

2020 Strategic Planning Survey: Summary Report

20th Judicial Circuit/Ottawa County Probate Courts
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Outline of Report

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1. Overview of External Partner Survey
 2. Characteristics of Respondents
 3. Results and Findings
 - ▶ Biggest Challenges/Emerging Issues in the next 3-5 years
 - ▶ Most Significant Barriers to Accessing the Courts
 - ▶ Most Wanted Changes/Improvements in the Next 3-5 Years
 - ▶ Greatest Strengths of the Courts
 - ▶ New COVID Practices that have Worked Well/Should be Continued

A hand-drawn line graph on a blue background. The graph shows a line that starts with a small peak, then a dip, followed by a larger peak, a dip, and then a steady upward trend. A hand is visible on the right side, holding a pen and drawing the line. A green sticky note is attached to the top right corner of the image.

Part 1: Overview of External Partner Survey



Overview of External Partner Survey

1. Purpose: Gather feedback and suggestions from external partners to help shape the future direction, goals, and strategic priorities of the 20th Judicial Circuit/Ottawa County Probate Courts.
2. Outreach Methods:
 - ❑ 1 Survey was administered to external partners/ stakeholders
 - ❑ Judges and employees were surveyed at the November All-Staff meeting via Poll Everywhere

Overview (continued)

3. Survey Administration: The surveys were administered in December 2020 by PRAXIS Consulting, Inc.

4. Number of Respondents/Response Rates:
 - ❑ Response Rate = 46%
 - ❑ n = 239 (out of N = 525)



Overview: Survey Questions

- Q1: Biggest challenges/emerging issues facing the Courts in the next 3-5 years. (select top 3 choices)
- Q2: Most significant barriers/challenges to accessing or using the Courts. (select top 3 choices)
- Q3: Greatest strengths of the Courts. (list your top 3)
- Q4: Most wanted improvements/changes in the next 3-5 years. (select top 3 choices)
- Q5: New COVID practices, policies, and/or procedures that worked well and should be considered for continuation post-COVID.
- Q6: Additional comments/suggestions.

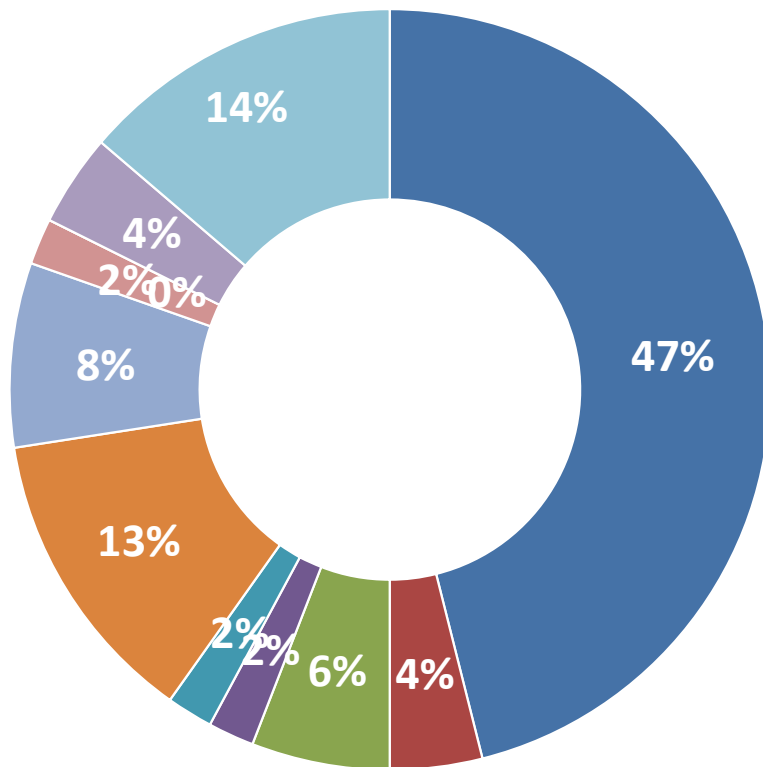
Demographic Questions

A hand is shown in the lower right corner, holding a pen and drawing a line graph on a blue background. The graph consists of a thick, dark blue line that starts with a small dip, then rises to a peak, dips slightly, rises to a higher peak, dips again, and finally rises steadily towards the top right. A bright green sticky note is attached to the top right corner of the blue background, partially overlapping the end of the graph line.

Part 2: Characteristics of Respondents

External Partners

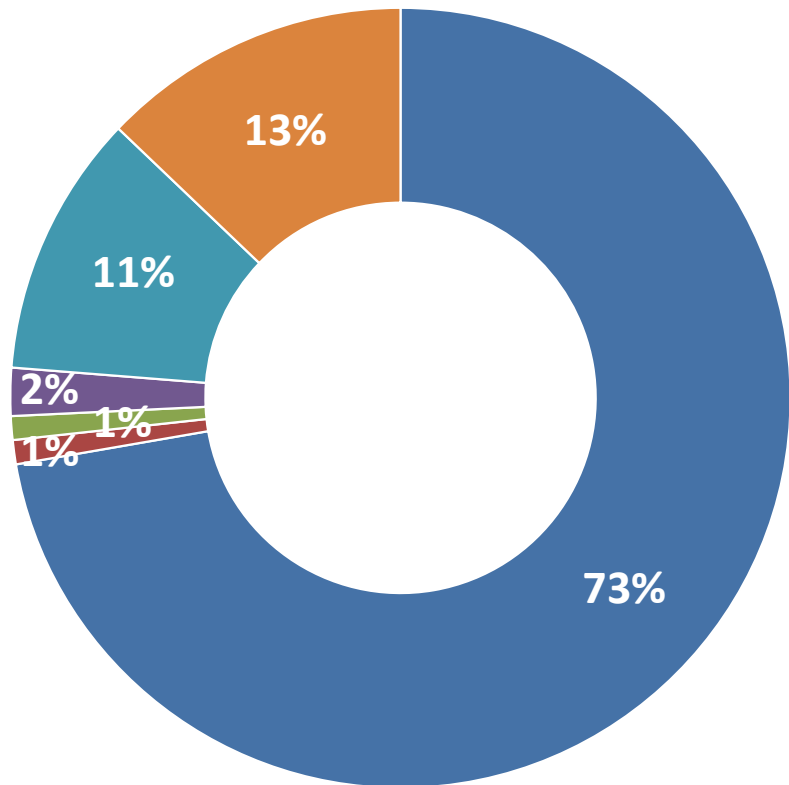
External Partner Demographics: By Relationship to Courts (n=239)



Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding.

- Private Attorney (n=113)
- Prosecuting Attorney (n=10)
- Court Appointed/PD Attny (n=15)
- Law Enforcement (n=4)
- MDOC/Probation (n=4)
- Treatment Provider (n=30)
- School/Community/Business (n=19)
- County Admin (n=5)
- Other Elected Officials (n=1)
- Other (n=4)
- Did Not Answer (n=34)

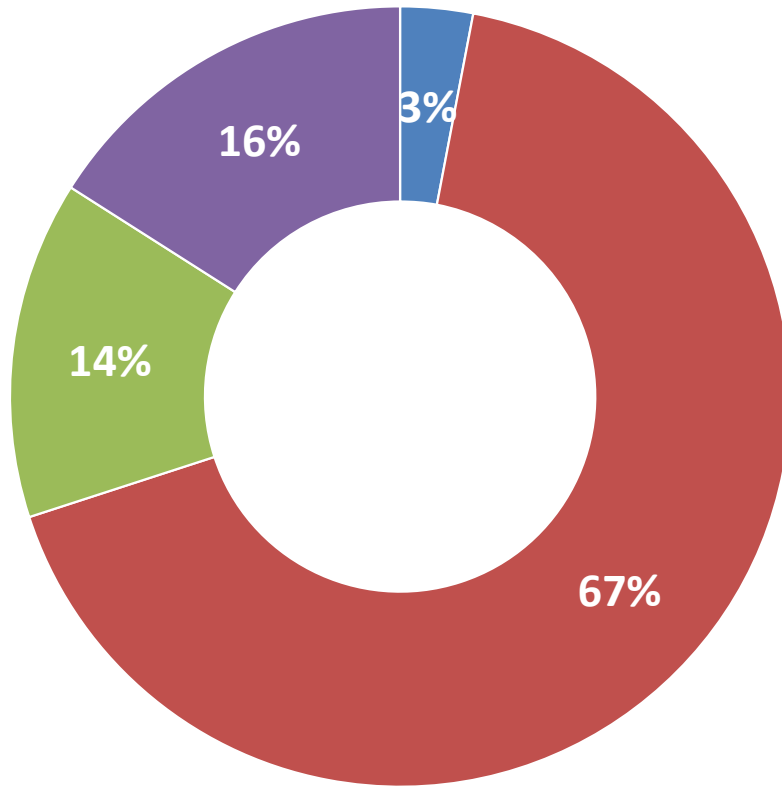
External Partner Demographics: By Race (n=239)



- White/Caucasian (n=174)
- Black/African American (n=2)
- Asian (n=2)
- 2 or more races (n=5)
- Prefer not to answer (n=25)
- Did Not Answer (n=31)

Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding.

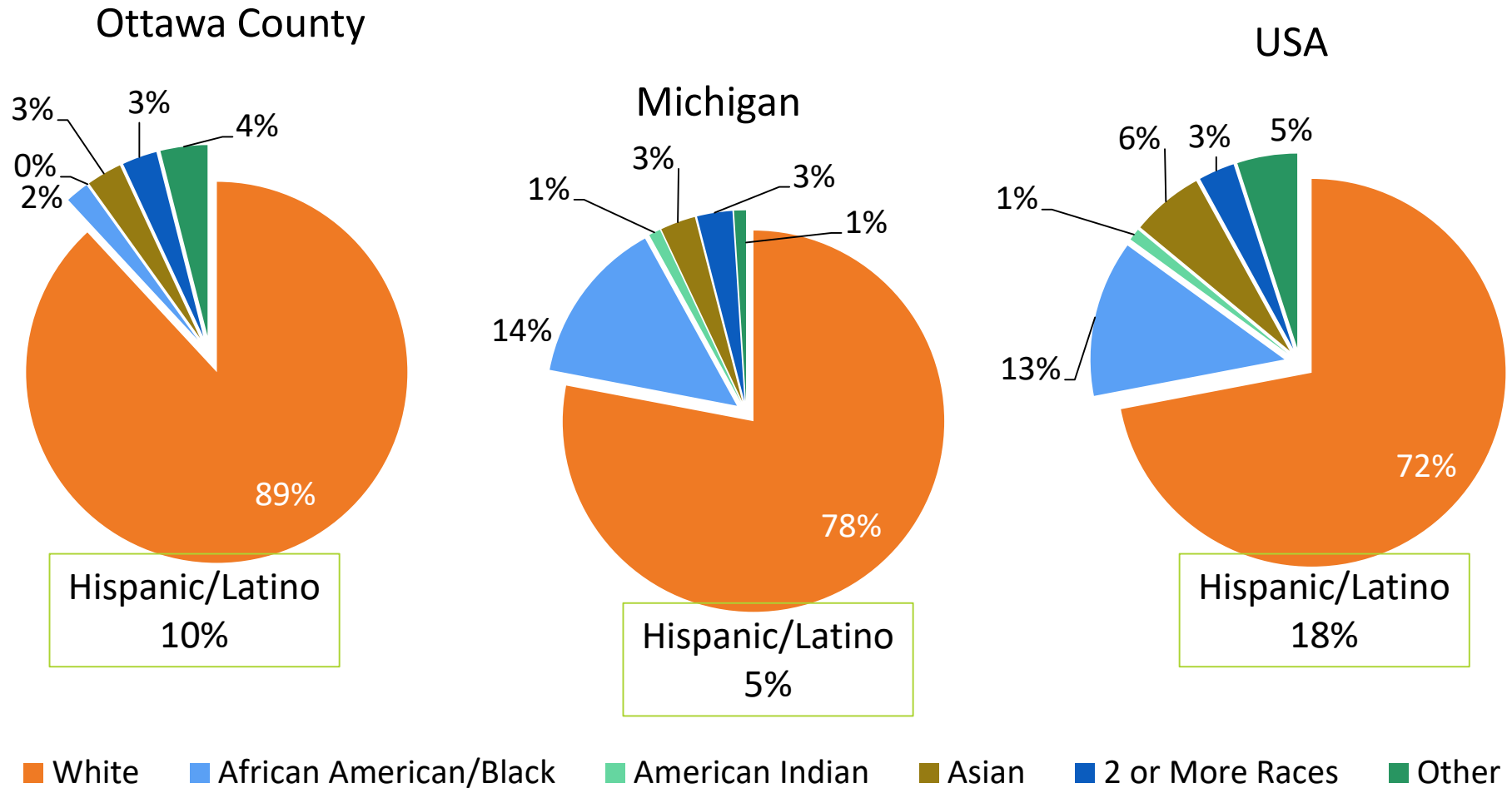
External Partner Demographics: By Ethnicity (n=239)



- Hispanic/Latino/Latina (n=6)
- Non-Hispanic (n=161)
- Prefer not to answer (n=34)
- Did not answer (n=38)

Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding.

Race and Ethnicity – Ottawa County 2019 (in percentages)



Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding. Source: US Census Bureau. 2019 Estimates. <http://www.data.census.gov>

A hand-drawn line graph on a blue background. The graph shows a line that starts at the bottom left, rises to a peak, falls to a trough, rises to a second peak, falls to a second trough, and then rises steadily to the top right. A hand is visible on the right side, holding a pen and drawing the line. A green sticky note is attached to the top right corner of the image.

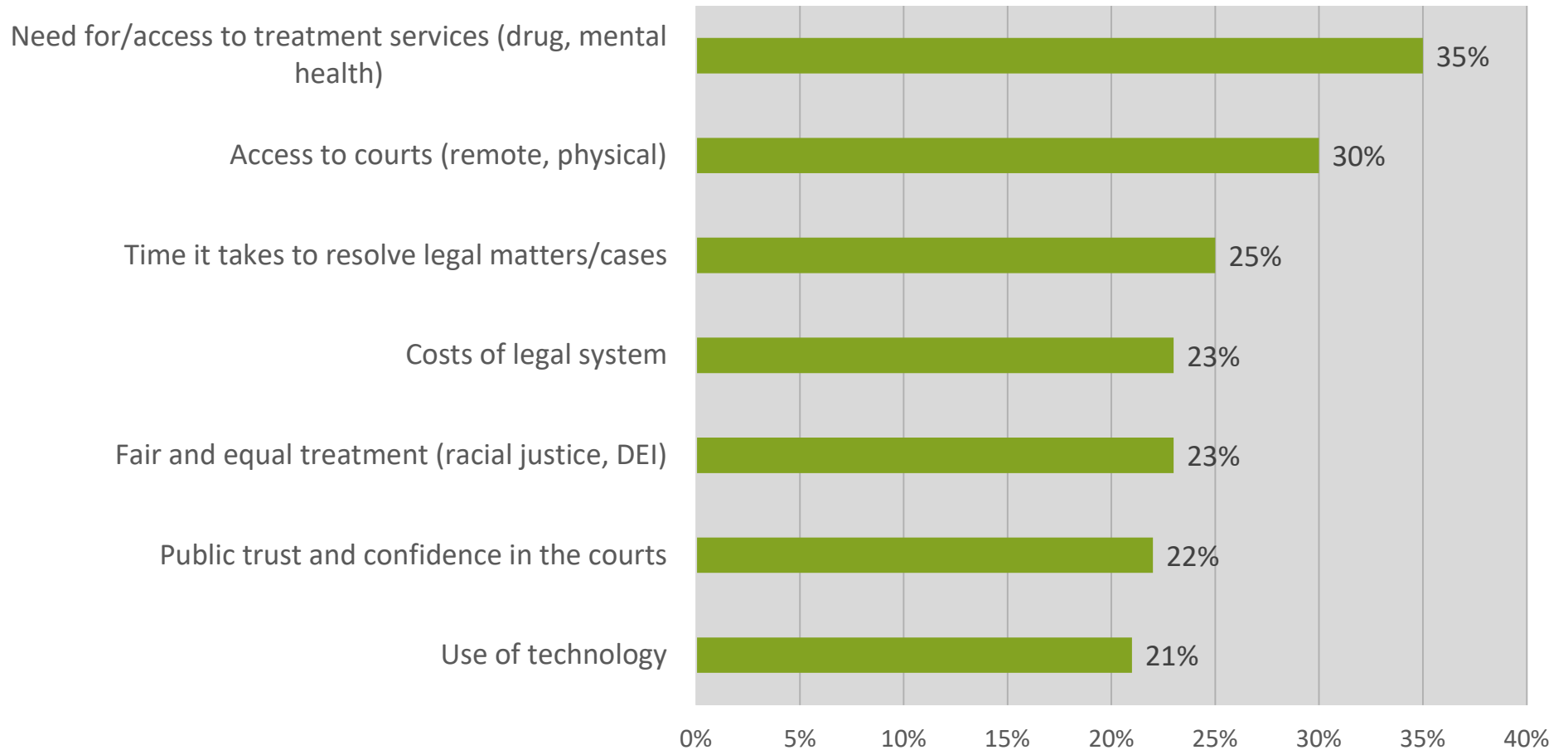
Part 3: Results and Findings

Biggest Challenges/Emerging Issues – Next 3-5 Years

(By rank order – most frequently mentioned – Top 7¹)



External Partners (n=239)



¹ This was a multiple response question – respondents were asked to select their top three from a list. Percentages are based on number of respondents that selected the option.

Biggest Challenges/Emerging Issues – Next 3-5 Years – By Group

(by rank order, most frequently mentioned – top 3 for each group)



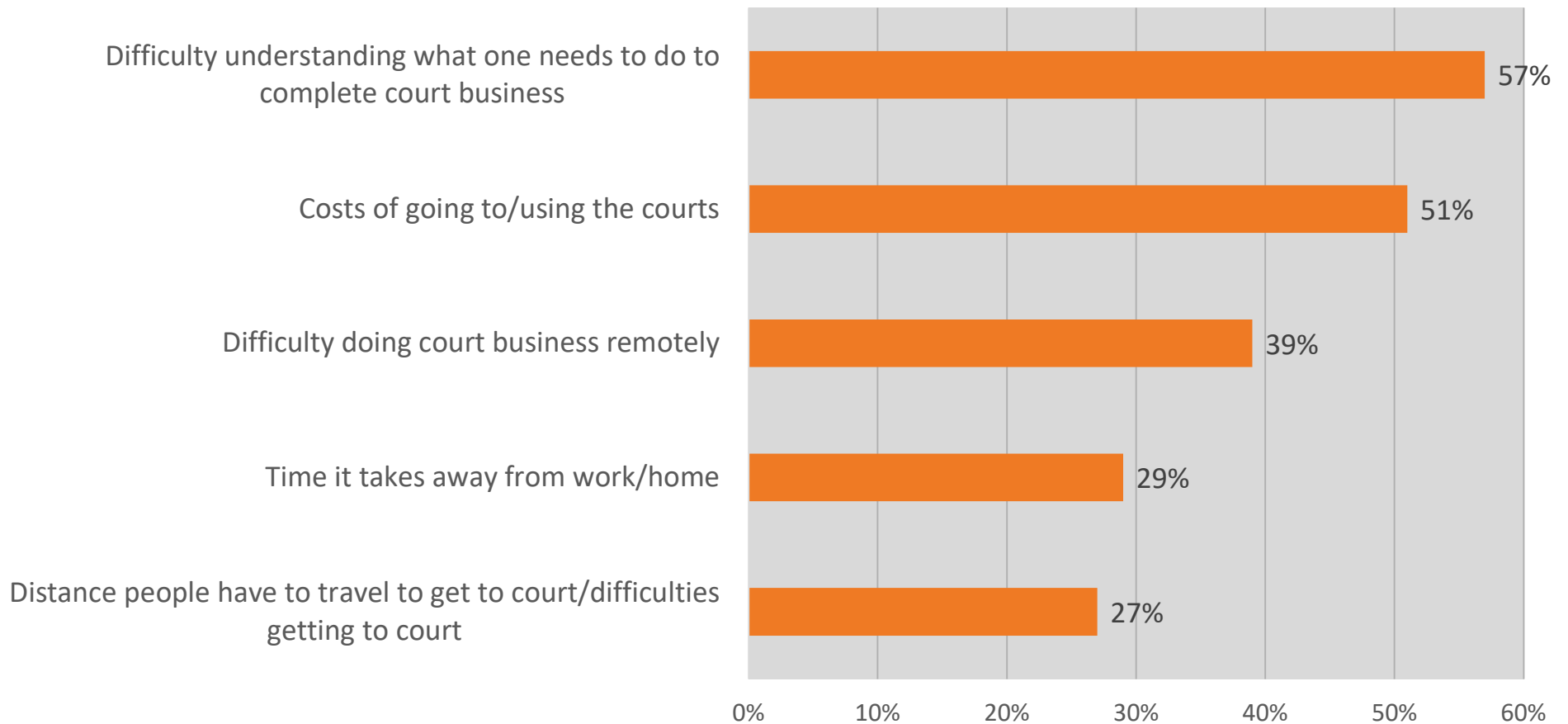
Most Frequently Mentioned Responses – Top 3 for Groups	External Partners (n=239)	Private Attyns. (n=113)	Pros. Attyns (n=10)	Ct-Appt Attny/ PD (n=15)	Law Enf./ MDOC/ Prob. (n=8)	Treatment Provs. (n=30)	School/ Comm. Leaders (n=19)	Cnty. Admin/ Elected Officials (n=10)	Did not Select Group (n=34)
Need for/access to treatment services (e.g., drug, mental health)	#1 (35%)		40%	80%	50%	53%	42%		
Access to the courts (e.g., remote, physical)	#2 (30%)	41%				23%			41%
Time it takes to resolve legal matters/cases	#3 (25%)	31%							29%
Costs of the legal system (e.g., attorney fees, filing fees, court costs)	#4 (23%)	31%			38%				
Fair and equal treatment (e.g., racial justice, diversity, equity, inclusion)	#4 (23%)			33%			53%	30%	29%
Public trust and confidence in the court system	#6 (22%)			33%			32%		
Use of technology	#7 (21%)							30%	
Changing demographics of users								50%	
Crime – levels/types			40%		38%				
Safety/Security in courthouse			60%						
Integrating Evidence Based/ Restorative Practices				47%					
Relationships w/External Partners						27%			

Most Significant Barriers/Problems Accessing/Using the Courts

(by rank order – most frequently mentioned – top 5¹)



External Partners (n=239)



¹ This was a multiple response question – respondents were asked to select their top three from a list. Percentages are based on number of respondents that selected the option.

Most Significant Barriers/Challenges to Accessing/ Using the Courts – By Group

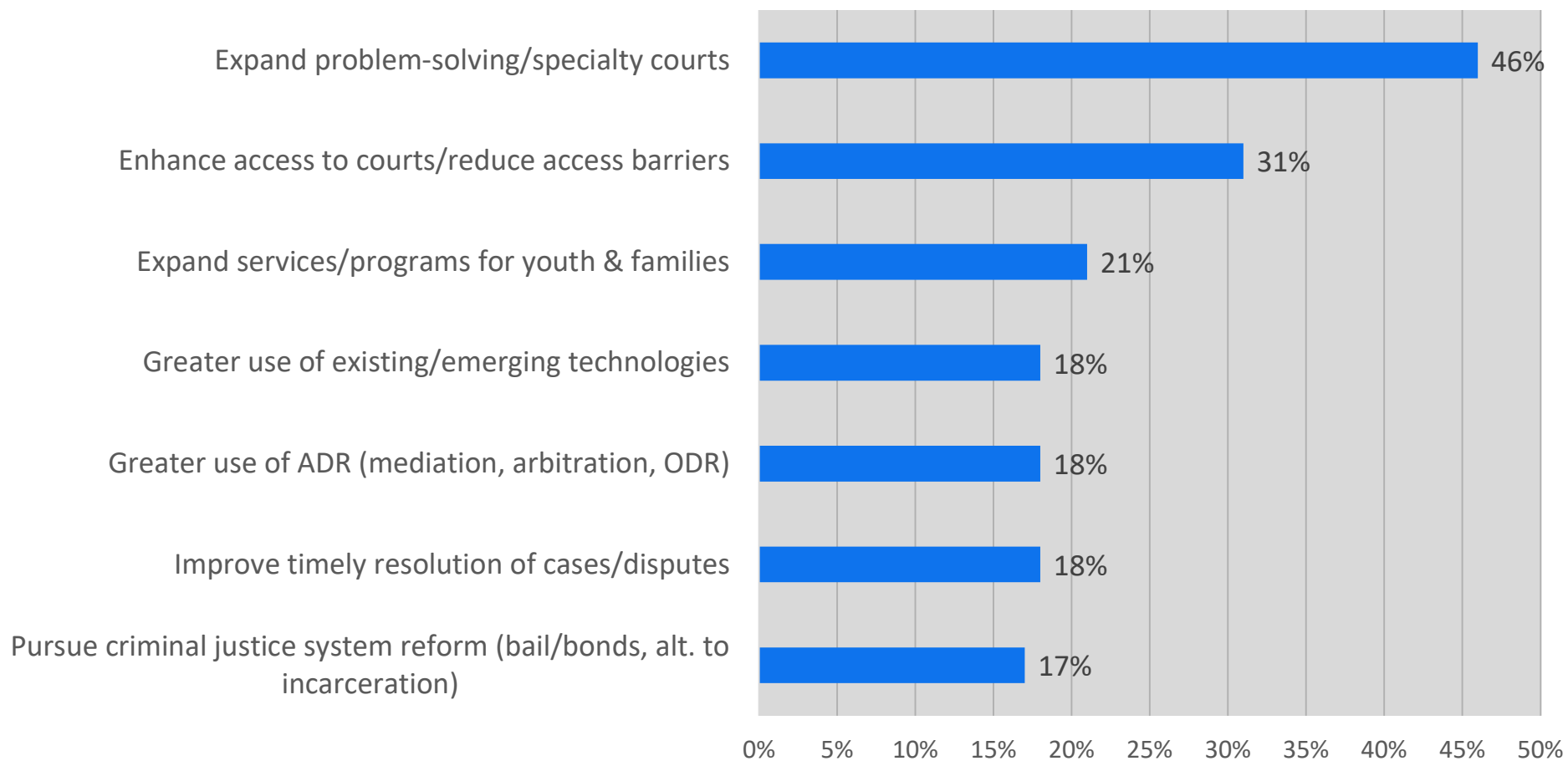
(by rank order, most frequently mentioned – Top 3 for each group)

Most Frequently Mentioned Responses – Top 3 for Groups	External Partners (n=239)	Private Attyns. (n=113)	Pros. Attyns (n=10)	Ct-Appt Attny/ PD (n=15)	Law Enf./ MDOC/ Prob. (n=8)	Treatment Provs. (n=30)	School/ Comm. Leaders (n=19)	Cnty. Admin/ Elected Officials (n=10)	Did not Select Group (n=34)
Difficulty understanding <u>what</u> one needs to do to complete court business	#1 (57%)	57%	60%	47%	38%	67%	68%	70%	44%
Costs of going to/using the courts	#2 (51%)	65%		53%		40%	47%	60%	32%
Difficulty doing court business remotely	#3 (39%)	41%	40%		38%	47%		40%	
Time it takes away from work or home	#4 (29%)		40%		38%				32%
Distance people have to travel to get to court/difficulties getting to court	#5 (27%)			60%		40%	47%	40%	
Difficulty understanding <u>where</u> one needs to go complete court business					50%				
Overall lack of trust and confidence in the court system					38%				

Most Wanted Changes/Improvements in the Next 3-5 Years (by rank order – most frequently mentioned – Top 7¹)



External Partners (n=239)



¹ This was a multiple response question – respondents were asked to select their top three from a list. Percentages are based on number of respondents that selected the option.

Greatest Strengths – External Partners

(not in priority order)

1. Excellent staff (helpful, courteous, professional, knowledgeable/competent dedicated, welcoming)
2. Excellent judicial officers (fair, impartial, dedicated, professional, follow the law, ethical, experienced)
3. Desire/commitment to continuously improve/try innovative things
4. Services & Resources (remote access, self-help, cust. service, website resources)
5. Facilities (clean, easy access, parking, Juv. Det., excellent, security/safety)
6. Use of technology (e-filing, remote hearings, embrace new tech.)
7. Court Leadership (well-respected, think/ plan strategically, listen to others, good decision-making, good admin. of courts)
8. Programs & Specialty Courts (for youth/ families, recovery & drug court, willing to try alt. treatment practices, counseling)
9. Relationships & collaboration w/partners (seek input/outreach, listen, good/prompt comm.,)
10. Timely & efficient resolution (scheduling, good case mgt., eff. handling of caseload, use of ADR)

Practices, Policies, Procedures that have Worked Well & Should be Continued Post-COVID (not in priority order)

1. Remote/virtual hearings (pre-trials, motions, settlement confs., default/consent matters, probate matters, pro cons, oral arguments, uncontested matters)
2. Remote meetings/appointments
3. Online scheduling/docketing
4. Online access to court/case info., court records, court schedules
5. Online payment options
6. Email access to staff
7. Waive fees for file access; eliminate/reduce online user/payment fees
8. Increase access to online filing; simplify e-filing
9. Safety precautions/requirements (mask wearing, dividers, distancing)
10. Live stream hearings
11. Expanded bond options for defendants while waiting trial
12. Batch/slot scheduling
13. Staggered sentencings