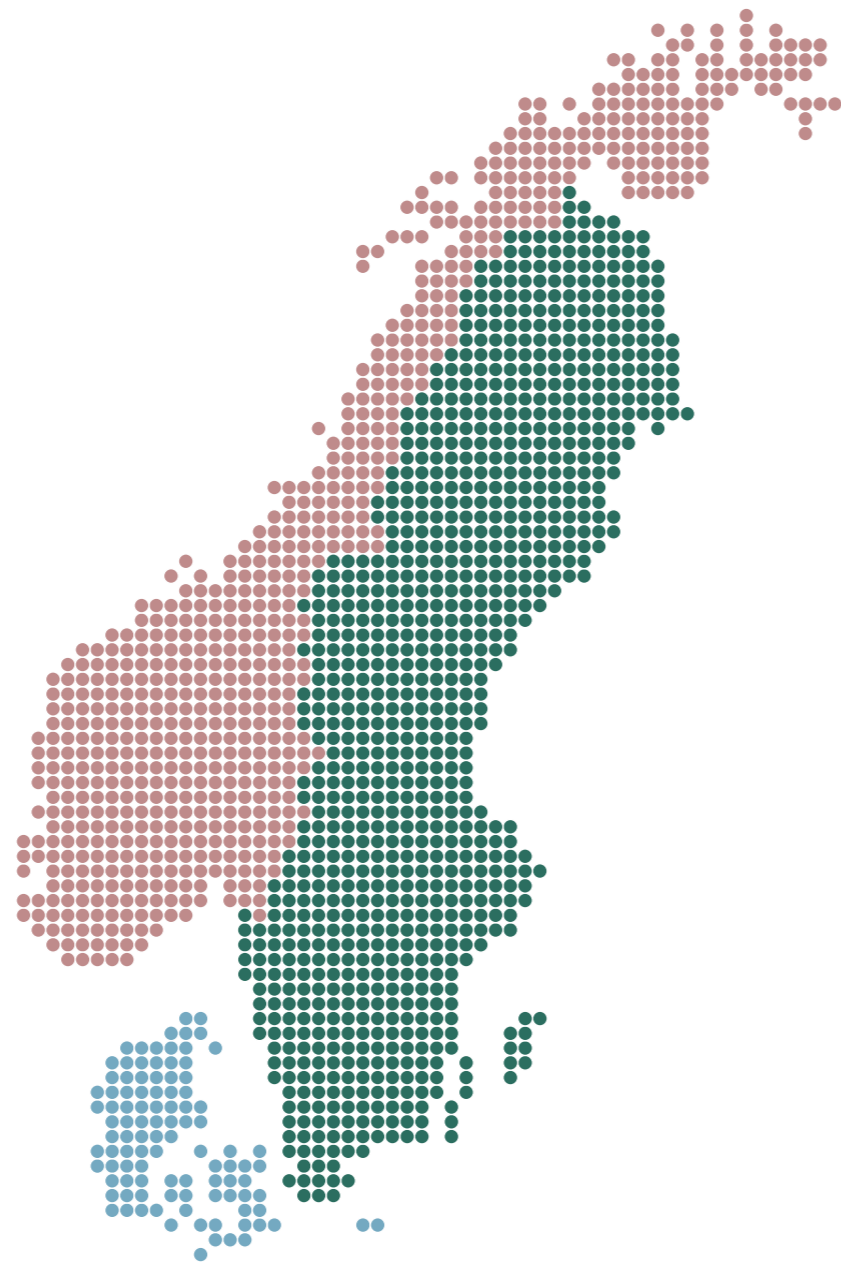




The Future of the Legal Profession

2023
Industry report

Taking the temperature of the legal industry in Denmark, Sweden, and Norway



Contents

Welcome from CEO Alexandra Åquist	4
Introduction to the 2023 survey	5
Three areas influencing the legal profession	6
Methodology and demographics	10
Chapter 1: A craving for tech	14
Chapter 2: Equal measures	32
Chapter 3: New journey	58
Position of the next generation	88
Insights 2023	90



Dear reader,

At Karnov, we are privileged to be a trusted supplier of knowledge and insights to dedicated professionals in a very resourceful industry. One of the many motivating factors of making an annual survey is the chance to follow up on findings and subjects brought up in previous reports.

This year, we dug deeper into last year's insights that almost 50% of the respondents had recently considered leaving their job. As it turned out – more than half of them did. The present report shows that one in three legal professionals switched jobs in 2022. There are several motivations behind each decision to seek new challenges, yet to some, lack of trust in their manager was a decisive factor. Elaborating statements show that employees seek three vital Cs from their managers: communication, care, and coaching.

Bearing job changes in mind, it was pleasant to learn that a vast majority of legal professionals are satisfied – or even very satisfied – with the job position they hold. This number can, among many reasons, be attributed to increased attention to open dialogue, flexibility, and psychological safety across all sectors.

Also thriving, unfortunately, are the two biological genders' different views on diversity – from the gender pay gap and recruitment policies to equal chances of career advancement. These differences of opinion call for deeper investigation and productive discussions across the industry.

Tech tools are becoming increasingly relevant to legal professionals. This survey reveals an impressive increase in how the potential of technology is perceived. Today, tech is considered a main driver for the future of the industry. Undoubtedly, digital aids will be able to save legal professionals a lot of time and increase efficiency in a busy schedule.

Looking forward to your feedback and more fruitful discussions, I would like to thank all the legal professionals who prioritised making the time to answer this survey. Without you, there would be no insights to share.

Alexandra Åquist

CEO Karnov Group Region North

The Future of the Legal Profession 2023 - Introduction

Reflective practice for the benefit of legal practice

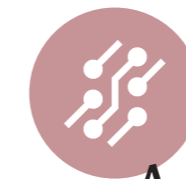
Karnov Group's Scandinavian survey shares the latest insights into areas affecting the drive and motivation of legal professionals in Denmark, Sweden, and Norway. The report is based on precious feedback from 3,213 full-time legal professionals. Their reflections on personal and professional challenges are invaluable and can serve as an inspiration. We thank you for every thought and observation shared!

The purpose of this report is, as always, to give readers a deeper understanding of the industry to which they contribute – and to invite the legal profession to come together in productive discussions allowing for creative dialogue. Knowing and naming prevailing tendencies in the industry makes it easier to appreciate positive conditions and to face challenges in an assertive way – effectively, making change happen.

Facing the obstacles of today makes for a smoother path towards tomorrow.

Welcome to The Future of the Legal Profession 2023.

Three areas reflecting the condition of the legal profession in Scandinavia



A craving for tech

The course is set for the legal industry of tomorrow. Across sectors, genders, and ages almost every single member shares an appetite for technological aids. Legal professionals all recognise the vital importance of understanding and being able to use digital tools.

A challenge lies in the fact that almost half of the Scandinavian legal professionals fear they lack the advanced skills required to benefit fully from new legal tech products. This raises the natural question of who bears the responsibility for securing the necessary training and re-education.

Today, for many, performing legal tasks and accommodating clients across countries and cultures around the globe is just part of the job. The majority of legal professionals in Scandinavia only expect globalisation to further increase the complexity of legal tasks in the future. Specifically, legal professionals in the public sector predict a growing need for legal services.

To look ahead we need innovation. This area is where legal professionals tend to agree less. Only half of the survey respondents believe that their employer sufficiently prioritises innovation. What the future holds for innovation in the legal profession is therefore interesting for everyone to follow.



What we are struggling with at the moment is that the legislation and the world are becoming more and more complex. We see increased digitisation, and legislation can be difficult to predict, as something also comes from the EU. And since the definitions often change, suddenly a new ruling comes from an EU court in another country. The authorities have a relatively strict interpretation, and there is not much room for creative interpretation. It entails greater demands.

Female, corporate sector, DK

In order to adapt the business model to future requirements, the legal industry will adopt technological solutions. It's not technology as such that will change the industry, but the need for the industry to provide cheaper legal services will drive the adoption of technological aids. Technology will likely be used for standard legal tasks, creating lower hourly rates. High hourly rates will be reserved for cases requiring more customisation.

Male, law firm, NO

Increased internationalisation has opened up new areas of legal practice, especially regarding sustainability and the environment. Internationalisation has led to new reporting requirements, which will only become more extensive.

Male, private sector, NO



Equal measures

On a positive note, four out of five members of the Scandinavian legal industry believe that gender equality can improve the overall job satisfaction of the individual employee. This should come as no surprise in 2023.

However, despite this inclusive view, this year's insights confirm the gender-related conflicts all too well known across the legal industry. The diversity and equality that every member of the legal profession should be able to take for granted are still challenged.

Opposing views expressed by women and men imply that in the legal industry, this area is still perceived very differently according to our biological gender. Female legal professionals' perception of pay gaps, possibilities of career advancement, and experience with non-inclusive behaviour differs vastly from that of their male peers – who, to a large extent, believe that their female peers share the same privileges as they do. Needless to say, this kind of disagreement is not productive for anyone.



What would be nice, I think, is if we could experience a strong example of successful female business lawyers. Like a really successful business law firm where 75% of the partners were women, and they would outperform everyone else. That would be a cool narrative.

Male, 52, law firm, SE

Women experience lower salaries than male colleagues with less experience. And bypassing when it comes to being picked out for management positions.

Female, 50-59, public sector, NO

It is important that parenthood is a topic in the diversity debate and not just gender or ethnicity. People choose other career paths when they become parents, and this is independent of gender but has to do with people who want to be involved in raising their children.

Male, 30-39, public sector, NO



New journey

An overwhelming number of legal professionals in Scandinavia are satisfied with their job. This is something for our industry to be proud of. Satisfaction, however, can have as many facets as dissatisfaction, and sometimes it is simply time for a change.

Almost one in three members of the legal industry changed jobs in 2022 – among these, one in four chose a new journey with a new employer. There are ample reasons for seeking new challenges. Primary motivators are more interesting assignments, the chance to use one's skills, salary increase, and better work-life balance.

Currently, there are areas where legal professionals would like to see a change. Many are still questioning why they have to experience excessive working hours. They would also like to be acknowledged for the work they do, which is not directly related to clients. Better cooperation between peers within the organisation is also considered a means to many benefits.

Managers with poor communication skills are the main reason that legal professionals feel unhappy in their current position. They respond to lack of feedback and disrespectful demeanour with resignation.



I chose to apply for a new position to get new colleagues, flexible working hours, normal workload, and varied assignments.

Male, 30-39, public sector, SE

I think work-life balance is a primitive way of assessing the challenge of management. It is often measured against hours, but we should look at energy or mood in a much broader sense – job satisfaction and professional joy. We should get better at talking about that. It is important that you feel supported."

Female, public sector, DK

There is a lot of bad management in the legal profession. (...) It is difficult to point out one specific thing that is wrong because it differs from place to place. It has to do with not being very explicit and not very good at collaborating. With my own colleagues, I have discussed stress, transparency, purpose, social responsibility, hybrid work, and working from home. Flexibility is sought on all levels."

Male, law firm, DK

The scope of the survey

Methodology and demographics

3 Scandinavian countries

3 sectors of the legal profession

3,213 full-time
legal professionals

This report was initiated by Karnov Group AB and is based on survey data shared by Karnov Group, Denmark, Norstedts Juridik, Sweden, and Lovdata, Norway.

The survey was conducted in partnership with the independent research company Kantar Public.

Survey approach

The 2023 report presents and delves deeper into issues brought up in connection with last year's report.

Qualitative, in-depth interviews initiated the survey. These were conducted with Scandinavian legal professionals across all three sectors. Feedback and findings from this qualitative phase constituted the base for a detailed survey questionnaire.

The subsequent quantitative, online survey was distributed to legal professionals in Denmark, Sweden, and Norway. The answers reflect the experience and opinions of 3,213 legal professionals with full-time employment.

The survey was conducted in April and May 2023.

Survey sectors

- **Public sector:** Legal professionals working in public organisations
- **Corporate sector:** Legal professionals working in private organisations
- **Law firms:** Legal professionals working at law firms

Demographics

Survey respondents: DK (n=1,256), SE (n=1,199), NO (n=758)

Gender	DK	NO	SE
Male	37 %	35 %	39 %
Female	62 %	64 %	60 %
Prefer not to say	1 %	1 %	1 %

Age	DK	NO	SE
23-29	22 %	17 %	16 %
30-39	32 %	33 %	30 %
40-49	23 %	20 %	23 %
50-59	16 %	20 %	21 %
60-69	6 %	8 %	9 %
70+	0 %	1 %	2 %
Prefer not to say	0 %	1 %	1 %

Experience	DK	NO	SE
>3 years	19 %	18 %	14 %
3-5 years	15 %	12 %	13 %
6-10 years	19 %	17 %	16 %
11-20 years	23 %	23 %	25 %
21-30 years	15 %	21 %	19 %
<30 years	9 %	9 %	13 %

Note:
In total, percentages may not add up to exactly 100% as they have been rounded to the nearest whole number. *Please note that the 2023 composition of samples across sectors differs from last year's survey:

- Denmark: Law firms increased from 31% to 44%; The public sector decreased from 47% to 32%.
- Norway: Corporate sector share increased from 14% to 23%; The public sector share decreased from 62% to 52%.
- Sweden: The public sector increased from 38% to 47%.

Organisation type	DK	NO	SE
PUBLIC SECTOR	32 %	52 %	47 %
The state	11 %	31 %	25 %
Municipalities	13 %	17 %	7 %
Within court system	5 %	3 %	13 %
Other, public	3 %	2 %	2 %
LAW FIRMS	44 %	24 %	25 %
Larger law firm	29 %	13 %	9 %
Mid sized law firm	13 %	9 %	11 %
Smaller law firm	2 %	2 %	5 %
CORPORATE SECTOR	24 %	23 %	28 %
Corporation	17 %	16 %	23 %
Organisation	7 %	7 %	6 %



Chapter 1

A craving for tech

An appetizing future course





There are many tools to run legal tasks, we already use computer science and AI. (...) We are not skilled at understanding which technical solutions are the best, even though we are the ones who best understand the tasks. There are quite a lot of tools coming that look exciting. We have discovered that we have a need. A need to be presented with the solutions to get the ideas to use them.

Anonymous

Devouring digital tools

Tech appliances designed for the legal industry are increasingly appealing – legal professionals are letting their guards down.

The 2022 survey was a testament to the increasing acknowledgement of technological aids in the legal business. This year, we read between the lines of former statements and sought to understand the deeper relationship between legal professionals and digital tools. As a result, significant opinions and huge engagement were uncovered.

More than ever before, Scandinavian legal professionals embrace technological tools, which are considered key to accommodating an ever more global reality. Legal professionals are very aware of the prospect of tech products – indeed, they worry that they may not fully know how to best employ the latest digital tools. However, statements also convey how members of our industry welcome the challenge and are prepared to do what it takes to learn new, advanced technological skills. We know that it is necessary to be able to foresee future obstacles in a globalised world. This might explain why innovation is a priority to a substantial number of legal professionals.



KEY INSIGHTS

All on board

Almost all Scandinavian legal professionals – 96% – believe that understanding and being able to employ new digital tools is an important skill for the future legal professional.

Tech is change

Tech is considered significantly more influential compared to previous findings. 77% consider technology a key driver of change in tomorrow's legal industry.

More wants more

Not surprisingly then, 71% of Scandinavian legal professionals look forward to an even more digital future in the legal business.

Doubting own tech talent

Almost half – 48% – of the industry is concerned they do not possess the necessary skills to benefit fully from new legal tech products.

Challenge accepted

Luckily, approximately two out of three legal professionals – 62% – are ready to take on the challenge on their own. They consider themselves responsible for any education/re-education required for obtaining the right set of digital skills.

Complexities of a global reality

One world – many legal voices. With legal agreements and contracts becoming still more globalised, 82% expect their work and assignments to become increasingly complex.

Expect the unexpected

Innovative measures in the industry are lacking according to 40% of all legal professionals.

All on board

Legal professionals agree, almost unanimously, that understanding and using digital tools is vital to thrive in the future.

Across Denmark, Sweden, and Norway legal professionals communicate the same message: All but a few – 96% – consider understanding and using digital tools an important or somewhat important competency for members of tomorrow’s legal industry. This point of view is shared by legal professionals from all sectors, and of any gender or age.

96% consider understanding and using digital tools an important competency

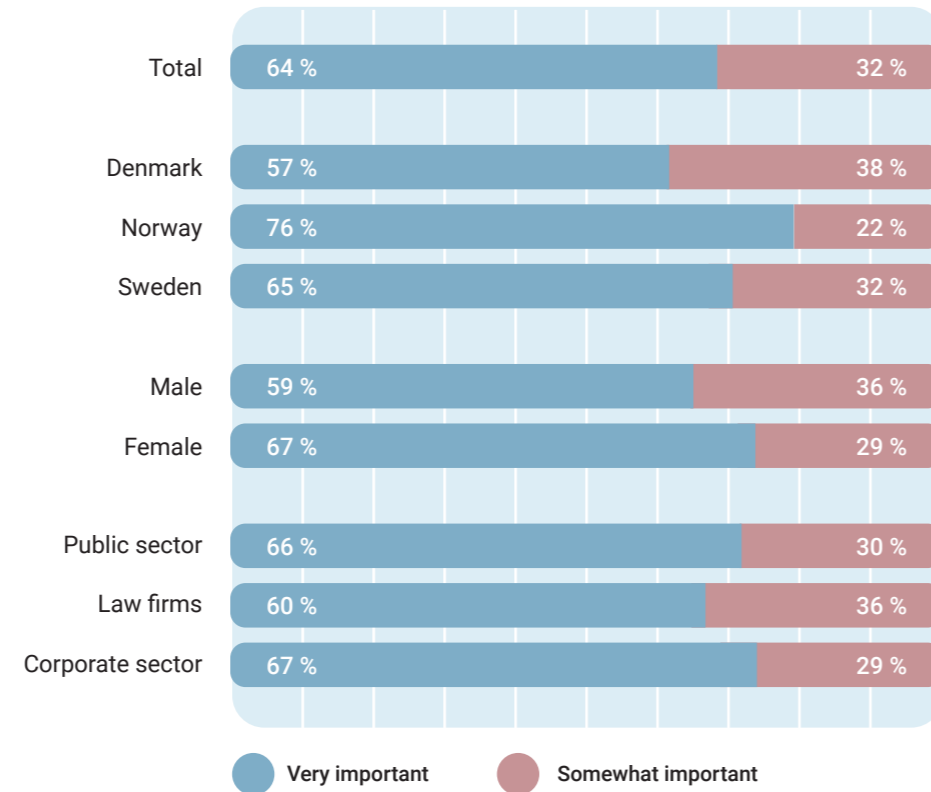
Consistent with the insights of last year, this conclusion constitutes the understandable basis for new findings in the tech area this year. Our industry is fully embracing the prospect of technological tools designed for legal professionals – and acknowledges the responsibility that naturally comes with it.



Exciting and demanding tasks in a high-tech field. Very future oriented, lots of creativity in the law, and you get to take part in technological development that goes faster than the law can keep up with.

Female, 30-39, other sector, NO

Figure 1.
How important do you think the following skills or competencies are for the future legal professional: *Understand and use new digital tools.*



Tech is change

More than 3 in 4 legal professionals believe that technology will shape the industry of tomorrow.

Compared to last year, this year’s survey reveals a significant change in what legal professionals perceive as the main driver of tomorrow’s legal business. 77% believe that technology is the area, which will most impact the legal profession in the future. Last year, tech was already mentioned by 60% of the respondents.

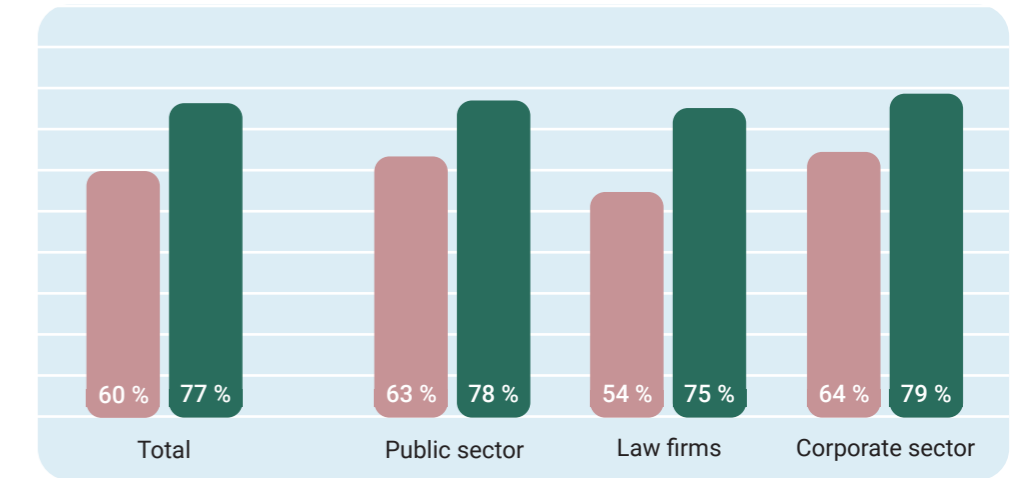
77% believe technology will drive the development of the legal industry

This remarkable 30% increase since 2022 may in part be attributed to the launch of ChatGPT and other language or document processing tools, all of which have been designed to save users time and strengthen the quality of all efforts. For this very reason, they have been the topic of as much praise as controversy.

The increased belief in tech is particularly apparent in law firms where as many as 75% have marked tech as the main driver of impact in the legal profession. Last year, only 54% of legal professionals working at law firms ranked technology as one of the three most influential areas.

Figure 2.

Which of the following options do you think will drive the development of the legal industry the most in the future: *Technology (e.g., automation, Artificial Intelligence (AI)), globalisation, increased demands on work-life balance, increased complexity in society leading to growing need for legal services, new business models/pricing models of legal services, legal services offered by non-legal professionals.*



Choice: *Technology (e.g., automation, Artificial Intelligence (AI))* ● 2022 ● 2023



The legal industry is now becoming increasingly digitised (AI), which has made it easier for everyone to access different legal sources. Furthermore, it is highly likely that more routine tasks can be completed with technological tools in the future.

Female, corporate sector, NO



More want more

The majority of the legal industry has surrendered to the prospect of technological tools.

This survey inquired whether legal professionals look forward to the legal business being even more digitalised than today. A vast majority do. More than two-thirds – 72% – of the legal professionals in Scandinavia concur. The result is almost similar across Denmark, Norway, and Sweden – with a bit more reluctance detected among Swedish legal professionals of whom 63% are looking forward to an even more digital future. This finding comes as no big surprise in that last year, the legal industry already reported how technology and digital tools were expected to facilitate efficiency and better quality.

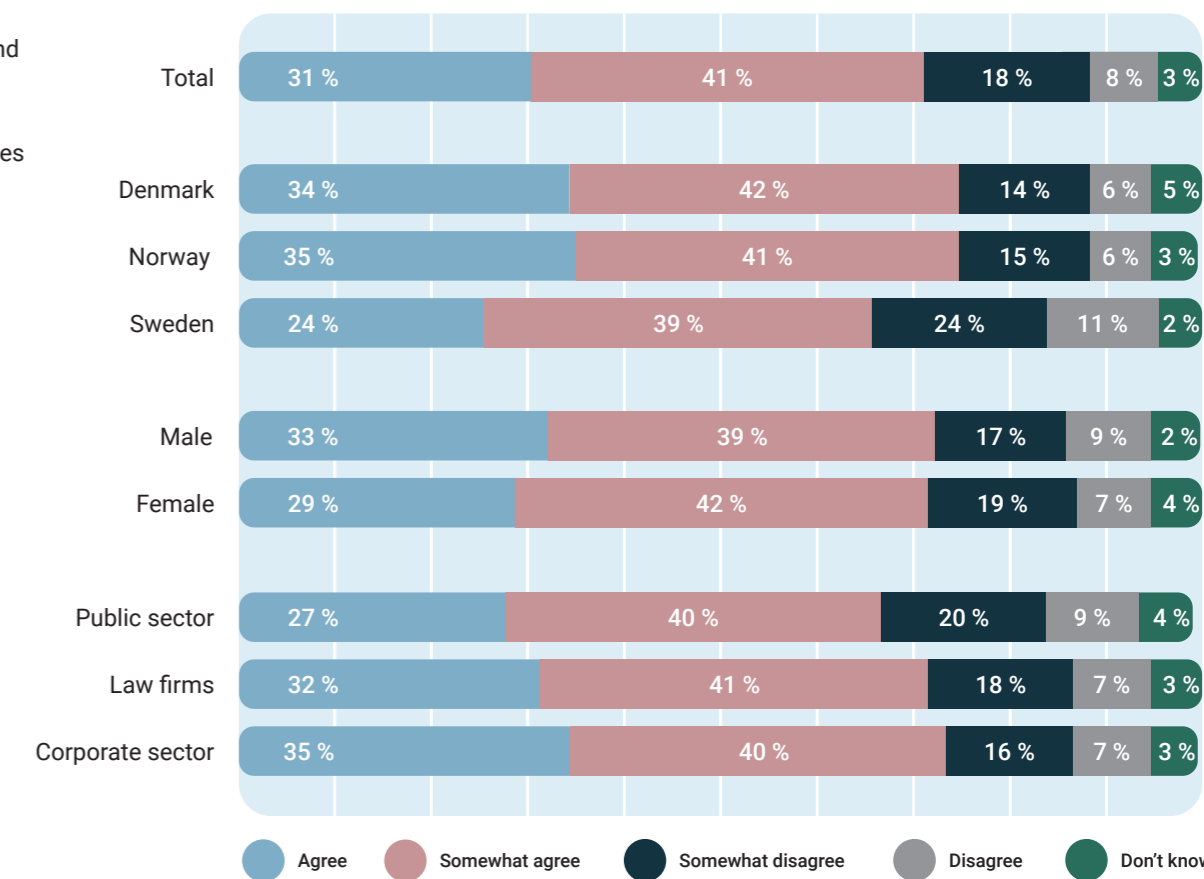


Interesting and maturing assignments with digitisation, AI, and possibilities to specialise in data protection and information security.

Female, 40-49, public sector, SE

Figure 3.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements:
I look forward to an even more digital future for the legal business.



Doubting own tech talent

Although ready to embrace tech, half of all Scandinavian legal professionals fear they don't have what it takes to benefit from digital tools.

We know we want it – but fear we cannot handle it at the end of the day. This is how many legal professionals consider legal tech products. The survey inquired whether legal professionals believe they possess the right skills to profit from new legal tech products. Results reveal that half of them – 48% – do not think so. It is food for thought how this is a recurring tendency across gender and age.

48% do not think they have the right skills to fully benefit from new legal tech products

There is a slight difference detected in the way the two biological genders regard their tech savviness. Half – 51% – of the female legal professionals believe they lack the necessary skills to fully benefit from legal tech products, whereas 43% of their male peers share this view.

It may come as a surprise that even the youngest respondents (23-29) feel intimidated by the thought of using legal tech products even more in the future. You could argue that the millennial generation, being so-called *digital natives*, would be comfortable with any digital progress and device. Nevertheless, almost half – 45% – of the youngest legal professionals represented in the survey feel that they too lack the right skills to benefit from new legal tech products.

Figure 4.
Do you agree or disagree with the following statement:
I have the right skills to fully benefit from new legal tech products.

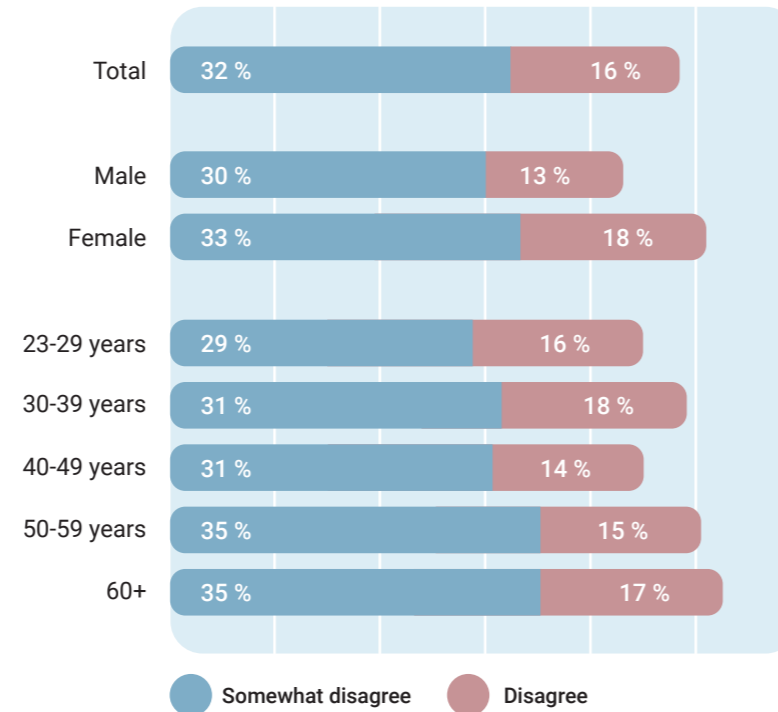
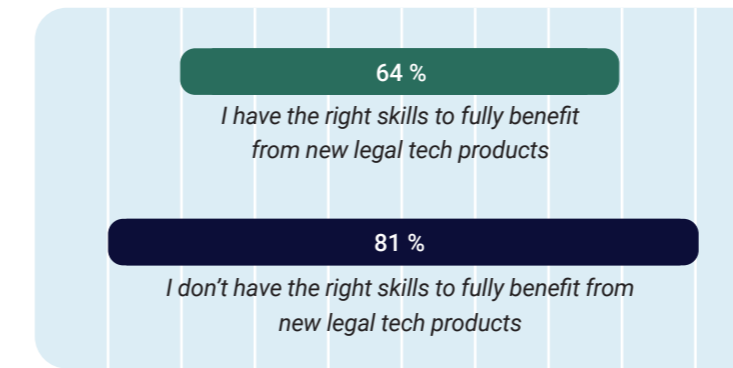


Figure 5.
I look forward to an even more digital future for the legal business.



Combining survey results for more in-depth knowledge, we cross-analysed the average of 72% who look forward to a more digital future with the 48% who fear they don't possess the right digital skills. The result confirms that legal professionals who believe they lack the necessary skills to fully benefit from legal tech products are looking less forward to the digital reality of tomorrow. They constitute only 64% compared to those who have fewer doubts about their tech abilities – of these as much as 81% are ready to embrace an even more digital future.



I would like to have information-gathering environments where you can follow and track cases in a digital, efficient, and automated way.

Male, law firm, SE

Challenge accepted

Willing to take control of their tech skills, legal professionals primarily place the responsibility for essential digital learning with management.

Giving respondents the option of multiple choices, the survey asked whom they consider mainly responsible for educating/re-educating the legal professional towards obtaining the necessary digital skills. Based on this multiple-choice option, three in five – 62% – consider digital learning their own responsibility. However, cross-analysing this result with the other choices made by the respondents, it turns out that only 10% of legal professionals in Scandinavia consider learning the required digital skills *only* their responsibility.

10% consider learning the required digital skills only their own responsibility

Along these lines, final results show that 74% of the respondents selected either their management group or the nearest manager. This means that three in four legal professionals believe that management or manager is partly responsible for educating them towards obtaining the necessary tech skills. Given multiple choices, 47% chose their management group and 46% chose their nearest line manager.

Together these results indicate a high degree of both individual responsibility and expectations of the management group/manager.

Figure 6.
Who - in your opinion - is mainly responsible for educating/re-educating legal professionals towards obtaining the right set of digital skills?

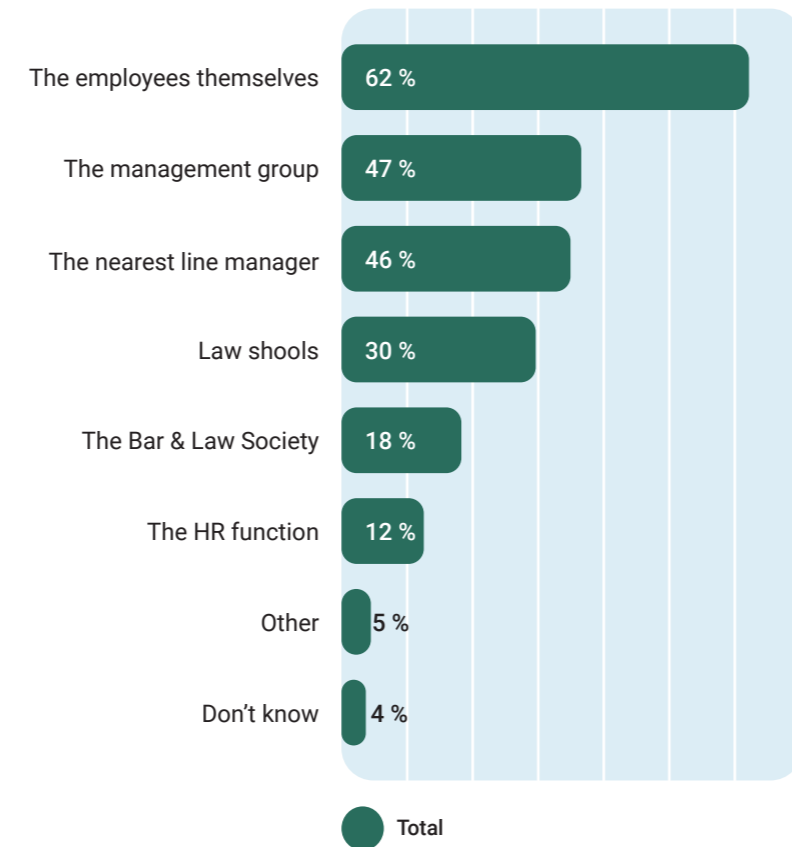
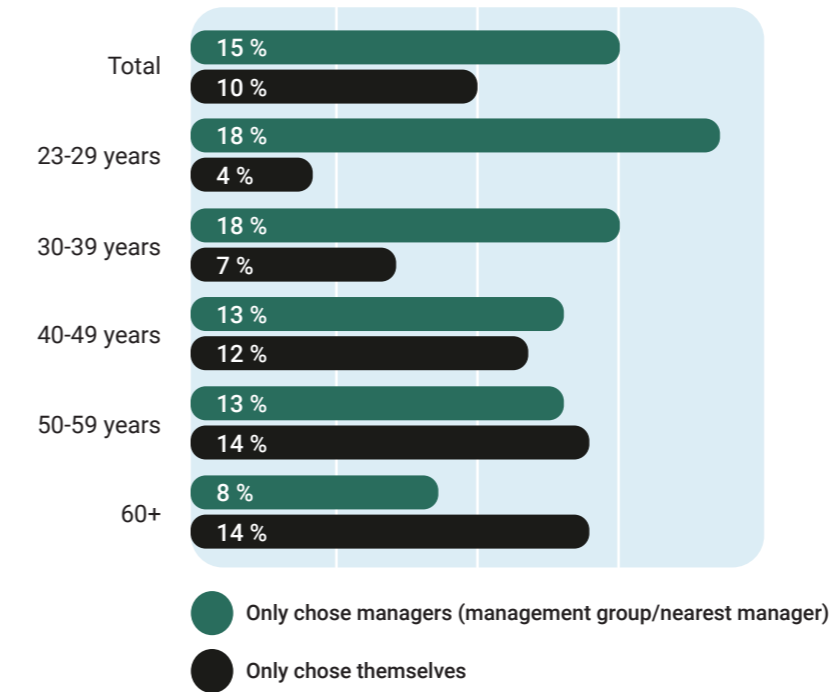
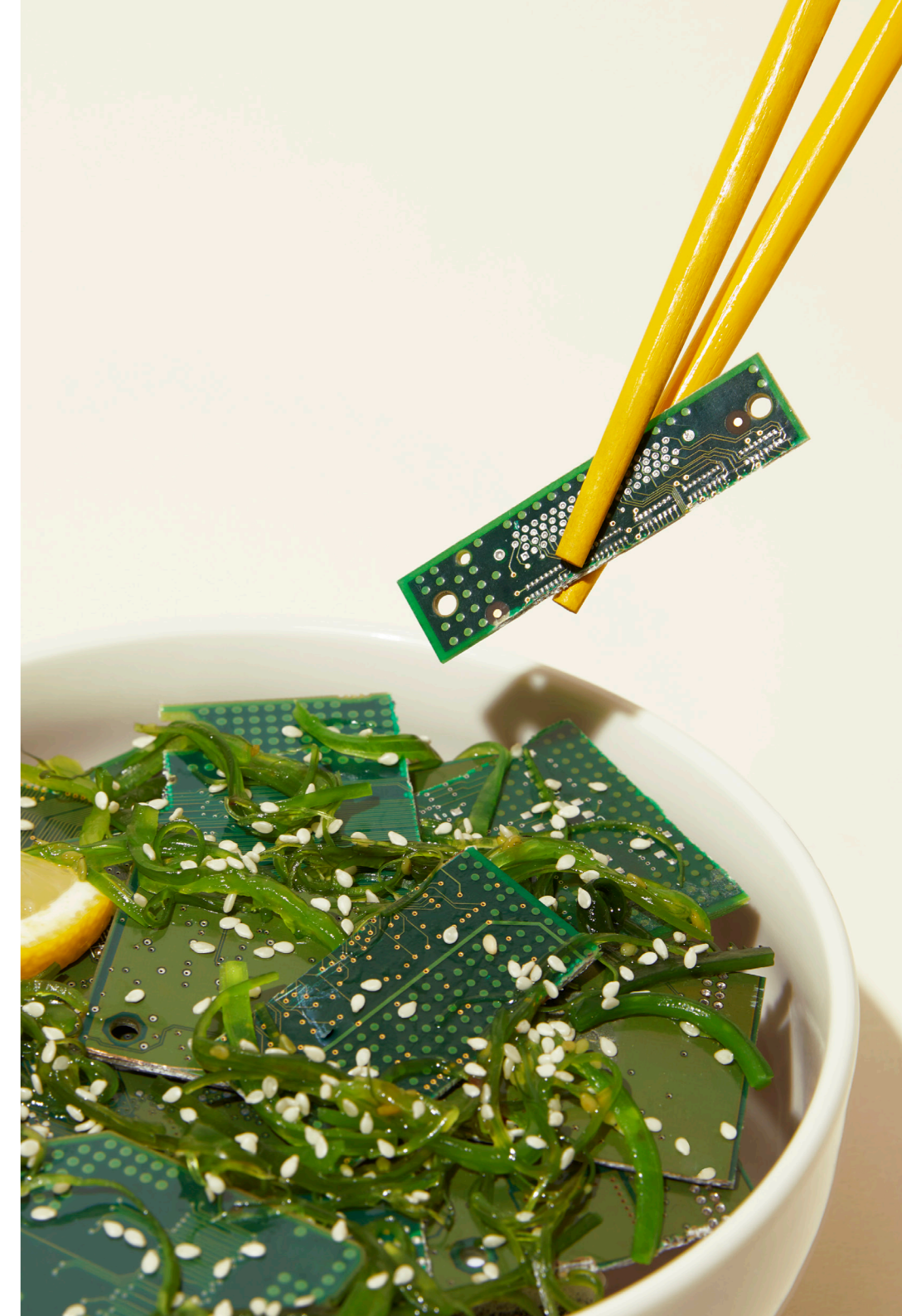


Figure 7.



As is apparent in Figure 7, an average of 10% of the Scandinavian professionals consider only themselves responsible for the education necessary to obtain the right set of skills to be able to fully profit from legal tech products in the future. 15% felt that only managers are responsible. The chart illustrates how legal professionals seemingly take increasing control of their own continued education with age. In comparison, younger legal professionals place the responsibility on their manager or management group to a much higher degree.

Among mature legal professionals – 50-59 years – the responsibility for digital learning is equally placed between only managers and only themselves. 13% placed the responsibility only on managers, and 14% only on themselves. In comparison, among a younger age group of legal professionals – 23-29 years – 18% selected only their manager and only 4% consider themselves solely responsible for keeping up the necessary digital education.



Complexities of a local & global reality

Our ever more globalised world increases the complexity of legal tasks – and will impact the development of the industry.

Globalisation makes the world smaller and bigger all at once. This is clear to a vast majority of Scandinavian legal professionals who expect the ever-increasing globalisation to bring more work to their table. Across all three legal sectors, 82% foresee expanding complexity in legal processes because of globalisation. Considering the number of laws, bylaws, and regulations that are compared across continents, nations, and cultures every single day this forecast seems only reasonable.

82% expect increased complexity in their work due to increased globalisation

61% of legal professionals consider increased complexity in society – on both a local and global level – as an aspect with huge influence on the development of tomorrow’s legal industry. Societal intricacies will inevitably lead to a growing need for legal services and will as such have an impact on the tasks and workload of legal professionals. In the public sector, particularly, as much as 70% predict that the need for legal services will evolve with new structures and regulations in society.

Figure 8.
Do you agree or disagree with the following statements:
I expect increased complexity in my work due to increased globalisation (e.g., new laws and regulations).

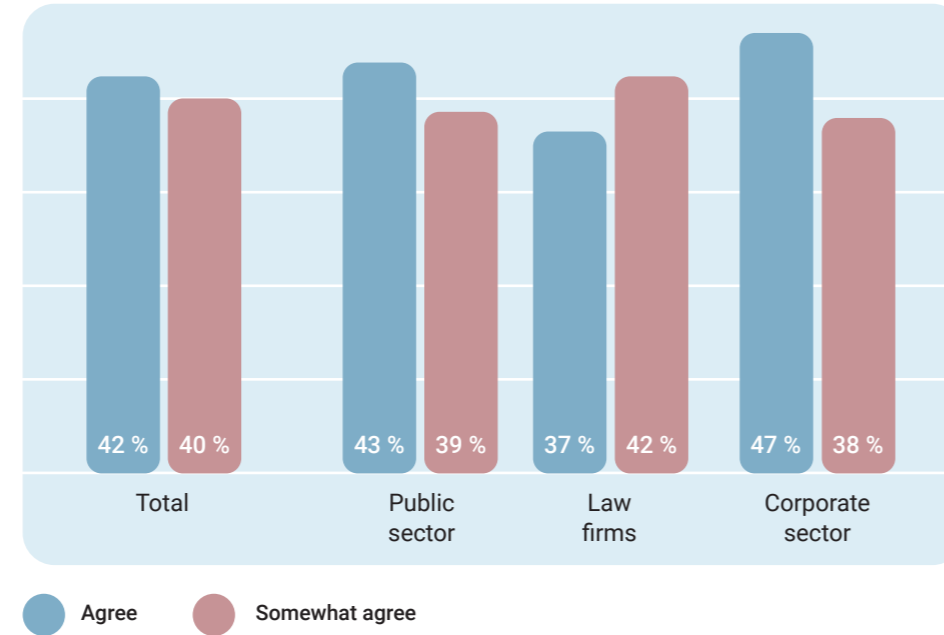
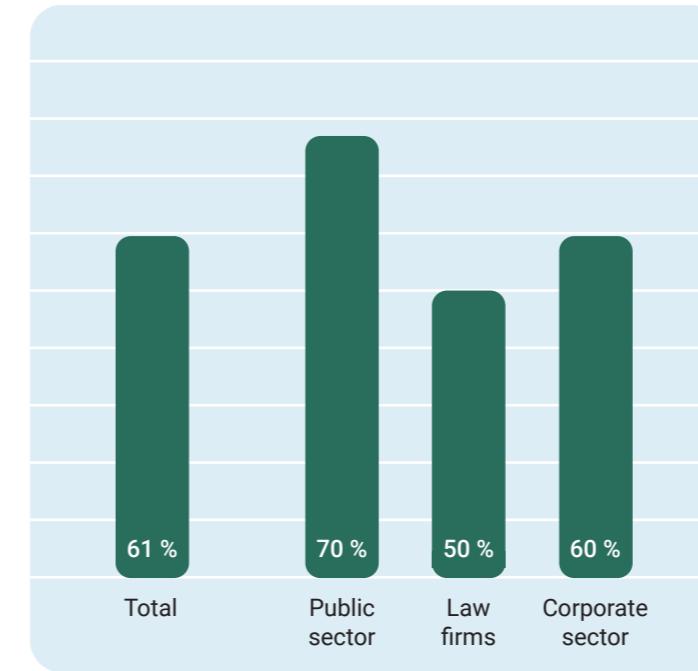


Figure 9.
Which of the following options do you think will drive the development of the legal industry the most in the future:

Technology (e.g., automation, Artificial Intelligence (AI)), globalisation, increased demands on work-life balance, increased complexity in society leading to growing need for legal services, new business models/pricing models of legal services, legal services offered by non-legal professionals.



Choice: *increased complexity in society leading to growing need for legal services.*



Due to work life becoming more international and increasingly complex, there will need to be a greater focus on competence development. It must become more systematic. There should at least be a minimum level required (with regard to understanding international rules and regulations, ed.).

Anonymous, corporate sector, NO

Expect the unexpected

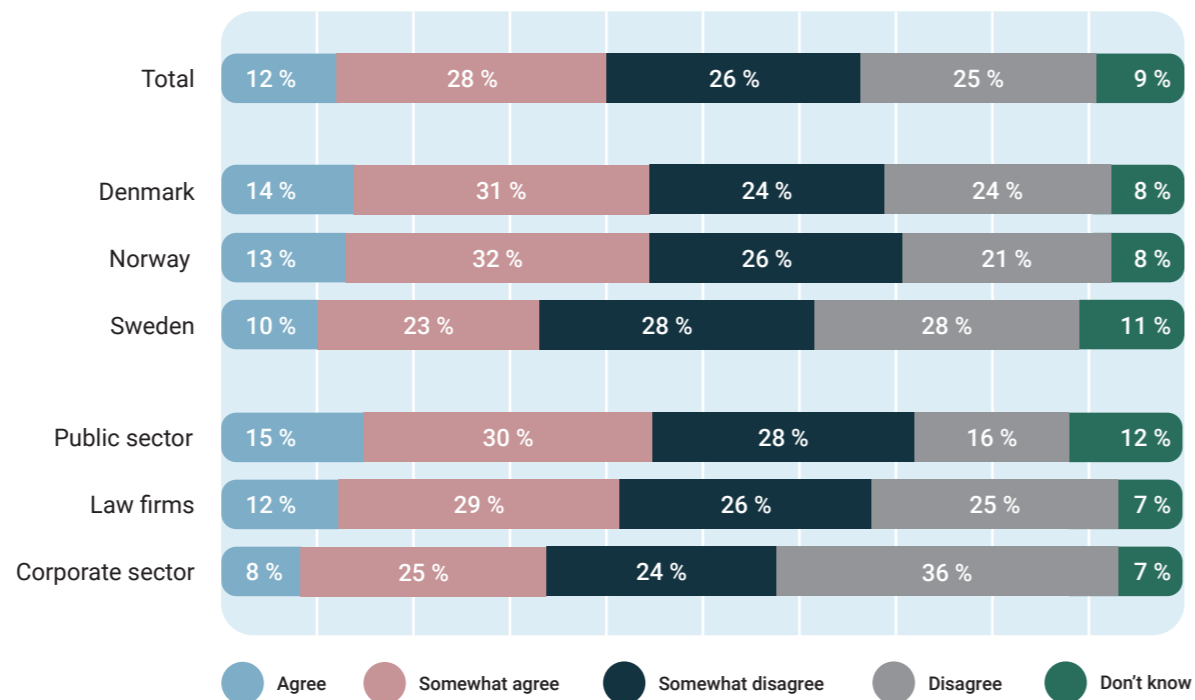
Legal professionals enjoy innovative initiatives, although 40% feel that innovation is not sufficiently prioritised at their workplace.

The survey questionnaire sought to learn if legal professionals believe that their workplace prioritises innovation as much as they consider necessary. Insights show that while half of the Scandinavian legal professionals – 51% – are satisfied with the extent of their employer’s approach to new ways of thinking and handling processes, 40% still agree or somewhat agree that more could be done to prioritise innovation.

Differences occur across legal sectors. Legal professionals working in the corporate sector are far more positive in terms of how they consider their company’s attitude towards innovative ideas – especially compared to the public sector. In the corporate sector, three in five – 60% – believe that innovation is indeed sufficiently prioritised. At law firms 51% are content, and in the public sector, 44% are happy with the way innovation is handled.

These positive findings, however, leave an average of too many Scandinavian legal professionals who are not satisfied with how innovation is prioritised. The reasons behind this remain an interesting subject to explore further.

Figure 10.
Do you agree or disagree to the following statements:
My company does not prioritise innovation enough.



Key discoveries

- Scandinavian legal professionals are very aware of the importance of digital skills. Almost all legal professionals (96%) consider it important/somewhat important for the future legal professional to understand and use new digital tools.
- Tech is becoming significantly more important to the legal business. This year, 77% mention ‘technology (e.g., automation, AI)’ as a main driver for the future of the legal industry – an increase of 17 percentage points compared to the 2022 survey. The current global focus on AI might be part of the explanation.
- Considering tech’s increasing popularity, it is not too surprising that 71% of Scandinavian legal professionals look forward to an even more digital future for the legal business.
- Almost half (48%) of the Scandinavian legal professionals fear that they lack the necessary skills to benefit fully from new legal tech products. Not surprisingly, legal professionals who believe they already possess the right competencies are more eager to welcome an even more digital future than peers who doubt their tech skills – 81% compared to 64%.
- Legal professionals are ready to take on the challenge but primarily consider digital learning a joined task. Only 10% consider themselves the sole responsible for their digital education. 62% believe they must participate in making sure they receive the proper education/re-education, while 74% also consider it a manager/management group responsibility.
- Innovation is popular, and the absence of innovation is noticed by 40% of the legal professionals who believe their company does not put enough effort into prioritizing innovation. 44% from the public sector, 51% from law firms, and 60% from the corporate sector agree that innovation is a sufficient priority within their company.



Questions for debate

- What is the potential use of AI in the legal industry – language, document processing?
- Do we need to consider some kind of “AI/Tech - Code of Conduct” for the legal business – and if so, who should initiate this process?
- Who bears the responsibility for making sure that legal professionals know how to employ the latest tech tools?
- How do we regard innovation in the business – and how open are the three legal sectors to new ways of trotting old paths?



The digital tools reshaping the legal landscape are not just about efficiency; they're about exploration. They offer lawyers a chance to approach age-old problems in new ways, to innovate, and to bring fresh perspectives.



Failure and exploration: The new paradigm for the legal industry

Written by: Alexandra Andhov – Associate Professor in Corporate Law and Law and Technology, founder and director of Copenhagen Legal Tech Lab, University of Copenhagen.

At the heart of the legal industry's evolution lies a fundamental need for the freedom to fail. Historically, the focus has been on outcomes, with lawyers often judged by their infallibility. However, in a rapidly digitizing world, this approach is not just outdated but counterproductive. The essence of growth, especially in the realm of technology, is the ability to explore, be creative – and yes, make mistakes.

The digital tools reshaping the legal landscape are not just about efficiency; they're about exploration. They offer lawyers a chance to approach age-old problems in new ways, to innovate, and to bring fresh perspectives. But to harness these tools effectively, lawyers must feel empowered to step out of their comfort zones, to experiment, and crucially, to fail without fear of retribution.

This brings us to a pressing responsibility that rests on the shoulders of law firms and educational institutions. The traditional methods of education and training need a thorough re-evaluation. It is no longer just about imparting knowledge; it's about fostering a mindset. Continuing education, once seen as an optional add-on, will become an integral part of a lawyer's journey. The skillset required of modern lawyers will continually evolve, demanding not just legal acumen but also technological prowess, adaptability, and a thirst for learning.

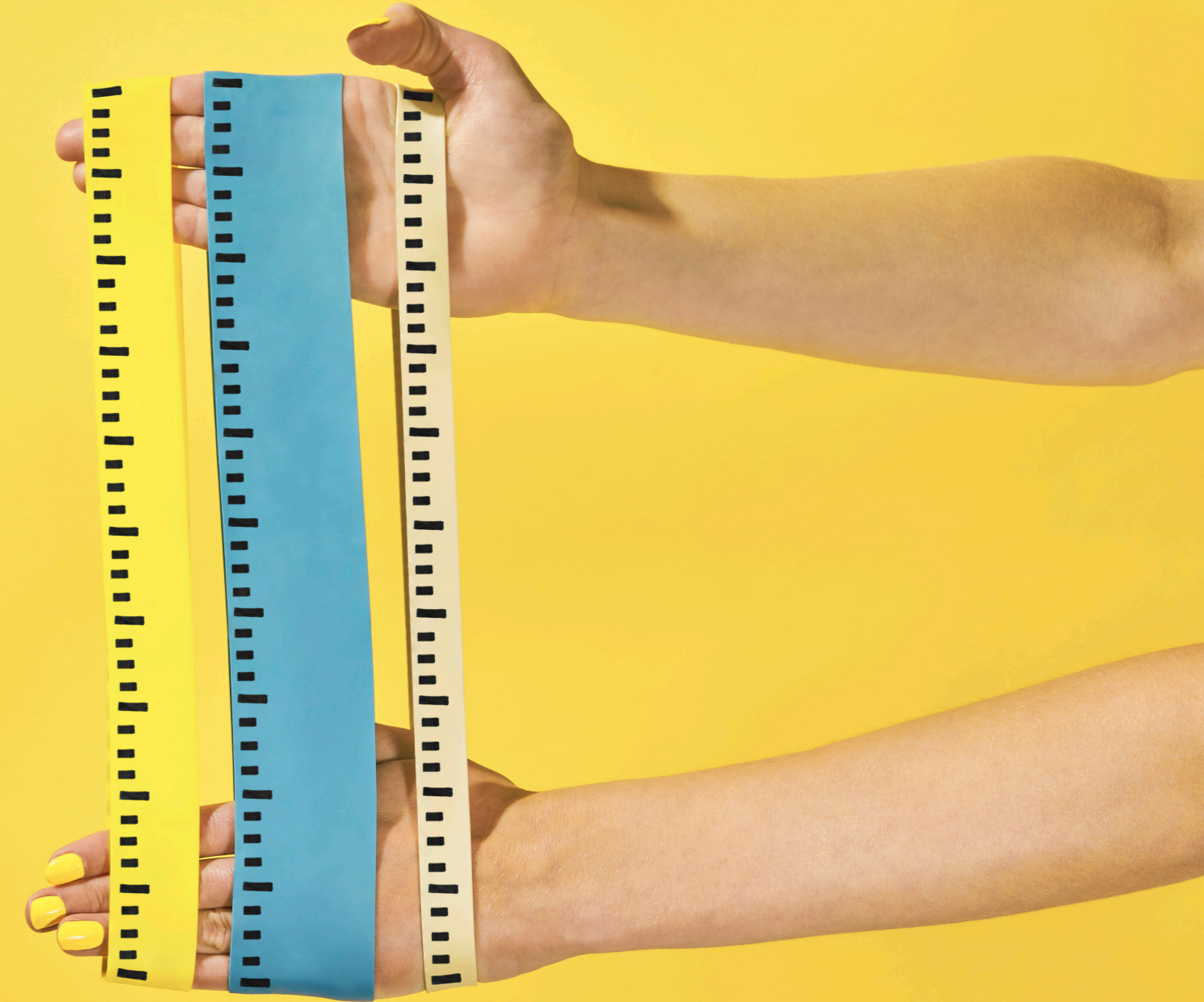
Ultimately, the future of the legal industry hinges on how we adapt today. It's imperative to create an environment where lawyers are not just equipped with tools but are also empowered to use them creatively, even if it means stumbling along the way. By redefining success, embracing the journey of exploration, and prioritizing continuous education, we can ensure that the legal profession remains dynamic, relevant, and ready for the challenges of the digital age. Moreover, this approach will not only enhance the skillset of lawyers but will also directly contribute to their mental wellbeing, fostering a healthier, more resilient legal community.



Chapter 2

Equal Measures

Is everybody equal in the eyes of the law?



Opposing views on equality

The survey presents vast differences in how men and women perceive gender equality in the legal industry.

This survey set out to inquire about the view of Scandinavian legal professionals on diversity. In the survey questionnaire, diversity was defined in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, religion, and sexual orientation.

A vast majority of respondents agree that diversity improves working conditions for everyone as well as strengthens the overall results. Nevertheless, the survey included questions specifically focusing on gender equality and inclusion. As it turned out, the two biological genders in the legal profession found these topics very relevant.

Survey results show significant differences in how women and men consider their possibilities to advance and thrive professionally. Female legal professionals believe they are still at a disadvantage to their male colleagues. They believe the gender pay gap still flourishes in their workplace. Also, they consider the possibilities of career advancement – and access to climb up the corporate ladder – much harder for them than for their male peers. Not many male legal professionals support this perception that gender segregation and unequal valuation of labour is a problem.

In other words, more than describing actual diversity, this chapter delves into *perceptions* of gender inequality in the industry. What the reality of the matter is remains a topic for interesting, upcoming discussions.



Compared to my male colleagues, I am treated worse and considered professionally less qualified by my manager.

Female, 30-39, corporate sector, DK



KEY INSIGHTS

Hard to advance

61% of female legal professionals agree – or somewhat agree – that it is still more difficult for women than men to land a top position. In comparison, only half as many male legal professionals – 30% – share this view.

Equal pay missing

Half of the female legal professionals – 50% – believe that a gender pay gap exists at their workplace. Only 17% of their male peers agree.

Promoting equality

45% of legal professionals claim that their workplace has a recruitment policy actively promoting equality. The survey shows major cross-Scandinavian differences: In Norway, 69% consider this the norm compared to only 33% of Danish legal professionals.

Judged by your cover

One in four female legal professionals in Scandinavia has experienced non-inclusive behaviour at her place of work in the past twelve months.

Equality at work

There is consensus among legal professionals about the impact of diversity and equality in the workplace.

82% agree or somewhat agree that a lack of gender equality ultimately means a less attractive company

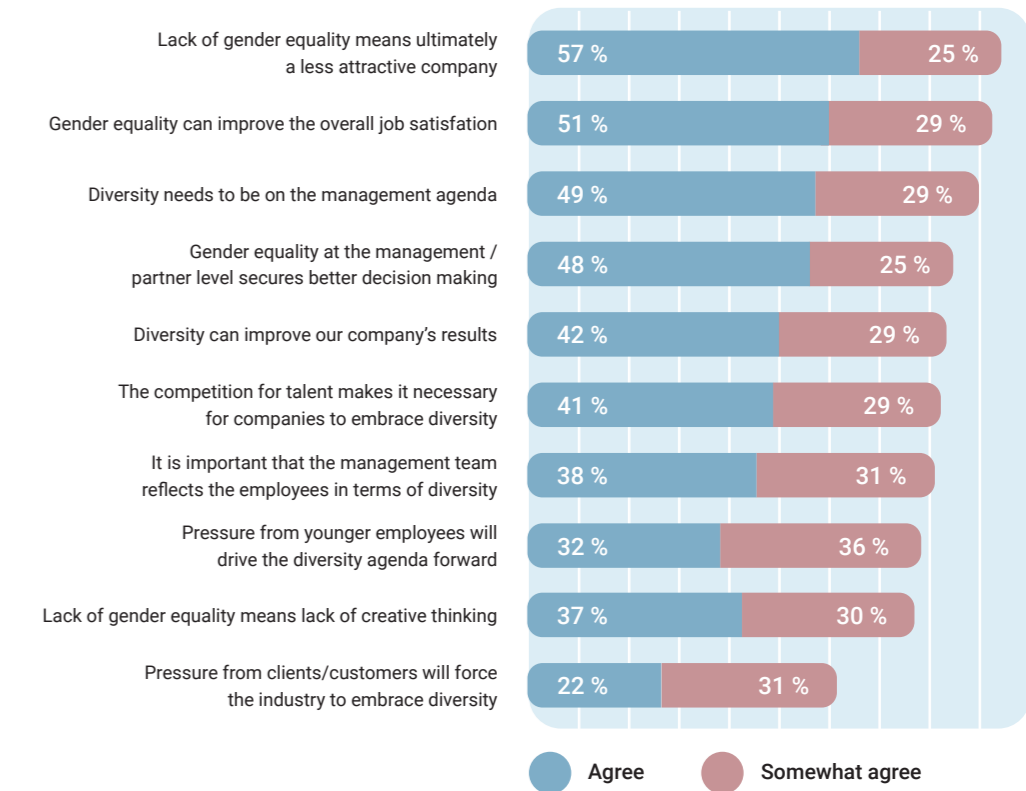
80% agree or somewhat agree that gender equality can improve overall job satisfaction

78% agree or somewhat agree that diversity needs to be on the management agenda

70% of Scandinavian legal professionals agree or somewhat agree with all statements concerning diversity

Figure 11.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement:
(the term “diversity” describes diversity in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, religion, and sexual orientation).



Hard to get

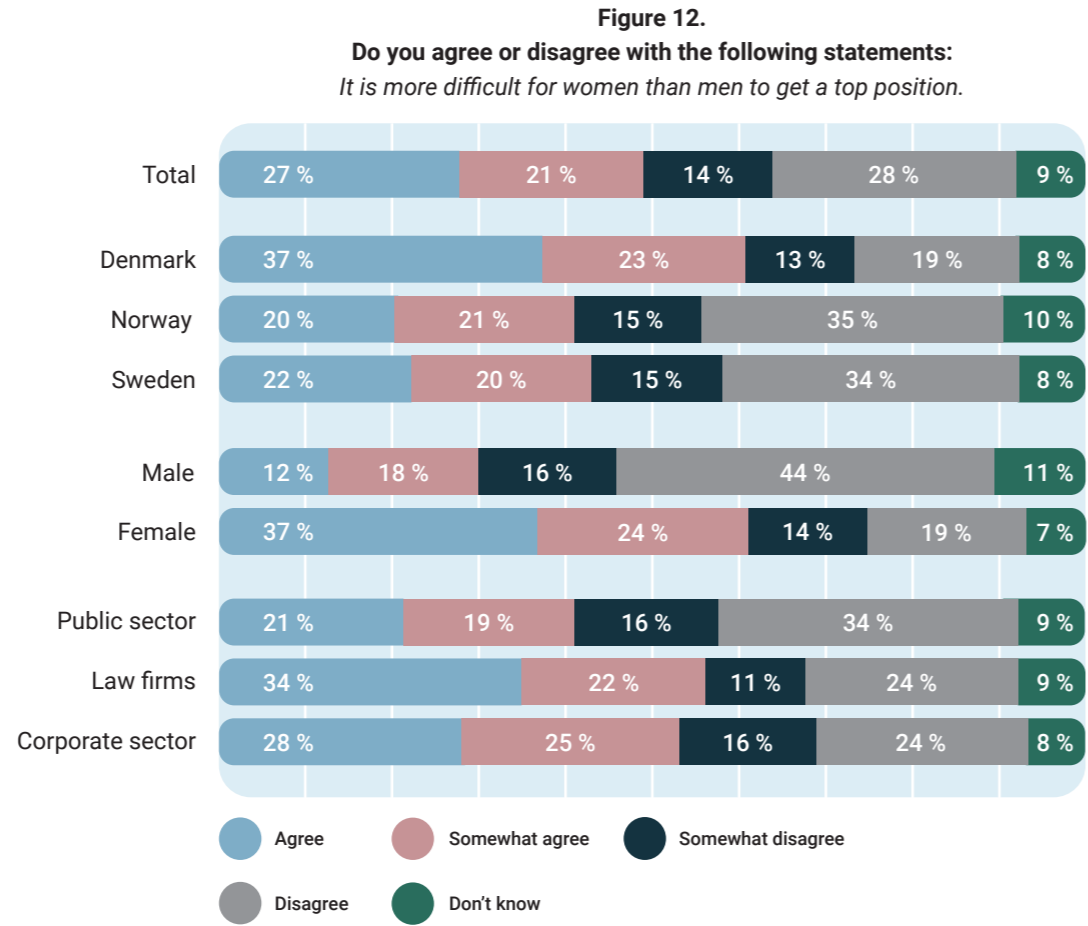
Half of the Scandinavian legal industry agrees that climbing the professional ladder is more challenging for women than men.

Across all countries, legal sectors, gender, and age almost half of all Scandinavian legal professionals – 48% – agree that getting a top position is a bigger challenge for women than men. As many as 61% – three out of five – of female legal professionals believe that it is more difficult for a woman than a man to get a top position. In comparison, only 30% of their male peers concur.

♀ **61%** believe that it is more difficult for a woman than a man to get a top position

♂ **30%** believe that it is more difficult for a woman than a man to get a top position

Analysing the results across sectors it appears that more than half of the legal professionals working at law firms – 56% – and in the corporate sector – 53% – support this view of the challenges faced by female legal professionals. In the public sector, the number of people agreeing with the statement is 41%.

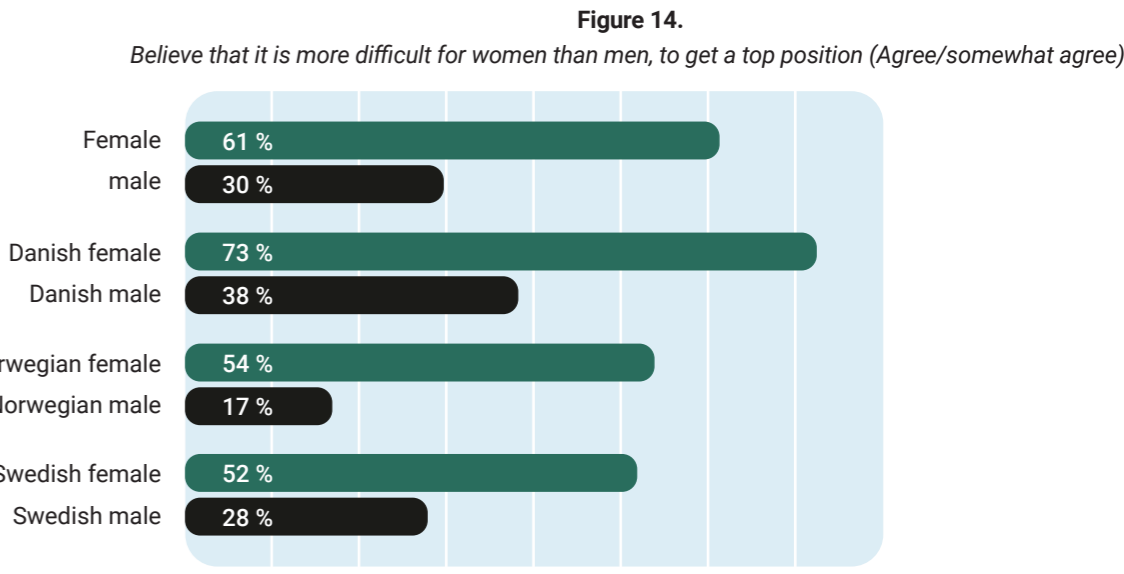
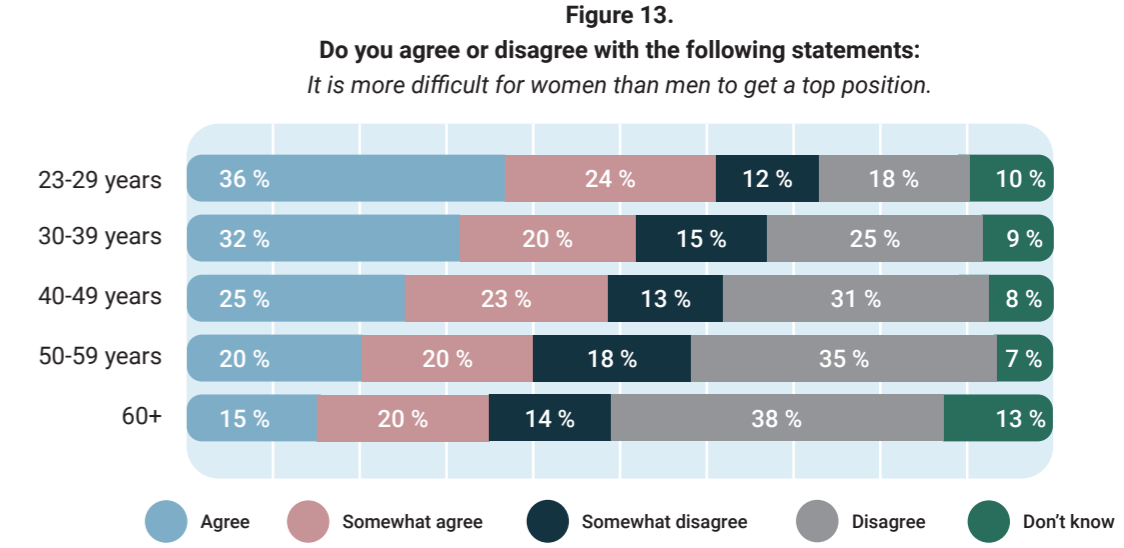


The lower percentage in the public sector might be linked to the fact that in this very sector, 59% of legal professionals with staff responsibility have indicated that their workplace has a recruitment policy which actively prioritises equality. This, however, is also the case for 54% of the legal employees in the corporate sector and 35% of those working at law firms.

61% of younger legal professionals (23 - 29 years) believe hierarchal inequality exists

With age, we appear to stand firmer and trust the positive options available to all. As the survey shows, the conviction that a top position is more difficult to obtain for women than men will decrease over time. Where as many as 61% of younger legal professionals (23-29 years) believe that hierarchal inequality does exist, only about half – 34% – among the 60+ legal professionals agree with this point of view.

Figure 13 illustrates interesting differences in how female legal professionals perceive their chances to advance in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden respectively. Almost three out of four – 73% – of female Danish legal professionals are firm believers that climbing up the corporate ladder is a more difficult task for a woman than a man. In comparison, just over half – 54% – of their female, Norwegian peers and female, Swedish peers – 52% – agree.

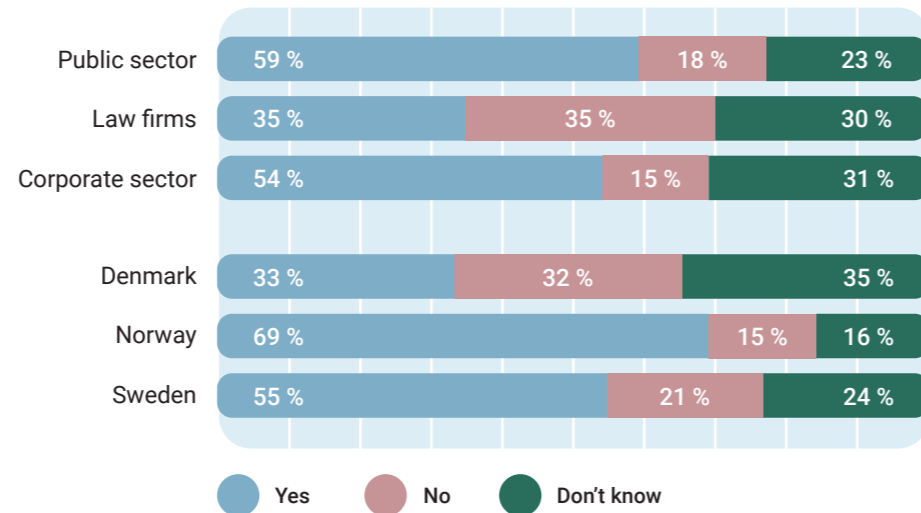


From a male perspective, the image is reversed. Across all three countries, male legal professionals are significantly less prone to agree that it is more difficult for women than men to get a top position. Norwegian men disagree the most with only 17% supporting the claim that a woman's way to the top is steeper than that of a man. In Sweden, 28% subscribe to the idea, and in Denmark 38%.

69% Norwegian legal professionals claim to have a recruitment policy which favours equality

Recruitment policies are key to understanding how companies approach gender equality. Only a third – 33% – of Danish legal professionals with staff responsibility indicate having a recruitment policy actively prioritising equality. In Sweden, more than half – 55% – know of gender-related recruitment policies, while in Norway an impressive 69% claim to have a recruitment policy which favours equality. In Denmark, more than a third – 35% – of the respondents ticked the 'don't know' box, indicating that Danish legal professionals with staff responsibility lack adequate access to information about recruitment policies.

Figure 15.
Does your company have a recruitment policy that actively prioritises equality?



“
There is an exaggerated focus on gender equality catering to a very small group of women who already have exceptionally good career opportunities.

Male, 30-39, law firm, NO



The legal industry is strongly gendered. This not only applies to the private sector, where the highest-paid positions are predominantly held by men – but also in the public sector, where far more men than women pursue higher positions. Private assignments such as arbitration and tasks of ombudsman are almost exclusively given to men. Men with children work overtime, while women with children largely disappear from the professional community in their workplace.

Female 50-59, public sector, NO

What happened to equal pay for equal work?

More than one out of three believe that there is still a gender pay gap in their company.

Comparing results across all three Scandinavian countries, genders, legal sectors, and ages, it appears many legal professionals still acknowledge the existence of the gender pay gap. According to survey answers more than every third – 37% – of the legal professionals in Scandinavia believe that there is a gender pay gap in their company.

Upon further scrutiny, data reveal vast differences in perception between the two biological genders. Half of the female legal professionals – 50% – believe there is a gender pay gap in their company. Only 17% of male legal professionals share this opinion. In fact, 62% disagree or somewhat disagree with this statement. Among both genders, as many as one in five indicate ‘don’t know’.

In the legal sector, it appears that legal professionals working at law firms disagree much more with the notion of a gender pay gap in their company: A total of 50% disagree compared to legal professionals from the corporate sector where 33% disagree, and the public sector where 42% disagree.

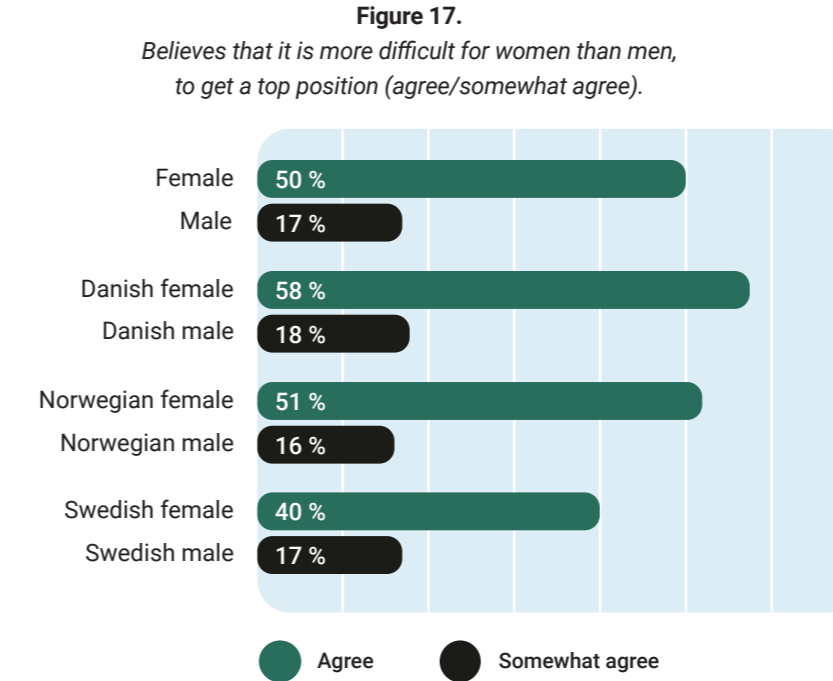
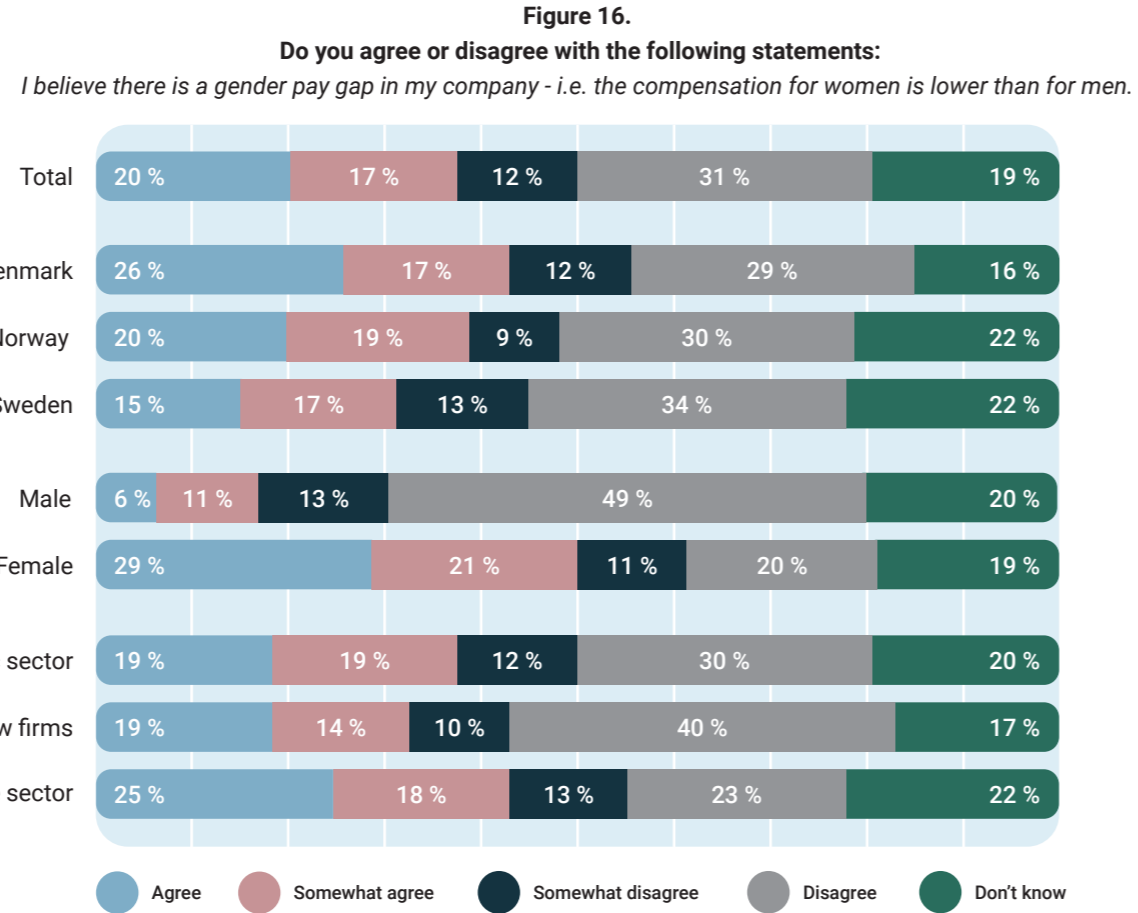


Figure 17 reveals significant differences between the Scandinavian countries. Particularly Danish female legal professionals – 58% – believe there is a gender pay gap. Female legal professionals across all three countries do, however, agree to a notable extent that there is a gender pay gap. In comparison, with only 17% in total, their male peers concur to a much lesser degree.



I am treated worse, and my boss sees me as less professionally competent than my male colleagues. This although we get the same score on feedback, work the same number of hours, and my male colleagues come to me with their legal tasks. The lowest paid male lawyer in the department is paid more than €3000 than me.

Female, 30-39, corporate sector, DK

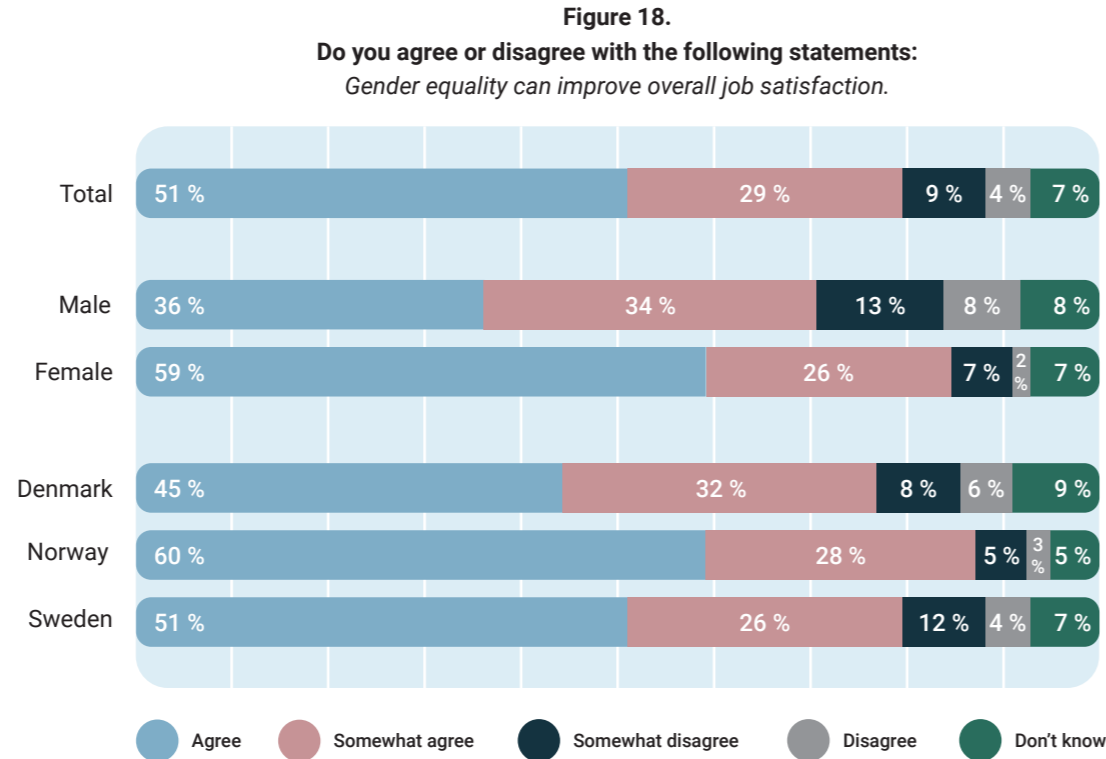
Equality makes for happy legal professionals

80% believe that gender equality can improve overall job satisfaction among Scandinavian legal professionals.

The survey inquired whether legal professionals believe that gender equality can strengthen individual job satisfaction. Results show that a vast majority consider this to be the case. 80% of Scandinavian legal professionals agree or somewhat agree that gender equality can improve overall job satisfaction. More women support this idea – 85%. Also, this notion is prominent among Norwegian legal professionals where as many as 87% agree with the statement.

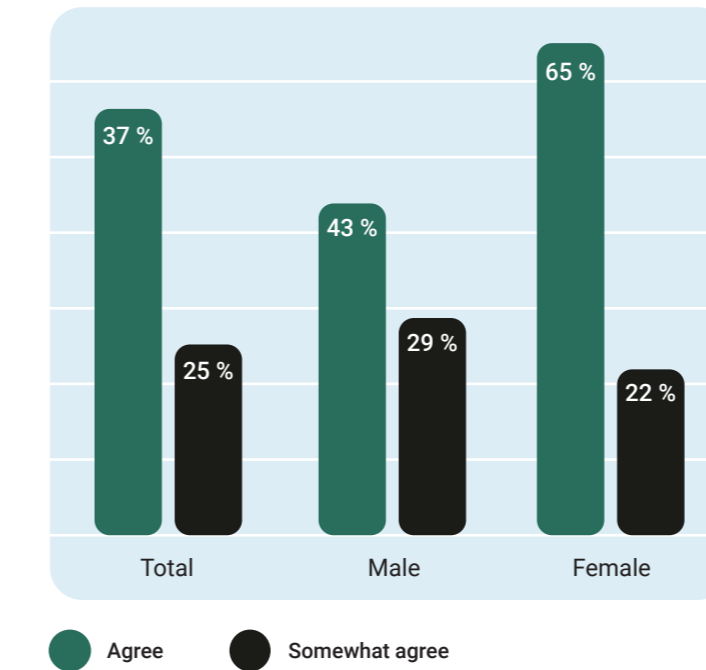
85% of female legal professionals believe gender equality can improve overall job satisfaction

70% of male legal professionals believe gender equality can improve overall job satisfaction



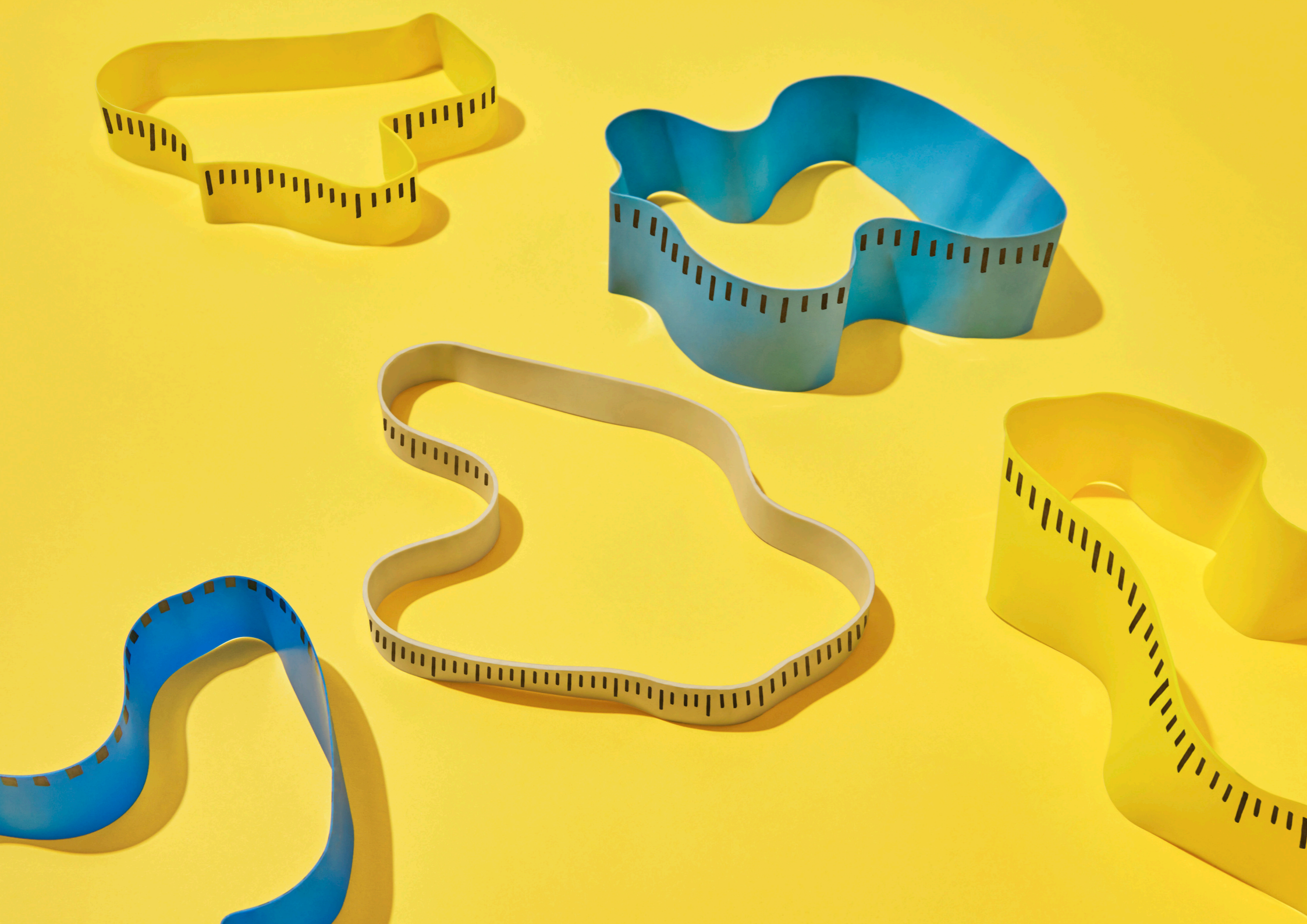
More than four in five – 81% – of the legal professionals agree or somewhat agree that lack of gender equality ultimately makes for a less attractive company. Again, this notion is more prevailing among female legal professionals of whom 87% agree or somewhat agree that lack of gender equality ultimately means a less attractive company. In comparison, 72% of their male peers share this thought.

Figure 19.
Do you agree or disagree with the following statements:
Lack of gender equality means ultimately a less attractive company.



It is my impression that it is easier for men to achieve respect and authority in their position than women, in that relation also differences in salary where men are the winners. Even men who do not hold leadership positions seem to enjoy a kind of natural authority/respect in the workplace that women either never achieve or have to work more/longer to achieve. By respect, I mainly mean professionally, i.e. being respected for your professional opinions, disagreements etc.

Female, 40-49, public sector, DK



Equal rights + equal pay = satisfaction

The perception of inequality influences the well-being of legal professionals in their current position.

Survey results clearly illustrate a difference of opinion between the two biological genders. Compared to their male peers, female legal professionals are much more convinced of challenges related to gender equality prevailing in the industry.

Diving deeper into the data, results reveal that legal professionals, who believe there is a gender pay gap and that it is more difficult for women to get a top position, are also less satisfied in their current position – compared to legal professionals who disagree with the notion of inequality. Among those who are convinced there is a gender pay gap, 76% are satisfied with their job – compared to a thriving 89% among the legal professionals who are not prone to acknowledge the notion of a gender pay gap in their company. Among legal professionals who believe that it is more challenging for women to advance to a top position, 80% are satisfied with their job – compared to 88% among those who do not agree that women have a harder time achieving a top job.

Although overall job satisfaction is very high among Scandinavian legal professionals, some are still unhappy with their current job. Dissatisfied employees tend to believe to a higher extent in the notion of a gender pay gap in their company – 61% – compared to 34% among satisfied employees. Dissatisfied legal professionals also tend to believe that it is more difficult for women than men to get a top position – 64% compared to 46% among peers who are content.

Figure 20. How satisfied are you in your current job – compared with:

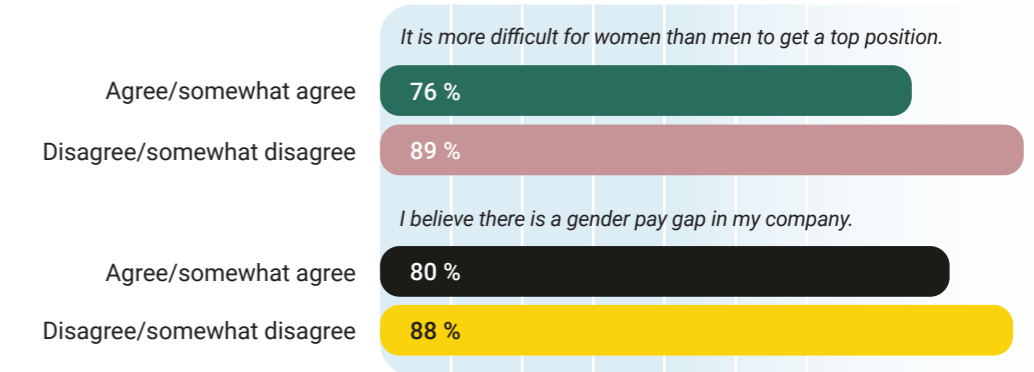


Figure 21. Agree/somewhat agree with the statement: I believe there is a gender pay gap in my company.

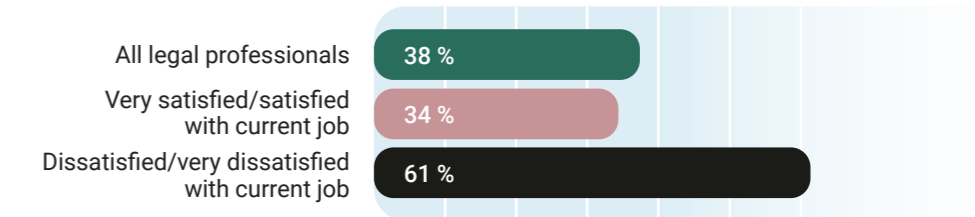
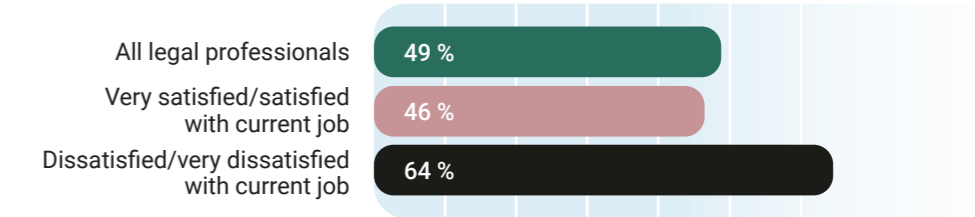
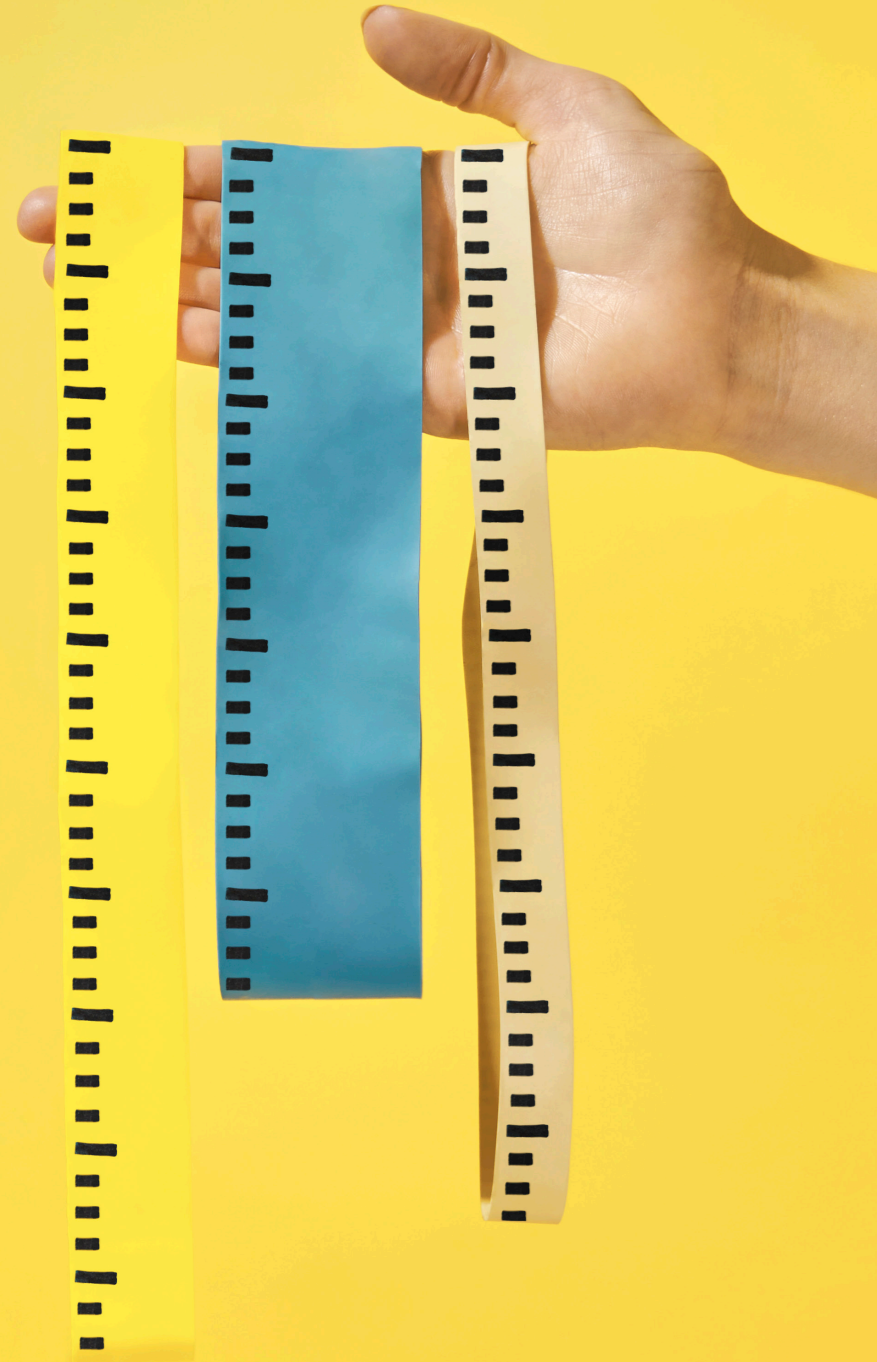


Figure 22. Agree/somewhat agree with the statement: It is more difficult for women than men to get a top position.





Diversity all around

Looking at the survey's top-5 diversity statements from the perspective of sectors, gender, and age.

Comparing survey answers across all three sectors it seems clear that Scandinavian legal professionals mostly share the same point of view about diversity. Legal professionals working in the corporate sector are, however, slightly more in agreement with the top-5 diversity statements. Answers related to the top-5 diversity statements reveal significant differences in the attitudes of the two biological genders.

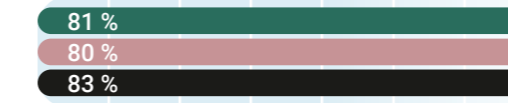
Female legal professionals more often agree with the statements compared to their male peers. The most noticeable difference of opinion is detected by the statement "Gender equality at the management level secures better decision-making". As many as 80% of female legal professionals agree with the statement compared to 58% of male legal professionals.

Among the younger and older age groups the top-5 diversity statements are also perceived differently. Whereas more than three out of four – 77% – of the legal professionals aged 23-29 years believe that "diversity can improve our company's results", 66% of the age group 50-59 years agree with this statement.

Sector

Figure 23.

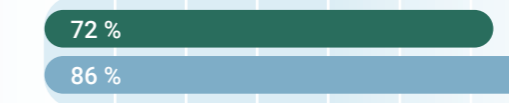
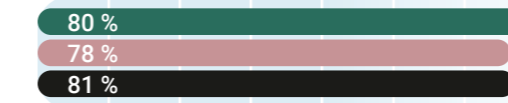
Agree/somewhat agree: It is important that the management team reflects the employees in terms of diversity.



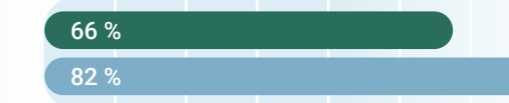
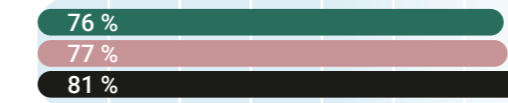
Gender

Figure 24.

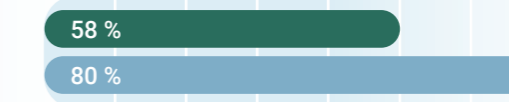
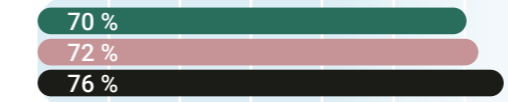
Agree/somewhat agree: Gender equality can improve the overall job satisfaction.



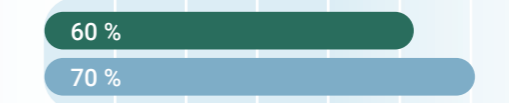
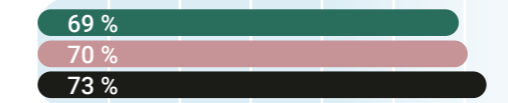
Agree/somewhat agree: Diversity needs to be on the management agenda.



Agree/somewhat agree: Gender equality at the management / partner level ensures better decision making.

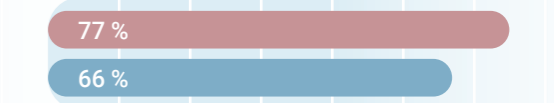
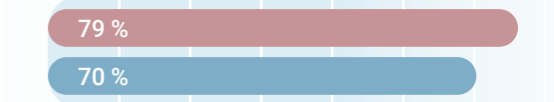
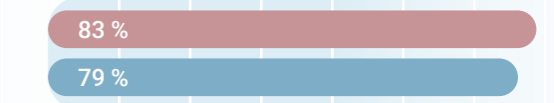
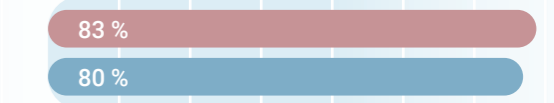
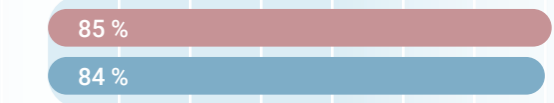


Agree/somewhat agree: Diversity can improve our company's results.



Age

Figure 25.



- Public sector
- Law firms
- Corporate sector

- Male legal professionals
- Female legal professionals

- 23-29 years
- 50-59 years

Judged by your cover

Non-inclusive behaviour is prevalent in the legal industry – one in five has felt excluded at work in the past year.

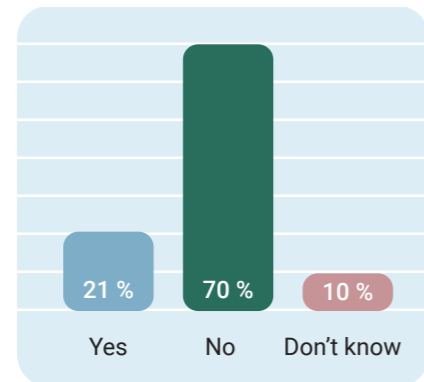
Non-inclusive behaviour is part of the reality for Scandinavian legal professionals. In the course of the past year, one in five – 21% – has experienced unpleasant, excluding conduct from their peers and managers. The number is higher among female legal professionals.

The survey sought to learn more about the exact types of non-inclusive behaviour experienced in the legal industry. The most typical and most often experienced types of exclusion are professional, gender-related, and social exclusion at work.

Almost every third – 31% – of the legal professionals mentioned being excluded professionally – not being invited to a relevant meeting or not being included in relevant decisions – as the primary kind of non-inclusive conduct they have experienced. Non-inclusive behaviour related to gender has been the experience of one in four – 25% – legal professionals. One in five – 21% – have encountered social exclusion at their workplace.

The following section will explore more about the profile of legal professionals who have experienced non-inclusive behaviour.

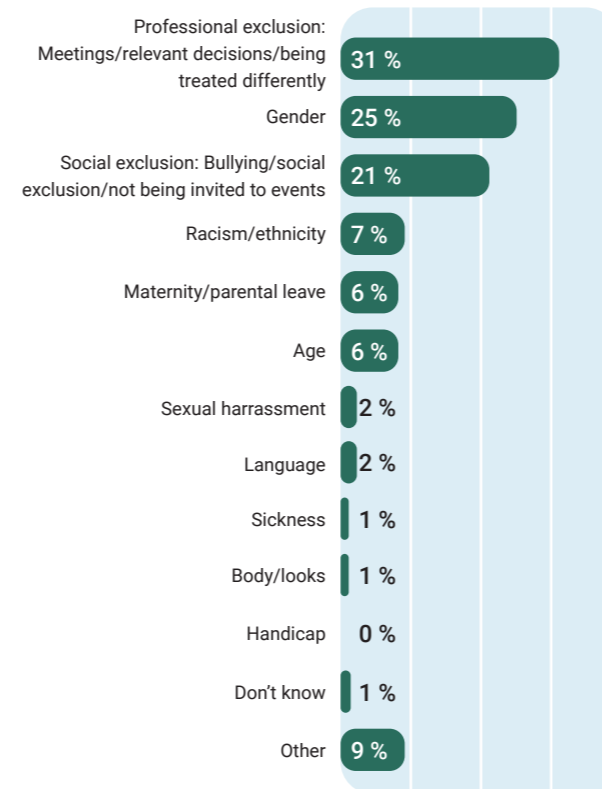
Figure 26.
Have you experienced non-inclusive behaviour at work over the last 12 months?



Being ignored and not being included in decisions involving me and my field of expertise.

Male, 30-39, corporate, NO

Figure 27.
What kind of non-inclusive behaviour have you experienced at work?



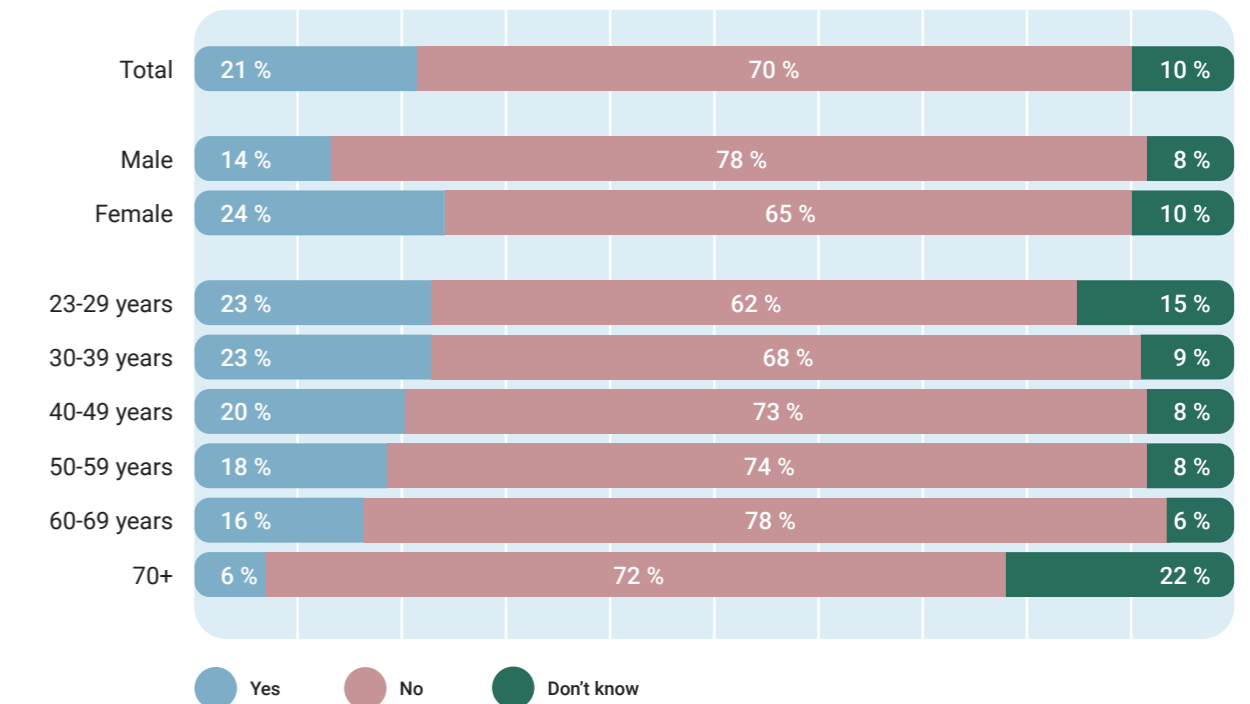
All but inclusive

Women and young legal professionals are more often exposed to non-inclusive behaviour by their peers.

The experiences of women and men are once again very different when it comes to non-inclusive behaviour. This reignites the classic notion that much of non-inclusive behaviour is still related to gender. One in four – 24% – of the female legal professionals in Scandinavia have experienced non-inclusive behaviour at their workplace, compared to only 14% among male legal professionals. No particular differences are detected across sectors.

Data also reveal that non-inclusive behaviour is mostly encountered by the younger age segment – so apparently, legal professionals feel more included with age. Almost four times as many legal professionals aged 23-39 have experienced non-inclusive behaviour in the past year compared to the oldest age segment 70+ where only 6% have indicated having experienced the same.

Figure 28.
Have you experienced non-inclusive behaviour at work over the last 12 months?





I have experienced being 'by-passed' in case distribution and casework in favour of male colleagues

Female, 23-29, law firm, DK



Withholding information to gain an advantage. An information culture that is status-building and hierarchical overall.

Female, 40-49, public sector, SE



As an employee with a foreign background, I constantly experience non-inclusive behaviour in various work situations.

Male, 40-49, public sector, NO



Freezing out of employees. I emphasize that this was not about gender, orientation, religion, skin colour, etc., but about a manager simply favouring employees and excluding others for unknown reasons.

Male, 30-39, corporate sector, NO



Primarily about promotions, where more men than women are appointed to higher positions. The general distribution between men and women in top management (at partner and board level).

Female, 23-29, law firm, DK



It is starting to look as if diversity is gaining ground in some areas of the legal industry. However, in the most influential areas – the large business firms and courts – ethnic diversity is limited. Men are still overrepresented here. Other qualifications and characteristics that appear to be valued by firms are sporting performance and commitment, professional experience, and networking – as well as the pursuit of leisure activities harmonising with a white and homogenous section of the legal profession. For example, it is strikingly common to have employees who go hunting, play tennis, golf and padel, ski, sail, etc. In other words, leisure activities signalling that you are part of a white and heterosexual higher income group. Who is responsible? The work for a more multifaceted workplace for legal professionals must include that the workplace starts to carefully explore itself. How is the management composed? What does management look like? Are appearances the same "on the floor"? Are the managers' and employees' socioeconomic backgrounds, upbringing, living situations etc. the same? Not just appearance, ethnicity, sexuality, etc.

Male, 40-49, corporate sector, SE

No filter

229 legal professionals made it a priority to add a personal, in-depth remark about their view on diversity.

The survey offered respondents the chance to add a personal comment about diversity related to the legal industry. Fortunately, many caught the opportunity. A total of 229 legal professionals wrote a comment.

As shown in Figure 29, personal remarks were divided into different categories, resulting in the following four main themes.

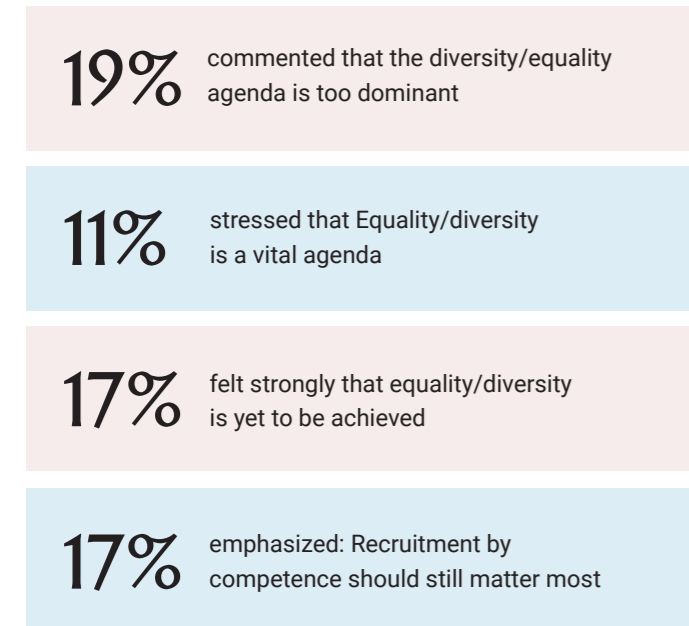
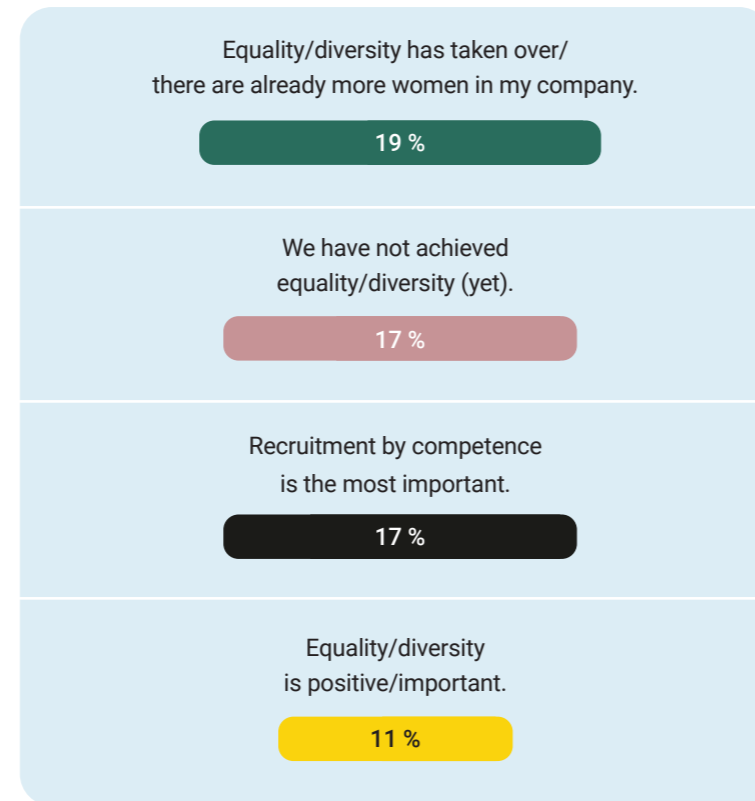


Figure 29.
Anything you want to add to the diversity topic in connection to the legal business?

Top-4 comments:



Creativity feeds on equality

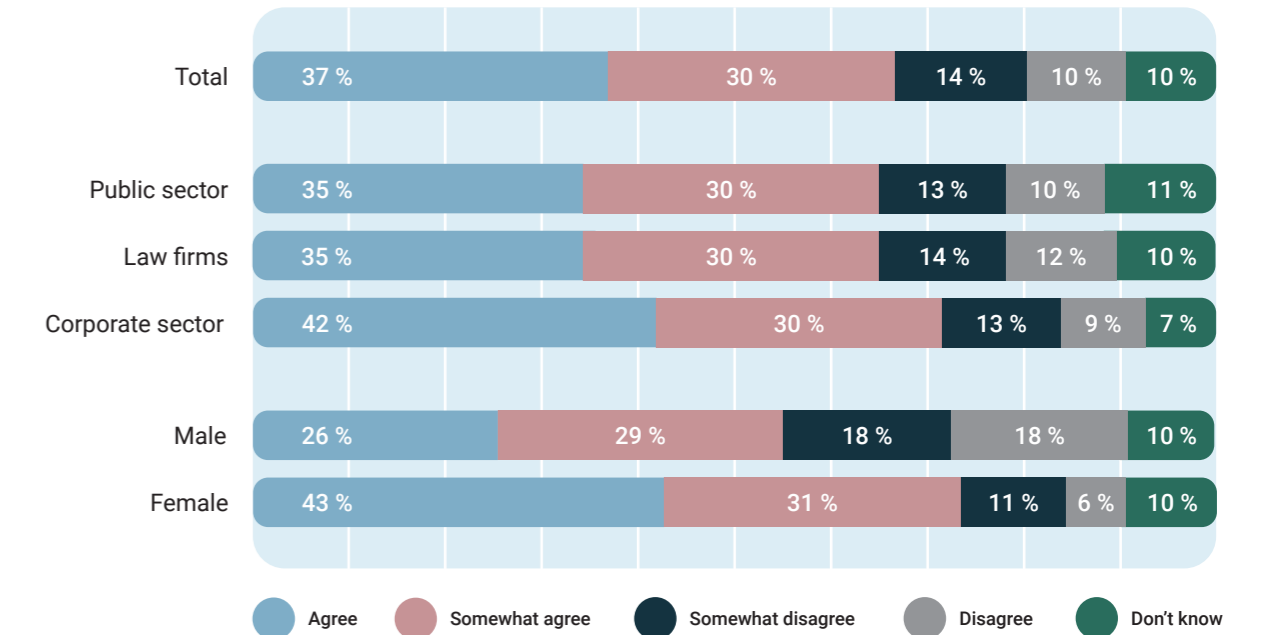
Equal options and equal responsibility are imperative for a company to maintain a creative outlook.

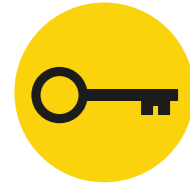
Measured across sectors and gender a total of 67% of the Scandinavian legal professionals believe that gender equality promotes creative thinking – and lack of equality is therefore interpreted as inhibiting a company's creativity and innovation.



Female legal professionals are very much in agreement with this statement. Three out of four – 74% – attribute the absence of gender equality to less creative thinking. This notion is considerably more prevalent among women compared to their male peers of whom 55% support the statement.

Figure 30.
Do you agree or disagree with the following statements:
Lack of gender equality means lack of creative thinking.





Key discoveries

- 80% of legal professionals agree that gender equality can improve overall job satisfaction.
- 49% of the female legal professionals consider diversity a strategic means to improve company results – to a larger degree than their male peers of whom 30% share this view.
- Twice as many women as men consider it important for a management team to reflect diversity. Almost half of all female legal professionals (48%) support this notion compared to only 23% of men.
- 65% of the women and 43% of the men agree that the absence of gender equality makes for a less attractive company.
- The hot topic of the gender pay gap is a major source of disagreement between male and female legal professionals. 50% of the women believe there is a gender pay gap in their company, yet only 17% of the men share this opinion. On the same topic, survey results indicate inter-regional contrasts: 58% of the Danish female legal professionals and 51% of the Norwegian female legal professionals agree there is a gender pay gap – compared to 40% of their Swedish female colleagues.
- 61% of female legal professionals consider it more difficult for a woman to advance to a top position than for a man. In comparison, only half as many men (30%) concur. Across Scandinavia, more differences are detected on the same issue. 73% of Danish female legal professionals believe women have a harder time climbing up the career ladder than men – compared to merely 52% of Swedish female legal professionals.
- In total, 45% of legal professionals state that their place of work has a recruitment policy actively promoting equality. Hiding behind this number are vast differences in approach to equality between the Scandinavian countries; An equality-supportive recruitment policy is acknowledged by 69% of the Norwegian legal professionals and 33% of the legal professionals in Denmark.
- One in five legal professionals (21%) has experienced non-inclusive behaviour at their workplace in the past year. This area also offers significant gender-related differences as one in four female legal professionals (24%) has experienced non-inclusive behaviour at work within the last 12 months – compared to only 14% of their male peers.



Questions for debate

- More focus on recruitment policies which actively prioritises equality? What can be learned from Norway as the Scandinavian country with the highest share of legal professionals stating that their company actively prioritises equality (69%)?
- Is there a gender pay gap in the Scandinavian legal business – and if so, how is this topic best addressed?
- Non-inclusive behaviour can be deliberate but also something experienced by the individual person. How do we approach the emotional reality of non-inclusive behaviour among legal professionals?
- Are we becoming too woke – seeing diversity- and gender-related problems around every corner? Or do open discussions and media attention really make a difference?





Mapping how employees experience inclusion in the workplace is another key factor. Change starts with questioning, and although it is good that women pay attention to difference, everyone needs to participate actively for change to happen.

Don't close the perpetual cycle of inequality

Written by: Amanda Lundeteg, CEO, Allbright.

The differences in awareness are striking. Unfortunately, we recognise the pattern from other industries: men do not notice inequality to the same extent as women. This report should be a real wake-up call for the legal industry, which is lagging behind several other sectors. But it's never too late to start working actively for equality, diversity and inclusion.

The fact that women feel they are being overlooked when it comes to top positions is serious on several levels. Firstly, it means that their skills are being overlooked, and secondly that the industry as a whole is not moving on from the 20th century view of women. When management and boards are appointed, it is a merit to have held higher positions – especially as CEO and partner. If women never go there, they will never be involved in making the higher decisions. And thus, the eternal circle of inequality is closed.

The lawyers themselves also ask for this: four out of five believe that gender equality weighs heavily on the work environment. At the same time, the industry report The Future of the Legal Profession 2023 shows that one in three lawyers have changed jobs in the past year. Therefore, gender equality initiatives are a must for employers who want to retain their employees. Otherwise, talent disappears to a workplace where they are actually paid for their work, where work and tasks are flexible, and where career opportunities are not dependent on gender. In the long run, the cost when competent colleagues disappear will be higher than the costs of ensuring equal conditions.

So, what do we at Allbright recommend that employers do? And what's next for the legal industry?

Flexible workplaces, reconciling parenthood with work, education on equality, inclusion and diversity are some of the things employers should focus on. Mapping how employees experience inclusion in the workplace is another key factor. Change starts with questioning, and although it is good that women pay attention to difference, everyone needs to participate actively for change to happen.

When it comes to pay gaps – conduct salary reviews, apply transparency and correct bias. The fact that more than one in three lawyers report unequal pay at their workplace is beyond criticism. It is not enough to provide equal pay for equal work, but as an employer you also have a responsibility to provide equal pay for work of equal value. Carry out a thorough review of the salary criteria in order to address the pay gap.

It is not possible for the legal industry to just sit back on old traditions and claim that this is how it has always been. Nothing will come of that. When the next report arrives, we hope that men will also have opened their eyes to the inequality that their female colleagues testify to.



Chapter 3

New Journey

Exploring professional opportunities



Hello yellow brick road

One in three recently changed jobs in an industry where an overwhelming number of legal professionals are satisfied – yet poor leaders still cause talents.

This chapter revolves around job satisfaction in the legal industry and the drivers behind it. The survey reports how legal professionals to an impressive degree are pleased in their current position. A related reason for this positive insight could very well be the fact that close to every third member of the legal industry switched jobs in the past year – one in four to work at a new company.

Data present insights into factors causing legal professionals to feel unhappy and consequently seek new professional paths. Among these poor management, lack of flexibility and time, and longing for new assignments are the primary reasons. The report delves into perspectives on the qualities that legal professionals most seek in their managers.



If I could change anything in my current job, I would make sure that managers took clearer responsibility, led their employees, and solved problems in the workplace instead of seeing the managerial role as a way to raise a higher salary.

Male, 30-39, public sector, SE



KEY INSIGHTS

A thriving business

Overall, legal professionals in Scandinavia are happy with their job. 84% find themselves in a very good place. They are satisfied or even very satisfied with their current position. The main reasons are assignments and flexibility.

Leap of faith

Almost a third – 32% – of legal professionals changed jobs in 2022. While some advanced to new positions with their existing employer, one in four – 25% – changed lanes and sought employment at a new company.

Path of inspiraton

The reasons for moving on are the same as for staying on. More interesting assignments, better salary, and improved work-life balance. More than half – 53% – sought new employment to get more inspirational work.

Bad management adieu

Managers influence the well-being of legal professionals. 49% of those who are not content with their job are primarily dissatisfied with their manager. Almost one in five – 18% – left their previous position in part because of their manager. Related to this is the lack of work-life balance and a bad work environment.

A thriving business

Legal professionals are impressively pleased with their current professional life – across all countries, genders, and sectors.

Happy news is worth sharing. More than four in five – 84% – of the Scandinavian legal professionals are satisfied, and even very satisfied, in their current job. This number is consistent across Scandinavia, genders, and legal sectors.

84% are satisfied, and even very satisfied, in their current job

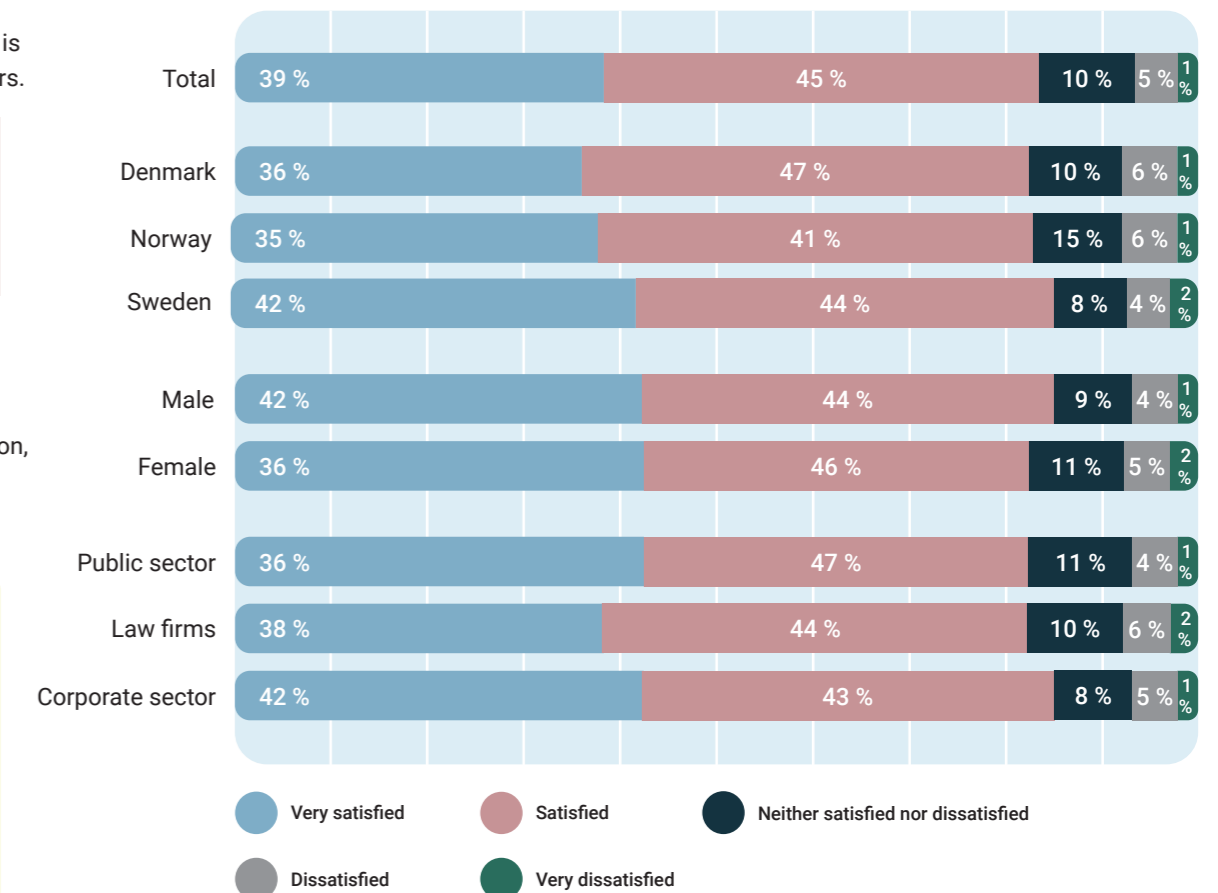
The following sections will illustrate that part of the satisfaction might be attributed to one in three legal professionals switching jobs in 2022. A new job will expectedly give employees new inspiration and motivation, new assignments, and a new professional social circle.



I have a good manager who assembled a great team that I am happy to be part of. We solve legal tasks in a good way because of the people who collaborate to solve them. My satisfaction is thus primarily based on the fact that I have been lucky to join the right people.

Male, 23-29, law firm, DK

Figure 31. How satisfied are you in your current job?



Our happy place

There are ample reasons for legal professionals to feel pleased with their current job: Satisfaction is mostly attributed to assignments, colleagues, and flexibility – together with the ability to appreciate time off work.

In the survey, we sought to uncover more details about the reasons that legal professionals feel happy in their current position. Adding more facets to their statements, the survey included questions about what caused the most satisfaction.

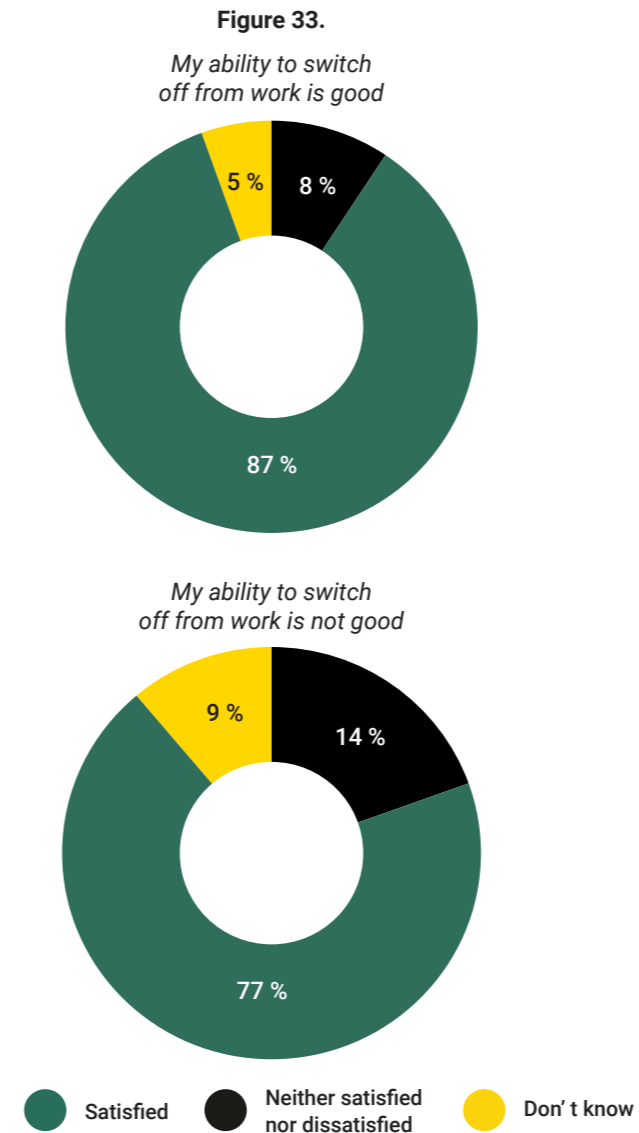
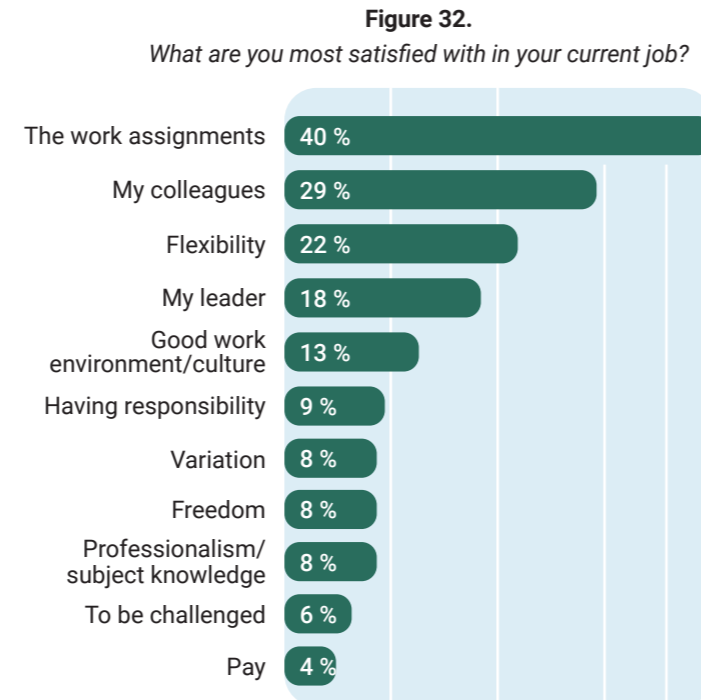
A total of 1,299 legal professionals replied. Their response highlights three main reasons for their joy and excitement: Work assignments (40%), colleagues (29%), and flexibility (22%).

40%

share that the work assignments are the most satisfying part of their job

Another factor influencing satisfaction is related to personal values, habits, and cognitive abilities: Is the legal professional able or unable to switch off from work during the time of leisure?

This is a well-known issue among legal professionals and is directly related to how satisfied the person is in his/her/their current employment. Almost nine in ten – 87% – of the legal professionals, who believe they have a good ability to switch off from work, are satisfied with their current job. In comparison, the percentage is 77% among those who do not have a good ability to switch off from work – although they are still satisfied with their present job.



Colleagues, flexible working hours, normal workload, varied tasks.

Male, 30-39, Public sector, SE

That I am free to work as it suits me best, and that there is freedom with responsibility and a good balance between work time and free time.

Female, 30-39, law firm, DK

Secure job. Good work culture and support from colleagues. Good balance between work and leisure. Exciting and challenging tasks. A professionally skilled manager and employees. The employees feel co-ownership of the workplace and participate in the development of tasks, marketing etc. The employer is constantly looking for exciting new tasks for the employees. There are ample opportunities for continued education. In addition, the location is central.

Female, 30-39, public sector, NO

A good manager (not a legal professional) who demonstrates competence, mutual respect, trust, and empathy. Who backs up and supports when needed. Who will elevate his employees in front of others, and who can bring people and departments together and create conditions for good cooperation and a good atmosphere. Great teams – comprising professional, empathetic, humble, and skilled people – combined with the general company culture and the team manager's efforts, create a lack of prestige that makes it easy and fun to collaborate. A healthy and responsible corporate culture – characterised by great transparency between management and employees, a constant pursuit of increased cooperation between departments and a strong we-mindset, as well as a strong focus on the joint pursuit of satisfied customers.

Female, 40-49, Corporate sector, SE

Path of inspiration

One in four chose to take up new challenges with a new employer in the past year – perfectly consistent with last year’s discovery that half of all legal professionals had recently considered moving on.

This year’s survey shows that almost one in three – 32% – legal professionals changed jobs in the past year. Among these, one in four – 25% – chose to explore new professional opportunities at another company.

These new insights correspond with last year’s findings that almost half of all respondents had recently considered leaving their job. After all, a natural consequence of thinking about leaving your job is to take a leap of faith and do something about it.

The data reveal that primarily younger legal professionals (23-39 years) – 41% – changed jobs in the past year. The vast majority of them switched to a new company. Among the 25% who sought new professional challenges with another employer in the past year, young, female legal professionals without staff responsibility are the prevailing pattern.

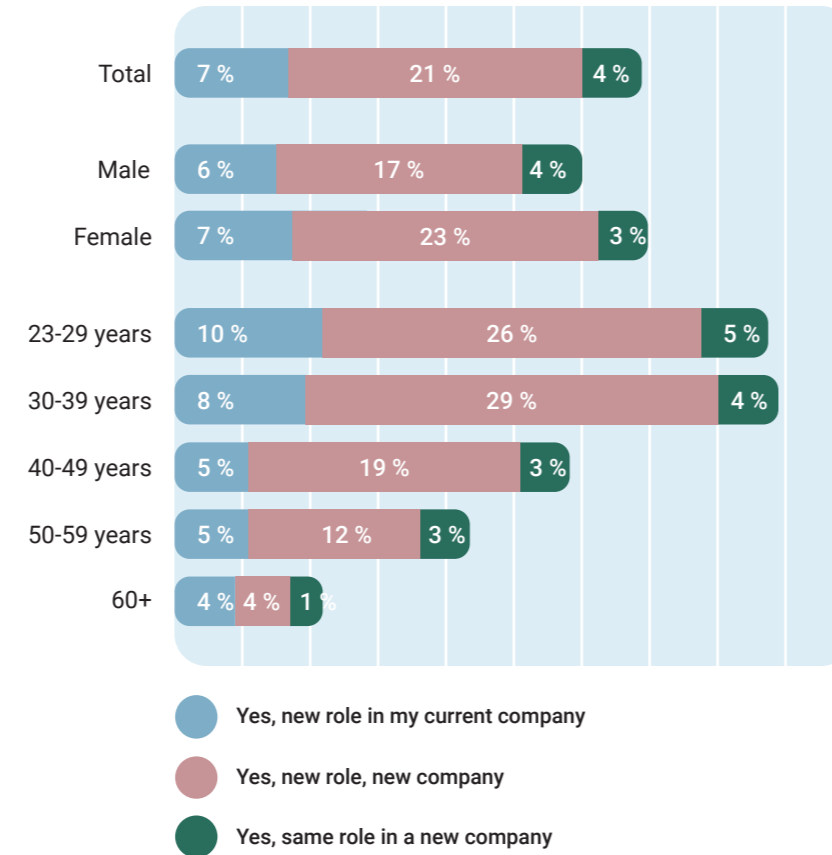
The following slide presents a profile of these newly-employed legal professionals, analysed per sector and country.



To have the opportunity to work at a very exciting company.

Male, 40-49, corporate sector, SE

Figure 34.
Did you change jobs in 2022?



A predictable outcome

Dive into a cross-analysis between last year's discovery that almost half of all legal professionals had considered leaving their job and this year's findings that a third did in fact seek new challenges. To a great extent, there is congruence between the profiles involved.

Denmark



Age

- Last year: The age group 30-39 years had the highest share of legal professionals who had considered leaving their job (53%).
- This year: 30-39 years was the age group from which most did eventually sign with a new company (30%).

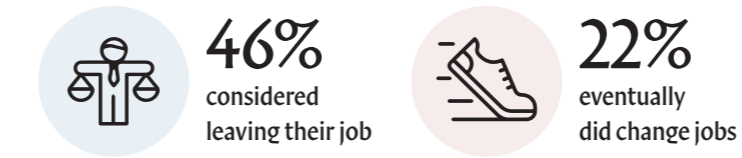
Gender

- Last year: The share was almost equal between men (41%) and women (44%).
- This year: Job change is identical for men and women (23%).

Staff responsibility

- Last year: Share was almost equal among legal professionals with staff responsibility who had considered leaving their job (41%) and with no staff responsibility who had considered leaving their job (44%).
- This year: No congruence between the two groups. 15% of the legal professionals with staff responsibility signed with a new company compared to 26% – almost twice as many – of the legal professionals without staff responsibility.

Norway



Age

- Last year: The age group 30-39 years and 40-49 years had the highest share of legal professionals who had considered leaving their job (49% and 53%).
- This year: 23-29 years and 30-39 years are the age groups from which most did eventually sign with a new company (30% and 31%). Less than half (18%) of the legal professionals aged 40-49 years did, in fact, change jobs.

Gender

- Last year: The share was almost equal between men and women (45% and 46%).
- This year: Almost half of the female legal professionals changed jobs (25%) compared to only a third of their male peers (18%).

Staff responsibility

- Last year: Share was very different between the two groups. 32% of the legal professionals with staff responsibility had considered leaving their job, while 47% of the legal professionals without staff responsibility had considered leaving their job.
- This year: No congruence between the two groups. 9% of the legal professionals with staff responsibility eventually signed with a new company in 2022, compared to 24% – almost three times as many – of the legal professionals without staff responsibility.

Sweden



Age

- Last year: The age group 30-39 years had the highest share of legal professionals who had considered leaving their job. The group made up 51% – more than half of the total.
- This year: 23-29 and 30-39 years are the age groups from which most eventually signed with a new company – almost one in four for each group (38% and 38%).

Gender

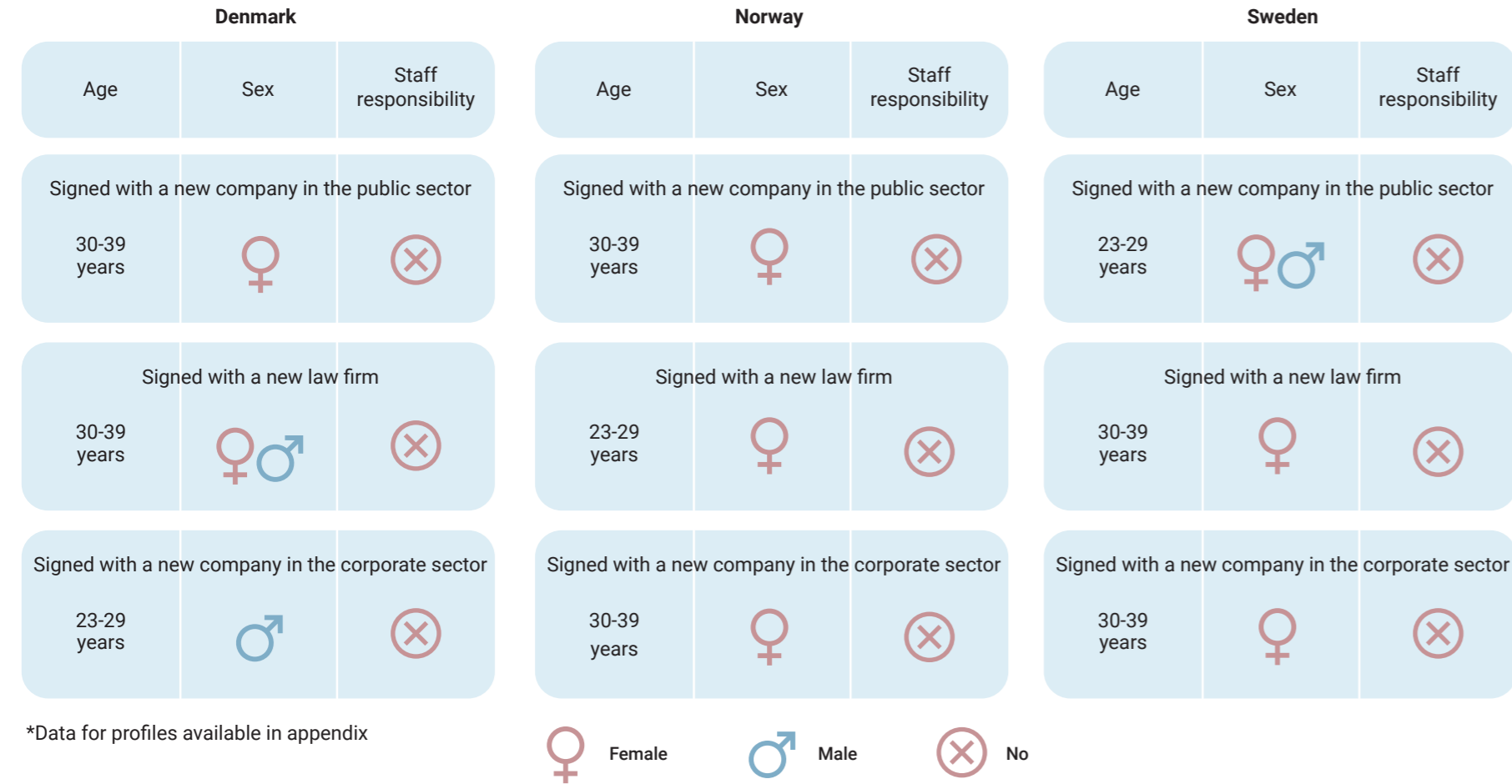
- Last year: The share was somewhat different between men (43%) and women (48%).
- This year: 31% – almost one in three – of the female legal professionals, and 22% of their male peers did eventually sign with a new company.

Staff responsibility

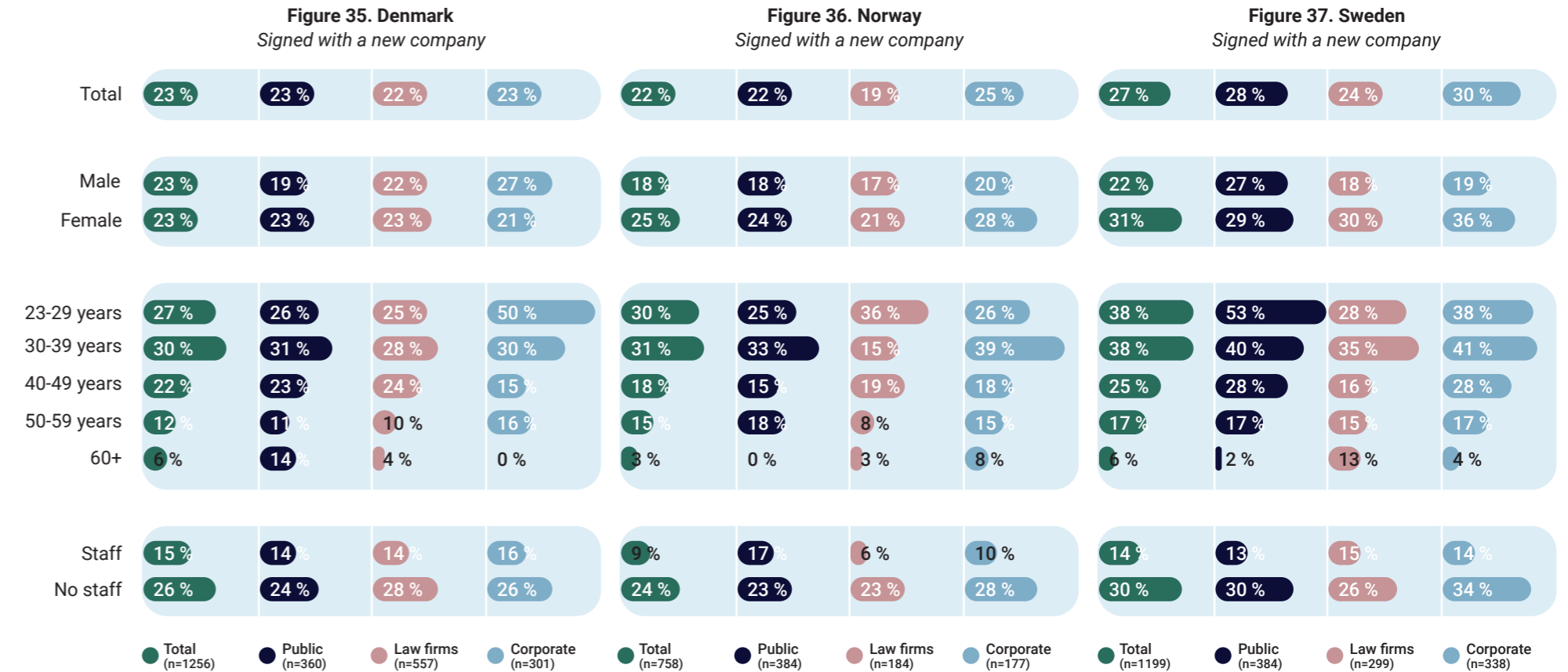
- Last year: Share was somewhat different between the two groups. 40% of the legal professionals with staff responsibility and 48% of the legal professionals without staff responsibility had considered leaving their job.
- This year: No congruence between the two groups. 14% of the legal professionals with staff responsibility eventually signed with a new company in 2022, compared to 30% – more than twice as many – of the legal professionals without staff responsibility.

Employee profile: The look of seeking new legal challenges

Profile of legal professionals who started working at a new company in the past twelve months.



More data about legal professionals signing with a new company



Reasons to choose a new employer

Hoping to get more inspiring work and more interesting cases. An increased salary. The chance of a better work-life balance. These are the three main reasons to seek employment at a new company.

Having already discovered who changed jobs in 2022, we move on to analysing why. Data is analysed across sectors, gender, and age groups. Findings show that the overall most important reasons for signing with a new company are more engaging work, an increased salary, and an improved work-life balance.

53%

change job to get more interesting work and better cases

With an average of 53%, the ambition to get more inspiring work and better cases is the prevailing reason for seeking new professional challenges.

A higher salary is the second most important reason with an average of 35%. The third most cited reason, with an average of 27%, is to obtain a better work-life balance.

Results show sector differences in that the legal professionals working in the corporate sector (46%) are far more prone to change jobs to obtain a better salary than their peers in law firms (31%) and the public sector (30%).

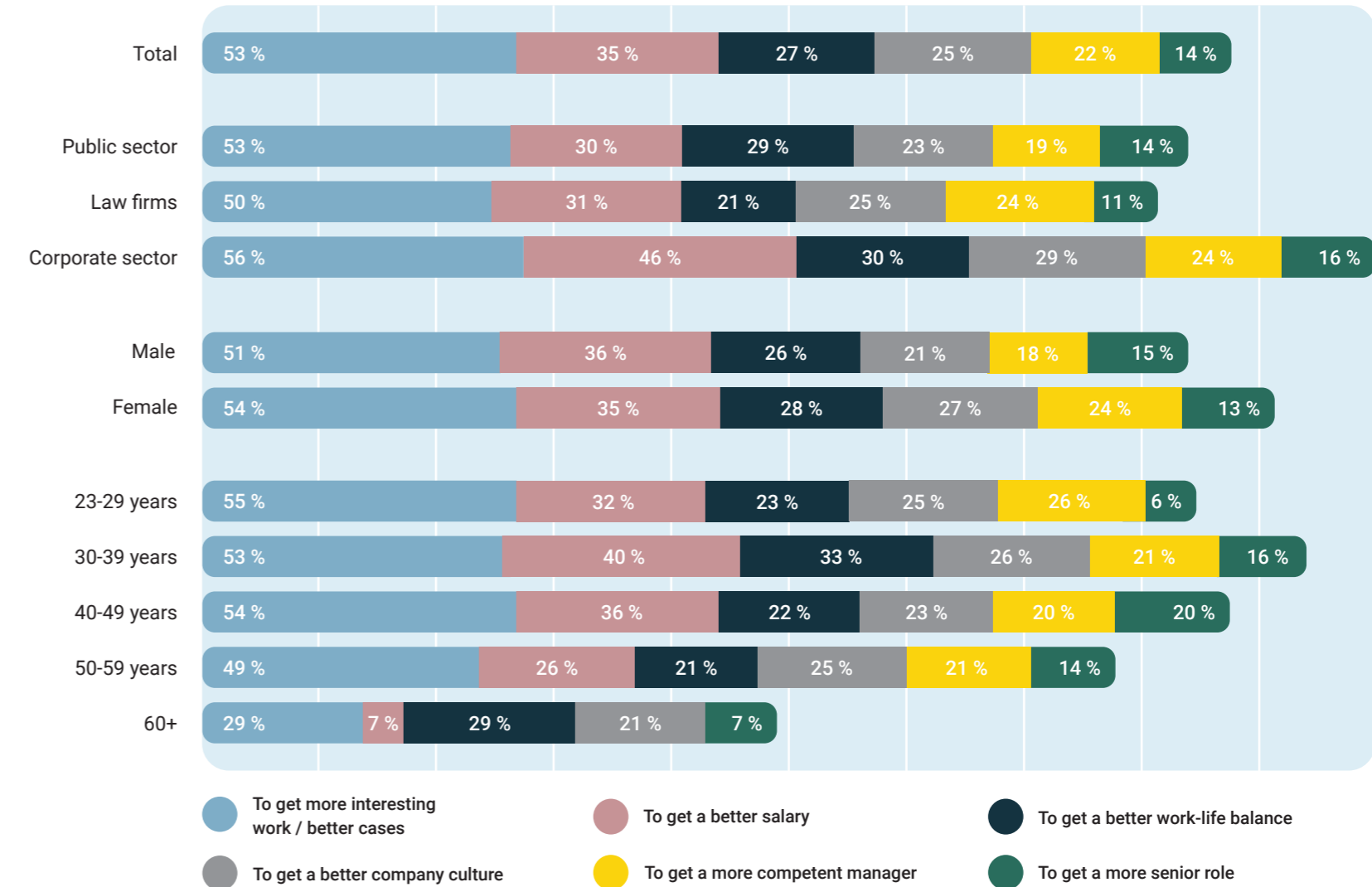
Last year's survey also inquired into the reasons that legal professionals considered leaving their job. The primary three reasons were identical to this year – and more interesting work was still the main reason to move on, alongside a better work-life balance, both with 38%. A higher salary was third with 34%. As contributing factors, the latter two switched places in this year's survey.



If we don't implement work-life balance, we will have a massive talent gap and talent loss. We are already seeing that. People not coming back from parental leave, for example. Instead, they go in-house where the job conditions are more predictable.

Male, Law firm, SE

Figure 38.
Why did you change jobs (please indicate multiple reasons)?





To work towards a bigger purpose than merely financial gain.

Female, 30-39, law firms, DK



To work cross-disciplinary with other professionals than just legal professionals.

Female, 40-49, corporate sector, NO



To learn new things and to grow.

Female, 40-49, public sector, SE



To learn something new – and to be challenged – so I chose a new industry and a new job.

Female, 50-59, corporate sector, DK



To have less conflict in my everyday life.

Male, 50-59, public sector, NO



I graduated and wanted a relevant job.

Female, 23-29, other sector, NO



To try working in a different sector.

Female, 30-39, corporate sector, SE



I changed from my student job to a full-time position in another company.

Male, 23-29, law firm, DK

Bad management adieu

Current job dissatisfaction is attributed to the poor qualifications of a demotivating manager by half of all respondents.

Legal professionals who testified to job dissatisfaction were asked to indicate their reasons. Half of all respondents blame their professional unhappiness on their manager (49%). The other most frequent causes of dissatisfaction are a lack of work-life balance (24%) and the company's generally poor work culture and work environment (18%).

The following pages will elaborate on what legal professionals seek in their managers and delve into factors affecting employees positively.

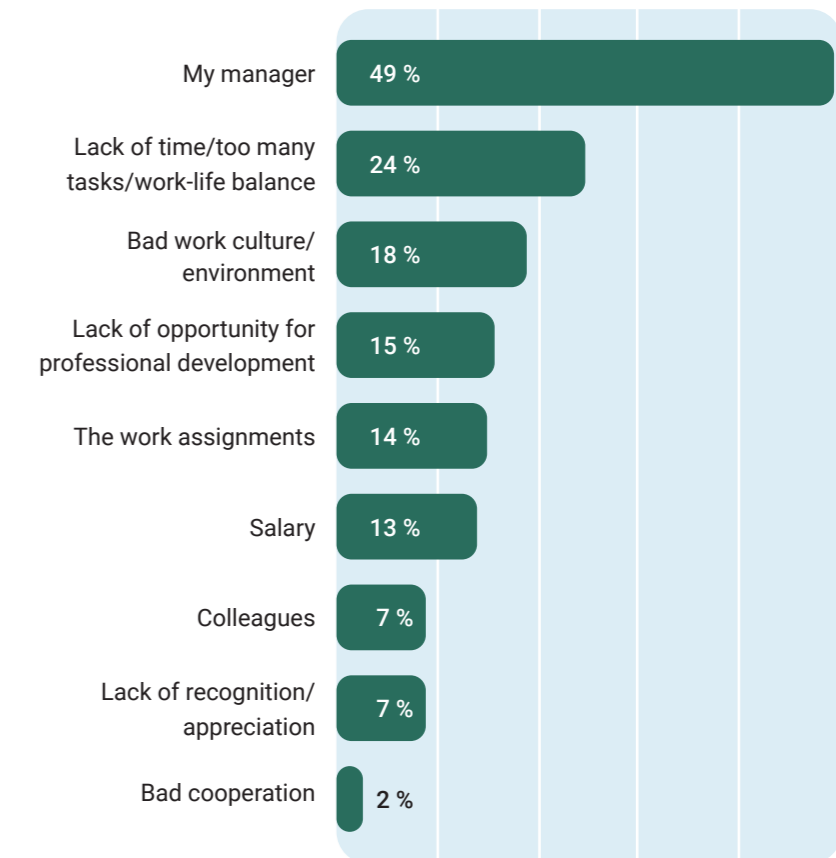


The management culture, lack of involvement of the employees, too much work pressure, too many unreasonably short deadlines, the expectation of constant availability – and the expectation that you put in hours significantly above the working time norm, the higher the position you have or get. Even if your experience makes you advance – clerk-special consultant-chief consultant – this does not mean that you, as an employee, find it desirable or reasonable to work significantly more than 37 hours a week.

Female, 30-39, public sector, Sweden

Figure 39.

What makes you most dissatisfied with your current job?



*coded open-ended answers

Does your manager C you?

Scandinavian legal professionals need managers who **Communicate, Care, and Coach**.

Legal professionals were asked to name the most important qualifications of a good manager. The vast majority cites skills related to communication, care, and coaching.

Communication 73%
"Communicate in a clear way"

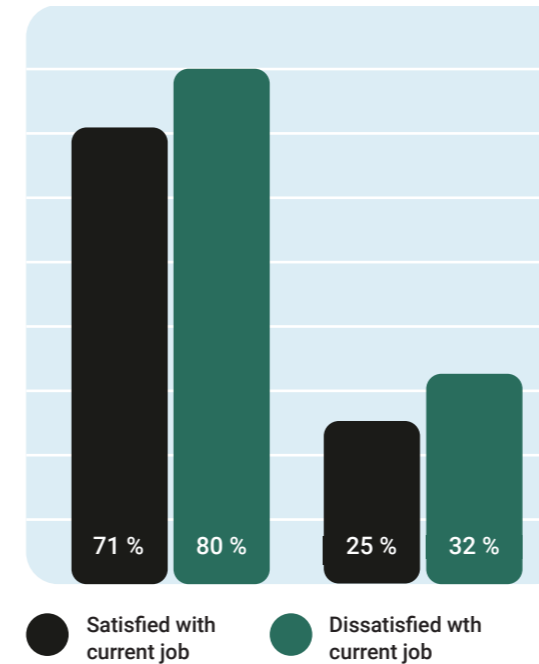
Care 72%
"Treat me with respect"

Coaching 65%
"Good at giving feedback"

Figure 40.
Does your company have a sustainability policy/plan in place today?



Figure 41.



Cross-analysing statements by legal professionals who are satisfied in their current position and legal professionals who are dissatisfied, expectable variations occur. More unhappy employees indicate "Treat me with respect" (80%) as an important quality than happy ones (71%). One in three (32%) dissatisfied employees cites "Treat all employees the same way" compared to one in four (25%) of their satisfied peers.



Great manager – appreciates my work, is clear, empathetic and accommodating, but also resourceful.

Female, 30-39, public sector, SE

[I am happy] to have a manager, who – in addition to being talented – is empathetic and treats everyone with respect and as equals. Odd that this is something to marvel about, it ought to be like that everywhere.

Female, 30-39, public sector, DK

Great manager – appreciates my work, is clear, empathetic and accommodating, but also resourceful.

Male, 23-29, corporate sector, SE

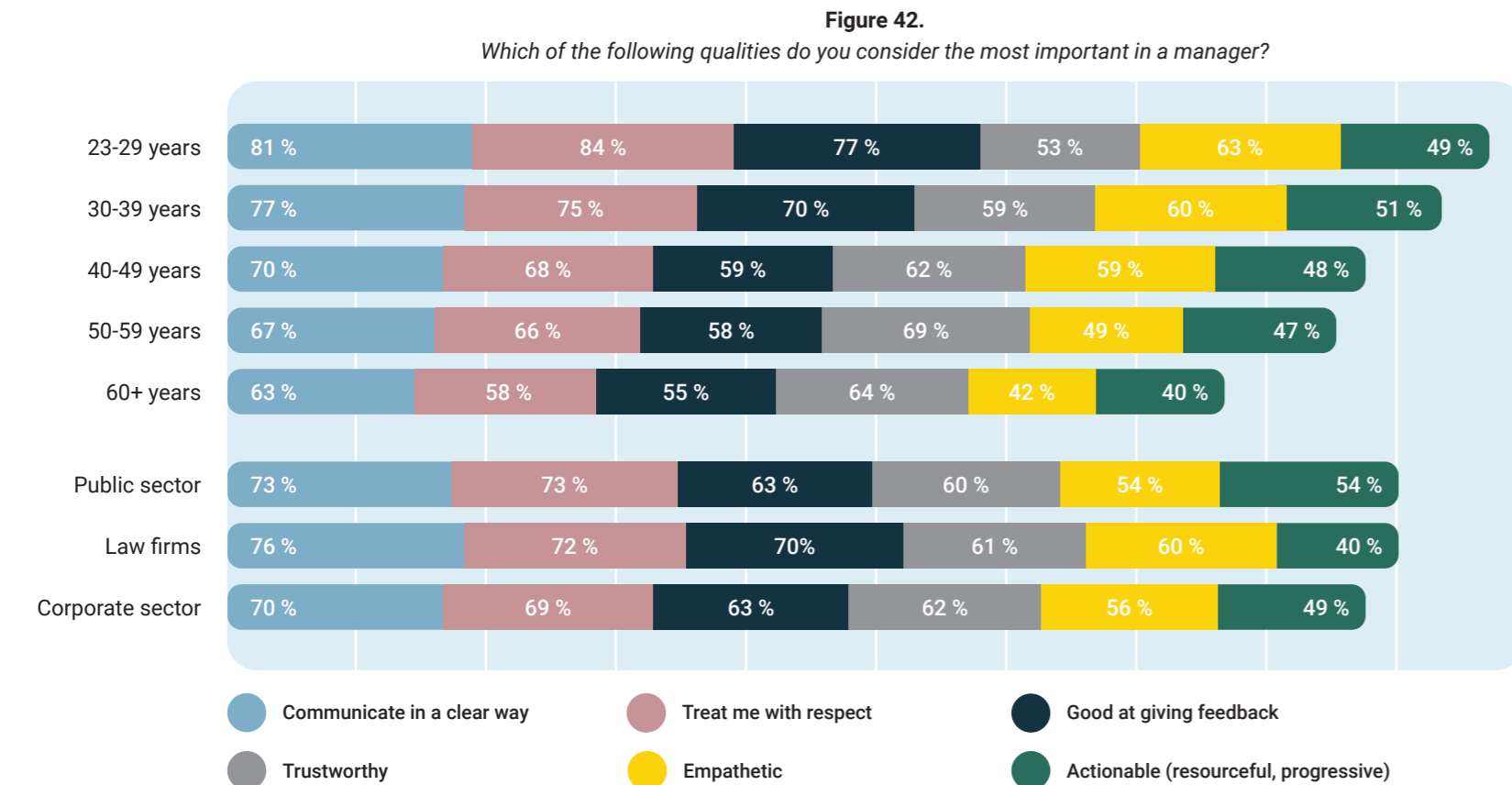
LEADERSHIP! Better managers and interest in stimulating and valuing the employees. Better communication from management. Better safeguarding, development, and use of the expertise that already exists in the company.

Female, 50-59, public sector, NO

Mapping manager qualifications

Survey results indicate increasing and decreasing preferences across age groups and sectors.

Analysing the six most prevailing qualities sought in a good leader across age groups and legal sectors, a clear pattern appears: The need for managers who master clear communication, treat employees with respect, and are good at giving feedback decreases with age.



81% – four in five – of the youngest legal professionals, aged 23-29 years, indicate communication, care, and coaching as the most important qualifications in a manager. The number decreases by more than twenty per cent to 63% among the oldest age group, 60+. There can be multiple reasons for the decrease. Experience and growing professional confidence could be one. Another could be that many legal professionals advance to manager positions with age and hereby gain new perspectives.

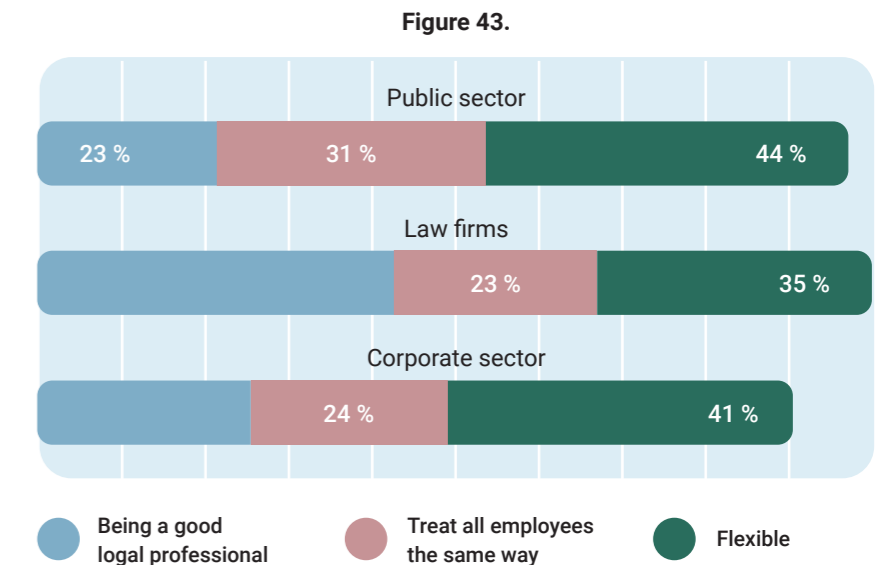
In contrast to this decrease, reliability is a quality increasingly appreciated with age. Being trustworthy is considered most important by legal professionals aged 50+, among whom this quality peaks with 69%. Only half of the youngest legal professionals (53%) consider being trustworthy a noteworthy quality.

53% (only) of the youngest legal professionals consider being trustworthy a noteworthy quality

Across legal sectors, results also indicate differences in terms of what is considered a manager's most important qualities. Scandinavian legal professionals in all three sectors generally agree. Nevertheless, legal professionals in law firms tend to value the ability to give good feedback to a higher extent (70%) than the public and corporate sectors (both 63%). Also, three in four legal professionals working at law firms appreciate clear communication (76%) – even ten per cent more than the corporate sector (70%). However, where only two in five legal professionals in law firms (40%) indicate being actionable and resourceful, this quality is treasured by more than half (54%) of their peers in the public sector.

Being a good legal professional, treating all employees the same way, and being flexible are not among the most sought-after qualities in a manager. Yet they are qualities illustrating significant differences across sectors.

Nearly a third of legal professionals in the public sector – 31% – consider treating all employees the same way an important trait in a manager compared to almost one in four in law firms (23%) and the corporate sector (24%). To nearly half of the employees at law firms – 45% – being a good legal professional is an essential quality in a manager – an opinion only shared by 23% in the public sector and 26% in the corporate sector.



A person - not a product

Four in five Scandinavian legal professionals state that their manager sees them as individuals – and not just professional assets.

Legal professionals are men and women – not machines. Fortunately, the prevailing perception of Scandinavian legal professionals (80%) is that their manager also sees them as individuals and not just work resources.

Sector results show slight variations. The observation was made by 72% of the legal professionals working at law firms and by 87% – twenty per cent more often – of those working in the corporate sector.

Last year's report showed that 39% considered a "manager who sees me as a person, not just a work resource" an important, contributing factor for getting a better work-life balance. This year's findings could suggest that managers have taken this observation to heart.



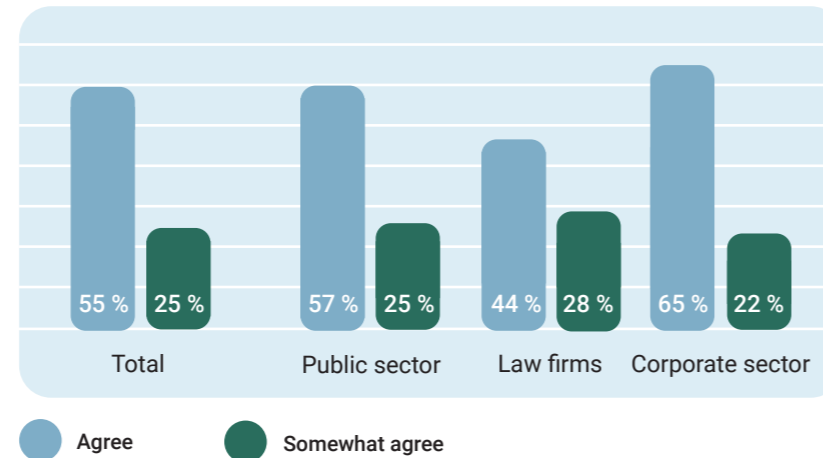
My manager sees me as a person and gives me a realistic amount of time to solve my tasks. I can also be part of exciting legal assignments, and not just the routine and administrative assignments where I cannot use my legal education to a satisfactory degree.

Female, 30-39, law firm, DK

Figure 44.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

My manager sees me as a person and not just as a work resource.



My manager fully appreciates that I, in addition to being a dedicated legal professional and employee, am also a human being.

Female, 30-39, public sector, DK



Attention creates attraction

Companies can stay attractive to legal professionals by paying attention to work-related areas that legal professionals would most like to change. Less excessive overtime and more inter-collegial support are on top of the list.

Legal professionals were encouraged to mention three things that they would like to change about their current work environment (mentally as well as physically). Among many different areas, the two most frequently mentioned aspects are reduced working hours (38%) and more support and cooperation between colleagues (37%). These findings are worth noting for any manager who is keen to hold on to precious employees.

38%

wish for reduced working hours

37%

wish for more support and cooperation between colleagues

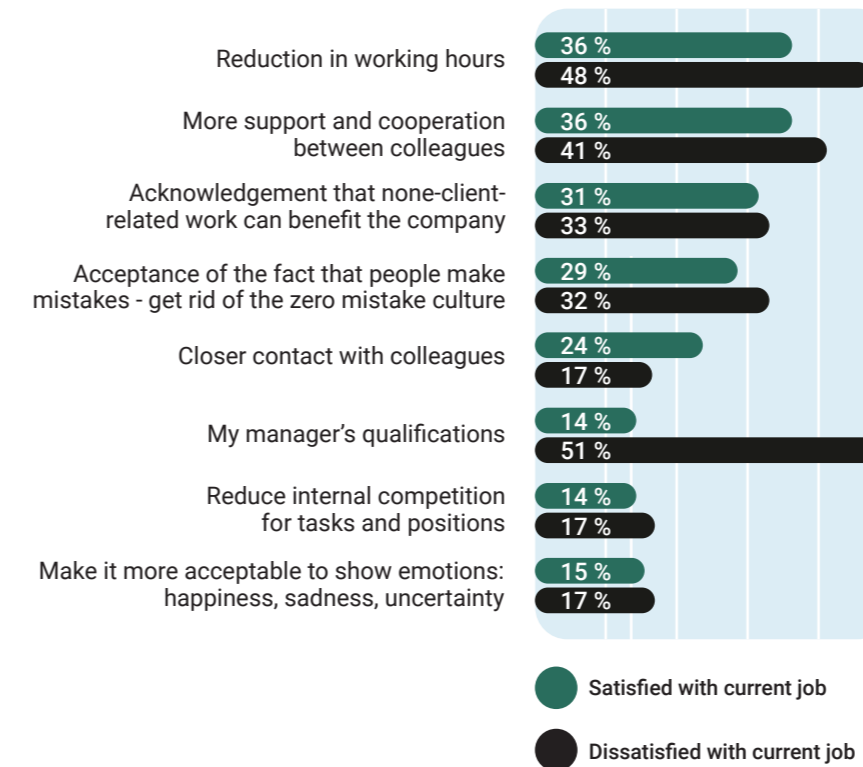
Cross-analysing these responses with whether the legal professional is satisfied or dissatisfied in a current job, two interesting results appear: A little more than half – 51% – of the unhappy legal professionals would want to change their manager’s qualifications, compared to only 14% of those who are satisfied or very satisfied.

Figure 45.
If you were to change three things about your current work environment (mentally as well as physically) what would they be?



This result makes perfect sense in that dissatisfied employees are often in conflict with their managers for various reasons. Also, nearly half – 48% – of the legal professionals, who are dissatisfied or even very dissatisfied in their current job, want to reduce their working hours – yet only about one in three (36%) of their happier peers.

Figure 46.
Cross-analysis of responses in Figure 44 and the respondents' feeling of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with a current job.



In my view, a good leader makes things happen – i.e. doesn't just listen understandingly to your professional ambitions and agrees, but actually acts on it [...] If my goal is to obtain Right of Audience before The High Courts or to go on secondment, my manager's expression of sympathy for this dream and belief it is a good idea doesn't help me. A good manager must also take the vision seriously and help to ensure that it can be realised.

Male 30-39, law firm, DK

So much more than zero

Across countries, gender, and sectors, two-thirds of all legal professionals agree that the time has come to bid the zero-error culture goodbye.

Everybody knows that practice makes perfect, yet for some reason, the notion of the zero-defects culture has trickled down from management to employees in the legal profession. Legal professionals have spent essential energy hitting themselves in the head and feeling stressed with anxiety that their work does not live up to the tacit demands of perfection. At least, that's how it used to be.

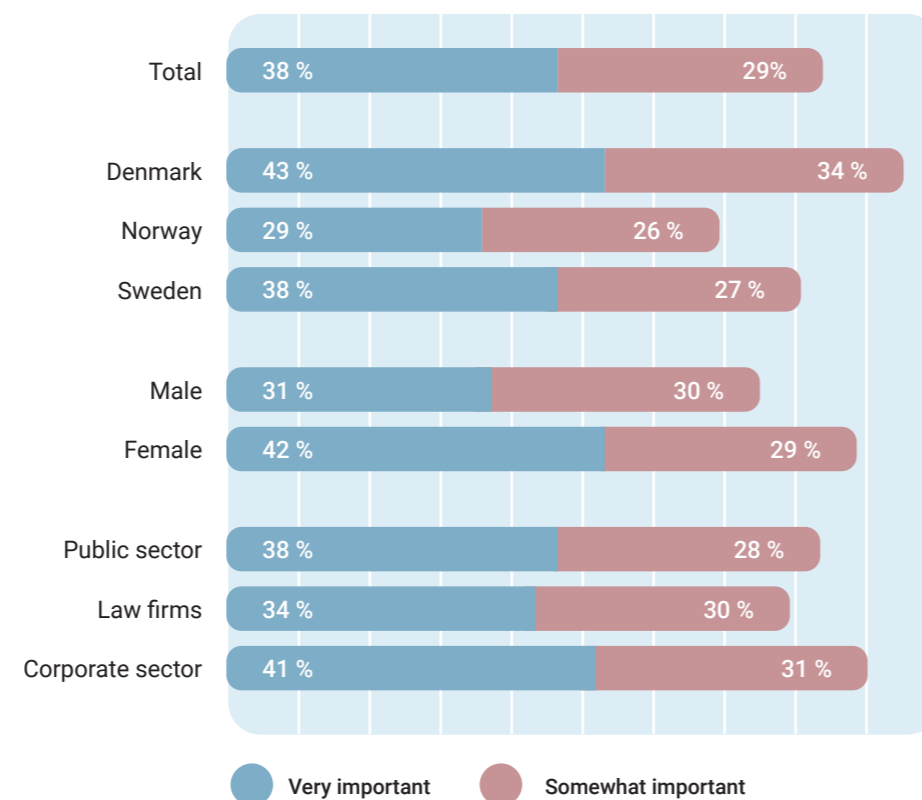
Today, two-thirds – 67% – of Scandinavian legal professionals believe it is time to face the conflict and altogether eliminate the zero-error culture in the legal business. This belief has more followers among Danish (77%) and Swedish (65%) legal professionals.

67% believe we need to get rid of the zero-error culture in the legal business

Also, among the two biological genders, results reveal different viewpoints. 71% of female legal professionals wish to abolish the culture of not allowing any mistakes – around fifteen per cent more than their male peers of which 61% support the claim.

It will be exciting to follow the prospect of a mistake-welcoming culture in the time to come. After all, were it not for educational mistakes, humankind would not have come very far.

Figure 47.
Do you agree or disagree with the following statement:
We need to get rid of the zero-error culture in the legal business.



The zero-error culture not only inhibits individual development but also the organisation around the individual person. With the rise of new technology, pedantic punctuators and other similar types of managers will gradually lose their raison d'être, because a language processing artificial intelligence will always spell correctly. As part of that development, it will become far more important for lawyers to be able to think creatively and strategically, and above all, to have human insight.

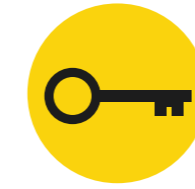
Male, 30-39, other sector, DK

The working environment is very good where I work in the public sector. I have good contacts and support from colleagues. My workplace has implemented Just Culture (an accountability tool, edit.), so the zero-defect culture is not a problem for us.

Female, 30-39, public sector, NO

That there is a warm and safe atmosphere, that there is room and understanding to make mistakes. You can ask any questions, and we help and support each other. It is an empathetic climate

Female, 23-29, corporate sector, SE



Key discoveries

- Almost a third of legal professionals (32%) changed jobs in 2022. One in four (25%) switched to a new company. More interesting work assignments, a salary increase, and a better work-life balance are the primary motivations for legal professionals to change jobs. 53% sought new professional challenges in 2022 to get more inspirational work.
- Poor leadership was a contributing factor for many of the legal professionals who changed jobs in 2022. Almost one in five (18%) stated that the prospect of a more competent manager was one of their main reasons for seeking new horizons. Half of the Scandinavian legal professionals (49%) who are currently not happy in their current position express dissatisfaction with their manager.
- Three Cs characterise the qualities considered most important in a manager: Communication – “Communicate in a clear way” (73%), Care – “Treat me with respect” (72%), and Coaching – “Good at giving feedback” (65%).
- Areas that legal professionals most wish to change in the work environment: “Reduction in working hours” (38%), “More support/collaboration between colleagues” (37%) and “Acknowledge non-client related work which is of benefit to the company” (31%).
- Confirming a well-known narrative, the survey shows that the tendency to change jobs diminishes with age: 31% of the youngest age group, aged 23–29 years, changed to a new company yet only 6% of the age group 60–69 years.
- A most positive survey finding is huge overall job satisfaction among Scandinavian legal professionals: 84% are satisfied or even very satisfied with their current job. It is worth noting that this impressive number includes legal professionals who recently changed jobs.



Questions for debate

- Reduction in working hours is high on legal professionals’ wish list. For some, this is about less excessive overtime. For others, it is a profound wish to work less and with more flexibility. Has the time come to further explore the possibility of 4-day work weeks or other alternative solutions?
- How do leaders in the legal industry work to incorporate the three Cs in their leadership?
- What is currently being done across sectors in Scandinavian countries to promote psychological safety and bravery in legal teams?
- To what extent do legal professionals switch between sectors – and what are the consequences for the individual sectors?



If managers always stay late, delegate tasks with impossible deadlines and picks on employees who don't live for their job. Well, then there will be no change in the work situation for legal professionals and even more people will go on sick leave due to exhaustion.

Actions needed to change norms and expectations

Written by: Ulrika Husmark, Specialist, Legal Professionals, Akavia.

It is gratifying that an overwhelming majority of legal professionals are so satisfied with their jobs and it is interesting that this is especially true for those who have recently changed jobs. This shows that legal professionals do not like to stay in a miserable workplace, but rather take hold of their situation and make a change for the better. It is healthy and reasonable to have a certain rotation of employees in a workplace to bring in new perspectives and expertise. However, if lawyers see a new job as the only or best way to achieve job satisfaction, this can have negative consequences. It would be problematic if, after only a few years in each job, most lawyers want to move on again.

Women and men want to change jobs at the same rate, but female legal professionals are more likely to take action and make the new job happen. What is the reason for this difference? Is it because women are more decisive and changeable, are men more compliant, or something else? Maybe women realise that they are hitting a glass ceiling and therefore are more eager to get away?

It is not surprising that younger legal professionals change jobs more often than older. It is in the nature of things that younger people test the waters in the labour market to find out what they find interesting and what kind of employer they like. Older legal professionals are also more likely to have family responsibilities, and probably consider more secure employment to be important. If there are children who demand energy and attention, it can certainly be convenient to remain in a well-known workplace where you have built up knowledge and trust capital.

Many legal professionals change jobs to find a less stressful work situation and a better work-life balance. This perception is no longer a novelty, but a well-known fact since many years. The question is why nothing is happening to change this? Addressing stress and pressure among legal professionals requires strong action that changes both norms and expectations of how a legal professional should be and act.

Here management needs to take the lead and set an example. If managers always stay late, delegate tasks with impossible deadlines and picks on employees who don't live for their job. Well, then there will be no change in the work situation for legal professionals and even more people will go on sick leave due to exhaustion.

In addition to decreased workload, legal professionals are looking for managers who can communicate. It may sound obvious, but communication is the foundation of good leadership. A manager who communicates clearly and effectively helps employees understand the goals and vision of the workplace. Good communication makes instructions and guidelines clear and makes it easier to understand what to do and how to do it. And when employees know what is expected of them, stress and uncertainty are reduced.

Communication is also at the heart of giving feedback; which is also something that is sought after by legal professionals. A manager who can deliver constructive feedback in a positive way creates an environment where employees can grow and improve their skills.

Enough praise for good communication. Most managers probably want to do the right thing; it's not out of spite that they fail. So why is it so hard to get it right? Are we going to see an upsurge in communicators and pedagogues in consultant suits when managers want to get better at communicating? Or is the communicative ability usually already there, but needs time and commitment to flourish?

Employers hiring legal professionals need to consider how to keep staff turnover at a reasonable level. Having to recruit new staff to replace those who are already well versed in their roles and business processes is costly and reduces efficiency. Involving employees in identifying priority areas for improvement in workplace satisfaction and enthusiasm can be an effective way forward. And just as with the respondents in this report, there is much to learn if you ask the questions.

Position of the new generation

Gathering all findings related to the youngest segment of legal professionals can contribute to understanding future expectations, imperative demands, and areas of consideration.

“

For the younger generation, being seen is much more important, both as customers and employees. It will be increasingly important for law firms to create personal relationships in all aspects, particularly as an employer. It would have been unthinkable to send a smiley to one's boss a few years ago, but now it is seen more and more often.

Anonymous, corporate sector, NO

“

The whole legal profession is driven by the fact that you have to work yourself to death, and young people simply don't want that, they just don't want that. And they don't want to work in the same place either. It used to be a mark of nobility – almost Japanese conditions – to work in the same place until death. That is not what young people want at all.

Anonymous, public sector, DK



Digital skills

The youngest age group (23-29 years) are often considered digital natives.

Somewhat surprisingly then, survey results showed that almost half (45%) of the youngest legal professionals (23-29 years) fear that they don't possess the right set of digital skills to benefit fully from new legal tech tools.

This finding highlights the importance of not taking anything or anyone for granted when it comes to staying ready to embrace future digital tools.



Digital education

The youngest generation (23-29 years) is more prone to place the responsibility for their ongoing digital education with their manager.

The opinion that employees themselves are primarily responsible for getting the proper education/re-education towards obtaining the necessary set of digital skills increases with age.

Among multiple-choice options, only 4% of the youngest generation considered themselves primarily responsible for their digital education. 18% did not make various choices but chose only their manager.



Diversity and equality

The youngest legal professionals (23-29 years) very much believe in the diversity/equality agenda.

79% – four in five – of younger legal professionals believe that gender equality at the management/partner level ensures better decision-making.

77% think that diversity can improve their company's results.

To a significantly high degree (61%) young legal professionals consider it more difficult for women than for men to get a top position.

Young women are particularly aware of the intricacies of equality: 70% of the youngest female legal professionals believe that it is more difficult for women than men to get a top position – and 50% believe that there is a gender pay gap in their company.



Manager expectations

The youngest legal professionals (23-29 years) brought up more qualities considered important in a manager than any other age group. On average the youngest legal professionals selected 7 qualities compared to only 5 among the oldest age group (60-69 years).

This indicates that the new generation generally has higher expectations of their manager – and therefore considers multiple qualifications crucial for a reliable manager.

More particularly, young legal professionals need managers who communicate in a clear way, treat them with respect and are good at giving feedback.



Changing jobs

A larger number of younger legal professionals (23-29 years) changed jobs in 2022 compared to their older peers.

In total, four out of ten (41%) of the youngest legal professionals sought new challenges.

Almost every third (31%) of legal professionals aged 23-29 years signed with a new company in 2022.

25% of all the legal professionals who signed with a new company in 2022 are young, female legal professionals.



Summary

Insights 2023





1 A craving for tech

An appetising future course

Summary

Scandinavian legal professionals are very aware of the importance of digital skills. Almost all legal professionals (96%) consider it important/somewhat important for the future legal professional to understand and use new digital tools.

Tech is becoming significantly more important to the legal business. This year, 77% mention 'technology (e.g., automation, AI)' as a main driver for the future of the legal industry – an increase of 17 percentage points compared to the 2022 survey. The current global focus on AI might be part of the explanation.

Considering tech's increasing popularity, it is not too surprising that 71% of Scandinavian legal professionals look forward to an even more digital future for the legal business.

Almost half (48%) of Scandinavian legal professionals fear that they lack the necessary skills to benefit fully from new legal tech products. Not surprisingly, legal professionals who believe they already possess the right competencies are more eager to welcome an even more digital future than peers who doubt their tech skills – 81% compared to 64%.

Legal professionals are ready to take on the challenge but primarily consider digital learning a joined task. Only 10% consider themselves the sole responsible for their digital education. 62% believe they must participate in making sure they receive the proper education/re-education, while 74% also consider it a manager/management group responsibility.

Innovation is popular, and the absence of innovation is noticed by 40% of the legal professionals who believe their company does not put enough effort into prioritizing innovation. 44% from the public sector, 51% from law firms, and 60% from the corporate sector agree that innovation is a sufficient priority within their company.



2 Equal measures

Is everybody equal in the eyes of the law?

Summary

80% of legal professionals agree that gender equality can improve overall job satisfaction.

49% of the female legal professionals consider diversity a strategic means to improve company results – to a larger degree than their male peers of whom 30% share this view. Twice as many women as men consider it important to for a management team to reflect diversity. Almost half of all female legal professionals (48%) support this notion compared to only 23% of men.

65% of the women and 43% of the men agree that the absence of gender equality makes for a less attractive company.

The hot topic of the gender pay gap is a major source of disagreement between male and female legal professionals. 50% of the women believe there is a gender pay gap in their company, yet only 17% of the men share this opinion. On the same topic, survey results indicate inter-regional contrasts: 58% of the Danish female legal professionals agree there is a gender pay gap – compared to 40% of their Swedish female colleagues.

61% of female legal professionals consider it more difficult for a woman to advance to a top position than for a man. In comparison, only half as many men (30%) concur. Across Scandinavia, more differences are detected on the same issue. 73% of Danish female legal professionals believe women have a harder time climbing up the career ladder than men – compared to merely 52% of Swedish female legal professionals.

In total, 45% of legal professionals state that their place of work has a recruitment policy actively promoting equality. Hiding behind this number are vast differences in approach to equality between the Scandinavian countries; An equality-supportive recruitment policy is acknowledged by 69% of the Norwegian legal professionals and 33% of the legal professionals in Denmark.

One in five legal professionals (21%) has experienced non-inclusive behaviour at their workplace in the past year. This area also offers significant gender-related differences as one in four female legal professionals (24%) has experienced non-inclusive behaviour at work within the last 12 months – compared to only 14% of their male peers.



3 New journey

Exploring professional opportunities

Summary

Almost a third of legal professionals (32%) changed jobs in 2022. One in four (25%) switched to a new company. More interesting work assignments, a salary increase, and a better work-life balance are the primary motivations for legal professionals to change jobs. 53% sought new professional challenges in 2022 to get more inspirational work.

Poor leadership was a contributing factor for many of the legal professionals who changed jobs in 2022. Almost one in five (18%) stated that the prospect of a more competent manager was one of their main reasons for seeking new horizons. Half of the Scandinavian legal professionals (49%) who are currently not happy in their current position express dissatisfaction with their manager.

Three Cs characterise the qualities considered most important in a manager: Communication – “Communicate in a clear way” (73%), Care – “Treat me with respect” (72%), and Coaching – “Good at giving feedback” (65%).

Areas that legal professionals most wish to change in the work environment: “Reduction in working hours” (38%), “More support/collaboration between colleagues” (37%) and “Acknowledge non-client related work which is of benefit to the company” (31%).

Confirming a well-known narrative, the survey shows that the tendency to change jobs diminishes with age: 31% of the youngest age group, aged 23–29 years, changed to a new company yet only 6% of the age group 60–69 years.

A most positive survey finding is huge overall job satisfaction among Scandinavian legal professionals: 84% are satisfied or even very satisfied with their current job. It is worth noting that this impressive number includes legal professionals who recently changed jobs.

The Future of the Legal Profession 2023

The data behind the present report highlight current and future topics of relevance to the Scandinavian legal profession.

This report is based on survey responses offered by 3,213 full-time legal professionals.

Any thoughts as to how you perceive the development of the legal industry?
Please do not hesitate to share the topics you would like to read more about in
The Future of the Legal Profession. Make your ideas known to us at
<https://www.karnovgroup.dk/fremtidensjurist>