

**Electricity:
affordability remains
the community's
priority, but concerns
about reliability
starting to bite**

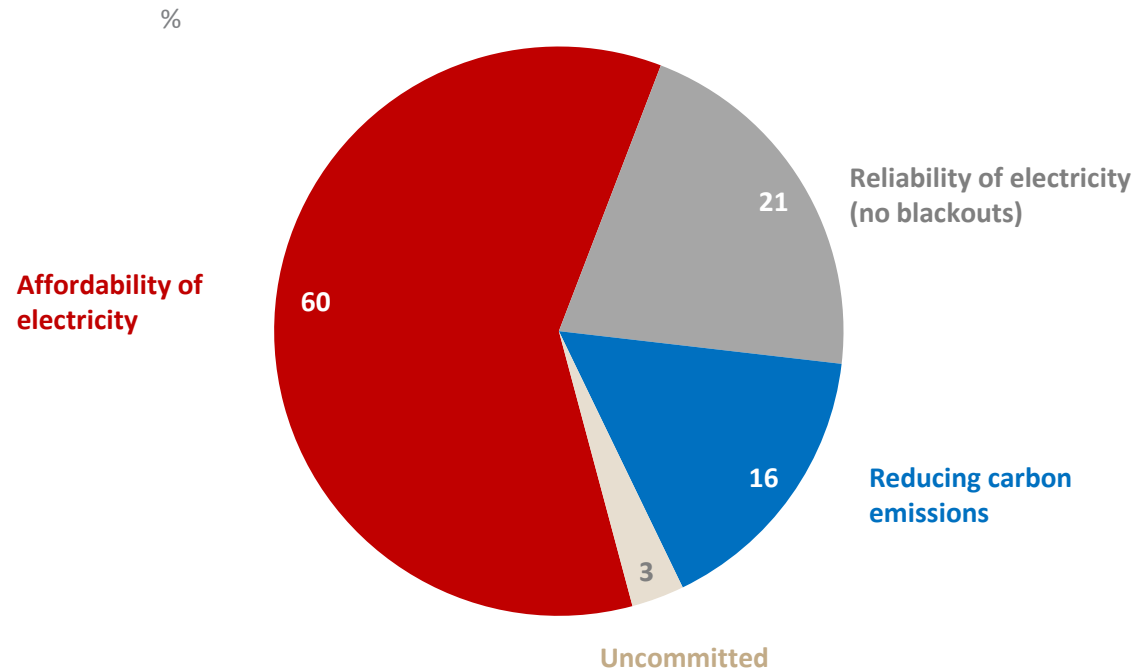


Most important priority for Australia's electricity network

As Australia's electricity network evolves over the next few years, which **one** of the following do you think is the **most important priority**?

Affordable electricity the highest priority

- A majority of Australians, 60%, believe that **affordability of electricity** is the most important priority for Australia's electricity network over the next few years – well ahead of **reliability** of electricity supply, 21%, or **reducing carbon emissions**, 16%.
- Arguably, the fact that many rate affordability ahead of reliability may reflect people taking reliability for granted – which may change if blackouts become a reality in the near future. Nonetheless the results point to affordability as being the most prevalent hot button issue.

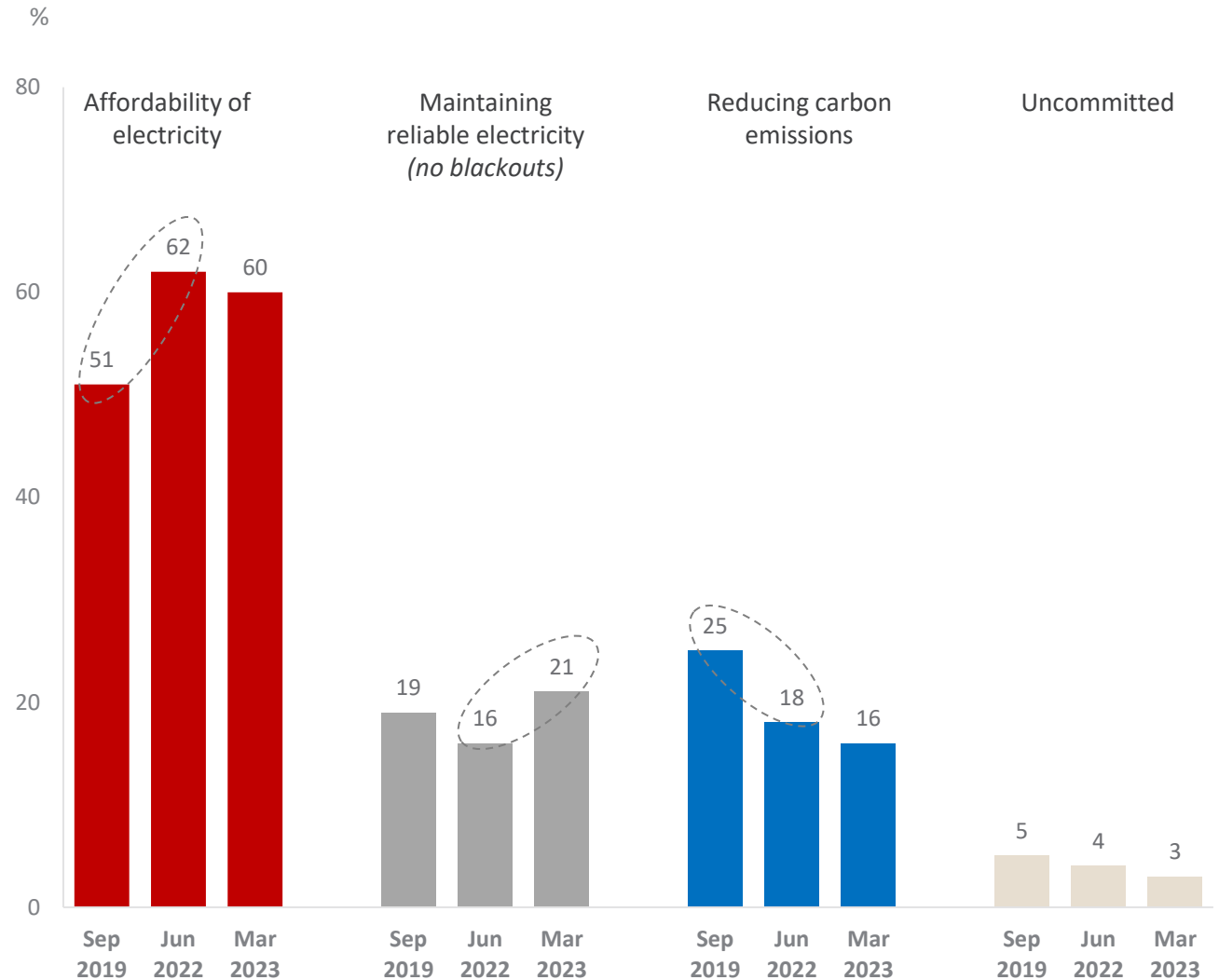


Methodology: Survey conducted nationally online among a sample of 1,230 people aged 18+. Fieldwork was conducted over the period March 9-14, 2023. Results were post-weighted to reflect the population distribution for age, sex, area and education.

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How is community sentiment changing?

- Community sentiment has not changed a great deal compared with June 2022. Nonetheless, there's been a small but significant increase in the number rating **reliability** as the priority (up from 16% to 21%). This indicates that concerns about potential blackouts are starting to bite.
- Against a backdrop of concerns about the cost of living and rising electricity prices in 2022 and 2023, the two most recent surveys show a marked shift in sentiment compared with a September 2019 survey, with:
 - a sharp rise in affordability as the priority, and
 - reducing carbon emissions showing the largest decline.



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Sentiment among age groups

- Affordability continues to be the highest priority across the age spectrum. The increased emphasis on reliability in the most recent survey is evident in most, though not all groups.
- The large gain in affordability last June was most pronounced among people in age groups under 50. Indeed, the emphasis on affordability among under 35's is even *more* pronounced now than it was last June.
- In particular, compared with September 2019, 18-24's have done a complete about face on their priority for reducing carbon emissions vs. affordability.
- None of this negates community concern about climate change. But faced with the day-to-day reality of making ends meet, the hip pocket wins out.

