



# OPINION MONITOR FOR DEVELOPMENT POLICY 2018 – ATTITUDES TOWARDS DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

2018

This study examines the attitudes, knowledge and engagement of the German population regarding development policy, development cooperation and global sustainable development. It provides state and civil society actors with up-to-date information and analyses on this topic area that they can use for the strategic orientation of their work as well as for communication and education work. The data essentially comes from the Aid Attitudes Tracker, a comparative panel survey that has been collecting data in Germany, France, Great Britain and the US since 2013.

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<sup>1</sup> The BMZ Division names listed here relate to the official names at the time this report was drawn up (June 2018)



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Background

Germany has long been one of the largest traditional donors of official development assistance (ODA). German ODA contributions amounted to approximately EUR 25 billion in 2016.<sup>2</sup>

Development policy and development cooperation (DC) play a key role in Agenda 2030 and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by the United Nations in 2015. Germany has made a commitment to this Agenda, with state and civil society working towards its implementation. With the adoption of the Charter for the Future: ONE WORLD – Our Responsibility back in 2014, the German Government set a high level of ambition for fully involving policy-makers, business, civil society and citizens in its engagement for a sustainable future.

Against this background, it is important to find out about public attitudes and whether and to what extent the public<sup>3</sup> is in favour of development policy and DC. For example, does the public support ODA and the target of spending 0.7 % of gross national income (GNI) on aid? Are citizens familiar with the Agenda 2030, and are they engaged with any of the SDGs?

Currently, the data collected about German public attitudes, knowledge and engagement with DC and sustainable development are patchy at best. This study aims to close this gap, channel feedback from the public to the development community, and provide development actors and a wider public with comprehensive knowledge-based guidance and trend-related data. The outcomes of the study should be used to encourage reflection by development organisations on the strategic direction of this field of policy and action in light of public opinion, and to inform practical work in areas such as communication and civic education strategies.

## Key questions and data source

The study focuses particularly on the following questions:

1. Which attitudes can be identified among citizens<sup>4</sup> in relation to development policy, DC and global sustainable development? How much do they know, and how do they engage?
2. Have knowledge, attitudes and behavioural engagement changed in recent years?
3. Which individual and social factors explain knowledge, attitudes and behavioural engagement (e.g., sociodemographic characteristics, party preference, historical events)?
4. What would a typology of public attitudes look like? How can the public be segmented into meaningful categories regarding their knowledge, attitudes and behaviour patterns?

The study is based on data from the *Aid Attitudes Tracker* (AAT), a survey conducted in six-month cycles in Germany, Great Britain, France and the US since 2013, with approximately 6,000 participants per wave and country. The AAT's purpose is to find out about the public's knowledge, attitudes, and behavioural engagement in relation to DC and development issues.

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.bmz.de/de/ministerium/zahlen\\_fakten/oda/geber/index.html](http://www.bmz.de/de/ministerium/zahlen_fakten/oda/geber/index.html)

<sup>3</sup> The term “(German) public” refers throughout the study to the population of Germany, irrespective of citizenship and registered place of residence.

<sup>4</sup> The term “citizens” refers throughout the study to persons living in Germany, irrespective of citizenship and registered place of residence.

## Key findings

In general, there is a consistently high level of support for DC within the German public: around 90 % of the public regard DC as important, while around 40 % would like to see more engagement for poverty reduction, and approximately 30 % are in favour of more generous ODA provision. Indeed, around 70 % say they would like Germany to meet or even exceed the 0.7 % ODA/GNI target set by the United Nations. This shows that large segments of the German public assign Germany a global responsibility. At the same time, citizens want poverty reduction in Germany itself to take priority. Furthermore, they rarely differentiate between the various motives behind DC, such as economic and security interests or the need to tackle the causes of migration. The AAT data suggest that the public tends to view the benefits of DC in generalised terms.

Despite the high level of public support, there are also widespread concerns. Around 25 % of the public believe that DC is ineffective; just 10 % believe it is effective. Around 50 % of the public take a position between these two extremes. Citizens assume that roughly 50 % of aid funding is lost to corruption. Views on aid effectiveness correlate strongly with assumptions about corruption.

Compared with other countries, German public attitudes towards development policy and DC are positive. Around 40 % of the French and German public say they are in favour of increasing aid in order to reduce poverty. Support for such a move is much lower – roughly 25 % – in Great Britain and the US. In all four countries, the desire to see more government engagement for poverty reduction correlates strongly with a left-leaning/liberal political orientation, a sense of moral obligation towards countries in the Global South, and a positive view of aid effectiveness. In addition, young people are more likely than older generations to support increasing the engagement for poverty reduction.

Citizens engage with global challenges through the media and in personal conversations. However, their knowledge of aid and (global) development issues lacks specific detail. Above all, their perceptions of global poverty, child mortality trends and the scientific consensus on the human contribution to climate change are plainly distorted. The 17 SDGs are largely unfamiliar to citizens, who are indifferent or sceptical on the question whether the SDGs can be reached, believing that they themselves have limited opportunities to exert influence. And yet self-efficacy, i.e. the sense of being able to make a meaningful contribution of one's own, is a key factor for individual engagement in SDG implementation.

Around 20 % of the public donated money in 2017, and 20 % made a conscious decision to buy – or not to buy – specific products in order to positively influence global development and poverty. However, citizens are much less likely to take on voluntary roles. This partly reflects people's individual sense of moral obligation and perceptions of self-efficacy, but education and income are additional factors of relevance to donations and consumption decisions.

Public attitudes to development policy and DC can be segmented into four types. The classification depends on interviewees' sociodemographic background and party preference:

1. **Undecideds (35 %)** do not have a clearly identifiable position.
2. **Sceptics (23 %)** care about the situation in the Global South and feel a moral obligation, but show only average levels of support for DC and have concerns about its effectiveness and their own scope to exert influence.
3. **Opponents (28 %)** care less about the situation in the Global South, do not feel any moral obligation, support DC to a lesser extent and regard it – and personal engagement – as ineffective.
4. **Supporters (14 %)** display highly positive attitudes across all areas.

The study focuses particularly on the effects of refugee movements on support for DC. The data from the entire survey period (2013-2017) show that after the so-called refugee crisis reached its peak in September 2015, the public increasingly regarded immigration as a challenge, and public attitudes towards refugees became slightly more sceptical. However, this was accompanied by a slight increase in public support for DC. Before the influx of refugees reached its peak, an increased tendency to view immigration as a challenge correlated with slightly stronger support for DC, as did a shift in political orientation towards the right.

The effect of immigration perceptions was neutralised later, however, while the effect of changes in political orientation weakened. From this, it may be concluded that following the influx of refugees and the debate about DC as a means of tackling the root causes of migration, support for DC increased. However, after the “crisis” peaked, the previously positive impacts of changes in perception and political orientation disappeared.

The implications of the findings on public opinion are discussed at the end of the report with reference to development policy, DC, communication, and civic education strategies.

## ATTITUDES

### What does the public think of development cooperation?



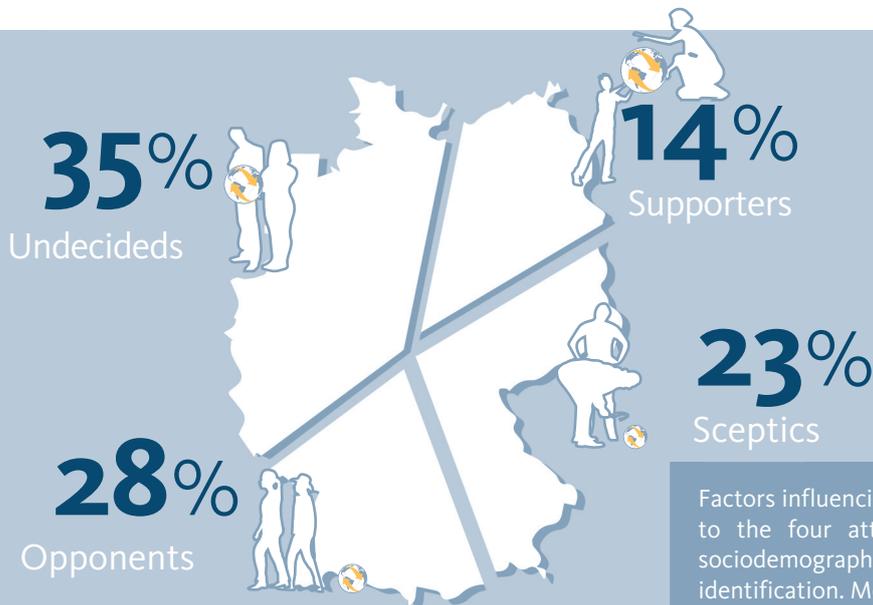
There is support for the general idea of development cooperation.



1. The general public supports development cooperation: around 90% assess development cooperation as important. Around 40% are in favour of greater government engagement in the global fight against poverty.
2. The general public barely distinguishes between the various motives for development cooperation, such as promoting the economy, security interests or fighting the causes of flight.
3. 25% of the general public consider development cooperation to be ineffective, only 10% believe it to be effective, and the majority of people are undecided. Also, it is assumed that 50% of the funding for development cooperation is lost due to corruption.

## TYOLOGY

### Which attitude types can be used to classify the wide range of attitudes on development cooperation?



Factors influencing how people are assigned to the four attitude types include their sociodemographic background and party identification. Media use differs only slightly among the four types.

## ENGAGEMENT

How do citizens get involved in the area of development cooperation?

**5%**  
report working in an honorary capacity in Germany.

**18%**  
report having donated within the last year.

**23%**  
report having made conscious consumption decisions with a view to affecting global poverty and development.



Knowledge questions with regard to combating poverty, child mortality and climate change are answered incorrectly by the majority. Donation and consumption behaviour are additionally influenced by education and income.

## SDGs

What does the general public think of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?

A decisive factor for people's commitment to achieving one of the goals is that they believe their contribution to be effective.

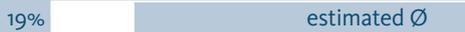
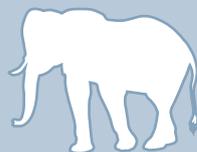


The general public is sceptical as to whether the 17 goals can be achieved by 2030. People rate their own scope to influence the goals (self-efficacy) and the contribution they make themselves as average to slightly positive. A somewhat higher level of approval can be seen for the goals relating to consumption and environmental protection.

## KNOWLEDGE

What do citizens know about the issue of development cooperation?

**79%**  
of respondents overestimated the share of the federal budget.



More than **50%**

of respondents had not yet heard of the SDGs in the summer of 2015 and the summer of 2017.



Knowledge questions with regard to combating poverty, child mortality and climate change are answered incorrectly by the majority.

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# ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AAT	Aid Attitudes Tracker
AfD	Alternative für Deutschland (Alternative for Germany)
BIC	Bayesian Information Criterion
BMU	Bundesministerium für Umwelt, Naturschutz und nukleare Sicherheit (Federal Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety)
BMZ	Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development)
GNI	Gross national income
CDU	Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands (Christian Democratic Union of Germany)
CSU	Christlich-Soziale Union in Bayern (Christian Social Union in Bavaria)
DFID	Department for International Development
EU	European Union
DEval	Deutsches Evaluierungsinstitut der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit (German Institute for Development Evaluation)
DC	Development cooperation
FDP	Freie Demokratische Partei (Free Democratic Party)
IS	Islamic State
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin criterion
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ODA	Official Development Assistance
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SPD	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (Social Democratic Party of Germany)
UN	United Nations
USA	United States of America
VENRO	Verband Entwicklungspolitik und Humanitäre Hilfe deutscher Nichtregierungsorganisationen e.V. (umbrella organisation of development and humanitarian aid NGOs in Germany)
ZiviZ	Zivilgesellschaft in Zahlen (Civil Society in Numbers)

# GLOSSARY

## Data source: Aid Attitudes Tracker

The Aid Attitudes Tracker (AAT) is a longitudinal survey across various countries regarding the attitudes of the general public towards development policy, development cooperation and related topical issues such as elections, flight, migration and terrorism. Since December 2013, around 6,000 people representative of the population in Great Britain, France, Germany and the US have been questioned online every six months. They are over 18 years old and are living in the respective country, irrespective of their citizenship or their registered place of residence. Whereas the state Department for International Development (DFID) and Bond, an umbrella association for non-government development cooperation organisations, in Great Britain already make intensive use of the data, the AAT in Germany has up to now only informed a fairly small group of people, mostly actors from civil society, about the latest survey results.

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation finances the AAT, while researchers from the University of Texas in Dallas, the University of Birmingham and University College London plan and conduct the survey. The market and opinion research institute YouGov collects the data. YouGov drew the random sample of individuals for the first AAT survey in December 2013 from the institute's existing set of respondents. The losses of participants that are usually seen in follow-up surveys in panel questioning (panel mortality) are made up for by refreshment samples (YouGov, 2017). The number of individuals questioned the first time is shown in the right-hand column of Table 1. YouGov takes numerous measures to assure the quality of the data. Firstly, this includes weighting the sample based on the distribution of sociodemographic characteristics such as gender, age or education among the overall population (Andreß et al., 2013). Secondly, respondents who complete the questionnaire extremely quickly or always select only a certain answer option (agreement or rejection effects) are excluded.

Unless specified to the contrary, for example because the software used for a specific analysis procedure does not provide a corresponding function for weighting, it is always the weighted data that is used in the analyses below. As the AAT is the main source of data for the study, its use is not explicitly indicated in tables or figures. In contrast, other data sources such as the Eurobarometer surveys are always shown.

**Table 1** The AAT surveys (2013-2017)

Wave	Data-collection period	Respondents (total)	New respondents
1	December 2013/January 2014	5,700	–
2	June/July 2014	6,170	2,063 (33%)
3	December 2014/January 2015	5,914	1,082 (18%)
4	May/June 2015	6,059	1,478 (24%)
5	December 2015/January 2016	6,027	1,769 (29%)
6	June/July 2016	6,049	1,018 (17%)
7	November/December 2016	6,131	771 (13%)
8	July 2017	6,096	266 (4%)

## Attitudes

Attitudes may be understood as a summary assessment of specific objects (e.g. cars), people (e.g. Angela Merkel) or social groups (e.g. refugees; Bohner and Wänke, 2009, page 5). They have the purpose of processing information and organising knowledge (Raatz, 2016, page 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, page 4; Raatz, 2016, page 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 behaviour, although their predicative 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 and depends on the strength and consistency of the attitudes, direct experience of the object of the attitudes, subjective and perceived standards, the social environment and behaviour 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, but not agree to spending tax revenues on 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, page 93–94). Substantial changes in aggregated attitudes indicate a change in public opinion.

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 a society (Erikson and Tedin, 2011, page 72). As a rule, political orientation is established by means of individuals positioning themselves on a scale from left to right, or alternatively from liberal to conservative (Jost et al., 2009) in the English-speaking world.

## 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” – on a questionnaire. Analysing survey data such as the Aid Attitudes Tracker presents a challenge because relevant characteristics need to be made measurable, in other words operationalised, on the basis of the data material available. Below, therefore, we often have to fall back on individual items – that is, individual statements or questions – to answer specific questions. 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 person questioned, thus allowing a more reliable measurement of the respective construct. However, this only applies if the items map an individual latent characteristic (one-dimensionality) and there is a strong relationship between them on average (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, the statistical interpretation requires no further discussion.<sup>5</sup> In contrast, in the case of a measurement of attitudes yielding, for instance, 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

Development cooperation (DC) means countries in the Global North working together with countries in the Global South to support them in their economic, political and social development, aiming to enable the population there to lead a self-determined life in dignity (see glossary entry “Global South”). The field of activity ranges from poverty reduction to tariff negotiations, for which many different instruments are used. Development cooperation is based on the principle of global solidarity and joint responsibility. Germany is one of the traditional donor countries and was the second largest development partner for the Global South in 2016 (in absolute figures), with ODA payments of 22 billion euros.

On the one hand, the international community has set itself an ambitious range of goals with the 2030 Agenda, spanning all areas of political, social, ecological and economic development (UN, 2015). On the other hand, the Agenda illustrates the endeavour to break up the old dichotomy of industrialised and developing countries, thus defining all countries as developing countries at different stages of development.

## Global South

The concept of the Global South describes an economically, politically and socially underprivileged position in the global system (Mignolo, 2011). The term refers in particular to those areas that have in the past been at a disadvantage, for example as a result of colonialism, neo-imperialism and exploitation. In comparison to the terms “periphery”, “developing countries” or “third world”, which reflect the perspective of the hegemonic Global North, the term “Global South” refers to dependencies and an unjust geopolitical balance of power (Dados and Connell, 2012). The division into south and north should therefore not necessarily be understood in the geographical sense, but rather in the context of globalisation with its “dichotomy of territorialisation/deterritorialisation” (Pagel et al., 2014, page 1). For example, states in the southern hemisphere such as Australia are included in the Global North, while sub-national areas within states of the Global North are assigned to the Global South (Trefzer et al., 2014).

## Principle component analysis

The principle component analysis is a statistical method that uses relationships (referred to in statistics as correlations) between a series of characteristics as a basis to determine their underlying dimensions (for an introduction, see Backhaus et al., 2011). By way of example, from a series of statements regarding the possible effects of development cooperation that were presented to respondents, the analysis might yield the two dimensions of “positive impact” and “risks and side-effects”. The method helps to reduce the complexity of the data and develop suitable instruments for measuring more abstract characteristics such as moral obligations or attitudes towards refugees.

<sup>5</sup> The social significance, in contrast, does require discussion. Likewise, it is also necessary to take account of further characteristics such as (vocational) training, practised profession, age and employment relationship.

## 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., 2011). The dependent variable, for instance general support for development cooperation, is estimated using a collection of individual characteristics such as sociodemography 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, under control of the remaining characteristics, if the respective independent variable – for instance the person’s age – changes by one unit. In the case of categorical variables such as gender or educational qualifications, “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*”). To make things easier to understand, the tables in the main sections of this study report only the direction and statistical significance of the relationship (see glossary entry “Statistical significance”). The numerical results of regression analyses can always be found in the Annex.

The key figure  $R^2$  (also referred to as the determination coefficient) 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 (e.g. engagement that has taken place) when the independent characteristics change by one unit.

## Statistical significance

To check whether a relationship or difference is statistically relevant, i.e. significant, significance tests are used. If the p value falls below the critical threshold value of 0.05 often used in social sciences, then a relationship or difference is considered to be significant (Bryman, 2016, page 347). The p value is the probability of observing the relationship found in the sample or an even stronger relationship if the null hypothesis were valid, in other words if there were no relationship (Goodman, 2008, page 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 also reported, 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.

However, significance must not be taken to imply substance, as even very small results become significant with large samples. Although it means there is very likely to be an effect here, this effect is very small. So it may be the case that it is in reality only of little importance. 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 action or a common cause of change in the independent and dependent variable. The majority of the analyses in the report are based on a cross-section of the AAT (see glossary entry “Aid Attitudes Tracker”) – in other words, on a single survey wave. Consequently, the risk described applies to them. We deviate from this practice in Section 8 in that we use the longitudinal section of the AAT – a repeated survey of the same people – to investigate the relationship between the influx of refugees since 2015 and support for development cooperation.

## Sampling error

The analyses presented are based on a sample. This leads to statistical uncertainty regarding the proportional and average values reported. Let us assume, for example, that out of 1,000 respondents in a fictional random sample, 20% stated that they had donated to a development cooperation organisation in the past year. Then, there is a probability of 95% that the percentage of the entire population lies between 17.5% and 22.5% (confidence interval).<sup>6</sup> If the sample size is increased to 5,000 respondents, then the value lies between 18.8% and 21.1%. 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  $\pm 3$  (Erikson and Tedin, 2011, pages 30–31). High proportional values around 50% exhibit broader confidence intervals than small ones. As a rule, to avoid overloading the text and diagrams, this report does not contain any confidence intervals but always specifies the observation number.

<sup>6</sup> The calculation (in German) is available at <http://eswf.uni-koeln.de/lehre/stathome/statcalc/v22o2.htm>



# 1. BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

## 1.1 Development policy action requires civic support

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In 2015, the United Nations adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with the aim of working together to confront global challenges (UN, 2015). The Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that it contains are dedicated to topics such as combating poverty and hunger, as well as the improvement of health care, education and gender equality, and the sustainable use of resources. The 2030 Agenda stands for a broad understanding of global sustainable development, for which all states play an important role (UN, 2015, page 5). Highly industrialised states, too, are called to instigate a transformation in their own policies, economy and society, and promote sustainable behaviour among their populations. The German Federal Government has espoused these obligations, for instance in the German Sustainable Development Strategy and the Charter for the Future “ONE WORLD – Our Responsibility” (BMZ, 2015a, page 10; BMZ, 2015b; Federal Government, 2017). At the same time, efforts of the “developing countries” are needed. In this context, development cooperation is an important instrument for supporting these efforts and meeting global challenges together on the road to achieving sustainable global development (UN, 2015, pages 14–15).

In order to achieve the aspired social transformation, however, government engagement alone is not enough; it is necessary for all relevant actors to get involved (e.g. BMZ, 2015a, page 27). Ultimately, this means not only that politics, business and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have a responsibility, but also that all citizens need to get involved too (BMZ and BMUB, 2015, page 8). The general public can contribute towards achieving the goals for sustainable development by

- developing an increased awareness of global social, political and economic relationships (Czaplínska, 2007, page 26),
- internalising values and attitudes as the basis for sustainable citizenship (Leiserowitz et al., 2006; Micheletti and Stolle, 2012) and
- finally changing its behaviour with regard to its social engagement and private consumption, for instance in the areas of food, clothing, mobility and tourism.

This also includes support for development policy and government development cooperation.

Even beyond the political objectives formulated in the 2030 Agenda, it is important from a normative democratic-theoretical perspective that the general public supports political goals and measures (Easton, 1975). For example, government decision-makers should take account of the expectations of the general public when defining their policies. Only in this way can they ensure acceptance for political decisions in the medium to long term. Moreover, a policy that permanently fails to correspond to the preferences of the general public would have a legitimacy problem.<sup>7</sup> This also applies to development policy and government development cooperation as well as the abovementioned efforts to fulfil the Sustainable Development Goals. This reasoning also becomes more topical and gains political relevance as a result of recent successes of ring-wing populist parties and movements in Europe and beyond. They claim that there is a distance in terms of content between the general public and political decision-makers. Therefore, they maintain that people question the legitimacy of the political actions of what they perceive as the “aloof” political elite and are frequently very critical of development cooperation (on right-wing populism e.g. Mudde, 2007).

<sup>7</sup> A distinction needs to be made in this context between input, throughput and output legitimacy (Schmidt, 2013). If the preferences of the general public in a certain policy area cannot be sufficiently incorporated into decision-making processes, then the input legitimacy is at stake. Throughput legitimacy in this context refers to the direct involvement of citizens in decision-making processes and the resulting recognition. Finally, output legitimacy refers to recognition based on services rendered, for instance in terms of a welfare state and infrastructure.

However, it is not only government political actions that require the support of the general public. Civil society organisations active in development cooperation also rely on support from the general public – e.g. in the form of donations, membership fees or honorary engagement. This support may fail to materialise or may decrease if citizens do not believe that global contexts and international cooperation are important for their well-being, or if they doubt that development cooperation can contribute towards positive changes. These organisations then only have a limited ability to act. On top of this, the government also provides quite a substantial amount of financial support for civil society development cooperation. Around 40% of the financial support from German NGOs comes from state resources (Dreher et al., 2012). If the endorsement of government development cooperation among the general public decreases, this may therefore also have indirect consequences for NGOs.

## 1.2 Weak feedback loop between development cooperation actors and society

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The involvement of citizens in development policy or development cooperation poses particular challenges. As is the case for many foreign policy issues, most citizens in highly industrialised states do not directly experience development cooperation in their everyday lives and it is consequently of little relevance to them (Eichenberg, 2007, page 384–385). This has the result that information regarding this topic area usually feeds on fragments of media coverage on the Global South and campaigns of government and non-government development cooperation organisations, although information is available from ministries and NGOs. These information sources are particularly characterised by the fact that they have an impact on citizens in irregular cycles (Erikson and Tedin, 2011, pages 60–63).

The information about development cooperation conveyed by the media meets with a limited individual ability among the general public to absorb this information, and competes with a wide range of other information that has greater direct consequences for people’s own living conditions (Lupia, 2016, page 72). For this reason, the feedback that reaches citizens with regard to government action and its consequences in the area of development policy – and especially in the area of development cooperation – is rather weak in comparison to other policy areas such as health care, education or infrastructure.

Conversely, the fact that the general public is rather distanced from development policy and development cooperation has the result that government and civil society actors receive little feedback from the general public. It is probably only in exceptional cases that questions relating to development cooperation are the subject of citizens’ consultations. In particular, population groups with a reserved or sceptical attitude towards development policy and development cooperation participate only to a little extent, if at all, in exchange formats initiated by the government or civil society, for instance in the development of basic strategies such as the Charter for the Future (BMZ, 2015b). The consistent orientation of the state and society towards sustainability, which due to international challenges also encompasses development policy as well as government and civil society development cooperation, demands that all social groups are involved. Nevertheless, the great distance of many citizens to development cooperation does not mean that they have no opinion as to whether they advocate development cooperation and how it should be structured. Such opinions even exist when people have little knowledge of development cooperation, and despite the fact that the issue only rarely attracts great media attention (e.g. Kevenhörster, 1995).

Politics, development cooperation implementing organisations and non-government actors in development policy and development cooperation should therefore pay attention to the attitudes of the general public. Making the assessments of all citizens heard and correspondingly strengthening the feedback loop in the direction of politics is therefore a central task of a “listening architecture” for development policy and development cooperation (OECD DevCom, 2016). In this regard, representative surveys can make a valuable contribution as they make it possible to gain an insight into the opinions of the general public. The consideration of knowledge, attitudes and behaviour patterns over the course of time and with regard to influencing factors is of particularly great relevance here. Does the general public support development cooperation? Are the SDGs known to citizens and are they becoming better known over the course of time? Are wealthy states seen to be (jointly) responsible for the situation in countries of the Global South? Do people support development cooperation projects with their own donations or honorary engagement and

which characteristics influence these actions? Are there possibly any global events over the course of time that influence attitudes towards development cooperation?

The data and studies currently available on attitudes towards development cooperation and sustainable development in Germany are fragmented and do not provide any satisfactory answers to these questions (the Global Perspectives Initiative study conducted in 2017 is an exception here). Many contributions are outdated or there is too little breadth and depth in the way they deal with the complex construct of “attitude” (Hudson and vanHeerde-Hudson, 2012, page 13).<sup>8</sup> Fairly recent events in world politics, in particular – including the European economic and financial crisis, the influx of numerous refugees since 2015 and international terrorism – have the potential to influence interest in and attitudes towards development cooperation in terms of its scope and orientation. Up-to-date data and analyses regarding attitudes towards development cooperation and sustainable development – especially longitudinal data – and also regarding the associated influencing factors are therefore urgently required for reflection upon development policy actions in times where the attitudes of society are rapidly changing.

### 1.3 Aims of the study

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Against this backdrop, this study provides detailed, up-to-date, policy-relevant information about attitudes, knowledge and engagement in the complex issues of development policy, development cooperation and sustainable development for those active in this field and also for a broader professional audience. It particularly focuses on developments over the course of time and on the analysis of factors that influence these developments. In this respect, the study pursues two interconnected objectives:

1. The study is intended to **strengthen the feedback loop between the German population and government or non-government actors in development policy and development cooperation**. For this purpose, it makes information about the general public’s knowledge, attitudes and engagement available for political and civil society discourse on development policy and development cooperation. The feedback loop constitutes a mechanism that can contribute, at least in the long term, towards achieving the necessary broad acceptance for the aspired social transformation in the (everyday) political process of implementing the 2030 Agenda.
2. The study makes **relevant orientation and trend knowledge available to actors in development policy and development cooperation**. It not only describes the knowledge, attitudes and engagement of the general public, but also investigates the associated influencing factors and changes over the course of time. It invites government and civil society actors to reflect on the general orientation and specific measures of their development policy and cooperation as well as their communication and education work against this empirical background.

### 1.4 Structure of the study

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Section 2 provides a brief overview of the development of public opinion regarding development cooperation in Germany. For this purpose, we include an interview with experts from research and development cooperation practice discussing the past, present and future challenges faced by opinion research in this field. Section 3 is devoted to the core of the study, in other words the attitudes of the German population towards development cooperation – subdivided into general attitudes towards development cooperation, support for various motives for development cooperation, the prioritisation of combating poverty and the assessment of impact. Sections 4 and 5 follow on from this, looking at two areas to be considered separately from attitudes, namely the knowledge and engagement of the general public in this topic area. The focus of Section 6 is on how the general public perceives the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. In Section 7, the complex attitudes of the general public towards development cooperation are consolidated

<sup>8</sup> Available studies tend to use a single indicator or just a few indicators to gauge attitudes and focus on a very narrowly defined theoretical argument to explain this indicator or these indicators. Moreover, a great deal of time often passes between data collection and the publication of the results. Frequently, the results are only poorly accessible for use in development cooperation practice.

to form a tangible typology. This is then used in Section 8 as the basis for a development cooperation-specific analysis of information intake and media use. Section 9 then looks into the increased number of refugees since 2015 – referred to as the “refugee crisis”<sup>9</sup> – and the consequences of this for support for development cooperation among the general public. Finally, Section 10 presents the central implications for development policy as well as government and civil society development cooperation.

The data source for all analyses is the Aid Attitudes Tracker (AAT). This project has been collecting data on attitudes towards development cooperation as well as the associated knowledge and engagement of the populations of Germany, France, Great Britain and the US at regular intervals since 2013 (for details, see glossary entry “Data source: Aid Attitudes Tracker”). Additionally, the Eurobarometer surveys are used to allow statements to be made spanning a longer period of time.

<sup>9</sup> The increase in the influx of refugees has frequently been referred to in the media as a refugee crisis or even flood of refugees. In view of the negative connotation of words such as crisis and flood, the study team largely avoids using these terms.

## 2. INTERVIEW: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE OF OPINION RESEARCH ON DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

To gain an insight into public opinion on development policy and development cooperation, representative surveys have been conducted in Germany since the mid-1970s (Willems, 1998). These surveys have different motivations and served or serve, for instance, to improve communication regarding the policy area, further develop development policy education work and improve the understanding of the target groups of development policy actors and the possibilities for mobilising them.

Against the backdrop of the 2030 Agenda, the attitudes of the general public towards development policy issues are currently becoming particularly relevant. Support among the general public is considered to be crucial for a successful implementation of 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

What has changed in the way in which public opinion on development policy and development cooperation is addressed? What role does opinion research now play in this policy area? Solveig Gleser from the DEval study team discussed these questions with Prof. Simone Dietrich (professor at the Department of Political Science and International Relations at the University of Geneva), Ulrich Post (head of the General Policy division at Welthungerhilfe, Bonn), Christian Wilmsen (former head of division for development policy education at BMZ, Berlin) and Felix Zimmermann (OECD DevCom Coordinator, Paris).

### **DEval: Since when have researchers in Germany been investigating public opinion on development policy and how have their investigations developed?**

**C. Wilmsen:** Soon after being established in 1961, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) started investigating public opinion on German development policy in the form of surveys. My own time at BMZ began in 1980. I remember exactly that we conducted surveys with the aim of establishing how we can put our scarce funds for development policy education work to better and more targeted use. In 1977, BMZ launched an opinion poll together with a remarkably provocative advertising campaign, displaying challenging pictures portraying prejudices against development aid and their rebuttal with the aim of drawing increased attention to development cooperation.

The survey was the prerequisite for structuring public relations work more effectively. By 1979, approval of development cooperation increased by nine percentage points. Following a brief decline, approval remained stable in the 1980s at approximately 72%. Unfortunately, BMZ has not been publishing survey results from the year 2000 onwards. Since 2009, surveys have been conducted together with the Sinus Institute, which represents the opinion patterns of certain target groups in clusters, and the results do not permit comparison with previous BMZ surveys.

**U. Post:** In 2007, VENRO (an umbrella organisation of development and humanitarian aid NGOs in Germany) commissioned a study questioning the German population on its opinion regarding public development cooperation. The results were stunningly positive. Surveys conducted by the EU Commission have also shown that there has been a very high rate of approval for development cooperation in Germany since the 1980s.

**C. Wilmsen:** Yes, the rate has always been between 70% and 85%. These figures are extremely pleasing. However, if we consider the results of the control questions, we need to put this into perspective again. Faced with competition from other policy areas such as road construction or education, development aid was then pushed to the background.

We wanted to use the results of the surveys to have a more targeted impact on certain opinion patterns and overcome reservations and resistance, which we classified at the time as negative catalysts. What I mean by that, for example, is people overestimating the amount spent on development aid by a factor of 5 to 15. Many citizens visiting BMZ came up with arguments such as the following: "If Africa is still poor despite these huge sums spent on development cooperation there, then the entire aid must have been wrong." Many people were also unaware of the interdependencies between industrialised and developing countries

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"I remember exactly that we conducted surveys with the aim of establishing how we can put our scarce funds for development policy education work to better and more targeted use."



*Christian Wilmsen*

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and judged the situation in many countries of the Global South to be worse than it actually is. Groups of visitors at BMZ often expressed scepticism with regard to the effectiveness of development cooperation or doubted that even ordinary people can make a contribution, for example through their purchasing decisions. All of these findings had a direct influence on the development of BMZ's diagrams, texts and concepts.

**F. Zimmermann:** The deficits you have mentioned still exist. This leads me to wonder whether using other frames and means of communication actually worked. The "Towards 2030 Without Poverty" study conducted by Glocalities/Motivaction International in 2016 (Lampert and Papadongonas, 2016) has shown the extent to which people underestimate the successes achieved in combating poverty. For example, only less than 1% of citizens from 24 countries know that extreme poverty has been halved over the past 20 years. It is also worrying that, according to this study, only 13% believe that absolute poverty can be overcome by 2030. We therefore need to think about what we can do to give people hope.

**DEval:** If the majority of the population is in favour of development cooperation, you would assume that this not only legitimises development cooperation in the democratic system, but also facilitates the practical implementation of development cooperation. Has this proven to be the case in practice?

**U. Post:** We mustn't forget that only around half of citizens are actually familiar with the concept of development cooperation at all, amongst other things because development policy plays only a minor role in media reporting. In particular, only little interest is shown in development cooperation with Africa. When the media report on this, it must fit in with the typical Africa frame – meaning that it must primarily involve

problems such as wars, too many children, diseases or famines. If the image of Africa that we depict does not fit into the reporting, it tends to meet with incomprehension. At present, public opinion influences the practical implementation of development cooperation in five points:

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"The pressure to legitimise ourselves has increased incredibly in recent times. This has the result that we are increasingly planning what we call quick-impact projects, which must lead to effects that can be measured quickly and quantitatively."



*Ulrich Post*

1. Public criticism has led to changes in development cooperation in that the effects and successes now need to be demonstrated and communicated to a much greater extent. The pressure to legitimise ourselves has increased incredibly in recent times. This has the result that we are increasingly planning what we call quick-impact projects, which must lead to effects that can be measured quickly and quantitatively. Increasing efforts are also being made to involve the private sector because it is considered to be much more efficient.
2. To put it somewhat cynically, politics needs images. As humanitarian aid is able to supply more topical and interesting images than development cooperation, this area has experienced a relative increase in importance. In addition, many projects are being relocated to the capital cities because ministers cannot spend lots of time being driven around the country.

3. The insinuation that development cooperation can combat migration and the causes of flight has contributed towards an increase in the funds available for projects in this area. Unfortunately, the conditions placed on funds have led to a series of questionable projects.

4. Discussion on dovetailing development policy, foreign policy and security policy has gained substantial speed. One consequence of this is the vindication of closer cooperation between government, non-government and military actors – especially in areas where the German Armed Forces are stationed.
5. Public opinion is diverting the focus of development cooperation to sectors in which people are particularly interested. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are affected by this to a particular degree if they rely on donations. On the one hand, people display great sympathy for and are willing to donate to projects relating to the issues of children and health care. On the other hand, there is great public indignation with regard to land grabbing. One of our studies discovered that many respondents are only willing to make donations when they are shown pictures depicting misery. This illustrates the dilemma that all NGOs face. They need to draw on the frames prevalent in public opinion to a certain degree. However, it is important not to go too far here.

**F. Zimmermann:** I find it very problematic to convey to the general public that development cooperation could stop the flow of migration. Numerous studies demonstrate that this cannot work very quickly, if at all.

If we make false promises, we will in the long term be faced with great scepticism among the general public. We will therefore be provoking criticism.

**S. Dietrich:** The changes mentioned by Ulrich Post are taking place not only in Germany, but in all donor countries. To find the source of these developments, I would not only look at criticism of development cooperation, but also more generally consider the reception and dissemination of public management principles<sup>10</sup> in public administration.

### **DEval: What role does public opinion play in the context of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs?**

**F. Zimmermann:** In the development of the 2030 Agenda, consultation processes took place at all levels, which is why it is often also referred to as the People's Agenda. This not only has the consequence that development cooperation organisations are under pressure to keep their promises and conduct a dialogue with citizens. It also means that everyone has an active co-responsibility for the implementation of the Agenda. This transforms citizens from observers of development cooperation into the actual actors, as the goals cannot be achieved without their participation. This is also true in Germany. We therefore need to do a lot more in development policy education to ensure that people understand the global correlations and recognise the positive and negative effects of their own actions. There is thus a lot more to civic engagement than simply communicating accountable information on what is taking place in the distance. When it comes to conveying content effectively, political consultations and opinion research are more important than ever. However, two challenges pose themselves at present. Firstly, the results of the last year have shown how many people have lost their trust in international cooperation. Secondly, opinion research is not yet paying sufficient attention to development cooperation discussion in a changed media landscape. The comments under a YouTube video regarding the SDGs mirror great scepticism. To what extent has the paradigm shift to the universality of the SDGs taken place in Germany? Has the development of a joint discourse been successful?

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“In addition to communicating accountable information on what is taking place in the distance, we must above all also mobilise people. Political consultations and opinion research have therefore become even more important.”



*Felix Zimmermann*

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“The majority of the population is not familiar with the SDGs and is therefore not aware that the SDGs also assign responsibility to the populations of rich countries.”



*Prof. Simone Dietrich*

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**S. Dietrich:** The majority of the population is not familiar with the SDGs and is therefore not aware that the SDGs also assign responsibility to the populations of rich countries. This also gives rise to the question as to how people can be motivated to get actively involved. The data of the Aid Attitudes Tracker gives the impression, for example, that citizens who get actively involved at home are also more likely to advocate the SDGs. By approaching engagement in this way, we could systematically change attitudes towards development cooperation. However, the reasons for this and the statistical causality have not yet been sufficiently investigated.

**U. Post:** Our problem is that the complexity of the SDGs makes them very difficult to communicate. Even if I were to ask in the *Bundestag* (German parliament) about the Sustainable Development Goals, many members of parliament would most likely not know what they comprise. And those who are familiar with them often consider them to be a type of extension of the Millennium Development Goals. No paradigm shift has taken place here yet.

This means, I believe, that we have a huge task ahead of us.

**DEval: Thank you for the interview.**

*Note: Simone Dietrich's schedule did not allow her to take part in the interview in person. She therefore provided her contributions in writing.*

<sup>10</sup> A good overview of the topic of public management reform is provided by Pollitt and Bouckaert (2017).

### Box 1 What factors influence attitudes towards development cooperation?

Scientific investigations of attitudes towards development policy and development cooperation examine a variety of potential factors that may influence attitudes. This includes, for example, people's own social situation, political orientation (ideology), individual value orientations, trust in fellow citizens and political institutions, and a moral obligation (e.g. Bae and Kim, 2016; Bauhr et al., 2013; Bayram, 2016a, 2016b; Bodenstein and Faust, 2017; Chong and Gradstein, 2008; Milner and Tingley, 2013a; Paxton and Knack, 2012). To simplify things slightly, many of these factors can be assigned to the dimensions of "material" and "ideological" (Hudson and vanHeerde-Hudson, 2012). By material, we mean individual and collective benefit evaluations. On the one hand, this may relate to a person's own circumstances, for instance with scarce financial resources or unemployment leading to an aversion to global redistribution in the form of development cooperation. In slightly broader terms, the perception of the economic situation in a person's home country may also play a role. On the other hand, direct economic interests may also be connected with development cooperation, for instance as a result of working in this field or thanks to the hope of new sales markets or raw materials.

The ideological dimension, in contrast, encompasses the numerous social and political expectations that shape attitudes towards development cooperation (Jost et al., 2015). One fundamental aspect here is the contrast between solidarity and personal responsibility, as it is dealt with in political theory on socialism and liberalism or the traditional classification of the political world along a continuum from left to right (Freeden, 2003). People who position themselves further to the left should accordingly be more in favour of development cooperation than those who are positioned further to the right. Moral obligations towards the Global South are closely connected to this. It should be pointed out here that both dimensions may vary with further sociodemographic characteristics. Up to now, however, there has been no clearly defined model in literature to explain development cooperation attitudes.

In this study, we examine relationships with the following characteristics: The material dimension comprises gross household income (up to €29,999, €30,000–€59,999, €60,000 and more), level of formal education (no qualification or Hauptschule (basic school-leaving qualification), Realschule (secondary school certificate), Abitur (higher school-leaving qualification)) and the perception of the individual and national economic situation (additive index 1–5). To gauge the ideological dimension, we use the left-right scale commonly used in social science research (scale 0 = left to 10 = right) for political orientation and the sense of moral obligation (additive index 1–5). In some cases, this is supplemented by party identification to make the results more tangible. In addition – where it seems appropriate in terms of content – further development cooperation attitudes and characteristics are also included in the analysis. By way of illustration, it would be assumed that general support for development cooperation is also influenced by assessments of effectiveness. Likewise, knowledge of the scope of development cooperation in the federal budget could play a role in the approval of financial cooperation. In concrete terms, in the multivariate analysis of specific attitudes, we always check for general support for development cooperation (individual item, scale 0–10), the assessment of effectiveness (additive index, 0–10) and – where appropriate – also the sense of self-efficacy in the area of development cooperation (individual item, scale 0–10) and the presumption of corruption (additive index, 1–5). Self-efficacy is based on the sense described in psychological literature of being able to make a difference with regard to global development (Bandura, 1982).

We additionally investigate sociodemographic characteristics, including gender, age (in years), migration background, place of residence (rural, suburban, urban; subjective description), religious affiliation and region (Eastern/Western Germany) in order to identify differences between population groups. However, the data available in the AAT limits the choice of characteristics. Likewise, the number of characteristics in multivariate analyses should not be extended indefinitely. Our aim is rather to include the most important factors in order to clarify the essential differences with regard to attitudes, knowledge and engagement among the general public. Details regarding the operationalisation of the respective characteristics can be found in the report's Annex.

### 3. ATTITUDES TOWARDS DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

## Key findings

A large majority of citizens support development cooperation.

- Since 2011, in each Eurobarometer survey at least 90% of citizens in Germany have assessed **development cooperation as important**.
- In July 2017, more than 40% of the German population **supported greater government engagement in combating global poverty**. Support is thus on a par with that in France, and is higher than in Great Britain and the US.
- In all four countries surveyed by the ATT, support for government engagement in combating poverty has a **positive correlation with a higher assessment of effectiveness** and a **sense of moral obligation**. In France, Great Britain and the US, a higher **presumption of corruption** correlates with lower support.
- One quarter of the general public in Germany **supports generous or very generous development cooperation**.
- Around 70% of citizens speak in favour of **adhering to or even exceeding the 0.7% ODA target**.
- The further to the left respondents are positioned in the political spectrum, the more positive their attitude towards development cooperation is.
- The general public **hardly differentiates between various motives for development cooperation** such as security policy considerations, promoting the economy, combating the causes of flight or moral obligation.
- Approximately 2% of the general public considers global poverty to be the most serious problem for Germany; approximately half of the general public name migration and refugees.
- From the viewpoint of the general public, policies should focus on combating **poverty in Germany**.
- **25% consider development cooperation to be ineffective, while only 10% consider it to be effective**. The majority of people are undecided.
- The available longitudinal data shows that, considered as a whole, **the attitudes of the general public towards development cooperation are very stable**.

### 3.1 Broad support for development cooperation among the general public

For development policy and government development cooperation, it is important that the population supports or at least accepts activities in this field in the long term (Czaplinska, 2007; Milner and Tingley, 2013a; Stern, 1998). If this is not the case, there is a danger of a lack of acceptance and legitimacy. In the age of the 2030 Agenda, which demands that industrialised countries increase their development cooperation engagement to achieve the SDGs, broad public support is crucial. This is particularly true when the development cooperation budgets need to be increased – as was recently the case in Germany (BMZ, 2017a). Support for government development cooperation is also relevant for civil society actors because the general public probably does not always make a clear distinction between government and civil society development cooperation, and civil society is frequently directly involved in government development cooperation through cooperation arrangements and financial support.

Decision-makers in development policy and development cooperation should therefore observe exactly how the general public supports government and also civil society engagement in development cooperation. Developments over the course of time are particularly important here because major social

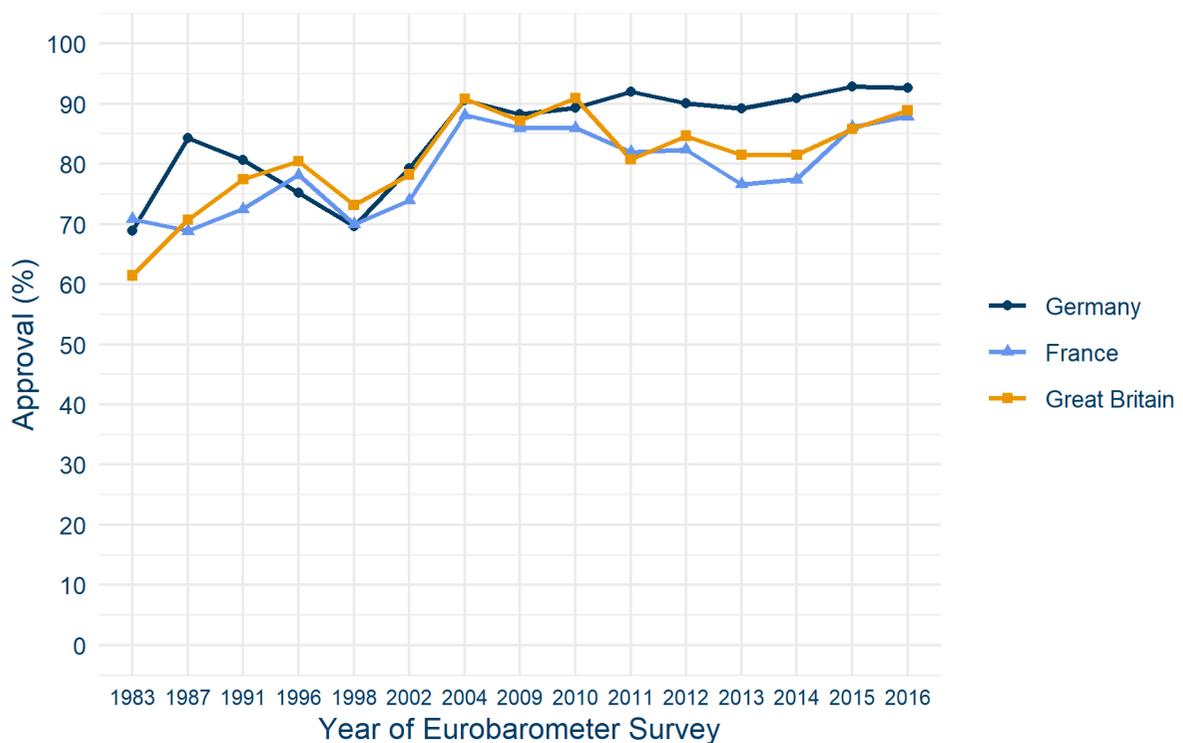
#### Eurobarometer

The Eurobarometer is a representative survey that has been conducted at regular intervals in the Member States of the European Union (EU) since 1973 (European Commission, 2017). It is intended to monitor the development of the opinions of European citizens. In addition to attitudes towards the EU and its institutions, participants are also questioned regarding their opinion of changing topics and policy areas, for example also including development cooperation. The data recorded is therefore suitable for use in time series analyses comparing different countries.

and political events such as the European economic and financial crisis as of 2010 or refugee movements in recent years may ultimately lead to a change in public support. Below we therefore compare the fundamental attitudes towards development cooperation in different countries and over the course of time, with the aim of providing an initial overview of public opinion in this topic area. When we speak of attitudes here, we simply mean perceptions and assessments of development cooperation (see glossary entry “Attitudes”).

We will begin by focusing on the importance of development cooperation. The Eurobarometer surveys<sup>11</sup> conducted from 1983 to 2016 show that the vast majority of citizens in Germany, France and Great Britain generally have a positive attitude towards development cooperation and consider it to be important (see Figure 1).<sup>12</sup> With values between 61% and 93%, the importance of development cooperation for the general public in the three countries has remained relatively stable in recent decades and always achieves an approval rate of more than 50% of the population.

**Figure 1 National comparison of the importance of DC (Eurobarometer 1983-2016)**



Source: own figure.

In the national comparison, it becomes apparent that, after progressing largely in parallel between the mid-1990s and 2010, the importance of development cooperation for the French and British populations decreased by around five and ten percentage points, whereas it remained constantly high in Germany even after 2011 and even reached its highest value of

Around 93% of respondents in Germany in 2016 assessed development cooperation as important or very important.

<sup>11</sup> A critical academic discussion of the Eurobarometer can be found, for instance, in Höpner und Jurczyk (2012) und Nissen (2014). However, this criticism does not apply to the items used in this report.

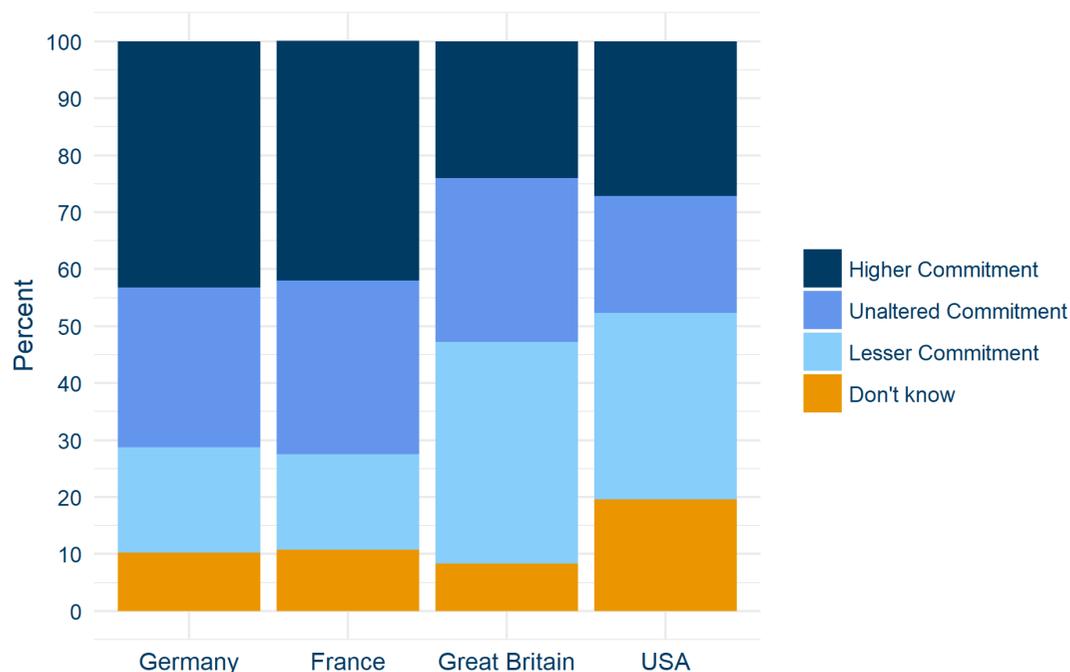
<sup>12</sup> The approval rates for development cooperation are determined from the cumulated answers “very important” and “important” to the following questions: “In your opinion, is it very important, important, not very important or not at all important to help people in developing countries?” (see Table 1 in the Annex). The way the question is formulated and the possible answers have changed slightly between the survey waves. The somewhat varying time intervals between the Eurobarometer waves should be noted.

93% in 2015.<sup>13</sup> A possible cause of these different trends and the temporary decline in approval is a different perception of economic development in the course of and after the global financial crisis as of 2007 and the effects on the real economy, including the euro crisis in subsequent years (Heinrich et al., 2016). Country-specific debates regarding development cooperation such as media campaigns against development cooperation in Great Britain may also play a key role. In the Eurobarometer survey at the end of 2016, all three investigated countries displayed a high approval rate again.

As for the trend over a larger period of time, approval of development cooperation increased from 1983 to 2010 in all three countries. At least during this phase, advancing globalisation correlated with a greater acceptance of development cooperation – possibly due to an increased awareness of global relationships and challenges. How the acceptance of development cooperation will develop in the future most likely depends on the further impact of globalisation on the lives of respondents.

The latest AAT data, collected in July 2017, confirms that public opinion in Germany is well-disposed towards development policy and development cooperation. The data shows – as illustrated in Figure 2 – that more than 40% of respondents, and thus a large proportion of the population, approve expanding government engagement in combating poverty. Only around 19% would like to see it decrease, while a little under 30% want it to stay constant. German public opinion is thus comparable with that in France. In Great Britain and the US, in contrast, the general public is substantially more critical here, with only around 25% in both countries advocating an expansion of the engagement, while nearly 40% in Great Britain and a little over 30% in the US speak in favour of reducing the engagement. Against the backdrop of the challenges posed by the 2030 Agenda, development cooperation actors in Germany are therefore working in a supportive environment. Considering the success of right-wing populist parties in Europe as well as tendencies to question regional integration and international cooperation, a high level of support from the general public should not be taken for granted.

**Figure 2** Support for government engagement in combating poverty (July 2017)



Note: data source AAT. Germany: N = 6,096; France: N = 6,202; Great Britain: N = 8,165; USA: N = 6,563. For the sake of clarity, the five-level answer scale has been condensed with just three levels.

<sup>13</sup> In the Annex, the values regarding rejection of development cooperation (response categories “not very important” and “not at all important”) are additionally presented in Table 3.

### 3.1.1 Which characteristics influence support?

To gain a better understanding of support among the general public for government engagement in combating global poverty, it is necessary to examine relationships with the sociodemographic and political characteristics of respondents.<sup>14</sup> In other words, do non-material or material factors play the greater role in support for combating poverty? In all four countries, the desire to see the government increase its engagement in combating poverty has a positive correlation with a more left-wing or liberal political orientation (see Table 2). This corresponds to the results of numerous other studies (Bodenstein and Faust, 2017; Chong and Gradstein, 2008; European Commission, 2016, 2017; Milner and Tingley, 2013a; Paxton and Knack, 2012). Likewise, support has a positive correlation with a sense of moral obligation in all countries.

In contrast, the influence of the assessment of the economic situation<sup>15</sup> on support for greater government engagement in combating global poverty varies between the four states investigated. In Germany, it can be said that the more positively people view the situation, the greater is their support for engagement in combating poverty. The opposite is true in the US, while no significant correlation can be ascertained in France and Great Britain.

Household income does not play a role in Germany, although the highest income category (an income of €60,000 and more) does display a slightly lower level of support compared to people with a lower income, as is also the case in the US.<sup>16</sup> In France, in contrast, the differences between the income groups are systematic, with the top two income groups (those who earn €30,000 to €59,999 and those who earn €60,000 and more) each displaying a significantly lower level of support compared to respondents in the lower income group. This contradicts the assumption that people's own financial resources are a prerequisite for support for development cooperation. On top of this, support for a greater engagement decreases with increasing age. In all countries except for France, support for increased engagement tends to be lower among female respondents than among male respondents. It is only in Germany that a high level of educational qualifications correlates with greater support for engagement compared with respondents who have a lower level of qualifications.

In addition, several development cooperation-specific and political perceptions were also included in the analysis: Germany is the only one of the four countries in which support for greater government engagement in combating global poverty is not negatively correlated with the presumption of corruption in the countries of the Global South. In the other countries, the greater the extent to which corruption is presumed to be a general problem in the Global South, the less people support increasing the engagement in combating poverty. General support for development cooperation and the expectation of the effectiveness of government development cooperation in Germany, Great Britain and the US also have a positive correlation with support for engagement.<sup>17</sup> It can be concluded from this that not only moral aspects, but also impact-related aspects are decisive for the approval of combating poverty.

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Moral obligation, assessment of effectiveness, political self-assessment and age influence support in the four countries for combating poverty.

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<sup>14</sup> For details of the method, see glossary entry "Regression analysis".

<sup>15</sup> For details of operationalisation and the items used, see Table 4 in the Annex. The analysis can be found in Table 9 in the Annex.

<sup>16</sup> However, the coefficient is only significant at the 10% level.

<sup>17</sup> All models were additionally estimated without the "General support for development cooperation" variable. The analyses show that including the variable has no impact on the substantial results and significances.

**Table 2** Approval of government engagement in combating poverty

	Germany	France	Great Britain	USA
Independent variables	Correlation	Correlation	Correlation	Correlation
General support for DC	Positive ***	Positive ***	Positive ***	Positive ***
Assessment of effectiveness	Positive ***	Positive *	Positive ***	Positive ***
Presumption of corruption	n. s.	Negative *	Negative *	Negative ***
Moral obligation	Positive ***	Positive ***	Positive ***	Positive ***
Political orientation (left-right)	Negative ***	Negative *	Negative ***	Negative ***
Economic situation	Positive *	n. s.	n. s.	Negative *
Income of €30,000-59,999 (GBP/USD)	n. s.	Negative *	n. s.	n. s.
Income of €60,000 (GBP/USD) and more	Negative †	Negative *	n. s.	Negative †
<i>Realschule</i> (secondary school)	n. s.	n. s.	n. s.	n. s.
<i>Abitur</i> (higher school-leaving qualification)	Positive *	n. s.	n. s.	n. s.
Age (in years)	Negative **	Negative ***	Negative ***	Negative ***
Female	Negative ***	n. s.	Negative †	Negative **
Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	0.449	0.349	0.623	0.589
N	4,029	3,620	5,056	3,996

Note: \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \* $p < 0.05$ , † $p < 0.1$ . n. s. = not significant. The education and income groups cannot be directly compared between the countries. In the other countries, high school leaving qualifications or equivalent qualifications are mapped under “Realschule”; while higher education qualifications are mapped under “Abitur”. This is due to the different ways in which educational qualifications are recorded. Reference categories: male, low level of education (no qualification or Hauptschule (basic school-leaving qualification)), low income (up to €29,000).<sup>18</sup>

As a result of the explicit reference to government engagement, part of the difference between the various countries regarding these statements may be connected to the extent to which people in the respective countries ascribe the government responsibility for establishing global equality. This could be derived from the way the national welfare state is structured in each case. When people live in a country with a pronounced welfare state and high degree of redistribution (such as the Scandinavian countries), for example, it is more likely that the general public also has a positive attitude towards international redistribution of state resources. Although the direct conveyance of attitudes towards national redistribution mechanisms to the international level is disputed (see, for example, Prather, 2016), several studies have established a relationship between national welfare and development cooperation (Lumsdaine, 1993; Noël and Thérien, 1995, 2002). Further evidence can only be provided by future studies that systematically investigate more countries with different welfare state systems.

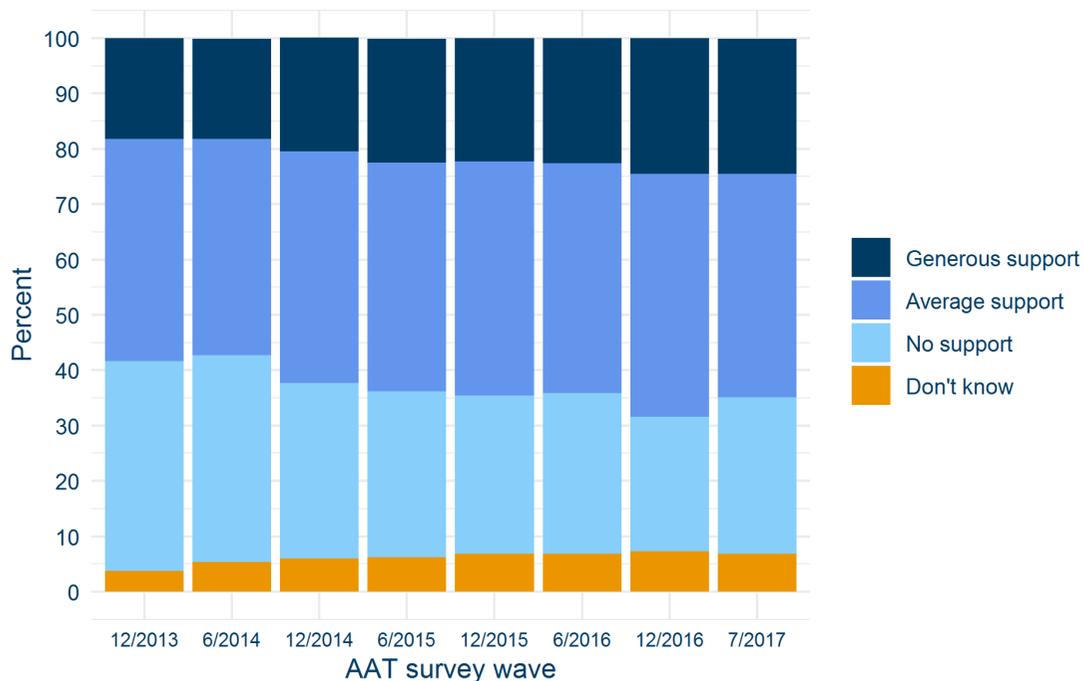
<sup>18</sup> As the dependent variable has a five-level ordinal scale, all models have alternatively also been estimated as ordinal logistic regression models. This does not change the substantial results and significances. In view of the fact that they can more easily be interpreted, we report on the results of the conventional regressions.

### 3.1.2 The general public has a positive attitude towards government development cooperation

Government engagement is financed through public funds and thus by citizens. What is the opinion of the German population regarding the financial scope of state support for countries in the Global South? Over the last four years, public opinion showed a slight trend towards more generous support. In December 2013, around 20% of the population spoke in favour of “very generous” or “generous” support and approximately 40% spoke in favour of “no” or “low” support (see Figure 3).<sup>19</sup> In July 2017, the proportion of supporters amounted to around 30%, while the proportion of opponents fell to 25%. The peak of refugee movements to Europe in September 2015 is not reflected in the 2015/2016 winter survey. This slight trend and the above-described view that the state should increase its engagement for reducing poverty can be interpreted as endorsement – at least among parts of the population – of Germany playing a more active role in development policy and development cooperation.

In the multivariate analysis, the factors that prove suitable for explaining support here prove to be similar to those for support for expanding government engagement in combating global poverty. There is a positive correlation between a more left-wing political orientation, the assessment of effectiveness, a sense of moral obligation and support for “generous” development cooperation. As sociodemographic characteristics such as gender, age and education have no statistically significant correlation with approval of the scope of development cooperation, it can be assumed that, taking account of a series of social and political attitudes, general support or rejection cuts straight across the population groups.<sup>20</sup> Somewhat more abstractly, it can be concluded from this that the general public advocates government development cooperation engagement on the one hand based on moral obligation, but on the other hand also bases its support on calculated benefits as the assumed impact of development cooperation plays a role here.

**Figure 3** General support for DC over the course of time (2013-2017)



Source: own figure.

<sup>19</sup> For the sake of clarity, the answer scale from 0 to 10 has been divided into three groups for the analysis. This may conceal any shifts between the individual points on the scale. The term “generosity” comes from the wording of the question and does not reflect an assessment of the study team. The exact wording can be found in Table 4 in the Annex. Section 9 looks in detail at the consequences that the increased number of refugees arriving has for general support for development cooperation.

<sup>20</sup> The analysis can be found in Table 10 in the Annex.

One of the best-known goals of traditional development financing is to increase the proportion of public development cooperation to 0.7% of gross national income (GNI).<sup>21</sup> The United Nations (UN) first decided on this target in 1970 (United Nations, 1970), since when the UN member states have confirmed it many times. Only eight countries had achieved this target by 2016.<sup>22</sup> Having promised to achieve the ODA quota several times, Germany succeeded in doing so for the first time in 2016.<sup>23</sup> The data of the AAT indicates that adherence to the target enjoys great popularity among the German population. Since the summer of 2015, the AAT has surveyed the opinion of the general public towards a quota of 1% of the federal budget. Just over 40% of respondents have consistently advocated an increase and a further 30% have advocated maintaining the 1% contribution; only 20% have advocated reducing the contributions. It can be presumed that 1% of the total budget is not perceived as an “overly generous” redistribution and is supported by a large proportion of the population.<sup>24</sup>

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There is a positive response among the general public for the 0.7% target.

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### 3.2 Why development cooperation? Motives for development cooperation in the light of public opinion

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Why do states get involved in development cooperation at all? This question is as old as development policy and development cooperation themselves. Up to the end of the Second World War, “development aid” was rare, was provided only selectively and had a small financial scope. It is for this reason that development cooperation is also referred to as one of the real innovations of recent times for foreign policy (Morgenthau, 1962). Whereas only a few states donated or received funds in the 1950s, all nations of the world are now involved. Today, with an ODA volume of around 121 billion euros in 2016 (OECD DAC, 2017), we can now no longer imagine international cooperation without development cooperation.

This ties in with the question as to the reasons why states get involved in development cooperation. Extensive scientific investigations examine the motives, allocation and scope of bilateral and multilateral development cooperation (including Degnbol-Martinussen et al., 2003; Faust and Leiderer, 2008; Lancaster, 2007; Riddell, 2007; van der Veen, 2011). Below we will therefore examine four possible patterns of argument that are currently being discussed for its support among the general public:

- 1) Development cooperation as a security policy instrument
- 2) Development cooperation to promote the economy (for Germany),
- 3) Development cooperation to combat the causes of flight
- 4) Development cooperation as a moral obligation.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Detailed information on ODA is provided by the OECD:

<http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/officialdevelopmentassistancedefinitionandcoverage.htm>. Using ODA as an indicator is controversial as it measures one-dimensional financial flows to countries of the Global South without recording intention, use and effects. More recent approaches, such as the Commitment to Development-Index (see [www.cgdev.org/commitment-development-index](http://www.cgdev.org/commitment-development-index)), therefore measure government engagement multi-dimensionally.

<sup>22</sup> Sweden, Norway, Luxembourg, Denmark, the Netherlands, UK, Turkey, Germany, see <https://data.oecd.org/oda/net-oda.htm>.

<sup>23</sup> The achievement of the 0.7% target can partly be attributed to the costs incurred in providing for refugees in Germany. The ODA quota would otherwise have amounted to 0.52% and thus failed to achieve the target (BMZ, 2017a).

<sup>24</sup> The question in the AAT relates to the federal budget and not the gross national income. Although this does not correspond to the exact definitions of the United Nations, it is assumed that the question is worded in such a way that it is suitable to approximately gauge the assessment of the general public in a survey. If we consider the ODA funds in relation to the federal budget, then the ODA funds not financed through the federal budget (e.g. KfW market funds, federal state funds) need to be deducted from the ODA funds.

<sup>25</sup> The wording of the questions and operationalisation of the individual motives can be found in Table 13 in the Annex.

## Box 2 Development cooperation or development aid – what does the general public say?

To emphasise the partnership between traditional donors and recipients linguistically, the term development cooperation has become established since the 1980s – especially in civil society, but also among other German-speaking actors (see Büschel, 2010). As the term “development aid” – which is used colloquially to mean the same thing – is used in the questions asked by the AAT, a survey has been conducted independently of the AAT to establish whether the alternative use of the term of “development cooperation” influences the answers given to the corresponding questions. To this end, for central questions such as what people estimate the extent of government development cooperation to be or whether people support financial cooperation, the question was put to 1,000 random respondents with the term “development aid” and 1,000 random respondents with the term “development cooperation”. The responses of the 2,000 respondents were compared, with the aim of discovering whether the wording leads to any significant differences in how people respond to the items. For the estimation of the percentage of the state budget that the German Federal Government spends on development aid or development cooperation each year, no difference between the two formulations can be found.<sup>26</sup> Likewise, no deviations can be found for the question regarding the financial support that the German Federal Government should provide.<sup>27</sup> The results indicate that the majority of the population does not essentially distinguish between the terms development cooperation and development aid, and that the term used does not have any distorting consequences for the response behaviour. This corresponds to a recent survey conducted on behalf of the Global Perspectives Initiative (2017).

In addition, an open question was asked to establish what exactly respondents understand under the term development aid or development cooperation.<sup>28</sup> The number of respondents providing an (implicitly) positive response towards development aid was around ten percentage points higher in comparison to development cooperation.<sup>29</sup> Respondents associated both terms most frequently with the areas of infrastructure, education, promoting the economy and agriculture. What is remarkable is that, overall, respondents named development cooperation areas twice as often when asked about development aid as when asked about development cooperation. Moreover, the number of respondents who said the term meant nothing to them when asked about development cooperation was ten percentage points higher than for those asked about development aid. This indicates that, in contrast to civil society, political or academic discussions, the term development cooperation is little known among the general public.

Another interesting result is that considerably more respondents described the term development aid as meaning aid for other people. In the case of development cooperation, respondents more frequently named partnership-based cooperation. In conclusion, we can say that, although the term is less established among the general public, it seems to make sense to use the term of development cooperation as it semantically supports the guiding principle of partnership in development policy and cooperation.

Irrespective of these methodical findings, the study team is aware of the dilemma between the formulation of questions that are as comprehensible as possible and the current normative discourse within development cooperation. In the context of a survey, however, comprehensibility needs to be given a comparably strong weighting. The danger of vocabulary that is problematic in normative terms becoming cemented in society seems to be limited for a sample of around 6,000 respondents. Moreover, it is not the task of the study to incite the general public to change its linguistic usage. Rather, this is a long-term task for the education system, not to mention the communication of politics, development cooperation implementing agencies and NGOs.

<sup>26</sup> The average value for the term “development aid” is 20.6%, while the average value for “development cooperation” amounts to 19.8%. The median for both formulations is 9.

<sup>27</sup> For both variants, the median of the scale of ten is 5, with the average values differing by only 0.12 scale points. The “Don’t know” option was selected by 3.7% for development aid and by 3.3% of all respondents for development cooperation.

<sup>28</sup> Details of the content analysis can be found in Table 11 and Table 12 in the Annex.

<sup>29</sup> 79.1% for development aid compared to 68.7% for development cooperation.

Potential factors influencing these four motives were the subject of a multivariate analysis, which is summarised in Table 3.<sup>30</sup> For all motives, the coefficient of general support for development cooperation is positive and significant. In combination with the positive correlation with the other motives, this may indicate that respondents have a more general attitude towards development cooperation rather than distinguishing in detail between the various motives.<sup>31</sup> Nonetheless, important differences can be detected among the general public and these will be discussed below.

**Figure 4 Approval of the four motives for government DC (2013-2017)**



Source: own figure.

### 3.2.1 Development cooperation as a security policy instrument

During the Cold War and towards the end of colonialism, people primarily specified political or geostrategic motives for development cooperation. These motives include, for example, gaining allies, containing communism or capitalism, increasing security and securing an influence in the former colonies. After the Cold War ended, such security policy motives faded into the background for a time. However, they later experienced a renaissance, especially after the attacks of 11 September 2001 in the US. The threat to national security posed by fragility in parts of the Global South was paid increasing attention in development policy considerations and communication (Brown and Grävingsholt, 2016; Faust and Messner, 2005). Nevertheless,

<sup>30</sup> These regression models control the influence of approval of the other motives in each case in the form of the averaged approval. The exact figures can be found in Table 14 in the Annex.

<sup>31</sup> These results correspond to a principle component analysis of various motives for development cooperation (see Table 15 in the Annex). Based on the data, differentiation on an abstract level seems to make more sense. One dimension reflects the perceived “benefits” – in other words, a positive attribution to development cooperation in general, irrespective of whether this positive aspect is related to security policy, human rights or scientific findings. The other dimension gauges the perceived risks and side-effects of development cooperation, such as failure to reach the target groups, corruption, dependence on external aid and wastage.

the data in Figure 4 indicates that there is no pronounced perception among the general public of development cooperation as an instrument to increase national security or combat terrorism. Despite terrorist attacks in places such as Nice, Paris and Berlin being present in the media, no increasing endorsement of the motive has appeared over the course of time – the average values remain fairly constant.

Approval of this motive has a positive correlation with general support for development cooperation, a positive perception of impact and a relatively positive assessment of the economic situation (see Table 3). Furthermore, women and people with a migration background support this motive less, whereas it meets with greater approval in urban areas.<sup>32</sup>

**Table 3** Multivariate analysis of motives for DC (July 2017)

Independent variables	Security	Promoting the economy	Causes of flight	Moral
	Correlation	Correlation	Correlation	Correlation
Average value for other motives	Positive ***	Positive ***	Positive ***	Positive ***
General support for DC	Positive ***	Positive ***	Positive ***	Positive ***
Assessment of effectiveness	Positive ***	n. s.	Positive ***	Positive ***
Political orientation (left-right)	n. s.	Negative **	n. s.	Negative ***
Economic situation	Positive ***	Positive ***	Positive *	n. s.
Income of €30,000-59,999	n. s.	n. s.	n. s.	n. s.
Income of €60,000 and more	n. s.	n. s.	n. s.	n. s.
<i>Realschule</i> (secondary school)	n. s.	n. s.	n. s.	n. s.
<i>Abitur</i> (higher school-leaving qualification)	n. s.	Positive *	Positive *	Positive *
Age (in years)	n. s.	n. s.	Positive **	Positive ***
Female	Negative ***	Negative ***	n. s.	Positive ***
Migration background	Negative †	n. s.	n. s.	Positive *
Religious affiliation	n. s.	n. s.	n. s.	Positive ***
Urban place of residence	Positive †	n. s.	n. s.	n. s.
Suburban place of residence	Positive	n. s.	n. s.	n. s.
Eastern Germany	n. s.	Positive **	Negative *	n. s.
Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	0.543	0.206	0.318	0.577
N	3,932	3,932	3,932	3,932

Note: \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$ , † $p < 0.1$ . Reference categories: male, low income (up to €29,000), no qualification or *Hauptschulabschluss* (basic school-leaving qualification); no religious denomination, rural place of residence, Western Germany. Coefficients for other/no specification for the variables of education and income have not been included in the table.

<sup>32</sup> The coefficient of migration background is significant at the 10% level.

### 3.2.2 Development cooperation as an instrument to promote the economy

What importance does the general public attribute to economic motives? In Germany, the Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development in office from 2009 to 2013, Dirk Niebel (Free Democratic Party, FDP), explicitly emphasised the primacy of the economy. He considered promoting the economy to be a key task of development policy, stating that he interprets the Z (for *Zusammenarbeit* – cooperation) in the name of BMZ as it was originally intended: as *wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit* (economic cooperation), not as *wiederholte Zuzahlung* (repeated extra payments) (Niebel, 2012, page 11). On top of this, the importance of the private sector for government development cooperation has increased over the past decade (BMZ, 2016a). In the data-collection period, with an average value that is always above the middle of the scale, this motive meets with somewhat greater approval among the general public than the previously discussed security motive (see Figure 4). Over the course of time, a slightly increasing level of approval can be established. If we consider the top two response categories, the approval level increased from around 40% in the winter of 2013 to almost 50% in the summer of 2017. This indicates that development policy and development cooperation are (increasingly) tied in public opinion to people's own economic interests, which also corresponds to the findings of other studies on the allocation of state resources for development cooperation (Milner and Tingley, 2013b).

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Economic motives for development cooperation are present in public opinion.

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The multivariate analysis (see Table 3) shows that approval of this motive, alongside general support for development cooperation, has a positive correlation with the perceived economic situation. On average, the further to the right people position themselves in the political spectrum, the lower their support for the economic motive is. This is surprising. After all, advancing national economic interests by means of development cooperation seems to be very compatible with a conservative orientation. It is conceivable, however, that the economic potential of the Global South is seen with scepticism, although this cannot be tested with the AAT data. Women also endorse this motive less, whereas it is more greatly advocated by those who have the *Abitur* (higher school-leaving qualification) and respondents from Eastern Germany.

### 3.2.3 Development cooperation as an instrument to combat the causes of flight

In an increasingly interwoven world, social challenges do not necessarily correspond with national borders. Global refugee movements are one example here. In this regard, current discussion in politics and the media closely connects development cooperation to the reduction of migration and refugee movements (Grefe and Köckritz, 2017; Schraven and Grävingsholt, 2016; Spiegel Online, 2016, 2017). The motive for development cooperation as a means of combating the causes of flight and reducing migration movements from the Global South is not actually new (Bermeo and Leblang, 2015; Clemens, 2014). However, it has been discussed with great publicity in the media as a result, for instance, of the positioning of the current Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, Gerd Müller (Christian Social Union, CSU) (Grefe and Köckritz, 2017; Spiegel Online, 2016, 2017). The underlying logic can be understood as enlightened self-interest, in other words support by others with the intention of achieving their own goals.

Across the survey waves, the average value of the index variable lies above the middle of the index, which can be interpreted as increasing approval (see Figure 4). In the eighth survey wave (July 2017), around half of respondents agreed that development cooperation contributes towards decreasing immigration attempts.<sup>33</sup> Similar results were obtained by a survey conducted by the *Institut für Demoskopie Allensbach* (Allensbach Institute for Demoscopy) for the Global Perspectives Initiative (2017). According to this, development cooperation is certainly perceived in public opinion as a means of combating the causes of flight.<sup>34</sup> It should be noted, however, that this question was put to respondents for the first time in

<sup>33</sup> Proportion of the top two response categories.

<sup>34</sup> Although this points to a high level of approval, it should be taken into account that only one question is asked regarding this motive, thus considerably restricting its measurement (e.g. Eichenberg, 2016). Combining different concepts (for instance combining migration and flight with humanitarian aid and development cooperation) within the question is problematic in terms of both content and method.

December 2015 – in other words, after the peak of refugee movements to Europe in September 2015. It is therefore not possible to make any statements as to whether the refugee influx led to an increase in approval of this motive that is prominent in current development cooperation discussion.

With respect to this motive, too, general support for development cooperation, a perceived positive effect of development cooperation and a positive assessment of the economic situation<sup>35</sup> are relevant influencing variables for increased approval (see Table 3). Approval is greater among respondents with the *Abitur* (higher school-leaving qualification), whereas a place of residence in Eastern Germany correlates with a lower level of approval. It is also notable that, contrary to expectations, the political orientation of respondents has no influence.

### 3.2.4 Development cooperation as a moral imperative

Due to its altruistic core, this motive is clearly set apart from the instrumental motives described above. Surprisingly, the AAT data reveals only an average level of support for the moral motive over the course of time, but this support remains very stable over the specified period (see Figure 4). The average value did not increase even after the peak of the influx of refugees, despite the fact that the situation in the countries of origin was very present in the media (Berry et al., 2015; Georgiou and Zaborowski, 2017).

It is not only conceptually that moral obligation as a motive for development cooperation is set apart from the other motives – the factors influencing greater approval also differ substantially from those for the other motives. This is the only case where approval is not correlated with the perceived economic situation (see Table 3). Household income also plays just as little a role. This means that people believe themselves to have a moral obligation to help others regardless of their own financial situation or the overall economic situation. However, general support for development cooperation and the perception of effectiveness do play a role here, too. Both characteristics have a positive correlation with the sense of moral obligation. Likewise, a more left-wing political self-assessment also has a positive correlation with moral responsibility. Once again, this finding corresponds to a large number of research findings (Milner and Tingley, 2013a). Support for this motive is also greater among women and people with the *Abitur* or a migration background as well as people who belong to a religious community. Moreover, agreement that development cooperation constitutes a moral obligation increases with age.

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The moral obligation does not depend on people's perception of their own or national economic situation.

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## 3.3 Problem perception and priorities of the general public

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### 3.3.1 The main challenges

What does the general public consider to be the greatest challenges for Germany? This is a core question asked when researching social constructions of reality, as differences in the perception of the central social challenges have the power to influence political preferences. Since the AAT surveys were first conducted in 2013, two political events have drawn particular attention in the media and in society, namely the European economic and financial crisis as of 2010 (Giebler and Wagner, 2015) and what is referred to as the “refugee crisis” as of 2015 (Wiesendahl, 2016).

Connections really can be seen between these events and the central challenges that the general public in Germany perceives. The most serious problems as perceived by the general public during the data-collection period involve social issues and security: unequal distribution of income and wealth, immigration and migration, refugees, international terrorism/Islamic State (IS) and poverty in Germany. All of these issues are more or less directly linked to the economic and financial crisis as well as the increased numbers of

<sup>35</sup> However, this coefficient is only significant at the 10% level.

refugees arriving. In contrast, economic aspects such as energy prices or taxation as well as the environment and poverty in the Global South play a subordinate role.<sup>36</sup>

Since December 2015 – following the peak of immigration in 2015 – the proportion of those who consider migration and refugee movements<sup>37</sup> to be the most serious problem increased to more than 40% of respondents. It is notable that the number of refugees arriving pushed other challenges such as inequality into the background. In view of the great attention paid to the issue in the media (e.g. Berry et al., 2015; Georgiou and Zaborowski, 2017), however, it should be taken into account that it may only be as a result of frequent media reporting that people actually begin to perceive a problem and that the problem perception may not have existed without this reporting, or may at least have not existed to the same extent (e.g. Gonzenbach, 1996; Wessler, 1999). Accordingly, the proportion of those naming the issue decreased in the following survey waves. At the same time, the proportion of those naming international terrorism and Islamic State has increased as of December 2015<sup>38</sup> (together around 20%), again reaching slightly higher proportional values in the subsequent waves. The findings for the issues of immigration and terrorism largely correspond<sup>39</sup> to the results of the Eurobarometer (2016), in which 48% of respondents in 2016 named immigration and 39% named terrorism (both average values across all 28 Member States of the European Union) as the most important problem for the EU.

Social problems in Germany play a major role across all waves. As a rule, at least 15% of respondents name inequality with regard to wealth and income as the most serious problem in Germany, while around 10% name poverty in Germany. When unequal distribution is treated as a problem, however, this relates in public opinion to the national context. In none of the eight survey waves did a noteworthy number of respondents identify poverty in poor countries as one of the central challenges. The consistency of the response behaviour indicates that the general public does not perceive global poverty as a central problem – at least in comparison to other challenges. The great discrepancy between the relevance attributed to global poverty and flight or migration can also be seen as an indication that the general public is only little aware of such global relationships.

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Around 10% consider national poverty to be the greatest problem in Germany, while less than 2% consider global poverty to be the greatest problem.

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### 3.3.2 Poverty in Germany and around the world

The previous analysis shows that the general public identifies social inequality and poverty in Germany as a social challenge, whereas in contrast global poverty is seldom mentioned. Below we will look more specifically at the prioritisation of government engagement in combating poverty. After all, it is possible that global poverty was not present in people's minds when answering the question about the greatest problem because this is the first question in the questionnaire.

In response to the question “Should the government engagement concentrate more on Germany or on the Global South?”, the general public is on average clearly of the opinion that reducing poverty in Germany should have priority over reducing poverty in the Global South – despite the great general endorsement of development cooperation and budget increases in this area (see Section 3.1). Numerous studies pursue the “charity begins at home” debate and show that private donations for international purposes lie below those for national concerns (Casale and Baumann, 2015; Knowles and Sullivan, 2017; Micklewright and Schnepf, 2009; Rajan et al., 2009).

On a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 signifying a higher priority for reducing poverty in poor countries and 10 signifying a higher priority for reducing poverty in Germany, the average value across all eight waves is 6.5

<sup>36</sup> The proportional values are presented in Figure 1 in the Annex.

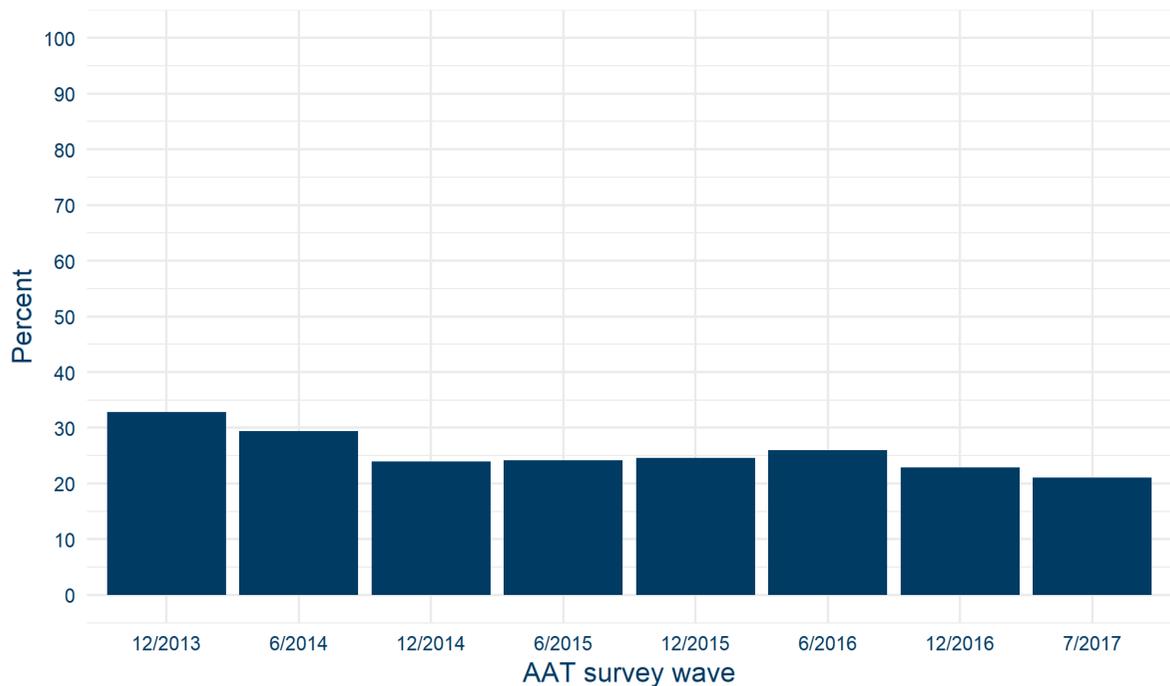
<sup>37</sup> As it is difficult to separate the items, the response options of “immigration” and “refugee crisis in Europe” have been combined to form a joint percentage as of wave 5 (December 2015).

<sup>38</sup> The response option of “ISIS” was only added in the third AAT wave (December 2014). The response options of “international terrorism” and “Islamic State/ISIS” are also difficult to distinguish and have therefore been combined to form a joint percentage as of December 2014.

<sup>39</sup> It is not possible to compare the data directly due to the different response options.

or higher; the proportion of respondents selecting the highest value of 10 for higher priority for reducing poverty in Germany was always over 20%, although the proportion has decreased since the first survey in 2013. Figure 5 shows the percentage of respondents choosing the highest scale value. It should be borne in mind that a person giving priority to combating national poverty does not mean that this person rejects combating global poverty.

**Figure 5** Prioritisation of reducing global poverty versus poverty in Germany



Note:  $N = 5,477-5,812$ . The figure shows the proportion of people who selected the highest scale value.

Source: own figure.

The multivariate analysis in Table 4 shows that general support for development cooperation, a sense of moral obligation to provide support and a positive assessment of the economic situation are correlated with a greater prioritisation of combating global poverty. In contrast, the further to the right respondents are positioned in the political spectrum, the greater they prioritise combating poverty in Germany.<sup>40</sup> Women tend to be more likely to advocate combating poverty in Germany, whereas the opposite is true for respondents with the *Abitur* (higher school-leaving qualification) or an average gross household income of €30,000 to €59,999. The findings correspond to previous research results (e.g. Chong and Gradstein, 2008; Hudson and vanHeerde-Hudson, 2012; Paxton and Knack, 2012) and suggest that both the social situation – even if it is only based on subjective feeling – and moral-ideological factors play a role for the prioritisation of poverty in Germany.

<sup>40</sup> The regression table can be found in Table 17 in the Annex.

**Table 4** Multivariate analysis for prioritisation of reducing global poverty versus poverty in Germany (July 2017)

Independent variables	Correlation
General support for DC	Negative ***
Assessment of effectiveness	n. s.
Moral obligation	Negative ***
Political orientation (left-right)	Positive ***
Economic situation	Negative ***
Income of €30,000-59,999	Negative *
Income of €60,000 and more	n. s.
<i>Realschule</i> (secondary school)	n. s.
<i>Abitur</i> (higher school-leaving qualification)	Negative *
Age (in years)	n. s.
Female	Positive *
Migration background	n. s.
Religious affiliation	n. s.
Urban place of residence	Positive *
Suburban place of residence	n. s.
Eastern Germany	n. s.
Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	0.210
N	4,218

Note: \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$ , † $p > 0.1$ . n. s. = not significant. Reference categories: male; low income (up to €29,000), no qualification or *Hauptschulabschluss* (basic school-leaving qualification); no religious denomination, rural place of residence, Western Germany. Coefficients for other/no specification for the variables of education and income have not been included in the table.

### 3.4 Effectiveness of German development cooperation from the viewpoint of the general public

Impact orientation in development cooperation and thereby also communication regarding effects have gained increasingly in importance over the past 15 years, in particular in conjunction with the Aid Effectiveness Agenda (OECD, 2005). The main focus here is on principles of effective practice in bilateral and multilateral cooperation. In particular, this means the following:

- Cooperation is aligned with the priorities of the partner countries and made the responsibility of these countries (alignment and ownership).
- International development partners (donors) coordinate their efforts with one another (harmonisation).
- Countries are made mutually responsible (mutual accountability) and all initiatives are oriented towards results (managing for results; see, for example, BMZ, 2009).<sup>41</sup>

The effectiveness of development cooperation also plays an important role in communication with citizens. Here, it is often not clear whether this entails results and effects in the context of the Aid Effectiveness Agenda or rather services rendered with regard to the number of goods provided or people reached. This

<sup>41</sup>For further information, see [www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/](http://www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/).

distinction is important, as the fact that a service has been rendered (e.g. a vocational training centre has been built) does not necessarily mean that vocational training has actually been improved, let alone that effects of relevance to the labour market have been achieved. Ultimately, development cooperation actors are faced with the challenge that higher-level goals such as ensuring peace and increasing security or multi-sectoral projects can hardly be mapped using simple performance indicators. In addition to this, the different motives for development cooperation that exist among the general public present difficulties for the communication of effectiveness. For example, if people assume that ending poverty should be the motivation and goal of development cooperation, they may not perceive a successful judicial reform in a partner country as effective development cooperation (Brown, 2015; Brown et al., 2016).

In spite of this complexity, the question as to how effective the general public assesses development cooperation to be and which characteristics are correlated with the assessment is politically relevant. Even if the assessment of effectiveness is based on fragments of knowledge or on stereotypes, it may be decisive for general support for development cooperation or for people's own development policy engagement. This is implied to some extent by the analyses at the beginning of this section and in the subsequent sections. Considerations of effectiveness therefore presumably play a role in determining whether the general public views development cooperation as a politically legitimate undertaking in the medium to long term.

### 3.4.1 Low perception of effectiveness

Even though the general public supports development cooperation in general – as portrayed in the previous subsections – people are critical regarding its effectiveness. Over the last four years, the proportion of respondents considering development cooperation to be ineffective has consistently amounted to around 25% (see Figure 6). This proportion is more than twice as high as the proportion of those who perceive it as effective (10%). The majority of the general public is positioned between the two extremes, ascribing development cooperation an average effectiveness.<sup>42</sup>

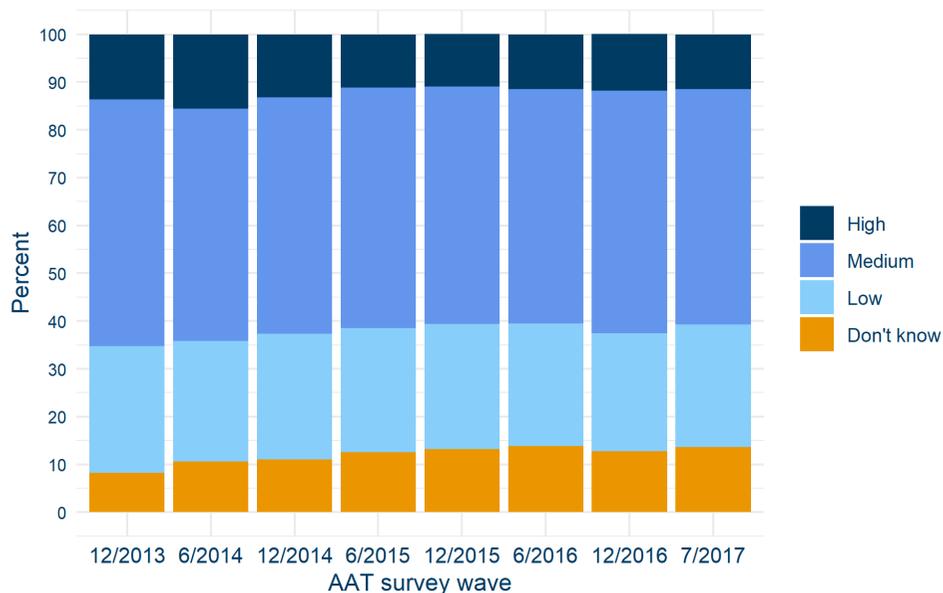
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25% consider development cooperation to be ineffective. In comparison, 10% consider it to be effective.

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<sup>42</sup> The Eurobarometer survey in 2016 also asked about the effectiveness of development cooperation (European Commission, 2017). Here, 29% of respondents in Germany stated that they consider development cooperation to be ineffective, while 64% viewed it as effective. This overall more optimistic assessment can be explained firstly by the lack of opportunity for differentiation, as respondents were only offered the options “Agree”, “Disagree” and “Don't know”. Secondly, the Eurobarometer asked about the effectiveness of the development cooperation of the EU and its Member States. It is plausible that the general public considers pan-European development cooperation to be more effective than national development cooperation. On top of this, the survey asked whether development cooperation contributes towards achieving a more peaceful and just world. The German population was shown to be optimistic here, too, with 66% agreeing with the statement.

**Figure 6 Effectiveness of DC from the viewpoint of the general public (2013-2017)**



Note: N = 5,701-6,170. The data source is a grouped index that combines two questions regarding the effectiveness of German development cooperation. For the details of the calculation, please refer to Table 4 in the Annex.

Source: own figure.

A positive correlation with the assessment of effectiveness can be established for the sense of having a moral obligation to support “developing countries” in the context of development cooperation, a positive assessment of one’s own economic situation and the national economic situation, and general support for development cooperation (see Table 5). So, if respondents view development cooperation as something positive, if they consider themselves to be economically able to provide support or if they feel an obligation towards countries of the Global South, then they also ascribe a higher effectiveness on average to development cooperation. Moreover, women assess development cooperation as more effective and people with the *Abitur* (higher school-leaving qualification) are comparably sceptical.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>43</sup> The positive correlation with the left-right scale appears somewhat surprising. It should be noted, however, that this correlation arises when we control the remaining characteristics (including general support for development cooperation, presumption of corruption and moral obligation), which at the same time correlate with political orientation. If we remove these influencing factors, we are left with a net effect of political orientation that points to a greater assessment of effectiveness the further to the right a person is positioned. On the other hand, if we consider the correlation without controlling these characteristics, then people who are positioned to the right of the centre of the political spectrum are more likely to view development cooperation as ineffective, which corresponds to the findings of previous analyses.

**Table 5** Multivariate analysis for perception of effectiveness (July 2017)

Independent variables	Correlation
General support for DC	Positive ***
Presumption of corruption	Negative ***
Moral obligation	Positive ***
Political orientation (left-right)	Positive ***
Economic situation	Positive ***
Income of €30,000-59,999	n. s.
Income of €60,000 and more	n. s.
<i>Realschule</i> (secondary school)	n. s.
<i>Abitur</i> (higher school-leaving qualification)	Negative *
Age (in years)	n. s.
Female	Positive ***
Migration background	n. s.
Religious affiliation	n. s.
Urban place of residence	n. s.
Suburban place of residence	n. s.
Eastern Germany	n. s.
Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	0.505
N	4,076

Note: \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$ ,  $fp > 0.1$ . n. s. = not significant. Reference categories: male; low income (up to €29,000), no qualification or *Hauptschulabschluss* (basic school-leaving qualification); no religious denomination, rural place of residence, Western Germany. Coefficients for other/no specification for the variables of education and income have not been included in the table.

Particular attention must be paid in this context to the presumption of corruption. The analysis of factors influencing the assessment of effectiveness in Table 5 displays a strong negative correlation between assessment of effectiveness and presumption of corruption. Here, the corruption problem proves to be considerable in the eyes of the general public. The extent of the funds lost as a result of corruption was estimated in June 2014 to amount to an average of 52% of development cooperation funds. In contrast, an average of 14% was considered acceptable.<sup>44</sup> How important the perception of corruption is for support for development cooperation among the general public has already been shown in numerous studies of public opinion in traditional donor countries (Bauhr et al., 2013; Henson and Lindstrom, 2013; Paxton and Knack, 2012). However, development cooperation actors should not concentrate on the estimated percentage of funds lost, but rather direct their attention towards the finding that the general public presumes there to be a huge problem here.

The public suspects that 50% of the funds are lost to corruption.

Such correlations present a particular challenge for communication regarding development policy and development cooperation. Although the analyses here cannot be used to establish a clear causal relationship between presumption of corruption and assessment of effectiveness, the findings should incite government and non-government development cooperation actors to reflect on the nexus of corruption

<sup>44</sup> The analyses can be found in Table 19 in the Annex.

and effectiveness. In view of the very high presumption of corruption among the general public, development cooperation actors should perform a self-critical examination of their communication up to now regarding this difficult issue and question whether it has contributed towards the formation of informed opinions among the general public. It is possible that evidence-based communication regarding corruption in partner countries as well as development cooperation in general may contribute towards a more realistic assessment of corruption and a more rational approach towards it. Nonetheless, the role of media reporting, which may pay more attention to discussing the problems and scandals of development cooperation, must not be underestimated in this context.

# 4. KNOWLEDGE OF DEVELOPMENT POLICY AND GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT

## Key findings

The general public has little knowledge of development policy, development cooperation and global development.

- The **scope of development cooperation in the federal budget is overestimated** by 80% of Germans. On average, respondents stated a scope of 19% of the federal budget.
- **Knowledge questions** with regard to combating poverty, child mortality and climate change **are answered incorrectly by the majority**. With 50% right answers, the question as to the global birth rate is most often answered correctly.
- Looking at all the questions **does not give us a clear picture regarding the influence of sociodemographic characteristics** such as gender, education, place of residence, **political orientation and media use**.

Political knowledge is considered to be crucial for citizens to develop informed opinions, make decisions and get involved in politics (Delli Carpini and Keeter, 1996). However, empirical research paints a sobering picture here, showing that political knowledge is relatively poor in many western countries, regardless of whether the questions asked related to general knowledge or specific political issues. In contrast to this, there are research contributions arguing that such knowledge is not actually necessary because, in view of the limited capacities, citizens can also fall back on decision heuristics to express their political interests (Boudreau and Lupia, 2011).

The general public can also be established to have fairly little knowledge of development policy and development cooperation (e.g. Henson and Lindstrom, 2013). In order for an enlightened discourse regarding development cooperation or the fulfilment of the SDGs to be established, however, it would be helpful for the general public to have a realistic basic knowledge of development policy and be aware of global challenges.

Accordingly, we will focus below on the following questions: What do citizens know about the issues of development cooperation and sustainable development? How has the general public's knowledge changed over the course of time? The second question is particularly important against the backdrop of the 2030 Agenda: Is the general public's awareness of and knowledge about global challenges and developments increasing or decreasing? What factors influence this knowledge and how does it vary across different population groups?

Gauging this knowledge is a challenge because development policy and development cooperation are complex issues and detailed knowledge within the general public cannot be expected. We therefore also draw on the question included in other surveys regarding the scope of state funds for development and check whether respondents have an approximately correct idea of this share. Although the AAT item specifies the federal budget as the benchmark, the United Nations' 0.7% ODA target is used as the reference point. This is prominently used in public communication (e.g. BMZ, 2017a), whereas calculating the share of ODA funds in the federal budget is problematic because ODA funds not financed via the federal budget (e.g. KfW market funds, federal state funds) would have to be deducted. In view of this complex situation, we apply the following operationalisation: respondents who stated the share of the development budget up to and including 3% of the federal budget were assigned to the "correct" category.<sup>45</sup> In addition, we also analyse further questions geared towards the assessment of key areas of the 2030 Agenda (e.g. the actual development of global poverty or the scientific consensus on climate change).

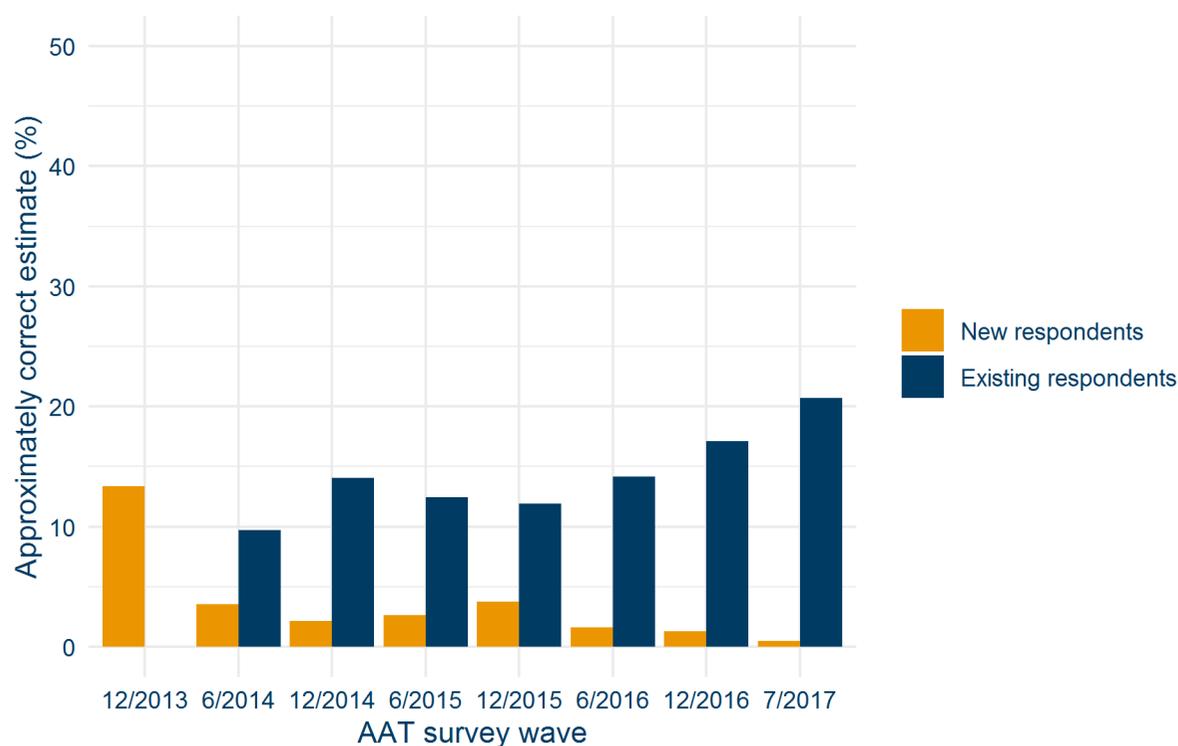
<sup>45</sup> Further technical details with regard to gauging the level of knowledge can be found in Section 2.1 in the Annex.

## 4.1 Share of development cooperation in the federal budget

Figure 7 shows that the general public's knowledge regarding the share of development cooperation in the federal budget is extremely low. For example, the proportion of those who estimate the share approximately correctly is always below 5% in the case of those questioned for the first time (new respondents). In the case of people who have taken part in a previous AAT survey, clear learning effects arise.<sup>46</sup> Despite this, only a maximum of around 20% of respondents who had been asked before actually got the share of development cooperation in the federal budget approximately right.<sup>47</sup> In July 2017, the share of development cooperation in the federal budget was estimated on average at around 19% (median: 7%), with new respondents even guessing the share to be around 29% on average (median: 20%). Other studies also observe that citizens greatly overestimate the share of development cooperation in the national budget (e.g. Milner and Tingley, 2013b).

21% of citizens estimate the share of development cooperation in the federal budget approximately correctly. The average estimate is 19%, in contrast to a share of around 0.7% ODA in the GNI in 2016.

**Figure 7** Estimation of the share of DC (ODA funds) in the federal budget



Note:  $N = 5,700-6,170$ .

Source: own figure.

<sup>46</sup> Also refer to the glossary entry "Data source: Aid Attitude Tracker".

<sup>47</sup> To aid comprehension, the question is formulated in the AAT survey to relate to the federal budget, and not to gross national income as in the case of the UN target (see Table 21 in the Annex). In addition, it should be pointed out that the share of ODA funds must not be equated with the Departmental Budget 23 of the federal budget.

## Panel conditioning

As the AAT is a panel survey – meaning that the same people are questioned several times – it can be argued that respondents build up knowledge through repeated questioning, with the result that the knowledge cannot be taken as representative for the population as a whole in later waves (panel conditioning) (Sturgis et al., 2009). As new knowledge questions are integrated in each survey wave and a distinction was made between existing and new respondents when it came to estimating the share of development cooperation in the federal budget, such contamination effects should not arise on a large scale or can at least be controlled.

Which characteristics are correlated with an approximately correct estimate of the share of the federal budget?<sup>48</sup> The analysis shows that women are more likely than men to estimate the share of development cooperation above the set threshold value of 3%, while respondents with the *Realschulabschluss* or *Abitur* (secondary or higher school-leaving qualification) tend to state a more realistic share of the budget than those with a lower level of education. Those belonging to a religious community are more likely to overestimate the budget share (comparison group: those with no religious denomination). The further to the right respondents are positioned in the political spectrum, the less likely they are to give a realistic estimate. Whereas those who obtain information via conventional media (e.g. television and newspaper), online news and discussions are more likely to estimate the share of development cooperation in the federal budget correctly, the probability of a correct estimate decreases with the use of social media. Eastern German respondents also displayed a lower probability of estimating the share of development cooperation in the federal budget correctly.

## 4.2 How does the general public assess global development?

What knowledge does the general public have of selected aspects of global development? In more recent waves, the AAT contains questions regarding the development of global poverty, population growth, climate change and child mortality.

When it comes to the perception of the development of global poverty, it is initially striking that the general public is not aware of the successes achieved over the past 20 years. Less than 5% of those questioned in December 2015 know that, over the last 20 years – in other words, during the period of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – global poverty has been almost halved (see Figure 8).<sup>49</sup> In contrast, nearly 65% of respondents assumed that the number of people living in poverty had increased by a quarter or even doubled. Although the decrease in poverty can be ascribed to successes in China and regional differences exist (Reddy and Minoiu, 2007), a considerable misperception among the general public can be established here.

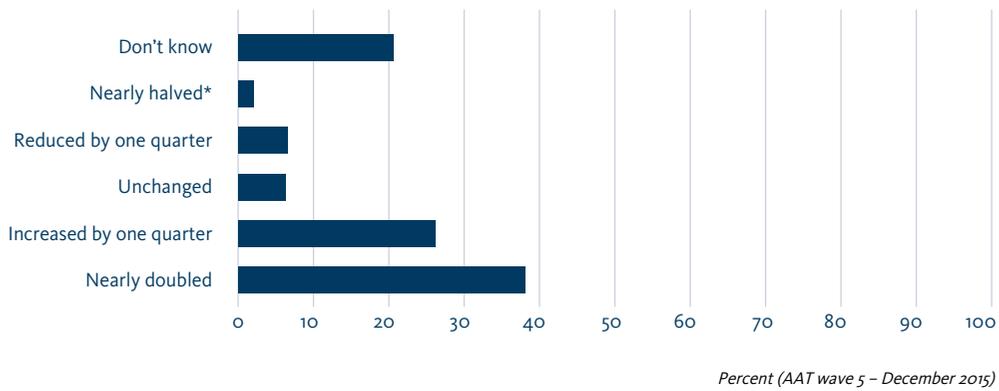
65% of citizens believe that global poverty has increased over the last 20 years. This estimation is independent of political orientation.

<sup>48</sup> Logistic regression models have been estimated for all knowledge items. A variable that maps the selection of the correct response category compared to all other response options is used as the independent variable. The same set of independent variables (sociodemography, political orientation and media use) is always used as explanatory characteristics. The regression tables and details of the model quality can be found in Table 22 in the Annex.

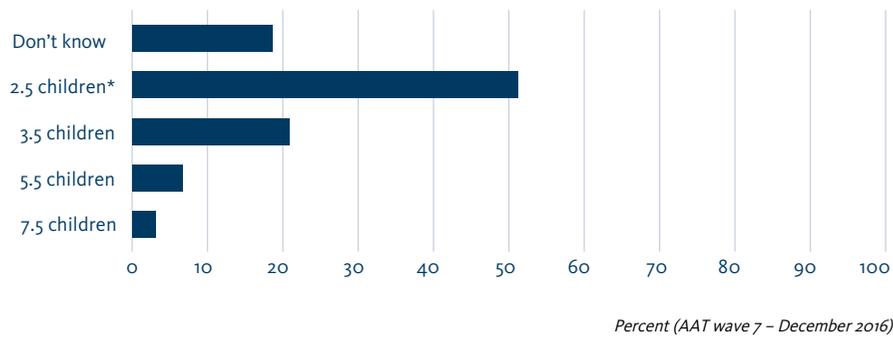
<sup>49</sup> The question states 20 years while 25 years would actually be correct. However, it can be assumed that specifying the correct period of time would not substantially change the response behaviour.

**Figure 8** General knowledge questions on development-related topics

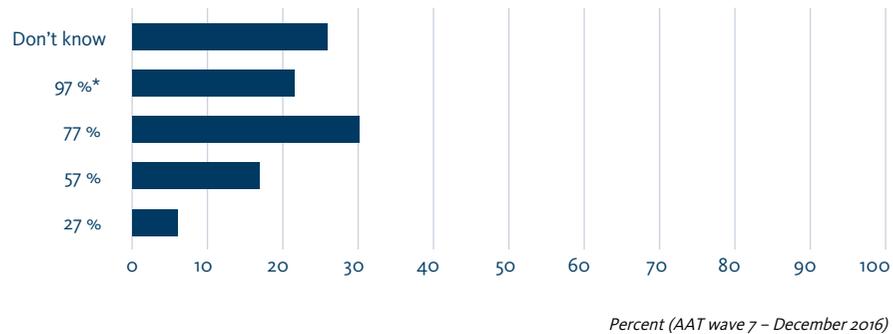
**Change in the proportion of people living in absolute poverty in the last 20 years**



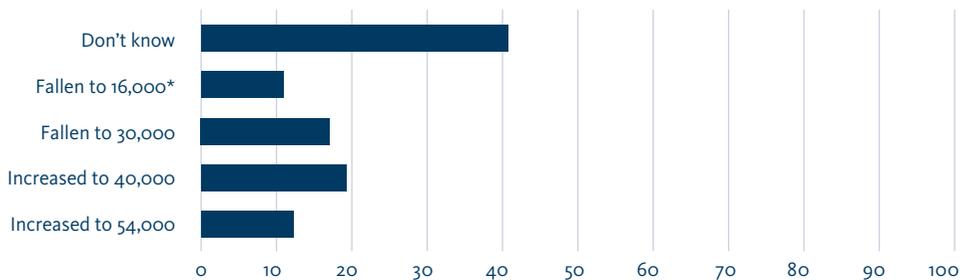
**Average number of children per woman worldwide in 2016**



**Proportion of climate researchers who believe that climate change is caused by people**



**Change in child mortality since 1990**



Note: N = 6,027–6,131. The correct response category is marked with an asterisk (\*).  
Source: own figure.

The multivariate analysis shows that respondents with the highest income category are more likely to choose the right answer.<sup>50</sup> Likewise, people who live in an urban or suburban area or who are members of the Protestant church are also more likely to give a correct estimate. In contrast, political orientation does not play a role. Respondents who use the conventional news media are more likely to estimate the development incorrectly, whereas use of NGO websites correlates with a higher probability of a correct estimate.<sup>51</sup> This possibly reflects the tendency of conventional media to report negative news (negativity bias) (Lengauer et al., 2012), whereas NGOs possibly pay more attention to reporting the successes of development cooperation.

More than half of respondents in December 2016 estimated the development of the average number of children per woman worldwide correctly, at 2.5 children per woman (see Figure 8). This figure is half as high as it was in 1965, although the differences between different regions are considerable. Only just under 10% of respondents assume that the figure has even increased since the reference year of 1965. There are therefore no pronounced misperceptions to be seen here.

Women are more likely to estimate the development correctly, whereas respondents with the *Abitur* (higher school-leaving qualification) are more likely to select an incorrect response category. The further to the right respondents are positioned in the political spectrum, the more likely they are to provide a correct estimate. Moreover, those who use conventional news sources are more likely to provide a correct answer, whereas personal discussions as a source of information correlate with a lower probability of a correct answer.<sup>52</sup> All other characteristics analysed are not statistically relevant.

When it comes to estimating the proportion of climate researchers who believe that climate change is caused by human actions, the general public is not extensively aware of the scientific consensus. In November 2016, around one fifth of respondents identified the correct answer that the proportion of climate researchers amounts to 97%. The other respondents assumed that the issue is disputed in the scientific world or chose the answer “Don’t know” (see Figure 8).

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The scientific consensus on the human contribution to climate change is only known to around 21% of citizens.

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Again, the probability of a correct answer was lower among women, but comparatively higher for those with the *Abitur* (higher school-leaving qualification). The probability of a correct answer decreases with increasing age.<sup>53</sup> The further to the right respondents are positioned in the political spectrum, the less likely they are to give a correct estimate. The scepticism towards research findings relating to climate change in parts of the political right wing may explain this finding (e.g. McCright, 2010). People who use conventional news channels, online news or personal discussions as a source of information are more likely to select the correct response category for this question than people to whom this does not apply.<sup>54</sup> Respondents in the new German states are less likely to provide a correct answer.<sup>55</sup>

With regard to child mortality, the majority of respondents are uncertain regarding the development since 1990, with more than 40% choosing the answer “Don’t know” (see Figure 8). Only around 10% were able to give the right answer (“fallen to 16,000 [per day]”). In contrast, around 30% of respondents in total assumed that the situation had even deteriorated during the specified period. A clear misperception can therefore be seen here, too.

Women are less likely to answer the question about child mortality correctly, whereas those with the *Realschulabschluss* or *Abitur* (secondary or higher school-leaving qualification) are more likely to answer the question correctly than those with the *Hauptschulabschluss* (basic school-leaving qualification) or no

<sup>50</sup> For the estimate of the development of poverty, it must be pointed out that only a very small proportion of respondents were able to provide the correct answer. This means that the model estimation needs to be viewed with a certain degree of care (King and Zeng, 2001).

<sup>51</sup> However, the correlation is only significant at the 10% level.

<sup>52</sup> Here too, the correlation is only significant at the 10% level.

<sup>53</sup> Here too, the correlation is only significant at the 10% level.

<sup>54</sup> The correlation for conventional news channels is only significant at the 10% level.

<sup>55</sup> The correlation is only significant at the 10% level.

qualification. Moreover, a negative age effect can be seen, as the older respondents are, the less likely they are to provide a correct answer. Media use can also be seen to have an effect, as the use of conventional media, social media and personal contacts to obtain information correlates with a higher probability for someone naming the correct response category. In contrast, the use of NGO websites correlates with a lower probability. Finally, the difference between Eastern and Western Germany is again worth mentioning, as the question is more likely to be answered incorrectly in the east.

These findings present a challenge to those involved in development cooperation and sustainable development. The general public seems to have no perception or a distorted perception of the low financial extent of development cooperation relative to the gross national income, global developments and the positive effects of development cooperation. Some assessments may have ideological reasons (e.g. overestimating the proportion of development cooperation in the federal budget or not recognising a human contribution towards climate change). It is not possible to establish from the analyses whether such assessments with an ideological basis would change if people were to gain a broader knowledge.

Nonetheless, the findings must not be understood as a negative judgement for existing education measures. Firstly, such measures often reach only a specific audience. Secondly, other research designs would be needed to verify effectiveness, for instance investigations that question a group subject to a measure and at the same time also a control group. The data regarding media use that is presented further down provides some initial ideas as to where population segments with different attitudes towards development cooperation could best be reached. However, providing improved information for potential supporters could also have the result of putting them in a better position to justify their support to others and thus indirectly contributing towards a more realistic assessment among the general public.

# 5. ENGAGEMENT IN DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

## Key findings

Citizens address global development and poverty through the media. Any further engagement is quite rare.

- The general public perceives **issues relating to global poverty and development in the news and discusses them in the social environment.**
- Around **20% to 30% of respondents state that they have made a donation for global development and poverty reduction in the last year** and have specifically made **consumption or non-consumption decisions** to have an impact on global development and poverty.
- Around **5% are involved in the area of development cooperation in Germany in an honorary capacity.**
- **Important influencing factors are self-efficacy and a sense of moral obligation.** The resources of education and income also play a role for donations and consumption/non-consumption.

### 5.1 Global development needs engagement

For development cooperation actors, it is important not only that citizens have a positive attitude towards development cooperation and the 2030 Agenda, but also that they take action, for example by getting involved in NGOs or making donations (BMZ, 2017b, page 18off.; BMZ and BMUB, 2015, page 7). Sustainable consumption behaviour also plays a role because the purchase decisions of consumers influence global sustainable development, for instance with regard to production conditions and the preservation of natural resources. As a basis for such engagement, it is important that the general public encounters global development and development cooperation in the media and in communication with others. After all, most citizens only rarely experience the complex issue directly in their everyday lives. Particular attention needs to be paid in this context to the Internet. Social media such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram offer a wide range of opportunities for interaction. In this way, citizens can obtain or distribute information on global development and discuss the matter with one another or with development cooperation actors. However, there is a danger that people using the Internet will only receive information that corresponds to their own view of the world and are thus in a filter bubble.

How do citizens get involved in the area of development policy and development cooperation through the media/communication and on a personal level? And how has the engagement changed over the course of time – for instance as the number of refugees arriving in Germany peaked in September 2015? What sociodemographic, political and development cooperation-based factors influence engagement? By answering these questions, the following analyses aim to identify potential for promoting engagement.

### 5.2 The engagement of the general public over the course of time

Although the intake and distribution of information on development policy issues does not constitute engagement, it is an important prerequisite. Figure 9 shows what proportion of respondents used the different forms of information intake and distribution in the last year. The majority of respondents followed news on poverty and “development aid” (approximately between 65% and 70% in each case). Discussion in the social environment can then be considered to form the first stage of engagement (between around 55% and 62%). These values vary only slightly over time and no clear trend can be seen.<sup>56</sup> More costly forms of engagement that involve media communication are substantially less often seen. Approximately 20% to 25% of respondents in each wave distributed information on global development offline and online, signed a petition or took part in an online vote (around 18% to 22%). Only around 10% of respondents were active in social media such as Facebook and Twitter, became involved in corresponding groups (also online),

<sup>56</sup> Slightly higher values in the winter surveys could possibly be due to increased salience resulting from numerous campaigns during the period leading up to Christmas.

composed blog articles or wrote online comments respectively. These forms of engagement are, on average, also largely stable across the survey waves. Minimal increases for some forms of information intake can be seen in the survey conducted in December 2015 – shortly after the influx of refugees in Germany had reached its peak. However, the increases may simply constitute incidental fluctuations. These findings seem to contradict the increased engagement of the general public in the wake of the high level of immigration in 2015/2016. This possibly reflects the fact that it was especially people who had already become involved who increased their engagement further in the wake of the temporary increase in the number of refugees.

Overall, it can be established that the general public in Germany certainly does address development cooperation and global poverty. Against this backdrop, it is interesting that misperceptions regarding various development policy aspects are also prevalent among the population (see Section 4). As it can be assumed that media content plays a role here, Section 8 looks into the perception of reporting.

**Figure 9** Information intake and distribution in the area of global poverty and DC



Note: N = 5,700-6,170.<sup>57</sup>

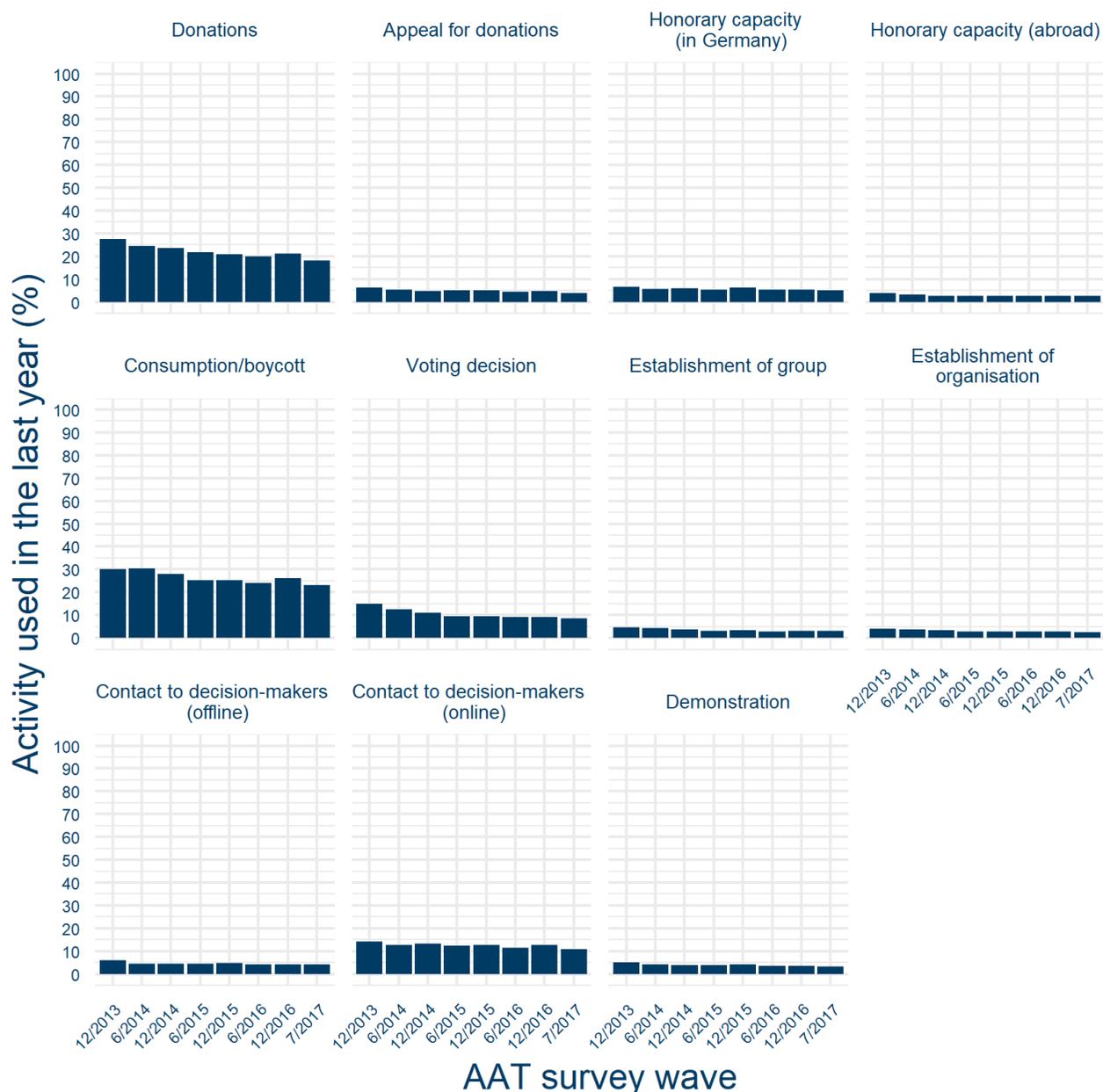
Source: own figure.

<sup>57</sup> The question was as follows: “When and in what form have you addressed the problem of poverty and development aid around the globe before now?” The exact formulation of the forms of information intake and distribution and the corresponding response categories can be found in Table 23 in the Annex.

In terms of the resources it requires and the necessary motivation, further engagement is considerably more costly than information intake and distribution. The bar charts in Figure 10 provide an overview of the distribution of these forms of engagement and how they have developed over time. Again, there is a difference that immediately becomes apparent, namely that while approximately 20% to 30% of respondents reported a willingness to donate as well as a willingness to engage in targeted consumption and boycott<sup>58</sup> in every survey wave since the end of 2013, use of the other forms of engagement is quite rare. For example, 5% of respondents stated in July 2017 that they have been involved in an honorary capacity in Germany in the last twelve months. The alignment of voting decisions with the development issue and contact to decision-makers via the Internet, both of which were used by approximately 10% to 15% of respondents, appear striking. It should be borne in mind, however, that these specifications are the subjective viewpoint of respondents, which does not necessarily correspond to the usual definitions of engagement in an honorary capacity. It is conceivable that even one-off engagement and engagement for a very limited length of time have been included here. Likewise, it cannot be excluded that people specify engagement from a sense of social desirability.

<sup>58</sup> In the AAT, the targeted purchase or non-purchase of products ("boycott") is established together in a single question. The exact formulation of the question can be found in Table 23 in the Annex.

Figure 10 Form of engagement and influence in the area of global poverty and DC



Note: N = 5,700-6,170.<sup>59</sup>

Source: own figure.

Over the course of time, the percentages presented in Figure 10 have been relatively stable. The values for donations, an influence on voting decisions and up to June 2016 also for consumption decisions decreased slightly, although they increased slightly in December 2016 at least for donations and consumption decisions (around 21% and 26% respectively) before falling again in the last

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18% of citizens make donations in the area of global poverty and development cooperation. 23% take global poverty and development into account in their consumption behaviour.

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<sup>59</sup> The question was as follows: “When and in what form have you taken action to influence the problem of poverty and development aid around the globe?” The exact formulation of the forms of engagement and the corresponding response categories can be found in Table 23 in the Annex.

survey in July 2017. The influx of refugees is not reflected in the data of the survey conducted in December 2015.

As the first AAT survey was conducted in 2013, the data cannot reliably be assigned to findings regarding the development of voluntary engagement in Germany over a longer period of time. As the survey of volunteers in 2014 shows, an increase in engagement since 1999 can be observed, irrespective of the thematic orientation (Vogel et al., 2017). The available data does not allow us to establish whether engagement in the area of global development is taking a similar course.

### 5.3 Who gets involved in global development?

What factors favour or hinder engagement in global development and development cooperation? As the evaluation of engagement in the area of international solidarity in the ZiviZ survey (*ZiviZ: Zivilgesellschaft in Zahlen* – Civil Society in Numbers) has shown, a key challenge faced by organisations operating in the area of global development is mobilising and recruiting new members (Krimmer, 2013, page 22). Below, we analyse the following forms of engagement partly due to their central significance, but also due to the observed frequency of use (see Figure 9/Figure 10): donation activity, consumption/boycott and engagement in an honorary capacity. The data source here is the AAT survey conducted in July 2017.

Analogous to findings in political participation research, influencing factors can be assigned to the categories of resources, motivation and mobilisation (see Table 6). Resources relate to the question as to whether citizens are able to get involved. In Brady et al. (1995), the necessary resources include in particular time, money and abilities (based on education and knowledge). With increasing resources, it should also become more likely that people will get involved. Motivation directly targets the drive to take action, in other words the assessment of the need for action and a person's own influence on the achievement of a goal (e.g. Opp, 2001). A person's own influence is referred to below as self-efficacy. Motivation also includes the instilled moral obligation to help people in countries of the Global South. This is supplemented by general support for development cooperation. Here too, it can be said that the more pronounced the characteristics are, the more likely it is that a respondent will get involved. Finally, mobilisation addresses the question as to what extent people or organisations call on the general public to use a particular form of engagement (for instance in the form of an appeal for funds). It is obvious here that the factors vary between different forms of engagement. For example, time resources are necessary in order to get involved in an honorary capacity, whereas petitions can be signed without taking any noteworthy length of time.

**Table 6** Factors influencing DC-based engagement

Resources	Motivation	Mobilisation	Control variables
Education (+) Income (+)	Political orientation (left-wing orientation: +) Assessment of effectiveness (+) Self-efficacy (+) <sup>60</sup> Moral obligation (+) General support for development cooperation (+)	<i>Not available in the AAT</i>	Religious denomination Migration background Place of residence Eastern/Western Germany Age (inverted u-shaped correlation) Gender

*Note: + = positive anticipated correlation. – = negative anticipated correlation.*

In the following analyses, available resources are mapped by formal level of education and available household income. For age and gender, it is assumed that the individual scope for action also varies with these characteristics. This means that these characteristics need to be controlled together with several

<sup>60</sup> Self-efficacy can alternatively also be viewed as a resource for action.

other sociodemographic characteristics.<sup>61</sup> Motivation is approximated by general political orientation in the traditional left-right dimension as it comprises fundamental ideas concerning how people should live together and how politics and society should be structured (Jost et al., 2015). On top of this, the more specific factors of individual and collective influence on the development in countries of the Global South are also relevant. In contrast, the need for development cooperation action and mobilisation cannot be adequately operationalised with the available data.<sup>62</sup>

To make them more easily comprehensible, the results are represented graphically. When it comes to interpreting Figure 11, Figure 12 and Figure 13, positive coefficients correspond to a higher probability of engagement, while negative ones correspond to a lower probability. As soon as the confidence intervals (horizontal lines) fail to cross the vertical line at zero, an attribute is statistically significant, which means that it has a non-random correlation with the investigated form of engagement.<sup>63</sup>

The findings for donations in the last year were as follows (see Figure 11): with regard to available resources, the probability of donations increases with a higher income and higher level of formal education. For the motivation characteristics, a significant positive correlation is apparent between the probability of donations and support for government development cooperation. Secondly, donations become more likely if a respondent has the impression of being able to make a difference. Thirdly, a sense of moral obligation also favours donation activity. The stronger this sense is, the higher the probability of the respondent making a donation.

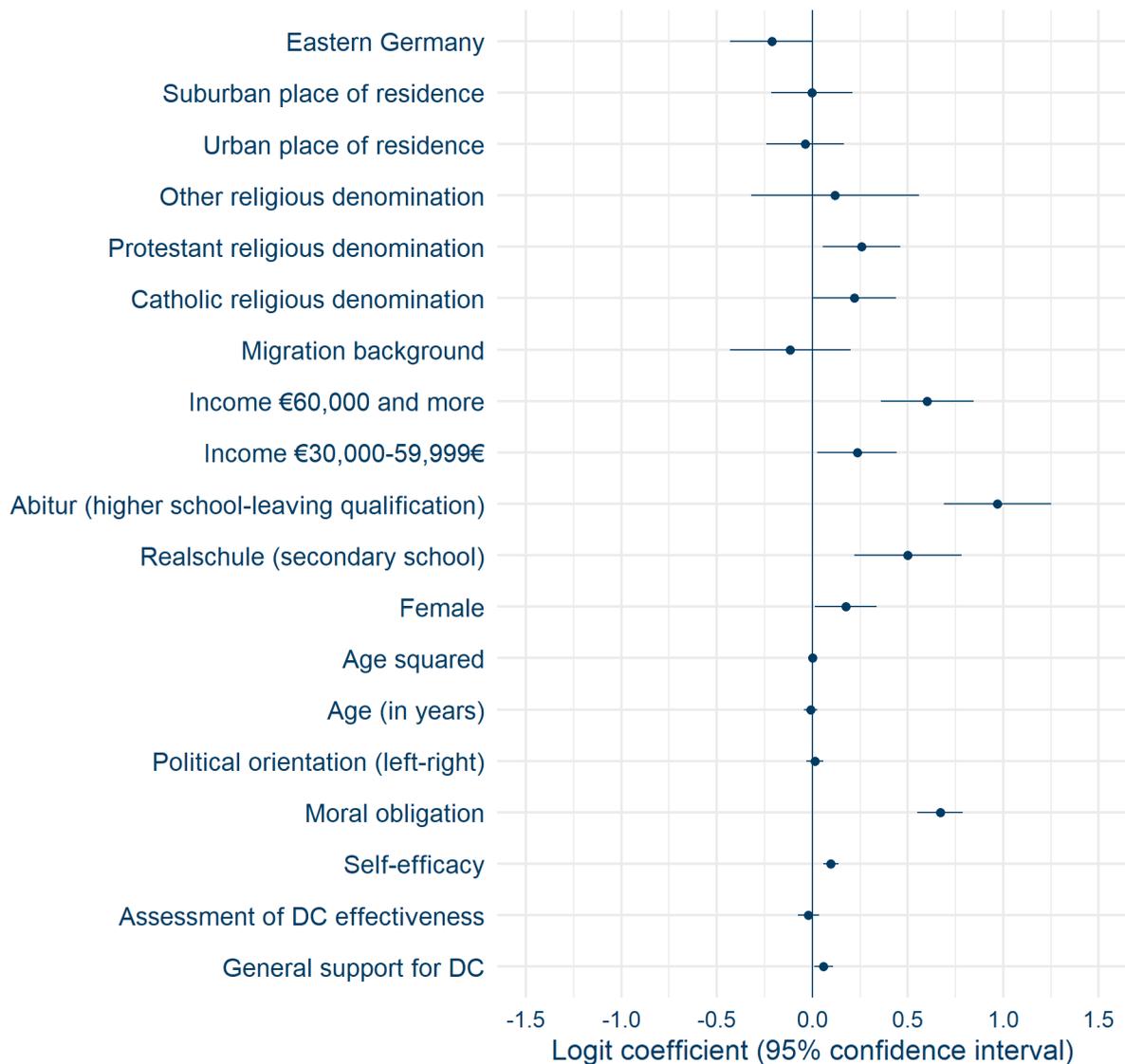
With regard to the control variables, it appears that those belonging to the Protestant church and also Catholics<sup>64</sup> are more likely to have made a donation in the last year than those with no religious denomination. Citizens in the eastern German states exhibit a lower probability of making donations than those in the western German states. The probability of donations in relation to age increases in a curved shape. This can most likely be attributed to the greater financial means of older people. Moreover, there is a significant difference between genders, with women exhibiting a higher probability of making donations in the last year than men. This may be due to different resources or varying motivation.

<sup>61</sup> For age, it can also be assumed that the probability of using certain forms of engagement does not develop linearly across the various phases of life, but rather progresses in the shape of a curve. This makes it necessary to model a quadratic correlation in the statistical model.

<sup>62</sup> For the analysis, we use logistic regression models that determine the influence of the explanatory characteristics on the probability of using a particular form of engagement in the last twelve months. The figure shows non-standardised Logit coefficients. It should be noted that the size of the coefficients cannot be compared within and between the models due to the different scaling of the variables and due to unobserved differences between respondents (Mood, 2010). Coefficients for missing specifications for education, income and religious denomination as well as for respondents who are still undergoing training are actually included in the model, but are not represented in the figures due to a low number of cases or lack of substantial significance. The regression models can be found in Table 24 in the Annex.

<sup>63</sup> However, this does not apply in the case of curved correlations that are modelled with two terms (variable and squared variable). In this case, the text looks into the interpretation separately.

<sup>64</sup> For Catholics, however, the coefficient is only significant at the 10% level.

**Figure 11** Factors influencing donations (in the last year)

Note: Reference categories: male; no qualification or Hauptschulabschluss (basic school-leaving qualification); income up to €29,000, no migration background, no religious denomination, rural place of residence, Western Germany.

Source: own figure.

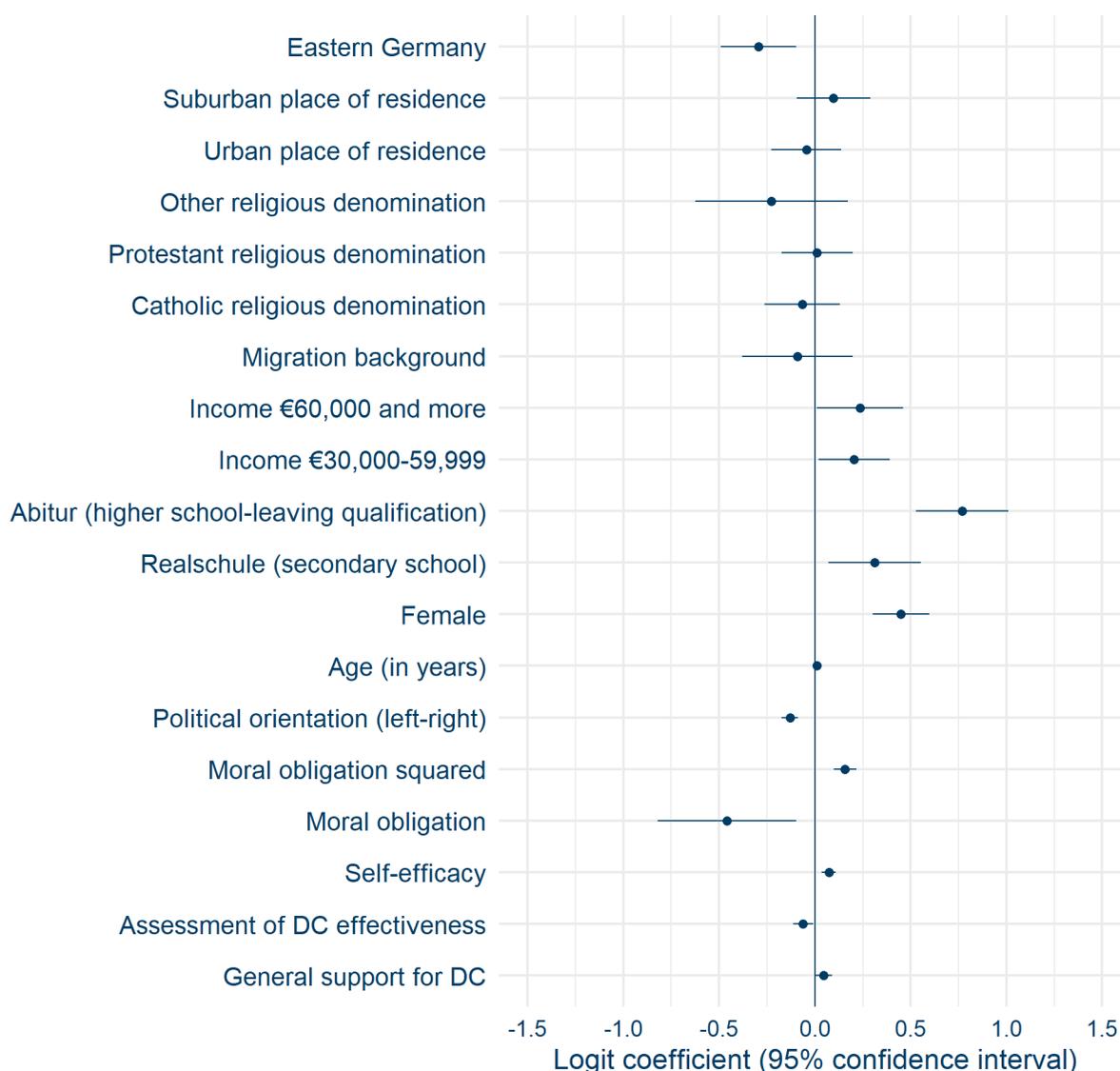
Figure 12 also shows income and education to have an effect on sustainable consumption and boycotts. Again, this can most likely be attributed to available resources, as well as to more conscious consumption behaviour within certain social groups. For motivation characteristics, we can also see a positive correlation with support for government development cooperation,<sup>65</sup> a negative correlation with people's assessment of effectiveness and a positive correlation with self-efficacy. The finding regarding the assessment of effectiveness could indicate a free-rider phenomenon, with people who view development cooperation as effective possibly concluding that it is thus not necessary for them to exercise an influence through consumption and boycotts. A moral obligation also once again has a significant effect.<sup>66</sup> With regard to political orientation, it is apparent that the further to the right respondents are positioned, the less likely it

<sup>65</sup> However, this coefficient is only significant at the 10% level.

<sup>66</sup> The correlation progresses as a curve, which explains the negative coefficient. In the case of lower values for the variables, the probability increases only a little, whereas it speeds up, or increases more strongly, to a certain extent at the end of the scale.

is that they have made consumption and boycott decisions in the last year with a view to affecting global poverty and development. This is consistent with findings regarding the differences in terms of the assessment of global challenges in various political camps (e.g. McCright, 2010), which could possibly inhibit the need to exert an influence through altered consumption behaviour. In addition, women demonstrate a higher probability of getting involved in this way. Likewise, the probability increases with increasing age. Moreover, a regional difference can be observed, with respondents in Eastern Germany having a lower probability of getting involved through consumption or non-consumption.

**Figure 12** Factors influencing consumption/boycotts (in the last year)



Note: Reference categories: male; no qualification or *Hauptschulabschluss* (basic school-leaving qualification); income up to €29,000, no migration background, no religious denomination, rural place of residence, Western Germany.

Source: own figure.

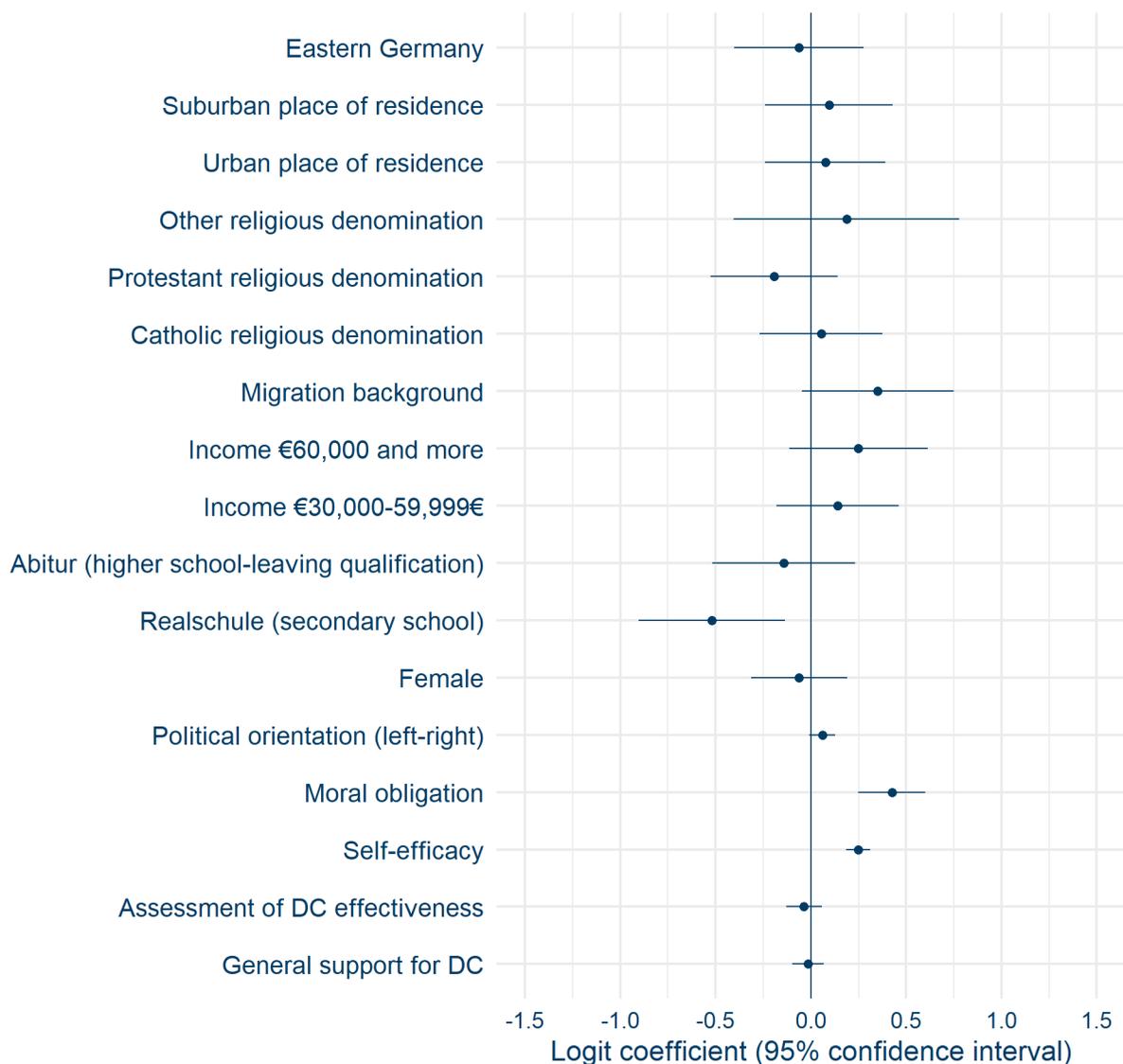
To end this section, we will focus on engagement in an honorary capacity in Germany and abroad. Compared to the two forms of engagement discussed previously, this form of engagement is clearly more time-consuming and is less often practised by the general public (see Figure 10). Nevertheless, the resources of income and education are not systematically relevant for getting involved in an honorary capacity if motivation factors are statistically controlled for (see Figure 13). People with the *Realschulabschluss* (secondary school qualification) are actually less likely to get involved in an honorary capacity than those

Around 6% of respondents specify an honorary capacity related to global poverty. Taking it on does not depend directly on income, but does depend on a sense of being able to change something.

People with the *Realschulabschluss* (secondary school qualification) are actually less likely to get involved in an honorary capacity than those

with a lower level of formal education (*Hauptschule* or no qualification). A separate analysis of the correlation between resources and engagement in an honorary capacity confirms the established finding that the probability of engagement increases with increasing income (Simonson and Hameister, 2017). This can be explained in that income also has a positive correlation with a sense of self-efficacy.<sup>67</sup> If the motivation factors are included, the coefficients of the income categories are reduced to such an extent that they are no longer statistically significant. Consequently, a social bias is also likely for engagement in an honorary capacity. However, it progresses indirectly in this case.

**Figure 13** Factors influencing involvement in DC in an honorary capacity (in Germany/abroad in the last year)



Note: Reference categories: male; no qualification or *Hauptschulabschluss* (basic school-leaving qualification); income up to €29,000, no migration background, no religious denomination, rural place of residence, Western Germany.

Source: own figure.

<sup>67</sup> In addition to this, due to the mathematical specification of the error term, the inclusion or exclusion of variables in logistic regression models always leads to changes in the coefficients (Mood, 2010).

Interesting results can be seen for the motivation factors. Firstly, a higher sense of self-efficacy correlates with a greater probability of engagement in an honorary capacity. Once again, this points to the significance of the prospects of success for people's willingness to take action. Secondly, the probability of engagement in an honorary capacity also increases with increasing moral obligation.<sup>68</sup> Finally, the control characteristics do not play any role worth mentioning. Although a negative correlation can be established for age, a more precise inspection using alternative model specifications indicates a slightly curve-shaped correlation. The youngest respondents, and also respondents with an age of around 55-60 years or higher, display a slightly higher probability of engagement in an honorary capacity than the citizens between these two age categories.<sup>69</sup>

In conclusion, it can be said that the resources of education and income are relevant not only for donations, but also for consumption and boycott, whereas this only indirectly applies to income in the case of getting involved in an honorary capacity in Germany or abroad. Moreover, the perceived moral obligation towards the Global South and people's sense of self-efficacy play a role for all three forms of engagement investigated.

## 5.4 Implications for promoting engagement

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What conclusions for promoting engagement do these findings suggest?

1. The general public does basically address the issue of global poverty and development cooperation. Only a fairly small proportion of the general public actually gets involved. The fact that citizens have a limited amount of time available and may also be involved in other areas such as church, sport, culture or social institutions gives rise to the question as to how this engagement could be linked more to the 2030 Agenda and beyond that to development cooperation.
2. The findings with regard to how education and income affect donation and consumption behaviour must not be underestimated. After all, one goal of the 2030 Agenda is to get all sections of the population involved. Letting global engagement become a project for the elite could counteract this aspiration.
3. Global engagement is often motivated by a sense of moral obligation, which can be associated with the concept of partnership.
4. The role played by the perception of self-efficacy of those who could potentially get involved must not be underestimated. Communication and education work, as well as financial support, could begin by targeting this specific area.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>68</sup> At first glance, the effect of the political orientation, namely that the further to the right people are positioned, the more likely they are to get involved in development policy in an honorary capacity, seems surprising. However, a more precise examination using a quadratic correlation reveals a slightly U-shaped probability curve, which is influenced by observations at the political extremes, but which is very uncertain as a result of the low observation numbers on these scale values. We should therefore not overinterpret this correlation, but rather assume a lack of correlation.

<sup>69</sup> As the estimation is very uncertain in the border areas of age distribution, we refrain from including this quadratic term.

<sup>70</sup> A practical starting point is provided in the literature on mobilising voters (Überblick bei Gerber und Green, 2017).

## 6. THE 2030 AGENDA AND THE SDGS FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC

## Key findings

The 2030 Agenda and the SDGs have not yet reached the population at large.

- In the summer of 2015 and the summer of 2017, **more than 50% of respondents had not yet heard of the SDGs.**
- The **general public is sceptical with regard to achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda.** Practically no distinction is made here between the individual 17 goals.
- People rate their **own scope to influence the goals (self-efficacy) and the contribution they make themselves as average to slightly positive.** A somewhat higher level of approval can be seen for the goals relating to consumption and environmental protection.
- A decisive factor for people's engagement for achieving one of the goals is that they believe **their contribution to be effective.**
- The general public considers the **relationship between western industrialised countries and the Global South to be unjust.**

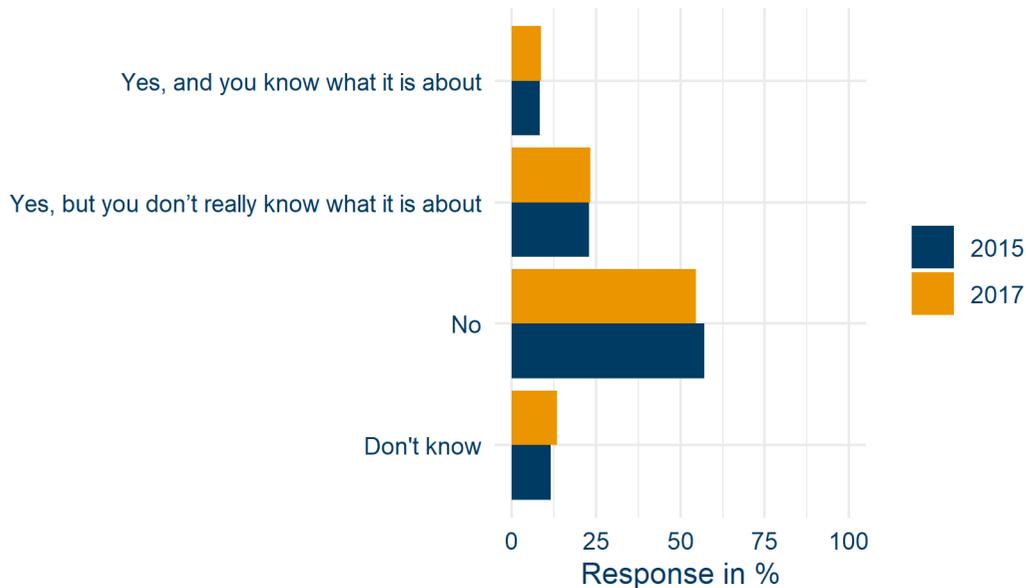
The 2030 Agenda can only claim to be a “people’s agenda”, as it was referred to by the former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, if it and the 17 goals for sustainable development that it contains meet with support among the general public. One prerequisite for implementing the 2030 Agenda is therefore establishing a “listening architecture” – that is, the possibility for political, economic and civil-society decision-makers to listen to the general public, understand people’s attitudes and take these attitudes into account in their own work (OECD DevCom, 2016). There is thus a growing interest in performing scientific investigations on the attitudes of the general public regarding the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. Up to now, however, only very few representative surveys have looked into the SDGs, and concepts such as “(global) sustainable citizenship”<sup>71</sup> (e.g. Micheletti and Stolle, 2012) that form a basis for the Agenda have not yet been covered sufficiently. In the eighth wave of the AAT in July 2017, the study team therefore added questions that were devoted explicitly to this issue.

### 6.1 Degree to which the SDGs are known

Although it is more important that the general public supports the principles of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs, the degree to which the SDGs are known constitutes a useful indicator of the extent to which the Agenda has reached the general public. In the winter of 2015, i.e. not long after the SDGs were adopted in September 2015, and in the summer of 2017, people were asked whether the concept of the SDGs was known to them. At both points in time, more than half of the respondents had not yet heard anything about the SDGs, while slightly over 10% were unsure (see Figure 14). Fewer than 10% stated that they had already heard of the SDGs and also had an idea of their content. A further 23% had already heard of the SDGs but did not have any idea of their content. Surprisingly, no differences were found in July 2017 between the respondents in previous waves of the AAT and those questioned for the first time in the eighth wave. Therefore, it does not appear that the degree to which the SDGs are known is overestimated as a result of respondents being asked about the issue more than once. These results match the results of the Eurobarometer from the years 2015 and 2016 (European Commission, 2016, 2017).

<sup>71</sup> Sustainable citizenship is a normative concept that expects citizens to advocate global and sustainable ecological, economic and social development (Micheletti and Stolle, 2012, p. 90). This means that people should constantly question their own convictions and behaviour and adjust them where necessary with a view to the consequences for the ecological and social environment. Such adjustments should take place even if no immediate benefits or advantages are foreseeable.

**Figure 14** Have you already heard about the Sustainable Development Goals or read anything about them?



Note: Observations for 2015:  $N = 6,058$ ; for 2017:  $N = 6,096$ .

Source: own figure.

## 6.2 Attainability and global claim of the SDGs

In addition to how well known the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs are, it is important how people assess the 17 goals with regard to their attainability and also with regard to their own opportunities to make a contribution. It can be assumed that there is a higher probability of support and engagement if the set goals are considered to be attainable by 2030. The data collected in July 2017 gives a pessimistic picture in this respect.<sup>72</sup> For example, the general public appears to be undecided to sceptical across all the goals. As the blue line in Figure 15 shows, the assessment regarding attainability varies little on average between the 17 SDGs. For none of the goals does the average value exceed the middle of the scale.

The general public therefore has no clear picture of which goals seem to be attainable by 2030 and which do not. The goal of ensuring sustainable consumption and production (SDG 12) is considered the easiest to achieve, while the goals of ending global poverty (SDG 1) and establishing peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 16) are considered the most difficult to achieve. However, as the absolute differences in the assessments of the attainability of the various goals are only small, the differences should be interpreted with caution.

The general public is sceptical as to whether the 17 SDGs can be achieved by 2030. People believe sustainable consumption and sustainable production (SDG 12) to be the easiest to achieve, while putting an end to poverty (SDG 1) is assessed as unlikely.

<sup>72</sup> In the survey, respondents always had to consider just one SDG. Goals were allocated to respondents at random. The average values were therefore always calculated for around 350 respondents. The exact wording of the question can be found in Table 25 in the Annex.

### 6.3 Scope for influence and own engagement for the SDGs from the viewpoint of the general public

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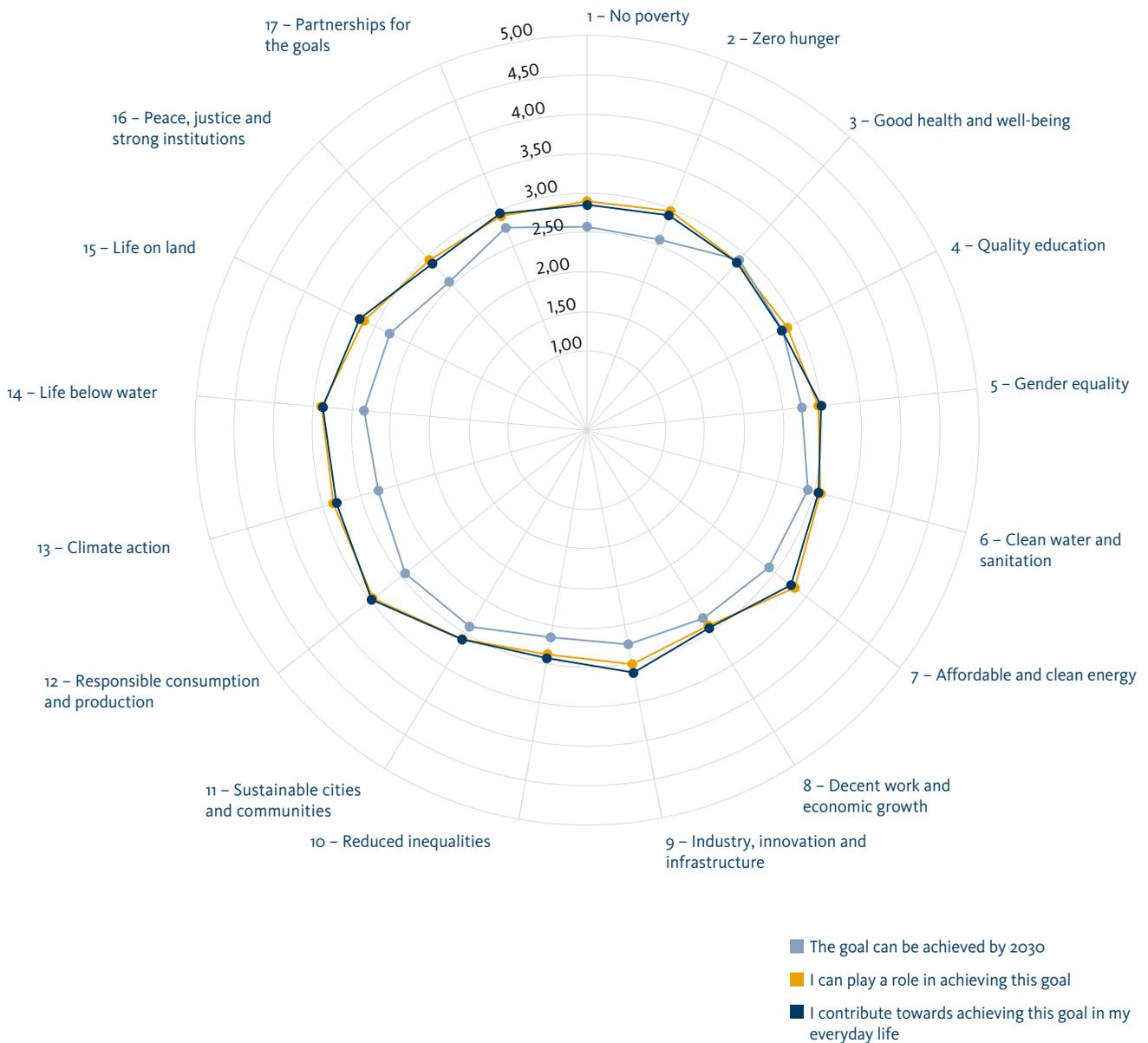
Building on the investigation of how well known the SDGs are and how people perceive their attainability, a crucial question for personal engagement is whether citizens believe themselves to be able to influence the achievement of the 17 goals, in other words whether they consider their contribution to be effective (Kollmuss and Agyeman, 2002; Taberner and Hernández, 2011). Although the general public distinguishes remarkably little between the various goals, a slight tendency can be seen for people to consider themselves to have a high self-efficacy in the area of the environment and consumption (SDGs 7, 12, 13, 14 and 15) – see the orange line in Figure 15. The average values here lie up to around 0.5 points above the middle of the scale, which indicates that the general public believes itself to have opportunities to exert an influence here. This can most likely be attributed to the greater relevance of these goals for everyday life in Germany.

The question regarding actual engagement or people's own contribution towards reaching the goals is answered similarly (light blue line in Figure 15). Again, the area of the environment and consumption stands out a little (SDGs 7, 12, 13, 14 and 15). In this case, too, the average values lie up to 0.5 points above the middle of the scale, thus indicating a slightly higher level of engagement for the respective goals. Once again, the greater relevance of the goals for everyday life could be decisive here.

Another point of interest is the differences between attainability (blue line) and self-efficacy (orange line) or own contribution (light blue line) in Figure 15. For nearly all SDGs, in fact, respondents assess attainability considerably lower than their scope to exert an influence and their actual contribution. People do actually perceive average to slightly positive opportunities to exert an influence and state that they make a contribution in the area of consumption and the environment. However, they view the goals themselves as illusory. The answers indicate that, despite their scepticism with regard to global goal achievement, citizens want to contribute something towards the 2030 Agenda in their local area. The high extent to which the average values for perceived opportunities to exert an influence correspond to the actual contribution indicates that citizens make a contribution to exactly the extent to which they believe themselves able to exert an influence. This assumption is backed up by invariably high correlations between the two characteristics.<sup>73</sup> Consequently, the key to extending the engagement could be to increase self-efficacy by showing the general public specific ways in which they can exert an influence on sustainable development. Conversely, experiencing for themselves that they can exert an influence may also increase the self-efficacy of citizens.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>73</sup> Pearson's R amounts to at least 0.59 for all 17 SDGs. All correlations are statistically significant ( $p < 0.001$ ).

<sup>74</sup> As the questions regarding the SDGs were only asked in the cross-section, no definitive statements regarding the effective direction can be made in the context of the analyses.

**Figure 15** Opinions of the general public with regard to achieving the SDGs (July 2017)

The figure shows the average values of the response options on a scale of 1: "Don't agree at all" to 5: "Completely agree"

Source: own figure.

## 6.4 Sustainable citizenship

To approach the issue of sustainable citizenship beyond the numerous available studies on environmental awareness<sup>75</sup> and environmentally friendly behaviour (overview provided by Kollmuss and Agyeman, 2002), respondents were presented with several statements relating to the perception of global relationships and challenges. The focus here was on the sustainability dimensions of the economy and social issues from a global perspective. For example, one of the statements was as follows: "I have very little in common with a person living in one of the poorest countries of the world." We can derive two fundamental attitudes

<sup>75</sup> The "Umweltbewusstsein in Deutschland" (Environmental awareness in Germany) (BMUB, 2015) and "Naturbewusstsein" (Nature awareness) (BMUB, 2016) series of studies are particularly worth mentioning here. They are published every two years by the Federal Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety and the Federal Environment Agency.

towards global interdependencies and challenges from these statements, namely psychological distance and global justice:<sup>76</sup>

- Psychological distance measures the psychological distance (see, for example, Spence et al., 2012; Trope and Liberman, 2010) towards the situation in the Global South or the responsibility of western states for this situation. The more pronounced this characteristic is, the greater the perceived distance.
- Global justice gauges the perception of differences or inequalities between western industrialised countries and countries of the Global South. The more pronounced this characteristic is, the more unequal or unjust the relationship between the two groups of countries is perceived to be.

With an average value of just over 3 on a scale of 1 to 5, the general public as a whole displays only an average psychological distance from the situation in the Global South. With an average value of 4, also on a scale of 1 to 5, the relationship between western industrialised countries and the Global South is considered to be unequal or unjust. Even though the general public is not familiar with the SDGs to a large extent, people support the basic idea behind the 2030 Agenda with regard to social sustainability.

What factors influence a distanced attitude with regard to global relationships? Which characteristics influence the perception of global injustice? On the one hand, people's circumstances could play a role again. A precarious situation could lead people to focus primarily on their own worries. On the other hand, global justice could be rejected due to political-social convictions, with people considering the countries or their citizens themselves to be responsible for their situation. In addition, it is necessary to establish whether psychological distance and global justice correlate with attitudes towards development cooperation.

The analyses in Table 7 display some interesting and consistent results. Educational effects are apparent with regard to circumstances in life: Those who have the *Abitur* (higher school-leaving qualification) are less distanced and have a greater perception of global injustice. Respondents in the higher income groups exhibit slightly higher values on the psychological distance index. In turn, the perception of the economic situation favours not only higher psychological distance values, but also the perception of global injustice.<sup>77</sup> In political terms, the left-right effect already observed in the other sections is further confirmed in that the further to the right people are positioned in the political spectrum, the greater is their psychological distance vis-à-vis the situation in the Global South and the smaller the extent to which they perceive global injustice.

For development cooperation attitudes, we first wish to point out the known correlation with moral obligation. This inhibits perceiving high psychological distance and favours the perception of global injustice. The same is true of general support for development cooperation, although the coefficient is substantially smaller.<sup>78</sup> One aspect that is surprising is the results for the perception of corruption and self-efficacy in the area of development cooperation. The greater people perceive the problem of corruption, the greater the psychological distance is perceived and also the greater people assess global injustice. In contrast, perceived self-efficacy also has a negative correlation with both indexes. This means that the more effective people perceive their actions to be, the less distanced they are towards global challenges. At the same time, the perception of global injustice is also smaller. Neither the estimated effectiveness of government development cooperation nor the other sociodemographic characteristics play a role. However, respondents from the eastern German states perceive global injustice slightly less.

<sup>76</sup> For the result of an explorative principle component analysis of a set of questions to gauge the concept of "global sustainable citizenship", see Table 26 in the Annex.

<sup>77</sup> The regression models are shown in Table 27 in the Annex.

<sup>78</sup> On top of this, the variable has a larger value range (scale of 1-10 compared to a scale of 1-5).

**Table 7** Multivariate analysis of indices of psychological distance and global justice

Independent variables	Psychological distance	Global justice
	Correlation	Correlation
General support for DC	Negative ***	Positive ***
Assessment of effectiveness	n. s.	Positive †
Presumption of corruption	Positive ***	Positive ***
DC-based self-efficacy	Negative ***	Negative **
Moral obligation	Negative ***	Positive ***
Political orientation (left-right)	Positive ***	Negative ***
Economic situation	Positive **	Positive **
Income of €30,000-59,999	Positive *	n. s.
Income of €60,000 and more	Positive *	n. s.
<i>Realschule</i> (secondary school)	n. s.	Positive †
<i>Abitur</i> (higher school-leaving qualification)	Negative ***	Positive ***
Age (in years)	n. s.	Positive ***
Female	n. s.	Positive **
Migration background	n. s.	n. s.
Religious affiliation	n. s.	Negative ***
Urban place of residence	Positive **	Negative *
Suburban place of residence	n. s.	n. s.
Eastern Germany	n. s.	Negative *
Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	0.502	0.226
N	3,677	3,677

Note: \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$ , † $p > 0.1$ . n. s. = not significant. Reference categories: male; income up to €29,000, no qualification or *Hauptschulabschluss* (basic school-leaving qualification); no religious denomination, rural place of residence, Western Germany. Coefficients for other/no specification for the variables of education and income have not been included in the table.

## 6.5 The 2030 Agenda – not yet widely known to the general public

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For actors in development policy and development cooperation, these findings also pose a challenge if they understand the 2030 Agenda to be a people's agenda. Firstly, the general public needs to be provided with more information regarding the SDGs – and therefore also the 2030 Agenda. Secondly, we could consider paying more attention than before to showing citizens their opportunities to exert an influence in the interests of global sustainable development to prevent them from giving up in face of the huge global challenges. In order to get all areas of the population to make a contribution towards sustainable global development, development cooperation actors – and, of course, also those involved in other relevant policy areas such as the environment, the economy and education – need to demonstrate specific ways in which citizens can exert an influence, thus strengthening perceived self-efficacy and promoting engagement in this area. One example of promoting participation and engagement among large sections of the population in Germany is the Charter for the Future “ONE WORLD – Our Responsibility” (BMZ, 2015b). This promotion does not necessarily need to take place in the area of the environment and consumption, where the local implications of global relationships can possibly be illustrated particularly well, as the “Mitmachen!” (Get involved!) brochure published by BMZ shows (BMZ, 2015c). There is also potential with regard to challenges outside people's own front doors, for example with regard to gender equality, high-quality education and health care, and well-being. In this context, we must not underestimate the extent to which experience of effectiveness in everyday life can conversely increase the sense of self-efficacy. For political participation, older studies have already revealed such effects (Finkel, 1985, 1987).

# 7. ATTITUDES TOWARDS DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION – A TYPOLOGY

## Key findings

The general public can be divided into four **four types of people with different aid attitudes**.

- The group of **undecideds**, making up 35% of the population is the most frequently represented. **Development cooperation opponents** account for 28%, while the sceptics account for 23%. **Supporters** comprise 14% of the population.
- The typology is based on statements regarding concern about the situation in the Global South, a sense of moral obligation, general support for development cooperation, assessment of the effectiveness of development cooperation and a sense of self-efficacy.
- **Factors influencing** how people are assigned to the four aid attitude types include their **sociodemographic background** and **party identification**.

### 7.1 Typologies help people to understand complex surveys

In the previous sections, we looked at the general public's attitudes, knowledge and engagement separately. With a view to making the wide range of individual perspectives on development cooperation and sustainable development more tangible, it makes sense to analyse these characteristics simultaneously. The aim here is to identify clearly distinguishable types of people based on their attitudes, with the characteristics of these types being as similar as possible within a single type and differing as clearly as possible between the types. This constitutes an innovation when it comes to researching attitudes towards development policy and development cooperation.

### 7.2 Statistical method for forming typologies: latent class analysis

The statistical method used here to form the types of people with different attitudes is the latent class analysis (Collins and Lanza, 2010).<sup>79</sup> This method is based on the assumption that respondents belong to latent (i.e. not directly observable) types of people with different attitudes (referred to as classes), which have an effect on how they answer the items on the questionnaire. How many characteristics and which ones distinguish between the types of people with different attitudes only become clear during the course of pre-analyses. Based on the pre-analyses and for reasons of theoretical content, we have included the following attitudes (or cognitions) in the analysis:<sup>80</sup>

- Concern about global poverty (concern)
- The moral obligation for the state to do something about this problem (moral obligation)
- Support for government development cooperation (general support for DC)
- The assessment of the effectiveness of government development cooperation (assessment of effectiveness) and
- The assessment of one's own influence on the situation in countries of the Global South (self-efficacy).

For the latent class analysis, we have used the survey wave of December 2015, as this was the only wave in which respondents were asked in more detail about their use of specific media (e.g. newspapers, television channels and Internet sites). In Section 8, media use is presented in relation to the developed typology.

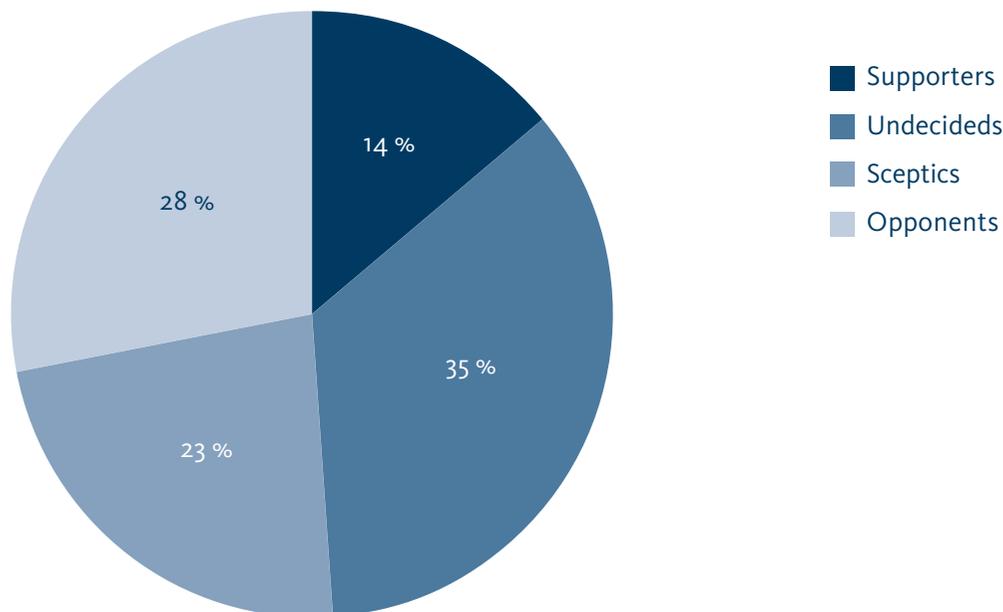
<sup>79</sup>The items used are shown in Table 28 in the Annex. Methodological details of the latent class analysis can be found in Section 5.1 of the Annex.

<sup>80</sup>As knowledge regarding development cooperation did not help to differentiate between respondents in pre-analyses, we have not paid any further attention to it in the further analysis. This can be put down to the high level of difficulty of some of the knowledge questions. We have also refrained from including forms of engagement in order to avoid mixing different conceptual levels (attitudes and actions) in the analysis. On top of this, only a few forms of engagement occur so frequently that they can contribute towards a reliable typology. For the analysis, the response scales for all characteristics included have been grouped to form three levels of agreement (low, medium, high).

### 7.3 Four types: supporters, undecideds, sceptics and opponents

The latent class analysis leads to the conclusion that the typology that best explains the attitudes of citizens is the one that distinguishes between just four types of people based on their development cooperation attitudes (see Figure 16). The largest segment of the population, accounting for around 35%, is the undecideds. They exhibit an average to high level of concern about the development in countries of the Global South, but only display a low to average level of agreement regarding a moral obligation to support these countries (see Figure 17). Government development cooperation also only meets with average support in this group and is assigned an average level of effectiveness. People in this group consider themselves to have only a low level of influence on the situation in the countries of the Global South.

**Figure 16** Aid attitude types in the German population



Note:  $N = 5,874$ . The data source is the AAT survey of December 2015.

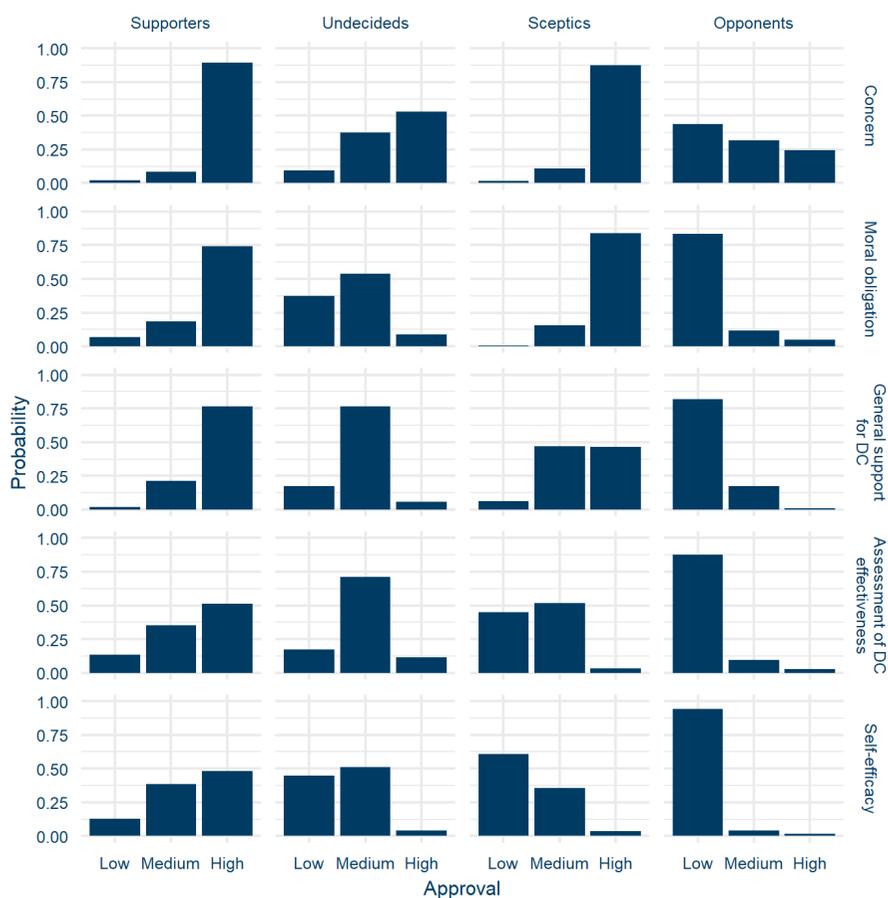
Source: own figure.

The second largest segment of the population is the opponents of development cooperation, who account for approximately 28% of respondents. Their profile can be easily summarised: they are hardly concerned about the situation in the Global South, hardly feel any moral obligation towards these countries and do not support government development cooperation. At the same time, this group believes neither government development cooperation nor themselves to have an effect on the situation in the Global South.

In third place, at just under 23%, come the sceptics. On the one hand, this group is actually concerned about the situation in the countries of the Global South and has a sense of moral obligation towards these countries. On the other hand, this group only displays an average level of support for government development cooperation and has reservations with regard to its effectiveness. It is this scepticism regarding its own effectiveness and government effectiveness, coupled with an average level of support, that gives the group its name.

Only 14% of the population supports development cooperation. The group of development cooperation opponents, at 28%, is twice as large.

The smallest segment, accounting for 14% of respondents, is the supporters. Out of all the groups, this group is most concerned about the developments in the Global South, has the greatest sense of moral obligation and supports government development cooperation. In addition, this group assigns both government actions and its own actions in this area the highest level of effectiveness compared to the other groups.

**Figure 17** Response profiles of the four aid attitude types

Note:  $N = 5,874$ . AAT December 2015. The figure shows the probabilities for naming the respective response category within a group of people with a certain attitude.

Source: own figure.

If we simultaneously take account of several attitude dimensions, the picture for development cooperation attitudes among the general public is therefore substantially more critical than if we simply analyse support for development cooperation (see Section 3.1).

## 7.4 Characteristics of the four aid attitude types

The question arises as to whether the identified types also differ with regard to other characteristics. Do the undecideds, opponents, sceptics and supporters have different average ages? How are characteristics such as education, income or gender distributed among the types? Do the people concerned live predominantly in a certain region such as Eastern or Western Germany or do they tend to live in urban or rural areas? With which party do they sympathise? All of these questions aim to achieve a better understanding of the types of people who make up the different groups and what causes different attitudes towards development cooperation and sustainable development. The results provide development policy actors from the government and civil society with knowledge that they can use as orientation in communication and education work, in that they help to make the individual types of people with different attitudes in the population tangible.<sup>81</sup>

<sup>81</sup> To make the sociodemographic and political differences between the different types of people more tangible, political orientation has been replaced by party identification, age has been divided into four groups according to clearly distinguishable phases of life and religious affiliation

For the statistical analysis of the characteristics of the individual types, the group of undecideds serves as the comparison group and we examine the extent to which the three other groups differ from it in terms of the characteristics included.<sup>82</sup> For all characteristics, the coefficient presented in Figure 18 represents the difference compared to a previously defined comparison category. If the coefficient is greater than zero, then there is a higher probability of a person belonging to the group investigated (e.g. supporters). If it is negative, the probability is lower. Finally, the confidence intervals shown in the horizontal lines provide information regarding the reliability of the estimate. If the confidence intervals do not cross the zero line, then the coefficient is statistically significant. By way of illustration, for example, panel a) in Figure 18 represents the correlation between sociodemographic and political characteristics and affiliation with the development cooperation opponents as opposed to the undecideds. The positive coefficient for *Abitur* (higher school-leaving qualification) indicates that a higher level of education compared to the reference category of *Hauptschulabschluss* (basic school-leaving qualification) or no qualification increases the probability of a person belonging to the development cooperation opponents. It should be noted that the probability is not absolute, but rather needs to be interpreted in relation to the comparison group of undecideds.

**a) Supporters:** Supporters can be seen to have a greater affinity to left-wing parties (SPD, Die Linke, Bündnis 90/Die Grünen) compared to the reference category of CDU/CSU. In contrast, there tends to be a lower probability of those who support the FDP and AfD belonging to development cooperation supporters than is the case for those who support the CDU/CSU. In addition, those who have the *Abitur* and also those who belong to the highest two income categories are more likely than the respective reference groups to be assigned to the group of supporters. Respondents with a migration background are less likely than people without a migration background to belong to the supporters.

**b) Sceptics:** Compared to the reference category of CDU/CSU, these people sympathise more with parties that belong to the left wing in the political spectrum (e.g. SPD, Die Linke, Bündnis 90/Die Grünen). Secondly, compared to the reference category of those under 30, they are more likely to belong to the 40- to 59-year-olds and are less likely to belong to the 30- to 39-year-olds. Moreover, the *Realschulabschluss* (secondary school qualification) or *Abitur* increases the probability compared to the reference category (*Hauptschule*) of belonging to this group. Women are less likely than men to belong to the group of sceptics and, finally, a place of residence in the new German states correlates with a lower probability of belonging to this group.

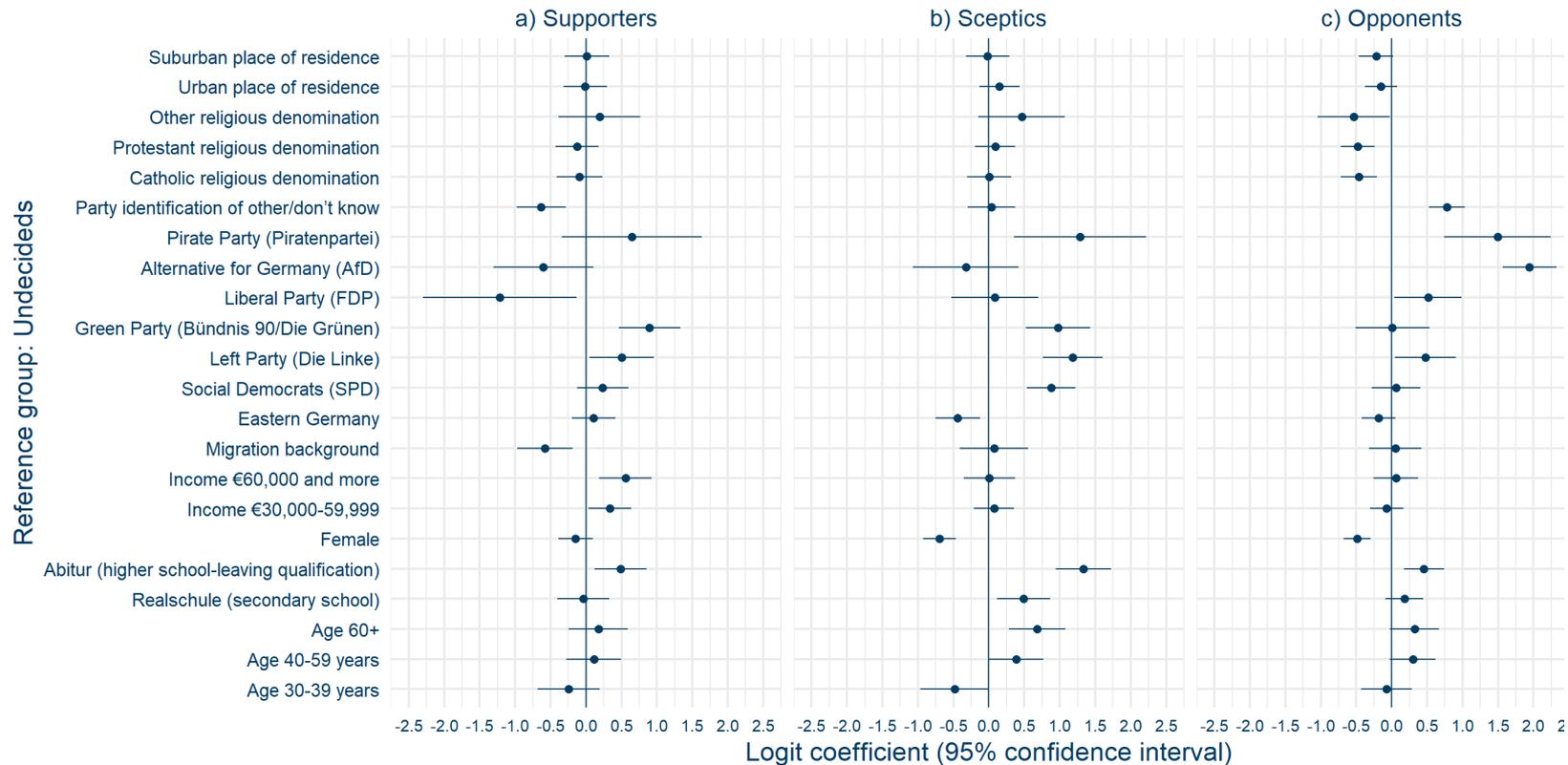
**c) Opponents:** For the group of development cooperation opponents, it can be established that all religious affiliations correlate with a lower probability of being assigned to this group (compared to those with no religious affiliation). In contrast, supporting the Alternative für Deutschland (AfD), FDP, Piratenpartei, or even Die Linke compared to the reference category of those supporting CDU/CSU increases the probability of belonging to the development cooperation opponents. The reasons for this most likely vary between the parties. Women display a lower probability than men of belonging to the group of development cooperation opponents, whereas the *Abitur* – compared to the *Hauptschulabschluss* – increases the probability of belonging to this group. Finally, it is worth mentioning that the group of those over 40 also exhibits a higher probability of belonging to this group than the reference group of those under 30.<sup>83</sup>

has been mapped in more detail. As reference categories, the party with the most second votes in the 2013 parliamentary elections (CDU/CSU) has been selected for party identification, the youngest age group (18 to 29 years) for age, and the group of those with no religious affiliation for religious affiliation. For party identification, the category of “Other/don’t know” has deliberately not been used as the reference category because it is too heterogeneous in terms of content for meaningful comparisons.

<sup>82</sup> The analysis can be found in Table 30 in the Annex.

<sup>83</sup> The coefficients for the top two age categories are only significant at the 10% level.

Figure 18 Factors influencing assignment to the different attitude types



Note: N = 5,874; multinomial logistic regression; comparison category: "undecideds". Reference categories for the independent variables: male, rural place of residence, no religious denomination, CDU/CSU, Western Germany, no migration background, income up to €29,999, Hauptschulabschluss (basic school-leaving qualification) or no qualification, up to 29 years old. Respondents who refused to provide an answer (e.g. those who entered "no specification" for income) were included in the analysis as a separate category or coefficient to avoid excluding them from the observation. However, they are not shown in the figure due to a lack of space.

To sum up, we have established the following:

1. A person's political position plays a role when it comes to assignment to one of the four aid attitude types. Compared to the undecideds, those who have a greater affinity with the more left-wing parties in the political spectrum have a greater probability of belonging to the development cooperation supporters. They also display a greater probability of belonging to the development cooperation sceptics. This means that, although they are conscious of the situation in the Global South and have a sense of moral obligation, they are rather sceptical with regard to government development cooperation activity and its effectiveness. In contrast, supporters of the AfD and FDP have a greater tendency to belong to the group of development cooperation opponents.
2. A high level of formal education also correlates with more pointed attitudes towards development cooperation. Respondents with the *Abitur* (higher school-leaving qualification) always display a higher probability compared to the undecideds, who do not exhibit any pronounced positive or negative attitudes, of belonging to the other three types of people, namely supporters, sceptics and opponents.
3. There are a wide range of correlations with sociodemographic background. The most conspicuous of these are the comparably low probability of women belonging to the development cooperation opponents or development cooperation sceptics and the comparably low probability of respondents with a migration background belonging to the development cooperation supporters.

The typology developed in this section is picked up again in the section on media use with a view to establishing how undecideds, opponents, sceptics and supporters differ in terms of their information behaviour regarding the issues of international development and poverty.

## 8. INFORMATION BEHAVIOUR AND MEDIA USE

## Key findings

- Sceptics and supporters **follow the issues of international development and poverty more intensively** than opponents and undecideds.
- **Traditional media channels continue to play a key role** with regard to information and news intake. This is also true in the case of the issues of **international development and poverty**.
- **Development cooperation supporters can more readily be reached via Facebook** than undecideds and development cooperation opponents.

### 8.1 Development-based media use in times of social media and “fake news”

For the feedback loop between the general public and development policy or development cooperation actors, it is important to understand which channels citizens use to find out about development-based issues and which specific media they use for this. In addition, in times of “fake news”, the question increasingly arises as to how neutral and reliable people consider reporting to be. The results of the media usage analysis can provide ideas as to how to reach citizens more effectively with information and education offers relating to development cooperation and global sustainable development.

For the analysis, we use the typology developed in Section 7 with the groups of undecideds, sceptics, opponents and supporters of development cooperation. The assessment is based on the AAT wave of December 2015, as this is the only one that asked about media use in detail. Here, the results are presented with a focus on key findings. More detailed presentations of the findings can be found in the Annex.<sup>84</sup>

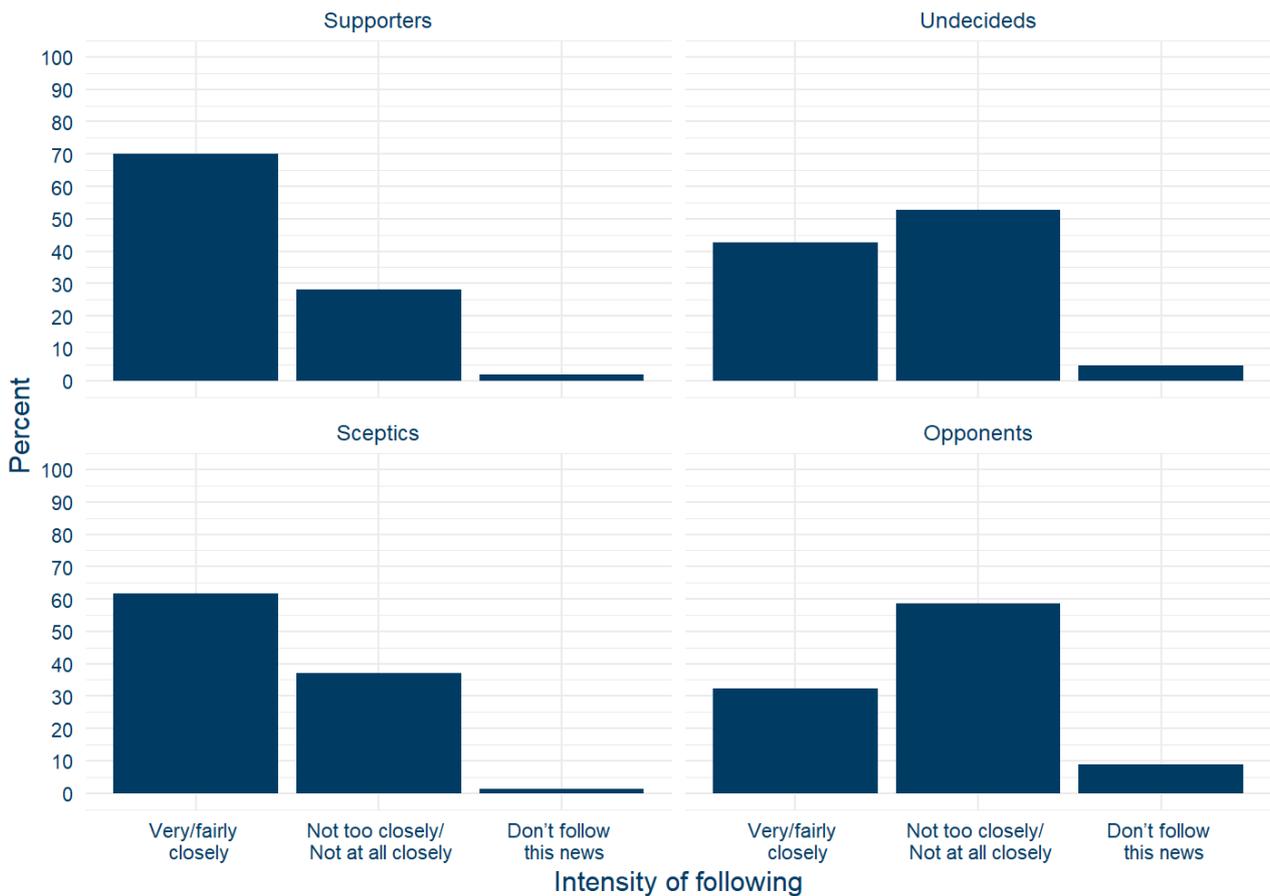
### 8.2 Media use of the four types of people

What sources do citizens use to find out about the latest news and current affairs? The analysis shows that, for all types of people with certain attitudes, at least 70% of respondents follow news broadcasts on television. This is followed by the radio, newspapers and news sites on the Internet, which are named by around 50% of respondents in each case. Despite the great emphasis placed on the relevance of social media, the population as a whole displays more traditional information-related behaviour, in which traditional channels continue to play an important role. As a rule, there are only minor differences between the types of people with specific attitudes in terms of the sources they use. Having said that, the undecideds, who have neither a particularly positive nor a particularly negative attitude towards development cooperation, specify use of all sources more seldom than the other groups. Development cooperation opponents, too, are behind the development cooperation sceptics and supporters in terms of the percentage specifying several sources. In particular, they conduct fewer personal discussions on the topic of development cooperation. However, they can just as readily be reached via classic channels such as television news and radio as development cooperation supporters.

<sup>84</sup> See figures in Section 6 in the Annex. The operationalisations are presented in Table 32 in the Annex.

When it comes to using the Internet, no relevant differences can be established between the four types of people. It is hardly surprising that most of them use it at least once a day. A similar pattern can be seen for the use of newspapers, with most respondents among all four types of people using newspapers as a source of information on a daily basis. Nonetheless, the percentage values for development cooperation sceptics and supporters are again slightly higher than those for the other types of people. Compared to the other types, development cooperation opponents state most frequently that they never read newspapers.

**Figure 19 Following international development and poverty in the media**



Note: N = 5,674.

Source: own figure.

How intensively do citizens follow the issues of international development and poverty? Figure 19 shows clear differences between the groups. Whereas development cooperation sceptics and supporters state with a clear majority (60% and more) that they follow the issue, the figure for the development cooperation opponents is only around 30%. In the group of undecideds, the ratio between those who follow the issue in detail and those who do not follow it in detail is more balanced, with a majority of just over 50% of respondents stating that they do not follow the issue in detail.

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48% of citizens intensively follow the issue of international development and poverty in the media. In the case of the development cooperation opponents, the figure is 32%.

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Development cooperation sceptics and supporters also follow general foreign policy more intensively than undecideds and opponents. In the case of the latter, however, the majority of respondents also state that they follow the issue in detail. All four types of people intensively follow natural and humanitarian catastrophes. However, differences can be seen between sceptics and supporters on the one hand and between undecideds and opponents on the other hand, with the proportion of people who do not follow

the issue in detail being slightly higher in the last two groups (30% to 40%). An interesting picture can be seen in the case of the issues of climate change, political unrest in the Global South and human rights. Whereas a clear majority (over 60%) of sceptics and supporters show an interest, the undecideds and opponents state in an approximately equal proportion that they follow the issue in detail or do not follow the issue in detail in the media.

Respondents who follow the issue of global development and poverty at least sporadically were subsequently asked which specific media they use to obtain the information.<sup>85</sup> The focus here was on TV, radio and print media as well as conventional use (via TV/radio set or as a printed product) and digital use (notebook computer or smartphone). The use of topic-based Internet offers or social media (Facebook, YouTube, etc.) was also investigated. In addition to this, citizens were asked how they assess the accuracy of the reporting and whether it pays more attention to positive or negative aspects.

The dominant TV and radio information sources on the issues of international development and poverty are the *Tagesschau* and *Tagesthemen* news broadcasts of ARD and the *heute* and *heute-journal* news broadcasts of ZDF. Considered across all four types of people, usage amounts to around 70%. There are only minor differences between the aid attitude types here. Use of the specified media via the Internet amounts to between 10% and 20%. The news formats of private television channels (Sat1, RTL, ProSieben) are used much less often. However, depending on the type of person and format, the figure amounts to between around 25% (development cooperation sceptics) and 60% (undecideds). Development cooperation sceptics generally use private television news a little less often compared to the other aid attitude types, whereas undecideds use them a little more often. Radio news are also used frequently by all aid attitude types (approximately 55% and more). The proportion of those accessing the broadcasts via the Internet amounts to between 10% and 15%. For all four aid attitude types, up to 50% of respondents mention 24-hour news channels.

Overall, print media have a substantially lower relevance with regard to information intake on the topic of international development and poverty. The item named most frequently by all aid attitude types is local newspapers (at least 50%), followed by the Spiegel, Stern and Bild magazines (approximately 20% to 30% in each case). In contrast to TV and radio, 15% to 35% of respondents state that they use print media more often via the Internet. The differences in use between the individual types of people are often only small. The data therefore does not support possible stereotypical expectations regarding the use of certain media by development cooperation opponents. The only finding of note here is that development cooperation supporters and in part also development cooperation sceptics slightly more often specify that they use Der Spiegel, Süddeutsche Zeitung, Die Zeit, taz and Die Welt.<sup>86</sup>

The AAT asks about the use of social media separately. Apart from development cooperation supporters, at least 50% of respondents among all aid attitude types state that they have not obtained information about international development and poverty via any of the named sources. Only Facebook, Google News and, to a somewhat lesser extent, YouTube have a certain relevance. Across all types of people, 25% and more respondents name Facebook, and the percentage using Facebook in the case of development cooperation supporters is even 35%. Moreover, the latter group is ahead of the other types of people in terms of the percentage specifying all online sources.

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35% of development cooperation supporters can be reached via Facebook. The figure is 26% for the undecideds and 21% for the opponents.

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<sup>85</sup> This reduces the gross observation number to 4,882. As a result of respondents refusing to answer questions relating to media use, the net number of cases varies slightly in each case.

<sup>86</sup> In addition, the AAT asked separately about the use of online news portals (e.g. Spiegel Online, Bild or Focus-Online). The data is not presented at this point as it is unclear whether respondents distinguished between digitised print editions and separate online offers of print media when answering the previous question about the online use of print media. Interested readers can find a graphical representation in Figure 16 and Figure 17 in the Annex.

### 8.3 Perception of reporting on international development and poverty

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The general public assigns an average level of accuracy to media reporting on international development and poverty across all types of people with certain attitudes. In percentage terms, however, development cooperation supporters more frequently assess the level of accuracy as high (around 25% of respondents), followed by the development cooperation sceptics, among whom nearly 15% of respondents perceive the accuracy as high. Among development cooperation opponents, 20% assess the accuracy as low, while the figure is, as a rule, below 10% for the other aid attitude types. It is also interesting to see that the proportion of those answering “Don’t know” – those who do not believe themselves capable of an assessment – is higher among the undecideds and development cooperation opponents than among the other two aid attitude types. This indicates a fairly large degree of uncertainty when it comes to judging media reporting.

A majority of respondents among all types of people consider the focus of media reporting in terms of content to be neutral. Only in the case of the development cooperation opponents is the share just under half. It is notable that approximately 25% of development cooperation opponents state that reporting focuses too much on negative aspects, although they even have a negative perception of development cooperation. We can at this point only speculate as to whether the negative reporting favours the negative image of development cooperation. Finally, it is also worth noting that undecideds and development cooperation opponents fall back on the “Don’t know” category somewhat more often for this question, too.

### 8.4 Possible implications for development communication and education

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For development cooperation and development policy actors, it seems to make sense to take a differentiated approach to the way they address the four aid attitude types. An emphasis could be placed on the effectiveness of development cooperation in the case of sceptics, whereas development cooperation opponents possibly have a lack of awareness of the problems involved. The latter may quite simply underestimate global challenges. Undecideds could be addressed with regard to both effectiveness and problem awareness. The findings of the media usage analysis provide possible starting points as to which channels can be used to reach the individual types of people with different attitudes. They can quite effectively be linked and compared with the media usage studies published each year (e.g. those provided by Arbeitsgemeinschaft Media-Analyse e.V.) in order to determine more precise starting points for communication and education work.<sup>87</sup> These studies provide detailed information about which population groups use which media, to what extent and at what times.

Based on the empirical findings, it could be particularly worthwhile for development policy and development cooperation actors to invest more in communication via social media. What we mean by this is not simply creating corresponding profiles but, above all, specifically addressing various target groups, in particular younger people who less often use print media and television. Nonetheless, in view of fairly recent debates on the targeted dissemination of misinformation in election campaigns, a moderate approach should be taken here. Influencing people through excessive communication of successes in development cooperation seems problematic, as do appeals to moral obligation using stereotypical images (for details of this, see Chouliaraki, 2010), although the latter may mobilise donations in the short term, for example (Burt and Strongman, 2005). In order to develop suitable strategies and campaigns, government and non-government institutions or actors can consult various sources and networks (e.g. OECD DevCom, 2014).<sup>88</sup> In this context, the evaluation of development policy and development cooperation could play an important role, which would need to be communicated more effectively to the general public in the future.

<sup>87</sup> See [www.agma-mmc.de](http://www.agma-mmc.de).

<sup>88</sup> Other websites worth mentioning include: [www.devcommmlab.org](http://www.devcommmlab.org) and [www.oecd.org/development/pgd/devcom.htm](http://www.oecd.org/development/pgd/devcom.htm).

## 9. THE EFFECT OF THE INFLUX OF REFUGEES SINCE 2015 ON SUPPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

## Key findings

In the wake of the increased number of refugees arriving in 2015, people's attitudes have changed.

- Following the peak of the number of refugees arriving in September 2015, the general public has come to **increasingly perceive immigration as a challenge**, while attitudes towards refugees have become slightly more negative.
- Since September 2015, **development cooperation has met with greater approval among the general public**.
- Before September 2015, individual changes in the perception of immigration as a challenge and a shift in political orientation towards the right are correlated with slightly stronger support for development cooperation. These effects become weaker in the surveys after September 2015.
- The more positive people's attitudes towards refugees are, the more pronounced their support for development cooperation is.

### 9.1 The influx of refugees since 2015 and its political consequences

The migration and refugee movements since 2015 are without doubt among the most important political events in Germany and Europe in recent years. Around 477,000 people applied for asylum in Germany in 2015 and around 745,000 in 2016 (BAMF, 2017). In particular, the willingness of the German Federal Government under Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel (CDU) to open the borders for refugees was discussed very controversially both in society and in politics (Wiesendahl, 2016). While some people consider it a humanitarian obligation for Germany as a wealthy and secure state to offer protection for refugees, others consider immigration – especially the immigration of people of the Islamic faith due to a presumed connection with terrorism – to pose a threat for Germany. On top of this, there are conflicts regarding the use of state resources because spending money on refugees could have negative consequences for more socially deprived citizens in Germany. Domestic political consequences that can reasonably be presumed to be related to the high immigration numbers include election successes of the right-wing populist AfD<sup>89</sup>, the tightening of asylum legislation and arson attacks on refugee accommodation (Crage, 2016; Jäckle and König, 2017). At the same time, the refugee crisis, as the events are referred to among the general public and in the media, may possibly have stimulated more intensive discussion regarding Germany as an immigration country and also on the opportunities and risks of immigration. Irrespective of this, the large number of refugees presents great administrative challenges for public administration (Bogumil et al., 2016).

Many political decision-makers are looking for ways to fight the causes of flight and reduce immigration compared to the record year of 2015. The credo is that the situation in 2015 must not be repeated. In this context, an emphasis is placed not only on short-term measures such as agreements with transit countries, but also on the medium- and long-term importance of development cooperation (BMZ, 2016b). This is reflected not least by the increasing budget of BMZ. The budget increased from around 6.5 billion euros in 2015 to 7.4 billion euros in 2016 and amounted to around 8.5 billion euros in 2017 (BMZ, 2017a). In political discussion, development cooperation is explicitly characterised as a means of combating the causes of flight. This is particularly believed to be the case in that it establishes better living and residence conditions in the countries of origin, neighbouring states and transit countries and thus reduces the incentives for migration to Europe (see Section 3.2.3).

<sup>89</sup> Whereas the party was classified as eurosceptical or national liberal during its start-up phase, it moved towards the right after Frauke Petry took over the party leadership in July 2015. In political science, the party is now included among the right-wing populist parties due to its political goals and public rhetoric (e.g. Lewandowsky, 2017). To put it in simple terms, these parties base their views on a homogeneous nation and often represent conservative sociopolitical views with regard to family, partnership, gender equality and culture, authoritarian opinions regarding security and criminality, and critical to hostile positions on immigration as regards Islam. They stand out with a rhetoric that sets the “people” apart from the “degenerated” political establishment. A good overview of these parties is provided, for example, by Mudde (2007).

How is support for development cooperation related to the perception of the people coming to Germany? Is the support increasing, staying the same or decreasing? How is support for development cooperation developing in the various political camps? Please note that the focus here is on general support for development cooperation and not on the approval of the general public of the motives for fighting the causes of flight that were investigated in Section 3.2.3. Based on the longitudinal survey questioning the same people in several waves, the AAT provides an excellent data source for answering this question, as changes at an individual level can be tracked.

Theoretically, the influence of the influx of refugees can be outlined as follows: it was paid great media attention both in conventional media (quality press, tabloid press, TV and radio) and in alternative (online) media channels (Berry et al., 2015). The reporting directed the attention of the public at large both towards the countries of origin of the refugees and towards possible approaches to finding solutions (Georgiou and Zaborowski, 2017, page 11). In this context, development policy and cooperation also experienced greater public attention, as politicians characterised them as a possible solution to the flight-based challenges. This gives rise to two hypotheses, which we will examine below:

- **Hypothesis H1:** The “crisis” or the described narrative regarding its causes and fighting the causes of flight could have increased support for development cooperation over the course of time. The sociopsychological explanatory mechanism here is to be found in changing perceptions of immigration or refugees, or in increased attention being paid to the situation in the countries of origin.
- **Hypothesis H2:** Differences between different political camps could have decreased, as even citizens who are positioned more towards the right in the political spectrum and represent immigration-critical positions could, against the backdrop of the increased influx of refugees, perceive development cooperation as an effective means of achieving designs for society that are characterised, amongst other things, by a lower level of immigration. On the other hand, the opposite is also possible, namely declining support as a result of disillusionment regarding the successes of government development cooperation. In both cases, however, the general influencing factor of “political orientation” and how this factor has changed over the course of time would be the explanatory mechanism.

## 9.2 Attitudes towards refugees and immigration

The analysis of the described assumptions takes place in two parts. Firstly, we need to investigate directly how the general public perceives the refugees. For this purpose, we consider the time frame from November/December 2015 to July 2017. The questions regarding refugees were not included in previous survey waves before September 2015, meaning that we cannot investigate the perception of refugees prior to the peak of refugee immigration in this study. Only the perception of immigration as a challenge in the negative sense is available across all survey waves since the end of 2013. Although immigration and flight can by no means be equated, public debate often hardly differentiates between the two terms. This indicator can therefore be used for an analysis of the entire period since 2013, thus making it possible to perform a before/after comparison around the peak of immigration in September 2015.<sup>90</sup>

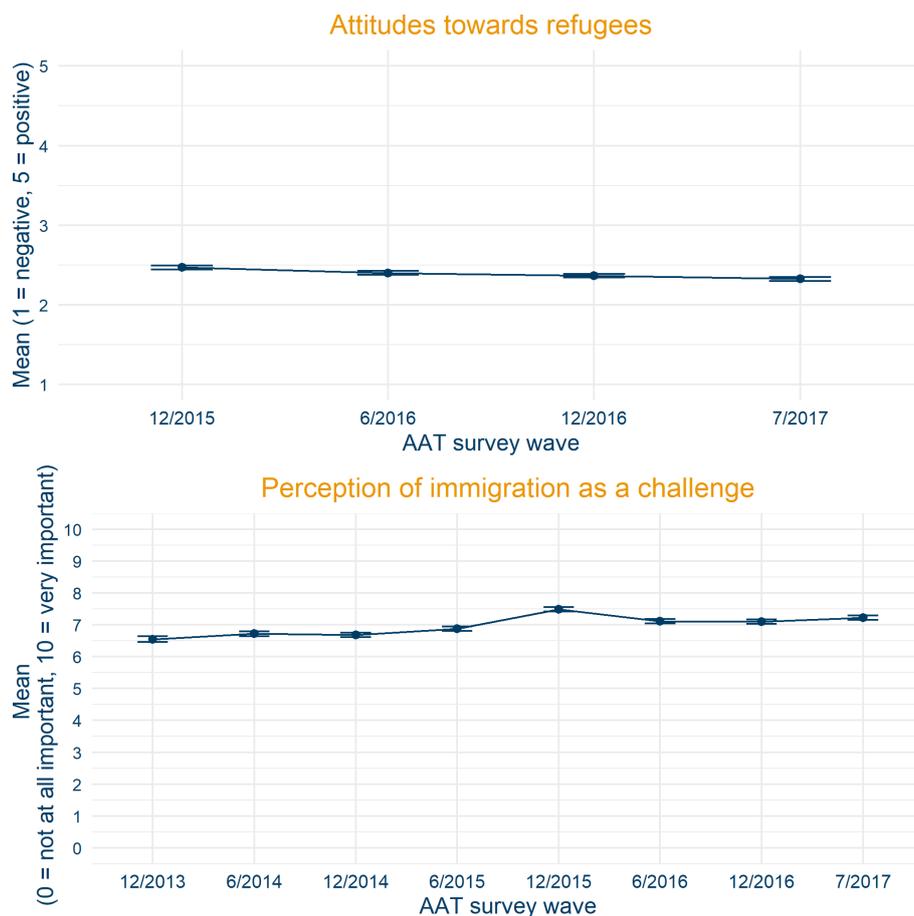
Shortly after the peak of immigration (September 2015) in the AAT wave of December 2015, attitudes towards refugees lie at an average index value of around 2.5 (scale of 1 to 5, see Figure 20 above).<sup>91</sup> This value lies clearly below the middle of the scale. It can therefore be said that attitudes towards refugees as a whole

<sup>90</sup> It is not possible to investigate at this point whether the general public has a differentiated perception of the different forms of immigration (flight, labour migration, influx of emigrants, etc.).

<sup>91</sup> An index consisting of three questions with a positive connotation and three with a negative connotation is used to measure attitudes. Details of the wording and the calculation can be found in Section 7 of the Annex.

tend to be negative. In the following three survey waves as of June 2016, the average value across all respondents in the respective wave constantly falls slightly. In this context, we should bear in mind the events on New Year's Eve in Cologne in 2015<sup>92</sup> and offences committed by refugees that have had a disproportionate impact on discussion in the media and politics and have most certainly influenced public opinion (see, for example, Dziuba-Kaiser and Rott, 2016).

**Figure 20 Attitudes towards refugees and perception of immigration as a challenge**



Source: own figure.

Responses to the question regarding the general perception of immigration as a challenge for Germany reflect this finding. In the first AAT wave in December 2013, the average value amounted to around 6.5 (scale of 0 to 10, see Figure 20 below). Citizens view the issue as an important challenge – but in the negative sense. In the subsequent surveys, the average value rose constantly, be it only slightly. In the survey conducted shortly after the peak in the number of refugees arriving, the average value is approximately 7.5. The value does fall again after this, but not to the initial level measured in the winter of 2013. It remains to be said that public opinion towards immigration and refugees has shifted over the past few years. An effect of the high immigration numbers seems plausible here, also in view of the fact that the results partly correspond to findings from surveys investigating the effect of comparable major political events (especially terrorist attacks, but also economic crises) on attitudes, for instance on immigration and European

<sup>92</sup> On New Year's Eve in 2015, young women were subjected to violent and/or sexual attacks in front of the Cologne Cathedral by young men who, based on their outward appearance, were thought to originate from Arab or North African countries and were presumed to be refugees. It proved difficult to identify the offenders, which means that it is not possible to make any reliable statements regarding their origin. Following these events, however, refugees were treated with general suspicion in public debate and became subject to racist attacks.

integration (e.g. Braun and Tausendpfund, 2014; Legewie, 2013; Schüller, 2016). However, the further development of these attitudes should be observed. After all, the issue could become less relevant as a result of diminishing reporting and attitudes could change accordingly.

### 9.3 Support for development cooperation over the course of the influx of refugees since 2015

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How is the changing perception of refugees and immigration related to support for development cooperation? Is support changing over the course of time in different political camps? We wish to stress once again that we will be looking below at general support for development cooperation, and not at the approval of the general public of the development cooperation motive of fighting the causes of flight (see Section 3.2.3 for details of this). From a statistical perspective, this means that we will analyse not only more general differences between respondents, but also changes in respondents across the points in time when the AAT surveys are conducted – in other words, situation-based and time-based characteristics.<sup>93</sup> To this end, we will begin by drawing on the entire AAT survey period from 2013 to 2017 and the question presented in the bottom box in Figure 20 regarding the perception of immigration so that we can analyse the period before and after the influx of a particularly large number of refugees.

To begin with, the findings of the longitudinal analysis document indirect support for the currently dominant development policy motive of fighting the causes of flight. In the AAT waves following the peak in refugee immigration in September 2015, if we control a series of sociodemographic and political characteristics, general support for development cooperation is higher than before, as the positive coefficient of “period after September 2015” in the top line in Figure 21 shows. The perception of immigration clearly also plays an important role here. The more a person views immigration as a social challenge on average across all survey waves, the lower the average support for development cooperation is to begin with (coefficient of “perception of immigration – average value”). However, if immigration is viewed as more of a challenge at the time of a particular survey, support for development cooperation increases slightly, as the coefficient of “perception of immigration” in the bottom line of Figure 21 shows. This suggests the interpretation that development cooperation is viewed as a possible (partial) solution to the challenge posed by immigration and speaks in favour of hypothesis H1 described above.

The relationships for political orientation are similar. The known differences between a left-wing and right-wing orientation can be seen among respondents in that the further to the right people are positioned on average across all survey waves, the lower their support for development cooperation is (coefficient of “political orientation – average value” in Figure 21). This corresponds to the findings in Section 3, where we established that those who position themselves more to the right in the political spectrum often have more sceptical attitudes towards development cooperation. It can be seen, however, that respondents who move to the right at the time of a particular survey compared to their average political orientation support development cooperation significantly more (if only slightly more in absolute terms) than before (coefficient of “political orientation”). To begin with, this also speaks in favour of hypothesis H2 stating that citizens who are usually sceptical towards development cooperation and who become more conservative or right-wing over the course of time support development cooperation more following the refugee crisis.

Both findings seem to correspond to current efforts in development policy. Even citizens who are said to be concerned have given a more positive assessment of development cooperation in recent years; in fact, support for development cooperation even increased after the peak of the “refugee crisis”. However, it is necessary to examine whether the positive correlation of individual changes in the perception of

<sup>93</sup> We use a hybrid estimation method here, referred to in literature as the random effects model with the integration of context variables (e.g. Bell and Jones, 2015; Giesselmann and Windzio, 2012, p. 102–105). Further details of the methodology can be found in Section 7.1 of the Annex.

immigration and shifts in political orientation on the established left-right scale with support for development cooperation is the same before and after September 2015.<sup>94</sup>

**Figure 21** Longitudinal analysis of support for DC (2013-2017)



Note: \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*  $p < 0.05$ . Non-standardised coefficients with 95% confidence intervals. The “perception of immigration” and “political orientation” vary over time. Their coefficients gauge the effects of changes over the course of time (“within” effects). All other variables are constant for a respondent over the survey waves. Both the characteristics that are constant over time and the average values map general differences between respondents (“between” effects).<sup>95</sup>

Source: own figure.

Analysing the interaction between the central characteristics of “perception of immigration” or “political orientation” and the peak of immigration gives rise to an interesting finding, namely that the previously positive, if not very large, influence of the change in the perception of immigration on support for development cooperation disappears in the surveys after September 2015.<sup>96</sup> For political orientation, in contrast, no significant change can actually be established in the survey waves after September 2015. However, the analysis indicates that the significantly positive, if only small, effect of a change in political orientation on development cooperation support disappears. Examined as a whole, these results – interpreted with caution – indicate that the high immigration numbers cancel the previously positive effect that the increasing perception of immigration as a challenge and an increasingly conservative political

<sup>94</sup> There are also differences between individuals, which are sufficiently described in research using cross-sectional data (including education and income). As we have already looked into these differences in Section 3, we will not discuss them again at this point.

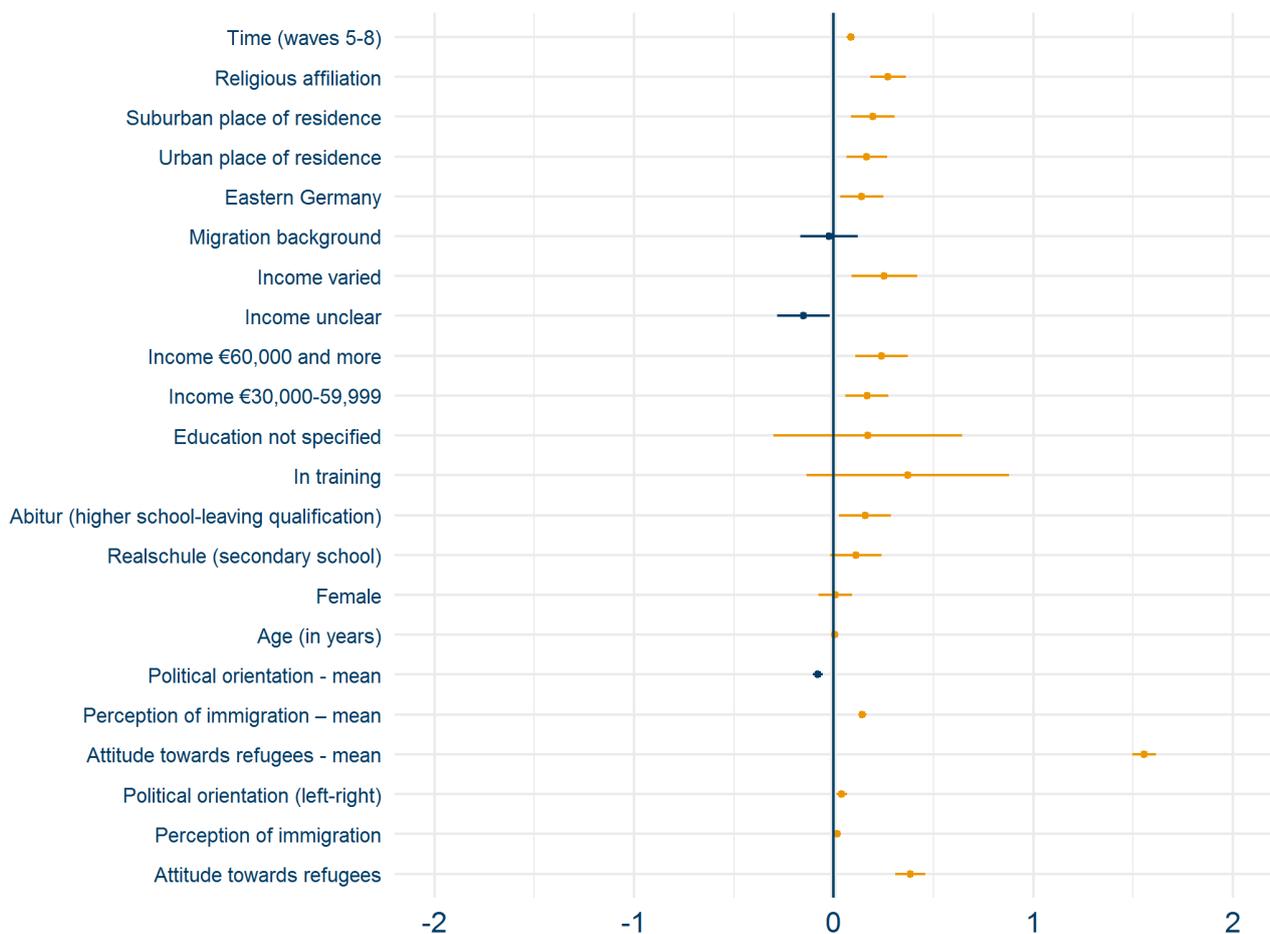
<sup>95</sup> Age must also be assumed to be constant over time as a person’s age only appears once in the AAT data, whereby it is unclear whether the age was simply noted during the first survey or was updated in a subsequent survey. For income, the mode is used across all survey waves. The regression models are shown in Table 35 in the Annex.

<sup>96</sup> Statistically, this means that interactions between the characteristics of “perception of immigration” or “political orientation” and a dummy variable of “period after September 2015” are calculated.

orientation have on support for development cooperation. The above hypothesis stating that population segments that are usually rather sceptical towards development cooperation advocate development cooperation more after September 2015 is therefore not supported by this data.<sup>97</sup>

The critical objection needs to be made here that the perception of immigration as a problematic challenge considered up to now does not say anything about the relationship between a person's attitude towards refugees and support for development cooperation. An identical analysis, controlling attitudes towards refugees and the other sociodemographic and political characteristics, has therefore been conducted for the period from the end of 2015 to the summer of 2017 (AAT waves 5–8).

**Figure 22** Longitudinal analysis of support for DC (as of November 2015)



Note: \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*  $p < 0.05$ . Non-standardised coefficients with 95% confidence intervals. The “attitude towards refugees”, “perception of immigration” and “political orientation” vary over time. Their coefficients gauge the effects of changes over the course of time (“within” effects). All other variables are constant for a person over the survey waves. Both the characteristics that are constant over time and the average values map general differences between respondents (“between” effects).<sup>98</sup>

Source: own figure.

<sup>97</sup> As it cannot be ruled out that concurrent social, political and economic events and developments have influenced attitudes, we should exercise caution when making causal statements at this point.

<sup>98</sup> The regression models are shown in Table 36 in the Annex.

If we look at Figure 22, we can see that the perception of refugees is correlated with support for government development cooperation. On the one hand, respondents who have on average had a more positive perception of refugees over the four AAT survey waves since November 2015 also display a greater level of support on average for development cooperation, as the positive coefficient in the line “attitude towards refugees – average value” in Figure 22 shows. On the other hand, a deviation from a respondent’s average attitude towards refugees (i.e. a more positive attitude over time, as the positive coefficient “attitude towards” in the bottom line shows) is correlated with a considerably greater level of support for development cooperation. To put it in other words, the “Refugees Welcome” motto and support for government development cooperation engagement go hand in hand.

For development policy and development cooperation actors, this analysis gives rise to a mixed picture. Firstly, general support for development cooperation in the general public increased following the peak of refugee movements in September 2015. Secondly, even people who perceived immigration as more of a challenge in the negative sense over the course of time or had positioned themselves further to the right in the political spectrum were apparently able to increasingly endorse development cooperation up to this turning point. However, disillusionment set in after the peak – the positive effect of a greater assessment of immigration as a social challenge disappeared, while the effect of changes in people’s own political orientation became weaker. Dealing with this disillusionment poses a challenge for those involved in domestic development policy work.

# 10. IMPLICATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT POLICY AND COOPERATION

The findings of this study can contribute towards reflecting on the strategic orientation of development cooperation and development policy and provide practical advice for communication or development policy education work. Below we will sum up some key findings and possible implications derived from these findings:

1. **Support among the general public for development cooperation is high. In fact, 40% of the German population even have a positive stance towards increasing the engagement in combating poverty.** Development policy actors in Germany therefore work in an environment that generally endorses government engagement in development cooperation. In contrast to other important donor countries such as Great Britain, the US or Denmark, Germany has up to now only comparably weak and disparate political forces and media that are committed to a negative attitude towards development cooperation and want to reduce government expenditure in this area.  
**Implication:** Development policy actors in Germany have the opportunity to discuss *how* to go about development cooperation rather than having to focus primarily on *whether* to get involved in development cooperation at all – something that clearly cannot be taken for granted in view of the situation in other countries. They need to seize this opportunity in their communication and development policy education work. If they now succeed in conducting an enlightened debate on development policy issues, for example rationally discussing the successes and failure of development cooperation (and what has been learned from them) as well as the associated opportunities and risks, it is foreseeable that this will form the best basis for possibly controversial discussions in the future. Moreover, it is vital to observe and understand public opinion – by means of citizens' consultations, participation procedures (as, for instance, in the context of the Charter for the Future), the analysis of social media and scientific discussion of development cooperation attitudes. These mechanisms contribute towards a "listening architecture" (OECD DevCom, 2016) – a feedback loop that is essential to achieve people-oriented politics in the long term.
  
2. **Important factors influencing attitudes towards development cooperation include a sense of moral obligation, political orientation and a positive assessment of the effectiveness of development cooperation.** How these influencing factors are related and to what extent causal conclusions can be drawn remains open.  
**Implication:** Research and practice require a valid model for attitudes towards development cooperation and also continue to need reliable empirical data. In the future, a particular emphasis should be placed on the development of a theoretically sound model for attitudes towards development cooperation that links sociological, psychological and political science approaches. How do attitudes towards development cooperation arise? What we need to consider here is socialisation experience, the role of long-term dispositions such as value orientations, personality and political orientation, and information behaviour. How are the various attitudes differentiated, how do they change and what consequences do they have for the actions of citizens? On the one hand, such a model can contribute towards a better understanding of the general public, therefore strengthening the feedback loop between the general public and decision-makers. On the other hand, it provides more reliable orientation and trend knowledge, which can subsequently be used for the alignment of development policy and development cooperation as well as for education and communication work. In practical terms, it would make sense to continue the AAT so that changes at an individual level can continue to be tracked in the longitudinal section of the surveys. Moreover, the annex to the AAT comparing different countries provides an excellent basis for investigating in more detail in the future how cultural and institutional country characteristics affect attitudes, knowledge and engagement. It would also be a good idea to extend this to include further countries – such as Scandinavia or new donors – especially in order to examine the effects of different social state structures on attitudes towards development cooperation (Noël and Thérien, 1995). In this context, the formulation of several questions in the AAT poses a challenge to which greater attention needs to be paid in the future.

3. **The general public has little knowledge both of the scope of development cooperation and of positive changes with regard to global challenges.** Less than 20% of citizens estimate the share of ODA funds in the federal budget approximately correctly, while fewer than 5% know that absolute poverty has been halved over the past 30 years.  
**Implication:** This finding indicates that the positive attitudes towards development cooperation are not based on people's knowledge or own experience. Alongside efforts in development policy education work, it is therefore important to disseminate such knowledge as effectively as possible as part of public relations work. It is interesting here that there are up to now no well-known personalities in Germany in the area of development cooperation practice and development research who enjoy a similar degree of popularity as the – sometimes controversial – advocates of other areas such as Peter Sloterdijk for philosophy, Mojib Latif for climate research, Harald Lesch for astronomy or Dietrich Grönemeyer for medicine.
  
4. **Citizens do not believe development cooperation to be very effective and suspect that substantial proportions are lost to corruption.** It seems that 25% of the population believe development cooperation<sup>5</sup> measures to be ineffective, while only 10% accredit it with a high degree of effectiveness. However, half of the population is positioned between these two poles.  
**Implication:** The critical assessments regarding the effectiveness of development cooperation and the extent of corruption involved provide a major impetus to further improving existing development cooperation practice. With regard to effectiveness, it is necessary to consistently follow the Aid Effectiveness Agenda and pay more attention to communicating central points. However, instruments such as rigorous impact assessments, which can hardly be seen in German development cooperation up to now, could also contribute towards communicating the effectiveness of development cooperation more adequately. With regard to combating corruption in development cooperation, the numerous international and regional initiatives that have been established, including those of the OECD and the United Nations, need to be implemented more ambitiously. In terms of effectiveness, in particular, we should perhaps first examine the question as to what the general public (or certain sections of the general public) actually understands effectiveness to mean. Moreover, in what form could convincing evidence be provided – a scientific study or evaluation, a video showing a building that has been erected, a report by those implementing a project or a testimonial of target groups? In view of the fact that the expectation of effectiveness plays a central role both for support for development cooperation and for people's own engagement, it is urgently necessary to conduct further research in this area and also to discuss and reflect on how effectiveness can be communicated
  
5. **The group of convinced development cooperation supporters is relatively small (14%), while the group of development cooperation opponents is twice as large (28%).** Having said that, there is a large group of people who are undecided with regard to their attitudes towards development cooperation (35%). Sceptics (23%), too, believe there is a need to take action in the Global South and have a sense of moral obligation. However, they have reservations, in particular with regard to the effectiveness of development cooperation.  
**Implication:** The study provides some initial ideas for creating a typology of the general public based on attitudes towards development cooperation. This approach appears promising, as it can form the starting point for an empirically well-founded means of addressing the various subgroups of the population in line with target group requirements. The typology indicates that the targets of communication need to differ for the different groups. Whereas sceptics, for example, may be especially interested in discussing the effectiveness of development cooperation, it may be more important for supporters to reinforce their experience of self-efficacy and thus encourage them to get involved in development policy work in an honorary capacity.

6. **Concrete development policy engagement is restricted to a relatively small proportion of the population. Factors favouring engagement include experiencing self-efficacy and feeling a sense of moral obligation.** Whereas around 60% of citizens discuss development policy issues in their social environment, only 18% of the population donates money for development cooperation and only very few people get involved in an honorary capacity in Germany.  
**Implication:** Against this backdrop, one key element of development policy education work could be allowing interested parties to experience self-efficacy in this area – be it only in small steps. This important principle of development policy education plays a key role already in school teaching, but especially also in promoting engagement in an honorary capacity among adults. In the study, the positive loop between experienced self-efficacy and independent engagement can be seen especially in the results regarding the SDGs in the 2030 Agenda. Those who think that they can contribute a great deal towards achieving a particular goal are also those who – at least in their self-perception – make a particularly large contribution to achieving it. This also speaks in favour of creating opportunities for people to experience their own contributions as having an effect. In cases where this is difficult, it could be helpful in communications to at least emphasise the effectiveness of the collective contribution.
7. **Political orientation is often related to attitudes towards development cooperation, but also to the perceived distance from the situation in the Global South or the perception of global inequality.** In contrast, people’s sociodemographic background hardly has any systematic relationship to attitudes and knowledge. Nevertheless, relationships can be seen between income or education and donations or consumption behaviour related to development policy. Income also plays an indirect role for engagement in an honorary capacity.  
**Implication:** One challenge faced by development cooperation actors, and also those involved in neighbouring policy areas and fields of activity (e.g. in the area of the environment), is to convince as large sections of the population as possible, aside from target groups with an affinity to development cooperation, of the importance of global sustainable development, inasmuch as the actors understand the 2030 Agenda to be a people’s agenda. Broad approval among society would most certainly make it easier to take political and social measures to implement the Agenda. It should be borne in mind that a correspondingly sustainable lifestyle (for instance purchasing clothes made in sustainable production and Fairtrade products) requires financial resources that several groups of the population do not have. For many others, such a lifestyle is not feasible, for instance if it would require them to do without their car. Engagement in an honorary capacity also requires time resources. For these reasons, development cooperation actors should pay attention to ensuring that the 2030 Agenda does not become an elite project that, pointing a “moral finger”, excludes more socially deprived or sceptical citizens. In connection with this, we would like to point out that the 2030 Agenda also addresses social problems in modern industrialised countries. Excluding the socially deprived therefore seems to be counterproductive. It would surely make more sense to initiate an inclusive public dialogue rather than simple advertising campaigns to “sell” the 2030 Agenda (see also Brulle, 2010). Within this dialogue, possibilities could be presented as to how people can make small contributions towards sustainable global development in their everyday lives even without substantial financial resources or a great deal of time. A social vision of sustainability could be developed from this in which the motto of “*Leave no one behind*” really applies.

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