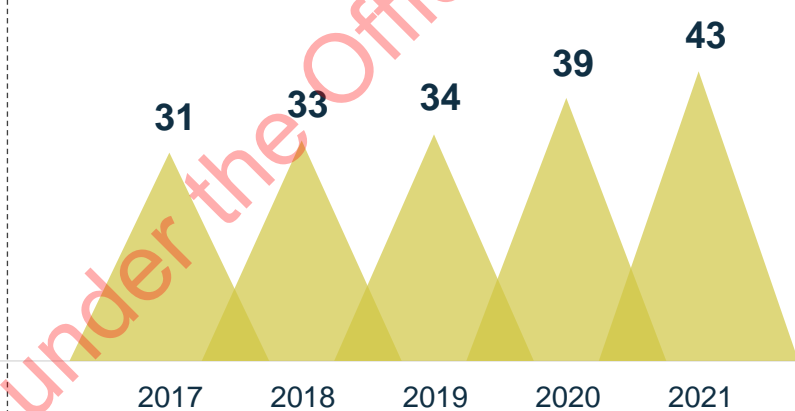
## Contributes to economic growth

% agree



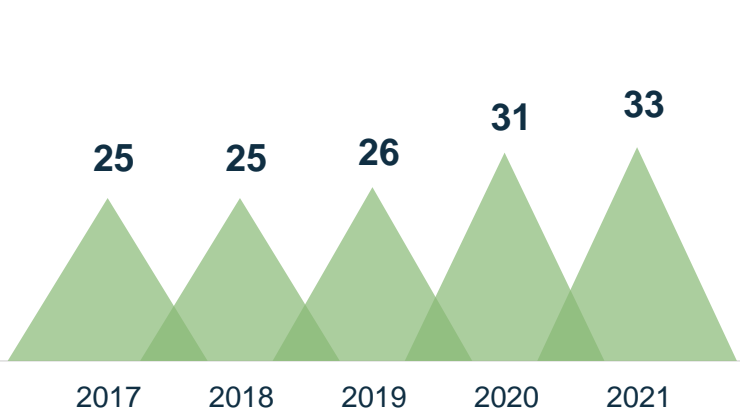
## Can be relied upon to protect personal information

% agree



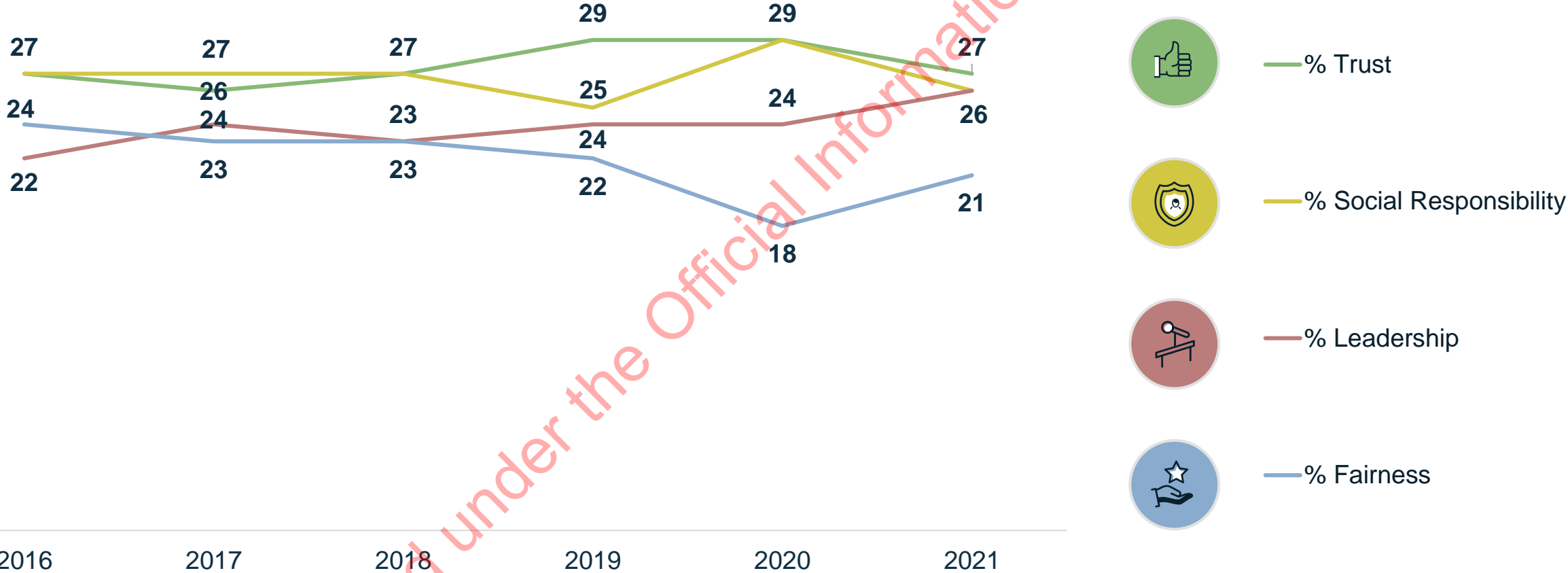
## Is easy to deal with in a digital environment

% agree



# Leadership is increasing in importance in terms of its impact on reputation.

## PILLAR IMPACT ON AGENCY REPUTATION



2

# How are our public sector agencies performing?

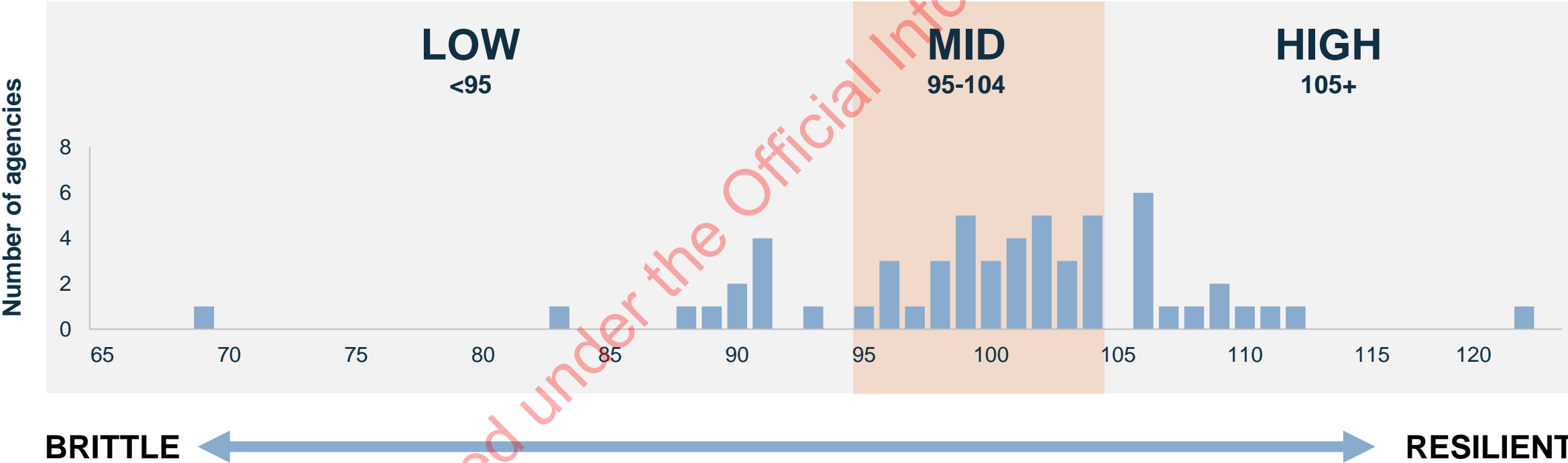


Most of the public sector agencies have a healthy reputation with 8 out of 10 in the mid to high range.

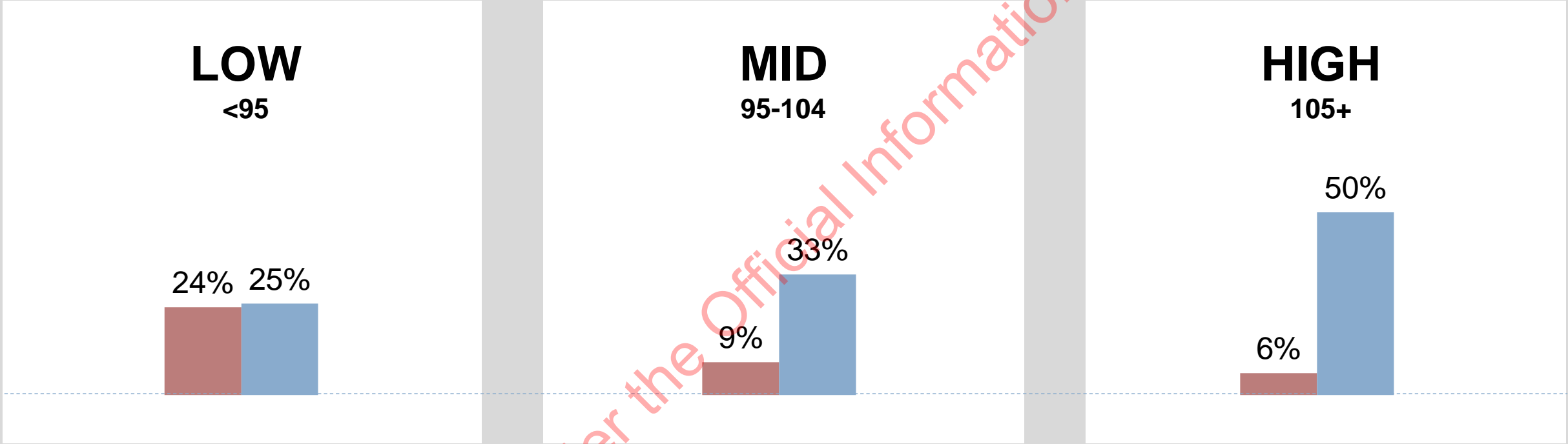
19%

57%

24%

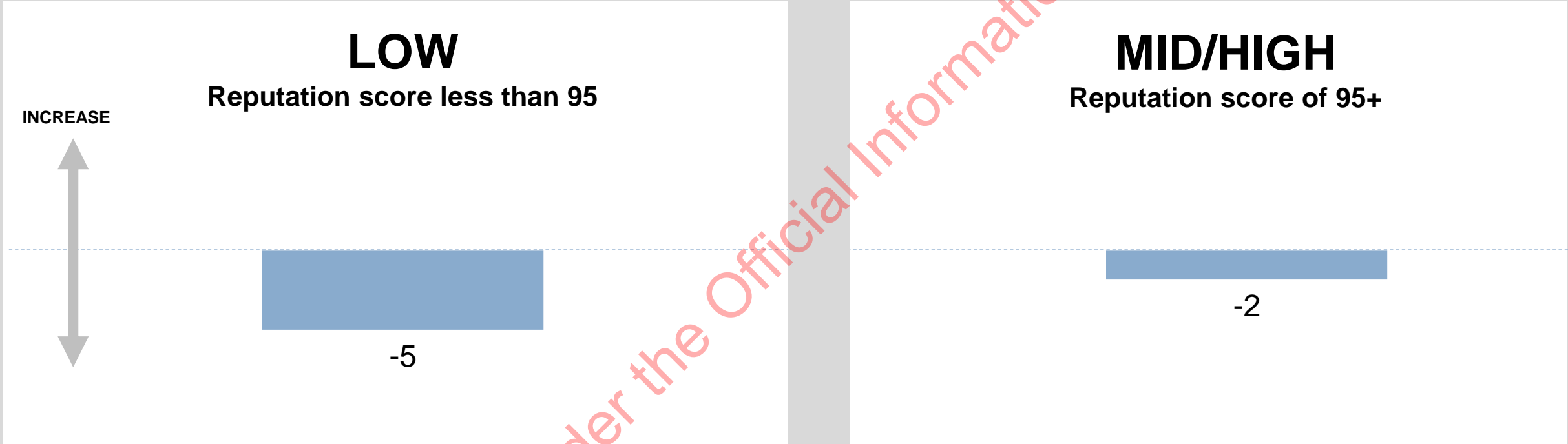


So what does this mean? A reputation in the high range means people are eight times more likely to be advocates than critics. In the low range they are evenly split.



ADVOACACY ■ % would be critical of them ■ % would speak highly of them

A mid or high reputation also means an agency is twice as resilient if an issue occurs.



Average change in reputation score when media / comms sentiment drops 10 percentage points plus

3

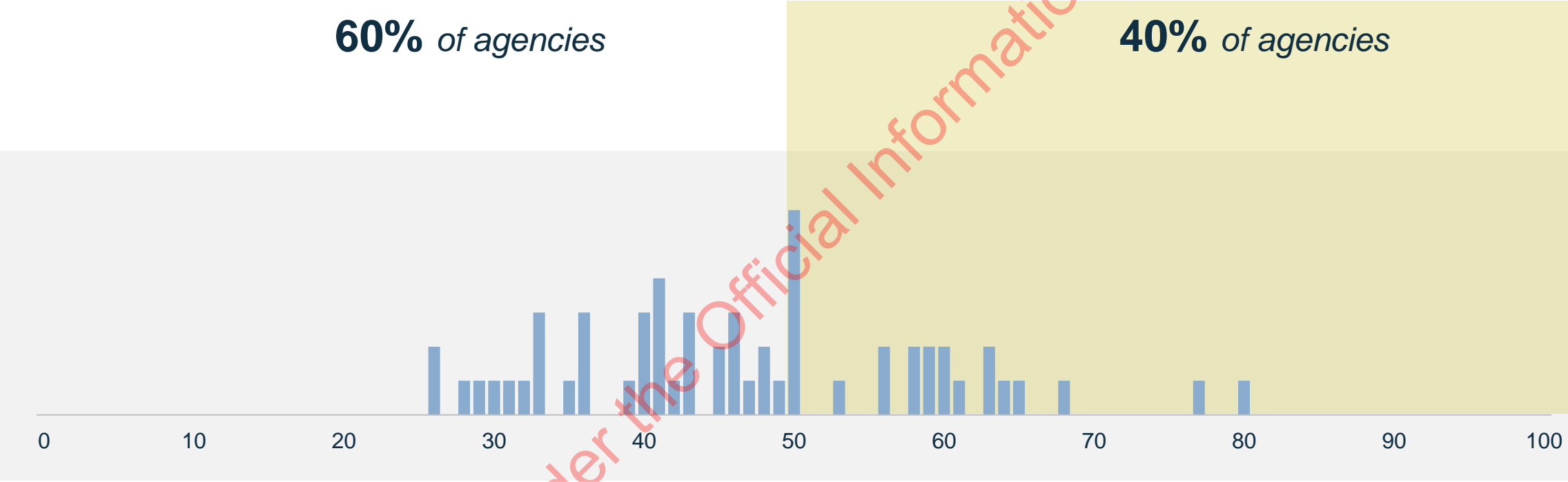
# How is COVID-19 affecting reputation?

# Some agencies are seen as more important than others to the COVID-19 recovery.

60% of agencies

40% of agencies

Number of agencies



LOW

HIGH

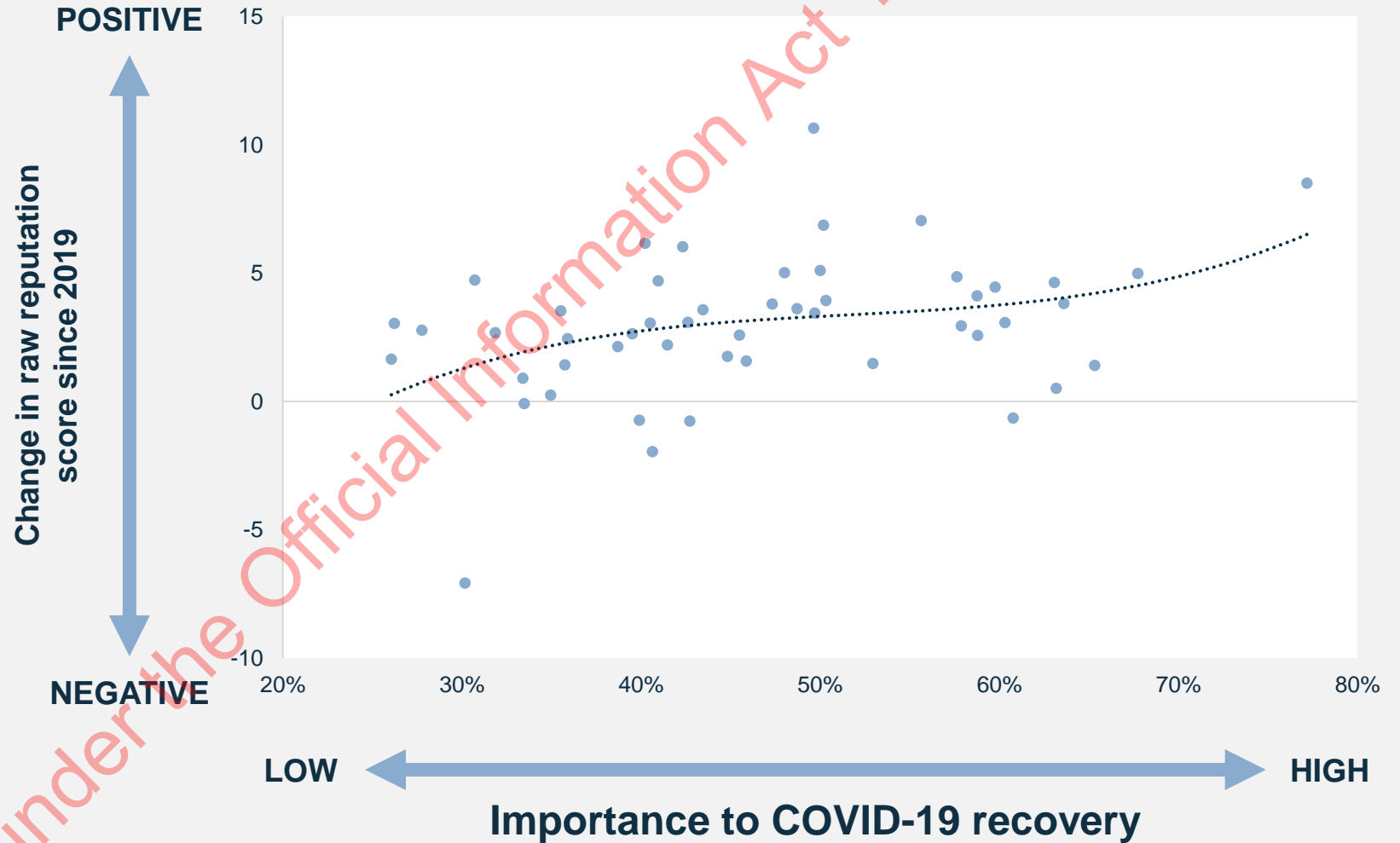
## Importance to COVID-19 recovery

The proportion of people who agree agency is important in helping New Zealand recover from the economic and social impact of COVID-19



There is a link between the extent to which public sector agencies are associated with the COVID-19 recovery and the strength of any reputational improvement since 2019. However the link is not a strong one.

There are plenty of agencies who've had reputational improvements who are not strongly associated with the COVID-19 recovery.



4

# Who has the strongest reputation in 2021?



# OVERALL REPUTATION

TOP 10

2021

Fire and Emergency remains top of the pack.

Ministry of Health enters the top 10 for the first time, and Tourism New Zealand is back in the mix.

Callaghan Innovation jumps from 5<sup>th</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> place.

121		109	 Department of Conservation Te Papa Atawhai
112	CallaghanInnovation New Zealand's Innovation Agency 	108	 New Zealand DEFENCE FORCE Te Ope Kātua O Aotearoa 
111	 National Emergency Management Agency Te Rākau Whakamarumarū	107	 NEW ZEALAND TOURISM
110	 NEW ZEALAND CUSTOMS SERVICE TE MANA ĀRAI O AOTEAROA	106	 MINISTRY OF HEALTH MANATŪ HAUORA 
109	 MetService	106	 hpa health promotion agency 



# TOP 5

## ON EACH PILLAR

Highest scoring agencies on each of the four pillars



TRUST

1



2

**CallaghanInnovation**  
New Zealand's Innovation Agency

3



4



5



SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



**CallaghanInnovation**  
New Zealand's Innovation Agency



LEADERSHIP



**CallaghanInnovation**  
New Zealand's Innovation Agency



FAIRNESS



**CallaghanInnovation**  
New Zealand's Innovation Agency



# TOP 5

## MOVERS & SHAKERS

Top 5 most improved agencies

Stats NZ has improved its reputation the most.

Ministry of Health is greatly improved following its COVID-19 response.

Kāinga Ora is in the top 5 most improved for the third year in a row.



1

**Stats**  NZ

2

 **WAKA KOTAHI**  
NZ TRANSPORT AGENCY

3

 **Inland Revenue**  
Te Tari Taake

4

 **MINISTRY OF HEALTH**  
MANATŪ HAUORA

5

 **Kāinga Ora**  
Homes and Communities

5

# How did Waka Kotahi do this year?



























































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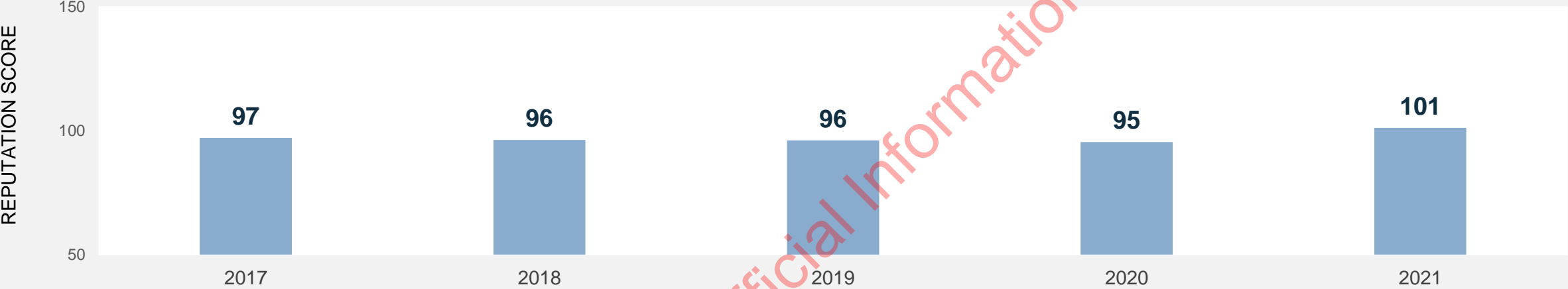
# 5

## Benchmark agencies

Waka Kotahi chose five agencies to be benchmarked against in 2021.

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Waka Kotahi's reputation (relative to all other agencies) has recovered following the gradual decline since 2017. This increase is due to significant improvements in perceptions across all of the reputation pillars compared to 2020, resulting in Waka Kotahi being one of the top movers and shakers on the Index in 2021.





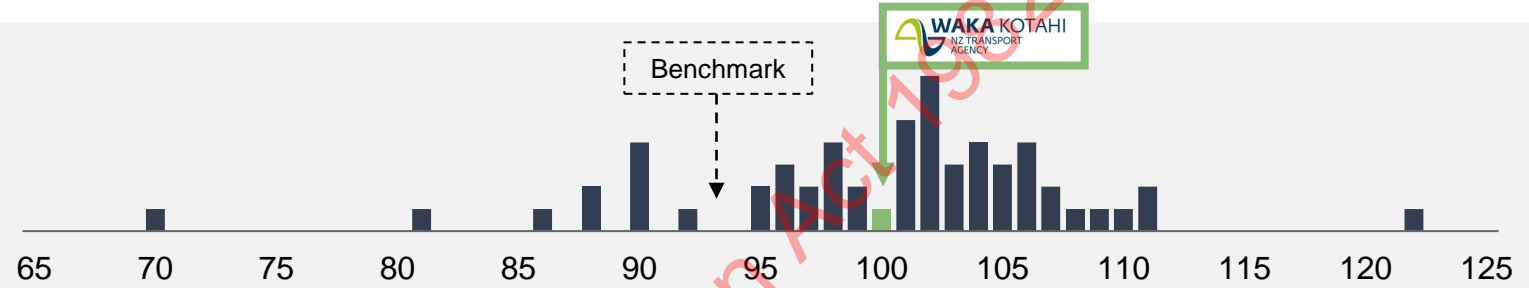
Waka Kotahi's reputation score of 101 is well ahead of the five benchmark agencies on 94.

Indeed, Waka Kotahi sits ahead of the five benchmark agencies on all pillars in 2021.

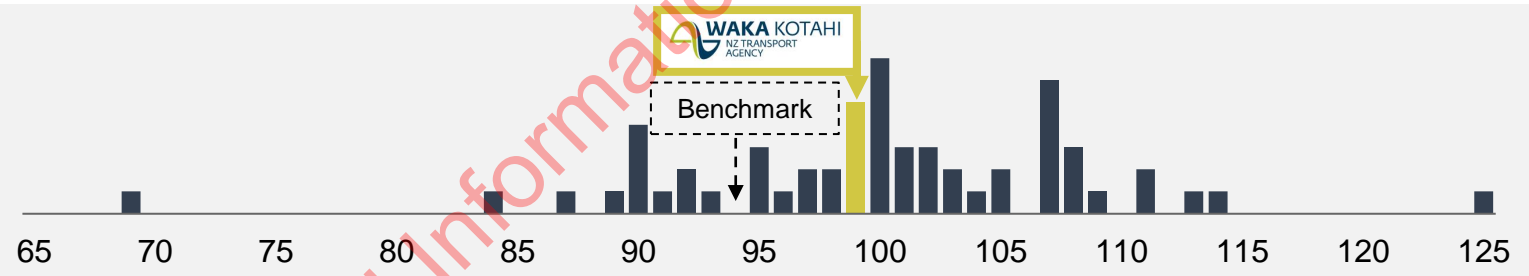
Compared to the benchmark agencies, leadership is Waka Kotahi's biggest strength.



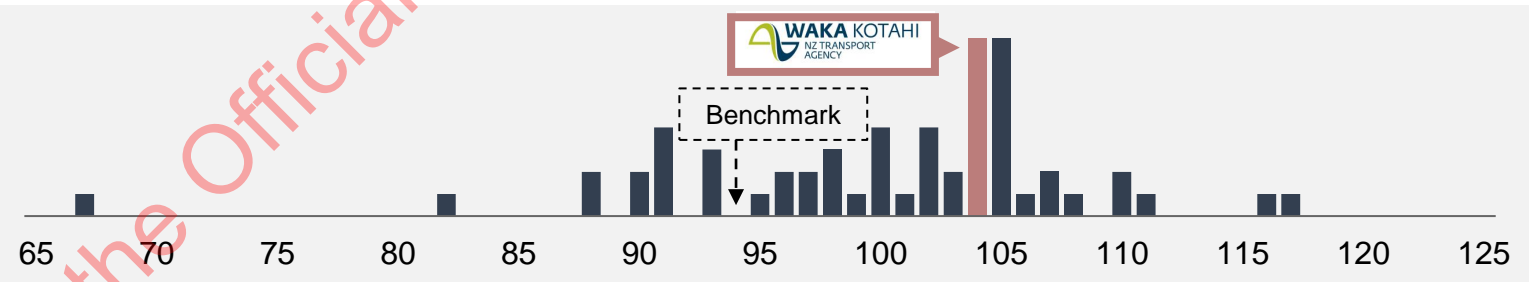
**TRUST**



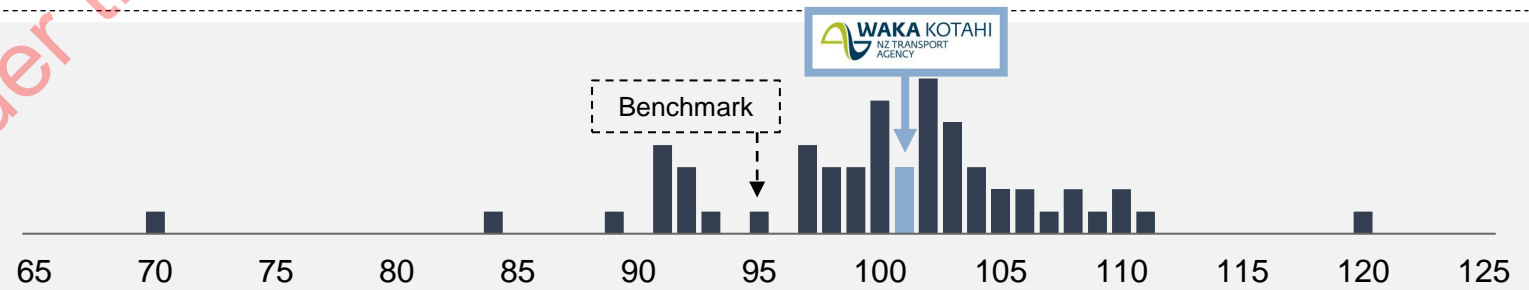
**SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**



**LEADERSHIP**



**FAIRNESS**

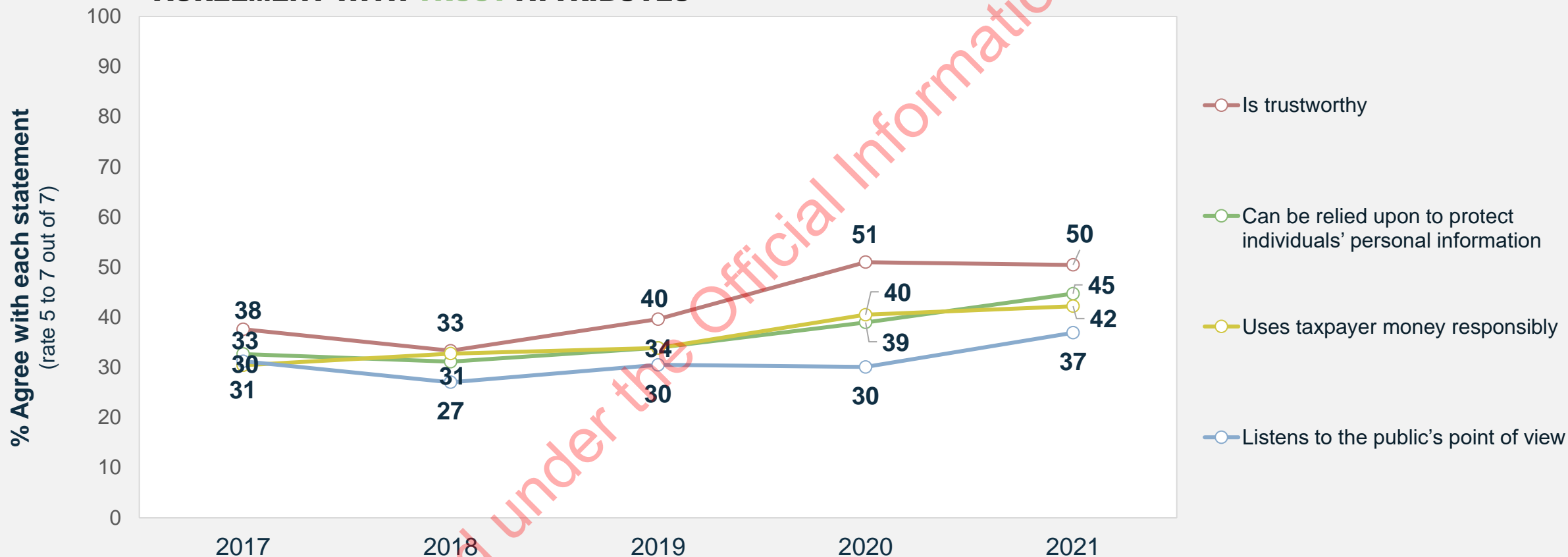


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Agreement with each of the trust attributes has increased compared to 2017. All attributes have seen an increase in agreement since 2020 except for being trustworthy, which has plateaued. In 2021, there has been a notable improvement in being seen as listening to the public's point of view.

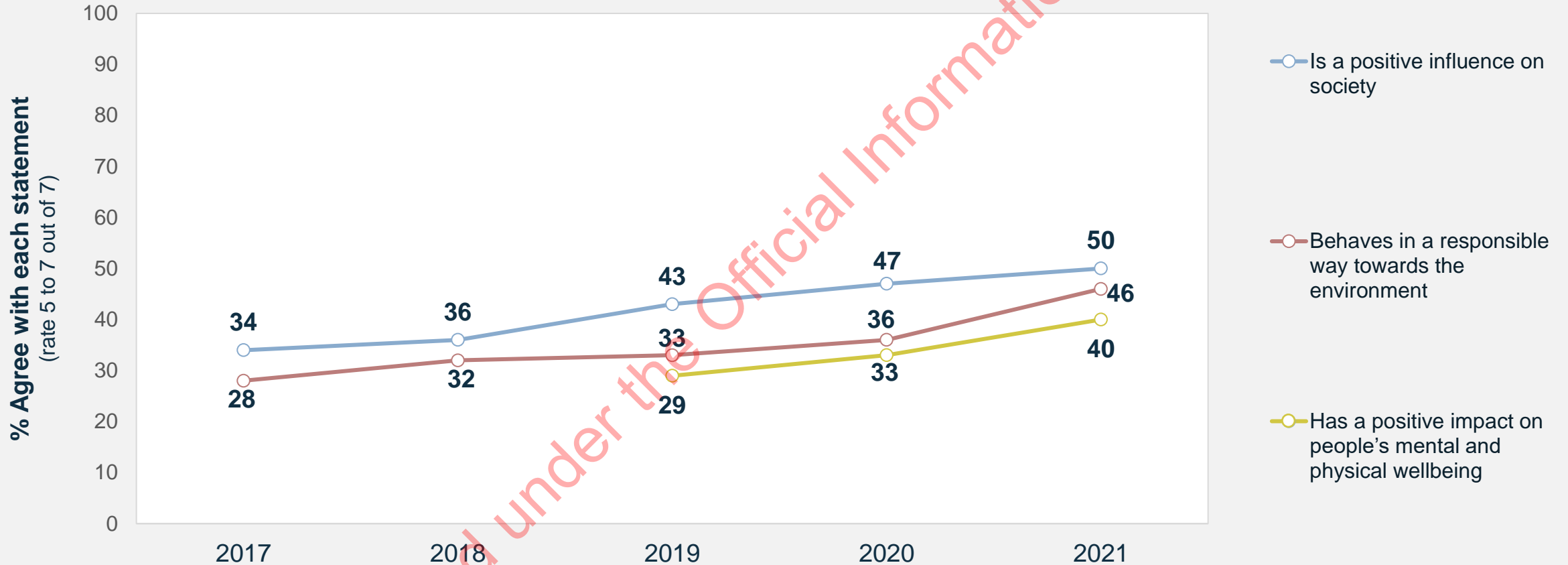
### AGREEMENT WITH TRUST ATTRIBUTES





There has been year-on-year growth for all of the social responsibility attributes. In 2021 there has been a notable increase in the proportion of New Zealanders who agree that Waka Kotahi behaves in a responsible way towards the environment.

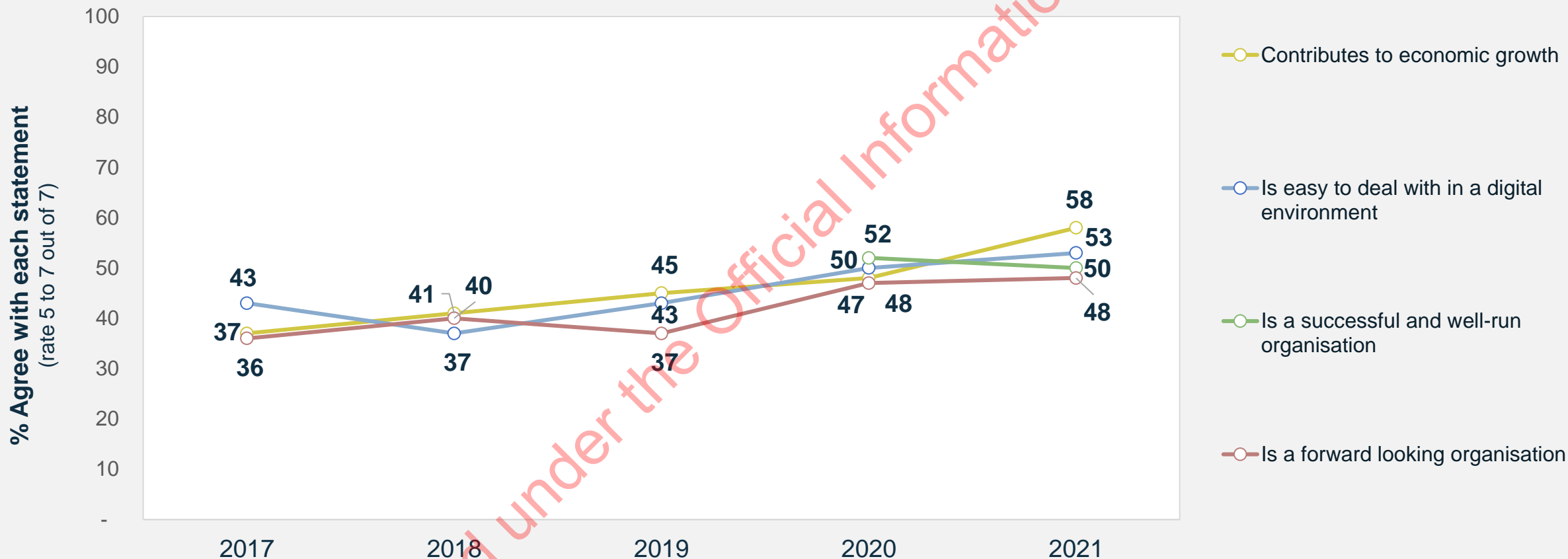
### AGREEMENT WITH SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY ATTRIBUTES





Leadership is Waka Kotahi's strongest pillar. This is positive, as leadership is increasingly having a greater impact on reputation (see slide 10). There has been a significant shift (+10 percentage points) in agreement that Waka Kotahi contributes to economic growth in 2021, while the other attributes are all relatively static. Waka Kotahi's biggest strengths across all the pillars are being seen as contributing to economic growth, and being easy to deal with in a digital environment.

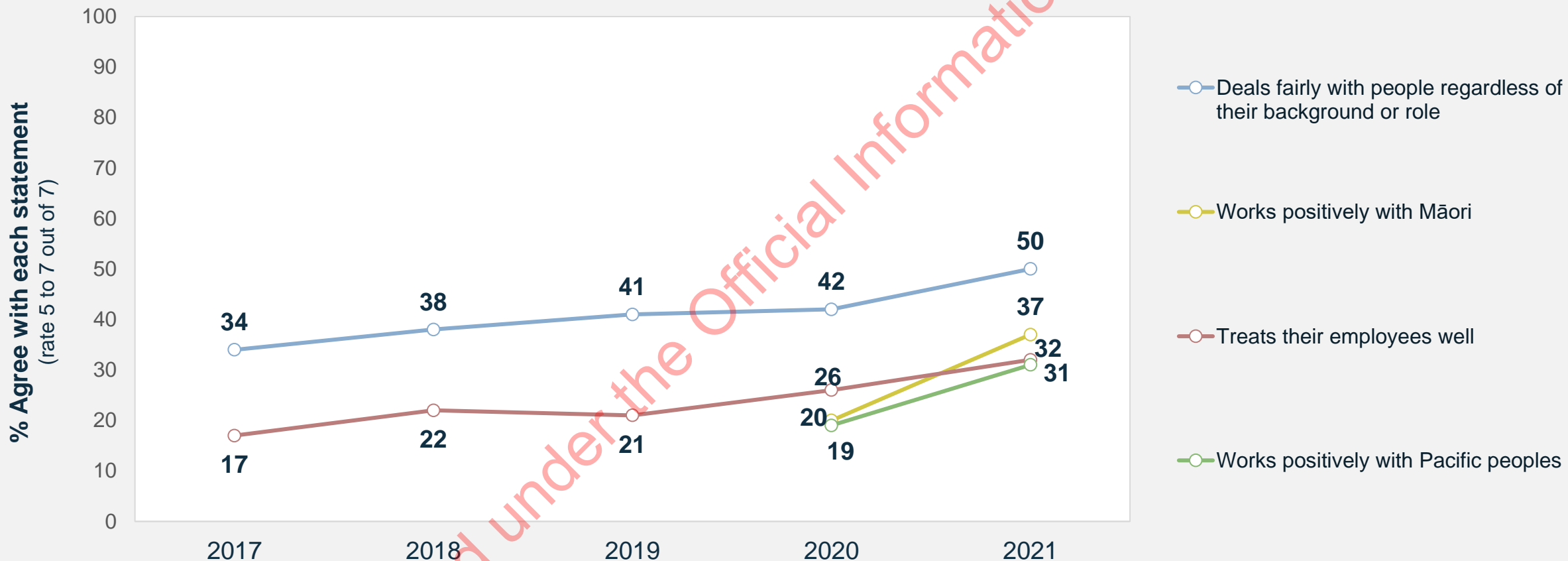
### AGREEMENT WITH LEADERSHIP ATTRIBUTES





Waka Kotahi is increasingly being seen as a fair organisation. There have been notable improvements in being perceived as working positively with Māori and with Pacific peoples in 2021. This could be attributable to the rebranding (this is the first year the agency was called 'Waka Kotahi' throughout the survey).

### AGREEMENT WITH FAIRNESS ATTRIBUTES



Waka Kotahi outperforms the benchmark agencies on almost all of the attributes.

Waka Kotahi's relative strengths are being easy to deal with in a digital environment, contributing to economic growth, and dealing fairly with people regardless of their background or role.

The only attribute where Waka Kotahi falls slightly behind the benchmark agencies is being seen to have a positive impact on people's mental and physical wellbeing.



**TRUST**



**SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**



**LEADERSHIP**



**FAIRNESS**

		% agree 2021 (rate 5 to 7 out of 7)	Percentage point difference from benchmark
Is trustworthy		50	10
Can be relied upon to protect individuals' personal information		45	7
Uses taxpayer money responsibly		42	7
Listens to the public's point of view		37	4
Is a positive influence on society		50	4
Behaves in a responsible way towards the environment		46	10
Has a positive impact on people's mental and physical wellbeing		40	-1
Contributes to economic growth		58	14
Is easy to deal with in a digital environment		53	22
Is a successful and well-run organisation		50	9
Is a forward looking organisation		48	8
Deals fairly with people regardless of their background or role		50	12
Works positively with Māori		37	4
Treats their employees well		32	5
Works positively with Pacific peoples		31	2

6

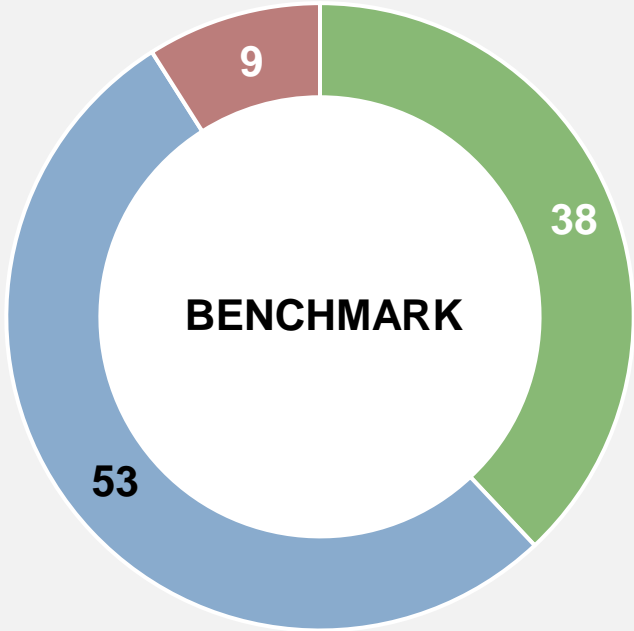
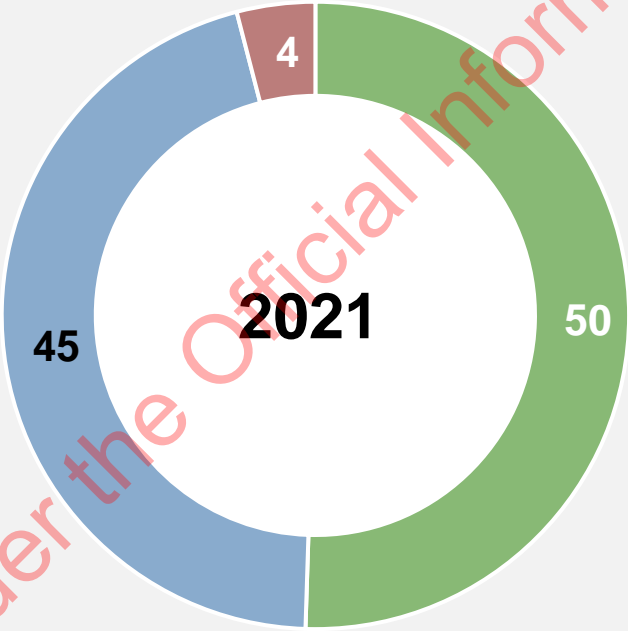
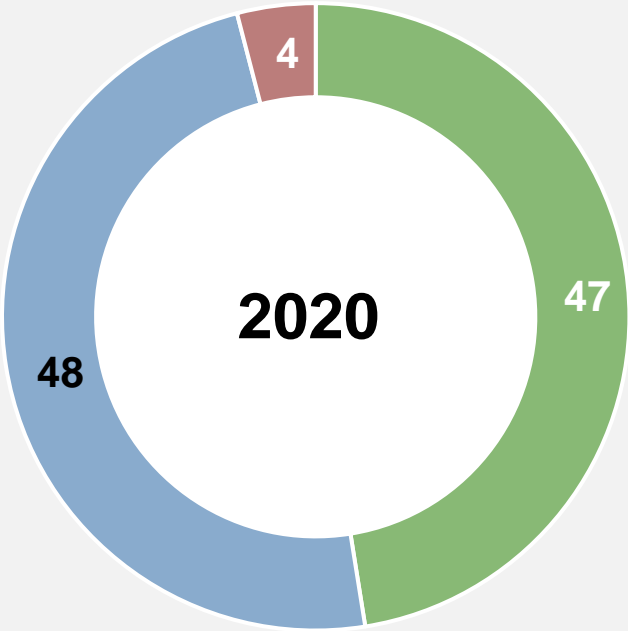
# Awareness and understanding

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Almost all New Zealanders (98%) have heard of Waka Kotahi. Perceived understanding of what the agency does is strong, with 50% of those aware claiming to have a good understanding. This is above the benchmark agency average.

### UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT WAKA KOTAHI DOES



■ % Good understanding

■ % Basic understanding

■ % Heard or seen the name only



Below are the key areas that people think Waka Kotahi has a role in. People think of the agency's administrative role for road users in addition to managing road / transport maintenance and safety.



## Theme 1:

### Administrative functions

WOFS, registrations, licensing and road user information

*License, vehicle registration and WOF and services.*

*Monitors and maintains the standards of vehicles in New Zealand.*

*Monitor parking around areas, help people get their licenses, driving tests.*

*Vehicle-related information. For example payments, user charges, ownership, roads.*



## Theme 2:

### Road / transportation maintenance

*Builds roads - Transmission Gully etc., which I hope they finish this year. Think they also are in charge of traffic and road works.*

*Responsible for upkeep of roads, trains, train lines, ferries etc.*

*Fixes roads.*



## Theme 3:

### Road safety

*Keeps reminding you about registration. All to do with keeping cars safe on New Zealand roads.*

*Making sure vehicles are road worthy and roads are safe.*

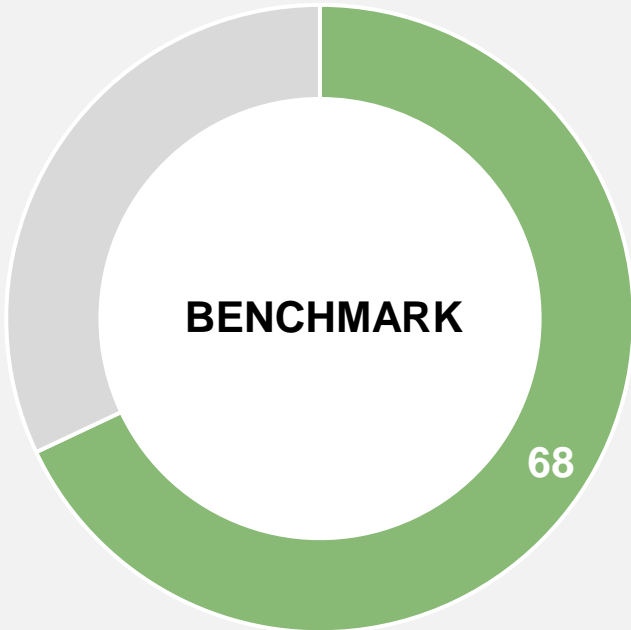
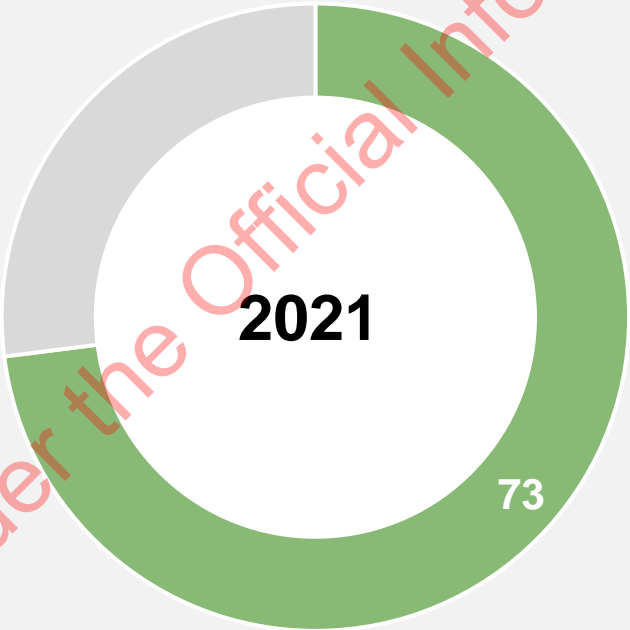
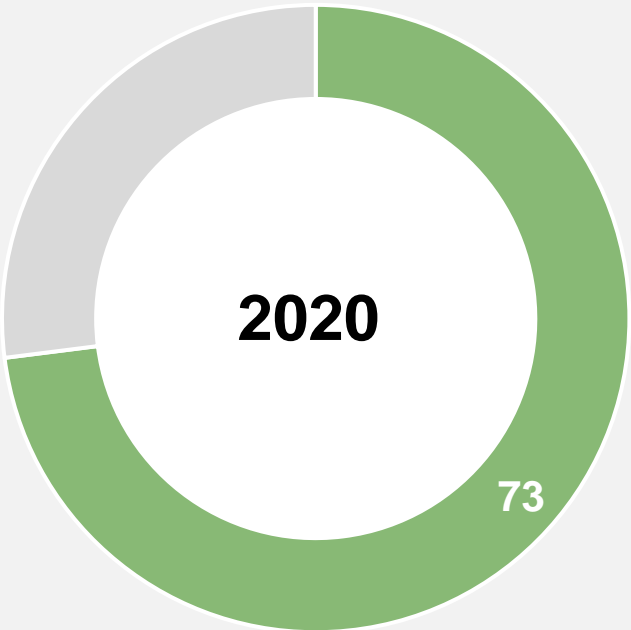
*I think they're the people that set speeds, driving tests, road safety.*

*Tries to keep our roads safe by keeping our cars in good working order. We pay fees to them. Looking after our highways and byways.*

Almost three-quarters of New Zealanders feel that the work Waka Kotahi does is important for New Zealand. This is in line with 2020, and above the benchmark agency average.

## LEGITIMACY OF PURPOSE

*The proportion of people who agree that the agency's work is important for New Zealand*



7

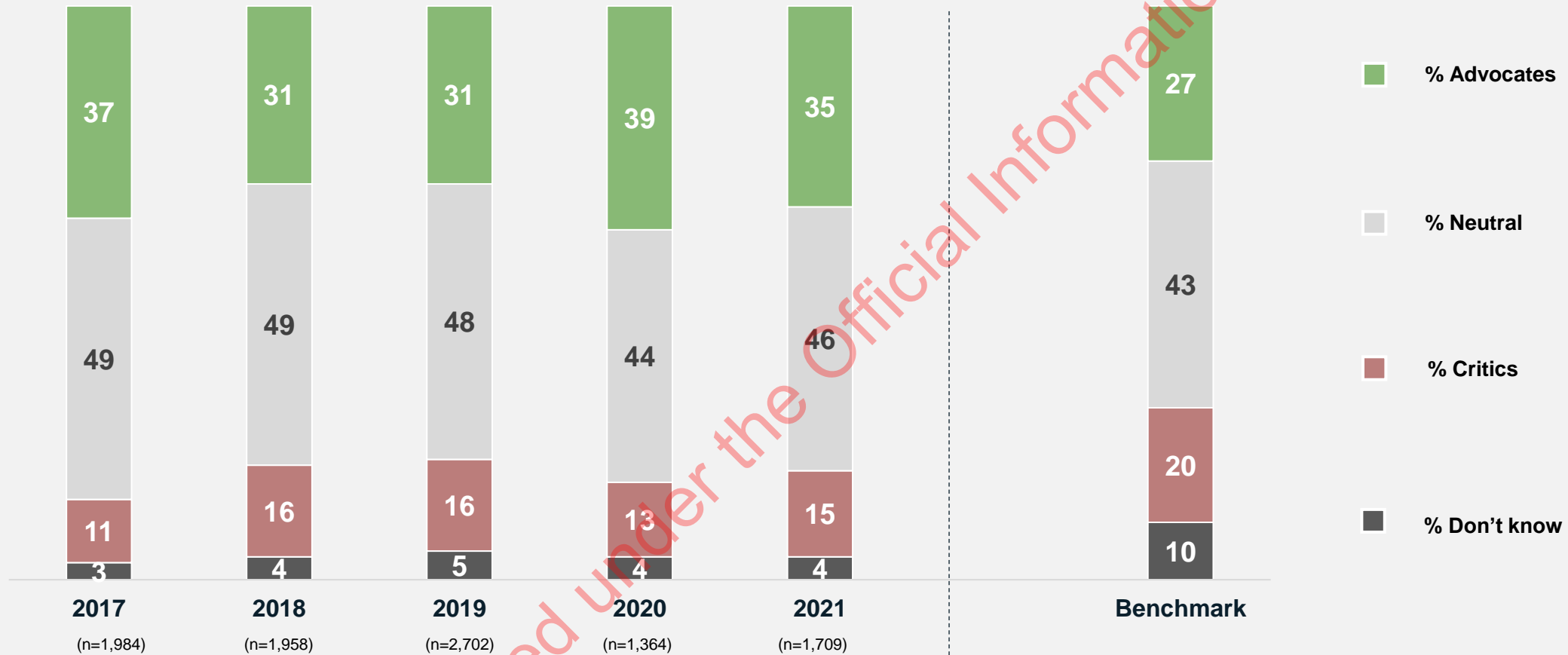
# Advocacy



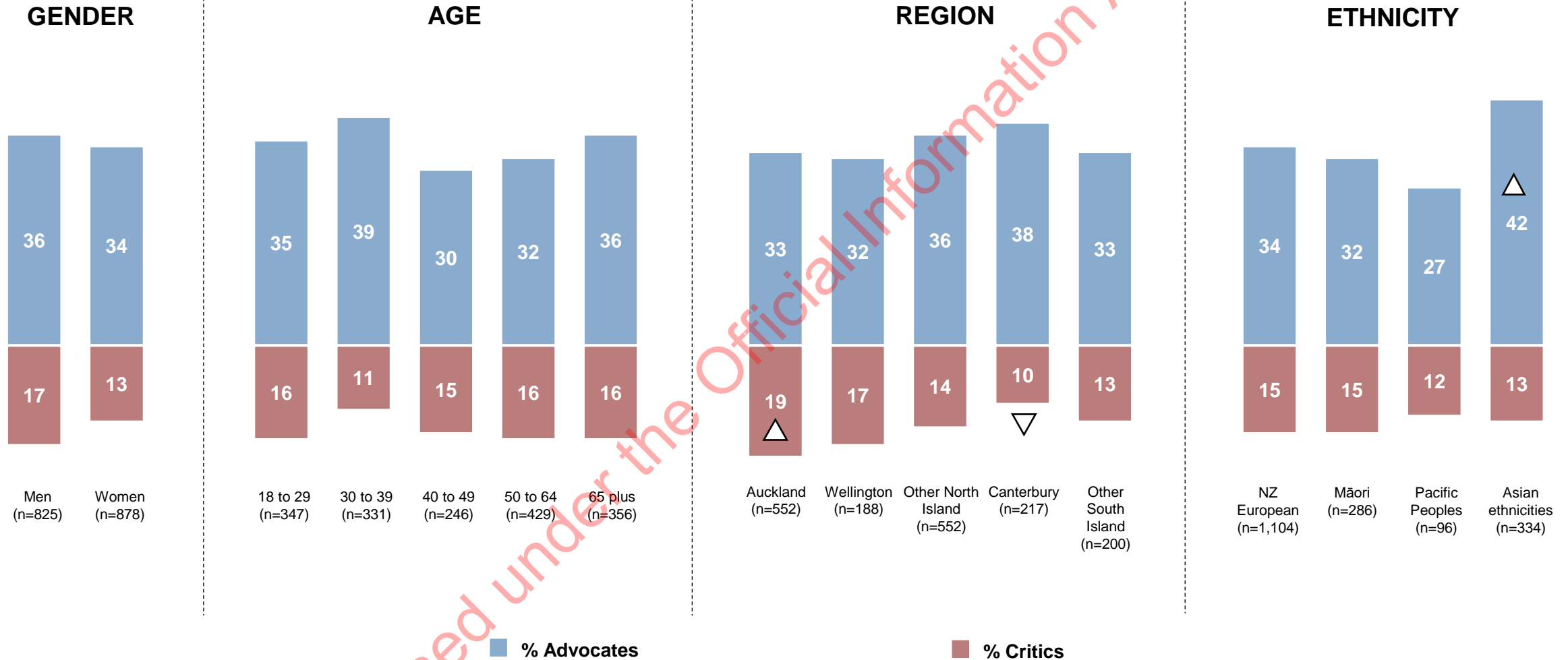
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Advocacy for Waka Kotahi has declined from the high seen in 2020. However, it is higher than the benchmark agency average. This is at odds with the improved performance across the reputational attributes. We believe this difference is because the advocacy score is akin to a gut response from the public, and that at a more emotional level they feel less positive than in 2020, but this does not reflect how they rationally think about the different attributes.

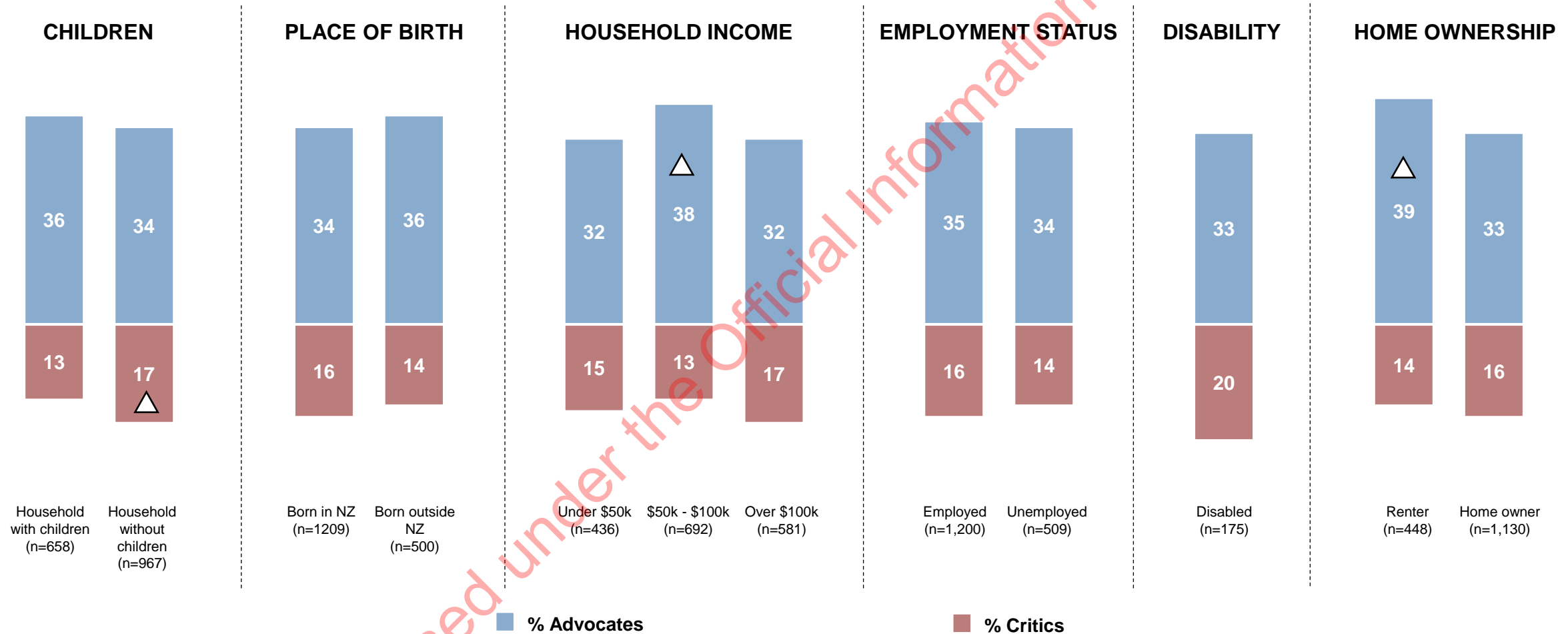
### ADVOCACY



# Asian New Zealanders are the most likely to advocate for Waka Kotahi. Aucklanders are more likely than average to be critics.



**Renters and middle-income earners are more likely than average to advocate for Waka Kotahi, while those in households without children are more likely than average to be critics. Disabled New Zealanders are the most critical group, with one in five being a critic (albeit this is not significantly higher than the average).**



Advocates feel that Waka Kotahi does the best it can to keep New Zealanders safe on our roads, and to keep us moving.

Many perceive the agency as being efficient and easy to deal with.

Advocates also praise the website for enabling them to easily action required tasks, such as renewing their car registration.



## What advocates say about Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency



*They are doing the best they can for NZ infrastructure.*

*They are really helpful for all people.*

*They provide safety in roads to everyone.*

*They do a great job with land transport in New Zealand.*

*I think they have done well for our country, it showed during shut down last year, where we didn't have to stress about no regos or WOF on our vehicles. Also, they have really good notification emails.*

*They appear to me to be efficient.*

*I like their services and always prompt response to current situations.*

*The information they give on their website.*

*Good website to work with.*

*Their website for dealing with day to day transactions eg car registration is excellent.*

*One can get the information they want by visiting their great website.*

Critics of Waka Kotahi feel that funds are being allocated to projects that they shouldn't be, or that issues that require attention are not being addressed.

Many reference negative experiences on the roads in New Zealand as cause for concern.

Relatively few mention any direct engagement with Waka Kotahi.



## What critics say about Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency



*They continue to waste money on stupid, stupid things that don't improve the safety of roads and just slow down travel journeys. They need to spend the money on what is important, like fixing the bloody roads!*

*They are focused on the wrong areas.*

*Badly maintained roads on the highway.*

*Cameras are outdated for new drivers licensing and they waste money on stupid projects. some are good but there are a few dumb ones.*

*They give fines.*

*If or when it is linked to Auckland Transport .... disastrous, lack of organisation.*

*Their anti-motoring policies against the people who supply the majority of the funds they administer is a shocking inditement on their bias.*

*They really haven't done much to help the current state of Auckland's roadworks. Now the news about the harbour bridge not being able to be strengthened anymore... Where was the future planning and mapping from NZTA?! Pathetic.*

*Poor customer service.*

*The state of our roads nationwide.*

*Have you tried to drive round this country lately?  
The road system is awful.*

*Experienced a talk to a group from one of their PR people a few years ago - person did not present well and totally lacked conviction.*

*Don't fix roads and terrible traffic congestion*

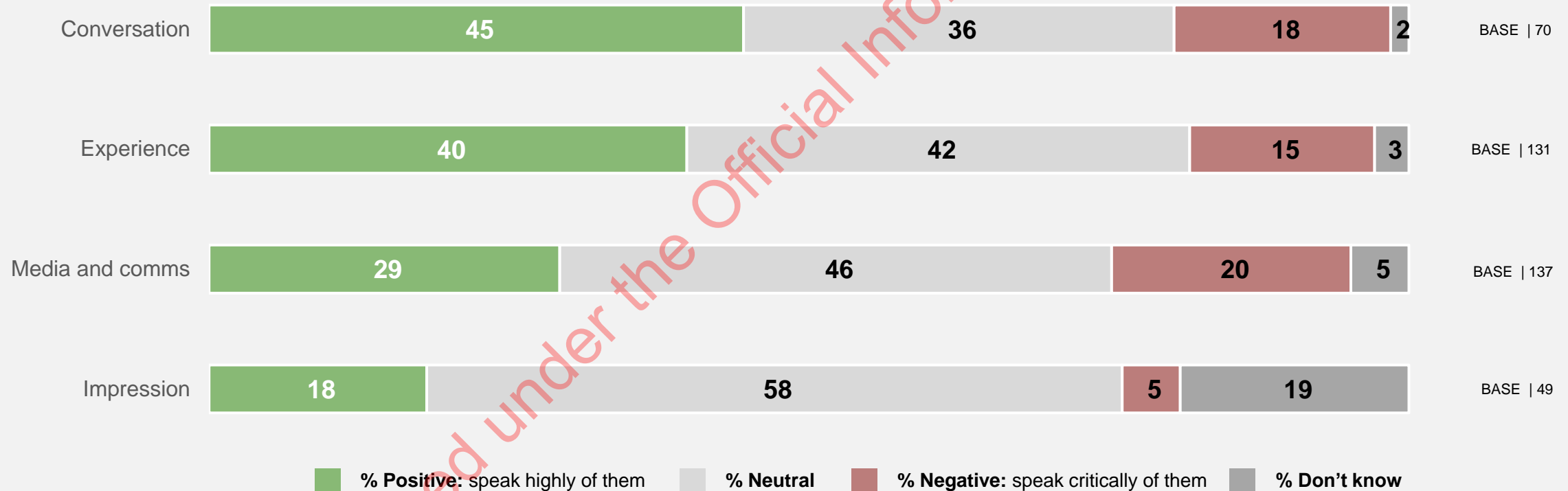
*The person we have had to deal with locally is very difficult to engage in helpful conversation. He caused a lot of stress.*

*Always a negative experience nothing is ever done well or on time*



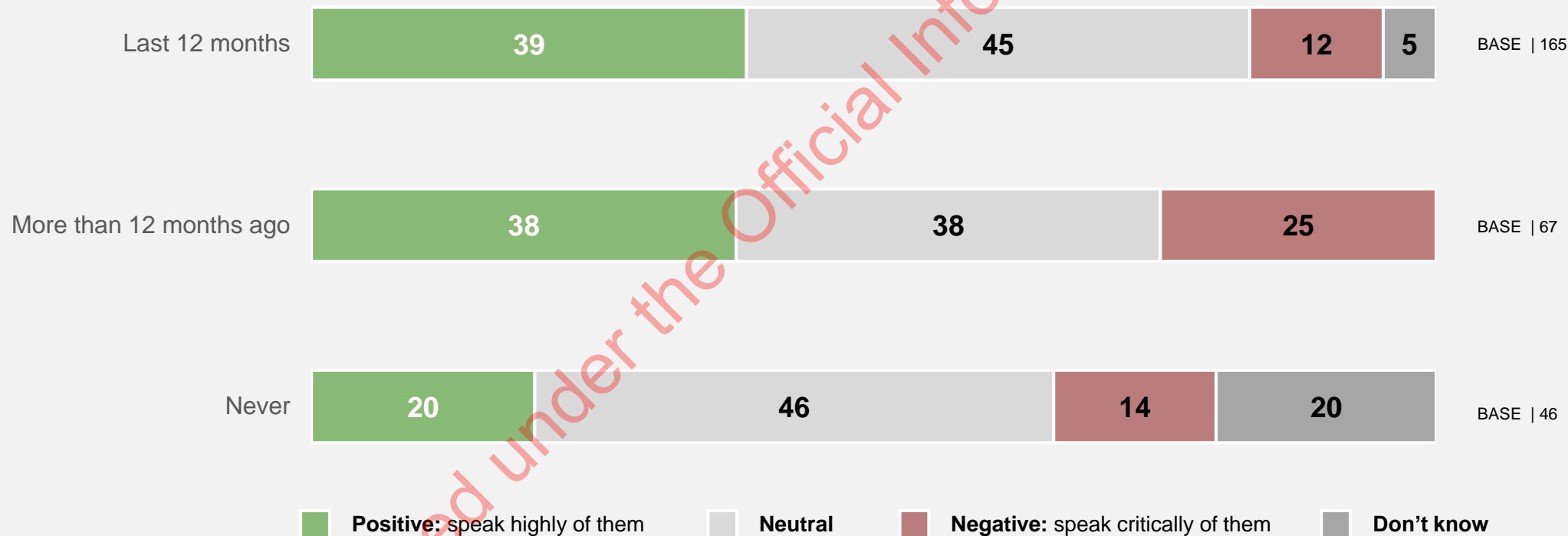
**New Zealanders who mainly base their opinion of Waka Kotahi on conversations, or their own experience, continue to be more positive than those whose views are based on the media or on impression.**

### ADVOCACY BY SOURCE OF REPUTATION



**New Zealanders who have interacted with Waka Kotahi more recently tend to be less critical about the agency. This reinforces the improvements seen earlier in this report, further highlighting the upwards trajectory that Waka Kotahi is on.**

### ADVOCACY BY TIME SINCE LAST PERSONAL CONTACT



8

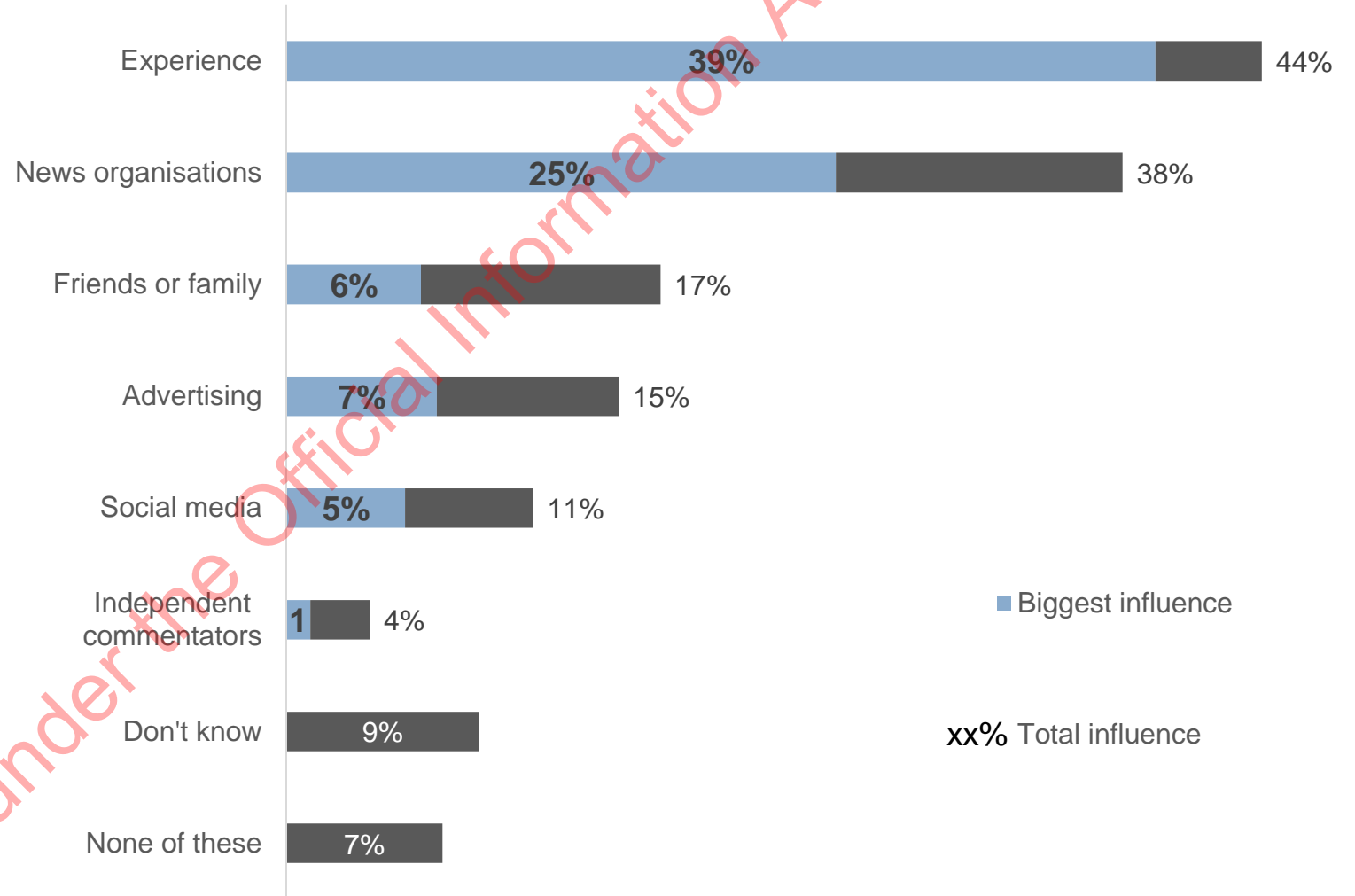
# Source of reputation



Direct experience with Waka Kotahi continues to be the single largest influence on peoples' perceptions of the agency. It has increased from 34% in 2020 to 39% in 2021.

While 38% of New Zealanders say that news media has influenced their view of Waka Kotahi, only 25% say it has had the biggest impact.

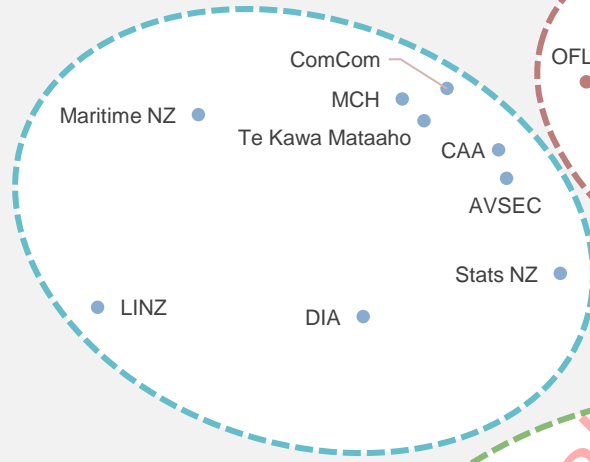
## What impacts people's views of Waka Kotahi



**Waka Kotahi is one of the few agencies where experience is the most important influence on reputation.**

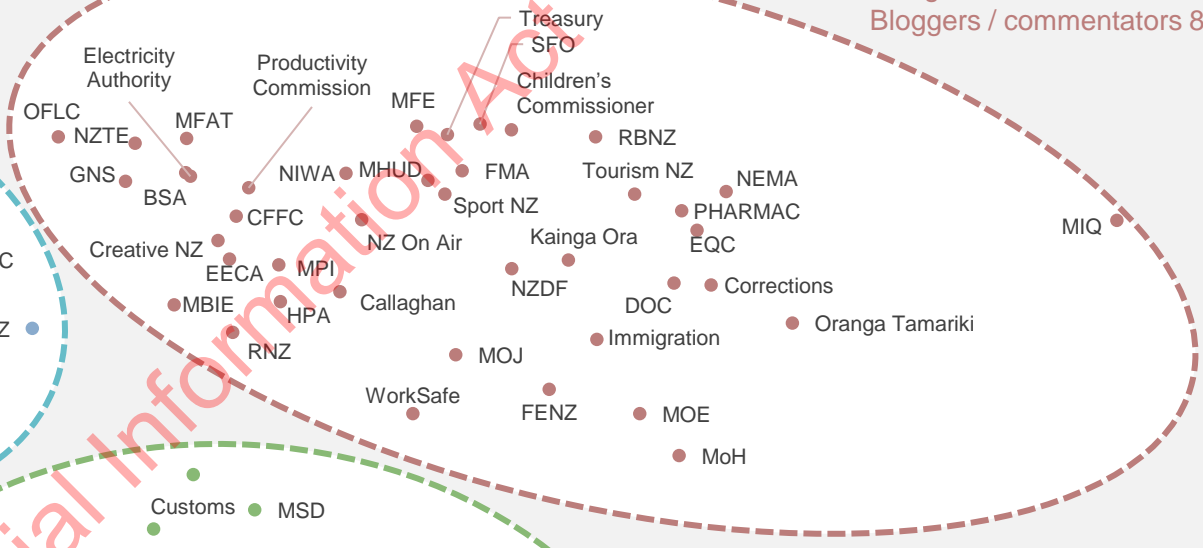
### IMPRESSION

Don't know 15%  
None of these 14%



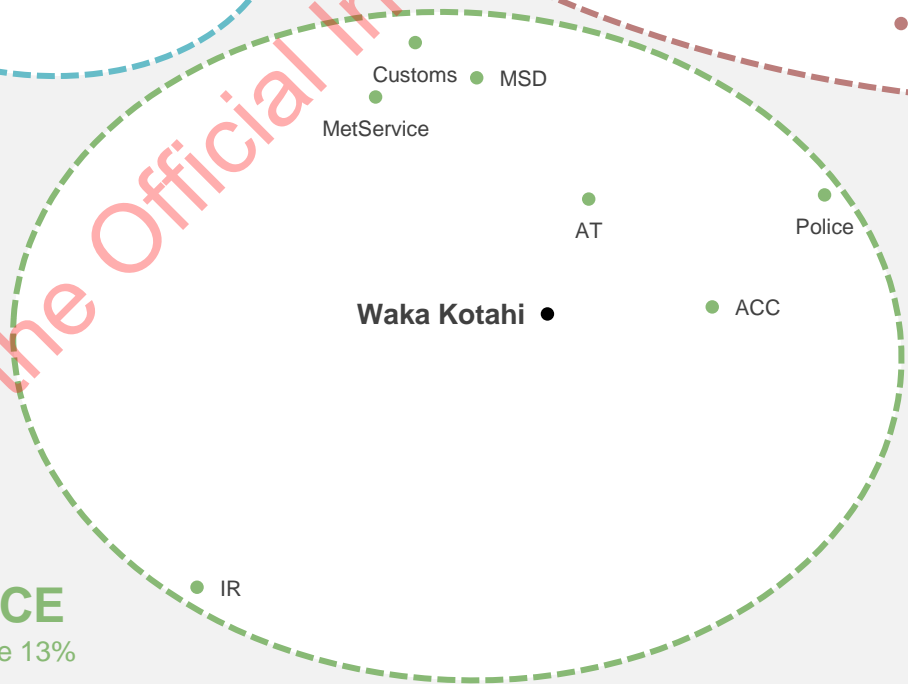
### MEDIA AND COMMS

News media 47%  
Advertising / communications 10%  
Bloggers / commentators 8%



### EXPERIENCE

Personal experience 13%



### CONVERSATION

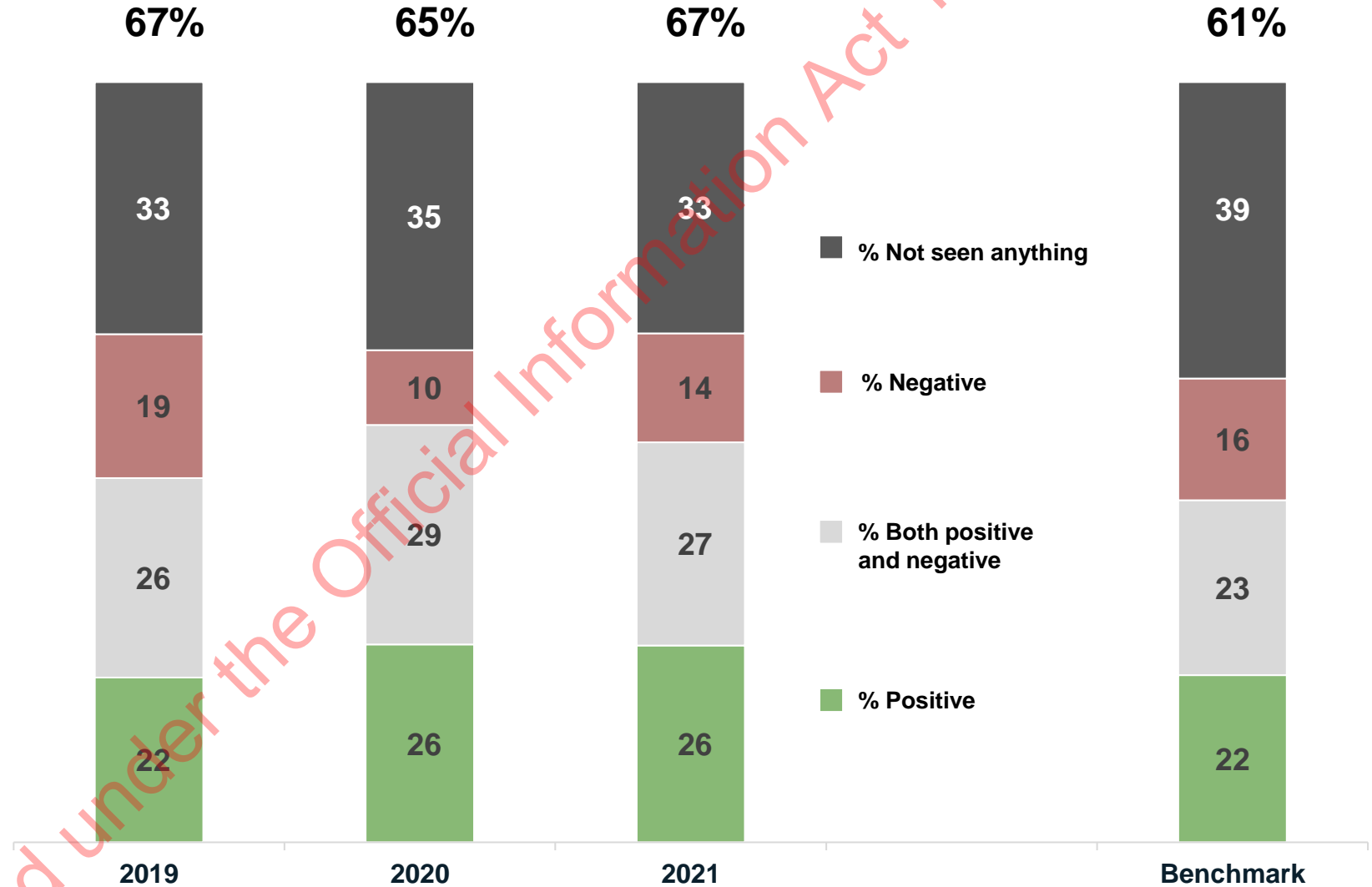
Friends or family 15%  
Social media 10%

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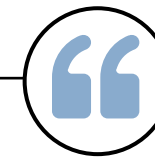
In line with previous years, two-thirds of New Zealanders have seen or heard something about Waka Kotahi in the last 12 months (slightly above the benchmark agency average).

The sentiment of what people have seen tends to be more positive than negative.

% SEEN OR HEARD SOMETHING



# What people have seen or heard about Waka Kotahi



- Work on highway.*
- Wearing a mask on public transport, free rides during COVID*
- Tolling on the new motorway joining onto Johnson Hill Tunnels - about how there may be two tolls.*
- The protracted work and extensions of time required to complete Transmission Gully project. The shortcomings of the Kapiti Expressway (near new seal breaking up).*
- Speed zone decrease in Auckland.*
- Restructuring.*
- Rego.*
- New road funding's and long term plans*

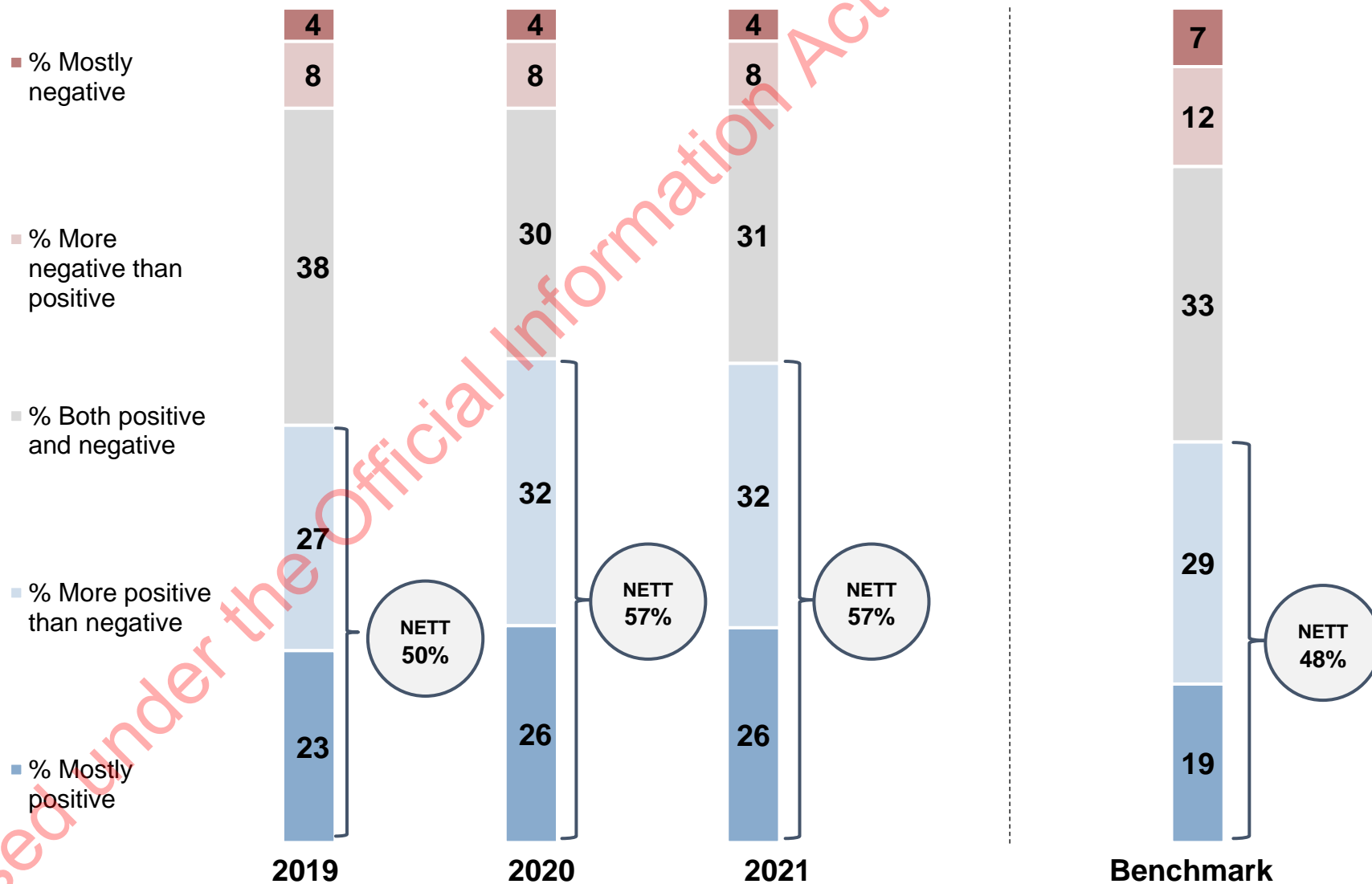
- Mainly adverts about texting and driving*
- Lots of road repairs.*
- Lots about speeding tickets and how unfair the fines were.*
- Issues with Transmission Gully project and delays around that.*
- Driving licence frauds.*
- Discussions around design and progress of Southern motorway near Christchurch - opinions on how well it was planned and being executed; some good, some bad.*
- Checked for the traffic throughout Auckland and also looking at the traffic cameras.*
- An ad on social media*

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The public's experience of Waka Kotahi is in line with the 2020 results.

Almost six in ten people who have had personal experiences with Waka Kotahi in 2021 rate it positively. This is above the benchmark agency average of 48%.

PERCEIVED POSITIVITY / NEGATIVITY OF PERSONAL EXPERIENCE WITH WAKA KOTAHI





The public is most likely to have personal contact with Waka Kotahi through the website, or through a service delivered by the agency.

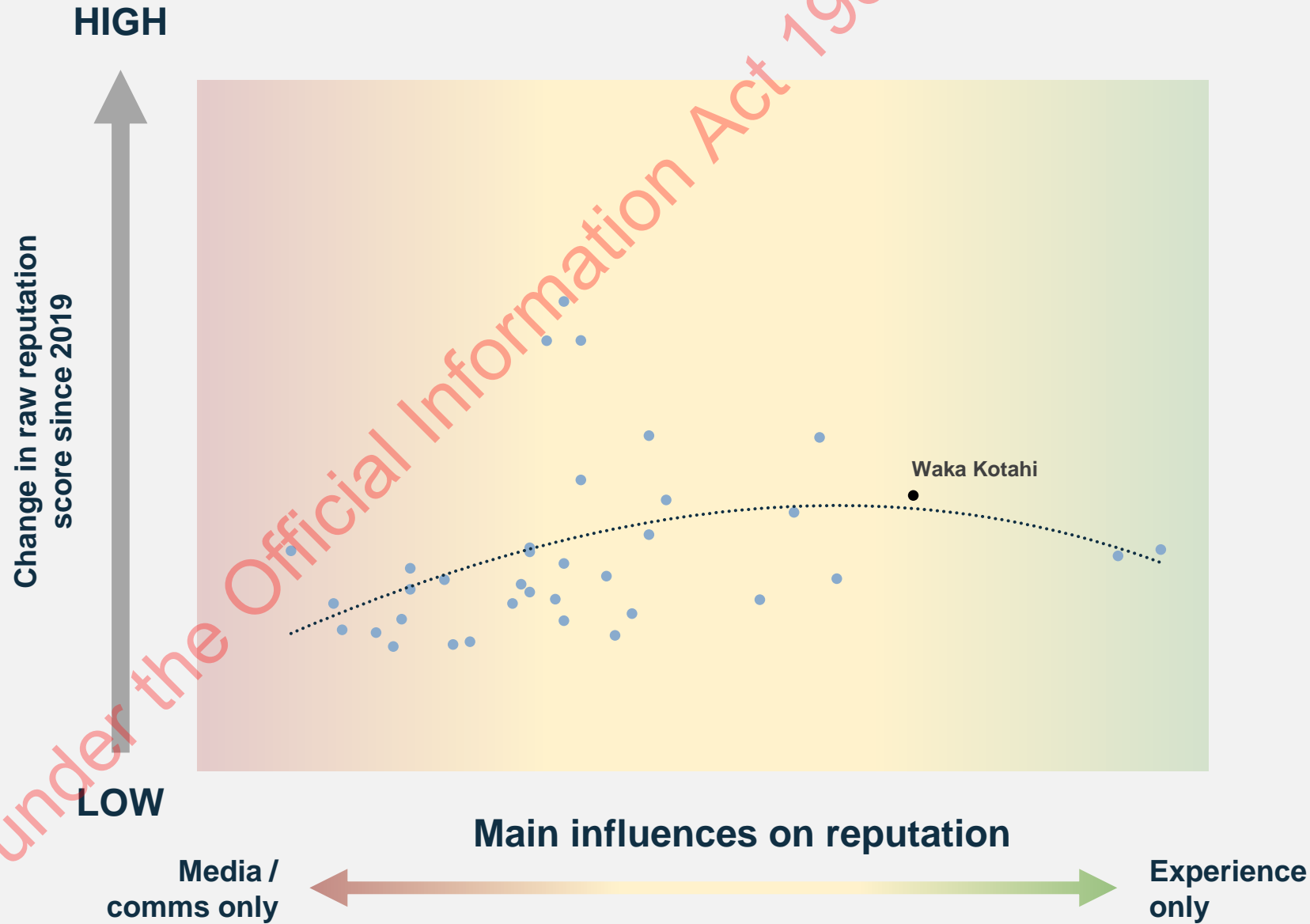
## SOURCE OF EXPERIENCE



However, Waka Kotahi shouldn't just rely on personal experiences to build its reputation.

Agencies whose reputation is shaped by both experience and media & communications have seen some of the most notable improvements in the past two years.

The challenge for Waka Kotahi is how it can generate more positive media coverage to help support a relatively positive customer experience.



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# Key take outs

# Moving on up

Waka Kotahi has seen year-on-year improvements in perceptions across almost all of the reputational attributes since 2019.

The improvements in 2021 have outstripped those of the rest of the agencies, resulting in Waka Kotahi significantly raising its relative reputation score, making it a key mover and shaker on the Index.

Effort should be made to maintain this momentum moving forwards.

# But where is the love

...

While Waka Kotahi has made advances across the reputational attributes, advocacy for the organisation has slipped.

This indicates that the public's rational response to the agency is moving in one direction and their emotional response in another.

To resolve this dichotomy and further build its reputation Waka Kotahi needs to consider how it can build love for the brand.



# Courting the media

Waka Kotahi's reputation is mainly influenced by the public's direct experience with the agency. However, the biggest reputational gains are from agencies that use both experience and media & communications to their benefit.

Those New Zealanders whose perceptions of Waka Kotahi are shaped by experience are much more likely to be advocates than those whose perceptions are shaped by the media and comms.

Waka Kotahi should consider how it can better use media and comms to build love for the brand and so improve advocacy.



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# PUBLIC SECTOR

Reputation index 2021

PUBLIC SECTOR REPUTATION INDEX 2021