

# Legal Problem & Resolution Survey 2023

The Legal Problem and Resolution Survey (LPRS) is a nationally representative general population survey of adults aged 18 and over living in households in England and Wales. A total of 10,323 interviews were achieved via a mixed mode approach (online and face-to-face interviews), between March and August 2023. Respondents were asked if they had experienced a range of problems or disputes in the 18 months before the interview and the ways in which they went about resolving these problems.

## Problems Experienced

**50%** of adults

experienced at least one legal problem within the last 18 months\*



2% experienced Family problems

19% experienced Administrative problems

44% experienced Civil problems

**52%** of those with a legal problem experienced **more than one problem category**. Some people are more likely to experience clustering, such as those who are:



In receipt of means-tested benefits



Younger respondents (18-44)



Unemployed



Renting



Living with a Long-term illness



**21%**

of respondents thought that the problem they had experienced was **related to COVID-19** to some extent.

## Adverse Consequences

**50%** of respondents reported that their problem caused or contributed to experiencing one or more adverse consequence.



## Resolving Problems



**Most people (86%) try to resolve their problem.**

**50%** use some form of **self-help** (obtained information or advice from the internet, self-help guides or friends and family).

A **minority (12%)** use a **formal resolution process** (court, tribunal, ombudsman or mediation).



Those who perceived their problem as legal and as serious were more likely to use a formal strategy.



**50%**  
Self-help only



**24%**  
Professional advice



**12%**  
Formal strategy



**8%**  
No Action

\*The reported prevalence rate of 50% excludes respondents' experiences of divorce and probate. When including divorce and probate the overall prevalence rate is 51%.

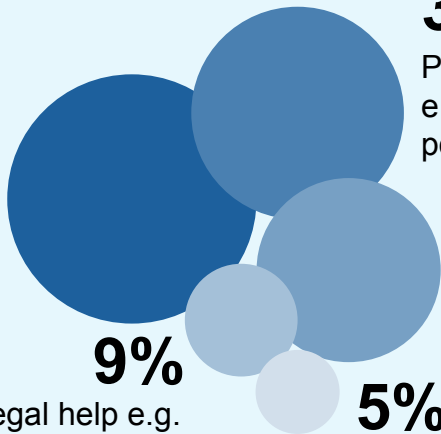
Where percentages do not sum to 100%, this is due to 'Don't know/prefer not to say' responses not being shown, and/or due to rounding.

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## Sources of help

**44%**

Self-obtained help e.g. internet, leaflets, friends and family etc



**32%**

Professional help e.g. local council, police etc

**24%**

did not try

**9%**

Legal help e.g. solicitor etc

**5%**

sought, not obtained



Among formal legal help, solicitors were most frequently used (**5%**), for professional help it was the local council (**10%**), and friends and family for self-obtained (**20%**).

## Problem outcomes

**64%**

of legal problems had concluded at the time of interview. This differed most significantly for Family problems, with only 39% having concluded.



Amongst those with concluded problems:



**3%** reported their problem ended by a decision made in court, tribunal or other independent party



**16%** reported the problem sorted itself out



**19%** reached an agreement with the other party (together or with the help of an independent party e.g. mediation)



**20%** acted independently to sort the problem



**22%** reported they were putting up with the problem

## Court modernisation

The LPRS explored attitudes towards the digitisation of services and the use of remote hearings.



**Awareness levels for both options were relatively high** (49% had heard of online options, 61% for remote hearings).

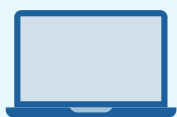


**Knowledge levels were low with only 7% and 12%** saying they know a great deal or fair amount about online options and remote hearings, respectively.



Personal experience of online options varied greatly. Those with **Family problems were significantly more likely to have used online options (21%)** compared with only 8% for **Administrative** and 7% for **Civil**.

**A large majority recognised the convenience of online options (64%) and remote hearings (62%), however only a small number had personal experience using these services (5% and 3%).**

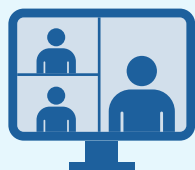


Online services were viewed as an acceptable alternative to offline paper routes (**64%**). Only a quarter (**24%**) preferred offline paper routes.



Those with lower digital capability were more likely to prefer face-to-face hearings (**56%**) or offline options (**61%**).

For remote hearings, over half of respondents (**53%**) preferred face-to-face hearings. **31%** agreed that remote hearings were more efficient.



Older respondents preferred face-to-face hearings over remote (**65%** aged 65+ vs 53% total) and favoured offline routes (**46%** aged 75+) compared to younger groups (**16%** aged 18-34).

