

Background

The goal of the present study was to use advanced statistical analyses to identify the various factors shaping Canadians' intention to engage in pro-climate action. Findings were leveraged to tailor programs and communications to Canadians where they are, and ultimately empower them to take action.

This study is part of the **Program of Applied Research on Climate Action (PARCA)**, a joint effort of the Privy Council Office, Environment and Climate Change Canada, and Natural Resources Canada

Segmentation of attitudes towards climate change in Canada

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*This work was conducted by many colleagues and collaborators within Impact Canada and across government



Established in 2017, Impact Canada (Impact and Innovation Unit, Privy Council Office) leverages insights and methodologies from behavioural science to inform the design and implementation of priority programs, services, and initiatives.

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Methodology

Data from the **Program of Applied Research on Climate Action (PARCA)** longitudinal study (Dec. 2021 – Mar. 2024) was analyzed to segment the Canadian population by their climate-related beliefs and attitudes.

A **latent class analysis (LCA)** was applied, using thirteen input variables to understand how respondents could be grouped based on measures of their climate change beliefs, affective responses to the issue of climate change (i.e., emotional response), perceptions of the efficacy of climate change mitigation efforts, social norms of climate action, and willingness to take action to limit climate change.

Results

Five unique ways Canadians think about and respond to climate change

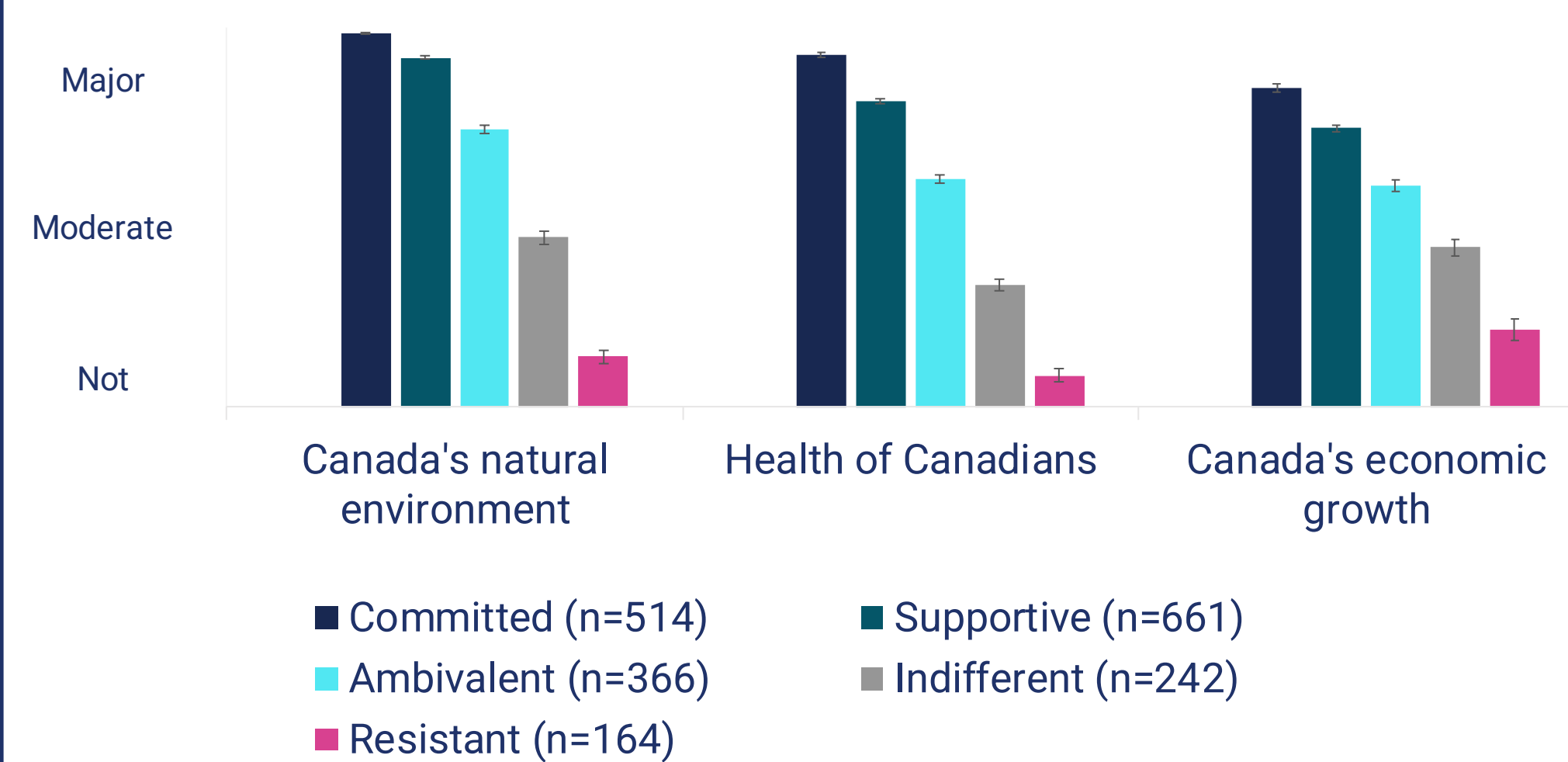
Using nationally-representative data collected from PARCA's longitudinal study, five belief-attitude segments of Canadians were identified, representing five unique ways in which Canadians think about and respond to climate action.

↑↑ Most ↑ More; - Neutral ↓ Less ↓↓ Least (compared to other groups)

Committed (25%)	Supportive (37%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↑↑ Belief in climate change ↑↑ Anxious and worried ↓↓ Hopeful ↑↑ Willing to make changes ↑↑ Climate social norms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↑ Belief in climate change ↑ Confused ↑ Anxious and worried ↑ Willing to make changes ↑ Climate social norms
Ambivalent (18%)	Indifferent (37%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↑ Belief in climate change ↑ Willing to make changes - Confused - Hopeful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↑ Belief in climate change ↓ Anxious and worried - Willing to make changes - Efficacy of Actions - Climate social norms
Resistant (7%)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↓↓ Belief in climate change ↓↓ Anxious and worried ↓↓ Willing to make changes ↓↓ Efficacy of Actions ↓↓ Climate social norms 	

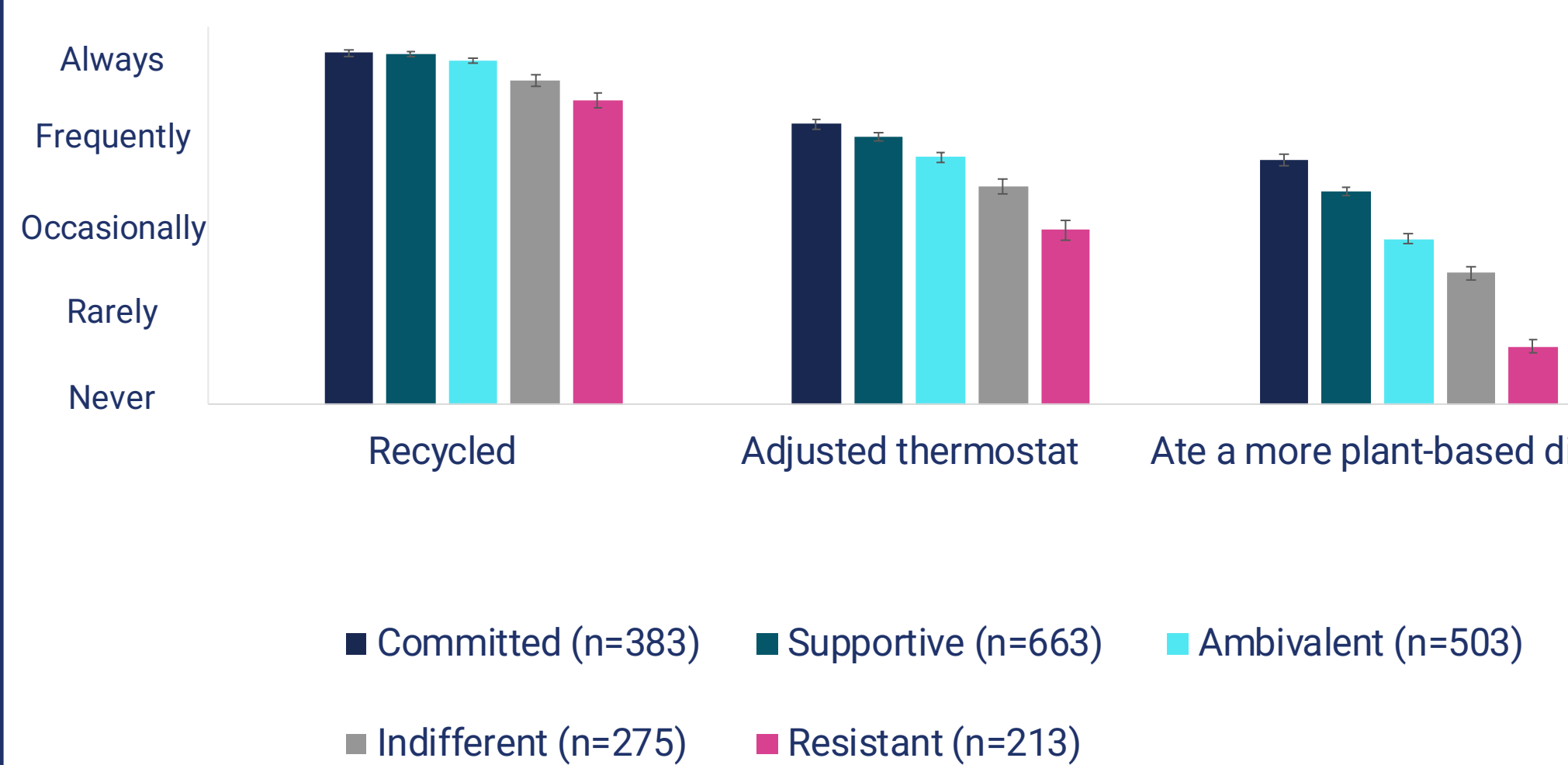
Motivated segments perceive greater threats due to climate change than other segments...

In your opinion, how much of a threat, if any, are climate change and its future impacts to...



...and occasionally engage in high-impact behaviours, like adjusting the thermostat lower in the winter

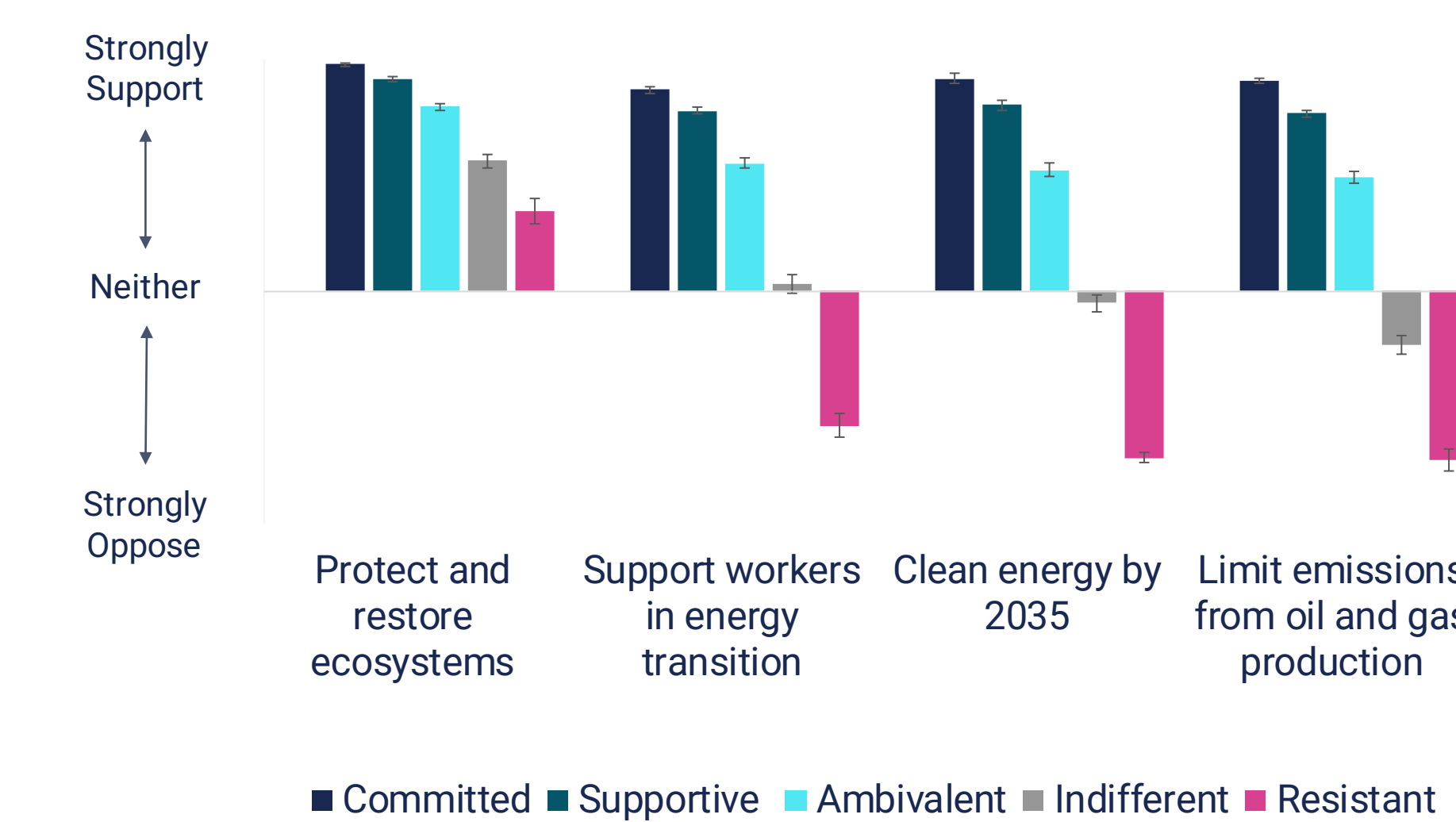
In the last two months, how frequently or infrequently have you done the following things?



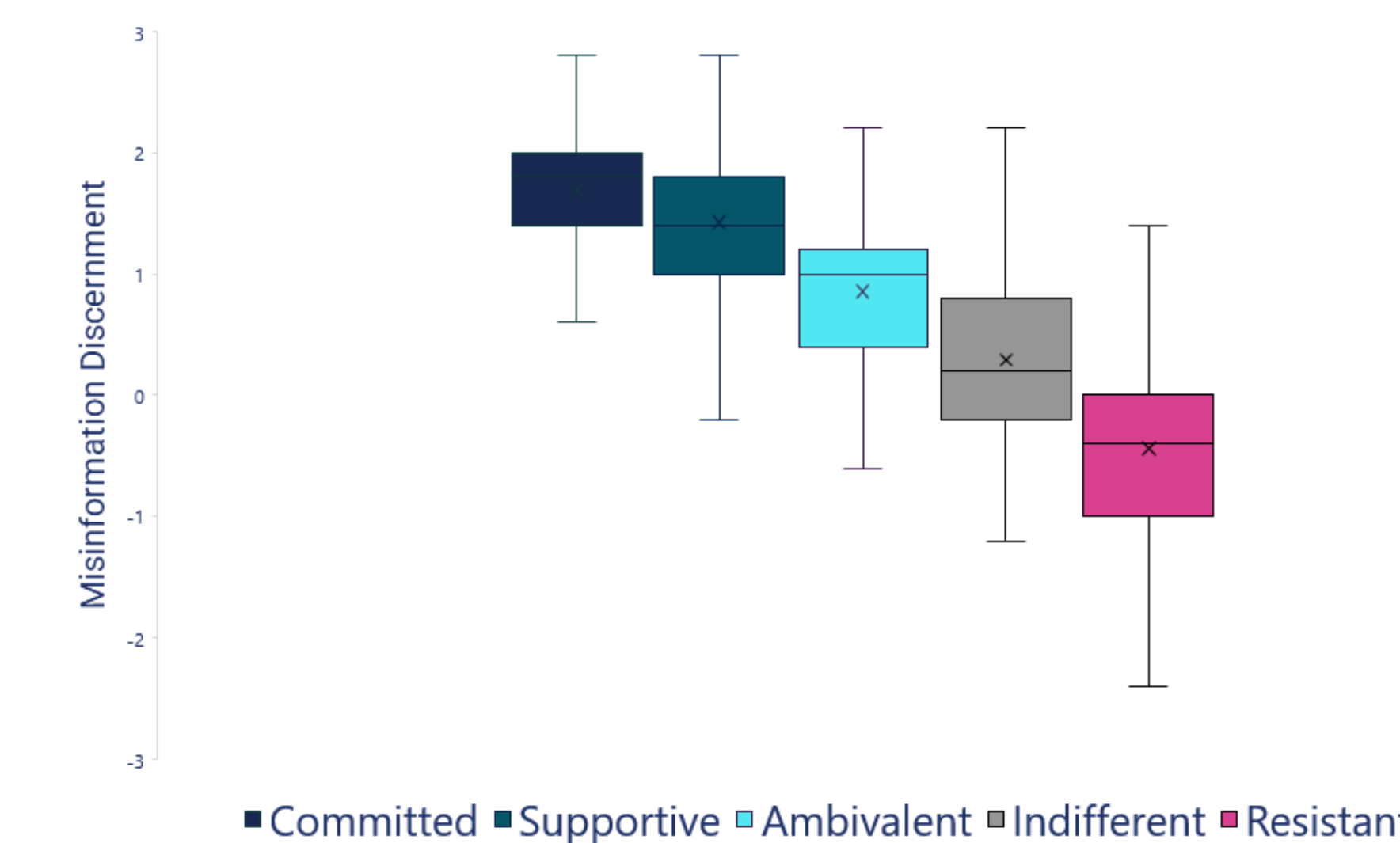
Data Source: PARCA Wave 1 (December 2021); n=2,104

Support for climate action varies strongly across belief-attitude segments

How much do you support or oppose the following environmental policies?



Some segments are more likely than others to believe inaccurate claims about climate change



Distribution of misinformation discernment scores in each of the five segments.
A higher score represents a better ability to discern true information as accurate and false information as inaccurate. The **upper and lower "whiskers"** (i.e., vertical lines above and below the boxes) represent the entire range of scores. The **boxes** represent the middle 50% of scores for each group, with the **line in the middle** representing the median and the **X** representing the mean.

Belief-attitude segments are better predictors than socio-demographics

Support for various climate action, perceptions of climate impacts, and levels of belief in climate misinformation are all outcomes that are **strongly** predicted by belief-attitude-based segmentation.

	Select Outcome of Interest	Socio-Demographic	Belief-attitude segments
Policy Support (n=110)	Support for Improving Ecosystems	R ² = 5.7%	R ² = 28.3%
	Support for Transitioning Workers	R ² = 7.1%	R ² = 47.8%
	Support for Limiting O&G Emissions	R ² = 10.0%	R ² = 53.9%
Risk Perceptions (n=111)	Threat to Canada's Economy	R ² = 3.3%	R ² = 32.0%
	Threat to Canada's Environment	R ² = 8.2%	R ² = 59.2%
	Threat to Canadians' Health	R ² = 8.4%	R ² = 61.5%
Beliefs (n=121)	Belief in Climate Misinformation	R ² = 9.5%	R ² = 51.2%

Conclusions

Segmenting Canadians by their beliefs and attitudes revealed more nuance in their views on climate change and climate action than was evident at first glance. It also demonstrated that many climate-related outcomes are shaped more by beliefs and attitudes than by typical socio-demographic characteristics.

The segment a person belongs to predicts, with a good deal of statistical accuracy, outcomes like their reported engagement in pro-climate habits, their support for climate action, and whether they rate climate misinformation as accurate or inaccurate.