

Working Paper

Pension, Disability and Carers Service Customer Satisfaction Survey: Interim results from 2010/11

by Nick Howat, Erica Garnett and Oliver Norden

Department for Work and Pensions

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Nick Howat, Erica Garnett and Oliver Norden

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Glossary and abbreviations

Attendance Allowance (AA)	AA is a tax-free benefit paid to customers, aged 65 or over, who need help with their personal care because of an illness or disability.
CATI	Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews.
Council Tax Benefit (CTB)	This is the means-tested benefit available to help cover the costs of Council Tax. It is available to both people renting and owner occupiers.
Disability Living Allowance (DLA)	DLA is a tax-free benefit for children and adults who need help with personal care or have walking difficulties because they are physically or mentally disabled.
DCS	The Disability and Carers Service.
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions.
Housing Benefit (HB)	This is a means-tested benefit paid to tenants or their landlords to help meet their rent.
Local Service	Local Service supports the work of Pension Centres primarily through providing home visits but also through Local Service Information points, by prearranged appointments and providing talks in locations accessible to pensioners. It works in partnership with a range of organisations accomplished in dealing with pensioners' needs. Local Service is aimed at raising pensioners' awareness of what is available to them and increasing take-up of benefits.
Pension Credit	Pension Credit is an entitlement for people aged 60 or over which was introduced in October 2003, replacing the Minimum Income Guarantee. It provides a guaranteed income for pensioners and rewards those who have saved for their retirement.
Pension forecasts	A Pension forecast informs customers of: the amount of State Pension they have earned already; the amount of State Pension they can expect at State Pension age (SPA) based on what they have earned already and what they might earn before reaching SPA.
SPA	State Pension age.
TPS	The Pension Service.

Note to reader

This report is an interim document and only includes topline results from the 2010/11 PDCS Quarterly Satisfaction monitor.

Detailed analysis and findings for 2010/11 along with comparisons to the 2009/10 results will be published in a full report in autumn 2011.

Notes on terminology

A large number of tables and charts appear in this report. The following conventions have been used:

- 0 = a 'true zero' (i.e. no responses in the category);
- * = less than 0.5 per cent, but more than zero responses.

Significance testing has been carried out at the five per cent level, unless otherwise stated. All comparative data described in the report is significant, unless otherwise stated.

Throughout the report percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number (figures are rounded up from .5, and rounded down below this).

Percentages in the tables do not always add to 100 per cent due to rounding, and where percentages in the text differ to the sum of percentages in the tables this too will be due to rounding. Also 'netted' (i.e. where a number of responses have been grouped together) responses may not always equal the sum of the individual responses, again due to rounding.

Summary

Background and objectives

The Pension, Disability and Carers Service (PDCS) was formed in April 2008 from the amalgamation of The Pension Service (TPS) and the Disability and Carers Service (DCS) and is responsible for delivering a range of age and disability related benefits. Following the formation of PDCS, a customer survey was developed to monitor satisfaction with the service and to ensure that the customer voice could be heard when it comes to operational and policy planning. This working paper gives an overview of the findings from the customer survey in 2010/11.

The survey was designed to include only contacting customers. Customers who received benefit payments, but had no interactions with the service beyond this, are excluded. Interviews were conducted by telephone with customers who had contact with PDCS in the previous six months and fieldwork was completed in two sweeps between September 2010 and April 2011.

This report is an interim document and only includes topline results from the 2010/11 PDCS Customer Satisfaction Survey. Detailed analysis and findings for 2010/11 along with comparisons to the 2009/10 results will be published in a full report in autumn 2011.

Enquiry types

The PDCS Customer Satisfaction Survey identified the customer's most recent contact with the service and then looked at all the interactions they had over the course of that enquiry.

The most common enquiry type for TPS customers was to claim the State Pension (31 per cent). This was followed by contacting regarding a query (30 per cent), notification of change of circumstances (18 per cent) and claiming Pension Credit (15 per cent). For DCS customers the most common enquiry type was to claim Disability Living Allowance (DLA) (37 per cent). This was followed by claims for Attendance Allowance (AA) (18 per cent), changes of circumstance (15 per cent), general queries (14 per cent) and claims for Carer's Allowance (CA) (11 per cent).

Customers who reported they had contacted PDCS to claim Pension Credit, AA or DLA were asked how they had first heard of the benefit, from family or friends was the most common answer across all benefits. Customers who reported contact with PDCS to claim the State Pension were most likely to report they had found out how to claim State Pension from a letter/leaflet from PDCS.

Contact channels used

Customers were asked what contact channels they had used as part of their enquiry and telephone was the most common for both TPS (77 per cent) and DCS customers (71 per cent), followed by customers writing to the service (14 per cent of TPS customers and 23 per cent of DCS customers).

The average number of telephone contacts was 2.17 for TPS customers and 2.39 for DCS customers. Customers who contacted by telephone were asked where they had got the telephone number from, the most common answer given was from a letter (63 per cent of TPS and 45 per cent of DCS customers).

The average number of times customers had written was 1.97 for TPS customers and 1.61 for DCS customers. TPS customers were more likely than DCS customers to have expected a reply when they wrote and not received one (21 per cent compared with seven per cent).

Twelve per cent of TPS and 17 per cent of DCS customers had searched online as part of their most recent enquiry, with three per cent of TPS and six per cent of DCS customers attempting a transaction online.

Two-thirds of TPS (67 per cent) and DCS (66 per cent) customers had access to the internet. Of these customers just under four-fifths of TPS (78 per cent) and DCS (81 per cent) customers accessed the internet at least once a week

Customer expectations

All customers were asked the length of their most recent enquiry. TPS customers reported shorter enquiry lengths than DCS customers, with a quarter (25 per cent) of TPS customers reporting that their enquiry was completed within one day/phone call compared with 12 per cent of DCS customers. When asked how long their enquiry took/was taking, fifteen per cent of TPS and 23 per cent of DCS customers reported that their enquiry was taking/took longer than expected.

Four-fifths of customers (80 per cent TPS and 78 per cent DCS) reported that they were given clear timings during their most recent enquiry. Seven in ten (69 per cent) TPS and about three-quarters (74 per cent) of DCS customers reported that they were kept up-to-date with the progress of their enquiry.

Customers were also asked how complex they had found the enquiry process, DCS customers were more likely to have found the enquiry process complicated than TPS customers (38 per cent compared with 18 per cent). When combining customers' expectations and experiences of complexity TPS customers were more likely to report that they had experienced a 'smooth enquiry' (67 per cent) than DCS customers (52 per cent). Whereas DCS customers were more likely to have experienced 'extra complexity' than TPS customers (16 per cent compared with eight per cent).

Overall performance

One of the key performance measures in the survey was overall customer satisfaction with the service and 91 per cent were satisfied with PDCS as a whole in 2010/11. Overall satisfaction was slightly higher for TPS customers than for DCS customers (94 per cent compared with 86 per cent).

While overall satisfaction is an important performance metric, the survey also included a number of other items that can be used as measures to evaluate the service as a whole. Customers were asked how much improvement the service needed to make and a no improvement response can be a good measure of differentiating high performance, 52 per cent TPS customers and 42 per cent DCS customers said the services needed no improvements at all.

In addition to this, it was also possible to look at customers' expectations alongside their satisfaction with the service. This again helps to differentiate performance at the high end with 29 per cent TPS customers and 23 per cent DCS customers 'delighted'.

The performance measure of staff behaviour achieved outstanding results often exceeding the overall satisfaction results. The positive views of staff were echoed when customers were asked to say what they felt was the best thing about the service. Staff were the number one area that was mentioned for both services, identified by 37 per cent of TPS and 44 per cent of DCS customers.

When it came to areas for improvement, the two services differed. For DCS customers the top area for improvement was the quality of forms and paperwork (25 per cent). By contrast, the biggest improvement for TPS customers was providing information and changes to the service (21 per cent for both).

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has a Customer Charter, which measures aspects of customer service. Four key drivers of satisfaction have been identified as important to customers against which the Department tracks its performance. Scores were highest for the Right Treatment driver at 84 per cent. Right Result scored 81 per cent with On Time and Easy Access scoring lower at 74 per cent and 70 per cent respectively.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The PDCS is an executive agency of the DWP formed in April 2008 from the amalgamation of TPS and the DCS. The agency is responsible for delivering a range of age and disability related benefits to around 15 million customers and pays out nearly £96 billion annually.

Previously both TPS and DCS had conducted customer research separately using different methodologies (face to face in home interviewing for TPS and postal questionnaires for DCS). With the creation of the new joint service the opportunity was taken to harmonise the two surveys into one quarterly monitor using the same methodology of telephone interviewing, the same questionnaire and sampling frame. Interviewing in 2010/11 involved two waves of interviewing, the first began in September 2010 and the second in February 2011. This working paper brings together the topline findings from 2010/11 PDCS Customer Satisfaction Survey.

1.2 Research objectives

The main objective of the PDCS Customer Satisfaction Survey is to monitor satisfaction with the service. Beyond this the research also aims to provide the 'customer voice' when it comes to operational and policy planning.

In particular, the research aims to establish what the main customer priorities are for the individual services and, as a result, identify how to improve satisfaction and reduce problems.

The survey also looks to provide findings that can be used to measure performance against the DWP customer charter standards of:

- right treatment;
- right result;
- on time;
- easy access.

The research examines the views of customers from a range of demographic and social backgrounds who interact with PDCS through different service channels so future design of services can be targeted most appropriately to suit the customers' needs.

1.3 Sample

The sample for the survey was generated from the PDCS database of customers. The target population for the research was customers who had recently completed a transaction with PDCS. This transaction may involve making a claim for various benefits on their own behalf, or on behalf of someone else, or notifying of a change in circumstance. A sample was drawn each wave based on customers who had made contact with PDCS within the last three months (within the last six months for the most recent wave), it was felt the more recent the transaction the better the customer would be able to recall the experience of the transaction. Customers may contact PDCS via the telephone, through local service, by letters and forms and by email. The survey included customers contacting via all these methods.

It should be noted that the approach described above means that the study is a survey of **contacting customers** rather than a survey of all customers receiving a benefit from one of the services. This approach was taken because the survey is intended to improve the service PDCS provides to its customers, therefore only customers who have had recent contact with the service were included.

1.4 Questionnaire design

The survey has been designed to capture the overall experience of the customer's most recent enquiry. The questionnaire traces the enquiry looking at all of the contact channels they have used, and maps their experiences against their overall ratings of the service as a whole.

The overall structure of the questionnaire is as follows:

- Reason for most recent contact with PDCS.
- Contact channels used.
- Forms.
- General enquiry experience.
- Enquiry conclusion.
- Non-enquiry contact.
- Problems and complaints.
- Overall satisfaction and statements.
- Demographics.

1.5 Fieldwork

Each wave all respondents were sent an advance letter two weeks before the start of fieldwork, which explained the purpose of the study, reasons for their inclusion in the research and the form that the survey would take. Respondents were invited to call a freephone number if they wished to opt-out of the survey or if they wished to enquire about further details of the research before deciding whether or not to participate. Contact details of those who opted out of the research were removed from the sample issued to interviewers.

There was a target of 1,500 interviews for the first wave and 3,500 interviews for the second wave. The following numbers were achieved per wave:

- 2010/11 Wave 1 = 1,500 interviews (772 TPS, 728 DCS).
- 2010/11 Wave 2 = 3,502 interviews (1,871 TPS, 1,631 DCS).

In total 5,002 interviews were achieved across 2010/11 with 2,643 TPS interviews and 2,359 DCS interviews.

The fieldwork for the first wave took place across a five week time period between Wednesday 15 September 2010 to Thursday 21 October 2010. The fieldwork for the second wave took place across an eight week time period between Monday 28 February and Tuesday 26 April.

The average interview length was 17 minutes, with all interviews conducted over the telephone using Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI). For respondents who were unable to complete the interview by telephone a postal option was available on request.

1.6 Report structure

This report is divided into five main chapters:

- Chapter 2: Enquiry types.
- Chapter 3: Contact channels used.
- Chapter 4: Customer expectations.
- Chapter 5: Overall performance.

2 Enquiry types

In the PDCS Customer Satisfaction Survey the questionnaire establishes the subject of the respondent's most recent contact with the service and then follows this throughout its history. This chapter discusses the types of enquiry customers were contacting the service about. In addition to this, it also looks at how customers who were contacting to claim Pension Credit, AA or DLA first heard of these benefits. Customers who were contacting to claim State Pension were asked how they had found out how to claim State Pension.

2.1 Main reason for contact

The sample for the PDCS Customer Satisfaction Survey is drawn from a list of contacts that have been made which result in a change to a customers' record. This will usually be either a change of circumstance or a claim. However, the survey itself focuses on the customers' most recent enquiry with the service and this may be a more recent incident. The survey also allows the customer to define the enquiry type in their own terms and this may also be slightly different to how they are classified on the records held by the PDCS.

There was a wide variety of reasons why customers contacted PDCS, the results for TPS are shown in Figure 2.1 and for DCS in Figure 2.2.

Figure 2.1 Main reason for contact – TPS

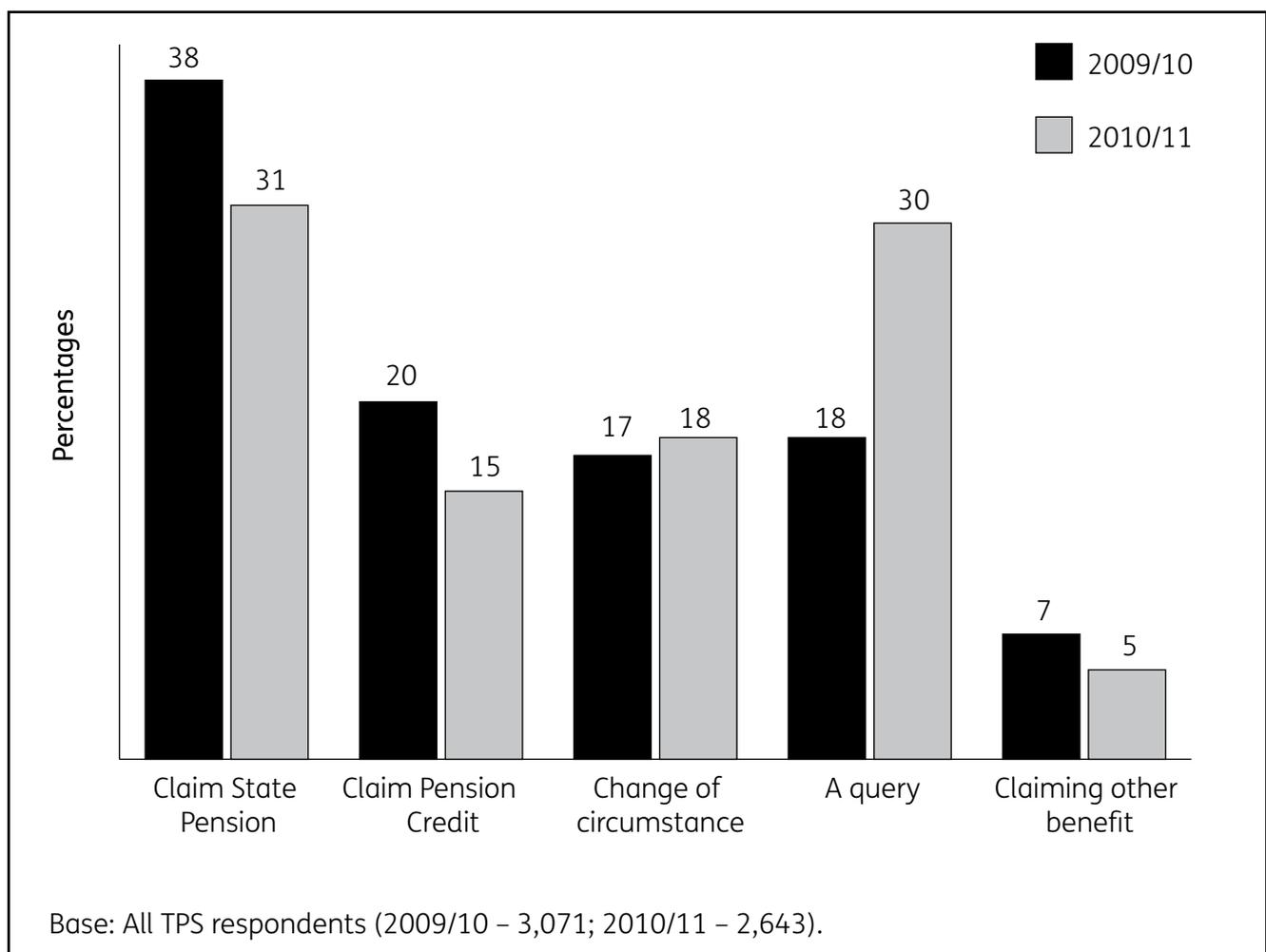
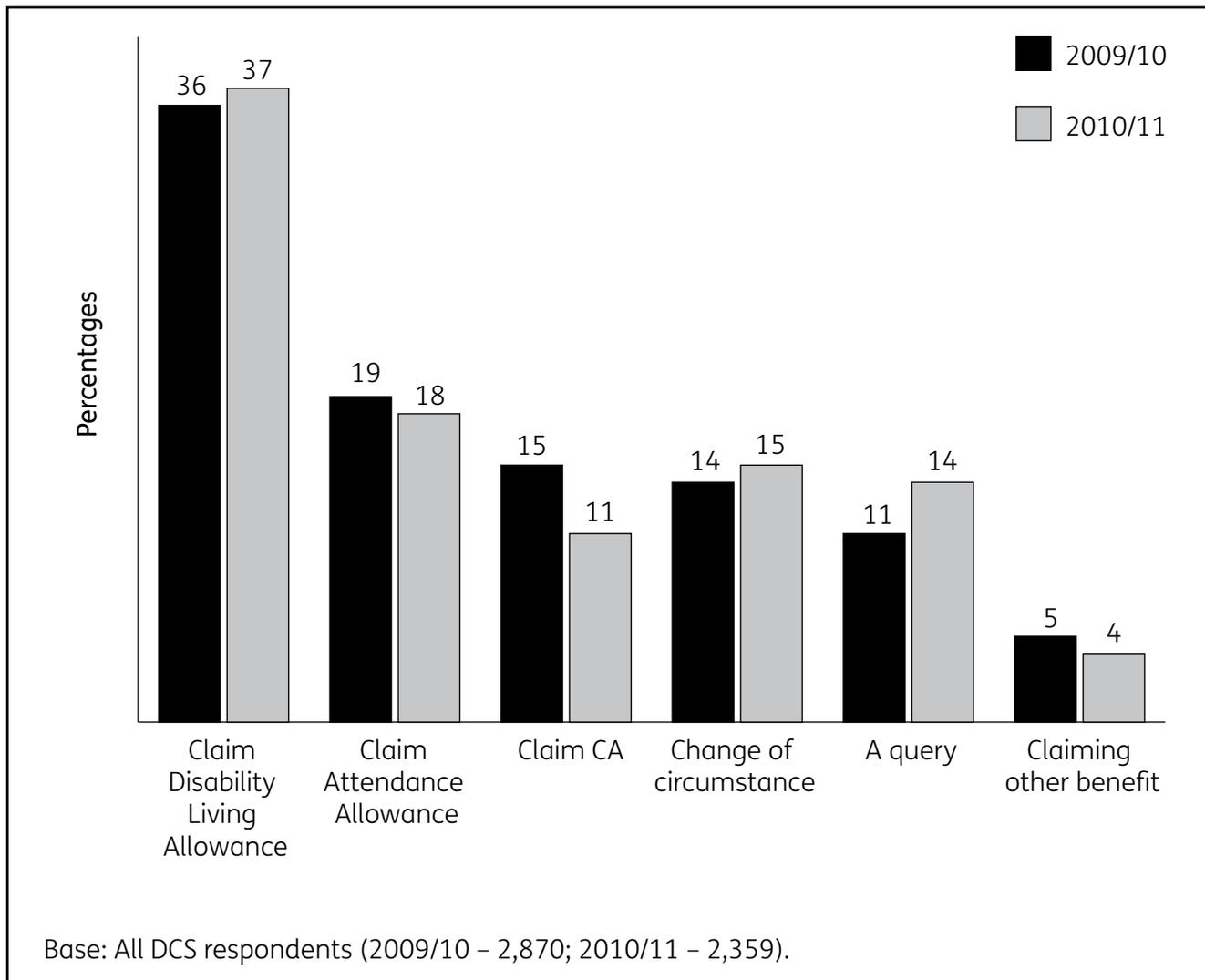


Figure 2.2 Main reason for contact – DCS



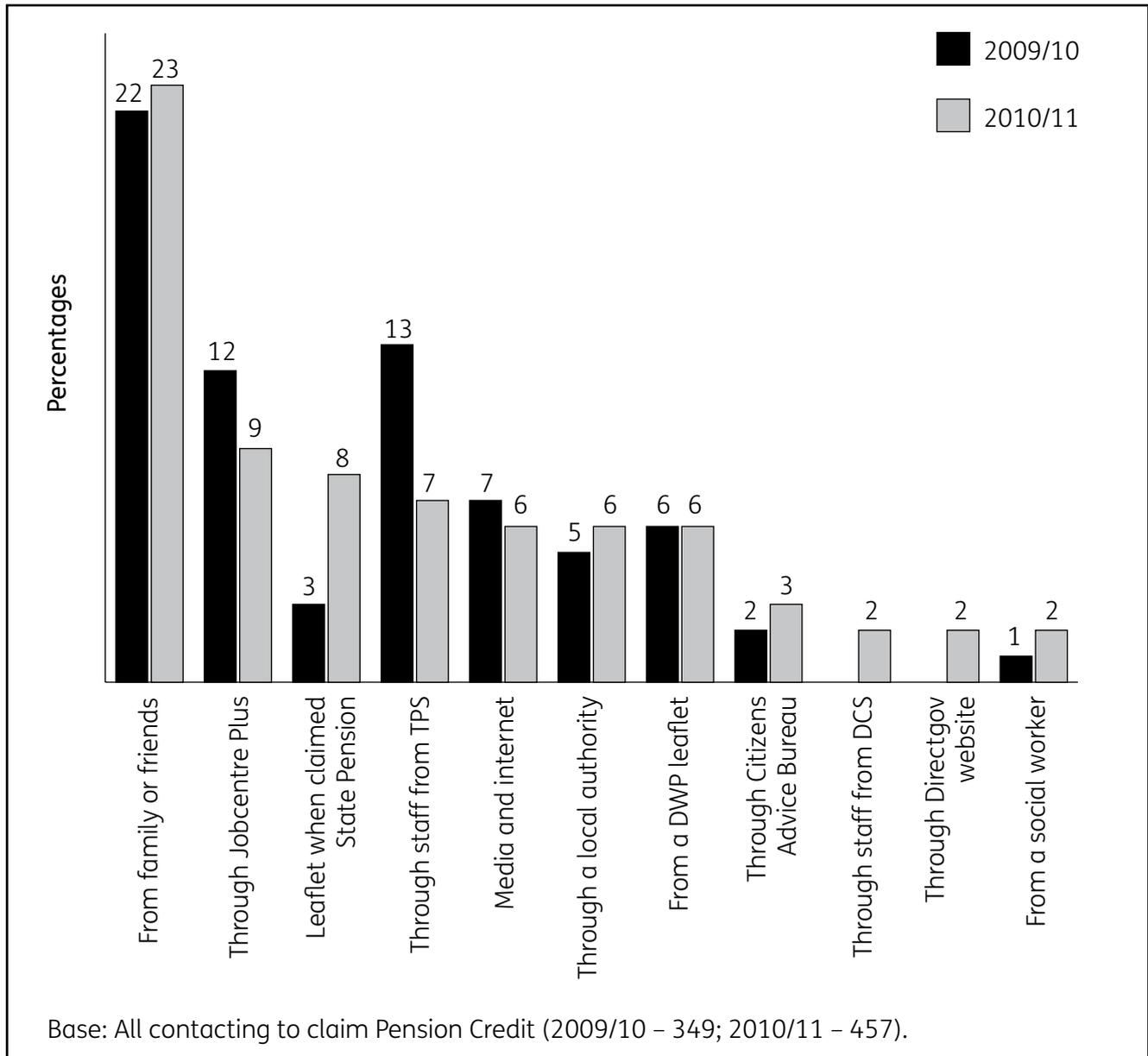
For TPS customers the most likely reason for them to contact PDCS was to claim the State Pension (31 per cent), this was followed very closely by a query (30 per cent). This differs from DCS customers who were twice as likely to be contacting to claim DLA (37 per cent) than for any other reason.

2.2 Signposting

All PDCS customers who reported they had contacted PDCS to claim Pension Credit, AA or DLA were asked how they had first heard about the benefit.

Results for Pension Credit are shown in Figure 2.3. Customers contacting to claim Pension Credit were most likely to state they first heard about the benefit from family or friends (23 per cent) or through Jobcentre Plus (nine per cent)

Figure 2.3 How first heard about Pension Credit



Results for AA are shown in Figure 2.4. Customers contacting to claim AA were most likely to report they first heard of the benefit from family or friends (28 per cent) or from a doctor or a nurse (ten per cent)

Figure 2.4 How first heard about AA

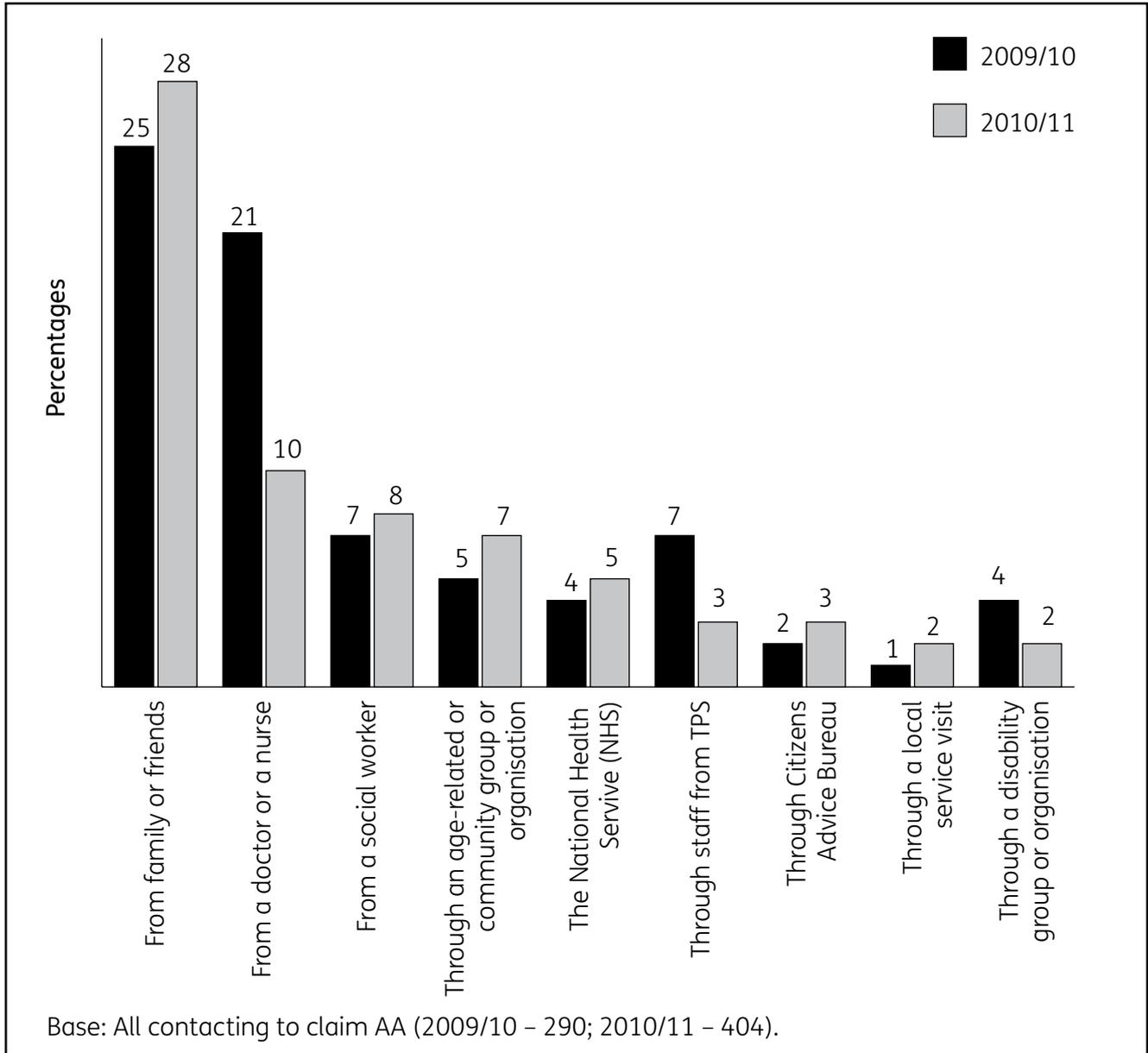
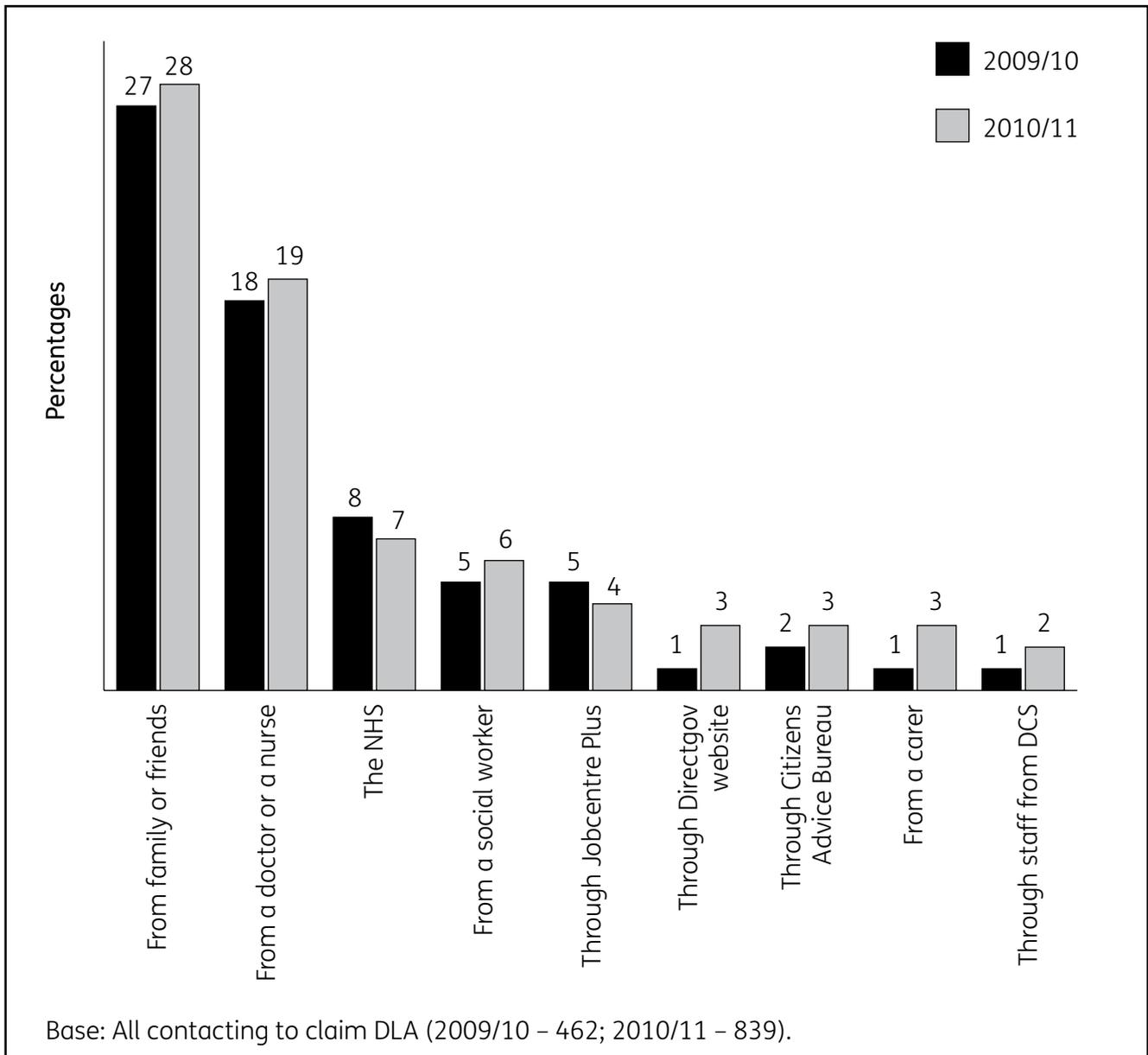


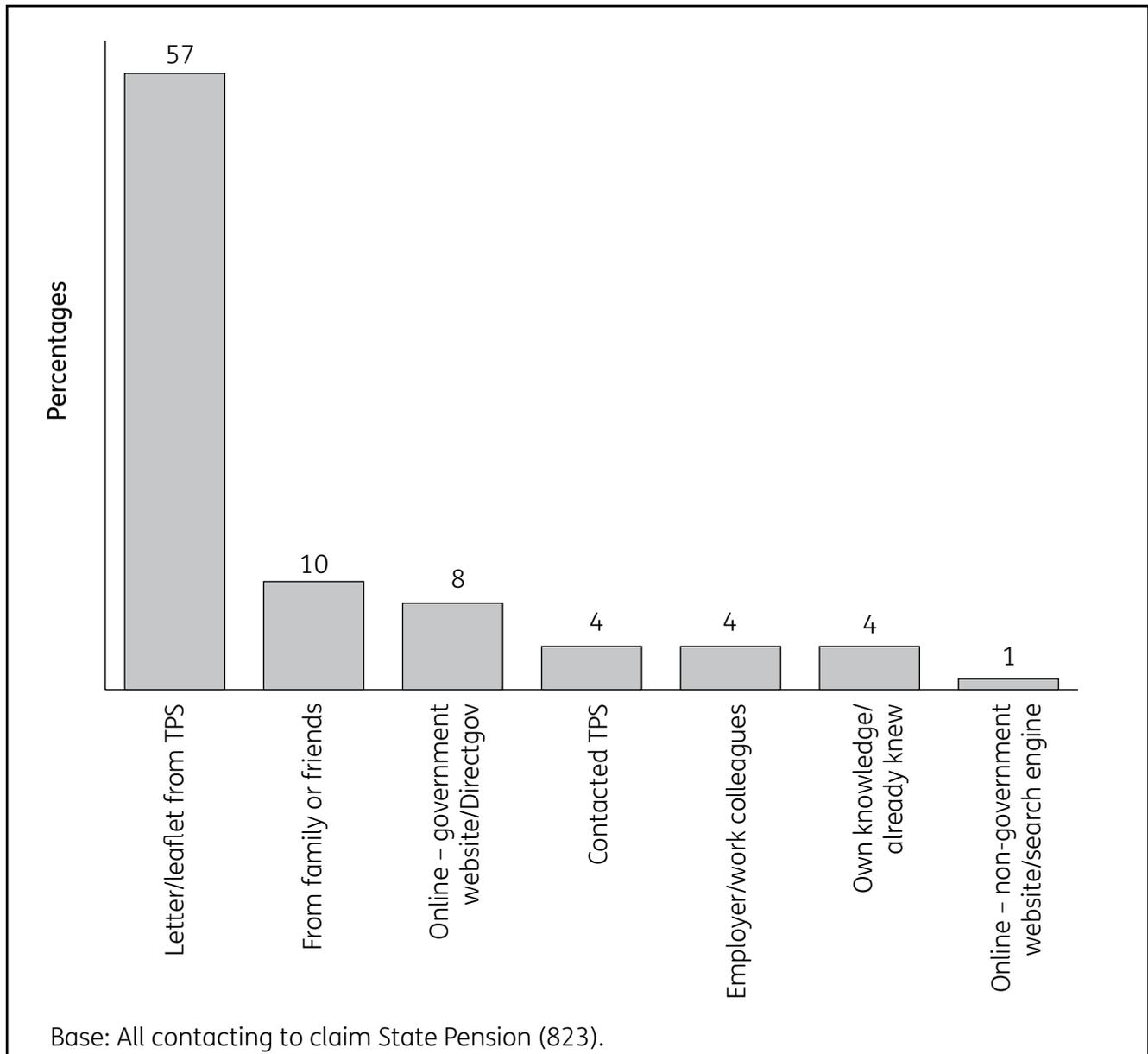
Figure 2.5 displays results for DLA. Customers contacting to claim DLA were most likely to have first heard about DLA from family or friends (28 per cent) or from a doctor or a nurse (19 per cent).

Figure 2.5 How first heard about DLA



Rather than asking customers how they had first heard about State Pension customers who were contacting to claim State Pension were asked how they found out how to claim the benefit, results are shown in Figure 2.6. This question was not asked in the 2009/10 survey. Customers were most likely to report they had found out how to claim State Pension from a letter/leaflet from PDCS (57 per cent).

Figure 2.6 How found out how to claim State Pension



3 Contact channels used

This chapter discusses the different channels of contact customers used as part of their most recent enquiry. In addition to this, it also looks at internet access/usage as well as whether customers who had internet access and had not attempted an online transaction would consider using the internet for a number of different activities.

3.1 Contact channels used

All PDCS customers were asked which contact channels they had used during the course of their most recent enquiry. Results for TPS are shown in Figure 3.1 and for DCS in Figure 3.2. For both TPS and DCS customers the most common contact channel was telephone (77 per cent TPS customers and 71 per cent DCS customers in 2010/11) followed by writing to PDCS (14 per cent of TPS customers and 23 per cent of DCS customers in 2010/11).

Figure 3.1 Contact channels used – TPS

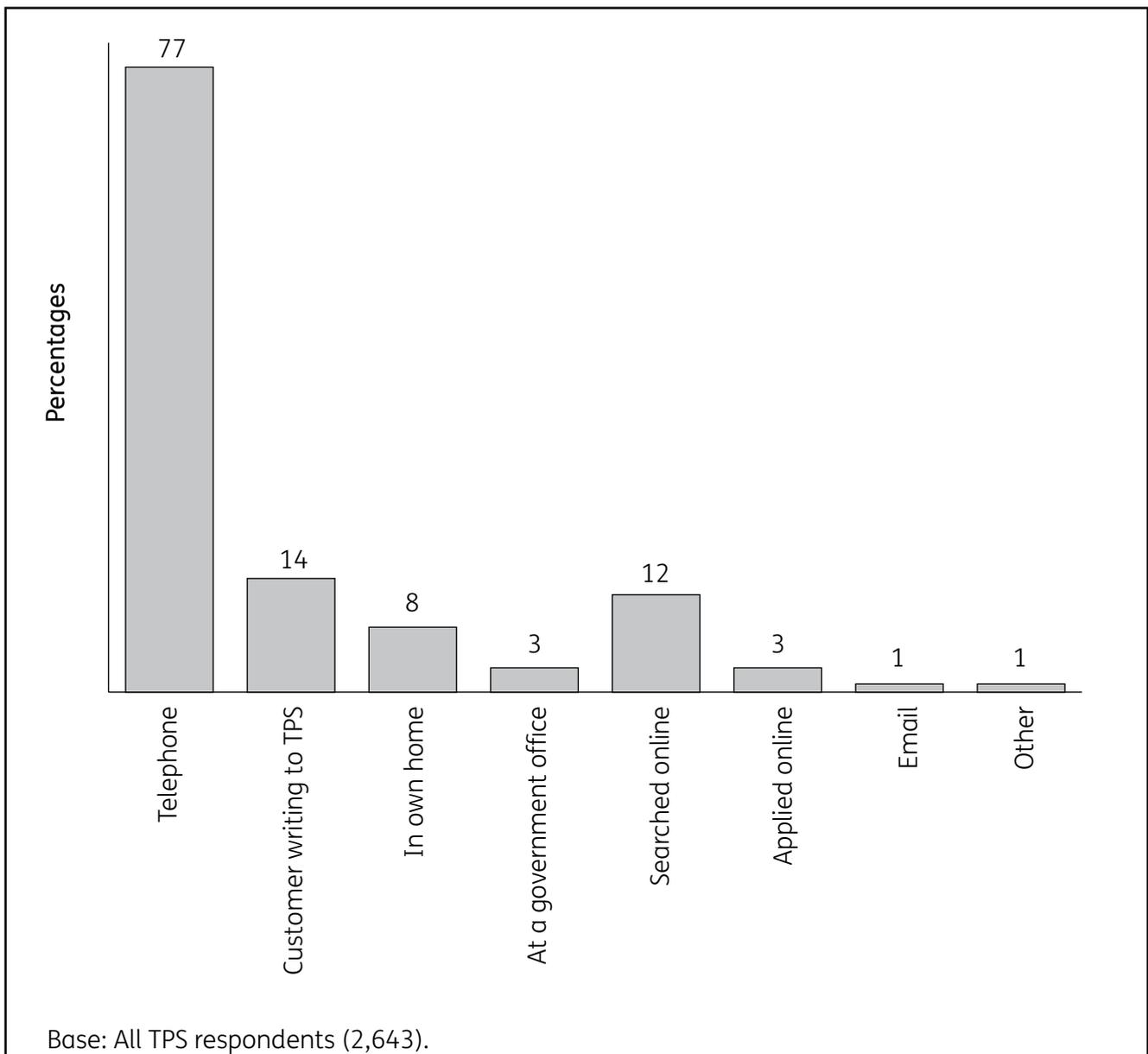
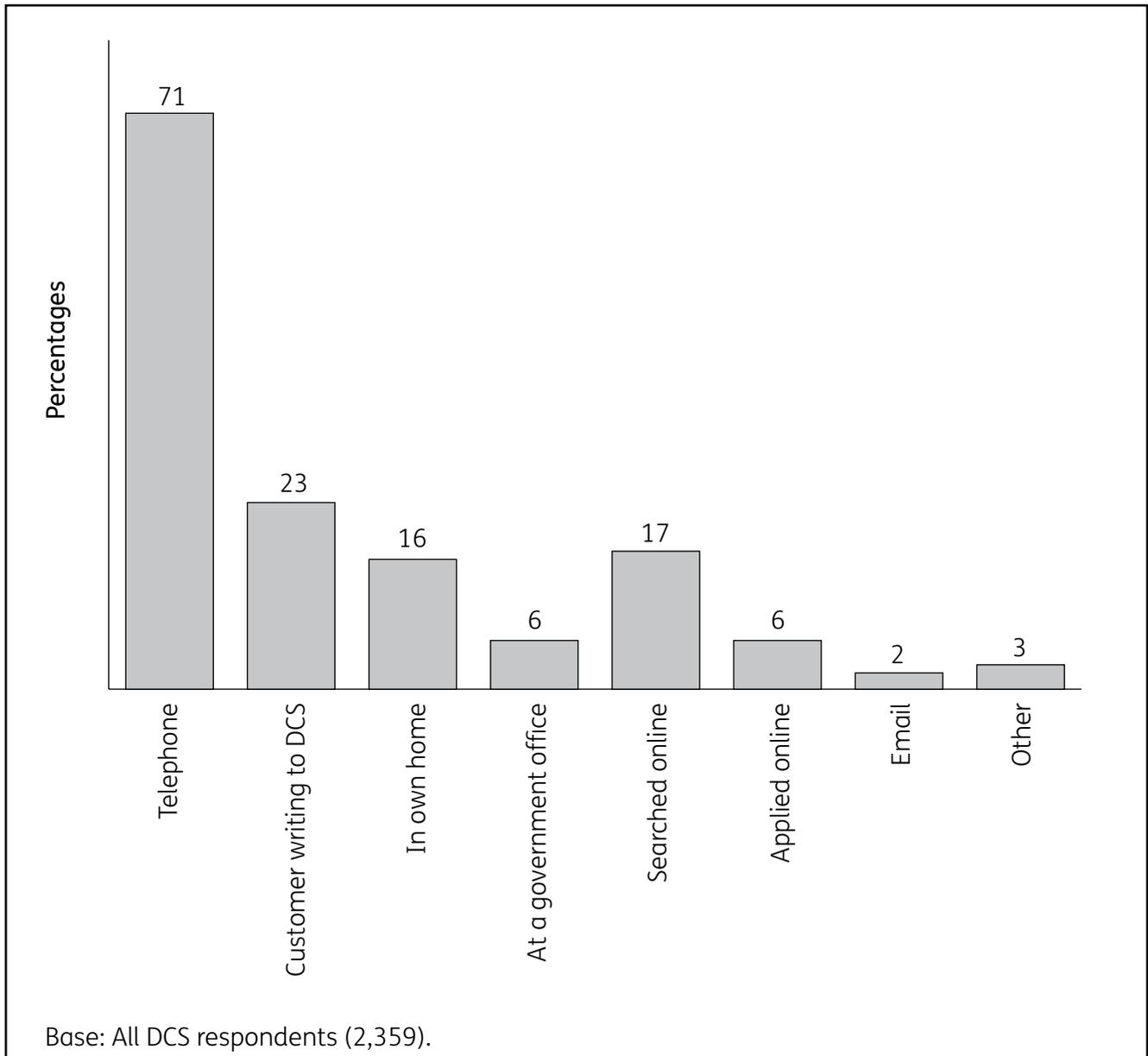


Figure 3.2 Contact channels used – DCS

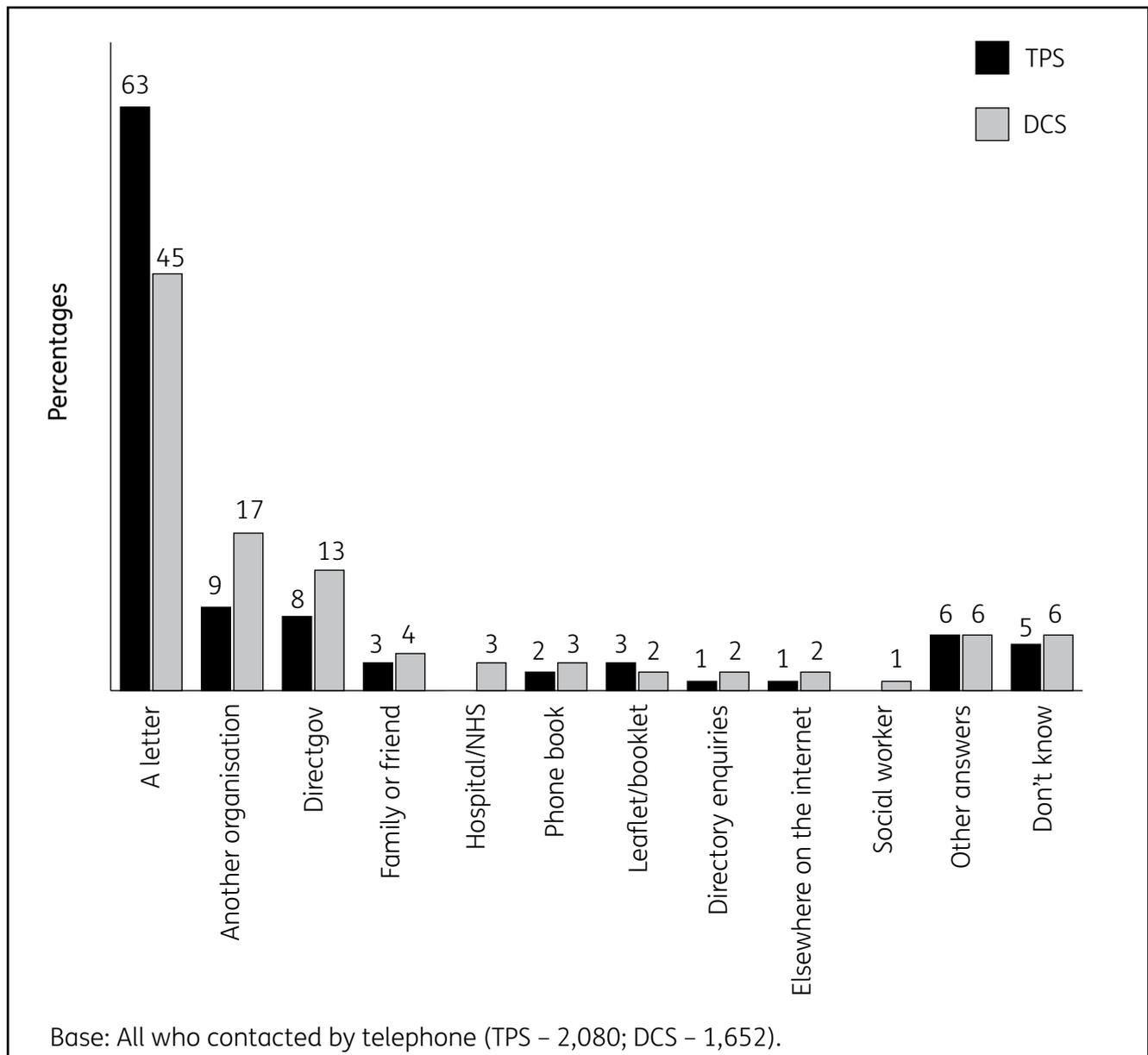


3.2 Telephone contact

The most common contact channel used for customer’s most recent enquiry was the telephone (77 per cent TPS customers and 71 per cent DCS customers in 2010/11). All customers who had contact by telephone were asked how many times they had called the service; TPS customers called an average of 2.17 times and DCS customers an average of 2.39 times.

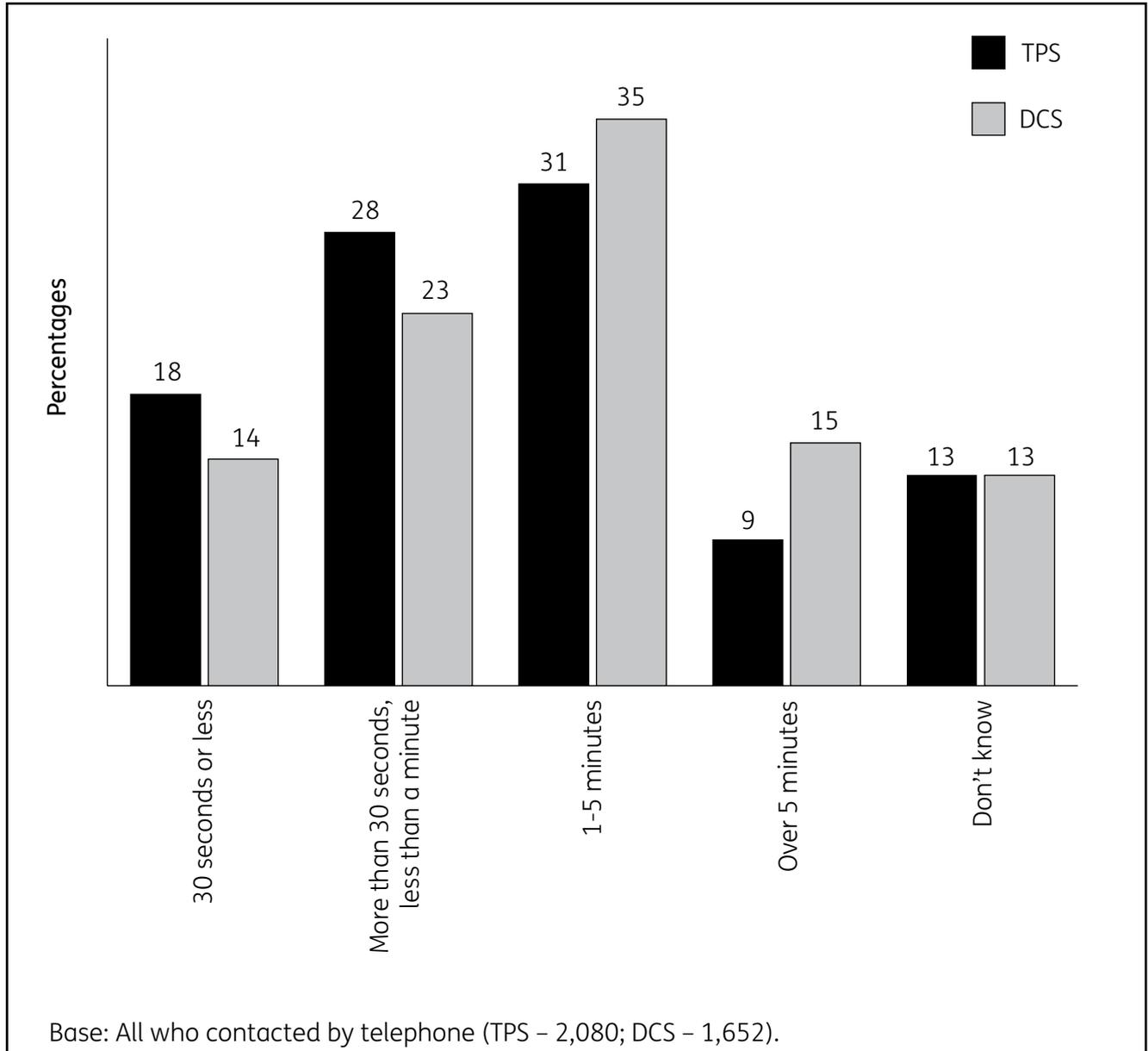
Customers who had contact by telephone were asked where they had got the telephone number from that they called, results are shown in Figure 3.3. The most common answers given were from a letter (63 per cent TPS and 45 per cent DCS), from another organisation (nine per cent TPS and 17 per cent DCS) or from DirectGov (eight per cent TPS and 13 per cent DCS).

Figure 3.3 Telephone number source



Shown in Figure 3.4 are the responses customers gave when they were asked how long they had waited for their calls to be answered. TPS customers were more likely to report waiting times of less than one minute, compared to DCS customers.

Figure 3.4 How long waited for calls to be answered

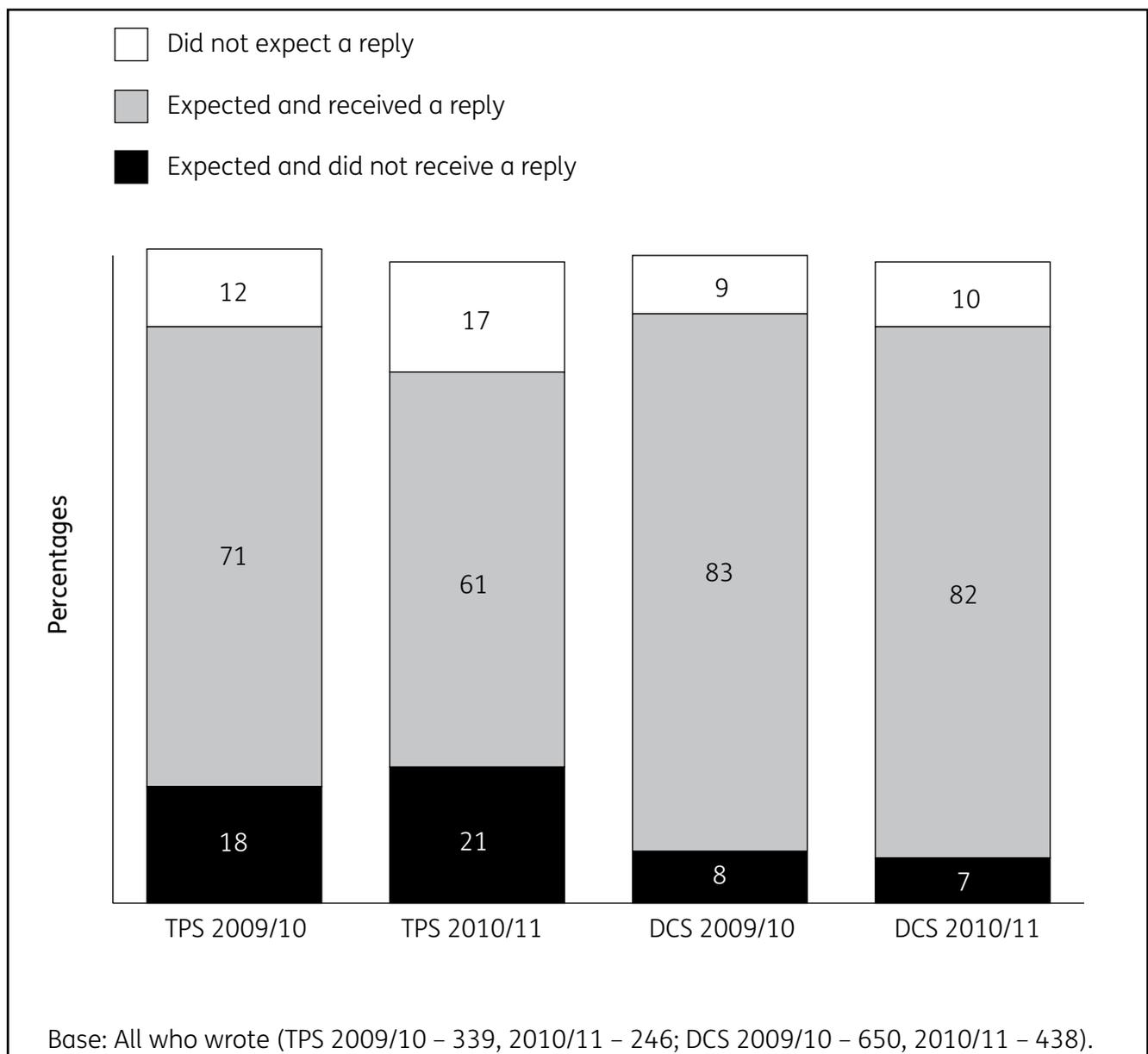


3.3 Postal contact

All customers who wrote to the service were asked how many times they had done so. The average number of times customers had written was 1.97 for TPS customers and 1.61 for DCS customers.

Figure 3.5 displays the results for both TPS and DCS customers in whether they expected/received a reply when they wrote. The majority of both TPS and DCS customers received the reply they expected. However, TPS customers were more likely than DCS customers to have expected a reply and not received one (21 per cent compared with seven per cent in 2010/11).

Figure 3.5 Whether expected/received a reply

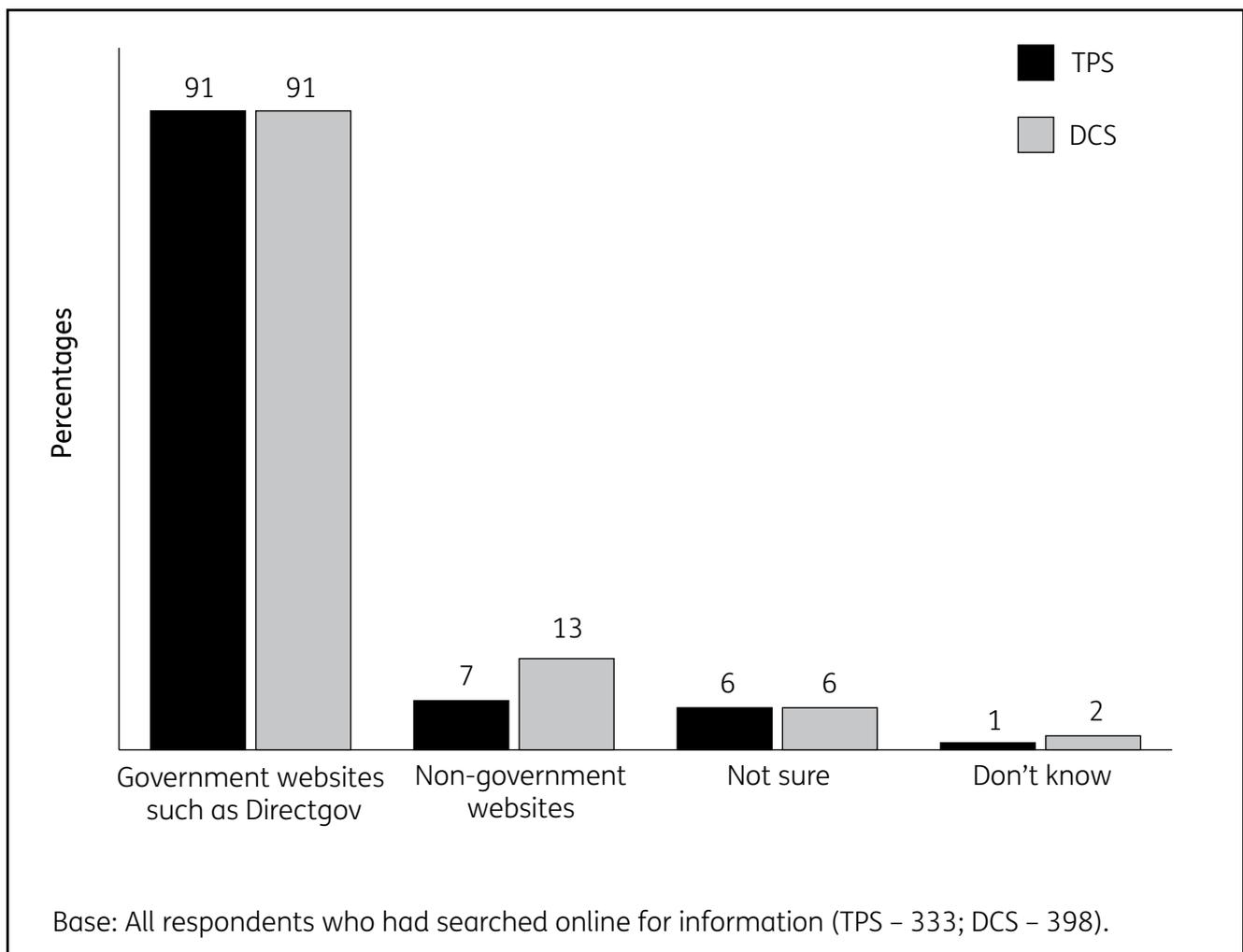


3.4 Online contact methods

Twelve per cent of TPS customers and 17 per cent of DCS customers had searched online as part of their most recent enquiry. Three per cent of TPS customers and six per cent of DCS customers had attempted an online transaction.

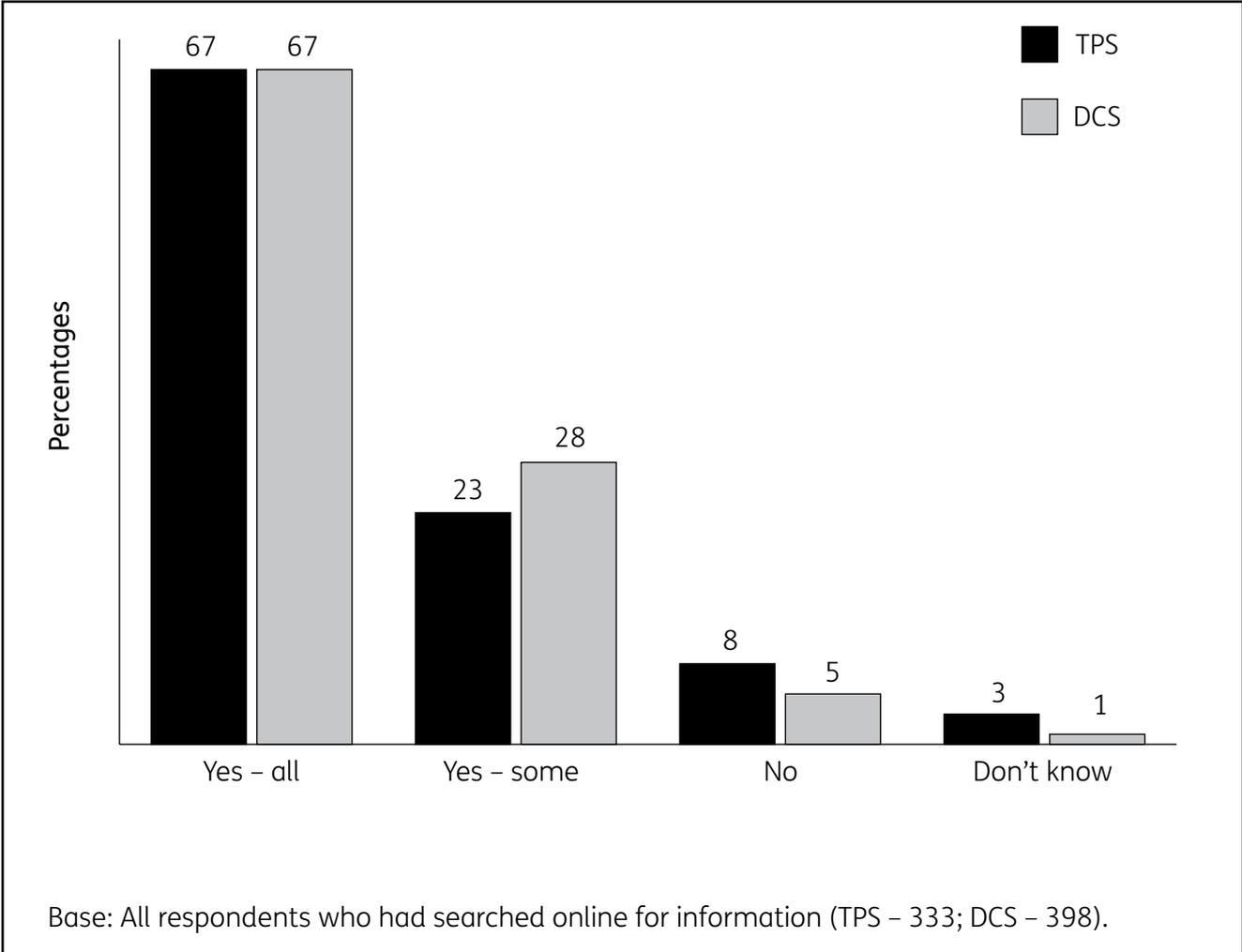
As shown in Figure 3.6, almost nine in ten (91 per cent) customers who had searched online for information as part of their most recent enquiry had used government websites such as DirectGov.

Figure 3.6 Sites searched for information



All customers who had searched online for information were asked whether they had found all the information they needed. As displayed in Figure 3.7, the majority of both TPS and DCS customers had found all or some of the information they needed (90 per cent of TPS customers and 95 per cent of DCS customers).

Figure 3.7 Whether found all information needed online



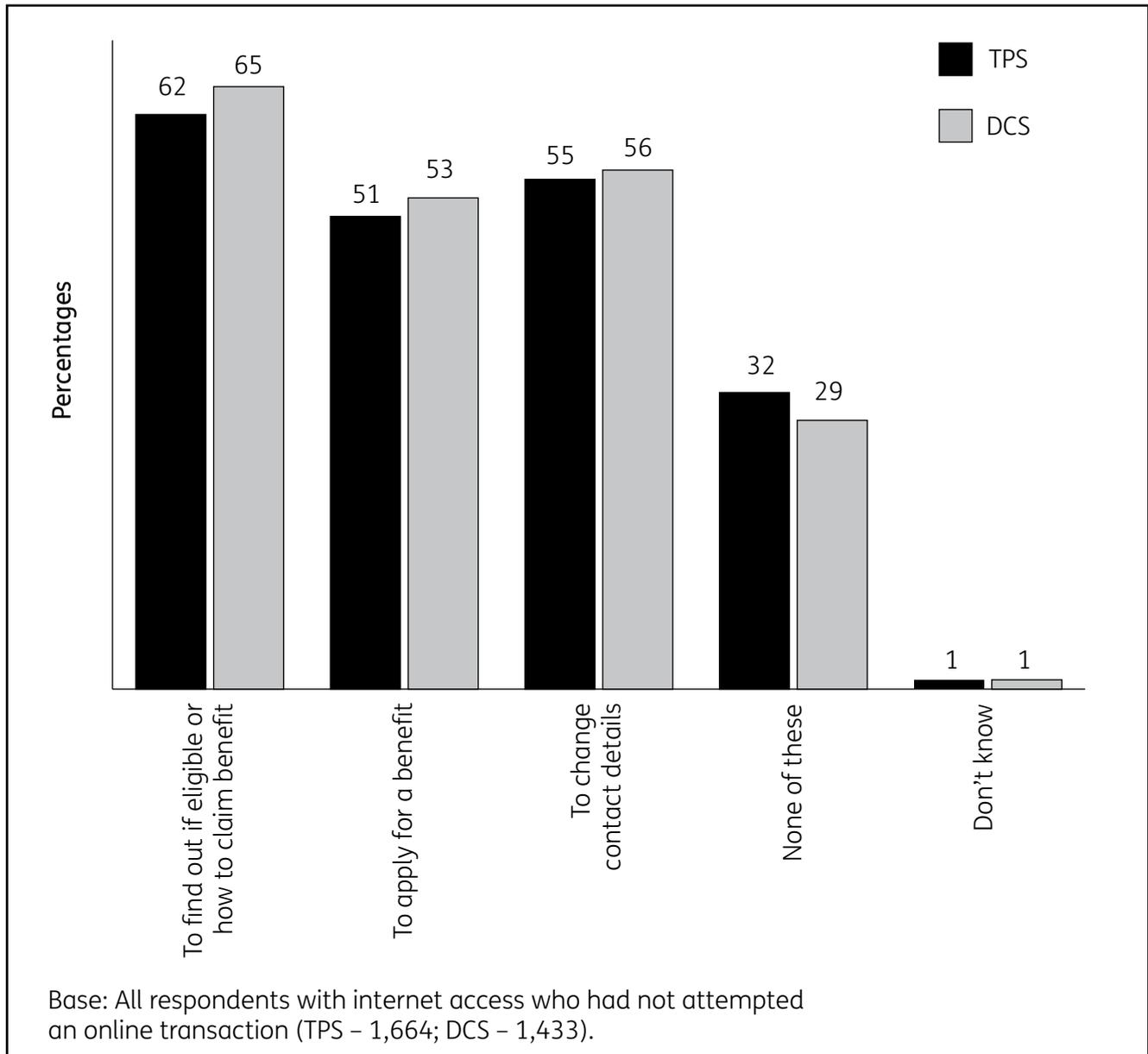
3.5 Internet access and usage

All customers were asked if they had access to the internet and if so how often they accessed the internet. Two-thirds of TPS (67 per cent) and DCS (66 per cent) customers had access to the internet. Of those customers that had internet access about four-fifths (78 per cent of TPS customers and 81 per cent of DCS customers) accessed the internet at least once a week.

3.6 Whether would consider using internet for

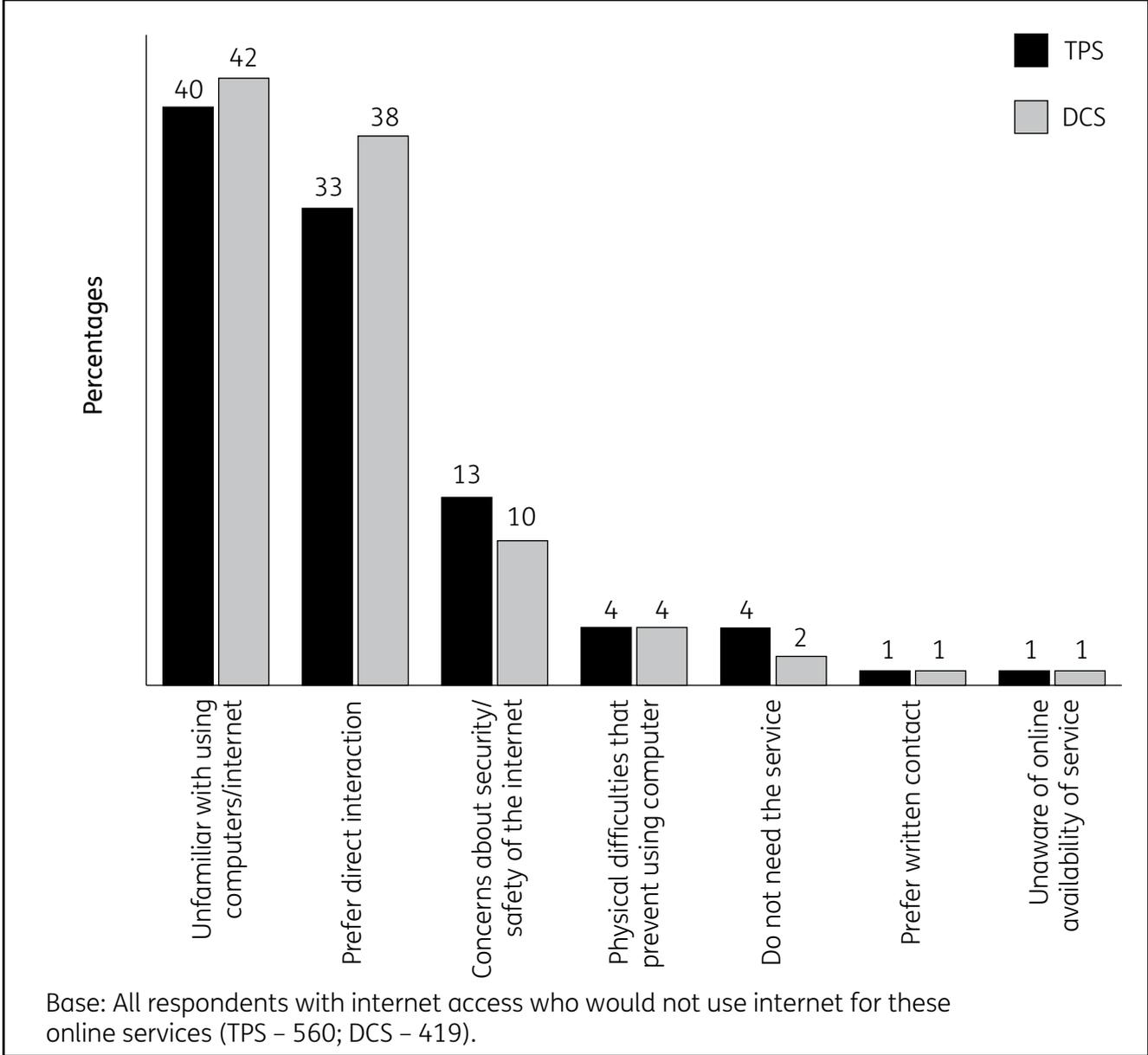
All customers who had access to the internet and had not attempted an online transaction were asked whether they would consider using the internet to find out if eligible or how to claim a benefit, to apply for a benefit or to change contact details, results are shown in Figure 3.8.

Figure 3.8 Whether would consider using internet for...



All customers who reported that they would not use the internet for any of these services were asked why this was, Figure 3.9 displays their answers.

Figure 3.9 Why would not use internet for these services...



4 Customer expectations

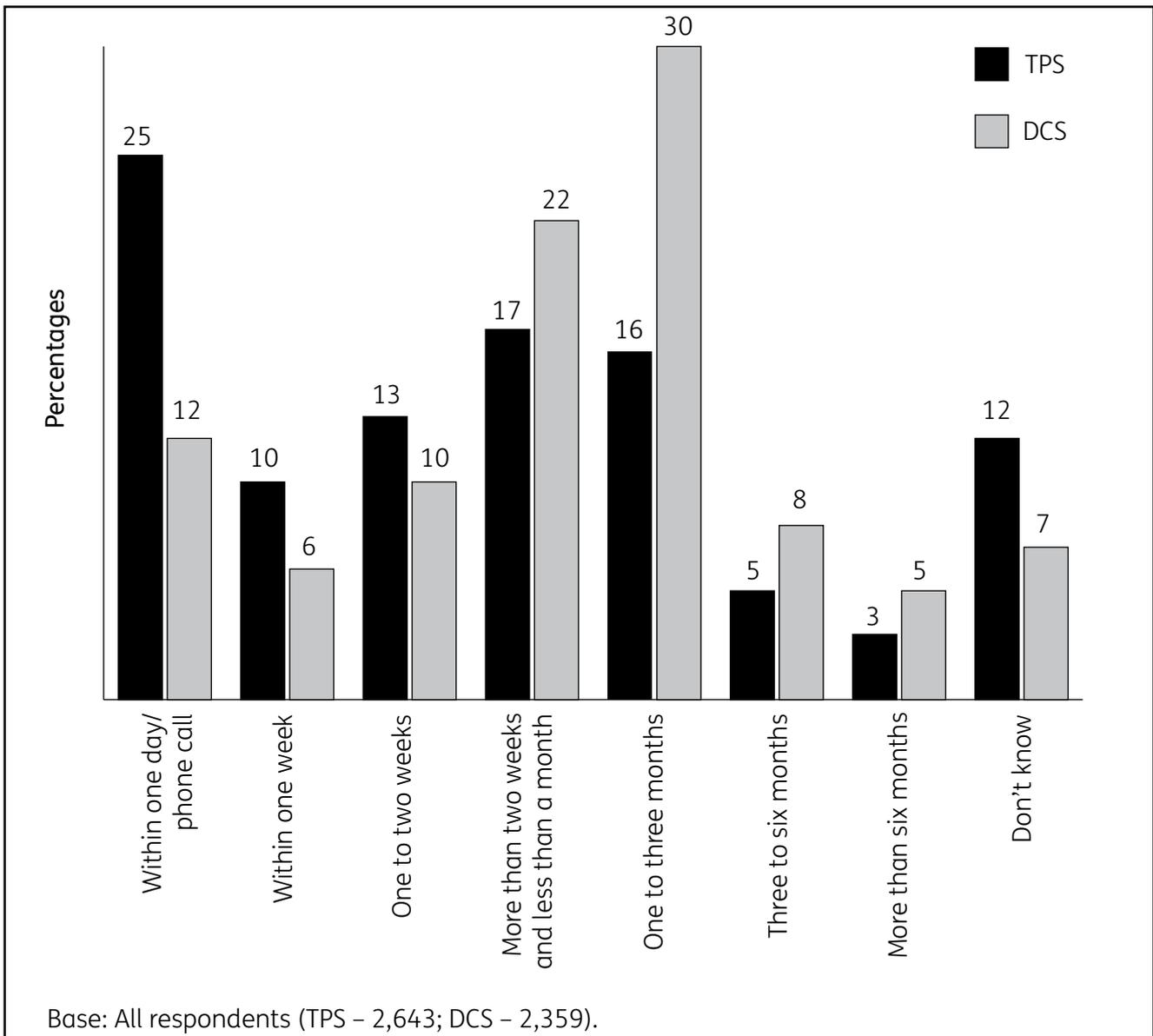
Regarding expectations, customers were asked:

- The length of their enquiry.
- Whether their enquiry had taken less, more or about as long as expected.
- Whether they were given clear timings.
- Whether kept informed during the course of their enquiry; and
- How complex they had found the enquiry process.

4.1 Length of enquiry

All respondents were asked the length of their most recent enquiry; results are shown in Figure 4.1. TPS respondents reported shorter enquiry lengths than DCS respondents.

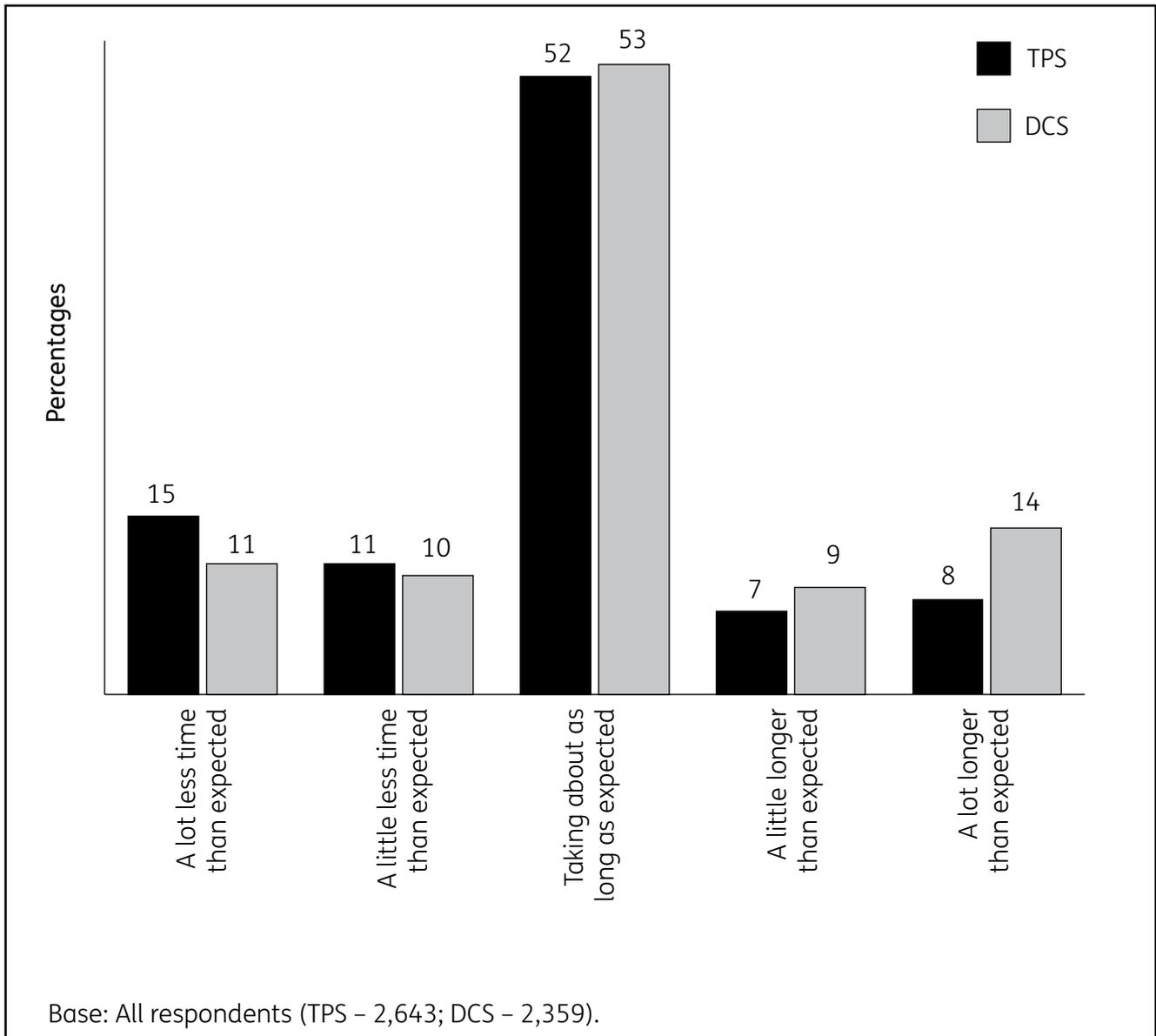
Figure 4.1 Length of enquiry



4.2 Speed of conclusion against expectations

Customers were asked whether the length of their most recent enquiry had taken less time, more time or about as long as expected. When customers responded that their enquiry had taken less or more time than expected they were asked to specify whether this was a lot less, a little less and a little longer or a lot longer. Results for both TPS and DCS customers are shown in Figure 4.2.

Figure 4.2 Speed of conclusions against expectations



4.3 Clear timings and kept up-to-date with progress

All customers were asked whether during their most recent enquiry they were given clear timings and whether they were kept up-to-date with the progress of their enquiry. Figures 4.3 and 4.4 displays the results for those who felt that it was applicable.

Figure 4.3 Whether given clear timings and kept up-to-date – TPS

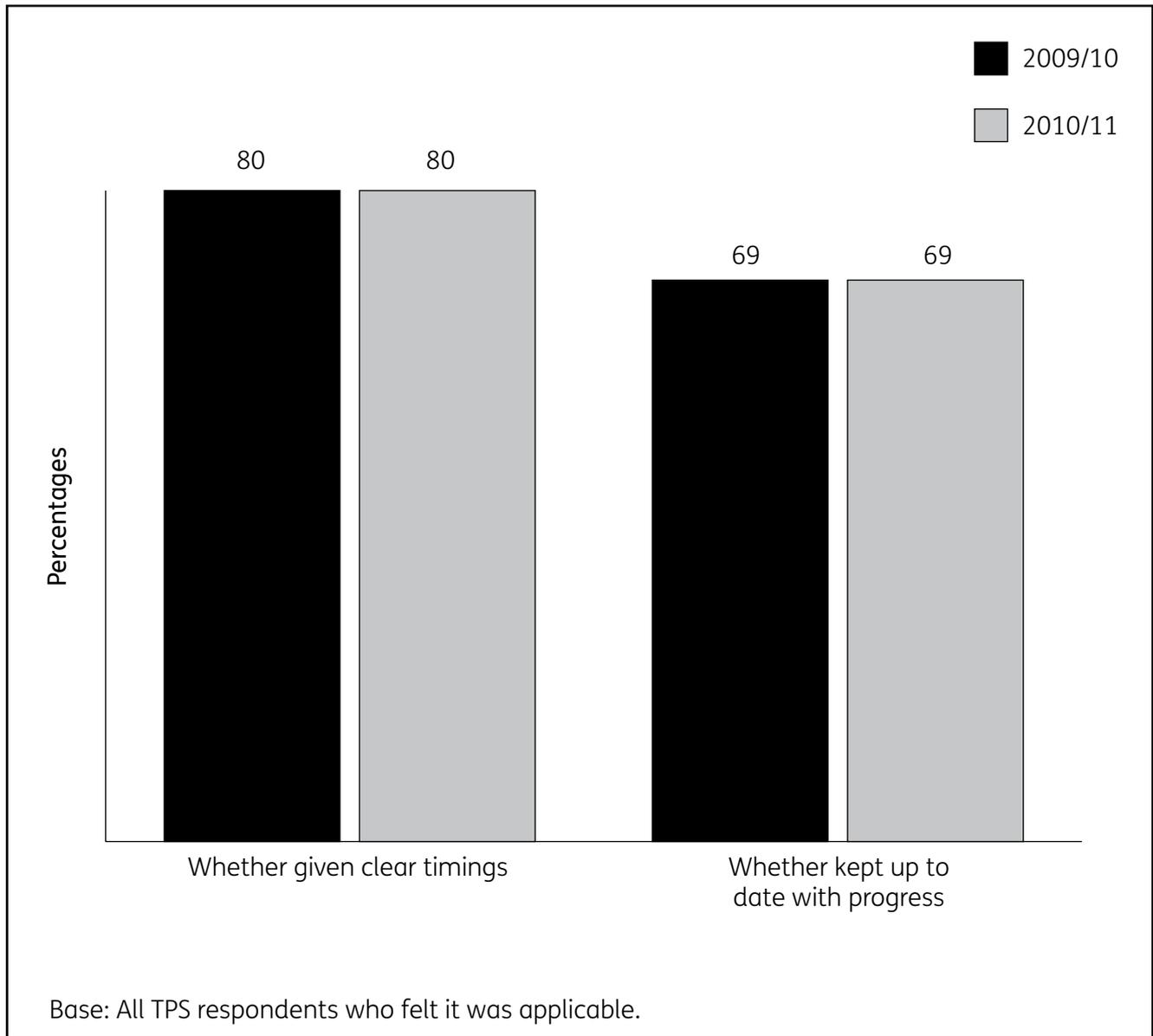
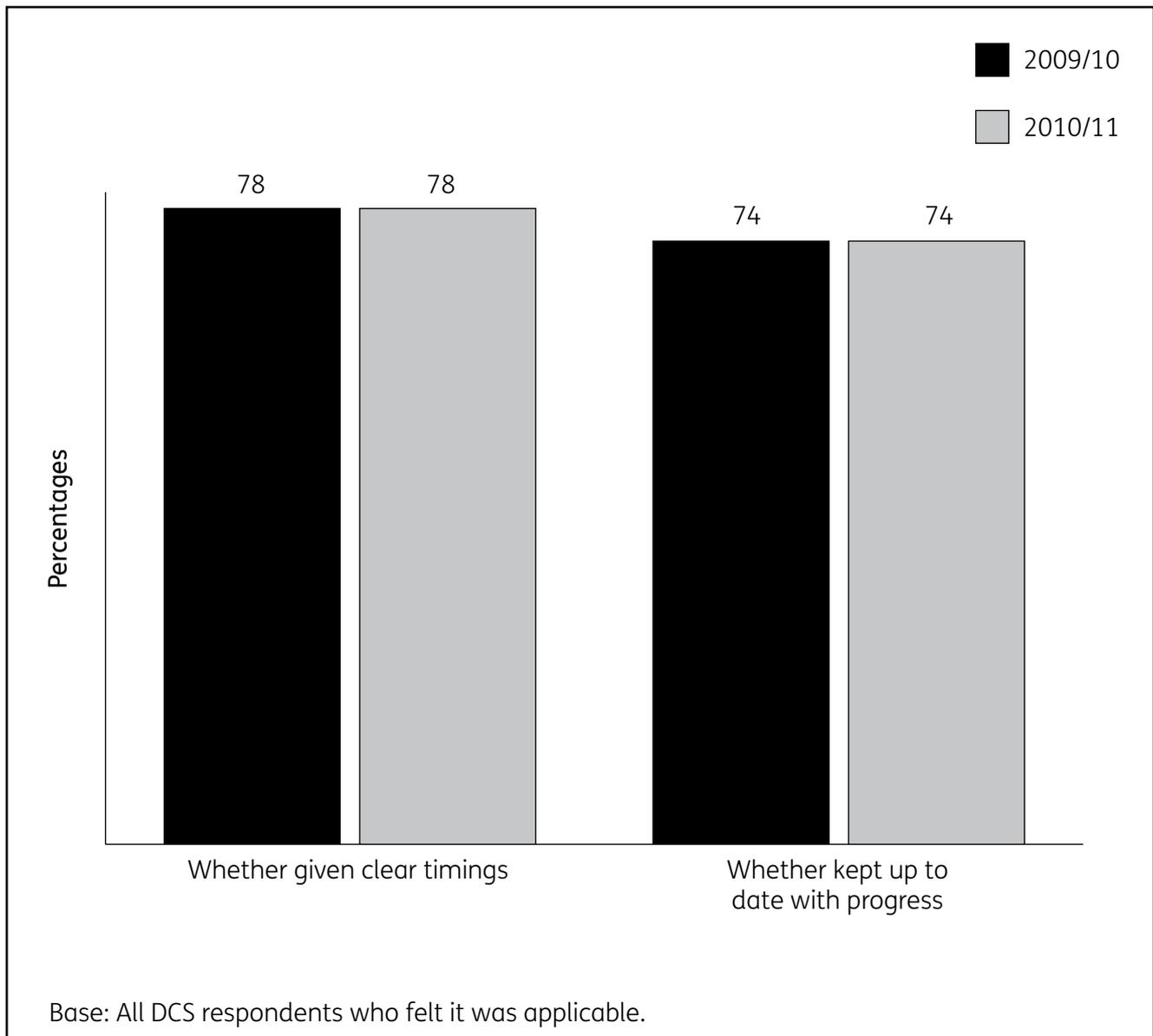


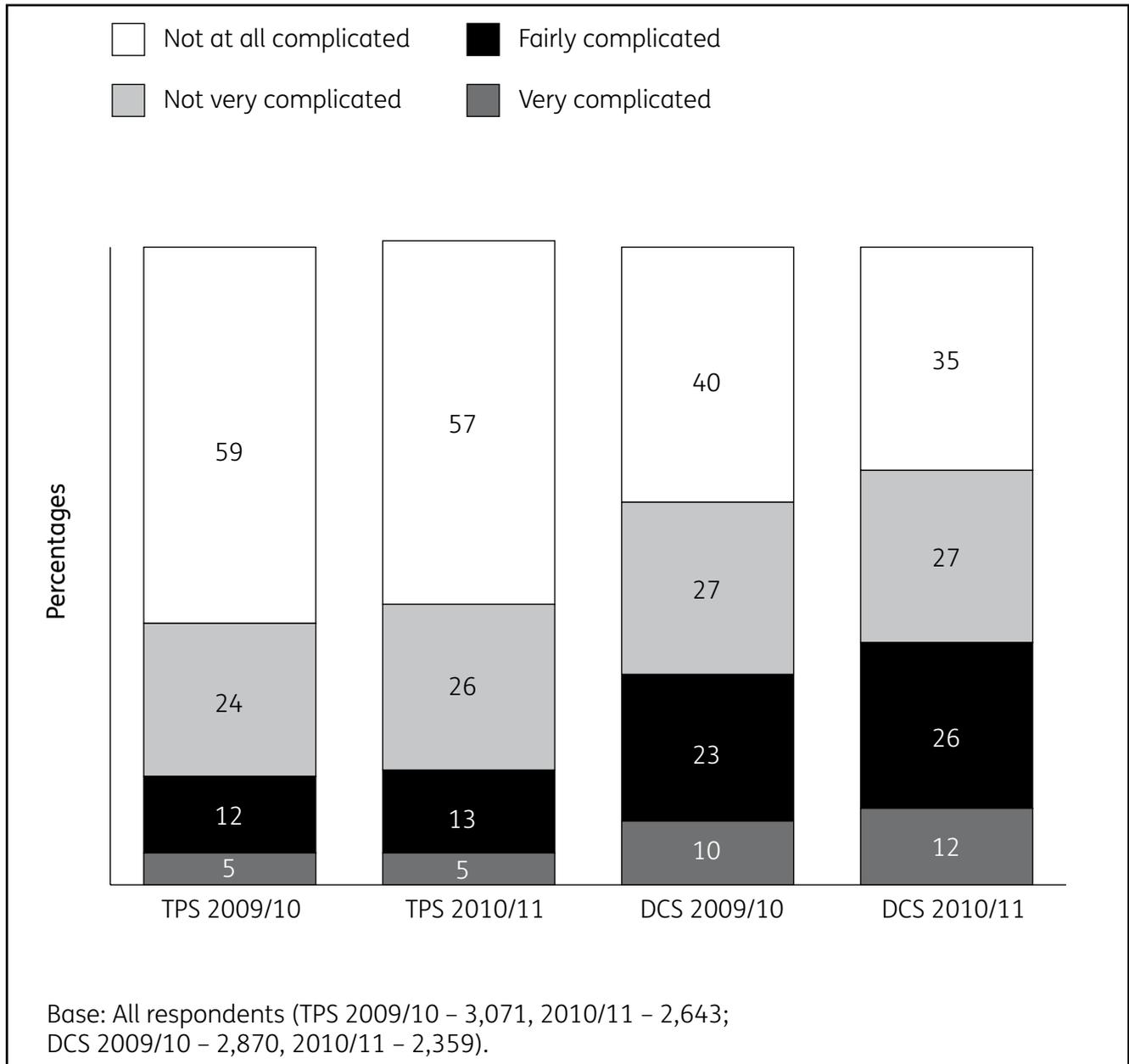
Figure 4.4 Whether given clear timings and kept up-to-date – DCS

Four-fifths of customers reported that they were given clear timings during their most recent enquiry (80 per cent of TPS customers and 78 per cent of DCS customers). DCS customers were more likely than TPS customers to report they were kept up-to-date with the progress of their enquiry (74 per cent compared with 69 per cent respectively).

4.4 Complexity

Figure 4.5 displays how complex TPS and DCS respondents had found the enquiry process. In both 2009/10 and 2010/11 DCS customers were more likely than TPS customers to report that they had found the enquiry process complicated. For DCS customers 33 per cent in 2009/10 and 38 per cent in 2010/11 found the enquiry process complicated compared with 17 per cent of TPS customers in 2009/10 and 18 per cent in 2010/11.

Figure 4.5 Complexity – TPS and DCS



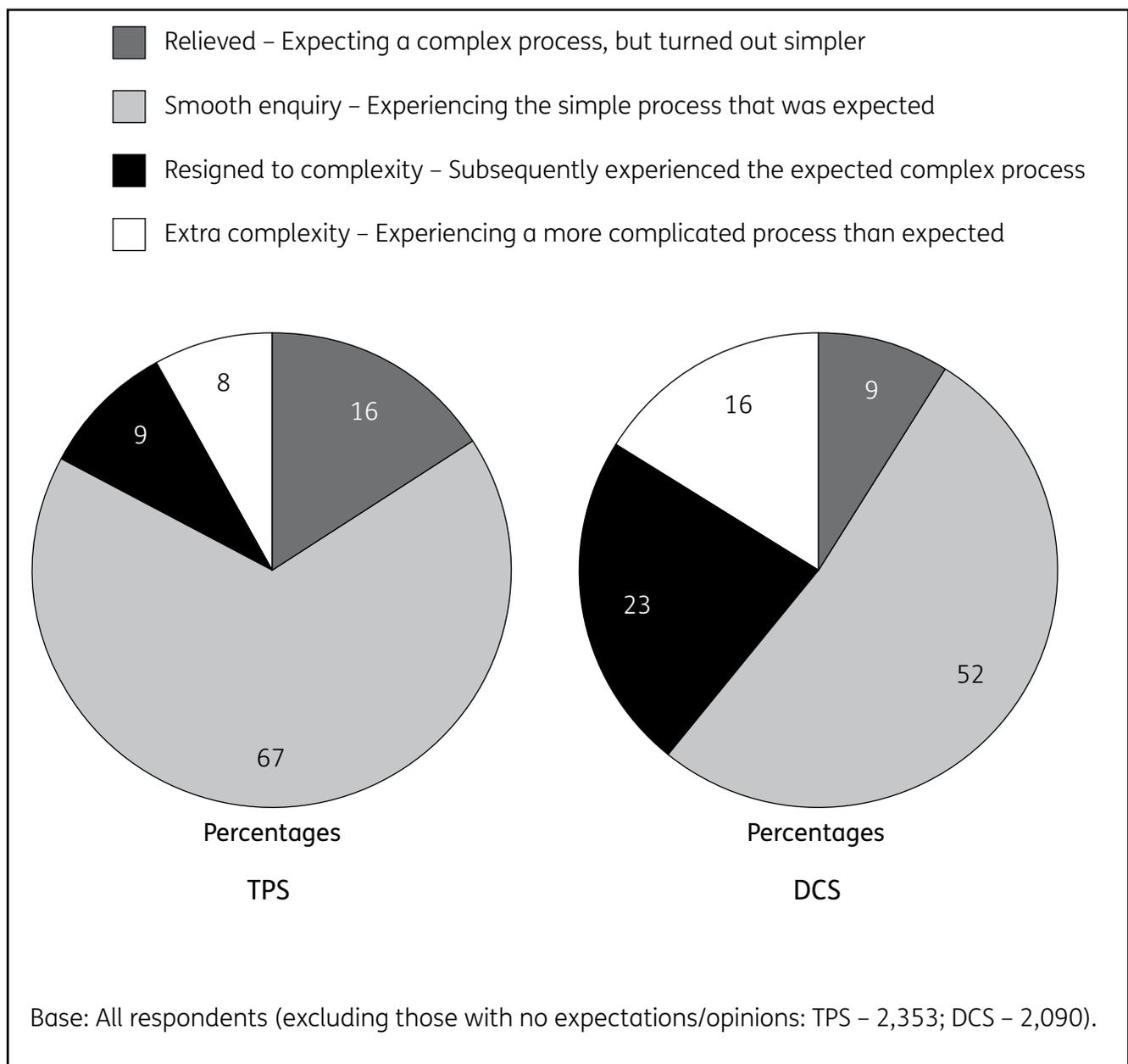
As well as being asked how complicated they had found the enquiry process all customers were asked their expectations of how complex the enquiry process would be.

When exploring customers' expectations and experiences of complexity we combined their responses and it was then possible to identify four distinct groups:

- Relieved – customers who were expecting a complex process, but it turned out to be simpler than expected.
- Smooth enquiry – customers who experienced the simple process that was expected.
- Resigned to complexity – customers who subsequently experienced the complex process they had expected.
- Extra complexity – customers who experienced a more complex process than they had expected.

Figure 4.6 displays customers' expectations regarding complexity. TPS customers were more likely to report that they had experienced a 'smooth enquiry' (67 per cent) than DCS customers (52 per cent). Whereas DCS customers were more likely to have experienced 'extra complexity' than TPS customers (16 per cent compared with eight per cent).

Figure 4.6 Customers expectations regarding complexity



5 Overall performance

Towards the end of the survey all customers were presented with a series of questions which asked them to rate PDCS at an overall level on a number of measures. These included how satisfied they were with the service, whether the service they received was above or below what they expected, and how much improvement they think the service needs to make. This chapter details the results of these overall performance measures.

In addition, this chapter also reports the results from a series of performance statements that look at staff behaviour from the customer perspective and the findings from two fully open questions where respondents were asked what areas PDCS most needed to improve and what the best thing about the PDCS was. Finally, this chapter concludes with the DWP Customer Charter.

5.1 Overall satisfaction

The primary measure of performance used in the PDCS Customer Satisfaction Survey is a question capturing overall customer satisfaction. The question uses a four-point scale running from very satisfied to very dissatisfied. Results for PDCS are displayed in Figure 5.1. Just over nine in ten (91 per cent) of PDCS customers were satisfied overall.

Figure 5.1 Overall satisfaction with the service – PDCS

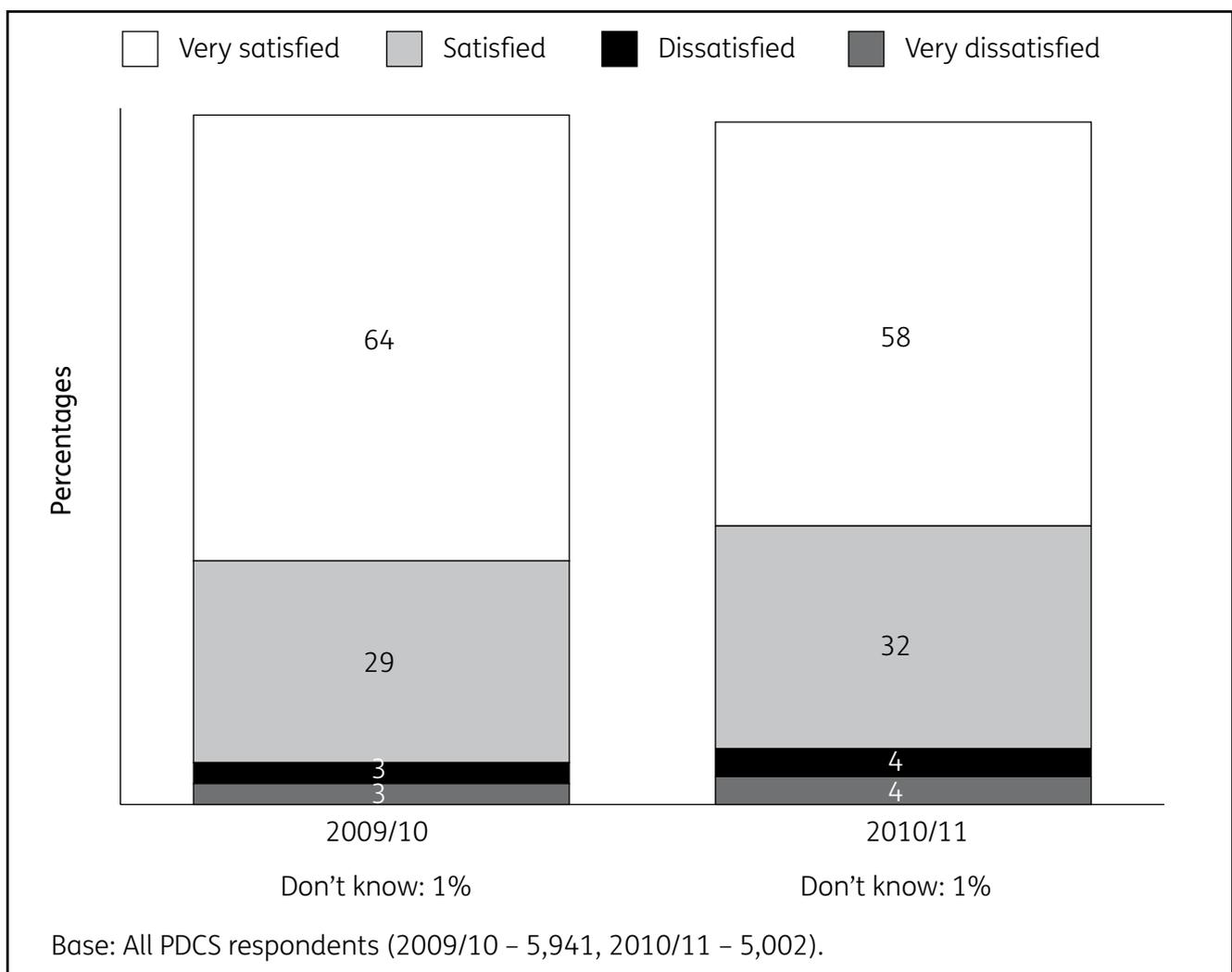


Figure 5.2 displays overall satisfaction with the service for TPS customers in 2009/10 and 2010/11.

Figure 5.2 Overall satisfaction with the service – TPS

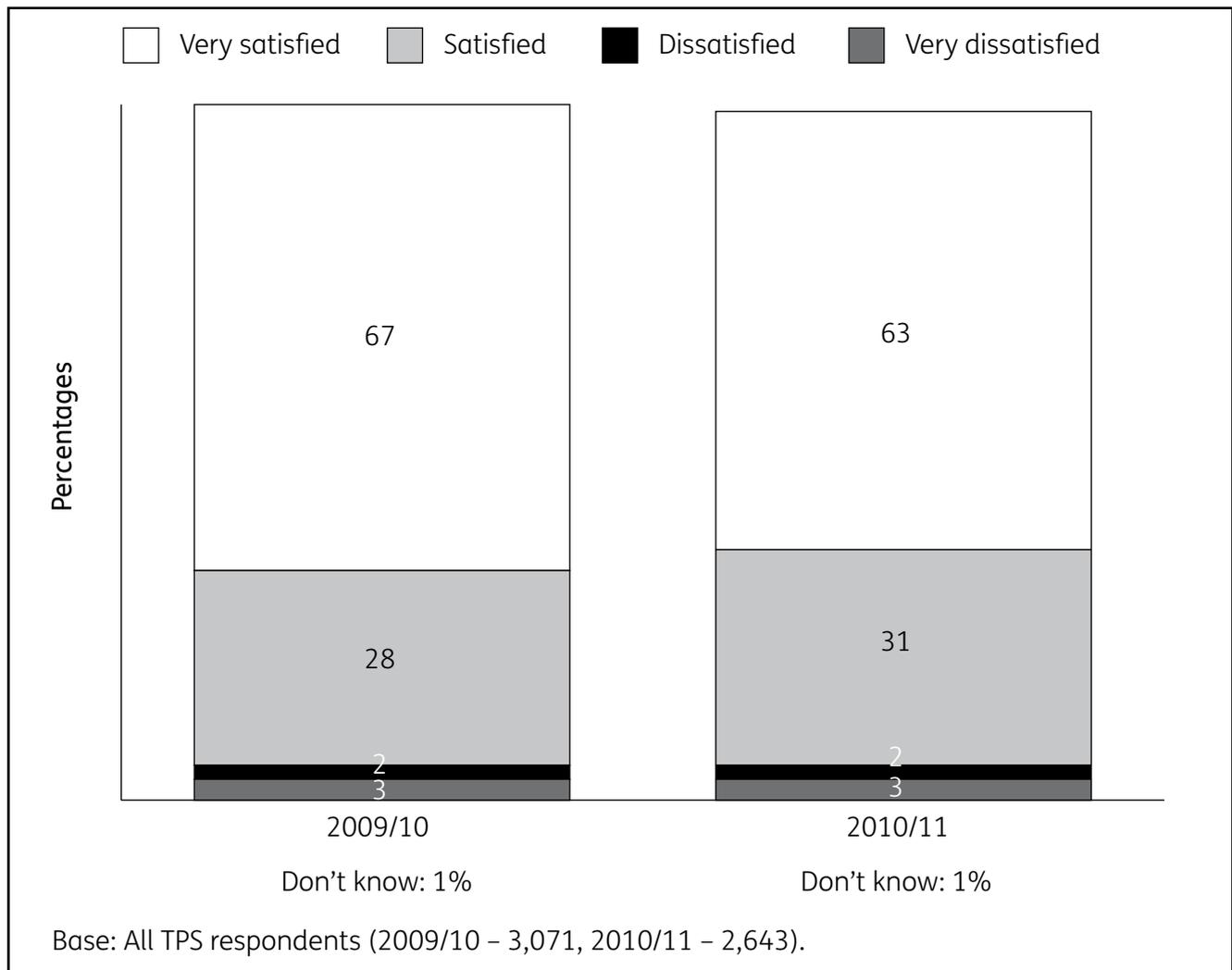
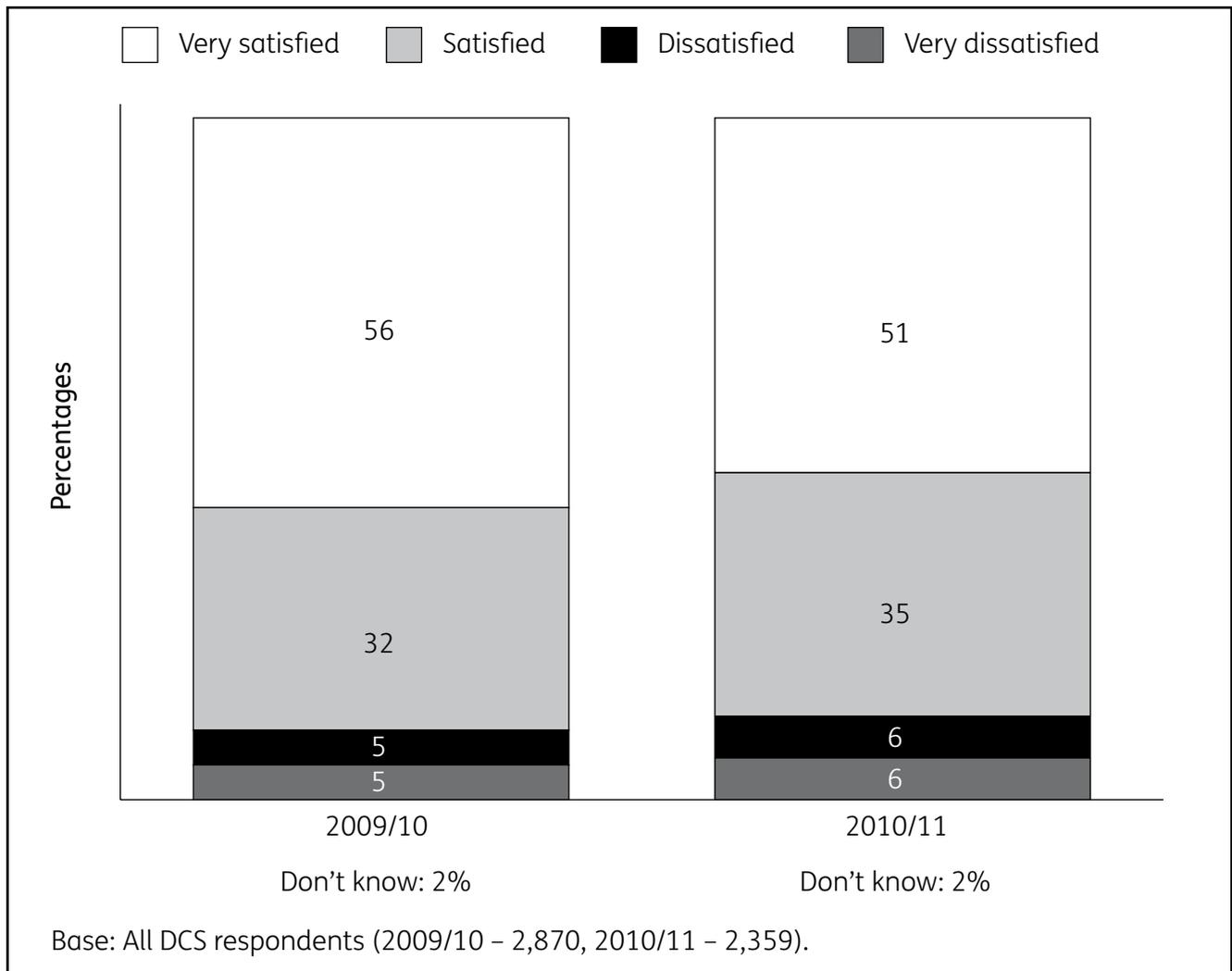


Figure 5.3 displays overall satisfaction with the service for DCS customers in 2009/10 and 2010/11.

Figure 5.3 Overall satisfaction with the service – DCS



Overall satisfaction was slightly higher for TPS customers than for DCS customers (94 per cent compared with 86 per cent in 2010/11).

5.2 Staff treatment

Customers were asked whether the staff they had dealt with had demonstrated a number of positive customer service behaviours over the last six months. Results for TPS are shown in Figure 5.4 and for DCS customers in Figure 5.5. The figures exclude those behaviours that respondents said were not applicable in their situation. In 2010/11, two service performance statements were added asking customers whether staff were friendly and whether staff had treated them fairly.

The vast majority of respondents said that the staff displayed each of the positive customer service behaviours they were asked about. TPS customers had slightly higher levels for each of the behaviours than DCS customers.

Figure 5.4 Service performance statements – TPS

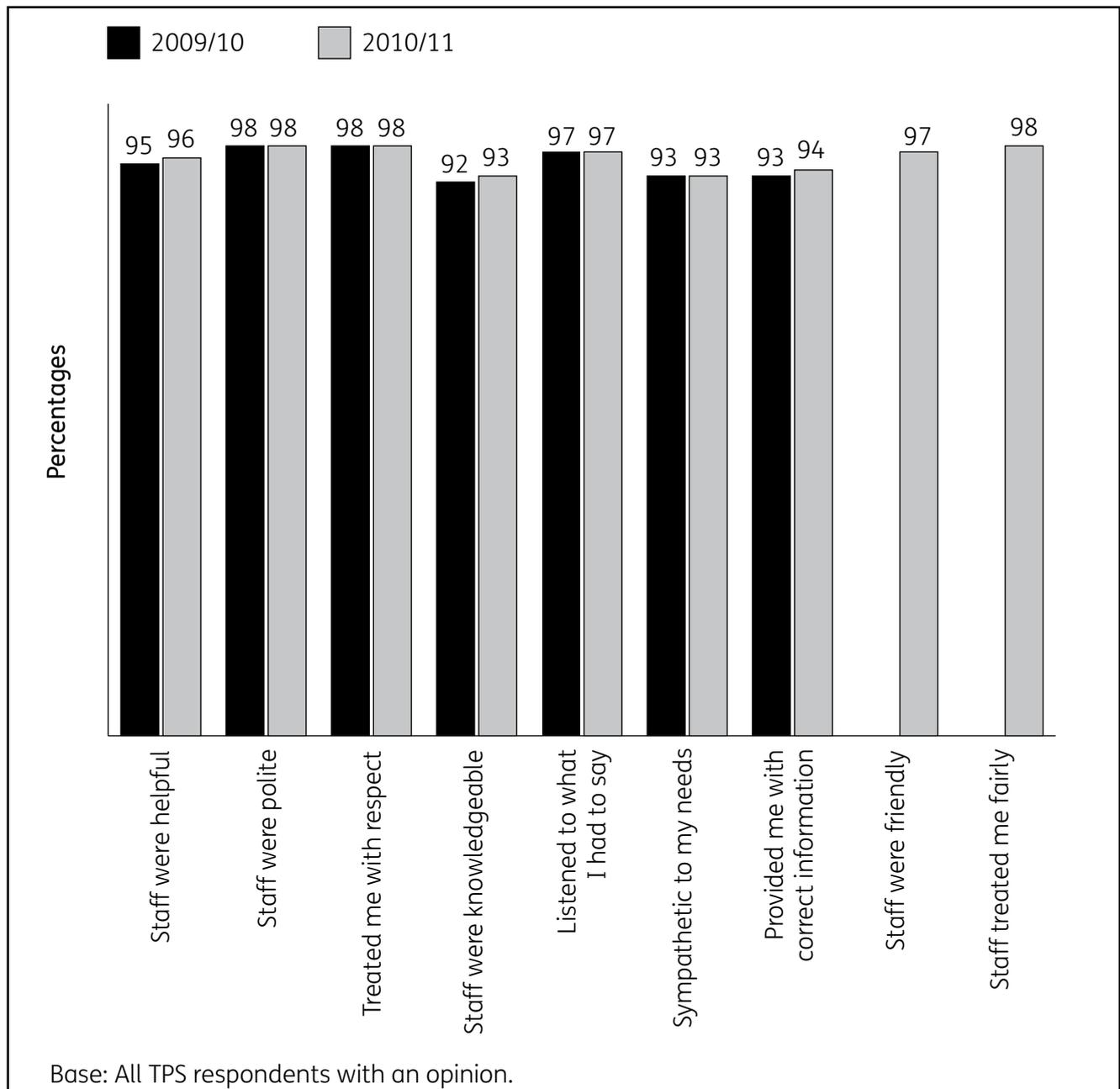
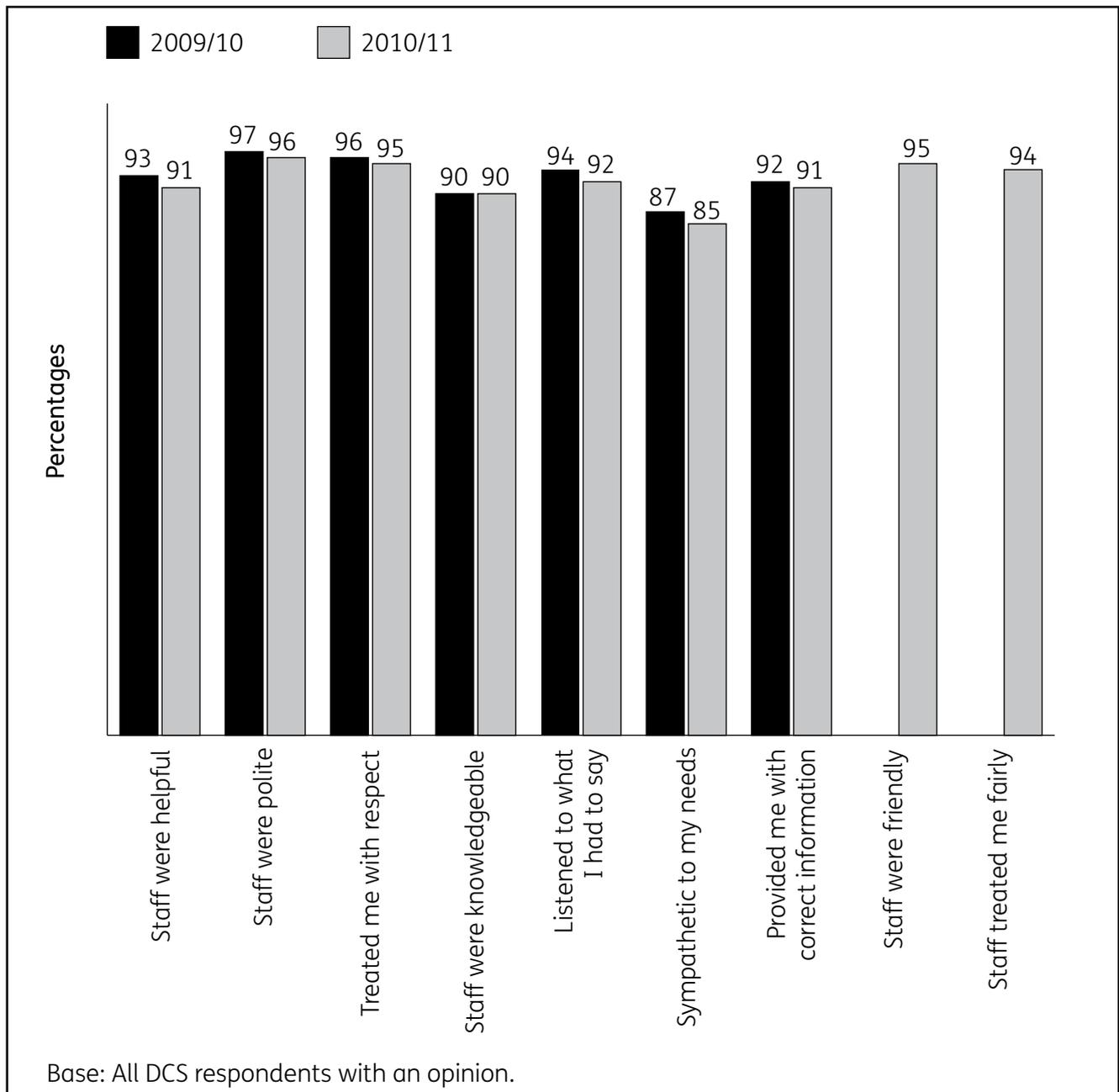


Figure 5.5 Service performance statements – DCS

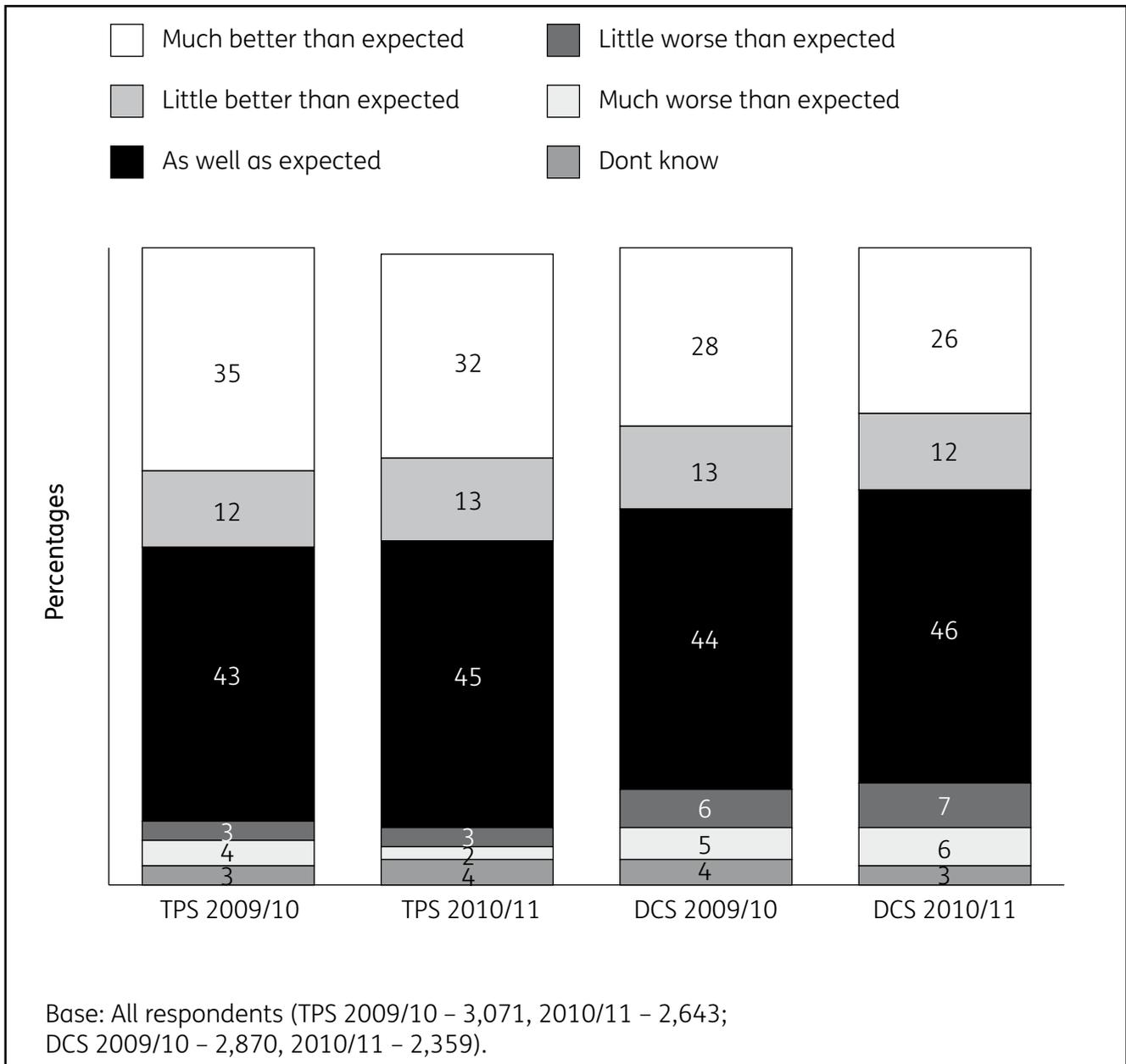


5.3 Performance against expectations

Expectations can give the satisfaction levels some context. If a customer is very satisfied, this might just be because they had such low expectations that it does not take much service performance to elicit a response of very satisfied.

As such customers were asked if all their dealings with PDCS went better or worse than expected. Results for TPS and DCS in both 2009/10 and 2010/11 are shown in Figure 5.6.

Figure 5.6 Performance against expectations

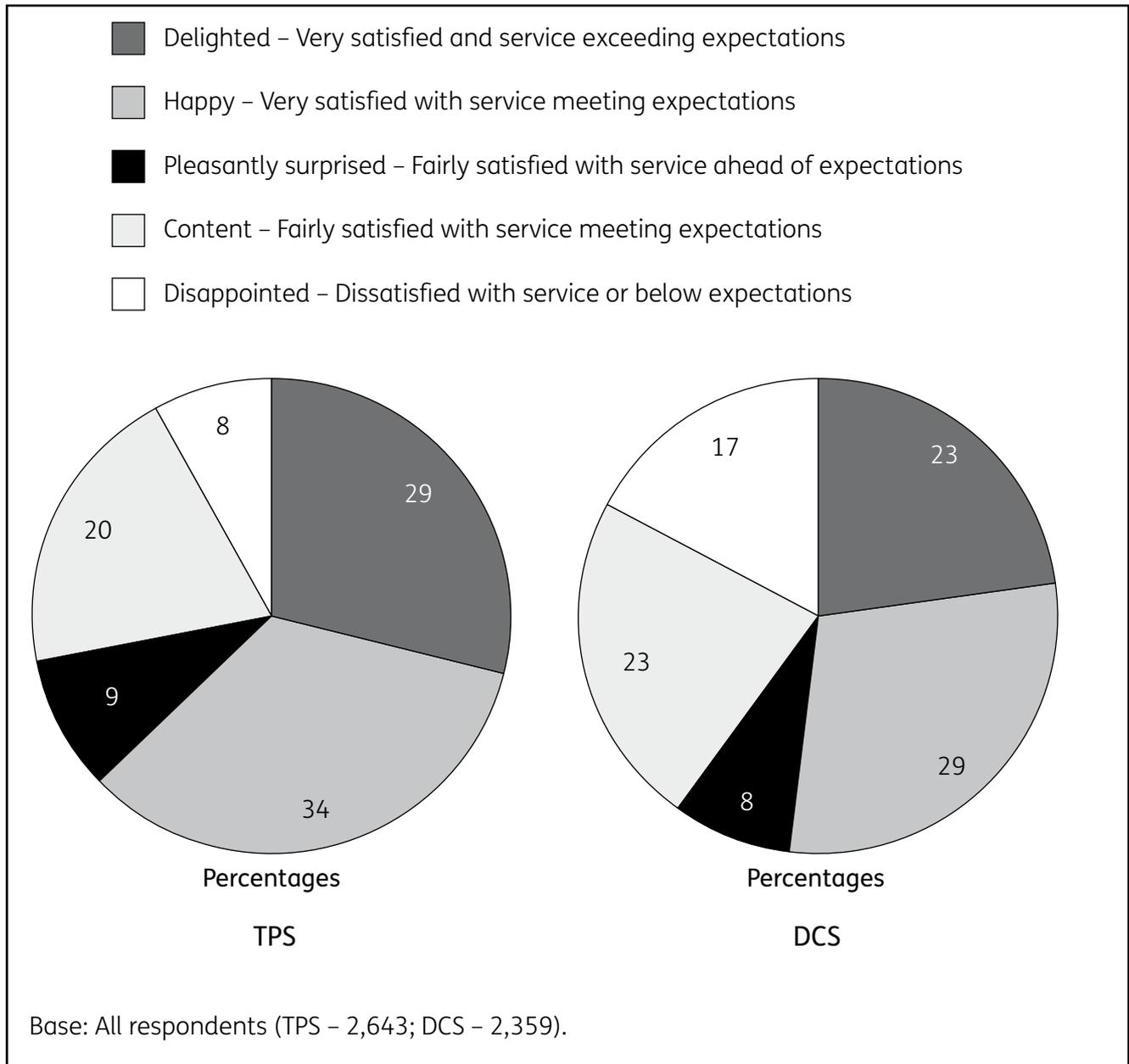


In 2010/11, 45 per cent of TPS customers and 38 per cent of DCS customers reported that their dealings with the service had gone better than expected, whilst five per cent of TPS customers and 13 per cent of DCS customers reported that their dealings went worse than expected.

5.4 Customers feeling towards service

Knowing how satisfied customers were with the service and how this relates to their expectations allows customers to be grouped into five categories by combining their answers to the two questions. It is then possible to observe the proportion of customers who fall into each category. The results for TPS and DCS customers are illustrated in Figure 5.7.

Figure 5.7 Customers feelings towards the service



Firstly, customers who were very satisfied with the service and this exceeded their expectations were classified as ‘delighted’. These customers made up almost a quarter (23 per cent) of DCS customers and three in ten (29 per cent) TPS customers. The second group were made of those customers who were very satisfied with the service and the service performance was as expected, labelled ‘Happy’. This was the biggest group for both DCS and TPS with about three in ten (29 per cent) of DCS customers and one-third (34 per cent) of TPS customers.

'Pleasantly surprised' customers were those who were fairly satisfied with the service, but the service was above expectations, comprising just less than one in ten of both DCS (eight per cent) and TPS (nine per cent) customers.

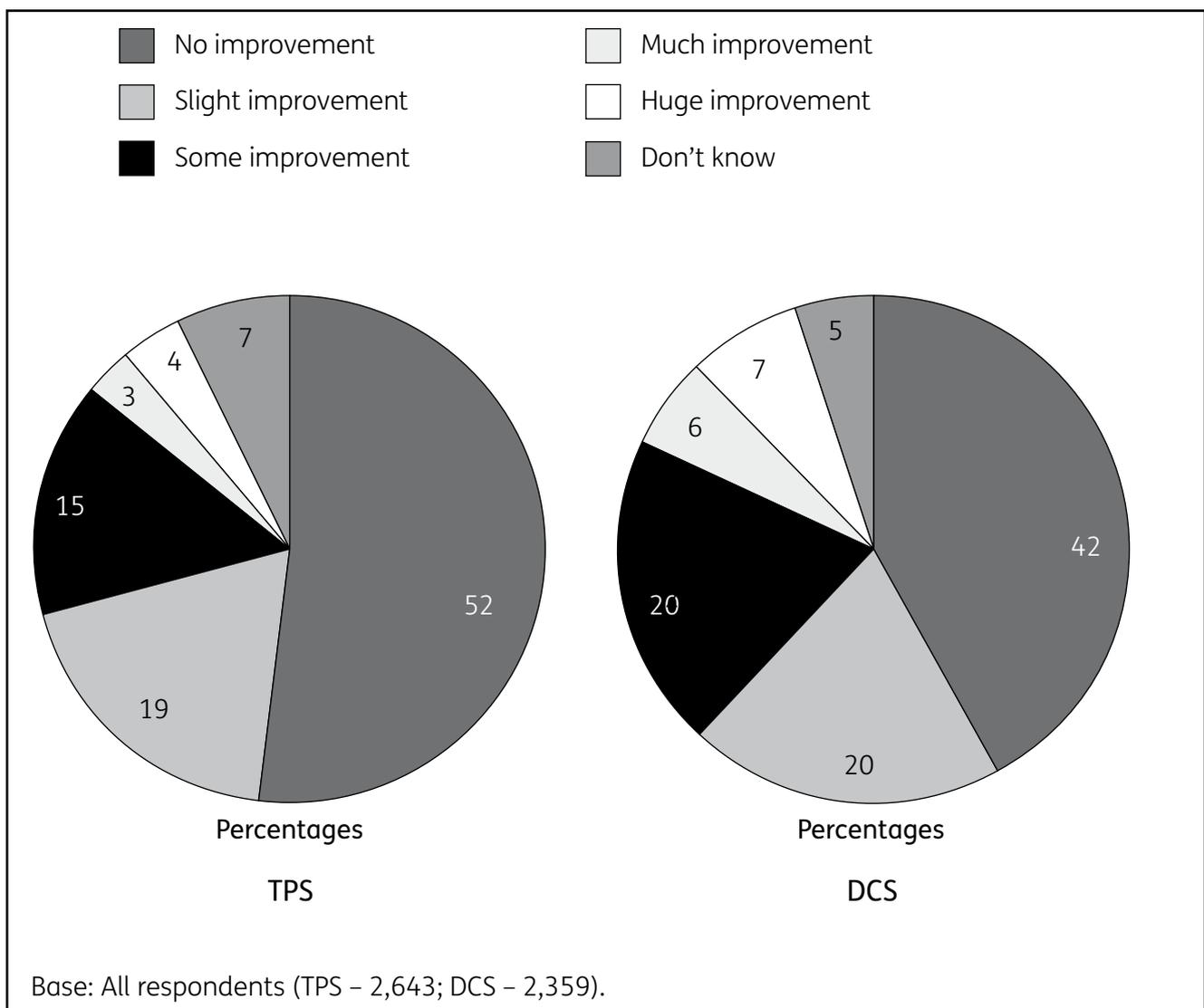
Customers who were fairly satisfied with the service and felt the agency met their expectations comprised 23 per cent of DCS customers and 20 per cent of TPS customers, with this group being labelled as 'content'. The last group were labelled as 'disappointed' and these were customers who were either dissatisfied with the service or the service performed below their expectations. This group made up only eight per cent of TPS customers, but 17 per cent of DCS customers.

5.5 Improvements to the service

Another good measure of performance is how much improvement, if any, customers thought the service needed. This has the advantage of being able to provide more discrimination, as even customers who are satisfied with the service may still feel that further improvements are necessary.

Figure 5.8 shows that over half (52 per cent) of TPS customers and around two-fifths (42 per cent) of DCS customers said no improvement was needed to the service, while only seven per cent of TPS and five per cent of DCS customers stated that a huge improvement was necessary.

Figure 5.8 How much improvement service needs



All customers were given the chance to make suggestions as to how PDCS could be improved. This was an open ended question, which meant that respondents gave an answer that was recorded verbatim and then coded at the end of the interview. These responses are very detailed and have been grouped for analysis. Customers were able to give more than one answer if they wished, therefore the scores may add up to more than 100 per cent in total.

It should be noted too that there were a significant proportion of customers of both services who did not have any suggestions for improvements and these customers are not included within the analysis.

The main areas for improvement mentioned by TPS customers (shown in Figure 5.9) were providing information (21 per cent) and changes to the service (21 per cent). For DCS customers (shown in Figure 5.10) the main areas for improvement were forms (25 per cent), providing information (20 per cent) and responsive to needs (20 per cent).

Figure 5.9 Improvements to the service – TPS

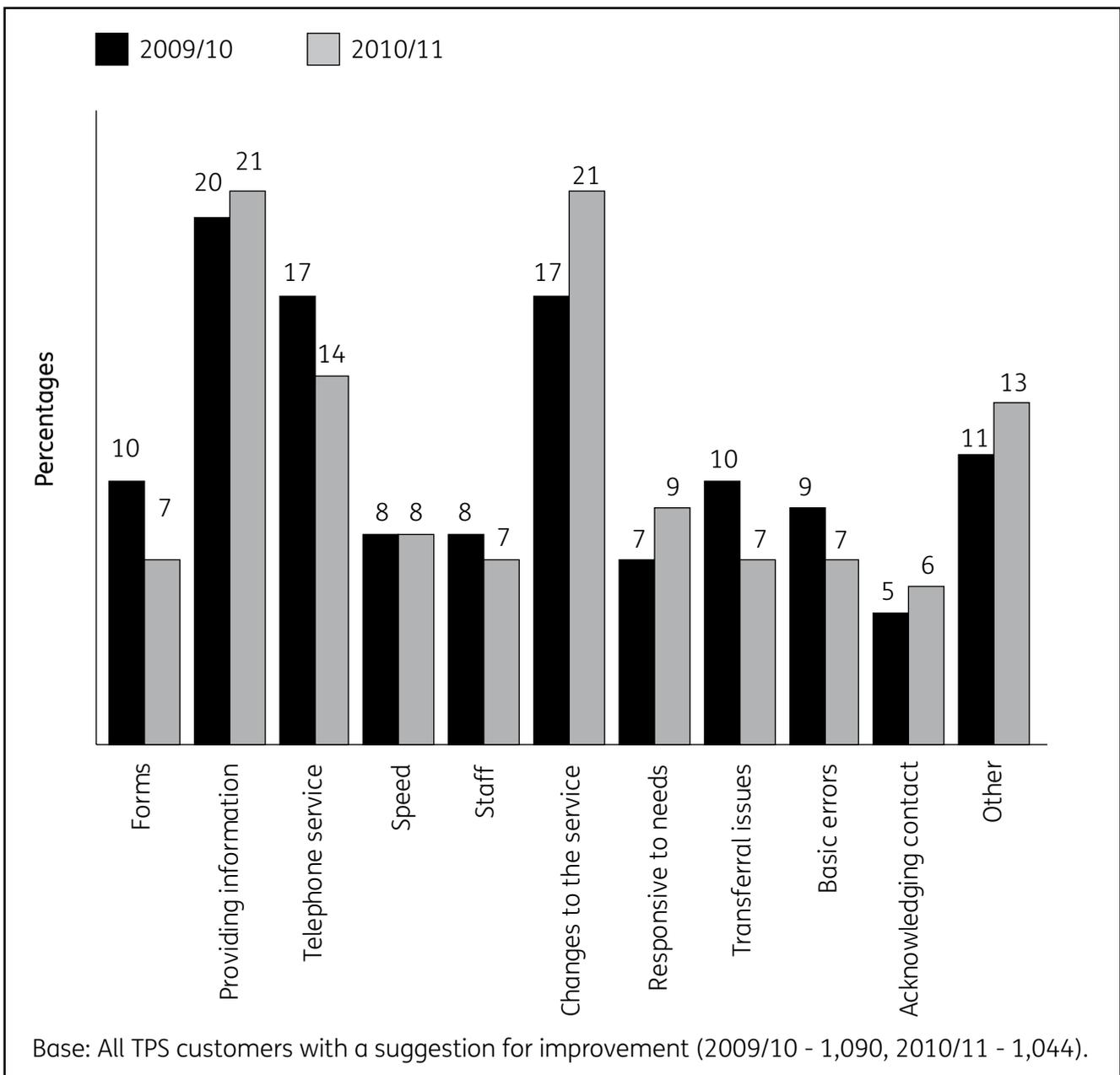
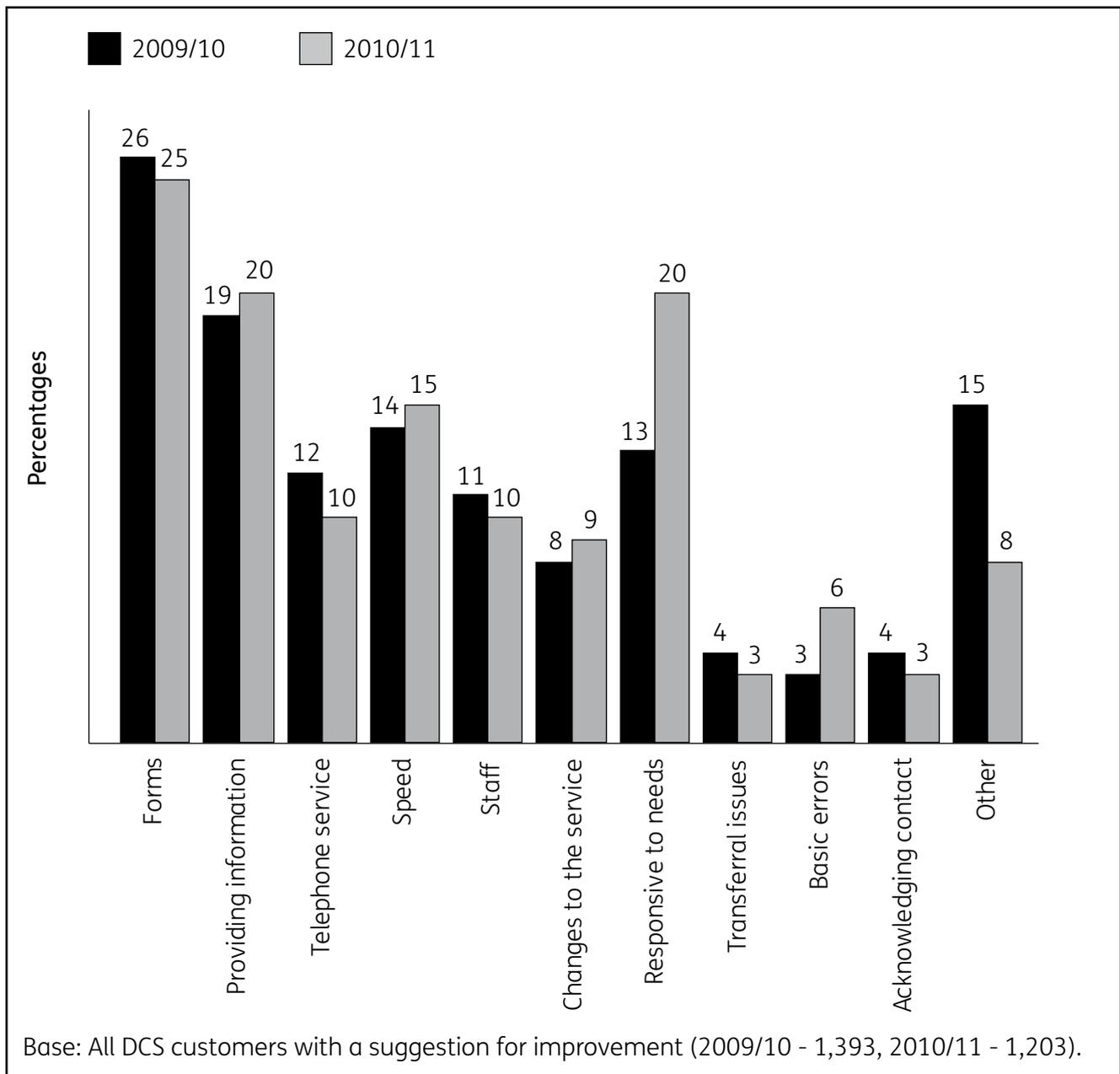


Figure 5.10 Improvements to the service – DCS



5.6 Best things about the service

As well as being asked about any improvements they would make to the service all PDCS customers were asked what they thought the best thing about the service was. Again, this was an open-ended question where customers' answer(s) were recorded verbatim then coded later and the totals may add up to more than 100 per cent.

Some respondents were unable to come up with positive comments when asked this question but it should be noted that this was not necessarily an indication that these customers were unhappy with the service. Around two thirds of customers who did not give a positive comment responded don't know to the question rather than making a specific negative comment.

Figure 5.11 displays the best things about the service for TPS customers and Figure 5.12 for DCS customers. In both 2009/10 and 2010/11 PDCS customers identified the staff as the best thing about the service.

Figure 5.11 Best things about the service – TPS

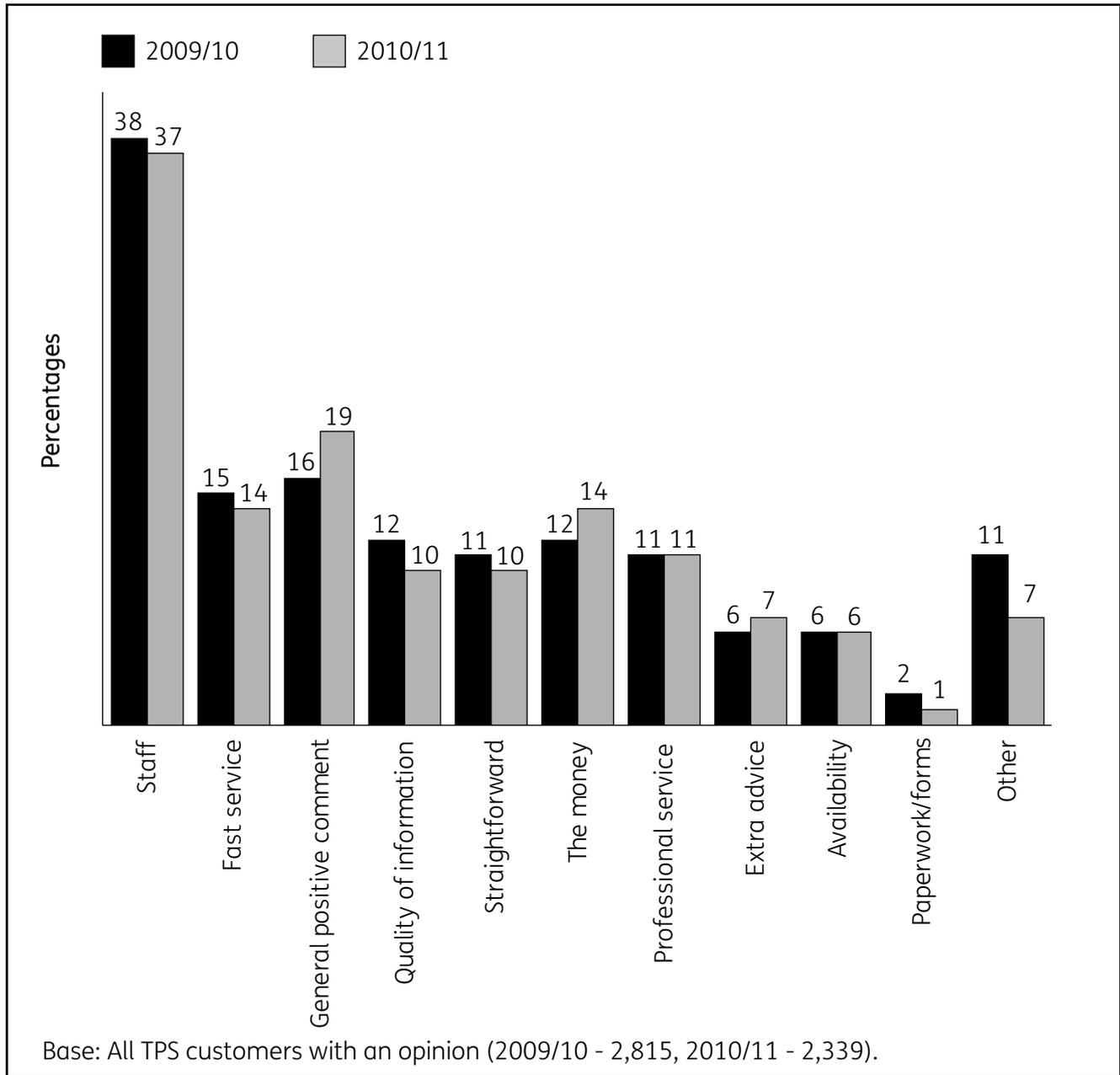
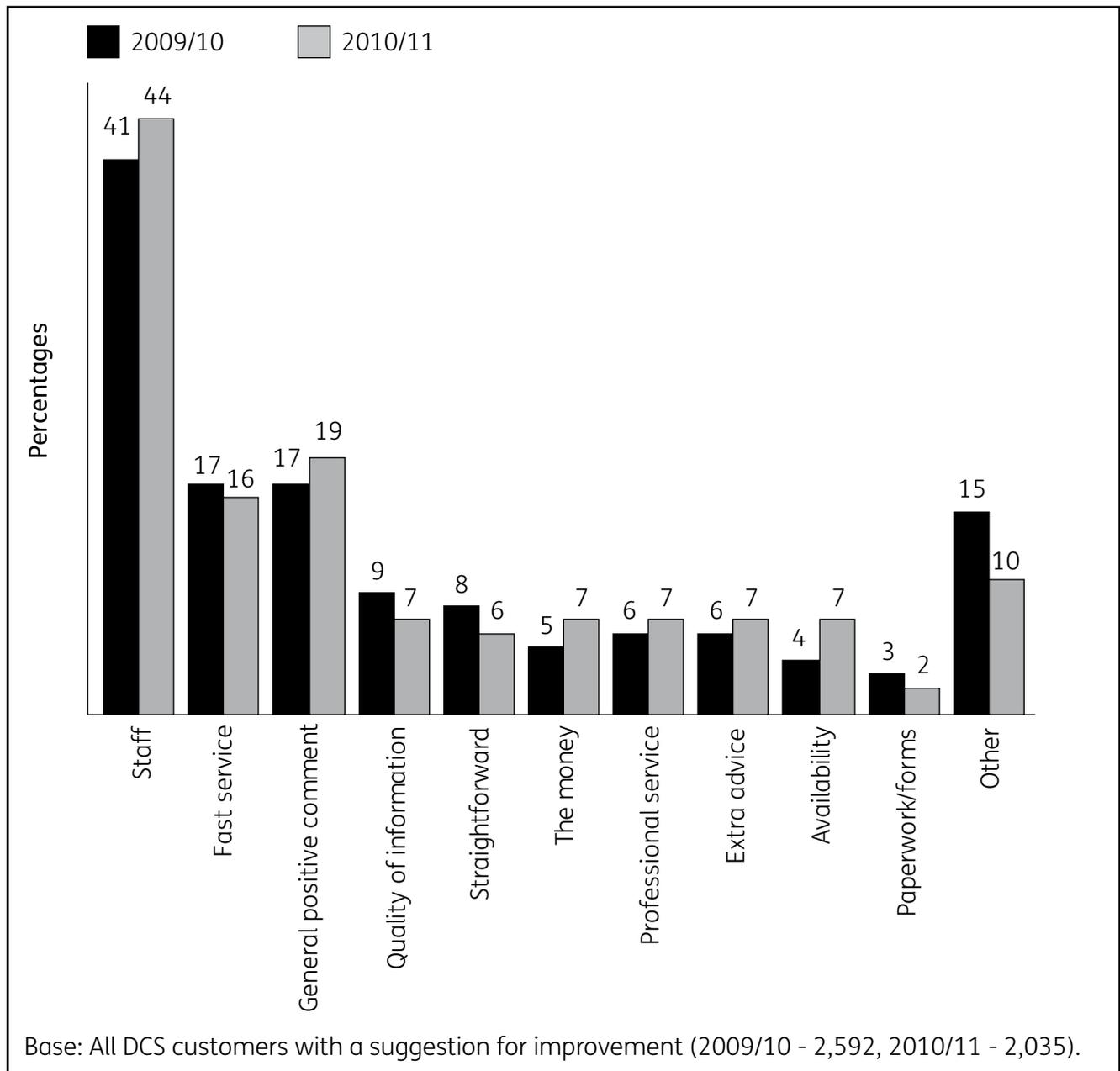


Figure 5.12 Best things about the service – DCS



5.7 Department for Work and Pensions customer charter

The Department has identified a number of drivers of customer satisfaction and these are incorporated within the DWP customer charter. The charter sets out four broad areas of customer service that it commits to delivering:

- Right treatment.
- Easy access.
- Right result.
- On time.

Each of these areas gets a score based on the responses to a number of questions in the survey. For right treatment this was: whether they were told what would happen next, if the staff were helpful, polite and knowledgeable, whether they were treated with respect, whether staff listened to what they had to say and whether they were sympathetic to their needs.

The questions used to derive the easy access measure were: whether the mode of contact was the channel the customer wanted to use, whether they had to repeat information when transferred, whether replies to letters were easy to understand and the complexity of the enquiry process.

For right result the questions were: whether the service did what they said they would, whether their enquiry had concluded, whether decisions were explained clearly, and whether they were provided with correct information.

The questions used to derive the on time measure were: whether the amount of time they needed to wait for calls was reasonable, whether the PDCS called back when they said they would, whether they replied to letters, whether they were given clear timings, whether they were kept up-to-date with progress and satisfaction with the time taken to deal with the enquiry.

Figure 5.13 displays overall PDCS scores for each of the four areas outlined in the charter. Generally these are quite high across the board, but scores for easy access and on time are lower than for right treatment and right result for both 2009/10 and 2010/11.

Figure 5.13 DWP Customer Charter – PDCS

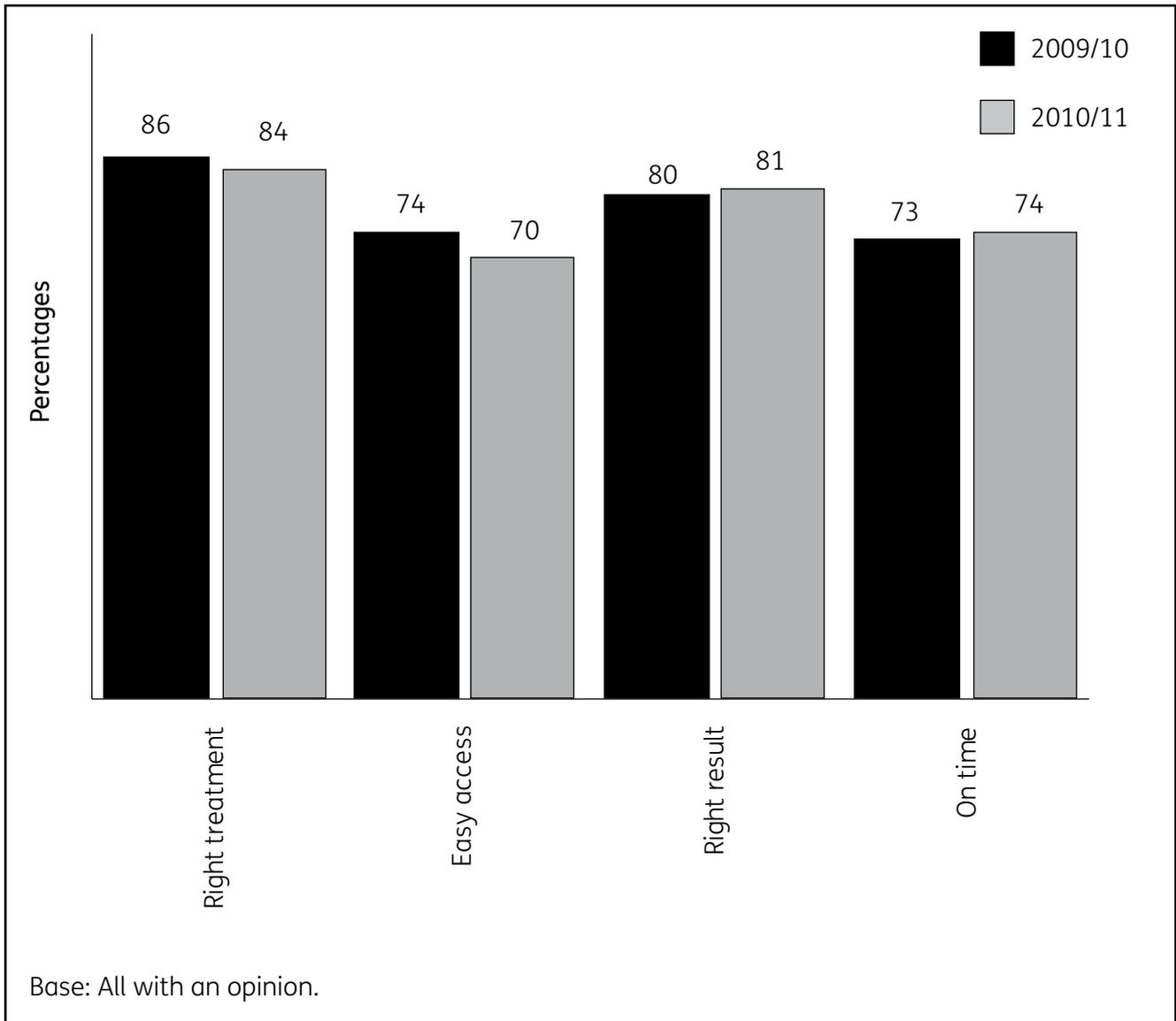


Figure 5.14 and figure 5.15 display overall TPS and DCS scores for each of the four areas outlined in the charter. TPS score higher across all four areas than DCS in both 2009/10 and 2010/11.

Figure 5.14 DWP Customer Charter – TPS

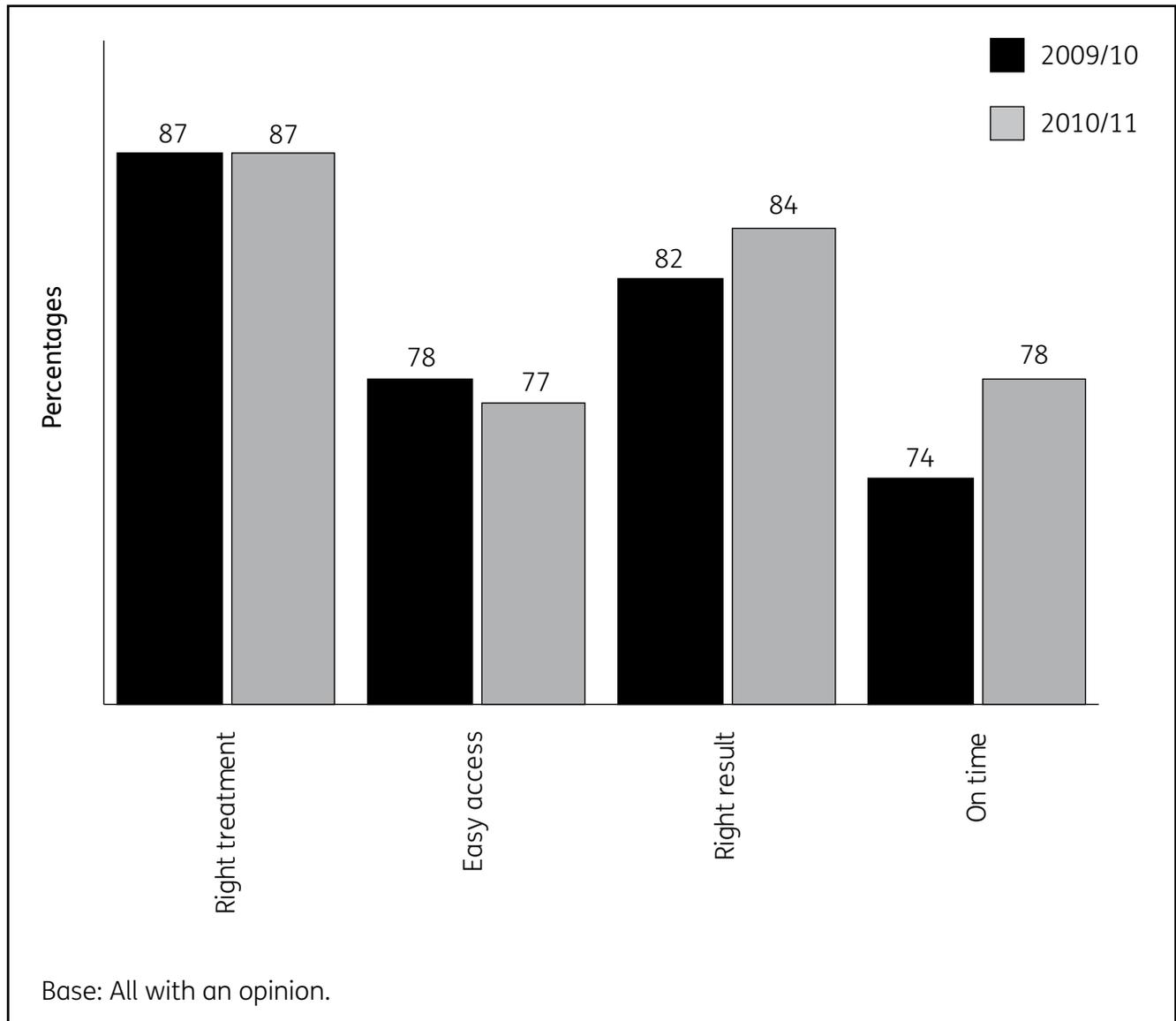
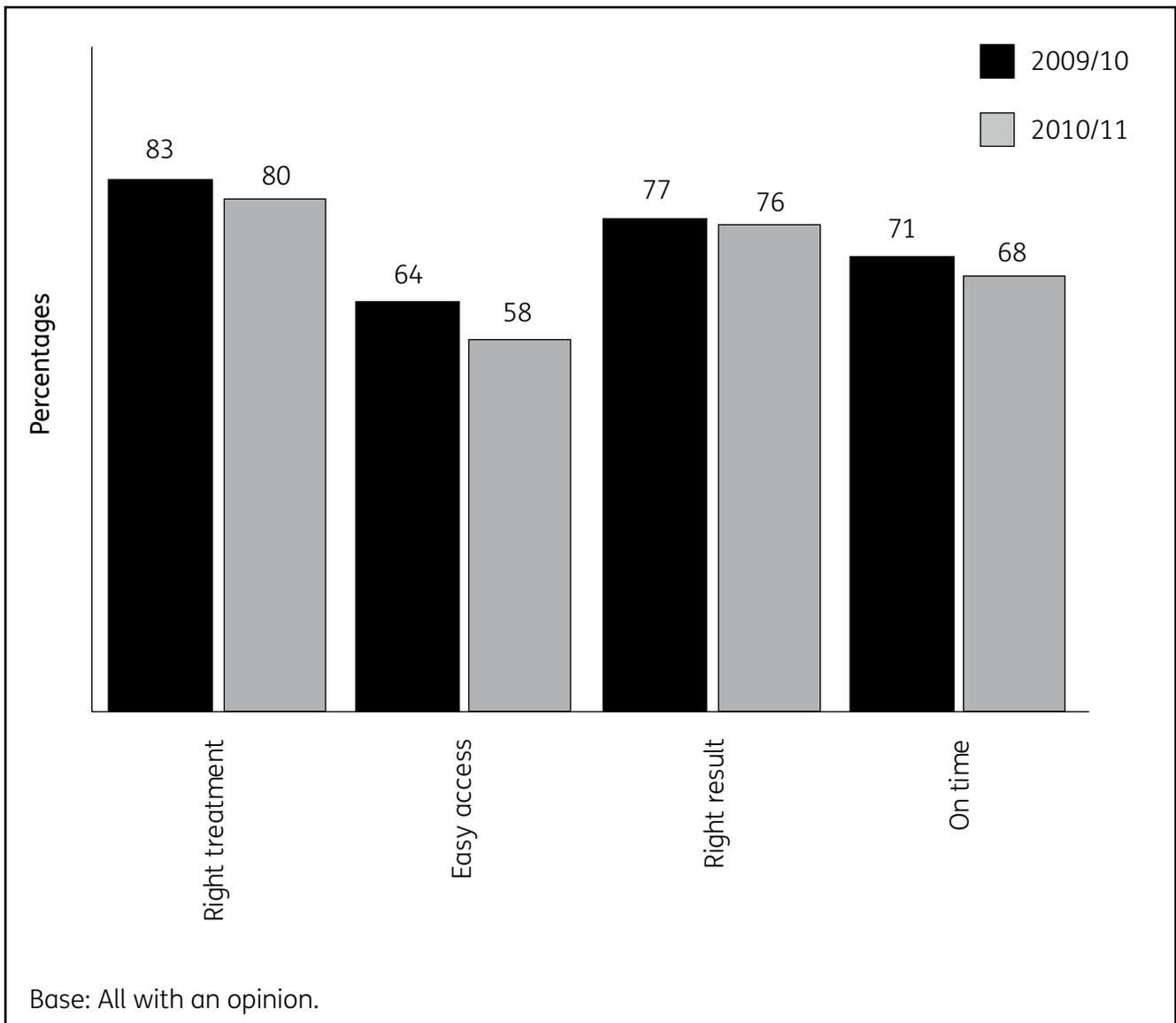


Figure 5.15 DWP Customer Charter – DCS



The Pension, Disability and Carers Service (PDCS) Customer Satisfaction Monitor was commissioned to regularly monitor the satisfaction of PDCS customers with the service it provides, provide real time feedback of the customer experience and ensure that the customer voice could be heard when it comes to operational and policy planning. It was conducted by TNS-BNRB on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions.

This Working Paper presents the headline findings for 2010/2011 survey. Detailed analysis and findings will be published in a full report in the autumn 2011.

The fieldwork took place in two separate waves:

- 15 September 2010 and 21 October 2010, and
- 28 February 2011 and 26 April 2011.

In total 5,002 PDCS interviews were achieved.

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