



WORLDVIEW TRENDS 2021-2026 WEBINAR

- / Dóchas Partner Meeting
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- /// www.developengagementlab.org

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WORLDVIEW TRENDS 2021-2026

- **To what extent does support for development aid and donation behaviour change over time?**
- **Worldview has tracked the following two questions since January 2021**

Do you feel it is very important, fairly important, not very important or not at all important that the Irish Government provides overseas aid to help people in developing countries?



Have you: Donated money to an international development organisation - sometimes known as overseas charities - working on the issue in the past 12 months?



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WORLDVIEW TRENDS 2021-2026

- **To what extent does support for development aid and donation behaviour change over time?**
- **Worldview has tracked the following two questions since January 2021**
 - **“What moves people?”**
 - Using Worldview data we can compare across different demographics, identities, life status
 - **“Does change within people matter?”**
 - But, more excitingly, we can follow the same person over time and see how shifts in attitudes or personal situation changes support for development aid and donation behaviour

IMPORTANCE OF AID TO THE IRISH PUBLIC



Do you feel it is very important, fairly important, not very important or not at all important that the Irish Government provides overseas aid to help people in developing countries?

PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT AID



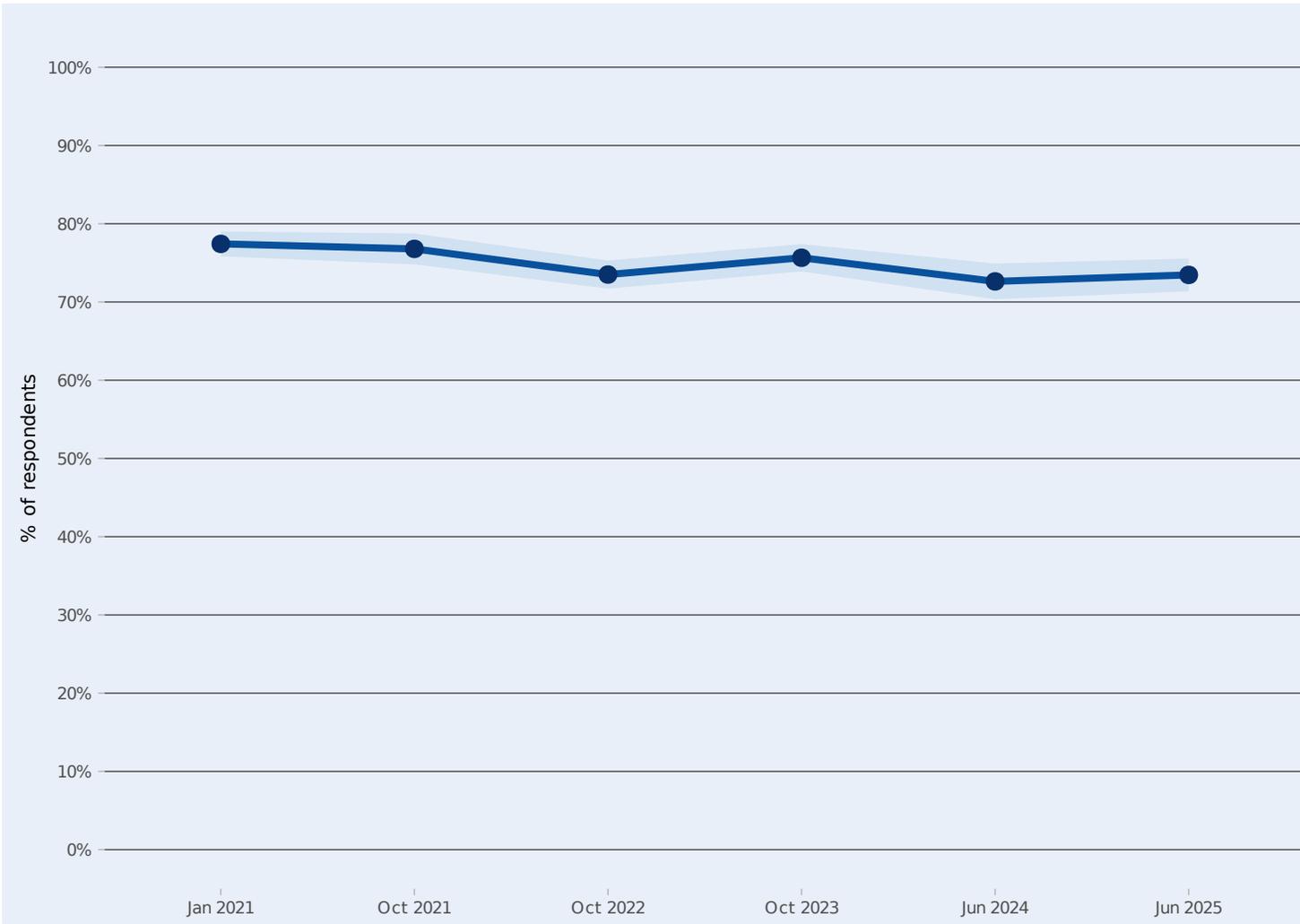
73%

say it is very or fairly important the Irish Government provides overseas aid

Public support for international development remains high.

Public support for overseas aid has remained remarkably stable since 2021, never falling below 7 in 10 of the population saying very or fairly important.

This suggests support is deep-seated rather than purely responsive to short-term events or media cycles.



INTENSITY OF IRISH PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR AID



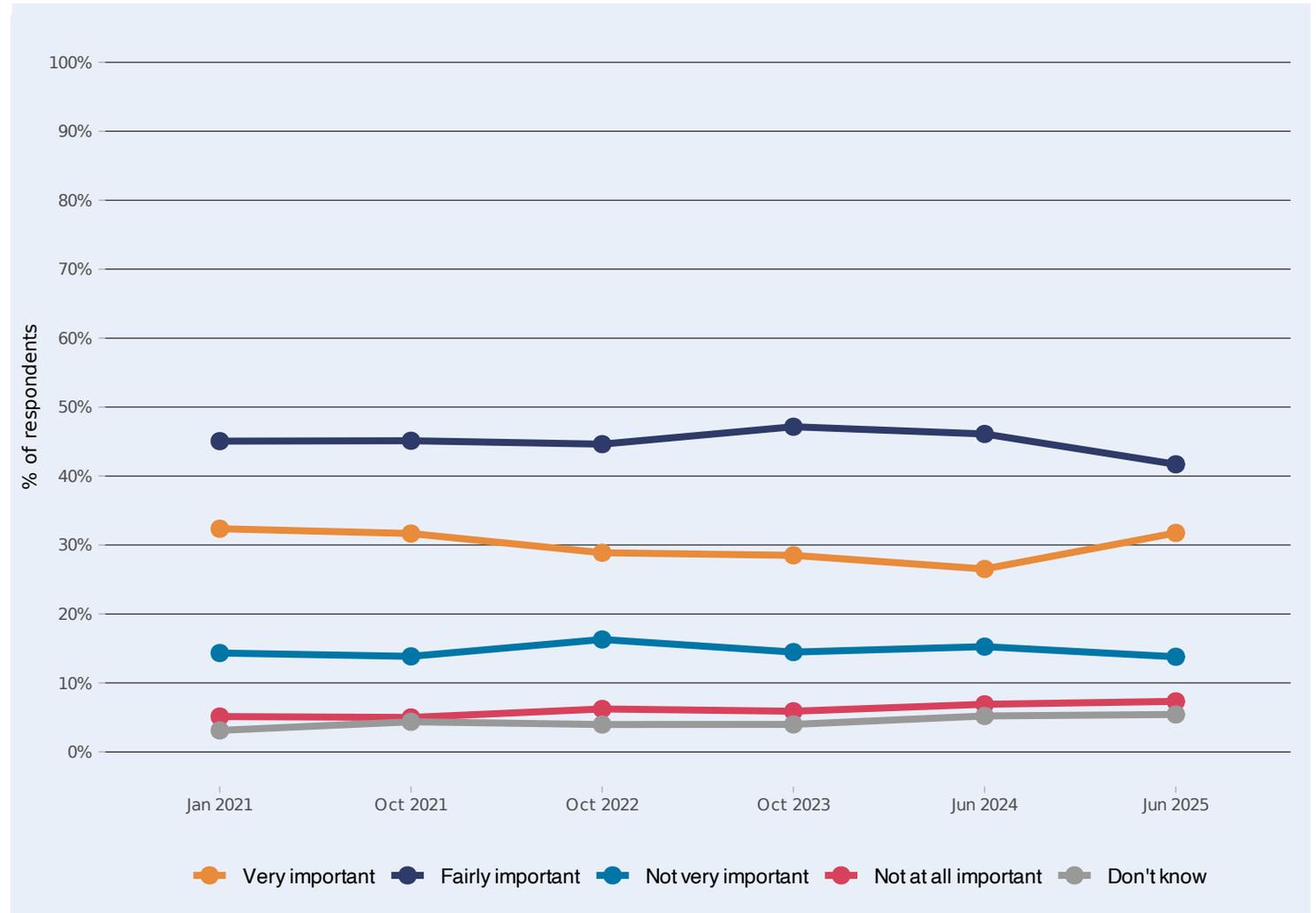
32%

say it is very important the Irish Government provides overseas aid

Overall support remains high, but its intensity has shifted over time.

Most of the movement occurs *within* the supportive majority, rather than between support and opposition. Since 2021, the share saying aid is fairly important has fluctuated modestly, while the proportion saying it is very important dipped in 2022–24 before rising again in 2025.

By June 2025, the share saying aid is very important returns to its highest level (of 32%), while outright opposition remains low and relatively stable.

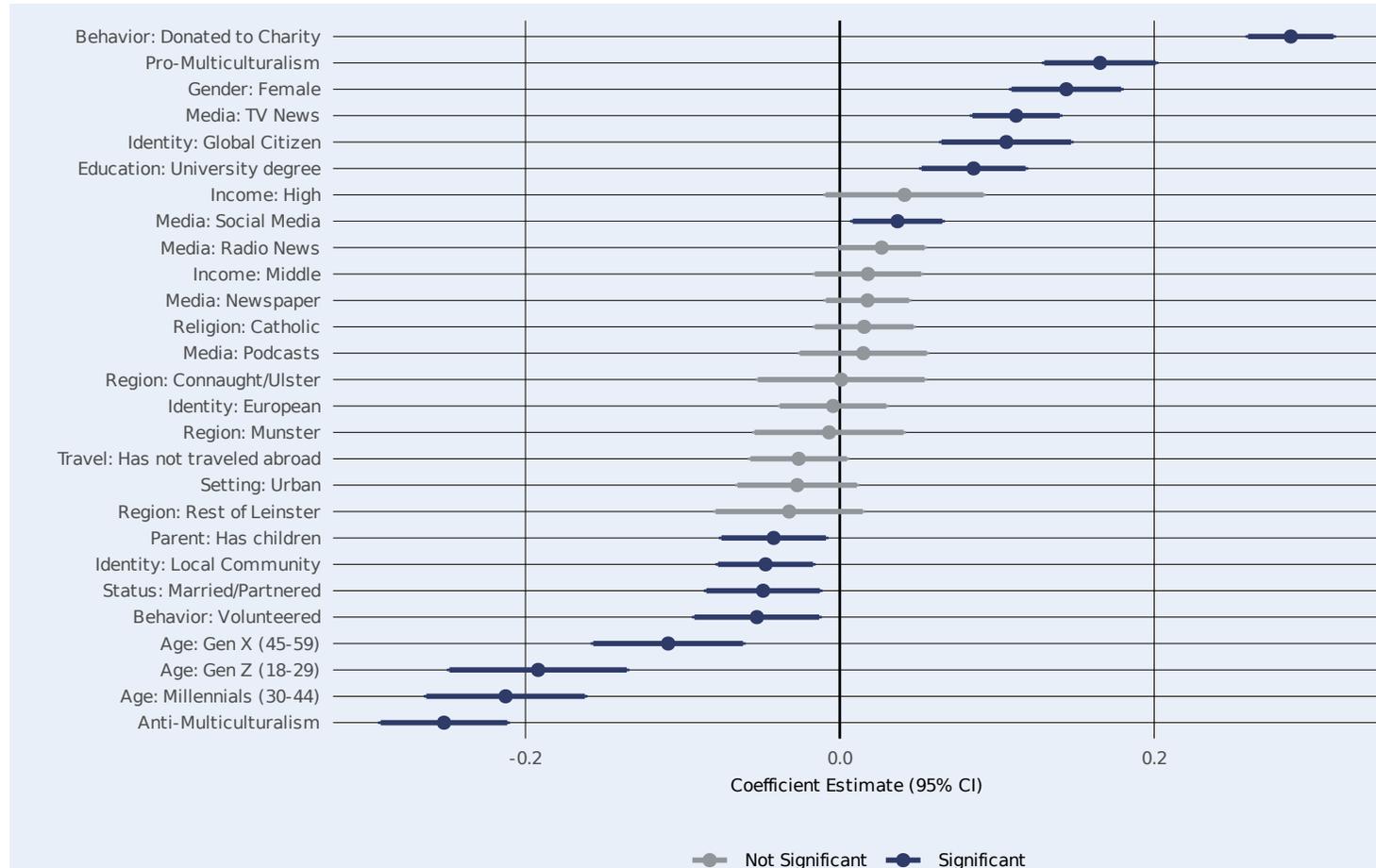


WHO THINKS AID IS IMPORTANT?

First of all, we need to analyse the difference between people based on characteristics, such as gender, income, age, education, faith, geography, view of society, kids



BETWEEN-PERSON DIFFERENCES IN PERCEIVED IMPORTANCE OF OVERSEAS AID



How to interpret the plot: The coefficient shows how much a specific factor moves the needle on the 1-to-4 scale of aid importance. For example, a coefficient of 0.28 for 'Donating' means that, compared to non-donors, those who give to charity rank the importance of government aid nearly a third of a point higher on the scale, even when they have the same age, income, and education. This suggests that 'personal' and 'political' solidarity are linked – the same people who put their own hand in their pocket are the ones most likely to champion government spending.

A negative view of multiculturalism is the single largest drag on aid support, but also a positive view is a strong boost; confirming that comms should address broader themes of social integration and identity.

Consuming news via TV is a stronger predictor of support than Social Media. This highlights the continued importance of traditional public service broadcasting in Ireland.

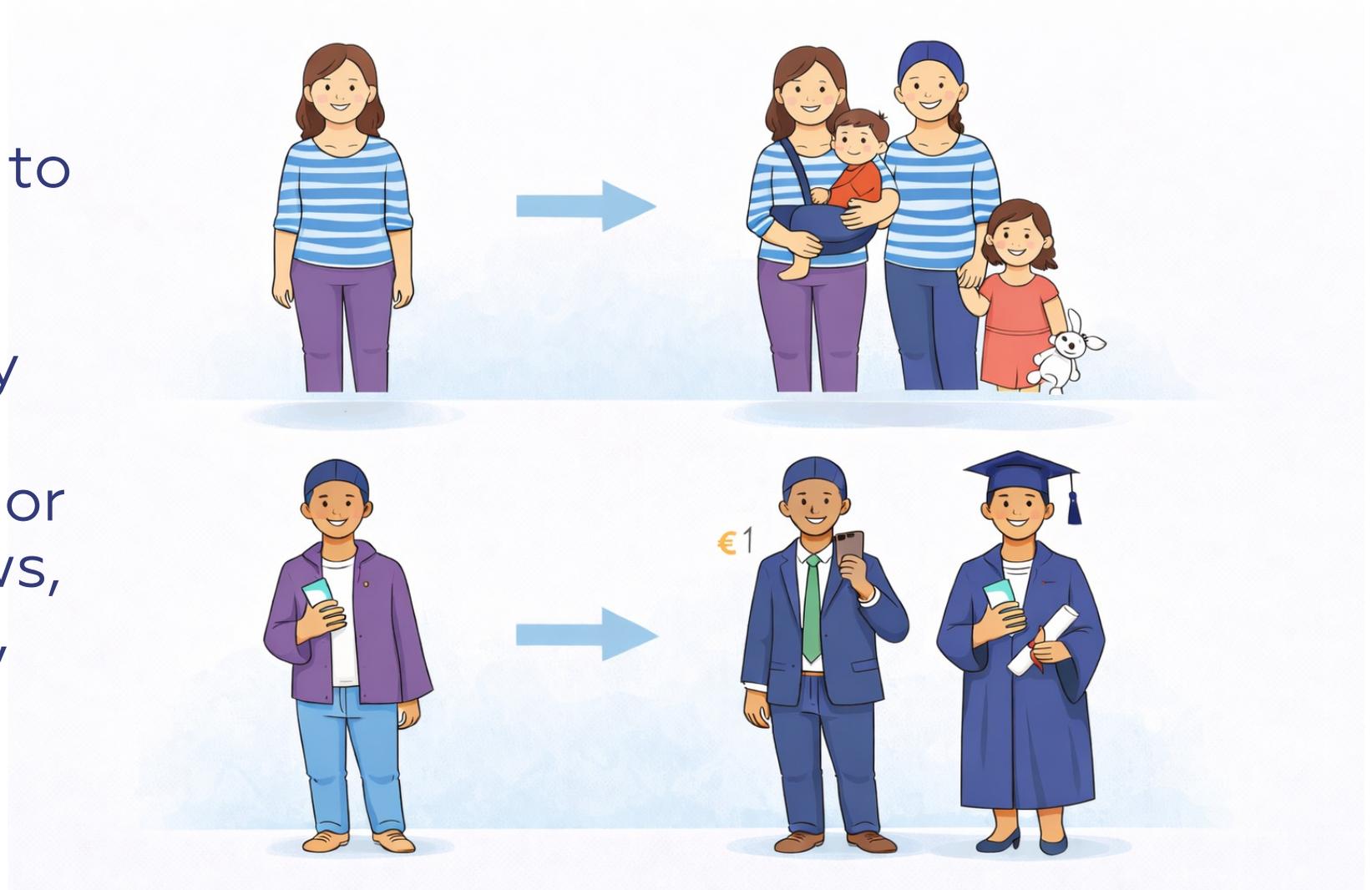
Even after controlling for news habits and charitable behaviour, Gen Z and Millennials remain significantly less supportive of aid than older cohorts. This isn't just because young people "don't watch the news"; there is a deeper generational scepticism or a prioritisation of other issues (like domestic housing or climate).

Identifying as a Global Citizen is a far more powerful driver than being High Income. Identity trumps income; the government has a mandate from people who feel globally connected, regardless of their bank balance.

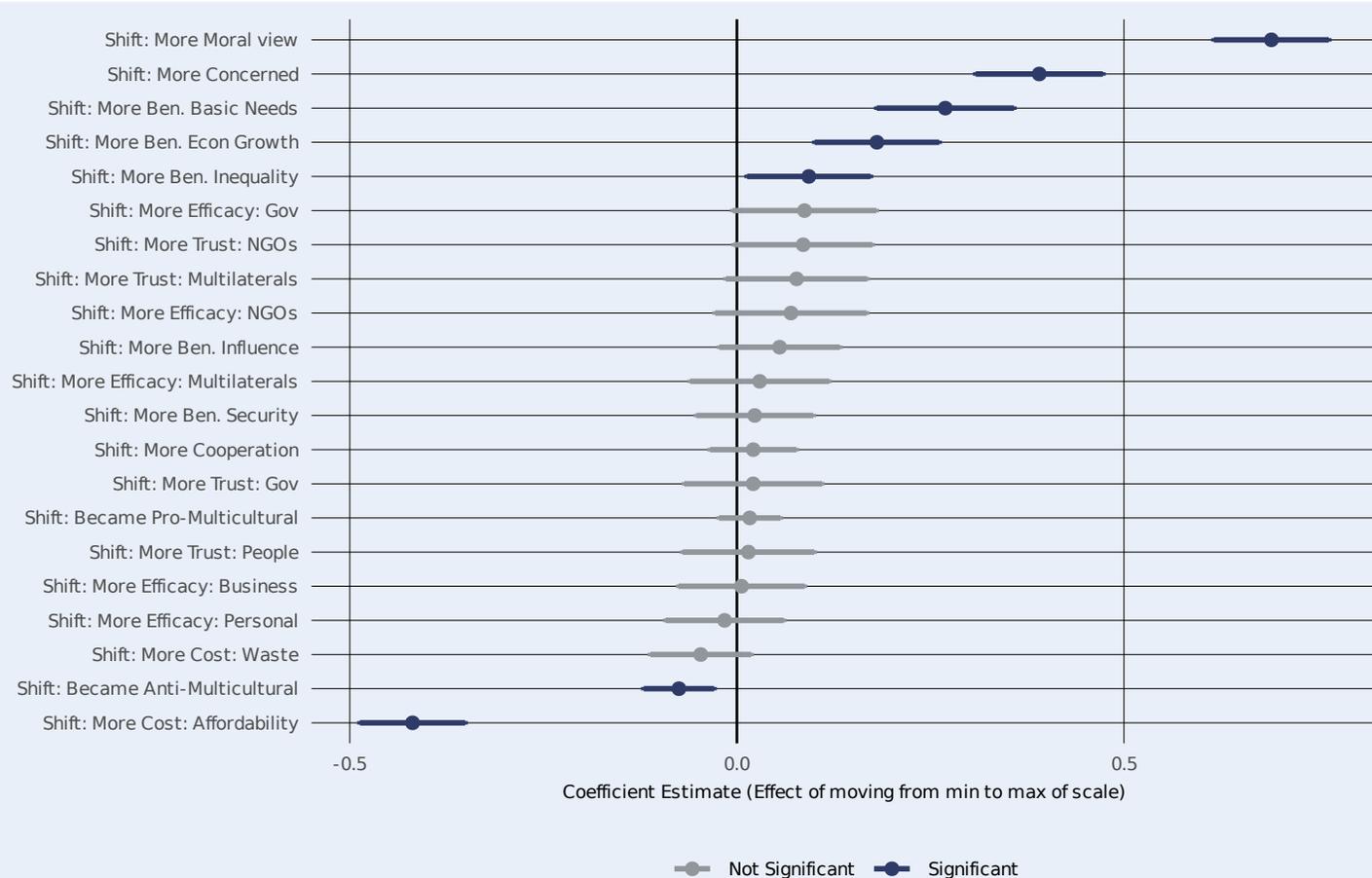
Model: Baseline Drivers of Aid Support | Coefficient estimates from Linear Mixed Effects Model | Question: How important is it that the Irish Government provides overseas aid? | Base: IRL Adults | Data are weighted to be nationally representative | Worldview Overseas Development Aid Survey | Fieldwork by B&A | Analysis by the Development Engagement Lab. Reference categories: Generation: Boomers+, Household income: <€50k, Education: Non-university, Multiculturalism: Neutral

WHO THINKS AID IS IMPORTANT?

Second, we need to analyse how people change over time: as they grow older, earn more, education, or change their views, attitudes, beliefs, and values



WHEN THE SAME PERSON BECOMES MORE X THAN USUAL, DOES IMPORTANCE CHANGE?



How to interpret the plot: It shows what happens when the *same person* becomes more concerned, more trusting, or more convinced aid works. Coefficients measure the 'internal' shift in a person's support for aid as their other attitudes change over time. An estimate of 0.69 for Morality means that if an individual moves from the bottom to the top of the moral conviction scale between survey waves, their support for aid is predicted to climb by over two-thirds of a point on the 1-4 importance scale, independent of any other factors. Moving the needle on moral conviction has the single largest impact on increasing aid support.

When individuals come to believe that Ireland cannot afford providing aid,, their support drops sharply. Support is sensitive to domestic concerns about budgets and the general cost-of-living.

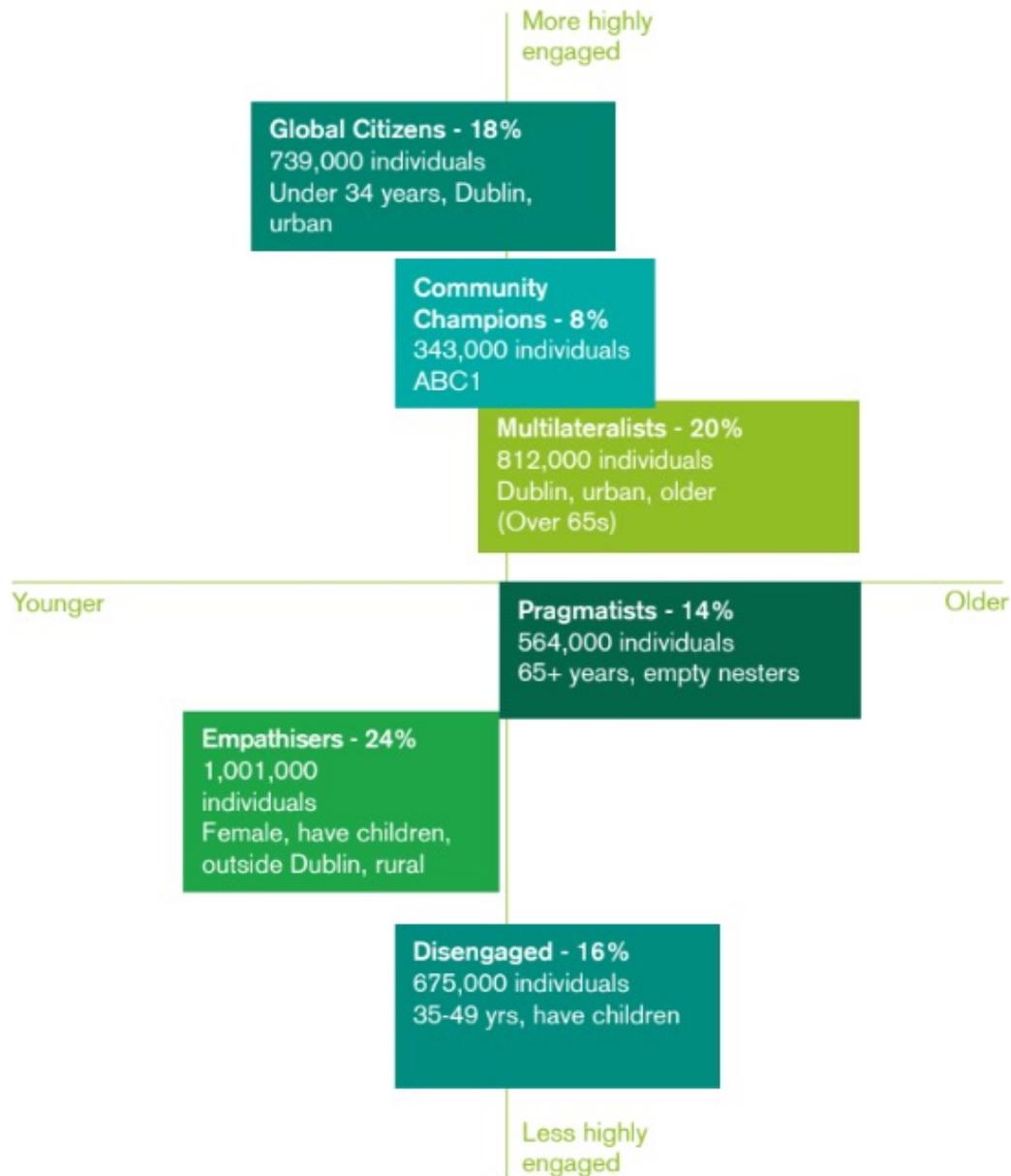
Needs vs. Influence: Reminding people that aid meets basic human needs is a much more effective way to increase support than talking about Irish influence or security: 'outcomes' matter more to people than the strategic 'benefit' to Ireland.

Trust is a Baseline, Not a Trigger: While having high trust is a characteristic of aid supporters, increasing trust in a from one year to the next does not significantly move aid support. Trust acts as a "permission' gate" that is already open or closed, rather than a lever that actively shifts support.

The Multiculturalism Spillover is Real: Even when controlling for every other attitude, a shift toward negative views of multiculturalism significantly drags down aid support: a retreat from diversity at home predicts a retreat from solidarity abroad.

Model: Within-person changes: How shifting attitudes impact aid importance | All attitudinal predictors (Concern, Morality, Trust, etc) have been rescaled to 0-1 to allow direct comparison. Estimates represent the predicted change in aid importance (1-4 scale) when an individual moves from the bottom to the top of an attitudinal scale between waves. | Question: How important is it that the Irish Government provides overseas aid? | Base: IRL Adults | Data: Worldview ODA Survey | Analysis by the Development Engagement Lab.

The Segments - Perceptions of ODA



Global Citizens

Justice and solidarity-driven; understand exploitation by powerful countries, the legacy of colonialism, and systemic inequality. Believe aid should be administered by the multilateral system and overseas aid organisations.



Community Champions

Believe aid should be given due to shared humanity and empathy. Understand exploitation and the impact of colonialism. The multilateral system and aid organisations are most effective at delivering aid.



Multilateralists

Aid based in humanitarianism, shared humanity, and human rights - mirror the national view on reasons for providing aid. Multilaterals like the EU and UN are best for coordinating aid.



Pragmatists

View the causes of poverty in developing countries as emanating from within - poor governance, corruption, and inefficiency. Trusting of institutions. Practical governance solutions and disaster relief resonate.



Empathisers

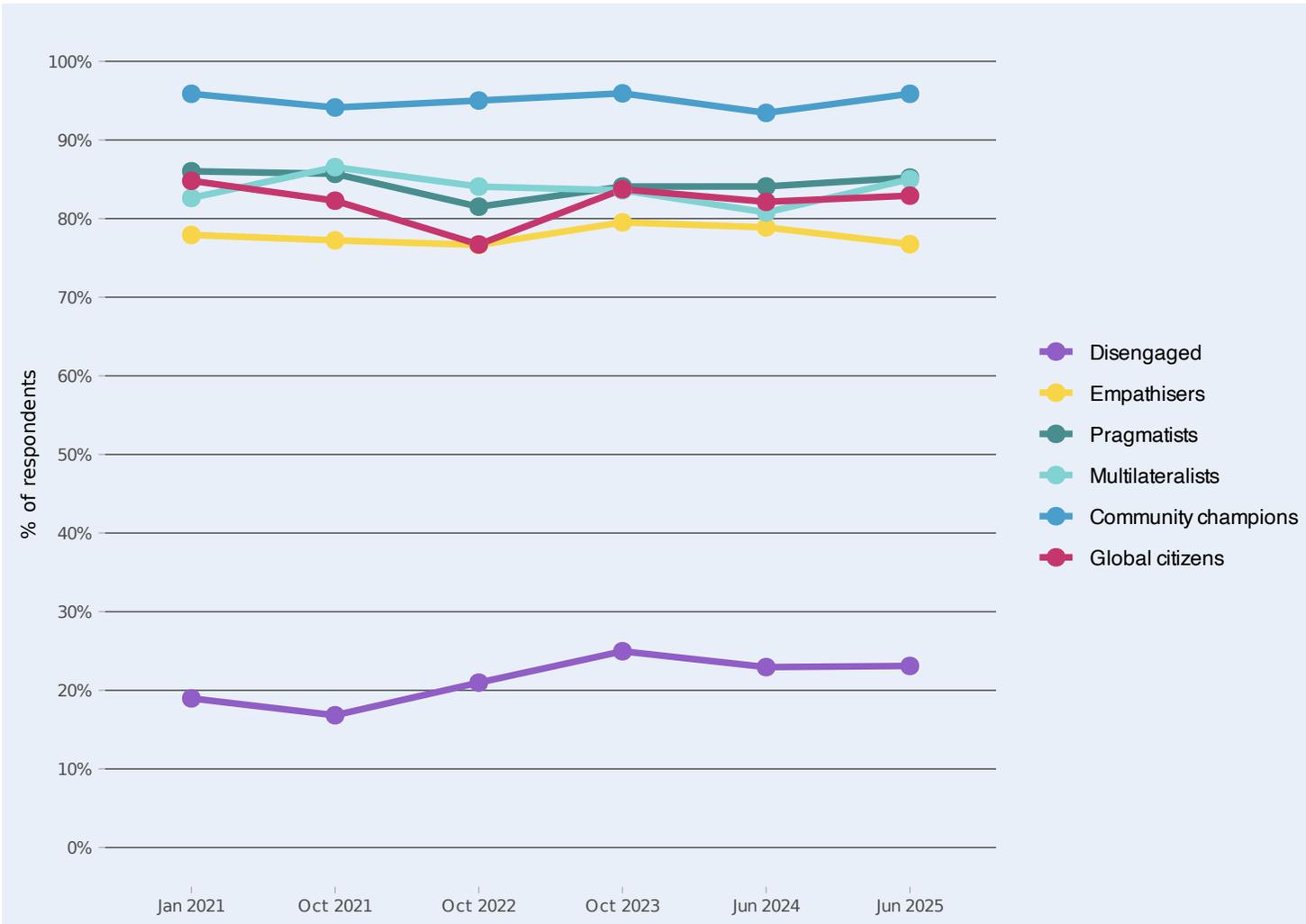
Poverty stems from war, lack of services, and disease prevalence. Should help developing countries out of charity and morality. Emphasise local country issues instead of global systems.



Disengaged

Unsympathetic to poverty in developing countries. Have deep distrust of all institutions. Deep misconceptions about where poverty stems from. Cite in-country corruption, inefficiency, incompetence, laziness and people having too many children. Main concern is immigration.

SEGMENTS' SUPPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT AID



96%

of community champions
said Irish aid is very or
fairly important in October
2023

Support varies sharply by underlying worldview.

Public support for overseas aid is high and stable within most segments, but levels differ between groups.

Support is near-universal among Community Champions and consistently high among Global Citizens, Pragmatists, and Multilateralists, with little change across waves.

By contrast, the Disengaged segment remains much less supportive, despite an increase since 2021 up to 23% in 2025.

This pattern suggests that public opinion is structured more by values and identity than by short-term events.

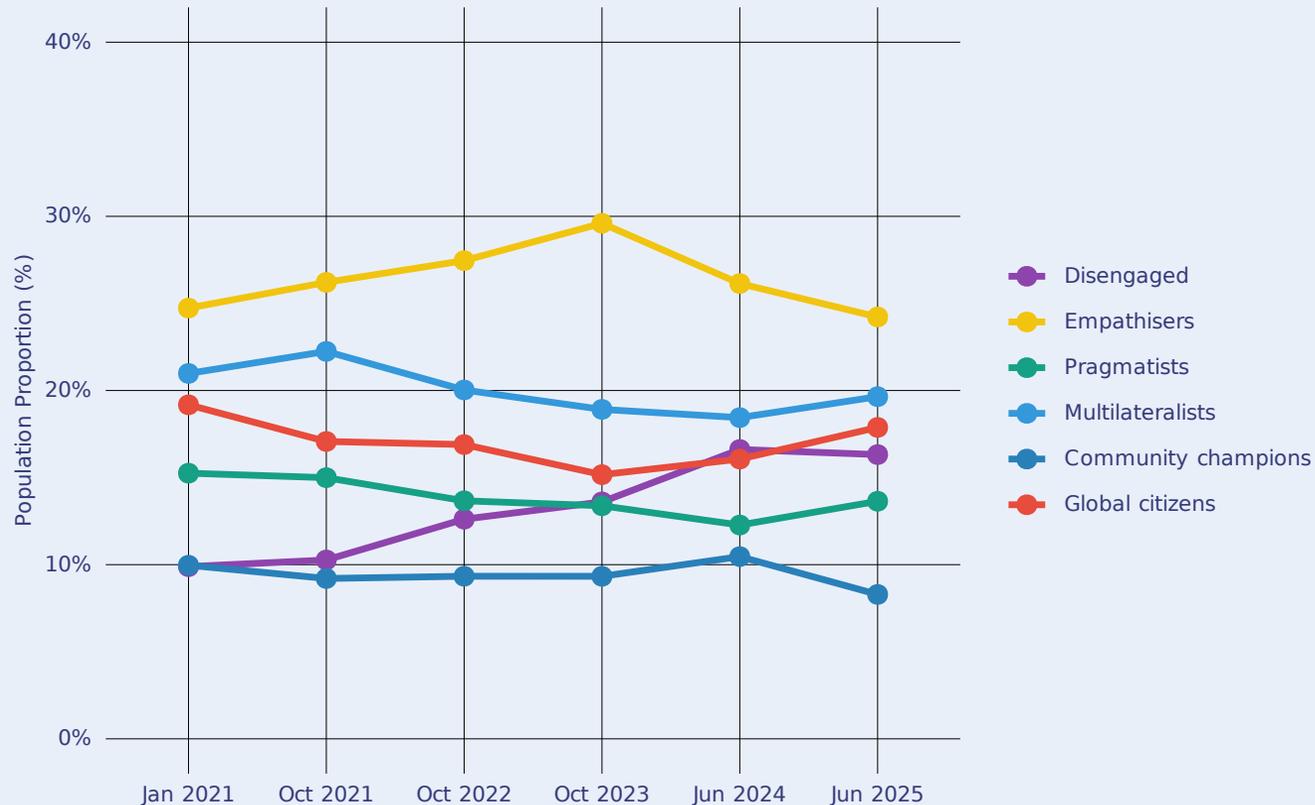


HOW DO DRIVERS VARY ACROSS SEGMENTS?

- Morality: The Universal (and Dynamic) Master Key – true across every segment
- Pragmatists & Champions: The Basic Needs Specialists
- The Disengaged are Driven by Efficacy and Personal Concern
- The Affordability Anchor is Everywhere (But Worst for Empathisers)

Segment	Primary Lever (To Maintain)	Secondary Lever (To Move)	Main Barrier
Disengaged	Concern (0.64)	Govt Efficacy (0.35)	Affordability (-0.54)
Pragmatists	Basic Needs (1.05)	Morality (0.89)	Affordability (-0.71)
Empathisers	Morality (0.85)	Basic Needs (0.45)	Affordability (-0.68)
Comm. Champions	Morality (1.21)	Basic Needs (0.77)	(Least impacted by costs)
Global Citizens	Concern (0.84)	Morality (0.81)	Econ Growth (0.42)

HOW THE SEGMENTS HAVE SHIFTED OVER TIME



Plot: Weighted % of total population belonging to each worldview segment | Base: IRL Adults | Data are weighted to be nationally representative | Worldview Overseas Development Aid Survey | Fieldwork by B&A | Analysis by the Development Engagement Lab | Worldview segments are derived from latent class analysis by B&A of underlying values and attitudes toward global cooperation.

The most significant shift is the steady growth of the Disengaged segment, which has climbed from 10% in 2021 to 16% in 2025. This suggests that while support remains high among core segments, a larger portion of the population is becoming less connected to the global development narrative.

Empathisers remain the largest single group in Ireland, peaking at 30% in October 2023 before settling back to 24% in 2025—nearly identical to their 2021 baseline. This segment represents the ‘humanitarian heart’ of the country, but they are also the group most sensitive to domestic affordability anchors.

Despite global economic and social shifts, the Global Citizen segment has proven highly resilient, maintaining a strong presence at 17.9% of the population in June 2025. This group provides the most reliable ‘floor’ for aid support due to their high baseline engagement and moral conviction.

The Community Champions – the most supportive segment at 97% – are the smallest and most specialized group, currently at 8%. While their support is near-universal, their small footprint means that national support levels depend heavily on the Pragmatists and Multilateralists who bridge the gap between the core activists and the disengaged.

KEY INSIGHTS



- **Stability & Structure:** Public support remains high, underpinned by deeply held worldviews. Demographic differences (like age and education) largely 'wash out' once you account for an individual's moral values and sense of global identity.
- **The Power of Personal Action:** Charitable behaviour is (unsurprisingly) a primary signal of support; those who donate personally are significantly more likely to support government aid.
- **Dynamic Change:** When individuals increase their support for aid, it is rarely due to media exposure. Instead, it is driven by a shift in their moral conviction – the single most powerful lever for change in the Irish public.
- **The 'Economic Anchor':** Support is highly sensitive to the economic context. As individuals feel aid is unaffordable, their support for overseas aid drops sharply, regardless of how 'concerned' they are about global issues.

KEY INSIGHTS



- The Strongest Drivers of Change (Ranked):

- Moral Conviction: The 'Master Key' to shifting public opinion.
- Perceived Affordability: The primary barrier; support drops as domestic economic anxiety rises.
- Basic Human Needs: The most effective 'benefit' message; the public responds more to humanitarian outcomes than to Irish strategic influence.
- Multiculturalism: Shifts in domestic attitudes towards multiculturalism have a direct spillover effect. Becoming more sceptical of diversity at home leads to a measurable decline in solidarity with the world's poorest.
- Media & Generational Gaps: While TV news acts as a positive boost for support, a significant generational gap persists among Gen Z and Millennials that cannot be explained by media habits alone, suggesting a deeper shift in generational priorities.

DONATIONS



Have you: Donated money to an international development organisation - sometimes known as overseas charities - working on the issue in the past 12 months?

DONATIONS TO DEVELOPMENT NGOS



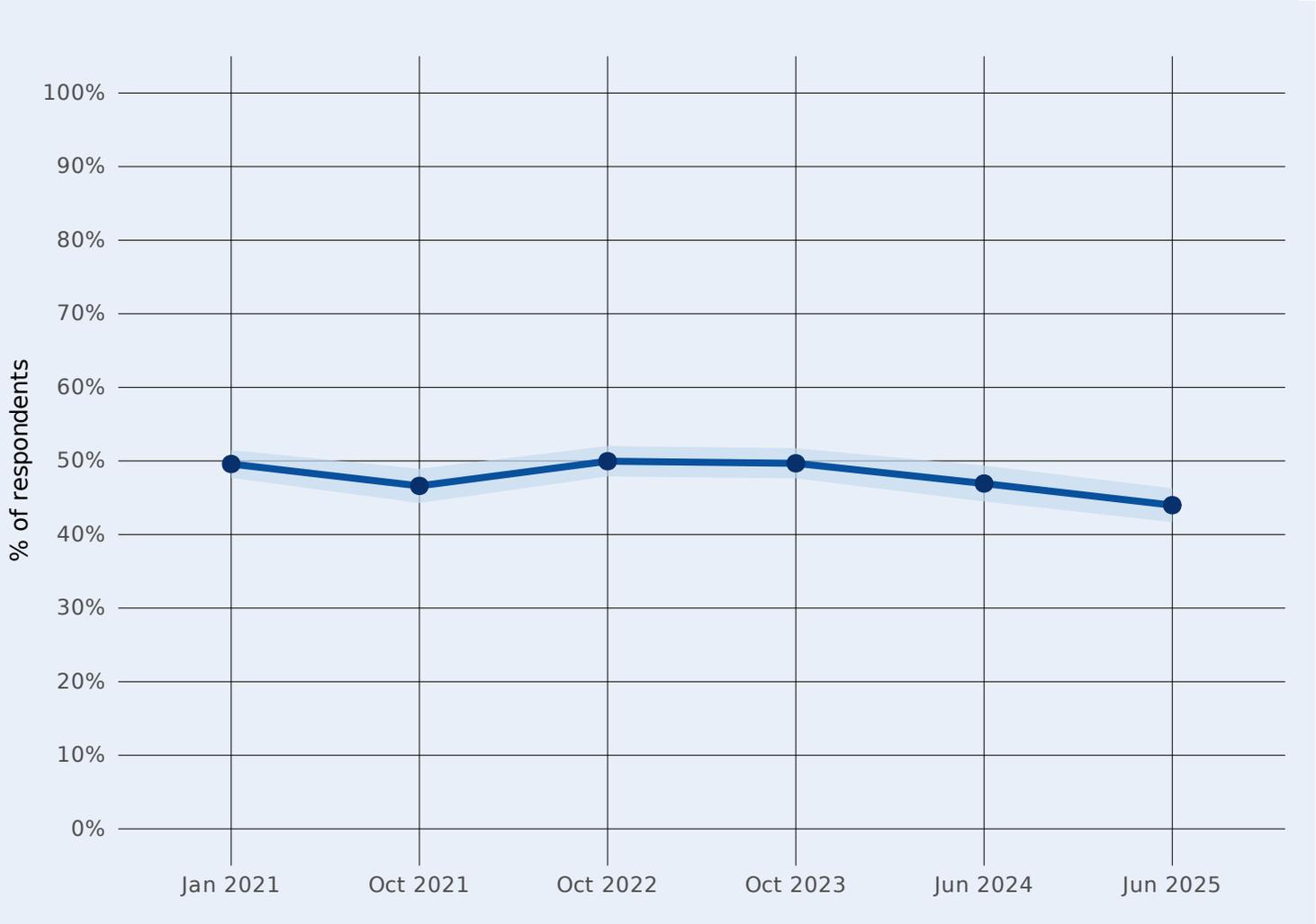
44%

say they have donated in the past 12 months

Public donation to overseas aid has declined modestly over time.

Around half of adults reported donating in earlier waves, but this has fallen to 44% in 2025.

This suggests that while attitudinal support for aid remains strong, financial engagement is more sensitive to changing economic pressures and household constraints.

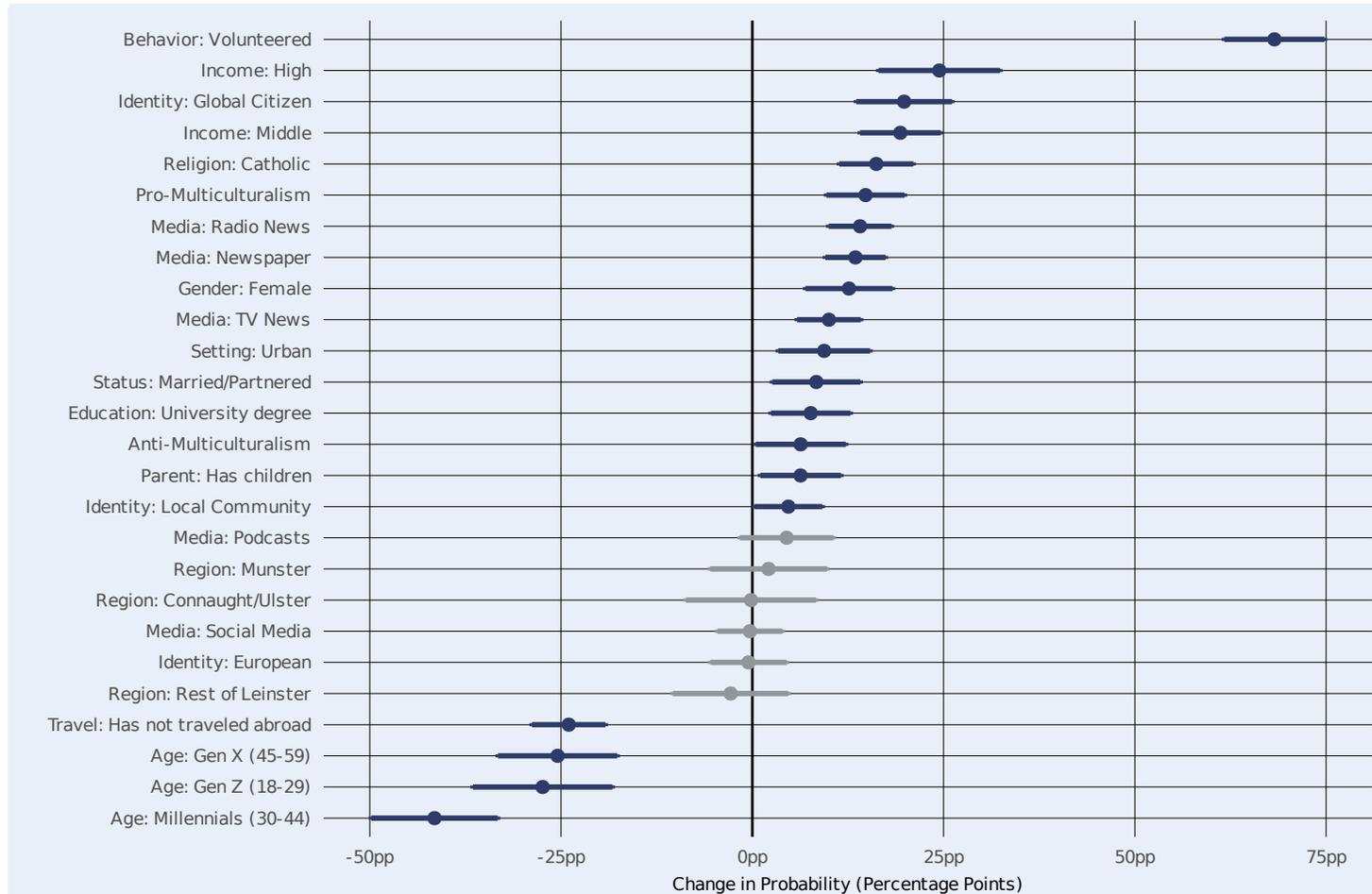


DONATION CHANGES



- Donating behaviour is fairly stable, but not fixed.
- Around three quarters of donors continue donating from one wave to the next, and four in five non-donors remain non-donors.
- However, exit from donating is slightly more common than entry. About one in four donors stop donating, compared to one in five non-donors who begin.
- This small imbalance helps explain the gradual decline in overall donating observed since October 2022.

WHO GIVES? BETWEEN-PERSON DIFFERENCES IN DONATIONS



Volunteering is (unsurprisingly) the single most powerful predictor of donating. A volunteer is 68 percentage points more likely to be a donor than a non-volunteer. If someone starts giving their time, giving money becomes almost a default behavior.

There is a dramatic generational divide in donation behavior. Millennials are 41 percentage points less likely to donate than the 60+ reference group, even when controlling for income. This suggests a conversion challenge for younger adults.

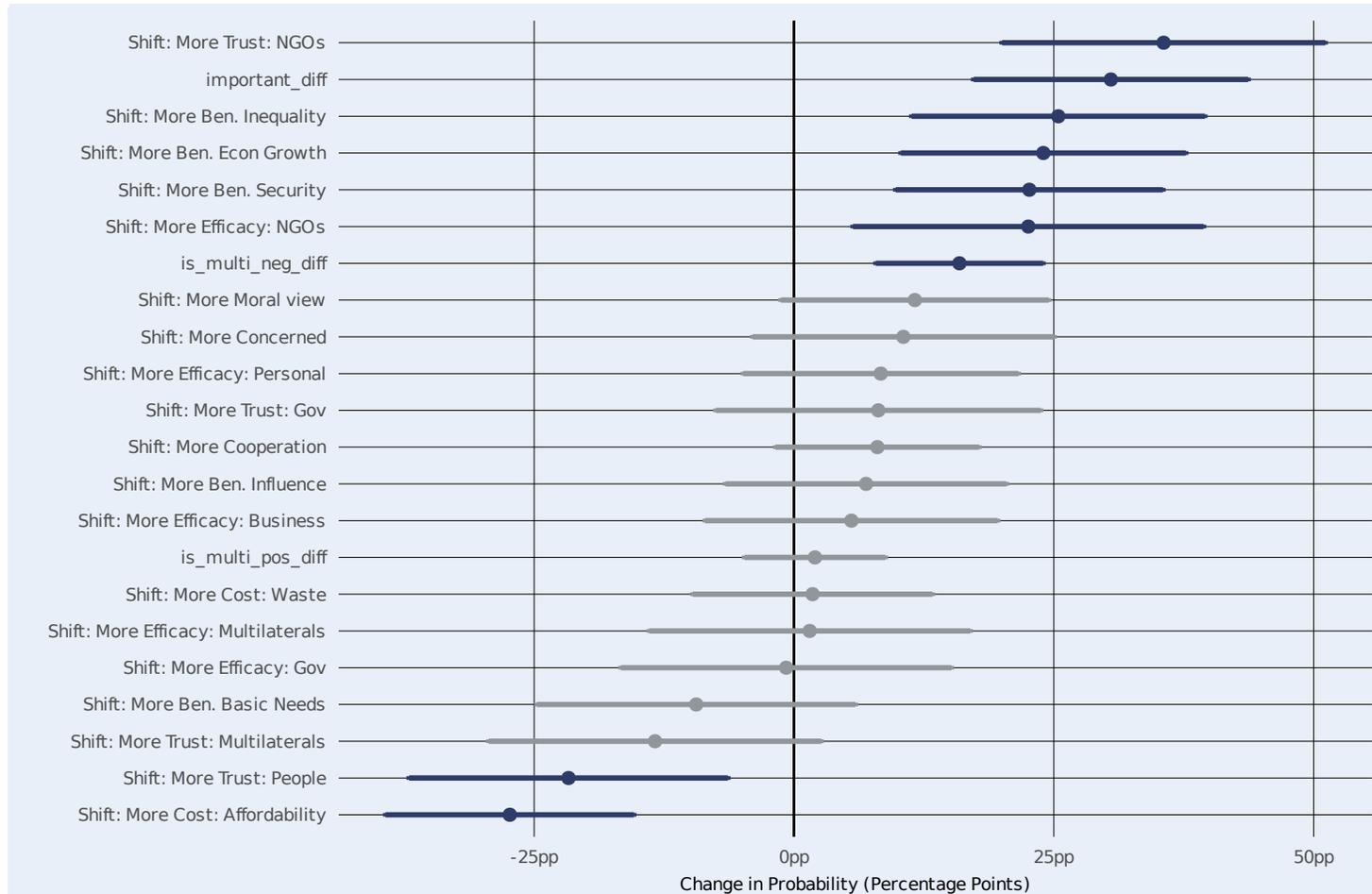
Traditional media consumption is a significant booster for donations. Consuming news via Radio (+14pp) or Newspapers (+13pp) significantly increases the chance of giving, while Social Media has zero statistical impact.

While where someone lives in Ireland (Region) has almost no effect on their likelihood to give, who they believe they are matters hugely. Identifying as a Global Citizen increases donation probability by 20 percentage points, while being Catholic remains a solid predictor of giving (+16 percentage points).

Household income is significant. Those in the highest income bracket are 24 percentage points more likely to donate than those in the lowest. However, the fact that Global Citizenship and Volunteering carry similar or higher weights suggests that values often overcome economic constraints.

Model: Baseline Drivers of Donation | Coefficient estimates from Mixed Effects Logistic Regression, converted from Log-Odds to predicted probability | Base: IRL Adults | Data are weighted to be nationally representative | Worldview Overseas Development Aid Survey | Fieldwork by B&A | Analysis by the Development Engagement Lab | Reference categories: Generation: Boomers+, Household income: <€50k, Education: Non-university, Multiculturalism: Neutral

WHO GIVES? WITHIN-PERSON CHANGES



This plot shows the dynamic view or within-person results, i.e. what triggers an individual to start (or stop) donating.

The single most powerful lever for donation is trust. When an individual's trust in NGOs increases, their probability of donating jumps by 36 percentage points. While people may support aid in principle for many reasons, they only part with their money when they believe NGOs are trustworthy.

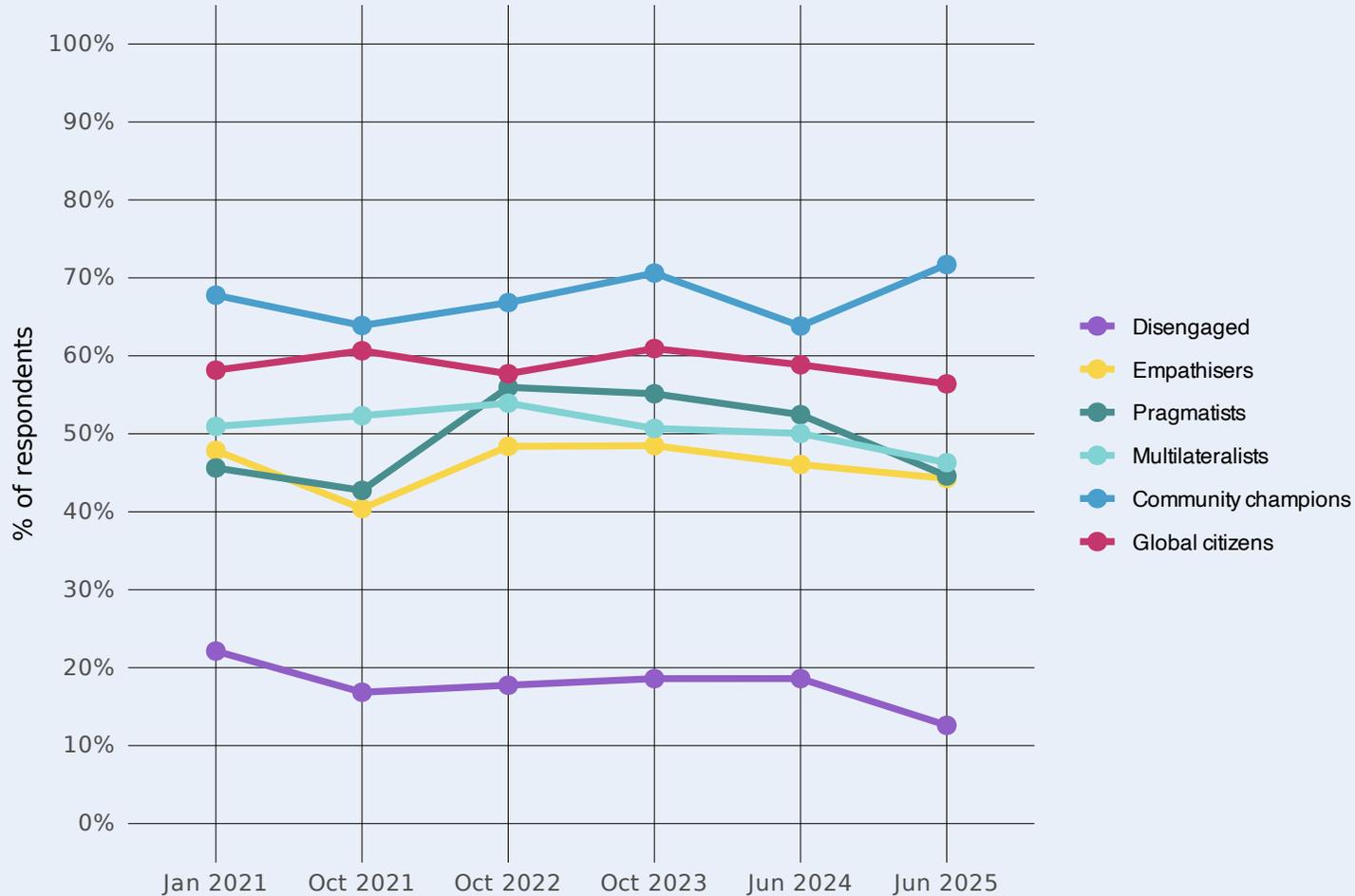
The perceived cost of aid is a natural inhibitor. When an individual becomes more concerned about whether Ireland (as a country and government) can afford to give aid, their likelihood of donating drops by 27 percentage points. This "charity begins at home" shift is a major barrier.

When an individual's personal belief in the importance of aid increases, their probability of donating increases by 31 percentage points.

Donating isn't driven by just one type of benefit; it's a mix of the practical and the political. Interestingly, the Morality and Concern shifts were not statistically significant here, suggesting that 'harder' pragmatic benefits may be more effective at triggering a donation than 'softer' emotional ones.

Model 4: Within-Person Drivers of Donation | Coefficient estimates (Log-Odds) converted to Percentage Points | This chart shows how an individual's likelihood of donating changes as their attitudes shift | Base: IRL Adults | Data are weighted to be nationally representative | Worldview Overseas Development Aid Survey | Fieldwork by B&A | Analysis by the Development Engagement Lab.

WHO GIVES? DONATION BEHAVIOUR BY SEGMENT



72%

of community champions
have donated to
development NGOs

Donation rates are consistently highest among Community Champions, remaining above two-thirds across all waves and reaching 72% in 2025.

Global Citizens and Multilateralists also show relatively high but more volatile levels of donating, while Empathisers and Pragmatists have seen noticeable declines since 2023.

By contrast, the Disengaged segment shows a steady erosion in donating, falling to just 13% in 2025.

Overall, this pattern suggests that giving is more sensitive to economic pressure and capacity, even among broadly supportive groups.



DONATIONS: KEY INSIGHTS

- Much like public support, donation behavior is anchored in deeply held identities. Identifying as a Global Citizen (+20pp) or Catholic (+16pp) remains a fundamental structural driver of giving.
- Charitable behaviour is rarely an isolated act; it is part of a broader pro-social lifestyle. Volunteering is the ultimate behavioral signal, increasing the probability of donating by a massive 68pp, suggesting that "giving" of time and money are two sides of the same coin.
- A profound structural challenge exists within the donor base. Even when controlling for income and education, Millennials are 42pp less likely to donate than older cohorts, representing a significant long-term risk to the sector's financial sustainability.
 - Moving the public to give is not just about demographic targeting. When an individual's personal conviction of aid's importance increases, their probability of donating jumps by 31pp



DONATIONS: KEY INSIGHTS

- While many factors make people *like* aid, Trust in NGOs is the primary lever that makes them *fund* it. A shift in trust leads to a 36pp increase in donation probability – the highest attitudinal driver in the model.
- Financial giving is highly sensitive to the domestic squeeze. As anxiety over national affordability rises, the probability of donating drops by 27pp, regardless of an individual's underlying moral concern.
- The Irish public responds to the practicality of aid. Shifts in perceiving aid as a tool are more effective at triggering donations than shifts in humanitarian morality.
- Traditional gatekeepers still drive the 'ask'. Regular consumption of Radio (+14pp) and Newspaper news (+14pp) acts as a significant booster for donation behavior, while social media consumption fails to generate a measurable impact on giving.





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The Development Engagement Lab (DEL) is a five-year study of public attitudes and engagement with global development in France, Germany, Great Britain, and the United States (2018-2023).

DEL is a partner focussed research programme, convening and co-producing research and insights with over 30 international development NGOs and government agencies to understand the drivers of engagement and inform development communications.

Fieldwork is carried out by YouGov and surveys are weighted to be a nationally representative of the adult population. DEL is funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and led by Professor Jennifer Hudson (University College London) and Professor David Hudson (University of Birmingham).

The **Development Engagement Lab**

(Aid Attitudes Tracker Phase 2) has three goals:

1. Co-production of an evidence base for development campaigning
2. Enabling collaboration across the sector
3. Increasing advocacy capacity through the sharing of research and strategic insights

You can find out more information about DEL research at www.developmentcompass.org, follow us on Twitter [@DevEngageLab](https://twitter.com/DevEngageLab) or by contacting del@ucl.ac.uk.