Opinion Monitor for Development Policy 2022

# DEVELOPMENT ENGAGEMENT IN TIMES OF GLOBAL CRISES AND CHALLENGES

*2022*

DEVELOPMENT ENGAGEMENT LAB

MeMo
DEval Meinungsmonitor Entwicklungspolitik

DEval
GERMAN
INSTITUTE FOR
DEVELOPMENT
EVALUATION

The Opinion Monitor for Development Policy 2022 covers two main topic areas. The first part investigates central public attitudes towards development policy. For example, it looks into general support for official development cooperation (DC), attitudes towards various motives for DC and how people assess its effectiveness. It pays particular attention to attitudes regarding democracy and promotion of democracy. The second part focuses on development engagement. This includes non-monetary engagement such as activities related to information and communication, organisation-based engagement and political participation, as well as monetary engagement such as donations to development policy organisations and sustainable consumption. A guest contribution supplements the second part, creating a typology based on the various forms of engagement and analysing factors that influence shifts between engagement types over the course of time. Both parts present the indicators for attitudes and engagement (longitudinal study) and investigate differences between different population groups. Finally, the report provides implications for governmental and civil-society development policy actors regarding strategy, communication and education and for promoting development engagement.

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# IMPRINT

The German Institute for Development Evaluation (DEval) is mandated by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) to independently analyse and assess German development interventions.

Evaluation reports contribute to the transparency of development results and provide policy-makers with evidence and lessons learned based on which they can shape and improve their development policies.

In its "Opinion Monitor for Development Policy" series, DEval regularly draws up analyses on the attitude of the German population towards development policy and cooperation as well as global sustainable development.

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The Online Annex to this report can be accessed at *https://bit.ly/40eYugM* (in German)

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

# Opinion Monitor for Development Policy 2022

### At a glance

**DEval**
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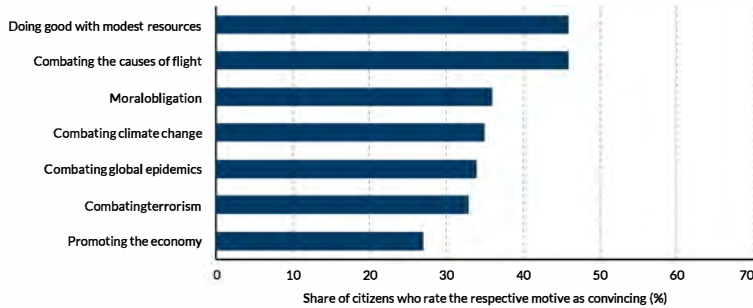DER ENTWICKLUNGS-
ZUSAMMENARBEIT

## The German population's attitude towards development policy

👍 **75% advocate medium to high support for countries of the Global South**

🎯 **20% consider DC to be effective**

🔋 **People assess their own influence on the situation in the Global South as low**

### Convincing motives for Development Cooperation

| Motive | |
|---|---|
| Doing good with modest resources | |
| Combating the causes of flight | |
| Moral obligation | |
| Combating climate change | |
| Combating global epidemics | |
| Combating terrorism | |
| Promoting the economy | |

Share of citizens who rate the respective motive as convincing (%)
(x-axis: 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70)

## Attitudes towards democracy and the promotion of democracy through Development Cooperation

**vote** — **58% advocate the promotion of democracy through DC**

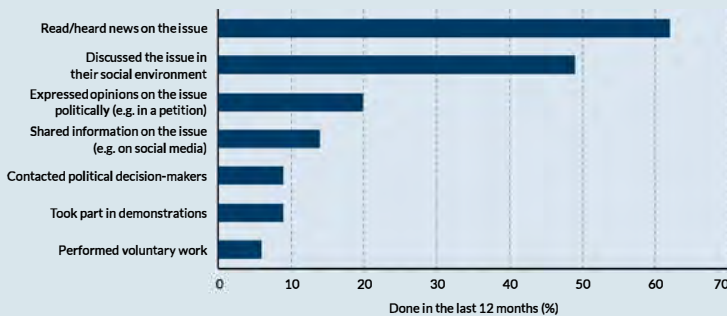**In cooperation with non-democratic states, the majority of people want DC to be tied to conditions**

**In the case of autocratisation processes in partner countries, the population advocates conditional DC, promoting democracy and adjusting the measures taking account of the situation of local people, but not ending the DC**

# The general public's development engagement

## Non-monetary

### The general public's non-monetary engagement

| | |
|---|---|
| Read/heard news on the issue | |
| Discussed the issue in their social environment | |
| Expressed opinions on the issue politically (e.g. in a petition) | |
| Shared information on the issue (e.g. on social media) | |
| Contacted political decision-makers | |
| Took part in demonstrations | |
| Performed voluntary work | |

Done in the last 12 months (%)
(x-axis: 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70)

## Monetary

### Share of donors for development policy

Pie chart values: 40, 30, 25, 5

- Non-donors (40%)
- Potential donors (30%)
- Donors in general (25%)
- Donors for development policy (5%)
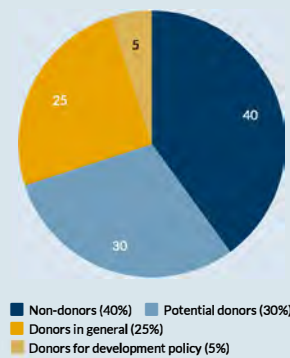
**Share of donors (in general and for development policy) declining since 2005**

**Donation labels as starting point for increasing trust in development policy NGOs**

## Sustainable consumption

♻️ **58% of respondents pay attention to sustainability in their consumption behaviour**

👕 **71% would like to consume more sustainably – especially in the case of clothing**

🏷️ **Great approval of political measures to promote sustainable consumption**

Four factors are closely related to sustainable consumption behaviour:
- awareness of sustainability
- a sense of being able to make a difference through sustainable consumption
- a sense of being able to consume sustainably
- distinct subjective norms

## Engagement typology

**Individuals change their engagement over time – especially intensively engaged individuals**

**The majority (66%) is not engaged or hardly engaged in development policy**

**Self-efficacy and concern about the situation in the Global South influence change in engagement.**

# SUMMARY

## Background, motivation and questions

Development policy and development cooperation (DC) measures aim to implement the 2030 Agenda and its 17 goals, to deal with global crises such as the coronavirus pandemic or climate change and to promote sustainable global development.

The German population plays an important role here. First, governmental development policy measures are financed through taxes, which means that they need the support of the general public. Second, citizens engage themselves in development policy, thus making an essential direct contribution towards global sustainable development. It is therefore important for development policy actors to know what attitudes the general public has towards development policy and global sustainable development, what they know about this topic area and how they engage themselves. These insights make it possible to understand and classify public opinion and the engagement of citizens, and take these aspects into account when it comes to designing development policy communication and education, promoting development engagement and strategically enhancing DC. Against this backdrop, the "Opinion Monitor for Development Policy" series – to which this report belongs – addresses the following overarching questions:

1) What attitudes does the general public have towards development policy and sustainable development, what do they know about this topic area, how do they engage themselves, and how do these factors change over the course of time?

2) What characteristics do attitudes, knowledge and engagement correlate with?

The report follows up on the analysis of central attitude and engagement indicators in the "Opinion Monitor for Development Policy 2018". It pays particular attention here to the population's attitudes regarding democracy and promotion of democracy in the context of DC. Two focus chapters provide a detailed analysis of donation behaviour with regard to development policy organisations as well as attitudes and behaviour related to sustainable consumption. A guest contribution groups various forms of engagement to create a typology, which presents the development of individual engagement types over the course of time, and investigates the factors that influence shifts between those types.

## Data sources

The data sources used, which are representative of the German population, comprise survey data from the Aid Attitude Tracker (AAT; 2012 to 2018) and its follow-on project Development Engagement Lab (DEL; starting in 2019), DEval's own surveys conducted by the research institute Respondi (2021) and data from the GfK Charity Panel (2005 to 2020). The focus analysis on sustainable consumption also draws on focus group discussions that were conducted with the support of an opinion research institute.

## Results

### What attitudes does the general public have towards development policy?

The majority of the German population continues to support DC, with 92 percent considering it important to support the countries of the Global South. 75 percent advocate providing medium to generous financial support for these countries through governmental DC. 43 percent are in favour of retaining the current expenditure for DC, while 23 percent advocate an increase. The most convincing motives for DC are as follows: "Doing good with modest resources" and "Combating the causes of flight" (46% in each case). Compared to 2019, the motive "Combating climate change" has gained in importance, with 35 percent of the population listing it as a convincing motive in January 2022. "Promoting democracy through DC" and "Working together with democratic states in DC" have met with great approval among the population (58% or more). In the case of autocratisation processes in the partner countries, the majority of the population endorses conditional cooperation, strengthening democratic structures and adjusting DC measures, but not ending the cooperation. Citizens do not believe that they can influence the situation in the Global South much

themselves – the level of "development policy self-efficacy" is accordingly low. Parts of the population continue to have reservations regarding the effectiveness of DC and (presumed) corruption in the partner countries. 22 percent consider governmental DC to be effective, while 21 percent do not. 53 percent agree that a large share of DC funding is lost as a result of corruption in the partner countries. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), six years after being passed, are still only known to a small share of the population. Only 8 percent know the SDGs and know what they involve, while 21 percent are at least familiar with the term. Moreover, many attitude indicators show differences based on age and political orientation (that is, self-identification on the political spectrum from left to right). Younger people and those who classify themselves to the left of the political spectrum are more likely to support DC.

⮕ There continues to be a conducive environment for development policy in Germany. However, doubts about the effectiveness of DC could jeopardise the positive basic attitude.

### How does the general public engage in development policy?

#### a) Non-monetary development engagement

Citizens frequently read or hear news on global poverty and development (62%) and frequently discuss the issues in their environment (49%). 14 percent of those surveyed have shared information on the subject in the past 12 months, 6 percent have done voluntary work, 20 percent have expressed their opinion on the issue of global poverty and development (for example through a petition), and 9 percent have contacted political decision-makers or taken part in a demonstration (data from January 2022). The forms of engagement used have hardly changed since September 2019. Older citizens more frequently obtain information about global poverty and development and discuss it, while younger citizens are more often actively involved in voluntary work. In terms of political orientation, the data reveals that a larger share of those on the left of the political spectrum obtain information about or discuss the issue of "global poverty and development". Engagement in an honorary capacity and the use of forms of political participation are more common at the two ends of the political spectrum. Some sections of the population even actively oppose development policy measures.

⮕ A large share of the population conducts information-related activities. In contrast, only a small share participates in more involved and time-consuming forms of engagement.

#### b) Focus analysis 1: Donations to development policy organisations

The general volume of donations in Germany has been stagnating since 2015. Based on projections of data from the GfK Charity Panel – excluding large donations – it amounted to around 5.5 billion euros in 2020.[1] The share of development policy in the donations market decreased from around 14 percent to 10 percent between 2010 and 2020. Although the volume of donations has hardly changed overall, the number of donors has continually decreased – from nearly 50 percent of the population in 2005 to less than 30 percent in 2020. The same applies to donations in the area of development policy, where the share of donors has fallen from around 11 percent (2005) to 5 percent (2020). Individuals who generally donate money, and those who specifically donate to development policy organisations, tend to be fairly old compared to non-donors, have a high level of education and earn a high income. In addition to the 30 percent of the population who already donate money, there is a large untapped number of potential donors, also amounting to around 30 percent of the population. The most frequently named reasons for not donating include a lack of information and a lack of trust in charitable organisations. Donation certification labels offer a possible means of increasing the trustworthiness of charitable organisations. However, a label does not directly increase the willingness to donate.

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[1] Projections of the volume of donations based on different data sources come to some quite different results. Box 9 in this report contains a discussion of these data sources.

⮑ The number of donors in Germany is decreasing. Donation certification labels – or other easily processed information – can close the knowledge gaps that inhibit the willingness to donate.

### c) Focus analysis 2: Sustainable consumption

Sustainable consumption is widespread among the population, with 58 percent of people stating that their consumption behaviour is at least partly sustainable. This sustainable consumption covers various areas, including food, clothing and finances. It also consists of various consumption phases – such as purchase considerations, disposal and consumption policy engagement – which go beyond simply purchasing and using sustainable products. 71 percent of the population state that they want to make their consumption more sustainable. There is therefore potential to increase sustainable consumption, especially in the area of clothing. Moreover, the general public is convinced that sustainable consumption can help to master challenges in development policy. A pronounced sustainability concern, perceived behavioural control, distinct subjective norms and a high perceived level of self-efficacy (regarding consumption policy) are associated with sustainable consumption behaviour. If the sense of being able to consume sustainably (perceived behavioural control) and to exert a personal or political influence (self-efficacy) is low, this potentially presents an obstacle to increasing one's own sustainable consumption. Interesting in this context is that, although the population believes that both individuals and businesses have great influence over the possibility of increasing sustainable consumption, people have little faith that they actually exert this influence. Consequently, the population supports consumption policy requirements that place obligations on companies and political actors.

⮑ There is great potential to increase sustainable consumption in Germany. In order to exploit this potential, it is necessary to demonstrate individual possibilities for taking action and exerting influence. In the view of the population, moreover, decision-makers should establish suitable political and economic conditions for sustainable consumption.

### d) Engagement types over the course of time

Grouping various forms of engagement to form a typology in the Development Engagement Lab's guest contribution reveals five types of development engagement with the following shares (data from July 2018): (1) *Totally Disengaged* (22%), (2) *Marginally Engaged* (44%), (3) *Informationally Engaged* (22%), (4) *Behaviourally Engaged* (9%) and (5) *Fully Engaged* (3%). The large majority of the population is therefore only marginally involved in development policy or not involved at all. At the aggregate level, engagement is stable over time. However, this stability conceals changes on an individual level. Those surveyed shift from one engagement type to another over the course of time. For individuals in the groups with the lowest level of engagement, the probability of shifting to a different engagement type is lower than for individuals in groups with a higher level of engagement. The latter increase or decrease their engagement over time. An analysis of the potential influencing factors reveals that an increase in the development policy self-efficacy is associated with an increase in the engagement. Concerns about the situation in the Global South lead to both an increase and a decrease in engagement. A high degree of concern namely corresponds to a high probability of increasing the level of engagement, while diminishing concern goes hand in hand with a higher probability of decreasing the level of engagement.

⮑ It poses a major challenge to motivate those citizens who are barely engaged to engage themselves in development policy. However, development policy self-efficacy and concern about the situation in the Global South offer starting points.

## Development policy implications

The results give rise to five implications for development policy practice:

1. **Further strengthening the positive attitude towards development policy.** The support of the population for development policy provides a strong foundation for German development policy. In order to maintain this foundation, it is important to avoid concentrating communication entirely on development policy as a means of resolving specific challenges. Rather, the communication should also take account of other motives among the population – for instance, a moral obligation towards the countries of the Global South – as well as the requirements of a broader global development agenda. Doubts about the effectiveness of DC should be taken seriously.

2. **Communicating the political context in partner countries.** Public opinion reflects the tension that results from the needs of the population in countries of the Global South and problematic (for example, autocratic) governments in these countries. In this context, citizens endorse conditional DC, which takes into account the situation of the local population, as well as measures to promote democracy. Development policy decision-makers should therefore communicate the political context in the partner country to their constituency as accurately as possible.

3. **Increasing the self-efficacy of citizens in order to encourage development engagement among larger sections of the population.** A sense of actually being able to achieve something in development policy is an important factor influencing development engagement. In order to increase self-efficacy, we need to (1) ensure that governmental and civil-society actors expand low-threshold engagement offers, (2) make use of the social visibility of engagement and (3) demonstrate individual opportunities to contribute to collective action – for example in organisations and initiatives.

4. **Closing gaps in the knowledge of DC and sustainable consumption.** The general public's knowledge in the area of development cooperation remains low. At the same time, there is a need for simple, reliable information. Certification labels, such as those used to certify charitable organisations and sustainable textiles, offer a possible solution in this context. To make labels useful for citizens, the corresponding information should be up to date and easily accessible, for example via apps. In this context, it is important not to neglect general information campaigns such as those to raise awareness of the SDGs.

5. **Expanding tailored and age-appropriate engagement offers.** The engagement of the population is characterised by age-related differences. For younger people, more flexible engagement offers need to be established so that they can continue to engage when their living circumstances change (such as when they embark upon a career or start a family). In the case of older people, the potential for development engagement could be tapped more effectively by building up connections to other engagement areas – such as church engagement.

## Outlook

This report is part of DEval's Opinion Monitor for Development Policy series. The next report is planned for 2024.

# CONTENTS

# Figures

# Tables

# Boxes

# ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

| | |
|---|---|
| AfD | Alternative für Deutschland (Alternative for Germany) |
| AAT | Aid Attitudes Tracker |
| BMU | Bundesministerium für Umwelt, Naturschutz, nukleare Sicherheit und Verbraucherschutz (Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection) |
| BMZ | Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development) |
| CDU | Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands (Christian Democratic Union of Germany) |
| CSU | Christlich-Soziale Union in Bayern (Christian Social Union in Bavaria) |
| DAC | Development Assistance Committee |
| DEL | Development Engagement Lab |
| DEval | Deutsches Evaluierungsinstitut der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit (German Institute for Development Evaluation) |
| DIW | Deutsches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung (German Institute for Economic Research) |
| DZI | Deutsches Zentralinstitut für soziale Fragen (German Central Institute for Social Issues) |
| EU | European Union |
| DC | Development cooperation |
| FDP | Freie Demokratische Partei (Free Democratic Party) |
| GfK | Growth from Knowledge |
| LCA | Latent class analysis |
| NGO | Non-governmental organisation |
| ODA | Official development assistance |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development |
| SDG | Sustainable Development Goal |
| SOEP | Sozioökonomisches Panel (Socio-Economic Panel) |
| SPD | Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (Social Democratic Party of Germany) |
| TPB | Theory of Planned Behaviour |
| UBA | Umweltbundesamt (German Environment Agency) |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children's Fund |
| VENRO | Verband Entwicklungspolitik und Humanitäre Hilfe (Association of German Development and Humanitarian Aid NGOs) |

# GLOSSARY

## Attitudes

Attitudes may be understood as a summary assessment of specific objects (e.g. cars), people (e.g. Federal Chancellor Olaf Scholz) or social groups (e.g. refugees) (Bohner and Wänke, 2009, p. 5).[2] They have the purpose of processing information and organising knowledge (Raatz, 2016, p. 76). They also make it easier for people to navigate in their environment: "Attitudes [...] influence how we view the world, what we think and what we do" (Maio and Haddock, 2009, p. 4; Raatz, 2016, p. 65). Social psychology distinguishes between cognitive, affective and conative attitude dimensions (e.g. Eagly and Chaiken, 1993).

Attitudes play an important role for human reactions and therefore for their behaviour, although their predictive value for actual behaviour is poor in many cases (attitude-behaviour gap). This is especially the case when general attitudes towards broad issues are researched and the behaviour investigated is abstract or unspecific (Ajzen and Fishbein, 2005). The relationship between attitudes and behaviour is complex (Bohner and Wänke, 2009, p. 5) and is influenced by the strength and consistency of the attitudes, direct experience of the object of the attitudes, subjective standards, the social environment and behavioural intentions.

Attitudes towards development policy and cooperation are neither simple, nor directly observable characteristics that can be ascertained by means of a single question or a very small number of questions (Bae and Kim, 2016). Due to the combination of their complexity and little importance in everyday life, it can rather be assumed that attitudes or perceptions are ambivalent or even inconsistent. To take one example, despite generally supporting development cooperation, people may simultaneously have doubts concerning its effectiveness. Likewise, people may support development cooperation in general, but not agree to spending tax revenues for it. Therefore, standards of technical precision or logical consistency should not be applied to either individual or aggregated attitudes. Aggregated attitudes in the form of average or percentage values, for instance comparing population groups, should thus be considered to provide tendency statements or pictures of public opinion that are often stable over the course of time (Erikson and Tedin, 2011, p. 93-94). Substantial changes in aggregated attitudes indicate a change in public opinion.

Moreover, a distinction needs to be made between specific political attitudes, for instance regarding a political measure, and an individual's political orientation (or even ideology). The latter comprises central values, standards and more general political attitudes that aim to shape society (Erikson and Tedin, 2011, p. 72). Usually, political orientation is established by means of individuals positioning themselves on a scale from *left* to *right*, or alternatively from *liberal* to *conservative* in the English-speaking world (Jost et al., 2009).

## Attitude measurements and their interpretation

Many characteristics that are of interest in this study cannot easily be recorded as a manifest characteristic. In contrast to income, educational qualifications or age, attitudes towards development cooperation and moral obligation are latent characteristics that have to be determined by presenting statements or agreement questions – referred to as "items" – in a questionnaire. Analysing secondary data such as from the Development Engagement Lab presents a challenge because relevant characteristics need to be made measurable, in other words operationalised, on the basis of the data material available. We therefore often have to fall back on individual items – individual statements or questions – to answer specific questions in this report. Whenever the data situation allows, however, we calculate what are known as Likert scales (Likert, 1932). This means that, across the answers to several items, the average value of agreement is calculated for each respondent, thus allowing a more reliable measurement of the respective construct (e.g.

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[2] The glossary was already used in the Opinion Monitor 2018 (Schneider and Gleser, 2018) and 2021 (Schneider et al., 2021a), and has been adapted slightly for this report. The definition of the concept of "development cooperation and development policy' has been adopted – also with a slight adjustment – from the Opinion Monitor 2019 (Schneider et al., 2019, p. 4–5).

Ansolabehere et al., 2008). However, this only applies if the items map an individual latent characteristic (one-dimensionality) and there is, on average, a strong relationship between them (consistency or reliability; for an introduction see Moosbrugger and Kelava, 2012). The key figure used to determine consistency is Cronbach's alpha. In the literature, a threshold value of 0.7 for acceptable consistency is often named.

Measurements based on such individual items or attitude scales are more difficult to interpret than measurements of manifest characteristics. For example, if a comparison of the average incomes of men and women indicates a difference of 500 euros, the statistical interpretation requires no further discussion.[3] In the case of a measurement of attitudes that shows that people who have the *Abitur* (higher school-leaving qualification) differ in their support for development cooperation by 0.3 scale points from those with the *Hauptschulabschluss* (basic school-leaving qualification), the conclusions are less obvious.

### Development cooperation and development policy

In this report, "development cooperation" is understood to mean all measures by state and social actors of industrialised countries and international organisations that aim to promote better political and socio-economic living conditions in the countries of the Global South. Strictly speaking, official development assistance (ODA) refers only to services and activities of governmental agencies that are carried out with the main objective of promoting economically, socially and environmentally sustainable development in the partner countries (see, for example, Faust, 2016, p. 338–339; Stockmann, 2016, p. 425-431).

State development cooperation is implemented bilaterally between governments as well as via multilateral organisations. Civil-society organisations also receive state funding to carry out projects. Measures by civil-society organisations that finance them using their own funds (for example donations) are also part of development cooperation in a general sense, but are not classified as ODA.

Furthermore, a terminology distinction is often made between structural development cooperation that aims to achieve medium and long-term results and humanitarian aid in emergency and crisis situations. With "transitional aid", development policy also has an instrument to specifically strengthen the affected people's and institutions' resilience and development capacities during emergencies and crises. This is therefore a means of bridging the gap between humanitarian aid and structural development cooperation.

The complexity of the topic, the interaction between fields of action, the various ministerial responsibilities and the large number of development policy actors mean that it cannot be assumed that the general public understands the difference between these terms. Therefore, when recording public opinion on these issues, it is sometimes necessary to work with terms that match the population's everyday understanding but do not reflect the self-image of individual or multiple development policy actors. For example, the surveys for this study often used the term "development aid" that is popular among the population and in the media to ask about the long-term dimension of development cooperation (see Schneider and Gleser, 2018, p. 20 for more on this). By contrast, the German Government and many development organisations use the term "development cooperation", which is less familiar for the general public. With this, they express that they do not view the countries, organisations, communities or individuals with which they cooperate on development policy as recipients of aid but as equal partners.

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[3] The social significance, on the other hand, does require discussion. Likewise, it is also necessary to take account of further characteristics such as (vocational) training, practised profession, age and employment relationship.

Furthermore, the general public frequently equates development cooperation with "combating global poverty". Accordingly, parts of the survey focus on this aspect. By contrast, the goals of German development policy relate to the various dimensions of development as specified in the comprehensive 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (see United National, 2015). This leads to measures that are not focused solely on fighting poverty, but also aim to promote economic, social and ecological development, environmental and climate protection, governmental structures, democracy and peace in the countries of the Global South.

In the current study, "development policy" is understood in a simplified way as an overarching field of action, while "development cooperation" means concrete measures that contribute to economic, social and ecological development in the Global South. Here, it is irrelevant whether governmental or civil-society organisations are responsible for the measures. If the population surveys used made further specifications, this is indicated in the text.

### Regression analysis

Regression analyses constitute a widespread statistical method for analysing relationships between a dependent variable and one or more independent variables (for an introduction see Backhaus et al., 2018). The dependent variable, for instance general support for development cooperation, is estimated using a collection of individual characteristics such as sociodemographic background and political orientation. In the case of quantitative characteristics, the regression coefficients specify the average number of measuring units by which support for development cooperation changes, keeping the remaining characteristics constant, if the respective independent variable – such as the person's age – changes by one unit. In the case of categorical variables such as gender, educational qualifications or experimental group, "dummy" variables are used, the coefficient of which specifies the average difference in general support for development cooperation for a characteristic value (e.g. the higher school-leaving qualification "*Abitur*") compared to a previously defined comparison category (e.g. the basic school-leaving qualification "*Hauptschulabschluss*" or the "control group" in an experiment). To make the results more tangible, this report presents the regression results graphically (using what are called coefficient plots; see, for example, Kastellec and Leoni, 2007). The numerical results of regression analyses can always be found in the online Annex.

The key figure $R^2$ (referred to as the coefficient of determination) additionally specifies what proportion of the variance of the dependent variable is explained by the model. This key figure can be viewed as an indicator of the model quality. However, due to the numerous factors that influence attitudes and behaviour, we should not let it lead us to draw premature conclusions. The results regarding the significance and substance of the individual coefficients are more important here (see glossary entry "Statistical significance").

If the report speaks of a logistic regression, the principle described above is conveyed to a two-stage categorical dependent variable, for instance the use of a certain form of civic engagement (yes/no). In this case, the interpretation of the coefficients becomes more complex. In simple terms, they can be interpreted as a change in the probability of occurrence of the investigated event (for example engagement that has taken place) when the independent characteristics change by one unit. A multinominal logistic regression is applied when the dependent variable can take more than two categorical values (e.g. "performed voluntary work in the last 12 months", "performed voluntary work in the past, but not in the last 12 months", "never performed voluntary work"). In comparison to a two-stage dependent variable, the principle of interpretation remains unchanged.

### Statistical significance

To check whether a relationship or difference is statistically relevant, meaning significant, significance tests are used. If the p-value falls below the critical threshold of 0.05 often used in social sciences, then a relationship or difference is considered to be significant (Bryman, 2016, p. 347). The p-value is the probability of observing the relationship found in the sample or an even stronger relationship if the null hypothesis was true, in other words if there was no relationship (Goodman, 2008, p. 136). To put it simply, there is only a low probability that the result is due to chance, and the null hypothesis can be rejected. In the case of p-values below 0.10 (i.e. 10%), a relationship is shown too, but the greater uncertainty regarding the

rejection of the null hypothesis is pointed out. Finally, in the case of p-values above 0.10, the null hypothesis is upheld.

Significance must not be taken to imply substance though, as even very small results become significant with large samples. Although significance means there is very likely an effect, if this effect is very small, it may be that it is of little importance in reality. Substance must therefore be checked separately. In addition, a statistically significant result must not unconditionally be taken to imply causality as, when cross-sectional data is used, neither the chronological sequence of the cause and effect nor the influence of non-recorded characteristics can be checked (e.g. Gangl, 2010). Cross-sectional data is data that records both independent variables – such as political orientation – and dependent variables – such as attitudes towards development cooperation – at the same time. In many cases, therefore, it is not possible to rule out a reverse direction of causality or a common cause of change in the independent and dependent variable. However, the survey experiments used in parts of the study are an exception because the independent variable was specifically varied by means of the random division into different experimental groups (see, for example, Mutz, 2011). This makes a causal interpretation possible.

### Sampling error

The analyses presented are based on a sample. This leads to statistical uncertainty regarding the shares and average values reported. For example, if 20 percent out of 1,000 respondents in a fictional random sample state that they have donated to a development cooperation organisation in the past year, then there is a probability of 95 percent that the percentage of the entire population lies between 17.5 and 22.5 percent (confidence interval).[4] If the sample size is increased to 5,000 respondents, then the value lies between 18.8 and 21.1 percent. Generally, in the case of a sample of 1,000 respondents, we assume for a dichotomous characteristic such as "yes/no" or "for/against" that the sampling error amounts to +/-3 (Erikson and Tedin, 2011, p. 30-31). High shares around 50 percent exhibit broader confidence intervals than small ones. To avoid overloading the text and diagrams, the descriptive representations of percentages in this report usually do not contain any confidence intervals but always specify the number of observations.

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[4]  The calculation (in German) is available at http://eswf.uni-koeln.de/lehre/stathome/statcalc/v2202.htm.

# 1.  INTRODUCTION: THE ATTITUDES AND ENGAGEMENT OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC IN TIMES OF GLOBAL CRISES

The year 2022 marks the halfway point for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, which the United Nations passed in 2015. Despite a fair amount of progress, the speed up to now will not be sufficient to achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) linked to the Agenda by 2030 (United Nations, 2020). This concerns not only combating climate change (SDG 13), but also reducing social inequality (SDGs 5 and 10) as well as establishing stable state structures and inclusive democratic structures (SDG 16; with regard to the latter see Alizada et al., 2021). The consequences of the coronavirus pandemic could even reverse progress on achieving the goals (United Nations, 2020). In addition, the war that has been waged in Ukraine since February 2022 will, on top of the suffering of the people concerned, also have an effect on global sustainable development.

At the same time, the coronavirus pandemic, global warming and the war in Ukraine make it clear how important international cooperation and global solidarity are for tackling global challenges and crises. In this context, development policy and measures of development cooperation (DC) should contribute towards implementing the 2030 Agenda, dealing with global crises and promoting sustainable global development (e.g. BMZ, 2020).

Not only the 2030 Agenda and its 17 goals, but also development policy and DC are closely related to the general public (Darnton and Kirk, 2011, p. 5; BMZ, 2014, 2015). First, public support in democracies lays the foundations for governmental and civil society actors to take action (Czaplińska, 2007, p. 6; Easton, 1975). This is especially the case when greater significance is attributed to development policy in public discussion.[5] Second, the citizens can contribute to the goals of the 2030 Agenda through their personal actions and actively engage in development policy (Hudson et al., 2020). In fact, experts even state that the goals of the 2030 Agenda cannot be achieved without this individual engagement (United Nations, 2019). Development engagement takes a wide range of forms that can be categorised as "non-monetary" and "monetary". In this context, "non-monetary" means that the forms of engagement do not require any financial outlay. There are three central areas of non-monetary engagement:

1. **Activities related to information and communication:** This includes, for example, obtaining information about development policy, discussing the topic in the social environment and creating or sharing contributions on social media.

2. **Organisation-based engagement:** This may range from memberships to active voluntary engagement. This area also includes voluntary (development policy) services abroad, such as those offered by the "weltwärts" programme (Polak et al., 2017).

3. **Political participation:** This includes taking part in demonstrations, signing petitions or contacting political decision-makers (e.g. van Deth, 2014).

Moreover, there are two forms of monetary engagement that do not actually correspond to the usual definitions of civic engagement in development policy (e.g. BMZ, 2015, p. 6), but which are treated as engagement here due to their significance and the associated individual behaviour that is relevant to development policy:

4. **Donations for development policy causes and organisations:** Donations provide a key source of income for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) involved in development policy. Without donations, the organisations would not be able to perform their work and would be unable to retain their organisational structures. Although the level of donations for German NGOs has remained stable overall during the coronavirus pandemic (Deutscher Spendenrat and GfK, 2021), development NGOs constantly face the challenge of maintaining their existing donation base, winning new donors and convincing former

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[5]    The budget of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) has increased from EUR 8.54 billion in the year 2017 (Bohnet et al., 2018, p. 10) to EUR 12.3 billion for 2022 (BMZ, 2021a). To support countries of the Global South in combating COVID-19, the BMZ has launched an emergency support programme of around EUR 4.7 billion (BMZ, 2021b). In addition, the Federal Government formed in 2021 from the *Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands* (Social Democratic Party of Germany, SPD), *Bündnis 90/Die Grünen* (the Green Party) and the *Freie Demokratische Partei* (Free Democratic Party, FDP) has committed itself to the United Nations goal of spending at least 0.7 percent of gross national income on official development assistance (Federal Government, 2021, p. 150).

donors to continue their engagement. In this context, it is important to remember that development NGOs compete for private donations not only with one another, but also with organisations that operate in other fields.

5. **Sustainable consumption:** Citizens can make a contribution to sustainable development through their consumption behaviour. Moreover, sustainable consumption can be used to raise awareness for sustainable development. Challenges in development policy can also be made more prominent in people's everyday lives. For example, the 2030 Agenda identifies sustainable consumption as a key building block for sustainable development (SDG 12; United Nations, 2015). Accordingly, current development policy discussions and initiatives in Germany contain clear references to the general public's engagement in the area of consumption – including the efforts to establish a German law on supply chains and the "Green Button" textile label (see, for example, BMZ, 2019a, 2019b, 2020). Although the market share of sustainable products in Germany is still low, the increasing sales show that consumers also increasingly support sustainable consumption.[6]

Against this backdrop, both governmental and civil society development policy actors need information on (1) what attitudes the general public in Germany has regarding development policy, DC and global sustainable development, (2) how the general public personally engages in this topic area and (3) what they know about the issue. In order to be able to classify and assess these indicators, we need to investigate how they develop over the course of time and what influences each of them.

These insights may help us to understand and classify public opinion and the engagement of citizens, and take these aspects strategically into account in the orientation and design of policies, programmes and measures. In this way, planned decisions can be reflected against the background of public opinion. One concrete example is development policy communication and education – for instance in terms of campaigns that aim to promote voluntary engagement among citizens or to convey the interrelations between consumption in industrialised countries and the situation in countries of the Global South. This information is also relevant when it comes to acquiring donations.

This report follows up on the previous reports in the "DEval Opinion Monitor for Development Policy" series (see Box 1). Based on representative survey data from the Aid Attitudes Tracker (AAT), the Development Engagement Lab (DEL) and DEval's own surveys, it draws a detailed picture of the German population's development policy attitudes and development engagement. It contains two innovations compared to previously available publications:

A focus analysis performs a detailed longitudinal evaluation of donations to development policy organisations based on the Growth from Knowledge (GfK) Charity Panel (Priemer et al., 2019). The main advantage of the Charity Panel is that participants document their donations using a diary-based approach. This increases the validity of the data. The analyses are then used for a subsequent survey experiment (see Mutz, 2011) to examine whether donation labels increase the willingness to donate.

The second innovation consists of a further focus analysis that evaluates sustainable consumption behaviour from a development policy viewpoint in a more theory-driven way, based on the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB; Ajzen, 1992) and using a combination of methods (focus groups, survey data). Neither of these analyses have been available up to now in this degree of detail for the field of development policy.

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[6] Coffee with the Fairtrade label – the best-selling sustainable product – achieved a market share of 4.5 percent in Germany in 2018 (Fairtrade, 2020). Between 2010 and 2019, sales in fairly traded products in Germany rose from EUR 413 million to EUR 1.853 billion (Forum Fairer Handel, 2020).

| Box 1 | DEval's series of "Opinion Monitor for Development Policy" studies |
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The first **DEval Opinion Monitor for Development Policy 2018** report (Schneider and Gleser, 2018) investigated the basic attitudes of the general public in the topic area of development policy and DC, and also how they correlate to sociodemographic, political and attitude-related characteristics. The results show that large portions of the population advocate DC. At the same time, however, people have reservations regarding the effectiveness of DC measures. On top of this, there are fears that a large share of DC funding may be lost as a result of corruption in the partner countries.

The subsequent reports examined the role of information and the general public's media information environment. The **Opinion Monitor 2019** focused on the question as to how the general public obtains information on the issue of "global poverty" and how they perceive the reporting on this topic (Schneider et al., 2019). The **Opinion Monitor 2021** investigated how the media report on development policy, how arguments for and against DC, information about the effectiveness of DC projects and moral appeals impact the attitudes of the general public, and what expectations the general public has of DC (Schneider et al., 2021a).

## 1.1    Overarching objectives of the report

The analyses pursue the same objective as the analyses for the previous reports:

1.    The information regarding public opinion and the development engagement of citizens promotes the **feedback loop** between the general public and decision-makers. The report also helps governmental and civil-society development policy actors to obtain an evidence-based view of the perspectives that exist in the population.

2.    Moreover, the Opinion Monitor for Development Policy provides **orientational knowledge** for development policy strategy, communication and education. Specifically, this concerns the opportunities for determining and promoting potential engagement in the population, and also for analysing the challenges connected to this engagement and its promotion. This particularly includes the areas of "donations for development policy organisations" and "sustainable consumption".

## 1.2    Structure of the report

Following the introductory part in Chapter 1, Chapter 2 of this report follows on from the Opinion Monitor for Development Policy 2018 (Schneider and Gleser, 2018) and provides an updated overview of the general public's attitudes towards development policy and DC (including support for DC, motives for governmental DC, assessment of the effectiveness of DC). It pays particular attention to attitudes towards democracy and the promotion of democracy in the context of DC (Escribà-Folch et al., 2021; Faust and Garcia, 2014) – an issue that is becoming increasingly relevant in light of tendencies towards authoritarian forms of government in many countries (see, for example, Alizada et al., 2021; Boese et al., 2022; Schäfer and Zürn, 2021). Examples of this include not only the developments in Mali since 2020 (Brössler et al., 2022) and the takeover by the Taliban regime in Afghanistan in August 2021 (e.g. Leininger, 2021), but also the "system conflict" between democratic states on the one hand and authoritarian states such as China and Russia on the other.

The third chapter analyses the general public's personal engagement in the area of development policy. To begin with, Section 3.1 focuses on describing non-monetary engagement. Section 3.2 analyses donation behaviour in general and specifically for development policy organisations, pinpoints donation potential, explains obstacles and identifies ideas for making better use of the donation potential. Section 3.3 describes the extent to which people consume sustainable products at present, how important sustainable consumption is to citizens and what factors influence sustainable consumption. It also identifies potential approaches for increasing sustainable consumption.

Section 3.4 contains a guest contribution by Jennifer Hudson, David Hudson and Paolo Morini from the Development Engagement Lab, which provides a typology of different forms of engagement. They investigate the extent to which the engagement of individual people changes over time and what role attitude-related characteristics play in this context. To conclude the report, Chapter 4 describes the implications of the results for development policy practice.

# 2. THE GENERAL PUBLIC'S ATTITUDES TOWARDS DEVELOPMENT POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

| Box 2 | Key findings: The general public's attitudes towards development policy and DC |
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- The majority of the German population continues to support DC, with 92 percent considering it important to support the countries of the Global South (2019). 75 percent advocate providing medium to generous financial support for these countries through governmental DC (January 2022). 43 percent are in favour of retaining the current expenditure for DC, while 23 percent advocate an increase (September 2021).
- The most convincing motives for DC, at 46 percent each, are as follows: "Doing good with modest resources" and "Combating the causes of flight" (January 2022). Compared to 2019, the motive "Combating climate change" has gained importance, with 35 percent listing it as a convincing motive in January 2022.
- "Promoting democracy through DC" and "Working together with democratic states in DC" meet with great approval (around 58% or more; November 2021). In the case of autocratisation processes in the DC partner countries, the majority of the population endorses conditional cooperation (68% endorsement), strengthening democratic structures in the country (64%) and adjusting DC measures (55% to 58%), but not ending the cooperation (44%).
- Citizens do not believe that they can influence the situation in the Global South much themselves (September 2021).
- Even six years after being adopted, the 17 SDGs are only known to a very small segment of the population. Only eight percent know the SDGs and know what they involve, while 21 percent at least know the term (September 2021).
- Some sections of the population continue to have reservations regarding the effectiveness of DC and (presumed) corruption in the partner countries. A mere 22 percent consider governmental DC to be effective (January 2022). 53 percent agree that a large share of DC funding is lost as a result of corruption (September 2021).

Following on from the DEval Opinion Monitor 2018 (Schneider and Gleser, 2018), this chapter provides an updated overview of the German population's attitudes in various areas of development policy and DC. It also investigates changes over the course of time and differences based on age and political orientation (with regard to the latter, also refer to Box 4).[7] The relevance of the characteristics investigated arises from the significance of age groups for communication and education based on the fact that they can be relatively clearly differentiated (e.g. media consumption; Schneider et al., 2019) and the extent to which political orientation can explain DC-related attitudes (with regard to the latter see, for example, Bodenstein and Faust, 2017; Hudson and van Heerde-Hudson, 2012; Milner and Tingley, 2013; Schneider and Gleser, 2018).

Alongside general support for DC measures (Section 2.1), the analysis revolves around an in-depth description of public opinion. Section 2.3 investigates the motives for governmental DC that citizens consider to be convincing. Section 2.4 focuses on the population's attitudes regarding democracy and promotion of democracy through DC – something that is a very topical issue in view of recent developments in countries such as Afghanistan and Mali. Section 2.5 looks into the extent to which citizens perceive themselves as being able to influence the situation in the Global South – also in comparison to other social actors. This factor plays a particularly important role for development engagement (see Chapter 3; with regard to the concept of self-efficacy, see Bandura, 1978). Section 2.7 follows on from this in that it presents two central attitude indicators: the assessment of the effectiveness of DC and the opinion on the problem of corruption (see Bauhr et al., 2013) in the partner countries. These are areas in which the general public has expressed reservations in the past and which may present a challenge for support for DC among the general public

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[7]   Due to space limitations, the text only discusses the more prominent differences. The complete contingency tables can be found in the online Annex (Section 1.6). The DEL panel wave of September 2021 is always used to break down the data, as this is the only survey that covers political orientation. On top of this, gender-specific differences are also examined. These were usually minor. The corresponding analyses are likewise documented in Section 1.6 of the online Annex.

(Schneider and Gleser, 2018).[8] To supplement this, two excursuses look into the frequency of development policy content on Twitter (Section 2.2) and how well-known the SDGs are among the general public (Section 2.6).

The data comes from the Eurobarometer and, above all, the Aid Attitudes Tracker (AAT) or the Development Engagement Lab (DEL; also refer to Box 3). Where the data basis allows, the DEL data is linked to the data of the predecessor project AAT and in places displayed in comparison with data from France, Great Britain and the US.[9] For the issue of democracy and the promotion of democracy in DC, the report uses a DEval survey conducted by the research institute Respondi in November 2021.

| Box 3 | Transition from the Aid Attitudes Tracker (AAT) to the Development Engagement Lab (DEL) |
| --- | --- |

The Aid Attitudes Tracker (AAT) is a panel survey in which the same approximately 6,000 people in Germany, France, Great Britain and the US were asked about development policy, DC and related topics twice a year between 2013 and 2018. In total, data is available for ten survey waves. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation funded the project, while the survey research institute YouGov collected the data online. Since 2019, the survey has been continued in the form of the Development Engagement Lab (DEL), which continues to be funded by the Gates Foundation and conducted by YouGov. The main changes are as follows:

1.  The number of questions in the panel survey has been substantially reduced to make it less time-consuming for the respondents (N still ≈ 6,000).
2.  Some of the questions have been reformulated and the order of the questions has been changed.
3.  The panel survey is no longer conducted twice a year, but rather annually in September.
4.  In addition to the panel survey, "tracker surveys" and "sandbox surveys" have been introduced. The tracker records the same central attitude and behavioural characteristics of the population[10] twice a year (N ≈ 1,000; January and June). In contrast, the sandbox surveys (N ≈ 1,000; February and May) address current issues. Both forms of survey are cross-sectional surveys. This means that, in contrast to the panel survey, a new sample is surveyed each time.

Points 3 and 4 are intended to counteract any learning effects that result from questioning the same individuals again. With regard to the panel survey, we wish to conclude by pointing out that the changes in the questionnaire – different formulations and a changed order of questions – may affect the response behaviour (see, for example, Oldendick, 2008; Schuman and Presser, 1996). It is therefore only possible to a limited extent to directly compare the results of the AAT and DEL panel; this must be taken into account in each case when interpreting any differences in public opinion between the AAT and DEL.

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[8]    For a more detailed discussion of individual influencing factors aside from DC-related attitudes, see, for example, Milner and Tingley (2013).

[9]    Unless specified to the contrary, all analyses based on the data from the AAT or the DEL surveys use population weights to adjust the distribution of relevant characteristics in the sample to the distribution in the population. In contrast, the surveys that Respondi has conducted use random samples that have been selected based on age, gender, education and federal state to make them representative of the German population. No population weights are used in analyses of this data.

[10]   In the first wave of the DEL tracker in January 2020, a split-half experiment was performed, alternating between the terms "development aid" and "development cooperation" in numerous questions. For this survey wave, we are only reporting the results for "development aid". The observation number for this wave is therefore reduced to around 500. In the following DEL surveys, the term "development cooperation" was then used. This must be taken into account when interpreting the results.

## 2.1   Does the general public support development policy and DC measures?

### 2.1.1   Support for people in countries of the Global South continues to be classified as important

**Figure 1**   **Cross-country comparison of the importance of DC**
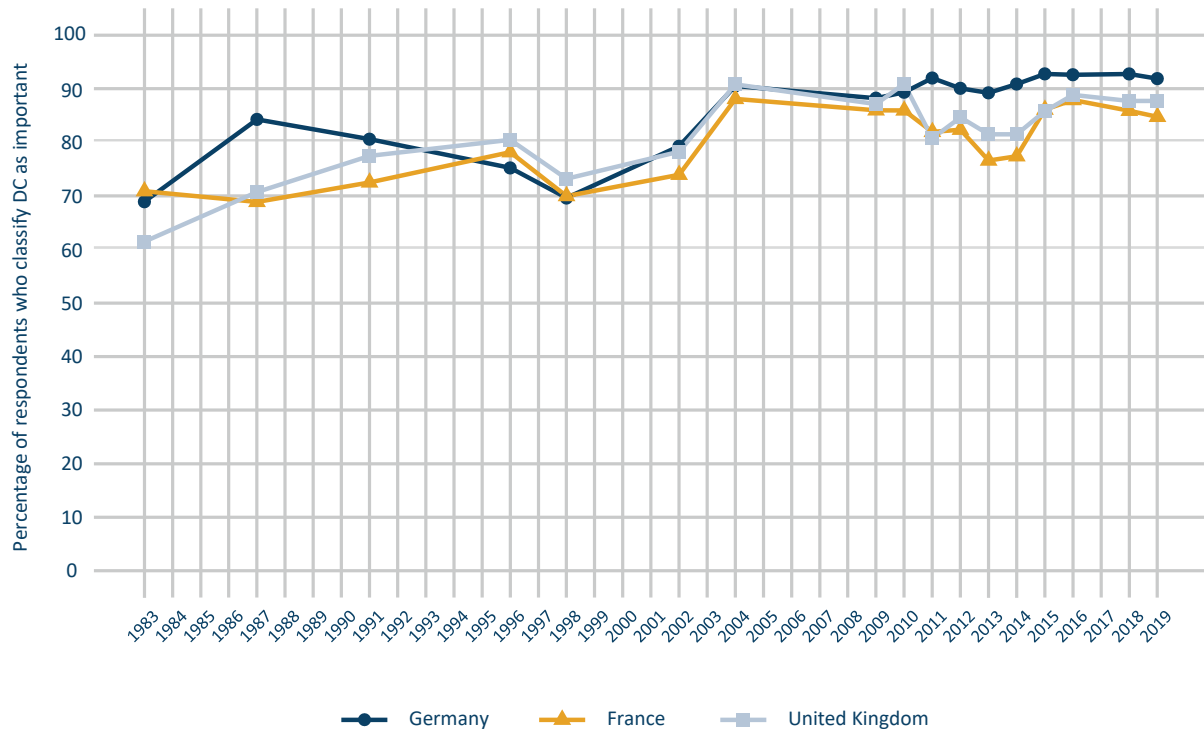


*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on the Eurobarometer surveys from 1983 to 2019 (see Section 1.1 in the online Annex). The number of those surveyed was around 1,000 people per country per survey wave. The question was as follows: "In your opinion, is it very important, fairly important, not very important or not at all important to help people in developing countries?" The figure shows the cumulative share of the response categories "very important" and "fairly important". Population weights have been used to present the data.*

To begin with, Figure 1 shows that the vast majority of the German population in 2019 (around 92 percent) considered it important to support people in the Global South. This share has only fluctuated slightly across the Eurobarometer surveys since 2004. The share of the population in Germany is slightly larger than in France (85%) and the United Kingdom (88%), although the importance of DC is also rated high by the vast majority of people in these countries.[11] The data indicates that public opinion regarding support for people in the countries of the Global South remains consistently benevolent – both in Germany and in two relevant comparison countries.

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[11] At the end of 2020, a further Eurobarometer survey was conducted on the topic of development policy (European Commission, 2021). However, the question was fundamentally changed in this survey ("In your opinion, how important or not is it to partner with countries outside of the EU to reduce poverty around the world?"). As a result, it is no longer possible to continue the time series in a meaningful way. In addition, it should be noted that the wording of the question in the Eurobarometer has changed slightly since the 1980s. However, it has remained unchanged since 2009. The substantial changes in the time series in the 1990s could therefore be due not only to the political and economic context, but also to questionnaire effects.

## 2.1.2    General support for governmental DC remains relatively high

**Figure 2**        **General support for DC among the German population over time**
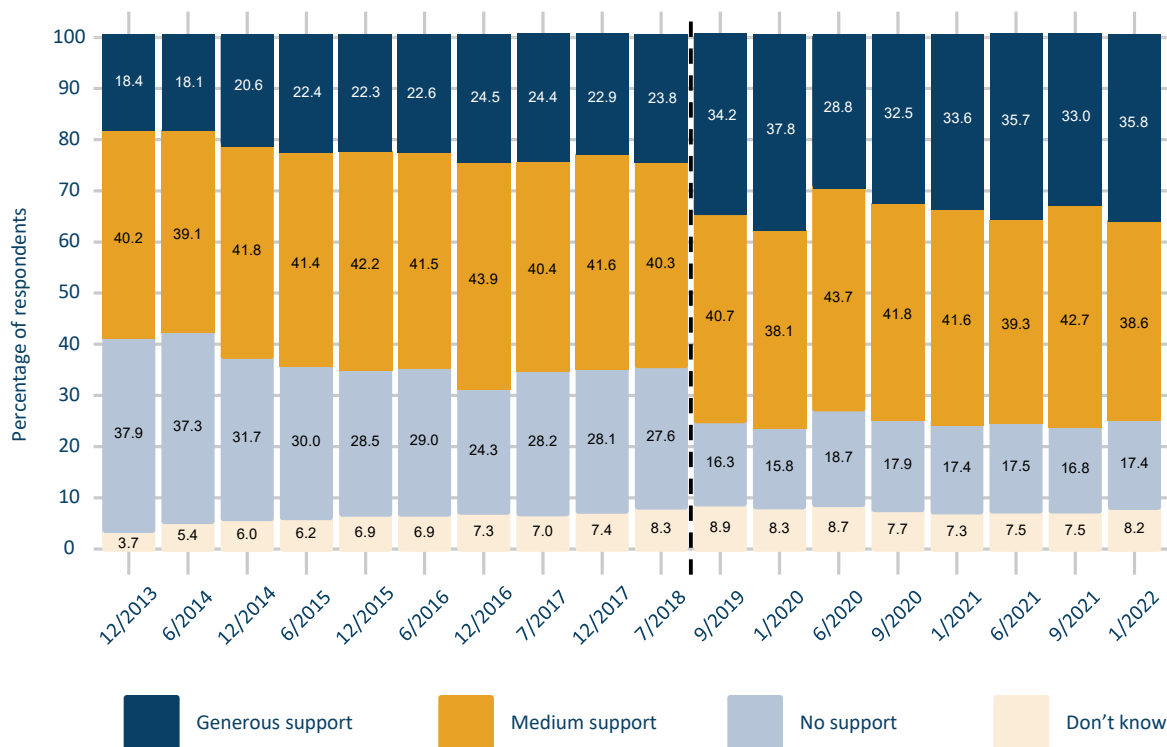


*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on the AAT (up to 7/2018) and the DEL panel and tracker surveys (as of 9/2019). The question was as follows: "Thinking about development cooperation with poor countries – in your opinion, to what extent should the Federal Government provide financial support if 0 on the following scale means 'Should not provide any support at all' and 10 means 'Should provide very generous support'?"[12] For the figure, the values 0–3, 4–6 and 7–10 have been grouped to form the categories "none", "average" and "generous support".*

In the most recent DEL data available from January 2022, when respondents are asked about specific support for development policy measures – which imply a financial or material outlay – around 36 percent speak in favour of generous development cooperation with poor countries (Figure 2). In contrast, 17 percent are against such engagement. The majority of respondents come somewhere in the middle, meaning that they advocate moderate engagement. This support remains stable over time; even the coronavirus pandemic has hardly influenced general support for DC (also refer to Eger et al., 2022; Schneider et al., 2020, 2021a, 2021b). In comparison to the DEL predecessor project AAT, the support is higher (see vertical dotted line). However, it should be taken into account that the order of the questions has been adjusted in the DEL, which means that the response behaviour could have been influenced by the preceding questions (see Box 3).[13]

Young people (aged 18–29) and older people (aged 60 and older) support DC to a greater extent. Support in the "generous support" category, at 37 percent, is highest in the group of people *aged 18 to 29* (data basis:

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[12]  As already pointed out in the previous reports, the formulation "very generous" does not correspond to many DC stakeholders' current self-perception. It allows an interpretation in the sense of "acting as a patron" rather than "well thought out spending of tax revenues" or "partnership-based cooperation". This possible interpretation of the response category should be taken into account when interpreting the results.

[13]  Where respondents in the AAT survey were asked to estimate the expenditure on DC beforehand, the DEL survey asks them about their concern about the situation in countries of the Global South. As a result, different assessment criteria are favoured among the respondents in each case – costs of DC as opposed to their personal concern – which may in turn be reflected in a systematic difference in levels (see, for example, Zaller, 1992).

DEL panel, September 2021). Support in the groups of people *aged 30 to 39* and *aged 40 to 59* is lower, at 30 percent in each case. The level of support in the group of people *aged 60 and older*, at 35 percent, is back on par with the youngest age group.[14]

| Box 4 | Classification of political orientation |
|---|---|

As in the previous Opinion Monitor studies (Schneider and Gleser, 2018; Schneider et al., 2019), the classic left-right scale with the end points "left" (scale value 0) and "right" (scale value 10) is used to measure political orientation.[15] To make the analyses more tangible and make non-linear connections across the corresponding attitude indicators visible, the scale is divided into five groups (see Vehrkamp and Merkel, 2019, p. 30–31): left (0–2), centre-left (3–4), centre (5), centre-right (6–7) and right (8–10).

The scale records fundamental notions regarding social interaction and politics (Erikson and Tedin, 2011, p. 72–73). "Left" essentially stands for welfare state benefits, the regulation of the economy and progressive social policy, regarding for example immigration, same-sex marriage and gender equality. In turn, "right" is associated with a lean state, liberal economic policy and conservative social policy. This includes, for example, traditional gender and marriage models as well as restrictions on immigration. Accordingly, where respondents see themselves on the scale from left to right correlates with their attitudes towards numerous political issues. This also includes attitudes towards DC (see, for example, Bodenstein and Faust, 2017; Milner and Tingley, 2013; Schneider and Gleser, 2018).

Aiming to better illustrate the scale, Figure 3 compares the average political orientation with party identification. To the left of the average for the population (4.9 on a scale from 0 to 10) we find supporters of the parties Die Linke, Bündnis 90/Die Grünen and SPD, while to the right of the centre are the supporters of the FDP and CDU/CSU. AfD supporters tend to be furthest to the right-hand end of the scale.

However, the scale is subject to criticism. Studies show that the interpretation of the scale end points varies in different population groups (Bauer et al., 2017; Jankowski et al. 2022; Zuell and Scholz, 2019). This may distort conclusions regarding content. Moreover, several authors suggest measuring political orientation (or ideology) based on a socio-economic dimension and a socio-political dimension (Evans et al., 1996; Heath et al., 1994; for a current application, see, for example, Jankowski et al., 2019).

Despite these limitations, the left-right scale provides a simple, but useful tool for recording political orientation.

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[14] It is not possible to clarify at this point whether this is due to differences in generation or differences in stages of life. For a compact explanation of "cohort effects", "life cycle effects" and "period effects", see, for example, Schneider (2021, p. 143–144).

[15] The box was already used in the Opinion Monitor 2019 (Schneider et al., 2019, p. 14) and has been adapted/extended for this report.

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**Figure 3**        **Political orientation on the left-right scale based on party identification**
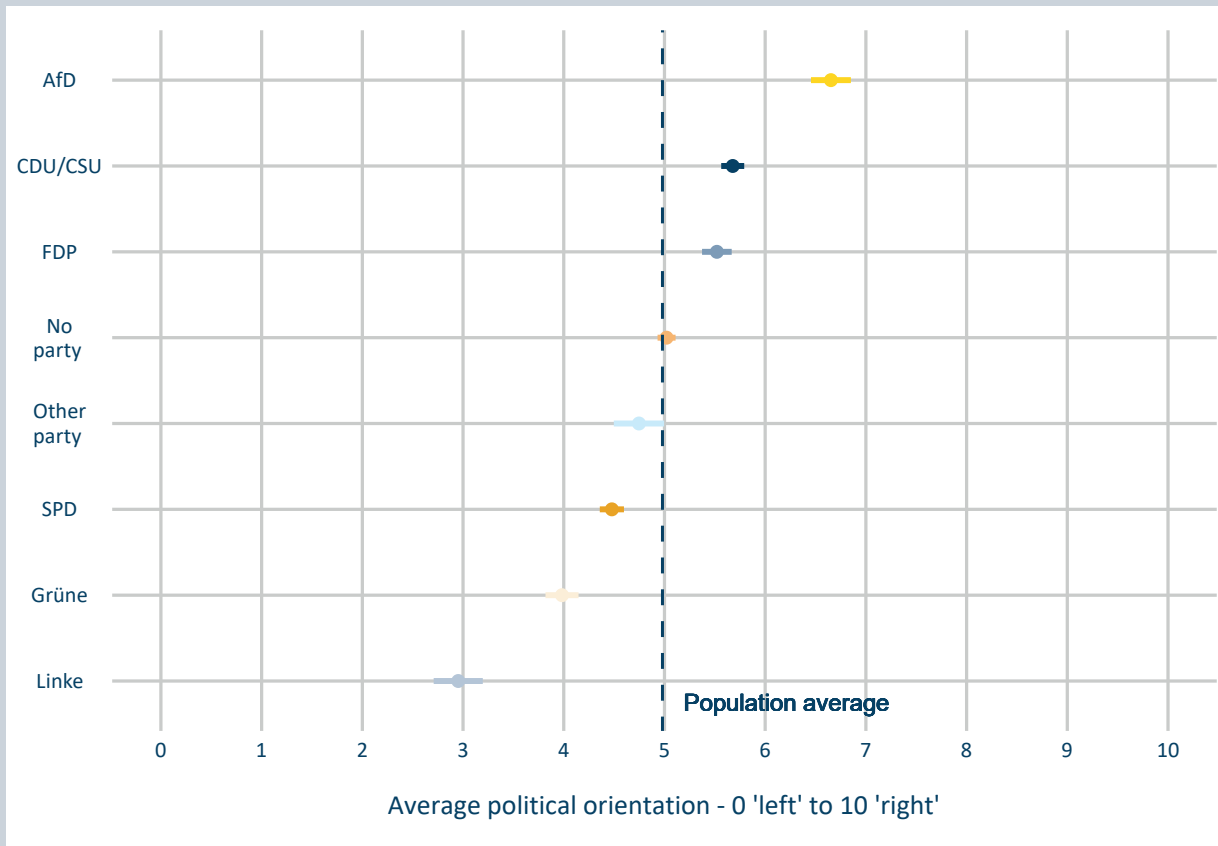


*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on DEL panel wave 3 (9/2021); N = 6,000. The figure shows the mean values with 95% confidence intervals. The questions were as follows: "In politics people sometimes talk about 'left' and 'right'. Where would you place yourself on a scale from 0 to 10 where 0 means 'left' and 10 means 'right'?" and "Generally speaking, do you feel attached to a certain party – and if so which one?"*

Differences in support for DC are also apparent with regard to political orientation. On the left side of the spectrum, support is considerably higher – amounting to around 57 percent in the "generous support" category in the group on the *left* and 48 percent in the *centre-left* group. In the remaining groups – *centre*, *centre-right* and *right* – support is much lower (26–29%). As already shown in the Opinion Monitor 2018 (Schneider and Gleser, 2018) and other studies (Bodenstein and Faust, 2017; Milner and Tingley, 2013), those on the left side of the political spectrum have the most positive attitude towards development policy and DC.

The comparison of the German population with the populations of France, Great Britain and the US in Figure 4 reveals that support in Germany, measured based on the *generous support* category, is highest. The overall pattern is similar to that in France and clearly different from that in the two English-speaking countries. In all three countries, the share of the *generous support* group, at 31 to 33 percent, is slightly below the 36 percent for this group in Germany. The share of the *average support* group is slightly bigger in France than in Germany, but 5 to 10 percentage points smaller in Great Britain (around 30%) and in the US (34%). At the same time, the share of those who advocate *no support* in these countries is approximately 13 and 9 percentage points higher than in Germany.

**Figure 4**       **Support for DC compared to France, Great Britain and the US**
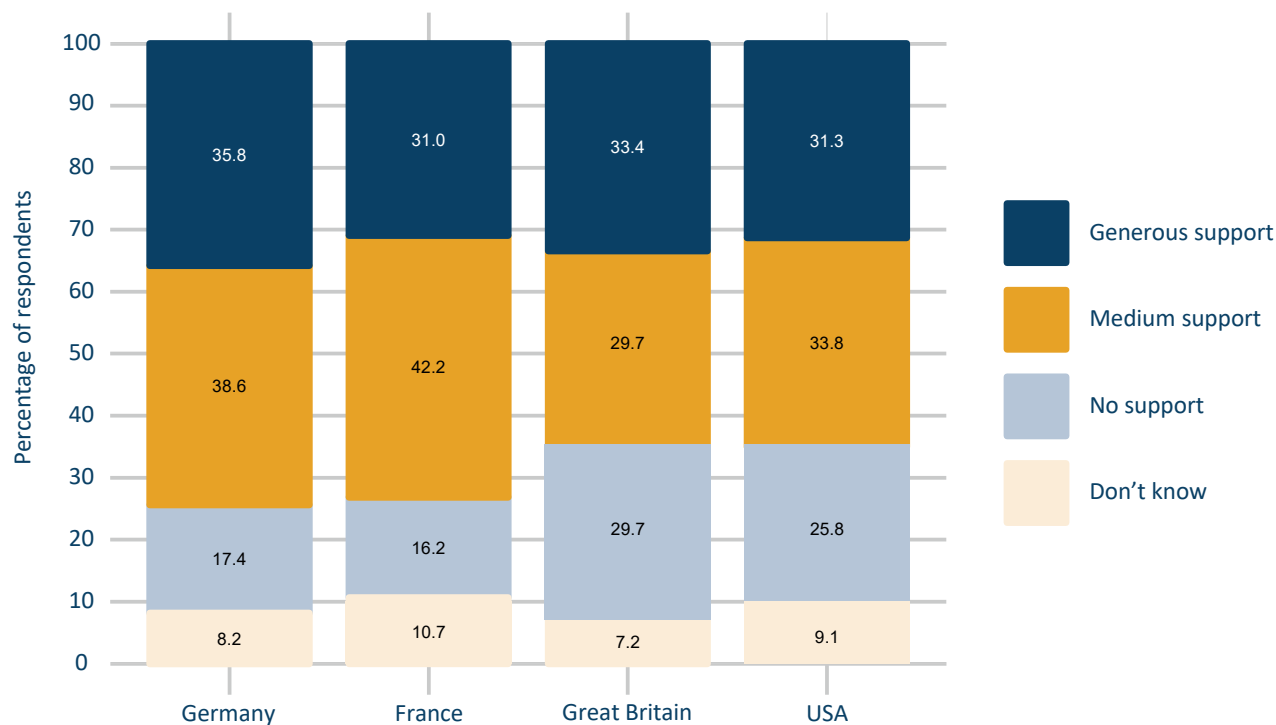


*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on the DEL tracker wave 5 (1/2022). D: N = 1,015; F: N = 1,055; GB: N = 1,690; USA: N = 1,240. The question used in Figure 2 is asked in the same form in all four countries. For the exact wording of the question see Figure 5.*

These differences, which correspond to the results of the Opinion Monitor 2018 (Schneider and Gleser, 2018, p. 15), could be due to different preferences with regard to the redistribution of government funds in these countries, influenced by how the countries organise their own national welfare state (for an overview see, for example, Dietrich, 2021, Chapter 1). In Great Britain and the US – both of which have liberal welfare state systems – the welfare state is rather weak, whereas in France and Germany citizens are entitled to extensive social services (with regard to the structure of the welfare state, see, for example, Esping-Andersen, 1990; Schmidt, 2016).

### 2.1.3     Funding for DC in Germany: majority of the population advocates no change

If the general public is asked directly for their opinion on the current expenditure for DC, a mixed picture arises, with a majority of 43 percent in favour of retaining the current level, around 23 percent demanding an increase and around 23 percent demanding a decrease in the amount (Figure 5). Interestingly, however, the share in the *decrease a great deal* category, at 12 percent, is almost three times as high as the share in the *increase a great deal* category with 4 percent.

**Figure 5**         **Public support for the current ODA expenditure**
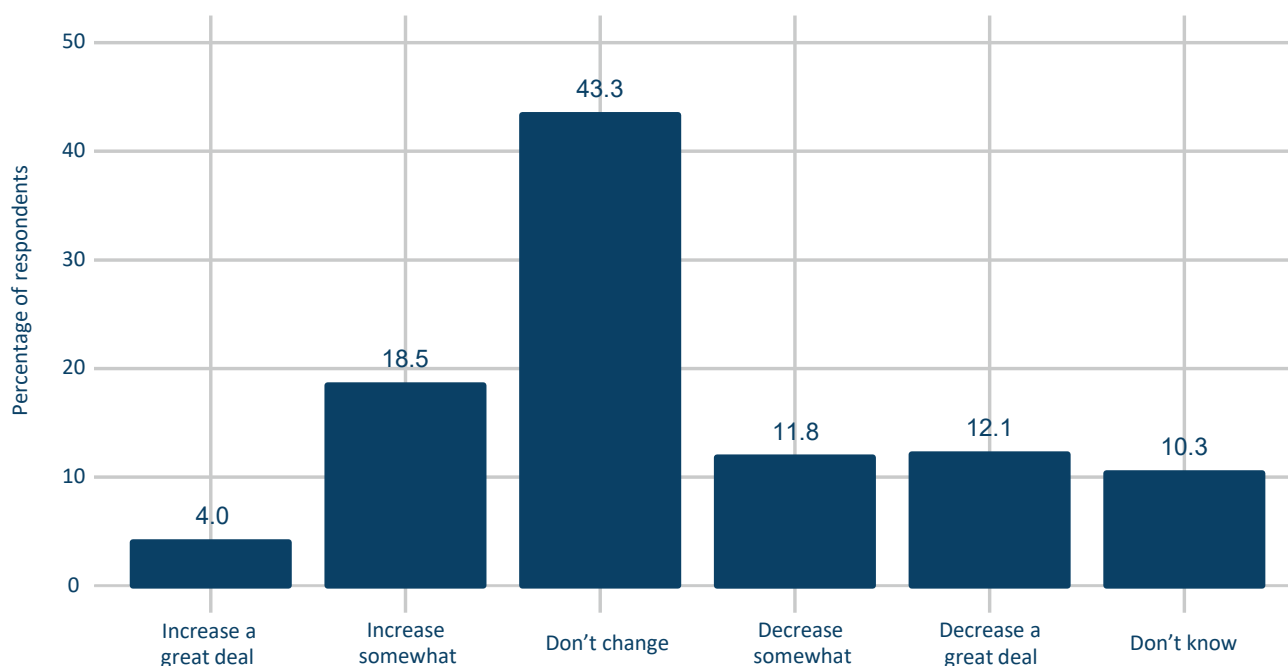


*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on DEL panel wave 3 (9/2021); N = 6,000. The question was as follows: "From its total budget of approximately EUR 512 billion, the Federal Government currently provides 4.9 percent – EUR 24.9 billion – to poor countries for development cooperation. Do you think that the government should increase or decrease the amount of money that it spends on development cooperation?" Response options: 1 = "Increase a great deal", 2 = "Increase somewhat", 3 = "Don't change", 4 = "Decrease somewhat", 5 = "Decrease a great deal".[16]*

In the case of the current expenditure on DC, too, it is apparent that young people particularly endorse increasing the DC funds (data basis: DEL panel, September 2021).

Again, political orientation proves to be more relevant than age, with 47 percent of those who position themselves on the *left* of the political spectrum and 34 percent of those who position themselves on the *centre-left* advocating an increase in the amount. In the remaining three groups, the share is between 16 and 19 percent. Conversely, 45 percent and 33 percent, respectively, of those in the groups on the *right* and *centre-right* advocate decreasing the amount. This could conceal reservations from a market-liberal viewpoint regarding government activity and redistribution and, from a national perspective, the view that government funds should primarily serve the country's own population directly (see, for example, Bodenstein and Faust, 2017; Milner and Tingley, 2010, p. 209; for the significance of political orientation in general, see Jost et al., 2009).

## 2.2    Excursus: the significance of development policy on Twitter

As most citizens hardly experience development policy directly in their everyday lives, reporting in the media plays an important role (Schneider et al., 2021a, Chapter 2). Alongside classic media such as television and newspapers, social media are playing an increasingly important role in access to news (Hölig and Hasebrink, 2018). Twitter, in particular, has the potential to influence public discussions in this context (Jungherr, 2019). At the same time, the microblogging service maps public discussion at least in parts. For this reason, Figure 6 carries on from the Twitter analyses in the Opinion Monitor 2021 (period from 1 May 2019 to 30 June 2020),

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[16]   The total of EUR 24.89 billion specified in the DEL survey represents Germany's entire ODA (official development assistance) (OECD DAC, 2021). This also contains funds that are not linked to the federal budget, such as loans with preferential conditions.

providing an updated picture of how frequently development policy and humanitarian aid have been mentioned on Twitter since then. The new data is denoted by the vertical dotted line.

**Figure 6        Tweets related to development policy and humanitarian aid from 2019 to 2021**
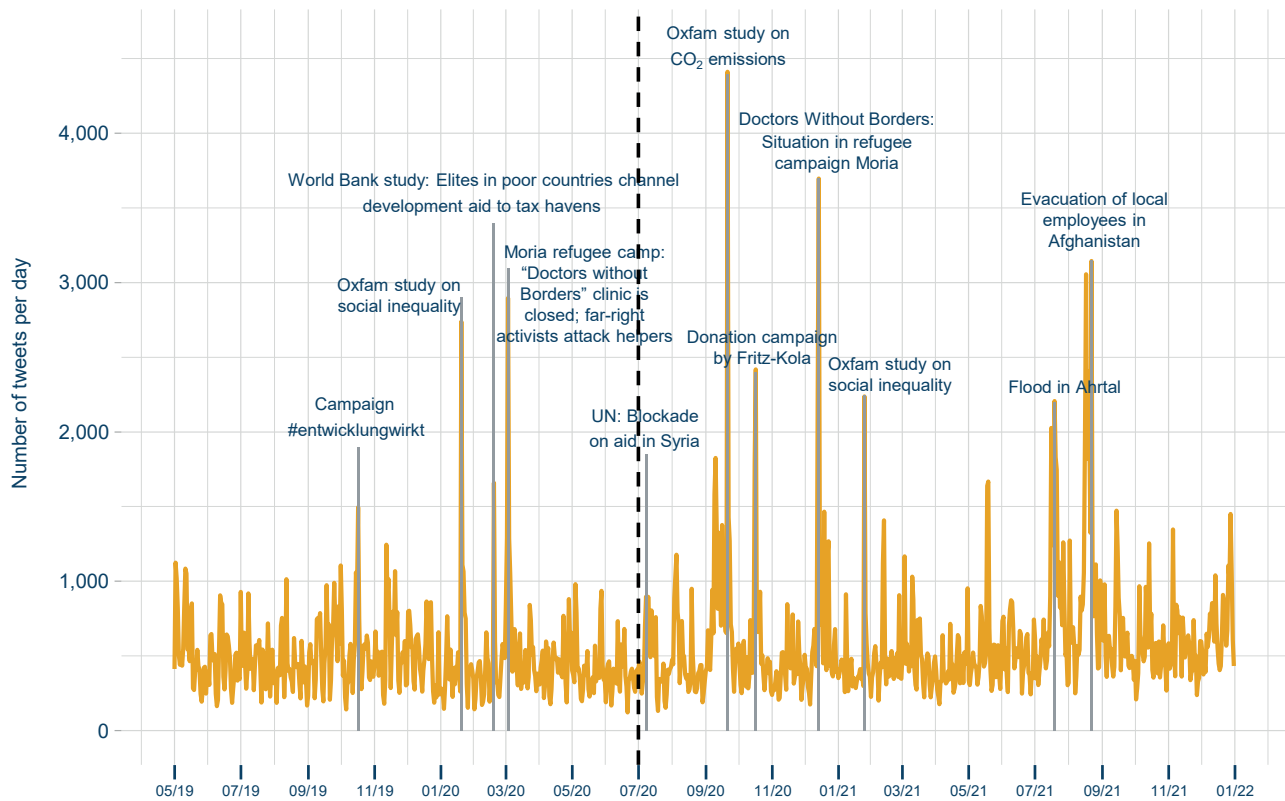


*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on Meltwater data (1 May 2019–31 December 2021); N = 558,807. The number of German-language tweets per day is shown. The tweets were determined using an extensive search term list containing not only terms but also the Twitter accounts of relevant actors and organisations. Details on methods and search terms used can be found in Section 1.3 of the online Annex.*

As in the preceding analyses, the data shows that, although the topic area is constantly mentioned on Twitter, the number of tweets tends to be low, with an average of around 560 tweets per day in the period under investigation. To put these figures into context, a query of the number of all German-language Tweets from Germany for randomly selected days revealed around 400,000 to 600,000 tweets per day (Schneider et al., 2021a, p. 17, footnote 28). Substantial fluctuations in the time series continued to be observed only in isolated cases. The greatest fluctuations are to be found in September 2020 in conjunction with an Oxfam survey of the carbon dioxide emissions of industrialised countries compared to developing countries. Further considerable fluctuations were to be seen in December 2020 in the wake of the reports from Doctors Without Borders on the situation in the Greek refugee camp in Moria and in August 2021, as people left Afghanistan or were evacuated as a result of the Taliban takeover and Germany discussed taking in former local employees of German organisations. One more noteworthy fluctuation in the time series is the one in connection with the beverage manufacturer Fritz-Kola in October 2020. The company had made fun of US President Donald Trump in an advertising campaign, for which it received much criticism. For every hate comment that was posted under this campaign on Facebook, the company in return donated one euro to Aktion Deutschland Hilft e. V. for refugee projects (Redaktionsnetzwerk Deutschland, 2020). In relation to the usual total number of tweets per day, however, even these fluctuations in the time series were low overall. It therefore has to be assumed that, although development policy content on Twitter plays a role in specialist circles, the tweets only reach the general public to a small extent.

## 2.3    Which motives for DC do citizens consider to be convincing?

There are numerous motives for development cooperation. They range from citizens' own direct national interests such as combating forced migration to a moral obligation towards people in countries of the Global South, and on to mastering global challenges or implementing the 2030 Agenda (Hudson and van Heerde-Hudson, 2012; Lumsdaine, 1993; Riddell, 2007). In this context, it is interesting to clarify which motives citizens consider to be convincing.

**Figure 7    Convincing motives for development cooperation**
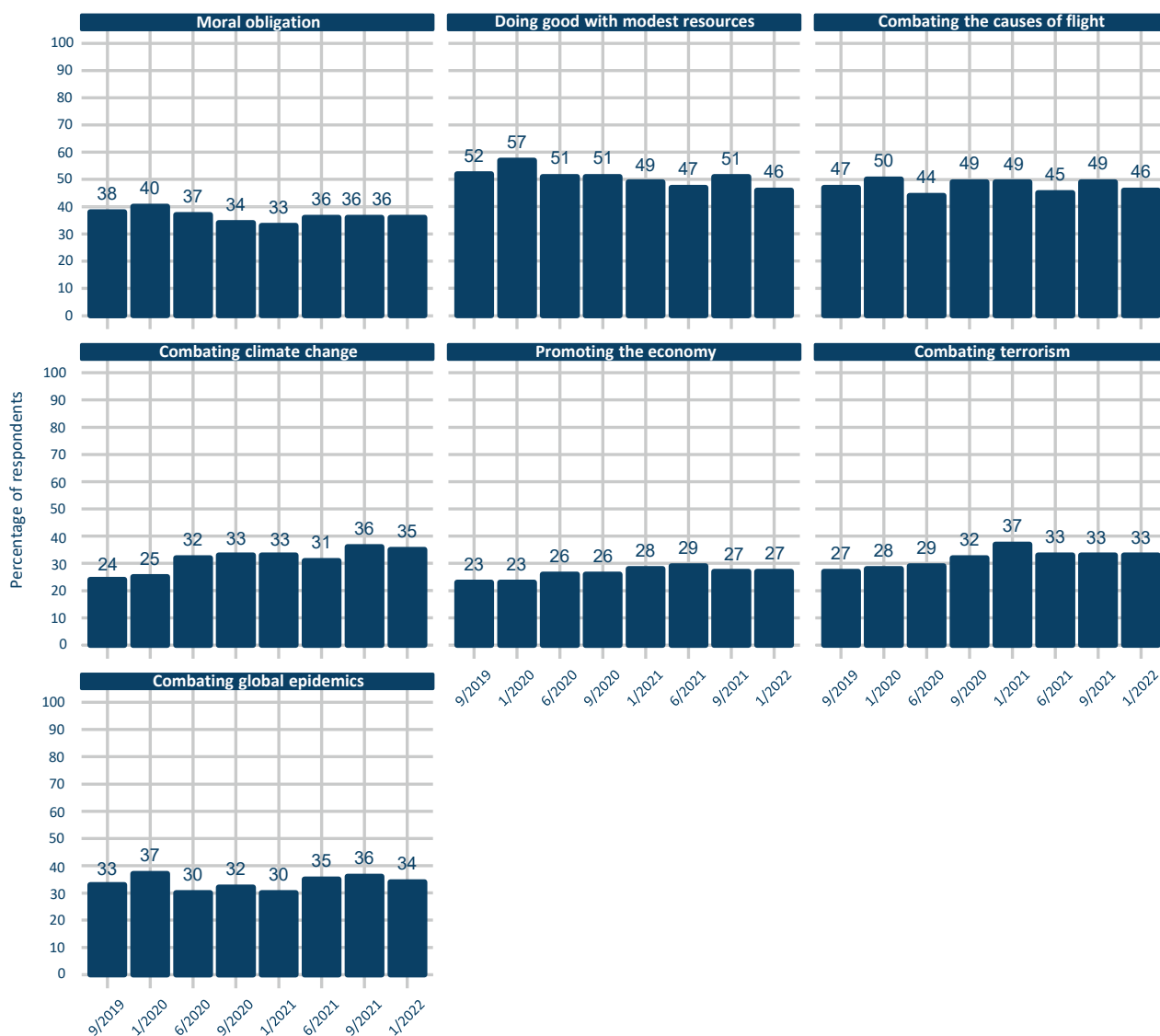


*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on the DEL panel and tracker surveys as of 9/2019. The question was as follows: "Here are several possible arguments in favour of development cooperation. Which of these arguments do you personally find particularly convincing? (Please select all applicable answers.)"*

"Doing good with modest resources" and "Combating the causes of flight" are most frequently named as convincing motives for DC in all waves (Figure 7). The shares in January 2022 were 46 percent in each case. These values have only fluctuated slightly across the survey waves examined. The altruistic motive of "Moral obligation" is deemed convincing by 36 percent (for a supplementary analysis of this motive, see Section 6.1 in the Annex). Here, too, only minor fluctuations can be seen over the course of time. In contrast, the motive of "Promoting the economy" is chosen the least across all survey waves, although its share has risen slightly since June 2020 in comparison to the first two surveys. In January 2022, a share of 27 percent was recorded for this motive.

It is also remarkable that climate change continues to become more relevant as a motivation for development policy measures. Whereas only 24 percent of respondents considered this motive to be convincing in September 2019, this figure had risen to around 35 percent in January 2022. This corresponds to the attention that the issue has received as a result of national/international discussions, as well as through movements such as "Fridays for Future", the flood disaster in the Ahr Valley, or in the context of the latest parliamentary elections (Schmitt-Beck, 2021, p. 14). A similar, albeit somewhat weaker, increase can be seen for the motives of "Combating terrorism" and "Combating global epidemics". The latter is hardly surprising in view of the coronavirus pandemic, which remains an acute issue. What is surprising, though, is that the increase did not take place until 2021. Citizens were possibly still assuming in 2020 that the pandemic would present only a short-term challenge. No further trends stand out.

From an overarching perspective, the shares for the motives of "Combating the causes of flight", "Combating climate change" and "Combating global epidemics" indicate that a substantial portion of the German population views mastering acute global challenges as a convincing argument for DC. With the exception of the motive of "Combating climate change", which is selected slightly more often over the course of time, the shares for the motives that are clearly related to global challenges are stable over time.

The differences along the political spectrum from left to right that we have already seen for DC support can also be seen in the data from September 2021 for the DC motives. In general, the *left* and *centre-left* groups classify the presented motives more often as convincing than individuals who position themselves to the *right* in the political spectrum do. "Moral obligation" is viewed as a convincing motive by around 56 percent in the group on the *left*, and by only 19 percent in the group on the *right*. Similarly, clear differences can be seen for the motives of "Doing good with modest resources*" (*left* 60%, *right* 43%), "Combating climate change" (*left* 51%, *right* 19%) and "Combating terrorism" (*left* 46%, *right* 27%).

The data also exhibits similar patterns for the motives of "Combating global epidemics" and "Promoting the economy". However, the differences between the political camps are smaller: "Combating global epidemics" finds endorsement particularly in the *left* and *centre-left* groups (around 45 % in each case), and more rarely in the *centre* to *right* groups (31% to 36%). 34 percent and 36 percent of respondents in the *left* and *centre-left* groups, respectively, regard "Promoting the economy" as a convincing motive; the shares in the remaining groups are lower (22% to 28%).

The picture is somewhat different for the motive of "Combating the causes of flight". With shares between 50 and 57 percent, the majority of respondents across the entire political spectrum from *left* to *centre-right* classify it as convincing. In the group on the *right*, only 44 percent rate this motive as convincing.

Considered as a whole, the data makes it clear that the various motives for DC meet with endorsement above all on the left of the spectrum, while the small group of respondents who position themselves on the right is very difficult to convince of the advantages of DC. This is especially true for the motives of "Moral obligation" and "Doing good with modest resources", but also for "Combating climate change". The latter, in particular, is hardly surprising despite the pressure to act regarding climate change. After all, individuals who position themselves to the right of the political spectrum are more often sceptical with regard to the human contribution to climate change and the need for corresponding countermeasures (e.g. Jacquet et al., 2014; McCright et al., 2016). Only the motive of "Combating the causes of flight" constitutes a common denominator across practically the entire political spectrum, with all population groups assigning it a similarly high importance.

## 2.4    What is the opinion of the German population regarding democracy and the promotion of democracy in DC?

Development policy actors often face the challenge that it is not possible to guarantee that funds will be used effectively in countries with poor governance, a weak democracy or fragile governmental structures (e.g. Zürcher, 2012). Weak democratic structures frequently also go hand in hand with widespread corruption (Rock, 2009). At the same time, the population of these countries is often particularly in need of support. Development policy therefore frequently places conditions on the use of funds in such contexts. This means

that partner countries only receive support if they fulfil certain conditions or implement certain measures – such as ones promoting democracy (BMZ, 2020; also refer to Bodenstein and Faust, 2017). Likewise, the structure of DC measures may be adjusted in such contexts, for example in that the cooperation takes place through multilateral or civil-society organisations – partly also in order to avoid working directly with the government in the partner country (referred to as *by-passing*).

It is often not possible for the donor country to reliably determine whether and to what extent the promises are kept (Collier et al., 1997; for more recent discussions of DC conditionality, see, for example, Molenaers et al., 2015; Wright and Winters, 2010). Providing support for countries with an authoritarian regime therefore bears the risk of helping to preserve the political system; in the extreme case, a government might be supported that substantially violates human rights (Dasandi et al., 2021; Dutta et al., 2013). At the same time, the promotion of democratic structures has the potential to further the partner country's socio-economic development (e.g. Ethier, 2003; Kosack, 2003; Niño-Zarazúa et al., 2020; Svensson, 1999). Empirical research also shows that the allocation of German DC funds is tied to the quality of democratic structures and governance in the partner countries (Wencker, 2022).

There is also substantial tension with regard to public opinion on this issue. On the one hand, the general public's expectations of DC are characterised by a narrative of care and aid for very poor people in the countries of the Global South. On the other hand, citizens view corruption as an obstacle to effective development policy and support DC less in partner countries with a high level of corruption (Schneider et al., 2021a). In view of this situation, it is unclear whether and to what extent the general public believes that non-democratic countries or countries with fragile democratic structures should be supported through DC (Escribà-Folch et al., 2021; Faust and Garcia, 2014).

### 2.4.1    The general public endorses both cooperation with democratic states and the promotion of democracy

In November 2021 the general public (N ≈ 2.000) was asked

1. whether they support the promotion of democracy and the rule of law in DC;

2. whether they are in favour of collaboration with non-democratic states; and

3. what measures they consider appropriate in the case of autocratisation tendencies in a partner country.

Overall, the German population considers promoting democracy and the rule of law to be important. In DC, they favour cooperation with democratic partner countries, or conditional DC in the case of states with an autocratic regime. Figure 8 shows that around 63 percent of the population are generally in favour of Germany helping countries of the Global South to develop democratic state systems governed by the rule of law. With regard to support for non-democratic states, 61 percent are in favour of the support being tied to conditions regarding rule of law and democracy, and also of applying sanctions if the countries fail to comply with the conditions. Finally, 58 percent of the population agree that DC should primarily concentrate on cooperation with democratically governed states (see the orange bars in each case).

Support for measures to promote democracy is particularly frequent among people who are more to the *left* of the political spectrum. It is also noticeable that people who position themselves to the *right* of the political spectrum agree with all three statements much more seldom than those who belong to the other four groups. With regard to cooperation with non-democratic countries and the prioritisation of democratic countries, however, there is very little difference between the various groups along the left-right spectrum, especially not in a systematic way. Overall, the findings indicate that, with the exception of the group on the right, the majority of the population as a whole endorses democracy and the promotion of democracy in DC.

**Figure 8**       **The general public's endorsement of democracy and the promotion of democracy in DC**
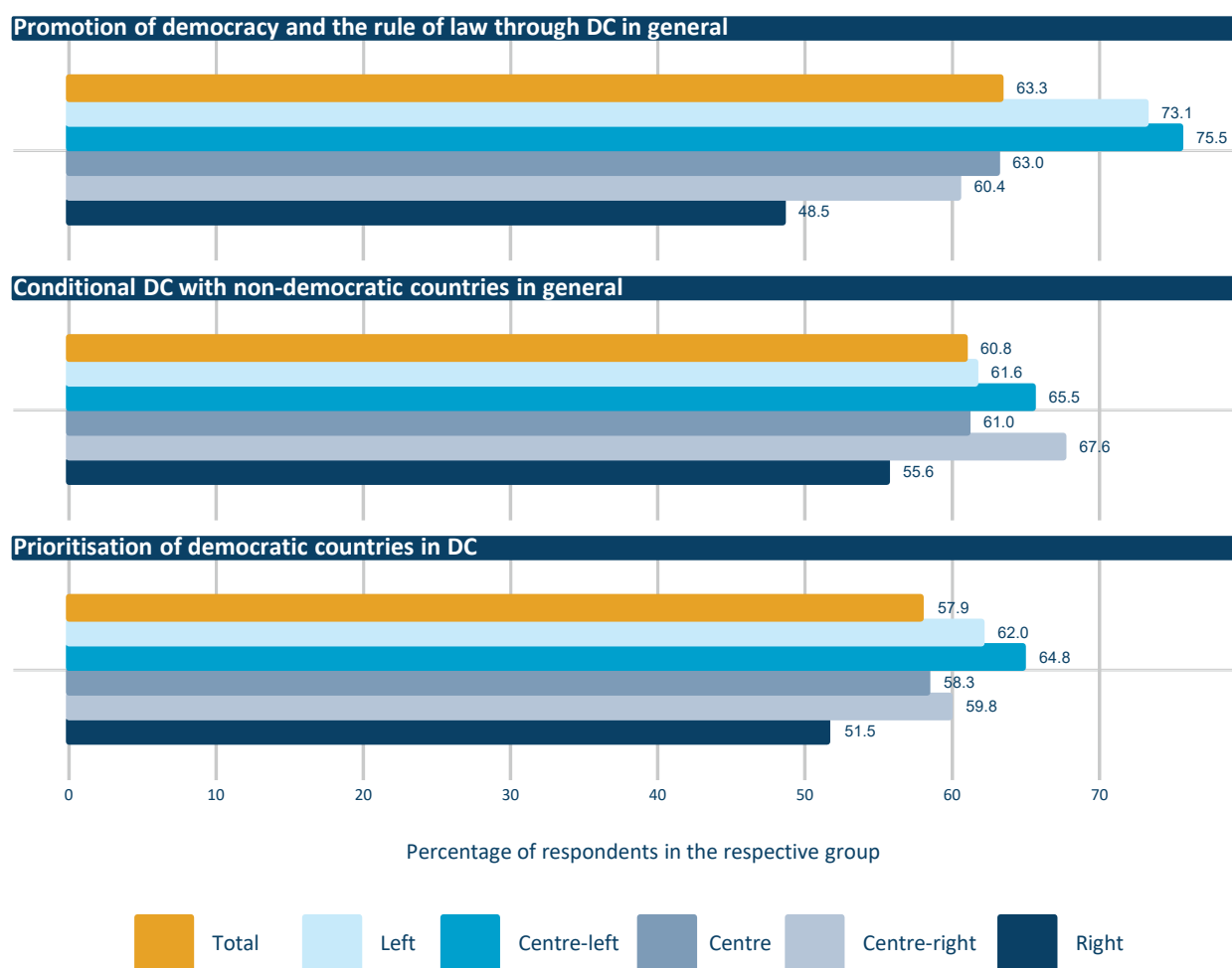


**Promotion of democracy and the rule of law through DC in general**

- Total: 63.3
- Left: 73.1
- Centre-left: 75.5
- Centre: 63.0
- Centre-right: 60.4
- Right: 48.5

**Conditional DC with non-democratic countries in general**

- Total: 60.8
- Left: 61.6
- Centre-left: 65.5
- Centre: 61.0
- Centre-right: 67.6
- Right: 55.6

**Prioritisation of democratic countries in DC**

- Total: 57.9
- Left: 62.0
- Centre-left: 64.8
- Centre: 58.3
- Centre-right: 59.8
- Right: 51.5

Percentage of respondents in the respective group

Legend: Total | Left | Centre-left | Centre | Centre-right | Right

*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on a survey by Respondi (11/2021); N = 2,005. Endorsement was queried based on a scale from 1 "Do not agree at all" to 7 "Completely agree". For the figure, scale values 1 to 3 have been grouped under "(Largely) disagree" and the values 5 to 7 under "(Largely) agree". The value 4 corresponds to the middle of the scale and is interpreted as an undecided attitude. The figure shows the share of those responding "(Largely) agree" in the respective group. The exact wording of the question can be found in Table 4 in the online Annex.*

### 2.4.2    DC in the case of autocratisation processes: conditions for the regime, without neglecting the situation of the population in the partner country

Following the questions about democracy and the promotion of democracy, the respondents were informed in a fictitious but realistic scenario that autocratisation tendencies are to be observed in an unspecified partner country of German DC.[17] At the same time, the population in this country suffers from poverty, hunger and poor infrastructure (education, health care). The respondents were then asked to state their attitude towards various Federal Government responses to the developments in the country. An attempt was made to map probable responses as comprehensively as possible (see Dasandi et al. 2021; Heinrich and Kobayashi, 2020 for a similar approach). The responses queried were as follows:

1.    No change in cooperation,

2.    Reduction in cooperation,

3.    Termination of cooperation,

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[17]    The complete wording of the question can be found in Section 1.4 in the online Annex.

4.  Termination of cooperation and additional sanctions,

5.  Conditions for continuing the cooperation with the partner country (conditionality),

6.  Cooperation more via civil-society organisations with little government influence,

7.  Reallocation of the funds to multilateral organisations,

8.  Promotion of democratic structures and the rule of law in the country concerned.

In the case of autocratisation tendencies, the majority of citizens speak in favour of taking a moderate approach, without neglecting the situation of the population in the partner country. The individual responses are presented in Figure 9 (endorsement in the population as a whole = orange bar). A high level of endorsement can be seen for the responses of *conditional DC with the partner country* (68%) and *promotion of democracy* (64%). Average endorsement can be seen for *continuation through civil-society DC* and *reducing cooperation but not terminating it* (around 59% in each case) and *switching to multilateral cooperation with the partner country* (55%). Less than half of citizens advocate *continuing the cooperation to prevent deterioration of the situation* (around 47%), *terminating the cooperation and additionally imposing sanctions on the partner country* (45%) or *terminating the cooperation without any additional measures* (44%).

Differences based on political orientation are also to be expected in the responses to autocratisation tendencies because the various political camps are highly likely to set different priorities – for example, considering the situation of the population as opposed to supporting an autocratic government (see Bodenstein and Faust, 2017). The survey revealed the following picture:

Continuing the cooperation conditionally, in other words formulating conditions for the partner country (*conditional DC*), meets with a high level of endorsement in all groups, with the greatest endorsement (around 74%) in the group on the *centre-left* and the least endorsement (63%) in the group on the *right*. This is also the case for switching to multilateral DC, which is endorsed by more than half of respondents in all groups – to the greatest extent in the groups on the *centre-left* and *centre-right* (around 60% in each case), and least in the group on the *right* (approx. 53%).

For the remaining responses, the political camps express different preferences, indicating that those on the left of the spectrum attach greater importance to the situation of the population in the partner country. Those who position themselves on the *left* or *centre-left* particularly endorse *promoting democracy in the partner country*, *reducing cooperation while considering the basic needs of the population of the partner country* and *continuing cooperation*. A particularly striking difference compared to the other groups can be seen in the results in Section 2.4.1 in the case of *promoting democracy in the partner country* – where the endorsement level is 75 percent in the group on the *left* and 73 percent in the group on the *centre-left*. The difference is more than 10 percentage points compared to the group in the *centre* and nearly 25 percentage points compared to the group on the *right*.

In contrast, individuals who position themselves more to the *right* advocate stricter responses to a greater extent: *terminating cooperation with the partner country* – be it with or without further sanctions – is most greatly endorsed among those who position themselves to the *right* or *centre-right*. For both forms of response, the endorsement values lie between 49 percent and 55 percent. The difference compared to the groups on the *left* and *centre-left* is relatively large in both cases, amounting to between 10 and 15 percentage points.

In addition, the group on the *right* is more reserved when it comes to *continuing the cooperation through civil-society DC*. This response variant meets with an endorsement level of 52 percent in this group, and 60 to 64 percent in the rest of the spectrum.

**Figure 9**      **Attitude towards DC responses in the case of autocratisation by political orientation**
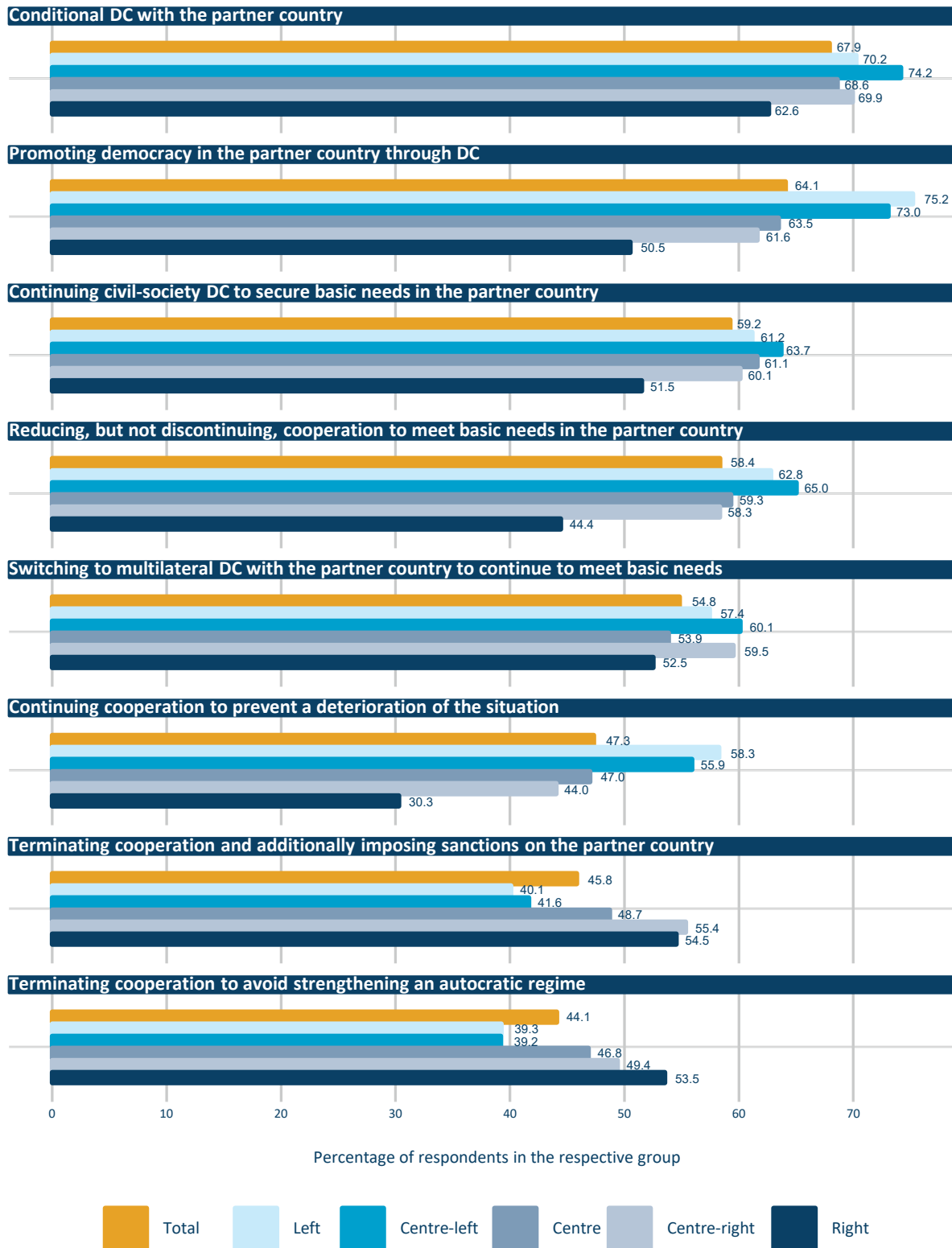
**Conditional DC with the partner country**

- 67.9
- 70.2
- 74.2
- 68.6
- 69.9
- 62.6

**Promoting democracy in the partner country through DC**

- 64.1
- 75.2
- 73.0
- 63.5
- 61.6
- 50.5

**Continuing civil-society DC to secure basic needs in the partner country**

- 59.2
- 61.2
- 63.7
- 61.1
- 60.1
- 51.5

**Reducing, but not discontinuing, cooperation to meet basic needs in the partner country**

- 58.4
- 62.8
- 65.0
- 59.3
- 58.3
- 44.4

**Switching to multilateral DC with the partner country to continue to meet basic needs**

- 54.8
- 57.4
- 60.1
- 53.9
- 59.5
- 52.5

**Continuing cooperation to prevent a deterioration of the situation**

- 47.3
- 58.3
- 55.9
- 47.0
- 44.0
- 30.3

**Terminating cooperation and additionally imposing sanctions on the partner country**

- 45.8
- 40.1
- 41.6
- 48.7
- 55.4
- 54.5

**Terminating cooperation to avoid strengthening an autocratic regime**

- 44.1
- 39.3
- 39.2
- 46.8
- 49.4
- 53.5

Percentage of respondents in the respective group

Legend: Total | Left | Centre-left | Centre | Centre-right | Right

*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on a survey by Respondi (11/2021); N = 2,005. Endorsement was queried based on a scale from 1 "Do not agree at all" to 7 "Completely agree". For the figure, scale values 1 to 3 have been grouped under "(Largely) disagree" and the values 5 to 7 under "(Largely) agree". The value 4 corresponds to the middle of the scale and is interpreted as an undecided attitude. The figure shows the share of those responding "(Largely) agree" in the respective group. The exact wording of the question can be found in Table 4 in the online Annex.*

To sum up, the data shows that a large share of the population classifies democracy and the promotion of democracy in DC as important.[18] This is the case for the entire political spectrum with the exception of the far right fringe. Nonetheless, citizens consider it to be necessary to tie development policy cooperation to conditions in the case of autocratisation processes. Terminating the cooperation in such cases meets with relatively high endorsement only on the right-hand of the spectrum. Those in the remaining groups endorse continuing the cooperation with adjusted funds and measures or switching to multilateral or civil society DC – but always under consideration of the situation of the people in the partner country.

The basic pattern here is similar to the general structure of foreign policy attitudes, which are oriented along the axes of *cooperative internationalism* (CI) and *militant internationalism* (MI) (see, for example, Gravelle et al., 2017; Rathbun, 2020). Whereas a high level of endorsement in the CI dimension correlates to endorsement of diplomacy, cooperation and humanitarianism, the MI dimension corresponds to a dominant foreign policy strategy, deterrents and possibly also military measures.

## 2.5      How do citizens perceive their own influence on the situation in the Global South?

One important characteristic of the 2030 Agenda is that all societal groups – politics, business, science and also citizens – are required to make a contribution towards achieving the SDGs, and that not only in their own country but also on a global scale. Against this backdrop, how do citizens specifically assess their own influence on the situation in the Global South – or in other words, how do they rate their development policy self-efficacy? This question is particularly relevant because self-efficacy constitutes an important correlation to personal development engagement (see Schneider and Gleser, 2018, Chapter 5), as well as for support for official development cooperation. Following on from this, the question arises as to what influence citizens attribute to civil society actors – such as governments, NGOs and multilateral DC organisations – in this context.

### 2.5.1      People perceive their own influence on the situation in the Global South as low

In general, it is apparent that citizens assess their personal influence on the situation in the countries of the Global South as low. With an average value of around 3 on the scale from 0 to 10, they have a low sense of personal development policy self-efficacy and thus rate themselves as having a much lower (self-)efficacy than the other organisations and institutions they were asked about (Figure 10).

On the one hand, this could be interpreted as a sense of powerlessness in face of global challenges. On the other hand, it could also be a realistic assessment of their own influence, especially in relation to the presumed influence of the remaining actors considered. Moreover, the question specifically relates to the Global South. It may be the case that people have a more positive assessment of their influence on their own environment and development policy activities in Germany – for instance through civic engagement – than their influence on the Global South. However, this question cannot be clarified with the available data.

Citizens attribute a much higher influence to companies and international organisations than they do to themselves. For these actors, the average value for the perceived influence amounts to 6.7, respectively. The Federal Government and NGOs, with an average value of 6, are rated considerably lower (also refer to Figure 10).

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[18]   In addition, the greater the extent to which people support DC in general, the more likely they are to also endorse the promotion of democracy in DC (correlation r = 0.4; p < 0.001).

**Figure 10**     **Perceived influence of various actors on the situation in poor countries**
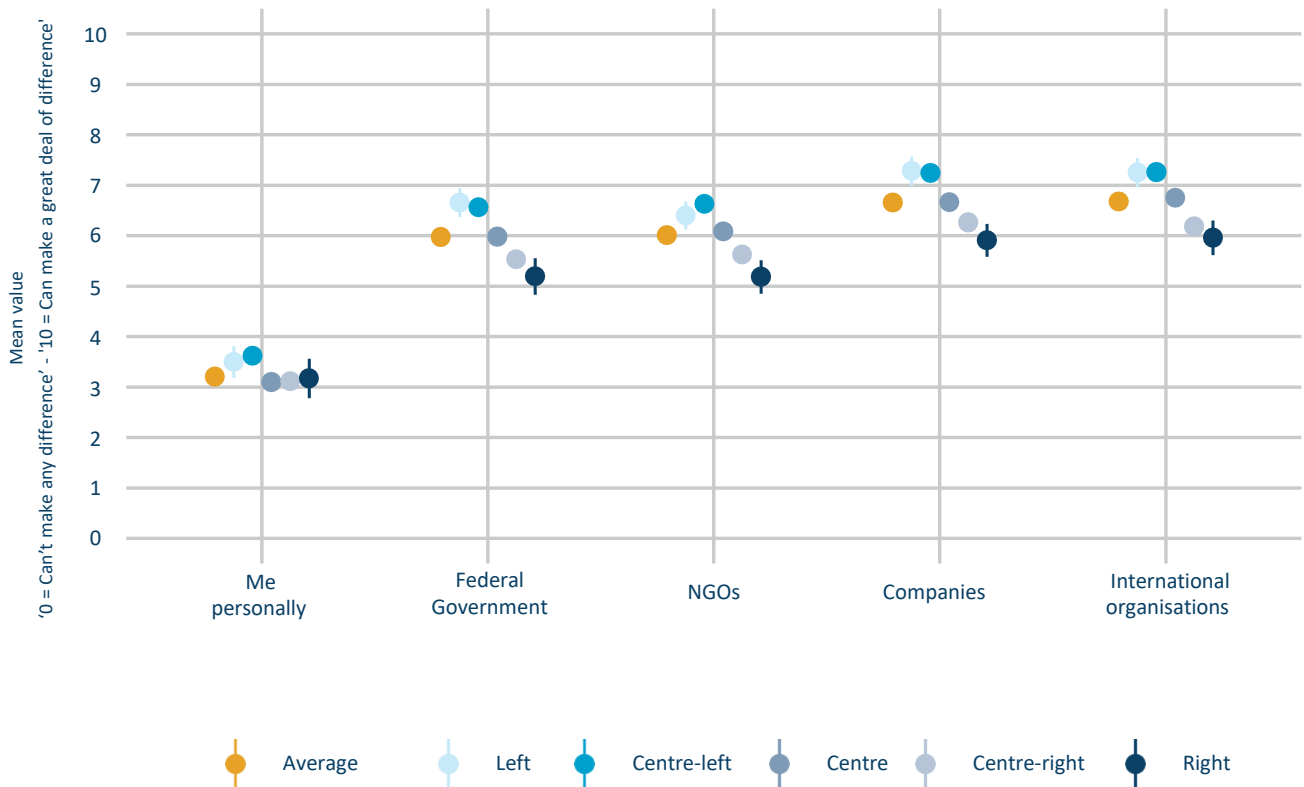


Source: DEval, own visualisation based on the DEL panel wave 3 (9/2021); N = 6,000. The figure shows the mean values with 95% confidence intervals. The question was as follows: "How much of a difference, if any, do you think each of the following can make to reducing poverty in poor countries?" Response options: Scale from 0 = "Can't make any difference at all" to 10 = "Can make a great deal of difference".

It is notable that individuals who classify themselves more to the left of the political spectrum rate their development policy self-efficacy higher. The difference for the *left* or *centre-left* groups in comparison to the remaining three groups amounts to around 0.5 scale points. For the remaining organisations and institutions, there are greater differences between left and right. In relative terms, the *left* and *centre-left* groups always attribute the highest effectiveness to the actors. In the remaining groups, the assessment is always lower, with the *right* group providing the lowest assessment of effectiveness.

In addition, younger people perceive themselves as having a substantially higher self-efficacy than older people. The highest assumed level of self-efficacy, with an average value of 3.9, is in the group *aged 18 to 29*, while the lowest is in the group *aged 60 and older*. Together with the greater support for official development cooperation (see Sections 2.1.1 and 2.1.2) and a stronger sense of moral obligation towards the countries of the Global South (see Section 6.1), these findings indicate that younger people have a more positive basic attitude towards development policy than older people.

The analyses of development engagement in Chapter 3 refer to self-efficacy, as it is an important factor in explaining development engagement, for instance through sustainable consumption.

The perception of self-efficacy in Germany corresponds to that in the OECD DAC donor states[19] France, Great Britain and the US. Figure 50 in the Annex shows that, based on the DEL data from January 2022, there are hardly any substantial differences. Only the citizens of Great Britain (presented by the light blue dots) assess their own opportunities to exert an influence (with a difference of half a scale point) more sceptically than the populations of the other three countries. Overall, however, self-efficacy is assessed as low in all four countries. In addition, the German population attributes slightly more influence to its government and also to companies compared to citizens of the other three states, whereas people in the US have a slightly more sceptical view of the influence of international organisations.

## 2.6       Excursus: Does the general public know the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?

The 2030 Agenda and the 17 SDGs form a key point of reference for development policy and efforts to achieve sustainable global development. In this context, citizens are also required to make their own contributions. How well-known the SDGs are is therefore an important indicator of whether the general public has knowledge on this point of reference.

The Opinion Monitor for Development Policy 2018 (Schneider and Gleser, 2018, p. 49–50) showed that neither shortly after the 2030 Agenda was passed in the winter of 2015 nor nearly two years later in the summer of 2017 had a substantial share of the population heard of the SDGs and also claimed to know what they involve. The shares were below 10 percent in both cases. Just under one quarter of respondents had actually heard of the term but didn't know what they are. The term was unknown to the majority. Has the situation changed since then?

Not significantly. Figure 11 shows that, even five years after being passed, the SDGs are unknown to 63 percent of respondents. In September 2021, only 8 percent of respondents stated that they had heard of the SDGs and knew what they are. 21 percent had at least heard of the term. This continuity is particularly surprising given that the survey questioned the same individuals again, so learning effects could quite well be expected. In cross-sectional surveys, the share of those who do not know the SDGs could therefore be even smaller.

The SDGs are slightly better known among the younger age groups. Among those *aged 18 to 29*, 15 percent stated that they had heard of the SDGs and also knew what they are, while a further 31 percent had at least heard of the term (DEL panel, September 2021). The shares for these two response categories decreased as the age of respondents increased. These findings could be an indication that campaigns relating to the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs are perceived more by younger people – such as the "17 goals" campaign managed by Engagement Global that is presented on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube.[20] Alternatively, the education system (school, university) could ensure that younger people have more contact with the issue.[21]

The latter possibility is backed up by the finding that citizens who have the (technical) *Abitur* (higher school-leaving qualification) or are still in school more frequently state that they know the SDGs. There is a clear difference here compared to those with the *Hauptschulabschluss* (basic school-leaving qualification). In the group *still undergoing training*, around 13 percent of respondents know what the SDGs are, and 40 percent are at least familiar with the term. In the case of those who have the *Abitur*, these shares amount to 14 percent and 29 percent, respectively. Among those with the *Hauptschulabschluss*, however, only 5 percent know the SDGs, while 15 percent have at least heard of the term.

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[19]    OECD DAC = Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.
[20]    See https://17ziele.de/.
[21]    See, for example, the information on the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs provided (in German) by the "Globales Lernen" portal of the World University Service: *https://www.globaleslernen.de/de/fokusthemen/fokus-sustainable-development-goals-sdg.* On top of this, minor differences can be seen based on gender.

**Figure 11**        **Familiarity with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) over time**
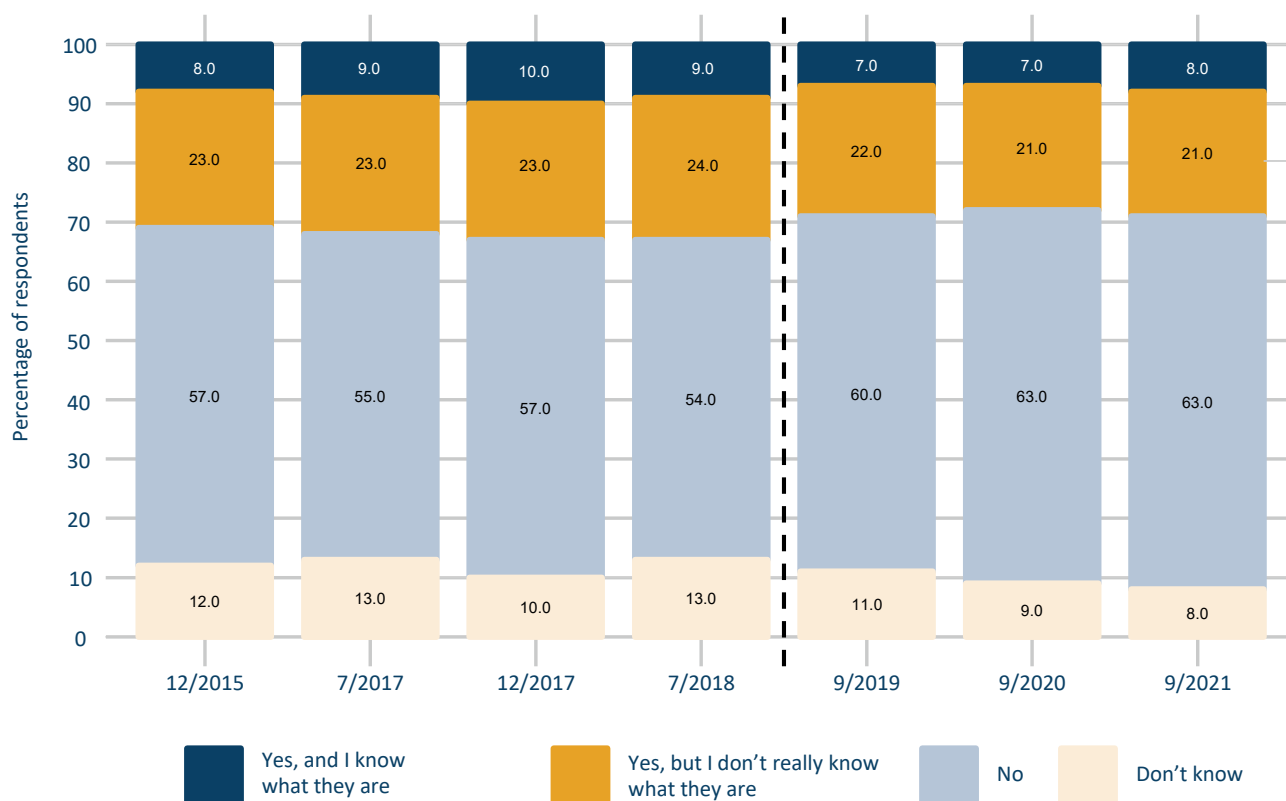


Source: DEval, own visualisation based on the AAT (up to 7/2018) and the DEL panel surveys (as of 9/2019). This item is not available in the DEL tracker surveys. The question was as follows: "Have you ever heard or read about the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals?" Response options: "Yes, and I know what they are", "Yes, but I don't really know what they are", "No" and "Don't know".

Individuals who position themselves on the *(centre-)left* or *(centre-)right* more frequently state that they know the SDGs. In the group on the *left*, 15 percent have already heard of the term and know what they are. A further 26 percent have at least heard of the term. In the *centre-left*, *centre-right* and *right* groups, the values for these two response categories are 10 percent and 26 percent, respectively. The SDGs are least known in the *centre* group, where 5 percent know the SDGs and 19 percent have at least heard of the term.

Individuals at the edges of the political spectrum are generally more politically active (for the cross-country comparison, see, for example, van der Meer et al., 2009). It is possible that citizens whose political orientation tends towards the very ends of the scale thus follow (international) political events more closely (for the US, see, for example, Blazina, 2022; also refer to the findings relating to political participation in development policy in Section 3.1).

| Box 5 | Why is it that the SDGs have not caught on among the German population? |
|---|---|

Reports from Norway for 2020 show that 70 percent of citizens have heard of the SDGs, whereas the figure for 2015 was still only 35 percent (Norwegian Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation and Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2021, p. 29). In France, although only 11 percent of the population knew the SDGs in 2021, a further 39 percent stated that they had at least heard of the term (DEL France 2021; own analysis). One possible explanation for why there is such little awareness of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs among the general public – in contrast to among development policy experts – could be that they are so rarely mentioned in public. For the period from 1 January 2015 to 30 November 2021, a search in the LexisNexis press database for the most important national daily and weekly newspapers accessible there yielded a result of just 495 mentions of the SDGs (see Section 1.5 in the online Annex). Searching for

the term in the search engines of the federal ministries also produced only a small number of results (documentation in Table 5 in the online Annex). One reason for this could be that governmental and civil-society bodies have not succeeded in designing and implementing any effective campaigns to support the SDGs. An interesting example is provided again by Norway, where a campaign was launched in 2021 with the aim of informing the population about the SDGs based on their everyday lives via the issue of "nutrition and climate change" (Svardal, 2021). This campaign, which follows on from similar measures in the past related to everyday life, focuses in particular on citizens who are sceptical regarding the extent of climate change and its negative consequences. The campaign apparently succeeds in breaking down the complex system of the goals in the 2030 Agenda in such a way that the SDGs are also establishing themselves among the population. However, it is not yet clear to what extent the campaign actually helps to change attitudes and behaviour.

## 2.7    How effective is DC from the viewpoint of the general public?

The Opinion Monitor 2018 showed that some sections of the German population have reservations regarding the effectiveness of DC and possible corruption in the partner countries (Schneider and Gleser, 2018, p. 28-30). This Opinion Monitor has thus also investigated how effective the general public believes DC to be, how they assess the problem of corruption and whether this assessment has changed over time.

### 2.7.1    Effectiveness of DC: The majority of the population remains sceptical

In January 2022, 44 percent, and thus the majority of the population, classified the effectiveness of development policy measures as medium (see Figure 12). 22 percent classified it as high, and 21 percent as low.[22] As was already the case in earlier surveys, the assessment of effectiveness has a positive correlation with DC support.[23]

In fact, the assessment of effectiveness has hardly changed over the last few years – even taking account of the coronavirus pandemic (Figure 12, bar to the right of the dotted line). However, a systematic break in the pattern of attitudes stands out at the transition between AAT and DEL (Figure 12, vertical dotted line), with the AAT data showing a more negative assessment of DC effectiveness. As was already the case for general support for DC in Section 2.1.2, this can be attributed to changes in the questionnaire.[24]

The assessment of effectiveness does not appear to have a linear correlation to a person's own political orientation. To begin with, the largest share of those who classify the effectiveness as *(very) effective* is found in the group on the *left*, at around 31 percent (data basis: DEL panel September 2021). Conversely, the largest share of the *(absolutely) ineffective* category, at around 37 percent, is found in the group on the *right*. This corresponds to the expectations that can be derived from the findings regarding DC support. At the same time, the share for the *(very) effective* category among those who position themselves on the *right*, at 24 percent, is slightly higher than in the *centre* and *centre-right* groups, at around 20 percent each, and is thus on the level of the *centre-left* group (25%). In the group on the *left*, on the other hand, there are also 21 percent who classify DC as *(absolutely) ineffective*. This share is higher than in the *centre-left* group (16%) and is approximately on par with the level of the *centre group.*

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[22]  The DEL surveys no longer allow us to continue the operationalisation used in the Opinion Monitor for Development Policy 2018 to record DC effectiveness, because a question for the index used in 2018 has been removed from the questionnaire. Consequently, the shares displayed in Figure 12 for the period from 12/2013 to 7/2018 do not correspond to Figure 6 in Schneider and Gleser (2018, p. 28).

[23]  Correlation r = 0.62; p < 0.001. Data: DEL panel September 2021. N = 6,000.

[24]  Whereas the preceding question in the AAT asked respondents about their own economic situation and the national economic situation, the preceding question in the DEL questionnaire asks what various actors can contribute towards combating global poverty. In this case, too, different assessment criteria are presumably activated among the respondents (see, for example, Zaller, 1992).

**Figure 12**      **The effectiveness of DC as viewed by the German population**
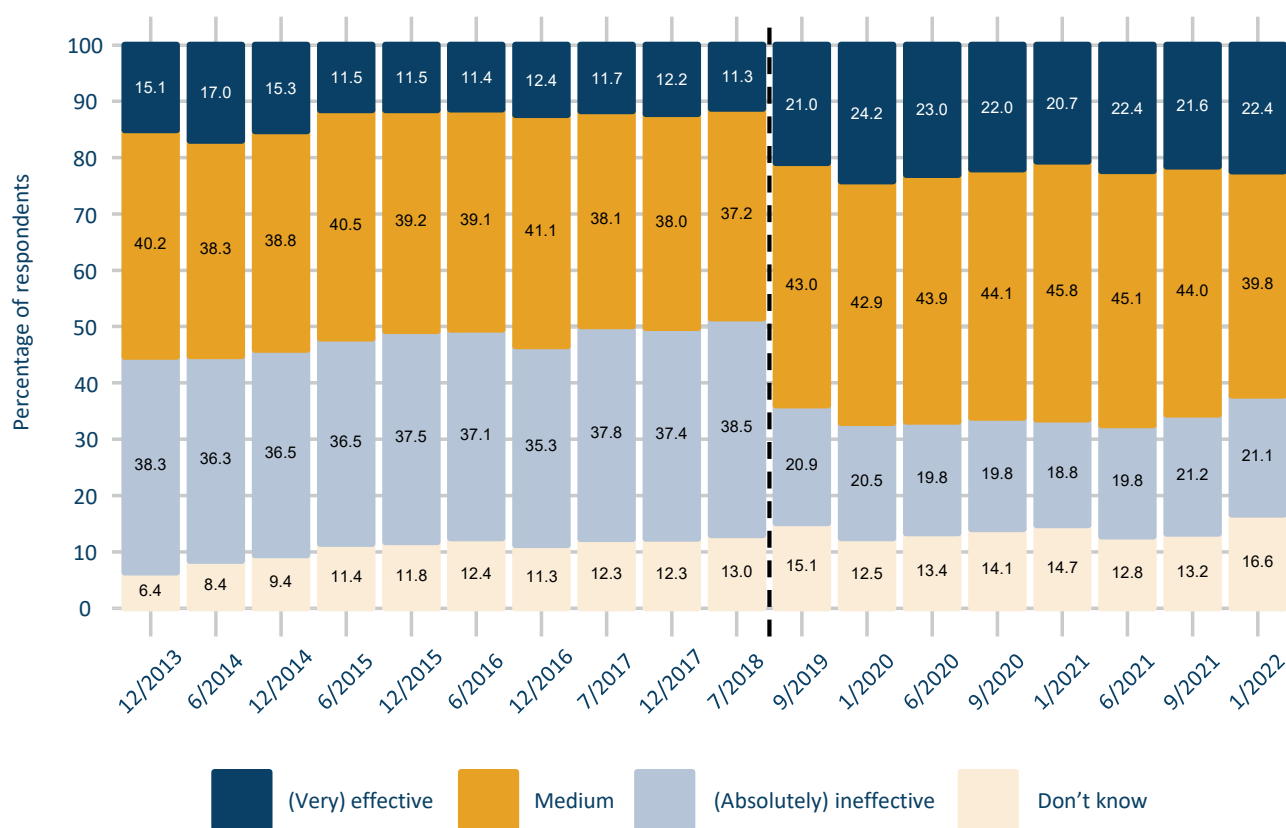


Source: DEval, own visualisation based on the AAT (up to 7/2018) and the DEL panel and tracker surveys (as of 9/2019). The question was as follows: "In your opinion, how effective is the government's financial support of development cooperation on the whole? Please use a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 = 'absolutely ineffective' and 10 = 'very effective'." For the figures, we have grouped categories 0 to 3 as "(absolutely) ineffective", categories 4 to 6 as "medium" and categories 7 to 10 as "(very) effective".

Overall, the data indicates that reservations regarding the effectiveness of DC are to be found even in the areas of the political spectrum that have a positive attitude towards DC. Considered as a whole, the results suggest that the effectiveness of DC should continue to be an issue for policy communication and education.

The national comparison (Figure 13) reveals that the German population assesses the effectiveness of official DC more positively than the citizens of France, Great Britain and the US. At around 22 percent, slightly more German citizens rate the DC of their own government as *(very) effective* than in the case of France and Great Britain. There is also a difference in the *(very) effective* category compared to the US, though it is slightly smaller. In terms of the *medium* category, the share for the German population, at just under 40 percent, is slightly below that in France but higher than the shares in Great Britain and the US. With around 38 percent and 36 percent, respectively, in the *(absolutely) ineffective* category, the citizens of Great Britain and the US are more sceptical compared to Germany and France with regard to the effectiveness of the DC of their governments.

**Figure 13        National comparison of the estimation of DC effectiveness**
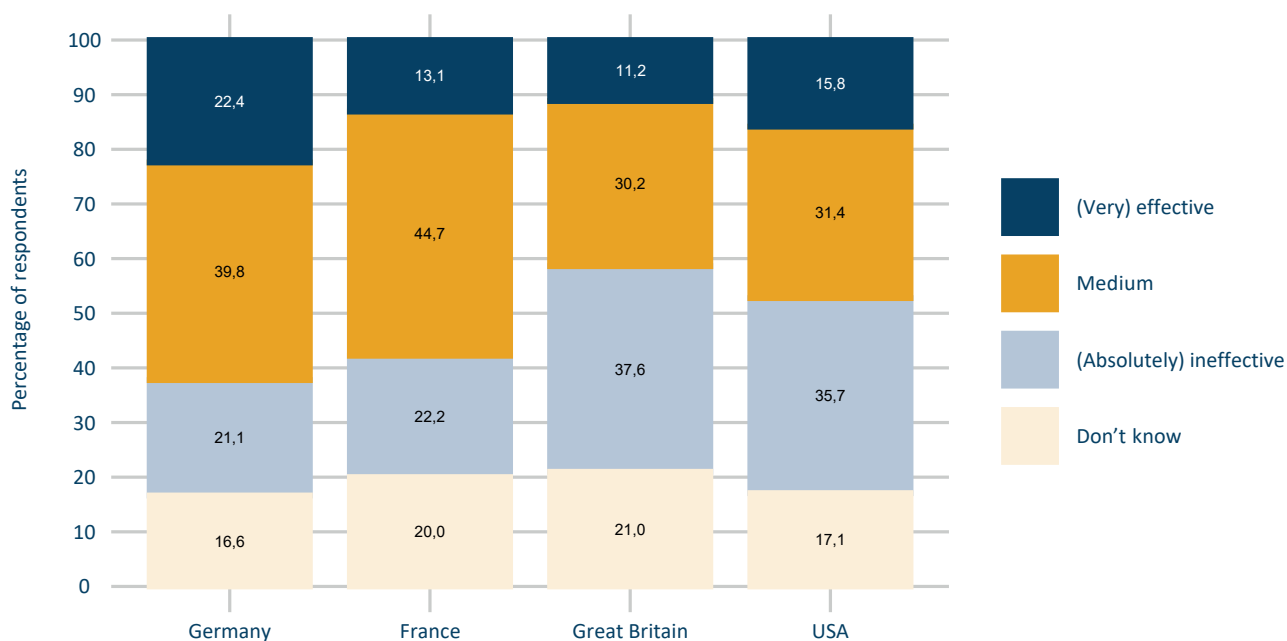


*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on the DEL tracker wave 5 (01/2022), D: N = 1,015. F: N = 1,055. GB: N = 1,650. USA: N = 1,240. The question was as follows: "In your opinion, how effective is the government's financial support of development cooperation on the whole? Please use a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 = 'absolutely ineffective' and 10 = 'very effective'." For the figures, we have grouped categories 0 to 3 as "(absolutely) ineffective", categories 4 to 6 as "medium" and categories 7 to 10 as "(very) effective".*

Although the German population rates the effectiveness of DC more positively than the populations of other countries, it should not be forgotten that the effectiveness debate may have a (positive or negative) impact on public opinion (regarding the effect of information about the effectiveness of DC projects, see, for example, Schneider et al., 2021, Chapter 4). The pointed media debates in Great Britain about ineffective DC measures and corruption in the Global South in recent years provide a vivid example of how actors attempt to attack development policy measures (e.g. Anders, 2018).

### 2.7.2    Corruption continues to be perceived as a challenge for DC

The assessment of effectiveness is closely related to the issue of "corruption in the partner countries". After all, misuse of DC funds can have a detrimental effect on the effectiveness of DC. In September 2021, more than half of respondents agreed with the statement that a large part of DC funds is lost due to corruption, whereas only 10 percent did not agree with the statement (see Figure 51 in the Annex). In contrast, nearly one quarter were undecided, and around 13 percent fell back on the "Don't know" category. This pattern has proven to be stable across the three DEL panel waves (bar to the right of the dotted line in Figure 51). In comparison to the surveys of the preceding project AAT, however, a systematic shift appears in the data. Agreement with the presented statement in the AAT surveys was up to 15 percent higher. Once again, the adjustment of the questionnaire in the transition to the DEL should be noted (see Box 3).[25] Irrespective of this, it is apparent that the majority of the population continues to assume that corruption poses a considerable problem in the countries of the Global South.

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[25]    As the question was asked both in the AAT and in the DEL with an identical compilation of several questions regarding the costs and benefits of DC, the deviations are most likely due to the general differences in the questionnaire and, possibly, a more positive assessment by the general public.

## 2.8 Summary: Development policy actors in Germany operate in a predominantly benevolent environment

The analyses in the previous sections show that citizens have a positive attitude towards development policy as a whole. They consider support for countries of the Global South important and also endorse the current expenditure on DC. Part of the population even advocates increasing the funds. A substantial share of the population feels a moral obligation to support these countries. Overall, the data indicates that governmental and civil-society development policy actors operate in an environment that is well-disposed towards their policy area. Even the coronavirus pandemic – at least from an aggregated viewpoint – has so far not had any negative impact on public opinion (also refer to et al., 2022; Schneider et al., 2020, 2021a, 2021b).[26]

At the same time, the current data shows that substantial portions of the German population remain sceptical with regard to the effectiveness of DC measures. Corruption in the partner countries also continues to be viewed as a challenge. On top of this, the majority of the population feel that they are unable to change the situation in the Global South in any way – which can be interpreted as a sense of powerlessness in the face of huge global challenges.

However, we must not overlook that substantial differences can be seen among the German population based on political orientation on the scale from left to right. This concerns general support for DC, endorsement of the current expenditure in this area, support for different motives for DC, and also influence on the situation in the countries of the Global South. Although public opinion remains relatively stable over time and, as a rule, development policy is not one of the political issues that is subject to controversial discussion among the general public in Germany, such differences should not be underestimated in light of the reservations regarding DC effectiveness and corruption.

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[26] Whereas the shares are stable over time, changes may arise at an individual level as a result of pandemic-related influences (such as a deterioration in a person's own economic situation).

# 3. ENGAGEMENT OF CITIZENS IN DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Through development engagement, citizens can contribute to a fair and sustainable world. Many NGOs rely on the engagement of the general public. Development policy actors therefore strive not only to inform the general public about their own work, but also to encourage development engagement among citizens themselves. This is particularly true in connection with the 2030 Agenda and its 17 goals, which see it as the responsibility of the general public to contribute to global sustainable development (United Nations, 2015).

**Figure 14      Overview of the different forms of engagement examined**
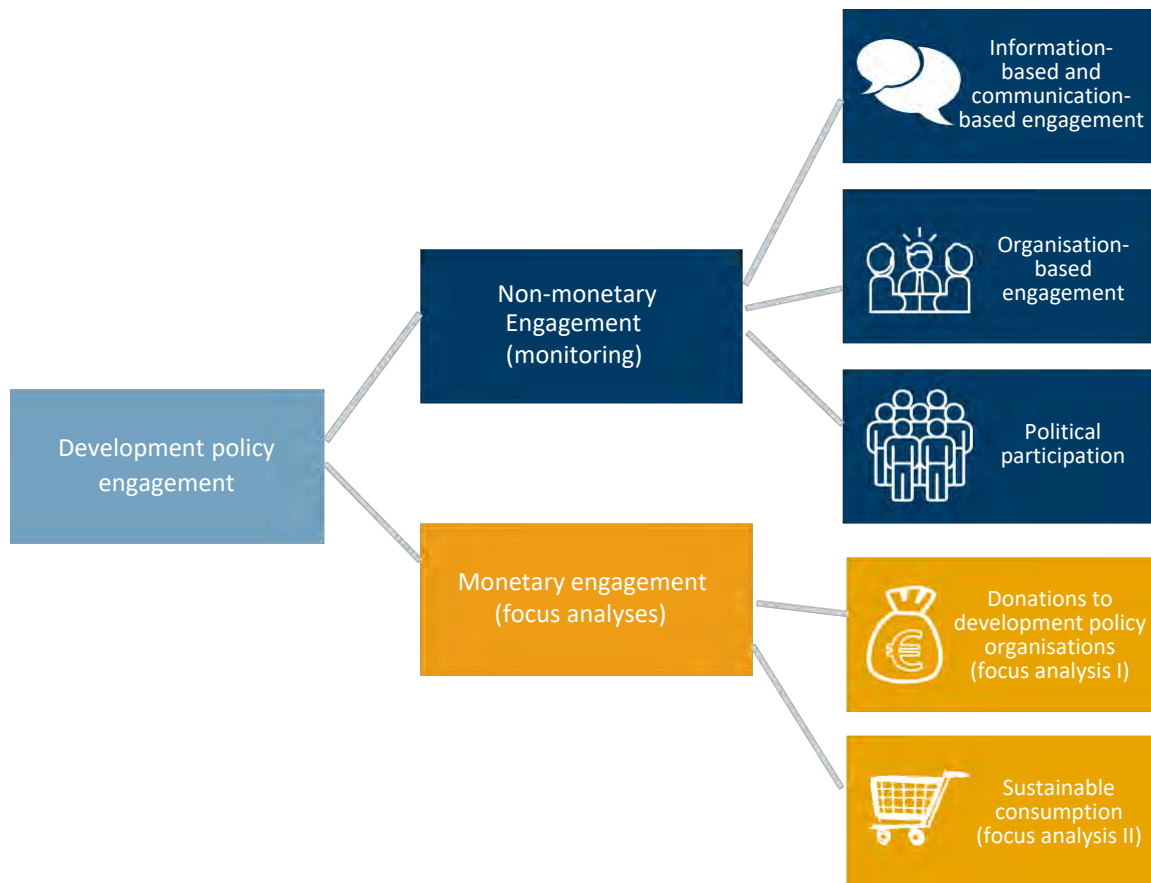


*Source: DEval, own visualisation.*

The development engagement of citizens can take many forms (see, for example, Hudson et al., 2020). As Figure 14 shows, these forms can be classified as "non-monetary" and "monetary" engagement. Non-monetary engagement is essentially of a non-financial nature, although organisation-based engagement may involve membership fees, for example. The area of non-monetary engagement comprises the following:

1.  **Information-based and communication-based engagement,** with the aim of providing information about development policy and drawing the attention of other people or governmental, business and civil-society decision-makers to the situation in the countries of the Global South or to other issues of relevance to development policy. This may involve following the news, holding conversations in one's social environment or sharing information on social media. Information-based engagement does not actually correspond to common definitions of development engagement (see Box 6) and obviously has no direct effects on other people. Nevertheless, it can be viewed as a fundamental interest in the issue and the prerequisite for further engagement.

2.  **Organisation-based engagement** such as membership in development policy NGOs, voluntary work in organisations or voluntary services on a national or international level (see, for example, the "weltwärts" programme; Polak et al., 2017). Many development policy NGOs rely on the engagement of citizens in order to perform their work in their home country or abroad.

3. **Political participation** (see, for example, van Deth, 2014) that aims to influence development policy decision-makers, for instance by participating in demonstrations, signing petitions or contacting political decision-makers either online or offline.

Monetary forms of engagement entail financial outlay. These include:

4. **Donations for development policy purposes and organisations** to support them in implementing development policy measures in partner countries and in performing domestic communication and education measures.

5. **Sustainable consumption** in order to consciously or unconsciously influence the situation in the Global South – for instance by striving to consume goods and services that have no or only minor negative environmental, social and economic effects (Seyfang, 2009) or by specifically attempting to improve the situation in these countries through consumption (e.g. based on fair-trade products). It should be noted at this point that sustainable consumption comprises not only purchase decisions, but also the refusal to purchase certain items, the disposal of old products and consumption policy engagement. For some of these areas of action, no financial resources are necessary.

| Box 6 | Definition: Civic engagement in development policy |
|---|---|

"All engagement, including development engagement, is of a voluntary nature, is geared towards the common good and does not involve any intention to make a profit; it takes place in the public sphere. (Civic) development engagement entails individual or joint action that is oriented towards the guiding principle of global sustainable development, responsibility in the globalised world and general human rights. It campaigns for an improvement of the situation of people in developing countries and also for the necessary changes in industrialised countries" (BMZ, 2015, p. 6).[27]

This definition provides an orientation for the analyses planned in the study, which essentially involve individual or joint action of citizens with the aim of improving the situation of people in the countries of the Global South and also making the necessary changes in industrialised countries.

Both donations and sustainable consumption only partly correspond to the common definition of development engagement presented in Box 6 (also refer to Simonson et al., 2022a, p. 14). Donations, for example, are private, financial actions. Pretty much the same applies to purchase decisions related to sustainable consumption. Nevertheless, both forms of engagement provide opportunities for citizens to contribute to improving the situation in the countries of the Global South and to campaign for changes in the areas of development policy and sustainability (see Sections 3.2 and 3.3).

For smaller organisations, in particular, it is difficult to motivate people to work with them. This is apparently because the networks are too small, because the organisations lack professionalization and because there is too little connection between engaged citizens and the organisations' target groups (Krimmer, 2013b). In contrast to engagement in sports clubs, for instance, voluntary engagement in development policy is directed towards people in the Global South. In this case, people often cannot directly observe the result of their own actions. On top of this, increasing individualisation and digitalisation are making it harder for organisations to tie people to them, be it as volunteers or in some other position, as flexibility and independence are required even for engagement (Simonson et al., 2022a, p. 17–19). At the same time, this development presents an opportunity to consider new engagement offers that are more flexible and direct. In addition, development policy competes with numerous other topic areas that allow engagement, such as sport and leisure, while citizens' capacities for engagement and donations are limited.

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[27] The definition was developed jointly by BMZ, Engagement Global, the Association of German Development and Humanitarian Aid NGOs (VENRO) and the Association of One World Regional Networks in Germany (see BMZ, 2015, p. 6). It largely corresponds with the general definition of voluntary engagement that is used in the German Survey on Volunteering (Simonson et al., 2022a, p. 14).

When it comes to promoting engagement among the general public, this situation gives rise to two overarching questions, which we will look at in the next few sections – however with different weightings, and with specific additions depending on the form of engagement considered in each case:

1. How often are different forms of engagement used and how does this usage vary over time?

2. What factors influence engagement and how can favourable conditions for engagement be established?

The available studies do not investigate development engagement separately from civic engagement.[28] As a result, there is no up-to-date, differentiated overview of how citizens engage themselves in this area of action and what characteristics are connected to this.

Section 3.1 therefore begins by following on from the engagement time series in the DEval Opinion Monitor for Development Policy 2018 (Schneider and Gleser, 2018, Chapter 5), using the DEL data to provide a general overview of non-monetary development engagement.

After that, more in-depth analyses examine donation behaviour in Section 3.2, followed by the issue of sustainable consumption in Section 3.3. The aim is not only to provide a description of the two areas of engagement, but also to understand what factors favour or hinder engagement in these areas. As a result, we should be able to pinpoint ideas regarding how to increase usage of the two forms of engagement.

Following the separate consideration of different forms of engagement, a guest contribution by Jennifer Hudson, David Hudson and Paolo Morini (all from DEL) in Section 3.4 looks into the question as to how different forms of engagement are correlated and how different engagement patterns develop over time. Does the engagement of citizens follow what are known as engagement journeys, in which the citizens first use simple, low-threshold forms of engagement and switch to more time-consuming and more expensive forms over time?

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[28] The task of establishing the quota of voluntary engagement in the area of development policy presents a challenge. For example, the German Survey on Volunteering, which has investigated the voluntary engagement of the German population every five years since 1999 based on representative cross-sectional surveys, does not directly ask about development engagement (Krimmer, 2013a). Instead, it determines development engagement from open specifications regarding the organisation or area of action (including informal groupings) and the geographic area covered by the engagement (specifically: countries on the OECD-DAC list or, in other words, countries that receive DC funds). For the Survey on Volunteering in 2009, this resulted in 107 people engaged in development policy in the broad sense based on a sample of around 20,000 respondents. Due to the design of the questionnaire, however, it is possible that not all those engaged in development policy were recorded. The publication on the latest Survey on Volunteering conducted in 2019 does not look into development engagement (Simonson et al., 2022c); it simply makes a brief mention of donations for development aid (Kausmann and Karnick, 2022). No updated version of the study by Krimmer (2013a) using the data from the Survey on Volunteering is available up to now. However, the data is available and can be used to repeat this study.

## 3.1    Non-monetary engagement

| Box 7 | Key findings: Non-monetary engagement |
|---|---|

- The DEL data from January 2022 shows that citizens frequently consume news on the issue of global poverty and development (62% of respondents) and frequently discuss this in their environment (49%). 14 percent have shared information on the issue in the past 12 months.
- 6 percent have done voluntary work at or for a development policy organisation.
- 20 percent have expressed their opinion on the issue of global poverty and development (e.g. in the form of a petition), 9 percent have contacted political decision-makers and the same share have taken part in a demonstration.
- The use of the forms of engagement has largely remained stable over the course of the DEL surveys.
- Older respondents obtain information about global poverty and development more frequently and discuss the issue more often. Younger respondents, in contrast, are more often active in and for organisations (September 2021).
- Those on the left of the political spectrum more often obtain information about or discuss the issue of global poverty and development. Engagement in and for organisations and the use of forms of political participation are more common at the two ends of the political spectrum (September 2021).
- Parts of the population also campaign against development policy measures; however, it is unclear whether they oppose such measures in general or simply oppose them in their present form.

Below, we focus in particular on non-monetary engagement in the areas of "activities related to information and communication", "organisation-based engagement" and "political participation". In analogy to the procedure in Chapter 2, we provide a longitudinal presentation of the proportionate use of the various forms of engagement. This is followed by a break-down based on age groups and political orientation (left-right self-identification), aiming to pinpoint essential differences in the use of non-monetary forms of engagement among the population.[29]

Again, the data comes from the DEL tracker (N ≈ 1.000; survey in January and June) and panel surveys (N ≈ 6.000; survey in September) conducted since September 2019 (see Box 3). The break-downs are based on the DEL panel from September 2021, as the tracker surveys do not ask about political orientation.

Figure 15 shows that information-based and communication-based engagement are particularly widespread. In January 2022, 62 percent of respondents stated that they had listened to or read news about poverty and development, 49 percent had discussed these issues with friends or family, and 14 percent had shared information about these issues, for instance on social media. The shares are relatively similar across the surveys. Only the sharing of information shows a slight downward trend with a decrease of four percentage points from 18 to 14 percent.

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[29] As in Chapter 2, the complete contingency tables can be found in Section 2.1.2 in the online Annex of the report. Due to space limitations, the text only discusses prominent differences. We have also investigated gender-specific differences. These were usually minimal. We therefore do not discuss the analyses in the text, but they are likewise documented in the online Annex.

It is not possible to clarify at this point whether this is the result of the coronavirus pandemic having become the dominant issue or whether other situational influences or fluctuations in the samples have had an effect. All in all, the data does not indicate that activity in this area of engagement has decreased during the pandemic.[30]

**Figure 15       Use of various non-monetary forms of engagement over time**
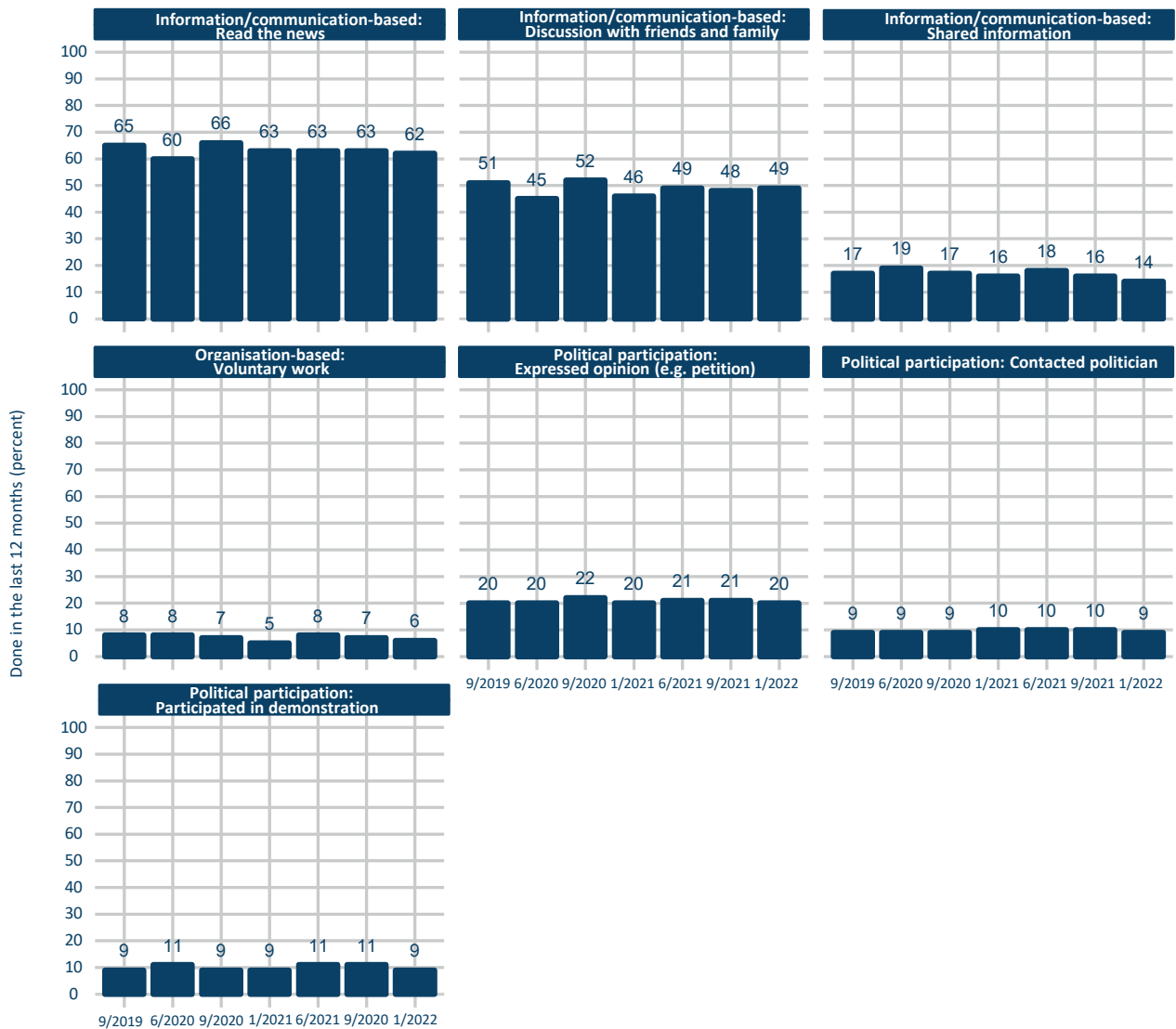


*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on the DEL panel and tracker surveys as of September 2019. In the first tracker wave in January 2020, the survey did not ask about engagement. For the sake of brevity, the exact wording of the question can be found in Table 33 in the online Annex. Multiple answers were possible. Further information about the DEL surveys can be found in Box 3 and in Section 1.3 in the online Annex.*

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[30] Moreover, the shares are on par with those in the data from the DEL predecessor project, AAT, which was analysed in the Opinion Monitor 2018 (Schneider and Gleser, 2018, p. 39–42). The shares in the area of information intake and distribution can generally be considered stable – there are no notable upwards or downwards trends. It is important to note here that the time series from the AAT, which were presented in the Opinion Monitor for Development Policy 2018, cannot be seamlessly continued. First, there is a clear reduction in the number of forms of engagement queried and, second, the wording of the questions has been adjusted. We therefore refrain from presenting the AAT data and DEL data together.

With regard to age, the data (data basis: DEL panel September 2021) indicates that older people are more interested in the issue. The oldest respondent group (*aged 60 and older*) has consumed news on the issue of global poverty and development proportionately more often – 76 percent as opposed to 51 to 60 percent in the younger groups. In addition, the oldest group has discussed the issue more frequently in their social environment, at 54 percent of respondents, than was the case in the three younger groups, each at around 45 percent.[31]

However, information such as news articles or social media posts relating to global poverty and development are shared proportionately less frequently in the youngest group (*aged 18 to 29*). Among those *aged 18 to 29*, 25 percent stated that they had shared information. This share is lower among those *aged 30 to 39* (21%), those *aged 40 to 59* (15%) and the respondents who are *aged 60 or older* (12%). Above all, this is connected to the usage structure of the internet and, in particular, social media – which young people use more often (Schneider et al. 2019, Chapter 2).

Interest in the issue of global poverty and development also differs between the various political camps. Around three quarters of those in the groups on the *left* and *centre-left* state that they have perceived news on the issue of global poverty and development. The figures are substantially lower in the *centre*, *centre-right* and *right* groups (58 to 63%). There is a similar pattern for discussions on the issue, which are conducted by around 63% in the group on the *left*, 57% in the *centre-left* group and around 45% in each of the three remaining groups. People's behaviour with regard to sharing information is particularly interesting. In comparison to the *centre* group (12%), individuals who position themselves on the *left* (25%), *centre-left* (21%), *centre-right* (17%) or *right* (22%) more frequently pass on news articles or social media posts.

If we take account of findings regarding the correlation between political orientation and support for development policy measures (e.g. Bodenstein and Faust, 2017; Milner and Tingley, 2013; Schneider and Gleser, 2018), this indicates, first, that individuals with a largely positive attitude towards development policy (*left* and *centre-left* groups) are more likely to obtain information about development policy and discuss the issue in their environment and, second, that individuals with a largely positive or negative attitude towards DC attempt to inform or even influence their environment. However, it should be noted that the groups on the *left*, at around 9 percent, and *right*, at 8 percent, make up only a small portion of the population. At the same time, we should not underestimate the extent to which even small groups can draw great public attention to development policy issues. Examples of this include tweets that criticise DC measures through exaggerations and sometimes achieve a broad reach (Schneider et al., 2019, p. 28–29).

With regard to organisation-based engagement, the longitudinal data in Figure 15 for January 2022 shows that 6 percent engaged themselves voluntarily in the preceding twelve months. In comparison to the previous waves, the shares are essentially unchanged; no decrease in engagement is seen in conjunction with the coronavirus pandemic.[32]

When it comes to assessing these figures, the Survey on Volunteering in 2021 proves useful. In this survey, around 40 percent of respondents stated that they undertook some form of voluntary engagement (Simonson et al., 2022, p. 53).

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[31]   In this section, too, the text only discusses substantially relevant differences based on age, gender and political orientation. The complete contingency tables can be found in the online Annex (Tables 34 to 54). The DEL panel survey from September 2021 is again used to break down the data, as this is the only survey that includes political orientation (left-right scale). Individuals who did not answer the question about their political orientation on the left-right scale were not included in the calculation of the shares.

[32]   Again, the shares are on par with those in the AAT surveys (Schneider and Gleser, 2018, p. 39–42). It should be noted, though, that the DEL panel survey no longer asks separately about engagement in Germany and abroad. This means that the AAT time series cannot be seamlessly continued.

The most frequently named areas of engagement among the population as a whole are "sport and exercise" (13.5%), "culture and music" (8.6%), the "social area" (8.3%) and "school and kindergarten" (8.2%; Kausmann and Hagen, 2022). However, as already mentioned, the Survey on Volunteering does not cover the area of "development policy". The DEL data reveals a share for voluntary engagement in development policy of 6 percent, which is approximately on par with the area of "leisure and socialising" (6.1%). However, it is necessary to consider that the Survey on Volunteering further delimits engagement with subsequent questions, which is not the case in the DEL surveys. It is therefore conceivable, for example, that one-off activities are also stated in the case of the DEL.

**Figure 16      Organisation-based engagement by age group**
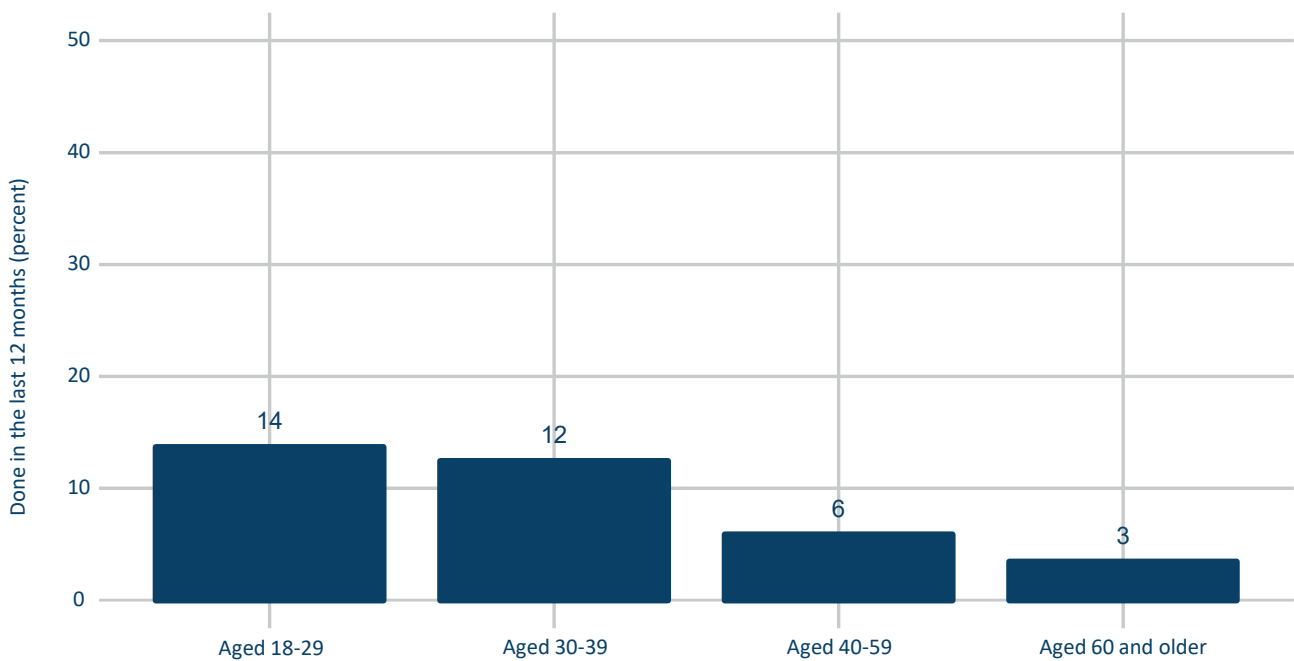


*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on the DEL panel survey in September 2021(N = 6,000). The question was as follows: "Which of the following things, if any at all, have you done in the last 12 months with regard to global poverty and development? Voluntary work at an aid organisation in this area in Germany or abroad." The response options were as follows: 1 = "Have done"; 2 = "Have not done"; 3 = "Don't know". The figure shows the share of those responding "Have done" in the respective age group.*

Young people, in particular, are more often engaged on a voluntary basis in organisations. Figure 16 shows that the two younger age groups of those *aged 18 to 29* and *aged 30 to 39*, at around 14 percent and 13 percent respectively, more frequently state voluntary work than the population as a whole (6%; see Figure 15). In the two older groups, the share is substantially lower.

Overall, this indicates that engagement for development policy and combating global poverty is particularly feasible for younger people. Against this backdrop, voluntary services such as "weltwärts" provide appropriate offers for young people. It remains to be investigated whether the trend towards a greater level of voluntary engagement among older people as a result of better average health, a higher life expectancy and higher levels of education (Simonson et al., 2022a, p. 18) will also be seen for development engagement.

With regard to political orientation, the data presents an interesting pattern. Among those who position themselves more to the right of the political spectrum, 15 percent (*right*) and 10 percent (*centre-right*) state that they have engaged themselves in some form on a voluntary basis for the issue of global poverty and development. The figures are around 9 percent in the group on the *left* and around 6 percent in each of the two remaining groups of *centre-left* and *centre*. This slightly U-shaped pattern is familiar from research on voluntary engagement (Arvanitidis, 2017, p. 258).

Based on the available data, it is not possible to clarify directly whether this engagement is for or against development policy measures. One possible explanation is that individuals with conservative political attitudes (*centre-right* group) – although they support governmental DC less (see Chapter 2) – are more engaged in development policy or in combating global poverty because they view it more as a private task than as a task for the government (for a similar argumentation relating to donation behaviour, see Brooks, 2007). Moral convictions – fairness and care for weaker people as moral convictions on the left of the spectrum and protecting life as a conviction on the conservative side of the spectrum – could also be decisive factors (Schneider et al., 2019, Chapter 5). Such convictions may also be shaped by religious beliefs (e.g. Yi and Tsang, 2020). Moreover, it is conceivable that people from the far right of the spectrum (*right* group) either act against development policy measures at organisation level or campaign for DC to combat the causes of flight.[33]

In the area of political participation – in other words, exerting influence on (development) policy decision-makers – people particularly often use means of expressing a political opinion such as petitions. In the DEL tracker survey in January 2022, 20 percent of respondents stated that they had expressed their opinion on the issue of global poverty and development in this way in the last 12 months. A much smaller number of respondents had contacted politicians online or offline or taken part in a demonstration (9% in each case). There are hardly any fluctuations in the shares across the survey waves. No change can be observed in conjunction with the coronavirus pandemic, despite the fact that lockdown measures and contact restrictions could have made political participation more difficult.[34]

In the case of the forms of political participation, moreover, respondents were asked more precisely whether they engaged themselves to support measures to combat global poverty or to oppose such measures. Viewed as a whole, the ratio of those "for" and "against" is approximately balanced. Overall, this differentiated consideration reveals that a small share of the population consciously uses political engagement against development policy measures. The figure based on the population as a whole is 8 percent for expressing a political opinion, 4 percent for contacting politicians and 6 percent for demonstrations. It is not clear here whether the engagement aims to end such measures or to simply redesign them.

Younger people express their opinions much more frequently, contact political decision-makers more often and more often take part in demonstrations. This engagement decreases with increasing age – for all three forms of participation investigated. Among those *aged 18 to 29*, for example, 38 percent have expressed their opinion (22% in support, 16% in opposition), while the figure in the group *aged 60 and older* is approximately 14 percent (9% in support, 5% in opposition). When it comes to expressing opinions and contacting politicians, in particular, this could be due to the fact that younger people use the internet more (German Federal Statistical Office, 2020). This may play a role in that these age groups become aware of corresponding issues and campaigns more quickly, or it may even facilitate participation itself.

As for political orientation, the data in Figure 17 presents a more complex picture. Those who position themselves on the *left* (35%) or *right* (28%) of the centre of the political spectrum express their opinions proportionately more frequently. This corresponds to the findings of political participation research, which indicate that individuals on the edges of the political spectrum participate in politics more frequently (e.g. van der Meer et al., 2009, p. 1.439; for the US: Blazina, 2022).

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[33] For example, it could be observed that an organisation close to the radical right-wing identity movement (see Bruns et al., 2017; Goertz, 2021 for a classification of this grouping) publicly advocated sending refugees back to supposedly safe or former crisis areas (e.g. Syria) and supporting them in rebuilding their home country (*https://www.endstation-rechts.de/news/rechtsextreme-entwicklungshelfer-wenn-eine-ib-kampagne-floppt.html*). The work and reach of such organisations are not at the centre of interest here.

[34] Compared to the data of the predecessor project AAT, respondents express their opinions and contact political decision-makers with a similar frequency, whereas participation in demonstrations has become slightly more frequent compared to the summer of 2017 (Schneider and Gleser, 2018, Chapter 5). With regard to this, however, it is necessary to consider the changes in the forms of engagement queried and in the question wording. This means that the time series cannot be seamlessly continued.

Surprisingly, there is a small share, just under 7 percent, of those on the *left* who express their opinion to oppose measures to combat poverty. Conversely, a substantial share, approximately 15 percent, of those on the *right* state that they do this to support such measures. In view of the pronounced left-right differences in support for DC measures, this seems paradox (see Chapter 2; also refer to Bodenstein and Faust, 2017; Schneider and Gleser, 2018).

**Figure 17    Use of political forms of participation by political orientation**
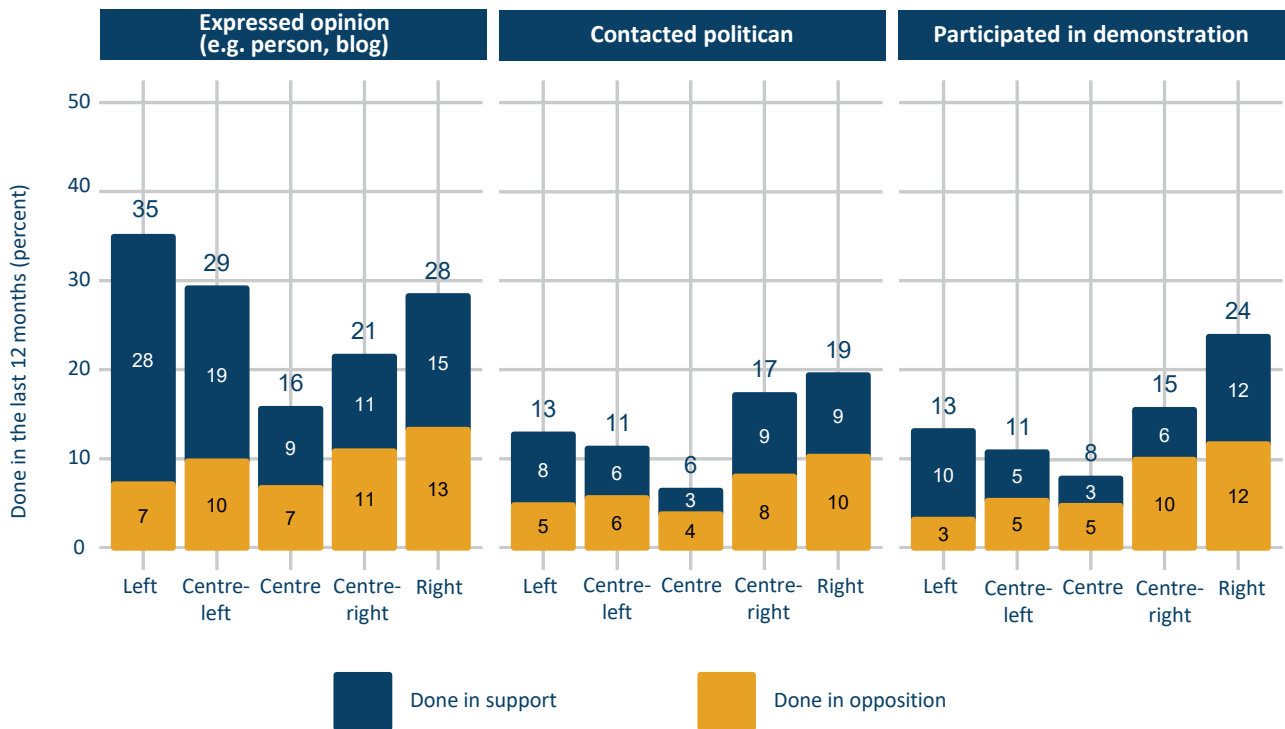


*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on DEL panel wave 3 (9/2021); N = 6,000. The question was as follows: "Which of the following things have you done in the last 12 months with the aim of supporting or opposing measures to combat global poverty? a) You have expressed your opinion in order to influence the issue (e.g. by signing a petition or writing a blog article); b) You have contacted a member of parliament or some other elected official (e.g. in person, by phone, in writing or via Twitter, Facebook or other social media); c) You have taken part in a demonstration, a rally, a protest or some other event related to this issue." The response options were as follows: 1) "Have done to support the efforts to address global poverty"; 2) "Have done to oppose the efforts to address global poverty"; 3) "Have not done"; 4) "Don't know". The figure shows the share of the response options 1) and 2) in the group concerned.*

However, it should be noted that some on the political left view DC as a continuation of colonialism (e.g. Kornprobst and Schwachula, 2020). Conversely, as already mentioned above, even individuals with more conservative political attitudes (this corresponds to the *centre-right* group) campaign for DC and combating poverty (see Brooks, 2007). Moreover, DC as a means of combating the causes of flight was also discussed in the conservative spectrum in conjunction with what is referred to as the European "refugee crisis" starting in 2015 (Ademmer et al., 2019). This is also reflected by the finding that the motive of combating the causes of flight meets with endorsement across the entire political spectrum (see Section 2.3). There are even individual relief efforts and aid organisations from the far right-hand side of the spectrum that are engaged in crisis regions.[35] It can therefore be assumed that individuals from this side of the spectrum also politically endorse development and aid measures, but from different moral motives (Schneider et al., 2021a, Chapter 5) and with the goal of reducing immigration or pursuing their own national interests in some other way.

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35    See the footnote 33.

Examined as a whole, the results on political participation indicate that development policy meets with opposition from a population segment that usually has a positive attitude towards DC, which could undermine public support in precisely this segment. Then again, the findings could be viewed as a sign that development policy receives endorsement from an environment that often expresses nationalistic views in the context of global sustainable development and justice.[36] This is backed up by the findings with regard to information/communication-based and also organisation-based engagement.

Future research should therefore address the extent of and the reasons for engagement for and against global development. In particular, it should identify where engagement against DC measures becomes publicly visible (for example, on certain websites and platforms or at demonstrations), what roles different motives play and what consequences this has for the work of development policy actors.[37]

## 3.2    Focus analysis 1: Donations for development policy purposes and organisations

| Box 8              Key findings: Donations for development policy purposes and organisations |
| --- |
| • The volume of donations in Germany has been stagnating since 2015, amounting to around EUR 5.5 billion annually in 2020. Likewise, the share of donations for development policy in the donations market decreased from around 14 percent to 10 percent in the period from 2010 to 2020. |
| • The share of donors in general is also in constant decline, having decreased from nearly 50 percent of respondents in 2005 to less than 30 percent in 2020. In the same period, the share of donors for development policy purposes decreased from around 11 percent to 5 percent. |
| • Donors tend to be old (aged 60 and older), have a high education level (categorisation of "high") and have a relatively high income (EUR 3,600 or more per month). |
| • There is a large, untapped number of potential donors, amounting to almost 30 percent of the German population. |
| • The most frequently named reasons for not donating include a lack of information and a lack of trust. |
| • Donation certification labels are one possible way of increasing trustworthiness. However, such a label cannot directly increase the willingness to donate. |

To fulfil the public-benefit missions in their statutes – for example, to help the poorest people in the world to live more self-determined lives – development policy NGOs need financial resources (Dreher et al., 2012; DZI and VENRO, 2013; Verbrugge and Huyse, 2020). These resources may be provided through governmental funding, obtained from membership fees or sponsoring memberships, or acquired through private donations. Usually, governmental funding also requires a share of the funding to be obtained from other sources. Donations are therefore essential in order for development policy NGOs to be able to perform their work.

It is therefore important for development policy NGOs to understand how willing citizens are to donate for development policy. They also need to know which individuals are particularly willing to donate and actually also make donations most frequently, and which factors (including age, gender, education level and income) are connected to the willingness to donate and donation behaviour. In addition to these socio-economic characteristics, sudden events – such as the coronavirus pandemic – may also influence donation behaviour (Schulz-Sandhof and Wilke, 2021).

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[36]    The position of the Alternative für Deutschland (AfD), according to which Germany should opt out of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda, is worth mentioning at this point, for example (Bundestag, 2019).

[37]    This also comprises a more extensive representation of political orientation in order to avoid the vagueness of the classic left-right scale (Bauer et al., 2017; Jankowski et al., 2022). One possible starting point is to use sets of questions and a corresponding scaling method (e.g. Carroll and Kubo, 2018).

Against this backdrop, this sub-chapter examines the donation behaviour of citizens in the field of development policy. The data for this comes from the GfK Charity Panel (see Box 9).

Based on this data, we intend to answer the following five sub-questions:

1. How has the donation behaviour (willingness to donate, donation amount, donation frequency) of citizens in the field of development policy developed over the last few years?

2. To which socio-demographic factors does the donation behaviour for development policy correlate?

3. How large is the potential for donation – in other words, the ratio of people willing to donate to those who actually donate – in the population?

4. For what reasons (motives) do citizens donate for development policy issues? What potential obstacles exist?

5. How have various events (such as what is referred to as the European "refugee crisis" of 2015 or the coronavirus pandemic since 2020) affected donation behaviour for development policy?

The answers to these questions should provide development policy actors with information on attitudes and behaviour with regard to donating, and orientational knowledge for their strategy and communication with citizens, for instance in conjunction with donation campaigns. The results should help them to obtain a better understanding of citizens' donation behaviour and enable them to define and address the target groups of possible donation and information campaigns in a more targeted manner.

| Box 9 | Data basis of Growth from Knowledge (GfK) Charity Panel |
|---|---|

Based on a monthly panel survey covering a representative sample of 10,000 respondents, the Growth from Knowledge (GfK) Charity Panel continually collects data regarding the donation behaviour of people in Germany aged 10 and older (Gricevic et al., 2020, p. 11). Amongst other things, it queries donation volumes and areas. The donations comprise any money that private individuals in Germany voluntarily donate to non-profit organisations, aid organisations, charitable organisations and churches. They do not include inheritances, company donations, donations to political parties and organisations, cash benefits ordered by court, the establishment of new foundations or major donations of more than EUR 2,500. The fact that these types of donations are not included most likely has the result that the data of the GfK Charity Panel underestimates the donations market as a whole (Gricevic et al., 2020).

The general donation behaviour of the respondents is recorded using a kind of diary, in which the respondents themselves enter any donations that they have made (further details of the GfK Charity Panel can be found in Section 2.2 in the online Annex).

Tables 55 to 57 in the online Annex provide an overview of all the available information collected in the panel. In addition to these surveys, special surveys on donation behaviour are conducted each year, recording details such as the central motives for donating (see Table 57 in the online Annex).

A survey by the German Institute for Economic Research (DIW Berlin; Gricevic et al., 2020) has investigated the results of various surveys on the donation behaviour of the German population and established significant differences in the respective projections. This survey compared the GfK Charity Panel (published in the "Bilanz des Helfens" (Balance of helping) series of publications by Deutscher Spendenrat, 2021), the Deutscher Spendenmonitor (German donation monitor), the German Survey on Volunteering, the German Ageing Survey, the World Giving Index and the Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP). The results show that, out of all the data sources, the GfK Charity Panel estimates the lowest donation rate. Based on this finding, the results of this survey should be interpreted as a conservative estimate of the donation rate. At the same time, the diary-based approach has advantages in that the panel participants document their donation behaviour directly rather than responding to an abstract question in a questionnaire and having to remember actions that may be several months in the past (see, for example, Holyk, 2008). This may prevent respondents from retrospectively underestimating or overestimating their donation activity. The greatest disadvantage of the GfK Charity Panel, however, is that it does not take account of major donations (over EUR 2,500). A study conducted by the Federal Statistical Office shows that around 10 percent of tax payers

with the highest incomes are responsible for 42 percent of the total donation volume (Gerber and Kann, 2019). It is therefore highly likely that major donations make up a substantial share of the total donation volume.

However, the data from the GfK Charity Panel makes it possible to establish the donation activity in the field of development policy and determine what factors it correlates with. No other such specific analysis of donation behaviour in this field has been available up to now.

### 3.2.1    Willingness to donate: How much is donated?

To begin with, we wish to examine the donations market in Germany as a whole as well as the role and share of development policy in particular. Our aim is to present how the donations market has developed in the period from 2005 to 2021 and the share of donations related to development policy.

| Box 10 | Definition: Donations for development policy |
| --- | --- |

In the GfK Charity Panel, respondents report on their donation activity themselves, specifying the organisations to which they donate money. Since 2010, the respondents have additionally had the opportunity to specify a purpose for the donation. The possible donation purposes include "development aid" and "immediate, emergency or disaster aid".[38] Both the specified organisations and the specified purpose of the donation allow respondents to record donations for development policy.

Below, we understand donations for development policy to be donations to organisations that are members of the Association of German Development and Humanitarian Aid NGOs (VENRO). However, several of these organisations are also active to a great extent in other sectors (e.g. Caritas). Donations to these organisations are only considered if the donors have specified that their donation had the purpose of "development aid". This method most likely leads to a slight underestimation of the actual volume of donations for development policy. At the same time, including all organisations of relevance to development policy in full would lead to a considerable overestimation of the volume of donations for development policy.

Tables 58 and 59 in the online Annex to this report provide an overview of which organisations have been considered fully or conditionally – that means, in connection with the donation purpose "development aid" – as development policy recipients.

Figure 52 in the Annex shows a projected comparison of the donation volume (1) based on the specified donation purpose or (2) based whether the organisation is a member of VENRO. Whereas a classification based on the organisations receiving the donations indicates that development policy has a 5 to 10 percent share of the donations market, only 3 to 4 percent of the donations can be attributed to the field of development policy based on the specified donation purpose. There are various possible reasons for this discrepancy:

1. Imprecise specification of the donation purpose: The German population has little knowledge of development policy (Schneider and Gleser, 2018, Chapter 4). At the same time, the populations of many countries referred to as DC donor states make little distinction between DC and humanitarian aid (Riddell, 2007, Chapter 7). This lack of knowledge may have the result that the donors' specifications of the donation purpose are imprecise.[39]

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[38]    An overview of all donation purposes and the number of times they are named is available in Table 2 in the Annex.

[39]    The GfK Charity Panel data reinforces this assumption. Only 45 percent of donations with the specified purpose of "development aid" go to a development policy organisation.

2. High share of donations without specification of a donation purpose: No donation purpose was specified for 37 percent of donations. This lack of specification may have a wide range of reasons, but leads in any case to an underestimation of the donation volume for all specified donation purposes.

3. Multiple answers not possible/ambiguous specification of the donation purpose: Only one donation purpose can be specified for each donation made. The most frequently specified donation purpose is "aid for children/young people". When this donation purpose is specified, however, it is not clearly defined where the aid is provided. It is quite possible that this donation purpose is also specified in the case of donations for children and young people in countries of the Global South – for instance through the organisation UNICEF.

### 3.2.1.1  Stagnation of the overall level of donations

Figure 18 depicts how the donation volume – calculated based on the GfK Charity Panel – in general (dotted line) and the share of donations for development policy (continuous line) have changed in the period from 2005 to 2020. It is apparent that the development of the donations market in general has been consistently positive since 2005, achieving its peak to date of approximately EUR 5.5 billion in 2015. Since 2015, the donations market has been stagnating, recording a volume of around EUR 5.4 billion in 2020.[40] The donation volume for development policy has followed a similar trend over the past 15 years. Whereas the donation volume for development policy was still around EUR 500 million in 2005, it reached around EUR 660 million in both 2015 and 2016. The figure has been decreasing slightly again since 2016, amounting to around EUR 570 million in 2020. Important, though, is the fact that the total donation volume rose slightly from 2019 to 2020, which is possibly due to the increased needs resulting from the coronavirus pandemic and could be an expression of international solidarity (see Eger et al., 2022; Schneider et al., 2020, 2021a, 2021b).

Looking at the share of donations to development policy organisations, we can see a slight downwards trend. Having still been nearly 14 percent in 2010, it fell to just under 10 percent in 2018. In 2020, it amounted to around 10.5 percent (for details of the percentage share of development policy in the donations market, see Figure 52 in the Annex). One possible reason for this could be the high level of media coverage of competing events such as the coronavirus pandemic as of 2020.[41]

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[40] This estimate is a projection based on the donation behaviour of the respondents in the GfK Charity Panel. Different studies calculate vastly different projections in some cases (see Gricevic et al., 2020).

[41] Figure 54 in the Annex examines the quarterly fluctuations of the donation volume over the past three years.

**Figure 18**        **Donations market: Development of the donation volume in the period from 2005 to 2020**
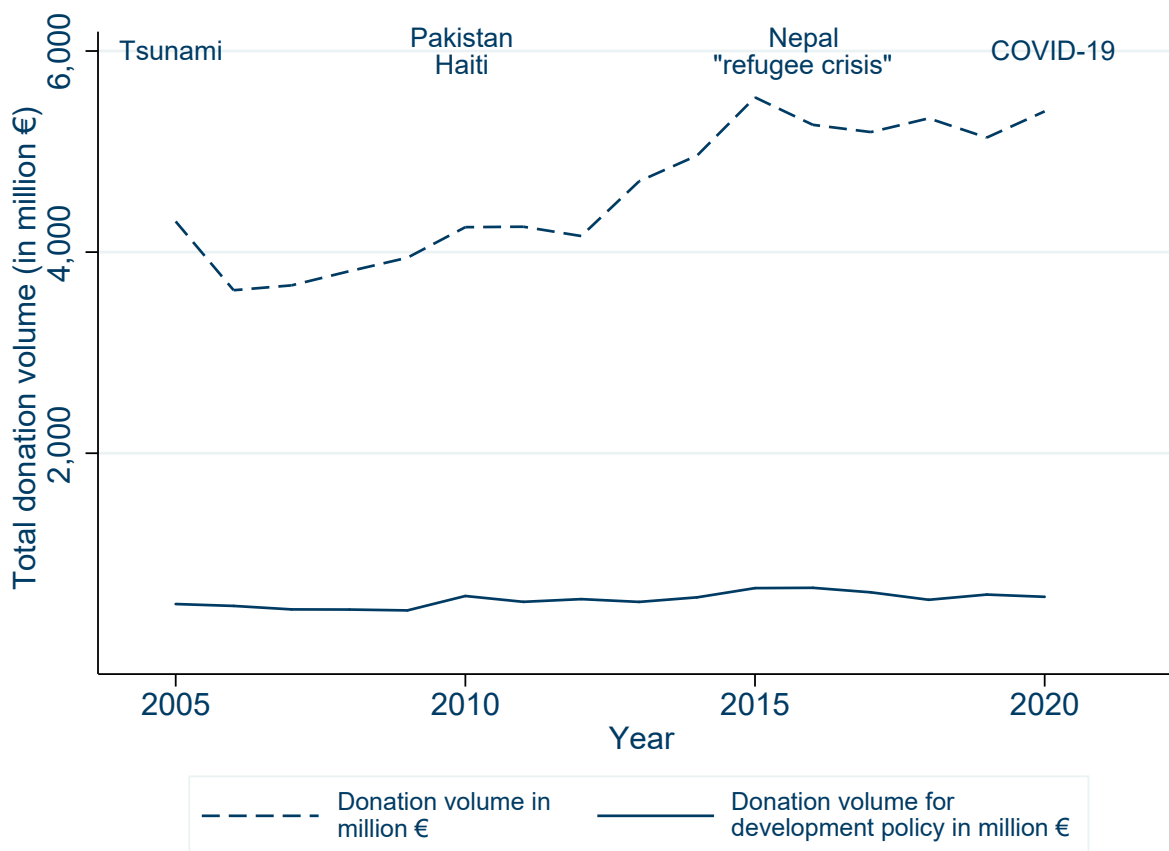


*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on the GfK Charity Panel. The diagram shows the estimated annual donation volume in total and the donation volume for development policy in the period from 2005 to 2020. The GfK Charity Panel covers approximately 10,000 people per year. It counts all individuals who have donated money to a development policy organisation as donors for development policy (see Box 9). The diagram omits the year 2021 because no complete information is available for this year and the annual donation volume therefore cannot be adequately estimated.*

### 3.2.1.2    Share of donors is steadily decreasing

When it comes to understanding the donations market, not only the donation volume, but also the share of donors in the population is relevant. It indicates whether the donations market is sustained by a small number of individuals or by a large mass.

Figure 19 shows how the share of donors in general (dotted line) and the share of donors for development policy (continuous line) have developed from 2005 to 2020. The data reveals that the share is steadily decreasing in both categories. Whereas just over 50 percent of the population made donations in 2005, only 28.5 percent did so in 2020. A similar trend can be observed for development-relevant donations. While approximately 11 percent of the population donated money for development policy organisations in 2005, slightly less than 5 percent did so in 2020.

**Figure 19**        **Share of donors in the period from 2005 to 2020**
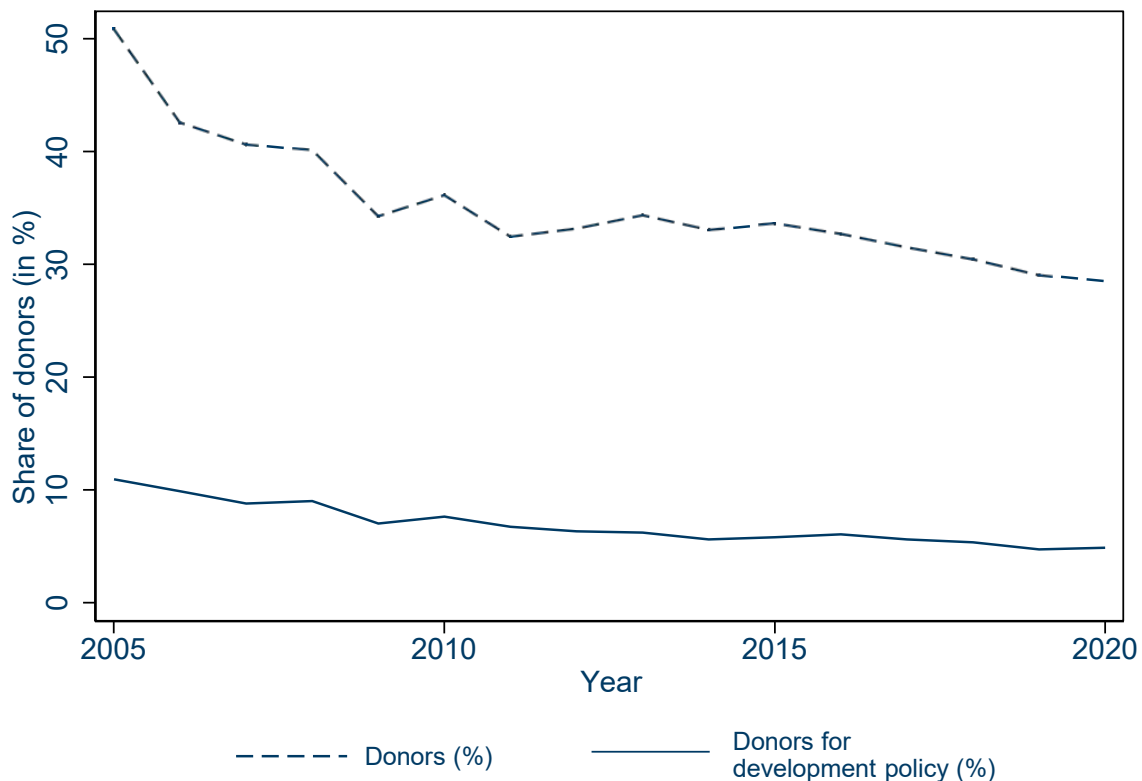


*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on the GfK Charity Panel. The diagram shows the share of donors in the population in the period from 2005 to 2020. The GfK Charity Panel covers approximately 10,000 people per year. It counts all individuals who have donated money at least once in a particular year as donors. It counts all individuals who have donated money to a development policy organisation as donors for development policy (see Box 9).*

**Individual donation amount is steadily increasing**

The average individual annual donation amount is developing in the opposite direction to the share of donors. Figure 20 shows that the average donation amount (all donations, including donations for development policy organisations) has risen from EUR 141 per donor in 2005 to EUR 264 in 2020. A very similar trend is seen for the donation amount for development policy purposes, where the average annual donation amount has increased from EUR 91 in 2005 to EUR 193 in 2019.[42] It should be noted that the specified values have not been adjusted for inflation. In the same period, the consumer price index has risen from 86.2 in 2005 to 105.8 in 2020 (Federal Statistical Office Destatis, 2022). This corresponds to an inflation rate of around 23 percent. In other words, donations in 2020 are worth 23 percent less than donations in 2005.

Nonetheless, even taking the inflation rate into account, we can see a linear increase in the average annual individual donation amount.

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[42]   What is striking is that the average annual donation amount for development policy is nearly on the same level as the average amount of donations in general. One possible interpretation of this result is that individuals who donate money to development policy organisations primarily donate to these organisations and do not have a broad donation portfolio covering different fields.

**Figure 20    Average individual donation amount per year**
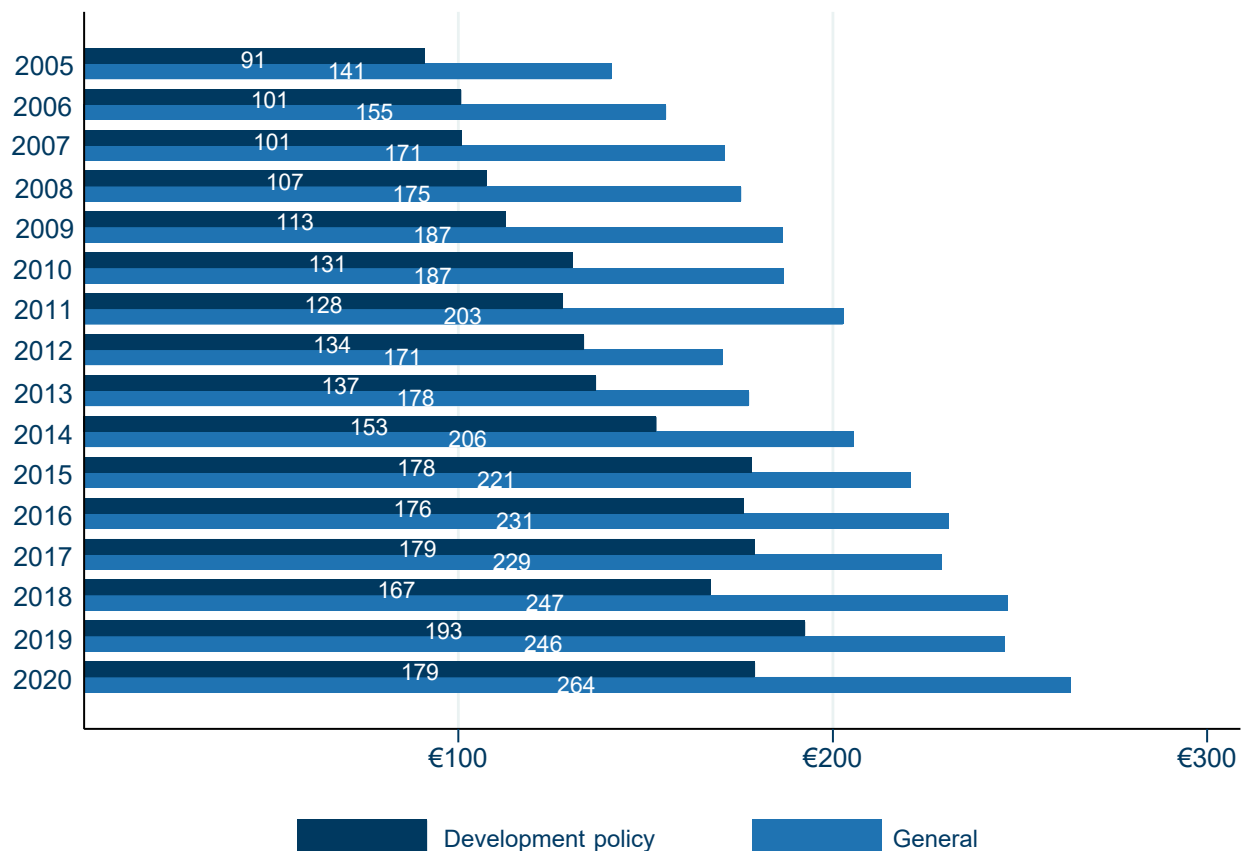


*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on the GfK Charity Panel. The diagram shows the average annual donation amount of donors (in general, including all donors) and of donors for development policy. A definition of donations for development policy can be found in Box 10. For the year 2021, only data up to September is available, which is why the calculated donation volume is lower than in the previous years.*

### 3.2.2    Description of donors: Mostly older, female, highly educated and with a high income

This section examines which groups of people donate particularly frequently or particularly rarely. This makes it possible to define possible target groups for information and acquisition campaigns.

**Multivariate analysis: How do donors differ from non-donors?**

To understand which of the examined factors influence donation behaviour, we need to analyse various factors simultaneously. In this way, we can consider, for example, the fact that people of a higher age often also receive a higher income. Figure 21 presents the results of a logistic regression investigating how the characteristics of 1) age, 2) gender, 3) education level, 4) income and 5) place of residence (federal state)[43] correlate with donation behaviour.[44]

The regression results show that older people (especially in the category *aged 60 and older*), women, people classed as having a high education level, people with a high income (especially EUR 3,600 per month and

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[43]  The place of residence is considered in order to clarify any regional differences in donation behaviour. First, this allows donors to be addressed more specifically and, second, possible context effects that explain regional differences can be identified.

[44]  The choice of characteristics is based on availability in the GfK Charity Panel and is limited to socio-economic influencing factors. All identified connections should be understood as correlations and not as causal relationships.

more) and people who live in Bavaria or Baden-Württemberg donate significantly more frequently than other people. This is indicated by the respective regression coefficients, which lie to the right of the vertical 0 line.

The results thus confirm the findings of previous studies (see, for example, Gricevic et al., 2020; Priller and Sommerfeld, 2005).

**Figure 21**     **Socio-economic factors influencing donation behaviour**
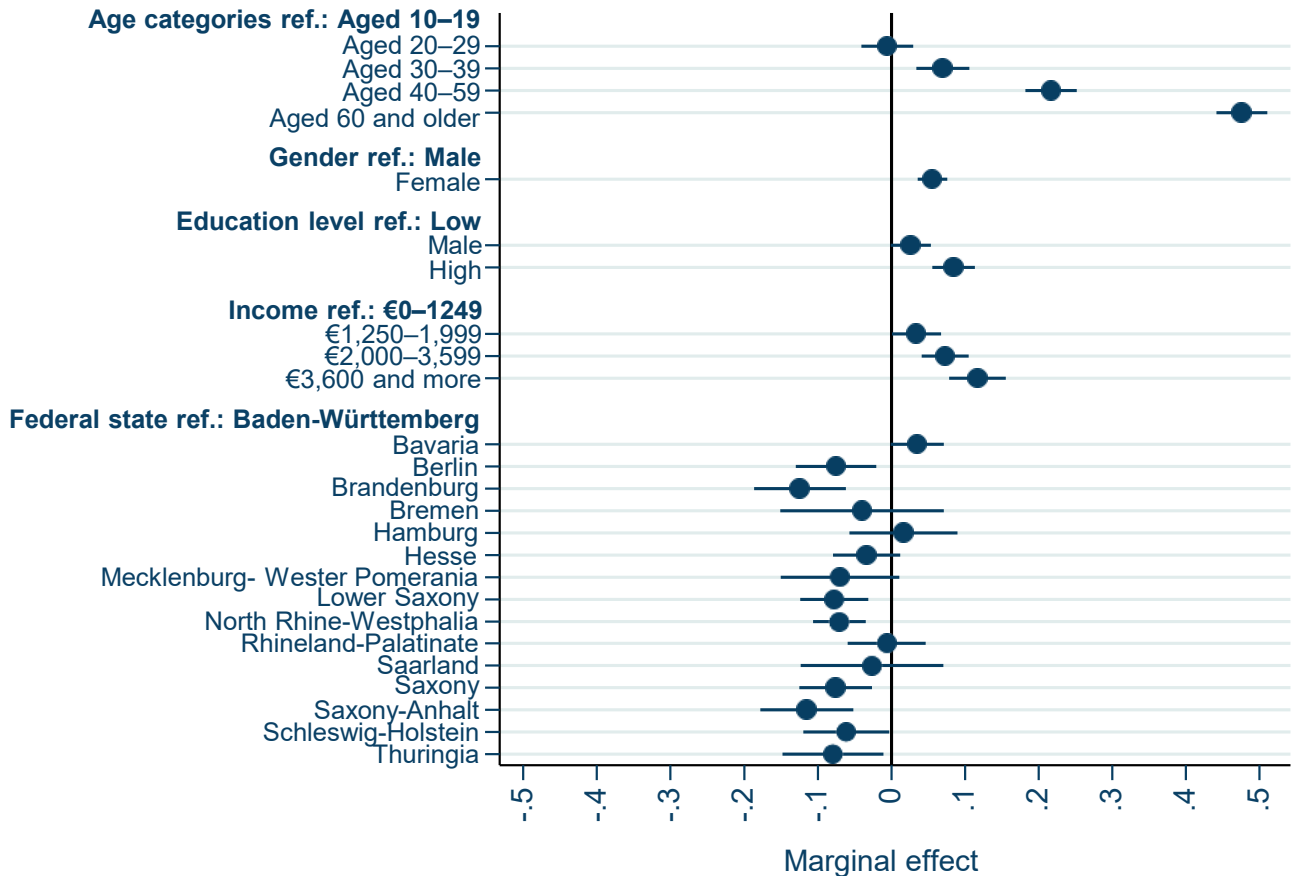


*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on the GfK Charity Panel. The graph shows the marginal effects (regression coefficients) of a pooled logistic regression. The dependent variable is a dummy that specifies whether a person has donated (1) or not (0). Ref. indicates the comparison groups. The coefficients depicted present the difference between the respective variable category and this comparison group. Positive coefficients mean that the probability of donating in the respective group is higher than in the reference group. Negative coefficients mean that this probability is lower. This difference is statistically significant (see "Statistical significance" in the Glossary) as long as the horizontal lines (95% confidence intervals) do not cross the vertical zero-line.*

**Multivariate analysis: How do donors for development policy purposes differ from other donors?**

To investigate whether donors for development policy systematically differ from other donors, a second logistic regression compares individuals who generally donate money with individuals who donate for development policy. The results in Figure 22 reveal that older donors (aged 60 and older) and donors classified as having a high level of education donate money to development policy organisations significantly more often than other donors. Donors who live in Berlin, Brandenburg, Hesse, Lower Saxony, North Rhine-Westphalia, Schleswig-Holstein or Thuringia, on the other hand, donate significantly less often to development policy organisations.

These results are consistent with the results in Section 3.1. There, too, it was apparent that older people in particular read/listen to news on global poverty more often than younger people and also talk about the issue in their social environment more often. The issue is likely to be more on the minds of individuals in the category *aged 60 and older*. In light of this, it is hardly surprising that they also donate to a greater extent in this field.

**Figure 22        Comparison of donors in general and donors for development policy**
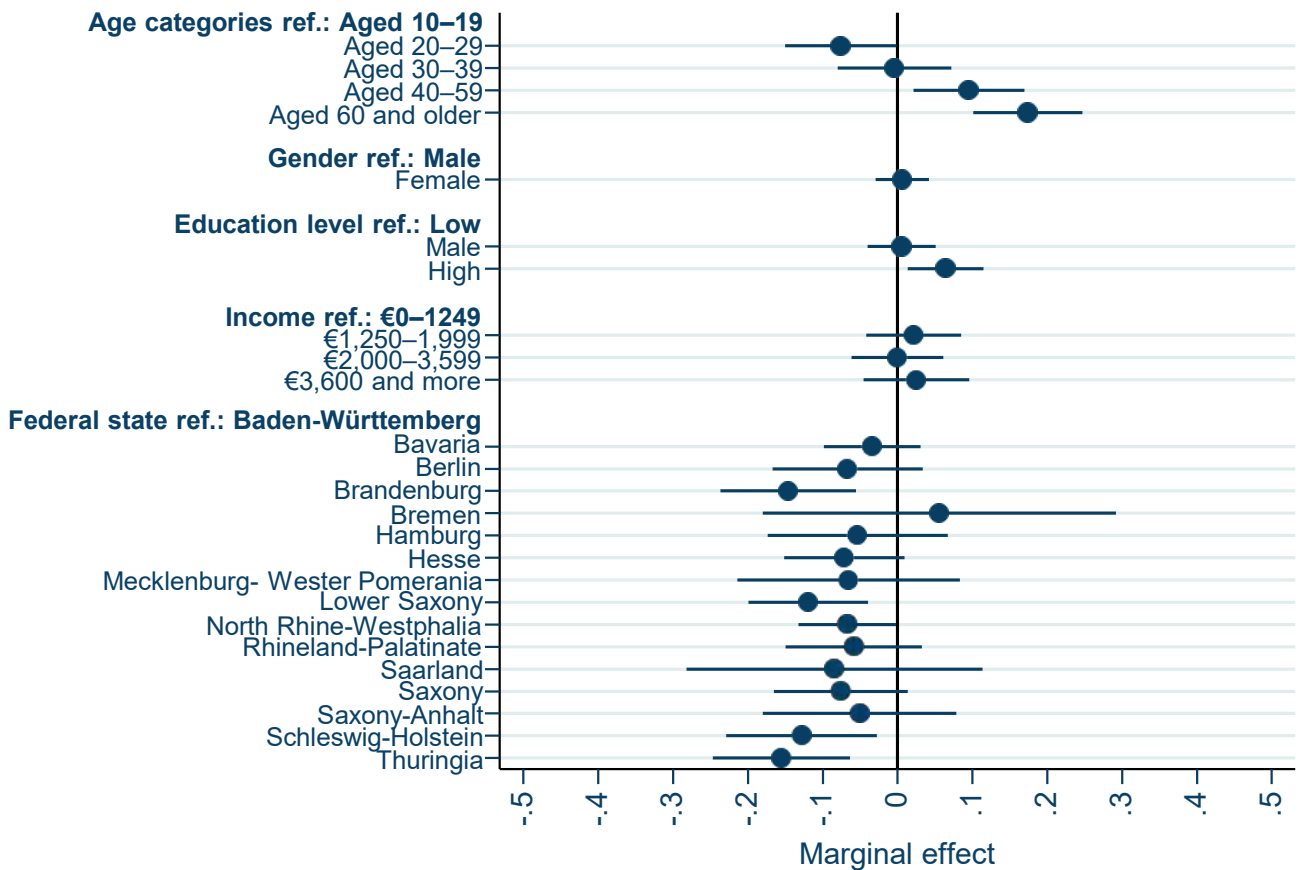


*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on the GfK Charity Panel. The graph shows the marginal effects (regression coefficients) of a pooled logistic regression. The dependent variable is a dummy that specifies whether a person has donated for development policy organisations (1) or whether they have generally donated but not for development policy organisations (0). Ref. indicates the comparison groups. The coefficients depicted present the difference between the respective variable category and this comparison group. Positive coefficients mean that the probability of donating to development policy organisations in the respective group is higher than in the reference group. Negative coefficients mean that this probability is lower. This difference is statistically significant (see "Statistical significance" in the Glossary) as long as the horizontal lines (95% confidence intervals) do not cross the vertical zero-line.*

### 3.2.3    Donation potential clearly exceeds the current donation share

The results presented up to now show, among other things, that the share of donors is continually decreasing. This negative development gives rise to the question as to the extent to which other people are willing to donate who are not donating or are no longer donating at present. Aiming to answer this question, a special survey conducted between December 2020 and January 2021 asked participants in the GfK Charity Panel whether they are generally willing to donate money for charitable purposes. [45]

In this special survey, 20 percent of respondents *completely* agreed to the statement "I am generally willing to donate". In contrast, 28 percent of respondents chose the statement *slightly agree*, and a further 31 percent stated that they were *undecided*. These results indicate that the actual donation potential clearly exceeds the current share of donors (around 30%). We will therefore first describe the donation potential in more detail below, before proceeding to analyse possible obstacles to donations and the requirements of potential donors.

**Willingness to donate and donation activity**

Table 1 shows the connection between the actual donation activity of respondents and the specified general willingness to donate. In this survey, 27.1 percent of respondents can be classified as donors. This means that they donated at least once in the year 2020. Conversely, 72.8 percent are to be classified as non-donors because they did not make any donations in the year in question.

**Table 1**        **Donation potential among the German population**

|  | "I am generally willing to donate money for charitable purposes" | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Disagree | Undecided | Agree |
| **Donors (27.1%)** | 2.6% (233) | 5.8% (512) | 18.7% (1,648) |
| **Non-donors (72.8%)** | 18.3% (1,612) | 25.4% (2,234) | 29.1% (2,558) |

*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on the GfK Charity Panel, special survey in January 2021. The table presents the donation behaviour in 2020 (divided into donors and non-donors) and agreement with the statement "I am generally willing to donate money for charitable purposes". The response categories "Do not agree at all" and "Largely disagree" have been grouped under "Disagree", and the response categories "Slightly agree" and "Completely agree" under "Agree". A detailed presentation of this table can be found in Table 3 in the Annex.*

It is hardly surprising that people who already make donations also more often state that they are willing to donate money. Out of those who already donate, 24.5 percent agree with the statement "I am generally willing to donate money for charitable purposes" or specify that they are undecided. What is particularly interesting, however, is that 29.1 percent of the population in Germany who do not donate at present also state that they are generally willing to do so. A further 25.4 percent of the population do not donate at present but state that they are undecided as to whether they are willing to donate. This 30 to 50 percent of the population can be considered potential donors.[46]

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[45] This sub-section focuses on general donation behaviour and the general willingness to donate. The reason for this is that the special survey conducted by the GfK Charity Panel simply asked about the general willingness to donate and not about the specific willingness to donate to development policy. It is therefore not possible to precisely analyse the donation potential for development policy. However, we can assume that the general results allow a projection to the donation potential for development policy. The shares of donors and non-donors may deviate from those depicted in Figure 19 as the data here comes from a non-weighted and not necessarily representative sample.

[46] It is possible that the willingness to donate is overestimated based on the specifications of respondents. The "social desirability bias" (see Grimm, 2010 for an overview) purports that respondents' answers are often biased by social desirability. In this case, it is conceivable that respondents perceive a willingness to donate as socially desirable and thus state that they are more willing to donate than they really are.

**Comparison of donors and non-donors who are willing to donate**

If we want to address the group of non-donors who are willing to donate, we first need to understand in which sections of the population this donation potential exists. The multivariate analysis in Section 3.2.2 has shown that age is a decisive factor and that older people in particular donate money much more frequently. Building on this, Figure 23 presents how the share of donors, the share of donors for development policy and the share of non-donors who are willing to donate differ between different age groups. Strikingly, both the share of donors and the share of donors for development policy are highest in the oldest age category, with figures of 38 percent and 8 percent, respectively. However, the highest share of non-donors who are willing to donate is in the categories aged 20–30 and aged 30–39, where it is 27 percent in each case.

**Figure 23    Disaggregation of donation behaviour by age category**
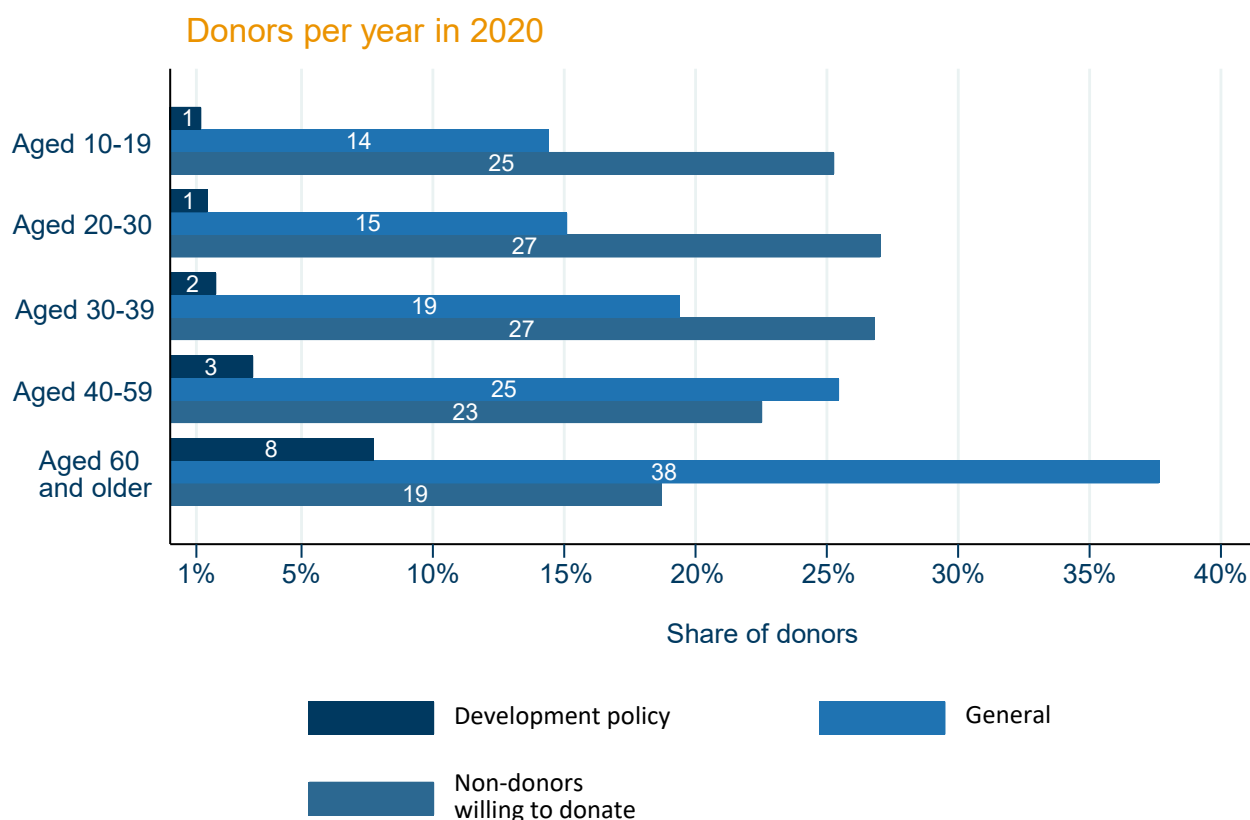


Source: DEval, own visualisation based on the GfK Charity Panel. The diagram shows, for the year 2020, the share of donors overall, the share of donors for development policy and the share of non-donors who are willing to donate. The diagram is disaggregated by age category.

Although the highest share of donors is therefore found in the highest age category, the greatest donation potential – that goes beyond the current donation behaviour – is in the middle age categories.

With regard to the other socio-economic characteristics, the greatest donation potential is in the highest income group (26%), in the group with the highest education level (28%) and distributed evenly between men and women (both slightly over 20%; graphical evaluations of this can be found in the Annex in Figure 55 to Figure 59).

### 3.2.4    Why do people donate?

If we want to fully tap the potential for donations, we need to understand the central motives for donating and possible obstacles. Only in this way can we remove any obstacles that exist. Below we compare donors with non-donors who are willing to donate.

Figure 24 depicts the extent to which donors and non-donors who are willing to donate agree with the four specified motives for donating.

To begin with, it is apparent that donors and non-donors who are willing to donate hardly differ in their agreement with the motive of "contributing to the needy". In both groups, around 80 percent of respondents *completely* agree or *largely* agree with the statement "Through donations, I want to make a small contribution to reducing the hardship of people in need".

Then again, the perception that donating money is a matter of course is slightly more widespread among donors, where 37 percent *completely* agree with the statement "For me, donations are a matter of course". The figure among non-donors who are willing to donate is 21 percent.

**Figure 24        Motives for donating**
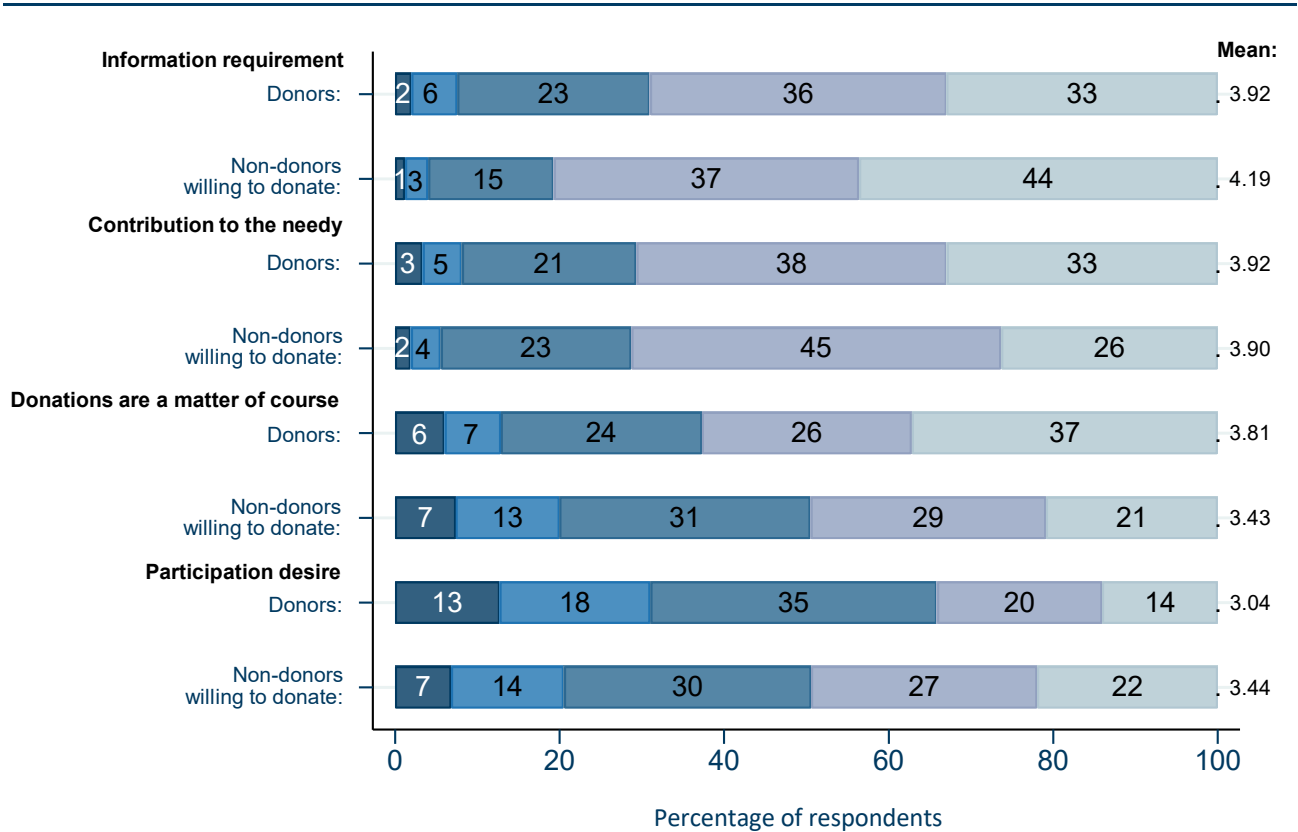


*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on the GfK Charity Panel. Scale: From "Do not agree at all" (dark blue), "Largely disagree", "Undecided", "Slightly agree" to "Completely agree" (grey). MV = mean value. The exact formulation of the motives can be found in Table 57 in the online Annex.*

Another striking finding is that non-donors who are willing to donate have a higher participation demand. Around 50 percent of the respondents in this group specify that they would like to donate to projects that they can participate in themselves. In comparison, this is true only for around one third of respondents in the case of donors. The participation requirement can be understood as a form of desired self-efficacy. This plays a decisive role both for support for development cooperation (see Schneider and Gleser, 2018) and for sustainable consumption (see Chapter 3.3).

It is also notable that non-donors who are willing to donate have a comparably high information demand. In this group, 44 percent *completely* agree with the statement "When I donate money, I would like precise information about the project", while the figure in the group of donors, at 33 percent, is somewhat lower.

### Obstacles: Uncertainty regarding the trustworthiness of organisations

When it comes to fully tapping the donation potential, not only motives for donating but also possible obstacles play an important role. We will now take a closer look at five obstacles that may reduce the willingness to donate (see Figure 25).

Disposable money is a decisive factor for the possibility of donating. This can also be seen in the results of the special survey. While only 15 percent of donors state that they cannot afford to donate in their current economic situation, the figure is around twice as high, at 30 percent, in the group of non-donors who are willing to donate. This relationship shows that financial restrictions clearly limit the opportunity to donate.

Neither the perception that helping the very poor is exclusively the task of the state nor the perception that calls to donate are a nuisance appear to be decisive factors for the willingness to donate. In the case of both factors, there is hardly any difference between donors and non-donors who are willing to donate.

**Figure 25        Obstacles to donating**
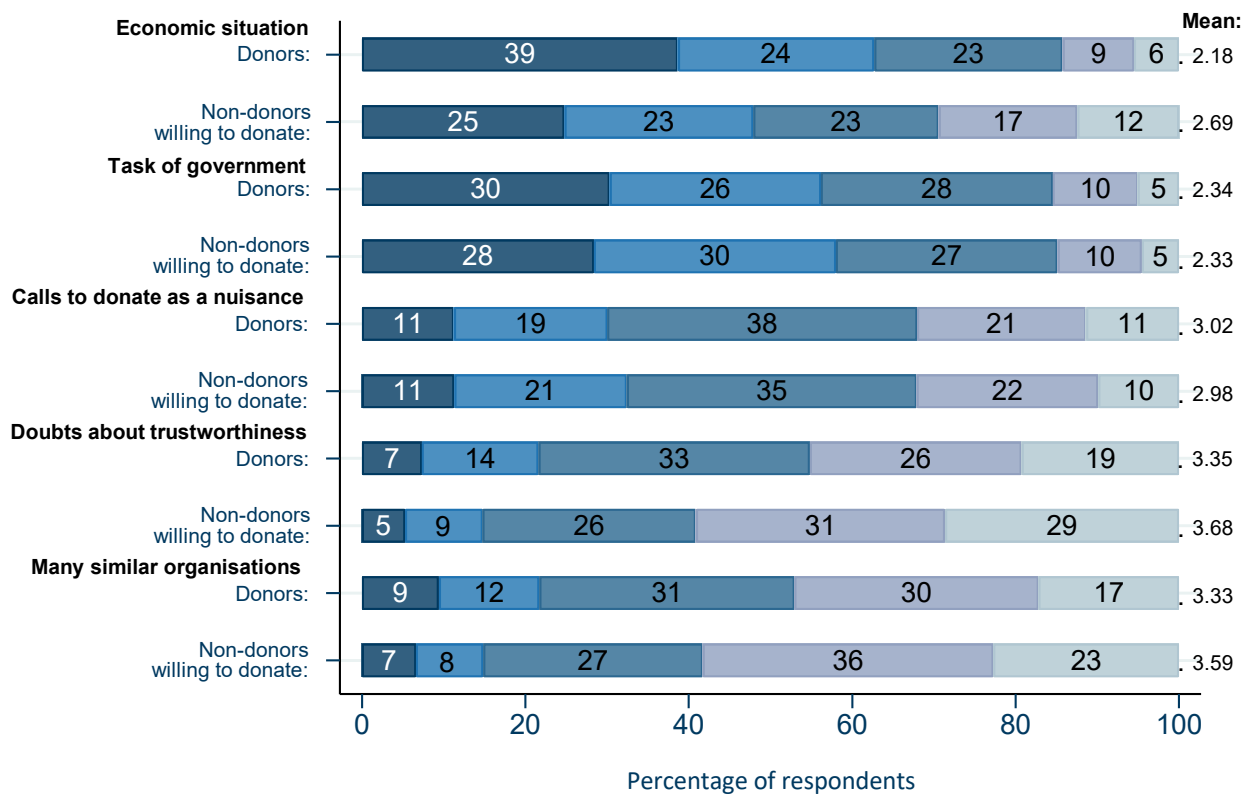


*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on the GfK Charity Panel. Scale: (1) "Do not agree at all" (dark blue), (2) "Largely disagree", (3) "Undecided", (4) "Slightly agree", (5) "Completely agree" (grey). MV = mean value.*

However, there are striking differences in the assessment of which organization are trustworthy. Whereas 45 percent of donors agree with the statement "I am unsure which non-profit organisations I can really trust", the figure among non-donors is 60 percent. This result shows that there is much greater uncertainty about the trustworthiness of charitable organisations among non-donors. It also confirms the finding from the previous section that this group has a higher information demand.

The slightly higher agreement of non-donors who are willing to donate with the statement "There are so many similar organisations that I find it hard to decide" also confirms this impression.

### Survey experiment: Do donation labels increase the trustworthiness of charitable organisations?

The results of the previous section have shown that many non-donors who are willing to donate specify doubts about the trustworthiness of charitable organisations as an obstacle to their donation activity. Aiming to establish whether additional information about the trustworthiness of an organisation might increase the donation activity of this target group, DEval has conducted a survey experiment to investigate whether donation labels have an impact on donation behaviour. Certifications and labels are already used in numerous consumption areas to inform consumers about product quality or production standards (see Box 11 for an overview of textile labels).

The studies to date have obtained different results and therefore do not allow any specific conclusions about the effect of certification (Adena et al., 2019; Vollan et al., 2017).

| Box 11 | Excursus: Public opinion on textile labels |
|---|---|

Textile labels can help consumers to specifically choose sustainable items of clothing. In order for this to be successful, the labels firstly need to be known to the general public and secondly need to be trusted by them (Larceneux et al., 2012; Taufique et al., 2017). As a new state textile label, the "Green Button" is also interesting to look at with regard to how well-known it is and its perceived reliability.

Against this backdrop, the survey on sustainable consumption in November 2021 asked citizens in a first step which textile labels they are familiar with. The response options here distinguished between "I am familiar with it" and "I am familiar with it and I know what criteria the label guarantees". In a second step, respondents were then asked to state to what extent they trust the labels that they knew.

The "Blue Angel" with 89 percent and "Fairtrade Cotton" with 80 percent are by far the labels that are best known among the population (see Figure 26). Next come "Oeko-Tex" with 57 percent, then "Naturland Textilien" and the "Green Button" with 50 percent each. The remaining labels were all much more seldom specified as being known.

Overall, the labels enjoy great trust among those who had previously stated that they knew a specific label (see mean values in Figure 26). In particular, there are hardly any differences among the labels that are well-known among the general public. On a scale from 1 (*not trustworthy*) to 7 (*very trustworthy*), the average trust ranges from 5.51 for "Fairtrade Cotton" to 5.36 for "Oeko-Tex". Even the less-known labels such as "Blue Sign" (known to 9%) or "SA8000" (known to 8%) tend to be trusted, with their mean values lying clearly above the middle of the scale (4). In addition, around 46 percent of respondents (largely) agree with the statement "If an item of clothing is certified with a sustainability label, then I can be sure that it is produced more sustainably than an item of clothing without a label" (analysis not presented).

Even assuming that the degree to which the labels are known is overestimated due to incorrect memories (social desirability; Holyk, 2008) or through internet searches (Smith et al., 2020) and the respondents have no detailed knowledge of them, the data indicates that, due to the high level of trust, textile labels provide consumers with orientation in purchasing clothing and textiles.

**Figure 26      How well-known are textile labels and to what extent do people trust them?**



Average trust of respondents (95% confidence intervals)
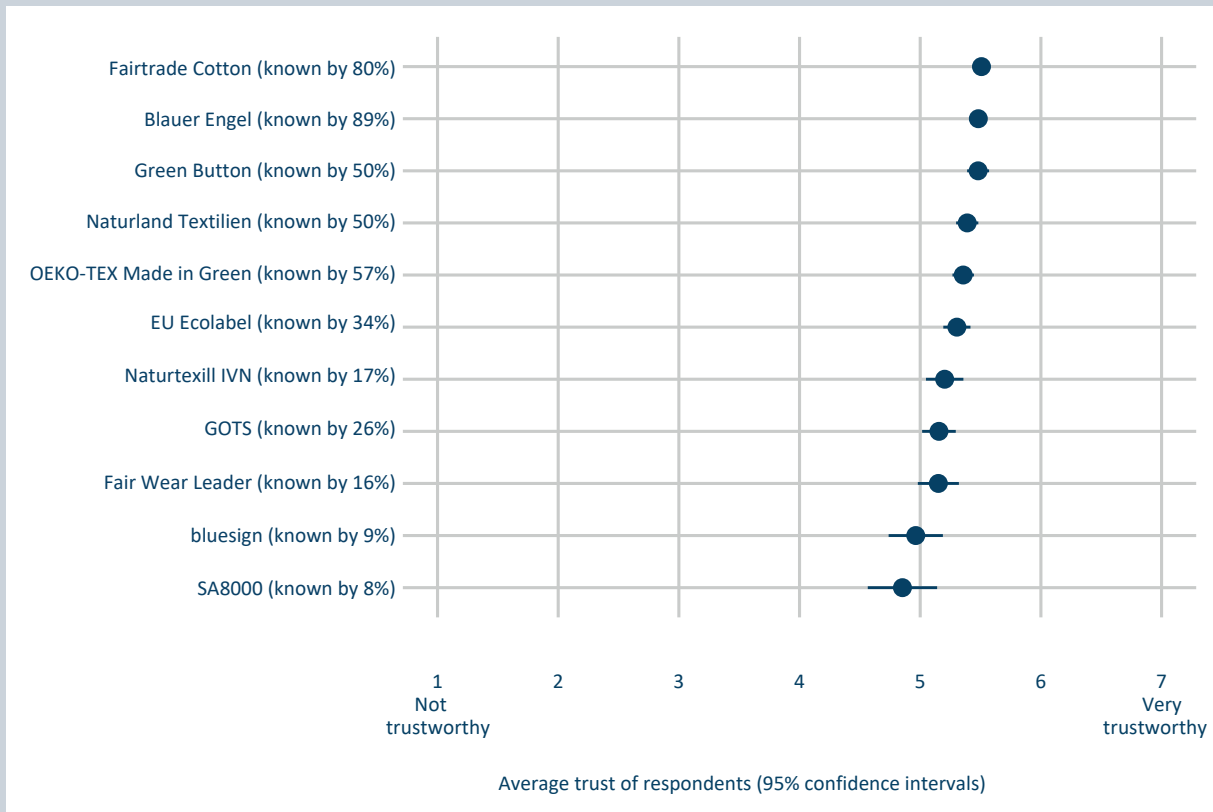
*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on the Respondi survey in November 2021; N = 2,010. The figure shows the mean values (95% confidence intervals) on a scale from 1 = "not trustworthy" to 7 = "very trustworthy" for respondents who stated that they knew the label in question. How well-known the label is among all respondents is specified in parentheses (cumulating the share stating "I am familiar with it" and "I am familiar with it and I know what criteria the label guarantees").*

In the context of DC, it is also interesting whether consumers trust and actually use the "Siegelklarheit" portal. This portal is an initiative of the Federal Government and is intended to provide clarity regarding the informative value, content and quality of environmental and social labels (https://www.siegelklarheit.de/en/). So far, though, the portal is not very well-known, with only 10 percent of respondents stating that they knew it. Out of this 10 percent, again only 10 percent stated that they have used the portal up to now.

A representative survey experiment has been performed in order to further examine the effect of donation labels (see Box 12 for a description of the experiment).

| Box 12 | Survey experiment on donation labels |
| --- | --- |

The aim of the experiment was to establish to what extent donation labels can increase the trustworthiness of charitable organisations and the willingness to donate to these organisations. For this purpose, a representative online survey split 1,600 individuals randomly into four groups. Two of the four groups received information about one of two charitable organisations ("Bündnis Entwicklung Hilft" or "Aktion Deutschland Hilft"). In addition, they were informed that the organisations have received the donation label of the German Central Institute for Social Issues (DZI). The other two groups received the same information about the two charitable organisations but no specification as to whether the respective organisation has received a donation label.

All participants were then asked whether they would generally be willing to donate to the respective organisation and what amount (EUR 10 or more) they would donate in a hypothetical scenario. Precise information about the structure of the experiment can be found in Section 2.2.3 in the online Annex of this report.

**Figure 27**      **Effect of donation labels on the willingness to donate**
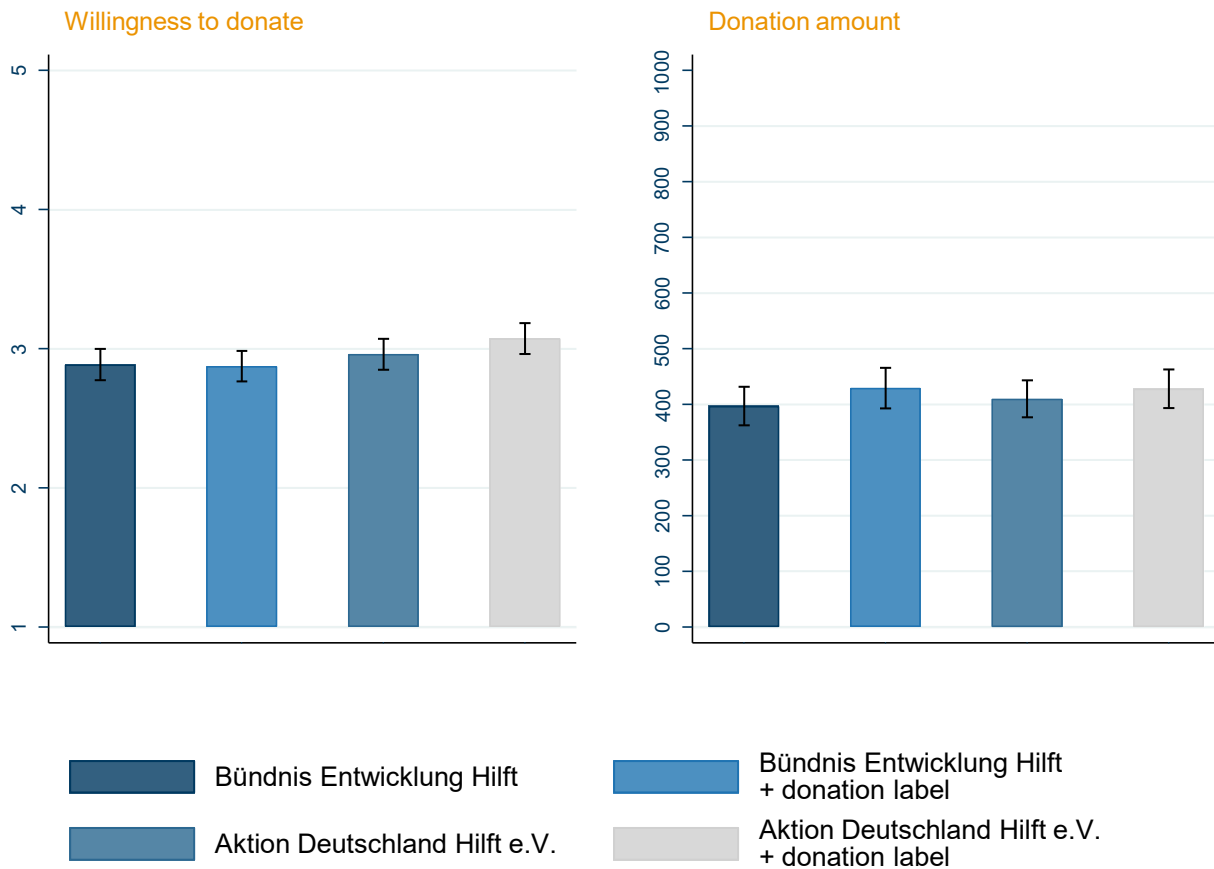


Willingness to donate

Donation amount

Bündnis Entwicklung Hilft

Bündnis Entwicklung Hilft
+ donation label

Aktion Deutschland Hilft e.V.

Aktion Deutschland Hilft e.V.
+ donation label

*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on a Respondi survey in February 2022 (N = 1,600). Dependent variable (left): Willingness to donate; categories: "I am generally willing to donate money for [Bündnis Entwicklung Hilft] [Aktion Deutschland Hilft].", measured on a scale from (1) = "Do not agree at all" to (5) = "Completely agree". Dependent variable (right): Donation amount; question: "The survey will be followed by a prize draw. The winner of the prize draw will receive EUR 10, paid out in Mingle points [authors' note: This is the reward presented by the survey institute for participating in surveys]. If you win the prize draw, you have the opportunity to donate part of your prize to the organisation described above. Please now specify what amount you would donate if you win."*

In the experiment, donation labels did not significantly increase the willingness to donate to a certain development policy organisation. Figure 27 (left) shows that the average willingness to donate is slightly higher in the groups that were informed that the respective organisation is certified. However, this difference compared to the groups that did not receive any information about the donation label is not statistically significant (also refer to the definition of "statistical significance" in the glossary). The picture is similar for the average specified donation amount (in the figure on the right). This, too, is slightly higher in the groups that received the information about the donation label, but did not significantly differ from the respective comparison groups.

**Figure 28**        **Effect of donation labels on trust and the assessment of effectiveness**
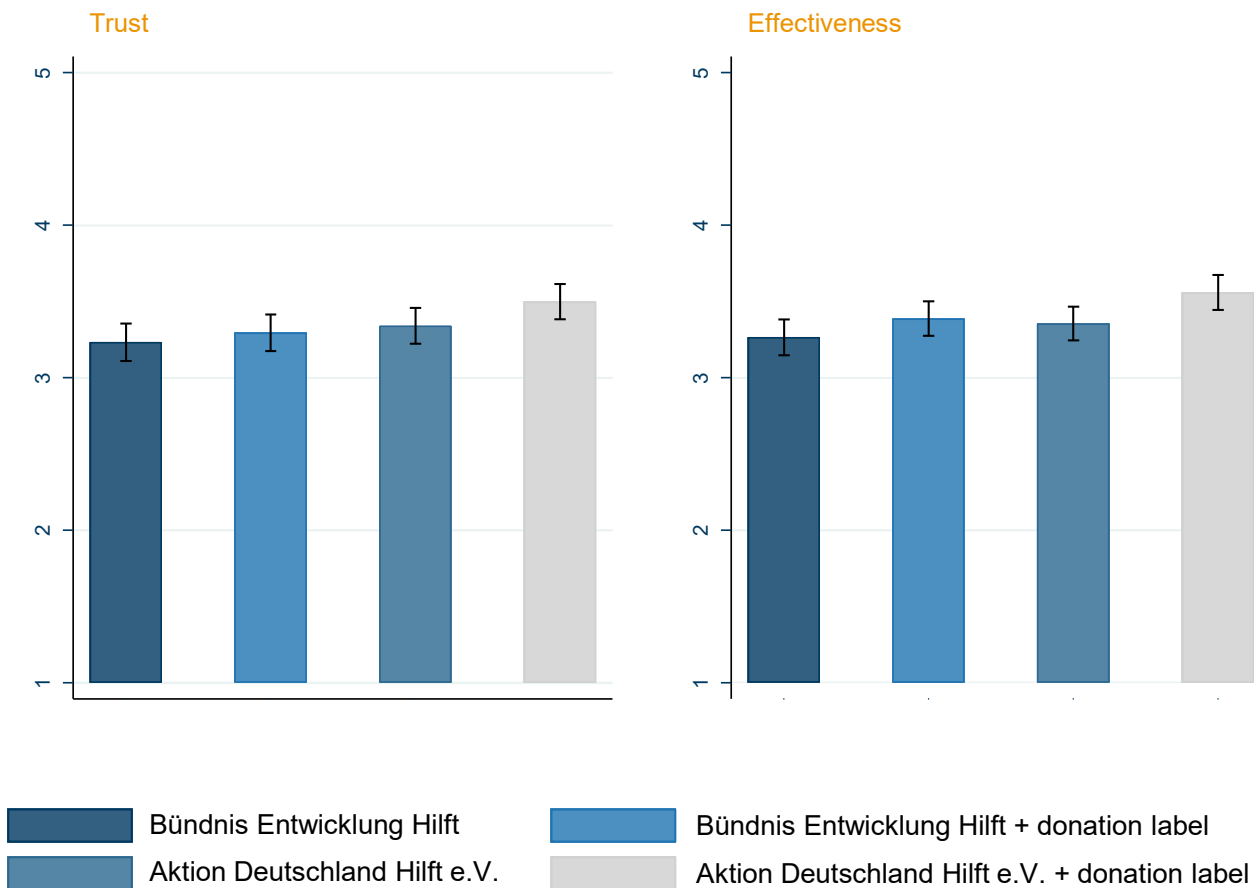


*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on a Respondi survey in February 2022 (N = 1,600). Dependent variable (left): Trust; statement: "I trust the organisation to handle the donated money with care and responsibility." Dependent variable (right): Effectiveness; statement: "I think that the donated money will be used effectively." Both variables are measured on a scale from (1) = "Do not agree at all" to (5) = "Completely agree".*

The situation is different for two other factors. As the results in Figure 28 show, both trust in the organisation and the assessment that the organisation is effective can be significantly increased through certification. However, the difference is only statistically significant for the organisation Aktion Deutschland Hilft. In contrast, no significant differences can be seen for the organisation Bündnis Entwicklung Hilft.

The results in Section 3.2.3 have illustrated that the group of non-donors who are willing to donate have a particularly high information demand regarding the trustworthiness of charitable organisations. Whether the donation label has an effect in this context can be seen in Figure 29.

As was also the case in the non-group-specific presentation (Figure 27), only a slightly higher willingness to donate can be seen among the individuals who had received information about the donation label. Again, the difference compared to the individuals who had not received any information about the label is not significant.

The results in this section indicate that donation behaviour is not easily increased in the short term through external information about the reliability of the organisation. At the same time, they show that the DZI donation label can actually increase the perceived trustworthiness and effectiveness in the short run. Other studies have already shown that these two factors can influence donation behaviour in the longer term (Alhidari et al., 2018; Chaudhry et al., 2021). This means that donation labels can certainly be viewed as a means of increasing donation activity in the long run.

**Figure 29**        **Effect of donation labels on the willingness to donate in the "donation potential" group**
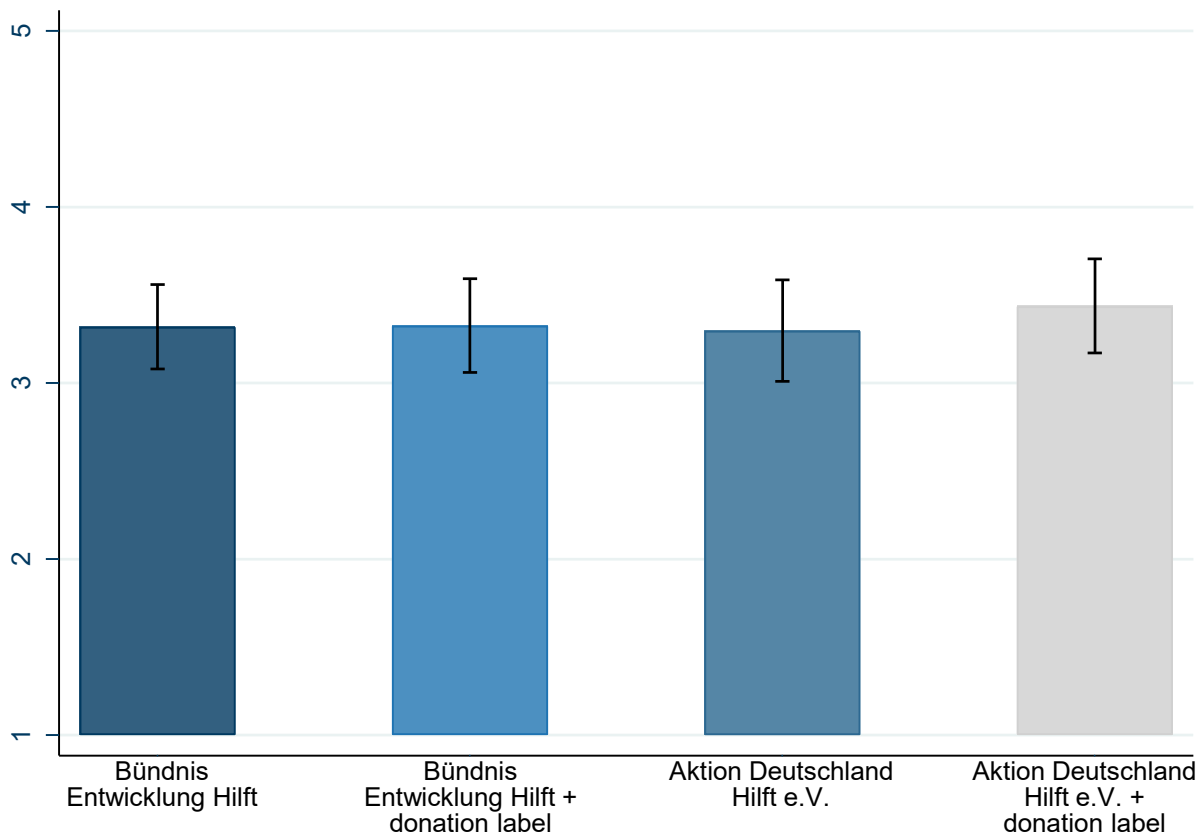


*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on a Respondi survey in February 2022 (N = 1,600). Dependent variable: Willingness to donate; statement: "I am generally willing to donate money for [Bündnis Entwicklung Hilft] [Aktion Deutschland Hilft]", measured on a scale from (1) = "Do not agree at all" to (5) = "Completely agree".*

### 3.2.5    Excursus: What are the effects of the coronavirus pandemic on the willingness to donate?

To end with, we will examine how the coronavirus pandemic has influenced the willingness to donate. Figure 18 and 19 have already shown that the donation volume increased slightly from 2019 to 2020, but that the share of donors has not changed. This means that the observed increase in the total donation volume can be attributed to increased donations from existing donors, and not to donations from new donors.

To address the question as to how citizens perceive the influence of the coronavirus pandemic on their donation behaviour, the special survey in December 2020 and January 2021 asked participants in the GfK Charity Panel to what extent their donation behaviour has changed as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. For example, they were requested to specify whether they now donate more money, whether the focus of their donations has changed and whether they use different methods of donating such as making a donation as part of a purchase decision or donating directly to those in need.

**Figure 30**        **Influence of the coronavirus pandemic on donation behaviour**
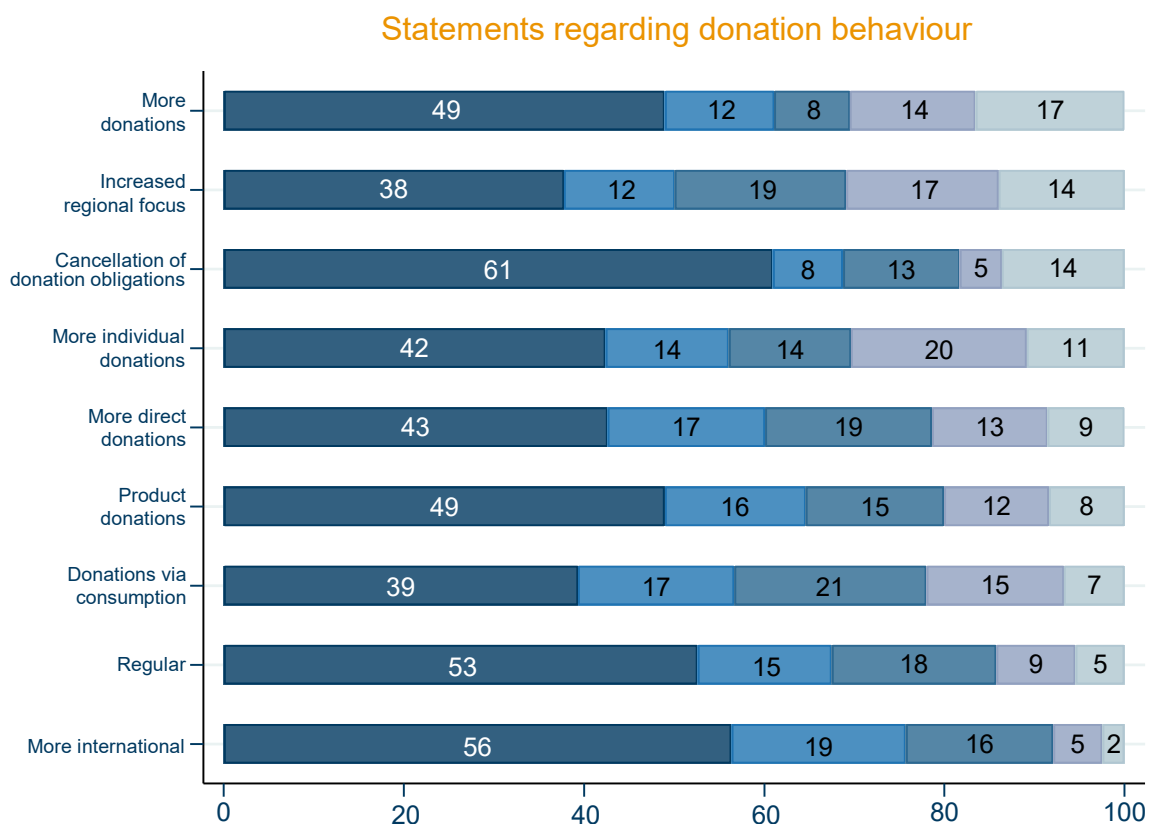
## Statements regarding donation behaviour

| Statement | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| More donations | 49 | 12 | 8 | 14 | 17 |
| Increased regional focus | 38 | 12 | 19 | 17 | 14 |
| Cancellation of donation obligations | 61 | 8 | 13 | 5 | 14 |
| More individual donations | 42 | 14 | 14 | 20 | 11 |
| More direct donations | 43 | 17 | 19 | 13 | 9 |
| Product donations | 49 | 16 | 15 | 12 | 8 |
| Donations via consumption | 39 | 17 | 21 | 15 | 7 |
| Regular | 53 | 15 | 18 | 9 | 5 |
| More international | 56 | 19 | 16 | 5 | 2 |

*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on the GfK Charity Panel. Scale: (1) = "Do not agree at all" (dark blue), (2) = "Largely disagree", (3) = "Undecided", (4) = "Slightly agree", (5) = "Completely agree" (grey).*

To begin with, it should be noted that agreement with all of the statements in Figure 30 is fairly low. In each case, at least 50 percent of respondents stated that they *do not agree (at all)* with the individual statements. The majority of respondents therefore believe that the coronavirus pandemic has not had any major influence on their donation behaviour.

A relevant finding for development policy is that the respondents state that they donate money to a greater extent to regional organisations and causes. At the same time, the agreement with the statement "I donate more money to international organisations and causes" is by far the lowest. Both findings indicate that donations focus more on local challenges.

### 3.2.6    Summary

The results of this chapter have shown that the share of donors has steadily declined in recent years, on a huge scale. Whereas nearly 50 percent of the population were still donating money in 2005, this figure had fallen to slightly below 30 percent in 2020. It is also notable that the number of donors is particularly high among older people (aged 60 and older). The two findings may be related. It is possible that the group of people who are over 60 today are part of a generation of donors and the share of this generation is steadily declining over time, which could at least partly explain the decreasing share of donors.

Potential new donors need to be addressed in order to counteract the downward trend in the number of donors. As the results of this chapter show, this potential amounts to just under 30 percent of the population. It can be increased by addressing existing information and participation requirements – which again emphasise the relevance of the sense of self-efficacy. (Donation) labels, for instance, provide a quick means of obtaining information about the trustworthiness and quality of organisations and are therefore a possible way of meeting the existing information demand. However, the results of the survey experiment show that

labels only partly help to raise the donation potential. They may increase the trustworthiness and assessed effectiveness of charitable organisations, but cannot directly increase the willingness to donate for certified organisations. However, one should not forget the results of previous studies, which have shown that trust in organisations and the assessment of their effectiveness are factors that can influence donation behaviour in the long term (Alhidari et al., 2018; Chaudhry et al., 2021).

The participation requirements of non-donors who are willing to donate may be interpreted as a desire for self-efficacy. The fact that self-efficacy is a decisive factor for development engagement and DC support is also apparent in the other chapters of this report and is examined in particular in Chapter 3.3. It is possible to strengthen the sense of self-efficacy by emphasising the impact of an individual's contribution.

## 3.3 Focus analysis 2: Sustainable consumption

| Box 13 | Key results: Sustainable consumption |
| --- | --- |

- There is widespread public awareness of sustainable consumption, with 58 percent of those surveyed stating that they consider sustainability when making purchases. Sustainable consumption covers several areas (food, clothing and finance) and consists of various consumption phases (purchase considerations, disposal and consumption policy engagement), going beyond simply purchasing and using sustainable products.

- 71 percent of the survey respondents want to make their consumption more sustainable. The potential to increase sustainable consumption is particularly apparent in the clothing sector.

- The general public believes that sustainable consumption can help overcome challenges in development policy.

- An analysis based on the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) shows that there is a positive relationship between sustainable consumption and a pronounced awareness of sustainability, a belief in the ability to consume sustainably, distinct subjective norms and a high perceived level of self-efficacy and self-efficacy in consumption policy).

- One potential obstacle to increasing sustainable consumption is that the sense of being able to consume sustainably (perceived behavioural control) and exert personal or political influence (self-efficacy) is not widespread among the general public.

- People believe that individuals as well as political and business stakeholders have great power to boost sustainable consumption, but have little faith in them actually exercising this power.

- The population supports consumption policy requirements that place obligations on companies and political actors.

Production and consumption drive the world economy. However, they also threaten to disrupt the ecological, social and economic balance of life on earth if they do not use resources sustainably. That's why the SDGs aim, among other things, to promote sustainable patterns of consumption and production so that we manage our planet's limited resources in a way that keeps them available for future generations (SDG 12; United Nations, 2015).

The current United Nations report on progress towards the SDGs, however, finds that our material footprint continues to grow[47], food is still wasted and waste volumes are growing (United Nations, 2020). In view of the harm caused by both current consumption behaviour and the underlying production processes, sustainable consumption has an important role to play.

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[47] The material footprint refers to the amount of primary materials required to cover the basic material needs of humans (United Nations, 2020).

| Box 14 | The limits of individual opportunities to contribute to sustainable development through consumption |
|---|---|

Sustainable consumption is sometimes supported by governmental development policy measures such as the German law on supply chains or labels like the "Green Button" textile label (see, for example, BMZ, 2019a, 2019b, 2020). For their part, private-sector stakeholders can play a crucial role by providing sustainably created products and services as a basis for consumers to make sustainable consumption decisions. It is therefore important not to neglect external factors influencing consumption behaviour when considering the potential individual influence on sustainable development through sustainable consumption. This is corroborated by studies showing that external factors such as government incentives, in particular, are relevant for sustainable consumption choices (for price incentives see Liebe et al., 2016; for laws and standards see, for example, Grunwald, 2010; Thøgersen, 2010).

In addition, even when they consume sustainably, the influence of consumers is limited (Austgulen, 2016; Partzsch et al., 2019; Partzsch and Kemper, 2019; for the behaviour-impact gap, see, for example, Csutora, 2012; Holden, 2004). Because it is mainly factors related to competition and tax law that determine the conditions along the production chain and set prices, policy-makers and business leaders are responsible for adjusting these overarching tools in the name of sustainability. Similarly, the question of how far social and environmental costs should be externalised and calculated into purchase prices is a political issue, too (Schüller, 2021; see also, for example, carbon pricing).

Accordingly, the influence of individual consumers should be appraised realistically in comparison to that of policy-makers and companies, and responsibility should not be shifted from the systemic level to the individual level.

Previous research has largely reduced sustainability to ecological aspects. While various publications have, for example, examined the public's environmental awareness (BMU and UBA, 2021), they have thus far delivered no comprehensive insights into how the general public perceives sustainable consumption as contributing to challenges in development policy such as global inequality or flight and migration. In other words, do citizens realise that their own consumption has global impacts? Especially in the development cooperation context, it is vital to consider all the various aspects of sustainability – social, ecological and economic. This approach incorporates the impact of individual consumption on working conditions in producer facilities and the promotion of sustainable economic systems, including important social problems like forced labour and child labour (for more on this see SDG 8; United Nations, 2015; German Sustainable Development Strategy; German Federal Government, 2020).

**Figure 31**        **Cube model of sustainable consumption behaviour**
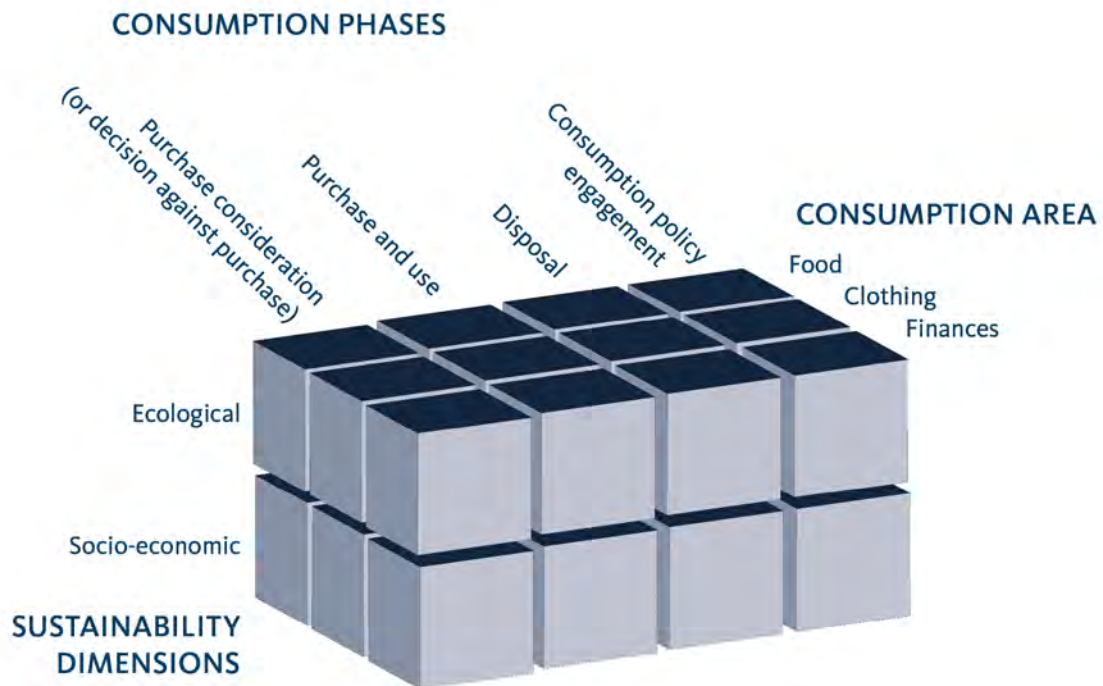


Source: DEval, own visualisation based on Geiger et al. (2018).

Sustainable consumption goes beyond the purchase of consumer goods. Efforts to reduce consumption, influence consumption policy or make sustainable investments are all conscious decisions that have an impact in this area. The cube model of sustainable consumption behaviour (Geiger et al., 2018) therefore recommends gauging sustainable consumption across multiple dimensions. As Figure 31 shows, this report follows this advice by considering the following aspects:

1.  Sustainability dimensions: Ecological and socio-economic[48] dimensions.

2.  Consumption phases: Purchase consideration (or decision against purchase), purchase and use, disposal, consumption policy engagement.

3.  Consumption area: Food, clothing, finances.

Sustainable consumption behaviour is understood in the following as "individual actions taken to satisfy needs in various areas of life by purchasing, using and disposing of goods and services in a way that does not (now or in future) threaten the ecological and socio-economic living conditions of other people" (for more on this see German Federal Government, 2019). The focus here is on sustainable consumption with the most direct perceived connection possible to the countries of the Global South or development cooperation. It covers consumer goods such as food, clothing and financial services, as their relevance to questions of global sustainability is likely to be more apparent to citizens in comparison to consumer goods from the housing and mobility areas.

Against the backdrop, it is important from a development policy perspective to understand the degree to which citizens practise sustainable consumption. This guiding knowledge makes it possible to identify the

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[48]   To keep the survey complexity in a reasonable proportion to the number of items to be answered, this model combines the social and economic dimensions into a single socio-economic dimension.

best ways to support citizens in consuming more sustainably so that the potential negative consequences of non-sustainable consumption behaviour can be minimised.

Sustainable consumption also brings opportunities to recognise global interdependencies in everyday life. Possible connections to the global impact of sustainable consumption can be demonstrated to let citizens view their everyday actions as related to the Global South. One example of a question that might be asked is: "What does my coffee consumption have to do with global poverty?"

This chapter therefore concerns the following main questions:

1. How does the German population practise sustainable consumption?

2. How much potential is there to increase sustainable consumption?

3. What connection does the general public see between sustainable consumption and sustainable development?

4. Which influencing psychological factors can explain sustainable consumption behaviour?

5. Which role does the general public ascribe to various social actors in terms of sustainable consumption?

6. Which consumption policy requirements does the general public support?

### 3.3.1   How does the German population practise sustainable consumption?

Because people have different definitions of sustainable consumption, the first part of this subsection describes how the general public defines sustainable consumption and whether they recognise a connection between sustainable consumption and development policy. This is followed by a nuanced description of citizens' actual sustainable consumption based on the cube model developed by Geiger et al. (2018). This makes it possible to map out the relevance of and links between the various sustainability dimensions, consumption phases and areas of consumption.

#### The general public views sustainable consumption as a multifaceted topic

Focus group discussions were first conducted to enable an empirical analysis according to the cube model (see Figure 31) and to record the broadest possible spectrum of the general public's views on sustainable consumption (see Fitzpatrick and Mayer, 2020).[49]

| Box 15 | Characteristics of the focus groups |
|---|---|

Three group discussions were carried out with six participants each. To ensure an open discussion atmosphere and make it easier to talk about topics that might be uncomfortable, the groups were each composed to be as homogeneous as possible in terms of their net household income – one group had a low net household income, one medium and one high. A certain level of group heterogeneity favours the emergence of different opinions. Quotas were used when forming the groups to guarantee a balance in terms of age, gender and socialisation in East or West Germany. It was also stipulated that at least four participants demonstrate a basic affinity[50] for sustainable consumption, which was ultimately the case for all participants (for details see Section 2.3.1 in the online Annex).

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[49]   This qualitative method is particularly well suited since the knowledge gained is shaped mainly by the discussion participants themselves rather than the researchers. The method is not highly standardised, so the participants themselves weight the various aspects. This can reveal previously unconsidered issues.

[50]   Operationalised via the statement "No matter if it's food, clothing or coffee to go, I avoid having a negative impact on people and the environment as much as possible, even if I have to pay a bit more." The possible answers were scaled from 1 = "strongly agree" to 5 = "strongly disagree". All individuals who gave answers between 1 and 3 were considered to have a "very strongly to fundamentally positive" attitude towards sustainable consumption.

The focus group results showed that sustainable consumption is most strongly associated with the "*purchase consideration*", "*purchase and use*" and "*disposal*" phases. This indicates a complex understanding of sustainable consumption among the general public.

> *"For me, sustainable consumption means not living at the expense of others;*
> *thinking about whether you really need what you're buying rather than making*
> *mindless purchases (…)"*

The main consumption areas named were food and clothing, but energy, water, mobility and housing were also mentioned. No participant spontaneously brought up the topic of finance, however. The ecological dimension of sustainable consumption was the dominant factor for all participants, which corresponds to the limited focus on the socio-economic dimension in academic discourse. All three groups showed a low awareness of the socio-economic dimension.

### There is widespread awareness of sustainable consumption among the general public

To assess and quantify the exploratory results of the focus group discussions, a representative online survey was subsequently conducted (November 2021; N = 2,010). The survey revealed that sustainable consumption is widespread in the self-perception of the German population: 58 percent of respondents stated that they at least partially consume sustainably, 21 percent were unsure and 22 percent stated that they do not consume sustainably.[51]

The increasing market share of fair trade products also points to a rising awareness of sustainable consumption, at least when it comes to purchasing sustainable products: between 2011 and 2019, fair trade sales in Germany rose from EUR 477 million to EUR 1.853 billion (Forum Fairer Handel, 2020). Even with coffee – which accounts for 30 percent of that figure as the best-selling fair trade product – the total market share is only 6 percent (Forum Fairer Handel, 2021). A comparison with the effects of current consumption behaviour also shows that, despite the widespread awareness of sustainable consumption among the German population, the per capita $CO_2$ footprint is still ten times the intended goal of less than a tonne.[52]

To explore the individual aspects of sustainable consumption in more detail, the survey asked respondents about their consumption behaviour over the past 12 months via 24 questions based on the cube model (for details see Tables 68 to 72 in the online Annex). The three aspects – sustainability dimension, consumption area and consumption phase – are each divided into subcategories, resulting in nine subscales. Each of the items is assigned to one of the subcategories of the three aspects (see Figure 31 and Table 69 in the online Annex). Scale indices were then calculated from the items assigned to the respective subcategory (for details of the scale characteristics, see Table 70 in the online Annex).[53]

It is important to note that consumption behaviour was recorded through self-assessment questions. The multi-dimensional nature of sustainable consumption as a construct makes it difficult to collect objective measured values for the various components and to avoid reducing sustainable consumption to the purchase of certain goods.[54]

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[51] The statement read: "In general, I pay attention to sustainability in my consumption behaviour." The scale ranged from 1 = "totally disagree" to 7 = "totally agree". For clarity, the scale values were grouped as follows: 5–7 = "(totally) agree", 4 = "neither agree nor disagree", 1–3 = "(totally) disagree".

[52] These results can only be used to a limited degree for context, however, because the $CO_2$ footprint is measured using different parameters than the ones used for sustainable consumption in the present cube model.

[53] The scale indices were calculated for each person using the mean values of the items assigned to each dimension. Only the items that were answered are included. The missing answers were not imputed.
One potential approach would be to longitudinally record all consumption choices in all consumption dimensions using a representative sample. The data collection would require significant financial resources, and the respondents would have to spend lots of time entering data. Data protection restrictions are an additional barrier.

### Consumption area: Sustainable consumption is most widespread for food and clothing.

As shown in Figure 32 (second diagram from top), people most often make sustainable consumption choices related to food ($MV_{food}$ = 4.7; example: "I buy ecologically sustainable food such as certified organic food products, fish products with the MSC label, and unpackaged or regional food products"). People consume just as sustainably in the area of clothing and textiles ($MV_{clothing}$ = 4.7; example: "I buy clothing from producers that guarantee decent working conditions in their manufacturing").

The few answers collected regarding financial products show that sustainable consumption is not as pronounced in the financial sector ($MV_{finance}$ = 3.3; example: "I buy ecologically sustainable financial services [e.g. ecologically sustainable investments in line with ESG criteria, account at a bank geared to sustainability]").[55]

To ensure that the answers remained comparable, the five items regarding financial products were omitted in the subsequent analyses. However, the German Sustainable Development Strategy lists sustainable finance as a decisive lever for fulfilling the 2030 Agenda – the topic is thus gaining importance (Bundesfinanzministerium, 2021). In recognition of these circumstances, Section 3.3.2 specifically deals with sustainable consumption in the financial sector.

### Consumption phase: Disposal is the phase in which the general public already acts most sustainably

There are also large differences between the various consumption phases (see Figure 32). People act most sustainably when it comes to disposal ($MV_{disposal}$ = 5.8; example: "I sort my waste, e.g. I separate my organic waste from my residual waste").

It is followed at a distance of over one scale point by purchase consideration (or decision against purchase) ($MV_{consideration/no\ purchase}$ = 4.6; example: "When shopping, I consider for the sake of sustainability whether I should even buy an item at all), followed by purchase and use ($MV_{purchase\ and\ use}$ = 4.3; example: "I buy sustainable products").

Items relating to consumption policy engagement had the lowest agreement level, including both organisation-based engagement and forms of political participation (Figure 32, lower diagram; $MV_{engagement}$ = 3.0; example: "I actively promote sustainable consumption"). Various factors may be behind this outcome. First, citizen engagement is generally not very pronounced (for example, due to limited free time). Consumption policy engagement is also a niche topic. In terms of the possible engagement fields mentioned in the German Survey on Volunteering, consumption policy engagement can be most easily assigned to the "politics and political lobbying" field. In the 2019 Survey on Volunteering, around 3 percent of respondents stated that they promote this topic within organisations or groups (Kausmann and Hagen, 2022, p. 101). Consumption policy engagement, in turn, is presumably even rarer. Second, consumption may be considered a private decision, making it unclear to many people that they can promote sustainable consumption and what options are available.

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[55]   For the finance area, the questionnaire explicitly states that only those who actually buy financial products should give answers. This ensures that the answers relate to the sustainability of the financial products and not to whether respondents buy financial products in general. In contrast to the other consumption areas, the latter is relevant for only a smaller segment of the population: approximately half the respondents gave answers for financial products.

**Figure 32**     **Sustainable consumption in the German population**
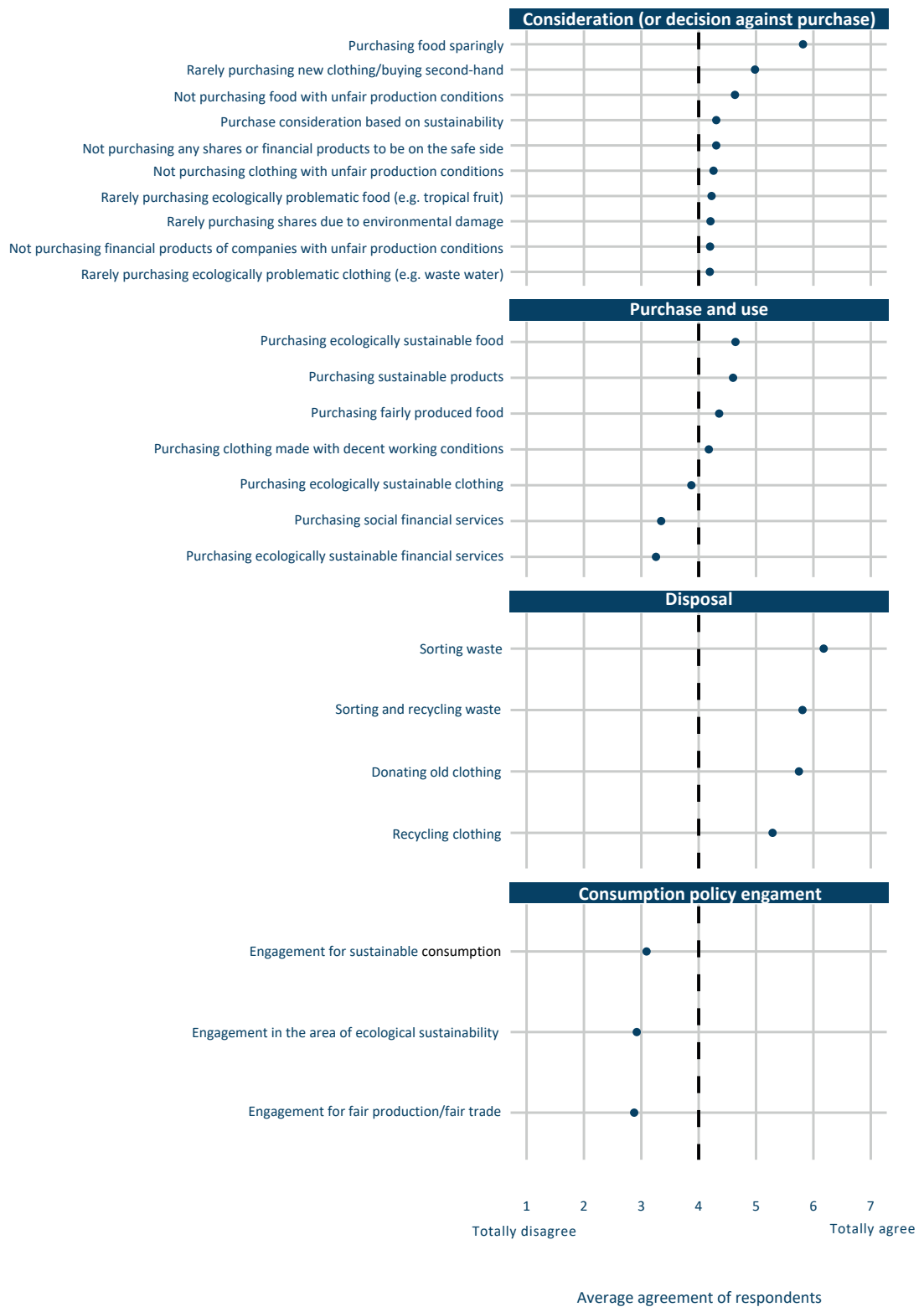


Source: DEval, own visualisation based on a survey conducted by Respondi in November 2021. N = 2,010. The exact wording of the questions can be found in Table 68 in the online Annex.

Examined as a whole, the data shows, for one thing, that people mainly practise sustainable consumption when buying food and clothing. For another, it is clear that people act especially sustainably in the low-threshold, low-cost phase of disposal. The following section examines the various consumption phases as potential points of reference for communication and education work relating to development policy. For the four consumption phases, indices will be formed based on several items assigned to the relevant phase. These indices will then be broken down according to the socio-demographic characteristics and political orientation of the respondents.[56]

**Older people and those with left-leaning political views are especially sustainability-conscious**

**Figure 33**        **Sustainable consumption according to consumption phase and age group**
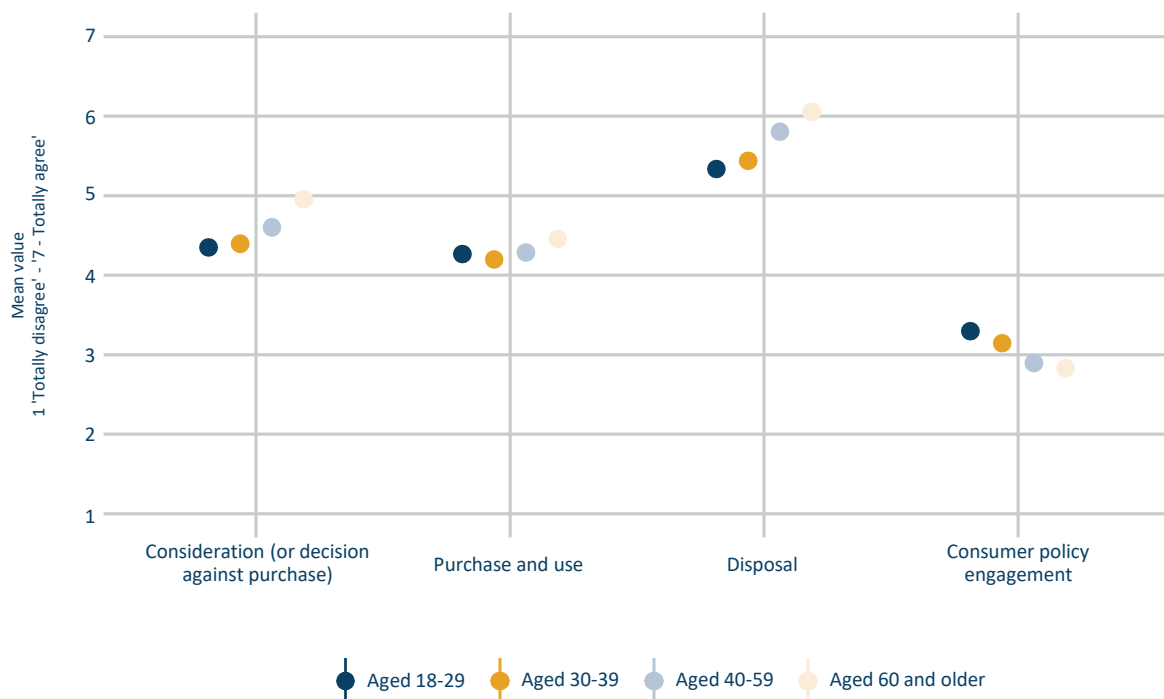


Source: DEval, own visualisation based on data collected by Respondi in November 2021, N = 2,010. Mean values with 95% confidence intervals are presented.

Figure 33 shows that people's consumption behaviour tends to become more sustainable as they get older. Only in the area of "consumption policy engagement" was the opposite trend found: The older the respondents, the less likely they were to be engaged on the topic. This corresponds with the findings on voluntary development engagement in Section 2: The younger age groups are more likely to be active in this area (see Figure 16).

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56    There are otherwise no significant differences between the ecological and socio-economic sustainability dimensions (MV = 4.2 vs. MV = 4.3). They are therefore not discussed in more detail. Only 16 of the 24 survey items could be clearly assigned to one of these two dimensions.

As for the political orientation, the same trend can be seen for all four consumption phases: The further right on the political spectrum a person identifies themselves, the less likely they are to consider sustainability in their consumption behaviour (see Figure 58 in the Annex). This trend is especially strong for the purchase phase and much weaker for the disposal phase.[57] This corresponds to findings on attitudes regarding climate protection, among others. This is another area where people who identify themselves as right-leaning are more sceptical (e.g. Jacquet et al., 2014; McCright et al., 2016).

Surprisingly, no significant difference in consumption behaviour was found across the various levels of income (see Figure 59 in the Annex) – although sustainable buying behaviour is associated with higher costs, and purchase considerations, for instance, could even lead people to save money. Overall, people in the group with the lowest income consistently reported that their consumption behaviour was no less sustainable than in the other groups, although one could presume that sustainable consumption would be a bigger hurdle for low-income segments of the population.

In addition to age and political orientation, education level (*high*) and gender (*female*) also correlate positively with sustainable consumption among the general public. The detailed breakdown of correlations between sustainable consumption and demographic variables is found in the online Annex (Table 87).

| Box 16 | Excursus on willingness to pay |
| --- | --- |

While this study finds that income has no influence on sustainable consumption among the general public, it is positively correlated with the subjective ability to pay. This means that the easier people feel it is for them to pay a higher price for sustainably produced products, the more sustainable their consumption will be ($p < 0.001$; see Table 87 in the online Annex).

To examine whether the willingness to pay for certain products was higher or lower than for others, the survey also asked how much more (as a percentage) people would be willing to pay for certain products and which differences there are in the categories "consumption area" and "sustainability dimension". The responses clearly showed that the general public would accept the highest price increase of 15 percent for fairly produced clothing and fairly produced food.[58] A similar willingness was found for ecological clothing (14%) and ecological food (13%). The general public is least willing to pay higher prices for fair financial services (6%) and ecological financial services (5%). The "pain threshold" for the most accepted products is therefore 15 percent – half the population would be willing to pay 15 percent more for these goods. However, it should be noted that there is a considerable variance in all areas. Parts of the population would pay significantly more, while others would only pay significantly less (see Figure 60 in the Annex).

### 3.3.2    How much potential is there to increase sustainable consumption?

Other studies have shown that financial resources are a significant factor for sustainable consumption (e.g. BMU and UBA, 2019). However, factors such as the availability and accessibility of corresponding products and services, the feeling of not being able to change anything (Holdsworth, 2003; Bibbings, 2004 quoted from Seyfang, 2009) or familiar lifestyles (Sanne, 2002) influence whether people behave according to their sustainability principles – especially when not only purchase decisions are examined, but also non-monetary aspects of sustainable consumption. All these factors can cause people's actual consumption to deviate from how they actually would like to consume.

The following section therefore represents the personally desired (ideal) behaviour of the individual respondents analogue to the self-reported behaviour presented in Section 3.3.1 (see Table 68 and 72 in the online Annex). This reveals in which of the specified areas citizens would like to consume more sustainably.

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[57] As in the other sections of this report, political orientation is measured using the conventional left-right scale with the end points "left" (scale value 0) and "right" (scale value 10). The scale is divided into five groups (see Vehrkamp and Merkel, 2019, p. 30–31 and Box 4): "left" (0–2), "centre-left" (3–4), "centre" (5), "centre-right" (6–7) and "right" (8–10).

[58] Because the mean value can be strongly influenced by outliers, the median value is used here. It divides the sample into two equal halves; 50 percent of the observations are lower than the median, and 50 percent are higher.

For each item, the discrepancy between the actual and ideal consumption is then calculated. This differentiation can help to gauge the potential of citizens for sustainable consumption in specific areas. It makes it easier to determine the areas at the interface of development policy and consumers where it could be especially worthwhile or promising for decision-makers to encourage more sustainable consumption through communication and education measures.

### *The general public shows a widespread desire to consume more sustainably*

In general, the survey found that 71 percent of respondents would like to consume more sustainably than is currently the case (see Section 3.3.1).[59]

For the deviation between respondents' actual consumption and their personal ideal consumption, the data shows an average difference of 0.8 scale points (minimum 0.2; maximum 1.3). On a scale of 1 = "totally disagree" to 7 = "totally agree", this difference is substantial. The items on consumption policy engagement and purchasing sustainable clothing show the largest discrepancy (see Figure 34). This means that many of the items with the largest discrepancy are directly linked to unfair and ecologically harmful production conditions in the countries of the Global South. One example is sustainable clothing production. Public awareness of this topic has increased in recent years due to media coverage of the conditions and catastrophes in Asian textile factories as well as initiatives such as the German law on supply chains and the "Green Button*"* textile label (Tagesschau, 2021; Tagesspiegel, 2018; ZEIT, 2021).

It is also noteworthy that citizens expressed a strong desire to make greater use of sustainable financial services, although this is otherwise a consumption area that many people do not associate with sustainability (see Section 3.3.1).

The lowest discrepancy between actual and ideal consumption is in the areas of "disposal" and "food".

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[59]  Here, too, the scale values were grouped for clarity as follows: 5–7 = "(totally) agree", 4 = "neither agree nor disagree", 1–3 = "(totally) disagree". The statement read: "In general, I would pay attention to sustainability in my consumption behaviour."

**Figure 34          Difference between actual and ideal (desired) consumption**



*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on data collected by Respondi in November 2021, N = 2,010. The dotted line shows the middle of the scale.*

**Young people with high incomes and left-leaning political views, in particular, would like to consume more sustainably**

Four of the statements with the largest discrepancy between actual and ideal behaviour were then selected for their special potential to expand DC-sensitive consumption:[60]

- Engagement for fair production (mean difference = 1.1)

- Purchasing ecologically sustainable clothing (mean difference = 1.0)

- Rarely purchasing ecologically problematic clothing (mean difference = 1.0)

- Purchasing ecologically sustainable financial services (mean difference = 0.9)

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60    For the exact wording of the questions, see Table 68 in the online Annex.

To determine more precisely which population groups would like to consume more sustainably, the responses to these statements were broken down again according to age group, income group and political orientation.
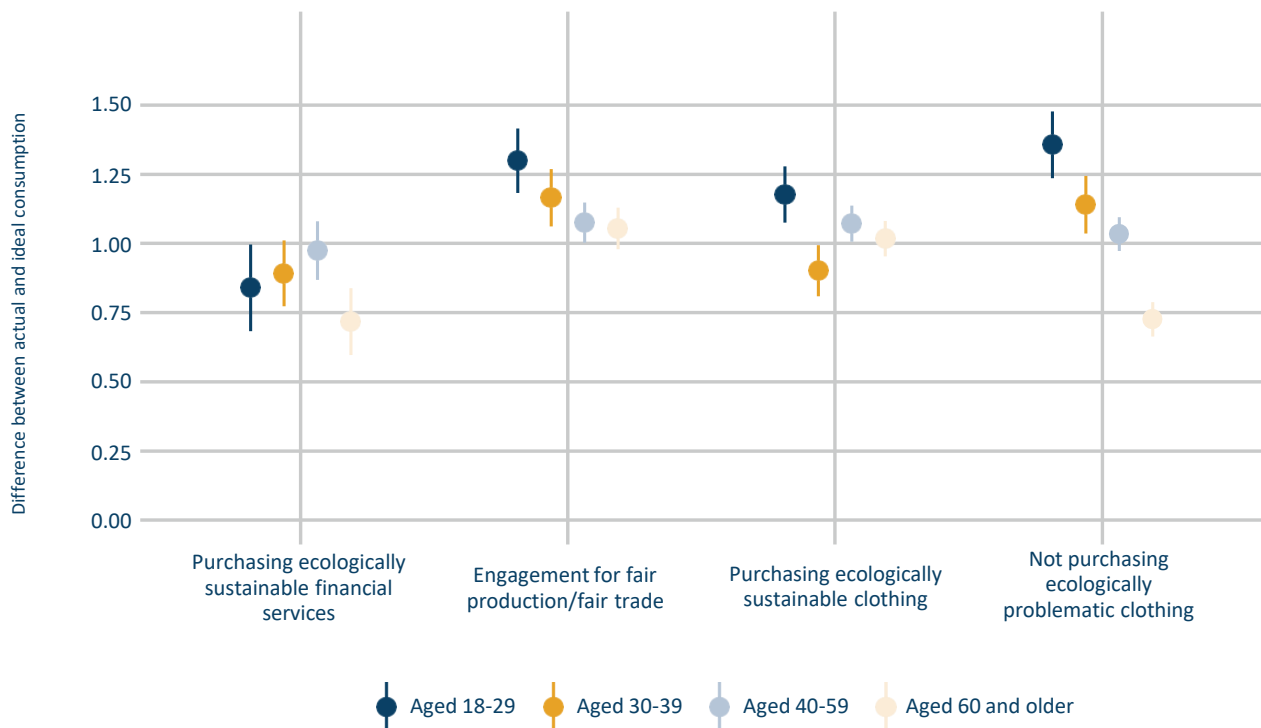
*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on data collected by Respondi in November 2021, N = 2,010. Mean values with 95% confidence intervals are presented.*

Figure 35 shows the differences according to **age group** in detail. The youngest group clearly shows the largest discrepancy for three of the four items – purchasing ecologically sustainable clothing, engagement for fair production and trade, and rarely purchasing ecologically problematic clothing. Only for purchasing ecologically sustainable financial services is this not the case. Even here, though, the three youngest age groups show a somewhat larger discrepancy between their actual and ideal consumption (MV = 0.8, 0.9 and 1.0) than the oldest age group (MV = 0.7). It must be noted that the three youngest age categories also already show the highest consumption level in this area (MV = 3.7; 3.5 and 3.1 vs. MV = 3.0 for the oldest group). That indicates that these age categories have a high potential for additional consumption despite their already high consumption level.

There is a similar dynamic, although with a larger overall discrepancy, for engagement for fair production. The two younger age groups (MV = 1.3 and 1.2) show a somewhat larger discrepancy than the two older groups (both MV = 1.1). In this area, too, the two younger groups are already more engaged (MV = 3.1 and 3.0) than the older groups (both MV = 2.8). These groups are thus not only already engaged in consumption policy, but would also like to increase their engagement (even further).

The connection is less clear for purchasing sustainable clothing. The youngest group does also show the largest discrepancy here (MV = 1.2), but the second-youngest group has the lowest discrepancy (MV = 0.9). The differences for the other age groups fall between those two values. However, actual consumption for the youngest group and the two middle groups lies between MV = 3.8 and 3.9, slightly lower than the oldest group's MV = 4.0. The younger groups thus consume slightly less sustainably in this area, but they have a slightly stronger desire to make more sustainable purchases.

The largest differences are in rarely purchasing ecologically problematic clothing. In this area, the difference between actual and ideal consumption for the youngest group is 1.4 scale points; for the oldest group, it is still 0.7 scale points. The other groups' values fall in between. Here, too, the trend in actual consumption is exactly reversed: the oldest group reports considering most intensely before buying ecologically problematic clothing (MV = 4.7), while the youngest group shows the least sustainable consumption in this area (MV = 3.7).

To summarise, the break-downs according to age group indicate that especially younger people have a desire be more active or engaged in purchasing ecologically sustainable clothing, in their own engagement for fair production and fair trade, and in rarely purchasing ecologically problematic clothing. When it comes to purchasing ecologically sustainable financial services, however, those *aged 40 to 59* show the largest discrepancy between their actual and ideal consumption behaviour. A high level of actual consumption or actual engagement is not necessarily accompanied by a high or low discrepancy value, though. Rather, the analysis finds that the youngest group is least active in rarely purchasing ecologically problematic clothing but that they have the greatest potential to make their consumption behaviour more sustainable. They are furthermore already very sustainable in their engagement for fair production and simultaneously have great potential in this area.

**Figure 36      Consumption potential according to item and political orientation**



*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on data collected by Respondi in November 2021, N = 2,010. Mean values with 95% confidence intervals are presented.*

The analysis according to **political orientation** (Figure 36) reveals, across all items, that respondents with left-leaning political views have not only the highest sustainable consumption level, but also a higher discrepancy to their ideal consumption. Put differently, their potential for sustainable consumption exceeds that of the other groups. The higher level of sustainable consumption among politically left-leaning individuals is already evident in aggregated form in the analyses of consumption phases (see Figure 58).

The larger discrepancy regarding engagement for fair production conditions on the left side of the political spectrum could be caused by a stronger desire for social justice (see, for example, Jost et al., 2009).

Conversely, the consistently smaller discrepancy among people who lean to the political right indicates that the desire for more sustainable consumption practices is not as pronounced in the specified areas. This corresponds to the previously mentioned correlation between political orientation and attitudes towards climate change (Jacquet et al., 2014; McCright et al., 2016) and to the political positions on climate change and sustainability voiced by the AfD, for example.[61]

**Figure 37    Consumption potential according to item and income**
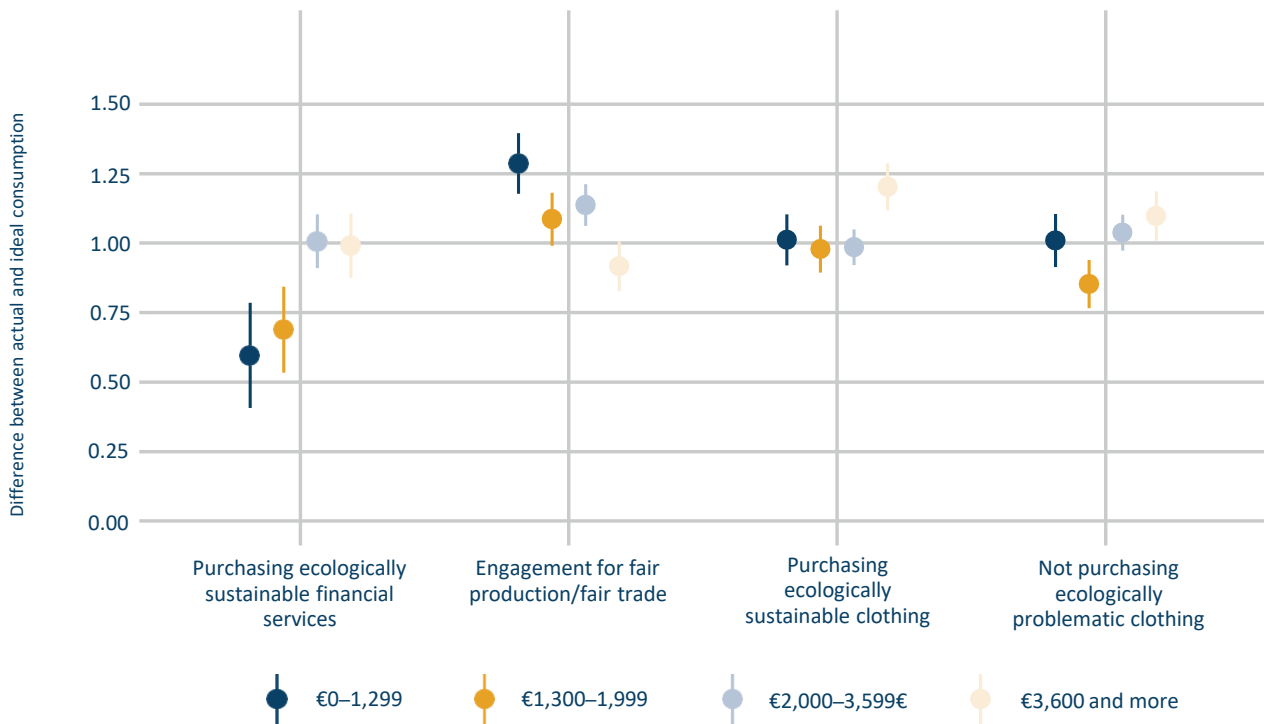


*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on data collected by Respondi in November 2021, N = 2,010. Mean values with 95% confidence intervals are presented.*

The breakdown according to **income** (Figure 37) shows that the highest income group has one of the largest discrepancies for the two purchase-related questions and the question on purchase considerations. This is especially relevant because this group's actual consumption is not notably different from that of the other groups (purchasing ecologically sustainable clothing: MV = 3.8 vs. 4.0 for the lowest income group), or the value for this group is even on the lower side (rarely purchasing ecologically harmful clothing: MV = 4.1 vs. 4.3 for the lowest income group). Combined with the fact that this group has the highest level of resource consumption (German Federal Environment Agency, 2021), this points to a high potential for savings and increased sustainability.

When it comes to engagement for fair production/fair trade, however, the opposite trend appears. The lowest income group shows the largest discrepancy here with a mean value of 1.3, while the highest income group has a mean value of 0.9. This is particularly interesting, since the actual engagement for fair production/fair trade among the lowest income (MV = 2.9) and the highest income (MV = 3.0) groups are extremely close. Overall, these results suggest that the respondents' answers take into account what they

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61    As previously mentioned in this report, the AfD calls for Germany to, among other things, withdraw from the 2030 Agenda (Bundestag 2019) and to specifically disregard the goals of the Climate Action Plan 2050 and the Paris Agreement (Alternative für Deutschland, 2021).

each consider to be possible for them personally. Higher-income individuals admit that they could make more sustainable purchases; lower-income individuals state that they could engage more in consumption policy discussions, which does not necessarily involve an immediate financial expense.

### 3.3.3 What connection does the general public see between sustainable consumption and sustainable development?

To understand the role that awareness of challenges in development policy plays in sustainable consumption among the general public, we will now examine the perceived connection between sustainable consumption and sustainable development. This aspect helps development policy actors identify points of reference for their own communication and education work, such as for making development policy more of a topic in people's daily lives.

**The general public sees some connections between sustainable consumption and living conditions in the Global South**

In people's day-to-day awareness, sustainable consumption seems to be limited to their immediate environment. However, participants in the focus group discussions also made spontaneous associations when the topic of development policy was mentioned. Particularly in the low-income group, the topic triggers a strong feeling of guilt for contributing to the negative impacts of current economic structures as consumers.[62]

> *"Of course, you know that Coca-Cola, for example, taps into wells somewhere and leaves the people in the region without water, that's why I don't drink any Coca-Cola and don't want to have anything to do with it."*

The participants also mentioned that products in modern, industrialised countries are consumed at the expense of nature in the countries of the Global South (rain forest deforestation, water scarcity, insecticides). In this context, they explicitly pointed to Germany's law on supply chains as an instrument for accountability and increasing the transparency of economic, social and ecological conditions in production and trade. The disadvantages of economic dependency were also discussed. In particular, participants criticised the outsourcing of production from western industrialised countries to countries of the Global South (with the bad conditions prevalent there) as the West simultaneously continues to flood those markets with mass-produced goods such as food (powdered milk, chicken meat) and second-hand products (clothing, cars).

> *"But we definitely have a big problem. With all the EU subsidies for agriculture, which account for one third, I think, of the entire EU budget, we're actually destroying the African economy (…)."*

Overall, this shows that associations between sustainable consumption and the countries of the Global South are sometimes made spontaneously and that, at the latest when asked specifically, people express having knowledge and moral concerns about consumption-induced problems in the Global South. It was not possible to conclusively determine in the discussion whether these issues are also associated with sustainable consumption. Some participants expressed solidarity, while many appeared to be overwhelmed or feel helpless due to the complexity of the topic.

Analyses based on the survey data, however, indicate a positive correlation between attitudes towards development cooperation and sustainable consumption. Specifically, sustainable consumption appears to be more pronounced the more concerned citizens are about poverty in the Global South. The same pattern can also be observed in public endorsement of government financial support for development cooperation ($p < 0.001$; see Table 88 in the online Annex). This indicates that respondents with positive attitudes towards

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[62]  The wording of the statements has been slightly adjusted without changing the content of the statements. This also applies to the following quotes from the focus group discussions.

development cooperation also practise sustainable consumption. The data available in this study is not sufficient to determine whether or not this is a causal relationship – meaning whether the respondents also consume sustainably because they support development cooperation.

### 3.3.4 Which influencing psychological factors can explain sustainable consumption behaviour?

To understand individual influencing factors for sustainable consumption in the next step, with the aim of developing and implementing communication and education measures, this section takes a more in-depth look at the psychological constructs relevant for consumption behaviour. The *Theory of Planned Behaviour* (TPB), as a guiding framework, has been adjusted to the questions examined here (Ajzen, 1992). The TPB identifies three central determinants of human behaviour: the individual attitude towards the behaviour, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control (see Figure 38). It is based on the following assumptions:

1. Attitudes describe how individuals assess behaviour. More positive attitudes increase the likelihood that people will carry out the associated activities.

2. Subjective norms, meaning social influences on the individual, are formed by perceived judgements and expectations of family, friends, colleagues and larger social groups, but also of experts. A person is more likely to exhibit a certain behaviour if it complies with the perceived subjective norm.

3. The perceived behavioural control describes a person's belief in their own potential to successfully engage in a behaviour. An intervention can increase behavioural control by lowering psychological or physical barriers to a behaviour or by encouraging individual skills.

4. In addition to behavioural control, the study also gauged self-efficacy in relation to sustainable consumption. Self-efficacy refers to a person's belief in their ability to affect change with their own behaviour. In the focus group discussions, a lack of self-efficacy proved to be a fundamental obstacle to sustainable consumption (see Box 17).

5. Political frameworks are also a factor in sustainable consumption behaviour (see Box 14). This makes political self-efficacy particularly relevant, so it was recorded as an additional parameter. Political self-efficacy describes a person's faith in their ability to understand political processes and influence them through individual political engagement.

The TPB enables development policy stakeholders to develop their interventions according to proven behavioural science. It has empirically proven its worth for efficiently and effectively adjusting interventions (Kaplan et al., 2020; World Bank, 2015).

**Figure 38** **Model of the Theory of Planned Behaviour**
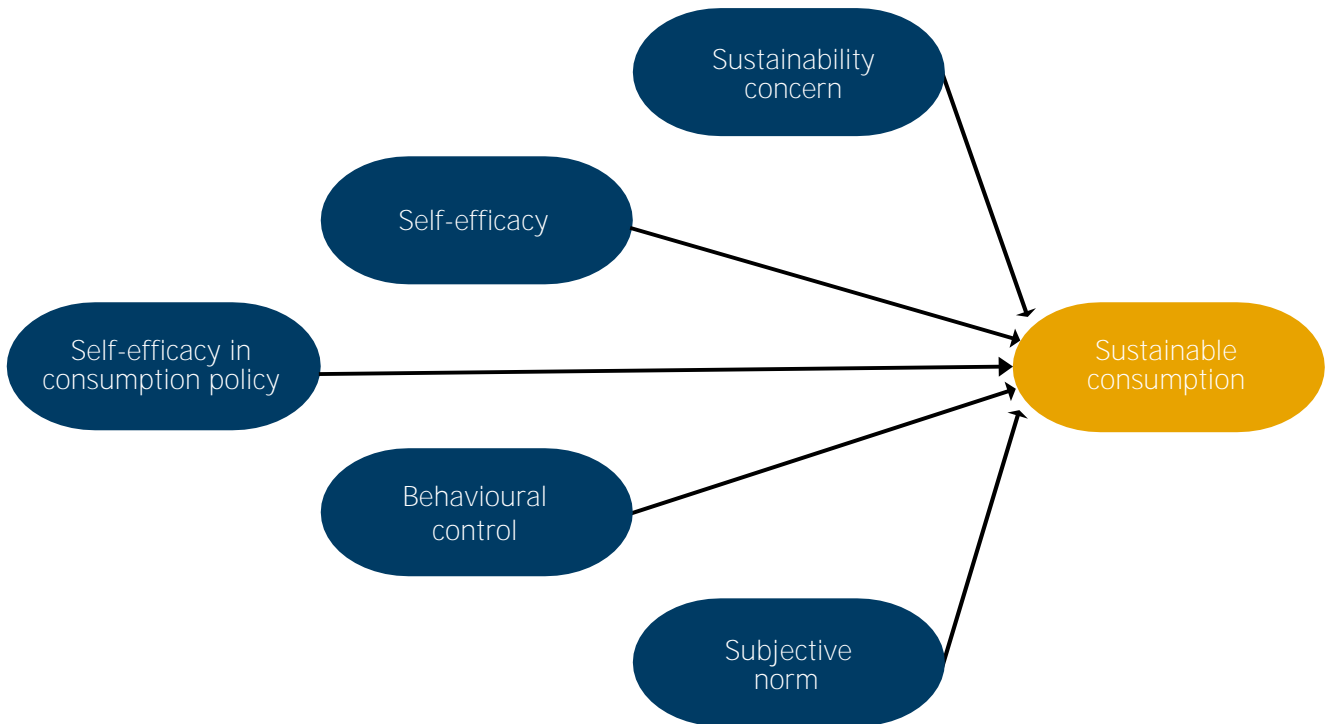


*Source: DEval, own visualisation.*

**There is widespread awareness of sustainable development**

The collected data reveals that the respondents generally have a strong awareness of sustainable development or that they are aware of the negative impact of non-sustainable consumption.[63] The overall mean value for this area is 5.1. As illustrated in Figure 39, the respondents agreed most with the statement that politicians do too little for sustainable development (MV = 5.6, on a scale of 1 = "totally disagree" to 7 = "totally agree"). One noteworthy finding is that the statement on acceptance of personal restrictions for the sake of sustainability also had a high level of agreement (MV = 5.0). Another crucial finding with development policy implications is that the general public is quite aware of the links between consumption in Germany and the associated consequences for the environment and people in other countries (MV = 5.3) and are quite concerned about the living conditions of people in the Global South (MV = 5.3).

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[63] These attitudes were measured using a validated scale of awareness of sustainable development. This is based on an environmental awareness scale used as an explanatory variable for various eco-relevant behaviour patterns (for a summary, see Diekmann and Preisendörfer, 2001).

**Figure 39**        **Concern about sustainable development**
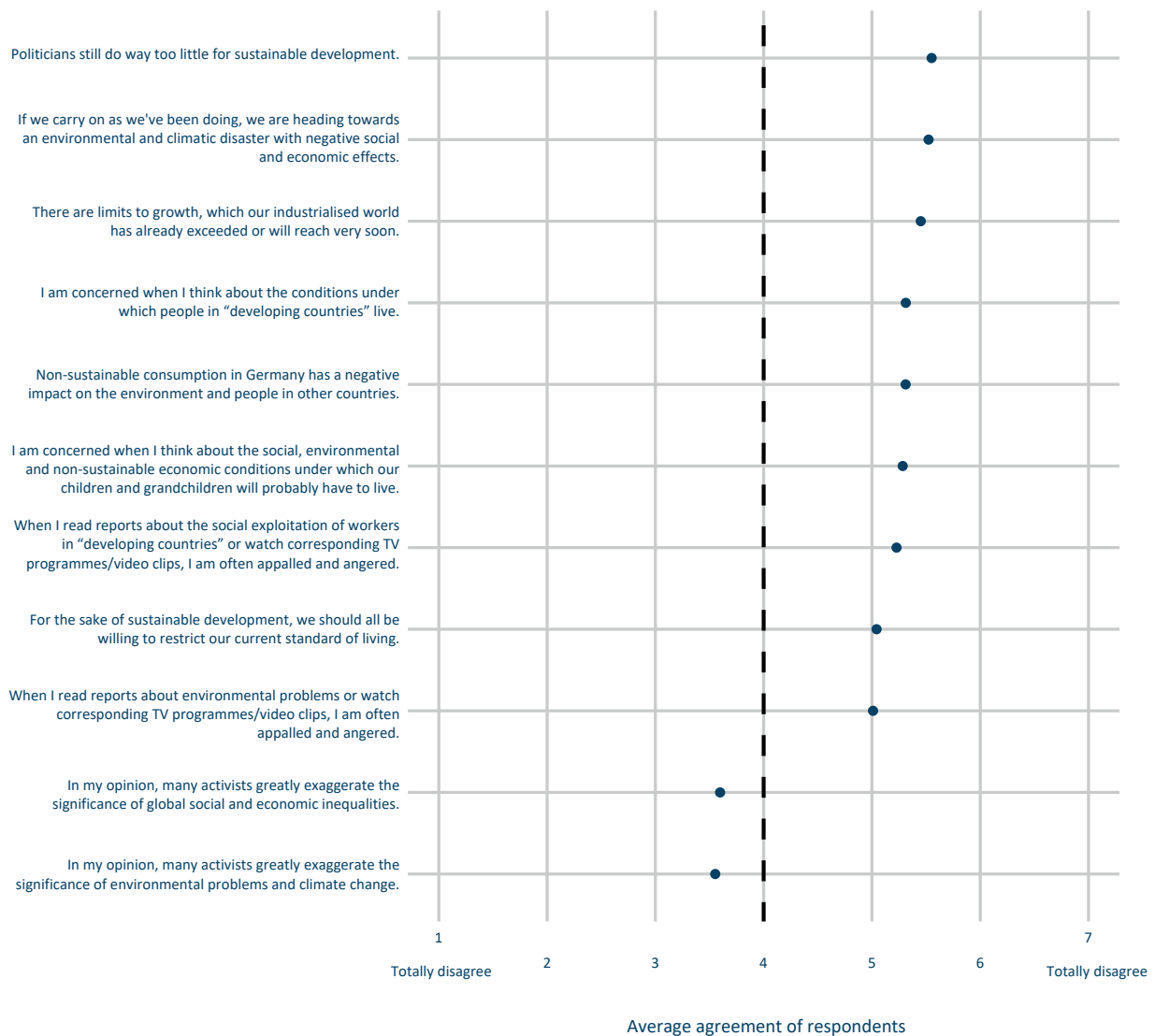


*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on data collected by Respondi in November 2021. N = 2,010. When creating the index, the last two items of the answer scale are switched, or recoded, because of the information they contain.*

## Subjective norms of sustainable consumption are hardly developed

The results show that people generally perceive no strong subjective norm (MV = 3.5, scale from 1 to 7; example item: "My household/family members think that I should consume sustainably; see Table 73 in the online Annex). [64] This is notable in light of discussions surrounding the alleged denunciation or degradation of non-sustainable behaviour (e.g. "flight shame", portrayal of the Greens as a "prohibition party", scandal regarding vegetarian food in German government canteens). It poses the question of whether this is due to people strongly differentiating between "the general public" and "friends and family" or whether the answers for the subjective norm more strongly reflect the desired norm.

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[64]    The validated scale for measuring subjective norms was modified for sustainable consumption (Paul et al., 2016; Thøgersen and Ölander, 2002). The four items were calculated into an index for the further analyses (Cronbach's alpha 0.88).

**The perceived level of behavioural control is relatively low**

<span style="color:orange">**Figure 40**</span>    <span style="color:orange">**Behavioural control**</span>
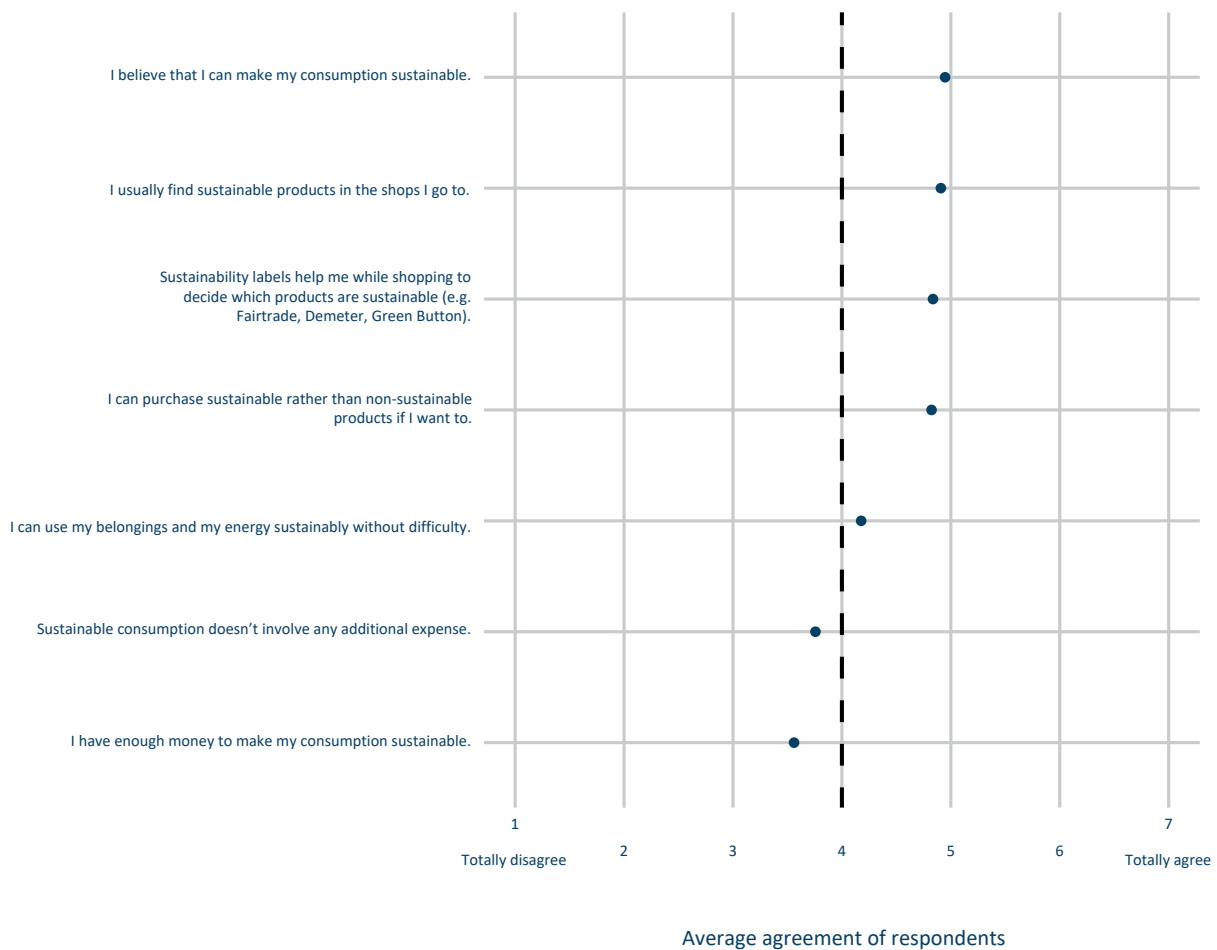


Average agreement of respondents

*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on data collected by Respondi in November 2021. N = 2,010.*

Overall, the analysis shows a relatively low perceived level of behavioural control (MV = 4.4, scale from 1 to 7; see Table 74 in the online Annex). There are interesting differences in how people answered the items within the scale. As Figure 40 clearly shows, people see their own financial resources and limited time as the biggest challenges for behavioural control. The availability of sustainable products and product labels is seen as a positive factor.

**Self-efficacy is estimated to be rather low**

Citizens also perceive themselves as having a relatively low level of self-efficacy (MV = 4.3, scale from 1 to 7; see Table 75 in the online Annex). This is consistent with findings indicating a low level of public self-efficacy regarding development policy (see Section 2.5.1).

Self-efficacy in consumption policy (scale from Beierlein et al. (2014), adjusted to sustainable consumption) is perceived to be significantly lower than general self-efficacy (MV = 3.4; see Table 76 in the online Annex). This is mainly due to the very low rating of items pertaining to the efforts and initiatives of individual politicians for sustainable consumption (both MV = 2.7; see Figure 41).

**Figure 41          Self-efficacy in consumption policy**
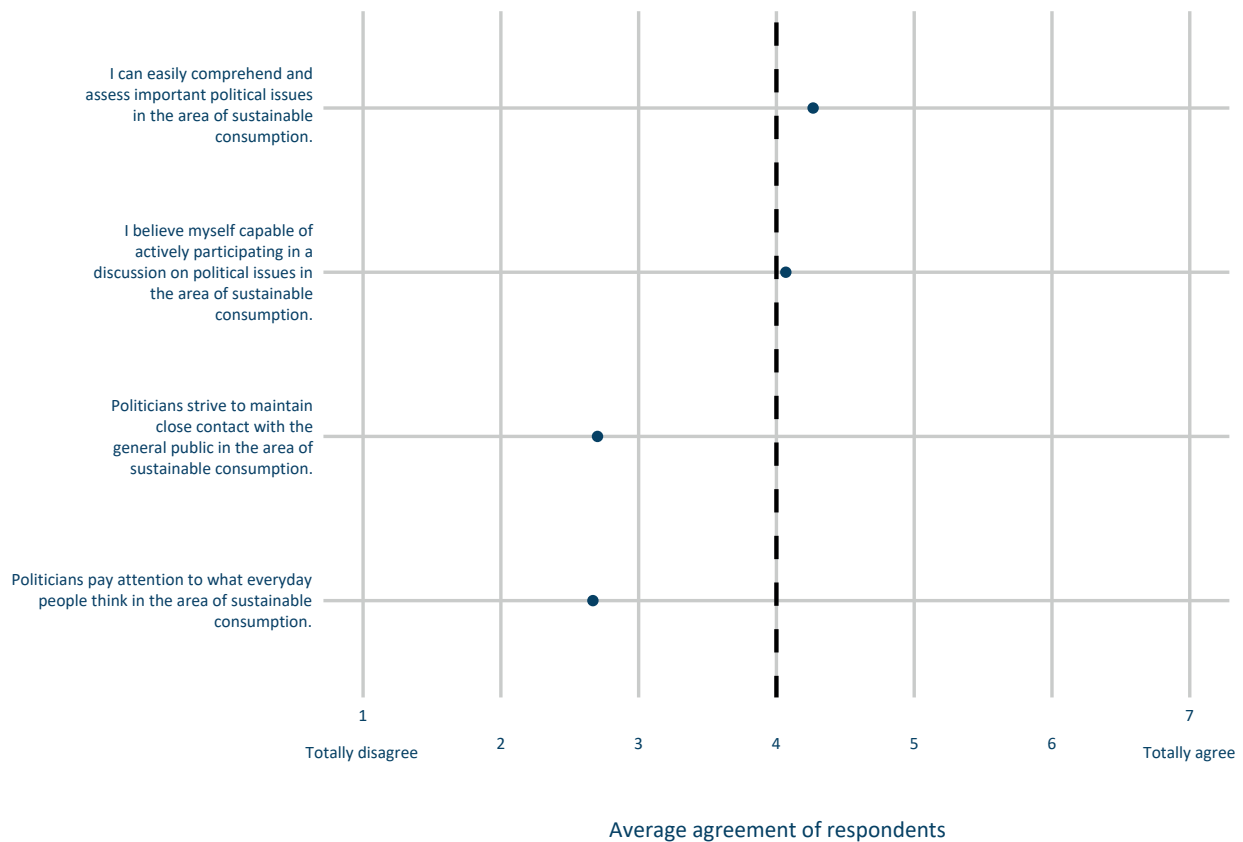


Average agreement of respondents

*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on data collected by Respondi in November 2021. N = 2,010.*

**The Theory of Planned Behaviour proves to be a powerful tool for explanation: All psychological influencing factors are relevant for sustainable consumption.**

To understand how the various factors influence sustainable consumption behaviour, the influencing factors of the TPB must be analysed together.[65] This was carried out via multiple regression. The potential influencing factors were added in blocks.[66] This showed that all five components – both individually and across the other respective variables – show a significantly positive correlation with the self-reported sustainable consumption behaviour (all coefficients $p < 0.01$; Table 89 in the online Annex). The correlations remain significantly positive even when the control variables (gender, age, income, political orientation and education level) are added. All influencing factors are thus relevant for sustainable consumption: The more pronounced the respective factor, the more pronounced the self-reported sustainable consumption will be. The model is therefore far more effective as an analytical tool here compared to the socio-demographic information ($R^2 = 0.57$ vs. $R^2 = 0.07$; Table 90 in the online Annex).[67]

[65]   This involved creating scale indices for all previously mentioned potential influencing factors. Two items were recoded for the "sustainability awareness" scale index to ensure that high values always stand for a high sustainability awareness. Internal consistency of the scales (Cronbach's alpha): sustainability awareness = 0.9; subjective norms = 0.9; behavioural control = 0.9; self-efficacy = 0.9; political self-efficacy = 0.8.

[66]   It must be noted here that this is an examination based on cross-sectional data. Although the analysis is based on a causal logic, the data cannot prove any causal relationship. The coefficients only indicate relationships between the characteristics and the reported consumption behaviour. They do not, however, indicate the effect of a characteristic being specifically manipulated, as would be shown in an experiment.

[67]   $R^2$ is a measure for linear regression models. It indicates how suitable the independent variables are for explaining the variance of the dependent variables. $R^2$ always falls between 0 and 1 and can also be interpreted as a percentage of the explained variance. This report uses a corrected $R^2$ that takes into account the number of dependent variables involved – more variables can ultimately lead to a higher $R^2$ without more variance being explained (Backhaus et al., 2018, p. 77–79).

Figure 42 depicts the relationships specifically for the various consumption phases. The analysis initially shows many similarities that point to general starting points for promoting sustainable consumption: Attitudes (sustainability concern) and behavioural control have a positive correlation with all four consumption phases. In addition to attitudes and behavioural control, the phases of purchase consideration, purchase, use and engagement also correlate positively with (consumption policy) self-efficacy and subjective norms. Attitude and perceived behavioural control show the largest influence on purchase consideration, purchase, use and disposal (see regression coefficients). In contrast, the most important influencing factors for consumption policy engagement are consumption policy self-efficacy, behavioural control and the subjective norm.

Overall, the results suggest that the general public's attitudes and perceived behavioural control are the most important influencing factors for sustainable consumption. It will thus be encouraging for sustainability policy advocates to see that attitudes are already on the positive side (MV = 5.1). The relatively low values for the other factors may represent a challenge, though. The subjective norm (MV = 3.5) and consumption policy self-efficacy (MV = 3.4), in particular, are not very pronounced. All four influencing factors could therefore represent critical hurdles to increasing sustainable consumption. At the same time, perceived behavioural control has the largest influence on sustainable consumption, and (consumption policy) self-efficacy was discussed particularly thoroughly in the focus groups. It thus makes sense for measures to focus on these aspects.

**Figure 42**   **Influence of TPB characteristics on sustainable consumption:**



1) Consideration (or decision against purchase)

| | |
|---|---|
| Attitude | 0.32 *** |
| Self-efficacy | 0.06 ** |
| Political self-efficacy | 0.08 *** |
| Behavioural control | 0.28 *** |
| Subjektive Norm | 0.10 *** |

2) Purchase and use

| | |
|---|---|
| Attitude | 0.34 *** |
| Self-efficacy | 0.09 *** |
| Political self-efficacy | 0.10 *** |
| Behavioural control | 0.33 *** |
| Subjective norm | 0.17 *** |

3) Disposal

| | |
|---|---|
| Attitude | 0.29 *** |
| Self-efficacy | 0.03 |
| Political self-efficacy | -0.02 |
| Behavioural control | 0.20 *** |
| Subjective norm | 0.01 |

Regression coefficients

4) Consumption policy engagement

| | |
|---|---|
| Attitude | 0.08 ** |
| Self-efficacy | 0.09 *** |
| Political self-efficacy | 0.28 *** |
| Behavioural control | 0.25 *** |
| Subjective norm | 0.20 *** |

Regression coefficients

*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on data collected by Respondi in November 2021. N = 2,010. Multiple OLS regression. Unstandardised regression coefficients. Control variables: age, income, political orientation, gender, education level; control variables not shown; adj. $R^2$ respectively from 1) to 4): 0.56, 0.48, 0.31 and 0.35. *** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$. Positive coefficients mean that the respective consumption phase is the more pronounced the higher the value for the respective influencing factor. Negative coefficients mean that the respective consumption phase is the less pronounced the higher the value for the respective influencing factor (see also "Statistical significance" in the Glossary).*

### 3.3.5    Which role does the general public ascribe to various social actors in terms of promoting sustainable consumption?

In addition to individual influencing factors, the general public's expectations of other social actors are also relevant for their personal sustainable consumption. The potential of various actors to exert influence in the fight against poverty in the Global South has already been discussed in Section 2.5. This analysis showed that the potential influence of individuals was estimated to be very low in comparison to that of other actors. At the same time, research findings suggest that sustainable consumption is perceived as one area in which individuals can have a large impact in comparison to other sustainable development goals (see introduction, Chapter 2; Schneider and Gleser, 2018, Chapter 6). Box 14 already mentioned the dilemma that influence on global sustainable production and consumption patterns is limited, as they are largely determined by policy-makers and companies. For example, the state can actively shape production and consumption through regulation and subsidies. This raises the question of whether citizens perceive this interaction between policy and business, or between production and consumption, and the associated impact on their own consumption behaviour. To which actors do citizens ascribe potential to effectively promote sustainable consumption, who do they trust to do this, and is sustainable consumption really seen as an area where individuals can make a large impact?

**Self-efficacy as a potential hurdle for sustainable consumption**

Many participants in focus group discussions see policy-makers and the private sector as responsible for promoting sustainable consumption. At the same time, they do not trust some political actors to be able or willing to assert influence on the private sector. This is associated with a more or less pronounced scepticism towards capitalism (see Section 3.3.3).

> *"I don't know if politicians have that much power. I think business comes before politics.*
> *And as long as we have this line of thinking – turbo-capitalism, always bigger, always*
> *more, we have to turn a profit next year – then (…) nothing will change about that (…)."*

People have very different opinions on whether the actions of individuals can realistically reduce the negative impacts of producing and consuming goods (see Box 17).

| **Box 17**    **Self-efficacy as an important influencing factor in focus groups** |
| --- |
| One reason that people doubt their own self-efficacy is that they see sustainable consumption and its potential impacts as complex and lacking transparency.<br><br>*"Yes, (…) but when I look at the reality, I quickly get fatalistic (…), because then I feel this helplessness again. And if you think on a small scale, like 'I'll buy second-hand clothes now' or 'I'll buy Demeter products at Bio-Company now' just to have a good conscience. Then it's difficult and complex to handle."*<br><br>Some participants vehemently criticised the economic and political framework of their consumption. They feel a certain powerlessness against global companies and doubt that sustainable consumption can still fend off ecological collapse on earth in time.<br><br>*"It's therefore highly complex because, in the end, the 'third world' is the motor of capitalism. Without the 'third world', without the exploitation, we cannot continue consuming at the level we currently maintain in industrialised countries (…)."*<br><br>This social criticism leads people to strongly doubt the effectiveness of their own contributions towards sustainable development.<br><br>*"I can't recall the exact number, but it was something like: companies are responsible for 60 percent of environmental problems. So how much can we do to change things if the business people, the corporations, are actually responsible?"*<br><br>Other participants expressed motivation to consume sustainably and saw options for acting to influence societal conditions. These participants were driven by a strong feeling of self-efficacy. When asked directly, |

they see their own actions as having the potential to positively impact the Global South, such as through targeted consumption behaviour, resource-efficient consumption, boycotts and political engagement for sustainable DC. In this context, people often expressed the opinion that positive examples have an impact. Individual participants also said that political activity has the potential to affect change (e.g. voting, protests with a letter template from Foodwatch).

> *"And I also think (…), you live by example, you talk to friends about it, teach your children about it and hope that it clicks for someone every once in a while. And there should really be increased public awareness, spread by policy-makers and other associations and so on."*

The positions of the two factions grew a little closer over the course of the discussions.

**Individuals and the private sector are seen as having the greatest potential to affect change**

The survey systematically recorded levels of attributed potential to affect change and levels of trust in various actors to promote sustainable consumption.[68]

**Figure 43        The role of social actors for sustainable consumption**
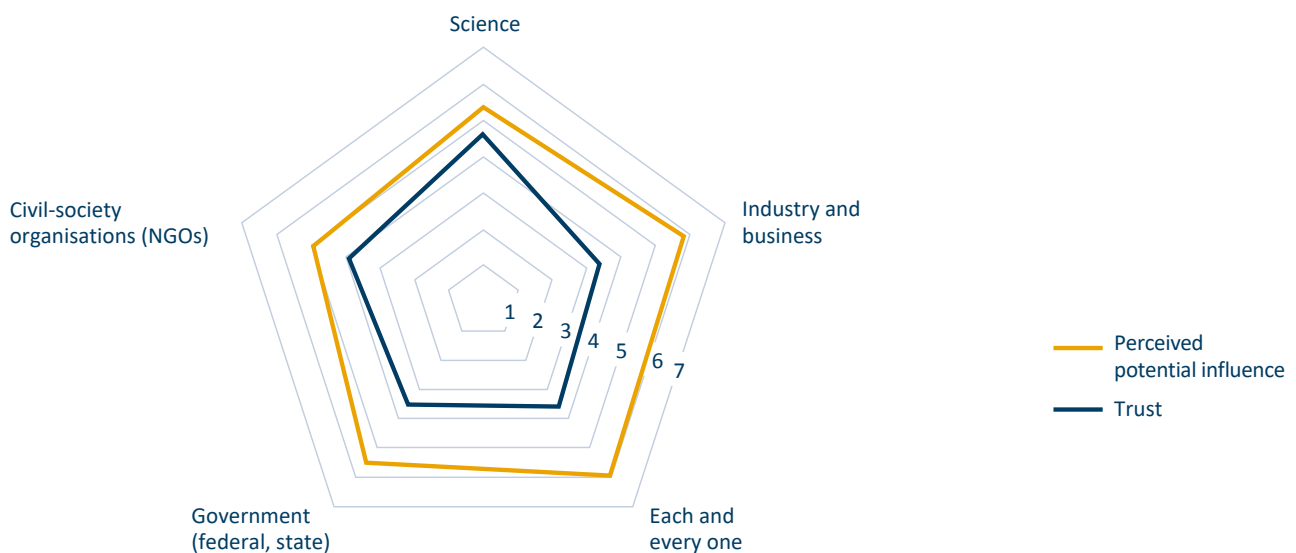


*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on data collected by Respondi in November 2021. N = 2,010. Mean value of the scale from 1 = "Do not agree at all" to 7 = "Completely agree"; actor "EU" not represented.*

Figure 43 shows that the general public sees the private sector, the government and individual people as having many options for exerting influence, while there is simultaneously little trust in these actors to actually promote sustainable consumption. There is more trust in science and civil-society actors, but less ascribed potential to exert influence, particularly for the latter. It is striking that private individuals are ascribed just as much potential to exert influence as the private sector, and more than the other three actors.

This is also a notable difference to the very low perceived potential influence ascribed to individuals regarding the fight against global poverty (see Section 2.5).[69] Sustainable consumption is therefore one global challenge in which the general public sees more opportunities to exert influence than in the overarching field of the fight against poverty. These results underscore the challenge that became clear in the focus group

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68    The following question was also asked: "In your opinion, who should contribute towards making consumption more sustainable?" The results largely correspond to those for "perceived potential to affect change" and are not additionally listed here for the sake of clarity. The specific wording of the items can be found in Table 68 and Tables 78–80 in the online Annex.

69    It differs slightly, since the question was adjusted for the specific context of sustainable consumption.

discussions: the lack of trust in political and social actors – but also in private individuals – to actually contribute to sustainable consumption. This could also explain why the high perceived potential influence of individuals is not reflected in high estimations of self-efficacy: people have a critical view of the extent to which the individual, within a constellation of dependencies, can actually consume sustainably on a personal level and of what contribution an individual person can really make through sustainable consumption.

### 3.3.6     Which consumption policy demands does the general public support?

The perceived role of various social actors ultimately poses the question of how the general public views specific consumption policy requirements. As previously shown, the direct individual influence of single actors is limited (see Box 14), which is why the significance of structural measures enacted by political actors should not be neglected. Although the general public ascribes high potential influence to individual persons, as was determined in Section 3.3.5, there is also a high level of support for consumption policy requirements (see Figure 44). There is thus no contradiction in allocating responsibility to both individuals and superordinate actors (see also Hellbrück and Kals, 2012).

**The population especially supports consumption policy requirements that place obligations on companies and political actors.**

The requirements for companies in particular ("obligation to pay living wages and responsibility for human rights violations along the supply chain") are each supported by almost three quarters of respondents (Figure 44). Fiscal policy regulations, such as tax laws promoting sustainable consumption, also enjoy a high level of support (78%). In turn, a majority of respondents do not share the impression that Germany already does enough for sustainable development or that sustainable development measures are not relevant (at most 27% agreement). One striking finding is that the level of agreement for the item demonstrating consequences for the respondents themselves (higher prices) is significantly lower than for the items emphasising the obligations of other actors. Even here, however, the level of agreement is almost 50 percent.

**Figure 44**       **Agreement with consumption policy requirements**



| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Companies should be compelled to pay living wages everywhere. | 79.4 | 9.6 | 6.9 | 4.1 |
| Tax law (e.g. lower VAT on sustainable products) should be used to promote sustainable consumption. | 72.7 | 10.3 | 10.0 | 7.0 |
| Companies should be held responsible for any violations to human rights along their supply chains (e.g. supply chain law). | 71.4 | 12.5 | 9.6 | 6.5 |
| True prices should be introduced based on the environmentally damaging effects of production, even if that might make the products more expensive. | 47.7 | 20.1 | 23.0 | 9.1 |
| Germany's current contribution to sustainable development is completely sufficient. In my opinion, it doesn't need to be increased. | 24.1 | 15.5 | 50.9 | 9.5 |
| Compared to other measures in politics, the promotion of sustainable development is not important. | 20.2 | 14.3 | 57.1 | 8.4 |

Percentage of respondents

■ (Largely) agree   ■ Centre   ■ (Largely) disagree   □ Don't know

*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on data collected by Respondi in November 2021. N = 2,010.*

### 3.3.7   Summary

The general public views sustainable consumption as a multifaceted topic and already practise it in many areas – most often when buying food products and disposing of products. Moreover, the data reveals potential for the respondents to further increase their sustainable consumption – especially regarding clothing. Above all, the textile industry has relevant points of reference for development policy actors to make DC tangible in people's everyday lives and raise public awareness of development policy topics. Examples include working conditions or environmental protection in the countries of the Global South where clothing is produced for industrialised countries.

Older people and those with left-leaning political views already consume more sustainably than younger people and those with right-leaning political views. The group with the greatest potential for even more sustainable consumption are young people, those with high incomes and those with left-leaning political views. Because both younger people and those on the left side of the political spectrum generally have more positive attitudes towards development policy (see Section 2.1), these groups may be particularly receptive to linking sustainable consumption and development policy issues.

Moreover, the general public is convinced that sustainable consumption can help to master challenges in development policy. However, the connection between sustainable consumption and DC is more likely to be recognised when the topic is raised externally, such as the corresponding questions in the focus group discussions.

In addition to a strong concern about sustainability, perceived behavioural control is the most important individual factor for sustainable consumption among the general public. However, self-efficacy (in consumption policy) and subjective norms are also relevant. The low perceived level of behavioural control and self-efficacy (in consumption policy) thus present a challenge here.

The focus group discussions suggest that a certain amount of disenchantment with politics and a feeling of powerlessness could be responsible for the lack of perceived self-efficacy. This is also evidenced by the fact that although citizens see individuals and business as having similarly great potential to exert influence (and more than the government), they simultaneously have little faith in any of the three actors making use of this potential. The assessment is therefore that these actors may be able contribute to sustainable consumption, but that they are unlikely to do so.

Compared to the perceived potential influence on the fight against poverty (see Section 2), individual influence on sustainable consumption is seen as greater. This is consistent with the findings of the Opinion Monitor for Development Policy 2018 (Schneider and Gleser, 2018, Section 6), which showed that the general public sees individuals as having greater potential influence on consumption-related SDGs (SDGs 7, 12, 13, 14, 15) than on other SDGs. Demonstrating ways of experiencing self-efficacy could therefore be one approach for getting people motivated to consume sustainably.

In turn, raising awareness of sustainable consumption could provide a gateway for the general public to engage with development policy. This involves a balancing act between demonstrating individual options for taking action – especially as an everyday reference point for development policy influence, as well – and simultaneously giving a realistic assessment of the responsibility and potential influence for other actors to avoid making people feel overwhelmed. An important approach to win people over for sustainable consumption could be not only to show them how they can change something through their individual behaviour, but also to share opportunities for exerting political influence.

After all, the broad support for consumption policy requirements shows that there is a strong mandate for political actors to advance sustainable development in a binding manner. The population especially supports requirements that place obligations on companies and political actors. For development policy actors, this means that they can also rely on strong support for their efforts related to sustainable consumption (see, for example, German supply chain law).

## 3.4 Connections between various engagement forms

| Box 18 | Key findings: Connections between various engagement forms |
|---|---|

- The general public can be grouped into five development engagement types: 1) *totally disengaged* (22%), 2) *marginally engaged* (44%), 3) *informationally engaged* (22%), 4) *behaviourally engaged* (9%) and 5) *fully engaged* (3%; data from the AAT panel in July 2018).

- All ten AAT survey waves found that 80 percent of the German population engages only marginally or not at all with development policy.

- The intensively engaged engagement types of *behaviourally* and *fully engaged* individuals perceive themselves as having a significantly higher self-efficacy in development policy than the other three engagement types.

- At an aggregated level, the shares of engagement types are relatively stable over time; at an individual level, the respondents also move between engagement types.

- The *totally disengaged* and *marginally engaged* will in all likelihood not change their engagement type. The more engaged engagement types will broaden or reduce their engagement, meaning they will in all likelihood change engagement types over time.

- The analysis of the potential influencing factors reveals that engagement increases when development policy self-efficacy increases. Furthermore, a higher level of concern correlates with a higher likelihood of increasing engagement. Diminishing concern corresponds with a higher likelihood of reducing the extent of one's engagement.

The previous sections of this chapter have separately covered the various ways in which the general public can confront development policy and global poverty. However, citizens can choose from a range of opportunities for engagement and also combine different forms of engagement. This results in many

potential engagement patterns. When it comes to identifying common patterns, it is useful to use typologies dividing the population into groups that are as clearly differentiated as possible but that exhibit a similar engagement pattern within each group. The advantage of these typologies is that they make the complex phenomenon of development engagement more tangible. The Aid Attitudes Tracker (AAT) provides a relevant typology for all ten survey waves, making it possible to analyse how individuals shift or remain static in their engagement types.[70]

### 3.4.1    Public engagement with global development in Germany over time

**Guest contribution from Jennifer Hudson, David Hudson and Paolo Morini (Development Engagement Lab)**

One of the basic assumptions underlying the efforts of many development organisations to increase public support is the concept of an engagement journey.[71] According to this approach, people are to be moved along a spectrum of activities with low to high effort towards development engagement. This is intended to increase both the breadth and depth of activities in the fight against global poverty. To do so, organisations define their target groups based on research findings and design their communication and activities to lead citizens step by step towards more engagement; this is referred to as the ladder of engagement. Does this model work for the German population? How do people become actively engaged in the global fight against poverty, and how does their engagement change over time? And which factors promote this engagement?

While earlier articles on engagement in the global fight against poverty focussed on the general public's attitudes (Scotto et al., 2017; Heinrich et al., 2016; Paxton and Knack, 2011; van Heerde and Hudson, 2009), this contribution concentrates on the behavioural aspects of engagement (Hudson et al., 2020).

To determine behavioural engagement, we relied on a battery of self-reported actions from the AAT (see Table 29 in the online Annex) through which the respondents can engage with the topics of global poverty and development.[72] The actions are designed in such a way that they reflect the ladder of engagement concept in the time and effort required to perform each action. Actions requiring little effort include information/communication-based engagement such as reading, watching or listening to news related to the topic or discussing it with family and friends. Actions requiring medium effort include writing internet posts about the topic or donating to a development or charity organisation. Actions requiring lots of effort include contacting selected decision-makers and volunteer work at home or abroad.

The data serves as the basis for a latent class analysis (LCA; see, for example, Collins and Lanza, 2010) in which the German population is divided into five qualitatively different engagement types. In other words, the latent measurement records different types or patterns of engagement and is thus not a purely quantitative measurement.

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[70]    It must be noted here that the engagement typology used in the following section does not correspond to the attitude typology developed in the DEval Opinion Monitor for Development Policy 2018 (Schneider and Gleser, 2018, Chapter 7).

[71]    This contribution is based on Hudson, J., Hudson, D., Morini, P., Stewart, M. and Clarke, H. (2020). "Not one, but many publics: Public engagement with global development". *Development in Practice*.

[72]    This includes actions queried similarly in the DEL survey which form the analytical basis for Section 3.1.

**Box 19** **Socio-demographics, political orientation and attitudes of the engagement types**

Based on the last AAT wave from July 2018, Figure 45 breaks down the five engagement types according to key socio-demographic and political characteristics as well as the development policy attitudes examined in Chapter 2.

**Figure 45** **Characteristics of the five engagement types**

**Behaviourally Engaged**
- Political orientation: centre/centre-left
- Average age 42
- 59 % men
- 31 % Abitur, 34 % higher education qualification
- Medium to high income
- 57 % know SDGs
- 50 % (very) concerned about situation in developing countries

**Fully engaged**
- Political orientation: centre-right/right
- Average age 40
- 57 % men
- 29 % Abitur, 34 % higher education qualification
- Medium to high income
- 71 % know SDGs
- 52 % (very) concerned about situation in developing countries

**Totally disengaged**
- Political orientation: centre/centre-right
- Average age 47
- 54 % women
- 61 % Hauptschule, Realschule or no school degree
- Low income
- 11 % know SDGs
- 22 % (very) concerned about situation in developing countries

**Informationally engaged**
- Political orientation: centre-left/left
- Average age 51
- no gender difference
- 44 % Hauptschule, Realschule or no school degree
- Low to medium income
- 49 % know SDGs
- 69 % (very) concerned about situation in developing countries

**Marginally engaged**
- Political orientation: centre
- Average age 51
- 54 % women
- 51 % Hauptschule, Realschule or no school degree
- Low or medium income
- 29 % know SDGs
- 52 % (very) concerned about situation in developing countries

Donut chart values: 9%, 3%, 22%, 22%, 44%

*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on the AAT, wave 10 (July 2018); N ≈ 6,000. The underlying contingency tables and average comparisons can be found in Table 4 in the Annex.*

In terms of socio-demographic characteristics, it is striking that the engagement types most intensively engaged with development policy (*behaviourally* and *fully engaged*) have higher education levels and higher incomes. Types that are not at all or only marginally engaged (*totally disengaged* and *marginally engaged*) tend to have lower education qualifications and lower incomes. These results are consistent with robust research findings on civic engagement (Simonson et al., 2022b) and political participation (Arriagada and Tesch-Römer, 2022; Burns et al., 2001; Solt, 2008; Verba et al., 1995). They point to two conclusions. First, it takes resources (Brady et al., 1995) to engage in development policy. Second, it can be assumed that due to the higher resources (education, income) of the especially engaged types, the views of a certain population group is more likely to reach development policy decision-makers. This may happen, for example, through personal contact and internet communication or when individuals represent NGOs (for more on social inequality in political participation, see, for example, Gallego, 2015; Schlozman et al., 2012). In turn, it is unlikely for the development policy views of socially disadvantaged groups to reach development policy decision-makers.

It is also notable that the more intensively engaged (*behaviourally* and *fully engaged*) are younger on average. This is consistent with the findings of Section 3.1, which showed that younger people more often shared information, engaged for and with organisations or participated in development policy discussions.

The data on political orientation indicates that the *totally disengaged* and *marginally engaged* tend to have *centrist* to *centre-right* political views. The views o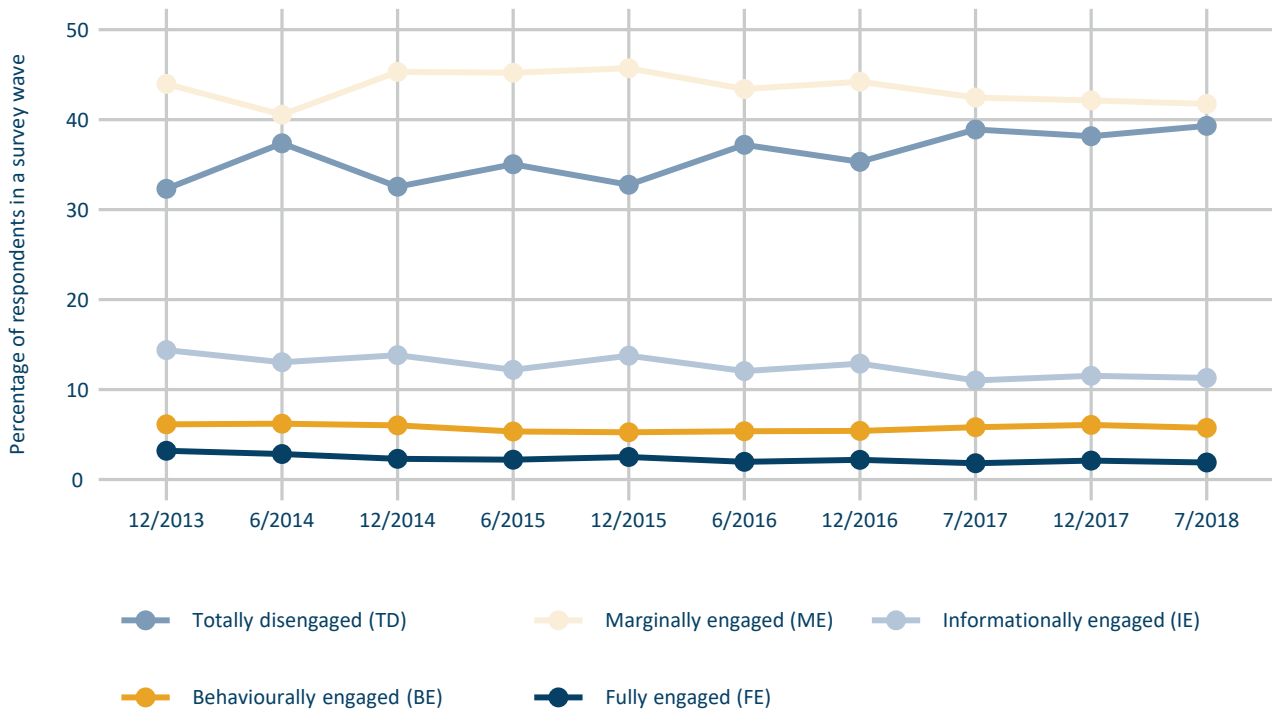f the *informationally* or *behaviourally* engaged tend to be on the *left* or *centre-left*. The political orientation of the *fully engaged* is, on average, significantly *right* of centre (Ø 5.6). Although self-identification as left-of-centre correlates with positive attitudes towards development policy (see Chapter 2), it is people with more conservative views who engage particularly intensively with development policy. This is partially consistent with the findings on organisation-based engagement and political participation in Section 3.1: People who identify themselves as politically *(centre- )right* report higher engagement levels in these areas than those in the *centre*. The generally more intensive engagement of people who lean politically *right* could be the result of different moral beliefs in the political camps (see Kivikangas et al., 2021; Schneider et al., 2021a, Chapter 5). For people with more conservative attitudes, engagement may be more strongly motivated by Christian ideals regarding support for those affected by poverty and other challenges. They may also more likely believe that DC measures are not the responsibility of the state, but should be performed by private organisations (see Brooks, 2007).

For the development policy attitudes already examined in Chapter 2, the engagement types show a consistent pattern that can be summed up as follows: The more intensive the engagement, the more positive will be the attitudes towards and the perceptions of development policy.

One striking comparison is the significantly stronger perception of development policy self-efficacy among the *behaviourally* and *fully engaged* compared to the other three engagement types. This is likely to be due to a mutually dependent cause and effect: Positive attitudes towards development policy could facilitate engagement, while engagement is also likely to influence attitudes towards development policy (for similar findings from political participation research see, for example, Gastil and Xenos, 2010; Quintelier and van Deth, 2014).

One last interesting finding was how well known the SDGs are: around 71 percent of the *fully engaged* stated that they were familiar with the SDGs – regardless of whether they know exactly what the goals entail or not. Awareness is also relatively high among the *behaviourally* and *informationally engaged*. The *totally disengaged* and *marginally engaged* are hardly aware of the SDGs. This backs up the finding from Chapter 2 that the SDGs are only known to a small portion of the German population interested in development policy.

Figure 46 shows the five engagement types and the degree of engagement among the German population over time (for the actions according to engagement type see Figure 61 in the Annex). The most engaged and smallest group – the *fully engaged* (*FE*) type – comprises, on average, less than 5 percent of the German population and carries out a combination of all 18 actions, especially, however, the very time-consuming and costly actions (e.g. contact with selected decision-makers, volunteer work, founding/joining an organisation etc.). The *behaviourally engaged* (*BE*) make up slightly more than 5 percent of the German population and have a similar profile to the *fully engaged*; however, they are slightly less active on average. These two engagement types have largely remained the same size over time, which indicates that this level and intensity of engagement is difficult to expand further.

**Figure 46**          **Engagement types in Germany over time**



*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on the Germany AAT panel, survey waves 1–10 (2013–2018). N per wave ≈ 6,000.*

The third-largest engagement type – the *informationally engaged* (*IE*) – comprises 10 to 15 percent of the German population. This group engages primarily through activities such as reading, watching or listening to news, sharing information on social media or commenting and writing posts on the internet. The second-largest group – the *totally disengaged* (*TD*) – covers 35 to 40 percent of the German population. This type engages, if at all, only very rarely with the topic of global poverty. It is the only group that exhibited notable changes over time. This group comprised a third of all respondents in November 2013, but their share had grown to almost 40 percent by July 2018. In other words, almost four in ten citizens engage only very seldom with the issues of development and the global fight against poverty. Finally, the group of *marginally engaged* (*ME*) is the largest group (on average 40–45%), meaning they exhibit the level of engagement most typical for Germany. The *marginally engaged* chiefly deal with global poverty and development by consuming news and through discussions in their social environment. They engage – to a limited degree – by donating to development organisations or by purchasing/boycotting products in a targeted manner. Although the group of *marginally engaged* showed an overall decline, the change over the course of the last five years was minimal.

The results in Figure 46 show that the relative size and structure of engagement types in Germany has remained largely constant. However, the stability of the big picture can conceal major changes at the individual level. People can change types over time.

**Figure 47    Development of the engagement types across the AAT waves**
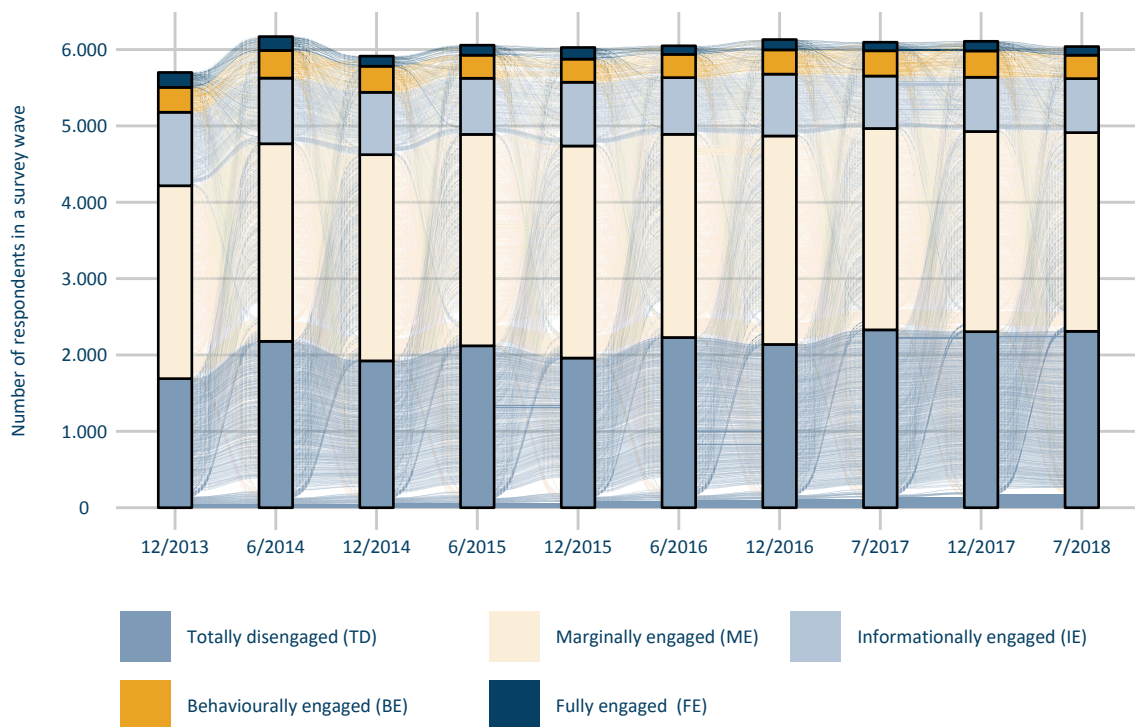


Source: DEval, own visualisation based on the Germany AAT panel, survey waves 1–10 (2013–2018). N per wave ≈ 6,000. The bars represent the respondents in the respective engagement types for each survey wave. The lines between the bars, in turn, show the migration between types.

Using a Sankey Plot, Figure 47 shows the "engagement journey" at the individual level over the course of the ten survey waves, both within the five groups and across groups. This illustrates that the respondents in the two lowest engagement types generally remain in their current segment for an extended period of time. Only rarely do people switch from *totally disengaged* or *marginally engaged* to a group more active in development policy. In contrast, there is lots of movement between the three groups with the highest engagement – *totally, behaviourally* and *informationally engaged*. The respondents switch between these groups often. They do not always move upward along the *ladder of engagement* as assumed, but both upward and downward.

To assess the stability of the groups, it makes sense to examine the average probability of transition from one group to another between any two survey waves (see Table 5 in the Annex). Both the *totally disengaged* and the *marginally engaged* show a transition probability of 0.67. This means that any given person will remain in the same engagement type between two survey waves in 67 out of 100 cases. This value decreases to 0.51 for the *informationally engaged*, 0.35 for the *behaviourally engaged* and 0.37 for the *fully engaged*. People in the most engaged groups are thus the least likely to remain in the same group. This indicates that highly engaged respondents can also be "lost", since engagement does not lead in a linear path from low-effort activities to high-effort activities. There are also no effective threshold values for assignment to an engagement type that, once crossed, are static.

Once it is known which factors influence the switch from one engagement type to another, development policy actors can address each group in a targeted manner to promote engagement and obtain more public support. The *marginally engaged* group – the largest group in Germany – was examined to determine why people move upward (more engagement) or downward (less engagement). The dependent variable was

regressed on the following characteristics: Support for DC; assessment of one's own economic situation and the national economic situation; non-benefit-related factors of engagement (e.g. morals, social norms, trust in and recognition of charitable organisations); political and development policy self-efficacy; political orientation on the left-right scale. To illustrate changes in engagement, the dependent variable sets the engagement of the respondents in the waves t = 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 in reference to their engagement in the respective subsequent wave, t+1 = 2, 4, 6, 8, 10. The variable takes on one of three values in a multinominal logistic regression (1 for those who switched from *marginally engaged* to *totally disengaged*, 0 for those who belong to the same type and 2 for those who switched from *marginally engaged* to *informationally, behaviourally or fully engaged* – combined into a single "*engaged*" category).

Figure 48 shows the average influence of the various factors on the change in engagement. The effects are clearly neither symmetrical nor consistent: The factors bringing people upward on the *ladder of engagement* (from *marginally engaged* to *engaged)* do not necessarily bring them downward (from *marginally engaged* to *totally disengaged*). For example, development policy self-efficacy – a person's assessment that they can personally contribute to reducing poverty in poor countries – is a positive and significant factor for increasing engagement (from *marginally engaged* to *engaged*), but there is no equivalent significant (and negative) correlation for the change from *marginally engaged* to *totally disengaged*. If all other factors are held constant, an increase in development policy self-efficacy is associated with a 22 percent chance of changing from the *marginally engaged* to the *engaged* group (compared with the chance of remaining in the marginally engaged group). The only factor linked with both a rise and a fall along the *ladder of engagement* is concern about the situation in the Global South: A higher degree of concern corresponds to a higher likelihood of increasing engagement, while diminishing concern is associated with lower engagement. In concrete terms, when all other factors are kept constant, increasing concern raises the chance of moving from the *marginally engaged* to the *engaged* group (compared to remaining marginally engaged) by 37 percent. Accordingly, self-efficacy and concern could serve as points of reference for promoting development engagement.

**Figure 48          Influencing factors for changing the engagement types**
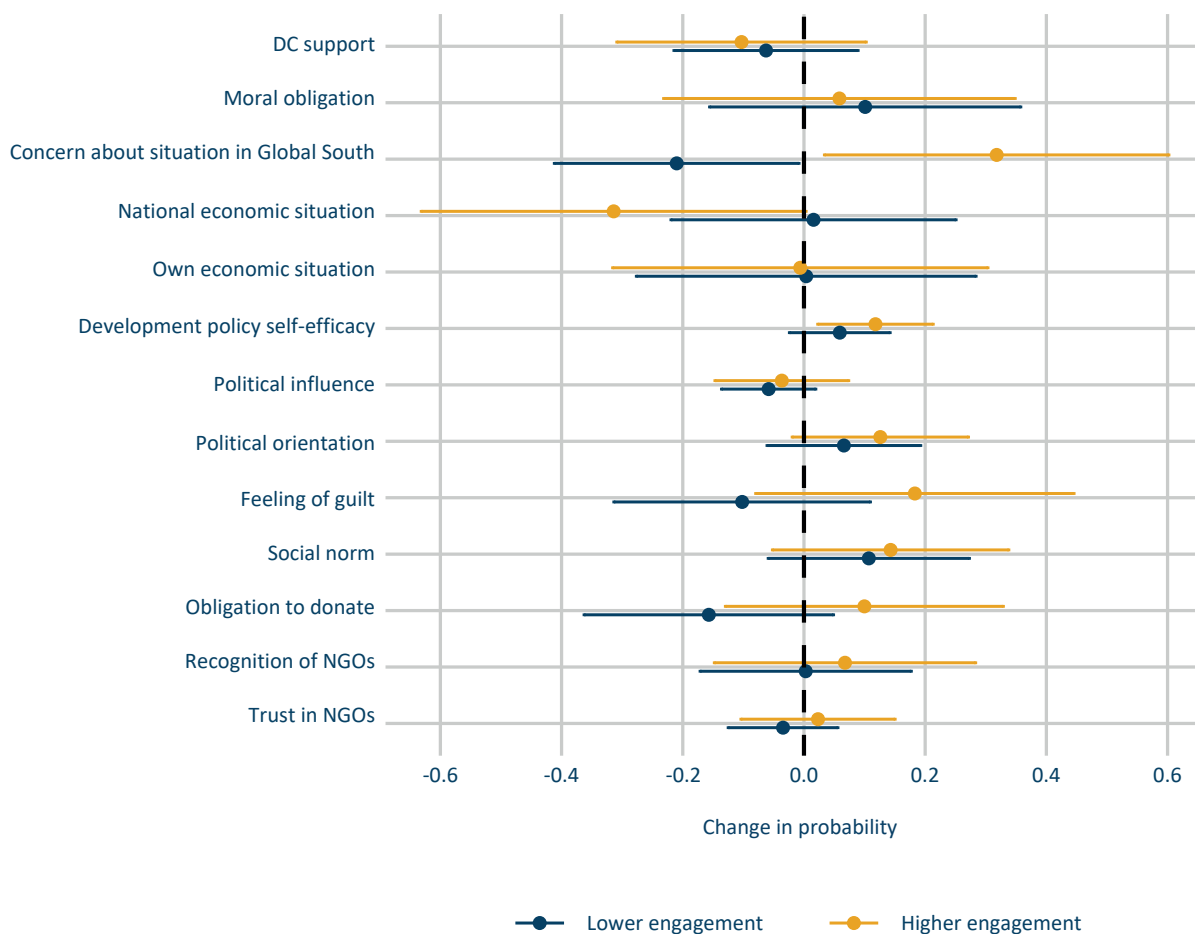


*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on the Germany AAT panel, survey waves 1–10 (2013–2018). N per wave ≈ 6,000. N valid = 1,870 (persons who participated in all waves and left no questions unanswered). The figure shows the results of a multinominal logistic regression. The points indicate how the probabilities for the transition from marginally engaged to totally disengaged ("reduced") and from marginally engaged to engaged (informationally, behaviourally or fully engaged; "increased") change when the independent variable is changed by one unit (95% confidence interval). If the horizontal lines do not cross the vertical line, the influence of a variable is statistically significant. The corresponding regression table can be found in Table 95 in the online Annex.*

The AAT data shows that, contrary to the commonly held view, there is hardly any sign of an upward trend in the German population's *engagement journey*: Eight out of ten respondents belonged to the *totally disengaged* or the *marginally engaged* across all ten AAT survey waves. At an aggregate level, the results show that the engagement level is relatively constant and has only changed minimally over time, particularly due to the *totally disengaged* share increasing from 32 to 39 percent. The stability of the aggregated groups conceals changes at the individual level, however. Those surveyed shift from one engagement type to another over time. Moreover, in Germany – as in France, Great Britain and the US (Hudson et al., 2020) – the least engaged groups are the most stable. In other words, people in the *totally disengaged* and *marginally engaged* groups are highly likely to stay in these groups. The *informationally*, *behaviourally* and *fully engaged* groups, on the other hand, are less stable, and the respondents move both up and down along the *engagement ladder*.

This is important information for development policy actors seeking to draw public support. The *marginally engaged* are an important target group for development NGOs, not least due to their number and the potential financial impact of any changes in their donation behaviour (for more on this, see Section 3.2). People in this group are already active in development policy, are not overly sceptical or critical of funding for DC, and sometimes feel a moral obligation to help people in the Global South (for the characteristics of the engagement types, see Box 19 as well as Figure 61 in the Annex). Each movement in this group towards

more engagement would be a positive change in the landscape of support for global development. As has been shown, however, it is difficult for actors to motivate both the *marginally engaged* and the *totally disengaged* to increase their engagement. The latter is a significantly bigger challenge, since this group does not share the positive attitude towards DC seen in the *marginally engaged*.

For development policy actors, the results of the analyses may mean that they should move away from the idea of a linear engagement model from less to more engagement and instead introduce a model that also addresses those who are either unwilling or unable to expand their current level of engagement, but would like to remain where they are.

# 4. IMPLICATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT POLICY PRACTICE

| **Box 20** | **Implications for development policy practice** |
|---|---|

1. Further strengthening the positive attitude towards development cooperation.
2. Communicating the political context in partner countries to the German population.
3. Increasing the self-efficacy of citizens in order to encourage engagement among larger sections of the population.
4. Closing gaps in the knowledge of DC and sustainable consumption.
5. Expanding tailored and age-appropriate engagement offers.

The findings presented here have a number of potential implications for the design of development policy communication and education work, for promoting engagement and for the strategic development of DC. Some of them are specific to certain actors or sectors. The following section presents selected implications relevant for all actors.

## 4.1 Implications

### IMPLICATION 1: Further strengthening the positive attitude towards development policy

The data on development policy attitudes shows that the German population has a positive view of development policy overall. Even the coronavirus pandemic – like the so-called European "refugee crisis" of 2015 (Schneider and Gleser, 2018, Chapter 9) – has so far not had a negative impact on public opinion (also refer to Eger et al., 2022; Schneider et al., 2020, 2021a, 2021b). Overall, governmental and civil-society development policy actors in Germany operate in an environment that is well-disposed to their policy area. There remains a strong social consensus that DC is necessary. Although citizens on the *left* side of the political spectrum support DC more strongly, development policy has thus far not become a politically charged topic in Germany – despite targeted criticism from the AfD towards measures for combating climate change or promoting gender equality (AfD; see, for example, AfD Bundestagsfraktion, 2021).

Two aspects are crucial for maintaining this solid foundation of support for DC:

- Particularly in the context of increasing armed conflicts and significant global refugee movements, DC should not be reduced to an instrument for crisis prevention or coping with refugees. With a view to public preferences, it is still important to consider that citizens also see a moral obligation towards the countries of the Global South and jointly confronting global challenges like climate change as crucial motives for DC.

- The overarching development policy agenda linked to the 2030 Agenda and its 17 SDGs should continue to be supported by a large share of the population. A "feminist development policy", as pursued by Germany's current federal government, may win less support than the previous approach, but it simultaneously represents both a challenge and an opportunity that will be covered by future editions of the Opinion Monitor.

At the same time, substantial portions of the population remain sceptical with regard to the effectiveness of DC measures. What's more, a majority of the general public has the impression that they cannot do anything about the state of affairs in the Global South. This can be interpreted as a feeling of powerlessness in the face of enormous global challenges. Although public attitudes towards DC over time are relatively stable overall, it cannot be ruled out that the aforementioned reservations will be stoked in the course of escalating societal conflicts – as we saw in relation to the pandemic measures from 2020 to 2022 and in connection with increasing economic problems stemming from the war in Ukraine – and international cooperation to confront global challenges may also become a target of public criticism.

**IMPLICATION 2: Communicating the political context in partner countries to the German population**

Following the (renewed) seizure of power by the Taliban in Afghanistan in August 2021, German DC funds for the country were frozen.[73] This "exit" from Afghanistan – like all exit processes (Lücking et al., 2021) – was rife with conflicting views: on the one hand, it avoided future cooperation with an autocratic government such as the Taliban. On the other hand, it lowers the German government's influence both in terms of the options for alleviating the acute emergency facing the population and with a view to working towards a less autocratic government and administration.

These conflicting views are reflected in the population's attitudes regarding democracy and promotion of democracy in the context of DC. Although concrete views of what democracy actually is or should be also vary within the German population (Niedermayer, 2009)[74], large portions of the population see democracy and the promotion of democracy as important for DC. In the event of developments towards autocracy in partner countries, citizens feel that it makes sense to attach conditions to development policy cooperation and adapt its specific implementation to the situation. However, the general public still sees it as important to take account of the people in the partner country and ensure their basic needs are met. Completely terminating the cooperation in such cases meets with relatively high endorsement only on the far right side of the political spectrum.

There is thus public support for promoting democracy and the rule of law through DC in partner countries. For development policy strategy building and policy communication, this is an important signal in light of global autocratic tendencies (Alizada et al., 2021; Boese et al., 2022; Schäfer and Zürn, 2021). In addition, many share the opinion that the German government should react in the event of autocratic tendencies in partner countries but not fail to consider the situation of the people there when doing so. Options that could be presented to the German population include *by-passing* (attempting to distribute funds not through the central government of the partner country, but via multilateral or civil-society channels) or by putting conditions on the payment of DC funds. In short, even in such complicated situations, it is possible to demonstrate that the right thing is to continue supporting the population in partner countries rather than completely terminating cooperation. For this to succeed, it is important that the general public is familiar with the political context in partner countries.

**IMPLICATION 3: Increasing the self-efficacy of citizens in order to encourage engagement among larger sections of the population**

Perceived development policy self-efficacy is an important factor for the general public's development engagement. It is higher among citizens who are very active in development policy than among those who are less active, and individuals who perceive themselves as having self-efficacy are more likely to increase their engagement (Section 3.4). (Political) self-efficacy also proves to be an important explanatory variable for sustainable consumption (see also Schneider and Gleser, 2018, Chapter 5). The analyses additionally show that people who assess their influence on the situation in countries of the Global South to be high are also more likely to support governmental development policy measures.

However, perceived (development policy) self-efficacy is not widespread among the German population overall, meaning most citizens have the impression that they cannot change much about the situation in the Global South. This also applies to self-efficacy regarding sustainable consumption or the opportunity to influence consumption policy regulations (Section 3.3.5). The focus group discussions revealed that low self-efficacy due to the perceived complexity and lack of transparency surrounding sustainability is also seen as a hurdle for sustainable consumption and can even make people feel powerless against global corporations.

Consequently, (development policy) self-efficacy offers one approach for boosting the development policy and sustainability engagement of citizens who were not previously actively engaged. Potential measures include the following:

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[73]    See BMZ country profile on Afghanistan (in German): *https://www.bmz.de/de/laender/afghanistan* (accessed on 08.02.2022).

[74]    A current overview of the international research on citizens' understanding of democracy can be found in König et al. (2022).

1. **Promoting low-threshold engagement opportunities:** To expand participation beyond the "usual" suspects and spread development policy or sustainability-related engagement to wider segments of the population, it makes sense to demonstrate small steps that contribute to sustainable development (see, for example, OECD DevCom, 2016). For example, more people perceive themselves as taking sustainable action when given information emphasising the sustainability of everyday activities like sorting waste (e.g. Cornelissen et al., 2008). Transferred to DC, one approach in the area of sustainable consumption might focus on clothing. The general public sees not only great potential here, but also a strong connection to DC. Development policy actors could draw a connection between the consumption of sustainable clothing and its contribution towards (global) sustainable development, thus making self-efficacy a tangible experience. The Green Button and the Textiles Partnership are steps in this direction. Low-threshold engagement opportunities like this can also overcome the hurdle of having little time available, which is often named as a barrier to engagement (Arriagada and Karnick, 2022). However, even this cannot guarantee that citizens will subsequently pursue engagement forms that require more effort (see Section 3.4).

2. **Taking advantage of the social visibility of engagement:** The focus group discussion results indicate that people feel like they have self-efficacy when they win over others for sustainable consumption (see also Hanss and Böhm, 2010). This creates a motivating feeling of not only making one's own contribution towards sustainability, but also of seeing one's actions have an expanded effect by reaching others. Emphasising this aspect in education and communication work could be an effective lever for boosting perceived self-efficacy and motivating other people to engage in development policy issues.

3. **Presenting opportunities for collective action**: Mutual political participation and mutual organisation-based engagement can help advance development-related and sustainability-related political causes. For example, civil-society associations called for a German supply chain law over a long period of time, thus contributing greatly to the country enacting such a law. This illustrates that individual people can do more when they join forces. Pointing to individual opportunities to contribute to collective action and especially the impact of collective action could raise the low perceived level of self-efficacy and counteract a feeling of powerlessness.[75]

Low-threshold forms of activism on the internet and social media (also referred to disparagingly as *clicktivism* or *slacktivism*; George and Leidner, 2019; Morozov, 2009) should not be cast in a positive light without reflection. After all, their potential disadvantages include superficiality, distraction from actual engagement, predisposition to waves of outrage and shitstorms, as well as manipulation through purchased clicks. It is nevertheless interesting that the aforementioned points (low-threshold, social visibility etc.) are often implemented comprehensively in this engagement field. This reduces the effort of engagement to an absolute minimum; the opportunities to share the engagement in one's own network are prominently displayed; and participation levels often suggest that just a relatively low number of additional signatures are needed to reach an important level of collective action.

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[75] In self-efficacy research, this phenomenon is discussed as its own construct using the term "collective self-efficacy" (see, for example, Lee, 2006; Kim, 2015).

### IMPLICATION 4: Closing gaps in the knowledge of DC and sustainable consumption

The general public's knowledge of development cooperation topics remains low. For example, the SDGs are still largely unknown; only 8 percent of citizens indicate having heard of them and knowing what exactly they are. Global developments – such as poverty reduction – are hugely underestimated (see also Rosling et al., 2018), while the effort associated with development policy is significantly overestimated (Schneider and Gleser, 2018). This gap in knowledge and information is not a problem per se and is also hardly surprising given the limited presence of development policy in the media (Schneider et al., 2021a). The results of this report make it clear, though, that citizens – and especially segments of the population that have not engaged with development policy thus far – have a considerable need for information that has not been met up to now. This applies to issues including the trustworthiness of charitable organisations or the sustainability of consumer goods.

It is therefore crucial to expand low-threshold sources of information. Product labels are one approach that is already widely used. They provide easy-to-understand information about the respective product or organisation, thus creating transparency regarding its sustainability or trustworthiness.[76]

The survey results show that citizens know and trust many product labels for textiles, for example. A parallel survey experiment revealed that while a donation label did not immediately increase people's willingness to donate, it did increase their trust in the certified organisation, which was then perceived as more effective (see Adena et al., 2019; Vollan et al., 2017 for further evidence on the effect of donation labels). Low-threshold information measures such as labels therefore appear to be a good way of providing simple information on quality, sustainability and trustworthiness.

The German government created the "Siegelklarheit" platform to give the general public an overview of the numerous product labels. However, the survey results indicate that the platform is hardly known. Awareness of the platform must be raised to ensure that people use it. At the same time, the information available on the platform should be easily accessible to citizens. One example of a measure that is already available is the app with which users can scan labels to receive information about them. However, there are still numerous labels (as of March 2022) that are either not entered on the platform or have not been evaluated yet.[77] These gaps in information should be closed as soon as possible.

Beyond specific measures like this, information campaigns in general should not be neglected. They should raise awareness of global sustainable development and try to also reach people who have probably not heard of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs up to now (e.g. older people). The SDG campaign in Norway is a clear example of this (see Box 5). Organisations should also continuously communicate the goals and impact of DC along with challenges and missteps in a transparent way. Rigorous evidence on the effectiveness of DC can serve as component of this (e.g. Krämer et al., 2021).

### IMPLICATION 5: Creating tailored services that take phases of life and available resources into account

The results of this report show that there are major differences both in people's general attitudes towards development policy and in their development engagement in all of its facets. Age is an especially important factor for how citizens engage. For instance, younger people communicate about development policy topics on social media more frequently, participate politically more often and, above all, are more likely to practise organisation-based engagement. Older people more frequently contribute through donations. There are also interesting differences in sustainable consumption: older people currently consume more sustainably, while younger people more strongly wish to make their consumption behaviour more sustainable. At the same time, the longitudinal analyses (Section 3.4) show that engagement is not a continuous process leading from simple forms of engagement to others requiring more effort. Rather, a majority of the population is only

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[76]   It must also be noted here that labels present a gateway for manipulation and greenwashing – such as when companies develop their own labels and certifications that only serve marketing purposes without actually proving the sustainability of products and services.

[77]   See *https://www.siegelklarheit.de/en/siegel#/sort:rating_desc* for an overview of the labels integrated into the platform and the availability of an evaluation.

marginally or not at all engaged, and even those who are strongly engaged do not always maintain a high level of engagement over time.

In light of this, it is crucial to address the different target groups with tailored information and take their engagement needs into account. Because younger people often halt their volunteer work due to lack of time when beginning an apprenticeship or university course, when embarking on a career or when starting a family (Arriagada and Karnick, 2022), it might be advisable to create flexible, less time-intensive engagement models with no permanent obligation for this group. It can also be considered a responsibility of development policy actors to create suitable conditions that make it easier for citizens to engage and give them the opportunity to better reconcile their engagement with their professional obligations, for example.

With older people, in turn, there is potential to expand organisation-based engagement. The long-term trend shows that, since 1999, people who have reached retirement age are increasingly likely to do volunteer work regardless of the field (Simonson et al., 2022b, p. 79). One starting point for promoting development engagement could be to establish links to areas in which older people engage often (or more often than other groups) such as the social work or church sphere (Kausmann and Hagen, 2022). At the same time, generations will be increasingly reaching retirement in the future who have already been engaged in development policy over the course of their lives and who might wish to expand this engagement again in retirement – with more time available – if they are approached with the right opportunity at the right time.

## 4.2    Outlook

The ongoing coronavirus pandemic, an escalating climate crisis, the far-reaching and unforeseeable consequences of the war in Ukraine, the need to advance sustainable global development: German development policy must do its part to confront these global crises and problems together with the international community. Governmental and civil-society actors depend on the support of the population to make this happen – in terms of not only public opinion, but also development engagement.

In this context, it helps to continually observe people's attitudes, engagement and knowledge in order to deploy evidence-based development policy strategies, communication and education approaches. The DEval Opinion Monitor is responding to this need and will continue to report on public opinion regarding development policy and DC in the future. The next report is planned for 2024.

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# 6. ANNEX

## 6.1    Supplementary analyses for Chapter 2

The feeling of moral obligation is unique among the potential motives for DC, as it does not focus on the benefits for one's own country or oneself, but looks altruistically at the situation of people in countries of the Global South. It is also an important explanatory variable for support for official development cooperation and development engagement (Hudson and van Heerde-Hudson, 2012; Schneider et al., 2021a, Chapter 5). In data from the DEL panel of September 2021, as well, moral obligation strongly correlates with support for DC.[78] In light of this, the following section supplements the analyses in Section 2.3 to more deeply examine the feeling of moral obligation towards people in the countries of the Global South.

**Figure 49        Feeling of moral obligation over time**
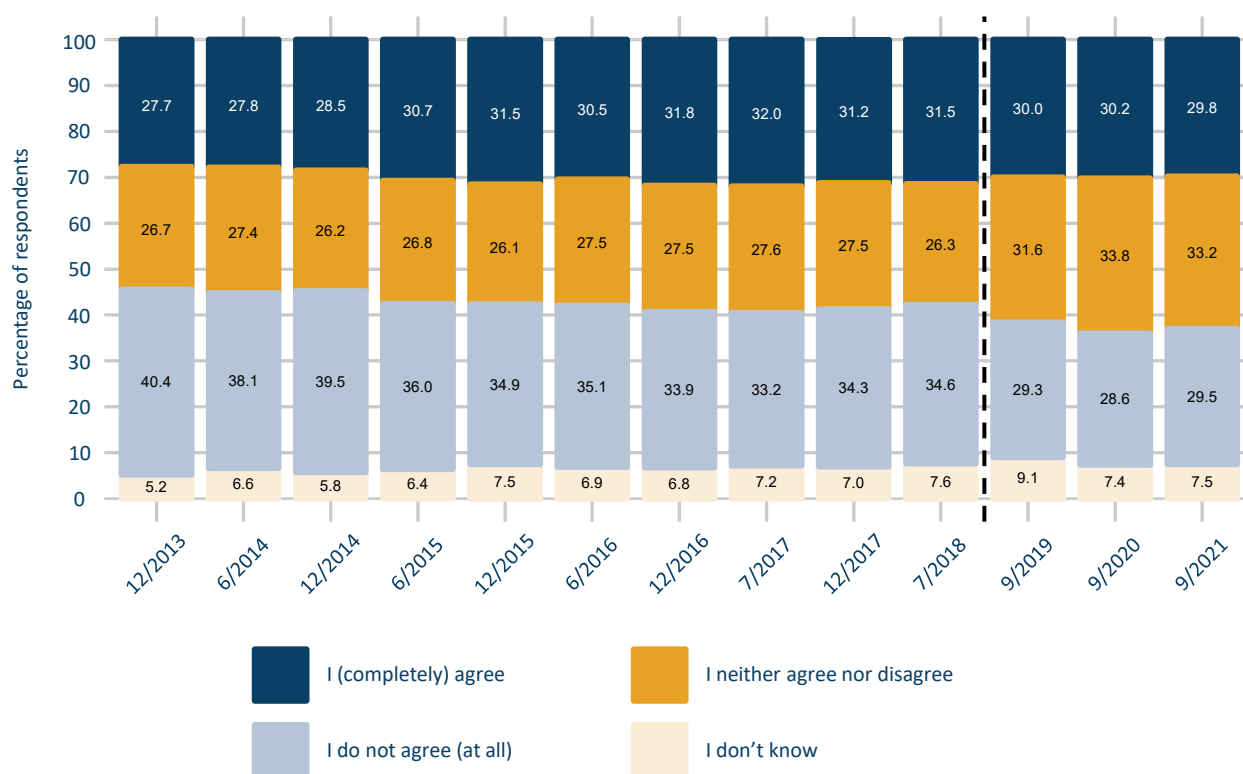


*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on the AAT (up to 7/2018) and the DEL (up to 9/2019). The statement reads: "Countries like Germany should provide more funding for development cooperation because it is morally the right thing to do." Answer options: 1 = "I completely agree", 2 = "I agree", 3 = "I neither agree nor disagree", 4 = "I do not agree", 5 = "I do not agree at all".*

As Figure 49 shows, around 30 percent reported a feeling of moral obligation in September 2021, 30 percent did not and 33 percent reported a neutral position. These shares are stable across all three DEL survey waves. Compared to the AAT, the data points to a slightly positive shift, since the share of *do not agree (at all)* fell by approximately five to six percentage points, and the share of *neither agree nor disagree* increased on average by five to six percentage points (see vertical dotted line).[79] However, due to the previously mentioned changes in the questionnaire associated with the switch to the DEL, this shift should be interpreted with caution (see Box 3).

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[78]    Correlation r = 0.58; p < 0.001.

[79]    Because several questions from the AAT are no longer available in the DEL, operationalisation of the "moral obligation" motive from the Opinion Monitor for Development Policy 2018 (Schneider and Gleser, 2018) cannot be continued. While an index was calculated from three items in the old study, the current report uses one single item.

The feeling of moral obligation is more prominent in the youngest group than in the three older groups. In the group *aged 18 to 29*, 39 percent agreed with the presented statement; in the groups *aged 30 to 39*, *aged 40 to 59* and *aged 60 and older* 27 to 29 percent agreed. Consequently, younger people more strongly demand higher DC funds for moral reasons. This is consistent with the higher general level of support for DC in this age group (see Sections 2.1.2 and 2.1.3).

As with many other attitude dimensions, the feeling of moral obligation is also influenced by political orientation. For people identifying themselves as politically *left* or *centre-left*, the moral obligation is pronounced, at 57 percent and 44 percent, respectively; in contrast, it is significantly lower for the other three groups, with values of 22 percent in the *centre-right* group and 25 percent in the *centre* group. Overall, these patterns indicate that moral and altruistic motives are more relevant on the left side of the political spectrum, although no statement can be made about whether concrete situations might cause people to disregard moral considerations in favour of personal or national interests (see, for example, Heinrich and Kobayashi, 2020).

## 6.2      Annex Section 2

**Figure 50**      **Comparison of perceived potential influence by country**
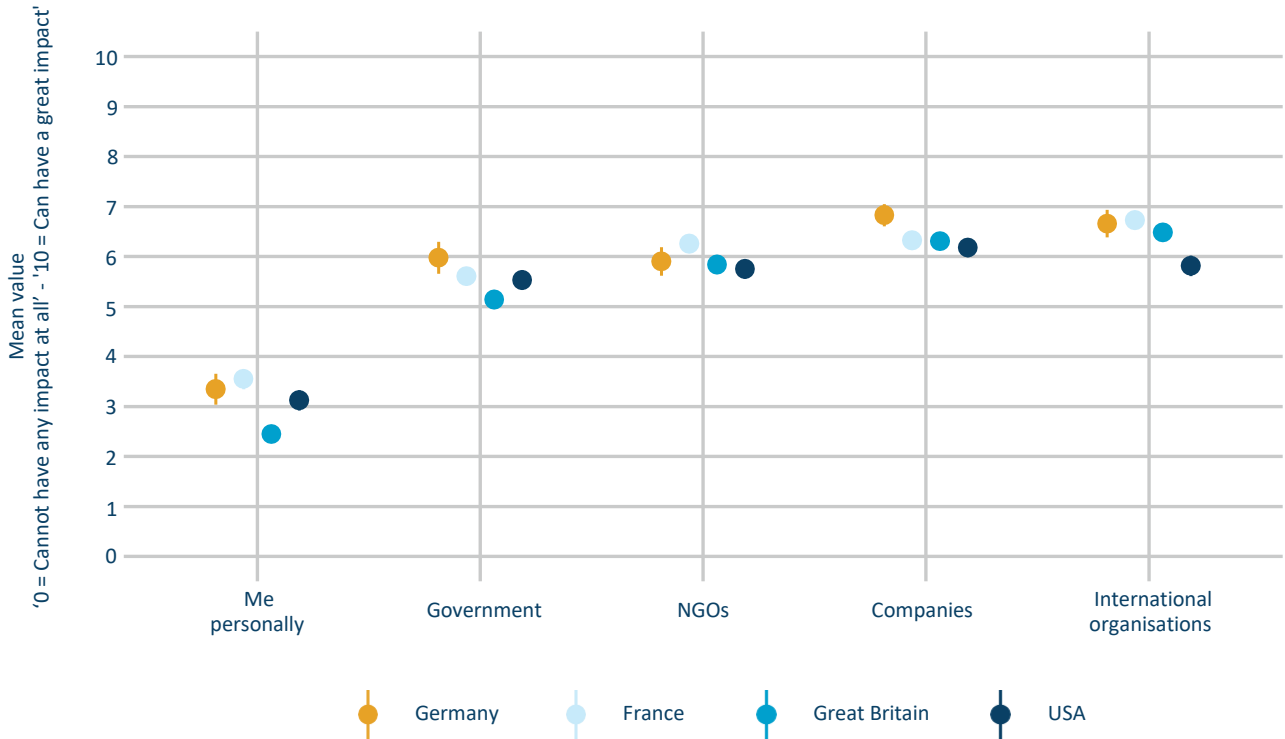


*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on DEL panel wave 3 (9/2021); N = 6,000; F: N = 6,106; GB: N = 8,281; USA: N = 6,112. The figure shows the mean values with 95% confidence intervals. The confidence intervals are very small due to the large sample size. The question was as follows: "In your opinion, what impact can each of the following actors have in combating poverty in poor countries?" Answer options: scale from 0 = "Can't make any difference at all" to 10 = "Can make a great deal of difference".*

**Figure 51** **The general public's view of corruption in the countries of the Global South**
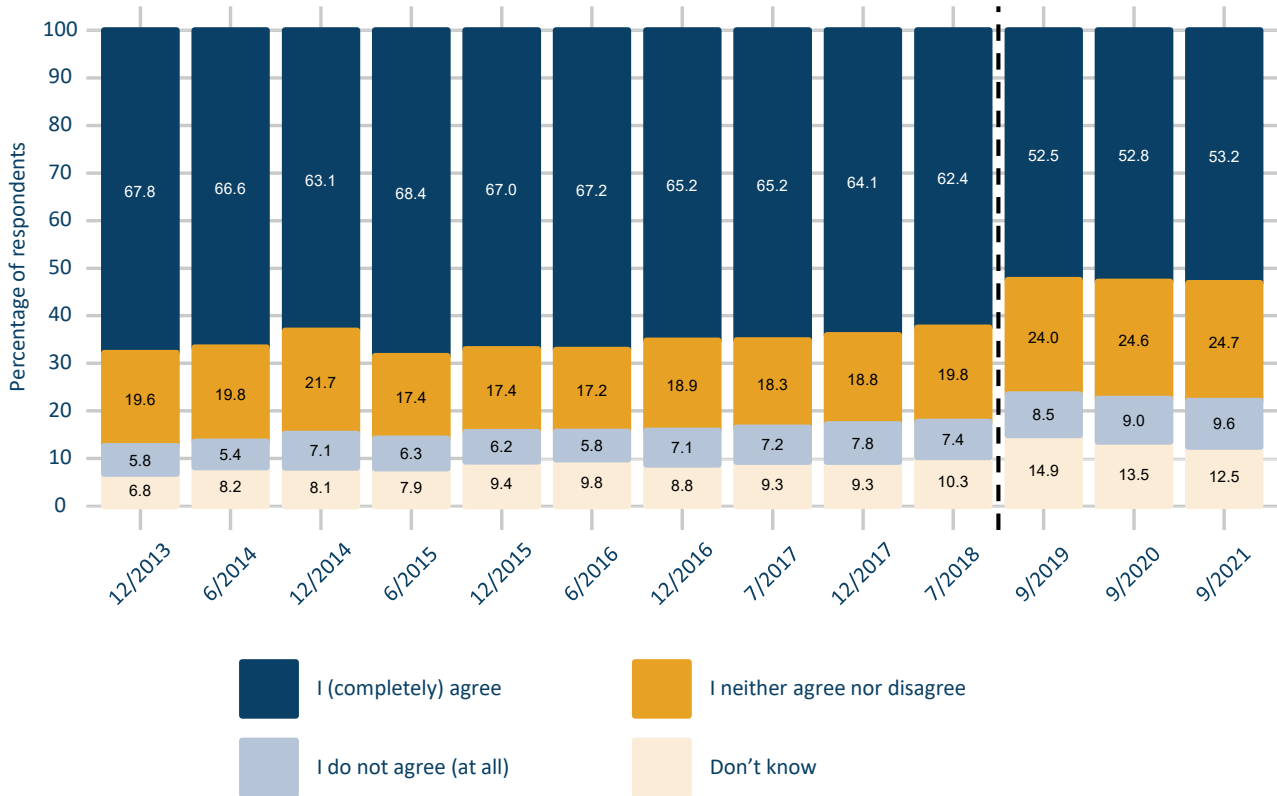


Source: DEval, own visualisation based on the AAT (up to 7/2018) and the DEL (as of 9/2019). The statement was as follows: "A large portion of German development cooperation lands in the pockets of corrupt politicians in the developing countries." Answer options: 1 = "I completely agree", 2 = "I agree", 3 = "I neither agree nor disagree", 4 = "I do not agree", 5 = "I do not agree at all". The visualisation groups categories 1 and 2 together as well as categories 4 and 5.

## 6.3    Annex Section 3.2

**Figure 52**       **Comparison of donation categorisations**
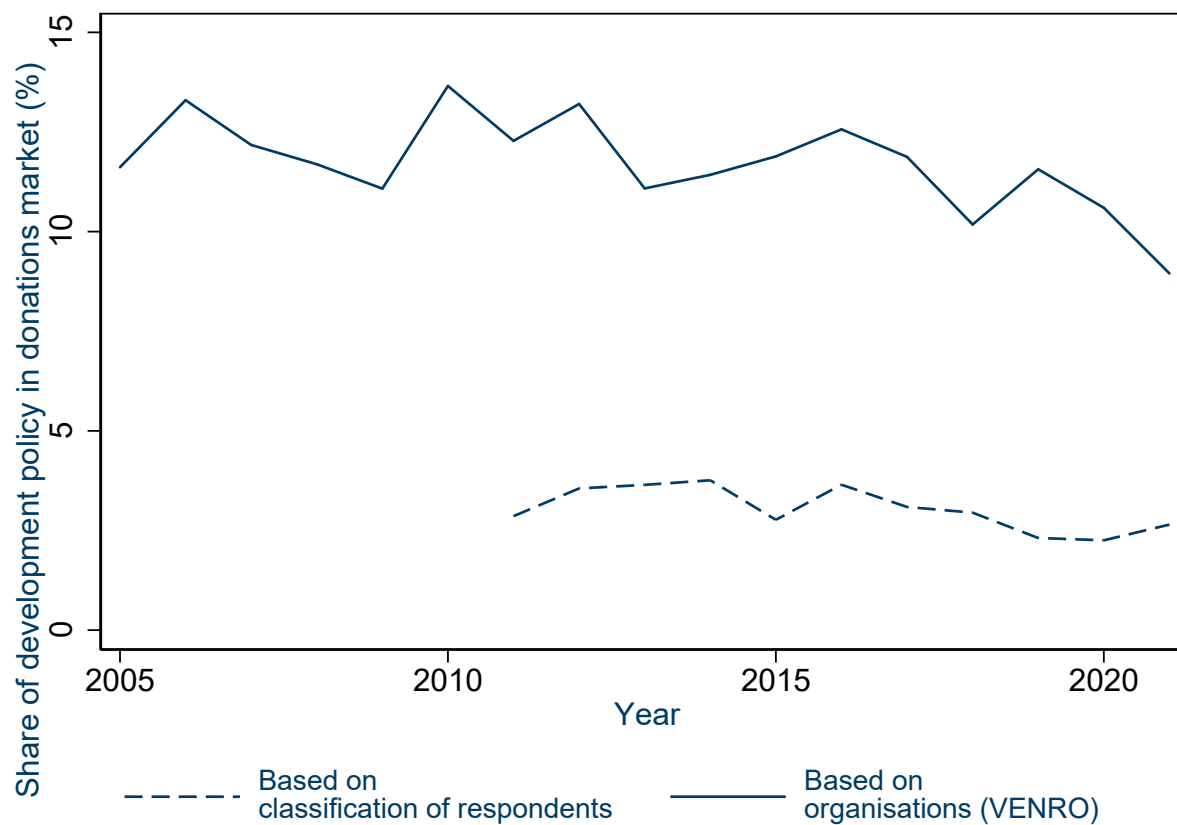


*Source:* DEval, *own visualisation based on the GfK Charity Panel. The diagram shows the estimated annual donation volume for development policy in the period from 2005 to 2020. The GfK Charity Panel covers approximately 10,000 people per year. It counts all individuals who have donated money to a development policy organisation as donors for development policy (see Box 9). The diagram omits the year 2021 because no complete information is available for this year and the annual donation volume therefore cannot be adequately estimated. Assignment by the respondents (dotted line) has only been recorded since 2012.*

**Figure 53**    **Change in the quarterly donation volume for development policy over the last three years**
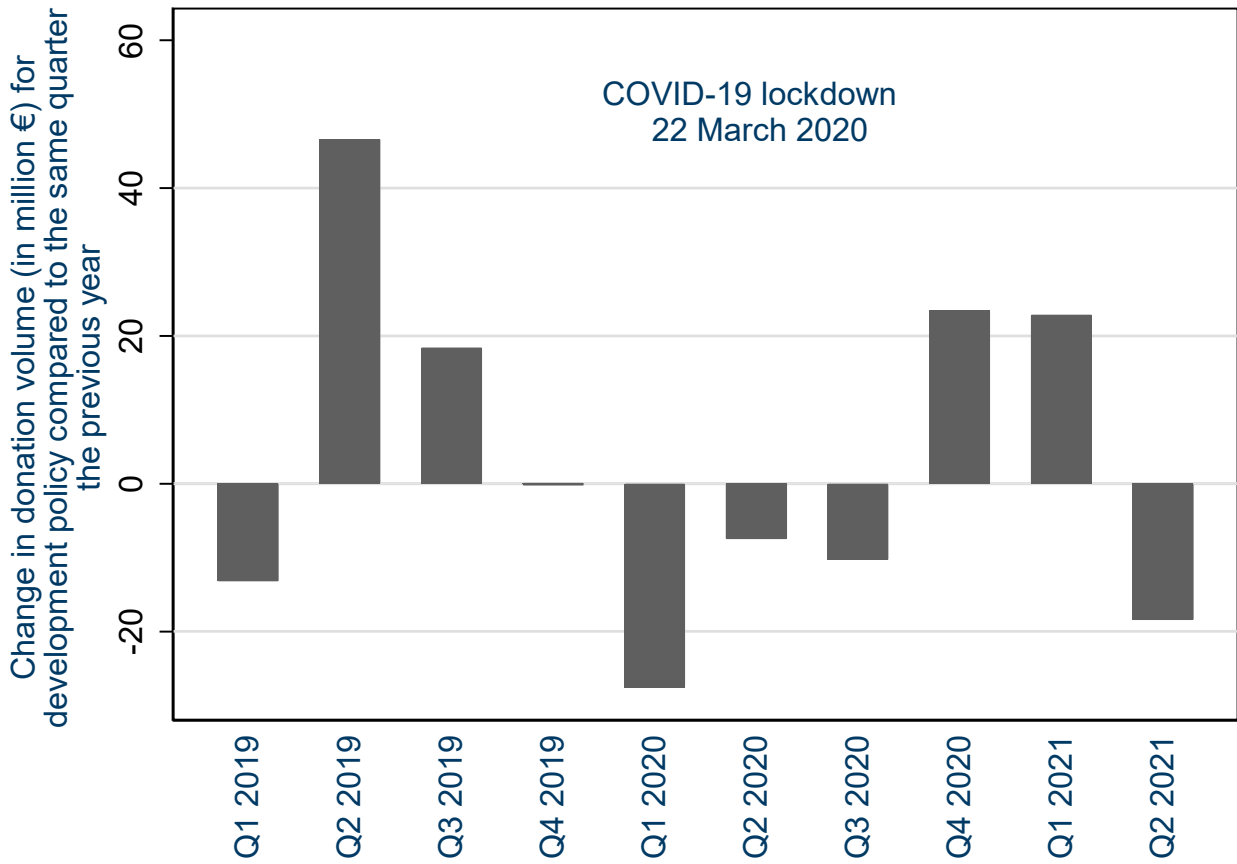


*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on the GfK Charity Panel. The figure shows the difference in the donation volume for development policy compared to the same quarter in the previous year. The third quarter of 2021 was not considered, since data was only available up to August 2021, not for the whole quarter.*

**Table 2** **Donation purpose (GfK Charity Panel)**

| Donation purpose | Number of mentions | Share (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Other social causes | 15,547 | 4.73 |
| Education | 3,049 | 0.93 |
| Monument preservation | 3,111 | 0.95 |
| Development aid | 5,846 | 1.78 |
| Aid for children/youth | 46,942 | 14.27 |
| Aid for the sick/disabled | 15,405 | 4.68 |
| Church/religious purposes | 40,561 | 12.33 |
| Art/culture | 2,559 | 0.78 |
| Conservation/environmental protection | 7,911 | 2.40 |
| No purpose | 121,465 | 36.92 |
| Emergency/disaster aid | 23,643 | 7.19 |
| Other | 14,374 | 4.37 |
| Sports | 1,824 | 0.55 |
| Animal welfare | 19,064 | 5.80 |
| Don't know | 5,977 | 1.82 |
| No purpose | 1,688 | 0.51 |

*Source: DEval, own visualisation.*

**Figure 54**  **Donation behaviour by age category**
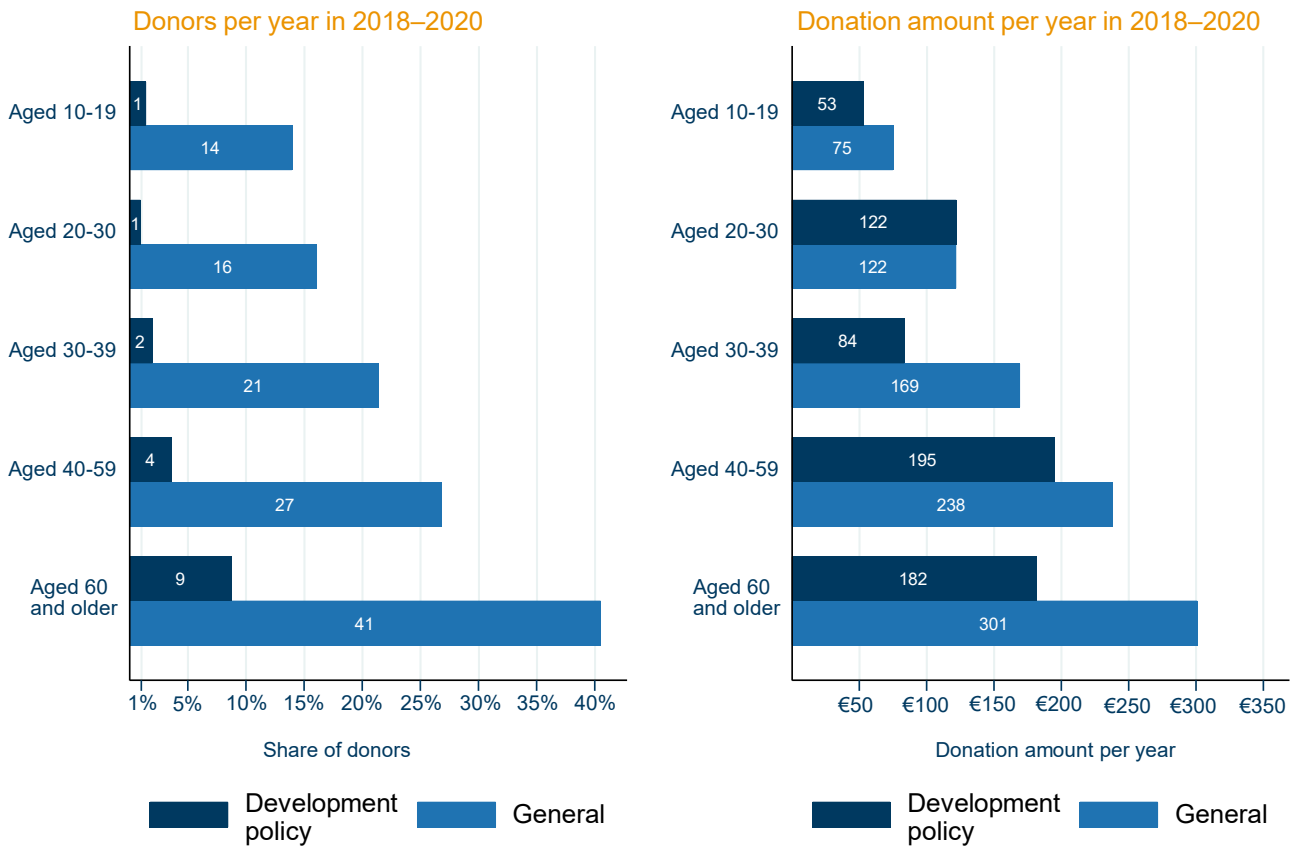
Donors per year in 2018–2020

| Age | Development policy | General |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Aged 10-19 | 1 | 14 |
| Aged 20-30 | 1 | 16 |
| Aged 30-39 | 2 | 21 |
| Aged 40-59 | 4 | 27 |
| Aged 60 and older | 9 | 41 |

Share of donors
1% 5% 10% 15% 20% 25% 30% 35% 40%

Donation amount per year in 2018–2020

| Age | Development policy | General |
|-----|-----|-----|
| Aged 10-19 | 53 | 75 |
| Aged 20-30 | 122 | 122 |
| Aged 30-39 | 84 | 169 |
| Aged 40-59 | 195 | 238 |
| Aged 60 and older | 182 | 301 |

Donation amount per year
€50 €100 €150 €200 €250 €300 €350

Development policy   General

Development policy   General

*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on the GfK Charity Panel. The left side of the figure shows the share of all donors overall and the share of donors for development policy. The right side depicts the average annual donation volume of the donors.*

**Figure 55**          **Donation behaviour by gender**
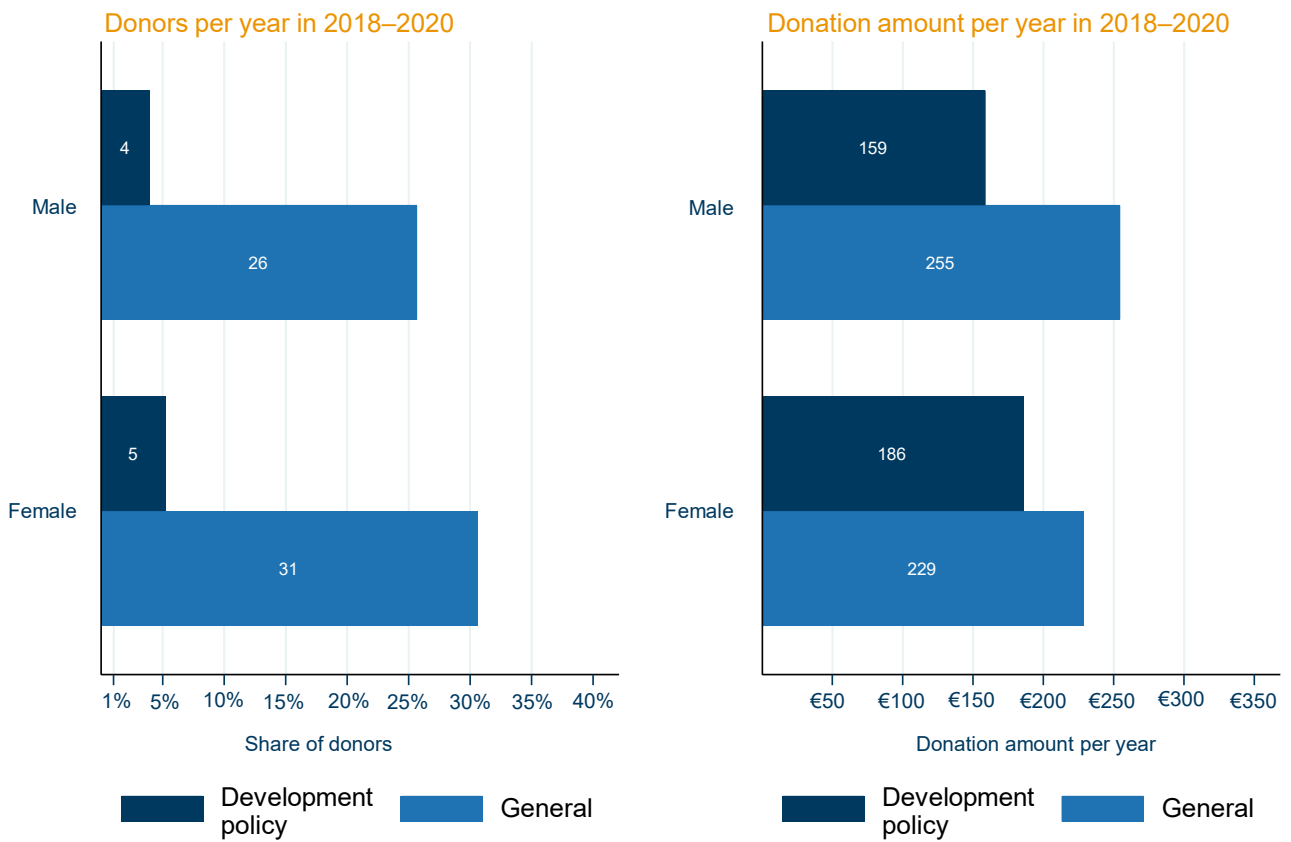
Donors per year in 2018–2020

Donation amount per year in 2018–2020



Male

4

26

Female

5

31

Male

159

255

Female

186

229

Share of donors

Donation amount per year

1%  5%  10%  15%  20%  25%  30%  35%  40%

€50  €100  €150  €200  €250  €300  €350

Development policy    General

Development policy    General

*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on the GfK Charity Panel. The left side of the figure shows the share of all donors overall and the share of donors for development policy. The right side depicts the average annual donation volume of the donors.*

**Figure 56**        **Donation behaviour by education level**

Donors per year in 2018–2020
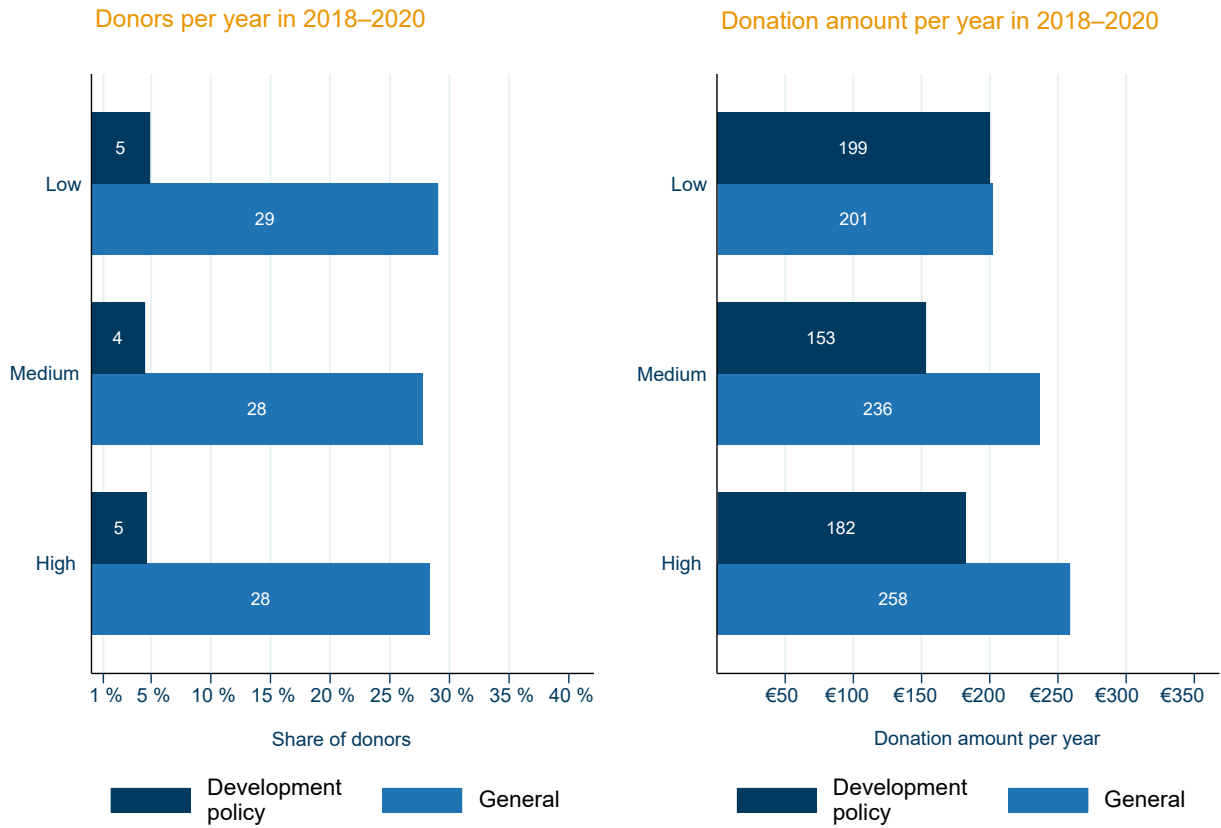
Donation amount per year in 2018–2020



Source: DEval, own visualisation based on the GfK Charity Panel. The left side of the figure shows the share of all donors overall and the share of donors for development policy. The right side depicts the average annual donation volume of the donors.

**Figure 57**    **Donation behaviour by income level**



Donors per year in 2018–020

| €0–1,249 | Development policy: 4, General: 24 |
| €1,250–1,999 | Development policy: 4, General: 26 |
| €2,000–3,599 | Development policy: 5, General: 29 |
| €3,600 and more | Development policy: 6, General: 32 |

Share of donors

Donation amount per year in 2018–2020

| €0–1,249 | Development policy: 126, General: 137 |
| €1,250–1,999 | Development policy: 102, General: 172 |
| €2,000–3,599 | Development policy: 165, General: 229 |
| €3,600 and more | Development policy: 249, General: 353 |

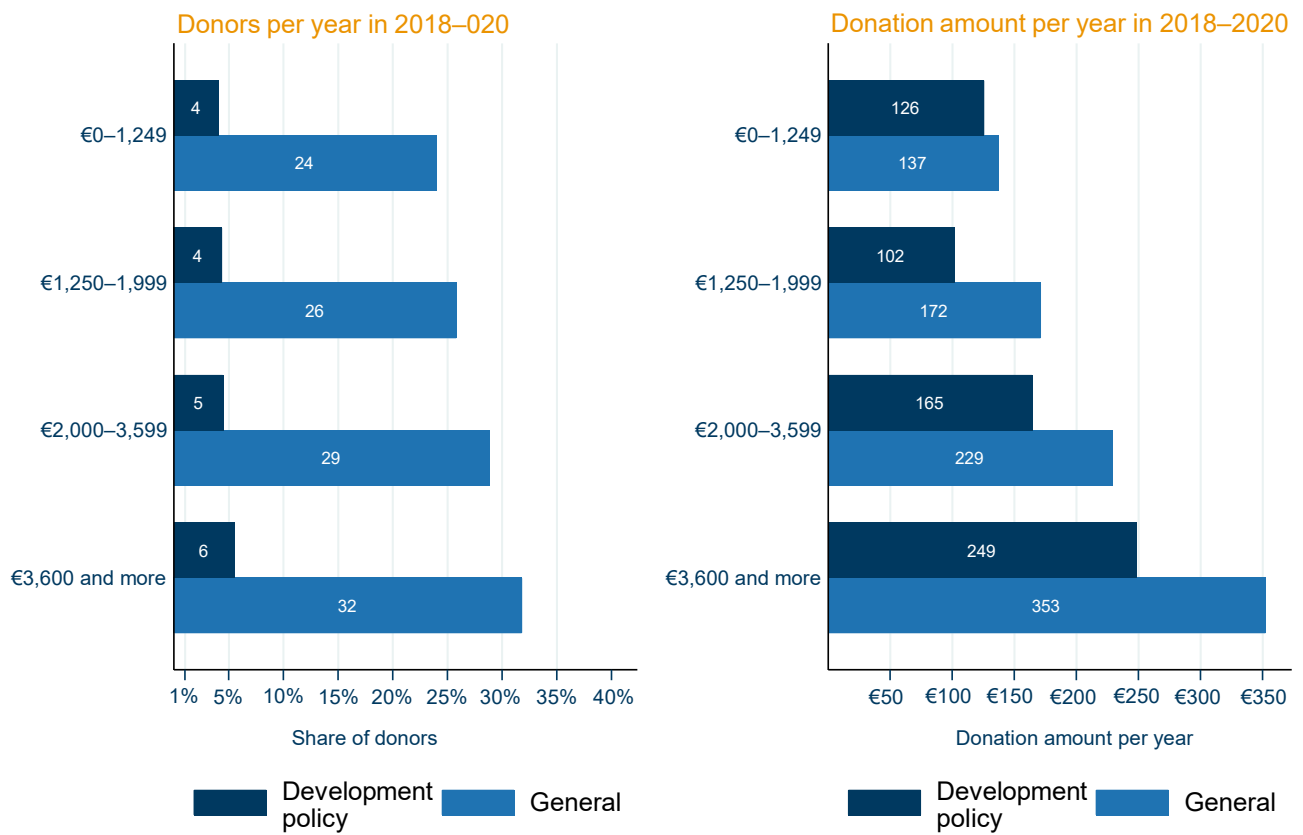Donation amount per year

Development policy    General

*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on the GfK Charity Panel. The left side of the figure shows the share of all donors overall and the share of donors for development policy. The right side depicts the average annual donation volume of the donors.*

**Table 3**          **Willingness to donate and donation behaviour**

| Statement | "I am generally willing to donate money for charitable purposes." | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Do not agree at all | Tend to disagree | I am undecided | Tend to agree | Completely agree | **Total** |
| **All respondents** | 773 | 1,072 | 2,746 | 2,469 | 1,737 | 8,797 |
| **Share in %** | 9% | 12% | 31% | 28% | 20% | |
| **Donors (27%)** | 68 | 165 | 512 | 808 | 840 | 2,393 |
| **Share of all donors in %** | 3% | 7% | 21% | 34% | 35% | |
| **Non-donors (73%)** | 705 | 907 | 2,234 | 1,661 | 897 | 6,404 |
| **Share of all non-donors in %** | 11% | 14% | 35% | 26% | 14% | |
| **Completion rate** | 9% | 15% | 19% | 33% | 48% | |

*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on the GfK Charity Panel, special survey in January 2021. The completion rate refers to the share of people with each level of willingness to donate who donated.*
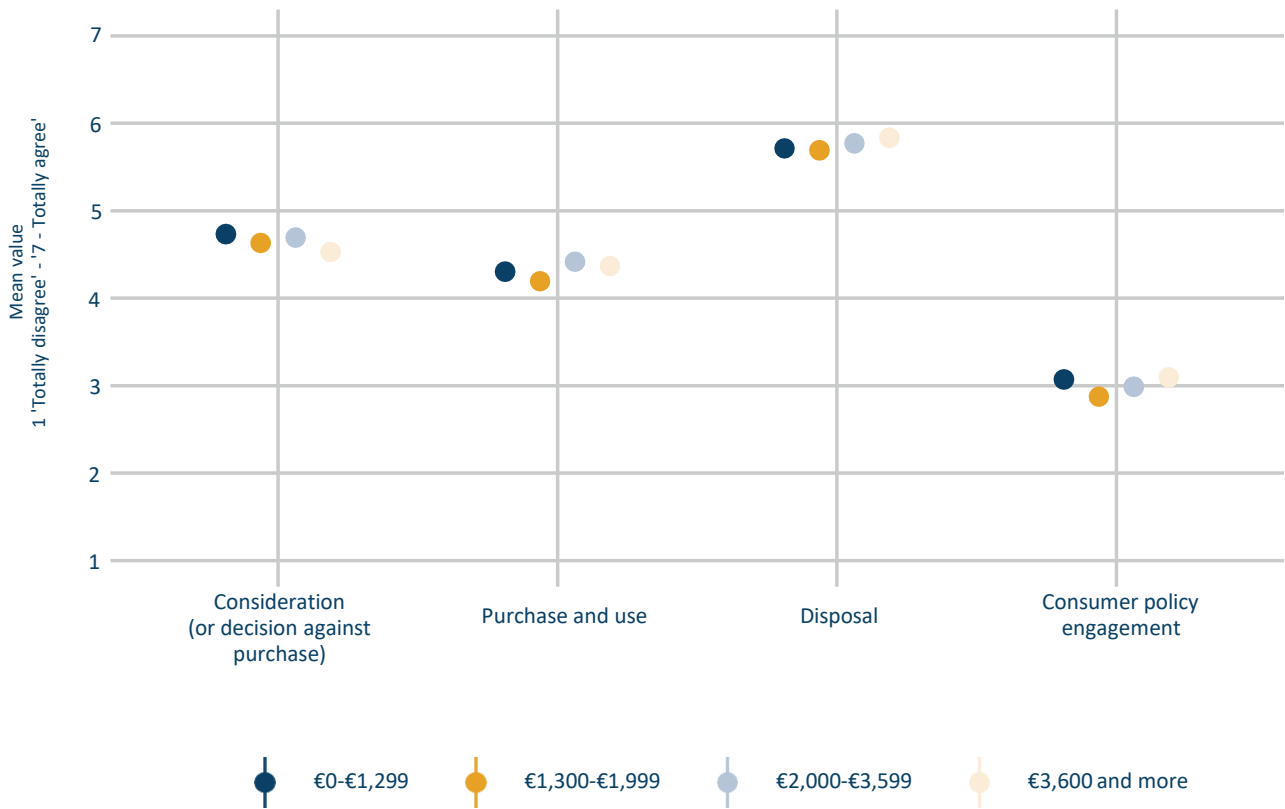
## 6.4 Annex Section 3.3

**Figure 58** **Sustainable consumption according to consumption phase and political orientation**
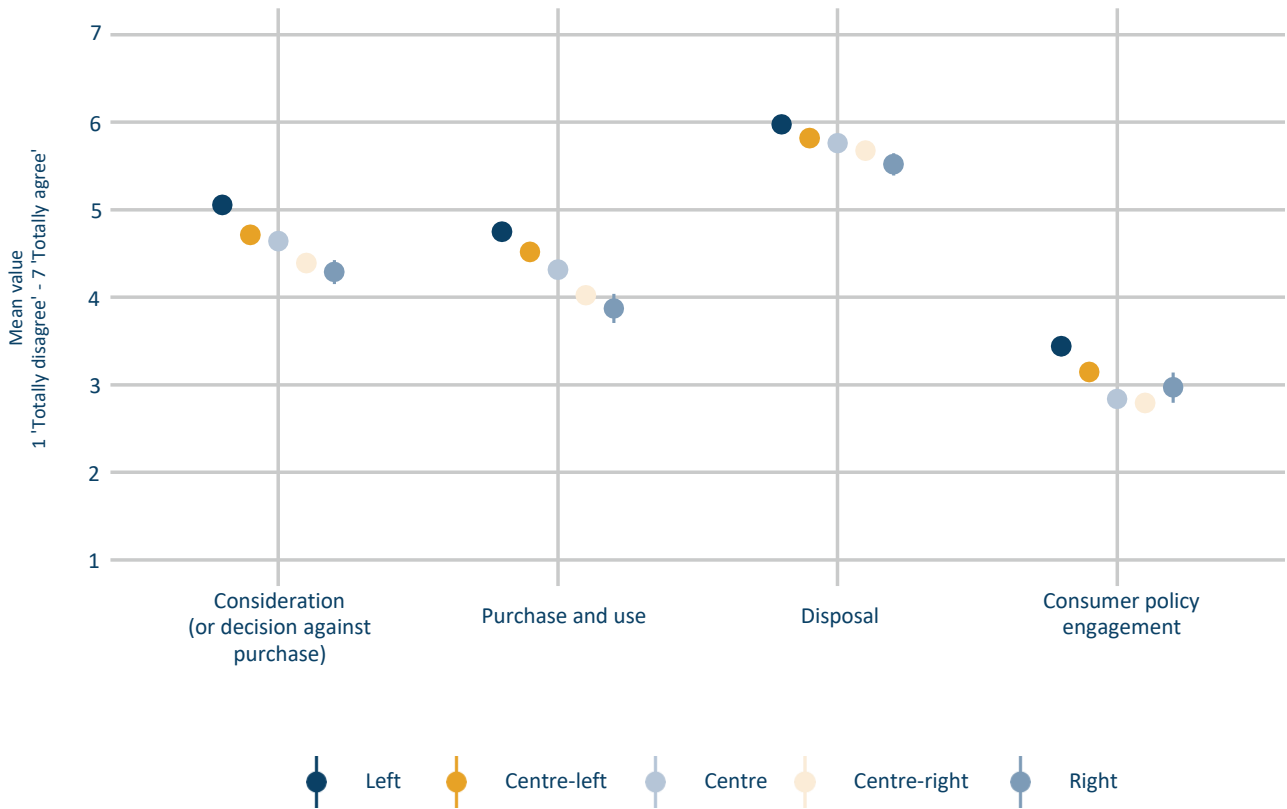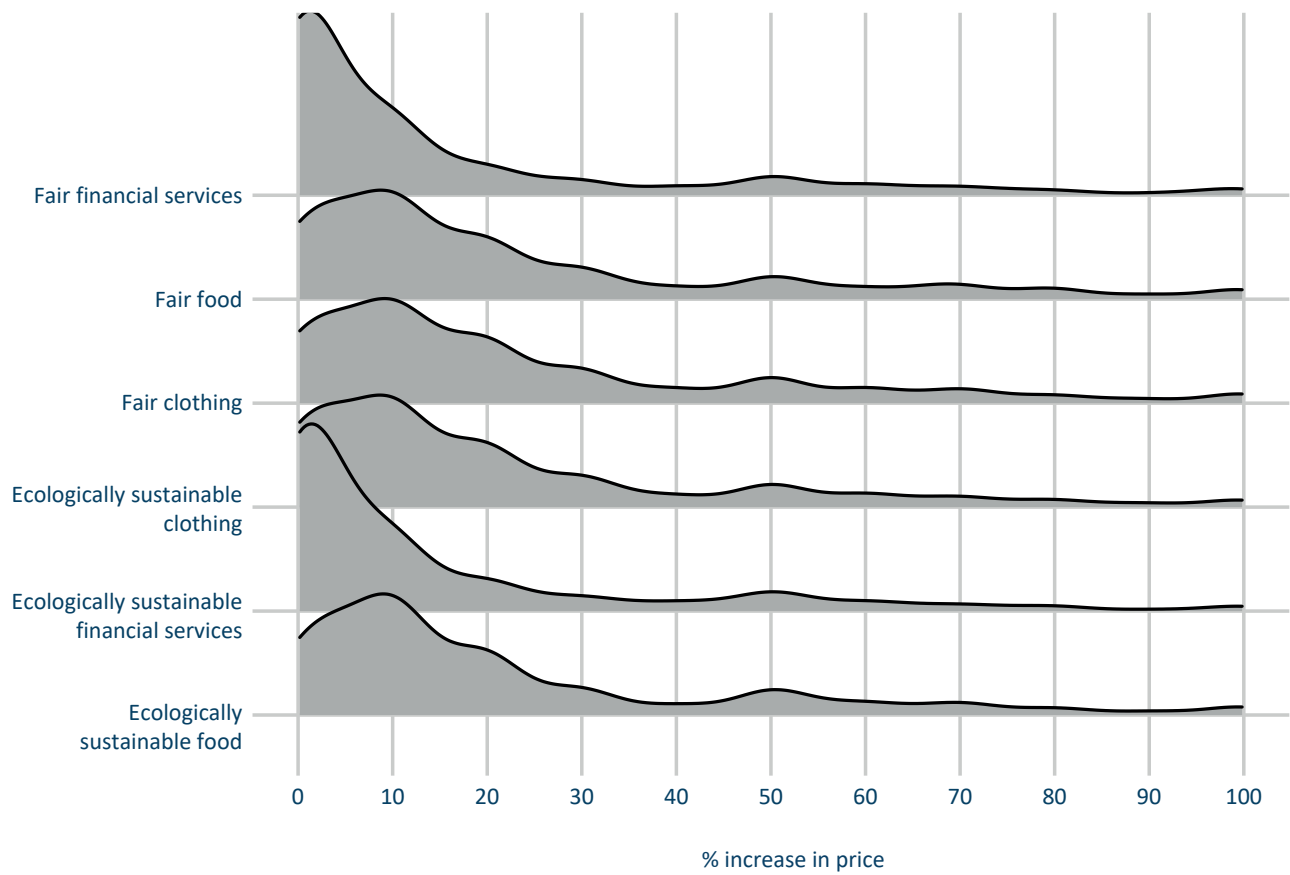


Source: DEval, own visualisation based on data collected by Respondi in November 2021, N = 2,010. For the categorisation of political orientation, see also Box 4.

**Figure 59** Sustainable consumption according to consumption phase and income group



*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on data collected by Respondi in November 2021, N = 2,010.*

**Figure 60**     **Willingness to pay more in the various consumption areas**



*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on data collected by Respondi in November 2021, N = 2,010.*

## 6.5    Annex Section 3.4

**Table 4    Socio-demographic and attitude-related characteristics of engagement types**

| Characteristic | Totally disengaged (TD) | Marginally engaged (ME) | Informationally engaged (IE) | Behaviourally engaged (BE) | Fully engaged (FE) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Share | 22.3% | 43.7% | 21.6% | 9.1% | 3.3% |
| Average age | 47 years | 51 years | 51 years | 42 years | 40 years |
| Gender | More often women (54.1%) | More often women (53.2%) | No difference (men: 49.1%; women: 50.9%) | More often men (58.9%) | More often men (56.8%) |
| Education | More likely Haupt-/Realschule/ no qualification (61.2%) | More likely Haupt-/Realschule/ no qualification (51.4%) | Slightly more likely Haupt-/Realschule/ no qualification (43.8%) | More likely Abitur (31.1%), higher education qualification (34.1%) | More likely Abitur (28.5%), higher education qualification (33.8%) |
| Income | More likely lower income (36.0%) or no answer (32.3%) | Low (33.5%) to medium income (28.9%) | Low (36.3%) to medium income (27.3%) | Medium (29.9%) to high income (20.5%) | Medium (34.4%) to high income (27.9%) |
| Political orientation (scale from 0 'left' to 10 'right') | Centre/centre-right (Ø = 5.3) | Centre (Ø = 5.0) | Tends centre-left/left (Ø = 4.5) | Tends centre-left/ centre (Ø = 4.8) | Tends centre-right/ right (Ø = 5.6) |
| Concern | Low share "(very) concerned" (22.0%) | High share "(very) concerned" (52.0%) | Very high share "(very) concerned" (68.7%) | Low share "(very) concerned" (50.1%) | High share "(very) concerned" (52.3%) |
| Moral obligation | Low share of moral obligation (11.0%) | Average share of moral obligation (29.7%) | High share of moral obligation (48.9%) | High share of moral obligation (42.8%) | High share of moral obligation (47.1%) |
| DC support | Very low share of generous support (9.5%) | Average share of generous support (20.7%) | High share of generous support (37.8%) | High share of generous support (35.2%) | High share of generous support (40.4%) |
| DC effectiveness | High share "(absolutely) ineffective" (31.5%)/ "don't know" (34.4%) | High share "(absolutely) ineffective" (42.1%) | Low share "(very) effective" (13.0%) | Slightly high share "(very) effective" (18.1%) | Low share "(very) effective" (34.8%) |
| Perceived self-efficacy (scale 0–10) | Very low self-efficacy (Ø = 2.6) | Very low self-efficacy (Ø = 2.6) | Low self-efficacy (Ø = 3.6) | Average self-efficacy (Ø = 4.8) | Slightly above-average self-efficacy (Ø = 5.7) |
| Awareness of SDGs | Very low awareness (10.7%) | Low awareness (29.3%) | Average awareness (48.6%) | Slightly higher awareness (56.7%) | High awareness (71.3%) |

*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on AAT survey wave 10 in September 2018. N = 6,039. Weighted data. The complete analyses can be found in Section 2.4.3 in the online Annex. Income: up to EUR 29,999 = low; EUR 30,000 to EUR 59,999 = medium; EUR 60,000 and more = high. For awareness of the SDGs, the shares for the categories "Yes, and you know exactly what they involve" and "Yes, but you don't really know what they involve" were added together. The other characteristics correspond to the coding in Section 2.*

**Figure 61     Use of various engagement forms in the engagement types**
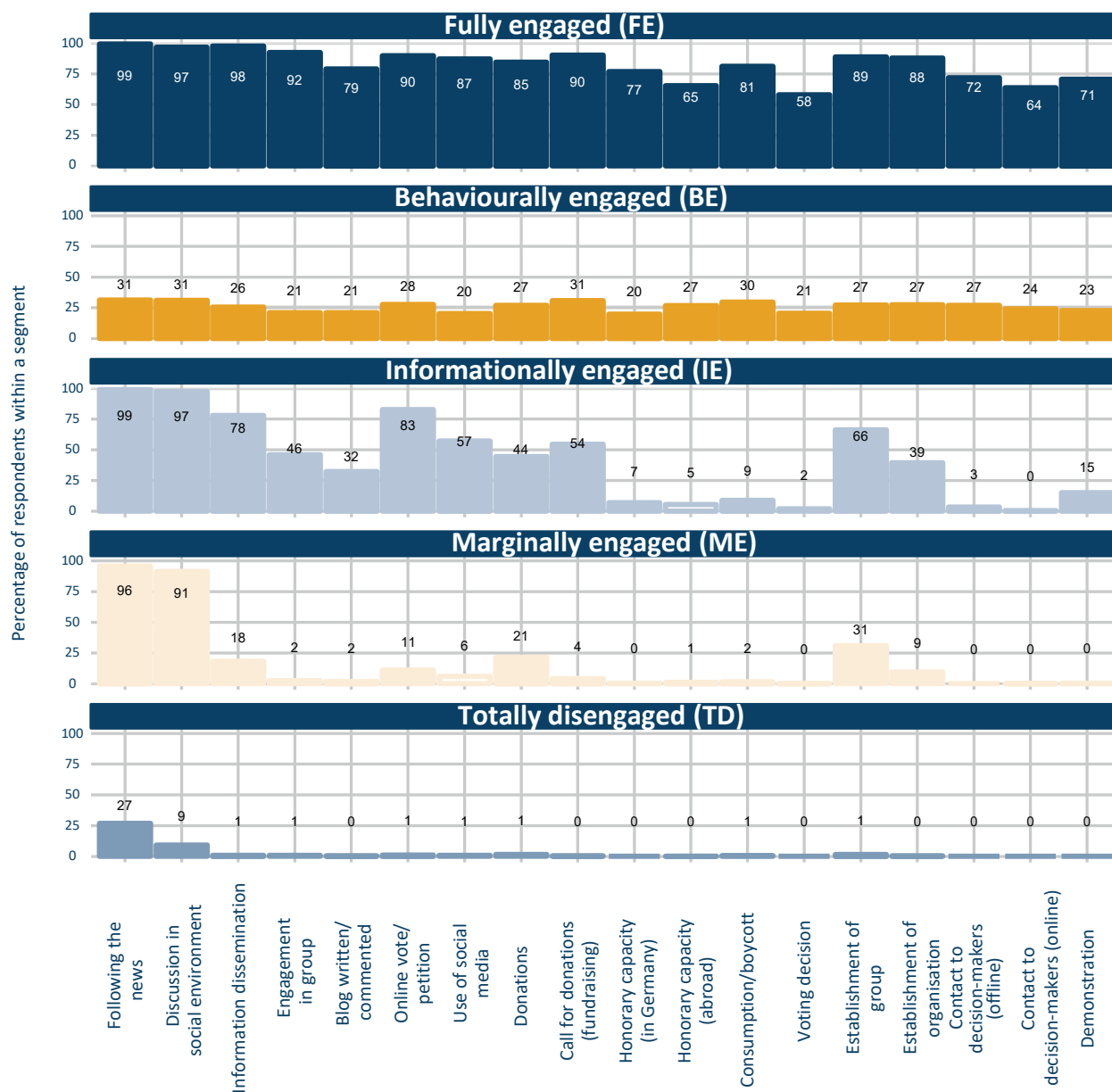


*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on AAT survey waves 1–10.*

**Table 5     Probability of transition between engagement types**

| | Totally disengaged (TD) | Marginally engaged (ME) | Information-ally engaged (IE) | Behaviourally engaged (BE) | Fully engaged (FE) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Totally disengaged (TD)** | 0.67 | 0.27 | 0.02 | 0.03 | 0.01 |
| **Marginally engaged (ME)** | 0.22 | 0.67 | 0.08 | 0.02 | 0 |
| **Informationally engaged (IE)** | 0.08 | 0.31 | 0.51 | 0.05 | 0.04 |
| **Behaviourally engaged (BE)** | 0.23 | 0.23 | 0.13 | 0.35 | 0.05 |
| **Fully engaged (FE)** | 0.13 | 0.1 | 0.29 | 0.12 | 0.37 |

*Source: DEval, own visualisation based on AAT survey waves 1–10. The figure shows the average probabilities for keeping/switching engagement types across all ten AAT waves.*

## 6.6 Project staff and time schedule

**Table 6** **Study team and contributors**

| Surname | Forename | Role |
|---|---|---|
| **Authors** | | |
| **Eger** | Jens | Evaluator |
| **Sassenhagen** | Nora | Evaluator |
| **H. Schneider** | Dr. Sebastian | Team leader |
| **Contributors** | | |
| **Becker** | Simon | Student employee |
| **Faust** | Prof. Dr. Jörg | Internal peer reviewer |
| **Liebe** | Prof. Dr. Ulf | External peer reviewer |
| **Orth** | Caroline | Project Administrator |
| **Sarro** | Luisa | Student employee |
| **Wolf** | Dr. Kathrin | Internal peer reviewer |
| **Zille** | Dr. Helge | Evaluator |
| **Responsible** | | |
| **Bruder** | Dr. Martin | Head of Department |

**Table 7** **Timeline of the study**

| Time frame | Tasks |
|---|---|
| **April 2021–June 2021** | Preparing the study concept |
| **July 2021** | First reference group meeting and revision of study concept |
| **August 2021–January 2022** | Data collection, analyses, textualisation |
| **February 2022–March 2022** | Internal/external peer reviewer |
| **April 2022** | Distribution of draft report |
| **May 2022** | Second reference group meeting |
| **May-June 2022** | Revision of draft report |
| **July-September 2022** | Revision, layout |