



RAIL OMBUDSMAN

RAIL CONSUMER EXPERIENCE SURVEY 2023

Covers cases closed in 2023

Report produced March 2024

Background and objectives

Since the Rail Ombudsman (RO) was formed in November 2018, it has provided a free and independent alternative dispute resolution expert service. It serves as an escalation point for rail industry complaints, mediating between Rail Consumers and Rail Operating Companies (ROCs).

The Rail Ombudsman provides fair and impartial services when mediating between Rail Consumers and ROCs. It makes decisions in relation to complaints and raises standards in the industry by providing training.

The Rail Ombudsman has a broader remit than the decision for each complaint, but it is from each individual's voice that it learns and provides feedback to enable the industry to continuously improve.

The Rail Ombudsman can also make recommendations to Rail Operators to improve the way their service is delivered and publish case studies and data which can provide insight into common complaints and how to raise standards.

The Rail Ombudsman appointed Ipsos, an independent research agency, to collect feedback, where possible, from Rail Consumers who have contacted the Rail Ombudsman between January 1 and December 31, 2023.

In November 2023, the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) assumed sponsorship of the Rail Ombudsman and is partially funding this study. The RO has since introduced new passenger contact channels and a programme of upgrades to processes and systems to provide for a more accessible service.

This research provides an insight into the experience of users of the Rail Ombudsman service. Feedback focuses on those who have had a case closed by the Rail Ombudsman, with their feedback separated from those whose cases are beyond the remit of the RO and thus deemed 'out of scope'.

In 2023, the following objectives were set:

- Evaluate the accessibility of the Rail Ombudsman
- Gather insights into consumers' profiles, with a focus on disabilities and socio-economic profile
- Identify specific challenges any group faces while accessing services
- Incorporate an inclusive survey design



Methodology

Methodology

- This survey is a follow-up to previous waves conducted annually since the start of the Rail Ombudsman operation in 2019
- Fieldwork dates: 22nd February 2024- 11th March 2024
- 10-minute online survey sent out to 3,699 Rail Consumers who had contacted the Rail Ombudsman between the 1st January 2023 – 31st December 2023. 3,699 was the number of eligible complaints to mail out to once any duplicates or incomplete/ missing/ contact details. Total original sample was 4,264 records for 2023.
- Research design adjusted to include a multi-mode telephone survey of up to 20 minutes to make the survey accessible; 22 interviews were completed using telephone methodology
- Questionnaire changes introduced in 2023 include six open-end questions to collect feedback on experience and pain-points, new rating questions on accessibility and consumer profiling (disability, ethnicity, income, education, current circumstance and social grade)
- 25% survey completion rate achieved from those who were sent the survey
- 687 Rail Consumers with cases that were in scope for the Rail Ombudsman completed the survey in 2023, along with 256 out of scope responses
- The survey population may not be entirely representative of the demographic characteristics of complainants who use the Rail Ombudsman's services. We have incorporated various strategies to mitigate bias, however, perfect representations may not always be achievable



Industry context 2023

- Growth in rail passenger journeys across 2023. Cost of living crisis alongside further rail fare rises.
- Notable increase in strikes as RMT and ASLEF strike, alongside TfL. Over 50 days in 2023 involved some level of industrial action, higher than in 2022.
- Well publicised clashes with important events such as the FA Cup final
- Number of complaints raised to the Rail Ombudsman increasing
- Ipsos publication on Rail strikes from 2022 polling shows how public opinion is split about the power people who are in employment have to influence outcomes – 61% feel they have no power
- 67% of adults in Britain do not have much sympathy for Network Rail, train companies or the government for rail strikes – sympathy among older age groups is even lower



* <https://www.ipsos.com/en-uk/public-divided-over-support-rail-strikes>

Explained

Train strikes: Full list of dates in December 2023 and rail lines affected

Rail lines are set for major disruption between now and Saturday 9 December, with walkouts spread over the next week and an overtime ban in place.

© Thursday 7 December 2023 14:32, UK



Train strikes June 2023: Full list of dates, impact on London TfL and FA Cup final disruption

• Here is a full list of services affected by the latest train strikes in June

By ZAC CAMPBELL

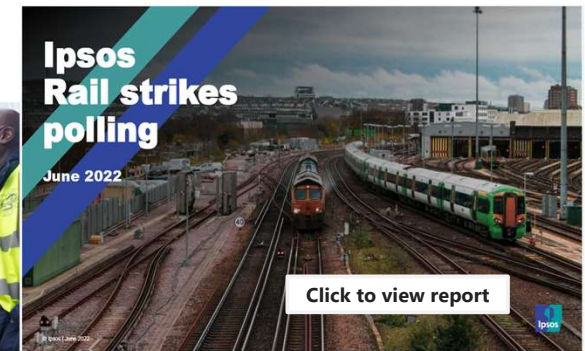
PUBLISHED: 11:25, 31 May 2023 | UPDATED: 10:43, 2 June 2023



A number of rail services across the UK were affected by the latest round of strikes.

The latest RMT walkout by came after a pay agreement continues to not be reached with rail operators.

Two more strikes, on Friday June 2 and Saturday June 3, are set to derail passengers' travel plans, including those attending the upcoming FA Cup final at Wembley and the Epsom Derby in Surrey.



Ipsos Rail strikes polling

June 2022

Click to view report

When are the next train strikes? What we know about if there will be more rail strikes dates in 2023

While there are no further train strikes planned in September 2023, the disputes involving the RMT and Aslef unions are rumbling on



Definitions

Term	Definition
In Scope	A complaint accepted as being eligible for the Rail Ombudsman scheme.
Out of Scope	A complaint that is outside the remit of the Rail Ombudsman scheme.
Simple Resolution	A stage in the Rail Ombudsman process that provides an opportunity, in some circumstances, to quickly resolve an issue.
Complex Resolution	A stage in the Rail Ombudsman process where a simple resolution is not possible. The Rail Ombudsman will first mediate and then where applicable, adjudicate to resolve an in-scope complaint.
Mediation	The process by which, assisted by an independent view from the Rail Ombudsman, a settlement in relation to an in-scope complaint can be negotiated to which both the Rail Consumer and the participating Rail Operating Company agree.
Cases resulted in a full or partial Rail Consumers remedy	The Ombudsman instructs Rail Operating Company to take action, Rail Consumer complaint upheld in part, Rail Consumer complaint Upheld in full, resolution reached between both parties prior to mediation and settled through mediation.
Cases ruled in favour of the Rail Operating Company	Rail Consumer complaint not upheld.
Rail Operator	All licenced train or station operators, including Network Rail and National Rail Enquiries



How has the profile of complainants changed vs. 2022?

More cases decided in favour of the Rail Operating Company (ROC), an outcome linked with much lower satisfaction

	2022	2023
In favour of ROC	19%	36%
Full or partial consumer remedy	81%	64%

Within *Full or Partial Consumer Remedy* cases, there were fewer *Simple – settled prior to mediation* case outcomes, and higher *Mediation* outcomes

% of full or partial consumer remedy	2022	2023
Simple – settled prior to mediation	64%	53%
Mediation	24%	35%
Split decision	10%	10%
Simple – Administrative	1%	1%
Decision in favour of consumer	1%	1%

In scope cases open for slightly longer in 2023 than in 2022 (4 working days more for Full or Partial remedy), and speed does have an influence on perceptions of experience

	2022	2023
No. of working days open	23	26

Categories of complaints have shifted in 2023 – Delay Compensation schemes and Train Service Performance have notably increased in proportion

Category-top 5 (all over 5% shown)	2022	2023
Delay compensation schemes	30%	40%
Complaints handling	21%	17%
Train service performance	10%	15%
Quality on train	8%	6%
Company policy	5%	5%

Overall, a profile of complainants which is older, skewed towards males, higher social grade and education than the average rail passenger population. The older age group are (from Ipsos research) the least likely to support rail strikes.



N.B. Full or Partial Consumer Remedy outcomes are: Simple – settled prior to mediation, Mediation, Split decision, Simple – Administrative and Decision in favour of consumer. In favour of ROC cases outcomes are Decision made in favour of business and Simple - Other

Executive Summary

An overall decrease in user satisfaction with the Rail Ombudsman amid a backdrop of industry disruption.

Overall experience ratings are down for all in scope complaints from 65% to 46%. This is in part explained by a lower proportion with remedy cases. However, it is the case that among rulings in favour of consumers, overall experience is also rated lower (77% to 67%).

Other changes in profile of cases also contribute to the overall decline. Mediation cases, which achieve lower ratings, have increased markedly.

It is possible that complainants' feedback may also be influenced by a more challenging period for the rail industry, including the ongoing media spotlight on strike actions. This potentially results in a more negative rail consumer mindset and more critical ratings.

Perceptions remain positive in key areas for Ombudsman staff

Against the backdrop of falling overall ratings, key aspects of the Rail Ombudsman's service still remain strong.

Consumers with a Full or Partial remedy continue to rate Rail Ombudsman staff highly, particularly for professionalism and knowledge, and also how well they are kept informed throughout the process.

However, consumer perceptions of the amount of effort they personally had to put in to resolve the case compared to the Rail Ombudsman, reveal a consistent mismatch. Improving perceptions of helpfulness, depth of review, and understanding of an individual's complaint are all central to conveying this effort and commitment.

Accessibility remains a strength

Despite a decline since 2022, Accessibility remains a top-rated area both among all complaints handled by the Rail Ombudsman as well as for those with outcomes in favour of the rail consumer.

Encouragingly, there is no evidence of any complainants experiencing specific challenges accessing services once they have contacted the Rail Ombudsman.

The profile of survey respondents suggests a potential skew to higher social grades and education levels among users of the service. This group may also be pre-disposed to be more negative about the rail industry. It is difficult to fully ascertain users' profile without collecting demographic information at the case handling stage.

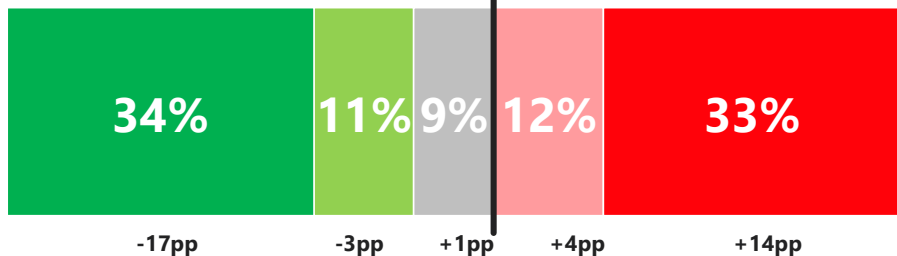
Of the 25% of rail customers that felt invested to take part in the survey there was a perceived decline in experience since 2022

Percentage rating experience overall as...

46% rate their experience very or fairly good

-19pp vs 2022

Compared to 2022 results, the number of consumers who say they have had a very good experience has declined. More consumers have had a negative experience with ratings of very poor showing the most change.



■ Very good ■ Fairly good ■ Neither good nor poor ■ Fairly poor ■ Very poor

Change in % points (pp) vs. 2022



Q1. Taking everything into consideration how would you rate your overall experience with the Rail Ombudsman? Base: Cases dealt with by the Rail Ombudsman (686)

Difference between case types

Proportion of participants based on case outcomes has changed notably since 2022

40% of in-scope cases in each category

64%
-17pp

of cases resulted in a full or partial Rail Consumer remedy

36%
+17pp

of cases ruled in favour of the Rail Operating Company

Experience of the Rail Ombudsman

% rating fairly or very good overall

Simple n=401

51% -30pp

Mediation n=152

62% -4pp

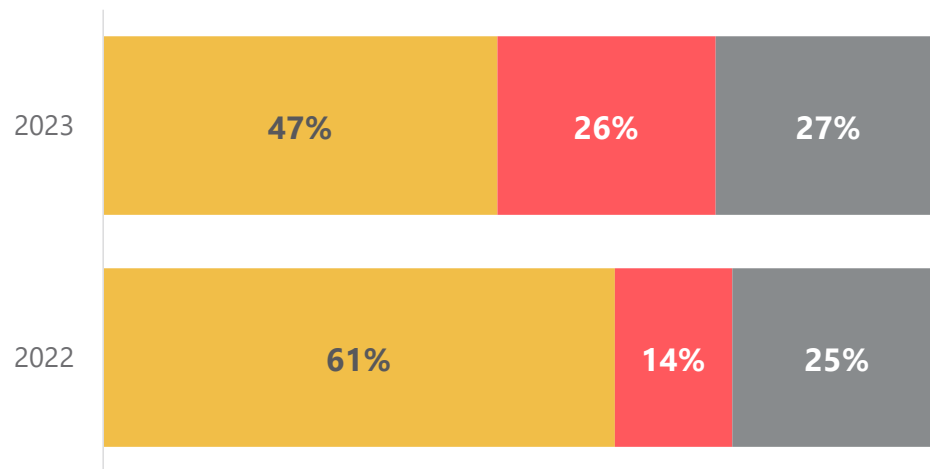
The overall results could be influenced by a mix of factors. These include the benchmark for satisfaction perceived as broader than that of the RO. The industry context, the makeup of complaint characteristics, and experience also play a role.

Slide 8

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Author, 2024-04-11T13:28:44.495

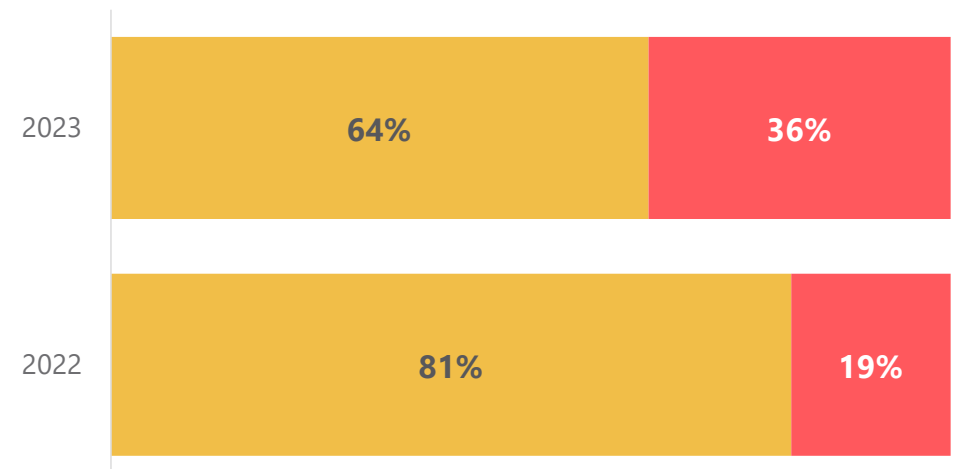
Higher proportion of cases ruled in the favour of the ROC in 2023 and fewer cases resulting in full or partial consumer remedy, affecting overall results

Case outcome profile overall



- Cases resulted in full or partial Rail Consumers remedy
- Cases ruled in favour of the Rail Operating Company
- Out of scope

Case outcome profile excluding Out of Scope



- Cases resulted in full or partial Rail Consumers remedy
- Cases ruled in favour of the Rail Operating Company

Base: All respondents 2023 (943), 2022 (583); Base: Cases dealt with by the Rail Ombudsman in 2023 (687), Cases dealt by the Rail Ombudsman in 2022 (434)

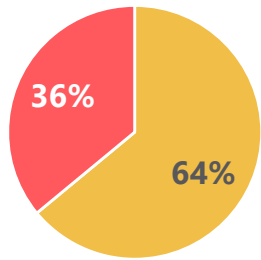


NOTE: The case outcome is strongly linked with satisfaction and so a change in the profile among cases dealt with will affect the total level results

The results by outcome show more consistency of overall performance for cases ruled in favour of Rail Operating Company

Differences between case types

2023



- Cases resulted in full or partial Rail Consumers remedy
- Cases ruled in favour of the Rail Operating Company

Percentage rating experience overall as...

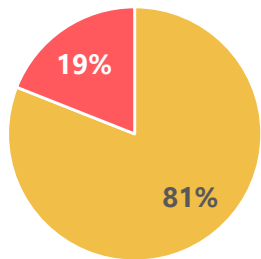


67% rate their experience as very or fairly good



7% rate their experience as very or fairly good

2022



- Cases resulted in full or partial Rail Consumers remedy
- Cases ruled in favour of the Rail Operating Company



77% rate their experience as very or fairly good



10% rate their experience as very or fairly good

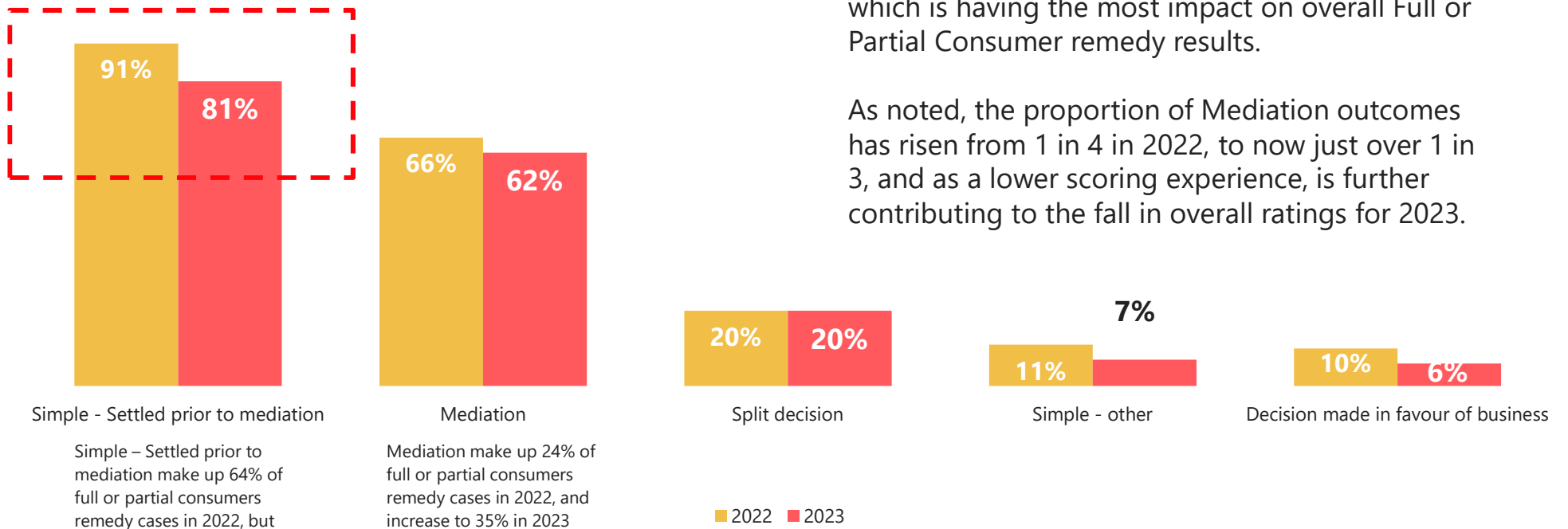
Very good Fairly good Neither good nor poor Fairly poor Very poor



Q1. Taking everything into consideration how would you rate your overall experience with the Rail Ombudsman? Base: Cases dealt with by the Rail Ombudsman 2023 (686), 2022 (434).

For full or partial consumer remedy, fall in experience for Simple – Settled prior to mediation, and rise in proportion of lower scoring Mediation

Percentage rating as fairly good or very good



Ratings for the two main outcomes have fallen, which is having the most impact on overall Full or Partial Consumer remedy results.

As noted, the proportion of Mediation outcomes has risen from 1 in 4 in 2022, to now just over 1 in 3, and as a lower scoring experience, is further contributing to the fall in overall ratings for 2023.

Simple – Settled prior to mediation make up 64% of full or partial consumers remedy cases in 2022, but drop to 53% in 2023

Mediation make up 24% of full or partial consumers remedy cases in 2022, and increase to 35% in 2023

■ 2022 ■ 2023

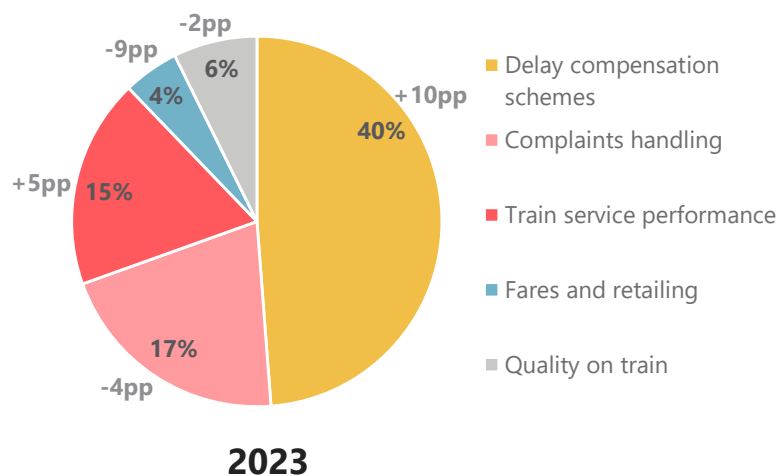


Cases decided fully or partial consumer remedy in 2022 (28 - 226), Cases decided in favour of the Rail Operating Company in 2022 (80)
 Cases decided fully or partial consumer remedy in 2023 (45 - 233), Cases decided in favour of the Rail Operating Company in 2023 (247)

Higher proportion of Delay Compensation Schemes and Service Performance

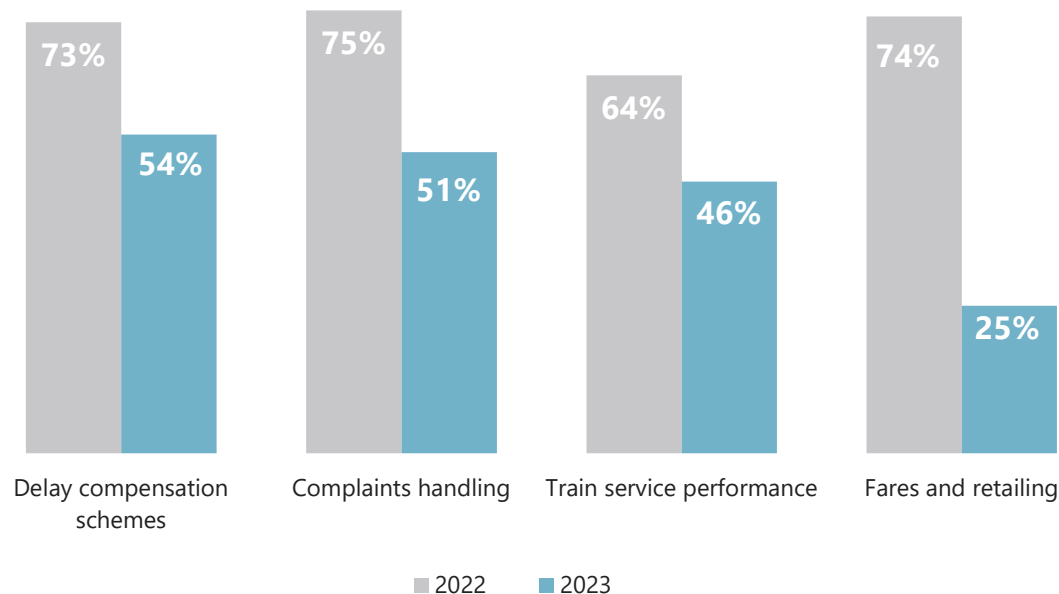
Overall experience ratings decline for all complaint categories YoY

Differences between complaint types YoY



Change in %pt (pp) vs. 2022

Percentage rating experience overall as very or fairly good



Base: Cases dealt with by the Rail Ombudsman 2023 (687), 2022 (434).

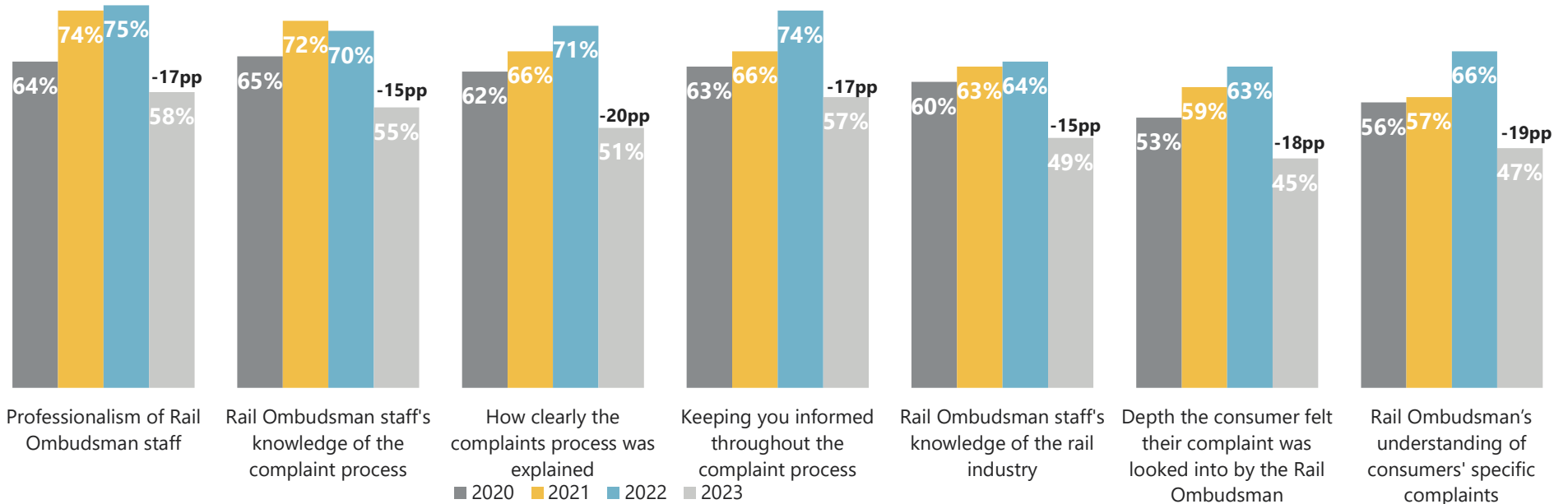
Q1. Taking everything into consideration how would you rate your overall experience with the Rail Ombudsman? Base: Cases dealt with by the Rail Ombudsman 2023 (687), 2022 (434).

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Author, 2024-04-11T13:29:24.611

At a total level, consumer ratings of the service have declined across the various elements of experience with the Ombudsman

Percentage rating as fairly good or very good

Change in % point (pp) vs. 2022



Q11. How would you rate the following aspects of the Rail Ombudsman's service? Base: Cases dealt with by the Rail Ombudsman (2023: 687, 2022: 434, 2021: 198, 2020: 504).

NOTE: Positive results at the overall level are influenced by change in profile - higher volumes of cases in favour of consumer in 2022 which score higher

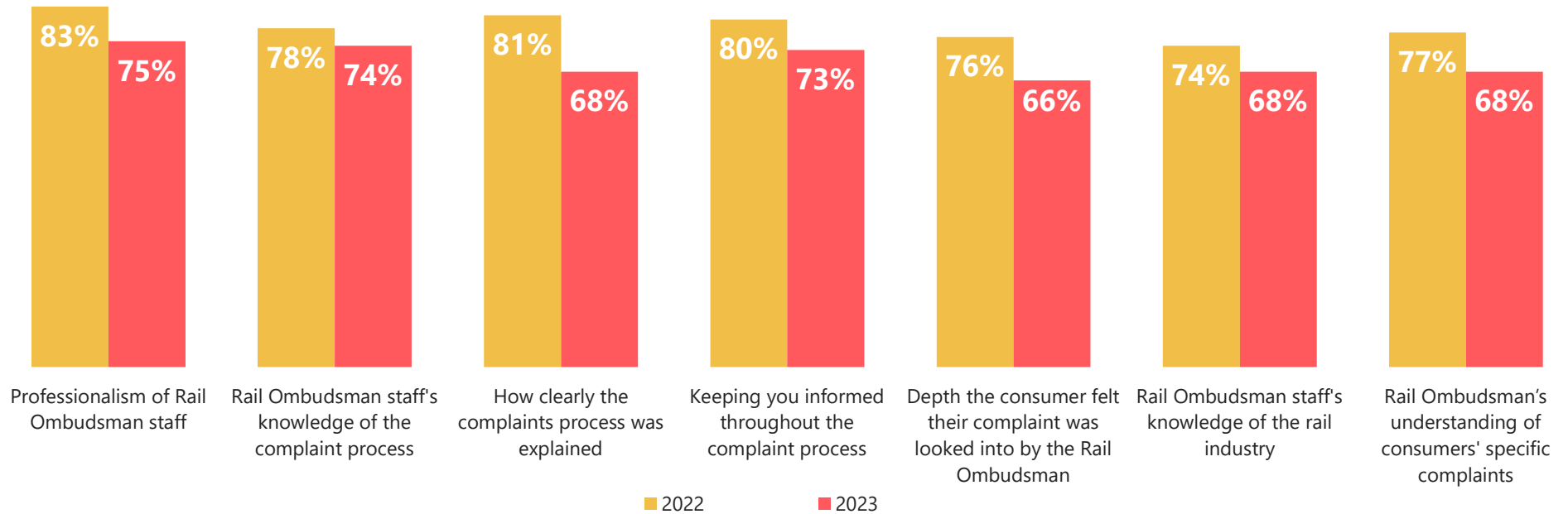
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Author, 2024-04-11T14:13:47.652

Consumers with full/ partial remedy continue – despite drops - to rate Rail Ombudsman staff positively particularly on professionalism and knowledge

Percentage rating as fairly good or very good

The main area to focus on is explaining the process which has fallen the most this year, as well as conveying the depth the complaint has been looked into

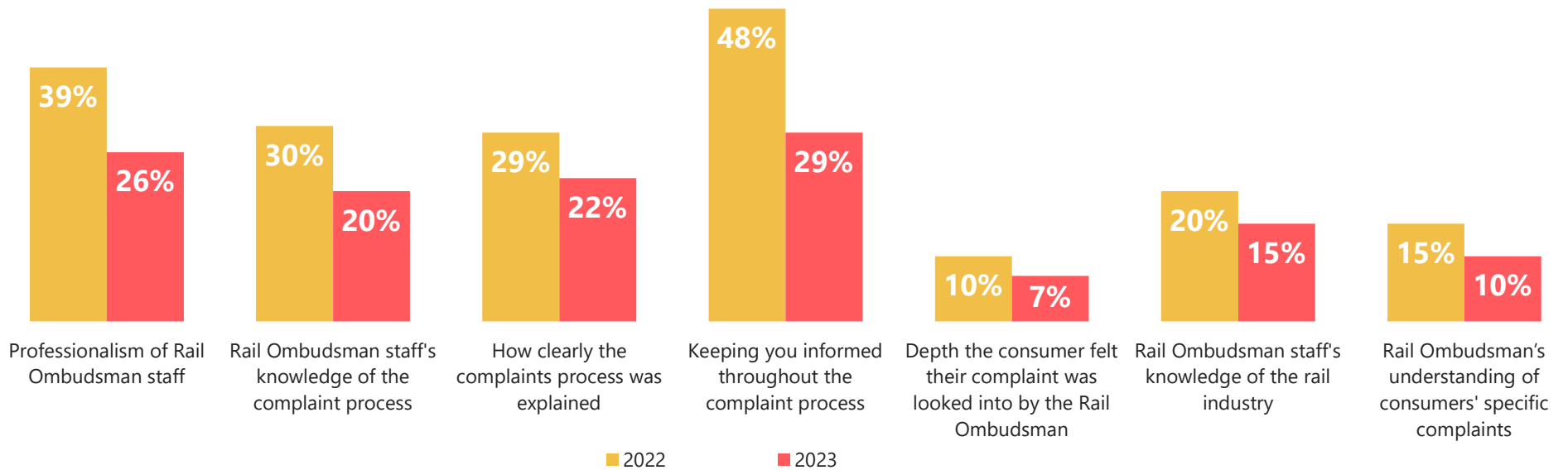


Q11. How would you rate the following aspects of the Rail Ombudsman's service? Base: Cases dealt with by the Rail Ombudsman. Cases decided fully or partially favour of rail passenger (359 - 440), Cases decided in favour of Rail Operating Company (200 - 247).

2022: Cases decided fully or partially favour of rail passenger (354), Cases decided in favour of Rail Operating Company (80).

For cases decided in favour of the ROC, while overall experience remains stable, notable drops in staff measures, particularly being kept informed

Percentage rating as fairly good or very good

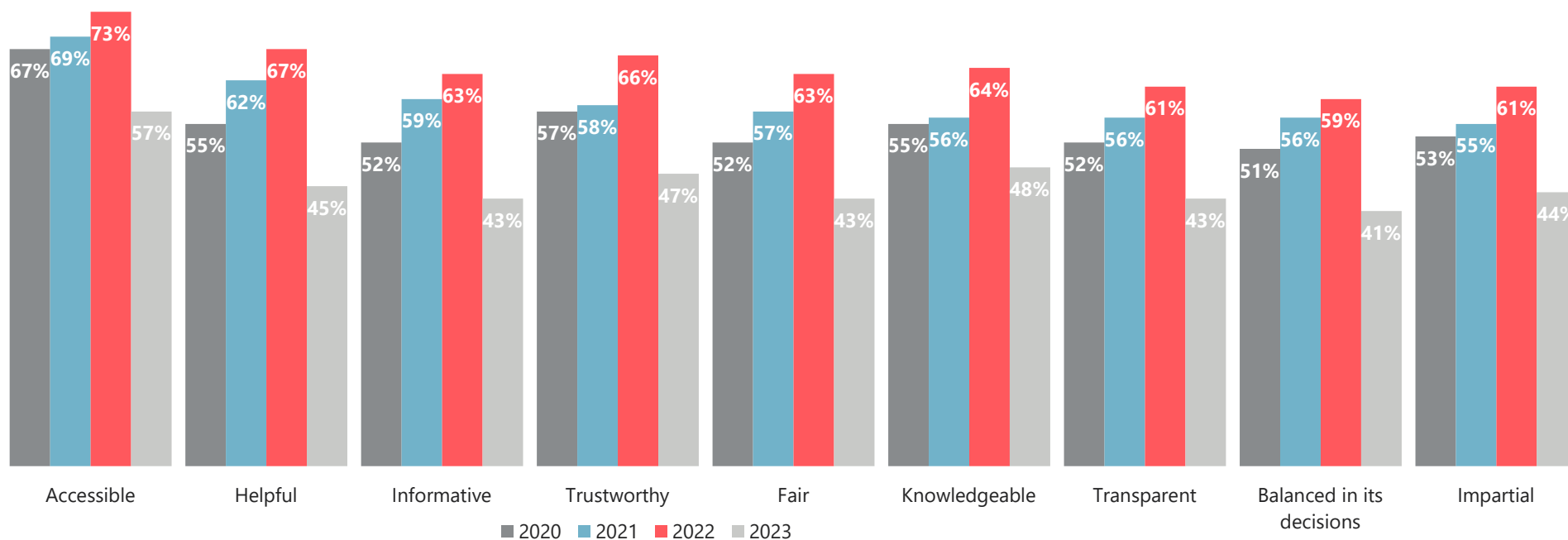


Q11. How would you rate the following aspects of the Rail Ombudsman's service? Base: Cases dealt with by the Rail Ombudsman. Cases decided fully or partially favour of rail passenger (359 - 440), Cases decided in favour of Rail Operating Company (200 - 247).

2022: Cases decided fully or partially favour of rail passenger (354), Cases decided in favour of Rail Operating Company (80).

Knowledgeable, trustworthy and particularly Accessible perceptions remain relatively strong performing areas but have declined since 2022

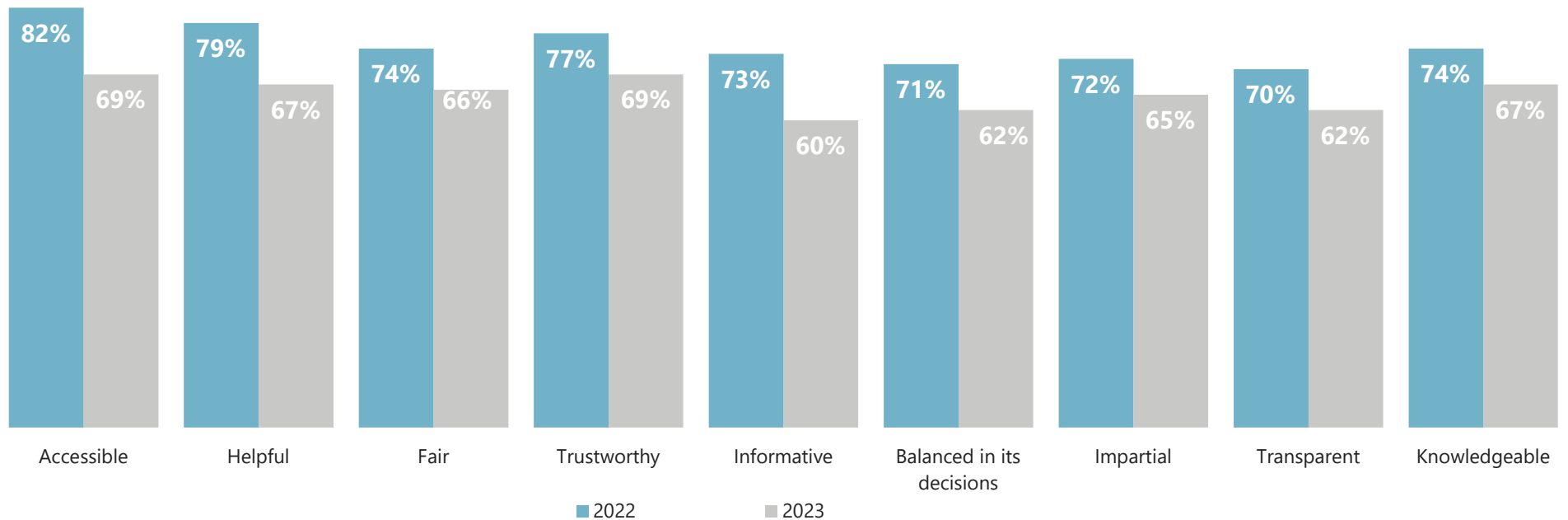
Percentage agreeing that the Rail Ombudsman is...



Q4. Taking into account your overall experience, how strongly do you agree or disagree that the Rail Ombudsman is... Base: Cases dealt with by the Rail Ombudsman (2023: 687, 2022: 434, 2021: 198, 2020: 504).

Accessibility remains a top-rated area for cases with full or partial consumer remedy

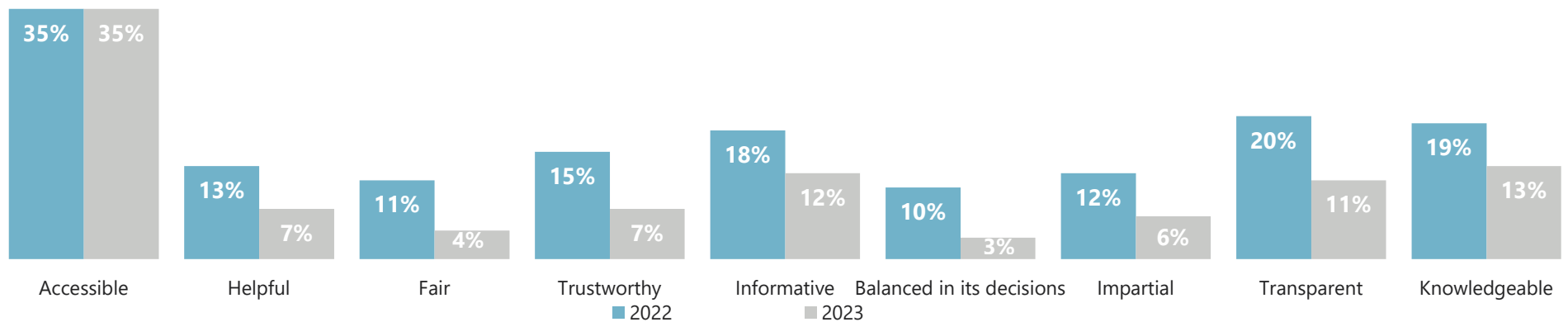
Percentage agreeing that the Rail Ombudsman is...



Ipsos Q4. Taking into account your overall experience, how strongly do you agree or disagree that the Rail Ombudsman is... Base: Cases decided in full or partial consumer remedy (440)

Accessibility remains a top-rated area for cases decided in favour of the Rail Operator, but with drops most notably on fairness, balance and transparency

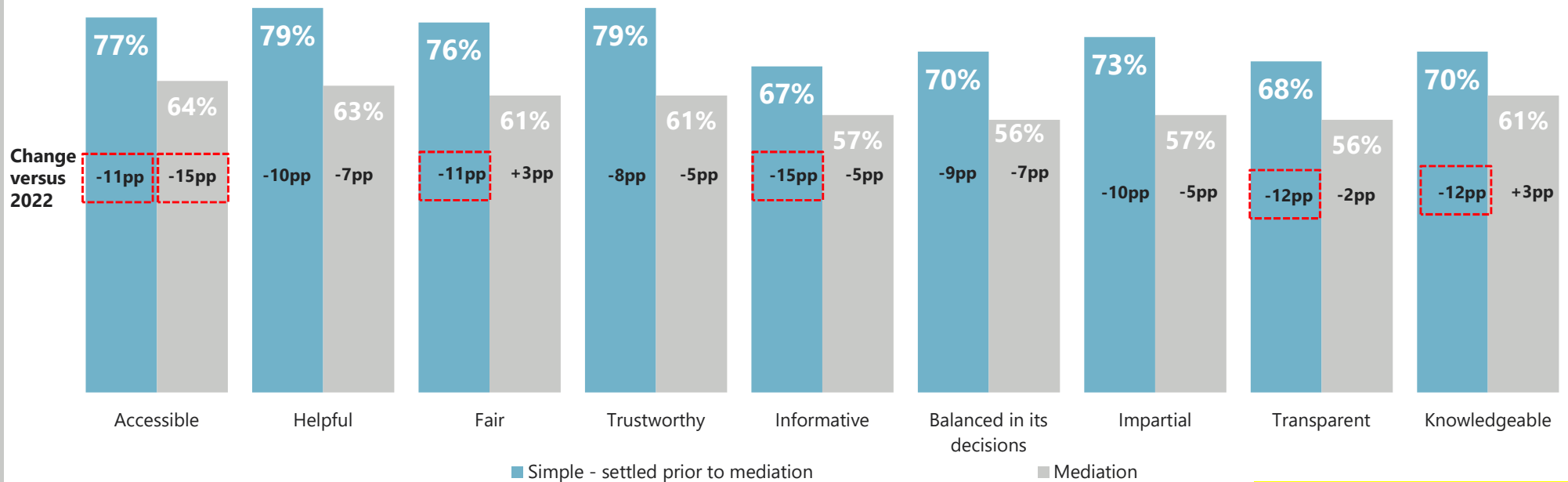
Percentage agreeing that the Rail Ombudsman is...



Q4. Taking into account your overall experience, how strongly do you agree or disagree that the Rail Ombudsman is...? Cases decided in favour of Rail Operating Company (247).

Consumers with Mediation outcomes remain more critical, however YoY more falls in positive agreement for Simple resolutions

Percentages agreeing that the Rail Ombudsman is...



Change in % points (pp) vs. 2022

■ Simple - settled prior to mediation

■ Mediation

NOTE: Red boxes highlight where there has been biggest drops (above -10)



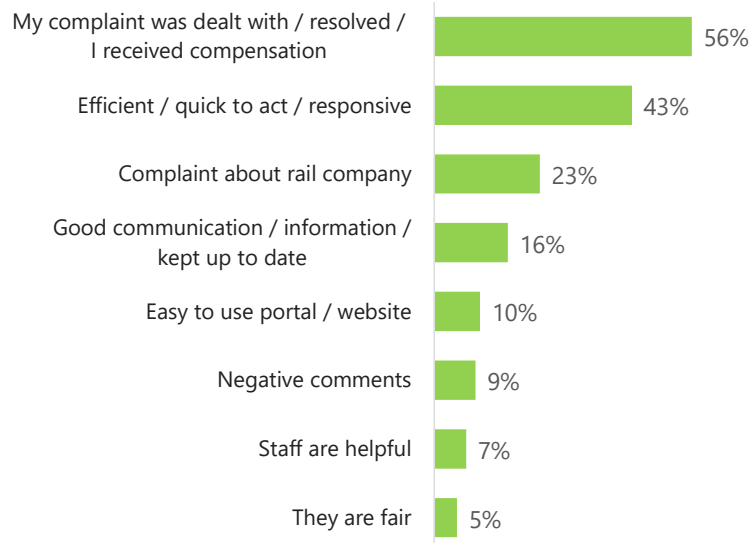
Q4. Taking into account your overall experience, how strongly do you agree or disagree that the Rail Ombudsman is... Base: Cases decided in full or partial consumer remedy (440), Cases decided in favour of Rail Operating Company (247).

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Author, 2024-04-11T13:43:54.133

A favourable outcome, speed and comms drive a positive rating, while improvements focus on perceptions of thoroughness, bias and outcome

Why do you rate your experience positively/negatively?

Positive Comments



Negative Comments



- Those for whom complaint was ruled in their favour are notably more likely to say the process was slow (29%)
- Also, more likely than those where ruling was in favour of ROC to say "Lack of authority / ability to hold rail operators to account" – 19% vs. 7%,
- Also, more likely to state Lack of communication / follow up / response – 15% vs. 9%



Q2a. Why did you rate your experience of the Rail Ombudsman positively? Base: 300
 Q2b. Why did you rate your experience of the Rail Ombudsman poorly? Base: 305

Having the complaint dealt with promptly and being treated fairly are key considerations

Why do you rate your experience positively/negatively?

“ [Provider] had not even replied to my complaint & the Ombudsman office sorted a satisfactory resolution in a short time. **Complex case** ”

“ The Ombudsman really took an interest in my case, acted diligently, fairly and quickly, without your intervention my complaint would not have been heard and [provider] would have abused its position. **Simple case** ”

“ I was regularly kept informed of the process and how far my case had progressed. My emails were acknowledged, and I was generally kept in the loop. **Simple case** ”

“ I understand they are funded by the rail operators, so it became apparent they do not bite the hand that feeds them regardless of the case put forth. **Complex case** ”

“ Because the rail ombudsman took the operator's opinion that a refund was not due even though they cancelled the booked train due to a strike. Other operators give refunds for this. Rail conditions state a refund is due. **Simple case** ”



Q2a. Why did you rate your experience of the Rail Ombudsman positively? Base:300
Q2b. Why did you rate your experience of the Rail Ombudsman poorly? Base: 305

Having a case resolved quickly, in a hassle-free way is appreciated by consumers

Why do you rate your experience positively/negatively?

“ The problem with [provider] was resolved quickly once the Ombudsman got involved. **Simple case** ”

“ The Ombudsman forced [provider] to compensate me for journeys between [place] and [place] on trains [provider] had cancelled. [Provider] delayed responding to me and it took me six months to get compensation. **Simple case** ”

“ They dealt with the matter in a timely manner and kept me updated throughout. **Simple case** ”

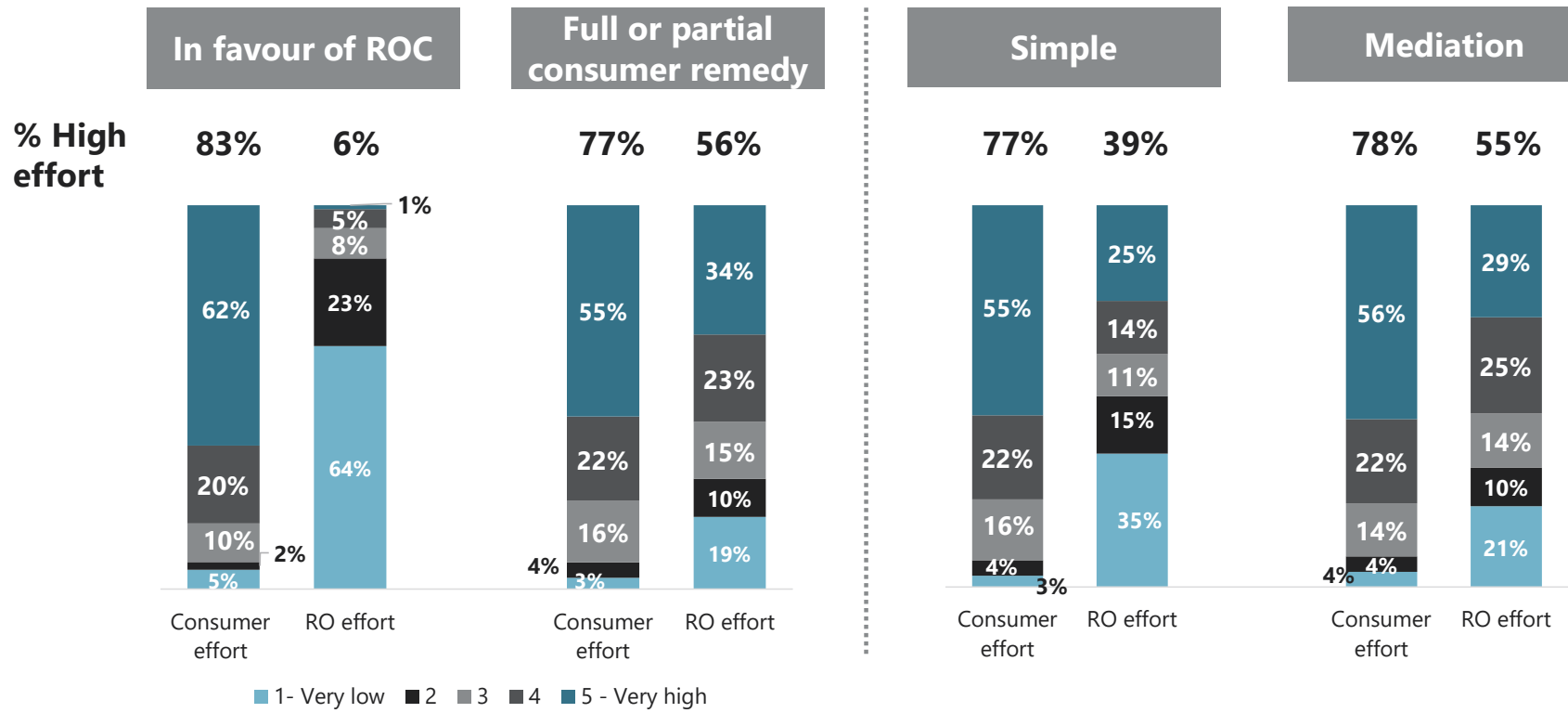
“ There seemed little appreciation of the situation **Simple case** ”

“ Though the Rail Ombudsman quickly found in my favour they allowed the train operating company to prevaricate for many months as they failed to pay the agreed **Complex case** ”



Q2a. Why did you rate your experience of the Rail Ombudsman positively? Base: 300. All those who rated overall experience as very and fairly good (313)
Q2b. Why did you rate your experience of the Rail Ombudsman poorly? Base: 305. All those who rated overall experience as fairly or very poor (309)

Rail Ombudsman also needs to convey the effort put in to resolving cases in order for it to feel balanced with the effort consumers feel they put in



The key takeout here is across case types, there is a mismatch between the level of effort the consumer perceives they have put in vs. the level of effort they believe the RO has put in.

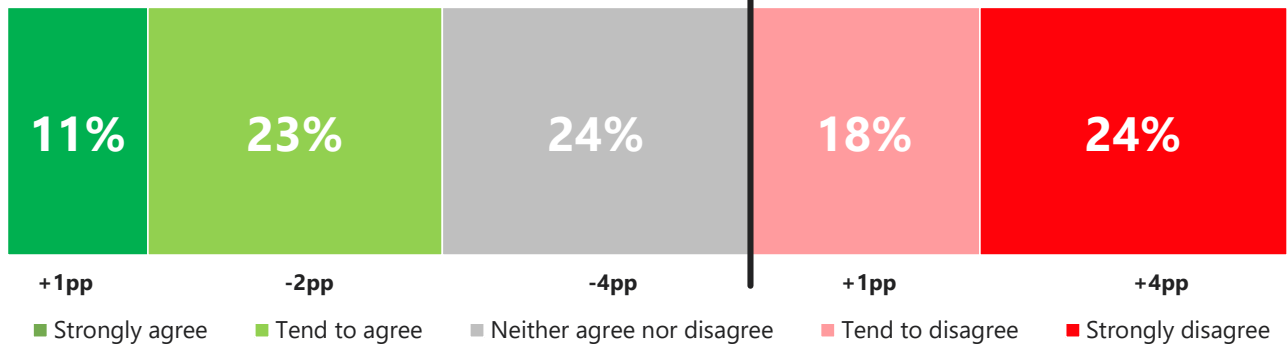


Q19. How much effort would you say that the Rail Ombudsman put in to try and resolve your complaint? Base:622
 Q20. How much effort did you personally have to put in to resolve your complaint? Base: 680

While a third still agree the Rail Ombudsman is well signposted, a notable proportion state it wasn't signposted at all

The Rail Ombudsman was well signposted by the Rail Operating Company...

34% agree -1pp vs 2022



Change in %pt (pp) vs. 2022



Q6. How strongly do you agree or disagree that the Rail Ombudsman was well signposted by the Train Operating Company? Base: All responding (635)
 Q7. At what point were you told about the Rail Ombudsman during the complaint process with the Train Operating Company? Base: All responding (601)

Point at which Rail Consumers were told about the Rail Ombudsman

40%

When the complaint needed escalating beyond the Rail Operator

7%

Told about the Rail Ombudsman when first complained to the Rail Operator

17%

During the complaints process

38%

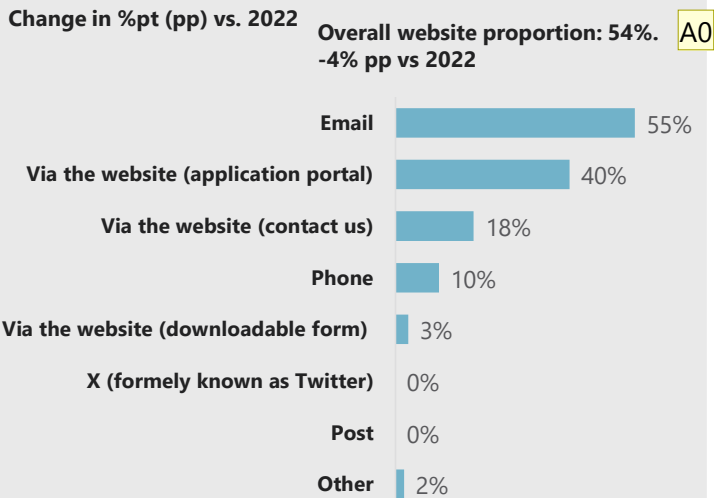
It wasn't signposted

NOTE: this question was changed to a multicode in 2023 and "it wasn't signposted" was added so is not directly comparable

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Author, 2024-04-11T14:37:04.301

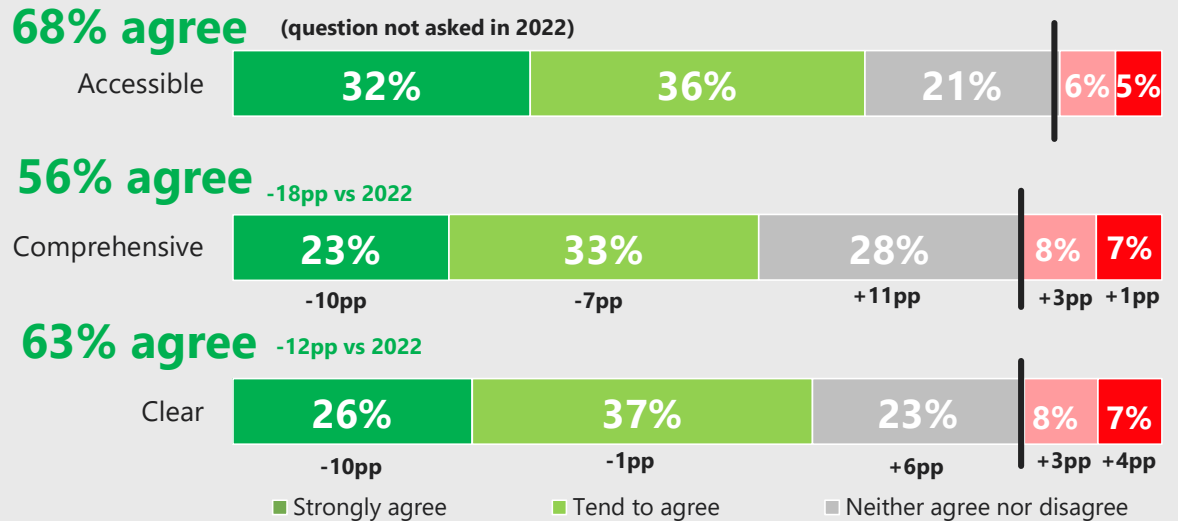
More than half of consumers are now making first contact via the website; most people agree the complaint form is accessible

54% say they contact the RO via website...



NOTE: this question was changed to a multicode, and website options were expanded in 2023 so it is not directly comparable to 2022

The complaint form was...

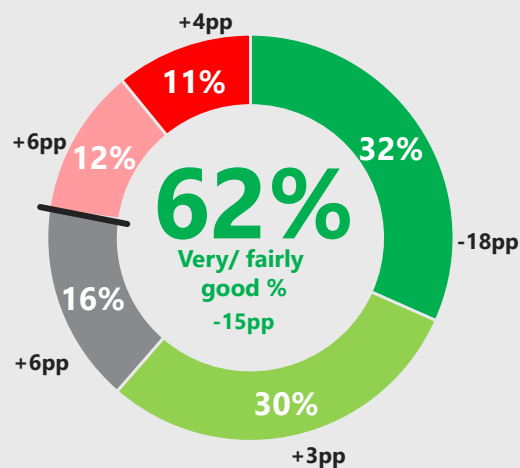


Q8. Which of the following methods did you use to contact or make a complaint with the Rail Ombudsman? Base: Cases dealt with by the Rail Ombudsman (687)
Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the initial complaint form was... Base: Cases dealt with by the Rail Ombudsman (687)

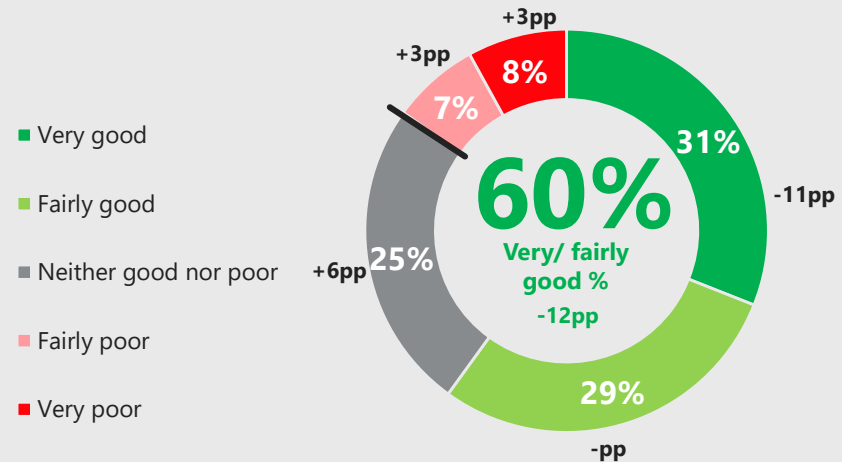
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The proportion of respondents rating speed of initial response and range of contact methods as fairly/ very good has dropped

Speed with which the Rail Consumer received an initial response



The different ways to contact the Rail Ombudsman about the complaint



Change in %pt (pp) vs. 2022

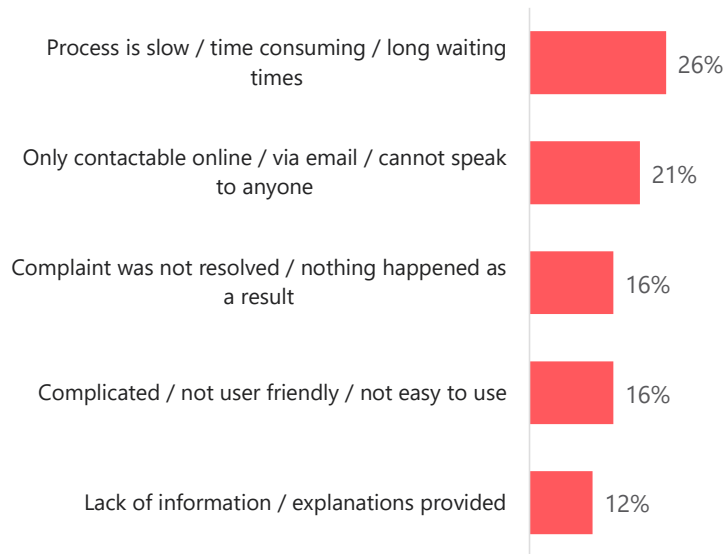


Q10. How would you rate the following aspects of your initial contact with the Rail Ombudsman? Base: Cases dealt with by the Rail Ombudsman (687); The different ways to contact the RO, Base (630) , Speed (673)

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Author, 2024-04-11T13:46:49.822

Those unhappy with ways of contacting cite lack of being able to speak to someone, but also use this as an opportunity to air general issues

Why did you rate the different ways to contact the Rail Ombudsman as poor?



“ Basic emails only, no telephone follow up from them, I was kept firmly at a distance. **Simple case** ”

“ I only remember having the option to type a letter and attach it to the form - I was not aware there was another way to contact them **Simple case** ”

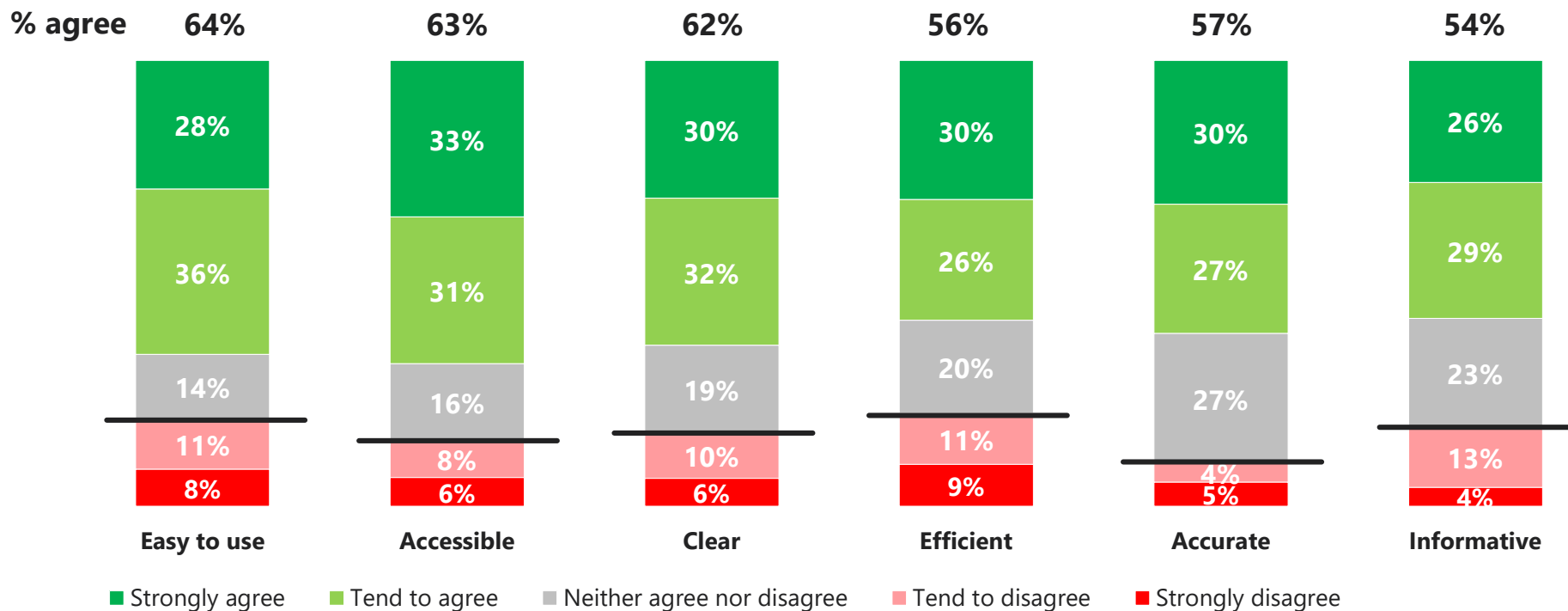
“ Because it is difficult for people with disability, and when I rang up there was a long wait as well. **Simple case** ”

“ Because you HAVE to fill in their form. Even if you've provided them with all the information they need in an email, they INSIST on a form. Or they can phone you up, and talk you through them filling it in. Because that's not a waste of my time either. **Complex case** ”

Ipsos Q10. How would you rate the following aspects of your initial contact with the Rail Ombudsman? The different ways to contact the Rail Ombudsman about your complaint Base: all rating as fairly or very poor (95)

The application portal comes across as easy, accessible and clear

The online application portal was...



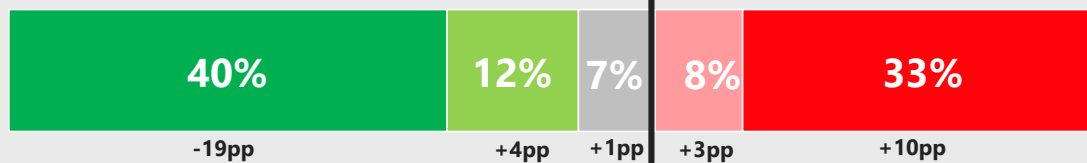
Q8. Which of the following methods did you use to contact or make a complaint with the Rail Ombudsman? Base (687)
 Q17. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the online application portal is..... Base: Online Application Portal (272)

NOTE: This question is only asked to all who rate the online application portal, and a new code 'accurate' is added in 2023. It is not comparable to 2022

Likelihood to recontact or recommend has dropped to around 1/2

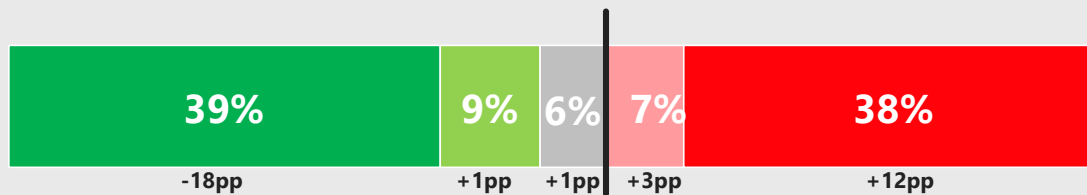
Based on the experience...

Likelihood to recontact



52% -15pp
Likely to recontact

Likelihood to recommend



48% -17pp
Likely to recommend

■ Very likely
 ■ Quite likely
 ■ Neither likely nor unlikely
 ■ Quite unlikely
 ■ Very unlikely

Change in %pt (pp) vs. 2022



Q22. Based on your recent experience, how likely or unlikely are you to contact the Rail Ombudsman again if you had another complaint? (666). **Q23.** Based on your recent experience, how likely or unlikely are you to recommend the Rail Ombudsman to someone who has a complaint? Base: Cases dealt with by the Rail Ombudsman (667)

A0 Ipsos - changed %pts to pp to indicate the difference
Author, 2024-04-11T14:25:19.724

The survey complainant profile skews towards older, higher educated, wealthier consumers

Gender, Age, Ethnicity, and Education



61% male
= vs. 2022



75% have completed higher education

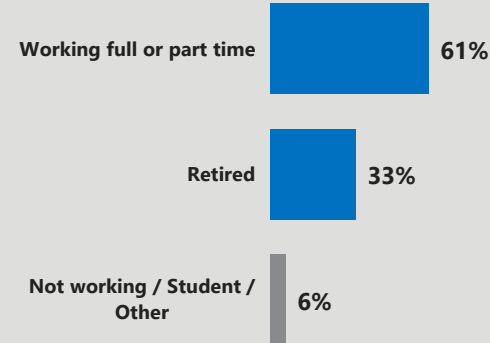
Don't know/ Prefer not to say are excluded from profile calculations

59%
Over 55
N.B. profile is similar to last year

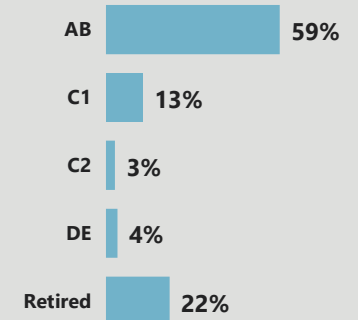
92%
White

Employment and Household Income

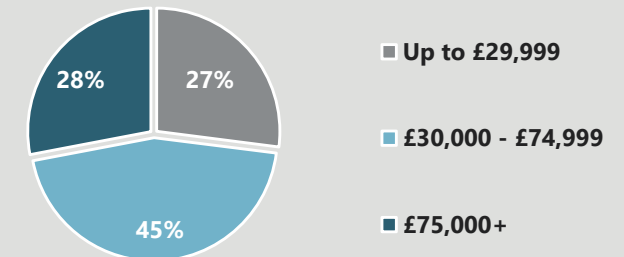
Employment status



Social grade



Total household income



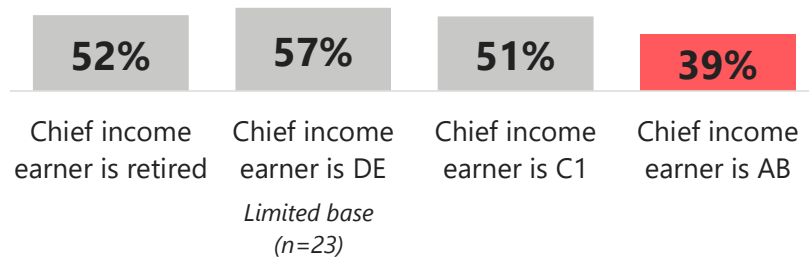
Note: The respondent profile in this survey is not necessarily representative of Rail Ombudsman users overall, since there are characteristics about complainants which are unknown. As a point of comparison, the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) has profiled the GB rail population which is to be published in Q3,2024.



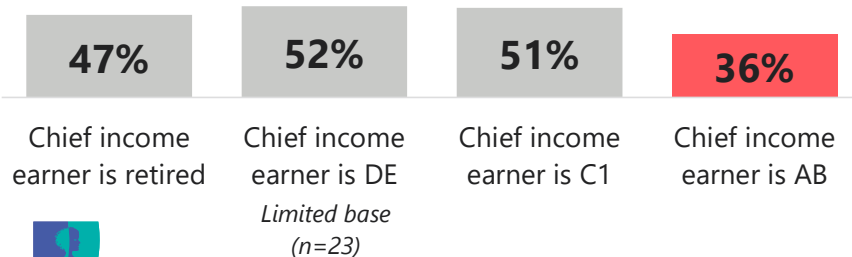
Note: Social grade classification: AB: Higher/Intermediate managerial/Admin/Professional; C1: Supervisor/Junior/Administrative; C2: Skilled manual occupations; DE: Semiskilled/ Unskilled/Unemployed. Base: Cases dealt with the Ombudsman (687)

'Middle class complainants have higher expectations and a more critical view, potentially due to a 'higher investment' / expectations of rail travel

% agree or strongly agree the RO is fair



% agree or strongly agree the RO is balanced



Note: Social grade classification: AB: Higher/Intermediate managerial/Admin/Professional; C1: Supervisor/Junior/Administrative; C2: Skilled manual occupations; DE: Semiskilled/ Unskilled/Unemployed. Base: Cases dealt with the Ombudsman (AB: 353, C1: 116, Retired: 130, AB and perceive lack of accessibility: 78)

Reasons for perceived lack of accessibility (among ABs)

22% Difficult to use / not user friendly / complicated

22% Lack of responsiveness / slow to reply

17% Did not properly investigate / resolve my complaint

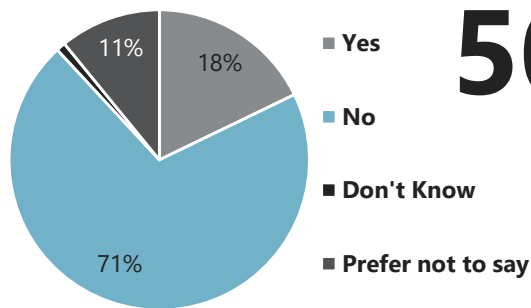
Why could AB households be scoring the complainant process lower?

AB households may be regular users of, and high spenders on, rail travel. This sense of 'high investment' (of time, money and emotion) could raise expectations of fair and swift processes and outcomes when complaints arise.

“The ombudsman seems to operate more on a tick box exercise rather than looking at the situation to see if it is actually fair and/or within the spirit of the law.” **Simple case** ”

The Rail Ombudsman is perceived positively among those with a disability than those without

One in six consumers have a disability and the majority do not require reasonable adjustments, though of the small number who do, there are a few people who said these weren't made



50% of consumers with disabilities rate their experience with the RO as very good or good – higher than the average rating

2% of consumers required reasonable adjustments

1% of consumers said the RO made these reasonable adjustments

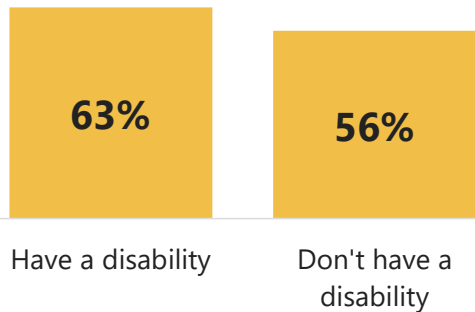
1% of consumers said the RO did not make these reasonable adjustments



Q32. Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last for 12 months or more? Base: Cases dealt with by the Rail Ombudsman (687)
Q1. Taking everything into consideration how would you rate your overall experience with the Rail Ombudsman? Base: All who have a disability (121)
Q34. Have you ever needed reasonable adjustments to take account of your disability needs when accessing the Rail Ombudsman's services? Base: All who have a disability (121)
Q35. Were these adjustments made? Base: all who needed reasonable adjustment (12)

Across all dimensions of accessibility, the Rail Ombudsman is perceived similarly, for those with a disability as those without

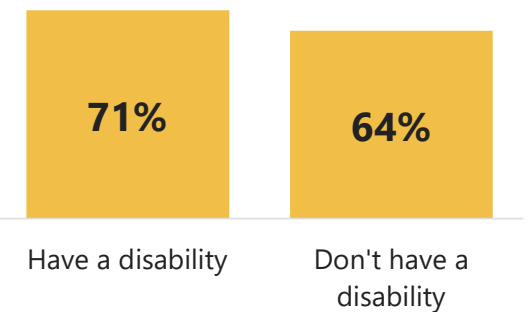
% agree or strongly agree the RO is accessible



% agree or strongly agree the initial complaint form was accessible



% agree or strongly agree the online application portal was accessible



Q4. Taking into account your overall experience, how strongly do you agree or disagree that the Rail Ombudsman is... Base: Cases dealt with by the Rail Ombudsman (687); All who have a disability (121), All who do not have a disability (486)

Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the initial complaint form was accessible (i.e. offered in a format which I could use, read and understand) . Base: Cases dealt with by the Rail Ombudsman (687); All who have a disability (121), All who do not have a disability (485)

Q17. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the online application portal is accessible Base: all who used the website via the online/ application portal to contact or make a complaint with the Rail Ombudsman (272)

Those with a disability who feel the Rail Ombudsman is not accessible cite a range of reasons linked to understanding needs

Why do you disagree that the Rail Ombudsman is accessible?

“

Clear, easy to understand information

Simple case ”

“

The form was simple to use, and the service was clear and prompt

Simple case ”

“

Very systemised approach, not a straightforward navigation.

Complex case ”

The process of getting all the evidence together was quite daunting (this is just the impression I was left with), and I imagine it would be difficult for some people without help

Complex case ”

“

Electronic means of communication was difficult for someone who is not fully conversant in use of electronic format

Simple case ”

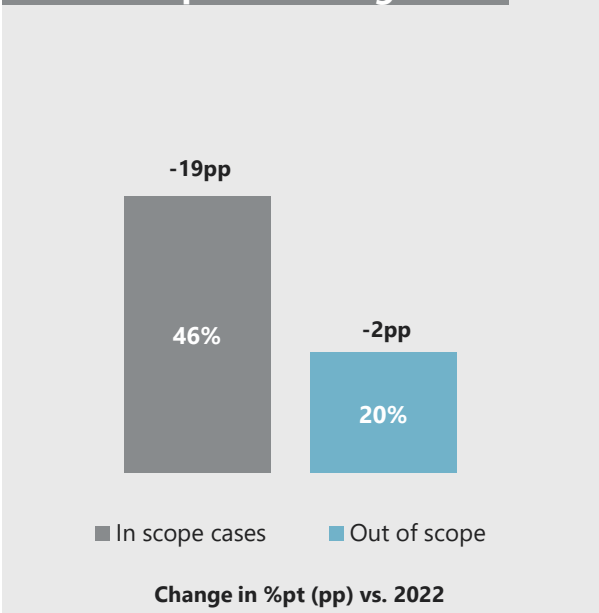


Q30. Can you tell us why you disagree that the Rail Ombudsman is accessible? Base: all who slightly disagree or strongly disagree that the Rail Ombudsman is accessible and have a disability (18)

In addition to cases dealt with by the Rail Ombudsman, we also surveyed Rail Consumers whose cases were out of scope

Naturally, Out of Scope consumers remain less satisfied overall. However, satisfied in scope consumers have dropped by 19%pts

Overall experience % good



Why do you rate your experience positively?

“My concerns were listened to and kept me updated at all stages of the process.”

Out of Scope

Why do you rate your experience negatively?

“[My complaint] was dismissed quickly. [Provider] is not accurately recording delays and cancellations to be able to claim compensation.”

Out of Scope



Q1. Taking everything into consideration how would you rate your overall experience with the Rail Ombudsman? Base: Cases dealt with by the Rail Ombudsman (687), Out of scope (256)

A0 Ipsos - changed %pts to pp to indicate the difference
Author, 2024-04-11T14:27:16.133

THANK YOU

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Ipsos Standards & Accreditations

Ipsos's standards & accreditations provide our clients with the peace of mind that they can always depend on us to deliver reliable, sustainable findings. Moreover, our focus on quality and continuous improvement means we have embedded a 'right first time' approach throughout our organisation.



ISO 20252 – is the international market research specific standard that supersedes BS 7911 / MRQA & incorporates IQCS (Interviewer Quality Control Scheme); it covers the 5 stages of a Market Research project. Ipsos UK was the first company in the world to gain this accreditation.



MRS Company Partnership – By being an MRS Company Partner, Ipsos UK endorse and support the core MRS brand values of professionalism, research excellence and business effectiveness, and commit to comply with the MRS Code of Conduct throughout the organisation & we were the first company to sign our organisation up to the requirements & self regulation of the MRS Code; more than 350 companies have followed our lead.



ISO 9001 – International general company standard with a focus on continual improvement through quality management systems. In 1994 we became one of the early adopters of the ISO 9001 business standard.



ISO 27001 – International standard for information security designed to ensure the selection of adequate and proportionate security controls. Ipsos UK was the first research company in the UK to be awarded this in August 2008.



The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) & the UK Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) – Ipsos UK is required to comply with the UK General Data Protection Regulation and the UK Data Protection Act; it covers the processing of personal data and the protection of privacy.



HMG Cyber Essentials – A government backed and key deliverable of the UK's National Cyber Security Programme. Ipsos UK was assessment validated for certification in 2016. Cyber Essentials defines a set of controls which, when properly implemented, provide organisations with basic protection from the most prevalent forms of threat coming from the internet.



Fair Data – Ipsos UK is signed up as a 'Fair Data' Company by agreeing to adhere to ten core principles. The principles support and complement other standards such as ISOs, and the requirements of Data Protection legislation.

This work was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the international quality standard for market research, ISO 20252