



August 2024 Climate Change and Forest Fires

Public Opinion Research
Field Dates: August 2nd to August 7th, 2024

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Summary

01

Most Canadians believe climate change is occurring (85%) and report experiencing unusual weather events linked to its existence (62%). However, concern about climate change has declined since August 2021, reaching an all-time low of 67%.

02

Support for a national carbon price is up since April with a plurality of 38% now in support and 31% opposed. However, when asked to choose between the Liberal carbon tax narrative and the Conservative carbon tax narrative, almost half (48%) take the Conservative side while only 36% take the Liberals side.

03

The Jasper fire could be a new tipping point. Canadians are now less likely to feel that forest fires are simply 'unfortunate events' and more commonly attribute the occurrence to climate change. In 2016, just 21% of Albertans and 39% of Canadians viewed the forest fires as proof of climate. This year 46% of Albertans and 57% of Canadians view the fires as evidence of climate change.

04

The response of Alberta's Premiers were viewed favourably both in 2016 and today. However, reaction to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau experienced a dramatic drop in approval.

Survey Methodology



These are the results of an online survey conducted between August 2nd to August 7th, 2024.

Method: This online survey was conducted using INNOVATIVE's Canada 20/20 national research panel with additional respondents from Lucid, a leading provider of online samples. Each survey is administered to a series of randomly selected samples from the panel and weighted to ensure that the overall sample's composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to Census data to provide results that are intended to approximate a probability sample.

Sample Size: n=1,321 Canadian citizens, 18 years or older. The results are nationally weighted to n=1,000 based on Census data from Statistics Canada.

Field Dates: August 2nd and August 7th, 2024.

Weighting: Results for Canada are weighted by age, gender, region, education, and self-reported federal past vote to ensure that the overall sample's composition reflects that of the actual population according to Census data, in order to provide results that are intended to approximate a probability sample. Weighted and unweighted frequencies are reported in the table.

Margin of Error: This is a representative sample. However, since the online survey was not a random probability-based sample, a margin of error cannot be calculated. Statements about margins of sampling error or population estimates do not apply to most online panels.

Note: Graphs may not always total 100% due to rounding values rather than any error in data. Sums are added before rounding numbers.

	Unweighted (n)	Unweighted (%)	Weighted (n)	Weighted (%)
Men 18-34	151	11.5%	136	13.7%
Men 35-54	220	16.7%	159	15.9%
Men 55+	290	22.1%	196	19.7%
Women 18-34	156	11.9%	131	13.2%
Women 35-54	217	16.5%	164	16.4%
Women 55+	280	21.3%	210	21.1%
Region				
BC	155	11.7%	140	14.0%
AB	342	25.9%	112	11.2%
Prairies	86	6.5%	65	6.5%
ON	412	31.2%	389	38.9%
QC	249	18.8%	232	23.2%
Atlantic	77	5.8%	63	6.3%



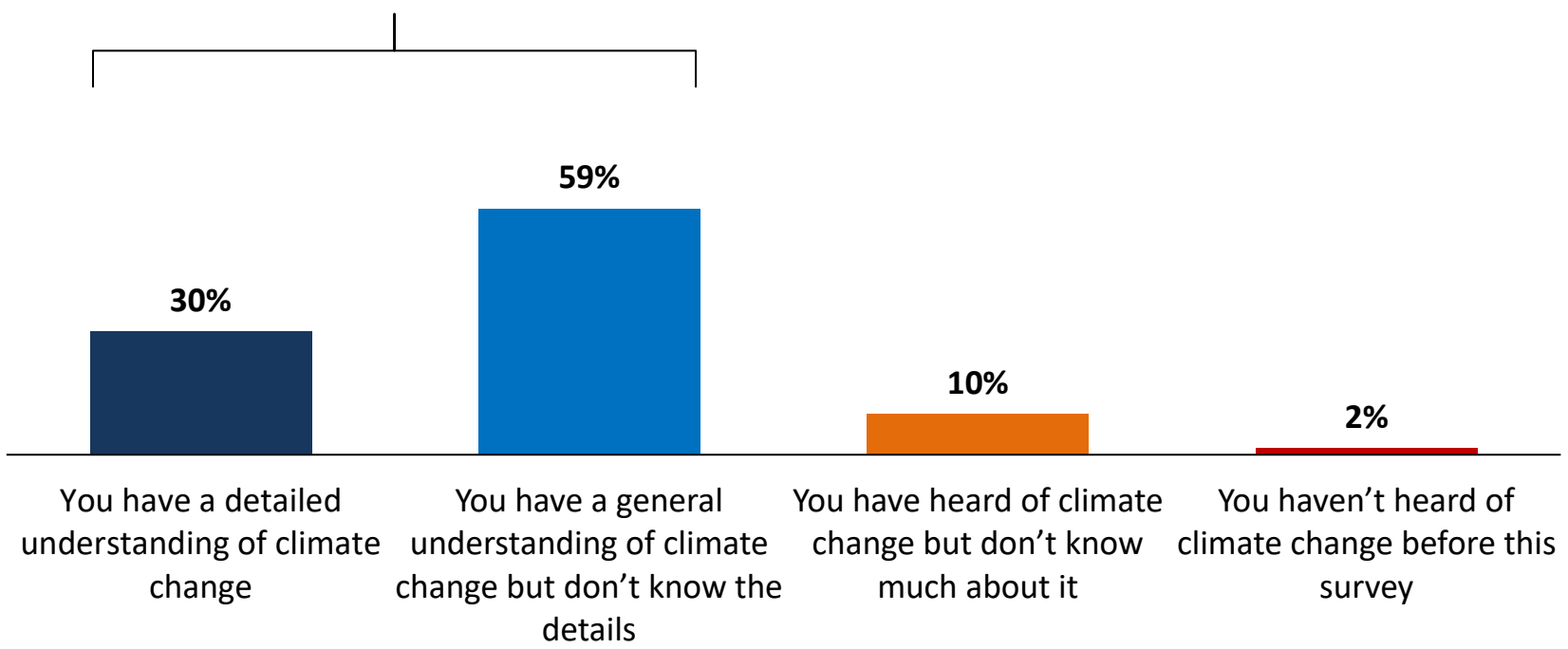
Climate Change Tracking

Familiarity with Climate Change: The vast majority of Canadians (89%) are familiar with climate change



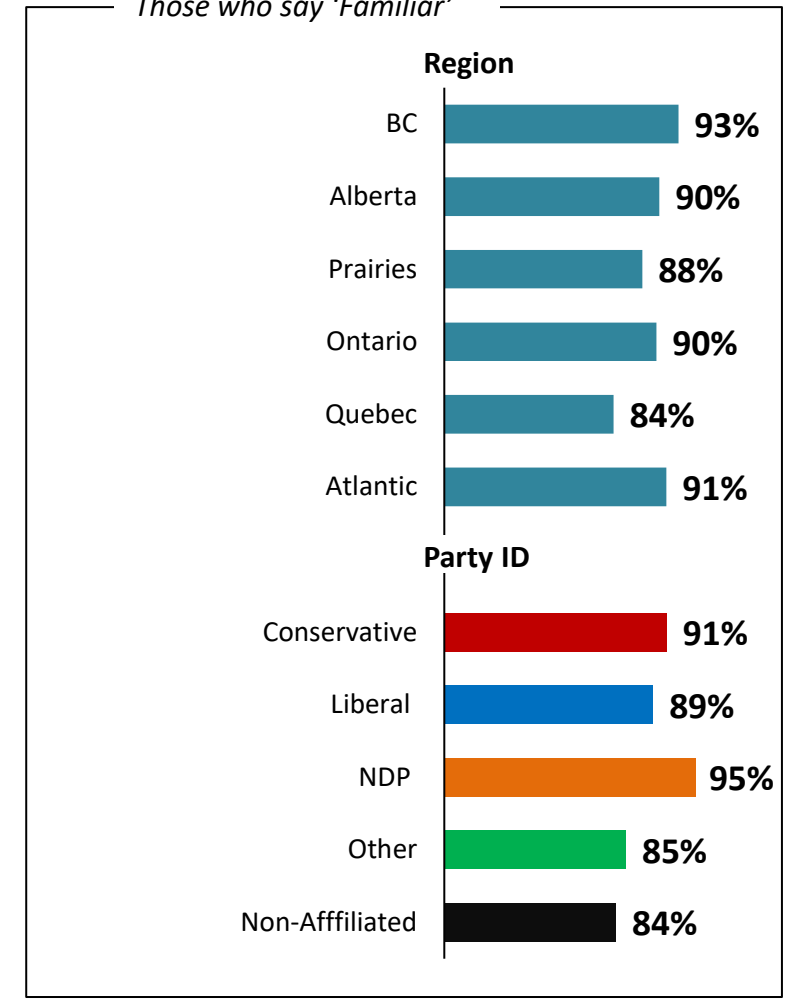
How familiar are you with the concept of climate change?
[asked of all respondents; n=1,000]

Familiar: 89%



Segmentation

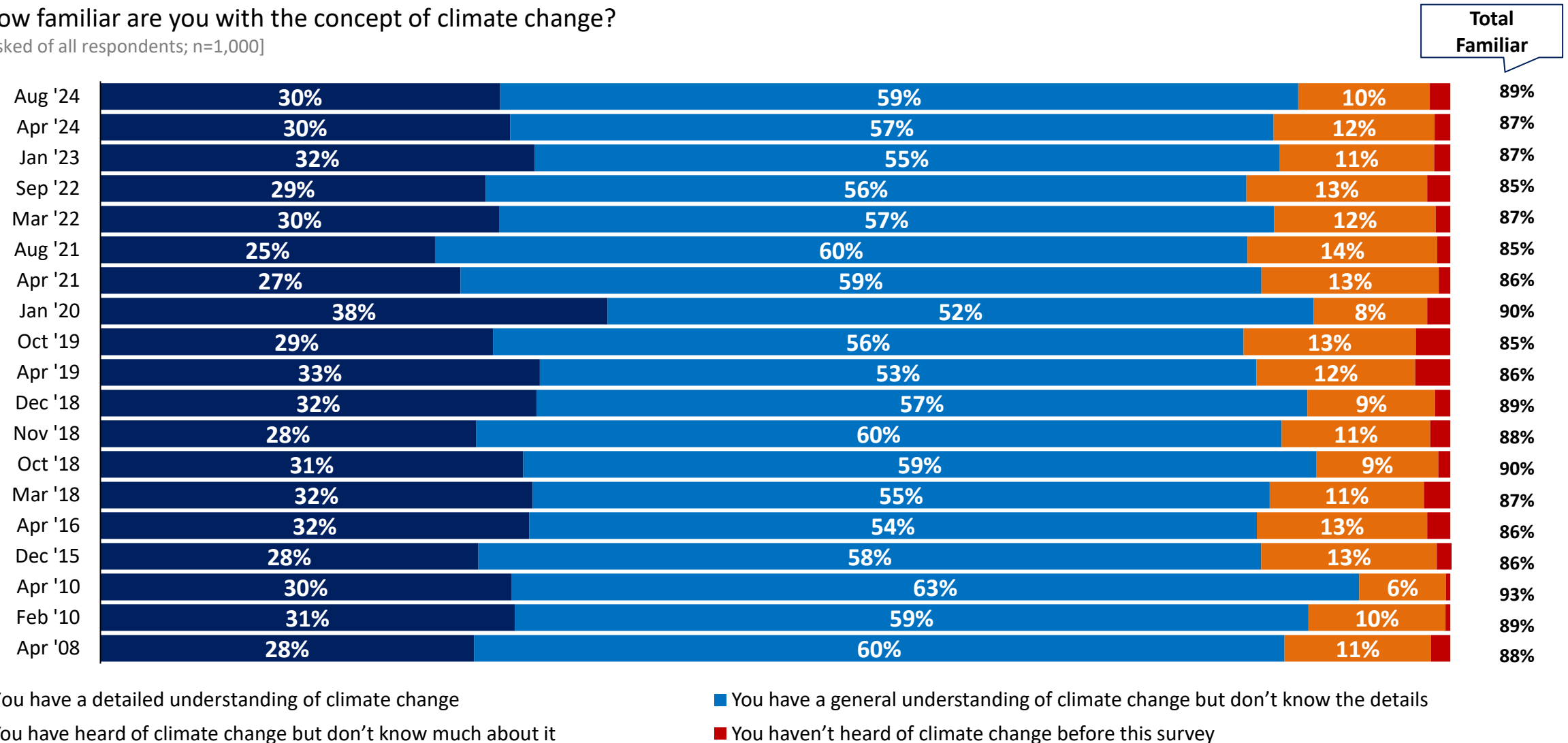
Those who say 'Familiar'



Familiarity with Climate Change Tracking: Familiarity with climate change sees a 2-point increase; highest familiarity level since Jan 2020

Q How familiar are you with the concept of climate change?

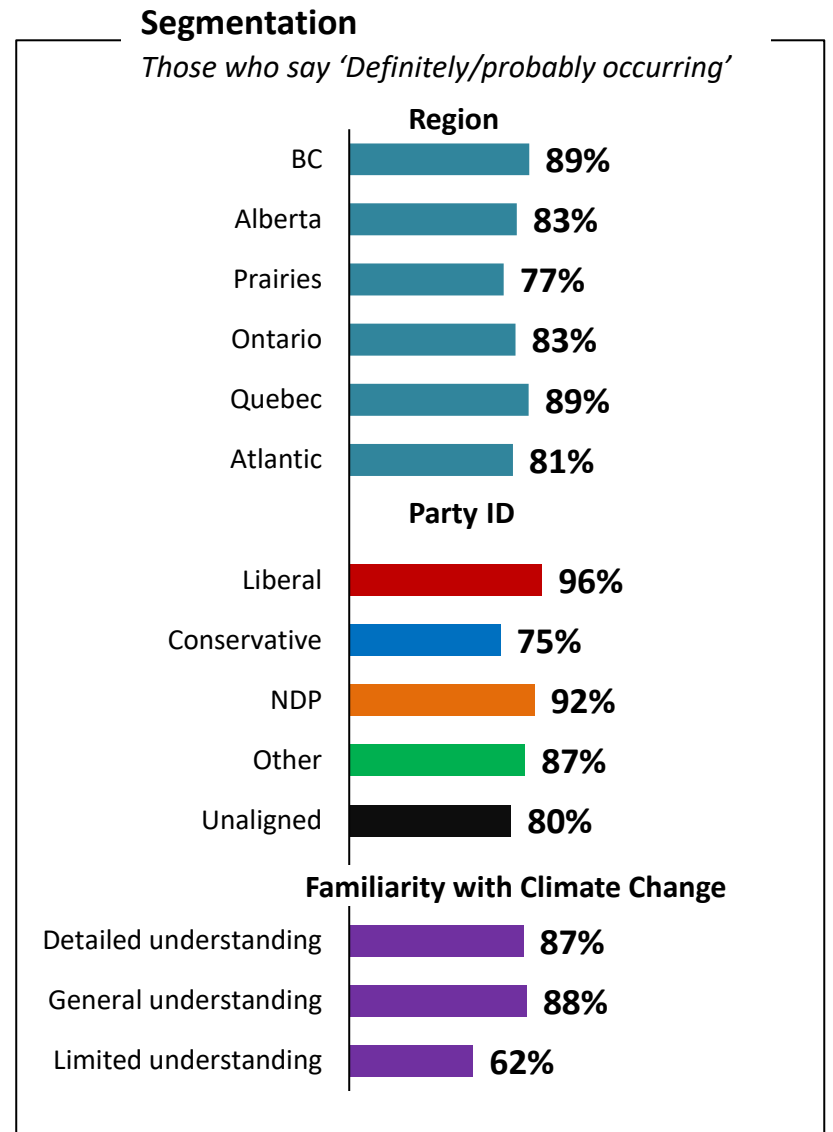
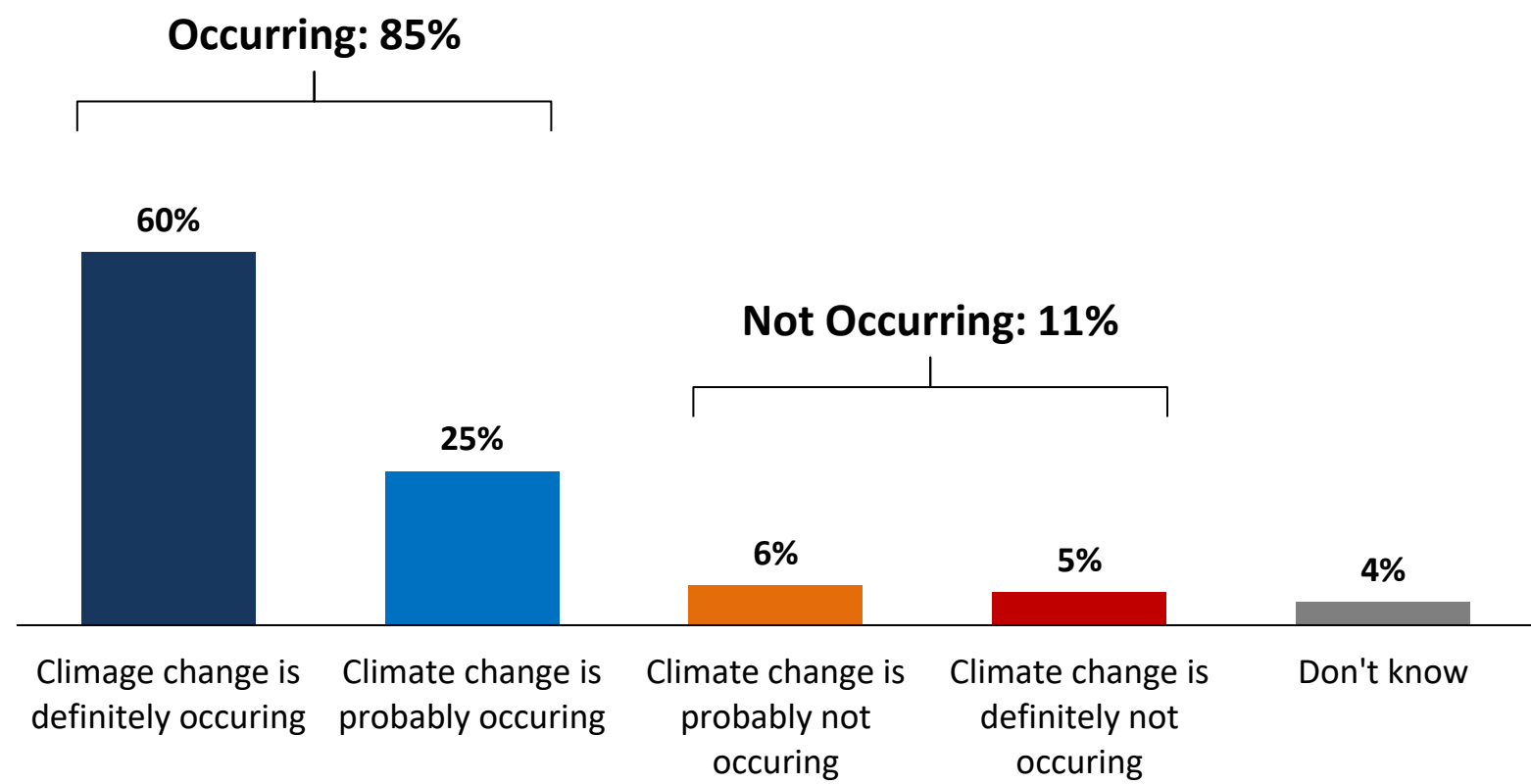
[asked of all respondents; n=1,000]



NOTE: Prior to 2010, the term "global warming" was used in place of "climate change"

Belief in Climate Change: A large majority of Canadians believe that climate change is occurring

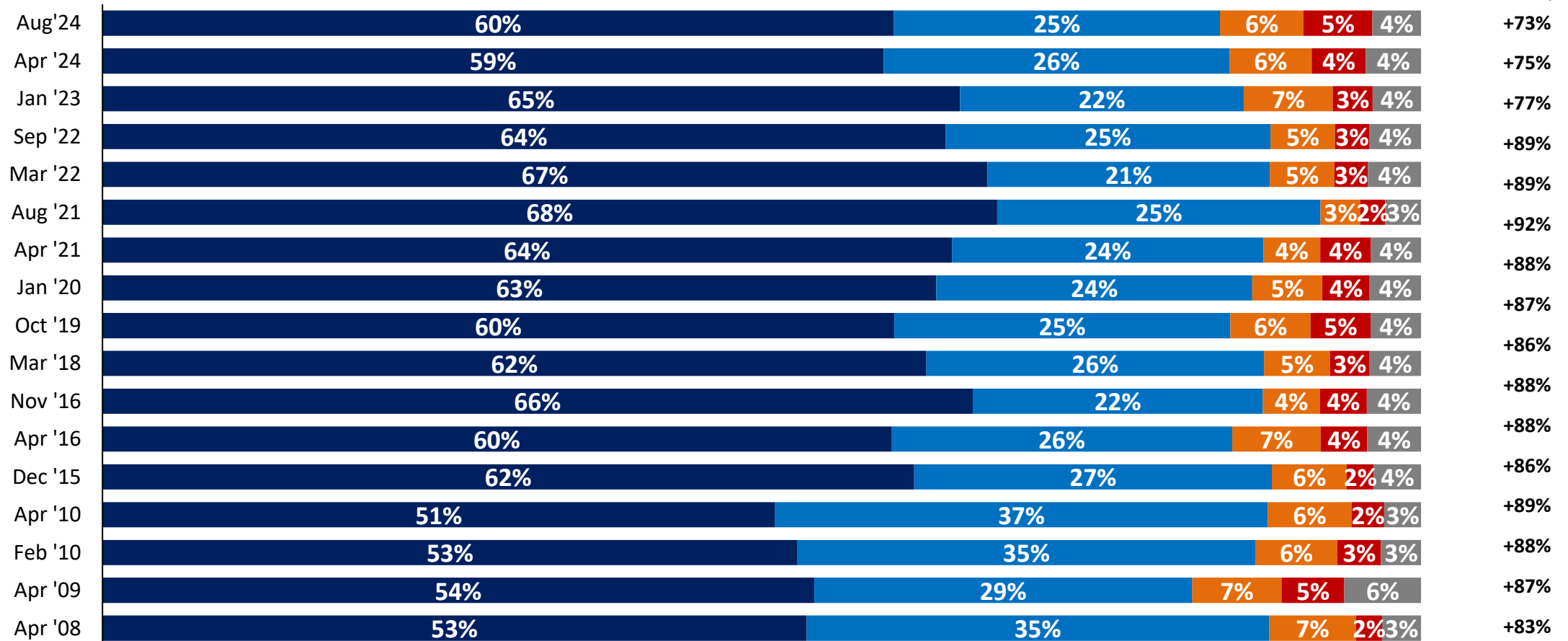
Q Thinking about your own personal view, do you believe that...?
[asked of all respondents; n=1,000]



Belief in Climate Change Tracking: While a large majority continue to believe it is occurring, the share who say “Definitely” is down in 2024

Q Thinking about your own personal view, do you believe that...?
[asked of all respondents; n=1,000]

Net Occurring



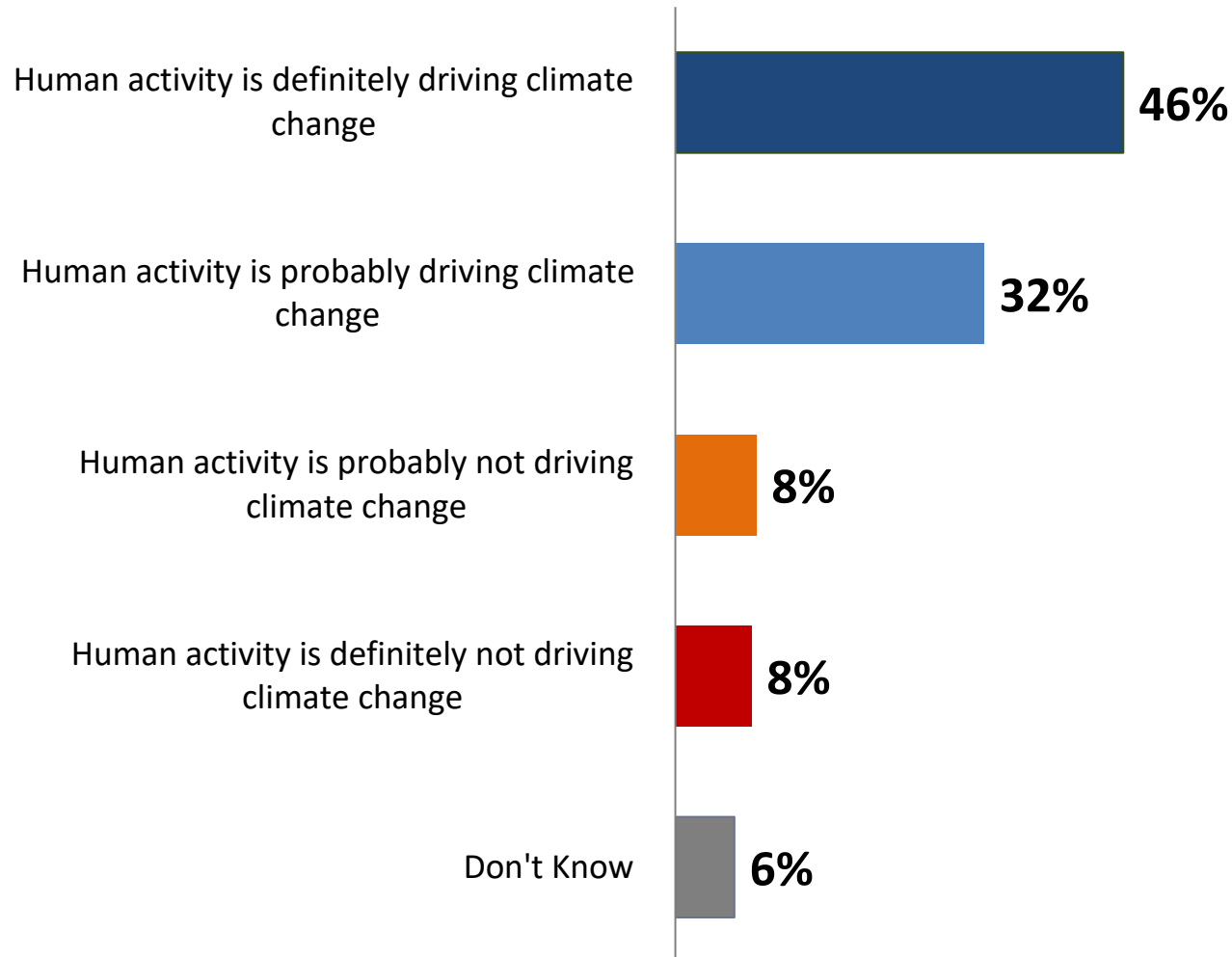
■ Climate change is definitely occurring
 ■ Climate change is probably occurring
■ Climate change is probably not occurring
 ■ Climate change is definitely not occurring
■ Don't know



NOTE: Prior to 2010, the term “global warming” was used in place of “climate change”
 Prior to Nov '16, only those who have heard of “climate change” are asked of this question; those who have not heard are combined with the “Don't know” responses here.

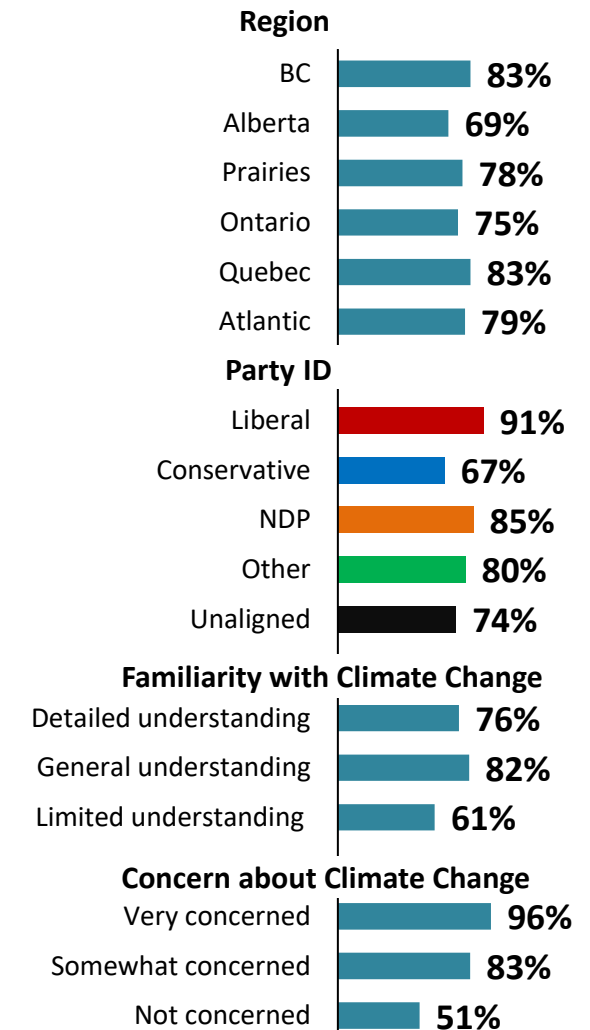
Human Activity and Climate Change: A large majority say that human activity contributes to climate change; lower among Conservatives

Q Thinking about your own personal view, do you believe that...?
[asked of all respondents; n=1,000]



Segmentation

Respondents who say 'Definitely/Probably'

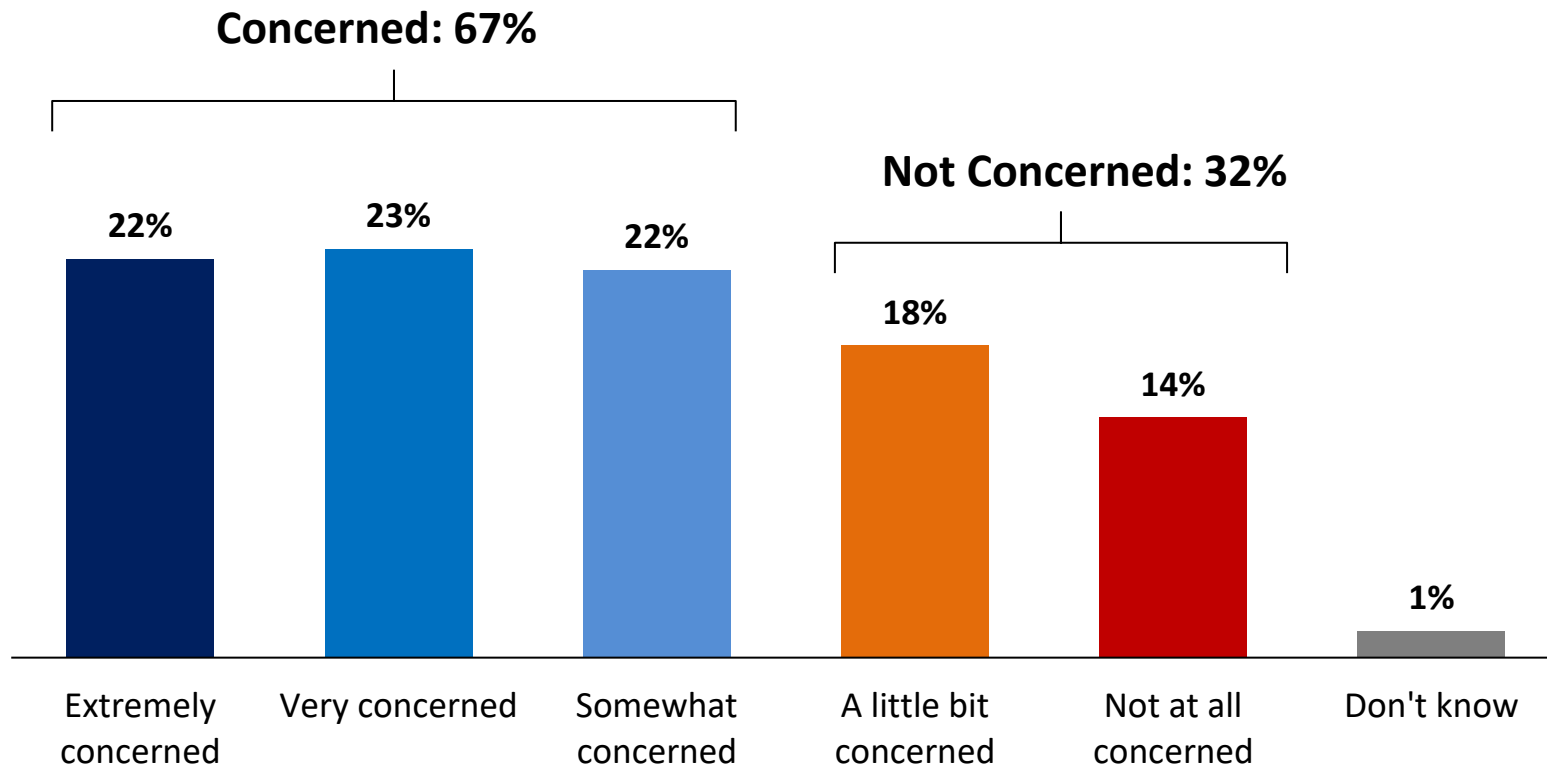


Concern for Climate Change: Most Canadians say they are concerned about climate change; Conservatives are more divided



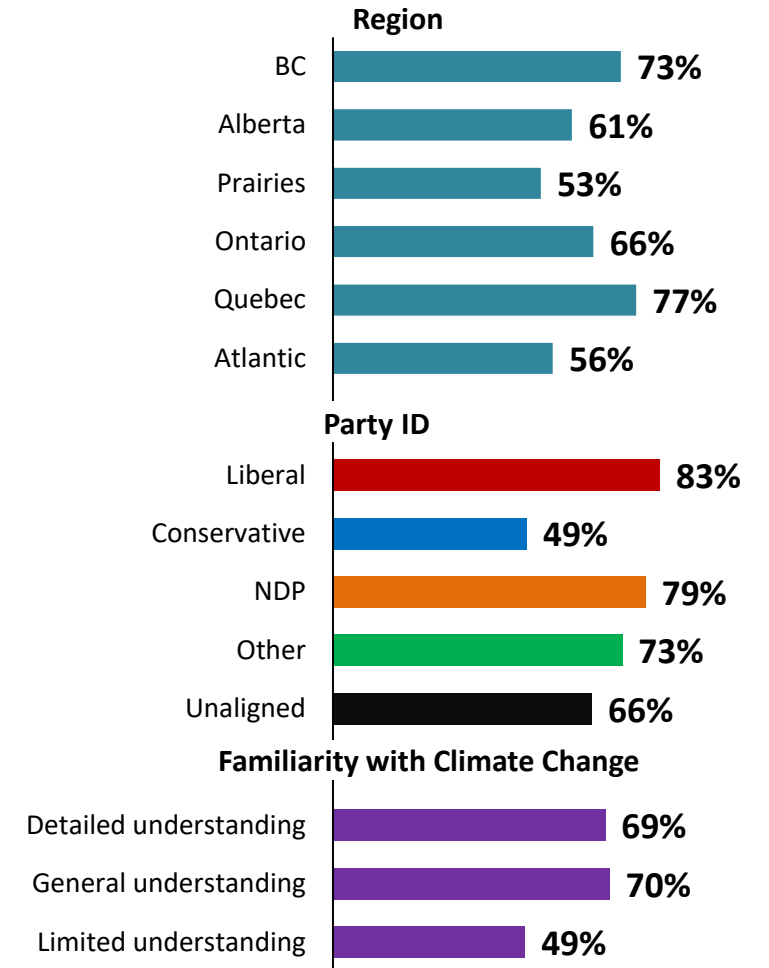
How concerned are you about climate change?

[asked of all respondents; n=1,000]



Segmentation

Respondents who say 'Concerned'



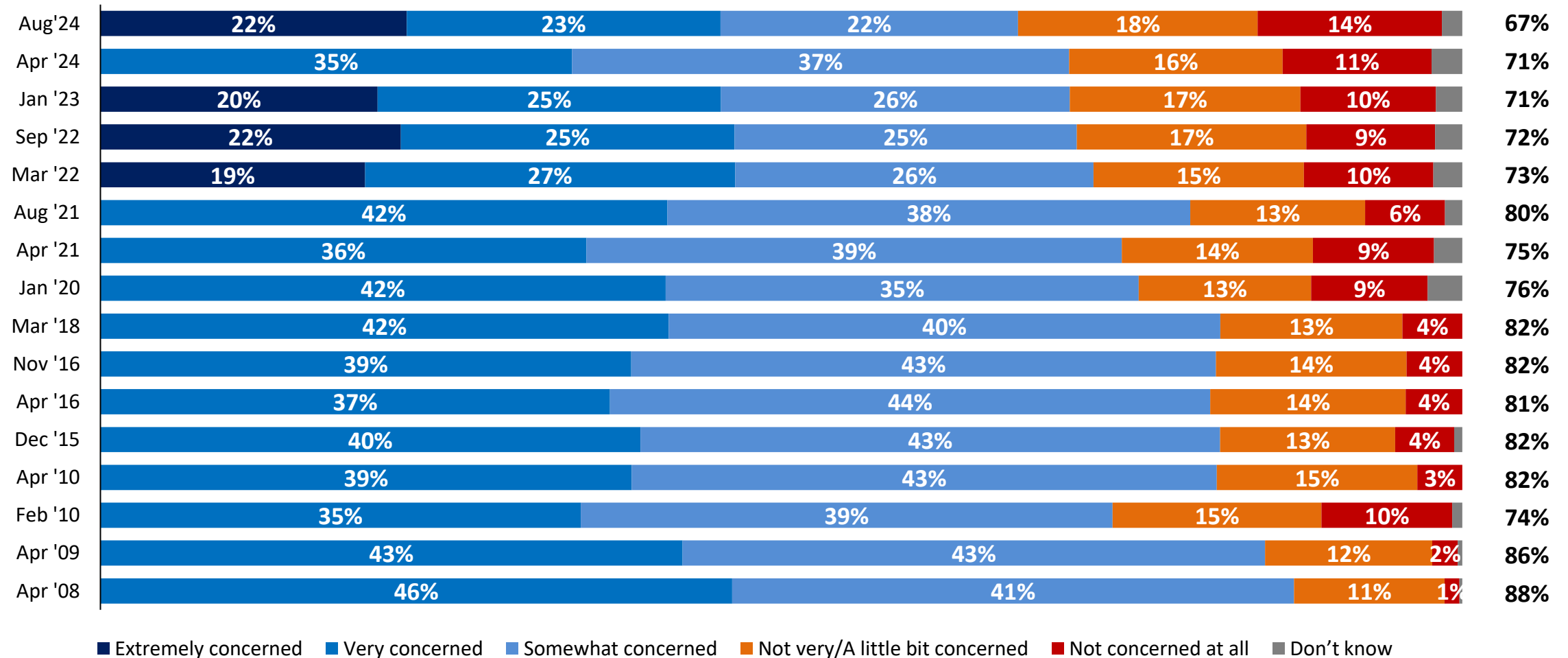
Concern for Climate Change Tracking: Concern for climate change has decreased steadily since August 2021



How concerned are you about climate change?

[asked of all respondents; n=1,000]

Total Concerned



NOTE: Prior to 2010, the term “global warming” was used in place of “climate change”

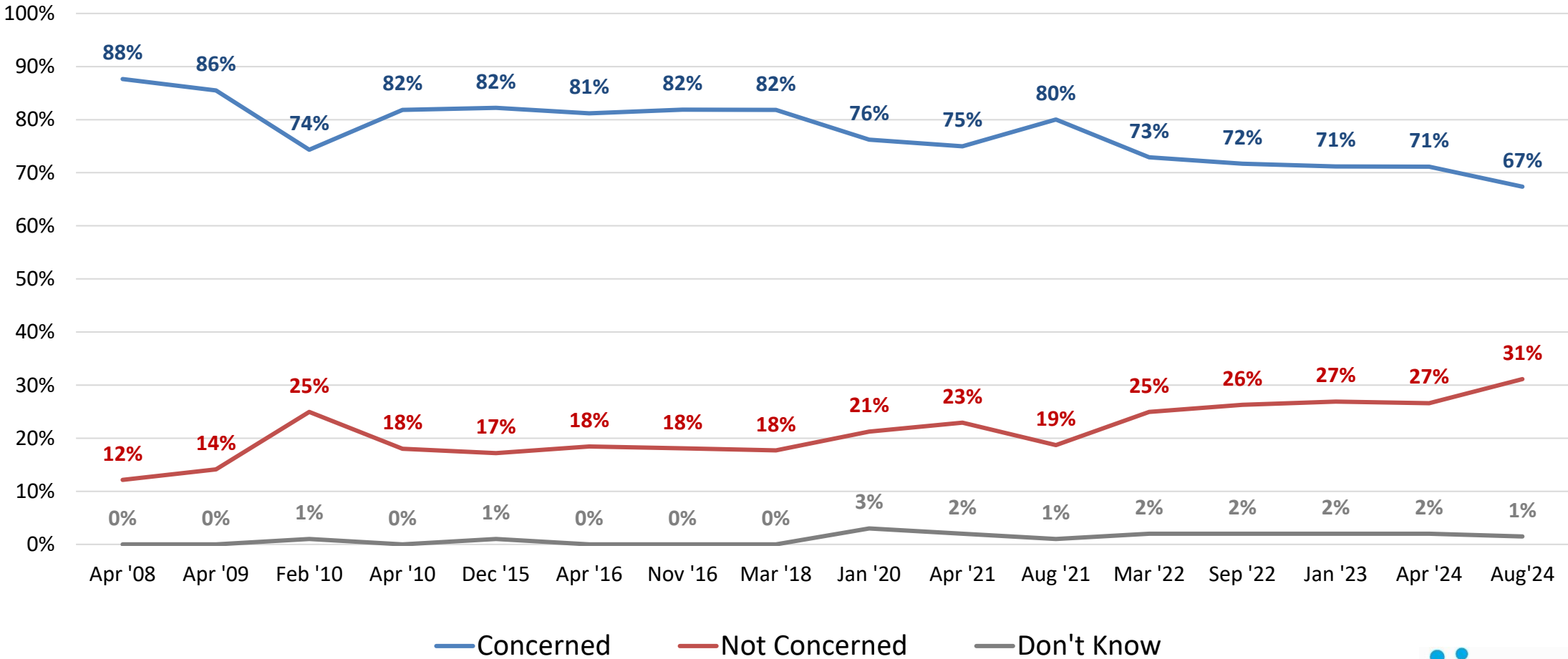
Prior to November 2016, results only show those who believe climate change is occurring. Extremely concerned' was recently added in March 2022.

Concern over Climate Change Tracking: Concern for climate change is at its lowest level, 67%, since tracking began in April 2008



How concerned are you about climate change?

[asked of all respondents; n=1,000]



NOTE: Prior to 2010, the term “global warming” was used in place of “climate change”
Prior to 2024, results only show those who believe climate change is occurring. Extremely concerned’ was recently added in March 2022.

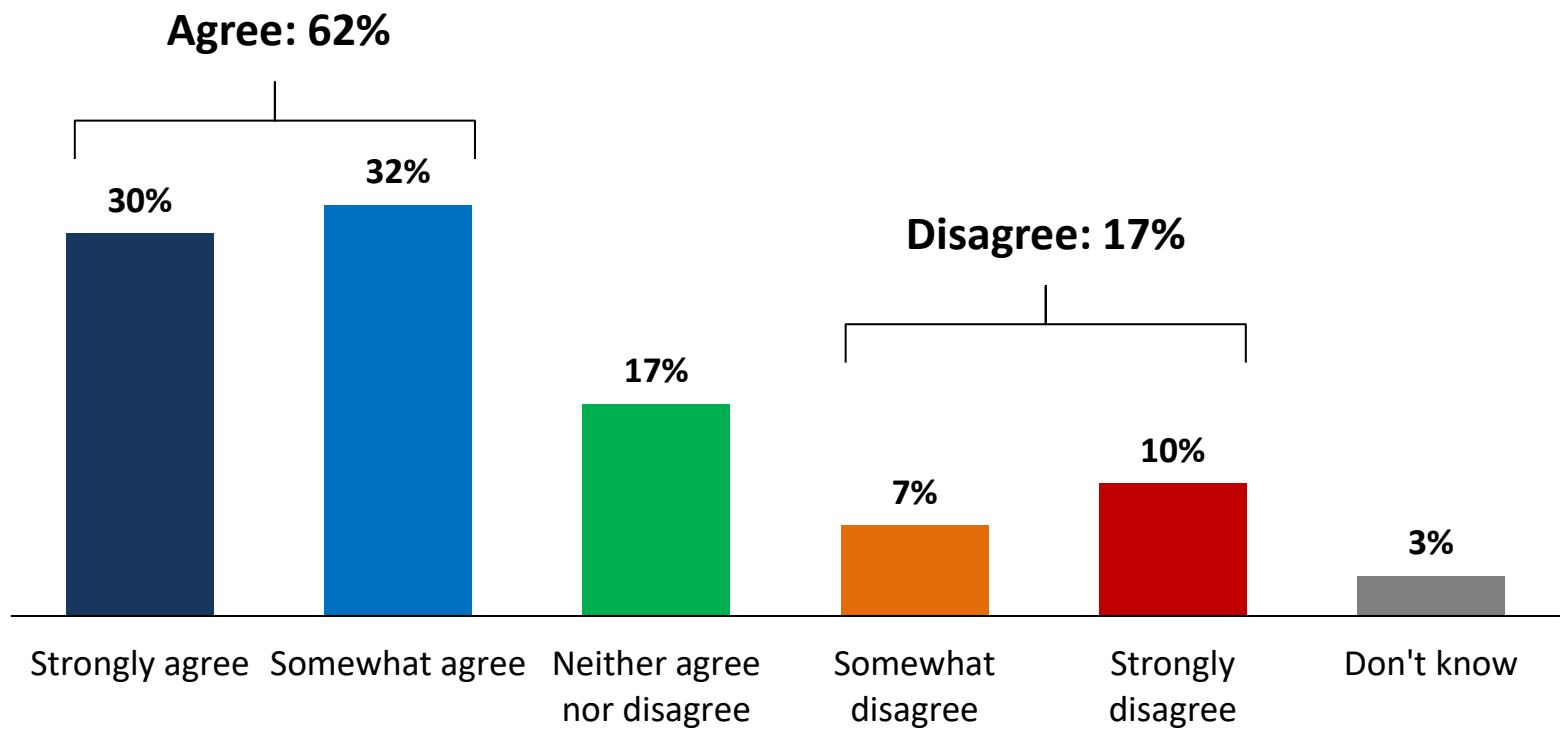


Unusual Weather: Over half of respondents agree they have experienced unusual weather that they feel is proof of climate change



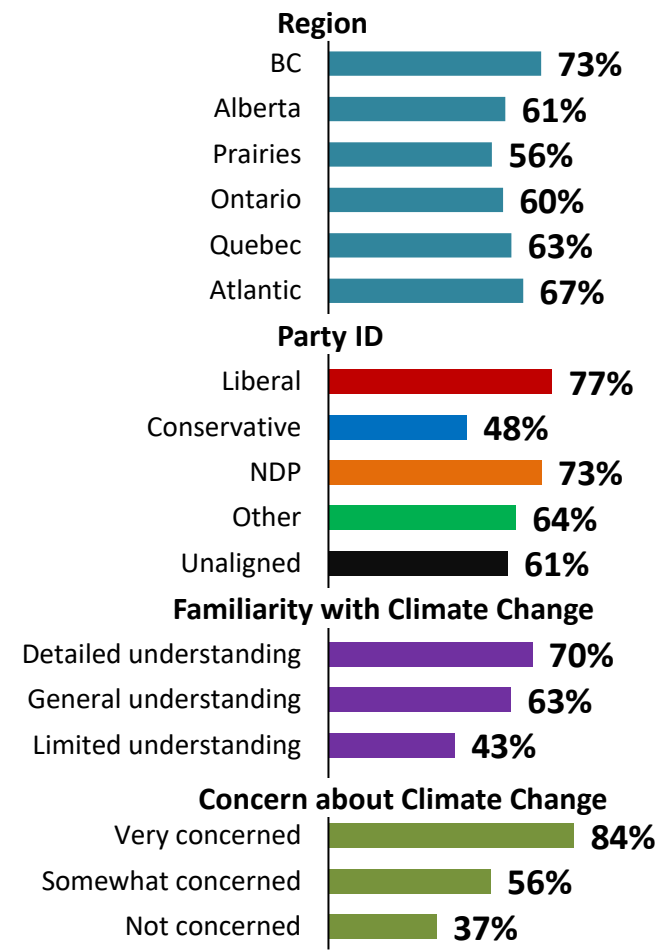
Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: **I have personally experienced unusual weather that I feel is clear proof of climate change.**

[asked of all respondents; n=1,000]



Segmentation

Those who say 'Strongly/Somewhat agree'

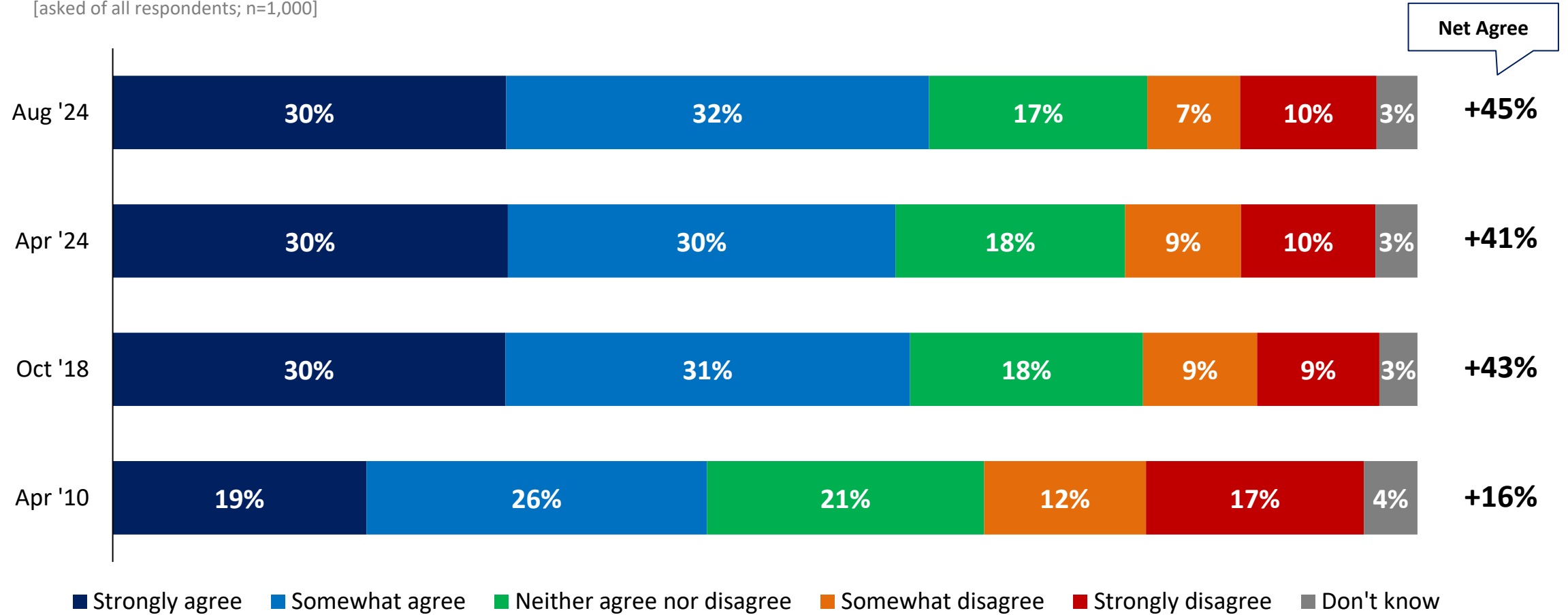


Unusual Weather Tracking: Net agreement on personal experience with unusual weather is stable since 2018¹⁵



Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: **I have personally experienced unusual weather that I feel is clear proof of climate change.**

[asked of all respondents; n=1,000]

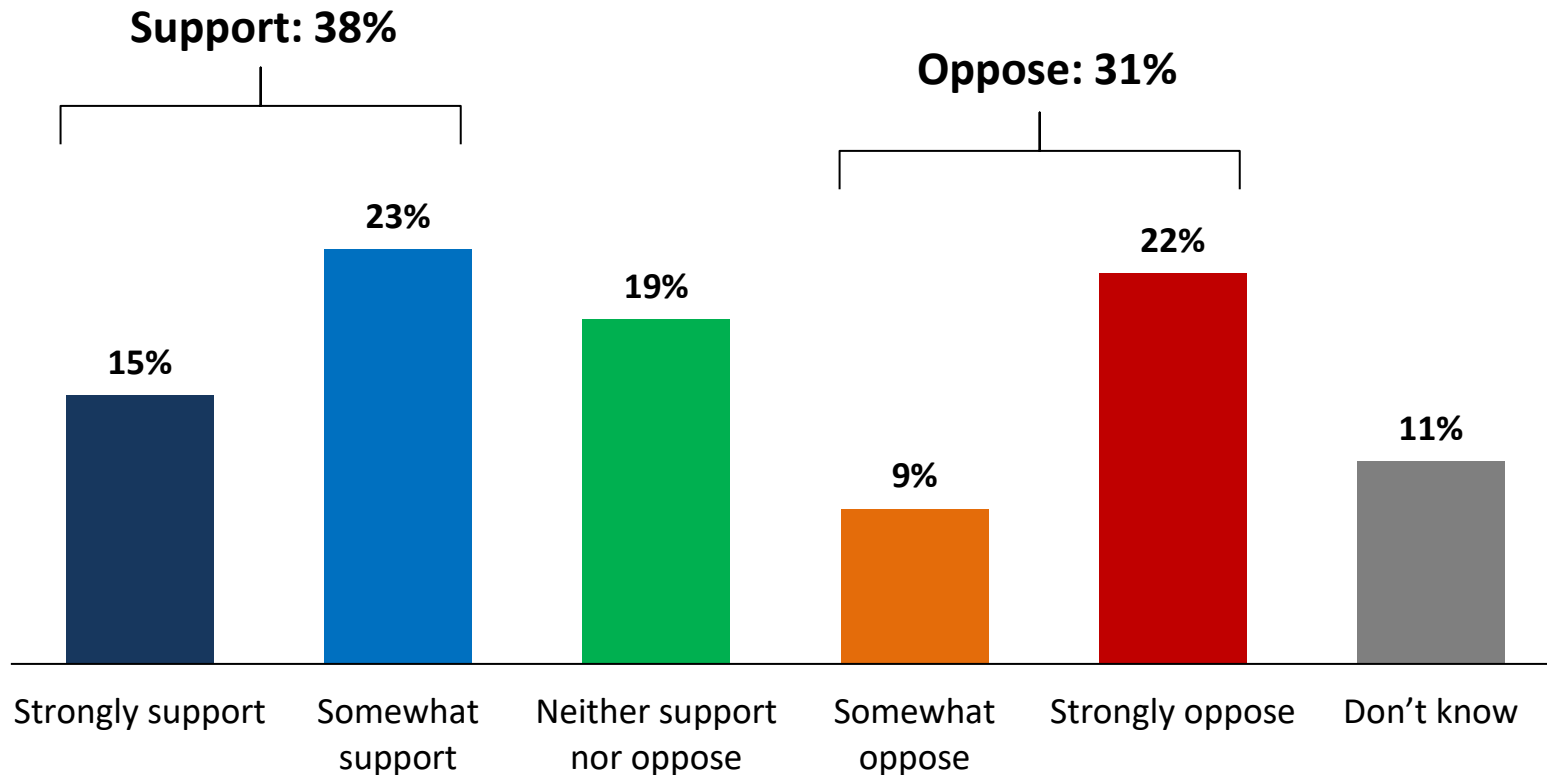


General Support for Carbon Tax: Canadians are divided on a minimum carbon price



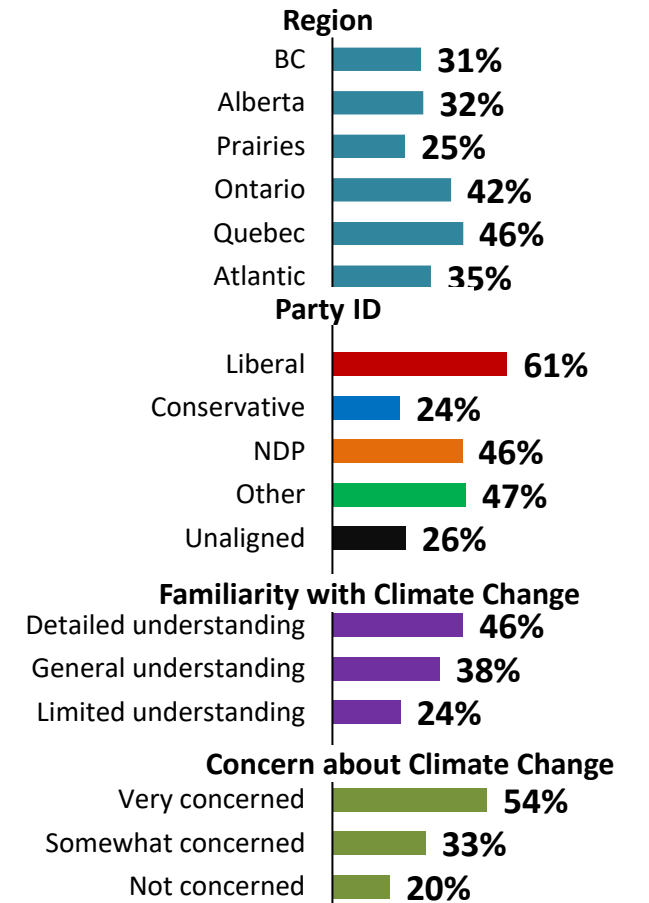
Do you support or oppose the federal government implementing the following policy?
Establish a national minimum price for carbon and, in provinces that fail to meet that national minimum price, the federal government will introduce a carbon tax in that province where the money raised by that tax is returned to that provincial government.

[asked of all respondents; n=1,000]



Segmentation

Those who say 'Strongly/Somewhat support'



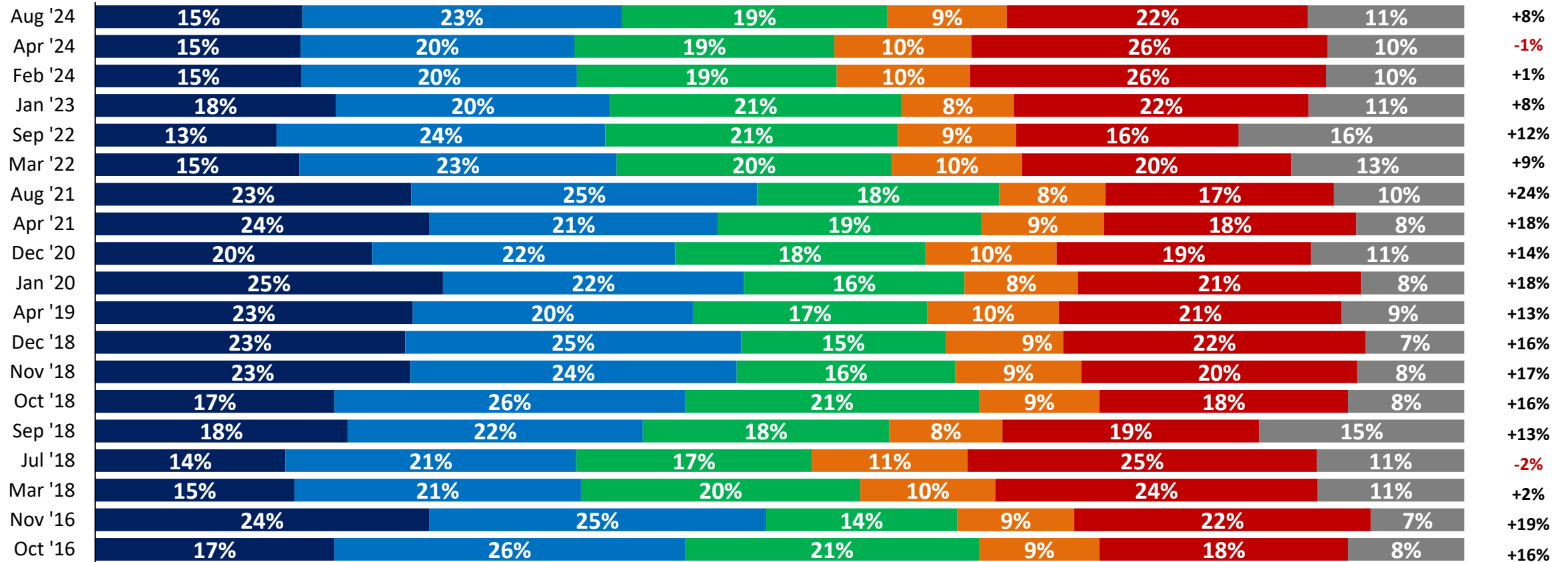
General Support for Carbon Tax Tracking: Net support for a minimum carbon price is up directionally, but still well down from its high in 2021



Do you support or oppose the federal government implementing the following policy? **Establish a national minimum price for carbon and, in provinces that fail to meet that national minimum price, the federal government will introduce a carbon tax in that province where the money raised by that tax is returned to that provincial government.**

[asked of all respondents; n=1,000]

Net Support



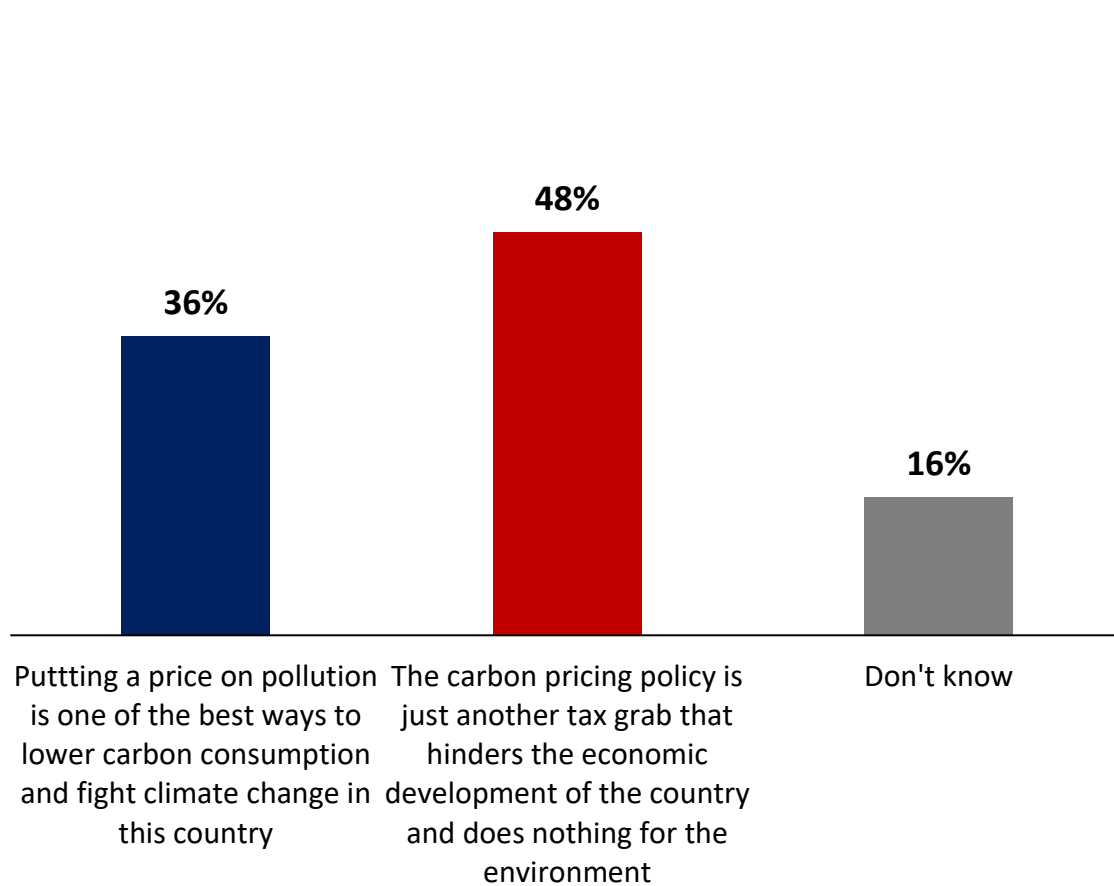
■ Strongly support
 ■ Somewhat support
 ■ Neither support nor oppose
■ Somewhat oppose
 ■ Strongly oppose
 ■ Don't know

Opinions on Carbon Tax: Slightly more Canadians feel the carbon tax is 'just another tax grab' than one of the best ways to fight climate change



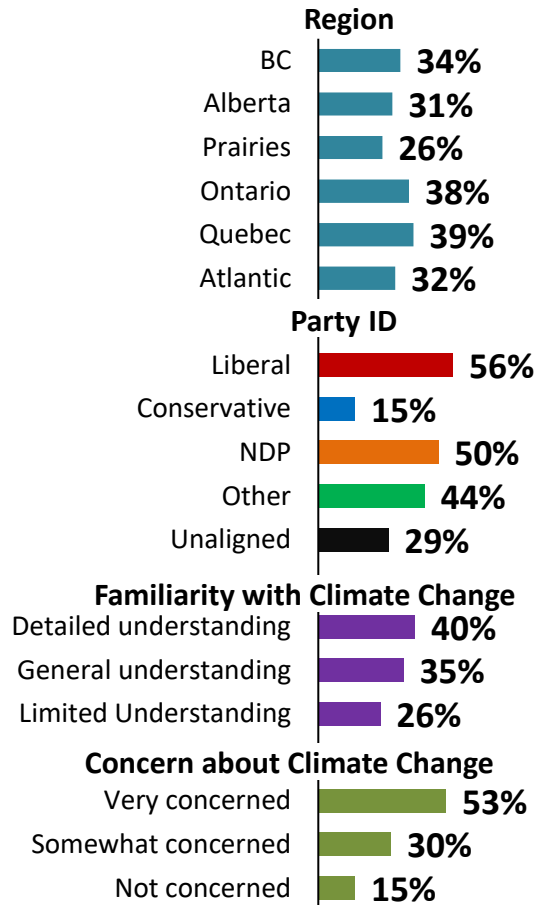
Based on what you know about the federal government's carbon pricing policy, which of the following statements is closest to your point of view?

[asked of all respondents; n=1,000]



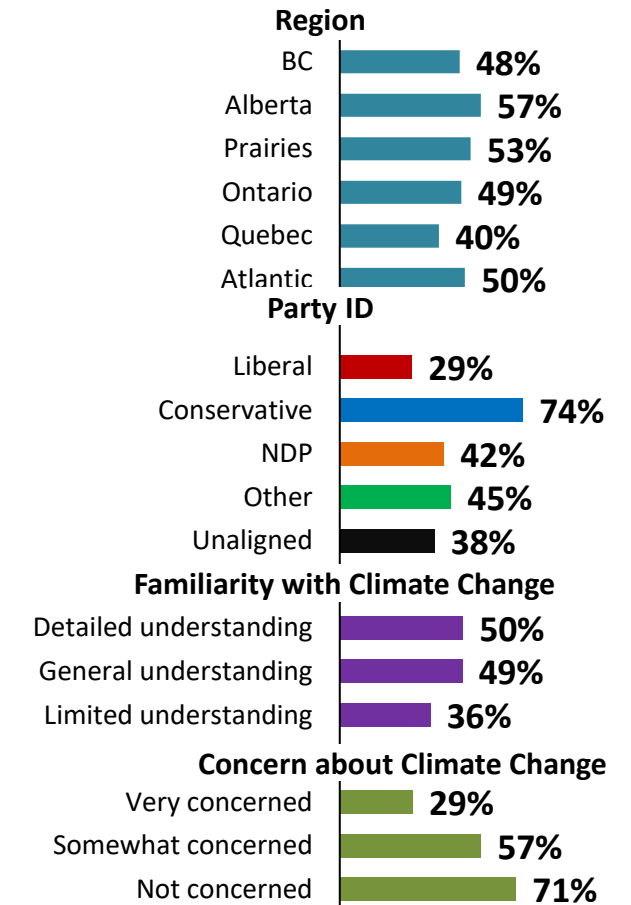
Segmentation

Those who say 'One of the best ways'



Segmentation

Those who say 'Just another tax grab'

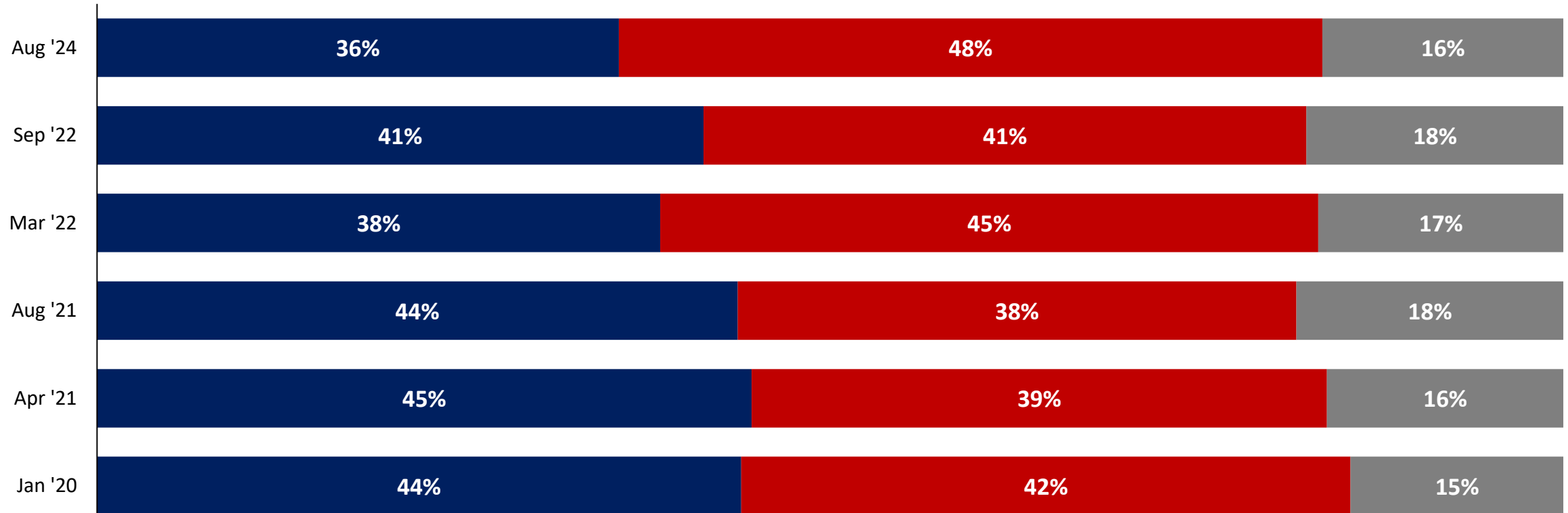


Opinions on carbon tax tracking: Nearly half of Canadians (48%) view carbon pricing as a tax grab; highest level since tracking began



Based on what you know about the federal government's carbon pricing policy, which of the following statements is closest to your point of view?

[asked of all respondents; n=1,000]




■ Putting a price on pollution is one of the best ways to lower carbon consumption and fight climate change in this country

■ The carbon pricing policy is just another tax grab that hinders the economic development of the country and does nothing for the environment

■ Don't know



**Canadian's Opinion on Forest Fires in Comparison:
*Fort McMurray and Jasper***



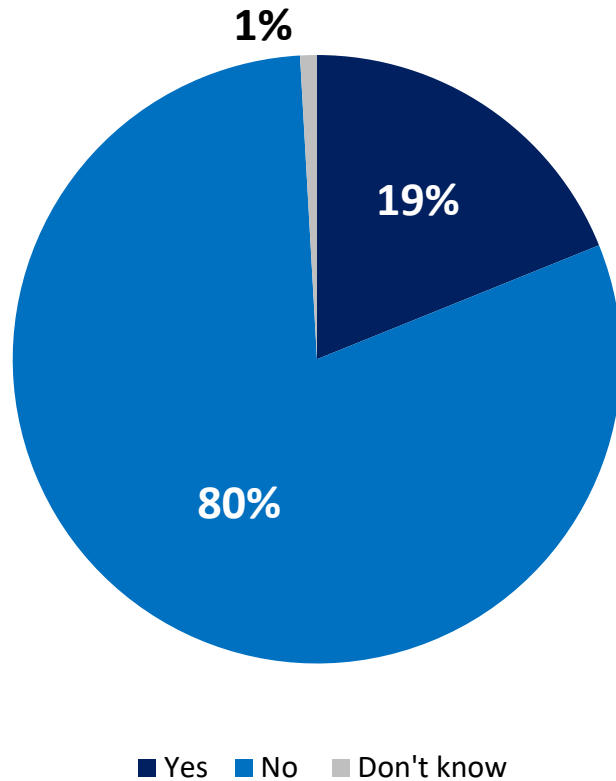
In June of 2016, we asked Canadians a series of questions on *'Canada this Month'* about the Fort McMurray forest fires. The weighted sample of 1,000 Canadians was asked their opinion on the handling of the forest fires and how they felt the fires related to climate change.

Following the recent forest fires in Jasper, we compared the reactions to the Fort McMurray fires in 2016 and Jasper in 2024. We aimed to understand how closely Canadians followed each event, evaluated the responses, and attributed the fires to climate change.

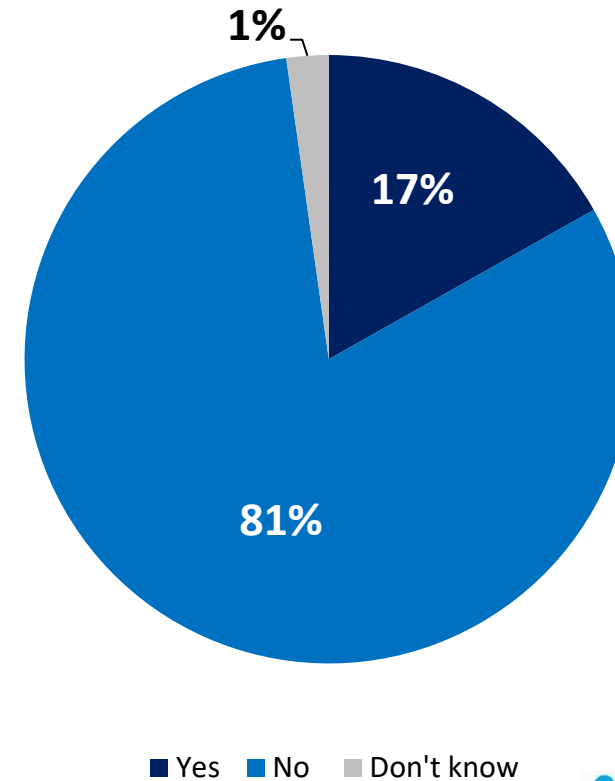
Family in Alberta: Just over 1-in-5 have immediate family living in Alberta from outside the province; remaining steady from 2016

Q Do you have any immediate family currently living in Alberta?
[asked of those outside Alberta; n= 888]

2016, Fort McMurray



2024, Jasper



Media Coverage Attention: 10% less Canadians have been closely following the media coverage of wildfires

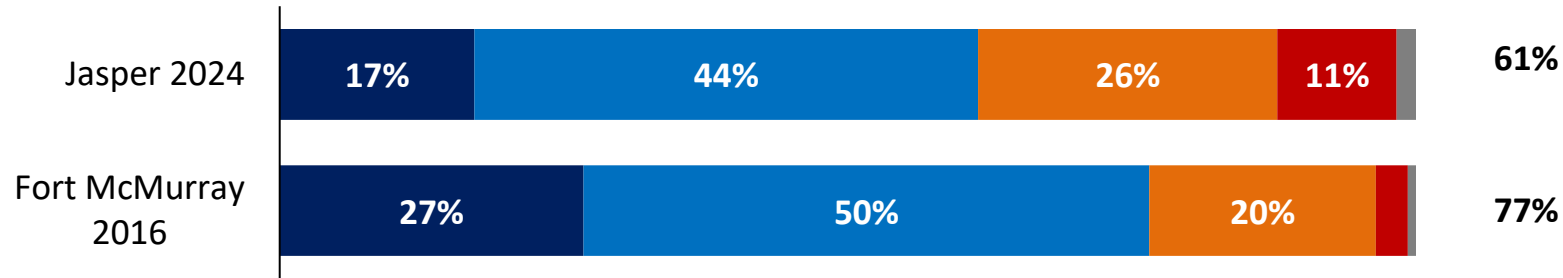


How closely have you been following media coverage of the wildfire in [Jasper, 2024 or Fort McMurray 2016]?

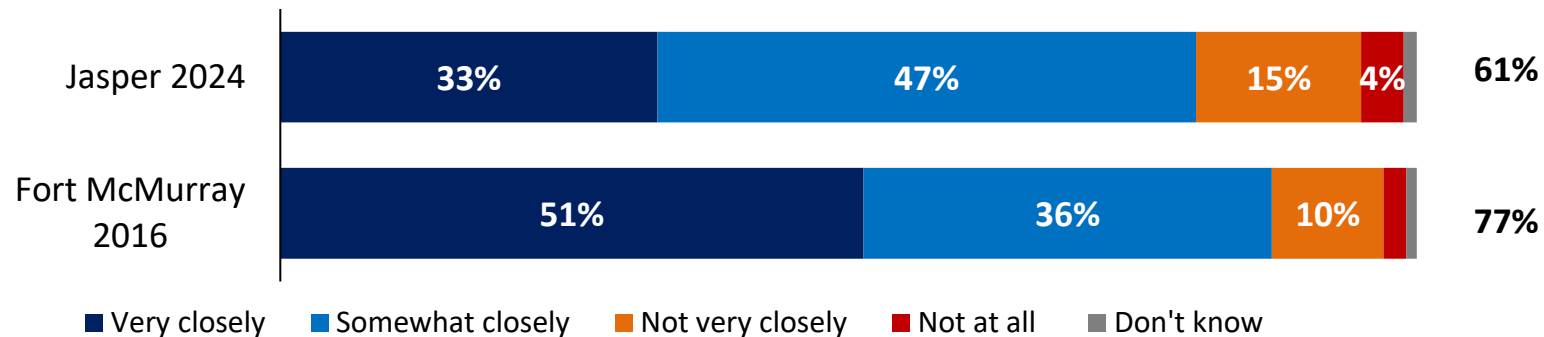
[asked of all respondents; n=1,000 in 2024 and n= 1,000 in 2016]

Followed the Coverage

Canada



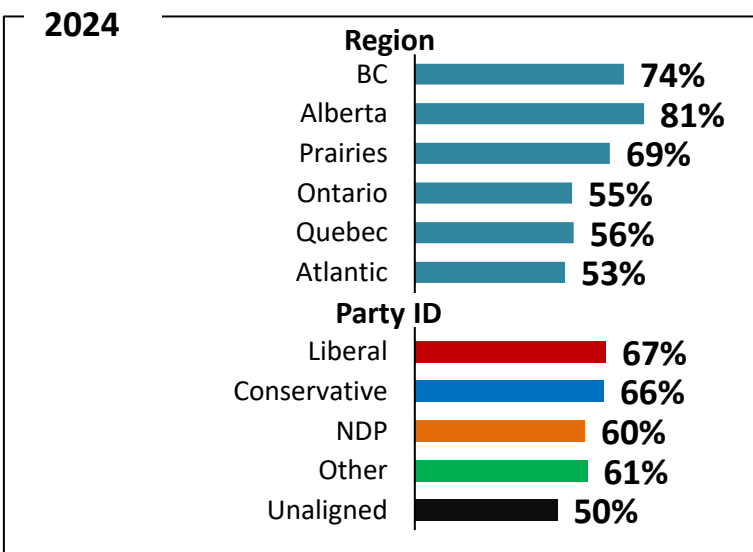
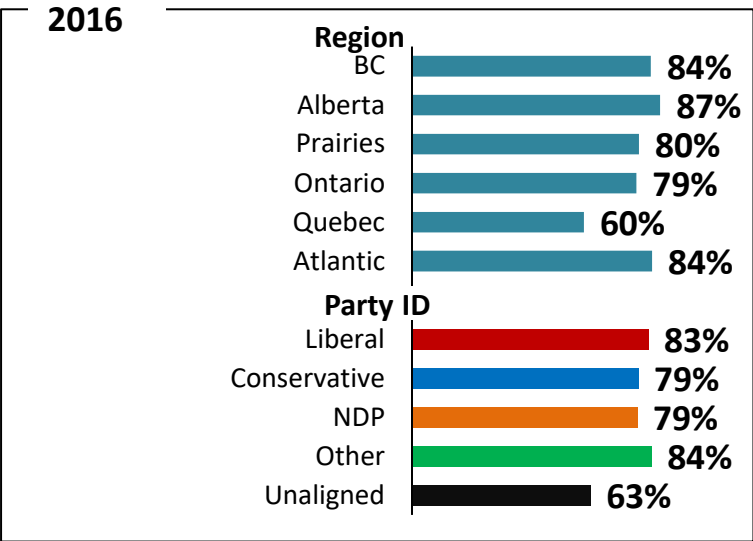
Alberta



■ Very closely ■ Somewhat closely ■ Not very closely ■ Not at all ■ Don't know

National Segmentation

Those who say 'Very closely/Somewhat closely'



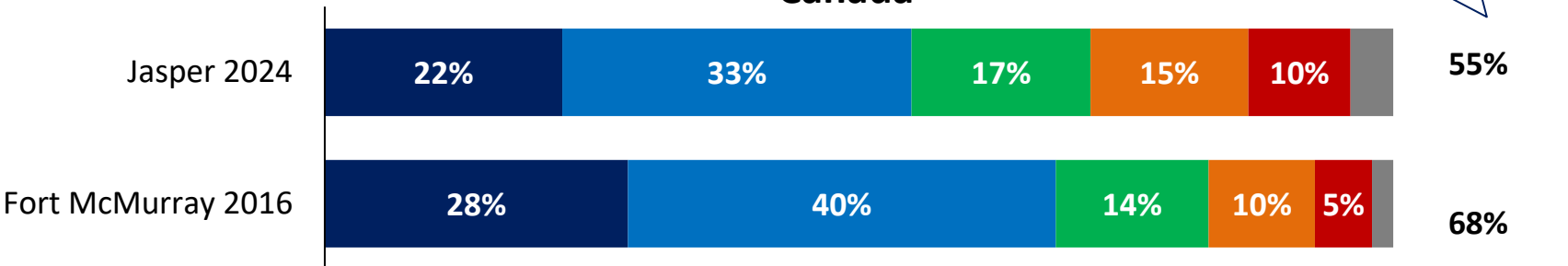
Perception of Forest Fires: Fewer Canadians feel that forest fires are natural, inevitable events than in 2016



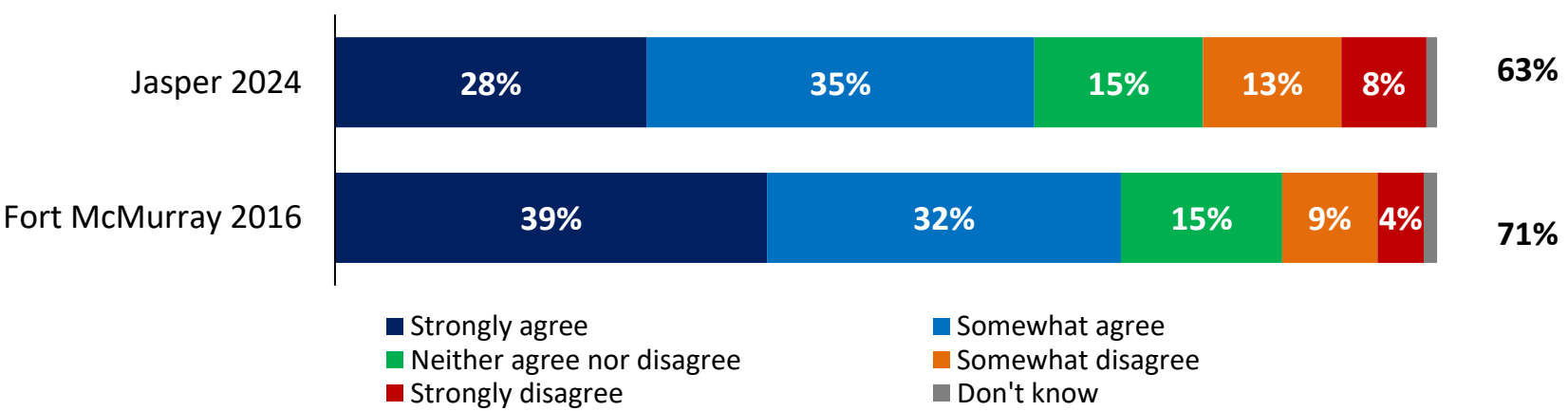
Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: **Forest fires like the one in [Jasper, 2024 or Fort McMurray 2016] are unfortunate events that just happen from time to time**

[asked of all respondents; n=1,000 in 2024 and n= 1,000 in 2016]

Canada



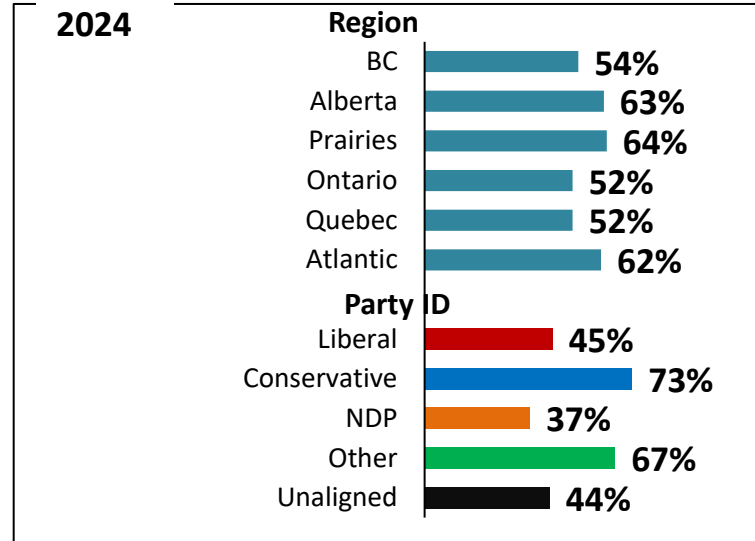
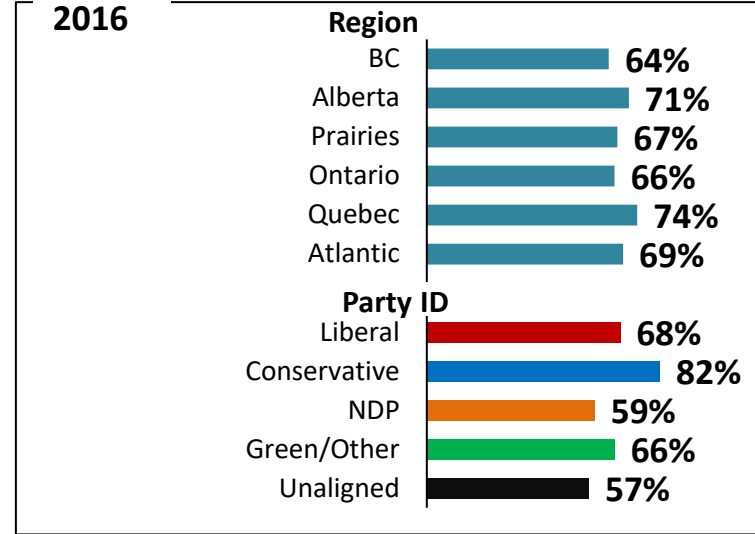
Alberta



■ Strongly agree ■ Somewhat agree
■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Somewhat disagree
■ Strongly disagree ■ Don't know

National Segmentation

Those who say 'Strongly agree/Somewhat agree'

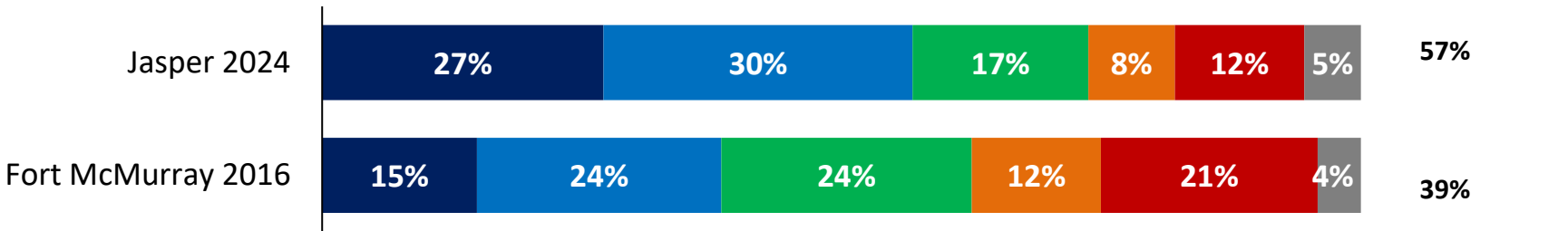


Climate Change Belief: Increasing numbers of Canadians feel that forest fires are proof of climate change ²⁵

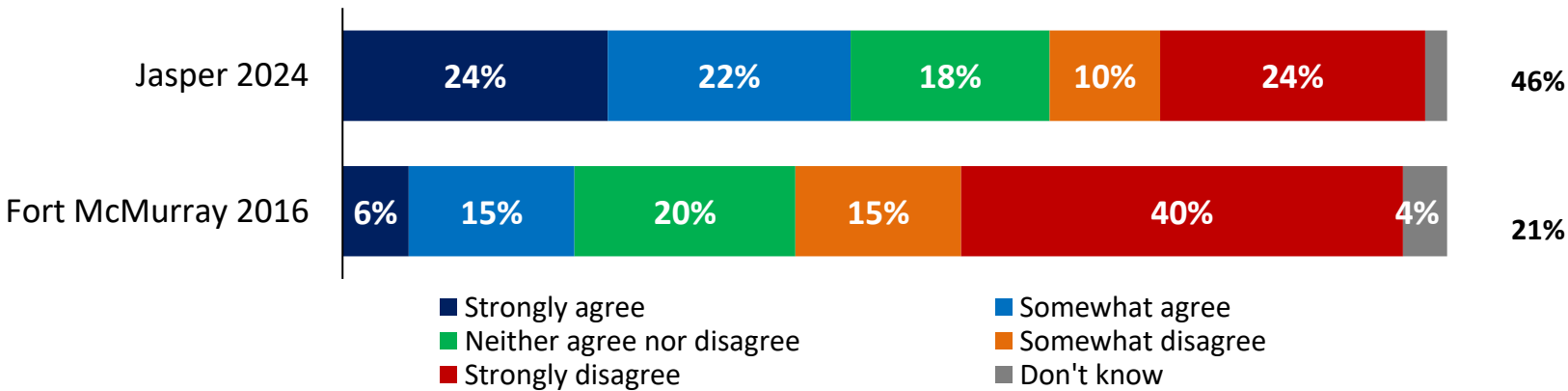
Q Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: **The fire in [Jasper, 2024 or Fort McMurray 2016] is proof that climate change is happening**

[asked of all respondents; n=1,000 in Canada and n= 300 in Alberta]

Canada



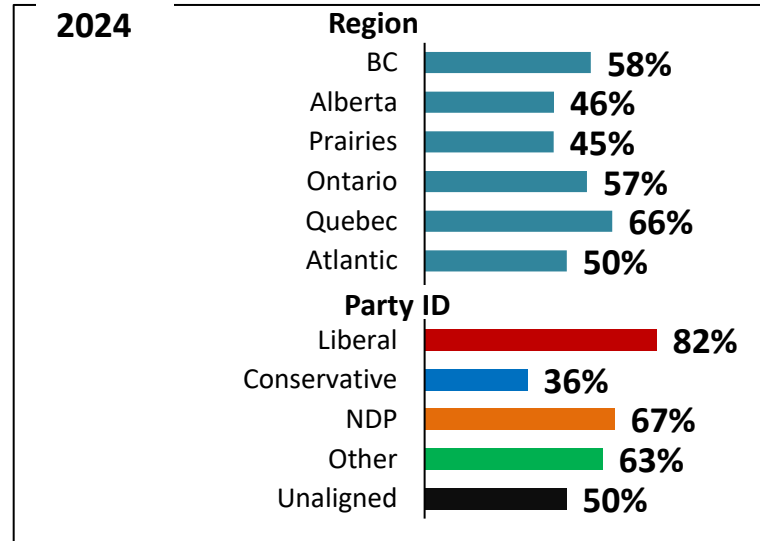
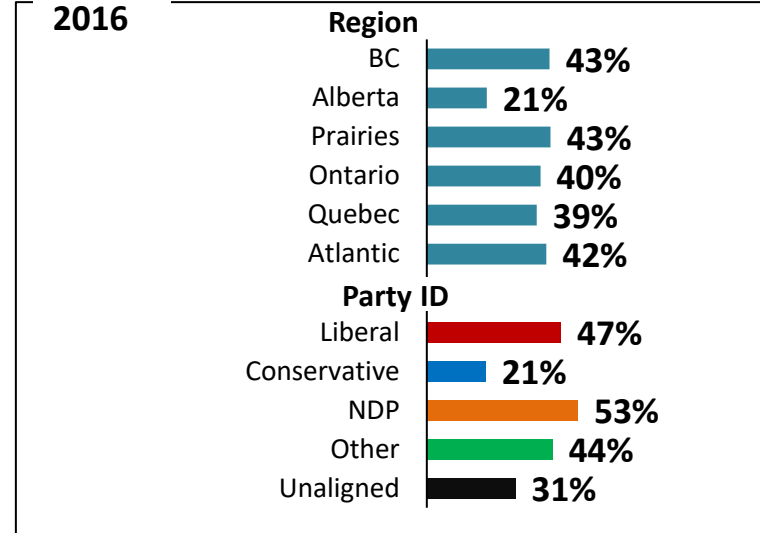
Alberta



■ Strongly agree ■ Somewhat agree
■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Somewhat disagree
■ Strongly disagree ■ Don't know

National Segmentation

Those who say 'Agree'



Premier's Response: Current Premier faces stronger disapproval of forest fire response than predecessor

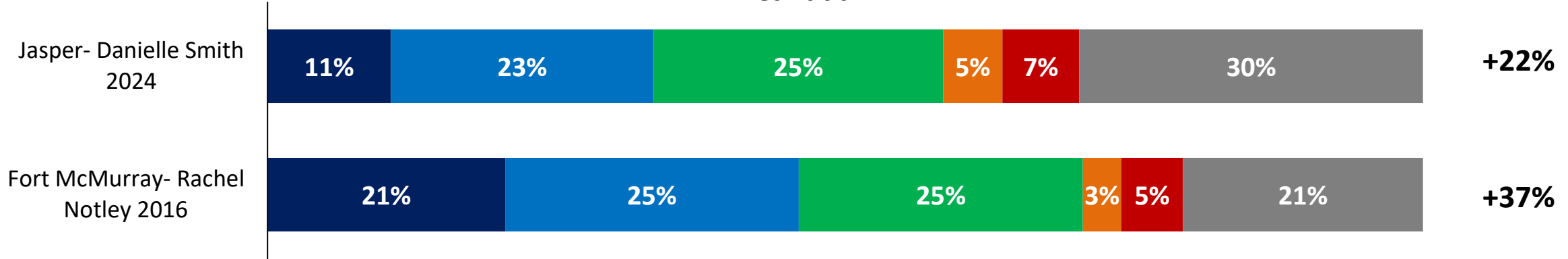


Do you approve or disapprove of the job [the Premier] has done in responding to the fire?

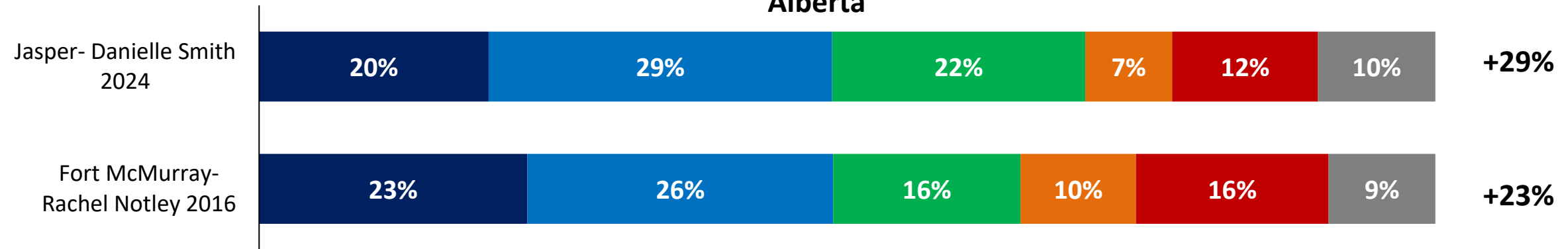
[asked of all respondents; Canada n= 1,000, Alberta n = 300]

Net Approve

Canada



Alberta



- Strongly approve
- Somewhat approve
- Neither approve nor disapprove
- Somewhat disapprove
- Strongly disapprove
- Don't know



Prime Minister's Response: Net approval for Justin Trudeau's response to forest fire declines

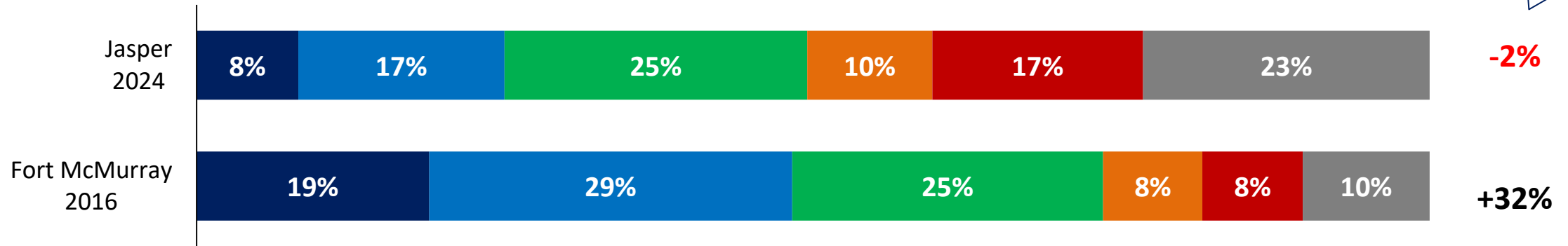


Do you approve or disapprove of the job Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has done in responding to the fire?

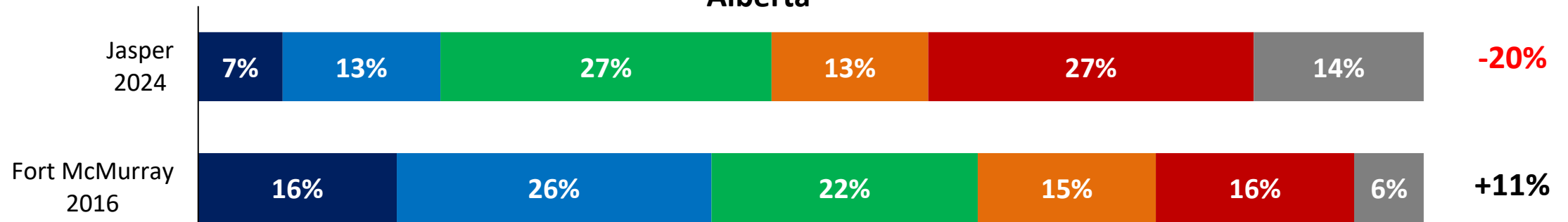
[asked of all respondents; Canada n=1000, Alberta n= 300]

Canada

Net Approve



Alberta



- Strongly approve
- Somewhat approve
- Neither approve nor disapprove
- Somewhat disapprove
- Strongly disapprove
- Don't know



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Building Understanding.

