

2025 Consumer Perceptions and Sentiment Survey Report

11 November 2025



Executive Summary

The 2025 Consumer Sentiment survey involved an online survey of over 1,500 residential and small business consumers (i.e. bill payers or decision makers). The survey was conducted between 14 July and 6 August 2025 and highlights the following:

Affordability and financial pressure

Electricity affordability remains a significant issue for both residents and small businesses. Around four in 10 residents and one in three small businesses are not confident they can afford their power bills over the next six months.

Low awareness of support

Confidence in accessing support when struggling to pay electricity bills is low. Fewer than one-third of residents and small businesses are confident that help is available or that they know where to go if unfairly treated by their power company. This represents both a consumer vulnerability and a reputational risk for the sector.

Engagement and Segmentation

Engagement with monitoring and managing electricity use is uneven. A minority actively monitor usage and feel more empowered, but many do not. Segmenting residents and small businesses by engagement and affordability highlights four distinct groups:

- **Comfortable / Engaged** who are confident and in control,
- **Comfortable / Less-engaged**, who are unconcerned but at risk of inertia,
- **Pressured / Engaged** who try hard but still struggle, and
- **Pressured / Less-engaged** who are both disengaged and under pressure.

Using these segments to guide policy development and communication will help ensure key consumer differences are taken into account.

Switching and market dynamics

Switching activity remains relatively low, with over half of residents and businesses never having changed power companies. However, personalised information about savings and services significantly increases the likelihood of switching.

Use of comparison tools

There is a clear opportunity to strengthen the information available to consumers, enhancing confidence and facilitating switching.

Reliability and security of supply

Current experience of supply is broadly positive, with most rating their local electricity as reliable. However, long-term confidence is weaker: only a minority feel assured that New Zealand will generate enough power to meet future demand. Key risks identified include insufficient generation capacity, ageing infrastructure, and climate-related disruptions.



Contents

Background - page 4

- Objectives - 5
- Methodology - 6
- Highlights - 8
- Key differences - 10

Residential Consumers - page 11

- Affordability and protection - 17
- Switching and competition - 28
- Efficiency and engagement - 41
- Security and reliability - 50

Small Business Consumers - page 56

- Affordability and protection - 62
- Switching and competition - 68
- Efficiency and engagement - 82
- Security and reliability - 91

Background

The Electricity Authority Te Mana Hiko has a statutory responsibility to promote **competition, reliability, and efficiency** in the New Zealand electricity industry, while **protecting** the interests of domestic and small business consumers. Monitoring consumer sentiment is a critical part of this mandate, helping the Authority understand how well the market is delivering fair, reliable, and affordable outcomes for households and businesses, and where additional action may be required.

Since 2021, annual consumer perception and sentiment surveys have provided a consistent measure of New Zealanders' views on electricity supply and market performance. These surveys have measured confidence in competition, affordability, and system reliability, alongside consumers' day-to-day experiences with power companies.

In 2022–2024, the Consumer Advocacy Council (CAC) also commissioned sentiment surveys, which reinforced the importance of affordability and system resilience as priority concerns for consumers. The newly designed 2025 Consumer Perceptions and Sentiment Survey integrates key questions from previous consumer sentiment work by the Authority and the CAC.

The newly designed **2025 Consumer Perceptions and Sentiment Survey** continues this integrated approach. It captures the views of a large sample of residential and small business bill payers and / or decision-makers, ensuring robust representation across household types, regions, and small business sectors.

The survey covers topics of growing importance as New Zealand transitions toward a more renewable energy system and demand continues to rise, including:

- consumer perceptions of the electricity market
- satisfaction with power companies
- affordability pressures
- trust in the sector
- switching behaviour
- awareness of support measures
- confidence in the future resilience of the electricity system.

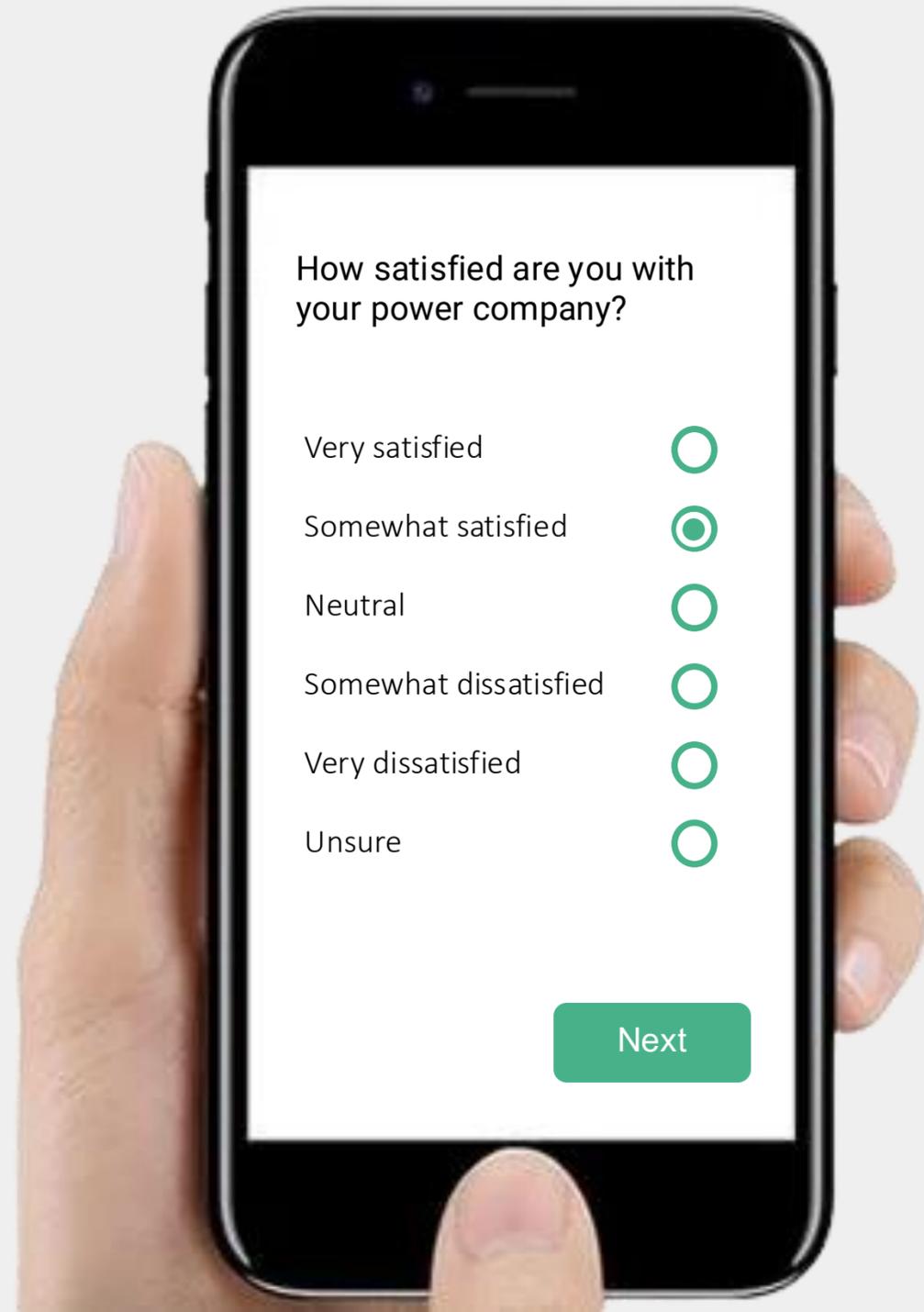
This year's survey establishes a durable baseline for long-term monitoring of consumer outcomes. These data points are a key input into the Authority's accountability reporting and strategic planning, ensuring that regulatory and policy initiatives are informed by the lived experiences of residents and small businesses.

Objectives

The overall objective of the Consumer Perceptions and Sentiment Survey is to provide the Electricity Authority Te Mana Hiko with an evidence base to monitor how New Zealand consumers experience and perceive the electricity market.

The specific objectives of the 2025 survey are to:

- **Create a baseline from which to track consumer sentiment over time:** providing a consistent measure of how residential households and small businesses view affordability, competition, reliability, and trust in the electricity sector.
- **Assess affordability pressures:** understanding how electricity costs are impacting consumers' financial wellbeing, and establish a benchmark for affordability concerns so they can be compared with subsequent years.
- **Measure satisfaction with power companies and services:** capturing experiences of customer service, ease of switching, and perceived fairness of billing and pricing.
- **Gauge confidence in security of supply:** including what risks consumers see to reliability, awareness of options to help reduce risk of supply problems and willingness to try these options.
- **Understand small business perspectives:** identify attitudes and pressures of business consumers, given their unique operating challenges.
- **Support regulatory and policy planning:** ensuring consumer voices inform Electricity Authority initiatives to promote competition, reliability, efficiency, and fairness in the electricity industry.



Survey Design

- Mobile first
- Short, simple wording
- Intuitive and visually engaging
- Pilot tested
- Built-in quality controls

The average length of the questionnaire was **15 minutes.**

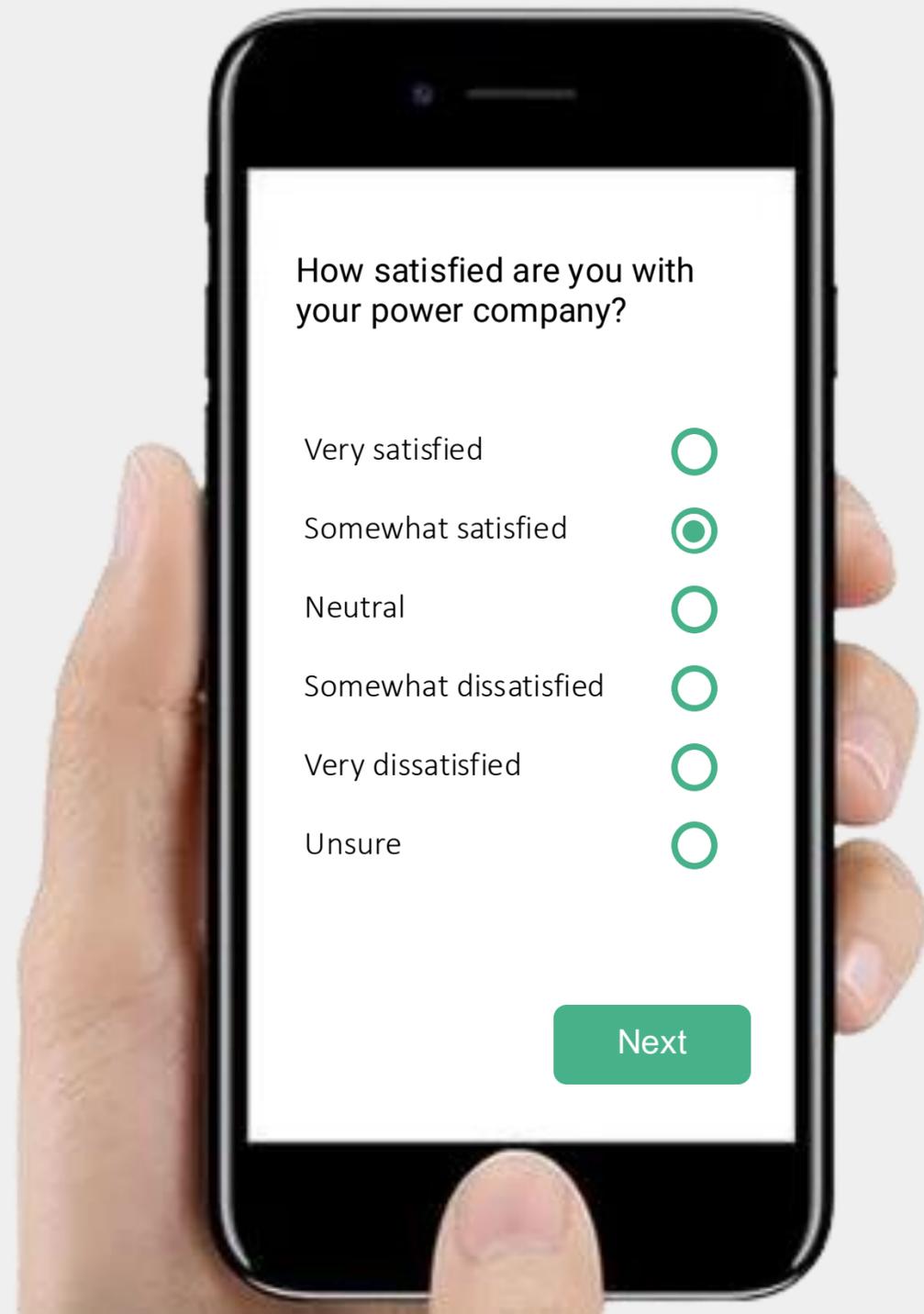
The survey was conducted between 14 July and 6 August 2025

Sample Design

A sample of **1,005** residential and **510** small business consumers (defined as either bill payers or decision makers).

Quotas were established to ensure a broad representation of ages and genders across regions.

The samples (residential and business) were weighted using Stats NZ population estimates.



Sample and reporting detail

- **Target population:** NZ residents and small businesses responsible for bill paying and/or electricity decisions.
- **Sample source:** Recruited from the Dynata national online panel with email and text-based invitations issued to a random selection within strata.
- **Stratification/quotas:** Region, age, and gender quotas aligned to Stats NZ population benchmarks to achieve national coverage (with sample controls to avoid over/under-representation).
- **Eligibility screeners:** Residency, age, and role in electricity decisions.
- **Weighting:** We applied the following RIM (Random Iterative Method) weight variables to both completed surveys (bill payers and decision makers) as well as the disqualified (non-decision makers) dataset:
 - Residents - Age/Gender/Region/Ethnicity/Household size/Location (urban vs rural)
 - Businesses - Business Type/Number of employees/Region
- Once the dataset was weighted to general public proportions, weighted tables were run for demographics based solely on the completed sample (i.e. electricity bill payers/decision makers).
- **NOTE:** Total values may not always equal 100% due to rounding error or % representing multiple responses.

Highlights of key data points from the residential consumer survey

For New Zealand residential electricity consumers we found that:

Affordability & Protection

- Fewer than half of households see their power bill as affordable;
 - 16% of households consider their power bill is not at all affordable or not very affordable.
- 38% are not confident they can manage their bill over the next six months.
- Only 29% are confident that support is available if they struggle to pay, and just 30% know where to seek help if treated unfairly.
- One-third (33%) fit into our definition of vulnerability, lacking confidence in both affordability and support. Females, those between 35-64 years and rural and small town consumers are more likely to fit into this definition.

Switching

- Around 1 in 5 (21%) switched power companies in the past two years.
 - 58% have never switched at their property.
- Switching is primarily motivated by savings (44%) or discounts (27%).
- Only 21% see themselves as likely to switch in the next year, but receiving personalised information about savings lifts this to 38%.
- 43% of consumers met our definition of “inert” (i.e. they have not switched power companies in the past 12 months *and* show little likelihood of doing so in the next 12 months.)

Efficiency & Engagement

- 57% monitor their electricity use closely, while 43% do not.
- Monitoring is linked to greater confidence in understanding bills, appliances, and how to reduce costs. Encouraging energy monitoring and making bills easier to understand presents an opportunity to empower households to switch and to reduce energy costs.
- Segmentation identifies four groups:
 - Comfortable / Engaged (41%) – confident and engaged.
 - Comfortable / Less-engaged (26%) – disengaged but can afford.
 - Pressured / Engaged (17%) – engaged but struggling with affordability.
 - Pressured / Less-engaged (16%) – disengaged and struggling.
- 26% believe they are on a time-of-use plan (noting this number is higher than the actual estimated uptake due to some mis-attribution of other time-based product offers), with over half (57%) of all consumers being open or unsure. And most who do adopt them find them easy to adapt to.
- Almost a third are bundling power with another service, most often internet services.

Reliability & Security of Supply

- Most see local supply as reliable (81%), but only 37% are confident about the long-term security of supply.
- One in four (25%) doubt there will be enough electricity to meet future demand.
- Key risks perceived by consumers:
 - insufficient generation (34%),
 - climate/natural disasters (28%),
 - ageing infrastructure (22%) and
 - cyber attacks (5%).

Highlights of key data points from the **small business decision-maker** survey

For small businesses we found that:

Affordability & Protection

- Just under half view their bill as affordable;
 - 12% say not very or not at all affordable.
- 35% doubt their ability to pay bills in the next six months.
- Only 25% are confident that support would be available if they struggled, and just 32% know where to get help if treated unfairly.
- Almost one-third (31%) fall into the Vulnerable category, lacking confidence in both affordability and support.

Switching

- 21% switched in the past two years; 58% have never switched.
- Main motivators are saving money (43%) and discounts (27%).
- Only 22% say they are likely to switch in the next year, but personalised information lifts this to 33%.
- Nearly half (45%) have neither recently switched nor show signs of switching.

Efficiency & Engagement

- Only 19% monitor usage very closely; one-quarter rarely or never monitor.
- Those who monitor more closely report much higher confidence in understanding usage and bills.
- Segmentation highlights four groups:
 - Comfortable / Engaged (33%) – engaged and comfortable with bills.
 - Comfortable / Less-engaged (38%) – disengaged but can afford.
 - Pressured / Engaged (15%) – engaged but under financial pressure.
 - Pressured / Less-engaged (15%) – disengaged and struggling.
- Only 19% use time-of-use plans, though 42% express interest; most who adopt find them easy to adapt to.

Reliability & Security of Supply

- Over 80% rate their local supply as reliable, though confidence in long-term supply is modest, with 37% being confident.
- 27% are not very or not at all confident that there will be enough electricity to meet future needs.
- Concerns: insufficient generation (38%), ageing infrastructure (25%), climate/natural disasters (23%) and cyber attack (5%).

Key differences between Residential and Small Business consumers

There are minor differences between businesses and residents in this research. This is likely due to most small businesses in the sample being sole operators (76%) working from home (80%). However, the following differences do appear:

- **Small businesses are less likely to monitor their power**
 - Household 'not very or not at all' 15%
 - Business 'not very or not at all' 26%
- **Households are more likely to be on a time-of-use plan and more likely to have made changes**
 - Household 26% vs Business 19% are on TOU
 - Household 42% vs Business 23% made big changes
- **Households are more likely to have bundled internet**
 - Household 24% vs Business 16%
- **Businesses are more aware of solar and battery options to secure supply**
 - Household 59% vs Business 69%
- **There are differing motivations for considering options to secure supply**
 - The household's main reason is to save money
 - The business's main reason is to keep the business safe and comfortable in an outage



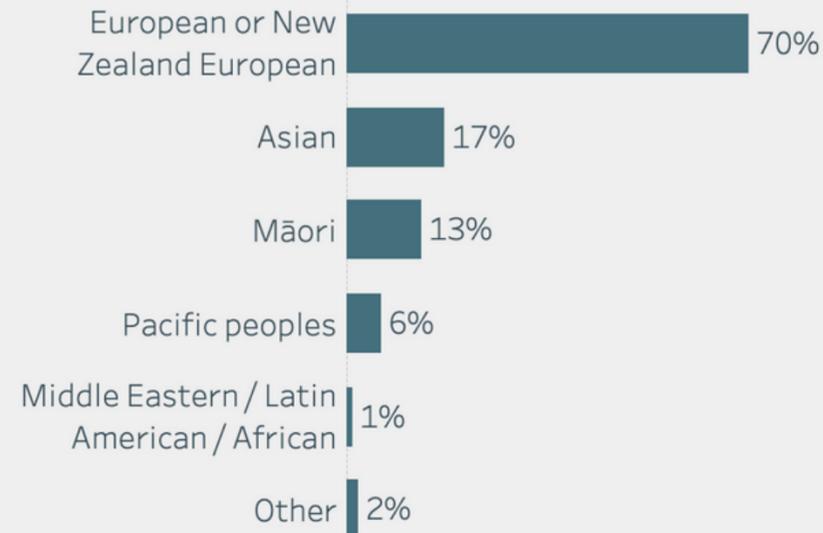
Results for the Residential Consumer Survey





Residential Consumer Sample Profile

Q6 Which ethnic group do you belong to?



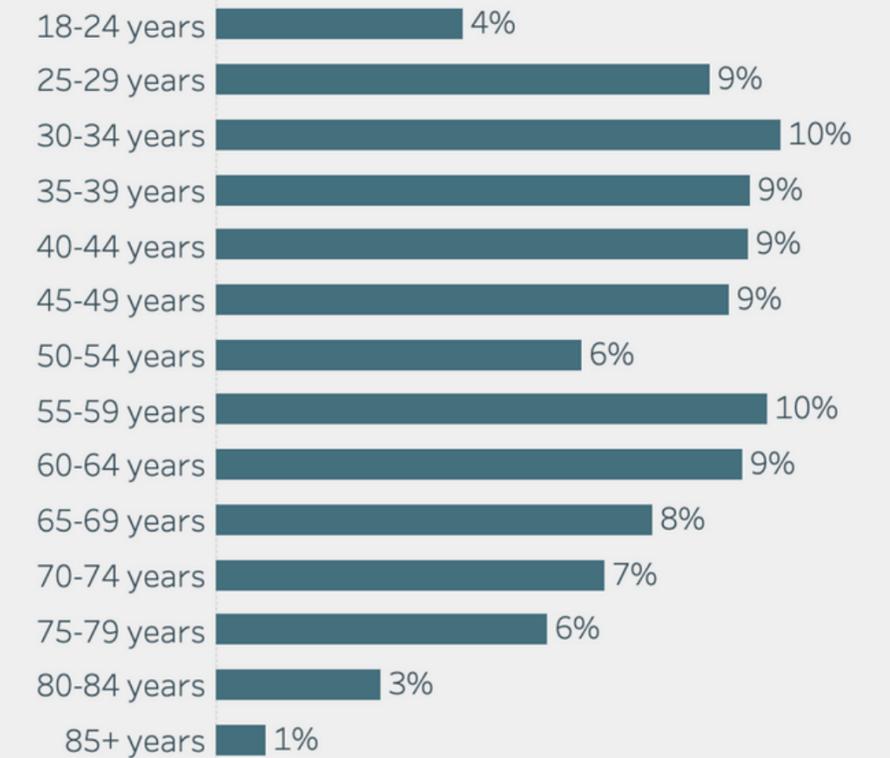
Q5 Which gender do you identify with?



Q44 Which of the following best describes the total annual income of your whole household before tax. Or if you are living in a flat or shared household, what is your personal total annual income?



Q7 Which of these age groups do you belong to?



n = Total sample 1,005 adult New Zealanders

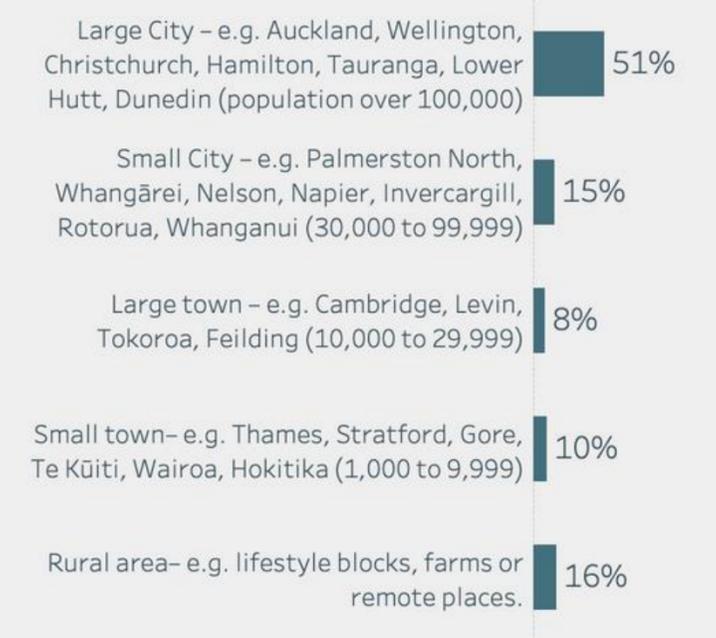


Residential Consumer Sample Profile

Q8 Which of the following regions best describes where you usually live?



Q10 Do you live in a city, town or in a rural area?

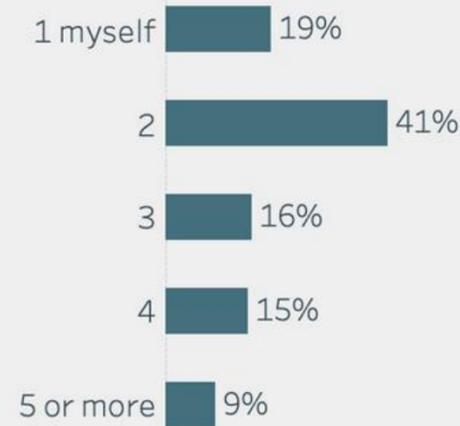


n = Total sample 1,005 adult New Zealanders

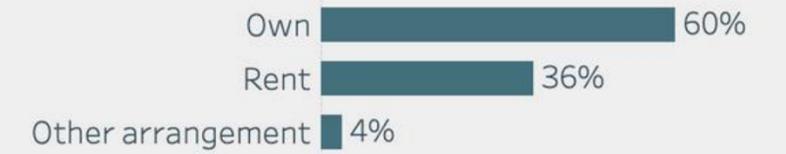


Residential Consumer Sample Profile

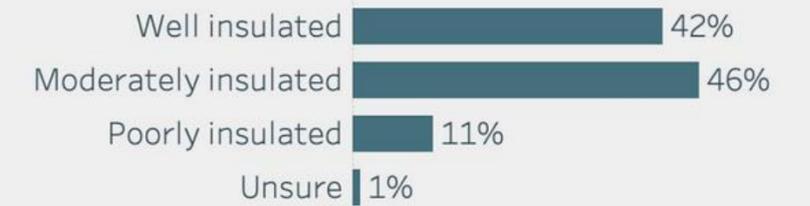
Q39 How many people usually live in your household, including yourself?



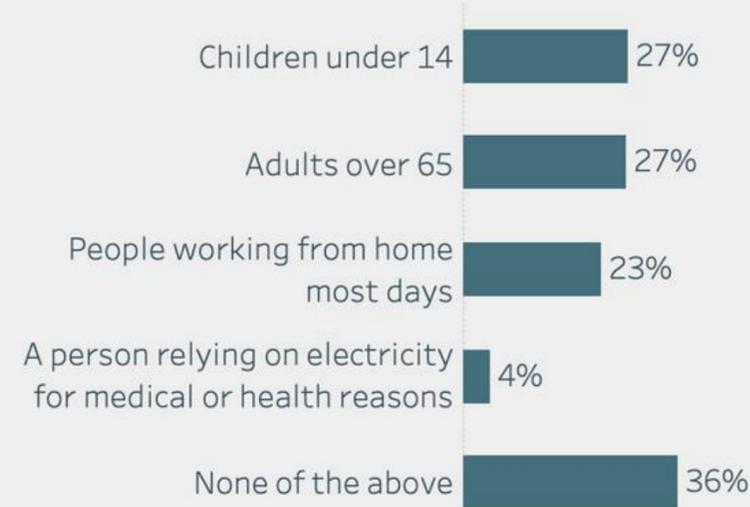
Q41 Do you own or rent your home?



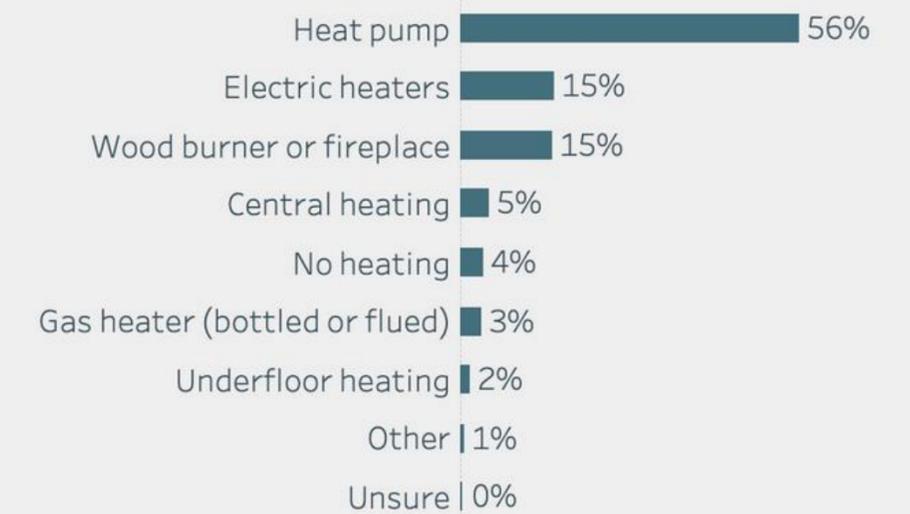
Q42 How would you describe your home's condition?



Q40 Does your household include any of the following?



Q43 What is your main source of heating that your household uses in winter?



n = Total sample 1,005 adult New Zealanders



Key Sentiment Indicators Control Beliefs

 The Navigators





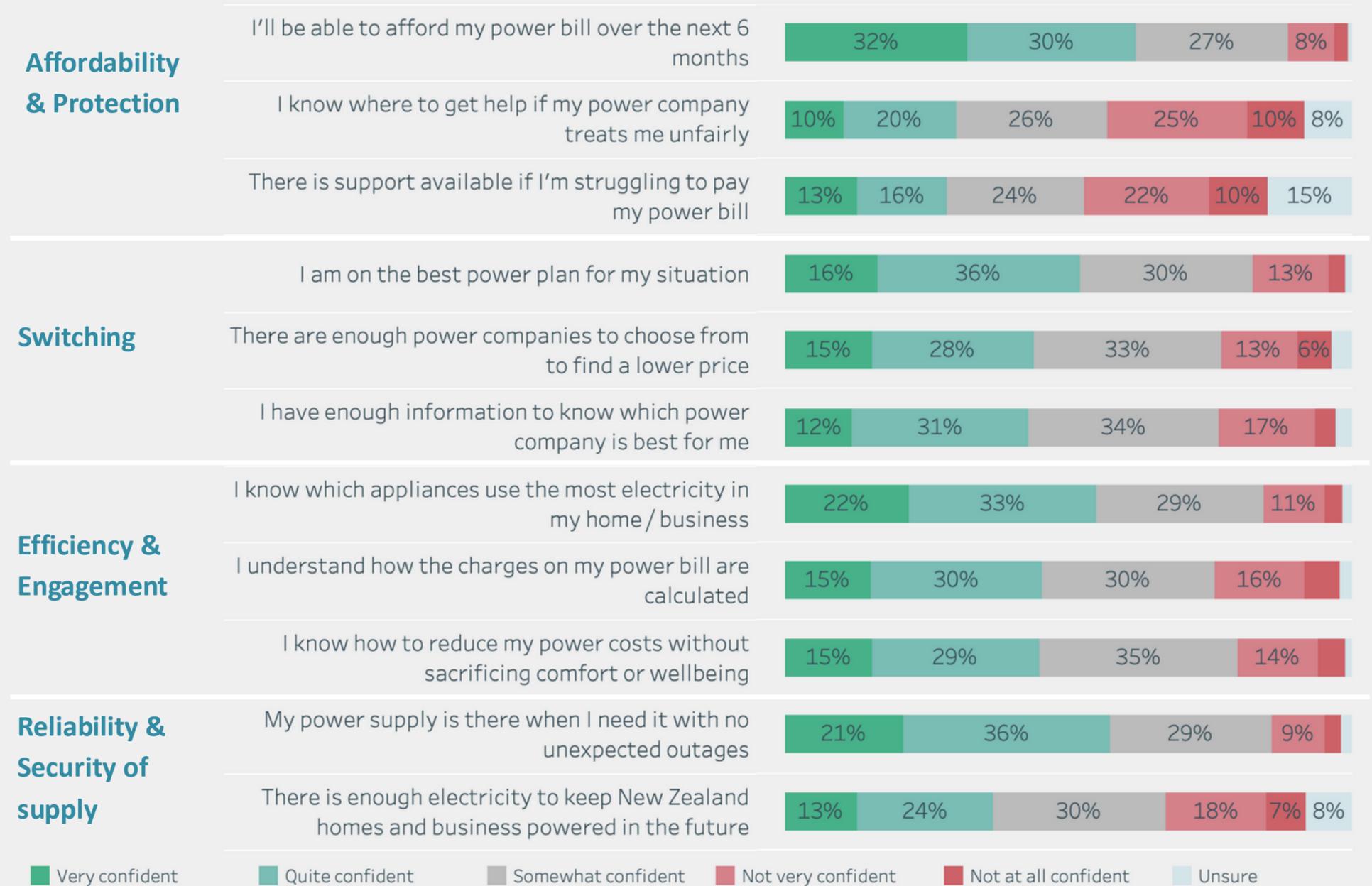
Overall summary: Control beliefs in the residential consumer market

The 11 control belief attributes have been grouped into the key focus areas for the Electricity Authority to provide a high-level overview of residential consumer confidence. For each attribute, respondents were asked how confident they felt.

The areas where confidence is lowest are in the availability of support if they are struggling to pay their power bill or if their power company treats them unfairly. Over 30% of consumers say they are not very or not at all confident in these areas.

Confidence in security of supply is also low, with 25% saying they are not confident that there is enough electricity for future needs.

Q12 We'd like to understand how confident you feel about your electricity situation and the choices available to you. How confident do you feel about each of the following?



n = 1,005 adult New Zealanders



Affordability and Protection



The Navigators



Affordability pressures leave over a third uncertain about paying their power bill

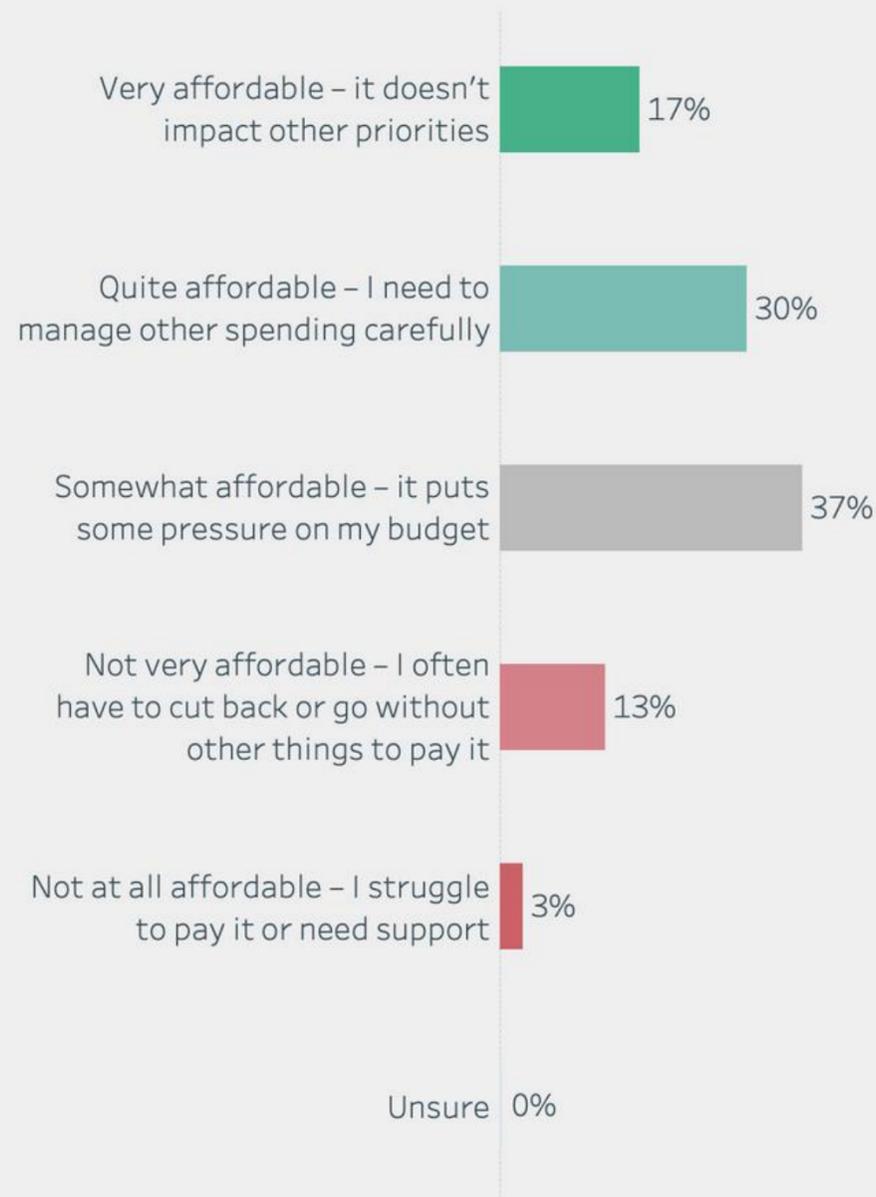
Perceptions of affordability are mixed.

Fewer than half of New Zealanders consider their power bill to be comfortably affordable, 17% say it is very affordable and 30% quite affordable. A further 37% describe it as somewhat affordable, noting it places pressure on their budget, while 16% find it not very or not at all affordable.

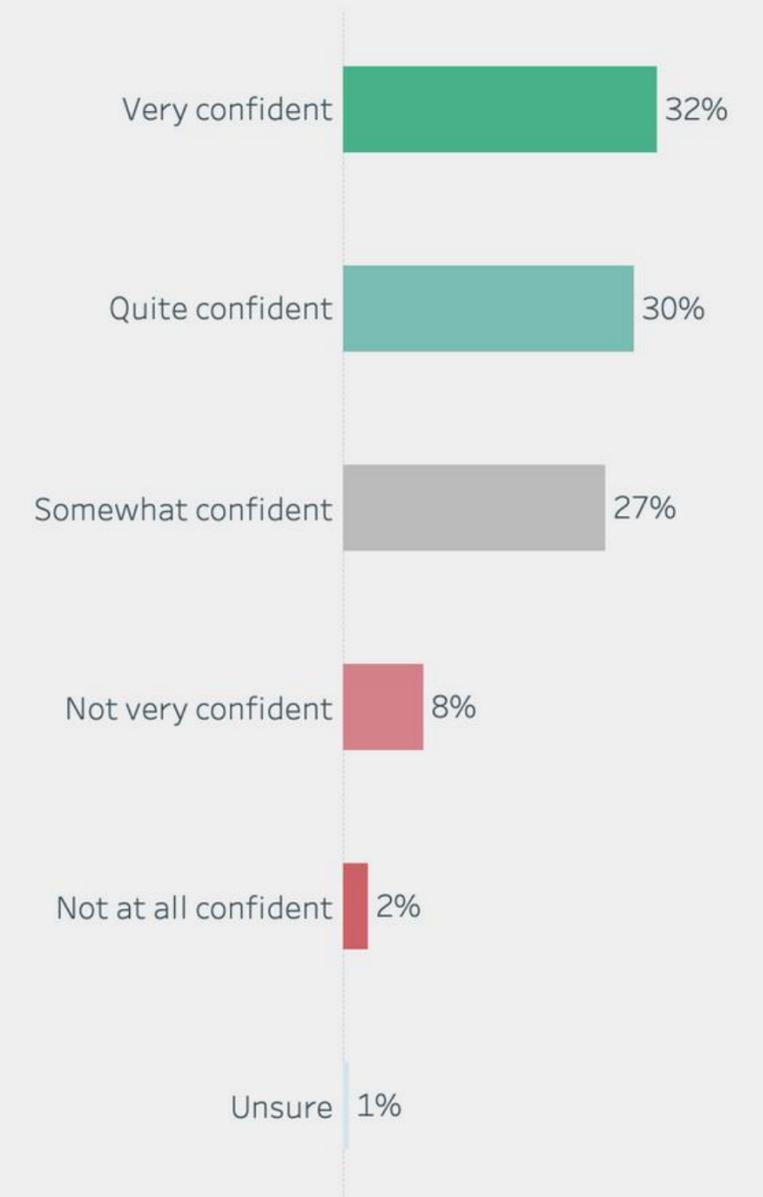
Looking ahead, 62% feel confident they can manage their bill over the next six months, but 38% express doubt. This includes 27% who are only somewhat confident and 10% who are not very or not at all confident.

These results highlight that while most households are coping with the cost of electricity, a significant minority remain vulnerable to affordability concerns.

Q32 Thinking about your power bill, how affordable is it for your household/business in terms of your overall budget and priorities?



Q12 How confident do you feel about each of the following: 'I'll be able to afford my power bill over the next 6 months'?



n = 1,005 adult New Zealanders

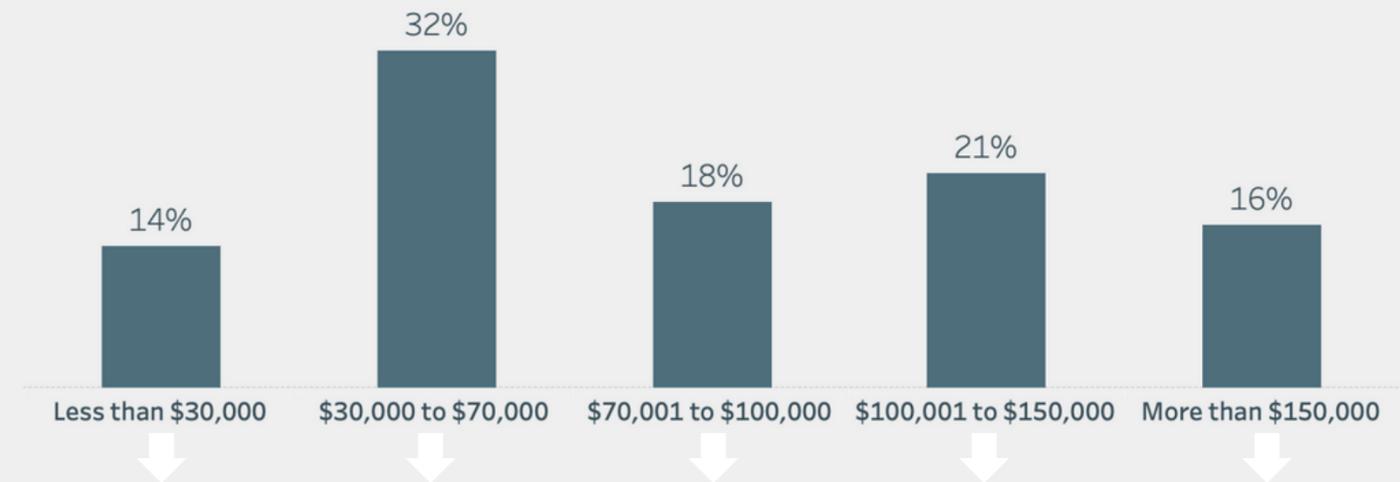


Affordability pressures hit hardest for low-income households but affect all income groups

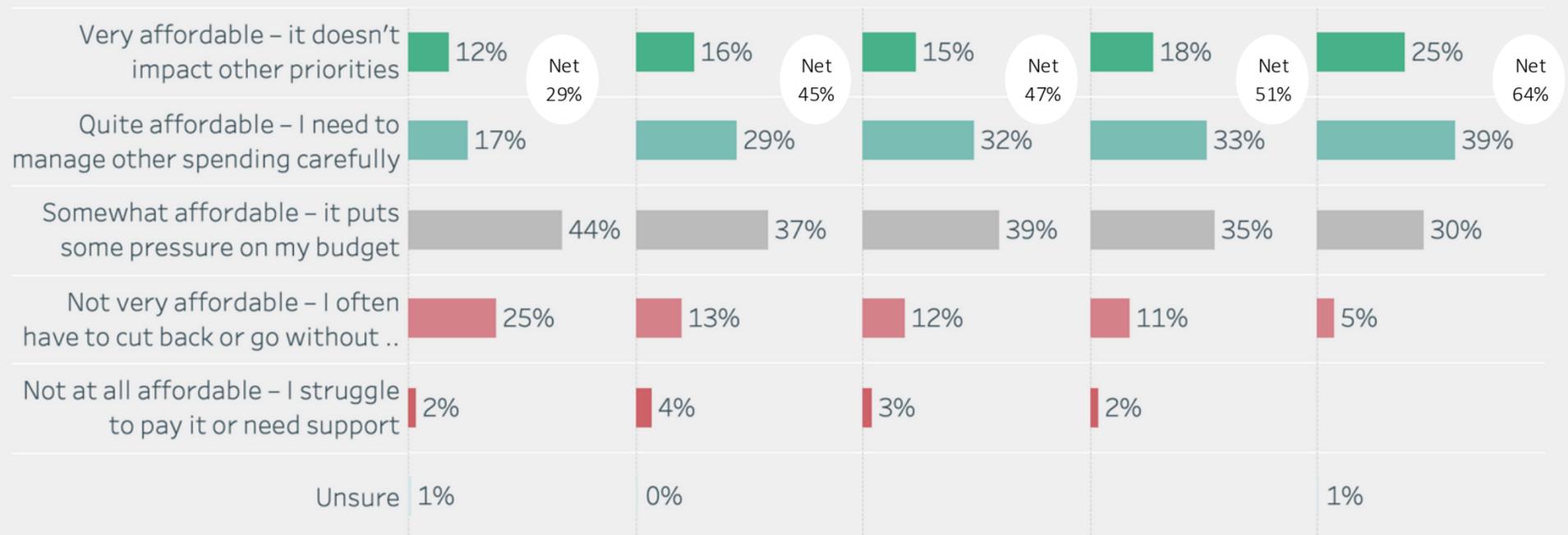
For households earning under \$30,000 annually, power bills create significant strain—27% say their bill is not very or not at all affordable, and a further 44% report it puts pressure on their budget. Fewer than one in three in this group find their bill comfortably affordable.

Financial pressure is not limited to lower incomes. Across middle-income households, around half describe their bill as at best somewhat affordable. Even among the highest earners (over \$150,000), 30% still describe their bill as only somewhat affordable, suggesting that budget pressure due to power bills cuts across all income levels, though with greater intensity for those on lower incomes.

Q44 Which of the following best describes the total annual income of your whole household before tax? Or if you are living in a flat or shared household, what is your personal total annual income?



Q32 Thinking about your power bill, how affordable is it for your household/business in terms of your overall budget and priorities?



n = Total sample 1,005 adult New Zealanders
 n = Household income <\$30k 132 | - \$70k 316 | - \$100k 176 | - \$150k 220 | \$150k + 161



Low confidence in accessing support leaves many consumers vulnerable

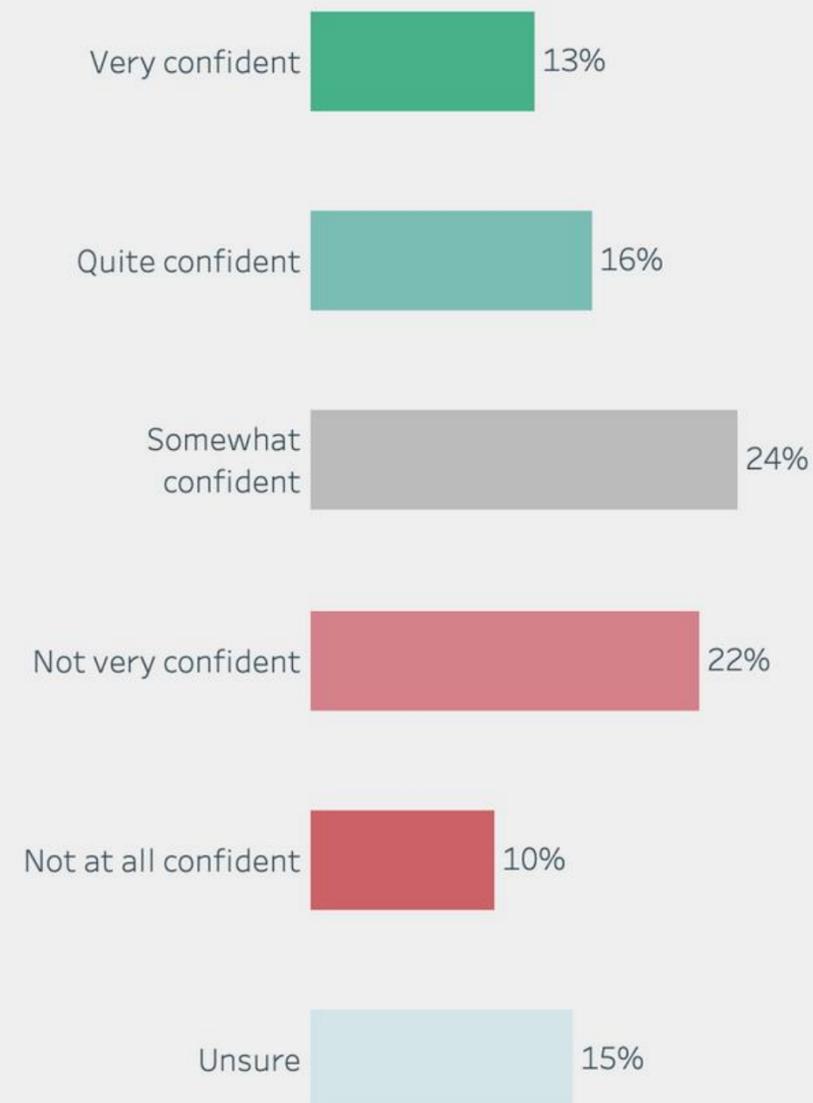
Consumer awareness and confidence in support services are low.

Around one-third of New Zealanders (32%) say they are not very or not at all confident that help is available if they struggle to pay their power bill. A further 15% are unsure, and 24% only somewhat confident. This leaves less than one in three (29%) feeling assured that support exists.

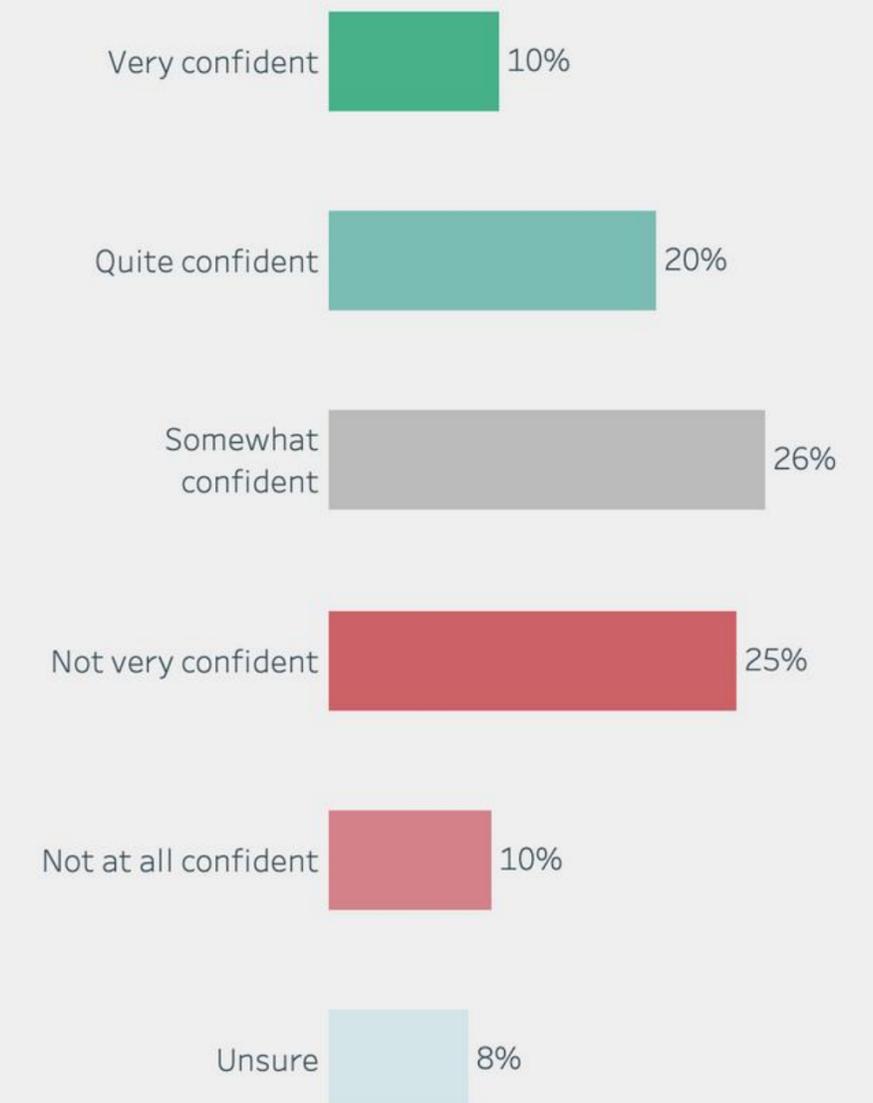
Confidence is also limited when it comes to seeking help if treated unfairly by a power company. More than a third (35%) lack confidence in knowing where to turn, and only 30% feel confident they would know how to access help.

These findings highlight a clear opportunity to strengthen awareness and trust in the availability of consumer support.

Q12 How confident do you feel about each of the following: 'There is support available if I'm struggling to pay my power bill'?



Q12 How confident do you feel about each of the following: 'I know where to get help if my power company treats me unfairly'?



n = 1,005 adult New Zealanders



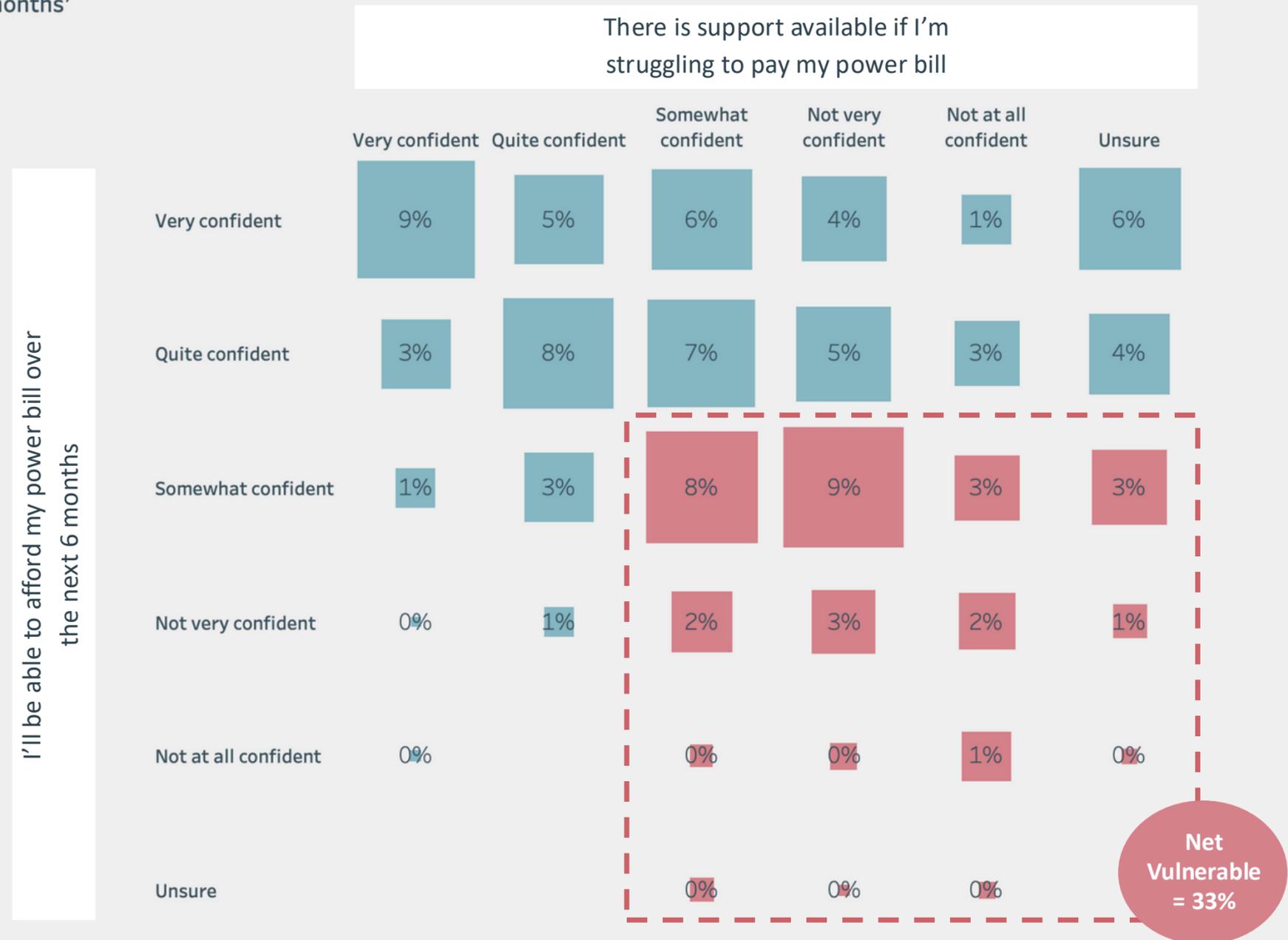
Opportunity to strengthen both affordability and awareness of support

The analysis on this page reveals the overlap between confidence in being able to afford power bills over the next six months and confidence that support would be available if they were struggling to pay their power bill.

A significant group, 33% of New Zealanders, fall into our definition of “vulnerable”, meaning they are at best “somewhat confident” in either their ability to pay or in the existence of support to help them if they struggle.

This highlights a dual challenge: financial strain combined with uncertainty about assistance, leaving many households at greater risk of hardship.

Confidence in 'There is support available if I'm struggling to pay my power bill' x 'I'll be able to afford my power bill over the next 6 months'



n = 1,005 adult New Zealander



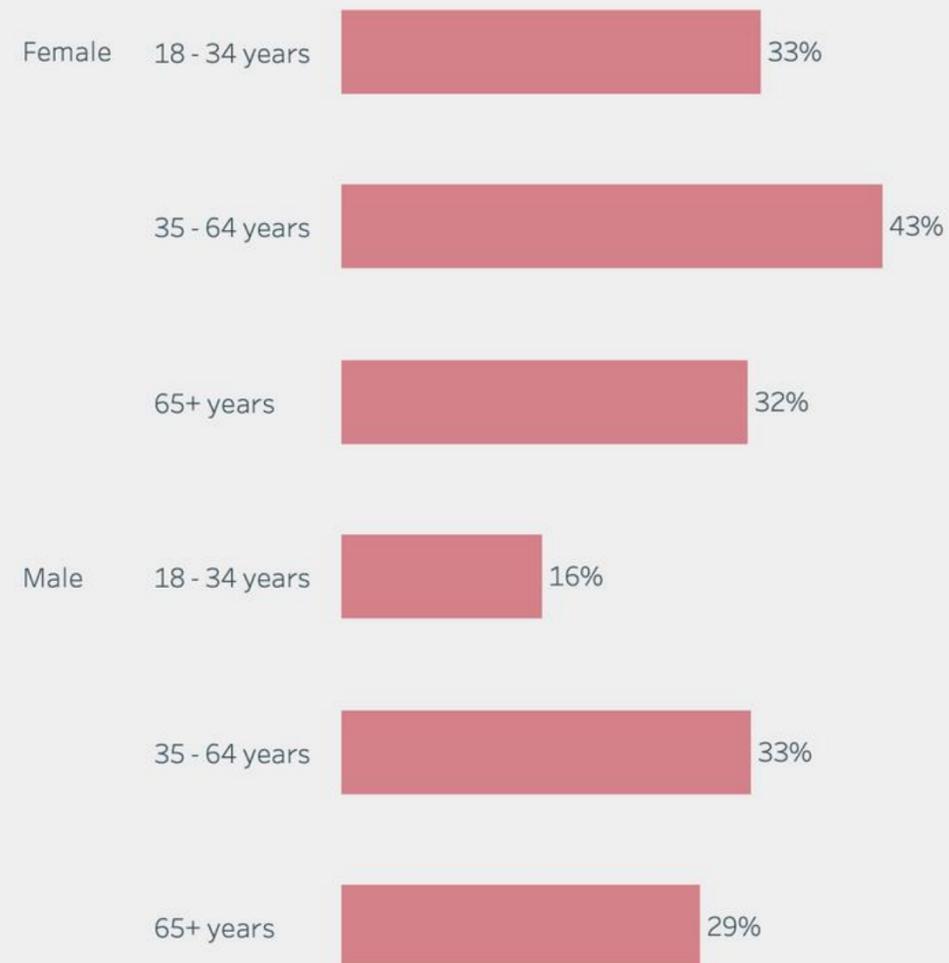
Almost half the lowest income bracket fall into the Vulnerable group

Vulnerability is highest amongst female consumers aged 35 - 64 years old and lowest amongst males aged 18 - 34 years.

Vulnerability declines with increased household income and is more prevalent in smaller towns and rural areas.

Profile of the 'Vulnerable' cohort: % that lack confidence that they can pay their bill in next 6 months and lack confidence that there is support available if they are struggling to pay

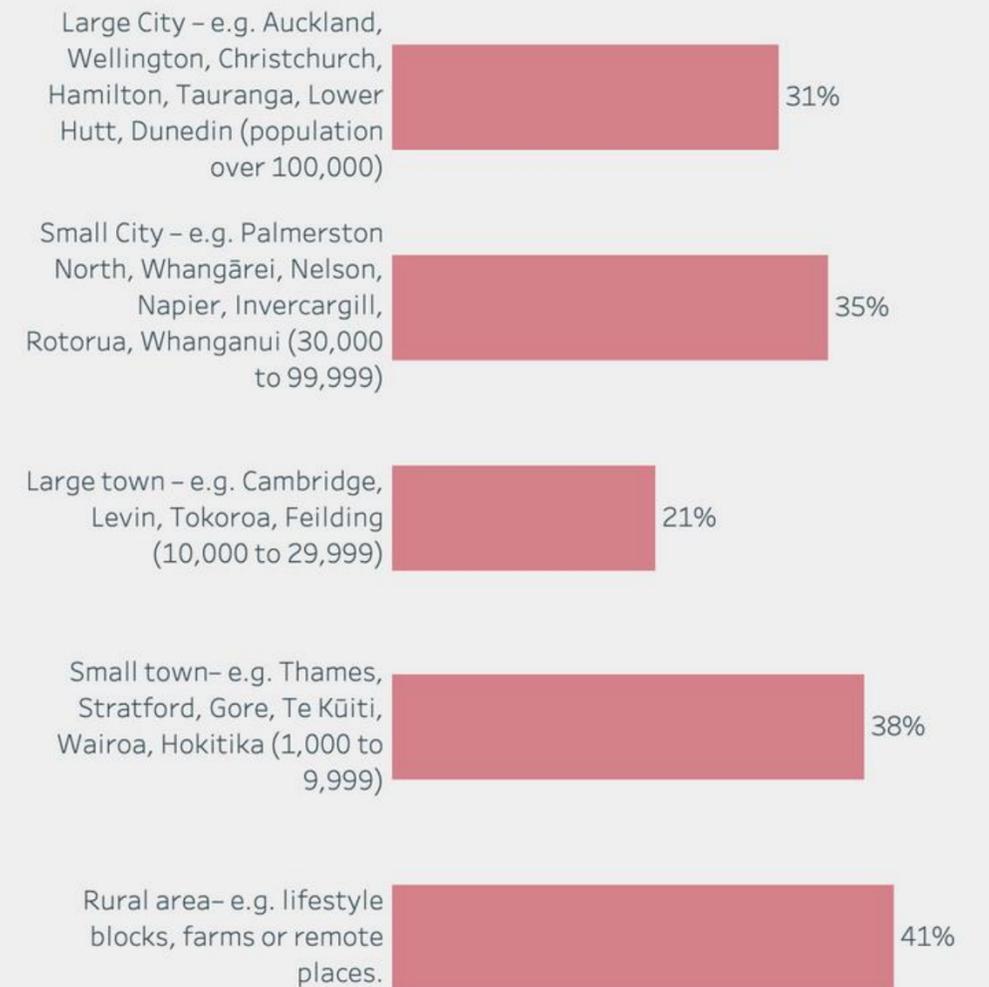
By age and gender



By household income



By area



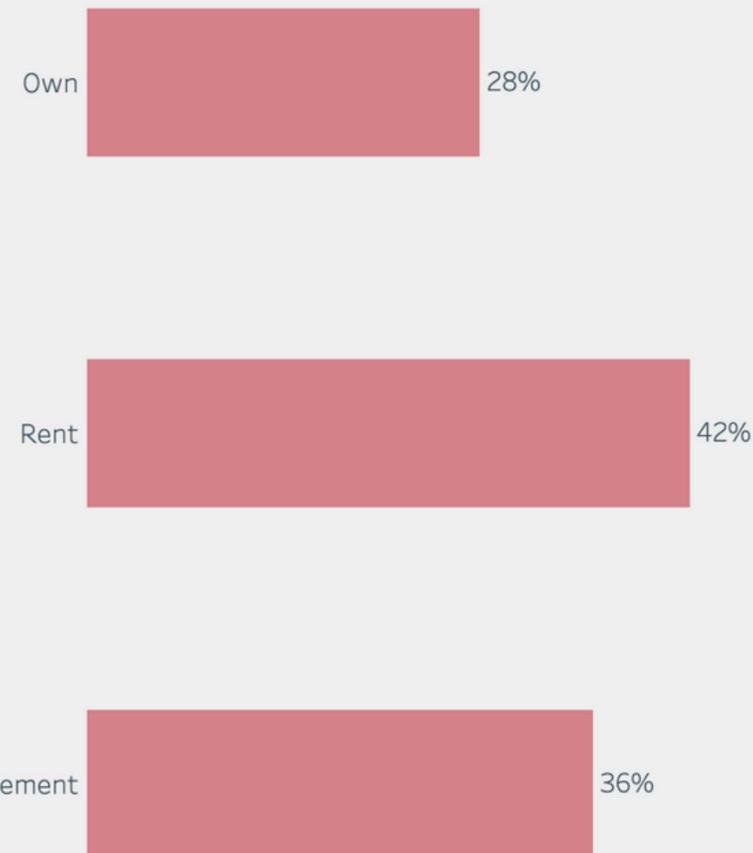


42% of renters are in the Vulnerable group

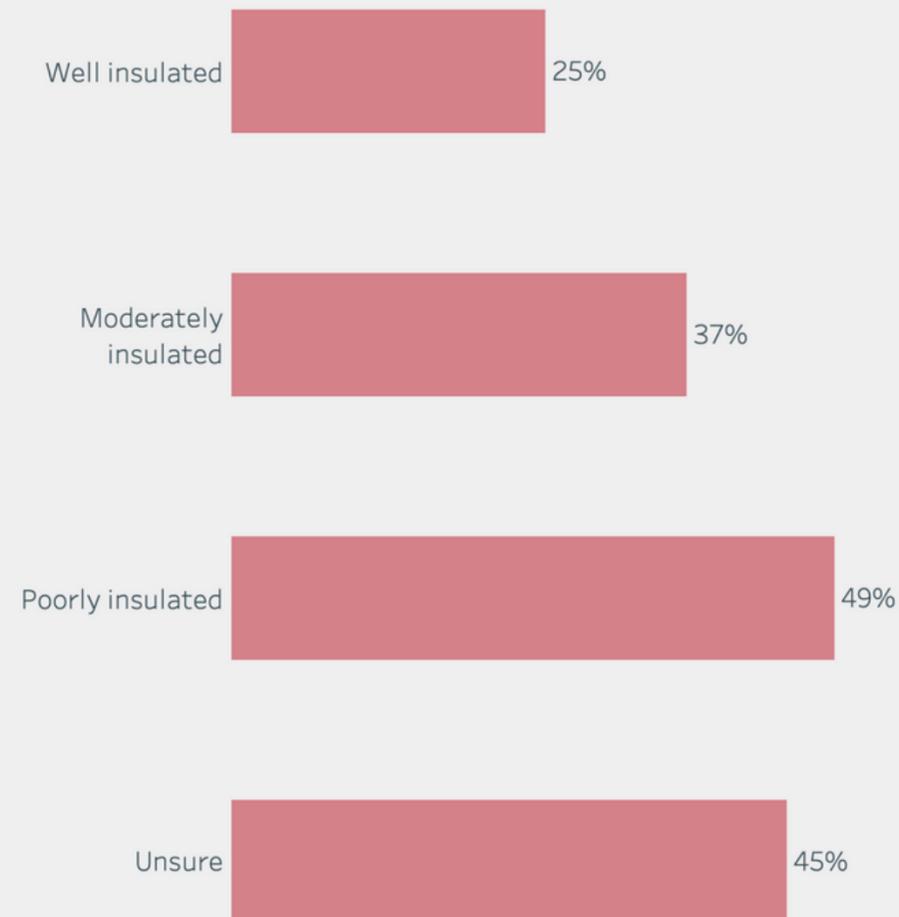
The incidence of falling in the Vulnerable group is highest amongst Renters, and those considering their residence to be poorly insulated. This is likely to be related to the lower socio-economic status of people in these households.

Profile of the 'Vulnerable' cohort: % that lack confidence that they can pay their bill in next 6 months and lack confidence that there is support available if they are struggling to pay

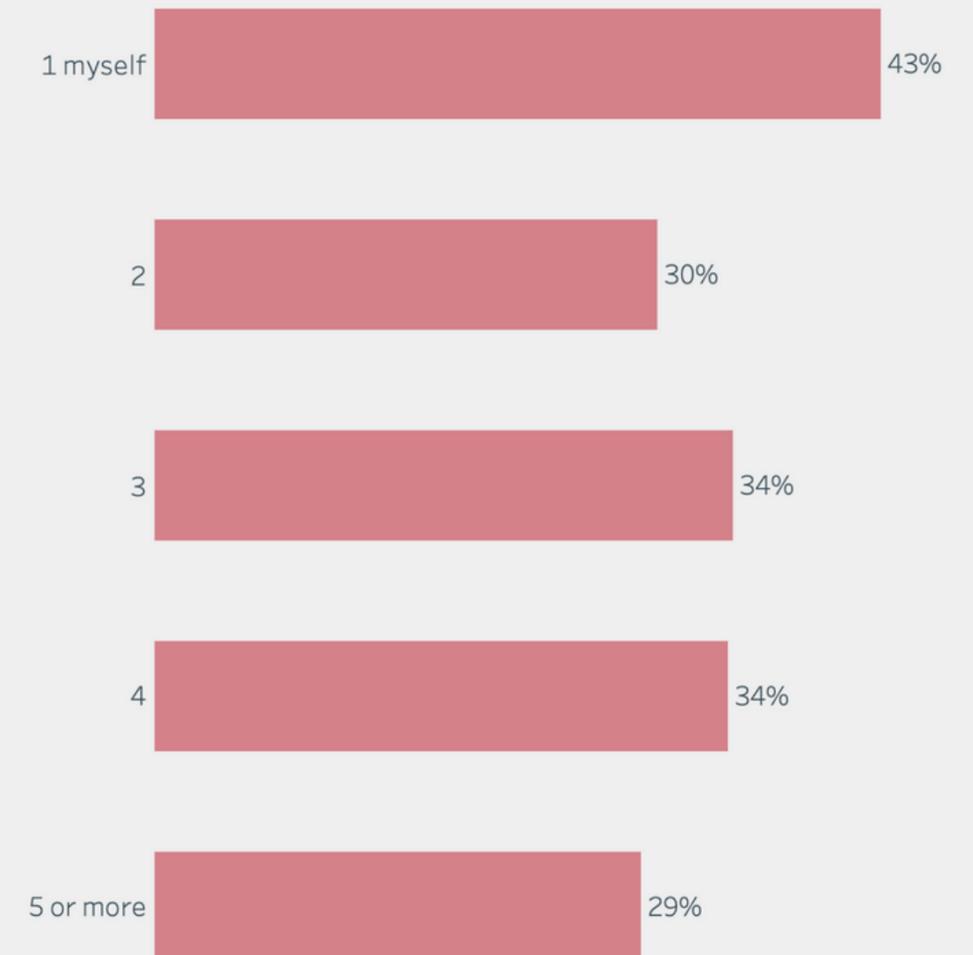
By Accommodation



By Insulation



By Household Size





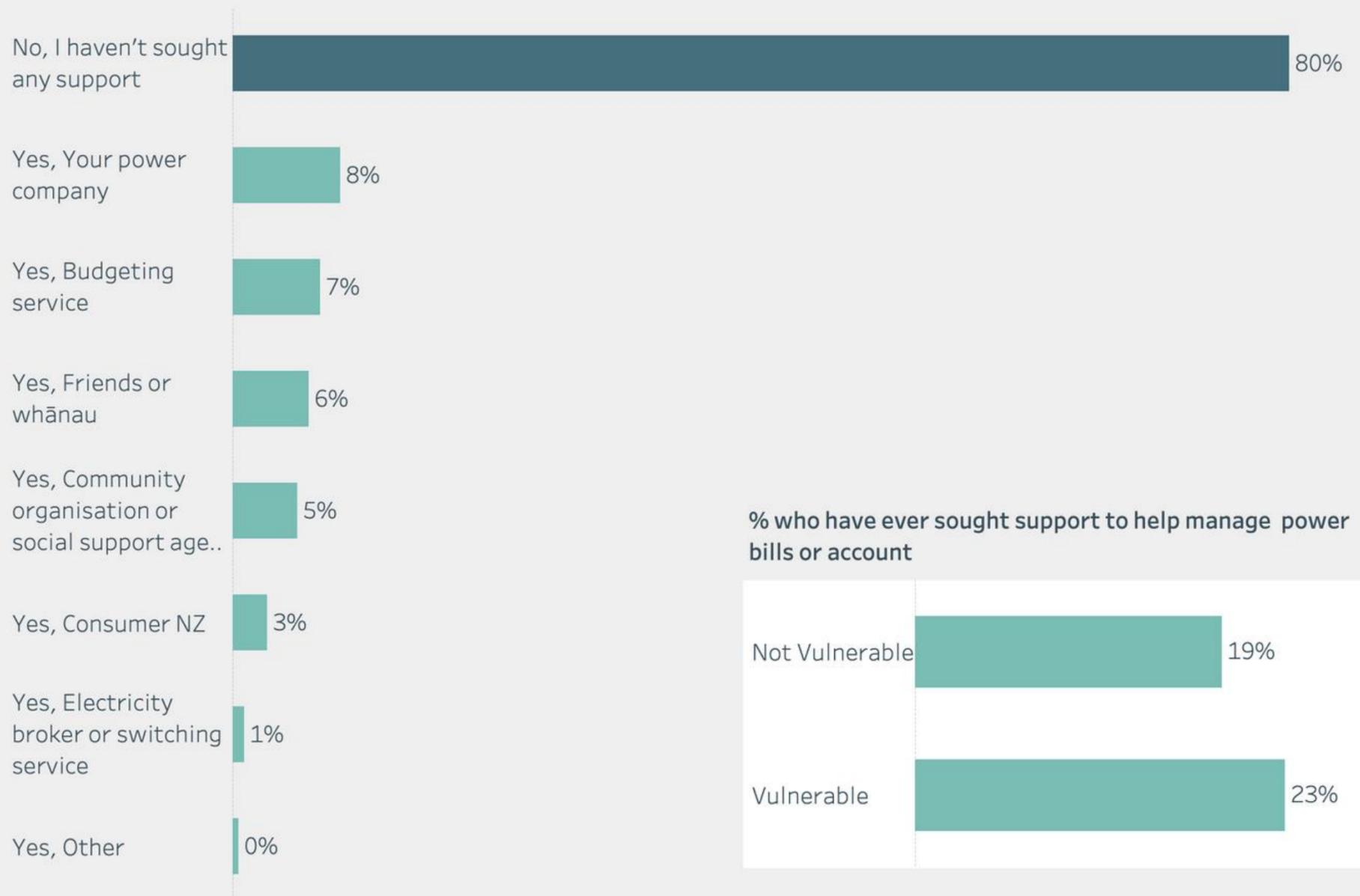
One in five have sought help managing their power bill

The vast majority of New Zealanders have never sought support to help manage their power bills or their electricity account.

A minority of consumers (20%) have sought support to help manage their power bills in the past. These consumers have drawn on a wide variety of support mechanisms, including their power company, a budgeting service, friends or whānau and community organisations.

Only 23% of the Vulnerable group (those lacking confidence both in affording their bill and that support is available) have sought support in the past. This is not significantly different to the 19% of those who are not Vulnerable, reflecting that current vulnerability is not strongly associated with past support-seeking behaviour.

Q33 Have you ever sought support to help manage your power bills or account?



n = Total sample 1,005 adult New Zealanders
n = Not vulnerable 670 | Vulnerable 335

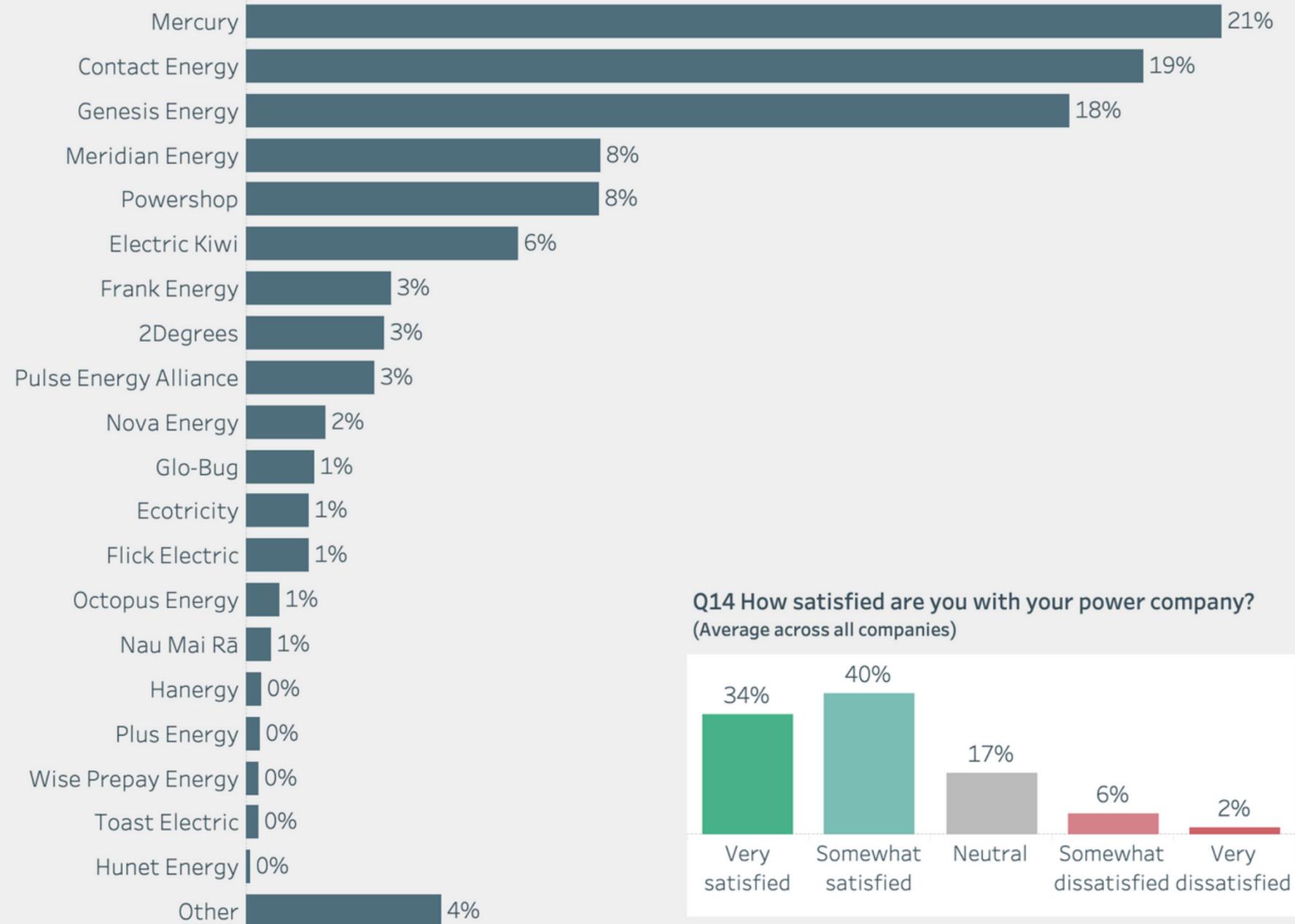


Three quarters of consumers are satisfied with their power company

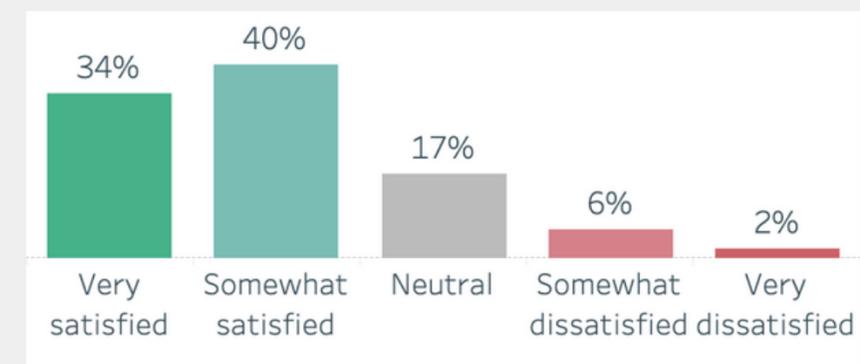
Most New Zealand consumers are satisfied with their power company.

Only a small proportion are somewhat or very dissatisfied. 17% are neutral, and 74% are very or somewhat satisfied.

Q13 Who is your power company?



Q14 How satisfied are you with your power company?
(Average across all companies)

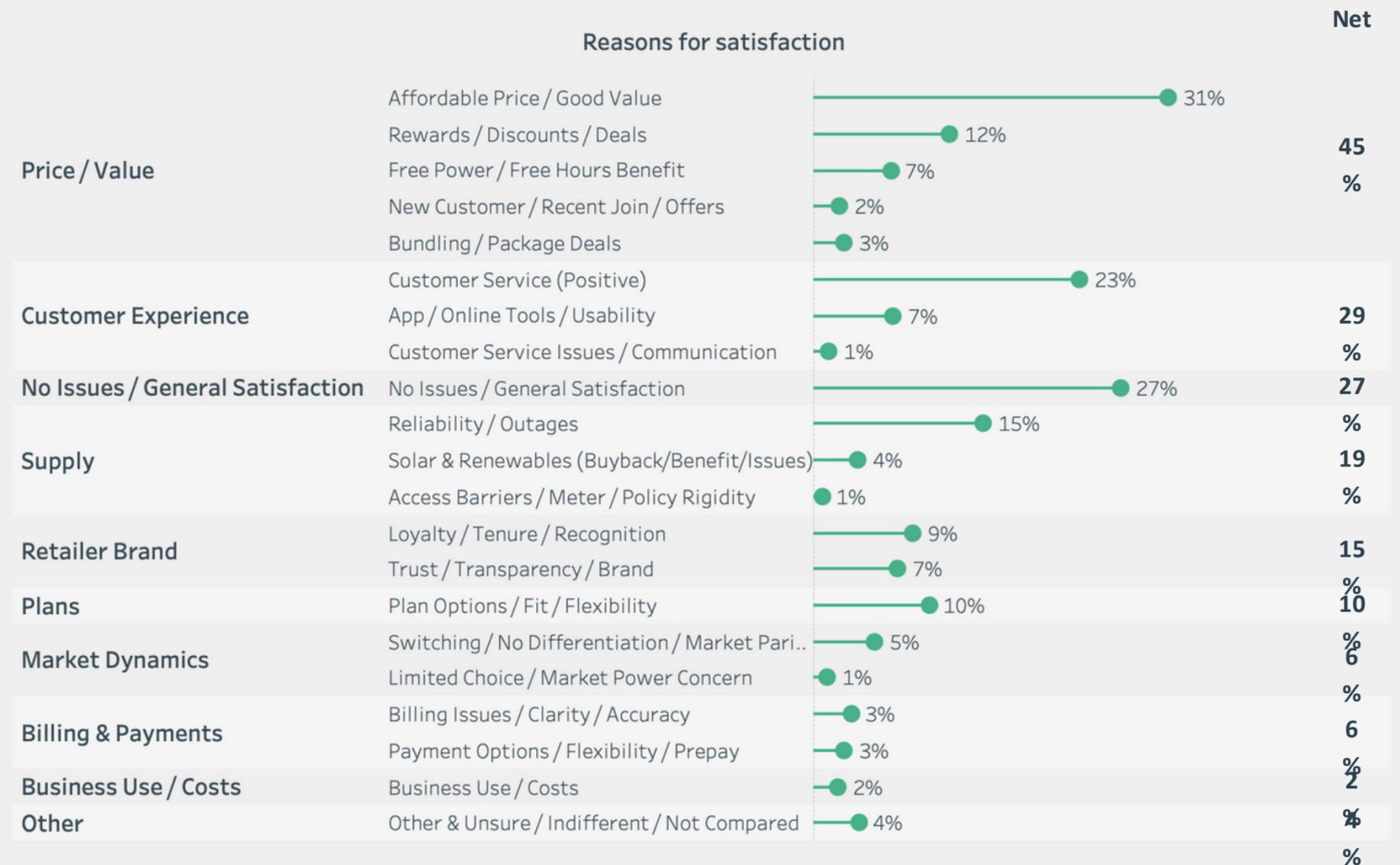
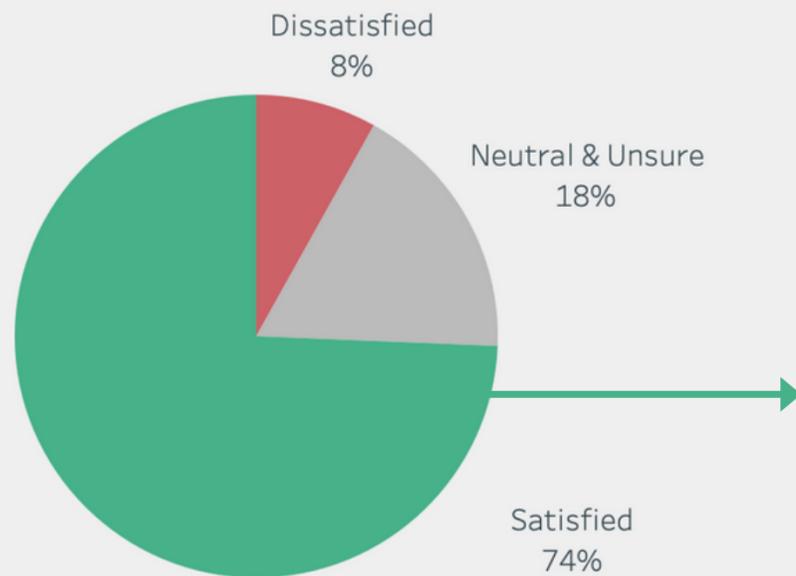




Perceived price and value dominate reasons for satisfaction

Almost half (45%) of those who were satisfied with their power company made at least one reference to the price or value received. This included mentions of overall affordability, rewards, deals or offers to join.

Q14: How satisfied are you with your power company? / Q15: And why do you feel that way?





Price and value also reasons for dissatisfaction

Among the small proportion of consumers who are dissatisfied (8%), the main reasons for their dissatisfaction is related to pricing and value, followed a distant second by customer experience.

Q14: How satisfied are you with your power company? / Q15: And why do you feel that way?





Switching and Competition

 The Navigators





There is an opportunity to improve consumer confidence in knowing which plan and power company is best for them

While a slim majority of consumers (52%) are confident they are on the best plan for their situation, the remainder lack confidence about whether they are on the best plan for their situation, with 30% being tentative (somewhat confident) and 16% lacking confidence.

There is an opportunity to improve the confidence of New Zealand consumers in feeling they have enough information to know which power company is best for them. A minority (43%) express confidence that they have enough information to make this judgment. And more than half of New Zealand consumers are either tentative (34% somewhat confident) or not feeling confident (21% not very confident) or unsure (3%).

Q12 How confident do you feel about each of the following:
'I am on the best power plan for my situation'?



Q12 How confident do you feel about each of the following:
'I have enough information to know which power company is best for me'?



n = 1,005 adult New Zealanders

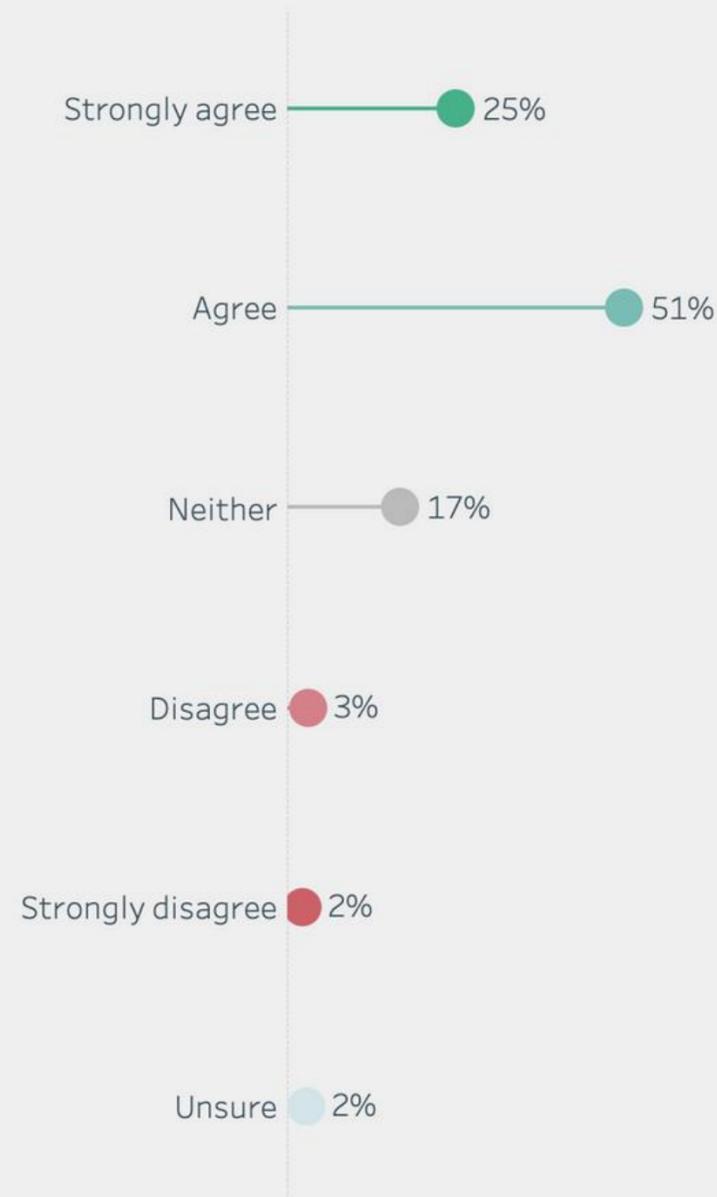


Consumers agree it is worthwhile shopping around, but are less confident in there being enough choice to find a lower price

Over three-quarters of New Zealand consumers strongly agree or agree that it is worthwhile shopping around to get the best-priced deal. Very few (5%) disagree with this statement.

There is a shortfall in confidence in the number of power companies to choose from. Only 43% of consumers feel confident that there are enough power companies to choose from to find a lower price. Most are either tentative (33%) or not confident or unsure (23%).

Q30 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: 'It's worthwhile shopping around different power companies for the best priced deal'?



Q12 How confident do you feel about each of the following: 'There are enough power companies to choose from to find a lower price'?



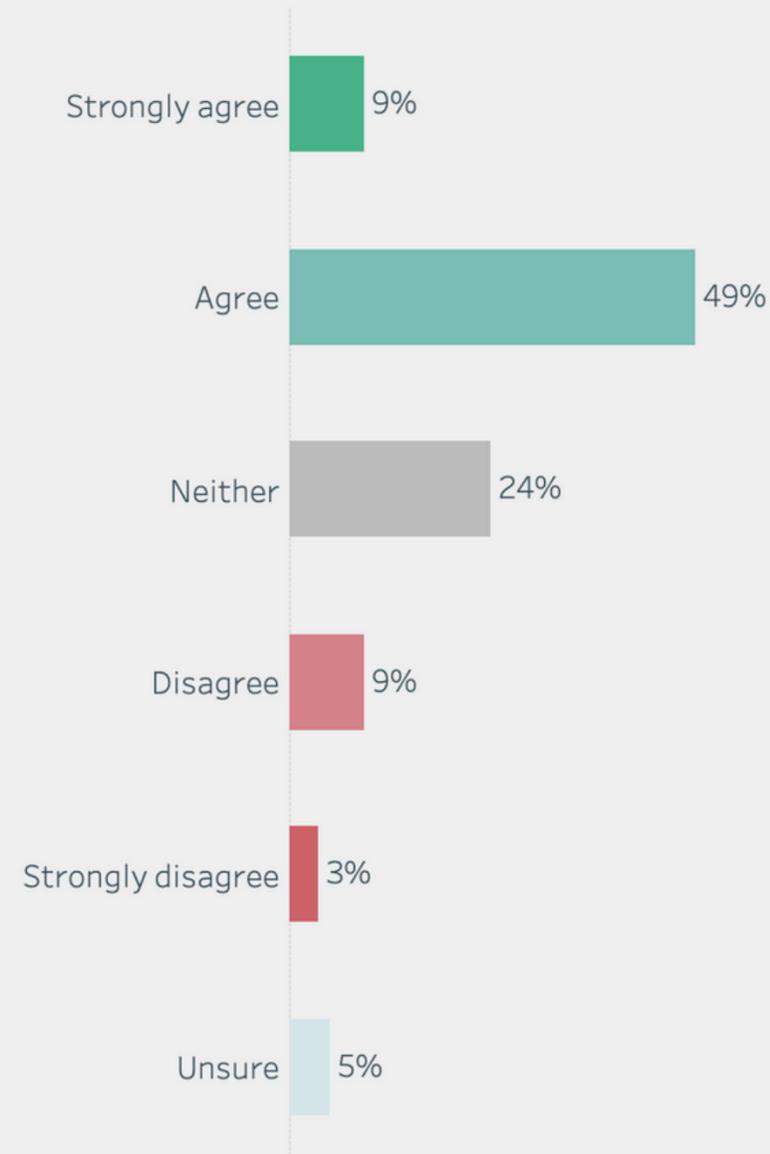
n = 1,005 adult New Zealanders



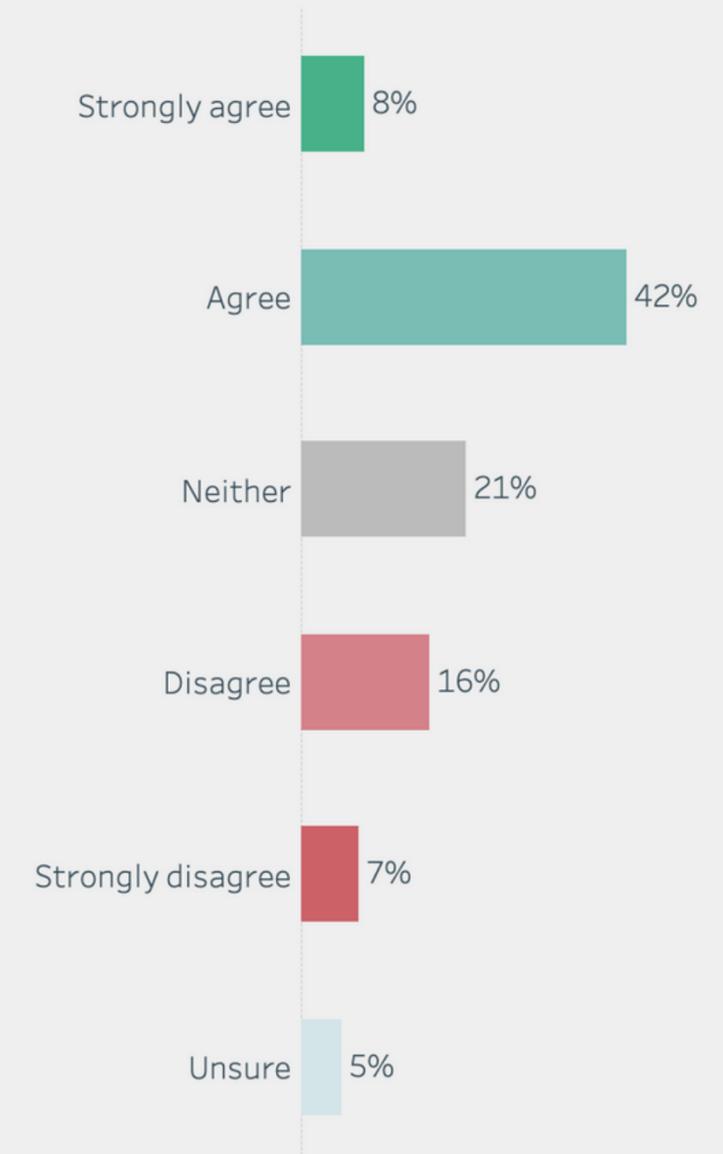
Consumers tend to agree that power companies are innovating and competing in ways that benefit consumers

Most consumers agree that power companies are innovating and competing in ways that matter to consumers. However, this agreement is not strong, indicating that there is room for improvement or to increase awareness of the innovations that do exist.

Q30 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: **'Power companies are innovating by offering new tools and apps, better services and more plans and options'?**



Q30 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: **'Power companies compete in ways that benefit consumers like me (e.g. through better prices, good quality of service and products etc)'?**



n = 1,005 adult New Zealanders



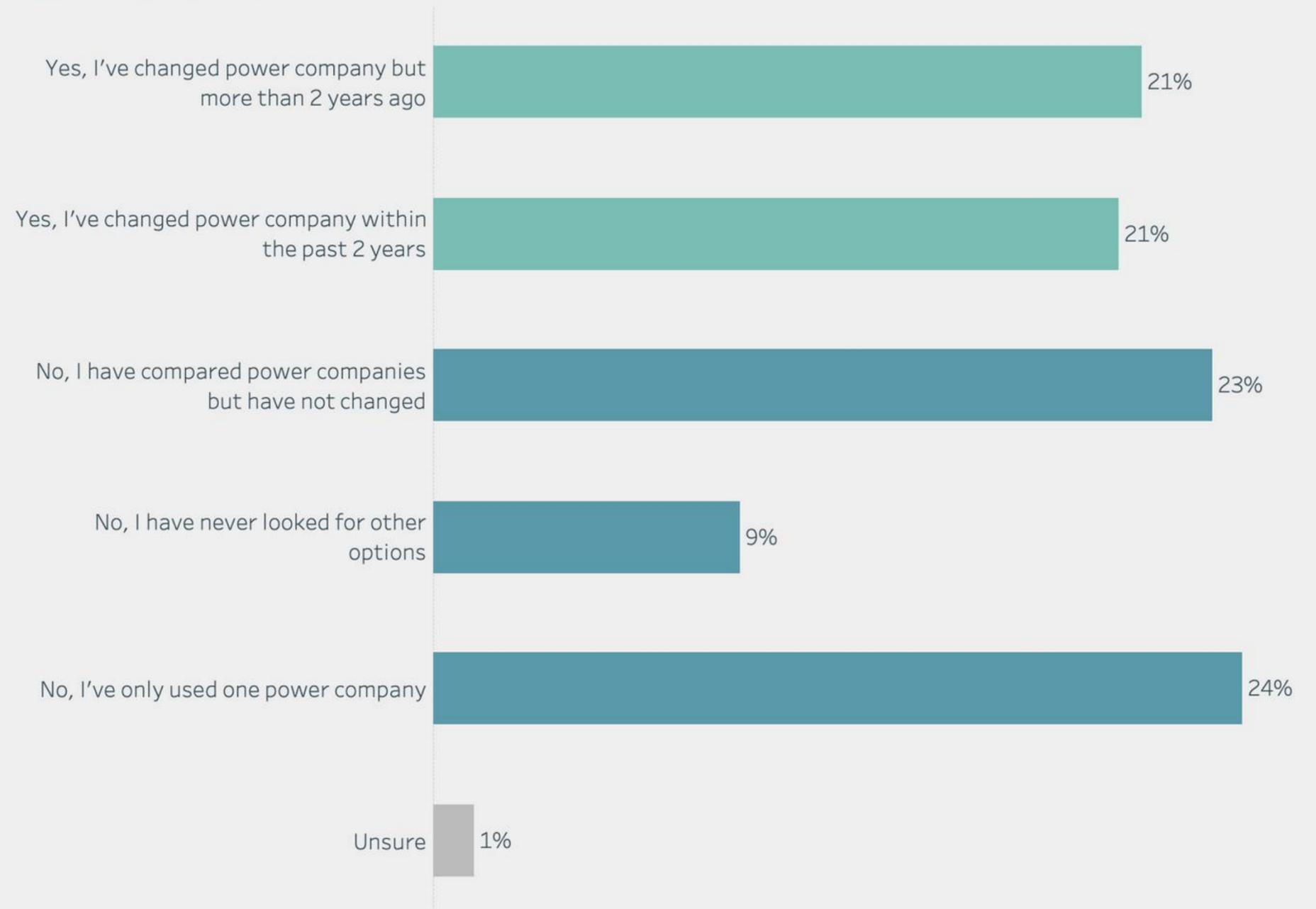
One in five consumers has switched their power company in the last two years, but most have never switched

Switching is not common among New Zealand consumers. The majority of consumers (58%) have never switched companies. Just over one in five (21%) have switched power companies in the past two years. A further 21% have switched some time before that.

Nearly one quarter of consumers (23%) have explored switching by comparing power companies, but not changed.

One third (33%) have neither explored changing nor have changed power companies.

Q21 Have you changed your power company?



n = 1,005 adult New Zealanders



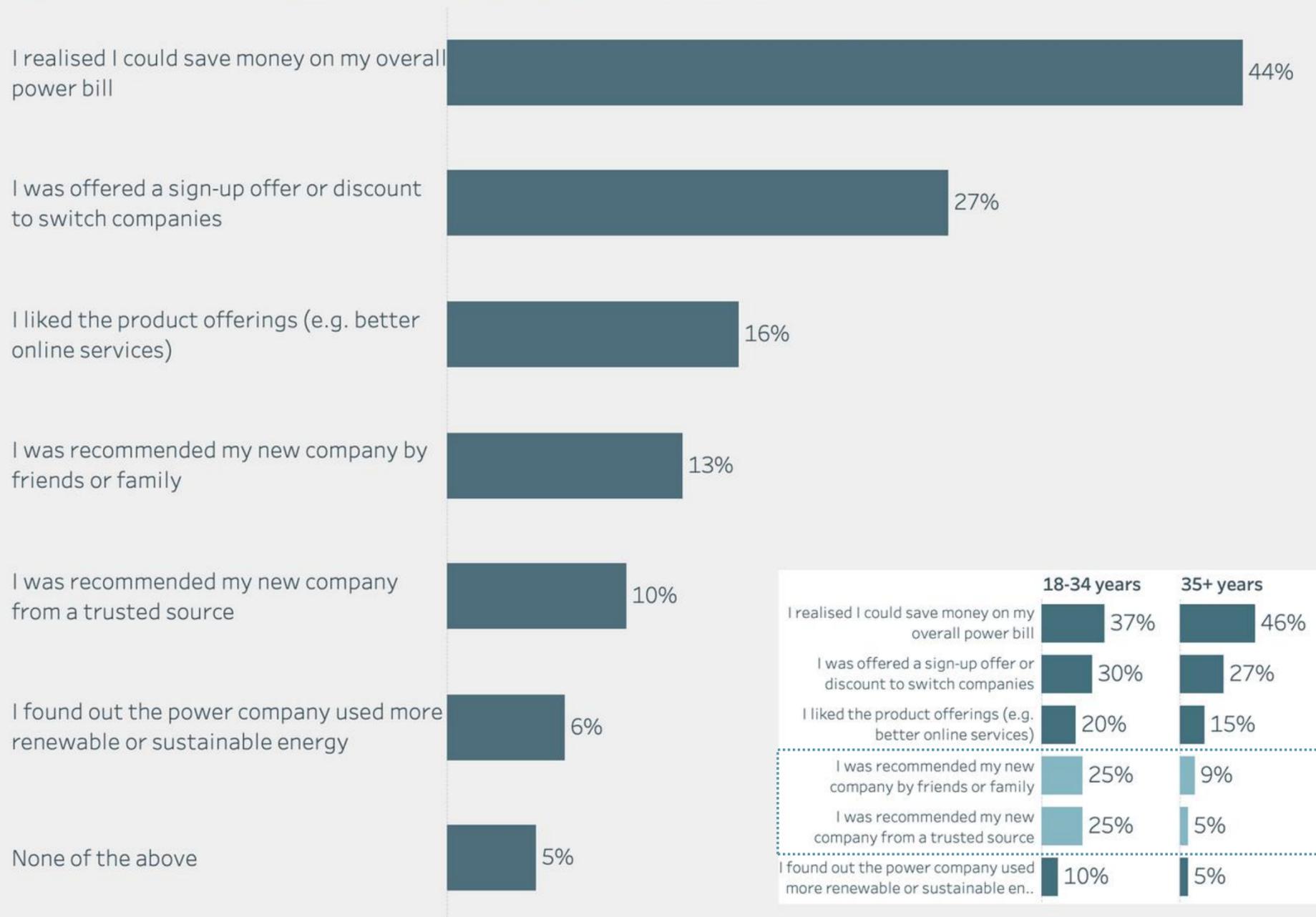
Saving money is the primary driver for past switching

Among those who have switched in the past, a realisation that money could be saved on their power bill motivated 44% to switch. Just over one quarter (27%) switched because they were offered a sign-up offer or discount.

Word of mouth plays a stronger role amongst the younger cohort (<35 years), with 25% saying it was recommended by friends or family and 25% saying it was recommended by a trusted source. For those over 35 years, both these mentions of these sources of influence are less than 10%.

Renewable or sustainable energy sources were only mentioned by 6% as their reason for switching in the past.

Q22 What were the main reasons you decided to change power companies?



n = 654 have switched in the past
n= 18-34 126 | 35+ 305

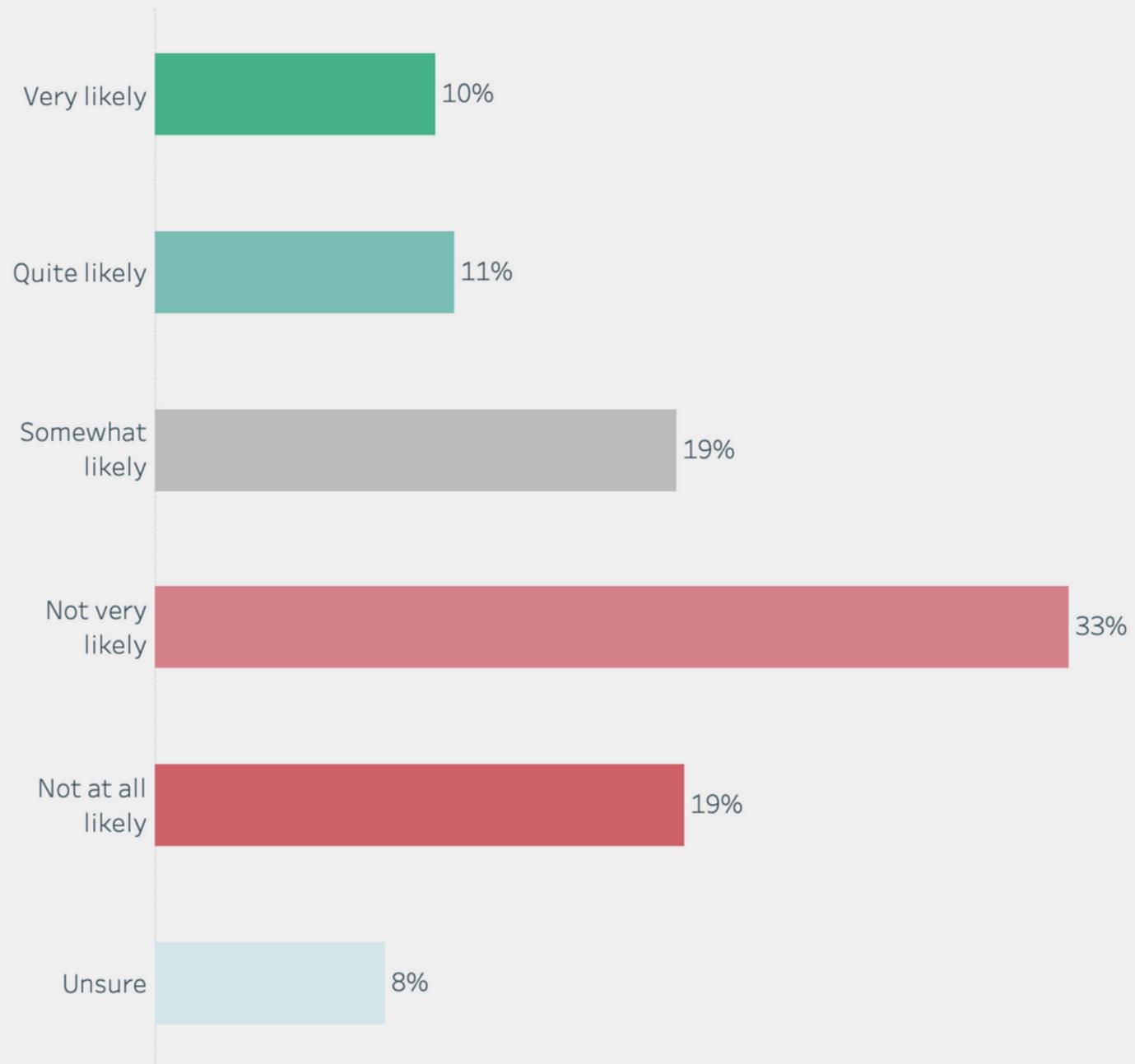


Approximately one in five believe it is likely they will switch in the next 12 months

Among New Zealand residential consumers, there is modest intent to switch in the future, with 10% claiming they are very likely and another 11% quite likely to switch providers in the next 12 months.

The majority of consumers have little intention of switching, with more than one in two consumers (52%) believing it is unlikely they will switch in the next 12 months.

Q23 How likely are you to consider switching to a different power plan or provider in the next 12 months?



n = 1,005 adult New Zealanders

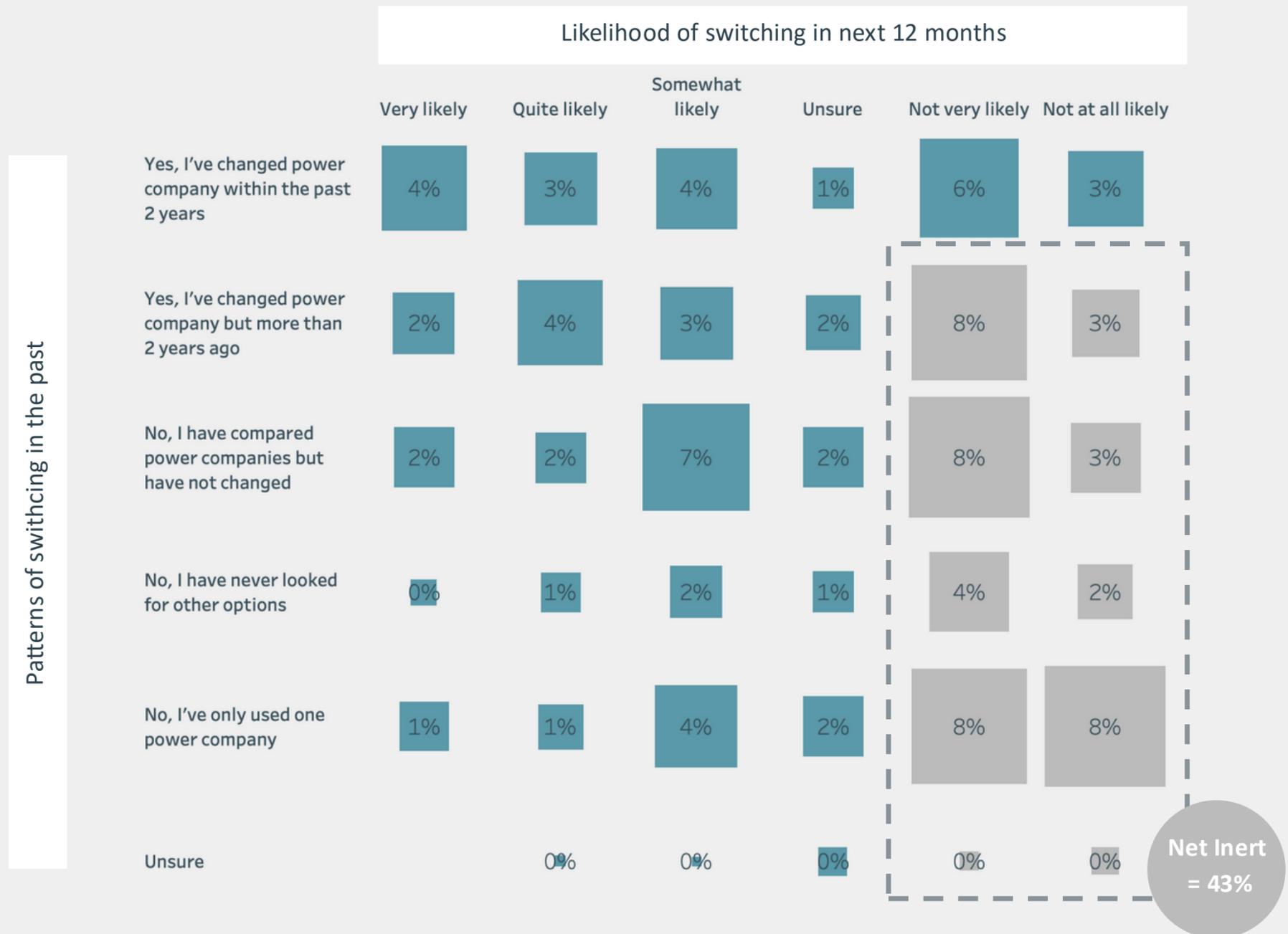


Inertia characterises a sizeable proportion of residential consumers when it comes to switching power companies

Switching inertia can be defined as having not switched power companies in the past 2 years **and** with little likelihood of doing so in the next 12 months.

Applying this definition to New Zealand residential consumers, over four in 10 (43%) can be described as 'inert' when it comes to the idea of switching power companies.

Past switching patterns by likelihood of switching in the next 12 months



n = 1,005 adult New Zealander



Residential consumers believe that receiving personalised information would significantly boost switching intentions

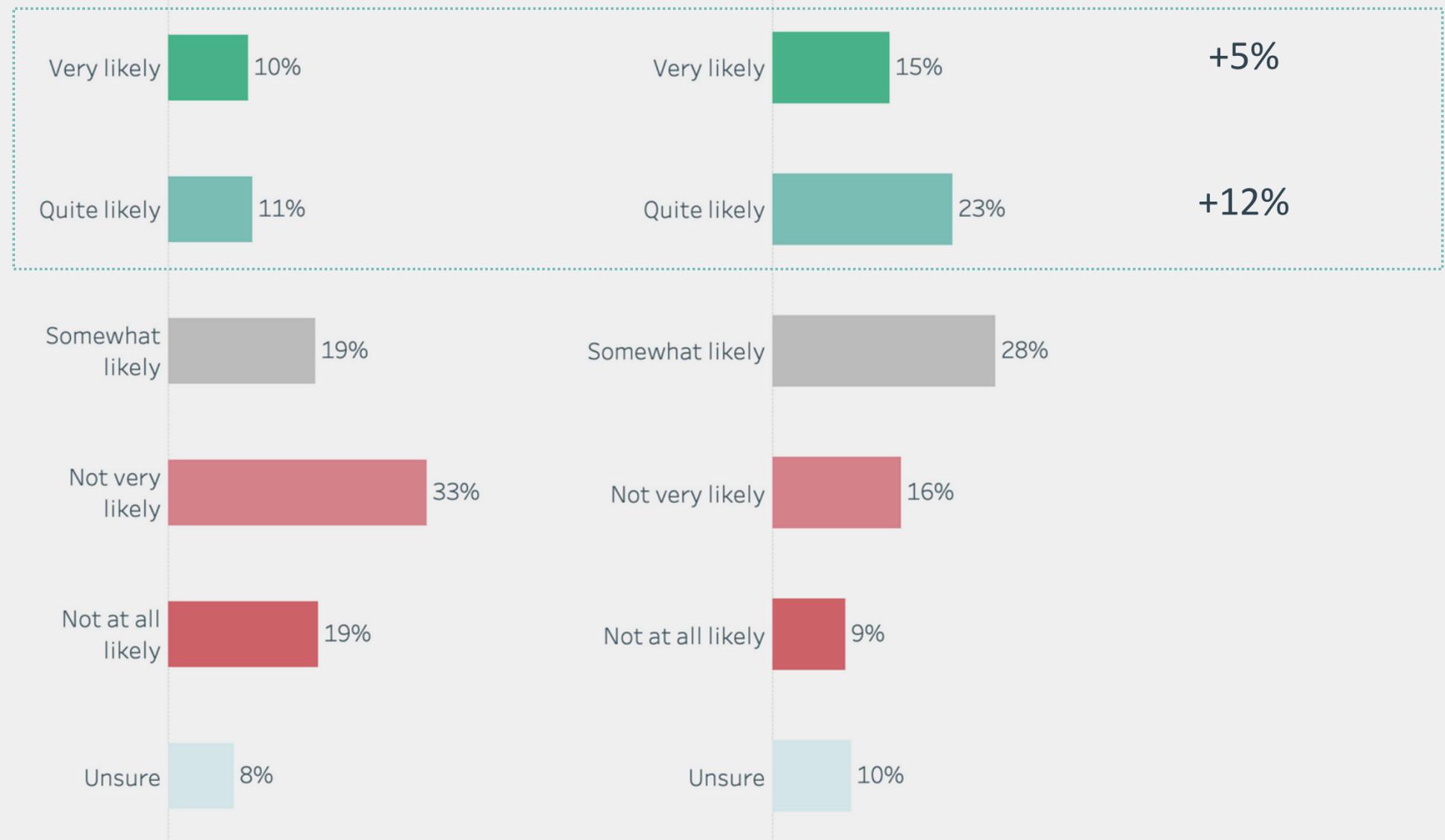
When residential consumers were asked about their likelihood to switch power companies, introducing personalised information about savings or product suitability made a clear difference. The proportion who said they were very likely to switch rose by 5 percentage points, while those quite likely increased by 12 points.

These results suggest that providing tailored, relevant information has the potential to encourage switching, particularly among consumers who might otherwise remain passive.

Q23/24 How likely are you to consider switching to a different power plan or provider...

...in the next 12 months?

...if you were sent personalised information about potential savings or electricity products and services that would better suit your circumstances?



n = 1,005 adult New Zealander

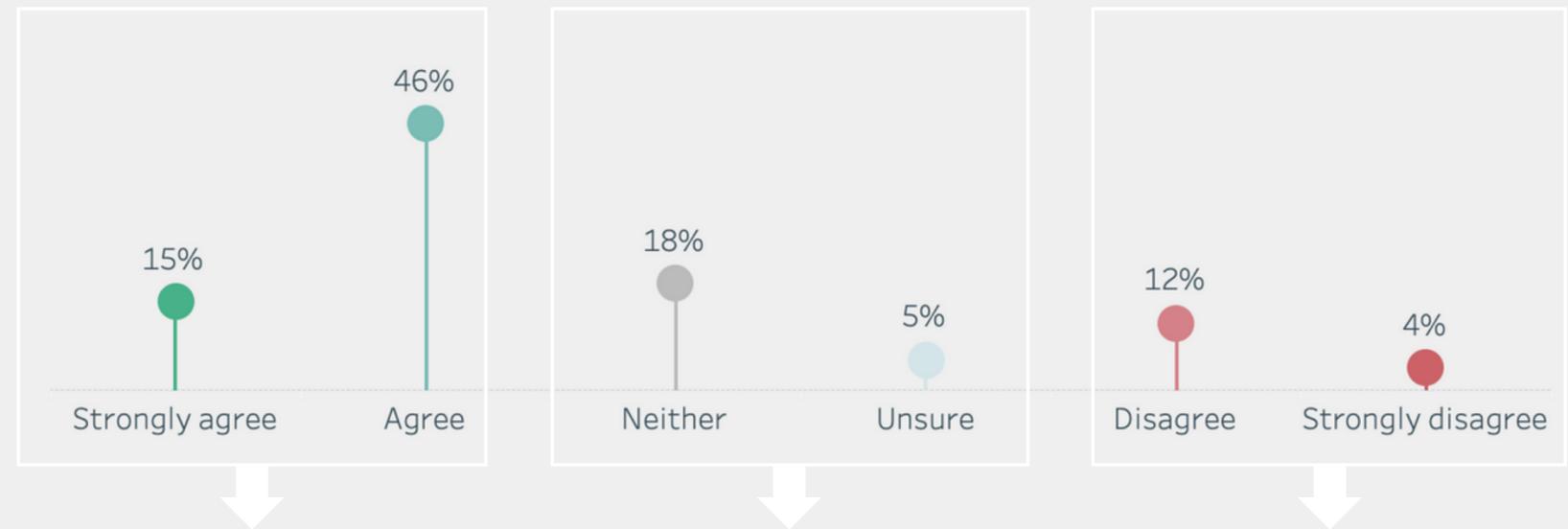


Residential consumers are open to sharing electricity usage data if there is a benefit to them

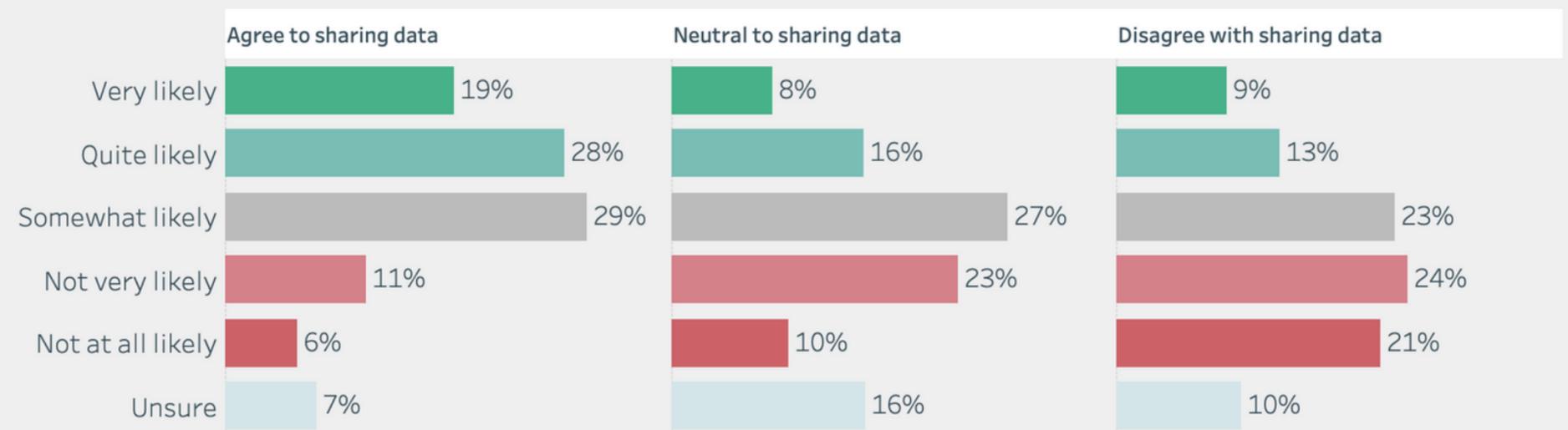
Most residential consumers (61%) strongly agreed or agreed that they would be comfortable sharing usage data with a trusted, authorised third party for their benefit.

Those who did not feel comfortable (16% disagreed) were less open to switching after being sent personalised information, suggesting this is a barrier for this cohort.

Q30 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'I would be comfortable allowing my electricity usage data to be shared to a trusted and authorised third party, if it meant I could get a better power price or service?'



Q24 And how likely are you to consider switching to a different power company in the next 12 months, if you were sent personalised information about potential savings or electricity products and services that would better suit your circumstances?



n = 1,005 adult New Zealanders
n = Agree 613 | Neutral 239 | Disagree 153



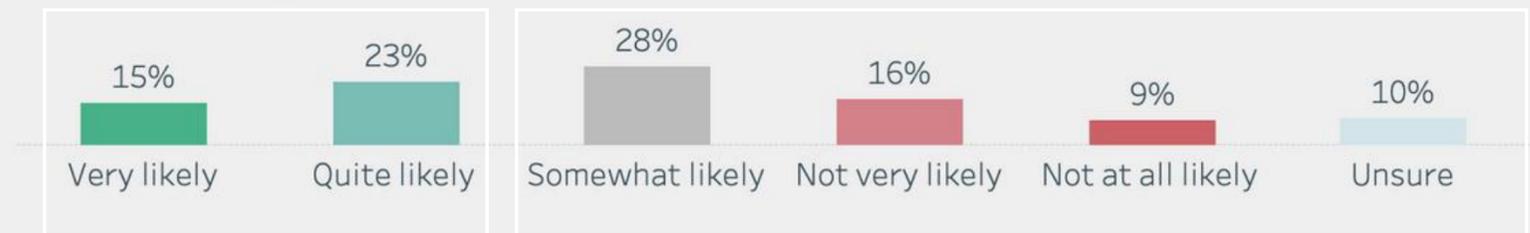
Savings on power bills drive switching, but doubt about value and complexity hold many back

The strongest motivator for switching power companies is financial: 80% of those likely to change say they want to reduce their power bill, and nearly half (49%) cite discounts or sign-up offers. Product features (29%) and renewable options (20%) are less influential.

At the same time, scepticism is a major barrier. Among those unlikely to switch, nearly half (47%) doubt they would actually save money, while 32% are uncertain about which provider is better. Perceptions of hassle (30%), hidden fees (27%), and concerns over service quality (26%) further deter change.

Together, this shows that while cost savings and incentives are powerful levers for switching, confidence in the transparency and ease of the process is just as critical in overcoming inertia.

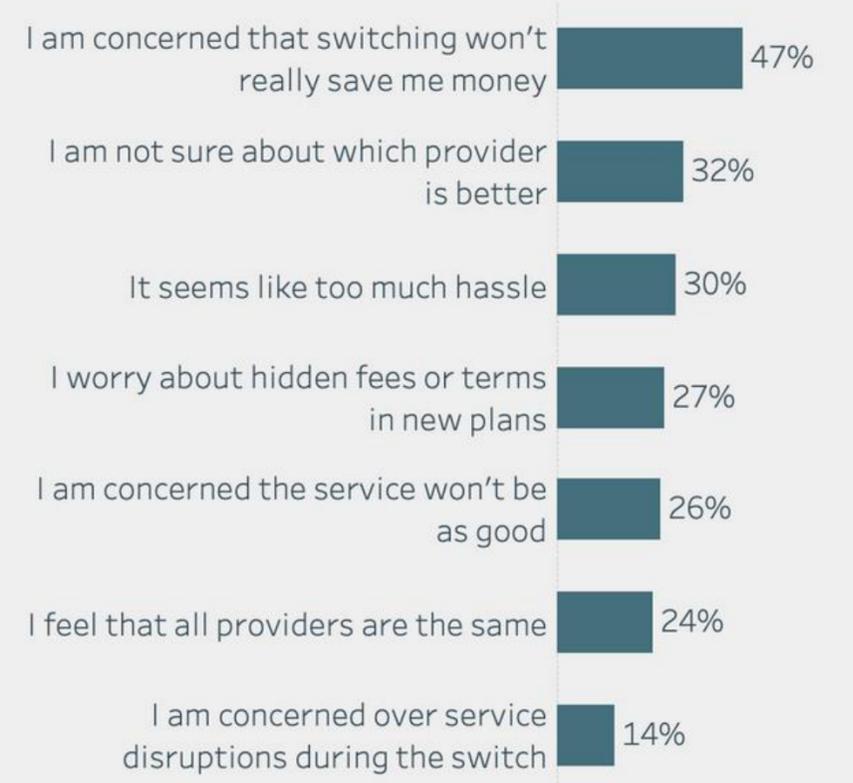
How likely are you to consider switching to a different power company in the next 12 months, if you were sent personalised information about potential savings or electricity products and services that would better suit your circumstances?



Q25 What are the main reasons you are likely to change power companies in the next 12 months?



Q26 What are the main reasons you are not very likely to change power companies in the next 12 months?



n = 1,005 adult New Zealanders
n= Very + quite 387 | Neutral and negative 618



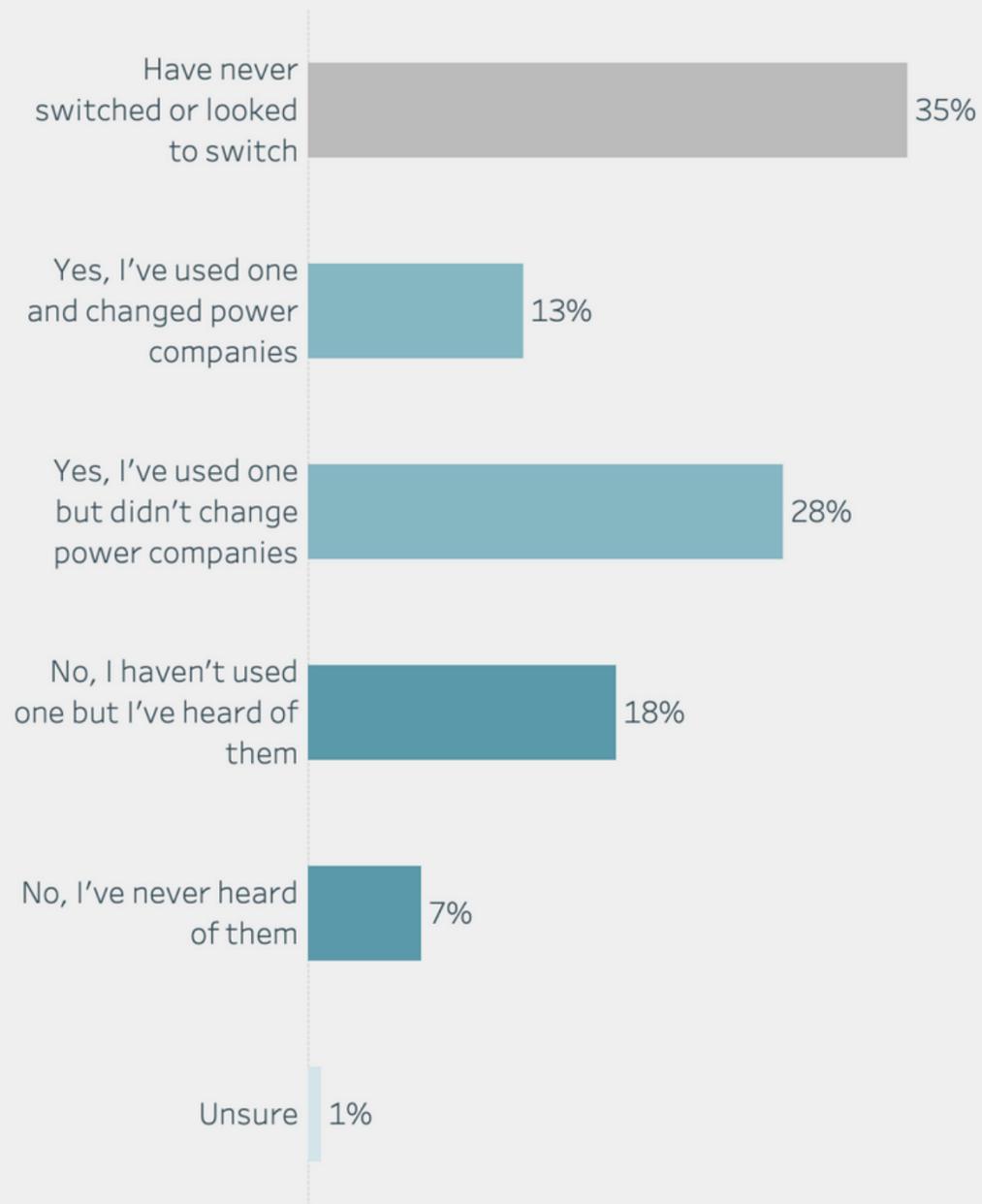
Comparison tools inform many, but only drive some to switch

Four in ten residential consumers (41%) have used a comparison and switching service, with 13% going on to change power companies and 28% using the tool but ultimately staying with their current power company. A further 18% have heard of these services but not used them, while only 7% remain completely unaware.

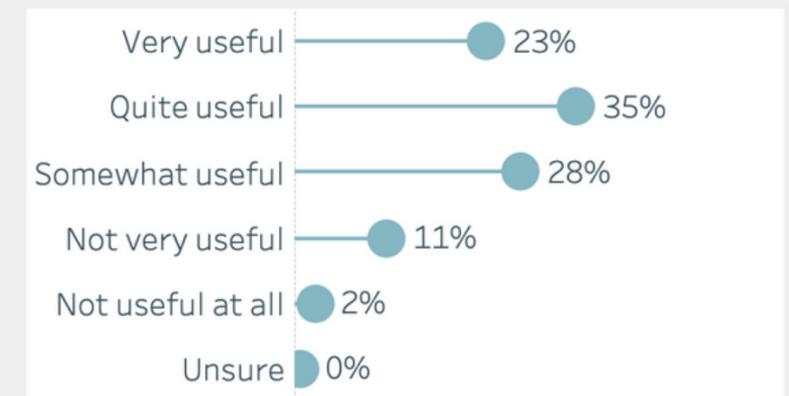
Among those who have used them, most found the tools helpful; 58% rated them very or quite useful. However, a sizeable group (around 4 in 10) only found them somewhat useful or not useful at all, limiting their impact as a catalyst for switching.

This suggests that while awareness of comparison services is reasonably strong, improving the clarity, transparency, and perceived value of the information could be key to turning interest into action.

Q27 Have you ever used a power company comparison and switching service (a free online tool to compare power companies or plans)?



Q28 How useful did you find the comparison and switching service for comparing power companies?



n = 1,005 adult New Zealander



Clearer information and visible savings can unlock greater value from comparison tools

The reasons given as to why some consumers have found comparison tools unhelpful are largely related to missing or unclear information (34%) and the perception that there are no real savings or benefits (31%). Concerns over pricing complexity and hidden fees (21%), poor user experience (13%), and the effort involved in comparing options also reduce their impact.

Findings suggest that comparison tools are recognised, but their effectiveness depends on improving transparency, showing clear savings, and improving the user experience.

Q28: How useful did you find the comparison and switching service for comparing power companies? / Q29: Why was the comparison and switching service not very useful to you?





Efficiency and Engagement

 The Navigators





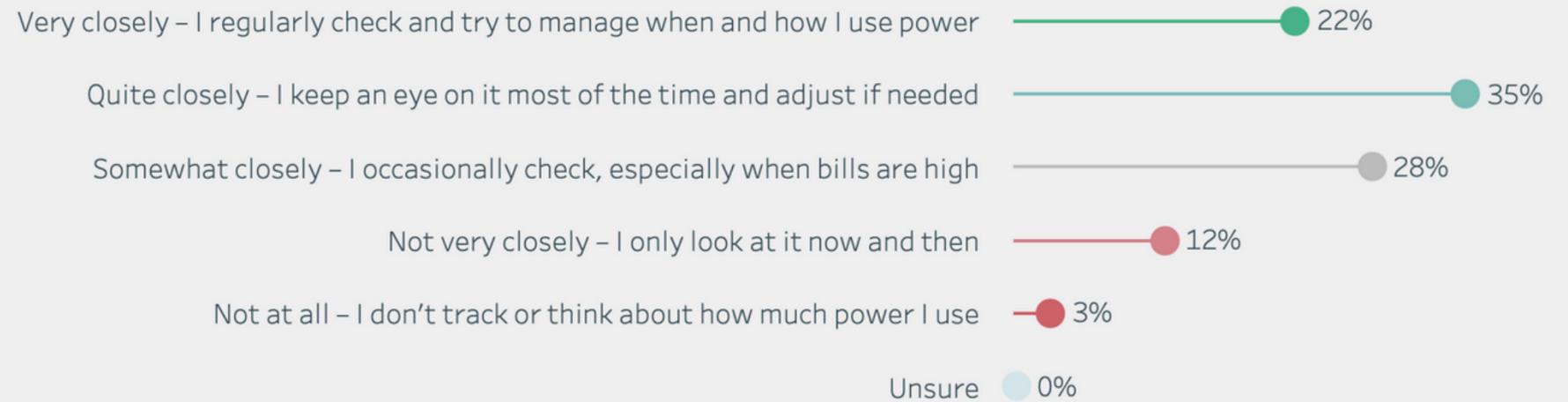
Most residential consumers actively monitor power use, but confidence in understanding bills and reducing costs is lower

A majority of residential consumers (57%) say they monitor their electricity use very or quite closely, suggesting a good level of engagement with their power consumption. However, a sizable group (43%) are less engaged, with 28% only checking occasionally, 12% looking at bills sporadically, and another 3% not monitoring at all.

Confidence in electricity knowledge is more modest. While 55% feel confident identifying which appliances use the most power, fewer are confident in understanding their bill calculations (45%) or knowing how to reduce costs without sacrificing comfort or well-being (44%).

These findings show that while many consumers are engaged with monitoring, this does not always translate into confidence in managing or reducing electricity costs effectively.

Q31 How closely do you monitor your power use in your home/business? (This could include checking your power bill, tracking usage online, or paying attention to when and how power is used.)



Q12 We'd like to understand how confident you feel about your electricity situation and the choices available to you. How confident do you feel about each of the following?



n = Total sample 1,005 adult New Zealanders



Households that monitor their bills are more confident in knowing about appliance efficiency, reducing costs and understanding their power bill

There is a cohort that is more engaged with the subject matter all around. Those who are not monitoring are generally well behind the average in knowing how to improve the efficiency of their utilisation and understand the impacts on their bill.

This is not to say that there is a causal relationship between the two; the common factor may be a person who is interested in all of these topics, including monitoring their bill.

Q12 We'd like to understand how confident you feel about your electricity situation and the choices available to you. How confident do you feel about each of the following?

VERY + QUITE CONFIDENT x ENGAGEMENT WITH MONITORING



n = 1,005 adult New Zealander
 n= very closely 223 | quite closely 342 | somewhat closely 291 | not very closely 117 | not at all 29



Engagement and affordability combine to reveal four distinct consumer groups

By examining both monitoring behaviour (a marker of engagement) and perceptions of affordability, consumers can be grouped into four broad cohorts.

 **Comfortable / Engaged** actively track their usage and generally find power bills affordable.

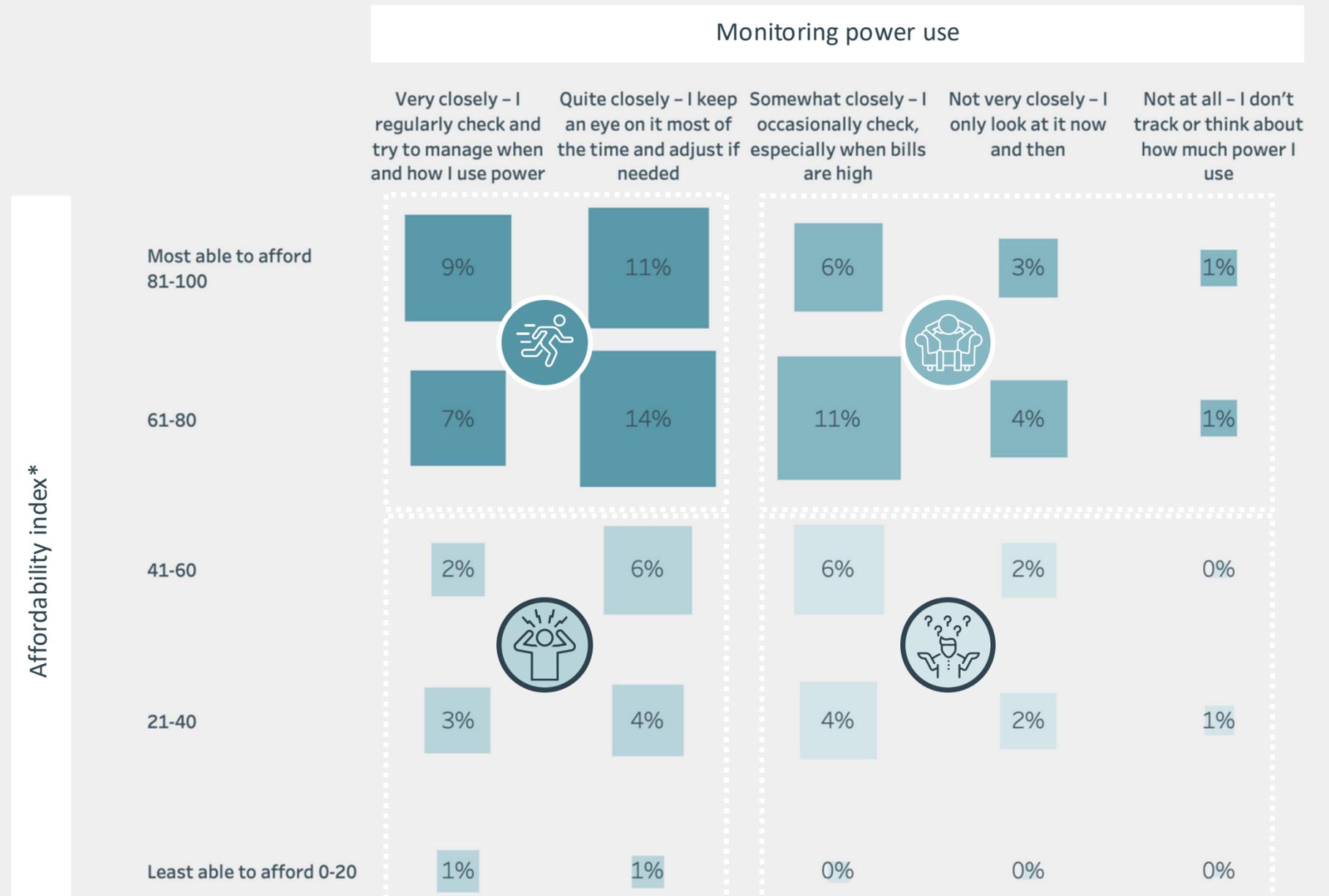
 **Comfortable / Less-engaged** are less inclined to monitor but typically manage affordability without concern.

 **Pressured / Engaged** monitor closely but still struggle with affordability, highlighting financial stress despite high engagement.

 **Pressured / Less-engaged** face both low engagement and affordability challenges, leaving them most at risk.

This framework provides a lens through which to understand differences in consumer experiences and begins to show the value of segmentation in guiding future strategies.

Interaction between engagement (monitoring) and affordability



n = 1,005 adult New Zealanders

*The affordability index combines both Q32 perceived affordability impacts on budget and priorities and Q12 confidence in ability to pay power bill in next 6 months

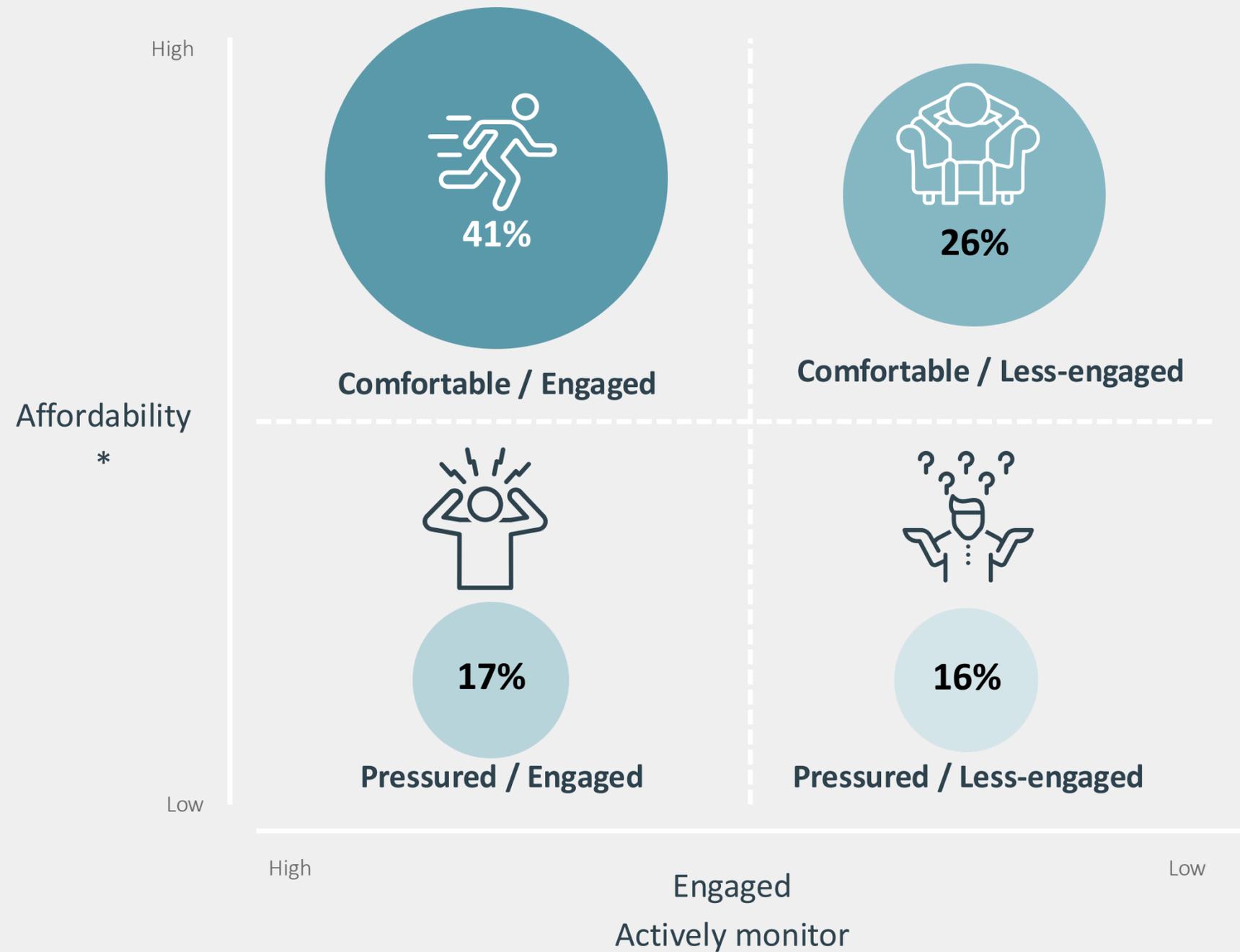


Consumers are segmented into four groups based on a combination of their engagement with monitoring power use and perceived affordability of their power bill

The segmentation reveals that two out of five consumers (41%) fall into the Comfortable / Engaged group, actively monitoring their power use and confident about affordability. In contrast, around one in six are Pressured / Engaged (17%) or Pressured / Less-engaged (16%), both facing affordability pressure but differing in their engagement levels.

Meanwhile, over a quarter (26%) are Comfortable / Less-engaged, showing little concern about affordability but also low engagement in monitoring.

This distribution underscores a dual challenge: while a sizeable share are well placed to manage their electricity use, a significant proportion remain financially stretched or disengaged.



n = 1,005 adult New Zealanders

* The affordability dimension in this segmentation is a composite measure of overall affordability and confidence that they can pay their bill in the next six months.



The segmentation reflects both the differences in vulnerability and inertia in the market

The consumer segments are based on a combination of engagement (they monitor their power bills) and affordability.

The vulnerability of the Pressured / Engaged and Pressured / Less-engaged is evident, in that these groups are most likely to report that they are struggling with affordability, yet are not confident in the support available to them.

These two groups are also most likely not to be inert, but a key difference between them is that Pressured / Engaged do monitor their power use and Pressured / Less-engaged do not, suggesting that the pathway to supporting these cohorts will need to address different motivations and behaviours.

Similarly, the large inert cohorts amongst the Comfortable / Engaged and Comfortable / Less-engaged have different origins. The first is more engaged and confident that they are on the best power plan, the latter is disengaged, can afford their power and is not motivated to pay more attention to the issue.



41% of consumers



17% of consumers

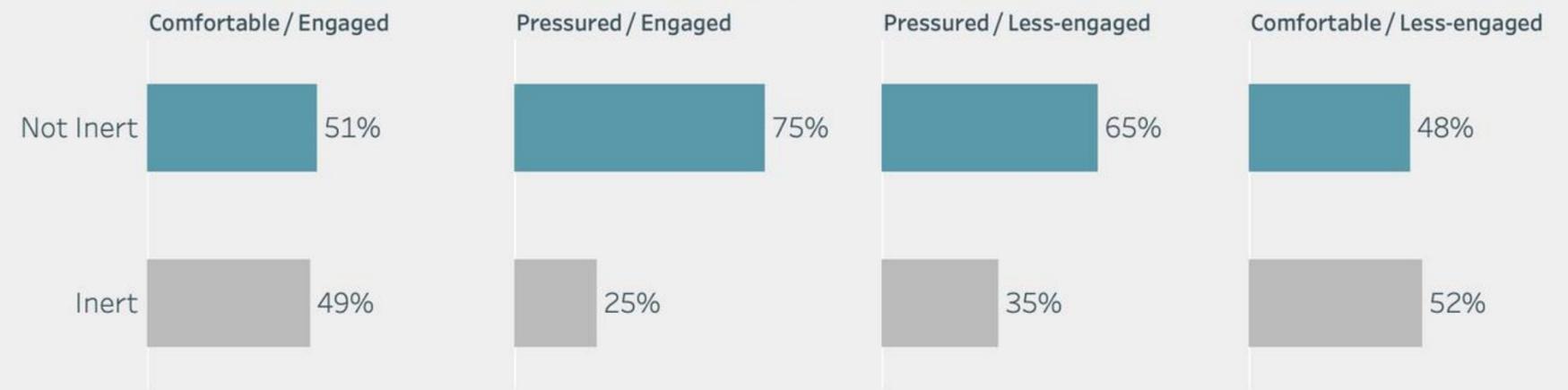


16% of consumers

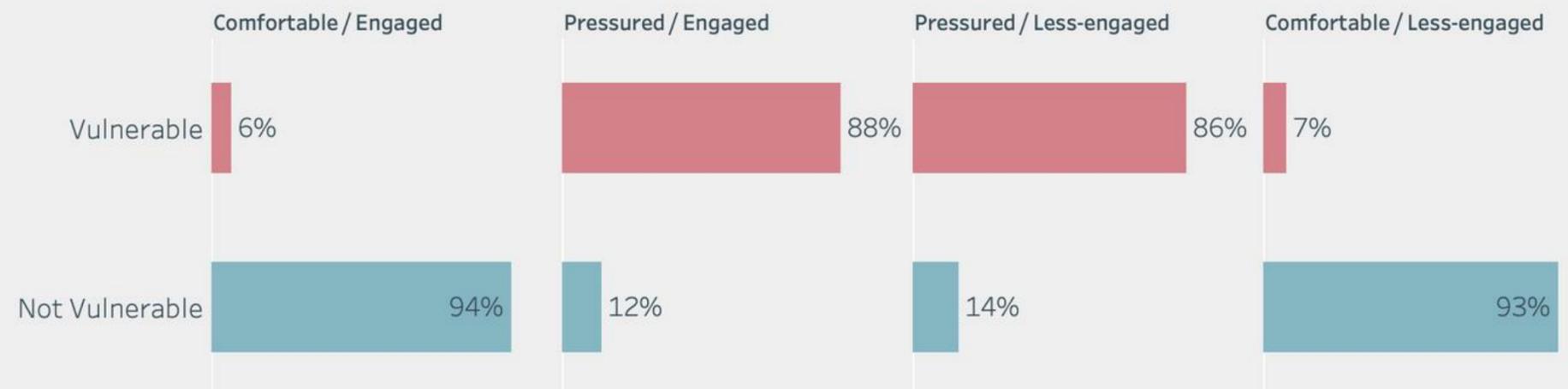


26% of consumers

Inert classification (based on past and future switching intent) by consumer segmentation



Vulnerable classification (based on affordability and confidence in getting support) by consumer segments



n = Comfortable / Engaged 397 | Anxious Manager 168 | Pressured / Less-engaged 172 | Comfortable / Less-engaged 265



There is strong residential consumer interest in time-of-use plans, but uptake remains limited

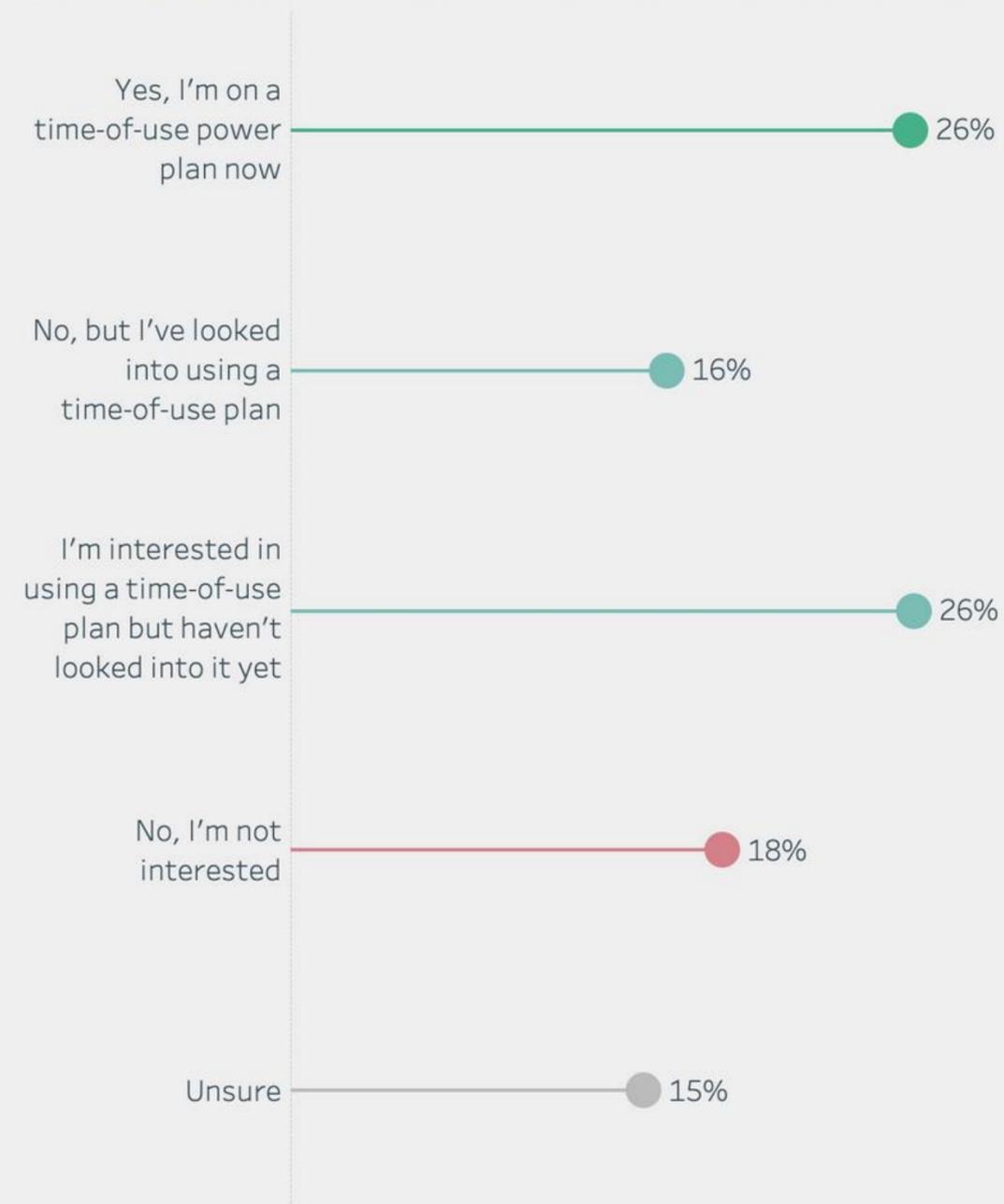
While only 18% of residential consumers say they are not interested in time-of-use power plans, 26% say they are currently on one*. This leaves a large potential pool of adopters (57%) either considering or open to such plans, or unsure. However, many remain inactive: 26% are interested but haven't looked into it, 16% have explored the option without taking it up, and 15% are unsure.

Segmentation shows that uptake is uneven. Among Comfortable / Engaged, who feel confident about affordability and monitor their bills, adoption is higher (38%). In contrast, Pressured / Engaged (who also monitor but face affordability pressures) are less likely to adopt (20%).

This highlights that engagement alone is not enough; affordability and confidence are key to driving uptake.

*Qualitative research shows that some households believe they are on a time-of-use plan when they are not (e.g. attributing 'hours of power' or night rates to TOU products).

Q18 Are you using a time-of-use power plan in your household/business?



Percentage in each segment using a time-of-use power plan



n = Total sample 1,005 adult New Zealanders
n = Comfortable / Engaged 397 | Anxious Manager 168 | Pressured / Less-engaged 172 | Comfortable / Less-engaged 265



Time-of-use plans prompt behaviour change, with most finding it easy to adapt

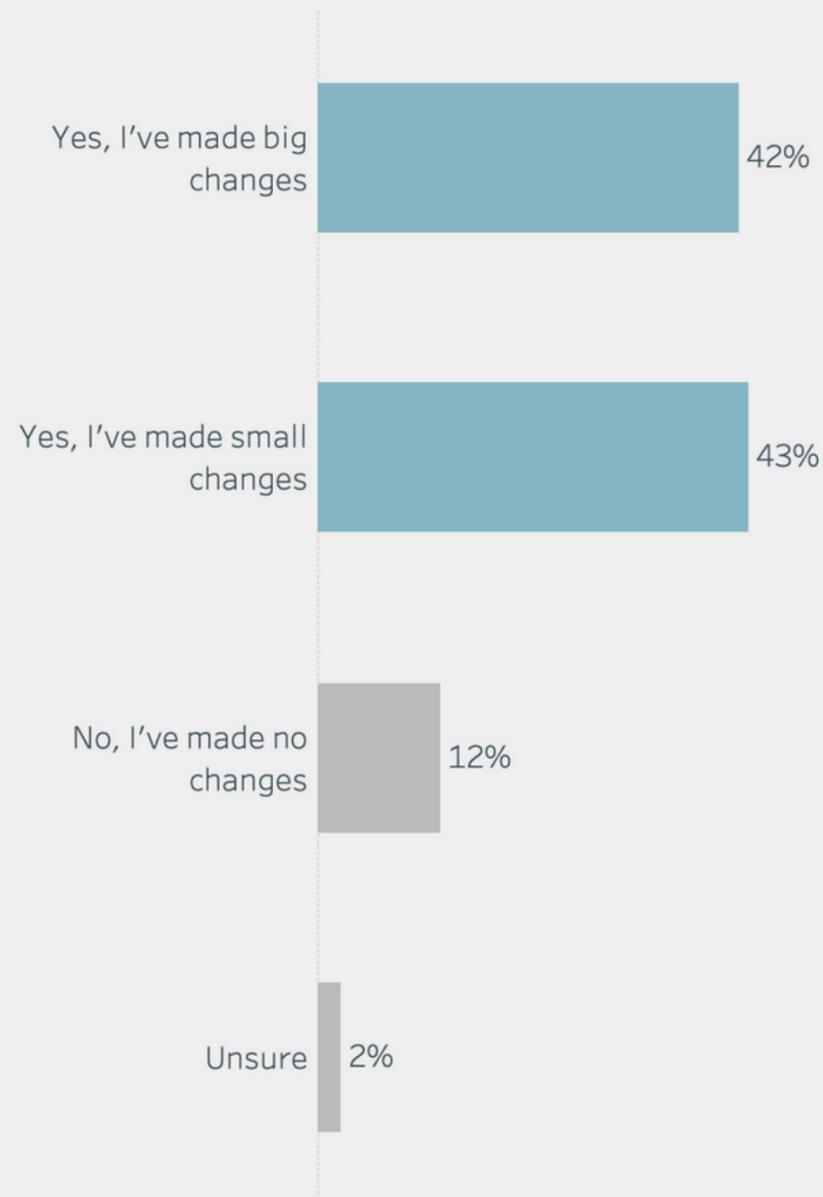
Adoption of time-of-use power plans is leading to meaningful shifts in electricity use.

Among those on time-of-use plans, 42% report making significant changes to when or how they use electricity, while a further 43% have made smaller adjustments. Only a small minority (12%) report no change.

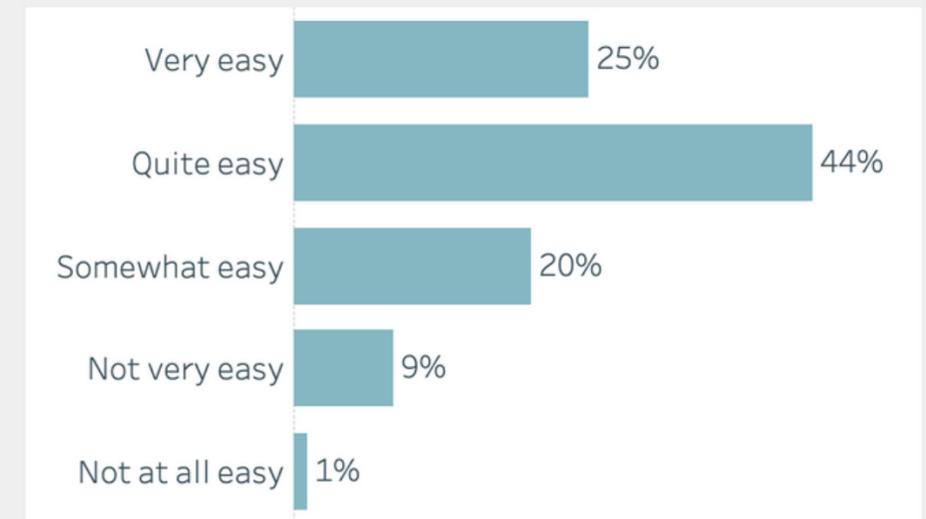
Encouragingly, the majority of time-of-use consumers find adapting their usage straightforward. More than two-thirds (69%) say it has been very or quite easy to change their habits, with only 10% describing the transition as difficult.

This suggests that once adopted, time-of-use plans are effective at encouraging behavioural change, and that the barriers to adjustment are relatively low for most consumers.

Q19 Since starting a time-of-use power plan, have you changed how or when your household/business uses electricity?



Q20 How easy has it been to change when you use your electricity to make the most of your time-of-use plan?



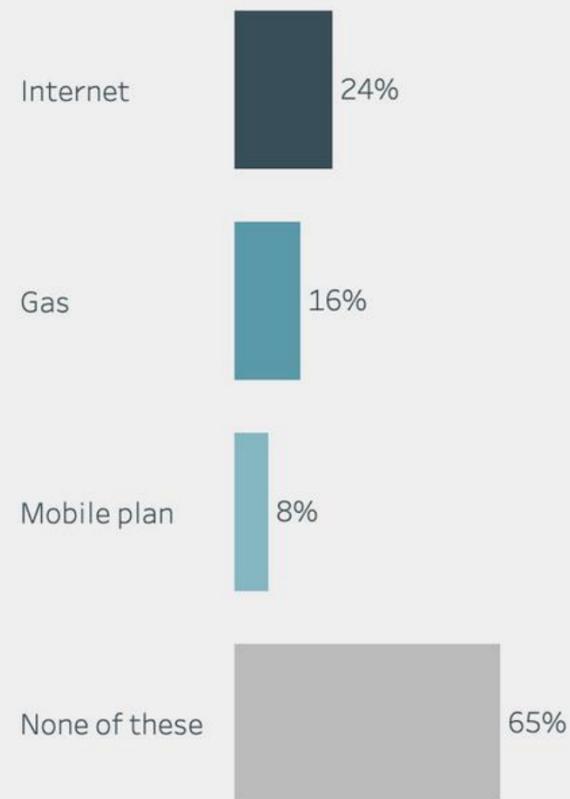
n = Total sample 1,005 adult New Zealanders
n = Use time-of-use plans and have made changes 225



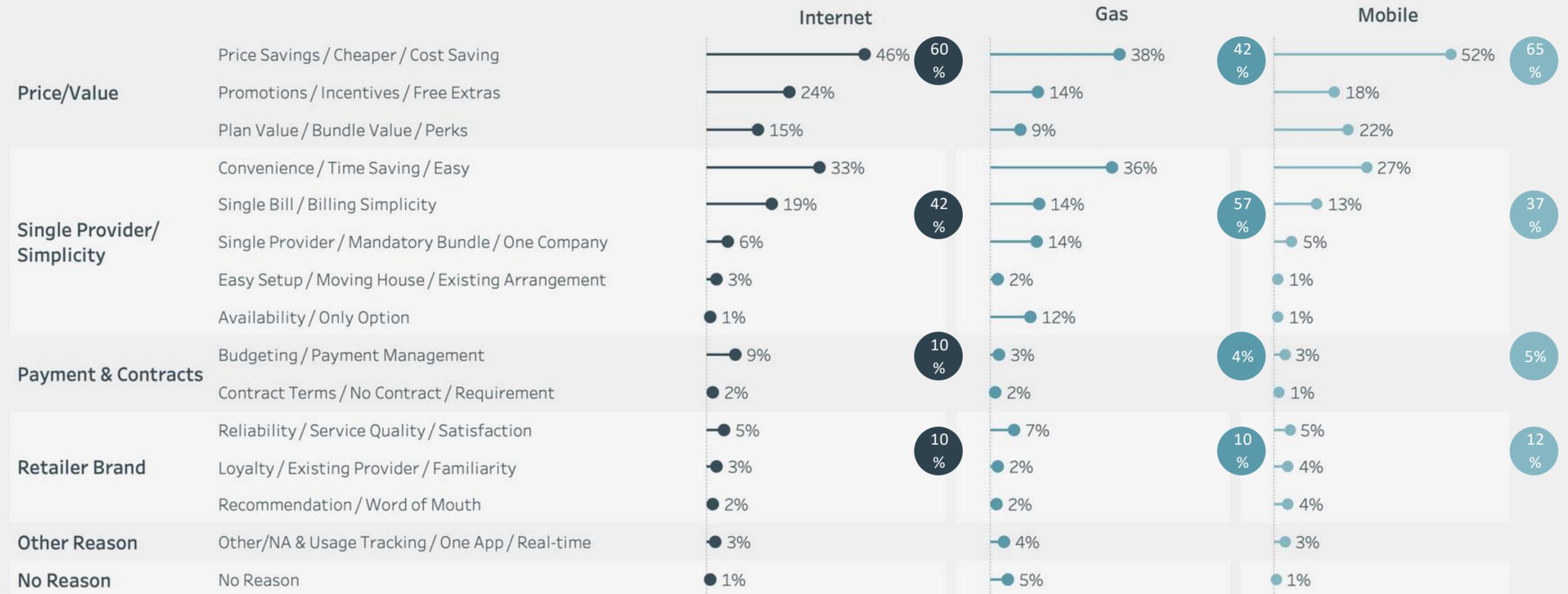
Bundling of power is most common with internet services, driven by savings and simplicity

About a third of residential consumers bundle another service with their power company, most often internet. The main motivations are price savings, promotions, and the convenience of a single bill or provider. Other factors, such as brand familiarity or ease of budgeting, play a smaller role.

Q16 Do you receive any of the following services from your power company?



Q17 What was the main reason you chose to bundle your electricity with these other services?



Sample of adult New Zealanders who bundled each service: n = 260 (Internet), n = 173 (Gas), n = 93 (Mobile)



Security and Reliability

 The Navigators





Residential consumer confidence in future electricity supply is modest, with concerns focussed upon capacity and resilience

Confidence in the long-term security of New Zealand's electricity supply is relatively soft.

Only 37% of consumers feel very confident or quite confident that future demand will be met, while a further 30% are only somewhat confident. One quarter of consumers remain sceptical, saying they are not very or not at all confident in the future supply.

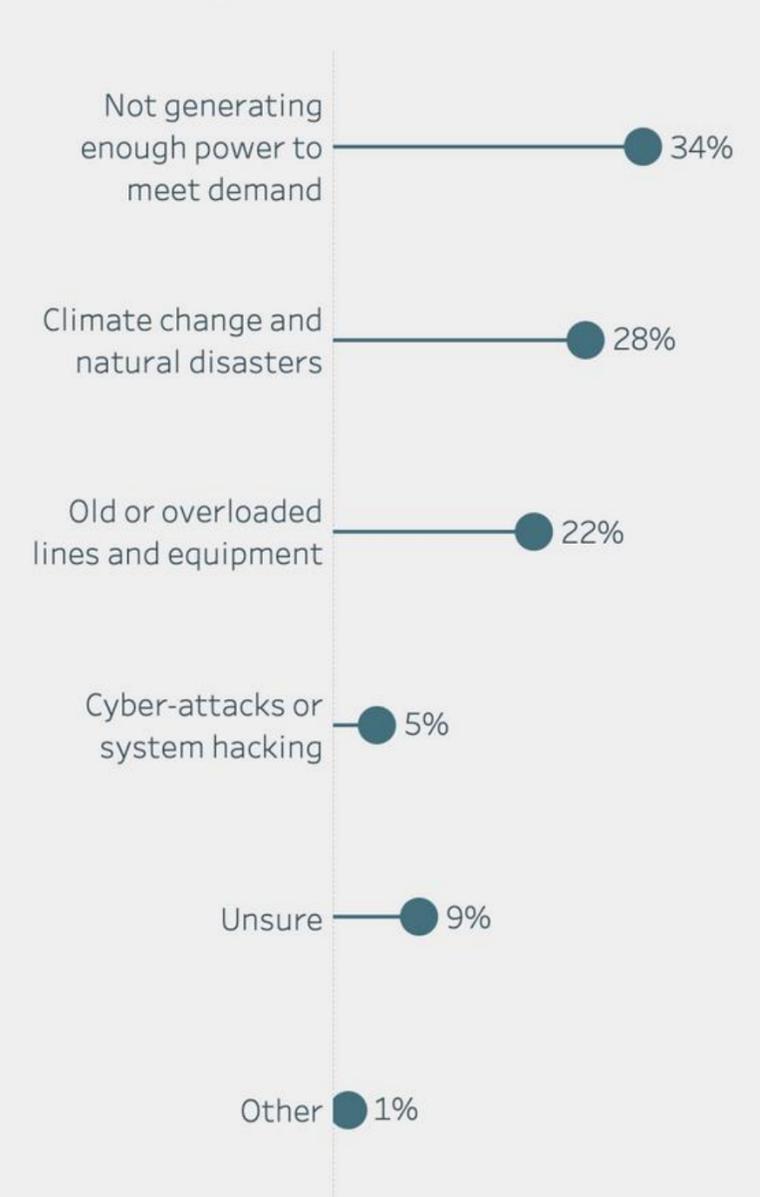
When asked about risks to reliability, the leading concern is not generating enough power to meet demand (34%). Other prominent risks include climate change and natural disasters (28%) and old or overloaded equipment (22%). Less frequently mentioned were cyber-attacks (5%) or other system risks.

This highlights a mix of supply-side and environmental concerns shaping consumer perceptions of electricity reliability in New Zealand.

Q12 How confident do you feel that: 'There is enough electricity to keep New Zealand homes and business powered in the future'?



Q35 Which of the following do you believe is the biggest risk to the reliability of New Zealand's power supply?



n = 1,005 adult New Zealanders



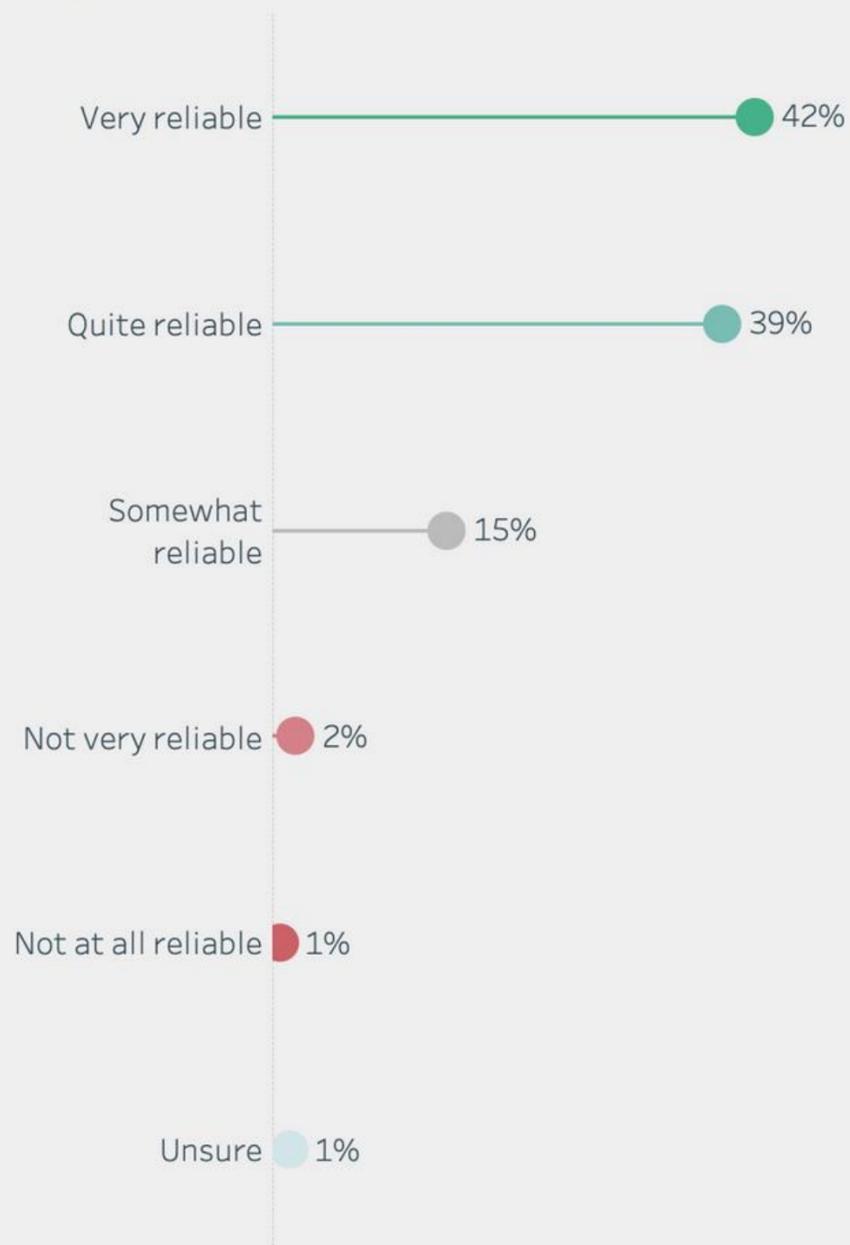
Most residential consumers view supply as reliable, though some remain cautious about outages

Perceptions of electricity supply are generally strong, with 42% rating their area as very reliable and 39% as quite reliable. Only 3% believe supply is not reliable, showing overall confidence in the system's performance.

When it comes to unexpected outages, confidence softens. While a majority (57%) feel very or quite confident that their supply will be there when needed without disruption, nearly 3 in 10 are only somewhat confident. Around 1 in 10 are not very or not at all confident, indicating lingering concerns about unexpected interruptions.

This suggests that while reliability is well-regarded at a broad level, there is still sensitivity around outage risk, which may shape perceptions of overall system resilience.

Q34 Overall, how reliable do you feel the supply of power is in your area?



Q12 How confident do you feel that: 'My power supply is there when I need it with no unexpected outages'?

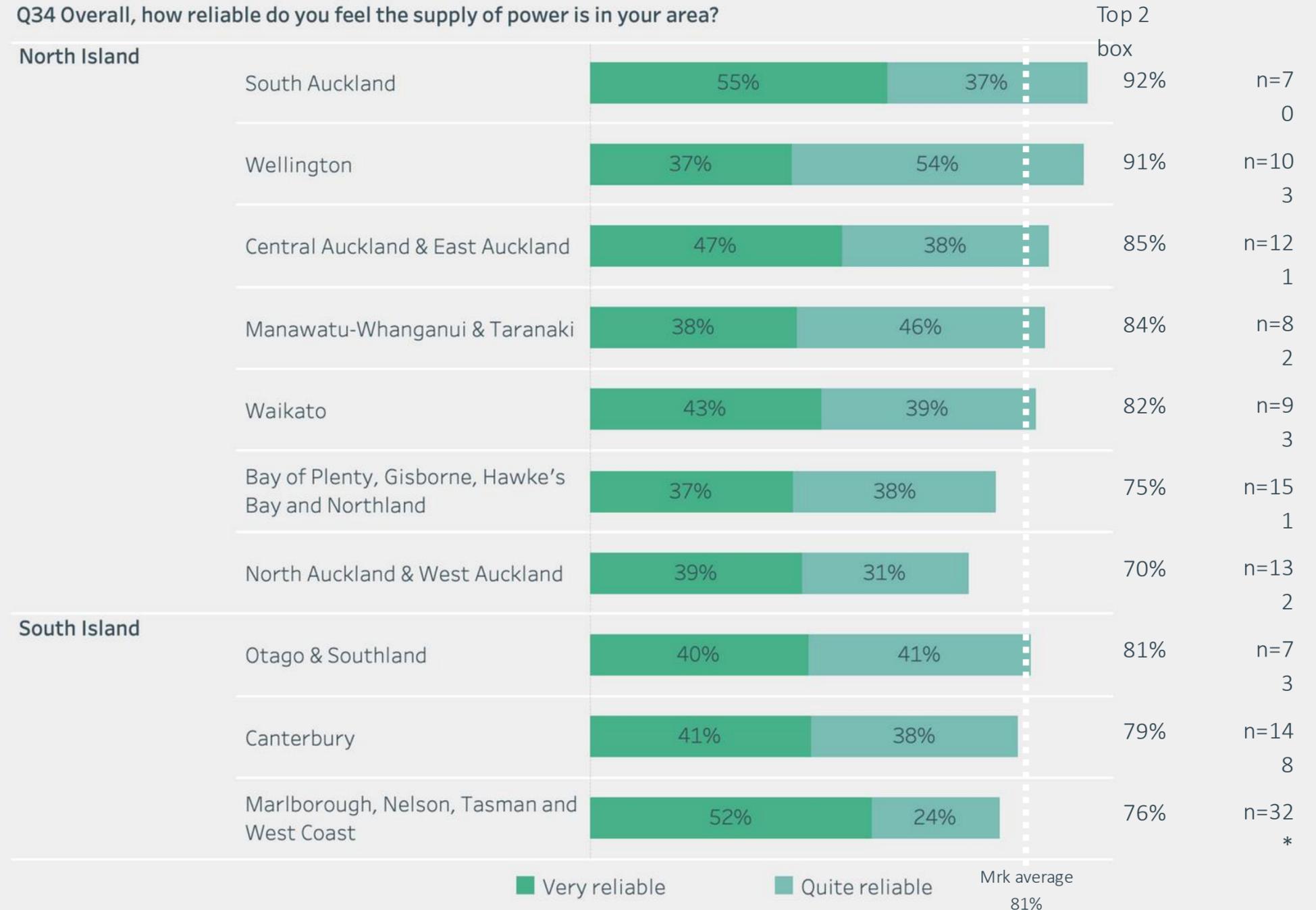


n = 1,005 adult New Zealanders



The areas that are lagging behind in perceived reliability include North/West Auckland and Bay of Plenty/Gisborne/Hawke's Bay/Northland

South Auckland and Wellington lead the way in terms of people residing there regarding the supply of power in their area as very or quite reliable.



• Caution small sample base



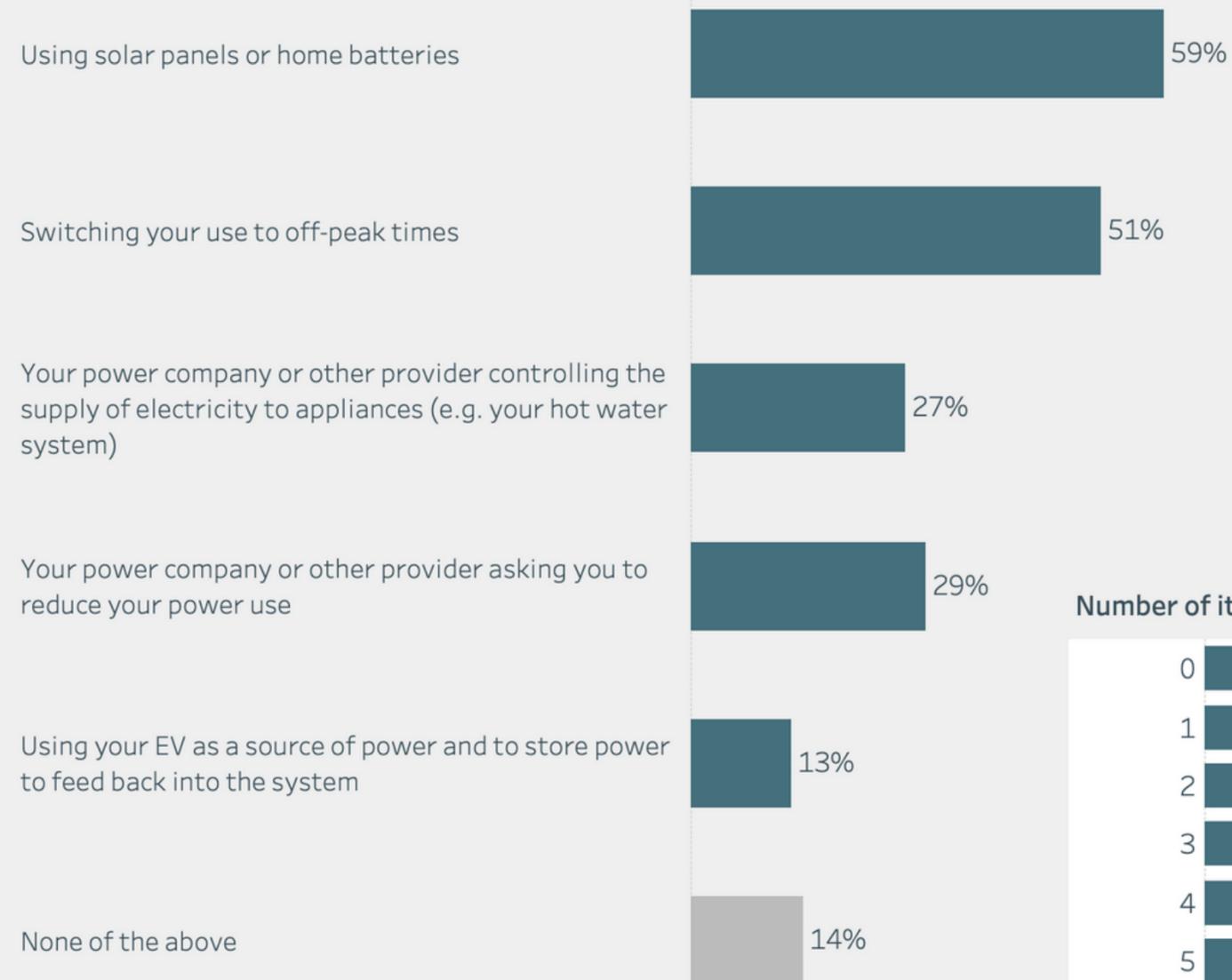
Awareness of outage-reduction options is high, but understanding remains narrow

Most residential consumers (86%) are aware of at least one option that can help reduce the risk of electricity supply problems, with solar panels or home batteries (59%) and shifting use to off-peak times (51%) the most recognised.

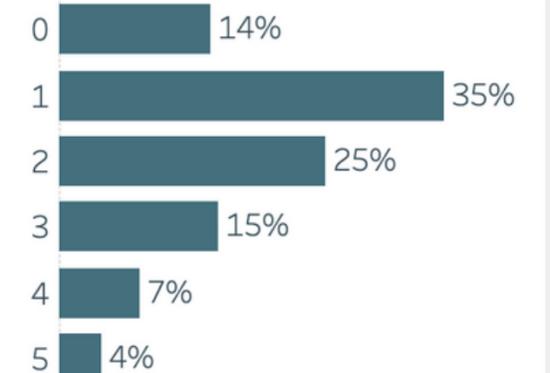
However, awareness drops sharply for other initiatives, such as demand management by providers (27–29%) or using electric vehicles as a power source (13%).

Despite high overall awareness, knowledge tends to be shallow: over a third of consumers (35%) could only name one option, and a further quarter (25%) knew of just two. Only 26% were aware of three or more initiatives, suggesting that while the concept of resilience is on the radar, consumer understanding of the full suite of solutions remains limited.

Q36 Which of the following options are you aware of that help reduce the risk of supply problems?



Number of items mentioned



n = 1,005 adult New Zealanders



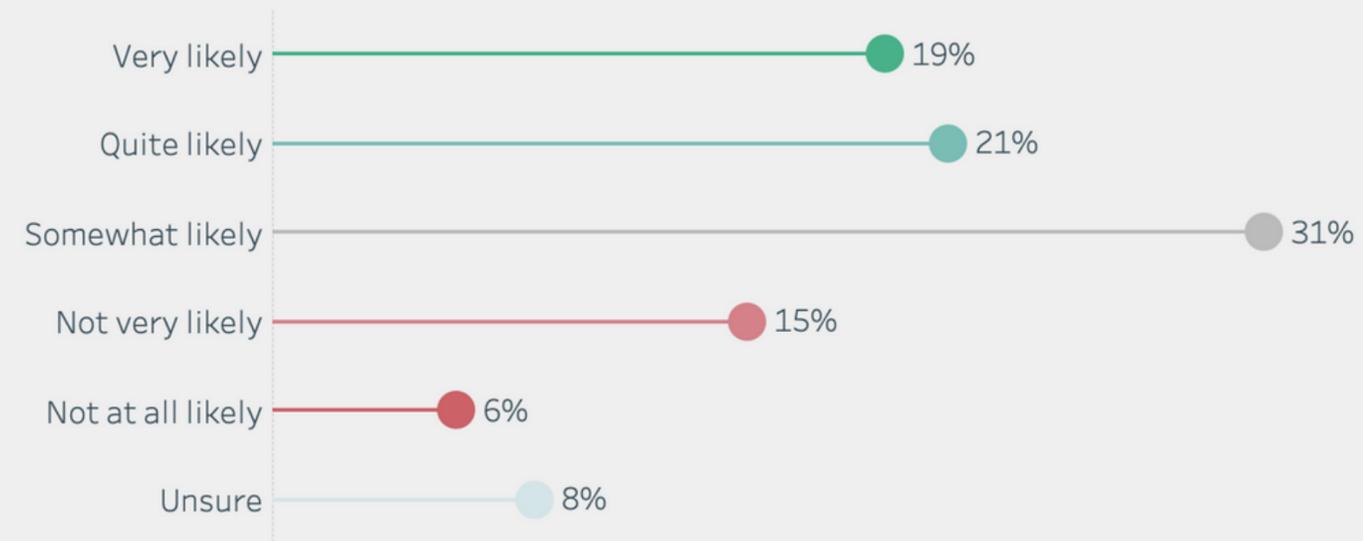
Residential consumers are open to outage-reduction measures, but financial savings drive their choices

There is strong openness to participation in power resilience initiatives. Four in ten consumers say they are very or quite likely to try measures that reduce the risk of power outages, with a further 31% somewhat likely.

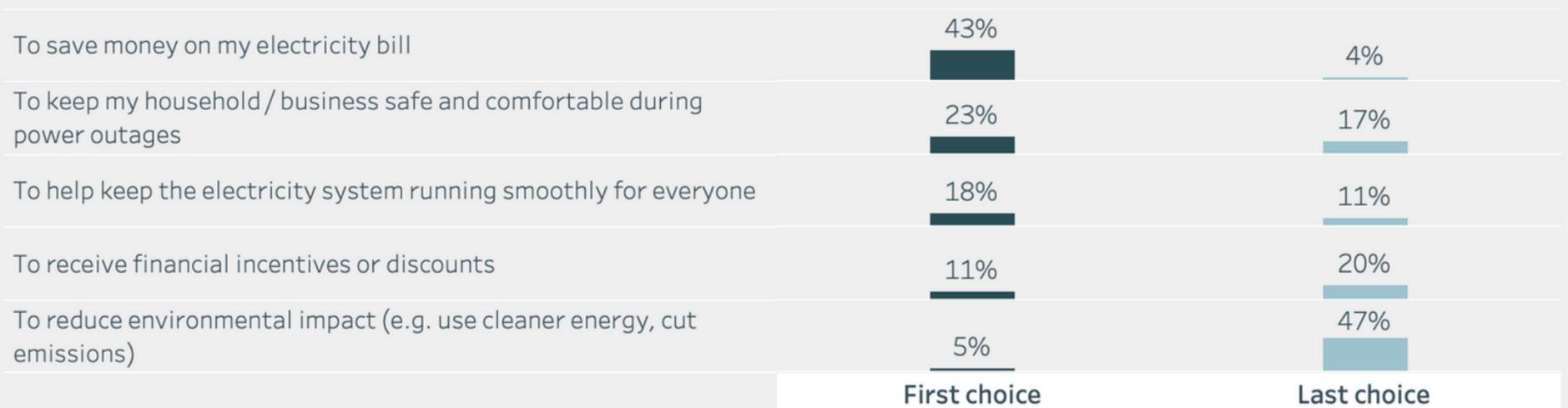
When asked why they would adopt such measures, the strongest motivator was saving money on electricity bills (43% ranking it their top reason). Ensuring their household remains safe and comfortable during an outage was also a significant driver (23%). Broader system benefits and financial incentives had less pull, while environmental impact was ranked lowest, with nearly half of consumers (47%) putting it last.

This highlights an opportunity: consumers are willing to act, but initiatives are most likely to succeed when aligned with personal financial benefits.

Q37 How likely would you be to try one of these options to help reduce the risk of power outages in your area?



Q38 Please order the following reasons for why you might be likely to choose an option to reduce the risk of outages, from the most important reason to the least important reason.



n = 1,005 adult New Zealanders
Q38 n=731 (very to somewhat likely in Q37)



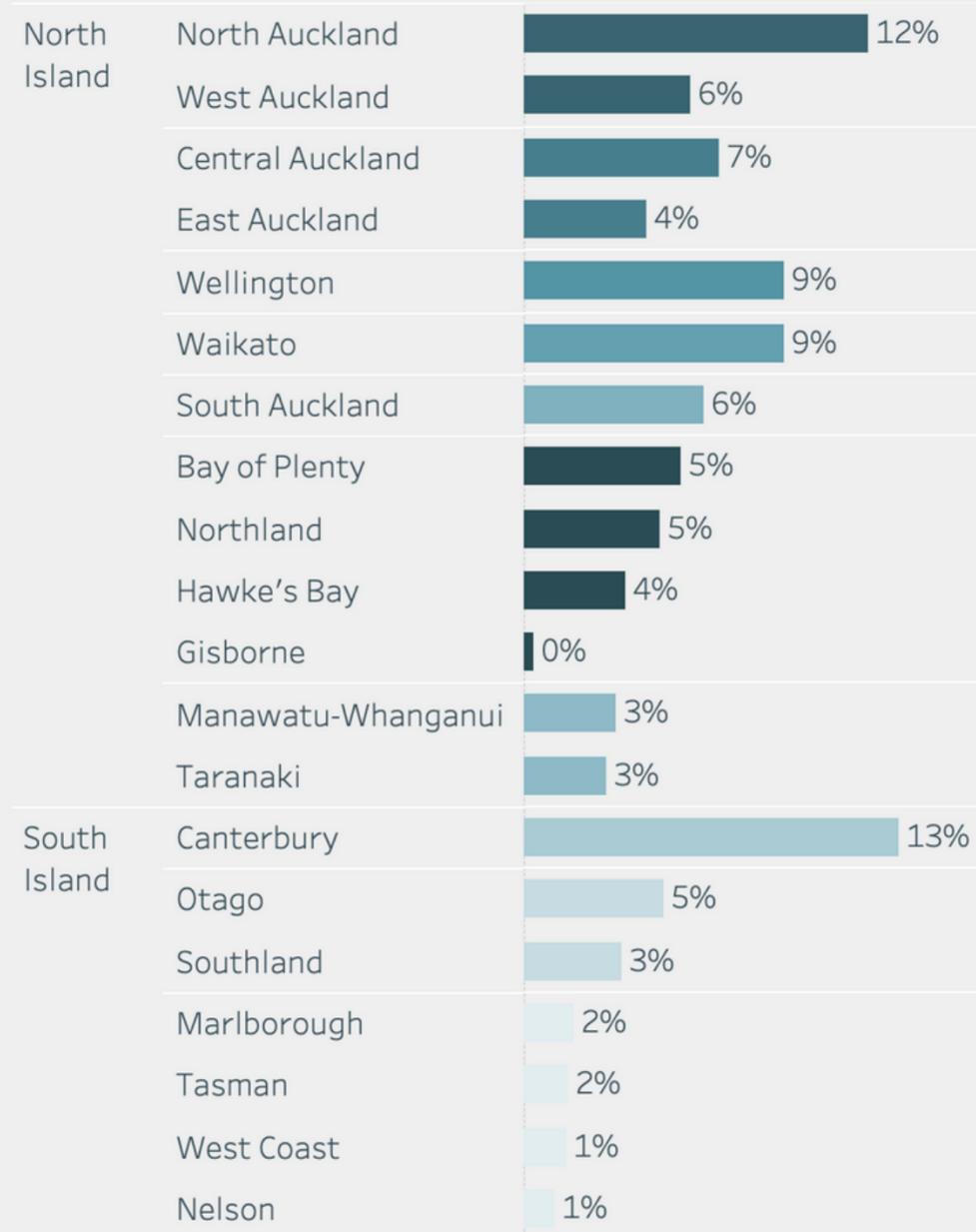
Results for the Small Business Consumer Survey



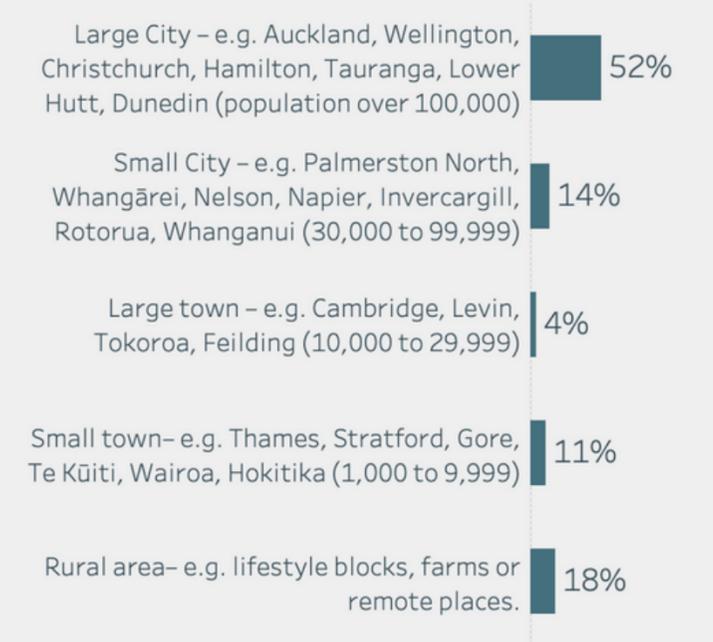


Small business consumer sample profile

Q8 Which of the following regions best describes where you usually live?



Q10 Do you live in a city, town or in a rural area?

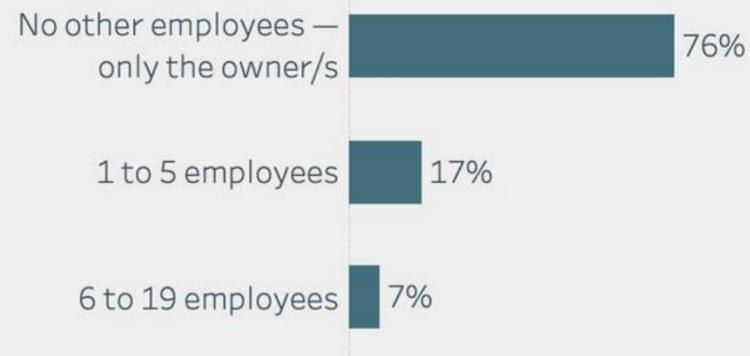


n=510 small business decision-makers



Small business consumer sample profile

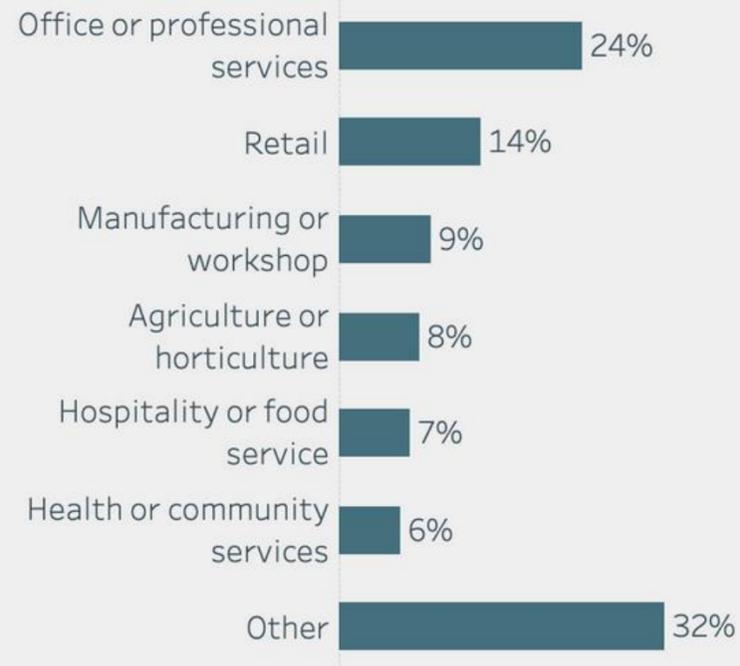
Q2 Which of the following classification best describes your business size?



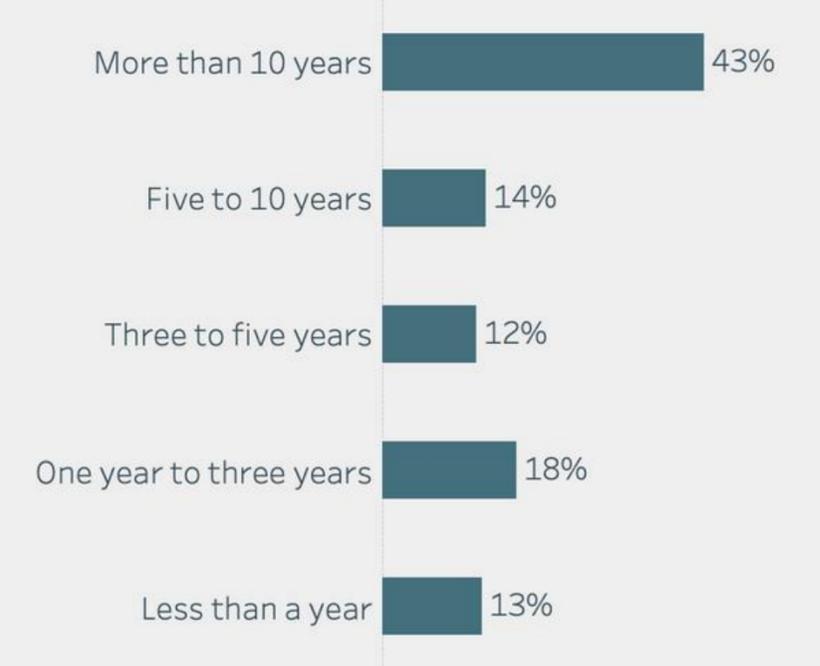
Q3 Where is your business mainly based?



Q45 What type of business do you operate?



Q46 How long has your business been operating?

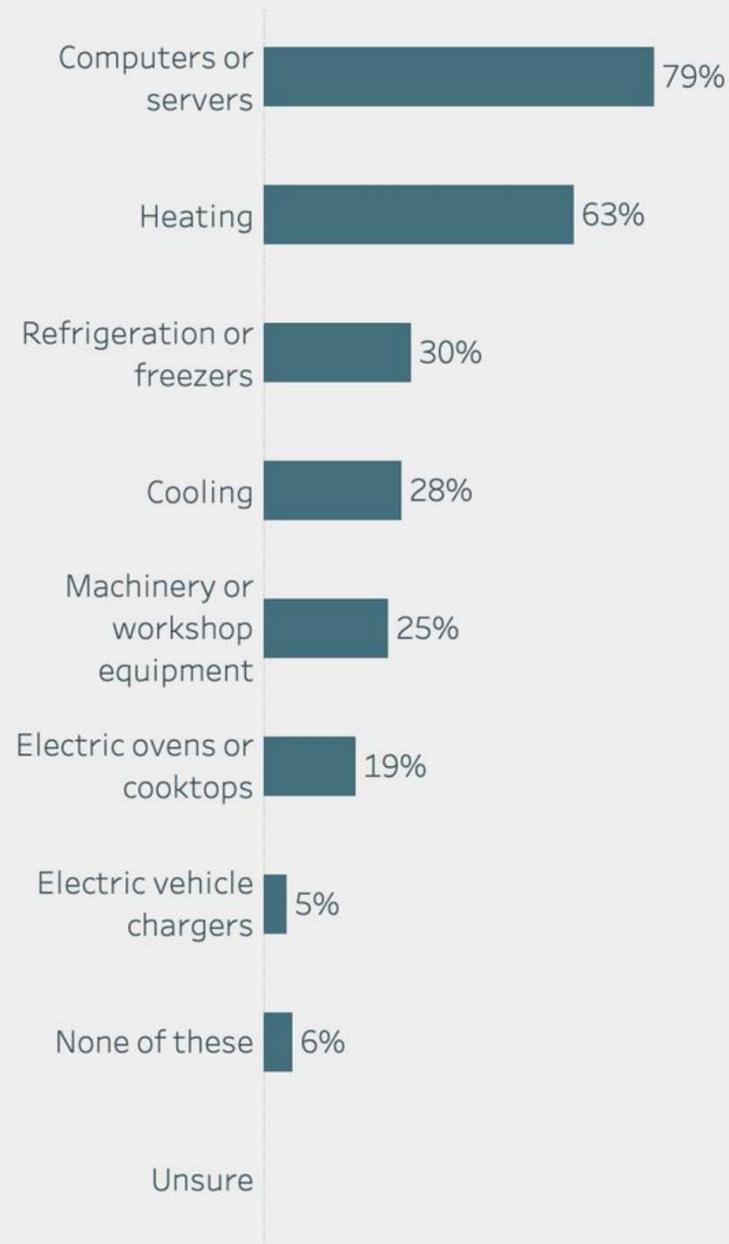


n=510 small business decision-makers

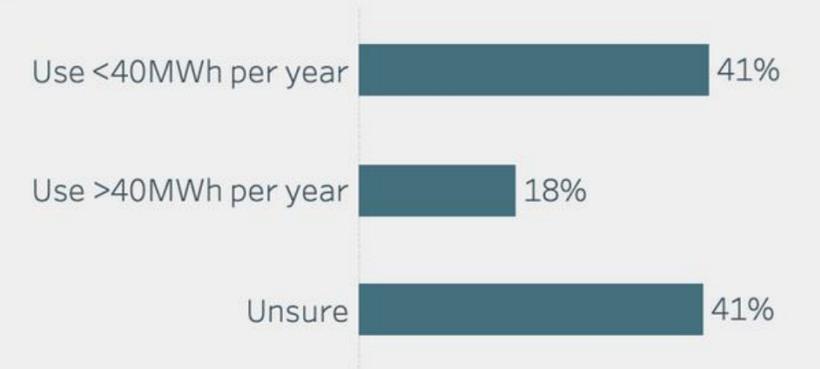


Small business consumer sample profile

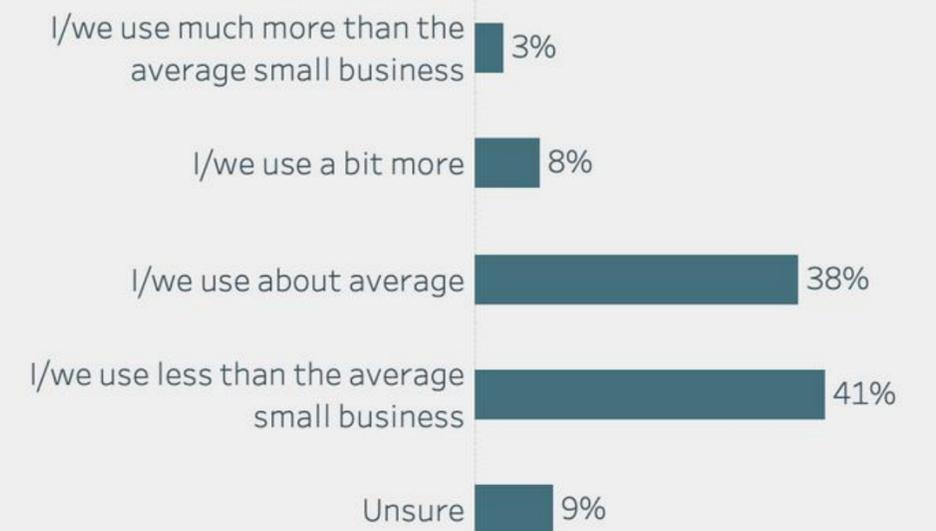
Q47 Which of the following does your business use regularly?



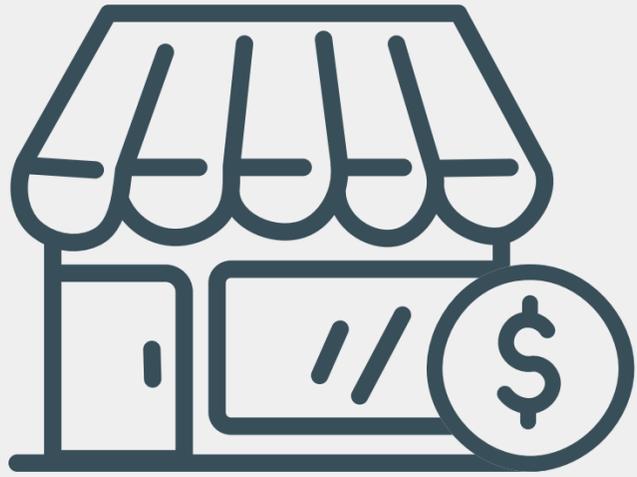
Q48 Does your business use less than 40 megawatt-hour (MWh) of electricity each year? (You can estimate this information by finding your monthly MWh on your latest electricity bill and multiplying it by 12.)



Q49 How much power do you think you use compared to other businesses like yours?



n=510 small business decision-makers



Key Sentiment Indicators Control Beliefs

 The Navigators





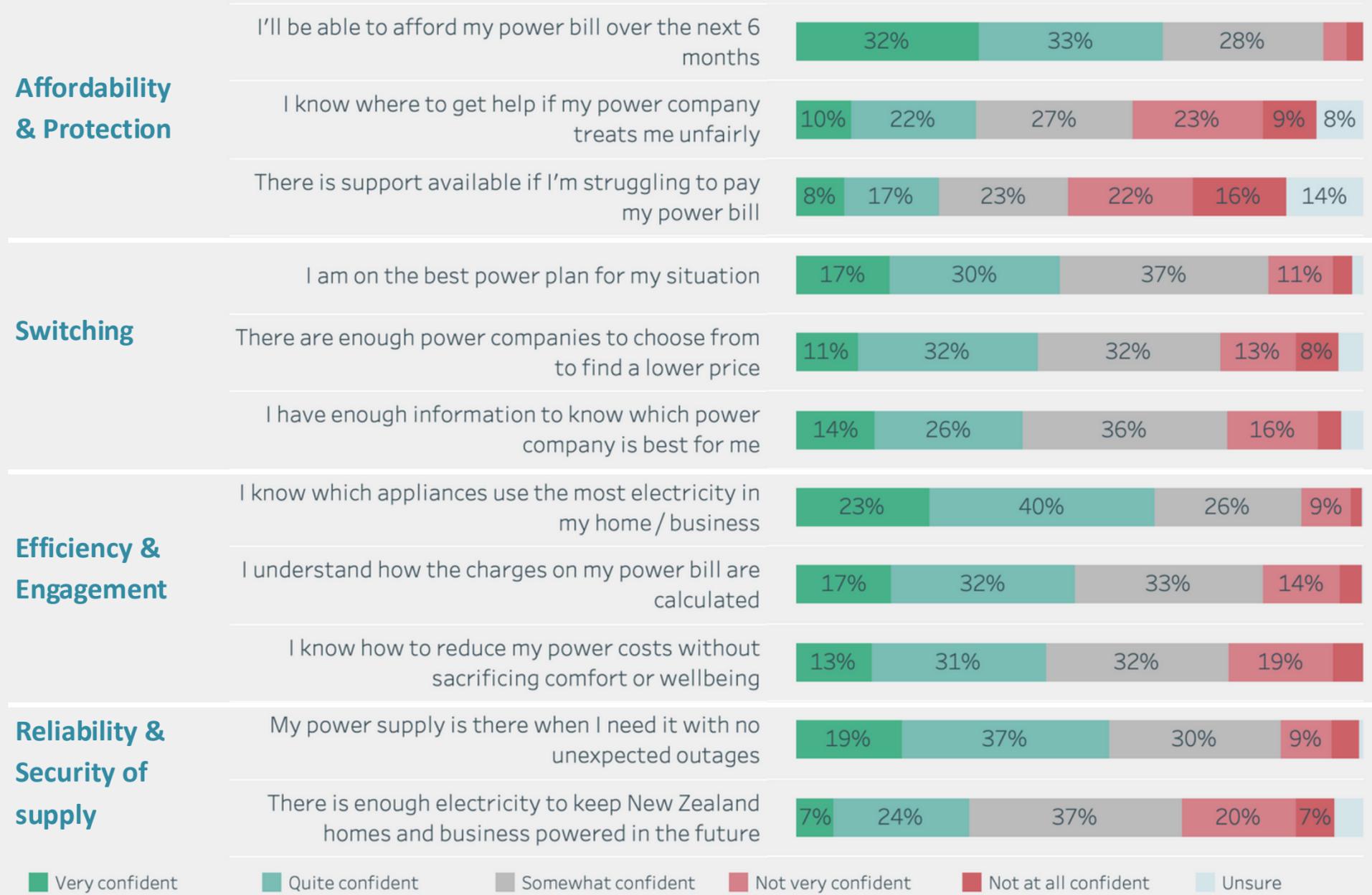
Overall summary: Control beliefs amongst small business consumers

The 11 control belief attributes included in the survey have been grouped into key focus areas by the Electricity Authority to provide a high-level picture of confidence in the market. For each attribute, small business consumers were asked how confident they felt.

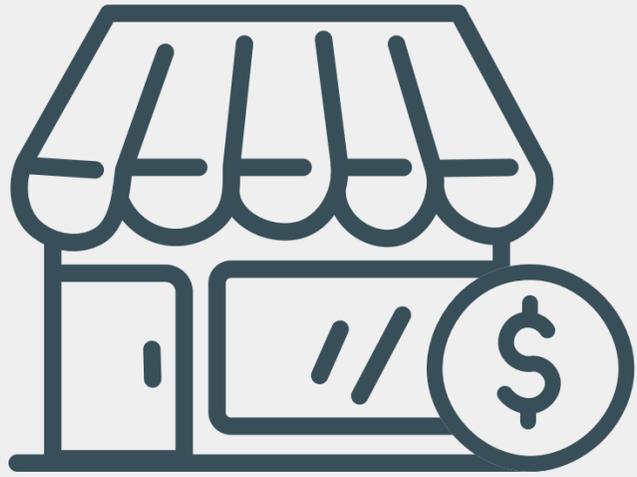
The lowest levels of confidence relate to support: 38% of respondents reported lacking confidence in accessing help if they struggle to pay their power bill, and 32% were not confident about knowing where to turn if treated unfairly by their power company.

Confidence is also relatively low in relation to security of supply, with 27% of respondents expressing doubt that there will be enough electricity to meet future needs.

Q12 We'd like to understand how confident you feel about your electricity situation and the choices available to you. How confident do you feel about each of the following?



n=510 small business decision-makers



Affordability and Protection



 The Navigators

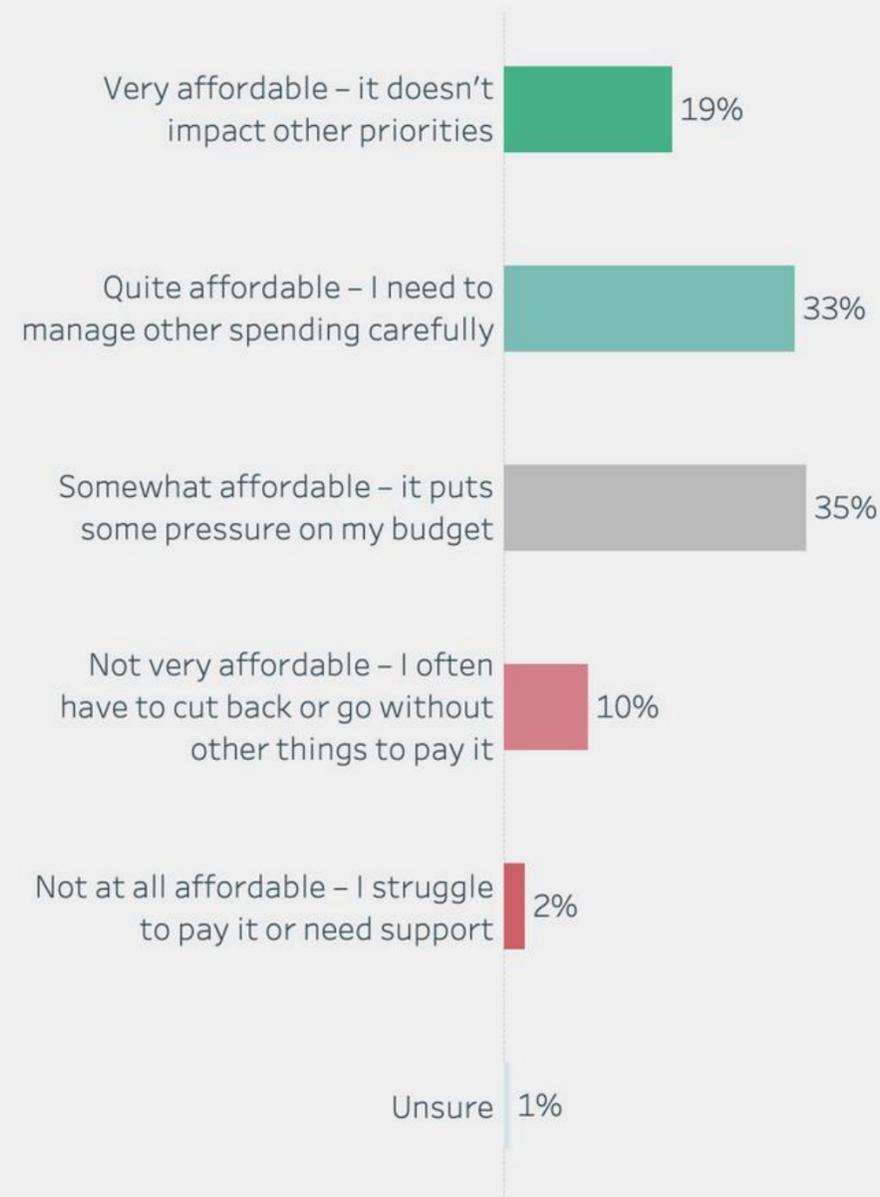


Affordability concerns: 35% doubt they can keep up with power bills in the months ahead

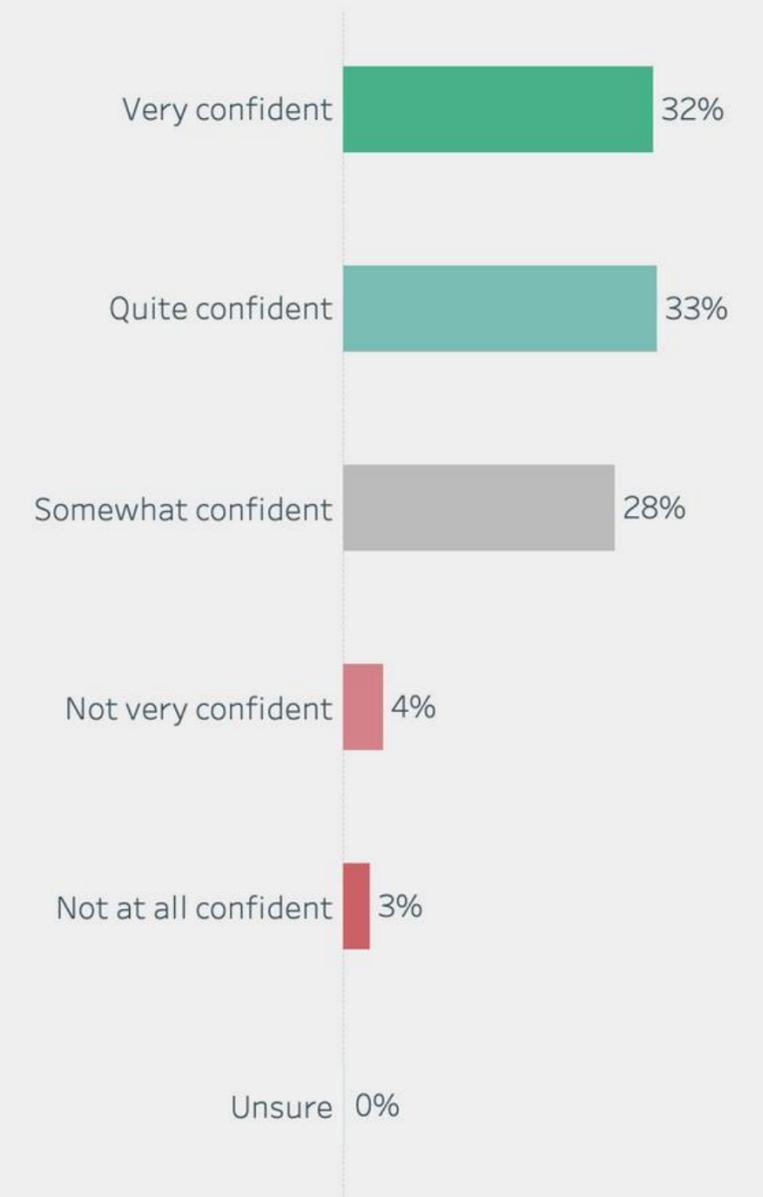
Just over half (52%) of small business consumers view their power bill as affordable, with 19% describing it as very affordable and 33% as quite affordable. A further 35% see it as somewhat affordable, acknowledging it puts pressure on their budget, while 12% rate it as not very or not at all affordable.

When it comes to short-term ability to pay, 65% are confident they can manage their power bill over the next six months (either very or quite confident). In contrast, 35% are less certain—7% say they are not very or not at all confident, and 28% describe themselves as only somewhat confident.

Q32 Thinking about your power bill, how affordable is it for your household/business in terms of your overall budget and priorities?



Q12 How confident do you feel about each of the following: 'I'll be able to afford my power bill over the next 6 months'?



n=510 small business decision-makers

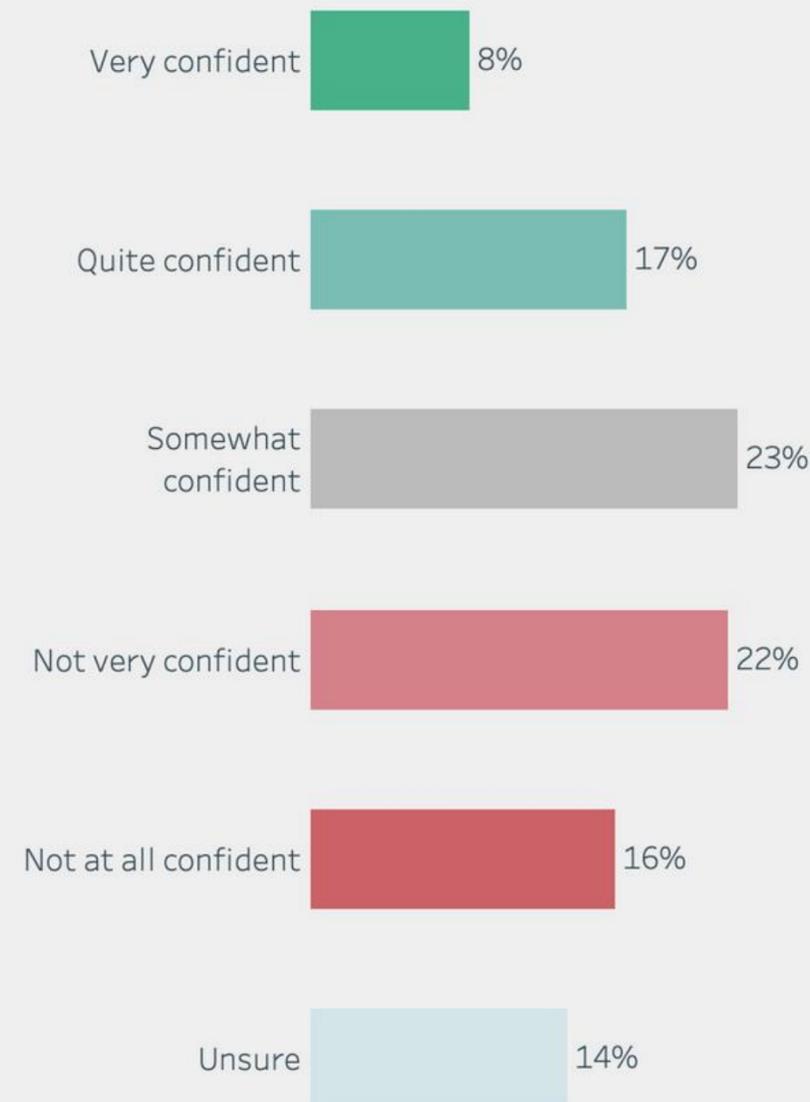


Scope to improve visibility of support options for small businesses in hardship

Among small business consumers, confidence in accessing support if they struggle to pay their power bill is low. Over a third (38%) say they are not very or not at all confident, while a further 14% are unsure and 23% feel only somewhat confident. This leaves just one in four (25%) confident that support would be available if needed.

There is also room to better empower small business consumers when it comes to fair treatment. Almost a third (32%) report lacking confidence in knowing where to seek help if treated unfairly by their power company, and only an equal share (32%) say they feel confident in this regard.

Q12 How confident do you feel about each of the following: 'There is support available if I'm struggling to pay my power bill'?



Q12 How confident do you feel about each of the following: 'I know where to get help if my power company treats me unfairly'?



n=510 small business decision-makers



31% of small business consumers feel vulnerable: unsure about affording bills or accessing support

The chart to the right illustrates the overlap between small business consumer confidence in being able to pay their power bill over the next six months and their confidence that support is available if they struggle.

Just under one-third (31%) fall into the Vulnerable group—meaning they lack confidence both in their ability to pay and in the availability of support.

Confidence in 'There is support available if I'm struggling to pay my power bill' x 'I'll be able to afford my power bill over the next 6 months'



n=510 small business decision-makers

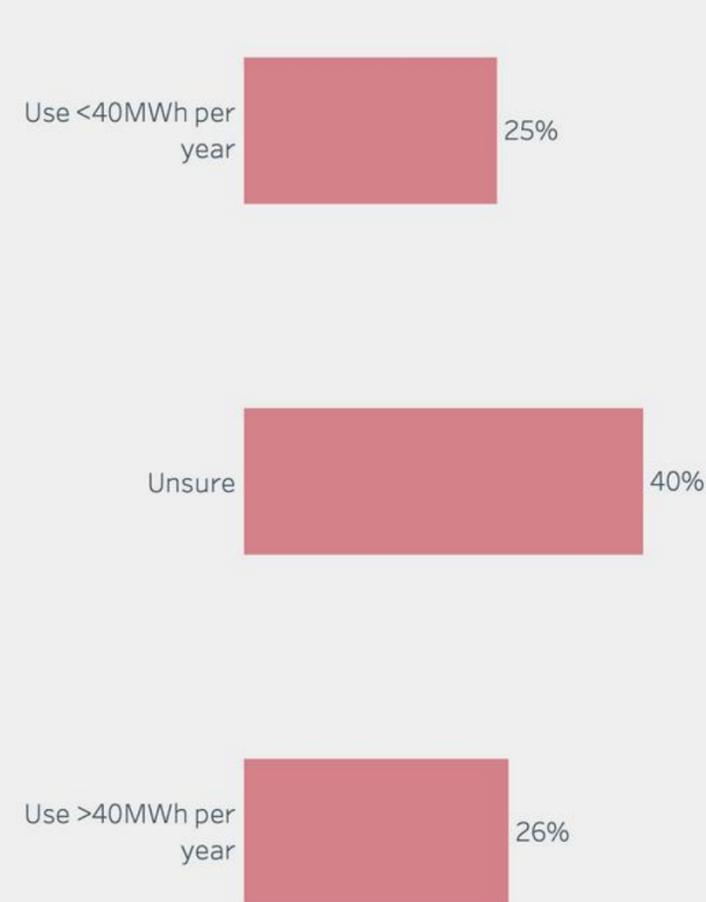


Those who are unsure of power consumption have a larger proportion of 'vulnerable' users

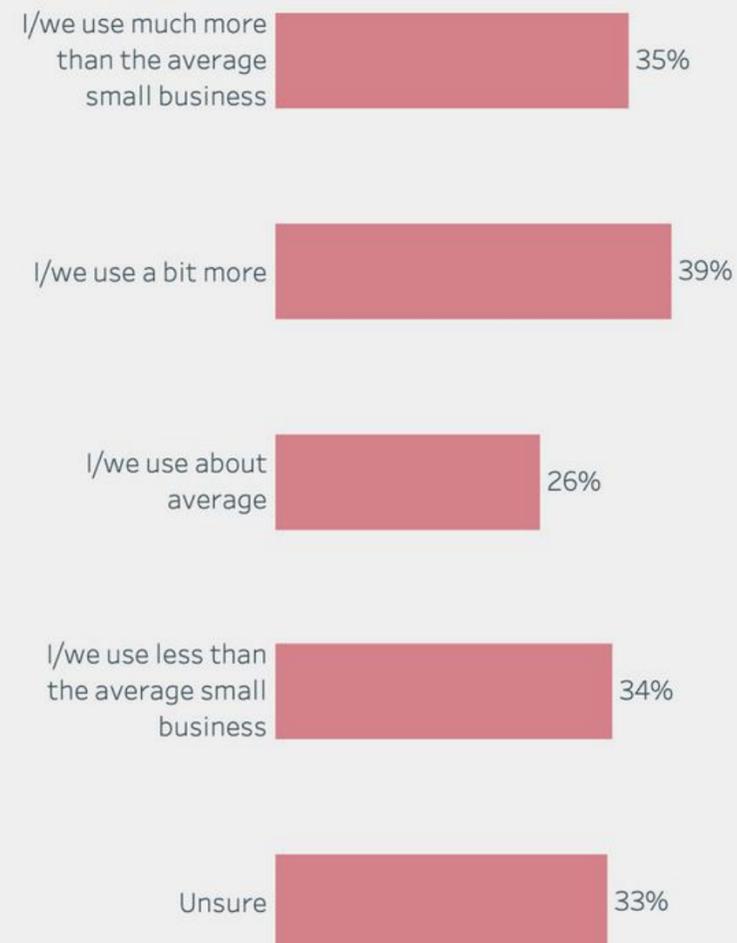
Using a smaller or larger amount of power, or more or less than other businesses, is not a indicator of being in the vulnerable cohort.

Profile of the 'Vulnerable' cohort: % that lack confidence that they can pay their bill in next 6 months and lack confidence that there is support available if they are struggling to pay

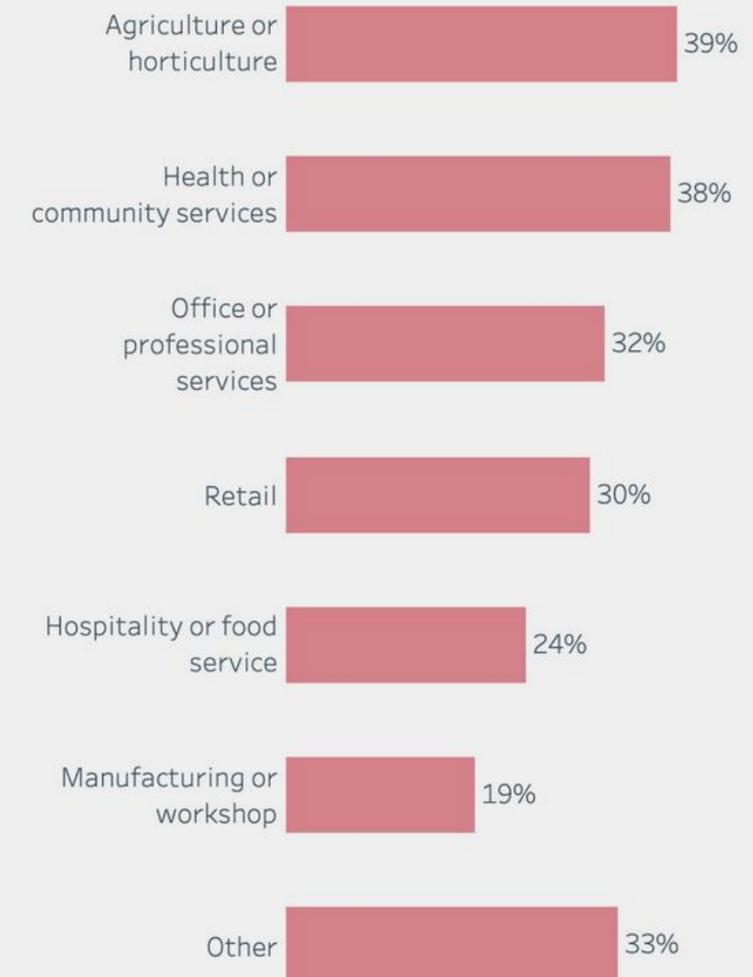
By approximate power use



By perceived use compared with similar businesses



By type of business



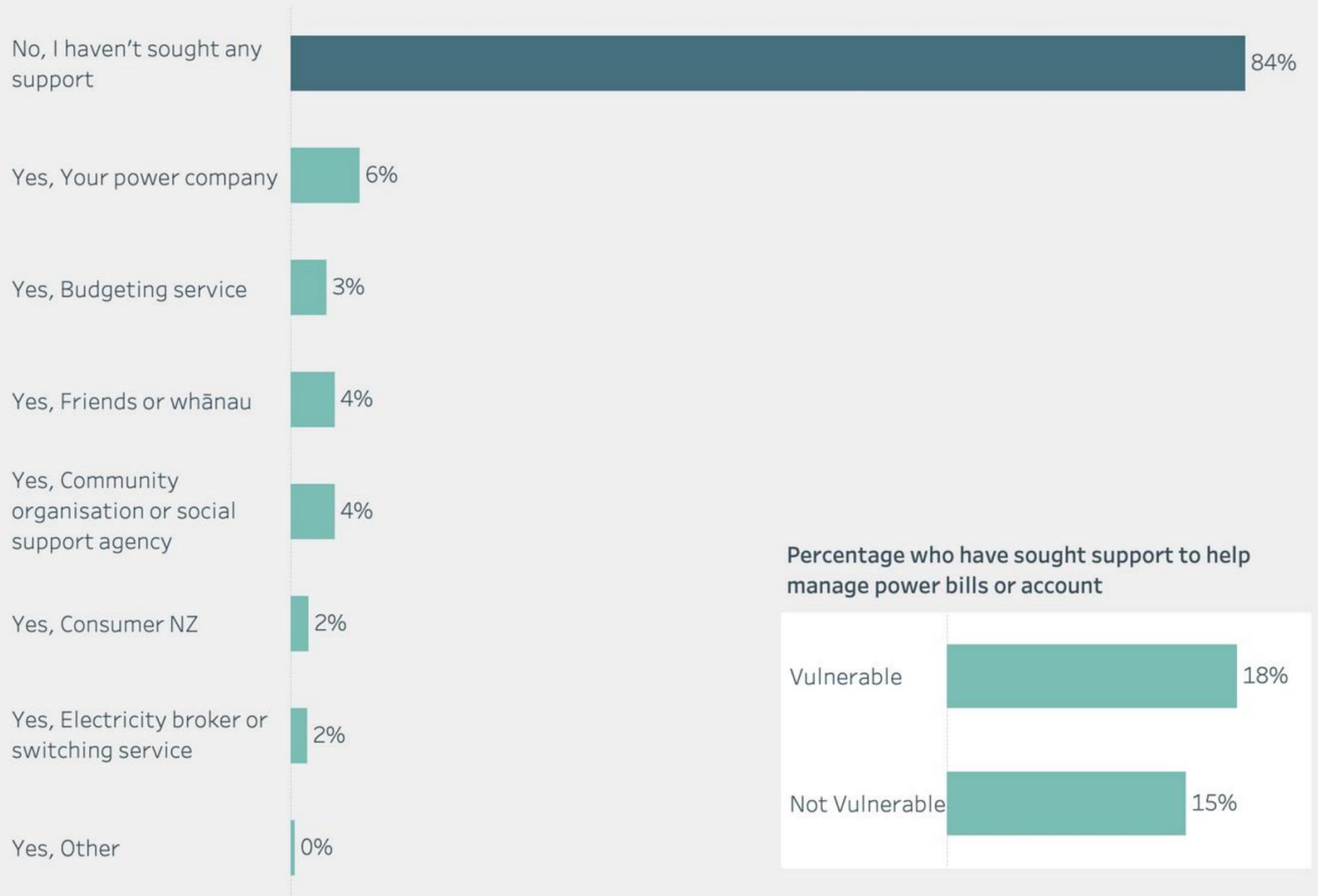


Support-seeking among small business consumers is low: 16% have asked for help

Overall, 16% of small business consumers have previously sought support to manage their power bills. They draw on a wide range of sources, including their power company, budgeting services, friends or whānau, and community organisations.

Among the Vulnerable group—those lacking confidence both in affording their bill and in the availability of support—just 18% have sought help in the past. This is only slightly higher than the 15% among those who are not classified as Vulnerable.

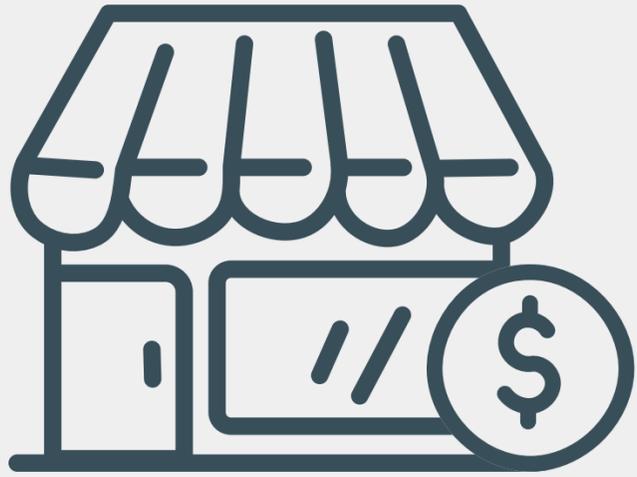
Q33 Have you ever sought support to help manage your power bills or account?



Percentage who have sought support to help manage power bills or account



n=510 small business decision-makers
n = Vulnerable 160 | Not vulnerable 350



Switching and Competition

The Navigators





Many small businesses are unsure if they're on the best power plan or with the right power company

Less than half of small business consumers (47%) feel at least quite confident they are on the most suitable power plan, while 14% express little or no confidence in their choice.

When it comes to selecting a power company, confidence levels are also divided. Four in ten believe they have enough information to identify the best power company, yet an equal share are somewhat confident or unsure, and one in five admit to having low or no confidence in making that decision.

Q12 How confident do you feel about each of the following: 'I am on the best power plan for my situation'?



Q12 How confident do you feel about each of the following: 'I have enough information to know which power company is best for me'?



n=510 small business decision-makers



Most small businesses believe it's worth shopping around, but confidence in their choice is mixed

A large majority of small business consumers see value in comparing options, with more than three in four agreeing it is worthwhile to shop around for the best-priced deal. Only a small minority (5%) disagree.

Confidence in the availability of choice is less clear-cut. While 43% believe there are enough power companies to secure a lower price, over a third (36%) are hesitant (either unsure or only somewhat confident), and one in five (21%) lacks confidence.

Q30 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: 'It's worthwhile shopping around different power companies for the best priced deal'?



Q12 How confident do you feel about each of the following: 'There are enough power companies to choose from to find a lower price'?



n=510 small business decision-makers

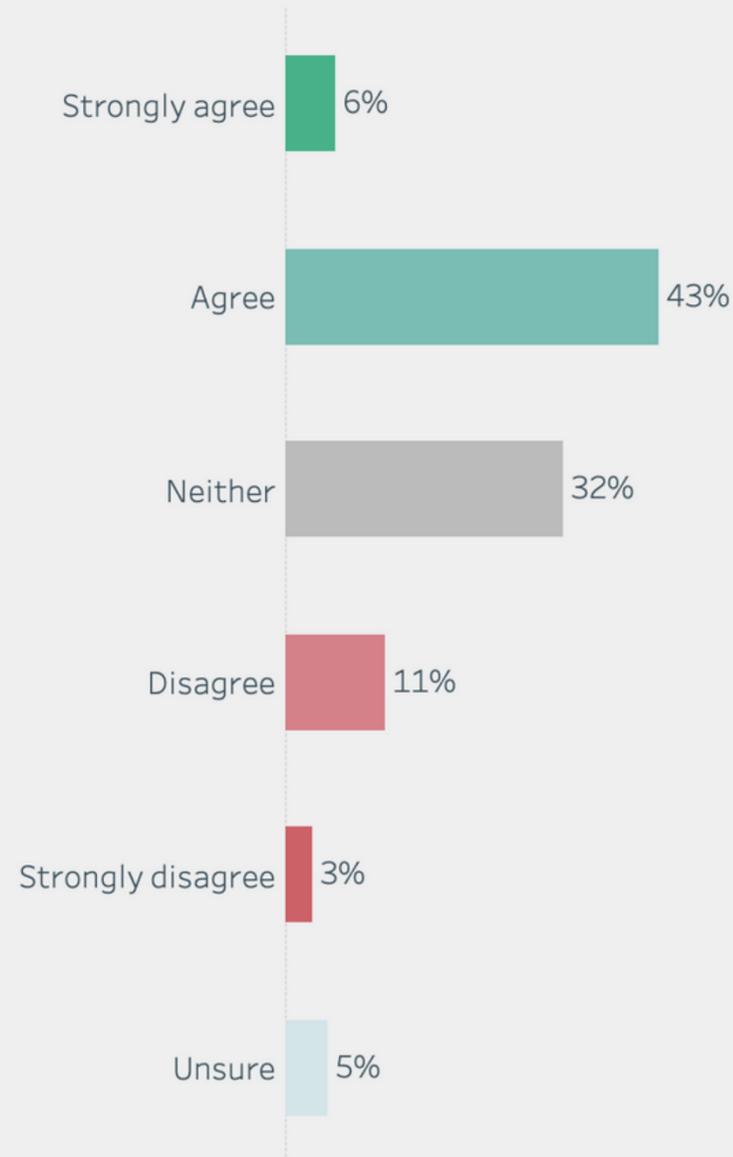


Small business consumers tend to agree that power companies are innovating, yet are not convinced they are competing in ways that matter to consumers

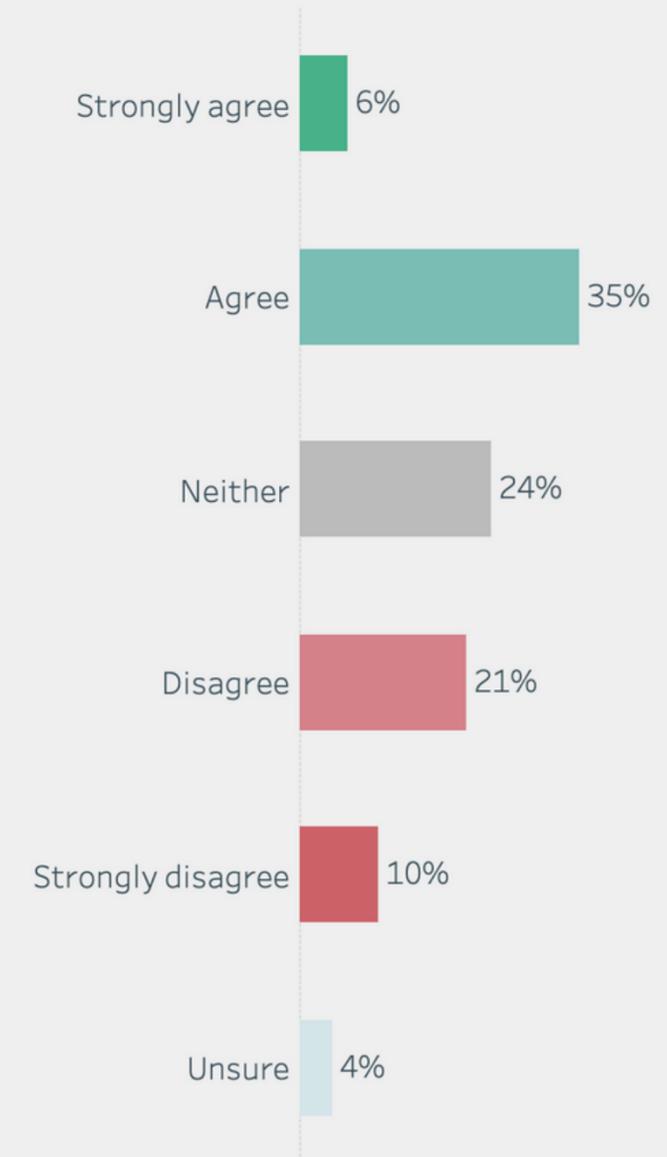
Just under half (49%) of small business consumers agree that power companies are innovating, yet only 2 in 5 (41%) believe they are competing in ways that matter to consumers.

This suggests an opportunity for the sector to better meet the needs of small business consumers.

Q30 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: **'Power companies are innovating by offering new tools and apps, better services and more plans and options'?**



Q30 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following: **'Power companies compete in ways that benefit consumers like me (e.g. through better prices, good quality of service and products etc)'?**



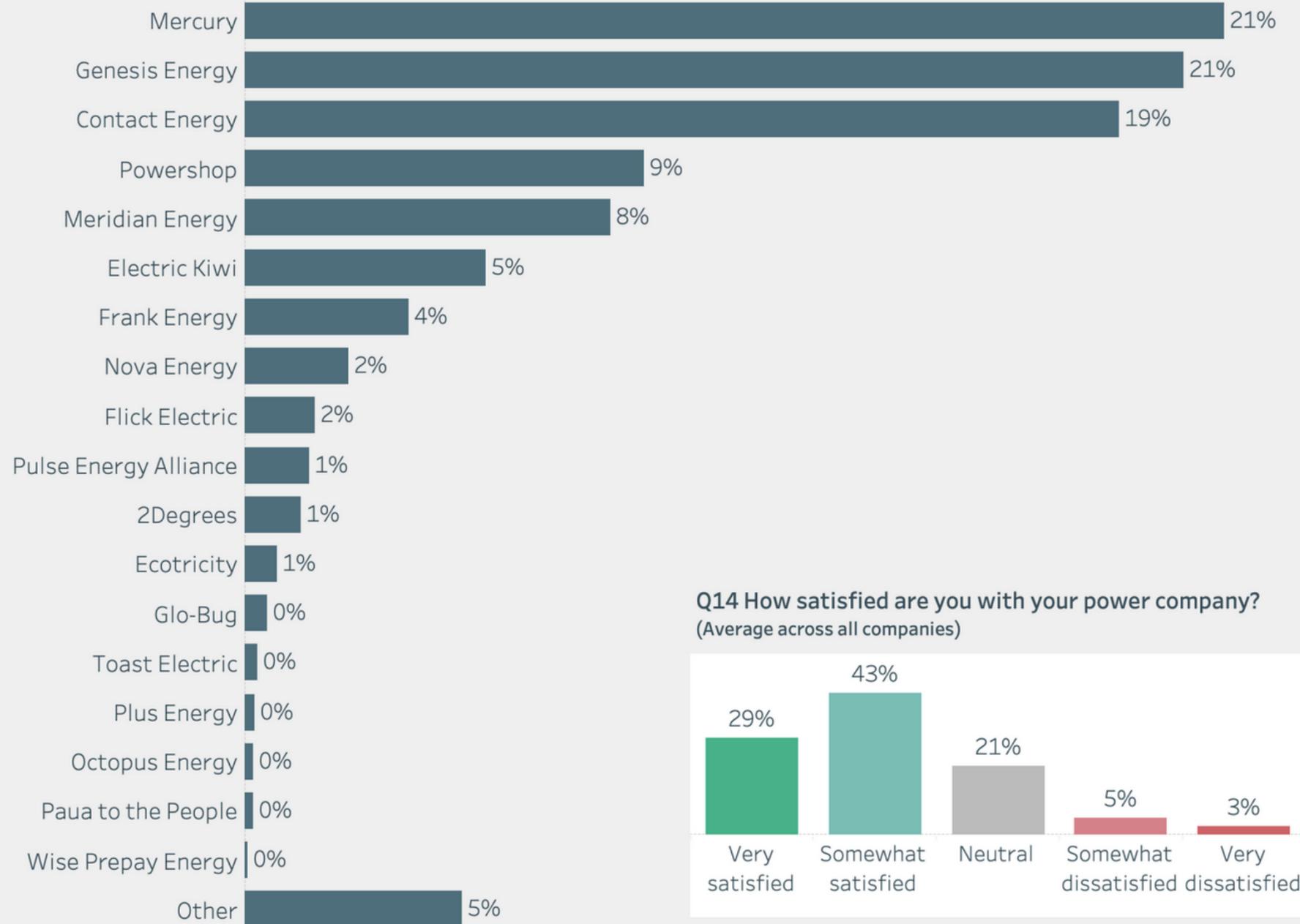
n=510 small business decision-makers



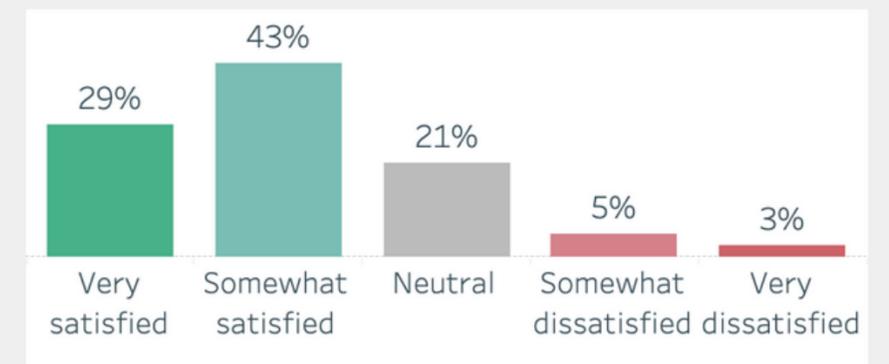
Small business consumers are satisfied with their current power companies

Levels of dissatisfaction with current power companies are low. Nearly three-quarters (72%) of small businesses say they are either very or somewhat satisfied, while 21% take a neutral position. Only a small minority report being dissatisfied.

Q13 Who is your power company?



Q14 How satisfied are you with your power company?
(Average across all companies)

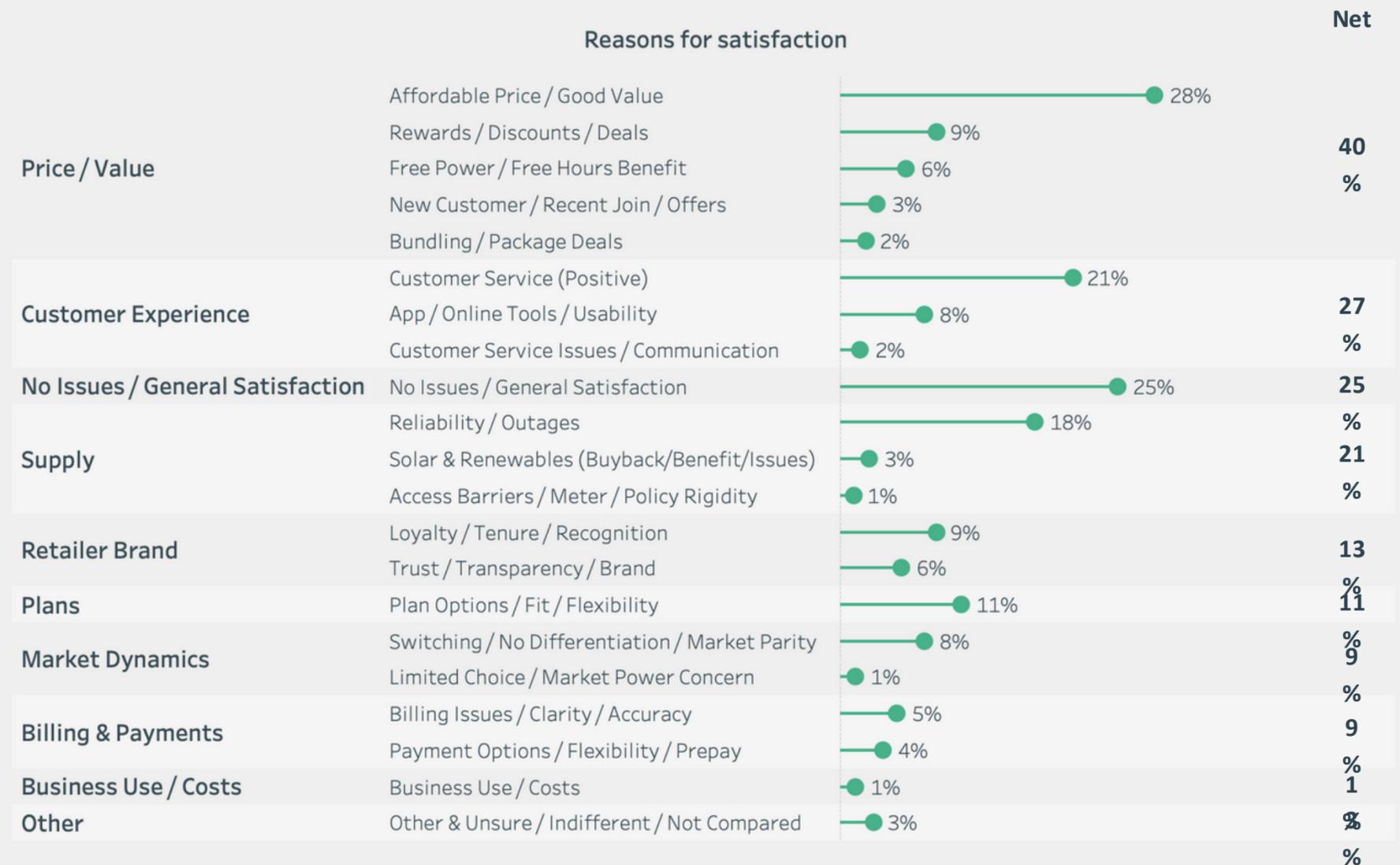
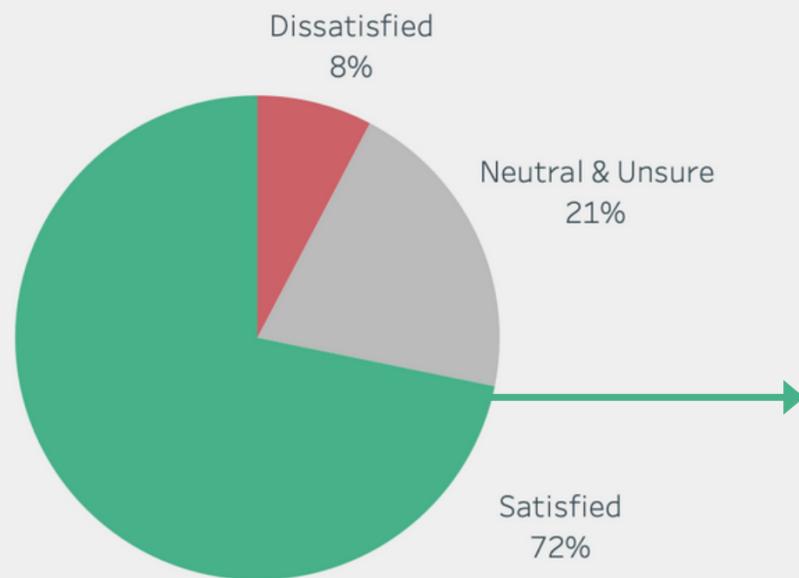




Key drivers of satisfaction among small businesses are value, customer service and reliability

Small business consumers were asked to describe in their own words their reasons for being satisfied with their power company. The responses have been coded into themes and summarised below. Value is the dominant theme, being mentioned by 40% of those satisfied, followed by customer service (27%) and reliability of supply (21%).

Q14: How satisfied are you with your power company? / Q15: And why do you feel that way?

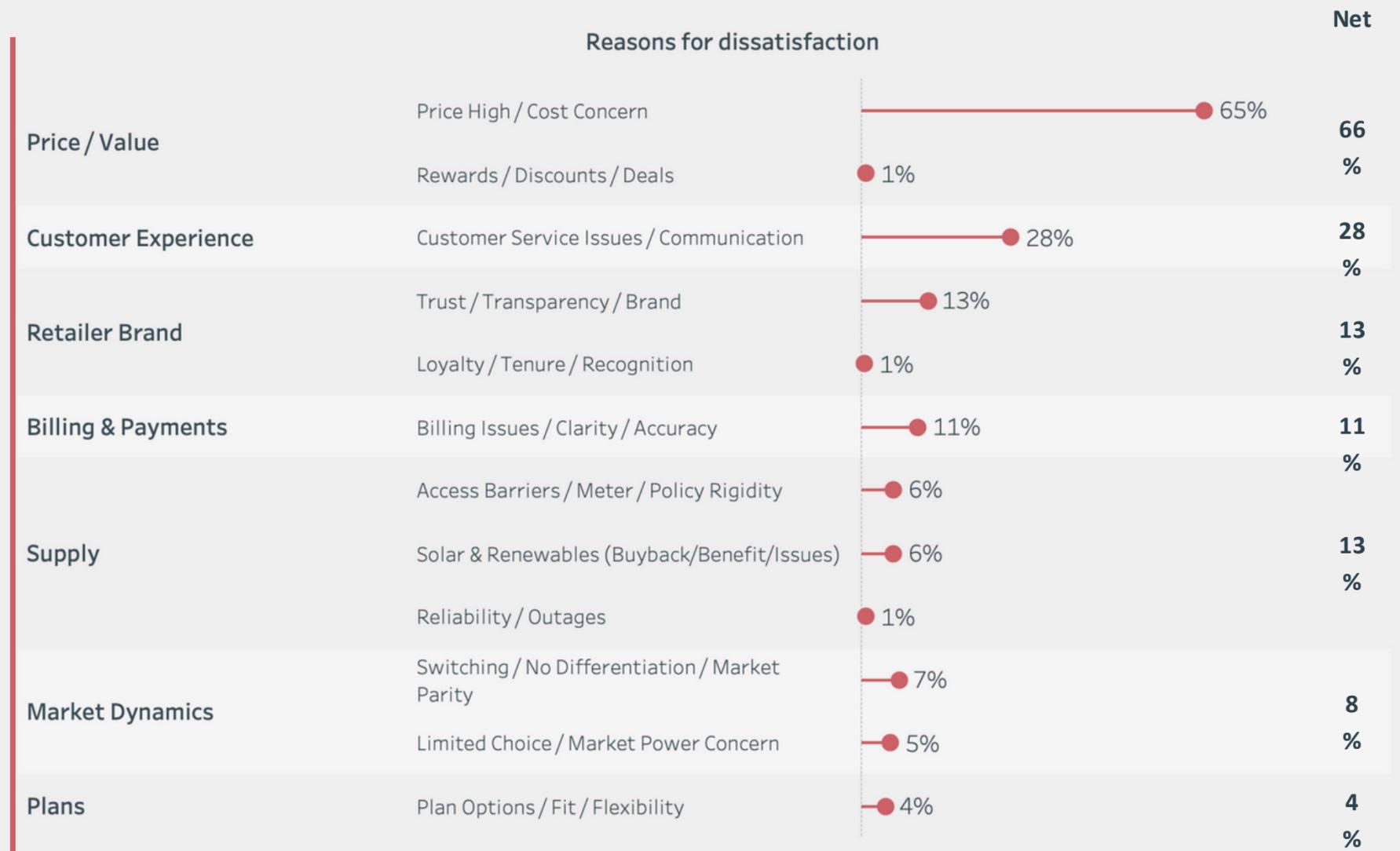
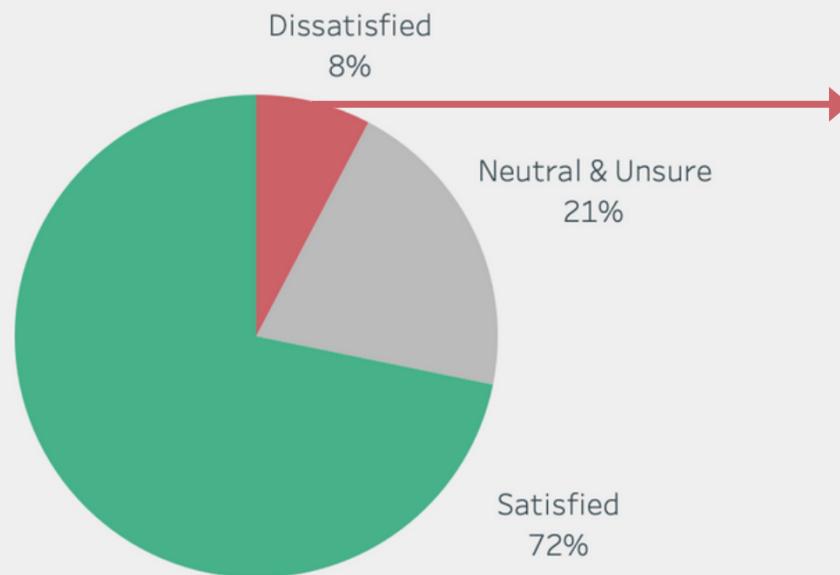




Dissatisfaction among small businesses relates mainly to price and value concerns

The dimensions that drive satisfaction and dissatisfaction are similar, in that failure to deliver on value or customer service are the main two drivers of dissatisfaction. However, high prices are by far the biggest driver of dissatisfaction

Q14: How satisfied are you with your power company? / Q15: And why do you feel that way?





Switching is uncommon, with savings and discounts the main motivators

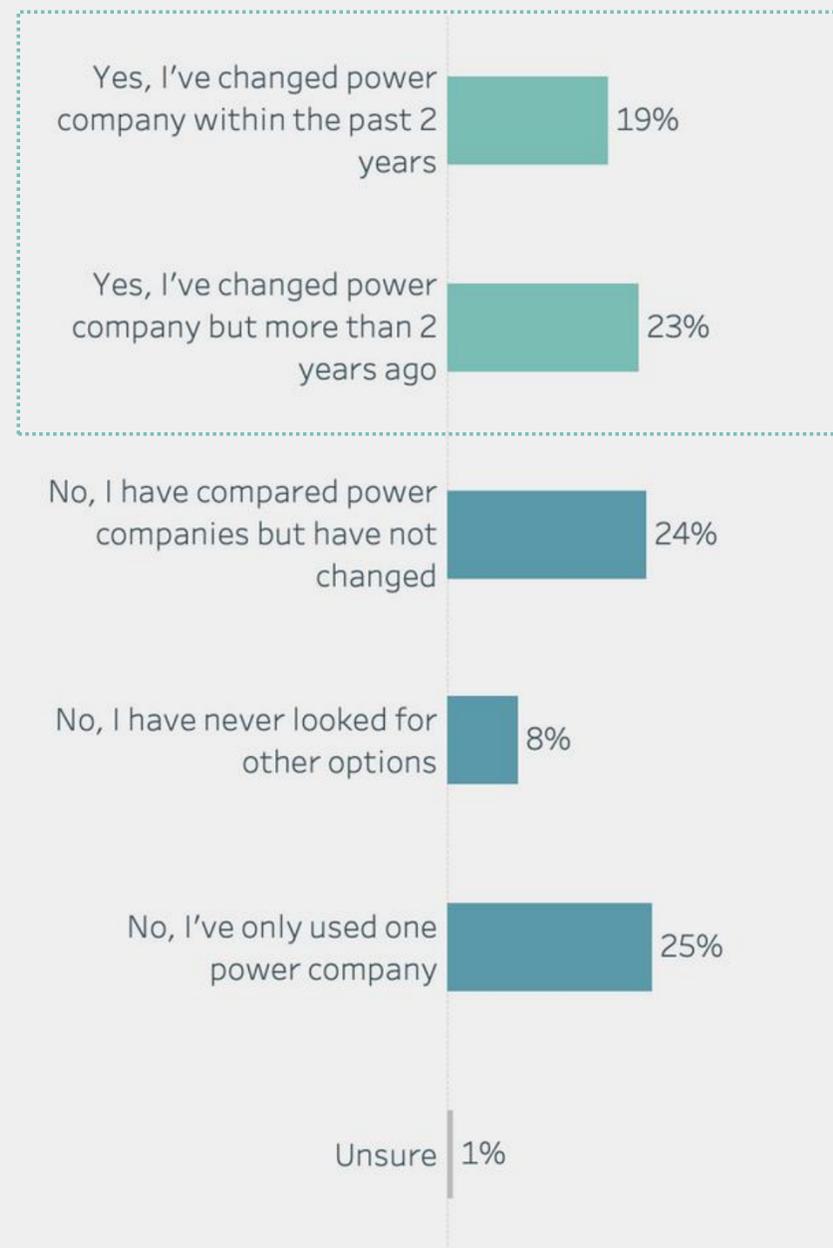
Switching behaviour among small business consumers is relatively low.

Around one in five small business consumers (19%) have changed power companies within the last two years, with another 23% having switched at some earlier point. The majority, however—58%—have never changed providers.

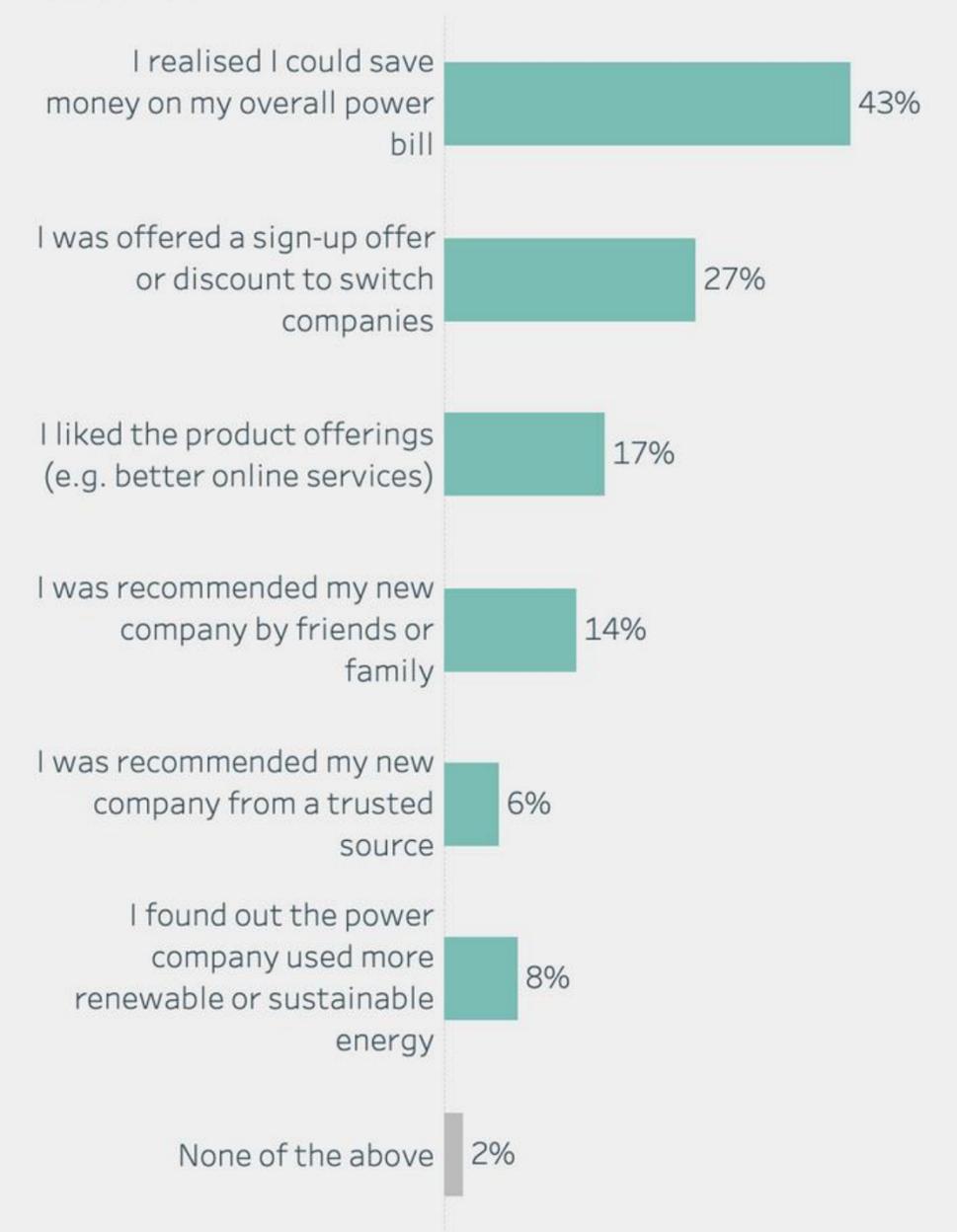
Engagement without switching is also limited. Nearly a quarter (24%) have compared options but decided not to move, while one-third (33%) have neither explored alternatives nor switched.

For those who did switch, cost savings were the main motivator. Almost half (43%) were driven by the prospect of lowering their bills, while just over a quarter (27%) were enticed by sign-up offers or discounts.

Q21 Have you changed your power company?



Q22 What were the main reasons you decided to change power companies?



n=510 small business decision-makers
n= 214 Have switched



Personalised information boosts likelihood of switching

Currently, only 22% of respondents say they are likely to switch providers in the next 12 months, while more than half (53%) indicate it is unlikely.

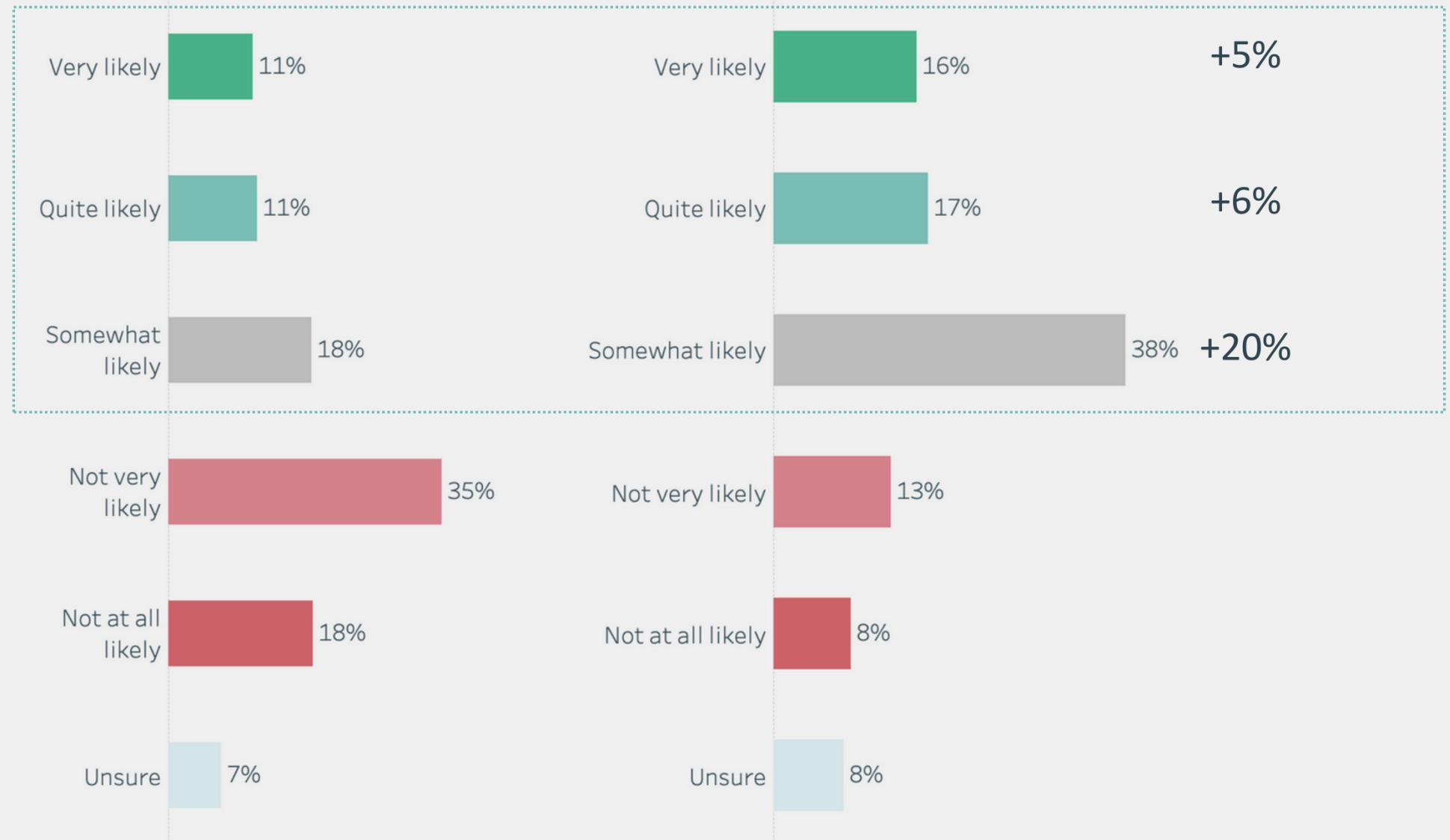
However, providing personalised information about potential savings or tailored services has a strong impact. Under this scenario, the proportion likely to switch rises to 33%, with the biggest shift coming from those who move into the “somewhat likely” category (+20%).

This highlights that clear, personalised communication about value can significantly increase openness to switching.

Q23/24 How likely are you to consider switching to a different power plan or provider...

...in the next 12 months?

...if you were sent personalised information about potential savings or electricity products and services that would better suit your circumstances?



n=510 small business decision-makers



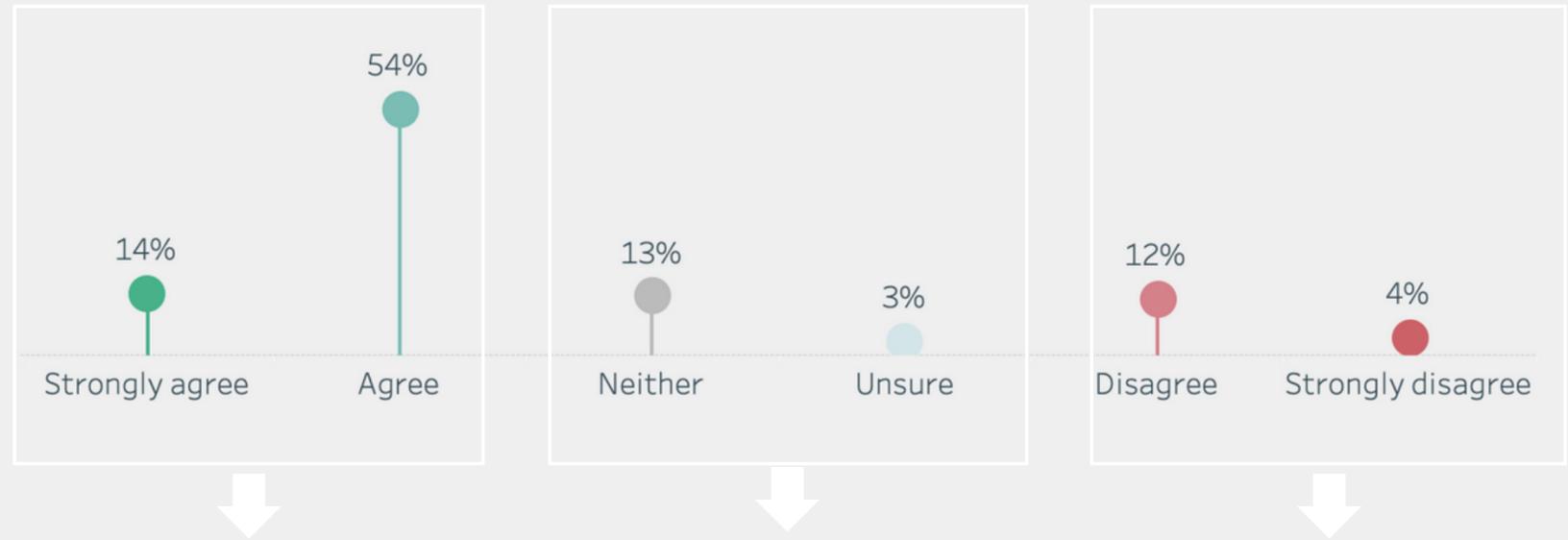
Comfort with data sharing improves the likelihood of switching among small businesses

Most small business consumers are open to sharing their electricity usage data if it helps secure a better deal. Two-thirds (68%) agree they would be comfortable sharing data with a trusted third party for this purpose, while only 16% disagree.

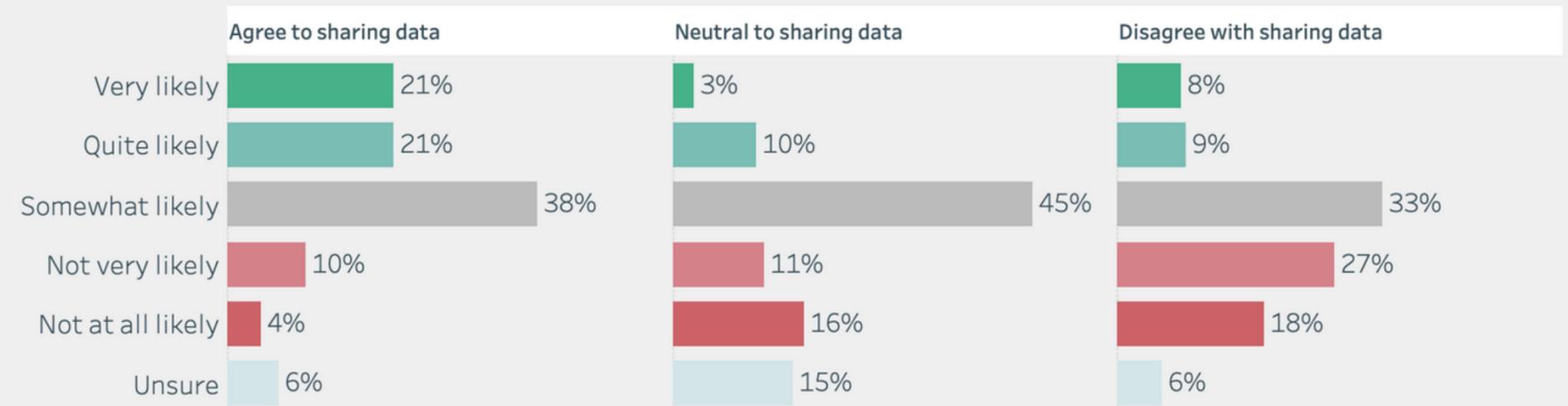
Willingness to share data is closely linked to openness to switching power companies. Among those who agree to data sharing, 42% say they are very or quite likely to switch in the next 12 months if sent personalised information about savings or better-suited products. In contrast, the likelihood of switching is much lower among those who are neutral (13%) or opposed to sharing data (17%).

This suggests that building trust around data use could play a key role in encouraging switching behaviour.

Q30 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'I would be comfortable allowing my electricity usage data to be shared to a trusted and authorised third party, if it meant I could get a better power price or service'?



Q24 And how likely are you to consider switching to a different power company in the next 12 months, if you were sent personalised information about potential savings or electricity products and services that would better suit your circumstances?



n=510 small business decision-makers
n = Agree 349 | neutral 83 | disagree 78



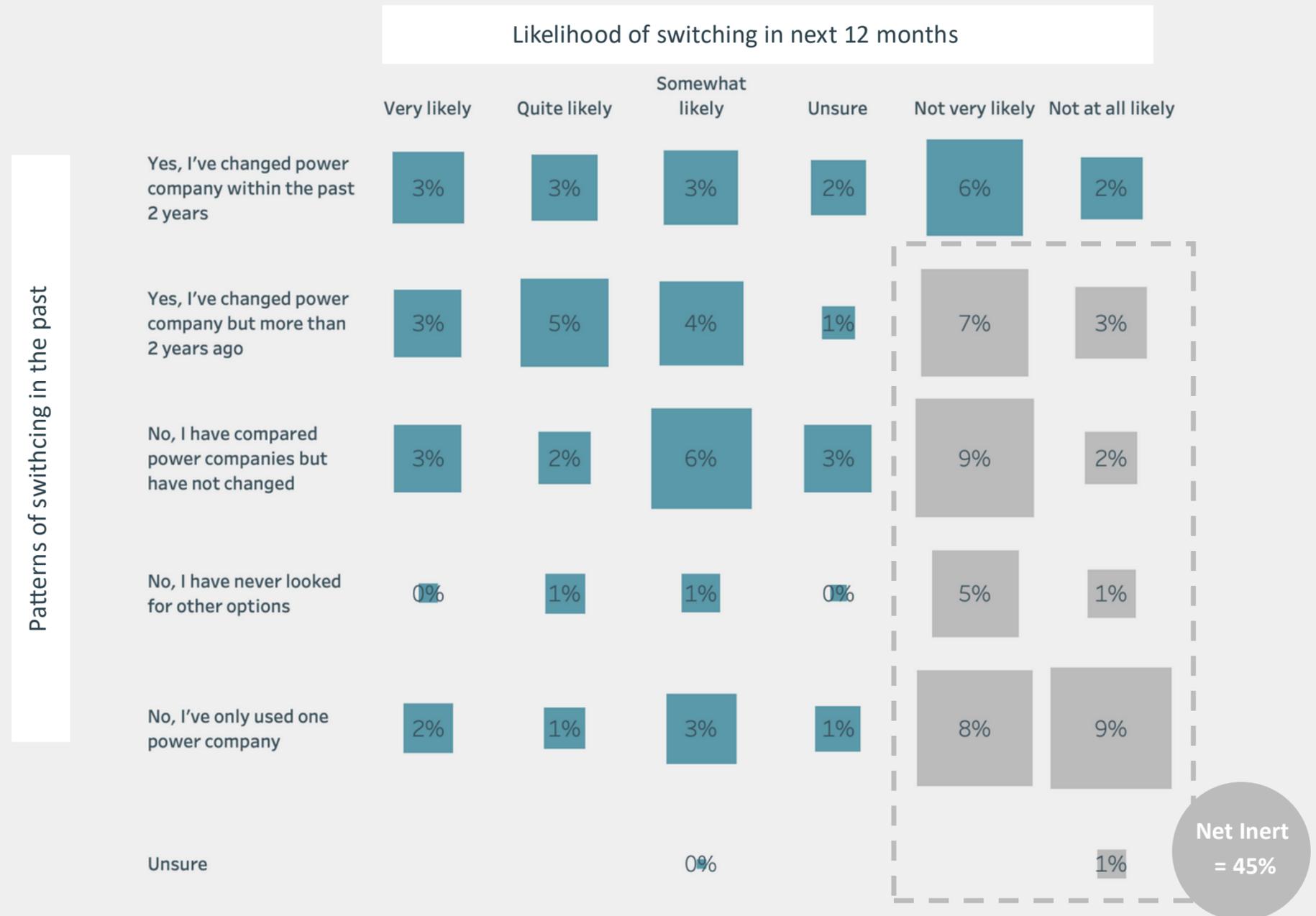
Nearly half of small businesses show no signs of switching behaviour

45% of small business consumers can be classified as inert; they have not switched power companies in the past two years and are unlikely to do so in the next 12 months.

This inertia reflects a large segment of the market that appears resistant to change, whether due to satisfaction, apathy, or perceived effort in switching.

The data suggests that many consumers remain disengaged from actively managing their power plans, representing both a challenge and an opportunity: without a compelling reason or clear benefit, most will simply stay with their current provider.

Past switching patterns by likelihood of switching in the next 12 months



n=510 small business decision-makers



Price is the key driver of switching; doubts about savings and hassle hold small business consumers back

Around one-third of small businesses say they are very or quite likely to switch power companies in the next 12 months if given personalised information, with a further 38% somewhat open to the idea.

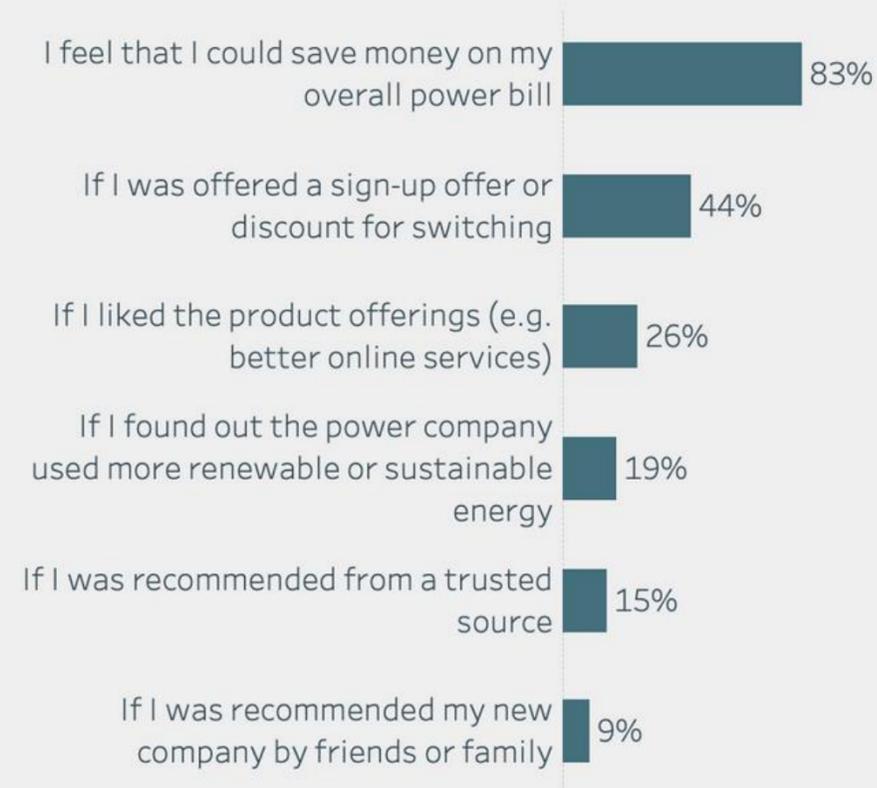
The main incentive is cost savings, with 83% motivated by the chance to lower their bill. Other drivers include sign-up offers or discounts (44%) and improved product offerings, such as better online services (26%).

Among those unlikely to switch, concerns focus on value and effort. Nearly half (48%) doubt switching would actually save them money, 35% see the process as too much hassle, and around a third worry about hidden fees (33%) or poorer service (27%).

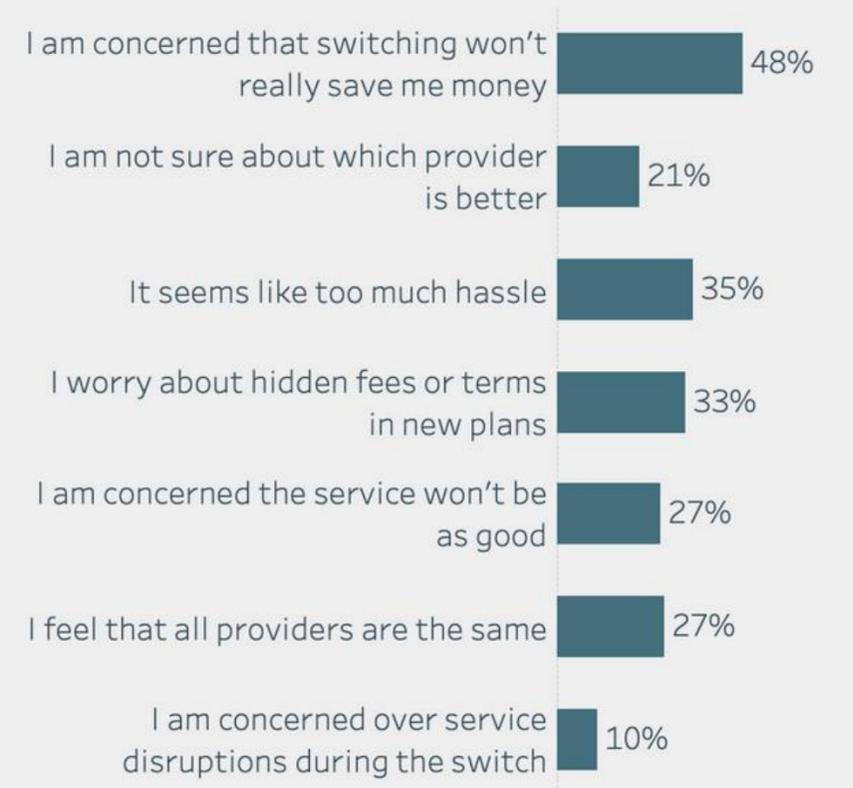
How likely are you to consider switching to a different power company in the next 12 months, if you were sent personalised information about potential savings or electricity products and services that would better suit your circumstances?



Q25 What are the main reasons you are likely to change power companies in the next 12 months?



Q26 What are the main reasons you are not very likely to change power companies in the next 12 months?



n=510 small business decision-makers
n= Very + quite 202 | Neutral to negative 308



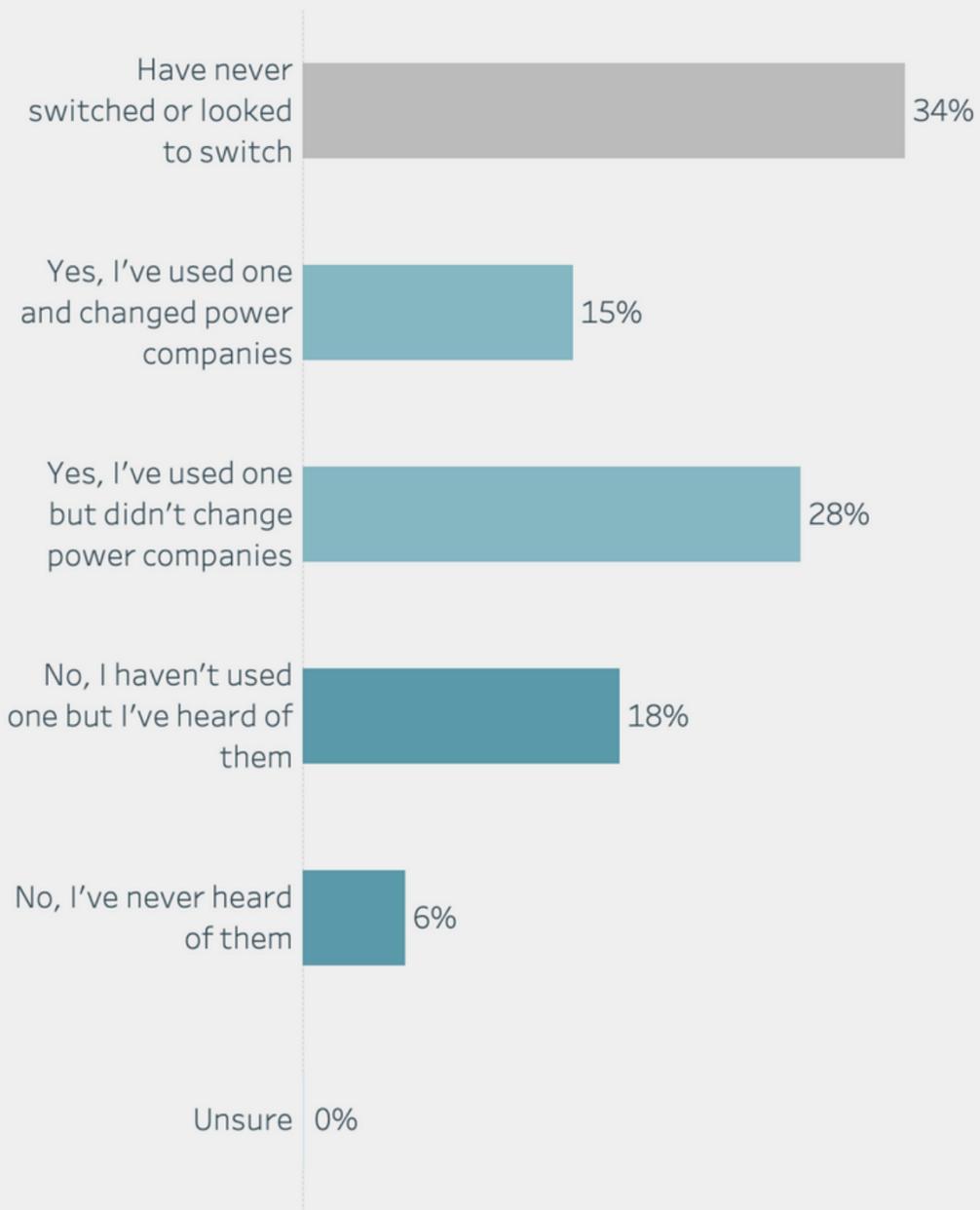
Comparison tools are widely seen as useful, though many small business consumers have never used them

Awareness and use of comparison and switching services are mixed.

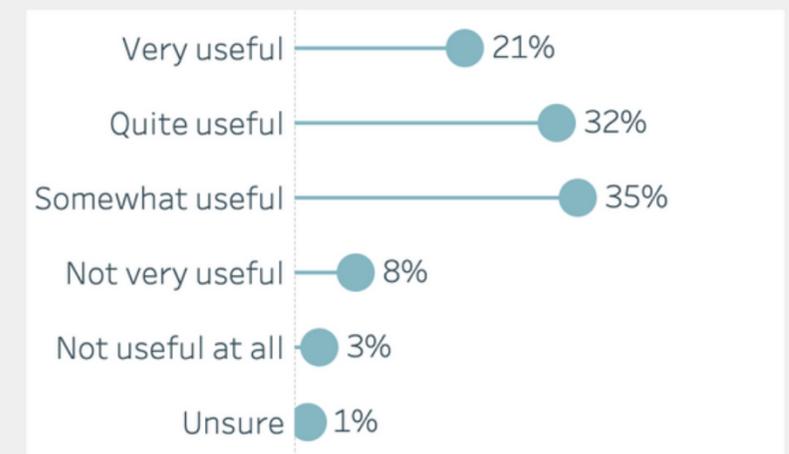
One-third (34%) have never looked to switch power companies, while a further 18% have heard of the services but not used them, and 6% are unaware they exist. Among those who have tried a comparison tool, 15% went on to change providers, while 28% compared options but chose not to switch.

Perceptions of usefulness are generally positive. More than half (53%) of users found the tools very or quite useful, with a further 35% rating them as somewhat useful. Only 11% considered them of little or no value.

Q27 Have you ever used a power company comparison and switching service (a free online tool to compare power companies or plans)?



Q28 How useful did you find the comparison and switching service for comparing power companies?





Gaps in information and pricing transparency reduce the usefulness of comparison tools

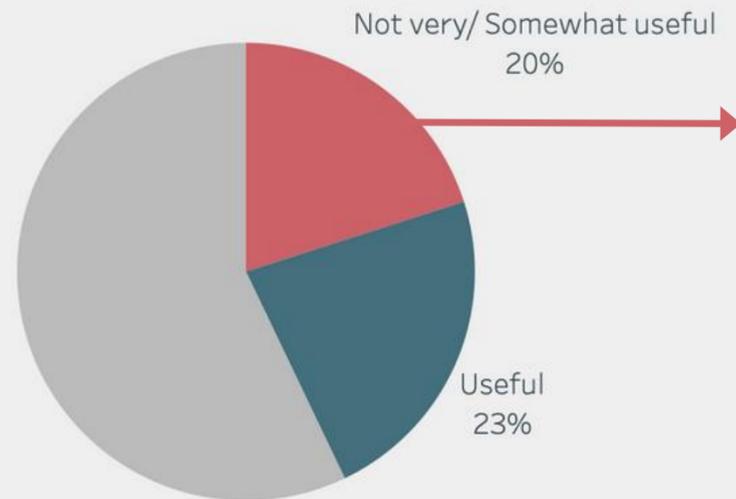
Most users found comparison tools useful, but some reported limitations. Key issues were missing or insufficient information (42%), lack of clear pricing or contract transparency (28%), and perceptions of little or no savings (27%). Usability challenges (16%) and effort required (11%) were also noted.

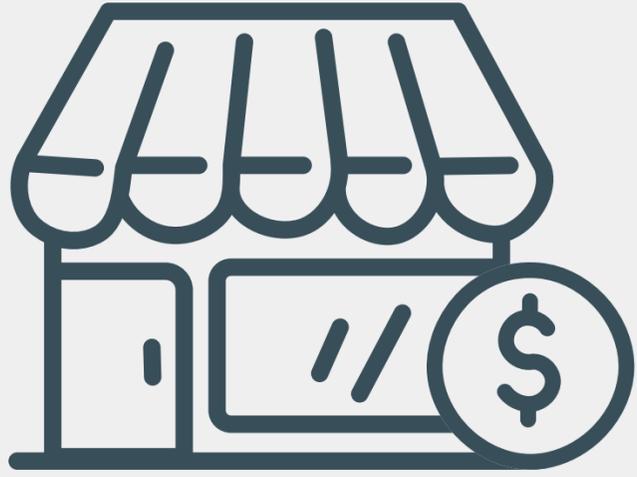
These findings suggest that improving clarity, transparency, and ease of use could make comparison tools more effective in supporting switching decisions.

Q28: How useful did you find the comparison and switching service for comparing power companies? / Q29: Why was the comparison and switching service not very useful to you?



Not used a comparison/switching service
57%





Efficiency and Engagement

The Navigators





Monitoring power bills reveals varying levels of engagement with electricity use among small business consumers

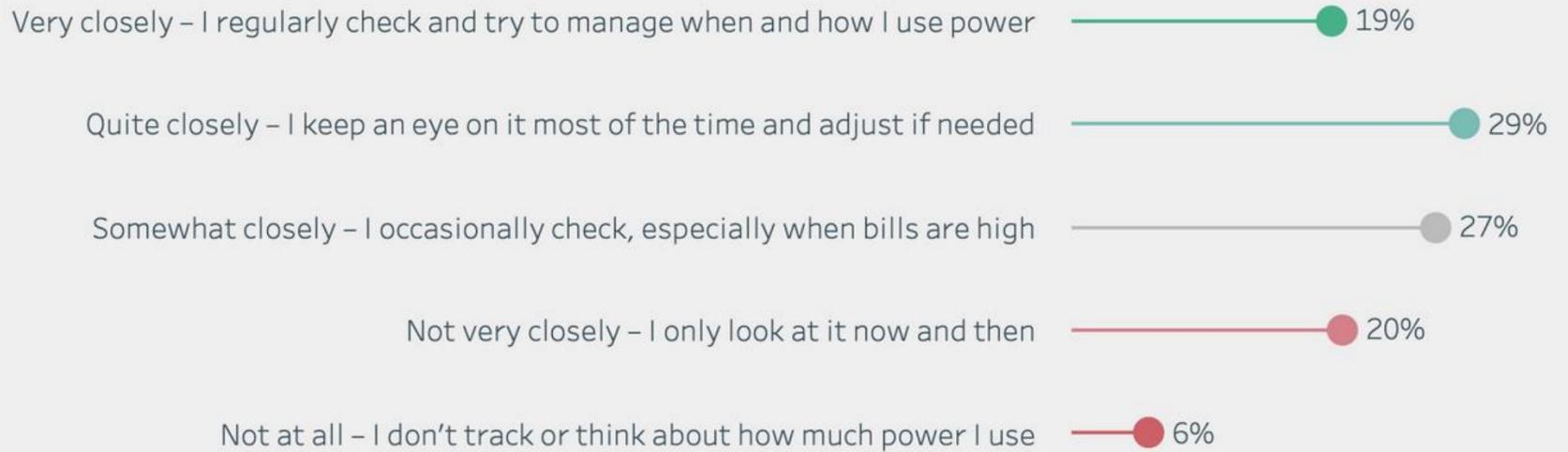
Monitoring of electricity use provides an early signal of engagement.

Fewer than one in five small businesses (19%) monitor their power use very closely, while 29% keep a regular eye on it and 27% check occasionally, often only when bills are high. A further 26% show low engagement, either checking infrequently (20%) or not at all (6%).

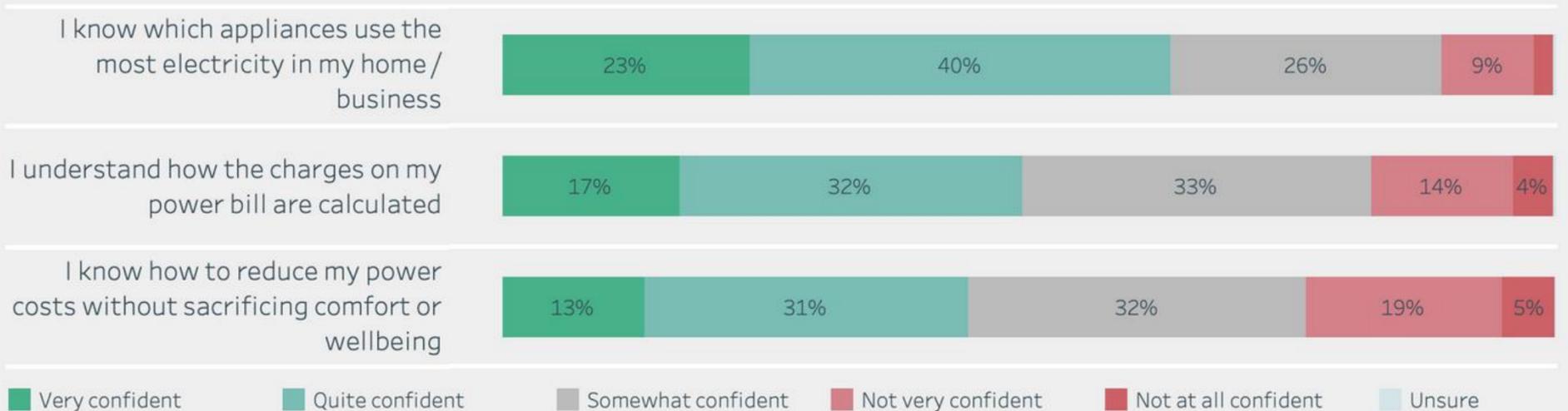
Confidence in understanding electricity use also varies. While 63% feel they know which appliances consume the most energy, fewer understand how their charges are calculated (49%) or how to reduce costs without sacrificing comfort (44%).

These results suggest that while many small businesses have some awareness of their energy use, only a minority are deeply engaged in monitoring and managing it.

Q31 How closely do you monitor your power use in your home/business? (This could include checking your power bill, tracking usage online, or paying attention to when and how power is used.)



Q12 We'd like to understand how confident you feel about your electricity situation and the choices available to you. How confident do you feel about each of the following?



n=510 small business decision-makers



Those who monitor their power use closely tend to feel more confident and engaged

The data shows a clear relationship between how closely small business consumers monitor their electricity use and their confidence in managing it.

Among those who track usage very closely, confidence is consistently higher: 79% say they know which appliances use the most power, 73% feel they understand how their bill is calculated, and 58% know how to reduce costs without sacrificing comfort.

By contrast, confidence levels drop significantly among those who monitor infrequently or not at all—for example, only 20–28% of this group feel confident across these same measures.

While this does not prove a direct cause-and-effect link, it suggests that the type of consumer who engages actively with their power use is also more confident and better equipped to manage electricity choices.

Q12 We'd like to understand how confident you feel about your electricity situation and the choices available to you. How confident do you feel about each of the following?

VERY + QUITE CONFIDENT x ENGAGEMENT WITH MONITORING



n=510 small business decision-makers



Engagement and affordability combine to reveal four distinct consumer groups

By examining both monitoring behaviour (a marker of engagement) and perceptions of affordability, consumers can be grouped into four broad cohorts.

Comfortable / Engaged actively track their usage and generally find power bills affordable.

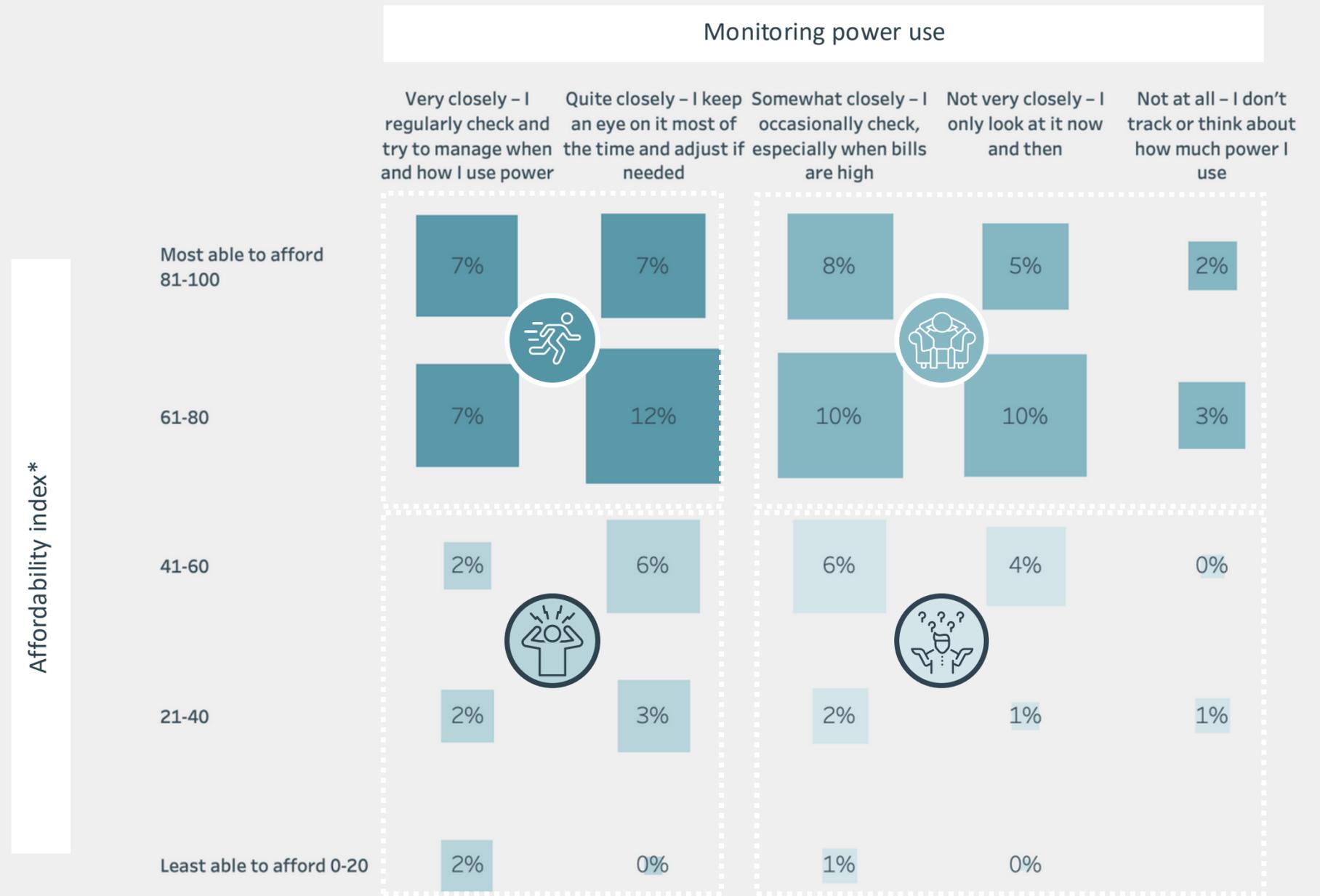
Comfortable / Less-engaged are less inclined to monitor but typically manage affordability without concern.

Pressured / Engaged monitor closely but still struggle with affordability, highlighting financial stress despite high engagement.

Pressured / Less-engaged face both low engagement and affordability challenges, leaving them most at risk.

This framework provides a lens through which to understand differences in consumer experiences and begins to show the value of segmentation in guiding future strategies.

Interaction between engagement (monitoring) and affordability



n=510 small business decision-makers

*The affordability index combines both Q32 perceived affordability impacts on budget and priorities and Q12 confidence in ability to pay power bill in next 6 months

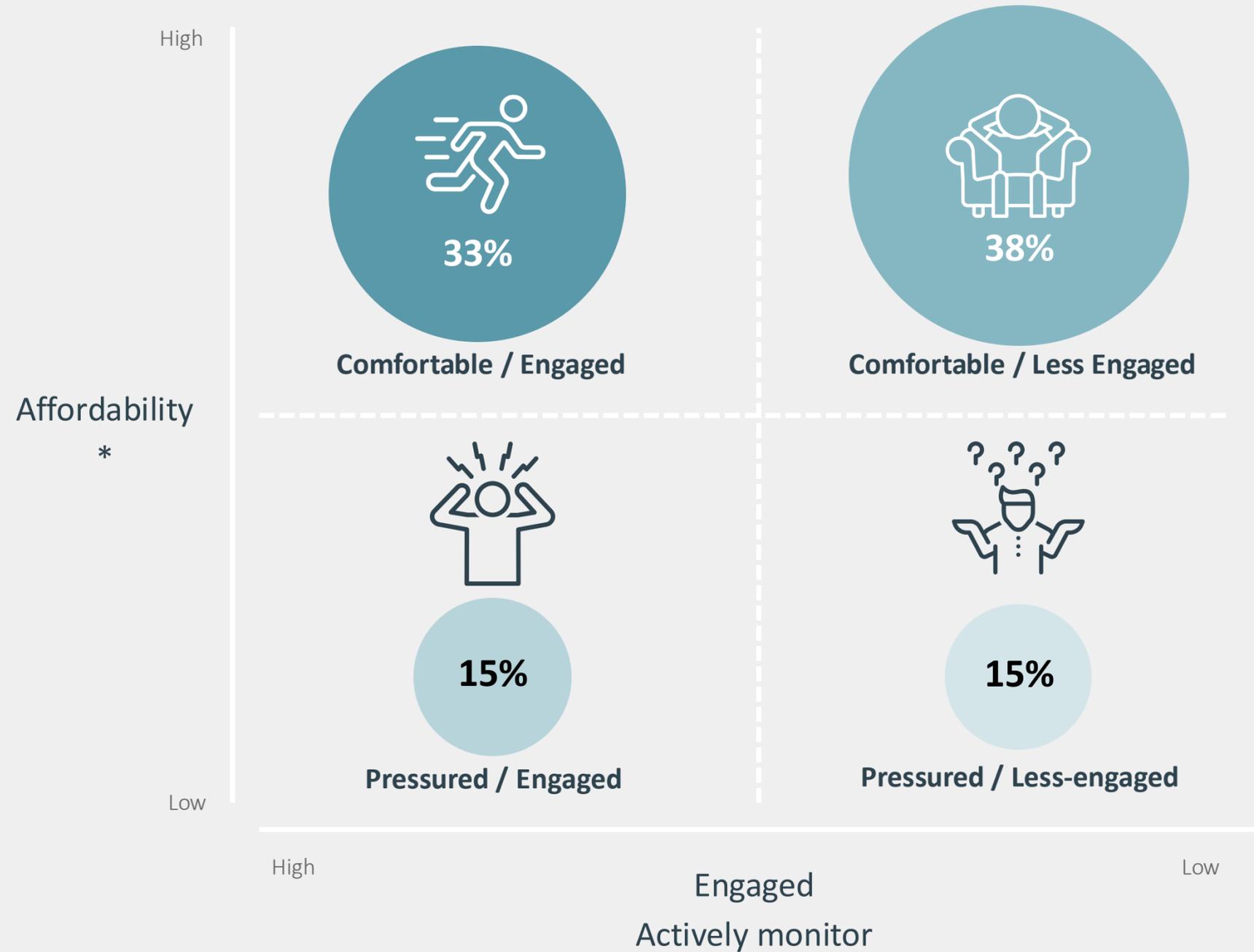


Among small business consumers under stress, some monitor closely while others remain disengaged

Four groups of small business consumers can now be seen more clearly.

- **Comfortable / Engaged** (33%) actively monitor their power use and feel comfortable with affordability.
- **Comfortable / Less-engaged** (38%) do not monitor closely but are not worried about their ability to pay.
- **Pressured / Engaged** (15%) are highly engaged with monitoring but continue to struggle with affordability, reflecting a group under financial pressure despite their attention.
- **Pressured / Less-engaged** (15%) neither monitor their usage nor feel confident about affording their bill, making them the most vulnerable segment.

This segmentation highlights that while a majority are either confident or disengaged, around 30% of small business decision-makers face affordability pressures, divided between those who are highly engaged and those who are not engaged at all.





Vulnerability and inertia look similar on the surface but stem from different behaviours

The segments show that affordability challenges and engagement levels intersect in different ways across the market.

The Pressured / Engaged and Pressured / Less-engaged stand out as the most vulnerable; both groups report difficulty affording their power bills and low confidence in support. However, they differ in behaviour: Pressured / Engaged actively monitor their usage, while Pressured / Less-engaged do not, meaning each requires a different approach to support.

Patterns of inertia also vary across segments. Among the Comfortable / Engaged and Comfortable / Less-engaged, large proportions are classified as inert, but for opposite reasons. Comfortable / Engaged are confident and engaged, believing they are already on the best plan, whereas the Comfortable / Less-engaged can afford their bills but lack motivation to pay closer attention.

These differences highlight the importance of tailoring strategies to both vulnerability and engagement, rather than treating inertia or affordability as uniform across the market.



33% of small business



15% of small business

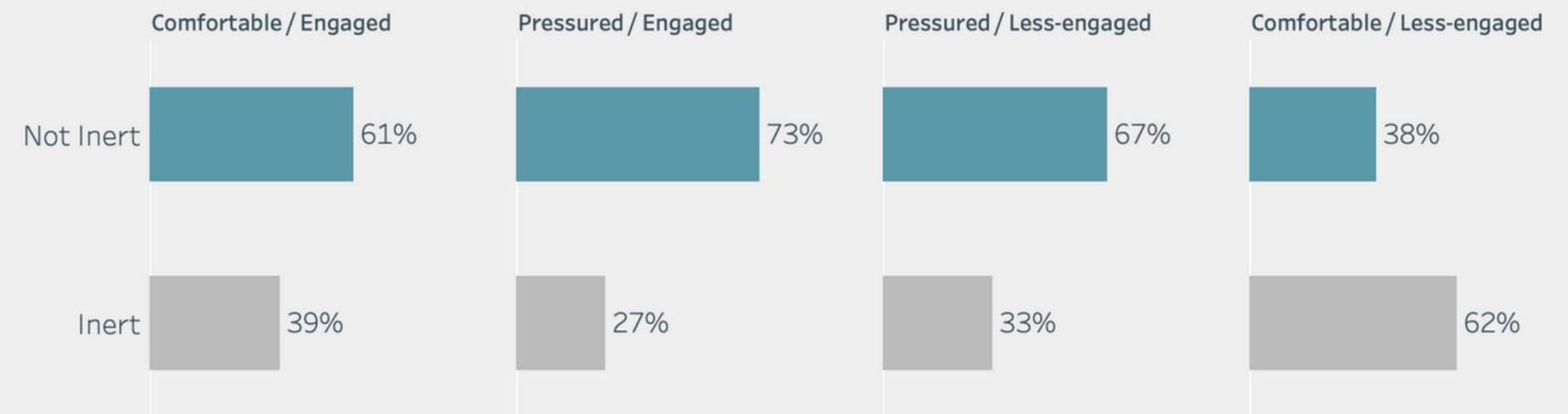


15% of small business

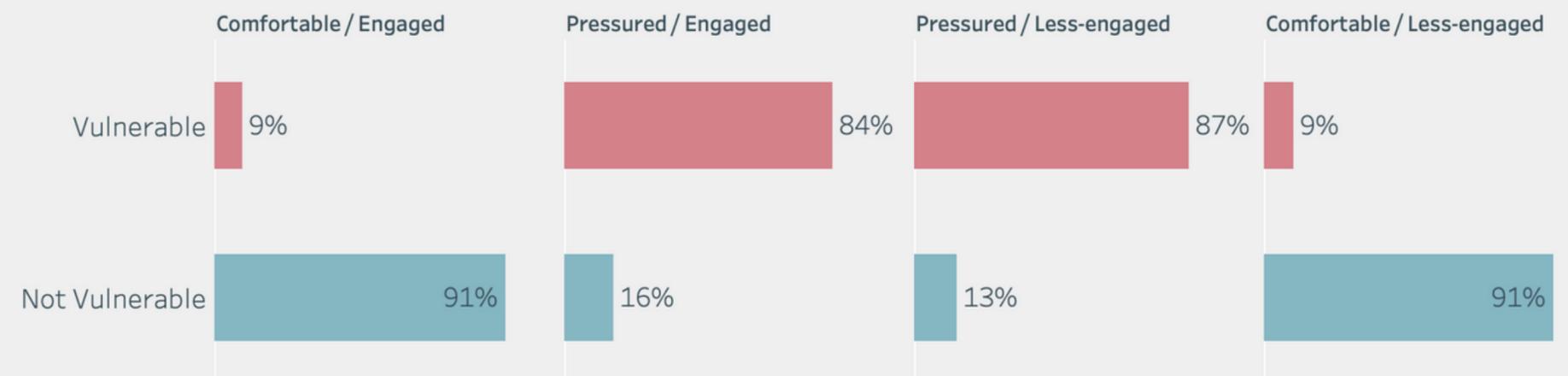


38% of small business

Inert classification (based on past and future switching intent) by segmentation



Vulnerable classification (based on affordability and confidence in getting support) by segmentation





Interest in time-of-use power plans is high, but adoption remains low among small business consumers

Only 19% of small business consumers believe* they are on a time-of-use power plan, though a further 42% express interest—either having already looked into it (17%) or wanting to explore it (25%). At the same time, one-quarter say they are not interested, and 14% are unsure.

Comfortable / Engaged are the most likely to be on a time-of-use plan (26%), while Comfortable / Less-engaged are least likely (15%). This suggests that while active engagement is linked to higher adoption, there remains significant untapped potential across all segments.

*Qualitative research into time-of-use perceptions shows that some consumers believe they are on a time-of-use plan when they are not (e.g. attributing ‘hours of power’ or night rates to TOU products).

Q18 Are you using a time-of-use power plan in your household/business?



% in each segment using a time-of-use power plan



n=510 small business decision-makers

n = Comfortable / Engaged 185 | Anxious Manager 86 | Pressured / Less-engaged 76 | Comfortable / Less-engaged 163



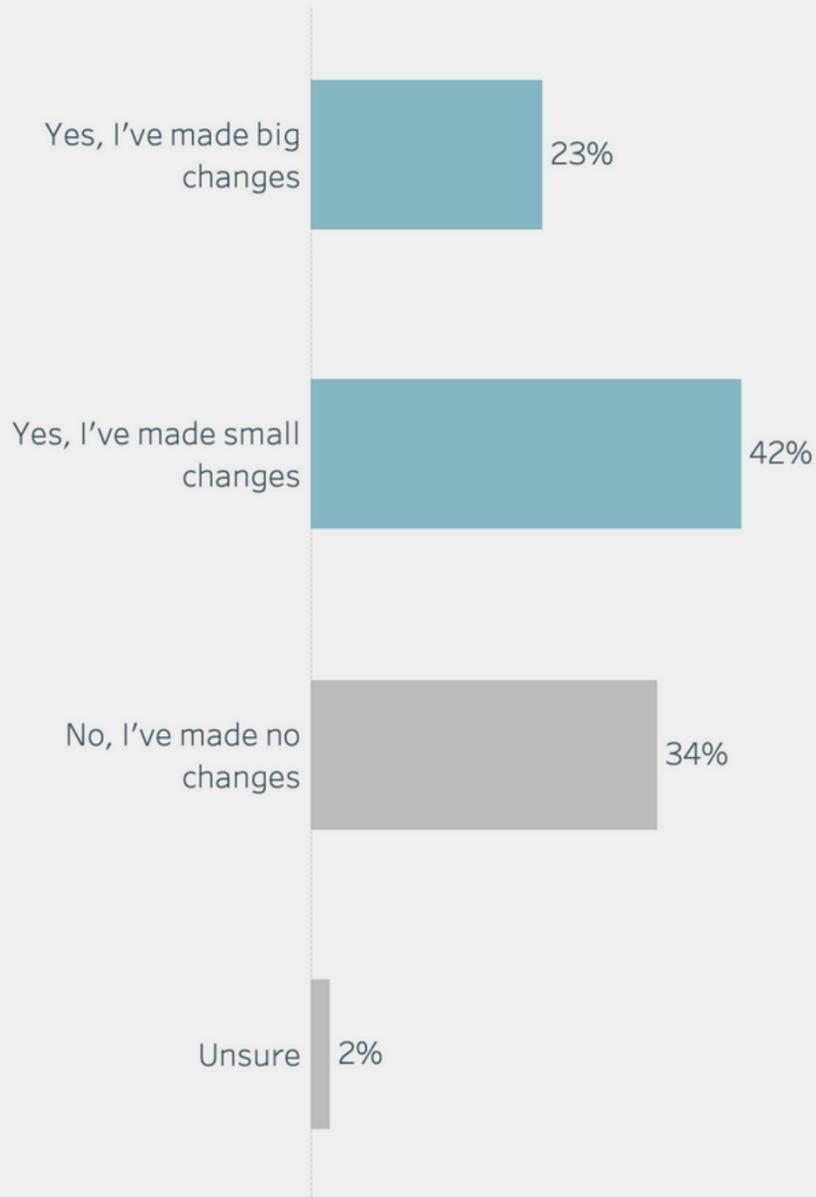
Most small businesses with time-of-use plans make changes to power consumption, and many find it easy to adapt

Time-of-use plans are prompting behavioural change among the majority of users.

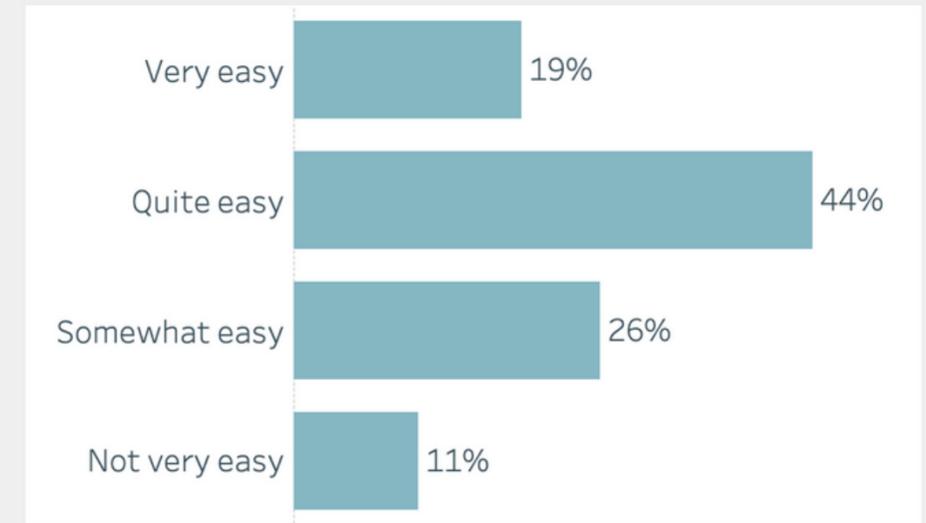
Two-thirds have adjusted how or when they use electricity, with 42% making small changes and 23% making significant changes, while a third report no change.

For most, adapting has been manageable. Nearly two-thirds say it has been very easy (19%) or quite easy (44%) to shift their usage, with a further 26% finding it somewhat easy. Only 11% describe it as difficult, suggesting time-of-use plans are generally accessible for those who adopt them.

Q19 Since starting a time-of-use power plan, have you changed how or when your household/business uses electricity?



Q20 How easy has it been to change when you use your electricity to make the most of your time-of-use plan?



n=510 small business decision-makers
n=83 On time-of-use plan and have made changes

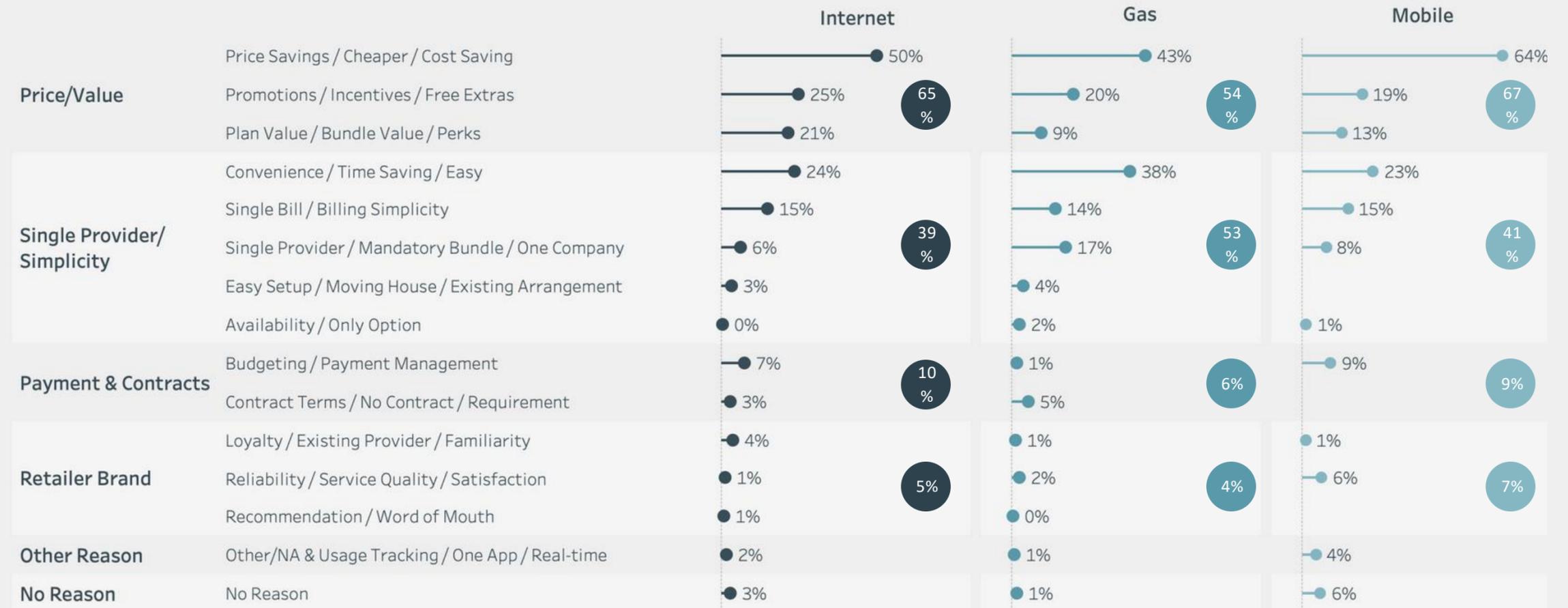
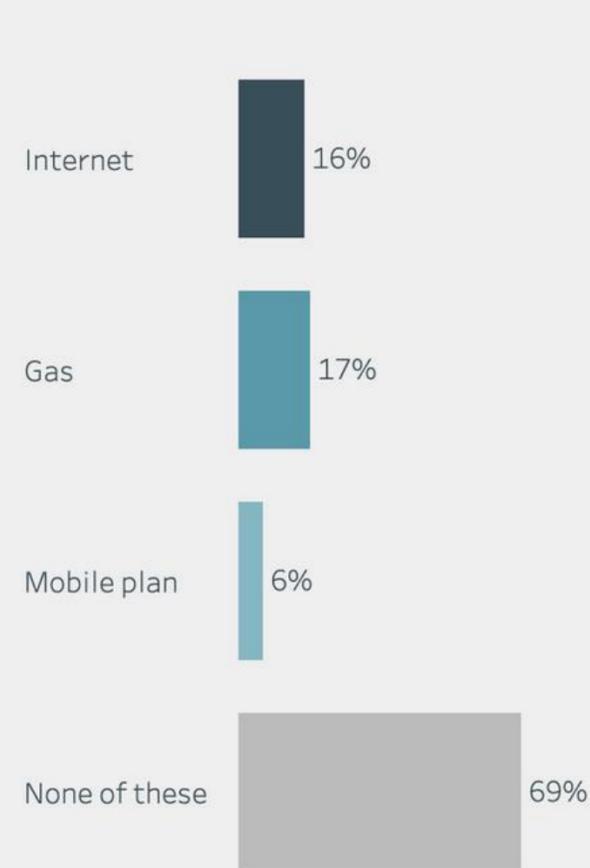


Bundling remains niche among small businesses, but cost and convenience are strong levers

Few small business consumers bundle services with their power provider: 17% for gas, 16% for internet, and just 6% for mobile. Among those who do, the main reasons are price savings and simplicity (e.g. single bill, convenience), with over half citing these drivers across all services. This suggests bundling appeals most where it reduces cost and streamlines management, though uptake remains relatively low overall.

Q16 Do you receive any of the following services from your power company?

Q17 What was the main reason you chose to bundle your electricity with these other services?



n=510 small business decision-makers

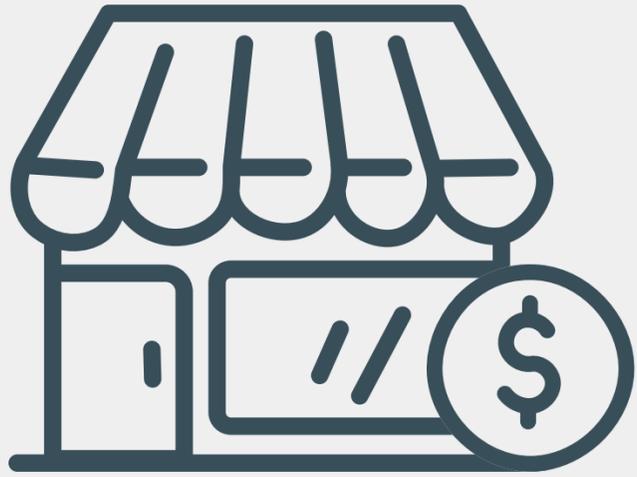
Sample of small business decision-makers who bundled each service:

n = 104

n = 107

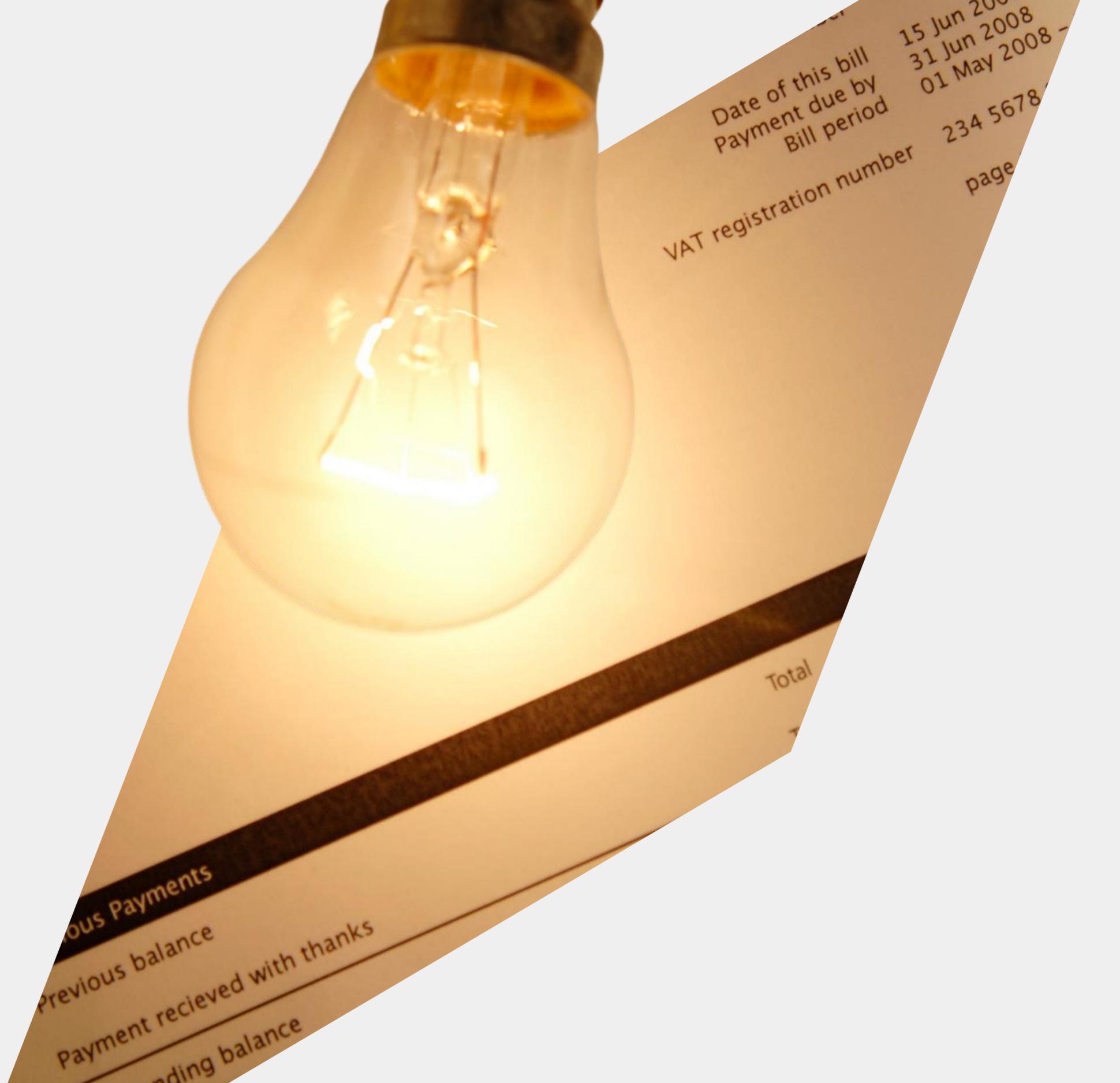
n = 39*

*Caution small sample size



Security and Reliability

 The Navigators





Small business confidence in future power supply is modest, with concerns focussed upon capacity and resilience

Confidence in New Zealand's ability to keep homes and businesses powered into the future is modest. Only 7% of small business consumers are very confident, with most falling into the somewhat confident (37%) or not very confident (20%) categories. Overall, more than a quarter (27%) express little or no confidence in long-term reliability.

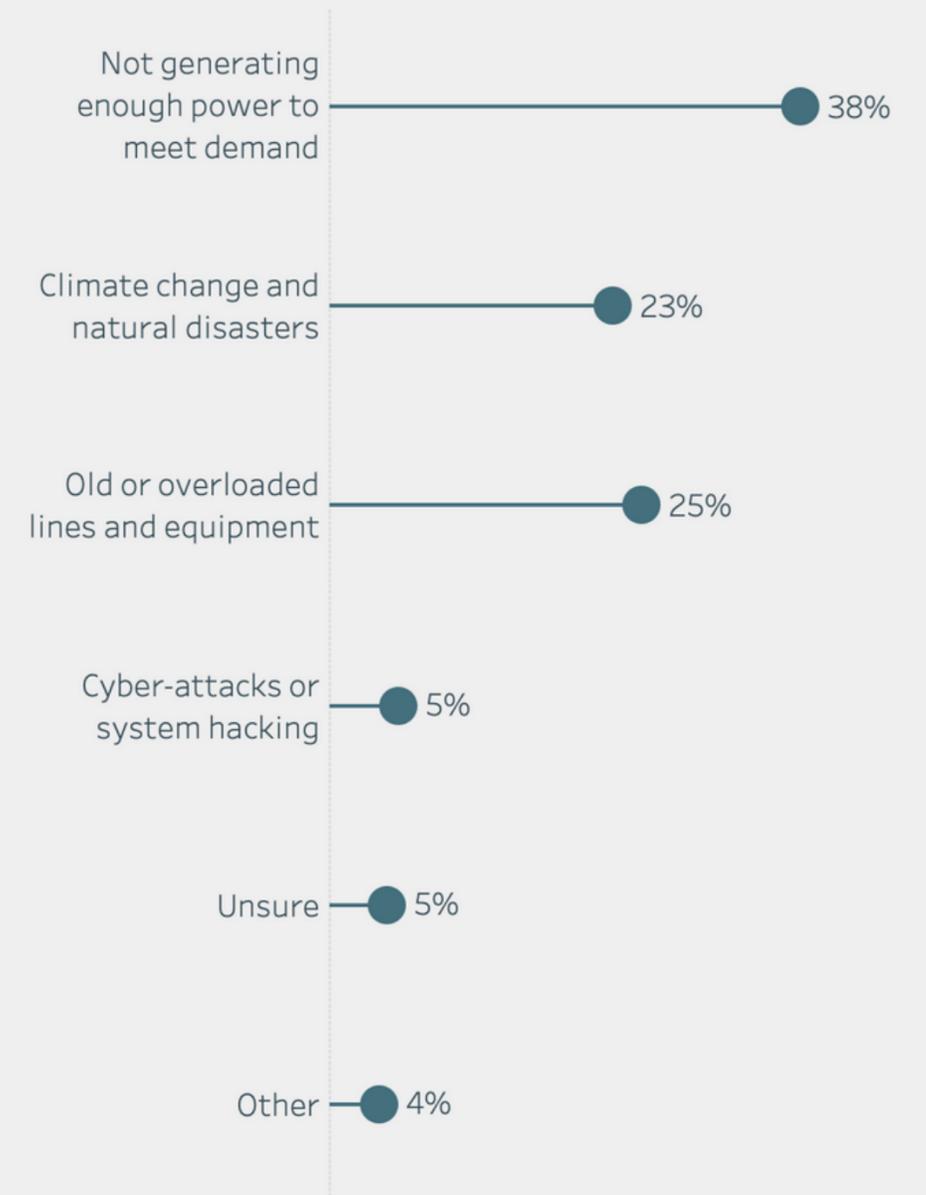
When asked about the biggest risks to supply, the top concern is not generating enough power to meet demand (38%). Other significant risks include old or overloaded infrastructure (25%) and climate change or natural disasters (23%). Smaller proportions highlight cyber-attacks or other threats.

Together, these findings show that while electricity reliability is seen as critical, many remain uneasy about whether future supply will be both secure and sufficient.

Q12 How confident do you feel that: 'There is enough electricity to keep New Zealand homes and business powered in the future'?



Q35 Which of the following do you believe is the biggest risk to the reliability of New Zealand's power supply?



n=510 small business decision-makers



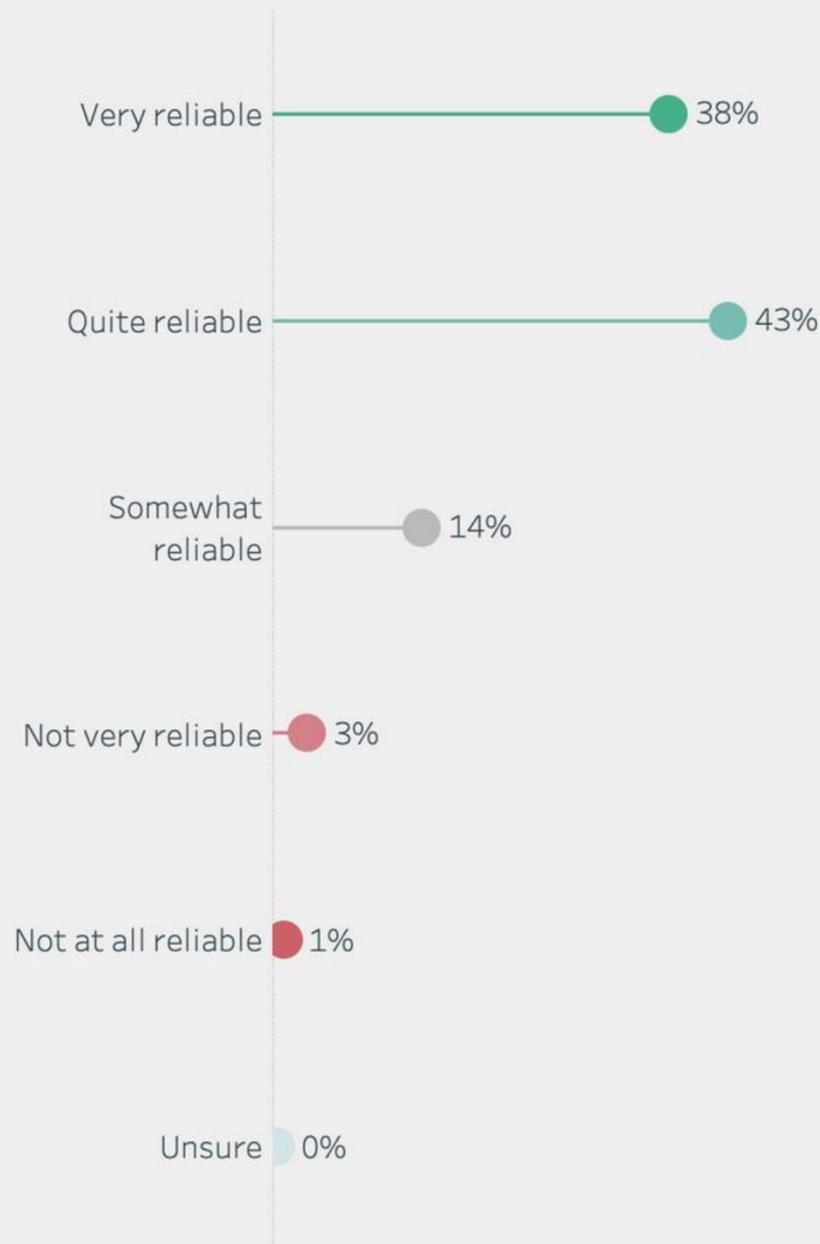
Most small business consumers see their local power supply as reliable

Confidence in the day-to-day electricity supply is strong. Over four in five respondents rate their local power supply as very (38%) or quite reliable (43%), with only a small minority expressing doubts.

Similarly, most feel assured that power will be available when needed without unexpected outages. More than half (56%) are very or quite confident, and a further 30% are somewhat confident. Only a small proportion reports low confidence.

These results suggest that, despite broader concerns about the future, the current experience of supply is largely positive and considered reliable.

Q34 Overall, how reliable do you feel the supply of power is in your area?



Q12 How confident do you feel that: 'My power supply is there when I need it with no unexpected outages'?



n=510 small business decision-makers



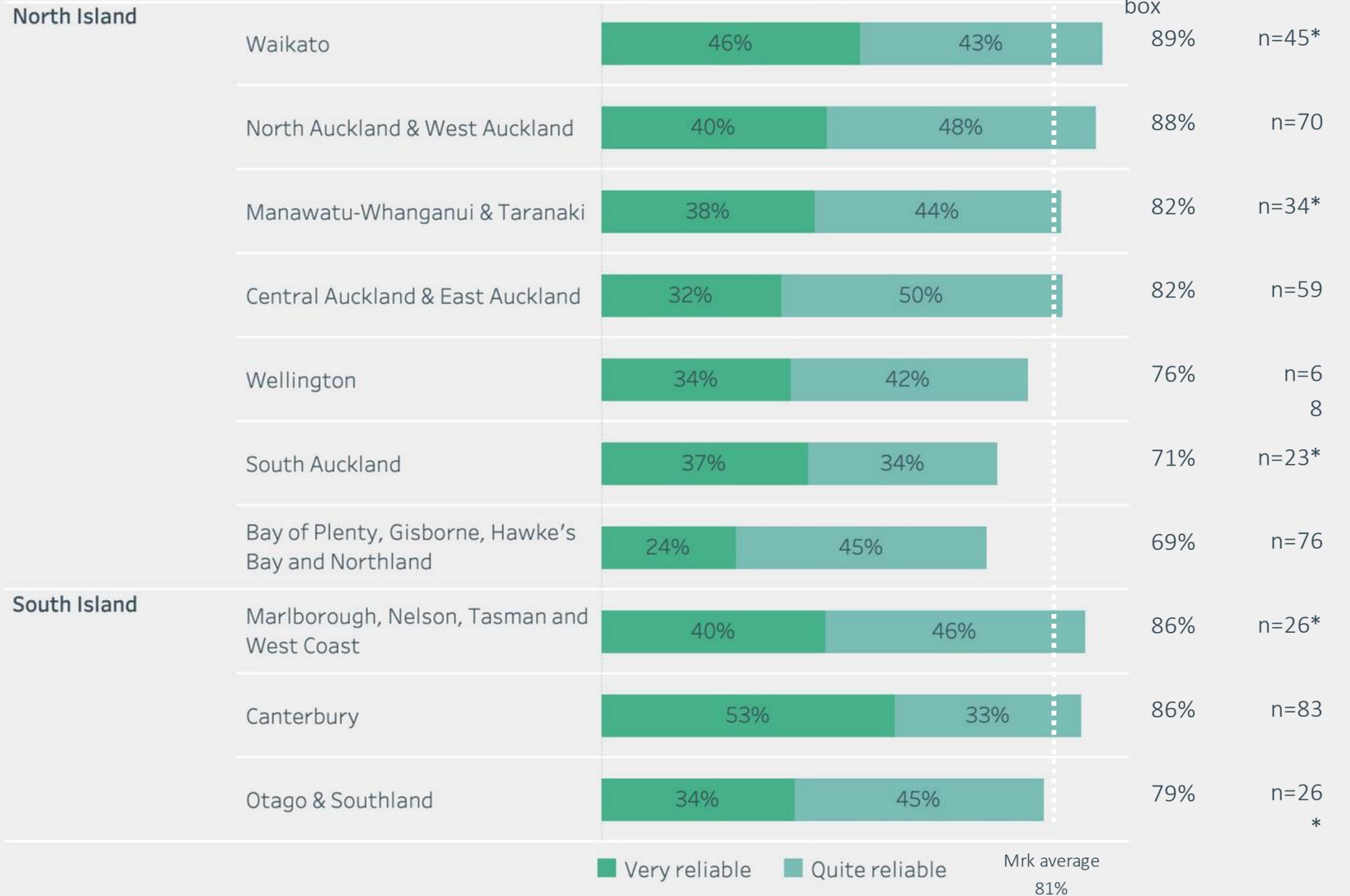
Reliability perceptions are highest in Waikato, North Auckland & West Auckland, and Canterbury

Regional results show most areas cluster around the market average of 81%, but there are some notable differences. Perceptions of reliability are significantly higher in Waikato (89%), North Auckland & West Auckland (88%), and Canterbury (86%).

By contrast, South Auckland (71%) and Bay of Plenty, Gisborne, Hawke’s Bay and Northland (69%) sit below average, indicating pockets where confidence in reliability is weaker.

These differences suggest that while overall confidence in supply is strong across the country, regional experiences shape perceptions in meaningful ways.

Q34 Overall, how reliable do you feel the supply of power is in your area?



* Caution small sample base



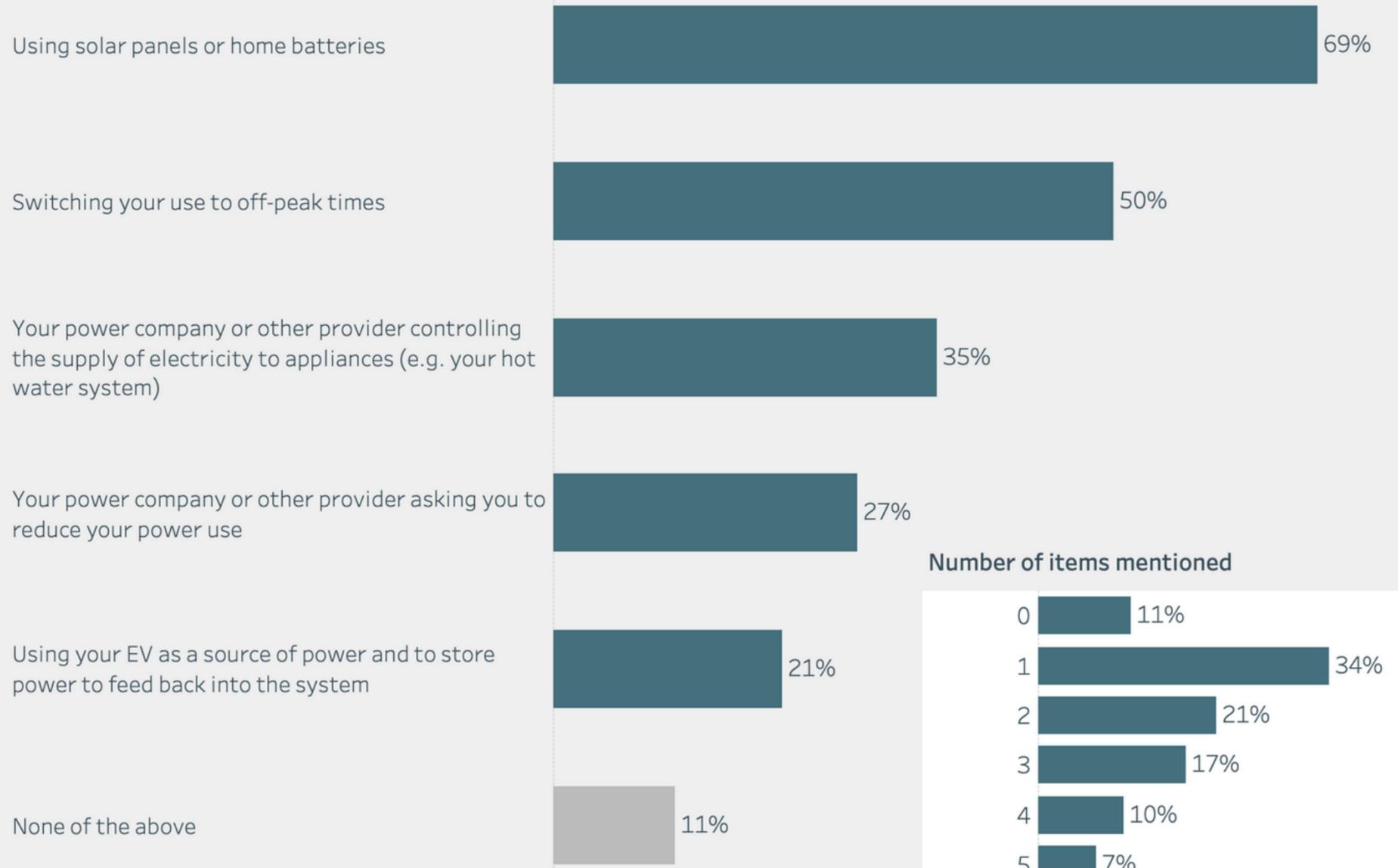
Awareness of supply risk solutions is uneven among small business consumers, but strongest for solar and off-peak use

Small business consumers are most aware of solar panels or home batteries (69%) and shifting electricity use to off-peak times (50%) as ways to help reduce the risk of supply problems. Fewer recognise demand management solutions controlled by providers, such as switching off appliances (35%) or direct requests to reduce usage (27%). Only one in five (21%) are aware of using EVs as a source of power.

Overall, awareness is often limited to just one measure. 34% of small businesses could only identify a single option, while just 7% mentioned all five. Around 1 in 10 (11%) were unable to identify any solutions.

This suggests that while headline technologies like solar are well understood, there is lower awareness of provider-driven or emerging flexibility solutions.

Q36 Which of the following options are you aware of that help reduce the risk of supply problems?



n=510 small business decision-makers



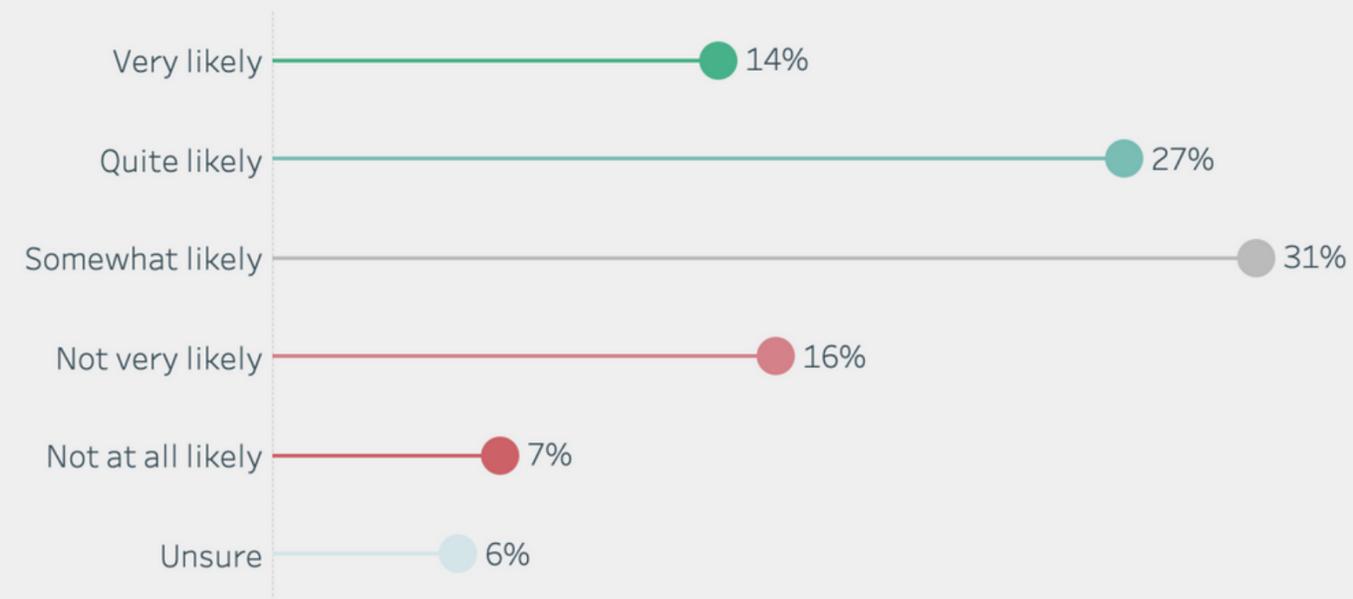
Willingness to act is driven by business continuity and cost savings

Over 7 in 10 small business consumers are at least somewhat willing to try measures that reduce the risk of power outages. Four in ten are very or quite likely to take part, while only 23% say they are unlikely.

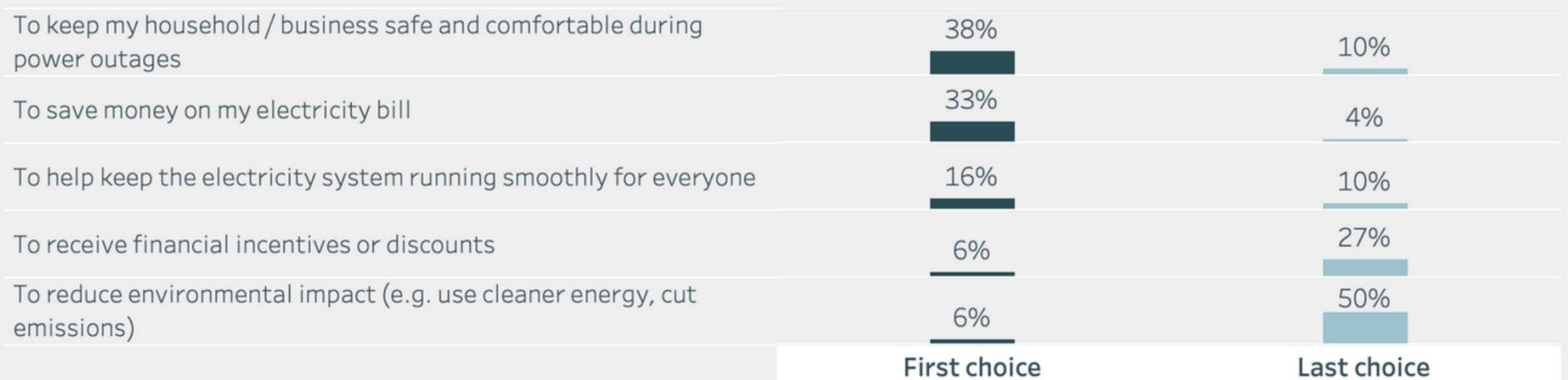
Motivations are strongest when benefits are direct and practical. The top reasons for participating are to keep the business safe and comfortable during outages (38% ranked first) and to save money on electricity bills (33%). System-wide benefits, discounts, and environmental impacts rank far lower, with half of respondents placing environmental reasons last.

These findings suggest uptake is most likely when actions are framed around immediate business continuity and cost savings, rather than broader societal or environmental outcomes.

Q37 How likely would you be to try one of these options to help reduce the risk of power outages in your area?



Q38 Please order the following reasons for why you might be likely to choose an option to reduce the risk of outages, from the most important reason to the least important reason.



n=510 small business decision-makers
Q38 n=387 (very to somewhat likely in Q37)

Appendix

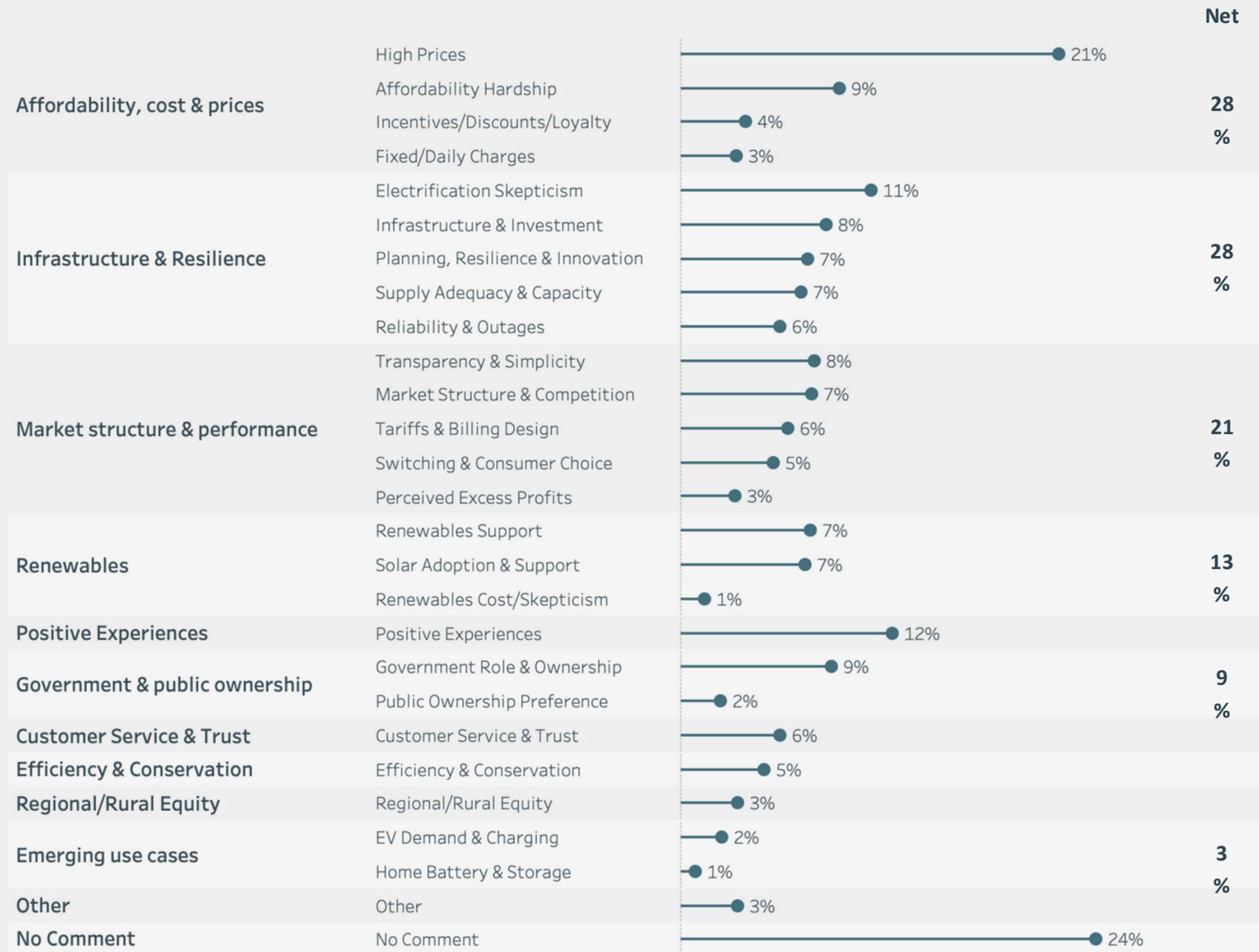
The logo for 'The Navigators' features the company name in a dark blue, sans-serif font. A small red triangle is positioned above the letter 'i' in 'Navigators'.

The Navigators



Verbatim comments, coded thematically

Finally, is there anything else you would like to share about your experiences as an electricity consumer, or how you think electricity is being managed or delivered in New Zealand?

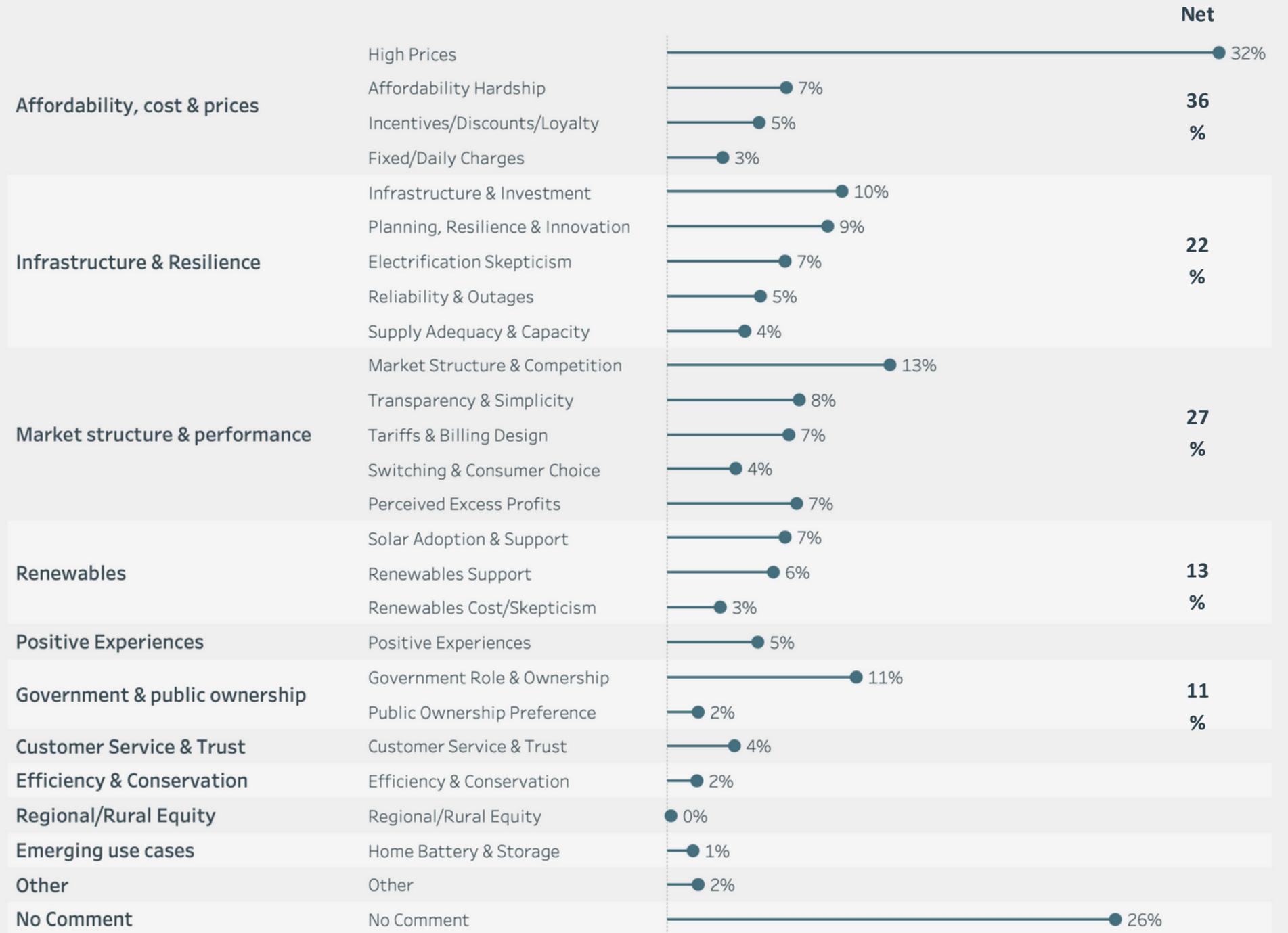


n = 1,005 adult New Zealanders



Verbatim comments, coded thematically

Finally, is there anything else you would like to share about your experiences as an electricity consumer, or how you think electricity is being managed or delivered in New Zealand?



n = 510 Small business decision-makers



Verbatim comments: Consumers



Satisfied with provider

You can control payments through the app and see readings and bill payments, also have flexible payment options.

(My power company) is a trusted brand and cares for customers. They offer healthy incentives to customers like the free hour of power.

(My power company) have a great website and app. Reasonable costs and power shouts of free power at user specified times. Good call centre.

Have been a long term customer and have always had a good steady supply, manage my account online.



Dissatisfied with provider

I feel my power has gone up, has but my budget at a struggle and billing is not correct.

I feel the power is quite expensive even after we changed to a better plan to get 3 free hours.

They still charge too much.

I used to be all green and then asset swapping happened and they got dirty coal powered plants.

They're the best of a bad bunch.

Unsure about the monthly bills as they always seem like more and more each month, they are never similar. I use the same power every day.



Verbatim comments: Business



Satisfied with provider

I like the free weekend power - but the lights turn on when I flick the switch and that's all I really want.

Easy to deal with and if any problems occur they are promptly fixed.

Can see the meter reading online.

Due to the plan we are on we have consistent prices.

Good pricing and rewards.

I can definitely afford the electricity bills for my company.

It has been very cheap but then they were sold and I expect the price to increase considerably.



Dissatisfied with provider

A bit costly for my business.

Charges are always high for something everyone needs.

Because we are rural and don't get the perks that people in towns get.

Because we always have to be careful of power usage.

I don't think they are any better than other companies. They don't reward loyalty.

It is a large bill every month. Based on how my power company works we could reduce but as we are a busy business we set and forget and make payment. If I took advantage of their packages it would be different but I don't have the time to be doing it.



Verbatim comments: Consumers



Reason comparison tool not useful

I was already on the best plan at the time

It didn't show too much savings.

It was quite complex and the difference wasn't worth it.

It still gave a lot of confusing information and didn't look all that easy to change.

It wasn't accurate even after I put my information in.

It was useful but I just couldn't be bothered with the hassle.

Was easier to compare myself. Seemed to be too much information to follow on a computer screen.



Verbatim comments: Business



Reason comparison tool not useful

Because the discounts weren't always applied, or the website made it confusing.

A lot of effort for nothing.

Couldn't match my current plan to what was being displayed which makes it difficult to compare.

Found it difficult to understand as our business power is complex.

I couldn't find any providers as good as my current ones.

It doesn't have every provider which is annoying.

It seemed that no offers were better than what I was on.