

## Cost of Living in the Northern Territory

Telecommunications July 2021



Around

# 25,000

Territorians still do not have internet or mobile access where they live (excluding satellite services)

### Australian Digital Inclusion Index (ADII)

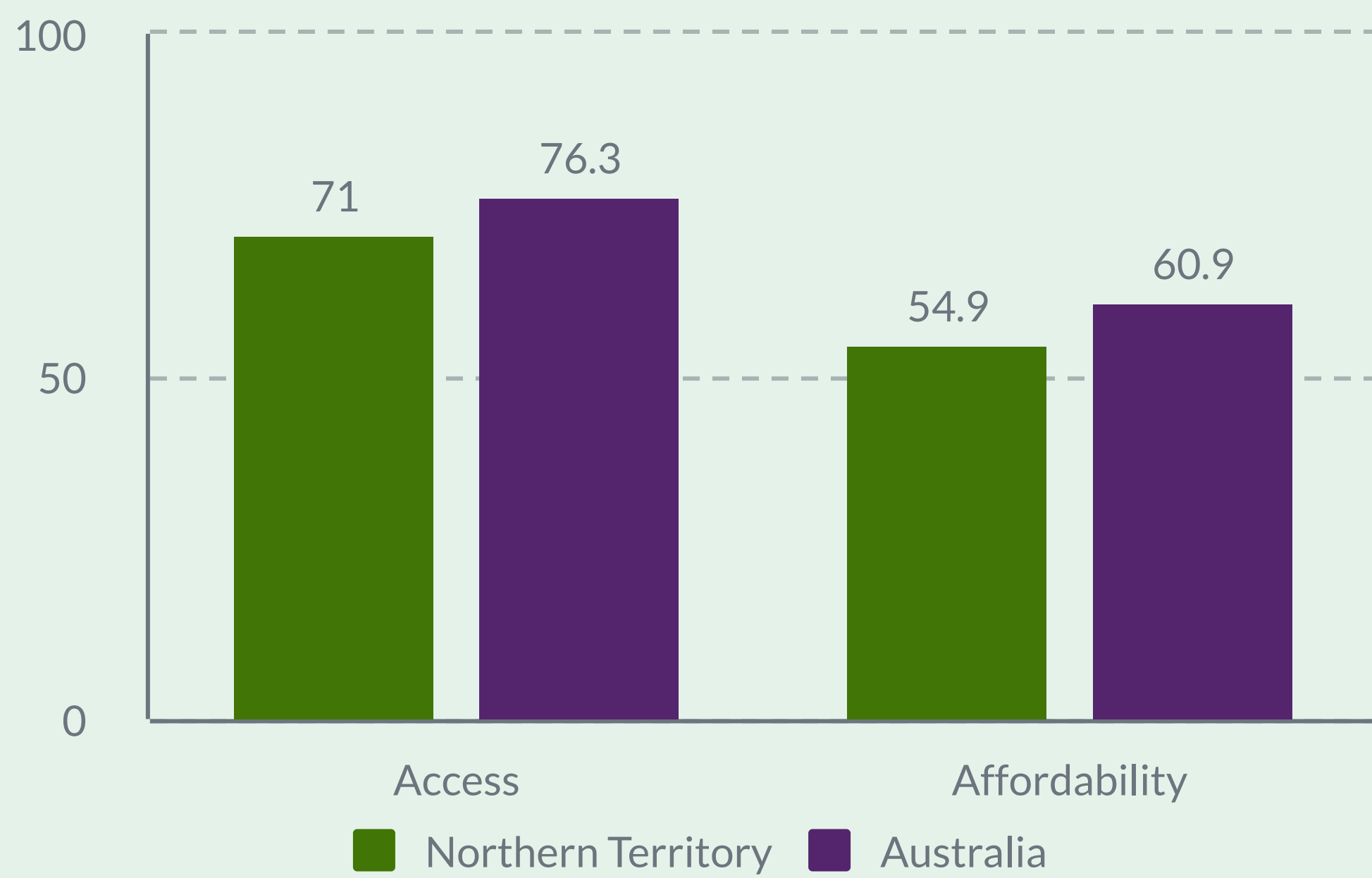
The Australian Digital Inclusion Index (ADII) measures the extent of the digital divide in Australia. Barriers to digital inclusion include access and affordability which can be exacerbated by remoteness, sales and service issues, and disruptions to continuous power supply.

While a very low sample size for the NT means the figures available for the NT are unreliable, the limited data shows the NT performing the worst in the country in terms of both access and affordability.

In the ADII, the lower the score, the greater the digital divide

### Access and Affordability

ADII 2020

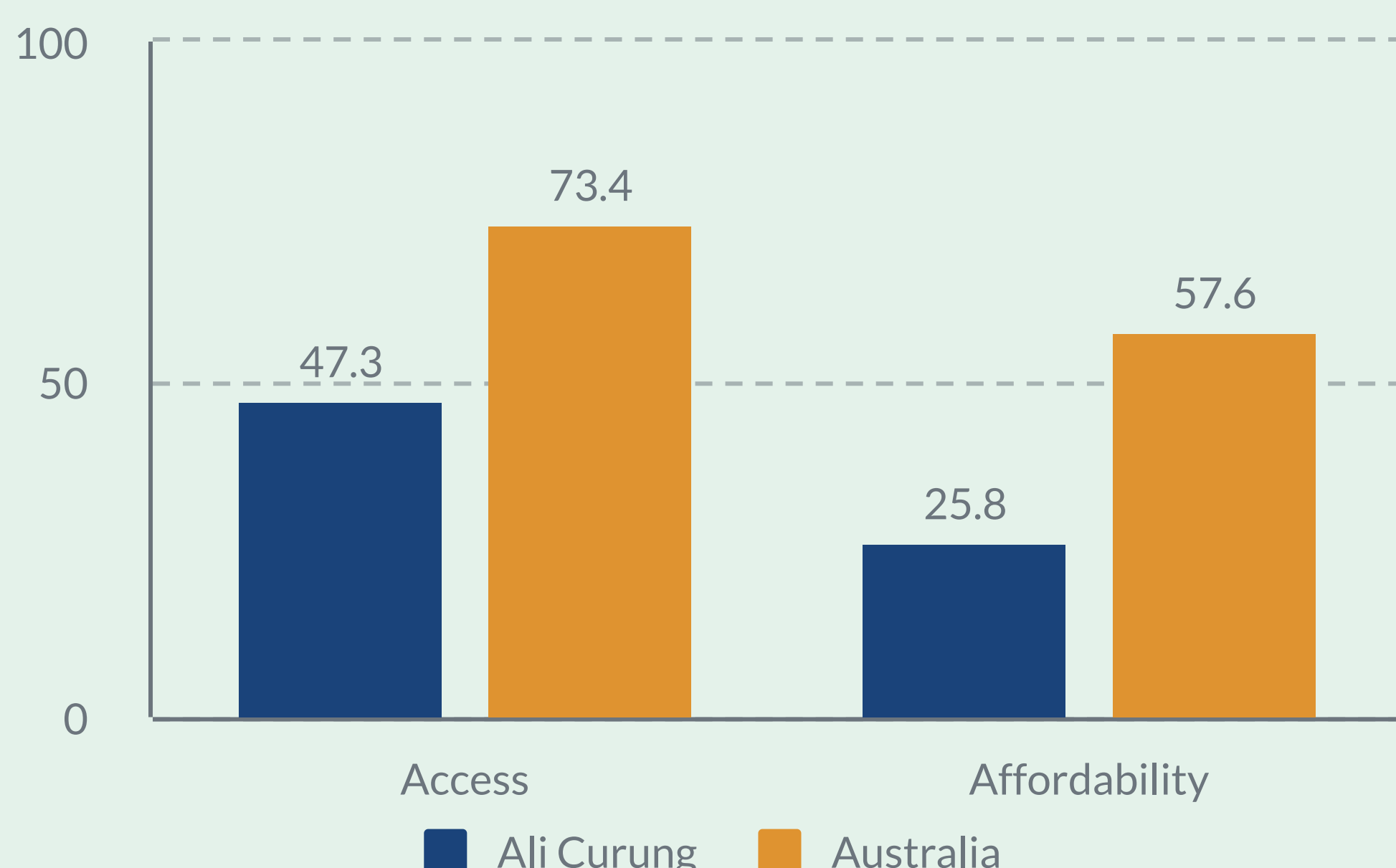


Affordability and access are affected by considerations of income and mobile use.

Aboriginal people have an especially high level of mobile-only use, with 35% of the Aboriginal population surveyed being mobile-only users, compared with an Australia-wide average of 19.9%.

When coupled with the 2018 case study at Ali Curung, it is clear that for regional and remote NT the picture may be much worse.

ADII 2018



Many mobile towers in remote Aboriginal communities are only 3G, which offer poor speeds and are prone to congestion.

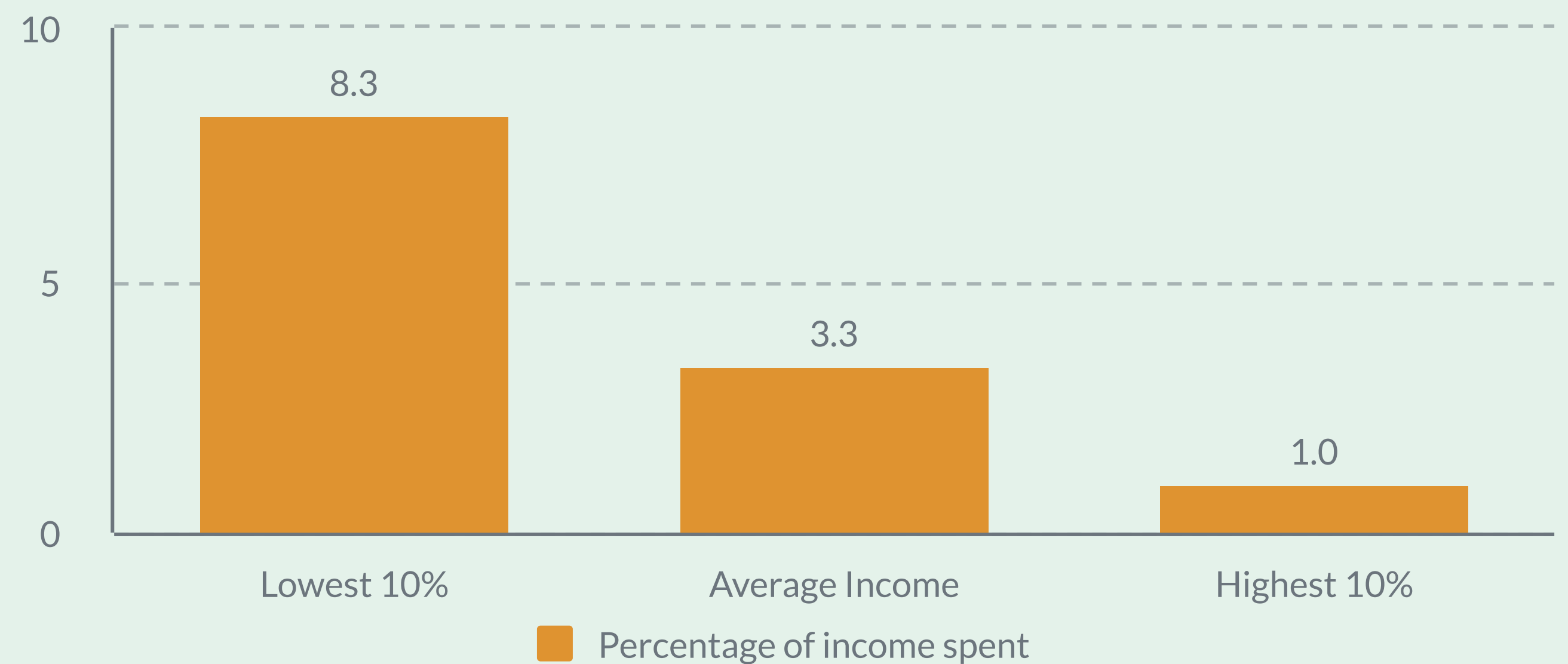


Power outages can also see remote community wi-fi hotspots disconnected, and even the ability to keep a smart phone charged cannot be assumed when a household may not have the money to buy power cards.

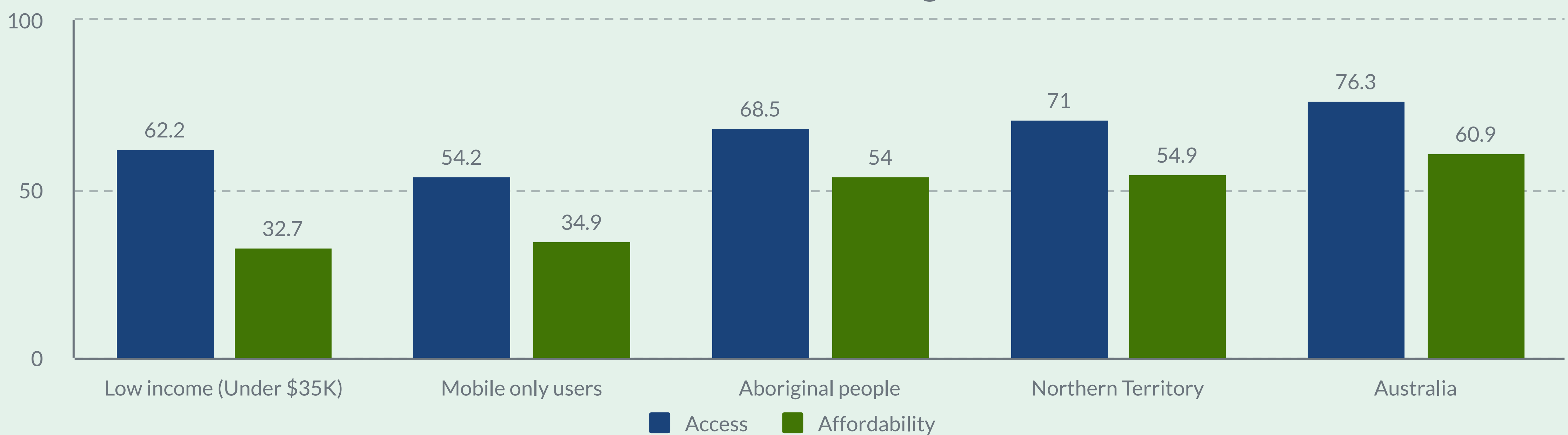


Australia's poorest households are paying the greatest amount of their disposable income on telecommunications


Percentage of income spent on telecommunications for different income levels 2018





ADII 2020 National Figures





## Recommendations

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Improve data collection on telecommunications access, use and expenditure, including face-to-face samples from remote and very remote communities and Town Camps
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In partnership with Aboriginal communities, develop and implement a targeted 'First Nations Digital Inclusion' program with a focus on access, affordability and digital ability
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An affordable, concessional, home broadband service for households on limited incomes
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Free or unmetered access to Government websites and other essential activities in plans most likely to be used by low-income households
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The Federal Government should increase the base rate of JobSeeker and related payments by \$175 per week