

ACSI[®], Research, and Other Updates

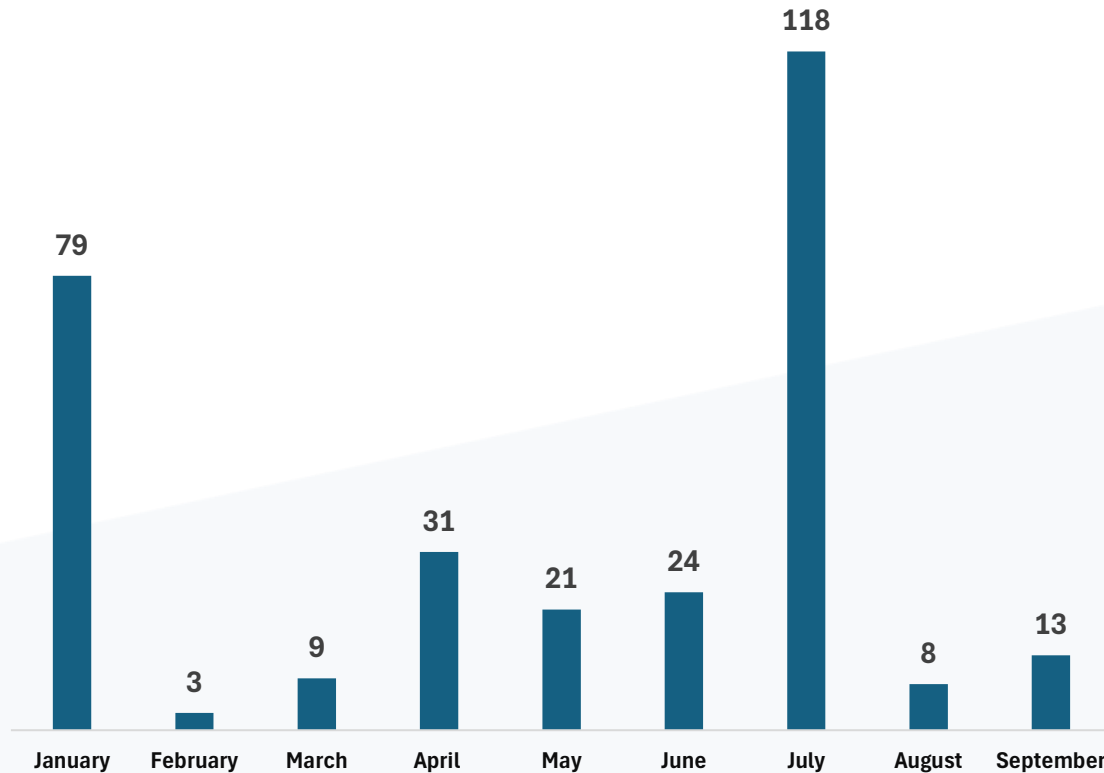
Research Schedule 2026

Time Frame	Publish	Item	Objective	Research Partner	Data Collection Period
Q1	March	ACSI Recap Report	Annual ACSI Trends	ACSI	2025
Q2	April	Broadband Internet Services	Member Perspectives	CFI Group/ACSI	February 2026
	June	Home Buying in the Energy Transition	Sponsored Study	SECC	Completed
Q3	August	Gen Z	Member Perspectives	CFI Group/ACSI	June 2026
	August	Exploring Energy Affordability	Sponsored Study	SECC	April-May 2026
	August	Cooperative Advantage Report	National Survey	CFI Group/ACSI	April-June 2026
	October	Community Engagement	Member Perspectives	CFI Group/ACSI	August 2026
Q4	October	Analyzing Rate Choices: Implications for Consumer Behavior	Sponsored Study	SECC	April-May 2026
	TBD	Member Satisfaction and Engagement	Member Perspectives	CFI Group/ACSI	October 2026



ACSI® Trends: 2026 (Jan. – Sept.)

- Between January 1 and September 30, 2026, **306 scores** across over **220 co-ops** were received for energy utility services.
- 17 new users**, that is, co-ops and affiliates that have either never received an ACSI score or not since / before 2018



Questline Selection for Q4 (2026)

October 2026

Residential

- Are You Wasting Energy at Night?
- Ward Off Energy Vampires in Your Home*
- Fall Home Maintenance: A Checklist

Business

- 6 Frightening Forms of Energy Waste

November 2026

Residential

- 5 Ways to Save While Staying Warm*
- Crank Up the Savings on Your Heating This Winter
- Changing Your HVAC Filter: Do's and Don't's*

Business

- Optimizing Operations: Heating Systems

December 2026

Residential

- 4 Ways to Reduce Your Energy Bills This Winter*
- 5 Ways to Save While Decorating for the Holidays*
- Portable Space Heaters: Using Them Safely*

Business

- 6 Winter Storm Preparations Your Business Should Make

*available for all Touchstone Energy® member cooperatives to embed content & request newsfeed on SHiNE website

Upcoming Questline Webinars

<i>Webinar Title</i>	<i>Date</i>
A Battery of Choices: Energy Storage	Tuesday, October 13, 2026 at 2pm Eastern



Member Satisfaction Measurement & Benchmarking Services

Member Satisfaction Research Packages



Member Benefit *Included with Dues*



Premium Reporting & Benchmarking Service

SERVICES	ANNUAL	SEMI-ANNUAL	QUARTERLY	ANNUAL	SEMI-ANNUAL	QUARTERLY
ACSI Score/s Per Year	1	2	4	1	2	4
ACSI Level 2 Report	—	✓	✓	—	✓	✓
National Cooperative Advantage Report	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Local Cooperative Advantage Report	—	—	—	✓	✓	✓
Custom Questions (up to 5)	—	—	—	—	—	✓
Annual Benchmarking Report	—	—	—	—	✓	✓
Quarterly Benchmarking Report	—	—	—	✓	✓	✓
Turn-key Survey Distribution	—	—	—	✓	✓	✓
Total Fees	FREE	FREE	FREE	\$5,000	\$6,500	\$9,500

<https://www.touchstoneenergy.com/member-satisfaction-measurement-benchmarking>

Measurement & Benchmarking Services

Member Benefit Research Packages

Included with Touchstone Energy membership.

- Up to four ACSI Scores per year
- Detailed ACSI Level 2 reporting
- National Cooperative Advantage Report

Premium Reporting & Benchmarking Services

Receive all of the member benefits, AND:

- Local Cooperative Advantage Report
- Custom Survey Questions
- Annual Benchmarking Report
- Quarterly Benchmarking Reports
- Turn-key Survey Distribution

Learning & Leadership Center



[Who We Are](#) ▾

[Member-Owner Resources](#) ▾

[Co-op Quick Links](#) ▾

[Become a Member](#) ▾

[Find Your Co-op](#)



LEARNING & LEADERSHIP CENTER



On-Demand



Virtual



In-Person

Touchstone Energy's Learning and Leadership Center empowers co-ops employee's with on-demand, virtual and in-person learning.

Continual learning fosters high employee engagement, talent retention, career growth and elevates Service Excellence to colleagues and member-owners. Our comprehensive



On-Demand

Who We Are ▾

Member-Owner Resources ▾



Virtual

Co-op Quick Links ▾

Become a Member ▾



In-Person

Find Your Co-op



Touchstone Energy's Learning and Leadership Center empowers co-ops employee's with on-demand, virtual and in-person learning.

Continual learning fosters high employee engagement, talent retention, career growth and elevates Service Excellence to colleagues and member-owners. Our comprehensive resources help cultivate marketing, communications, member service and business relationship skills and empowers the next generation of leaders. Take a look at the different ways to learn below or [view all resources now](#).

Upcoming Events and Featured Resources

**SHiNE Town Hall: Thursday, August 20 at
2 PM ET (Webinar)**



**Questline Webinar: Hidden Energy Costs
Sept. 15 at 2:00 PM ET**



**LinkedIn Learning: AI Role Play to
Practice Tough Conversations**



**Save the Date for NEXT 2027: February 1
- 3 (Amelia Island, Florida)**



Published and Pending Studies

Member Perspectives: Gen Z

Touchstone Energy®

Member Perspectives Report Gen Z Q2 2026



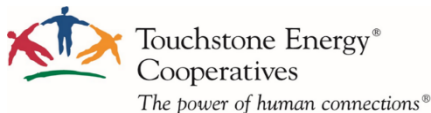
Member Perspectives Methodology Overview

- Survey results were collected from 05/18/2026 through 06/15/2026.
- A total of **4 cooperatives** participated in the Q2 study to collect the perspectives of Gen Z members and/or those living in a member's household.
- To collect survey responses, a screener survey was first sent to determine eligibility. Eligible participants had to be between the ages of 18 and 30 years of age. There were no other eligibility requirements. Members who were contacted but did not meet the age criteria were encouraged to forward the invitation to members of their household within that age range. Anyone who indicated having an immediate family member currently employed by the local cooperative was screened out of the survey.
- From the screener survey, email invitations were sent to all respondents from each cooperative by CFI Group for the full survey. Reminder emails and additional emails were later sent to increase response rate. Respondents to the full survey received one \$20 prepaid card as an incentive for their participation.
- A total of **37 responses** were collected as follows:
 - Boone Power: 16
 - Middle Tennessee Electric (MTE): 7
 - Sioux Valley Electric: 11
 - The Energy Cooperative: 3

Key Findings

- Overall, Gen Z members lack familiarity with electric cooperatives and more specifically with the principles that set them apart from other types of electric utilities.
 - › This lack of familiarity may help explain the low ratings younger members provide of how well their cooperative is upholding the Seven Cooperative Principles in the 2026 Cooperative Advantage Survey.
- Understanding of the member/owner relationship also seems to be limited among this member segment, reflected in this qualitative study and even more pronounced in the results of the 2026 Cooperative Advantage Study.
 - › Based on the 2026 Cooperative Advantage Study, 20% of 18-34 year-old members identify as member/owners as compared to 44% of those 35+.
- Just over half of the 37 Gen Z respondents express some level of agreement that electric utilities should provide more than just power.
 - › However, 25 of 37 (68%) say they would choose a primarily transactional type relationship where they pay a bill and receive a service over a more collaborative one where the utility offers opportunities for input and involvement in the community.
 - › In terms of their expectations, there appears to be a strong emphasis on affordability, reliability and transparency, though educating customers, providing programs/services, promoting sustainability or clean energy and supporting the local community are also expectations mentioned by many.
 - › When asked about the qualities of an ideal electric utility, reliable electric service (89%) and easy-to-understand billing and pricing (70%) are the most commonly mentioned qualities.
 - › The largest number of respondents (21 of 37, or 57%) indicated their desired level of involvement with cooperative activities would be slightly involved, saying occasional updates are enough.

Note: Age ranges used in the Cooperative Advantage Study did not isolate the Gen Z age range used in the qualitative study (18-30). The most comparable age range reported was 18-34.



Key Findings

- Consistent with feedback that they are only seeking to be slightly involved with their cooperatives, reported participation in annual meetings and board elections was very limited. Newsletter readership was higher but still reported by less than half of the respondents.
 - › About one-quarter of respondents report not having read the newsletter or participated in the annual meeting and that they are not likely to in the future.
 - › Just over half (51% - 19 of 37) of respondents say they have not voted in board elections but would consider doing so in the future.
 - › While 38% (14 of 37) of respondents indicated they would be interested in attending cooperative events other than the annual meeting, only one respondent has actually attended one, and 32% (12 of 37) say they are not interested.
 - › Interestingly, data from the 2026 Cooperative Advantage Study shows that the ACSI score and outreach performance ratings among members 18-34 are notably lower compared to those 35+. The largest disparity in the outreach ratings was in efforts to support the local community and relevancy of co-op magazine content.
- According to respondents, the top areas of interest in terms of energy information include how to reduce my energy use and lower my bill (68%), program rebates or financial incentives available to me (51%), and outages reliability and what to expect during service interruptions (41%).
- Awareness and participation in community engagement programs is very limited.
- Renewable energy and energy efficiency programs appear to be of greater interest to Gen Z members than electric vehicles.

Implications and Recommendations

- Findings from this small qualitative sample suggest that many Gen Z members have limited familiarity with electric cooperatives, the cooperative principles, and the member-owner relationship. This lack of understanding may make it more difficult for younger members to recognize the value of cooperative-specific benefits and distinguish their cooperative from other utility providers.
 - › Consider integrating cooperative education into communications that address topics already relevant to younger members, such as affordability, reliability, sustainability, and community impact. Connecting cooperative concepts to tangible member benefits may help make the cooperative model more meaningful and accessible.
- While some respondents expressed interest in utilities providing services beyond electricity, the findings suggest that many Gen Z members view their relationship with the cooperative primarily through the lens of reliable service, affordable rates, and clear communication. Interest in governance and formal participation appears more limited.
 - › Rather than focusing exclusively on participation opportunities, cooperatives may benefit from emphasizing how member ownership contributes to outcomes that younger members value, including transparency, accountability, service quality, and long-term affordability.
- Responses suggest that many Gen Z members prefer lower-effort forms of engagement, with occasional updates viewed more favorably than active involvement in meetings, elections, or governance activities. This may indicate a preference for staying informed rather than actively participating.
 - › Explore communication and engagement strategies that require minimal time commitment, such as concise digital content, brief feedback opportunities, and targeted updates delivered through channels frequently used by younger audiences.

Implications and Recommendations

- Although based on a limited sample, interest appears strongest around practical and forward-looking topics such as renewable energy, energy efficiency, affordability, and sustainability. These topics may have greater relevance to younger members than communications focused primarily on governance or organizational structure.
 - › Consider using these areas of interest as entry points for engagement efforts. Educational content, programs, and communications tied to energy savings, renewable energy, and community impact may provide opportunities to increase awareness while reinforcing the cooperative's broader value proposition.
- Taken together, the findings suggest that the challenge may not be a lack of interest among younger members, but rather a disconnect between what cooperatives traditionally emphasize and the topics younger members find most relevant.
 - › Given the exploratory nature of this research and the small sample size (n=37), these findings should be viewed as directional rather than representative. Future research with a larger sample could help validate these themes and identify the most effective strategies for engaging younger members.

SECC: Exploring Energy Affordability

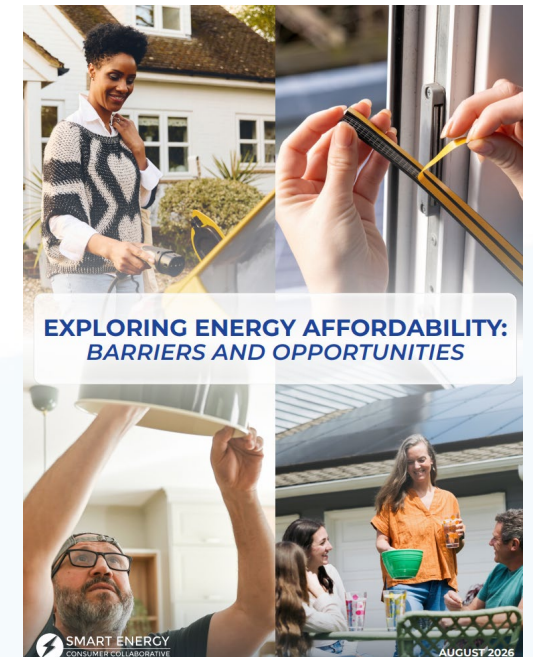
Published Study: Exploring Energy Affordability: Barriers and Opportunities

Co-sponsored by Touchstone Energy, this SECC report examines affordability among US energy consumers and finds that affordability stress “is not confined to low-income households, and a one-size-fits-all strategy leaves most customers underserved.”

Four strategic imperatives emerge for providers:

- 1) Build a multi-tier affordability strategy rather than a single program
- 2) Turn every bill into an enrollment opportunity while supplementing it with other channels
- 3) Simplify access and consider auto-enrollment programs, especially for the households that need it most
- 4) Proactively educate customers on what actually drives their bill.

Providers who act on these findings have an opportunity to convert a source of customer frustration into a foundation of trust.



2026 Cooperative Advantage Report

Touchstone Energy®

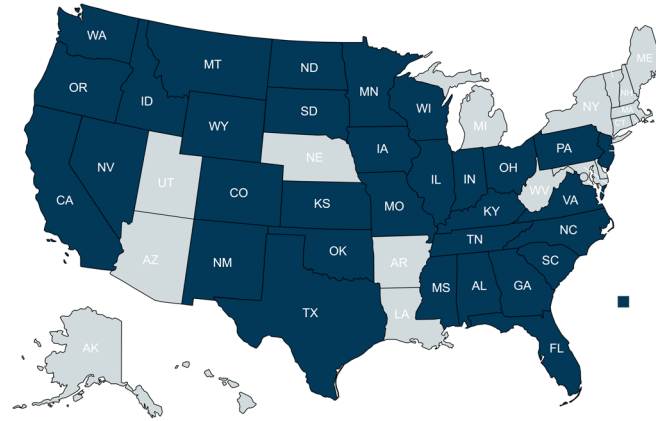
The Cooperative Advantage Report 2026 National Edition



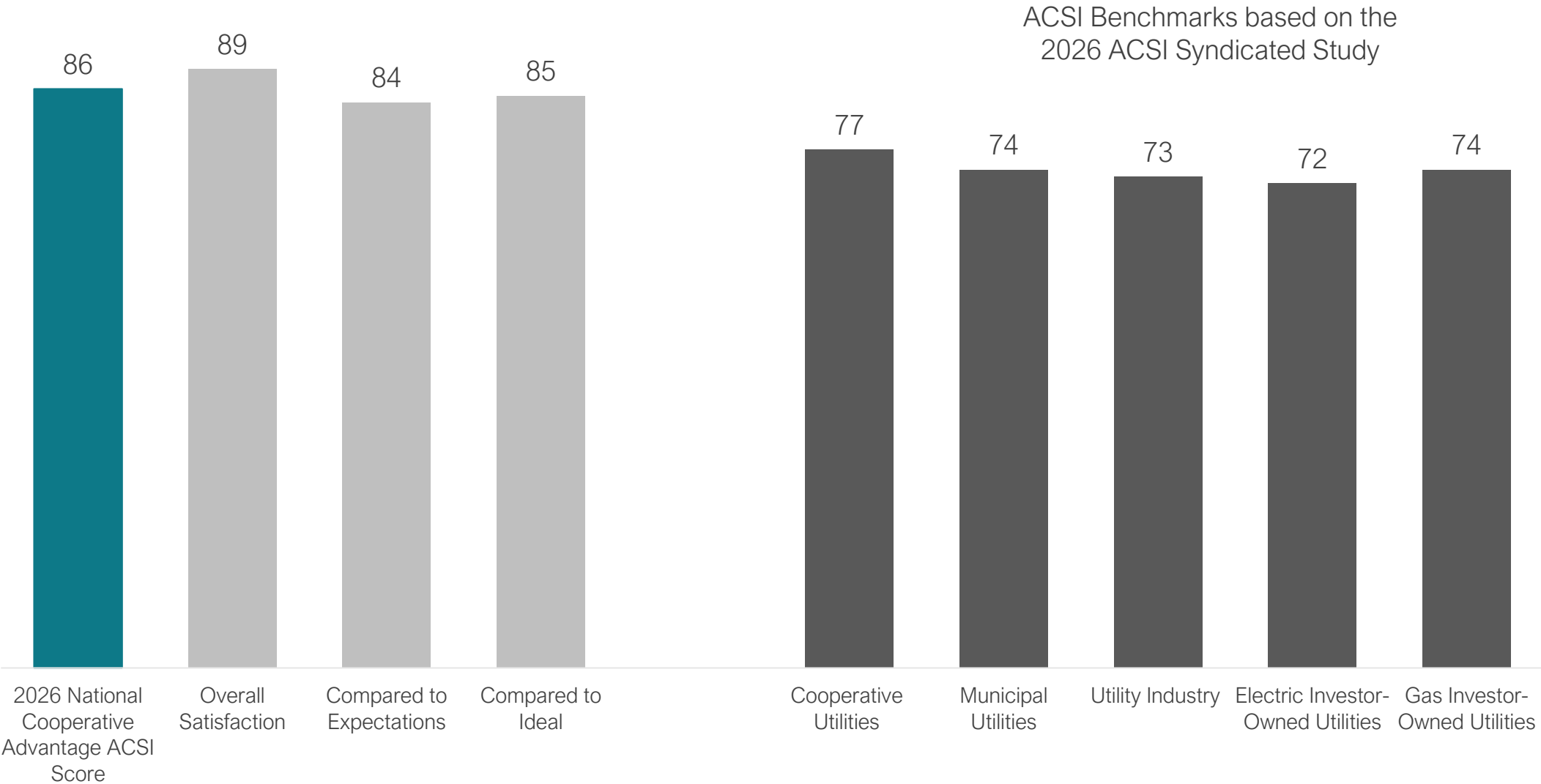
Regional and National Participation

Responses Received

- A total of 70 cooperatives participated in 32 states across the country. Cooperatives from each of the four U.S. Census Bureau regions as follows:
 - Midwest = 25 (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin)
 - Northeast = 4 (New Jersey, Pennsylvania)
 - South = 31 (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia)
 - West = 10 (California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Washington and Wyoming)
- Most participants reside in the South, totaling **7,628** responses. The fewest responses came from the Northeast with only 1,857 participants.
- Some states drew more participating members than others: Texas posted **2,891** responses, comprising **16%** of the total sample. An additional **8% (1,359)** came from Pennsylvania, **6% (1,133)** from Georgia, and **6% (1,049)** from Illinois.
- On June 10th of 2026, the Study closed with **17,539** responses. The number of responses and geographic reach makes year 2 of the Cooperative Advantage Survey among the largest cooperative-exclusive satisfaction surveys in the country.

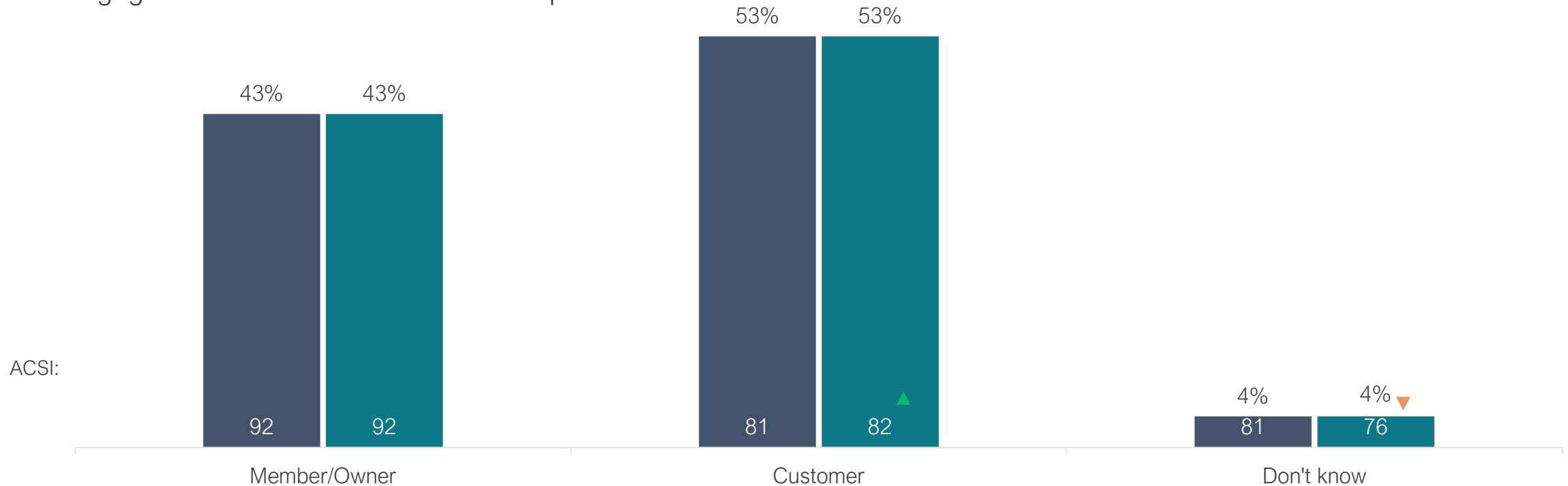


2026 National Cooperative Advantage ACSI Score



ACSI Scores by Member Identity

- Unchanged compared to last year, about four in ten (43%) of members think of themselves as Member/Owners, leaving more than half of members either considering themselves customers (53%) or unsure (4%).
- Although the ACSI score among respondents who identified themselves as customers improved one point to 82 in 2026, it remains 10 points below the ACSI score among those who identify as members.
- Satisfaction among respondents not knowing the member or customer status dropped 5 points, providing an opportunity for engagement and education on the cooperative business model.



■ 2025
(n = 11,458)

■ 2026
(n = 17,539)
26

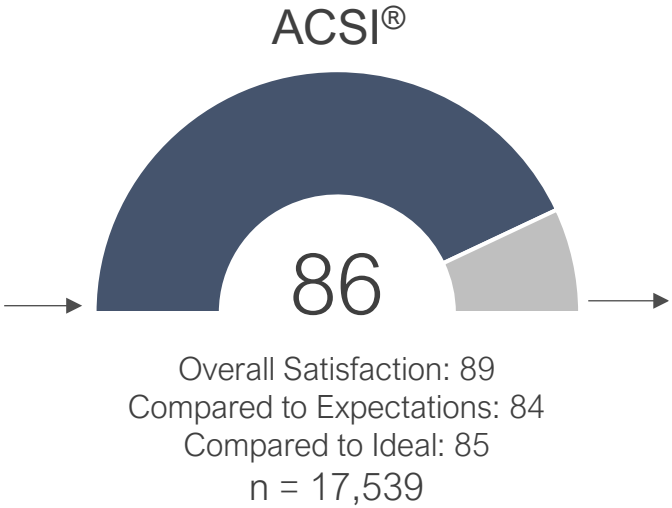
▲ ▼ Indicates score change is significant at 90% confidence

* Scores flagged where sample size < 30
Interpret results with caution

Cooperative Advantage Model Scores, Industry Impacts

Satisfaction Drivers

85	1.8	Outreach
86	1.8	Call Center Satisfaction
91	1.6	Service Reliability
89	1.5	Website Satisfaction Index
93	0.9	Billing and Payment
90	0.0	Call Center Representatives



Future Behaviors

Likelihood to Recommend	4.9	88
Likelihood to Speak Positively about Cooperative	4.8	89
Likelihood to Choose Again	4.6	87
Likelihood to Return to the Website	1.9	92



Scores represent your performance as rated by customers.



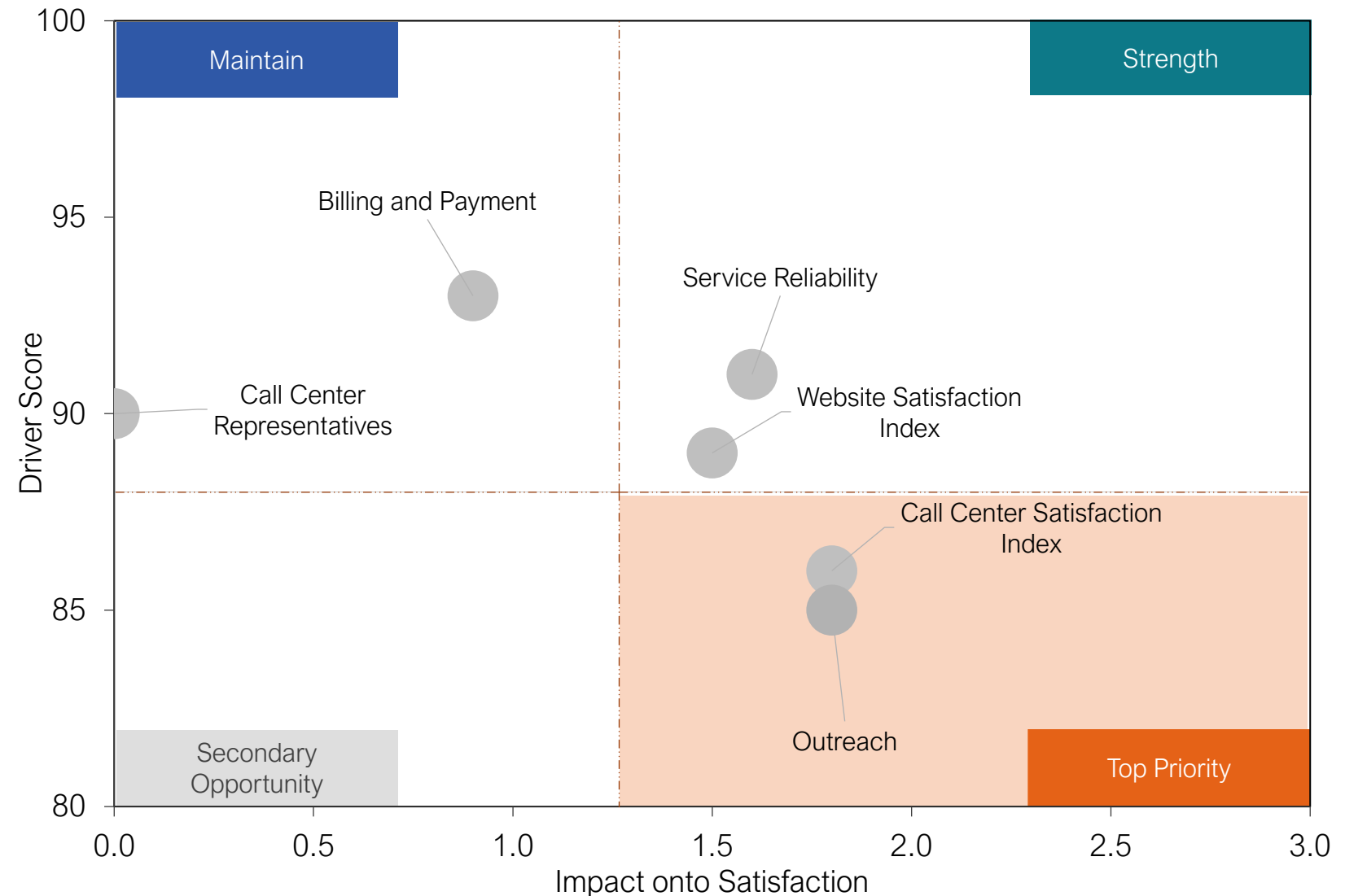
Impacts show you which driver has the most/least leverage – where improvements matter most/least to your customers



Future behavior impacts show the expected change in respondent behavior for every five-point increase (or fraction thereof) in Satisfaction.

Satisfaction Priority Matrix

- Drivers in the **Top Priority** quadrant have a high impact on CSI and a relatively low score. These are the drivers where the organization can achieve significant improvements and see positive changes in customer satisfaction.
- Strengths** are high impact drivers that also have high scores. There is less room for improvement with these drivers than the Top Priorities, however, these drivers have high impact on satisfaction.
- Maintain** identifies high-scoring drivers that do not have high impact on customer satisfaction. Maintaining the already high scores for these drivers is important.
- Secondary Opportunities** are drivers that have low impact on satisfaction and are relatively low scoring.



2027 Cooperative Advantage Report

Survey Questions Focus On These Areas

Service Reliability

Power Outage
Communications

Outreach

Call Center
Satisfaction and
Call Center
Representatives

Website
Satisfaction

Billing and
Payments

Co-op's Operation
Based on Seven
Cooperative
Principles

Member
Satisfaction

2027 Cooperative Advantage Report

Free Participation for All Touchstone Energy® Members

Free ACSI® Score

Receive your co-op's individual ACSI score—on top of the credits included in your Touchstone Energy membership.

Stronger Benchmarking

Compare your results to national peers and regional/national satisfaction trends to identify strengths and opportunities.

Optional Local Insights Package *(fee-based)*

- PowerPoint report with all survey responses
- Two Excel files with demographic & performance-based ACSI breakdowns
- Summary of verbatim member comments

Part of a Major National Study

The 2025 and 2026 surveys were among **the largest cooperative-exclusive satisfaction studies in the United States**—your co-op can be part of this impactful research.

Research Opportunities

Option 1:

Participate in national research and receive national results and an individual ACSI® score

Included in membership

Option 2:

All of the above, plus results for your cooperative

Fee-based

G&Ts and Statewides
Aggregate reports and scores

Fee-based

Cooperative Advantage Sign-Up Form

Sign-Up Information

Touchstone Energy member cooperatives have the exclusive opportunity to participate in the Cooperative Advantage Report. The survey will be conducted by the CFI Group, the research firm that owns and administers the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI®). Each participating cooperative will receive their individual ACSI score and access to the national report at no additional cost. Individual co-op reports and custom reports for G&Ts or Statewide Associations are available for a fee.

All survey data will be collected online only. The data collection period is in Q2 (2027).

The sample size per individual co-op is at least 200 completes by residential member-owners.

Co-op Distributes Survey to Members

Your cooperative receives a unique survey link and you are responsible for distributing the survey link to your member-owners (e.g., via email). Touchstone Energy will provide your co-op with an email template and further guidelines for the distribution of the survey link. This collection option is free to Touchstone Energy member cooperatives.

Touchstone Energy to Distribute Survey to Members

Touchstone Energy will send an email invitation to your member-owners, including the survey link. Your co-op will be responsible for providing a member list of email addresses by **April 16, 2027**. This collection option includes a fee of \$1,000 for the survey distribution and related programming.

FOR DISTRIBUTION COOPERATIVES

If you would like to participate in the Cooperative Advantage Report, please fill out this form **no later than April 2, 2027**.

Cooperative Name As It Should Appear on the Official Survey: *

Data Collection & Report Release

ACSI® will create URL links and QR codes to collect data that goes directly to their database. This ensures accuracy of data collection and is seamless for the cooperative.

Two options for outreach to members:

1. Cooperative distributes the URL links/QR codes to their members. Member outreach templates will be provided. No charge.
2. Provide member list with email addresses to Touchstone Energy to distribute links to cooperative members (fee-based).

Recommendations for optimum sampling will be provided

THE COOPERATIVE ADVANTAGE



National Report Timeline

- Co-ops sign-up has started
- Deadline to sign up April 2, 2027
- Sampling begins on April 26, 2027
- Final Report delivered Q3

Contact Angelika Hoelger for more information
Angelika@touchstoneenergy.coop

The Cooperative Advantage Report 2027

Cooperatives can sign up for the 2027 Cooperative Advantage Report!

Deadline to register is April 2, 2027

<https://www.cooperativeadvantage.coop/cooperative-advantage-report>

