

Liberty Utilities (Granite State Electric) Corp. d/b/a Liberty

DE 23-039
Distribution Service Rate Case

Department of Energy Technical Session Data Requests - Set 2

Date Request Received: 11/3/23
Request No: DOE TS 2-57

Date of Response: 11/20/23
Respondent: Lauren Preston

REQUEST:

Liberty has proposed that customers who enroll in the arrears management program would also be enrolled in Liberty's levelized payment plan, a plan where the payment changes monthly. Please explain how that payment structure provides an affordable and consistent payment amount for payment troubled customers.

RESPONSE:

Liberty GSE's proposed arrears management plan (AMP) proposal is paired with enrollment in a budget billing plan because if a customer makes consistent monthly payments the customer can keep up with their current charges while also receiving a reduction in their arrearage amount through the AMP.

In general, Liberty GSE recommends budget plans for customers who may have significant seasonal differences in their energy bill to provide greater monthly consistency of payment amounts. The Company also recommends using budget billing to increase AMP benefits to customers. A customer who is not using the budget plan is at risk of missing out on the AMP forgiveness in a month where the customer receives an unexpectedly high winter heat or summer cooling bill that the customer may not be able to pay in full.

There are two types of budget billing Liberty GSE offers and both plans would qualify for AMP participation. Levelized average monthly billing (AMB) and Budget Billing Plan (BBP). Levelized Average monthly billing plan (AMB) is a monthly plan in which the budget amount adjusts each month by no more than 20% depending upon the bill amounts during the budget period. This plan allows for a gradual change in payments to allow a customer's installment payments to remain in line with actual costs. For example, if the original levelized plan is set up at \$60 a month based on previous annual cost of \$720 per year, and an unusually cool summer or lower commodity costs results in lower summer bills, reducing the rolling 12-month cost to \$600 a year, the levelized installment will drop to \$50 a month. If the opposite happens (warmer weather and higher commodity costs) and the annual costs increase to \$900, the levelized plan would first increase from \$60 to \$72 (due to the 20% cap on adjustments) and then the next month if the annual cost remains as high, the level plan would increase to \$75 a month. The

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levelized plan goes through a final reconciliation of installment payments vs. actual charges when a customer moves out or leaves the budget plan.

Budget Billing payment Plan (BBP) is a monthly plan in which the budget amount is set for the plan's 12-month duration with the opportunity to modify it twice per year at months six and nine. The installment payments are reconciled at the end of the plan year or if a customer chooses to voluntarily end their budget participation. The less frequent review and reconciliation process can cause a customer to have a reconciliation amount which might be a hardship, which is why Liberty GSE recommends the levelized AMB plan more frequently to customers. However, both plans are available and would be eligible for a customer to pair with the arrears management plan.

The Federal Reserve Payments Study: 2022 Triennial Initial Data Release

The 2022 Federal Reserve Payments Study (FRPS) collected data for the 2021 calendar year. This initial release includes top-line figures for the core noncash payment methods used in the United States by consumers, businesses, and governments, including payments by general-purpose and private-label cards, automated clearinghouse (ACH) transfers, and checks. This release also covers automated teller machine (ATM) cash withdrawals. Wire transfers, used primarily for large financial transactions, are excluded from these data. Additional details will be available in future releases.

Get Data

- Download [Excel](#) file with tables containing data discussed on this page.
- Use the [Previous Studies](#) link to access historical data.
- For data questions please contact:
frpaymentsstudy@frb.gov.

Key Findings

- **The value of core noncash payments in the United States grew faster from 2018 to 2021 than in any previous FRPS measurement period since 2000.** Having increased at a rate of 9.5 percent per year since 2018, noncash payments value reached \$128.51 trillion in 2021 ([table 1](#)). This rate of increase was more than twice the rate of increase in the previous three-year period (2015 to 2018) and more than three times the rate of increase from 2000 to 2018. The 2018 to 2021 increase in value reflects, in part, increases in the average value of each of the components of core noncash payments (ACH, check, and card payments).
- **The increase in the value of ACH transfers accounted for more than 90 percent of the rise in noncash payments value from 2018 to 2021.** By number and value, the rate of increase in ACH transfers accelerated to 8.3 percent per year and 12.7 percent per year, respectively, over the period. Since surpassing checks as the highest-value noncash payment method in 2009 ([figure 1](#)), ACH transfers have grown to \$91.85 trillion, 72 percent of core noncash payments value in 2021.
- **The average value of check payments increased substantially from 2018 to 2021.** The value of check payments increased slightly (0.6 percent per year) despite a significant drop in the number of check payments. As a result, the average value of check payments increased

from \$1,908 in 2018 to \$2,430 in 2021. By number, checks declined at a rate of 7.2 percent per year since 2018, dropping to 11.2 billion. In 2021, the value of check payments stood at \$27.23 trillion, which was approximately 21 percent of noncash payments value.

- **The value of card payments grew faster from 2018 to 2021 than in any previous FRPS measurement period.** Rising 10.0 percent per year since 2018, card payments value reached \$9.43 trillion in 2021, accounting for approximately 7 percent of noncash payments value in that year. Among the card types, prepaid debit card payments grew at the greatest rate by value since 2018, 20.6 percent per year, and reached \$0.61 trillion in 2021, but remained a relatively small part (6.5 percent) of the value of all card payments.
- **The number of core noncash payments grew by a larger amount from 2018 to 2021 than in any previous FRPS measurement period since 2000.** Specifically, the number of noncash payments grew by 30.7 billion, increasing to 204.5 billion in 2021. The growth rate, at 5.6 percent per year, was smaller than the growth rate from 2015 to 2018 (6.6 percent).
- **The increase in the number of card payments accounted for more than 84 percent of the growth in the number of noncash payments from 2018 to 2021.** Despite a temporary drop in 2020 ([figure 2](#)), the number of card payments grew by 25.9 billion from 2018 to 2021. Nevertheless, the rate of increase in the number of card payments from 2018 to 2021, at 6.2 percent per year, was lower than the growth of approximately 9.9 percent per year recorded from 2000 to 2018. With 157.0 billion payments in 2021, card payments accounted for approximately 77 percent of noncash payments by number.
- **The number of non-prepaid debit card payments increased most of all card types.** Non-prepaid debit cards reached 87.8 billion payments, or approximately 56 percent of all card payments in 2021. Credit card payments experienced the second largest increase, rising to 51.1 billion, or about one-third of all card payments in 2021. Prepaid debit card payments had the greatest growth rate by number (9.6 percent per year), reaching 18.1 billion payments in 2021.
- **The number of ATM cash withdrawals dropped substantially from 2018 to 2021.** ATM cash withdrawals declined at a rate of 10.1 percent per year, falling to 3.7 billion in 2021. By value, ATM cash withdrawals also declined, but at a slower rate, reflecting an increase in the average value of an ATM cash withdrawal from \$156 in 2018 to \$198 in 2021.

Table 1. Noncash payments, 2015, 2018, and 2021(Excel)

Noncash payment type	2015			2018			2021			Change	
	Number	Value	Average	Number	Value	Average	Number	Value	Average	Number	Value
	(billions)	(\$trillions)	(\$)	(billions)	(\$trillions)	(\$)	(billions)	(\$trillions)	(\$)	(billions)	(\$trillions)
Total	143.6	86.78	604	173.7	98.00	564	204.5	128.51	628	30.1	1
Cards	101.5	5.52	54	131.2	7.08	54	157.0	9.43	60	29.7	
Debit cards	67.8	2.47	36	86.4	3.10	36	106.0	4.55	43	18.6	
Non-prepaid	56.6	2.18	38	72.7	2.75	38	87.8	3.94	45	16	
Prepaid	11.2	0.29	26	13.8	0.35	25	18.1	0.61	34	2.6	
General purpose	4.3	0.15	35	6.0	0.19	32	8.9	0.37	42	1.8	
Private label	4.4	0.07	16	5.5	0.10	18	5.1	0.08	16	1.2	
Electronic benefits transfer (EBT)	2.6	0.08	29	2.2	0.06	26	4.0	0.16	39	-0.4	-
Credit cards	33.7	3.05	91	44.7	3.98	89	51.1	4.88	96	11.1	
General purpose	31.0	2.80	90	40.9	3.64	89	47.8	4.52	95	9.9	
Private label	2.7	0.25	93	3.8	0.34	89	3.3	0.36	108	1.2	
Automated clearinghouse (ACH)	23.9	52.08	2,177	28.5	64.16	2,250	36.2	91.85	2,536	4.6	1
Credit transfers	10.0	32.48	3,253	11.9	40.87	3,441	15.9	58.66	3,690	1.9	
Debit transfers	13.9	19.60	1,406	16.6	23.28	1,399	20.3	33.19	1,634	2.7	
Network	19.3	41.64	2,159	22.9	51.25	2,234	29.1	72.62	2,497	3.7	
Credit transfers	8.0	26.78	3,333	9.5	33.42	3,512	12.7	47.25	3,714	1.5	
Debit transfers	11.3	14.86	1,321	13.4	17.83	1,328	16.4	25.37	1,551	2.2	
On-us	4.6	10.44	2,249	5.6	12.90	2,315	7.1	19.23	2,695	0.9	
Credit transfers	2.0	5.70	2,922	2.4	7.45	3,154	3.2	11.40	3,591	0.4	
Debit transfers	2.7	4.74	1,761	3.2	5.45	1,697	4.0	7.82	1,977	0.5	
Checks	18.1	29.18	1,609	14.0	26.77	1,908	11.2	27.23	2,430	-4.1	-
Interbank	13.6	21.29	1,564	10.9	20.30	1,865	8.6	19.67	2,280	-2.7	-
On-us	4.5	7.90	1,746	3.1	6.47	2,058	2.6	7.56	2,930	-1.4	-
Additional estimates											
Checks written	20.2	29.68	1468	15.5	27.17	1,747	12.0	27.47	2,287	-4.7	-
Checks converted to ACH	2.1	0.5	238	1.5	0.40	263	0.8	0.24	299	-0.6	-

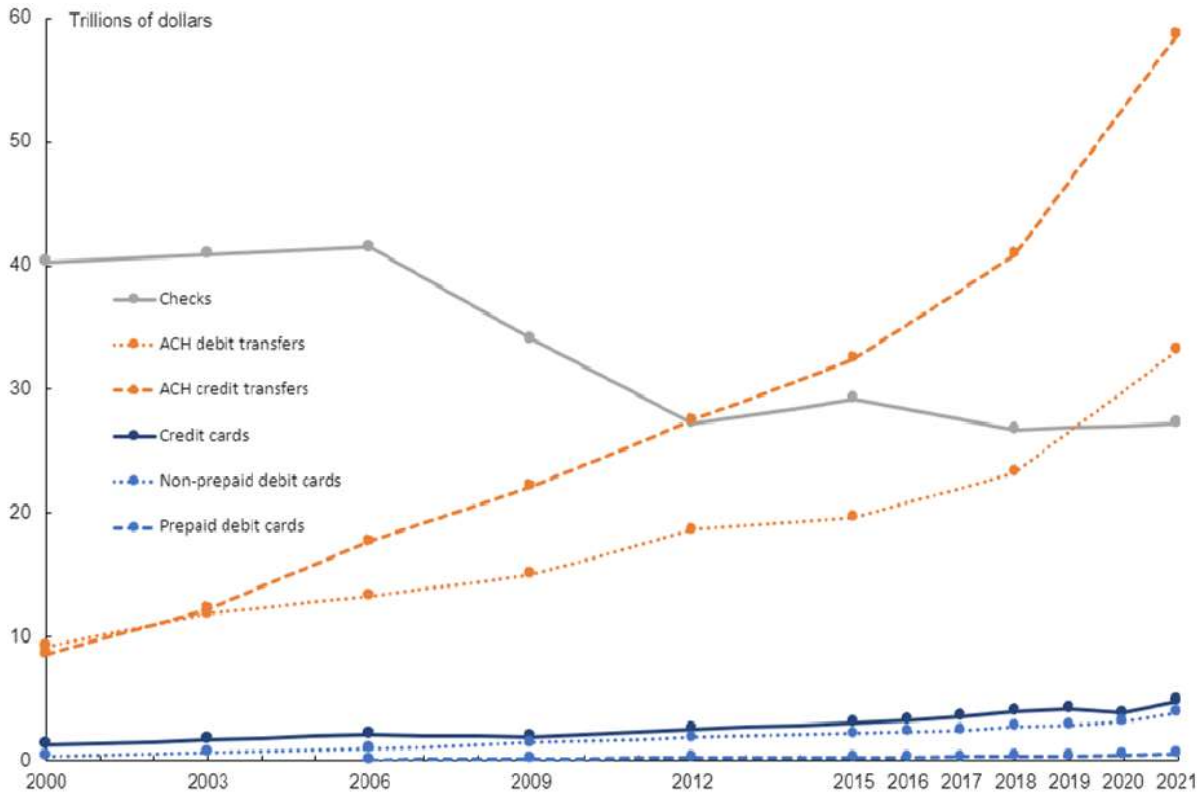
Noncash payment type	2015			2018			2021			Change	
	Number (billions)	Value (\$trillions)	Average (\$)	Number (billions)	Value (\$trillions)	Average (\$)	Number (billions)	Value (\$trillions)	Average (\$)	Number (billions)	Value (\$trillions)
ATM cash withdrawals	5.2	0.76	146	5.1	0.80	156	3.7	0.73	198	-0.1	

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Note: General-purpose card figures are defined as net, authorized and settled. Figures may not sum because of rounding. CAGR is compound annual growth rate. Checks written is the sum of "Checks" and "Checks converted to ACH" which uses the check as a source document to initiate the ACH payment.

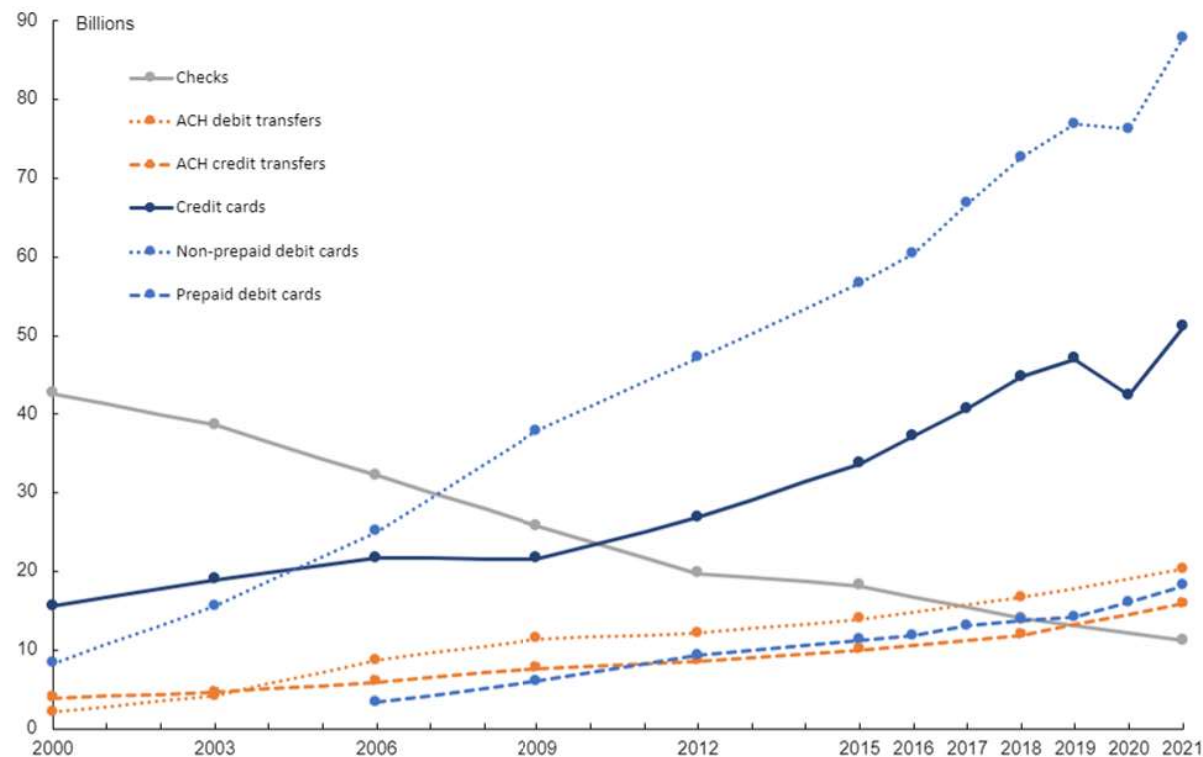
Note: On April 21, 2023, the CAGR (percent) value from 2015-18 for Electronic benefits transfer (EBT) was corrected on the webpage from 7.8 to -7.8. On July 21, 2023, the CAGR (percent) value from 2015-18 for Checks, Interbank, and On-us were corrected on the webpage from 2.8, 1.6, and 6.4 to -2.8, -1.6, and -6.4, respectively. No changes were made to the Excel.

Figure 1. Trends in noncash payments, by value, 2000–21



Note: All estimates are on a triennial basis, except that card payments were also estimated for 2016, 2017, 2019, and 2020. Credit card payments include general-purpose and private-label versions. Prepaid debit card payments include general-purpose, private-label, and electronic benefits transfer (EBT) versions. Estimates for prepaid debit card payments are not available for 2000 or 2003. The points mark years for which data were collected and estimates were produced. Lines connecting the points are linear interpolations.

Figure 2. Trends in noncash payments, by number, 2000–21



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Note: All estimates are on a triennial basis, except that card payments were also estimated for 2016, 2017, 2019, and 2020. Credit card payments include general-purpose and private-label versions. Prepaid debit card payments include general-purpose, private-label, and electronic benefits transfer (EBT) versions. Estimates for prepaid debit card payments are not available for 2000 or 2003. The points mark years for which data were collected and estimates were produced. Lines connecting the points are linear interpolations.

Contact

For questions, comments, or to be added to the FRPS mailing list, please contact:

frpaymentsstudy@frb.gov.

Last Update: July 27, 2023



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November 27, 2023
Via Electronic Report Filing

Daniel Goldner
Chairman
New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission
21 South Fruit St., Suite 10
Concord, NH 03301-2429

Dear Chairman Goldner:

**Re: DG 11-040; Liberty Utilities (Granite State Electric) Corp. d/b/a Liberty
Annual Residential Customer Satisfaction Survey – 2023**

Pursuant to the Settlement Agreement approved by Commission Order No. 25,370 (May 30, 2012) in Docket No. DG 11-040, enclosed please find Liberty's Annual Residential Customer Satisfaction Survey results. Please note this report has been filed via the Commission's Electronic Report Filing system.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please do not hesitate to call if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Erica L. Menard'.

Erica L. Menard

Enclosure

Cc: Amanda Noonan
Paul Dexter, Esq.
Donald M. Kreis, Consumer Advocate

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Customer Satisfaction Tracking New Hampshire Electric

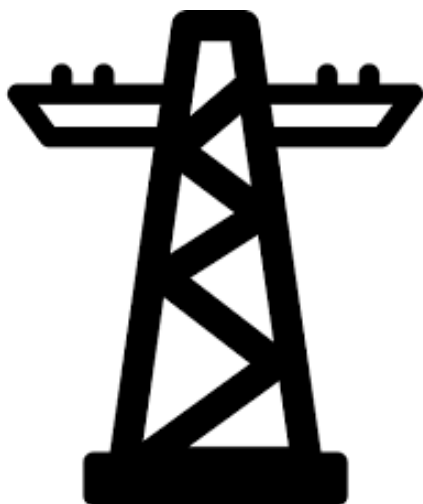
October 2023



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Background and Objectives

Background and Objectives



Screen & Evaluative Criteria

- Person in household who would contact local utility company or deal with bill
- Age 18 or older
- Aware Liberty is their local electricity provider



Method

- Web survey
- Qualification screener
- Analyze current customer satisfaction levels with Liberty among New Hampshire (NH) Electric Customers
- Compare current customer satisfaction levels with previous years to determine whether satisfaction changed significantly over time
- Identify areas for improvement in order to increase satisfaction in the future
- Demographics



Survey Specs

- Interview length 6 minutes on average
- Survey fielding: September 5-28, 2023
- Sample source: Liberty customer list
- 1,516 customers participated, 1147 via an online survey and 369 via phone interviews
- The margin of error is plus or minus 2.5% at the 95% level for results based on all customers



Key Findings

Key Findings

- **Overall satisfaction dropped another 10 points this year, to 53%.** Satisfaction is 66% if customers specifically exclude cost.
 - ✓ Although cost is still the top complaint mentioned by dissatisfied customers, *mentions of billing issues have more than tripled over the past year.*
 - ✓ Lack of problems, reliability and good service overall are mentioned the most by satisfied customers, although one-third of these customers also complain about cost.

- **Last year, Liberty's ratings were hit most on price-related issues, while this year satisfaction with bill and statement accuracy and customer service took the largest tumbles.**
 - ✓ In addition to bill/statement accuracy and customer service, there were very large declines for several reputational attributes – quality of services and building confidence in how it operates.
 - ✓ The largest decline over the past two years has been for providing good value for the price, from 71% to 30%.
 - ✓ Satisfaction ratings for most attributes are now lower than they were in 2014-2015.
 - ✓ The groups which consistently give Liberty lower satisfaction ratings are customers younger than 45 and more affluent customers (those living in households with annual incomes of \$100,000 or more),

- **The most important drivers of satisfaction for Liberty, and the areas which are most important to focus on, are:**
 - ✓ Price
 - ✓ Bill/statement accuracy (improvement here will likely also improve perceptions about value for the price)
 - ✓ Customer service (improvement here will likely also improve perceptions about value for the price)

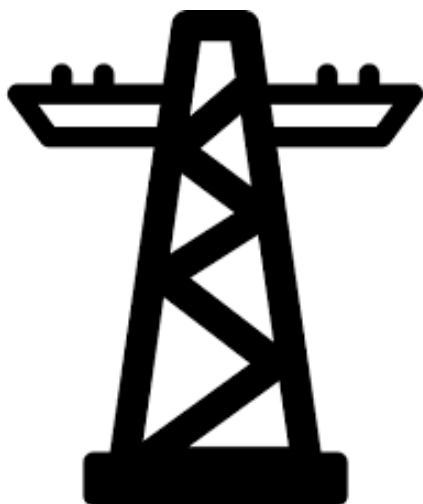
- **Looking at the open-ends, many customers had specific complaints about billing problems and difficulty getting into touch with Liberty.**

Key Findings

7

- **The percentage of customers contacting the company reached its highest level ever this year (81%).**
 - ✓ Usage of the website has doubled since 2020 and currently more customers use it than call and speak with a Liberty representative.
 - ✓ Satisfaction remains much higher for contacts involving speaking with a Liberty representative than for the website.

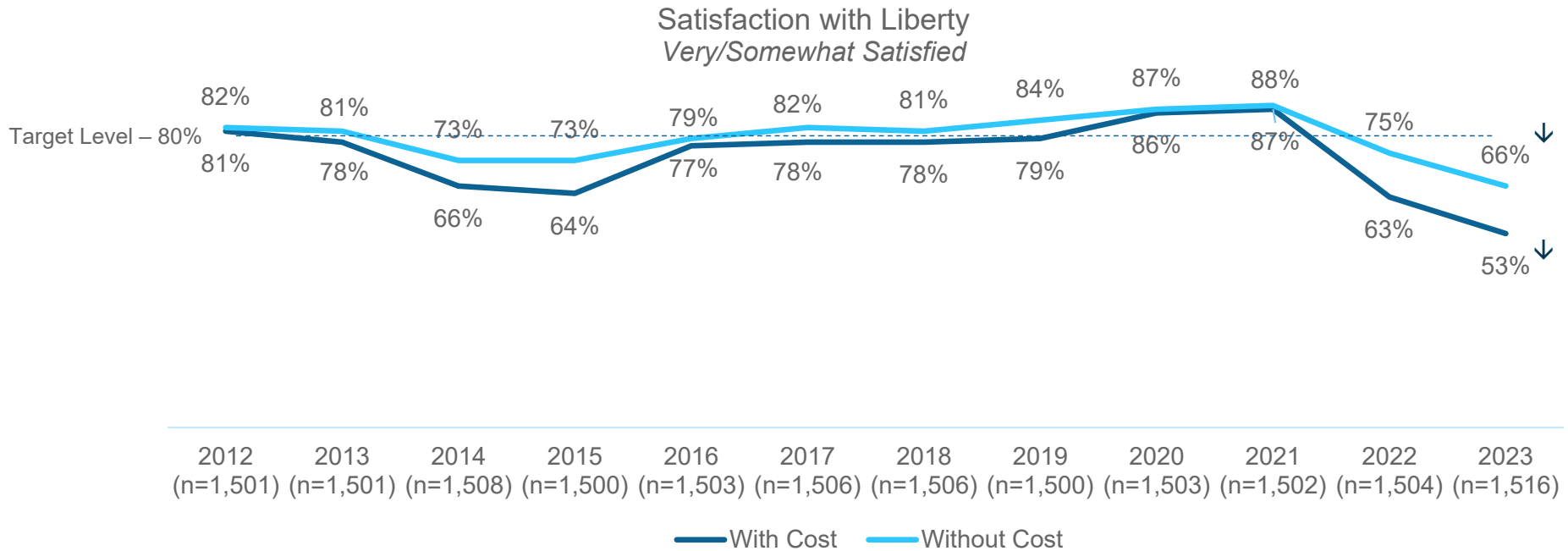
- **Awareness of Liberty's energy efficiency programs bumped up this year, to 57%.**
 - ✓ Aside from 2022, awareness of these programs has remained very stable, between 55% and 58%.
 - ✓ Increasing awareness of these programs is one way to tackle several issues for Liberty – helping customers reduce cost and being more community-minded.
 - ✓ Awareness of these programs has been shifting from direct mail to electronic sources, although mail remains the single strongest source, particularly among seniors. Aside from direct mail, email and the website are the biggest drivers of awareness.



Overall Satisfaction

Overall Satisfaction and Satisfaction without Cost

- Overall satisfaction with Liberty declined another 10 points this year, to 53%. Excluding cost, satisfaction declined by 9 points, to 66%. The 13-point gap in satisfaction between overall satisfaction and satisfaction excluding cost confirms the impact cost is having; in 2021, the gap was only a single percentage point.
- This year's results are lower than those from 2014-2015.



2012 (n=1,501) 2013 (n=1,501) 2014 (n=1,508) 2015 (n=1,500) 2016 (n=1,503) 2017 (n=1,506) 2018 (n=1,506) 2019 (n=1,500) 2020 (n=1,503) 2021 (n=1,502) 2022 (n=1,504) 2023 (n=1,516)

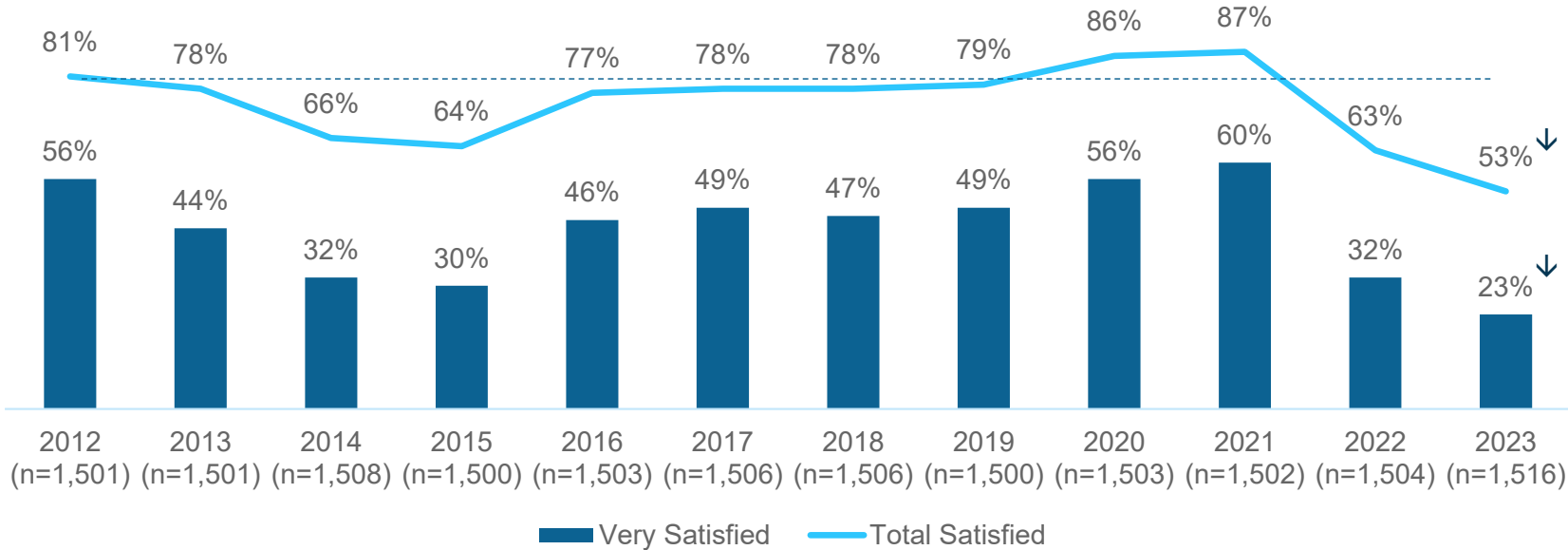
↑/↓ Indicates score is significantly higher/lower than 2022
 Q3 Overall, how satisfied are you with Liberty?
 QEASTO1 Using a scale where 5 is "very satisfied" and 1 is "very dissatisfied", how satisfied are you with the services, excluding price, that you are receiving from Liberty?



Overall Satisfaction

- Overall satisfaction dropped to 53% in 2023, driven by a 9-point decline in the percentage 'very satisfied' with Liberty.
- While the decline in satisfaction has occurred across the board, customers 65 and older remain the strongest group for Liberty.

Satisfaction with Liberty with Cost
Very/Somewhat Satisfied



2023 Satisfaction by Age		
	Very	Total
<45	16%	40%
45-64	21%	51%
65+	28%	62%



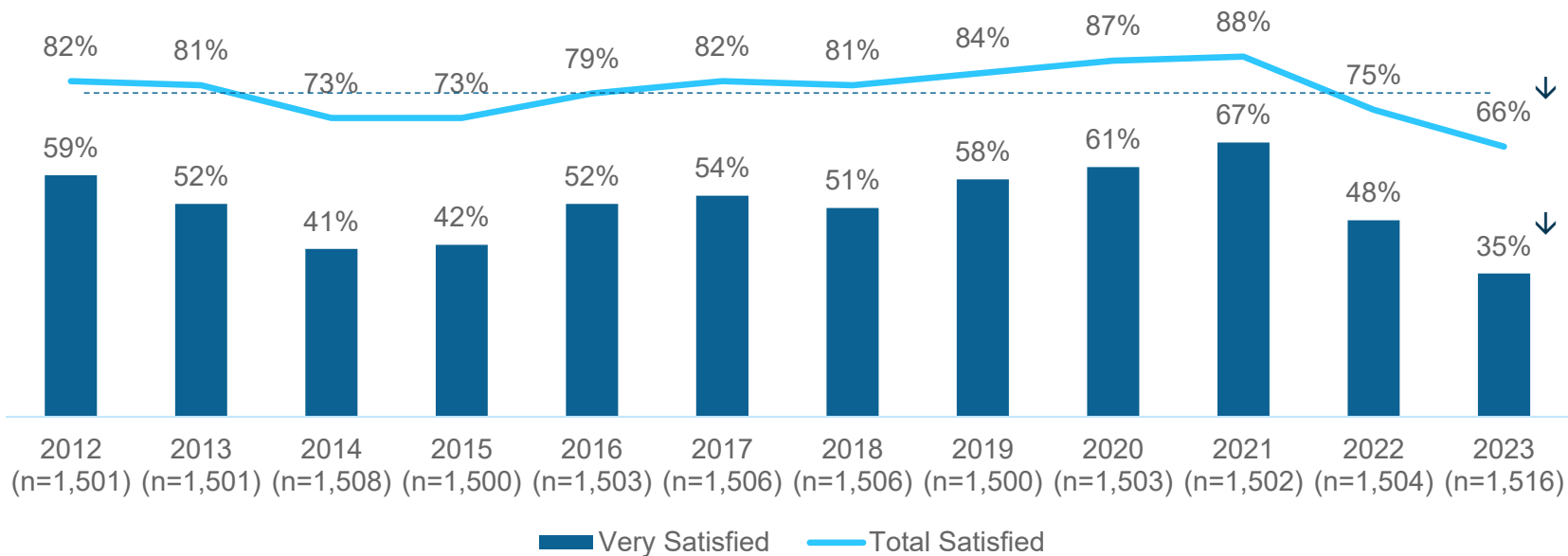
↑/↓ Indicates score is significantly higher/lower than 2022
 Bases: <45 years of age (n=343), 45-64 years of age (n=576), 65+ years of age (n=597)
 Q3 Overall, how satisfied are you with Liberty?



Satisfaction Excluding Cost

- There has been less variability in satisfaction for Liberty excluding cost, although there was a major decline in satisfaction here as well in 2023, to 66%. The percentage 'very satisfied' with Liberty excluding cost has almost been cut in half since 2021.
- Mirroring overall satisfaction results, customers 65 and older give Liberty its highest satisfaction levels.

Satisfaction with Liberty without Cost
Very/Somewhat Satisfied



2023 Satisfaction by Age		
	Very	Total
<45	24%	59%
45-64	34%	65%
65+	43%	72%



↑/↓ Indicates score is significantly higher/lower than 2022
 Bases: <45 years of age (n=343), 45-64 years of age (n=576), 65+ years of age (n=597)
 QEASTO1 Using a scale where 5 is "very satisfied" and 1 is "very dissatisfied", how satisfied are you with the services, excluding price, that you are receiving from Liberty?



Reasons for Satisfaction or Dissatisfaction

- The main reasons customers are satisfied with Liberty are lack of problems, reliability and good service overall; however, almost one in three satisfied customers also complain about cost.
- Cost is overwhelmingly top complaint of dissatisfied customers, although billing problems are mentioned far more often this year than in 2022.

Total Satisfied (n=800)	Very Satisfied (n=347)	Neither Satisfied Nor Dissatisfied (n=203)	Total Dissatisfied (n=513)
Cost is too high (31%)	Never had a problem (29%)	Cost is too high (46%)	Cost is too high (59%)
Reliable service (19%)	Reliable service (27%)	Billing problems (19%)	Billing problems (38%)
Service good overall (16%)	Service good overall (21%)	Don't know much about them (10%)	Website problems (14%)
Never had a problem (16%)	Good customer service (14%)	Reliable service (8%)	Poor communication/unable to contact (14%)
Billing problems (9%)	Prompt repair service (14%)	Website problems (8%)	Poor customer service (10%)
Good customer service (8%)	Cost is reasonable (8%)	Adequate service (6%)	Liberty is dishonest (6%)
Prompt repair service (7%)	Cost is too high (7%)	Poor communication/unable to contact (5%)	

Reasons for Satisfaction

When I have an issue, they are able to resolve it simply. It was usually a paperwork issue or an issue with the new system that they installed. Nothing more.

A real person answers my call. When I needed protection on the wire to my house for the roofers and siding workers, they were there quickly as promised.

I find them very reliable. They came within an hour when the power was out and worked until it was restored. The ease of setting up an account was evident and easy to link to an existing account.

When we lost electricity, they had a team at our home to repair the problem even though it was Thanksgiving Day.

It's been reliable the 12 years I've lived here. One time we lost power, and the crews were there in a less than 2 hours. They found everything in order with the connection to the house. I asked the tech to come and look at the fuse box. For some reason the master switch is what blew. That's never happened before or since. Most likely it was due to a new microwave oven we purchased. I would not have figured that out alone.

Because I owe back electric, and they are very understanding and helpful in getting me into a plan, so I don't lose my electricity.

I love the consistent and reliable service especially when there is severe weather the linemen are on top of their game.

Once I smelled a weird odor and panicked. The customer service gal sent a tech to my home immediately.

I was encouraged by Liberty to part with my ancient chest freezer and my electricity usage (and bill) plummeted. Liberty has always restored power quickly when there has been an outage. The Utility Arborist who came last week to assess a potentially hazardous large sugar maple near the power lines and the road seemed quite knowledgeable and was also very pleasant.

Reasons for Dissatisfaction

I have not received a paper statement in months. I also have not received an emailed bill. Then they shut off my power unannounced to me. They stated they mailed out a warning, but I never got it. I pay my bills and have been a client for 16 years. I have never had my power shut off.

Communication is virtually impossible. Phone contact impossible; local walk-in center closed; attempt to pay via Walmart (as suggested by Liberty employee) failed. Overall impression is that Liberty does not wish to be bothered by customers.

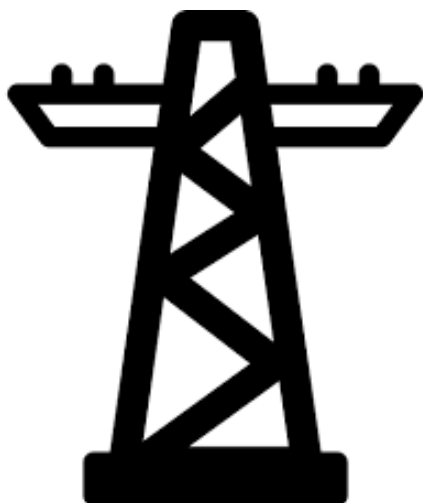
Billing issues, poor website and mobile app experience, issues with automated payments, ongoing problems logging into their website, difficulties contacting customer service to remedy the above problems.

Billing issues, poor website and mobile app experience, issues with automated payments, ongoing problems logging into their website, difficulties contacting customer service to remedy the above problems.

*Your auto billing system has not worked for over a year since you changed your website. **I've never seen a company so opposed to receiving money for services.***

*Ever since Liberty switched over to their new system, they've tanked IMO! They can't get their train on track with billing, and somehow my Walmart is now having issues with receiving payments; I find out they're not even listed as a Western Union recipient, so my bill payments take many, many days to get to their final destination; **NOT ACCEPTABLE!** Also, there's **NO** option to set up my credit card for auto pay, and paying over the phone has a \$1.75 fee; **NOT ACCEPTABLE!***

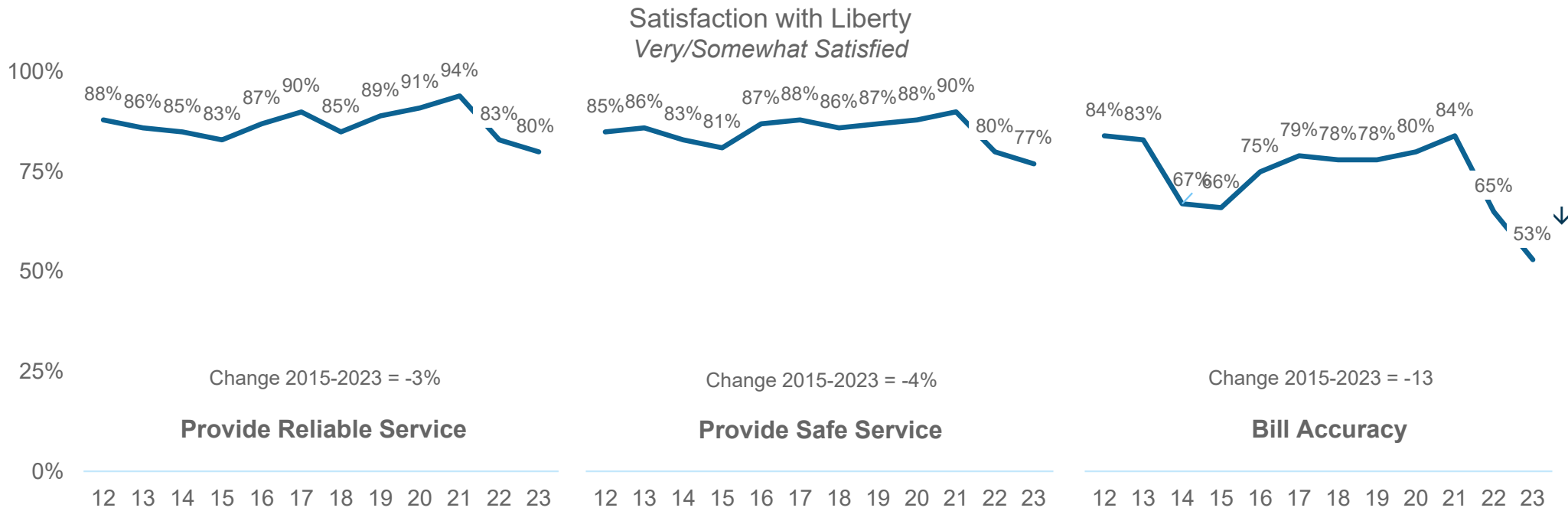
1. One must provide an account number to report an outage. 2. Cannot pay bill using credit card. 3. Website often crashes. 4. Cannot review prior monthly statements. 5. Electricity rates for delivery are exorbitant.



Key Indicators and Company Evaluations

Key Indicators

- Ratings this year held up best for providing safe and reliable services, the core responsibilities for a utility.
- Satisfaction with bill accuracy dropped by 12 points this year, which is tied with customer service for the largest decline in 2023.



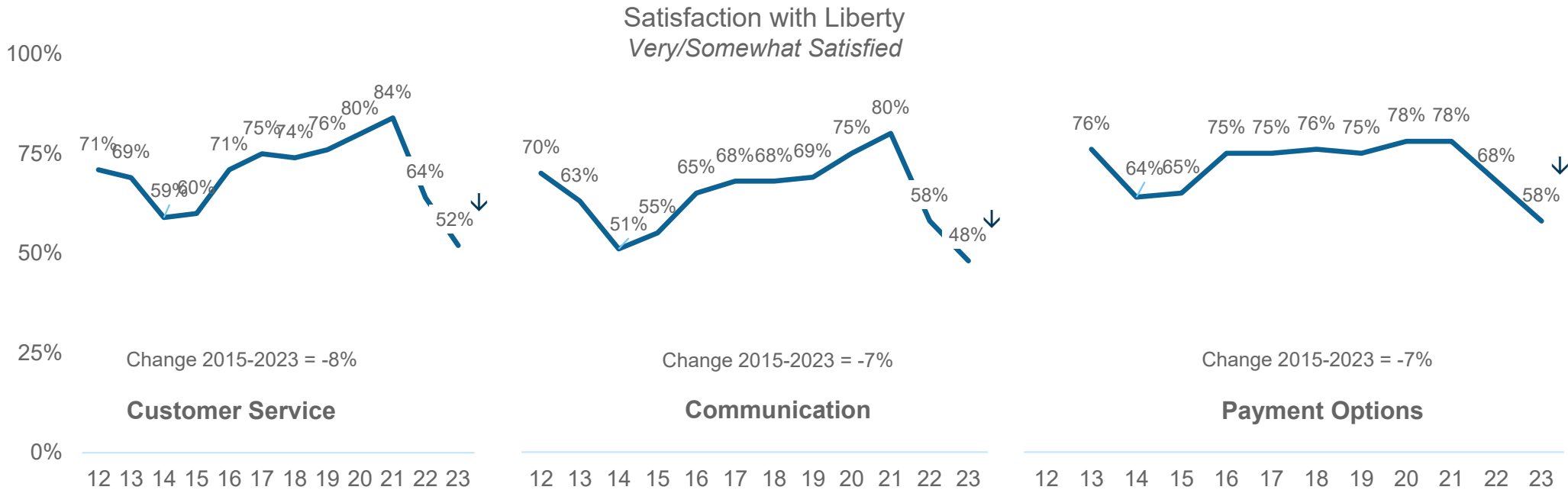
↑/↓
Base:
Q2.

Indicates score is significantly higher/lower than 2022
Varies by indicator and by year
Please rate Liberty in the following areas by using a 5-point scale with 5 being "Very Satisfied" and 1 being "Very Dissatisfied".



Key Indicators

- Liberty’s rating for customer service declined by 12 points this year, together with bill accuracy the largest drops in 2023.
- There were also significant satisfaction declines for communication and payment options.
- Satisfaction with all of these Key Indicators is well below where it was in 2015.



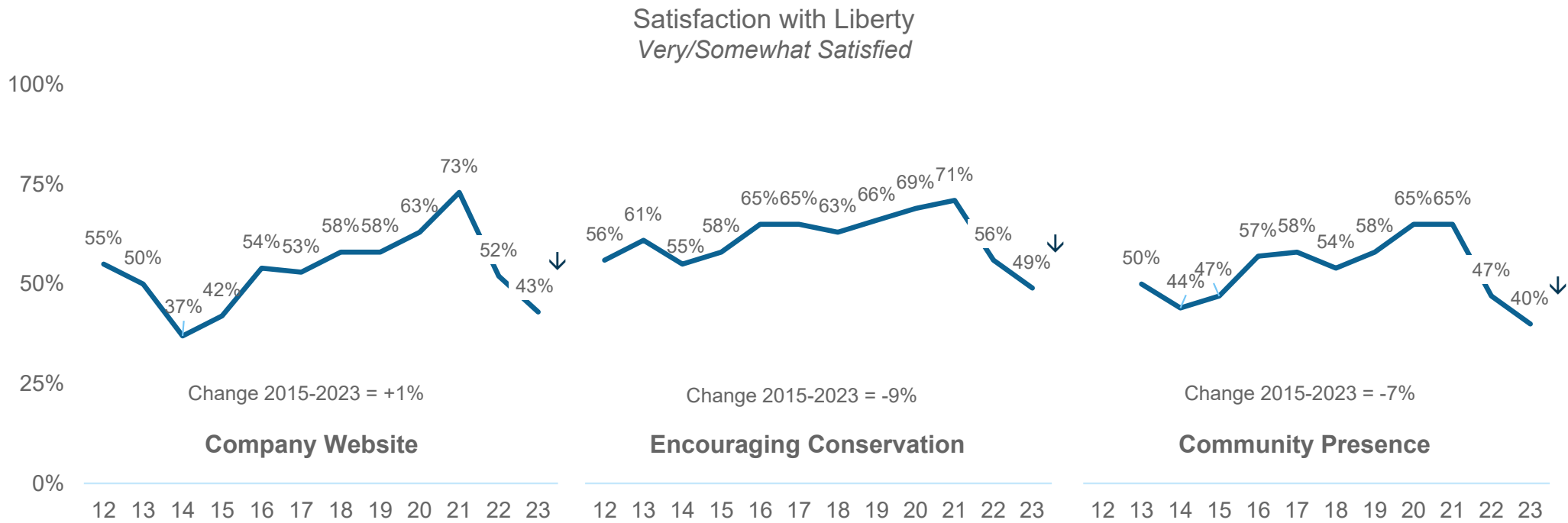
↑/↓
Base:
Q2.

Indicates score is significantly higher/lower than 2022
Varies by indicator and by year
Please rate Liberty in the following areas by using a 5-point scale with 5 being "Very Satisfied" and 1 being "Very Dissatisfied".



Key Indicators

- Satisfaction levels declined significantly this year for the website, encouraging conservation, and community presence. Aside from cost, community presence is where Liberty is rated lowest.
- Compared with the 2014-2015 trough, ratings have held up best for the website.

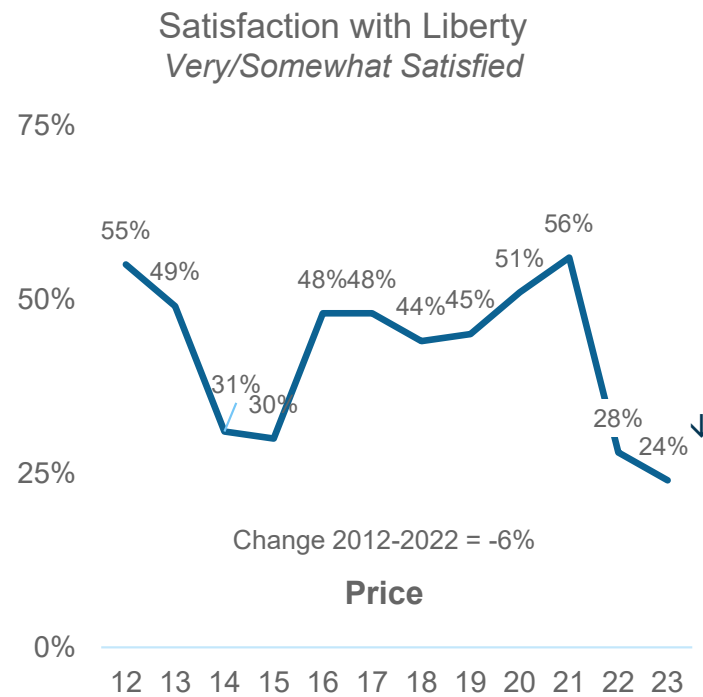


↑/↓ Indicates score is significantly higher/lower than 2022
 Base: Varies by indicator and by year
 Q2. Please rate Liberty in the following areas by using a 5-point scale with 5 being "Very Satisfied" and 1 being "Very Dissatisfied".



Key Indicators

- Satisfaction with price slipped another 4 points this year, to 24%.
- Satisfaction is below where it was in 2015, at the end of the last major decline in Liberty satisfaction.



↑/↓
Base:
Q2.

Indicates score is significantly higher/lower than 2022
Varies by indicator and by year
Please rate Liberty in the following areas by using a 5-point scale with 5 being "Very Satisfied" and 1 being "Very Dissatisfied".



Key Indicators

- Across the board, satisfaction levels are lowest for customers younger than 45. The largest satisfaction gaps between customers younger than 45 and those 65 and older are for bill/statement accuracy and encouraging electricity conservation (both 17 points).
- Aside from providing reliable and safe electricity, satisfaction levels are lower among customers living in households earning more than \$100,000 annually; the gap between satisfaction between the highest and lowest income groups is largest for community presence (19 points) and customer satisfaction (18 points).

Very/Somewhat Satisfied	Total	Age			Household Income		
		18-44	45-64	65+	<\$50K	\$50K- <\$100K	\$100K+
Providing reliable electricity	80%	77%	77%	84%	79%	81%	81%
Providing safe electricity	77%	71%	75%	82%	79%	77%	76%
Payment options	58%	49%	58%	63%	61%	62%	56%
Accuracy of bill/statement	53%	43%	50%	60%	54%	58%	47%
Customer service	52%	47%	51%	56%	61%	56%	43%
Encouraging electricity conservation	49%	39%	47%	56%	57%	54%	41%
Communications	48%	42%	46%	54%	57%	54%	41%
Company website	43%	40%	45%	44%	53%	51%	37%
Community presence	40%	33%	39%	44%	47%	49%	28%
Price	24%	22%	24%	26%	33%	27%	17%
Average	52%	47%	51%	57%	58%	57%	47%



Base:
Q2.

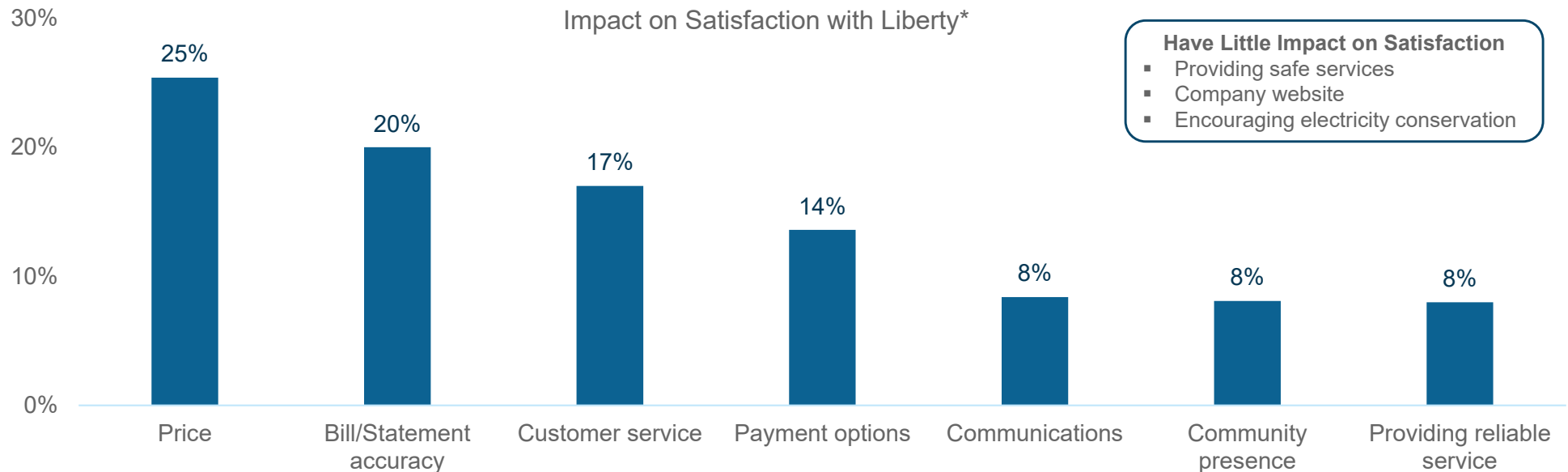
Varies by indicator and subgroup

Please rate Liberty in the following areas by using a 5-point scale with 5 being "Very Satisfied" and 1 being "Very Dissatisfied".



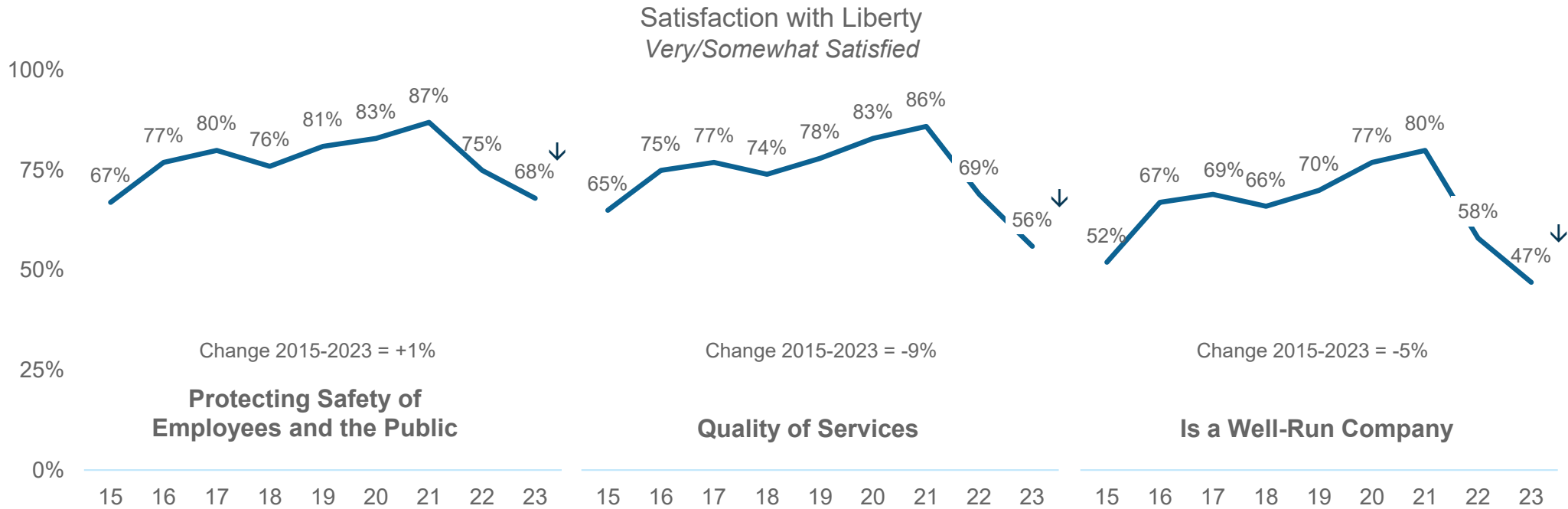
Drivers of Satisfaction

- A regression analysis was conducted to help quantify the impact of the Key Indicators on overall satisfaction with Liberty. The results for the attributes which had a significant impact on satisfaction are shown below.
- The indicators which have the biggest impact on satisfaction with Liberty are price, bill and statement accuracy and customer service; these account for 62% of the variation in satisfaction with Liberty. Compared with last year, the importance of bill and statement accuracy increased.



Company Evaluations

- Mirroring the results for Key Indicators, satisfaction with all Company Evaluations also declined this year.
- Satisfaction with Liberty protecting safety and service quality remains the highest of all Company Evaluations.
- Quality of services is the Evaluation with the largest decline in satisfaction this year (13 points).



↑/↓
Base:
Q5.

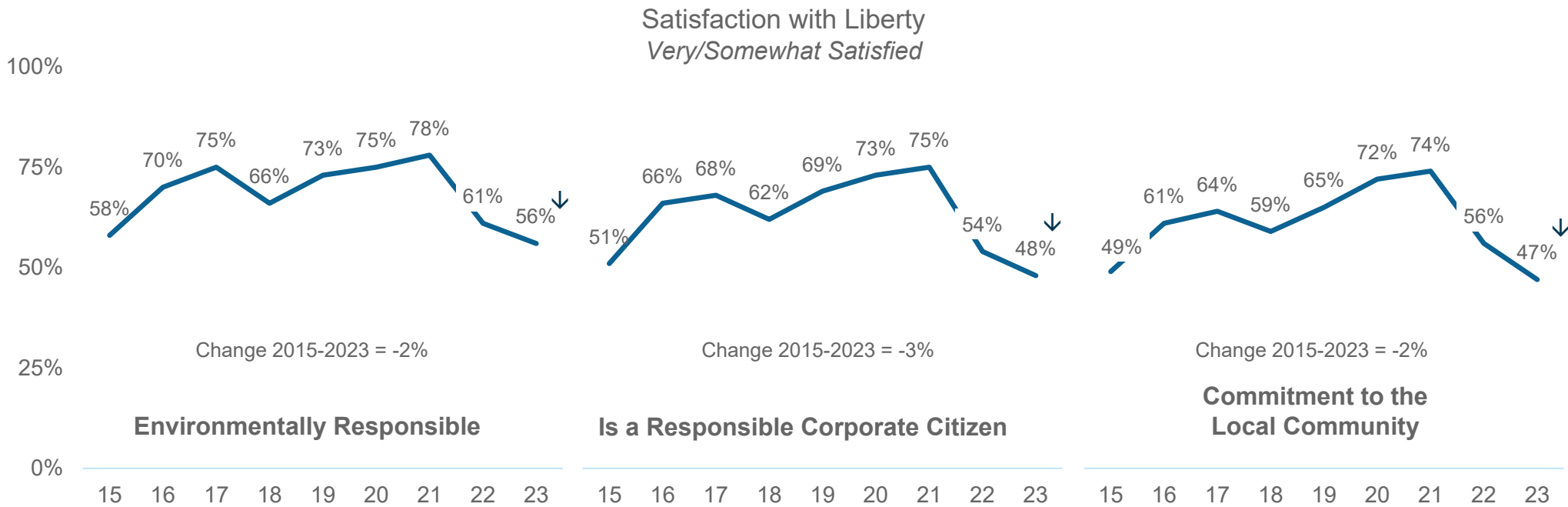
Indicates score is significantly higher/lower than 2022
Varies by indicator and by year

Based on a 5-point scale where 5 means "Excellent" and 1 means "Poor", please rate how good a job Liberty does on each of the following items:



Company Evaluations

- Satisfaction with Liberty being environmentally responsible, a responsible corporate citizen, and having a commitment to the local community all significantly declined this year, although the declines were of much less magnitude than in 2022.
- For these three Evaluations, satisfaction levels are close to where they were in 2015.



↑/↓
Base:
Q5.

Indicates score is significantly higher/lower than 2022

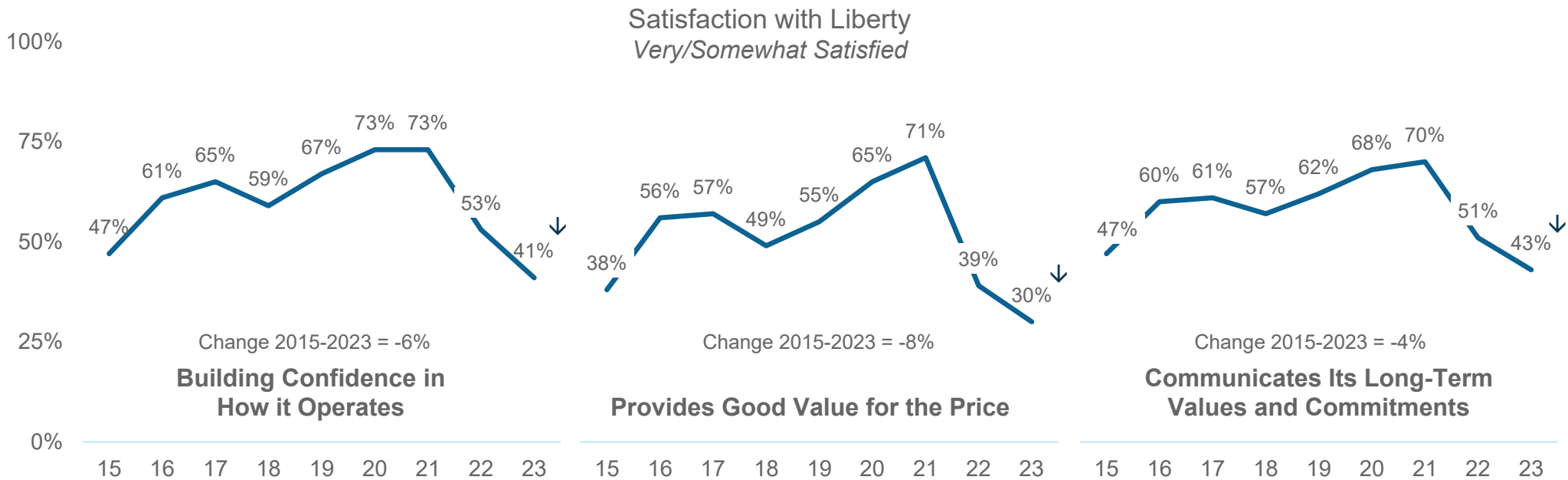
Varies by indicator and by year

Based on a 5-point scale where 5 means "Excellent" and 1 means "Poor", please rate how good a job Liberty does on each of the following items:



Company Evaluations

- Liberty’s rating for providing good value for the price declined by another 9 points this year, to 30%; this is the Evaluation with the largest total decline since 2021 (-41 points).
- Satisfaction levels also dropped in 2023 for Liberty building confidence in how it operates (-12 points) and communicating long-term values and commitments (-8).



↑/↓
Base:
Q5.

Indicates score is significantly higher/lower than 2022
Varies by indicator and by year
Based on a 5-point scale where 5 means "Excellent" and 1 means "Poor", please rate how good a job Liberty does on each of the following items:



Company Evaluations

- Across the board, satisfaction for Liberty is highest among customers 65 and older, although the company's rating for providing good value for the price is notably lower among this group.
- Satisfaction levels are also lower among the most affluent customers, with the largest gaps for Liberty being a well-run company and building trust in how it operates. Lower satisfaction levels among more affluent customers have been common since tracking began.

Very/Somewhat Satisfied	Total	Age			Household Income		
		18-44	45-64	65+	<\$50K	\$50K- <\$100K	\$100K+
Protecting the safety of employees and the public	68%	59%	67%	74%	74%	68%	65%
Quality of services provided to customers	56%	47%	52%	66%	64%	58%	50%
Operating in an environmentally responsible manner	56%	49%	55%	62%	64%	59%	46%
Being a responsible corporate citizen	48%	41%	46%	55%	57%	53%	38%
Commitment to the local community	47%	39%	47%	54%	57%	53%	35%
Being a well-run company	47%	40%	45%	53%	59%	52%	33%
Communicates its values and long-term commitments	43%	40%	40%	49%	53%	47%	34%
Building customer confidence and trust in how it operates	41%	35%	39%	48%	52%	48%	29%
Providing good value for the price	30%	24%	29%	34%	38%	33%	20%
Average	49%	41%	47%	55%	58%	52%	39%



Base:
Q2.

Varies by indicator

Please rate Liberty in the following areas by using a 5-point scale with 5 being "Very Satisfied" and 1 being "Very Dissatisfied".



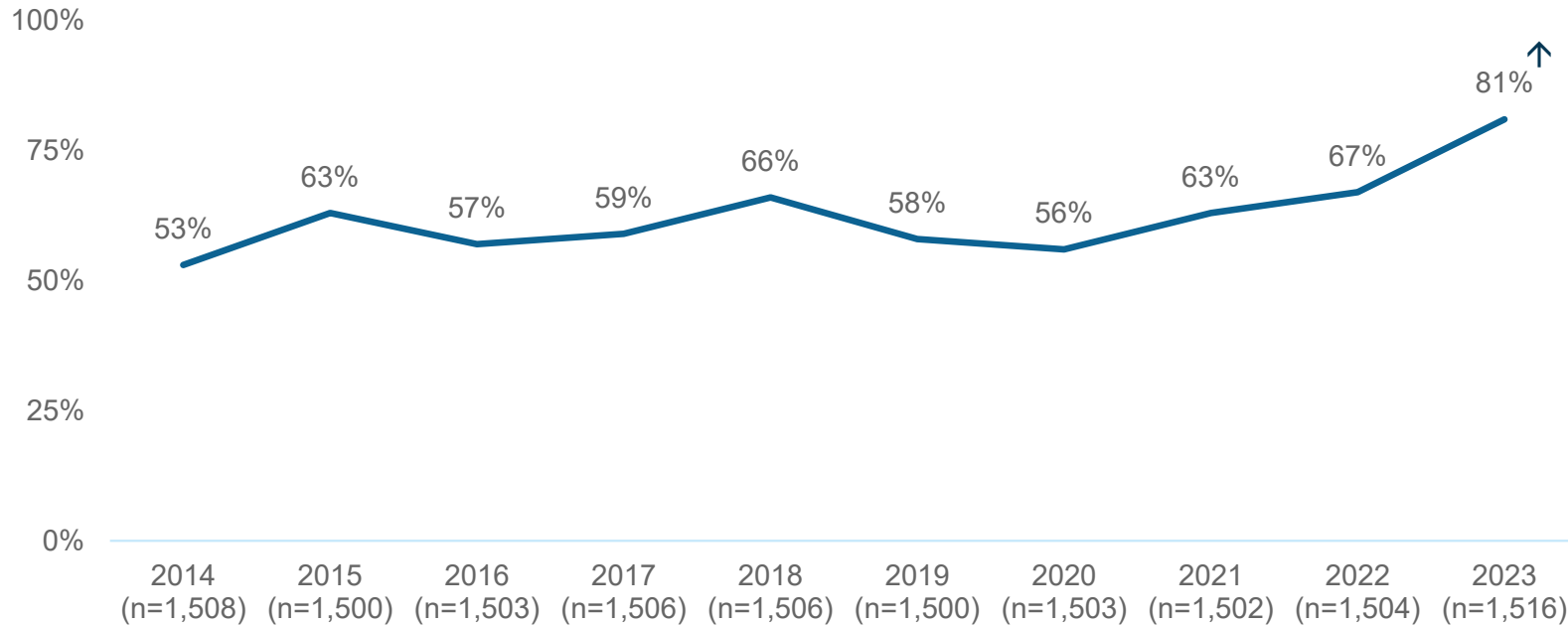


Contacting Liberty

Contacting Customer Service

- Four in five Liberty customers contacted the company in the past year, a significant increase since 2022 and the highest contact level measured since tracking began.
- A large majority of customers in all age groups contacted Liberty, with those younger than 45 being the most likely to do so.

Contacted Liberty in Past 12 Months



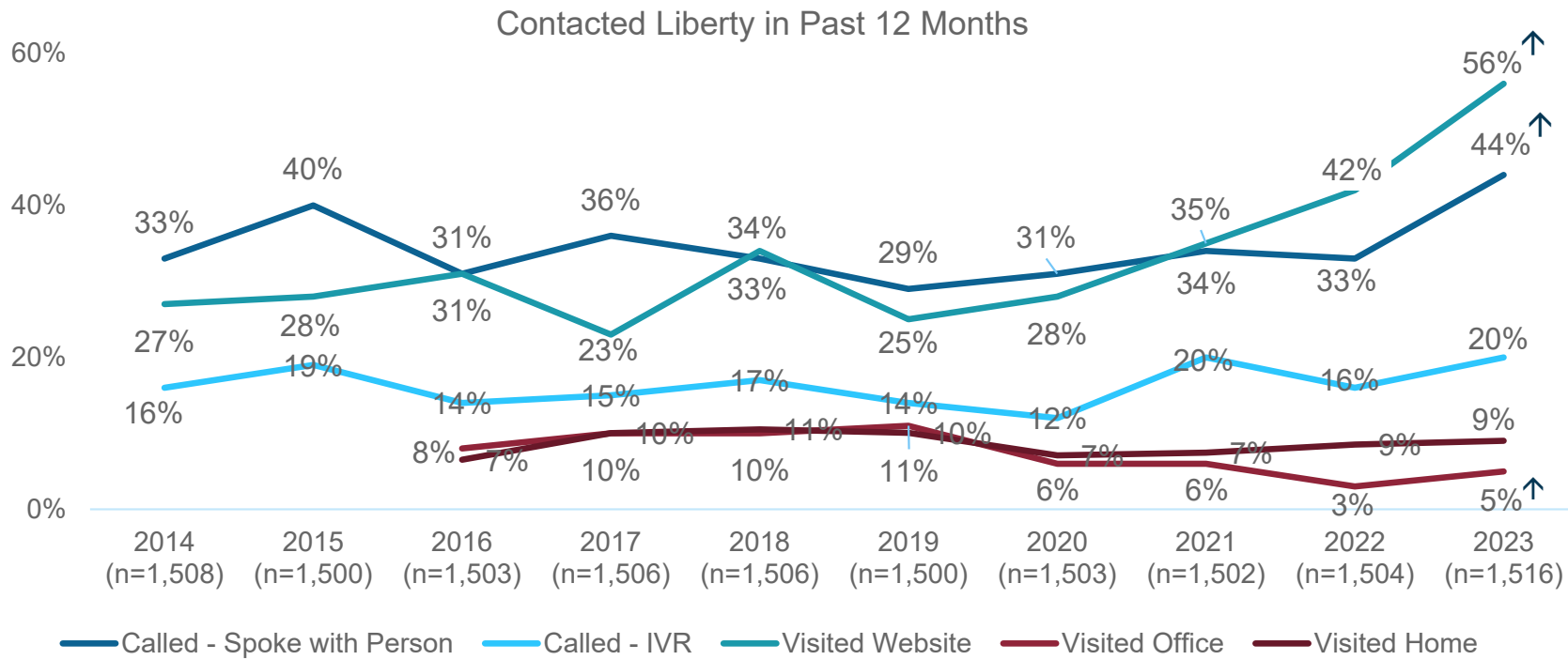
2023 Contact by Age	
<45	87%
45-64	83%
65+	75%

↑/↓ Indicates score is significantly higher/lower than 2022
 Bases: <45 years of age (n=343), 45-64 years of age (n=576), 65+ years of age (n=597)
 Q6z Which of the following have you done in the past year? Please select all that apply.



Contacting Customer Service

- The most common ways customers contact Liberty are by visiting the website and calling and speaking with a representative. Usage of the website for customer service has doubled since 2020.



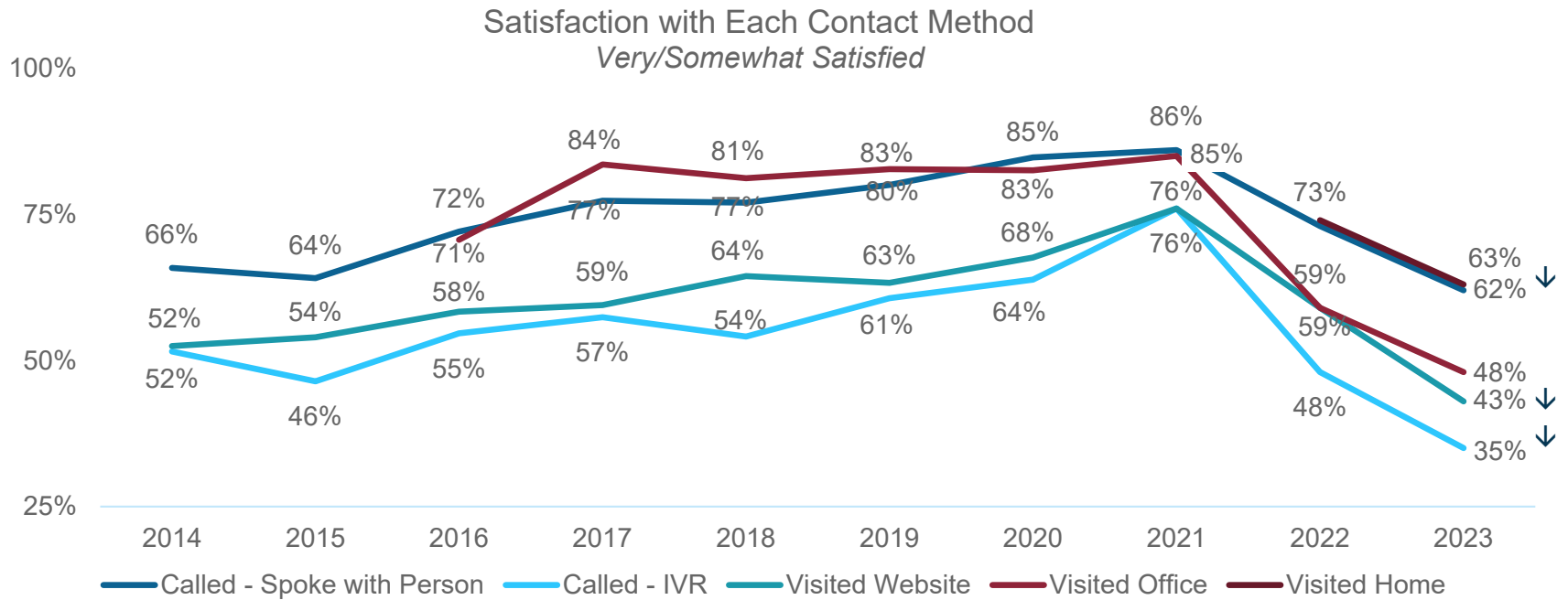
↑/↓
Q6z
Q6x

Indicates score is significantly higher/lower than 2022
 Which of the following have you done in the past year? Please select all that apply.
 When you called Liberty in the past year, did you...?



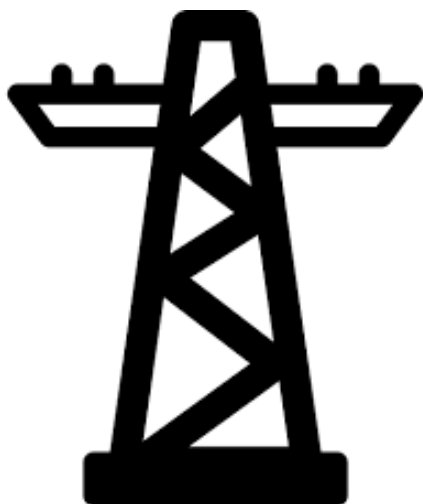
Satisfaction with Contact Method

- Satisfaction levels for three of the five types of contact dropped significantly this year – calling and speaking with a person, visiting the website and calling and using IVR.
- Satisfaction remains highest for home visitation and calling and speaking with a Liberty representative.



↑/↓ Indicates score is significantly higher/lower than 2022
 Base: Varies by contact method and year
 Q6y Overall, how satisfied are you with your experience with each of the following?

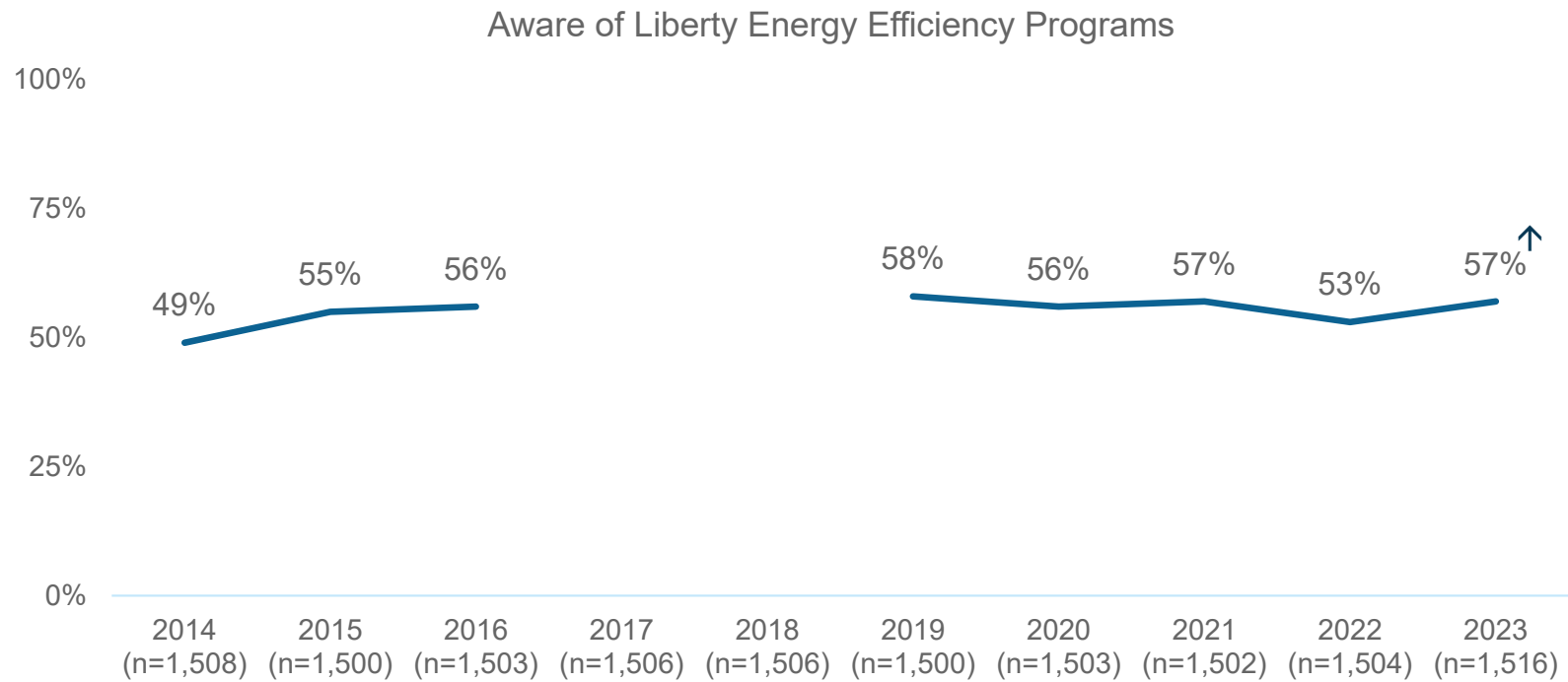




Energy Efficiency Programs

Awareness of Energy Efficiency Programs

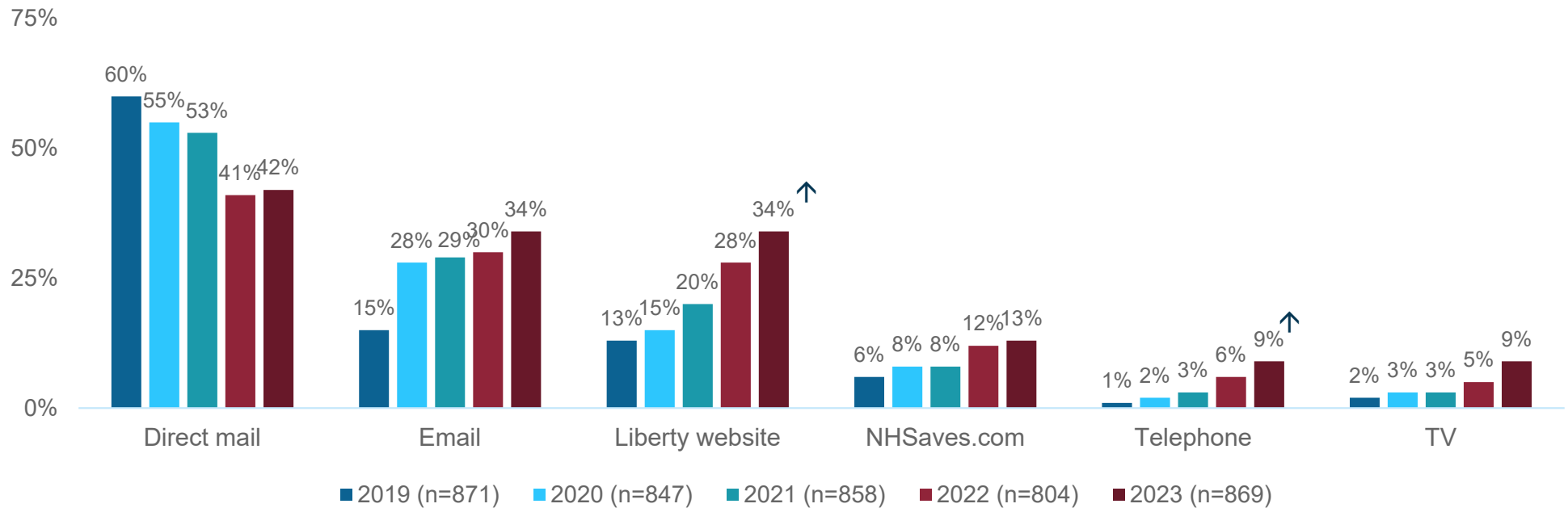
- Awareness of Liberty energy efficiency programs bumped up this year, to 57%.
- Since 2015, awareness has remained very stable, between 55% and 58%, aside from 2022.

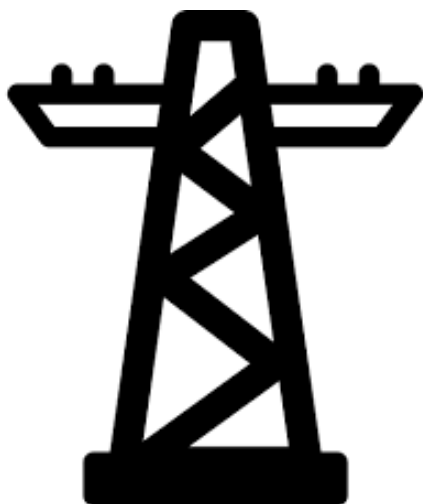


Source of Awareness

- Awareness of Liberty energy efficiency programs has been shifting from direct mail to electronic sources, although mail remains the single strongest source (especially among customers 65 and older). One-third of customers aware of Liberty energy efficiency programs heard about them via email or the website.

How Heard About Liberty’s Energy Efficiency Programs





Appendix

Demographics

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
	n=1500	n=1503	n=1506	n=1506	n=1500	n=1503	n=1502	n=1504	n=1516
Gender									
Male	45%	46%	46%	50%	51%	50%	50%	49%	48%
Female	55%	54%	54%	50%	49%	50%	49%	49%	50%
Age									
18-34	11%	15%	11%	8%	5%	10%	14%	9%	8%
35-44	11%	13%	11%	12%	8%	13%	18%	17%	15%
45-54	18%	15%	17%	15%	14%	15%	16%	18%	15%↓
55-64	24%	23%	23%	26%	27%	21%	19%	22%	23%
65+	37%	33%	38%	40%	45%	41%	34%	33%	39%↑
Household Income									
<\$50,000	31%	22%	28%	21%	25%	21%	22%	18%	16%
\$50,000-\$74,999	14%	17%	16%	14%	15%	17%	16%	16%	15%
\$75,000-\$99,999	11%	10%	10%	13%	12%	13%	15%	14%	14%
\$100,000+	16%	20%	14%	22%	19%	17%	19%	25%	26%
Prefer not to say	28%	31%	28%	30%	29%	32%	28%	26%	29%

Demographics

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
	n=1500	n=1503	n=1506	n=1506	n=1500	n=1503	n=1502	n=1504	n=1516
Ethnicity									
White/Caucasian	86%	85%	85%	83%	83%	83%	80%	79%	80%
Other ethnicities	8%	7%	6%	8%	7%	8%	10%	9%	8%
Prefer not to say	8%	8%	9%	9%	10%	9%	10%	12%	12%
Educational Level									
High school or less	22%	18%	23%	17%	21%	16%	17%	21%	18%
Some college	26%	26%	29%	30%	30%	27%	29%	27%	22% ↓
College graduate	21%	23%	17%	20%	20%	22%	21%	20%	23%
Graduate school	25%	27%	24%	27%	23%	26%	25%	23%	28% ↑
Prefer not to say	7%	6%	7%	6%	6%	9%	8%	9%	9%
Children in Household									
Children under 18	21%	23%	19%	23%	17%	21%	28%	32%	26% ↓

Demographics

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
	n=1500	n=1503	n=1506	n=1506	n=1500	n=1503	n=1502	n=1504	n=1516
Own or Rent Home									
Own	79%	73%	77%	83%	81%	76%	71%	78%	80%
Rent	20%	26%	21%	16%	18%	22%	27%	20%	19%
Prefer not to say	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%
Type of Home									
Single-family	79%	76%	77%	82%	79%	76%	73%	80%	81%
Multi-family	19%	21%	20%	16%	17%	20%	23%	16%	16%
Other/Don't know	2%	3%	3%	2%	4%	4%	4%	4%	3%

Liberty Utilities (Granite State Electric) Corp. d/b/a Liberty

DE 23-039
Distribution Service Rate Case

Department of Energy Technical Session Data Requests - Set 2

Date Request Received: 11/3/23
Request No: DOE TS 2-60

Date of Response: 11/20/23
Respondent: Erica Menard

REQUEST:

Reference Tariff, Bates Page III-141, Deposits. The 1200 rules were re-promulgated in 2020, and the deposit rule was changed. Please update the below to be consistent with the provisions of 1203.03.

6. Deposits, Payments, Refusal or Discontinuance of Service

The Company, to protect against loss, may require a satisfactory cash deposit or other guarantee as a condition of new or continuing service. No deposit shall be less than ten (10) dollars nor more than the estimated charge for utility service for a period of two (2) high-use billings periods, exclusive of the highest-use billing period, and calculated pursuant to New Hampshire Administrative Rules Puc 1203.03(1)(1). The Customer shall have the opportunity to pay the deposit in three (3) equal monthly installments, with the first payment due immediately, the second payment due within thirty (30) days and the final payment due within sixty (60) days, provided that the first payment shall be for no more than the charge for one month's utility service calculated as provided in Puc 1203(1)(1)(b); and the second and third payments shall be in equal installments of the remainder due.

RESPONSE:

Please see the edited language below. Changes are italicized and bolded. The Company will include these revisions in its compliance tariff.

6. Deposits, Payments, Refusal or Discontinuance of Service

The Company, to protect against loss, may require a satisfactory cash deposit or other guarantee as a condition of new or continuing service. No deposit shall be less than ten (10) dollars nor more than the estimated charge for utility service for a period of two (2) high-use billings periods, exclusive of the highest-use billing period, and calculated pursuant to New Hampshire Administrative Rules Puc 1203.03(*m*)(1). The Customer shall have the opportunity to pay the deposit in three (3) equal monthly installments, with the first payment due immediately, the second payment due within thirty (30) days and the final payment due within sixty (60) days, provided that the first payment shall be for no more than the *average monthly bill* for utility service calculated as provided in Puc

Docket No. DE 23-039 Request No. DOE TS 2-60

1203(*m*)(*II*); and the second and third payments shall be in equal installments of the remainder due.

Liberty Utilities (Granite State Electric) Corp. d/b/a Liberty

DE 23-039
Distribution Service Rate Case

Department of Energy Technical Session Data Requests - Set 2

Date Request Received: 11/3/23
Request No: DOE TS 2-62

Date of Response: 11/20/23
Respondent: Erica Menard

REQUEST:

Reference Tariff, Bates Page III-163, System Benefits Charge

40. System Benefits Charge

All customers taking delivery service shall pay the System Benefits Charge as required by New Hampshire law and approved by the Commission. The System Benefits Charge shall recover the cost of the Company's (i) Electric Assistance Program and (ii) energy efficiency core programs and any other such energy efficiency programs, as approved by the Commission. The Company shall implement its Electric Assistance Program as approved by the Commission from time to time. The System Benefits Charge will fund the Company's Electric Assistance Program and such other system benefits as are required by law or approved by the Commission.

The Company will reconcile on an annual basis actual costs incurred of the Electric Assistance Program, including development, implementation, and ongoing administrative and maintenance costs against the actual amounts charged to customers through the portion of the System Benefits Charge attributable to the Electric Assistance Program, set at a level of 0.150¢ per kilowatt-hour in accordance with RSA 374-F:4, VIII (c), and shall be in addition to the portion of the System Benefits Charge relating to the Company's energy efficiency core programs stated below.

Liberty submits a budget for the EAP on or before August 1, 2023, for any incremental costs associated with the administration of the EAP. The above language included in the tariff is inconsistent with the EAP budget process as there is currently no reconciliation of costs. Please explain how the language proposed in the Company's tariff is consistent with current EAP processes.

RESPONSE:

Please see below for proposed revised language regarding the EAP budgeting process. The Company acknowledges there is no reconciliation process. Changes are italicized and bolded and will be included in the Company's tariff compliance filing in this proceeding.

40. System Benefits Charge

All customers taking delivery service shall pay the System Benefits Charge as required by New Hampshire law and approved by the Commission. The System Benefits Charge shall recover the cost of the Company's (i) Electric Assistance Program and (ii) energy efficiency core programs and any other such energy efficiency programs, as approved by the Commission. The Company shall implement its Electric Assistance Program as approved by the Commission from time to time. The System Benefits Charge will fund the Company's Electric Assistance Program and such other system benefits as are required by law or approved by the Commission.

The Company will file on an annual basis *a budget of anticipated costs to be* incurred of the Electric Assistance Program, including development, implementation, and ongoing administrative and maintenance costs *to be charged* to customers through the portion of the System Benefits Charge attributable to the Electric Assistance Program, set at a level of 0.150¢ per kilowatt-hour in accordance with RSA 374-F:4, VIII (c), and shall be in addition to the portion of the System Benefits Charge relating to the Company's energy efficiency core programs stated below.

Liberty Utilities (Granite State Electric) Corp. d/b/a Liberty

DE 23-039
Distribution Service Rate Case

Department of Energy Technical Session Data Requests - Set 2

Date Request Received: 11/3/23
Request No: DOE TS 2-63

Date of Response: 11/20/23
Respondent: Erica Menard

REQUEST:

Reference Tariff, Bates Page III-161, Electricity Consumption Tax (ECT). The ECT was repealed in 2019. Leaving reference in the tariff to a tax that no longer exists will likely be confusing for customers. Please explain how the Company will ensure clarity for its customers.

RESPONSE:

The Company will remove this language from the tariff to avoid confusion since this charge is no longer applicable.

Liberty Utilities (Granite State Electric) Corp. d/b/a Liberty

DE 23-039
Distribution Service Rate Case

Department of Energy Technical Session Data Requests - Set 2

Date Request Received: 11/3/23
Request No: DOE TS 2-64

Date of Response: 11/20/23
Respondent: Erica Menard

REQUEST:

Reference Tariff, Bates Page III-167, Electric Assistance Program. The language in the tariff is out of date and should be revised to reflect the revised tariff language filed by Liberty on September 9, 2023 in DE 23-073. In addition to the changes made in that tariff filing, references to the electricity consumption tax and water heater rental fee should be deleted as should the sentence that states effective April 27, 2014, the income eligibility for participation in the EAP is at or below 200% of the FPG.

Please indicate whether the Company will refile the tariff to reflect the revised tariff language filed by Liberty on September 9, 2023, in DE 23-073, as well as removing the other references identified above.

RESPONSE:

The Company will revise its tariff to accommodate the revised tariff language in DE 23-073, remove the electricity consumption tax and the water heater rental fee language. The EAP income eligibility will also be edited to reflect the most recent changes.

Liberty Utilities (Granite State Electric) Corp. d/b/a Liberty

DE 23-039
Distribution Service Rate Case

Department of Energy Technical Session Data Requests - Set 2

Date Request Received: 11/3/23
Request No: DOE TS 2-65

Date of Response: 11/20/23
Respondent: Erica Menard

REQUEST:

Reference Tariff, Bates Page III-176, Off-cycle meter reads. Please indicate whether the Company would clarify this section of its tariff to make sure customers are aware that this provision is intended for an individual customer not a block of customers.

RESPONSE:

The Company will add language to this section to clarify that the provision is only applicable to individual customers, and not a block of customers.