



# Netsafe 2025 Annual Survey



Māori Population Report



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netsafe

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# Background and methodology

# Background



Netsafe is an independent, not-for-profit organisation with a mission to promote online safety among New Zealanders.

In order to effectively meet New Zealanders' needs, since 2017 Netsafe has regularly commissioned surveys to understand the ongoing role of technology in people's lives and their experiences online. Each survey measure contains a mix of questions: (a) core questions which don't change over time, and (b) topical questions, focused on providing detailed information about an issue.

The 2025 survey was focused on:

- Understanding New Zealanders' digital behaviour,
- Assessing awareness of rights and options under the Harmful Digital Communications Act,
- Measuring awareness and use of support services for unwanted digital communications,
- Gaining insight into New Zealanders' experiences of unwanted communications and the impact these have on those who receive them,
- Measuring New Zealanders' online experiences of hate speech,
- Understanding New Zealanders' experiences as perpetrators of harmful digital communications,
- Understanding perceptions around online safety for young people, including a possible law preventing young people from accessing social media.

# Reporting



This year, the following reports have been produced:

1. APS 2025 results
2. Trended results for APS core questions 2017-2025
3. Online hate speech – 2025 results and trends in 2018-2025
4. Social media ban – 2025 results
5. Māori population 2025 results and trends in 2023-2025

**This report focuses on the Māori population results.**

# Methodology



1,648 New Zealanders aged 16 years and over completed an online survey between 6 and 30 June, 2025. The sample of survey participants were sourced from the same online research panels that were used in previous waves. A total of 543 Māori completed the survey, the sample was structured to be representative of the population in terms of age and gender.



Average survey length: 17 minutes



Statistically significant differences (at the 95% confidence interval) between the 2025 survey results and the 2023 results are indicated by coloured arrows.

# Methodology

The overall results for Māori have been weighted to 2023 Census figures for Māori to align the data with Census counts for age and gender.

	Unweighted sample proportion	Weighted sample proportion
16 to 17 years old	3%	4%
18 to 29 years old	27%	30%
30 to 39 years old	13%	17%
40 to 49 years old	14%	18%
50 to 59 years old	15%	11%
60 to 69 years old	17%	13%
70 + years old	11%	8%
Male	47%	48%
Female	53%	51%
Gender diverse	<1%	<1%



# Key findings

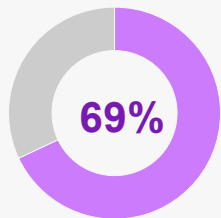
# Key findings – Māori population

## Keeping protected online

32%

**A third half of Māori consider scammers to be the main risk of going online.**

Concerns around privacy and personal data remain low but are up on 2023: privacy (9% vs 3%) and data leaks/sale of personal data (7% vs 3%).



**Over two thirds of Māori have taken action to protect themselves or others online in the past year.**

The most common protective action is taking care with passwords – a quarter of Māori did this. Using additional security settings, asking for advice, and being weary of dodgy emails or websites are other steps each taken by around 10% of Māori.

## More precautions



**Over nine in ten (94%) Māori would consider taking more action to protect themselves and others – this is up from 91% in 2023.**

Māori are most willing to consider keeping up-to-date with security risks and changing security settings.



## Awareness of rights and options

Māori have strong awareness of their rights and options under the HDC Act. Awareness of the need for online communications to adhere to legal principles has increased since 2023.

The **illegality** of online behaviour that intentionally causes harm to a person

**70%**  
AWARE

Ability to **lodge a complaint** about upsetting digital communications with an agency appointed by Government to help

**68%**  
AWARE

There are a set of **legal principles** that people are required to follow when communicating with others online

**63%** ▲  
AWARE  
Up from 49% in 2023

Deliberately **causing harm** with digital communications is punishable with imprisonment or a fine

**57%**  
AWARE

# Key findings – Māori population

## Unwanted digital communications



Nearly half (48%) of Māori have received unwanted digital communications in the past year.

Māori under 30 years are *most likely* to have received unwanted communications (59%).



Around half (52%) of recipients say these communications have had a negative impact on their life. This is up significantly from 39% percent in 2023.

## Accessing support services



Just over a third of those who experienced unwanted digital communications contacted some type of support service. This is up significantly from 2023 (23%).

Support is typically sought from an online service/platform such as Facebook or Google (44%), or the police (31%). A quarter (28%) say they contacted Netsafe for support.



Of those who contacted a support service, 55% percent found it helpful.

In 2025, those seeking help from an internet platform/provider were more likely to have found it helpful (44%) compared to 2023 (9%). Two thirds of those who sought help from the police found it helpful (66%).

## Perpetrators



Nearly two in ten (19%) Māori admit to having sent or shared at least one type of unwanted digital communications – this is up significantly from 9% in 2023.

Most perpetrators have also been victims of digital harm.

The communications they sent or shared most often either attempted to make a joke, to get revenge, or to embarrass someone. However, a quarter didn't know why they did it.

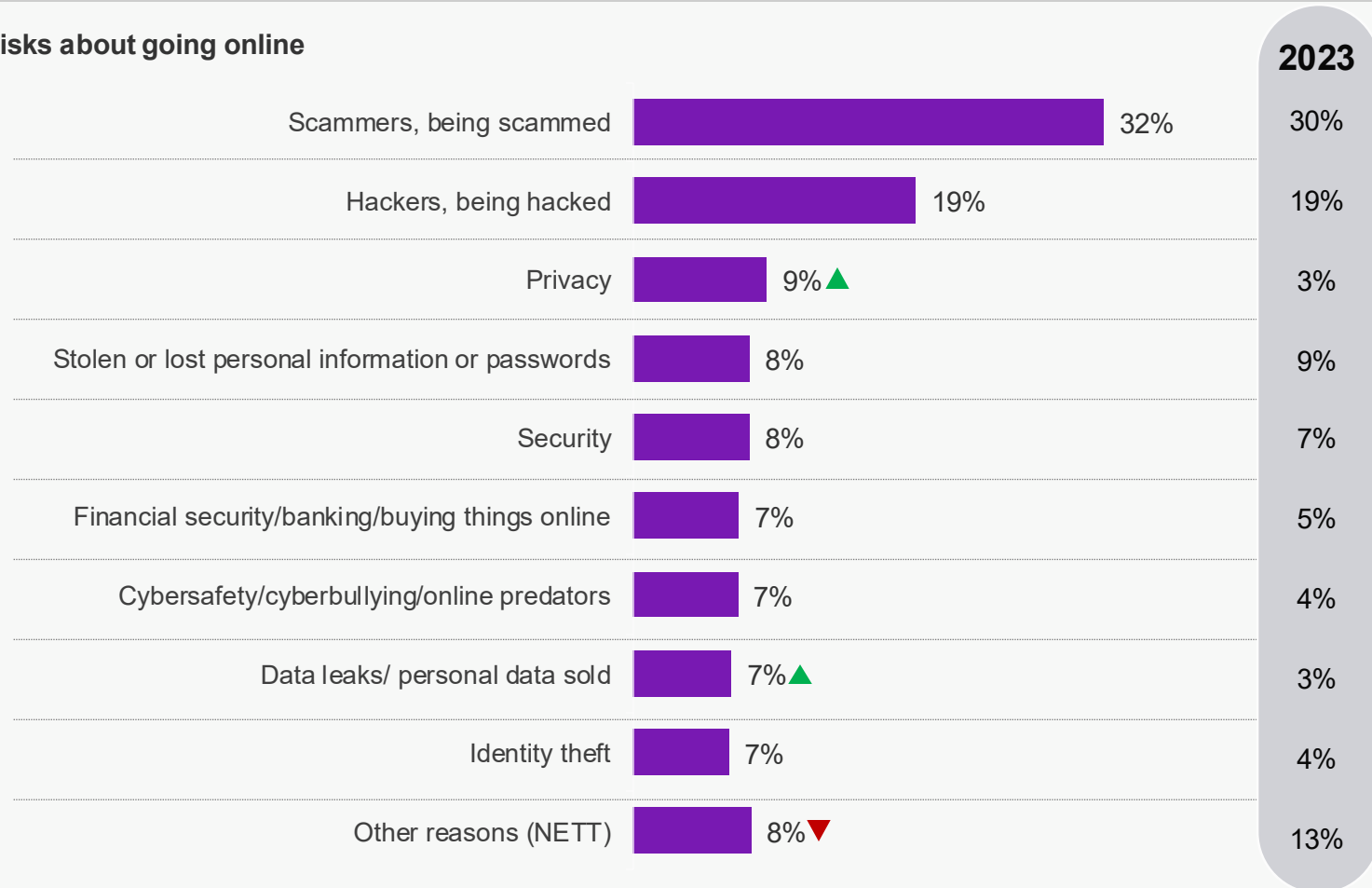




# Keeping protected online

When asked about the main challenges or risks of going online, being scammed or hacked are the greatest concerns. This is consistent with 2023. Māori have more concerns about privacy and personal data leaks in 2025 than in 2023.

### Biggest concerns/risks about going online



▲ ▼ Significant increase/decrease since 2023

# Concerns and risks about going online in their own words...

*"Being exposed to constant negative content, even when I purposefully avoid it, advertising is usually something negative. I also find it challenging to avoid AI, I don't like it being forced upon me, like with google search, it's not actually what everyone thinks it is, it's just a summarising program. But it still hinders important skills like critical thinking."*

**Wāhine, 30-39 years, Wellington region**

*"Going online and my device that I am using being hacked or getting a virus on it. I fear when my kids are online that they are sharing information they should not with people they do not know. With internet banking I fear someone hacking into my account and taking all of my money."*

**Wāhine, 30-39 years, Manawatū-Wanganui region**

*"Information overload, it's difficult to filter out high-quality content, and one is also prone to come across bad information, which interferes with judgment."*

**Tāne, 18-21 years, Auckland region**

*"People stealing my information or my information being used by any party without my permission. My other concern is people trying to scam me and others."*

**Tāne, 50-59 years, Waikato region**

*'Stolen identities, stolen bank details, amount of spam and fraud emails.'*

**Tāne, 50-59 years, Northland region**

*'Being hacked. Theft of personal information. The impact of that to myself and my family. Financial ruin. Understanding how to keep myself safe. What sites to trust, should I or shouldn't I click on this link? Also, when wanting to buy things who do I trust. Chatter from others who say don't buy from them because they've had a bad experience. We need some sort of register of trustworthy sites! Downloading viruses, Trojans, Spyware. Accidentally tapping into something because my phone screen is so sensitive. Knowing what I need to do step by step to set myself up safely on my devices.'*

**Wāhine, 60-69 years, Waikato**

*"Unwanted sexual content, unsafe people."*

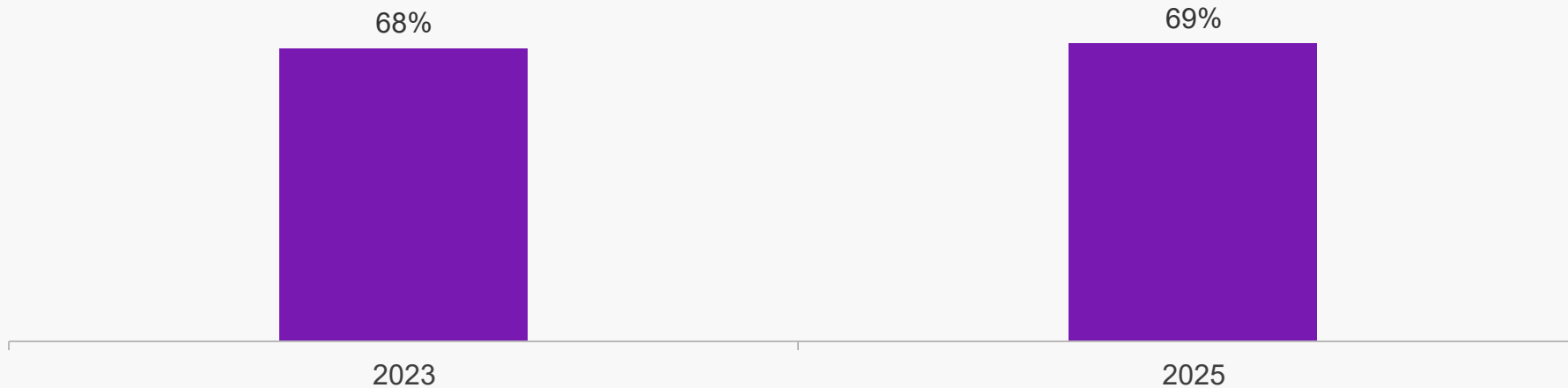
**Wāhine, 22-25 years, Canterbury**

# Two thirds of Māori have taken actions in the past 12 months to protect themselves or others online.

## Taken action to protect themselves or others

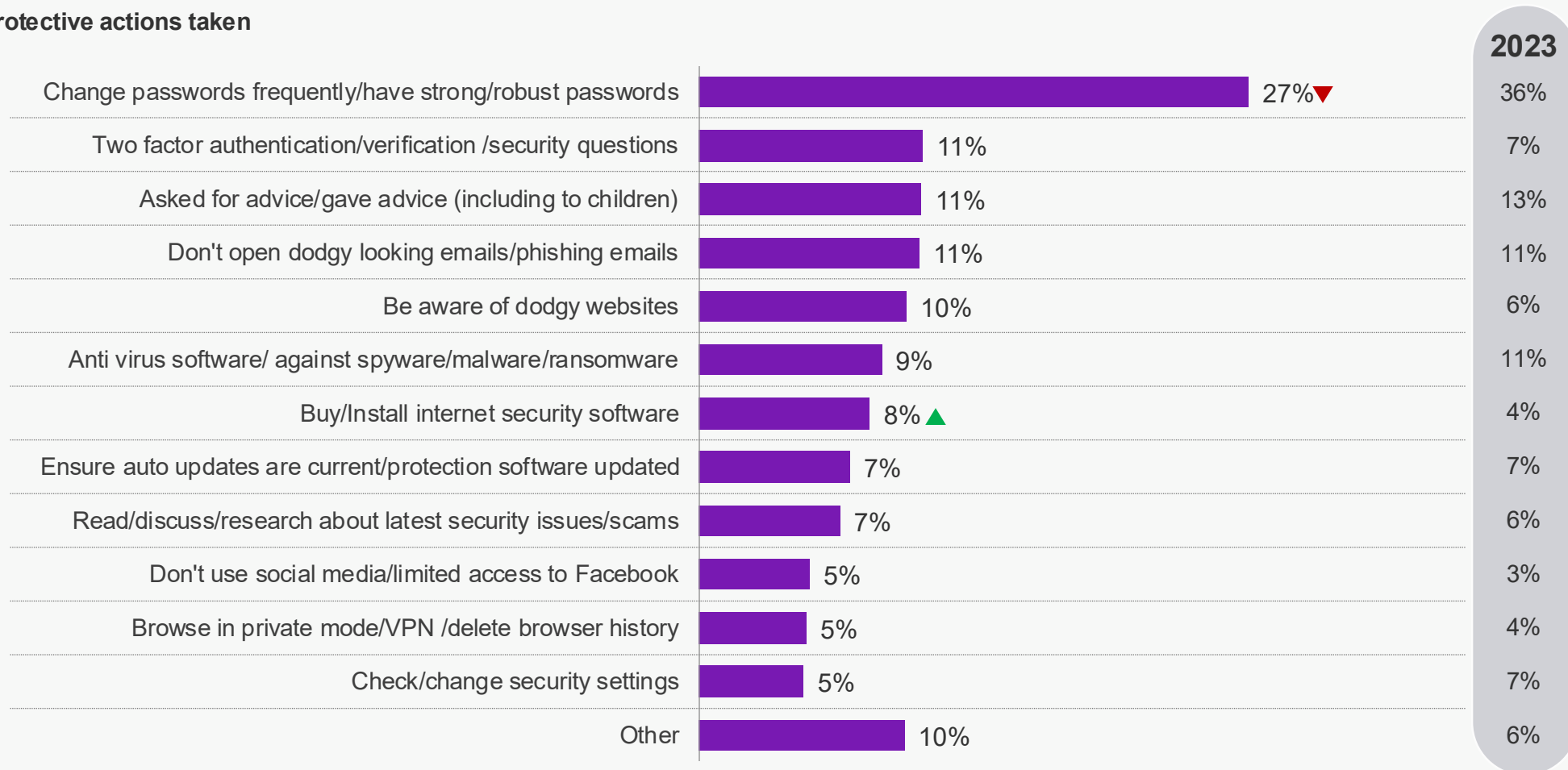
**69%**

have taken action to protect themselves or others online  
in the past 12 months



The type of protective actions Māori take are quite varied with *regular changing of passwords* the most common (although down on 2023). Compared with 2023, slightly more are buying or installing security software.

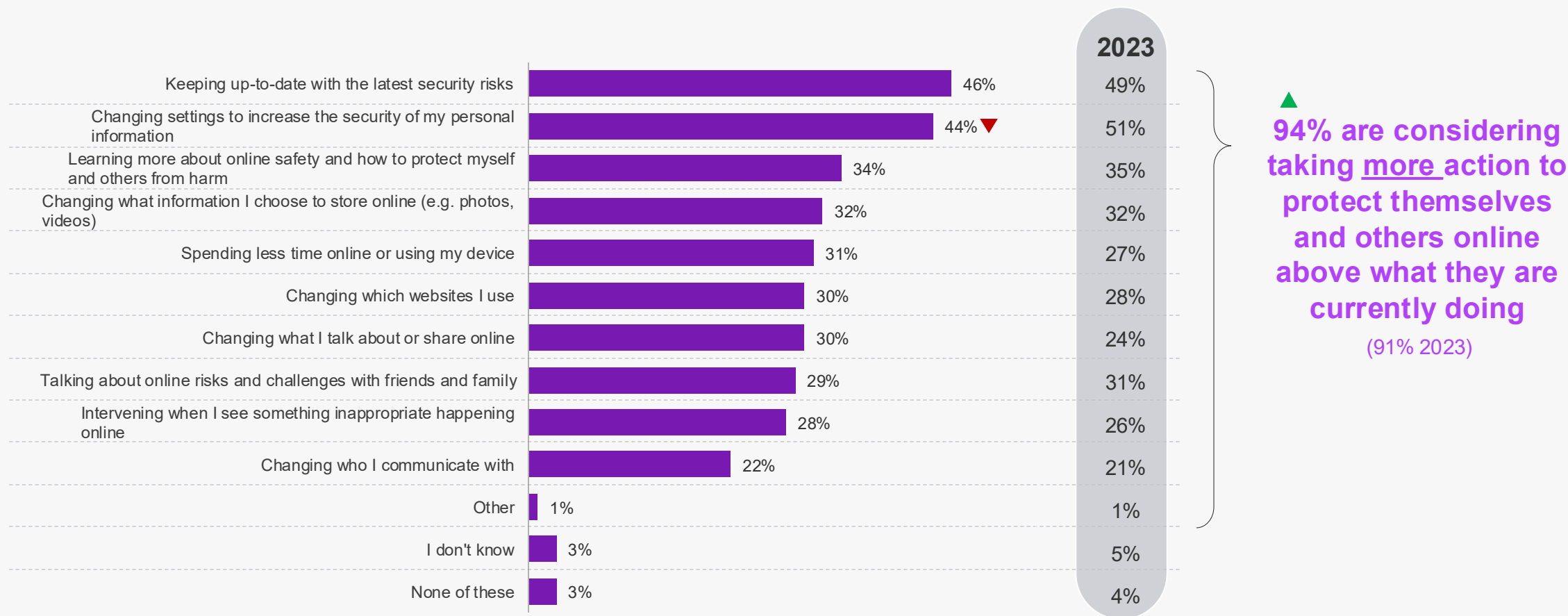
### Protective actions taken




▲ ▼ Significant increase/decrease since 2023

Over nine in ten Māori are considering taking **more** precautions in the future to protect themselves or others from online harm. This will most likely be done by keeping up to date with security risks and changing security settings.

Consideration of taking protective online actions in future (actions that are not currently being taken)

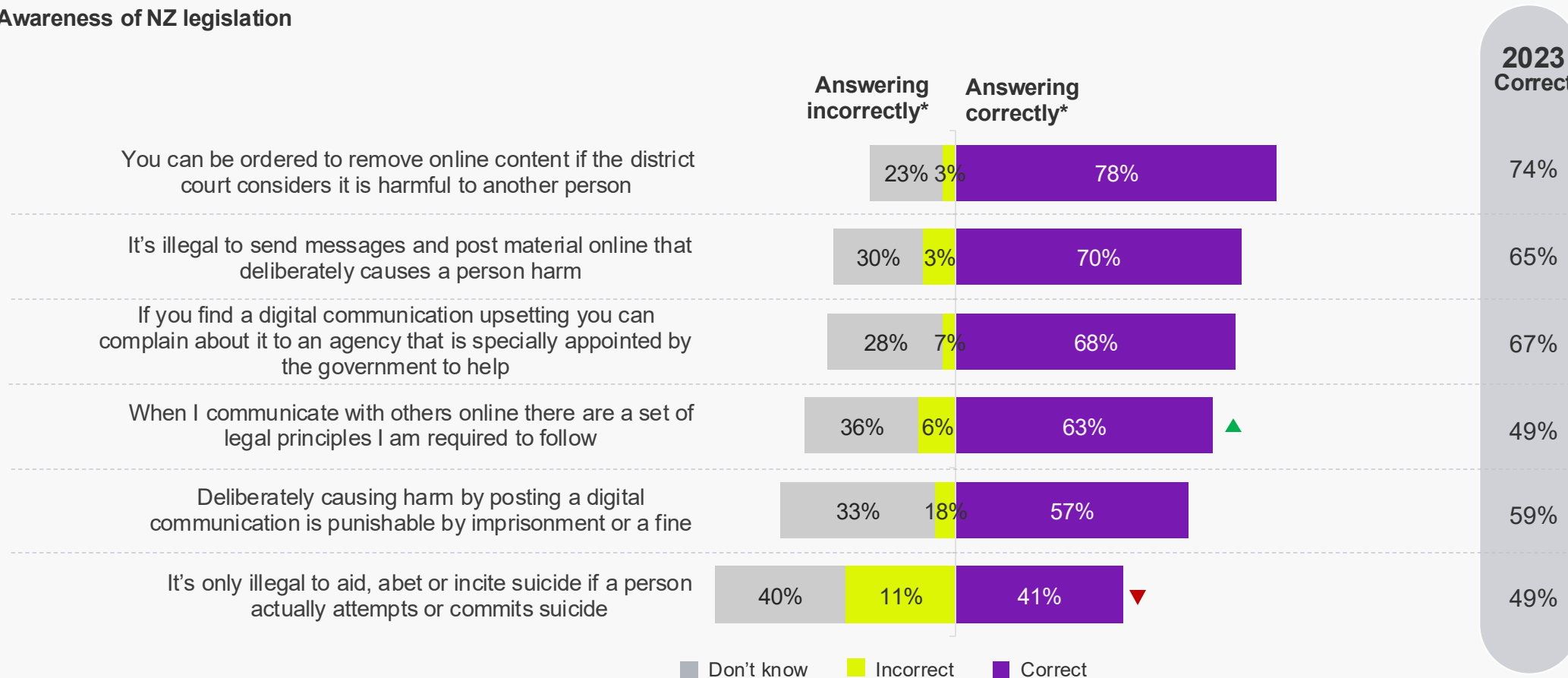




# Awareness of rights and options

Awareness of legislation around rights and responsibilities when online is generally fairly strong. Since 2023, more Māori are aware that there are legal principles that must be followed when interacting online, while fewer can correctly identify that it's illegal to aid or incite suicide.

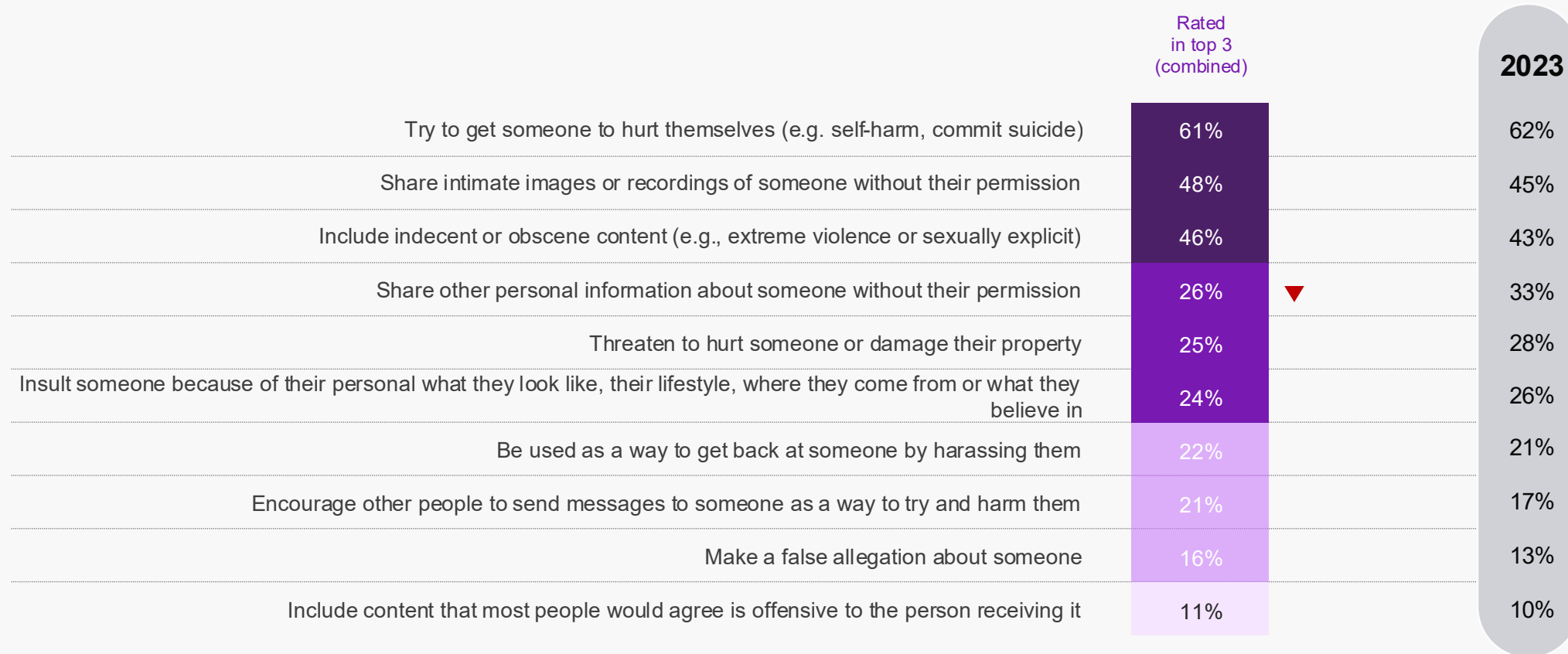
### Awareness of NZ legislation



▲▼ Significant increase/decrease since 2023

When asked what digital communications **should not** include, the main components are encouraging self-harm, followed by sharing intimate images/recordings, and sharing indecent or obscene content. Since 2023, fewer feel sharing personal information about someone online should not be included in digital communications.

Digital communication should not\*...

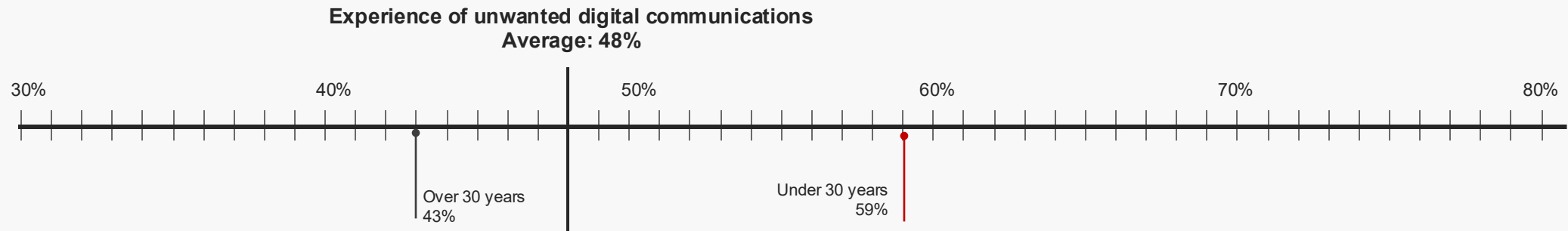
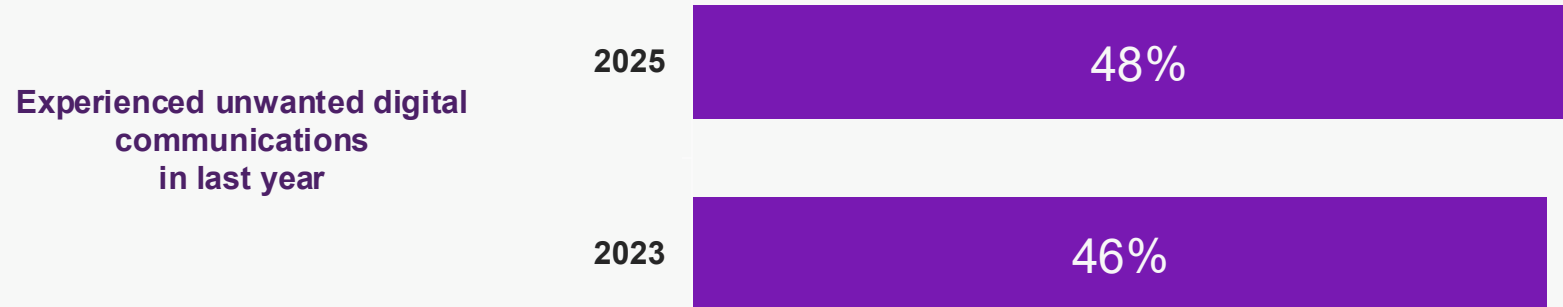


▲▼ Significant increase/decrease since 2023



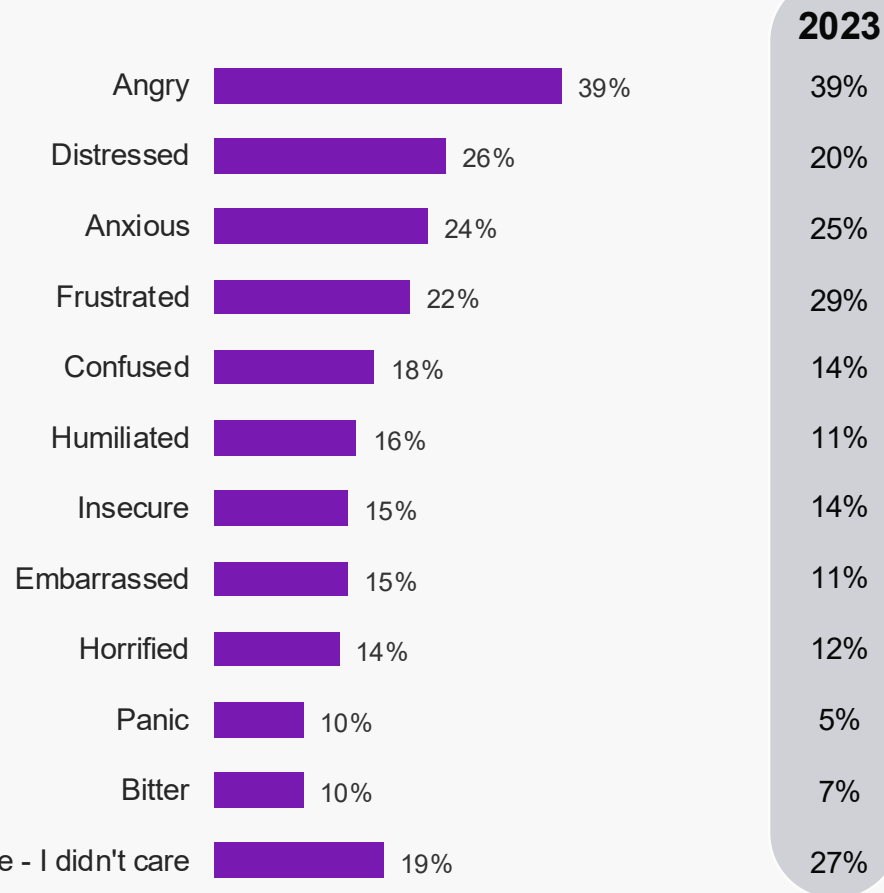
# Experience of unwanted digital communications

Consistent with 2023, just under half (48%) of all Māori have received unwanted digital communications in the past year. This is more common among young Māori (59%).



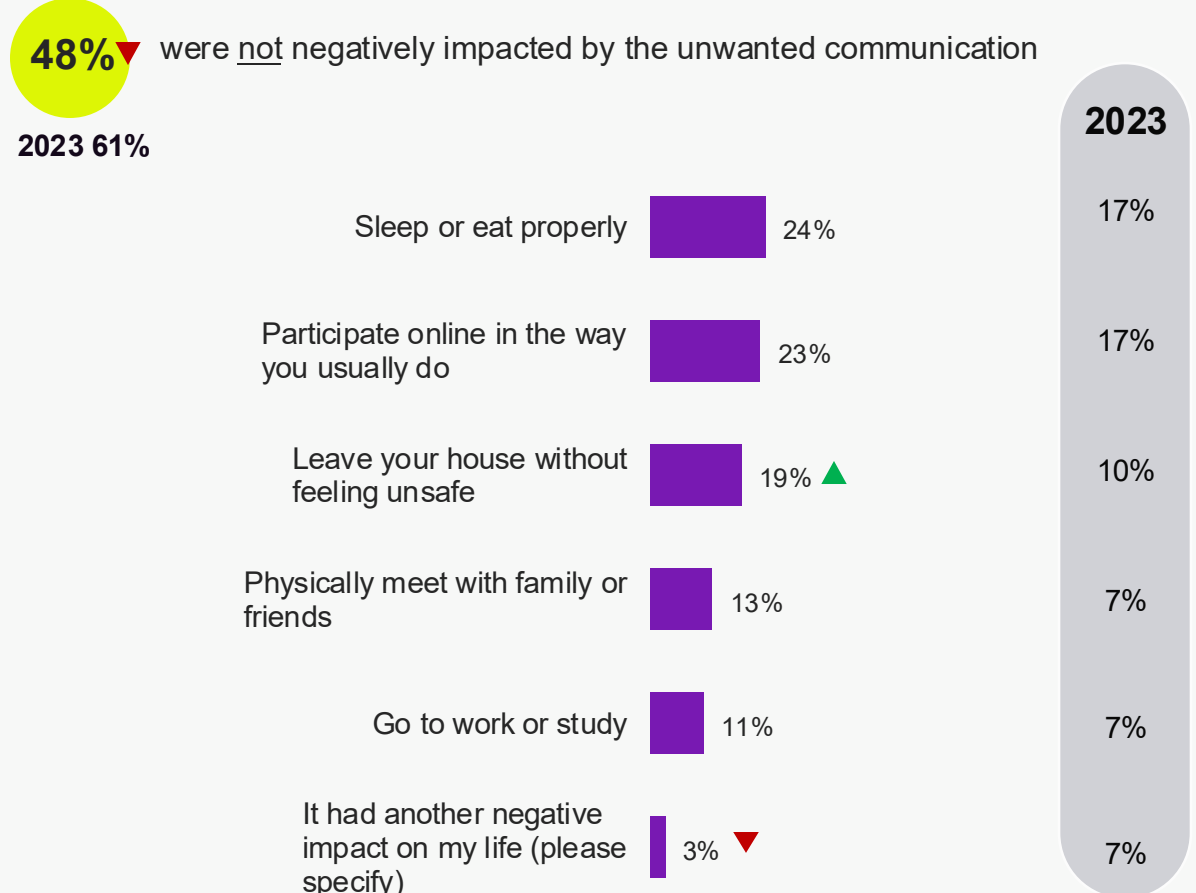
Anger, frustration, and anxiety are the emotions commonly felt by people receiving unwanted digital communications. While many (48%) say they have not been negatively impacted, over half have been.

### Most common emotional reactions to unwanted digital communication



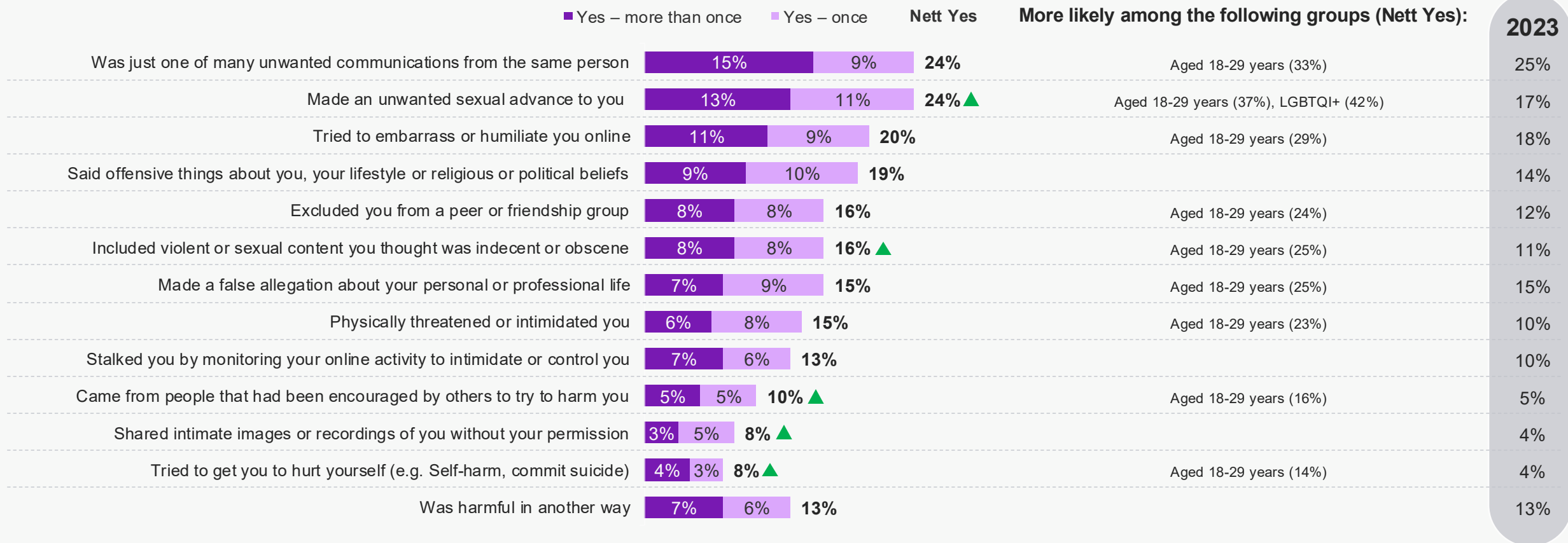
▲ ▼ Significant increase/decrease since 2023

### Impact of unwanted digital communication on daily life



The nature and type of unwanted communications people are receiving is quite varied, with repetitive unwanted communications from the same person the most common, along with unwanted sexual advances. Compared to 2023, more Māori are experiencing unwanted sexual advances, indecent or obscene content, intimate content, self harm encouragement and maliciously incited by others.

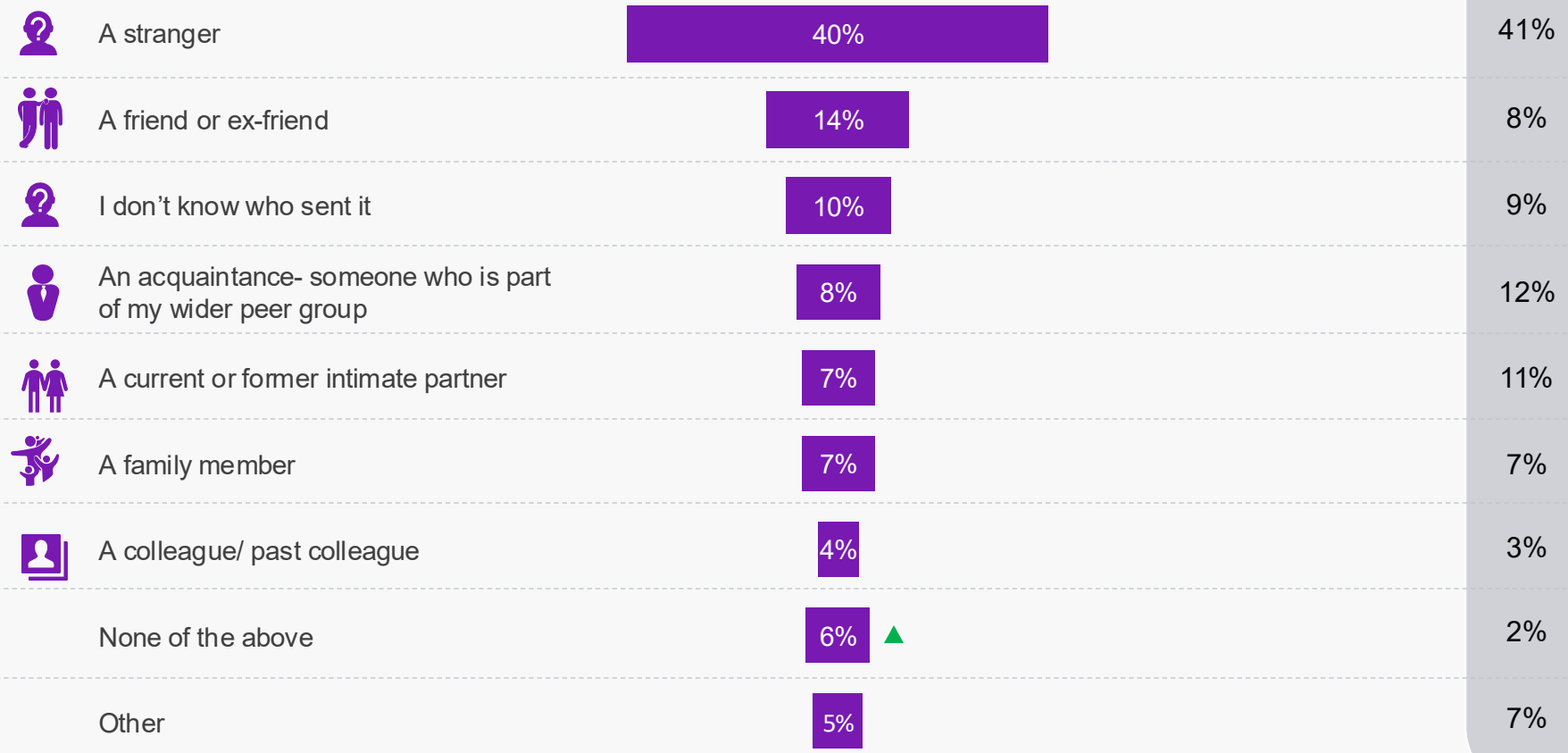
### Type of unwanted digital communications



▲▼ Significant increase/decrease since 2023

For many Māori who received unwanted digital communications, the sender was unknown to them (40%). A friend or ex-friend is now the second most common sender of unwanted communications; previously acquaintances or current or former partners were more likely to have initiated these communications.

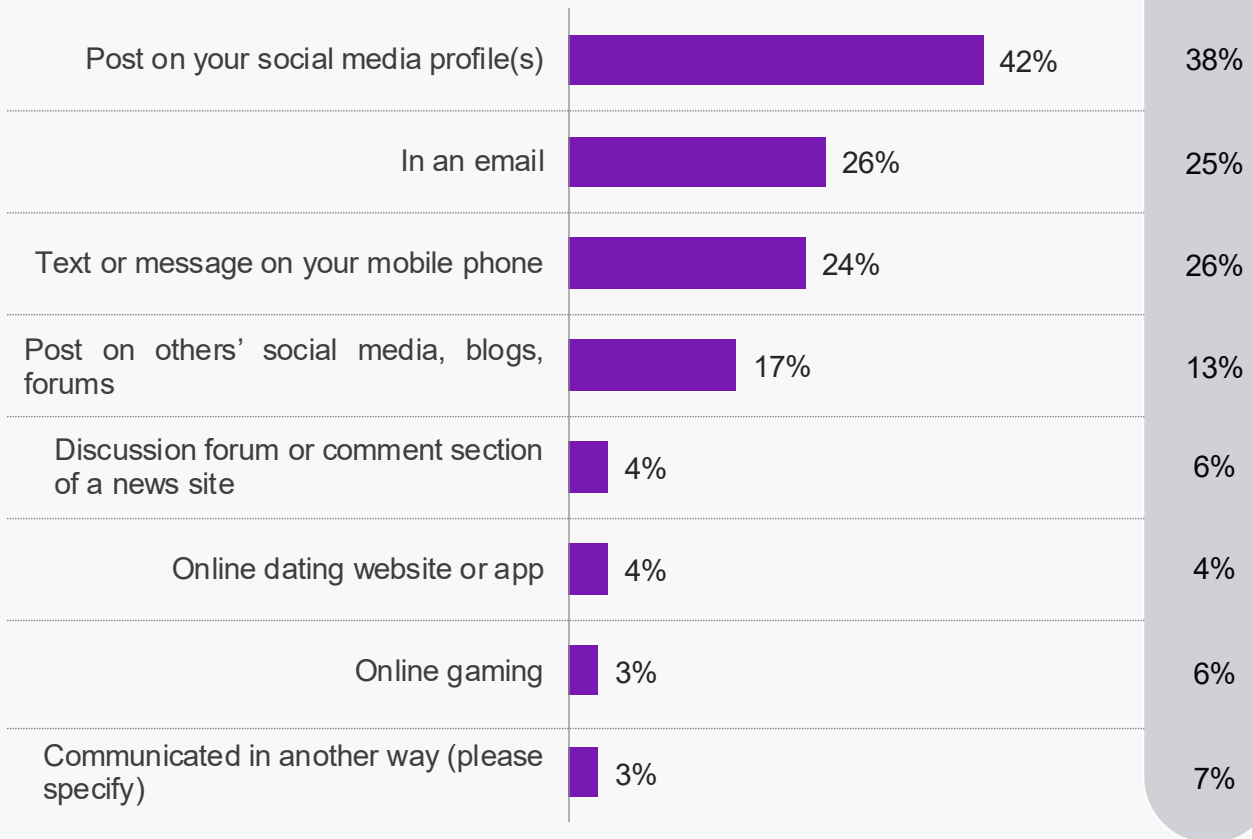
Sender of unwanted communication



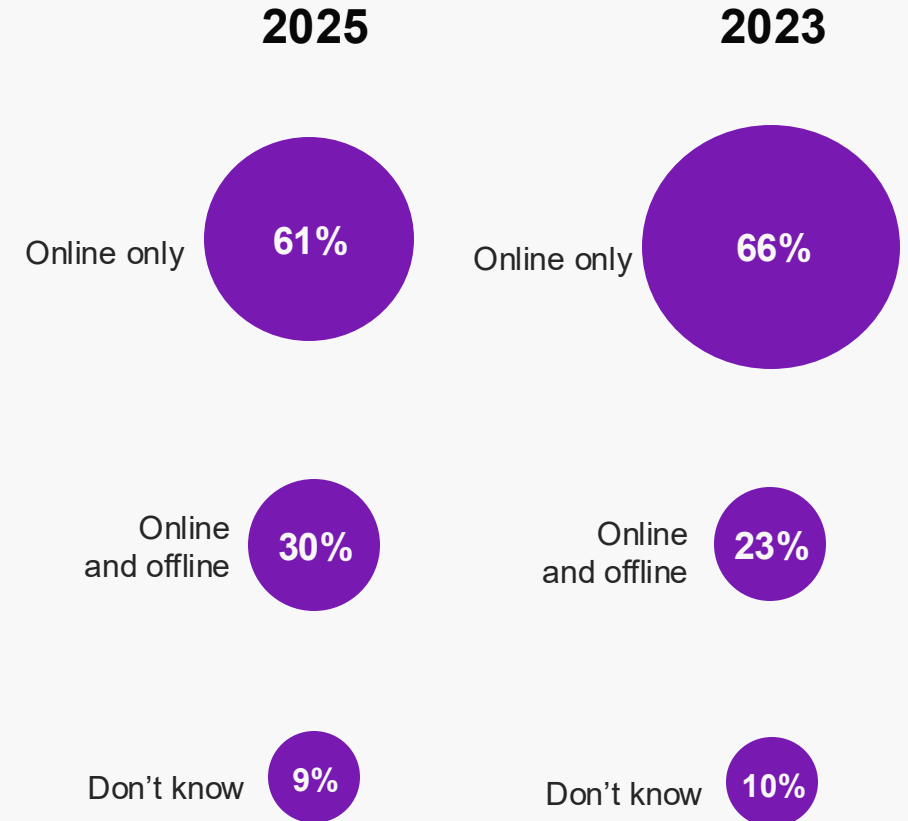
▲ ▼ Significant increase/decrease since 2023

Four in ten (42%) Māori who received unwanted digital communications in the past year got it through their social media profiles, and a quarter received it either through email or phone messages. Unwanted communications are isolated to online platforms for most (61%), but for nearly a third (30%) this is part of a wider issue also happening offline.

Channel of unwanted digital communication



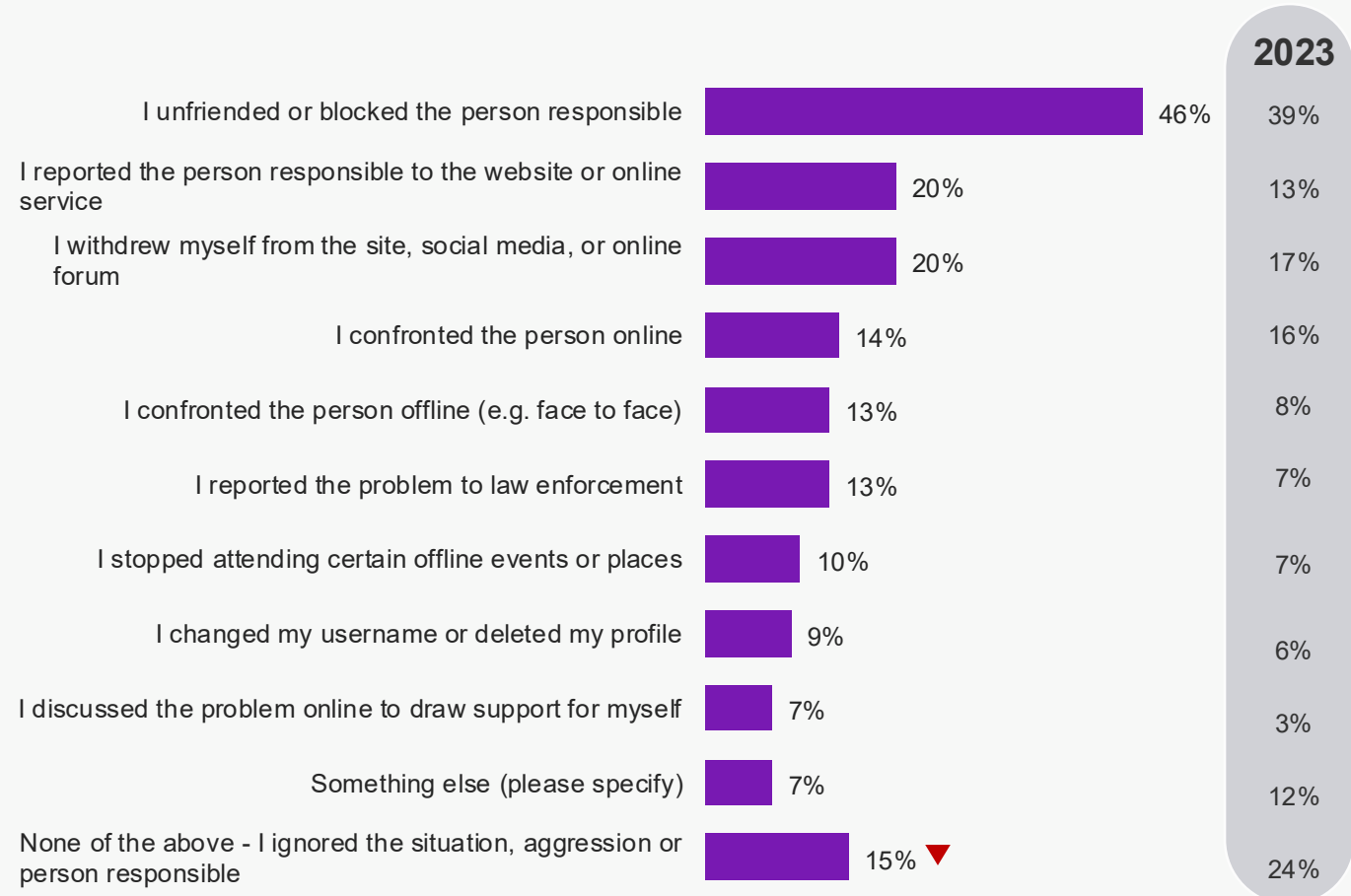
Part of a wider issue happening offline



▲▼ Significant increase/decrease since 2023

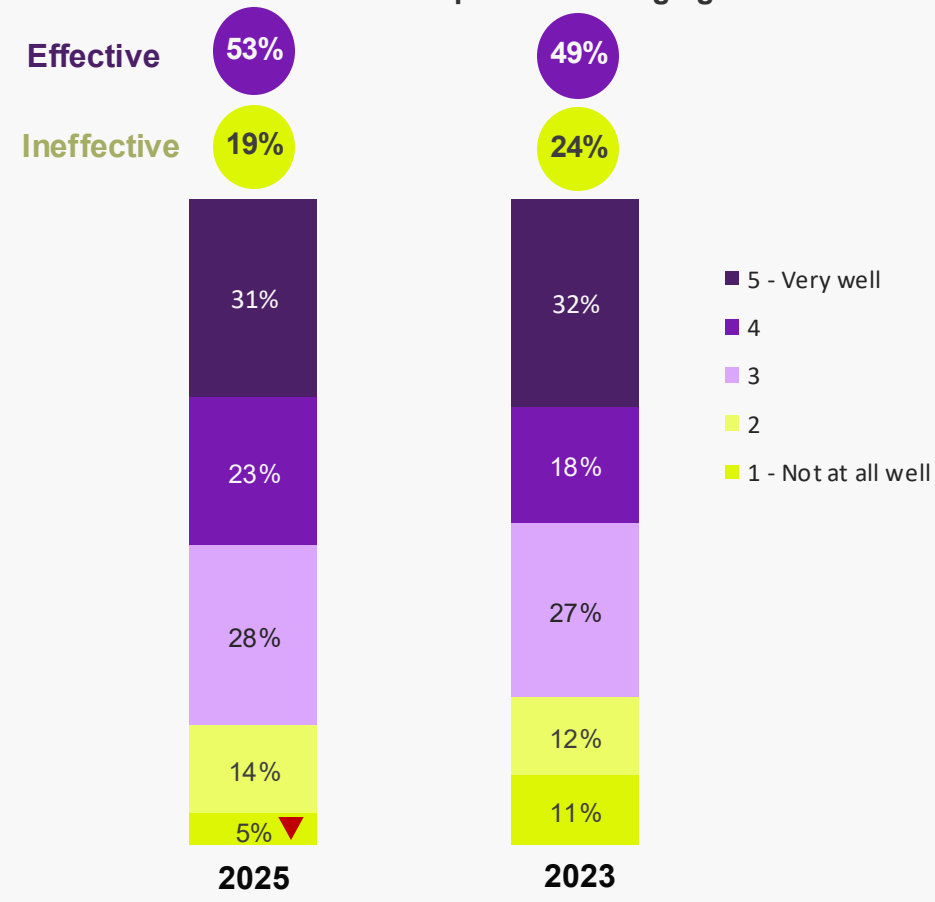
The most common responses to unwanted communication are to block or unfriend the person responsible, report it to the website, or withdraw from the site. Only 15% of Māori ignored the situation, which is down from 24% in 2023. Only half (53%) of Māori who took action say it was effective.

### Response to situation



▲ ▼ Significant increase/decrease since 2023

### Perceived effectiveness of response at changing the situation



Base: Māori respondents who have experienced an unwanted digital communication and did not ignore the situation (2025 n=209, 2023 n=178).

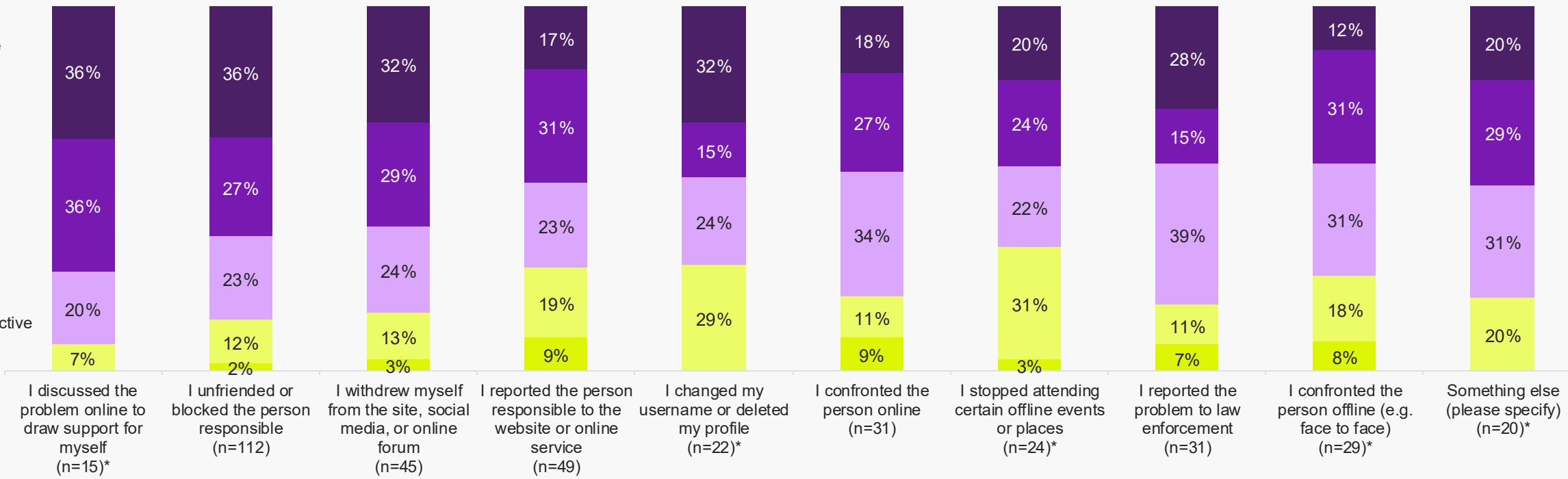
The responses perceived to be the most effective are discussing the problem online\*, unfriending or blocking the person responsible, and withdrawing from the site.

Perceived effectiveness of response of the different reactions

Effective (Nett)

	2025	2023
1 - Not at all effective	7%	2%
2	20%	12%
3	36%	23%
4	36%	27%
5 - Very effective	36%	36%

- 5 - Very effective
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1 - Not at all effective



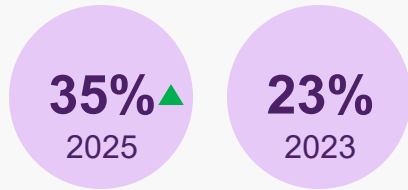
▲ ▼ Significant increase/decrease since 2023



# Accessing support services

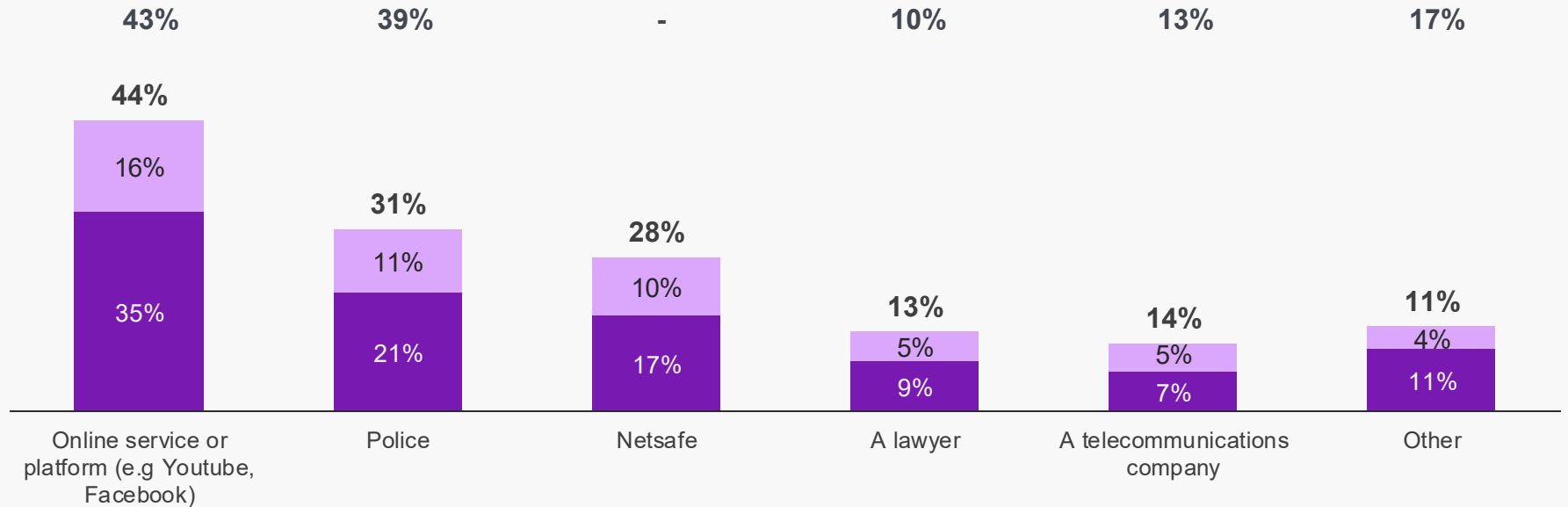
A third (35%) of Māori who received unwanted communications say they reached out to a support service, and this tended to be internet service providers/ platforms, the Police or Netsafe.

Used a support service:



2023  
Nett Sought support

Those who sought support from...



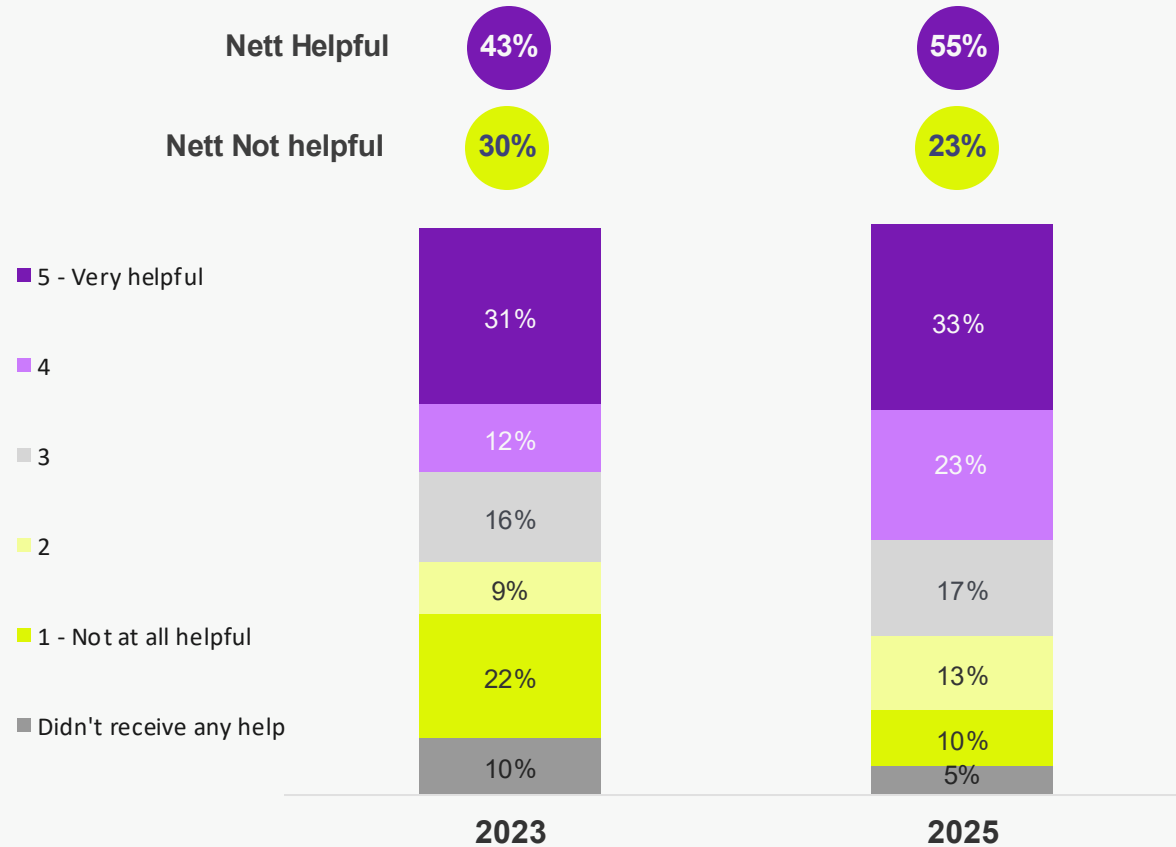
Nett Sought support

- % used this support services used in conjunction with other services
- % the one main support service used

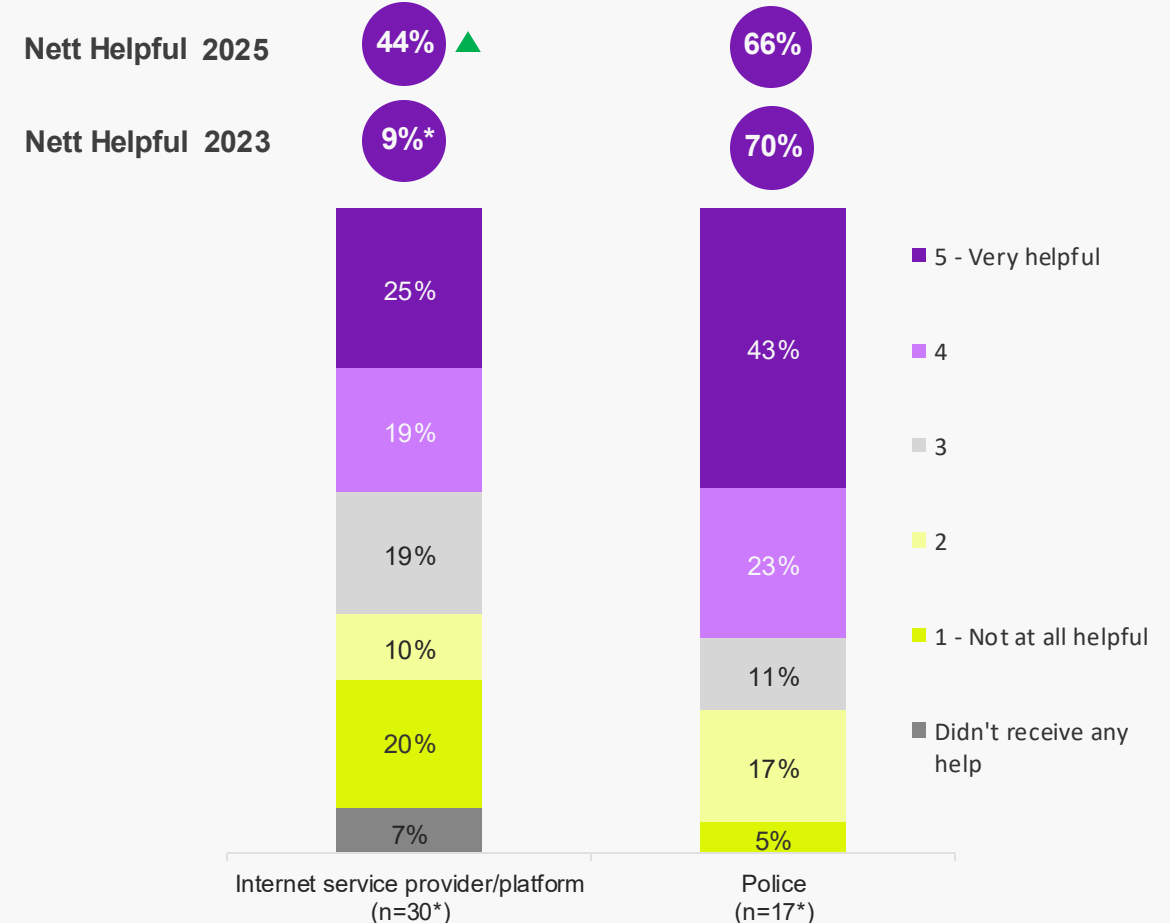
▲ ▼ Significant increase/decrease since 2023

Overall, 43% of Māori who sought support from a service found it helpful. Police support is rated most highly. Internet service providers are perceived to be more helpful in 2025 than in 2023.

### Helpfulness of support received



### Helpfulness of the individual support services



▲ ▼ Significant increase/decrease since 2023

# Reasons support was not helpful in their own words...

*"I continued to get the messages, and no further action (that I'm aware of) had been taken."*

**Wahine, 18-21 years, Hawke's Bay region**

*"I felt the response was slow and lacked clear guidance on what steps to take next."*

**Tāne, 22-25 years, Auckland region**

*"It blocked the content at the time but other content keeps showing up. I wanted to be able to block any/all such content."*

**Wahine, 60-69 years, Waikato region**

*"Not great at giving updates about the case."*

**Wahine, 22-25 years, Waikato region**

*"One didn't respond, the other told me information I already knew."*

**Tāne, 70-79 years, Bay of Plenty region**

We also asked what further support Māori would like for themselves and their whānau when online. Many mentioned specific support and education for both their elderly whānau and their tamariki.

*"Guidance on handling digital addiction concerns."*

**Tāne, 30-39 years, Auckland region**

*"For my mum, she's 73, it would help to have a support line or someone for online or app issues that she could call if I am unavailable."*

**Wahine, 30-39 years, Wellington region**

*"Be great to get more information for parents to educate themselves to look after our kids and teenagers"*

**Tāne, 40-49 years, Wellington region**

*"Laws against online abuse that have teeth. Require the police to take online offences seriously. Enable a statutory organisation to manage online harm rather than a charity. Give that organisation power to take down platforms and arrest abusers. Legally define every online post as publishing to make platforms liable for their content."*

**Tāne, 50-59 years, Auckland region**

*"If we are subjected to adverts, educational ones would be beneficial to give guidance on where to get support or advice about online issues."*

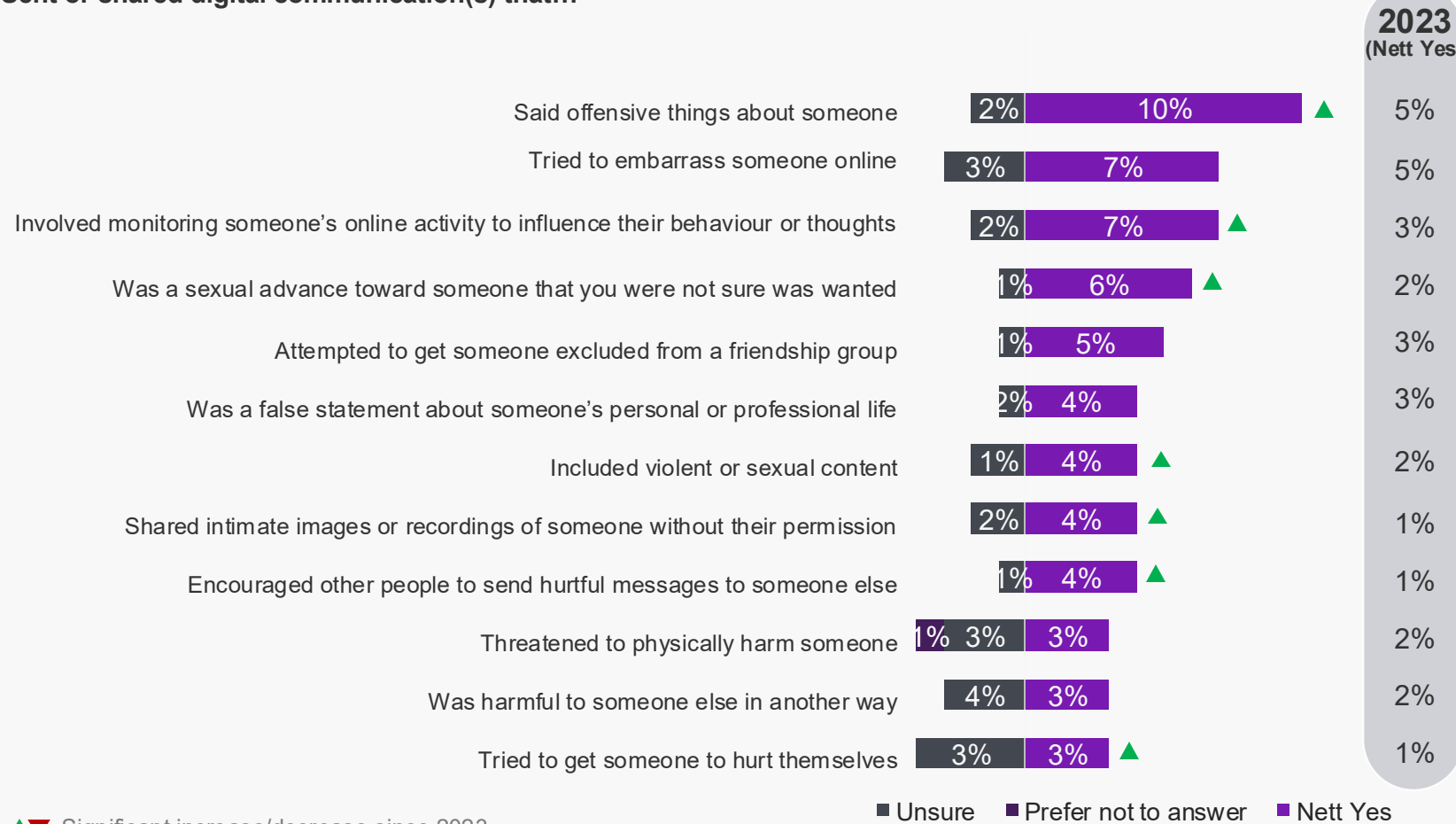
**Wahine, 40-49 years, Waikato region**



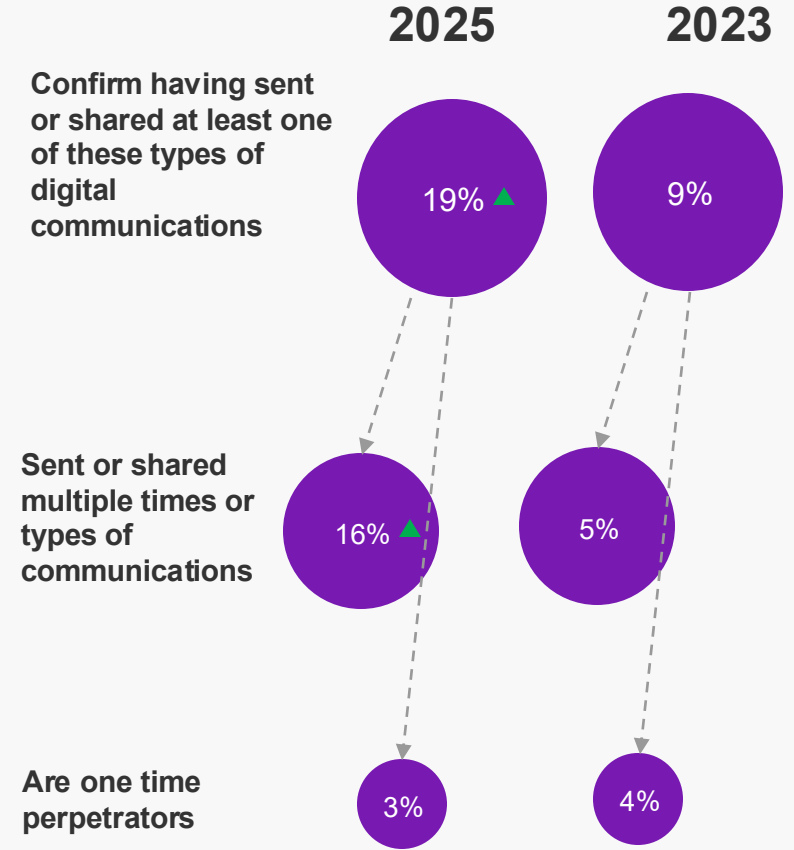
# Perpetrators

A fifth of Māori admit to sending unwanted digital communications to someone in the past year, almost double the proportion seen in 2023. Most of those (16% of all Māori) admit to doing it multiple times.

Sent or shared digital communication(s) that...

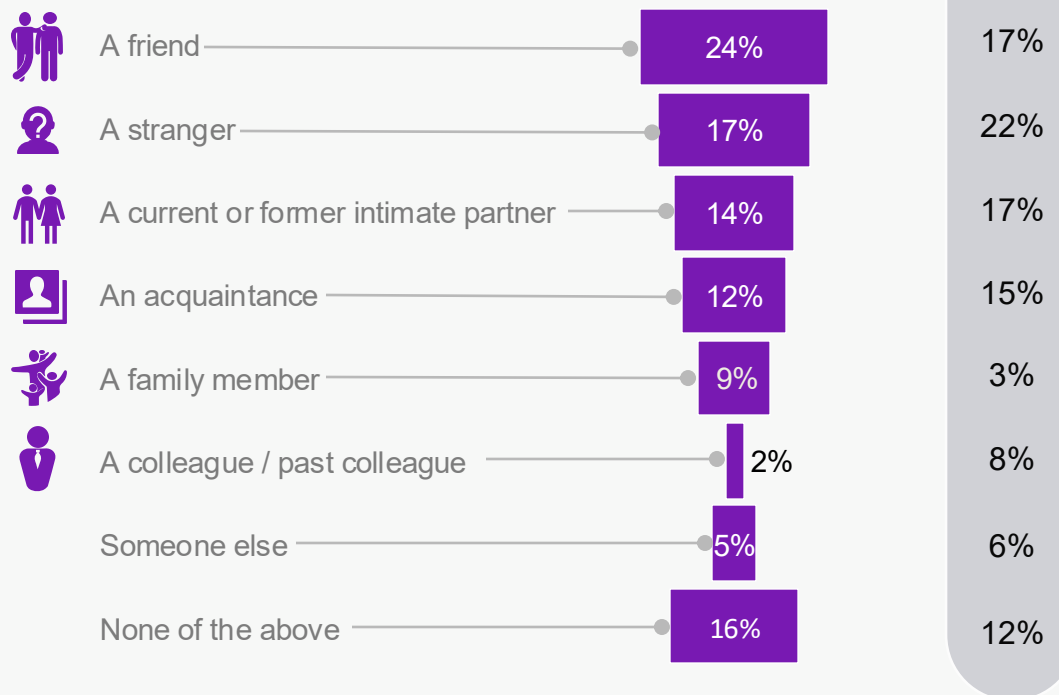


▲▼ Significant increase/decrease since 2023

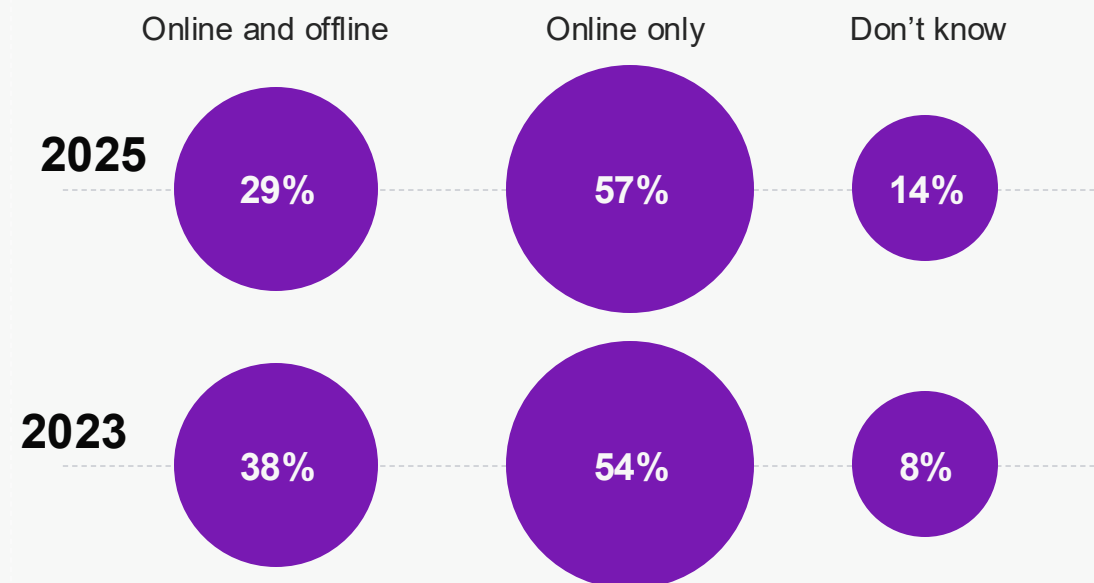


Recipients of unwanted communications are most likely to be friends (24%), followed by strangers (14%). A third of the time (29%), the online communications are part of a wider issue happening offline.

### Receiver of unwanted communication(s)

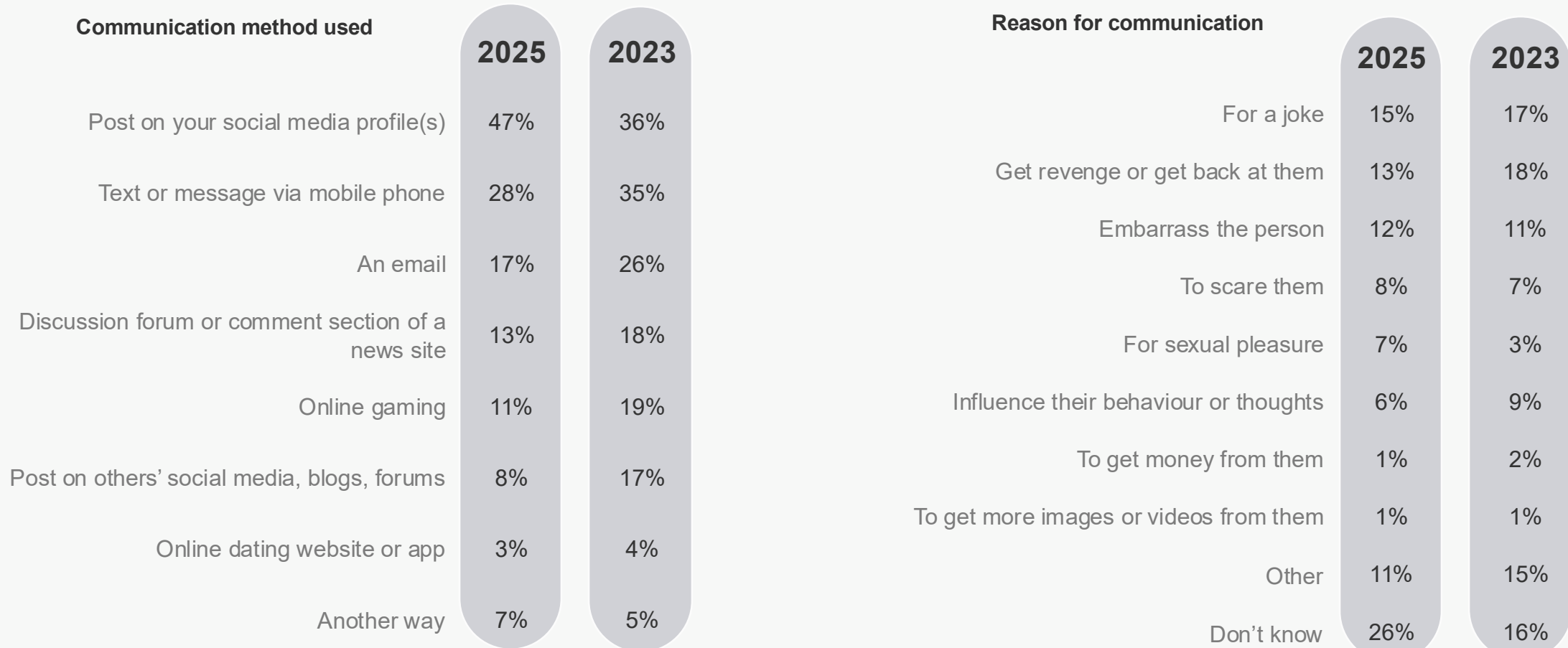


### Online actions part of a wider issue happening offline



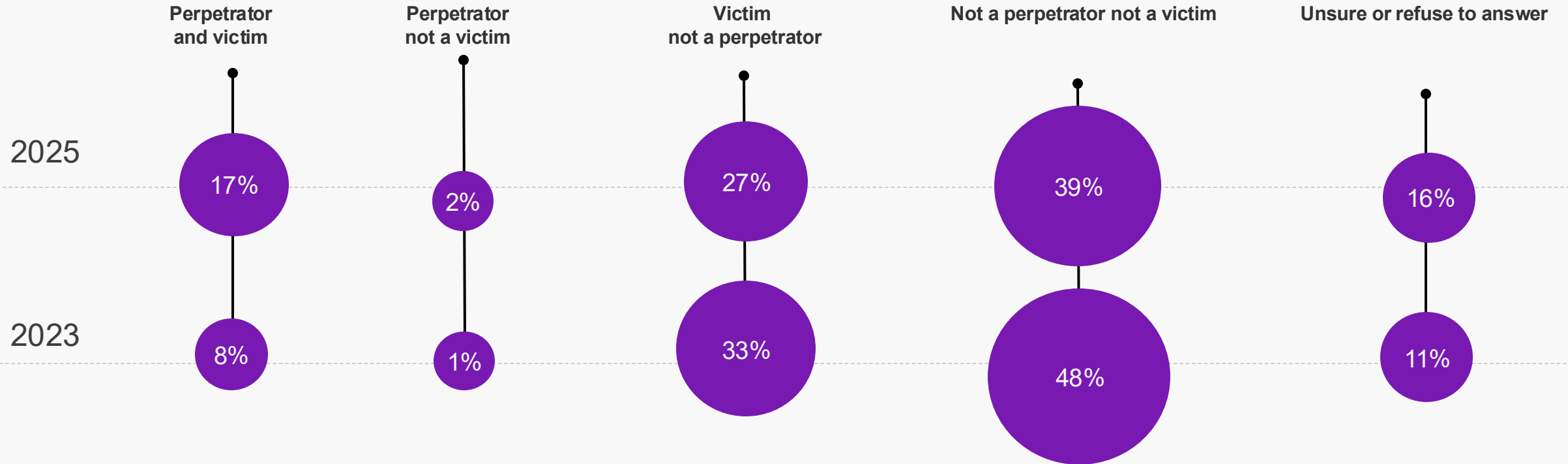
▲ ▼ Significant increase/decrease since 2023

Social media, text, and emails are the most common communication methods used by perpetrators. Most cited reasons for sending unwanted communications include to make a joke, revenge, and to embarrass their victim.



▲ ▼ Significant increase/decrease since 2023

Most perpetrators are also victims of digital harm. A third of Māori are victims but not perpetrators.

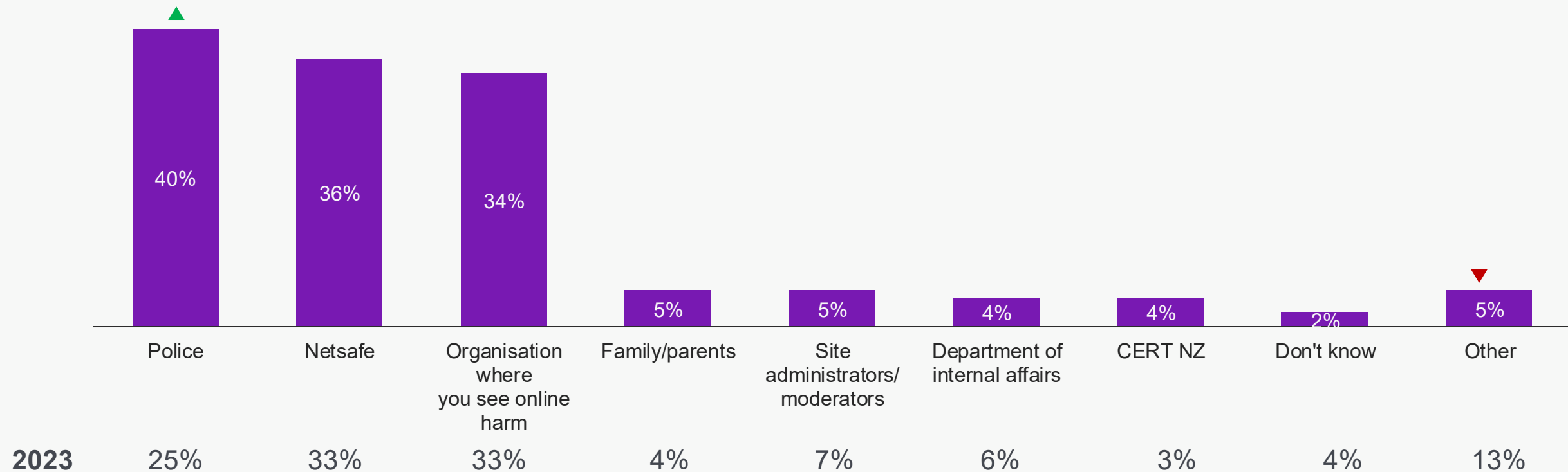




# Reporting harmful content

Two out of five Māori who know where to report unwanted digital communications would turn to the Police, far more than the quarter who said they would do this in 2023. More than a third say they would go to Netsafe.

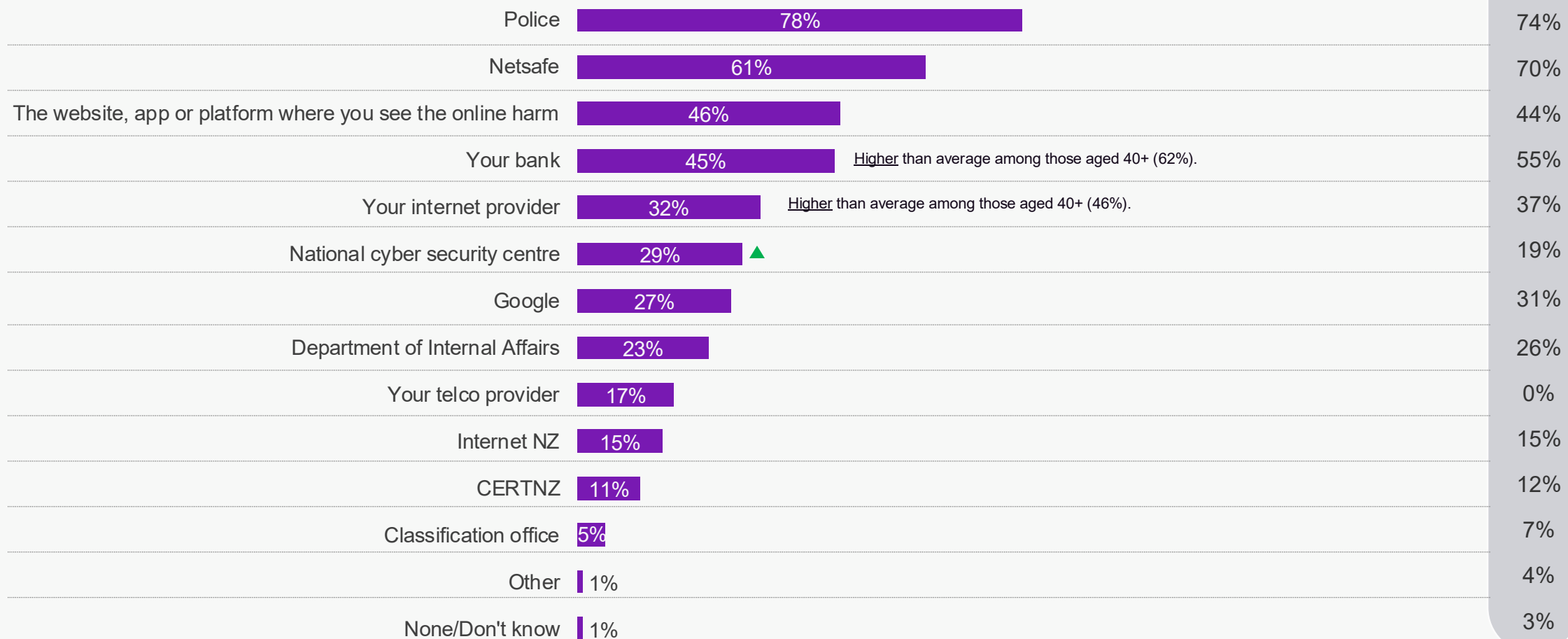
Where to report harmful or dangerous online content - Unprompted



▲▼ Significant increase/decrease since 2023

Most Māori recognise the police (78%) and Netsafe (61%) as places to report online harm. Banks and internet providers are other known organisations for reporting online harm, particularly amongst older Māori.

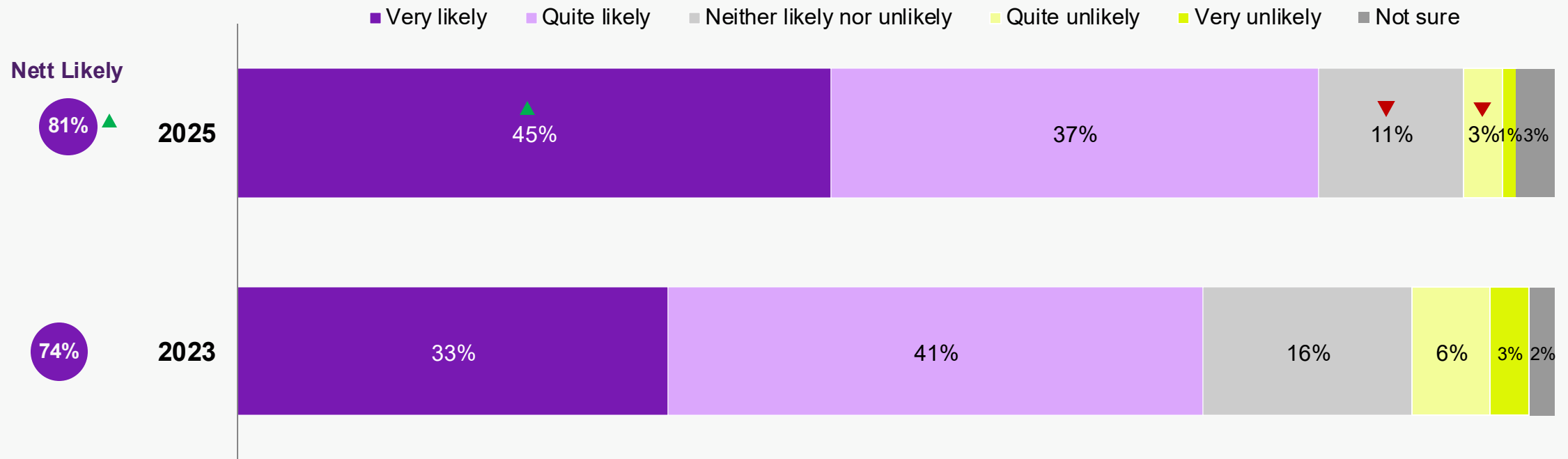
Where to report harmful or dangerous online content - Prompted



▲▼ Significant increase/decrease since 2023

Most Māori (81%) are likely to report harmful online content – this has increased significantly since 2023. Just under half (45%) are very likely to report harmful online content.

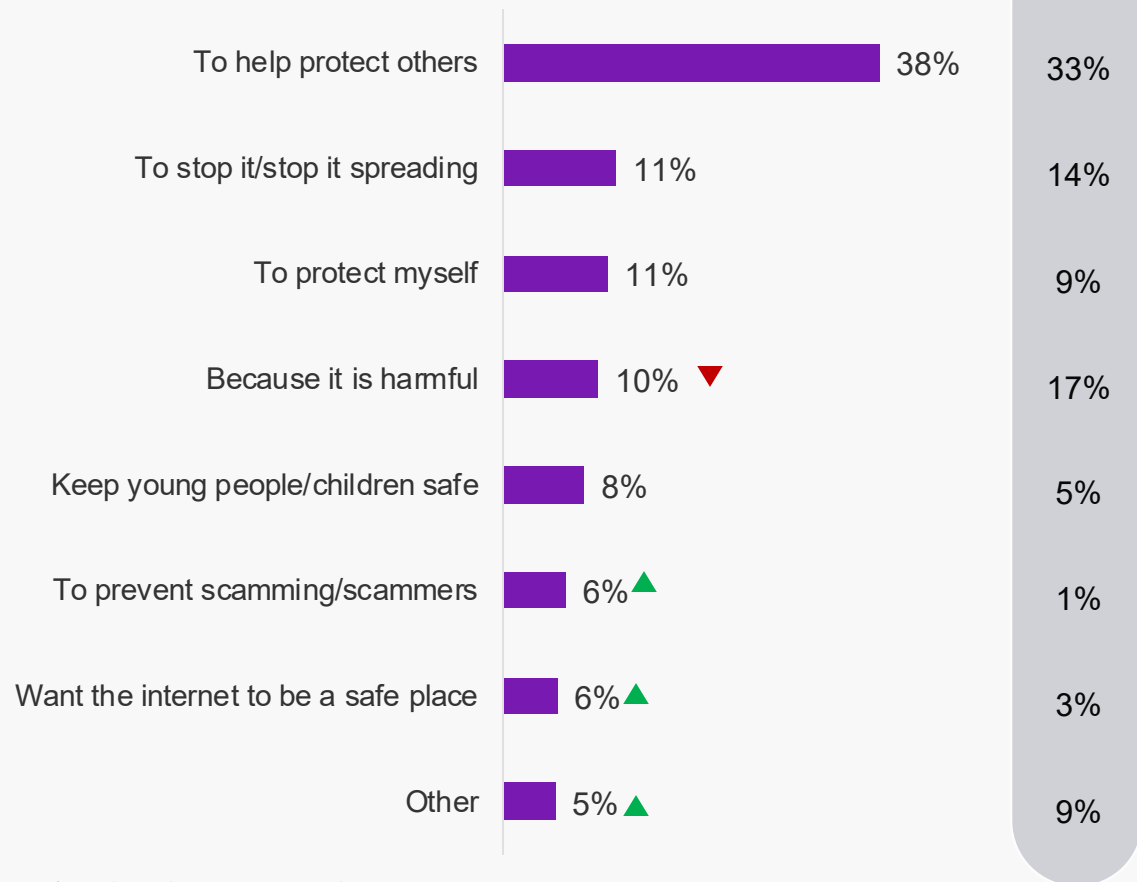
Likelihood of reporting harmful content



▲ ▼ Significant increase/decrease since 2023

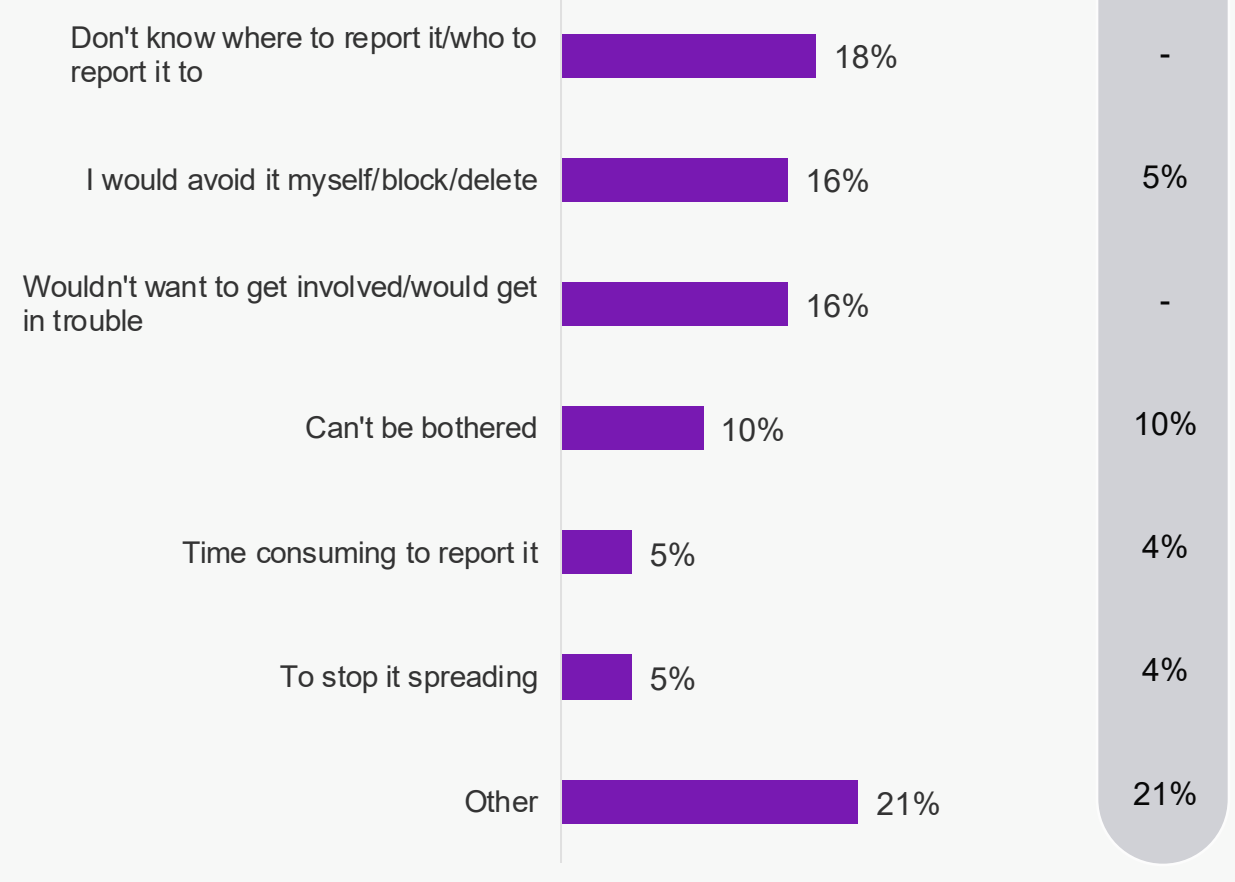
The main motivation to report online digital harm is to protect others. Many also want to stop the harmful communications from continuing, protect themselves, and would report it because of the harm it causes. Those unlikely to report harmful content cite a lack of awareness of where to report it, a preference to avoid or delete it, or not wanting to get involved.

### Reasons likely to report



▲ ▼ Significant increase/decrease since 2023

### Reasons unlikely to report



2023

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