

**Public Legal Education and
Information Study**

Report to Justice Canada

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Multi-Audience Research
Ottawa, Toronto and Winnipeg**

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- Questionnaire (English and French)
- Multivariate Analysis Technical Note

Executive Summary

- ◆ Justice Canada commissioned COMPAS to conduct a survey among Canadians to explore their attitudes and behaviour with respect to legal information and assistance. A total of 1,502 interviews were completed by phone at the end of March. Based on a sample of this size, the national results could be considered to be accurate to within +/- 2.6%, 19 times out of 20 (most conservative estimate).

Contextual information

- ◆ Participants identified youth crime (17%) and tougher sentencing (11%) as the most important justice-related issues facing Canadians at this time. Also cited with some frequency were unfair treatment or perceptions of judicial prejudice (6%), the cost of the justice system (5%), and a lack of confidence in the system (5%).
- ◆ When asked to identify the most important justice-related issue facing them or their family at this time, 74% did not identify any issues (61% said there were no issues, while 13% did not provide a response). Small numbers (3% or less) identified youth crime, family law issues, human rights issues, native rights and discrimination.
- ◆ Canadians differ in their perceived knowledge of the justice system in Canada. That said, most see themselves as not very well informed in this area. Using a 7-point scale (1 = not knowledgeable at all; 7 = very knowledgeable), 72% offered middling scores (i.e. scores of 3-5), suggesting limited knowledge of the system. Relatively few (9%) consider themselves to be well informed about our laws and courts, while almost one-in-five view themselves as poorly informed (scores of 1-2) in this area.
- ◆ Confidence in the justice system also varies considerably. Using a similar 7-point scale, participants were asked to rate their level of confidence and trust in the justice system in Canada (1= no confidence at all; 7 = a great deal of confidence). While nearly half (46%) expressed confidence in the system (i.e. positive scores on the scale), they were much more likely to express moderate, not strong confidence. Almost one-third (32%) expressed a lack of confidence in the system, offering scores below the scale's mid-point. The remainder, 22%, were right in the middle.

Past Behaviour and Information Needs

- ◆ Just over half (52%) said they have never needed legal information or assistance for any reason, while 48% said they have. Among those who have needed legal



information or assistance, over half (57%) needed both. The rest were more likely to require information (27%) than assistance (16%).

- ◆ Participants who required legal assistance most often needed help with real estate transactions (22%) or separation, divorce or custody issues (21%). Similar numbers needed advice or counselling (20%) or representation in court (17%), while many also required assistance making a will (12%).
- ◆ Participants who required legal information most often needed information in the same two main areas: related to real estate transactions and separation, divorce, or custody issues (20% each). A significant number (17%) simply needed general information.
- ◆ 71% rated the legal information they received as useful (7-point scale: 1 = not useful at all; 7 = very useful), with over half (54%) describing it as very useful (scores of 6-7). At the other end of the spectrum, almost one-in-five (18%) rated the information as not very useful to them (offering scores below the scale's mid-point).
- ◆ By a wide margin, lawyers were the most common source of legal information or assistance. Two-thirds (67%) of those who needed legal information/assistance said they went to a lawyer to get it. This was followed, at a distance, by 16% who visited a legal aid office, many of whom likely also dealt with a lawyer for their needs. All other sources of information or assistance were identified by small numbers.
- ◆ Slightly more than three-quarters (77%) said they received all of the information or assistance they needed, while an additional 13% received part of what they needed. Ten percent did not receive what they needed.
- ◆ 75% of participants who have not previously needed legal information or assistance for themselves or their families said they knew where to go if they needed it. Conversely, 23% did not. Those who said they would know where to go for legal information or assistance were asked to specify where. Their responses mirrored those given by participants who had previously sought legal information/assistance. Almost three-quarters (72%) would go to a lawyer. This was followed, at a distance, by the Internet (13%), a legal aid office (11%), a friend or family member (10%), the Government of Canada (7%), and police or a police station (6%) (multiple responses accepted).



- ◆ All survey participants were asked whether they have ever needed legal information or assistance for any of the following situations for themselves or their families. Participants' personal experiences varied widely by subject area:
 - ✓ 53% needed information or assistance with a real estate transaction.
 - ✓ 38% required it for making a will.
 - ✓ 24% for a separation, divorce, child support or custody issues.
 - ✓ 14% for a criminal case of any type.
 - ✓ 11% for going to court for a civil case, such as collecting a debt or for an employment matter.
 - ✓ 7% for victims' rights.
 - ✓ 6% for family or domestic violence.
 - ✓ 5% for human rights issues.

One-quarter have not needed assistance or information for any of these.

Awareness and Interest in PLEI

- ◆ 76% said they were not aware of any organizations in their community that provide legal information and education (PLEI) to the public. Conversely, almost one-quarter (23%) said they were aware of such organizations. Among the latter, the types of organizations identified most often were legal aid clinics (28%) and community agencies (20%). Also identified with some frequency (7-10%) were schools/school boards, legal or law societies, municipal government, libraries, and police or police stations.
- ◆ 66% of people who claimed to be aware of organizations in their community that provide PLEI have never personally received this type of information or service. Conversely, one-third said they have.
- ◆ 82% of those who have received information or assistance from a PLEI provider in their community expressed satisfaction with the information or assistance received (7-point scale: 1 = very dissatisfied; 7 = very satisfied). Over half (59%) expressed *strong* satisfaction. Most of the rest were neutral, not negative.
- ◆ All participants were asked how interested they were in legal information to help them better understand how laws affect them and their families, and to help them deal effectively with the justice system in Canada. In response, over half (59%) expressed some measure of interest in PLEI, with 36% expressing strong interest. However, exactly one-quarter exhibited a clear lack of interest (i.e. scores below the neutral point), while a further 15% were neutral, also suggesting a lack of interest.



Information Needs

- ◆ When asked in an open-ended fashion what types of legal issues were most relevant to themselves and their family, either now or in the foreseeable future, participants tended to identify issues related to the domestic realm (i.e. the household). These included real estate (18%), making a will (16%), and family law (11%). All other issues were identified by 7% or less.
- ◆ Participants were asked to use a 7-point scale (1 = not useful at all; 7 = very useful) to assess the relevance to them or their family of different types of information, either now or in the foreseeable future. Not surprisingly, perceived usefulness varied by type of information:
 - ✓ 62% attributed relevance to employment law.
 - ✓ 60% to human rights and related issues.
 - ✓ 54% to victims' rights.
 - ✓ 51% to youth justice and sentencing issues.
 - ✓ 47% to family law issues, such as separation, divorce, child support and custody issues.
 - ✓ 46% to alternatives to courts, such as mediation or alternative dispute resolution.
 - ✓ 44% to alternative sentencing options, such as community service.
 - ✓ 42% to family or domestic violence.
- ◆ The Internet (33%) and lawyers (28%) were the two sources identified most often when participants were asked where they would prefer to obtain relevant legal information. These were followed at a distance by community agencies or centres (11%), libraries and books (10%), municipal governments (9%), and court buildings (7%).
- ◆ Asked to rate various locations in terms of their usefulness as places to obtain information to help them better understand the justice system and how law affects them (7-point scale: 1 = not a useful location at all; 7 = very useful location), participants offered the following assessments:
 - ✓ 83% attributed usefulness to agencies that serve new immigrants to Canada (asked to new Canadians only).
 - ✓ 79% to native friendship centres, bank councils or other Aboriginal groups (asked to Aboriginal Canadians only).
 - ✓ 63% to government organizations and offices.



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- ✓ 60% to youth groups or organizations (asked to youth only).
- ✓ 57% to legal aid clinics (asked only in Ontario and BC).
- ✓ 57% to community agencies or centres.
- ✓ 53% to schools and school boards.
- ✓ 53% to women's organizations and shelters (asked to women only)
- ✓ 51% to community radio or TV.
- ✓ 36% to community events, such as fairs or exhibits.
- ✓ 30% to non-governmental organizations, such as the Elizabeth Fry Society or the John Howard Society.
- ✓ 29% to church groups.

Related Attitudes

- ◆ The vast majority of participants (90%) think it is important that governments in Canada provide information to help people understand how laws affect them and enable them to participate effectively in the justice system (using 7-point scale: 1 = not important at all; 7 = very important). Moreover, 77% rated this as *very important* (i.e. scores of 6-7), with 59% offering the highest score possible.
- ◆ Despite widespread perceptions of the importance of PLEI, participants were divided when assessing government performance in this area. Using a similar 7-point scale, only one-third felt that governments in Canada are doing a good job in this area. At the other end of the spectrum, 38% provided negative assessments. One-quarter were neutral, while an additional 5% did not offer any assessment.
- ◆ Asked to use a 7-point scale to rate their understanding of the justice system in Canada, including how laws affect them, most offered scores in the middle of the range – 72% provided ratings of 3-5. Relatively few (13%) felt their level of knowledge was very good (scores of 6-7) or very poor (14% provides scores of 1-2).
- ◆ A majority of participants agreed with various statements about the justice system (7-point scale: 1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree), although the level of agreement varied
 - ✓ 84% agreed that in order to be responsible citizens, people need to understand how laws affect them and to be able to participate effectively in the justice system.
 - ✓ 79% that providing legal information and education can improve access to justice for those who traditionally have been at a disadvantage when dealing with the justice system, such as low-income Canadians, new immigrants, Aboriginal people or people with disabilities.



- ✓ 76% that informing Canadians about the laws that affect them strengthens public confidence and trust in the justice system.
- ✓ 66% that the justice system works well for people with money or education, but does not work very well for disadvantaged people.
- ✓ 60% that there is a high level of public distrust of the justice system in Canada.

Communications and Information Preferences

- ◆ Participants were asked to identify the form in which they would prefer to obtain public legal information so that it is most useful to them. People identified a range of different forms. However, two dominated – almost half (46%) prefer to obtain such information as print material or brochures, followed by just over one-third (37%) who identified the Internet or electronic information (multiple responses accepted). Also identified with some frequency were video/audio-visual material (16%) and personal contact (14%).

- ◆ Following this, participants were read a list of ways in which legal information and education could be provided to the public and were asked to rate the effectiveness of each method for themselves personally (7-point scale: 1 = not effective at all; 7 = very effective). A majority of participants viewed each of these methods as effective, but the size of the majority varied:
 - ✓ 81% attributed effectiveness to 1-800 help-lines, which people could call to obtain information about our laws and justice system.
 - ✓ 78% to the creation of libraries or resource centres to provide free access to legal information in different cities.
 - ✓ 78% to education programs in schools.
 - ✓ 76% to electronic information through the Internet.
 - ✓ 69% to print material, such as brochures.
 - ✓ 60% to seminars or workshops in their community targeted to specific groups, such as new Canadians or Aboriginal Canadians.
 - ✓ 58% to audio-visual materials, such as videos or audio tapes.
 - ✓ 58% to seminars or workshops in their community on specific legal issues.

- ◆ Participants were asked what the Government of Canada could do to improve the level of understanding that people have about the justice system in Canada, including how laws affect them. While people offered a variety of suggestions, the ideas provided tended to be general rather than specific. The suggestion offered most often was simply providing more information (27%). Following this, in declining order of frequency, were better education (13%), use of television (11%), easier



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access to resources (10%), simplifying the laws (8%), and offering seminars or lectures (6%).



Demographic Variations

- ◆ Aboriginal Canadians were more likely than others to need legal information or assistance, and to use legal aid offices to get it (and less likely to use lawyers). They expressed less confidence in the justice system, and routinely expressed higher levels of interest in the various types and sources of legal information, as well as the different potential methods to provide PLEI. Aboriginal Canadians also tended to be more aware of PLEI organizations in their community and to use them, and expressed more interest in legal information to better understand how laws affect them and their families.
- ◆ Differences in the views of new Canadians (people who have lived in Canada for five years or less) versus those of others were generally not pronounced. There were essentially no differences in the types of legal issues that were most relevant to respondents or their families. New Canadians were only slightly less likely to view themselves as knowledgeable about the justice system in Canada, and were more apt to express confidence and trust in the Canadian justice system. New Canadians were less apt to say they needed legal information/assistance with any of the specific areas explored in the survey, especially making a will, separation, divorce or custody issues, and a criminal case of any type. And new Canadians were more likely to rank as very useful information about employment law, alternative sentencing options, and human rights and related issues.
- ◆ Low-income Canadians (\$30,000 or less) were less likely to have needed legal information or assistance in the past. When in need, they were more likely to go to a legal aid office and less likely to use a lawyer. Low-income respondents were less likely to express satisfaction with the information/ assistance received, whether PLEI or otherwise. They expressed greater interest in legal information to better understand how laws affect them and their families. They were more apt to view all legal issues as relevant to them and their families, to attribute greater levels of usefulness to the various PLEI sources, and to view as effective the various methods of receiving PLEI.
- ◆ The youngest cohort (16-24 years old) was less likely than other age groups to need legal information or assistance and less likely to go to a lawyer to get it. They expressed more confidence in the justice system, and were more likely to rate as useful schools/school boards (and less likely to view NGOs and community agencies/centres as useful). They were more apt to rate education programs in schools as an effective method of providing PLEI. Youth were the least aware of



PLEI organizations in their community, but were proportionately more likely to have received information from such organizations.

- ◆ Men were slightly more likely to have needed legal information or assistance in the past. To varying degrees, women were more likely to have required it for separation, divorce or custody issues, making a will, and with real estate transactions. Men were more apt to need legal representation in court and general advice or counseling. Men and women expressed similar levels of awareness of PLEI providers in their communities. Women were slightly more apt to have used PLEI (no difference in satisfaction levels), and to express greater interest in it. Women were more likely to view the various types and sources of PLEI as very useful, and to rate as very effective the different methods in which it can be provided.
- ◆ Respondents with university education tended to express higher levels of confidence in the justice system. They also expressed higher levels of awareness of organizations that provide PLEI and were more satisfied with the information or service received. They were more likely to express strong interest in legal information to better understand how the laws affect them and their families. They were more likely to view their understanding of the justice system as very good, and were less apt to view the various methods of providing PLEI as useful. Respondents with high school education were less apt to have received PLEI, were more likely to view all types of legal information as useful, and were more likely to view schools and school boards as a useful source of legal information.
- ◆ Quebecers were less likely to have needed legal information or assistance in the past. They also tended to attribute greater usefulness to the various sources of information about the justice system. Residents of Quebec and BC expressed more interest in legal information to better understand how laws affect them and their families. They were also more likely to view the various types of legal information as very useful. Residents of Quebec and the Prairies expressed less confidence in the justice system. BC residents were more aware of organizations that provide PLEI and were more likely to use them.

Multivariate Analysis

- ◆ Numerous multivariate analyses were performed to better understand the needs, orientations and perceptions of Canadians with respect to PLEI. Models that focus on the organizational and media/format delivery of PLEI are much more powerful than models explaining more general perspectives on PLEI. What this means is that



Canadians appear to have fairly structured systems or frameworks for viewing and thinking about PLEI delivery. Their assessments of the details of information dispersal are well embedded in a variety of demographic and experiential drivers. More general opinions, interests and evaluations concerning PLEI are not as distinctly embedded in drivers that reflect personal characteristics and experience.

- ◆ When we look at the performance of specific drivers across the models, there are some striking consistencies. Some of the most noteworthy ones are:
 - ✓ In every final model, gender has a significant impact. Women consistently show more interest in PLEI, attribute more importance to PLEI, have more positive evaluations of government performance regarding PLEI, and have higher acceptance of a variety of PLEI delivery organizations and media. So, it appears that women may be well served by existing activities in this area, but probably have an appetite for additional PLEI activity.
 - ✓ In all but one of the models, there was a negative income effect. Higher income people tend to place less value on PLEI, and to have lower evaluations of and to not favor a wide variety of organizations and media forms for PLEI delivery. This may be related to tax issues, in which high-income people are not interested in expanding the delivery of services because this may ultimately have indirect tax pressure implications. At the other end of the spectrum, it may well be that lower income people are more concerned with finding alternative sources of information outside of conventional fee-for-service legal services arrangements.
 - ✓ The disabled are associated with three negative effects. They stand out as a segment of the population that has a low evaluation of government PLEI performance, and low evaluations of the usefulness of a variety of delivery organizations and media. This is clearly one group that may need further consideration to determine modes of delivery and information dispersal that would be more applicable for them. Other groups, such as new Canadians and visible minorities, are less likely to have significant effects, but, when they do, they tend to indicate a positive disposition towards PLEI and towards its delivery through conventional mechanisms. Aboriginal people run somewhat counter to this pattern, but not as strongly as the disabled.
 - ✓ Interestingly, past use of legal information/assistance tends to have a negative, albeit not dominant, influence in most models. The exception to this seems to be previous use of information/assistance in the area of human rights. There are various possible interpretations. It may mean that people who have had experience with basic fee-for-service legal services were generally satisfied and don't have elaborate needs beyond that. It may also suggest that more positive orientations toward PLEI rely on an interest in some of the more activist and topical areas of the law. It might also indicate a basic skepticism about PLEI



providing more quality than that associated with earlier negative legal experiences.

- ✓ Alternatively, ratings of future needs for information in various areas of law, as opposed to past use, tend to have positive influences in most models. This may mean that current and future needs might be defined more expansively than past usage of legal assistance/information would suggest. It may mean that there are segments of the population with an interest in legal policy issues above and beyond the ones connected with basic property and estate transactions.
- ✓ Not surprisingly, indicators of interest in PLEI and self-evaluations of knowledge about the justice system are often major drivers in models.
- ✓ Finally, it should be noted that age did not have a significant impact in any of the models. It is fairly certain that age is not one of the more important drivers of PLEI perceptions, evaluations and delivery preferences.

Conclusions and Implications

The findings point to a population that is largely “unengaged” in justice issues, on both a personal level and in their role as citizens or residents of Canada. Not only are almost three-quarters of survey respondents unable or unwilling to identify any justice issues of relevance to them or their family at this time, one-third do not identify any issues of importance to Canadians as a whole. As well, the issues that were identified tend to reflect the substance and tone of justice-related coverage that appears with some regularity in newspapers – youth crime, the need for tougher sentencing, and perceptions of unfair treatment or bias in the courts, which is linked to a lack of confidence or trust in the justice system.

In terms of understanding or knowledge of the justice system in Canada, few see themselves as being well informed. Most characterize their level of knowledge of the justice system, including how laws affect them and their family, as moderate-to-low.

While almost half the surveyed population have needed legal information or assistance in the past (most of whom were in need of both), that assistance has tended to focus on “domestic” issues, such as real estate transactions, making a will or family law issues (divorce, separation, custody, etc.). Relatively few have needed legal support in other areas. In short, the breadth or scope of the legal requirement has tended to be relatively narrow for most people.

In terms of who they turn to when in need of legal support, the vast majority go to lawyers, followed at a distance by legal aid offices (also lawyers). The same is true for people who have not yet needed legal assistance (i.e. most would go to lawyers or



legal aid). And when people do use lawyers, most are largely satisfied with what they receive, and get all or almost all of what they need.

In essence, people almost exclusively link the need for legal information and/or assistance with the traditional gatekeepers of the justice system -- lawyers. This suggests the need to expand people's perspective or horizon in terms of how they view the justice system in Canada. Otherwise, most will simply not look for or consider other organizations that provide legal information, such as PLEI providers, since these are not even on their 'radar screen'.

When the focus is directly on PLEI – sources, types, and formats or media – we find low awareness and mixed levels of interest. Less than a quarter were aware of organizations in their community that provide PLEI (and the organization that tops the list is, again, legal aid clinics), and fewer have received information or service from a PLEI provider – only 8% of the full sample, many of whom received PLEI from a legal aid office. Other than community agencies in general, no other organizations were identified with any frequency (schools were cited, but mostly by youth).

Interest in PLEI, including sources, types and formats, varies considerably across the different demographic groups. As such, some of the most useful, actionable information in this survey lies in the subgroup and multivariate analyses. These provide guidance in terms of who is interested in what, from whom, and in what form.

The findings indicate that organizations that service specific groups, such as new Canadians, Aboriginal Canadians, youth or women, generally rate higher among the target populations they serve than other potential PLEI providers. Despite this, the multivariate analysis indicates that the target populations still view as useful some of the more "generic" types of organizations. That said, funneling PLEI through audience-specific organizations does appear to be an effective method to get PLEI to those who need it. Some potential providers rate poorly in terms of perceived utility, including church groups, NGOs and community events.

In terms of the potential subject areas for PLEI information, interest levels varied considerably. While the same was true for the methods or formats that could be used to distribute PLEI, each of these was rated positively by 60% or more. Clearly, all of the delivery methods appealed to Canadians. Heading the list was 1-800 help lines. This suggests a desire for customized information that suits people's specific needs or circumstances, something that could be obtained, at least in some measure, through real-time access to a person who could answer questions and direct people to resources best suited to their needs. There was also strong interest in the creation of



library resource centres, education programs in school, and electronic information through the Internet. The use of audio-video aids was also suggested.

While Canadians attribute a significant degree of importance to the provision of PLEI (virtually a consensus), most offer moderate-to-poor grades to governments in Canada for their performance in this area. Given people's limited awareness and knowledge of PLEI-related issues, one suspects that such assessments are not well grounded, but are rather based on perceptions of a population, including themselves, that is not well informed about the laws in Canada, including how they affect them/their families, or issues related to accessing the justice system.

From the attitudinal measures included in the survey, it is clear that people make a link between the availability/provision of PLEI and the accessibility of the justice system to Canadians, including disadvantaged Canadians. They also draw a link between an informed public and increased confidence and trust in the system. With respect to the latter, it was evident from the data that the population is quite divided in terms of their level of confidence in the justice system (although most are somewhere in the middle, expressing neither strong confidence nor distrust).

Taken together, the results paint a portrait of a Canadian population that does not tend to see justice issues as directly related to them or their family, other than for "domestic" matters, that tends to use traditional service providers (lawyers) for their legal needs when they arise, has low awareness and knowledge of PLEI, expresses mixed levels of interest in PLEI, attributes significant importance to it, and views PLEI as important in terms of facilitating access to the justice system, and perhaps even increasing confidence in it.

In terms of the detailed analyses that were performed on the data, these suggest that special analytical attention probably needs to be devoted to groups such as the disabled in order to determine what special or unique needs they have in the area of legal information/service delivery. The consistently lower PLEI orientation of men also deserves further reflection and may provide a potential growth area if properly understood. In addition, the income effect could bear further exploration in order to determine if it is essentially a reflection of tax apprehension. Finally, it may be of some use to consider if those who are particularly positively oriented towards PLEI are primarily interested in the more policy-oriented areas of law rather than the day-to-day transaction aspects of law and legal services. If this is the case, it could either suggest a way of clarifying the mission of PLEI agencies, or it could suggest ways of expanding the focus of such activities to include more common and established legal information needs.



Looking at the responses of different segments of the population, we see that women, visible minorities and new Canadians are more likely than others to rate as useful the various delivery agencies. This does not mean that these groups would not want special agencies focused on them. However, it does mean that they would find a variety of conventional agencies, other than those specially focused on them, to be useful.

Alternatively, Aboriginals and disabled people tend to rate the usefulness of the delivery agencies lower than others. In the case of Aboriginals, this probably means that they would prefer agencies specifically focused on them. It is also likely that the disabled would prefer special delivery agencies for their group. In any case, these findings and interpretations make some sense in light of the special arrangements that have been made for natives in the justice system already and in terms of the geographic concentration of Aboriginal populations. Respecting the disabled, the whole question of access issues probably drives the results here.

Respecting demographic and socio-economic effects, we see a negative income effect – the higher the income, the less ‘positive’ the assessment of PLEI-related issues (e.g. sources, types, forms). As noted elsewhere, this may be related to tax apprehensions. An aspect of the socio-economic effects that is unexpected is that there is also a negative impact by level of education. This is not common in multivariate models. It may be that the more highly educated think that they can gain whatever information/service they need from distribution methods outside the realm of social or governmental agencies. They may be looking for modes of delivery that are not mediated by direct contact with organizations. For example, the highly literate and educated could probably make do with access to printed material and Internet access not connected to specific types of organizations.

Finally, we see an impact related to household size. The positive nature of this suggests that the higher the number of people in a household, the wider the variety of needs for information and the greater the general rating of usefulness for a variety of delivery organization types.

There is a general absence of age as an important factor in terms of attitudes related to PLEI. There do not appear to be continuous variations across generations in perceptions of the way PLEI should be delivered. There may be more discrete or "chunky" generational or differences, but there is no clear impact arising from the whole age spectrum, including a specific focus on youth.



Introduction

Justice Canada commissioned COMPAS to conduct a survey among Canadians to explore their attitudes and behaviour with respect to legal information and assistance.

Background and Objectives

Justice Canada currently undertakes a variety of public legal education and information activities in support of its mandate. This includes:

- ❑ Annual funding to one organization in each province to undertake public legal education and information (PLEI) activities in areas of priority for that province.
- ❑ Providing grants to a variety of PLEI organizations and other NGOs to undertake specific PLEI projects.
- ❑ Funding to organizations through special initiatives programs to provide PLEI information and services in support of the program initiative objective.

PLEI activities include printed material, workshops, face-to-face information exchange, school programs, and web-based information.

PLEI is aimed at:

- ❑ People working within the legal system (police, court workers, etc.) to help these professionals gain a better understanding of people's needs when accessing the justice system (e.g. accessibility needs for people with disabilities, victims needs, cultural diversity issues). (This audience is not included in this present research).
- ❑ The general public, with specific emphasis on those most in need (e.g. low-income, new immigrants/refugees, aboriginal people, other minority groups).

The purpose of this study is to provide Justice Canada with information on the public's views, understanding, need and desire for public legal information and education, their awareness of and views about PLEI programs across the country, and their opinions about the role of the government in providing Canadians with legal information and education.

Specifically, some of the issues that Justice Canada wanted to explore include:

- ❑ Is the public aware of PLEI programs in their communities?



- ❑ Do people know where to get PLEI information?
- ❑ How do people prefer to receive legal information, and from whom?
- ❑ What legal issues are most relevant to them, and what kind of information is most useful?
- ❑ What role, if any, do they see as appropriate for the federal government to play in relation to PLEI?

This included a focus on youth issues as they relate to PLEI programs, information and needs.

To date, Justice Canada has met with service providers to get their views on the needs, uses and gaps in PLEI programs across the country. There was broad consensus that, increasingly, there is a need for PLEI organizations to provide their clients with justice-related information and to help them access the justice system. Very little investigation, however, has been done with the direct users of the information – members of the public – with respect to their awareness of PLEI programs, their specific information needs or concerns, and their views about the role of the federal government in terms of providing or supporting the provision of legal information and education to the public.

For these reasons, Justice Canada wanted to undertake a national survey to address these issues. The results will be used to inform the Department's work on a "vision paper" that will include recommendations on the federal government's role in relation to PLEI, as well as how to strengthen the role of PLEI programs in Canada.

Research Design

To address the research objectives and information needs identified above, a survey of Canadians was undertaken by COMPAS. A total of 1,502 interviews were completed by phone at the end of March. Based on a sample of this size, the national results could be considered to be accurate to within +/- 2.6%, 19 times out of 20 (most conservative estimate).

The following specifications applied to this project:

- ❑ The survey averaged 21 minutes in length.
- ❑ Oversampling was undertaken to provide for 160-250 completed interviews with each of the following groups:
 - Youth (aged 16-24) (N= 278)
 - Aboriginal Canadians (N= 212)



- Recent immigrants (arrived in Canada within the past five years) (n= 161, 115 of whom have lived in Canada for three years or less).

To achieve this oversampling, targeted sample was used once random calling yielded approximately 1,000 completed interviews. Parents of youth 16-17 years of age were asked to provide consent before the youth would be interviewed.

- Regional quotas were used for the general sample to ensure that the results are proportionate to the Canadian population by region.
- The final data was weighted by region and age to maximize the extent to which the results are representative of the Canadian population as a whole.
- Only one version of the questionnaire was used. It was developed in close consultation with Justice Canada and addressed the issues identified above.
- Standard industry screening applied (i.e. media, market research, etc.).
- A pre-test was conducted in both official languages (15 in English, 15 in French).
- The calls were conducted during evenings and weekends, using VOXCO's "Interviewer" CATI technology.
- We conducted up to eight call-back attempts per sample record.
- All research activities were conducted according to CAMRO and PMRS standards (the industry and professional associations).
- The survey was registered with the Canadian Survey Research Council.
- Sponsorship of the study was not revealed (i.e. Justice Canada).

Appended to this report are copies of the questionnaire in both official languages, as well as the Multivariate Analysis Technical Note.



Contextual Information

In order to provide some context to the issues explored in this survey, participants were asked a number of background questions regarding justice-related issues and the justice system in Canada.

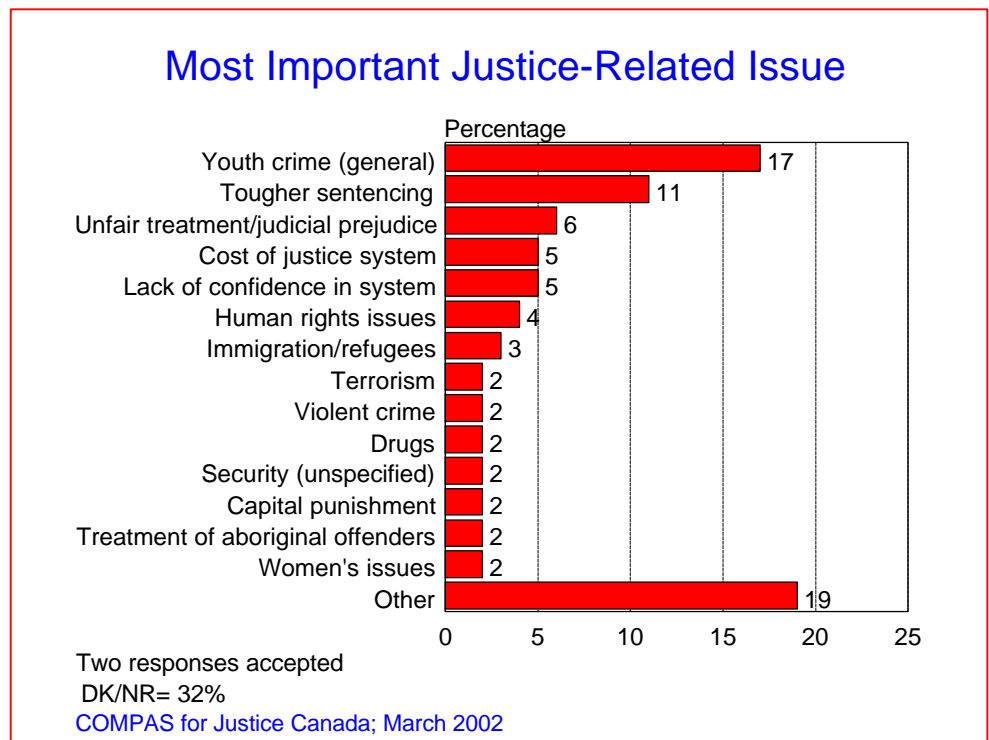
Youth Crime, Tougher Sentencing Top List of Justice Issues

Participants were asked to identify what they thought were the most important issues in the justice system, including our laws and courts, facing Canadians at this time. While a broad range of issues were identified, only two were cited with any real frequency. Heading the list was youth crime (17%), followed by tougher sentencing (11%) (two responses accepted).

Also receiving attention were unfair treatment and perceptions of judicial prejudice (6%), the cost of the justice system (5%), and a lack of confidence in it (5%).

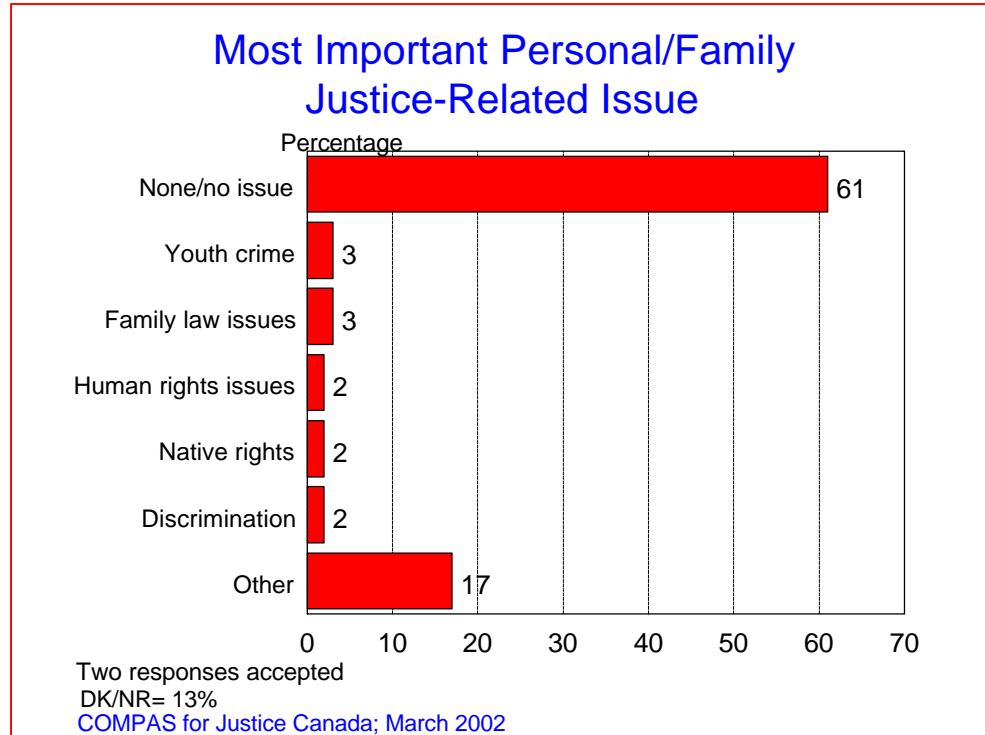
A host of issues were identified by small numbers (4% or less), including human rights issues, immigration and refugees, terrorism, violent crime, drugs, personal security in general, capital punishment, treatment of aboriginal offenders, and women's issues. Included in the 'other' category are perceptions of a rise in the crime rate, alternative sentencing options, the need for more police, a lack of information about the law, domestic violence, pornography, overcrowded prisons, drunk driving, access to legal aid, and gun control.

Note that one-third of participants (32%) did not provide an answer to this question.



Few Identify Legal Issues of Direct Relevance to Them & Their Families

Shifting the focus to a more personal level, participants were asked to identify the most important justice-related issue facing them or their families at this time. In response, nearly three-quarters did not identify any issues: 61% said there were no such issues facing them or their families, while a further 13% did not provide a response.



All issues were identified by small numbers. These included youth crime, family law issues, human rights issues, native rights, and discrimination. Included in the 'other' category are concern about family safety, concerns about theft or robbery, violent crime, spousal abuse, sex crimes, drugs, tax-related issues, gun laws, immigration issues, and the slowness of the judicial process.

Moderate-to-Low Knowledge of Canadian Justice System

Canadians differ in their perceived knowledge of the justice system in Canada. That said, most see themselves as not very well informed in this area. Using a 7-point scale (1 = not knowledgeable at all; 7 = very knowledgeable), almost three-quarters (72%) offered middling scores (i.e. scores of 3-5), suggesting quite limited knowledge of the system. Relatively few (9%) consider themselves to be well

informed about our laws and courts, while almost one-in-five view themselves as poorly informed (scores of 1-2) in this area. Looked at another way, one-third provided positive scores on the scale. However, most of these offered the lowest score above the neutral point on the scale.

Overall, these results translate into moderate-to-low levels of knowledge on the part of Canadians, at least in their own minds, of the justice system in Canada.

People were responding to the following question:

Overall, how well informed do you consider yourself to be about the justice system in Canada, including our laws and courts? Please use a 7-point scale, where 1 means you are not knowledgeable at all about this, and 7 means very knowledgeable.



Confidence in Justice System Varies, Most Express Moderate Confidence

Confidence in the justice system also varies considerably. Using a similar 7-point scale, participants were asked to rate their level of confidence and trust in the justice system in Canada (1= no confidence at all; 7 = a great deal of confidence). While nearly half (46%) expressed confidence in the system (i.e. positive scores on the scale), they were much more likely to express moderate, not strong confidence. Almost one-third (32%) expressed a lack of confidence in the system, offering scores below the mid-point on the scale. The remainder, slightly less than one-quarter (22%), were right in the middle.



Almost one-third (32%) expressed a lack of confidence in the system, offering scores below the mid-point on the scale. The remainder, slightly less than one-quarter (22%), were right in the middle.

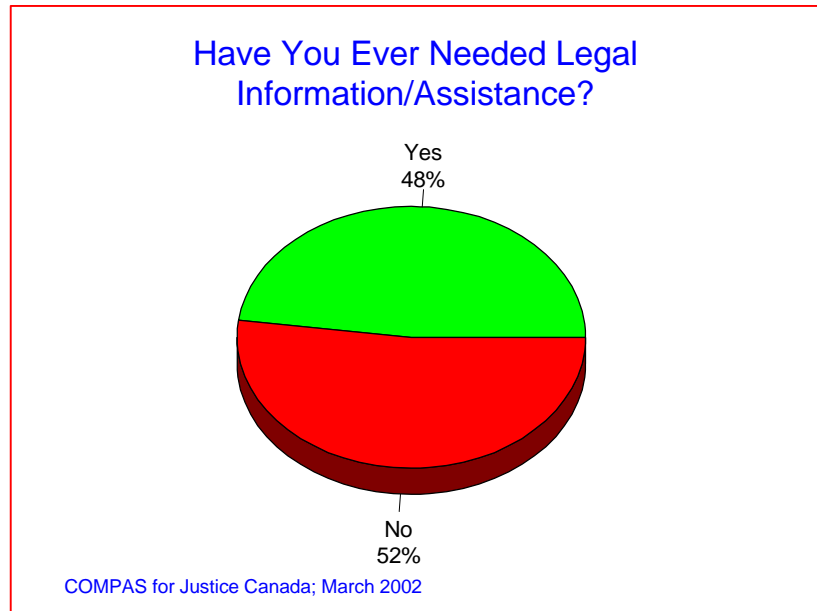
Taken together, the findings point to a population that, for the most part, has moderate levels of confidence in the Canadian justice system, although a significant minority clearly lacks confidence in the system.

Past Behaviour And Information Needs

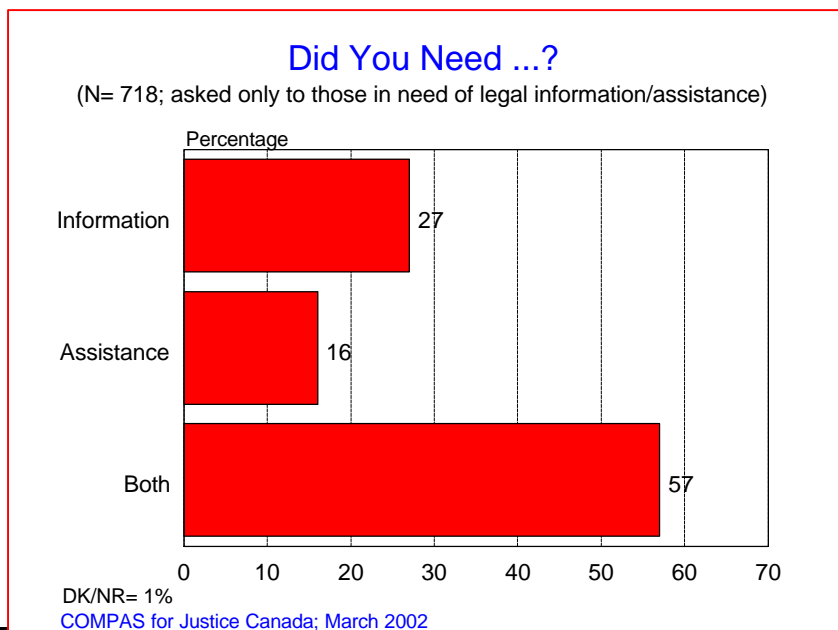
This section focuses on participants' own experiences and involvement with Canada's laws and justice system, including their need for legal information and assistance.

Almost Half Have Needed Legal Information or Assistance

Survey participants were almost evenly divided when asked if they have ever needed legal information or assistance for any reason. While just over half (52%) said they have not, almost as many (48%) have needed legal support.

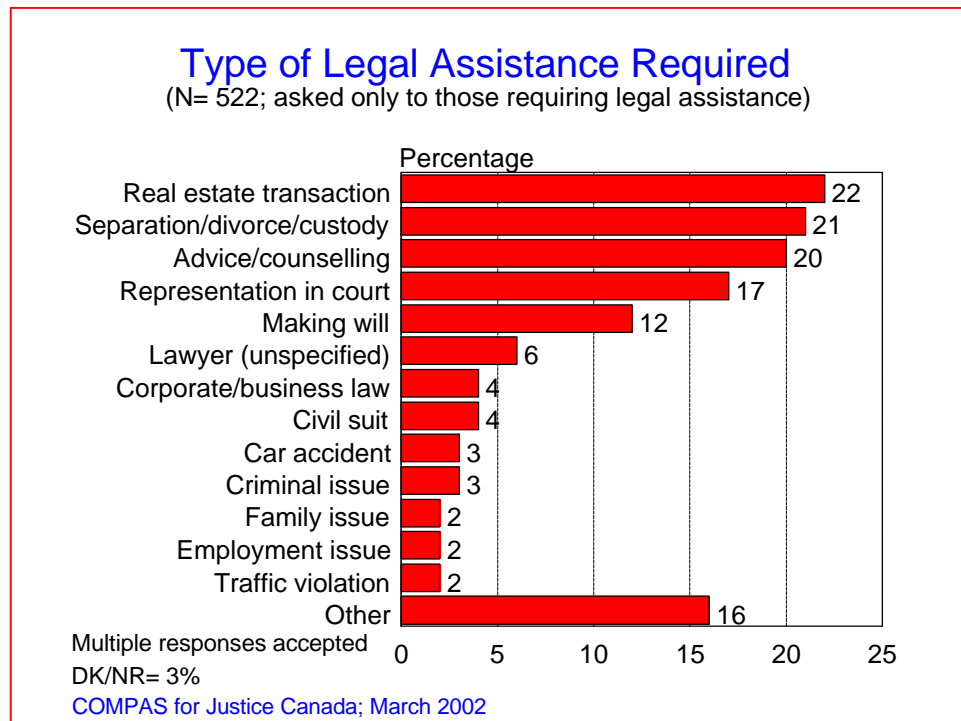


Those who indicated that they have needed legal information or assistance were asked more specifically if they needed legal information, legal assistance, or both. More than half (57%) needed both. The rest were more likely to require information (27%) rather than assistance (16%).



Real Estate & Family Law Issues – Main Types of Assistance & Information Required

People who needed legal assistance were asked to identify the type of assistance they required. The types of assistance identified most often were help with one or more real estate transactions (22%) and help with a separation, divorce or custody issues (21%) (multiple responses accepted). Similar numbers indicated their need for general advice or counselling (20%) or for representation in court (17%). Significant numbers also cited the need for assistance in making or amending a will (12%).



Other types of assistance were identified much less often and included the need for a lawyer (without specifying why), assistance with corporate or business law, a civil suit, a car accident, criminal issues, family issues, employment issues, and traffic violations. Included in the 'other' category are power of attorney, bankruptcy, insurance claims, an injury or disability-related issue, a property dispute, settling an estate, and tax-related issues.

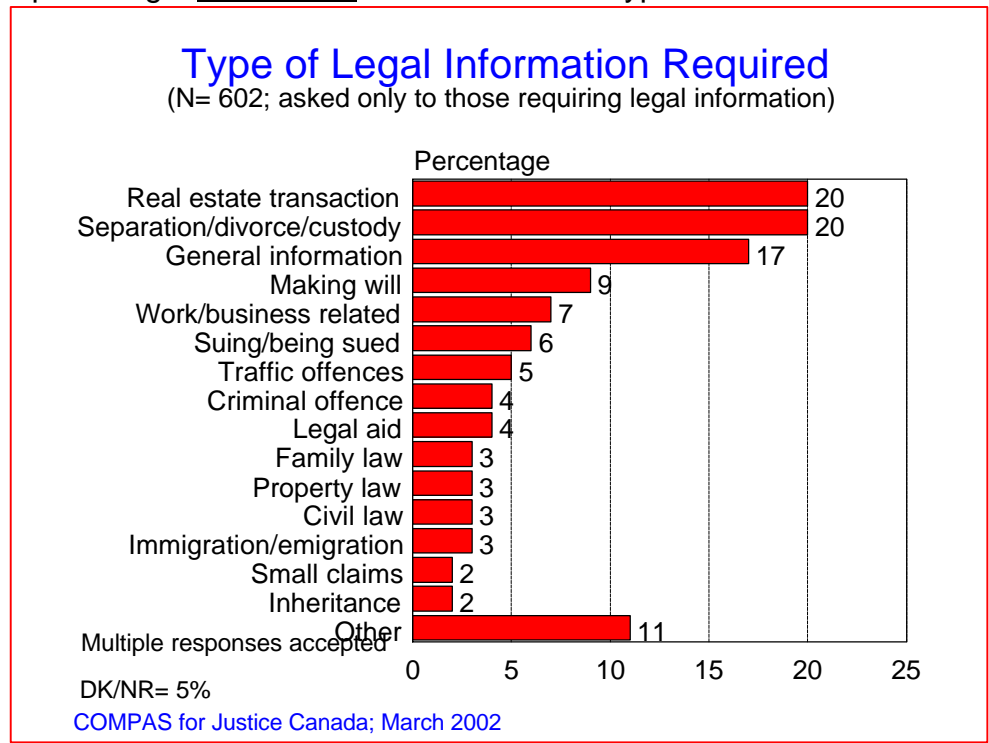


People who said they required legal information were asked what type of information they needed. Once again, the two issues identified most often were information related to real estate transactions and separation, divorce or custody (20% each) (multiple responses accepted). A significant number (17%) also said they needed information in general.

Smaller numbers (5-9%) were quite specific, identifying their need for

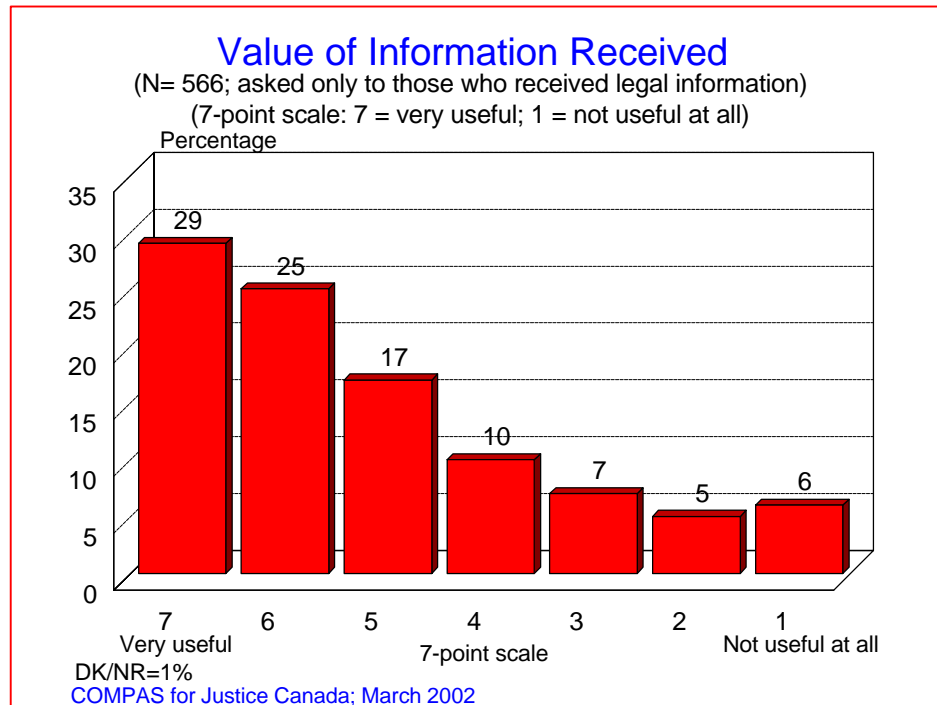
information about making a will, work or business-related information, information about suing or being sued, and information about traffic offences.

A number of other information types were identified infrequently, including information about criminal offences, legal aid, family, property or civil law, immigration or emigration, small claims, and inheritance. Included in the 'other' category are information about contract violations, property lines, power of attorney, and taxes.



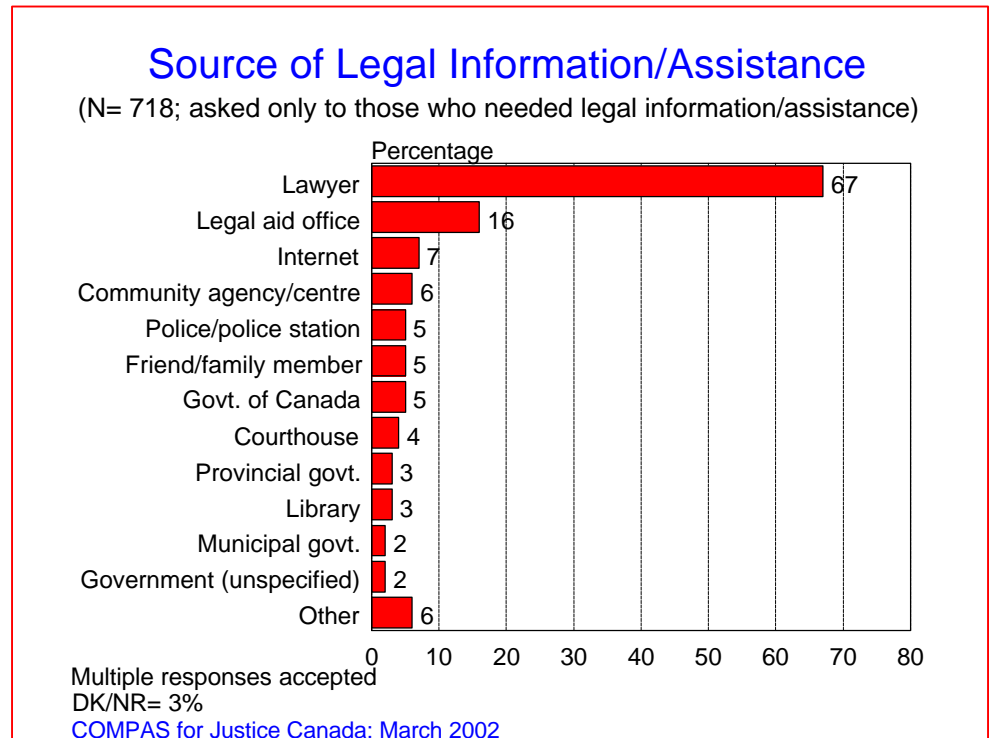
Most Satisfied With Usefulness of Information Received

Participants who received legal information were asked to rate the information in terms of its value or usefulness to them (7-point scale: 1 = not useful at all; 7 = very useful). Fully 71% rated the information as useful, with over half (54%) describing it as very useful (scores of 6-7). At the other end of the spectrum, almost one-in-five (18%) rated the information they received as not very useful to them (offering scores below the mid-point on the scale).



Lawyers – Main Source of Legal information & Assistance

By a very wide margin, lawyers were the most common source of legal information or assistance. Two-thirds (67%) of those who needed legal information or assistance said they went to a lawyer to get it. This was followed, at a distance, by 16% who visited a legal aid office, many of whom likely also dealt with a lawyer for their needs (multiple responses accepted).

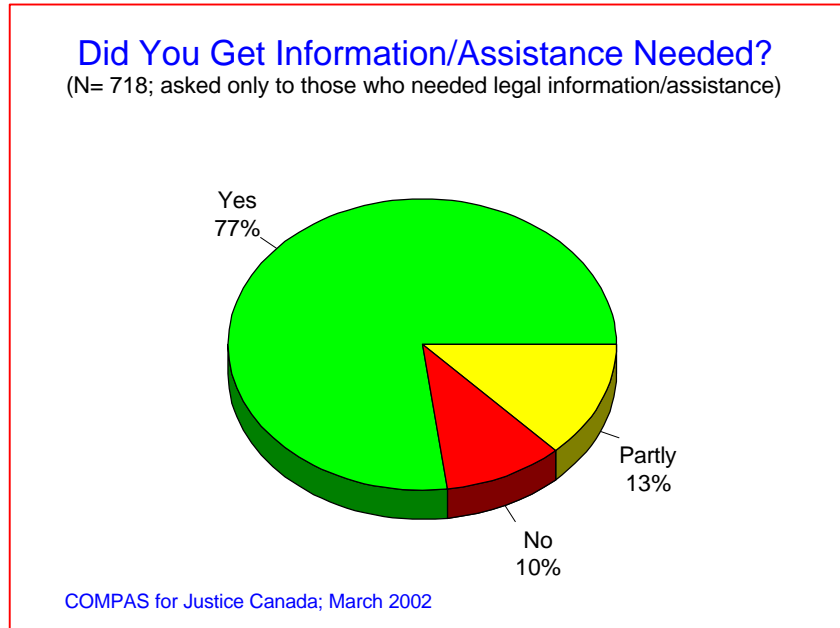


All other sources of information or assistance were identified by small numbers. This included the Internet, a community agency or centre, the police or a police station, a friend or family member (in some cases, likely a lawyer), governments (federal, provincial and municipal), a courthouse, and the library. Included in the 'other' category are an MLA or MP, university law departments, teachers, and NGOs.



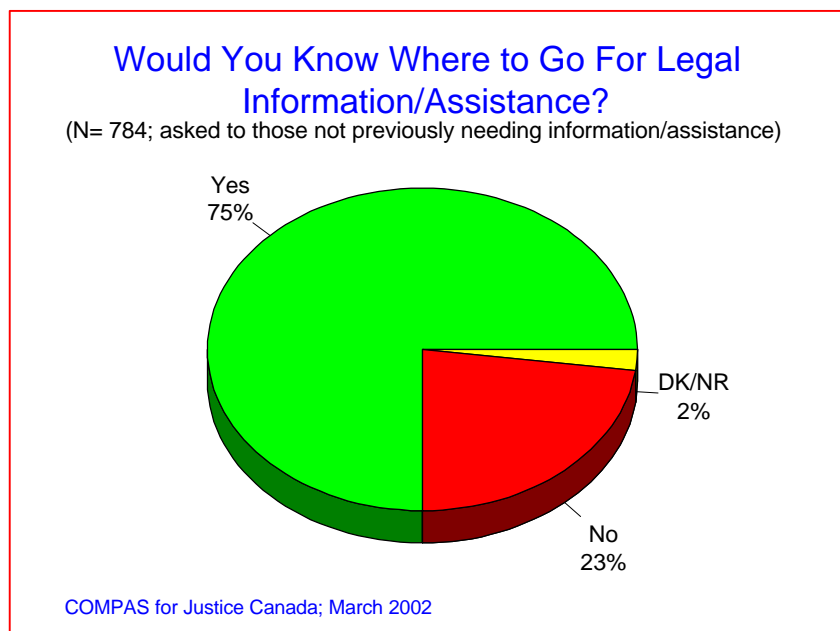
Three-Quarters Received All of the Required Information or Assistance

Slightly more than three-quarters (77%) said they received all of the information or assistance they needed, while an additional 13% received part of what they needed. Ten percent did not receive what they needed.

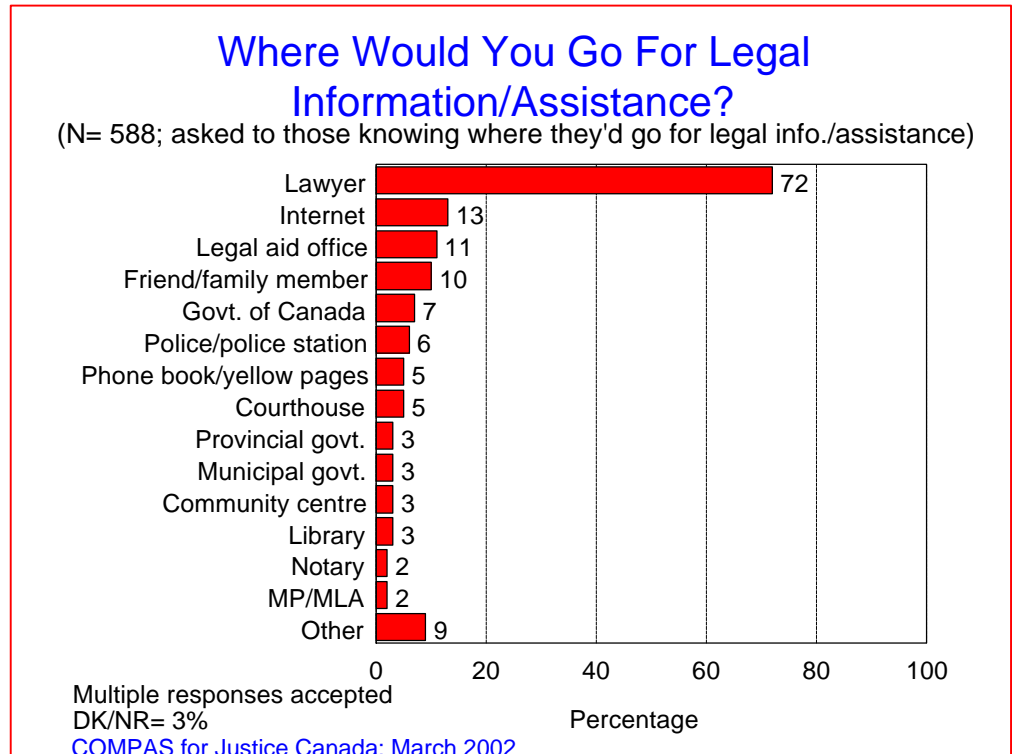


Most “Non-users” Know Where to go for Legal Information or Assistance – a Lawyer

Participants who have not ever needed legal information or assistance for themselves or their families were asked if they knew where to go for such support if they needed it. Exactly three-quarters said they did, with 23% saying they did not.



Those who said they would know where to go for legal information or assistance were asked to specify where. Their responses mirrored those given by participants who had previously sought legal information or assistance. Almost three-quarters (72%) would go to a lawyer. This was followed, at a distance, by the Internet (13%), a legal aid office (11%), a friend or family member (10%), the Government of Canada (7%), and police or a police station (6%) (multiple responses accepted).



Small numbers identified the phone book or yellow pages, a courthouse, provincial and municipal governments, community centres, a library, notaries, and MPs and MLAs. Included in the 'other' category are law societies, government in general, and university law departments. A few also said it would depend on the type of information or assistance they needed.

Legal Information/Assistance Needed

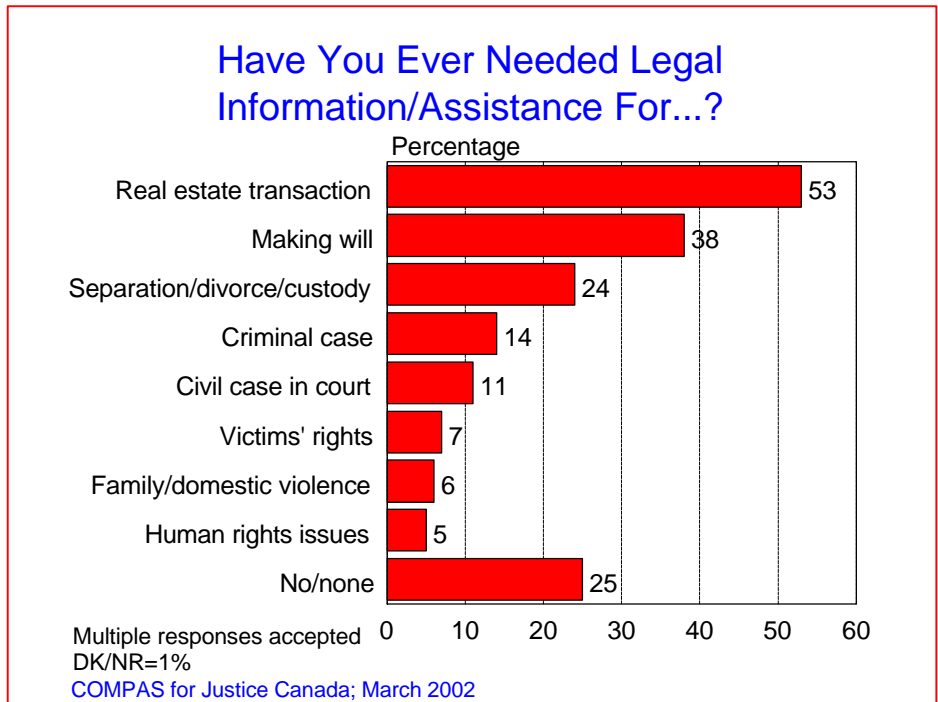
All survey participants were asked whether they have ever needed legal information or assistance for any of the following situations involving themselves or their families:

- Making a will.
- Separation, divorce, child support or custody issues.
- A real estate transaction, such as buying or selling a house.
- A criminal case of any type.
- Victims rights.



- ❑ Going to court for a civil case, such as collecting a debt or for an employment matter.
- ❑ Family or domestic violence.
- ❑ Human rights issues.

Participants' personal experiences varied widely by subject area. The only type of legal information or assistance required by a majority related to real estate transactions, cited by 53%. More than one-third (38%) required information or assistance to make a will, while one-quarter (24%) needed information/assistance with a separation, divorce, or custody issues (multiple responses accepted).



Recall that these were among the main types of information and assistance identified in an open-ended fashion by participants who previously needed legal support.

Following this, in declining order of frequency, were information or assistance with a criminal case (14%), a civil case in court (11%), victim's rights (7%), family/domestic violence (6%), and human rights issues (5%). One-quarter did not need assistance or information in any of these areas.



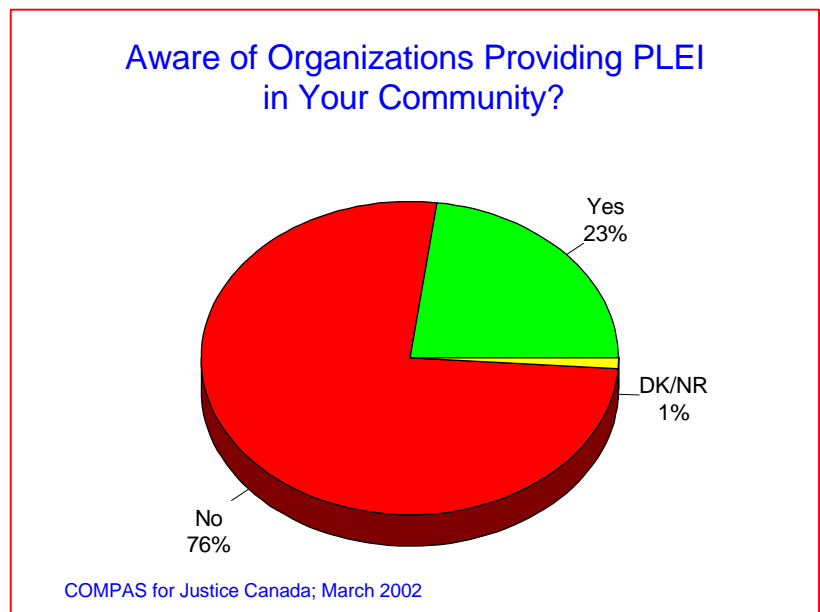
Awareness and Interest in PLEI

This section explores participants' awareness of, and interest in, public legal education and information (PLEI). As a preamble to this section, participants were told the following:

The focus of this survey is on public legal education and information. This involves providing the public with information and education about the law and the justice system. This can take many different forms, such as workshops, brochures, videos, or the Internet. The purpose is to make available to people information about Canada's laws or the justice system so that they are informed and can take informed decisions when they need to. Public legal education and information is available free of charge through government and community organizations.

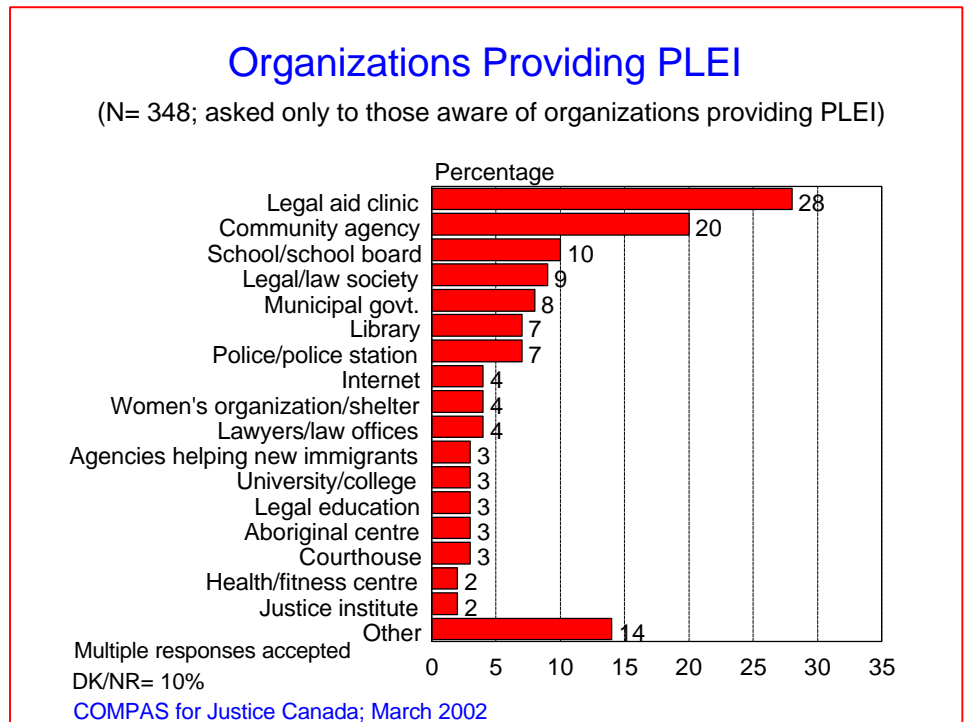
Three-Quarters Not Aware of Organizations That Provide PLEI

After being read the preamble, survey participants were asked if they were aware of any organizations in their community that provide legal information and education to the public. Fully three-quarters (76%) were not aware of any such organizations in their community. Conversely, approximately one-quarter said they were.



Legal Aid Clinics & Community Agencies Identified Most Often as PLEI Providers

Participants who claimed to be aware of organizations in their community that provide PLEI were asked to identify the organizations that provide this information or service. The types of organizations identified most often were legal aid clinics (28%), followed by community agencies (20%) (multiple responses accepted). Identified much less often, but still by noteworthy numbers (7-10%), were schools and school boards, legal or law societies, municipal government, libraries, and police or police stations.



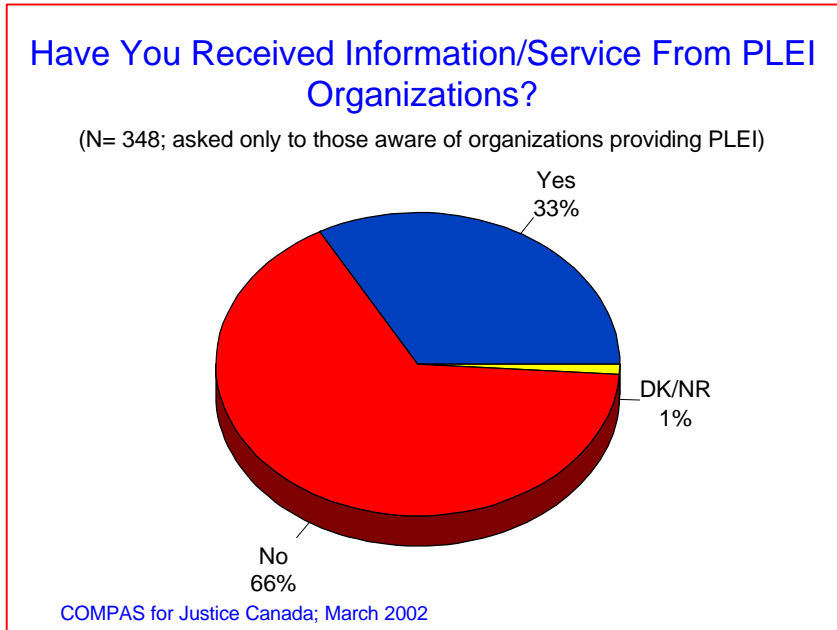
A number of organizations were identified by small numbers, including women's organizations or shelters, lawyers and law offices, agencies that help new immigrants, universities and colleges, legal education clinics, aboriginal centres, courthouses, health and fitness centres and justice institutes. Although the focus was on organizations, a few also identified the Internet. Included in the 'other' category are church groups, the Elisabeth Fry and John Howard Societies, friends and family members, crime stoppers and TV.

Ten percent of those eligible to answer this question said they did not know of any specific organizations in their community that provide PLEI or did not respond.



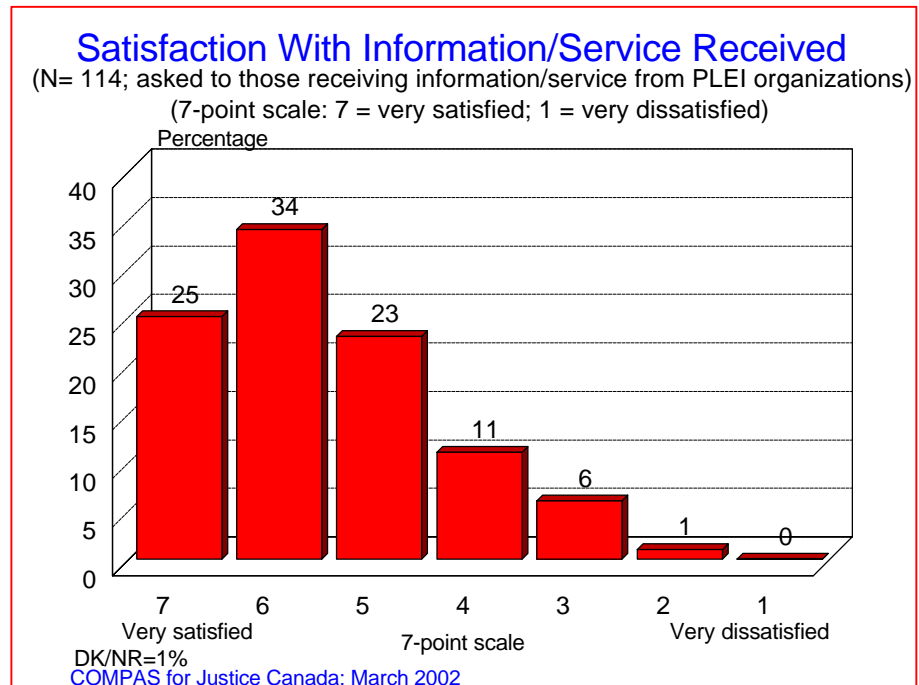
Two-Thirds of Those Aware of PLEI Organizations Have Not Used Them

Participants who claimed to be aware of organizations in their community that provide PLEI were also asked whether they have ever received this type of information/service from an organization in their community. Two-thirds said that they had not, while one-third has received such information. Note that this represents 8% of the full sample of survey participants.



Large Majority of “Users” Satisfied With PLEI Information or Service

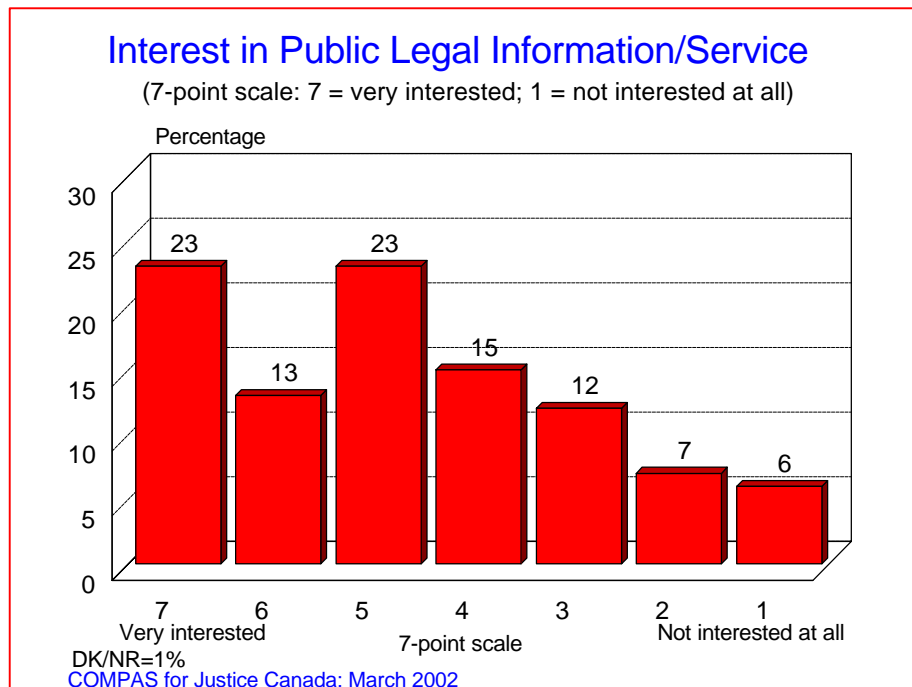
Participants who have received information or assistance from a PLEI provider in their community were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with the information/assistance received (using a 7-point scale: 1 = very dissatisfied; 7 = very satisfied). Fully 82% expressed some degree of satisfaction, with over half (59%) expressing relatively strong satisfaction (i.e. scores of 6-7). Most of



the rest were neutral, not negative.

Participants Express Varying Degrees of Interest in PLEI

All participants were asked how interested they were in legal information to help them better understand how laws affect them and their families, and to help them deal effectively with the justice system in Canada. In response, over half (59%) expressed some measure of interest in PLEI, with 36% expressing strong interest. However, exactly one-quarter exhibited a clear lack of interest (i.e. scores



below the neutral point), while a further 15% were neutral, also suggesting a general lack of interest.

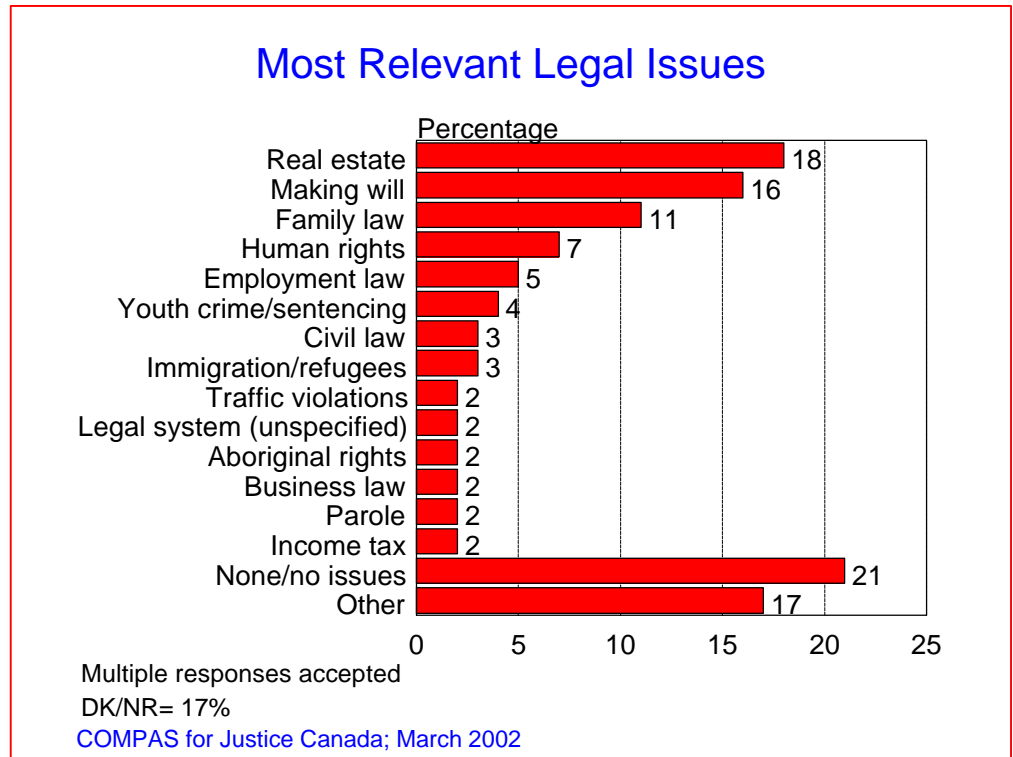
Lack of interest may be due in large part to the fact that many participants have never needed legal information or assistance (recall that 52% said they have never needed such information/assistance).

Information Needs

This section identifies the legal issues of most relevance to participants, including their information needs and preferences regarding sources of information.

Domestic-Type Issues – Most Relevant Legal Issues

When asked in an open-ended fashion what types of legal issues were most relevant to themselves and their family, either now or in the foreseeable future, participants tended to identify issues related to the domestic realm (i.e. the household). These included real estate (18%), making a will (16%), and family law (11%) (multiple responses accepted). The only other issue to receive significant attention was human rights (7%).



All other issues were identified infrequently. These included employment law, youth crime and sentencing, civil law, immigration and refugees, traffic violations, the legal system (unspecified), aboriginal rights, business law, parole, and income tax. Included in the 'other' category are victims' rights, sexual abuse, domestic violence, landlord-tenant issues, home schooling, children's rights, firearms legislation, animal rights, environmental issues, and the rights of senior citizens.



Usefulness of Different Types of Legal Information

Participants were asked to use a 7-point scale (1 = not useful at all; 7 = very useful) to assess the relevance to themselves or their family of the following types of information, either now or in the foreseeable future. The purpose was to identify in a ranked, closed-ended manner the perceived relevance of various topic areas. Subject matter included:

- ❑ Family law issues, such as separation, divorce, child support and custody issues.
- ❑ Human rights and related issues.
- ❑ Youth justice and sentencing issues.
- ❑ Victims' rights.
- ❑ Family or domestic violence.
- ❑ Employment law.
- ❑ Alternative sentencing options, such as community service.
- ❑ Alternatives to courts, such as mediation or alternative dispute resolution.

Not surprisingly, perceived usefulness varied by type of information. A majority of participants rated four of these types of legal information as useful (providing scores above the mid-point on the scale). Leading the way was information about employment law (62%) and about human rights and related issues (60%), followed by information about victims' rights (54%) and youth justice and sentencing issues (51%).

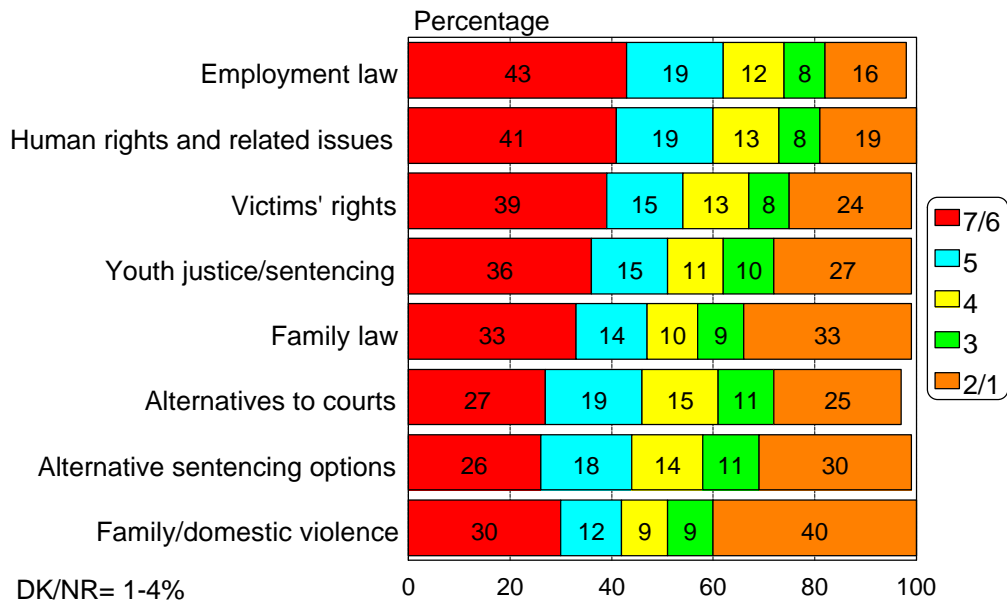
Less than half (42-47%) attributed relevance to information about family law, alternatives to courts, alternative sentencing options, and family or domestic violence, though they were more likely to consider each of these as useful rather than not useful. Moreover, people were more likely to consider each of these types of information as very useful rather than moderately useful.

Perceptions that these types of information were not useful ranged from 16-40%, and were highest regarding family or domestic violence. In interpreting these results, it is important to remember that participants were asked to assess the usefulness of these types of information to themselves or their family, not in terms of their inherent worth.



Usefulness of Types of Legal Information

(7-point scale: 7 = very useful; 1 = not useful at all)



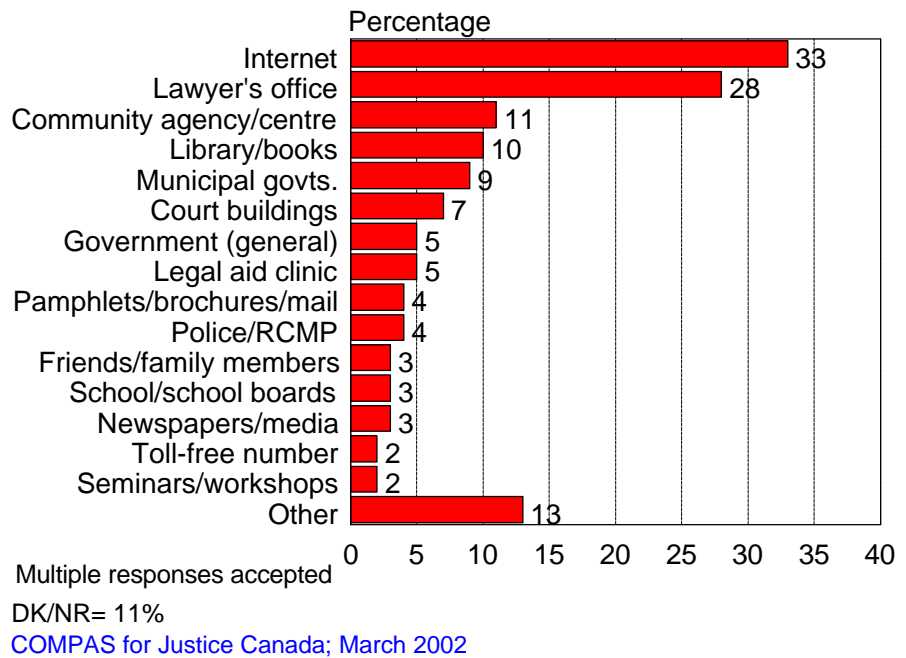
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Internet & Lawyers – Preferred Sources of Legal Information

Asked in an open-ended manner where they would prefer to obtain legal information of relevance to them, two sources dominated: one-third identified the Internet, while over one-quarter (28%) pointed to lawyers or a lawyer's office (multiple responses accepted). These were followed, at a distance, by community agencies or centres (11%), libraries and books (10%), municipal governments (9%), and court buildings (7%).

Preferred Sources For Relevant Legal Information



Sources identified infrequently included government in general, legal aid clinics, pamphlets, brochures and mail, the police or RCMP, friends and family members, schools and school boards, newspapers and other media, a toll-free number, and seminars or workshops. Included in the 'other' category are women's organizations and shelters, agencies that help new immigrants, church groups, NGOs, the telephone book, the post office, and an MP's or MLA's office. Eleven percent did not identify any preferred source of information.

Participants were then read a list of places where they could go to obtain information to help them better understand the justice system and how laws affect them. They were asked to rate each one in terms of where they would like to go to obtain the information using a 7-point scale (1 = not a useful location at all; 7 = very useful location). People were asked to rate 12 locations or types of organizations:

- ❑ Women's organizations and shelters (asked to women only)
- ❑ Agencies that serve new immigrants to Canada (asked to new Canadians only).



- ❑ Youth groups or organizations (asked to youth only).
- ❑ Native friendship centres, bank councils or other Aboriginal groups (asked to Aboriginal Canadians only).
- ❑ Church groups.
- ❑ Schools and school boards.
- ❑ Government organizations and offices.
- ❑ Non-governmental organizations, such as the Elizabeth Fry Society or the John Howard Society.
- ❑ Legal aid clinics (asked only in Ontario and BC).
- ❑ Community radio or TV.
- ❑ Community agencies or centres.
- ❑ Community events, such as fairs or exhibits.

A majority of participants rated all but three of these locations as useful, although the size of the majority varied. Leading the way in terms of perceived usefulness were agencies that serve new immigrants (identified by 83% of new Canadians) and native friendship centres (cited by 79% of Aboriginal Canadians). Between 65-70% described each of these as *very* useful. By comparison, 60% of youth described youth groups or organizations as useful providers, and 53% of women offered the same assessment of women's organizations and shelters. These were all of the organizations or groups that were of relevance to specific sub-groups of the population. Note that three of these groups/locations were among the top four on the overall list.

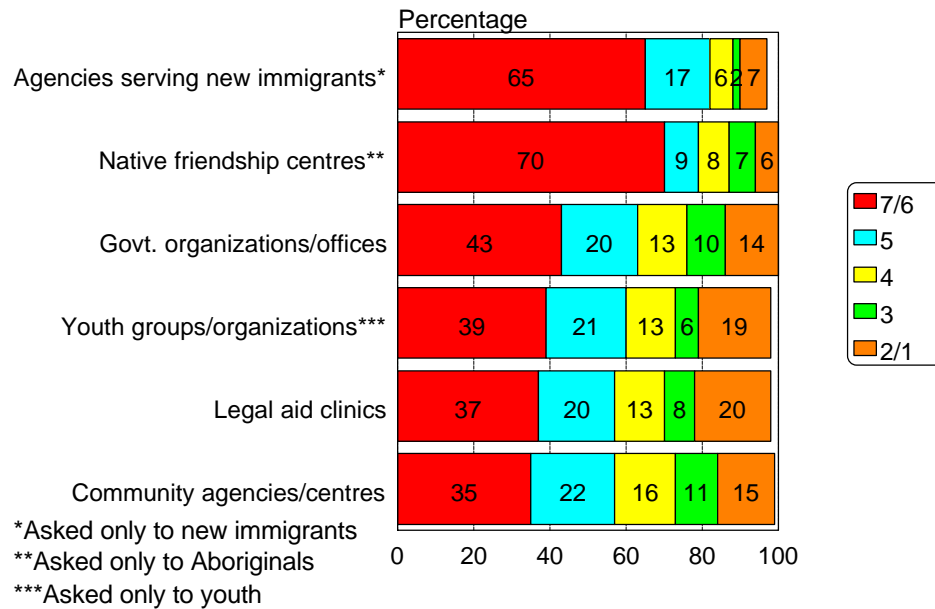
Among places accessible to the general population, government organizations and offices were most often viewed as useful PLEI providers (63%), followed by legal aid clinics and community agencies or centres (57% each), schools and school boards (53%) and community radio or TV (51%).

Participants were divided over the usefulness of community events. Just over one-third (36%) viewed them as useful, but almost half (47%) rated them as not very useful. Non-governmental organizations and church groups were also likely to be considered not useful as sources of legal information. This was particularly the case for church groups, rated by more than half (58%) as not useful in this regard.



Usefulness of Sources For Legal Information

(7-point scale: 7 = very useful; 1 = not useful at all)

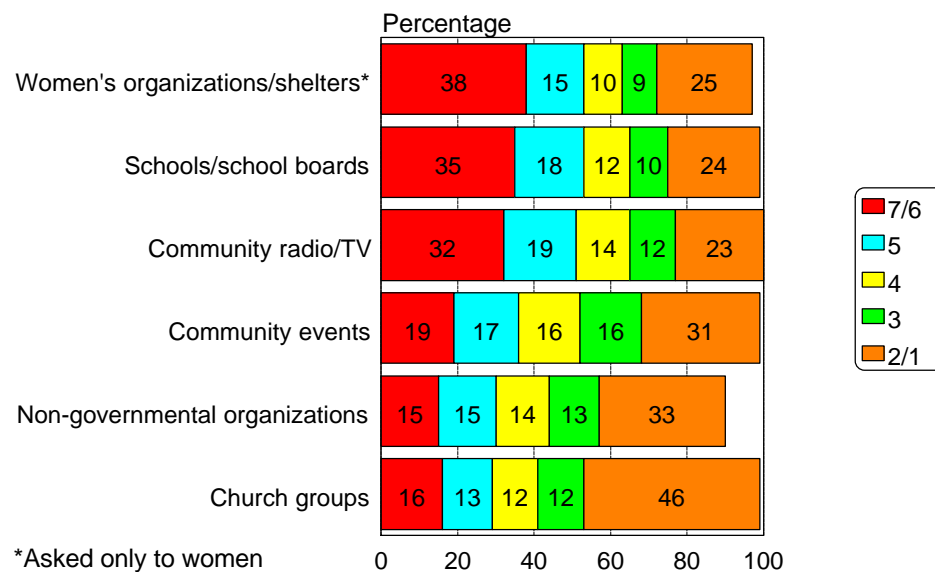


DK/NR= 0-2%

COMPAS for Justice Canada: March 2002

Usefulness of Sources of Legal Information (Cont'd)

(7-point scale: 7 = very useful; 1 = not useful at all)



DK/NR= 0-10%

COMPAS for Justice Canada; March 2002



Specific Needs of Key Target Groups

New Canadians, youth, and Aboriginal Canadians were each asked in an open-ended manner what was needed in terms of legal information or education for the justice system to be more responsive to the needs of their group.

The most common response from Aboriginal Canadians was more information about native rights under the law (23%). Smaller numbers (4%) identified information about fighting discrimination. On a related topic, some (3%) said that more aboriginal Canadians had to be hired in justice-related professions (multiple responses accepted). Very small numbers (less than 2%) identified more government involvement. Nearly one-third (30%) said they did not know or did not provide an answer to this question.

New Canadians tended to focus on the issue of information in general. This included knowing where to get information (14%), getting information through the media (5%), providing more information in general (4%) and providing more assistance in general (2%). New Canadians also identified information on societal integration (8%) and being able to communicate better with new immigrants (3%). Very small numbers (less than 2%) identified sending written information through the mail. Over one-quarter (29%) said they did not know or did not provide an answer to this question.

Youth most often identified improving schools and access programs (13%). Small numbers (2-3%) identified access to information through the Internet and more personal communication (i.e. meeting in groups). Very small numbers (less than 2%) identified improving/facilitating access to law schools. A few said that it was up to people to inform themselves about such issues, while a few others said that nothing was needed. Over one-third (37%) said they did not know or did not provide an answer to this question.

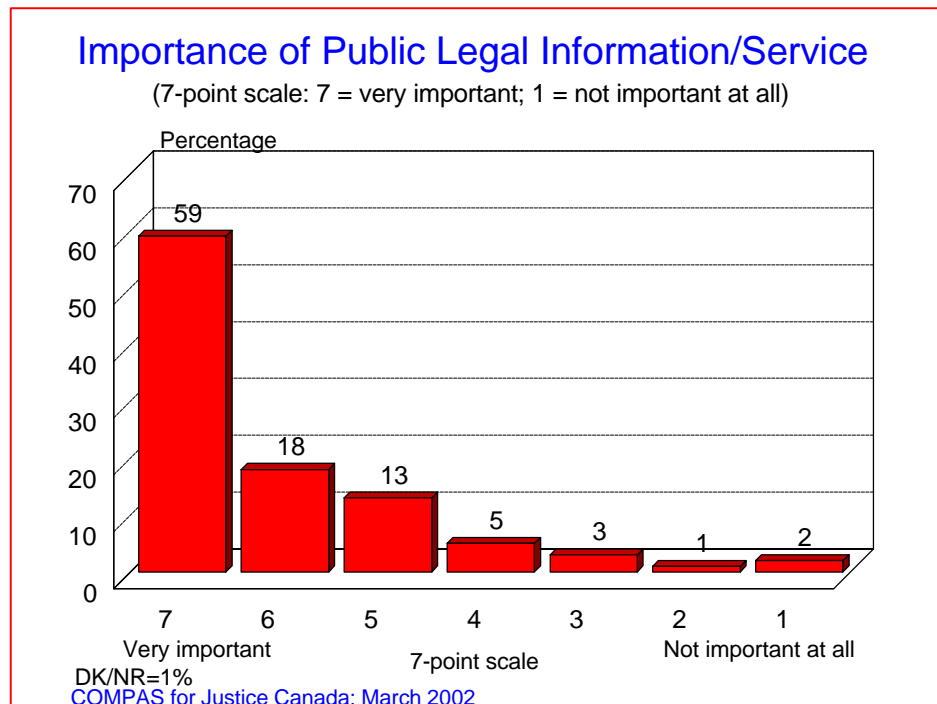


Related Attitudes

This section explores the attitudes of participants toward PLEI-related issues.

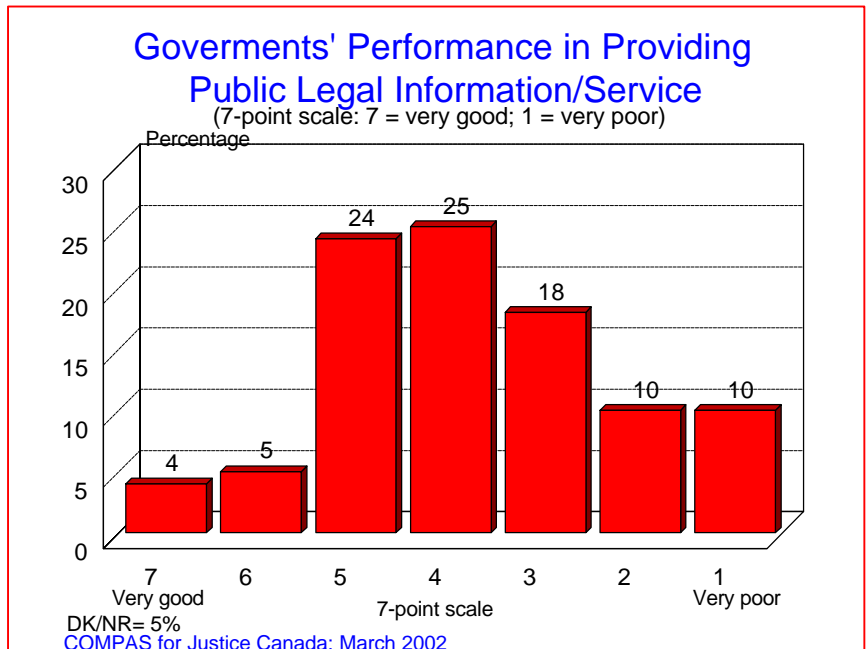
Strong Consensus on Importance of PLEI

The vast majority of participants (90%) think it is important that governments in Canada provide information to help people understand how laws affect them and enable them to participate effectively in the justice system (using 7-point scale: 1 = not important at all; 7 = very important). Moreover, 77% rated this as very important (i.e. scores of 6-7), with well over half offering the highest score possible. Clearly, the provision of PLEI is seen to be very important to Canadians.



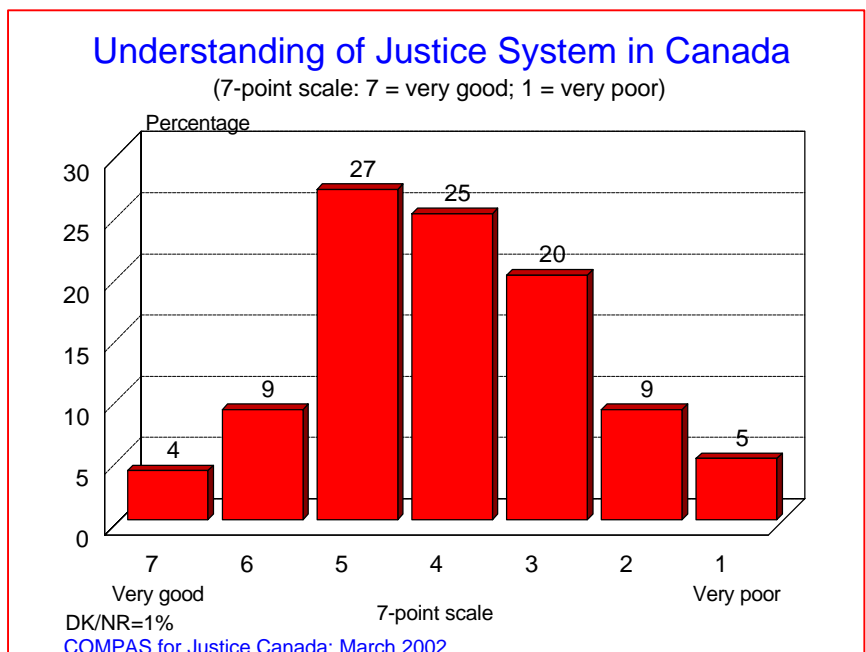
Relatively Poor Assessments of Government Performance in Area

Despite widespread perceptions of the importance of PLEI, participants were divided when it came to assessing government performance in this area. Using a similar 7-point scale (1 = very poor; 7 = very good), only one-third felt that governments in Canada are doing a good job in this area. At the other end of the spectrum, 38% provided negative assessments of government in this area. One-quarter were neutral, while an additional 5% did not offer any assessment.



Moderate Understanding of Justice System

Participants were also divided with respect to their level of understanding of the justice system. Asked to use a 7-point scale to rate their understanding of the justice system in Canada, including how laws affect them, most offered scores in the middle of the range – 72% provided ratings of 3-5. Relatively few (13%) felt their level of knowledge was very good (scores of 6-7) or very poor (14% provides scores of 1-2).



The response pattern is similar to the one resulting from the earlier question assessing how well informed participants feel they are about the justice system in Canada.

Attitudes Regarding Canadian Justice System

Participants were read five statements about the justice system and asked to indicate their level of agreement with each one using a 7-point scale (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree). The statements were:

- ❑ Informing Canadians about the laws that affect them strengthens public confidence and trust in the justice system.
- ❑ Providing legal information and education can improve access to justice for those who traditionally have been at a disadvantage when dealing with the justice system, such as low-income Canadians, new immigrants, Aboriginal people or people with disabilities.
- ❑ To be responsible citizens, people need to understand how laws affect them and to be able to participate effectively in the justice system.
- ❑ The justice system works well for people with money or education, but does not work very well for disadvantaged people.
- ❑ There is a high level of public distrust of the justice system in Canada.

A majority of participants agreed with each of these statements, although the level of agreement varied. Participants were most likely to agree with statements concerning the importance and impact of information regarding the justice system. There was widespread agreement (84%) that in order to be responsible citizens, people need to understand how laws affect them and to be able to participate effectively in the justice system. There was also strong agreement that providing legal information/education can improve access to justice for those who traditionally have been at a disadvantage when dealing with the justice system (79%), and that informing Canadians about the laws that affect them strengthens public confidence and trust in the system (76%). Over half (51-62%) strongly agreed with each of these statements.

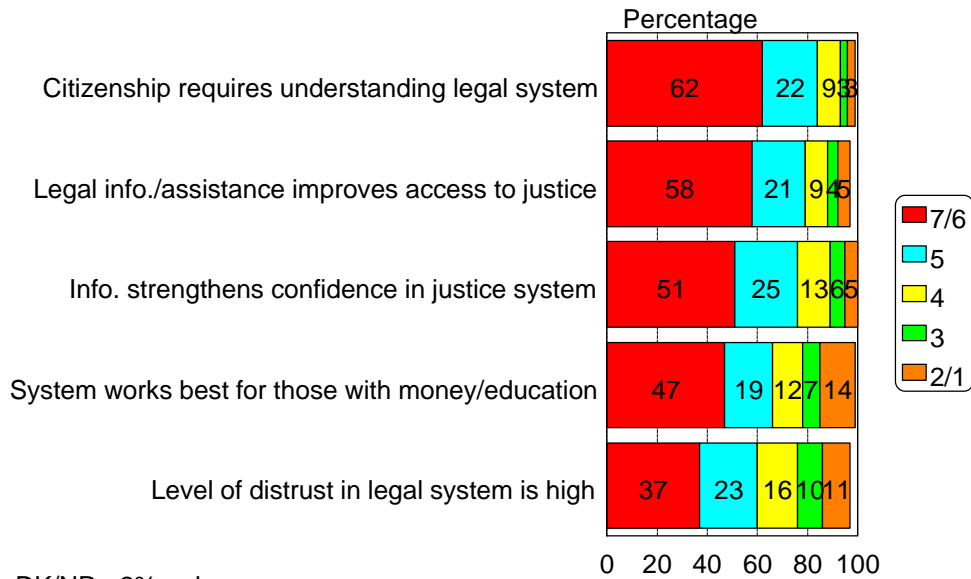
Two-thirds agreed that the justice system works well for those with money or education, but does not work very well for disadvantaged people, and only slightly fewer (60%) agreed that there is a high level of public distrust of the justice system in Canada. Participants were more likely to express strong than moderate agreement with these two statements.

Levels of disagreement with all of these statements ranged from 6-21%.



Attitudes Regarding Justice System

(7-point scale: 7 = strongly agree; 1 = strongly disagree)



DK/NR= 2% or less

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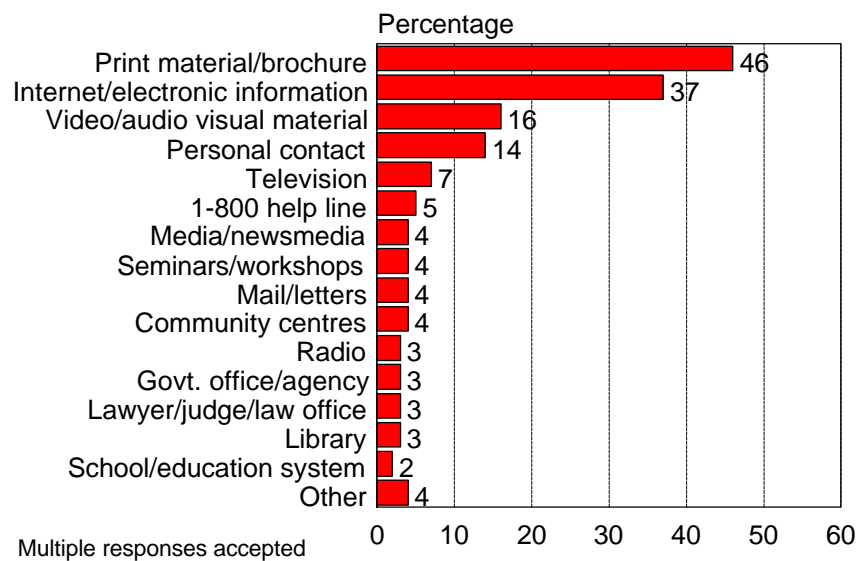
Communications and Information Preferences

This section focuses on communications issues, including the preferred form in which to obtain PLEI information.

Hard Copy & Electronic Format – Preferred Ways of Obtaining PLEI

Participants were asked to identify the form in which they would prefer to obtain public legal information so that it is most useful to them. People identified a range of different forms. However, two dominated – almost half (46%) prefer to obtain such information as print material or brochures, followed by just over one-third (37%) who identified the Internet or

Preferred Way of Obtaining Public Legal Information



Multiple responses accepted

DK/NR= 11%

COMPAS for Justice Canada; March 2002

electronic information (multiple responses accepted). Also identified with some frequency were video or audio-visual material (16%) and personal contact (14%). In addition to video and audio-visual material, a further 7% identified television.

Other preferred forms were identified infrequently and included locations as well as formats. These included a 1-800 help line, the media (including news media), seminars and workshops, mail or letters, community centres, radio, government offices or agencies, lawyers, judges, and law offices, libraries, and schools or the education system. Included in the 'other' category are alternative formats for disabled people, material translated into other languages, and magazines.



Many Formats Seen to be Effective

Following this, participants were read a list of possible ways in which legal information and education could be provided to the public and were asked to rate the effectiveness of each method for themselves personally (7-point scale: 1 = not effective at all; 7 = very effective). The list included the following methods:

- ❑ Electronic information through the Internet.
- ❑ Audio-visual materials, such as videos or audio tapes.
- ❑ Print material, such as brochures.
- ❑ Education programs in schools.
- ❑ Seminars or workshops in your community on specific legal issues.
- ❑ Seminars or workshops in your community targeted to specific groups, such as new Canadians or Aboriginal Canadians.
- ❑ The creation of libraries or resource centres to provide free access to legal information in different cities.
- ❑ 1-800 help-lines, which people could call to obtain information about our laws and justice system.

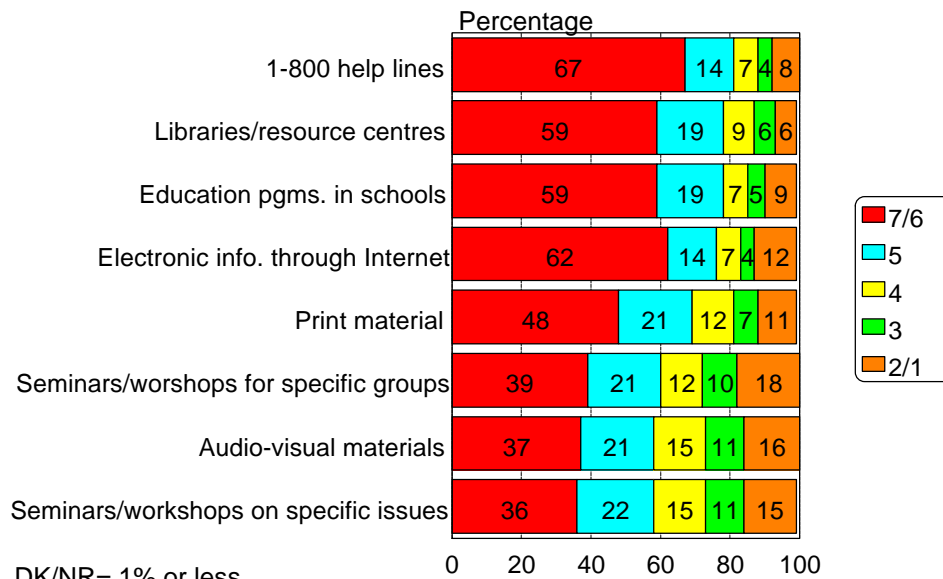
A majority of participants viewed each of these methods as effective, but the size of the majority varied. Heading the list was a 1-800 help line, seen to be effective by 81%. This was followed closely by libraries and resource centres (78%), education programs in schools (78%), and electronic information on the Internet (76%). Over half (59-67%) rated each of these as very effective ways of providing PLEI.

Over two-thirds (69%) rated print material as effective, followed by seminars and workshops for specific groups (60%), audio-visual material, and seminars and workshops on specific issues (58% each).



Effectiveness of Ways of Providing PLEI

(7-point scale: 7 = very useful; 1 = not useful at all)



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Suggestions For Improving Understanding of Justice System

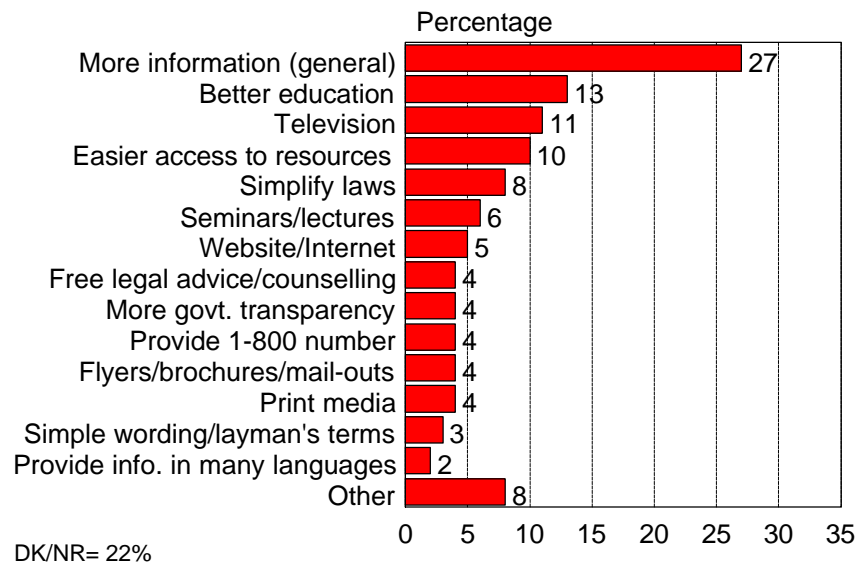
In conclusion, participants were asked what the Government of Canada could do to improve the level of understanding that people have about the justice system in Canada, including how laws affect them. While people offered a variety of suggestions, the ideas provided tended to be general rather than specific. The suggestion offered most often was simply providing more information (27%).

Following this, in declining order of frequency, were better education (13%), use of television (11%), easier access to resources (10%), simplifying the laws (8%), and offering seminars or lectures (6%).

Small numbers suggested using a website or the Internet, providing free legal advice or counselling, more government transparency, providing a 1-800 number, providing flyers, brochures or mail outs, using the print media, using simple wording and layman's terms, and providing information in many languages. Included in the 'other' category are listening to the public more, media campaigns, and cooperating with other levels of government.

Almost one-quarter (22%) said they did not know or did not provide a response.

Ways of Improving Understanding of Justice System



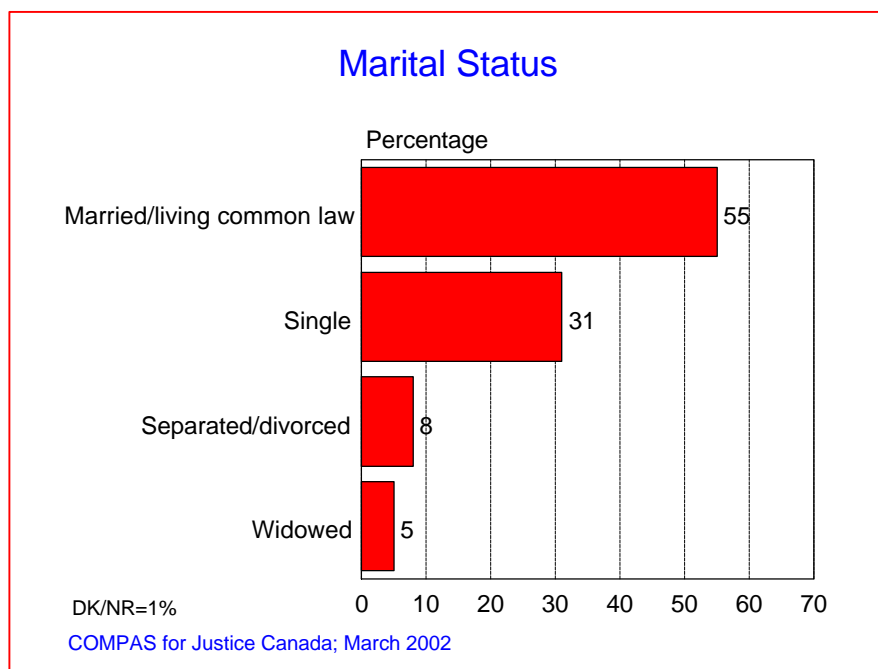
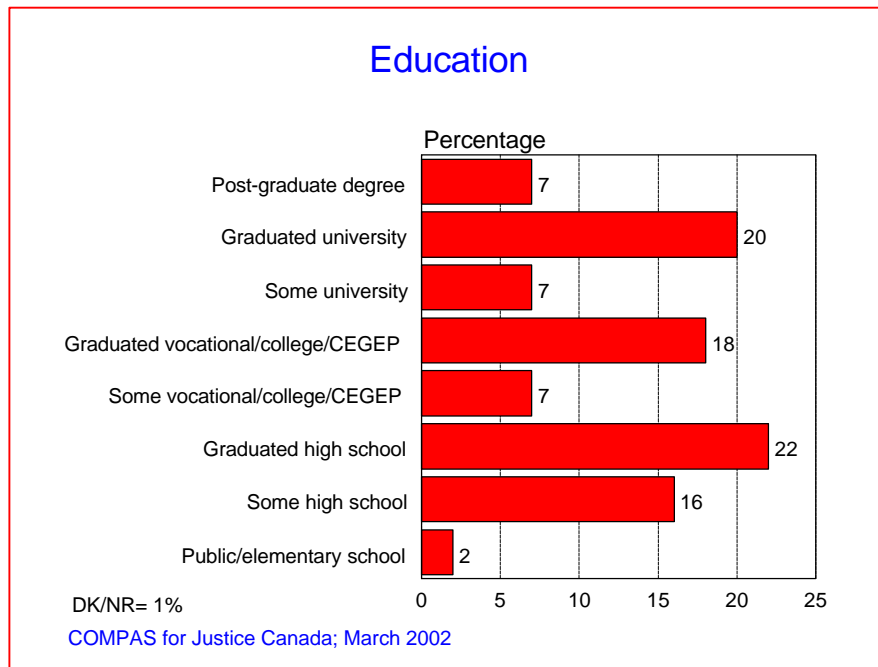
DK/NR= 22%

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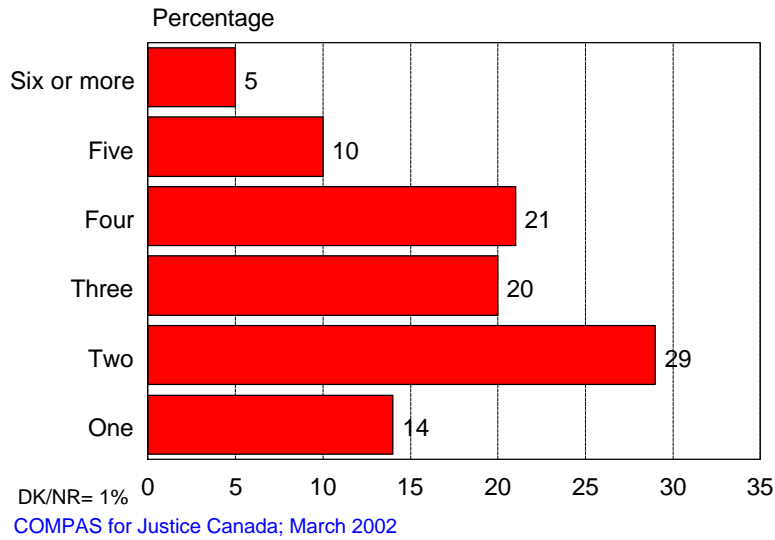


Profile of Participants

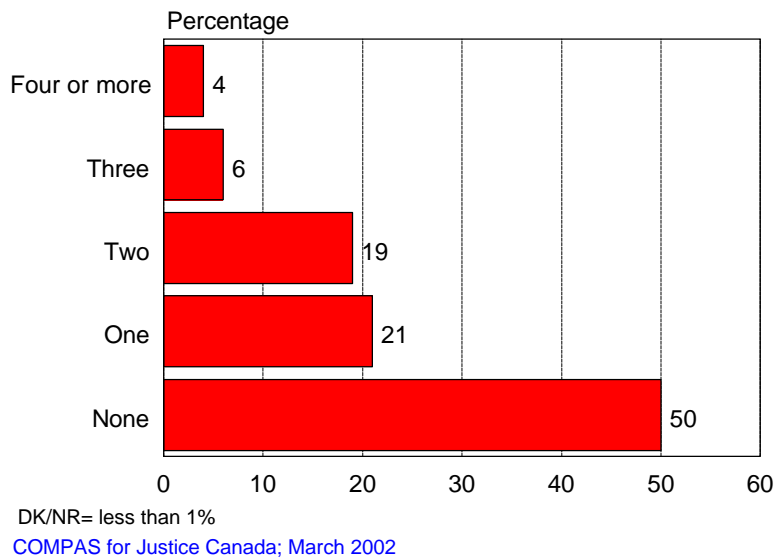
The following set of graphs present the characteristics of survey participants.



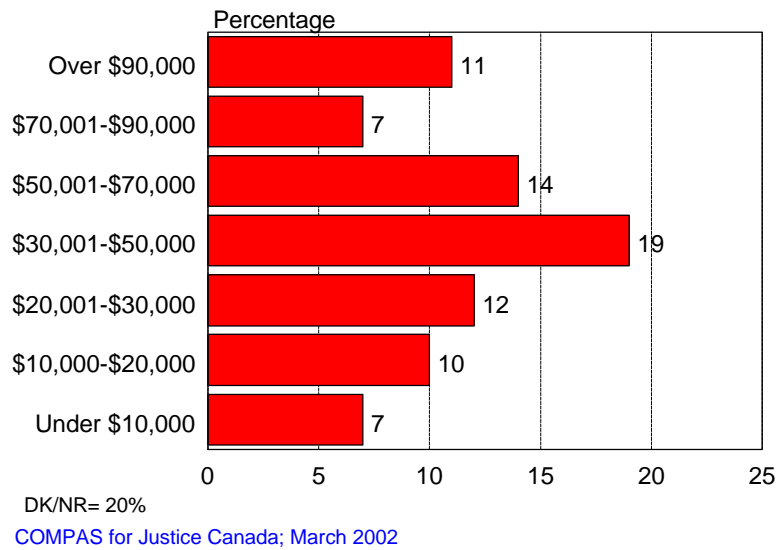
Number of People Living in Household



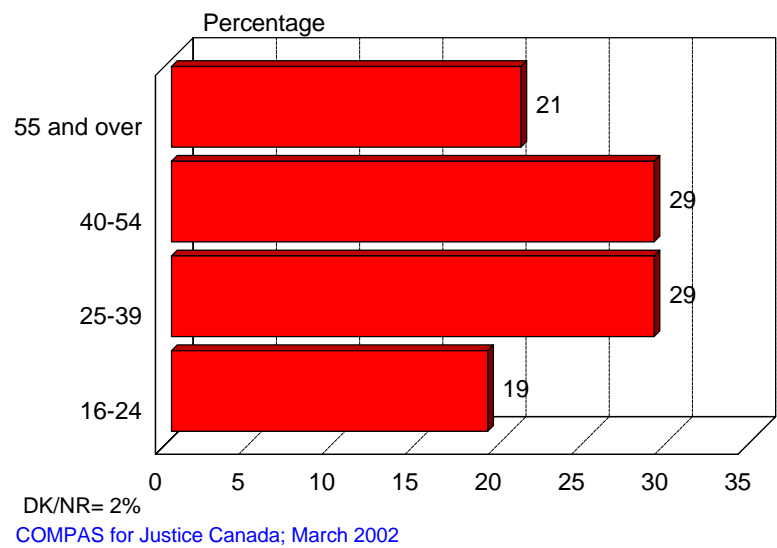
Number of Children Under 17 Living in Household

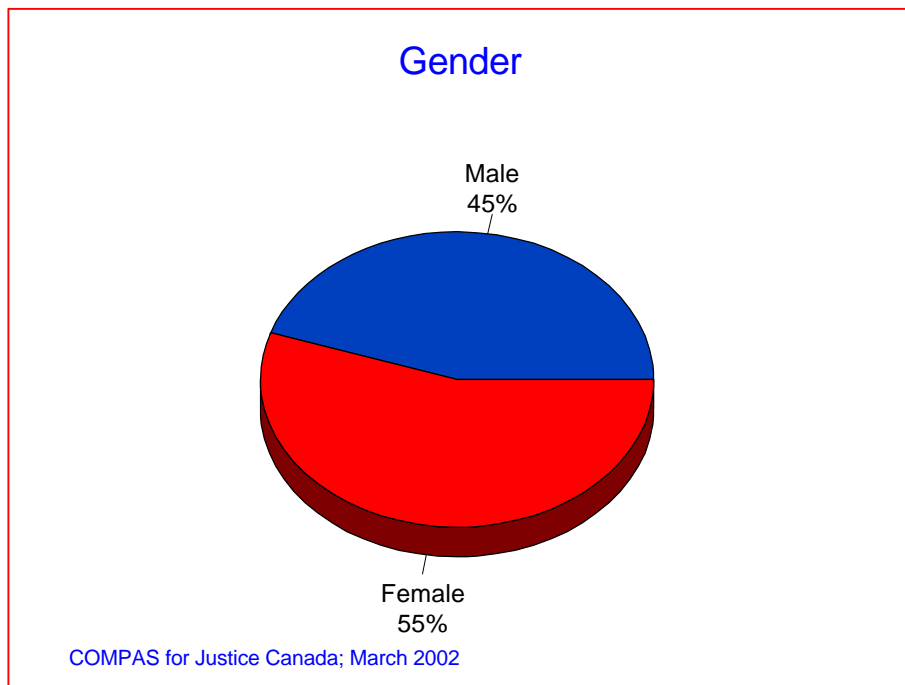
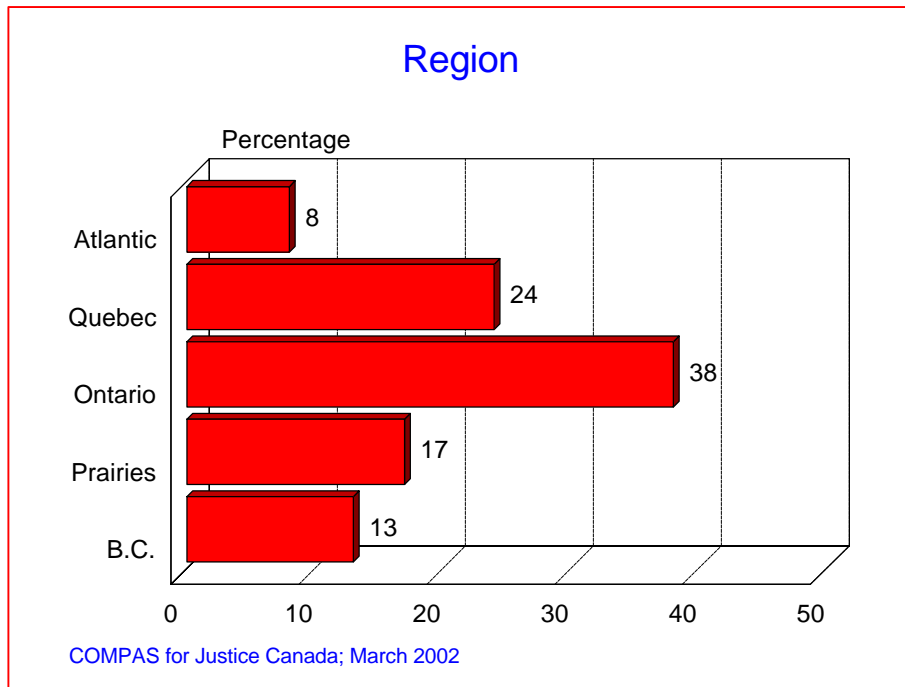


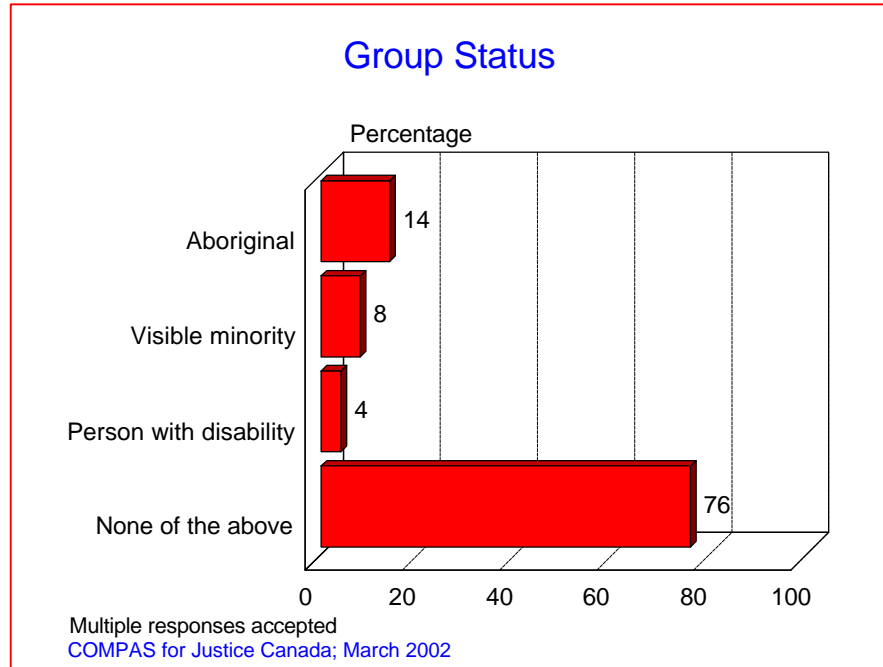
Household Income Before Taxes/Deductions



Age







Demographic Variations

This section presents the demographic variations for the issues explored in this survey. Characteristics included in this analysis are gender, age, education and region. We also present a detailed review of the perceptions and behaviours of Aboriginal Canadians, new Canadians (lived in Canada five years or less), and low-income Canadians.

Aboriginal Canadians

Aboriginal Canadians were more likely than other Canadians to need legal information or assistance, and to use legal aid offices to get it (and less likely to use lawyers). They expressed less confidence in the justice system, and routinely expressed higher levels of interest in the various types and sources of legal information, as well as the different potential methods to provide PLEI. Aboriginal Canadians also tended to be more aware of PLEI organizations in their community and to use them, and expressed more interest in legal information to better understand how laws affect them and their families.

Context Issues

Aboriginal Canadians were more likely than others to identify native rights and treaty issues as the most important justice issue facing them or their families (13% vs. 1%). While Aboriginal Canadians offered similar self-assessments to others in terms of their level of knowledge about the justice system in Canada, they were less likely to express confidence or trust in the system (34% vs. 48%).

Past Behavior and Information Needs

Aboriginal Canadians are more likely to have needed legal information or assistance in the past (59% vs. 47%). Among those who did need legal information or assistance, Aboriginal Canadians were more likely to say they needed both assistance and information (68% vs. 55%) and less likely to say legal information only (17% vs. 28%).

Among those who required legal assistance, Aboriginal Canadians were more likely to have needed representation in court (30% vs. 14%) and general advice or counseling (24% vs. 19%). Among those who required legal information, Aboriginal Canadians were more apt to say they needed general advice/information (24% vs. 15%). They were less likely to view the information they received as very useful (44% vs. 55%).



Aboriginal Canadians were more likely to go to a legal aid office for legal information or assistance (29% vs. 13%) and less apt to go to a lawyer (55% vs. 69%). They were less likely to say they received all of the information/assistance they needed (71% vs. 78%).

Among respondents who had not needed legal information or assistance, there was no difference in terms of knowing where to go to get such help (75-76%). And among those who said they would know where to go, Aboriginal Canadians were once again more likely to identify a legal aid office (18% vs. 10%) and less likely to say they would go to a lawyer (59% vs. 73%).

To varying degrees, Aboriginal Canadians were more likely to say they needed legal information or assistance with a criminal case (32% vs. 11%), separation, divorce and custody issues (39% vs. 22%), victims' rights (15% vs. 6%), family or domestic violence (15% vs. 4%), and human rights issues (15% vs. 4%). They were less likely to need it for making a will (20% vs. 40%) or real estate transactions (28% vs. 56%).

Awareness and Interest in PLEI

Aboriginal Canadians were slightly more likely to be aware of organizations in their community that provide legal education and information to the public (29% vs. 22%). Among those who were aware of such organizations, Aboriginal Canadians were more likely to identify a community agency/centre (33% vs. 17%) and less likely to identify a legal aid clinic (18% vs. 29%) as a source of such information.

Aboriginal Canadians were more apt to have received PLEI from an organization in their community (45% vs. 31%), but were similarly likely to express satisfaction with the information or service received. They were more likely to express strong interest in legal information to better understand how laws affect them and their families (49% vs. 35%).

Information Needs

Aboriginal Canadians were more likely to identify human rights issues (12% vs. 6%) as a legal issue that was most relevant to them and their families, and were less apt to identify making a will (8% vs. 17%) and real estate (7% vs. 19%).

Aboriginal Canadians were more likely to view the various types of legal information as very useful to them or their families. This includes:

- Family law issues such as separation, divorce, and custody issues (53% of Aboriginal Canadians vs. 30% of others)



- ❑ Victims' rights (59% vs. 36%)
- ❑ Human rights and related issues (59% vs. 38%)
- ❑ Youth justice and sentencing issues (52% vs. 34%)
- ❑ Alternative sentencing option, such as community service (42% vs. 24%)
- ❑ Alternatives to courts (40% vs. 25%)
- ❑ Family or domestic violence (43% vs. 28%)
- ❑ Employment law (53% vs. 41%)

Aboriginal Canadians were more apt to say they prefer going to a community agency or centre (18% vs. 10%) or a legal aid clinic (11% vs. 5%) to obtain legal information, and less likely to prefer going to a lawyer's office (19% vs. 29%), the municipal government (5% vs. 10%) or the Internet (28% vs. 34%).

Aboriginal Canadians tended to attribute greater usefulness to the various sources of information about the justice system:

- ❑ Legal aid clinics (asked only in Ontario and BC) (52% of Aboriginal Canadians vs. 35% of others)
- ❑ Community agencies or centres (48% vs. 33%)
- ❑ Schools and school boards (46% vs. 33%)
- ❑ Community events, such as fairs or exhibits (28% vs. 18%)
- ❑ Community radio or TV (40% vs. 30%)
- ❑ Non-governmental organizations, such as the Elizabeth Fry Society or the John Howard Society (22% vs. 14%)
- ❑ Government organizations and offices (47% vs. 42%)
- ❑ Church groups (18% vs. 16%)

The majority of Aboriginal Canadians (70%) view native friendship centres, band councils or other Aboriginal groups as useful sources of information.

Related Attitudes

Respondents were asked to rate five statements on a 7-point scale (7 = strongly agree; 1 = strongly disagree). To varying degrees, Aboriginal Canadians expressed higher levels of agreement (scores of 6-7) with all of the following statements:

- ❑ There is a high level of public distrust of the justice system in Canada (49% of Aboriginal Canadians vs. 36% of others)
- ❑ The justice system works well for people with money or education, but does not work very well for disadvantaged people (58% vs. 45%)
- ❑ Providing legal information and education can improve access to justice for those who traditionally have been at a disadvantage when dealing with the



justice system such as low-income Canadians, new immigrants, Aboriginal people or people with disabilities (67% vs. 57%)

- ❑ To be responsible citizens, people need to understand how laws affect them and to be able to participate effectively in the justice system (65% vs. 62%)
- ❑ Informing Canadians about the laws that affect them strengthens public confidence and trust in the justice system (52% vs. 50%)

Communication and Information Preferences

Other Canadians were more apt to identify the Internet/electronic information as the most useful method of receiving public legal information (38% vs. 30%).

Aboriginal Canadians were more likely to view as very effective all of the methods of receiving legal information and education. In declining order of difference:

- ❑ Seminars or workshops in their community targeted to specific groups, such as new Canadians or Aboriginal Canadians (61% of Aboriginal Canadians vs. 35% of others)
- ❑ Seminars or workshops in their community on specific legal issues (56% vs. 33%)
- ❑ The creation of libraries or resource centres to provide free access to legal information in different cities (72% vs. 58%)
- ❑ Audio-visual materials such as videos or audio tapes (47% vs. 35%)
- ❑ Education programs in schools (66% vs. 58%)
- ❑ Print material, such as brochures (54% vs. 47%)

The sole exceptions relate to electronic information through the Internet (61-63%) and the 1-800 help-lines (no difference).

There were essentially no differences in terms of suggestions for what the Government of Canada could do to improve the level of understanding that people have about the justice system in Canada, including how the laws affect them.

New Canadians

The following analysis looks at the perceptions and behaviours of new Canadians compared to those of other Canadians. For the purposes of this research, new Canadians were defined as people who have lived in Canada for five years or less (over 70% of whom were here three years or less).

Differences in the views of new Canadians versus those of others were generally not very pronounced. There were essentially no differences in the types of legal issues that



were most relevant to respondents or their families. New Canadians were only slightly less likely to view themselves as knowledgeable about the justice system in Canada, and were more apt to express confidence and trust in the Canadian justice system.

New Canadians were less apt to say they needed legal information/assistance with any of the specific areas explored in the survey, especially making a will, separation, divorce or custody issues, and a criminal case of any type. And new Canadians were more likely to rank as very useful information about employment law, alternative sentencing options, and human rights and related issues.

Context Issues

In terms of top justice-related issues, there were only relatively minor differences. New Canadians were less likely than others to identify youth crime as the most important issue facing Canadians (9% vs. 19%). They were also less willing or able to identify any top justice-related issues facing Canadians at this time (43% vs. 30%).

New Canadians were slightly less likely to view themselves as knowledgeable about the justice system in Canada (29% vs. 34%), and were more apt than others to express confidence and trust in the Canadian justice system (55% vs. 44%).

Past Behaviour and Information Needs

New Canadians were considerably less likely to say they have needed legal information or assistance in the past (36% vs. 50%). Among those who required legal assistance, new Canadians were more likely to say they needed help with real estate transactions (32% vs. 20%) and were less likely to identify assistance for separation, divorce or custody issues (15% vs. 22%) or representation in court (12% vs. 17%).

Among those who required legal information, new Canadians were less apt to say they needed information about separation/divorce/custody (21% vs. 14%). Both groups were similarly likely to view the information received as useful.

New Canadians were slightly less likely to go to a legal aid office for information or assistance (16% vs. 10%). They were more apt to say they did not get the information or assistance they needed (15% vs. 9%).

Among respondents who have not previously needed legal information/assistance, new Canadians were less likely to say they would know where to go if they needed such help (66% vs. 77%). Furthermore, new Canadians were slightly less likely to identify lawyers as a source of such information or assistance (67% vs. 72%). There were minimal variations across other sources of information.



New Canadians were less apt to say they needed legal information/assistance with any of the specific areas explored in the survey, especially making a will (27% vs. 40%), separation, divorce or custody issues (12% vs. 27%) and a criminal case of any type (4% vs. 16%). They were more likely to say that none of the things applied (36% vs. 22%).

Awareness and Interest in PLEI

There was no difference in terms of awareness of organizations in their communities that provide legal education and information to the public (22-23%). Among those who were aware of such organizations, new Canadians were more likely to identify agencies that serve new immigrants to Canada and less likely to identify community agencies or centres. New Canadians were slightly less likely to say they had received PLEI from an organization in their community, and to express satisfaction with it. No percentages are provided for some of these issues because of the very small sample size of new Canadians who were aware of or have used PLEI.

New Canadians tended to express higher levels of interest in legal information to better understand how laws affect them and their families (66% vs. 58%).

Information Needs

There were essentially no differences in the types of legal issues that were relevant to respondents or their families.

New Canadians were more likely to rank as very useful information about employment law (52% vs. 41%), alternative sentencing options (31% vs. 25%) and human rights and related issues (45% vs. 40%). There were minimal differences across other types of information (0-3%).

New Canadians were more apt to say they prefer going to the municipal government to obtain legal information (13% vs. 8%), and slightly less likely to prefer a lawyer's office (24% vs. 29%).

Two-thirds of new Canadians (65%) view agencies that serve new immigrants to Canada as very useful sources of information about the justice system. New Canadians and others tended to attribute similar levels of usefulness to the various sources of information about the justice system (within 0-5%). The sole exception was government organizations and offices, which new Canadians were more likely to rate as very useful (54% vs. 41%).



Related Attitudes

Respondents were similarly likely to view as important the need for governments in Canada to provide information to the public about the laws and justice system. However, new Canadians were somewhat more likely to think that governments in Canada were doing a good job in this area (39% vs. 32%).

People were asked to rate five statements on a 7-point scale (7 = strongly agree; 1 = strongly disagree). New Canadians expressed higher levels of strong agreement (scores of 6-7) with the following:

- ❑ To be responsible citizens, people need to understand how laws affect them and to be able to participate effectively in the justice system (71% of new Canadians vs. 60% of others)
- ❑ Providing legal information and education can improve access to justice for those who traditionally have been at a disadvantage when dealing with the justice system such as low-income Canadians, new immigrants, Aboriginal people or people with disabilities (66% vs. 57%)
- ❑ Informing Canadians about the laws that affect them strengthens public confidence and trust in the justice system (57% vs. 49%)

New Canadians expressed lower levels of strong agreement with:

- ❑ There is a high level of public distrust of the justice system in Canada (26% vs. 40%)
- ❑ The justice system works well for people with money or education, but does not work very well for disadvantaged people (39% vs. 48%)

Communications and Information Preferences

New Canadians were more apt to identify video/audio visual materials (21% vs. 15%) and personal contact (19% vs. 13%) as the most useful form of receiving PLEI. There were minimal differences across the other identified forms of receiving information.

New Canadians were more likely to rate as very effective different methods of providing PLEI, including seminars or workshops in their community targeted to specific groups such as new Canadians or Aboriginal Canadians (47% vs. 37%), audio-visual materials such as videos or audio tapes (43% vs. 36%), and education programs in schools (65% vs. 58%). Differences across other methods were small (within 0-3%).

Low-Income Canadians

For the purpose of this analysis, respondents were divided into two income groups:



- ❑ \$30,000 or less (low-income Canadians)
- ❑ \$30,001 or more (higher-income Canadians)

The focus of the analysis is on low-income respondents.

Low-income Canadians were less likely to have needed legal information or assistance in the past. When in need, they were more likely to go to a legal aid office and less likely to use a lawyer. Low-income respondents were less likely to express satisfaction with the information/assistance received, whether PLEI or otherwise. They expressed greater interest in legal information to better understand how laws affect them and their families. They were more apt to view all legal issues as relevant to them and their families, to attribute greater levels of usefulness to the various PLEI sources, and to view as effective the various methods of receiving PLEI.

Context Issues

In terms of top justice-related issues, there were only minor differences. Low-income Canadians were slightly less likely to identify youth crime as the most important issue facing Canadians (14% vs. 19%). They were also less willing or able to identify any top justice-related issues facing Canadians at this time (38% vs. 28%).

Low-income Canadians tended to express lower levels of confidence and trust in the justice system (42% vs. 49%). There were minimal differences in the other issues explored in this section.

Past Behaviour and Information Needs

Low-income Canadians were less likely to have needed legal information or assistance in the past (45% vs. 53%). Among those who required legal assistance, low-income Canadians were more likely to say they needed advice or counseling (22% vs. 17%) or representation in court (21% vs. 16%), and were less likely to identify assistance with making a will (4% vs. 15%).

Among those who required legal information, low-income Canadians were more likely to say they needed information about separation, divorce or custody issues (28% vs. 19%) or general advice/information (21% vs. 12%). They were less apt to say they needed information about making a will (3% vs. 12%) or real estate transactions (8% vs. 27%). Low-income Canadians were less likely to view the information received as very useful (46% vs. 57%).



Low-income Canadians were more likely to go to a legal aid office for information or assistance (25% vs. 12%) and less apt to use a lawyer (55% vs. 75%). They were also less apt to say they received all of the information/assistance they needed (70% vs. 82%).

Among respondents who had not needed legal information or assistance, there was little difference in terms of knowing where to go to get such help (73-77%). And among those who said they would know where to go, low-income Canadians were more likely to identify a legal aid office (15% vs. 9%) and less likely to say they would use a lawyer (63% vs. 74%), the Internet (11% vs. 17%) or a friend/family member (6% vs. 13%). Low-income Canadians were considerably less likely to say they needed legal information/assistance with real estate transactions (33% vs. 64%) or making a will (28% vs. 44%). They were more apt to need it for separation, divorce or custody issues (30% vs. 23%) or a criminal case of any type (19% vs. 12%). They were also more likely to say that none of the things applied (31% vs. 19%).

Awareness and Interest in PLEI

There was minimal difference in terms of awareness of organizations in their communities that provide legal education and information to the public (23-26%).

Among those who were aware of such organizations, low-income Canadians were less likely to identify legal aid clinics (18% vs. 33%). Respondents were equally likely to have received PLEI from an organization in their community (31-33%), but low-income Canadians were less likely to express satisfaction with what was received (52% vs. 65%). Low-income Canadians were more likely to express strong interest in legal information to better understand how the laws affect them and their families (44% vs. 33%).

Information Needs

Low-income Canadians were less likely to identify making a will (21% vs. 11%) or real estate (11% vs. 22%) as legal issues relevant to them and their families. Overall, they were less able or willing to identify any legal issues that were most relevant to them and their families (21% vs. 14%).

Low-income Canadians were more likely to view the various types of legal information as very useful to them or their families. This includes:

- ❑ Family law issues such as separation, divorce, and custody issues (45% among low-income Canadians vs. 26% among higher-income Canadians)
- ❑ Family or domestic violence (41% vs. 25%)



- ❑ Alternative sentencing options, such as community service (36% vs. 21%)
- ❑ Human rights and related issues (51% vs. 36%)
- ❑ Victims' rights (49% vs. 34%)
- ❑ Employment law (52% vs. 39%)
- ❑ Youth justice and sentencing issues (43% vs. 34%)
- ❑ Alternatives to courts, such as mediation or alternative dispute resolution (33% vs. 25%)

Low-income Canadians were less likely to prefer going to a lawyer's office (24% vs. 29%) or the Internet (20% vs. 43%) to obtain legal information.

Low-income Canadians tended to attribute greater usefulness to the various sources of information about the justice system:

- ❑ Schools and school boards (44% of low-income Canadians vs. 28% of higher-income Canadians)
- ❑ Church groups (22% vs. 11%)
- ❑ Legal aid clinics (asked only in Ontario and BC) (46% vs. 35%)
- ❑ Community radio or TV (38% vs. 27%)
- ❑ Community agencies or centres (42% vs. 32%)
- ❑ Government organizations and offices (50% vs. 41%)
- ❑ Community events, such as fairs or exhibits (24% vs. 16%)

Related Attitudes

Respondents were similarly likely to view as useful the need for governments in Canada to provide information to the public about the laws and the justice system (77-81%). However, low-income Canadians were somewhat more likely to think that the governments in Canada were doing a good job in this area (39% vs. 30%).

People were asked to rate five statements on a 7-point scale (7=strongly agree; 1=strongly disagree). Low-income Canadians expressed higher levels of strong agreement (scores of 6-7) with the following (although sometimes the differences were small):

- ❑ The justice system works well for people with money or education, but does not work very well for disadvantaged people (54% among low-income Canadians vs. 45% among higher-income Canadians)
- ❑ There is a high level of public distrust of the justice system in Canada (43% vs. 35%)
- ❑ To be responsible citizens, people need to understand how laws affect them and to be able to participate effectively in the justice system (67% vs. 60%)



- ❑ Providing legal information and education can improve access to justice for those who traditionally have been at a disadvantage when dealing with the justice system such as low-income Canadians, new immigrants, Aboriginal people or people with disabilities (62% vs. 58%)
- ❑ Informing Canadians about the laws that affect them strengthens public confidence and trust in the justice system (54% vs. 51%)

Communications and Information Preferences

Low-income Canadians were less apt to identify the Internet/electronic information as a useful form of receiving PLEI (25% vs. 46%). There were minimal differences across other identified forms of receiving information (when asked in an open-ended fashion). Low-income Canadians tended to view as very effective all of the methods that were identified as ways to provide PLEI. In declining order, income differences were:

- ❑ Audio-visual materials such as videos or audio tapes (44% vs. 33%)
- ❑ The creation of libraries or resource centres to provide free access to legal information in different cities (65% vs. 56%)
- ❑ Seminars or workshops in their community targeted to specific groups, such as new Canadians or Aboriginal Canadians (45% vs. 36%)
- ❑ Seminars or workshops in their community on specific legal issues (42% vs. 34%)
- ❑ Education programs in schools (64% vs. 56%)
- ❑ 1-800 help-lines, which people could call to obtain information about our laws and justice system (71% vs. 67%)

The sole exceptions were electronic information through the Internet, which low-income Canadians were less apt to view as effective (56% vs. 68%) and print materials such as brochures, which both groups were equally likely to view as effective.

Youth/Age

For this analysis, respondents were divided into the following age groups:

- ❑ 16-24 years (youth)
- ❑ 25-39 years
- ❑ 40-54 years
- ❑ 55 and over (seniors)

The main, but not exclusive focus of this note is on comparing the behaviour and views of youth vis-à-vis other Canadians.



The youngest cohort was less likely than other age groups to need legal information or assistance and less likely to go to a lawyer to get it. They expressed more confidence in the justice system, and were more likely to rate as useful schools/school boards (and less likely to view NGOs and community agencies/centres as useful). They were more apt to rate education programs in schools as an effective method of providing PLEI. Youth were the least aware of PLEI organizations in their community, but were proportionately more likely to have received information from such organizations.

Context Issues

The tendency to identify youth crime as the most important justice-related issue facing Canadians increases with age in a linear fashion (10% of youth vs. 15% of those aged 25-39 years vs. 19% of those 40-54 years vs. 22% of seniors). Seniors were also more likely to identify tougher sentencing (14% vs. 6-9% of all others), and to say they were no justice issues facing them or their families (66% vs. 58-59% of all others).

All respondents regardless of age provided similar self-assessments in terms of their levels of knowledge about the justice system in Canada (8-10%). However, youth expressed the most confidence and trust in this system (57% vs. 39-48% of all others – the level of confidence decreased with age).

Past Behaviour and Information Needs

Youth were much less likely to have needed legal information or assistance in the past (27% vs. 48-51% of those aged 25-39 years and seniors vs. 58% of those 40-54). Among those who had needed legal information or assistance, youth were the most likely to have needed information only (41% vs. 22-29% of all others) and the least likely to say both. All respondents were similarly likely to say they required assistance only (14-19%).

Youth were the most likely to require assistance with representation in court (30% vs. 15-19% among 25-54 year olds vs. 11% of seniors) and the least likely to require assistance for separation, divorce or custody issues (9% vs. 19-20% of those 40 and over vs. 28% among those between 25-39 years) or for real estate transactions (2% vs. 18-23% of those aged 25-54 years vs. 31% of seniors). The oldest cohort was the most apt to require assistance with making a will (24% vs. 2-10% among all others).

Among respondents who required legal information, youth were the most likely to have needed general advice/information (34% vs. 13-18% of all others) and information about traffic offences (13% vs. 2-5% of all others). However, they were the least likely to have required information about real estate transactions (5% vs. 17-23% of all



others) and information about separation, divorce and custody issues (7% vs. 18-25% of all others). The oldest cohort was the most likely to require information about making a will (21% vs. 2-7% among all others). All respondents were similarly likely to have rated the information received as useful.

Youth were considerably less likely to go to a lawyer for legal information or assistance (36% vs. 63-70% of those 25-54 years vs. 80% of seniors). Respondents 25-54 years were more likely to have used a legal aid office (17-20% vs. 9-12 % among all others). Youth were moderately less likely to say they received all the information or assistance that they needed (71% vs. 78% of all others).

Among respondents who have not previously required legal information or assistance, seniors were the most apt to say they would know where to go to get it (84% vs. 70-76% of others). Among those who said they knew where to go for legal information or assistance, the youngest cohort was once again less likely to say they would go to a lawyer (66% vs. 69-72% of those 25-54 years vs. 78% of seniors). Respondents aged 25-39 years were more likely to identify the Internet (20% vs. 9-12 % among all others).

The tendency to have needed legal information/assistance for making a will increases with age (19% vs. 24% of 25-39 year olds vs. 42% of those 40-54 years vs. 67% of seniors). The youngest cohort was also less likely to identify separation/divorce/child custody (16% vs. 24-27% of all others) and real estate transactions (30% vs. 47% of those 25-39 years vs. 63-66% among respondents 40 and over). Respondents aged 25-39 years were more apt to say they needed information/assistance with a criminal case (18% vs. 12-13% of youth and 40-54 year olds vs. 8% of seniors).

Awareness and Interest in PLEI

The youngest cohort was less aware of organizations (in their communities) that provide legal education and information to the public (14% vs. 24-27% of all others). Among those who were aware of such organizations, youth were considerably more likely to identify schools/school board (42% vs. 4-8% of all others) as PLEI providers, and less likely to identify legal aid clinics (8% vs. 21% of those 25-39 vs. 33-36% of all others) and community agencies or centres (12% vs. 19-23% of all others).

The youngest cohort was more apt to have received legal education or information from a PLEI provider in their community (43% vs. 29-34% of all others). They were less likely to express satisfaction with the information received (46% vs. 54% of those aged 25-39 years vs. 66-68% of others).



Respondents aged 25-39 years expressed the most interest in receiving legal information to better understand how laws affect them and their families (44% vs. 30-36% among all others).

Information Needs

Youth were less likely to identify making a will (9% vs. 17-18% of others) as a relevant legal issue. Meanwhile, respondents aged 25-39 years were more likely to cite family law issues (16% vs. 7-10% of others) and real estate (22% vs. 15-19% of those aged 40 and over vs. 12% of youth).

Respondents aged 25-39 years were slightly more likely to rate as very useful, family law issues (37% vs. 30-31% of all others) and alternatives to courts (33% vs. 26-28% of those 40 and over vs. 18% of youth). Seniors were less likely to rate as very useful human rights issues (34% vs. 42-43% of others) and employment law (28% vs. 44-48% of those 25-54 years vs. 52% of youth). There were minimal differences across other types of legal information (within 2-6%).

Seniors prefer to go to a lawyer to obtain legal information (40% vs. 21-29% of others), while youth prefer schools/school boards (10% vs. 1-2% of others). Respondents aged 25-39 prefer the Internet (44% vs. 29-35% of youth and those 40-54 vs. 20% of seniors).

In total, 60% of youth view youth groups or organizations as useful sources of information about the justice system of Canada (38% said very useful).

Seniors were more likely to view church groups as a very useful source of information about the justice system (21% vs. 13-16% of others). Meanwhile, youth were considerably more likely to say this about schools/school boards (51% vs. 31-37% of those 25-54 years vs. 24% of seniors) and slightly less likely to do so for NGOs such as the Elizabeth Fry Society or the John Howard Society (10% vs. 14-17% of all others) and community agencies/centres (30% vs. 33-37% of others). Respondents aged 25-39 years tended to view as very useful government organizations and offices (47% vs. 40-42% of others) and legal aid clinics [asked only in ON and BC] (43% vs. 34-38% of others).

Related Attitudes

Respondents were asked to rate five statements on a 7-point scale (7=strongly agree; 1=strongly disagree). Youth expressed lower levels of strong agreement (scores of 6-7) with all of the following:



- ❑ There is a high level of public distrust of the justice system in Canada (27% vs. 37-39% among respondents aged 25-54 years vs. 44% among seniors)
- ❑ Informing Canadians about the laws that affect them strengthens public confidence and trust in the justice system (44% vs. 49-50% of those aged 25-39 and seniors vs. 56% of respondents 40-54 years)
- ❑ The justice system works well for people with money or education, but does not work very well for disadvantaged people (38% vs. 41% among respondents aged 25-39 years vs. 52-54% among all others)
- ❑ To be responsible citizens, people need to understand how laws affect them and to be able to participate effectively in the justice system (58% vs. 61-64% of others)

Communications and Information Preferences

Seniors were the least likely to identify the Internet/electronic information as a useful form of receiving PLEI (20% vs. 30% of youth vs. 41% of those 40-54 vs. 50% among respondents aged 25-39 years). The younger two cohorts were slightly less likely to identify print material/brochures (41-44% vs. 48% each among the older two cohorts). Respondents aged 25-39 years were more likely to rate as very effective methods of receiving PLEI the following: electronic information through the Internet (73% vs. 65-65% of youth and 40-54 years vs. 42% of seniors); the creation of libraries or resource centres (65% vs. 55-58% of all others); 1-800 help lines (71% vs. 63-67% of all others); and print material such as brochures (52% vs. 49% of those 40-54 years vs. 43-44% of others). Meanwhile, youth were more likely to view as very effective education programs in schools (66% vs. 55-60% among all others) and less likely to say this about seminars or workshops in their community on specific legal issues (30% vs. 35-37% of those aged 25-39 and seniors vs. 40% of those aged 40-54).

Youth were more likely to suggest that the Government of Canada should teach the encourage the teaching about laws in schools as a way to improve the level of understanding that people have about the justice system in Canada (18% vs. 13-14% of those 25-54 years vs. 10% of seniors).

Gender

Men were slightly more likely to have needed legal information or assistance in the past. To varying degrees, women were more likely to have required it for separation, divorce or custody issues, making a will, and with real estate transactions. Men were more apt to need legal representation in court and general advice or counseling. Men and women expressed similar levels of awareness of PLEI providers in their communities. Women were slightly more apt to have used PLEI (no difference in



satisfaction levels), and to express greater interest in it. Women were more likely to view the various types and sources of PLEI as very useful, and to rate as very effective the different methods in which it can be provided.

Context Issues

Women were slightly more apt to identify youth crime as the most important justice issue facing Canadians at this time (19% vs. 14%). Men expressed somewhat stronger confidence and trust in the justice system in Canada (21% vs. 15%). There were minimal differences across the other issues explored in this section.

Past Behaviour and Information Needs

Men were slightly more apt to have needed legal information or assistance in the past (51% vs. 46%). Among those who said they needed legal information or assistance in the past, women were more likely to say they needed both (60% vs. 55%), while men were more likely to say assistance only (19% vs. 13%).

To varying degrees, women were more likely to have required legal support for separation, divorce or custody issues (31% vs. 11%), making a will (16% vs. 7%), and with real estate transactions (23% vs. 19%). Men were more apt to identify representation in court (20% vs. 14%) and general advice or counseling (23% vs. 17%).

Among those who required legal information, women were more likely to say they needed information about separation, divorce or custody issues (28% vs. 12%) and making a will (13% vs. 5%), while men were more likely to have needed general advice or information (21% vs. 13%). There was essentially no gender difference in terms of the perceived usefulness of the information.

Women were slightly more likely to go to a lawyer (69% vs. 64%) or legal aid office (18% vs. 13%) for legal information or assistance.

Among respondents who had not previously needed legal information or assistance, men were more likely to say they would know where to go for such help (79% vs. 72%). In terms of where they would go, women were more likely to identify a legal aid office (14% vs. 7%).

In terms of use of legal information or assistance, women were more likely to say making a will (41% vs. 34%), separation, divorce, custody issues (28% vs. 20%), and real estate transactions (56% vs. 49%). Men were more apt to say a criminal case (16% vs. 11%).



Awareness and Interest in PLEI

Men and women expressed similar awareness of organizations in their communities that provide PLEI to the public. Among those who were aware of such organizations, women were somewhat more likely to identify legal aid clinics (32% vs. 21%).

Women were slightly more apt to say they had received PLEI from an organization in their community (35% vs. 30%). There was minimal difference in the likelihood of being satisfied with the information or service received.

Women tended to express higher levels of strong interest in legal information to understand how laws affect them and their families (40% vs. 32%).

Information Needs

There were minimal differences in the types of legal issues that were most relevant to respondents or their families, with the exception of family law issues, which women were slightly more likely to identify (13% vs. 8%).

Women were more likely to view the various types of legal information as very useful to them or their families, although in many instances the differences were small:

- ❑ Family law issues such as separation, divorce, child support and custody issues (38% among women vs. 26% among men)
- ❑ Human rights and related issues (45% vs. 35%)
- ❑ Victims' rights (42% vs. 35%)
- ❑ Family or domestic violence (33% vs. 27%)
- ❑ Employment law (45% vs. 41%)

The exceptions were alternative sentencing options, alternatives to courts, and youth justice and sentencing, where both genders attributed similar levels of usefulness. Women prefer to go to a community agency or centre to obtain legal information (14% vs. 8%). There were minimal differences across other preferred sources of legal information (when asked in an open-ended fashion).

Among new Canadians, women were more likely to rate as very useful agencies serving new immigrants to Canada (69% vs. 60%). Aboriginal women were more likely than Aboriginal men to rate as very useful native friendship centres, band councils or other Aboriginal groups (72% vs. 67%). Women in Ontario and B.C. attributed greater usefulness to legal aid clinics (40% vs. 33%).



Women also tended to view as very useful the various sources of information about the justice system. In declining order of gender differences, they are:

- ❑ Community agencies or centres (40% of women vs. 28% of men)
- ❑ Community radio or TV (37% vs. 25%)
- ❑ Schools and school boards (38% vs. 30%)
- ❑ Community events, such as fairs or exhibits (22% vs. 15%)
- ❑ Church groups (19% vs. 12%)
- ❑ Government organizations and offices (44% vs. 41%)
- ❑ Non-governmental organization, such as Elizabeth Fry Society or the John Howard Society (16% vs. 14%)

Related Attitudes

Women were more likely to view as important the need for governments in Canada to provide PLEI (82% vs. 72%). Men tended to rate more highly their level of understanding of the justice system (43% vs. 37%).

Respondents were asked to rate five statements on a 7-point scale (7=strongly agree; 1=strongly disagree). Women expressed higher levels of strong agreement (i.e. scores of 6-7) with the following:

- ❑ To be responsible citizens, people need to understand how laws affect them and to be able to participate effectively in the justice system (68% of women vs. 55% of men)
- ❑ Informing Canadians about the laws that affect them strengthens public confidence and trust in the justice system (54% vs. 46%)
- ❑ Providing legal information and education can improve access to justice for those who traditionally have been at a disadvantage when dealing with the justice system such as low-income Canadians, new immigrants, Aboriginal people or people with disabilities (62% vs. 54%)

There were minimal differences regarding the level of public distrust of the justice system and perceptions that “the justice system works well for people with money or education, but does not work very well for disadvantaged people”.

Communications and Information Preferences

Women were more apt to identify print material and brochures as the most useful way to receive public legal information (51% vs. 39%). There were essentially no differences across other unaided preferences for receiving such information.



Women were more likely to view as very effective all of the methods that were identified as ways to provide PLEI. In declining order, gender difference were:

- ❑ The creation of libraries or resource centres to provide free access to legal information in different cities (66% vs. 51%)
- ❑ Print material, such a brochures (55% vs. 40%)
- ❑ 1-800 help-lines (73% vs. 59%)
- ❑ Seminars or workshops in their community on specific legal issues (42% vs. 29%)
- ❑ Education programs in schools (63% vs. 54%)
- ❑ Seminars or workshops in their community targeted to specific groups, such as new Canadians or Aboriginal Canadians (42% vs. 35%)
- ❑ Audio-visual materials such as videos or audio tapes (39% vs. 35%)
- ❑ Electronic information through the Internet (64% vs. 61%)

Education

For this analysis, respondents were divided into the following educational categories:

- ❑ High school education or less (labeled high school)
- ❑ People with some college or who have completed college (college)
- ❑ People with some university or who have completed university (university)

Respondents with university education tended to express higher levels of confidence in the justice system. They also expressed higher levels of awareness of organizations that provide PLEI and were more satisfied with the information or service received. They were more likely to express strong interest in legal information to better understand how the laws affect them and their families. They were more likely to view their understanding of the justice system as very good, and were less apt to view the various methods of providing PLEI as useful.

Respondents with high school education were less apt to have received PLEI, were more likely to view all types of legal information as useful, and were more apt to view schools and school boards as a useful source of legal information.

Context Issues

While all respondents regardless of education level offered similar self-assessments in terms of their knowledge about the justice system, people with university education were more likely to express strong confidence in the system (22% vs. 13-16% of others).



Past Behavior and Information Needs

Respondents were similarly likely to have needed legal information or assistance in the past (46-49%). Among those who did, university-educated respondents were more apt to say they needed information only (32% vs. 23-25% of others) and less likely to say assistance only (12% vs. 16-19% of others).

To varying degrees, respondents with university education were more likely to have required legal assistance with real estate transactions (33% vs. 19% of college educated vs. 14% of those with high school), general advice/counseling (23% vs. 17-19% of others) or making a will (20% vs. 7-9% of others). They were less likely to need representation in court (12% vs. 16% of college educated vs. 20% of those with high school only) or assistance for separation/divorce/custody (16% vs. 23-26% of others).

Among those who required legal information, respondents with high school were less apt to say they needed information about making a will (5% vs. 10-14% of others) or real estate transactions (15% vs. 21-25% of others). Respondents with university education were less likely to identify information about separation/divorce/custody (15% vs. 23-26%). University-educated respondents were more likely to view the information they received as useful (59% vs. 50-51% of others).

Respondents with high school education were slightly less apt to go to a lawyer for legal support (64% vs. 68-69% of others). The most educated respondents were less apt to identify a legal aid office (11% vs. 16-19% of others).

Among respondents who had not needed legal information or assistance, there was minimal difference in terms of knowing where to go to get such help. And among those who said they would know where to go, university-educated respondents were less likely to identify a legal aid office (8% vs. 12-13% of others), while the least educated were less likely to identify the Internet (7% vs. 18-19% of others).

In terms of use of legal information and assistance, respondents with high school or less were less likely to say making a will (34% vs. 39-41% of others), real estate transactions (45% vs. 58% of others), and going to court for a civil case (8% vs. 13-14% of others). Meanwhile, respondents with university education were less apt to identify separation, divorce, custody issues (21% vs. 25-27% of others) and a criminal case of any type (8% vs. 16-17% of others).



Awareness and Interest in PLEI

Respondents with university education expressed greater awareness of organizations in their communities that provide PLEI (30% vs. 23% of college educated vs. 18% of those with high school or less). Among those who were aware of PLEI providers, respondents with high school were more likely to identify schools and school boards (17% vs. 6-7% of others) and less likely to identify legal aid clinics (22% vs. 29-30% of others).

The least educated were considerably less apt to say they had received PLEI from an organization in their community (22% vs. 27-28% of others). People with university education were more likely to express satisfaction with the information/service received (66% vs. 60% of those with high school vs. 45% of those with college education).

University-educated respondents tended to express higher levels of strong interest in legal information to better understand how the laws affect them and their families (41% vs. 33-35%).

Information Needs

Respondents with high school education were less apt to identify making a will (12% vs. 19-20% of others) or real estate (11% vs. 18% of college educated vs. 25% of those with university) as legal issues that were most relevant to them and their families. They were also less willing or able to identify any relevant legal issues (22% vs. 14-15%) and more likely to say there were no relevant legal issues (28% vs. 15-19%).

Respondents with high school or less were more likely to view the various types of legal information as very useful to them or their families, although the differences between these people and respondents with college education tended to be small. In short, interest in most of these types of information decreased with the level of education.

- ❑ Family or domestic violence (35% vs. 31% of college educated vs. 23% of university educated)
- ❑ Victims' rights (43% vs. 40% of college educated vs. 33% of university educated)
- ❑ Youth justice and sentencing issues (40% vs. 36% of college educated vs. 31% of university educated)
- ❑ Family law issues (37% vs. 33% of college educated vs. 28% of university educated)
- ❑ Alternative sentencing options (29% vs. 25% of college educated vs. 23% of university educated)



- ❑ Human rights issues (43% vs. 38-39% of others)
- ❑ Employment law (46% vs. 40-43% of others)

The sole exception related to alternatives to courts, such as mediation or alternative dispute resolution, which all groups were equally likely view as very useful. Respondents with high school or less were more apt to say they prefer to go to court buildings to obtain legal information (11% vs. 4-5%) and less likely to prefer using the Internet (18% vs. 44-45% of others). The most educated were more likely to prefer going to a community agency or centre (15% vs. 9-10% of others).

All groups tended to attribute similar levels of usefulness to the various sources of information about the justice system (within 2-6%). The sole exceptions related to schools and school boards which respondents with high school were more likely to view as very useful (42% vs. 28-31% of others) and legal aid clinics (asked only in BC and Ontario), which respondents with college education were more apt to view as very useful (42% vs. 34-37% of others).

Related Attitudes

Respondents with university education were more likely to view their understanding of the justice system in Canada as very good (17% vs. 11-12% of others).

Respondents were asked to rate five statements on a 7-point scale (7 = strongly agree; 1 = strongly disagree). Respondents with university education expressed higher levels of agreement (scores of 6-7) with following:

- ❑ Providing legal information and education can improve access to justice for those who traditionally have been at a disadvantage when dealing with the justice system, such as low-income Canadians, new immigrants, Aboriginal people or people with disabilities (66% vs. 58% of those with college vs. 53% of those with high school education)
- ❑ To be responsible citizens, people need to understand how laws affect them and to be able to participate effectively in the justice system (66% vs. 64% of college educated vs. 58% of those with high school or less)
- ❑ Informing Canadians about the laws that affect them strengthens public confidence and trust in the justice system (55% vs. 47-50% of others).

Respondents with university education expressed lower levels of strong agreement with “there is a high level of public distrust of the justice system in Canada” (32% vs. 40-41% of others), while respondents with high school or less expressed higher levels of strong agreement with “the justice system works well for people with money or



education, but does not work very well for disadvantaged people” (49% vs. 45% of others).

Communications and Information Preferences

The least educated respondents were less apt to identify the Internet/electronic information (22% vs. 46-49% of others) and print material/brochures (42% vs. 46-49% of others) as the most useful ways to receive PLEI.

Respondents with university education were less likely to view as very effective the following methods of providing PLEI:

- ❑ 1-800 help lines (63% vs. 68-71% of others)
- ❑ Audio-visual materials such as videos or audio tapes (33% vs. 36% of college educated vs. 41% of those with high school or less)
- ❑ The creation of libraries or resource centres (56% vs. 60-61% of others)
- ❑ Seminars or workshops in their community on specific legal issues (33% vs. 37-38% of others).

The exceptions were print material, such as brochures, and seminars or workshops in their community targeted to specific groups such as new Canadians or Aboriginal Canadians. For both of these, differences were minimal. With respect to information through the Internet, respondents with high school education were less apt to view this as effective (53% vs. 68-70%).

Respondents with university education were more apt to suggest easier access to resources (14% vs. 8-9% of others) as something the Government of Canada could do to improve the level of understanding that people have about the justice system in Canada. People with high school education were slightly less likely to identify teaching the laws in school/better education (11% vs. 14-16% of others).



Region

For the purpose of this analysis, the country is divided into the following regions:

- ❑ Atlantic Canada
- ❑ Quebec
- ❑ Ontario
- ❑ The Prairies
- ❑ British Columbia (BC)

Quebecers were less likely to have needed legal information or assistance in the past. They also tended to attribute greater usefulness to the various sources of information about the justice system. Residents of Quebec and BC expressed more interest in legal information to better understand how laws affect them and their families. They were also more likely to view the various types of legal information as very useful. Residents of Quebec and the Prairies expressed less confidence in the justice system. BC residents were more aware of organizations that provide PLEI and were more likely to use them.

Context Issues

Residents of the Prairies were more likely than others to identify youth crime as the top justice issues facing Canadians (29% vs. 20-22% for Atlantic Canada and Ontario vs. 15% for B.C. vs. 4% for Quebec), as well as tougher sentencing (16% vs. 6-9% of others). Quebecers were less willing or able to identify any top justice-related issues (43% vs. 31-34% for the Atlantic and Ontario vs. 25-26% for the Prairies and BC).

Residents of BC and Ontario were slightly less likely to say there were no justice issues facing them or their families (56-58% vs. 61-65% of others).

All respondents regardless of region were similarly likely to view themselves as knowledgeable about the justice system in Canada. However, residents of Quebec and the Prairies were less apt to express strong confidence and trust in the justice system (11-12% vs. 19-23% of others).

Information Needs

Quebecers were less likely to have needed legal information or assistance in the past (39% vs. 48-52% for Ontario, the Prairies and BC vs. 56% for the Atlantic). Among those who did need legal information or assistance, residents of the Atlantic and Quebec were more likely to say they needed information only (36-38% vs. 22-23% of



others) and less apt to say both information and assistance (47-49% vs. 59-62% for Ontario and BC vs. 66% for the Prairies).

Among those who required legal assistance, Atlantic Canadians were more likely to identify assistance with real estate transactions (37% vs. 23-26% for Ontario and BC vs. 17% for the Prairies vs. 5% for Quebec) and less likely to identify representation in court (4% vs. 15-20% of others). Residents of the Prairies were more apt to identify assistance for separation/divorce/custody issues (31% vs. 15-17% for the Atlantic and Quebec vs. 20-22% for Ontario or BC) and less likely to identify general advice or counseling (14% vs. 20-22% of others).

Among those who required legal information, respondents from the Atlantic and Quebec were more apt to identify general advice/information (21-22% vs. 14-17% of others). Quebecers were considerably less likely to identify real estate transactions (7% vs. 17% for the Prairies and BC vs. 28-31% for Ontario and Atlantic Canada). Meanwhile, residents of Quebec and the Prairies were more likely to need information about separation/divorce/custody issues (24% each vs. 16-19% of others). They were less likely to view the information they received as useful (48-49% vs. 55-57% of others).

Residents of Atlantic Canada were more likely to go to a lawyer for legal information or assistance (75% vs. 68-70% for Ontario, the Prairies and BC vs. 51% for Quebec) and less apt to go to a legal aid office (7% vs. 15% among Ontarians vs. 17-20% of all others). They were slightly more likely to say they received all of the information or assistance they needed (81% vs. 78-79% for Ontario and the Prairies vs. 74-75% for Quebec and BC).

Among respondents who had not needed legal information or assistance, Quebecers and Ontarians were slightly less likely to say they would know where to go to get such help (73-74% vs. 77-79% of others). And, among those who said they would know where to go, residents of the Prairies were the most likely to identify a lawyer (84% vs. 75-78% for BC, Ontario and the Atlantic vs. 56% for Quebec).

Quebecers were less likely to say they needed legal information or assistance with making a will (32% vs. 37-39% for the Prairies and BC vs. 41-45% for Ontario and the Atlantic) or real estate transactions (33% vs. 53% for BC vs. 58-61% for the Prairies, Ontario and the Atlantic). They were also more apt to say that none of the things applied (34% vs. 21-23% of others). Residents of Atlantic Canada were less likely to say they needed information/assistance with a criminal case of any type (5% vs. 13-16% of others), going to court for a civil case (7% vs. 10-11% for Ontario, the Prairies and BC vs. 14% for Quebec) or separation, divorce or custody issues (17% vs. 21-24% for Ontario and the Prairies vs. 27-28% for BC and Quebec).



Awareness and Interest in PLEI

Residents of BC were more likely to be aware of organizations in their community that provide PLEI (31% vs. 25% each for the West and Quebec vs. 19-20% for the Atlantic and Ontario). Among those aware of such organizations, Ontario residents were more likely to identify community agencies/centres (27% vs. 18-19% for Quebec and BC vs. 13% each for the Atlantic and the Prairies). Quebecers were less apt to identify legal aid clinics (16% vs. 25% for the Prairies vs. 30-35% of all others).

BC residents were more apt to have received PLEI from a community organization (42% vs. 38% for the Prairies vs. 33% for Quebec vs. 26-29% for Ontario and the Atlantic). Atlantic Canada residents were much more likely to express strong satisfaction with the service or information received (86% vs. 64-69% for BC and Quebec vs. 52% for the Prairies vs. 43% for Ontario).

Residents of Quebec and BC were more likely to express strong interest in legal information to better understand how laws affect them and their families (40-41% vs. 35% each for Ontario and the Atlantic vs. 30% for the Prairies).

Information Needs

Quebecers were less likely to identify real estate (9% vs. 15-17% for Atlantic Canada and BC vs. 21-24% for Ontario and the Prairies) and making a will (12% vs. 16-18% for BC, Ontario and the Prairies vs. 22% for the Atlantic) as legal issues that were most relevant to them and their families. Residents of Atlantic Canada and the Prairies were slightly less apt to identify family law issues (7-9% vs. 11-13% among all others).

Quebecers were more likely to view the various types of legal information as very useful to them or their families. This includes:

- ❑ Employment law (55% vs. 48% for BC vs. 41% for Ontario vs. 30-35% for Atlantic Canada and the Prairies)
- ❑ Family law issues (41% vs. 29-33% of all others)
- ❑ Victims' rights (49% vs. 43% for BC vs. 32-37% of all others)
- ❑ Family or domestic violence (33% vs. 31% for BC vs. 25-28% of all others)

Residents of BC were either slightly more likely than Quebecers or equally likely to rank as very useful human rights issues (48% each vs. 37-39% for the Atlantic and Ontario vs. 32% for the Prairies), alternative sentencing options (30-33% vs. 25-26% for Ontario and the Atlantic vs. 19% for the Prairies), alternatives to courts (32-35% vs. 22-26% for Ontario and the Atlantic vs. 18% for the Prairies), and youth justice and sentencing issues (38-40% vs. 34-35% of all others).



Quebecers were less apt to prefer going to a lawyer (15% vs. 29% for BC vs. 32-26% of all others) to obtain legal information. Respondents from BC were more likely to prefer going to a community agency or centre (16% vs. 11-13% for Quebec and Ontario vs. 5-7% for the Atlantic and the Prairies).

Quebecers tended to attribute greater usefulness to the various sources of information about the justice system:

- ❑ Schools and school boards (41% vs. 33-34% for Ontario, the Prairies and BC vs. 29% for the Atlantic)
- ❑ Community events (26% vs. 18-19% for BC and Ontario vs. 13-15% for Atlantic Canada and the Prairies)
- ❑ Community radio or TV (37% vs. 31-34% for Ontario and the Atlantic vs. 27-28% for the Prairies and BC)
- ❑ Community agencies or centres (41% vs. 39% for BC vs. 30-33% for Ontario and the Prairies vs. 27% for Atlantic Canada)
- ❑ Government organizations and offices (52% vs. 49% for BC vs. 36-39% of all others).

Quebecers were less likely to view as useful non-governmental organizations (11% vs. 14-16% for the Prairies, Atlantic and Ontario vs. 20% for BC) and church groups (13% vs. 16-17% for Ontario, BC and the Prairies vs. 22% for Atlantic Canada). Residents of BC were more apt to view legal aid clinics (asked only in BC and Ontario) as a very useful source of information about the justice system (42% vs. 35%).

Related Attitudes

Residents of BC were more likely to view as very important the need for governments in Canada to provide PLEI (82% vs. 77-78% for Atlantic Canada, Quebec and Ontario vs. 72% for the Prairies). Respondents from all regions were similarly likely to think that governments in Canada were doing a good job in this area. Residents of Quebec, Ontario and BC were slightly more likely to rate highly their level of understanding of the justice system (14% each vs. 9-11% for the Atlantic and the Prairies).

Respondents were asked to rate five statements on a 7-point scale (7 = strongly agree; 1 = strongly disagree). To varying degrees, residents of Quebec and BC expressed higher levels of agreement (scores of 6-7) with the following statements:

- ❑ Informing Canadians about the laws that affect them strengthens public confidence and trust in the justice system (57% each v. 49% for Ontario vs. 42-43% among all others)



- Providing legal information and education can improve access to justice for those who traditionally have been at a disadvantage when dealing with the justice system such as low-income Canadians, new immigrants, Aboriginal people or people with disabilities (63-66% for BC and Quebec vs. 52-57% for Ontario and the Prairies vs. 46% for the Atlantic)
- The justice system works well for people with money or education, but does not work very well for disadvantaged people (51-54% for BC and Quebec vs. 47% for the Atlantic vs. 44% among all others).

Residents of BC were more likely to express strong agreement with “to be responsible citizens, people need to understand how laws affect them and to be able to participate effectively in the justice system” (70% vs. 62-65% for Atlantic Canada, Quebec and Ontario vs. 56% for the Prairies). Residents of Ontario and the Atlantic were more apt to express strong agreement with “there is a high level of public distrust of the justice system in Canada” (41-42% vs. 34-37% among all others).

Communications and Information Preferences

Quebecers were more apt to identify print material/brochures (51% vs. 46% each for Ontario and BC vs. 38-41% for the Atlantic and the Prairies) as the most useful way to receive PLEI, and less apt to identify personal contact (5% vs. 16-20% of all others). Residents of Ontario and BC were more likely to identify the Internet/electronic information (40-41% vs. 36% for Quebec vs. 31-33% for the Atlantic and the Prairies).

There was no consistent pattern in viewing the identified methods of providing PLEI as effective. Quebecers were more likely to think this about 1-800 helps lines (73% vs. 65-67% for the Atlantic, Ontario and the Prairies vs. 59% for BC) and print material such as brochures (58% vs. 48-50% for the Atlantic and BC vs. 40-44% for Ontario and the Prairies). Meanwhile, respondents from the Atlantic were less apt to view electronic information through the Internet as effective (52% vs. 59% for the Prairies vs. 64-65% of others). Residents of Quebec and the Prairies were less likely to view education programs in schools as very effective (55% each vs. 61-62% of others).

Residents of Atlantic Canada and the Prairies were less apt to view libraries as an effective way to provide PLEI (54-55% vs. 62-66% of others), while people in BC and the Atlantic were more likely value seminars or workshops in their community on specific legal issues (42-46% vs. 33-35% of others). BC and Quebec residents were more apt to rate as effective seminars or workshops in their community targeted to specific groups, such as new Canadians or Aboriginal Canadians (44% each vs. 33-37% of others).



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Residents of Atlantic Canada were more likely to suggest providing more information as something that the Government of Canada could do to improve understanding about the justice system in Canada (32% vs. 27-29% for Ontario and the Prairies vs. 24-26% for BC and Quebec). They were less likely to suggest providing information through TV or advertising (6% vs. 9-10% for the Prairies and BC vs. 12-15% for Ontario and Quebec). Quebecers were less apt to suggest teaching about the law in school (8% vs. 14-16% for the Atlantic, Ontario and the Prairies vs. 19% for BC).



Summary of Multivariate Analysis

Numerous multivariate analyses were performed to better understand the needs, orientations and perceptions of Canadians with respect to PLEI. A technical note appended to this report presents the procedures used, and detailed findings of, these analyses. This present note provides a summary of the main results.

Here, it is most useful to draw out the broad contours that occur throughout these analyses at various levels. These occur with respect to variations in the overall power of the models that have been created, as well as concerning the degree of consistency of certain demographic and socio-economic drivers (i.e. relevant factors) across the models.

Models that focus on the organizational and media/format delivery of PLEI are much more powerful than models explaining more general perspectives on PLEI. What this means is that Canadians appear to have fairly structured systems or frameworks for viewing and thinking about PLEI delivery. Their assessments of the details of delivery and information dispersal are well embedded in a variety of demographic and experiential drivers. More general opinions, interests and evaluations concerning PLEI are not as distinctly embedded in drivers that reflect personal characteristics and experience. In the case of PLEI, the most stable perspectives, and probably the perspectives most useful in policy design, are in the details of delivery and information dispersal rather than in broad perspectives on the performance, interest and value of PLEI.

When we look at the performance of specific drivers across the various models, there are some striking consistencies. Some of the most noteworthy ones are:

- ❑ In every final model, gender has a significant impact. Women consistently show more interest in PLEI, attribute more importance to PLEI, have more positive evaluations of government performance regarding PLEI, and have higher acceptance of a variety of PLEI delivery organizations and media. So, it appears that women may be well served by existing activities in this area, but probably have an appetite for additional PLEI activity.
- ❑ In all but one of the models, there was a negative income effect. Thus, higher income people tend to place less value on PLEI, and to have lower evaluations of and to not favor a wide variety of organizations and media forms for PLEI delivery. This may be related to tax issues, in which high-income people are not interested in expanding the delivery of services because this may ultimately have indirect tax pressure implications. At the other end of the spectrum, it may



well be that lower income people are more concerned with finding alternative sources of information outside of conventional fee-for-service legal services arrangements.

- ❑ The disabled are associated with three negative effects. They stand out as a segment of the population that has a low evaluation of government PLEI performance, and low evaluations of the usefulness of a variety of delivery organizations and media. This is clearly one group that may need further consideration to determine modes of delivery and information dispersal that would be more applicable for them. Other groups, such as new Canadians and visible minorities, are less likely to have significant effects, but, when they do, they tend to indicate a positive disposition towards PLEI and towards its delivery through conventional mechanisms. Aboriginal people run somewhat counter to this pattern, but not as strongly as the disabled.
- ❑ Interestingly, past use of legal information/assistance tends to have a negative, albeit not dominant, influence in most models. The exception to this seems to be previous use of information/assistance in the area of human rights. There are various possible interpretations. It may mean that people who have had experience with basic fee-for-service legal services were generally satisfied and don't have elaborate needs beyond that. It may also suggest that more positive orientations toward PLEI rely on an interest in some of the more activist and topical areas of the law. It might also indicate a basic skepticism about PLEI providing more quality than that associated with earlier negative legal experiences.
- ❑ Alternatively, ratings of future needs for information in various areas of law, as opposed to past use, tend to have positive influences in most models. This may mean that current and future needs might be defined more expansively than past usage of legal assistance/information would suggest. It may mean that there are segments of the population with an interest in legal policy issues above and beyond the ones connected with basic property and estate transactions.
- ❑ Not surprisingly, indicators of interest in PLEI and self-evaluations of knowledge about the justice system are often major drivers in models.
- ❑ Finally, it should be noted that age did not have a significant impact in any of the models. It is fairly certain that age is not one of the more important drivers of PLEI perceptions, evaluations and delivery preferences.

In summary, some of the most immediately useful information that comes out of this analysis is that special analytic attention probably needs to be devoted to groups such as the disabled in order to determine what special or unique needs they have in the area of legal information/service delivery. The consistently lower PLEI orientation of men also deserves further reflection and may provide a potential growth area if properly understood. In addition, the income effect could bear further exploration in order to



determine if it is essentially a reflection of tax apprehension. Finally, it may be of some use to consider if those who are particularly positively oriented towards PLEI are primarily interested in the more policy-oriented areas of law rather than the day-to-day transaction aspects of law and legal services. If this is the case, it could either suggest a way of clarifying the mission of PLEI agencies, or it could suggest ways of expanding the focus of such activities to include more common and established legal information needs.

More Detailed Results

General Opinion about PLEI

Questions 50-54 provide general indicators of opinion about public legal education. Despite the relatively small number of variables in this set, a factor analysis produced two strong factors. Those who scored high on the first and strongest factor have a positive view of the purposes of public legal education. Those who scored high on the second and weaker factor think that the justice system is biased and distrusted.

We decided to focus on the strongest factor derived above, and it was used as a dependent variable in a series of regressions. The following all have a significant, positive impact on the value of public education factor:

- ❑ Interest in getting more information on legal matters (i.e. question 23).
- ❑ Rating of information usefulness with respect to human rights. People rating this area highly tend to score high on the value of public legal education. This is the most powerful driver in this model by a small margin.
- ❑ Rating one's self as having a high level of understanding of the justice system.
- ❑ Gender has a significant impact in which females tend to attribute higher importance to the public value of PLEI.

The following have a significant, negative effect on the value of public education factor:

- ❑ Previous need for legal information/assistance pertaining to human rights. Thus, it appears that people generally think that the value of PLEI is high even when they have not needed human rights information/assistance in the past. When they have had need of such information/assistance in the past, they are more likely to discount the value of public legal education.
- ❑ Income. Such negative income effects are a common part of many of the models in this report.
- ❑ Education has a positive, significant impact on the public value of PLEI factor.



Importance of Government of Canada Being Involved in PLEI

Question 47 measures the perceived importance of government involvement in PLEI-type activity. This is another aspect of the general context of opinion about PLEI. We find that the following have a significant, positive impact on perceived importance:

- ❑ Rating of information usefulness with respect to human rights and alternatives to courts.
- ❑ General interest in getting more information on legal matters. This is the largest driver in this model.
- ❑ Gender has a significant impact, in which women are more likely to assign high importance than men.

The following have a significant, negative impact on perceived importance:

- ❑ Previous need for legal information/assistance pertaining to a will (just on the margin of conventional significance).
- ❑ Number of people in the household.

Perceived Performance of Governments in PLEI

There are a wide variety of significant factors that drive perceptions in this area. We find that the following have a significant, positive impact on perceptions of government performance:

- ❑ Rating of information usefulness with respect to employment law and alternative sentencing.
- ❑ Self-rated understanding of the justice system. This is the biggest driver in the performance model.
- ❑ Women are more likely than men to give a high performance rating (just short of conventional significance).
- ❑ Francophones are more likely than Anglophones to give high performance ratings. This is one of the larger language effects encountered.
- ❑ Visible minorities give higher performance ratings than others. This is significant.
- ❑ New Canadians give significantly higher performance ratings than others.

As well, the following have a significant, negative impact on perceptions of government performance:

- ❑ Rating of information usefulness with respect to victims' rights and family law.



- ❑ Previous need for legal information/assistance pertaining to criminal law and human rights.
- ❑ Disabled people give significantly lower performance ratings than others.
- ❑ Quebec residents give lower performance ratings than other regions (on the edge of conventional significance).
- ❑ British Columbia residents give significantly lower performance ratings than most other regions.
- ❑ As is often the case in the models in this report, the income driver has a significant, negative effect.

Usefulness of Different Forms of Organizational Delivery of PLEI

We now turn to indicators that are more reflective of possible future directions for PLEI delivery. First, we factor analyzed questions 38-45. These represent the perceptions that people have of the usefulness of different kinds of organizations as delivery agents for PLEI information and services. Certain questions were excluded because they relate to subsets of the sample (e.g. youth, women or new Canadians only). Including them would have reduced the usable data set considerably due to missing value constraints.

The factor analysis produces one strong factor. People who score high on this factor tend to see most kinds of delivery organizations as being useful. People scoring low on this factor may generally discount the usefulness of any kind of delivery organization, or they may think that some organization not included in the survey would be useful. The core meaning of the factor is the extent to which people see a variety of organizations as being useful PLEI delivery agents. All original variables have strong relationships to the main factor. The factor works least well in relation to delivery through government offices. Government office delivery seems to be viewed as being relatively distinct from other types of organizational delivery.

There are a wide variety of significant and near-significant effects. The following have a significant, positive impact on the factor reflecting usefulness of different forms of organizational delivery of PLEI:

- ❑ Rating of the usefulness of information on family law, youth justice, family or domestic violence, employment law, alternative sentencing options, and alternatives to courts.
- ❑ Interest in legal information in order to understand how the system affects one's self or one's family.
- ❑ Having needed information in the past on human rights or any non-defined legal information or assistance,



- ❑ Rating one's self as having a high level of understanding of the justice system (just short of conventional significance).
- ❑ Women, new Canadians, and visible minority Canadians score higher on this factor.
- ❑ Household size (just short of conventional significance). That is, the bigger the size of the household, the higher the rating.

As well, the following have a significant, negative impact on the factor reflecting usefulness of different forms of organizational delivery of PLEI:

- ❑ Having needed information/assistance in the past on family law issues and victims' rights (both just short of conventional significance).
- ❑ Disabled Canadians and Aboriginal Canadians score lower than others on this factor.
- ❑ British Columbians score lower than others (while short of conventional significance, it is worth noting because B.C. is one of the areas that has a somewhat different legal aid delivery system than the rest of Canada).
- ❑ Household income.
- ❑ Education (right on the border of conventional significance).

There is a certain amount of complexity in the above effects, but some are fairly straightforward. For example, it is not surprising that people who have high prospective needs in a variety of areas of legal information will think that future delivery of such information through a variety of organizations is useful. It is also not surprising that people who express greater interest in legal matters or who have a high self-evaluation of their understanding of justice issues will generally find a variety of legal information agencies to be useful.

However, some of the other effects need elaboration. Looking at the responses of different segments of the sample, we see that women, visible minorities and new Canadians are more likely than others to rate as useful the various delivery agencies. This is interesting when we recall that special agencies for women and new immigrants were excluded from the construction of the factor on which this is based. This does not mean that women, visible minorities and new Canadians would not want special agencies focused on them. However, it does mean that they would find a variety of conventional agencies, other than those specially focused on them, to be useful.

Alternatively, Aboriginals and disabled people tend to rate the usefulness of the delivery agencies lower than others in the sample. In the case of Aboriginals, this probably means that they would prefer agencies specifically focused on them. It is also likely that the disabled would prefer special delivery agencies for their group. In any



case, these findings and interpretations make some sense in light of the special arrangements that have been made for natives in the justice system already and in terms of the geographic concentration of Aboriginal populations. Respecting the disabled, the whole question of access issues probably drives the results here.

Respecting demographic and socio-economic effects, we see again the negative income effect. As noted elsewhere, this may be an anticipatory tax. An aspect of the socio-economic effects that is unexpected is that there is also a negative educational effect. This is not common in these types of models. It may be that the more highly educated think that they can gain whatever information/service they need from distribution methods outside the realm of social or governmental agencies. They may be looking for modes of delivery that are not mediated by direct contact with organizations. For example, the highly literate and educated could probably make do with access to printed material and Internet access not connected to specific types of organizations.

Finally, we see another household size effect. The positive nature of this effect suggests that the higher the number of people in a household, the wider the variety of needs for information and the greater the general rating of usefulness for a variety of delivery organization types.

Note also the continuing absence of an age effect. There do not appear to be continuous variations across generations in perceptions of the way PLEI should be delivered. There may be more discrete or "chunky" generational or differences, but there is no clear impact arising from the whole age spectrum.

Prospective Rating of Effectiveness of Different Modes of PLEI Dispersal

Another factor was created from questions 56-63. These reflect different media and forms for the potential distribution of PLEI information. Again, we find only one strong factor. When we make this the focus for a regression analysis, we should be aware that the single factor basically represents the level of agreement that most forms of information dispersal pertaining to PLEI are effective. The important core of this factor's information is a general tendency in rating all forms of information dispersal as effective.

The following have a significant, positive impact on the prospective rating of the effectiveness of the various modes of dispersal of PLEI:



- ❑ The rated importance of information on youth justice, family/domestic violence, employment law, and alternative sentencing issues as part of current and future needs.
- ❑ Interest in information on laws to help one better understand how they might affect one's self or family. This, in fact, is the largest effect.
- ❑ Having needed legal information/assistance pertaining to human rights.
- ❑ Rating one's self as having a good understanding of the legal system.
- ❑ Gender: women were more likely than men to give high ratings on this factor.
- ❑ Language has a significant impact. Specifically, Francophones provide a lower rating than Anglophones on this factor.
- ❑ Household size.

The following have a significant, negative impact on the prospective rating of the effectiveness of the various modes of dispersal of PLEI:

- ❑ In terms of past usage of legal information/assistance, having sought information to draw up a will or pertaining to a civil case (the latter has a near-significant impact).
- ❑ Disabled people are significantly more likely to give low ratings.
- ❑ Income has quite a strong negative impact.

Perhaps the most interesting findings here are those relating to gender, disability, language and the continuing influence of income. It would appear as though men, the disabled and Francophones are less likely to think that the various modes of information dispersal would be effective. This may mean that such groups would like to see other modes of information dispersal, or, most likely, it may represent a general tendency to discount any common mode of information dispersal. The negative income effect was also observed in earlier analysis of the value of PLEI. As noted, this is not uncommon in these types of analyses and may reflect the tax burden skepticism of higher income people with respect to many kinds of publicly funded activities.



Multivariate Analysis: Detailed Technical Note

Introduction

The general structure of the report will proceed from more general orientations toward, and evaluations of, PLEI to an analysis of more specific indicators of how PLEI should be delivered in the future. So, initial parts of the analysis will set some of the current context and evaluation of PLEI, and later parts of the report will deal more directly with potential operational issues for the future.

In this report, we provide the following analysis:

- A characterization of the basic structure of responses concerning general opinion about PLEI, the importance attached to government involvement in PLEI, the perceived performance of the government with respect to PLEI, the perceived usefulness of different potential sources of PLEI, and the perceived usefulness of different formats used to distribute PLEI. When these analyses involve sets of variables, as they generally do, this will be done primarily with a technique generically known as factor analysis. The factors derived can then be used to represent the underlying sets of original variables.
- An assessment of which variables drive opinion on PLEI, the importance of government delivery of PLEI, government performance in delivering PLEI and perceptions of the usefulness of various forms of PLEI delivery and distribution. This will be done using ordinary regression analysis in which various drivers are used to predict the factors or other variables established in the first part of the analysis. Drivers will include such variables as past use of legal information and assistance, awareness of PLEI, interest in PLEI, perceived usefulness of various kinds of legal services for the present and future. These last indicators might be considered indicators of need for legal information and assistance. In addition, a variety of socio-economic and demographic variables are assessed as drivers. This includes age, income, gender, education, number of people in the household, region of residence, language, aboriginal status, visible minority status, new Canadian status, disabled status and a self-evaluation of knowledge of the justice system. Regressions in this part of the analysis will be done in stages, gradually eliminating the less important variables and finally reporting models where all drivers are significant or near significant.

The main focus of this analysis will be the full respondent population rather than particular subsets of it. However, in some cases, it will be possible to show how particular subsets vary in their opinions and preference pertaining to PLEI compared to the full population.

Respecting the kind of information we will see from factor analysis, the following are the key indicators for our purposes:

- Loadings. These are coefficients that reflect how important original variables in the survey are in the construction of newly derived factor variables that summarize the original variables. The bigger the loading coefficient, the more important the relation between a particular factor and one of the underlying variables. This information is primarily useful in assigning meaning to the factors derived.
- KMO statistics and variance accounted for summarize the overall factor solution. The higher the KMO and the more variance accounted for by the strongest derived factors, the better the factor solution generally speaking.

Respecting the second or regression part of this analysis, some things to note about the information derived from such regression analysis and related terminology are as follows:

- By conventional significance we mean an effect that has a significance level of .05 or less using a two-tailed test.
- By near or marginal significance we mean an effect that has a significance level between .05 and .1 using a two-tailed test.
- In early stages of developing models, we sometimes continue to examine drivers that have significance between .1 and .2 because it is possible that such drivers will assume greater significance as other drivers are filtered out of or added into the models.
- The R square and adjusted R square statistics will be used to show how well a complete regression model works. An R square is an indication of the percentage of variation in a dependent variable, such as perceptions pertaining to PLEI, that is predicted by a complete set of independent variables or drivers.
- Betas or standardized coefficients are used to reflect the importance of individual drivers. The range between -1 and 1. The larger a Beta the more important its driver, controlling for the other drivers in the model.

A very general preview of major findings is presented below. However, much more detail is available in the main body of the report.

- Models focusing on the organizational and media/format delivery of PLEI are much more powerful than models explaining more general perspectives on PLEI. Thus, the public appears to have a more structured framework for assessing the specifics of PLEI delivery than it has for making general assessments about its importance and performance.

When we look at the performance of specific drivers across the various models, there are some striking consistencies. In brief, some of the more noteworthy ones are:

- In every final model, gender has a significant impact. Women consistently show more interest in PLEI, attribute more importance to PLEI, have more positive evaluations of government activities in PLEI, have higher acceptance of a variety of PLEI delivery organizations and media. So, women appear to be relatively well served by existing activities in this area, but they also probably have a taste for additional PLEI activity.
- In all but one of the models, there was a negative income effect. Thus, higher income people tend to place less value on PLEI, to have a lower evaluation of and to not favor a wide variety of organizations and media forms for PLEI delivery.
- The disabled are associated with three negative effects. They stand out as a small segment of the population that has a low evaluation of government PLEI performance, and low evaluations of the usefulness of a variety of delivery organizations and media. This is clearly one group that may need further consideration to determine modes of delivery and information dispersal that would be more applicable for them. Other groups, such as new Canadians and visible minorities, are less likely to have significant effects, but, when they do, they tend to indicate a positive disposition towards PLEI and towards its delivery through conventional mechanisms. Aboriginals run somewhat counter to this pattern, but not as strongly as the disabled.
- Interestingly, past use of legal information/assistance tends to have a negative, although not dominant, influence in most models. The exception to this seems to be previous use of information/assistance in the area of human rights. There are various possible interpretations. It may mean that people who have had experience with very basic fee-for-service legal services were basically satisfied and don't have elaborate needs beyond that. It may also suggest that more positive orientations toward PLEI rely on an interest in some of the more activist and topical areas of the law. It might also indicate a basic skepticism about PLEI providing more quality than that associated with earlier negative legal experiences.
- Alternatively, ratings for future needs for information in various areas of law, as opposed to past use, tend to have positive influences in most models. This may mean that current and future needs might be defined more expansively than past history of legal service and information usage would suggest. It may mean that there are segments of the population with an interest in legal policy issues above and beyond the ones connected with basic property and estate transactions.
- Not surprisingly, indicators of interest in PLEI and self-evaluations of knowledge about the justice system are often major drivers in models.

- Finally, it should be noted that age did not have a significant impact in any of the models. It is fairly certain that age is not one of the more important drivers of PLEI opinions, evaluations and delivery preferences.

This should lead to some further consideration of the way services are provided to various groups. It may also provide insights into consideration of how support for PLEI could be improved or managed. More detail on this appears in the concluding comments.

Detailed Results

General Opinion about PLEI

Questions 50-54 provide general indicators of opinion about public legal education. These are:

I'm going to read you a number of statements. Please tell me the degree to which you agree or disagree with each one by using a 7-point scale, where '1' means you strongly disagree and '7' means you strongly agree with that statement. How about...? (ROTATE)

50. Informing Canadians about the laws that affect them strengthens public confidence and trust in the justice system.
51. Providing legal information and education can improve access to justice for those who traditionally have been at a disadvantage when dealing with the justice system, such as low-income Canadians, new immigrants, Aboriginal people or people with disabilities.
52. To be responsible citizens, people need to understand how laws affect them and to be able to participate effectively in the justice system.
53. The justice system works well for people with money or education, but does not work very well for disadvantaged people.
54. There is a high level of public distrust of the justice system in Canada.

Despite the relatively small number of variables in this set, a factor analysis produces two strong factors. The KMO statistic is 66.3, which is modest but acceptable. The two strong factors do account for 62.7% of the variation in the original variables, and this is quite good. The rotated loadings on the two factors are as follows:

Rotated Component Matrix ^a

	Component	
	public value of public legal education	legal system biased
Q50. Level of agreement: Informing Canadians about the laws that affect them strengthens public confidence and trust in the justice system	.806	-2.643E-02
Q51. Level of agreement: Providing legal information and education can improve access to justice for those who traditionally have been at a disadvantage when dealing with the justice system	.730	.212
Q52. Level of agreement: To be responsible citizens, people need to understand how laws affect them and to be able to participate effectively in the justice system	.766	8.923E-02
Q53. Level of agreement: The justice system works well for people with money or education, but does not work very well for disadvantaged people	.107	.805
Q54. Level of agreement: There is a high level of public distrust of the justice system in Canada	6.762E-02	.805

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
 Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

The factors have been labeled with their obvious meanings in light of the size of the loading coefficients. Those who score high on the first and strongest factor have a positive view of the purposes of public legal education. Those who score high on the second and weaker factor think that the justice system is biased and distrusted.

We decided to focus on the strongest factor derived above, and it was used as a dependent variable in a series of regressions. We started out with a large number of drivers or independent variables, and went through numerous iterations until we arrived at a small set of drivers that were significant or extremely close to significance

Specifically, what we finally arrived at was a regression based on a small number of subjective and demographic variables. In this regression, we find that the specific drivers explain 15.1% of the public value of public legal education factor using R square and 14.6% using the adjusted R square, which is more

appropriate. This is a statistically significant result. This means that the specific benefit drivers explain 14.6% of the variation in the factor reflecting public value of public legal education.

Specific effects of each driver are provided below:

Coefficients^a

Model		Standardized Coefficients	
		Beta	Sig.
1	Q23. How interested are YOU in legal information to help you better understand how laws affect you or your family and to help you deal effectively with the justice system in Canada?	.173	.000
	Q26. Rating of information usefulness: Human rights and related issues.	.178	.000
	needed legal information or assistance relating to human rights	-.065	.022
	Q49. In general, how would you rate your level of understanding of the justice system in Canada, including how laws affect you?	.124	.000
	Gender or respondent	.106	.000
	Q69. During the 2001 calendar year, what was your approximate total household income, before taxes and deductions?	-.069	.023
	Q65. What is the highest level of education that you have completed?	.140	.000

a. Dependent Variable: public value of public legal education

- General interest in getting more information on legal matters, as reflected in question 23, has a positive and significant effect on the public value of public education factor.
- Rating of information usefulness with respect to prospective needs in the area of human rights is significant. People rating this area highly tend to score high on the public value of public legal education factor. This is the most powerful driver in this model by a small margin.
- Previous need for legal information/assistance pertaining to human rights has a significant and negative effect. Thus, it appears that people generally think that public value of PLEI is high even when they have not needed human rights information/assistance in the past. When they have had need of such information/assistance in the past, they are more likely to discount the value of public legal education.

- Rating one's self as having a high level of understanding of the justice system has a positive and significant impact on the public value of public education factor.
- Gender has a significant impact in which females tend to attribute higher importance to the public value of PLEI.
- Income has a significant negative impact on perceptions of the public value of PLEI. Such negative income effects are a common part of many of the models in this report.
- Education has a positive, significant impact on the public value of PLEI factor.

Importance of Government of Canada Being Involved in PLEI

Question 47 measures the perceived importance of governments in Canada being involved in PLEI-type activity. This is another aspect of the general context of opinion about PLEI. The question reads as follows:

47. In your opinion, how important is it that governments in Canada provide information to help people understand how laws affect them and to enable them to participate effectively in the justice system? Please use a 7-point scale, where 1 means not important at all, and 7 means very important.

There is no need to factor analyze this as it is only one variable. However, we did want to establish its important drivers, and we did this by using a series of regressions. The final model arrived at is described below.

Specifically, we arrived at a regression based on a small number of subjective and demographic variables. In this regression, we find that the specific drivers explain 13.6% of the variation in perceptions of the importance of governments being involved in PLEI using R square and 13.2% using the adjusted R square, which is more appropriate. This is a statistically significant result. This means that the drivers explain 13.2% of the variation in perceptions of the importance of government involvement in PLEI.

Specific driver effects are as follows:

Coefficients^a

Model		Standardized Coefficients	Sig.
		Beta	
1	Q26. Rating of information usefulness: Human rights and related issues.	.116	.000
	Q32. Rating of information usefulness: Alternatives to courts, such as mediation or alternative dispute resolution	.083	.005
	Q23. How interested are YOU in legal information to help you better understand how laws affect you or your family and to help you deal effectively with the justice system in Canada?	.216	.000
	needed legal information or assistance for a will	-.049	.053
	Gender or respondent	.094	.000
	Q67. Including yourself, how many people currently live in your household?	-.050	.046

a. Dependent Variable: Q47. In your opinion, how important is it that governments in Canada provide information to help people understand how laws affect them and to enable them to participate effectively in the justice system?

We find that:

- Rating of information usefulness with respect to prospective needs in the area of human rights has a positive and significant impact on perceived importance.
- Rating of information usefulness with respect to prospective needs in the area of alternatives to courts has a positive and significant impact on perceived importance.
- General interest in getting more information on legal matters has a positive and significant effect on perceived importance. This is the largest driver in this model.
- Previous need for legal information/assistance pertaining to a will has a significant and negative effect. This is just on the margin of conventional significance.
- Gender has a significant impact, in which women are more likely to assign high importance than men.
- Number of people in the household has a significant and negative effect on perceived importance.

Perceived Performance of Governments in PLEI

Question 48 allows us to see perceptions of government performance in promoting PLEI. This is a summary evaluation of PLEI activities to date. The question reads as follows.

48. And how would you rate the job that governments in Canada are doing in this area?
Please use a 7-point scale, where 1 means very poor, and 7 means very good.
(REPEAT PHRASE FROM PREVIOUS QUESTION IF NEEDED)

Again, no factor analysis is necessary here. We arrived at a final regression based on a small number of subjective and demographic variables. In this regression, we find that the specific drivers explain 15.9% of variation in perception of government performance in delivering PLEI using R square and 14.7% using the adjusted R square, which is more appropriate. This is a statistically significant result. This means that the drivers explain 14.7% of the variations in perceptions of government performance in delivering PLEI.

Specific driver effects are as follows:

Coefficients^a

Model		Standardized Coefficients	Sig.
		Beta	
1	Q28. Rating of information usefulness: Victims' rights.	-.080	.028
	Q30. Rating of information usefulness: Employment law.	.070	.041
	Q31. Rating of information usefulness: Alternative sentencing options, such as community service	.119	.001
	needed legal information or assistance for separation, divorce, child support, child custody	-.082	.005
	needed legal information or assistance for a criminal matter	-.074	.011
	needed legal information or assistance relating to human rights	-.121	.000
	Q49. In general, how would you rate your level of understanding of the justice system in Canada, including how laws affect you?	.299	.000
	Gender or respondent	.053	.062
	Language of interview	.166	.004
	visible minority	.060	.038
	disabled	-.070	.013
	someone not born in canada and here less than 3 years	.069	.020
	quebec	-.112	.051
	british columbia	-.072	.012
	Q69. During the 2001 calendar year, what was your approximate total household income, before taxes and deductions?	-.080	.007

^a. Dependent Variable: Q48. And how would you rate the job that governments in Canada are doing in this area?

There are a wide variety of significant drivers. Specifically, we find that:

- Rating of information usefulness with respect to the area of victims' rights has a negative and significant impact on perceived performance.
- Rating of information usefulness with respect to the area of employment law has a positive and significant impact on perceived performance.
- Rating of information usefulness with respect to the area of alternative sentencing has a positive and significant impact on perceived performance.
- Previous need for legal information/assistance pertaining to family law has a significant and negative effect.
- Previous need for legal information/assistance pertaining to criminal law has a significant and negative effect.

- Previous need for legal information/assistance pertaining to human rights has a significant and negative effect.
- Self-rated understanding of the justice system has a significant, positive effect on perceived performance. This is the biggest driver in the performance model.
- Women are more likely than men to give a high performance rating. This falls just short of conventional significance.
- Francophones are more likely than Anglophones to give high performance ratings. This is one of the larger language effects encountered in this report.
- Visible minorities give higher performance ratings than others. This is significant.
- Disabled people give significantly lower performance ratings than others.
- New Canadians give significantly higher performance ratings than others.
- Quebec residents (in contrast to Francophones) give lower performance ratings than other regions. This is on the edge of conventional significance.
- British Columbia residents give significantly lower performance ratings than most other regions.
- As is often the case in the models in this report, the income driver has a significant, negative effect.

Usefulness of Different Forms of Organizational Delivery of PLEI

We now turn to indicators that are more reflective of possible future directions for PLEI delivery. First, we factor analyzed questions 38-45. These represent the perceptions that people have of the usefulness of different kinds of organizations as delivery agents for PLEI information and services. Questions 34-37 and 42 were excluded because they relate to subsets of the sample. Including them would have reduced the usable data set considerably due to missing value constraints. The specific phrasing of the battery of questions is provided below:

There are various places where people could go to obtain information to help them better understand the justice system and how laws affect them. Using a 7-point scale, please rate each of the following in terms of where you would like to go to obtain such information, where '1' means it is not a useful location at all for you, and '7' means it is a very useful location. How about... (ROTATE)

34. Women's organizations and shelters (ask women only)
35. Agencies that serve new immigrants to Canada (ask new immigrants only).
36. Youth groups or organizations (ask youth only).
37. Native friendship centres, bank councils or other Aboriginal groups (ask Aboriginal Canadians only).
38. Church groups.
39. Schools and school boards.
40. Government organizations and offices.
41. Non-governmental organizations, such as the Elizabeth Fry Society or the John Howard Society.
42. Legal aid clinics (ask only in Ontario and BC).
43. Community radio or TV.

- 44. Community agencies or centres.
- 45. Community events, such as fairs or exhibits.

The factor analysis produces one strong factor with a KMO statistic of .845 and accounting for 44.3% of the variation in the underlying variables. This is a fairly good result for a one-factor solution. People who score high on this factor will tend to see most kinds of delivery organizations as being useful. People scoring low on this factor may generally discount the usefulness of any kind of delivery organization, or they may think that some organization not in the series included in the survey would be useful. The core meaning of the factor is the extent to which people see a variety of organizations as being useful PLEI delivery agents. The loadings of original variables on the derived factor are presented in the following table. As is evident, all original variables have strong relationships to the main factor. Analysis of other information not presented here, but consistent with the loadings presented below, suggests that the factor structure works least well in relation to delivery through government offices. Government office delivery seems to be viewed as being relatively distinct from other types of organizational delivery.

Component Matrix^a

	Usefulness of Various Organizations as Delivery Agents for PLEI
Q38. Rating of location usefulness: Church groups	.612
Q39. Rating of location usefulness: Schools and school boards	.724
Q40. Rating of location usefulness: Government organizations and offices	.553
Q41. Rating of location usefulness: Non-governmental organizations, such as the Elizabeth Fry Society or the John Howard Society	.591
Q43. Rating of location usefulness: Community radio or TV	.663
Q44. Rating of location usefulness: Community agencies or centres	.758
Q45. Rating of location usefulness: Community events, such as fairs or exhibits	.728

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. 1 components extracted.

Now we will take all of the subjective and demographic drivers mentioned earlier and run them through regressions until we find those drivers that are significant or near significant. Note that if groups such as women, the disabled, new Canadians or Aboriginals act as negative drivers in this analysis, we can tentatively assume that they would have found organizations tailored specifically to them to be more effective.

In the regression application in this part of the analysis, we ultimately arrived at a model that contained only significant or near significant drivers. In this regression, we find that drivers explain 37.8% of the factor of interest using R square and 36.5% using the adjusted R square, which is more appropriate. This is a statistically significant result. This means that the specific drivers explain 36.5% of the variation in the factor reflecting usefulness of different forms of organizational delivery of PLEI.

Specific effects of each driver are provided below:

Coefficients^a

Model		Standardized Coefficients	Sig.
		Beta	
1	Q25. Rating of information usefulness: Family law issues, such as separation, divorce, child support and custody issues	.101	.005
	Q27. Rating of information usefulness: Youth justice and sentencing issues.	.078	.031
	Q29. Rating of information usefulness: Family or domestic violence.	.147	.000
	Q30. Rating of information usefulness: Employment law.	.069	.028
	Q31. Rating of information usefulness: Alternative sentencing options, such as community service	.112	.002
	Q32. Rating of information usefulness: Alternatives to courts, such as mediation or alternative dispute resolution	.116	.001
	Q23. How interested are YOU in legal information to help you better understand how laws affect you or your family and to help you deal effectively with the justice system in Canada?	.115	.000
	needed legal information or assistance for separation, divorce, child support, child custody	-.053	.063
	needed legal information or assistance relating to victims rights	-.048	.077
	needed legal information or assistance relating to human rights	.081	.004
	Q9. Have you ever needed legal information or assistance for any reason?	.062	.024
	Q49. In general, how would you rate your level of understanding of the justice system in Canada, including how laws affect you?	.048	.073
	Gender or respondent	.109	.000
	aboriginal or native	-.055	.044
	visible minority	.091	.001
	disabled	-.054	.037
	someone not born in canada and here less than 3 years	.043	.118
	british columbia	-.041	.104
	Q69. During the 2001 calendar year, what was your approximate total household income, before taxes and deductions?	-.067	.024
	Q67. Including yourself, how many people currently live in your household?	.047	.079
	Q65. What is the highest level of education that you have completed?	-.055	.057

^a. Dependent Variable: Usefulness of Various Organizations as Delivery Agents for PLEI

There is a wide variety of significant and near significant effects. Specifically:

- Rating of usefulness of family law information has a positive and significant impact on the factor reflecting usefulness of different forms of organizational delivery of PLEI.
- Rating of usefulness of youth justice information has a positive and significant impact on the factor reflecting usefulness of different forms of organizational delivery of PLEI.
- Rating of usefulness of family or domestic violence information has a positive and significant impact on the factor reflecting usefulness of different forms of organizational delivery of PLEI. This, in fact, is the biggest effect.
- Rating of usefulness of employment law information has a positive and significant impact on the factor reflecting usefulness of different forms of organizational delivery of PLEI.
- Rating of usefulness of alternative sentencing option information has a positive and significant impact on the factor reflecting usefulness of different forms of organizational delivery of PLEI.
- Rating of usefulness of information about alternatives to courts has a positive and significant impact on the factor reflecting usefulness of different forms of organizational delivery of PLEI.
- Interest in legal information in order to understand how the system affects one's self or one's family has a significant positive impact on the factor reflecting usefulness of different forms of organizational delivery of PLEI.
- Having needed information/assistance on family law issues in the past has a negative impact on the factor reflecting usefulness of different forms of organizational delivery of PLEI. This falls just short of conventional significance.
- Having needed information on victims' rights in the past has a negative impact on the factor reflecting usefulness of different forms of organizational delivery of PLEI. This falls just short of conventional significance.
- Having needed information on human rights in the past has a positive and significant impact on the factor reflecting usefulness of different forms of organizational delivery of PLEI.
- Having needed any non-specifically defined legal information or assistance in the past has a positive and significant impact on the factor reflecting usefulness of different forms of organizational delivery of PLEI.
- Rating one's self as having a high level of understanding of the justice system has a positive impact on the factor reflecting usefulness of different forms of organizational delivery of PLEI. This falls just short of conventional significance.
- There is a gender effect in which women are significantly more likely than men to score high on the factor reflecting usefulness of different forms of organizational delivery of PLEI.

- There is a significant effect in which Aboriginal Canadians score lower than others on the factor reflecting usefulness of different forms of organizational delivery of PLEI.
- There is a significant effect in which visible minority Canadians score higher than others on the factor reflecting usefulness of different forms of organizational delivery of PLEI.
- There is a significant effect in which disabled Canadians score lower than others on the factor reflecting usefulness of different forms of organizational delivery of PLEI.
- There is an effect in which new Canadians score higher than others on the factor reflecting usefulness of different forms of organizational delivery of PLEI. This is short of conventional significance, but it is worth noting because of some of the special segmentation concerns in this study.
- There is an effect in which British Columbians score lower than others on the factor reflecting usefulness of different forms of organizational delivery of PLEI. This too is short of conventional significance, but it is worth noting because British Columbia is one of the areas that has a somewhat different legal aid delivery system than the rest of Canada.
- Again, household income has a significant, negative impact on the factor reflecting usefulness of different forms of organizational delivery of PLEI.
- Household size has a positive impact on the factor reflecting usefulness of different forms of organizational delivery of PLEI. This a little short of conventional significance.
- Education has a negative effect on the factor reflecting usefulness of different forms of organizational delivery of PLEI. This is right on the border of conventional significance.

There is a certain amount of complexity in the above effects, but some of the effects are fairly straightforward. For example, it is not surprising that people who have high prospective needs in a variety of areas of legal information will think that future delivery of such information through a variety of organizations is useful. It is also not surprising that people who express a high interest in legal matters or who have a high self-evaluation of their understanding of justice issues will generally find a variety of legal information agencies to be useful. However, some of the other effects need further elaboration.

Looking at the responses of different noteworthy segments of the sample, we see that women, visible minorities and new Canadians are more likely than others to rate standard delivery PLEI agencies as useful. This is interesting when we recall that special agencies for women and new immigrants were excluded from the construction of the factor on which this is based. This does not necessarily mean that women, visible minorities and new Canadians would not want special agencies focused on them. However, it does mean that they would find a variety of conventional agencies, other than those specially focused on them, to be useful.

Alternatively, Aboriginals and disabled people tend to rate the usefulness of conventional delivery organizations for future PLEI efforts as being lower than other parts of the sample. In the case of Aboriginals, this probably means that they would prefer agencies specifically focused on them, and question options pertaining to them were asked of their part of the sample. It is also likely that the disabled would prefer special delivery agencies for their group. No special questions were asked of this subset of the sample. In any case, these findings and interpretations make some sense in light of the special arrangements that have been made for natives in the justice system already and in terms of the geographic concentration of Aboriginal populations. Respecting the disabled, the whole question of access issues probably drives the results here.

Respecting demographic and socio-economic effects, we see again the negative income effect. As noted elsewhere, this may be an anticipatory tax scepticism in which high-income people are not interested in expanding the delivery of services because this might ultimately have indirect tax pressure implications. At the other end of the spectrum, it may well be that lower income people are more concerned with finding alternative sources of information outside of conventional fee-for-service legal services arrangements.

A further aspect of the socio-economic effects that is unexpected is that there is also a negative educational effect. This is not common in these types of models. It may be that the more highly educated think that they can gain whatever service and information they need from distribution methods outside the realm of social and governmental agencies. They may be looking for modes of delivery that are not mediated by direct contact with organizations. For example, the highly literate and educated could probably make do with access to printed material and Internet access not connected to specific kinds of concrete organizations.

Finally, we see another household size effect. The positive nature of this effect suggests that the higher the number of people in a household, the wider the variety of needs for information and the greater the general rating of usefulness for a variety of delivery organization types.

Note also the continuing absence of an age effect. There do not appear to be continuous variations across generations in perceptions of the way PLEI should be delivered. There may be more discrete or "chunky" generational or differences, but there is no clear impact arising from the whole age spectrum.

Prospective Rating of Effectiveness of Different Modes of PLEI Information
Dispersal

Another factor was created from questions 56-63. These reflect different media and forms for the potential distribution of PLEI information. The specific wording of these questions is provided below.

There are a number of ways in which legal information and education could be provided to the public. For each of the following, please tell me how effective you think that method would be for you. To do this, use a 7-point scale, where '1' means you think it would not be effective at all, and '7' means very effective. How about... (ROTATE)

56. Electronic information through the Internet.
57. Audio-visual materials, such as videos or audio tapes.
58. Print material, such as brochures.
59. Education programs in schools.
60. Seminars or workshops in your community on specific legal issues.
61. Seminars or workshops in your community targeted to specific groups, such as new Canadians or Aboriginal Canadians.
62. The creation of libraries or resource centres to provide free access to legal information in different cities.
63. 1-800 help-lines, which people could call to obtain information about our laws and justice system.

Again, we find only one strong factor. The KMO statistic is quite good at .838. The amount of variation accounted for in the original variables by the strong factor is 38.87%. Specific loadings showing how original variables relate to the strong factor are noted in the following table.

Component Matrix^a

	prospective rating of effectiveness of different modes of PLEI information dispersal
Q56. Rating of method effectiveness: Electronic information through the Internet	.395
Q57. Rating of method effectiveness: Audio-visual materials, such as videos or audio tapes	.660
Q58. Rating of method effectiveness: Print material, such as brochures	.588
Q59. Rating of method effectiveness: Education programs in schools	.657
Q60. Rating of method effectiveness: Seminars or workshops in your community on specific legal issues	.748
Q61. Rating of method effectiveness: Seminars or workshops in your community targeted to specific groups, such as new Canadians or Aboriginal Canadians	.696
Q62. Rating of method effectiveness: The creation of libraries or resource centres to provide free access to legal information in different cities	.673
Q63. Rating of method effectiveness: 1-800 help-lines, which people could call to obtain information about our laws and justice system	.494

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. 1 components extracted.

If we make this the focus for a regression analysis, we should be aware that the single factor basically represents the level of agreement that most forms of information dispersal pertaining to PLEI are effective. It is possible to analyze the individual variables separately, but the results obtained are not terribly powerful. The important core of this factor's information is a general tendency in rating all forms of information dispersal as effective. The relatively low loadings for Internet and telephone dispersal are related to simpler patterns suggesting that people would be more comfortable with classroom, seminar and print type

dispersal. However, there is still some approval of the idea of more electronically-oriented modes of information dispersal. In any event, high ratings on the overall factor represent a tendency to rate most forms of information dispersal as being effective. Low scores on the factor might arise from the view that the specific forms of dispersal mentioned in the question are not appropriate but others might be, or, more likely, low scores might arise from a general discounting of any mode of dispersing PLEI.

In the regression application in this part of the analysis, we took all of the subjective and socio-economic variables used before, and we refined them through a series of models until we arrived at a set that contained only significant or near significant drivers. In this regression, we find that drivers explain 25.2% of the factor of interest using R square and 24.3% using the adjusted R square, which is more appropriate. This is a statistically significant result. This means that the specific benefit drivers explain 24.3% of the variation in the factor reflecting effectiveness of modes of PLEI information dispersal.

Specific effects of each driver are provided below:

Coefficients^a

Model		Standardized Coefficients	Sig.
		Beta	
1	Q27. Rating of information usefulness: Youth justice and sentencing issues.	.082	.026
	Q29. Rating of information usefulness: Family or domestic violence.	.096	.008
	Q30. Rating of information usefulness: Employment law.	.064	.047
	Q31. Rating of information usefulness: Alternative sentencing options, such as community service	.081	.024
	Q23. How interested are YOU in legal information to help you better understand how laws affect you or your family and to help you deal effectively with the justice system in Canada?	.188	.000
	needed legal information or assistance for a will	-.064	.020
	needed legal information or assistance relating to going to court for a civil case	-.045	.090
	needed legal information or assistance relating to human rights	.049	.072
	Q49. In general, how would you rate your level of understanding of the justice system in Canada, including how laws affect you?	.065	.016
	Gender or respondent	.145	.000
	Language of interview	-.068	.011
	disabled	-.053	.045
	Q69. During the 2001 calendar year, what was your approximate total household income, before taxes and deductions?	-.128	.000
	Q67. Including yourself, how many people currently live in your household?	.072	.008

^a. Dependent Variable: prospective rating of effectiveness of different modes of PLEI information dispersal

- The rated importance of youth justice issues information as part of current and future needs has a positive and significant impact on the prospective rating of the effectiveness of modes of dispersal of PLEI.
- The rated importance of family/domestic violence information as part of current and future needs has a positive and significant impact on the prospective rating of the effectiveness of modes of dispersal of PLEI.

- The rated importance of employment law issues information as part of current and future needs has a positive and significant impact on the prospective rating of the effectiveness of modes of dispersal of PLEI.
- The rated importance of alternative sentencing issues information as part of current and future needs has a positive and significant impact on the prospective rating of the effectiveness of modes of dispersal of PLEI.
- Interest in information on laws to help one better understand how they might affect one's self or family has a positive and significant impact on the prospective rating of the effectiveness of modes of dispersal of PLEI. This, in fact, is the largest effect.
- In terms of past history of legal information/assistance usage, having sought information to draw up a will has a negative and significant impact on the prospective rating of the effectiveness of modes of dispersal of PLEI.
- Having needed legal information/assistance pertaining to a civil case has a negative and near significant impact on the prospective rating of the effectiveness of modes of dispersal of PLEI.
- Having needed legal information/assistance pertaining to human rights has a positive and near significant impact on the prospective rating of the effectiveness of modes of dispersal of PLEI.
- Rating one's self as having a good understanding of the legal system has a positive and significant impact on the prospective rating of the effectiveness of modes of dispersal of PLEI.
- Gender had a quite strong and significant impact on the prospective rating of the effectiveness of modes of dispersal of PLEI. Specifically, women were more likely than men to give high ratings on this factor.
- Language has a significant impact on the prospective rating of the effectiveness of modes of dispersal of PLEI. Specifically, Francophones provide a lower rating than Anglophones on this factor.
- Disabled people are significantly more likely than others to give low prospective ratings of effectiveness of modes of dispersal of PLEI information.
- Income has quite a strong negative impact on prospective ratings of effectiveness of modes of dispersal of PLEI information.
- Household size has a significant, positive impact on prospective ratings of effectiveness of modes of dispersal of PLEI information.

Perhaps the most interesting findings here are those relating to gender, disability, language and the continuing influence of income. It would appear as though men, the disabled and Francophones are less likely to think that the modes of information dispersal mentioned in the variables underlying this factor would be effective. This may mean that such groups would like to see other modes of information dispersal, or it may represent a general tendency to discount any common mode of information dispersal. The negative income effect was also observed in an earlier analysis of the value of PLEI information. As noted elsewhere, this is not uncommon in these types of analyses and may

reflect the tax burden skepticism of higher income people with respect to many kinds of publicly funded activities.

Conclusions

The detailed findings can be reviewed for specific information by returning to earlier sections of this report. At this point, it is most useful to draw out the broad contours that occur throughout this work at various levels. These occur with respect to variations in the overall power of the models, as well as with respect to the degree of consistency of certain drivers across the models.

The most obvious points about the overall performance of the models is that the percentage of variation explained (as reflected in R square statistics) is much higher for those models that focus on the usefulness of future modes of PLEI delivery. The model for the usefulness of organizational delivery factor has an adjusted R square of 36.5%. The factor concerning rating of different modes of information dispersal had an adjusted R square of 24.3%. Other dependent variables and factors were associated with models with adjusted R squares in the 13-15% range. These other factors and variables relate to much more general opinions and evaluations. What this means is that Canadians have fairly structured systems or frameworks for viewing and thinking about PLEI delivery. Their assessments of the details of delivery and information dispersal are well embedded in a variety of demographic and experiential drivers. More general opinions, interests and evaluations concerning PLEI are not as distinctly embedded in drivers that reflect personal characteristics and experience. In the case of PLEI, the most stable perspectives, and probably the perspectives most useful in policy design, are in the details of delivery and information dispersal rather than in broad perspectives on the performance, interest and value of PLEI.

When we look at the performance of specific drivers across the various models, there are some striking consistencies. In brief, some of the more noteworthy ones are:

- In every final model, gender has a significant impact. Women consistently show more interest in PLEI, higher assessment of the importance of PLEI, more positive evaluations of government activities in PLEI, higher acceptance of a variety of PLEI delivery organizations and information dispersion media. So, women may be well served by existing activities in this area, but they probably have an appetite for additional PLEI activity.
- In all but one of the models, there was a negative income effect. Thus, higher income people tend to place less value on PLEI, to have a lower evaluation of and to not favor a wide variety of organizations and media forms for PLEI delivery.

- The disabled are associated with three negative effects. They stand out as a segment of the population that has a low evaluation of government PLEI performance, and low evaluations of the usefulness of a variety of standard delivery organizations and media. This is clearly one group that may need further consideration to determine modes of delivery and information dispersal that would be more applicable for them. Other groups such as new Canadians and visible minorities are less likely to have significant effects, but, when they do, they tend to indicate a positive disposition towards PLEI and towards its delivery through the identified mechanisms. Aboriginal people run somewhat counter to this pattern, but not as strongly as the disabled.
- Interestingly, past usage of legal services/assistance tend to have a negative, although not dominant, influence in most models. The exception to this seems to be previous use of services/assistance in the area of human rights. There are various possible interpretations. It may mean that people who have had experience with very basic fee-for-service legal services were basically satisfied and do not have elaborate needs beyond that. It may also suggest that more positive orientations toward PLEI rely on an interest in some of the more activist and topical areas of law. It might also indicate a basic skepticism about PLEI providing more quality than that associated with earlier negative legal experiences.
- Alternatively, ratings of future needs for information in various areas of law, as opposed to past use, tend to have positive influences in most of the models. This may mean that current and future needs might be defined more expansively than past history of legal service and information usage would suggest. It may mean that there are segments of the population with an interest in legal issues above and beyond the ones connected with basic property and estate transactions.
- Not surprisingly, indicators of interest in legal education and self-evaluation of justice system knowledge are often major drivers in the models.
- Finally, it should be noted that age did not have a significant impact in any of the models. It is fairly certain that age is not one of the more important drivers of PLEI opinions, evaluations and delivery preferences.

In summary, some of the most immediately useful information that comes out of this analysis is that special analytic attention probably needs to be devoted to groups such as this disabled in order to determine what special or unique needs they have in the area of legal information/service delivery. The consistently lower PLEI orientation of men also deserves further reflection and may provide a potential growth area if properly understood. In addition, the income effect could bear further exploration in order to determine if it is essentially a reflection of tax apprehension. Finally, it may be of some use to consider if those who are particularly positively oriented towards PLEI are primarily interested in the more policy-oriented areas of law rather than the day-to-day transaction aspects of law and legal services. If this is the case, it could either suggest a way of

clarifying the mission of PLEI agencies, or it could suggest ways of expanding the focus of such activities to include more common and established legal information needs.