The Role of Ideology in Public Attitudes towards Refugees: Empirical Evidence from Canada

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Welcome to
CANADA
أهلاً وسهلاً بكم في كندا
EH?

Methodology

3-wave cross-sectional study

Methodology

3-wave cross-sectional study

- Wave 1 = June 2015

Methodology

3-wave cross-sectional study

- Wave 1 = June 2015
- Wave 2 = Jan. 2016

Methodology

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- Wave 1 = June 2015
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Methodology

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- Wave 1 = June 2015
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Nationally-representative on age, gender, & region

Study Sample (*N* = 778)

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381

397

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♂ 381

♀ 397

18-34 yrs.: 249

35-54 yrs.: 262

55+ yrs.: 267

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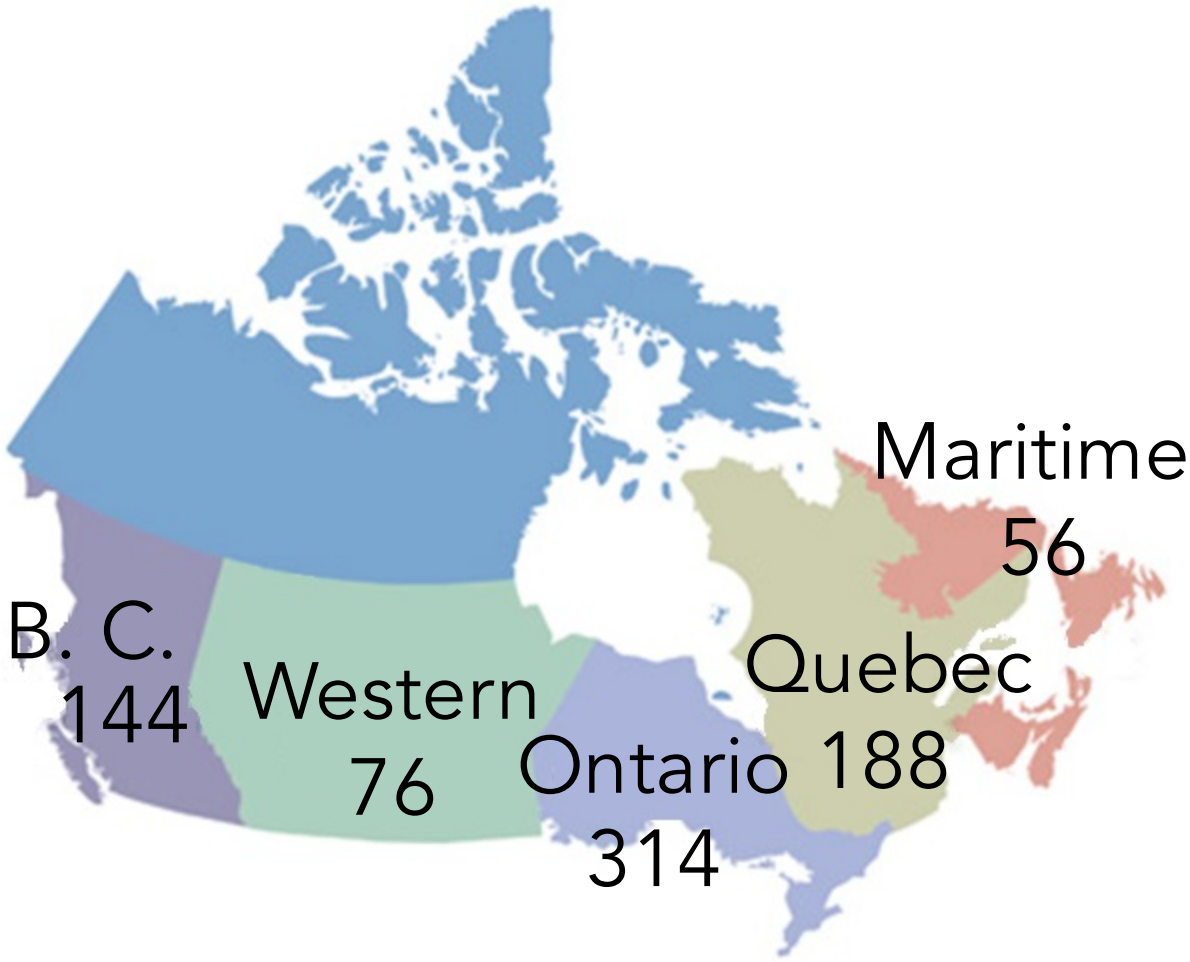
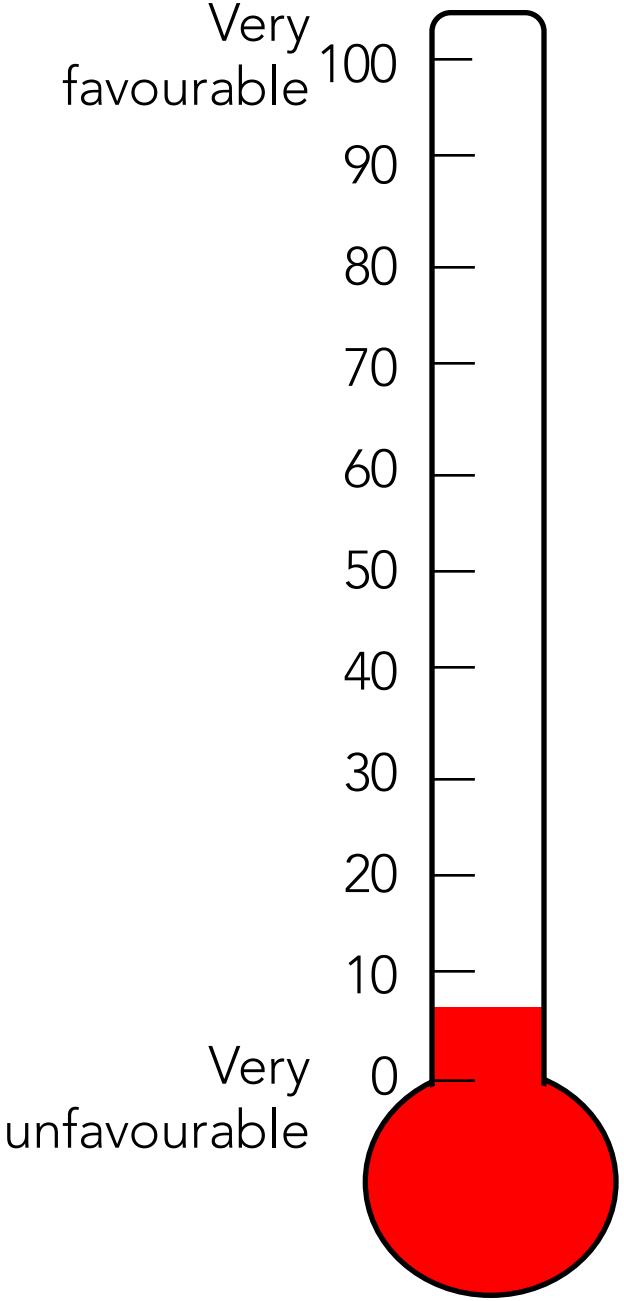


What are Canadians' feelings towards refugees? How do these views compare to those towards other groups?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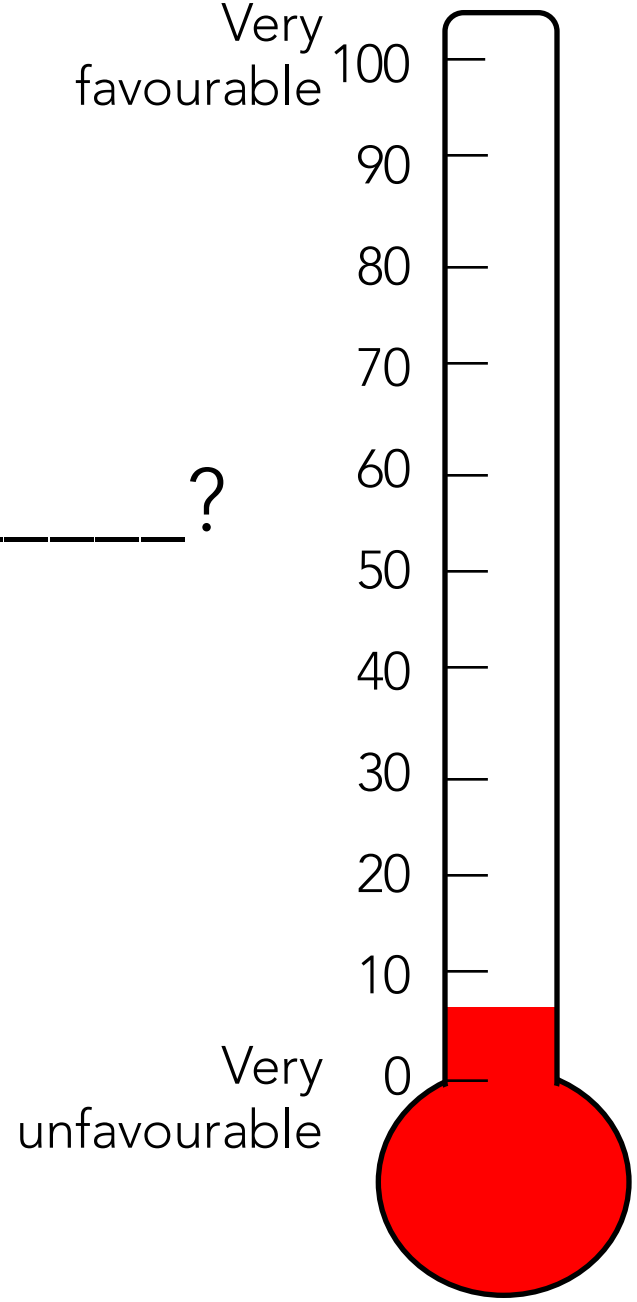
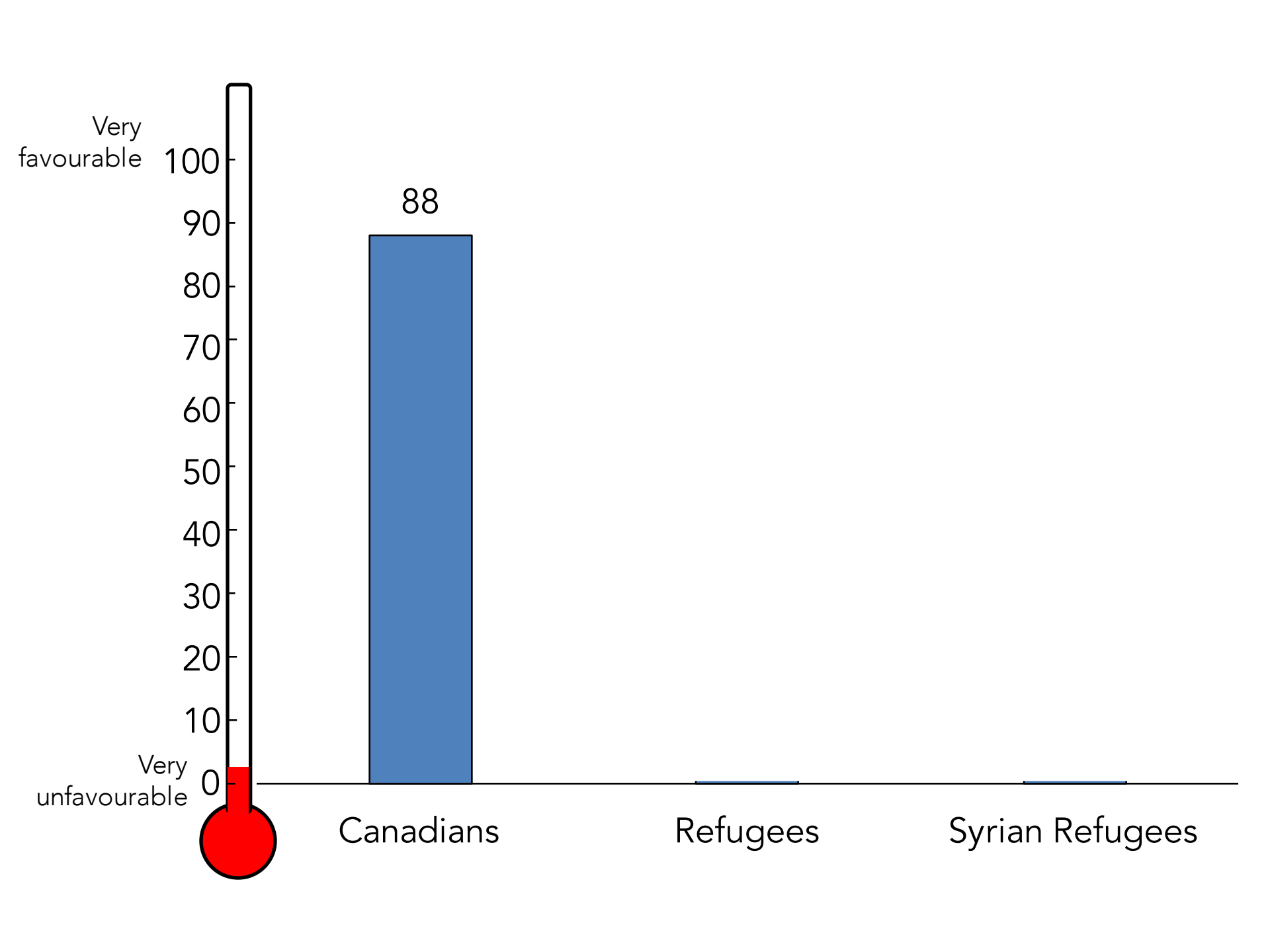
How do you feel towards _____?

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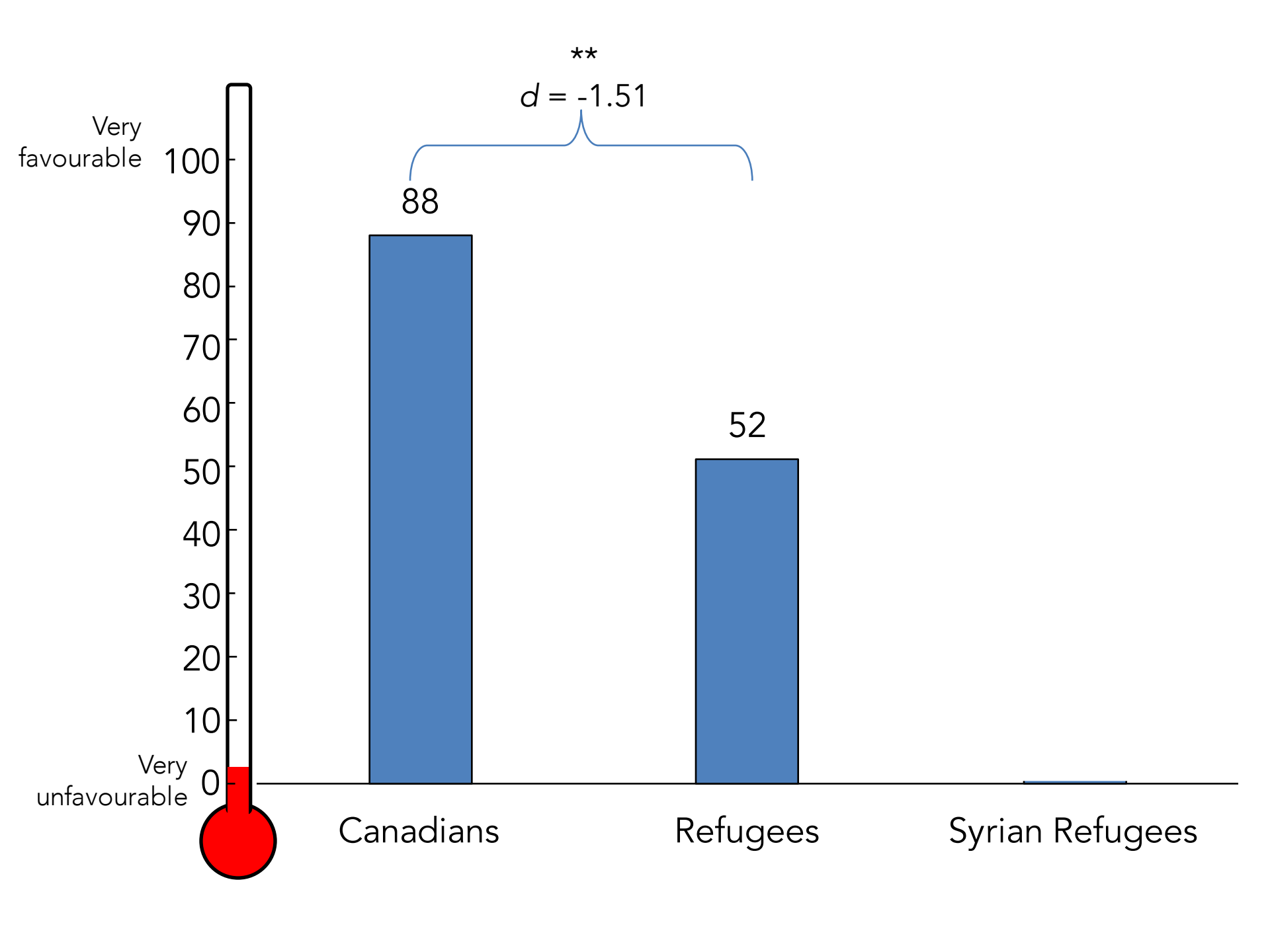
Canadians
Refugees
Syrian Refugees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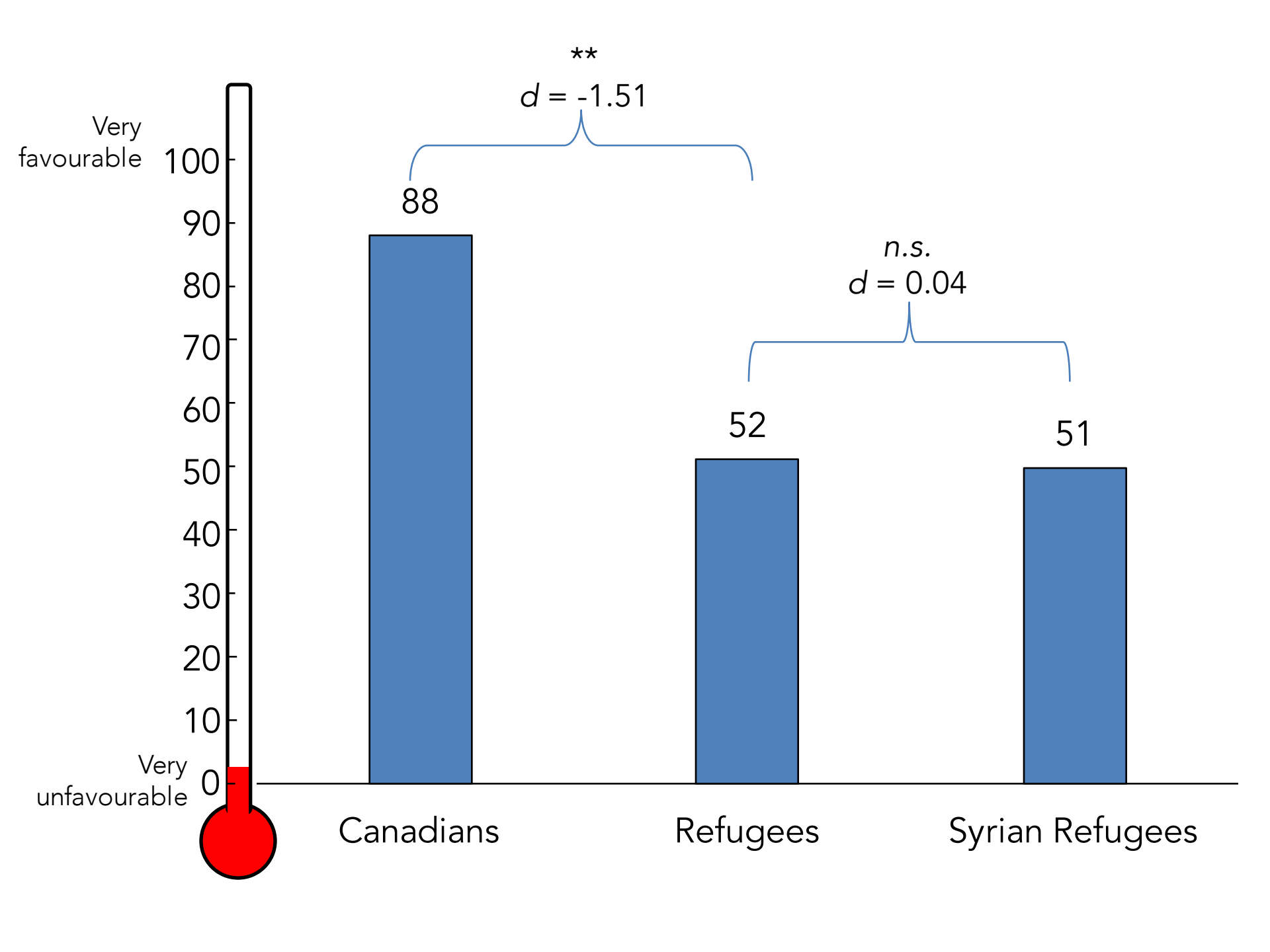
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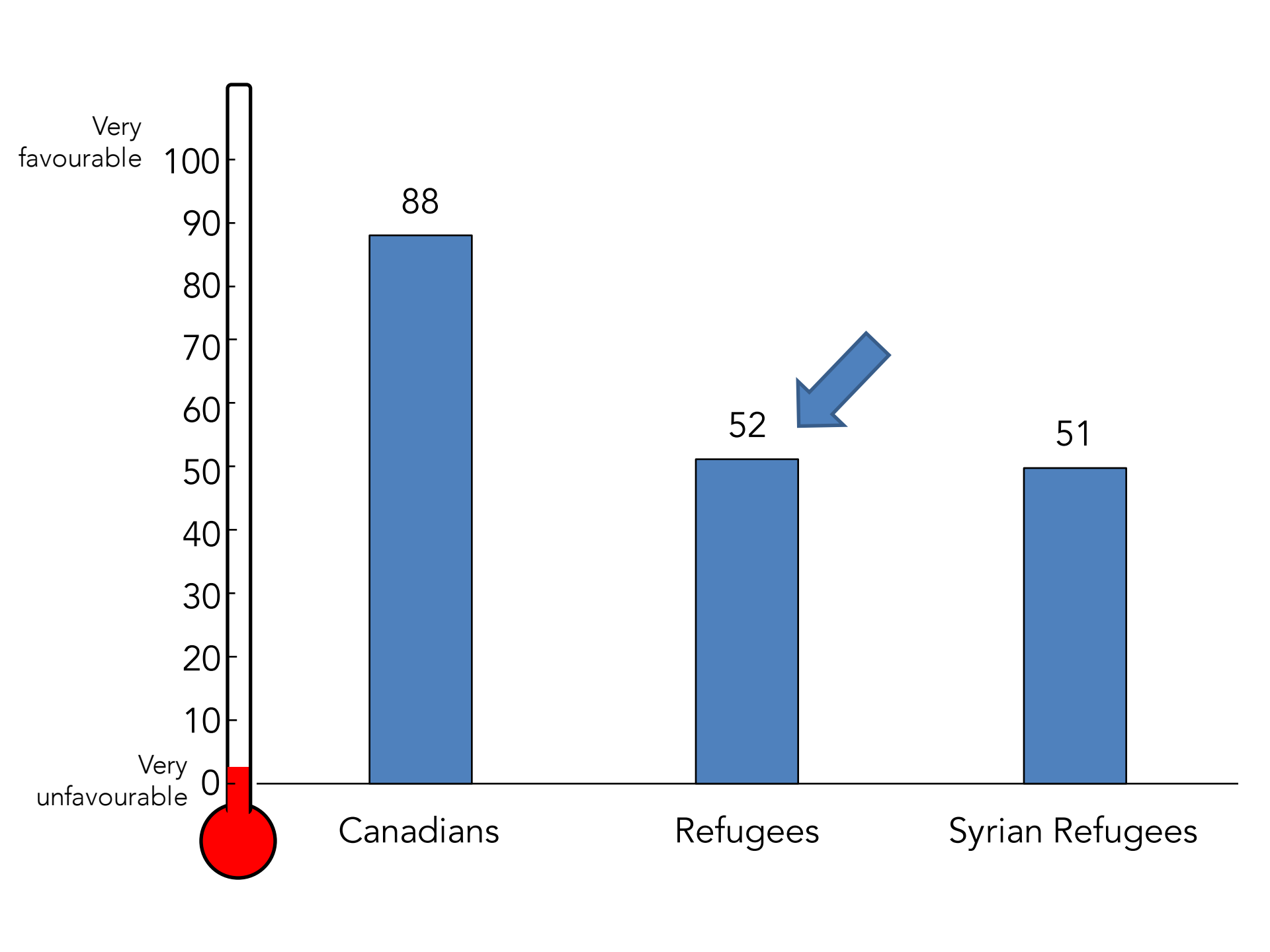
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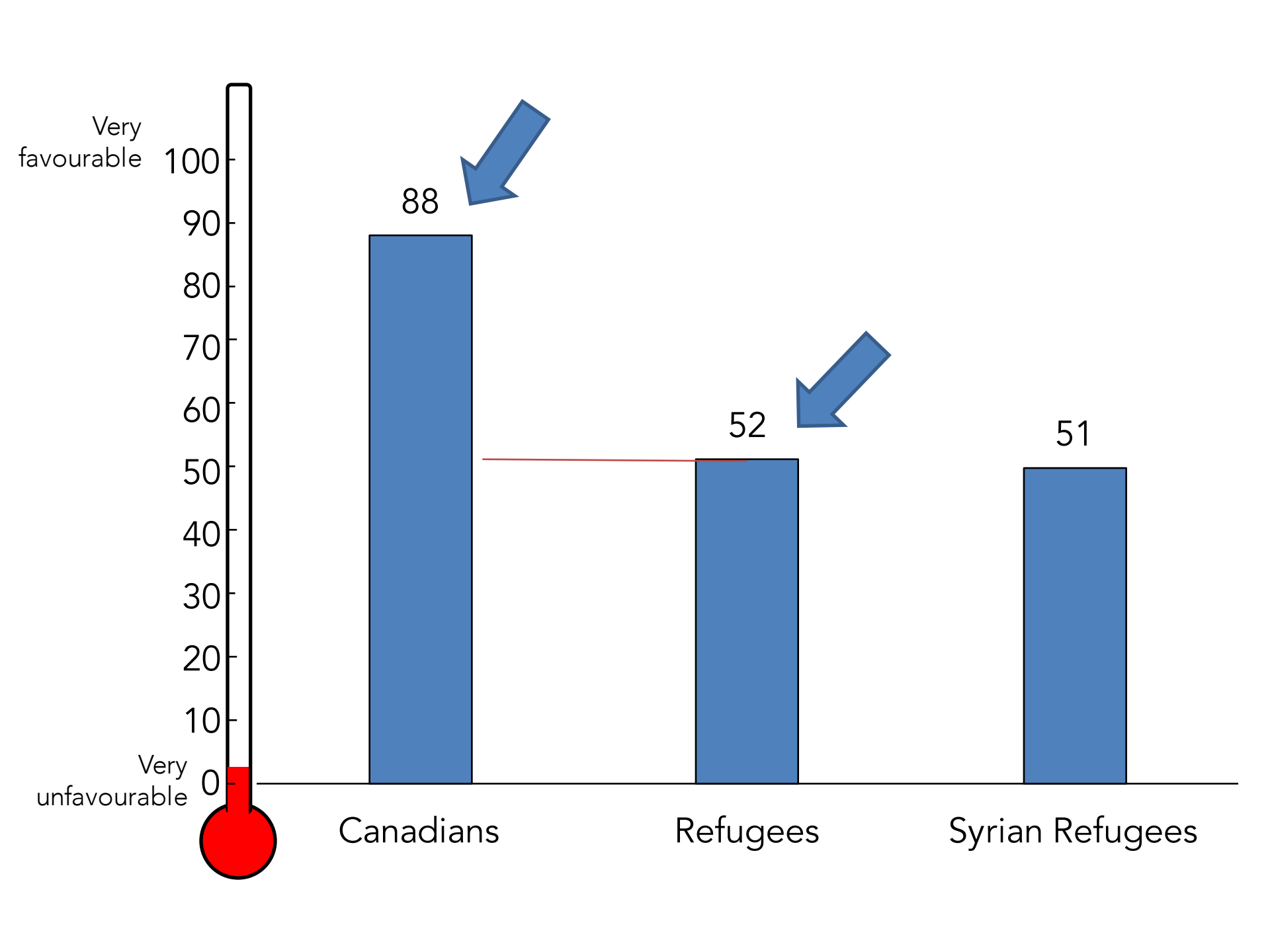
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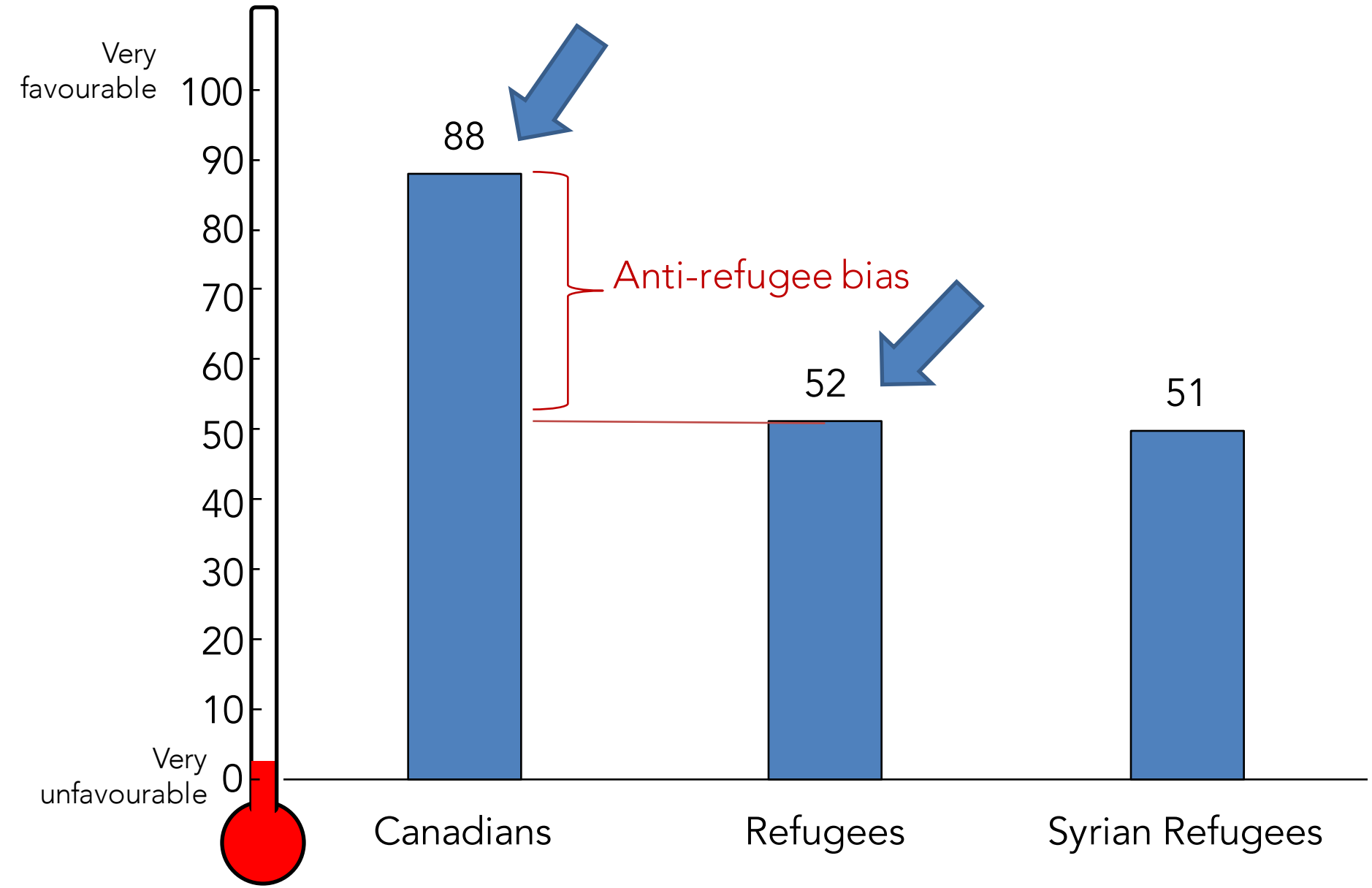
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Anti-refugee bias
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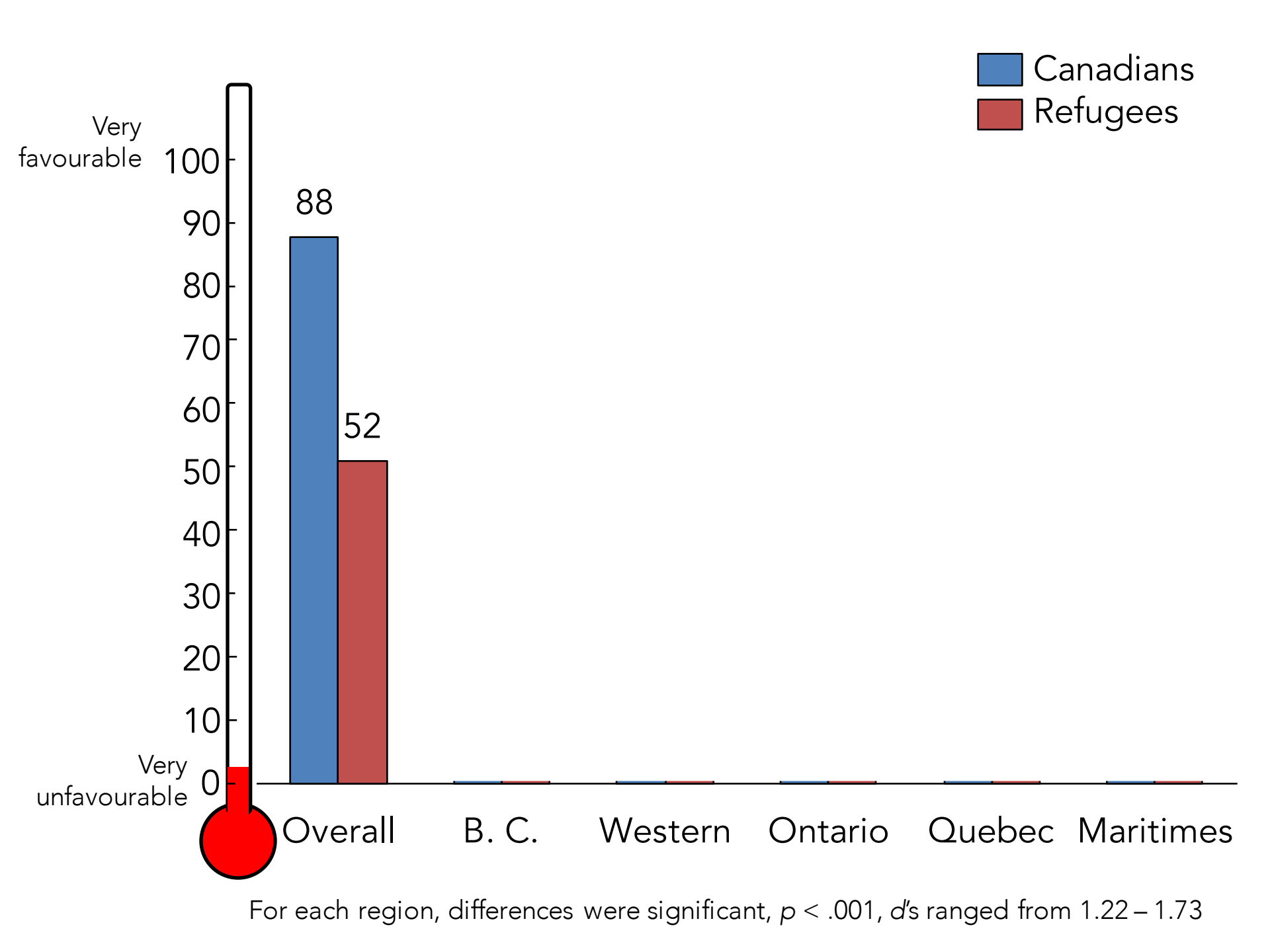
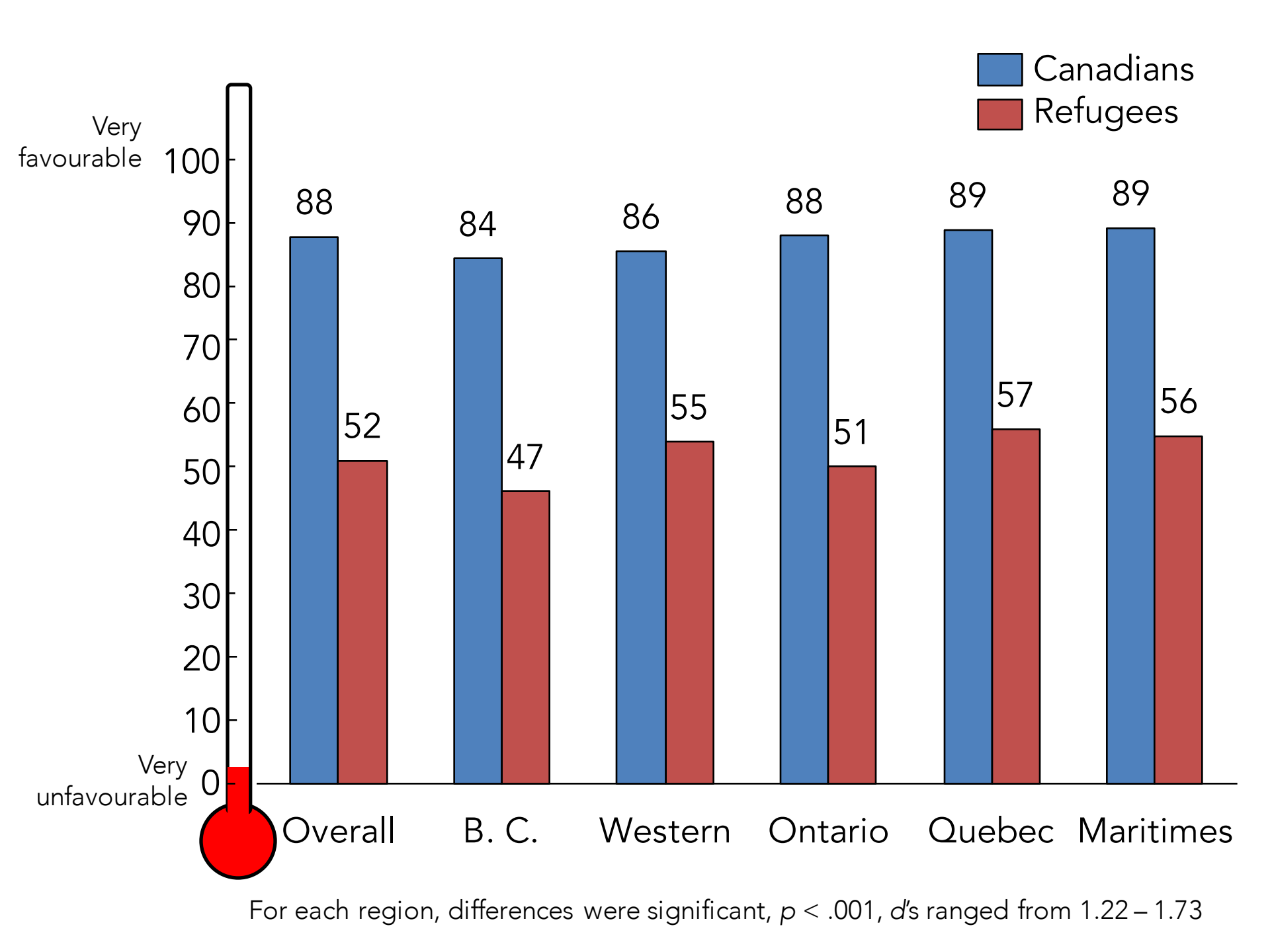


For each region, differences were significant, $p < .001$, d's ranged from 1.22 – 1.73



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Which ideologies underlie Canadians' anti-refugee bias?

Social Dominance Orientation

Sidanius, Pratto, Stallworth, & Malle (1994)

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16 items (α = .91)

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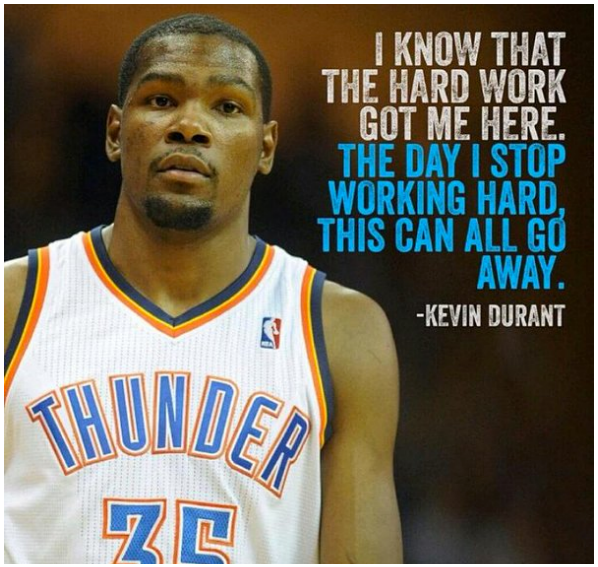
Protestant Work Ethic

Quinn & Crocker (1999)



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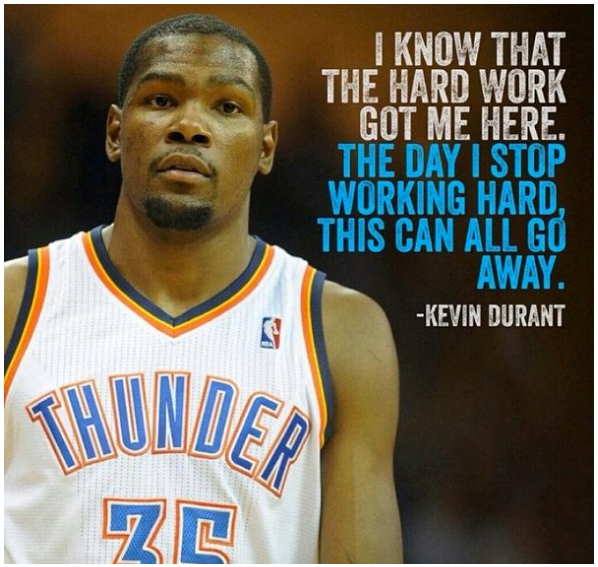
Protestant Work Ethic

Quinn & Crocker (1999)

5 items (α = .82)

"If you want to be successful, all you need to do is work hard and improve yourself."

1 = *Strongly disagree; 7 = Strongly agree*



Political Orientation

2 items (r = .61)

"Politically, how do you consider yourself on social issues?"

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System Justification

Jost & Kay (2003)

Political Orientation

2 items (r = .61)

"Politically, how do you consider yourself on social issues?"

1 = *Very liberal*; 7 = *Very conservative*

System Justification

Jost & Kay (2003)

8 items (α = .84)

"In general, the Canadian political system operates as it should"

1 = *Strongly disagree; 7 = Strongly agree*

Ideological Predictors of Anti-Refugee Bias

	β

*$p < .05$
**$p < .001$

Ideological Predictors of Anti-Refugee Bias

	β
Social dominance orientation	+.36**
Protestant work ethic	+.23**
Political orientation	+.09*

*$p < .05$
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$F(4, 757) = 82.71^{**}$, $R^2 = .30$

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Anti-Refugee Bias

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Exists across Canada

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More common among people who strongly believe…

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Group hierarchy/inequality are a good thing

(Social Dominance Orientation)

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Anti-Refugee Bias

Exists across Canada

More common among people who strongly believe…

- Group hierarchy/inequality are a good thing (Social Dominance Orientation)
- Hard work = success (Protestant Work Ethic)
- In more conservative political policies

Less common among people who strongly believe...

- The Canadian government is legitimate/fair (System Justification)

To counter anti-refugee bias, create strategies that target or leverage these ideologies

Leverage the system justification motive by using system-sanctioned messages

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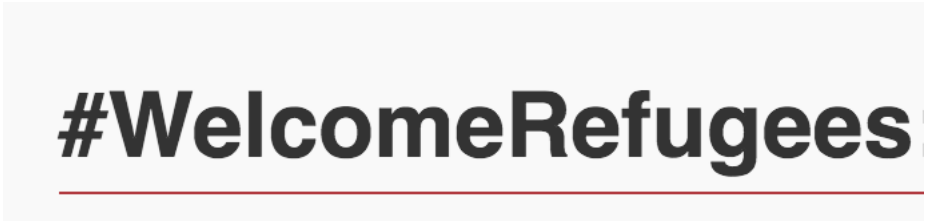


Leverage the system justification motive by using system-sanctioned messages

#WelcomeRefugees

Open hearts and welcoming communities: it's the Canadian way

Resettling refugees is a proud and important part of Canada's humanitarian tradition. It reflects our commitment to Canadians and demonstrates to the world that we have a shared responsibility to help people who are displaced and persecuted. Get the latest #WelcomeRefugees stories.

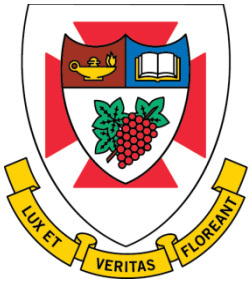
A young Syrian boy happily shakes the hand of Minister John McCallum.

Item 3 of 10

Canada's Humanitarian Tradition: Vanig

Welcome to
CANADA
أهلاً وسهلاً بكم في كندا
EH?

Thank you



THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

PATHWAYS TO PROSPERITY
Promoting Welcoming Communities in Canada

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada

Canada

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*$p < .05$
**$p < .001$

$F(4, 757) = 82.71^{**}$, $R^2 = .30$

Counter social dominance with a common ingroup identity

Esses, Dovidio, Jackson, & Armstrong (2001)

Ideological Predictors of Opposition to Further Refugee Intake

	β
Social dominance orientation	+.42**
Protestant work ethic	+.11**
Political orientation	+.16**
System justification	-.33**

*$p < .05$
**$p < .001$

$F(4, 768) = 141.18^{**}$, $R^2 = .42$

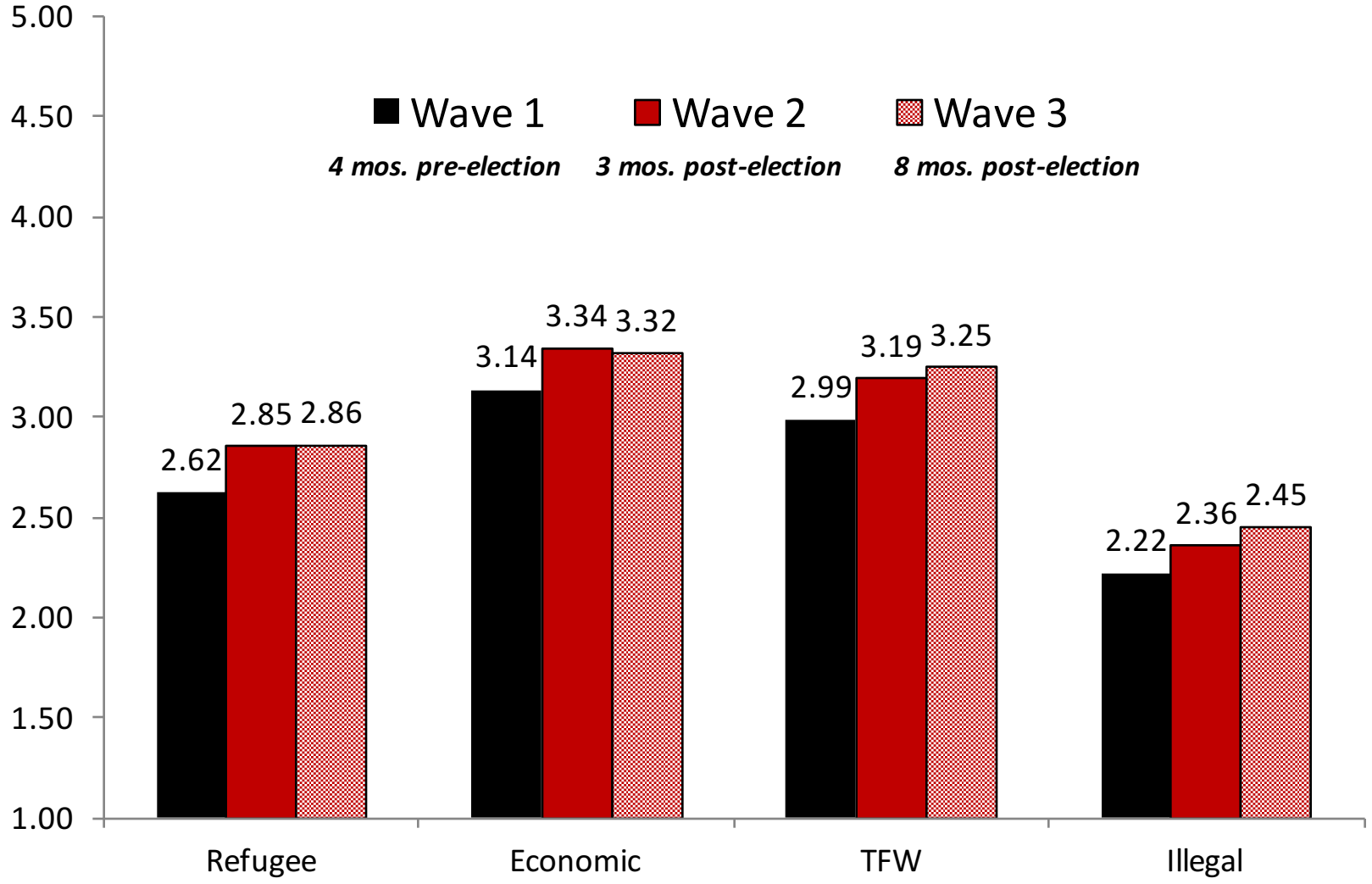
Ideological Predictors of Support for Assimilation

	β
Social dominance orientation	+.34**
Protestant work ethic	+.15**
Political orientation	+.11**
System justification	-.25**

*$p < .05$
**$p < .001$

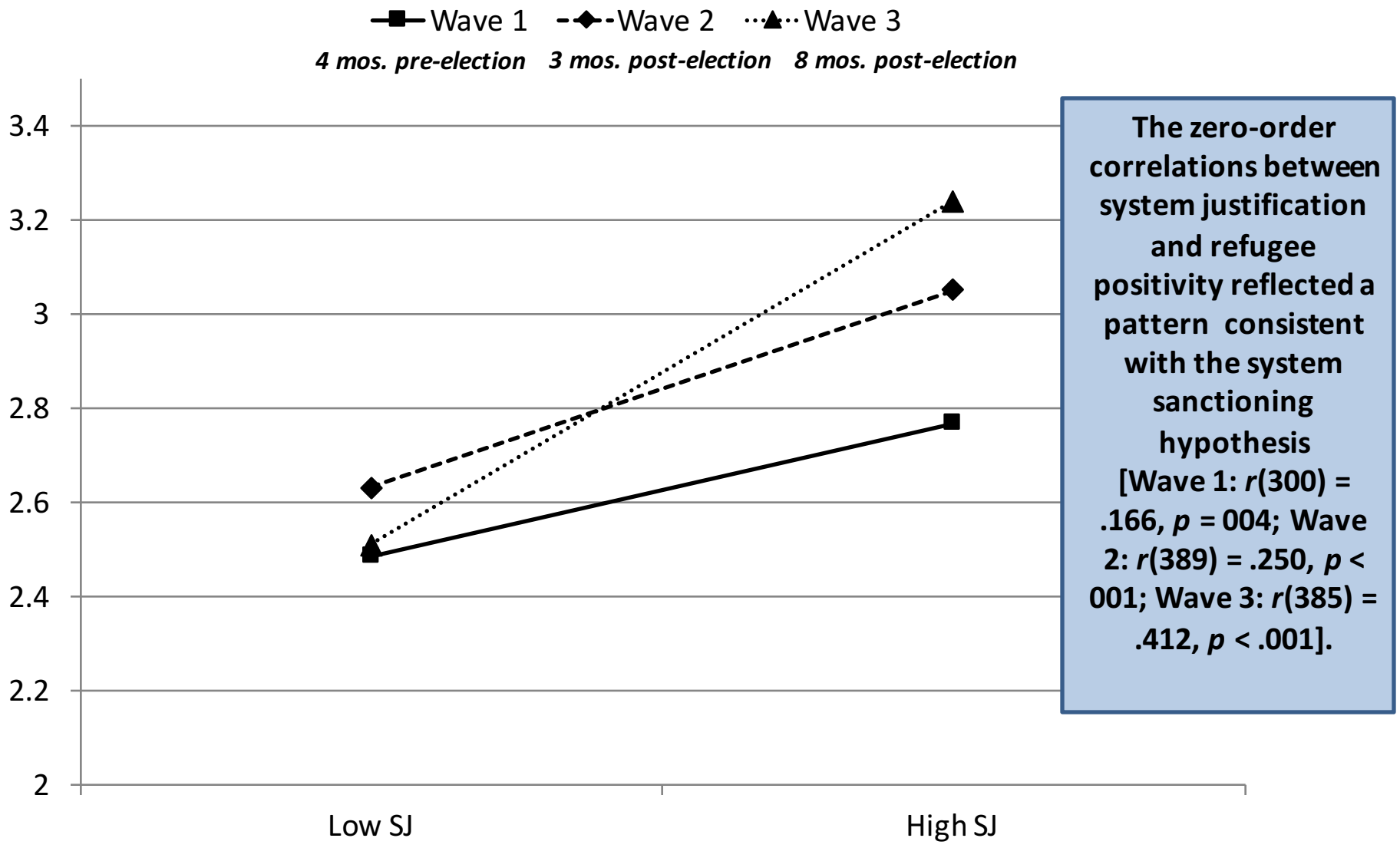
$F(4, 773) = 70.62^{**}$, $R^2 = .27$

Positivity as a Function of Data Collection Wave



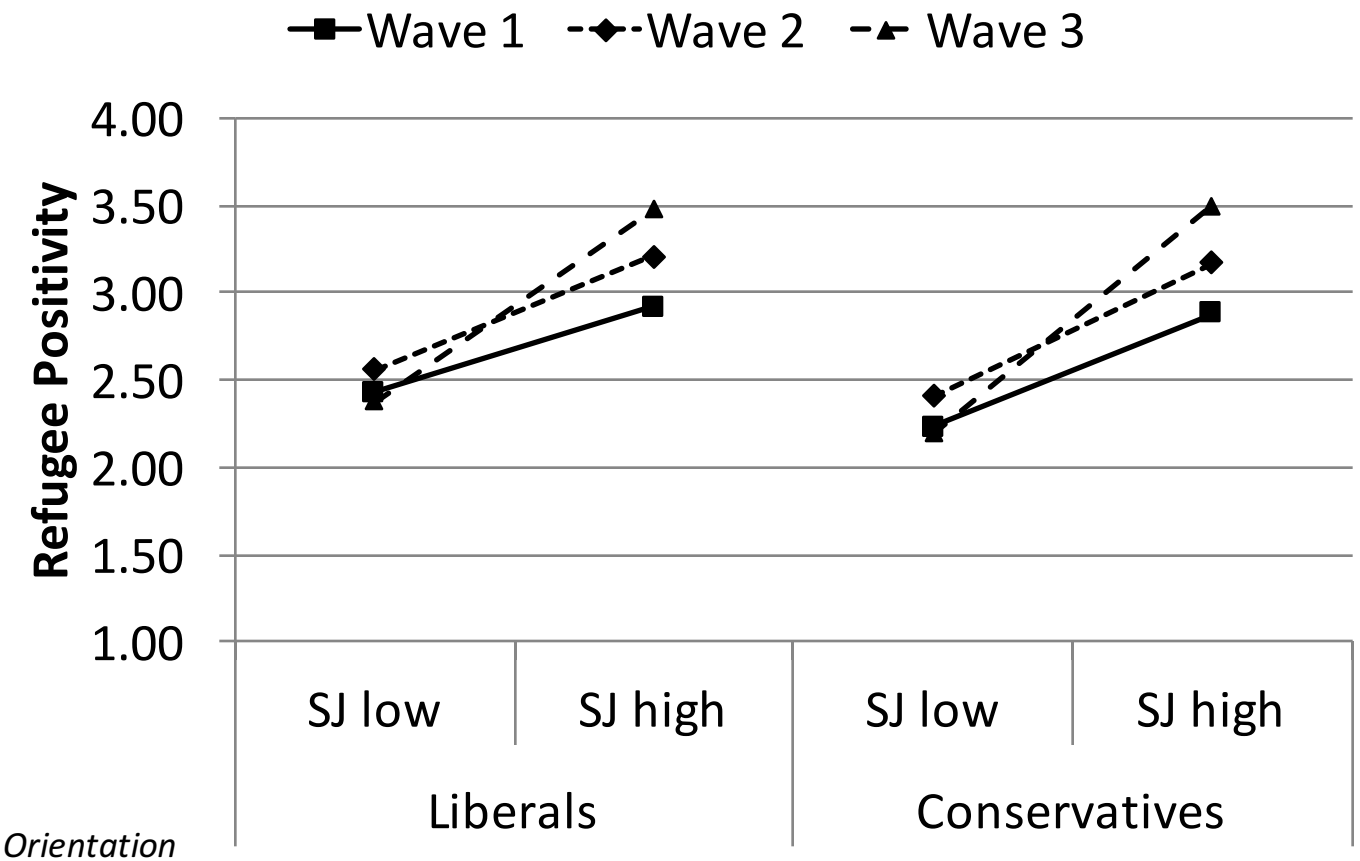
Scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 5 (extremely)

System Justification and Refugee Positivity



The zero-order correlations between system justification and refugee positivity reflected a pattern consistent with the system sanctioning hypothesis [Wave 1: $r(300) = .166$, $p = 004$; Wave 2: $r(389) = .250$, $p < 001$; Wave 3: $r(385) = .412$, $p < .001$].

System Justification and Refugee Positivity as a Function of Political Orientation



Political Orientation
N = 1080; *Range* = -4 to +4
Mean = -.75; *SD* = 2.17
53% of the sample using "liberal" side of the scale
20% of the sample using "moderate"
32% of the sample using "conservative" side of the scale

Sample Income

$25,000 or less	130
$25,000 - $49,999	207
$50,000 - $74,999	170
$75,000 - $99,999	125
$100,000 - $149,999	108
$150,000 or higher	36

Sample Education

1	Less than High School	24
	High School / GED	170
2	Some College	156
	2-year College Degree	111
	4-year University/College Degree	210
3	Masters Degree	68
	Doctoral Degree	12
	Professional Degree (JD, MD)	7

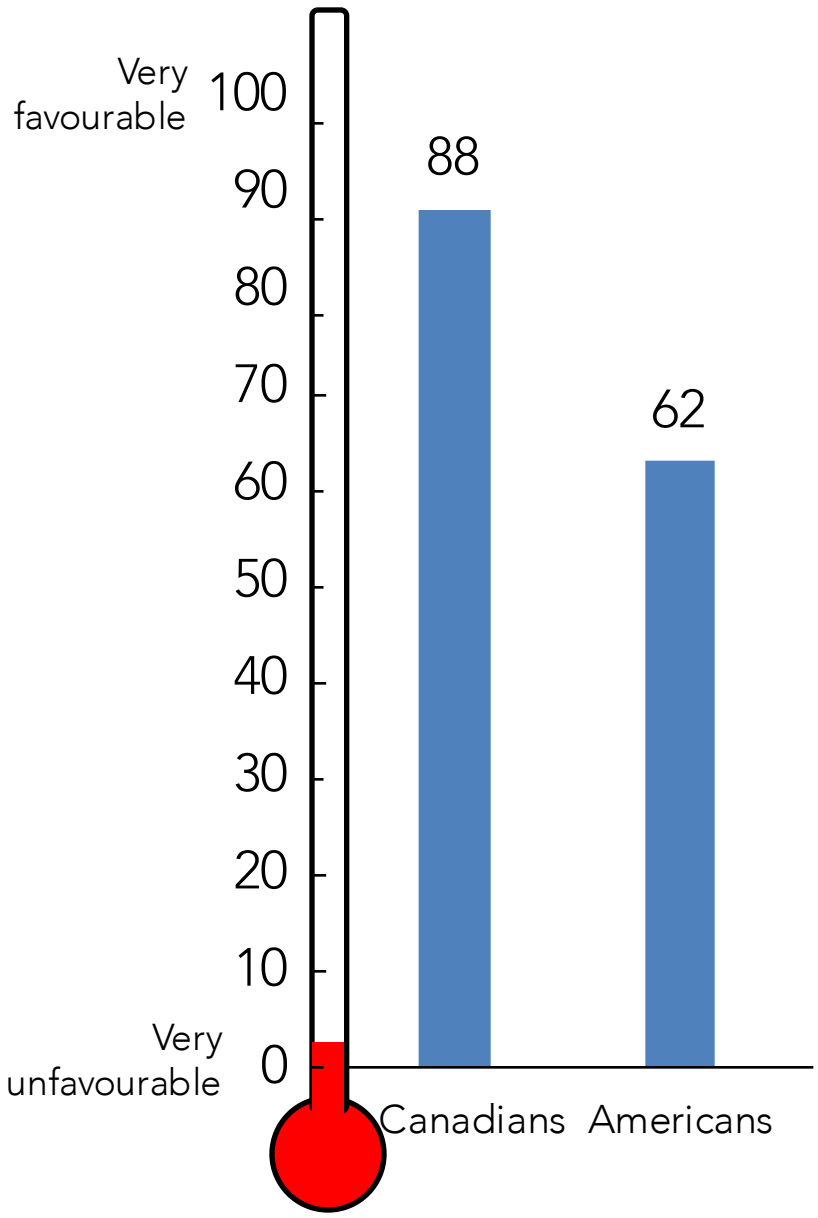
Correlations of Ideologies

	Social Dominance Orientation	Protestant Work Ethic	Political Orientation	System Justification
Social Dominance Orientation	--	.19**	.38**	-.14**
Protestant Work Ethic		--	.15**	.36**
Political Orientation			--	-.16**
System Justification				--

Sample Characteristics

Demographics	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3
Gender			
Male	135 (45%)	193 (49%)	188 (49%)
Female	167 (55%)	198 (51%)	199 (51%)
Age			
18-34	98 (33%)	129 (33%)	120 (31%)
35-54	101 (33%)	131 (34%)	131 (34%)
55+	103 (34%)	131 (34%)	136 (35%)
Region			
Ontario	121 (40%)	156 (40%)	158 (41%)
Quebec	76 (25%)	97 (25%)	91 (24%)
Maritimes	21 (7%)	28 (7%)	28 (7%)
Western	84 (28%)	38 (10%)	72 (19%)
B.C.*		72 (18%)	38 (10%)
Total	302	391	387

*subsumed under Western in Wave 1.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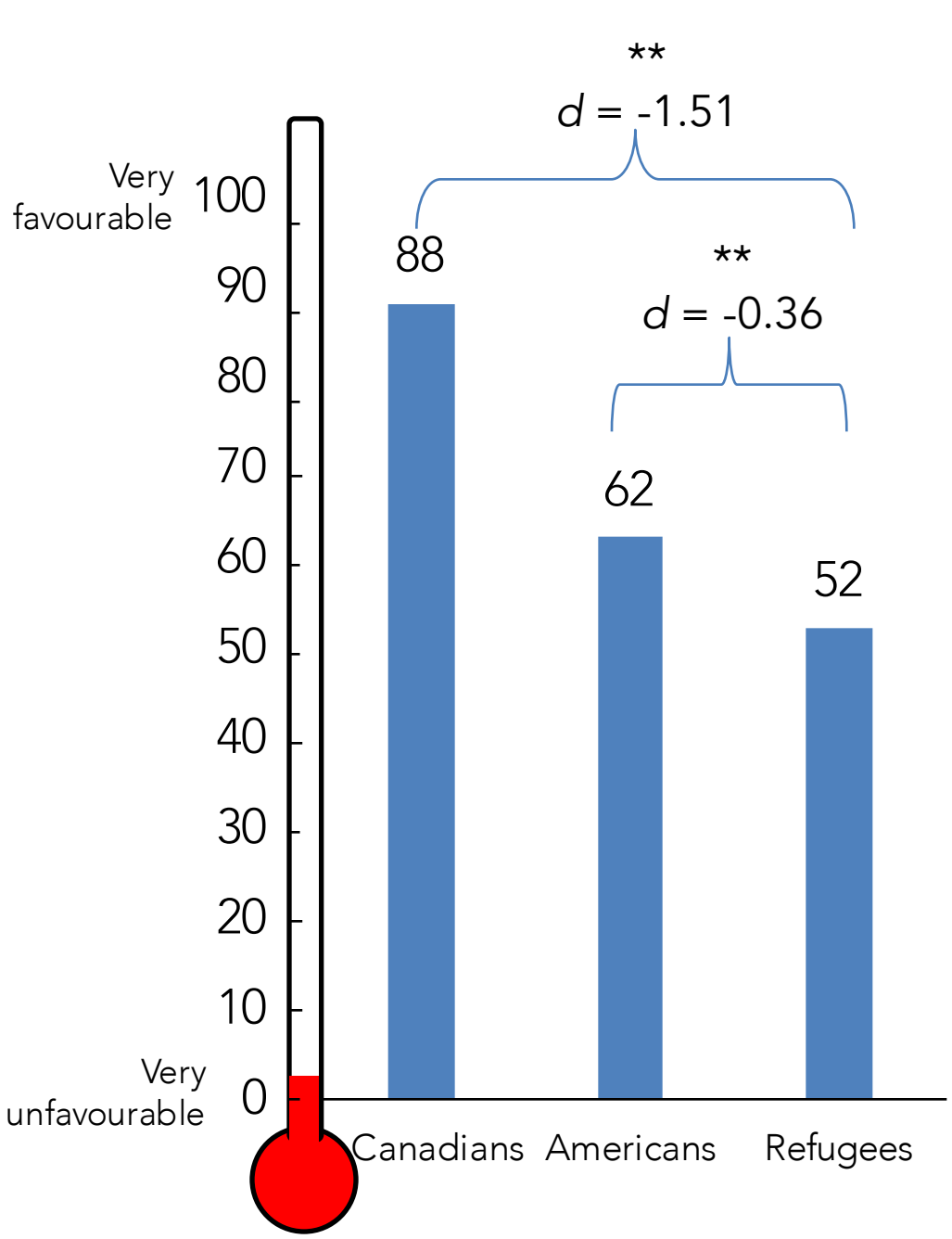
Canadians
Americans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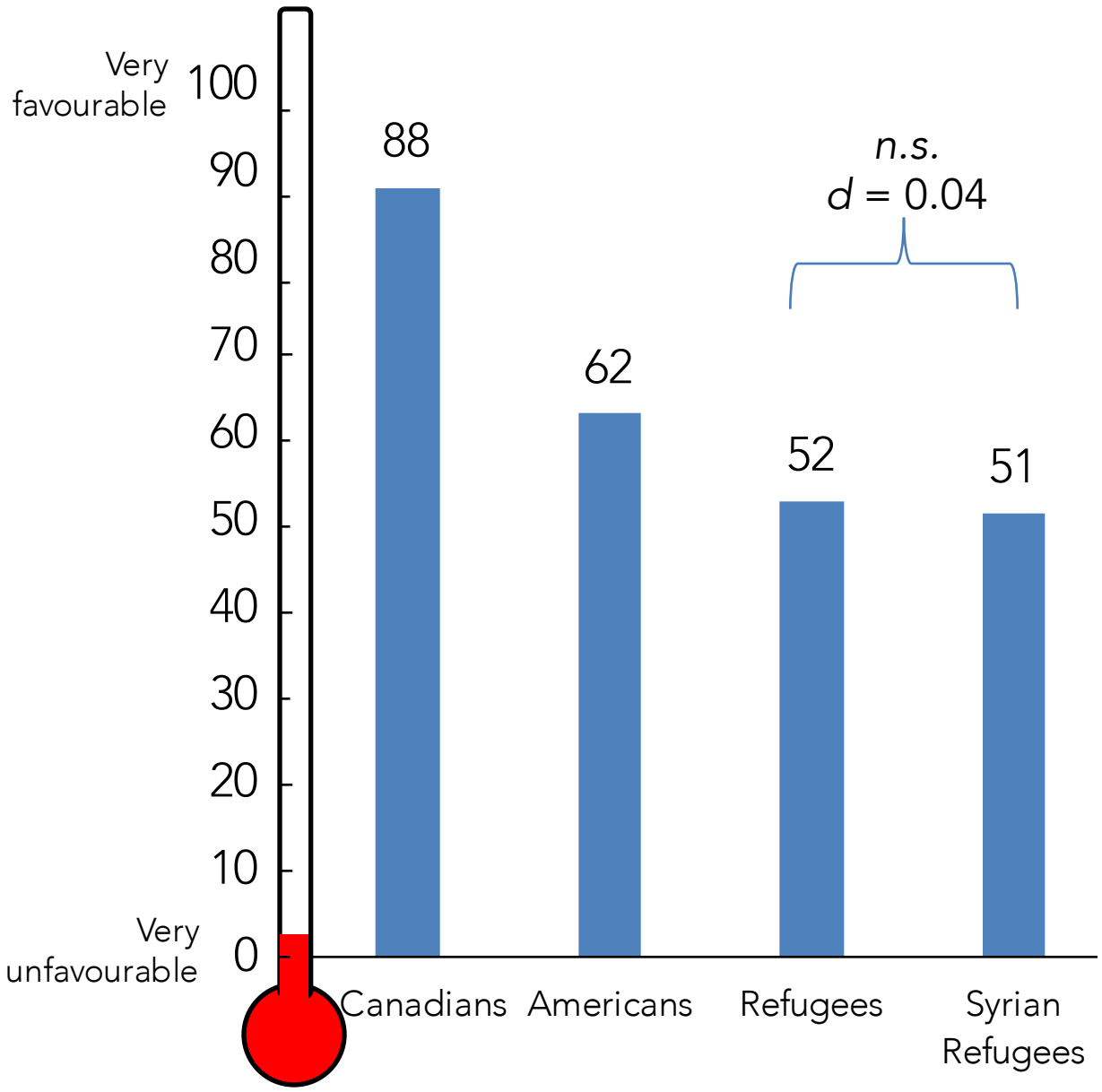
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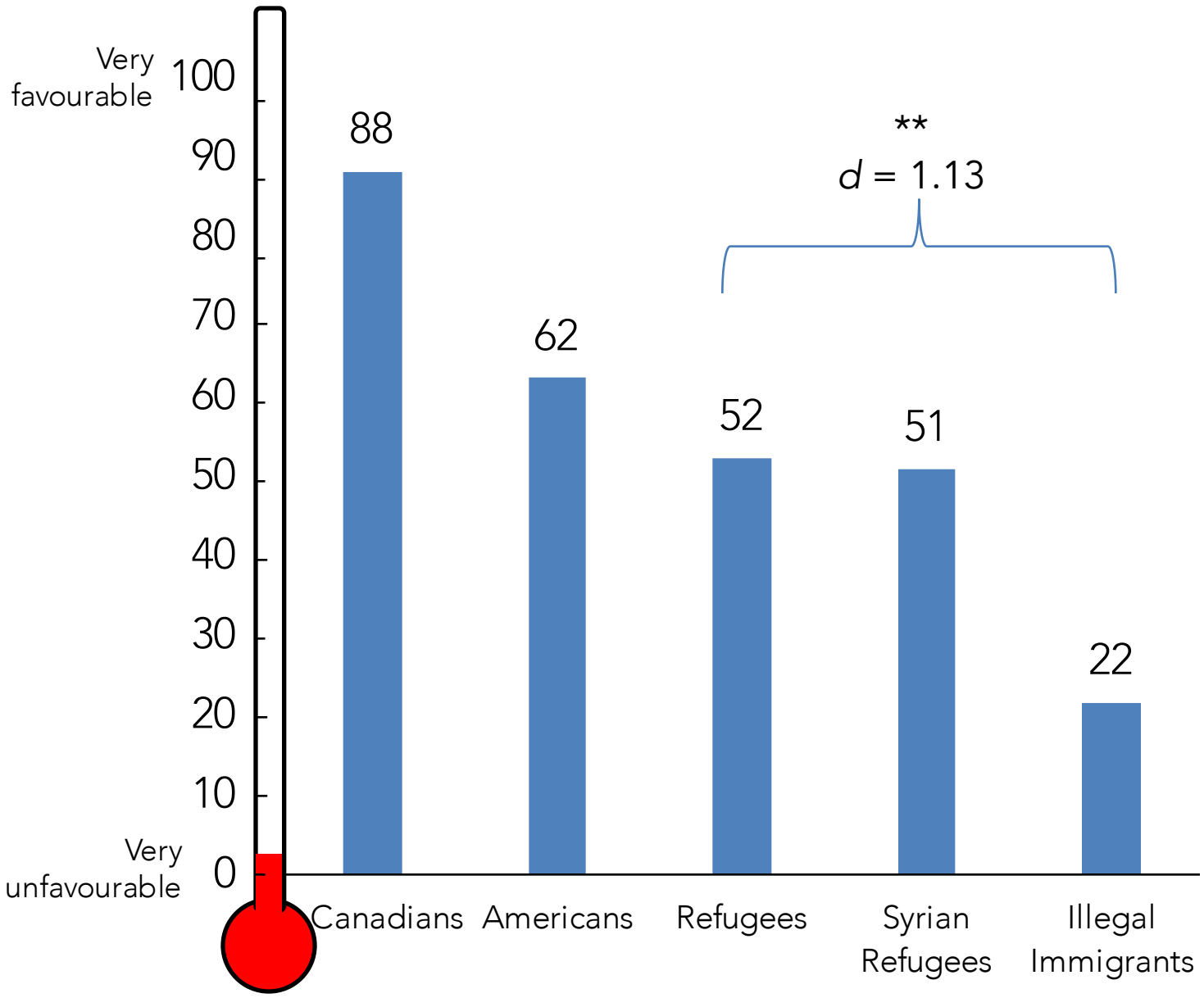
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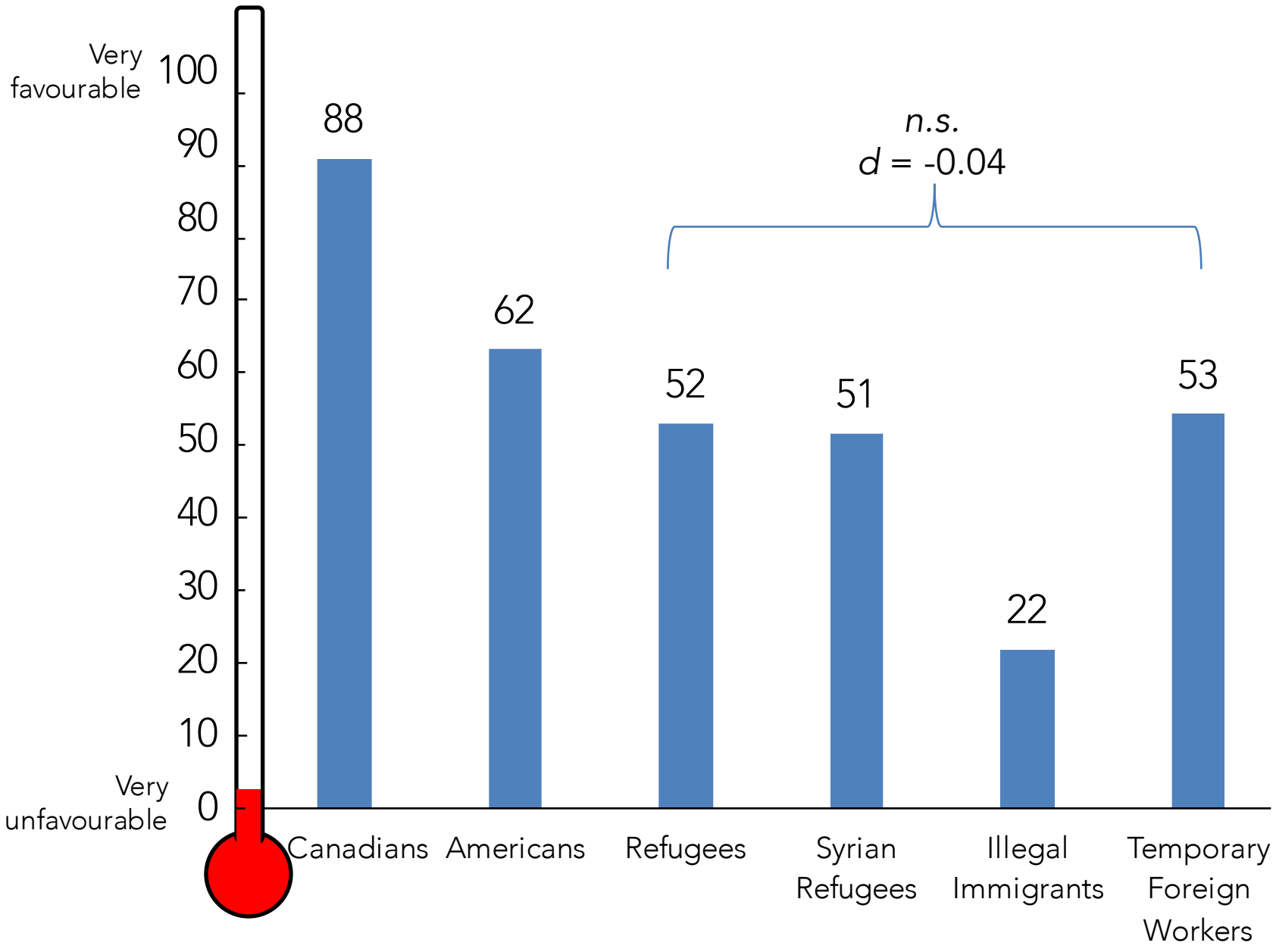
Illegal Immigrants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Canadians
Americans
Refugees
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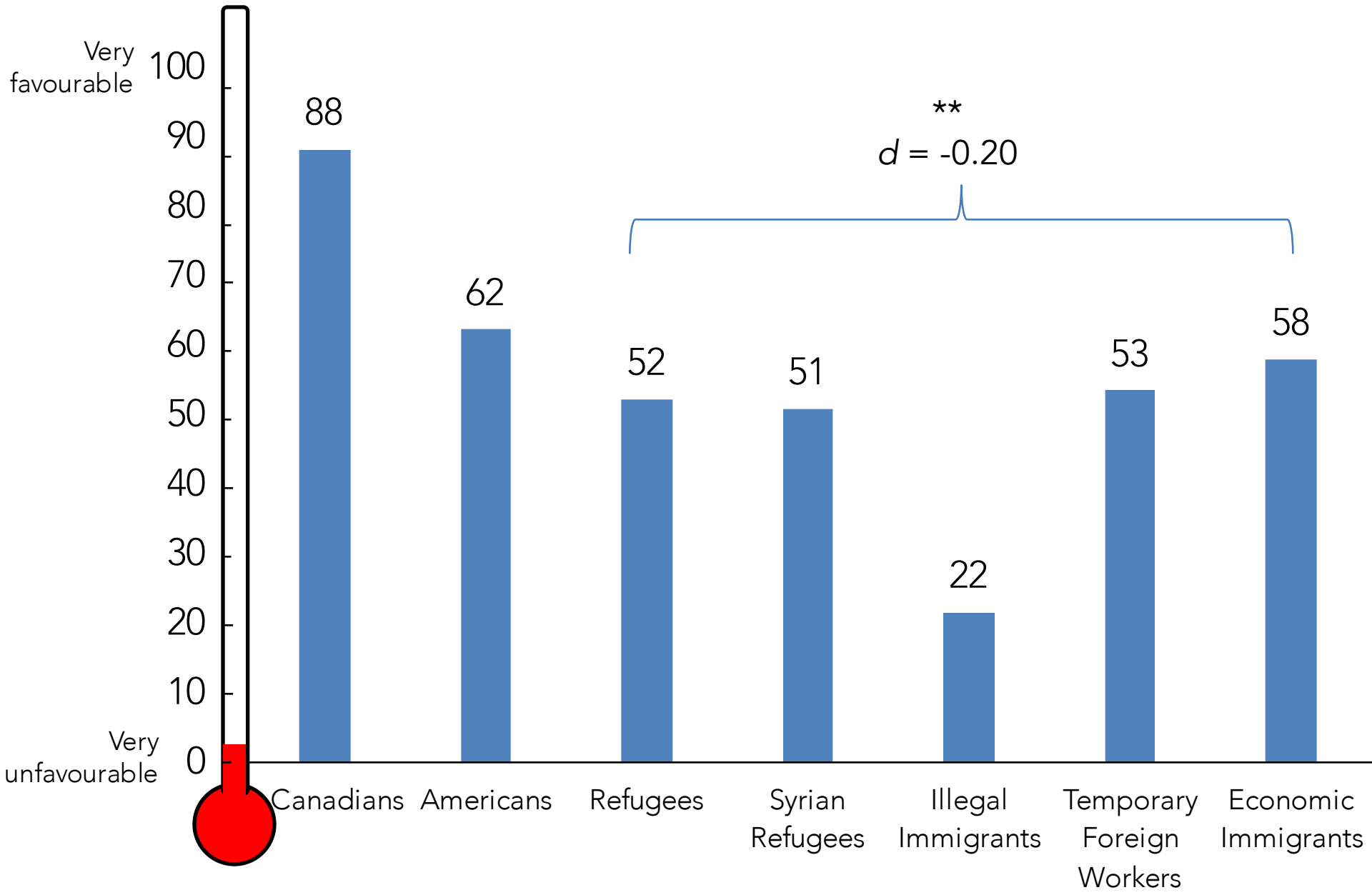
Illegal Immigrants
Temporary Foreign Workers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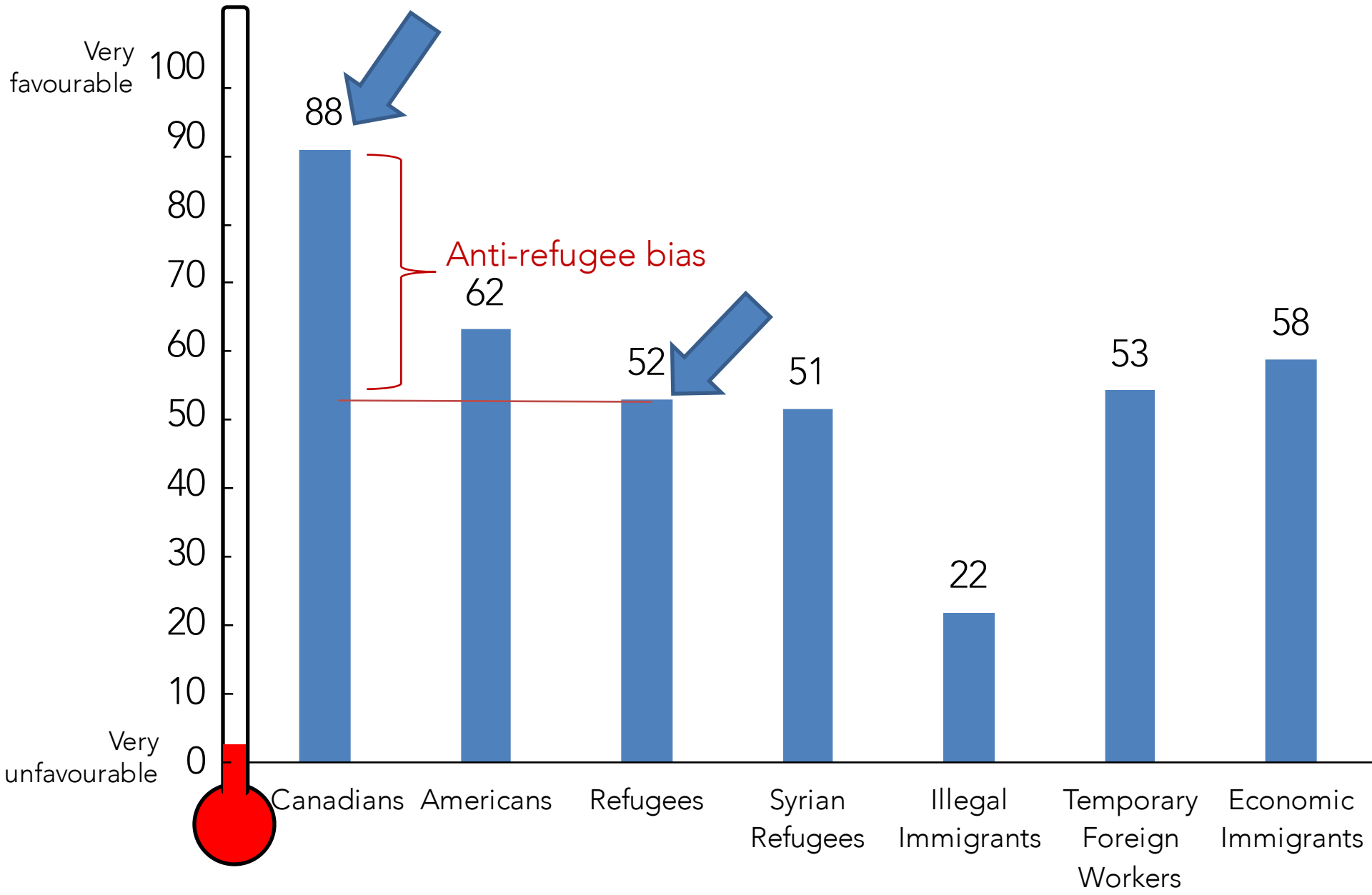
Refugees
Syrian Refugees
Illegal Immigrants
Temporary Foreign Workers
Economic Immigrants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