

PUBLIC SUPPORT AND CRITICISM IN THE CONTEXT OF MULTIPLE CRISES AND NEW GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Opinion Monitor for Development Policy 2024

2024

The Opinion Monitor for Development Policy 2024 covers two main topic areas. The first part focuses on key attitudes of the German population towards development policy and development cooperation (DC) over the course of time. Among other things, general support for state DC and for the current development cooperation/ODA expenditure, as well as for various development cooperation actors and motives, is examined. The stability of attitudes towards DC is also analysed for the first time. The second part addresses current global developments and new policy guiding principles. It sheds light on the attitudes of the German population towards DC in connection with armed conflicts and economic crises as well as general attitudes towards foreign and security policy, and analyses what factors have an impact on the preferences for partner countries for German DC. It also explores the knowledge and attitudes of the German population with regard to feminist development policy. Alongside the contents of feminist development policy and the “feminist” label, the focus here is on support for the guiding principle in the context of global crises. The report concludes with implications for development policy strategy and communications.

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IMPRINT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

As a result of numerous global crises and the lack of progress in achieving the United Nations' sustainability goals, German development policy is being challenged more than almost ever before. At the same time, many partner countries are becoming more fragile, and the number of states ruled by an autocratic regime is increasing. In the context of domestic developments such as the strained economic and budgetary situation, the general public in Germany is increasingly questioning development policy. These challenges come at a time when the German Federal Government is establishing new focal points in its international engagement, for example with the guiding principle of a feminist foreign and development policy presented in 2023 (see Chapter 1: Development policy context and objectives of the report).

Question

In light of these multiple crises and the new guiding principle of development policy, the Opinion Monitor for Development Policy 2024 provides important information for policy communications, education and strategy by

1. providing a detailed picture of the attitudes of the German population towards development policy and how these have changed over time, selectively addressing differences between population groups,
2. examining attitudes towards development policy in the context of general attitudes towards foreign and security policy,
3. studying attitudes towards development policy in the context of foreign and security policy crises and the war against Ukraine with the associated challenges and
4. touching upon the population's knowledge, understanding and perceptions of and attitudes towards the guiding principle of feminist development policy and its contents.

Data sources

The study uses a wide range of survey data collected in 2023 and 2024. In addition, secondary data collected by the *Aid Attitudes Tracker* (AAT) and the *Development Engagement Lab* (DEL) from 2013 onwards is analysed and time series of relevant attitude indicators are updated (see Chapter 2: Data sources and methodology).

Attitudes towards development policy and development cooperation over the course of time

Since the beginning of 2022, the respondents' support for development cooperation (DC) has declined. In January 2024, only 47 percent of respondents advocated DC expenditure remaining the same or increasing – a drop of 21 percentage points. Decreasing support can be observed across the entire political spectrum. The fact that the German Federal Government provides DC and humanitarian aid in general is met with a high level of support – from 63 and 72 percent of respondents respectively, although this figure has declined slightly since January 2023. In comparison with other policy areas, many respondents see DC as an area in which they would be most willing to cut funding (21% of respondents).

Even though the majority of respondents express a general interest in the topic area of development policy/DC (57%), only 34 percent feel well informed about it. In October 2023, 30 percent of respondents were aware of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda, but only 9 percent knew precisely what these involve. A majority of over 60 percent had never heard of the SDGs.

“Doing good with modest resources” (46%) and “combating the causes of flight” (43%) remain the most convincing motives for DC in the eyes of the respondents. Other motives such as “moral obligation”, “combating climate change” and “preventing pandemics” have lost some support over the course of time.

According to the respondents, the European Union (49%) and multilateral organisations (48%) are primarily responsible for implementing DC, followed by the governments of partner countries (41%) and the German Federal Government (35%). The most frequently endorsed goals of DC are improvements to water, sanitary and hygiene (WASH; 56%), education (47%), health care (42%), and food and agriculture (41%).

The majority (58%) of respondents have a moderately positive, but relatively unstable attitude towards DC. Only 19 percent can be identified as stable supporters, while 18 percent are stable opponents.

Respondents consider their self-efficacy in the field of development policy – i.e. the feeling that they can achieve something themselves in terms of development policy – to be low. Since the beginning of 2022, the feeling of self-efficacy has dropped from 3.3 to 2.7 (on a scale from 0 = “can achieve absolutely nothing” to 10 = “can achieve a lot”). The respondents also continue to have a low opinion of the effectiveness of German DC. Around 18 percent rate it as “very effective”, while around 32 percent consider it to be “absolutely ineffective”. Here too, the assessment is more negative than at the beginning of 2022 (see Chapter 3: Attitudes towards development policy and development cooperation over the course of time).

Attitudes towards development policy in the context of ...

... foreign and security policy

In the area of foreign and security policy, many respondents most strongly endorse cooperation in international institutions as well as diplomacy and striving for consensus (attitude dimension: “*cooperative internationalism*”). The attitude that Germany should keep out of international affairs received a similarly high level of support (dimension: “*isolationism*”). At the same time, fewer respondents agreed with a foreign and security policy focusing on military might and deterrent potential (dimension: “*militant internationalism*”). There is even less support for a foreign and security policy centred around assisting countries in the Global South (dimension: “*global justice*”). This attitude dimension is conceptually closest to general support for DC.

Respondents who advocate cooperative internationalism and global justice are also more likely to be in favour of increasing the DC expenditure, concrete DC interventions, development policy aid for Ukraine and a feminist development policy. However, respondents who support an isolationist approach reject such interventions (see Section 4.2: Attitudes towards development policy in the context of attitudes towards foreign and security policy).

... security policy and economic challenges

Against the backdrop of security policy and economic challenges, respondents show a high level of support for international engagement in emergency situations. In this context, they endorse measures to assist Ukraine more strongly than measures to assist other countries.

Since the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine began, respondents have had a more negative view of their future personal and the future national economic situation. This goes along with a decline in support for development cooperation. Furthermore, experimental findings show that a reference to the tense budgetary situation in Germany has a negative impact on support for DC across various demographic, socio-economic and political characteristics.

If respondents in a survey experiment are informed about the war in Ukraine, a war that is visible in the media and geographically close, they express greater support for DC than those who have been informed about the war in Yemen, which is less visible in the media and geographically further away. This greater level of support is primarily because the respondents feel more affected by the situation in Ukraine, because they perceive the security threat caused by this situation to be greater and because they consider the people living there to be more similar to themselves.

When asked about specific countries, participants prefer countries in sub-Saharan Africa as partners for German DC, whereas the preference for a cooperation with China and countries on the Arabian peninsula and in North Africa is lower. A cooperation with Ukraine receives much greater support than in 2020.

In a comparison of hypothetical country profiles, geopolitical factors such as a close partnership with China or support for the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine lead to a clear rejection of partner countries. By contrast, the respondents prioritise countries from which Germany obtains energy. The number of refugees coming to Germany from a potential partner country

has no effect on whether the respondents support DC with this country. In addition, needs-based characteristics of the countries, such as vulnerability to the consequences of climate change or the level of poverty, play an important role. Furthermore, respondents are more likely to reject countries with a predominantly Muslim population as partner countries (see Section 4.3 Attitudes towards development cooperation in the context of security policy and economic challenges).

... *feminist development policy*

An increasing number of people are familiar with the term “feminist development policy”. In January 2024, for example, a narrow majority of respondents (52%) had heard of or read about feminist development policy; 27 percent confirmed that they knew what the term meant. This is an increase of 15 percentage points since June 2022. Even though the respondents understand the main features of a feminist orientation, they are largely unaware of more specific contents, such as intersectional, post-colonial or power-critical approaches.

Whereas 59 percent of respondents still supported feminist development policy in January 2023, this fell to 52 percent in January 2024. In comparison with other focuses, such as a

“human rights-based” or “peace-promoting” development policy, fewer respondents are in favour of a feminist development policy. Concerning the goals of a feminist development policy described in the strategy drawn up by the BMZ, respondents primarily agree with the overarching goal of strengthening the “rights, resources and representation of women”. However, fewer respondents support the specific provision of financial resources for projects promoting equal rights.

The opinions of the supporters of different parties vary more when the “feminist” label is used for development policy than when the same feminist contents are presented without the label.

Around 28 percent of respondents are stable supporters of feminist development policy. A total of 63 percent are moderately unstable or ambivalent supporters, while 19 percent can be described as stable opponents.

In times of global crises, feminist development policy is more likely to be supported if it is justified on normative or instrumental grounds than if no additional justification is provided (see Section 4.4 The attitude of the German population towards feminist development policy).

Implications for development policy strategy, communications and education

Implication 1: Support for development cooperation is waning. In this situation, development policy actors should look into possible changes to their strategies and design policy communications and education proactively to meet future challenges.

Implication 2: A large proportion of the population has moderately positive, but unstable attitudes towards development policy. Development policy actors should actively seek communication to maintain the existing development policy consensus.

Implication 3: The increasing interconnectedness between DC and geopolitical and security policy aspects is leading to new areas of tension in development policy; here it is important to find a new balance of interests and to communicate this appropriately.

Implication 4: The polarising effect of the term “feminist development policy” requires careful consideration of whether and how the label is used; contents that are capable of achieving consensus should be implemented and conveyed to the general public (see Chapter 5: Implications).

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

3R+D

Rights, representation and resources of women and marginalised groups + diversity

AAT

Aid Attitudes Tracker

ACLED

Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project

AfD

Alternative für Deutschland (Alternative for Germany)

AMCE

Average marginal component effect

BDI

Bundesverband der Deutschen Industrie (Federation of German Industries)

BMGF

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

BMZ

Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development)

BVerfGE

Bundesverfassungsgericht (Federal Constitutional Court)

CDU

Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands (Christian Democratic Union of Germany)

CEDAW

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

CSU

Christlich-Soziale Union in Bayern (Christian Social Union in Bavaria)

DAC

Development Assistance Committee

DE

Germany

DEL

Development Engagement Lab

DEval

Deutsches Evaluierungsinstitut der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit (German Institute for Development Evaluation)

ESEM

Exploratory structural equation model

ESOMAR

European Society for Opinion and Market Research

EU

European Union

FC

Financial cooperation

FDP

Freie Demokratische Partei Deutschlands (Free Democratic Party of Germany)

FM

Federal minister

HIIK

Heidelberg Institut für Internationale Konfliktforschung (Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research)

IPBES

Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

IPCC

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

ISO

International Organization for Standardization

LGBTIQ+

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex, queer and other gender identities

LPA

Latent profile analysis

NATO

North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NGO

Non-governmental organisation

ODA

Official development assistance

OECD

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

OSF

Open Science Framework

SDG

Sustainable Development Goal

SIPRI

*Stockholm International Peace
Research Institute*

SPD

*Sozialdemokratische Partei
Deutschlands (Social Democratic
Party of Germany)*

TC

Technical cooperation

UN

United Nations

UNDP

*United Nations Development
Programme*

UNESCO

*United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural
Organization*

WASH

Water, sanitary and hygiene

WFP

World Food Programme

ZMSBw

*Zentrum für Militärgeschichte
und Sozialwissenschaften der
Bundeswehr (Bundeswehr
Centre of Military History
and Social Sciences)*

1.

DEVELOPMENT POLICY CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES OF THE REPORT

As a result of multiple global crises and the lack of progress in achieving the United Nations' sustainability goals, German development policy is being challenged more than almost ever before. Implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs; United Nations, 2015) is faltering and is unlikely to be achieved by 2030 (United Nations, 2023a). Climate change is also moving forward (IPCC, 2023), biodiversity is declining (IPBES, 2019), the food supply is critical in many regions (World Food Programme, 2022), and gender equality is stagnating (UN Women, 2023).

At the same time, development policy is facing changing contexts in the partner countries. In many countries in the Global North and South, democracy and the rule of law are being eroded and nations are becoming autocracies (Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2024; Freedom House, 2023; Nord et al., 2024). This is also affecting partner countries of German development cooperation (DC). In this context, state fragility is also relevant and can put development progress at risk (Faust et al., 2023; Wencker and Verspohl, 2019). The same applies to an increase in armed conflicts (ACLED, 2024). In the foreseeable future, DC will predictably have to deal with the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine in particular – involving high costs when it comes to tackling the individual and societal consequences of the war (see, for example, BMZ, 2022, Grävingholt et al., 2023).

In this complex situation, German development policy faces additional challenges as a result of domestic policy developments, especially the strained economic and budgetary situation. When the war against Ukraine began in February 2022, sanctions were imposed on Russia by Germany and the European Union (EU). This caused energy and food

prices to increase considerably (e.g. OECD, 2022). In addition, in November 2023, the Federal Constitutional Court ruled that the planned reclassification of budgetary funds for tackling the coronavirus pandemic as funds for protecting the climate was unconstitutional (Federal Constitutional Court, 2023). This decision meant that savings were needed in the federal budget. As a consequence of these developments, the use of government funds is becoming an increasingly contentious issue. Even development policy has not escaped this, as the public debate about cycle paths in Peru in January 2024 demonstrated (Tagesschau, 2024). In this context, Germany's short-term domestic interests are becoming increasingly prominent. For example, at the beginning of 2024, the Federation of German Industries (BDI) repeated its demand for development policy to be geared more strongly towards Germany's economic interests (BDI, 2024). This demand is part of an increasing polarisation of political discourse that reaches the very centre of society and also affects development policy (Herold et al., 2023).

All these challenges come at a time when the German Federal Government elected in 2021 has formulated a feminist foreign and development policy as a guiding principle. The aim of this guiding principle, which was set out in the coalition agreement (SPD, Alliance 90/The Greens and FDP, 2021) for foreign policy and has been carried over to development policy, is to increase the rights, representation and resources of women and marginalised groups and promote diversity ("3R+D" formula; Federal Foreign Office, 2023a; BMZ, 2023a). However, this has met with criticism from some politicians and in some sections of society (e.g. Sassenhagen et al., 2023; Schneider et al., 2024b). This could erode the hitherto relatively broad consensus on development policy.

Especially against the backdrop of these multiple crises, it is important for development policy actors to concern themselves with the attitude of the German population. This is where the Opinion Monitor for Development Policy 2024 comes in, as it

1. provides a detailed picture of the attitudes of the German population towards development policy and how these have developed over time, selectively addressing differences between population groups;
2. examines attitudes towards development policy in the context of general attitudes towards foreign and security policy;
3. studies attitudes towards development policy and DC in the context of foreign and security policy crises and the war against Ukraine as well as the resulting financial challenges;
4. touches upon the population's knowledge, understanding and perceptions of and attitudes towards the guiding principle of feminist development policy and its contents.

To shed light on these aspects, a vast array of survey data collected in 2023 and 2024 is used. In addition, as in previous reports in DEval's Opinion Monitor for Development Policy series, secondary data collected by the *Aid Attitudes Tracker (AAT)* and the *Development Engagement Lab (DEL)* from 2013 onwards is analysed and time series of relevant attitude indicators are updated.

The report comprises two analytical parts: in Chapter 3, selected attitude indicators are presented over the course of time and the strength of attitudes towards DC is analysed. Alongside established indicators such as basic support for DC or the assessment of its effectiveness, the general level of

interest in development policy/DC and the extent to which the German population considers itself to be informed about this policy area are examined. Furthermore, psychological research on attitude strength (e.g. Krosnick and Petty, 1995, Vogel et al., 2016) is picked up and the strength of the attitudes of the German population towards development policy/DC is explored. The analysis of attitude strength should provide an indication of how volatile the citizens' DC-related attitudes are in an intensified debate of development policy.

Chapter 4 focuses on detailed analyses of three aspects: (1) the relationship between attitudes towards development policy and the attitudes of the German population towards foreign and security policy in general, (2) attitudes towards development policy/DC in the context of security policy challenges and economic bottlenecks, and (3) attitudes towards feminist development policy. In the reports in the Opinion Monitor series, attitudes towards development policy have so far been considered in isolation. Owing to its close connection to other areas of action within the sphere of foreign policy, a holistic approach is appropriate (see, for example, the German Federal Government's national security strategy; Federal Foreign Office, 2023b). Two of the most defining development policy topics of the last two years – DC in the context of the war against Ukraine and feminist development policy – have hardly been addressed in the literature to date (Sassenhagen et al., 2023; Schneider et al., 2024b; Zille et al., 2023) and are explored in depth in this study.

The report concludes in Chapter 5 with implications for the German Federal Government's development policy strategy and for communications and education.

2.

DATA SOURCES AND METHODOLOGY

The *Opinion Monitor 2024* is essentially based on data from the *Aid Attitudes Tracker* and its follow-on project, the *Development Engagement Lab*, as well as data that the *Opinion Monitor* team has collected itself. In addition, selective use is made of social media data from Twitter/X.

2.1 Aid Attitudes Tracker and Development Engagement Lab

The *Aid Attitudes Tracker* (AAT) is a long-term cross-country comparative study in which online surveys were conducted every six months from 2013 to 2018 in Germany, Great Britain, France and the USA. The study was carried out in a panel design. This means that the same people, around 6,000 in total, were asked about their knowledge, their attitudes and their engagement with regard to DC and other relevant topics relating to development policy in each of the ten survey waves. The participants were over the age of 18 at the time of the survey and resided in the respective country, regardless of their nationality or registered place of residence. The panel study was funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) and conducted by researchers from the University of Texas in Dallas, the University of Birmingham and University College London. The data was collected by the British market and opinion research institute YouGov, which randomly selected the participants from the institute's pool of respondents (online access panel). Various measures were taken during the survey to guarantee the data quality, including eliminating extremely quick or one-sided answers (YouGov, 2017).

Since 2019, the data collection work of the AAT has been continued under the name *Development Engagement Lab* (DEL) at University College London and the University of Birmingham. It is still funded by the BMGF and carried out by YouGov. Important changes are:

1. The data is now collected annually – instead of semi-annually – and the number of questions in the panel survey has been greatly reduced (N still \approx 6,000 per country and wave; data collection in September/October).
2. Some of the questions have been reformulated and the order of the questions has been changed.
3. Cross-sectional surveys have been introduced as additional forms of data collection.¹

The differences between the two surveys are improvements to the survey design but mean that time series cannot simply be updated. Shorter, less frequent and more comprehensible surveys of changing samples are supposed to reduce survey fatigue as well as learning effects over time. At the same time, changes to the wording and to the order of the questions can have an impact on the response behaviour (for example question-order effects, e.g. Oldendick, 2008; Schuman and Presser, 1996). Therefore, a seamless link between AAT and DEL data is not possible. When interpreting time series, it is important to take into account that changes in the results could to some extent be traced back to these adjustments in the methodology.

Unless stated otherwise, survey weighting is used in analyses of AAT and DEL data. This ensures that the distribution of important sociodemographic and political characteristics in the sample corresponds to the distribution in the population as a whole. An overview of all the AAT/DEL surveys used can be found in Table 1 in the Annex.

¹ The DEL tracker records the same key attitude and behavioural characteristics of the population (N \approx 1,000) twice a year (January and June), while the DEL sandbox surveys (generally in February and May) address current issues. Both are based on cross-sectional surveys with a new random sample each time.

Box 1 **Sampling error**

The shares and mean values of the analyses presented in the report show statistical uncertainties because of the use of samples. For example, if 20 percent of 1,000 respondents in a fictional sample state that they have donated to a development cooperation organisation in the past year, there is a 95-percent probability that the percentage of the entire population lies between 17.5 and 22.5 percent (95% confidence interval).² If the sample size is increased to 5,000 respondents, there is a 95-percent probability that the actual value lies between 18.8 and 21.1 percent. Generally, in the case of a sample of 1,000 respondents, for a dichotomous characteristic such as “yes/no” or “for/against” it is assumed that the sampling error amounts to +/-3 percentage points (Erikson and Tedin, 2011, p. 30-31). High shares around 50 percent exhibit broader confidence intervals than small ones. To avoid overloading the text and diagrams, the descriptive representations of percentages in this report usually do not contain any confidence intervals, but always specify the number of observations.

2.2 DEval surveys

As well as using the AAT and DEL data, the Opinion Monitor team conducts a regular DEval tracking survey and its own survey experiments. The DEval tracking survey records key indicators relating to attitudes, knowledge and engagement in the area of development policy/DC twice a year in January and June/July. To ensure that the respondents understand and are able to answer the presented questions, the questionnaire was developed in collaboration with experts from GESIS – Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences, and a cognitive online pretest was conducted (Schick et al., 2022). The data is collected using quota samples of around 2,000 people from the

online access panel of the opinion research institute Respondi/Bilendi.³ These samples are representative of the German population up to the age of 75 with respect to gender, level of education, age and federal state. Various measures are taken to ensure the quality of the data. For example, respondents who repeatedly give atypical responses are eliminated from the panel. Participants who complete a survey exceptionally quickly or exhibit atypical response patterns (e.g. so-called *straight liners*, i.e. respondents who always select an identical response category across several groups of questions) are also removed from the final data set. Because of the stratified quota sample, the results are analysed without survey weighting.

² The box has been taken from the glossary of the Opinion Monitor for Development Policy 2022 (Schneider et al., 2022, p. xx) with minor adjustments.

³ Respondi/Bilendi meets the standards of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the European Society for Opinion and Market Research (ESOMAR) for online surveys.

Box 2 Recording gender and political orientation

In some places in the report, the relationship between attitude indicators and various sociodemographic and political characteristics is examined. Standard predictors such as age, gender, level of education, region (East v. West Germany) and indicators for recording political orientation are generally used for this. Two explanations are necessary here:

In the analyses, the relationship with gender is studied on the basis of a binary variable. In all the surveys commissioned by DEval, the respondents are given the opportunity to specify their gender on the basis of the response categories “male”, “female”, “non-binary” or “prefer not to say”. Here it is not specified whether the respondents are being asked for their social gender or their biological gender. Therefore, the answer relates to how the respondents prefer to self-identify. As only a very small number of respondents (less than 10 people out of 2,000 respondents) in all the surveys uses the category “non-binary” and such a small category is hardly (statistically) informative, the analyses only distinguish between people who self-identify as “male” (“men”) or “female” (“women”).

As in the previous Opinion Monitor studies (Schneider and Gleser, 2018; Schneider et al., 2019, 2021a, 2022), the classic left-right scale with the end points “left” (scale value 0) and “right” (scale value 10) is used to measure political orientation.⁴ To make the analyses more tangible and make non-linear connections across the corresponding attitude indicators visible, for descriptive purposes the scale is divided into five groups (see Vehrkamp and Merkel, 2019, p. 30–31): left (0–2), centre-left (3–4), centre (5), centre-right (6–7) and right (8–10).

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

However, the scale is subject to criticism because of the scope for interpretation. Studies show that the interpretation of the scale end points varies in different population groups (Bauer et al., 2017; Jankowski et al. 2023; Zuell and Scholz, 2019). Under certain circumstances, this may distort content-based conclusions. Moreover, several authors suggest measuring political orientation (or ideology) based on a socio-economic dimension and a socio-political dimension (Evans et al., 1996; Heath et al., 1994; for a current application, see, for example, Jankowski et al., 2019). Despite these limitations, the left-right scale provides a simple, but useful tool for recording political orientation.

In addition, party identification is selectively also used as an alternative indicator. This indicator makes it possible to focus on differences along political party lines or even on lines of conflict within the population.

In recent years, experimental designs such as those used in this report have been increasingly applied in the study of attitudes, including in the context of development policy (see, for example, Bayram and Thomson, 2022; Eger et al., 2023; Scotto et al., 2017). Their advantage lies in their ability to reliably determine causal relationships. This is done by randomly dividing the participants into two groups of equal sizes and giving them different information (*treatments*).

They are then asked about their attitudes or other relevant characteristics (*outcomes*; for an overview, see Gaines et al., 2007; Mutz, 2011). This procedure makes it possible to establish what the effects of the respective treatment are, as other possible influences can be eliminated by the random assignment to groups. As well as the effect of the treatment across all participants, it is also possible to study whether the impact of the information varies depending on

⁴ The explanation was already used in a box in the Opinion Monitor 2022 (Schneider et al., 2022, p. 11) and has been adapted and expanded for this report.

particular characteristics of the respondents (moderation analysis; see MacKinnon et al., 2012). For example, a test can be carried out to ascertain whether people with a particularly negative attitude towards DC are less convinced by information about successful development interventions than those with a more neutral attitude (cf., for example, the literature on *motivated reasoning*; Taber and Lodge, 2006).

The experiments conducted follow the good scientific practice of studies – for example through preregistration – and avoid distortions by always drawing new samples of respondents where possible. All the survey experiments

presented in the report, with the exception of the conjoint experiment in Section 4.3.4 were preregistered with the *Open Science Framework* (OSF). A preregistration is used for planning research studies in advance and determining which hypotheses, methods and analyses are used. This promotes the transparency and reproducibility of scientific studies (Nosek et al., 2018). To prevent potential distortions that may arise as a result of treatments in different survey experiments within a single survey influencing one another (Gaines et al., 2007; Transue et al., 2009), the experiments were carried out separately in different surveys. An overview of all the data collections carried out by the study team can be found in Table 2 in the Annex.

Box 3 Use of online surveys in social research

In social research, it is becoming increasingly difficult to generate samples for data collection over the telephone, in person or by post. However, online access panels also involve challenges. Sample surveys conducted over the telephone, in person or by post are increasingly suffering from low response rates. In online access panels, on the other hand, the participants must register for the pool of respondents themselves. This raises the question of whether the population as a whole is represented. In particular, people with no internet access are unable to participate in online surveys, and the people registered in the panels may differ systematically from the general population (Baker et al., 2010; Cornesse et al., 2020; Jerit and Barabas, 2023; Kohler and Post, 2023). However, a current study from the USA shows that quota systems and quality management make it possible to come close to the gold standard of a genuine random sample when population characteristics are specified – especially in comparison with pure convenience samples without any quality assurance, monitoring of participation or a quota system (Stagnaro et al., 2024). Online surveys also have the advantage that texts (or even audiovisual contents) can be integrated without any problems, for example for survey experiments. Another point in favour of surveys that are conducted without a human interviewer (unlike telephone or in-person surveys) is that the respondents may answer more openly and may be less influenced by social desirability (e.g. Holbrook and Krosnick, 2010; Kreuter et al., 2008; Tourangeau and Yan, 2007). In contrast to estimates of shares and mean values, multivariate analyses and experimental designs are not affected by the aforementioned challenges, or are only affected to a lesser extent (Baker et al., 2010).

All in all, it is assumed in this report that the data collected using an online access panel is an approximate estimate of the actual attitudes in the German population. Nevertheless, it must be assumed that this estimate is less accurate than when a genuine random sample is used. Therefore, the expression “representative of the German population” is not used.

2.3 Data sources for the analysis of Twitter/X posts

In order to be able to look not only at public opinion, but also at the public discussion or the information environment of the German population in the area of development policy and DC, data collected by the short message service X (known as Twitter until June 2023) is accessed and the frequency with which the topic is mentioned on the platform is studied. Twitter/X is accessed via the media monitoring software produced by Meltwater, which provides an interface to the platform. This interface is used to identify and download relevant posts (approx. 1.4 million posts in the period from 1 May 2019 to 29 February 2024). Since 2019, a search term and account list has been used for this. This list is regularly reviewed to ensure that it is up to date. The number of thematically relevant posts per day is calculated for the analysis. Posts may relate to both development policy/DC and humanitarian aid, as many organisations are active in both fields, making a clear delineation between them impossible. In addition, a separate search has been conducted for the topic “feminist foreign and development policy” since September 2021 (around 69,000 identified posts by 29 February 2024).

Please note that Twitter/X is suitable for an analysis of public online debates, but not for analyses of public opinion.

Firstly, only a small section of the population uses the platform (2023: 8% of the German population over the age of 14; see Koch, 2023); secondly, the users are not representative of the population as a whole (e.g. Jungherr, 2019; Koch, 2023).

Furthermore, as on all social media platforms, there is a risk that automated accounts (known as bots) can create or share posts on Twitter/X. Especially in the case of controversial political topics, there is a high probability of political actors attempting to use such bots to influence public opinion (e.g. Martini et al., 2021). However, a review proves challenging, as Twitter/X closed the public interface that was accessible for research on 31 March 2023. A manual review of the data set using the tool Botometer X (<https://botometer.osome.iu.edu>; see also Yang et al., 2020) revealed that it is very unlikely that the 20 most active accounts are bots. However, the presence of posts by bots in the data set cannot be ruled out. It must also be borne in mind that the use of the platform and therefore the potential reach of posts declined as a result of the acquisition of Twitter/X by the entrepreneur Elon Musk in October 2022 (e.g. Carr, 2023). The extent to which Twitter/X will continue to be suitable for broadly mapping out public online debates in the future must be reviewed or weighed up anew in each case.

Box 4 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 of 0.05 often used in social sciences, then a relationship or difference is considered to be significant (Bryman, 2016, p. 347). The p-value is the probability of observing the relationship found in the sample or an even stronger relationship if the null hypothesis was true, in other words if there was no relationship (Goodman, 2008, p. 136). To put it simply, there is only a low probability that the result is due to chance, and the null hypothesis can be rejected. In the case of p-values below 0.10 (i.e. 10%), a relationship is shown too, but the greater uncertainty regarding the rejection of the null hypothesis is pointed out. Finally, in the case of p-values above 0.10, the null hypothesis is upheld.⁵

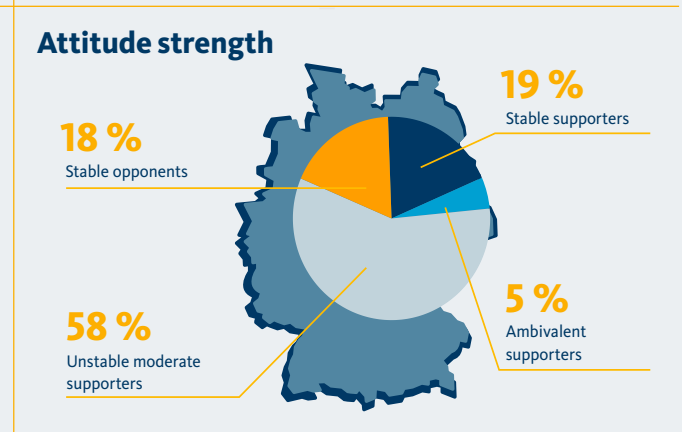
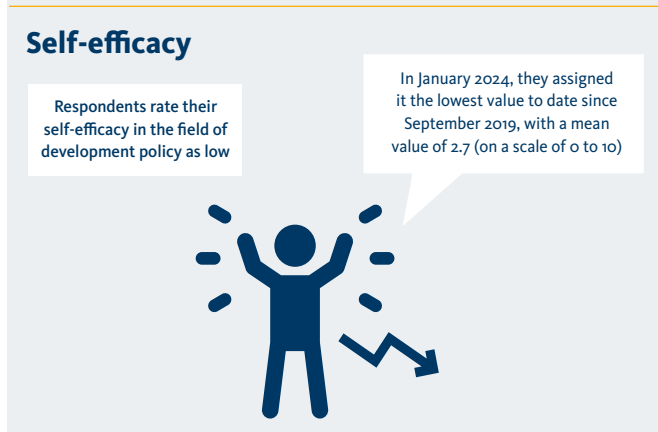
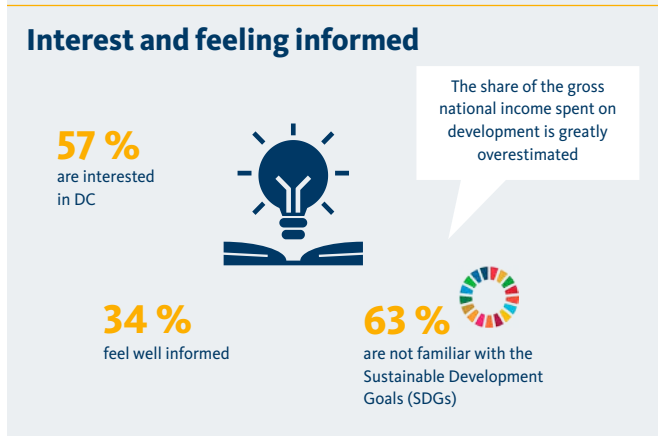
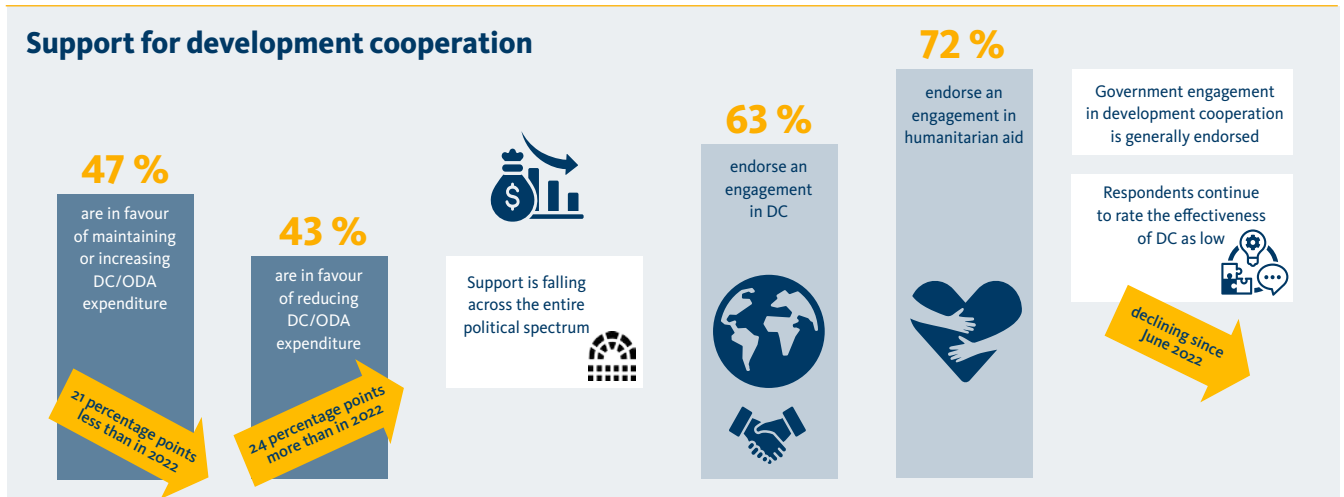
⁵ The box was taken from the glossary in the Opinion Monitor 2022 (Schneider et al., 2022).

3.

**ATTITUDES TOWARDS
DEVELOPMENT POLICY AND
DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION
OVER THE COURSE OF TIME**

OPINION MONITOR FOR DEVELOPMENT POLICY 2024

Attitudes towards development policy and development cooperation



In financial crises, political decision-makers often see potential for savings in development cooperation (e.g. Heinrich et al., 2016). The population's support for DC/ODA expenditure can also fall in crisis situations. In the winter of 2023/24, a corresponding discussion can also be observed in Germany (e.g. Tagesschau, 2024). The criticism expressed was aimed at individual DC interventions and contrasted these with the frequent lack of funds for interventions that benefit the population in Germany. Such criticism, which sometimes uses a populist "us against them" rationale can in turn reduce public support for development cooperation (see, for example, Bayram and Thomson, 2022; Bayram et al., 2024).

Against this backdrop, this chapter analyses public opinion of development policy and DC in order to provide a strong empirical foundation for development policy strategy and communications. The analysis maps out established attitude indicators such as general support for development cooperation, support for the current DC/ODA expenditure (Section 3.1), the assessment of the effectiveness of DC (Section 3.6) as well as self-efficacy with regard to development policy (Section 3.5) and, finally, development engagement (Section 3.7). In addition, new indicators in the form of the level of interest and knowledge in the area of development policy/DC (Section 3.2) and questions regarding actors and objectives in DC (Section 3.3) are mapped out. The stability of the attitudes towards DC is also examined so that conclusions can be drawn about the potential impact of information (Section 3.4).

3.1 How strong is the respondents' support for development policy and development cooperation?

3.1.1 Support among the respondents for DC in Germany has declined since the beginning of 2022

Since January 2022, support for the German Federal Government's current DC/ODA expenditure has fallen steadily. In January 2024, 47 percent of respondents (dark blue line in Figure 1) indicated that the current expenditure should be increased or at least maintained. In January 2022, this share was still 68 percent.⁶

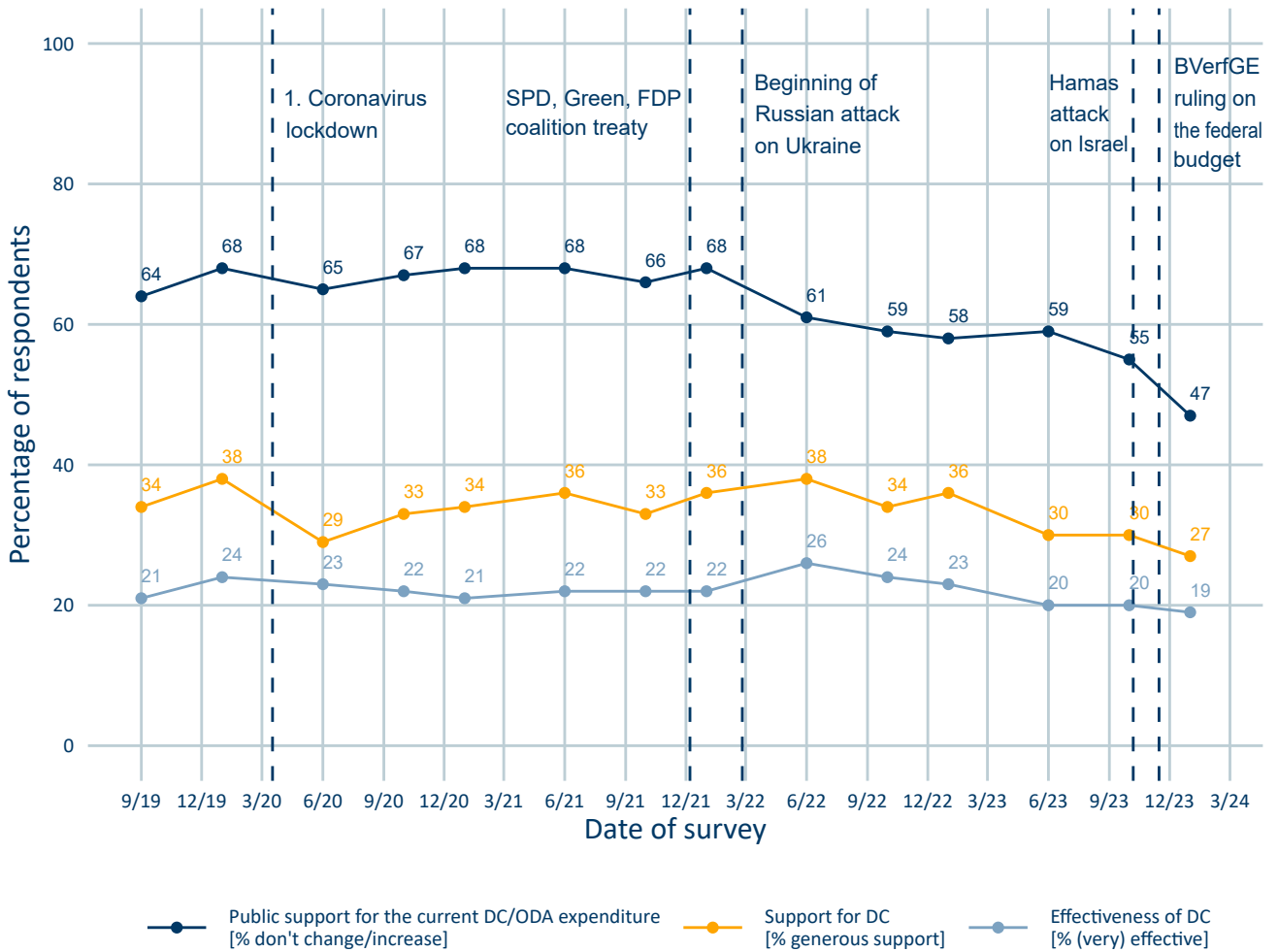
General support for development cooperation is also declining substantially. Ever since 2013, the Opinion Monitor (Schneider and Gleser, 2018; Schneider et al., 2022) has observed the general support for development cooperation among the German population (see yellow line in Figure 1). In January 2024, 27 percent were in favour of generous support for the countries in the Global South; this is 9 percentage points less than in January 2022.

The group that considers DC to be effective or very effective remains largely stable. However, the group that regards DC as ineffective is growing. In January 2024, 19 percent of respondents rated DC as "(very) effective" (light blue line in Figure 1); in January 2022, this was slightly higher at 22 percent. However, the share of respondents who consider DC to be "(absolutely) ineffective" has risen from around 21 percent before the start of the war against Ukraine (February 2022) to around 32 percent in January 2024 (+ 11 percentage points).⁷ Most of the remaining people selected a middle response category (approx. 39%).

⁶ Both the data from the DEL tracker and the data from the subsequent DEval tracking survey were collected at a time when the construction of cycle paths in Peru was already being criticised in the wake of protests by the agricultural sector in Germany (DEL tracker: 8–13 January 2024; DEval tracking survey: 10–17 January 2024).

⁷ A complete representation of the time series, including all the response categories, can be found in Figure 17 in this chapter. The time series for the remaining variables from Figure 1 can be found in Section 1.2 of the online appendix.

Figure 1 Development Cooperation: support and assessment of effectiveness (2019–2024)



Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEL tracker and DEL panel 2019 to 2024. N tracker ≈ 1,000. N panel ≈ 6,000. DEL tracker surveys take place in January and June, DEL panel surveys in September/October. Weighted data.

Overall, these figures indicate that support for DC in Germany, after remaining high for a long time, is waning against the backdrop of multiple crises – for example the repercussions of the coronavirus pandemic, the deteriorating financial situation since the war against Ukraine began in February 2022 and the public discussion on the federal budget. Since the beginning of the 1980s, a large majority of the German population (70% and more) has considered it to be important to support people in the Global South (see the data from the Eurobarometer since 1983 in Schneider et al., 2022, p.9). This support remained high in the 1990s and 2000s (e.g. Fransman and Solignac Lecomte, 2004, p. 3; Stern, 1998, p. 4) and did not fall even during the so-called European refugee crisis of 2015 (Schneider and Gleser, 2018) and the coronavirus pandemic, which raged from 2020 (Schneider et al., 2022). However, a substantial decline in support for DC can be observed since January 2022.

3.1.2 Support for development cooperation/ ODA expenditure is falling across the entire political spectrum

A breakdown by party preference shows that respondents who vote for parties on the right of the political spectrum support development cooperation/ODA expenditure less than those who vote for parties on the left of the political spectrum. Among those who vote for parties that are categorised as being on the left politically (Alliance 90/The Greens, The Left, SPD), a majority is in favour of maintaining or even increasing development cooperation/ ODA expenditure (51–73%); those who vote for centre-right parties (CDU/CSU and FDP) fall just short of a majority in favour of maintaining or increasing the expenditure, with 48 percent in favour of this in each case (see Figure 44 in the Annex). Most of the AfD voters surveyed (71%) want development cooperation/ODA expenditure to be reduced.⁸

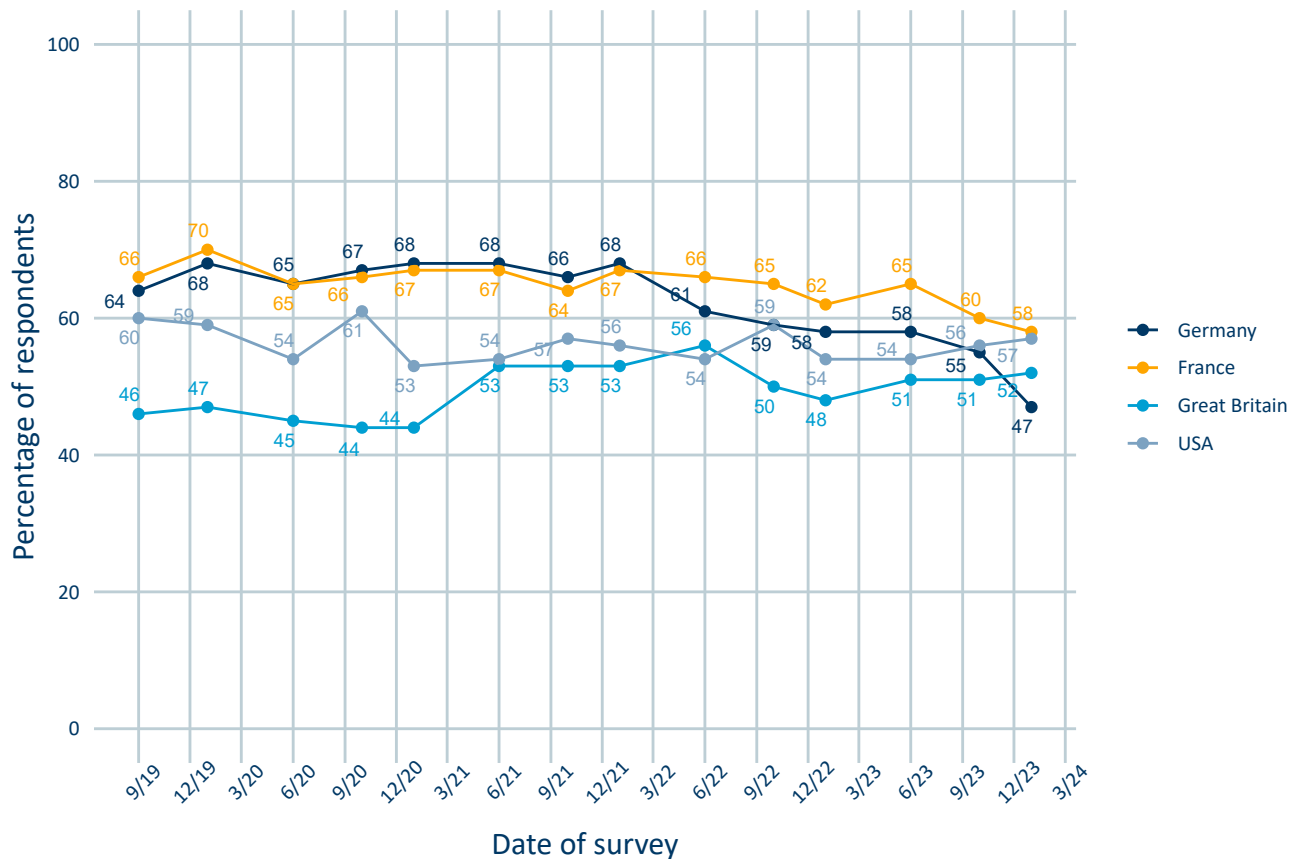
Over the course of time, public support for the current development cooperation/ODA expenditure is decreasing across the entire political spectrum. The demand for a reduction in development cooperation/ODA expenditure is not only increasing among AfD-voters; it also meets with greater support among some of the voters for the coalition parties, the SPD, Alliance 90/The Greens and the FDP, in January 2024 than in 2022 (see Figure 44). Among CDU/CSU voters too, the number of responses in the category “reduce slightly/a great deal” has increased gradually since January 2022. It is only among people who voted for The Left that no clear trend can be observed.⁹ This finding suggests that support for DC interventions is dropping in the wake of a growing threat perception as a result of global conflicts, a deteriorating budgetary situation and associated consequences for the population, and media debates on government expenditure. Therefore, the relationship between the perception of the economic situation and support for DC is addressed in more detail in Section 4.3.

3.1.3 In a cross-country comparison, respondents in Germany show the lowest level of public support for the current development cooperation/ODA expenditure for the first time

In Germany, public support for the current DC/ODA expenditure has noticeably been falling in comparison with France, Great Britain and the USA for around two years. Whereas Germany demonstrated the highest level of support until January 2022, the DEL survey in January 2024 shows the lowest support out of all four of the countries studied for the first time at 47 percent (see Figure 2). At 59 percent, the highest level of support in January 2024 can be observed in France. This pattern is primarily interesting because the formerly higher level of support for development cooperation in Germany than in the Anglo-Saxon countries was explained in the research by a different way of organising the welfare state and a different redistribution of funds by the government (Schneider et al., 2022, p. 13).

⁸ In all the surveys up to and including the DEL panel wave 9/2021, the party that the respondents voted for in the 2017 Bundestag elections was used for the breakdown; in all the surveys from January 2022 onwards, it was the party voted for in the 2021 elections.

⁹ A similar pattern can be found when the five waves of the DEL panel are used to break down public support for the current development cooperation/ODA expenditure on the basis of political orientation on the left-right scale. Here too, public support for the current development cooperation/ODA expenditure is falling in the groups on the left, centre-left, centre, centre-right and right (Figure 3 in the online appendix). In the political centre and on the right of the political spectrum, however, the decline in support is greater. Furthermore, a similar picture emerges with regard to party identification (Figure 4 in the online appendix).

Figure 2 Cross-country comparison of public support for the current development cooperation/ODA expenditure

Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEL tracker and DEL panel 2019-2024. Weighted data. The question was: "From its total budget of approximately EUR 360 billion, the German Federal Government currently provides X.X percent – EUR XX.X billion – (note: the figures are updated each year) to poor countries for development cooperation. Do you think that the government should increase or decrease the amount of money that it spends on development cooperation?" The response options were: "increase a great deal", "increase somewhat", "don't change", "decrease somewhat", "decrease a great deal". The categories "increase" and "don't change" were conflated for the figure.

3.1.4 In spite of reservations about the current development cooperation/ODA expenditure, respondents endorse DC and humanitarian aid in principle

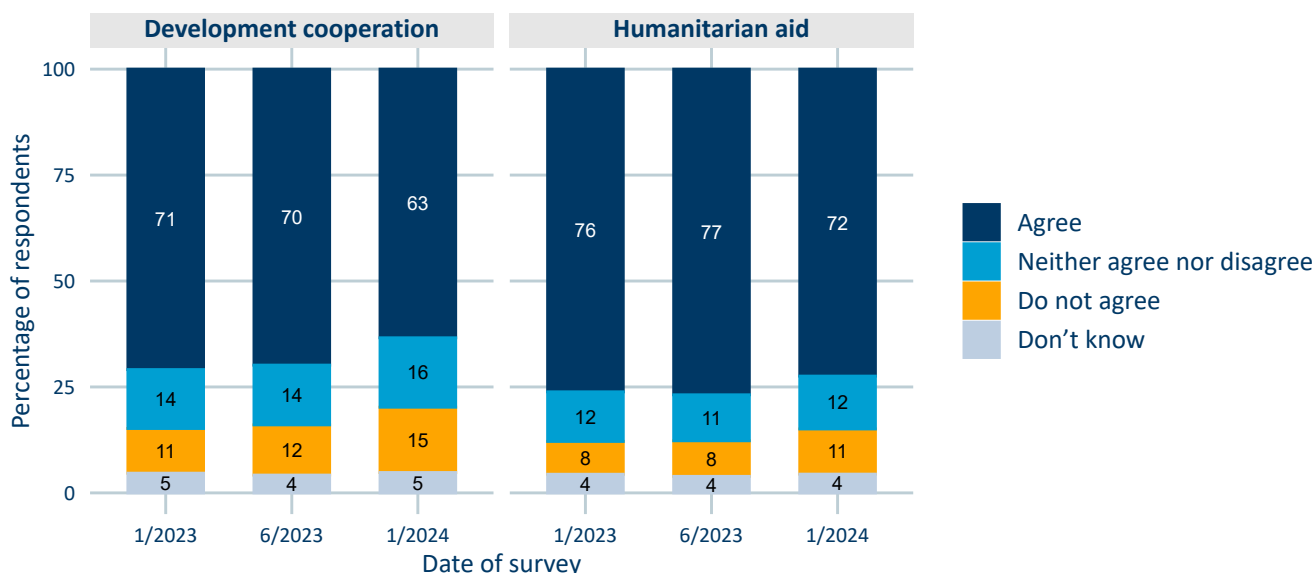
The DEval tracking surveys ask about support for DC and humanitarian aid separately. There is reason to assume that the population does not make a distinction between DC and humanitarian aid or has humanitarian aid in mind when "development aid" or DC is mentioned (e.g. Riddell, 2007, p. 112). For this reason, the Opinion Monitor surveys have examined measures in these two areas separately since January 2023.

Both humanitarian aid and DC experience a high level of support as fields of action for foreign and development policy – but humanitarian aid more than DC. As Section Figure 3 shows, around 63 percent of respondents in January 2024 agreed that Germany should provide assistance to countries in the Global South in the form of DC. For humanitarian aid, it was 72 percent. Support is declining slightly in both areas – by around 8 percentage points in comparison with January 2023 for DC, and by just under 4 percentage points for humanitarian aid. Against the backdrop of the public debate surrounding the expenditure of the Federal Foreign Office and the BMZ, the majority of the population appears not to

consider it to be up for discussion whether DC interventions (or humanitarian aid interventions) should be carried out. Instead, the prevailing question seems to be how high the financial expenditure should be, and possibly what objectives should be pursued.

Respondents who endorse the German Federal Government carrying out DC measures also advocate humanitarian aid and vice versa. The data shows a strong positive correlation between support for the two fields of action.¹⁰ This suggests that respondents do not really differentiate between the two areas.

Figure 3 Support for the German Federal Government carrying out DC and humanitarian aid



Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEval tracking, carried out by Respondi/Bilendi in January 2023, July 2023 and January 2024. N for each survey ≈ 2,000. The seven-point response scale was condensed for the visualisation. The question was: "Thinking about the extent to which you endorse different kinds of support for developing countries, please tell us to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements. 1. [humanitarian aid] In the context of emergency aid or humanitarian aid, the German Federal Government should provide short-term assistance in emergency situations (e.g. natural disasters or famines) in developing countries. 2. [development cooperation] In the context of development cooperation, the German Federal Government should work with developing countries to reduce poverty and hunger in the medium and long term and to create efficient health care, education and economic systems in these countries."

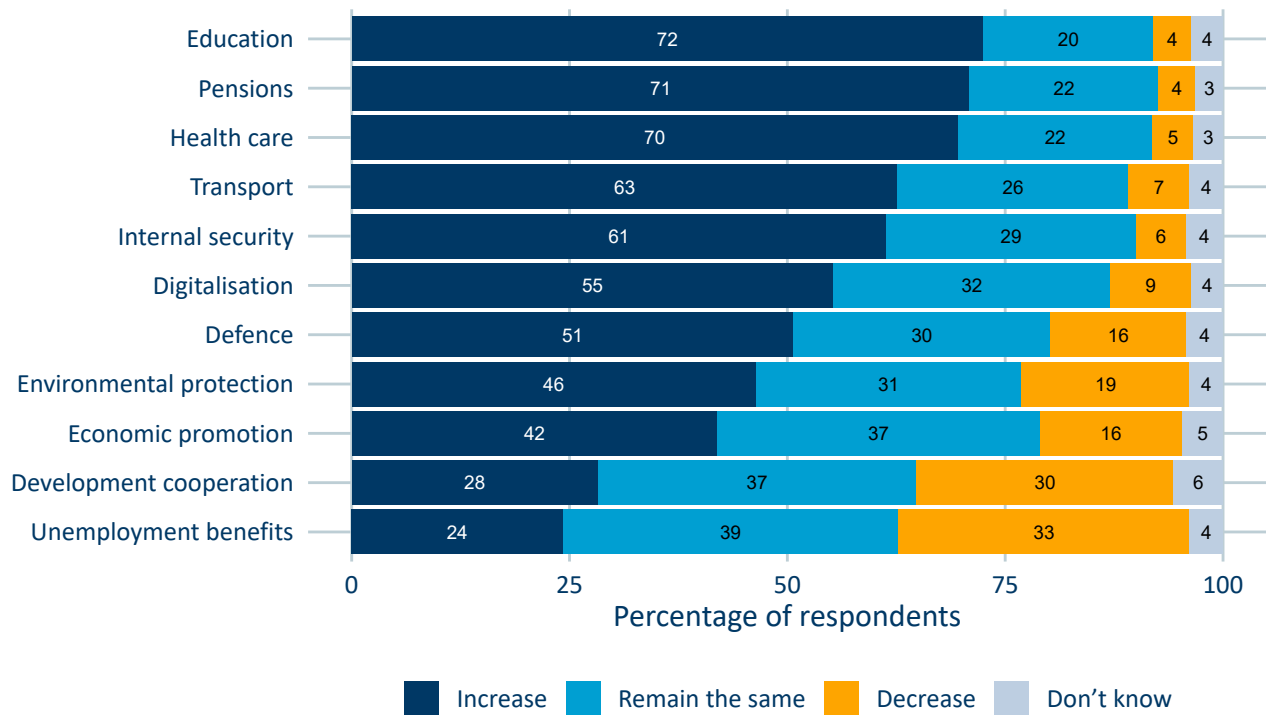
3.1.5 In comparison with other policy areas, respondents see DC (and support for the unemployed) as the areas with the biggest potential for reducing expenditure

Besides support for the unemployed, DC is the policy area in which respondents would most heavily cut government expenditure. In January 2024, around 30 percent pleaded for a reduction of the expenditure, while just under 28 percent

declared themselves in favour of an increase and approximately 37 percent advocated maintaining the existing expenditure (see Figure 4).¹¹ Fewer respondents endorse providing more funds just to support the unemployed than support an increase in the development cooperation/ODA expenditure. Greater expenditure on education, pensions and health care receives a particularly high level of support. More than 70 percent of respondents supported an increase in the expenditure in each of these areas.

¹⁰ Pearson's r 0.66; $p < 0.001$. Source of the data: DEval tracking January 2024 (N = 2,101).

¹¹ The differences in comparison with the figures from the DEL survey in January that are presented in sections 3.1.1 and 3.1.3 can largely be explained by the fact that the specific expenditure is included in the DEL question. Mentioning a specific sum in the billions of euros could give rise to stronger reservations with regard to DC.

Figure 4 Support for expenditure in different policy areas

Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEval tracking, carried out by Respondi/Bilendi in January 2024 (N = 2,101). The five-category response scale was condensed for the visualisation. The question was: “Do you think that government expenditure on the following policy areas should increase, decrease or remain the same? When answering the question, please remember that the government budget is limited.” The question was taken from the population survey that was conducted in 2022 by the Bundeswehr Centre of Military History and Social Sciences (ZMSBw) (Graf, 2022, p. 5).

When respondents were asked, in a direct comparison, to mention a policy area in which they would be most willing to make savings, DC and support for the unemployed were also selected most frequently. 21 percent of respondents declared themselves in favour of a reduction of expenditure in the area of DC – and just as many supported a reduction in the support given to the unemployed (Figure 45 in the Annex).¹² This means that in this kind of survey too, DC comes far behind policy areas such as “education”, “internal security”, “health care” and “pensions”, which have a direct impact on the lives of the German citizens or directly address their needs.

The proportion of mentions given to the policy area of DC varies with party identification. Among sympathisers of the AfD, the Sahra Wagenknecht Alliance (BSW), the CDU/CSU, the FDP, the Free Voters and the SPD and among people who do not feel affiliated to a party, DC consistently has the highest or second highest share of mentions (see Figure 46 in the Annex). This means that these people see DC as one of the two areas in which they would be most willing to make savings. It is only among supporters of the Greens and The Left that DC is named proportionately less frequently. Their most frequent responses are the areas of “defence” and “promoting industry and the economy”.

¹² In comparison with the results of the ZMSBw survey in June/July 2022 (Graf, 2022, p. 5; a representative telephone survey of the German-speaking population in private households over the age of 16), the figures from January 2024 indicated a more critical attitude towards development cooperation/ODA expenditure.

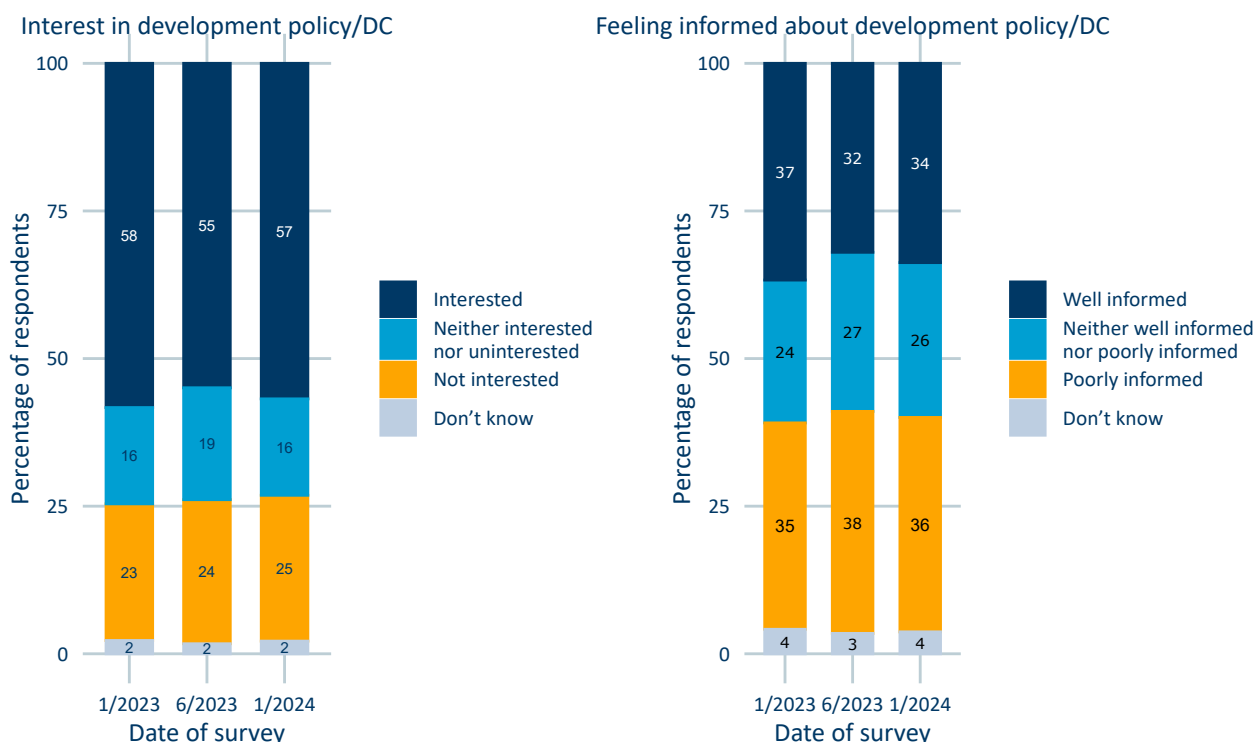
3.2 How interested are the respondents in development policy/DC and how well informed do they feel?

In order to be able to better assess whether additional information is relevant to the attitude of the German population towards development policy, the DEval tracking studies have started asking, since January 2023, about the respondents' interest in development policy/DC and how well informed they feel in this policy area. These indicators are particularly important for development policy communications and education.

3.2.1 The majority of respondents show an interest in development policy/DC, but only a small proportion feel well informed

The majority of respondents are interested in development policy/DC. This can be seen in the left-hand bar chart in Figure 5. For example, 57 percent of respondents in January 2024 indicated that they are interested in the topic area. However, 25 percent are not interested, and 16 percent selected the response "neither interested nor uninterested". No clear trend can be observed across the three survey waves.

Figure 5 Interest and knowledge in the area of development policy/development cooperation



Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEval tracking, carried out by Respondi/Bilendi in January 2023, July 2023 and January 2024. N for each survey = 2,000. The seven-point response scales were condensed for the visualisation. The questions were: "How interested are you in topics relating to development policy, development cooperation and global poverty?" "How knowledgeable or well informed do you think you are on topics relating to development policy, development cooperation and global poverty?"

A much smaller proportion of respondents feels well informed about the topic area of development policy/DC. In January 2024, 34 percent classed themselves as (very/relatively) well informed (right-hand diagram in Figure 5). 26 percent feel

neither well informed nor poorly informed, 36 percent see themselves as (very/relatively) poorly informed. It is evident that respondents feel slightly less well informed in the most recent two survey waves compared to January 2023.

In addition, there is a relationship between interest in development policy/DC and how well informed the respondents feel about this topic area: the more interested a respondent is in the topic, the better informed they feel.¹³ It is probable that a greater level of interest also leads to greater effort to find out about the topic. Conversely, however, more information could also contribute towards an emerging or growing interest in development policy/DC.

Interest and knowledge in the area of development policy/DC are accompanied by increased knowledge in this area. People who are interested in development policy/DC and feel well informed are much more likely to have heard of the SDGs, to be familiar with the United Nations 1.5°C climate target and to indicate that they have heard of feminist development policy than people for whom this is not the case.¹⁴

Irrespective of the respondents' interest and how well informed they feel, the share of German's gross national income that is spent on development is greatly over-estimated. Those who class themselves as very interested or well informed are not able to assess the share substantially more accurately than other respondents. For example, people who are interested in development policy assume that the share allocated to official development assistance (ODA) is around 9.5 percent; people who are not interested assume that it is 10.7 percent. Those who describe themselves as well informed estimate the share at 9.6 percent; those who state that they are poorly informed at 10.5 percent. These estimates are considerably above the actual quota of 0.79 percent in 2023 (OECD, 2024). The fact that the expenditure is estimated as being considerably higher than is actually the case is well known from the available literature (Milner and Tingley, 2013, Scotto et al., 2017) and has already been established for Germany (e.g. Schneider and Gleser, 2018, p. 33-34). However, it is interesting that this also applies to people who consider themselves to be well informed and interested.¹⁵

There is a relationship between the formal level of education and both interest in development policy/DC and the subjective level of information; a relationship also exists between interest in the topic and age and political orientation. The higher the school-leaving qualification of the respondents, the more pronounced their interest in DC and the greater their reported knowledge (see also the findings relating to political knowledge in Germany, e.g. Tausendpfund, 2020). Younger and older people are more interested in development policy/DC than middle-aged people; this also applies to people who place themselves on the left of the political spectrum (in comparison with the political centre or right).¹⁶

With respect to how well-informed people feel, there are also slight differences depending on political orientation and gender. People who place themselves on the political fringes tend to feel better informed than people who position themselves in the political centre. Furthermore, women feel less well informed about development policy/DC than men.¹⁷

3.2.2 The SDGs remain little known to respondents in Germany

Since they were adopted in 2015, familiarity with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has remained persistently low – the "People's Agenda" has not yet reached the wider population.¹⁸ At the half-way point of the 2030 Agenda in October 2023, 9 percent of respondents stated that they were familiar with the SDGs and knew what they involved (see Figure 6). 21 percent are familiar with the SDGs, but do not know what they involve. A clear majority of 63 percent have not heard of the SDGs yet (for further details, see Schneider et al., 2024a).

¹³ The Pearson correlation coefficient is $r = 0.39$, with a significance value of $p < 0.001$. Source of the data: DEval tracking January 2024 (N = 2,101).

¹⁴ All the analyses in this section are documented in Section 1.3 of the online appendix.

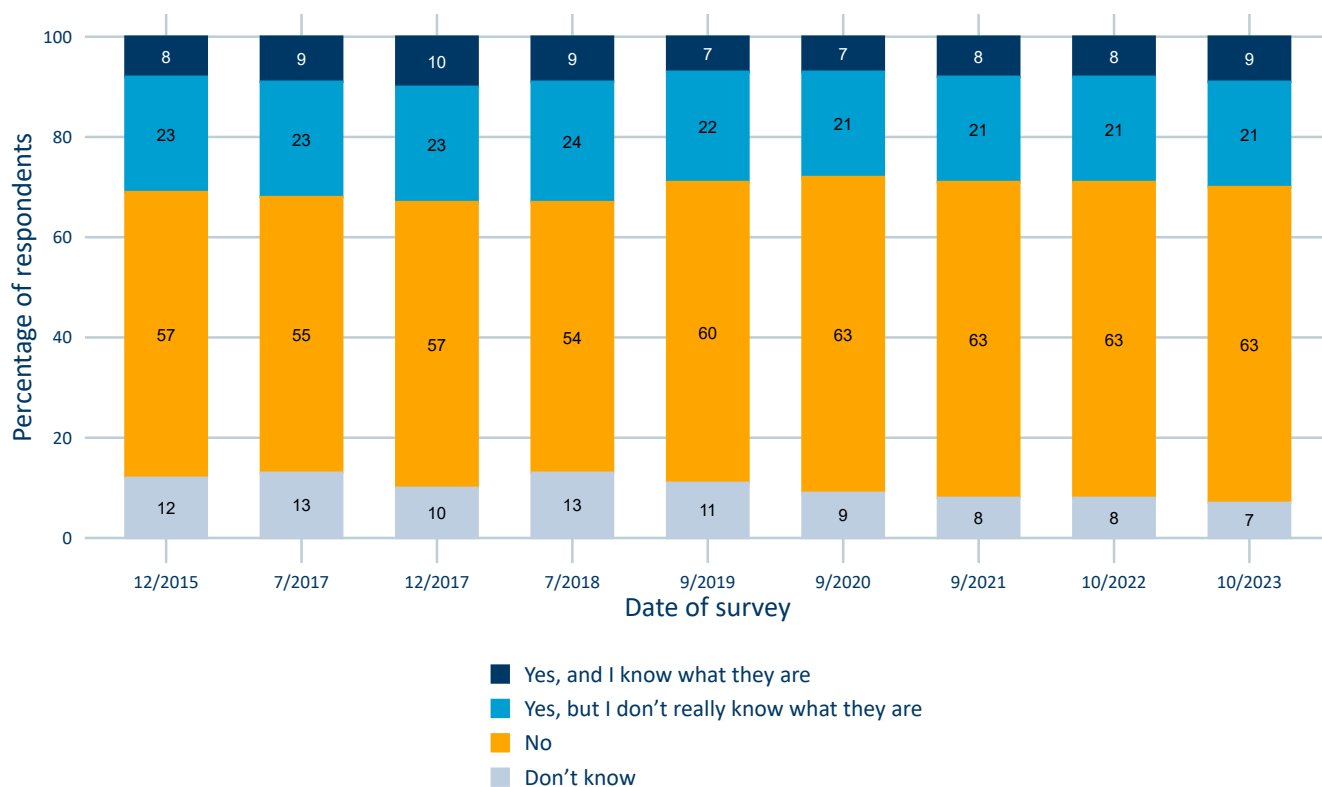
¹⁵ It is also interesting that the share is overestimated even in an online survey, in which the respondents, at least theoretically, have the option of looking up the answers to knowledge-based questions on the internet. Therefore, this finding indicates that a large proportion of the respondents did not consult the internet for knowledge-based questions.

¹⁶ The results of the regression analyses can be found in Table 12 in the online appendix.

¹⁷ Only people who identify either as "female" or as "male" were included in the analysis, as the group of people identifying as "non-binary" was too small for a meaningful analysis. For a detailed explanation of how gender information was collected in the surveys behind this report, see Box 2.

¹⁸ This particularly applies when we consider that the SDGs are better known to people with a higher level of formal education and a strong interest in politics (for details, see Schneider et al., 2024a).

Figure 6 Familiarity with the Sustainable Development Goals in Germany (2015–2023)



Source: DEval, own visualisation. Until July 2018 AAT panel, from September 2019 DEL panel. For each survey N ≈ 6,000. Weighted data. The question was: “Have you ever heard or read about the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals?”

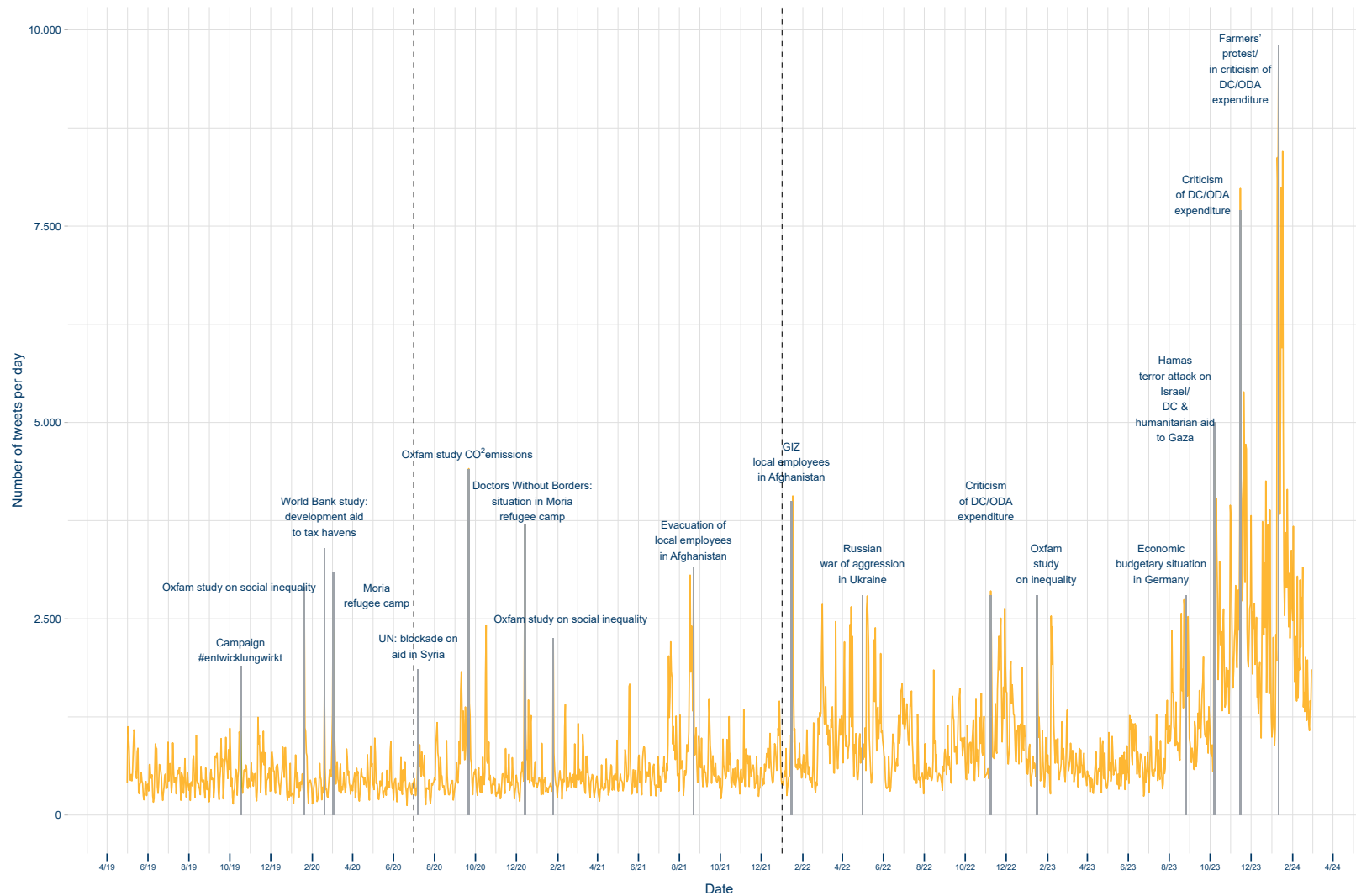
3.2.3 Development policy/DC and humanitarian aid are mentioned more frequently on Twitter/X

The analysis of development policy contents on the short message service X (known as Twitter until June 2023) makes it possible to form an impression of what topics are relevant at a particular point in time in the public debate on (development) policy. The information environment also plays a role in shaping the attitudes of the German population. The platform Twitter/X in particular picks up on aspects of public discussions, but can also have an influence on them (e.g. Jungherr, 2019).

Therefore, Figure 7 updates the time series from past Opinion Monitor reports.¹⁹ Alternative short message services do not yet have the same reach. With regard to other social media, messenger services such as WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger or Telegram provide a poorer access to data, whereas other platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube or TikTok are harder to analyse because of their photo- and video-based contents. In the future, the various platforms and their relevance to the questions studied in the Opinion Monitor – and their feasibility for analysis – will have to be constantly re-assessed.

¹⁹ For the limitations of Twitter/X analyses, see Section 2.3.

Figure 7 Posts relating to development policy/development cooperation and humanitarian aid on Twitter/X (2019–2024)



Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: around 1.4 million posts that were downloaded between 1 May 2019 and 29 February 2024 using the analysis tool Meltwater, with the help of a search term list. The search term list is documented in Box 1 in the online appendix. The vertical dotted lines mark the periods presented in the Opinion Monitor for 2021 or 2022.

For the new period under consideration from January 2022 to October 2023, the number of posts relating to development policy/DC and/or humanitarian aid observed each day is similar to the previous period, apart from a few fluctuations. This “basic level” is interrupted by sporadic upward fluctuations. A first such fluctuation can be seen in January 2022. This consists primarily of posts on how the German Federal Government and government DC actors were handling local Afghan employees after the Taliban took power in August 2021. It is important to bear in mind that individual accounts have generated a large number of posts. From February 2022, the time series reflects the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine. In this context, the posts primarily discussed the humanitarian aid interventions undertaken by the German Federal Government.

In November 2022, a surge of posts explicitly criticising DC/ODA expenditure was observed for the first time. This aspect is picked up again in August/September 2023 in the course of discussions about the economic and budgetary situation in Germany, also reflected in spikes in the time series. The attack on Israel by the Islamist terror organisation Hamas on 7 October 2023 and the subsequent Israeli military operation in Gaza led to a considerable increase in the average number of posts per day. The government is criticised for supporting an Islamist terror organisation with DC and humanitarian aid in Gaza and also for providing too little support for the people in Gaza.

With the German Federal Constitutional Court's ruling on the federal budget in November 2023 and the farmers' protests in January 2024, the time series spikes strikingly high. These posts reflect the criticism for DC/ODA expenditure in politics and the media that pointedly questions the expenditure on cycle paths in Peru and gender trainings in Rwanda, for example, and contrasts this expenditure with a lack of funds for agriculture in Germany (see, for example, Tagesschau, 2024).

On the whole, the increasingly critical tone of communications on Twitter/X since autumn 2023 corresponds to a drop in support for DC/ODA expenditure. However, the question of whether the discussion of development policy/DC in the media and politics is the reason for this decline is unresolved. It is also conceivable that an increasingly negative perception of the respondent's own personal or the national economic situation

leads to conflicts over the distribution of resources (see, for example, Heinrich et al., 2016; Kobayashi et al., 2021) and thus to reduced support for development cooperation. Therefore, the relationship between the perception of the economy and support for development cooperation is addressed separately in Section 4.3.2. Another reason could be a shift in priorities with respect to the responsibilities of the state because of a stronger sense of threat in the German population as a result of the war against Ukraine (e.g. Graf, 2024, p. 6) – a topic that is dealt with in Section 4.3.3. Furthermore, the choice of a feminist guiding principle for German foreign and development policy could have led to a polarised discourse and to the rejection of current development policy in some circles (Sassenhagen et al., 2023). This is examined in more detail in Section 4.4. Finally, the response of development policy communications to the expressed criticism may not have been sufficient.

3.3 What are the respondents' attitudes towards DC motives, actors and objectives?

Especially in economically challenging times, it is important to assess not only the extent to which general support for development cooperation is changing, but also what attitudes exist towards the various motives, actors and objectives in the area of DC. For example, it is conceivable that the population thinks that DC should focus more strongly on national interests and that it is primarily seen as the responsibility of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or companies. The belief that DC should be restricted more to the basic needs of the people in the partner countries could also be prevalent.

3.3.1 “Doing good with modest resources” and “combating the causes of flight” remain the most convincing motives for DC

“Doing good with modest resources” and “combating the causes of flight” are still the most convincing motives for DC in the eyes of the respondents; the remaining motives follow a long way behind. As can be seen in Figure 8, 46 percent of respondents in January 2024 named “doing good with modest resources” and 43 percent “combating the causes of flight” as

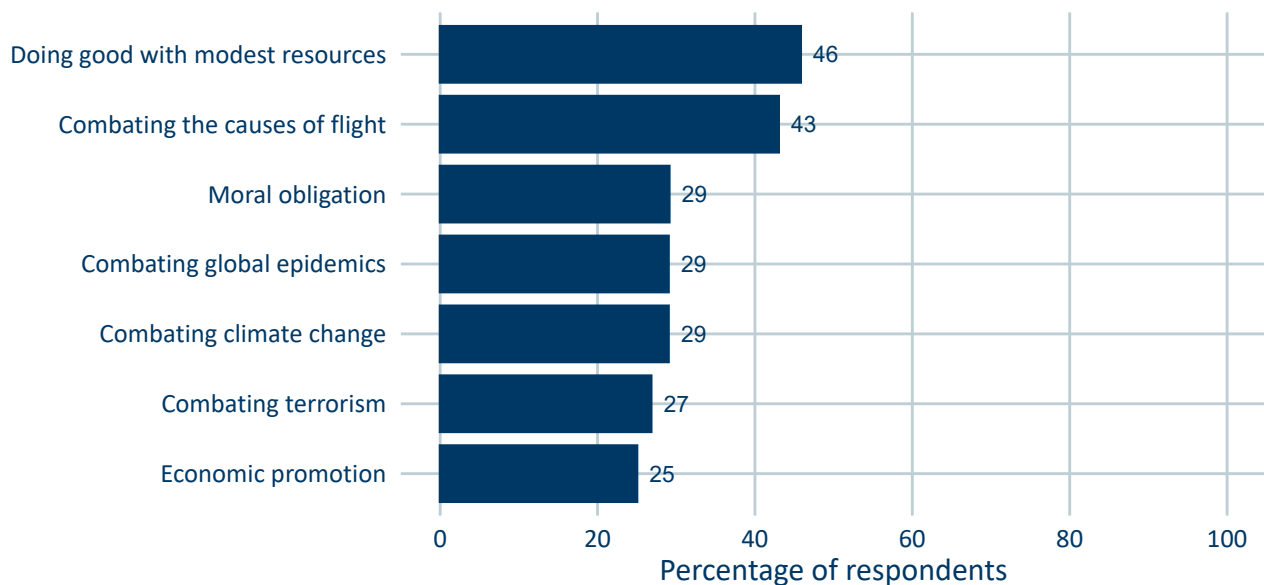
the most convincing motive for DC. All the other motives were named by just 25 to 29 percent of the respondents.

When the motives are considered over the course of time, the proportion of respondents mentioning the motives “moral obligation”, “combating terrorism” and “combating global epidemics” has fallen slightly since the survey in January 2022. “Combating climate change” is also mentioned proportionately less frequently in the surveys in October 2023 and January 2024 than in the previous surveys

(minus 5 percentage points; see Figure 5 in Section 1.2 of the online appendix).

These results can be interpreted as a decline in the persuasiveness of the narrative that DC can be used as a means of overcoming global challenges. The fall in the proportion of respondents mentioning the motive “moral obligation” can also be seen as an indication that the German population is putting aside the interests of the countries in the Global South in light of economic challenges in their own country.²⁰

Figure 8 Convincing motives for DC



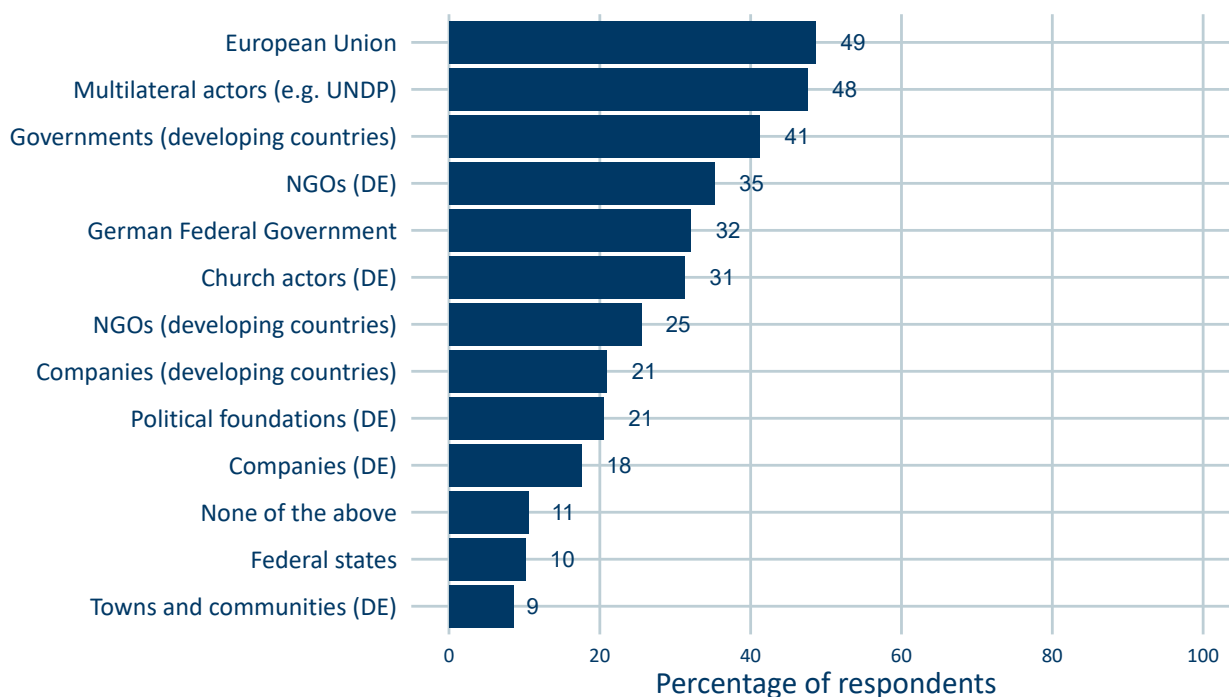
Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEL tracking, January 2024. N = 1,021. Weighted data. The question was: “Here are several possible arguments in favour of development cooperation. Which of these arguments do you personally find particularly convincing? (Please select all applicable answers.)”.

3.3.2 Respondents most frequently consider supranational and multilateral organisations to be responsible for putting DC into practice

An important aspect is the question of which actors the population considers to be responsible for putting the DC measures into practice. Even though governments of the donor states provide a large share of the financial resources for DC, DC interventions can also be implemented by civil

society organisations and private companies. This can also be done by the governments from the partner countries as well as local civil society organisations and private companies. Other actors are multilateral and international organisations such as the European Union (EU) and the United Nations (UN). In population surveys on DC, however, it is often only the government that is mentioned as a responsible actor.

²⁰ The DEL panel has also found that the percentage of respondents agreeing with the statement “Countries like Germany should provide more funding for development cooperation because it is morally the right thing to do” has decreased since 2022 (see Figure 9 in the online appendix).

Figure 9 Actors in the area of development cooperation

Source: DEval, own visualisation; source of the data: DEval tracking, carried out by Respondi/Bilendi in January 2024. $N = 2,101$. The question was: "Development cooperation can be carried out by different actors and organisations. Please name up to 5 actors and organisations that you believe are the best fit for carrying out development cooperation."

The respondents most frequently consider multilateral actors (e.g. the United Nations Development Programme, UNDP) and the EU to be responsible for carrying out DC measures. The proportion of respondents mentioning these actors is around 48 to 52 percent across the three survey dates (see Figure 6 in the online appendix and Figure 9 for January 2024). These are followed by the governments of the partner countries, which were mentioned by around 40 to 42 percent of the respondents in all the surveys. Then, after a clear gap, come the German Federal Government, civil society organisations (NGOs) and church actors, which were mentioned by around 31 to 37 percent. The proportion of respondents mentioning the German Federal Government has fallen across the three surveys, whereas the proportion

mentioning NGOs and church actors has remained the same. Here too, it can be assumed that the strained budgetary situation has an impact on this decline. Only a small fraction of respondents – around 7 to 11 percent – considered the German federal states or the towns and communities to be responsible for DC interventions. This share has proved to be stable across the three surveys to date.

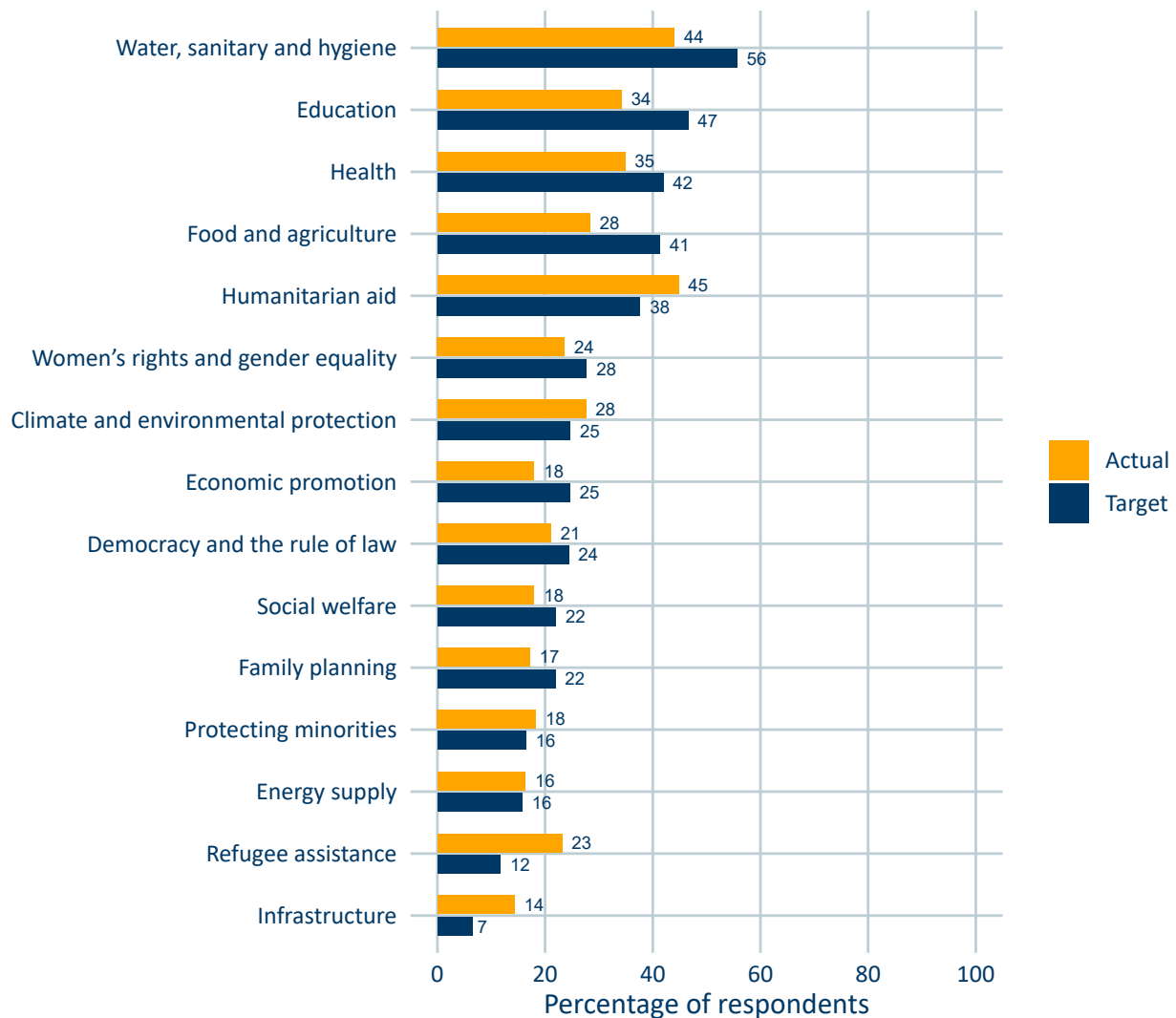
The high support for the EU and multilateral actors could indicate that supranational and multilateral actors are deemed to have a greater influence than individual national actors. It could also imply that the respondents advocate dividing the expenditure of resources and the responsibility between several DC donor states.

3.3.3 The most frequently endorsed goals of DC are WASH, education, health care, and food and agriculture.

Overall, the data suggests that respondents advocate a traditional approach to development cooperation with

a focus on basic needs and particularly approve of classic DC sectors (education, food, health care). On the other hand, more progressive goals such as protecting the climate, women's rights and gender equality, or protecting minorities receive much less support.

Figure 10 Objectives of German development cooperation: "target" v. "actual"



Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEval tracking, carried out by Respondi/Bilendi in January 2024. N = 2,050. The questions were: "In your opinion, what objectives should German development cooperation contribute towards? Please select up to 5 objectives." ("target"). "And which objectives do you think German development cooperation is actually contributing towards? Please select up to five objectives." ("actual").

In concrete terms, respondents believe that German development cooperation should focus primarily on improvements in the areas of “water, sanitary and hygiene” (WASH), “education”, “health care” and “food and agriculture” (blue bar (“target”) in Figure 10). “WASH” was selected by 56 percent of respondents, “education” by 47 percent, “health care” by 42 percent and “food and agriculture” by 41 percent. After these objectives, which focus on basic needs, comes “humanitarian aid” at 38 percent. Most of the other objectives – including “women’s rights and gender equality”, “protecting the climate and the environment” and “promoting democracy and the rule of law” – were selected by around 20 to 30 percent of respondents. The DC objectives endorsed by fewest respondents are “creating infrastructure” and “helping refugees”. Across all the goals, no conspicuous upward or downward trends can be seen over the course of the three survey waves.²¹ With respect to these opinions, however, it should be noted that traditional and progressive goals for DC are not mutually exclusive but can influence one another. For example, improvements in the education sector could also promote gender equality.

In the subsequent question – which objectives do the respondents think that German development cooperation is actually contributing towards (“actual”) – approximately the same objectives were mentioned most frequently. Respondents most frequently mention “Humanitarian aid” as the area to which they believe the German Federal Government is contributing (45%), followed by WASH (44%) and health care (35%; see Figure 10, yellow bar).

A comparison of the objectives that the German Federal Government should pursue in the area of development cooperation (“target”) with the objectives to which the respondents believe it to actually contributes (“actual”) reveals some major differences. For example, respondents are most likely to believe that the German Federal Government is contributing less than it should to the objectives of “WASH”, “education”, “food and agriculture”, “health care” and “promoting the economy” (difference between “target” and “actual” greater than 5 percentage points in each case). In the case of “humanitarian aid”, “helping refugees” and “infrastructure”, it

is the other way around; here respondents are most likely to assume that the German Federal Government is doing more than it should (difference between “target” and “actual” greater than 5 percentage points in each case).

3.4 How stable are the attitudes towards development policy and DC?

Even though attitudes towards DC have hardly changed in Germany in the past, the results of the current Opinion Monitor suggest that support for DC only has a limited resilience to multiple crises. For example, the DEL data until January 2022, which can be seen in the time series in the previous Opinion Monitor reports, revealed very small or no changes in the attitudes towards DC, leading to the conclusion that these are very stable (Schneider and Gleser, 2018; Schneider et al., 2022). However, the latest analyses in this chapter show that the respondents’ support for DC has been decreasing sharply since the beginning of 2022. This may indicate that the attitudes of the German population towards development policy are not completely stable and unchanging, especially in the context of major global challenges and crises. Ultimately, observations at a population level cannot determine changes on the individual level as it is possible for shares to remain the same while individuals change their attitudes.²²

One possible explanation for the decline in support for DC in the context of the current political challenges is that the attitude towards DC is not particularly stable. For example, various experimental studies have been able to show that small changes in the explanation of development policy (framing) or in the presentation of information can substantially change the attitude towards DC (see, for example, Bayram and Thomson, 2022; Bayram et al., 2024; Eger et al., 2022; Schneider et al., 2022; Scotto et al., 2017). With respect to attitudes towards development policy, the literature also often shows that in spite of a high level of support for DC and a reported interest in the topic, knowledge of specific measures in the policy area is low. Therefore, attitudes towards DC are characterised as “a mile wide and an inch deep”, i.e. as support that is widespread, but is possibly standing on

²¹ A visualisation of the objectives over the course of time can be found in Figures 7 and 8 in the online appendix.

²² A sample calculation to illustrate this: if ten people are surveyed and five of them support DC and five do not, DC supporters and DC opponents each have a share of 50 percent. If just one person who previously supported DC changes their attitude and no longer supports DC from now on, and one person who previously did not support DC now supports it, these two people have changed their attitude towards DC. However, the share of 50 percent would remain unchanged.

shaky ground (e.g. Smillie, 1999; see also Riddell, 2007, Chapter 7). A study by the research institute pollytix that was commissioned by the BMZ comes to a similar conclusion; it assesses the German population's level of knowledge and information with regard to DC as low and attitudes towards DC as not very stable (Faltas et al., 2024). These findings suggest that support for and interest in DC are rather superficial or might be poorly anchored in knowledge or an actual belief and therefore are easy to change in the case of doubt.

The question of the strength of attitudes towards DC – i.e. of how stable and resistant to change they are – represents a gap in the research that has a high practical relevance. How strong or weak an attitude is allows conclusions to be drawn regarding how changeable it is and how much it influences our behaviour (e.g. Krosnick and Petty, 1995; Vogel et al, 2016). Strong attitudes have a greater impact on behaviour than weak attitudes (e.g. Conner et al., 2022). At the same time, strong attitudes are more difficult to change than weak attitudes (e.g. Eagly and Chaiken, 1995). There are indications of a possible instability of attitudes towards DC in the literature, but the actual strength of the attitudes of the German population towards DC has not been studied to date. The question of which population groups have very stable or easily changeable attitudes and opinions is particularly relevant in a polarised discourse in which political actors want to influence the climate of opinion. It stands to reason that the aforementioned actors focus primarily on those attitudes of the electorate that can be changed.

In the existing research on the strength of attitudes, a large number of characteristics are studied that make attitudes resilient to change and have a greater influence on behaviour. For example, strong attitudes are characterised by people a) having more knowledge about the topic, b) rating the topic as relevant or important on a personal level, c) being certain of their own attitude, d) being able to retrieve the attitude quickly, e) having hardly any contradictory thoughts, but also by people f) having stronger feelings about the topic, g) feeling personally affected by the topic or by h) attitudes being strongly anchored in (moral) convictions (for various lists of the characteristics of strong attitudes, see, for example, Howe and Krosnick, 2017; Krosnick and Petty, 1995; Vogel et al., 2016).

To investigate the strength of attitudes towards DC in Germany, a measuring tool has been developed in the context of this study to measure these characteristics. On the basis of the literature on attitude strength, 11 characteristics have been selected as relevant for the attitudes towards DC. These include perceived knowledge about DC, attitude certainty with regard to DC, attitude ambivalence towards DC, the subjective accessibility for the assessment of DC, the personal relevance of DC, interest in DC, personal involvement in DC, the influence of beliefs and moral convictions on the attitude towards DC, the self-assessed extremity of the attitude towards DC and the affective intensity (see Figure 11; the precise wording of the questions relating to the individual characteristics can be seen in Table 3 in Section 1.1.3 in the online appendix).

Additionally, with the help of this measuring tool, overarching factors of attitude strength were determined and the respondents were categorised according to their attitude strength and support for DC. This allows a nuanced picture to be drawn of how deeply rooted the attitudes towards DC are and what factors make the attitudes more stable or more unstable.

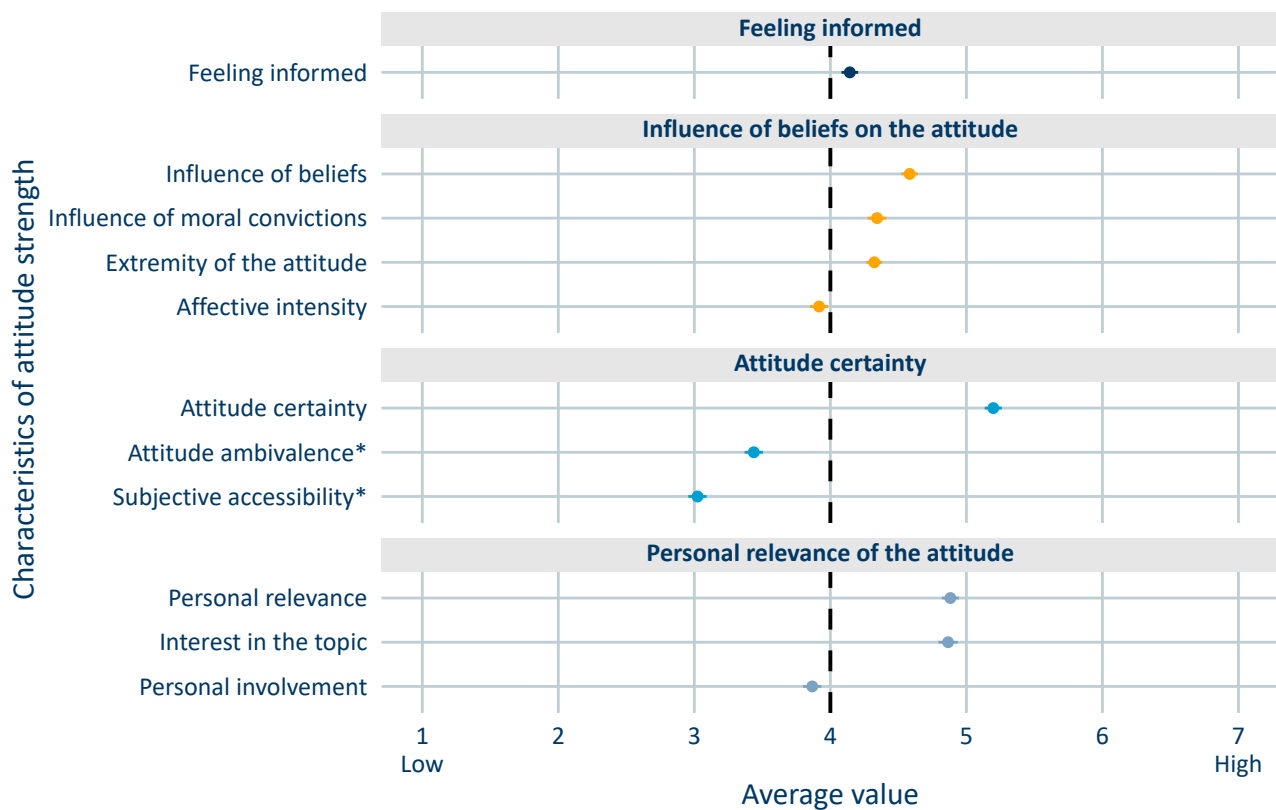
3.4.1 Many respondents are confident in their attitude towards DC and find the topic relevant; only a few feel well informed.

An examination of the average values for the individual characteristics shows that the respondents are relatively certain in their attitude towards DC, perceive the topic as personally relevant and are interested in the topic, but consider themselves to be poorly informed and do not feel any strong personal involvement. As Figure 11 illustrates, the characteristics of “attitude certainty”, “personal relevance” and “interest in the topic” show the highest average score, with values between 4.9 and 5.2 on a scale from 1 to 7. The sense of being personally affected (“personal involvement”) by the topic of DC has a lower score with an average value of 3.9. This also applies to the affective intensity with regard to DC (3.9) and the perceived knowledge (4.1).

The 11 characteristics can be summarised in four superordinate factors of attitude strength towards DC: (1) perceived knowledge, (2) attitude certainty, (3) the personal relevance of the topic and (4) the influence of personal beliefs on the attitude.²³ These factors were determined using an exploratory factor analysis (see Box 5).

Figure 11 shows which characteristics are assigned to which factor. Even though there is no consensus in the scientific literature to date on universal factors of attitude strength, the four factors described here can also frequently be found in the literature on attitude strength and reflect the key aspects of attitude strength (Bassili, 2008; Krosnick and Petty, 1995).²⁴

Figure 11 Score assigned to the characteristics of attitude strength



Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEval survey, carried out by ResponDi/Bilendi in August 2023. N = 4,050. The respondents were randomly assigned to a survey with questions on development policy in general (N = 2,041) or questions on feminist development policy (N = 2,009) first. The figure shows the mean values with 95% confidence intervals. The values only relate to the people who answered the questions about DC first. The response options vary depending on the question, but consist of a seven-point scale for all questions, where “1” stands for lower values and “7” for higher values. The value “4” corresponds to the centre of the scale. With regard to the individual characteristics, higher values are generally an indication of more stable attitudes. In the case of the characteristics that are marked with * (“attitude ambivalence” and “subjective accessibility”), lower values are an indicator of more stable attitudes.

²³ “Belief” and “attitude” are related, but distinct concepts. Attitudes are appraisals of specific objects, people, ideas or situations, which can be positive, negative or neutral (see, for example, Maio et al., 2019, p. 4). Beliefs, on the other hand, are deeply rooted assumptions that people have about the world, themselves, other people or particular topics and are often associated with fundamental values and identities. Attitudes are deemed to be more stable if they are anchored in profound beliefs. They can, however, also be more superficial and flexible and, for example, be based on other influences that are less stable, for example the current mood (see, for example, Kruglanski and Stroebe, 2005).

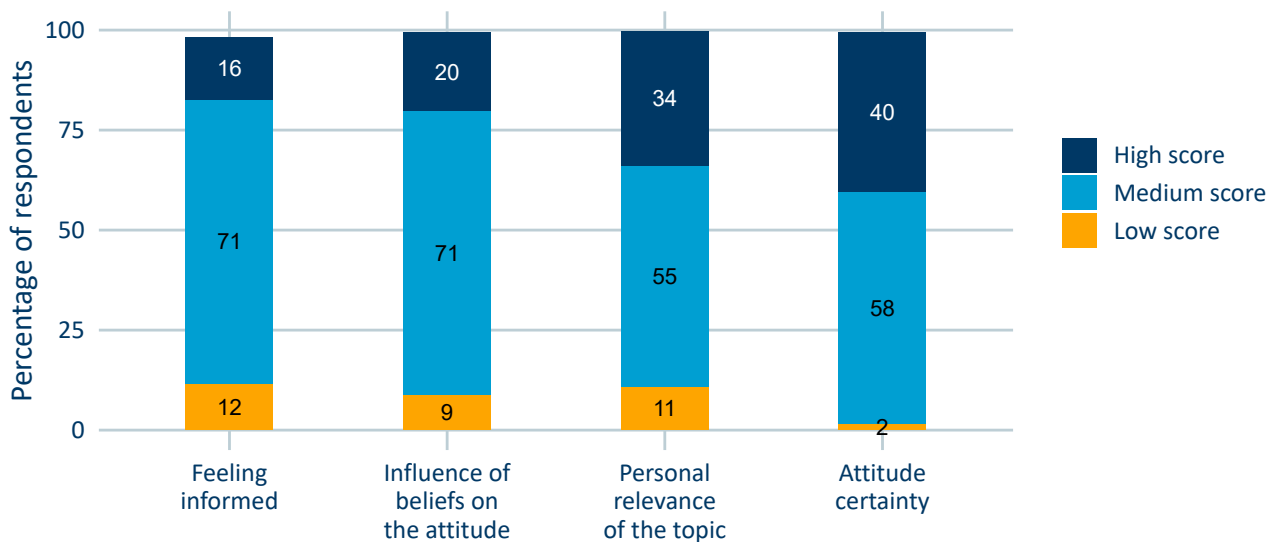
²⁴ Details of the results of the exploratory factor analysis can be found in Section 1.4.1 of the online appendix.

Box 5 Exploratory factor analysis

The exploratory factor analysis is a statistical method that is used to identify patterns or structures in a data set (Backhaus et al., 2018, Chapter 7). It is often applied to understand the underlying relationships between variables and to reduce the complexity of data. Essentially, the exploratory factor analysis attempts to reduce a large number of variables to a smaller number of factors. These factors are hypothetical constructs that cannot be directly observed but are derived from the relationships between the variables. They can be understood as umbrella terms that are derived from the data and characterise the data. As an exploratory factor analysis is a data-driven procedure, the identified factors may differ when it is applied to different data sets.

The analysis of the four factors shows that a large proportion of the respondents feel poorly to moderately informed about DC and that the attitudes of the majority are only slightly to moderately rooted in beliefs. At the same time, a high proportion of respondents consider the topic of DC to be very relevant and state that they are very certain with regard to their attitudes towards DC. The shares of respondents according to their scores on the factors are shown in Figure 12. In line with the scientific literature and previous insights from the Opinion Monitor, the majority of the population (83%) reports a low or medium level of perceived knowledge about the topic area of DC and development policy, while just 16 percent feel very well informed. Attitudes towards DC also appear to be less anchored in personal beliefs. The majority of respondents indicate that the influence of their beliefs on their attitude towards DC is only medium (71%)

or low (9%). However, 20 percent of respondents specify that beliefs have a high influence on their attitude towards DC. Even though many respondents feel moderately to poorly informed about DC and many do not consider their personal beliefs to have a major influence over their attitude towards DC, large sections of the respondents still regard DC as a highly relevant topic (34%) and are very certain of their attitude (40%). Only 11 percent of respondents see the topic as irrelevant, and 2 percent are very uncertain of their attitude. These observations indicate that many people are relatively confident of their attitude in spite of being poorly informed about the topic of DC. In addition, the topic of DC is definitely classed as relevant and important by many respondents. In line with the hypothesis that attitudes towards DC are “a mile wide and an inch deep”, they are only rooted in beliefs for a relatively small proportion of the respondents.

Figure 12 Shares of respondents according to their score on the factors of attitude strength

Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEval survey, carried out by ResponDi/Bilendi in August 2023. N = 4,050. The respondents were randomly assigned to a survey with questions on development policy in general (N = 2,041) or questions on feminist development policy (N = 2,009) first. The values are based on the share of respondents who answered the questions about DC first. The figure shows the four factors into which the individual indicators have been conflated on the basis of the exploratory factor analysis, and the shares of the population that have a low (average value < 3), medium (average value 3–5) or high (average value > 5) score on these factors.

3.4.2 Attitude types: the majority has a moderately positive, but unstable attitude towards DC

To get a better understanding of how the various characteristics of attitude strength relate to the support for DC and of which attitude profiles can be found in the German population, the respondents were segmented. A latent profile analysis (LPA; see Box 6) was used for this, considering all the characteristics of attitude strength and the support for DC. The aim was to determine what proportion of people have strong or weak attitudes and whether there are differences in the attitude strength of advocates and opponents of DC. This sets the current Opinion Monitor apart from the previous studies on the topic – for example the Opinion Monitor 2018 (Schneider and Gleser, 2018, Chapter 7) or the study commissioned by the BMZ on attitudes towards DC (Faltas et al., 2024). In these studies, corresponding attitude profiles were created, but the stability of the attitudes was not determined.

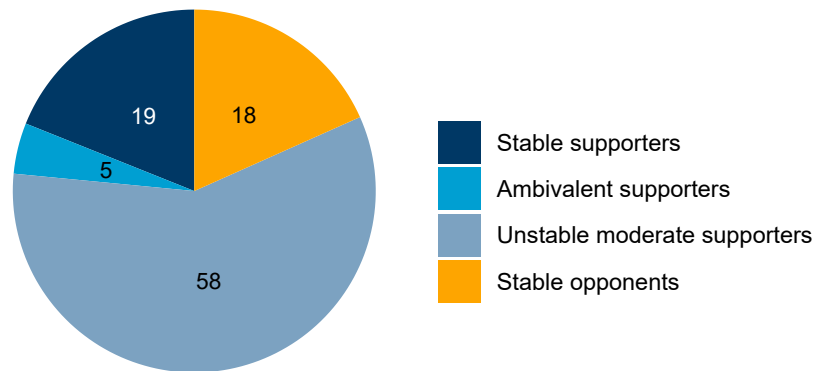
Box 6 Latent profile analysis (LPA)

Latent profile analysis (LPA) is a statistical method that is used to identify groups in a sample that are similar with regard to characteristics that are not directly observable – so-called latent characteristics (Spurk et al., 2020; Vermunt and Magidson, 2002). Essentially, LPA looks for common patterns of responses, for example to questions relating to personality characteristics, behaviour patterns or attitudes. The identified groups or profiles can then be examined further to analyse what factors distinguish them from one another. As LPA is a data-driven procedure, the identified profiles may vary when it is applied to different data sets.

The segmentation by means of an LPA identified four attitude types: (1) “stable supporters” (19%), (2) “ambivalent supporters” (5%), (3) “unstable moderate supporters” (58%) and (4) “stable opponents” (18%).²⁵ The labels of the attitude types were selected on the basis of the two dimensions that

were relevant for the classification of these attitude types: (1) the level of support for DC and (2) the attitude strengths. The proportion of respondents assigned to each of the attitude types is presented in Figure 13.

Figure 13 Proportion of respondents assigned to the four attitude types (in percent)



Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEval survey, carried out by ResponDi/Bilendi in August 2023. $N = 4,050$. The respondents were randomly assigned to a survey with questions on DC ($N = 2,041$) or questions on feminist development policy ($N = 2,009$) first. The values are based on the share of respondents who answered the questions about development policy first. The figure shows the shares for the four attitude profiles to which respondents were assigned by a latent profile analysis based on their responses.

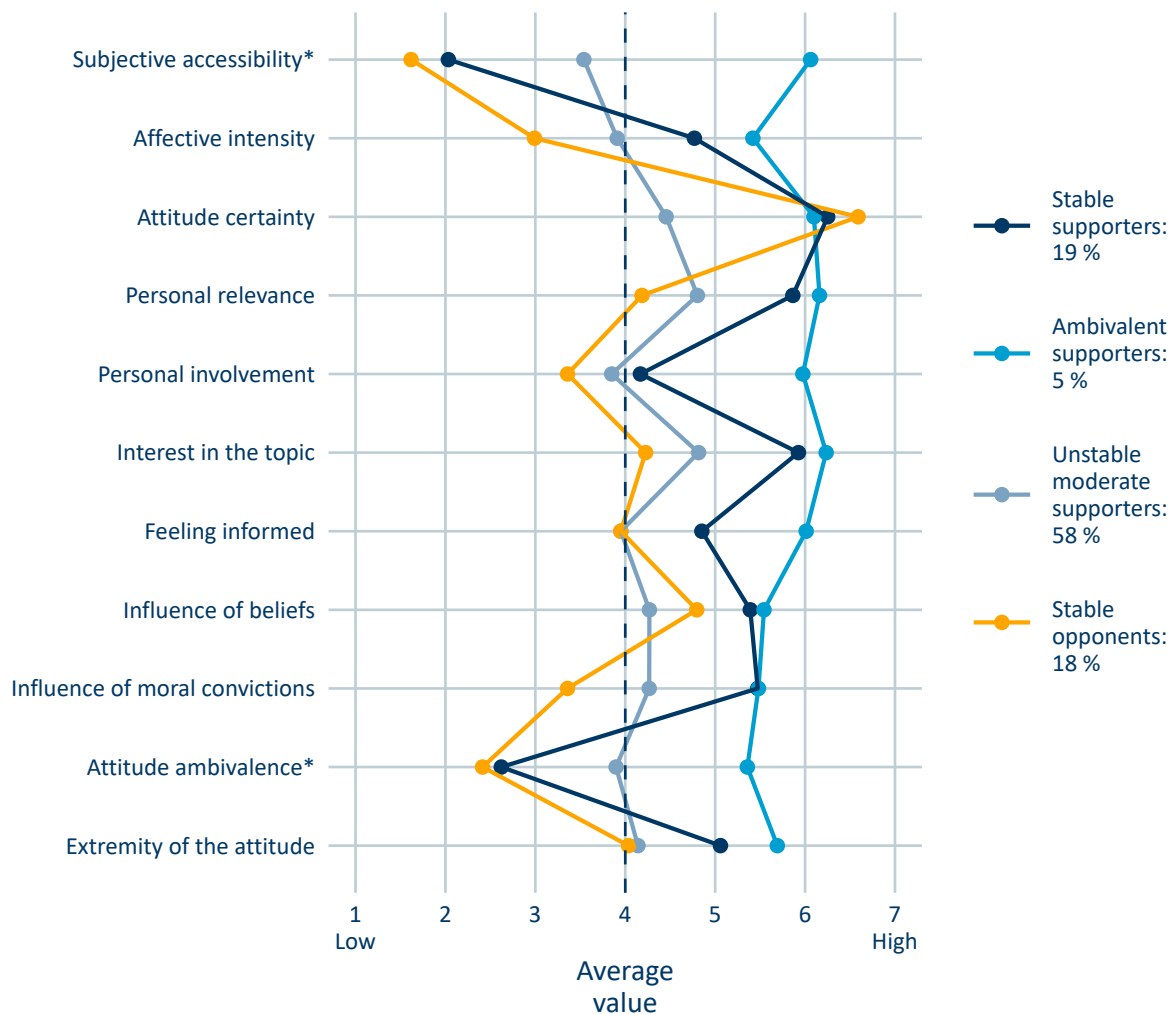
Even though a majority of respondents supports the idea of DC in principle, only 19 percent can be referred to as “stable supporters”, whereas 58 percent support DC to a moderate degree, but have a relatively unstable attitude. The group of “stable supporters” is characterised by very positive attitudes towards DC, a high attitude certainty and an attitude that is rooted in beliefs (see Figure 14 and Figure 15). In contrast, the “moderately unstable supporters” are distinguished by a support that is on weak ground, as the attitudes are less pronounced and are relatively poorly rooted in beliefs. In addition, there is rather less interest in the topic. 5 percent of respondents can be identified as “ambivalent supporters”. On the one hand,

this group shows the greatest level of support for DC, with this attitude appearing to be strongly influenced by beliefs. On the other hand, it shows a high degree of ambivalence about this attitude, and the respondents say that they spent a long time deliberating on their own opinion.

In spite of widespread support for DC, 18 percent of respondents can be labelled “stable opponents”. This group is very certain of their attitude, but finds the topic rather irrelevant, and their attitude is less rooted in personal beliefs (see Figure 15). This special profile suggests that the attitudes are stable and will not change easily.

²⁵ The LPA found that a solution with five groups best describes the data. In a solution with five groups, two attitude profiles were identified for unstable moderate supporters, which differ only slightly from one another both in terms of their support for DC and in terms of the score given to the various attitude characteristics. For the sake of simplification, these two attitude profiles are conflated into a single group in this report. The shares and the attitude profiles, taking all five groups into account, and other details on the results of the latent profile analysis are documented in Section 1.4.2 of the online appendix.

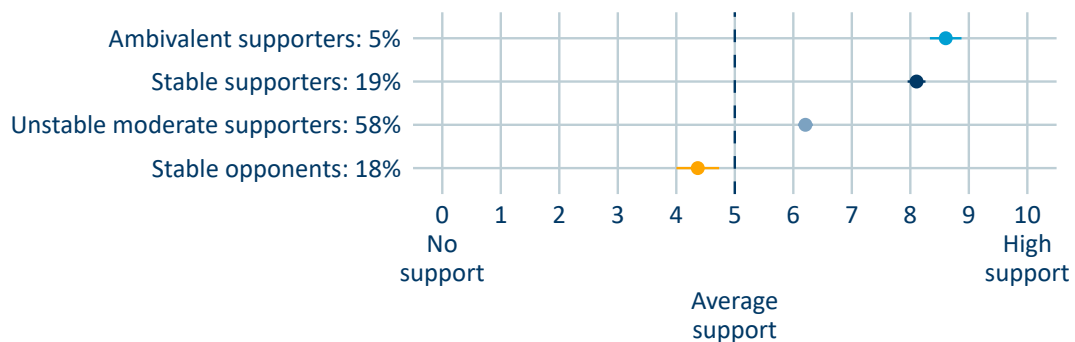
Figure 14 The profiles of the four attitude types



Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEval survey, carried out by ResponDi/Bilendi in August 2023. N = 2,041. The figure shows mean values for the different characteristics of attitude strength, broken down into the four attitude types that were identified by a latent profile analysis. The values are based solely on the share of respondents who answered the questions about development policy first. The response options varied depending on the question, but consisted of a seven-point scale for all questions, where "1" represents lower values and "7" higher values. "4" corresponds to the centre of the scale and a medium score. With regard to the individual characteristics, higher values are generally an indication of more stable attitudes. In the case of the characteristics that are marked with * ("attitude ambivalence" and "subjective accessibility"), lower values are an indicator of more stable attitudes.

The interesting thing is that even the group of opponents does not completely reject DC in the latest survey. With an average value of 4.4 on a scale from 0 to 10, this group ranks near the centre of the scale (see Figure 15). As the survey only asked to what extent Germany should provide assistance in countries in the Global South, it is unclear at this juncture what support for specific DC/ODA expenditure, for example, would be like in this group. Against the backdrop of multiple crises,

scanty budgetary resources and increased criticism for German DC, the question is whether support for DC could fall further, especially amongst opponents and unstable supporters. Alternatively, the current results could also reflect the lowest level of support for DC. In the context of a stabilising economy and contingent on a changing environment, support for DC could also rise again.

Figure 15 Average support for development cooperation by attitude type

Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEval survey, carried out by Respondi/Bilendi in August 2023. $N = 4,050$. The respondents were randomly assigned to a survey with questions on development policy in general ($N = 2,041$) or questions on feminist development policy ($N = 2,009$) first. The figure shows mean values with 95% confidence intervals for support for DC, broken down into the four attitude types that were identified by a latent profile analysis. The values are based solely on the share of respondents who answered the questions about development policy first.

Stable opponents and unstable moderate supporters identify more frequently with the AfD and have a lower level of formal education. With regard to gender and age, opponents are more often male, but age only plays a role for unstable moderate supporters. An in-depth analysis examined the extent to which various sociodemographic characteristics are related to the assignment to the attitude types. The group of stable supporters was chosen as a comparison group to ascertain how the other groups differ from this group in terms of the characteristics of gender, age, level of formal education and party preference. This comparison showed that stable opponents are more often male than stable supporters. There was no gender difference between stable and unstable supporters. Unstable supporters were slightly younger (under 40) than stable supporters; this age difference is not evident between stable opponents and stable supporters. Both unstable supporters and stable opponents are less likely to have a high level of formal education than stable supporters. Both groups identify more frequently with the AfD than the SPD. No significant differences can be seen between the groups with regard to the other parties.²⁶

3.4.3 Attitude strength as an important factor for understanding fluctuations in attitudes towards DC

All in all, the examination of attitude strength has shown that a large proportion of respondents do have a positive attitude towards the basic concept of DC, but this attitude is not built on a strong foundation. Many appear to be poorly informed about DC, and their attitudes are based less on actual beliefs than on a superficial feeling that the topic is relevant in principle.

Unstable attitudes drive action less and are easier to change, and people with unstable attitudes are more receptive to counterarguments. For the attitude towards DC, this means that the increased economic bottlenecks combined with multiple global crises and the ever louder voices of opponents to DC presumably also have an impact on the opinion of the German population because many people do not have a particularly strong attitude towards DC. Hence, these attitudes can be influenced by external information. And since the topic is only really central to a small proportion of the population

²⁶ The results were determined on the basis of a multinomial logistic regression. The characteristics used are categorical variables, i.e. variables that can only take the form of a limited number of categories. The results of this regression model indicate the probability of belonging to an attitude type compared with a comparison group (see, for example, Backhaus et al., 2018, Chapter 5). The coefficients of the explanatory (categorical) variables provide a simplified indication of how the probability changes if the respondents have a certain characteristic (for example "male"), specifically relative to a reference category (here "female"). Therefore, a hypothetical interpretation could be: "In comparison with women, men are more likely to be stable opponents than stable supporters." In the analysis, the reference category "female" was selected for the analysis. Age was divided into five groups, with the youngest age group (18-29) as the reference category. The level of formal education was separated into three categories, with the lowest level of education as the reference category. With regard to party preference, the SPD was selected as the reference category because it is the largest parliamentary group and contains the German Federal Chancellor after the most recent Bundestag elections (2021). The detailed results of this analysis are documented in Figure 15 in Section 1.4.2 of the online appendix.

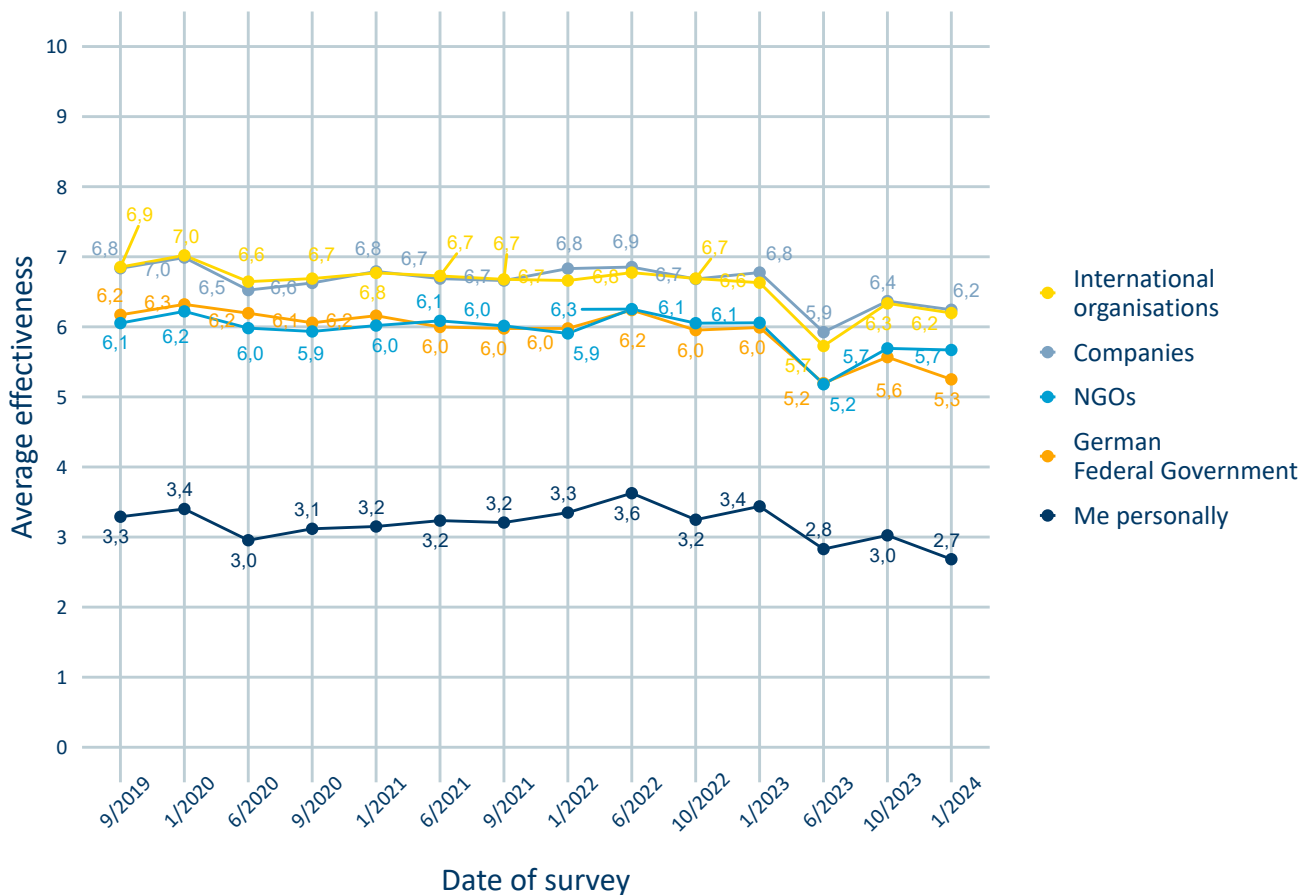
and thus does not drive individual behaviour, positive attitudes towards DC might not be reflected in active engagement for the majority of the population (see also Section 3.7).

Attitude strength can be an important starting point for future debates about the fluctuation of attitudes towards DC; here, particular attention should be given to the population's information environment and beliefs relating to the topic of DC. In this context, it remains unclear how information about DC reaches the wider population and what kind of information can change, but also stabilise their attitude towards it. For example, the question emerges as to whether strong beliefs on the topic of DC can arise as a result of external influences or ultimately (have to) arise from the people themselves.

3.5 How do the respondents rate their self-efficacy and how effective do they consider other development policy actors to be?

Against the backdrop of the 2030 Agenda and its 17 SDGs, another important indicator concerning engagement with development policy and sustainable development is the German population's sense of being able to achieve something themselves. This feeling, which is referred to in psychology as self-efficacy (see Bandura, 1982), has a considerable influence on development policy engagement (Schneider and Gleser, 2018; Schneider et al., 2022). Therefore, the DEL surveys ask both about the respondents' perceived self-efficacy in the area of development policy and about the effectiveness that is attributed to various development policy actors in combating global poverty.

Self-efficacy in the area of development policy is still low in the German population and is even on the decline. In the most recent survey in January 2024, the average was 2.7 (on a scale from 0 to 10; see Figure 16). This is the lowest observed value of the whole of the period under investigation; since June 2022, the point in time with the highest average self-efficacy (3.6), the self-efficacy rating has been falling with slight fluctuations.

Figure 16 Effectiveness rating of various actors in development policy

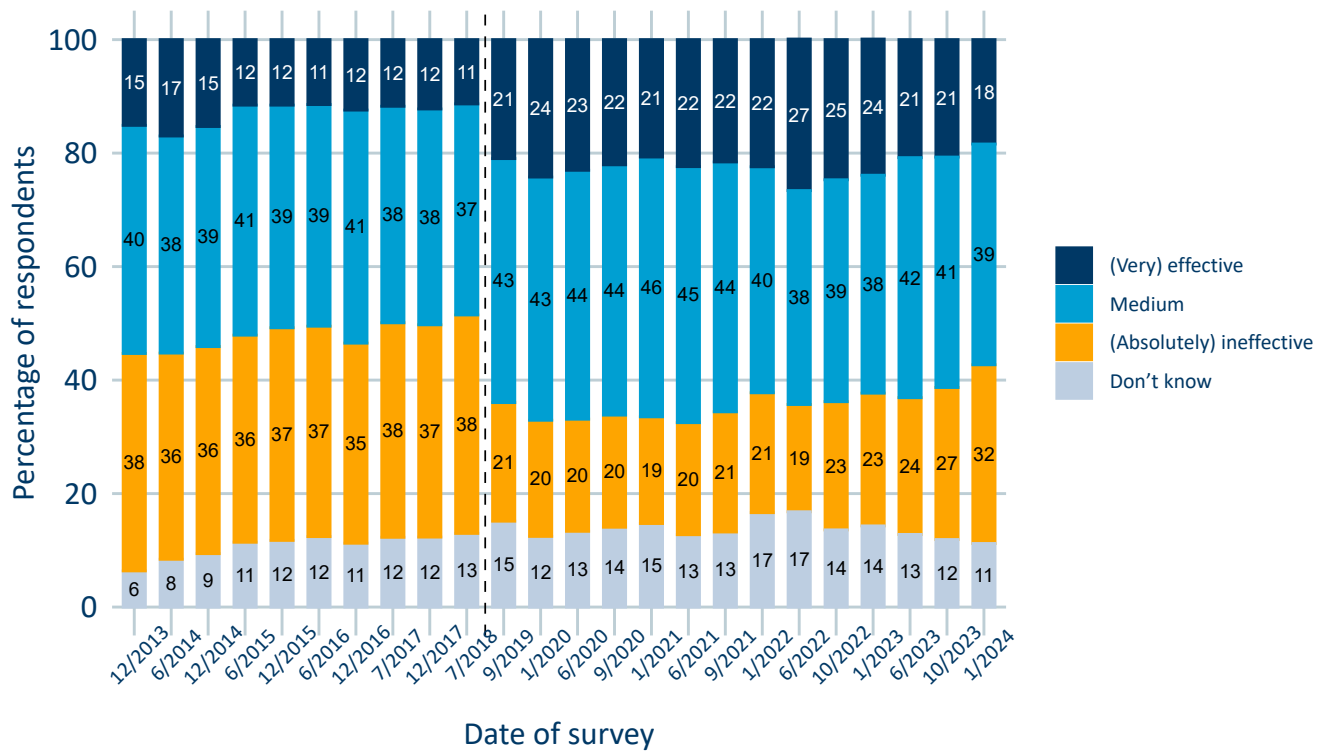
Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEL tracker and DEL panel. The figure shows mean values. The question was: “How much of a difference, if any, do you think each of the following can make to reducing poverty in poor countries?” Response scale: from 0 = “can’t make any difference at all” to 10 = “can make a great deal of difference”. “5” represents the centre of the scale.

A much stronger influence is ascribed to the other actors that the survey asks about; companies and international organisations are given the highest score with an average ascribed effectiveness of 6.2 each on a scale from 0 to 10. NGOs and the German Federal Government have a slightly lower average score (5.7 and 5.3 respectively) Since January 2023, a decrease followed by a slight increase in the ascribed effectiveness has been observed for these actors. However, the level from before January 2023 has not been reached again. The decline both in the respondents’ self-efficacy rating and in the effectiveness ascribed to the various actors could again be attributed to the political situation during the surveys as discussed in the introduction.

3.6 How effective do respondents rate German DC?

The estimated effectiveness of German development cooperation has also been falling steadily in the survey waves since January 2022 (after a slight rise in June 2022).²⁷ As Figure 17 shows, the group that rates DC as “(absolutely) ineffective” has grown from around 19 percent in June 2022 to 32 percent in January 2024 (+13 percentage points), whereas the group that gives the assessment “(very) effective” has fallen from 27 to 18 percent (-9 percentage points).

²⁷ The DEL tracker of January 2022 was the last DEL survey wave that was included in the Opinion Monitor 2022 (see Schneider et al., 2022, Chapter 2).

Figure 17 Assessment of the effectiveness of development cooperation (2013–2024)

Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: AAT panel until 7/2018 and DEL tracker and DEL panel from 2019 to 2024. N AAT panel ≈ 6,000, N DEL tracker ≈ 1,000, N DEL panel ≈ 6,000. The DEL tracker surveys take place in January and June, the panel surveys in September/October. Weighted data. The question was: “In your opinion, how effective is the government’s financial support of development cooperation on the whole? Please use a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 = ‘absolutely ineffective’ and 10 = ‘very effective’”. The vertical dotted line marks the transition from AAT to DEL.²⁸

The increasing scepticism regarding the effectiveness of DC since 2022 corresponds to the observed decrease in support for DC. The global political situation, the economic development in Germany and the public debate on development policy might also play a role in this trend. Even though the topic of “the effectiveness of DC” was already a controversial issue and relevant to public debate in the past, criticism of DC in winter 2023/24 also addressed its effectiveness (e.g. Buchsteiner, 2023).

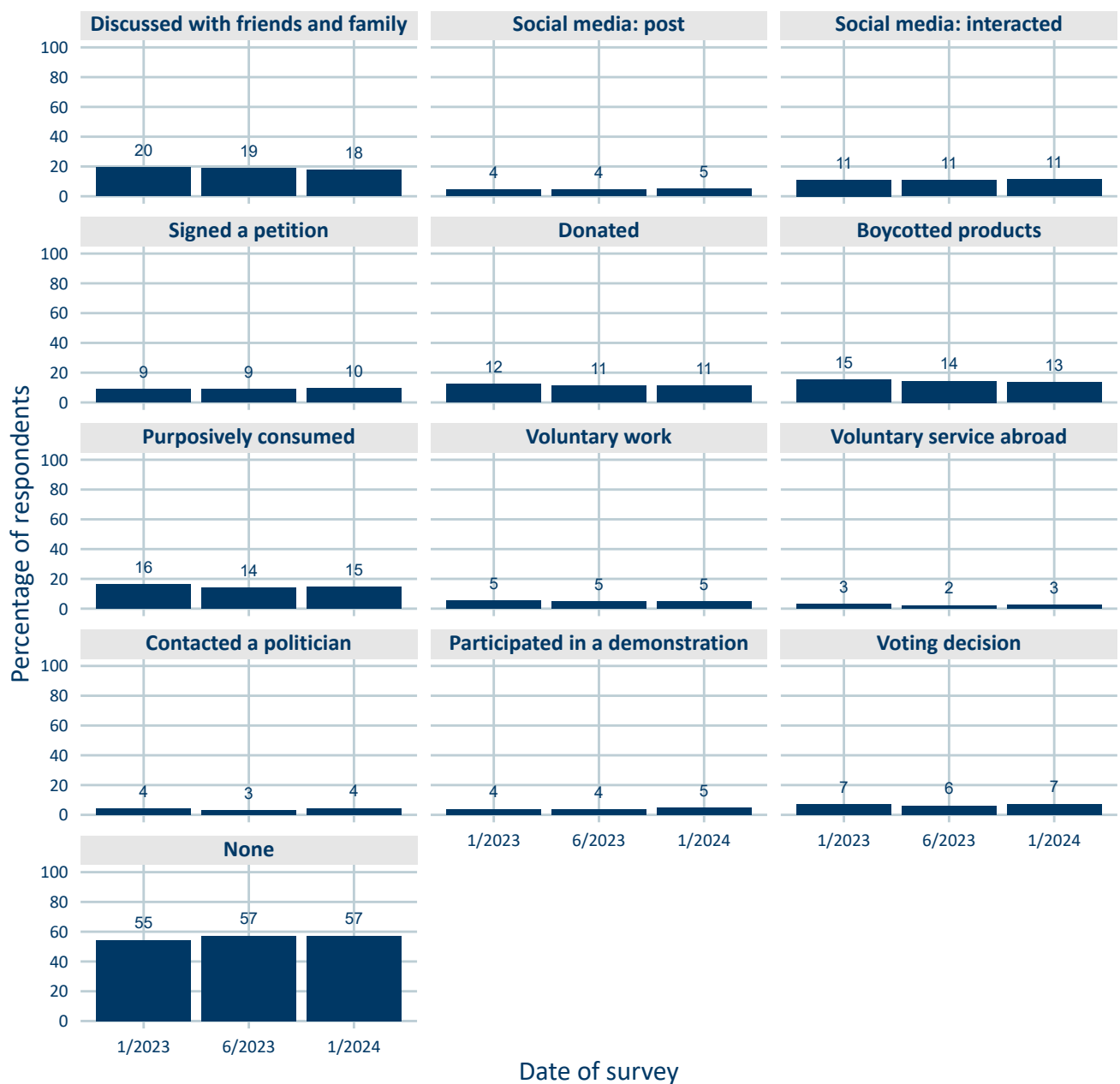
3.7 How do respondents engage in development policy?

Alongside public support for development policy, development policy actors are interested in getting the citizens to engage in development policy objectives and organisations on a personal level. Therefore, the BMZ has composed its own strategy for promoting civic engagement in development policy (BMZ, 2023b). Civil society organisations, too, promote engagement

²⁸ Due to a fundamental change in the structure of the questionnaire, a question-order effect (Oldendick, 2008; Schuman and Presser, 1996) must be assumed. The basic idea is that preliminary questions can activate assessment criteria, which are then used when answering the subsequent question (see the discussion on question-order effects in the Opinion Monitor for Development Policy 2022 (Schneider et al., 2022, Chapter 2)). In the present case, the question-order effect probably leads to the effectiveness of DC being assessed more positively on average in the DEL surveys than in the AAT surveys.

and rely on it in their advocacy work, their fund-raising and frequently also in their project work. Federal states and local communities also support (decentralised) engagement with development policy. Accordingly, development policy actors need a differentiated picture of how the German population engages in development policy and how uptake changes over time.

Figure 18 Development engagement over the course of time



Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEval tracking, carried out by Respondi/Bilendi in January 2023, July 2023 and January 2024. N for each survey ≈ 2,000. The question was: "In the last 12 months, have you taken action to support people in developing countries?" The respondents could choose any number of forms of engagement.

A new, more differentiated set of questions was developed for the Opinion Monitor 2024 to record the German population's development engagement. In comparison with the Opinion Monitor for Development Policy 2022 (Schneider et al., 2022, Chapter 3), this set of questions allows a more comprehensive view of development engagement – especially in the area of non-monetary engagement (e.g. activities on social media and in development policy organisations). In addition, the respondents are asked directly about their activities to support people in countries in the Global South. Figure 18 presents the results of the three available surveys to date.

The majority of respondents say that they have not engaged in development policy in the last 12 months. This share is 55 to 57 percent in the three available survey waves. This is consistent with the analyses in the Opinion Monitor 2022 (Schneider et al., 2022, Chapter 3.4) and is in line with the finding from Section 3.4 of this report that a large proportion of the respondents have unstable attitudes, which are consequently not reflected in concrete behaviour and development engagement.

Discussing topics from the area of development policy, DC and global poverty with friends and family is the most frequently mentioned form of engagement (18 to 20% of respondents). Other common forms of engagement are donations, consumption-related activities (consumption and boycotting decisions) and activities on social media. Consumption decisions were mentioned by 13 to 16 percent of respondents, donations and activities on social media by 11 to 12 percent. More complicated forms of engagement such as volunteering at development policy organisations and volunteer work abroad hardly received any mentions.²⁹ The minor changes across the three survey waves suggest that there is no relationship between the political developments of 2023 and the use of individual forms of development engagement.

3.8 Conclusion: German development policy is at a crossroads

The results of this chapter show that German public opinion regarding development policy is changing since the beginning of 2022. This is reflected above all in the decline in general support for DC in the German population and the dwindling public support for the current development cooperation/ODA expenditure of the German Federal Government. The growing doubts about the effectiveness of development cooperation and a decline in support for a moral obligation towards the countries of the Global South also suggest that the population is becoming more reticent with respect to Germany's development engagement. Other surveys and studies also show such a change in public opinion.³⁰ These changes come at a time when German foreign and development policy is facing major challenges (e.g. Ukraine, the situation in the Middle East, global tensions between the West on the one hand and China and Russia, but also states in the Global South on the other), while the government is also under pressure because of domestic policy developments. In this context, development policy is also receiving greater attention, as the analysis on the platform Twitter/X shows. Amid these challenges, the German Federal Government announced that it will commit to a feminist foreign and development policy in the future.

Against this backdrop, the previous broad consensus in the German population in favour of development cooperation appears to be eroding, although it still exists. The data indicates that the population is increasingly questioning where tax revenues are going in light of a strained budgetary situation and financial burdens for private households as well as public criticism for specific DC/ODA expenditure – for example the funding of interventions in Afghanistan or Gaza as well as the discussion in the media about interventions relating to climate

²⁹ The lower shares on average in comparison with the DEL data (see Schneider et al., 2022, Section 3.1) might be partly because the question used here asked directly about supporting people in countries in the Global South, whereas the DEL questionnaire talks more generally about poverty and development in the world.

³⁰ For example, the Eurobarometer survey in May/June 2023 for Germany indicated that sections of the population are seeing it less and less as the task of Germany and the EU to combat poverty in countries in the Global South, and that the EU's effectiveness in promoting sustainable development in the Global South is perceived as being lower (Eurobarometer, 2023). The two surveys in the study that the research institute pollytix conducted for the BMZ in July and November 2023 also showed that public support for the current development cooperation/ODA expenditure is declining, and that the weighting given to national interests is increasing within the population (Faltas et al., 2024).

change adaptation in Peru. So far, DC is still supported, even though attitudes towards it can be classified as unstable in large parts of the German population and the support is consequently on shaky ground. Therefore, whether DC takes place is not (yet) in question, but what, how and where it takes place are (see Faust, 2024). This is evident, for example, in the dwindling persuasiveness of motives for DC, which affect the narrative of a “DC to overcome global challenges”. In conjunction with the population’s scepticism regarding the achievement of the objectives of the 2030 Agenda and the possibility of being able to make a personal contribution to these (see Schneider et al., 2024), this should be seen as a warning signal for development policy actors. The implications in Chapter 5 go into more detail about what dealing with these challenges could look like.

4.

DEVELOPMENT POLICY
ATTITUDES IN THE CONTEXT
OF SECURITY POLICY
CHALLENGES AND FEMINIST
DEVELOPMENT POLICY

4.1 Overview of the chapter

The complex challenges of our time also make it necessary to understand the attitudes of the German population towards development policy in the context of foreign and security policy and against the backdrop of the guiding principle of a feminist development policy. Therefore, not only do general attitudes towards development policy have to be continuously recorded (see Chapter 3); they also have to be considered in more detail in the context of (1) public perceptions and attitudes towards foreign and security policy in general, (2) the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine and other global crises and conflicts, and (3) the strategic guiding principle of feminist development policy. Against this backdrop, the subsequent in-depth section examines the following questions:

What overarching attitudes towards foreign and security policy does the German population have, and how do these relate to specific attitudes towards development policy?

Section 4.2 begins by addressing the question of what the German population's general attitudes towards foreign and security policy are, how these attitudes differ according to political orientation and what the relationship is between these attitudes and attitudes towards DC. These analyses give a better understanding of what approach the population supports in international politics, irrespective of current issues, and what role development policy or DC plays in this. Together with the results of the chapter on monitoring (see Chapter 3), these analyses serve as a backdrop for contextualizing the subsequent investigations.

How do attitudes towards development policy behave in the context of the war against Ukraine and other international crises and economic developments?

In Section 4.3, the focus is on attitudes towards development policy in the context of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine and general challenges of security policy. These also influence development policy. Conversely, development policy must also be considered in a comprehensive security policy (see Federal Foreign Office, 2023b). In both cases, the attitudes of the German population play an important role. In a first step, a descriptive study to ascertain the German population's attitude

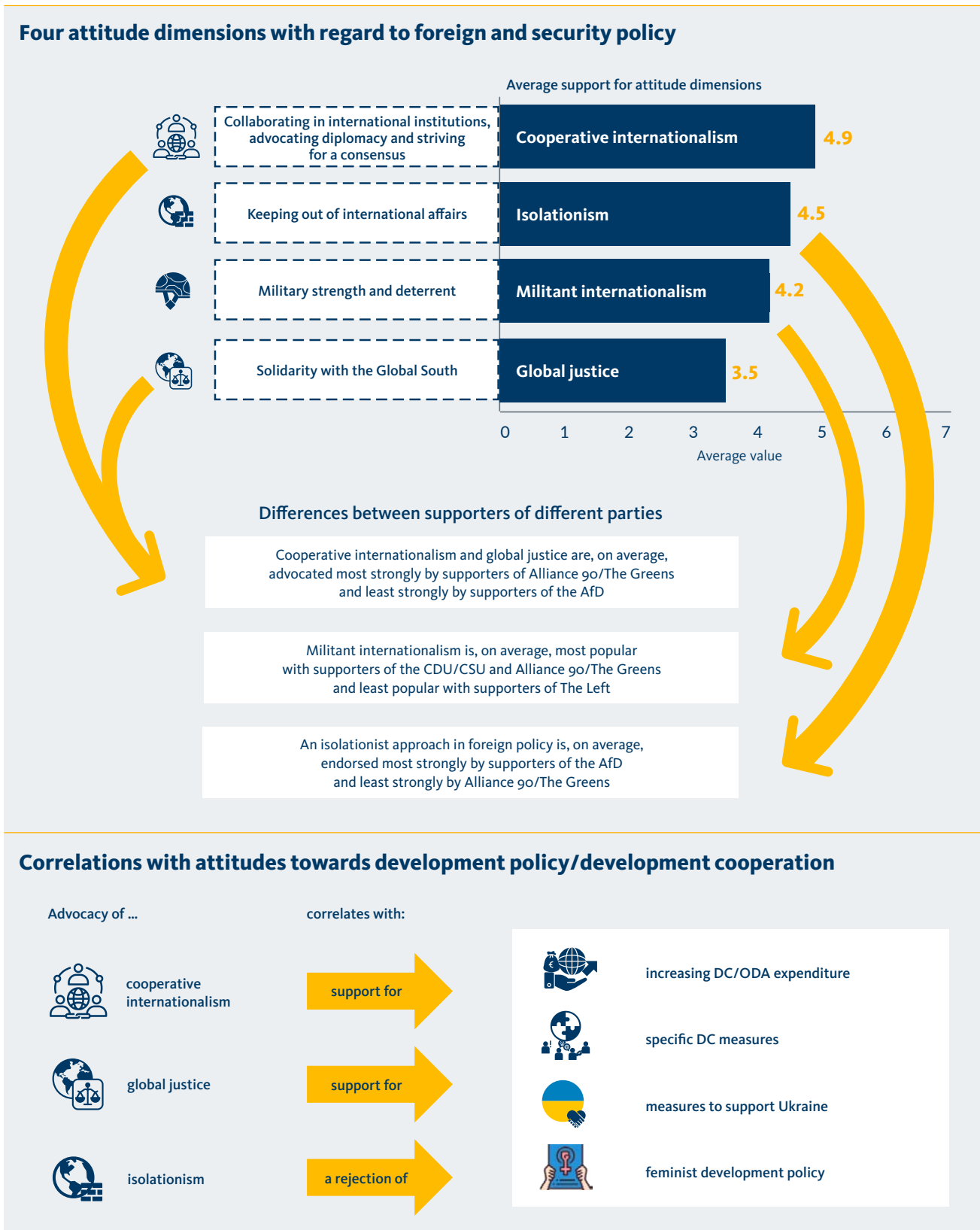
towards various supporting measures of Ukraine and towards measures in the context of general security policy challenges is conducted. In a second step, the impact that the perception of the economic situation and information about partner countries have on support for DC are experimentally examined. The assumption is that support for DC declines as the population's concerns about their own personal economic situation and the national economic situation increase. Finally, in a third step, a conjoint experiment is used to analyse the specific preferences of the citizens with regard to partner countries, taking national self-interest and geopolitical factors into account.

How is a feminist development policy perceived and supported, even in the context of global challenges?

Section 4.4 addresses the opinions and attitudes towards feminist development policy. Since the "traffic light coalition" consisting of the SPD, the Greens and the FDP took office in December 2021, German development policy has followed this guiding principle and aims to strengthen the rights, representation and resources of women, girls and marginalised population groups in the countries of the Global South through development cooperation (BMZ, 2023a). With the term "feminism" and demands for equal rights and equal treatment, feminist development policy provides points of attack for (right-wing) populist actors (for the relationship between populism and feminism, see, for example, Abi-Hassan, 2017; Kantola and Lombardo, 2019). Therefore, the attitudes of the German population are an important aspect here too. Specifically, the following questions are studied: what the population understands by feminist development policy, its contents and objectives, whether they support these, how stable the attitudes towards feminist development policy are, and to what extent the perception of and support for feminist development policy and its contents are changing in the context of the current global challenges.

Taken together, the results of this in-depth section are supposed to help development policy actors to communicate with the population in an evidence-based way in times of domestic and foreign policy challenges, with regard to security policy challenges and the guiding principle of a feminist development policy, and to critically reflect on their own strategies in light of the attitudes of the German population.

4.2 Attitudes towards development policy in the context of attitudes towards foreign and security policy



Especially in times of multiple global crises, the various areas of foreign and security policy – development policy, defence and security policy, trade policy and diplomacy – must be organized coherently, and public opinion must also be examined across the different areas. It is not sufficient to look at public opinion regarding development policy in isolation. On the contrary, a more comprehensive picture of attitudes towards foreign and security policy, and the positioning of attitudes towards development policy within this picture are helpful for development policy actors.

An examination of the general attitudes towards foreign and security policy allows to draw conclusions about which specific foreign policy measures are endorsed by the population or sections of the population and which are not. As a result, political tensions can be detected and the room for manoeuvre defined. This particularly applies in view of the assumption that general attitudes towards foreign policy are more stable than attitudes towards daily political decisions (e.g. Mader and Schoen, 2023).

Therefore, the in-depth section begins by focusing on general attitudes towards German foreign and security policy. The key questions for the following analyses are:

1. What are the general attitudes of the German population towards foreign and security policy?
2. What differences can be found in the German population's attitudes towards foreign security policy along the political spectrum?
3. What relationships exist between attitudes towards foreign and security policy and attitudes towards development policy?

To draw a detailed picture of attitudes towards foreign policy, the model created by Gravelle et al. (2017) was used during the data collection. The authors of this model condense the existing academic literature on attitudes towards foreign and

security policy (e.g. Holsti and Rosenau, 1990; Hurwitz and Peffley, 1987; Wittkopf, 1986) and supplement the traditional areas of “international cooperation” and “military might” with isolationist attitudes and questions of global justice, solidarity and redistribution. Specifically, the model consists of the four dimensions “cooperative internationalism”, “isolationism”, “militant internationalism” and “global justice”. As every dimension is captured over several items, the model makes it possible to ascertain attitudes more precisely than would be the case if they were captured by single items (see, for example, Ansolabehere et al., 2008).³¹ In terms of their content, the four dimensions are characterised as follows (the exact phrasing of the items is documented in Table 15 in Section 2.1.1 of the online appendix):

1. **Cooperative internationalism** represents support for international cooperation (especially in international organisations such as the United Nations), diplomacy and striving for consensus and peace (example item: “Germany should work more through international organisations like the United Nations”).
2. **Isolationism** encompasses the desire for one's own state to keep out of international affairs – especially when there is a fear that involvement will lead to disadvantages for the population at home (example item: “Germany needs to simply mind its own business when it comes to international affairs.”).
3. **Militant internationalism** describes the premise that the state should possess or maintain military might and should take military action, including abroad, in the event of conflicts (example item: “Germany needs a strong military to be effective in international relations”).
4. **Global justice** addresses how strong the population's support is for the global redistribution of financial resources to combat poverty. It has points of contact with the concept of global solidarity and corresponds to general support for development cooperation (example item: “Germany should spend more money on development aid”).

³¹ The first step in calculating the attitude dimensions was to use an exploratory structural equation model (ESEM) to check whether the attitude structure corresponded to the results found by Gravelle et al. (2017). It did. In order to then calculate the aggregate index, the associated items were then added to a dimension and scaled to a value range from 1 to 7. Higher values mean stronger support for the respective attitude dimension. The analysis is documented in Section 2.1.2 of the online appendix.

4.2.1 Respondents showed most support for the concepts of cooperative internationalism and isolationism and least for the concept of global justice

In the full sample, cooperative internationalism receives the greatest support from respondents. The average value of around 4.9 on a scale from 1 to 7 is clearly above the scale centre of 4. Consequently, international cooperation is also advocated in times of global crises. This high level of support corresponds to Germany's self-image as a civil power that dedicates itself to a rule-based international order and multilateralism and is cautious about using military resources (see, for example, Maull, 2015). Slight differences can be seen along party identification lines (Figure 19); overall, however, sympathisers of all parties as well as people without a preferred party advocate a cooperative approach in international politics. Only supporters of the AfD deviate substantially from this pattern and express a neutral attitude.

With an average value of 4.5, isolationism also meets with a high level of support from respondents. This finding points towards a possible area of tension between public opinion and outward-looking measures of the German Federal Government – for example the feminist orientation of foreign and development policy (Federal Foreign Office, 2023a; BMZ, 2023a). Supporters of the AfD most strongly endorse an isolationist course in foreign and security policy; the lowest level of support can be found among supporters of Alliance 90/The Greens. Supporters of the other parties range between those two poles.

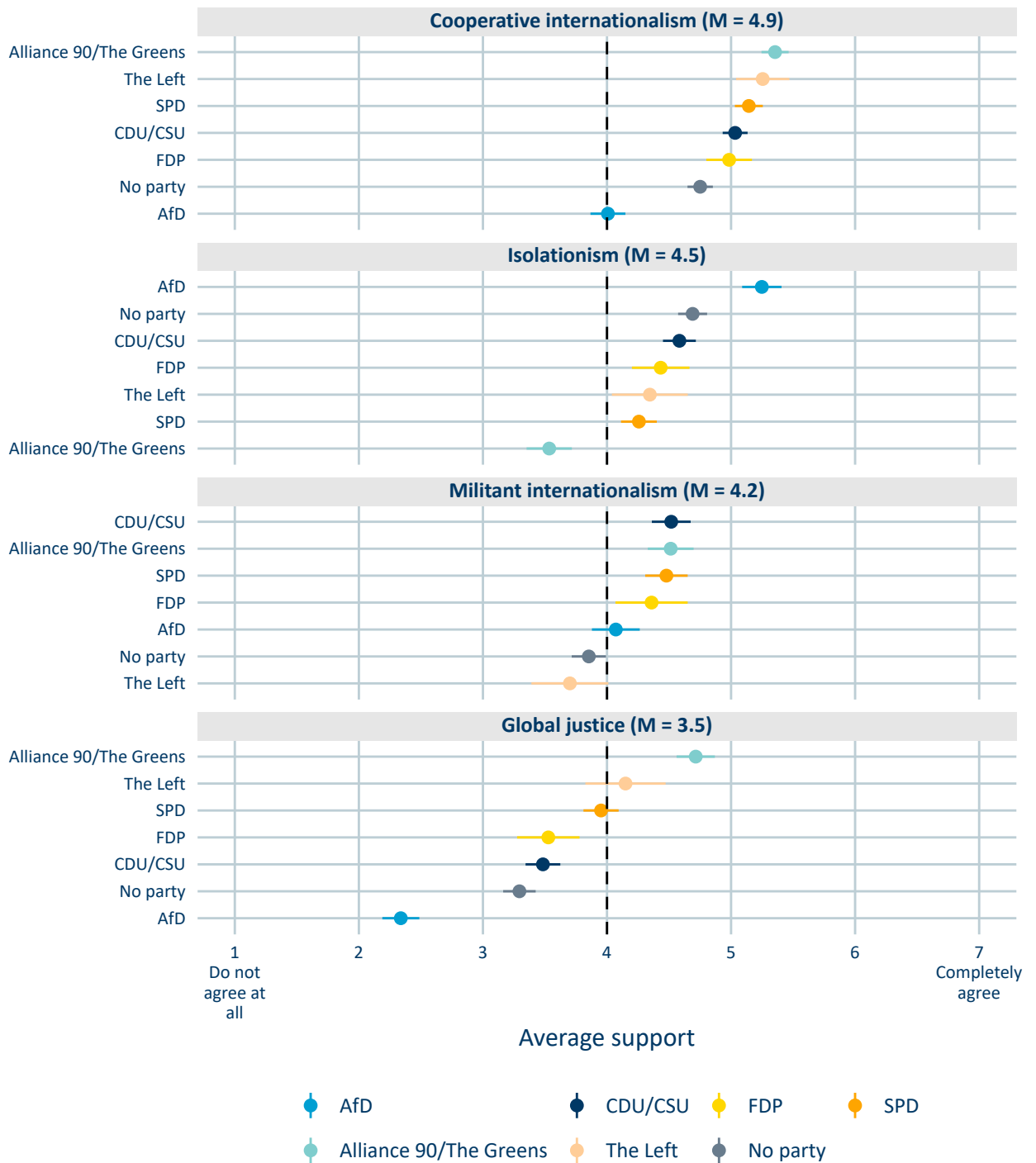
Respondents also have a slightly positive attitude towards militant internationalism, with an average value of 4.2. This may come as a surprise in view of Germany's caution with regard to military measures, but could also be related to the altered security situation as a result of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine.³² Strikingly, besides sympathisers of the CDU/CSU, it is supporters of the Greens who most strongly endorse this approach to foreign and security policy.

This is surprising because the party is closely associated with the peace movement (e.g. Mende, 2011). However, the differences between the Green party, the other parties in the traffic light coalition and the CDU/CSU are small. This is probably because of the consensus between these parties with respect to supporting Ukraine and the importance of the capacity for military action that has arisen from the Russian war of aggression. The lowest level of support is expressed by sympathisers of The Left, a party that is generally critical of military action.

Global justice – the dimension that conceptually roughly corresponds to endorsement of DC – receives the lowest level of support from the population, with an average value of 3.5. Here, the average value is clearly below the centre of the scale (4). This is indicative of a rather negative position across all respondents. For development policy actors, this finding means that their policy area has a hard time competing with other areas of action in foreign and security policy in public opinion. However, the differences along the lines of political preferences that are familiar from analyses of support for DC can also be seen here (e.g. Schneider and Gleser, 2018; Schneider et al., 2022): a high level of support among supporters of Alliance 90/The Greens and The Left, an average level of support among supporters of the SPD, lower support among those of the CDU/CSU and FDP and very little support among AfD-sympathisers (Figure 19, graph below).

³² However, Mader and Schoen (2023) report that general foreign policy orientations were relatively stable before and after the Ukraine war began.

Figure 19 Attitude towards foreign and security policy by party identification



Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEval survey carried out by ResponDi/Bilendi in June/July 2023 (N = 2,050). M = average support of the full sample. The figure shows the mean values with 95% confidence intervals. The vertical dotted line represents the centre point of the calculated approval index and expresses a neutral attitude towards the respective attitude dimension. For the background to the attitude dimensions, see Gravelle et al. (2017). The items and analyses used for the dimensions are documented in Table 15 and 16 of Section 2.1 of the online appendix.

4.2.2 Respondents who advocate cooperative and militant internationalism also support various development interventions more strongly

General attitudes towards foreign and security policy allow to make predictions about more specific attitudes towards development policy/DC. Firstly, there are – as Figure 20 shows – medium to strong positive correlations between advocacy of global justice and support for DC and humanitarian aid measures, support for the funding of economic and social development and the development of the rule of law in Ukraine, and support for a feminist development policy. To put it a different way: respondents who advocate global justice and redistribution also declare themselves in favour of specific DC measures. The same pattern also applies to cooperative internationalism – the greater the support for this general dimension of foreign and security policy, the greater the support for the various specific development measures. If, however, respondents advocate an isolationist approach, they also show less support for the various development measures. There is a weak positive relationship between militant internationalism and the attitude towards DC. Therefore, advocating military might and supporting development interventions are not mutually exclusive, but are not necessarily linked.³³

To sum up, the results show that large sections of the respondents across almost the entire political spectrum advocate international cooperation (i.e. cooperative internationalism) and military might (militant internationalism); the simultaneously high level of support for an isolationist foreign policy, the differences in the support for the dimension of global justice and the clearly divergent attitude among AfD sympathisers illustrate current and possible future areas of tension.

The empirical findings reflect the political positions in more recent debates about foreign, security and development policy. These include the discussion about Germany's support for Ukraine since February 2022 and the controversial public discussion of development policy in winter 2023/2024. The latter took place not only between the government and the opposition, but also within the governing coalition. On the one hand, for German foreign, security and development policy, the findings relating to cooperative and militant internationalism imply a general level of public support, for instance with regard to Ukraine policy, the role of the armed forces and cooperation with international organisations. On the other hand, the data relating to development policy in general and also with respect to specific development interventions points towards a greater spread of attitudes in the German population, and not just between sympathisers of the governing parties and those of the opposition parties, but also between supporters of the three coalition parties. Adding to this is the high level of support for an isolationist foreign policy across almost the entire political spectrum and the special position of AfD supporters; the latter are particularly in favour of an isolationist approach to foreign and security policy and are also the most reticent in the dimensions of “cooperative internationalism” and “global justice”. As international conflicts are unlikely to calm down in the foreseeable future and foreign, security and development policy topics require interdepartmental handling and are likely to continue to experience a high level of public attention, such tensions could be exacerbated in the future. This particularly applies in view of the numerous elections that are coming up in 2024 and 2025 and the associated requirement for the parties to convey their political positions to the electorate.³⁴

³³ Further correlation analyses show that a high level of support for cooperative internationalism goes hand in hand with a high level of support for global justice (Pearson's $r = 0.48$) and militant internationalism (Pearson's $r = 0.32$). This illustrates the close relationship between areas of action in foreign policy in the eyes of the population. Only isolationism deviates from this pattern. Respondents who advocate Germany keeping out of international affairs and only watching out for its own interests tend to reject global justice ($r = -0.46$). However, there is no correlation with cooperative internationalism and militant internationalism ($r = 0.08$ or 0.11). This illustrates the special position occupied by isolationist attitudes.

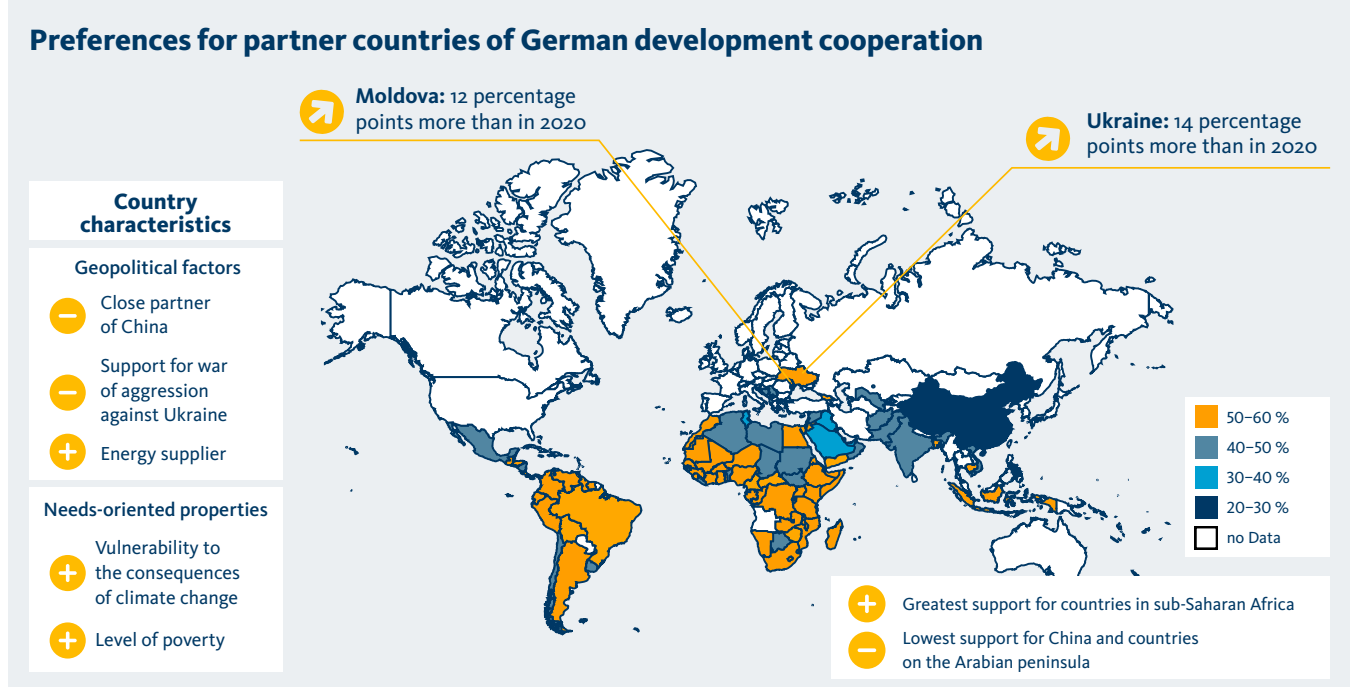
³⁴ At this point, it is important to bear in mind that the data was collected both before the attack on Israel by Hamas in October 2023 and before the Federal Constitutional Court ruling on the federal budget and the farmers' protests in January 2024. This might have had an effect on various attitudes (see also the changes in attitudes in Chapter 3).

Figure 20 Relationship between attitudes towards foreign and security policy and attitudes towards development cooperation



Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEval survey carried out by ResponDi/Bilendi in June/July 2023. N = 2,050. The figure shows Pearson's correlation coefficient (r). A value of 1 means a perfect positive relationship; a value of -1 a perfect negative relationship. The value 0 means that there is no relationship.

4.3 Attitudes towards development cooperation in the context of security policy and economic challenges



Germany and the world are facing a large number of foreign and security policy crises, and this poses major challenges for DC. Around the world, more than 200 armed conflicts and wars are in progress, the most prominent examples of which are Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and the conflict in Israel and Gaza (HIIK, 2023). There are also numerous geopolitical tensions, for example between the USA and China. Other regional powers with divergent interests, such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Iran or Turkey, as well as other countries in the Global South, have also gradually played a more confident role in international politics. In addition, the trend towards autocratisation, which has been observed for years now, is continuing. For example, more than 70 percent of the world's population lived in autocracies in 2023 – that is 21 percentage points more than in 2013 (Nord et al., 2024). All these tensions and conflicts make it more difficult to overcome global challenges such as combating climate change, containing global pandemics or achieving the SDGs (United Nations, 2023a). German DC and its partners are facing the challenge of navigating and functioning in the context of international crises and the associated costs (Blumenau, 2022; Schulze, 2023).

The Russian attack on Ukraine in February 2022 was a watershed moment for Germany, which is reflected both in politics and in public opinion. For the first time in the recent past, a country in Europe was attacked by another country. The German Federal Government responded, for example, with a special fund of 100 billion euros for the Bundeswehr, which means that Germany is spending at least 2 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP) on defence for the first time since the end of the Cold War (SIPRI, 2024). In this context, Federal Chancellor Olaf Scholz coined the term "*Zeitenwende*" (watershed era) (German Federal Government, 2022). This watershed is also noticeable in German public perception. Therefore, increased defence expenditure and deliveries of arms are receiving more popular support than they have for a long time (Graf, 2022, 2024). The German population regards the war against Ukraine as by far the greatest foreign policy challenge facing Germany (Körber Foundation, 2023), and wars, conflicts and terrorism are (among) the biggest concern for the German population, even when compared to domestic policy challenges (Morini, 2023a, 2023b, 2023c).

Development policy cannot be looked at and conceived separately from foreign and security policy. The challenges described above are so multifaceted and complex that an integrated policy approach is needed to overcome them. For example, the understanding of the concept of security has long been more differentiated than previously, and development cooperation is regarded as an integrated part of security policy, which is reflected in the National Security Strategy published by the German Federal Government in 2023, among other things (Federal Foreign Office, 2023b; Leininger and Hornidge, 2024; Schulze et al., 2023, 2024).

DC is at risk of restrictions caused by the current economic and financial situation. The repercussions of the Covid-19 pandemic, the interruption of supply chains caused by the war against Ukraine and the sanctions policy resulting from the war have been a persistent burden on the global economy in recent years. Like other export-oriented countries, Germany is particularly affected by this (ifo, 2022), and this is noticeable in the strain on the government budget and in financial losses for many citizens. At the beginning of 2024, in the wake of the budget freeze and protests by large numbers of farmers, it became clear that DC is coming under pressure and being called into question as a result of conflicts over the distribution of financial resources.

Against this backdrop, the following four questions are examined in this section:

1. What kind of German engagement in international crises and emergency situations does the population support in general and specifically for Ukraine?
2. Is there a relationship between the assessment of the economic situation and support for DC?
3. Are attitudes towards DC resilient in the face of economic challenges and financial burdens and the consequences of the war against Ukraine and other current wars?
4. What kinds of countries does the German population prefer as partner countries for DC, and are strategic and geopolitical factors important here?

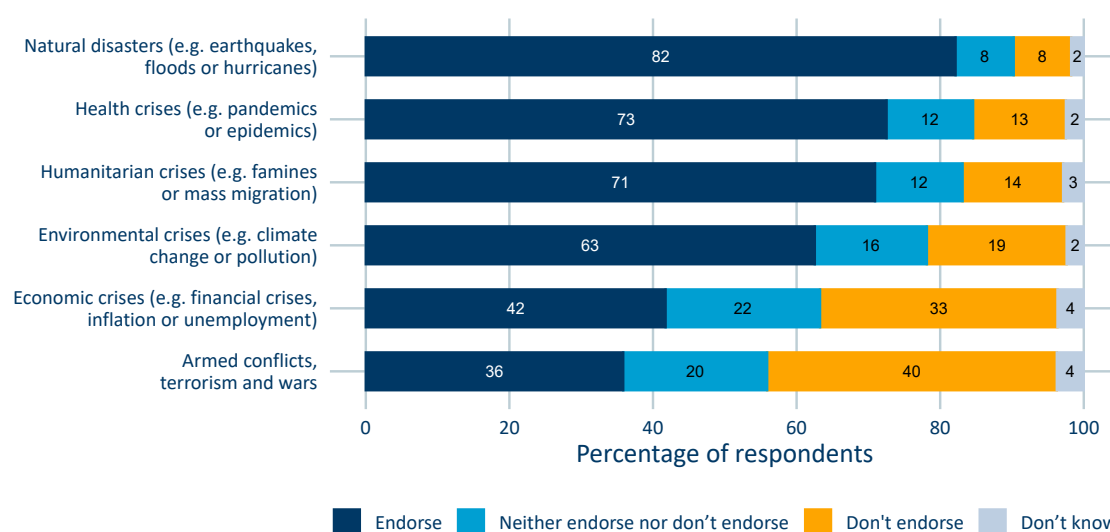
4.3.1 How should Germany engage in international crises and emergency situations?

Germany is involved in many countries and a lot of different emergency situations around the world. As part of an integrated security concept, DC is an important element of this. As one of the biggest OECD donor states, Germany is active in 65 countries as a DC partner (BMZ, 2020; OECD, 2023). Furthermore, Germany provides humanitarian aid to numerous countries facing acute emergency situations such as earthquakes, tsunamis or floods. The country's military is also active on the world stage and is currently participating in 18 UN, NATO and EU operations abroad (Bundeswehr, 2024). Where and in what form an engagement is possible must be carefully weighed up against the backdrop of the numerous and complex emergency situations.

Respondents support Germany's international engagement first and foremost in the case of natural disasters, health crises and humanitarian crises. In the event of

economic crises and armed conflicts, terrorism and wars, an engagement is endorsed and rejected by equal shares of the population. When asked about different kinds of emergency situations in which Germany should get involved on an international level, the vast majority of respondents (82%) advocates an engagement in the case of natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods or hurricanes (see Figure 21). An engagement in health crises (73%), humanitarian crises (71%) and environmental crises (63%) is also endorsed by the majority. Only in the category of "armed conflicts, terrorism and wars" is German engagement rejected on average more than it is endorsed (40% versus 36%). This pattern suggests that the respondents support engagement in human-made crises such as armed conflicts and economic crises less than in emergency situations that are apparently influenced by force majeure (for the underlying mechanisms, see, for example, Zagefka et al., 2011).³⁵

Figure 21 Support for Germany's engagement in different crisis and emergency situations



Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEval survey, carried out by Respondi/Bilendi in July 2023. N = 2,050. The dependent variable is the question "In each case, please indicate to what extent you endorse Germany providing aid in the following crisis and emergency situations." The responses "rather endorse", "endorse" and "completely endorse" have been conflated into the category "endorse" and the responses "rather don't endorse", "don't endorse" and "don't endorse at all" into the category "don't endorse". The full wording of the question can be found in Table 15 in Section 2.1.1 of the online appendix.

³⁵ This should not ignore the fact that the number and intensity of particular natural disasters and other emergency situations that *apparently* stem from force majeure may be a direct consequence of human-made climate change.

Support for Ukraine and other countries facing acute crises

General support for Ukraine is high and, particularly concerning the topics “refugees” and “arms deliveries”, it is higher than for other crisis countries. When asked about different types of support for Ukraine, respondents were particularly in favour of humanitarian aid (with an average value of 5.6 on a scale from 1 to 7; see Figure 22 and also the results in Section 3.1.4). Humanitarian aid also receives the highest level of support in the question about acute crises in other countries (average value 5.5). On average, respondents endorse financial assistance with reconstruction and the funding of economic and social development and the development of the rule of law – both DC-related topics – to the same extent for Ukraine as for countries in the Global South that are experiencing acute crises.

A difference can be seen in the reception of refugees: here the respondents’ support is significantly higher, with an average value of 4.8, for refugees from Ukraine than for refugees from other countries faced with acute crises (average value 4.3). The respondents’ support for assistance for refugees who have fled to countries other than Germany is also slightly higher for people from Ukraine than for people from other countries (see, for example, de Coninck, 2023).

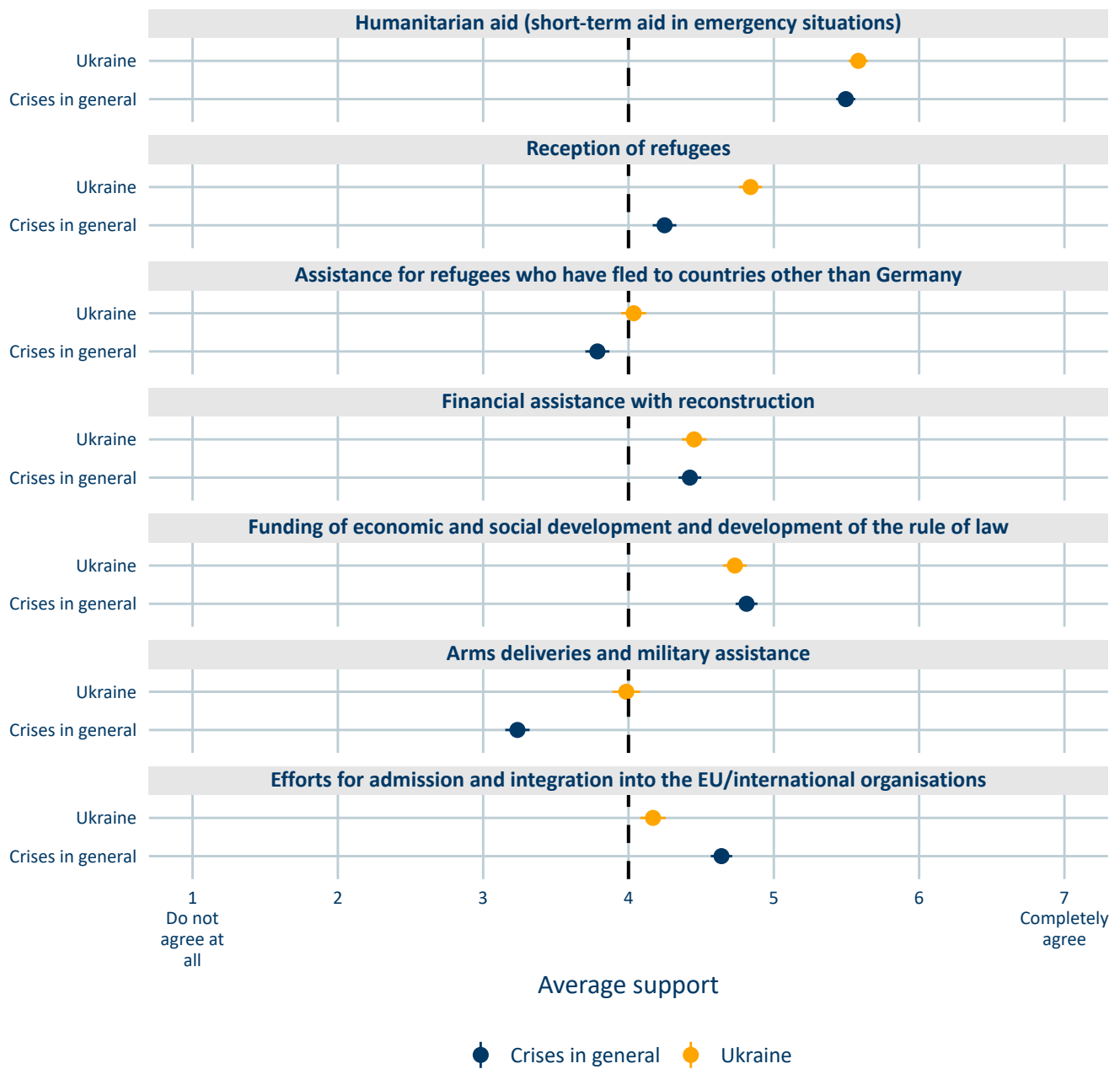
Respondents endorse arms deliveries to and military assistance for Ukraine more than for other partner countries in acute crises. For Ukraine, the average value given by respondents is right in the centre of the scale (4). Therefore, this kind of support is, on average, neither endorsed nor rejected. Overall, however, attitudes are spread more widely here than is the case with other kinds of support, which also reflects the polarised debate on this issue. For other countries in the Global South experiencing acute crises, the average support for arms deliveries and military assistance has a value of 3.2. This means that respondents, on average, tend to reject arms deliveries to and military assistance for such countries.

Respondents are cautious about admitting Ukraine into the EU. With an average value of 4.2, the assessment is only slightly positive. The respondents show more support for efforts to integrate other partner countries of German DC into international organisations, with an average value of 4.6.

Greater support for development cooperation goes hand in hand with greater support for Ukraine and other countries in crisis. The results of multiple regression analyses show that all seven recorded kinds of support have a positive correlation with general support for development cooperation – both for Ukraine and for other partner countries of German DC faced with acute crises. This means that respondents who support DC are also more likely, on average, to endorse support for countries in crisis.³⁶ This relationship is obvious for types of support that are based in the area of DC or humanitarian aid. However, it is also evident with regard to the reception of refugees as well as arms deliveries and military support. To this extent, these findings are consistent with the German population’s attitudes towards foreign and security policy (see Section 4.2) inasmuch as a strong link between the attitudes towards international cooperation, global justice and military might can also be observed there. A simultaneous endorsement of DC, diplomacy and multilateralism, but also military might, is therefore not necessarily mutually exclusive.

³⁶ See Table 23 and Table 24 in Section 2.2.2 of the online appendix for detailed results.

Figure 22 Approval of support for Ukraine and other countries experiencing acute crises



Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEval survey, carried out by ResponDi/Bilendi in July 2023. N = 2,050. The figure shows the mean values with 95% confidence intervals. The variables shown are the questions “In connection with the war against Ukraine, Germany is providing various kinds of support. Below, we will present some of the possible kinds of support for Ukraine. In each case, please indicate the extent to which you agree with these” (Ukraine) and “In the context of its international engagement, Germany is providing various kinds of support not only in Ukraine, but also in developing countries experiencing acute crises. Below, we will present some of the possible kinds of support for developing countries experiencing acute crises. In each case, please indicate the extent to which you agree with these.” (Crises in general). The full wording of the question can be found in Table 15 in Section 2.1.1 of the online appendix. The value “4” corresponds to the centre of the scale.

4.3.2 Economic crises and the German population's support for DC

The Russian war of aggression against Ukraine is having a negative impact both on the German state budget and on the financial situation of the citizens. While the state spends money on military, humanitarian and development measures, the citizens are affected by rising prices, for example for food and energy (Destatis, 2024).

This strained financial situation could lead to the population scrutinising government spending more closely and thus also to a decline in support for expenditure on DC. This is associated with real or perceived distribution conflicts, which may arise or be exacerbated in such crisis situations. From a (socio-) psychological perspective, thinking in terms of ingroups and outgroups is important in this context. This is a way of thinking that, in the present case, views the population of Germany (ingroup) in contrast with people in other countries (outgroup) (Mullen et al., 1992; Tajfel and Turner, 1979). The ingroup is preferred to the outgroup, especially in conflict situations or when resources are scarce – in other words: an aid situation becomes a competitive situation (see the so-called “intergroup threat theory”; Stephan et al., 2015). In line with this assumption, research on the European economic and financial crisis from 2010 onwards has shown, for example, that the population of the EU tends to advocate supporting the population of their own country in times of crisis, followed by the population of other EU states (Gerhards et al., 2020, p. 150-151). It is conceivable that, in similar crisis situations, the focus is placed more strongly on the interests of the ingroup, whereas the needs of people who are further away geographically – such as people in the Global South – receive less attention. DC as a policy area that is rather distant from everyday life could be particularly affected in this context, especially because the population does not recognise the economic benefits of DC (on support of DC in economic crises see Heinrich et al., 2016).

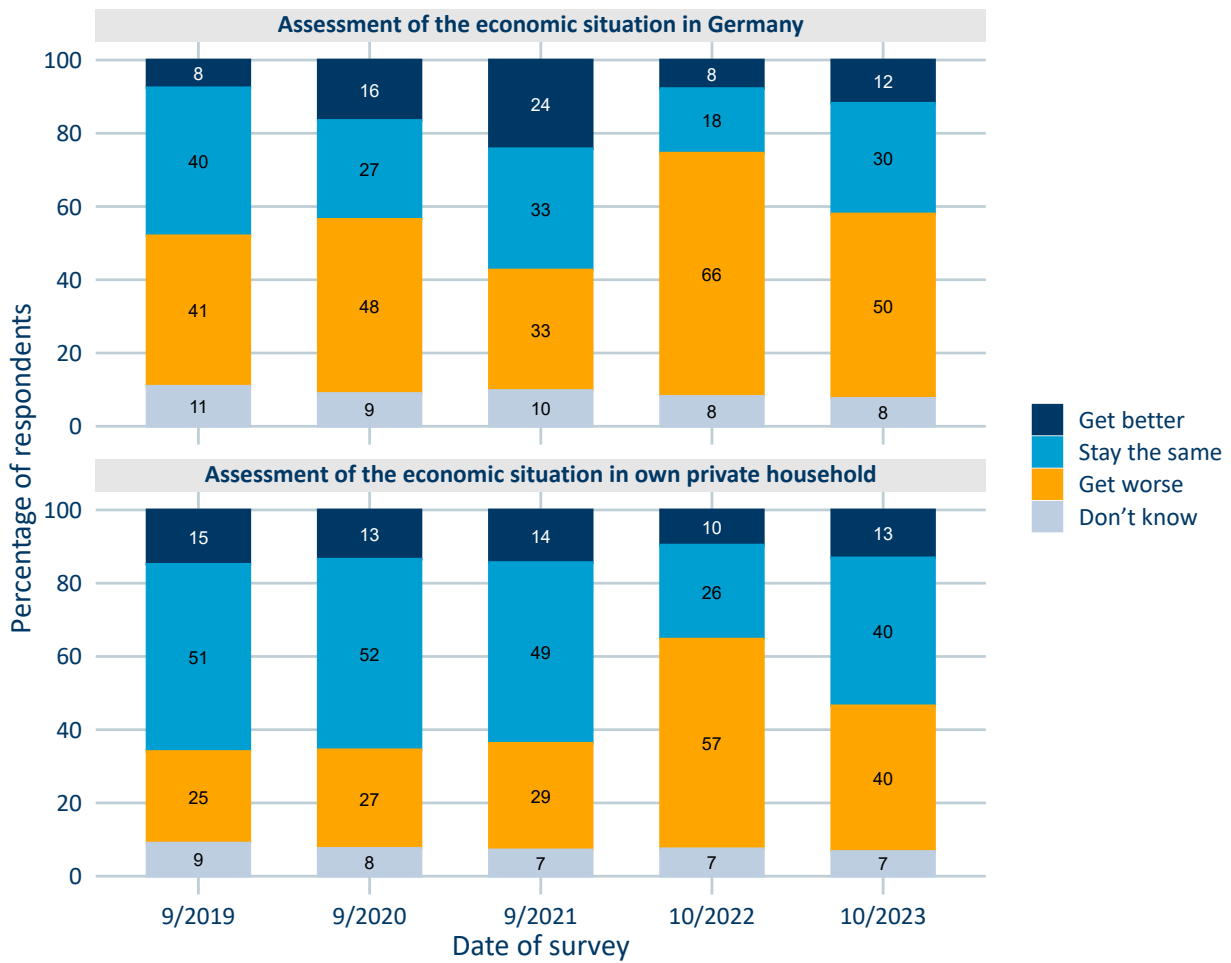
The analyses in Subsection 3.1 already provide empirical evidence that the German population's support for DC has fallen since the war against Ukraine began in February 2022. Against this backdrop, the following section explores the question of the extent to which the respondents' perception of their own personal financial situation and the national financial situation correlates with the endorsement of DC.

Assessment of one's own personal economic situation and the national economic situation

In order to determine whether a changed economic situation has an impact on support for DC over the course of time, it is necessary to examine whether there is a relationship between the assessment of the economic situation and support for DC.

An initial analysis, using cross-sectional data collected by the DEL in October 2022, has already revealed that support for DC is lower, the more negative the assessment of the development of the respondent's own personal economic situation and the national economic situation (Zille et al., 2023). Such a data basis makes it possible to determine the relationship between perception of the economic situation and support for DC. However, it does not show the impact that changes in this perception on the part of citizens have on support for DC. Therefore, the five survey waves of the DEL panel from 2019 to 2023 are consulted and the hypothesis is examined that a more negative assessment of the future development of the respondent's own personal economic situation and the national economic situation relates to less support for DC.³⁷ This ties in with the question of whether such a relationship has strengthened since the beginning of the Russian war of aggression.

³⁷ The DEL questionnaire asks about the “general economic situation in your country” and the “financial situation in your household”. For reasons of clarity, “economic situation” is always used in the text.

Figure 23 Assessment of the economic situation in Germany and of the respondent's own household (2019–2023)

Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEL panel wave 1 to 5; N per wave \approx 6,000, weighted data. Wording of the questions: "How do you think the general economic situation will develop in your country in the next 12 months?" and "To what extent do you think that the financial situation in your household will change within the next 12 months?" The response categories were: "get much better", "get slightly better", "stay the same", "get slightly worse", "get much worse", "don't know". The response categories have been conflated to "get better" and "get worse" for the graph.

The respondents have a much more negative view of their future personal economic situation and the future national economic situation since the Russian war of aggression began than they did before the war. This is illustrated by the analyses of the two panel waves in 2022 and 2023 (see Figure 23). In October 2023, 50 percent of respondents assumed that the economic situation in Germany would get worse. With regard to the private economic situation, this was 40 percent. Only 12 or 13 percent of respondents believed that their personal economic situation or the national economic situation would get better. However, these assessments are more positive than in 2022. Interestingly, the years of the coronavirus pandemic do not stand out in the data, even though this crisis was also associated with financial burdens.³⁸

This illustrates that the challenges associated with the war against Ukraine are reflected in the public perception of the financial situation – an initial indication that a pessimistic financial outlook could also have an effect on the German population's support for DC. At this point, it is not possible to definitively ascertain whether the war against Ukraine is the sole reason for this trend in how the economic situation is perceived or whether this results from an accumulation of crises, starting with the Covid-19 pandemic. Furthermore, the period under consideration covers neither the ruling of the Federal Constitutional Court on the federal budget in November 2023 nor the farmers' protests in January 2024, which might also have had an impact on the perception of the economic situation.

Perception of the economic situation and support for DC

To understand the relationship between the perception of the economic situation and support for DC, both individual changes and general differences between the respondents must be considered. The following section starts by dealing with how the respondents' assessment of the economic situation relates

to support for DC over time (within effect). To put it another way: if respondents have an increasingly negative perception of the economic situation over the course of the survey waves, does their support for DC also fall? It also looks at the relationship between the average assessment of the economic situation and the respondents' support for DC (between effect). In other words: do the respondents who, on average, have a more negative view of their own (or Germany's) economic situation across surveys also support DC less, on average, than those who have a positive view of the economic situation?³⁹

A negative assessment of the respondent's own personal economic situation and the national economic situation correlates with less support for DC over the course of time. The longitudinal analysis on an individual level yields two key results (see Figure 24): (1) respondents whose perception of the economic situation gets worse over the course of time also support DC less on average (within effect). (2) Respondents who generally give a poorer assessment of the economic situation, measured on the basis of their average perception across all survey waves, support DC less than those who rate the economic situation more positively (between effect).

This pattern is repeated if public support for the current development cooperation/ODA expenditure is analysed instead of general support for DC.⁴⁰ This means that the indicator that more strongly reflects support for current development policy activities and for which a clear decline has been observed since January 2022, as described in Chapter 3, is also negatively related to the respondents' perception of their own personal economic situation and the national economic situation. All things considered, the findings can be regarded, both for general support for DC and for public support for the current development cooperation/ODA expenditure, as an initial indication that the more negative perception of the economic situation is causing public backing for DC to dwindle (see also the results in Chapter 3).

³⁸ The monthly data from the political polling survey Politbarometer has shown an identical pattern since 2009. Here too, a much more negative assessment of the respondent's own personal economic situation and the national economic situation can be seen since the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine began, even though the economic situation was already rated more negatively by some people during the coronavirus pandemic (Forschungsgruppe Wahlen, 2024).

³⁹ All the analyses were carried out with all the available observations (unbalanced panel). This means that the respondents did not need to have taken part in all five surveys. Alternatively, all the models were therefore computed for the respondents who took part in all five waves. The results are not substantially different.

⁴⁰ Furthermore, it is apparent that the majority of the spread in support for DC can be attributed to differences between people and not to individual changes over the course of time (see also Section 3.4 on attitude strength). The intraclass correlation coefficient is 68 percent for general support for DC and 65 percent for support for the DC budget. This key figure indicates that around 70 percent of the spread in support for DC can be attributed to differences between people and around 30 percent to changes over time (see, for example, Snijders and Bosker, 2012, p. 17-23). By analogy with the results relating to attitude strength, this suggests that the respondents' support is stable, but not entirely invariable.

Figure 24 Influence of the assessment of the economic situation on support for DC

Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEL panel wave 1 to 5; N per wave \approx 6,000. Multi-level model for longitudinal data (random intercepts). The following variables were also controlled for: education, gender, age, political orientation and survey wave. The coefficients of the control variables can be found in Table 25 in Section 2.2.3 of the online appendix. The full wording of the question for all the variables used can be found in Table 18 in Section 2.2.1 of the online appendix.

The relationship between the perception of the economic situation and general support for DC has only changed slightly since the war in Ukraine began. Now the question is whether the assessment of the economic situation has a greater influence on support for DC in the wake of the Russian attack on Ukraine and the resulting economic impact on Germany than in the previous survey waves. This could be a further indication to explain the declining support for DC in Germany (see Chapter 3). However, the analysis shows that the relationship between the assessment of the economic situation and general support for DC only varies slightly with the survey waves (see Figure 47 in the Annex).⁴¹ Overall, therefore, the results do not suggest that the negative relationship has strengthened as a result of the war.⁴²

The relationship between the perception of the economic situation and public support for the current development cooperation/DC expenditure changes relatively little over the course of time, albeit somewhat more substantially than the relationship with the general endorsement of DC. As Figure 48 in the Annex shows, a more negative assessment of the national situation in the survey waves after the beginning of the war against Ukraine in February 2022 goes hand in hand with less support for the current development cooperation/ODA expenditure.⁴³ This finding can be seen as an indication that the perception of the economic situation is having a greater negative impact on support for DC in the course of the war against Ukraine. However, this is not a causal relationship.⁴⁴

⁴¹ For the analysis, interaction terms were added to the models between the within indicators relating to the perception of the economy, and to the dummy variables for recording the survey waves. The interaction models can be found in Table 25 in Section 2.2.3 of the online appendix.

⁴² Detailed comparisons of the effect of the assessment on the national economic situation yield no statistically significant differences between the two survey waves of the DEL panel after the Ukraine war began in February 2022 and the three preceding waves. When it comes to the respondents' assessment of their own personal economic situation, the effect only differs between wave 5 and wave 3 ($p < 0.05$). With regard to statistical significance, see also Box 4.

⁴³ The comparison of the effect in wave 5 and wave 4 is significant at the 10 percent level, whereas the comparison with wave 3 is significant at the 5 percent level. This means that the difference between wave 4 and 5 is afflicted with greater statistical uncertainty. For more detailed results, see Table 26 in Section 2.2.3 of the online appendix.

⁴⁴ This is because the analysis relates to Germany and thus does not contain a control group that is not affected by the consequences of the Ukraine war.

4.3.3 How stable is support for DC in the face of military conflicts and economic worries?

Following on from the results of the previous sections, the question is whether fear of military conflicts and economic worries could be causing the decline in support for DC. It has already been shown that relationships exist between support for DC and the assessment of the economic situation as well as between support for DC and attitudes towards support for Ukraine and other countries in emergency situations.

Therefore, a survey experiment has been conducted, investigating, on the one hand, whether information about the wars in Ukraine and Yemen has an influence on attitudes towards DC.⁴⁵ These wars were used in the experiment because they differ in terms of a characteristic that could influence support for DC: psychological distance from the German population. “Construal level theory” describes how psychological distance – spatial, temporal or social – influences how people interpret and respond to events (Trope and Liberman, 2010). Ukraine, as a European country with a predominantly white, Christian population, could be perceived by the German population as psychologically closer than the predominantly Muslim Yemen, which is located on the Arabian peninsula. In addition, the war against Ukraine has a greater media presence, and the economic consequences are more noticeable. The smaller distance from the war in Ukraine could lead to the mental “image” of this war being more concrete and evoking more solidarity than the potentially more abstract image of the more distant war in Yemen (Kogut et al., 2018).

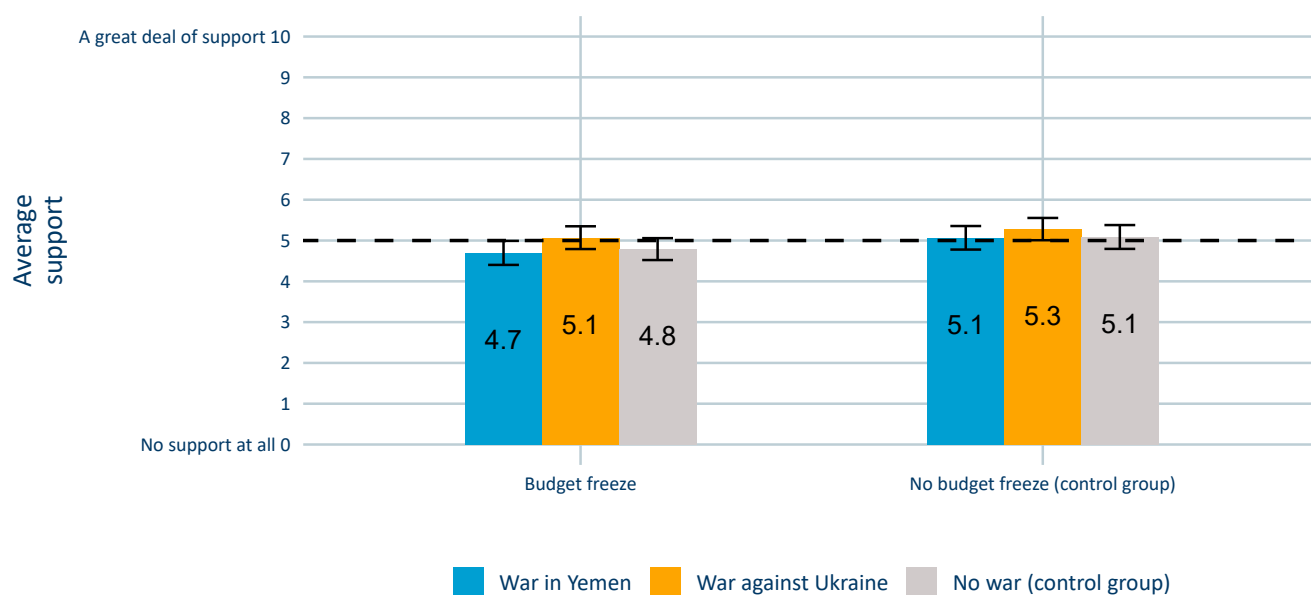
On the other hand, the experiment tests whether information on the tense situation surrounding the federal budget has an impact on attitudes towards DC. To induce economic worries, respondents read a text about the freeze on additional expenditure for the federal budget that was decided upon at the end of 2023. At the time of the survey, this was a very present topic in the media, encompassed a lot of policy areas and therefore had the potential to be clearly felt by many citizens. As mentioned at the beginning of Section 4.3, this could lead to respondents increasingly prioritising the population of Germany (ingroup) over the population of developing countries (outgroup) when it comes to the use of public funds (see also Heinrich et al., 2016).

It is also conceivable that economic worries have different effects on DC-related attitudes depending on whether respondents have read the text about Ukraine or the text about Yemen. As people in Ukraine are possibly perceived to be closer and more similar, an increased ingroup effect could occur here, leading to greater support (Kossowska et al., 2023). However, the (financial) consequences of this war are much more noticeable and thus more concrete, which in turn could lead to a higher level of rejection of DC/ODA expenditure. On the other hand, the strained finances could lead to a devaluation of the outgroup, in this case Yemen, as a country that is geographically and socially more distant, and thus to less support for DC. However, it could also be the case that Yemen is perceived more as a “developing country” and thus evokes greater solidarity and therefore support for DC.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ For the full structure of the experiment and the associated information texts, see Table 18 in Section 2.2.1 of the online appendix. The experiment was also pre-registered on the platform OSF before the data was collected (see Chapter 2) and can be viewed there at <https://osf.io/khvxp>.

⁴⁶ Corresponding variables were also recorded for this purpose and evaluated in an exploratory analysis. Information about this and about the hypotheses formulated above can be viewed in the pre-registration document.

Figure 25 Effect of information on the budget freeze and on the wars in Yemen/Ukraine on support for development cooperation



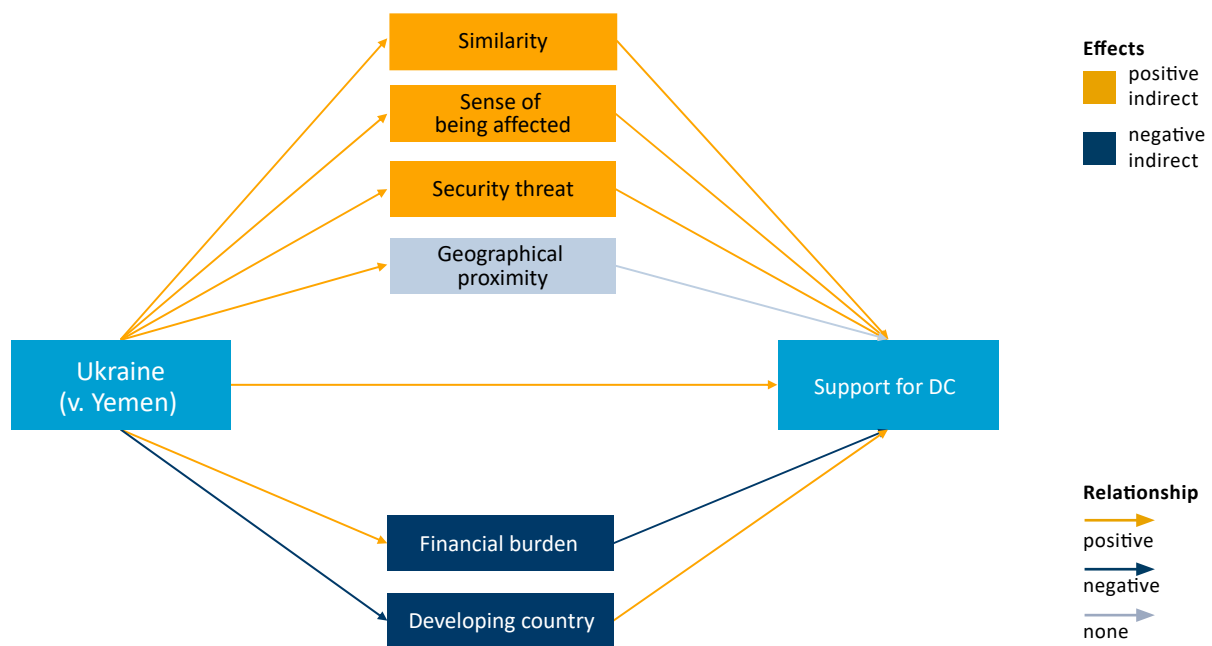
Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEval survey, carried out by ResponDi/Bilendi in January 2024. $N = 2,046$. The dependent variable is support for German DC. The figure shows the mean values in the respective experimental groups with 95% confidence intervals. The dotted line represents the centre of the scale, the value “5”. In the “no war” control group, the respondents were shown a text about a UNESCO World Heritage Site in Denmark. In the “no budget freeze” control group, the respondents received a text about the Bundestag resolution on telephone sick notes. For the full treatments used in the experiment, see Table 18 in Section 2.2.1 of the online appendix.

The results of the experiment show that economic worries lead to less support for DC. Respondents support DC less if they were made aware of economic worries in advance through a reference to the budget freeze than if these worries were not present. This was evident irrespective of whether the people were also informed about a military conflict. This effect is small, with the support for DC having decreased by 0.3 scale points; however, the intervention only consisted of a small text. Even the brief reference to the budget freeze can therefore lead to a small, but statistically significant decline in support for DC. This effect can also be seen across various demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the respondents.⁴⁷ And it even relates to respondents who

tend to be more in favour of DC. These are, for example, people who place themselves more on the left of the political spectrum or have a high level of formal education.

The results also show that respondents support DC more strongly if they have been confronted with information about the war against Ukraine than if they received information on the war in Yemen. This difference is also 0.3 scale points on average, is statistically significant and can be seen irrespective of whether the respondents had read the text about the budget freeze. Therefore, the war against Ukraine, which is psychologically near, appears to trigger more support for DC than the distant war in Yemen.

⁴⁷ Providing information about the budget freeze has a significant effect on support for DC when the experiment controls for income, gender, education and political orientation (left-right scale). Providing information about the budget freeze shows no significant interaction effects with these variables (with the exception of a high level of formal education), which means that the strength of this effect hardly differs across these characteristics (see Table 27 in Section 2.2.4 of the online appendix).

Figure 26 Effect of information about the wars in Ukraine/Yemen on support for development cooperation

Source: DEval, own visualisation. The figure maps out possible mechanisms through which the information on the wars in Ukraine and Yemen can have different effects on support for DC. These have been examined in six separately calculated mediation analyses. Orange arrows represent a significant positive correlation in the mediation analysis, dark blue arrows a significant negative correlation, and grey arrows no significant correlation. Orange boxes mean that the “war against Ukraine” has a significant positive indirect effect on support for DC, which is mediated, i.e. conveyed, by the respective variable. Dark blue boxes mean that there is a significant negative indirect effect, grey boxes that there is no significant indirect effect. The DEval survey conducted by ResponDi/Bilendi in January 2024 with a subsample size of $N = 1,384$ serves as the source of the data. Respondents who were in the “no war” control group have been eliminated from the subsample, as they did not receive the questions about Ukraine and Yemen. The detailed results can be found in Tables 29–34 in Section 2.2.4 of the online appendix.

The greater support for DC from those who were informed about the war in Ukraine can be explained as follows: (1) people in Ukraine are perceived by the respondents as being similar to themselves, (2) the respondents feel affected by the situation in Ukraine, and (3) the war in Ukraine is perceived as a threat to Germany’s security. In a mediation analysis (see Bruder et al., 2020; MacKinnon et al., 2012), various mechanisms were studied that can potentially explain the difference in support for DC between respondents who were informed about the war in Ukraine and those who were informed about the war in Yemen (Figure 26 illustrates these mechanisms).⁴⁸ The perceived similarity, the sense of being affected and the perceived security threat are factors that are more pronounced with regard to the situation in Ukraine than with regard to the situation in Yemen and are also associated

with greater support for DC. At the same time, the geographical proximity of Ukraine in comparison with Yemen is not a factor that is connected to greater support for DC. The fact that the financial burden caused by the war against Ukraine is perceived as higher and that Ukraine is regarded less as a developing country than Yemen is associated with a lower level of support for DC among respondents. Nevertheless, support for DC among the respondents who read the text about the war in Ukraine is greater overall than among the respondents who read the text about the war in Yemen (see Figure 25). Overall, these results suggest that the perceived psychological distance from individual countries (i.e. sense of being affected by the situation and perceived similarity), as well as security considerations, play a role in the attitudes towards DC, especially with regard to support for countries in acute war situations.

⁴⁸ For the precise results of the mediation analyses, see Tables 29–34 in Section 2.2.4 of the online appendix.

4.3.4 Which countries are preferred as partner countries for German DC in the context of geopolitical tensions?

Scarce financial resources and public criticism for DC raise the question, in public and political debate, of whether Germany should reduce the number of its partner countries or prioritise between them. As financial resources for DC are in short supply, a key challenge for development policy actors, above all the BMZ, is to determine both the thematic focal points and the partner countries. In the BMZ 2030 reform strategy (BMZ, 2020), the BMZ defines the partnership categories of “bilateral partners”, “transformation partners”, “global partners” and “nexus and peace partners”. The aim is to use DC resources more effectively and efficiently thanks to a targeted selection of partners.

The selection of partner states is also a subject of political discourse. For example, the AfD parliamentary group in the Bundestag submitted an interpellation about the basic criteria for the selection of partner countries in June 2020 (German Bundestag, 2020). The collaboration with specific countries is also regularly scrutinised – for example in minor interpellations submitted by various parliamentary groups in the Bundestag (German Bundestag, 2019, 2022a, 2023). Most recently, DC with China, for example for gender training, has been publicly criticised and called into question (Focus online, 2024). Against this backdrop, German DC is subject to increasing pressure to justify itself, especially in terms of the selection of projects and partner countries.

The selection of the partner countries and the attitudes of the German population towards this also play a vital role for civil society. For example, NGOs are primarily financed by donations and voluntary engagement in addition to government funds (Dreher et al., 2012; Verbrugge and Huyse, 2020). The extent to which cooperation with particular countries is supported by the German population is likely to be relevant for the willingness to donate.

The prioritisation of partner countries and the possible withdrawal from partner countries are accompanied by the risk that actors such as China or Russia will fill the resulting gap and thus also pose major challenges for German development policy. The influence of emerging countries such as China, Russia and India as development policy actors and as donor states has been growing continuously for several years (see, for example, Dreher et al., 2022; Fuchs and Vadlamannati, 2013; Gray, 2015). If, as in the case of some countries in Africa, cooperation with traditional donor states – here France – is terminated because of their colonial past, countries with rival systems are ready to fill this gap. The Western world’s influence in the Global South is threatening to dwindle. This was demonstrated particularly impressively after Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022. Many countries in the Global South abstained in the subsequent resolutions of the UN General Assembly, which led to great surprise and resentment in some of the Western states (Plagemann, 2022).

In politics and society, the question arises of whether geopolitical factors should play a role in the selection of partner countries. For example, the question of whether the German Federal Government should get involved in states that do not share Germany’s social, democratic and regulatory values is the subject of public discussion (ntv, 2024). At the same time, DC is facing the challenge that more than 70 percent of the people in the world live in autocracies (Nord et al., 2024) and a considerable portion of DC is implemented in fragile states (Faust et al., 2023; Wencker and Verspohl, 2019).

In order to figure out whether geopolitical factors have an influence on which countries the population prefers as partner countries for German DC, a so called choice-based partial profile conjoint experiment was conducted on the basis of the experiment in the Opinion Monitor 2021 (Schneider et al., 2021a, Chapter 6) (see Box 7). This experiment made it possible to determine what characteristics of potential partner countries are likely to lead to respondents preferring one country over another as a partner country. In this study, various strategic and geopolitical characteristics have been added to the experiment in comparison with the Opinion Monitor 2021.

Specifically, respondents were asked about the following eleven attributes (for a detailed overview of all the attributes and their levels, see Table 20 in Section 2.2.1 of the online appendix):⁴⁹

1. Thematic focal point of the cooperation
2. Religion of the population
3. Corruption in the country
4. Poverty in the country
5. Performance capacity of the state
6. State authority

7. Impact of climate change
8. Number of refugees coming from the country to Germany
9. Role as an energy supply for Germany
10. Political partnership with China or the West
11. Attitude to the war against Ukraine

In a second choice-based conjoint experiment, the preferences for specific countries as partner countries for German DC were studied.

Box 7 **Structure of the conjoint experiment**

In choice-based conjoint experiments, respondents are presented with two options and must choose between them (see, for example, Hainmueller et al., 2014; Raghavaram et al., 2010). The two options can, for example, be profiles of different products. Thereby, a series of different attributes is presented for each pair. The levels of the attributes that are shown are determined on a random basis. In a partial profile conjoint experiment, the attributes shown are selected at random from a larger total number of attributes for each pair. The participants must then make a decision based on these characteristics, while the options “don’t know” or “both equally” are deliberately omitted. Based on these decisions, it is possible to determine which levels of the attributes statistically lead to the choice in favour of a product more frequently or less frequently

For the Opinion Monitor 2024, such a choice-based partial profile conjoint experiment was used to investigate which characteristics respondents consider as criteria for selecting recipient countries of German DC (see also Doherty et al., 2020). Five pairs were presented to the respondents for selection, each with two country profiles, each of which contained six randomly selected attributes (concrete examples of the pairs can be found in Figure 16 in Section 2.2.5 of the online appendix). The respective levels of the presented attributes were also selected on a random basis. The presented country profiles were not based on actual countries, but were made up of a random selection of attributes and levels. The respondents then had to select a country from each pair that they would prefer the German Federal Government to support with development cooperation.

Following the selection, regression analyses were used to calculate the average marginal component effects (AMCEs). These indicate how the probability of a country profile being selected changes when an attribute changes from a reference level to another level. This study design makes it possible to draw causal conclusions about which levels are more likely to lead to a country profile being selected.

⁴⁹ With the exception of the attributes “thematic focal point of the cooperation”, “religion of the population” and “poverty”, the respective levels of the attributes allow for subjective perception. For example, the levels “high level of corruption” and “close political partner of China” are not quantified more precisely. Therefore, precisely what they mean is a matter for the subjective perception of the respondents.

Preferences for country characteristics

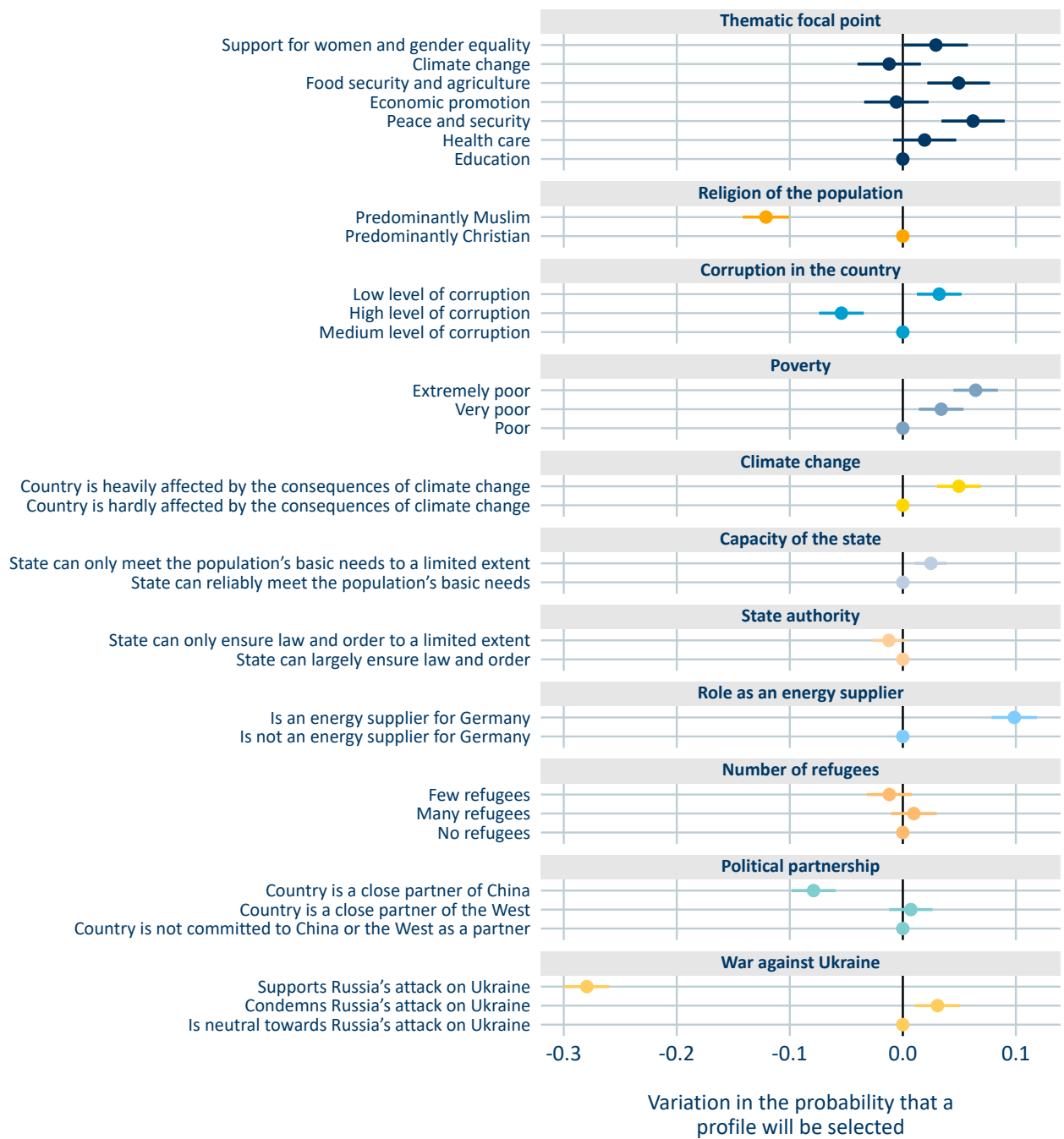
Self-interest and geopolitical trade-offs can play an important role in the prioritisation of DC partner countries. Especially in the context of current events such as the war against Ukraine or geopolitical tensions with China, greater emphasis could be placed on such trade-offs. In order to examine this role more closely, three additional attributes were used in the (hypothetical) country profiles that were not used in the 2020 survey: whether the country supplies Germany with energy, whether a country is a close partner of China or the West, and what a country's position is on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

(Hypothetical) countries with the attribute "energy supplier for Germany" are clearly favoured as DC partner countries. In the course of the Russian war against Ukraine, energy security has become a focus of social and political debate. After decades of depending on fossil fuels from Russia and the lack of gas supplies since the war began, the questions of which countries Germany should obtain energy from and what role the political conditions in the respective countries play are becoming increasingly important. In this context, possible energy partnerships and their compatibility with the principles of a feminist foreign and development policy were also discussed. The results in Figure 27 show that energy security plays an important role in the respondents' attitudes towards DC. The probability that a country is prioritised as a DC partner is 10 percentage points higher if the country is presented as an energy supplier for Germany.

The geopolitical alignment of a potential partner country is also relevant to the respondents: if a country is deemed to be a close partner of China, it is likely to be rejected as a potential partner country for German DC. In this case, the probability of the country being selected by the respondents as a DC partner country decreased by 8 percentage points. On the other hand, no statistically significant difference was evident if a hypothetical country was presented as a close partner of the West or has not committed itself either to the West or to China as a partner.

Countries that are presented as supporters of Russia's attack on Ukraine experience by far the highest level of rejection as potential partners of DC. As mentioned above, many countries in the Global South abstained in the UN General Assembly resolutions condemning the Russian war against Ukraine. In comparison with these countries, countries that condemn this war are 3 percentage points more likely to be prioritised as a partner country. Only very few states demonstrate open support for Russia's attack on Ukraine. For example, in February 2023, only six other countries aside from Russia itself voted against Resolution A/ES-11/L.7 of the UN General Assembly and thus against condemning the Russian attack (United Nations, 2023b, 2023c). Such a position led to a high level of rejection among the respondents: countries that support Russia's attack are 28 percentage points less likely to be favoured. This represents the strongest effect in the results.

Figure 27 Effect of information on the choice of potential partner countries for DC



Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEval survey, carried out by ResponDi/Bilendi in October 2023. N = 3,355. The dependent variable is whether one country is selected over another country. The figure shows the average marginal component effects (AMCEs) of the various explanatory variables. The AMCEs were calculated using a linear probability model. The reference category of the respective variable can be seen on the zero line. The rest of the dots represent the respective AMCE coefficients. A positive coefficient means that this characteristic has a positive effect on the dependent variable. Conversely, a negative coefficient means a negative effect on the dependent variable. The horizontal bars through the dots represent the 95% confidence intervals. If these intersect the zero line, this variable has no statistically significant effect. Otherwise, the effect is statistically significant.

Attributes geared towards the needs of the countries, such as poverty, limited performance capacity of the state and a high level of vulnerability to climate change make the respondents more likely to favour the country as a partner country. For example, a country profile is 5 percentage points more likely to be selected if the country is heavily affected by the consequences of climate change. If the majority of the population of a country is described as being very poor or extremely poor, the country is 3 or 6 percentage points respectively more likely to be preferred as a partner country than a country that is only described as poor. States that can only meet the basic needs of the population to a limited extent are 3 percentage points more likely to be preferred. The state authority, i.e. the indication of whether a state can largely ensure law and order or can only do this to a limited extent, does not play a statistically significant role when prioritising partner countries over one another. The same applies to the number of refugees that come to Germany from a country. This is interesting in light of the fact that “combating the causes of flight” is frequently put forward as an argument to DC-sceptics (see, for example, BMZ, 2024; Federal Government Commission on the Root Causes of Displacement, 2021).

A high level of corruption leads to less support as a partner country. Countries with a high level of corruption are 5 percentage points less likely to be prioritised than countries with a medium level of corruption. In contrast, countries for which a low level of corruption is specified are 3 percentage points more likely to be preferred. One explanation could be that corruption can decrease the effectiveness of the DC funds used, leading to reservations on the part of the respondents (see also Bauhr et al., 2013).

Countries with a predominantly Muslim population are much less likely to be supported as a partner country than countries with a predominantly Christian population. The difference here is 12 percentage points, which is the second largest effect in these results. Thus, the difference is greater than,

for example, for the level of poverty or corruption. This anti-Muslim bias is also relevant for the acceptance of refugees (Bansak et al., 2016), as demonstrated by the debate about the reception of Ukrainian refugees (Esposito, 2022). It can also be found in other studies relating to DC preferences (Blackman, 2018). Prejudices against people of the Muslim faith could be the decisive factor here (see, for example, Strabac and Listhaug, 2008; Sides and Gross, 2013).

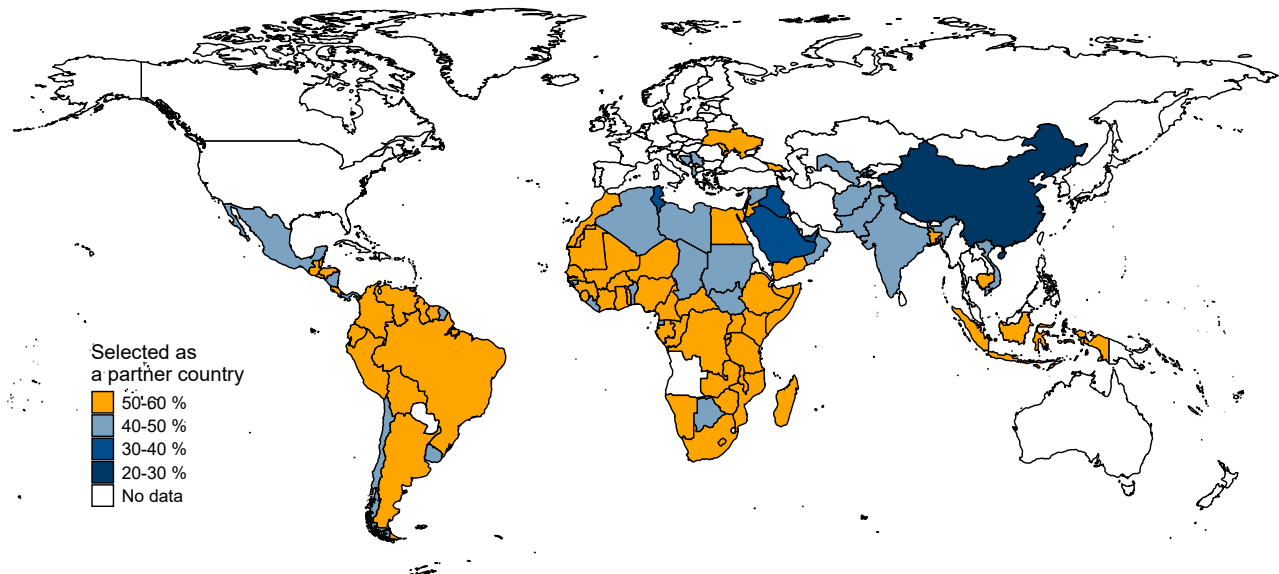
Preferences for partner countries

The analysis in the second part of the experiment, in which people had to choose between real countries, shows that the respondents particularly support cooperation with countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Figure 28 presents the results of the second choice-based conjoint experiment. For each of the 89 countries included in the experiment, the map shows the percentage of cases in which it was chosen as a partner country over another randomly selected country. The most frequently selected countries were Namibia, Ethiopia, Kenya and Togo, all of which are located in sub-Saharan Africa. Three of these countries (Namibia, Tanzania, Togo) are also former German colonies. Among the 15 countries with the greatest support, there are only two that are not in sub-Saharan Africa. Therefore, this appears to be where the German population sees the regional focus of German DC. This picture is consistent with the results from the Opinion Monitor for Development Policy 2021 (Schneider et al., 2021a, Chapter 6).

China and the Arab region are least likely to be preferred as partner countries by the German population. At around 29 percent, China is the country that was selected by far the least frequently (see Figure 28). Iraq, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates also have a much lower selection rate than the other countries, at 34 to 35 percent.⁵⁰ In total, eight of the ten least frequently selected countries are in North Africa or on the Arabian peninsula.

⁵⁰ The United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia are not partner countries of German DC. These countries were included in this experiment to ensure that the data could be compared with the data from 2020.

Figure 28 Endorsement of possible partner countries for DC



Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEval survey, carried out by Respondi/Bilendi in October 2023. $N = 3,355$. The figure shows the frequency with which a country would be chosen over another randomly selected country. 50 percent represents the average and thus the expected value. Orange countries were selected with a frequency of more than 50 percent, blue countries with a frequency of less than 50 percent. All the countries that are on the List of ODA Recipients of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD-DAC) were included in the survey.

Countries in Central Asia and Eastern Europe, especially Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, have gained support in comparison with 2020. Whereas Ukraine was still one of the least frequently selected partner countries in 2020⁵¹ with 37 percent support, support for the country is now 14 percentage points higher, at around 51 percent. Therefore, it is clear that DC with Ukraine has been endorsed by considerably more people since the Russian war of aggression began than previously – even though Ukraine is not perceived as a “developing country” by the majority of people (see Section 4.3.3). In this context, it is also interesting that the Republic of Moldova was selected more frequently than in 2020 (increase by almost 12 percentage points). At 56 percent,

this makes it the sixth most frequently selected country. This too should be understood in the context of the war against Ukraine. The Republic of Moldova is an immediate neighbour of Ukraine, received (measured by the number of inhabitants of the country) a large number of refugees from Ukraine and has a secessionist region, Transnistria, that receives military assistance from Russia. Therefore, countries that are potentially in Russia's political and geographical sphere of influence have gained support as partner countries for German DC since the Russian war of aggression began. One possible explanation could be that geopolitical and security incidents have an influence on the respondents' attitudes towards DC.

⁵¹ The data used for the Opinion Monitor for Development Policy 2021 was collected in a conjoint experiment in August and September 2020.

4.3.5 Conclusion: support for international engagement is high, but could wane as a result of ongoing economic challenges

Overall, respondents show a high level of support for Germany's engagement in international crises and emergency situations. Humanitarian and development engagement receive more support than military engagement.

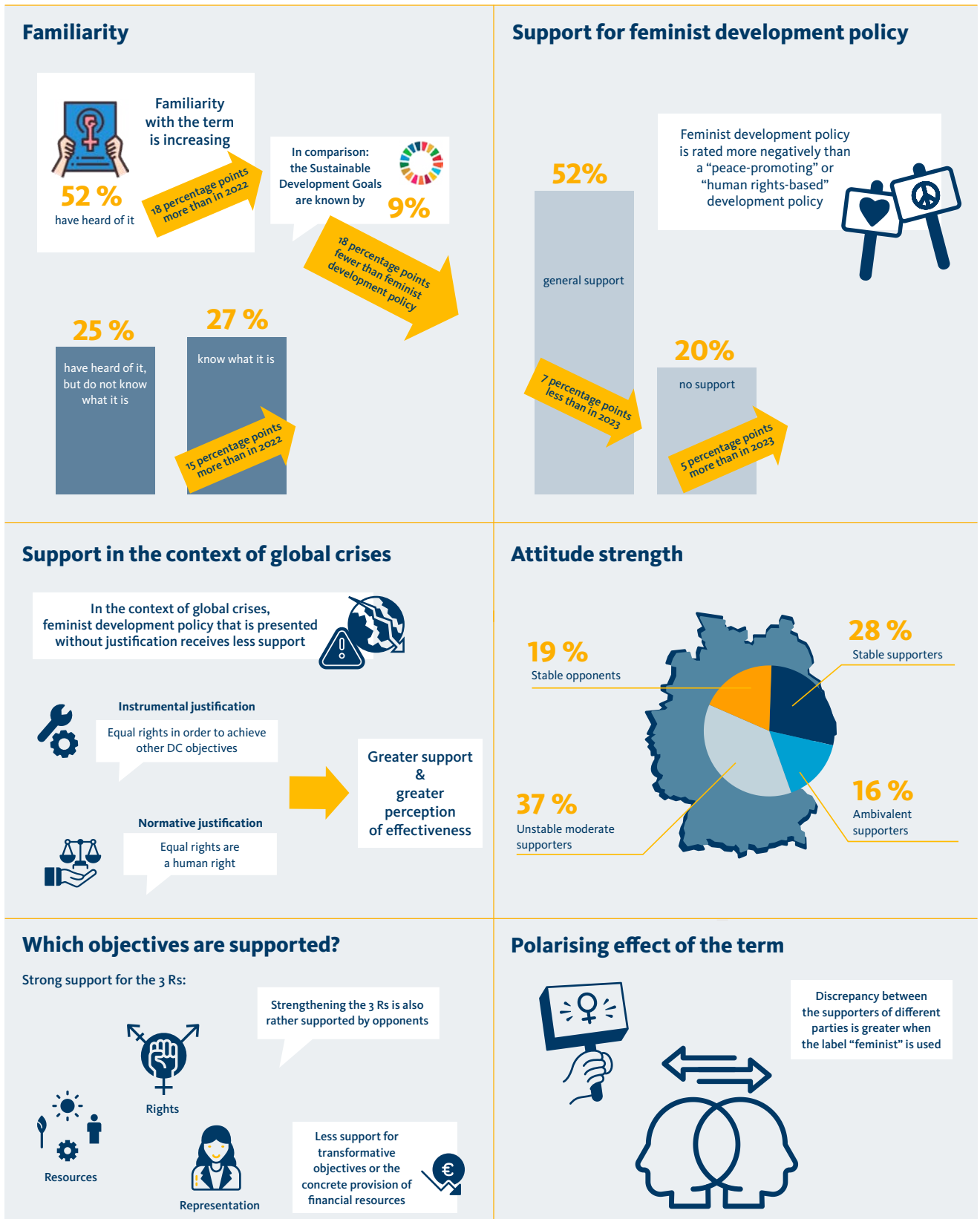
Even two years after the Russian attack on Ukraine, support for the country is strongly endorsed. The high level of support sends an important message to politicians, especially with regard to the vast funds required for the reconstruction of Ukraine.

However, the strained economic and financial situation potentially has a negative effect on support for DC. Across different demographic and socio-economic groups, economic worries lead to a decline in support for DC, while at the same time a large proportion of respondents rate the current and future economic situation as poor. Considering the challenges, which are not getting any smaller, and the associated costs – both for the citizens and for the state – the previous broad consensus in the population regarding development policy could disappear in the long term (see also Chapter 3 of this report).

Strategic and geopolitical factors play a role in the selection of potential partner countries. Factors that represent the needs of the local people, such as poverty or being affected by the consequences of climate change, are still important to the respondents when choosing their preferred partner countries. However, the country's role as an energy supplier for Germany and its position regarding Russia and China are also taken into account in the decision. In addition, several Eastern European and Central Asian countries have gained support as partner countries, which must undoubtedly also be seen in the context of Russia's attack on Ukraine. The latest incidents relating to foreign and security policy play an important role in shaping attitudes towards development policy. Designing and communicating a development policy that shows consideration for these preferences could therefore lead to a higher degree of acceptance.

DC only appears to be perceived by respondents as an effective crisis tool to a limited extent. This appears to depend on the respective context. On the whole, respondents endorse Germany's engagement in countries experiencing acute crises as well as DC interventions and humanitarian aid for Ukraine. However, the results also show that countries plagued by crises such as Iraq, Afghanistan or South Sudan have lost support as partner countries in comparison with 2020. Here, the largely negative outcome of German engagement in Afghanistan (Hartmann et al., 2023), which became clearly apparent once again after the withdrawal of the troops in 2021 and was also visible in the media, could have diminished the population's confidence in DC as an effective crisis tool.

4.4 The attitude of the German population towards feminist development policy



In its coalition agreement of 2021, the German Federal Government explicitly announced a feminist foreign policy for the first time, and the BMZ presented a strategy for a feminist development policy in March 2023 (Federal Foreign Office, 2023a; BMZ, 2023a; BMZ, 2023c; SPD, Alliance 90/The Greens and FDP, 2021). A feminist development policy that ties in with the gender equality goal (SDG 5) of the 2030 Agenda adopted by the United Nations in 2015 continues the tradition of taking gender equality into account in foreign and development policy and in DC. It was 40 years ago that the parties to the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW, in force since 1981 and ratified by Germany in 1985) undertook to promote women's rights around the world. 15 years later, the Platform for Action for gender equality in all areas of society was adopted at the 1995 World Conference on Women in Beijing. Here, there were already clear references to DC, such as the reduction of poverty among women or the consideration of gender-specific differences in educational opportunities (e.g. BMFSFJ, 2021; UN Women, 2020). In addition, former Federal Ministers for Economic Cooperation and Development advocated gender equality as part of their mandate and promoted important aspects of a feminist development policy, even if these were not explicitly referred to as such (Bohnet, 2019).

Current feminist development policy differs from previous efforts to promote gender equality, at least in terms of its aspirations.

For example, current feminist development policy is supposed to have a gender-transformative effect in particular and thus to focus on systemic change and breaking up existing patriarchal power structures. The strategy also goes beyond gender equality; it has an intersectional aspiration, in which not only women and girls, but also other marginalised groups are supposed to be taken into account (BMZ, 2023a, 2023c). The key objectives of feminist foreign and development policy are to strengthen the rights, representation and resources of women and other marginalised groups and to promote social diversity ("3R+D" formula; Federal Foreign Office, 2023a; BMZ, 2023a, 2023c; SPD, Alliance 90/The Greens and FDP, 2021). The principles, contents and objectives of feminist foreign policy overlap considerably with those of feminist development policy, even though the fields of action are distinct (Federal Foreign Office, 2023a; BMZ, 2023a, 2023c).

With the feminist guiding principle for foreign and development policy, Germany is following the example of Sweden, where a feminist foreign policy was established as early as 2014 (Zilla, 2022). Other countries have subsequently announced a feminist foreign and/or development policy (Khillare, 2023). However, the concept does not enjoy universal support; there are often reservations in some sections of politics and among the general public (Hudson et al., 2023; Sassenhagen et al., 2023; Schneider et al., 2024b). For example, it is denied that feminist foreign and development policy does justice to the acute global security crises or is the appropriate guiding principle for these.⁵² For instance, after the change of government in 2022, Sweden at least abandoned the term "feminist foreign policy".

On the one hand, the feminist guiding principle for German development policy has the potential of attracting attention to existing inequalities, injustices and structural power disparities. On the other hand, it is associated with the risk of the basic consensus on development policy (Schneider et al., 2022) that has hitherto existed within the population being called into question in an increasingly polarised political debate. From this perspective, it is particularly important to capture public discourse and public opinion regarding feminist development policy. While there is already comprehensive academic literature on feminist foreign policy (e.g. Aggestam et al., 2019; Jezierska, 2022; Scheyer and Kumskova, 2019; Sundström et al., 2021; Thompson and Clement, 2019; Thomson, 2020; Towns et al., 2023; Zhukova, 2023), this does not apply specifically to feminist development policy. In particular, the public attitude towards both feminist foreign policy and feminist development policy has hitherto remained largely ignored, apart from a few exceptions (but see Sassenhagen et al., 2023; Schneider et al., 2024b on feminist development policy). However, the public attitude is an important indicator both for democratic legitimacy and as information for political actors and their decision-making processes.

⁵² This is how the chairman of the CDU/CSU parliamentary group in the Bundestag, Friedrich Merz, expressed it in his speech in the Bundestag shortly before the Russian attack on Ukraine began (German Bundestag, 2022b).

Therefore, the aim of this chapter is to get a clearer picture of what the German population's understanding of feminist development policy and how broad the support is for the label and its contents, especially in the context of global crises. As such, this chapter intends to give development policy actors feedback and orientational knowledge regarding public opinion of feminist development policy and thus information for further policy decisions. For example, potential for political communications and for the substantive implementation of feminist development policy can be determined.

Against this backdrop, this section deals with the following key questions:

1. What does the German population understand by feminist development policy?
2. To what extent does the population support a feminist development policy and its contents?
3. How stable are the attitudes towards feminist development policy?
4. How do the perception of and support for feminist development policy change in the context of acute global challenges and crises?

4.4.1 What does the German population understand by feminist development policy?

Even though the term “feminist development policy” was already more familiar to the participants than the SDGs in a 2022 survey, it was still unknown to the majority (59%) (Sassenhagen et al., 2023).⁵³ In March 2023, both the Federal Foreign Office's strategy for a feminist foreign policy and the BMZ's strategy for a feminist development policy were republished. They received a lot of media attention. Both the public interest and knowledge of the topic could have increased as a result.

Therefore, a key question is how much the German population currently knows about feminist development policy and what they understand by the term.

Feminist development policy on Twitter/X

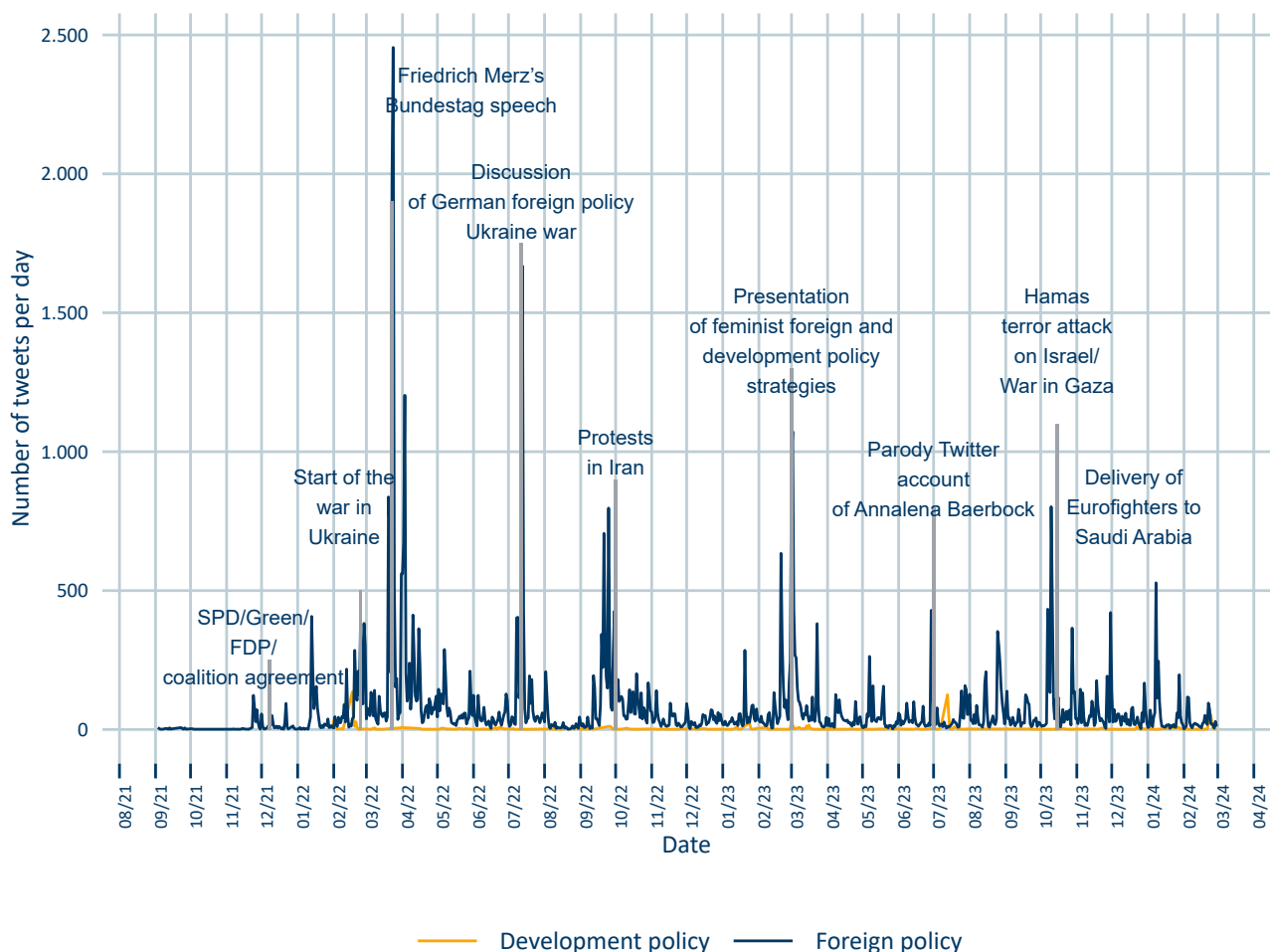
As an indicator of the German population's information environment on the topic of feminist foreign and development policy, the short message service Twitter/X has been analysed.⁵⁴ Records were made of how frequently the terms “feminist foreign policy” and “feminist development policy” were mentioned.

The attention given to feminist foreign and development policy on Twitter/X remains largely unchanged since 2022. Apart from a few spikes, only a few posts per day were counted (see Figure 29). This number has largely remained stable and shows no average increase over time. This suggests that even the presentation of the policy strategies in March 2023 did not initiate increased discussions about the topic in the long term. During this period, there was just a brief rise in the number of relevant posts.

A comparison of the posts published per day about both policy areas show that most posts are concerned with feminist foreign policy, while feminist development policy receives hardly any attention. This could be because, in comparison with foreign policy, development policy is only of interest to a smaller section of the population and the political elite. On the other hand, it could be the case that people barely differentiate between feminist foreign and development policy. For example, the strategies of both ministries were presented together, and the ministers were seen together in many of their public appearances (e.g. Tagesschau, 2023).

⁵³ The Körber Foundation's study “The Berlin Pulse” came to a similar conclusion with respect to the term “feminist foreign policy” (Körber Foundation, 2022).

⁵⁴ The same limitations apply to these analyses as to the analyses of general mentions of development policy on Twitter/X. These limitations are explained in Section 2.3.

Figure 29 Feminist development policy/foreign policy on Twitter/X (2021–2024)

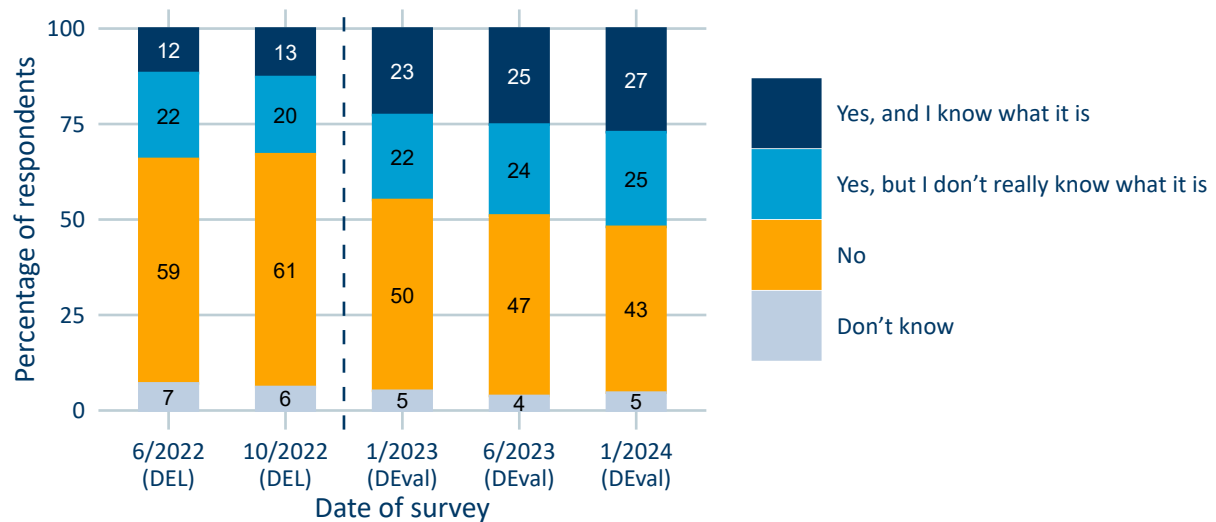
Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: around 69,000 posts that were downloaded between 1 May 2019 and 29 February 2024 using the analysis tool Meltwater, with the help of a search term list. The search terms were „feminist foreign policy“ and „feminist development policy“.

Familiarity with feminist development policy

In comparison with the results obtained by the DEL in 2022, the term “feminist development policy” is much better known in more recent surveys. As can be seen in Figure 30, only 43 percent of the respondents in January 2024 indicated that they had never heard of or read about this term. For the first time, a small majority (52%) even said that they had already heard of or read about feminist development policy. The

proportion of respondents who are familiar with the term and know what it means has risen by 15 percentage points between June 2022 (DEL survey) and January 2024 (DEval survey) – to 27 percent. This could indicate that the strategy published in March 2023 and the associated formulation of the contents of feminist development policy helped to give at least some of the population a clearer idea of a feminist development policy.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ In this survey, it was not possible to clarify whether respondents can actually distinguish between development policy and foreign policy, as the respondents were not asked about a distinction between the two terms and the questions only used the term “feminist development policy”. Therefore, it is conceivable that respondents say that they know what the term means even if they only know about “feminist foreign policy” and do not differentiate between foreign and development policy.

Figure 30 Familiarity with feminist development policy over the course of time

Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: 6/2022: DEL sandbox (N = 2,059), 10/2022: DEL panel (N = 6,008). DEL data is weighted data. 1/2023, 6/2023, 1/2024: DEval tracking (N for each survey ≈ 2,000). The question was: “Have you ever heard or read anything about ‘feminist development policy?’”

The respondents who reported being more familiar with feminist development policy are: respondents with a higher level of formal education, men, people interested in politics, people interested in and informed about DC, and people who place themselves on the fringes of the political spectrum (left or right). Attitudes towards feminism or populist attitudes, on the other hand, have no relationship with familiarity with feminist development policy.⁵⁶

Public perception of feminist development policy

When the respondents are asked to express, in their own words, what they believe feminist development policy is about, it is evident that most people think that it is primarily about women, women’s rights and equality. These three terms were mentioned most frequently.⁵⁷ “No idea” was also among the 15 most common responses. Positive words such as “promote” or “empower” were also frequently included in the responses. Interestingly, some respondents also believe that the term relates to topics such as “quotas of women”, “more women

in politics and business” or “women in positions of leadership”. Therefore, both women’s rights and the representation of women appear to be present in the responses – and both are key aspects of the BMZ strategy (BMZ, 2023a). On the other hand, the aspects of “resources” and “diversity” largely went unmentioned.⁵⁸

Reservations about a feminist development policy include doubts as to whether the objectives are achievable, the concern that men could reject this policy or be excluded from it, and questions regarding the extent to which a feminist development policy clashes with the values of other cultures. For example, respondents express the fear that “nothing is really changing and it is just a lot of talk” or that it could “treat women in a one-sided manner and discriminate against men”. It was also feared that “different cultures [...] will reject [...] this development policy”. Respondents also indicate that a feminist development policy reflects Western values in particular, which would be imposed on the countries of the Global South (“We are trying to influence prevailing structures, to impose

⁵⁶ The results of the in-depth regression analysis, which takes a closer look at the relationships between demographic variables and attitude variables and familiarity with feminist development policy is documented in Section 2.3.2 of the online appendix.

⁵⁷ An overview of the 15 most frequently mentioned words in response to the question of what people think a feminist development policy is about can be seen in Figure 18 in Section 2.3.3 of the online appendix.

⁵⁸ Open-ended questions were analysed with the help of various computer-assisted text analysis methods. Details of the analyses of the open-ended questions in the survey can be found in Section 2.3.3 of the online appendix.

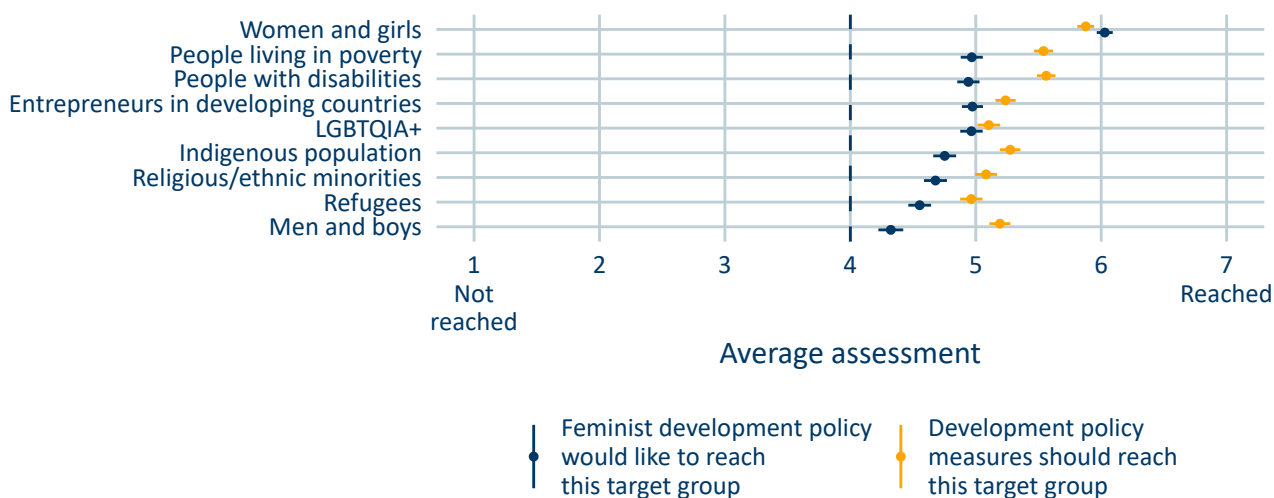
our standards on other countries [...]”. However, these are presumably the reservations of informed citizens, as a large proportion of the population claims to have no reservations or no knowledge about this. “No idea”, “don’t know” and “no reservations” are amongst the most common phrases used in the response to this question.⁵⁹

Target groups of feminist development policy according to the German population

On average, respondents believe that the target group of a feminist development policy is women and girls in particular, with other groups left far behind. There is a discrepancy here from the target groups that should be reached by development policy in the eyes of the respondents. As can be seen in Figure 31, respondents indicate that women and girls are and should be one of the most important

target groups of development policy. Regarding almost all other groups, the priorities of the respondents deviate from their idea of which groups are actually reached by a feminist development policy. It is evident that the intersectional aspiration of feminist development policy is not present for the respondents. The label “feminist” could sound to many laypeople as if development policy will only be about women and girls in the future. The fact that the target group “men and boys” shows the greatest discrepancy, i.e. is least frequently regarded as the actual target group of feminist development policy while being seen as a key desired target group of development policy, demonstrates the concern that men and boys could be neglected as a result of the focus on women, girls and marginalised groups. This concern is consistent with the reservations regarding feminist development policy that have already been mentioned, in which “discrimination against men” was mentioned as one aspect.

Figure 31 Target groups of feminist development policy according to the German population



Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEval survey, carried out by ResponDi/Bilendi in August 2023. N = 2,000. The figure shows the mean values with 95% confidence intervals. The mean values correspond to the average assessment of the respondents as to which target groups a feminist development policy would like to reach (“Please use the following scale to assess the extent to which you believe that feminist development cooperation would like to reach the specified group of people”) or which target groups development interventions in general should take into account (“Thinking of development interventions in general, to what extent do you think that the specified group of people should be taken into account by development interventions.”) The scale ranged from 1 = “not reached at all”/“should not be reached at all” to 7 = “definitely reached”/“should definitely be reached”. The value “4” corresponds to the centre of the scale.

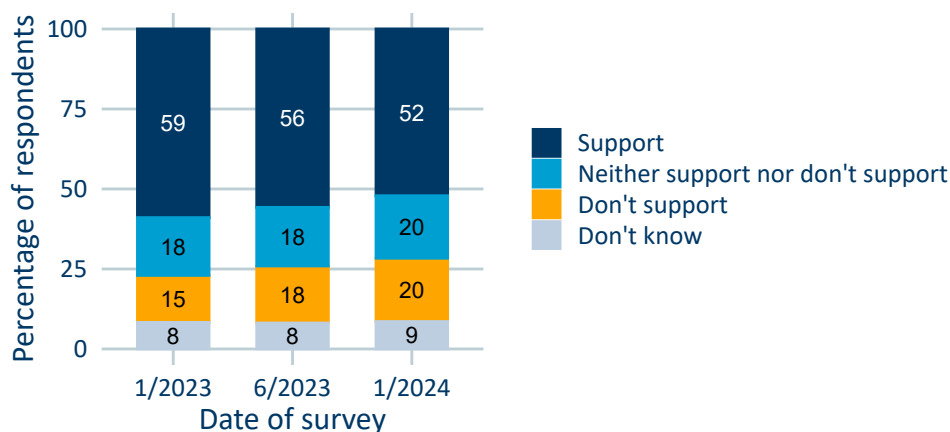
⁵⁹ An overview of the 15 most frequently mentioned words in response to the question of what reservations people have about a feminist development policy is presented in Figure 20 in Section 2.3.3 of the online appendix.

4.4.2 Does the population support feminist development policy and its content?

The majority of respondents support a feminist development policy, even though support is declining over the course of time. As Figure 32 shows, around 52 percent of respondents in January 2024 stated that they support a feminist orientation as a focus of development policy, while just under 20 percent stated that they do not support such a development policy.

Around 20 percent selected the option “neither support nor don’t support” and around another 9 percent “don’t know”. Corresponding to support for DC in general, a decline can be seen here in comparison with January 2023. The proportion of respondents supporting a feminist development policy was around 7 percentage points higher in January 2023. The group that doesn’t support it was also smaller (around 5 percentage points).

Figure 32 Support for a feminist development policy over the course of time



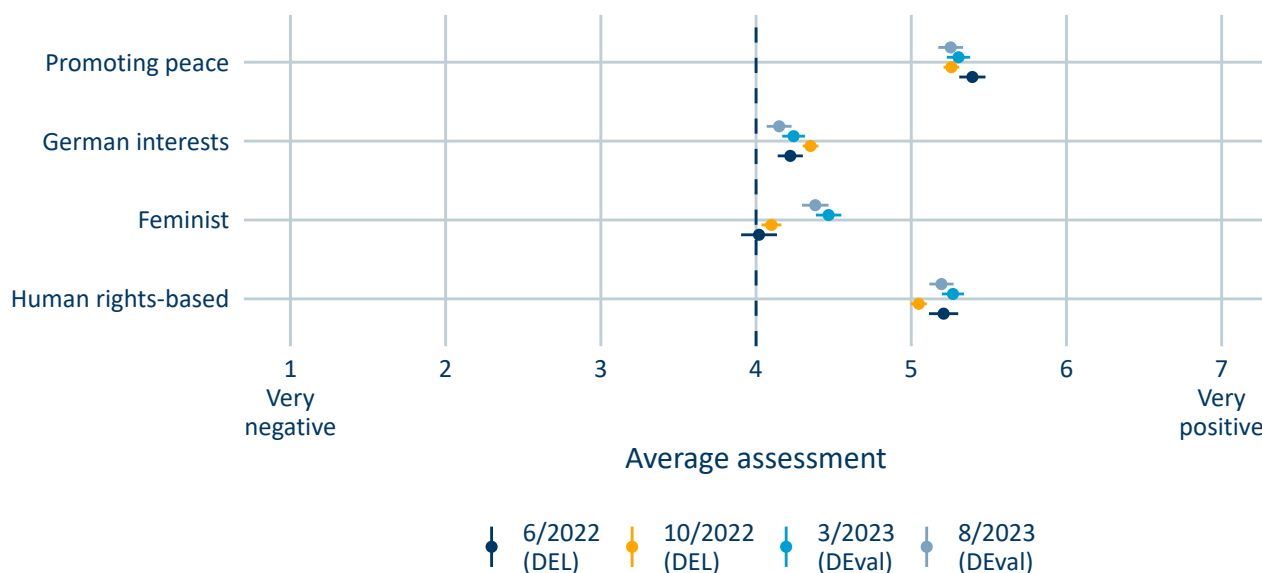
Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEval tracking, carried out by Respondi/Bilendi in January 2023, July 2023 and January 2024. N for each survey ≈ 2,000. The seven-point response scale was condensed for the visualisation. The question was: “One focus of the current German Federal Government is feminist development policy. This is about increasing the rights, representation, resources and equal opportunities of women, girls and disadvantaged groups in developing countries. These groups include people who are disadvantaged because of their religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or a disability, for example. What is your opinion of this focus?”

Feminist development policy receives less support than other possible focuses of development policy. Sassenhagen et al. (2023) have already demonstrated, with DEL data from June 2022, that the focus on feminist development policy comes off substantially worse than a “human rights-based” or “peace-promoting” development policy, for example. A more recent

survey from August 2023 reaches a similar conclusion (see Figure 33). Feminist development policy is rated slightly more positively here than in June 2022, but still more negatively than a “peace-promoting” or “human rights-based” development policy. Only a development policy “guided by German interests” is assessed even more negatively.⁶⁰

⁶⁰ The results are based on data collected from two different surveys (a DEL survey and a DEval survey conducted by Respondi/Bilendi), which differ both in terms of the contents of the overall survey and in terms of the order of the questions. Even if the wording of the question remained the same, it cannot be ruled out that differences may have arisen due to the different survey modes.

Figure 33 Support for different focuses of development policy



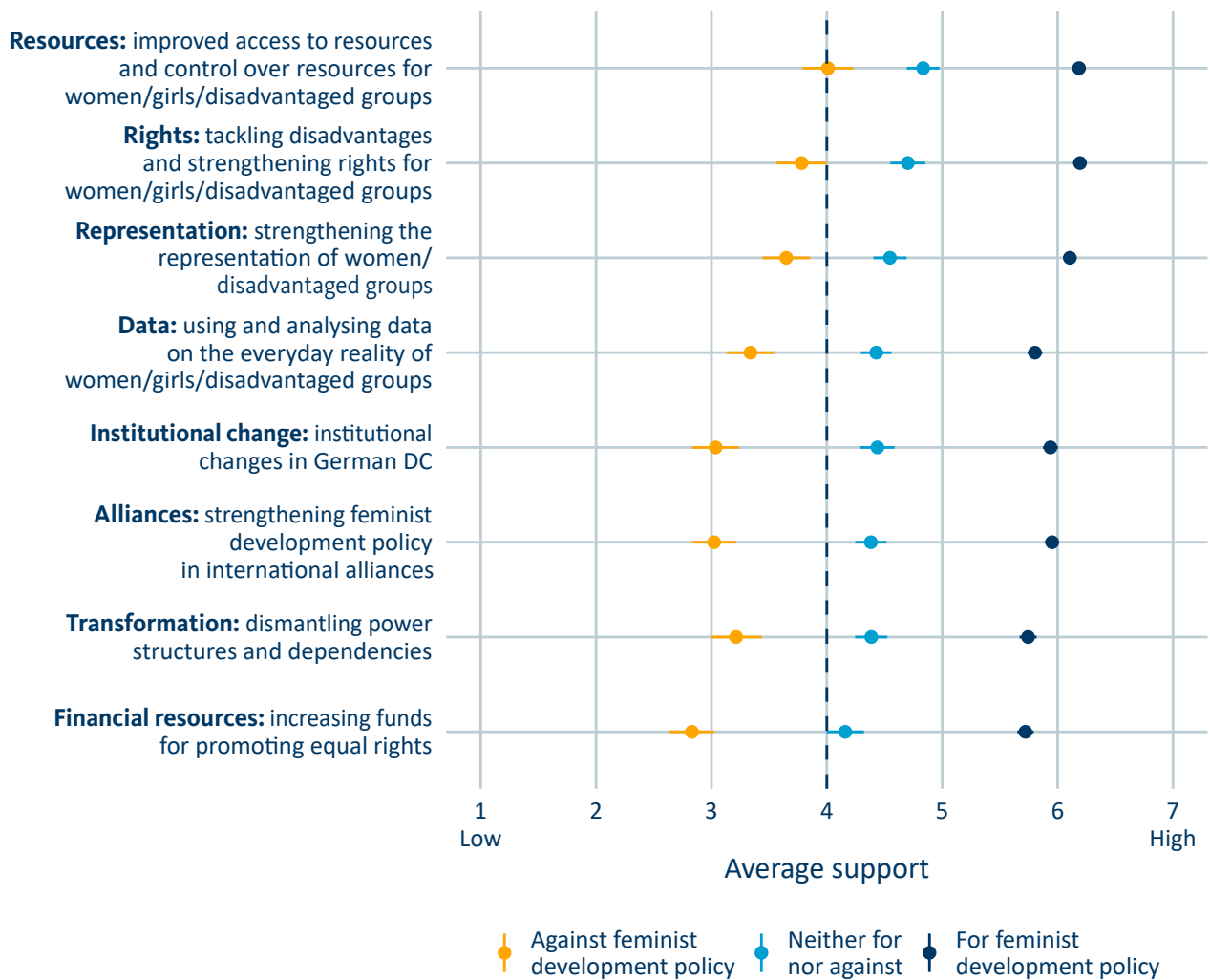
Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEL sandbox in June 2022 (N = 2,059), DEL panel in September 2022 (N = 6,008); DEL data is weighted data. DEval surveys in March 2023 (N = 2,048) and August 2023 (N = 2,000). The figure shows the mean values with 95% confidence intervals, broken down according to the date of the survey and the focus of development policy. Respondents were supposed to provide, on a scale from 1 (“very negative”) to 7 (“very positive”), their assessment of different types of development policy. The value “4” corresponds to the centre of the scale and thus to an assessment that is neither negative nor positive. Respondents were asked about six kinds of development policy in total. To simplify the visualisation, only four kinds of development policy are shown here.

Support for the objectives of feminist development policy

The BMZ strategy describes objectives that are to be pursued with the guiding principle of a feminist development policy. Respondents primarily support the overarching objectives of strengthening the “rights”, “resources” and “representation”, whereas the provision of funds for projects promoting equal rights receives less support. As can be seen in Figure 34, rights, representation and resources (“the 3 Rs”) meet with the highest level of support from both advocates and opponents of feminist development policy. The specific increase in funds for projects promoting equal rights receives least support in all groups. This appears to contradict the fact that the improved access to resources for women, girls and disadvantaged groups receives the strongest endorsement even by the opponents of feminist development policy. It is possible that the provision of funds is rejected, while improved access to other resources, for example by awarding land rights or loans to women is supported.

Nevertheless, there are great discrepancies between advocates and opponents of feminist development policy with regard to the level of support for all the objectives. As expected, Figure 34 shows that opponents of feminist development policy support all the objectives less, whereas supporters of such a policy show a high level of support for all the objectives. The topics of “rights”, “resources” and “representation” are only just below or on the centre of the scale for opponents of feminist development policy, but this support is still 2 scale-points lower than that shown by advocates of feminist development policy. The discrepancy is particularly great when it comes to the support shown by opponents and advocates for the topics “institutional change within German DC”, “formation of international alliances” and “provision of funds for equal rights”. Here, the discrepancy is almost 3 points on the scale; these objectives are clearly rejected by opponents of the policy with a mean value of 3, whereas advocates still strongly support them with a mean value of just under 6. At this point, it should once again be noted that, as illustrated in Figure 32, the group of supporters was considerably bigger than the group of opponents in this survey too.

Figure 34 Support for the objectives by support for feminist development policy



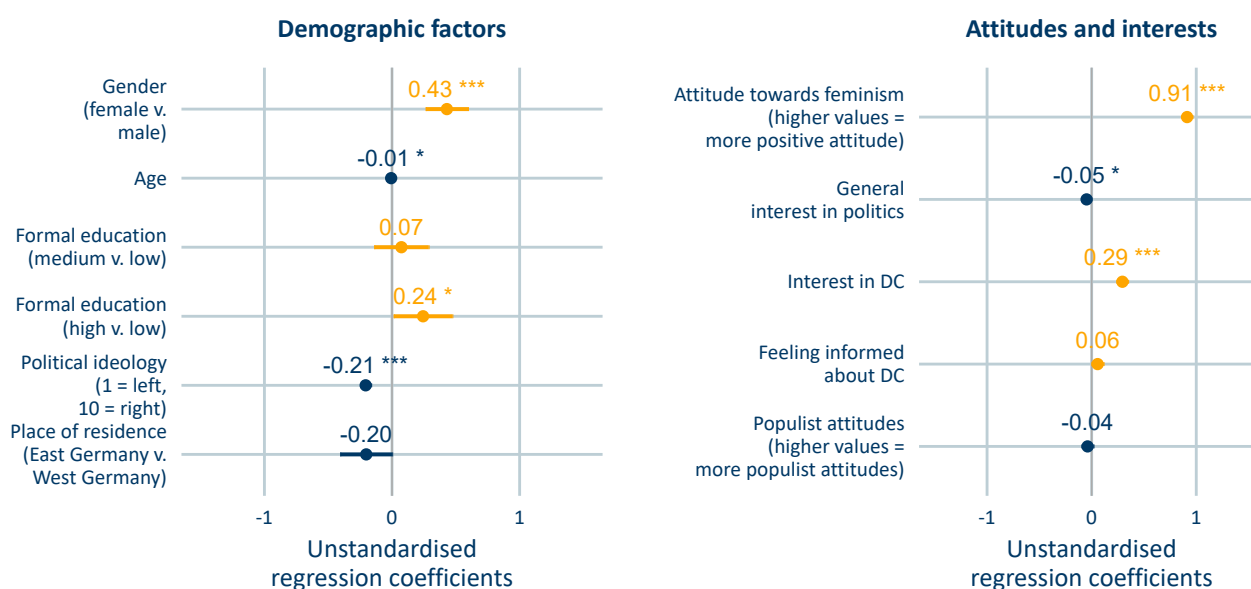
Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEval survey, carried out by Respondi/Bilendi in August 2023. N = 2,000. The figure shows mean values with 95% confidence intervals, broken down according to support for feminist development policy. For the breakdown, the seven-point response scale has been conflated to three categories: “against feminist development policy” (values 1-3), “neither for nor against” (value 4) and “for feminist development policy” (values 5-7). Respondents were supposed to indicate, on a scale from 1 (“don’t support at all”) to 7 (“completely support”) the extent to which they support various objectives of a feminist development policy. The value “4” corresponds to the centre of the scale (“neither support nor don’t support”).

Who supports feminist development policy?

Feminist development policy is particularly supported by women, people with a high level of formal education and respondents who place themselves on the left of the political spectrum. Respondents who have a more positive attitude towards feminism overall, are more interested in DC-related topics and feel well-informed about DC-related topics are also

more likely to support feminist development policy. Respondents from East Germany tend to support feminist development policy less than those from West Germany, although this difference is not significant.⁶¹ Weaker correlations are also found for age and interest in politics. Older people tend to support feminist development policy slightly less than younger people.⁶²

Figure 35 Factors that predict support for feminist development policy



Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEval survey, carried out by ResponDi/Bilendi in August 2023. $N = 2,000$. Unstandardised regression coefficients of a multiple regression are shown. The dependent variable is support for feminist development policy. Two multiple regressions were calculated, in which support for feminist development policy was predicted firstly by demographic variables (on the left) and secondly by psychological factors (on the right). Positive coefficients (yellow) mean that the factor has a positive correlation with support for feminist development policy. Therefore, people with a high score in this characteristic are more likely to support feminist development policy. Negative coefficients (blue) mean that the factor has a negative correlation with support for feminist development policy. Correspondingly, people with a high score in this characteristic show less support for feminist development policy. For categorical predictors, the category to which the coefficient applies is in brackets in each case. Coefficients marked with an asterisk are statistically significant. *** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$.

⁶¹ In the analysis presented here, Berlin is encoded as "East Germany". If the same analysis is conducted with Berlin encoded as West Germany, the relationship is significant. People from East German states (not including Berlin) support feminist development policy significantly less frequently than people from West German states (including Berlin). The results of this additional analysis are documented in Figure 42 in Section 2.3.4 of the online appendix.

⁶² Interestingly, when a number of predictors are included (see Figure 35), a negative correlation can be seen in the regression analysis between a general interest in politics and support for feminist development policy. In the first place, this suggests that respondents who are more interested in politics support feminist development policy slightly less. When we look solely at the correlation between an interest in politics and support for feminist development policy, without taking other predictors into consideration, this correlation is positive (Pearson's $r = 0.13$; $p < 0.001$). This means that respondents who are more interested in politics in general are also more likely to support feminist development policy. As there is a high correlation between the two forms of interest (Pearson's $r = 0.52$; $p < 0.001$), the multiple regression analysis can accurately determine the influence of the individual variables. Therefore, it must be assumed that both forms of interest are associated with greater support for feminist development policy.

Influence of the feminist label and feminist contents on support for development cooperation

The “feminist” label could have a negative effect on support for development cooperation in the population. So far, results have shown that, on the whole, a majority of respondents supports a feminist development policy. However, a feminist development policy is rated more negatively than other possible focuses such as a “human rights-based” or “peace-promoting” development policy. This could suggest that the label “feminist” leads to negative reactions and that using it could reduce support for development cooperation overall.

At the same time, certain contents of feminist development policy could also adversely affect support for development cooperation in parts of the population. In the question relating to support for feminist development policy, the contents “rights”, “representation” and “resources” are explained, and these appear, on the whole, to receive support from a large proportion of the population (see Figure 32 and Figure 34). At the same time, a large discrepancy is evident in support for the objectives of feminist development policy between opponents and advocates of such a policy, especially with regard to transformational objectives or financial resources. Therefore, specific feminist contents could also lead to a decline in support for development cooperation in general when a feminist development policy is pursued.

To test this hypothesis, an experiment was conducted in which respondents were randomly presented with one of four descriptions of a development policy, which either carried a feminist label or described feminist contents. They were then supposed to state how much they supported this development policy. The four descriptions either contained the term “development policy” (without an additional label) or the term “feminist development policy” and a description that either outlined development policy in general (without feminist contents) or also specified feminist contents. When formulating the contents, transformative objectives were also explicitly included in the description of feminist development policy.⁶³

This experiment can show whether the label “feminist” – in comparison with no label – increases or decreases support for development cooperation and whether feminist contents in DC lead to more or less support than traditional DC contents.⁶⁴

Contrary to expectations, no significant differences were found between the different groups with regard to general support for development policy. The average support was lowest for “development policy” without feminist contents (mean value = 4.4) and highest for “development policy” without a feminist label but with feminist contents (mean value = 4.6). Overall, differences between the average values are minimal and there are no statistically significant differences.⁶⁵

Regarding the question about expenditure on DC, greater support can be seen if a development policy was previously presented just with a feminist label (without feminist contents) or just with feminist contents (without a feminist label). If a “traditional” development policy (without a feminist label or contents) or a development policy with both a feminist label and feminist contents is presented, the support for expenditure is lower. Respondents want to cut funds for DC less if they previously read about a “feminist development policy” without specific feminist contents or about a “development policy” without this label but with feminist contents than if they read about a “development policy” without feminist contents or a “feminist development policy” with feminist contents (see Figure 36). Concerning these results, it is important to emphasise that this effect is statistically significant, but very small. The difference between the groups is just 0.1-0.2 points on the scale. Furthermore, it is evident in accordance with the insights from Section 3.1.2 that the respondents want to reduce rather than increase the funds for DC across all experimental groups.

⁶³ The precise wording of the experimental texts is documented in Table 36 in Section 2.3.1 of the online appendix.

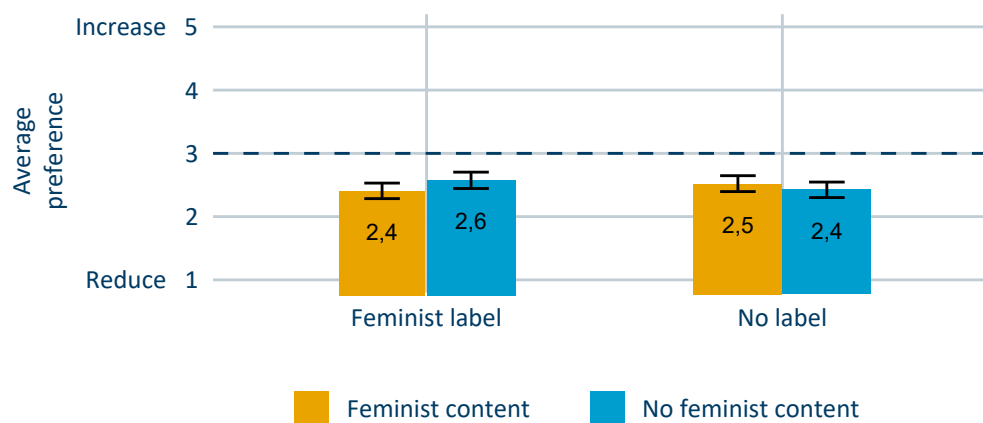
⁶⁴ We recorded our hypotheses in advance in a pre-registration, which can be accessed at <https://osf.io/x7h6y> (for the background to pre-registrations, see Chapter 2).

⁶⁵ The experiment was analysed with a variance analysis. The detailed results of these analyses are documented in Section 2.3.4 of the online appendix.

This result could suggest that the feminist label and feminist contents in DC are supported and are also rated more positively than “traditional” DC, but that there could also be “too much” or “too little” feminism. Overemphasising feminist topics (as in the condition with a feminist label and feminist

contents) could potentially be perceived as “too much” and thus be rated more negatively. At the same time, the absence of a feminist perspective could be perceived as “too little” and rated more negatively, as in the condition without a feminist label and without feminist contents, for example.

Figure 36 Support for Development cooperation/ODA expenditure by experimental group



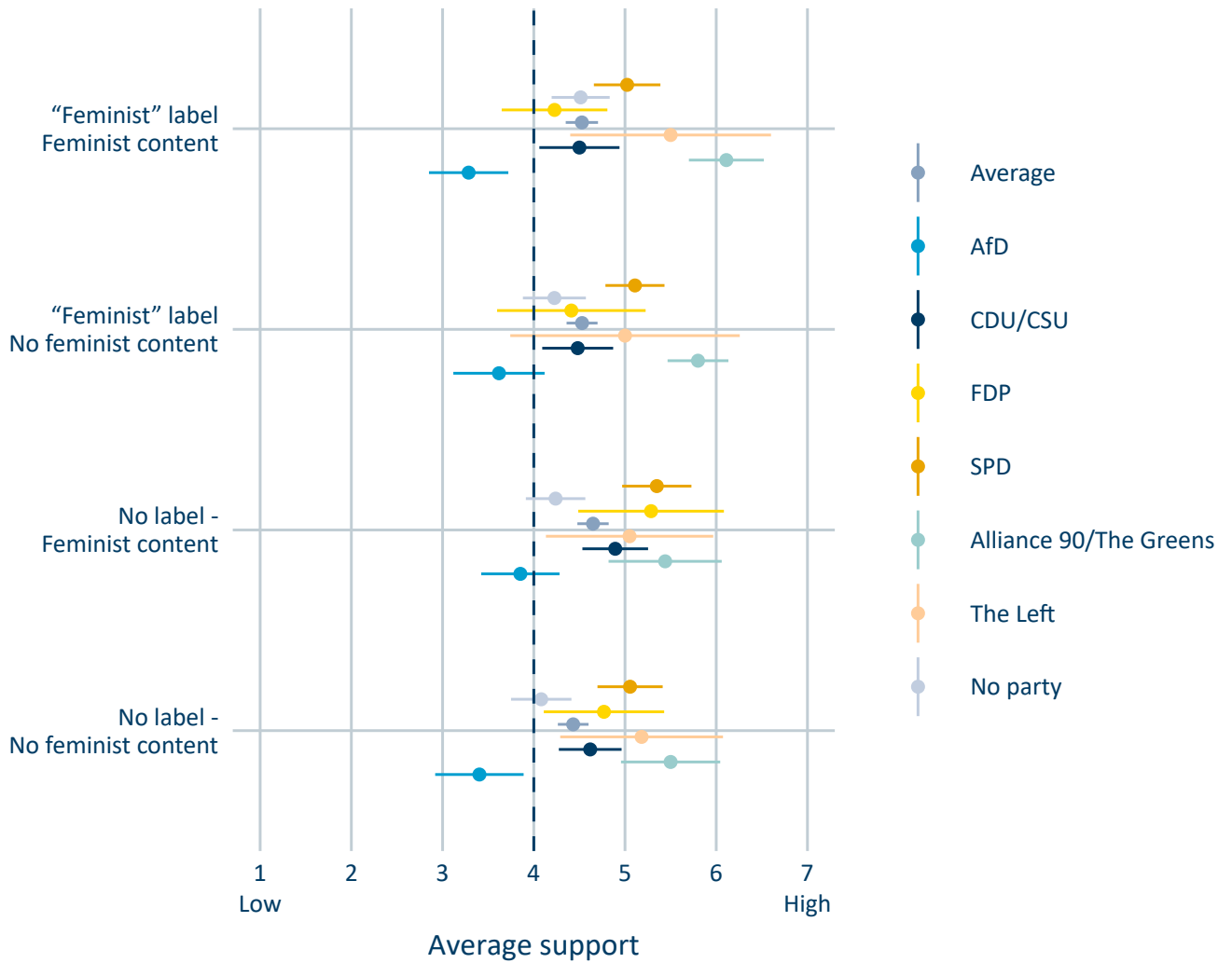
Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEval survey, carried out by Respondi/Bilendi in November 2023. $N = 1,628$. The figure shows mean values with 95% confidence intervals, broken down by experimental condition. The question was: “In 2022, Germany spent approx. 33.3 billion euros on development cooperation. This corresponds to approximately 0.8 percent of the gross national income (GNI). What should Germany do about this amount in the future?” The response categories were: “increase a great deal” (5), “increase somewhat” (4), “don’t change” (3), “reduce somewhat” (2) and “reduce a great deal” (1). The value “3” corresponds to the centre of the scale.

An interesting finding by Sassenhagen et al. (2023) was that supporters of different parties showed greater differences in their attitudes towards feminist development policy than in their attitudes towards other focuses of development policy. This was interpreted to mean that the use of the label “feminist” for the new focus of development policy could call the previous broad public consensus regarding development policy into question and lead to a more polarised debate (see also Schneider et al., 2024b).

In the current experiment too, it is evident that the feminist label can be a challenge for cross-party acceptance, whereas feminist contents in development policy are more capable of achieving a consensus across party lines. As can be seen in Figure 37, the discrepancy in support for DC between supporters of different parties is greater when the “feminist” label is used than when this label is not used. If development policy is labelled “feminist”, the difference in support between

the highest (Alliance 90/The Greens) and the lowest (AfD) values is 2.5 points on the scale on average. The greatest consensus is shown for a development policy without the “feminist” label but with feminist contents. Here, there are just 1.5 points on the scale between the highest (Alliance 90/The Greens) and the lowest (AfD) values. Even people who identify with the AfD show most support for a development policy with feminist contents (mean value = 3.8), but only if it is not referred to as “feminist”. However, the average value for AfD sympathisers is below the centre of the scale in all experimental conditions, whereas the average values for all those who identify with parties other than the AfD are above the centre of the scale. It is also evident that the feminist label leads to a greater rejection of the described development policy particularly among people who identify with the FDP or the CDU/CSU. On the other hand, it is primarily among sympathisers of the Greens that the label leads to greater support for the described development policy.

Figure 37 Support by experimental group and party identification



Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEval survey, carried out by Respondi/Bilendi in November 2023. N = 1,628. The figure shows mean values with 95% confidence intervals, broken down by the experimental condition and the party identification. The question was: "To what extent do you support the development policy described above?". The scale ranged from 1 ("don't support at all") to 7 ("completely support"). The value "4" corresponds to the centre of the scale ("neither support nor don't support").

4.4.3 How stable are the attitudes towards feminist development policy?

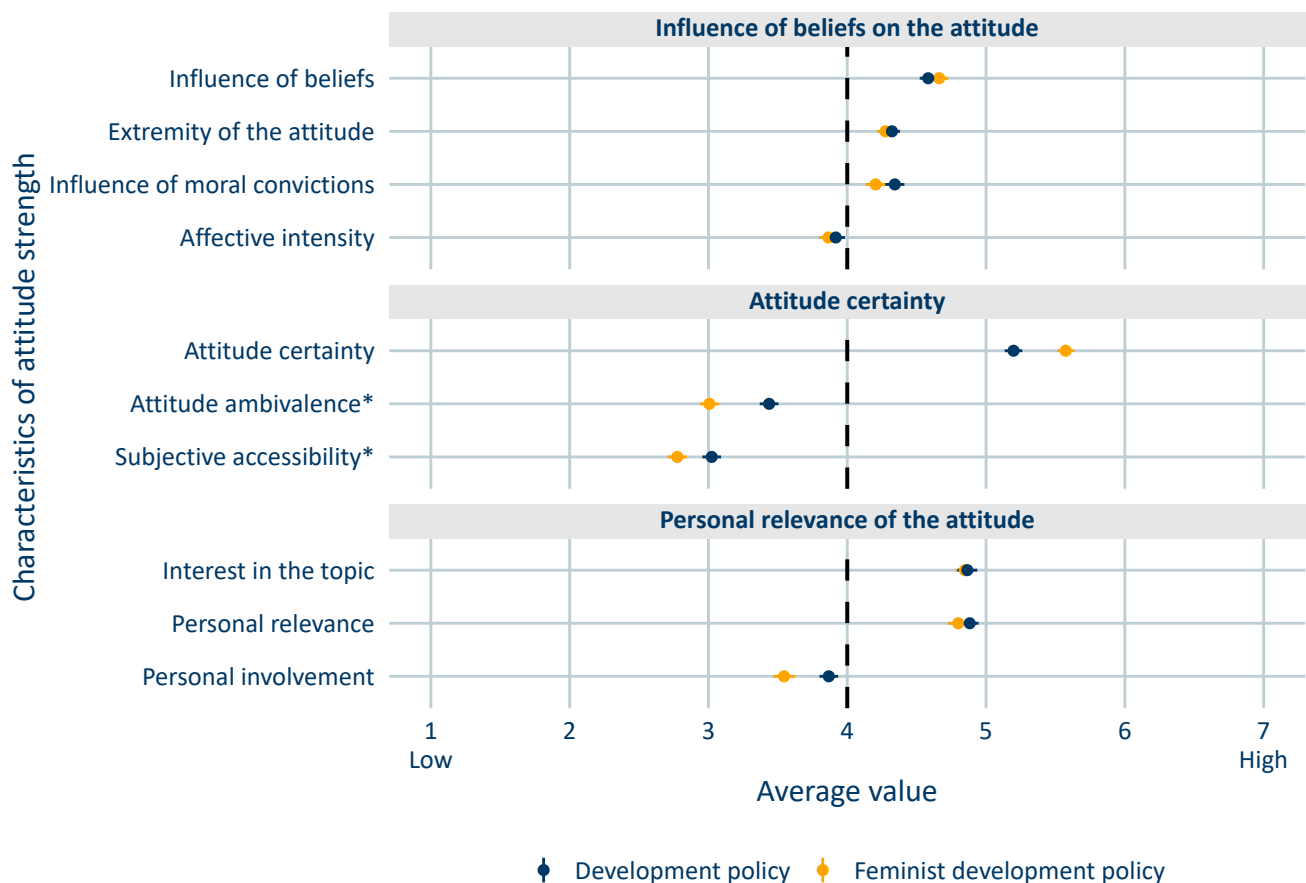
Also with regard to attitudes towards feminist development policy, the question arises of how stable these attitudes are. On the one hand, an explicitly feminist development policy has been formulated in Germany for the first time. The previous analyses suggest that the contents of this guiding principle are unknown to a large proportion of the population. This could indicate that attitudes towards feminist development policy are still fragile and unstable. On the other hand, the analyses showed that the feminist label led, to some extent, to polarised attitudes, which could mean that attitudes towards feminist development policy are very pronounced and therefore stable, as they are possibly strongly rooted in beliefs.

To investigate how stable attitudes towards feminist development policy are and how they differ from attitudes towards DC in general, a survey was carried out with ten characteristics of attitude strength. The measuring tool explained in Section 3.4, which was used to determine the strength of attitudes towards development policy, was also used to measure attitude strength towards feminist development policy. The ten⁶⁶ characteristics of attitude strength included attitude certainty, attitude ambivalence, subjective accessibility for the assessment of the attitude, personal relevance, interest, personal involvement, the influence of beliefs and moral convictions on the attitude, the self-assessed extremity of the attitude and affective intensity (see Figure 38; the precise wording of the questions relating to the individual characteristics can be seen in Table 3 of Section 1.1.3 of the online appendix).⁶⁷

When it comes to the topic of feminist development policy, respondents are, on average, slightly more confident, have less ambivalence and form their attitude more quickly than when it comes to development policy in general, but feel less affected by it. In Figure 38, it can be seen that the average value for the characteristic of attitude certainty is higher (by 0.4 points on the scale) for feminist development policy than for development policy without this label, but the average values for ambivalence and for subjective accessibility are lower (by 0.4 and 0.2 points on the scale respectively). Overall, therefore, the respondents appear to be slightly more confident in their attitude towards feminist development policy than in their attitude towards development policy in general. This is also evident when examining the factors of attitude strength (see also Section 3.4.1). As shown in Figure 39, 51 percent of respondents feel very confident in their attitude towards feminist development policy. This is 11 percentage points more than for development policy without the feminist label. This could be because the topic of feminism triggers stronger reactions in the population than the topic of development policy, and it is possible that more stable attitudes exist towards feminism than towards development policy in general. This greater attitude certainty leads to the conclusion that attitudes towards this type of development policy may be less susceptible to change by external influences and that people may persist more strongly in their opinion on this topic.

⁶⁶ The characteristic "perceived knowledge" was not included for the analysis of attitude strength towards feminist development policy, in contrast to the analyses in Section 3.4, as only respondents who had stated that they had already heard of feminist development policy were asked about this characteristic. As a large proportion of respondents therefore show a lack of data points for this characteristic, the characteristic was not included in the analysis.

⁶⁷ Every person went through both the survey on attitude strength regarding development policy in general and the survey on attitude strength regarding feminist development policy. To avoid question-order effects, the block of questions that was to be answered first was randomly determined (see Oldendick, 2008; Schuman and Presser, 1996). The results shown in this chapter are based exclusively on the half of the sample that completed the block on feminist development policy first.

Figure 38 Characteristics and factors of attitude strength by type of development policy

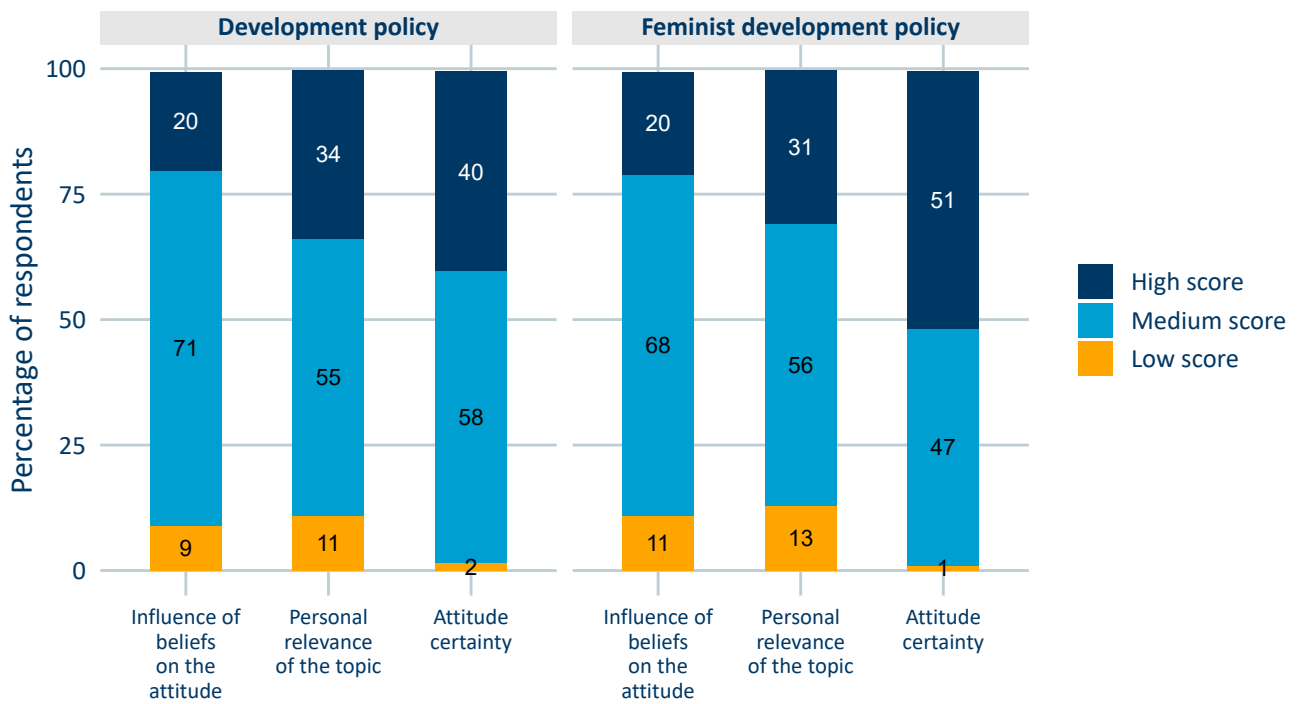
Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEval survey, carried out by Respondi/Bilendi in August 2023. $N = 4,050$. The respondents were randomly assigned to a survey with questions on development policy in general ($N = 2,041$) or questions on feminist development policy ($N = 2,009$) first. The figure shows mean values with 95% confidence intervals, broken down by type of development policy, for the people who answered the questions on the respective development policy first. The response options varied depending on the question, but consisted of a seven-point scale for all questions, where “1” represents lower values and “7” higher values. “4” corresponds to the centre of the scale and a medium score. With regard to the individual characteristics, higher values are generally an indication of more stable attitudes. In the case of the characteristics that are marked with * (“attitude ambivalence” and “subjective accessibility”), lower values are an indicator of more stable attitudes.

The fact that the respondents, on average, feel less affected by feminist development policy than by development policy without this label is partly because men in particular feel that a feminist development policy addresses them less than women. For example, an in-depth analysis

has shown that the personal involvement of men and women does not differ when it comes to the topic of development policy, but men feel less personally affected when the same development policy is referred to as “feminist”.⁶⁸

⁶⁸ The details of this analysis are documented in Table 48 in Section 2.3.5 of the online appendix.

Figure 39 Factors of attitude strength by type of development policy (share of respondents)



Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEval survey by ResponDi/Bilendi in August 2023. N = 4,050. The respondents were randomly assigned to a survey with questions on development policy in general (N = 2,041) or questions on feminist development policy (N = 2,009) first. In each case, the values are based solely on the share of the respondents who answered the questions on the respective topic first. The figure shows the three factors into which the individual characteristics have been conflated on the basis of the exploratory factor analysis, and the shares of the population that give a low (average value < 3), medium (average value 3–5) or high (average value > 5) score for these factors.

In order to understand how the different characteristics of attitude strength relate to support for feminist development policy, the respondents were segmented. As in Section 3.4.2, a latent profile analysis (LPA; see Box 6) was used, which included ten characteristics of attitude strength as well as support for a feminist development policy. All the variables included in the LPA are shown in Figure 41.

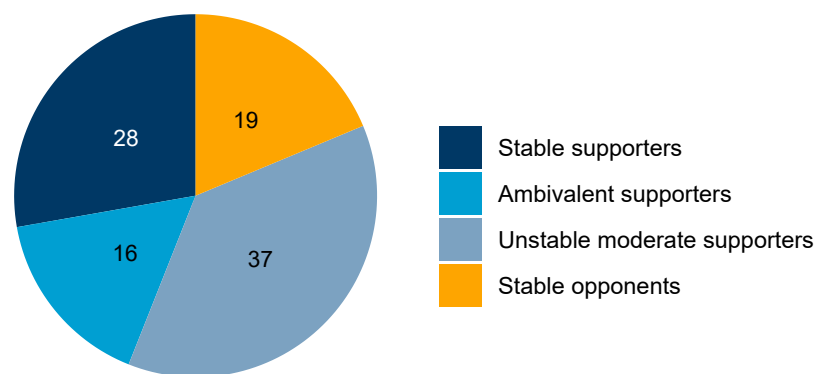
During the segmentation, four attitude types were identified: (1) “stable supporters” (28%), (2) “ambivalent supporters” (16%), (3) “unstable moderate supporters” (37%) and (4) “stable opponents” (19%). The proportion of respondents assigned to each of the attitude types is presented in Figure 40.⁶⁹ The names of the attitude types were chosen on the basis of the two dimensions “support for feminist development policy” and “attitude strength”.

⁶⁹ The LPA found that a solution with five groups best describes the data. In a solution with five groups, two attitude profiles were identified for unstable moderate supporters, which differ only slightly from one another both in their support for feminist development policy and in the score given to the various attitude characteristics. For the sake of simplification, these two attitude profiles have been conflated into a single group in this report. The shares and the attitude profiles, taking all five groups into account, and other details of the results of the latent profile analysis are documented in Section 2.3.5 of the online appendix.

The four attitude types with regard to feminist development policy coincide with those that were determined for attitudes towards development policy (see Section 3.4.2). This could indicate that the attitude types found represent a general pattern that emerges for attitude strength in relation to attitudes towards DC. Even though the attitude types are based on similar variables, the analyses were calculated independently of one another. Therefore, the shares of the attitude types are only comparable to a limited extent.

More than a quarter of respondents could be identified as stable supporters of a feminist development policy; more than half as unstable or ambivalent supporters. Thus, there is a core of stable supporters whose attitude is unlikely to change as a result of external influences and who stand firmly behind a feminist development policy. At the same time, a majority is undecided with regard to their attitudes towards feminist development policy. In this group, support is still unstable and can be changed more easily.

Figure 40 Share of respondents assigned to the four attitude types for feminist development policy (in percent)

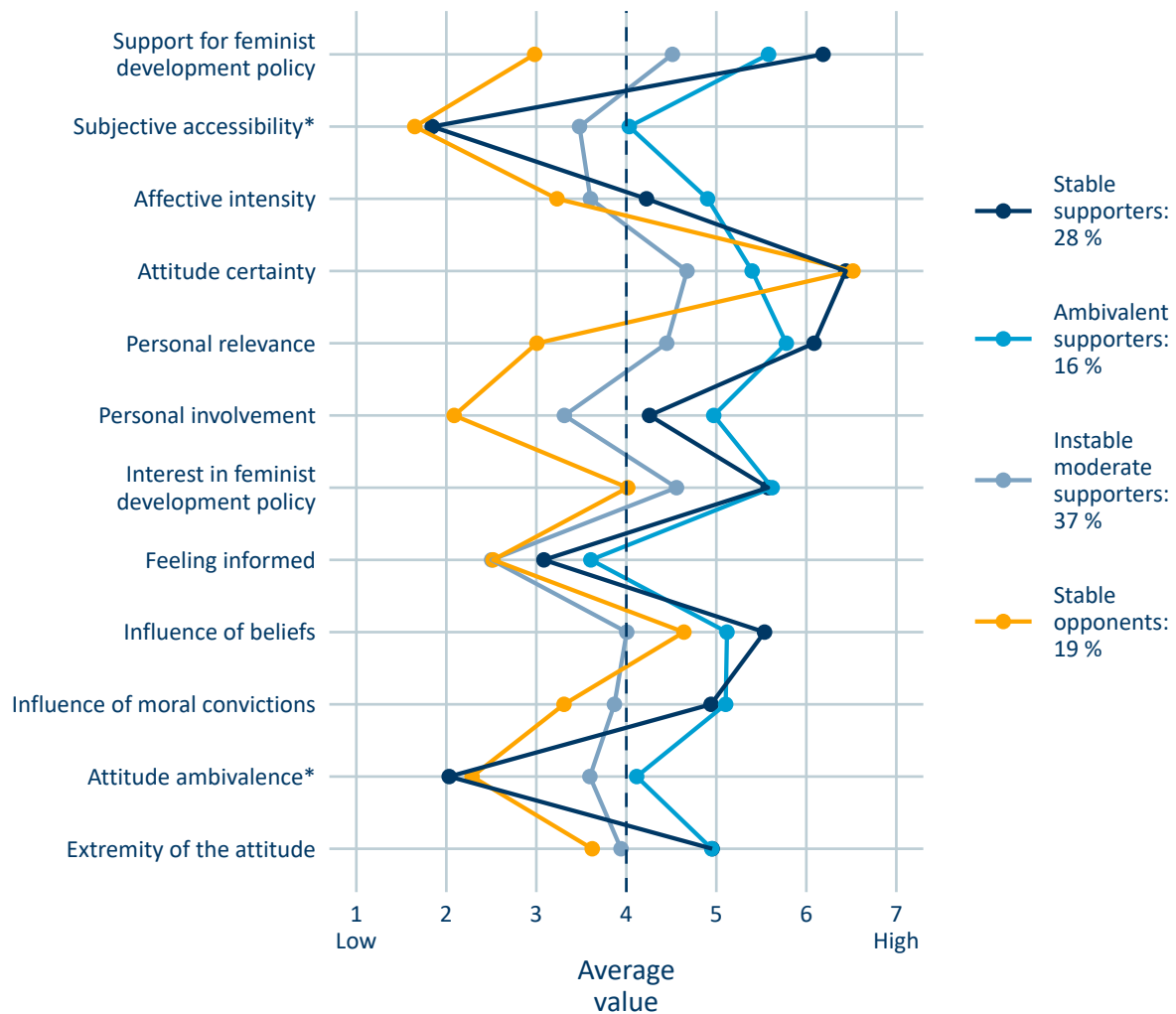


Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEval survey, carried out by Respondi/Bilendi in August 2023. $N = 4,050$. The respondents were randomly assigned to a survey with questions on development policy in general ($N = 2,041$) or questions on feminist development policy ($N = 2,009$) first. The values are based on the share of respondents who answered the questions about feminist development policy ($N = 2,009$) first. The figure shows the shares for the four attitude types to which the respondents were assigned by an LPA on the basis of their responses.

A fifth of respondents reject a feminist development policy in general and thus fall into the category of opponents. As can be seen in Figure 41, the average value given by this group for support for feminist development policy is clearly below the centre of the scale. This contrasts with the analysis of attitude

types regarding development policy in general, in which even the stable opponents had average support values near the centre of the scale. Therefore, this finding too could suggest that the label “feminist development policy” can lead to more polarised attitudes.

Figure 41 The profiles of the four attitude types regarding feminist development policy



Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEval survey, carried out by ResponDi/Bilendi in August 2023. N = 4,050. The respondents were randomly assigned to a survey with questions on development policy in general (N = 2,041) or questions on feminist development policy (N = 2,009) first. The figure shows mean values for the different characteristics of attitude strength, broken down into the four attitude types that were identified by a latent profile analysis. The values are based solely on the share of respondents who answered the questions about feminist development policy first. The response options varied depending on the question, but consisted of a seven-point scale for all questions, where “1” represents lower values and “7” higher values. “4” corresponds to the centre of the scale and a medium score. With regard to the individual characteristics, higher values are generally an indication of more stable attitudes. In the case of the characteristics that are marked with * (“attitude ambivalence” and “subjective accessibility”), lower values are an indicator of more stable attitudes.

Opponents and unstable supporters of a feminist development policy deviate, as expected, from stable supporters in terms of their party preferences; other differences can be seen with regard to the sociodemographic variables of gender, age and level of formal education. An in-depth analysis was carried out to investigate the relationship between group membership and the characteristics of gender, age, formal level of education and party preference. The comparison group is the group of stable supporters. In this analysis, it was evident that stable opponents tend to be male and between 30 and 59 years old. Unstable supporters, on the other hand, do not differ from stable supporters in terms of their age and gender. Both opponents and unstable supporters tend to have a lower level of formal education. With regard to party preferences, the picture is as expected: both opponents and unstable supporters identify less frequently with the Greens and more frequently with the CDU, the AfD, other unspecified parties or no party (in comparison with the SPD).⁷⁰

4.4.4 Feminist development policy in times of global crises

The previous analyses show that support for a feminist development policy depends on various personal factors. Which label is selected and whether and how contents of the policy are communicated is also important. Furthermore, the analysis of attitude strength shows that, in addition to stable supporters and stable opponents, there is also a large group of people who are not certain of their attitude. Thus, the attitude towards feminist development policy is probably still malleable in a large section of the population. Whether this section of the population supports or rejects a feminist development policy in the long term will probably depend on how the contents and objectives of this policy orientation are formulated.

One previously unheeded factor is that a feminist foreign and development policy's ability to deliver results is increasingly called into question in times of acute crises and that its implementation into political decisions and measures is regarded with scepticism (Ganter and Stamm, 2022). For example, in a speech in March 2022, leader of

the CDU Friedrich Merz indicated that a feminist foreign and development policy conflicts with expenditure on military objectives in the context of the war against Ukraine (German Bundestag, 2022b). In addition, there are doubts as to whether a feminist development policy really changes anything and whether it is translated into concrete interventions (e.g. OECD, 2023, p. 97–99).

Another aspect that could have a negative effect on support for a feminist development policy in times of global crises is that people may weigh up different development policy objectives against one another. In Section 3.3.3, for example, it was demonstrated that the general public is more likely to endorse a traditional approach to DC and is more likely to support objectives from traditional DC sectors (education, food, health care) than more progressive objectives such as promoting women's rights, equality or protecting minorities. The BMZ's feminist strategy is pursuing a holistic approach and shows how close the links are between various fields of action (for example gender equality and poverty) of DC. Within the population, however, these relationships could be less visible or could be viewed more critically, potentially leading to a trade-off between the various fields of action.

A survey experiment was conducted to investigate the extent to which feminist development policy is supported in times of global crises and how different narratives can change this support. First, the respondents received a text about current global crises. Then they were randomly given a text in which feminist development policy was justified on either normative or instrumental grounds. All respondents received the same text to begin with, which drew their attention to current global challenges and crises such as the war of aggression against Ukraine, the war in the Middle East, the Covid-19 pandemic, climate change, and economic cut-backs and increased social inequality in the world and in Germany. At the end of the text, it says "All these global crises also present challenges for German development policy and development cooperation. The current German Federal Government has shifted its focus regarding development policy in recent years and is now pursuing a feminist development policy." After this introduction, the respondents were randomly assigned to four experimental groups. The first group received additional information about the objectives and

⁷⁰ For the rationale behind these analyses, see footnote 26. The detailed results of this analysis are documented in Figure 30 in Section 2.3.5 of the online appendix.

contents of feminist development policy. This explained that women's rights and equality are key contents and objectives of development policy, as they are a human right that has so far not been achieved in any country in the world (normative justification). The second group also received information about feminist development policy. Women's rights and equality were described as key objectives and contents of development policy, with the justification that the participation of women, girls and marginalised groups is seen as a prerequisite for better and more sustainable development results (instrumental justification). A third group received both sets of information about feminist development policy. The control group received no additional information beyond the introductory sentence. Then the respondents had to indicate their general level of support for feminist development policy.⁷¹

With this approach, the effect that different narratives have on support for feminist development policy can be investigated. It can also be determined whether a normative and an instrumental justification of feminist development policy have different effects, especially in the context of global crises. For example, an instrumental justification could be more likely to lead to people judging a feminist development policy to be effective and capable of delivering results, even in times of crises. In addition, the control group of the experimental design can be used as an indicator for determining whether a feminist development policy is assessed differently in the context of global crises and when these crises are not directly present.

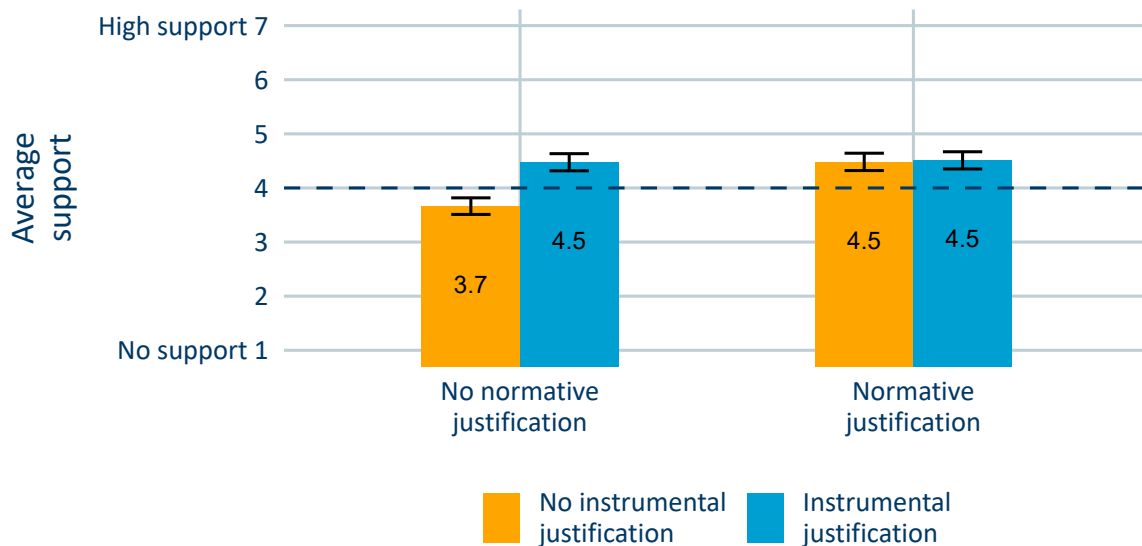
Both a normative and an instrumental justification increased support for feminist development policy in the context of global crises in comparison with the control group.⁷²

As can be seen in Figure 42, the average support for feminist development policy is below the centre of the scale ("4"). This means that this policy is rather rejected. Both the presentation of an individual justification and the presentation of both justifications increased support for feminist development policy by 0.7 points on the scale; with an average value of 4.5, this was clearly above the centre of the scale. No difference in effect is evident for the different justifications. Even when both justifications were presented, the support did not increase further. This result suggests that additional information about the objectives and motivations of feminist development policy can increase support that has fallen in the context of global challenges. Both instrumental and normative justifications can contribute to this; in the setting studied, a combination is not more effective than a normative or an instrumental justification alone.

The same effect can be seen for the perception of the effectiveness of feminist development policy: if respondents are given a more detailed explanation of feminist development policy, they not only support it more, but also class it as more effective. On a scale from 1 to 10, the mean value for the assessment of the effectiveness of feminist development policy without further justification is 4.5. With a normative justification or a combination of a normative and an instrumental justification, this value increases by 0.7 points on the scale to 5.2. An interesting observation is that the effectiveness of feminist development policy is rated most highly when only an instrumental justification is provided. Here, the mean value is 5.4 (see Figure 31 in Section 2.3.6 of the online appendix).

⁷¹ The experiment was previously recorded in a pre-registration (see Chapter 2), which can be accessed at <https://osf.io/37na9>.

⁷² The experiment was analysed with a variance analysis. The detailed results of these analyses are documented in Section 2.3.6 of the online appendix.

Figure 42 Support for feminist development policy depending on the justification

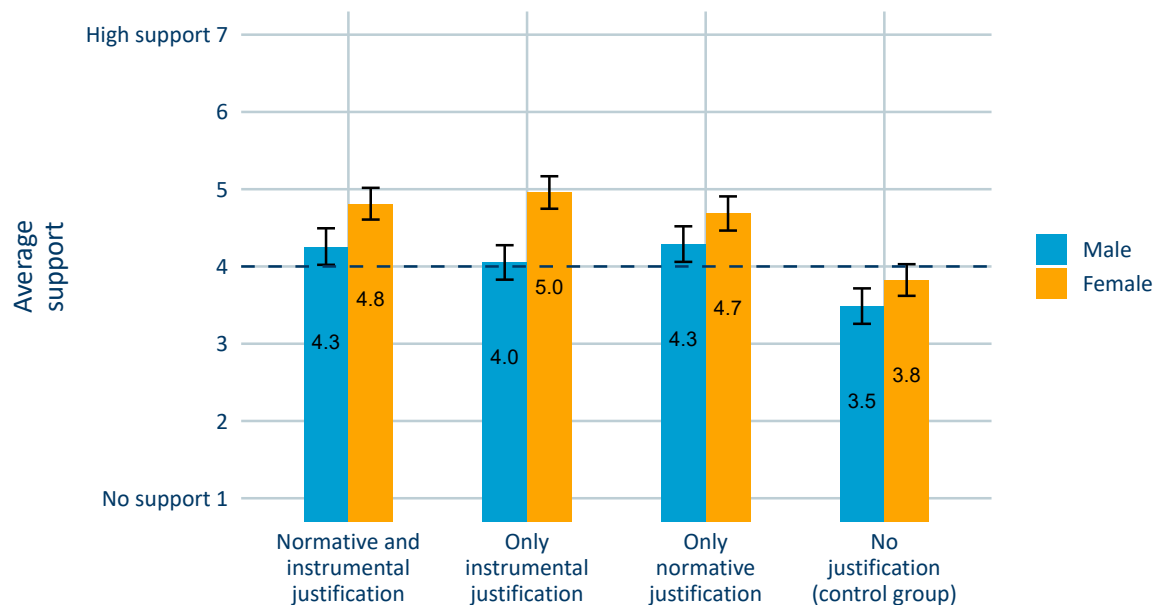
Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEval survey, carried out by Respondi/Bilendi in December 2023. $N = 2,146$. The figure shows mean values with 95% confidence intervals, broken down by experimental condition. The left-hand bar represents the control group and thus a feminist development policy without further justification. The right-hand bar represents feminist development policy with both a normative and an instrumental justification. The question was: "What is your opinion about the current focus of the German Federal Government's development policy, the so-called feminist development policy?" The response was provided on a seven-point scale from 1 ("don't support at all") to 7 ("completely support"). The value "4" corresponds to the centre of the scale ("neither support nor don't support").

The different justifications of a feminist development policy in this study had no influence on the respondents' opinions as to whether the budget for DC should be increased or reduced in general. This could lead to the conclusion that information about feminist development policy has an effect primarily on direct support for such a policy, but not on development policy in general. Alternatively, this finding could also mean that the presentation of a feminist development policy does have an influence on general support for development policy in the context of global crises, but that even detailed justifications cannot change an individual attitude when it comes to the distribution of scarce financial resources.

Gender differences

Even though women generally support feminist development policy more than men in this experiment, everyone, regardless of gender, is more likely to support a feminist development policy if it is also justified.⁷³ As can be seen in Figure 43, the average support for feminist development policy is 0.3 to 1.0 points on the scale higher for women than for men. While both women and men in the control group show a level of support below the centre of the scale, this support is on or above the centre of the scale for all respondents, irrespective of gender, in the conditions in which feminist development policy is justified.

⁷³ Only people who identify either as "female" or "male" were included in the analysis, as the group of people identifying as "non-binary" was too small for a meaningful analysis. For a detailed explanation of how gender information was collected in the surveys behind this report, see Box 2.

Figure 43 Support for feminist development policy by justification and gender

Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEval survey, carried out by ResponDi/Bilendi in December 2023. $N = 2,146$. The figure shows mean values with 95% confidence intervals, broken down by justification and gender. The question was: “What is your opinion about the current focus of the German Federal Government’s development policy, the so-called feminist development policy?” The response was provided on a seven-point scale from 1 (“don’t support at all”) to 7 (“completely support”). The value “4” corresponds to the centre of the scale (“neither support nor don’t support”).

The difference in support for feminist development policy between women and men is particularly great if feminist development policy is justified with instrumental objectives. This is where the highest level of support from women and, apart from the control condition, the lowest level of support from men can be seen, leading to a difference of a whole point on the scale (see Figure 43).

As the focus of the instrumental justification for feminist development policy was on the positive consequences of women, girls and marginalised groups being decision-makers, such wording could cause men to believe that the status of their own group is threatened. This could, in turn, bring about a greater rejection of feminist development policy. In accordance with this hypothesis, experimental psychological research shows, for example, that men support feminist movements less if they feel that their own status is under threat (Rivera-Rodriguez et al., 2022).

4.4.5 Conclusion: a challenging label with contents that lend themselves to a consensus

The guiding principle of feminist development policy could attract attention and bring development policy more strongly into public debate. However, it is doubtful whether this means that development policy will lose its status as a niche topic. The term “feminist development policy” is gaining prominence and is already better known than the term “SDGs”. Thus, it has the potential to make development policy topics more visible – even among people who may not previously have engaged with these topics. At the same time, the term appears to have failed to stimulate discourse on a wider scale in the general public. For example, the information environment on Twitter/X only changed selectively in the wake of the presentation of the strategy by the BMZ. The topics of “gender equality” and “representation of women” are mentioned by respondents as contents of feminist development policy, but specific contents of the strategy are less well known.

The “feminist” label could contribute to a decline in support for development policy, especially against the backdrop of global crises, and the previous consensus on development policy could dwindle as a result of a more polarised political debate. For instance, a feminist development policy receives less support than other guiding principles such as a “human rights-based” or “peace-promoting” development policy. In addition, the differences between supporters of different political parties in terms of their support for DC are greater when the label “feminist” is chosen for development policy. Furthermore, respondents tend to be more confident in their attitudes towards feminist development policy than in their attitudes towards development policy in general. This could foster further political polarisation.

The contents of a feminist development policy appear to lend themselves to consensus more than the corresponding label and thus provide opportunities for development policy communications. For example, there is more agreement between supporters of different parties when it comes to their support for a development policy with feminist contents but without a feminist label. The objective of strengthening the rights, representation and resources of women, girls and marginalised groups is also largely endorsed by opponents and supporters of feminist development policy. However, discrepancies can be seen with regard to transformational objectives or the redistribution of financial resources. This also makes it clear that support varies according to the contents. Support for a feminist development policy will ultimately depend on how it is implemented and communicated and on what contents and narratives are brought to the fore.

5.

IMPLICATIONS

Implication 1: Support for development cooperation is waning. In this situation, development policy actors should look into possible changes to their strategies and design policy communication and education proactively to meet future challenges.

Support for DC has been declining substantially across the entire political spectrum in Germany since the beginning of 2022; the consensus regarding development policy is eroding, although it has not yet been broken. This development falls in a period that is characterised by financial burdens for the government and the individual and, at least sporadically, by high media attention for development policy. At the same time, public discussion is increasingly polarised. This polarisation does not only relate to the fringes of the political spectrum. There are also clear divergences between supporters of the government and the opposition and even within the current governing parties – especially between supporters of the FDP and those of the other coalition parties – when it comes to attitudes towards development, foreign and security policy. This poses challenges for development policy, both with regard to its implementation and with respect to communications about the policy area.

In relation to the design of development policy, the declining support can be seen as an opportunity for development policy actors to reflect on their own actions and thus to consider which objectives German DC would like to pursue, which tools should be used and how to better monitor the achievement of objectives and the effectiveness of the policy. Evaluations and studies repeatedly point to challenges in development policy. Key concepts include a geographical and sectoral fragmentation of the portfolio, coordination and coherence problems within DC in the narrower sense (in particular relating to the coordination of technical and financial cooperation) and with other departments and international donors; difficulties associated with reviewing the achievement of objectives and

the effectiveness; and challenges when it comes to learning from evidence (see, for example, OECD, 2021). Against the backdrop of the persistently strained budgetary situation and the associated debate on government expenditure, the declining support should provide grounds for self-critically questioning how DC funds can be used more effectively and more efficiently and to what extent more use could be made of scientific evidence, in the spirit of a culture of learning, to push forward a global sustainable development.

The situation can be used to prepare development communications for future crises. In the past, development policy communications faced the challenge that the attention threshold for a public discussion was not generally reached. Examples of this are the low level of familiarity with the SDGs as well as the low level of knowledge about development policy topics in the German population. In the future, however, it is at least possible that negative news about DC in particular will produce attention peaks – the discussions in winter 2023/2024 about cycle paths in Peru, training in positive masculinity in Rwanda and DC with China and India provide a vivid illustration of this. These challenges for communications can be anticipated by development policy actors and accordingly translated into forward-looking action. The what, how and why of DC and its impact should be transparent and comprehensible to broader parts of the population and be based on coherence between different actors (BMZ, DC implementing organisations) in the public sector. Last but not least, a selectively raised awareness of the topics can also provide a chance to reach people who do not otherwise deal with DC (for the limitations of these communications, see Box 8).

Implication 2: A large proportion of the population has moderately positive, but unstable attitudes towards development policy. It makes sense for development policy actors to actively seek communication in order to maintain the existing consensus regarding development policy.

The analyses of attitude strength indicate that a large section of the population can potentially be reached by development communications. While approx. 19 percent can be characterised as stable supporters and 18 percent as stable opponents of DC, the majority of respondents (58%) have a moderately positive, but relatively unstable attitude towards development policy. If these people come into contact with information on the topic, this could lead to them changing their attitudes. Depending on the specific content of this information, this change may be positive or negative. For development policy actors, the question arises as to how best to operate in this environment?

One option is to wait until the economic and budgetary situation improves again, the public attention to DC declines and support for DC among the German population increases again or the fragile basic consensus about DC is re-established on the basis of unstable, but positive attitudes. The possibility of this scenario occurring cannot be ruled out, but is not very likely: the war against Ukraine, the situation in the Middle East, other global challenges and trouble spots, and the ongoing challenges for the German economy and the German federal budget are likely to shape the political agenda in the short and medium term. There are also the upcoming elections in 2024 and 2025 and the corresponding positions of the political actors. In view of this situation, a return to a broad consensus based on rather unstable attitudes is unlikely in the foreseeable future.

A second option for development policy actors is to actively shape the public debate on the topic. This can be done with more or less strongly polarising labels, but should build

upon contents that largely lend themselves to a consensus at the same time. The results presented in Chapter 4.4 show that the contents of a feminist development policy meet with relatively broad support. The label “feminist development policy” is associated with much more negative support values among people who place themselves (more) on the right of the political spectrum than is an alternative development policy label with related contents (for example, “human rights-based” or “peace-promoting”). At the same time, the label “feminist development policy” is comparatively well known, and therefore appears to generate a certain level of attention. In communications about development policy, appropriate consideration should be given to how attention can be attracted to the policy area – on the premise that the communications are also as broadly connective as possible. This could take place via the contents of a feminist development policy that are supported by the German population, for example the “3 Rs” (resources, rights and representation) or via objectives of DC that receive a particularly high level of support, such as improvements to the conditions in the areas of WASH, education, health, or food and agriculture. In this context, it should also be borne in mind that greater gender equality can also have a positive effect on other areas (and vice versa). An example of this is the significance of women for peace processes and generally for the establishment of more peaceful societies (Hudson et al., 2020, UN Women, 2015). For instance, studies suggest that peace treaties are longer lasting if women are involved in negotiating the treaty (e.g. Adjei, 2019). This relationship also exists for the degree of equality of women in the societies in question.

Box 8 Limitations of development policy communications

Various psychological mechanisms can influence the impact of information. These include the finding that people react more strongly to negative information than to positive information (negativity bias; e.g. Soroka et al., 2019) and take a more critical stance towards information that contradicts their own views or comes from people and organisations that they do not like (motivated reasoning; Taber and Lodge, 2006). For development policy actors, this means that reaching the sections of the German population that have a more critical attitude towards the Federal Government is particularly challenging in a news landscape that is shaped by negative information about the Global South (Maurer and Reinemann, 2006, Chapter 4.3). Against this backdrop, non-governmental DC actors and social media play an important role in communication.

Implication 3: The increasing interconnectedness between DC and geopolitical and security policy aspects is leading to new areas of tension in development policy; here it is important to find a new balance of interests and to communicate this appropriately.

Experimental findings have made it clear that strategic or geopolitical and security policy factors are playing an increasingly important role in which partner countries are preferred for DC. This is evident with respect to (1) support for Ukraine (and other countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia), (2) reservations about countries that have ties with Russia and China and (3) the significance of partner countries as energy suppliers for Germany. The perception of threat is relevant to development policy attitudes in this context. If the security policy benefit of DC is not sufficiently clear to the German population, this could lead to a loss of support for DC. Particularly because the policy areas cannot be viewed separately, several areas of tension are arising for development policy actors:

1. **Normative tensions:** from a normative perspective, geopolitical and security policy objectives can clash with human rights obligations and objectives. A hypothetical example is the case of a partner country that is important to Germany on a geopolitical level systematically violating the rights of women and LGBTIQ+ people.
2. **Impact-related tensions:** with regard to a conflict between the impacts of development policy and geopolitical or security policy objectives, one area of tension may lie in the fact that security policy considerations (e.g. “The security of Germany is also being defended in the Hindu Kush”; statement by former Defence Minister Peter Struck on the deployment of the German army in Afghanistan) contribute towards longer-term development policy objectives being neglected and thus, in the worst case scenario, failing in both target areas (Hartmann et al., 2023). This may in particular be the case if geopolitical and security policy aspects outweigh considerations of effectiveness when DC resources are allocated and the funds are not used where they can achieve most. Analogously, a focus on geopolitical and security policy objectives can also contribute towards problems of corruption that hamper development being exacerbated as a result of a more prominent role of the military (e.g. Gupta et al., 2001). At the same time, it is necessary to bear in mind that military operations in fragile countries that are marked by conflicts make DC interventions possible in the first place by creating an acceptable level of security (for DC in fragile states, see Faust et al., 2023; Wencker and Verspohl, 2019).
3. **Thematic and spatial tensions:** the high value assigned to geopolitical and security policy interests, could have a negative effect both on DC sectors and on cooperation with partners and regions with less direct relevance to geopolitics and security policy. Support for Ukraine, to which a growing share of German DC resources are being committed, can be cited to illustrate this. In the medium term, this can also contribute to new geopolitical and security policy challenges in other regions – especially in view of the increasing activities of China (e.g. Dreher et al., 2022), India (e.g. Fuchs and Vadlamannati, 2013) and Russia (e.g. Gray, 2015) in the Global South.

Development policy actors must find a balanced approach in these multiple areas of tension and communicate this to the public. On the one hand, this relates to a convincing conceptual delimitation of the policy areas that names interfaces transparently, without also abandoning independent objectives and normative obligations (Faust, 2024; Leininger and

Hornidge, 2024). On the other hand, it will be crucial to link a comprehensive security concept that covers various aspects of security (defence, preventing pandemics, energy security, etc.) to development policy objectives, as denoted by the term “integrated security” in the new National Security Strategy (Federal Foreign Office, 2023b).

Implication 4: The polarising effect of the term “feminist development policy” requires careful consideration of whether and how the label is used; contents that are capable of achieving a consensus should be implemented and communicated to the public

The polarising effect of the term “feminist development policy” presents challenges for development policy communications and the existing consensus on development policy in the German population. Feminist development policy receives less support on average than other, related development policy orientations; it is more polarising than development policy without this label, and in the context of global crises it is perceived as a less effective approach to development policy and is less likely to be supported. However, the label is relatively well known. It could attract public attention to development policy and, at the very least, encourage intermittent attention peaks. However, there is no evidence that the label helps to tap into new target groups. Therefore, it could have contributed to the declining support for development policy, especially in the context of global crises, and towards the debate surrounding development policy becoming polarised.

If the term “feminist development policy” is to be used, it is important to weigh up what objectives and target groups it is aiming to reach and whether the benefits balance out the costs. In certain groups of people, the feminist label can stabilise support for DC, whereas it could lead other groups of people that were previously more likely to endorse DC to rethink this attitude and to reject at least the concrete form of feminist development policy. In some groups of society, a rejection could be determined less by the contents than by the theoretical points of reference of a feminist development policy. Examples of this are intersectional, post-colonial and queer feminist approaches and approaches that are critical of capitalism from the humanities and social sciences, which meet with criticism in some sections of academia and the media and

in different political camps (see, for example, Chibber, 2013; Elbe et al., 2022; Feddersen and Gessler, 2021; Mounk, 2023). A rejection could, on the other hand, also occur because of the overriding associations that the term “feminism” triggers for some people. Increasingly powerful networks of political actors, think tanks, media platforms and campaign organisations, which pick up on and foster such a sentiment, are potentially relevant here. However, there is still the question of how advocates of the current feminist development policy would react to the label being abolished and whether this could lead to a sense of disappointment in people who are traditionally strong supporters of DC (Aspington and Shekh Mohamed, 2024).

Contents of feminist development policy that are capable of achieving consensus should reveal their impact when they are actually put into practice. Development policy actors should emphasise the contents and impact of feminist development policy in their communications and clearly explain the focus on feminist topics. The overriding objective of strengthening the rights, resources and representation of women, girls and marginalised groups is supported by both opponents and advocates of feminist development policy. And even if women’s rights and equality were not the top priority as objectives of German DC, they did not come far behind WASH, education, health care, and food and agriculture. Therefore, they were more likely to be endorsed than protecting the climate and the environment, promoting the economy and promoting democracy and the rule of law, for example. This shows that the contents of feminist development policy are supported by many respondents and are regarded as an important element of DC. In particular, the fact that supporters of different parties agree

that a feminist development policy without a feminist label but with feminist contents is worth supporting demonstrates that a social consensus has been reached regarding key contents, such as gender equality. Furthermore, in the context of global crises, respondents were more likely to support a feminist development policy if this was justified on normative or instrumental grounds than if it was presented without further explanation. From this perspective, it makes sense for the contents of a feminist development policy to be put into practice and to take effect. Their implementation and impact should also be communicated to the general public in an evidence-based manner. This could help to make the relevance of more consensual contents even more visible in practice (Office of the Auditor General of Canada, 2023; Towns et al., 2023).

6.

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7.

ANNEX

7.1 Data sources

Table 1 Surveys: Aid Attitudes Tracker and Development Engagement Lab

No.	Designation	Data collection	Respondents (total)
1	AAT wave 1	December 2013	5,700
2	AAT wave 2	June 2014	6,170
3	AAT wave 3	December 2014	5,914
4	AAT wave 4	June 2015	6,059
5	AAT wave 5	December 2015	6,027
6	AAT wave 6	June 2016	6,049
7	AAT wave 7	December 2016	6,131
8	AAT wave 8	July 2017	6,096
9	AAT wave 9	December 2017	6,108
10	AAT wave 10	July 2018	6,039
11	DEL panel wave 1	September 2019	6,004
12	DEL tracker wave 1	January 2020	1,141
13	DEL tracker wave 2	June 2020	1,025
14	DEL panel wave 2	September 2020	6,000
15	DEL tracker wave 3	January 2021	1,004
16	DEL tracker wave 4	June 2021	1,001
17	DEL panel wave 3	September 2021	6,000
18	DEL tracker wave 5	January 2022	1,015
19	DEL sandbox	June 2022	2,059
20	DEL tracker wave 6	June 2022	1,038
21	DEL panel wave 4	October 2022	6,008
22	DEL tracker wave 7	January 2023	1,100
23	DEL tracker wave 8	June 2023	1,067
24	DEL panel wave 5	October 2023	6,050
25	DEL tracker wave 9	January 2023	1,021

Source: DEval, own visualisation.

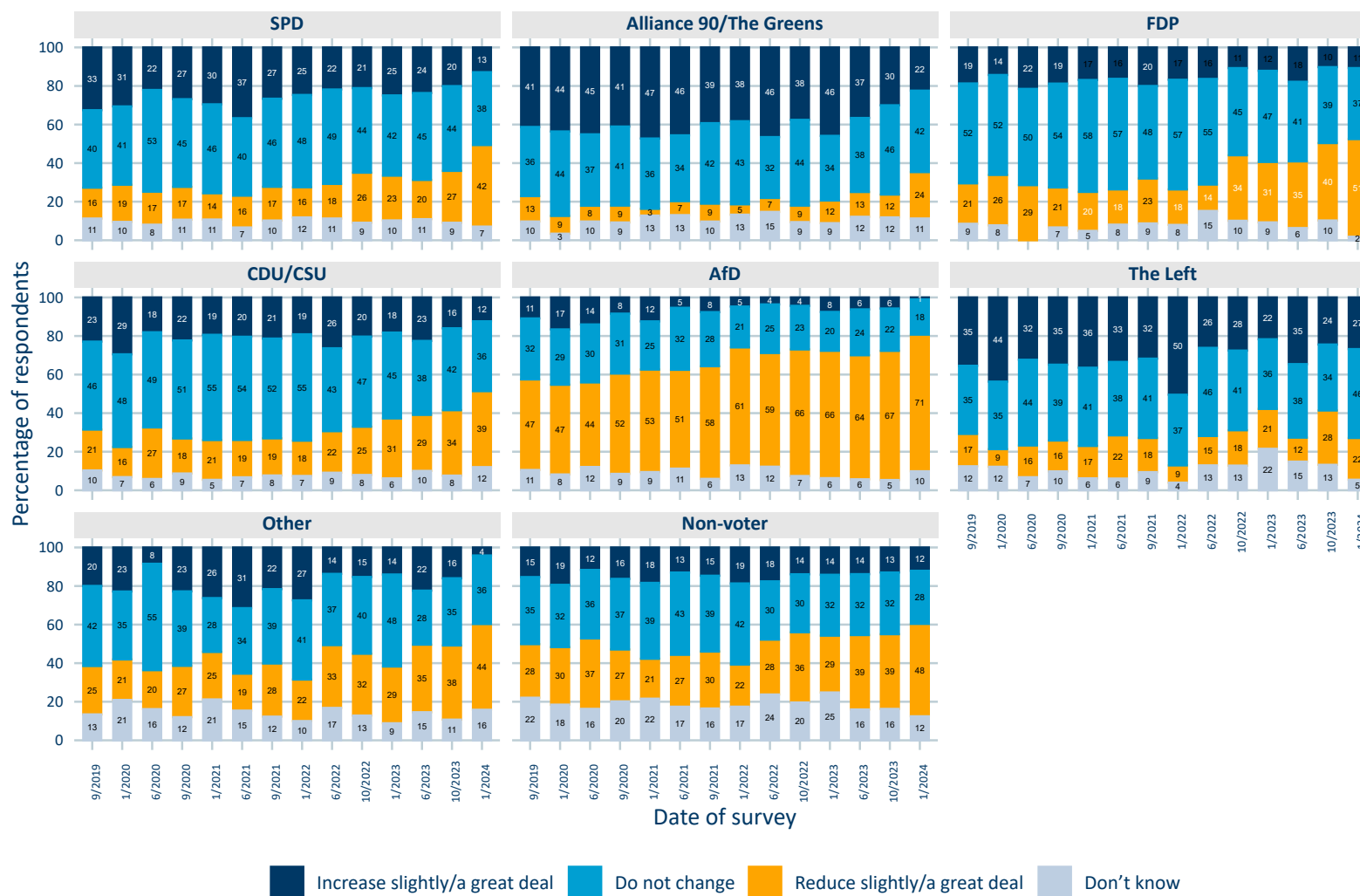
Table 2 Respondi/Bilendi surveys

No.	Time period	Respondents (total)	Contents	Remarks
1	24 January – 31 January 2023	2,000	Core questionnaire; module on cooperation with the private sector	
2	29 June – 12 July 2023	2,050	Foreign policy attitudes, emergency situations, support for Ukraine	
3	11 July – 9 August 2023	4,050	Survey tool for attitude strength; strength of attitudes towards development policy and feminist development policy	Half of respondents had to answer the block on feminist development policy first, followed by the block on development policy; the other half had to complete the survey the other way round.
4	25 July – 8 August 2023	2,000	Core questionnaire	
5	4 August – 22 August 2023	2,000	Knowledge and understanding of feminist development policy	
6	12 October – 24 October 2023	3,047	Conjoint experiment on prioritising partner countries	The survey contained a module for which the respondents were redirected to the survey website <i>SoSci-Survey</i> and had to answer the conjoint component there.
7	27 October – 13 November 2023	1,628	Survey experiment on feminist development policy: content v. label	The sample was divided into four experimental groups. Attention check: respondents who did not answer a content-related attention check question correctly were excluded.
8	19 December – 28 December 2023	2,146	Survey experiment on feminist development policy in a time of global crises	The sample was divided into four experimental groups. Attention check: respondents who were unable to answer a low-threshold content-related question about the treatments were excluded.
9	11 January – 19 January 2024	2,046	Survey experiment on support for DC in the context of wars against Ukraine and economic troubles	The sample was divided into four experimental groups. Attention check: respondents who were unable to answer a low-threshold content-related question about the treatments were excluded.
10	10 January – 17 January 2024	2,101	Core questionnaire; questions about expenditure on development policy in comparison with other policy areas; development policy education	

Source: DEval, own visualisation.

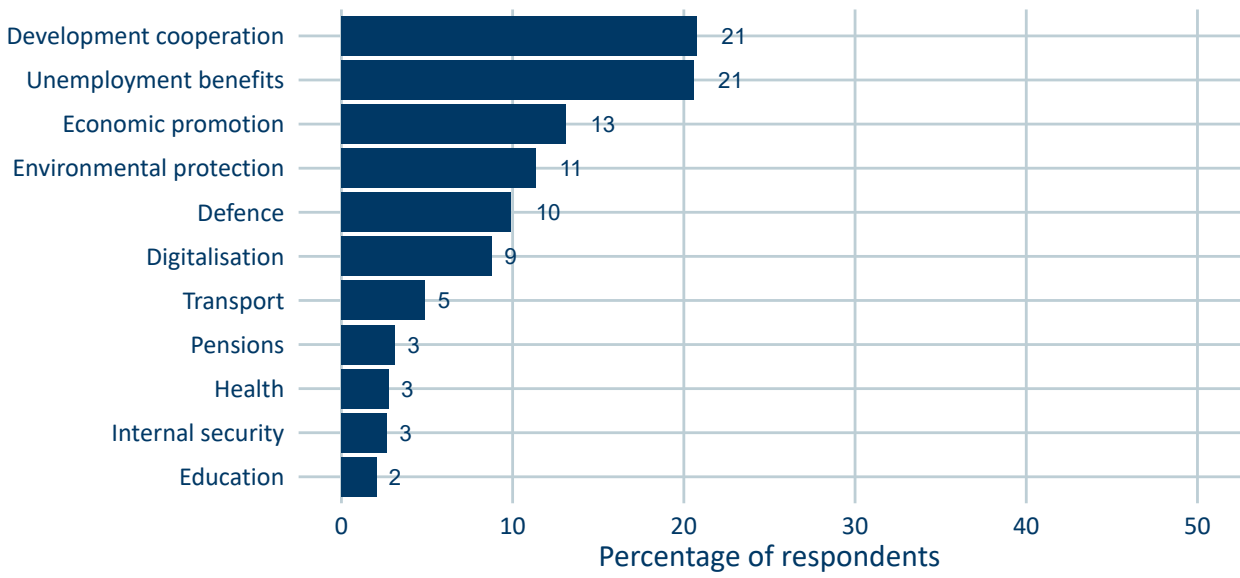
7.2 Supplementary analyses and figures

Figure 44 Support for development cooperation/ODA expenditure by party voted for in the last Bundestag elections



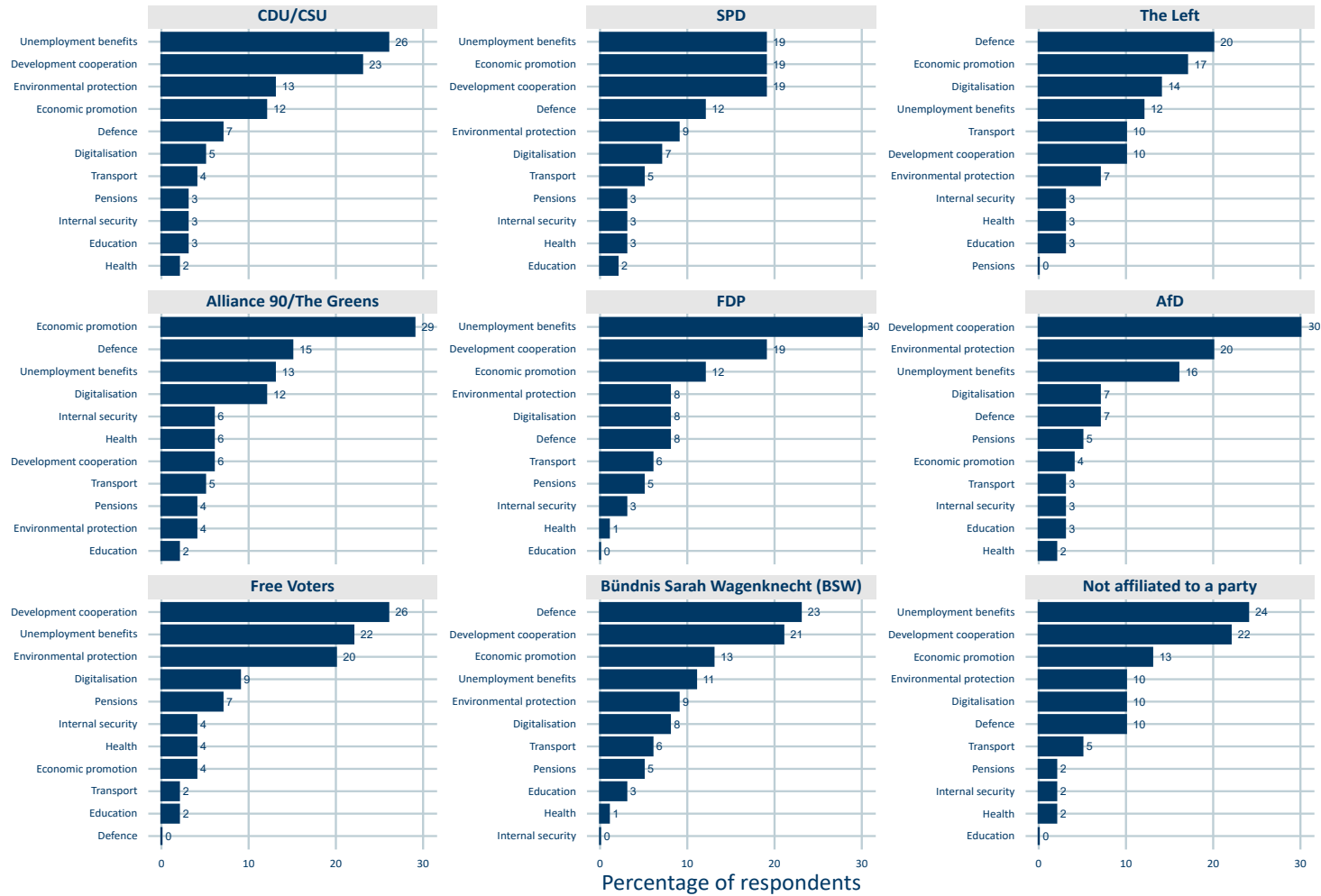
Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEL tracker and DEL panel 2019-2024. Weighted data. The question was: "From its total budget of approximately EUR 360 billion, the German Federal Government currently provides X.X percent – EUR XX.X billion – (note: the figures are updated each year) to poor countries for development cooperation. Do you think that the government should increase or decrease the amount of money that it spends on development cooperation?" The response options were: "increase a great deal", "increase somewhat", "don't change", "decrease somewhat", "decrease a great deal". The categories were conflated for the figure.

Figure 45 Policy area in which respondents would be most willing to cut expenditure



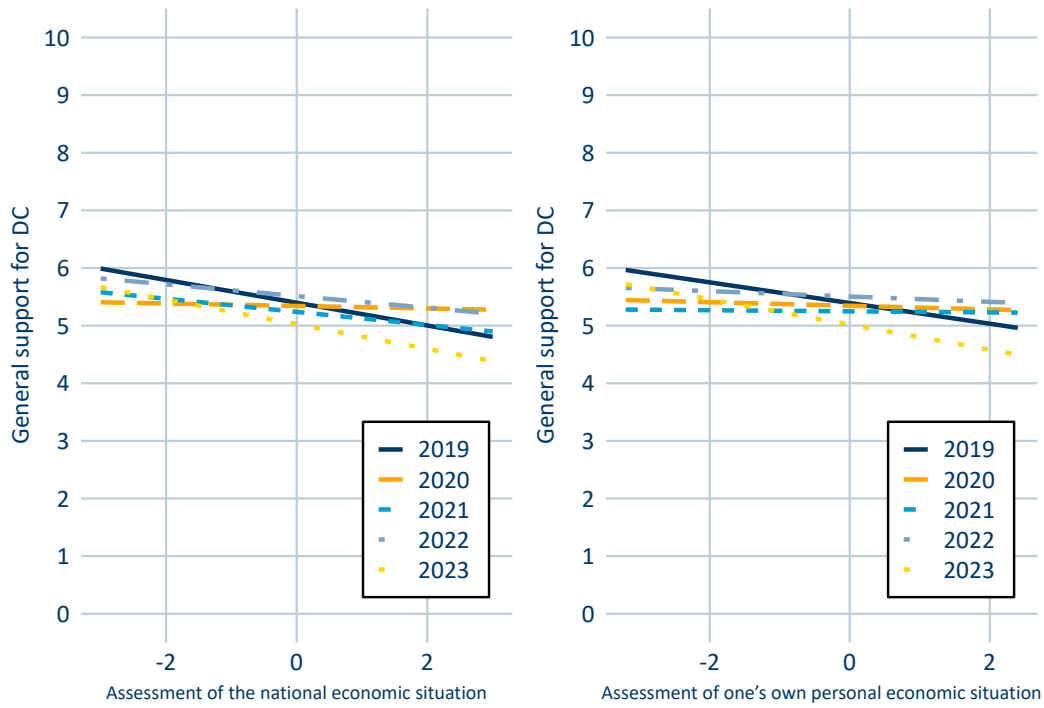
Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEval tracking, carried out by ResponDi/Bilendi in January 2024. N = 2,101. The question was: "Imagine that government expenditure urgently needs to be cut. In which of the following policy areas would you be most willing to cut expenditure? Please select a policy area." The question is based on the policy areas used in the survey carried out by the ZMSBw (Graf, 2022, p. 5).

Figure 46 Preferred policy area for cuts by party identification



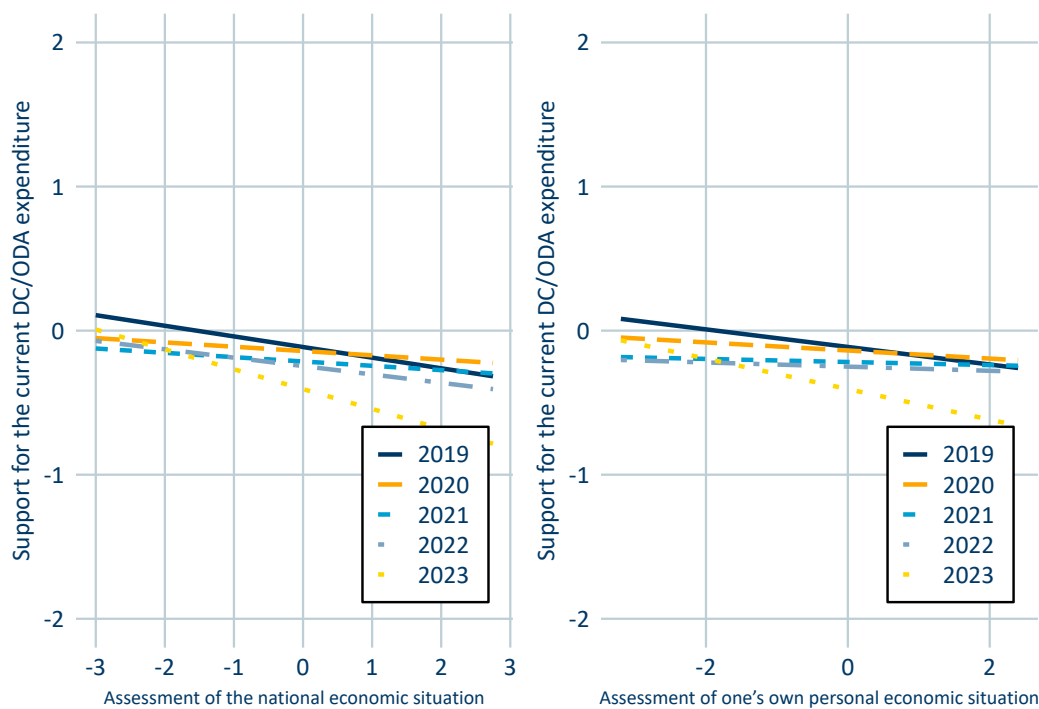
Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEval tracking, carried out by ResponDi/Bilendi in January 2024. N = 2,101. The question was: "Imagine that government expenditure urgently needs to be cut. In which of the following policy areas would you be most willing to cut expenditure? Please select a policy area." The question is based on the policy areas used in the survey carried out by the ZMSBw (Graf, 2022, p. 5).

Figure 47 Strength of the correlation between the assessment of the economic situation and support for development cooperation in different years



Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEL panel wave 1 to 5; N per wave ≈ 6,000. Multi-level model for longitudinal data (random intercepts and random slopes for the assessment of the economic situation). The figure is based on models M4 and M5 in Table 24 in the online appendix.

Figure 48 Strength of the correlation between the assessment of the economic situation and public support for the current development cooperation/ODA expenditure in different years



Source: DEval, own visualisation. Source of the data: DEL panel wave 1 to 5; N per wave \approx 6,000. Multi-level model for longitudinal data (random intercepts and random slopes for the assessment of the economic situation). The visualisation is based on models M4 and M5 in Table 25 of the online appendix.

7.3 Study schedule

Time frame	Tasks
January 2023 – March 2023	Conception and preparation of the study concept
March 2023	First reference group meeting to discuss the study concept
April 2024 – May 2024	Revision of the study concept
May 2023 – February 2024	Data collection, data analysis, report writing
March 2024 – May 2024	Internal and external peer review; revision of the draft report
May 2024	First reference group meeting to discuss the draft report
June 2024 – July 2024	Revision of the draft report
July 2024 – October 2024	Editing, layout and publication

7.4 Study team and contributors

Core team	Function	CRedit-Statement ⁷⁴
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Dr Helge Zille	Evaluator	Conceptualization, Methodology, Formal analysis, Investigation, Writing – Original Draft, Writing – Review & Editing, Visualization
Dr Martin Bruder	Head of department	Conceptualization, Writing – Review & Editing, Supervision
Merle Gmeineder	Project administrator	Project administration
Caroline Orth	Project administrator	Project administration

Contributors	Function
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Heike Steckhan	Internal peer reviewer
Dr Markus Steinbrecher	External peer reviewer
Simon Becker	Student employee
Hanna Link	Student employee
Carla Vasco Pérez	Student employee

Responsible	
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⁷⁴ The CRedit statement (Contributor Roles Taxonomy, <https://credit.niso.org/>) indicates the roles of the authors of this evaluation report in the evaluation. The CRedit taxonomy distinguishes between 14 different roles to show the specific contribution of the individual authors.

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