

# **SURVEY OF VETERANS SATISFACTION WITH THE VA HOME LOAN GUARANTY PROCESS**

## **2003 National Results Regional Loan Centers**



**Surveys and Research Staff  
Office of Performance Analysis and Integrity  
Veterans Benefits Administration**

**April 2004**

# Table of Contents

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• Acknowledgments	3
• Executive Summary	4
• Quadrant Analysis	13
• Respondent Characteristics	19
• Overall Satisfaction with VA Home Loan Process	21
• Contact with VA	35
• Timeliness, Responsiveness, and Knowledge	39
• Appendices	44
– Appendix A: Frequency of Responses	
– Appendix B: Methodology	
– Appendix C: Examples of Mailing Materials	
– Appendix D: VBA Home Loan Guaranty Process Questionnaire	

# Acknowledgments

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- **This information was collected and analyzed under the direction of the:**

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
Veterans Benefits Administration  
Office of Performance Analysis and Integrity  
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## **Executive Summary**

# Project Objectives

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- To measure veteran satisfaction with the VA Home Loan Guaranty process at both the national and VBA Regional Loan Center (RLC) levels.
- To identify those areas of the VA Home Loan Guaranty process with which veterans are most and least satisfied, and to gain an understanding of those areas of the process which are in greatest need of improvement.
- To determine where improvements to the VA Home Loan Guaranty process will have the greatest impact on veteran satisfaction.
- To create performance measures, including measures of customer service, through a strategic planning process, as required by the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) that was passed and signed into law in August 1993.
- To establish an explicit goal for the quality of service that is “equal to the best in business” as described in President Clinton’s Executive Order 12862, *Setting Customer Service Standards*, issued in September 1993. This order was aimed at “ensuring that the Federal Government provides the highest quality of service possible to the American people.”
- To provide data for the purpose of identifying and monitoring Regional Loan Center (RLC) improvements in customer service.

# Project Methodology

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- This report presents results from the fourth administration of the *Survey of Veterans Satisfaction with the VA Home Loan Guaranty Process*. The data represent statistically valid measurements of various elements of customer satisfaction.
- The annual mail survey assesses veteran satisfaction with the VA Home Loan Guaranty process using a random sample of loans closed from April 1 through July 31, 2003, representing the nine Regional Loan Centers.
- For each of the nine Regional Loan Centers, the survey sample consisted of approximately 1,400 veterans, with an equal mix of original or refinanced loans. Approximately 678 questionnaires were returned from each regional loan center, resulting in a national response rate of 49.6 percent.
- Data for this report were collected from December 2003 through February 2004.
- A more detailed discussion of the survey methodology appears in Appendix B.

Note: The words *veterans*, *customers*, and *respondents* are used interchangeably throughout the report and represent all possible respondents.

# Project History

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- As part of this project, VBA's Surveys and Research Staff conducted four focus groups with veterans and front-line employees to gather information relevant to customer satisfaction issues.
- From the focus group data, the VBA designed and developed a questionnaire to assess customer satisfaction with the Home Loan Guaranty process. This original survey was pretested in March and April 2000. Based on the results, the skip patterns, and the verbatim responses of the pretest, the VBA Surveys and Research Staff modified the questionnaire.
- The questionnaire was revised in 2002 and for the current survey administration period (2003); changes were made to the Appraisal section in order to obtain more relevant information. A copy of the questionnaire is in Appendix D.
- Results from this survey are now available for 2000, 2001, 2002, and 2003.

# Report Highlights

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## *Response Rate:*

- 6,098 questionnaires were completed and returned, resulting in a 49.6 percent response rate from veterans served by the nine Regional Loan Centers nationally.

## *Demographics:*

- Most respondents were men (91.2 percent), and the largest proportion were between the ages of 36 and 45 years (29.2 percent). In 2003, the majority of loans processed were refinanced loans (71.7 percent) rather than original loans (28.3 percent). These percentages are a complete reversal from the workload proportion in 2002 (29.8 percent refinanced their loan and 70.2 percent received an original loan).

## *Background:*

- Most (90.7 percent) felt the information they received was very or somewhat accurate.
- Overall, 76.1 percent of the respondents reported completely or mostly understanding the dollar amount of the loan the VA would guarantee.

## *Modes of Contact:*

- Respondents were asked what methods they used to contact the VA about their loan. Overall, 15.9 percent of veterans reported that they phoned the VA, 21.3 percent contacted the VA via fax, e-mail, or letter, while 7.5 percent visited the VA.

## *Certificate of Eligibility (COE):*

- Overall, 38.4 percent obtained their COE through the mail and 82.8 percent of the respondents felt the amount of time it took to get the COE was very or somewhat reasonable.

## *Realtor:*

- 51.5 percent used the services of a realtor; 87.5 percent reported being very or somewhat satisfied with the realtor.

## Report Highlights (continued)

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### *Lender:*

- 90.4 percent reported being very or somewhat satisfied with the lender.
- When asked how long is reasonable to get a loan approved, 37.0 percent (the largest proportion) of respondents answered less than two weeks.

### *Appraisal:*

- Overall, 47.3 percent reported having an appraisal and 69.4 percent reported being very or somewhat satisfied with the appraisal process.
- 8.7 percent reported problems with the appraiser and 11.3 percent reported problems with the appraisal process.

### *Overall Impressions:*

- Overall, 94.8 percent of veterans reported being somewhat or very satisfied with the VA home loan process. This is a significant improvement over the percent satisfied in 2002 (93.6 percent).

## Results from Quadrant Analysis: Quadrants I and II

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- Quadrant analysis is a useful tool for determining which individual performance areas need improvement in order to raise the overall quality of service. The analysis involves determining the importance of individual performance areas (how meaningful an area is to the veteran) and VA's performance in each area. Generally, items with high importance but relatively low performance deserve immediate attention. (See the Quadrant Analysis section of this report for greater detail of these results.)
- The following items were identified as areas of importance to satisfaction with the VA home loan process on which your office is **performing well** (more than 75.0 percent of veterans indicated satisfaction).

### Strengths: Quadrant II Results

VA employees were very or somewhat courteous during your in-person visit.

Amount of time it took to get your Certificate of Eligibility (COE) was very or somewhat reasonable.

The lender was very or somewhat responsive regarding inquiries about your VA home loan.

Very or somewhat satisfied with your lender.

- The following items were identified as areas of importance to satisfaction with the VA home loan process on which your office **could be performing better** (less than 75.0 percent of veterans indicated satisfaction). In general, while a Regional Loan Center may not be able to improve a given item (such as satisfaction with the lender), other items can be improved, with a resultant improvement in satisfaction.

### Possible Improvements: Quadrant I Results

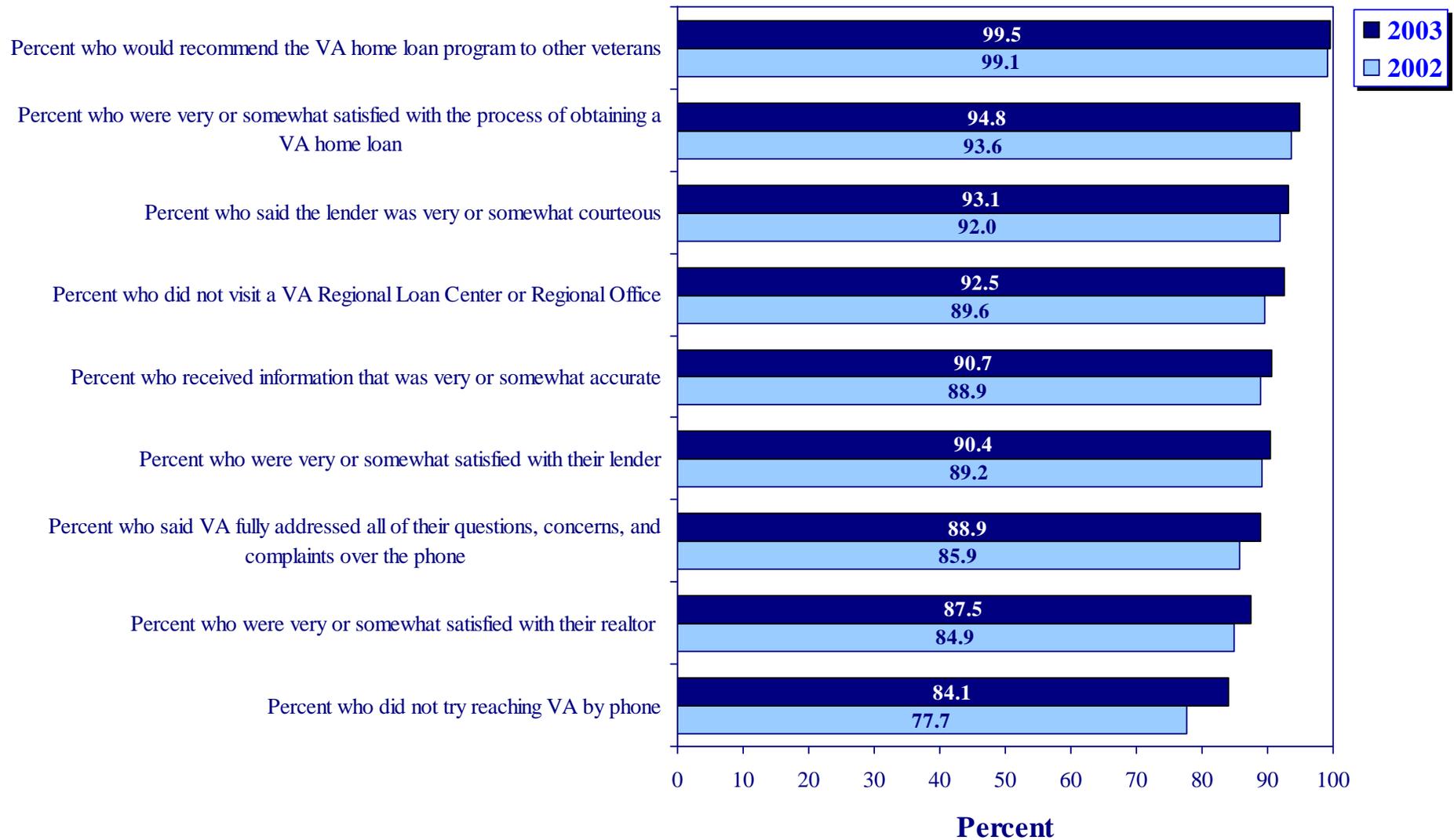
Very or somewhat easy to get through to VA on the phone.

Very or somewhat satisfied with the appraiser.

Very or somewhat satisfied with the appraisal process.

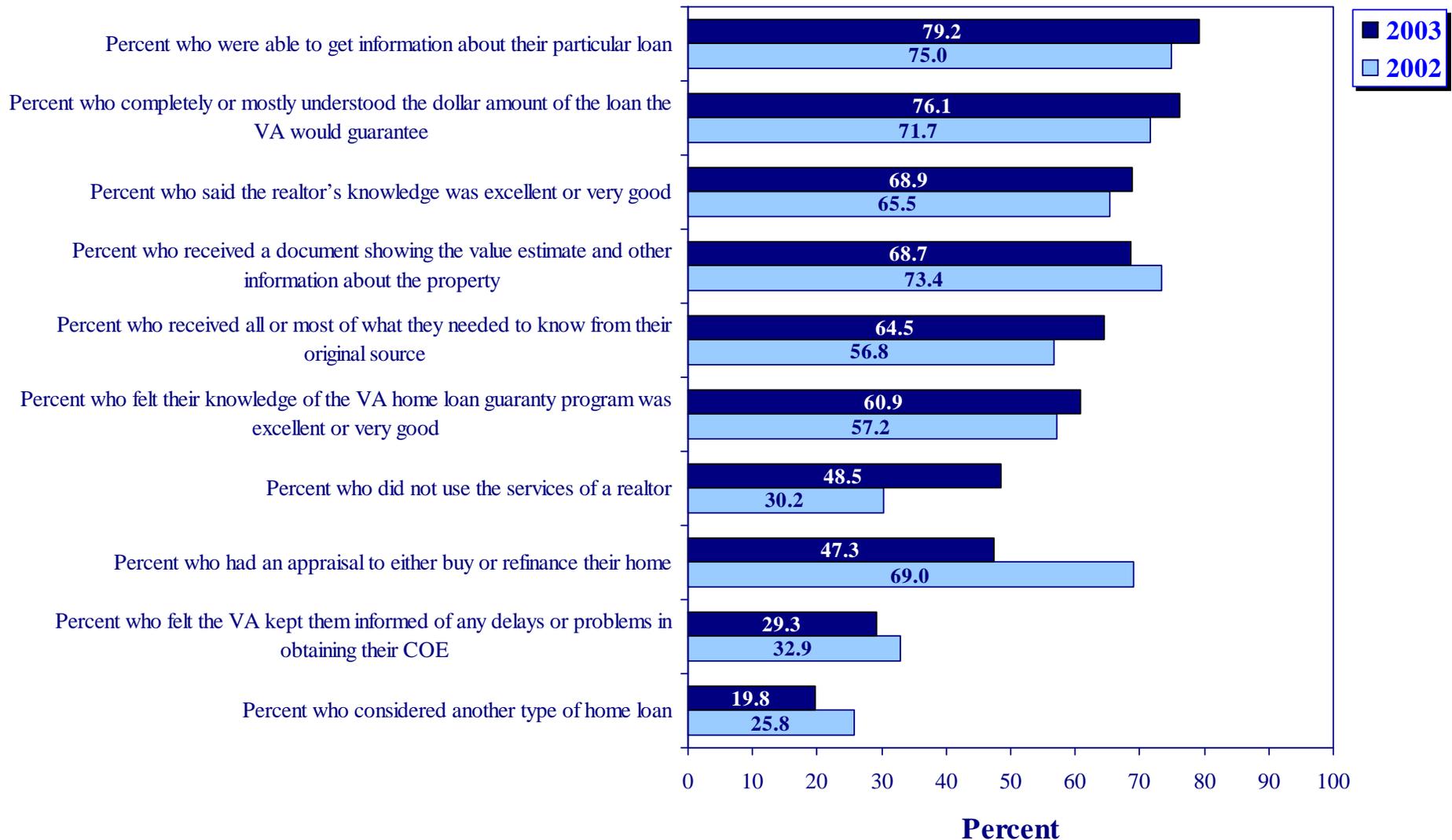
# Significant Results in Trend Analysis: 2002 vs. 2003

- The items shown here reflect true differences in performance over time. If an item does not appear, then performance did not significantly change between the years. Trends on the response rates appear in Appendix B.



# Significant Results in Trend Analysis: 2002 vs. 2003 – continued

- The items shown here reflect true differences in performance over time. If an item does not appear, then performance did not significantly change between the years. Trends on the response rates appear in Appendix B.



# Quadrant Analysis

# Understanding Quadrant Analysis

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- Quadrant analysis is a useful tool for determining which individual performance areas need improvement in order to raise the overall quality of service. The analysis involves determining the importance of individual performance areas (how meaningful an area is to the veteran) and VA's performance in each area. Generally, items with high importance but relatively low performance are those which deserve immediate attention.
- Each of the twenty-seven variables represented in the Quadrant Analysis graph are plotted on the basis of:
  - 1) **Importance:** a variable's correlation with the overall satisfaction with the home loan process; and
  - 2) **Performance:** a variable's top-box percent (the percent of people who answered positively to the question).
- Variable correlations with *overall satisfaction with the home loan process* are used to determine the degree to which variables are related to overall satisfaction. Zero indicates no correlation, and 1 indicates perfect correlation. The closer a variable's correlation (Importance) is to 1, the stronger that variable's relationship is with the overall satisfaction with the process. *Variables that have stronger correlations are considered to have higher importance.*
- Top-box percents represent how well VA is performing within a given area (for example, the percent who indicated that it was very or somewhat easy to get through to VA on the phone). *The higher the percent, the better VA is performing.*
- The quadrant analysis graph is divided into four quadrants (sections) based on the following combinations of the plotted location of a variable:
  - Quadrant I: Critical Improvement Areas (high importance, low performance)**
  - Quadrant II: Maintain Relationship Building Variables (high importance, high performance)**
  - Quadrant III: Lower Return on High Performance (low importance, high performance)**
  - Quadrant IV: Lower Return on Investment (low importance, low performance)**
- The horizontal line in the plot represents importance and is placed at .40, which indicates relatively high correlation and, thus, relatively high importance. The vertical line represents performance and is placed at 75 percent. The quadrant lines can be moved up or down, left or right, to include more or fewer items in each quadrant. The plotted numbers within each section of the quadrant analysis graph correspond with the performance items listed on the following three pages.
- **To help interpret the graph that appears on page 18, see the Executive Summary (page 10) for a list of items that fell into Quadrants I and II.**
- It should be noted that quadrant analysis is only a typology used to determine where an organization might begin to improve service. Continuous improvement in all areas, given available resources, should be the ultimate goal.

# Questions Used in Quadrant Analysis

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## Quadrant Questions

### Background Information

- **Q2** Got all or most of what you needed to know from your original source.
- **Q3** Information you received was very or somewhat accurate.
- **Q4** Completely or mostly understood the dollar amount of the loan the VA would guarantee.

### Phone Contact with VA

- **Q7** Very or somewhat easy to get through to VA on the phone.
- **Q10** VA employees were very or somewhat courteous on the phone.
- **Q11** VA fully addressed all your questions, concerns, or complaints on the phone.
- **Q12** Got all or most of needed information from telephone contact with VA.
- **Q13** Got information about particular loan.

### Visiting a VA RLC or RO

- **Q17** Location of the VA Regional Loan Center was very or somewhat convenient.
- **Q18** VA employees were very or somewhat courteous during your in-person visit.
- **Q19** VA employees fully addressed all your questions, concerns, or complaints during your visit.
- **Q20** Got all or most of needed information from in-person visit to VA office.

# Questions Used in Quadrant Analysis (continued)

## Quadrant Questions

### Certificate of Eligibility

- **Q24** Amount of time it took to get your Certificate of Eligibility (COE) was very or somewhat reasonable.
- **Q25** VA kept you informed of any delays or problems in obtaining your Certificate of Eligibility (COE).

### Realtor

- **Q27** The realtor was very or somewhat courteous.
- **Q28** The realtor's KNOWLEDGE about the VA home loan guaranty program was excellent or very good.
- **Q29** The realtor was very or somewhat responsive regarding inquiries about your VA home loan.
- **Q30** Very or somewhat satisfied with your realtor.

### Lender

- **Q31** The lender was very or somewhat courteous.
- **Q32** The lender's KNOWLEDGE about the VA home loan guaranty program was excellent or very good.
- **Q33** The lender was very or somewhat responsive regarding inquiries about your VA home loan.
- **Q34** Information about the VA home loan guaranty program from your lender was very or somewhat easy to get.
- **Q35** The lender informed you of any delays or problems with your loan.
- **Q38** Very or somewhat satisfied with your lender.

# Questions Used in Quadrant Analysis (continued)

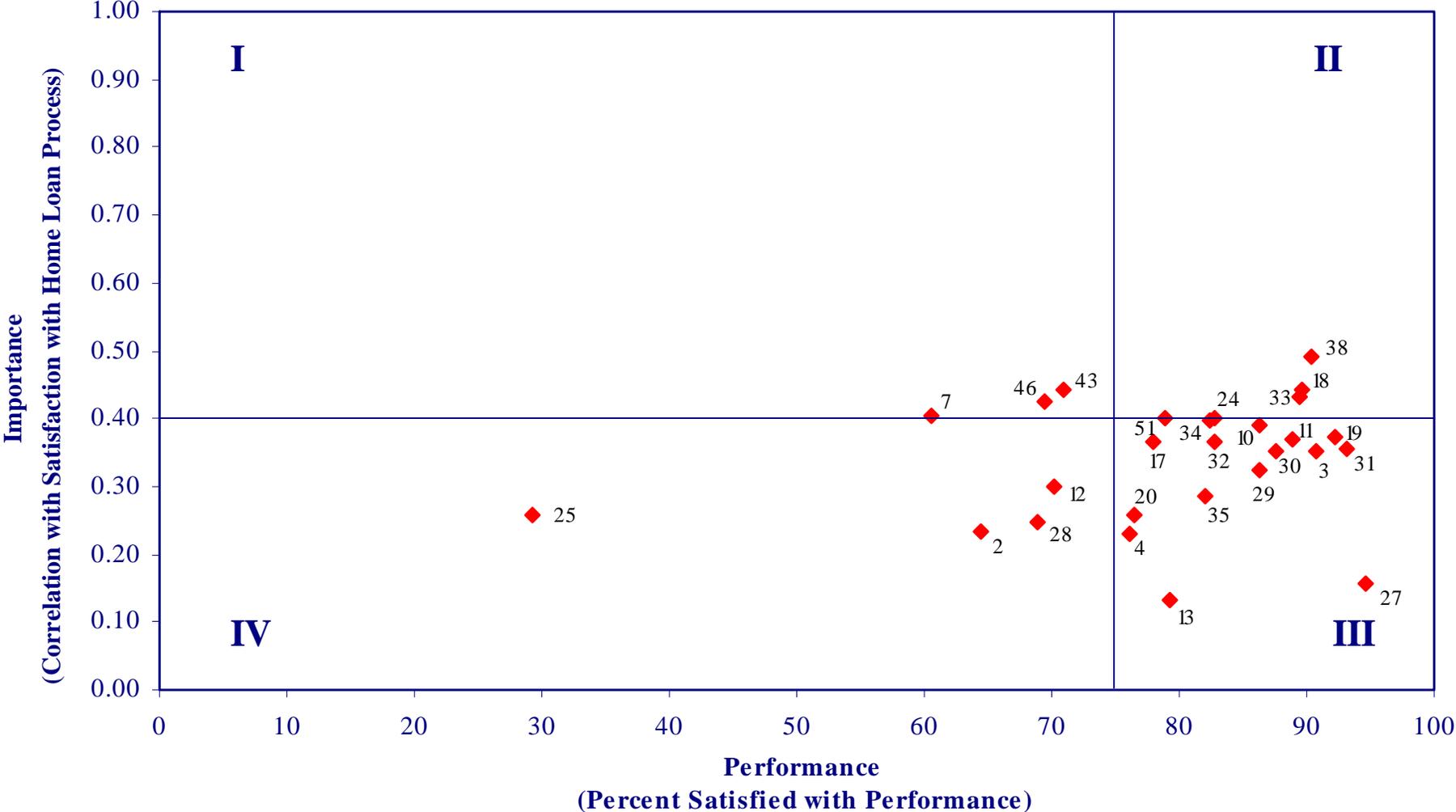
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## Quadrant Questions

### Appraisal

- **Q43** Very or somewhat satisfied with the appraiser.
- **Q46** Very or somewhat satisfied with the appraisal process.
- **Q51** Very or somewhat satisfied with the appraised value of your property.

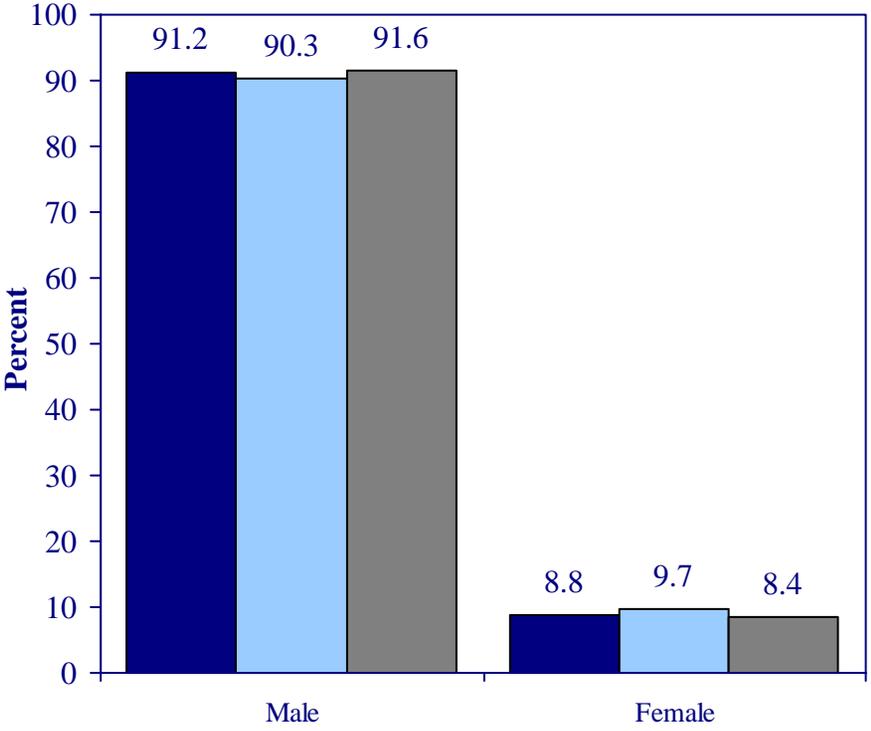
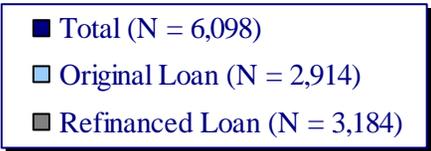
# Quadrant Analysis for 2003



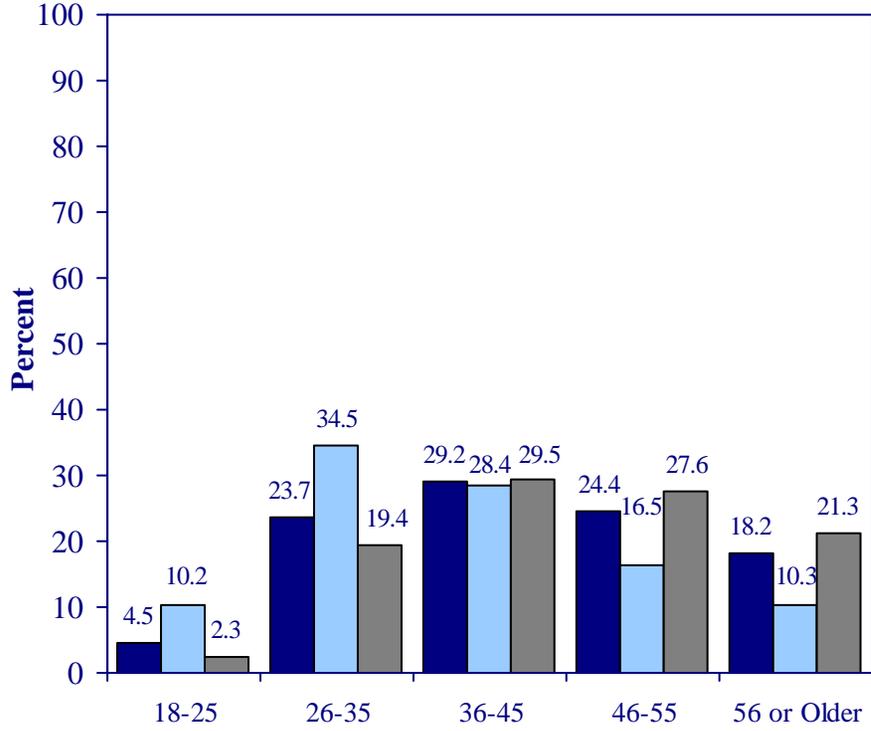
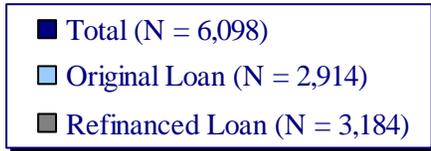
## **Respondent Characteristics**

# Respondent Profiles by Gender and Age

## Gender Distribution

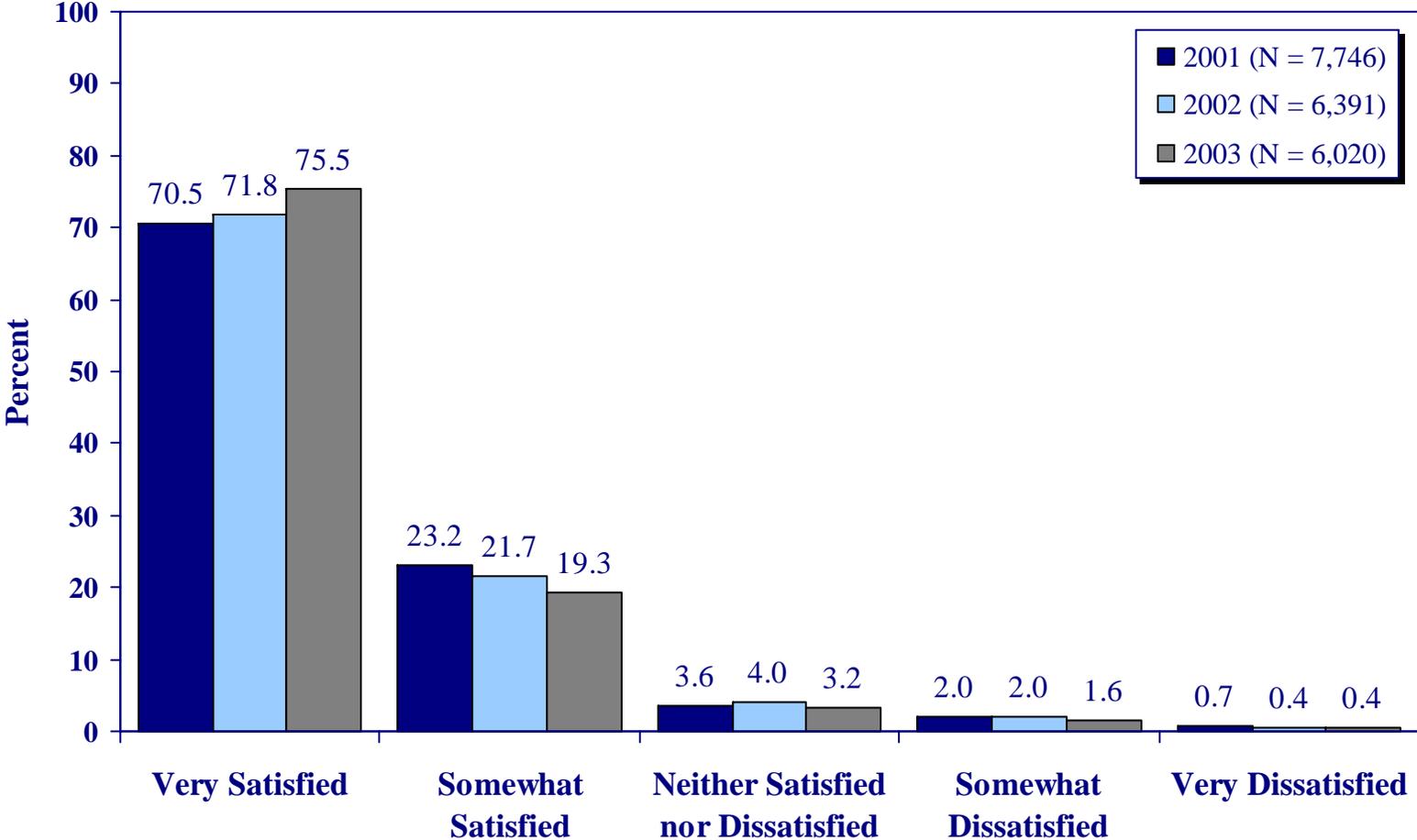


## Age Distribution

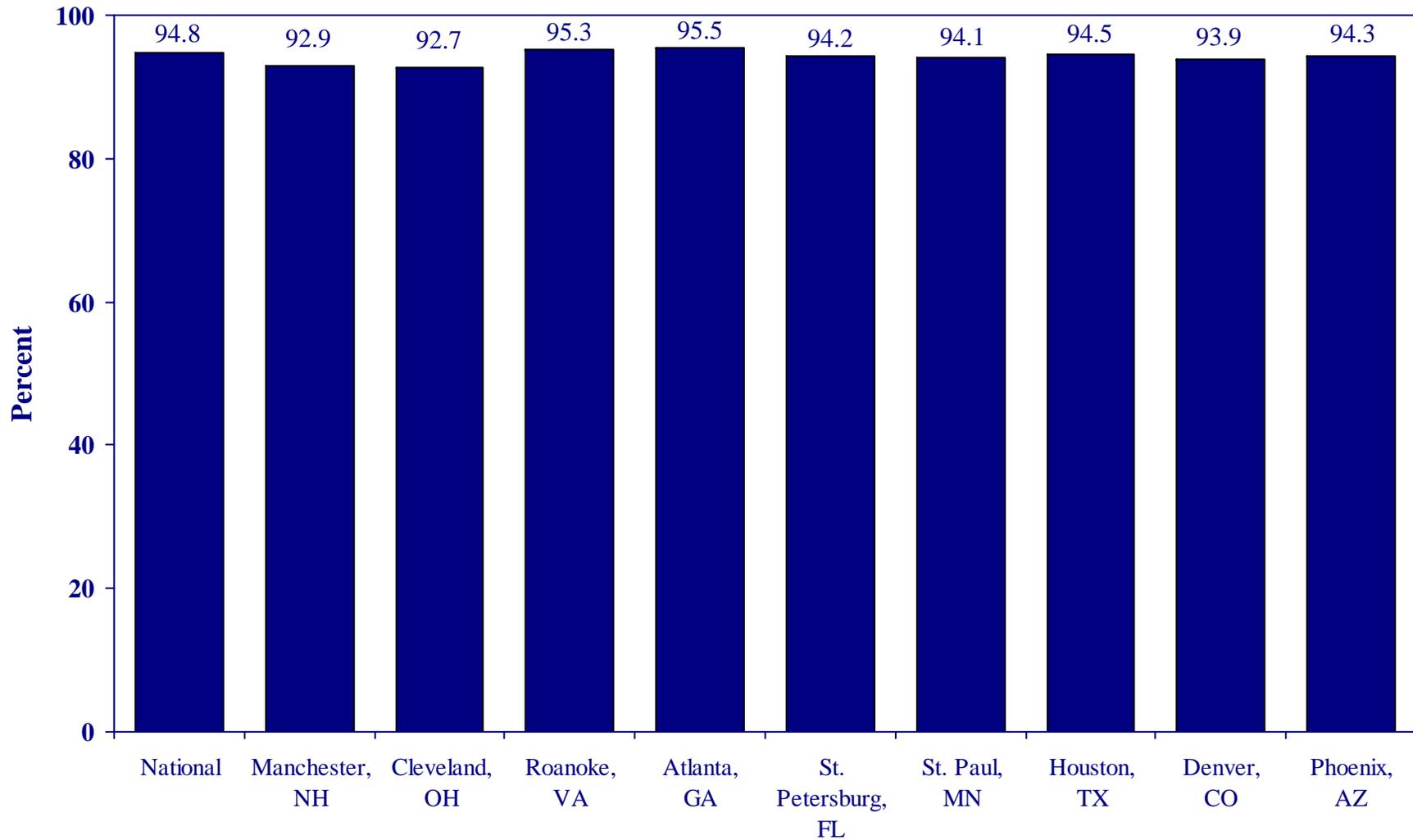


**Overall Satisfaction  
with VA Home Loan Process**

# Overall Satisfaction with the VA Home Loan Process



## Percent Very or Somewhat Satisfied with the VA Home Loan Process by RLC



# Understanding Double Bar Charts

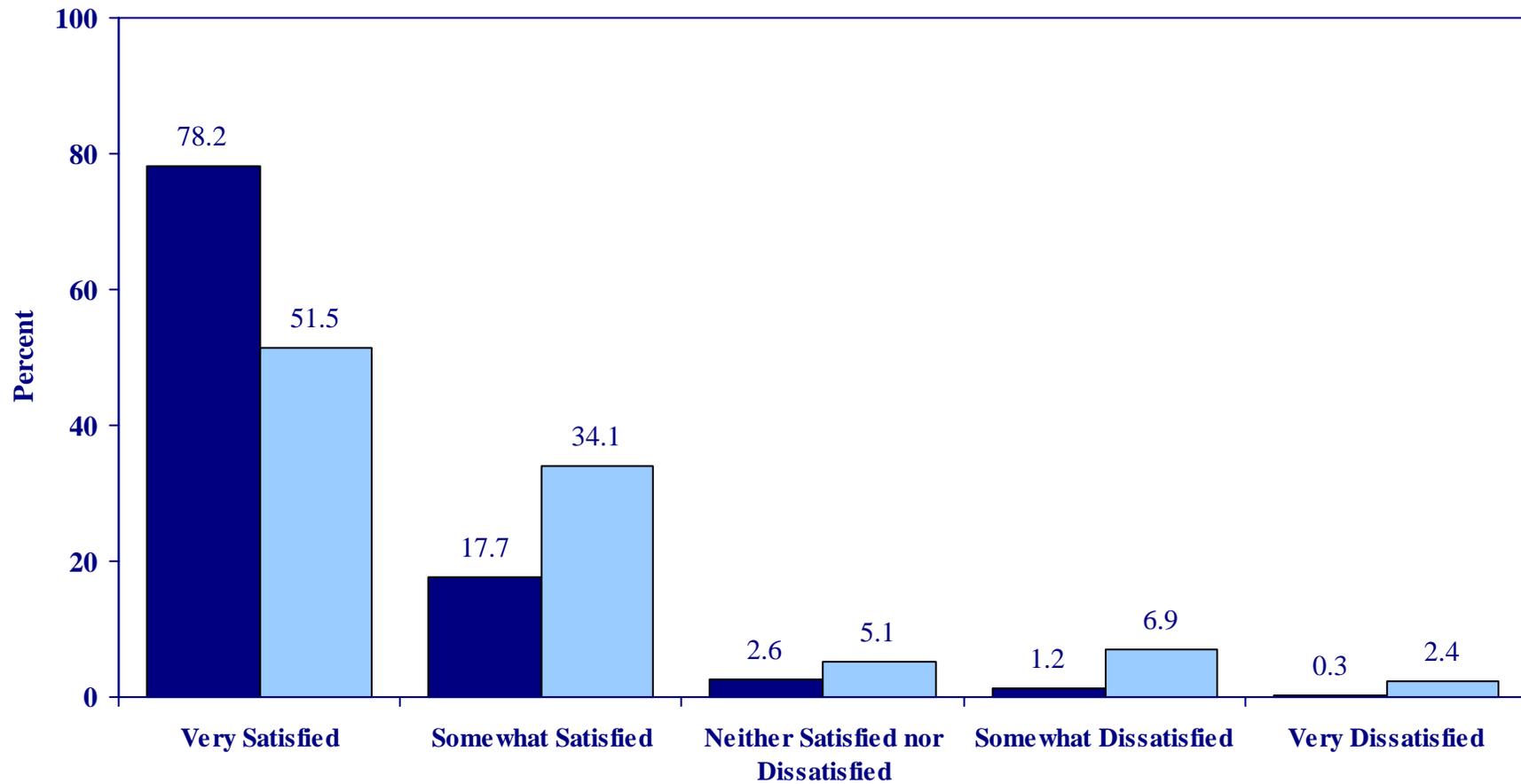
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- The following charts show the effect of key veteran experiences to the overall satisfaction with the VA Home Loan Guaranty process. These key experiences include the following:
  - Satisfaction with realtor
  - Satisfaction with realtor's knowledge
  - Satisfaction with realtor's responsiveness
  - Satisfaction with lender
  - Satisfaction with lender's knowledge
  - Satisfaction with lender's responsiveness
  - Amount of time taken to receive loan
  - Satisfaction with the appraiser
  - Satisfaction with the appraisal process
  - Appraised value of property
- On each of the following charts, different distributions for the overall satisfaction with the home loan guaranty process are displayed along the horizontal axis. The darkest shaded bars represent the overall satisfaction distribution for those veterans who were satisfied with the specific key experience. The lightest shaded bars represent the overall satisfaction distribution for those veterans who were dissatisfied with the specific key experience.
- The last two charts show the effects of problems with the appraiser and problems with the appraisal process on the satisfaction with the appraised value of the property.

# Overall Satisfaction with Home Loan Process by Key Experiences

## Overall Satisfaction by Satisfaction with Realtor

■ Very or Somewhat Satisfied with Realtor (N = 3,057)  
■ Very or Somewhat Dissatisfied with Realtor (N = 188)

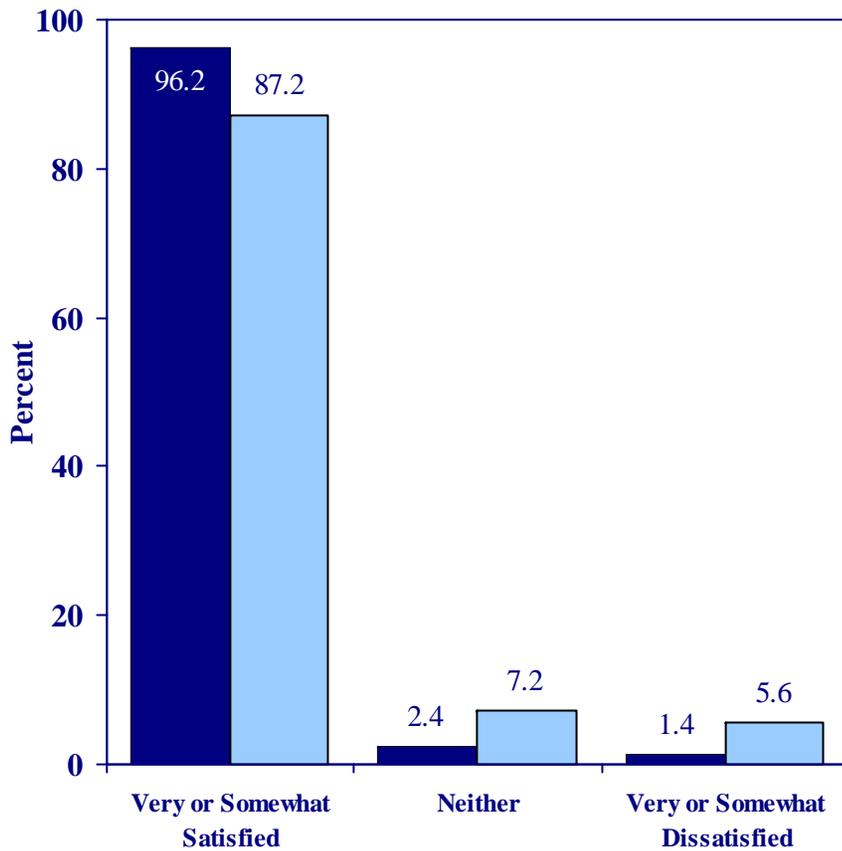


## Overall Satisfaction with Home Loan Process

# Overall Satisfaction with Home Loan Process by Key Experiences

**Overall Satisfaction by Realtor's Knowledge about the VA Home Loan Guaranty Program**

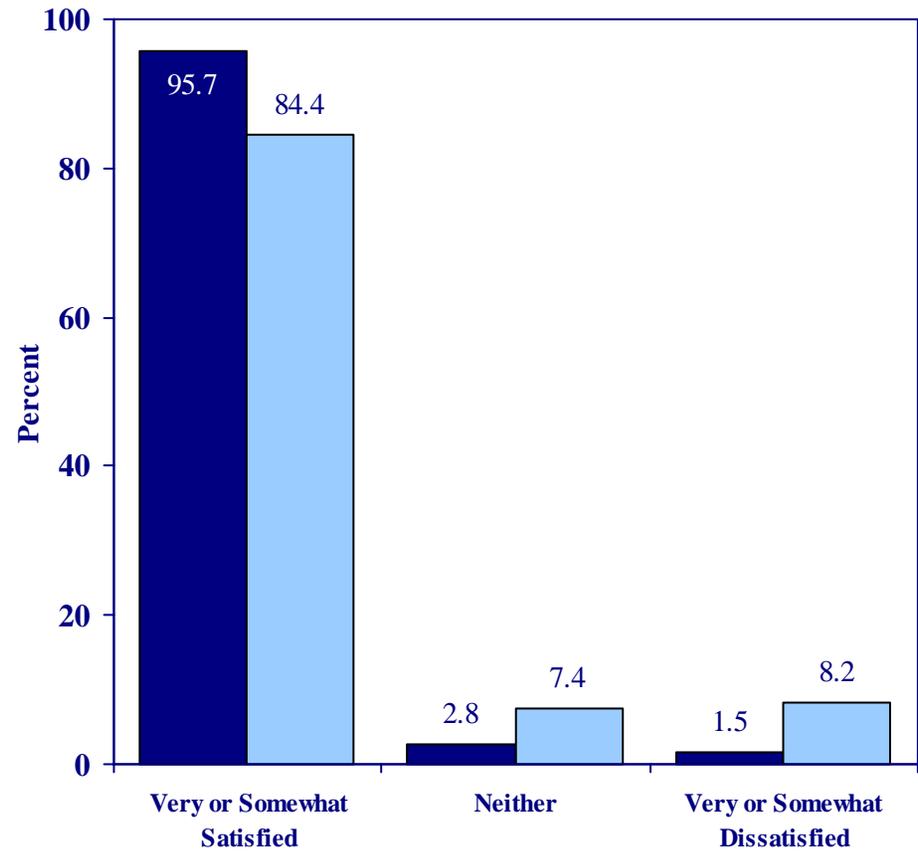
Excellent or Very Good Knowledge (N = 2,316)  
 Fair or Poor Knowledge (N = 584)



Overall Satisfaction

**Overall Satisfaction by Realtor's Responsiveness Regarding Inquiries**

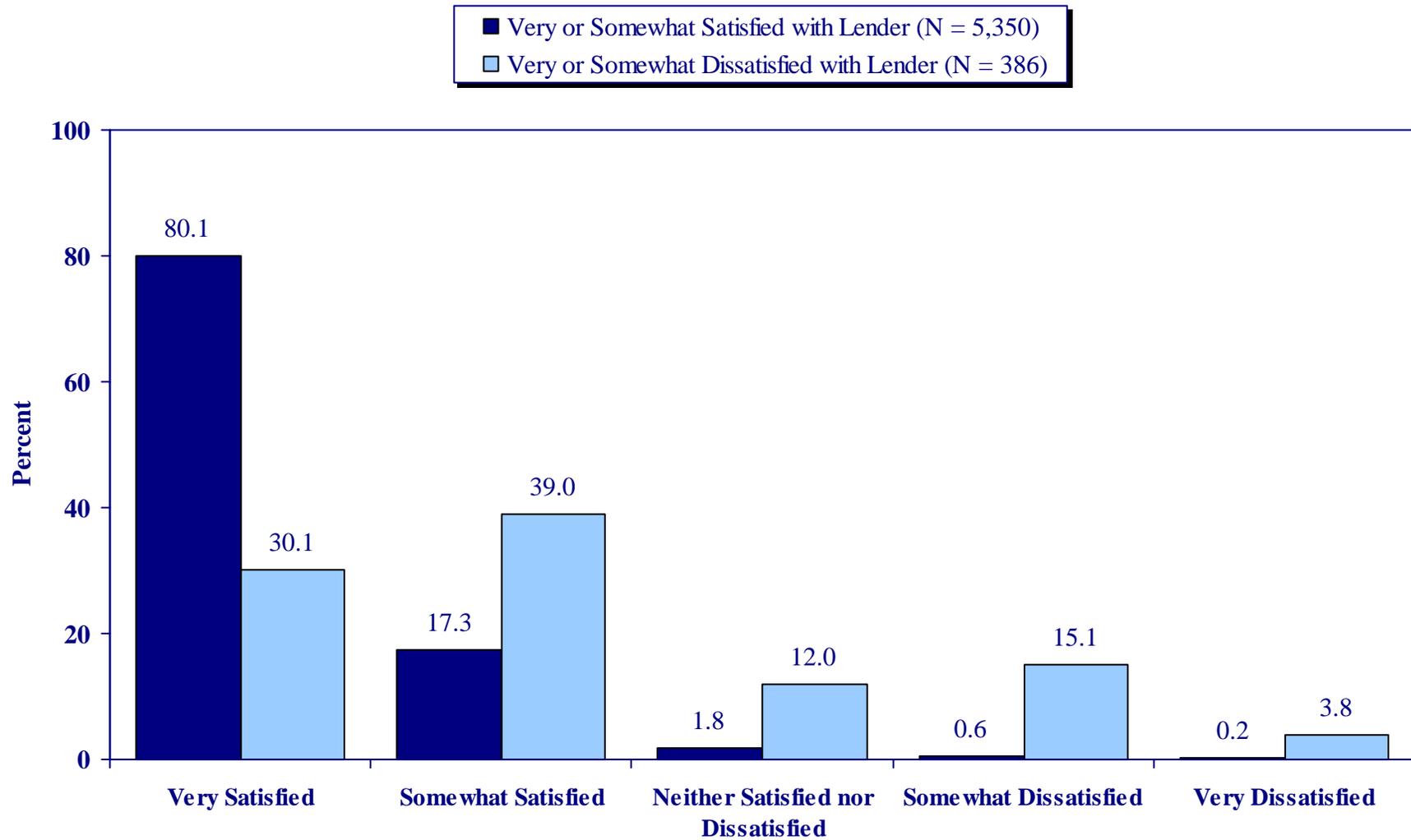
Very or Somewhat Responsive (N = 2,747)  
 Very or Somewhat Unresponsive (N = 181)



Overall Satisfaction

# Overall Satisfaction with Home Loan Process by Key Experiences

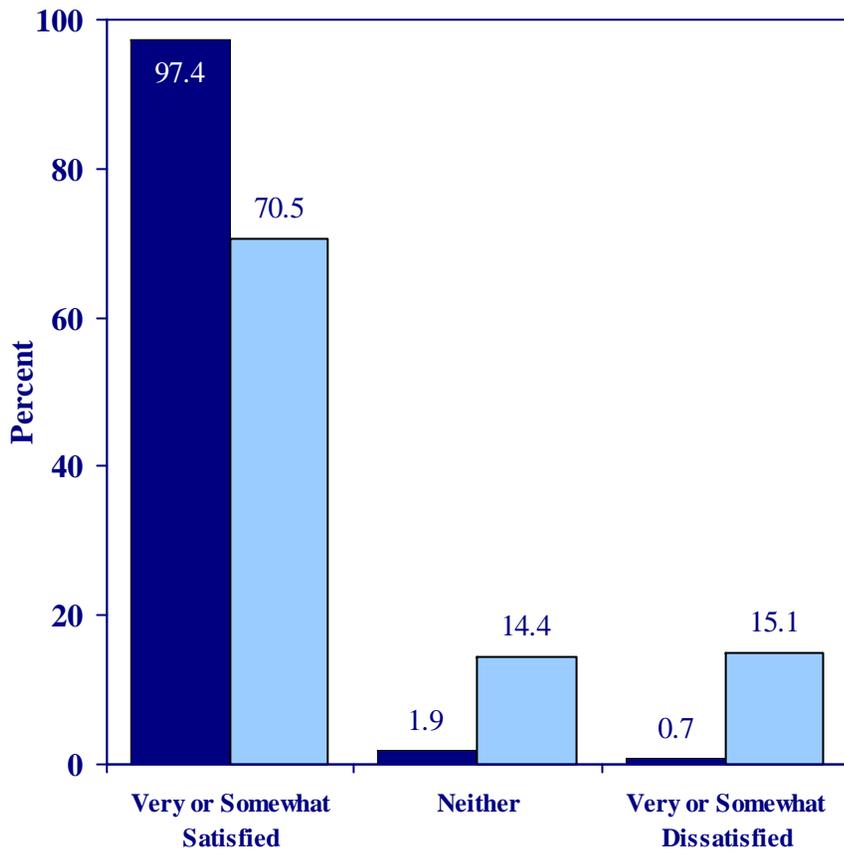
## Overall Satisfaction by Satisfaction with Lender



## Overall Satisfaction with Home Loan Process

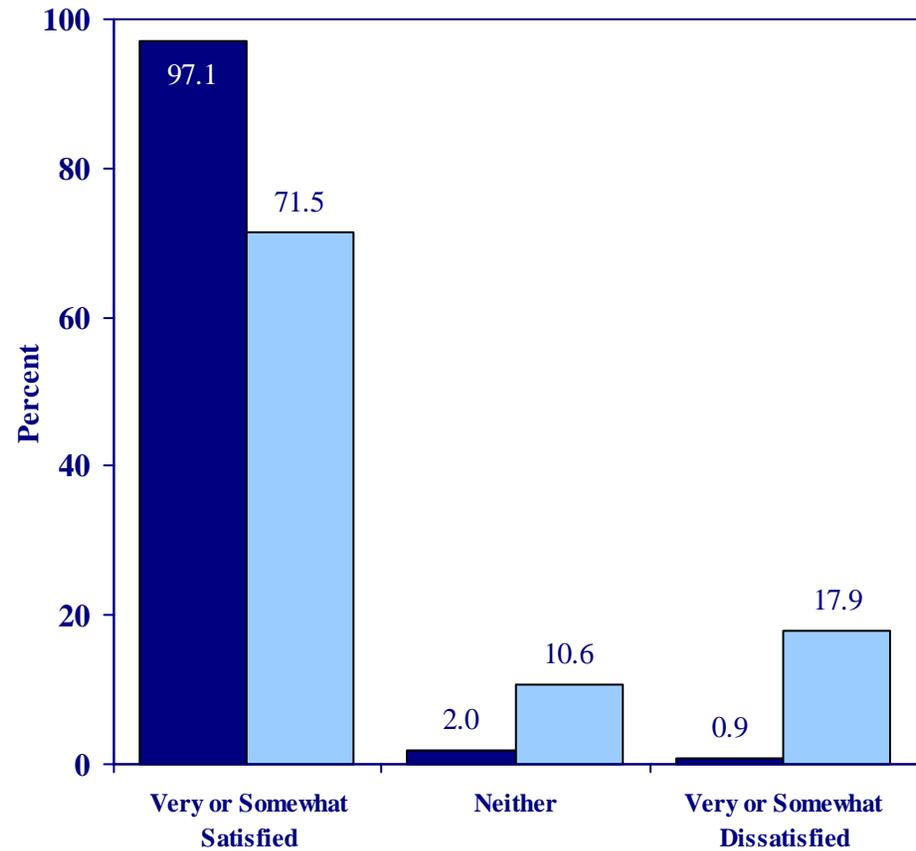
# Overall Satisfaction with Home Loan Process by Key Experiences

**Overall Satisfaction by Lender's Knowledge about the VA Home Loan Guaranty Program**



**Overall Satisfaction**

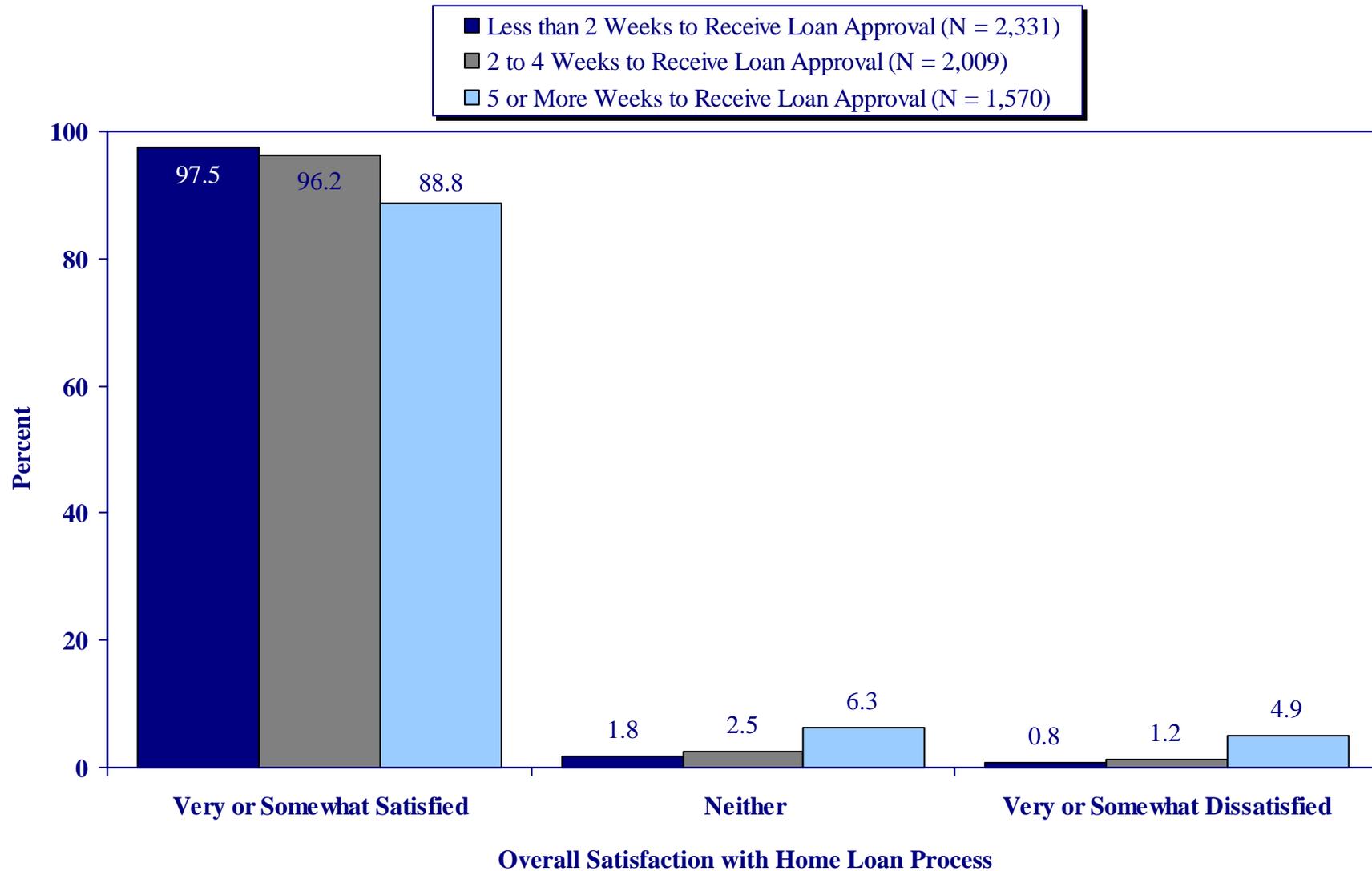
**Overall Satisfaction by Lender's Responsiveness Regarding Inquiries**



**Overall Satisfaction**

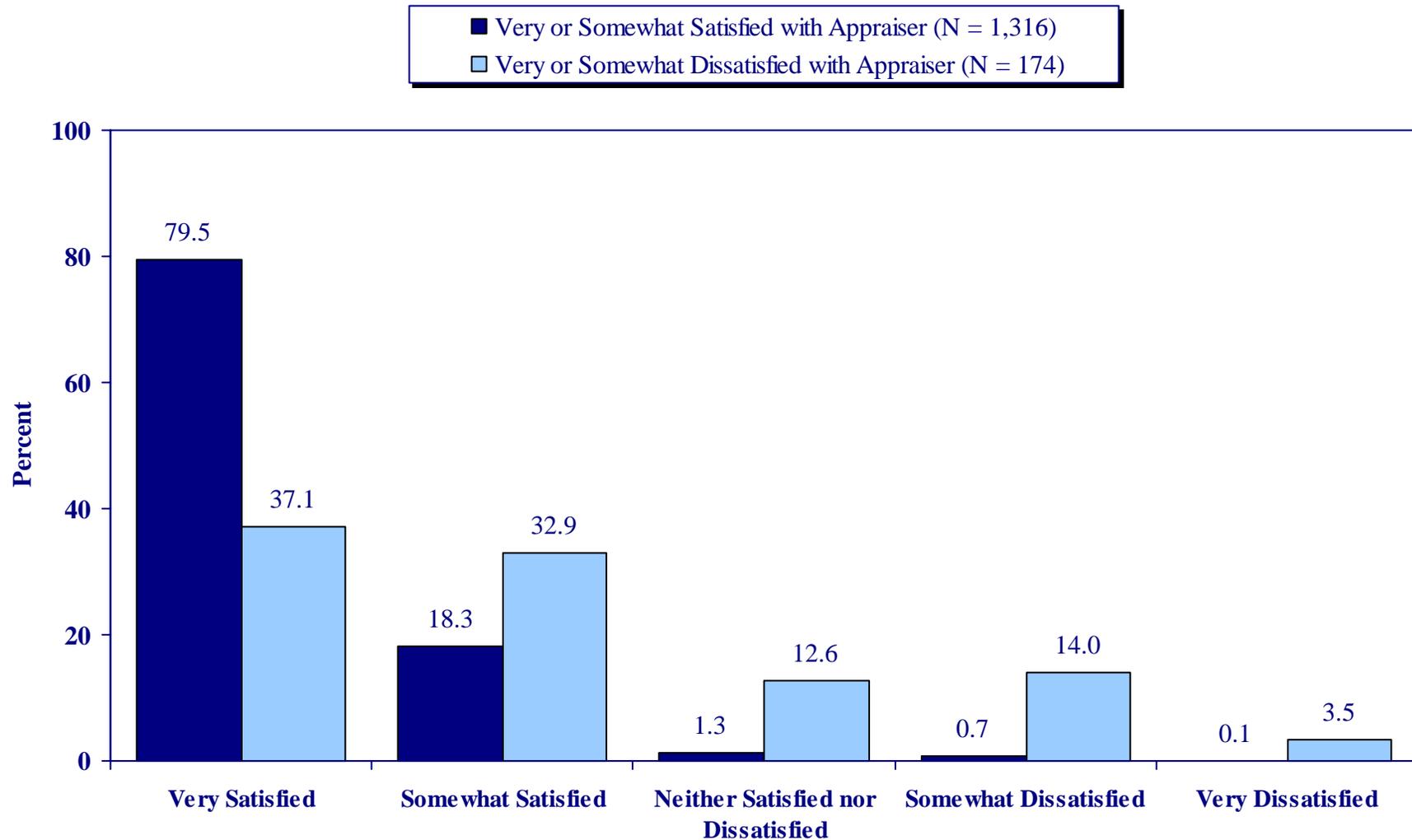
# Overall Satisfaction with Home Loan Process by Key Experiences

## Overall Satisfaction by Time Taken to Receive Loan Approval



# Overall Satisfaction with Home Loan Process by Key Experiences

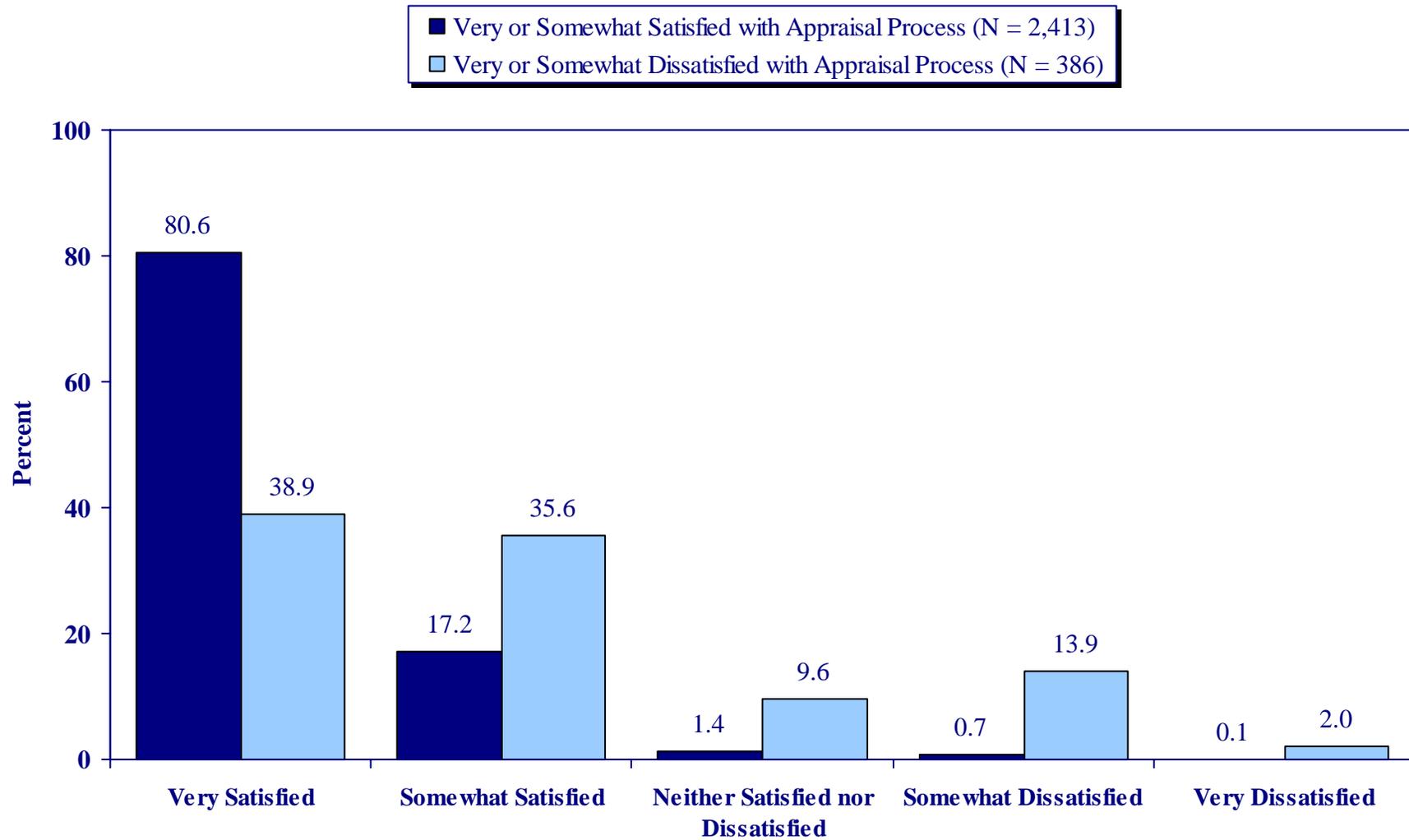
## Overall Satisfaction by Satisfaction with the Appraiser



## Overall Satisfaction with Home Loan Process

# Overall Satisfaction with Home Loan Process by Key Experiences

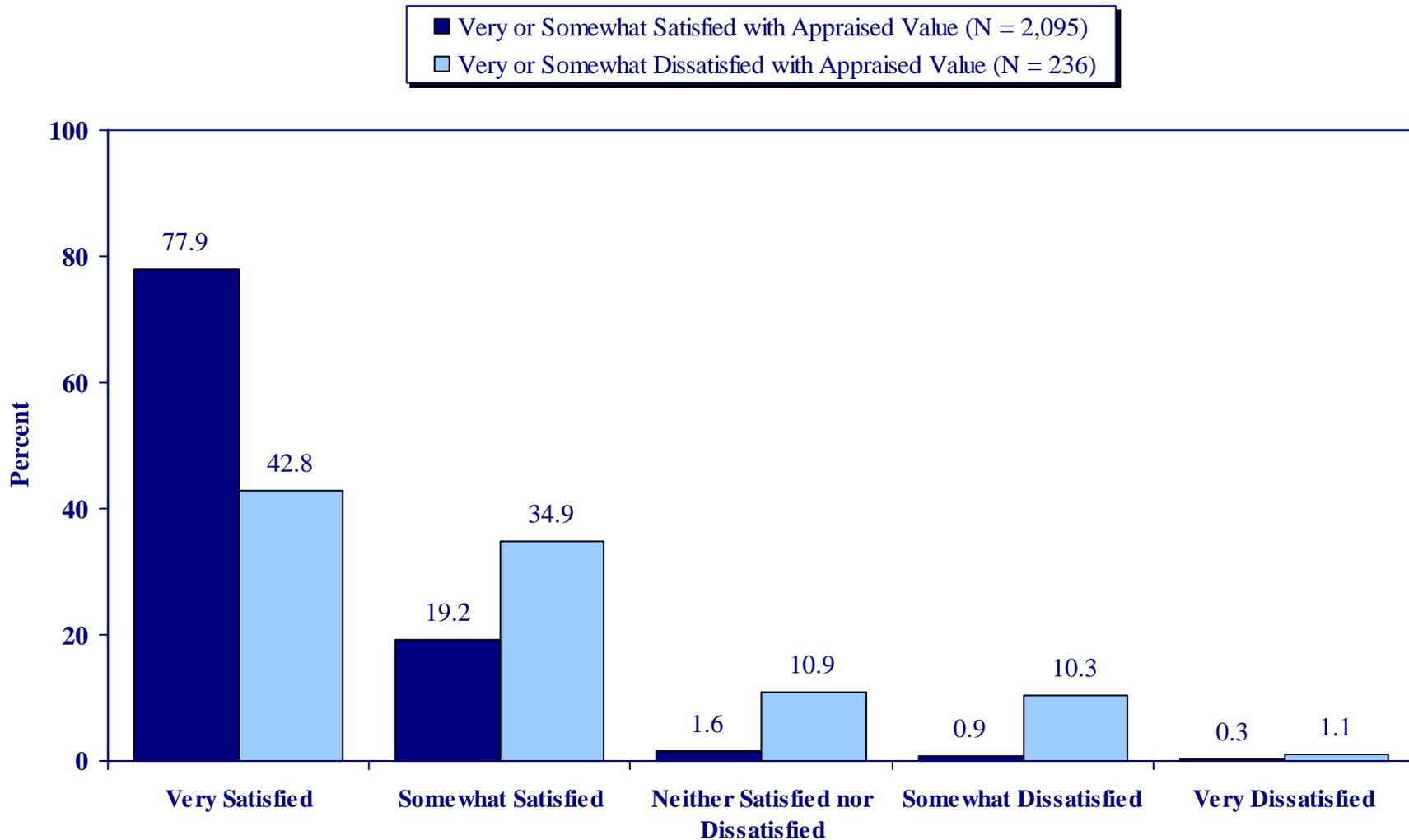
## Overall Satisfaction by Satisfaction with the Appraisal Process



## Overall Satisfaction with Home Loan Process

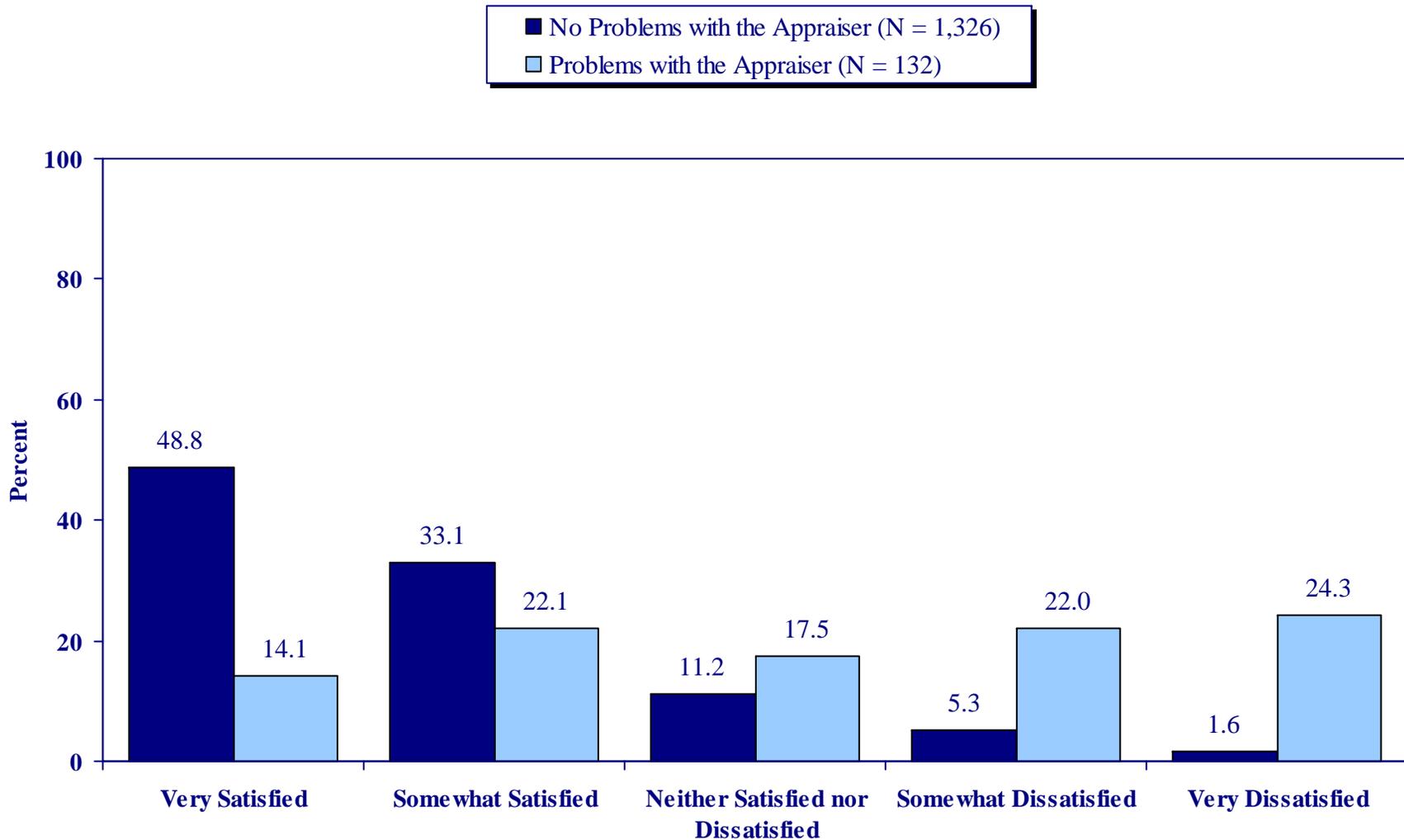
# Overall Satisfaction with Home Loan Process by Key Experiences

## Overall Satisfaction by Satisfaction with the Appraised Value of the Property



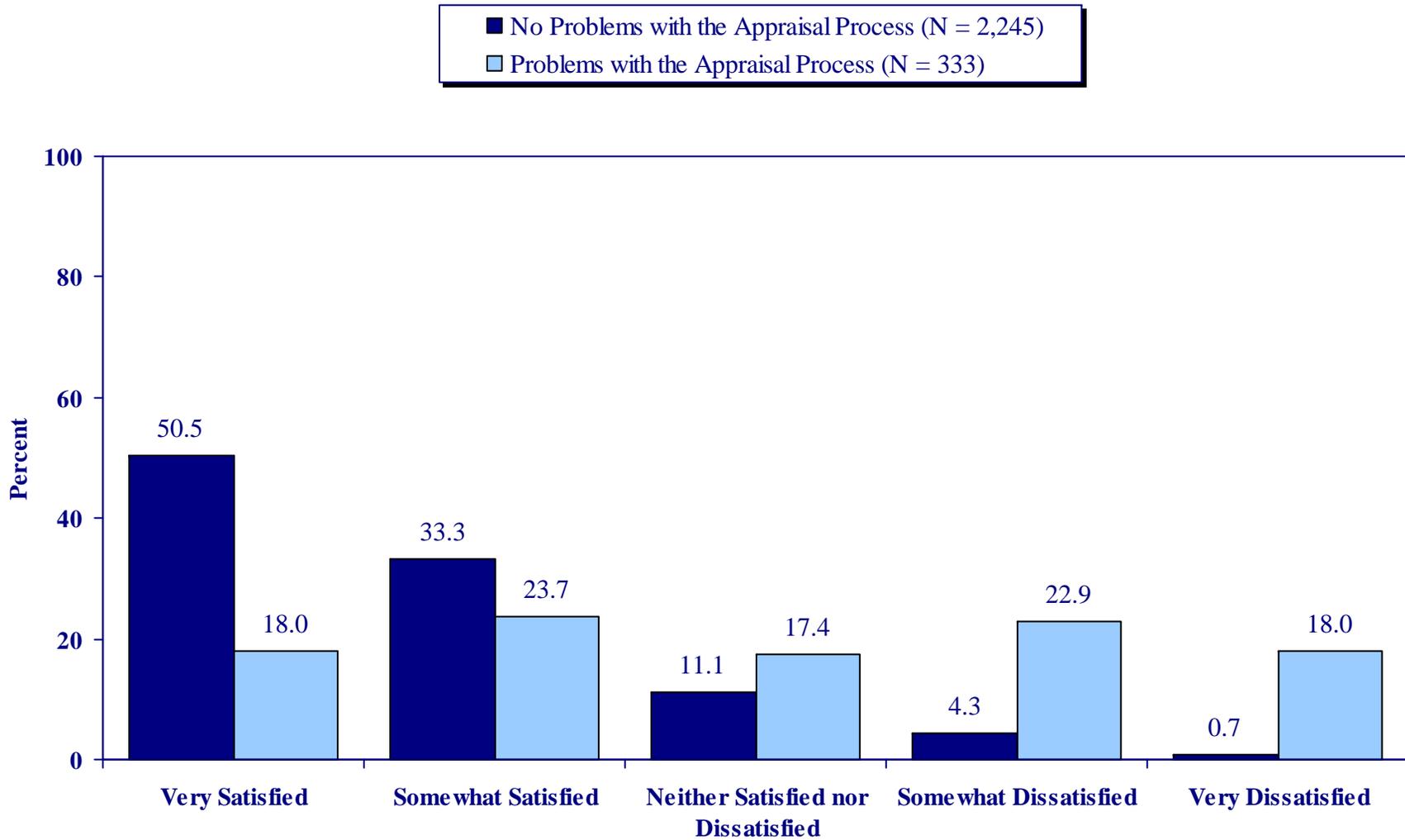
### Overall Satisfaction with Home Loan Process

# Satisfaction with the Appraised Value of Property by Problems with the Appraiser



Overall Satisfaction with the Appraised Value of the Property

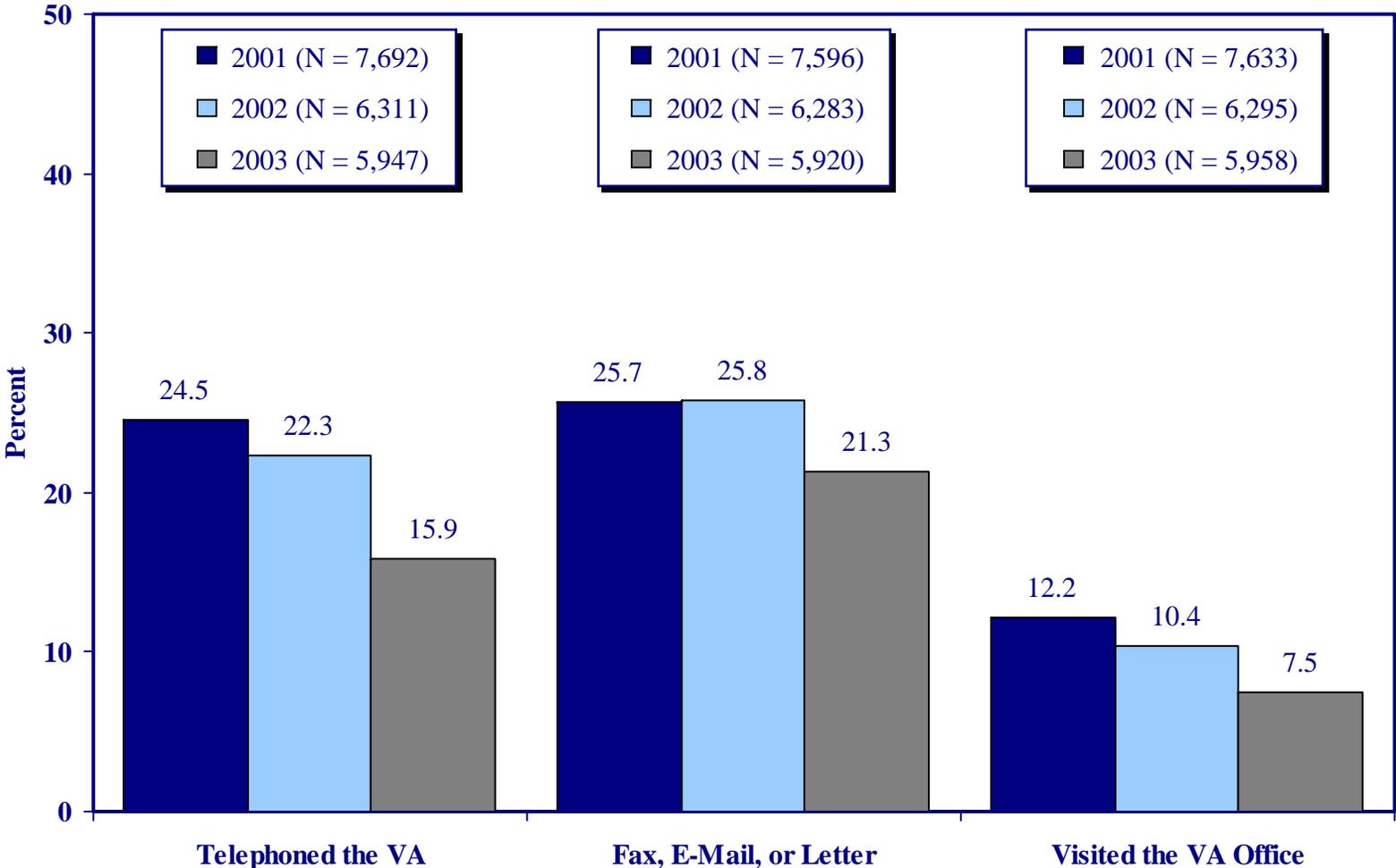
# Satisfaction with the Appraised Value of Property by Problems with the Appraisal Process



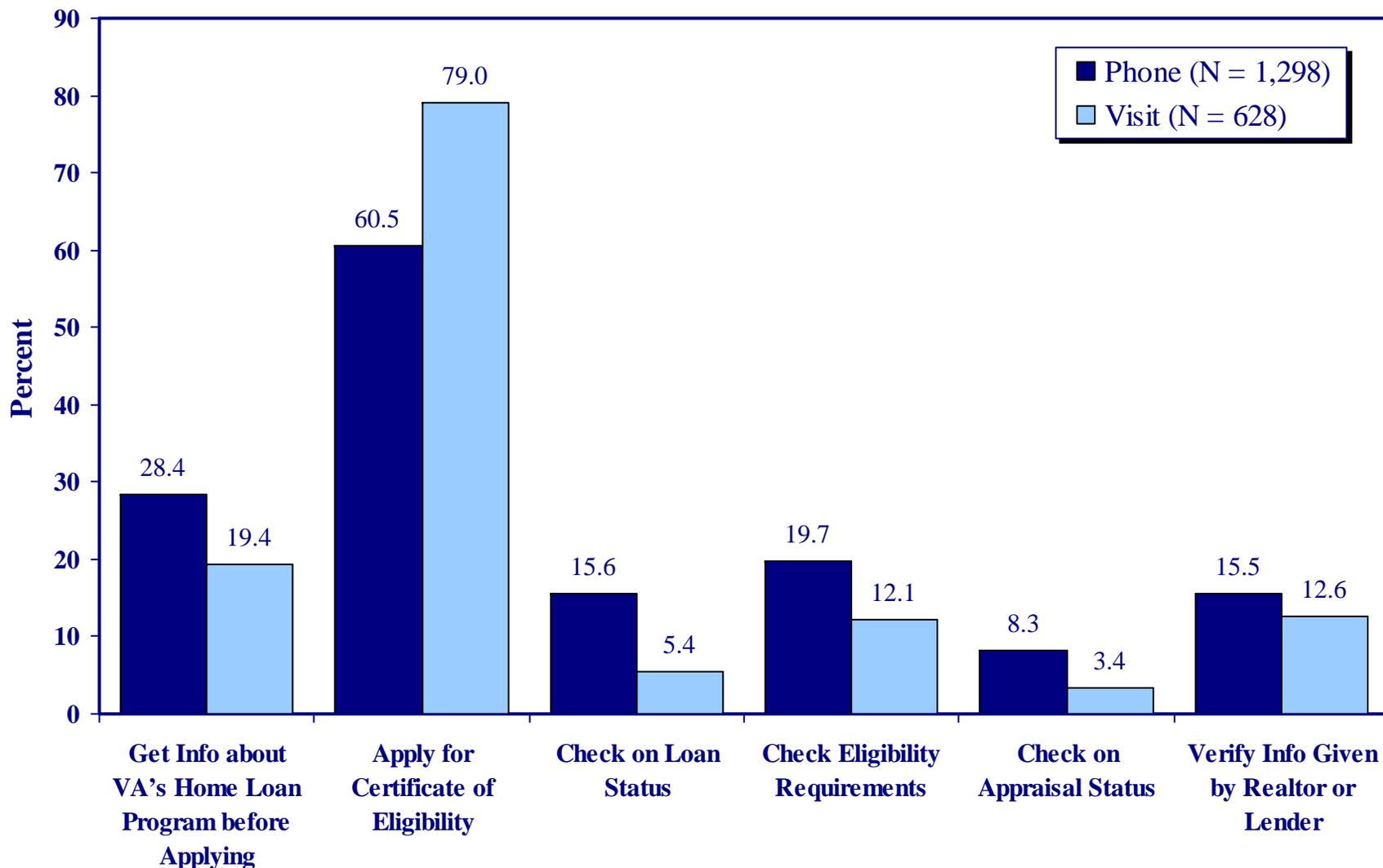
Overall Satisfaction with the Appraised Value of the Property

**Contact with VA**

# Contacts with VA

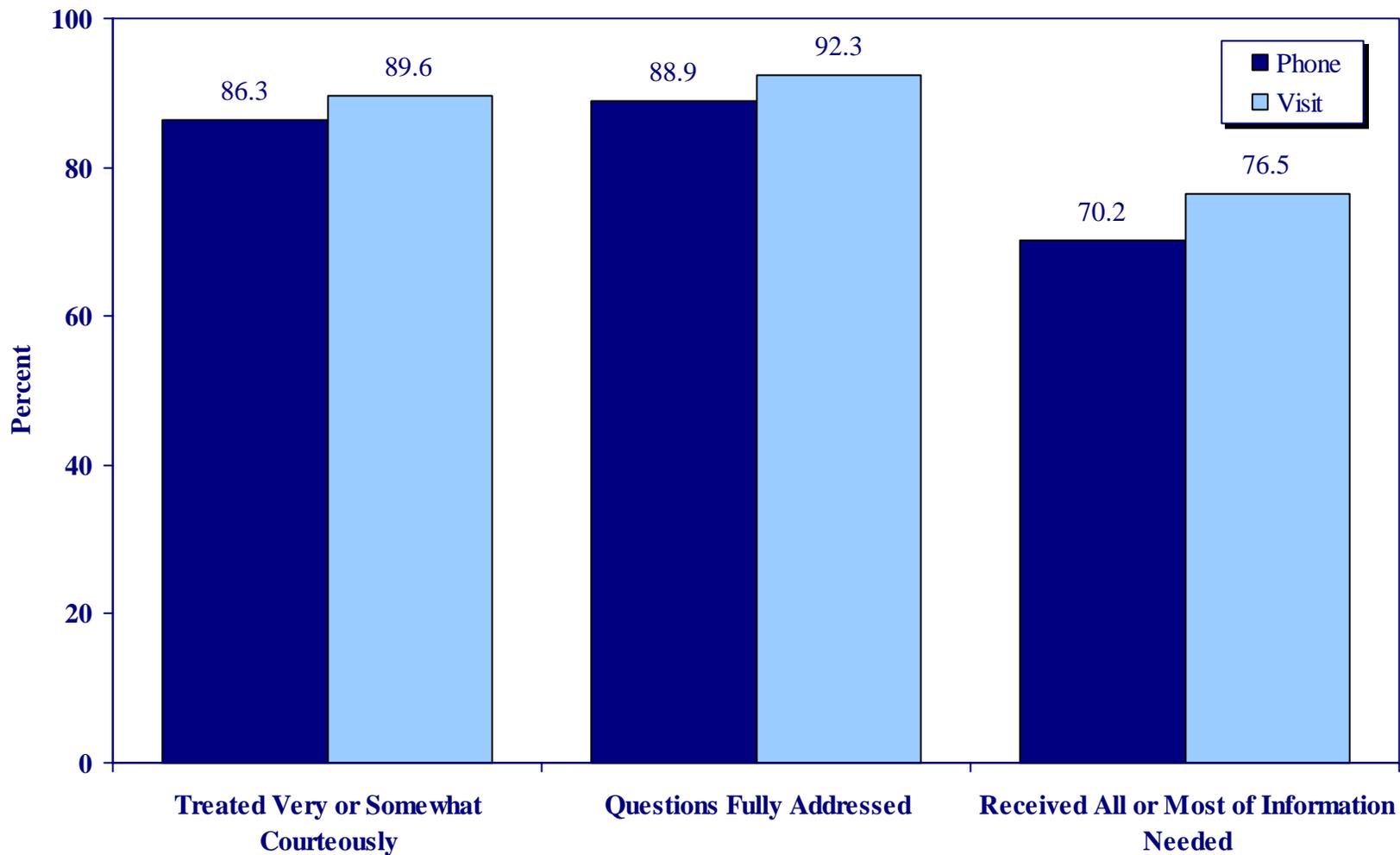


# Reason for Contacting VA



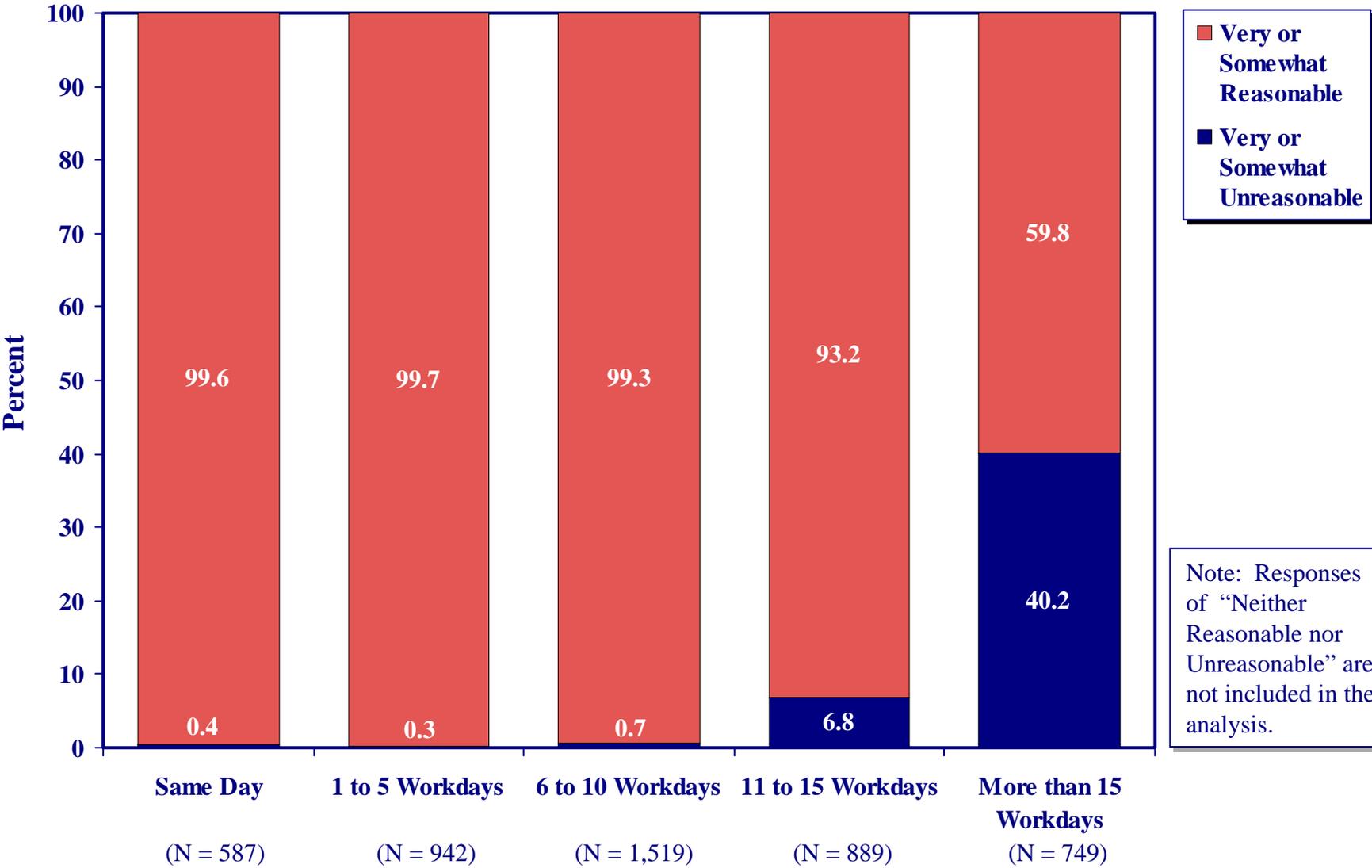
Note: As a respondent could give more than one reason, the percentages do not add to 100.

# Selected Satisfaction Issues Regarding Contact with the VA

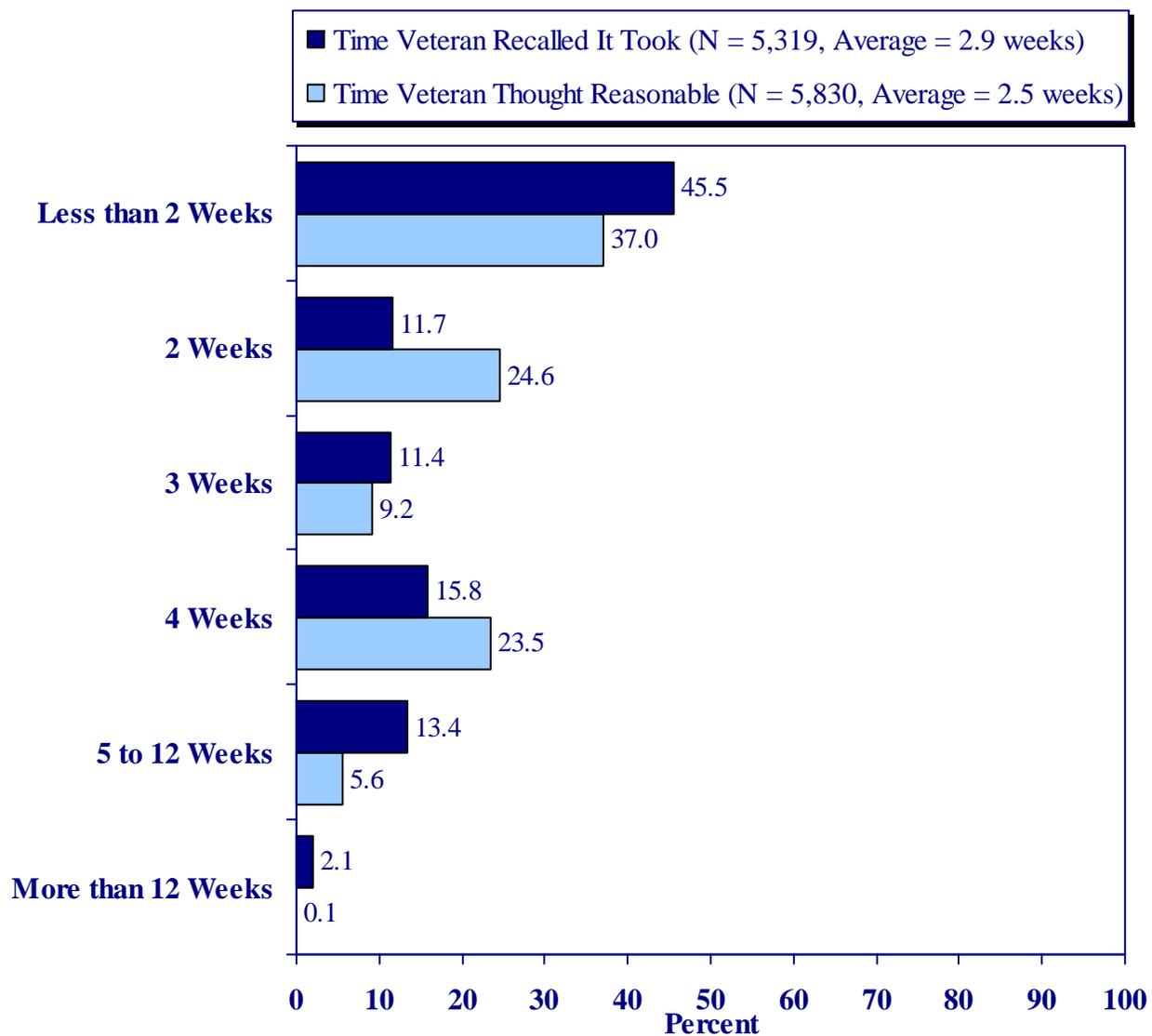


**Timeliness, Responsiveness,  
and Knowledge**

# Reasonableness of Time to Get Certificate of Eligibility (COE)

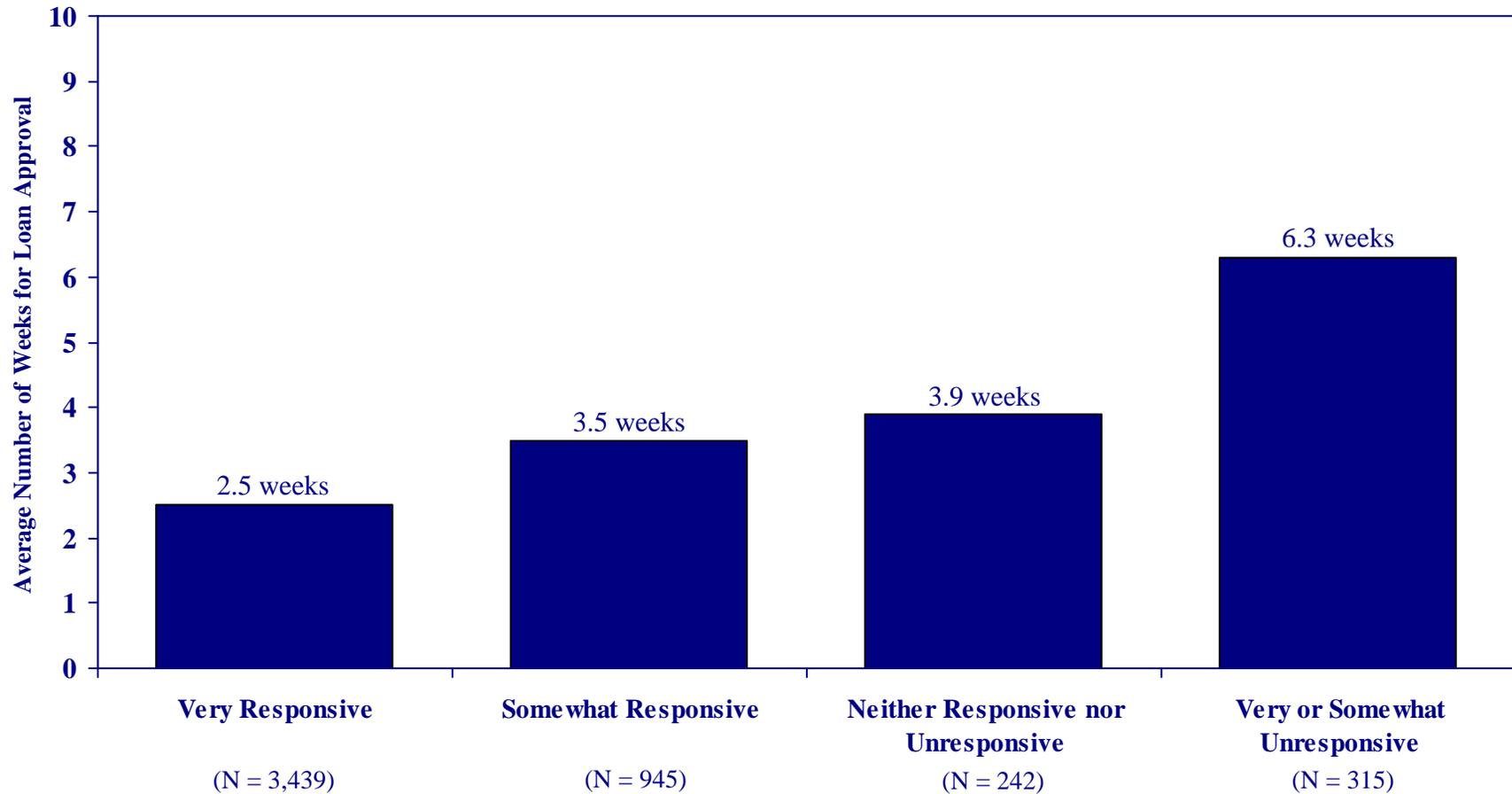


# Time Taken to Get Loan Approval



# Lender's Responsiveness by Time for Loan Approval

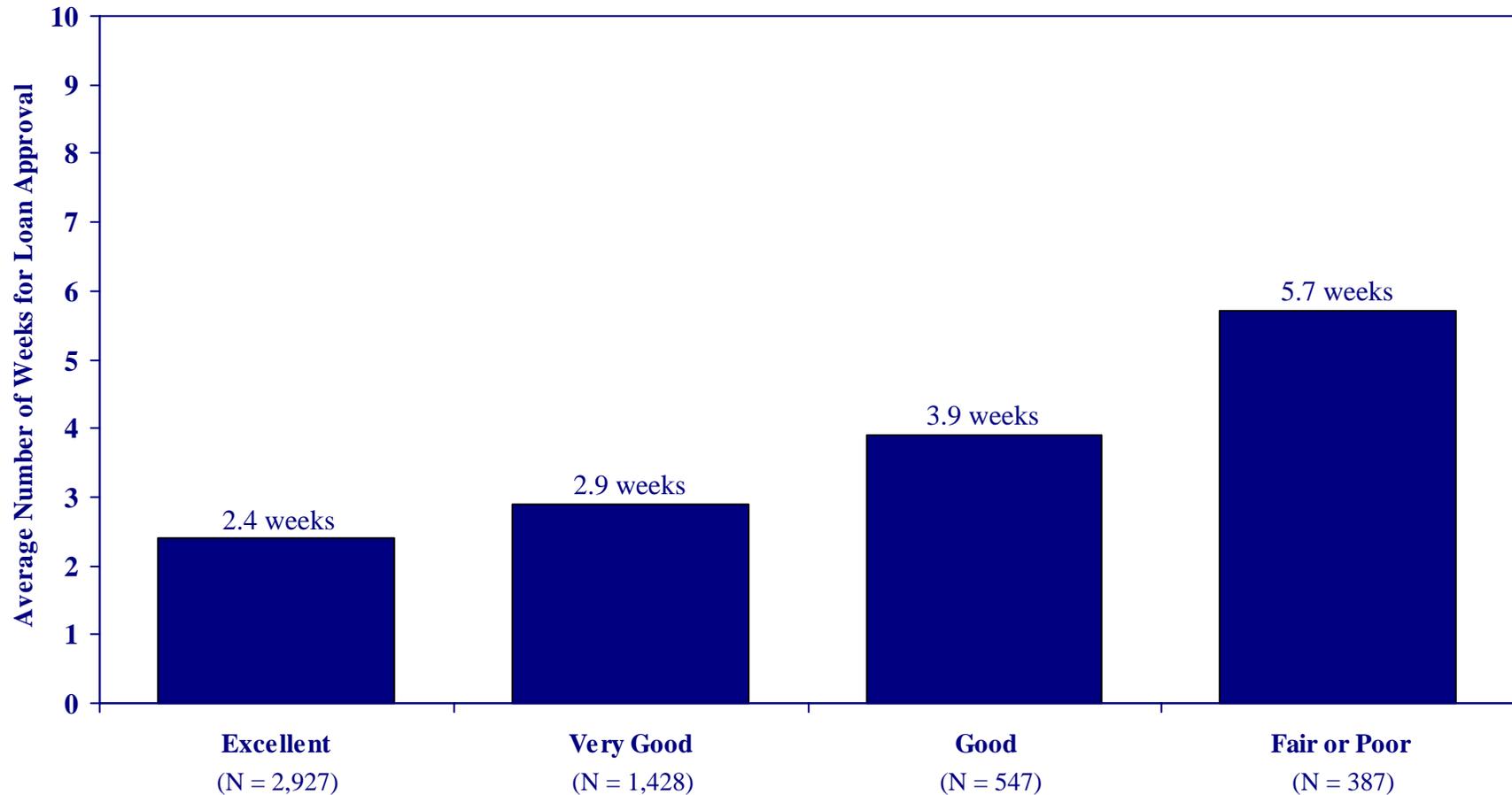
Lender's Responsiveness Regarding Inquiries by Average Number of Weeks For Loan Approval



## Lender's Responsiveness Regarding Inquiries

# Lender's Knowledge by Time for Loan Approval

Veterans' Assessment of Lender's Knowledge of VA Home Loan Guaranty Program by Average Number of Weeks For Loan Approval

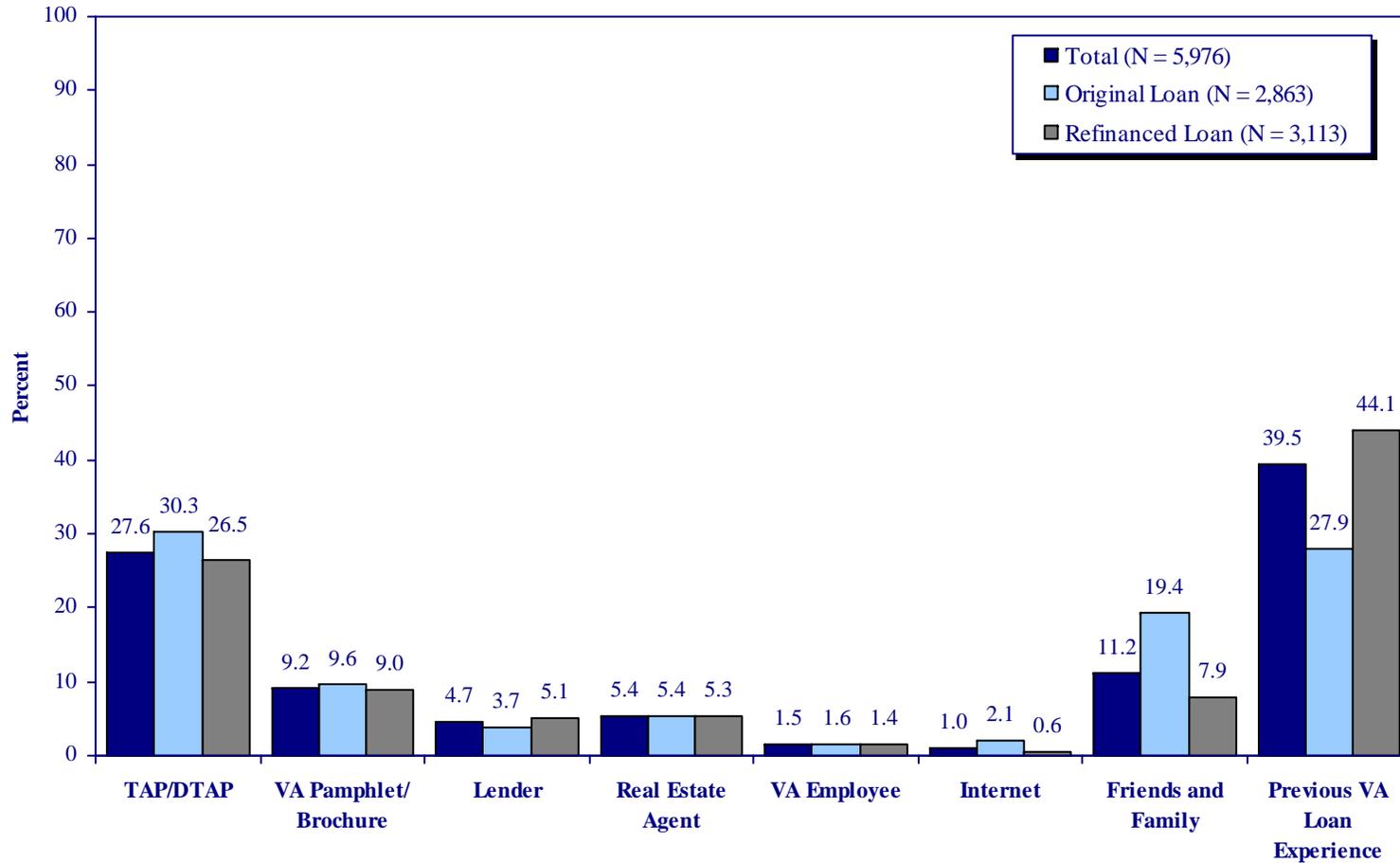


## Lender's Knowledge of VA Home Loan Guaranty Program

**Appendix A:  
Frequency of Responses**

# Frequency of Responses – Background

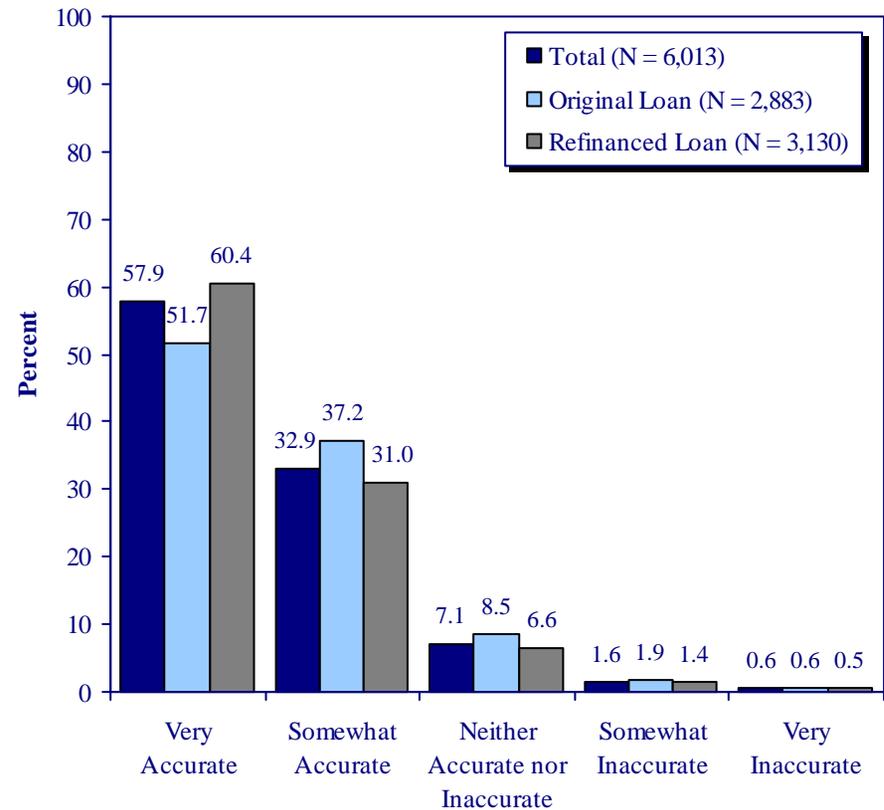
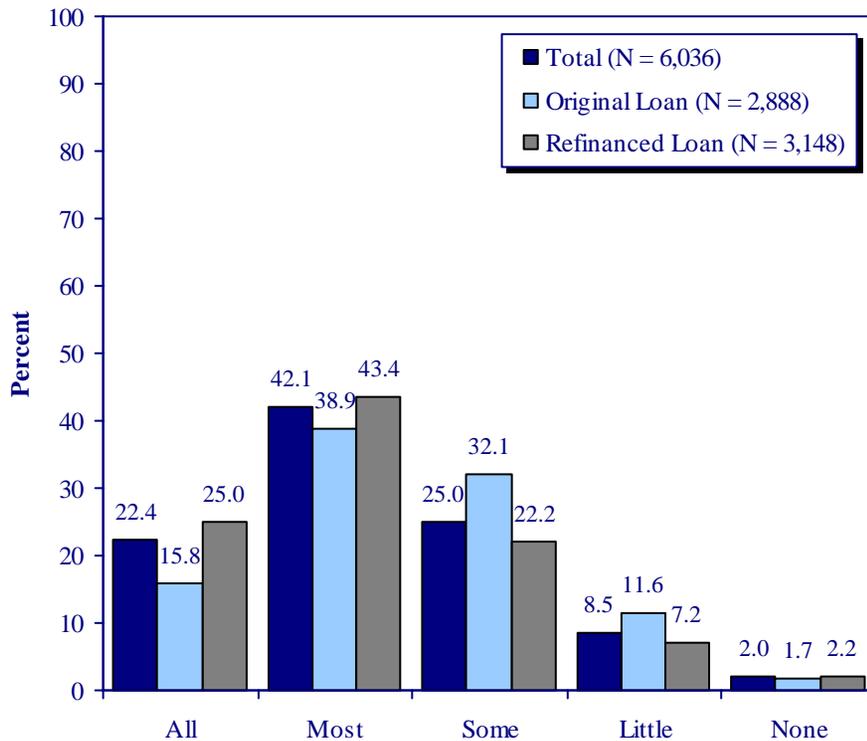
Q1. How did you FIRST learn about the VA home loan guaranty program?



# Frequency of Responses – Background

**Q2. Looking back, how much of what you NEEDED TO KNOW did you get from this source?**

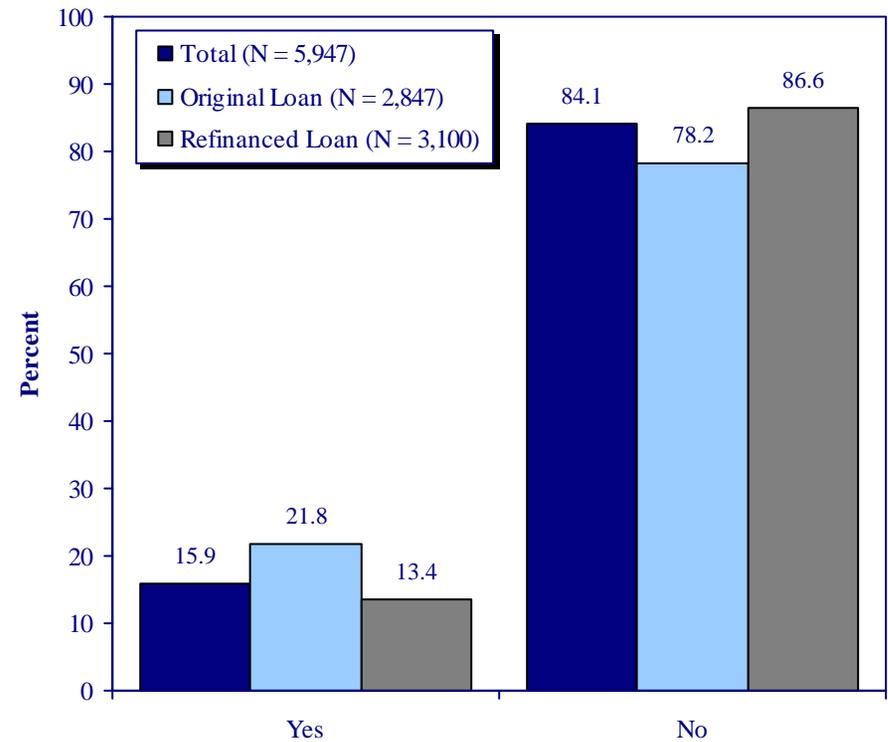
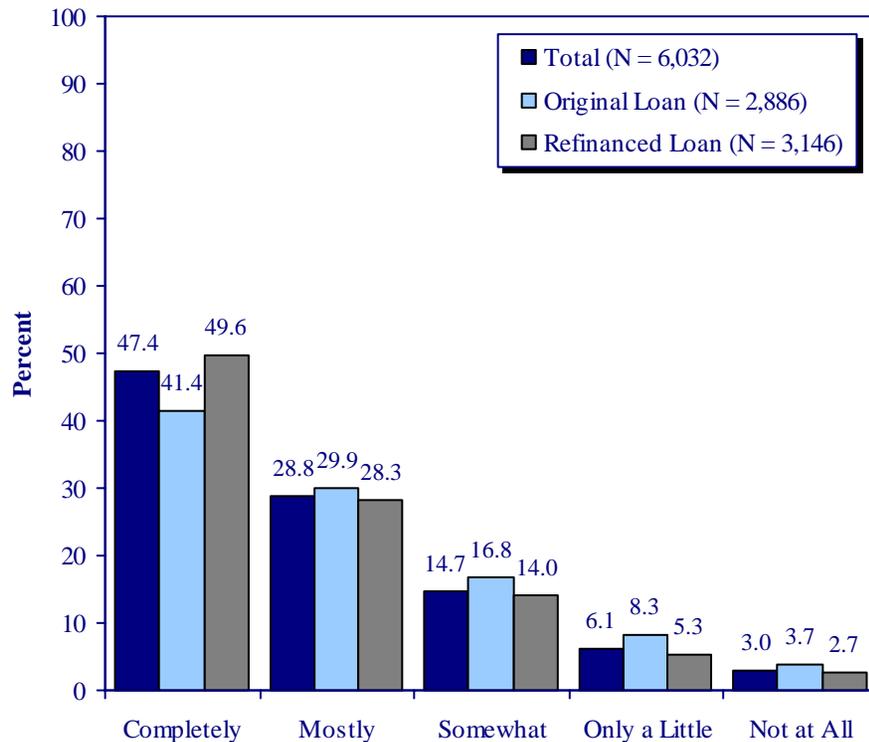
**Q3. How accurate was the information you received?**



# Frequency of Responses – Background and Phone Contact

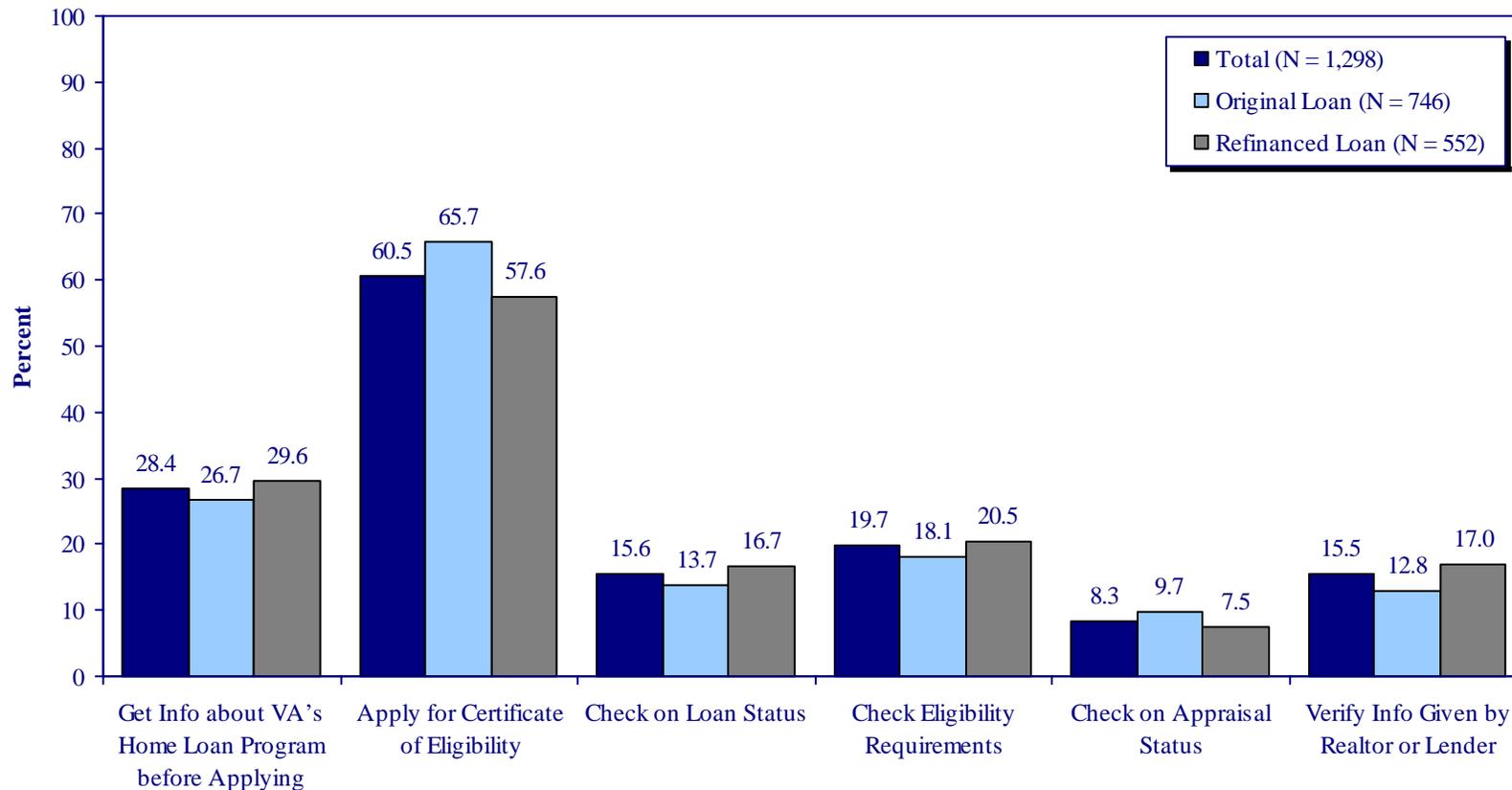
**Q4. At the beginning of the home buying process, how completely did you understand the dollar amount of the loan the VA would guarantee?**

**Q5. Did you ever try to reach the VA using the toll-free number during the home buying/refinancing process?**



# Frequency of Responses – Phone Contact

Q6. Why did you call VA? (Mark all that apply.)

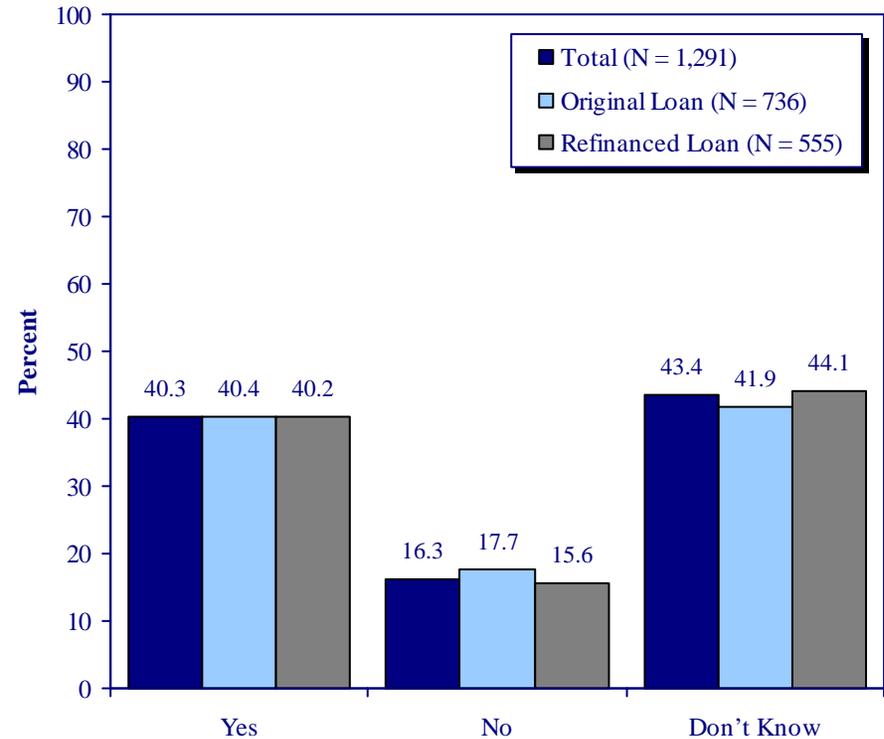
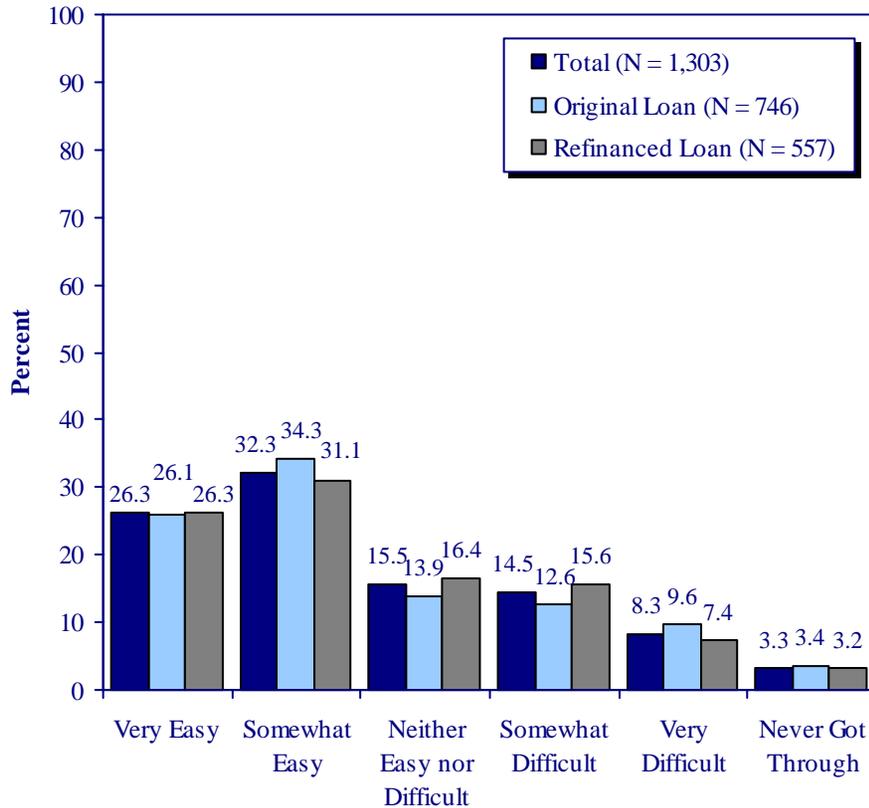


Note: As a respondent could give more than one reason, the percentages do not add to 100.

# Frequency of Responses – Phone Contact

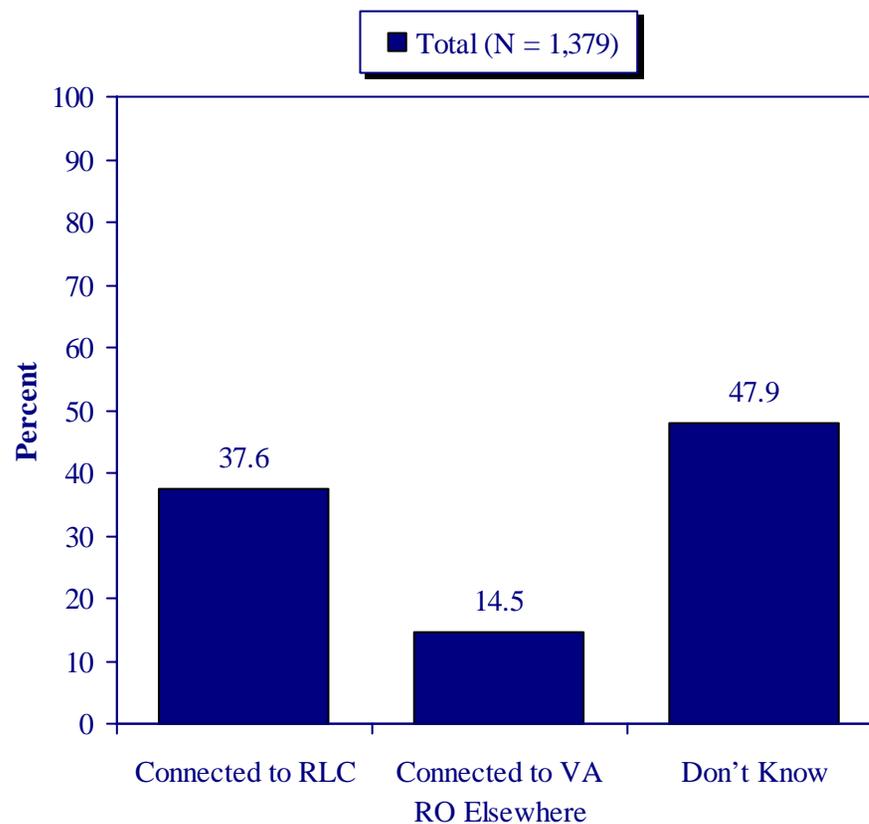
**Q7. How easy was it to get through to VA on the phone?**

**Q8. When you called the toll-free number, were you connected directly to a VA Regional Loan Center?**



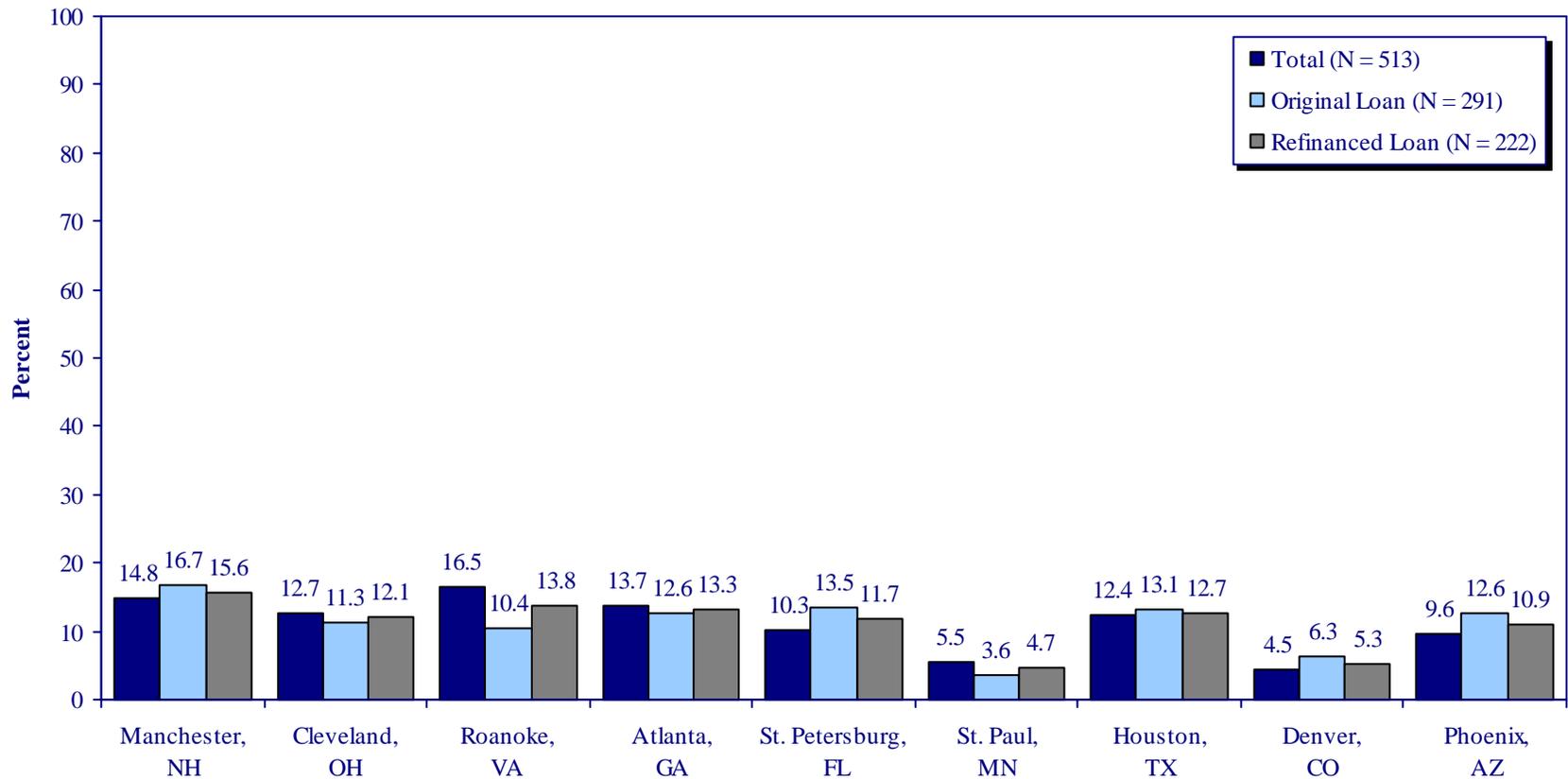
# Frequency of Responses – Phone Contact

Q9a. Which, if any, of the following VA Regional Loan Centers were you connected with?



# Frequency of Responses – Phone Contact

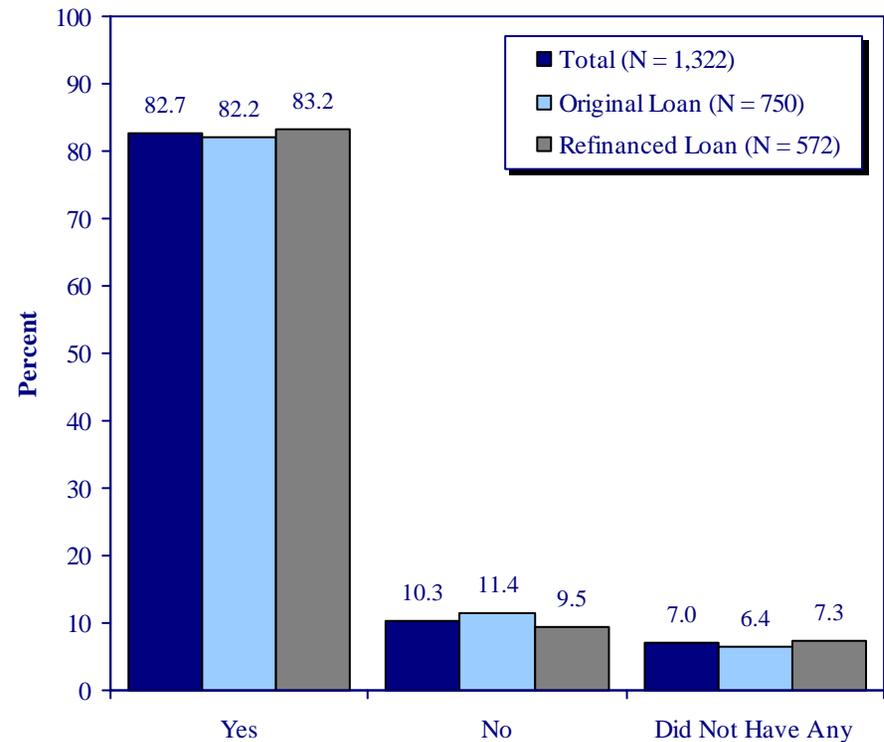
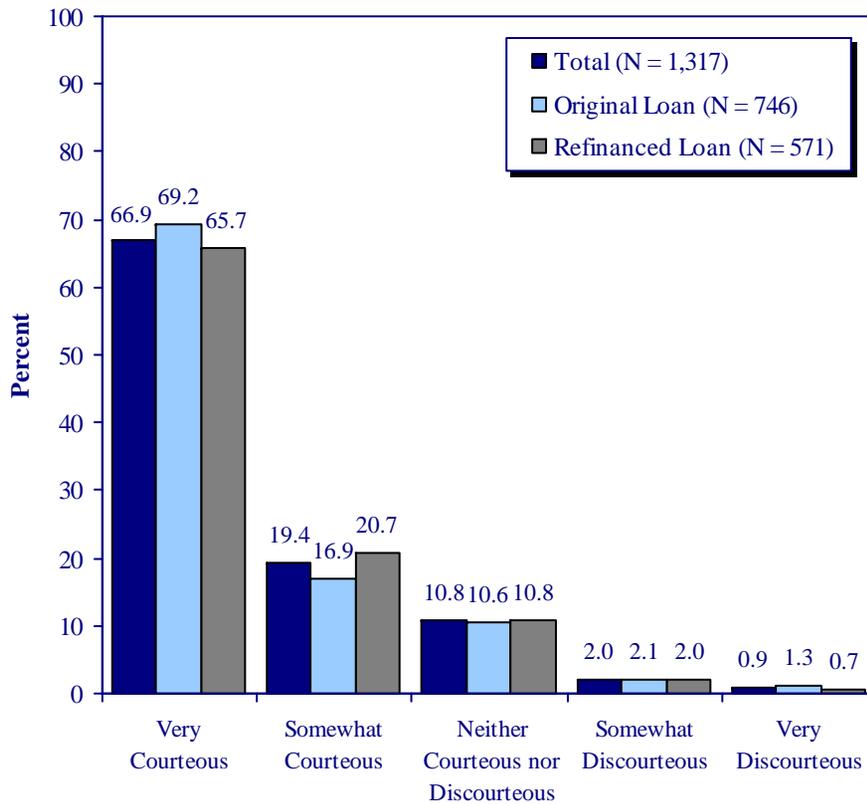
Q9b. Which, if any, of the following VA Regional Loan Centers were you connected with?



# Frequency of Responses – Phone Contact

**Q10. How courteous were VA employees you spoke to on the telephone?**

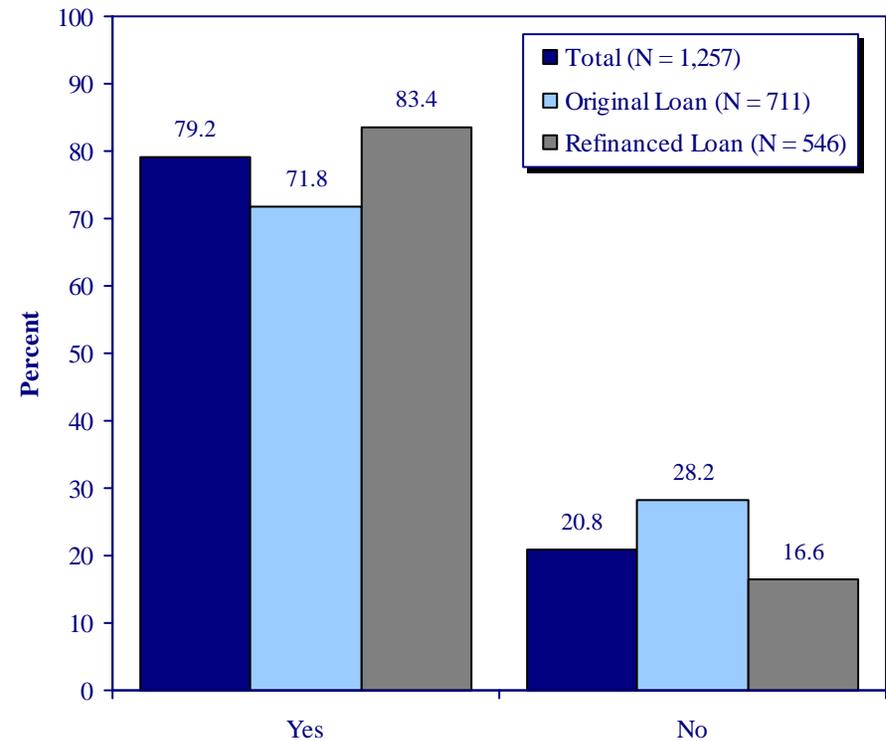
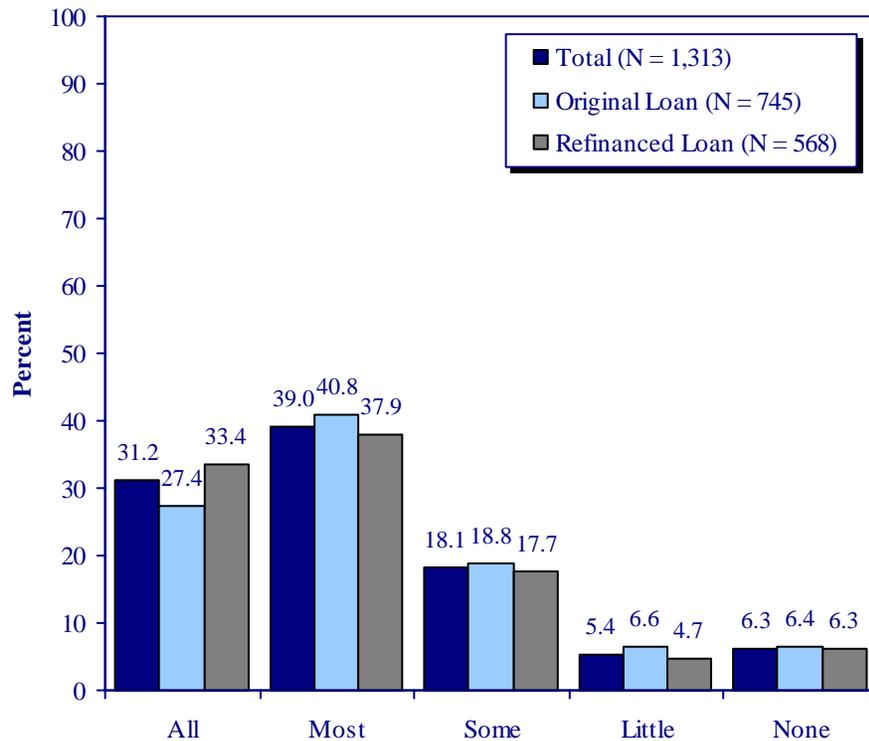
**Q11. Did VA employees fully address all your questions, concerns, or complaints?**



# Frequency of Responses – Phone Contact

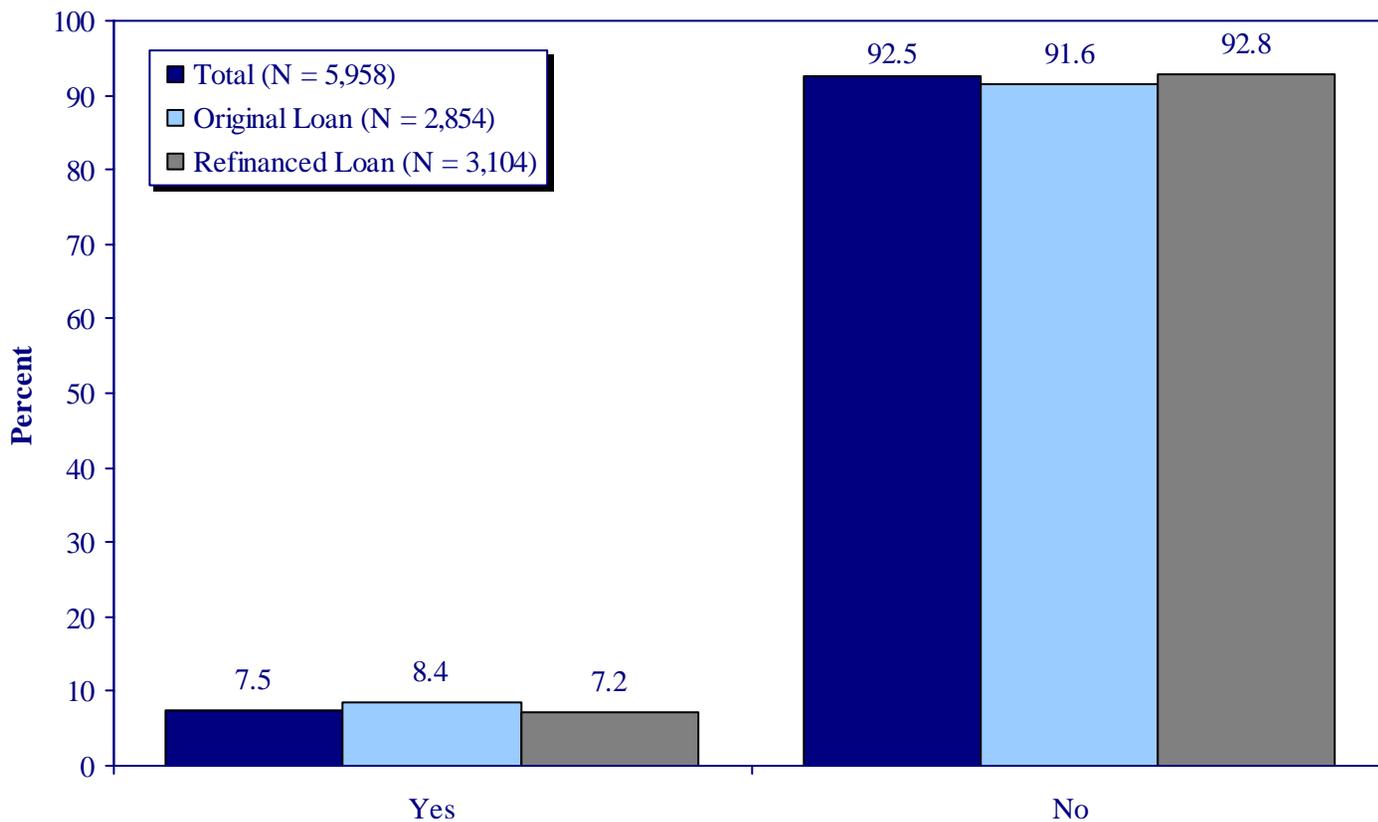
**Q12. In general, how much of what you NEEDED TO KNOW did you get from your telephone contact with the VA toll-free number?**

**Q13. Were you able to get information about your particular loan?**



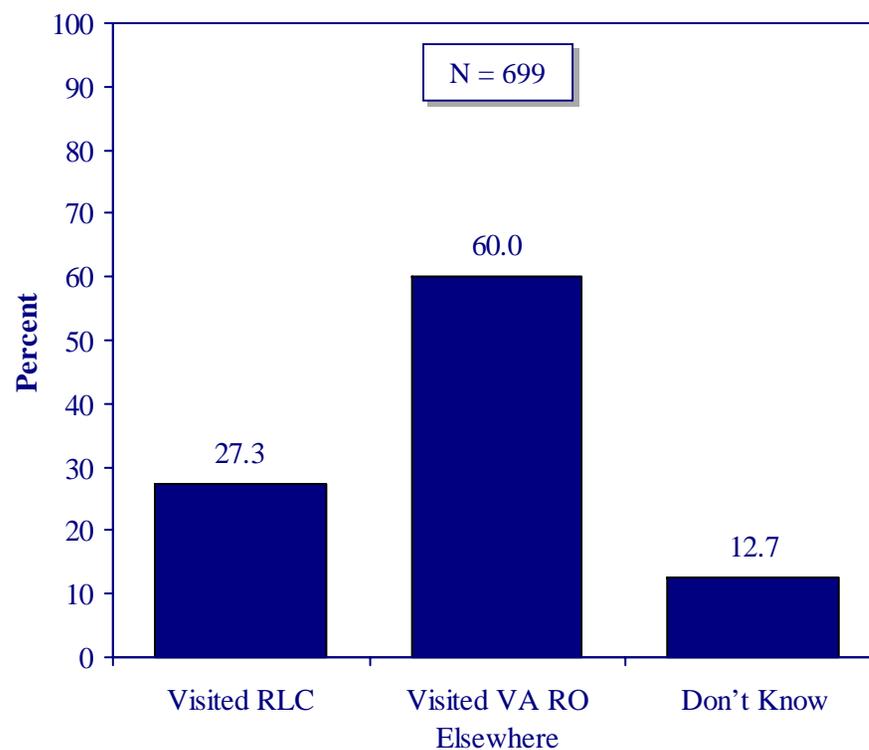
# Frequency of Responses – Visiting a VA Center or Office

**Q14. Did you ever visit a VA Regional Loan Center or Regional Office during the home buying/refinancing process?**



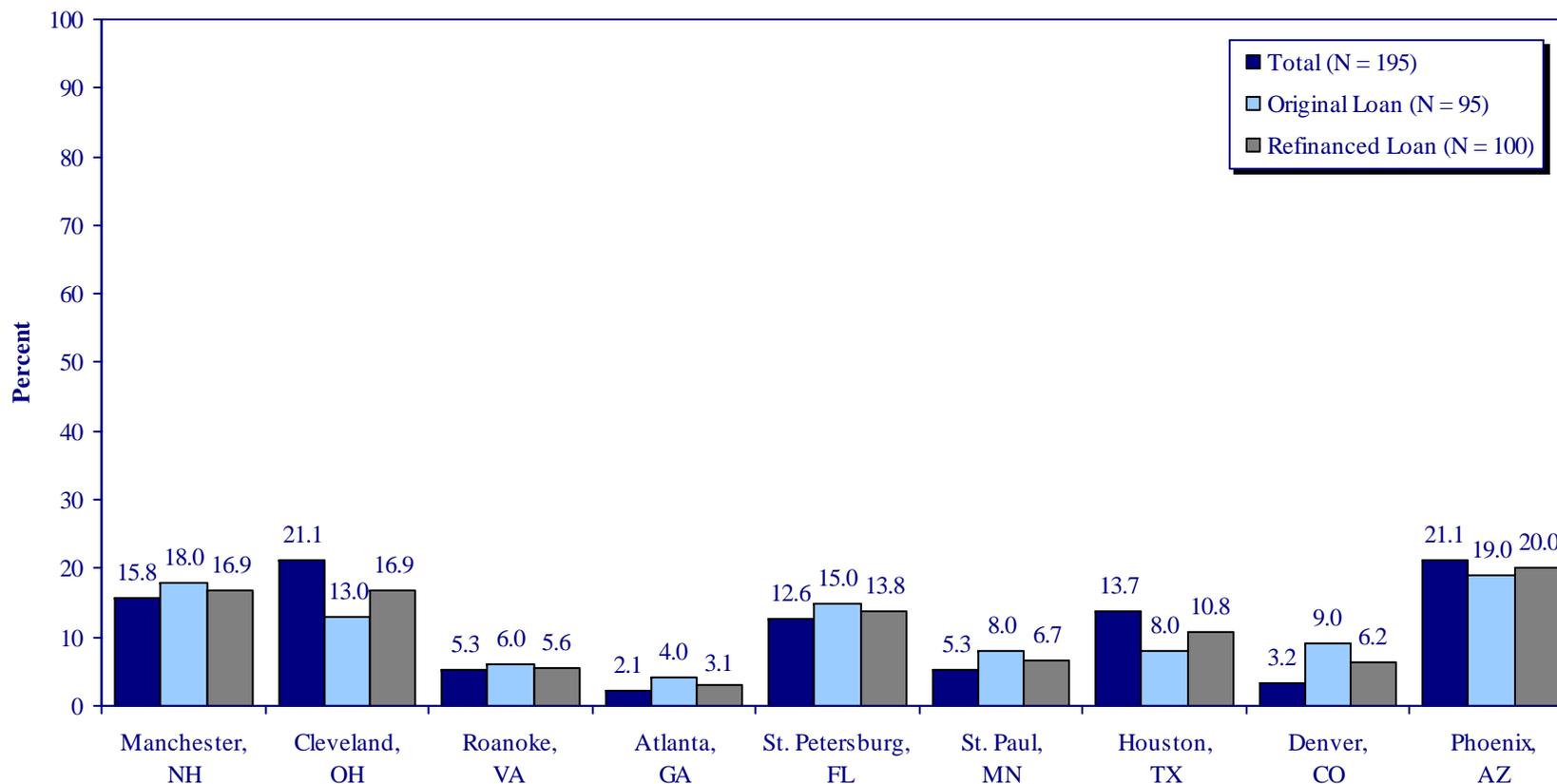
# Frequency of Responses – Visiting a VA Center or Office

Q15a. Which, if any, of the following VA Regional Loan Centers did you visit?



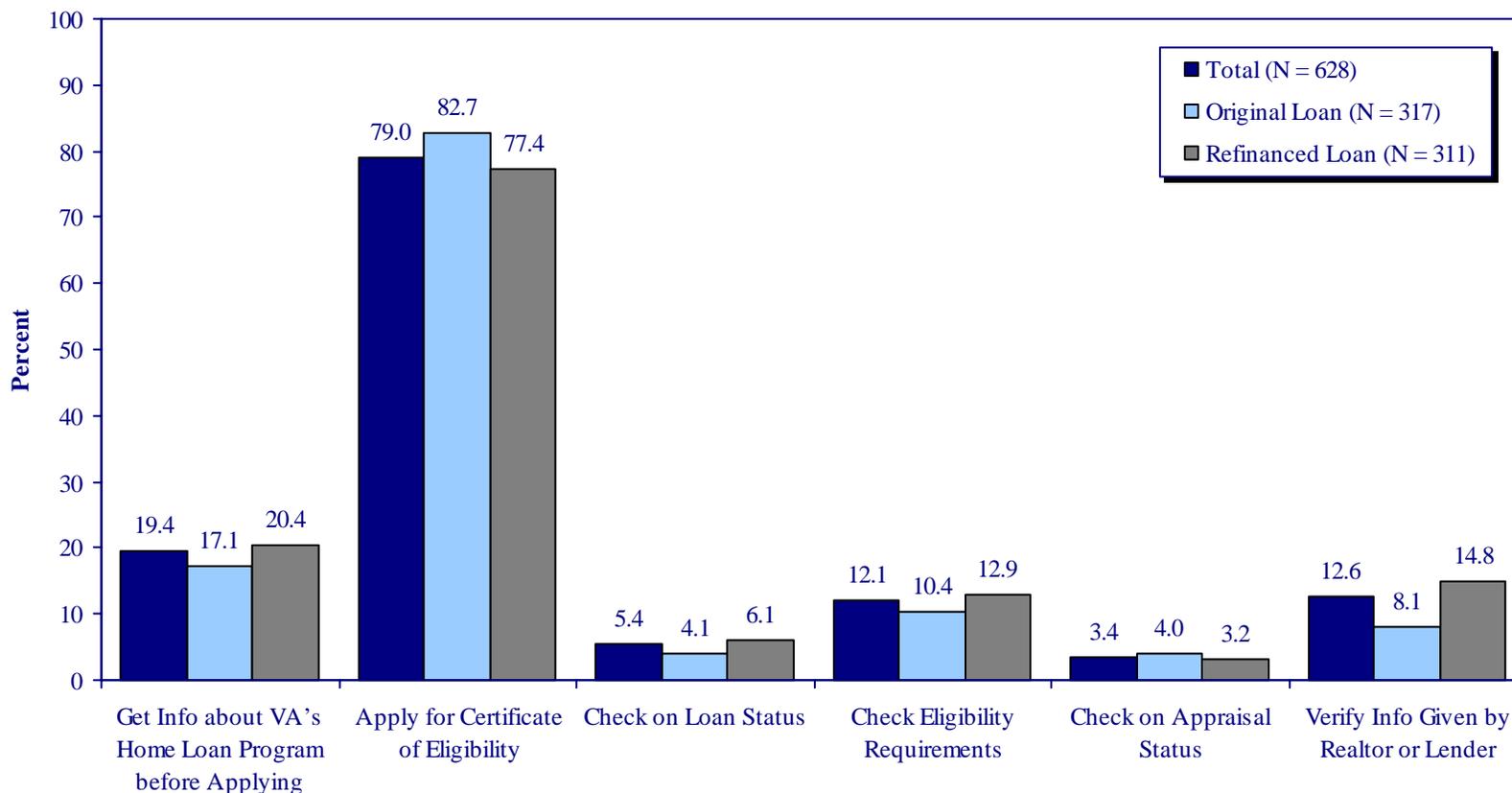
# Frequency of Responses – Visiting a VA Center or Office

Q15b. Which, if any, of the following VA Regional Loan Centers did you visit?



# Frequency of Responses – Visiting a VA Center or Office

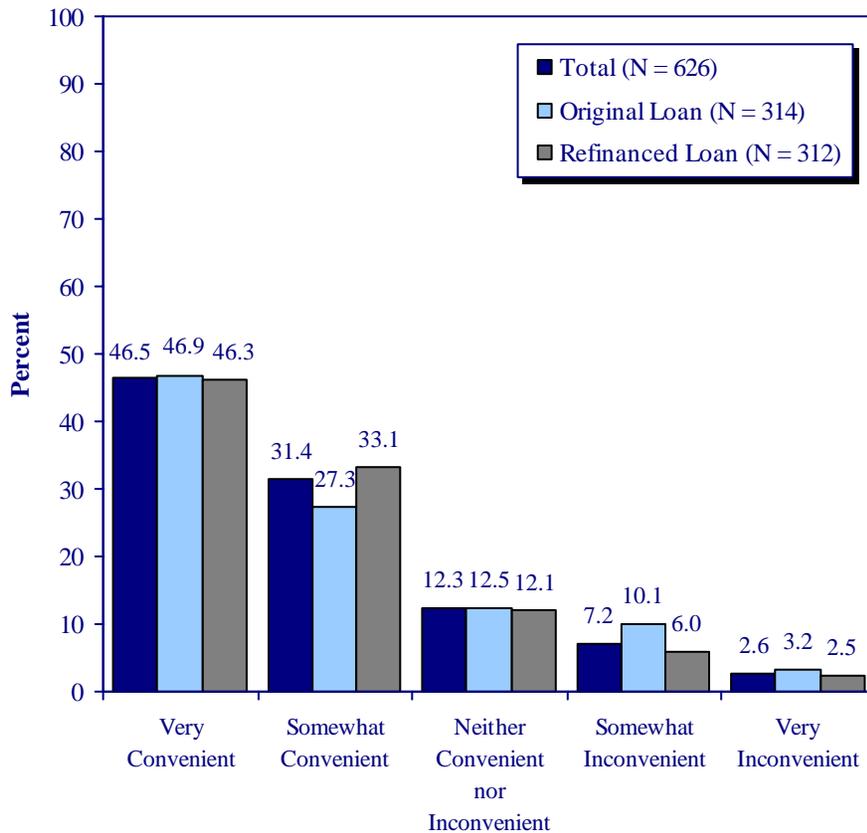
Q16. Why did you visit a VA Regional Loan Center or Regional Office? (Mark all that apply.)



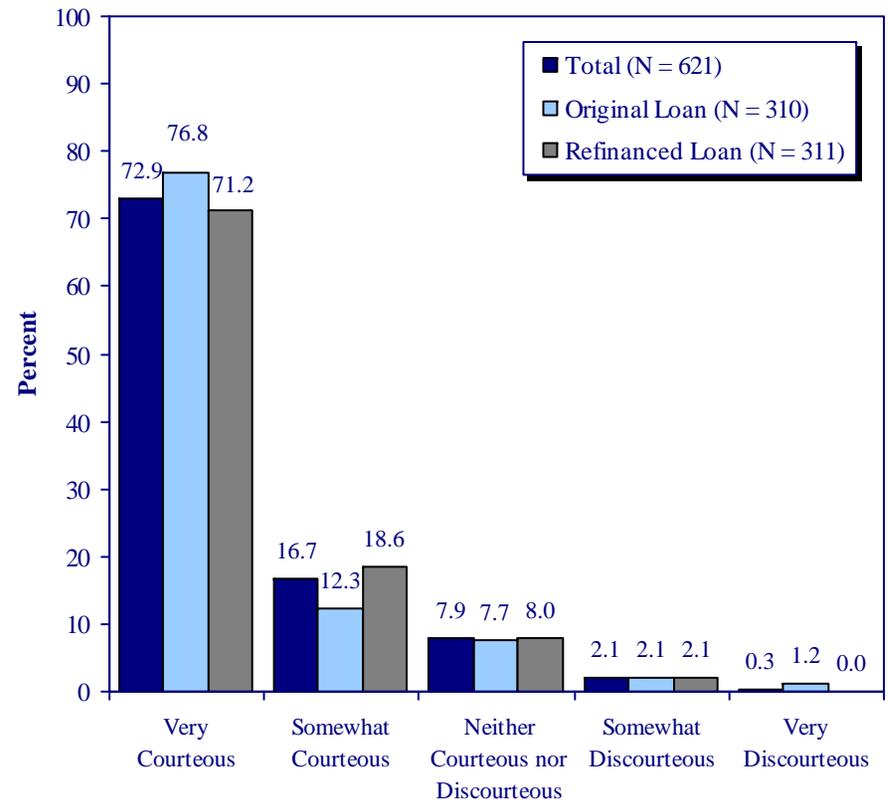
Note: As a respondent could give more than one reason, the percentages do not add to 100.

# Frequency of Responses – Visiting a VA Center or Office

**Q17. How convenient was the location of the VA Regional Loan Center or Regional Office?**



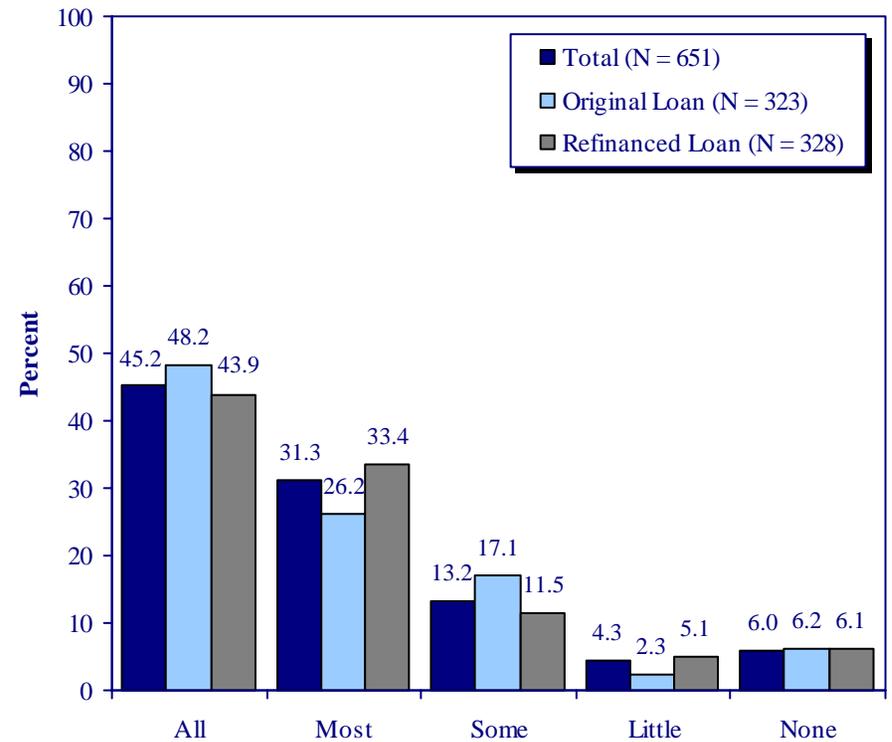
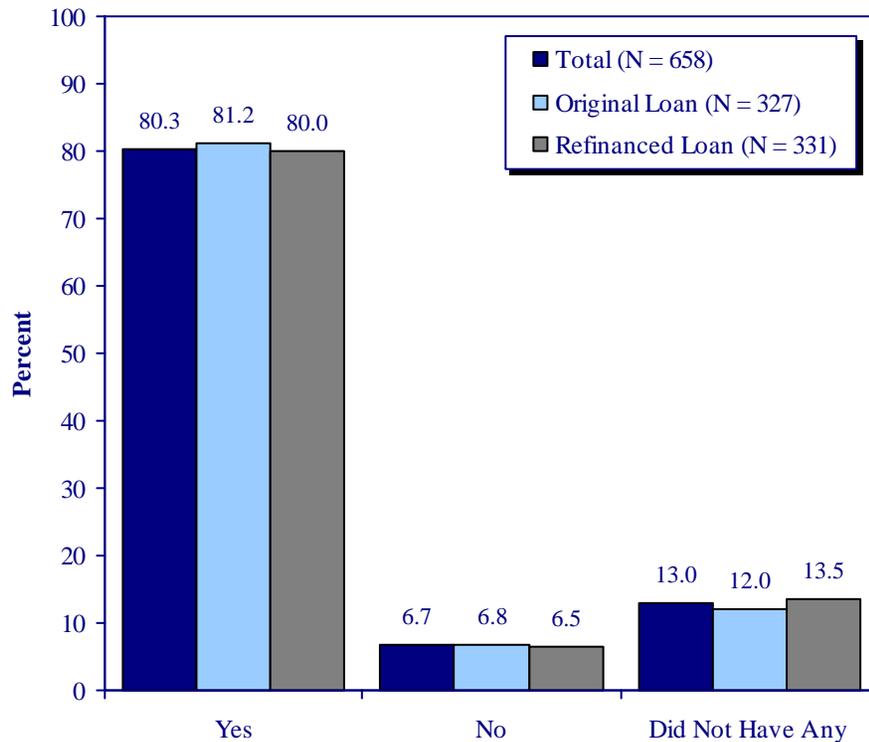
**Q18. How courteous were VA employees when you visited the Regional Loan Center or Regional Office?**



# Frequency of Responses – Visiting a VA Center or Office

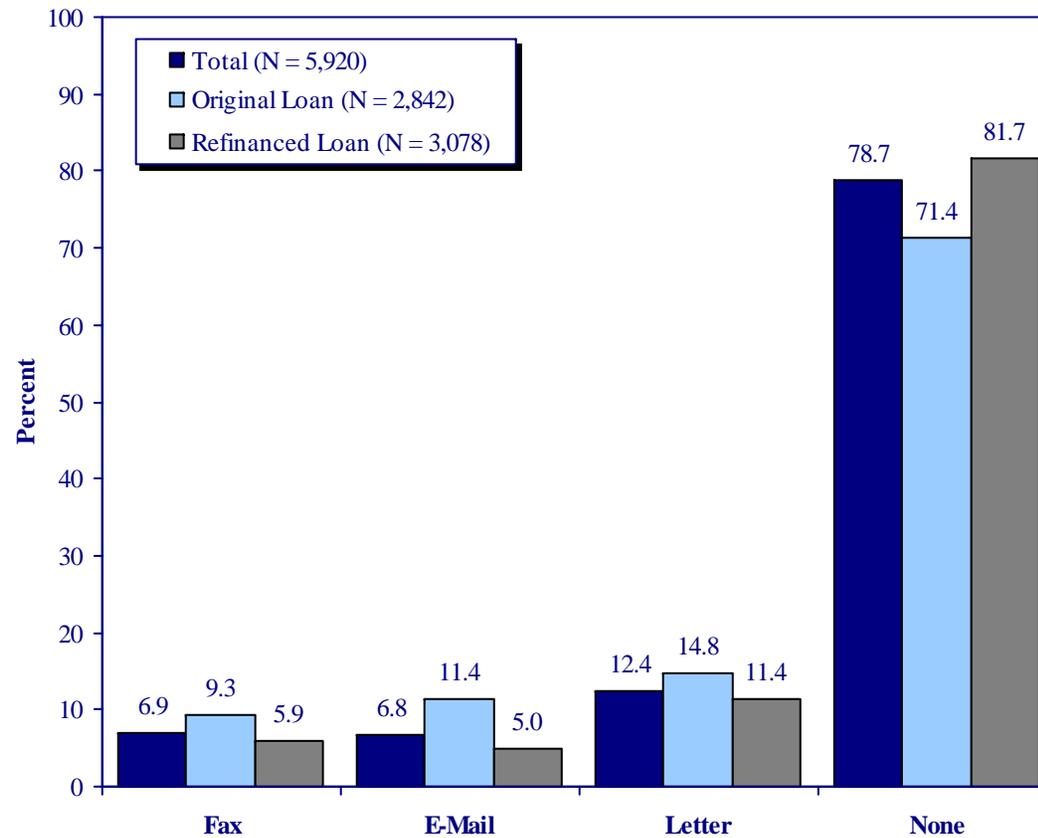
**Q19. Did VA employees fully address all your questions, concerns, or complaints?**

**Q20. In general, how much of what you NEEDED TO KNOW did you get from your visit to the VA Regional Loan Center or Regional Office?**



# Frequency of Responses – Other Methods of Contact

**Q21. During the home buying/refinancing process, what methods other than phone or visit did you use to contact the VA? (Mark all that apply.)**

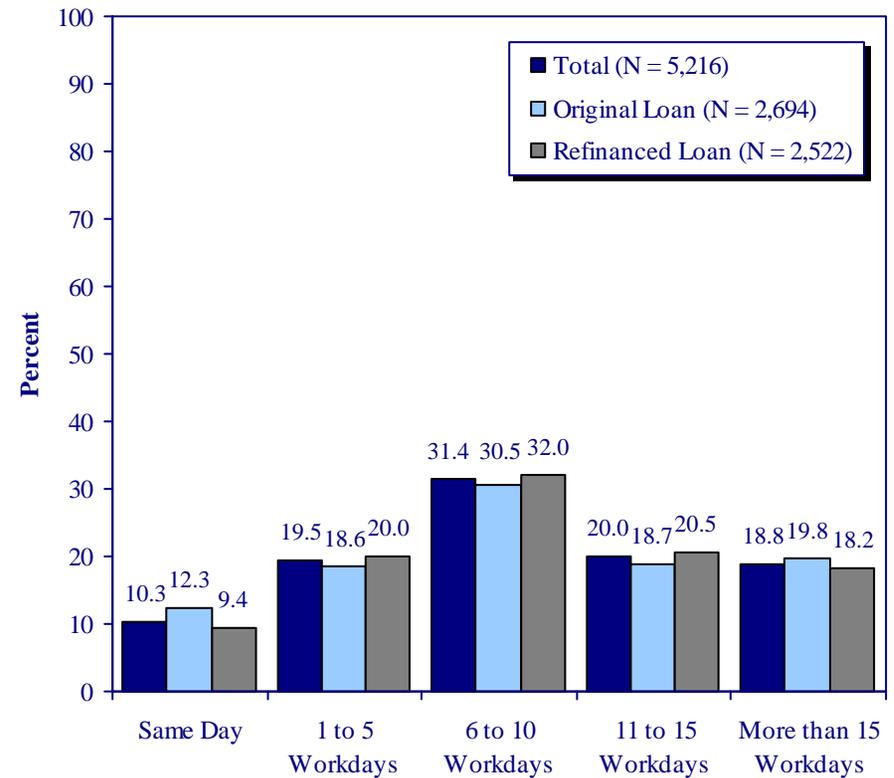
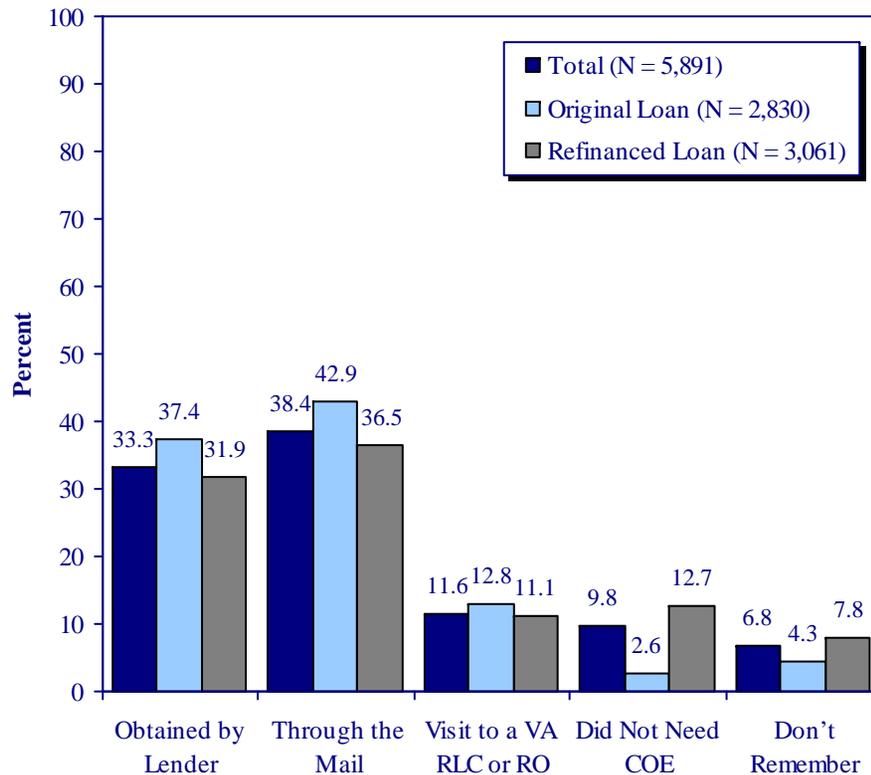


Note: As a respondent could give more than one method, the percentages do not add to 100.

# Frequency of Responses – Certificate of Eligibility

**Q22. How did you obtain your Certificate of Eligibility (COE) for Loan Guaranty Benefits?**

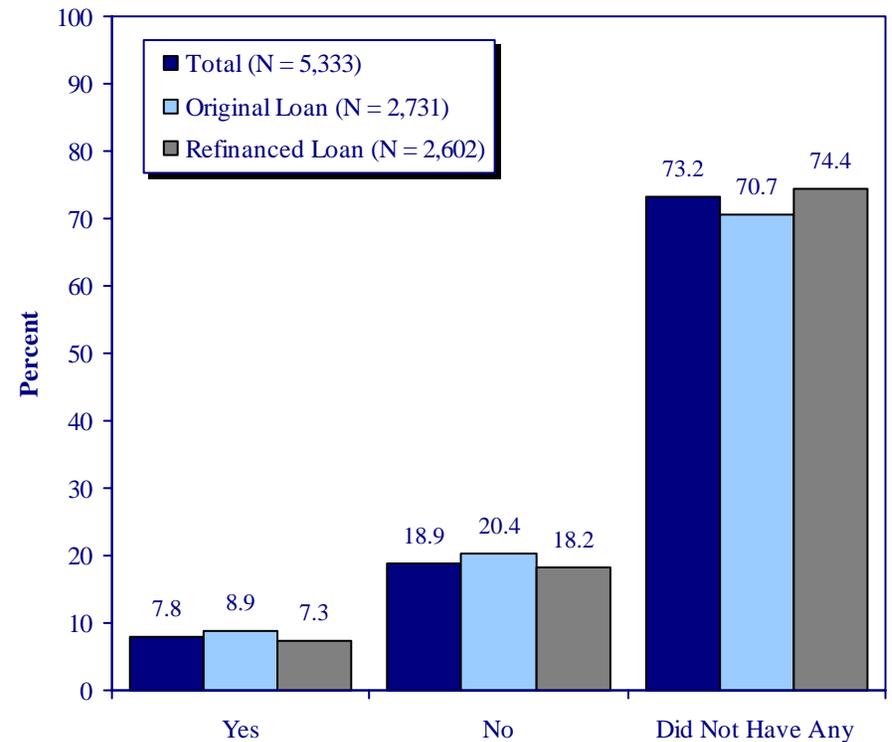
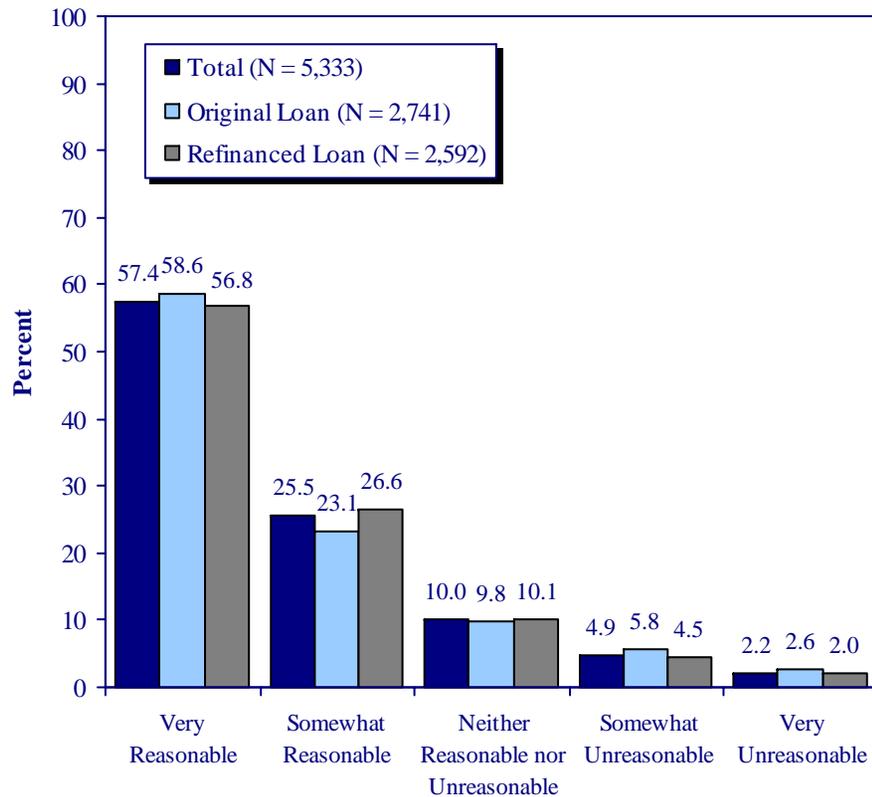
**Q23. From the time you applied, how long did it take to get your Certificate of Eligibility (COE)?**



# Frequency of Responses – Certificate of Eligibility

**Q24. How REASONABLE was the amount of time it took to get your Certificate of Eligibility (COE)?**

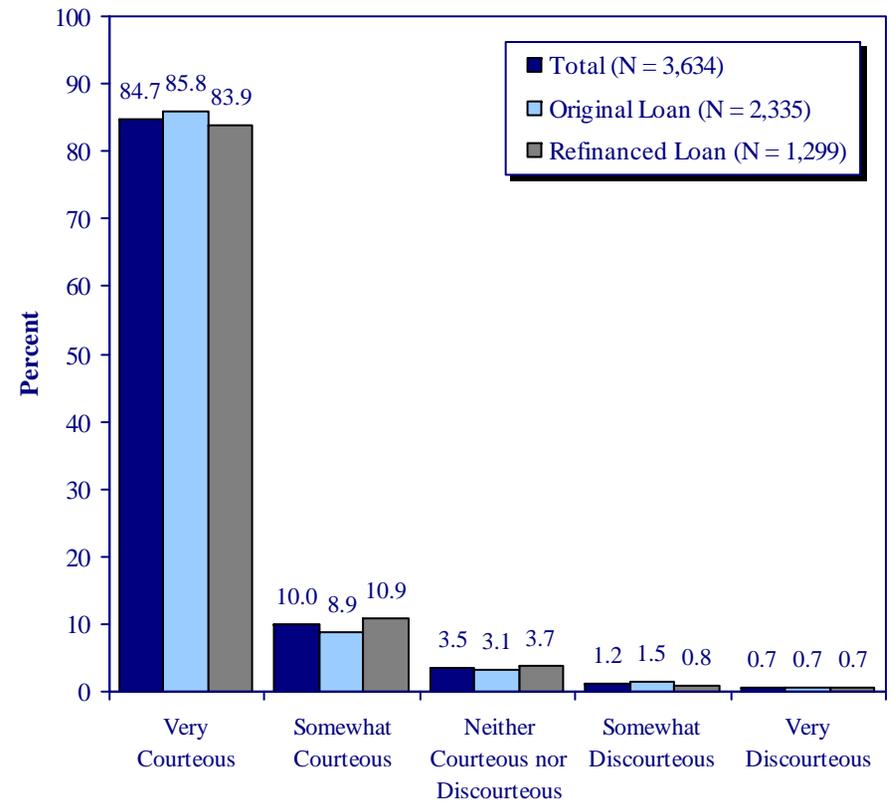
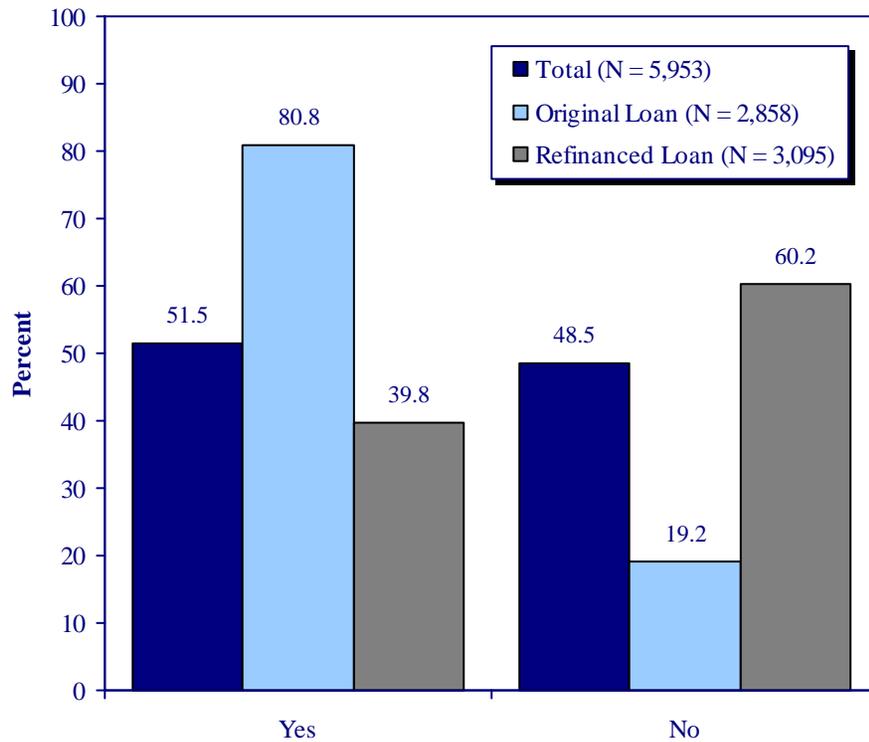
**Q25. Did VA keep you informed of any delays or problems in obtaining your Certificate of Eligibility (COE)?**



# Frequency of Responses – Realtor

**Q26. Did you use the services of a realtor in purchasing/refinancing your home?**

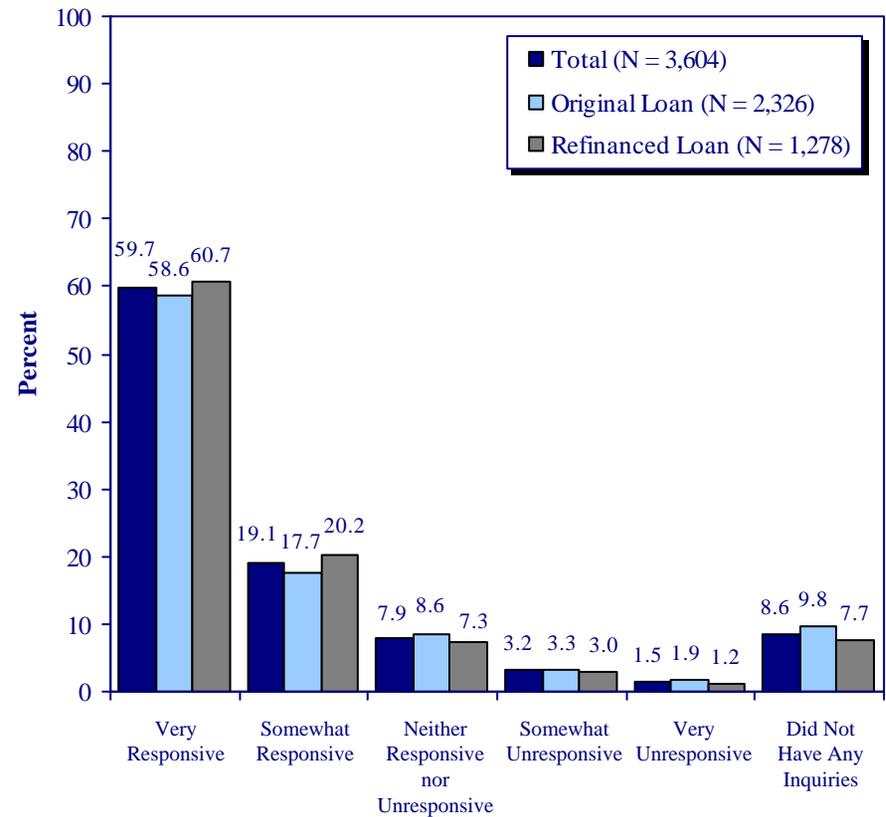
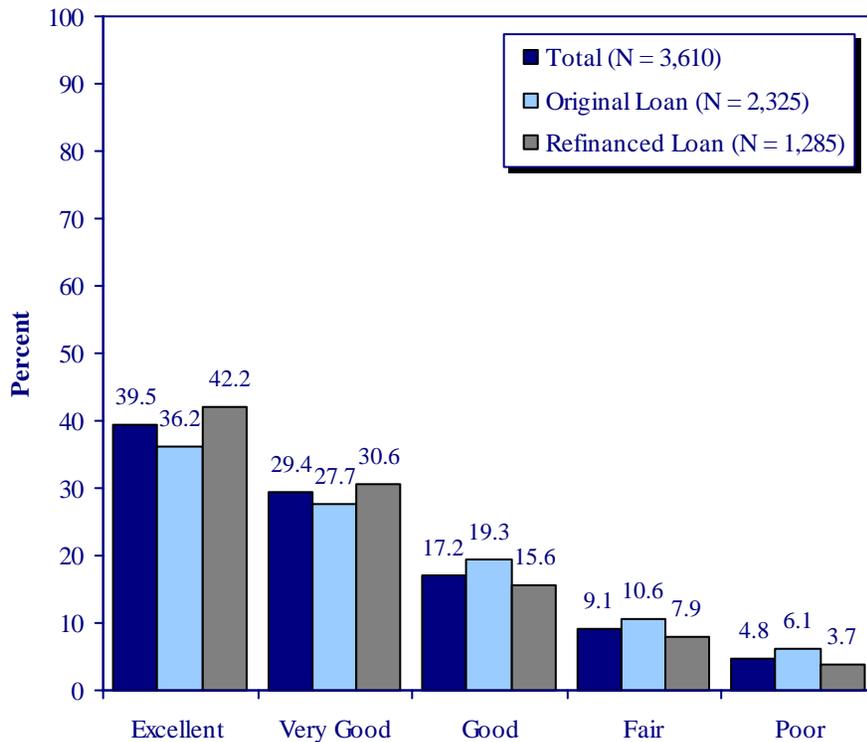
**Q27. How courteous was the realtor you dealt with?**



# Frequency of Responses – Realtor

**Q28. How would you rate your realtor's KNOWLEDGE about the VA home loan guaranty program?**

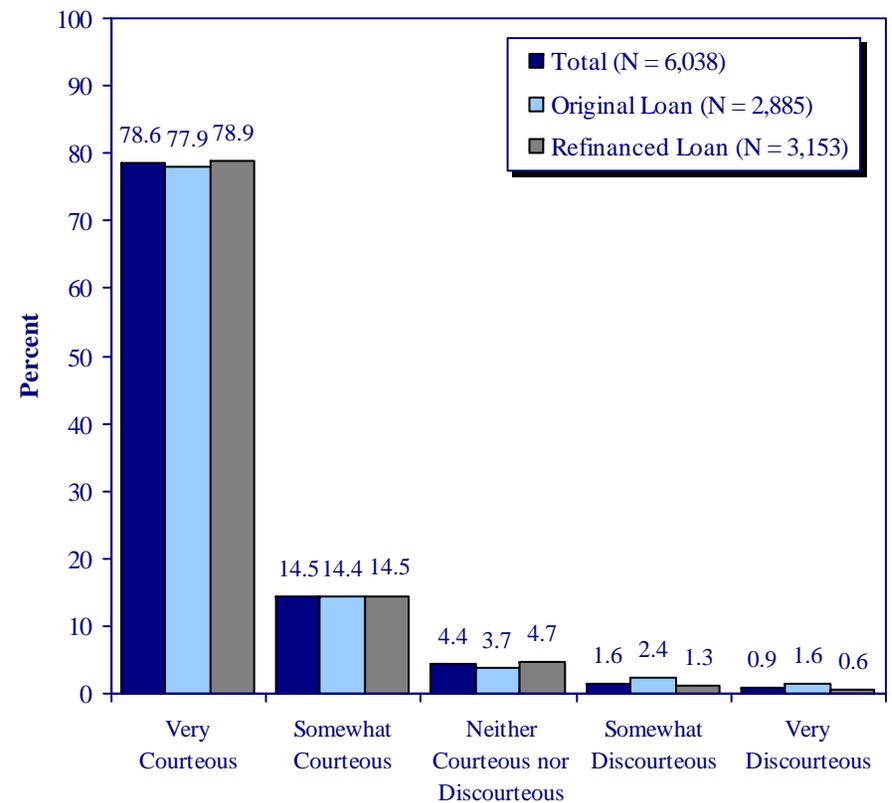
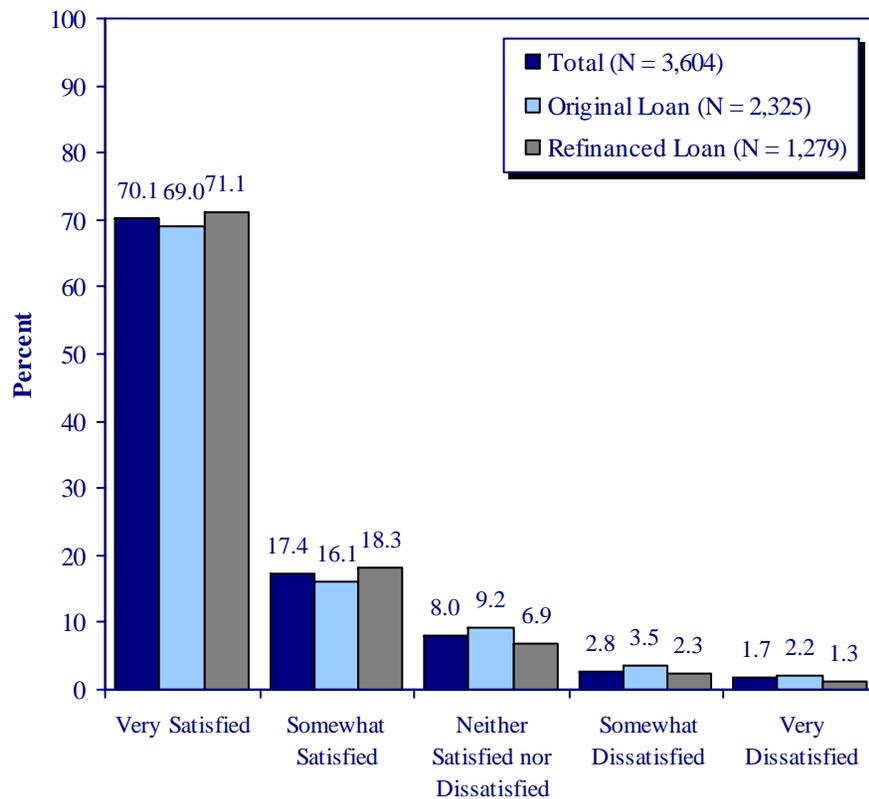
**Q29. How RESPONSIVE was your realtor regarding any inquiries about your VA home loan?**



# Frequency of Responses – Realtor and Lender

**Q30. Overall, how satisfied were you with your realtor regarding your use of the VA home loan guaranty program?**

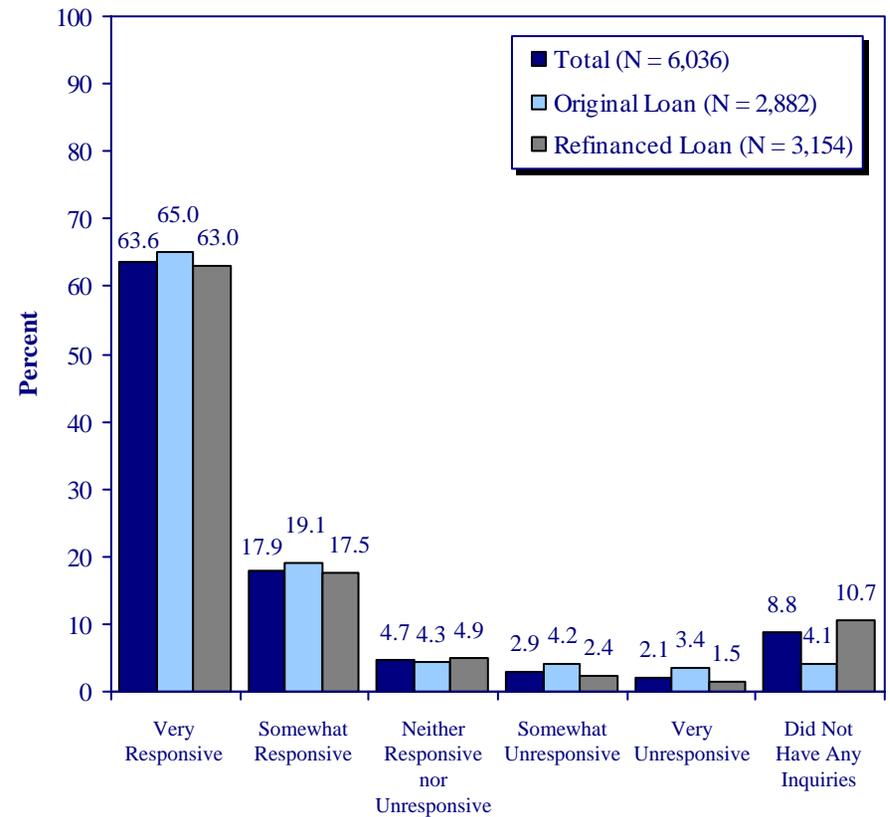
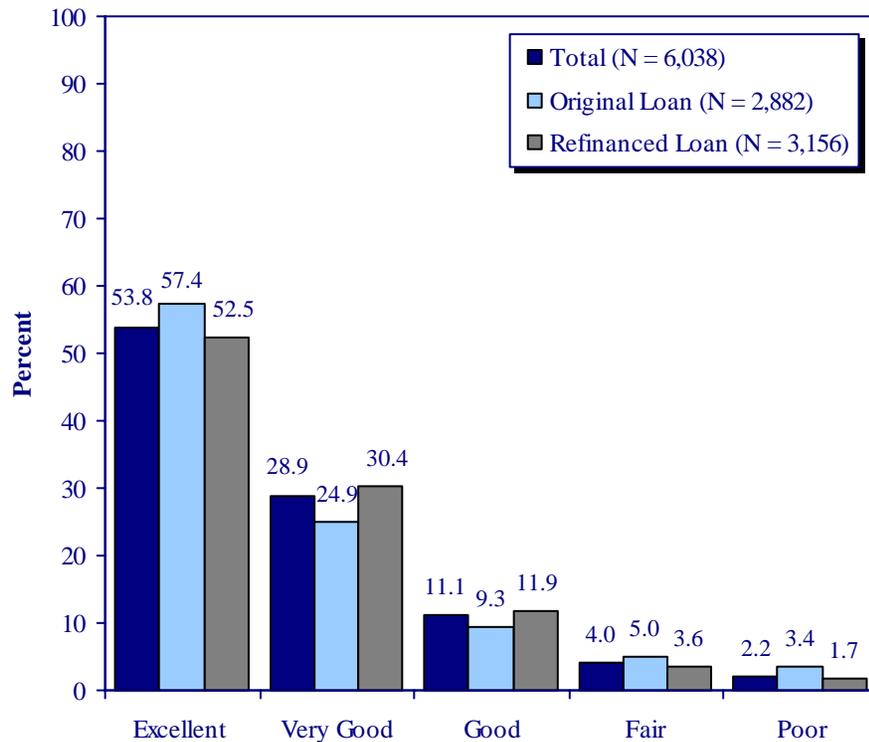
**Q31. How courteous was the lender you dealt with?**



# Frequency of Responses – Lender

**Q32. How would you rate your lender's KNOWLEDGE about the VA home loan guaranty program?**

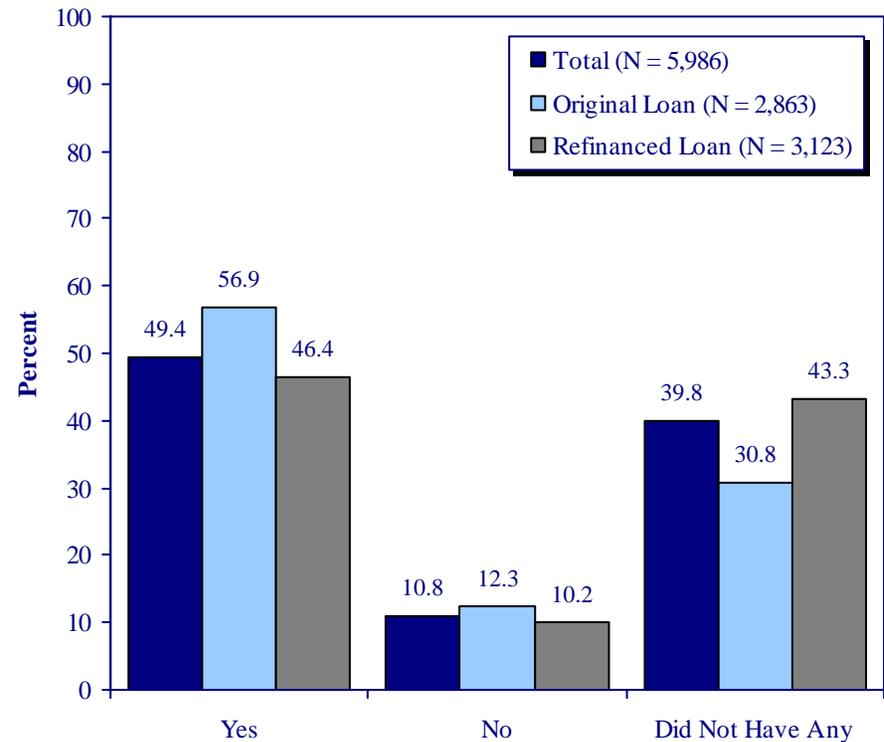
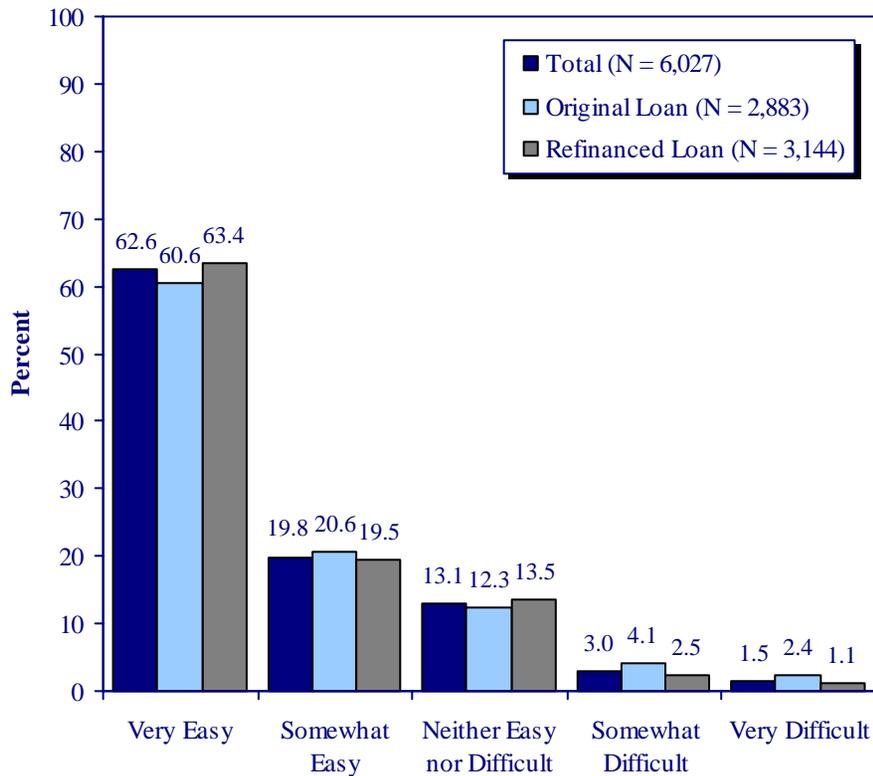
**Q33. How RESPONSIVE was your lender regarding any inquiries about your VA home loan?**



# Frequency of Responses – Lender

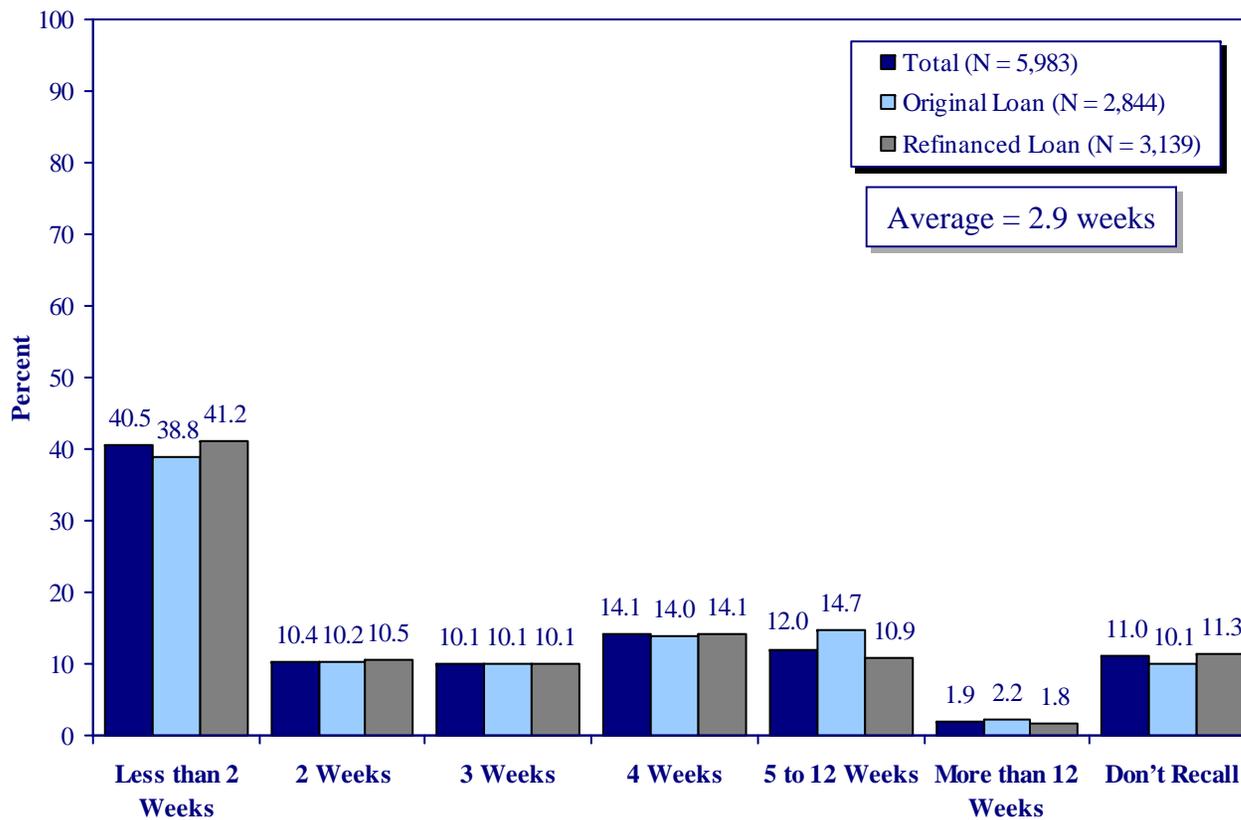
**Q34. How easy was it to get information about the VA home loan guaranty program from your lender?**

**Q35. Did your lender keep you informed of any delays or problems with your loan?**



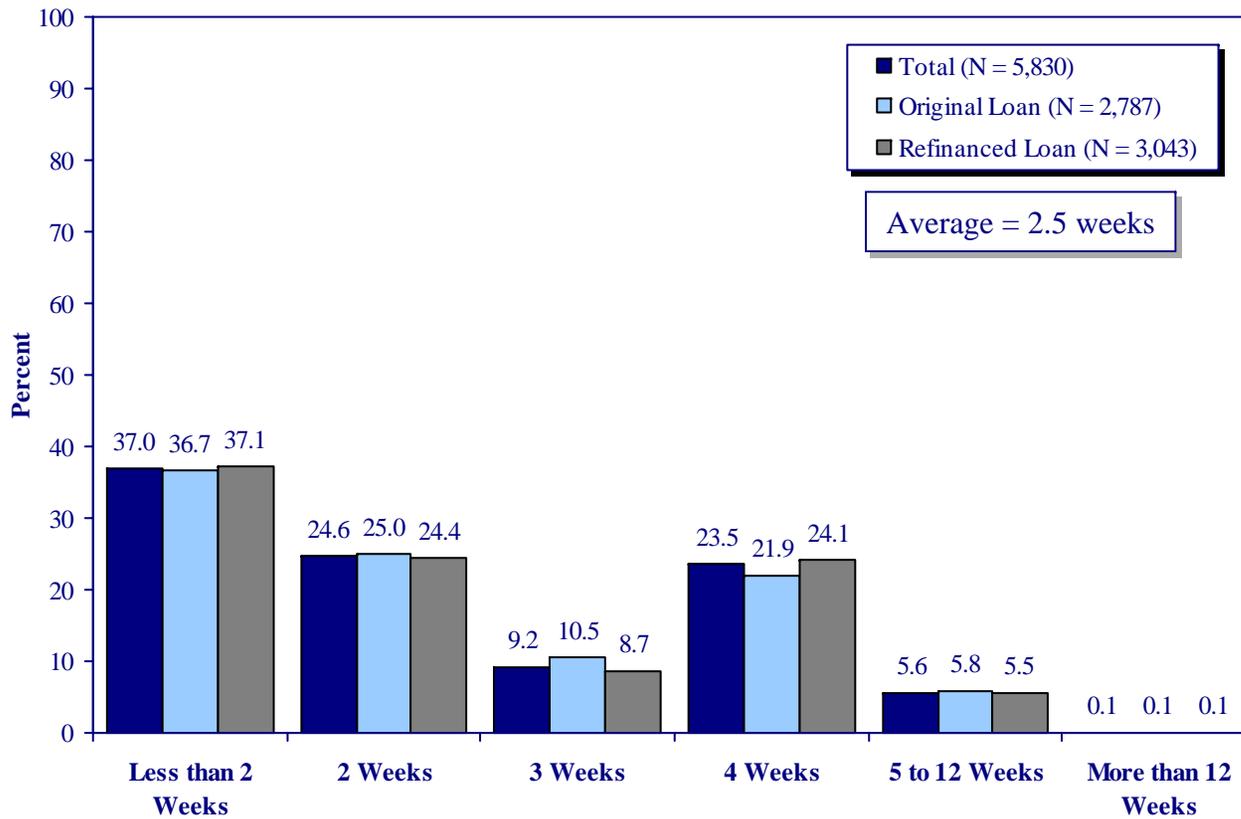
# Frequency of Responses – Lender

Q36. How long did it take for your loan to get approved?



# Frequency of Responses – Lender

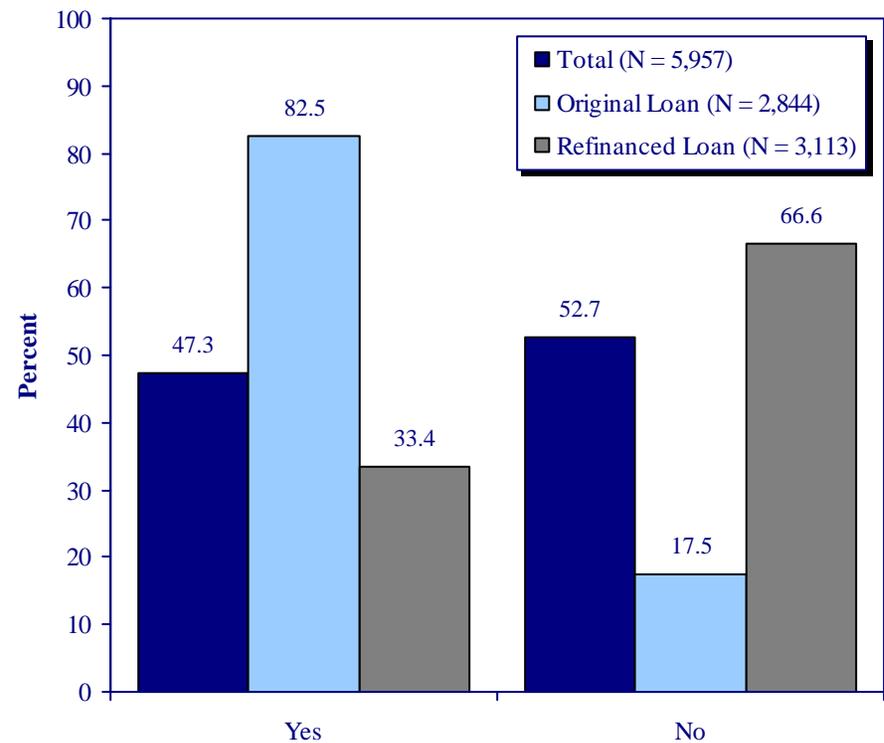
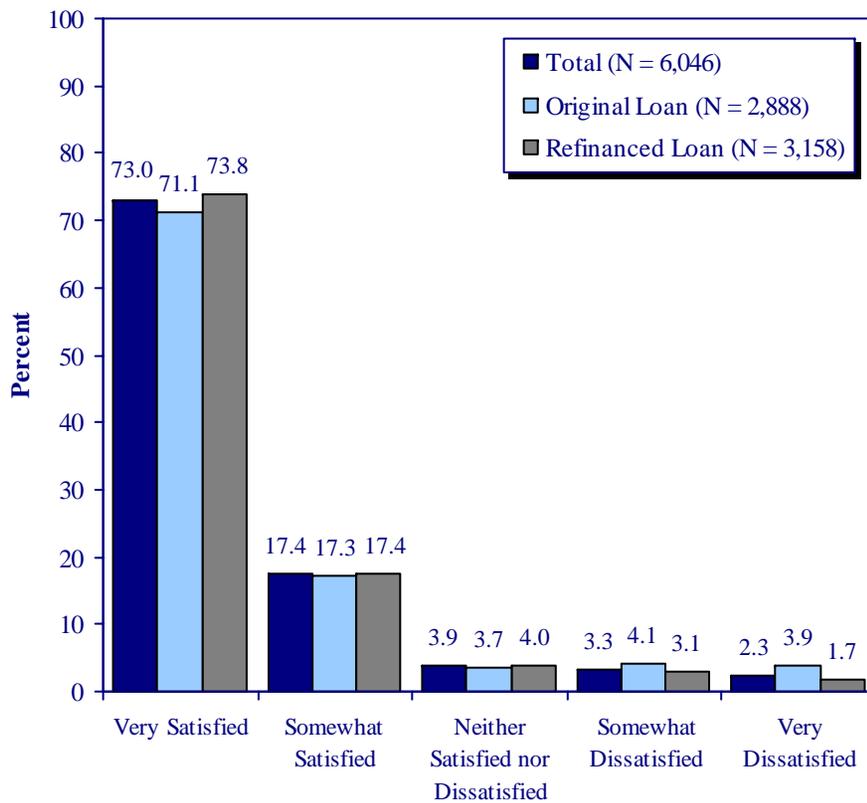
Q37. How long do you think is REASONABLE for your loan to get approved?



# Frequency of Responses – Lender and Appraisal

**Q38. Overall, how satisfied were you with your lender regarding your use of the VA home loan program?**

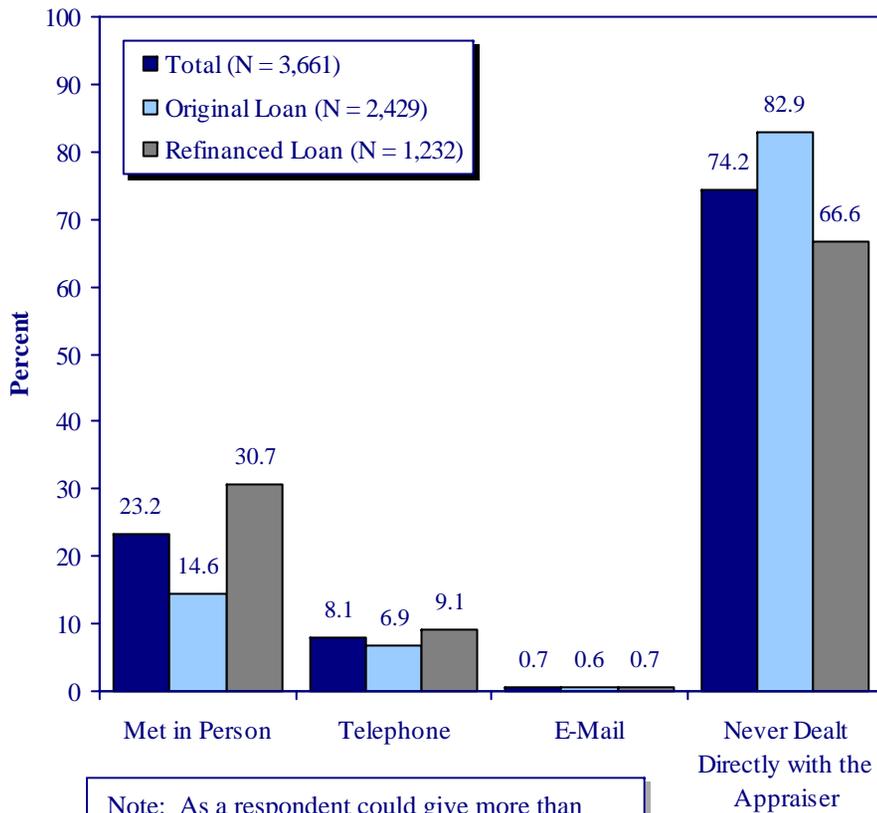
**Q39. Did you have an appraisal to either buy or refinance your home?**



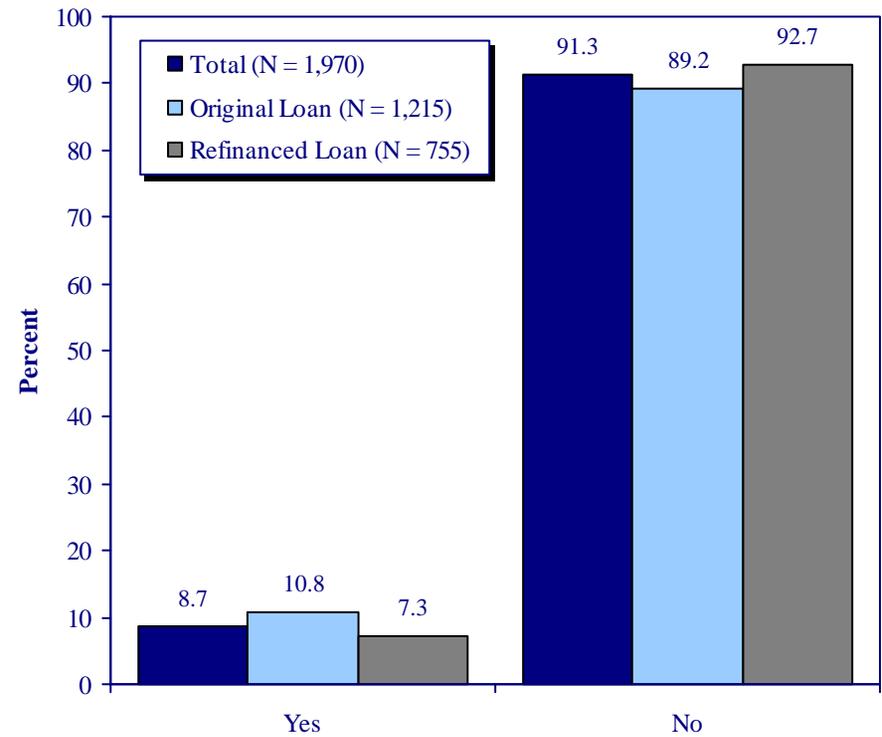
# Frequency of Responses – Appraisal

**Q40. What type of contact did you, or a member of your family, have with the appraiser?  
(Mark all that apply.)**

**Q41. Did you have any problems with the appraiser?**

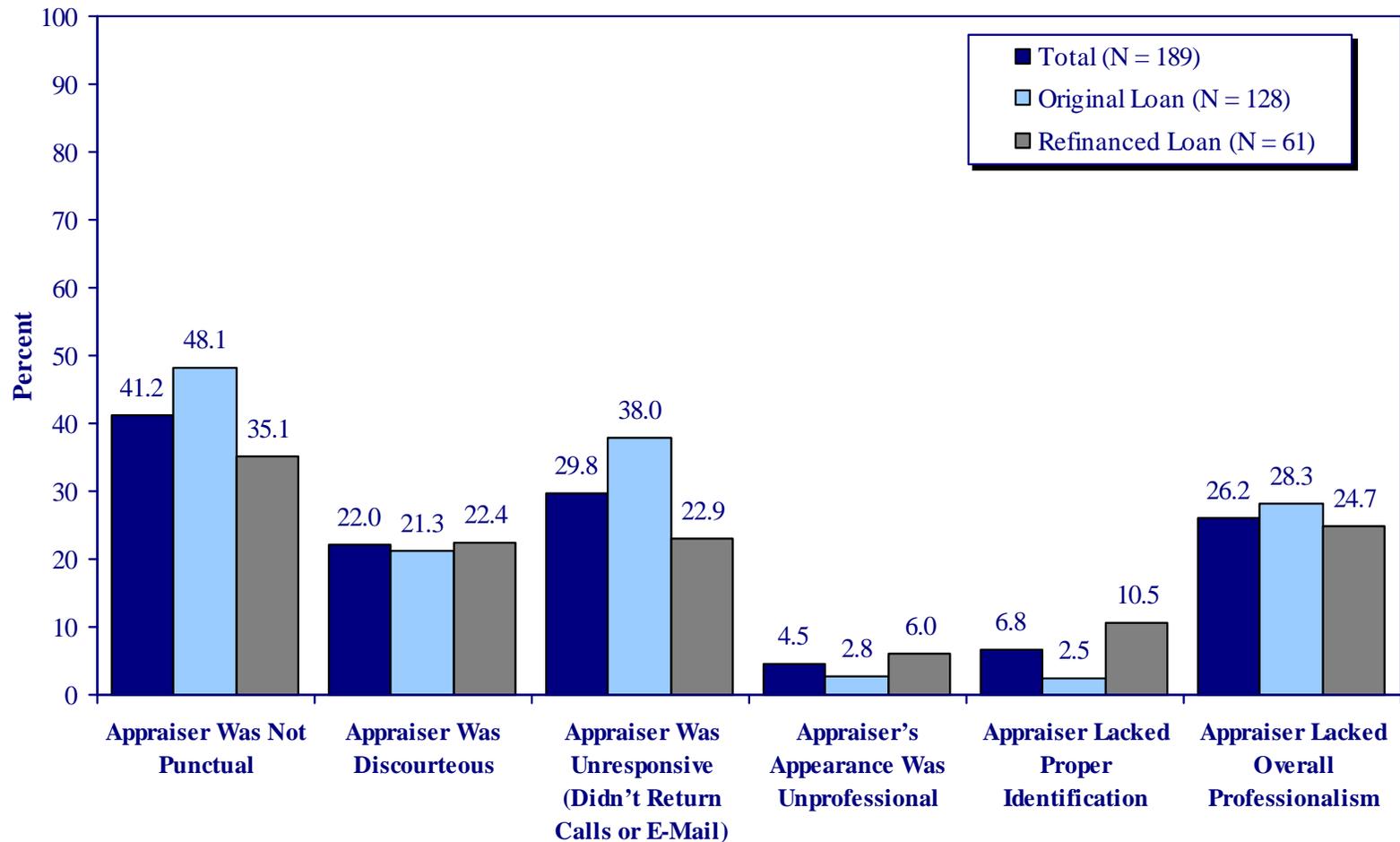


Note: As a respondent could give more than one response, the percentages do not add to 100.



# Frequency of Responses – Appraisal

Q42. What specific problems did you have with the appraiser? (Mark all that apply.)

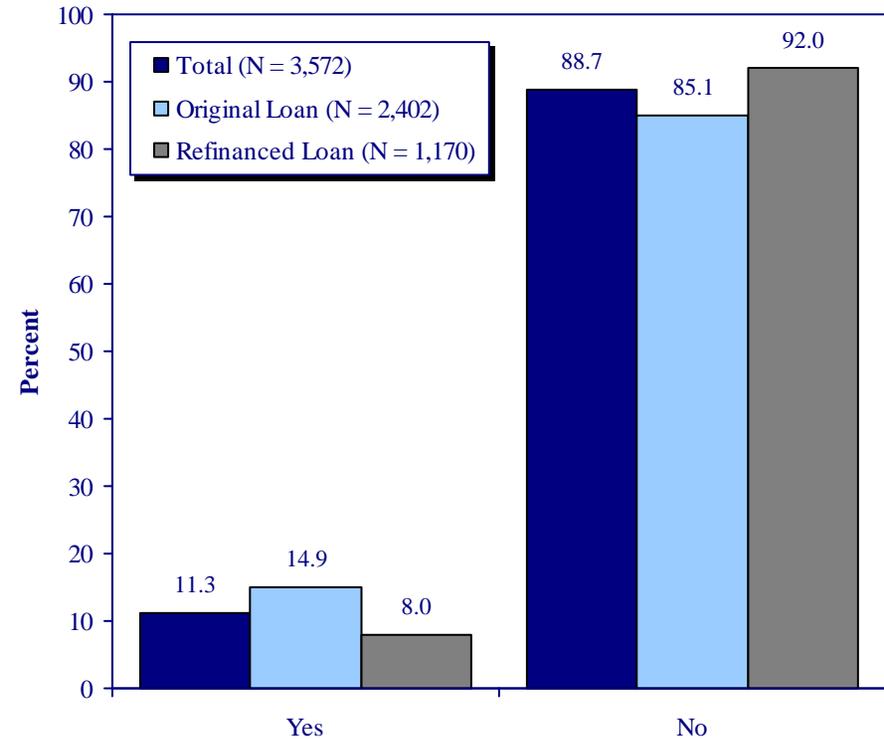
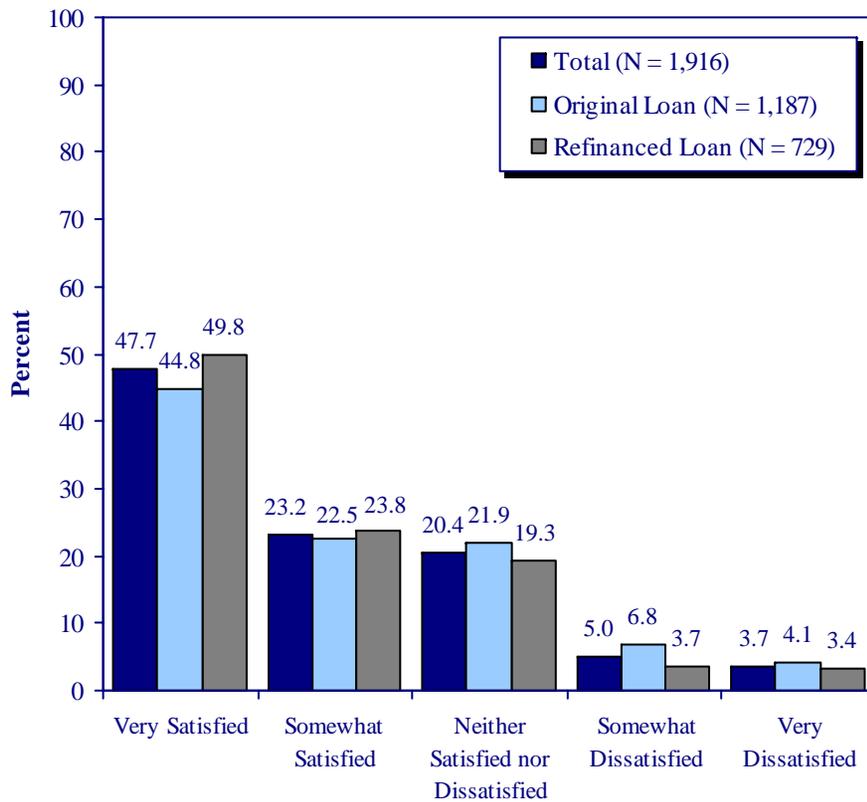


Note: As a respondent could give more than one reason, the percentages do not add to 100.

# Frequency of Responses – Appraisal

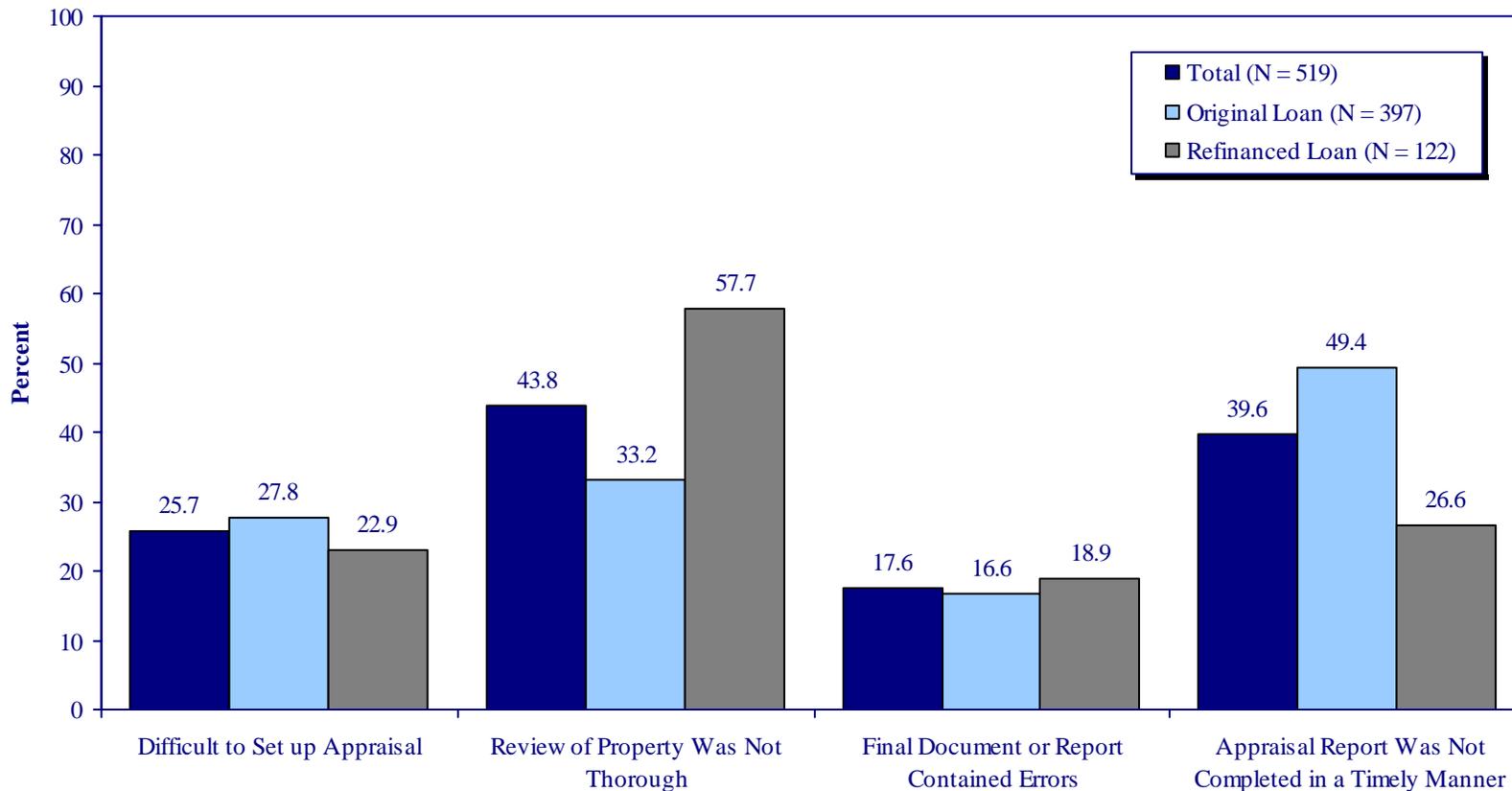
**Q43. Overall, how satisfied were you with the appraiser?**

**Q44. Did you have any problems with the appraisal process?**



# Frequency of Responses – Appraisal

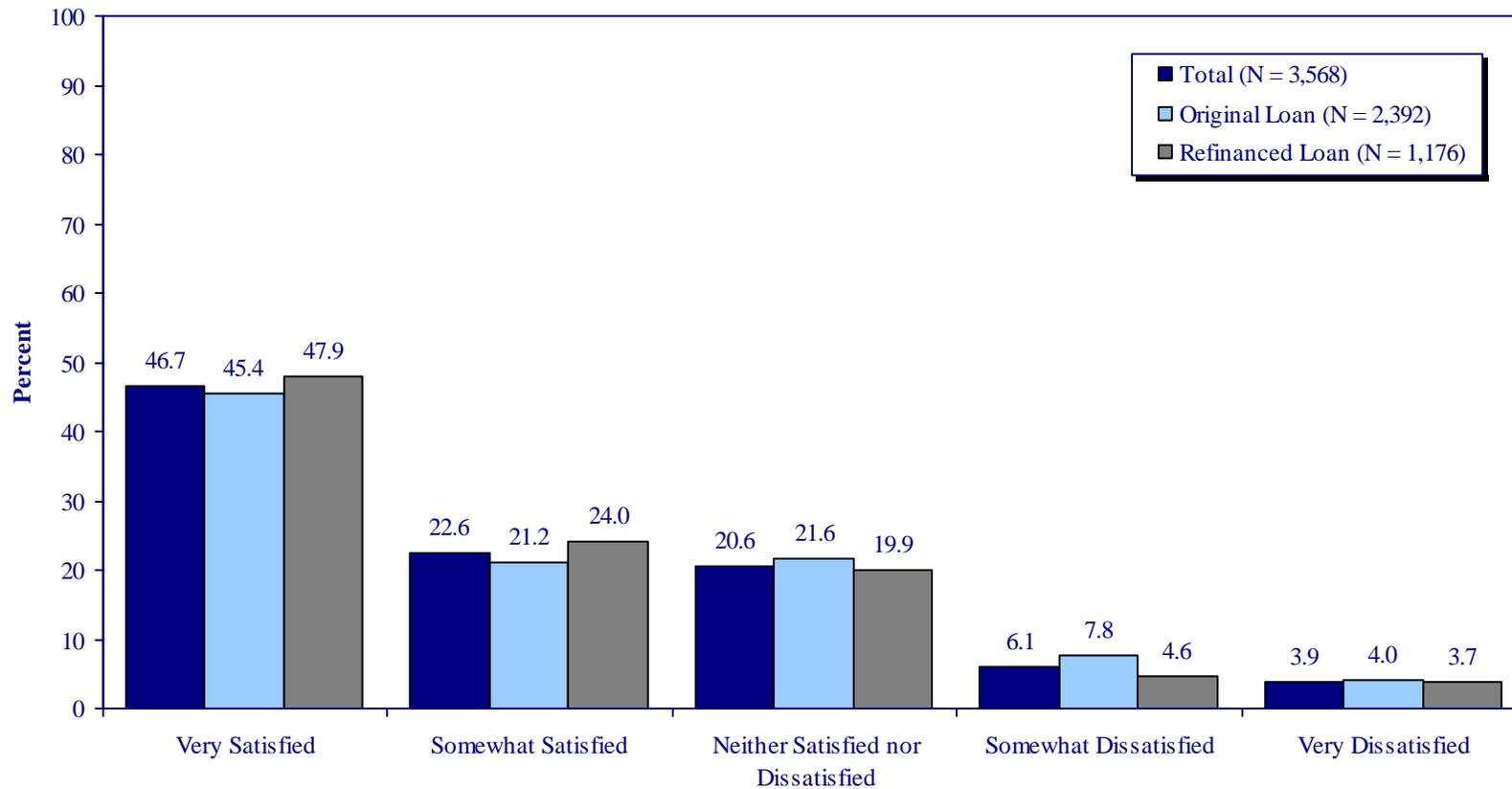
Q45. What specific problems did you have with the appraisal process? (Mark all that apply.)



Note: As a respondent could give more than one reason, the percentages do not add to 100.

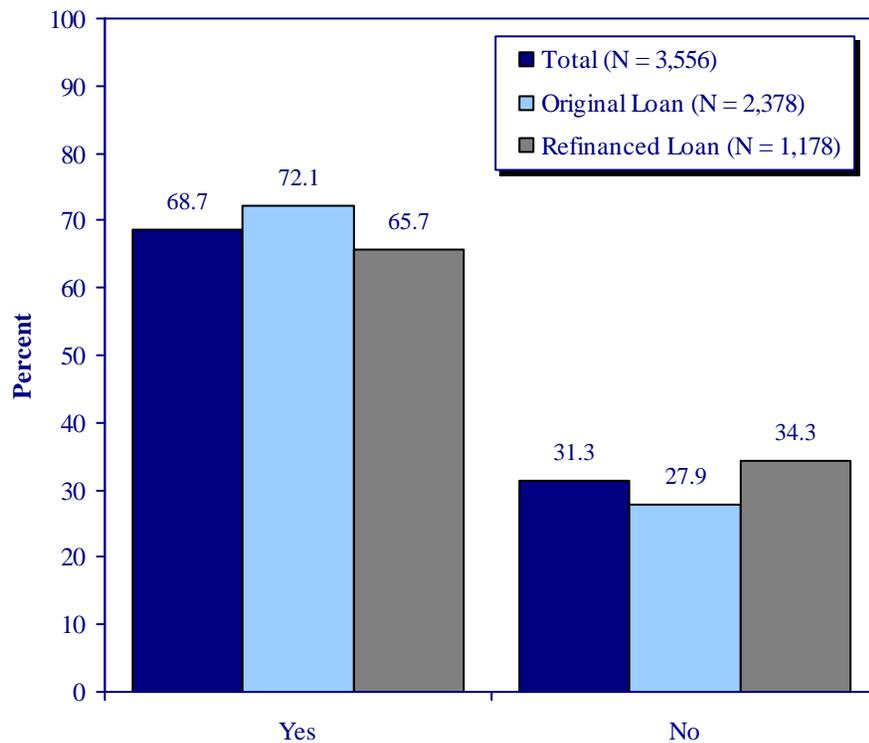
# Frequency of Responses – Appraisal

Q46. Overall, how satisfied were you with the appraisal process?

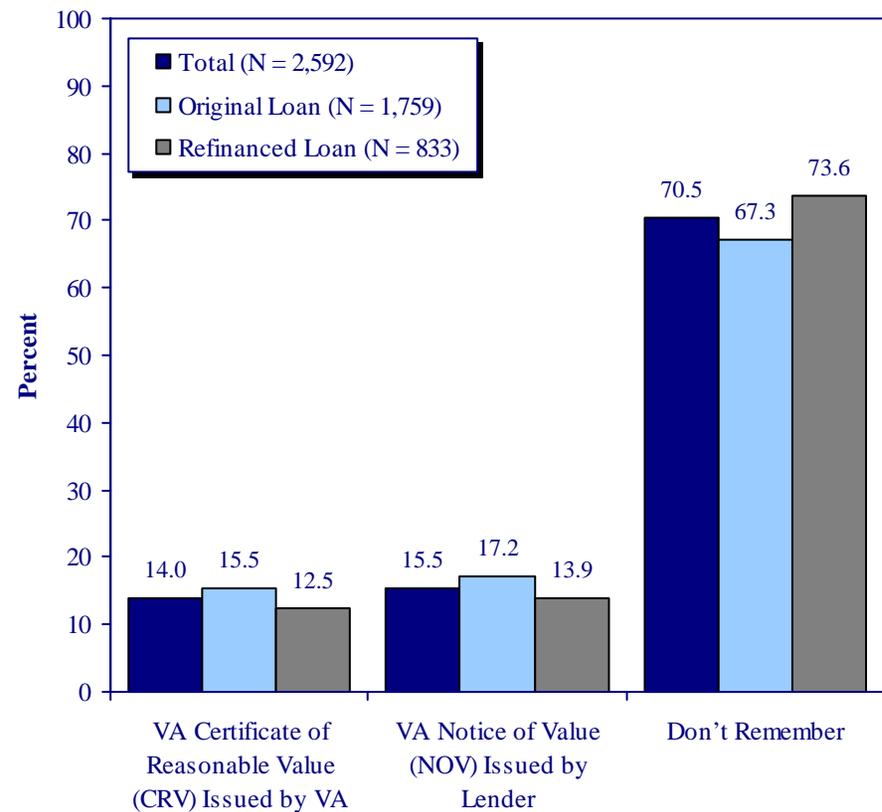


# Frequency of Responses – Appraisal

**Q47. Did you receive a document showing the value estimate and other information about the property?**

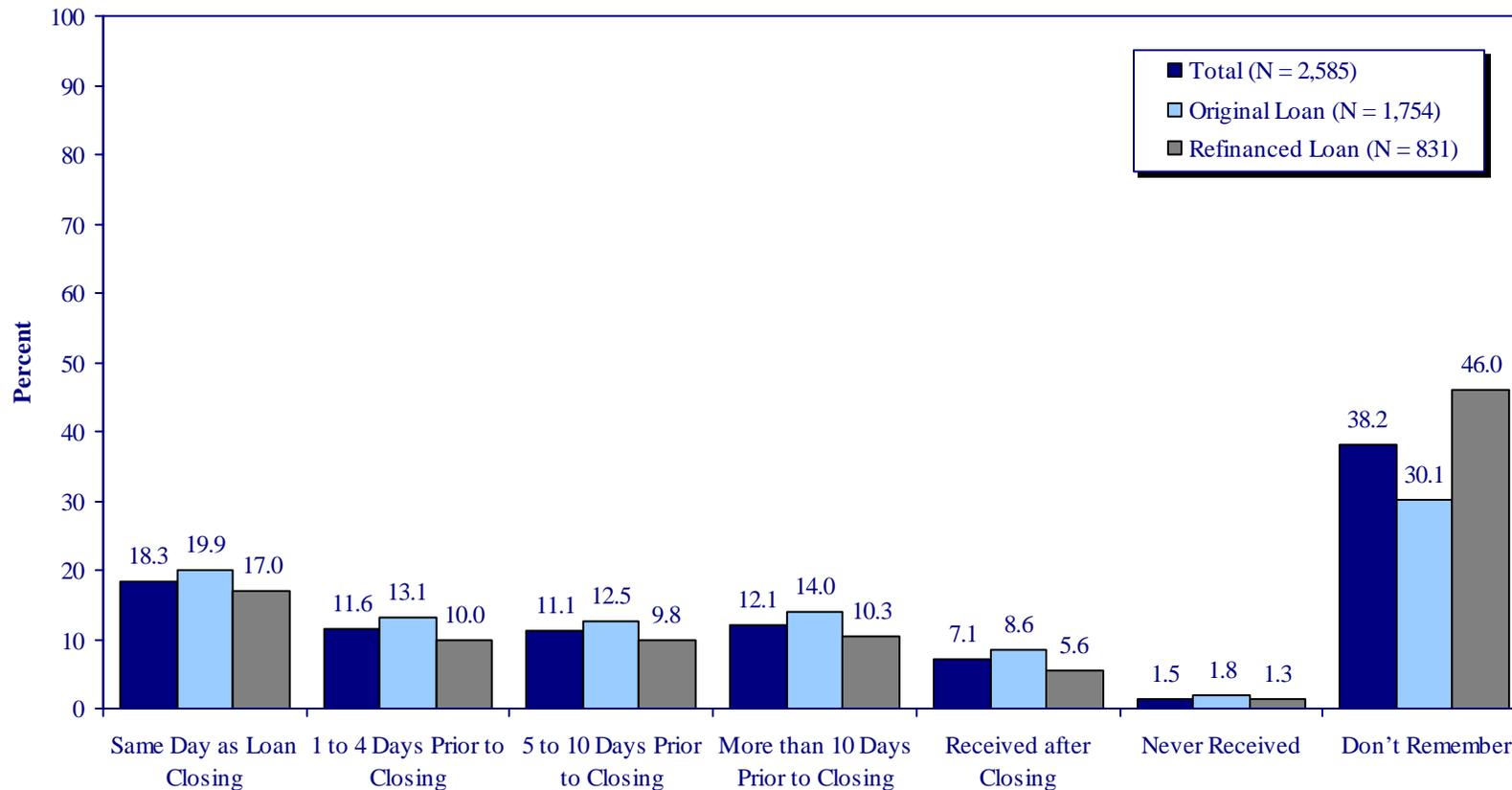


**Q48. Which document did you receive?**



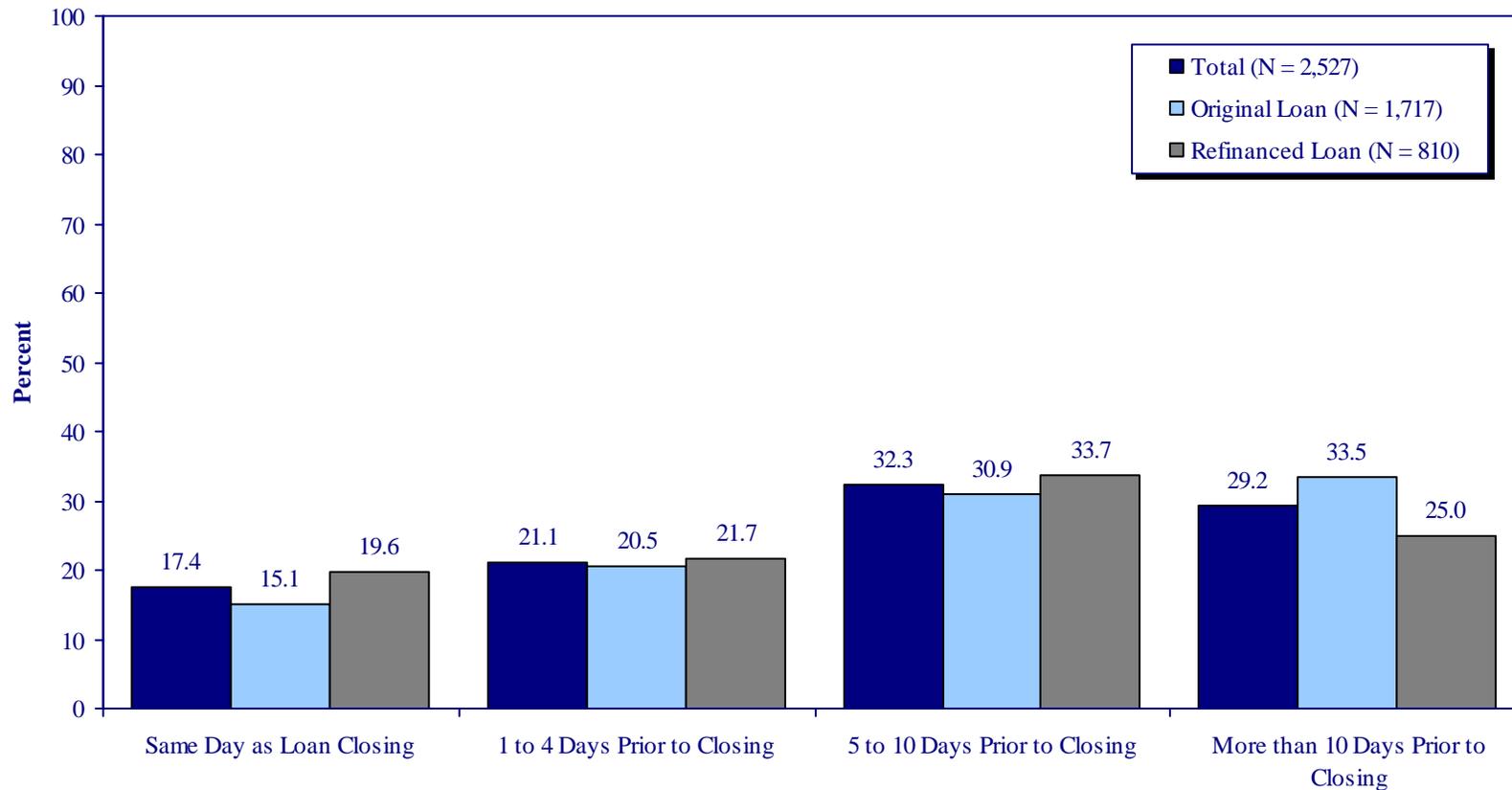
# Frequency of Responses – Appraisal

**Q49. Relative to the closing date, when did you receive this document?**



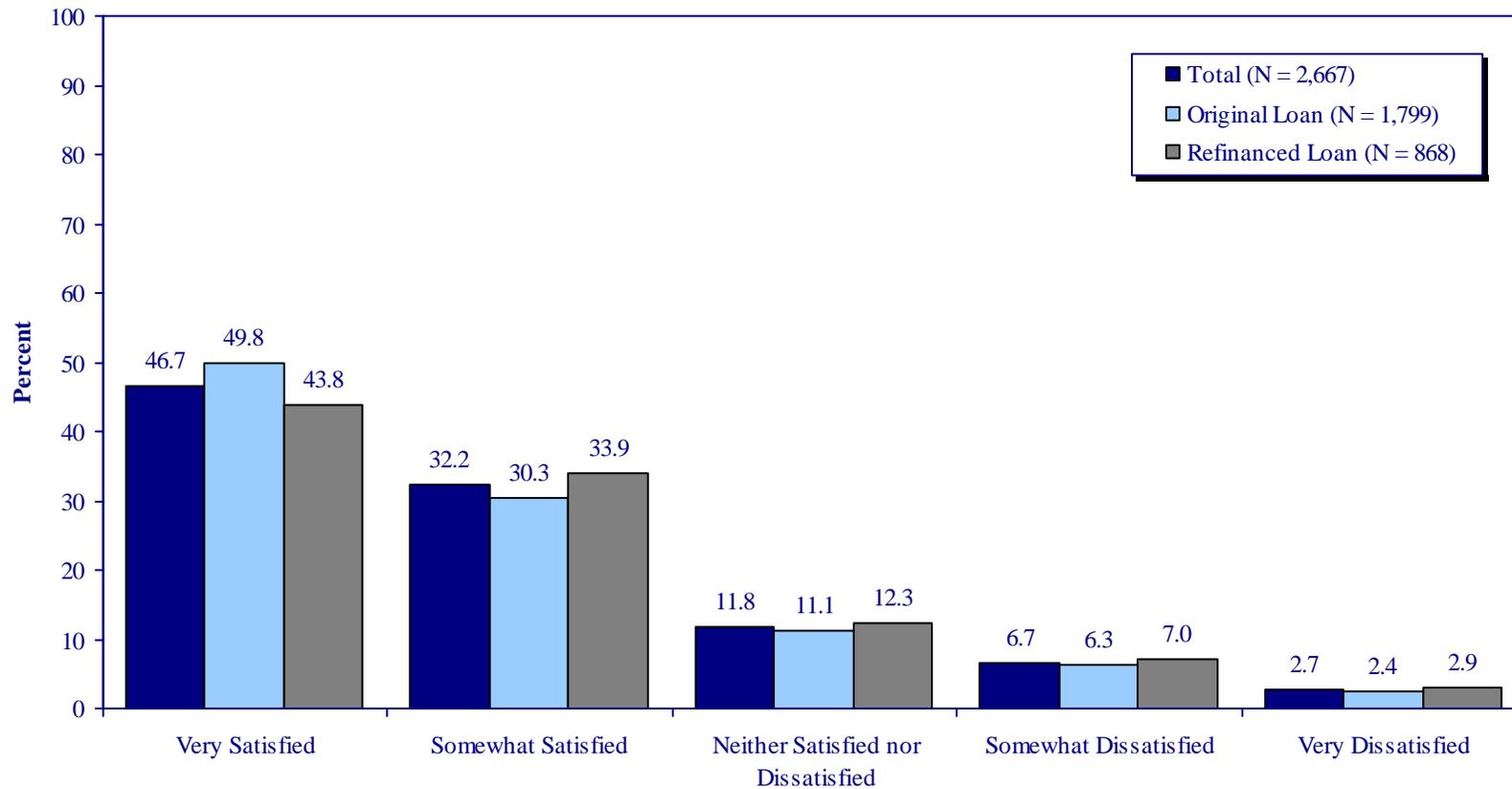
# Frequency of Responses – Appraisal

**Q50. Relative to the closing date, when would you HAVE LIKED to receive this document?**



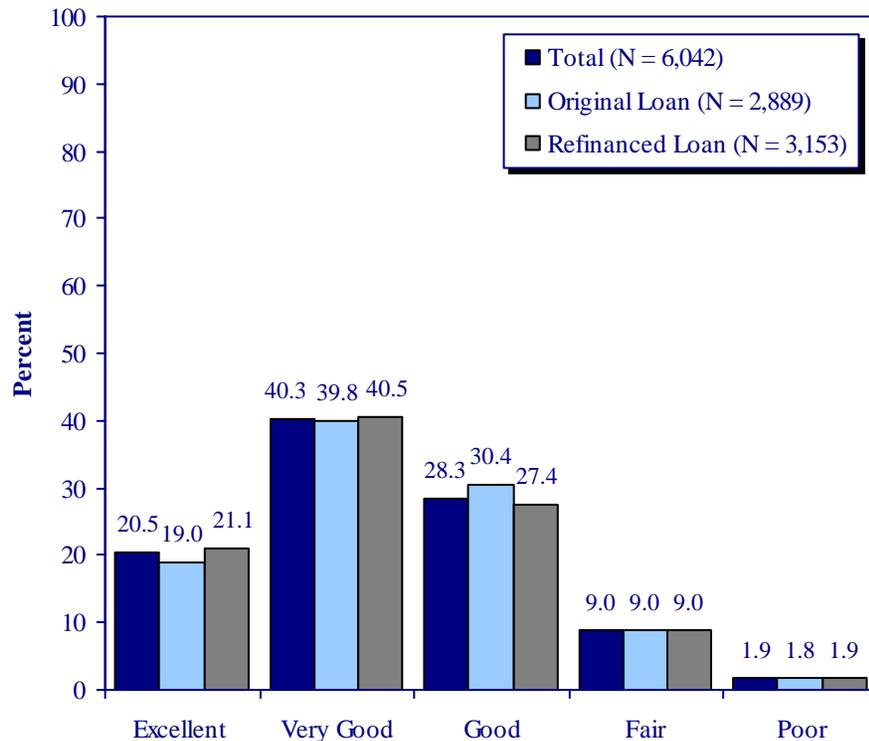
# Frequency of Responses – Appraisal

Q51. How satisfied were you with the appraised value of your property?

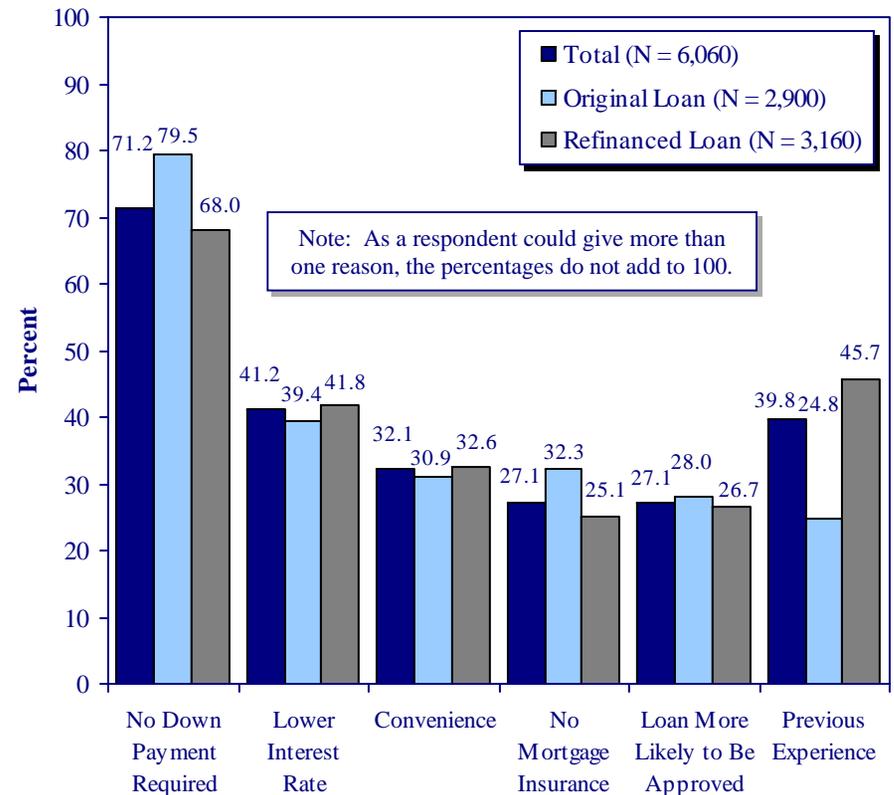


# Frequency of Responses – Overall Impressions

**Q52. Overall, how would you rate your current knowledge of the VA home loan guaranty program?**



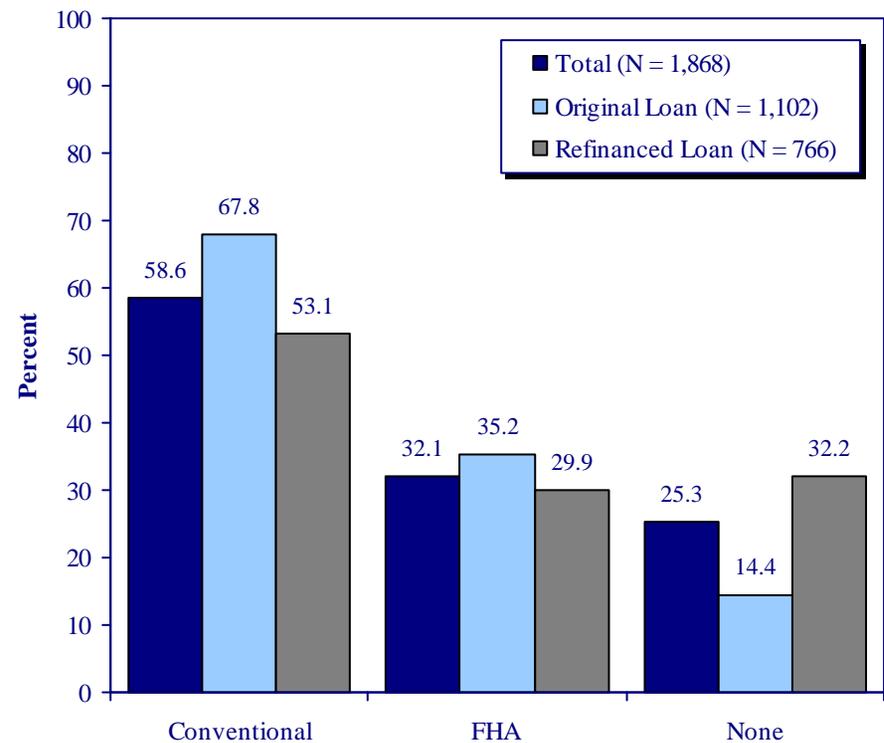
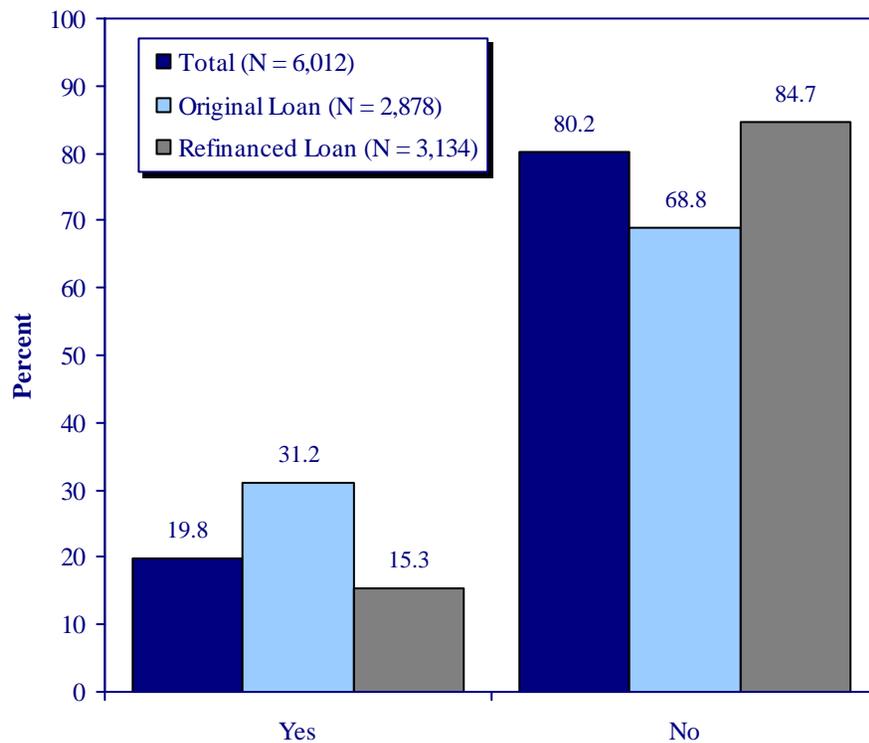
**Q53. Why did you choose to get a VA home loan? (Mark all that apply.)**



# Frequency of Responses – Overall Impressions

**Q54. Did you consider another type of home loan?**

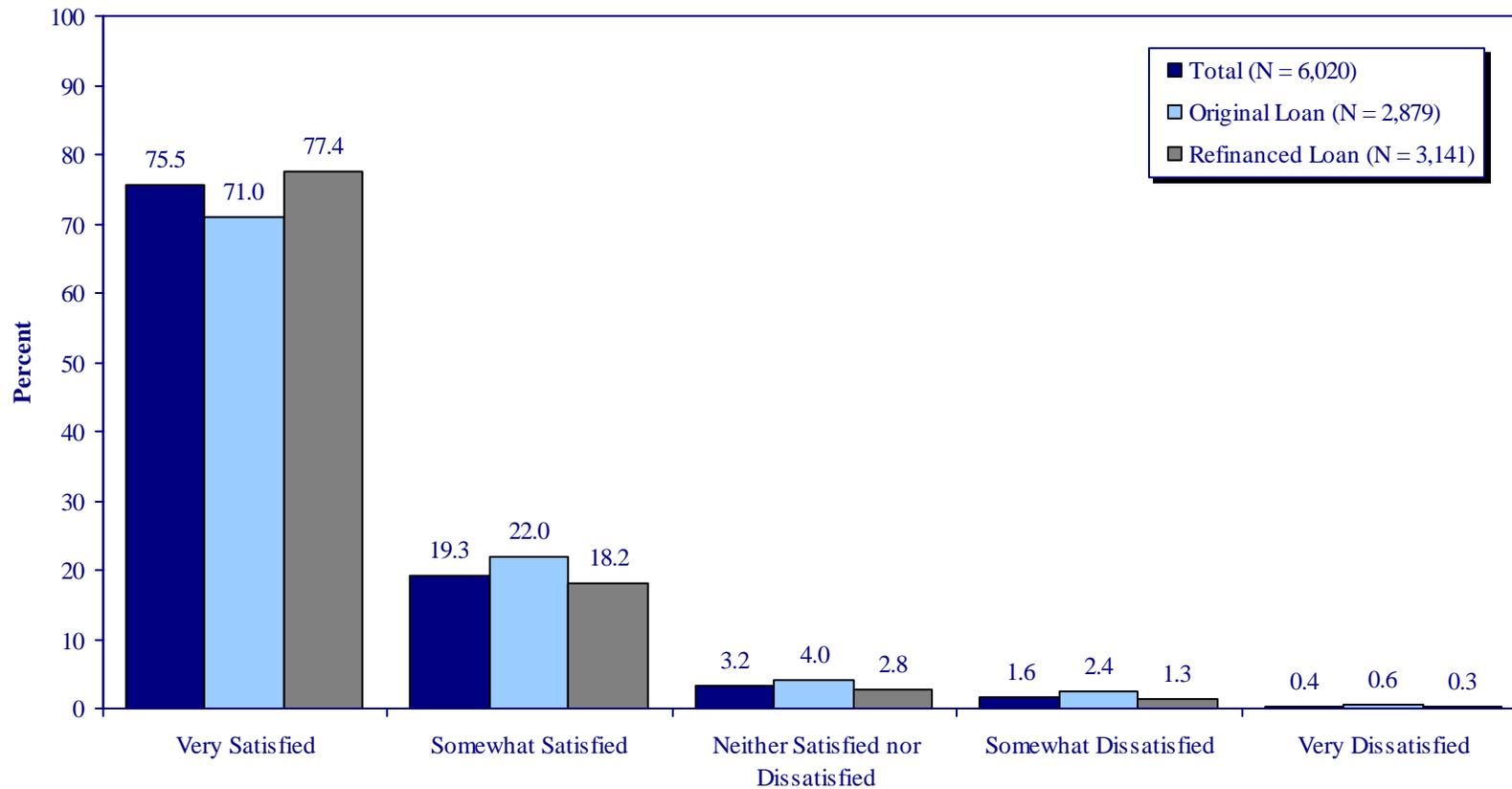
**Q55. What other types of home loans did you consider? (Mark all that apply.)**



Note: As a respondent could give more than one reason, the percentages do not add to 100.

# Frequency of Responses – Overall Impressions

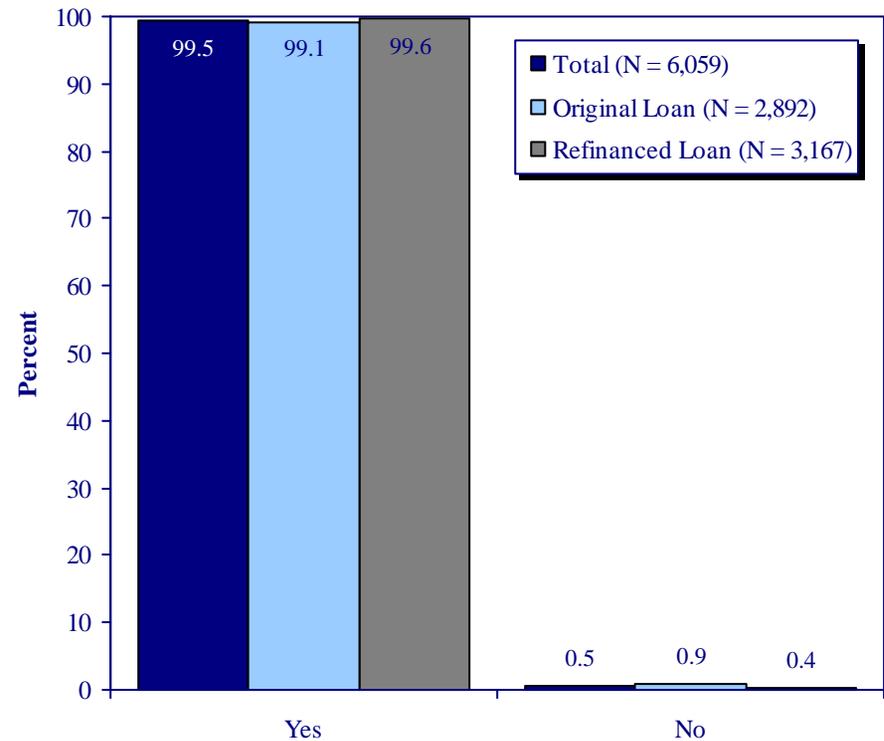
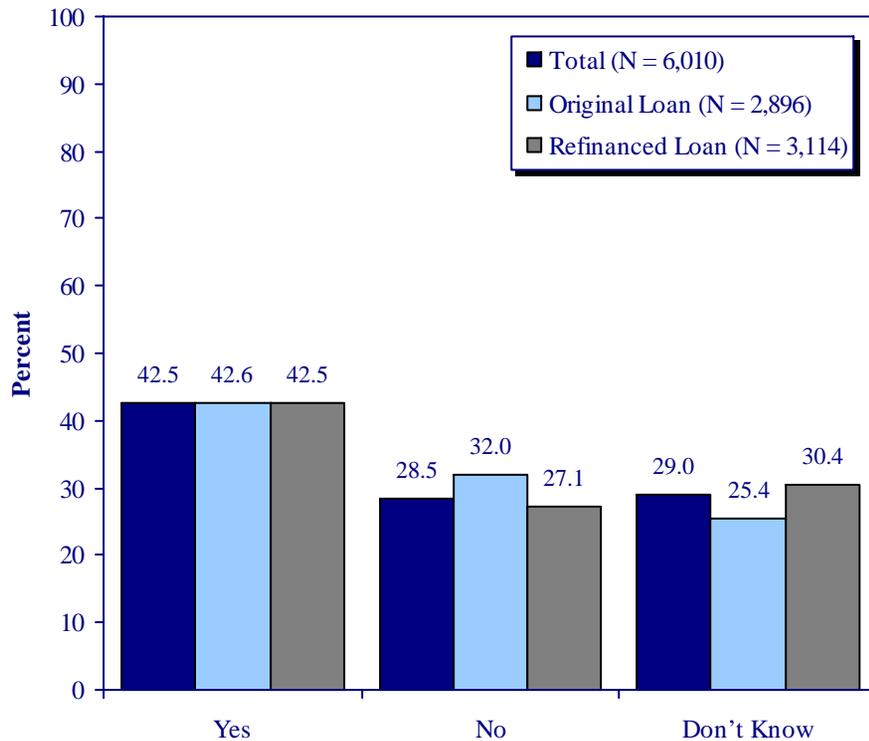
Q56. Overall, how satisfied are you with the process of obtaining a VA home loan?



# Frequency of Responses – Overall Impressions

**Q57. If you had not received a VA guaranteed home loan, would you have been able to purchase your home at this time?**

**Q58. Would you recommend the VA home loan program to other veterans?**



## **Appendix B: Methodology**

# Methodology

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- The goal of the 2003 survey administration was to obtain 400 completed questionnaires per loan type for each of the nine VBA Regional Loan Centers. Assuming a 60.0 percent response rate, approximately 700 names and addresses were needed to reach this goal. The expected response rate was based on the results of the previous years' surveys, where a national average of 53.0 percent of all persons who were sent a questionnaire responded. Approximately 384 responses were needed to yield a margin of error of  $\pm 5$  percentage points, assuming a 95.0 percent confidence interval for each loan type by RLC.
- The potential respondents are persons who recently received a VA home loan or recently refinanced their original VA home loan and whose loans were serviced by the nine Regional Loan Centers. In 2003, the majority of loans processed were refinanced loans (71.7 percent) rather than original loans (28.3 percent). These percentages are a complete reversal from the workload proportion in 2002 (29.8 percent refinanced their loan and 70.2 percent received an original loan).
- The LG service provided a file consisting of loans closed starting from approximately April 1, 2003, to July 31, 2003. The addresses were run through the National Change of Address (NCOA) program to detect undeliverable addresses by the contractor assigned to this survey.
- The names and addresses that were used for the Regional Loan Centers were randomly selected within each loan type (original or refinanced). Any veterans living abroad were excluded from the survey. A Spanish language version of the survey was provided to veterans residing in Puerto Rico.

# Weighting

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## Reasons for Weighting

- When response rates for customer segments are disproportionate to their representation in the entire population, it is necessary to weight the segment responses during analyses to ensure that they remain representative of the entire population.

## Weighting Variables for National VA Home Loan Guaranty Process

- When disproportionate samples are drawn for subpopulations of an overall population, weighting is required in order to report results for the population as a whole. The VA Home Loan Guaranty sample is drawn disproportionately in order to obtain sufficient responses from each Regional Loan Center and type of loan to support statistical analysis at both these levels. In order to aggregate the samples to the national level, the sample must be weighted appropriately to reflect the different volumes of cases across these two levels.
- We have used Regional Loan Center and type of loan as weighting variables.

# Questionnaire Mailing Protocol

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- The questionnaire design consisted of five mailings to individuals included in the sample. These included: 1) a pre-notification letter telling potential respondents that they should expect to receive a mailed survey questionnaire; 2) a copy of the questionnaire, including a standard return envelope; 3) a reminder/thank you postcard; 4) a second copy of the questionnaire mailed to those who had not yet responded; and 5) a reminder/thank you postcard following the second mailing. Examples of these materials appear in Appendix C.
- The questionnaires were sent in window envelopes which displayed the veteran's address. Each envelope contained a cover letter on VBA letterhead, a questionnaire, and a postage-paid envelope addressed to Pearson NCS, the subcontractor administering the survey. Toll-free numbers for both Pearson NCS and the VA were also included to help field respondents' questions.
- These mailings took place on the dates indicated below.

Mail Survey Schedule	
Prenotification Letter	November 26, 2003
First Questionnaire	December 8, 2003
First Reminder Postcard	December 17, 2003
Second Questionnaire	January 27, 2004
Second Reminder Postcard	February 2, 2004
<b>Fieldwork Completed</b>	<b>February 24, 2004</b>

# Response Rates

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- The response rate is calculated by dividing the number of completed questionnaires by the number of eligible questionnaires. Generally, a response rate of 70.0 percent or more is considered excellent, 60.0 to 69.0 percent is considered very good, 50.0 to 59.0 percent is considered good, 40.0 to 49.0 percent is considered fair, and any response rate less than 40.0 percent is considered poor.
- Eligible questionnaires are those which were returned completed, which were returned blank or incomplete, or which were returned with an indication that the recipient had not recently had a VA home loan approved or which were not returned.
- Ineligible questionnaires are those which were returned undeliverable, which were returned with an indication that the respondent was unable to complete the survey, or which were returned with an indication that the recipient was deceased.

Response Rates by Year	
Year	Response Rate (Percent)
2003	49.6
2002	53.0
2001	56.2
2000	62.0

# Response Rates (continued)

National Response Rate	
Total Sample Mailed	12,600
Total Ineligible	304
Undeliverables	302
Deceased	2
Total Eligible	12,296
Blank or incomplete	25
Did not have VA home loan approved	30
Refusal (Did Not Return)	6,143
<b>Total Completed</b>	<b>6,098</b>
<b>Response Rate</b>	<b>49.6%</b>

Response Rates	
Manchester, NH	53.2%
Cleveland, OH	52.8%
Roanoke, VA	46.9%
Atlanta, GA	47.9%
St. Petersburg, FL	50.4%
St. Paul, MN	53.2%
Houston, TX	48.6%
Denver, CO	48.2%
Phoenix, AZ	45.1%
<b>National Response Rate</b>	<b>49.6%</b>