

A SNAPSHOT OF FINDINGS FROM THE 2025 EMPLOYMENT MONITOR

Workers in New Zealand

MBIE’s employment monitor delivers a comprehensive view of New Zealand workers’ and employers’ perceptions, experiences and pressures in the employment market. This infographic focuses on NZ workers (excluding self-employed). Verian surveyed around 1,700 workers in February and March 2025. Comparisons are made with a baseline 2024 survey.



Worker satisfaction with their employment situation holds strong in 2025 despite a tighter labour market.



84%
are satisfied.

However, while most workers trust their employer, levels of high trust are down for some.

- High trust 25%
- Moderate trust 46%
- Low trust 26%
- Unsure 3%



High trust levels have dropped since 2024 for:

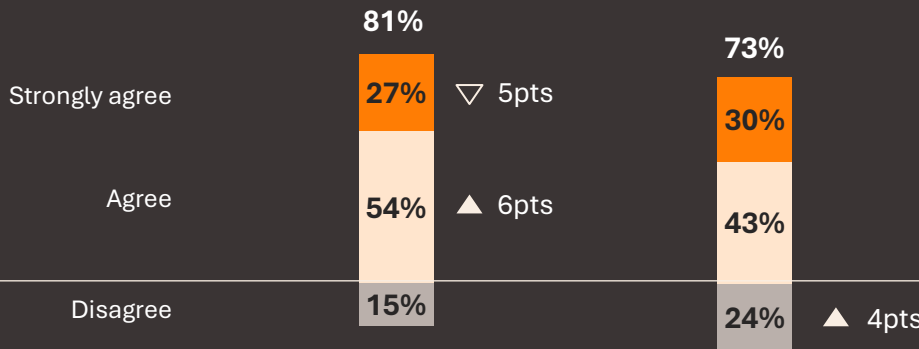
- Young workers (down 10pts to 16%)
- Asian workers (down 12 pts to 16%)
- Māori workers (down 9 pts to 25%)

Perceptions of supportive managers and flexible working have also weakened.



Managers care for and support workers

My employer allows flexible working



Some workers continue to be at higher risk of exploitation.



Nearly 1 in 4 four (23%) workers in micro workplaces^ don’t have a signed, written employment contract.
^ 1-5 employees



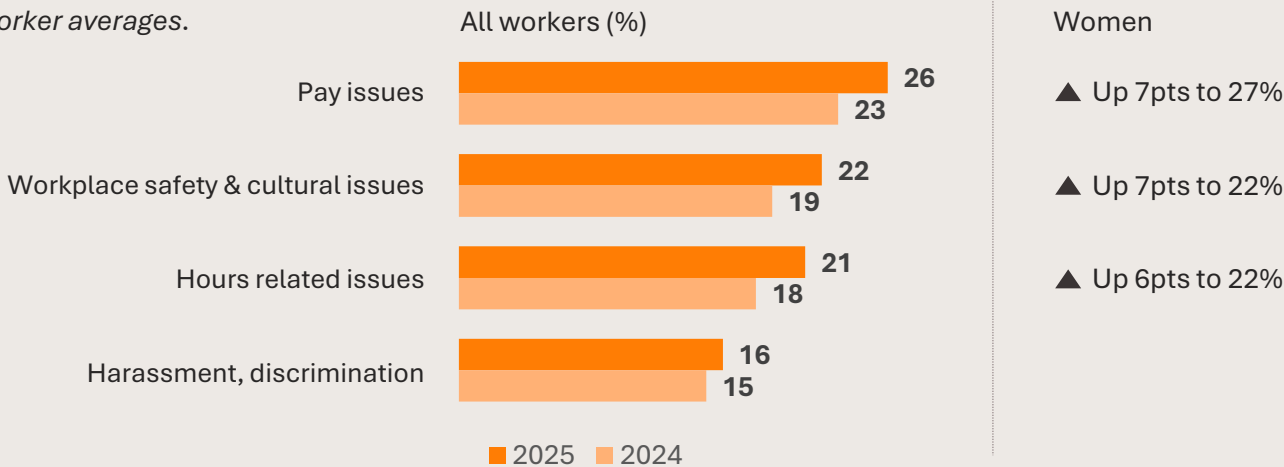
Over 2 in 3 (69%) say their employer could easily replace them if they left.



1 in 6 (16%) say their employer isn’t willing to listen to their work-related problems.

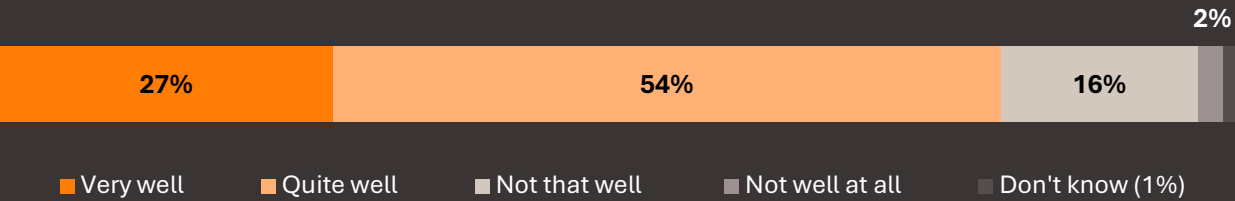
Compared to last year, women voice more concerns about their employment in our survey.

This means women are now on par in voicing their concerns with worker averages.



Similar to last year, most workers (81%) feel they understand their employment rights and nearly one in five (18%) do not.

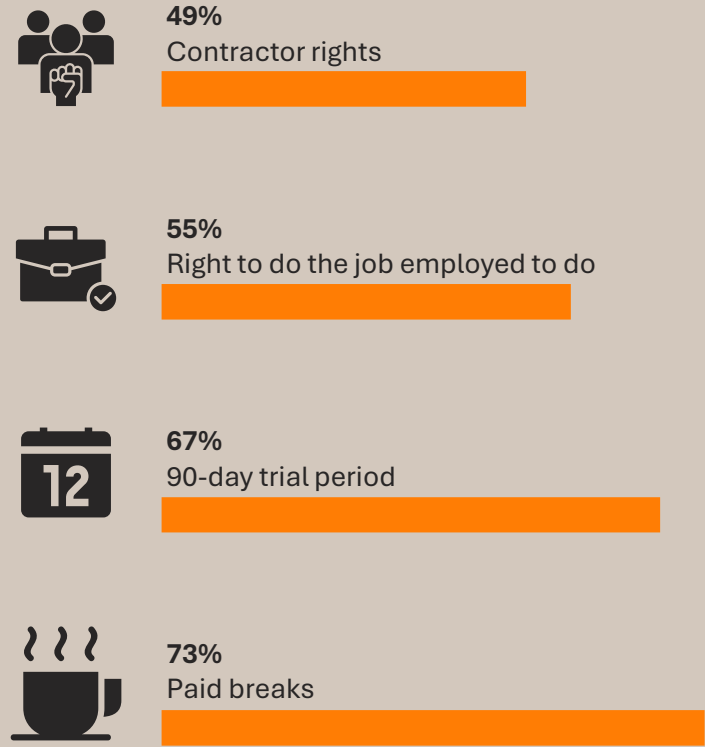
NZ workers feel they understand their employment rights...



On average, workers correctly understand 11 of the 14 employment rights tested, and misunderstand (or are unsure about) three.



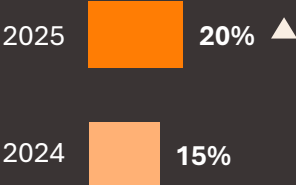
Tested knowledge remains lowest for:



Tested knowledge of annual leave entitlements has improved since 2024.



More workers can name the adult minimum wage in 2025.



And more workers are aware that employers caught exploiting migrant workers can be banned from hiring them in the future.

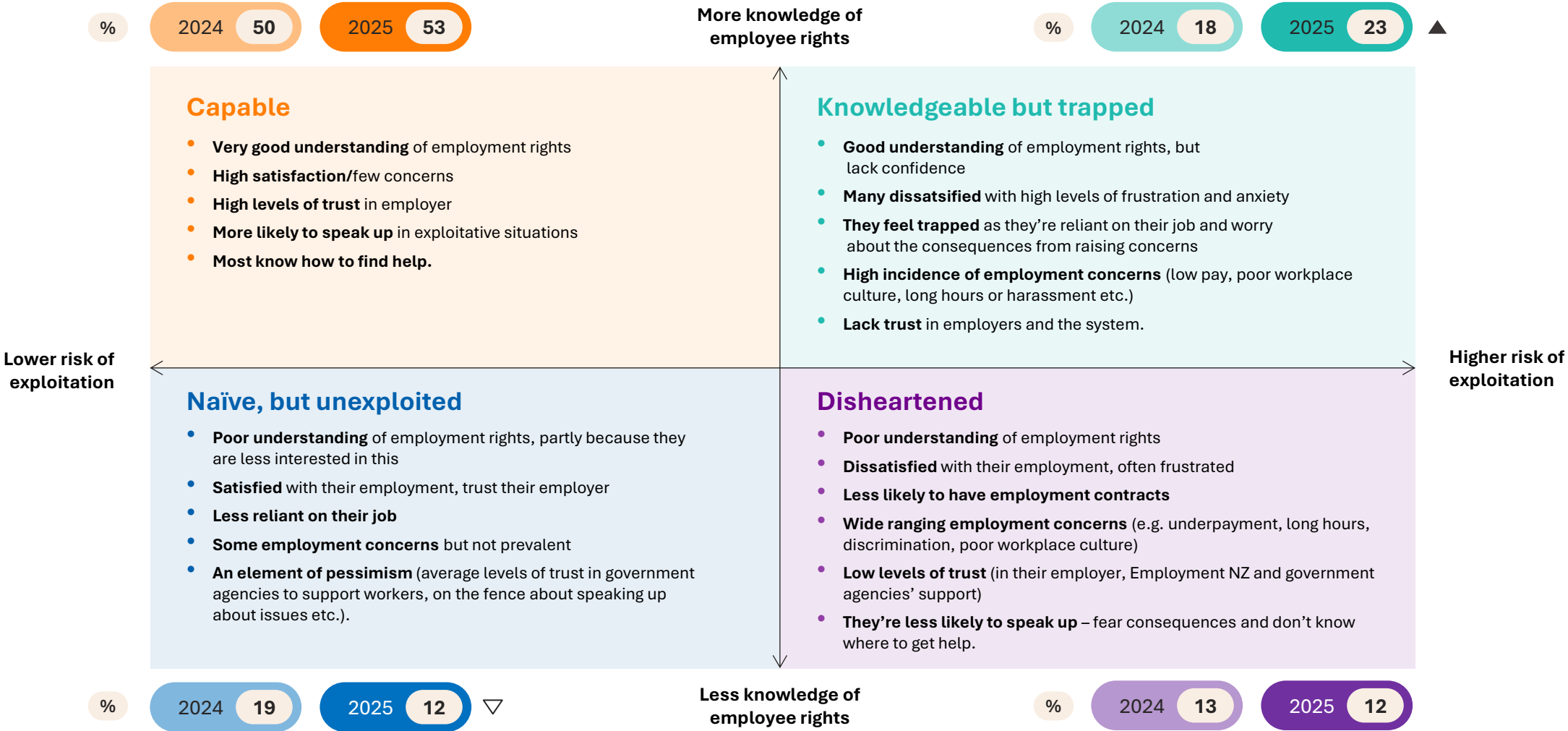


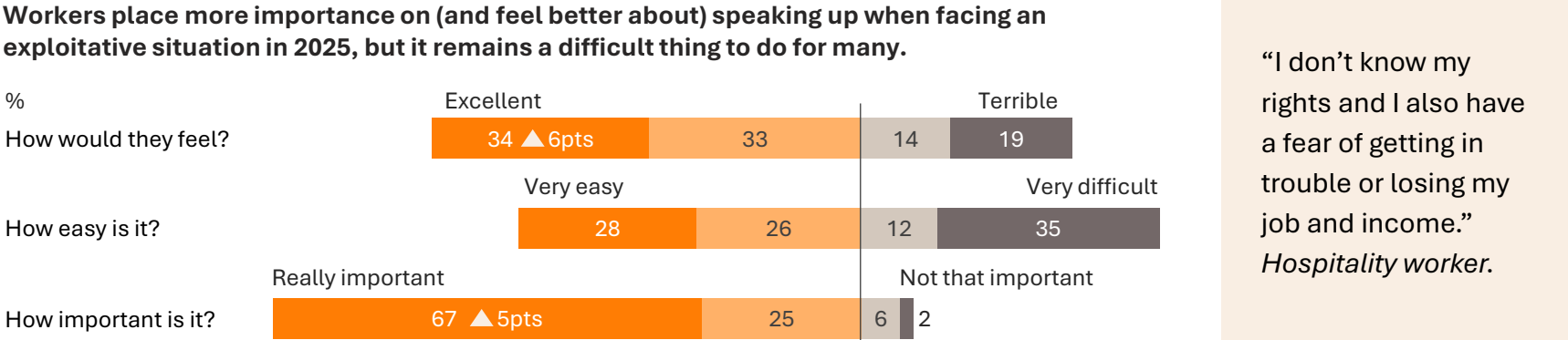
We see some shifts in the size of our four worker groups that are defined by worker knowledge of rights and risk of exploitation.

An improvement in worker knowledge of employment rights, coupled with growing financial dependence on their jobs and heightened job concerns (including worry about job security), has led to a decrease in the size of the **Naïve but unexploited** segment and increase in the size of the **Knowledgeable but trapped** segment.

Most workers are still at low risk of exploitation; around half (53%) are **capable** and know their rights.

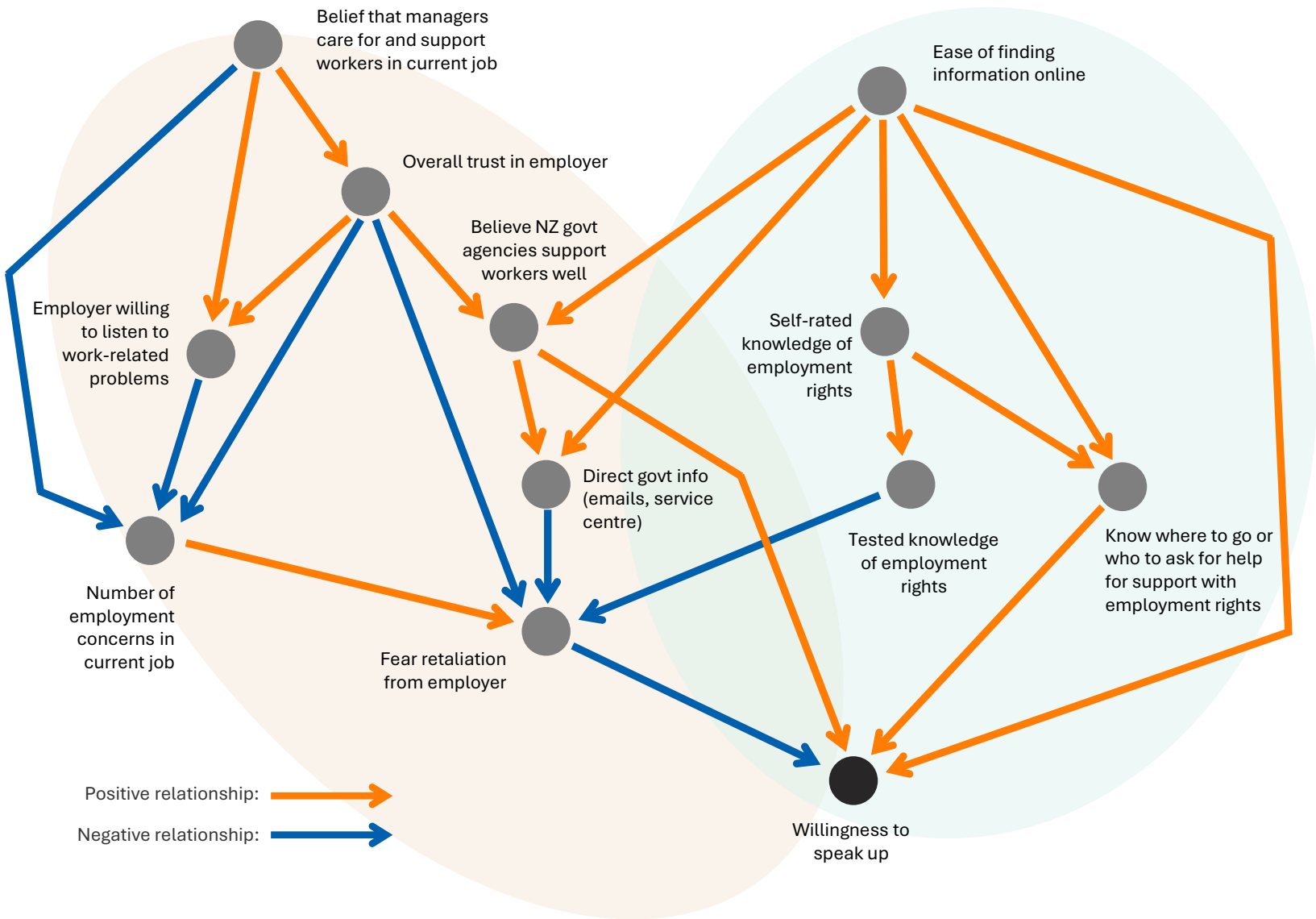
Over a third (35%) are potentially at risk of exploitation; 12% are **disheartened** lacking knowledge of their rights.





Workplace culture and independent communications play critical roles in worker willingness to ‘speak up’.

- We modelled^ key factors shaping worker willingness to report worker exploitation and found that:
- 1. **Workplace culture** either empowers speaking up or fuels fear-based silence (left of model)
 - 2. **Online information** has proven to be effective in **short circuiting employer influences** by increasing knowledge and reducing fear (right of model).



^We used a Bayesian Belief Network – this assesses the factors workers consider, the relative importance of those factors, and how they interact to drive worker willingness to speak up.

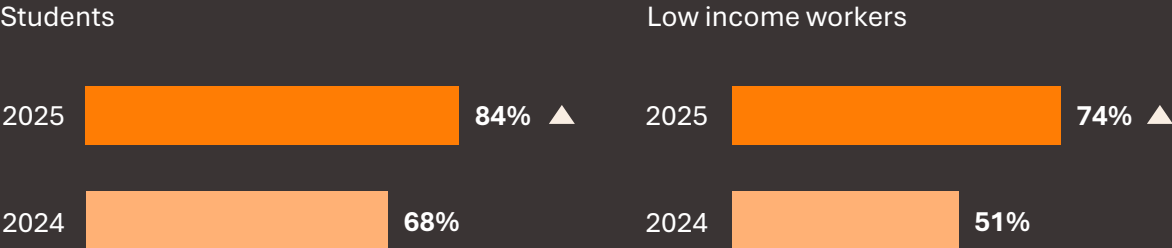


Finding online information is getting easier.

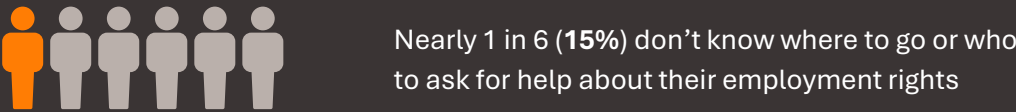
Since 2024, more workers found it easy to find employment rights online.



Students and low-income workers rate Employment NZ’s website more positively since the refresh.



But there is still work to be done in supporting workers with the right information.



Top 4 support ideas

% who would find this very helpful

