



IFF Research

Customer Feedback Survey 2013/2014

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Background & Introduction

- IFF Research, an independent research agency, has conducted a customer feedback survey throughout the year on behalf of the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO).
- This report describes the findings of this survey of a sample of PHSO customers in the period 15th April 2013 to 25th April 2014.
- Interviews were conducted using computer assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) technology, using a random sampling approach.
- A total of 25 waves of fieldwork were conducted over the course of the year, with each wave of fieldwork lasting two weeks.
- Customers were invited to take part in the survey once they had received the final decision about their case.



Background & Introduction

- PHSO's customer feedback results deal with three categories of customer:
 - **Enquirers:** a member of the public who has contacted PHSO, asking them to investigate their complaint about a UK government department or agency, or the NHS in England.
 - **Investigations:** someone whose complaint has been formally investigated.
 - **Reviews:** someone who has asked PHSO to review their decision about their enquiry or complaint, or has made a complaint about their service.
- Total interviews:
 - 2,399 with Enquirers
 - 746 with Investigations
 - 191 with Reviews
- Please note that a

★ ~~has been used to highlight a significant decrease~~ from 2012/2013 to 2013/2014
★ Has been used to highlight a significant *increase* from 2012/2013 to 2013/2014

NB - in 2013/14, PHSO are now investigating more cases, including those that it might have formerly rejected following an in-depth assessment. This means that there has been a decrease in the proportion of cases upheld following an investigation.



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Summary

Summary (1)

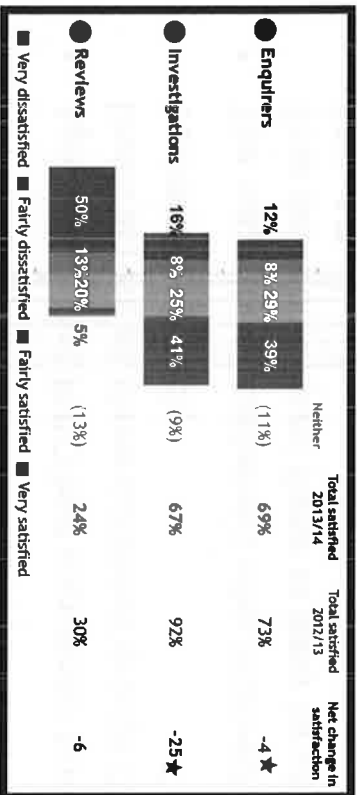
Key positive findings

- Key positive findings were that:
 - The majority of Enquirers and Investigations are satisfied with PHSO's customer service overall (69% and 67% satisfied, respectively);
 - The majority of Enquirers (around four-fifths) found it easy to find out about PHSO, in line with findings from 2012/2013;
 - Agreement that PHSO had explained how long the process would take, remained at 2012/13 levels across all three customer groups (56% of Enquirers, 70% of Investigations, 68% of Review customers agreed);
 - The majority of customers who received letters/emails from PHSO before they received the final decision, rated these as easy to understand (88% of Enquirers, 84% of Investigations and 77% of Reviews);
 - Similarly, Enquirers, Investigations and Review customers all rated PHSO highly for communicating about the final decision in a way that was easy to understand and in plain language (85%, 83% and 65%, respectively).

Summary (2)

Satisfaction with PHSO's customer service

- The majority of Enquirers and Investigations are satisfied with PHSO's customer service overall. There has, however, been a small but significant decrease in Enquirer satisfaction (69% in 2013/2014 vs. 73% in 2012/2013) and a more substantial decrease among Investigations (67% in 2013/2014 vs. 92% in 2012/2013) - this is likely to be influenced by a decrease in levels of cases upheld (see below).

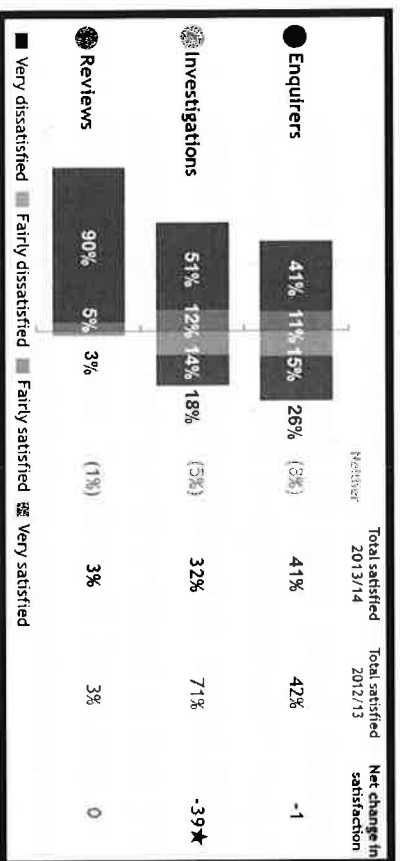


- Good communication, keeping the customer informed and politeness were key reasons for satisfaction with overall customer service;
 - Key causes of dissatisfaction included not having had help/support, and poor communication/updates (Enquirers), not having had a proper investigation and perceived Ombudsman bias (Investigations and Review customers).
- There has been a significant and substantial increase in the proportion of Investigations reporting that their case was not upheld (up 42 percentage points from 2012/13). This is likely to affect Investigations' ratings of PHSO, since there is a relationship between perceived outcome and satisfaction with both outcome and customer service. This increase in the level of cases not upheld reflects changes in the number and type of cases PHSO investigates.
 - In the context of this relationship between satisfaction and outcome, it is notable that a substantial minority of Investigations whose case was upheld by PHSO believe that their case was not upheld (9% of those whose case was fully upheld and 32% of those whose case was upheld in part).

Summary (3)

Satisfaction with outcome

- Alongside the substantial decrease in Investigation satisfaction with PHSO's service, Investigation satisfaction with outcome has also substantially decreased (32% in 2013/2014 vs. 71% in 2012/2013) - again, likely to be influenced by the decrease in the levels of cases reported as having been upheld.
- Satisfaction with outcome remains consistent with previous years for Enquirers and Reviews (41% and 3% satisfied, respectively). Only a small minority of Review customers are ever satisfied with the outcome (fewer than one in twenty each year).



- The main reason all customer types were satisfied with the outcome of their case was because they felt PHSO had dealt with their problem or query. Receiving relevant information/advice was another key reason.
- That their complaint was not upheld/accepted and not getting what they were looking for (or wanted) were key reasons. ~~Enquirers and Investigations were~~ dissatisfied with their outcome. More than a third of Review customers were dissatisfied as they didn't think a proper investigation had occurred.

Summary (4)

Staff handling of complaints (Investigations)

- Alongside overall satisfaction with service and outcome, Investigations' ratings of a number of more detailed aspects of PHSO staff's handling of complaints also fell significantly from 2012/13 to 2013/14:
 - Although the majority of Investigations remain positive, ratings of various aspects of how staff communicated the complaints process fell. There was a particularly marked fall in Investigations' overall confidence in the system handling their complaint (30 percentage points).
 - Again, although the majority of Investigations remain positive, several ratings of PHSO staff for their customer service/soft skills fell; and there was a particularly marked fall in Investigations' ratings of PHSO staff for their being sympathetic (26 percentage points).
 - Investigations' ratings of contact from PHSO about the final decision have significantly decreased since 2012/2013, on all measures. The most pronounced falls included:
 - Whether the most important aspects of the complaint were dealt with;
 - Whether the decision was explained or evidenced; and
 - Whether the way in which the decision was communicated suggested either a thorough assessment, or an independent, fair and unbiased assessment, had taken place.
- This is likely to be a further symptom of the aforementioned relationship between perceived outcome and satisfaction with service.

Summary (5)

Staff handling of complaints (Enquirers and Reviews)

- Enquirers and Review customers' ratings of communication regarding the complaints process, of PHSO's customer service, and of contact regarding the outcome, tended to be stable or (compared with Investigations) exhibited more modest falls from 2012/13 levels. There were exceptions, however, there were more substantial falls in Review customers' ratings re:
 - PHSO staff being polite and considerate (a 15 percentage point decrease);
 - Being kept informed of any delays (a 13 percentage point decrease);
 - PHSO staff being professional (a 13 percentage point decrease);
 - PHSO staff being easy to get hold of (a 10 percentage point decrease).
- There has also been a significant increase in the proportion of Enquirers feeling the complaint took longer than expected to deal with (41% in 2013/2014 vs. 30% in 2012/2013).



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Customer profile

Customer profile

There is a broadly even split of males and females across customer types. Few customers fall in the lowest (18 - 34) and highest (75+) age brackets. Around three in ten Enquirers and Investigations have a disability, but for Reviews this is closer to two-fifths. Around eight in ten customers across customer types are White British.

	Enquirers	Investigations	Reviews
Total	2,399	746	191
Sex			
Male	47%	46%	51%
Female	53%	54%	49%
Age			
18 - 34	14%	9%	6%
35 - 54	44%	39%	32%
55 - 74	37%	43%	51%
75+	5%	9%	10%
Ethnicity			
Total White British	81%	87%	84%
Total BME	19%	13%	16%
Disability			
Yes	30%	27%	38%
No	70%	73%	62%



da. INTERVIEWER - CODE GENDER
 db. What age were you on your last birthday?
 dm. What is your ethnic group? Are you Asian, Black, Chinese, of a mixed background, White or of another ethnic group?
 dh. The Disability Discrimination Act defines a person as having a disability if he or she 'has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities'. Do you have such a disability?



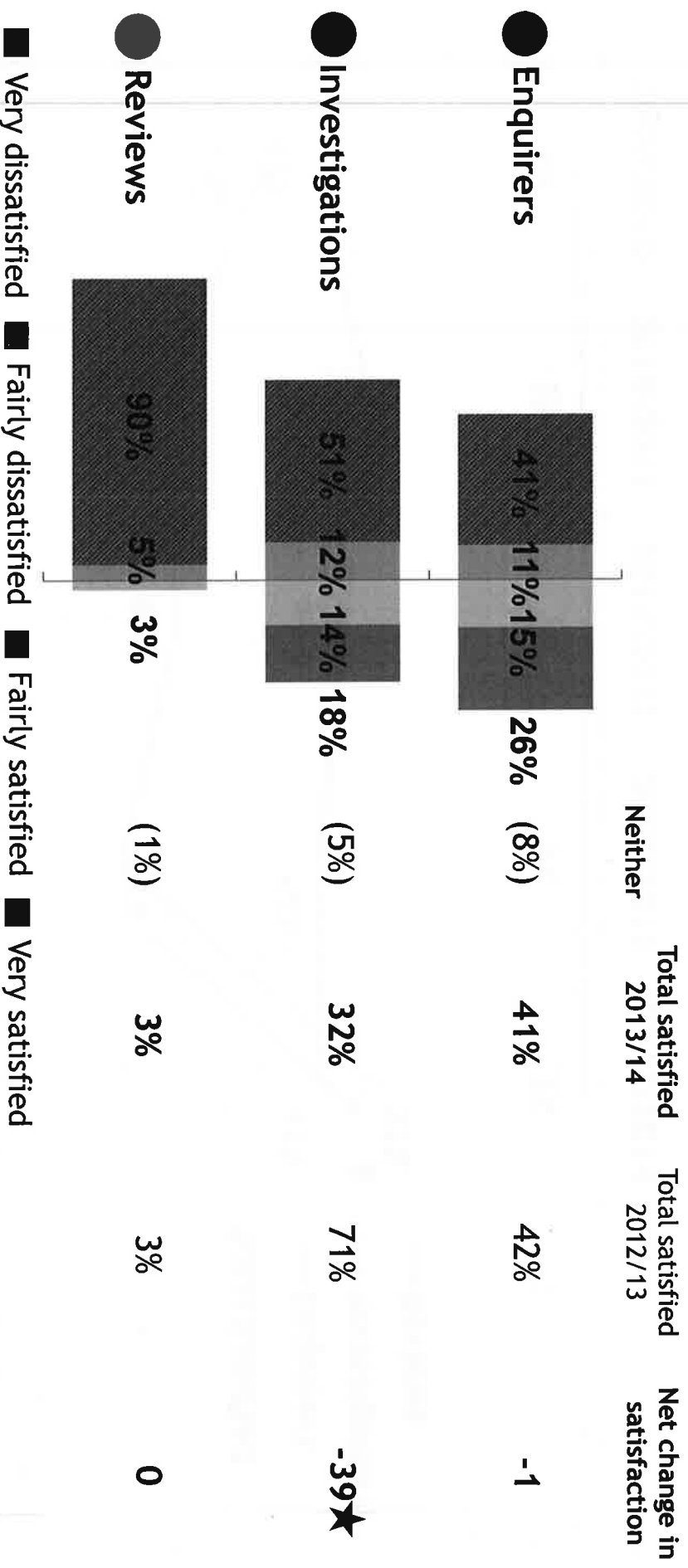


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Overall satisfaction with outcome

Overall satisfaction with outcome

Overall satisfaction with PHSO's final decision amongst Enquirer and Review customers has remained broadly stable since 2012/2013. However there was a significant decrease in satisfaction with outcome amongst Investigations in 2013/14 (likely to be influenced by the decrease in Investigations reporting that their case had been upheld).



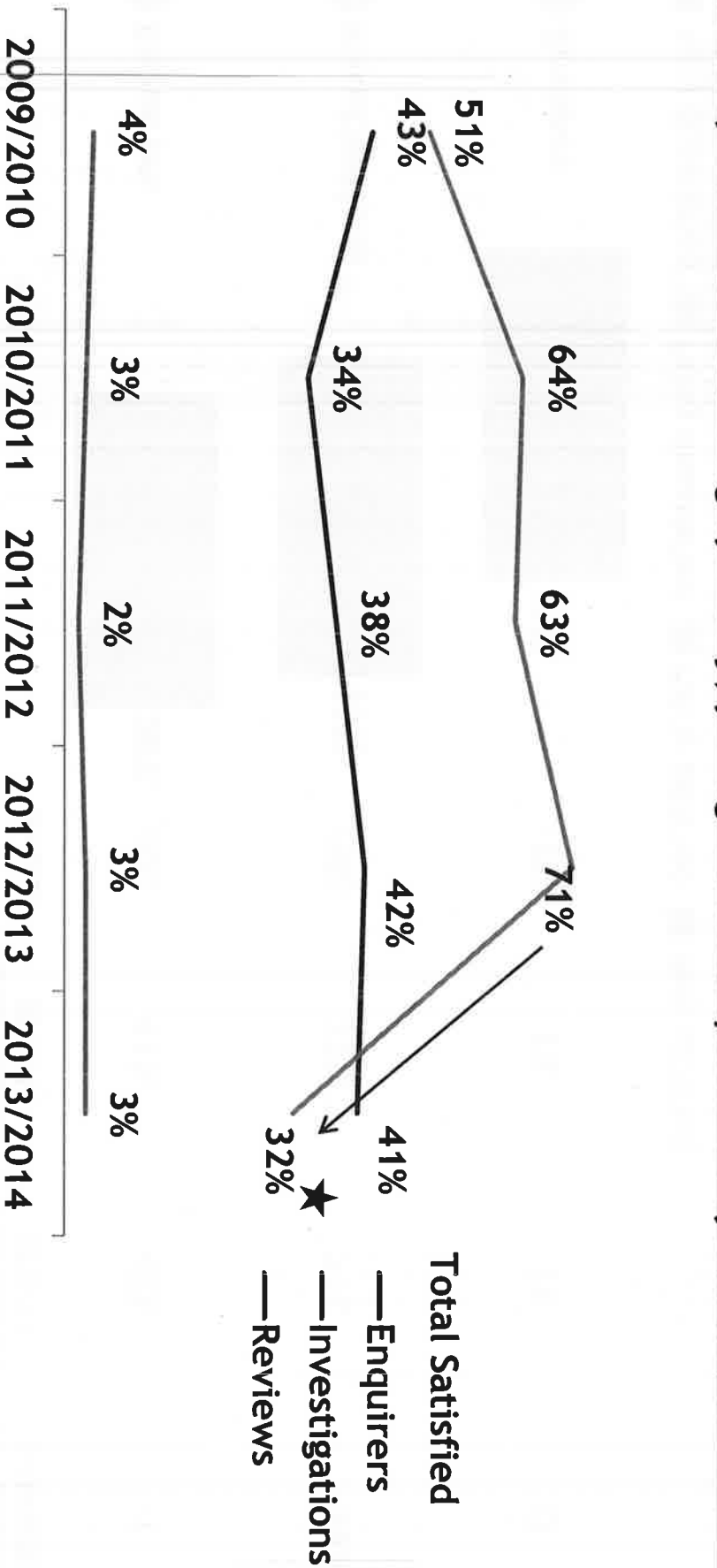
A2/B3/C4. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with this decision - I mean just the final decision, not the overall way in which your complaint was dealt with by the Ombudsman's Office?

2013/2014 Base: 903 enquirers, 704 investigations, 188 reviews
 2012/2013 Base: 1,058 enquirers, 140 investigations, 218 reviews

★ Denotes a significant decrease from 2012/2013 to 2013/2014

Tracking overall satisfaction with outcome

Satisfaction with outcome has stayed broadly stable amongst Enquirer and Review customers, with the exception of a decrease in 2010/2011 for Enquirers. Investigation satisfaction has been consistently the highest with the exception of 2013/2014, when satisfaction decreased significantly, falling behind Enquirer satisfaction.



A2/B3/C4. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with this decision - I mean just the final decision, not the overall way in which your complaint was dealt with by the Ombudsman's Office?

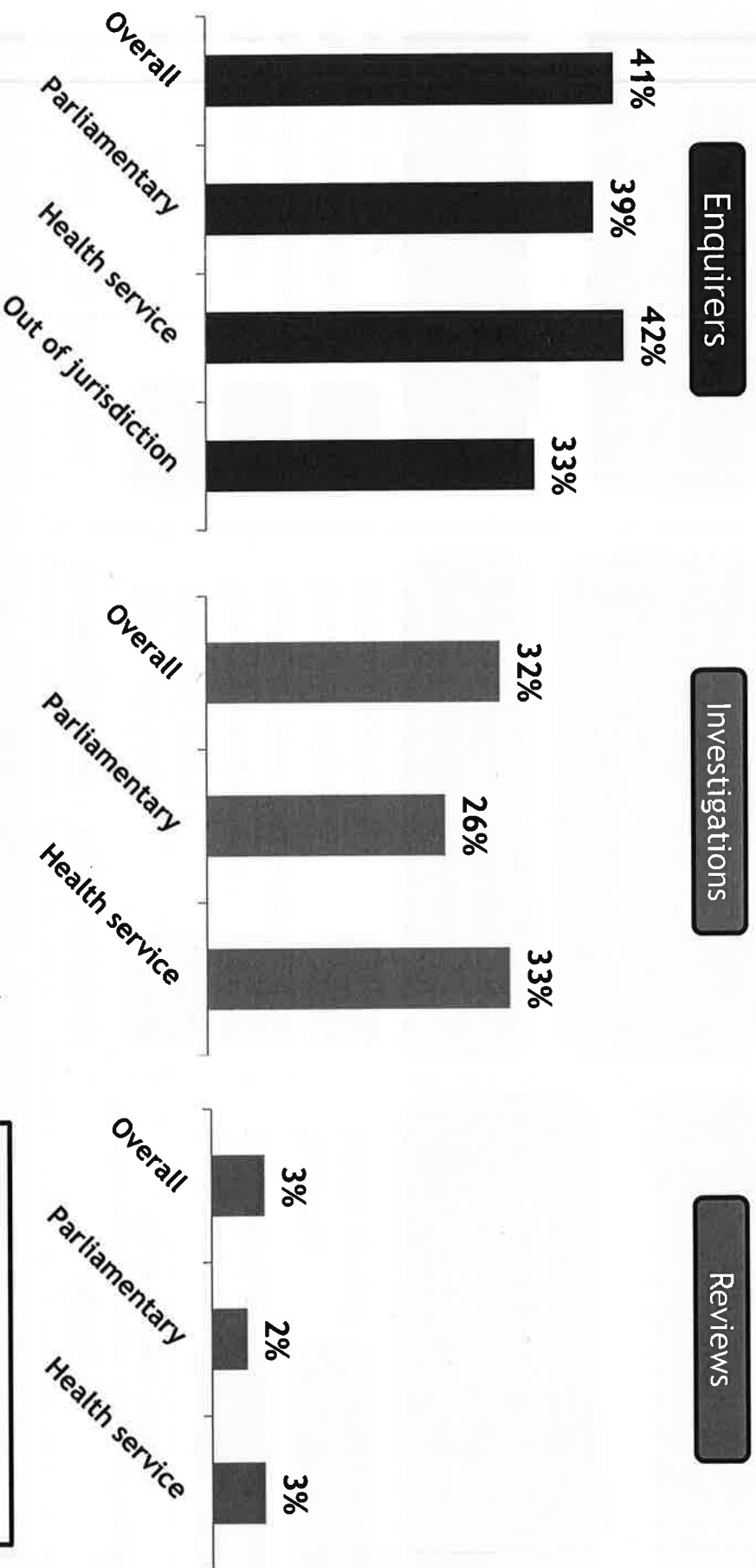
- 2013/2014 Base: 903 enquirers, 704 investigations, 188 reviews
- 2012/2013 Base: 1,058 enquirers, 140 investigations, 218 reviews
- 2011/2012 Base: 1,269 enquirers, 193 investigations, 243 reviews
- 2010/2011 Base: 653 enquirers, 179 investigations, 205 reviews
- 2009/2010 Base: 536 enquirers, 114 investigations, 202 reviews



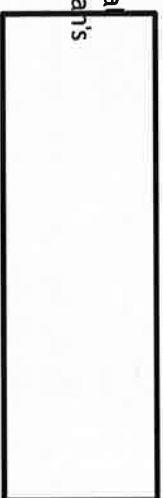
★ Denotes a significant decrease from 2012/2013 to 2013/2014

Overall satisfaction with outcome by jurisdiction

Overall satisfaction with PHSO's final decision did not vary significantly by jurisdiction.



A2/B3/C4. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with this decision - I mean just the final decision, not the overall way in which your complaint was dealt with by the Ombudsman's Office?
 2013/2014 Base: 903 enquirers, 704 investigations, 188 reviews



Reasons satisfied with outcome

That PHSO dealt with their problem/query was the main reason all customer types were satisfied with the final decision. Receiving relevant information/advice was also one of the top three reasons for Enquirers and Investigations.

Enquirers - top 3 reasons	Investigations - top 3 reasons	Reviews
<p>Dealt with my problem/query</p> <p>45%</p> <p>Gave me relevant information/advice</p> <p>14%</p> <p>Prompt/dealt with problem quickly</p> <p>13%</p> <p><i>'They were helpful and advised me on what to do.'</i></p> <p><i>'The communication has been quick, easy, clear - dealt with it straight away.'</i></p>	<p>Dealt with my problem/query</p> <p>70%</p> <p>They listened to me/made me feel reassured</p> <p>8%</p> <p>Gave me relevant information/advice</p> <p>7%</p> <p><i>'They upheld my complaints and have made recommendations that I am satisfied with.'</i></p> <p><i>'Because the young man who sorted it out was very fair and he listened to everything I said, and took on board my complaints.'</i></p>	<p><small>*Caution small base size, number of mentions not percentages reported</small></p> <p>Dealt with my problem/query</p> <p>1 mention</p> <p>Received follow-up call</p> <p>1 mention</p> <p><i>'The reasons for not going forward with the complaint were acceptable.'</i></p> <p><i>'They kept in touch with me.'</i></p>



A4/B5/C5A. Why do you say that?
2013/2014 Base: 273 enquirers, 183 investigations, 4 reviews

Reasons dissatisfied with outcome

That their complaint was not upheld/accepted and not getting what they were looking for or wanted were key reasons Enquirers and Investigations were dissatisfied with their outcome. More than a third of Review customers were dissatisfied as they didn't think a proper investigation had occurred.

Enquirers - top 3 reasons	Investigations - top 3 reasons	Reviews - top 3 reasons
<p>My complaint was not upheld/accepted 57%</p> <p>I did not understand why my complaint was not accepted 17%</p> <p>I did not get what I was looking for/wanted 13%</p> <p><i>'The points I made weren't addressed; they've not understood my complaint.'</i></p> <p><i>'I believed I followed the correct procedure, they said I hadn't, they took many weeks to tell me that.'</i></p>	<p>I did not get what I was looking for/wanted 67%</p> <p>My complaint was not accepted/upheld 47%</p> <p>The Ombudsman is biased 11%</p> <p><i>'Has not been investigated properly - disregarded some very serious concerns.'</i></p> <p><i>'The case worker was only concerned about the notes - the Trust only showed her what they wanted her to see.'</i></p>	<p>Don't think proper investigation has occurred 36%</p> <p>They ignored the info/evidence submitted 31%</p> <p>They won't/haven't resolved my complaint 23%</p> <p><i>'The PHSO decided to take the easy way out rather than investigate it.'</i></p> <p><i>'They basically ignored most of what I said; they put their own interpretation of what you said.'</i></p>

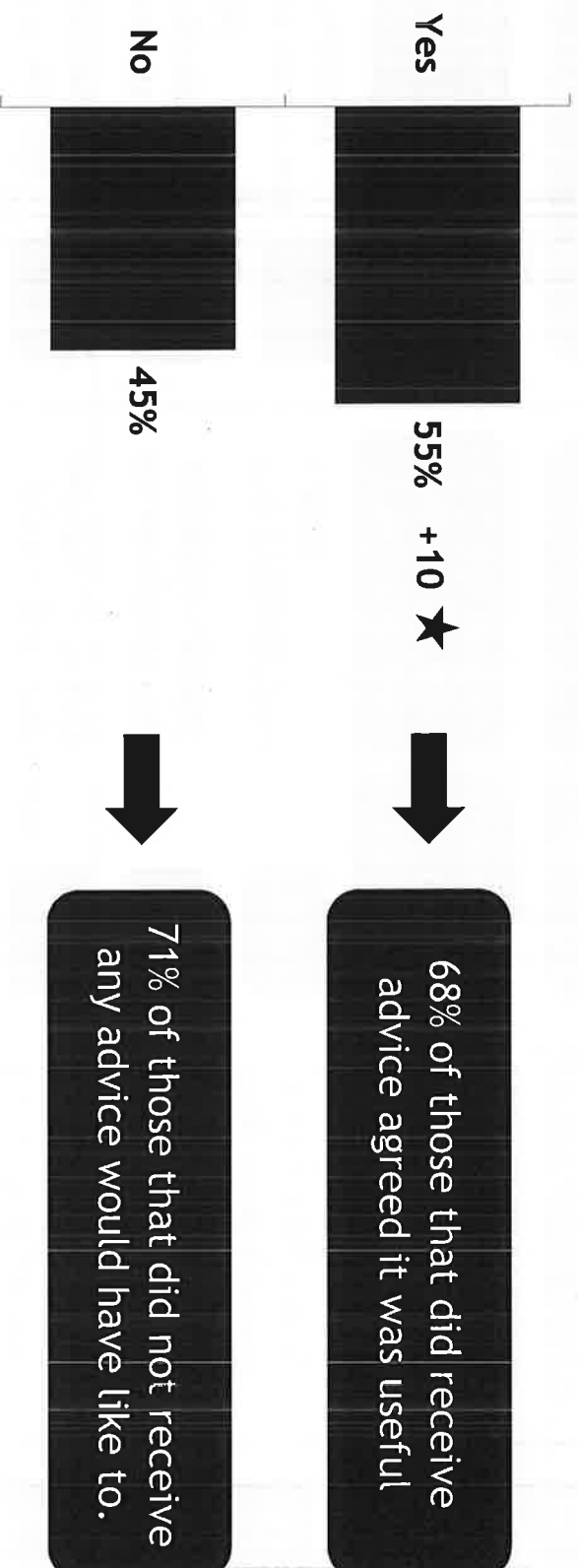
A3/B4/C5. I am sorry to hear that. Why are you dissatisfied with the final decision?
 2013/2014 Base: 466 enquirers, 446 investigations, and 179 reviews



Final advice on taking the complaint forward (Enquirers)

Just over half of Enquirers received advice on what to do to take their complaint forward, a significant increase from 2012/13. Around two-thirds of those receiving advice agreed that it was useful. Seven in ten of the Enquirers that did not receive advice would have liked to.

Whether received advice on how to take the complaint forward



A13. At the same time that you received the final decision, were you given any advice on what to do to take your complaint forward?

2013/2014 Base: 830 enquirers; 2012/13 Base: 956 enquirers

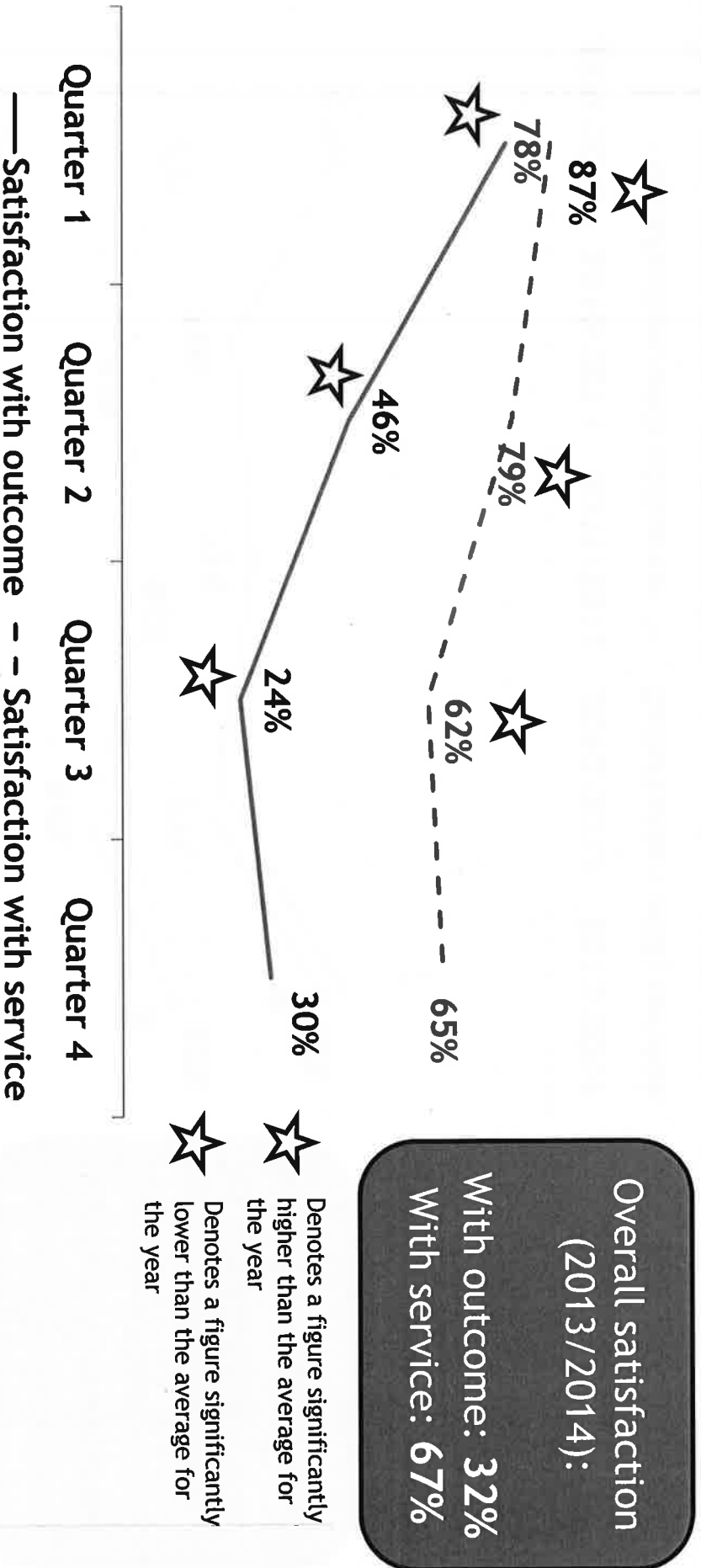
A14. Would you have like to receive such advice?

2013/2014 Base: 353 enquirers

A15. How much do you agree or disagree that the advice was useful?

2013/2014 Base: 444 enquirers

Investigation satisfaction with outcome and service, by quarter (2013/14)
Satisfaction with outcome and service fell between Quarter 1 and Quarter 3, and stabilised after Quarter 3.

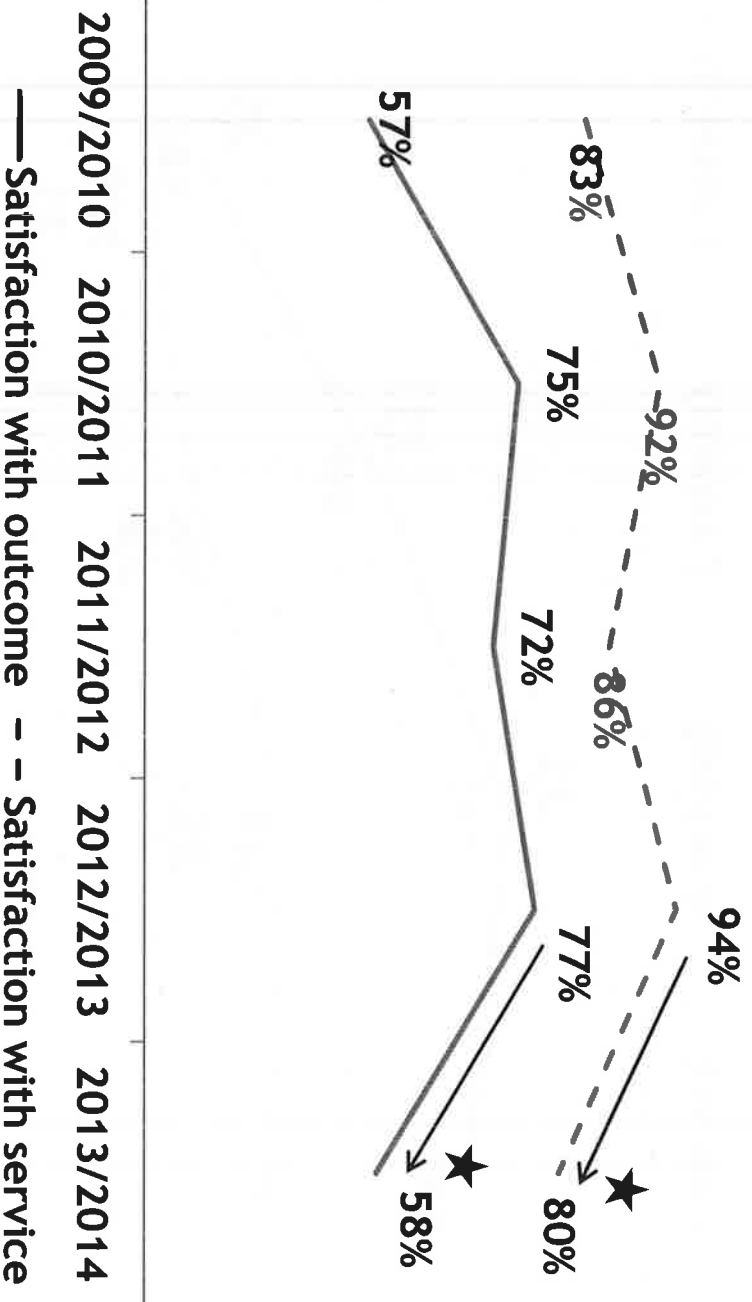


B3. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with this decision - I mean just the final decision, not the overall way in which your complaint was dealt with by the Ombudsman's Office?
 2013/2014 Base: Quarter1 37, Quarter2 90, Quarter 3 266, Quarter4 311
 B24. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the customer service you received?
 Are you...

2013/2014 Base: Quarter1 38, Quarter2 95, Quarter 3 280, Quarter4 325

Tracking Investigation satisfaction with outcome and service for those where complaint was upheld

Overall investigation satisfaction with outcome and service has significantly decreased from 2012/13 to 2013/14 even among those whose complaint was upheld/partially upheld.



Overall satisfaction where complaint was upheld/partially upheld (2013/2014):
 With outcome: **58%**
 With service: **80%**

★ Denotes a significant decrease from 2012/2013 to 2013/2014

*Please note 'upheld' includes those where complaint was fully upheld and partially upheld. This is based on actual, not perceived, outcome.

— Satisfaction with outcome -- Satisfaction with service



B3. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with this decision - I mean just the final decision, not the overall way in which your complaint was dealt with by the Ombudsman's Office?

Upheld Base: 2009/10, 87; 2010/11, 153; 2011/12, 163; 2012/13, 123; 2013/14, 330

B24. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the customer service you received?

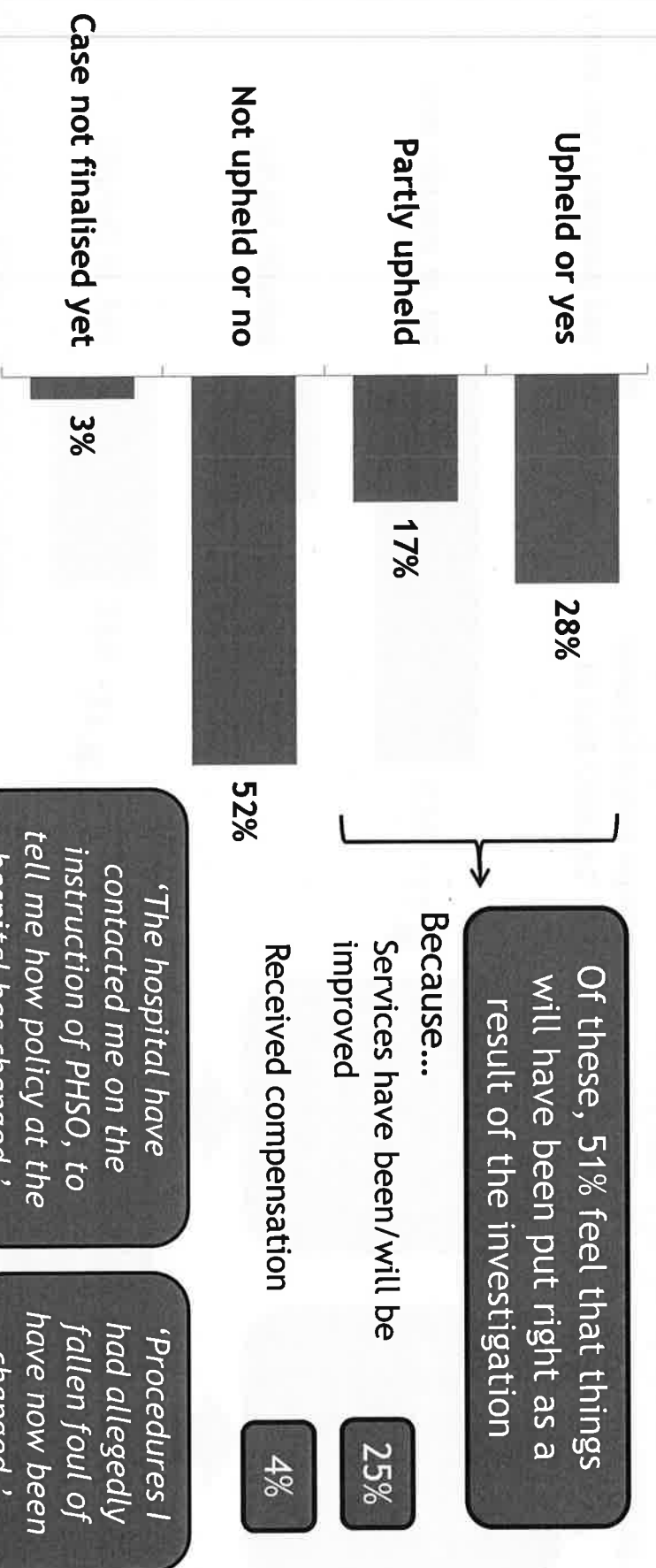
Are you...

Upheld Base: 2009/10, 87; 2010/11, 154; 2011/12, 165; 2012/13, 126; 2013/14, 341

Perceived complaint outcome and impact (Investigations)

Just under half of investigations felt that PHSO's letter/report upheld their complaint; of these, around half felt that things will have been put right as result. This is mainly because investigations believed services have been or will be improved.

Whether letter/report upheld complaint



'The hospital have contacted me on the instruction of PHSO, to tell me how policy at the hospital has changed.'

'Procedures I had allegedly fallen foul of have now been changed.'

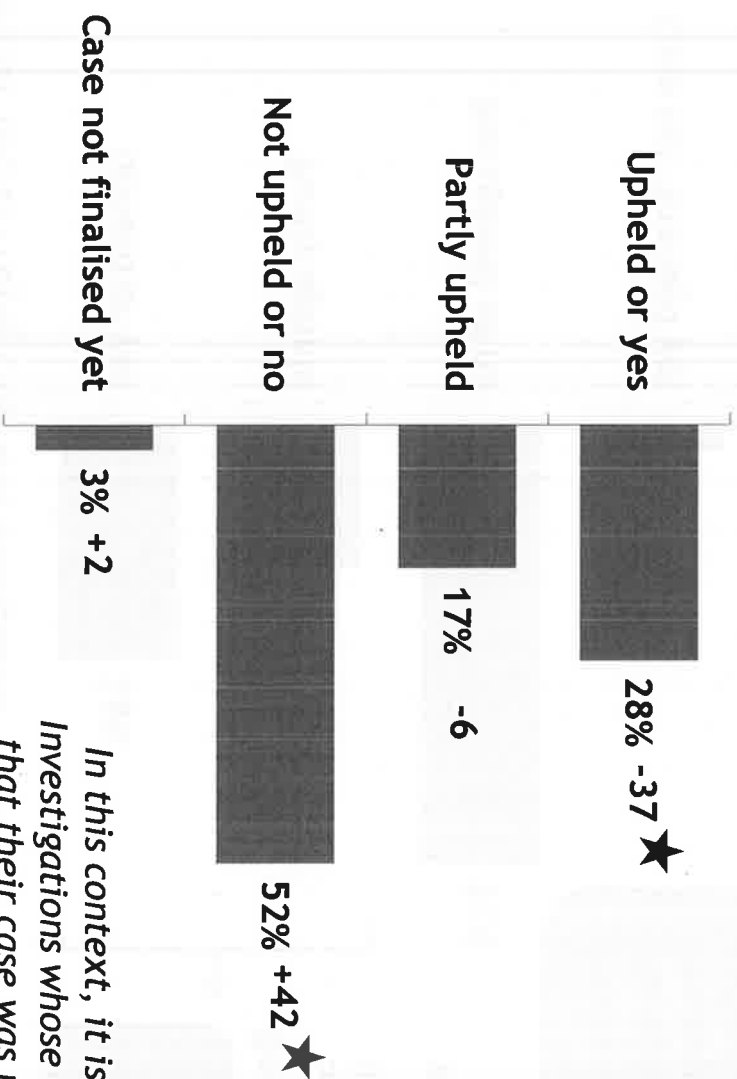


B18. On balance, do you feel that the letter or report upheld your complaint or not - by 'upheld' we mean supported your complaint?
 2013/2014 Base: 722 investigations
 B19. Do you feel that things will be/have been put right as a result of the investigation?
 2013/2014 Base: 220 investigations
 B20. Why do you say that?
 2013/2014 Base: 105 investigations

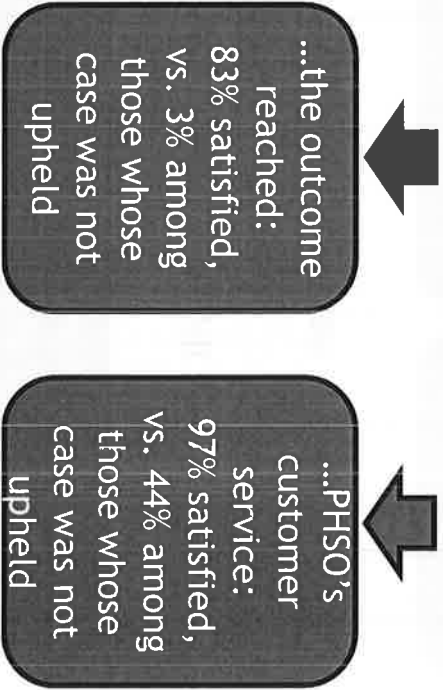
Perceived complaint outcome and impact (Investigations)

There has been a significant and substantial increase in the proportion of Investigations perceiving that their case was not upheld. This is likely to affect Investigation ratings of PHSO, since there is a relationship between perceived outcome and satisfaction with both outcome and customer service.

Whether letter/report upheld complaint



Those who perceive that their complaint was fully upheld are significantly more likely to be satisfied with...



In this context, it is notable that a substantial minority of Investigations whose case was upheld by PHSO upheld believe that their case was not upheld (9% of those whose case was fully upheld and 32% of those whose case was upheld in part).



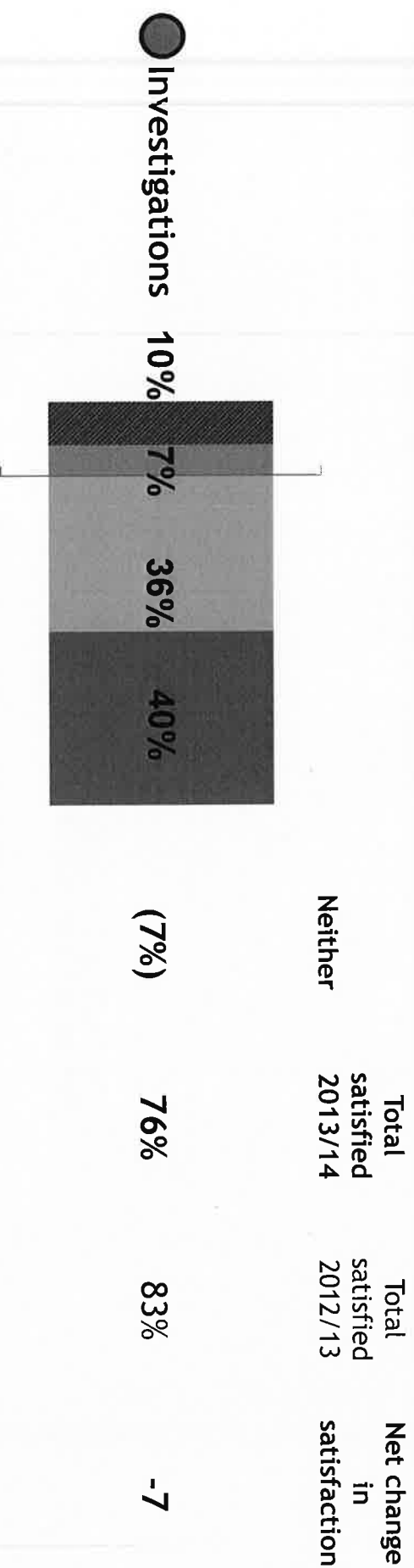
B18. On balance, do you feel that the letter or report upheld your complaint or not - by 'upheld' we mean supported your complaint?
 2013/2014 Base: 722 investigations; 2012/13 Base: 142 investigations



NB - this shift reflects a real decrease in the proportion of cases upheld, as PHSO are now investigating more cases, including those that it might have formerly rejected following an in-depth assessment.

Satisfaction with PHSO's recommendations (Investigations)

The majority of Complaints (around three-quarters) were satisfied with recommendations made by PHSO as a result of the investigation. There was no significant change from 2012/13 to 2013/14.



Neither	Total satisfied 2013/14	Total satisfied 2012/13	Net change in satisfaction
	76%	83%	-7

- Very dissatisfied
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Very satisfied

Why has Investigation satisfaction with recommendations held up, when satisfaction with service and outcome has declined?

- This rating is given only by those (a substantial minority) who report that their complaint was upheld, either fully or in part. These individuals are significantly more likely to be satisfied with both PHSO's customer service and the outcome reached.



B20B. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the recommendations made by the Ombudsman as a result of the investigation? These would be given in the Ombudsman's final report or letter. Are you ..?

2013/2014 Base: 311 investigations who said the letter/report upheld or partially upheld their complaint
 2012/2013 Base: 123 investigations who said the letter/report upheld or partially upheld their complaint

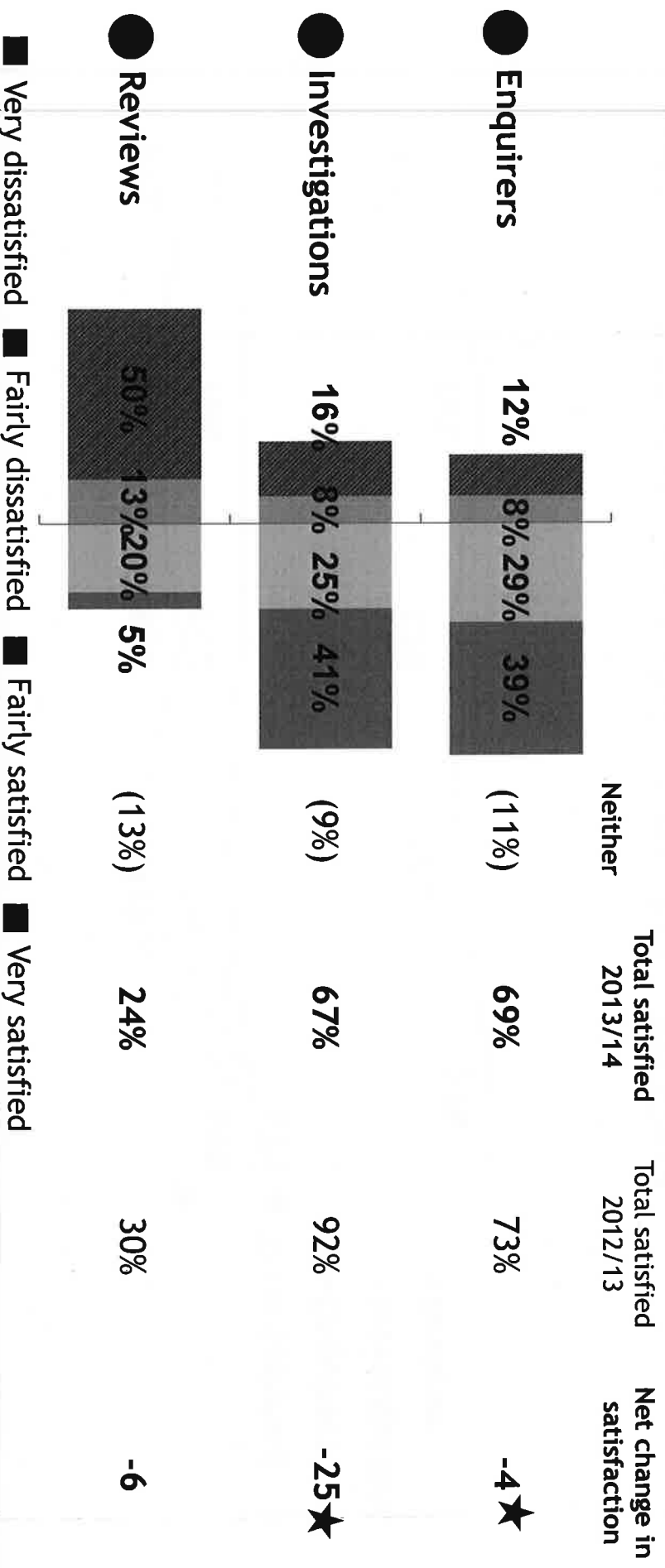


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Overall satisfaction with PHSO's service

Overall satisfaction with PHSO's service

The majority of Enquirers and Investigations (around two thirds) were satisfied with PHSO's customer service. However Enquirers' and Investigations' overall satisfaction with PHSO's service has significantly decreased since 2012/13 - and by a substantial margin, among Investigations (again, this may be influenced by perceived outcome).

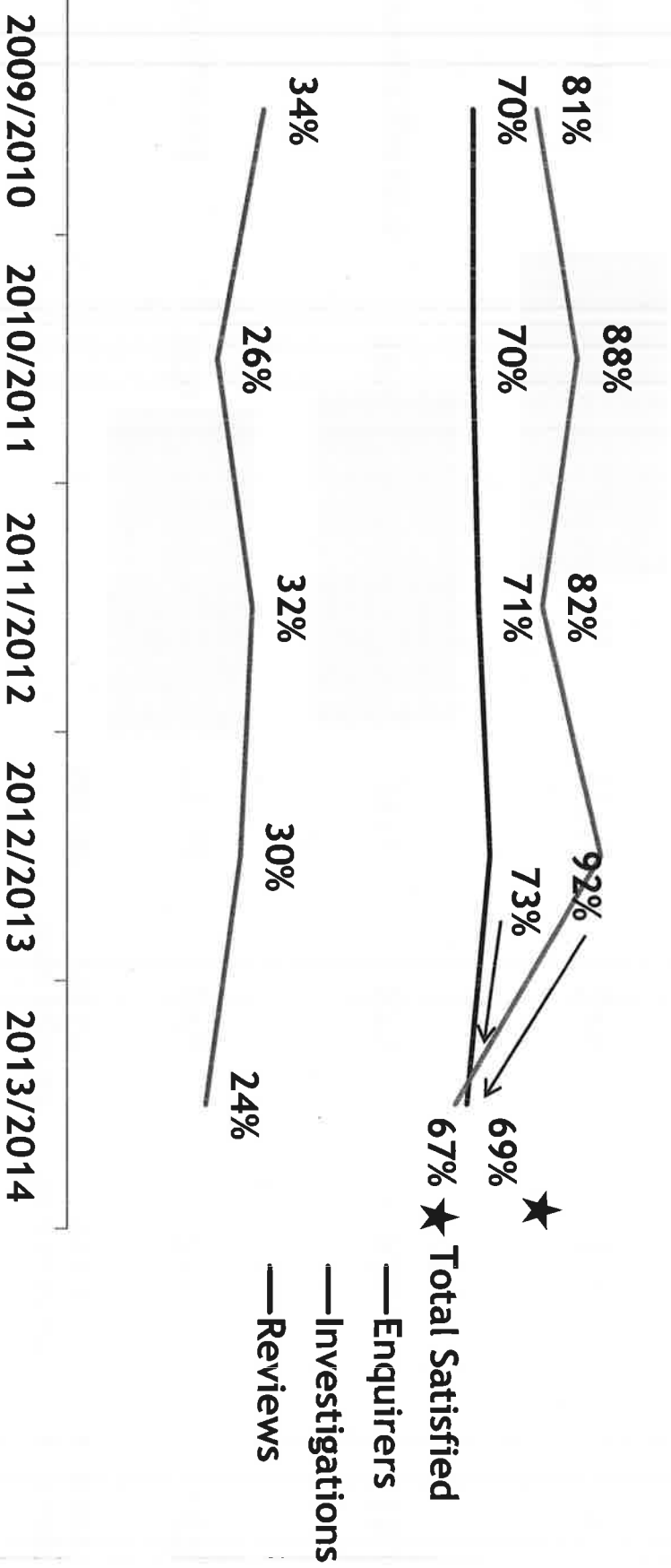


A19/B24/C17. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the customer service you received? Are you...
 2013/2014 Base: 2,350 enquirers, 738 investigations, 189 reviews
 2012/2013 Base: 2,108 enquirers, 142 investigations, 216 reviews



Tracking overall satisfaction with PHSO's service

Overall satisfaction with PHSO's customer service has stayed largely stable amongst Enquirers and Review customers. Investigations have consistently shown the highest levels of satisfaction (although with greater variation from year-to-year), with the exception of 2013/2014, when investigation satisfaction fell below that of Enquirers.



A19/B24/C17. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the customer service you received? Are you...

- 2013/2014 Base: 2,350 enquirers, 738 investigations, 189 reviews
- 2012/2013 Base: 2,108 enquirers, 142 investigations, 216 reviews
- 2011/2012 Base: 2,239 enquirers, 196 investigations, 240 reviews
- 2010/2011 Base: 1,196 enquirers, 180 investigations, 202 reviews
- 2009/2010 Base: 598 enquirers, 114 investigations, 205 reviews

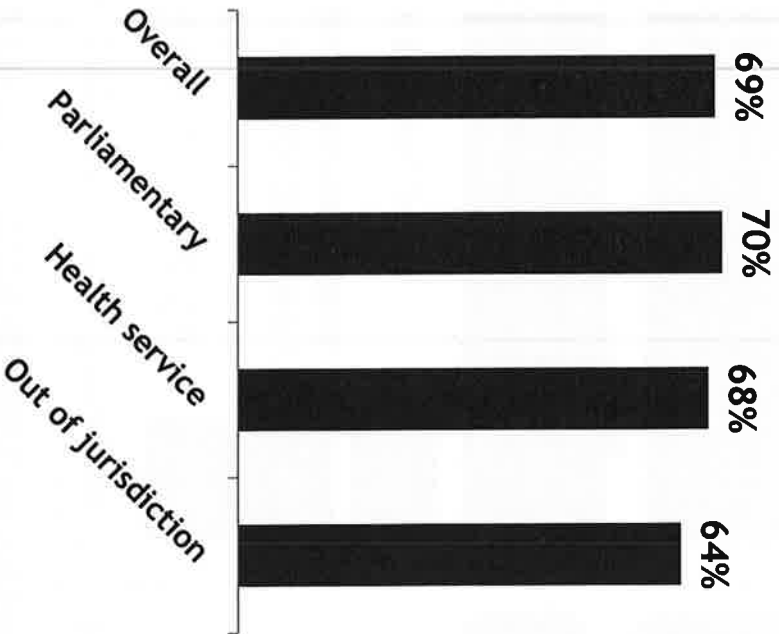


★ Denotes a significant decrease from 2012/2013 to 2013/2014

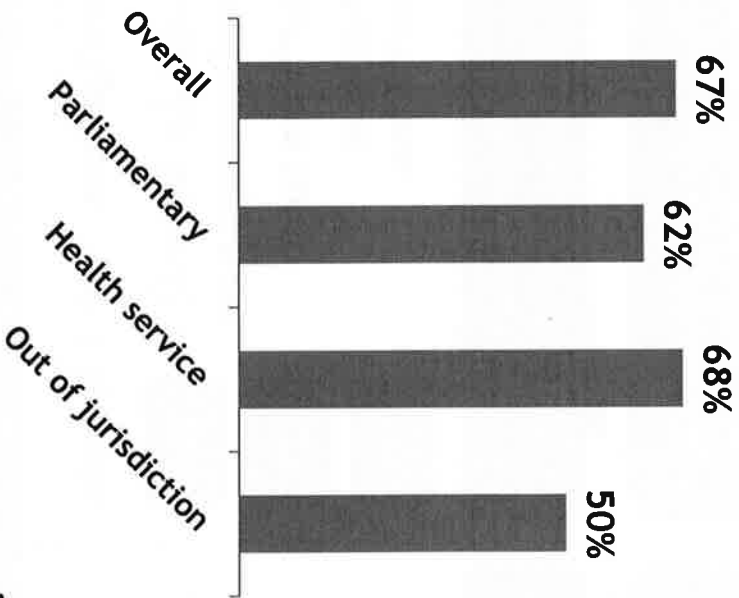
Overall satisfaction with PHSO's service, by jurisdiction

Overall satisfaction with PHSO's customer service did not vary significantly by jurisdiction.

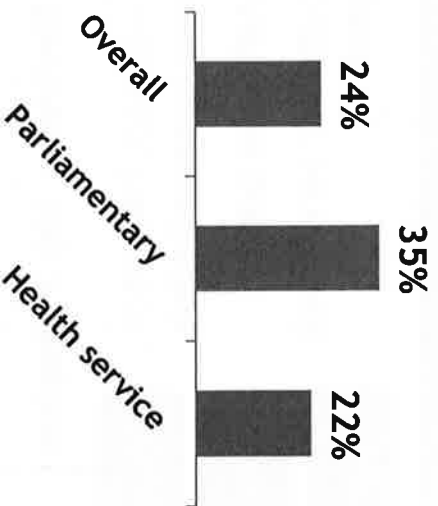
Enquirers



Investigations



Reviews



A19/B24/C17. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the customer service you received? Are you...
 2013/2014 Base: 2,350 enquirers, 738 investigations, 189 reviews



Reasons satisfied with PHSO's customer service

Communication, keeping the customer informed and politeness appeared to be key reasons for satisfaction with PHSO's customer service.

Enquirers - top 3 reasons	Investigations - top 3 reasons	Reviews - top 3 reasons
<p>Information / advice was good 25%</p> <p>I was kept informed / good communication 25%</p> <p>Staff were polite 20%</p> <p><i>'I needed - and got - really good practical advice on what I could and couldn't do.'</i></p> <p><i>'Every communication was dealt with in a very business like manner - it has been done very well.'</i></p>	<p>I was kept informed / good communication 39%</p> <p>Staff were polite 22%</p> <p>They were professional 21%</p> <p><i>'They answered my correspondence clearly.'</i></p> <p><i>'They were helpful and easy to get in contact with. They were approachable.'</i></p>	<p>I was kept informed / good communication 46%</p> <p>Staff were polite 22%</p> <p>Customer service was good 16%</p> <p><i>'They kept me informed and letters were understandable.'</i></p> <p><i>'When I rang they were very polite, when I asked for an update I got one and they kept in contact by phone.'</i></p>

A20/B25/C18. Why were you satisfied with the customer service you received?
 2013/2014 Base: 1,400 enquirers, 459 investigations, 37 reviews



Reasons dissatisfied with PHSO's customer service

Not having had any help/support and poor communication/updates were the key issues for Enquirers, while not having had a proper investigation and the Ombudsman being biased were the main reasons investigations and Review customers were dissatisfied.

Enquirers - top 3 reasons	Investigations - top 3 reasons	Reviews - top 3 reasons
<p>I have not had any help / support 22%</p> <p>I wasn't kept informed 18%</p> <p>Communication was poor 15%</p> <p><i>'I haven't received any information from them about the investigation. I don't even know whether it is being processed.'</i></p> <p><i>'They didn't keep me updated and the reply I received was of poor quality.'</i></p>	<p>I haven't had a proper investigation 24%</p> <p>The Ombudsman is biased 18%</p> <p>They didn't listen to me/my letters 17%</p> <p><i>'...it was doctors covering the backs of doctors.'</i></p> <p><i>'[They were] more interested in following the process than with dealing with the essence of my complaint.'</i></p>	<p>The Ombudsman is biased 25%</p> <p>I haven't had a proper investigation 17%</p> <p>Joint 3rd They didn't listen to me/my letters & They did not take all the evidence into account 14% each</p> <p><i>'Superficial and biased in what they investigated and repeating what the hospital said.'</i></p> <p><i>'They didn't conduct comprehensive research'</i></p>

A20/B25/C18. Why were you dissatisfied with the customer service you received?
 2013/2014 Base: 462 enquirers, 173 investigations, 117 reviews



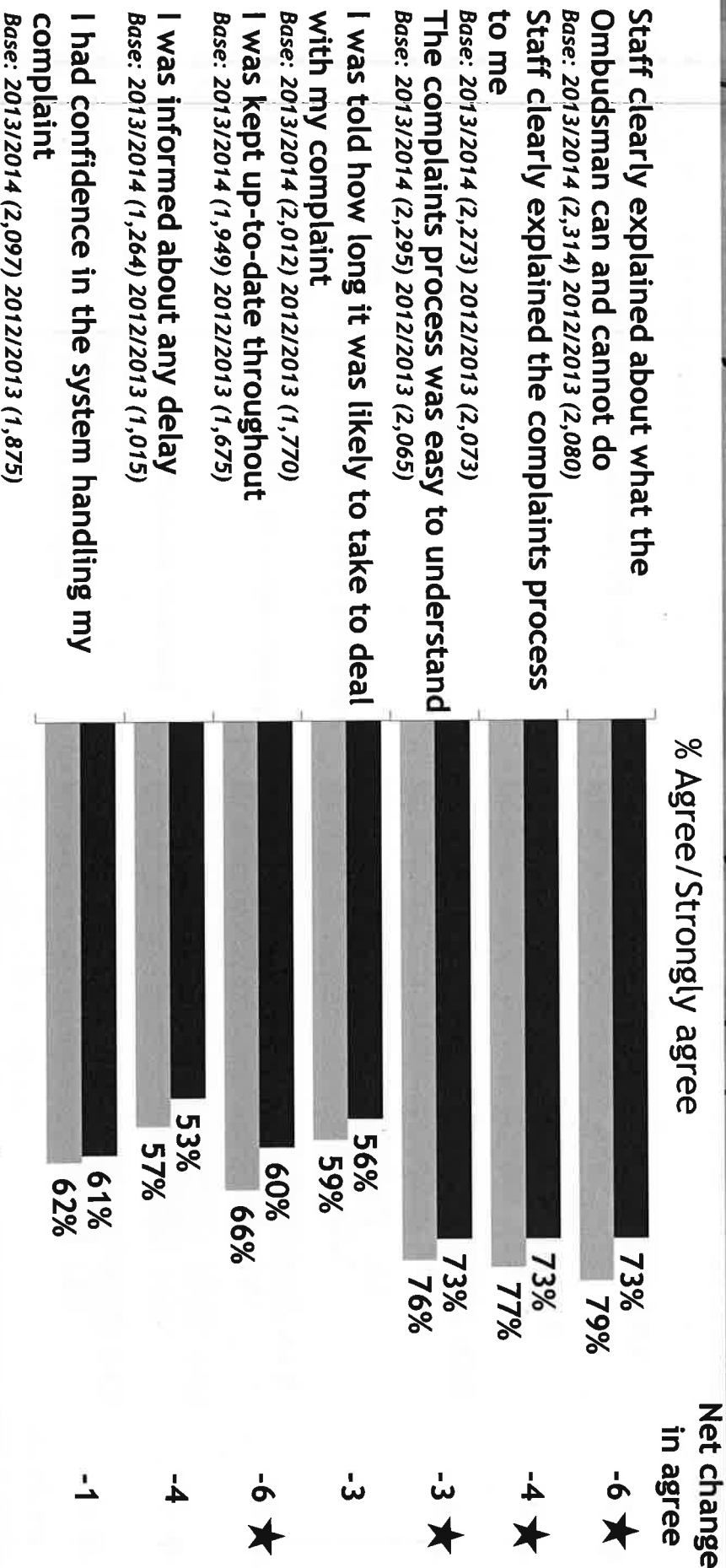


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**In detail:
Ratings of communication
regarding the complaint
process**

Enquirers' ratings of communication of process

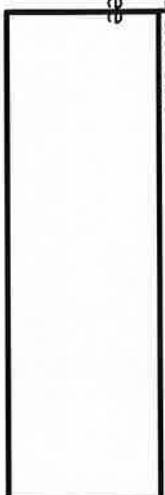
Although at least half were positive about each measure, there have been small but significant decreases in Enquirer agreement that staff explained clearly what the Ombudsman can and cannot do, that staff explained the complaints process, that the process was easy to understand and that they were kept up-to-date throughout.



■ Enquirers 2013/2014 ■ Enquirers 2012/2013

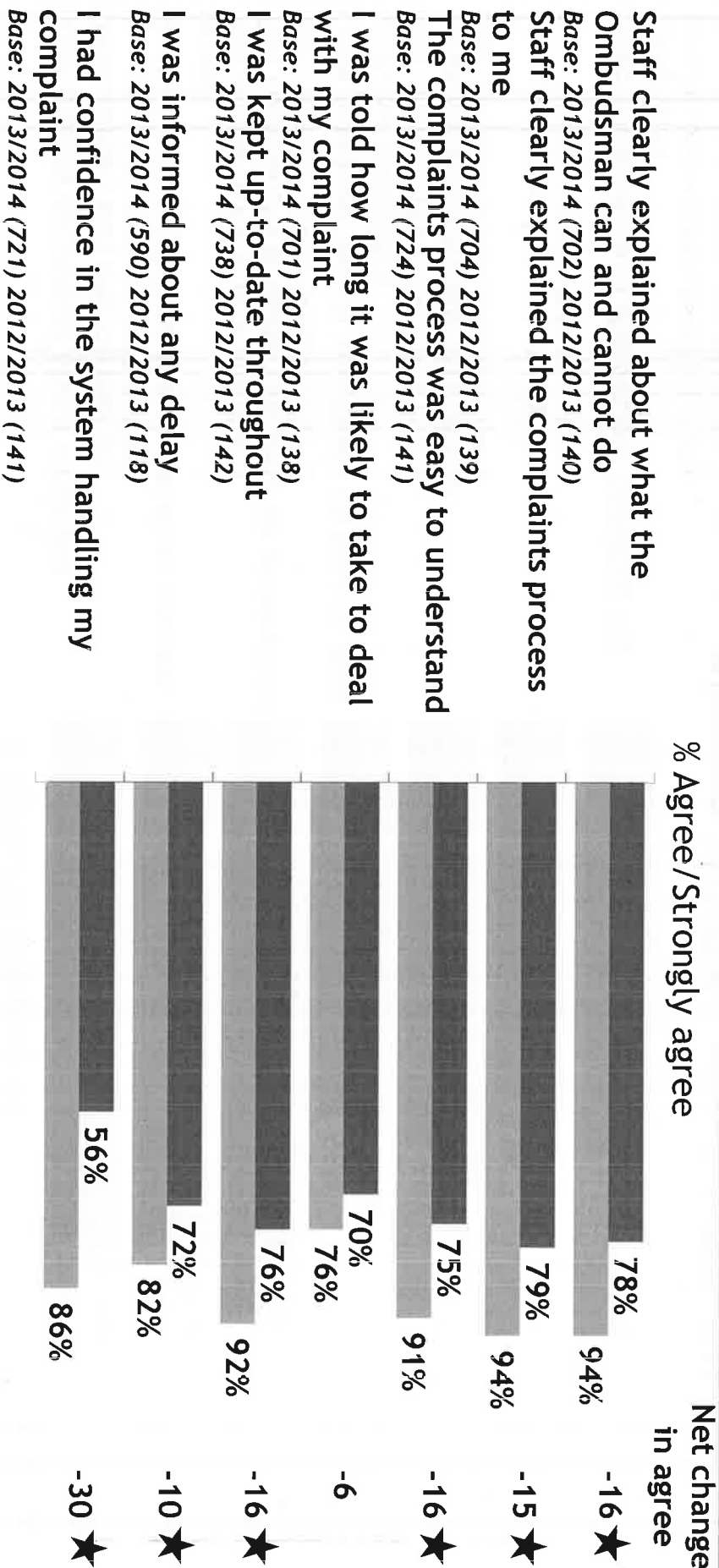


A5/B6/C6. Thinking back to your contacts with the Ombudsman, how much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?
*Variable bases, shown in brackets underneath statements



Investigations' ratings of communication of process

There have been significant decreases from 2012/2013 across all measures of communication of complaints processes among Investigations. Overall confidence in the system fell particularly sharply.

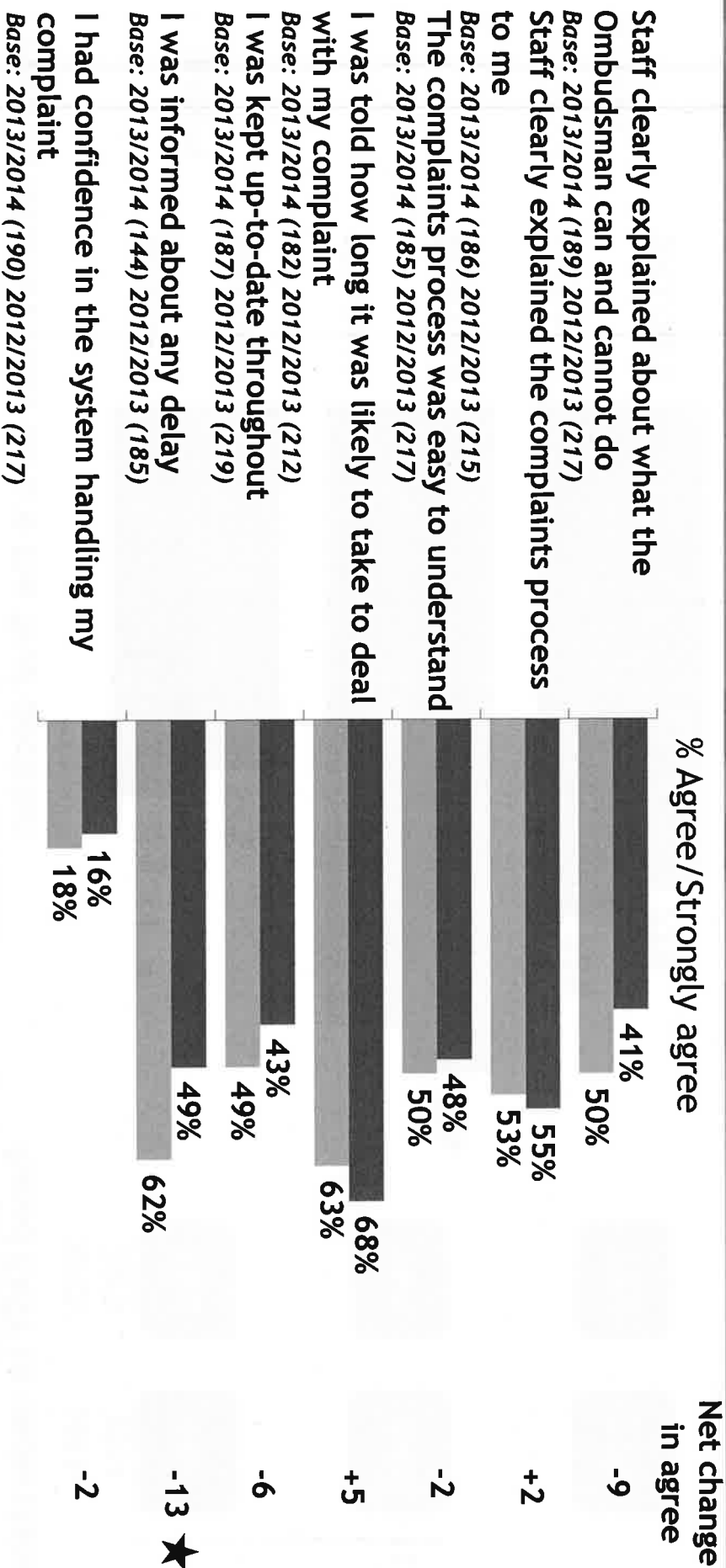


A5/B6/C6. Thinking back to your contacts with the Ombudsman, how much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?
 *Variable bases, shown in brackets underneath statements

■ Investigations 2013/2014 ■ Investigations 2012/2013

Reviews' ratings of communication of process

There has been a significant decrease from 2012/2013 in the proportion of Review customers who agree that they were informed about any delay. Other measures are broadly unchanged.



A5/B6/C6. Thinking back to your contacts with the Ombudsman, how much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?
*Variable bases, show in brackets underneath statements

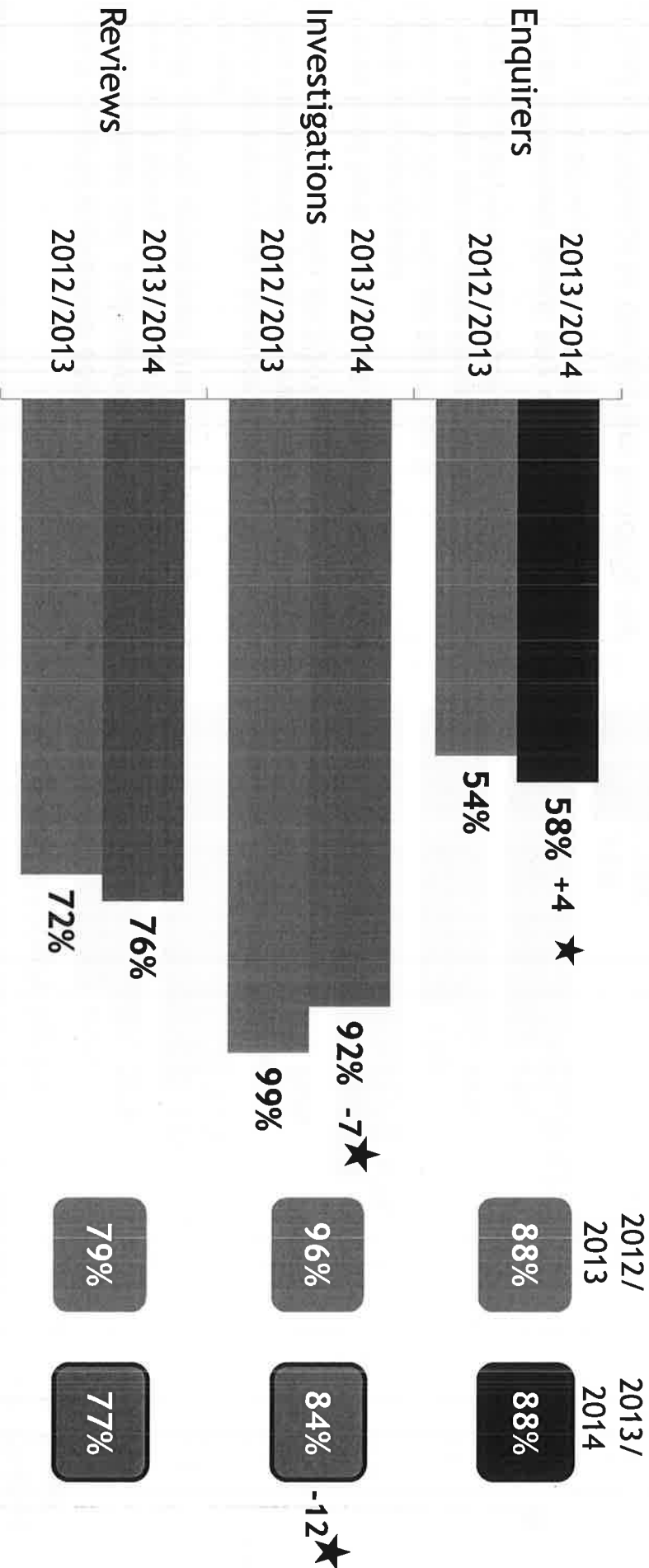


Rating of PHSO's letters/emails before the final decision

Most Investigations and Review customers received letters/emails from PHSO before the final decision was reached. The majority of recipients rated these letters/emails as easy to understand, although the proportion of Investigations saying this fell significantly (by 12 percentage points) from 2012/13.

Received letters/emails before the final decision

Rated EASY to understand



A10/B11/C11. Did you have any letters/emails from the Ombudsman in the time BEFORE you received the final decision?

2013/2014 Base: 1,368 enquirers, 709 investigations, 181 reviews

2012/2013 Base: 1,314 enquirers, 141 investigations, 212 reviews

A11/B12/C12. And thinking about these letters/emails how much would you agree or disagree that they were easy to understand? Do you...?

2013/2014 Base: 785 enquirers, 647 investigations, 138 reviews

2012/2013 Base: 697 enquirers, 140 investigations, 150 reviews

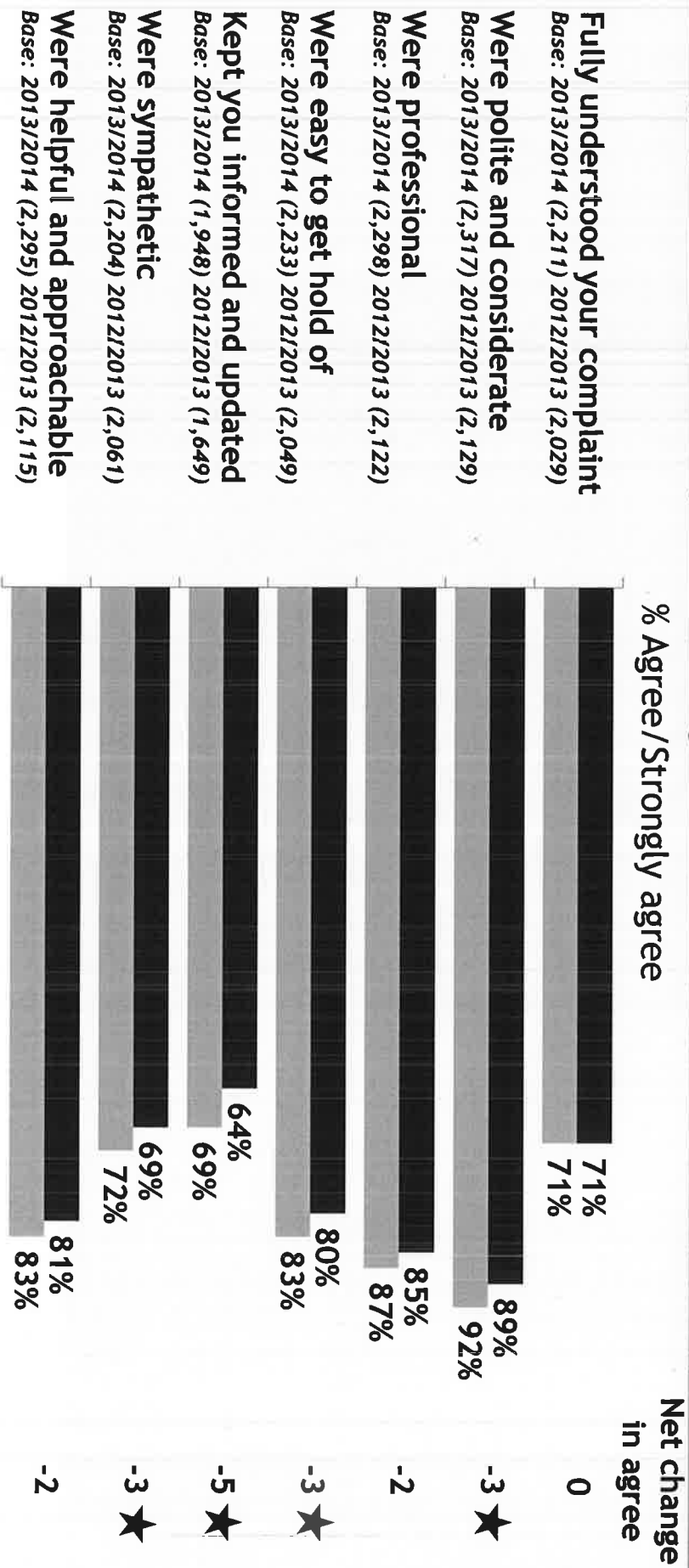


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**In detail:
Ratings of staff for customer
service**

Enquirers' ratings of staff for customer service

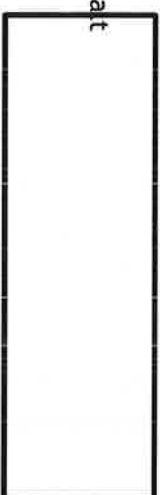
At least two-thirds of enquirers were positive about every measure, with PHSO staff particularly highly-rated for being polite and considerate, professional, easy to get hold of and helpful/approachable. There have, however, been several small but significant decreases in positive ratings since 2012/13.



■ Enquirers 2013/2014 ■ Enquirers 2012/2013

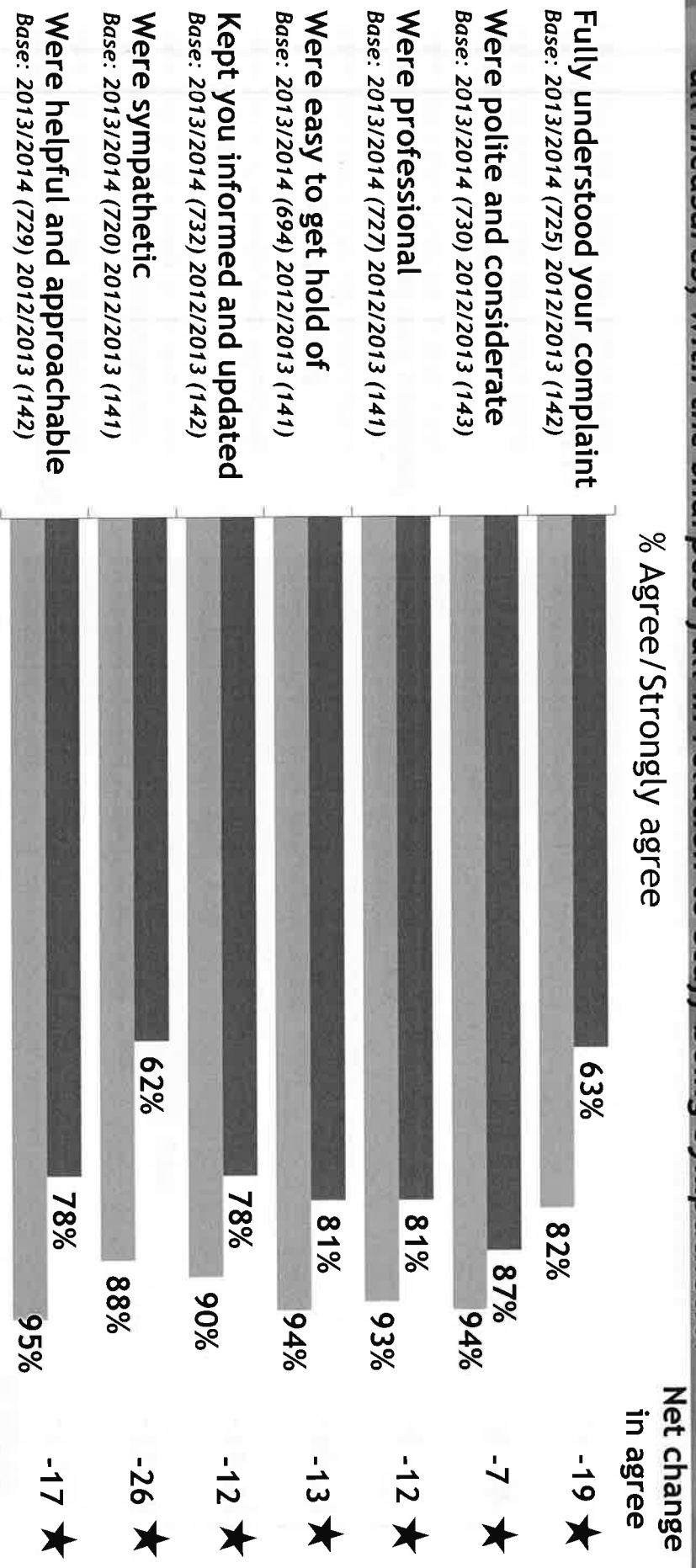


A6/B7/C7. And how much do you agree or disagree that the Ombudsman's staff you dealt with . . . ?
*Variable bases, shown in brackets underneath statements



Investigations' ratings of staff for customer service

At least six in ten Investigations were positive about every measure, with PHSO staff being particularly highly-rated for being polite and considerate, professional and easy to get hold of. There have, however, been significant decreases across all measures, with the sharpest fall in relation to staff being sympathetic.



■ Investigations 2013/2014 ■ Investigations 2012/2013

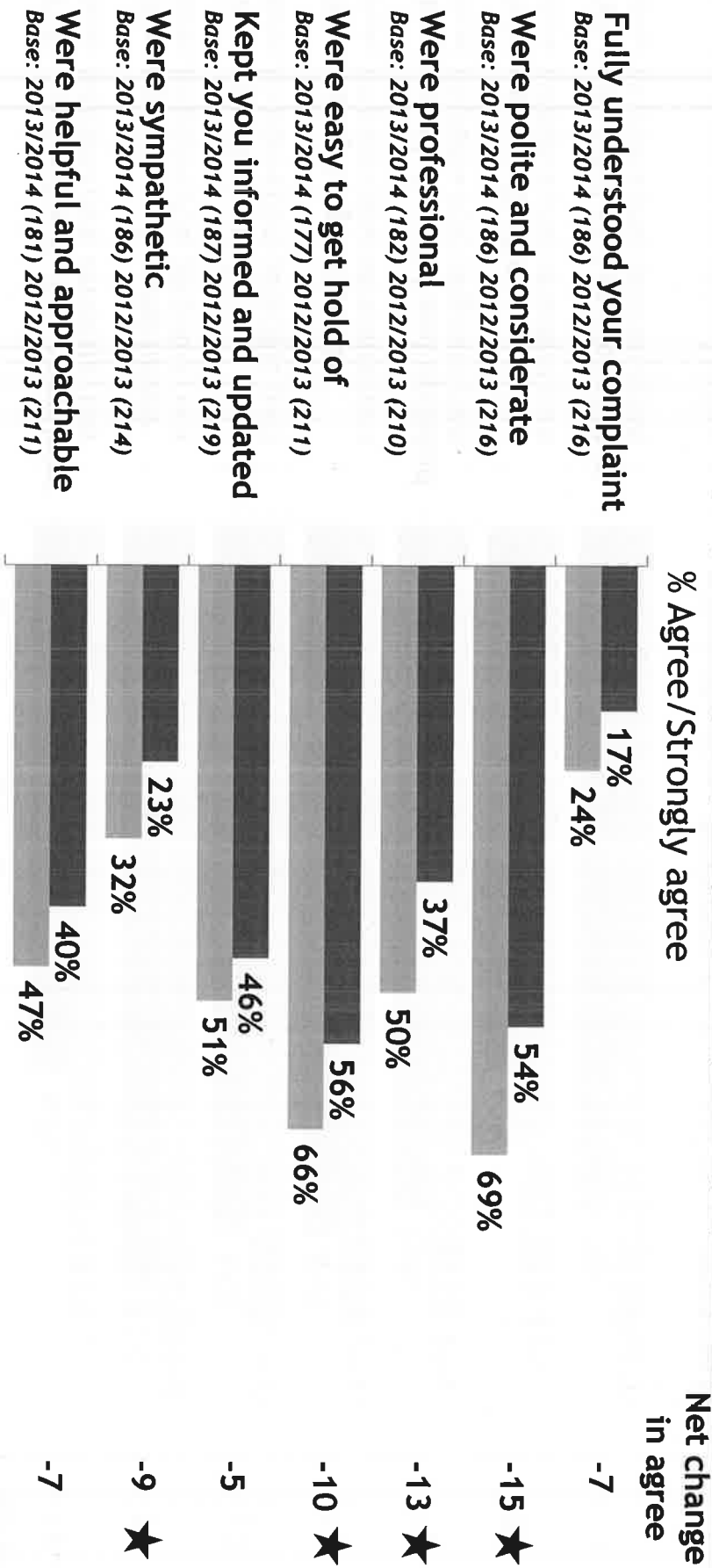


A6/B7/C7. And how much do you agree or disagree that the Ombudsman's staff you dealt with . . . ?
*Variable bases, shown in brackets underneath statements



Reviews' ratings of staff for customer service

Review customers were less positive than Enquirers and Investigations, with the most positive views (re: staff politeness and accessibility) being held by around half. There have been significant decreases from 2012/13 in the proportions who agreed staff were polite and considerate, professional, easy to get hold of and sympathetic.



■ Reviews 2013/2014 ■ Reviews 2012/2013

A6/B7/C7. And how much do you agree or disagree that the Ombudsman's staff you dealt with . . . ?

*Variable bases, shown in brackets underneath statements



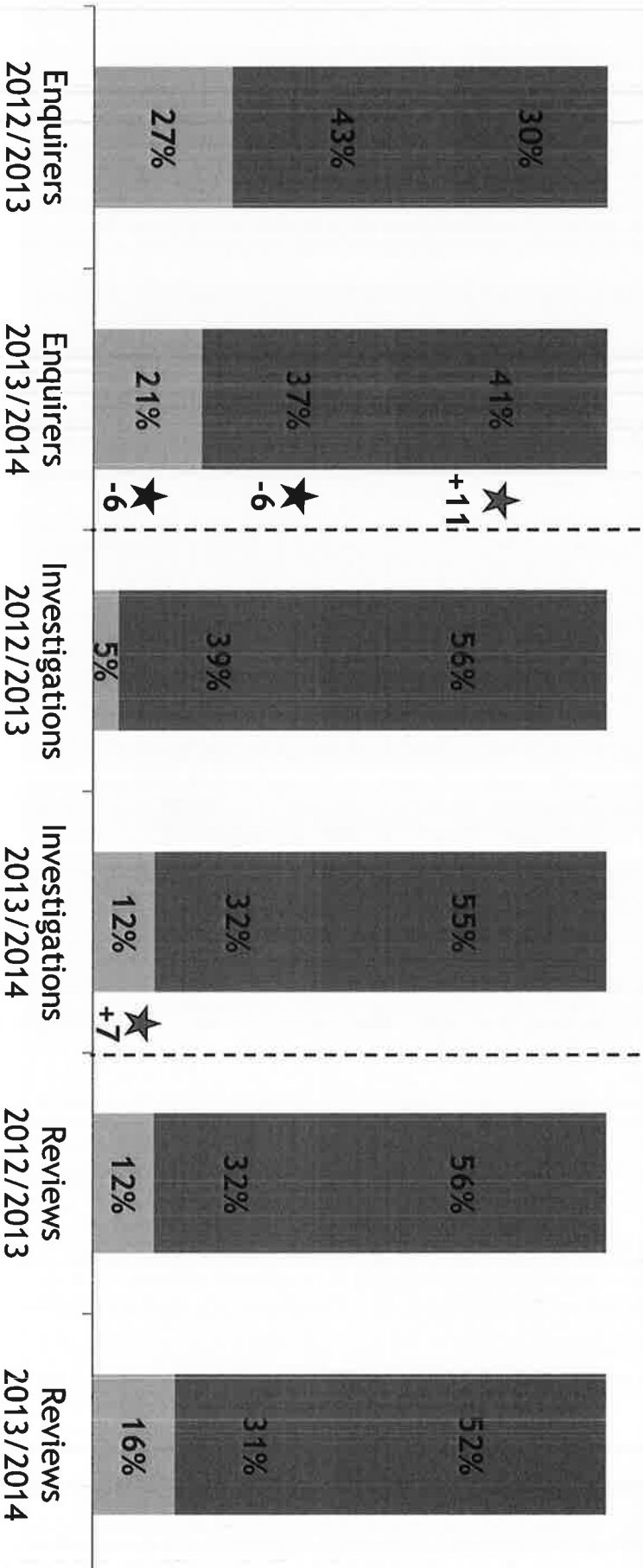


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Timeliness

Time taken to deal with complaint

Across customer types, between a third and two-fifths felt the time taken to deal with their complaint was about the time expected. Around half of Investigation and Review customers felt the time taken was longer than expected. There has been a significant increase in Enquirer customers feeling it took longer than expected.



■ Longer than expected

■ About the time expected

■ Shorter than expected



A16/B21/C14. Thinking about the time that was actually taken to deal with your complaint and taking into account any information about timescale that you were provided by the Ombudsman's Office, would you say the time taken was...?
 2013/2014 Base: 1,223 enquirers, 706 investigations, 181 reviews
 2012/2013 Base: 1,081 enquirers, 133 investigations, 211 reviews



Reasons time taken was longer than expected

Across all customer types, most simply felt that the time taken to deal with their complaint had been longer than they had been told or had expected.

Enquirers - top 3 reasons	Investigations - top 3 reasons	Reviews - top 3 reasons
<p>It took forever/ages/ longer than told or expected</p> <p>62%</p> <p>Believe it is still ongoing</p> <p>11%</p> <p>Had to chase them up</p> <p>9%</p>	<p>It took forever/ages/ longer than told or expected</p> <p>76%</p> <p>The complexity of the complaint/nature</p> <p>6%</p> <p>Had to chase them up</p> <p>5%</p>	<p>It took forever/ages/ longer than told or expected</p> <p>70%</p> <p>Not dealt with properly</p> <p>10%</p> <p>Had to chase them up</p> <p>9%</p>
<p><i>'After the phone call he sent me a letter 2-3 weeks later, which is a long time.'</i></p> <p><i>'I didn't hear anything from them and I had to start phoning them. They never got back to me.'</i></p>	<p><i>'They took much longer than I was told they would take.'</i></p> <p><i>'They started the case last year - I didn't think it would take so long, because all the evidence was there.'</i></p>	<p><i>'I was notified that it would take a certain amount of weeks and it was significantly longer.'</i></p> <p><i>'I was bounced around 3 different people this made things repetitive, and much longer.'</i></p>



A17/B22/C15. Thinking about the time that was actually taken to deal with your complaint and taking into account any information about timescale that you were provided by the Ombudsman's Office, would you say that the time taken was ...?

2013/2014 Base: 427 enquirers, 338 investigations, and 87 reviews

Reasons time taken was shorter than expected

Review customers tended to interpret a shorter than expected timescale to reach an outcome as meaning their issue had not been dealt with properly (this was also a concern, albeit to a lesser extent, for Enquirers and Investigations).

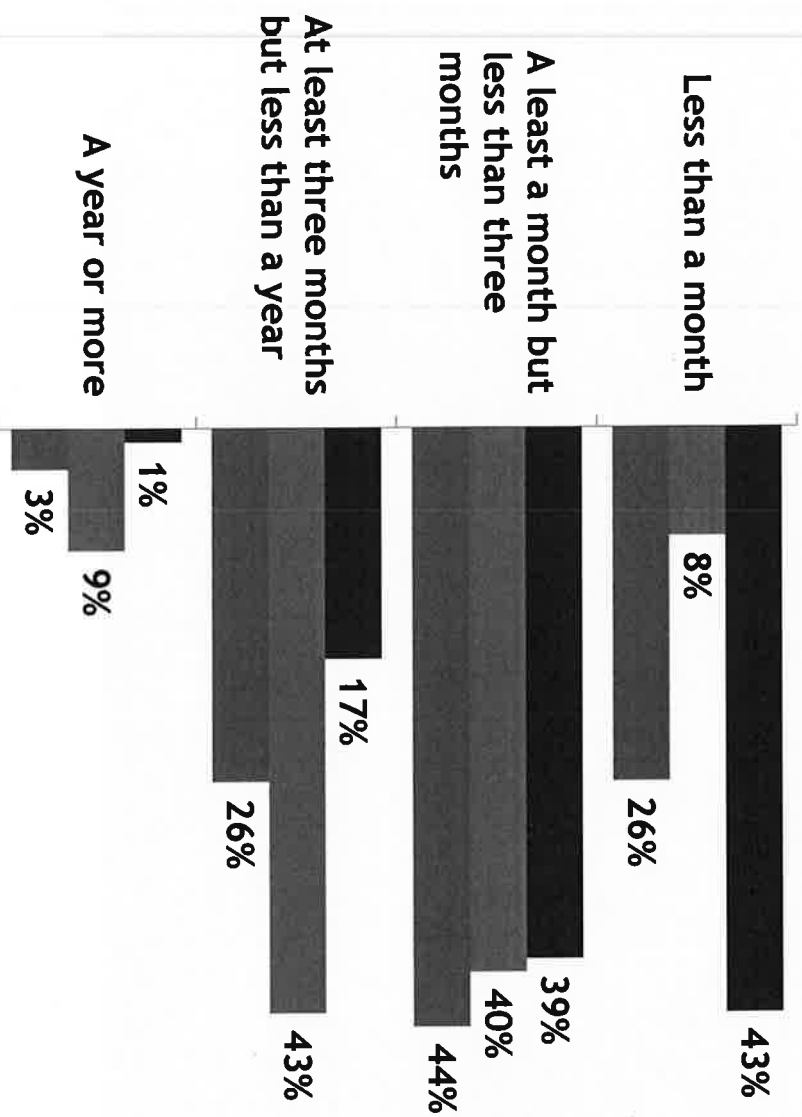
Enquirers - top 3 reasons	Investigations - top 3 reasons	Reviews - top 3 reasons
<p>Quicker than I expected 58%</p> <p>Not dealt with properly 23%</p> <p>Reasonable timeframe 5%</p> <p><i>'I got a decision back quite quickly. It was only a week.'</i></p> <p><i>'Because they didn't really investigate my problem at all, they just said it wasn't their responsibility, when it was.'</i></p>	<p>Quicker than expected 63%</p> <p>Not dealt with properly 13%</p> <p>I was told how long I could expect it to take 11%</p> <p><i>'They took 3 days to come to the decision.'</i></p> <p><i>'Because they failed to carry out a proper legal and honest examination.'</i></p>	<p>Not dealt with properly 50%</p> <p>Quicker than I expected 39%</p> <p>I was told how long I could expect it to take 21%</p> <p><i>'I don't believe they could have done it so quickly with all the evidence.'</i></p> <p><i>'Because of the complexity, I thought it would have take a bit longer.'</i></p>



A17/B22/C15. Thinking about the time that was actually taken to deal with your complaint and taking into account any information about timescale that you were provided by the Ombudsman's Office, would you say that the time taken was ...?
 2013/2014 Base: 239 enquirers, 82 investigations, and 28 reviews

Length of time the case should have taken

Enquirers expected the quickest response, with around two-fifths suggesting that it should have taken PHSO less than a month. Review customers are most likely to expect a wait of between a month and 3 months, while Investigations are equally likely to expect a wait of between a month and 3 months and 3 months to 1 year.



■ Enquirers ■ Investigations ■ Reviews

A18/B23/C16. How long do you think it should have taken the Ombudsman's Office to deal with your case?

2013/2014 Base: 877 enquirers, 482 investigations, 126 reviews





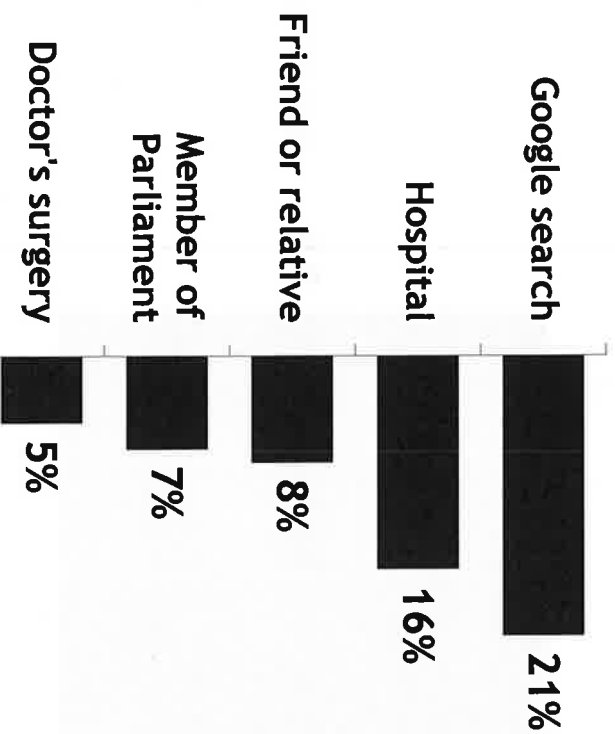
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Accessibility

Finding out about PHSO

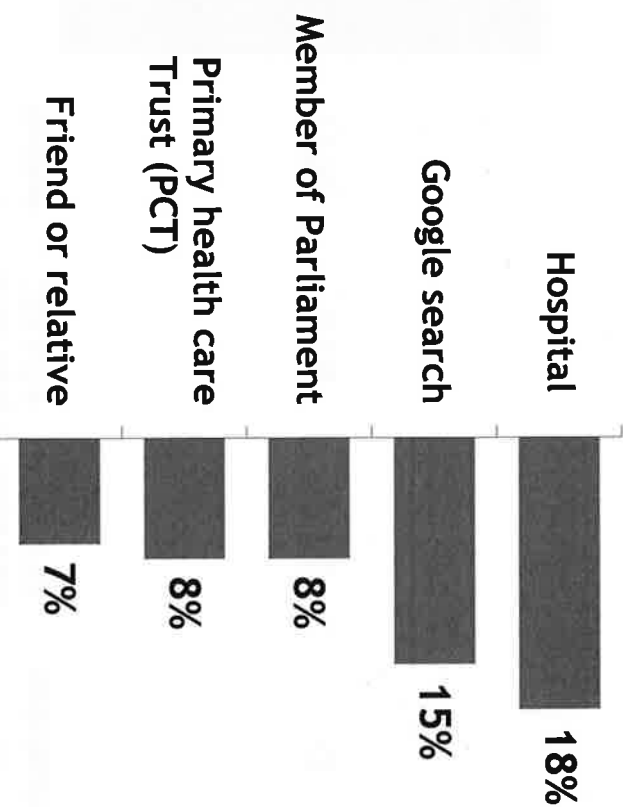
Enquirers and Investigation customers were most likely to have found out about PHSO from a Google search or from a hospital. Overall, around a third of Enquirers and Investigations heard about PHSO from a healthcare provider of some description.

Top 5 codes Enquirers



30% ANY Healthcare provider

Top 5 codes Investigations



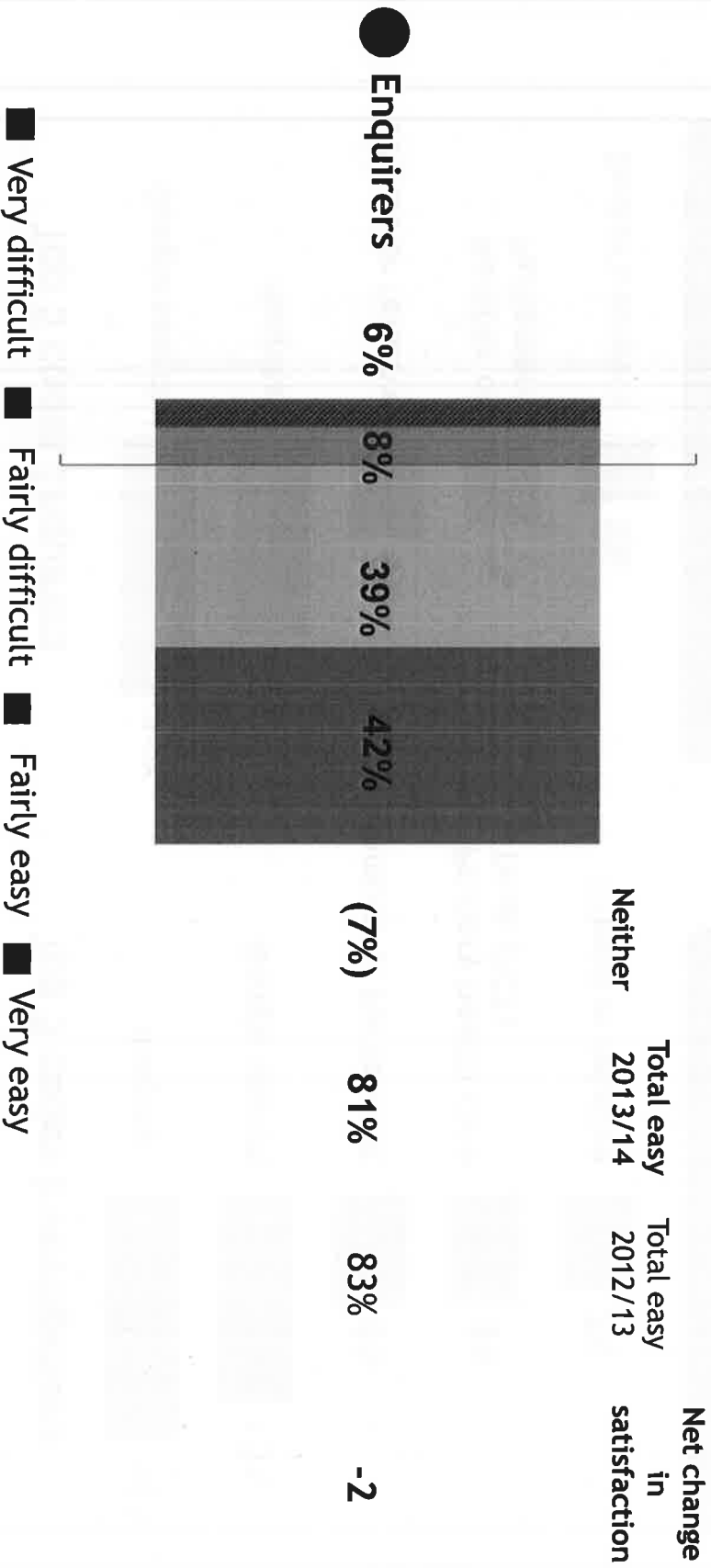
33% ANY Healthcare provider

A1 / B1. How did you find out about the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman?
2013/2014 Base: 2,240 enquirers, 685 investigations



Finding out about PHSO

The majority of Enquirers (around four-fifths) found it easy to find out about PHSO, in line with findings from 2012/2013.

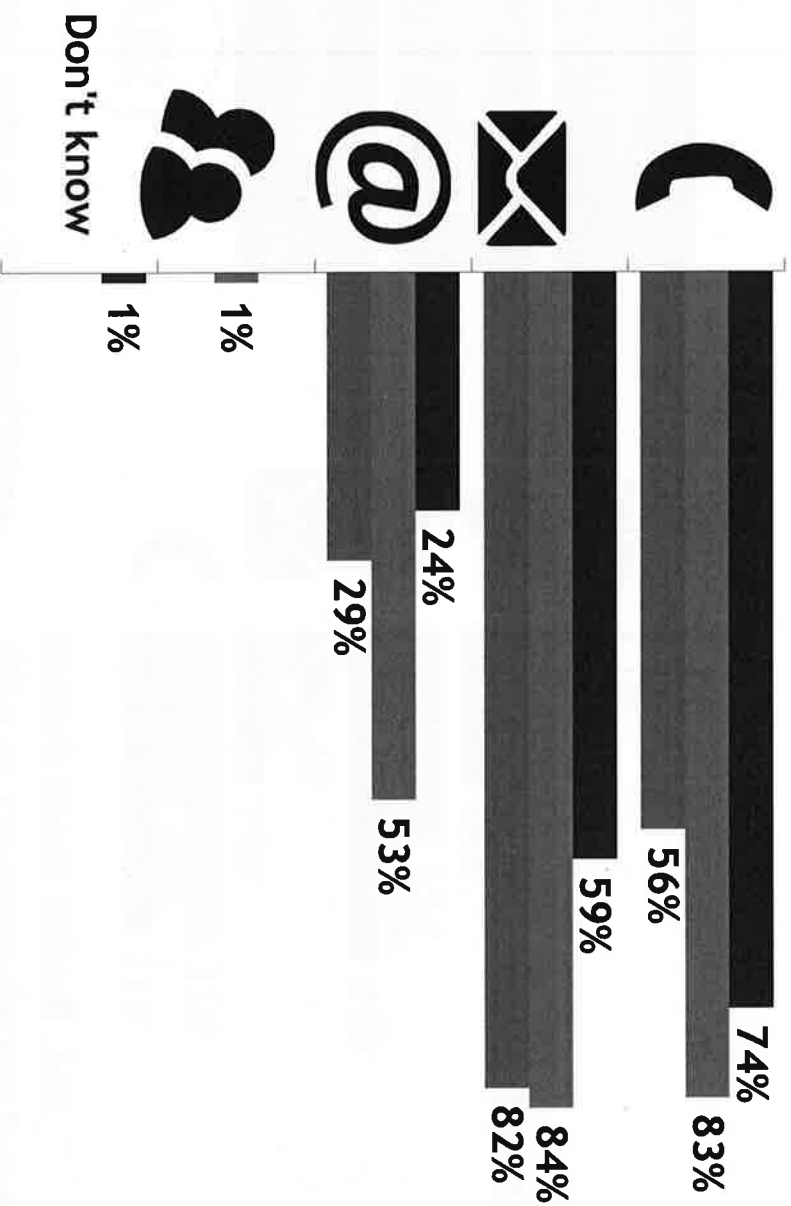


A1a. How easy or difficult was it to find out about PHSO? Was it...?
 2013/2014 Base: 2,346 enquirers
 2012/2013 Base: 1,951 enquirers



Communication channels used by PHSO

PHSO staff were mostly likely to communicate with Investigations and Review customers by letter, although a similar proportion of Investigations also reported receiving telephone communications. The majority of Enquirer communications were by telephone.



■ Enquirers ■ Investigations ■ Reviews

A7/B8/C8. How did staff at the Ombudsman's office communicate with you?
2013/2014 Base: 2,377 enquirers, 745 investigations, and 191 reviews

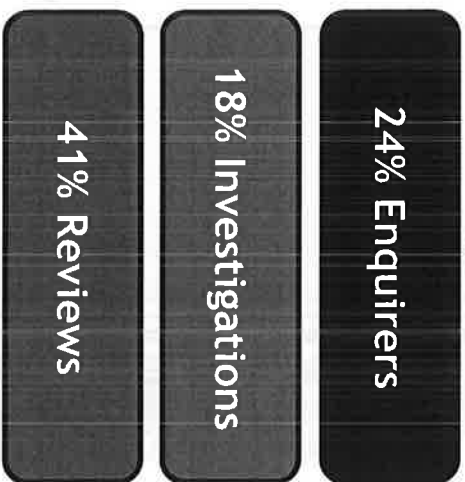


Communication channels used by PHSO

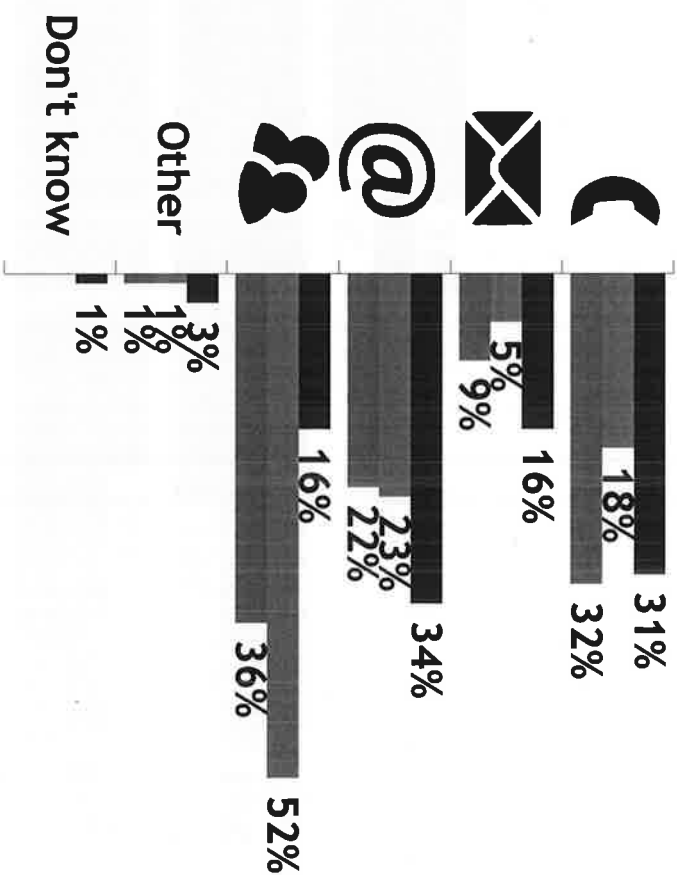
Two-fifths of Review customers, a quarter of Enquirers and a fifth of Investigations would have preferred another communication channel. Greatest unmet demand is for communication face-to-face (particularly among Investigations and Reviews); telephone (particularly Enquirers and Reviews); and email (particularly among Enquirers).

Whether other form of communication preferred...

YES



Type of communication preferred among those saying 'yes' ...



A8/B9/C9. Would you have preferred any other form of communication with the Ombudsman's staff?

2013/2014 Base: 2,328 enquirers, 741 investigations, and 188 reviews

A9/B10/C10. How would you have preferred the Ombudsman's staff to communicate with you?

2013/2014 Base: 558 enquirers, 132 investigations, and 78 reviews

■ Enquirers ■ Investigations ■ Reviews



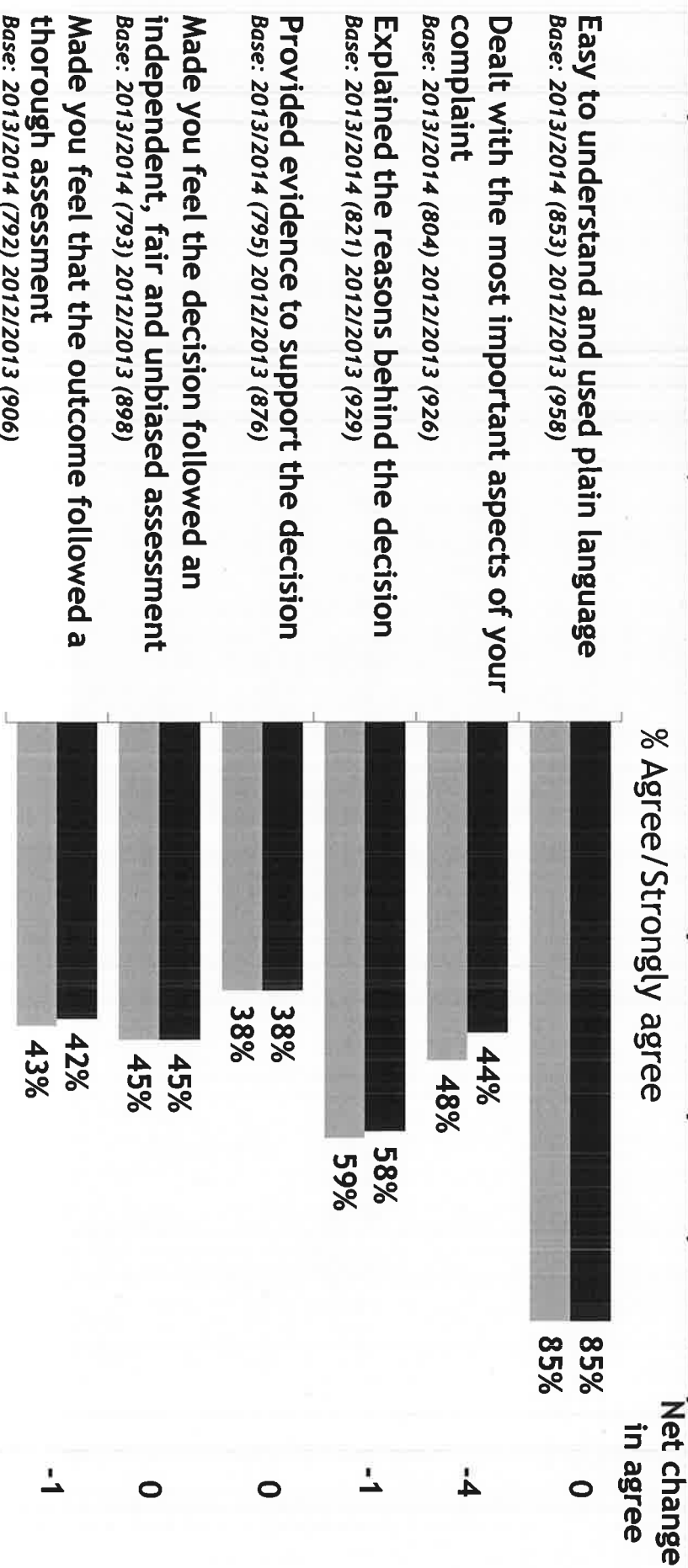


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**In detail:
Ratings of contact about the
final outcome**

Enquirers' rating of contact about the final outcome

Consistent with 2012/13, Enquirers rated PHSO most highly for communicating the final decision in a way that was easy to understand and used plain language (more than four-fifths agreed). Views were more mixed on whether the decision was fully explained or evidenced, or dealt with the most important aspects of the complaint.

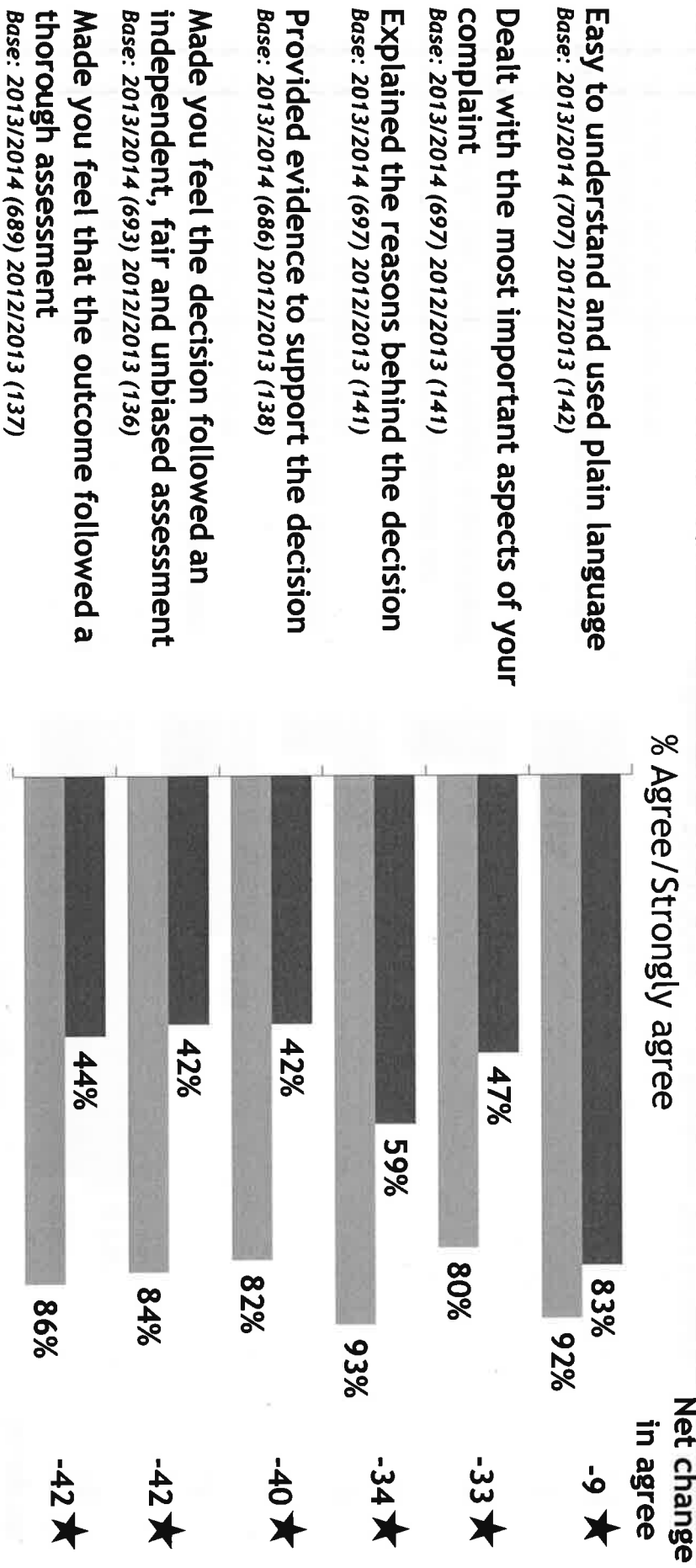


A12/B13/C13. Now I would like to ask you about the contact informing you of the decision to [accept/reject] your complaint for investigation. How much would you agree or disagree that the contact...?
*Variable bases, shown in brackets underneath statements

■ Enquirers 2013/2014 ■ Enquirers 2012/2013

Investigations' rating of contact about the final outcome

Positive ratings of all six statements have significantly decreased since 2012/2013. However, more than four-fifths of Investigations still agreed that communications were easy to understand and used plain language (this has held up better than other measures).



■ Investigations 2013/2014 ■ Investigations 2012/2013



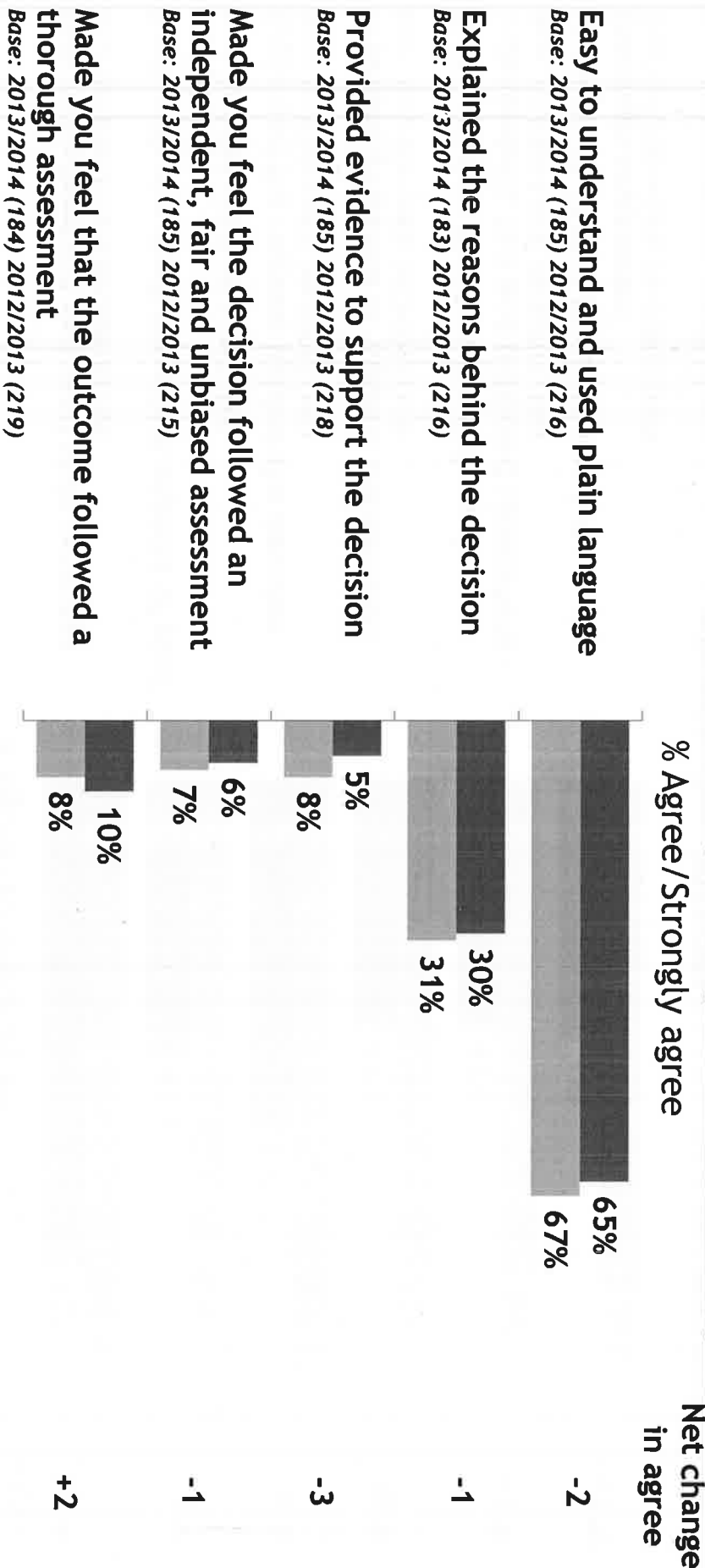
A12/B13/C13. Now I would like to ask you about the contact informing you of the decision to [accept/reject] your complaint for investigation. How much would you agree or disagree that the contact...?
*Variable bases, shown in brackets underneath statements



★ Denotes a significant decrease from 2012/2013 to 2013/2014

Reviews' rating of contact about the final outcome

As in 2012/13, Review customers rated PHSO most highly for communicating the final decision in a way that was easy to understand and used plain language. Only a third felt the reasons behind the decision were explained and small proportions felt the communication set out the evidence or conveyed independence or thoroughness.



■ Reviews 2013/2014 ■ Reviews 2012/2013



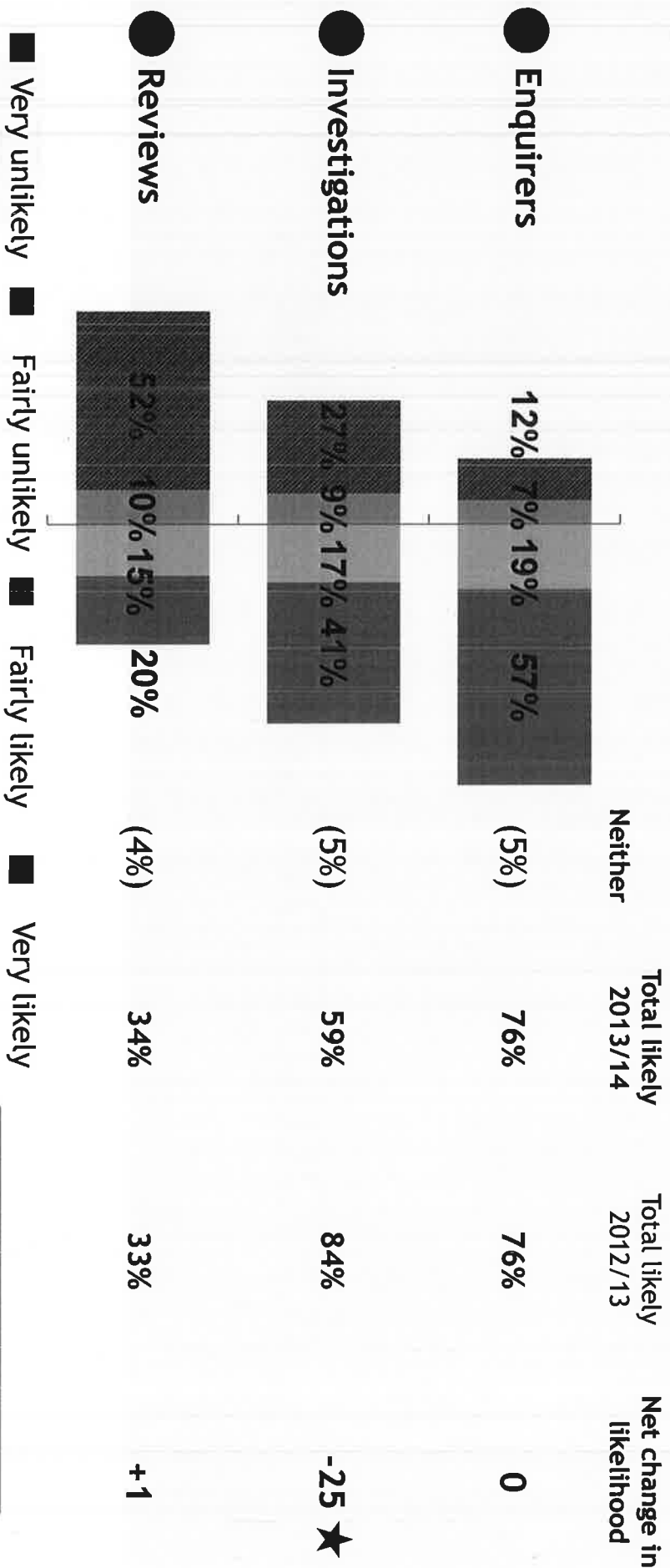
A12/B13/C13. Now I would like to ask you about the contact informing you of the decision to [accept/reject] your complaint for investigation. How much would you agree or disagree that the contact...?
*Variable bases, shown in brackets underneath statements



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Future usage and advocacy

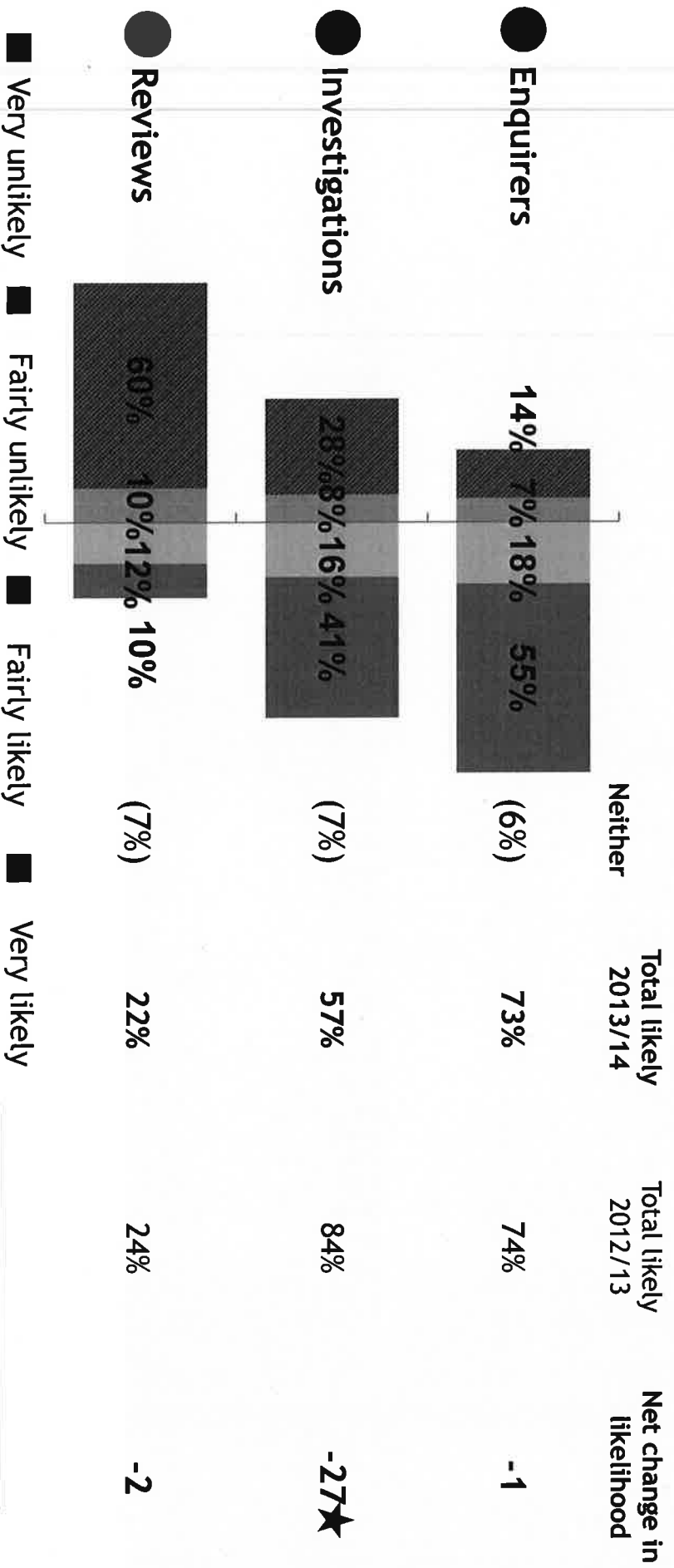
Likelihood of contacting PHSO in future with a complaint
Enquirers are the most likely to contact PHSO in the future, followed by Investigations and then Review customers. However there has been a significant drop from 2012/2013 in the proportion of Investigations that are likely to contact PHSO again.



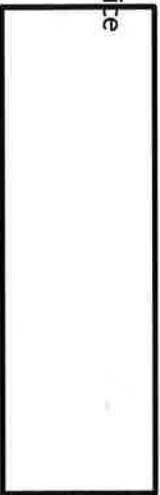
A21/B26/C19. How likely or unlikely would you be to contact the Parliamentary and Health Services Ombudsman again with a complaint?
 2013/2014 Base: 2,250 enquirers, 710 investigations, 178 reviews
 2012/2013 Base: 2,073 enquirers, 141 investigations, 205 reviews



Likelihood of recommending PHSO to friends and family
 Enquirers are the most likely to recommend PHSO to friends and family, followed by Investigations and then Review customers. However there has been a significant drop from 2012/2013 in the proportion of Investigations that are likely to recommend PHSO to friends and family.



A22/B27/C20. How likely or unlikely would you be to recommend the Ombudsman service to friends and family?
 2013/2014 Base: 2,295 enquirers, 723 investigations, 187 reviews
 2012/2013 Base: 2,107 enquirers, 141 investigations, 216 reviews





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Suggested improvements

Ways PHSO could improve their customer service

Being more thorough, quicker, and less biased were among the main ways Enquirers, Investigations and Review customers felt that PHSO could improve their customer service.

Enquirers - top 3 ways	Investigations - top 3 ways	Reviews - top 3 ways
<p>Keeping people informed</p> <p>Could be quicker</p> <p>Be more thorough/ look at all evidence/ investigate more</p> <p>12%</p> <p>9%</p> <p>7%</p> <p><i>'...communication with the claimant must be on a regular basis...'</i></p> <p><i>'Be a bit more pushy on behalf of customer, there tend to be long periods where you don't hear anything...'</i></p>	<p>Could be less biased/ more on my side</p> <p>Be more thorough/ look at all evidence/ investigate more</p> <p>Could be quicker.</p> <p>15%</p> <p>15%</p> <p>14%</p> <p><i>'Believing the customer rather than hospital.'</i></p> <p><i>'By listening to what evidence I presented to them, rather than just look at their own evidence.'</i></p>	<p>Be more thorough/ look at all evidence/ investigate more</p> <p>Could be less biased/ more on my side</p> <p>By listening</p> <p>33%</p> <p>28%</p> <p>10%</p> <p><i>'Addressing all the concerns raised; speaking to patients, staff. Spending more time researching the complaint.'</i></p> <p><i>'They rely too much on the government agency they should be independent they are not as unbiased as they could be.'</i></p>



A23/B28/C21. How do you think the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman could improve their customer service?
 2013/2014 Base: 1953 enquirers, 652 investigations, and 180 reviews

