

Renters Pulse Survey Topline report

May 2023



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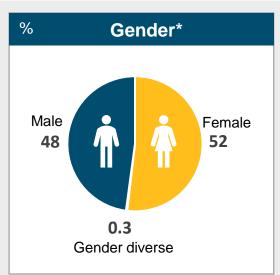


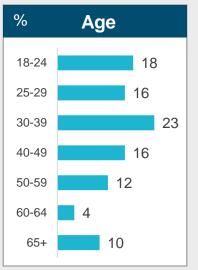
Research objectives and method

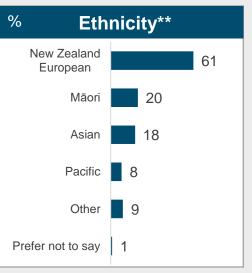
The Ministry of Housing and Urban Development has commissioned Kantar Public to undertake 'pulse' surveys of renters and landlords twice a year to help inform its understanding of the impacts of legislative changes on the residential rental market. This report provides the results for the fifth wave (conducted May 2023), with comparisons made with the previous four waves where appropriate (April 2021, October 2021, and May 2022 and November 2022).

- A nationwide online survey of 1,503 renters.
- Maximum margin of error on the total sample (at the 95% confidence level) is +/-2.5%.
- Fieldwork was conducted from 28th April to 12th May 2023.
- Statistically significant changes over time are denoted on the charts by triangles. Statistical significance has been calculated (at the 95% confidence level, unless otherwise stated) using a two column independent proportional t-test.
- Data were weighted by age within gender, and region, to match Census population characteristics of renters.

Sample profile of renters (May 2023 only)

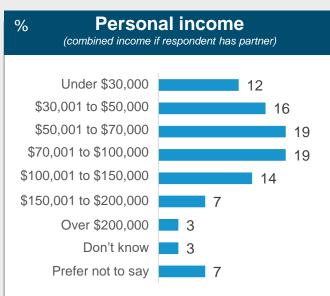


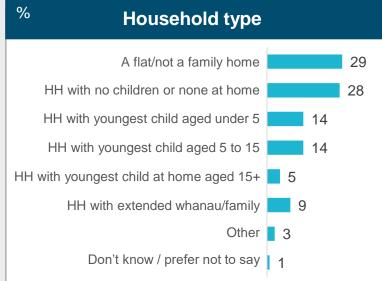


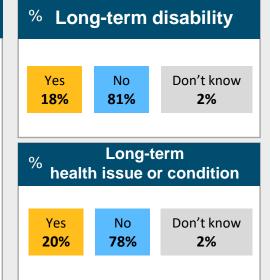












Base: All renters (May '23 only, n=1503). **Source:** S3, S4, S5, S6, Q2, Q3, Q4, Q37, Q38.

Note: Totals may not always add to 100% due to rounding. **Multiple answers can be selected, so totals may not add to 100%



Tenancy characteristics

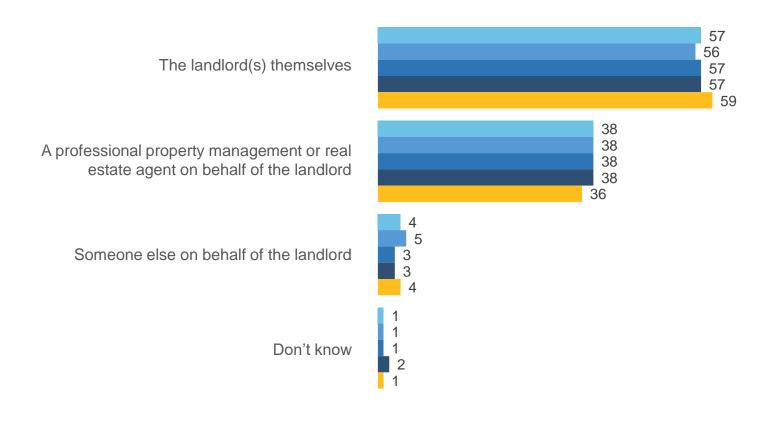


Management of the rental property

Almost three in five (59%) renters' properties are managed by the landlord(s) themselves and 36% are managed by a property manager or real estate agent. Just 4% say the property is managed by someone else. This has remained fairly consistent over time.

Who manages the rental property

%



Base: All renters (Apr '21 n=1,500, Oct '21 n=1,500, May '22 n=1501, Nov '22 n=1501, May '23 n=1503).

Source: Q7. "Who mainly manages the rental property where you live?"

Note: Totals may not always add to 100% due to rounding.

April 2021 October 2021

May 2022 November 2022

May 2023

Start of the tenancy

Seven in ten renters (70%) began their tenancy more than 12 months ago which is similar to the previous four waves. Of those with a tenancy that began in the last year, 13% were charged a fee other than bond or rent when their tenancy began.





All renters (Apr '21 n=1,500, Oct '21 n=1,500, May '22 n=1501,

Nov '22 n=1501, May '23 n=1503).

Source: Q9. "When did the tenancy start for the rental property you live in?" Totals may not always add to 100% due to rounding.

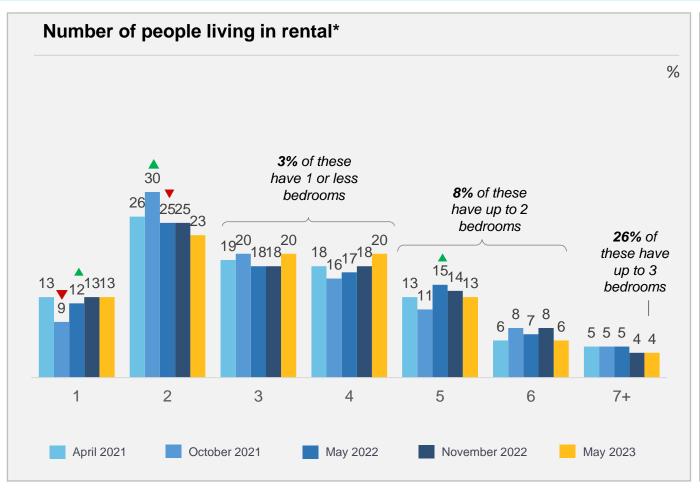
Renters whose tenancy started in the last 12 months (Apr '21 n=432, Oct '21 n=460, May '22 n=452, Nov '22 n=445. May '23 n=423).

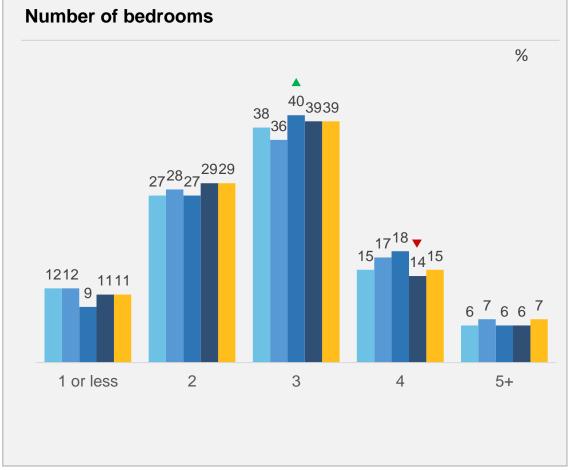
Any fee charged by the property manager or landlord for giving you the tenancy (not including rent or bond)."

Source: Q10. "Did the landlord (or property manager) charge any fees other than your bond or rent?

Tenancy characteristics

As in the previous four waves, around three quarters of renters (76%) live in a household with up to four people and just over three quarters (78%) live in a property with up to three bedrooms.





Base: All renters (Apr '21 n=1,500, Oct '21 n=1,500, May '22 n=1501, Nov '22 n=1501, May '23 n=1503).

Source: Q5. "How many people do you currently live with?"

Note: *For reporting, '1' has been added to answers to give a total number of people living in the property.

Hase: All renters (Apr '21 n=1,500, Oct '21 n=1,500, May '22 n=1501, Nov '22 n=1501 , May '23 n=1503).

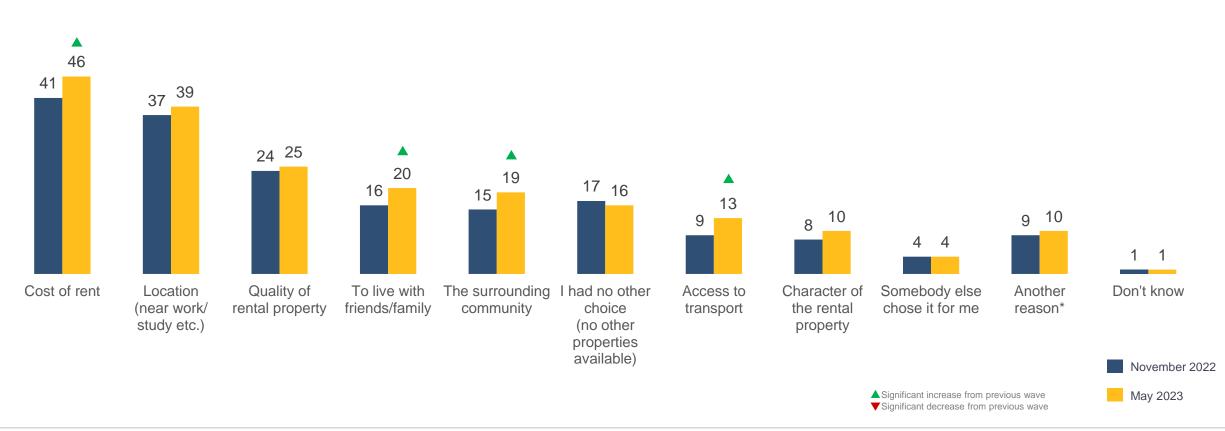
Source: Q6. "How many bedrooms are there where you currently live?"

Reason for choosing rental property

Cost of living pressures are evident when searching for a rental property; cost is the most common motivator and this has increased in the last six months (up five points to 46%). Renters are also increasingly motivated by the desire to live with friends or family (up four points to 20%), or by location-based factors like the surrounding community (up four points to 19%) or access to transport (up four points to 13%).

Why tenants chose their rental

%



Base: All renters (Nov '22 n=1501, May '23 n=1503).

Source: Q6a. "Why did you choose to rent your current rental property?"

Note: *Other reasons include: Property owned by friends/family, pets were allowed, came with a job etc. Multiple answers can be selected so totals do not add to 100%

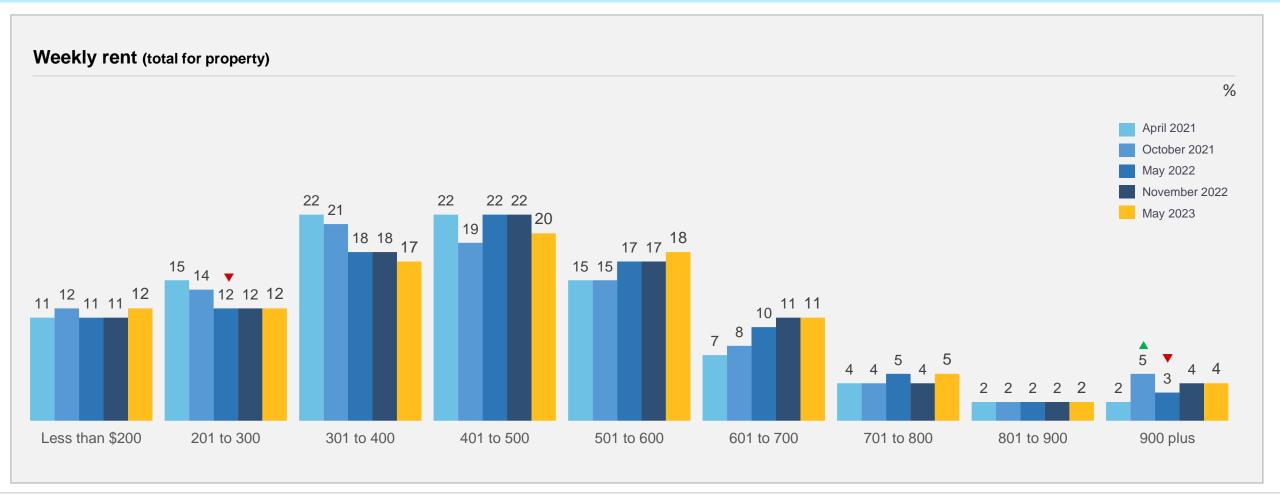


Rental payments and government financial support



Rental affordability (1)

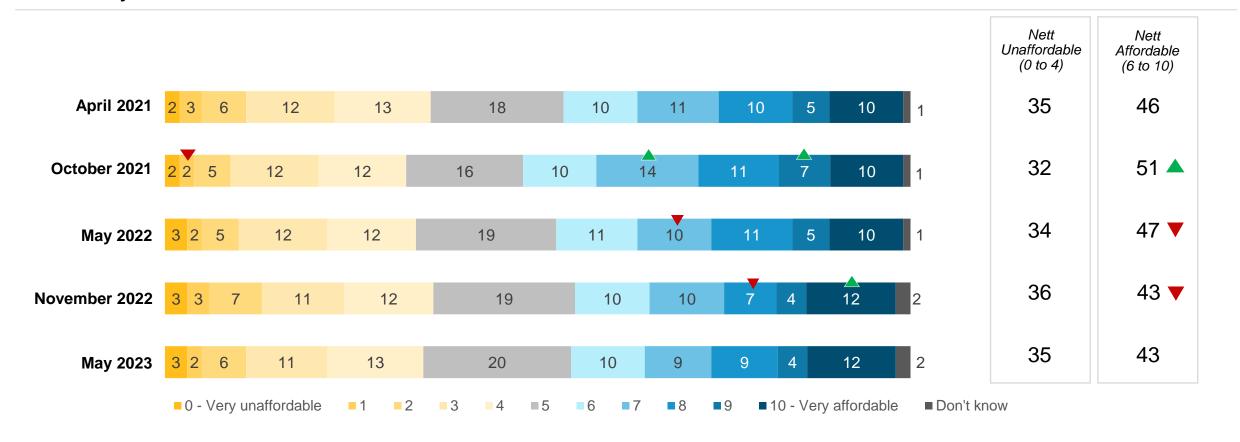
Rent has remained relatively stable since November 2022, with three in five renters (61%) paying \$500 or less per week.



Rental affordability (2)

About two in five renters (43%) feel their rent is currently affordable. This has stabilised following a decline in perceived affordability since 2021.

Affordability

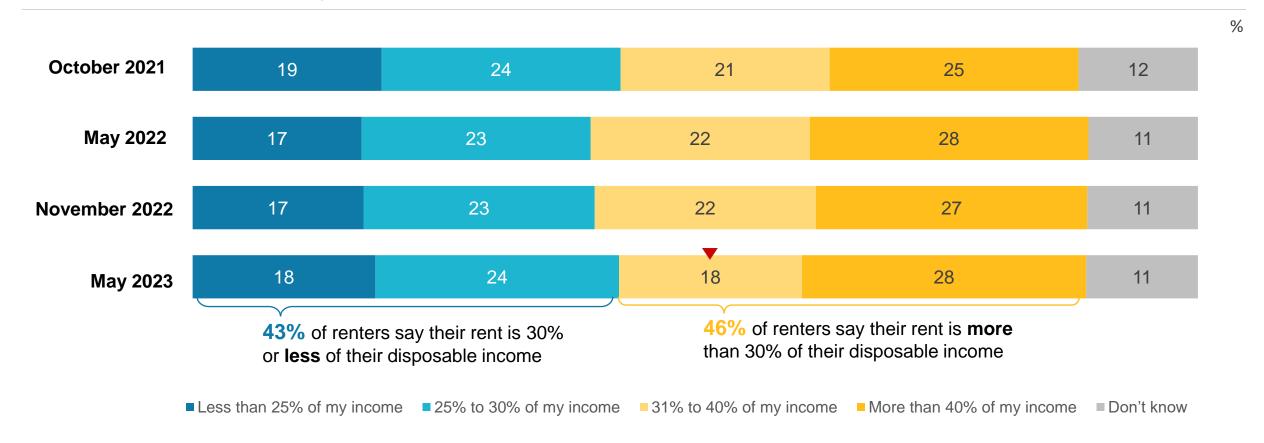


%

Rental affordability (3)

Two in five renters (43%) spend up to 30% of their disposable income on rent and a similar share (46%) spend more than 30% on rent. Compared with 2022, there has been a decline in renters at the mid-point, spending between 31-40% of their disposable income on rent.

How much is rent as a percentage of renters' disposable incomes



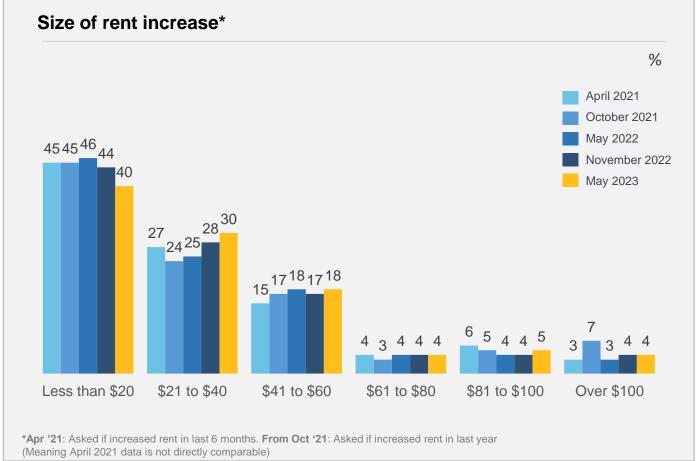
Base: All renters (Oct '21 n=1500, May '22 n=1501, Nov '22 n=1501, May '23 n=1503).

▲ Significant increase from previous wave ▼ Significant decrease from previous wave

Rent increases (1)

Just over four in ten (44%) renters faced a rent increase in the last year. For two in ten renters (22%) this increase occurred in the last six months. Of those who have experienced any increase, most faced an increase of \$40 or less (70%). The survey data suggests there may be a gradual increase in the size of rent increases over time (as shown by the rising \$21 to \$40 category and decreasing 'less than '\$20 category').





Base: All renters (Apr '21 n=1,500, Oct '21 n=1,500, May 2022 n=1501, Nov '22 n=1501, May '23 n=1503). **Source**: Q13. "When was your last rent increase?

May '23 n=936).

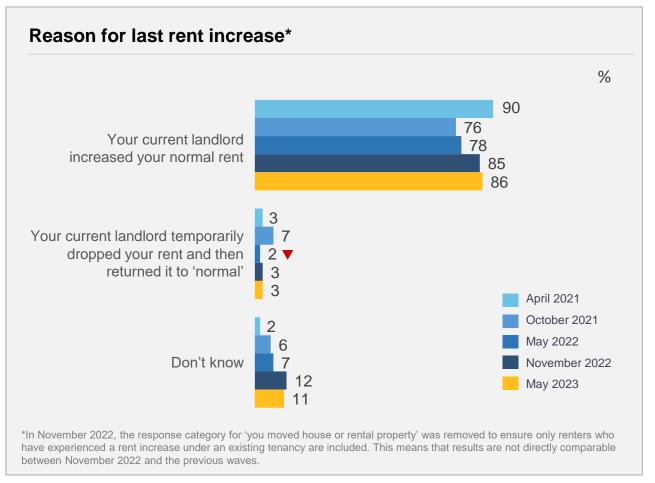
Base: Renters whose rent has increased (Apr '21 n=328, Oct '21 n=982, May '22 n=916, Nov '22 n=929, May '23 n=936)

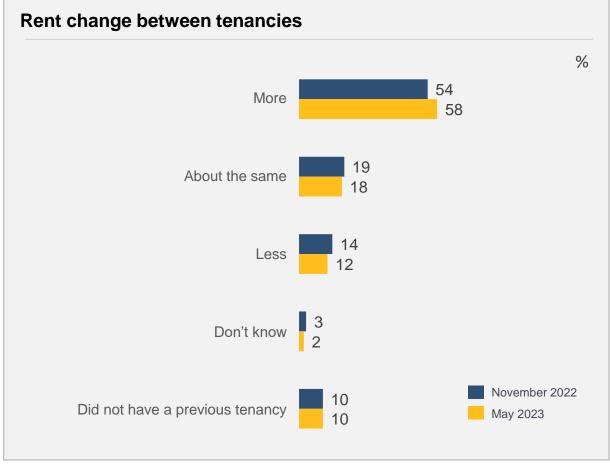
▲ Significant increase from previous wave ▼ Significant decrease from previous wave

Rent increases (2)

Source: Q15. "Was your last rent increase because..."

A large majority (86%) of those who experienced a rent increase in the last year say this was on top of their 'normal' rent, rather than a return to normal following a temporary drop. When changing tenancies, most renters either experienced an increase in rent (58%) or say it stayed the same (18%).





Base: Apr '21: Renters whose rent has increased within the last six months (n=328), from Oct '21 on: Renters whose rent increased at any point (Oct '21 n=982, May '22 =916, Nov '22 n=929, May '23 n=936).

Rent increases (3)

Financial strain is again evident, with three in five (60%) renters saying they now struggle more to pay their rent than they did six months ago. Over a quarter (27%) feel it is <u>much more</u> of a struggle.



Base: Apr '21: Renters whose rent has increased in last six months (n=328), Oct '21: Renters whose rent increased at any point (Oct '21 n=982, May '22 n= 916, Nov '22 n=929, May '23 n=936). Source: Q16. "Is paying your rent now more or less of a struggle than it was 6 months ago? It is now..."

▲ Significant increase from previous wave ▼Significant decrease from previous wave

Note: Due to rounding, totals may not add to 100%.

Rent arrears

The proportion of renters in rent arrears remains unchanged from Nov 2022 (5% are currently behind on their rent).

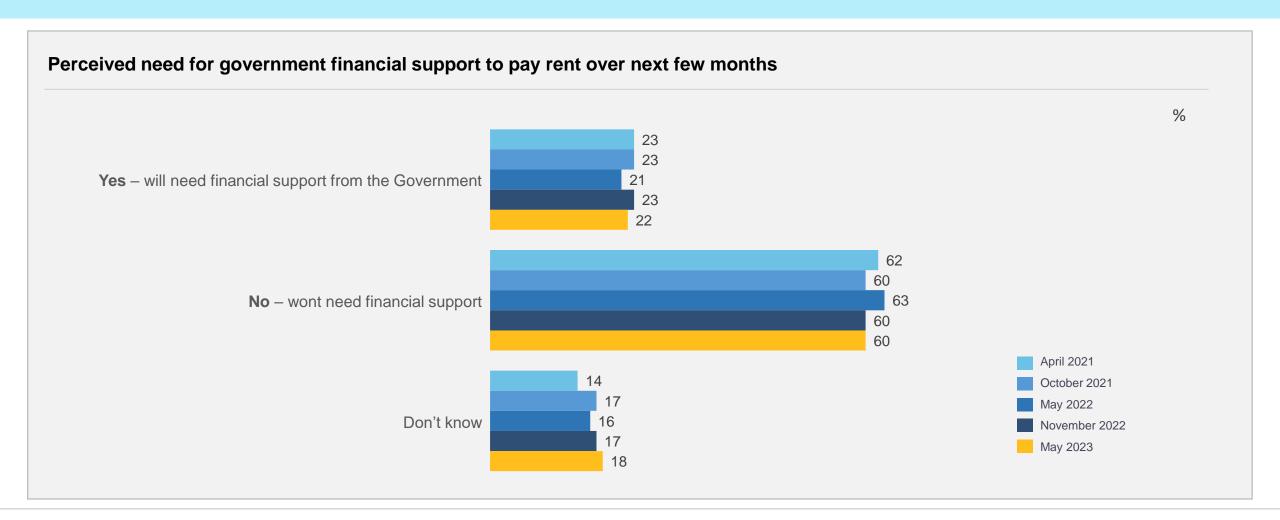
Currently behind in rental payments

%



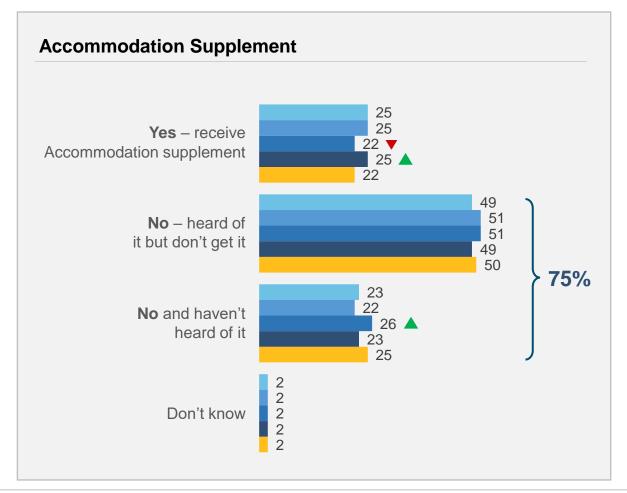
Financial support

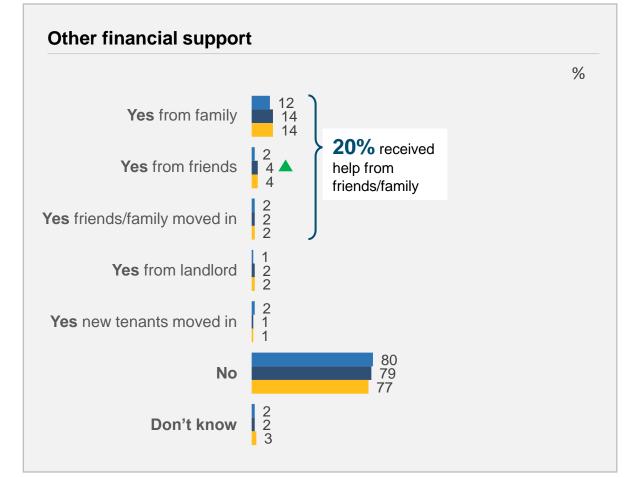
The anticipated need for government financial support remains fairly stable, with one in five (22%) renters feeling that they will need government financial support to pay rent over the next few months.



Financial support

One in five renters currently receive the Accommodation Supplement (22%) and a similar share (20%) receive financial assistance from friends or family.





All renters (Apr '21 n=1,500, Oct '21 n=1,500 May '22 n=1501,

Nov '22 n=1501, May '23 n=1503).

Source: Q19a. "Do you receive the Accommodation Supplement?"

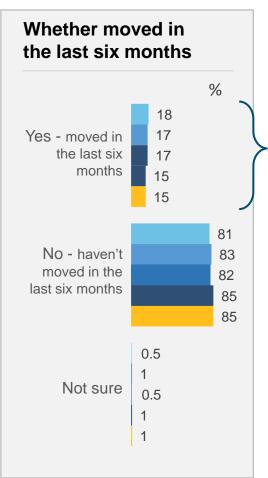


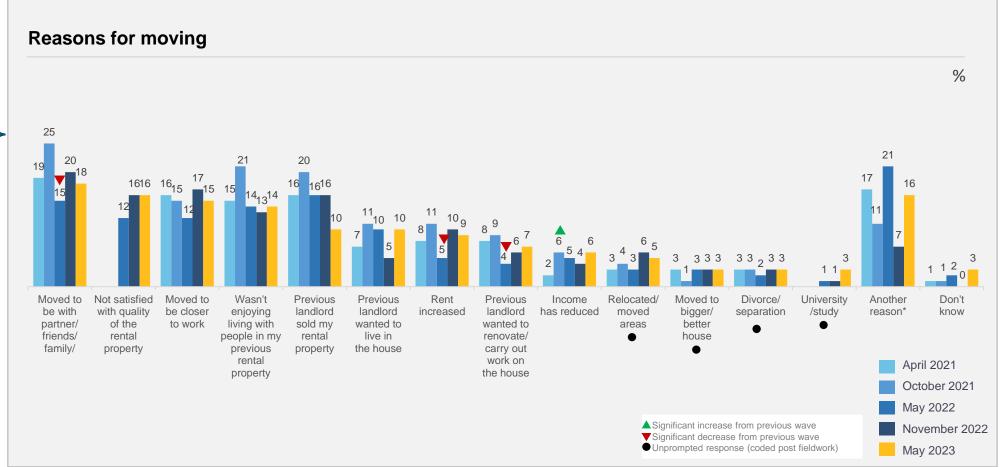
Moving



Recent moves

Just over one in seven (15%) renters have moved in the last six months. Renters who have moved are most motivated to move in with or away from others, including wanting to move in with friends/family (18%) or wanting to move away from the people they previously lived with (14%). Other reasons include dissatisfaction with the property itself (16%) or wanting to move closer to work (15%).





Base: All renters (Apr '21 n=1,500, Oct '21 n=1,500, May '22 n=1501, Nov '22 n=1501, May '23 n=1503).

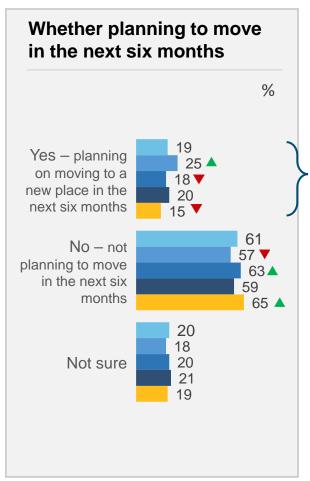
Base: Renters who have moved in the last six months (Apr '21 n=273, Oct '21 n=252, May '22 n=260, Nov '22 n=221, May '23 n=222). Source: Q21. "Why did you move?"

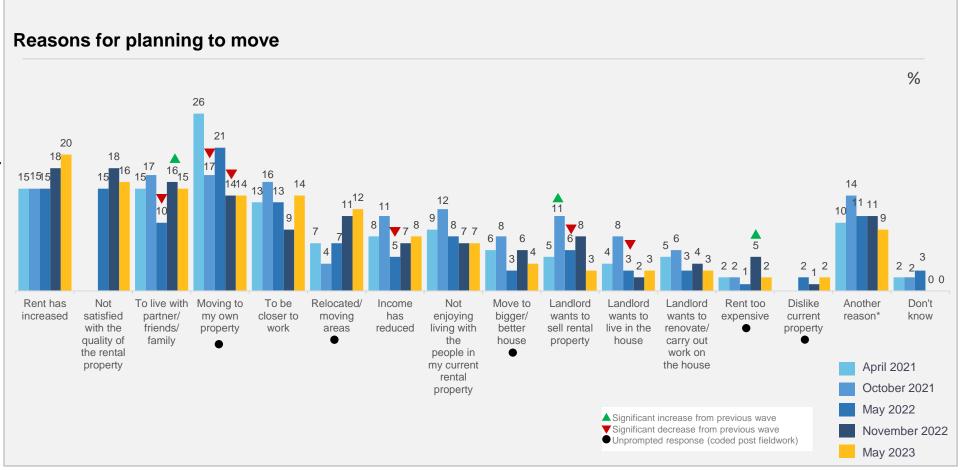
Source: Q20. "In the last 6 months, have you moved to a new place to live?" **Note:**

Note: Only showing reasons more than 1%. *Other reasons include: downsizing, relocating for work/study, lease ending, flood damage etc.

Plans to move

Compared with November 2022, there has been a decline in renters who plan to move in the next six months (down five points to 15%). Renters who plan to move say this is because their rent has increased (20%), they are dissatisfied with the property itself (16%) or they wish to move in with friends/family (15%).





Base: All renters (Apr '21 n=1,500, Oct '21 n=1,500, May '22 n=1501 , Nov '22 n=1501, May '23 n=1503).

Base: Renters who are planning to move in the next six months (Apr '21 n=293, Oct '21 n= 378, May '22 n=267, Nov '22 n=306, May '23 n=233).

Source: Q23. "Why are you planning on moving?" *Other reasons include: landlord not doing necessary repairs, end of lease, it was only a temporary situation etc. Only showing responses with a response of more than 1%.

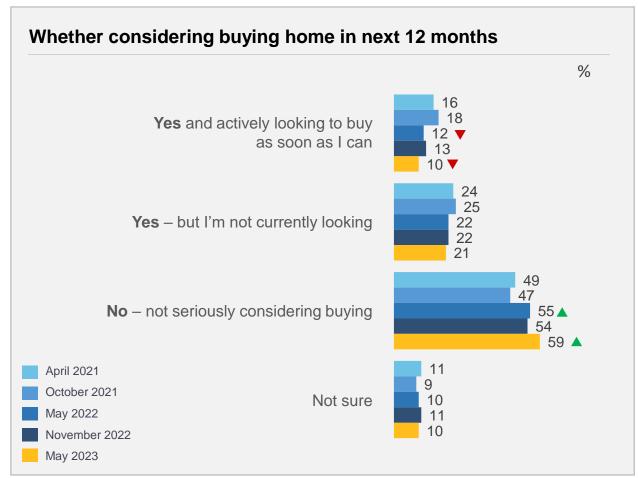


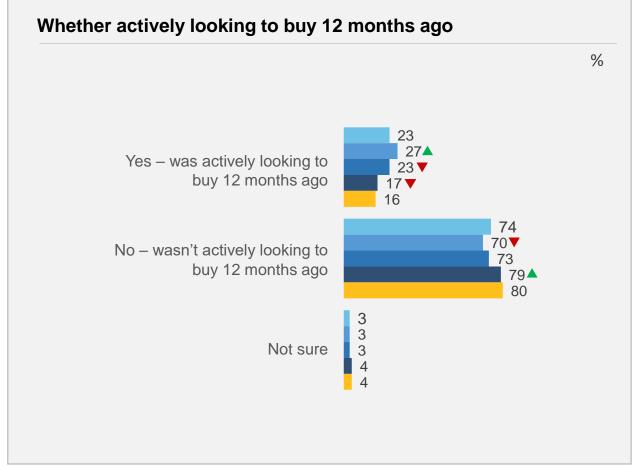
Home buying



Home buying intentions

Three in ten renters are considering buying a home in the next year and just one in ten are actively looking. There has been a decline in those actively looking in the last six months (down three points to 10%).





Base: All renters (Apr '21 n=1,500, Oct '21 n=1,500, May '22 n=1501, Nov '22 n=1501, May '23 n=1503). Source: Q24. "Are you seriously considering buying your own home in the next 12 months?"

Nov '22 n=1501, May '23 n=1503).

Source: Q25. "Were you actively looking to buy your own home a year ago?"

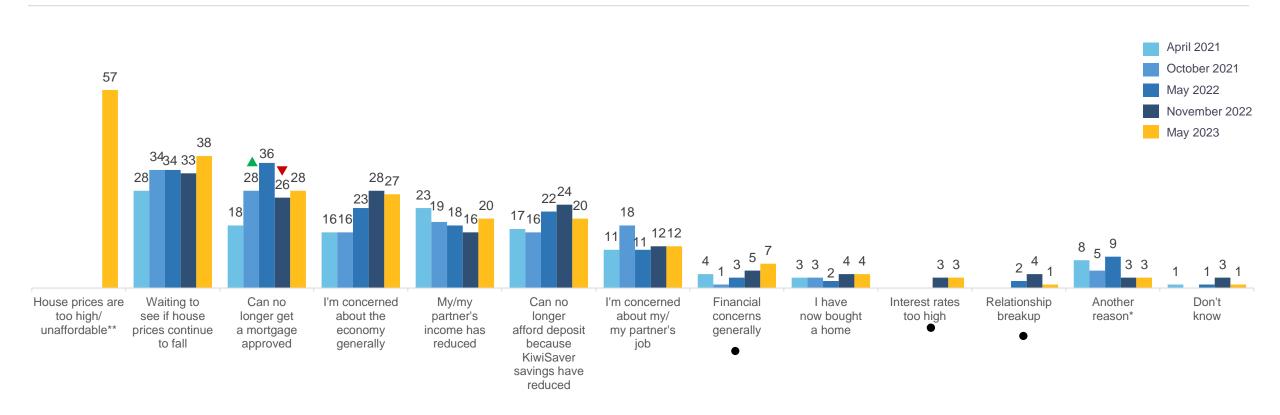
Base: All renters (Apr '21 n=1,500, Oct '21 n=1,500, May '22 n=1501,

Barriers to looking

Price is the most common barrier stopping renters from looking to buy a house (57% feel houses are unaffordable). Another two in five renters (38%) are hopeful that prices continue to drop before they consider buying.

Reasons why renters have stopped actively looking to buy

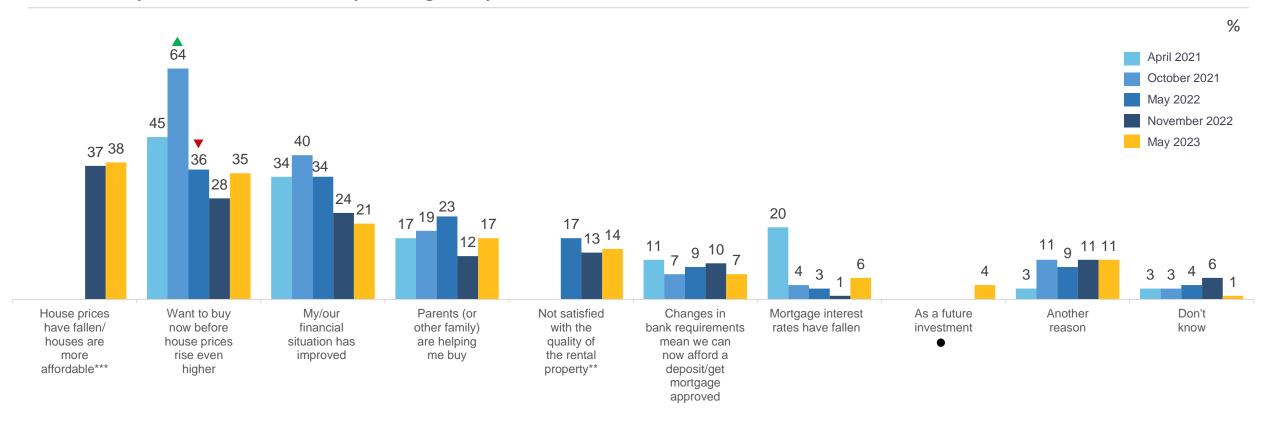
%



Reasons for looking

Renters who are looking to buy a home are mostly driven to do so by falling house prices (38%) and the desire to buy before prices rise (35%). Others have experienced changes to their finances, including improvements to their own financial situation (21%), financial help from family (17%) or changes to bank requirements giving them greater access to a deposit or mortgage (7%).

Reasons why renters are now actively looking to buy



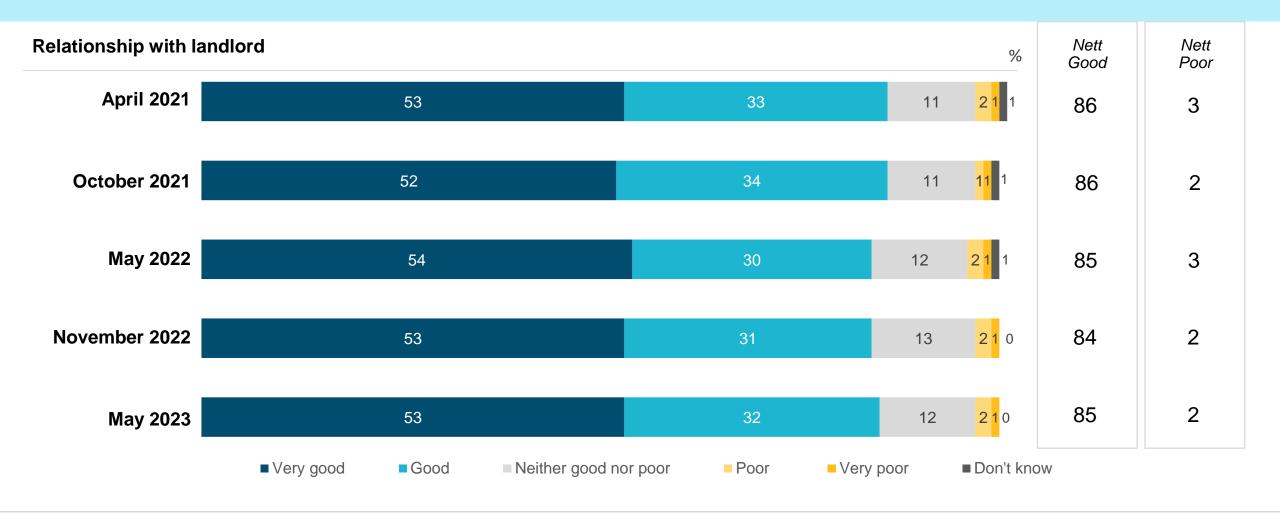


Renters' relationships with landlords



Relationship with landlord

Most renters (85%) feel they have a good or very good relationship with their landlord or property manager, which has remained consistent over the previous four waves.



▲ Significant increase from previous wave

▼ Significant decrease from previous wave

Why your relationship with the landlord is good

Renters who feel their relationship with their landlord is good were asked to explain why they feel this way. Note, this data has not been coded into like categories (i.e. quantified). However, the verbatim responses suggest tenants feel that good relationships stem from a positive give-and-take relationship, prompt resolution and communication when issues arise, and infrequent rent increases.

"The rent has remained reasonable over 8 years of being their tenant, we maintain each other's privacy and peace, we communicate well.."

"Because I look after their house and pay on time every time. They [are] very happy with me and when needed they respond to any thing that pops up guickly."

"She respects me and gives me somewhere warm and safe to live."

"Our landlords only come to visit their property a few times a year or if there's a need to fix something in the house."

"They are very supportive of me, and I of them. I care for their property as though I was the owner. They have allowed me to create a garden and see the benefits for their property as well. We are both very considerate to each other, both parties very giving."

"I pay rent on time and have had no complaints."

"He always does repairs super fast, always upgrading, takes care of gardens, checks in to see how things are going. Always is aware of boundaries and rules. On top of that just a super nice guy."

"Property is in good condition and we rarely have any property. Have had heating installed and insulation."

Why your relationship with the landlord is bad

Renters who feel their relationship with their landlord is bad were asked to explain why they feel this way. Poor relationships with landlords and property managers tend to come from a lack of respect, maintenance or communication. Other concerns relate to non-compliance with Healthy Homes Standards.

"Negligent of responsibility by property manager. Dwelling non-compliance with regulations and a health and fire hazard."

"He doesn't really take the time to sort out our problems with the flat and there are quite a few hazardous/maintenance issues that have been needing to be fixed over the last few months that he has acknowledged but done nothing about."

"Because he's not nice to deal with. He's always making personal comments, makes repairs himself making the problems worse."

"Racist landlord, rude, arrogant."

"Had issues with condensation, mould and cold down bedroom end of the house. Told it is our fault for not airing out the house at night."

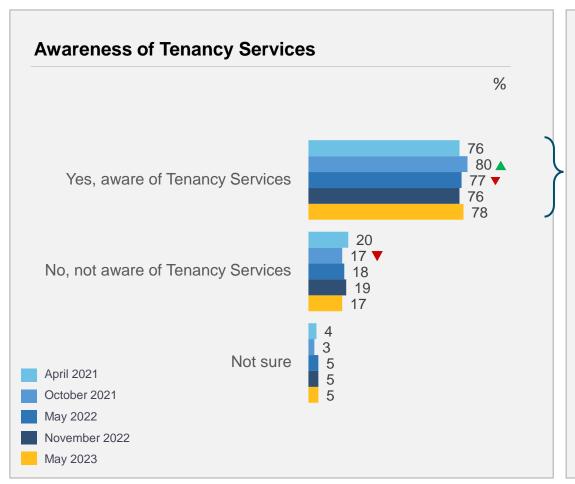
"We had flood damage and not sorted yet. Every time it rains we have to get out buckets and move things out of our kitchen."

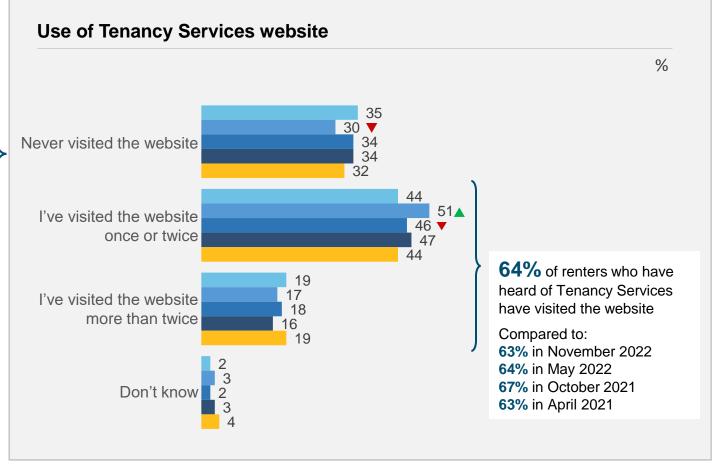
"They have too many clients, frequent turnover of staff [and] assume all tenants are bad rather than relying on facts."

"They only care about money, they don't fix anything and when they do, they up my rent to pay for it with no sh*ts given that it's causing financial hardship .I'm worried if I say anything that they will have me kicked out."

Awareness of Tenancy Services and website use

Almost four in five (78%) renters are aware of Tenancy Services and around two thirds (64%) of those who are aware have visited the website.





Base: All renters (Apr '21 n=1,500, Oct '21 n=1,500, May '22 n=1501, Nov '22 n=1501, May '23 n=1503).

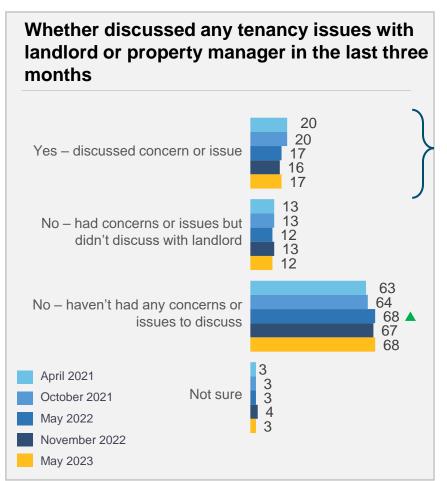
Source: Q28. "Tenancy Services provides information on tenancy law on its website www.tenancy.govt.nz.

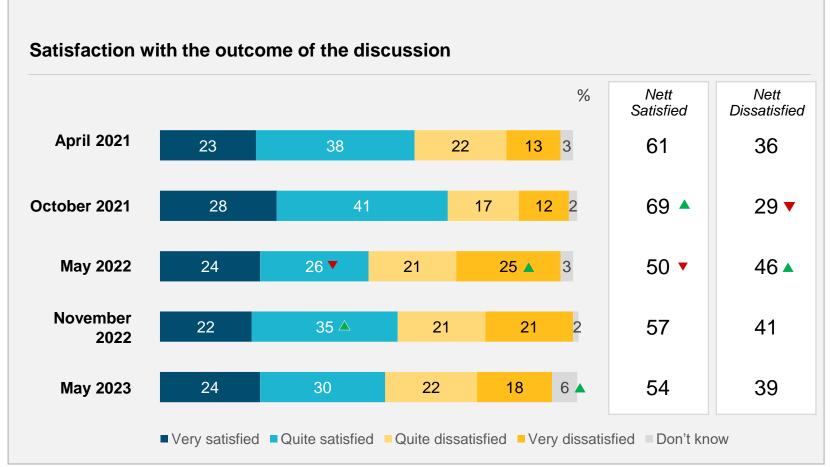
Before today, were you aware of Tenancy Services?"

Renters who are aware of Tenancy Services (Apr '21 n=1,142, Oct '21 n=1,199, May '22 n=1154, Nov '22 n=1140. May '23 n=1173).

Prevalence of tenancy issues

Around three in ten renters have had concerns or issues with their tenancy (29%) in the last three months, and 17% discussed this with their landlord or property manager. Of those who discussed issues, just over half (54%) were satisfied with the outcome and 39% were dissatisfied.



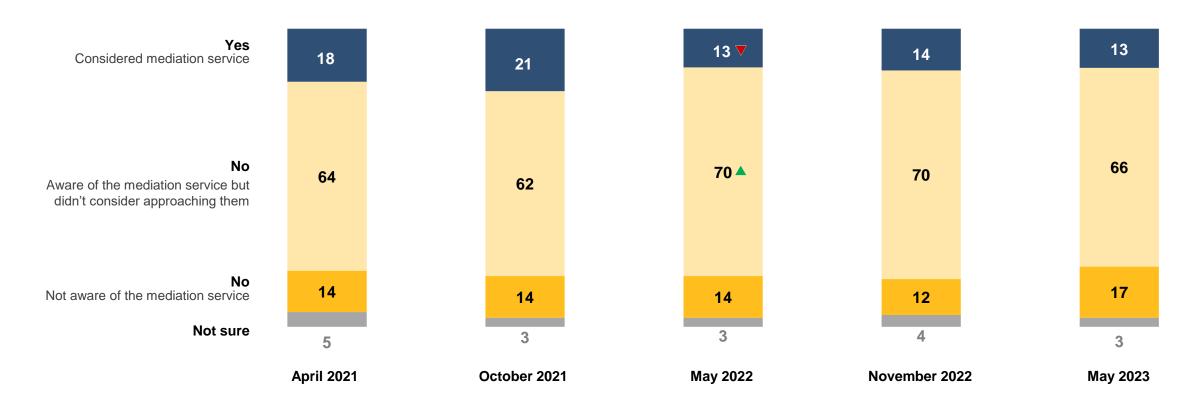


Resolving tenancy issues

Most tenants who have had issues are aware of mediation provided by Tenancy Services (79%), with levels of awareness remaining similar over the last year. Thirteen percent have considered using the service, meaning 66% have heard of it but have not considered using it.

Whether seriously considered Tenancy Services' mediation service

%



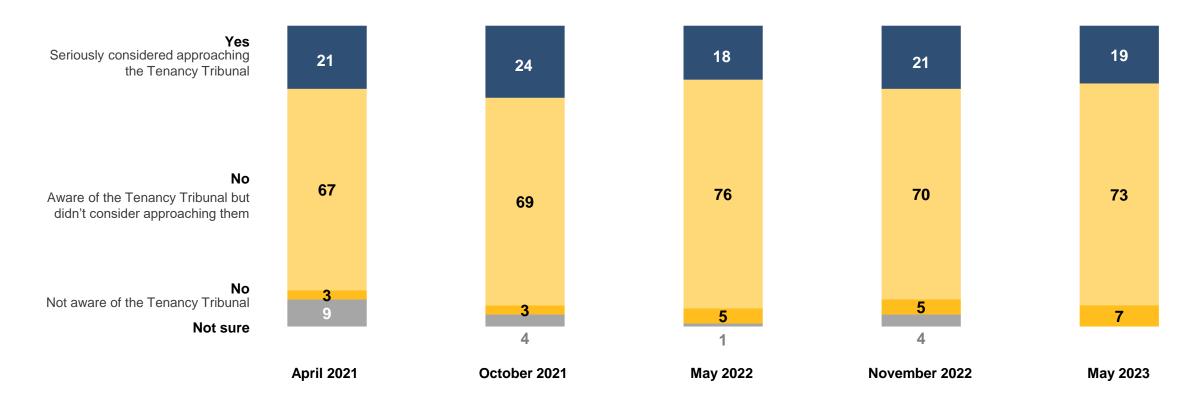
Base: Renters who are aware of Tenancy Services and had a concern or issue with their tenancy in the last three months (Apr '21 n=399, Oct '21 n=407, May '22 n=357, Nov '22 n=331, May '23 n=344). Source: Q32. "Had you seriously considered the mediation service that Tenancy Services provides, to assist with resolving the issues with your landlord?"

Tenancy Tribunal

Around one in five renters (19%) who were dissatisfied with the outcome of discussions with their landlord or property manager are aware of the Tenancy Tribunal and have considered using this service. However a further 73% were aware of the service, but had not considered using it.

Whether seriously considered approaching the Tenancy Tribunal

%



Renters who are aware of Tenancy Services and were dissatisfied with the outcome of their discussion with their landlord or property manager (Apr '21 n=92, Oct '21 n=72, May '22 n=101, Nov '22 n=83, May '23 n=83).

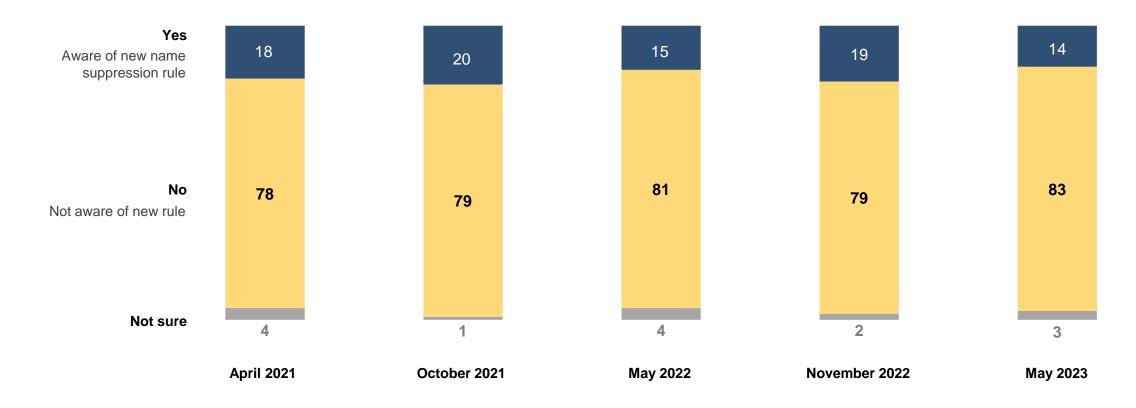
▲ Significant increase from previous wave ▼Significant decrease from previous wave

Name suppression rule

The majority of renters (83%) who are aware of the Tenancy Tribunal are **not** aware of the option for name suppression.

Awareness of the Tenancy Tribunal's name suppression rule

%



Renters who are aware of the Tenancy Tribunal (Apr '21 n=89, Oct '21 n=70, May '22 n=96, Nov '22 n=79, May '23 n=77).

Source: Q36. "Rules allowing name suppression in the Tenancy Tribunal for people who are successful in their applications came into force last year. Before today, were you aware of the name suppression rules?"



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT

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