



Information Commissioner's Office
Annual Track 2013
Individuals

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1. Introduction

This report presents the findings from the ICO's Annual Track 2013, which measures the awareness of the Data Protection Act (DPA) and Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) amongst the general public. This work represents a continuation of tracking research which the ICO have undertaken on this subject since 1997 in relation to the DPA and since 2003 in relation to the FOIA.

For the most part, the questionnaire which was used during the survey remains consistent with previous years. This allows for comparisons between findings from different survey years to be made in the report. Any changes in question wording over time or new questions which have been included in this year's survey are indicated in the text.

Opinion Leader also conducted interviews with businesses to measure understanding and awareness of the acts amongst these groups and also to explore how the ICO might better communicate with businesses more effectively. The findings from these interviews are reported under separate covers.

2. Research aims and objectives

The research which is reported here continues that of previous waves. The aims of this research were therefore consistent with those of the 2011 and previous ICO tracking studies.

The overall aims of the study reflect the aims of the ICO as a whole and were to:

- Reinforce the ICO's positioning as the authoritative arbiter of information rights
- Raise organisations' awareness of their obligations
- Maintain individuals' awareness of their information rights
- Educate young people about their information rights

Further and more specific aims of the research are indicated below.

2.1 DPA Objectives

DPA objectives of the research were to measure and to track:

- the awareness of rights under the DPA;
- the awareness of the DPA generally;
- the relevance of the Act to individuals;
- perceptions of the way organisations handle information;
- the importance of specific matters relating to personal information;
- where individuals go for advice relating to the DPA;
- the extent to which individuals perceive the Act to be beneficial; and
- how individuals learn about their rights under the Act.

2.1 FOIA Objectives

FOIA objectives of the research were to measure and to track:

- the awareness of FOIA rights;
- the awareness of FOIA generally;
- the relevance of the Act to the public;
- where the public goes for advice relating to the FOIA;
- the extent to which the public perceives the Act to be beneficial;
- perceptions of the way public authorities handle official information; and
- how individuals learn about their rights under the Act.

2.3 Corporate Awareness Objectives

Lastly and as per previous years, the research aimed to support the ICO objectives in terms of corporate awareness. Specifically the research aimed to:

- Measure the extent to which individuals are aware of the ICO as being responsible for the DPA and FOIA.
- Measure the extent to which individuals consider it important that both the DPA and FOIA is regulated independently from Government.

3. Executive Summary

3.1 Social Issues

When given a list of issues three were mentioned by almost nine in ten respondents; unemployment (89%), protecting people's personal information (88%) and preventing crime (87%).

Access to information held by public authorities remains that social issue which is rated as least important of those presented to respondents. Concern over this issue has continued to fall since 2009.

Those who rate two or more social issues as a concern were asked which they were personally most concerned about. More than one in five mention the NHS, making this the most frequently cited concern. Only 3% say that they are most concerned about the access to information held by public authorities.

3.2 Data protection

More than three in five feel that people have lost control of the way in which personal information is collected and processed. Proportions saying this have risen since 2011 although the general trend for people holding this view has been downwards since 2009.

Reflecting this negativity just two in five agree that the organisations handle information that they collect about individuals in a fair and proper way. In addition a similar proportion say that existing laws and organisational practices provide sufficient protection of personal information and a third agree that online companies collect and keep personal details in a secure way.

While there is negativity around the way in which personal information is collected and processed the awareness of the right to see information, both spontaneous and prompted remains high. Spontaneously, three in five mention the right to see information that organisations hold, while just fewer than nine in ten say that they are aware of this right when asked directly. While prompted awareness of the right to see information has remained consistent through previous waves of the research, unprompted awareness has fallen by six percentage points since 2011.

Respondents mention a range of issues that they are concerned about regarding organisations holding personal information. Chief amongst these are concerns around organisations sharing information with other bodies, which is mentioned by around two in five of those for whom protecting personal information

is a concern, and organisations passing or selling personal details on, an issue about which almost all respondents express some concern when prompted.

Another issue which is of a similar concern is organisations not keeping personal details which they hold securely. When prompted, more than nine in ten respondents express concerns about this. Other issues relating to the use of personal information which concern respondents include nuisance and cold calling, which nine in ten express concerns about and spam emails and spam texts about which around four in five express concern.

When asked to rank different types of information as sensitive, people are most likely to mention financial information, with banks rated highly as organisations which people are concerned about holding personal information.

A third of people spontaneously mention the DPA when asked what laws they are aware of concerning the handling of personal details. This represents a fall of five percentage points since last year and the first decrease in this result since 2009. However, prompted awareness has risen by nine percentage points since last year so that almost all say that they are aware of the DPA when asked; this therefore brings findings to pre-2011 levels.

Just less than three in ten state that they are made aware of the DPA through the media and a similar proportion say that they are made aware through work.

As previous years, the Citizen's Advice Bureau is that source of advice on rights under the DPA that the greatest proportion of people would use. Fewer state that they would use a solicitor for this advice.

A quarter of respondents say they have made a request to see the personal information that organisations hold about them, representing an increase of nine percentage points since last year. Applying for, or being refused, financial credit remain the key reasons why people would request this information.

3.3 Freedom of information

A quarter spontaneously mention the right to request information held by the Government when asked what rights they think they have to access information. This is consistent with previous waves of the survey. When prompted, awareness rises to around nine in ten; a result which represents a nine percentage point increase since 2011 and which brings results in line with earlier iterations of the survey.

Levels of awareness of FOIA rights in general have increased since 2011 and are generally in line with earlier surveys. In particular and alongside an increase in the prompted awareness of the right to request information, there has been an increase (of seven percentage points) in the prompted awareness of the right to see official information from the Government and other public authorities since 2011.

Reflecting an increase in the levels of awareness of the right to request information almost three in five agree that information that they want about the Government and other public authorities is available and accessible. Levels of agreement with this statement have risen by eight percentage points since last year.

One in five spontaneously mention the FOIA when they are asked what laws they are aware of regarding access to information held by the Government, while more than eight in ten express awareness once being prompted. Unprompted awareness of the FOIA has fallen marginally by three percentage points since 2011, while prompted awareness has risen by nine percentage points, bringing results in line with those from pre-2011 waves of the survey.

In general the degree to which people perceive there to be benefits of the FOIA has increased since last year bringing results in line with previous waves of the survey. Overall levels of agreement around the benefits of the FOIA are high; in particular around nine in ten agree that being able to access information held by public authorities increases your knowledge of what they do.

The most commonly cited source of awareness about the FOIA is cited as the internet, with two in five respondents mentioning it. In relation to other sources of information used, a quarter of respondents also mention the media.

The internet is also frequently cited by people with regards to where they would go to receive advice about rights under the FOIA. Just less than two in five mention the internet in this regard, however, the Citizen's Advice Bureau remains the most commonly used source of advice, mentioned by more than two in five.

3.4 Independent Regulation

Two thirds say it is very important that the regulator of the DPA is independent of Government, while more than three quarters say the same regarding the regulator of the FOIA. In each case greater proportions feel it is important overall that the regulator of the acts is independent of the Government than they did last year.

3.5 The ICO

Awareness of the ICO has increased markedly since last year. Two in five say that they have heard of the organisation compared with a quarter who said the same last year.

4. Methodology and sample profile

Opinion Leader interviewed 2,465 individuals by telephone to collect data for this survey. This methodology was chosen in order to maintain consistency with previous waves of the research and therefore to ensure that findings were directly comparable. The sample for the survey was generated using Random Digit Dialling techniques applied to telephone numbers stratified by GOR (or devolved nation) to ensure a comprehensive respondent coverage across the UK. Interviewing for the survey was undertaken between the 21st February and the 18th April 2013.

Two separate questionnaires were administered during fieldwork for the survey; one which captured individuals' awareness and attitudes towards the DPA and another which captured awareness and attitudes towards the FOIA. In some cases questions were similar across both questionnaires and where this is the case combined findings are indicated and presented in the report. Overall Opinion Leader aimed to undertake 2,500 interviews in England split between those concerning the Data Protection and Freedom of Information Acts with booster samples conducted in Wales and Northern Ireland. Here Opinion Leader aimed to complete 200 interviews, again equally split between the acts. In Scotland Opinion Leader aimed to undertake a further 100 interviews, exclusively in relation to the DPA. In the event, 2,465 interviews were completed, split as follows.

Subject	Quota	Achieved
Data Protection	1,450	1,237
Freedom of Information	1,350	1,228
TOTAL	2,800	2,465

Prior to fieldwork quotas reflecting the profile of the UK population were set in order to ensure a naturally representative sample of interviews were achieved. The quotas reflected those set for the last wave of the ICO Annual Track which was undertaken in August 2011. At the end of fieldwork and at the stage of data processing weights by gender, age, socio economic grade (SEG), ethnicity and region were applied to the data so that the final sample profile matched that of the achieved sample in 2011. Again, this methodology was adopted in order to render results directly comparable with previous waves of research. The weighted and unweighted profile of the sample is provided as an appendix to this report.

5. Main Findings

5.1 Social Issues¹

5.1.1 Concerns with issues of social importance

Nine in ten people say that they are concerned about rates of unemployment (89%). This represents a three percentage point increase since 2011, a reversal of the trend that had seen a gradual fall since 2009 when the impact of the t economic climate had become obvious. Similar proportions say that they are concerned with protecting people’s personal information (88%). Concern with this issue has been falling since 2008 / 2009.

Preventing crime also continues to be that issue which is of concern to a significant proportion of the population and is mentioned by around nine in ten (87%). Here too, with this issue has been falling gradually since 2009.

Of the ones listed to respondents, access to information held by public authorities continues to of the lowest concern. Around two thirds mention that they are concerned by this issue (67%).

For many of the issues listed to respondents the level of concern has fallen since 2011. The greatest degree of increasing concern is in relation to equal rights for everyone. A rise of six percentage points since the 2011 survey is reported.

¹ Although two questionnaires were administered, one covering the DPA and one the FOIA, there were some similar questions across both questionnaires. The results from these sections are based on the combined sample and the results based purely on DPA or FOIA sections are based on the two respective samples

Q1: I am going to read out a list of issues that could be considered of social importance. Please tell me how concerned you are about each of the following issues.						
Prompted	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Unemployment	80%	83%	93%	90%	86%	89%
Protecting people's personal information	92%	94%	94%	92%	89%	88%
Preventing crime	94%	94%	96%	93%	92%	87%
Improving Standards in Education	88%	87%	89%	90%	84%	84%
The National Health Service	91%	88%	90%	90%	84%	83%
Equal rights for everyone	89%	88%	89%	87%	77%	83%
Protecting freedom of speech	86%	85%	89%	86%	78%	81%
Environmental issues	86%	87%	90%	83%	74%	79%
National Security	89%	87%	90%	85%	80%	72%
Access to information held by public authorities	79%	78%	80%	75%	69%	67%

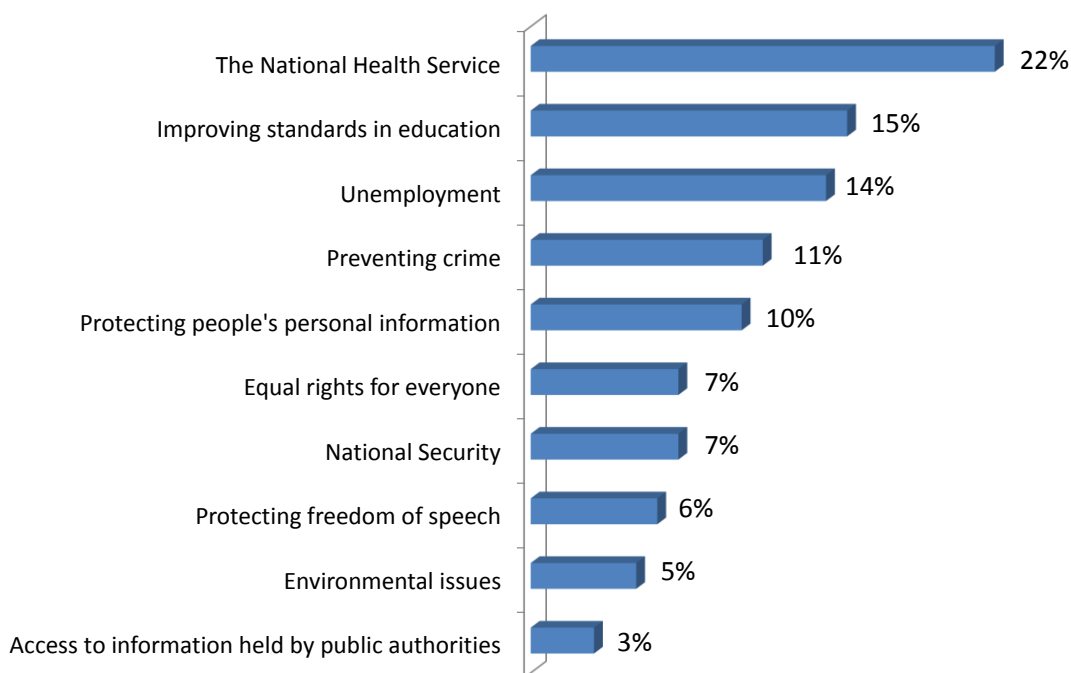
As with previous years of research, female respondents tend to be more concerned than men on most of the issues listed. Particular points of difference are in relation to equal rights (88% versus 79%), national security (76% versus 67%), unemployment (92% vs. 86%) and environmental issues (83% versus 76%).

Like women, older people tend to be more concerned about each of the issues listed than those that are younger. Specifically, those aged 55-64 were more likely than respondents overall to be concerned about the access to information held by public authorities (75%), the NHS (88%), protecting freedom of speech (86%) and national security (77%).

By socio-economic group results are fairly consistent. However, those in social classes DE are more likely than people overall to say that they are concerned with the access to information held by public authorities (71%), while those in social classes AB are more likely to express concern with regards to unemployment (87%) and environmental issues (82%).

Those respondents who said that they are concerned about two or more issues were asked to identify which of these they are most concerned about. One in five say that they are personally most concerned about the National Health Service (22%), while fewer mention improving standards in education (15%) or unemployment (14%). Despite preventing crime and protecting people's personal information being ranked within the top three concerns when people were asked initially, just one in ten in each case said that these issues were personally of most concern to them (11% and 10% respectively).

Chart 1: Please could you tell me which you are personally most concerned about



5.2 Data Protection

5.2.1 Current perceptions of information handling

More than three in five respondents consider that people have lost control over the way in which personal information is collected and processed (62%). This represents a marginal increase since 2011, although the trend has been generally downwards since 2009.

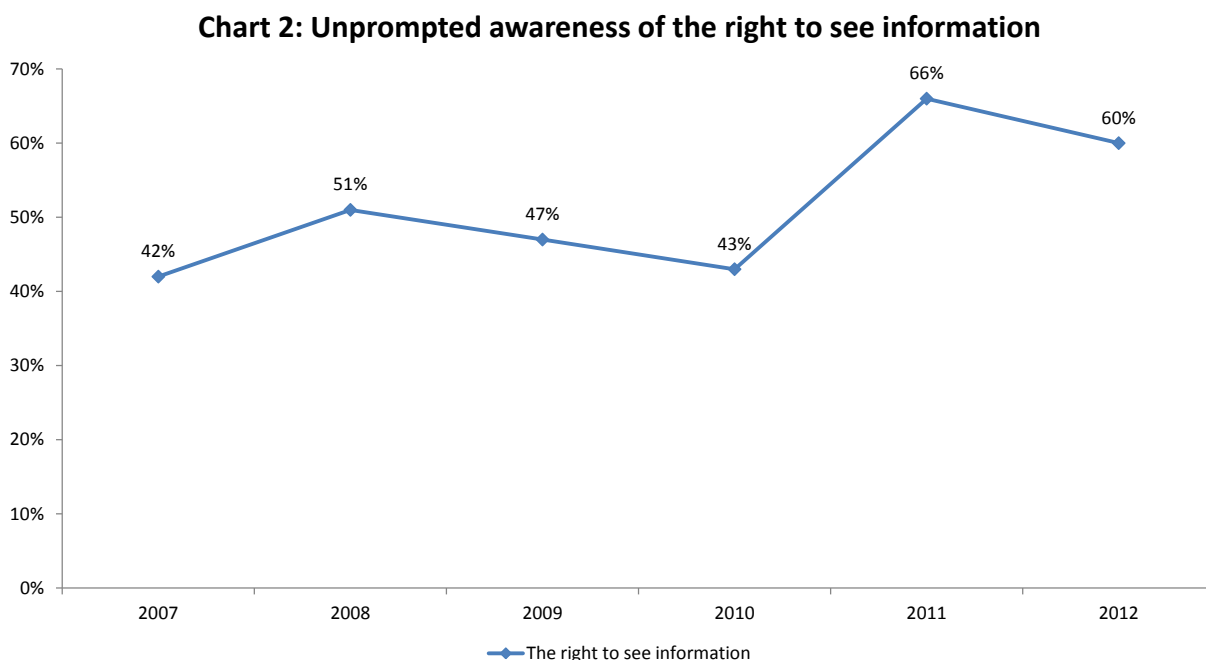
Reflecting the negativity around the extent to which people feel they have control over the processing of personal information, just two in five say that organisations handle the information that they collect about individuals in a fair and proper way (40%). Since 2009 people have been becoming increasingly more negative about this aspect of data protection.

The proportions of people agreeing that existing laws and organisational practices provide sufficient protection of personal information and that online companies collect and keep personal details in a secure way had fallen between 2010 and 2011. However levels of agreement with these statements has risen since last year; 37% say that laws and practices provide sufficient protection (up three percentage points) and 32% agree that online companies securely collect and keep information (up eight percentage points since 2011).

There are differences by demographic sub-group regarding the extent to which people agree or disagree with each of the statements about information handling. Those aged 45-54 are consistently most negative. They are less likely than other to agree that organisations handle the information they collect in a fair and proper way (32%) and more likely than others to agree that you have lost control of the way your information is collected and processed (74%). Similarly, they are more likely than others to disagree that existing laws and practices provide sufficient protection (55% versus 45%) and that online companies collect and keep personal details in a secure way (58% versus 48%).

Q4: I am now going to read out a list of statements and this time I would like you to tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement						
Prompted	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
You have lost control over the way your information is collected and processed	60%	68%	67%	60%	59%	62%
Organisations handle the information they collect about you in a fair and proper way	50%	47%	57%	56%	49%	40%
Existing laws and organisational practices provide sufficient protection of your personal information	39%	40%	44%	46%	34%	37%
Online companies collect and keep your personal details in a secure way	34%	32%	37%	37%	26%	32%

5.2.2 Awareness of rights (unprompted)



When asked without prompting which rights about accessing personal information are held by individuals, three in five spontaneously mention the right to see information (60%). Compared with 2011 this represents a fall of six percentage points. It is, however, still higher than any year prior to 2011.

By demographic sub-group, women are more likely than men to mention spontaneously the right to see information (63% versus 57%), while those aged 25-34 are significantly more likely than people overall also to do this (71% versus 60%).

By socio-economic grade, DEs are significantly more likely than other groups to mention spontaneously the right to see information (66%).

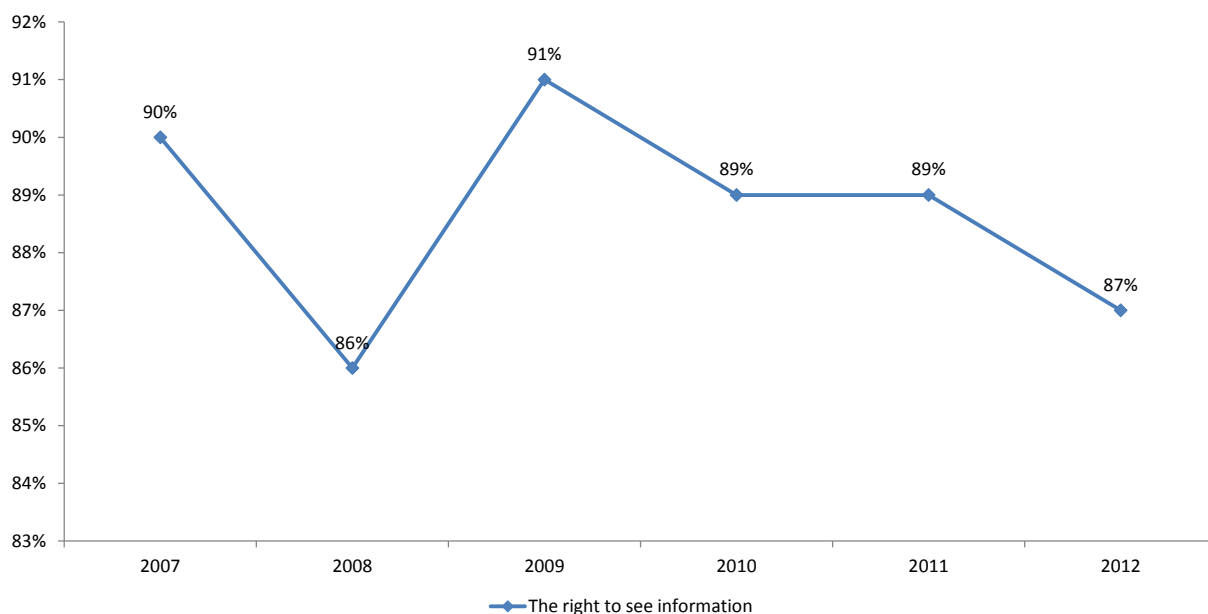
Q5: Organisations such as doctors/banks and credit card companies hold personal information. This personal information can include your name, your address, your bank account details or your credit rating information. What rights do you think you have to access personal details held about you by organisations?

Unprompted	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
The right to see information	42%	51%	47%	43%	66%	60%
Individuals have no rights	5%	6%	6%	5%	4%	5%
The right to correct inaccurate information	6%	2%	2%	3%	1%	4%
The right to prevent the processing of information if it would cause damage or distress	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%
The right to stop unsolicited mail	2%	0.4%	0.2%	2%	1%	1%
The right to claim compensation for damage or distress caused by a breach of the Act	1%	0.2%	0.2%	1%	0.4%	1%
The right to object to decisions made only by automatic means	1%	0.2%	0.1%	2%	0.3%	1%
The right to have the breach of the Act investigated and assessed	1%	0.3%	0%	1%	0.2%	1%
Don't know	48%	34%	38%	43%	28%	22%

5.2.3 Awareness of rights (prompted)

Around nine in ten people say that they are aware of the right to see information when they are asked directly (87%). This finding is consistent with previous waves of the individuals' survey.

Chart 3: Prompted awareness of the right to see information



As with levels of unprompted awareness of the right to see information, when prompted women are more likely than men to say that they are aware of this right (90% versus 84%). There are few other differences by demographic sub-groups, however those in the North East are less likely than individuals overall to be aware of this right (75%).

Q6: Which of the following rights do you think you have with regards to your personal details held by organisations?						
Prompted	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
The right to see information	90%	86%	91%	89%	89%	87%
The right to correct inaccurate information	87%	81%	87%	82%	82%	86%
The right to have a breach of the Act investigated and assessed	87%	83%	88%	83%	74%	86%
The right to claim compensation for damage or distress caused by a breach of the Act	82%	74%	82%	74%	70%	76%
The right to stop unsolicited mail	88%	88%	86%	81%	79%	75%
The right to prevent the processing of information if it would cause damage or distress	78%	68%	75%	63%	71%	65%
The right to object to decisions made only by automatic means	77%	63%	69%	62%	65%	55%
Individuals have no rights	3%	9%	9%	7%	8%	12%

Compared with other rights presented to respondents, the right to see information was the one most were aware of. However, similar proportions are aware of the right to correct inaccurate information and the right to have a breach of the DPA investigated and assessed (both 86%).

When results for this year’s survey are compared against last, the awareness of some rights has increased while the awareness of others has fallen. Most significantly, the awareness of the right to have a breach of the DPA investigated and assessed has risen by twelve percentage points, while the right to object to decisions made only by automatic means has fallen by ten percentage points.

5.2.4 Concerns with regard to organisations holding and using personal information

Nine in ten (89%) indicate that protecting personal information is a concern for them. These respondents were asked to specify what it was in particular they are concerned about. Fewer than two in five said that they are concerned about organisations sharing personal information without being given consent (37%), while around three in ten mentioned organisations not keeping information secure (29%). Significantly smaller proportions mention other concerns.

Chart 4: Please could you tell me which you are personally most concerned about – top 8 responses



By demographic sub-group, women who say that they are concerned about protecting personal information are more likely than men who say the same to mention that they are specifically concerned about fraud or identity theft (15% versus 11%). Those who are 25-34 particularly mention being concerned about organisations not keeping information secure (43%), while those who are 35-44 are more likely than others to say that they are concerned about fraud or identity theft (20%). Those who are 65+ are more likely than others to be concerned about cold-calling or junk mail (14%).

When presented with a series of issues relating to the way in which organisations treat the personal information that they hold, respondents indicate significant levels of concern. In particular almost all say that they are concerned about the possibility of organisations passing on or selling personal details to other organisations (97%). More than nine in ten say that they are concerned about organisations not collecting and keeping personal details securely (94%). A similar proportion indicate concern about being asked for too many personal details (90%) and receiving unwanted emails, faxes, letters or telephone calls (89%). Smaller proportions, but no less than two-thirds, indicate concern with other issues.

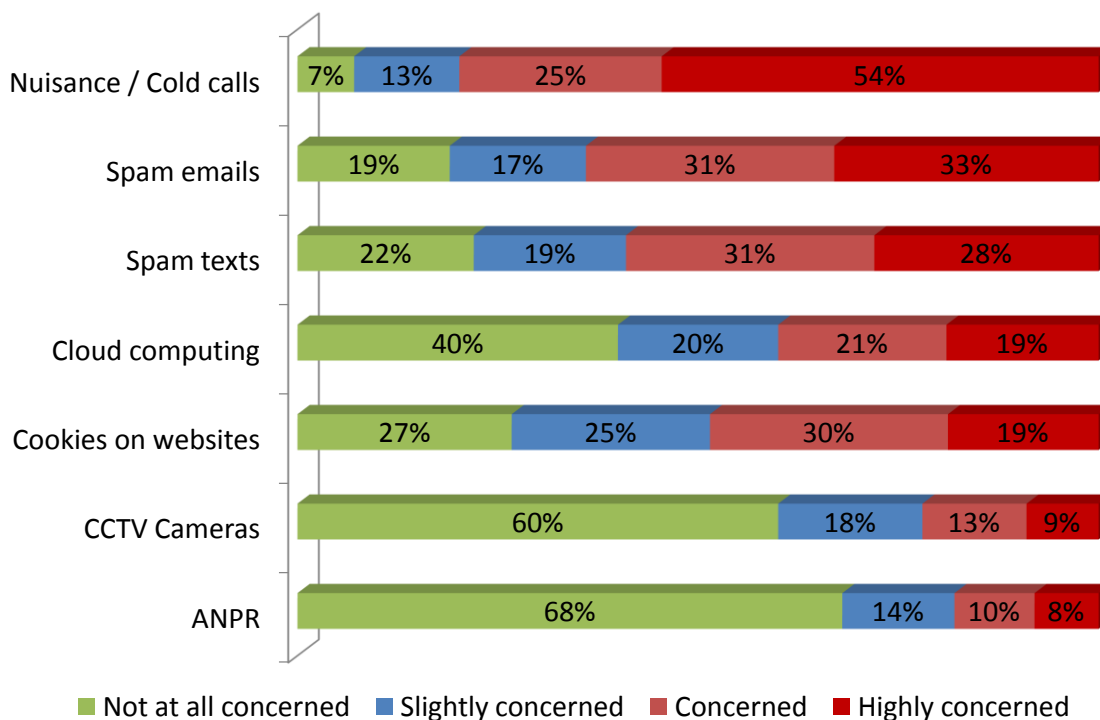
Q7: I am now going to read out a list of concerns that people might have about organisations holding their personal details. Please tell me how concerned you are about each issue.						
Prompted	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Passing or selling your personal details onto their organisations	94%	95%	97%	96%	97%	97%
Not collecting and keeping your personal details secure	94%	96%	96%	96%	96%	94%
Requesting too many of your personal details	88%	89%	92%	88%	93%	90%
Receiving unwanted emails, faxes, letters or telephone calls	87%	87%	89%	87%	89%	89%
Requesting inappropriate information that is not relevant	83%	83%	87%	81%	91%	86%
Holding inaccurate or out of date information	87%	89%	91%	88%	86%	84%
Holding information for longer than is required	84%	84%	89%	84%	83%	80%
Collecting and holding your personal information online	84%	81%	87%	80%	81%	79%
Using cookies to store information relating to personal preferences on websites	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	68%

Compared with results from the 2011 survey, people indicate similar or smaller levels of concern about the issues which were presented to them. In particular levels of concern with organisations requesting inappropriate information that is not relevant has fallen by five percentage points.

Women are more concerned than men about several of the issues which were presented to them. Specifically women are more likely to express concern with regards to organisations requesting too many personal details (93% versus 87%), collecting and holding personal details online (83% versus 76%), and using cookies to store information relating to personal preferences on websites (71% versus 64%). Older people also indicate greater levels of concern on many of the issues when compared with those who are younger.

Respondents were also asked about the degree to which they are concerned about other issues related to data protection. More than nine in ten indicated that they are concerned about nuisance or cold calls (93%), while around four in five said the same regarding spam emails (81%) and spam texts (78%). Almost three quarters indicated that they are concerned about cookies on websites (73%) and three in five said that they were concerned about cloud computing (60%). Smaller proportions indicated concern with CCTV cameras (40%) and automatic number plate recognition (32%).

Chart 5: How concerned are you about the following issues?



As with issues relating to the way in which organisations treat personal information, women tend to be more concerned than men about the issues covered at this question. Specifically, women are more likely than men to report concern about cloud computing (64% versus 55%), and cookies on websites (78% versus 69%).

5.2.5 Which types of materials are considered to be sensitive?

Respondents were presented with a list of different types of personal information which might be held by an organisation and asked to rate each one for the degree to which they felt the information was sensitive on a scale of 1-10 where 1 was 'not at all sensitive' and 10 was 'extremely sensitive'. Around seven in ten rated financial information at 9 or 10 or as 'extremely sensitive' (69%), while around a half said the same regarding health information (47%). Similar proportions rated address and phone number and criminal record as extremely sensitive (39% and 37% respectively), while one in five said the same of purchasing information (21%), sexual orientation (21%) and political opinions (20%).

Q8: I am now going to read out a list of types of personal information that organisations hold. Ranking each type with a number one to ten, where one means you don't consider the information sensitive at all and ten means you consider the information to be extremely sensitive, how sensitive do you consider the following types of personal information to be?

Prompted	Not sensitive (rated 1-5)	Sensitive (rated 6-8)	Extremely sensitive (rated 9 and 10)
Financial information	8%	23%	69%
Health information	20%	33%	47%
Address and phone number	29%	31%	39%
Criminal record	38%	25%	37%
Purchasing information	47%	32%	21%
Sexual orientation	59%	20%	21%
Political opinions	55%	25%	20%
Religious beliefs	63%	22%	16%
Racial or ethnic origin	67%	20%	13%
Trade Union membership	68%	20%	12%
Educational information	63%	27%	11%
Gender	79%	10%	10%
Employment status	67%	23%	10%

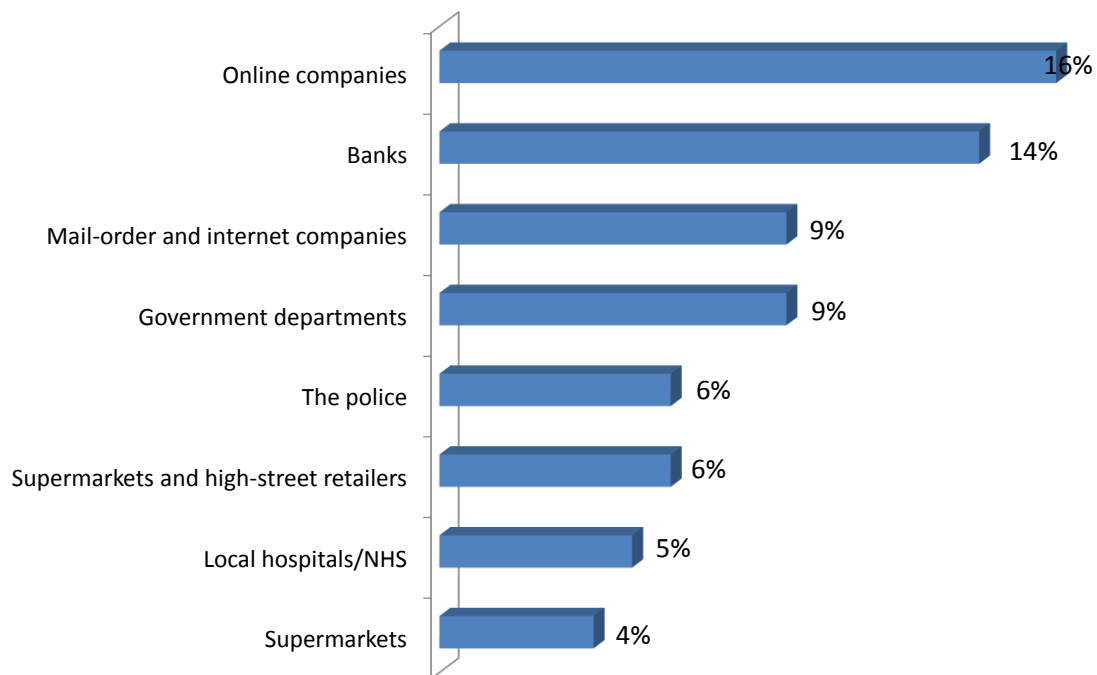
Women are more likely than men to rate several of the types of information as extremely sensitive including: address and phone number (44% versus 35%), financial information (72% versus 66%) and criminal record (40% versus 34%). In contrast, men are more likely than women to rate political opinions and Trade Union membership as extremely sensitive (24% versus 16% and 14% versus 10%).

Across many of the types of information, the oldest respondents are more likely than others to rate each as extremely sensitive. In particular those aged 65+ are more likely than others to rate as extremely sensitive: educational information (16%), gender (18%), employment status (15%), political opinions (27%), religious beliefs (25%), racial or ethnic origin (22%), Trade Union membership (19%), and sexual orientation (29%).

5.2.5 Which types of organisations are people most concerned about?

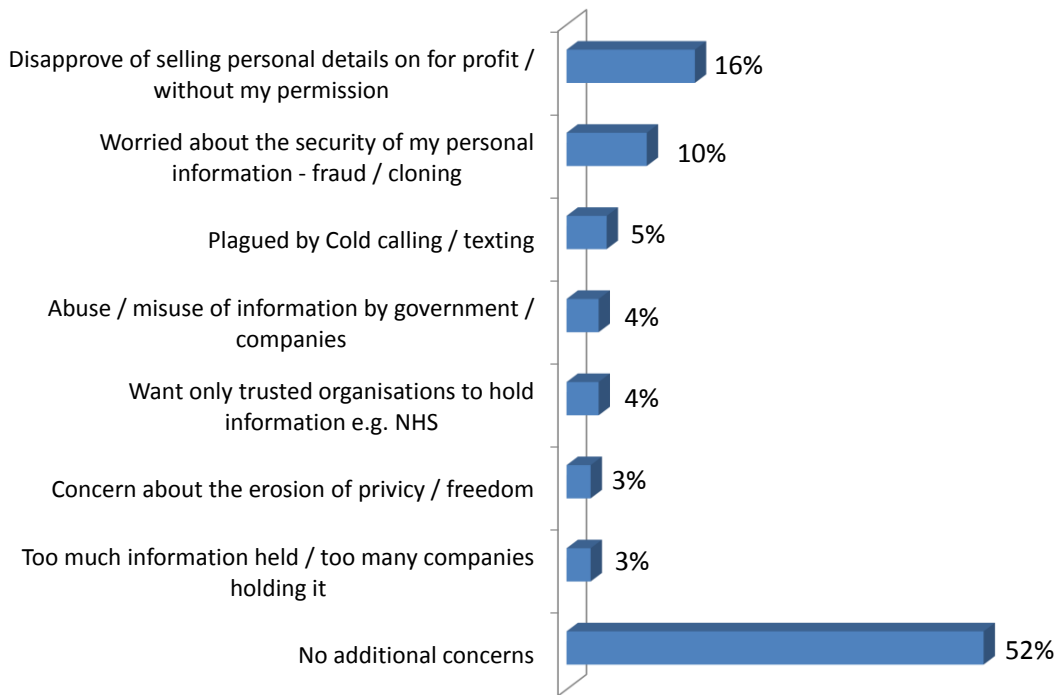
Respondents were asked which particular organisations they were most concerned about holding personal information. Online companies are most frequently cited by 16%, while banks are mentioned by 14%, and government departments and mail-order and internet companies are both mentioned by 9% of respondents.

Chart 6: Which organisations are people most concerned about holding personal information? Top 8 responses.



Respondents were also asked if they had any other concerns regarding organisations holding personal details. Around half say that they have no particular concerns (52%), while 16% say that they disapprove of organisations selling personal information on and one in ten say that they are worried about the security of their personal information.

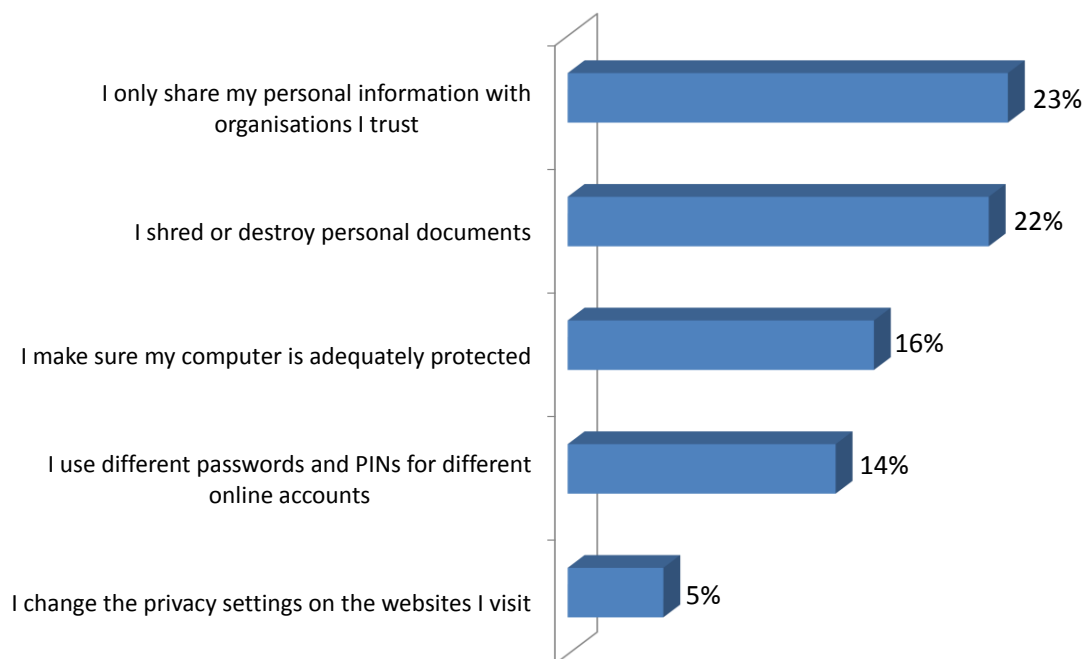
Chart 7: Other concerns - top 8 responses.



5.2.6 Steps taken to protect personal information

Respondents to this wave of the survey were asked what steps they currently take to protect their personal information. More than one in five say that they only share personal information with organisations that they trust (23%), and that they shred or destroy personal documents (22%). Smaller proportions say that they make sure that their computer is adequately protected (16%), and that they use different passwords and pins to access online accounts (14%). Less than one in ten mention other ways of protecting personal information.

Chart 8: What steps do you currently take to protect your personal information? – top 5 responses



Men are more likely than women to say they make sure their computer is adequately protected (21% versus 11%), while those aged 24-35 are more likely than others to say that they only share their personal information with organisations that they trust (34%). Those in socio-economic grade AB are more likely than people overall to say they shred or destroy personal documents (27%).

5.2.7 Awareness of laws concerning the handling of personal information (unprompted)

A third of people spontaneously mention the DPA as a law concerning the handling of personal details, a five percentage point decrease since last year.

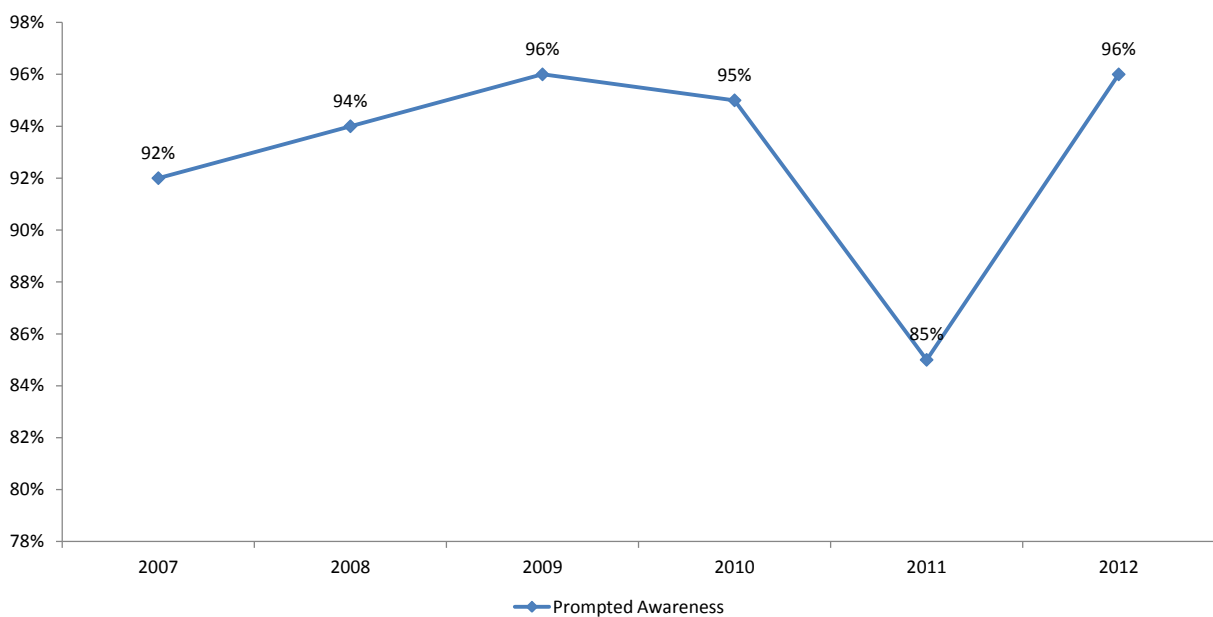
Men are more likely than women to spontaneously mention the DPA (36% versus 30%), as are those aged 45-54 (44% compared with 33% overall) and those in social class AB (48%).

Women are more likely than men to say they are unaware of any laws (59% versus 52%), as are those aged 65+ (70%).

Q13: What if any, laws are you aware of concerning the handling of your personal details?						
Unprompted	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
DPA	45%	41%	27%	37%	38%	33%
FOIA	7%	5%	6%	8%	7%	7%
Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations	1%	0.4%	0.2%	0.4%	1%	1%
Environmental Information Regulations	1%	1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%
None	52%	56%	70%	59%	57%	55%

5.2.8 Awareness of the DPA (prompted)

Chart 9: Prompted awareness of the Data Protection Act over time



When prompted more than nine in ten people stated that they had heard of the DPA (96%). This represents a significant increase of eleven percentage points since 2011 and brings results back in line to those of previous years of individuals' research.

There are few differences in prompted awareness of the DPA between demographic sub-groups. However, those aged 65+ are less likely than others to be aware of the DPA (92%), while those in social class AB are more likely than others to be aware (99%).

5.2.9 Sources of awareness of the DPA

The media (print, television and radio) and the workplace are together cited as the main sources of awareness of the DPA (both 28%). These sources have consistently been those most frequently mentioned by respondents over previous waves of the survey.

Q14: Generally, how are you made aware of data protection issues or the DPA?			
Unprompted	2010	2011	2012
Newspapers/radio/TV	28%	41%	28%
Through work	29%	21%	28%
In documents/forms	n/a	n/a	17%
Education	6%	4%	8%
My bank	2%	4%	2%
From a family member/friend	4%	4%	1%

Men are more likely than women to mention the media (32% versus 24%) as a means of increasing making them aware of the DPA, while women are more likely than men to have been made aware through the workplace (31% versus 25%). Those in social class AB are also more likely than others to be made aware of the DPA through work (43%).

5.2.10 Requests for personal information held by organisations

Around a quarter of respondents had requested to see information that organisations might hold about them (23%). This represents an increase of nine percentage points since the 2011 survey.

There are few differences in this by demographic sub-groups, although those aged 25-34 are more likely than those of other ages to have requested to see personal information (33%).

Applying for financial credit remains the most frequently cited reason for requesting to see personal details held by organisations. Asking to see information after being refused financial credit also remains an important prompt for this action, though proportions citing this reason have decreased by three percentage points since 2011. Requesting to see personal information relating to medical records is also relatively well cited by respondents, with proportions mentioning this increasing by four percentage points since 2011.

Similar proportions to previous waves of research said that they could not think of any circumstances when they would request to see personal information (12%).

Q17: Can you think of any situations where you have or would request any of your personal details held by a company or organisation?						
Unprompted	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Applying for financial credit	21%	20%	16%	22%	18%	15%
Being refused financial credit	26%	21%	17%	22%	16%	13%
To check medical records	17%	13%	9%	14%	9%	13%
No circumstances	16%	14%	25%	14%	14%	12%
General interest	3%	3%	2%	2%	10%	3%
To check criminal record	4%	1%	2%	3%	4%	2%
Change in employment status	4%	1%	3%	2%	2%	2%
When moving house	1%	2%	1%	0.3%	2%	1%
After being involved in court action	1%	0.1%	0.3%	1%	1%	0.2%

5.2.11 Sources of advice on the rights under the DPA

The Citizen’s Advice Bureau (CAB) remains the most often cited source of advice about the DPA (53%), a finding consistent with previous waves of the survey. This finding also continues the trend of a declining use of the CAB for advice about the DPA since 2010. The proportion of respondents who mentioned using a solicitor as a source of information also remains consistent with previous waves (16%).

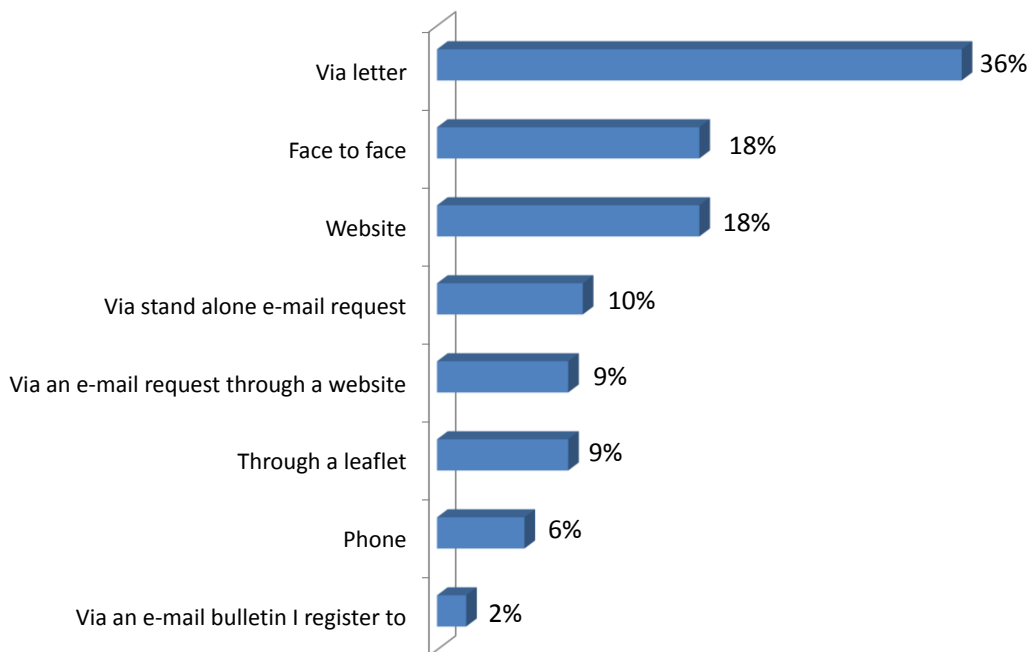
Q18: Where would you get to get advice on your rights under the Data Protection Act?						
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
CAB	59%	55%	66%	69%	60%	53%
Solicitor	11%	12%	12%	15%	18%	16%
Local MP/Councillor/Assembly member	3%	2%	2%	3%	4%	3%
Police	1%	1%	0.4%	1%	3%	2%
ICO	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%	3%
Public library	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	2%

Women are more likely than men to say that they would use the CAB as a source of information (57% versus 49%), while those that are younger are less likely than those that are older to use the CAB (37% of those aged 16-24 compared with 53% overall). In contrast, those that are older are more likely to use a solicitor as a source of information about the DPA (21% of those aged 65+ compared with 16% overall).

By socio-economic group, AB respondents are more likely than others to use solicitors as a source of information about the DPA (21%).

Respondents were asked how they would prefer to receive advice and guidance about the DPA. More than a third say that they would prefer to receive this advice by letter (34%), while less than one in five mention via a website or by face-to-face methods (both cited by 18%). Around one in ten mention receiving information by standalone email request (10%), via an email request through a website (9%), and through a leaflet (9%).

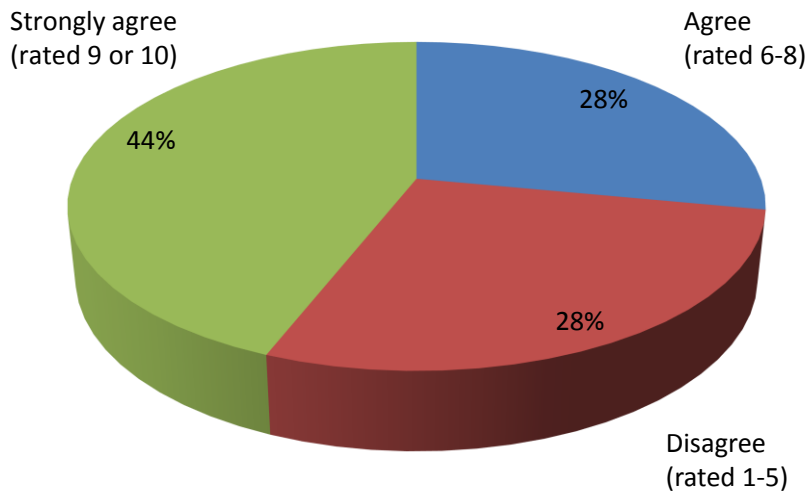
Chart 10: Preferred ways of receiving advice and guidance on the Data Protection Act – top 8 responses



5.2.12 Are DP issues taught in schools?

Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement that learning how to protect your personal information, and pointers on where to go for help, information, and advice is taught in schools on a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is 'completely disagree' and 10 is 'completely agree'. Less than three in ten express disagreement with this statement, rating their level of agreement between 1 and 5 (28%). In contrast seven in ten express agreement by giving a rating of between 6 and 10 (72%), with more than two in five rating their agreement as 9 or 10 (44%).

Chart 11: Learning how to protect personal information is taught in schools



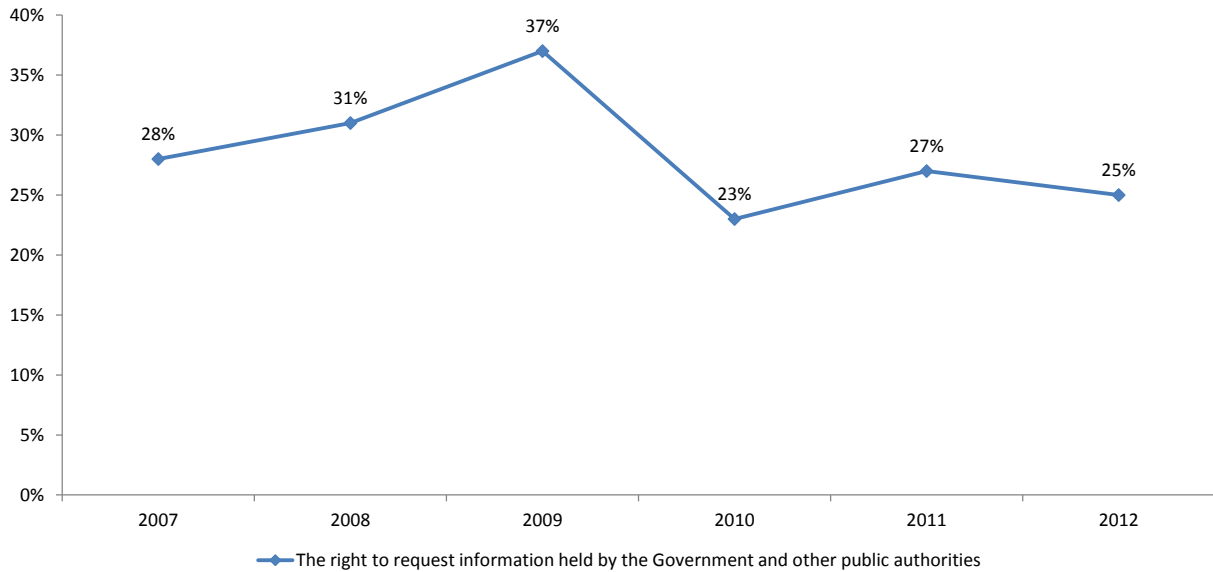
Women are more likely than men to express strong levels of agreement with the statement that learning how to protect your personal information, and pointers on where to go for help, information, and advice is taught in schools (49% versus 39%). In contrast, those aged 16-24 are less likely than others to express strong levels of agreement; 28% of this group rate their level of agreement as 9 or 10. By socio-economic group, DEs are more likely than others to express strong levels of agreement (58%).

5.3 Freedom of Information

5.3.1 Awareness of rights (unprompted)

Unprompted awareness of the right to request information has remained consistent since the 2011 survey and is mentioned by a quarter (25%). Those aged 35-44 (33%) are more likely than others to mention the right to request information.

Chart 12: Unprompted awareness of the right to request information held by the government and other public authorities



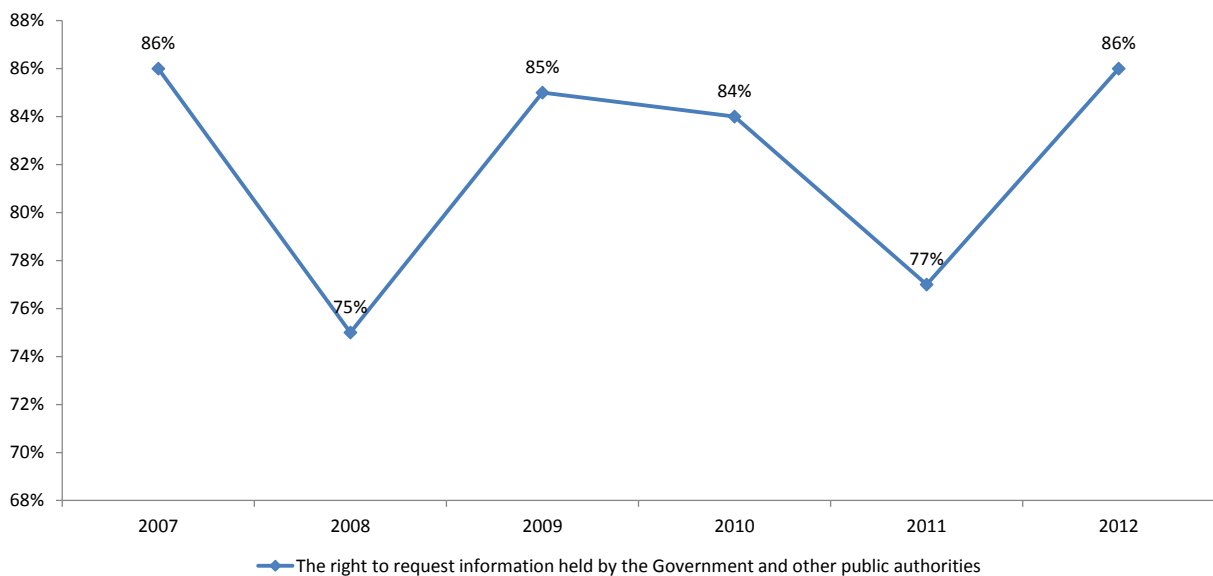
Aside from the consistency of results for awareness of the right to request information, unprompted awareness of all other FOIA rights has decreased since the 2011 survey. Results are now consistent with those from 2010 or from earlier surveys.

Q3: What rights do you think you have to access information held by the Government and other public authorities?						
Unprompted	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
The right to request information held by the Government and other public authorities	28%	31%	37%	23%	27%	25%
The right to know what type of information is available from the Government and other public authorities.	3%	1%	1%	3%	15%	4%
The right to see what public money is being spent on	5%	1%	2%	3%	15%	3%
The right to request information about the environment	3%	1%	1%	2%	11%	3%
The right to see official information from the Government and other public authorities	3%	1%	0.1%	3%	12%	2%
The public don't have any rights	4%	8%	6%	7%	7%	10%
Don't know	59%	49%	46%	50%	49%	32%

5.3.2 Awareness of rights (Prompted)

Once prompted, almost nine in ten say they are aware of the right to request information held by the Government and other public authorities (86%). This represents a significant increase (of nine percentage points) since 2011 and is a result which is equal to previous highest levels of awareness in 2007.

Chart 13: Prompted awareness of the right to request information held by the government and other public authorities



Levels of prompted awareness of the right to request information held by the Government and other public authorities are consistent across demographic sub-groups.

In general awareness of FOIA rights is relatively high, with around four in five or more expressing awareness in each case. Awareness of all FOIA rights has increased since 2011 and results are generally consistent with those from 2010. In particular, and alongside the increase in prompted awareness of the right to request information, there has been a significant increase (of seven percentage points) in the prompted awareness of the right to see official information from the Government and other public authorities such as minutes and planning documents since 2011.

Although awareness for all FOIA rights is high and increasing since 2011, 15% say that individuals do not have any rights, an increase of five percentage points since 2011.

Q4: Which of the following rights do you think you have with regards to accessing information held by the Government and other public authorities?						
Prompted	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
The right to see what public money is being spent on	91%	86%	86%	88%	84%	89%
The right to know what type of information is available from the Government and other public authorities	91%	83%	84%	88%	84%	88%
The right to request information about the environment	90%	83%	86%	87%	83%	86%
The right to request information held by the Government and other public authorities	86%	75%	85%	84%	77%	86%
The right to see official information from the Government and other public authorities such as minutes and planning documents	79%	72%	71%	75%	71%	78%

5.3.3 Confidence in information being available and accessible

Almost three in five agree that information they want about the government and other public authorities is available and accessible (58%). This represents an eight percentage point increase since 2011 and is consistent with those from the 2009 and 2010 surveys.

Q5: How much do you agree with the following statement “Information you want about the government and other public authorities is available and accessible”?					
Prompted	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Agree	50%	59%	59%	50%	58%
Neither agree nor disagree	25%	16%	16%	26%	18%
Disagree	25%	25%	25%	23%	24%

The degree to which people agree that information they want about the government and other public bodies is available and accessible is consistent across demographic sub-groups.

5.3.4 Awareness of laws regarding access to information held by the Government and other public authorities (unprompted)

One in five demonstrated unprompted awareness of the FOIA (21%), a finding which represents a three percentage point decrease in awareness since 2011. More than one in ten mention the DPA when asked about laws regarding access to information held by the Government and other public authorities, which

indicates a degree of confusion around the acts (13%). However, this mistake is made by smaller proportions than 2011 and the finding is now consistent with that from 2009 and 2010 surveys.

Q6: What laws are you aware of regarding access to information held by the Government and other public authorities about the way they run their organisation?						
Unprompted	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
FOIA	20%	16%	18%	24%	24%	21%
DPA	19%	10%	11%	12%	22%	13%
Environmental Information Regulations	0.4%	0.3%	0.2%	0.2%	3%	0.2%
Open Governmental Code	0.1%	0.3%	0.2%	0.3%	1%	1%
None	16%	13%	23%	33%	26%	36%

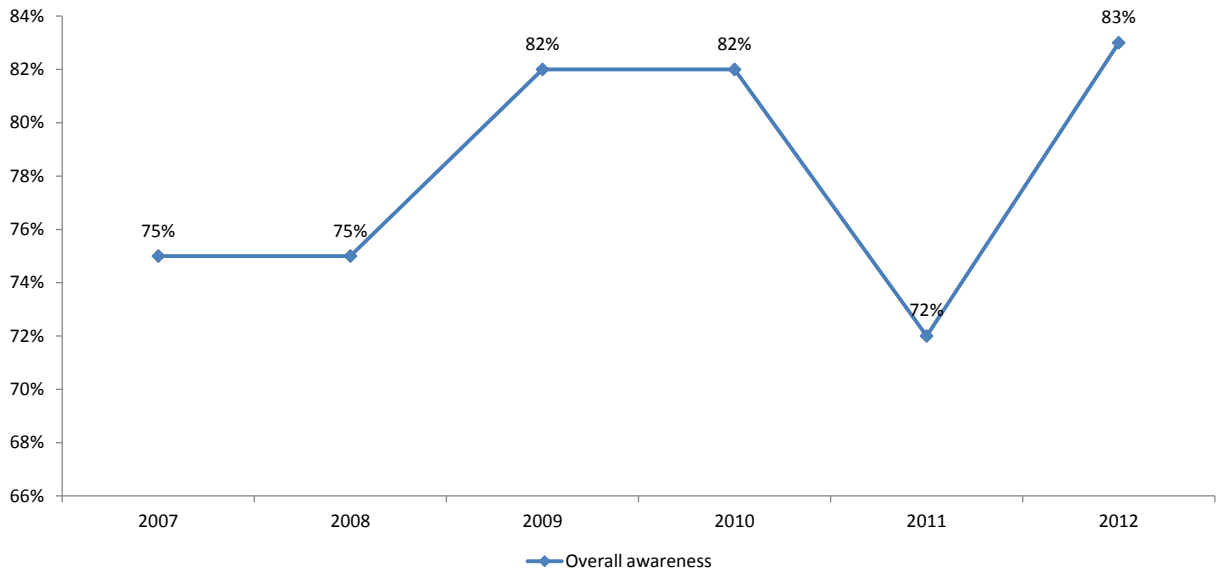
As with awareness of the DPA, men are more likely to be aware of the FOIA than women (26% versus 16%). Similarly, those aged 35-44 are more likely than others to be aware (31%) and are those in socio-economic grades AB (35%).

Lowest levels of awareness are found amongst those aged 16-24 and those aged 65+ (9% and 16% respectively). Similarly, those in socio-economic grades DE are less likely than others to be aware of the FOIA (12%).

5.3.5 Awareness of the FOIA (prompted)

More than four in five say that they are aware of the FOIA when prompted (83%). This represents a ten percentage point increase in prompted awareness since 2011 and brings results in line to those from the 2009 and 2010 surveys.

Chart 14: Prompted awareness of the Freedom of Information Act over time



Men are again more likely than women to say that they are aware of the act (89% versus 78%) and those aged 55-64 are also more likely than others to express awareness (93%). Conversely those aged 16-24 are less likely than others to express awareness (60%).

Prompted awareness of the FOIA also increases with socio-economic status. Just over two-thirds of those in social grades DE express awareness compared with almost all of those in social grades AB (68% versus 96%).

5.3.6 Sources of awareness of the FOIA

Two in five identify the internet as a source of information on the FOIA (40%), while a quarter mention the media (24%). In each case results represent an increase on those from the 2011 survey though the increase in people citing the media is particularly marked, increasing by nine percentage points.

Q8: Generally, how do you find out about freedom of information issues or the FOIA?			
Unprompted	2010	2011	2012
The internet	25%	38%	40%
Media	29%	15%	24%
Through my local authority	4%	5%	5%
Through work	8%	3%	6%
From a friend/relative/family member	4%	2%	2%
CAB	2%	2%	2%

Women are more likely than men to say that they use the internet to find out about freedom of information issues or the FOIA (44% versus 36%), while men are more likely than women to use the media (29% versus 18%).

By age, those who are 65+ are less likely than others to use the internet for information about the FOIA (26%). Those in social grades DE are less likely than others to say they use the internet (34%).

5.3.7 Requests for information

Around one in five have requested information held by the government or other public authorities (18%). This represents an eight percentage point increase since 2011 and is also five percentage points ahead of higher than from 2010.

When compared with others, men and those in social grades AB are most likely to have requested to see information (21% and 27% respectively).

As in previous years the most likely scenario for requesting information is in relation to planning issues, with one in five mentioning this (21%). Smaller proportions say that they would request to access information to find out about local issues (15%), find out about their local hospital (13%) and to find out information on the government (7%).

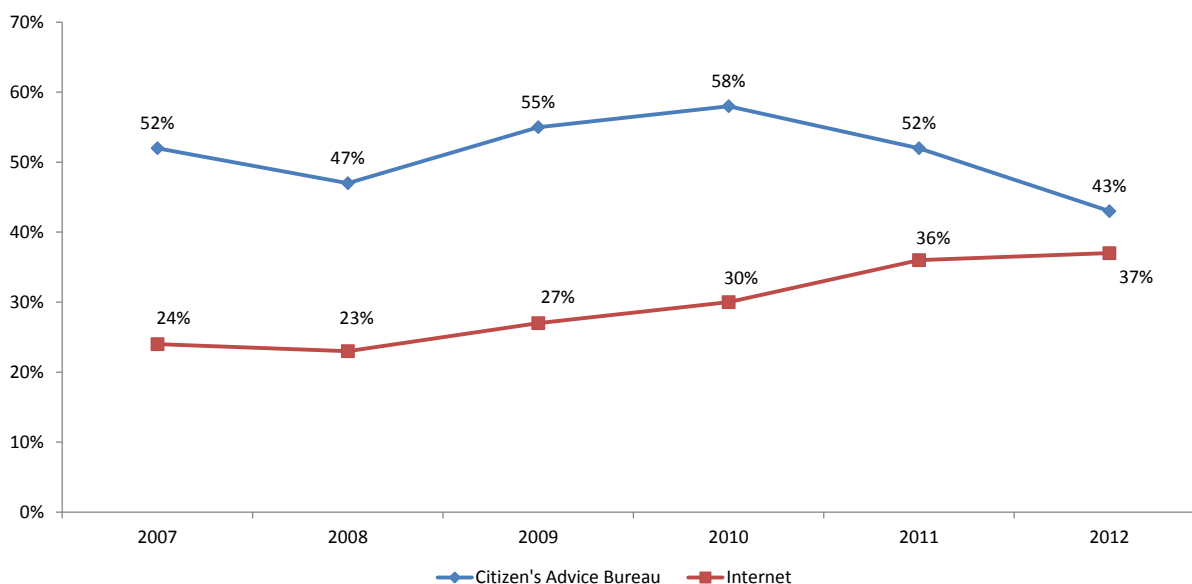
Q10: Can you think of any situations where you have or would request to access information held by the Government and/or public authorities such as your local council, your local hospital or a Government department?						
Unprompted	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
When dealing with planning issues	32%	25%	18%	15%	14%	21%
If I want information from / about my local council / local issues / minutes of meetings	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	15%
If I want information on my local hospital	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	13%
If I want to find information on the government such as spending or policies	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	7%
To check medical records	21%	27%	15%	12%	8%	6%

5.3.8 Sources of advice for rights under the FOIA

The Citizen’s Advice Bureau (CAB) is the place where the greatest proportion go to get advice on their rights under the FOIA. More than two in five (43%) mention the CAB. Although the CAB remains the most cited source, the finding represents a nine percent decrease on that from 2011.

The internet is cited as a source of information for advice about rights under the FOIA by around two in five (37%), a finding which is consistent to that from 2011. Use of the internet decreases with socio-economic grade; almost a half of those in social grades AB mention the internet compared with less than a quarter of those in social grades DE (48% versus 23%).

Chart 15: Top two sources of contact for advice on the FOIA over time (unprompted)



Local MPs or councillors are mentioned by 17% of respondents, while solicitors are mentioned by 11%. Each of these findings are largely consistent with those from the 2011 survey. Also as last year, one in a hundred mention the ICO as a source of information (1%).

5.3.9 Preferred method for receiving advice and guidance on the FOIA

More than a third state that their preferred method of receiving advice and guidance on the FOIA is by letter (35%). This represents a seven percentage point increase since 2011 and brings the finding in line with those from previous waves. A quarter say they would prefer to receive advice via a website (24%), which is a six percent decline since 2011, but which brings results in line with earlier waves of research.

Similarly a preference for face-to-face methods of contact has fallen by nine percentage points to 13%, which again brings results in line with pre-2011 waves of the survey. In contrast, the preference for stand-alone email requests has risen by five percentage points to 16%.

Q12: How would you prefer to receive advice and guidance on the FOIA?						
Unprompted	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Via a letter	39%	35%	38%	35%	28%	35%
Website	22%	18%	22%	25%	30%	24%
Via stand-alone e-mail request	8%	9%	9%	10%	11%	16%
Face to face	22%	22%	18%	15%	24%	13%
Leaflet	6%	8%	7%	10%	11%	9%
Via an e-mail request through a website	1%	2%	2%	3%	5%	7%
Phone	6%	5%	6%	4%	8%	6%
Via an e-mail bulletin I register to	1%	0.3%	1%	1%	2%	2%
Visit office	3%	1%	1%	2%	5%	0.4%
Get in touch with other organisation/advice agency to ask on my behalf	0.2%	0.3%	1%	1%	1%	0.2%

Compared with results overall, women are most likely to favour contact by letter (38%), as are those aged 65+ (41%). In contrast, those aged 35-44 and those in social grades AB are most likely to favour information through a website (30% and 34% respectively).

5.3.10 Benefits of the FOIA

Levels of agreement with the benefits of the FOIA have increased since the 2011 survey and are generally now in line with previous waves of research.

Around nine in ten agree that being able to access information held by public authorities increases your knowledge of what they do (87%), a level of agreement greater than for the other benefits of the FOIA. More than four in five agree that being able to access information held by public authorities promotes their accountability and transparency (84%), while fewer than this agree that being able to access information

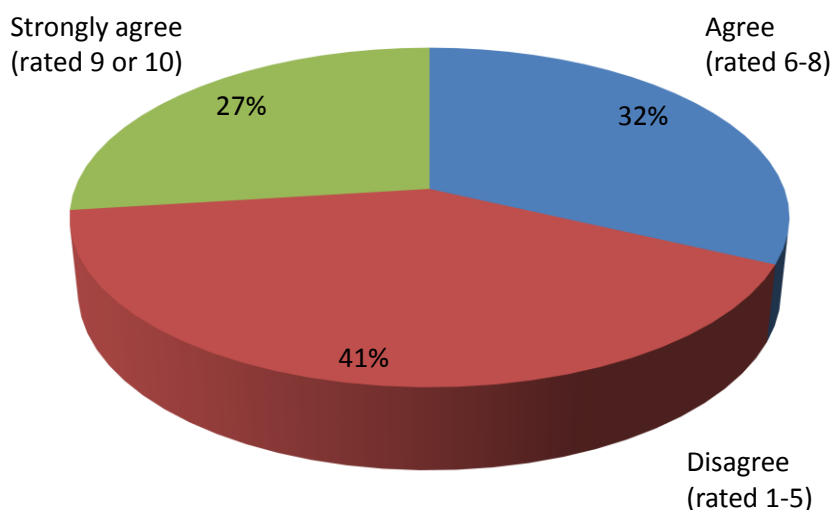
held by public authorities increases your confidence in them (78%). Around three quarters agree (73%), that being able to access information held by public authorities increases your trust in them while the lowest levels agreement are in relation to the statement that existing laws mean that information held about the Government and local authorities and their operations is available and accessible to you (63%).

Q14: How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?						
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Being able to access information held by public authorities increases your knowledge of what they do	86%	84%	88%	87%	81%	87%
Being able to access information held by public authorities promotes their accountability and transparency	81%	80%	82%	83%	76%	84%
Being able to access information held by public authorities increases your confidence in them	81%	75%	81%	79%	76%	78%
Being able to access information held by public authorities increases your trust in them	72%	73%	79%	75%	71%	73%
Existing laws mean that information held about the Government and local authorities and their operations is available and accessible to you.	66%	65%	73%	68%	59%	63%

5.3.11 Are FOIA issues taught in schools?

Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement that learning about your right to access information is taught in schools and that schools give pointers on where to go for help, information, and advice on how to go about accessing such information on a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is ‘completely disagree’ and 10 is ‘completely agree’. Two in five express disagreement with this statement, rating their level of agreement between 1 and 5 (41%). In contrast three in five express agreement by giving a rating of between 6 and 10 (59%), with more than a quarter rating their agreement as 9 or 10 (27%).

Chart 16: Learning about your right to access information is taught in schools



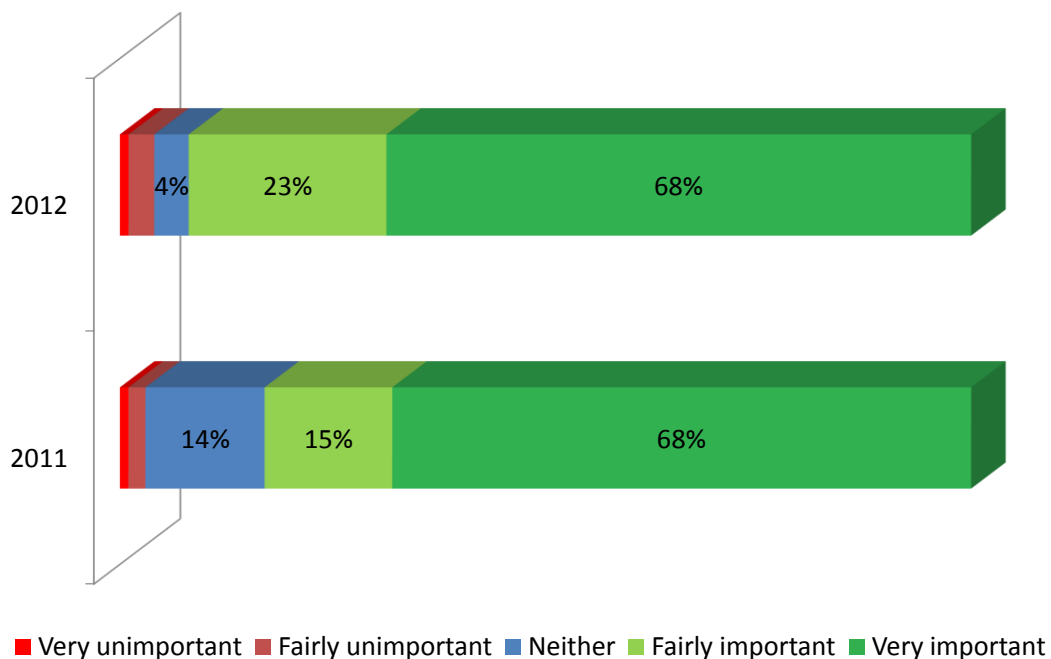
Those aged 65+ are more likely than others to express strong levels of agreement that learning about your right to access information is taught in schools (36%). Strong levels of agreement decrease with socio-economic status; a third of those in social grades DE strongly agree compared with one in five of those in social grades AB (32% versus 20%).

5.4 Independent Regulation

5.4.1 Data Protection

Nine in ten say that it is important that the regulator of the DPA is independent of Government (91%), with more than two thirds saying it is very important (68%). Overall ratings of importance of having an independent regulator have therefore increased by eight percentage points since 2011, though the proportion of those considering this independence as very important has remain consistent.

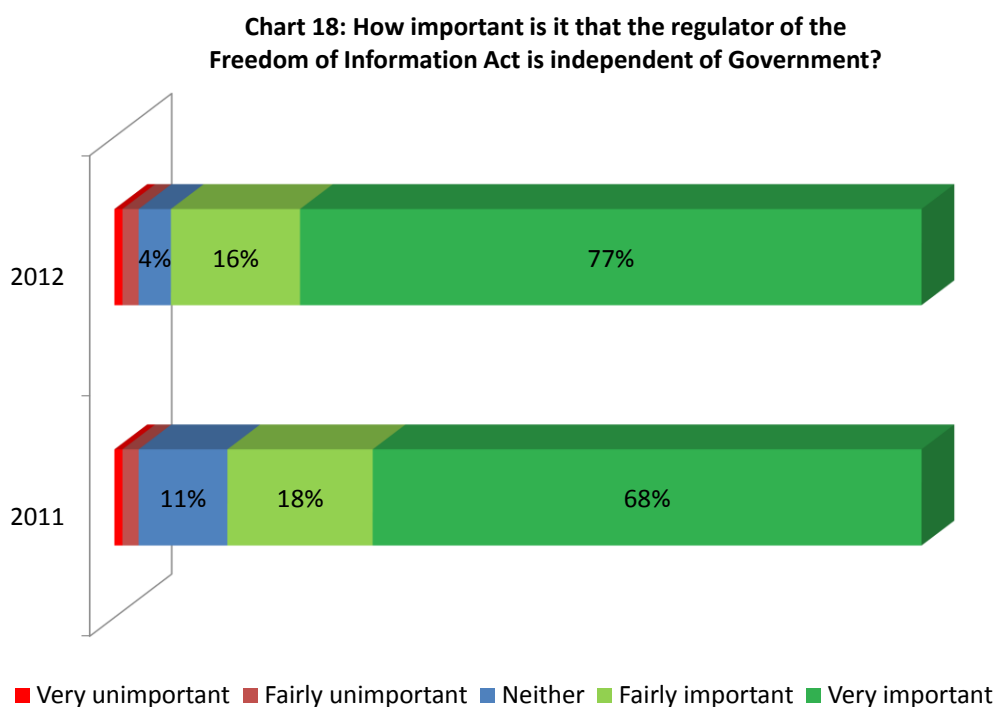
Chart 17: How important is it that the regulator of the Data Protection Act is independent of Government?



Those who are younger are less likely than those who are older to consider it important that the regulator of the DPA is independent of Government; four in five aged 16-24 say this compared with more than nine in ten of those aged 65+ (79% versus 95%).

5.4.2 Freedom of Information

Similar proportions as those who say that it is important that the regulator of the DPA is independent of Government say the same of the regulator of the FOIA. More than nine in ten say this (93%) compared with just 3% who disagree. Ratings of the importance of the regulator of the FOIA being independent of Government have increased by seven percentage points since 2011.



Those who are younger are less likely to consider it important that the regulator of the FOIA is independent of Government; 81% of those who are 16-24 say this. In contrast, those in socio-economic grades AB and C1 are more likely than those in grades C2 and DE to consider this independence as important (96% versus 89%).

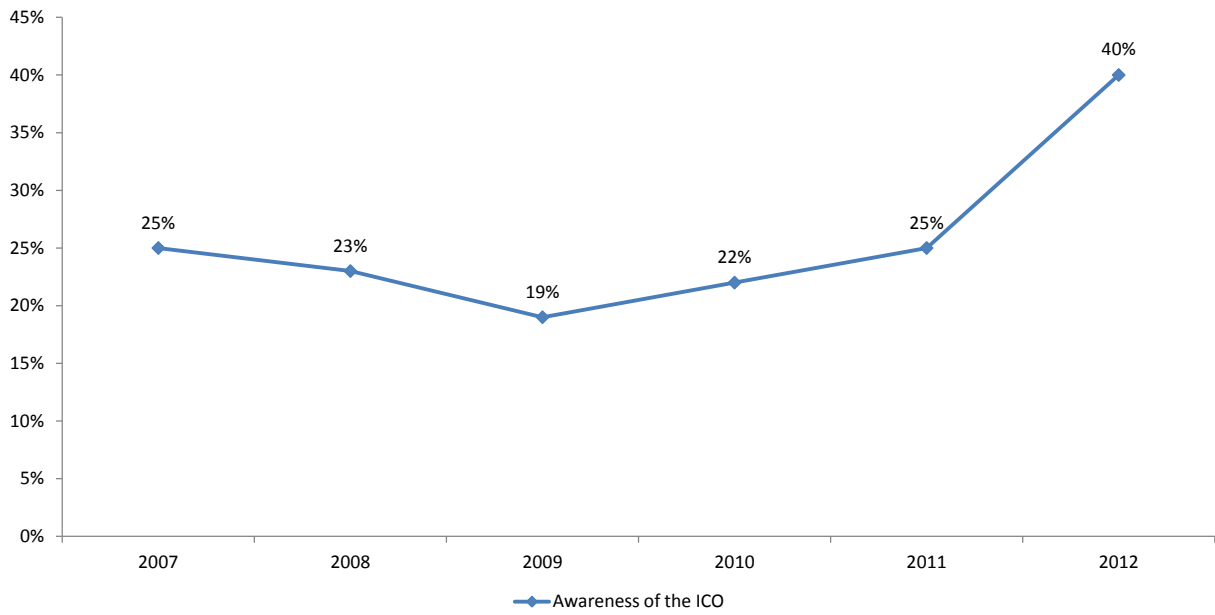
5.5 The Information Commissioner's Office

5.5.1 Awareness of the ICO

Two in five say that they have heard of the information Commissioner's Office (40%). This represents a very significant increase of fifteen percentage points since 2011 and by far the greatest levels of awareness since the first wave of the survey.

The highest levels of awareness are expressed by men (45%), those aged 25-34 (49%) and those in socio-economic grades AB (52%).

Chart 19: Awareness of the ICO



6. Appendices

6.1 Demographic Tables

Gender	Unweighted		Weighted	
	N	%	N	%
Male	1,066	43%	1,201	49%
Female	1,399	57%	1,265	51%
TOTAL	2,465	100%	2,465	100%

Age	Unweighted		Weighted	
	N	%	N	%
16-24	129	5%	300	12%
25-34	228	9%	393	16%
35-44	462	19%	445	18%
45-54	502	20%	439	18%
55-64	497	20%	367	15%
65+	641	26%	515	21%
Refused	6	0.2%	6	0.2%
TOTAL	2,465	100%	2,465	100%

SEG	Unweighted		Weighted	
	N	%	N	%
AB	634	26%	460	19%
C1	878	36%	970	39%
C2	459	19%	412	17%
DE	452	18%	581	24%
Refused	42	2%	42	2%
TOTAL	2,465	100%	2,465	100%

Ethnicity	Unweighted		Weighted	
	N	%	N	%
White	2,303	93%	2,298	93%
BME	142	6%	147	6%
Refused	20	1%	20	1%
TOTAL	2,465	100%	2,465	100%

Region - DP	Unweighted		Weighted	
	N	%	N	%
North West	98	8%	123	10%
North East	85	7%	53	4%
Yorks and Humber	93	8%	96	8%
East Midlands	107	9%	85	7%
West Midlands	97	8%	99	8%
East of England	129	10%	104	8%
London	76	6%	140	11%
South East	168	14%	149	12%
South West	127	10%	93	7%
Wales	94	8%	99	8%
Scotland	97	8%	101	8%
Northern Ireland	66	5%	99	8%
TOTAL	1,237	100%	1,241	100%

Region - FOIA	Unweighted		Weighted	
	N	%	N	%
North West	113	9%	133	11%
North East	93	8%	50	4%
Yorks and Humber	97	8%	101	8%
East Midlands	118	10%	86	7%
West Midlands	113	9%	105	9%
East of England	111	9%	116	9%
London	80	7%	171	14%
South East	173	14%	149	12%
South West	146	12%	101	8%
Wales	98	8%	108	9%
Scotland	-	-	-	-
Northern Ireland	86	7%	108	9%
TOTAL	1,228	100%	1,228	100%

Region - combined	Unweighted		Weighted	
	N	%	N	%
North West	211	9%	244	10%
North East	178	7%	105	4%
Yorks and Humber	190	8%	191	8%
East Midlands	225	9%	169	7%
West Midlands	210	9%	197	8%
East of England	240	10%	207	8%
London	156	6%	278	11%
South East	341	14%	296	12%
South West	273	11%	185	7%
Wales	192	8%	197	8%
Scotland	97	4%	201	8%
Northern Ireland	152	6%	197	8%
TOTAL	2,465	100%	2,465	100%