

Governance, Public Safety and Justice Survey (GPSJS)

Governance, Public Safety and Justice Release 2024/25

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About the GPSJS and its objectives



Victims of Crime Survey (VOCS)

The Victims of Crime Survey (VOCS) was conducted by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) in 1998. The Institute for Security Studies (ISS) conducted the 2003 and 2007 versions of the VOCS.



Sample size

Stats SA resumed the survey from 2011 – 2017/18, based on a total sample size of approximately 30 000 households across 9 provinces of SA.



New information demands on governance

In 2017 VOCS was redesigned to make room for new information demands on governance. The redesigned survey is called Governance, Public Safety and Justice Survey (GPSJS) and follows a 4-year rotational plan. Currently publishing Year 4 results.



Levels, trends and perceptions about crime in SA

Provide an overview of the level and trend of crime experienced by households and individuals in SA and explore public perceptions on issues of safety and general perceptions of individuals.



Access, experience and satisfaction with courts and correctional services

Provides data on the following themes:

- ❖ Households' access to courts
- ❖ Individuals experience and perception of courts
- ❖ Households' experience and perceptions of correctional services.



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Household access and perception of Courts

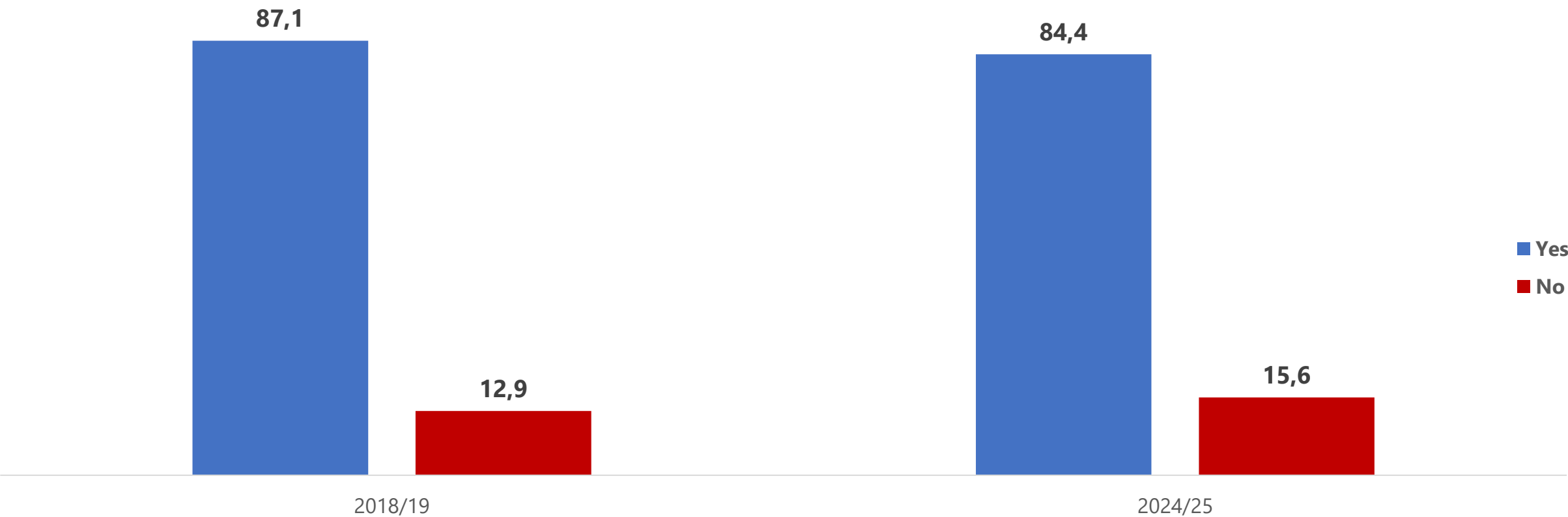
This module measured household's presence and perception of the Courts:

- ❖ Households who have been to courts in the 12 months preceding the survey
- ❖ Satisfaction with the way courts generally deal with perpetrators of crime
- ❖ Main reason for satisfaction/dissatisfaction
- ❖ Length of sentence for violent or gender-based crimes



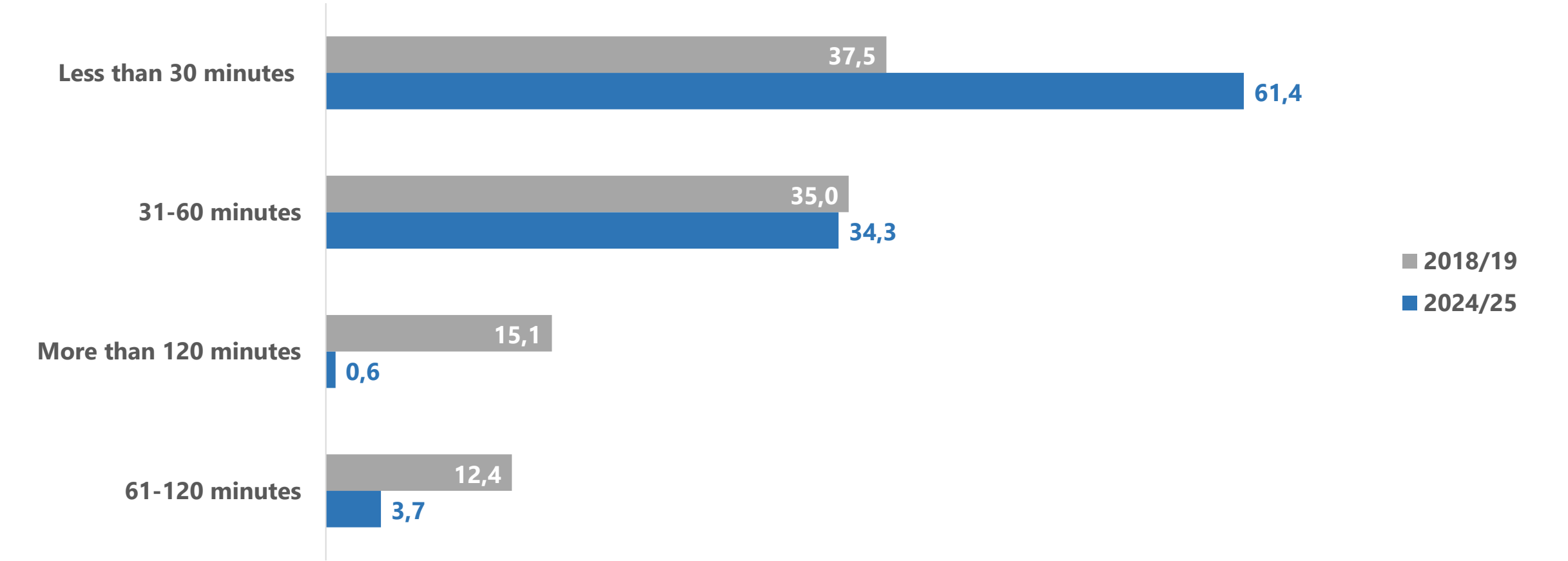
More than four-fifths of households knew the location of their nearest magistrate court in both reporting periods 2018/19 and 2024/25.

Percentage of households who know location of their nearest magistrate court in the 12 months preceding the survey period, 2018/19 and 2024/25



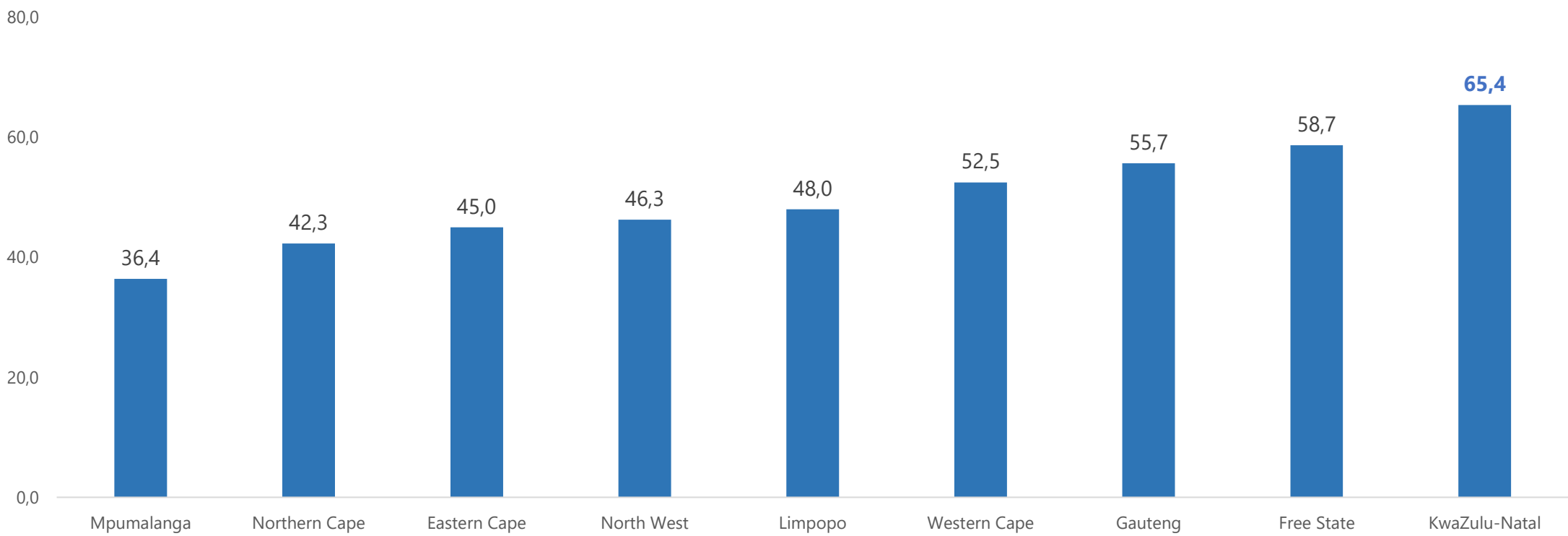
In 2024/25, **three-fifths** of households (**61,4%**) took less than 30 minutes on average to get to their nearest magistrate court, this is a sharp increase of 23,9 percentage points form 2018/19.

Percentage of average time households take to get to the nearest magistrate court by means of their usual mode of transport in the 12 months preceding the survey period, 2018/19 and 2024/25



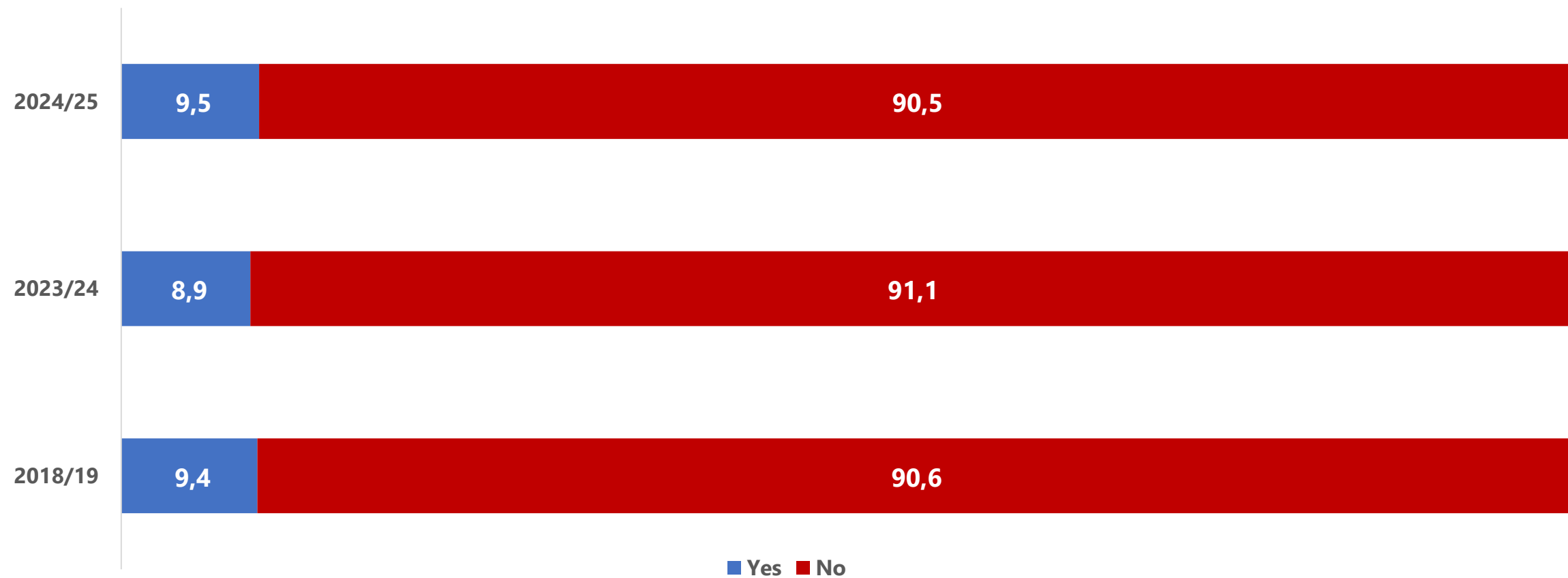
In 2024/25, most households **(65,4%) in KwaZulu-Natal** took less than 30 minutes on average to get to their nearest magistrate court.

Percentage of average time households take to get to the nearest magistrate court by means of their usual mode of transport by province, 2024/25



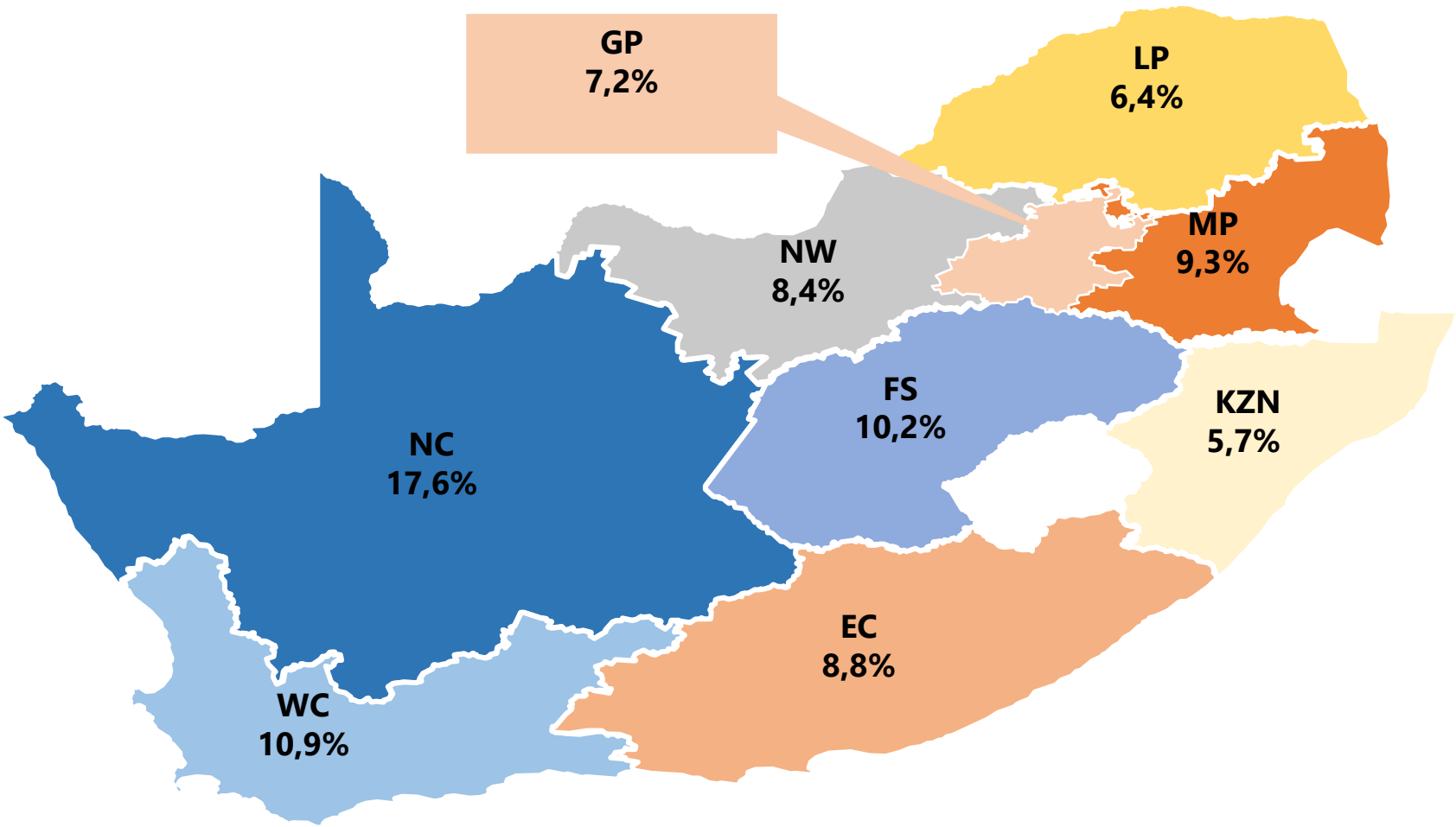
About one-tenth of households have been to courts in all three reporting periods. A slight increase of 0,6 percentage points is observed between 2023/24 and 2024/25 reporting periods.

Percentage of households who have been to courts in the 12 months preceding the survey period, 2018/19, 2023/24 and 2024/25



Northern Cape (17,6%) has the highest proportion of households that have been to court in 2024/25, followed by **Western Cape (10,9%)** and **Free State (10,2%)**.

Percentage of households who have been to courts in the 12 months preceding the survey period by province, 2024/25

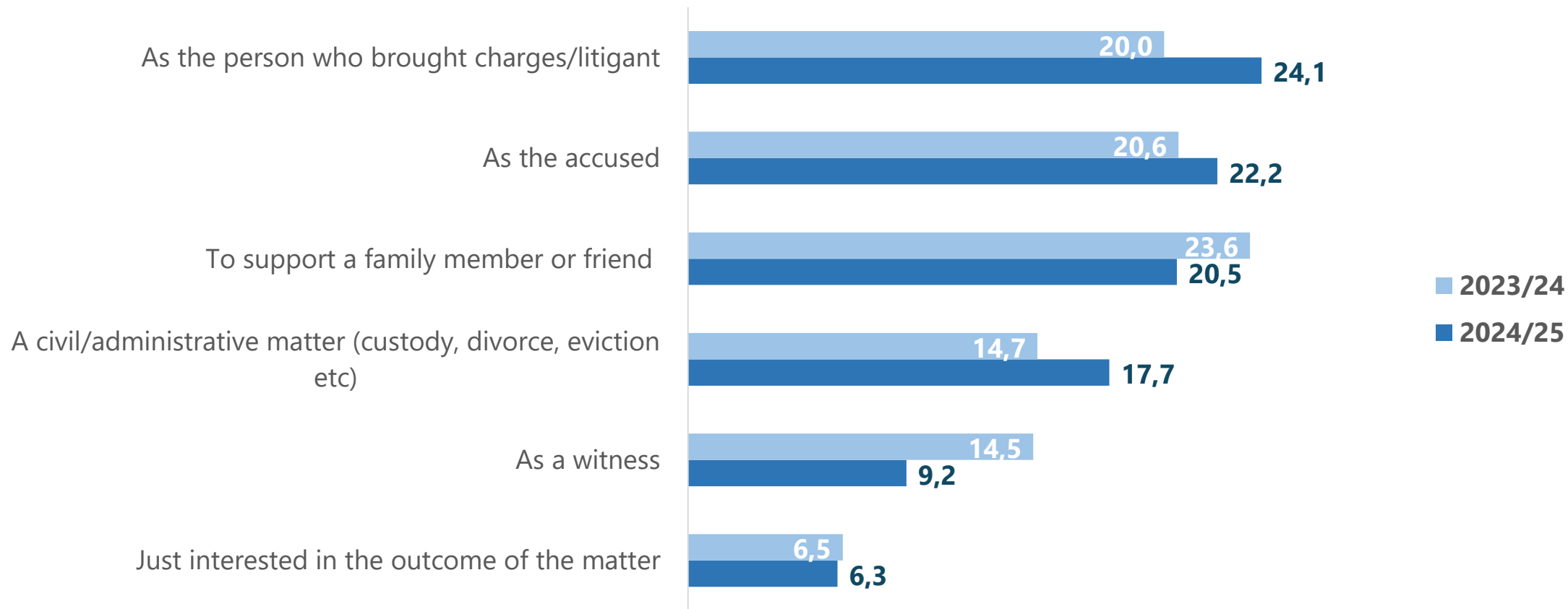


RSA: 9,5% households have been to court



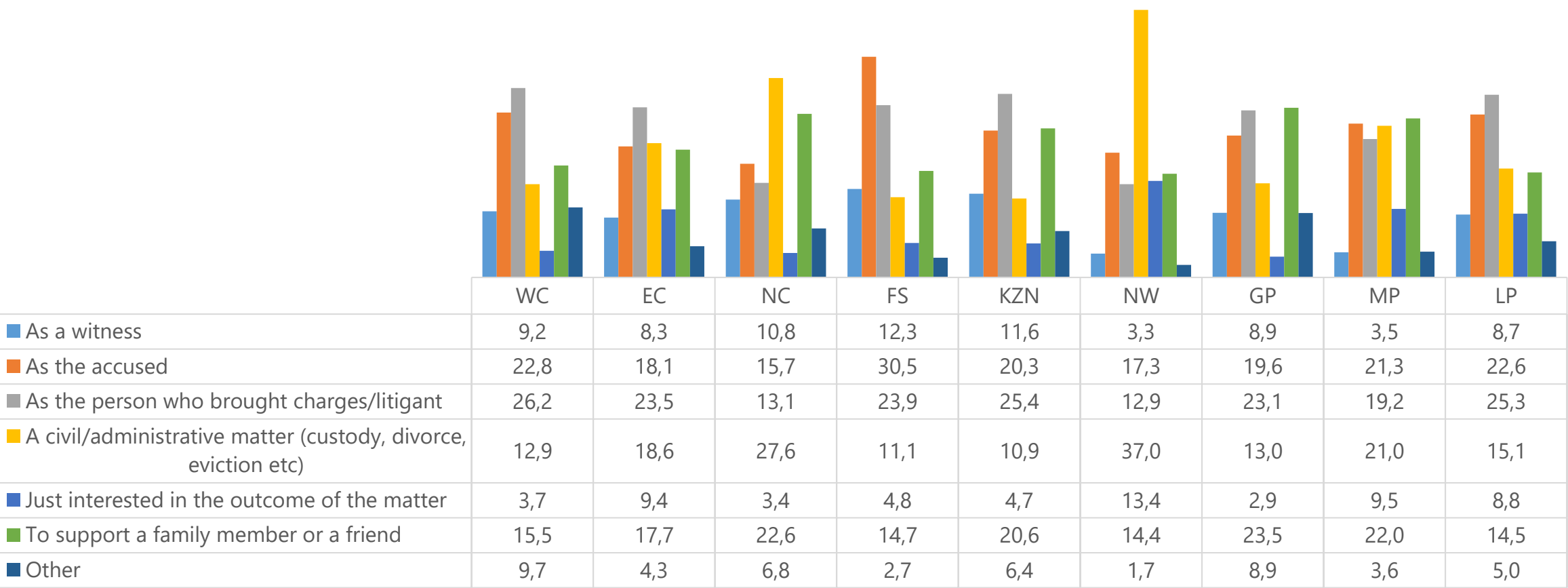
In 2024/25, more households **(24,1%)** visited courts “as the person who brought charges/litigant” compared to 2023/24 **(20,0%)**. Less than 10% visited out of interest in the outcome of the matter.

Percentage distribution of reasons households visited court in the 12 months preceding the survey period, 2023/24 and 2024/25



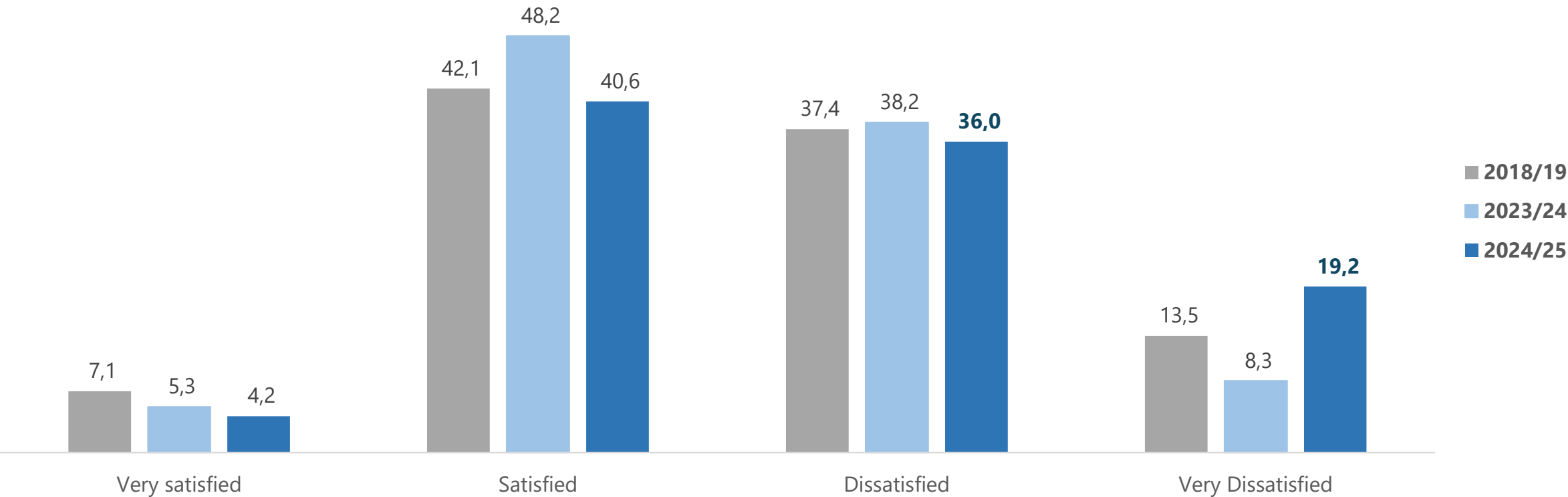
In 2024/25, more households in North West (**37,0%**) went to court for a civil/administrative matter and **30,5%** households in Free state visited courts “as the accused”.

Percentage distribution of reasons households visited court in the 12 months preceding the survey period by province, 2024/25



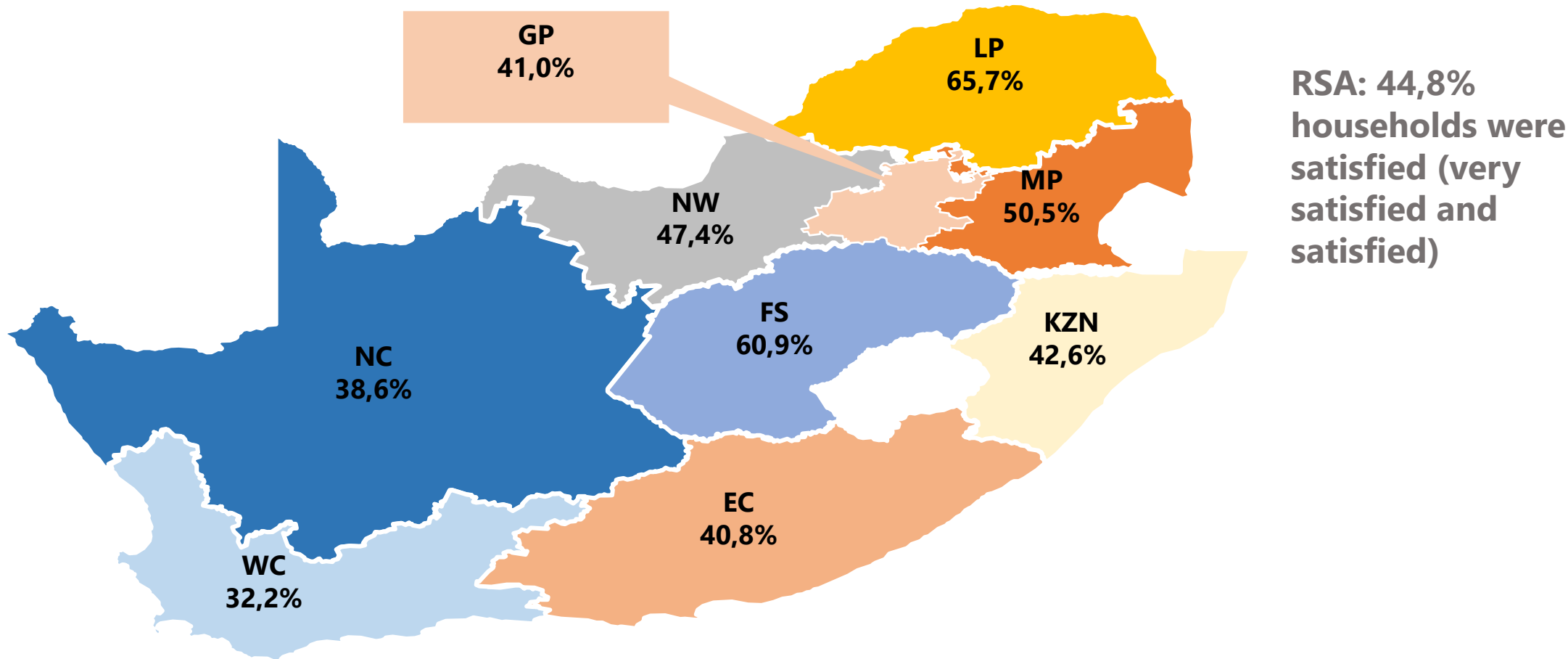
Most households (55,2%) were dissatisfied (dissatisfied and very dissatisfied) with how the courts generally dealt with perpetrators of crime in the 2024/25 reporting period.

Household heads level of satisfaction with the way courts generally deal with perpetrators of crime in the 12 months preceding the survey period, 2018/19, 2023/24 and 2024/25



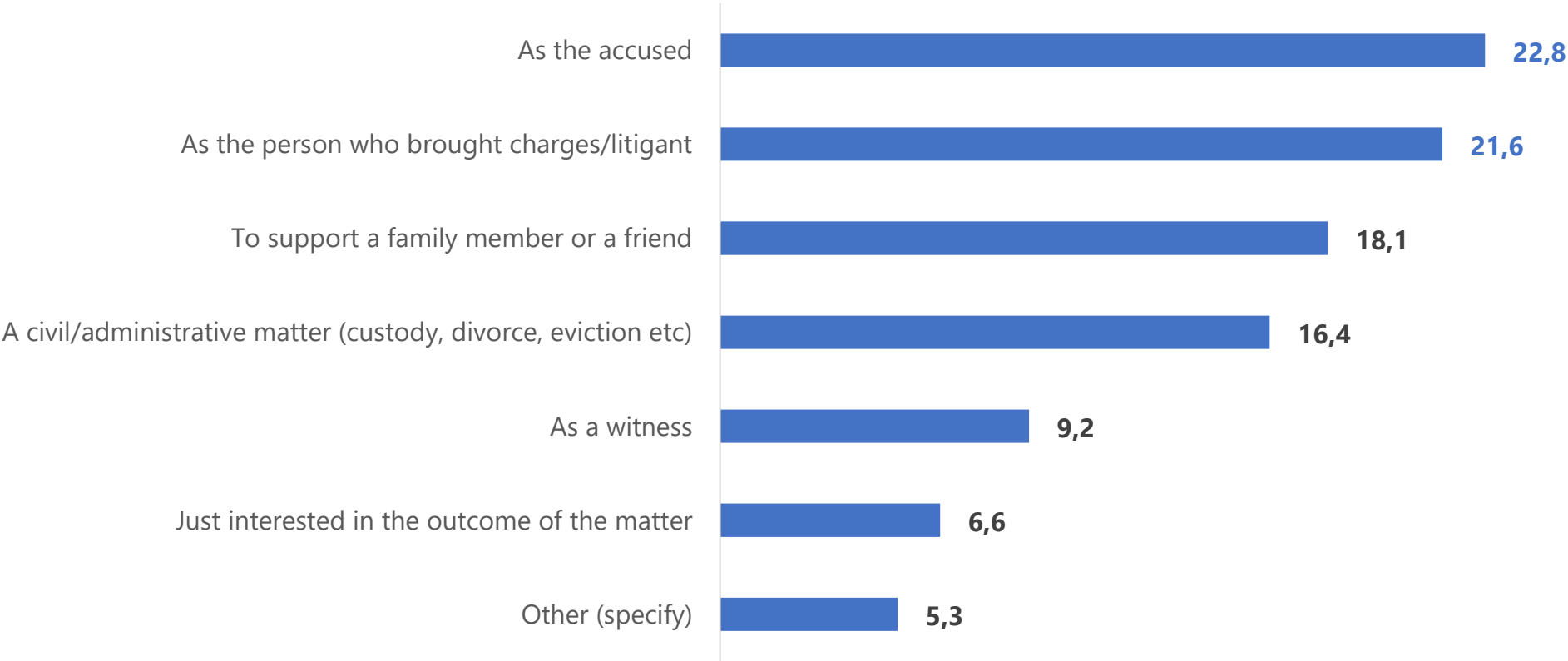
Household heads that were satisfied with the way courts generally deal with perpetrators of crime in 2024/25 were most common in **Limpopo (65,7%)**, **Free State (60,9%)** and **Mpumalanga (50,5%)**.

Percentage of those satisfied with the way court generally deal with perpetrators of crime in the 12 months preceding the survey period by Province, 2024/25



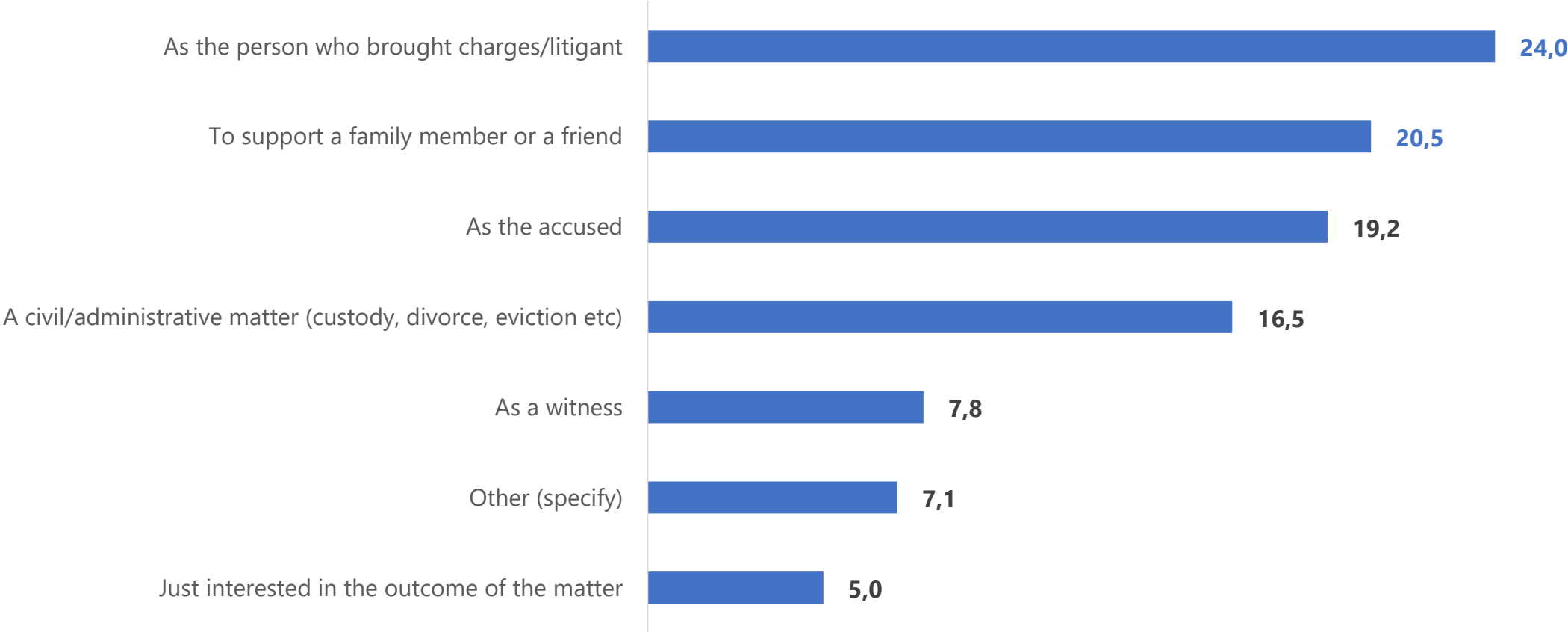
Household heads that were satisfied with the way courts generally deal with perpetrators of crime in 2024/25 were most in court **as the accused (22,8%)**, followed by those who went **as litigants (21,6%)**.

Percentage of those satisfied with the way court generally deal with perpetrators of crime and the reason they went to court, 2024/25



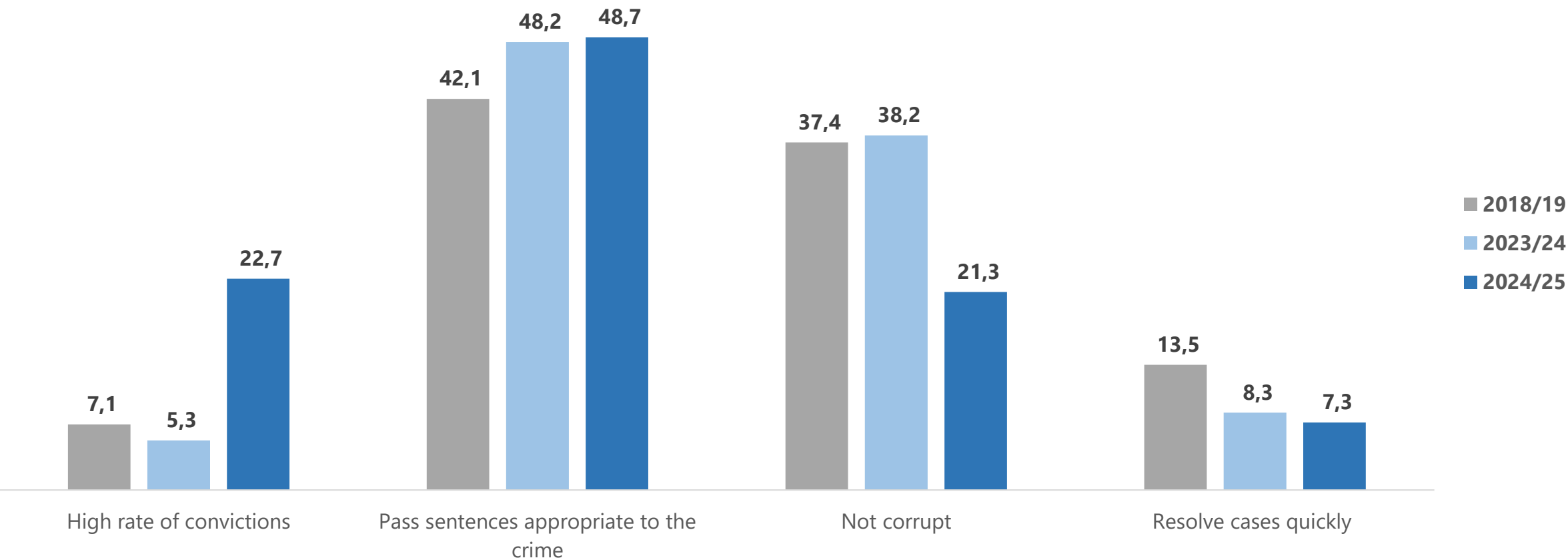
Household heads that were dissatisfied with the way courts generally deal with perpetrators of crime in 2024/25 were in court mostly **as the litigant (24,0%)**, followed by those who went to **support a family member or a friend (20,5%)**.

Percentage of those dissatisfied with the way court generally deal with perpetrators of crime and the reason they went to court, 2024/25



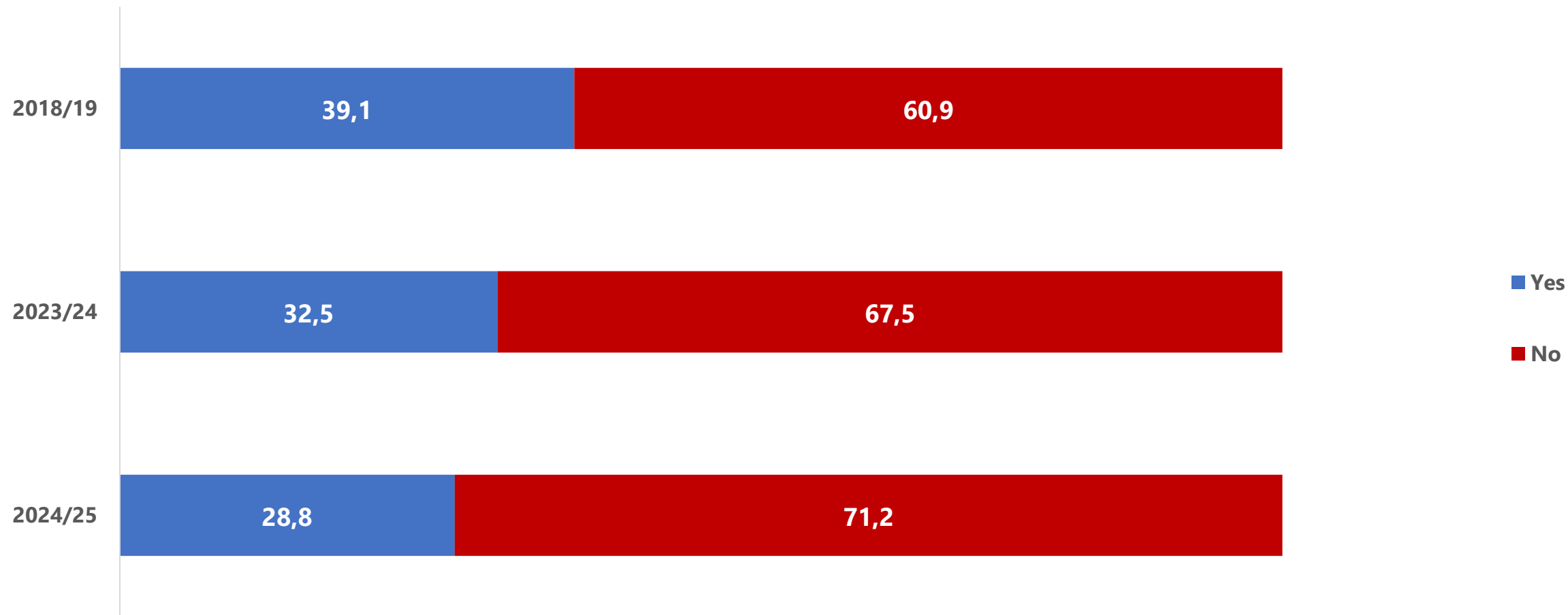
The main reason indicated for satisfaction was 'courts pass sentences appropriate to the crime' in the three-reporting periods. In 2024/25, households indicated 'high rate of convictions' as a second most common reason they are satisfied with the way courts deals with perpetrators of crime.

Percentage distribution of the main reason households are satisfied in the 12 months preceding the survey period, 2018/19, 2023/24 and 2024/25



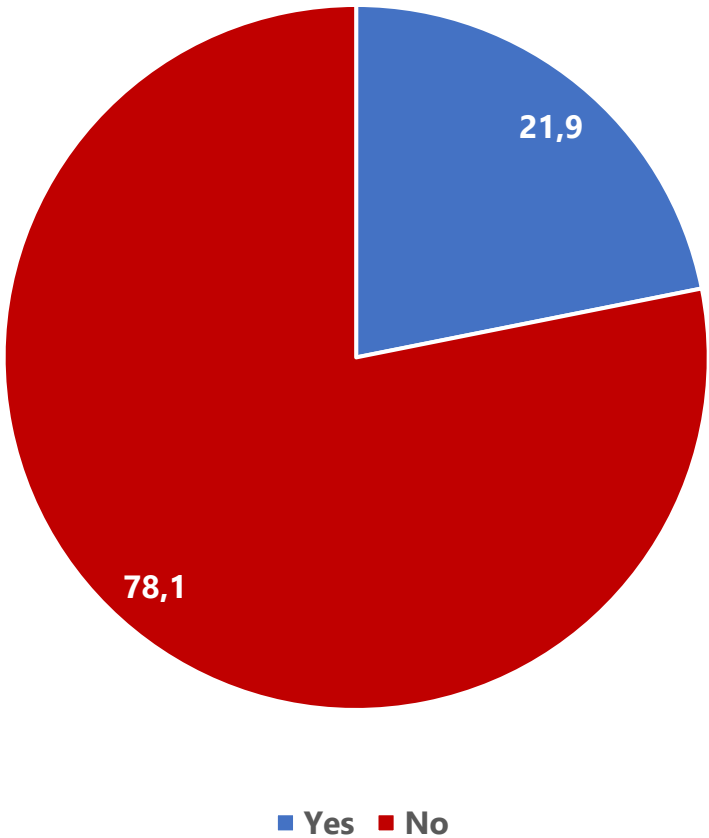
There is a constant increase in those who do not think sentences served for violent crimes are long enough from **60,9%** in 2018/19, followed by **67,5%** in 2023/24 and **71,2%** in 2024/25.

Percentage of households who think sentences served for violent crimes are long enough in the 12 months preceding the survey period, 2018/19, 2023/24 and 2024/25



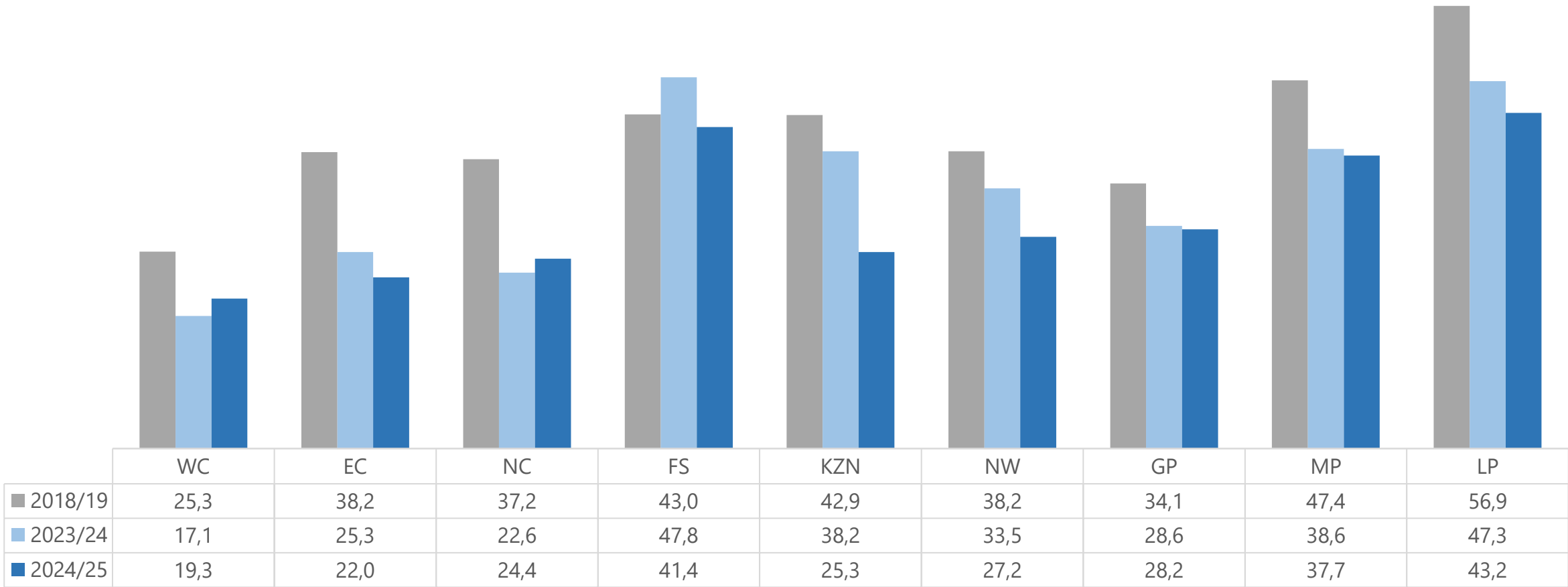
Most households **(78,1%)** that experienced home robbery in 2024/25 do not think sentences served for violent crimes are long enough.

Percentage of households who experienced home robbery in the past 12 months preceding the survey and their perception on duration of sentences served for violent crimes, 2024/25



In 2024/25, Western Cape **(19,3%)** and Eastern Cape **(22,0%)** provinces had the lowest proportion of households that think sentences served for violent crimes is long enough.

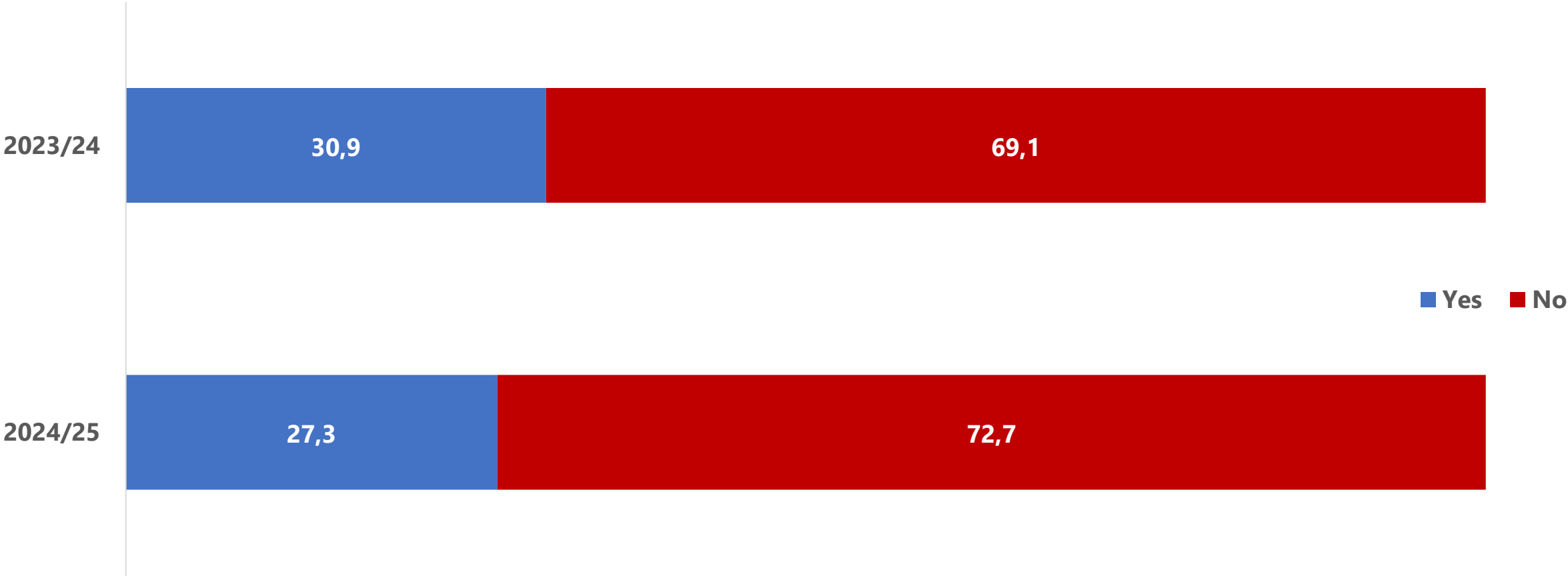
Percentage of household who think sentences served for violent crimes is long enough in the 12 months preceding the survey period by Province, 2018/19, 2023/24 and 2024/25



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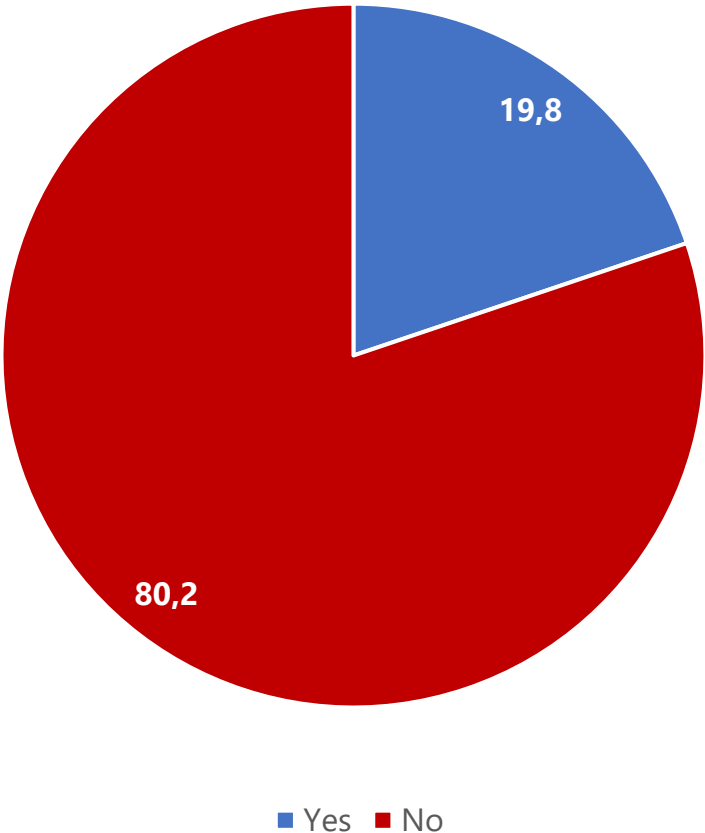
Most households did not think sentences served for Gender Based Violence are long enough in both reporting periods with **69,1%** in 2023/24 and **72,7%** in 2024/25.

Percentage of households who think sentences served for Gender Based Violence are long enough in the 12 months preceding the survey period 2023/24 and 2024/25



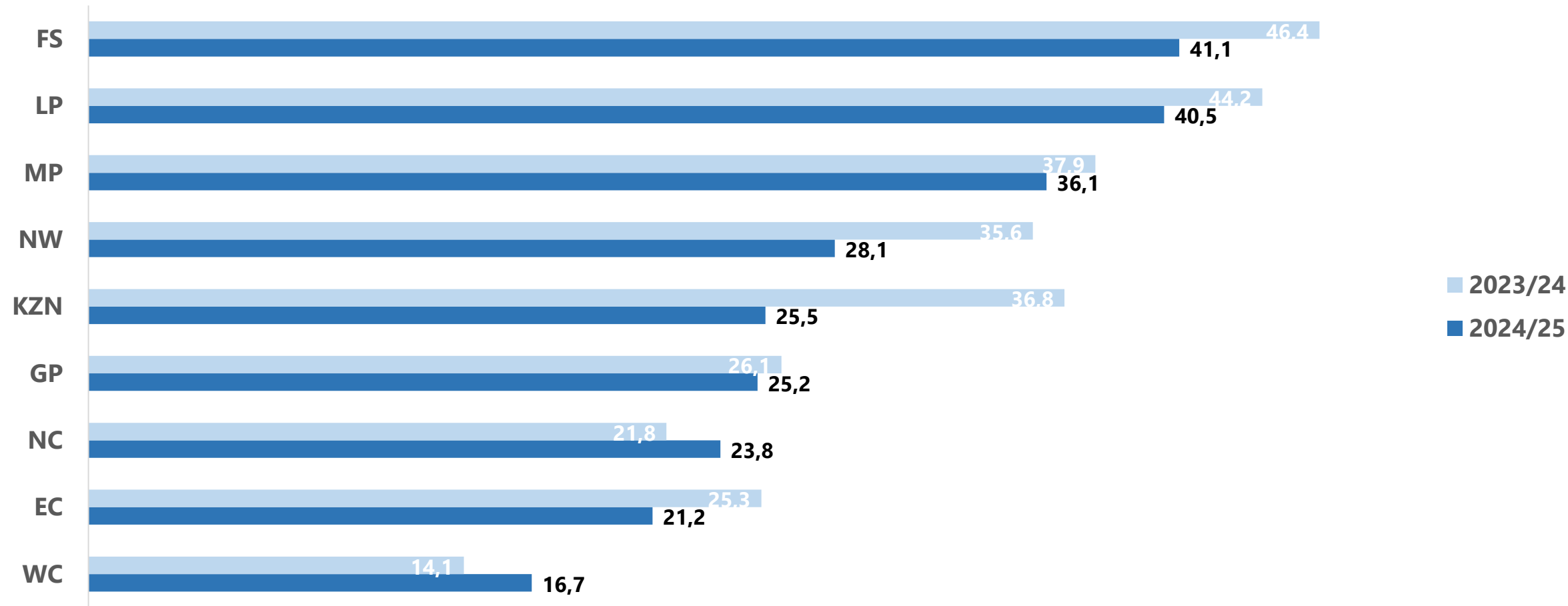
More households **(80,2%)** that experienced assault in 2024/25 did not think sentences served for GBV are long enough.

Percentage of households who experienced assault in the past 12 months preceding the survey and their perception on duration of sentences served for Gender Based Violence, 2024/25



Most households in Free State thought that sentences served for Gender Based Violence were long enough in both periods, although there is a decrease observed from **46,4%** in 2023/24 to **41,1%** in 2024/25.

Percentage of households who think sentences served for Gender Based Violence are long enough in the 12 months preceding the survey period by Province, 2023/24 and 2024/25



Individual access and perception of Courts

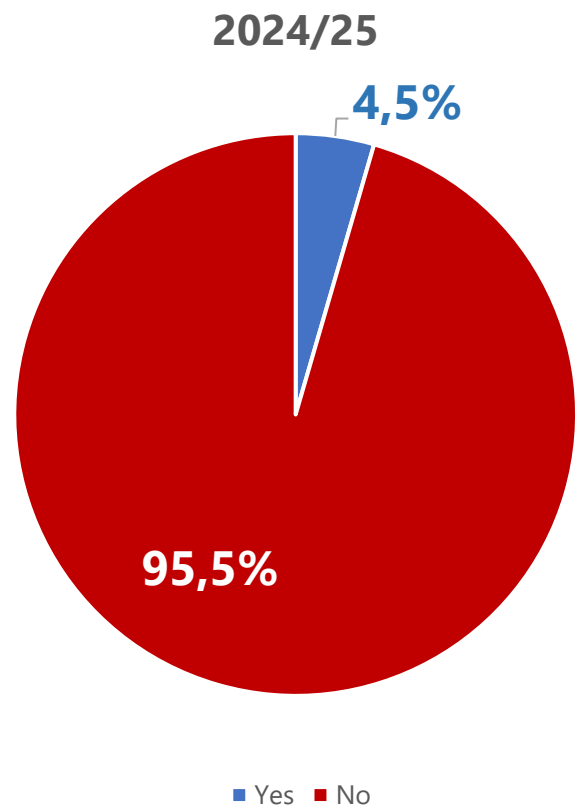
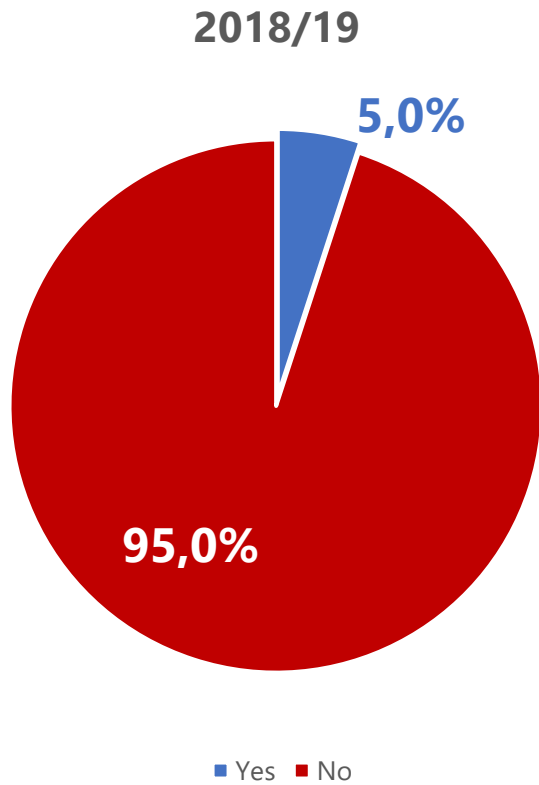
Individuals who are 16 years and older were asked their experience with courts and their perceptions about the quality of service:

- ❖ Individuals who have been to courts in the past 12 months preceding the survey
- ❖ Main reasons individuals stated for being to courts
- ❖ Services at the courts
- ❖ Satisfaction with services offered by the court
- ❖ Knowledge of National Prosecuting Officer (NPA)



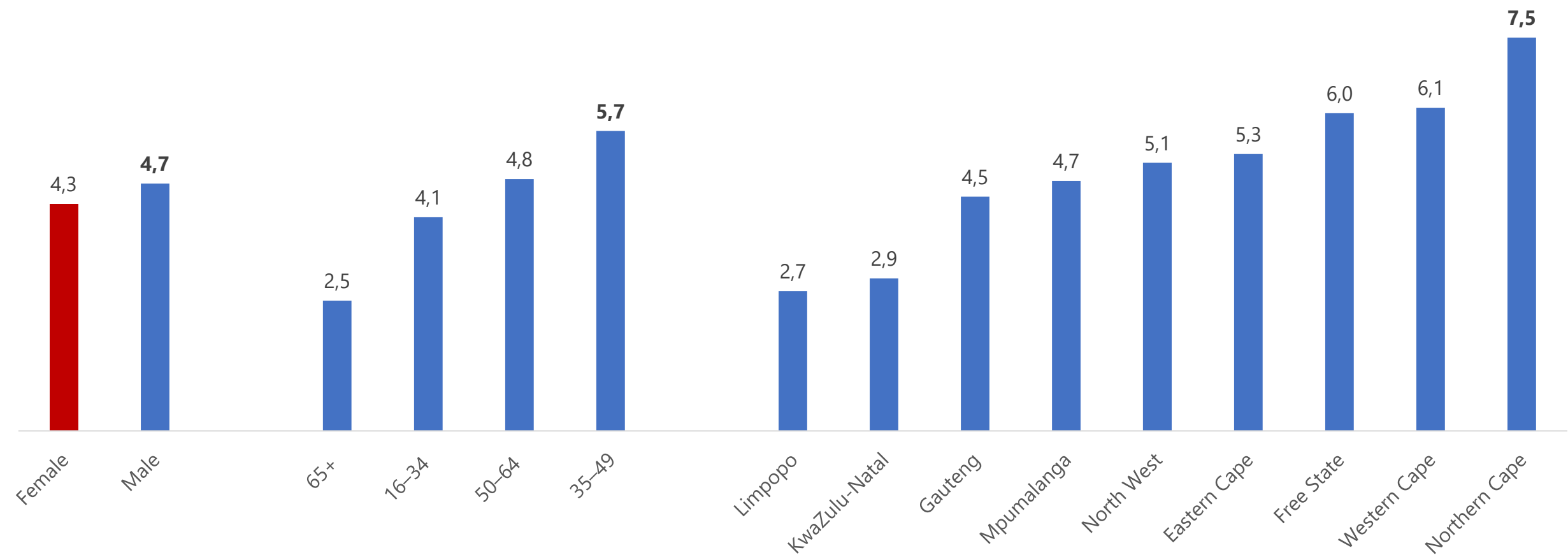
Percentage of individuals aged 16 years and older who indicated they have been to courts slightly decreased from **5,0% in 2018/19** to **4,5% in 2024/25**.

Percentage of people who have been to courts for specified reasons in the 12 months preceding the survey period, 2024/25



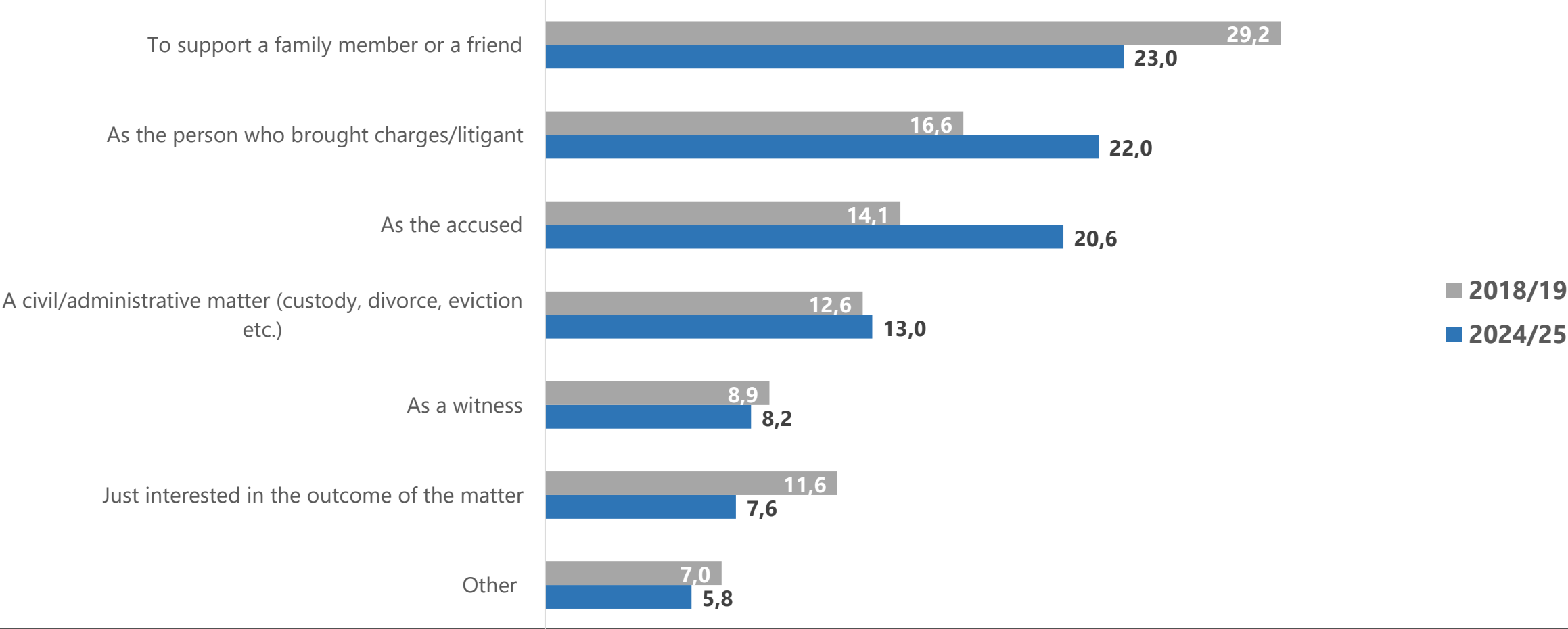
Males (4,7%) were more likely to have been to court in the 12 months preceding the survey compared to **females (4,3%)** in 2024/25. A higher proportion of individuals in Northern Cape **(7,5%)** were more likely to have who have been to court.

Percentage distribution of individuals who have been to court by selected demographic characteristics, 2024/25



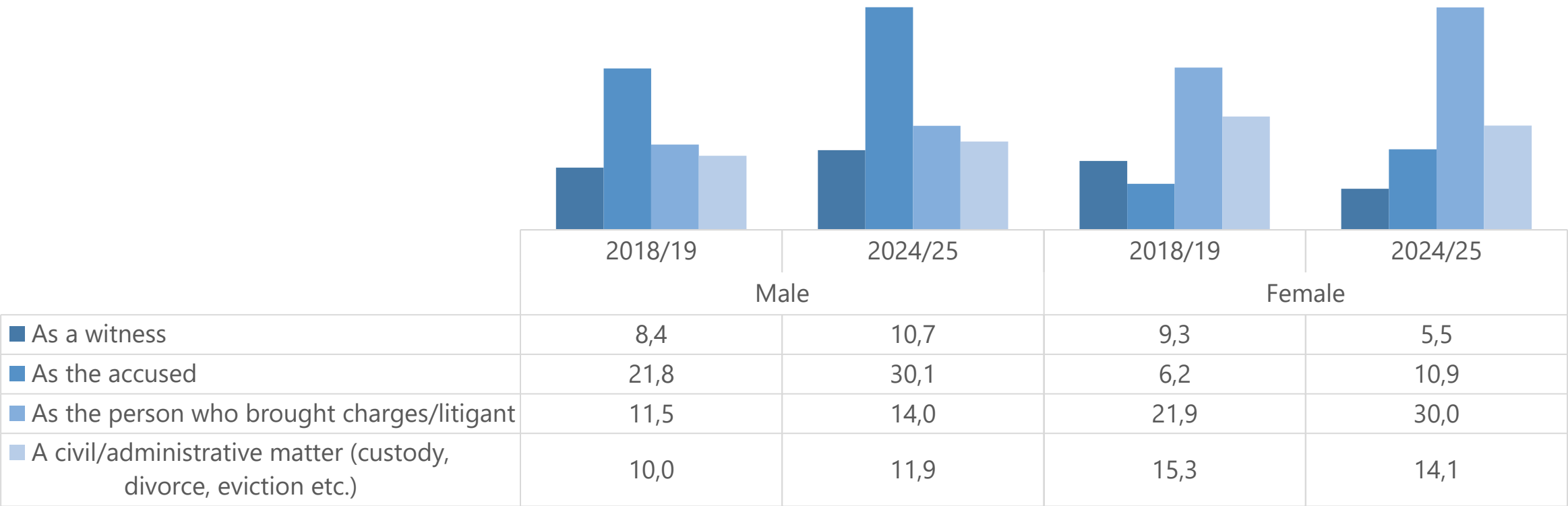
The main reason individuals 16 years and older stated for being to courts was to support a family member or a friend in both reporting periods, this decreased from **29,2%** in 2018/19 to **23,0%** in 2024/25.

Percentage of main reasons people stated for being to courts in the 12 months preceding the survey period, 2018/19 and 2024/25



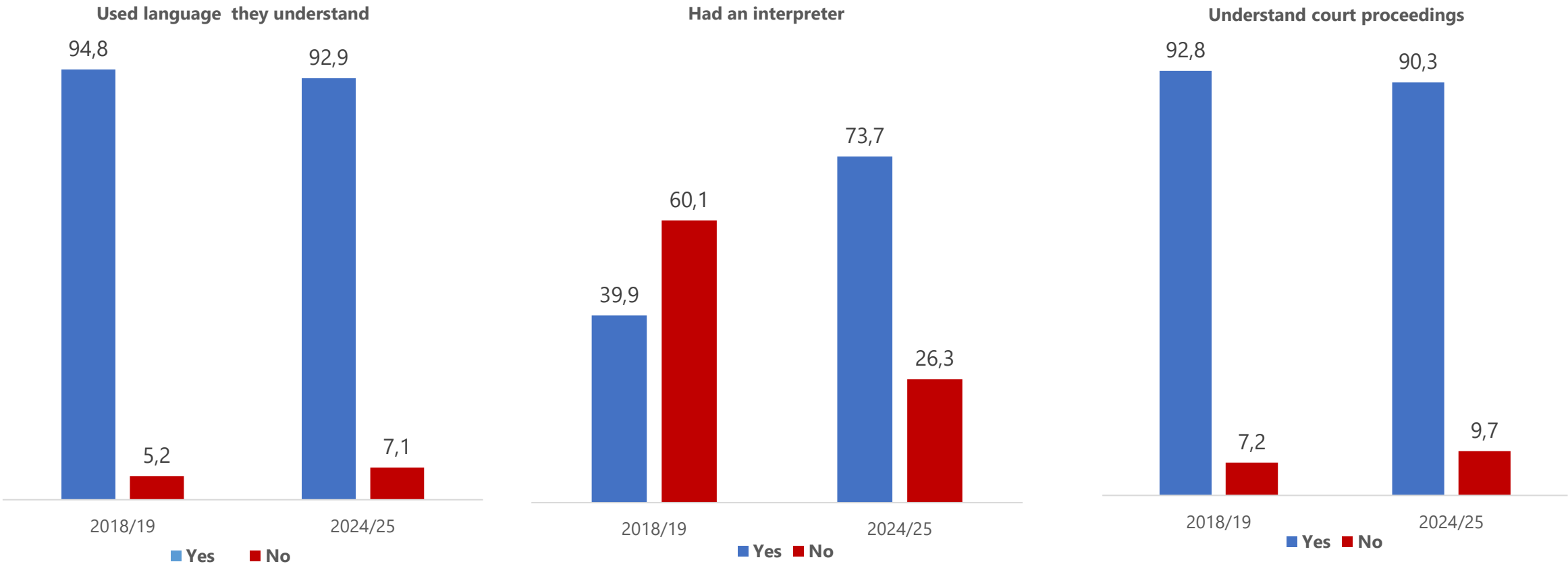
More males **(30,1%)** went to court as the accused compared to only **10,9%** females in 2024/25, the same trend was observed in 2018/19. In both 2018/19 and 2024/25 periods more females went to court as the person who brought charges/ litigant.

Percentage of the people who went to court as witnesses, accused, litigants and administrative services by sex, 2018/19 and 2024/25



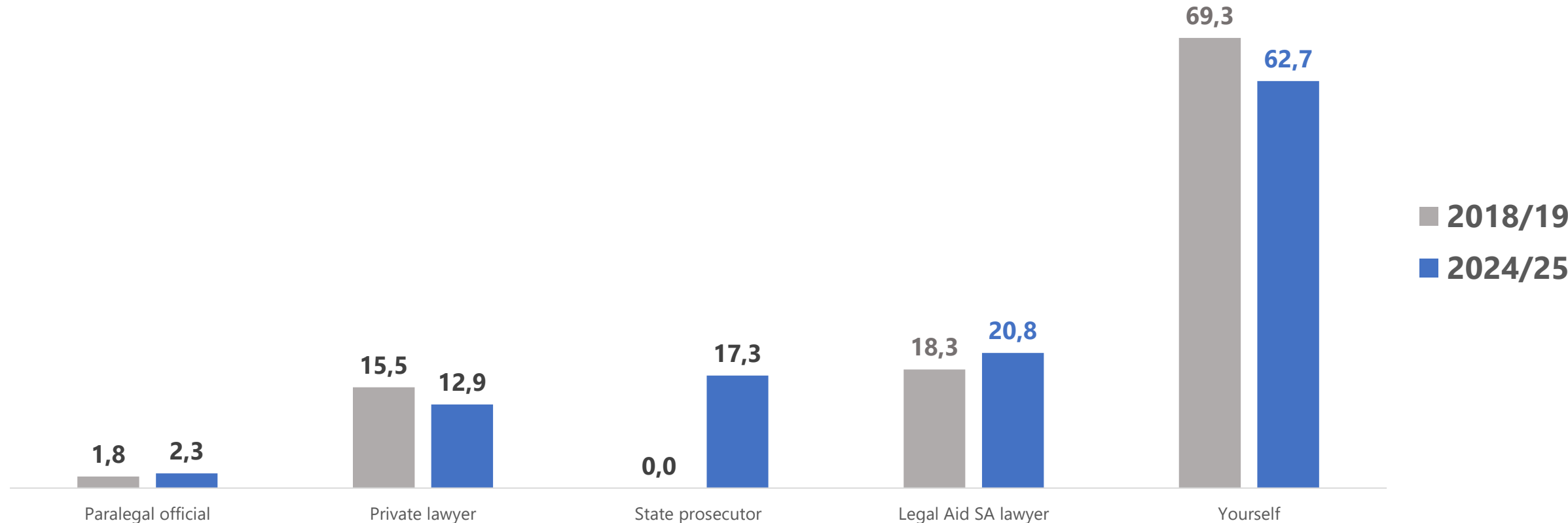
More than **90%** of the individuals were allowed to speak in a language they understand during courts proceedings in both 2018/19 and 2024/25.

Percentage of the people who were allowed to use a language they understand and those who had an interpreter interpreting proceedings and those who understood court proceedings, 2018/19 and 2024/25



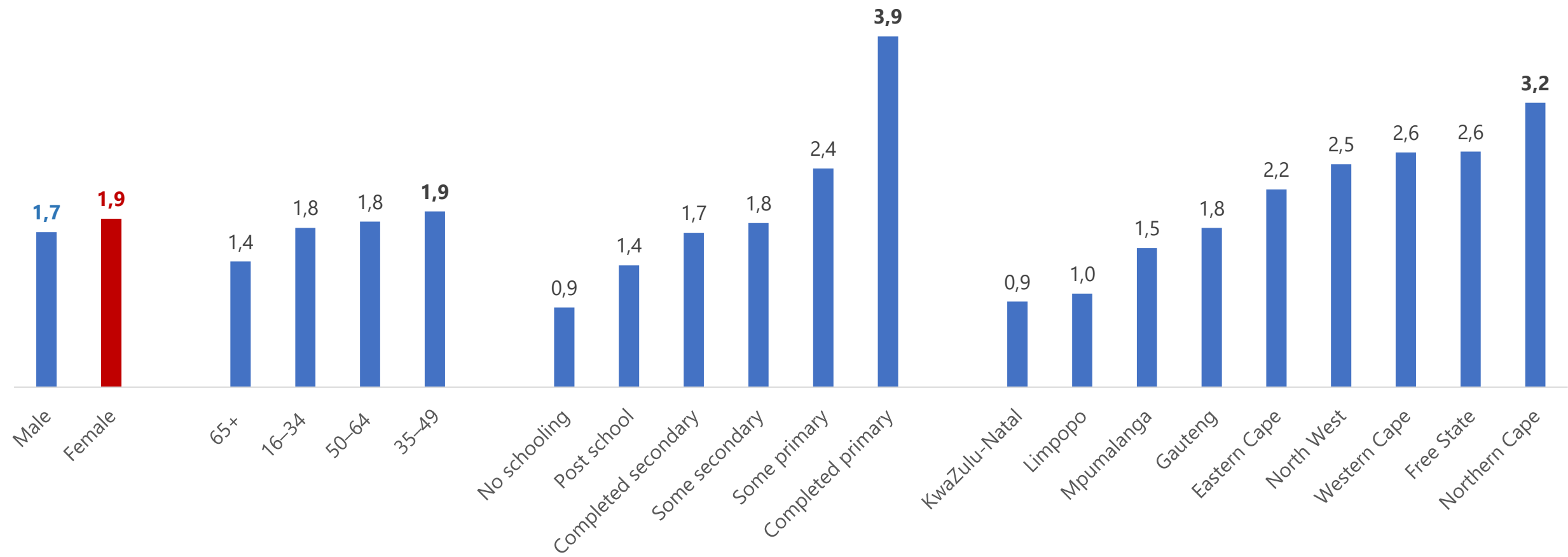
Almost **70%** of the people who went to court represented themselves in 2018/19, this percentage decreased to **62,7%** in 2024/25. Individuals who were represented by a Legal Aid SA lawyer increased from **18,3%** in 2018/19 to **20,8%** in 2024/25.

Percentage of people who were represented by type of representation in court, 2018/19 and 2024/25



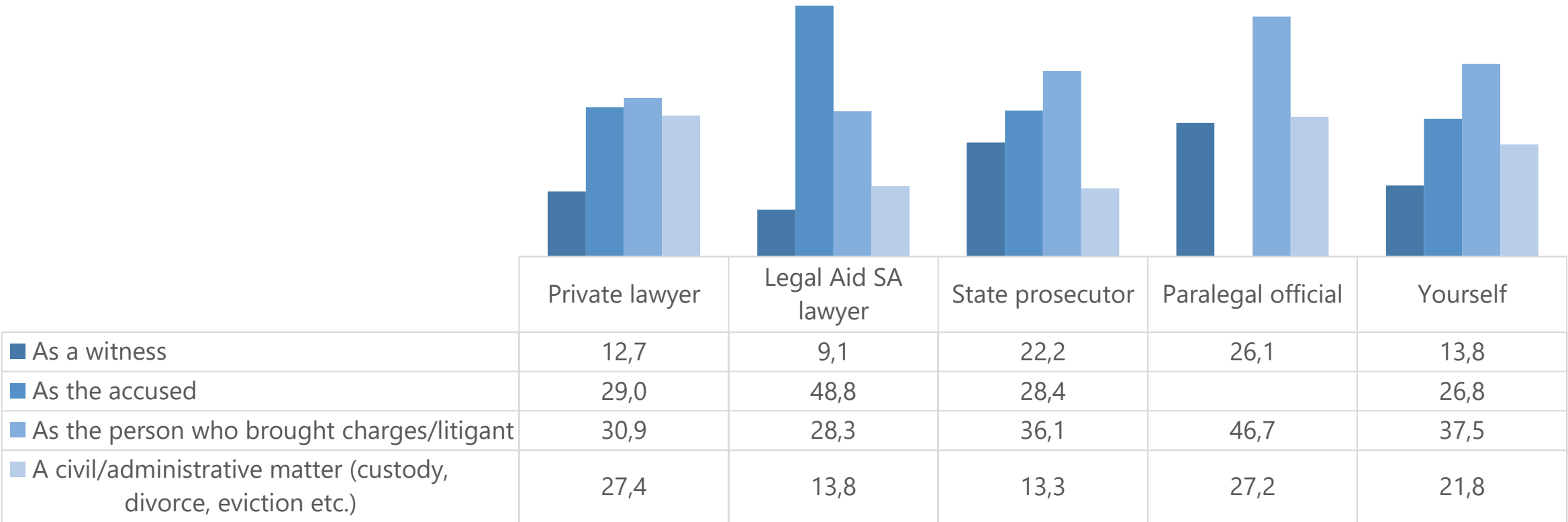
Females (1,9%) were more likely to self-represent than **males (1,7%)**. Additionally, those who completed primary schooling (**3,9%**) and those who reside in the Northern Cape province (**3,2%**).

Percentage distribution of people who self-represented in court by selected demographic characteristics, 2024/25



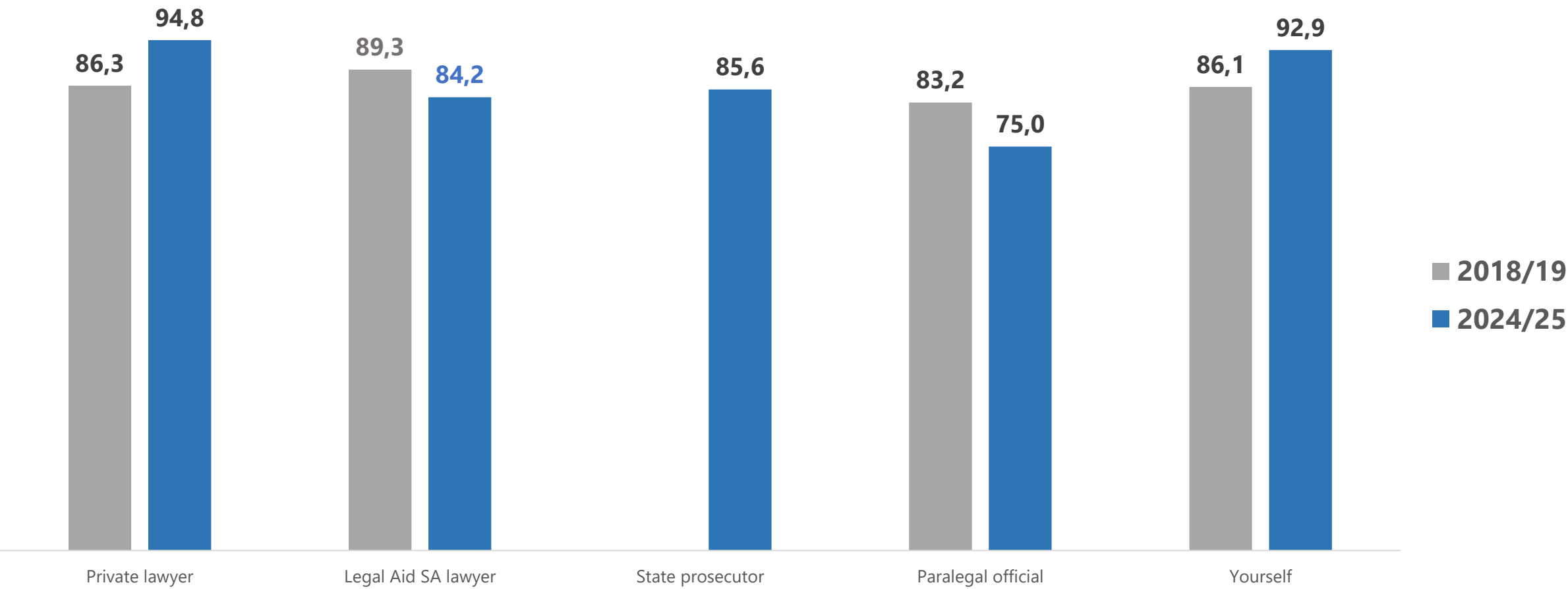
Those who were present in court **as the person who brought charges/litigant** had the highest proportion of being represented by a paralegal official followed by self representation. A higher proportion of those who were represented by the legal aid lawyer were in court as the accused.

Percentage of representation in court according to reason for going to court, 2024/25



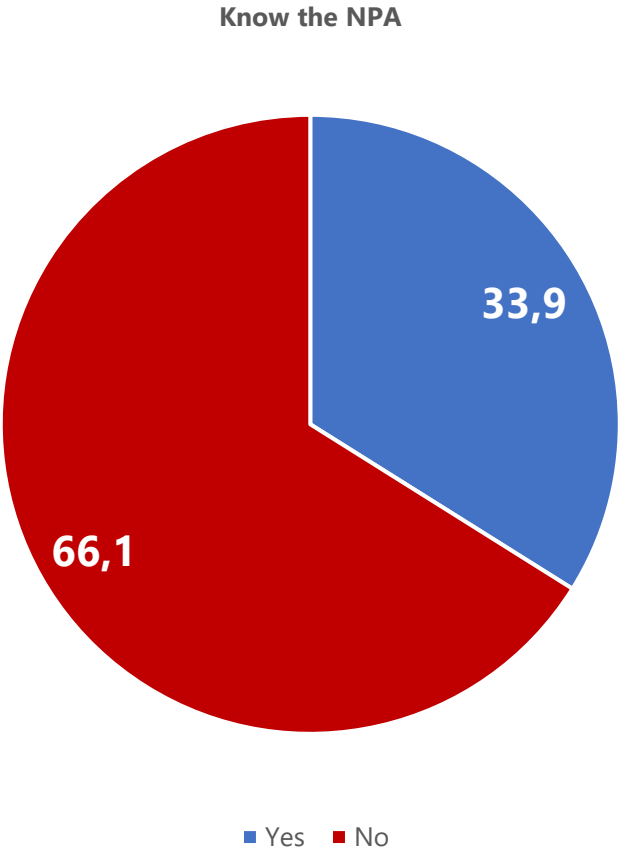
Individuals 16 years and older who were represented by Legal Aid lawyers had the lower levels **(84,2%)** of satisfaction with services in 2024/25 compared to 2018/19 **(89,3%)**.

Percentage of people who were satisfied with type of representation, 2018/19 and 2024/25



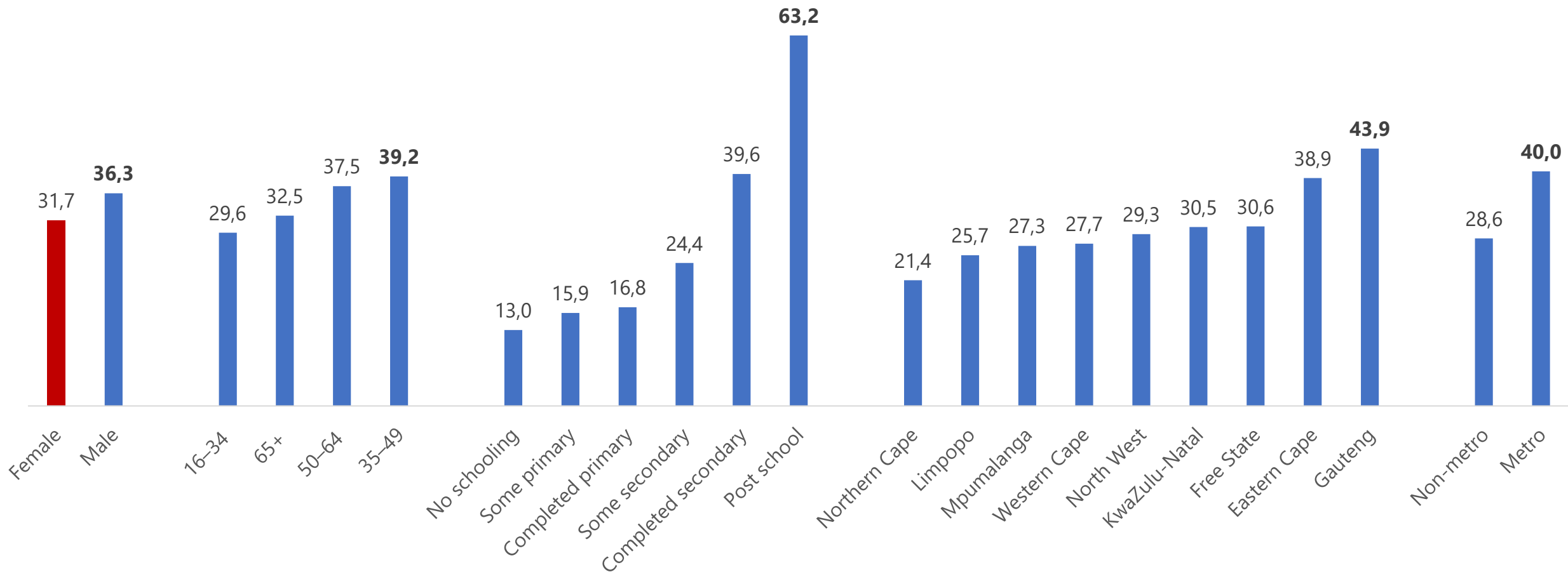
More than one-third **(33,9%)** of individuals 16 years and older knew about the NPA in 2024/25.

Percentage of people knows NPA and percentage distribution of their demographic characteristics, 2024/25



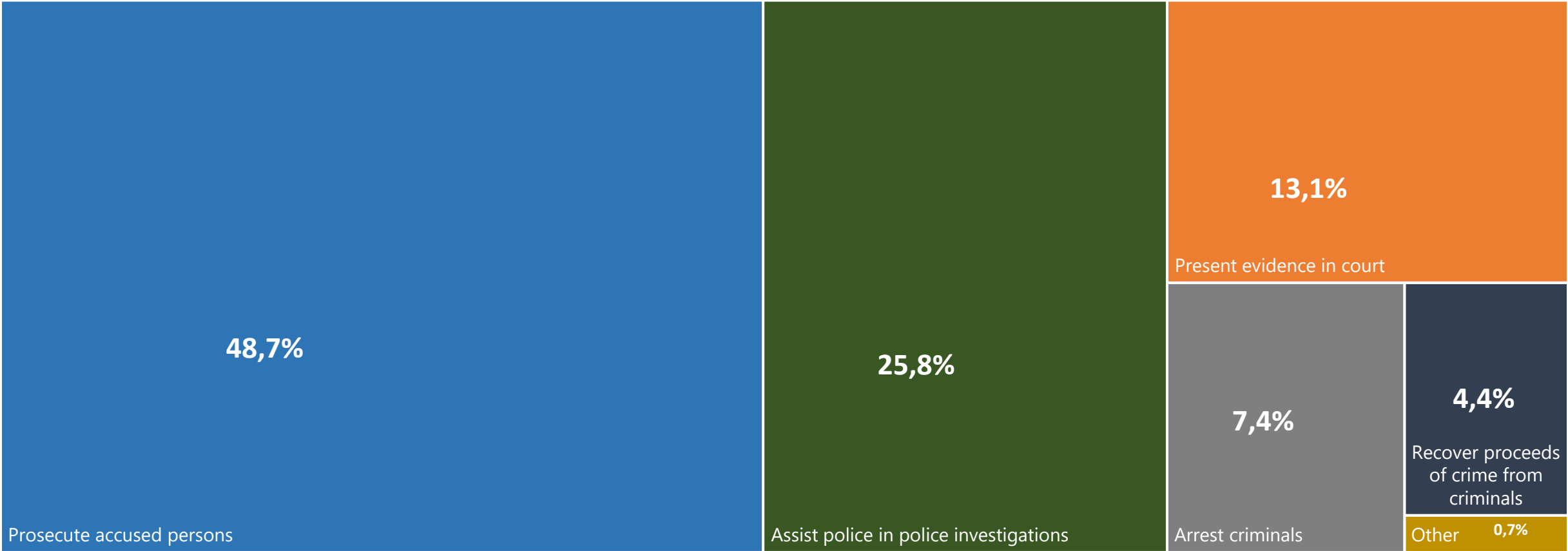
Gauteng (43,9%) had higher proportions of individuals who knew about the NPA compared to other provinces in 2024/25. More individuals with post school education and those aged 35 to 49 knew about the NPA.

Percentage of people knows NPA and percentage distribution of their demographic characteristics, 2024/25



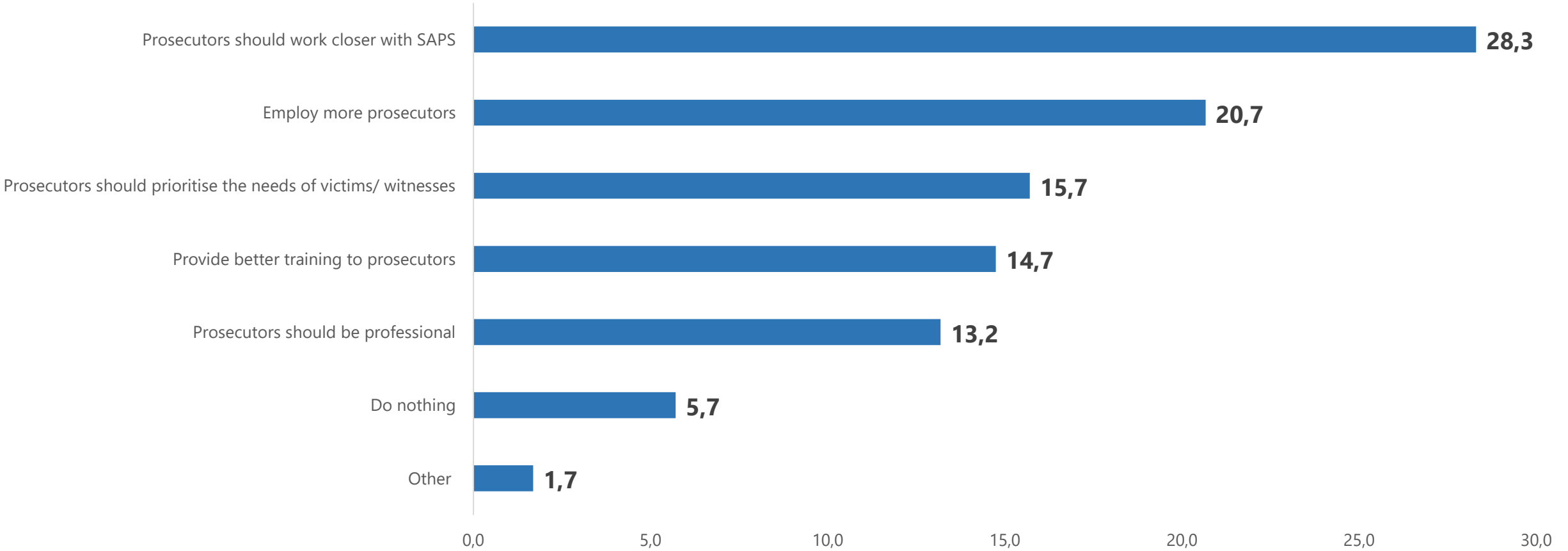
Almost **one-half (48,7%) of individuals** indicated that the main function of the NPA is to prosecute accused persons.

Main function of the NPA, 2024/25



The main thing that individuals 16 years and older indicated the NPA should do to improve their services was that prosecutors should work closer with SAPS **(28,3%)**. Only **5,7%** of respondents indicated that the NPA should do nothing.

Percentage of main thing the NPA should do to improve their services, 2024/25



Correctional services

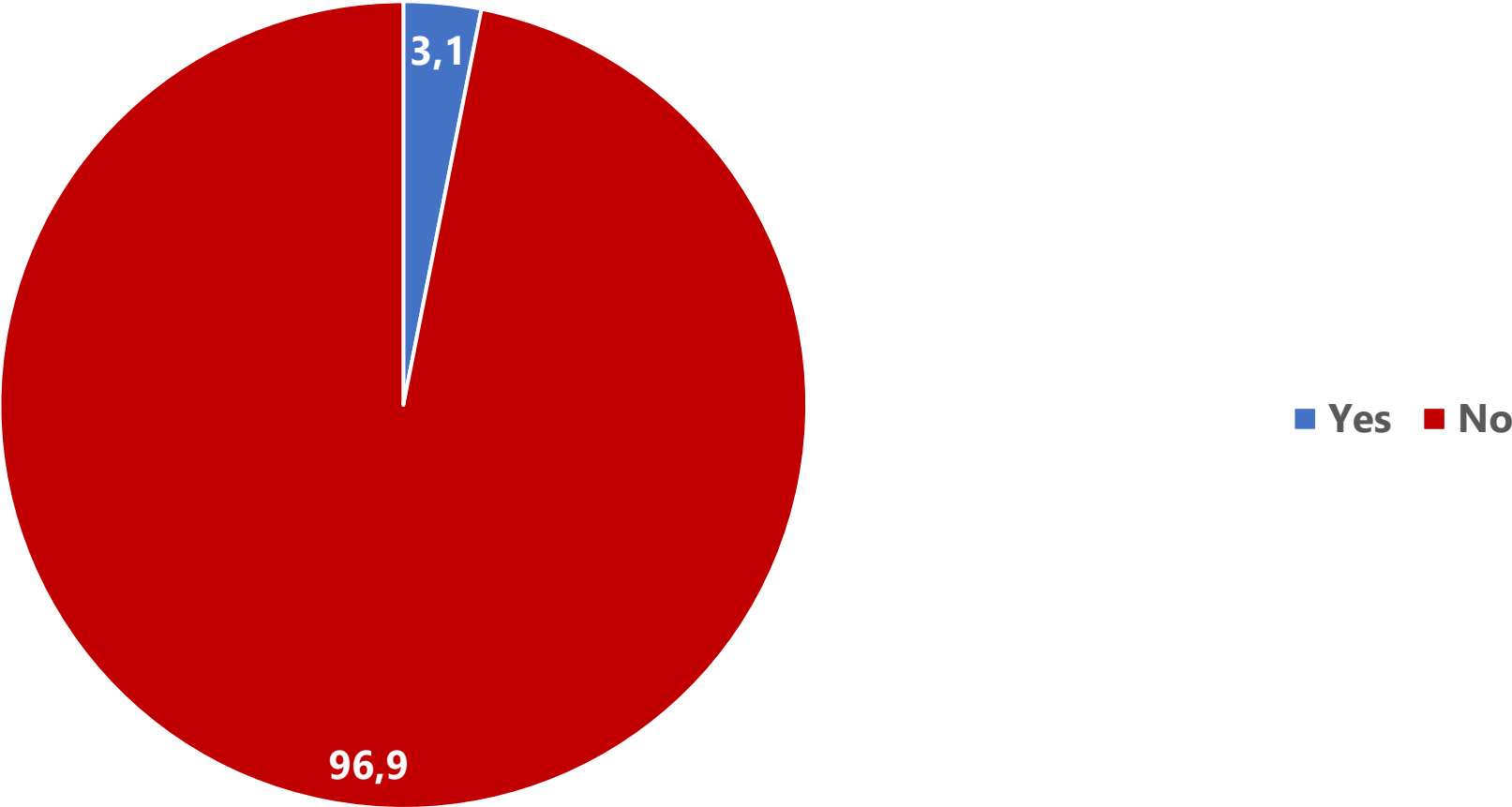
This section presents findings on households' experience and perceptions of the services provided by correctional services:

- ❖ Households that have been victims of crime where the perpetrator was imprisoned/ jailed
- ❖ Households' participation in the parole hearing
- ❖ Things households are comfortable to do with a former prisoner
- ❖ Satisfaction with services offered by the correctional services



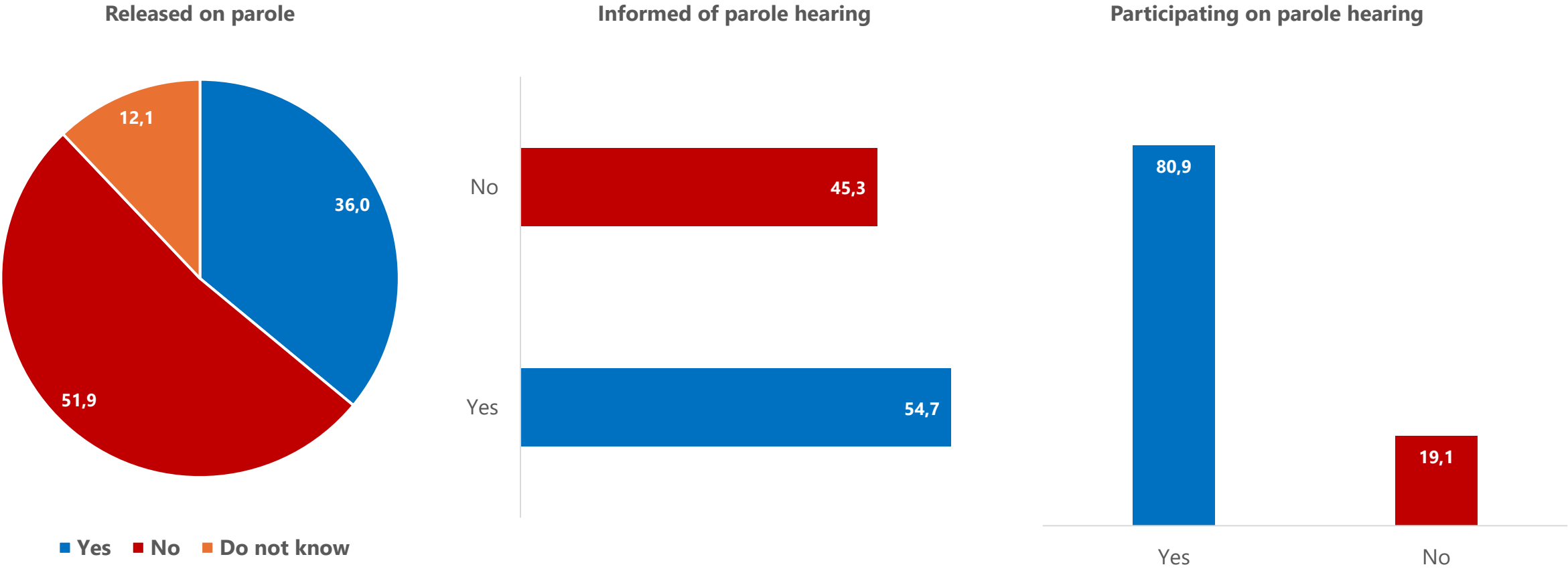
Only 3,1% of households have been victims of crime where the perpetrator was arrested and put in jail in 2024/25.

Percentage of households that have been victims of crime where the perpetrator was imprisoned/ jailed, 2024/25



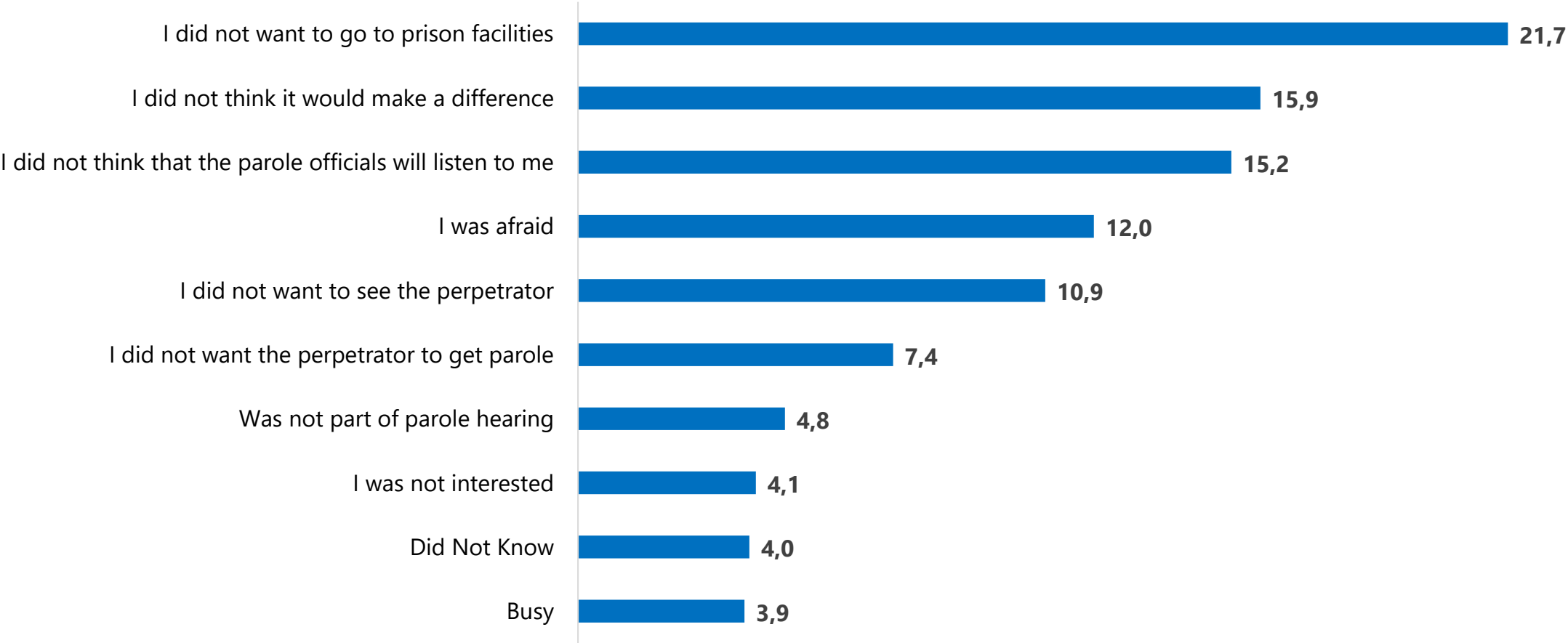
In 2024/25, **36%** of households indicated the accused were released on parole, about **54,7%** were informed of the parole hearing, and **80,9%** of victims participated in the parole hearing.

Percentage distribution of household's participation in the parole hearing, 2024/25



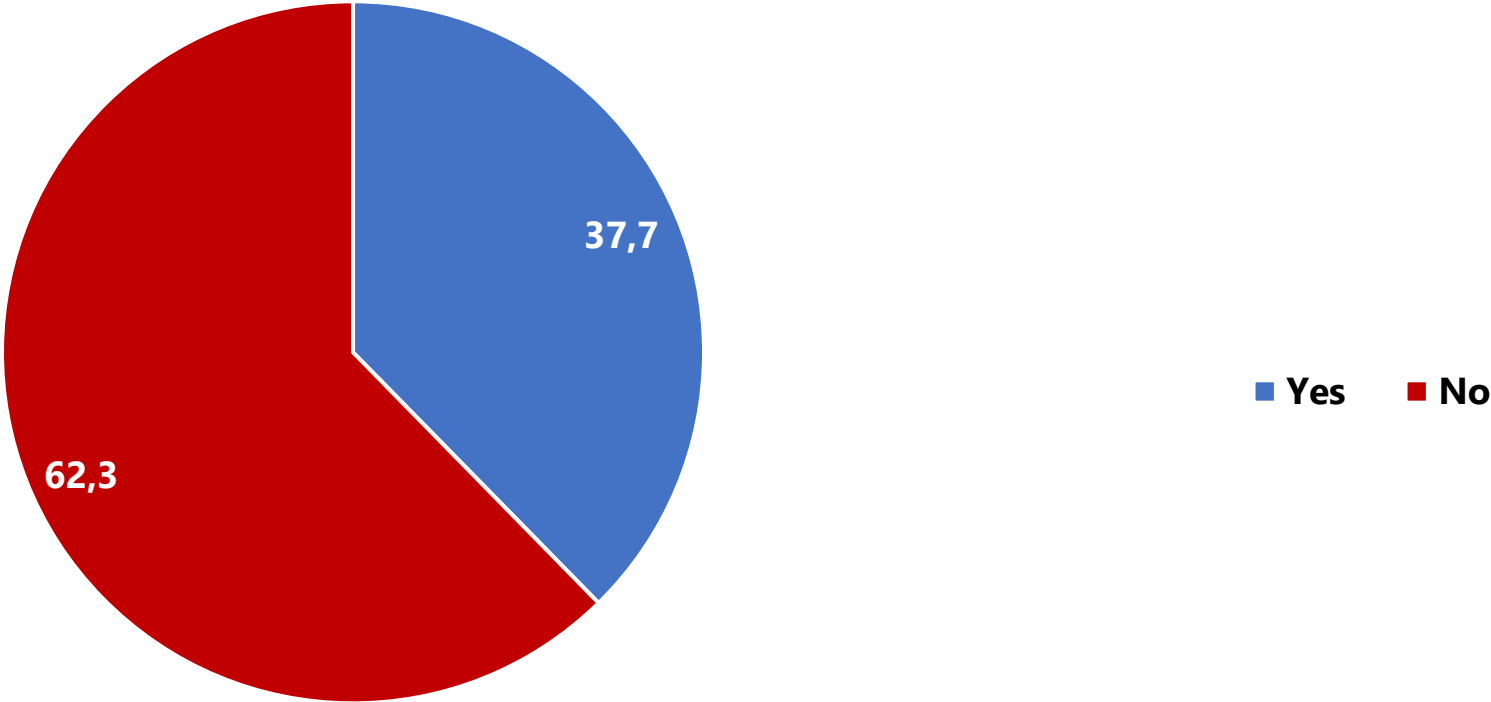
Reasons for not participating in parole hearings were most commonly because they did not want to go to prison facilities **(21,7%)**, and that they did not think it would make a difference **(15,9%)**.

Percentage distribution of reasons why households did not participate in the parole hearing, 2024/25



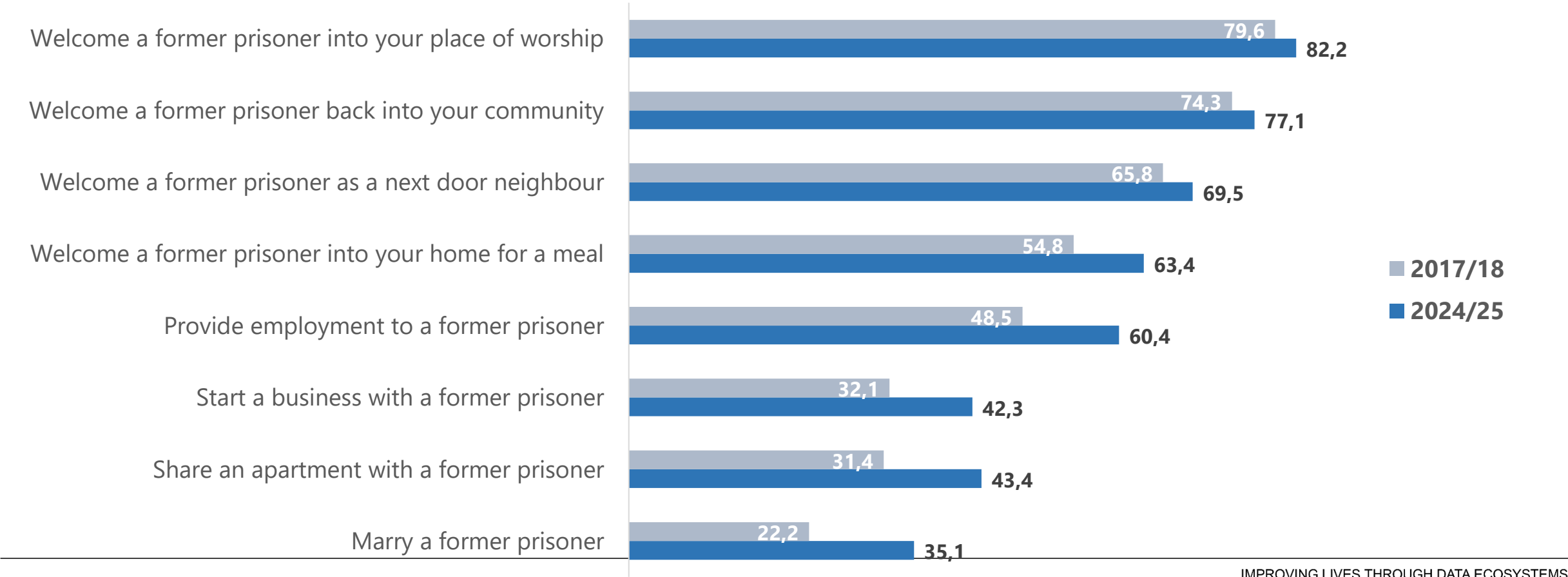
About **two-fifths (37,7%)** of household knew someone who is a former prisoner in 2024/25.

Knowledge of a former prisoner, 2024/25



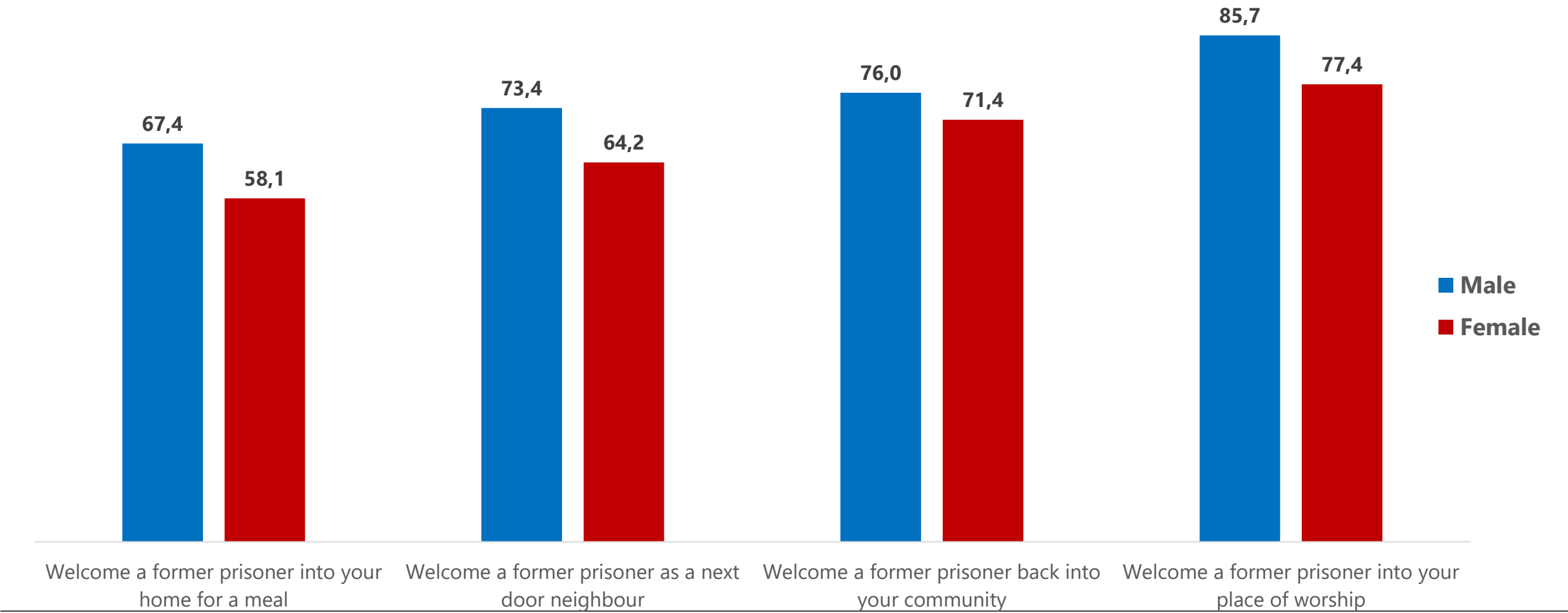
More households in 2024/25 **(82,2%)** were comfortable to welcome a former prisoner into their place of worship compared to 2017/18 **(79,6%)**.

Percentage distribution things households are comfortable to do with a former prisoner, 2017/18 and 2024/25



Male-headed households were more comfortable doing things with former prisoners than female-headed households.

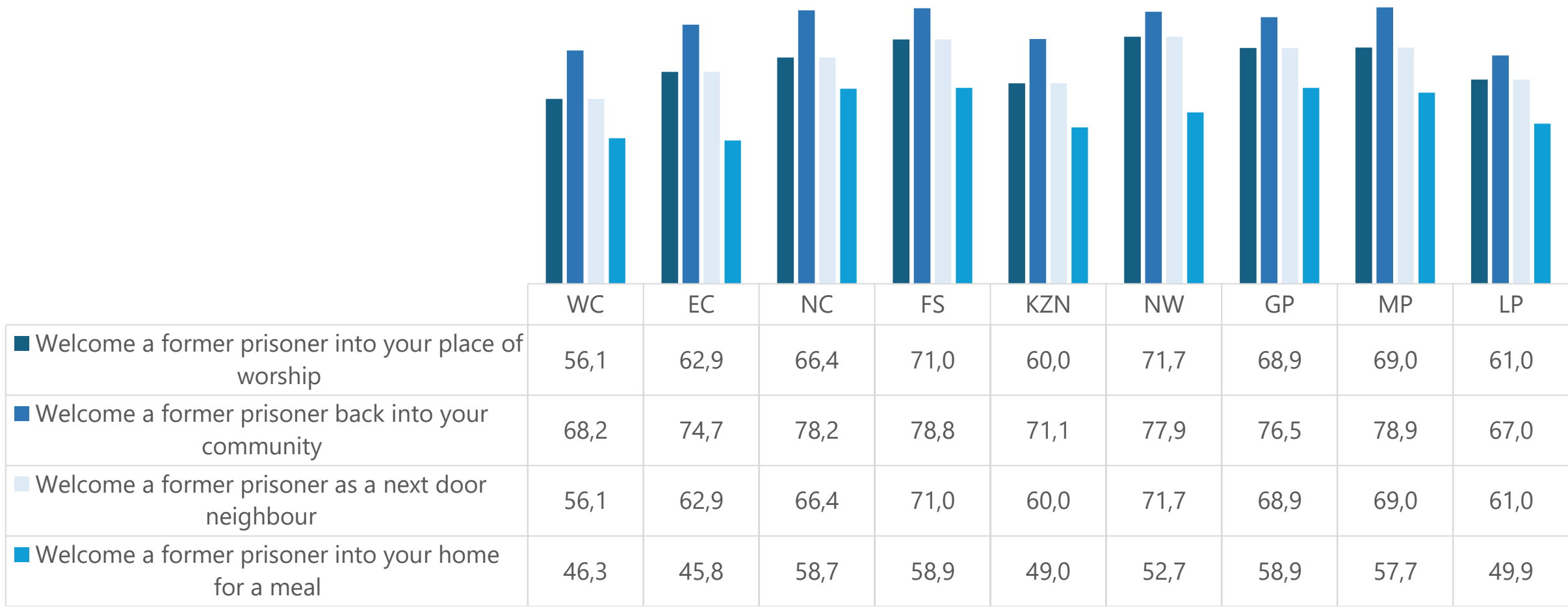
Percentage distribution things households are comfortable to do with a former prisoner by sex, 2024/25



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Almost **59%** of households in Gauteng and Free State were comfortable welcoming a former prisoner in their home for a meal in 2024/25.

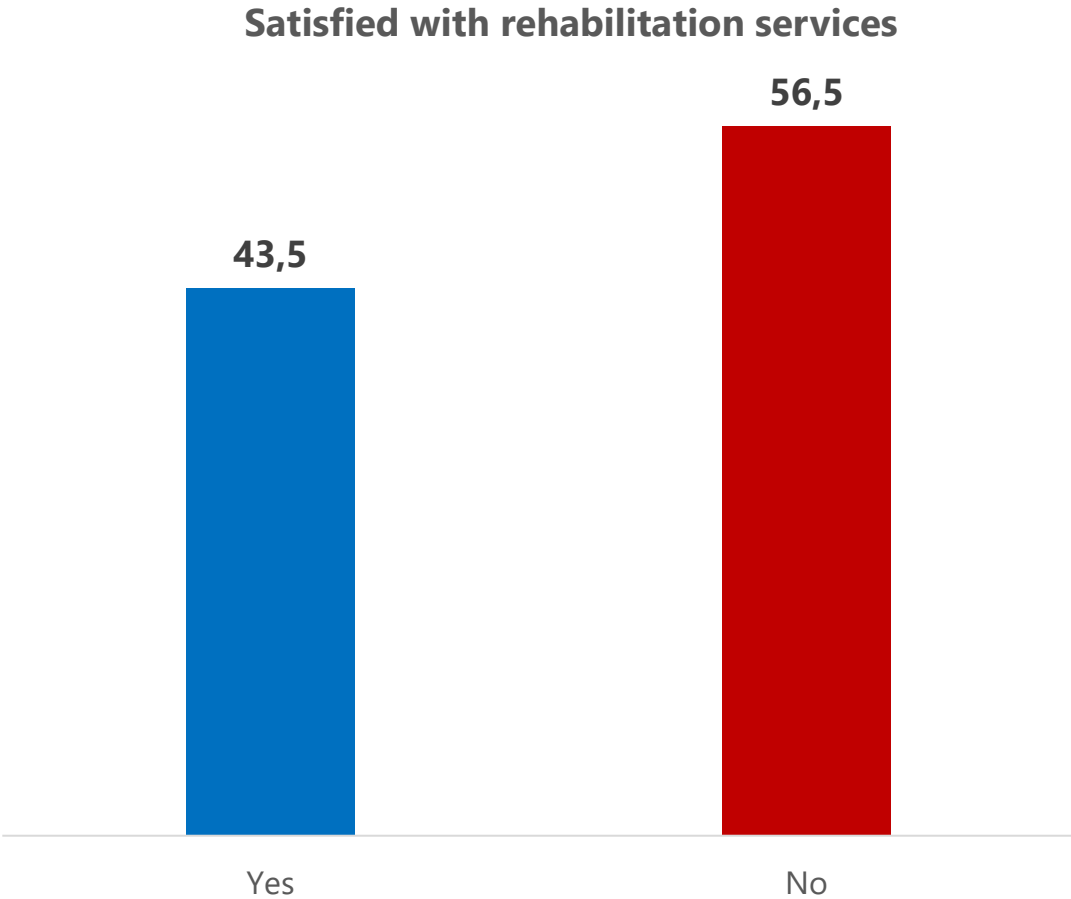
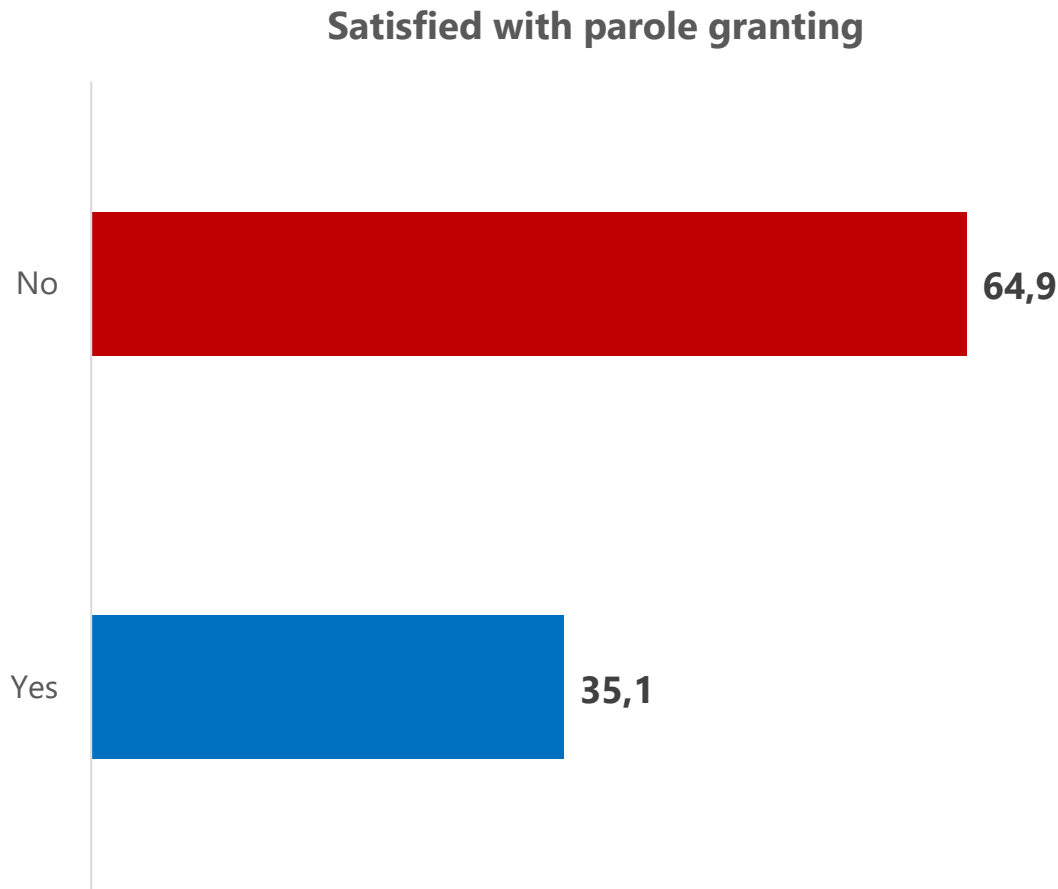
Percentage distribution things households are comfortable to do with a former prisoner by province, 2024/25



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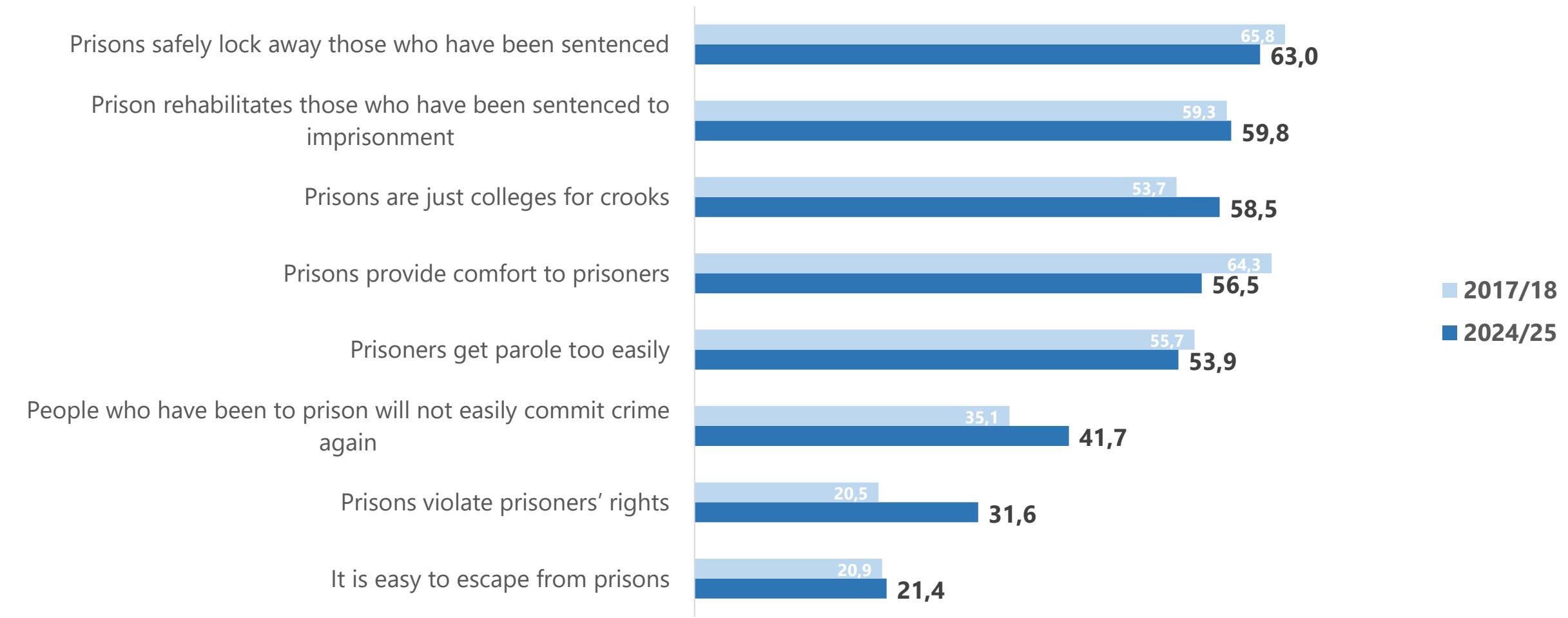
About **35%** of households was satisfied with the way correctional services granted parole to criminals and **43,5%** were satisfied with the way correctional services rehabilitate criminals.

Percentage distribution of satisfaction with correctional services with granting parole and rehabilitation services, 2024/25



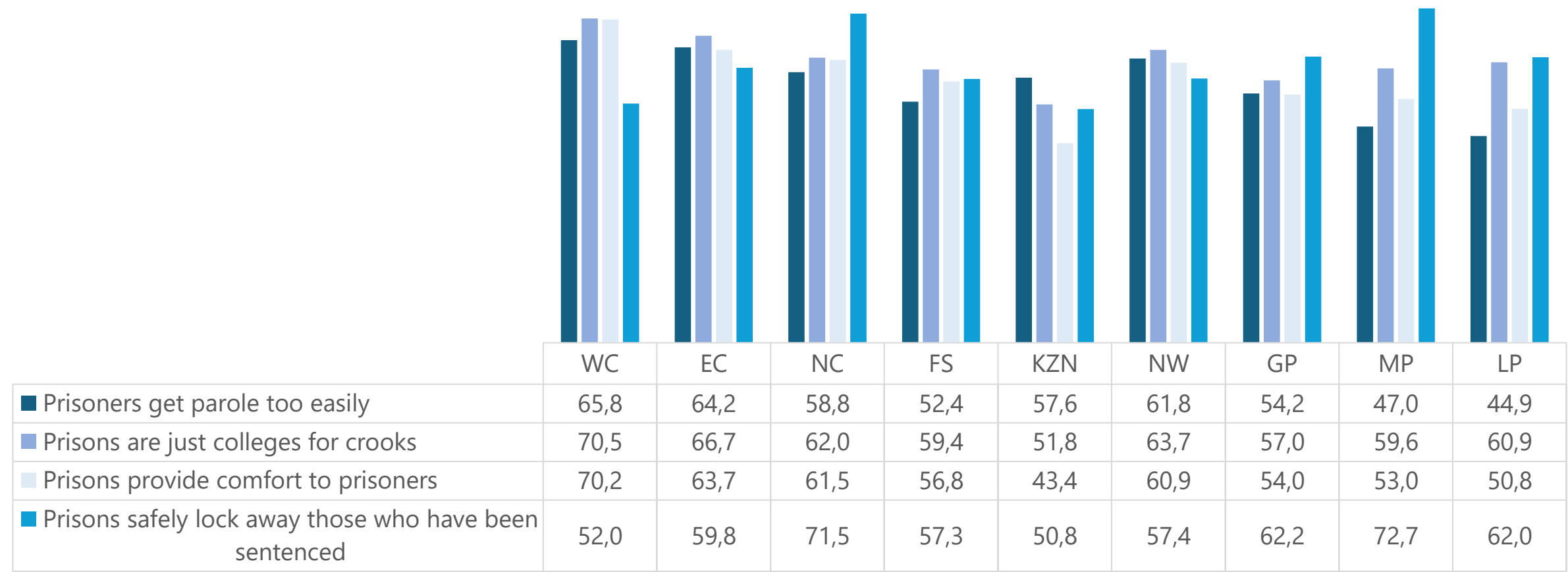
Majority of households **(63%)** agreed that prisons safely lock away those who have been sentenced in 2024/25 , this decreased from **65,8%** in 2017/18.

Household's level of agreement with certain statements, 2017/18 and 2024/25



About **73%** of households in Mpumalanga province agreed that Prisons safely lock away those who have been sentenced, followed by Northern Cape at **71,5%**. Almost **71%** of households in Western Cape believed that prisons are just colleges for crooks.

Percentage distribution of statements that households agree with by province, 2024/25



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Recap: GPSJS 2024/25

Household access and perception of Courts

01

- More than four-fifths of households knew the location of their nearest magistrate court in both reporting periods 2018/19 and 2024/25.
- In 2024/25, three-fifths of households (61,4%) took less than 30 minutes on average to get to their nearest magistrate court, this is a sharp increase of 23,9 percentage points from 2018/19.
- The main reason indicated for satisfaction with courts is that 'courts pass sentences appropriate to the crime' in the three-reporting periods.

Individual access and perception of Courts

02

- Males (4,7%) were more likely to have been to court in the 12 months preceding the survey compared to females (4,3%) in 2024/25.
- The main reason individuals 16 years and older stated for being to courts was to support a family member or a friend in both reporting periods, this decreased from 29,2% in 2018/19 to 23,0% in 2024/25.
- Gauteng (43,9%) had higher proportions of individuals who know about the NPA compared to other provinces in 2024/25.
- Almost one-half (48,7%) of individuals indicated that the main function of the NPA is to prosecute accused persons.

Correctional services

03

- Only 3,1% of households have been victims of crime where the perpetrator was arrested and put in jail in 2024/25. About two-fifths (37,7%) of household knew someone who is a former prisoner in 2024/25.
- More households in 2024/25 (82,2%) were comfortable to welcome a former prisoner into their place of worship compared to 2017/18 (79,6%).
- About 35% of households were satisfied with the way correctional services give parole to criminals and 43,5% are satisfied with the way correctional services rehabilitate criminals.

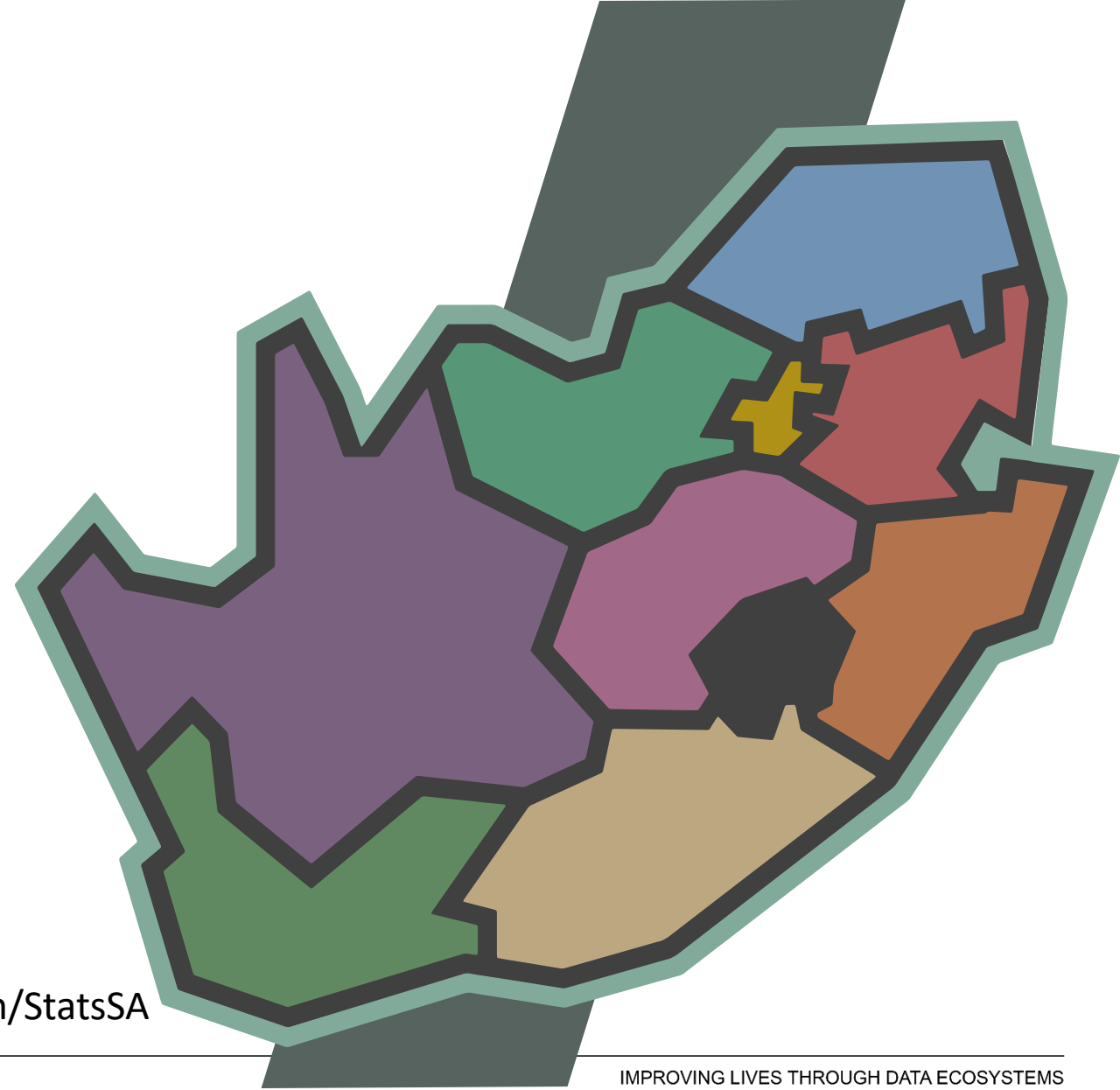


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