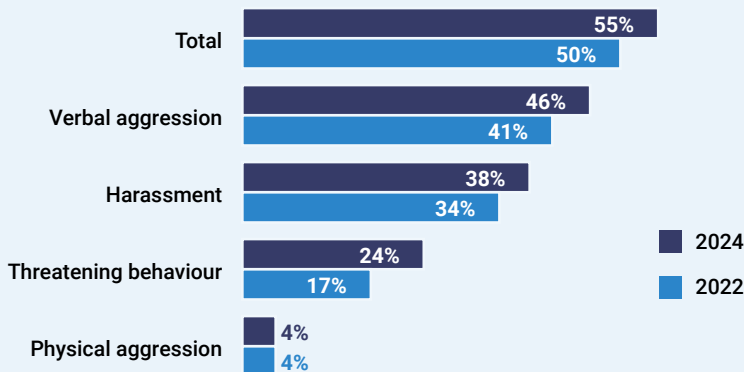


Aggression, threatening behaviour and harassment targeted at lawyers

2024 measurement

Experience of aggression, threatening behaviour and harassment

Figure 1
Percentage of lawyers who experienced aggression



Areas of law in which aggression is a common occurrence:

- 1 Tenancy law
- 2 Law of persons and family law
- 3 General practice
- 4 Criminal law
- 5 Immigration law

The percentage of lawyers who experienced aggression increased in comparison to 2022.

Most lawyers (43.6%) experienced multiple incidents. For 11.6%, there was a single incident.

47%

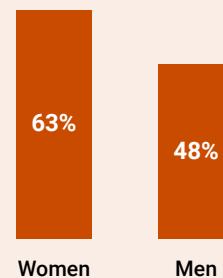
found the most recent incident serious or very serious
2022: 37%

Differences between men and women

Female lawyers experienced more aggression than male lawyers (Figure 2). Specifically, women experienced more verbal aggression and harassment.

26% of women found the most recent incident discriminatory in nature, compared to 4% of men. The main issue is gender discrimination.

Figure 2
Percentage of lawyers who experienced aggression, broken down by gender



Perpetrators and focus of aggression



In 53% of the incidents, it was a current or former client who had exhibited aggressive behaviour. In 33% of the incidents, it was the opposing party who had been aggressive.



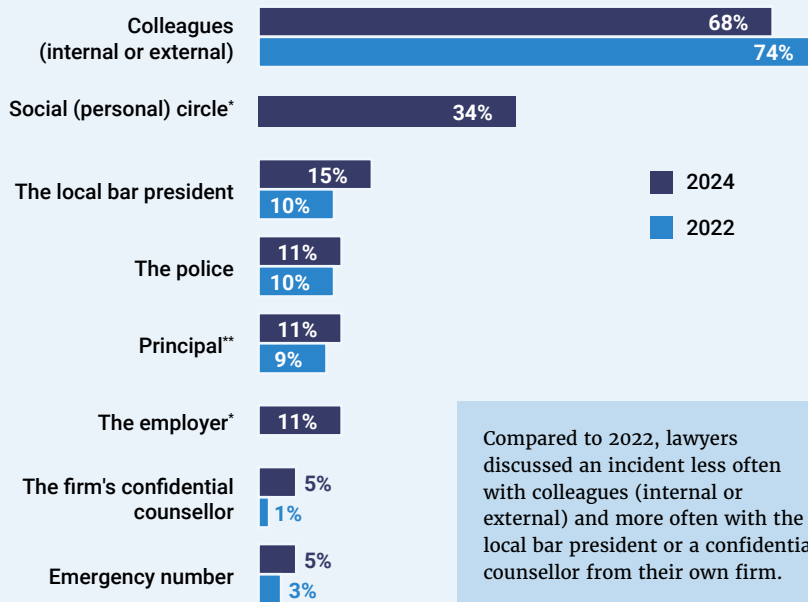
According to lawyers, aggression was mainly an expression of mounting emotions and/or frustration (35%) or was deliberately used to achieve a particular goal (24%).



Aggression was mostly targeted at the lawyer as a lawyer (65%) or at the lawyer personally (60%). As for threatening behaviour, 14% of the incidents reported were also directed at family or friends.

Discussion and reporting of incidents

Figure 3
Who do lawyers discuss an incident of aggression with?
(more than one answer allowed)



Compared to 2022, lawyers discussed an incident less often with colleagues (internal or external) and more often with the local bar president or a confidential counsellor from their own firm.

* Not asked in 2022.
** The principal is a point of contact for trainee lawyers only.

Most common reasons for not reporting an incident:

- 1 The incident in question was not serious enough (52%)
- 2 It was not a criminal offence (28%)
- 3 There was no point in reporting it (17%)
- 4 It is part and parcel of my job (17%)

86%

brought the incident up for discussion

2022: 86%

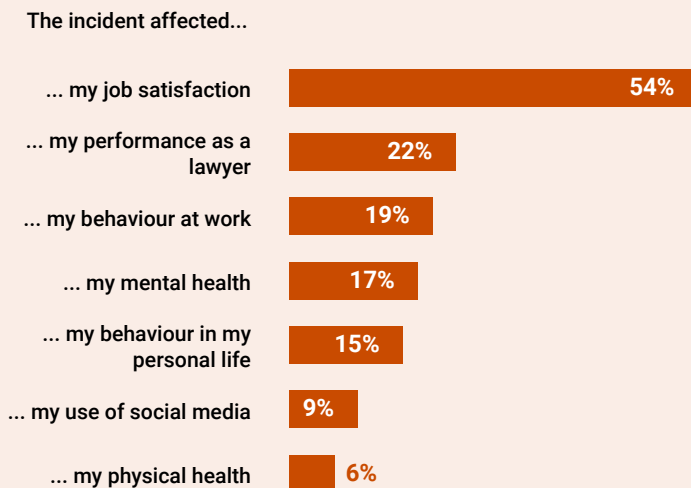
7%

reported incidents

2022: 5%

The impact that incidents have

Figure 4
Adverse effects after experiencing an incident



67%

experienced adverse effects after an incident

2022: 68%

43%

needed counselling or aftercare

2022: 37%

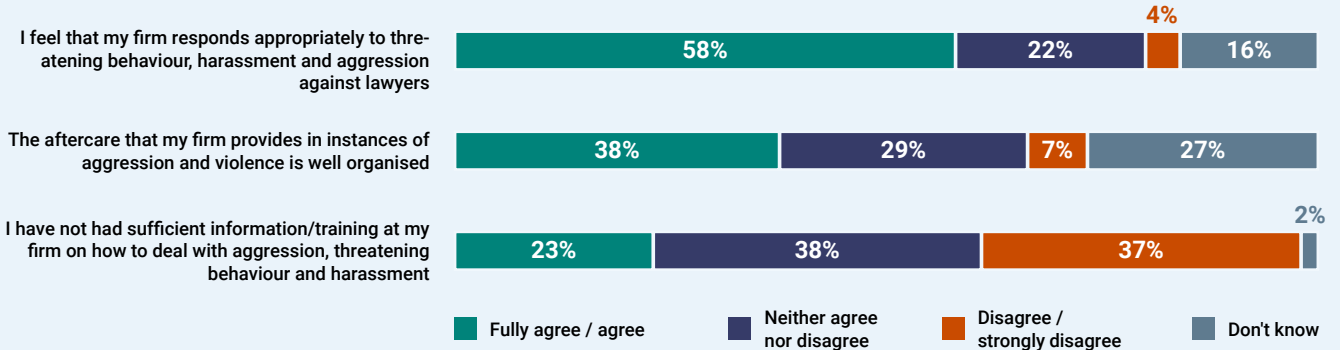
23%

considered whether to give up being a lawyer

2022: 23%

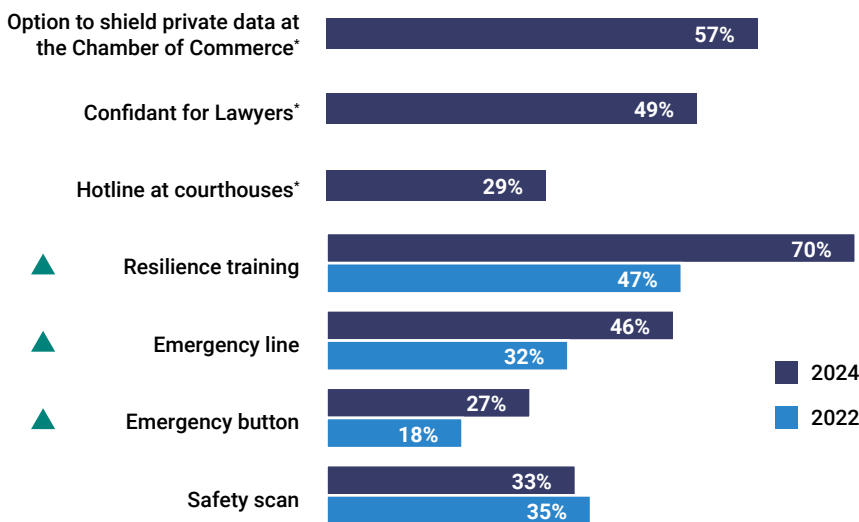
Role of a lawyer's own firm

Figure 5
Lawyers' views on their own firm's role and response to incidents



Familiarity with existing support and protective measures

Figure 6
Awareness of facilities offered by the Netherlands Bar

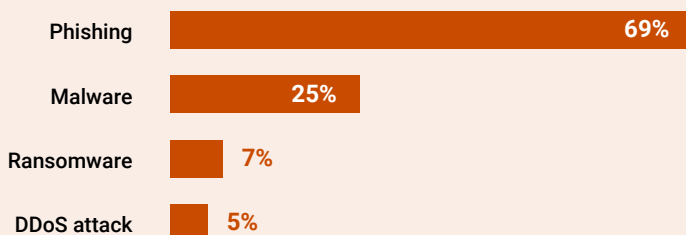


Since December 2023, lawyers have been able to call a **Confidant for Lawyers** in the event of actual or suspected subversive crime. Almost half the lawyers were already familiar with this officer.

* Not asked in 2022.
▲ Awareness increased compared to 2022.

Digital crime

Figure 7
Percentage of lawyers who experienced forms of digital crime



"I want to know how to protect myself better from digital 'attacks', beyond antivirus software and insurance."

"I'm not an expert and would like to get more information about how best to protect my digital environment."