

# Snapshot OF THE Profession

AT 01 FEBRUARY 2014

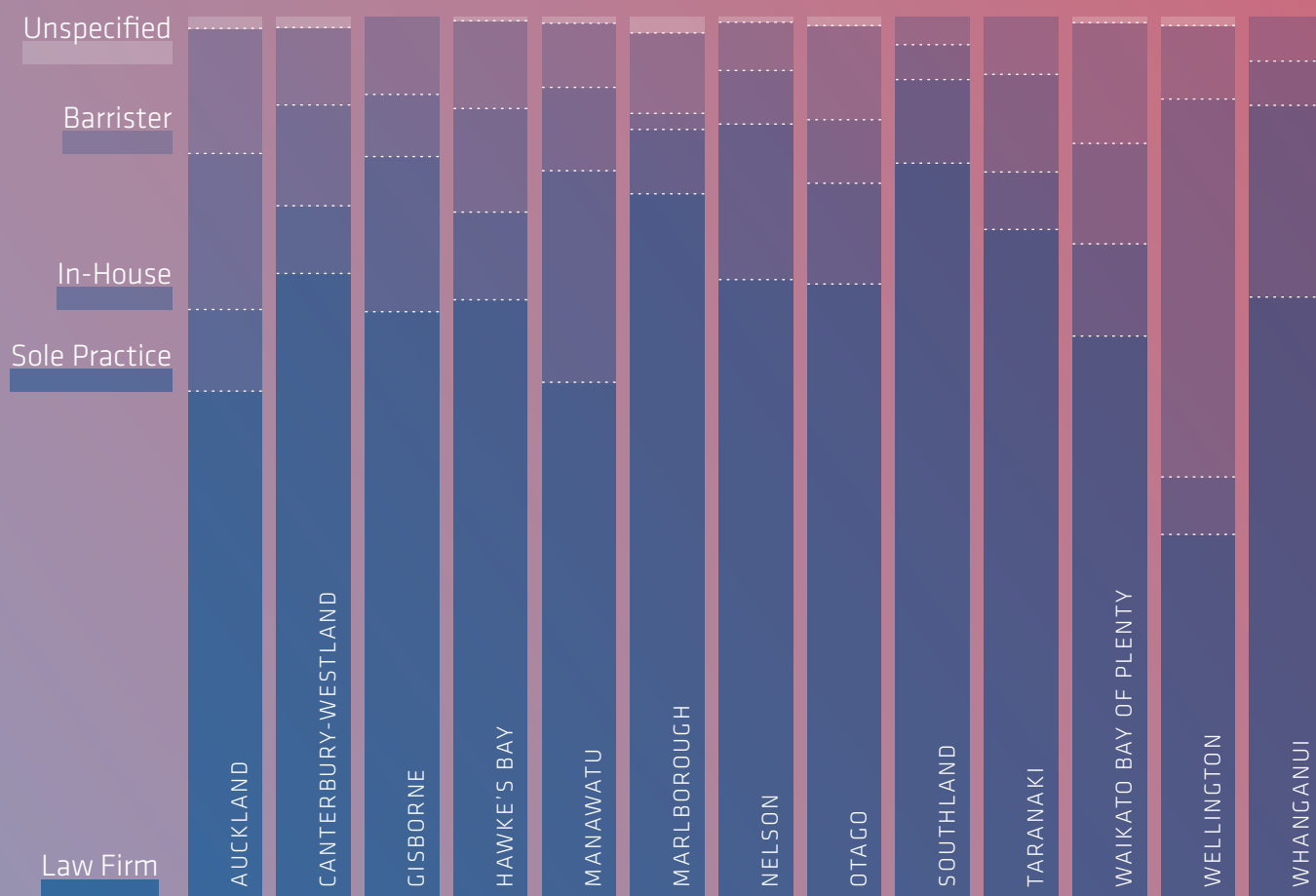
*The information has been prepared from data on practising certificates issued by the New Zealand Law Society and held as at 1 February 2014. Apart from the overall summary, the data excludes the 502 lawyers who hold a New Zealand practising certificate but who are based outside New Zealand.*

Compiled by Geoff Adlam

Designed by Andrew Jacombs

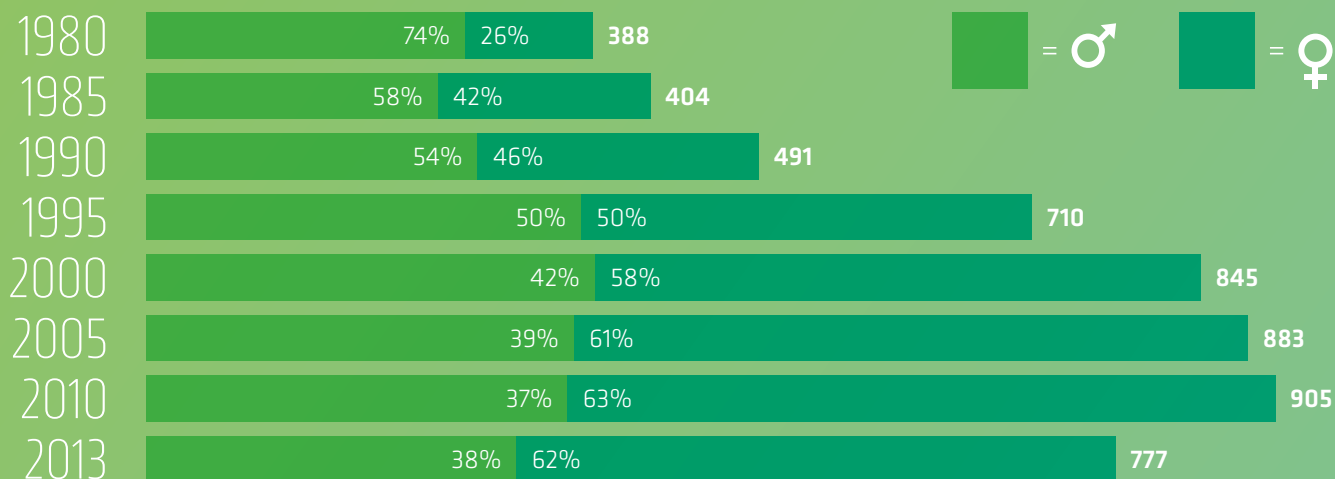
# Practising Certificates on Issue

Branch	Law Firm	Sole Practice	In-House	Barrister	Unspecified	Total
Auckland	3,098	495	947	759	70	5,369
Canterbury-Westland	891	96	143	110	15	1,255
Gisborne	38	10	4	5	0	57
Hawke's Bay	151	22	26	22	1	222
Manawatu	81	33	13	10	1	138
Marlborough	44	4	1	5	1	55
Nelson	116	29	10	9	1	165
Otago	282	46	29	43	4	404
Southland	106	12	5	4	0	127
Taranaki	117	10	17	10	0	154
Waikato Bay of Plenty	675	110	120	144	7	1,056
Wellington	1,104	173	1,136	221	26	2,660
Whanganui	41	13	3	3	0	60
<b>Total New Zealand</b>	<b>6,744</b>	<b>1,053</b>	<b>2,454</b>	<b>1,345</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>11,722</b>
<b>Overseas</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>502</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,051</b>	<b>1,070</b>	<b>2,595</b>	<b>1,373</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>12,224</b>



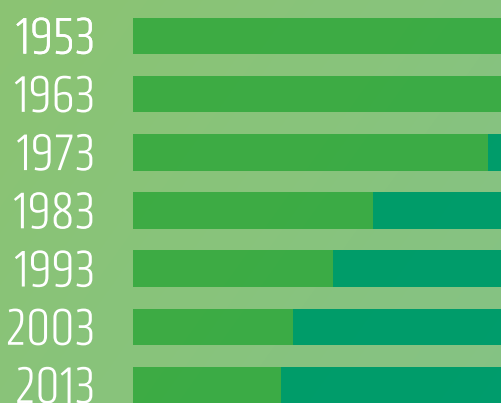
# Admission to the Legal Profession

New lawyers enter the New Zealand legal profession throughout the year. The most noticeable trend over the past two decades has been the rise in the proportion of women who are admitted. The number of women admitted exceeded the number of men for the first time in 1993. Statistics on the gender of people admitted as lawyers were first kept in 1980. Interestingly, the number of men admitted has remained relatively constant over the past 20 years – the 297 men admitted in 2013 were up just 3.8% on the number admitted in 1980, while the 480 women admitted in 2013 were up 370% on 1980. What may be the start of another key trend was the 19% fall in the number of admissions in 2013 compared with 2012. The 777 admissions in 2013 was the lowest number since 2001.

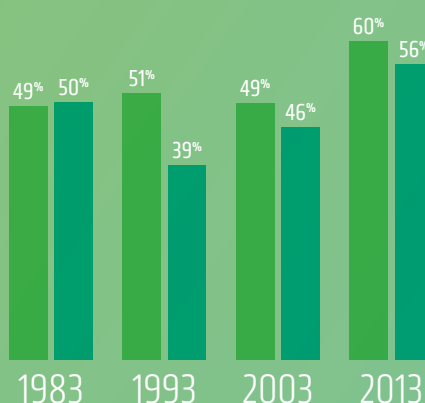


While women made up 52% of lawyers admitted in 1993, they only made up 46% of 1993 admittees still practising in 2014. It appears that a relatively lower proportion of women than men from a particular admission year are generally in practice at any given time.

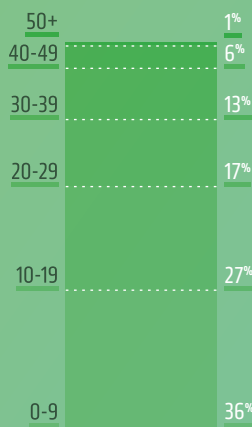
Gender of lawyers currently practising by admission year



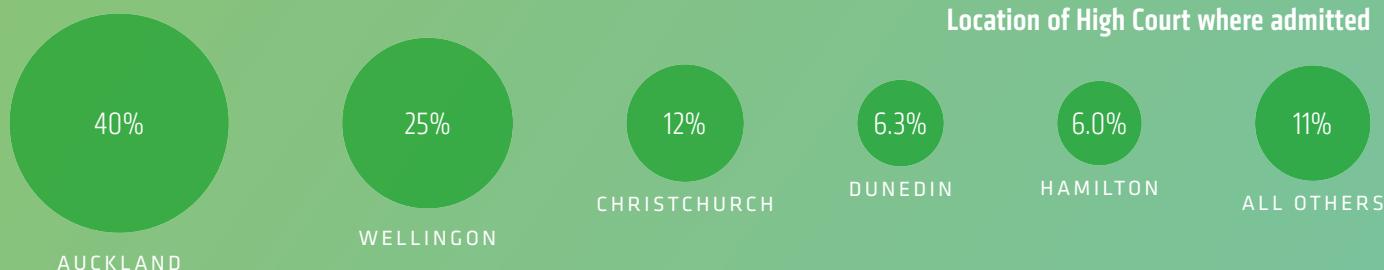
Proportion of lawyers admitted in year currently practising



Years since admission



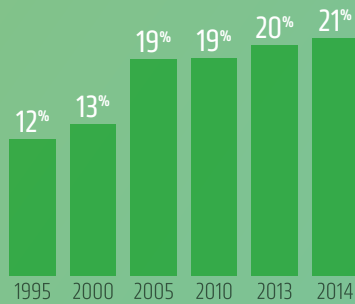
Location of High Court where admitted



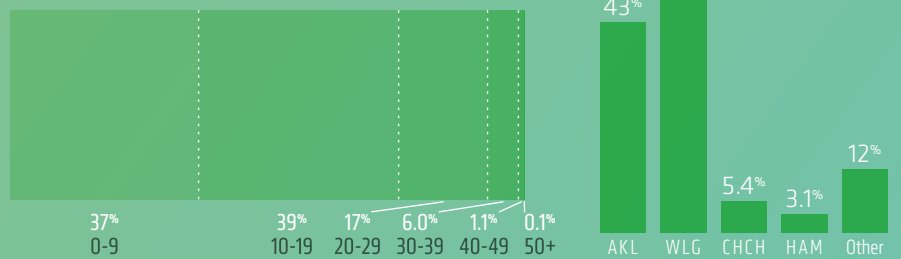
# Types of Practice

**In-House Lawyers** make up **21%** of NZ lawyers, and have on average **14** years in practice

CLANZ, the Law Society's section for in-house lawyers was established in 1987. The proportion of lawyers who practise in-house continues to increase. Over half of New Zealand's in-house lawyers (57%) are employed by the government and government agencies, with a further 1.3% employed by local government.

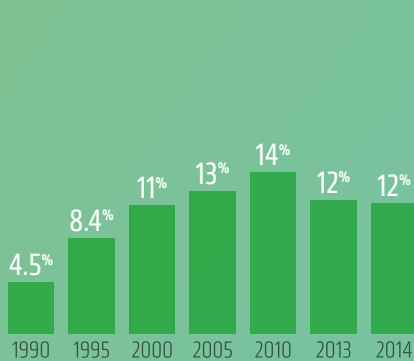


Years since admission

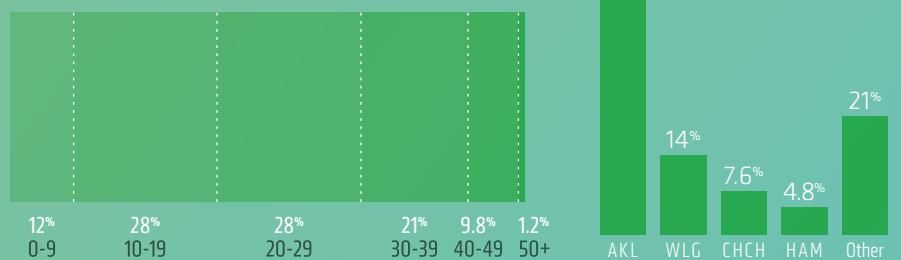


**Barristers** (including Queen's Counsel) make up **12%** of NZ lawyers, and have on average **24** years in practice

During the 1990s there was rapid growth in the number of barristers practising in New Zealand. The proportion of lawyers practising as barristers is now declining. Barristers have been required to complete the Stepping Up course since 2012 and changes to legal aid may also have contributed to the decline.

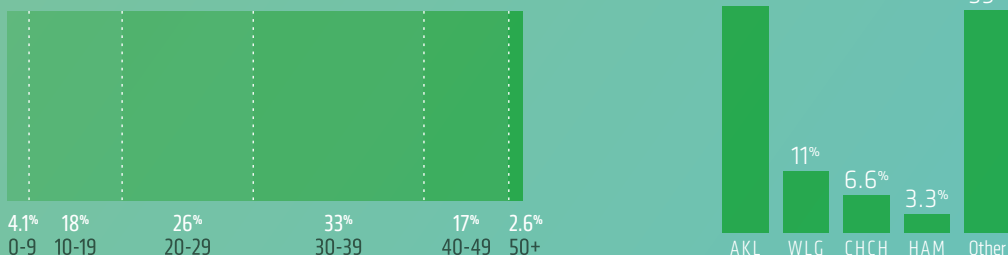


Years since admission



**Sole Practitioners** make up **9.0%** of NZ lawyers, and have on average **29** years in practice

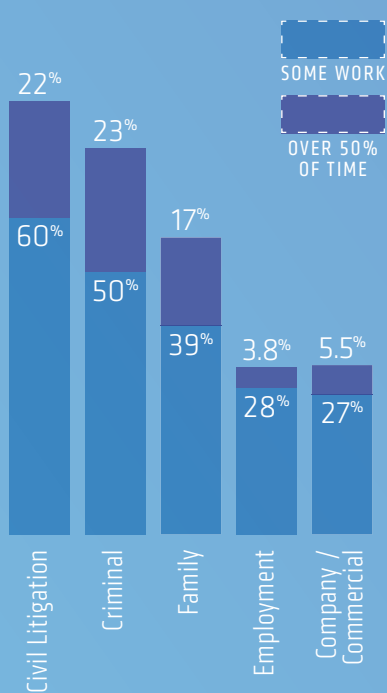
Years since admission



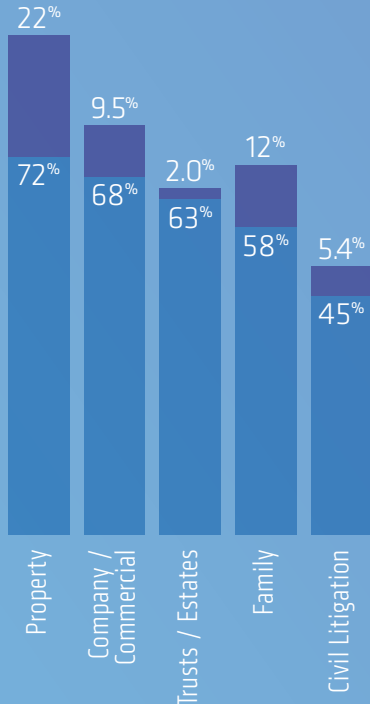
# Areas of Practice

The Law Society collects information from lawyers on areas in which they practice. Lawyers are asked to estimate the proportion of their time spent in each of 23 areas of practice. The information below shows the proportion of lawyers who spend at least some of their time practising an area of law, and the proportion who spend over half their time in one area.

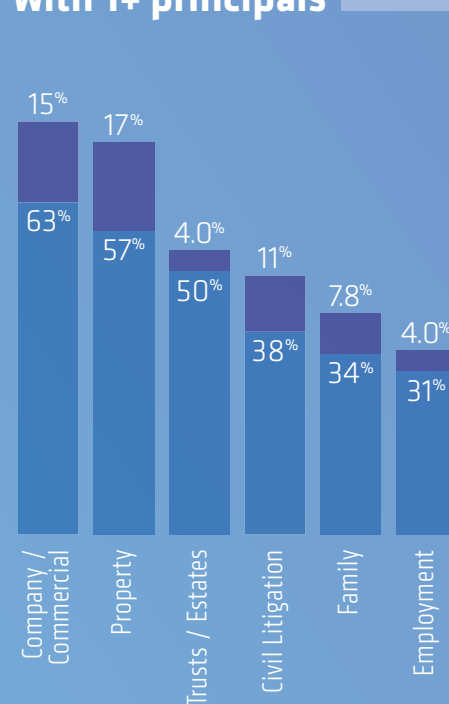
## Barristers



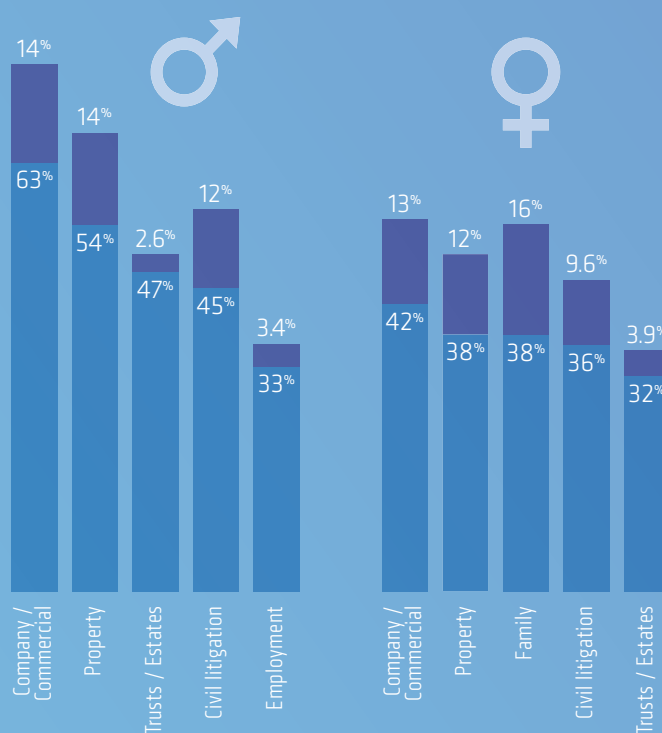
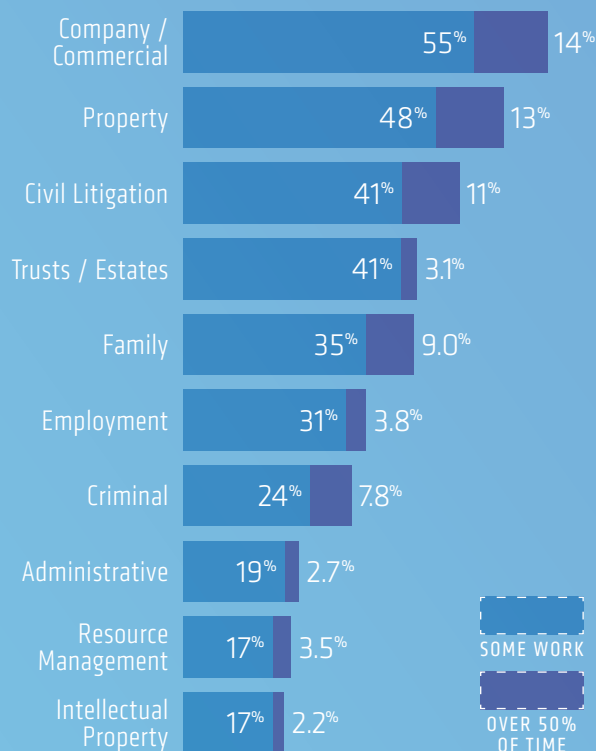
## Sole Practitioners



## Lawyers in firms with 1+ principals

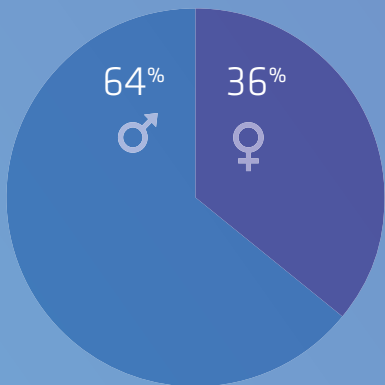
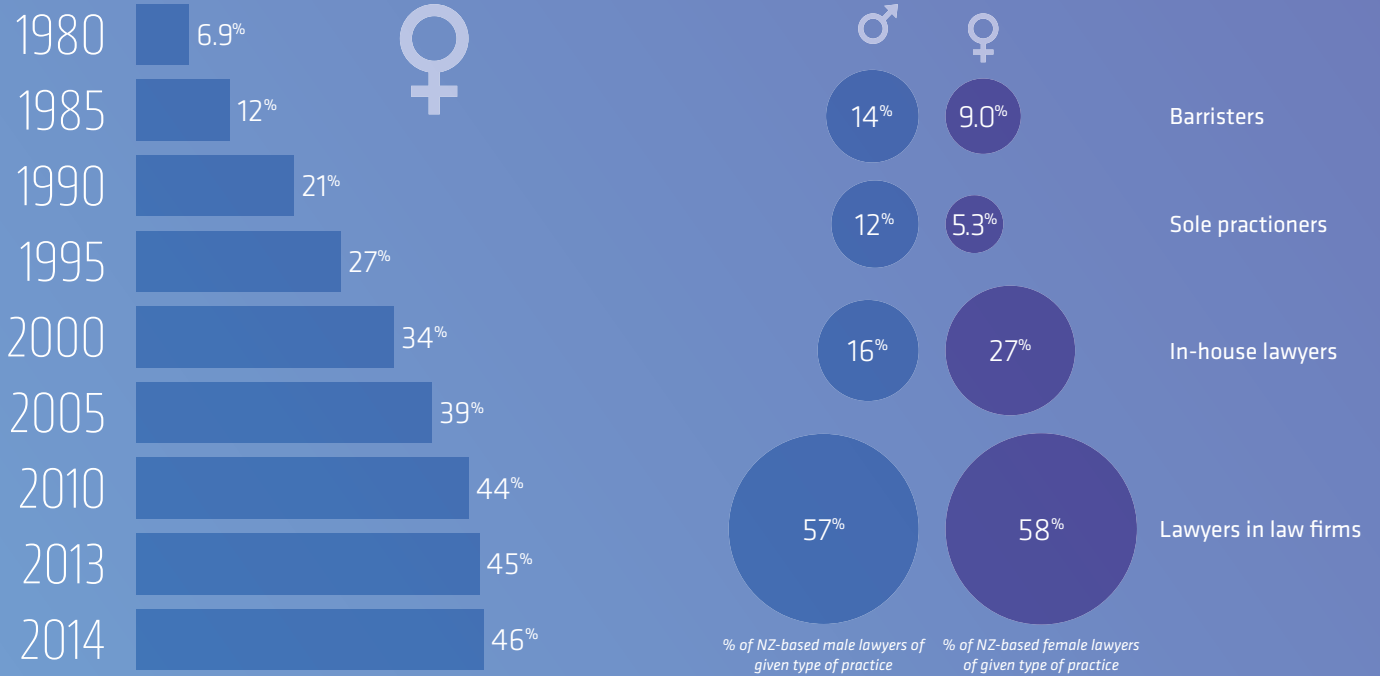


## All New Zealand based lawyers

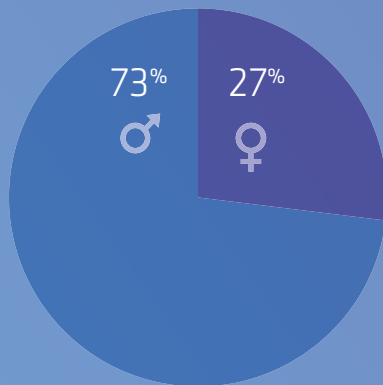


# Gender

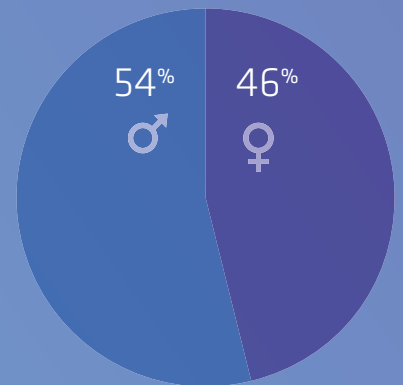
The impact of the high proportion of women entering the legal profession is dramatically illustrated here. At present, just under 46% of lawyers are female.



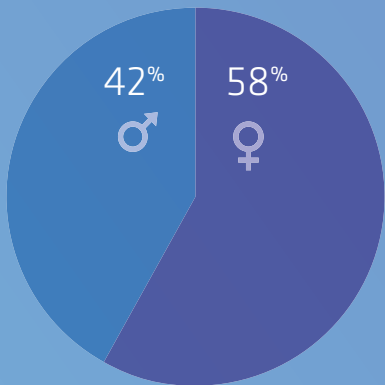
BARRISTERS



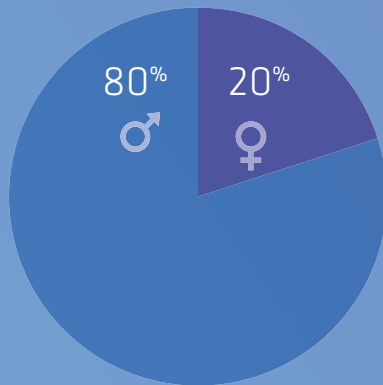
SOLE PRACTITIONERS



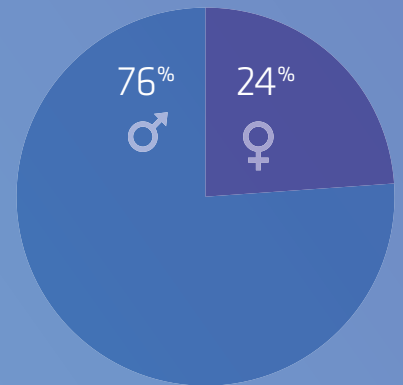
LAWYERS IN LAW FIRMS



IN-HOUSE LAWYERS



PARTNERS/DIRECTORS  
IN LAW FIRMS WITH OVER  
20 PARTNERS/DIRECTORS



PARTNERS/DIRECTORS IN  
LAW FIRMS WITH 2-5  
PARTNERS/DIRECTORS

# Lawyers by Location

14 centres have over 100 lawyers and between them have 89% of New Zealand's lawyers

Whangarei

116 1.0% #12

Auckland

5,012 43% #1

Hamilton

443 3.8% #4

New Plymouth

122 1.0% #9

Palmerston North

102 0.9% #14

Nelson

156 1.3% #8

Tauranga

279 2.4% #5

Rotorua

121 1.0% #10

Napier

118 1.0% #11

Lower Hutt

179 1.5% #7

Wellington

2,271 19% #2

Christchurch

1,088 9.3% #3

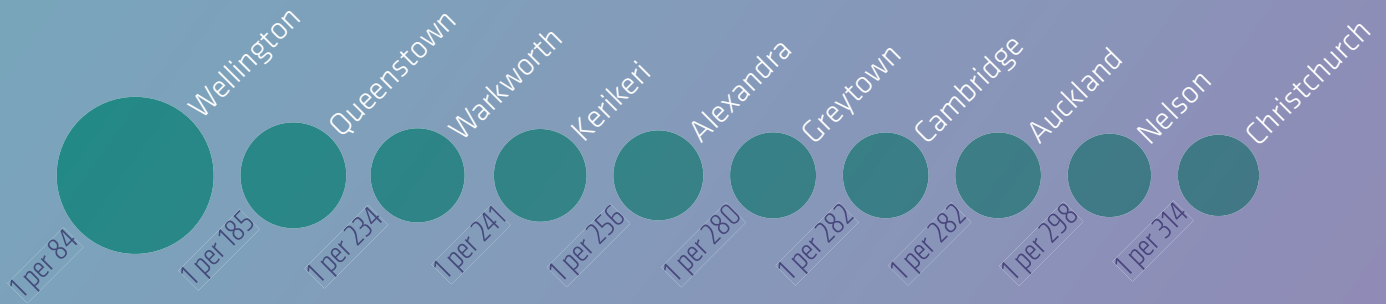
Dunedin

278 2.4% #6

Invercargill

107 0.9% #13

## Highest proportion of lawyers



## Lowest proportion of lawyers



## Freshest Faces

**Highest proportions of lawyers who have been in practice for less than 10 years**

50%	Morrinsville
43%	Rangiora
43%	Orewa
43%	Hawera
42%	Te Puke
41%	Ashburton

**Lowest average years in practice**

15.3	Hamilton
15.4	Wellington
15.8	Rangiora

Excluding centres with fewer than 10 lawyers

## Most Experienced

**Highest proportions of lawyers who have been in practice for 40 years or more**

30%	Kaitaia
30%	Levin
29%	Warkworth
27%	Feilding
21%	Hawera
20%	Thames

**Highest average years in practice**

29.6	Feilding
26.4	Alexandra
26.0	Wanaka

## Oldest law firms

New Zealand has over 50 law firms which have been in continuous existence for more than 125 years. A list of the 50 oldest known firms is available on [my.lawsociety.org.nz](http://my.lawsociety.org.nz)

Current name	Established	Age in years	Location
Treadwells	1840	173	Wellington
Bell Gully Buddle Weir	1840	173	Auckland/Wellington
Brandons	1841	172	Wellington
Jackson Russell	1844	169	Auckland
Brookfields	1856	157	Auckland

## Law Firms

New Zealand has 1,836 law firms (branches consolidated). Of these, 1,493 (81%) are partnerships or sole practices while 343 are incorporated. There are 7,797 lawyers who own or work in the law firms, giving an average of 4.2 practising certificates per firm.

1,258 <sup>+1</sup>  
1 partner

404 <sup>+11</sup>  
2-3 partners

11 <sup>+1</sup>  
20+ partners

19 <sup>+1</sup>  
10-19 partners

19 <sup>+2</sup>  
8-9 partners

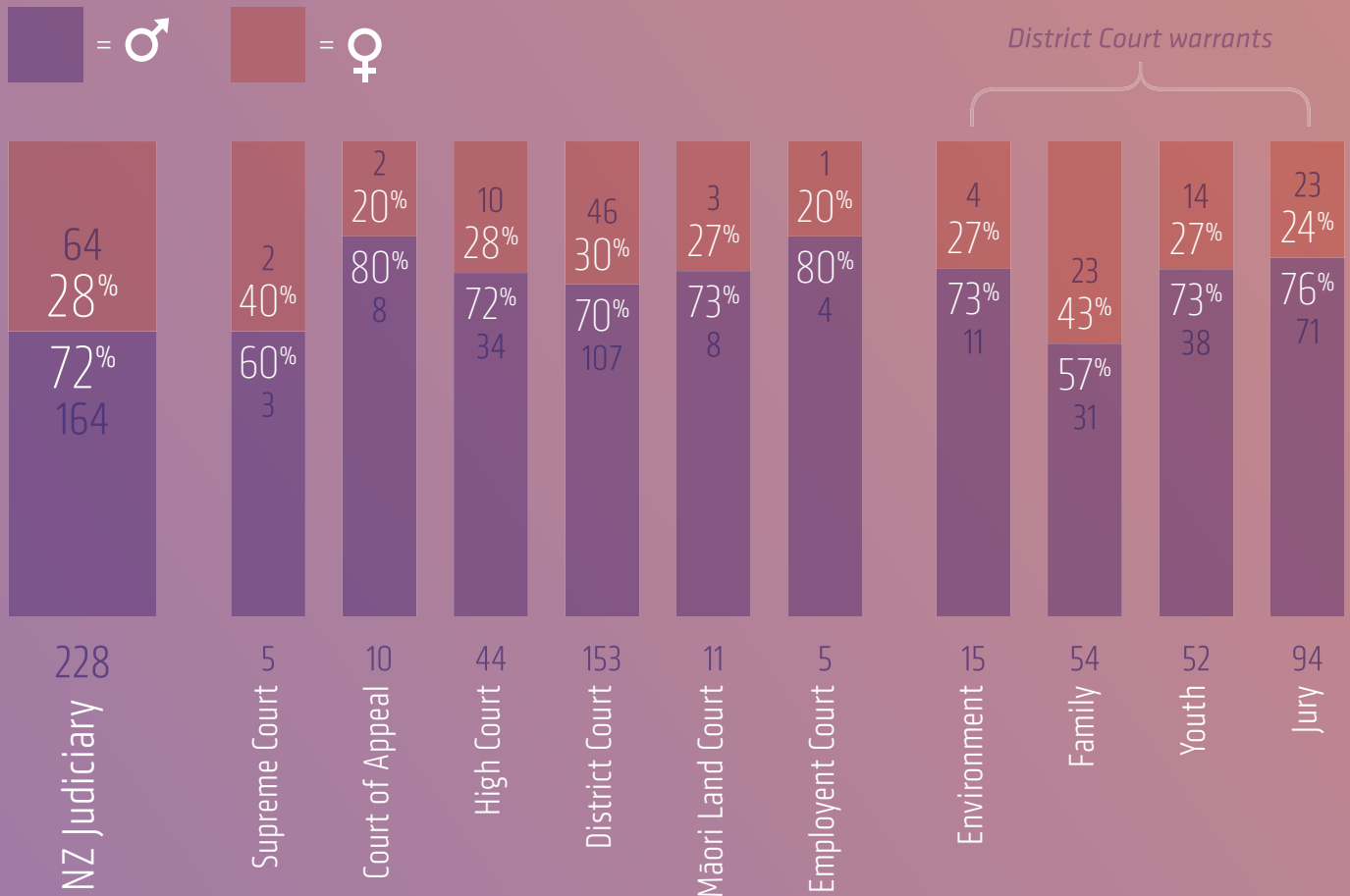
31 <sup>-6</sup>  
6-7 partners

94 <sup>+5</sup>  
4-5 partners

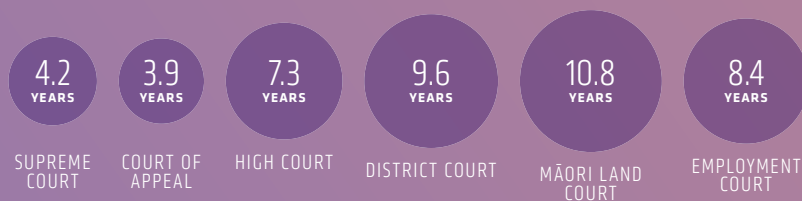


# The Judiciary

The information on New Zealand's judiciary has been mainly sourced from the Ministry of Justice website. All members of the judiciary appointed before 12 February 2014 are included. At that date there were 228 members of the judiciary (includes one Acting High Court Judge).



## Average time since appointment to the court

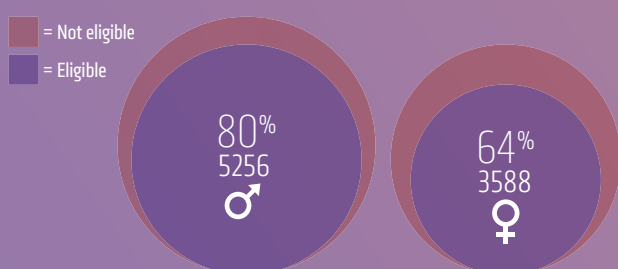


## Longest serving

- 26 years Justice Keane, District and High Courts
- 26 years Judge Spencer, Māori Land Court
- 25 years Justice Ronald Young, District and High Courts
- 24 years Judge DJ Harvey, District Court

## Eligibility for Appointment

To be eligible for appointment to the judiciary, a lawyer must have been admitted for at least 7 years.

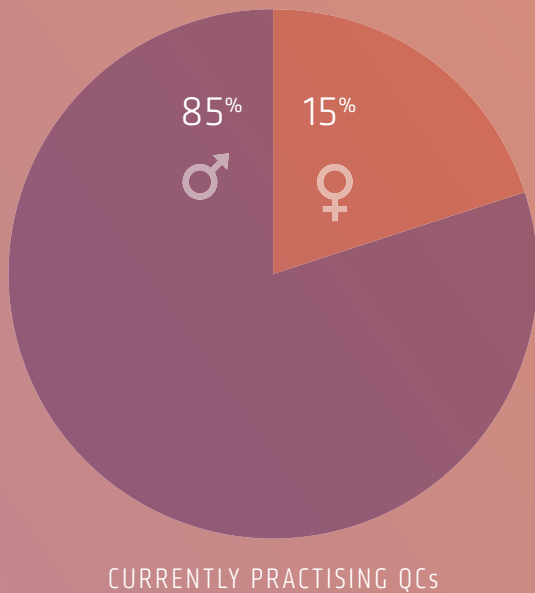


## Status on appointment to the judiciary

Position	Supreme Court	Court of Appeal	High Court	All
Queen's Counsel	3	5	14	22
Barrister Sole			8	8
Law Firm Partner	1	3	17	21
Solicitor-General	1		1	2
Academic		1	1	2
Govt Agency		1	3	4

# Queen's Counsel

A new round of appointments for Queen's Counsel will take place in 2014, with appointments expected in May. A round in 2013 resulted in the appointment of 26 new Queen's Counsel – the most appointed at any time since the first appointments were made in 1907. Since 1907, 259 New Zealand lawyers have been appointed Queen's Counsel.



100 Queen's Counsel with a current practising certificate

22 Women appointed QC – 8.5% of all appointments since 1907

1988 Year first women took silk – Dame Sian Elias and Justice Lowell Goddard

29 Longest serving QC – Anthony Patrick Molloy

7 Longest gap between QC appointments – between 1939 and 1946

## Odds & Ends

Much of this information has appeared sometime somewhere in a New Zealand Law Society publication. In the interests of fleshing out the picture of the profession it is repeated here, along with some indicative information on age and languages spoken.

### Age

Lawyers are offered the option of providing details of their age in their practising certificate application. The age of just over two-thirds of practising lawyers is known. Of the lawyers whose age is known:

40.2 years  
AVERAGE ALL NZ LAWYERS

38 years  
MEDIAN ALL NZ LAWYERS

36.7 years  
AVERAGE FEMALE LAWYERS

34 years  
MEDIAN FEMALE LAWYERS

44.1 years  
AVERAGE MALE LAWYERS

42 years  
MEDIAN MALE LAWYERS

2,054 (25%)  
AGED UNDER 30  
(WHERE AGE IS KNOWN)

22 years  
YOUNGEST LAWYERS

### Longest-practising lawyers

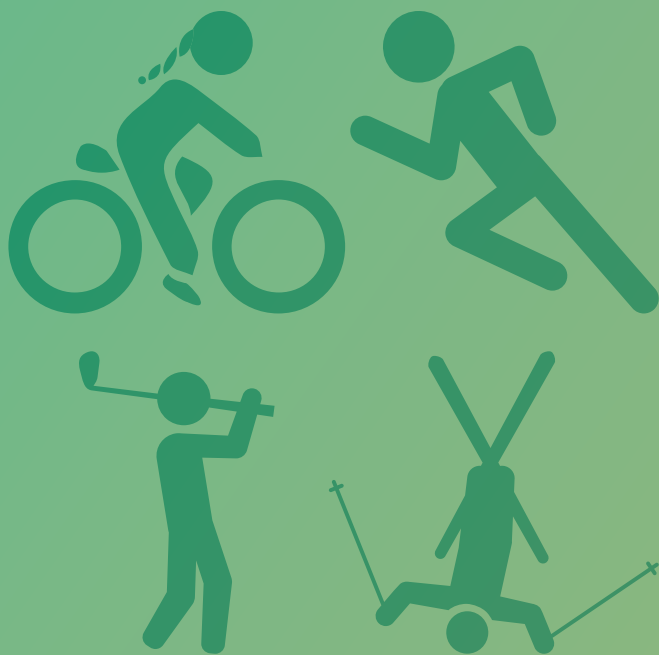
Of those lawyers currently holding a practising certificate, one was admitted to the bar in 1948 (having been in practice for over 65 years), one in 1949 and two in 1950. All are men. The earliest date of admission for a woman still in practice is 1952. The names of the holders of the practising certificates are, of course, confidential. The longest time in practice in New Zealand may have been the 70 years completed by Laurie Schnauer (1908-2001), who was admitted in 1931 and spent his last day at work just three days before his death at the age of 93.

1948  
YEAR LONGEST SERVING  
CURRENT LAWYER ADMITTED

70 years  
LONGEST SERVING  
LAWYER

## Sports

A *LawPoints* survey of over 200 lawyers in November 2013 found that the sports which the highest number had participated in during 2013 (either socially or seriously) were skiing, golf, running and cycling. Netball, skiing and running were the top three sports for women, while the top three lawyer sports for men were golf, cycling and skiing.



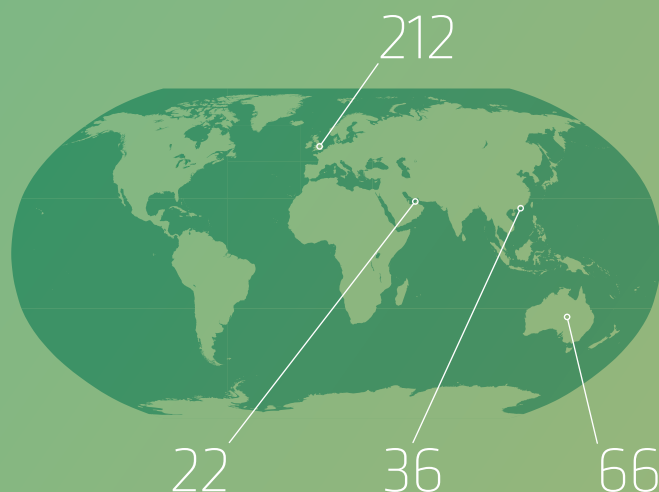
## Lawyer names

An investigation in *LawTalk* 827 (13 September 2013) found that New Zealand's lawyers shared 2,316 different first names. Most common was "John", the first name of 304 lawyers. Names change in popularity, and while just under 9% of the lawyers admitted during the 1970s and still practising are called John, only 0.6% of lawyers admitted after 2000 (46% of all current practising lawyers) are John. (Of lawyers admitted since 2000, the most common first name is Sarah). The top five first names of lawyers currently practising are:

304 John	1 Sarah	152
293 David	2 Nicola	80
242 Michael	3 Susan	77
195 Andrew	4 Catherine	75
191 Peter	5 Jennifer	71

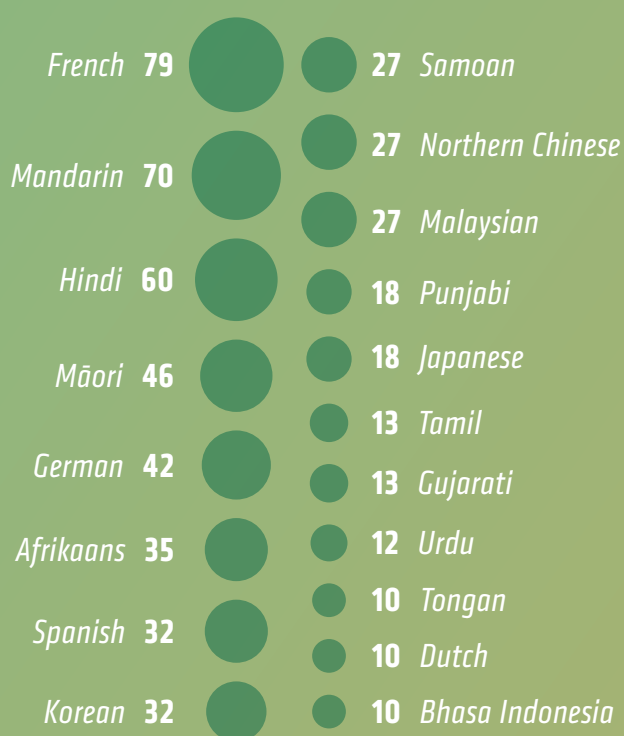
## New Zealand Lawyers Overseas

At 1 February 2014 there were 502 overseas-based lawyers holding a New Zealand practising certificate. These lawyers can be found around the world, but 212 (42%) are located in England, with 196 in London. Another 66 (13%) are in Australia, with 36 in Hong Kong and 22 in Dubai.



## Languages

Like age, provision of information on languages other than English spoken by a lawyer is optional. When provided, the information is used to assist members of the public who use the Law Society's Find a Lawyer feature on its website. There is no set criteria for claiming proficiency. Languages other than English which 10 or more lawyers speak are:



# The “typical” Lawyer

## ... so can we come up with a stereotype?

*Of course not! However, going by all the numbers, the “typical” New Zealand lawyer is ...*

NAME	John
GENDER	Male
AGE	38
TIME IN PRACTICE	14 years
LOCATION	Auckland
TYPE OF LAWYER	Solicitor
TYPE OF WORKPLACE	Unincorporated law firm
SIZE OF WORKPLACE	1–3 partners / directors
AREAS OF PRACTICE	Company / Commercial & Property law
HEALTH	Non-smoker
LIKELY RETIREMENT AGE	68

*If the number of women in the legal profession continues to grow at the current rate, our typical lawyer will change sex in 2019.*

