

**Salary and Benefits  
Benchmarker | 2021**



**pinpoint positioning™**

# Salary and Benefits Benchmarker | 2021

## The data driving legal sector recruitment trends

### About Us

Douglas Scott Legal Recruitment are multi-award winning, values driven legal recruitment experts with two decades of sector experience. From offices in London, Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds, and Bristol we connect talented legal professionals with the best career options across regional and UK200 private practice, City and International law firms and Commerce and Industry's In-house legal departments.

### Legal's Big Data Survey

Every year thousands of legal professionals have their say and help us produce our acclaimed Salary Survey and Benefits Benchmarker – the largest and most comprehensive of its kind in the UK, and now in its 9th year. A heartfelt thank you to the 3,100 survey respondents who have helped make the 2021 survey are biggest and best yet.

Once again, we have crunched all the data from our survey, and pulled in salary information from the 4,250 candidates who registered with us in the last 12 months and 3,000 legal jobs that law firms and In-house legal departments instructed us on in a challenging year. The result is a unique body of research offering insight into salaries, bonuses, benefits package composition, sentiment, career motivators and much more; that is trusted to inform legal professionals making career decisions and Partners and Hiring Managers looking for an edge when acquiring and retaining the legal profession's top talent.

Browse with interest and have a great rest of 2021.

Thanks, The Douglas Scott Legal Recruitment team.

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# Meet the team



# Lockdown and the Legal Sector

90% of all lawyers worked from home during the recent lockdowns. In-house lawyers and HR functions were the most likely to have worked remotely and those employed in Criminal Law, Property and General Practice the least likely to have incorporated some element of home working into their day to day.

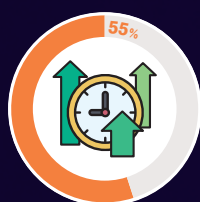


## What kind of impact do you think homeworking has or would have on your productivity?

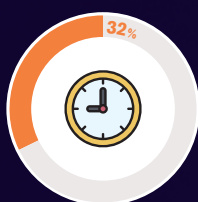
58% of female lawyers were overwhelmingly positive compared to 50% of males. Partners were in general less positive than their team members. 82% of female Partners however believed homeworking had a positive or neutral effect on productivity compared to 75% of male Partners. Lawyers employed in smaller firms were most likely to believe homeworking had a negative impact on their productivity. 61% of In-house lawyers felt homeworking boosted their output. Just 6% of Costs Lawyers believed their productivity was negatively impacted. 100% of respondents working in HR functions believed they were more productive working from home.

## What kind of impact do you think homeworking has or would have on your career progression?

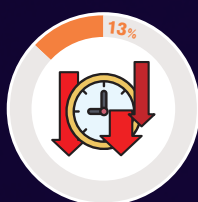
The general feel amongst lawyers is that the Lockdown working experience was neutral in terms of shaping their careers. 21% of female lawyers believed the impact would be positive compared to 16% of male lawyers. 1 in 4 Partners thought the experience would have a negative effect on their careers, and there were similar figures for Junior Lawyers. 1 in 3 In-house lawyers working in finance felt that their prospects had taken a bash in Lockdown, on the flip side 1 in 3 legal professionals working in Crime, Fraud and Licensing and General Practice, and 1 in 4 Costs Lawyers believed remote working had given their careers a boost. 27% of female In-house Lawyers believed working from home during Lockdown had slammed the breaks on career progression compared to 18% of males.



Positive impact  
on Productivity



Neutral impact  
on Productivity



Negative impact  
on Productivity



Positive impact  
on Career Prospects



Neutral impact  
on Career Prospects

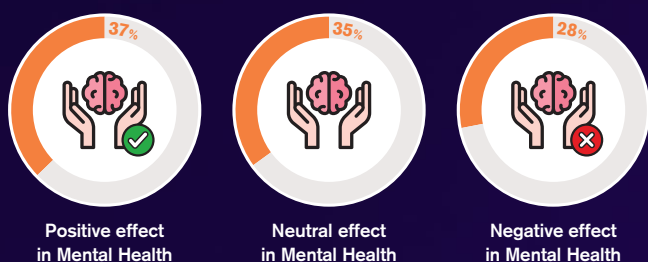


Negative impact  
on Career Prospects



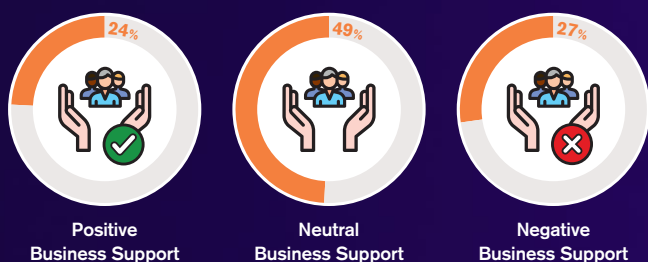
## What kind of impact do you think homeworking has or would have on the levels of support you have received from your employer?

For close to half of legal professionals the experience was neutral, but more negative than positive. 31% of Partners believed levels of support from their employers had dropped, the figures were the same for Junior Lawyers. By comparison just 1 in 4 Associates and Senior Solicitors felt less supported. Maybe we have a scenario whereby nobody supported the Partners while they were supporting the Fee Earners and by doing so not having the capacity and resource to get to the Juniors. 25% of female lawyers felt more supported compared to 21% of males. A third of legal professionals employed in High Street firms believed employer support levels had slipped when homeworking. There was consistency across practice areas save Asset Finance where the experience was twice as likely to be negative than positive.



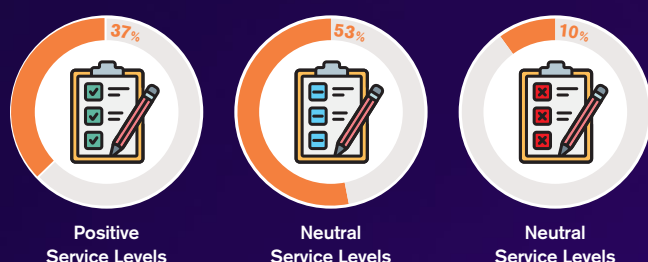
## What kind of impact do you think homeworking has or would have on your mental health?

For the majority, homeworking had a positive or at worst, neutral effect on their mental health and there was a marginal difference across genders. A third of Junior Lawyers believed homeworking during Lockdown had a negative effect on their mental health. On the other hand, 75% of Senior Lawyers felt remote working had a positive or neutral effect on their mental health. Lawyers working in Crime, Fraud and Licensing and In-house Public Sector and Charity were among those who benefitted most. For respondents working in HR functions there was zero negative impact. Conversely Solicitors, Lawyers and Support staff working in Corporate and Finance found Lockdown working most challenging from a mental health perspective.



## What kind of impact do you think homeworking has or would have on the levels of service your firm has delivered?

90% of legal professionals believed homeworking had a positive or neutral effect on the service levels their firm has delivered. For 37% there was an uplift and for 53% there was no impact at all. 40% of female lawyers were overwhelmingly positive compared to 33% of males. 1 in 5 Partners felt as though homeworking had a negative effect on service levels compared to 1 in 10 Associates and Juniors. There was consistency across employer profiles though high street lawyers were most likely to be concerned about service levels and Boutique Commercial and Sole Practitioners adapting best to working conditions. It was a similar story with Practice areas; overwhelmingly more positive than negative though some blips in General Practice, Private Client and Asset Finance as opposed to Employment Law and Law Costs for example who believed the impact was positive more than most.



**"The supervision and learning experience have fallen off a cliff ... I've really felt my mental health slipping over the last few months."**



# At a Glance



**£44,444**

The average salary amongst legal professionals surveyed



**23%**

of lawyers received a bonus in 2020



**Homeworking**

has emerged as most valued benefit



**54%**

of legal professionals are happy in their jobs



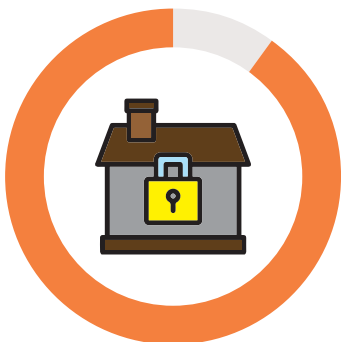
**28%**

of lawyers will actively look for another job this year



**61%**

of respondents secured a pay rise when they took a new role



**90%**

of respondents home worked during lockdown



**35%**

of legal professionals used a recruitment agency to secure a new role

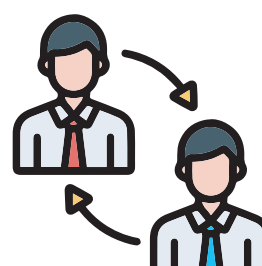


**87%**

of legal professionals see themselves working in legal in 5 years



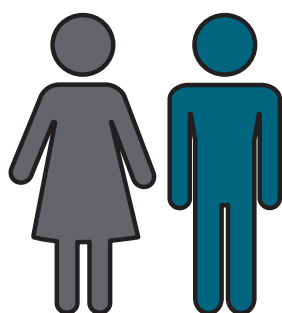
Lawyers are working an extra **5 hours 25 minutes** a week on top of contracted hours.



Legal professionals will stay on average **4 years** in a role before changing jobs

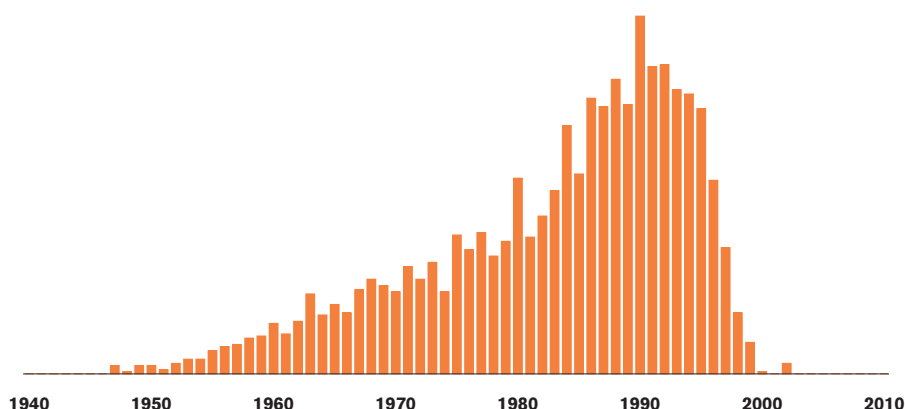
The average age was 37, 1990 being the most popular date of birth and the 5 years either side of that were peak response years. Female lawyers were more responsive to the survey. We attracted Private Practice and In-house respondents from law firms, commerce and industry, public sector and not for profit, all shapes and sizes across the England and Wales jurisdiction. A third of those surveyed spoke at least one other language. Typical time spend completing survey, 7m:36s.

### Age Range



**65%**

**35%**



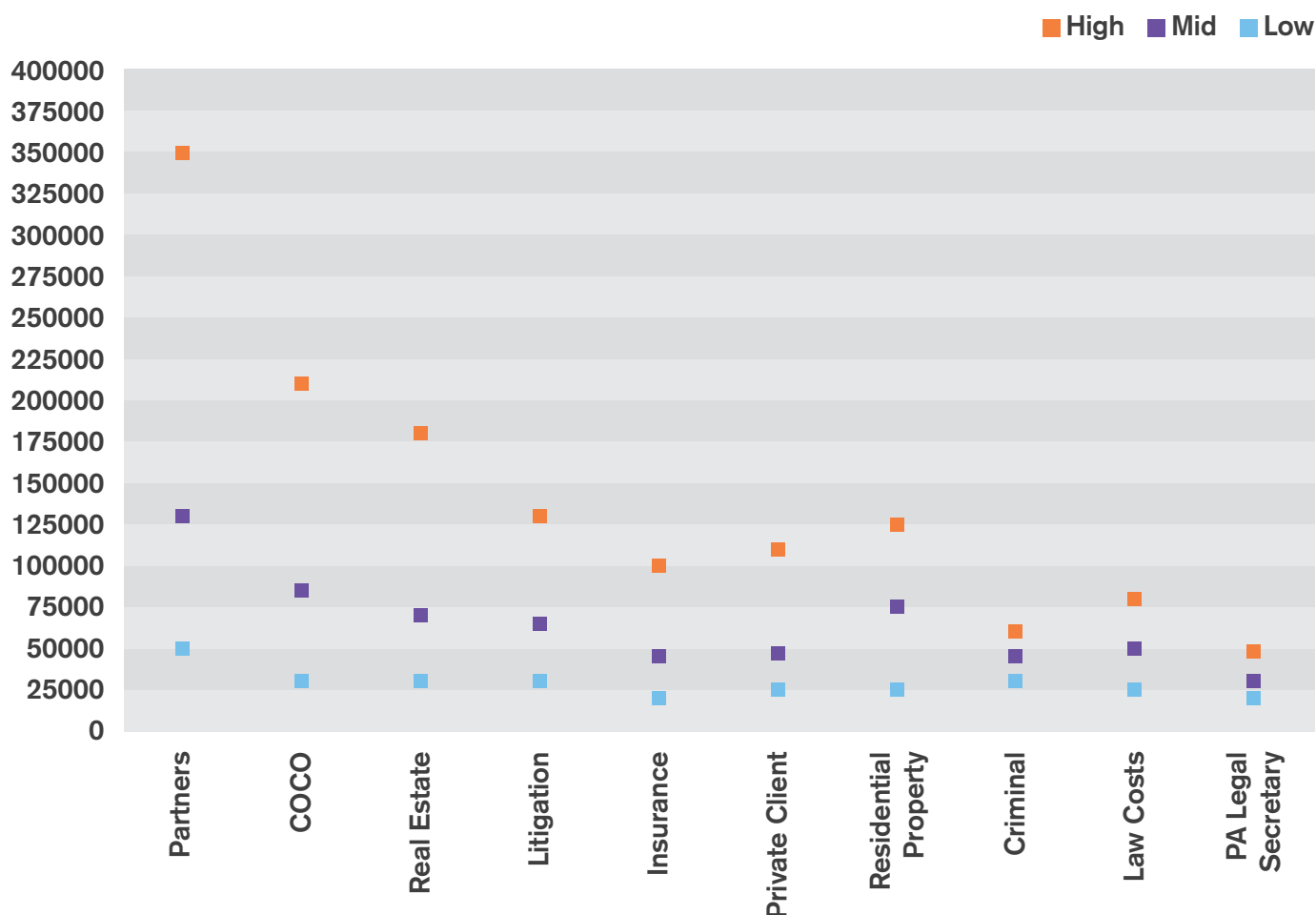
A third of respondents were bi-lingual



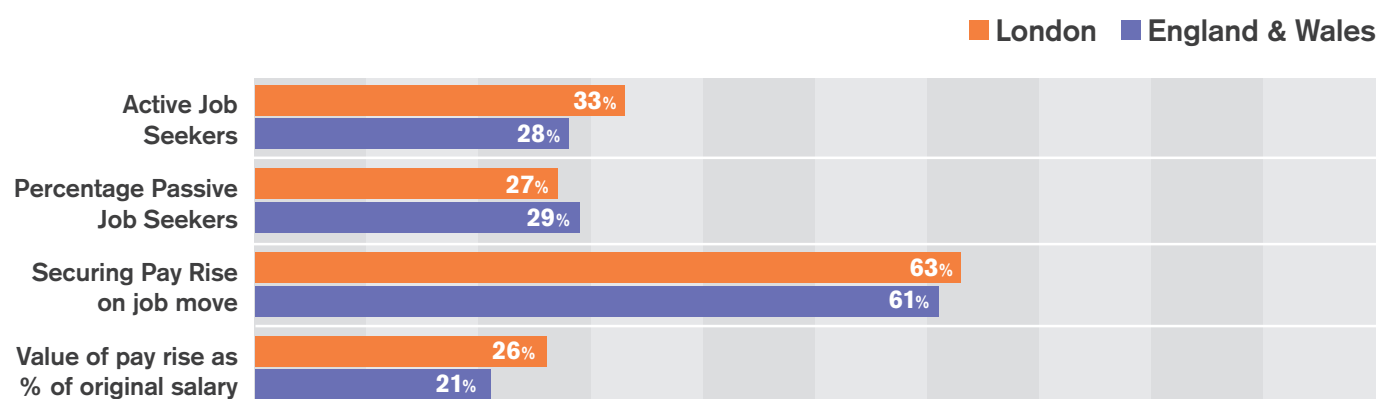
# London

A third of all London based legal professionals are actively looking to change jobs in any given cycle. London is fast flowing and is home to the most fluid talent pool. There are more progression driven career moves than any other region, the largest percentage of lawyers with leadership aspirations but the fewest who think they can achieve their ambitions with their current firm. Throw all that into the mix and visualise a Formula 1 race, slip streaming, late breaking, overtaking etc. That is London.

## Salaries



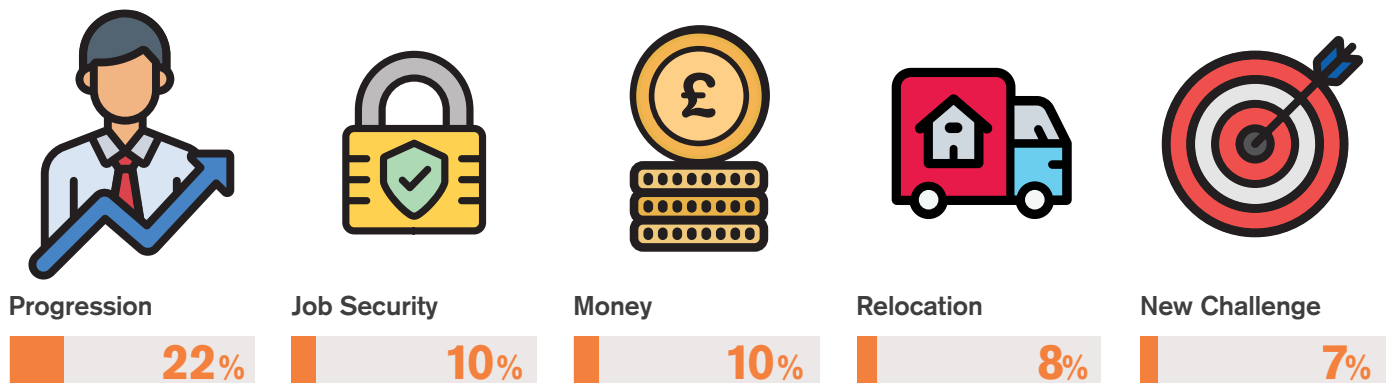
## Talent Pool



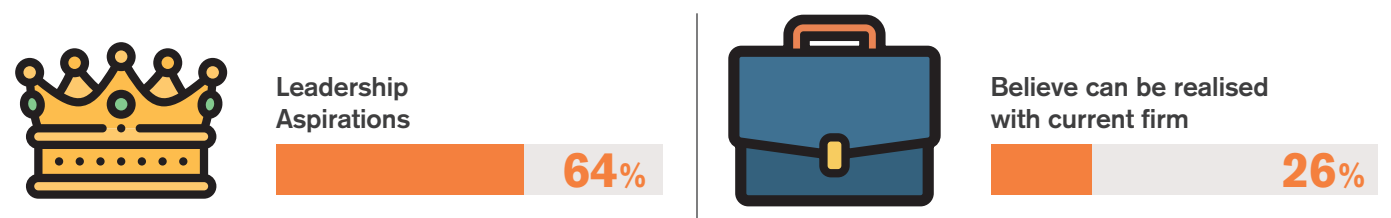


# London

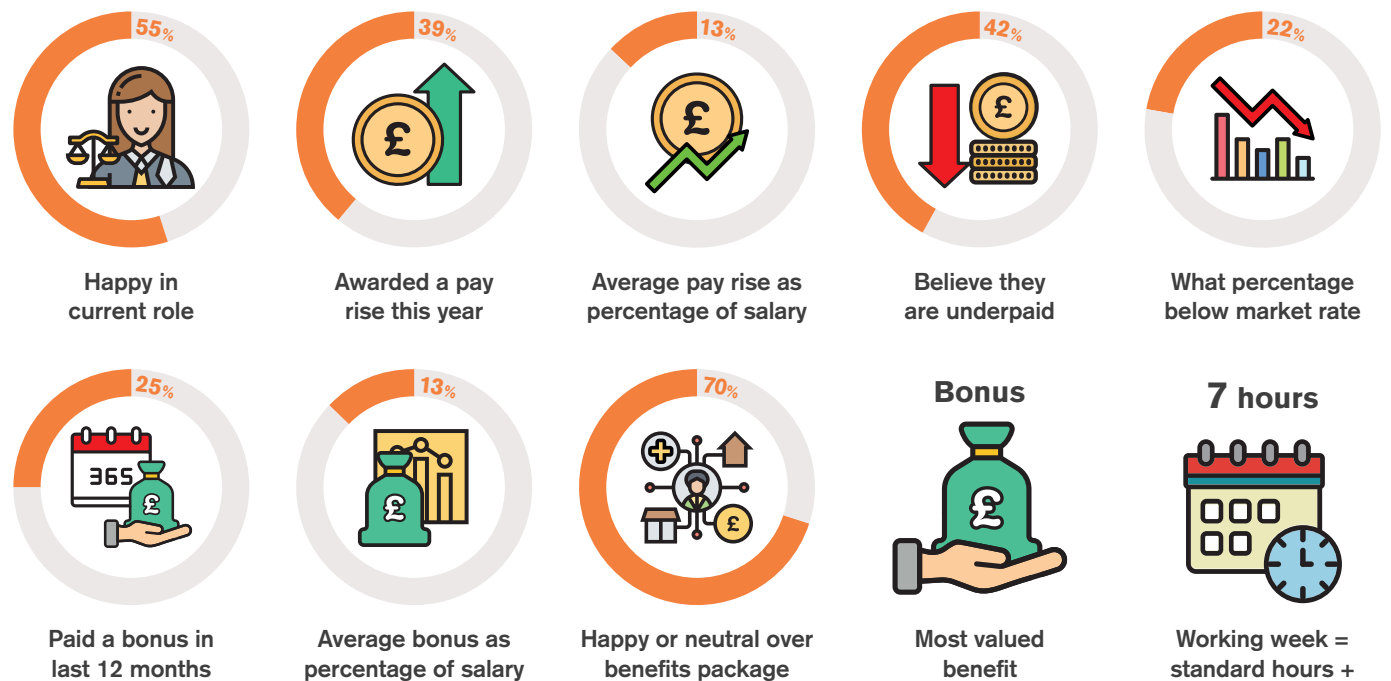
## Career motivators



## Aspirations



## Sentiment



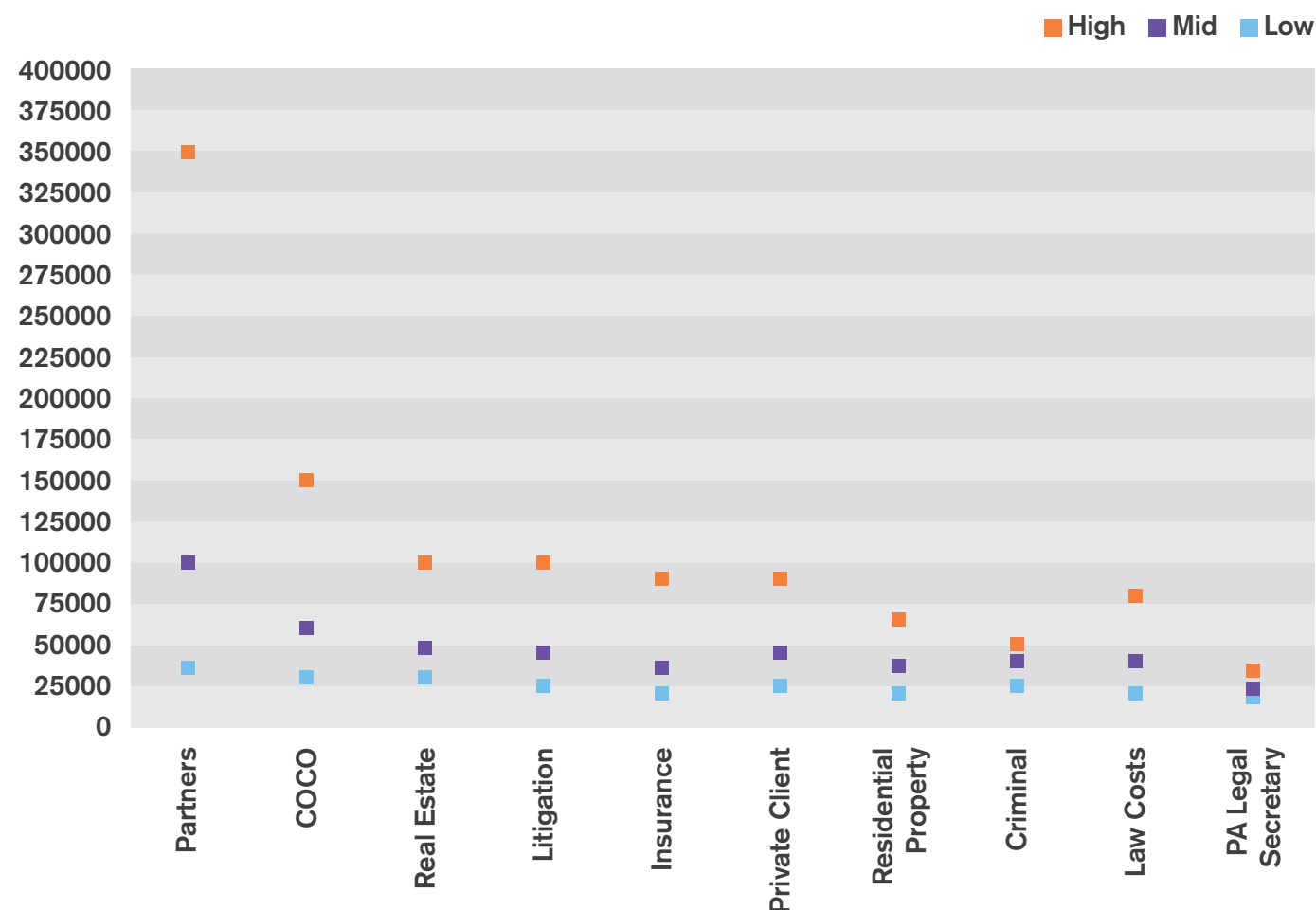
## And finally

50% of Greater London based legal professionals speak one or more other languages on top of English which makes them the most likely of all regions to be able to converse in another tongue. We counted 89 languages across all regions in total, ancient and modern, stretching across the globe, North, South, East, and West. You get the beautiful picture.

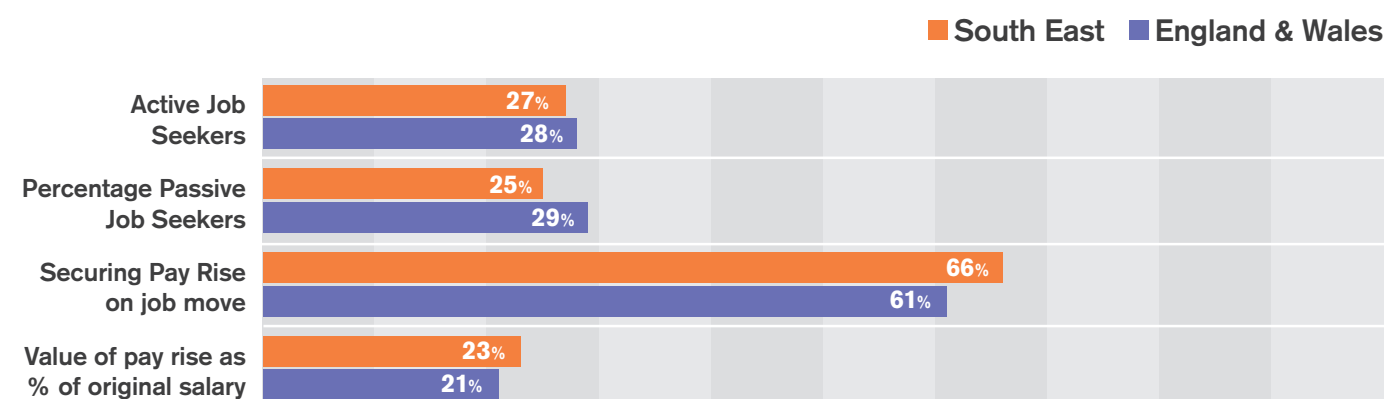
# South East

Although London does cast a shadow over the South East legal sector it does have its own culture. There are similarities when it comes to progression driven career moves, and salary satisfaction but South East legal professionals are the happiest people in legal, they are the least likely of all regions to aspire to a leadership position, work life balance features higher on the list of priorities e.g. the only region to list commute in their top 5 career motivators and home working is considered their most valued benefit unlike their colleagues in London who champion the financial bonus.

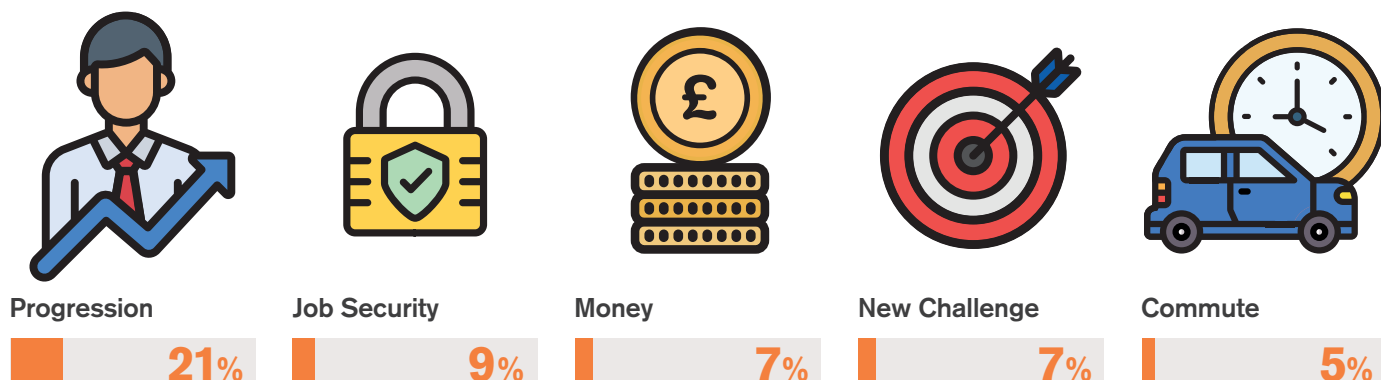
## Salaries



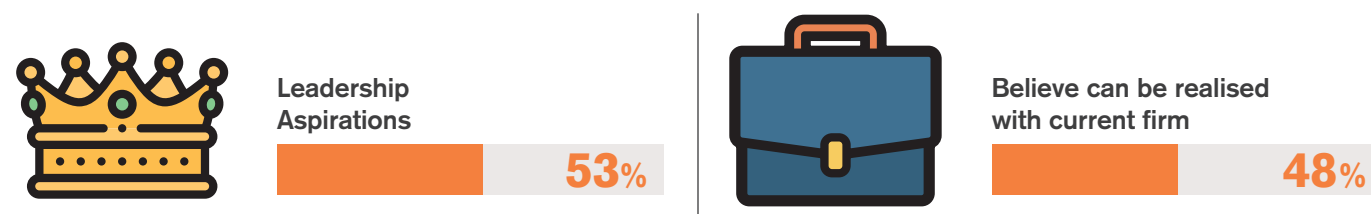
## Talent Pool



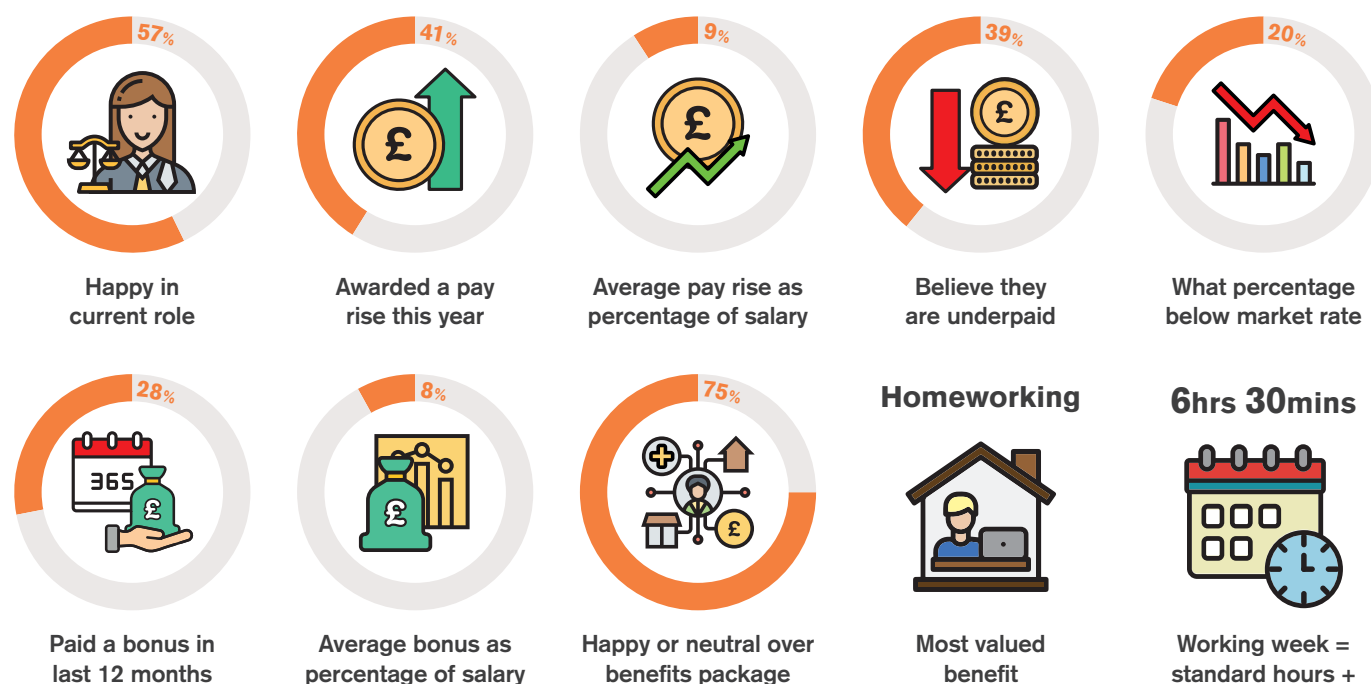
## Career motivators



## Aspirations



## Sentiment



## And finally

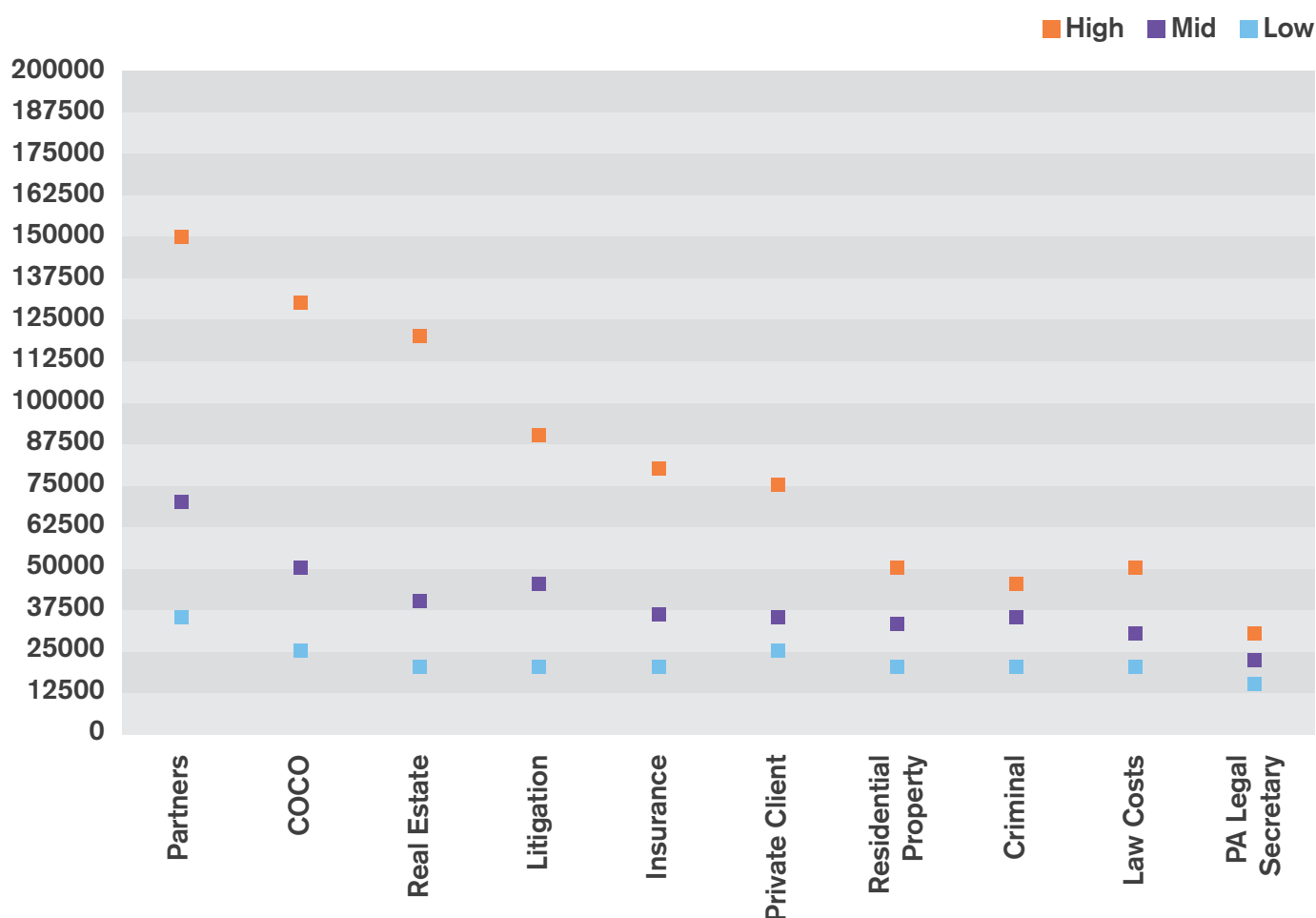
South East law firms are way ahead of their regional peers when it comes to clear and transparent career paths. Although just 53% of South East based lawyers aspire to a leadership position, nearly half of those believe they can achieve that goal with their current employer. That is top ranked amongst the regions and nearly twice the London rate.



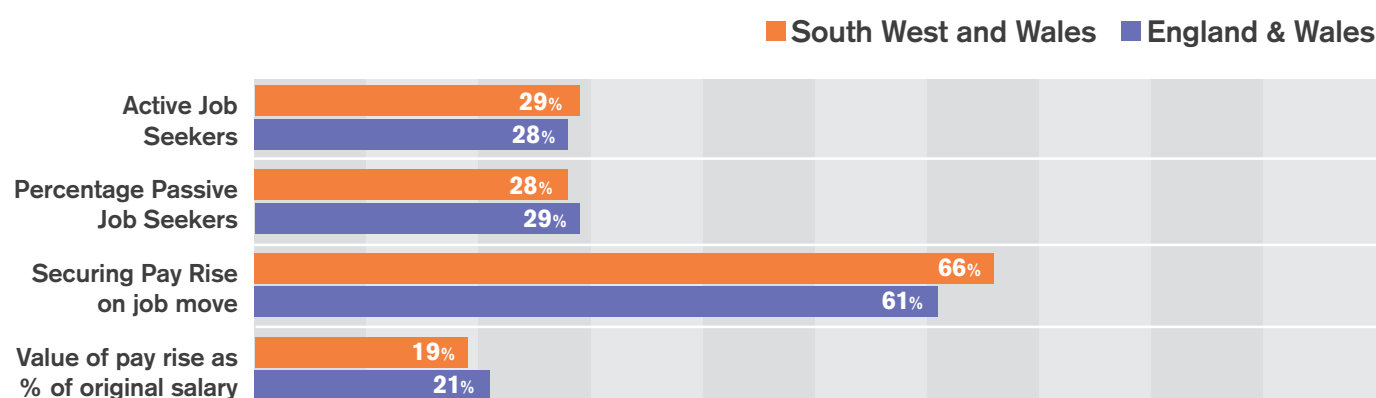
# South West and Wales

Although not the main driver behind a career move, money talks for South West and Wales based legal professionals. A top ranked 43% of lawyers believe they are underpaid, a joint top ranked 10% of legal professionals cited an increase in salary as the reason they changed legal jobs. Two thirds of South West and Wales based lawyers secured a pay rise when they changed jobs recently which was the joint highest of all the regions.

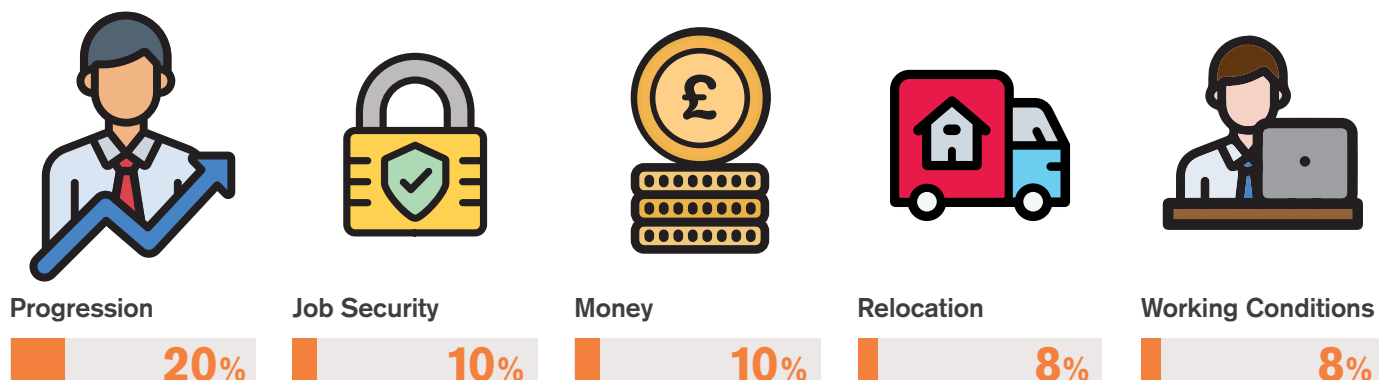
## Salaries



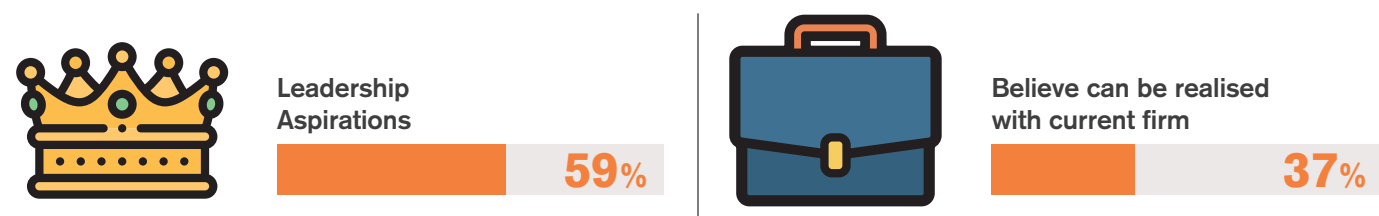
## Talent Pool



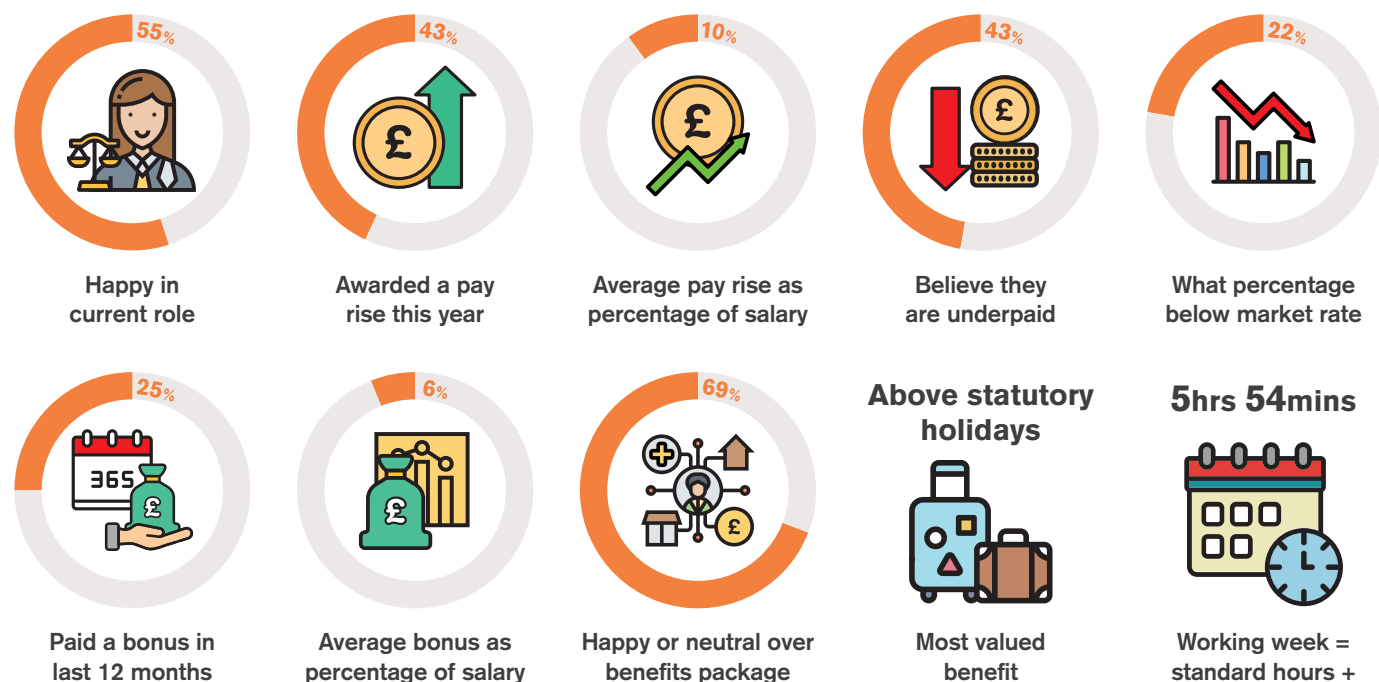
## Career motivators



## Aspirations



## Sentiment



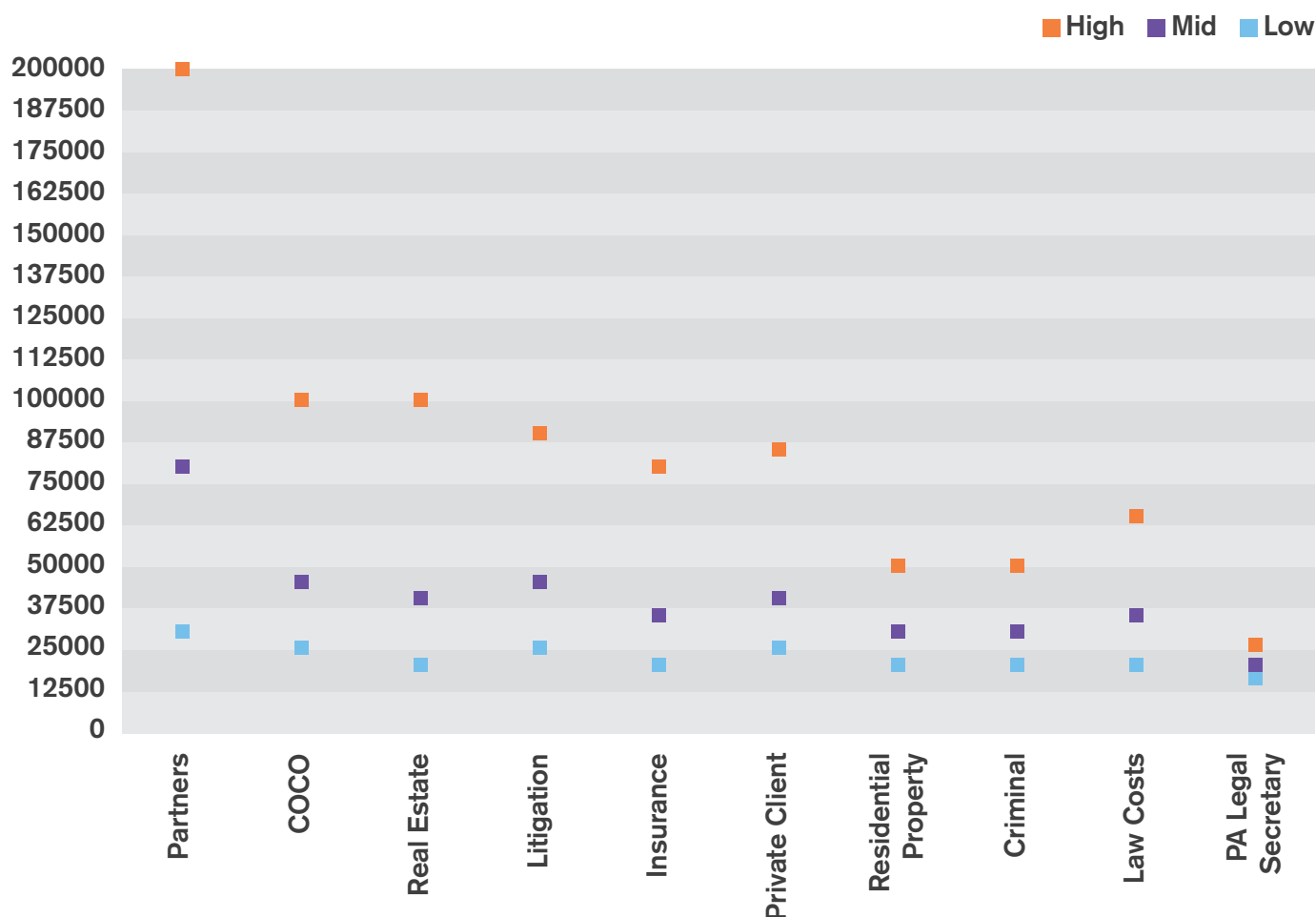
## And finally

Homeworking is a permanent feature in benefits packages for 59% of South West and Wales based legal professionals, the average across all regions is 55%. In 2020 39% of South West and Wales based legal professionals home worked in some fashion, second only to London based lawyers.

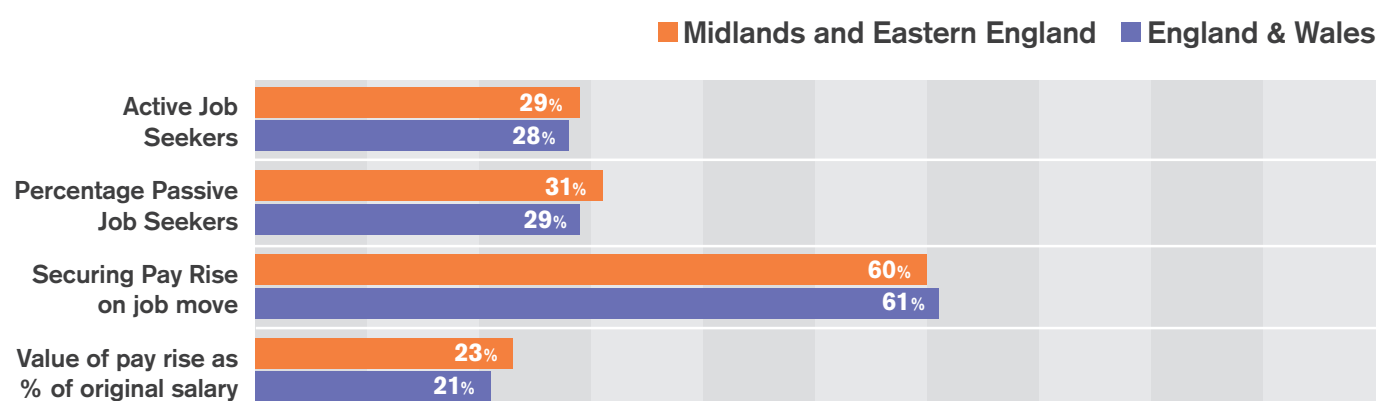
# Midlands and Eastern England

Midlands and Eastern England based legal professionals are most likely of all the regions to make a reactive job move. A reactive career move is something driven by external factors such as job security, working conditions or getting fed up of the commute. A proactive choice would be for career advancement or money. The former can half your chances of securing a pay rise on a move and make it three times more likely that you will lose some salary. Reactive career decisions make up two of the top three career motivators for lawyers based in these regions.

## Salaries

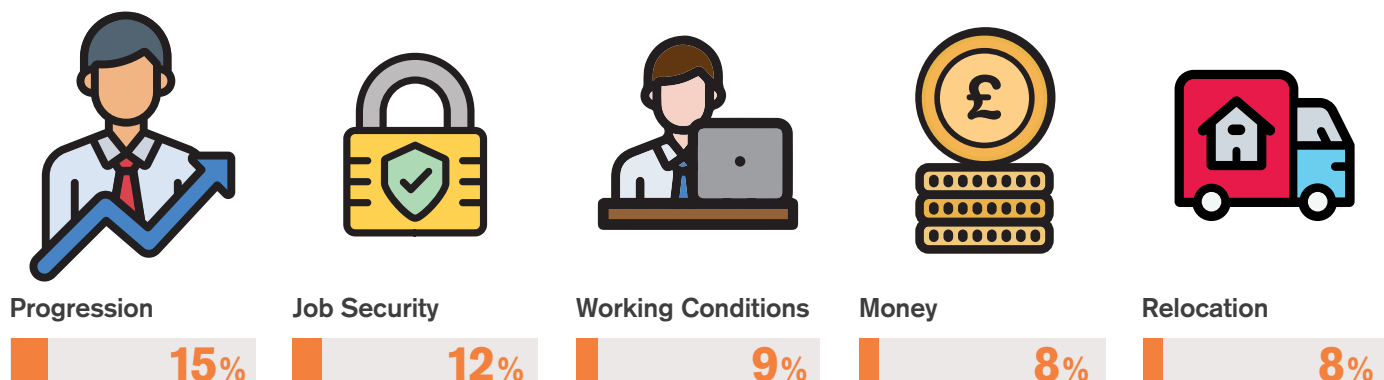


## Talent Pool

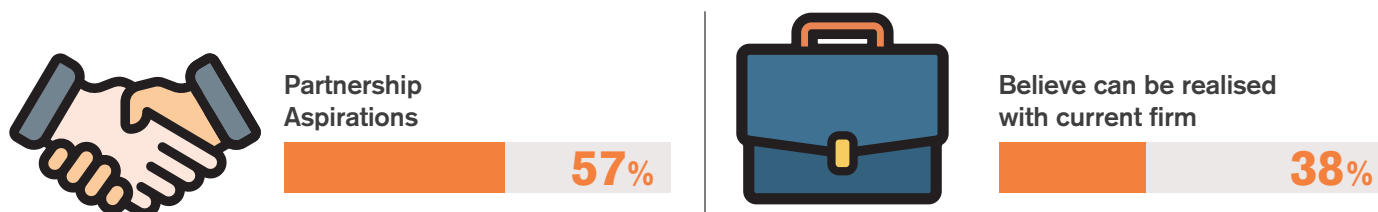




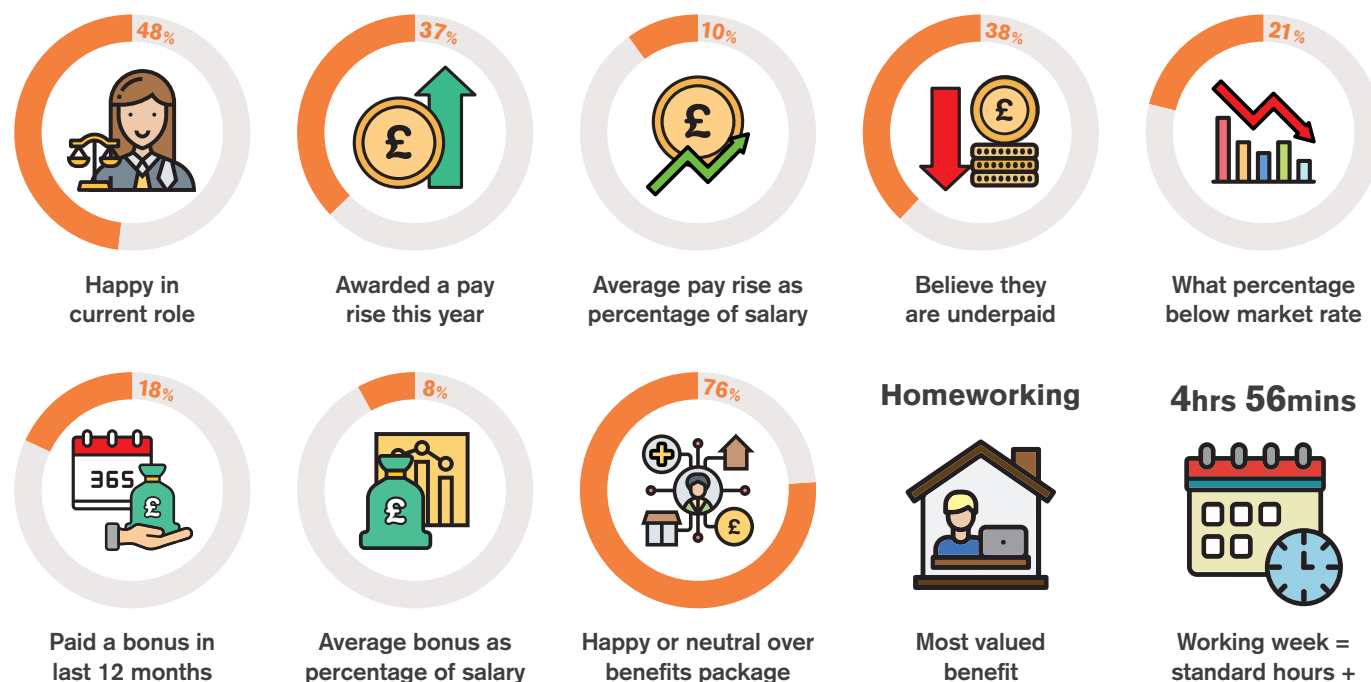
## Career motivators



## Aspirations



## Sentiment



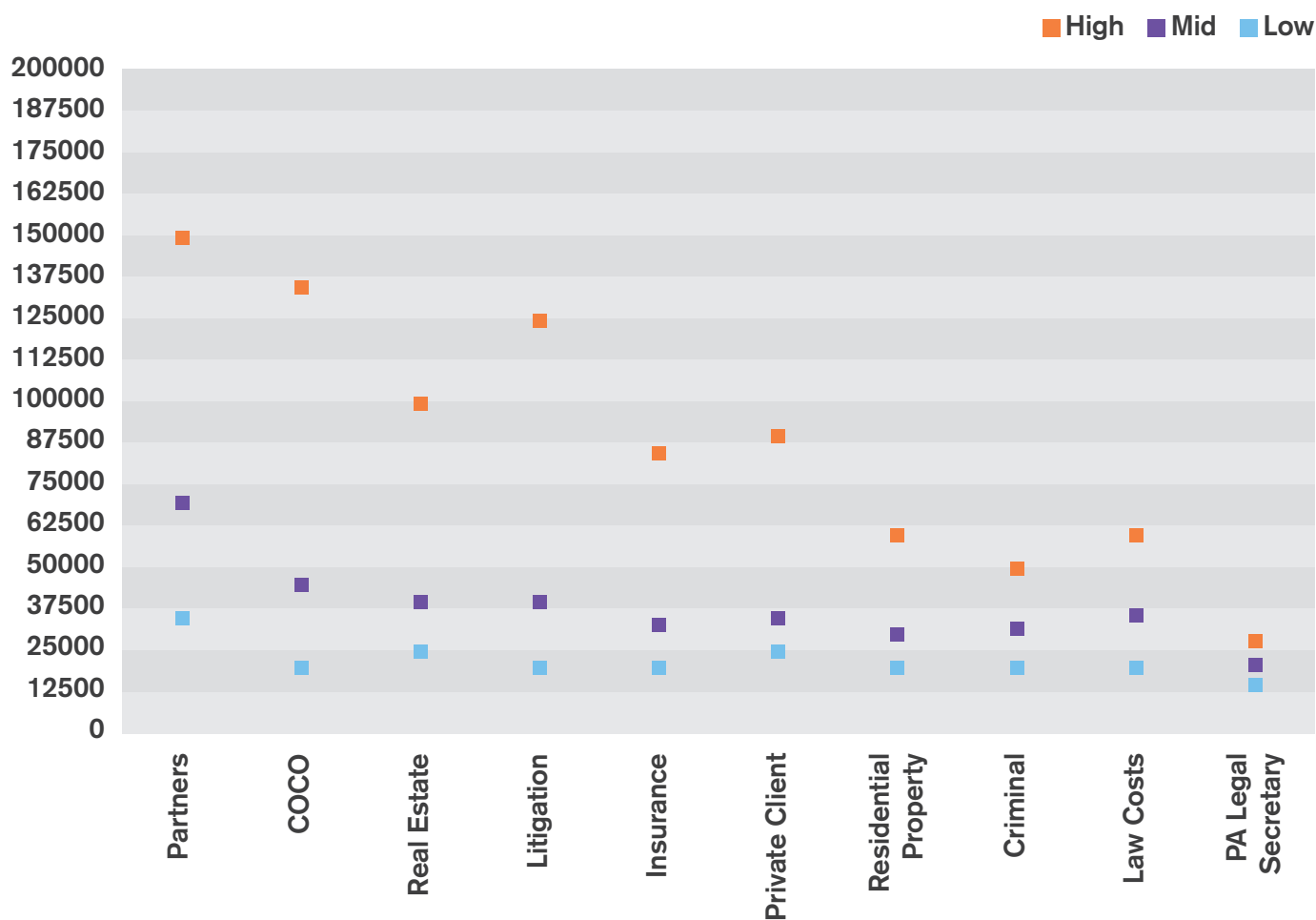
## And finally

Midlands and Eastern England based legal professionals are arguably striking the best work life balance. Not the longest or the shortest commute but managing to deliver the working week and average just 4 hours and 56 minutes extra contractual hours a week compared to say London who rack up an extra 7 hours.

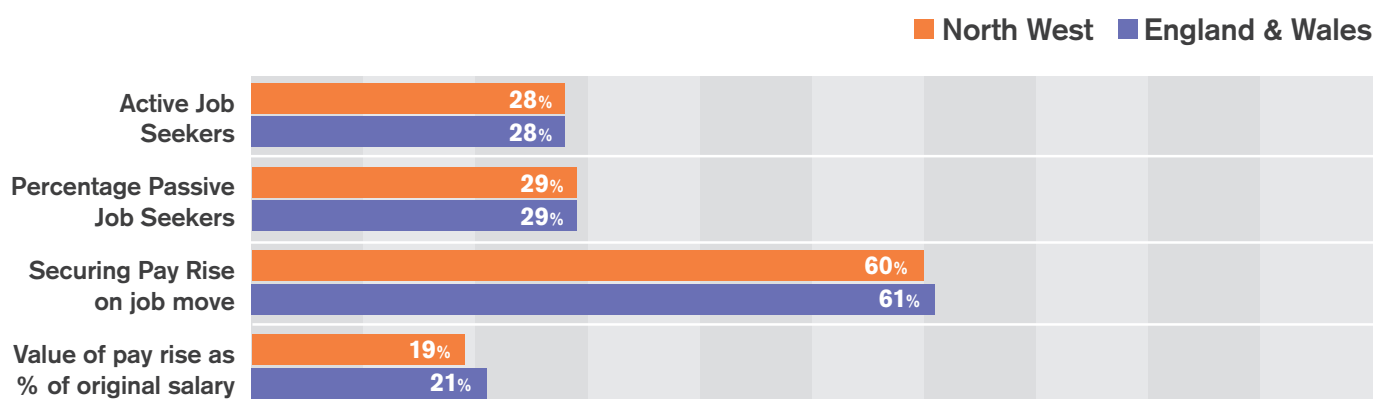
# North West

There is some harmony in the North West. Legal sector salaries are the most likely to be aligned with expectations with 55% of respondents believing they are paid a market rate salary where the average across all regions is 52% and the lowest region posted 48%. There has been a steady increase in salary satisfaction over the past 3 years, in 2020 54% believed they were paid the market rate and in 2019 it was 52%.

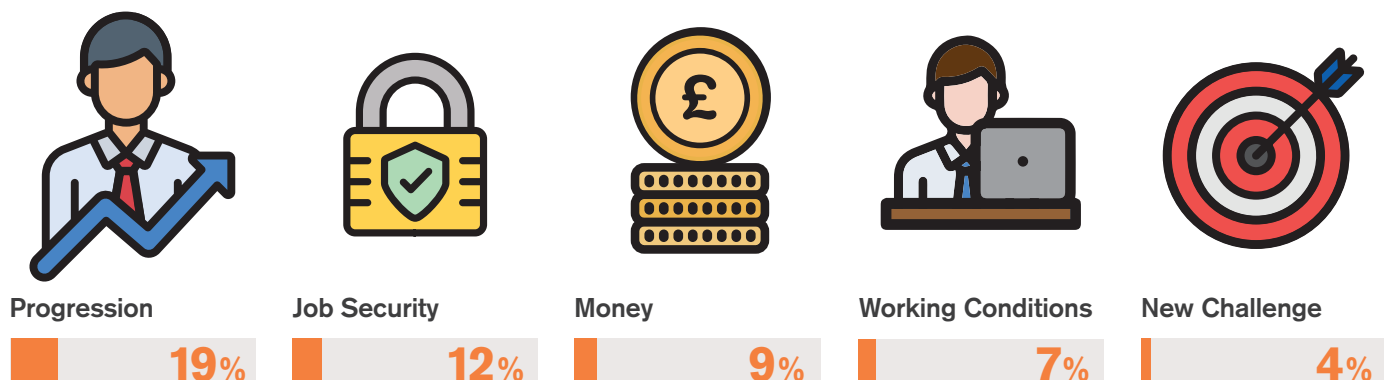
## Salaries



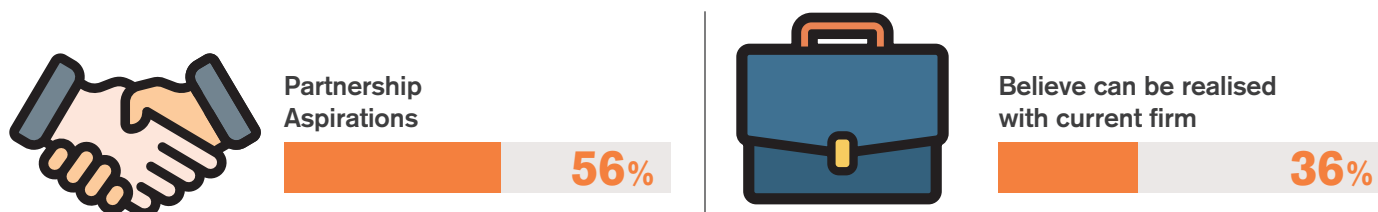
## Talent Pool



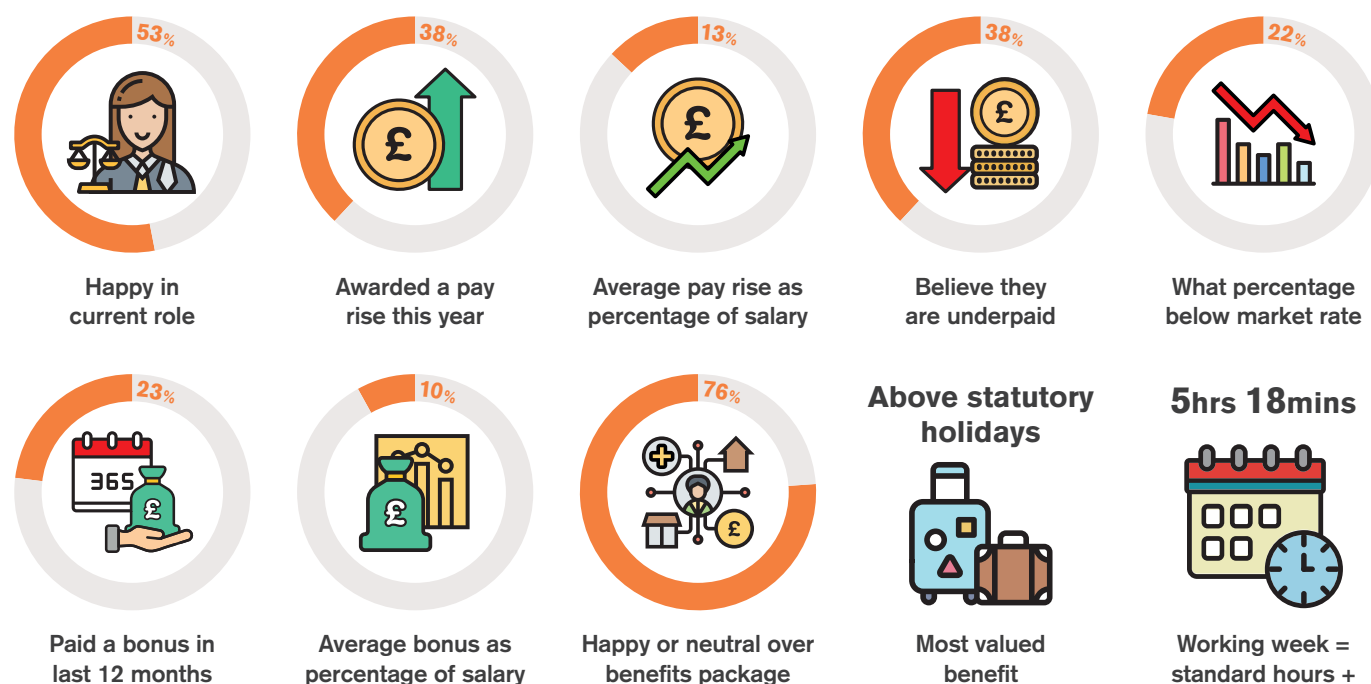
## Career motivators



## Aspirations



## Sentiment



## And finally

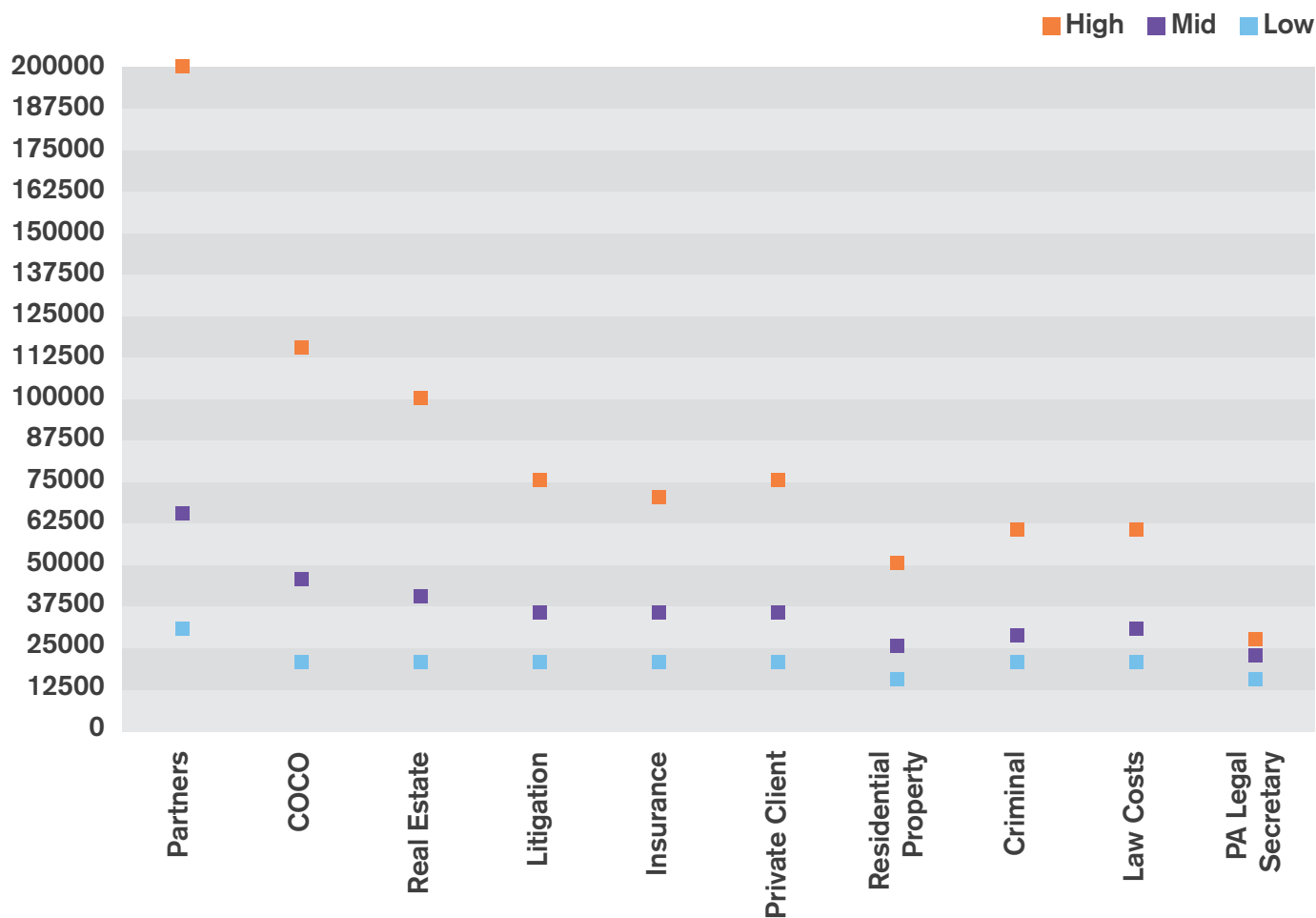
Roll back 5 years and how things have changed. 59% of the 2016 cohort of North West legal professionals were happy in their roles, 29.5% of North West lawyers cited progression as their main career motivator in 2016, with job security at 11% and salary 10%. 5 years ago 1 in 5 benefitted from an agile or flexible working week and now it is 1 in 4.



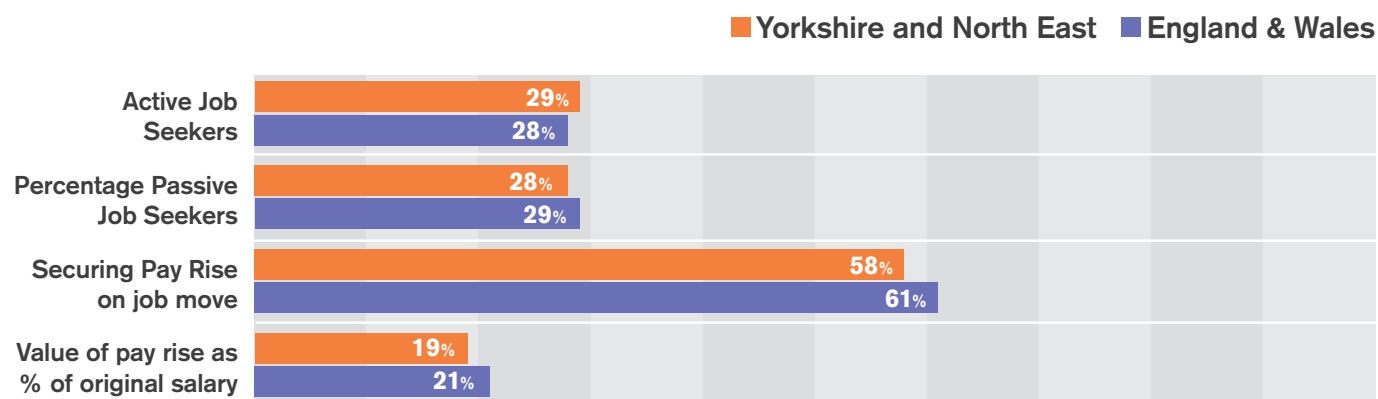
# Yorkshire and North East

Yorkshire and North East lawyers stay in their jobs longest. At 4.25 years that is a whole quarter of a year above average and over 6 months longer than their peers in South East England who average 3.7 years. On the whole Northern England is around 4 or 5 months stickier than the South of England and that can create growth problems with talent less inclined to move through the gears and create opportunities in their wake.

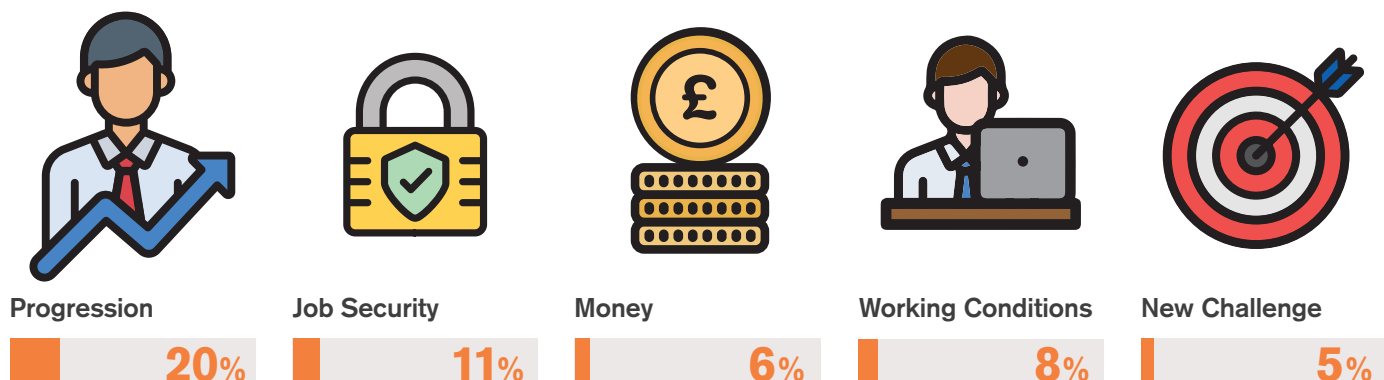
## Salaries



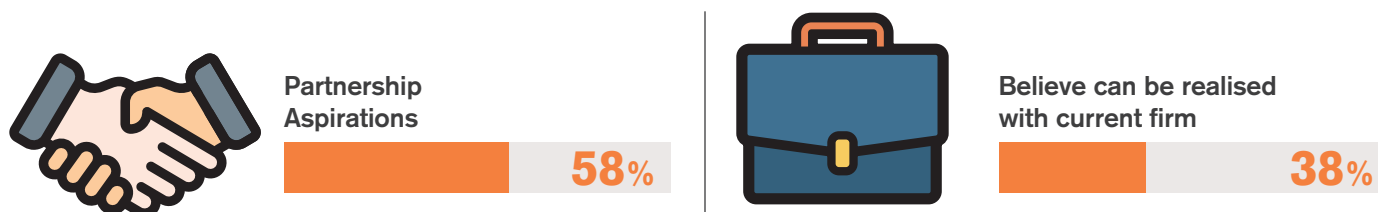
## Talent Pool



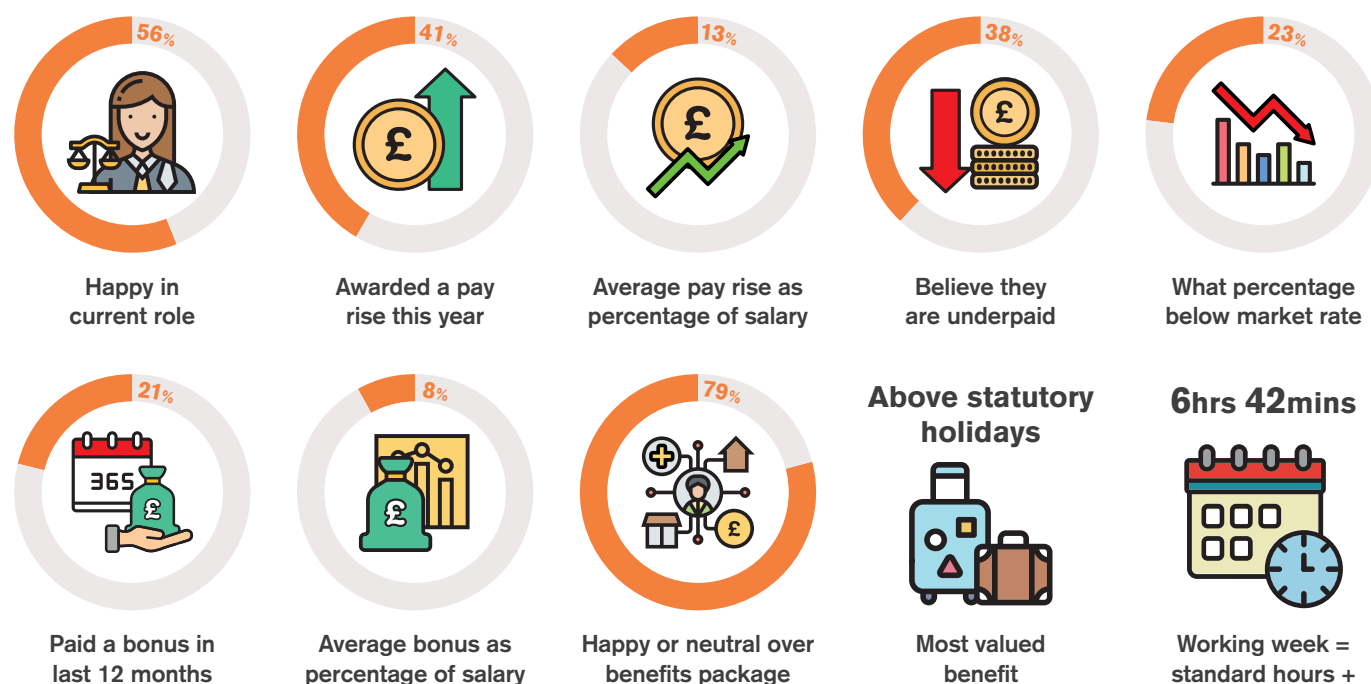
## Career motivators



## Aspirations



## Sentiment



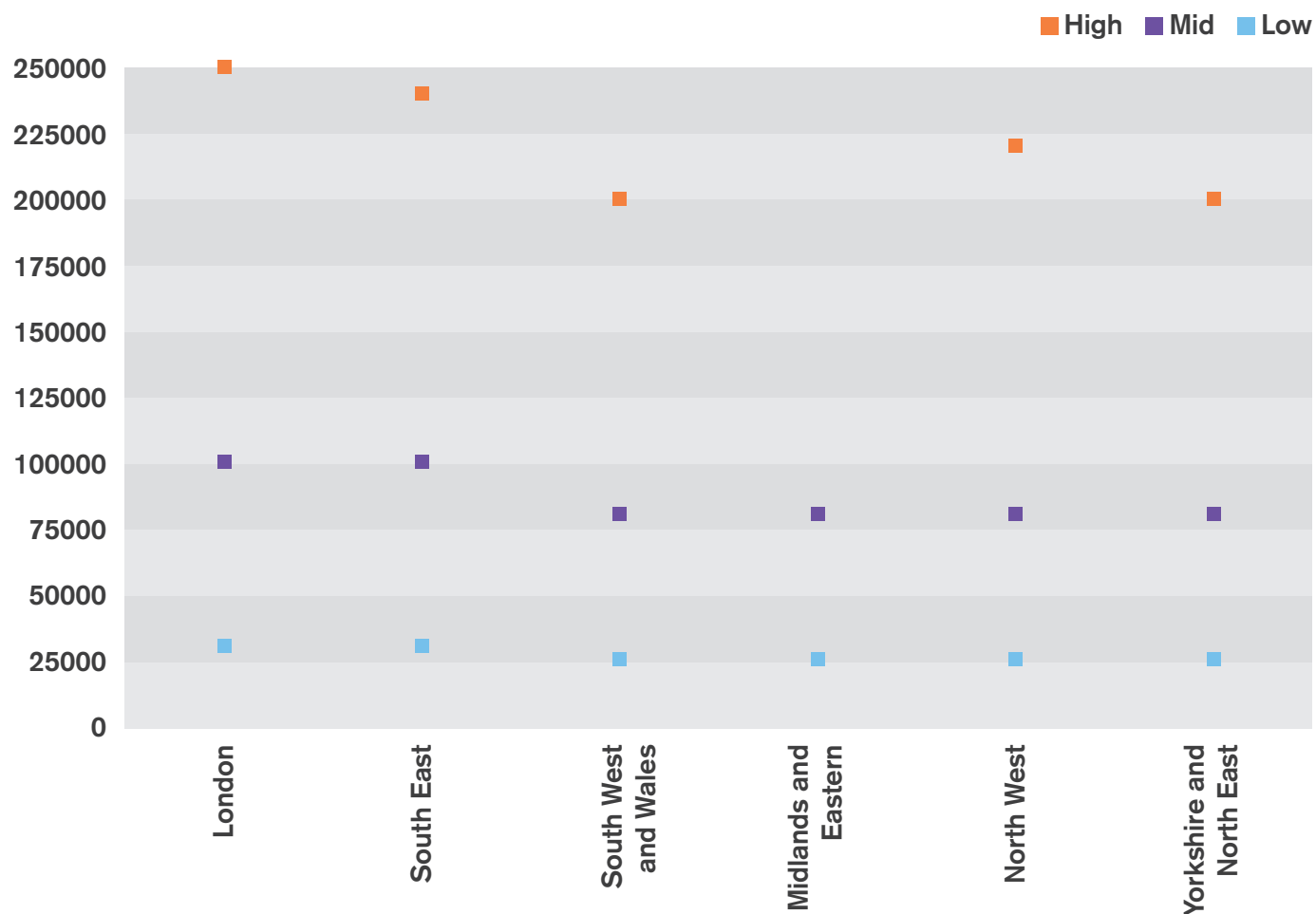
## And finally

At 29 minutes one way, Yorkshire and North East legal professionals enjoy the shortest commute to their work place. They invest this time saved into productivity, logging an average 6 hours and 42 minutes extra contractual hours every working week second only to London with 7 hours.

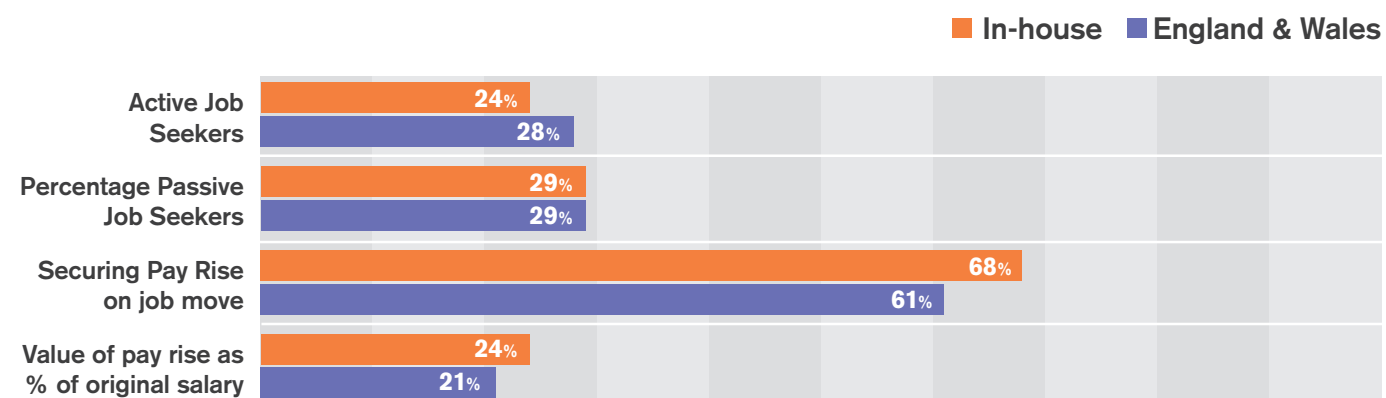
# In-house

There is a rich vein of satisfaction running through the working lives of In-house lawyers. 63% are happy in their roles compared to the average 54% of all legal professionals. Only a third believe they are paid below market rate, nearly half were awarded a pay rise or promotion last year, 25% were paid a bonus and 86% are happy or neutral with the benefits package they receive. 89% of In-house Lawyers see themselves working in legal in 5 years' time.

## Salaries



## Talent Pool

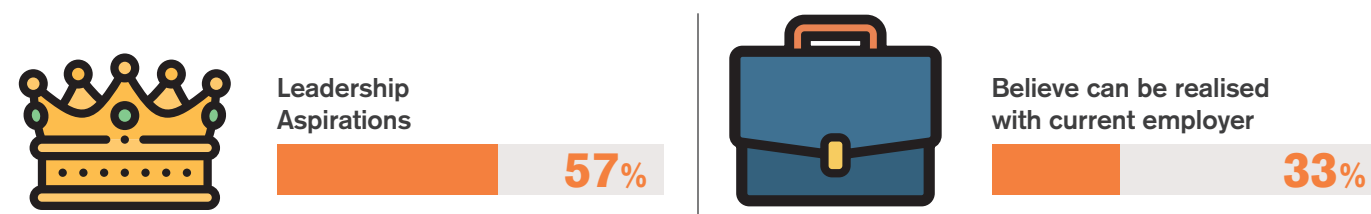




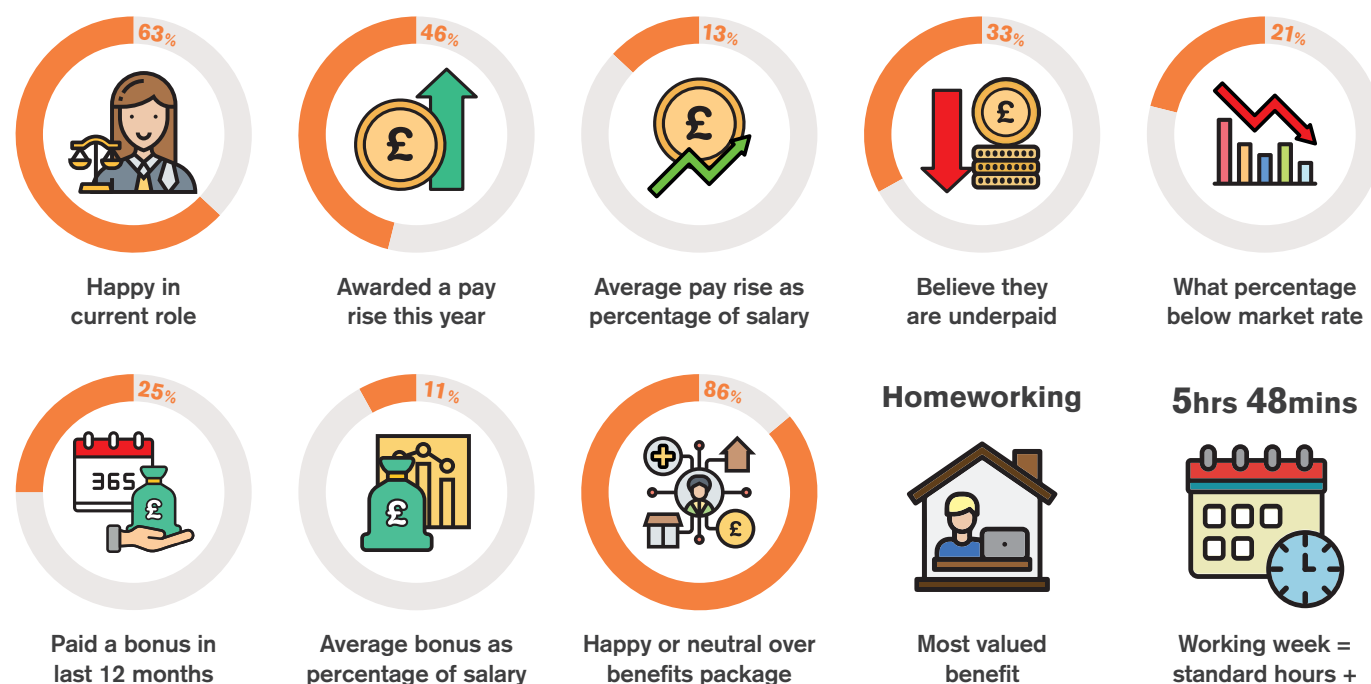
## Career motivators



## Aspirations



## Sentiment



## And finally

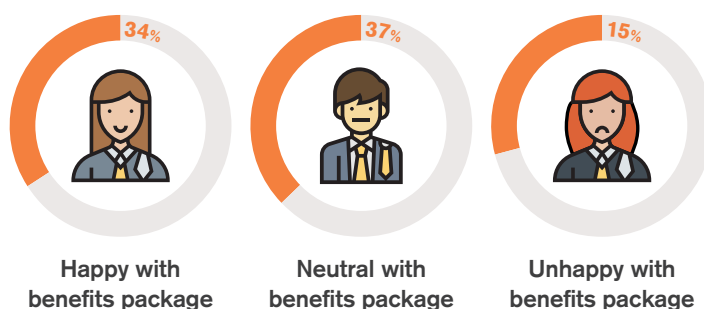
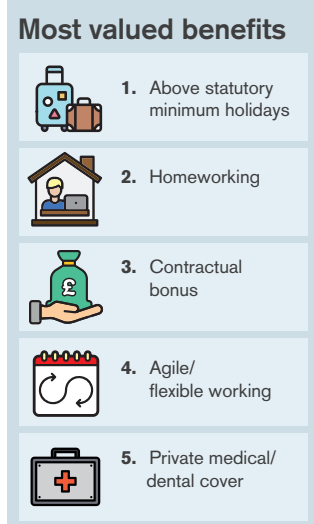
In-house is sticky, with just 1 in 4 actively looking to change jobs at any one time and so the sector relies on a steady flow of new blood switching over from Private Practice. In-house Lawyers stay in their jobs for an average 3 years 6 months. 35% of In-house Lawyers are bilingual and average commutes are 35 minutes.

# Benefits

## Private Practice

Some people must think Homeworking did not exist before Coronavirus. 55% told us that some element of Homeworking is now a permanent feature of their benefits package but over a third were telling us that last year. Homeworking is this year's most valued benefit, in 2020 it slipped in almost unnoticed as the second most loved behind above statutory holiday entitlement.

### Which benefits are included in your current package?



11% of legal professionals working in private practice have nothing more than a basic benefits package, 20 days holiday and SSP.

## In-house

Benefits satisfaction rates are much higher for In-house lawyers compared to Private Practice. The simple explanation is that In-house benefits packages are better across the board and particularly among the top 5 most valued in Private Practice, with free or subsidised legal services the only exception. Pockets of resistance can be found in the financial and charity/trade union sectors.

### Which benefits are included in your current package?

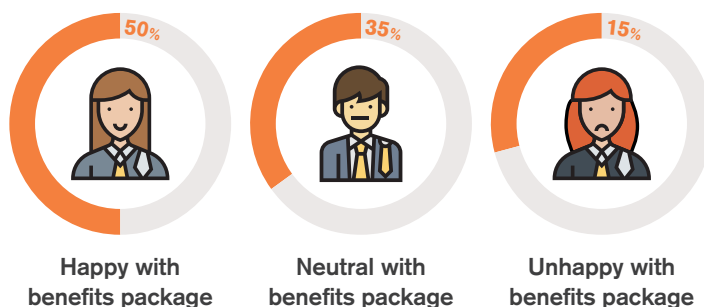


#### Most valued benefits

1. Homeworking
2. Contractual bonus
3. Above statutory minimum holiday
4. Agile/flexible working
5. Private medical/dental cover

#### Least valued benefits

1. Cycle-to-work scheme
2. Child care vouchers / salary sacrifice
3. Laptop / mobile phone
4. Free/subsidised legal services
5. Travel season ticket loan

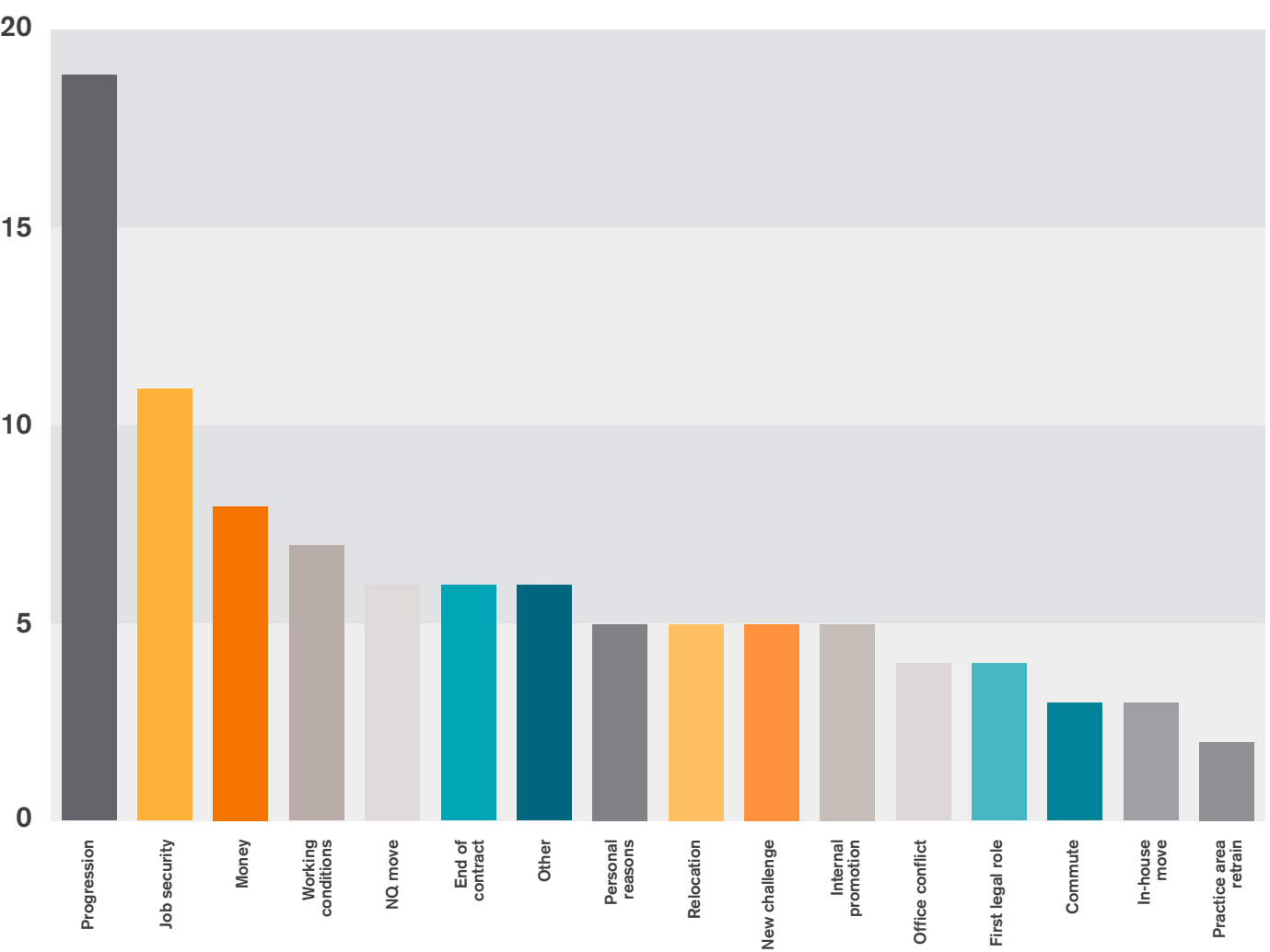


5% of legal professionals working in the In-house legal sector have nothing more than a basic benefits package, 20 days holiday and SSP.

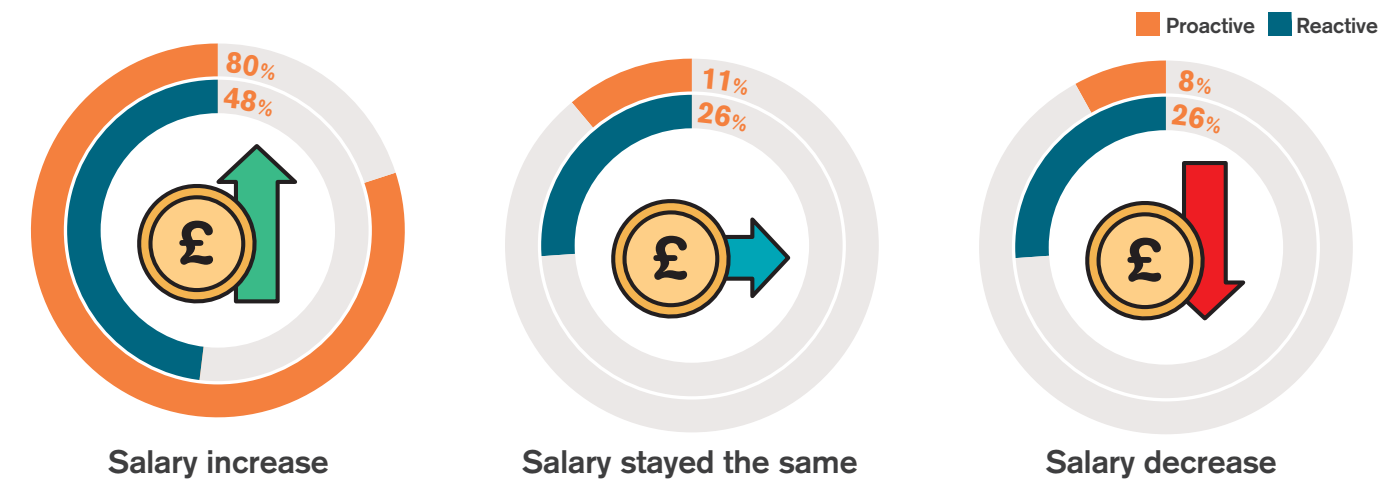
# Career Motivators

Warning, reactive career decisions can seriously damage your wealth. While 1 in 5 legal professionals cite career progression as the reason they changed jobs recently, 1 in 3 moves were reactive and included external factors such as job security, working conditions and office conflict. A reactive career move can cut your chances of securing a rise in salary by a third and make it three times more likely that you lose money.

Career motivators



Proactive v reactive Career Decision





# Partnership and Leadership

## Partnership and Leadership Aspirations

### Partnership or Leadership Aspirations

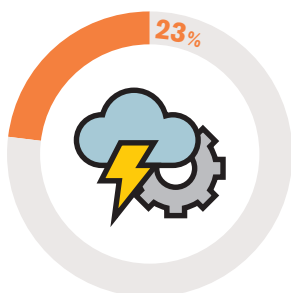


### Believe can be realised with current firm

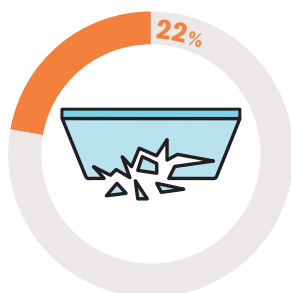


■ Female ■ Male

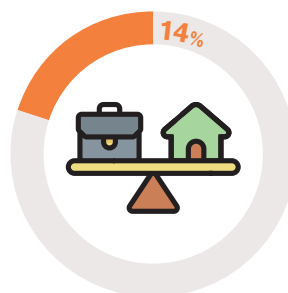
## Top 3 Partnership turn offs



Stress of additional responsibility

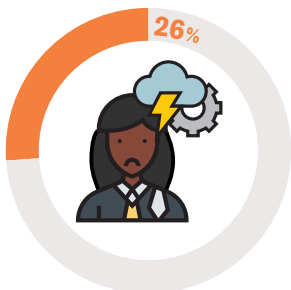


Glass ceiling

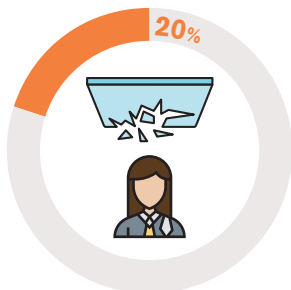


Work Life balance

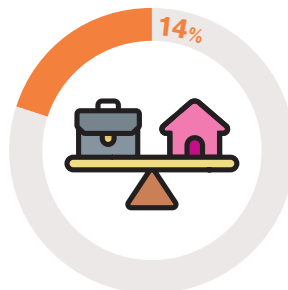
### Female



Stress of additional responsibility

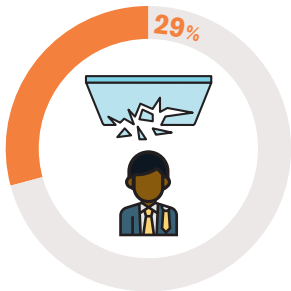


Glass ceiling

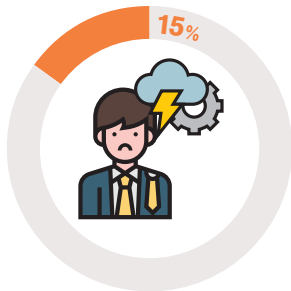


Work Life balance

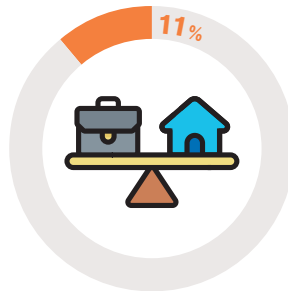
### Male



Glass ceiling



Stress of additional responsibility



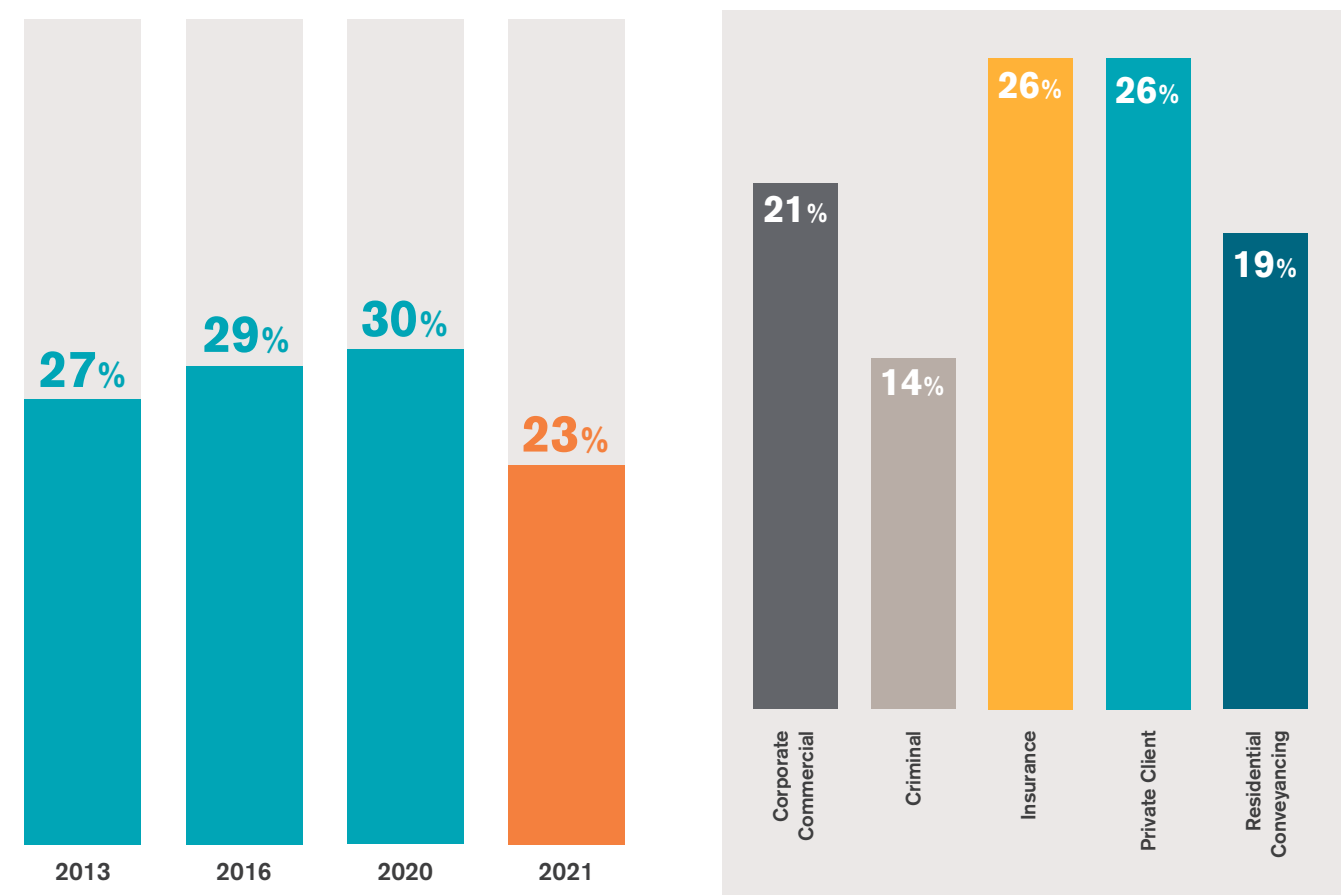
Work Life balance

Interesting to see male lawyers perceive glass ceiling as the number one turn off from pursuing a partnership opportunity. We picked up on quite a few comments and frustrations that suggest there is still work to be done to open up the profession including nepotism, chauvinism, racism, parenthood and CILEx qualified lawyers not being afforded the same respect as Solicitors.

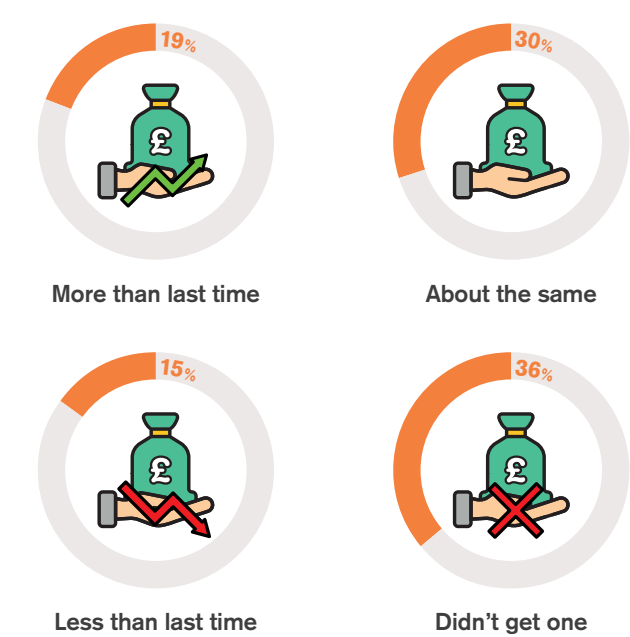
# Bonus

The average bonus is £5,600. The numbers of legal professionals being paid a bonus is lower than it was during the financial crisis. Bonus satisfaction is however at its highest for 3 years.

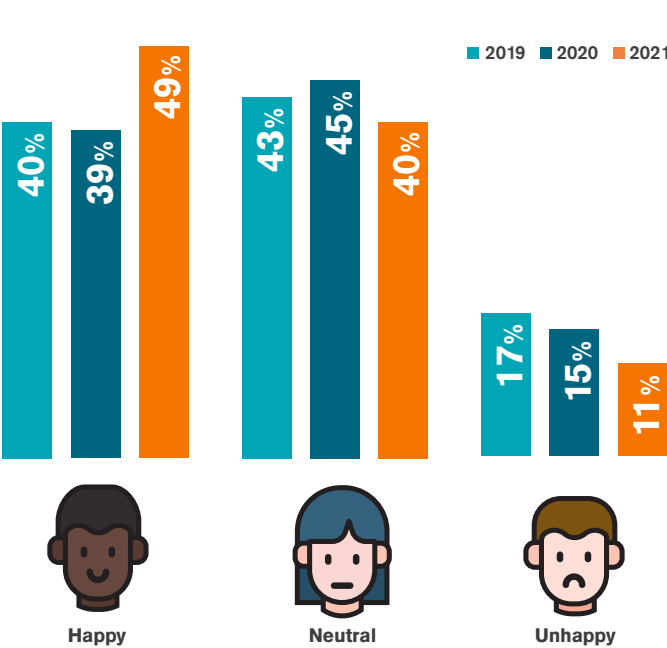
## Have you or will you receive a bonus, profit share or dividend this year?



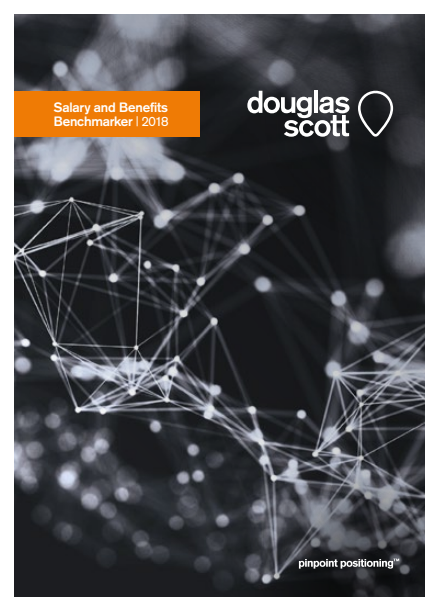
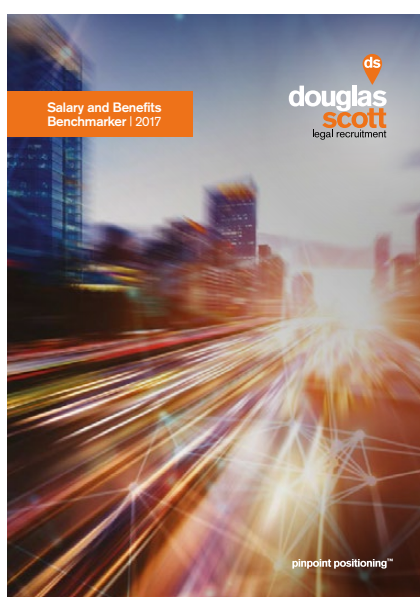
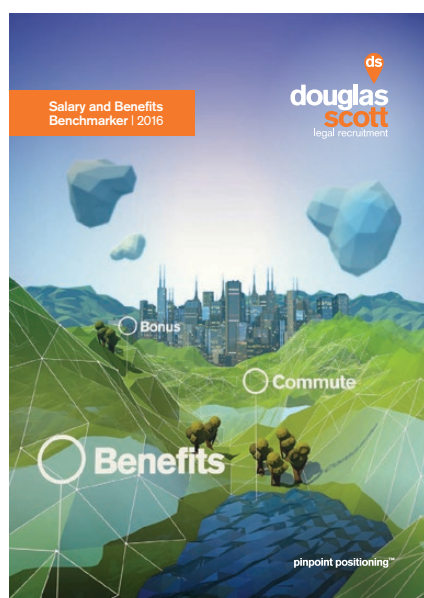
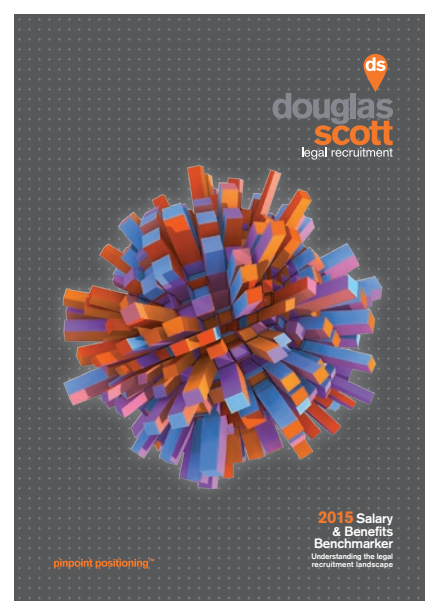
## How does this compare to your last one?



## Bonus Satisfaction



# 9 years of comparable data





# Contact the legal recruitment experts

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