



RESEARCH  
& INSIGHT

# Public Engagement Webinar

5<sup>th</sup> April 2022

Prepared for:

**dóchas**

The Irish Association  
of Non-Governmental  
Development Organisations

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# Introduction

- An online quantitative survey was undertaken with 2,026 adults aged 18+ years.
- The sample was quota controlled on gender, age, socio-economic status and region.
- 1,497 of the original 3008 respondents from the first study were re-interviewed with 529 additional respondents recruited to take part this wave.
- A new section on innovative positionings was added this wave.
- Fieldwork was undertaken between 20/10/2021 to 02/12/2021.

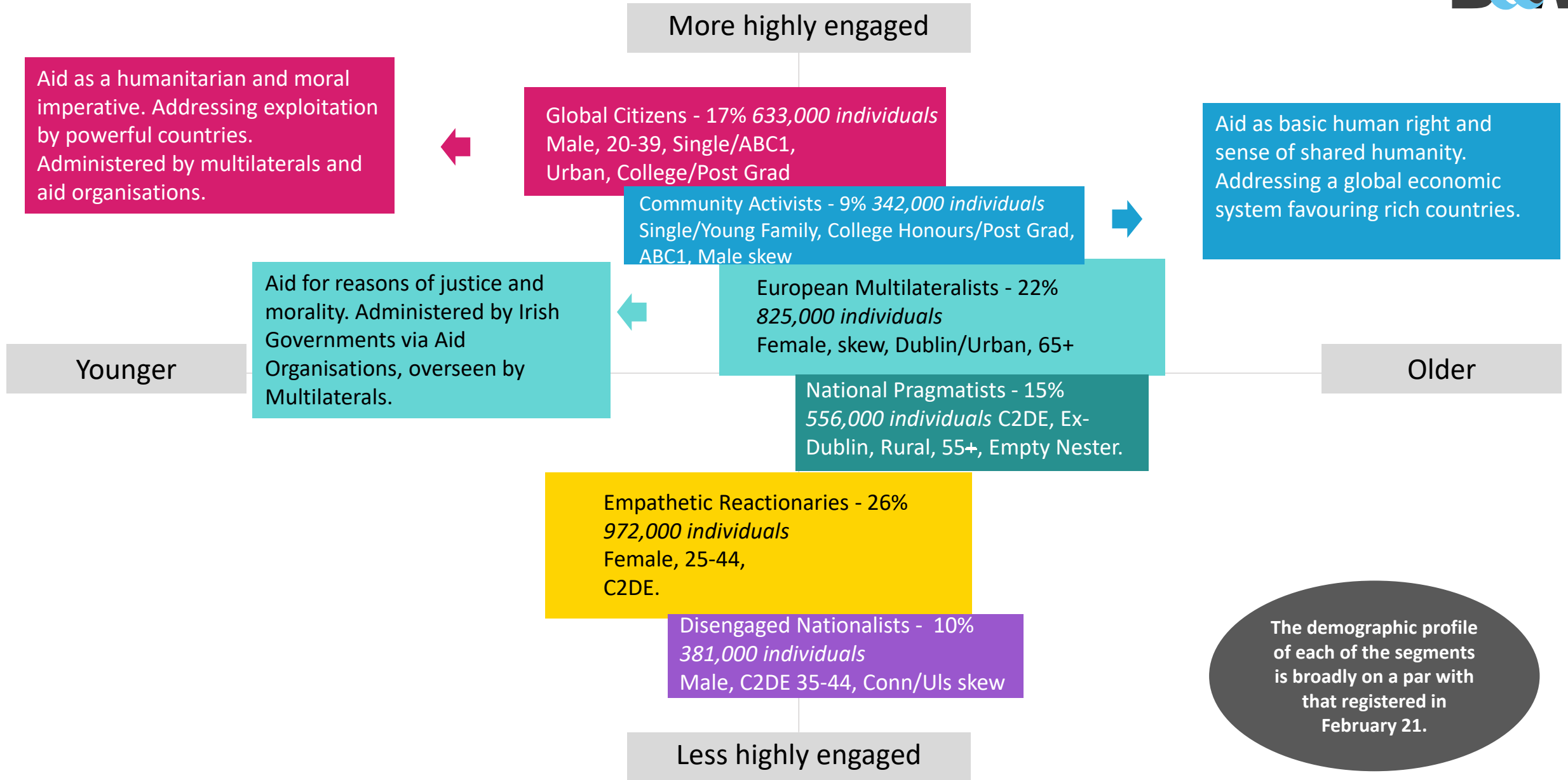






# The Findings

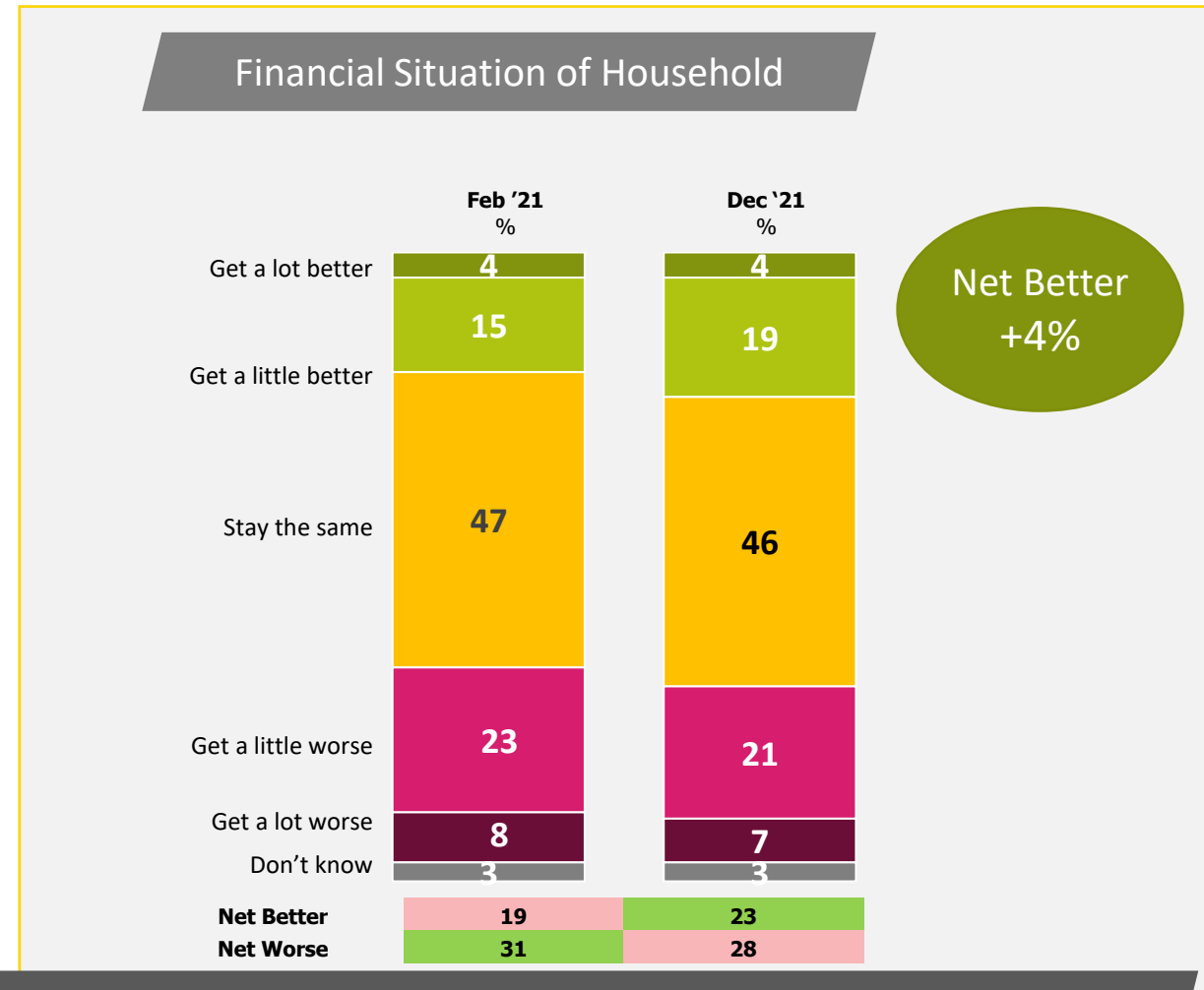
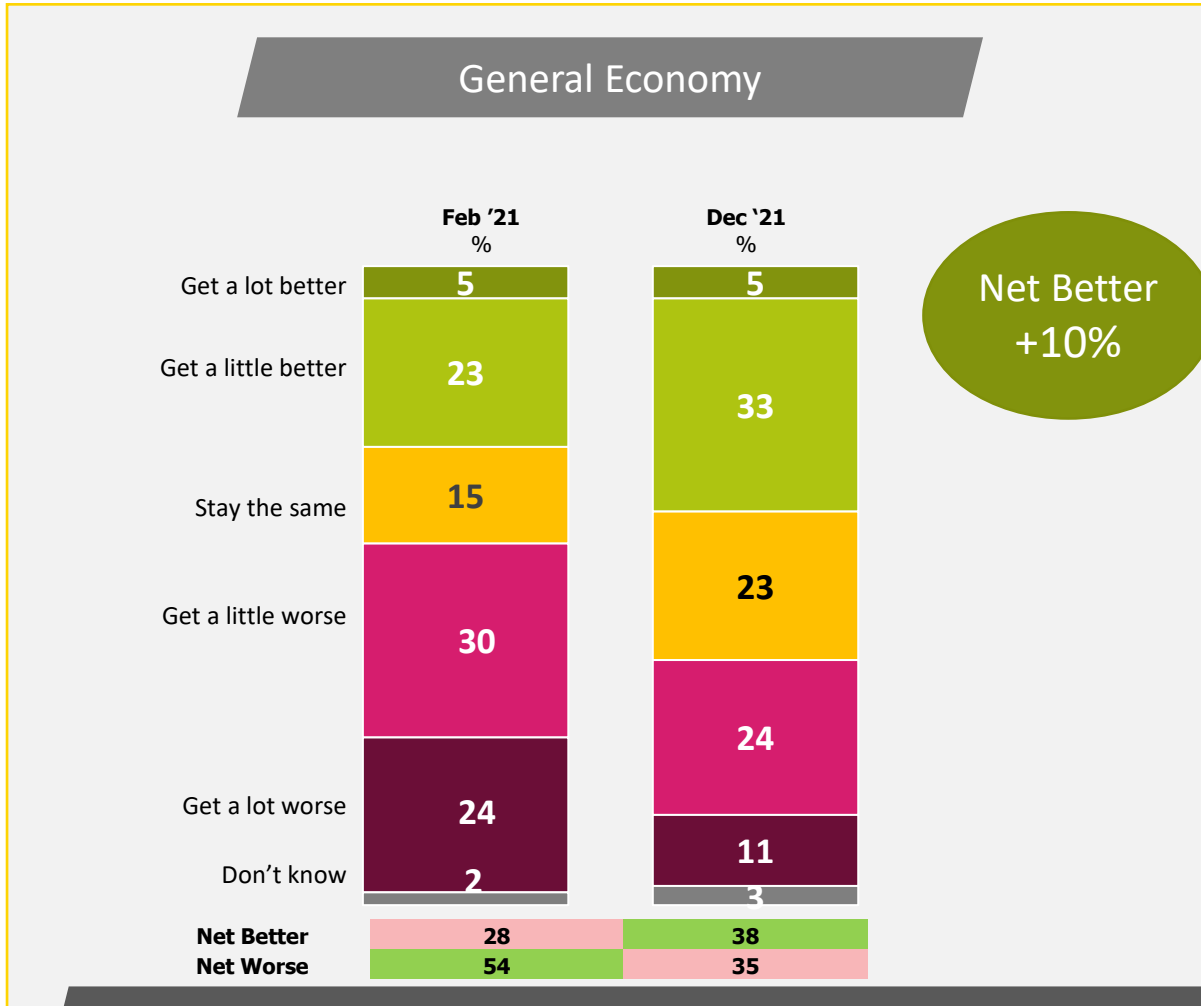
# Segments - Demographic Overview



# General Economy/Financial Situation over next 12 months

Base: All Adults (Feb 21 N – 3,008; Dec 21 N – 2,026)

■ Statistically higher than Feb 21  
■ Statistically lower than Feb 21



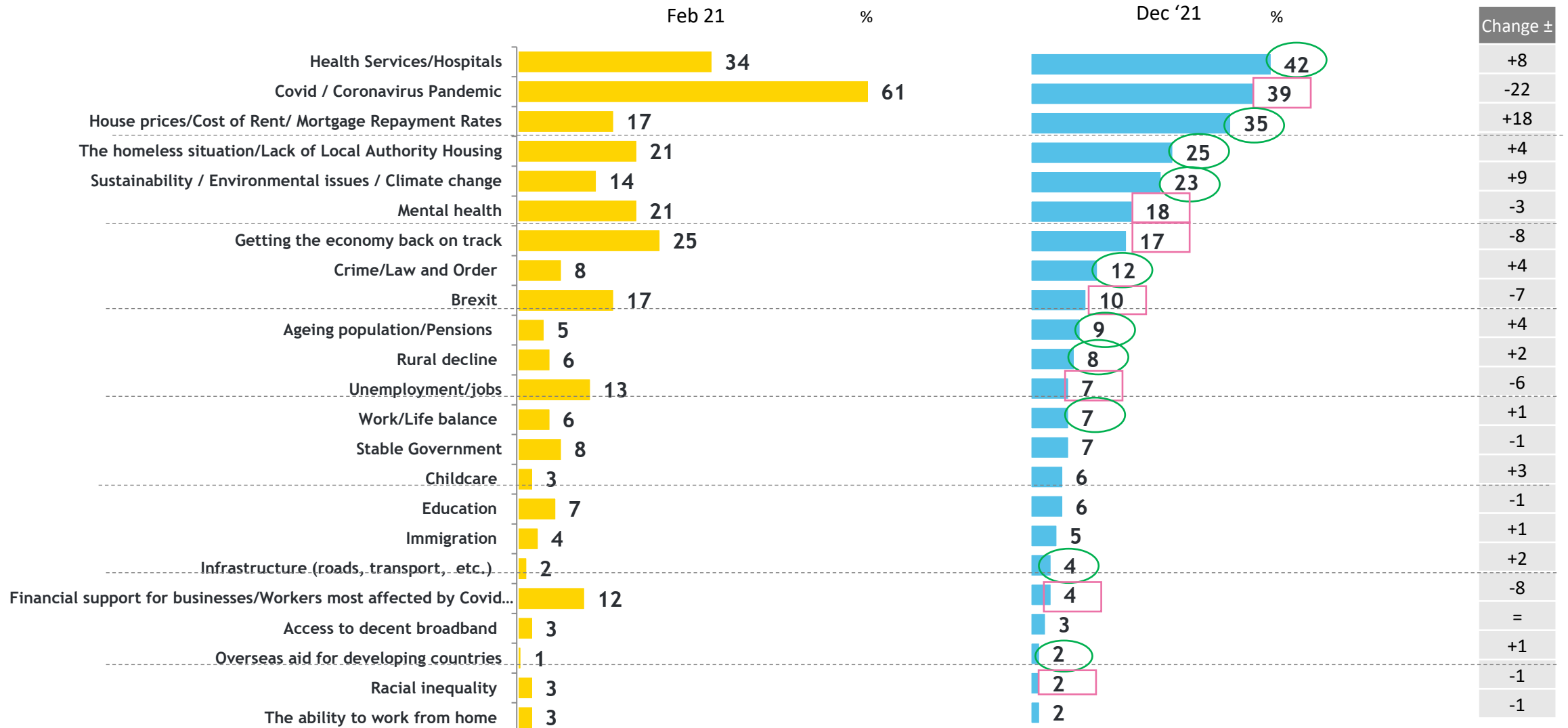
People's perception of the general economic situation in Ireland has vastly improved since February with the net better as opposed to worse being +10%. However, people are more sceptical about their own financial household situation with 28% believing it will be worse, 23% believing it will be better with 46% believing it will remain the same over the next 12 months. However, the negative gap has reduced here too, with respondents more positive on balance.



# The Top 3 Most Important Issues Facing Ireland

Base: All Adults (Feb 21 N – 3,008; Dec 21 N – 2,026)

○ Statistically higher than Feb 21  
 □ Statistically lower than Feb 21



Not surprisingly, Covid, while still in the top 3 most important issues facing Ireland has subsided in terms of importance. The areas of housing and sustainability have increased in terms of importance. Community Activists and Global Citizens significantly over index on sustainability/ climate change. Community activists also over index on homelessness.





## Strong sense that the pandemic has encouraged people to become more inward looking

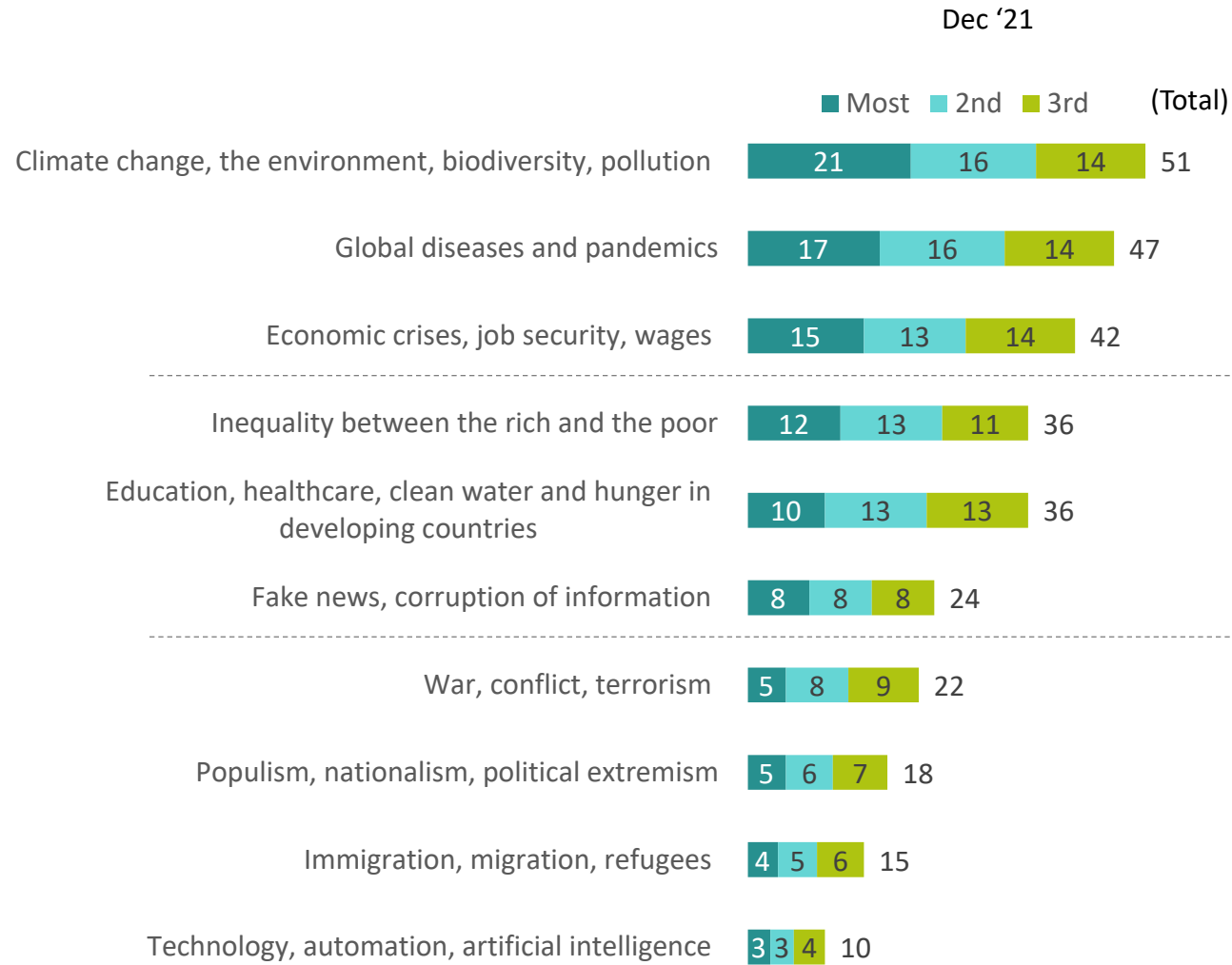
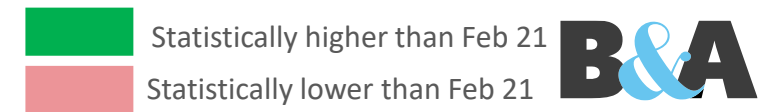
- This is a trend that was **in evidence prior to the pandemic**, with issues like the housing crisis/homelessness/mental health provision in Ireland high on people's radars to begin with.
- However during the pandemic, we became very focused on ourselves and **the immediate issues we were facing** (initially the pandemic itself, then how the health service was coping with it)
- Many people felt they **didn't 'have the band width'** to cope with much more than getting through the crisis, so they actively monitored the content they were consuming, avoiding other bad news, skipping over distressing content, seeking out feel good topics instead to distract themselves

People feel a degree of guilt about this, particularly Community Activists/Global Citizens, but equally they don't feel like they could have done anything else in the circumstances. At the time of speaking to consumers, they were still in this mindset to some degree



# Issues of Personal Concern

Base: All Adults (Feb 21 N – 3,008; Dec 21 N – 2,026)



Any Importance Dec 21 vs Feb 21				
Ranked on importance in Feb 21		Dec-21	Feb-21	Change
3	Climate change, the environment, biodiversity, pollution	51	43	+8
1	Global diseases and pandemics	47	58	-9
2	Economic crises, job security, wages	42	51	-9
4	Inequality between the rich and the poor	36	35	+1
5	Education, healthcare, clean water and hunger in developing countries	36	30	+6
6	Fake news, corruption of information	24	23	+1
7	War, conflict, terrorism	22	21	+1
8	Populism, nationalism, political extremism	18	18	=
9	Immigration, migration, refugees	15	16	-1
10	Technology, automation, artificial intelligence	9	6	+3

Climate/environment has increased in terms of personal importance, with global diseases/pandemics and economy still in the Top 3. Despite climate changing being the issue of highest personal concern, Education, healthcare, clean water and hunger in developing countries has become more important to Global Citizens and Community Activists.





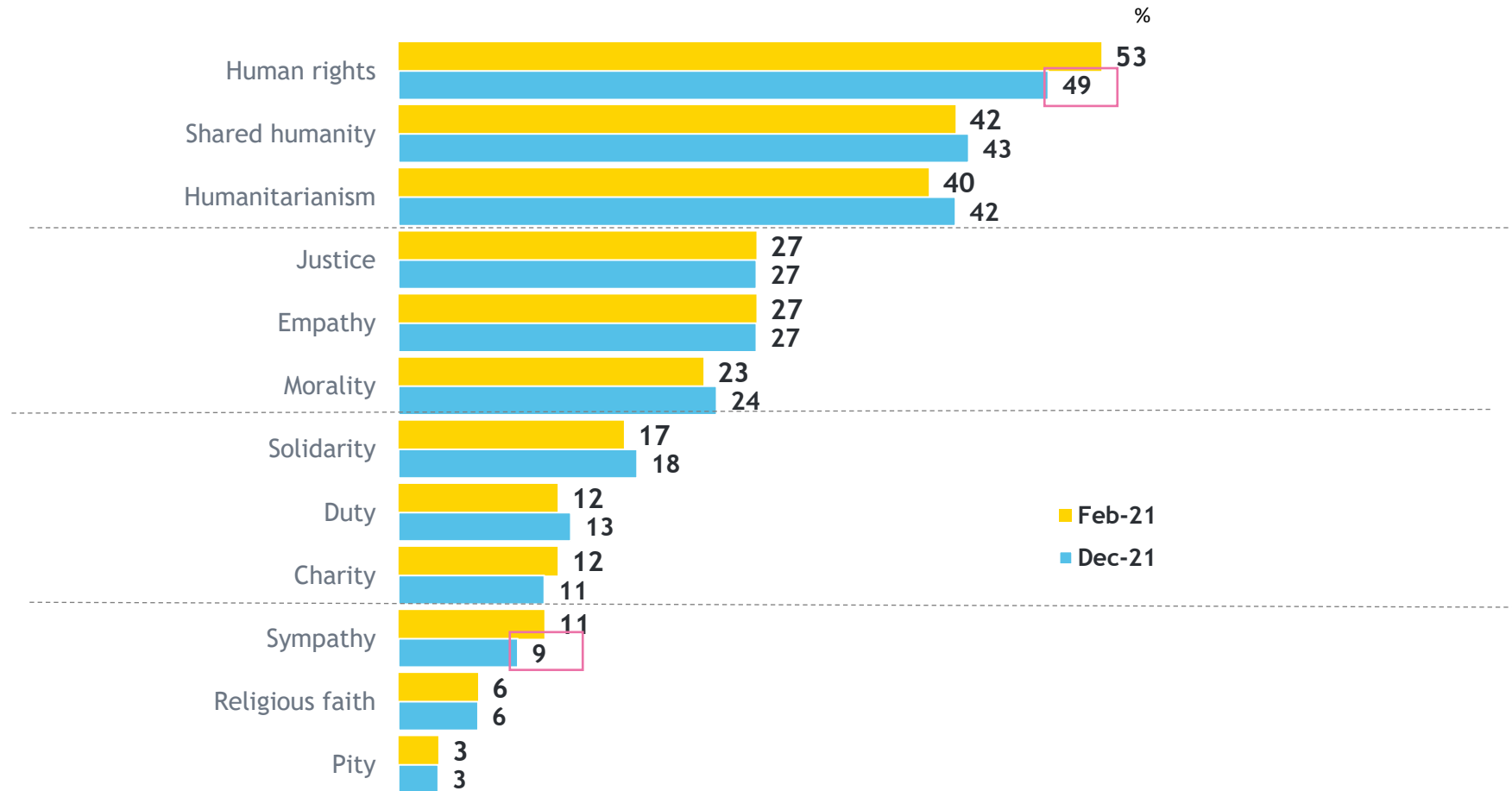
# The Top 3 Most Important Reasons to Help those in developing countries



Base: All Adults (Feb 21 N – 3,008; Dec 21 N – 2,026)

○ Statistically higher than Feb 21  
 □ Statistically lower than Feb 21

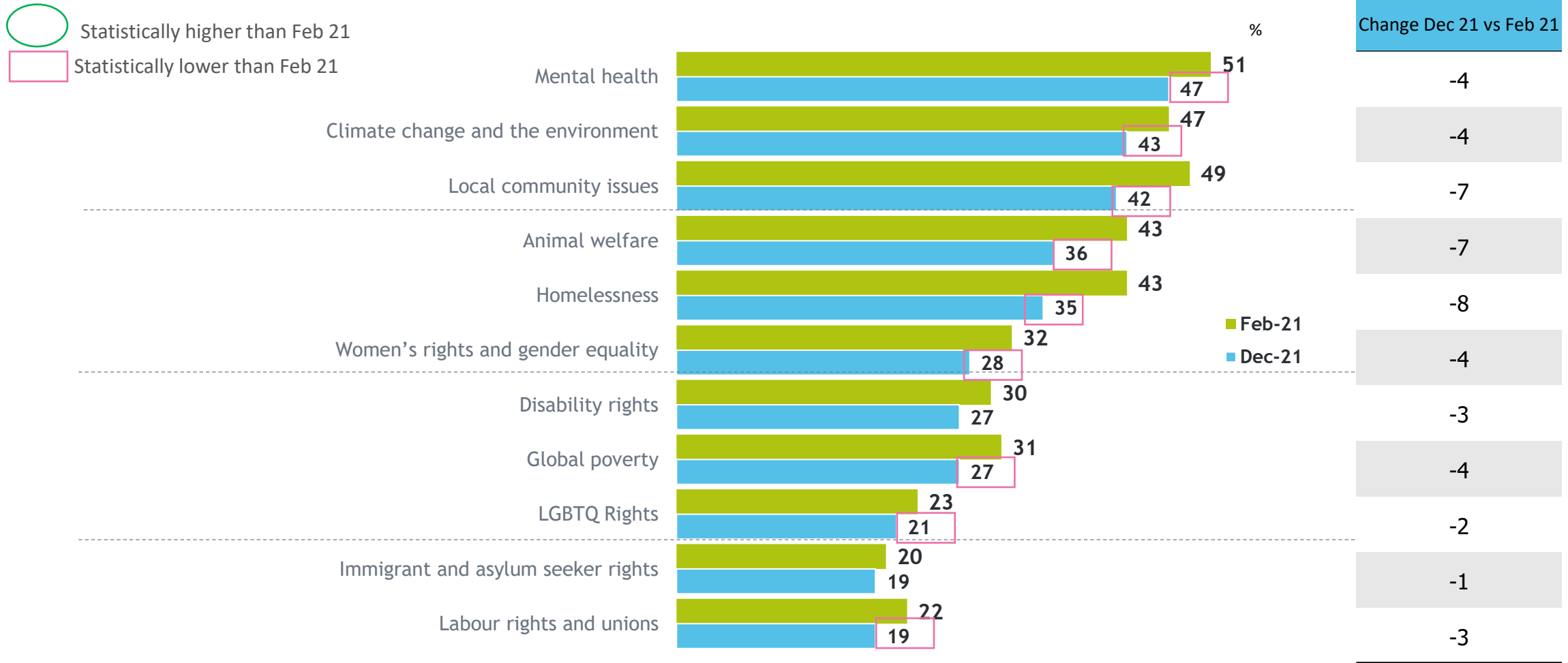
The top three reasons to help those in developing countries remain unchanged from the previous wave.



Q.6 Please select up to three words from the list below that best align with your own view of why we should help those in developing countries worse off than ourselves.

# Incidence of being active in causes over the last 12 months

Base: All Adults (Feb 21 N – 3,008; Dec 21 N – 2,026)

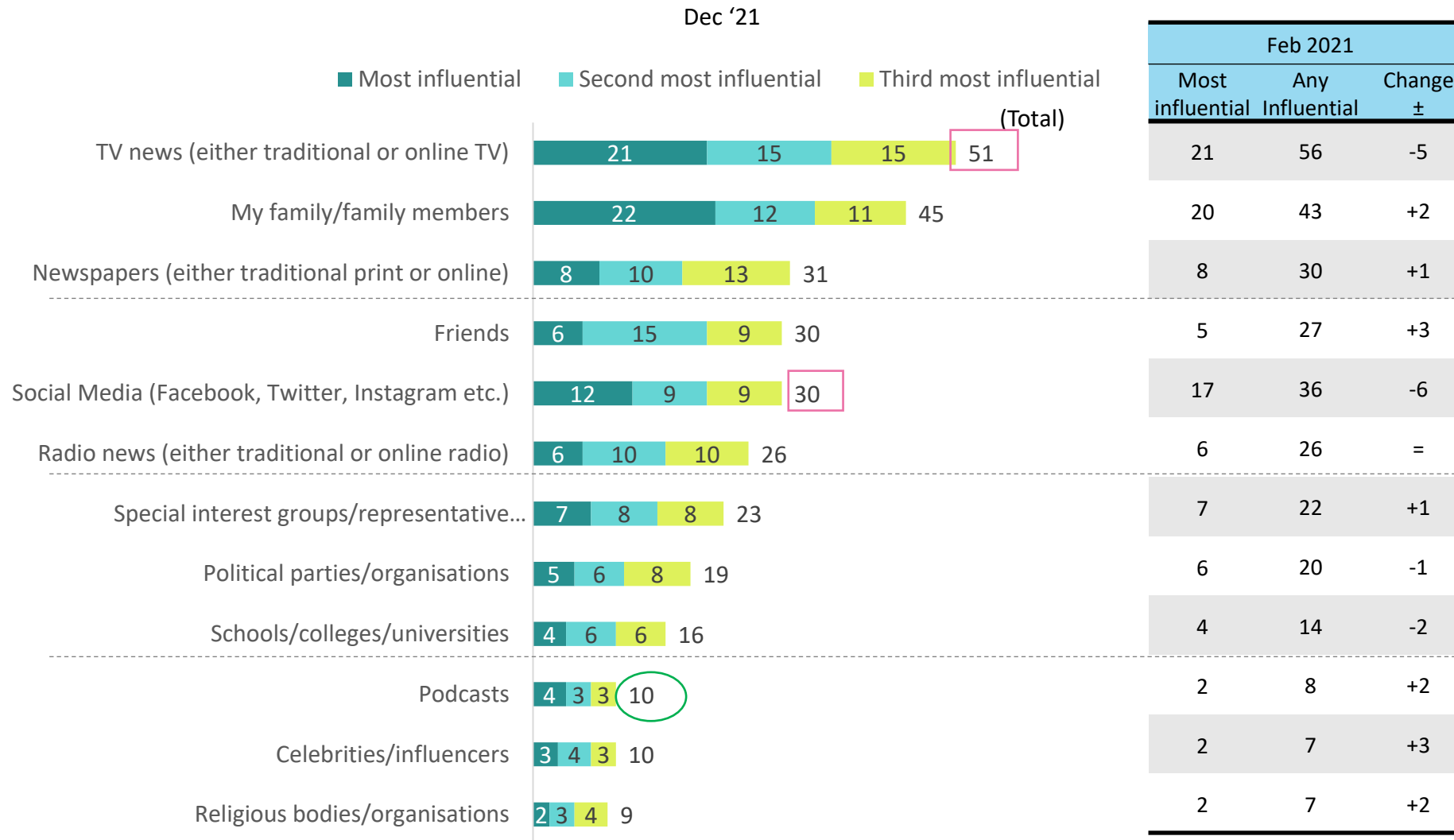


The relativities between the causes people have been active in over the last 12 months are broadly similar to the last wave. However, the level of activity over the last 12 months has decreased compared to the previous wave.

# Greatest influence on views and opinions of key issues

Base: All Adults (Feb 21 N – 3,008; Dec 21 N – 2,026)

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 □ Statistically lower than Feb 21



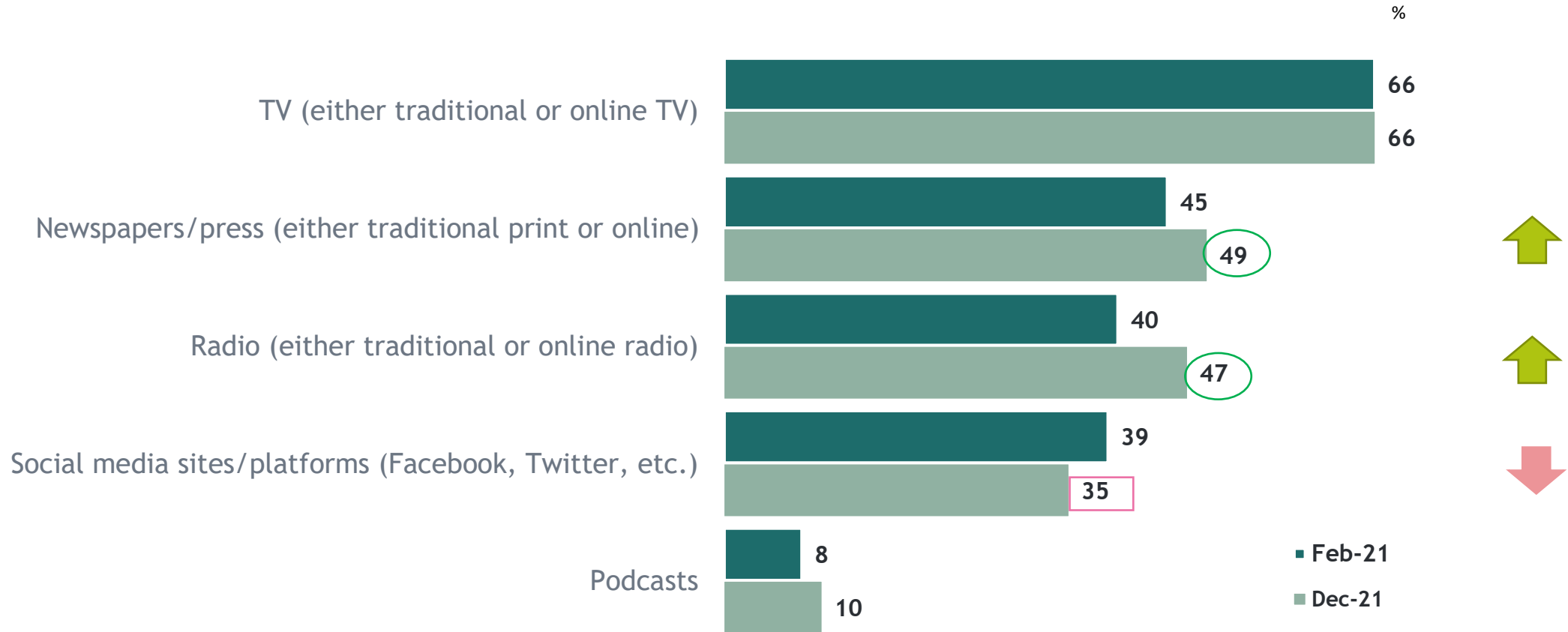
A slight drop on TV news and social media being influences on views and opinions of key issues, albeit they remain within the top three most influential sources.

# Sources for news and information

Base: All Adults (Feb 21 N – 3,008; Dec 21 N – 2,026)



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**In terms of sources for news and information most frequently used, TV remains top, with newspapers/press (either traditional print or online) and radio receiving increased mentions this wave.**

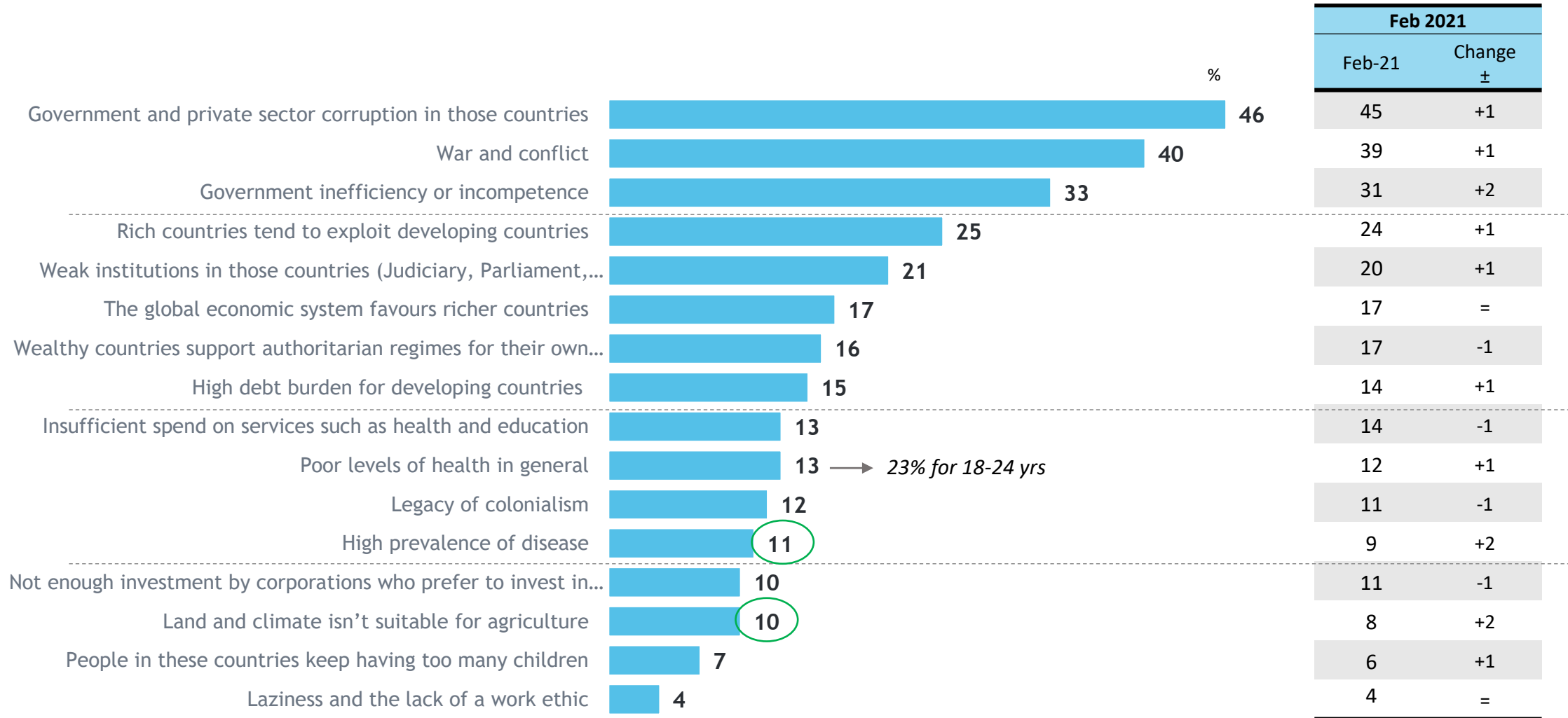




# Main causes of poverty in developing countries

Base: All Adults (Feb 21 N – 3,008; Dec 21 N – 2,026)

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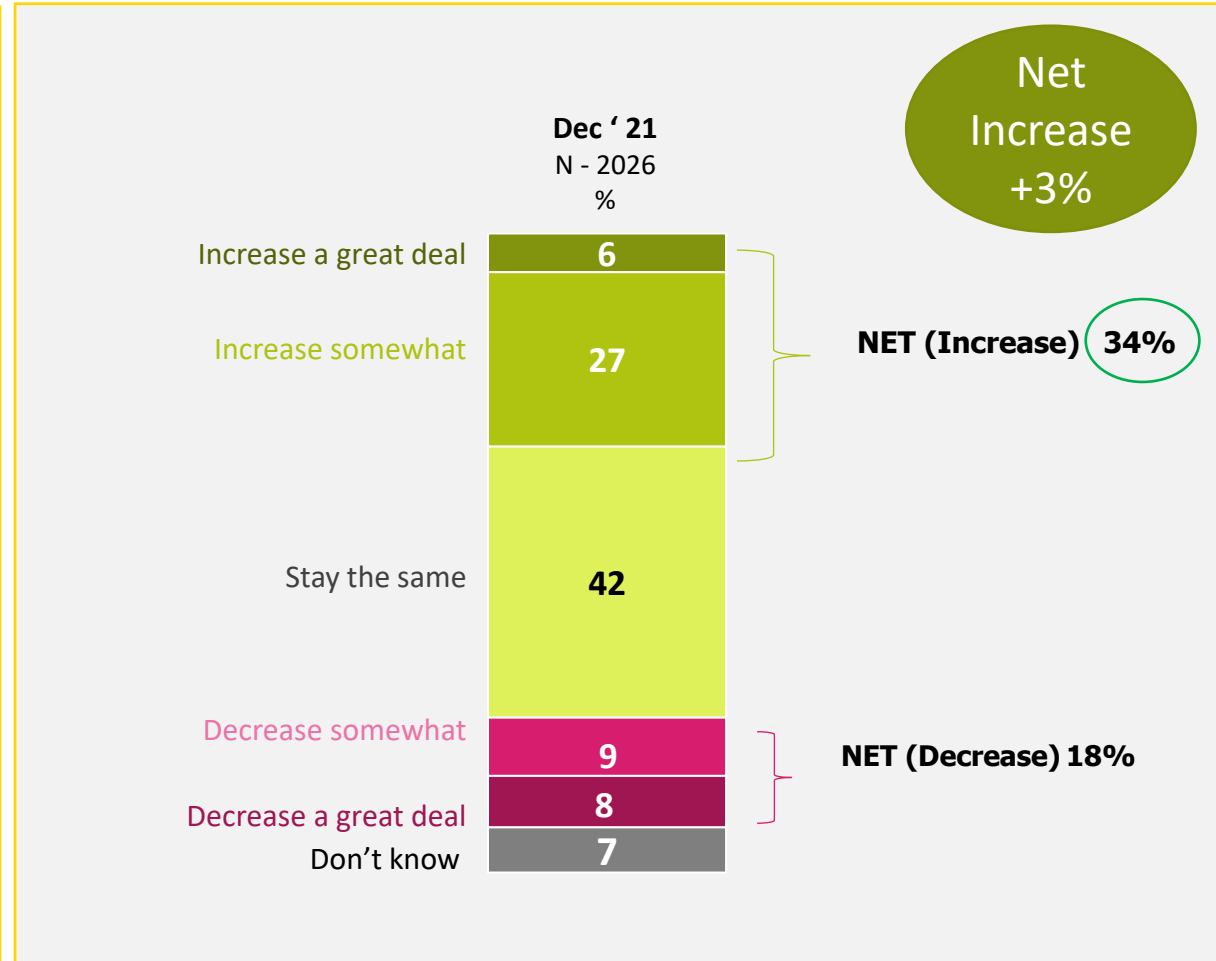
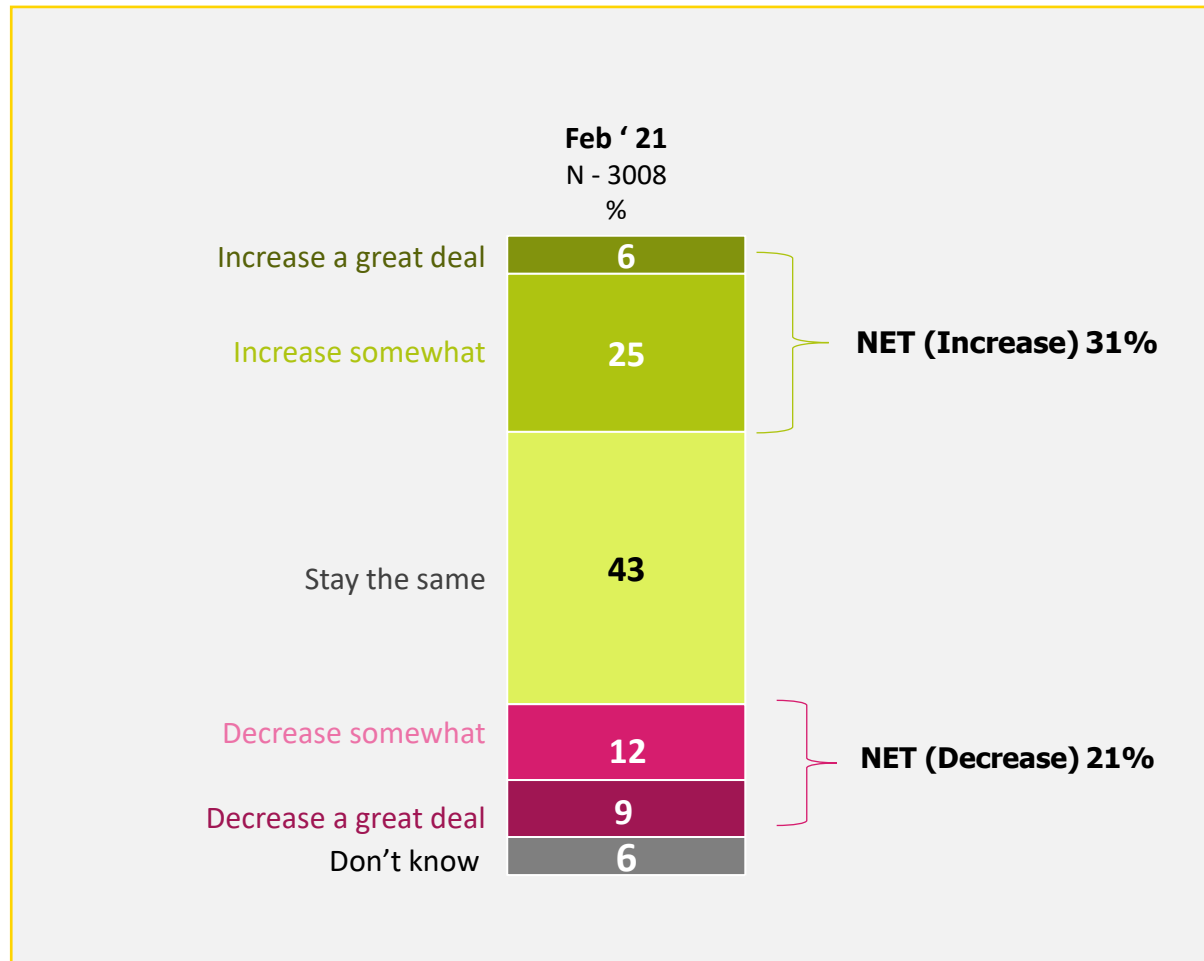
The main causes of perceived poverty in developing countries remain similar to February 21 with Government and Private Sector corruption in these countries 46%, war and conflict 40% and Government inefficiency or incompetence 33% remaining the top three perceived main causes.

# Extent the Irish Government should increase or decrease the amount of money it spends on overseas aid



Base: All Adults (Feb 21 N – 3,008; Dec 21 N – 2,026)

○ Statistically higher than Feb 21  
□ Statistically lower than Feb 21



This wave we see a net increase of three percentage points in terms of the extent to which the Irish Government should increase the amount of money it spends on overseas aid, with 34% of the population citing this view.



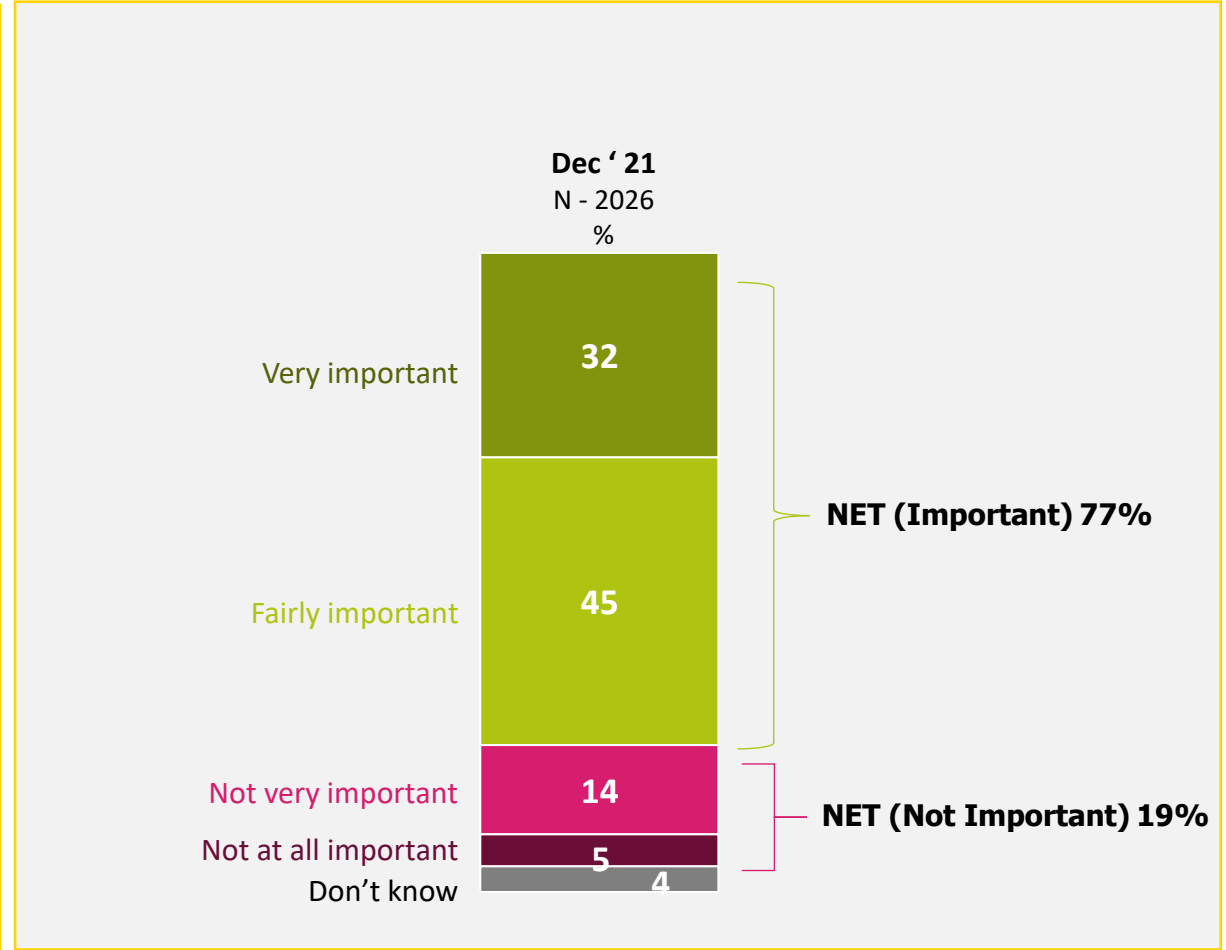
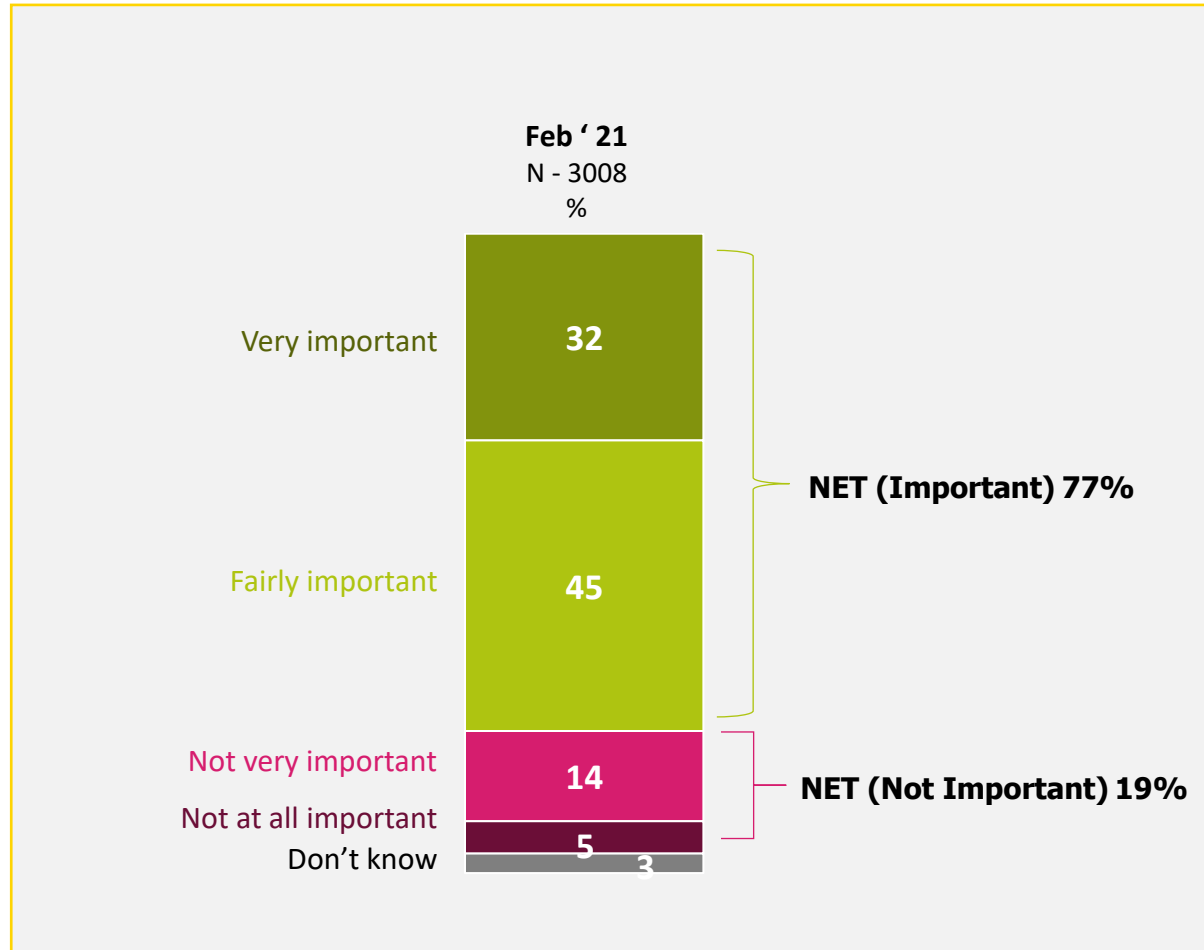
Q.32 Do you think that the Irish Government should increase or decrease the amount of money that it spends on overseas aid to developing countries?

# Importance of Irish Government providing overseas aid

Base: All Adults (Feb 21 N – 3,008; Dec 21 N – 2,026)



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The Irish Government should provide overseas aid metric remains on a par with Feb 21 with 77% believing it is very/fairly important.



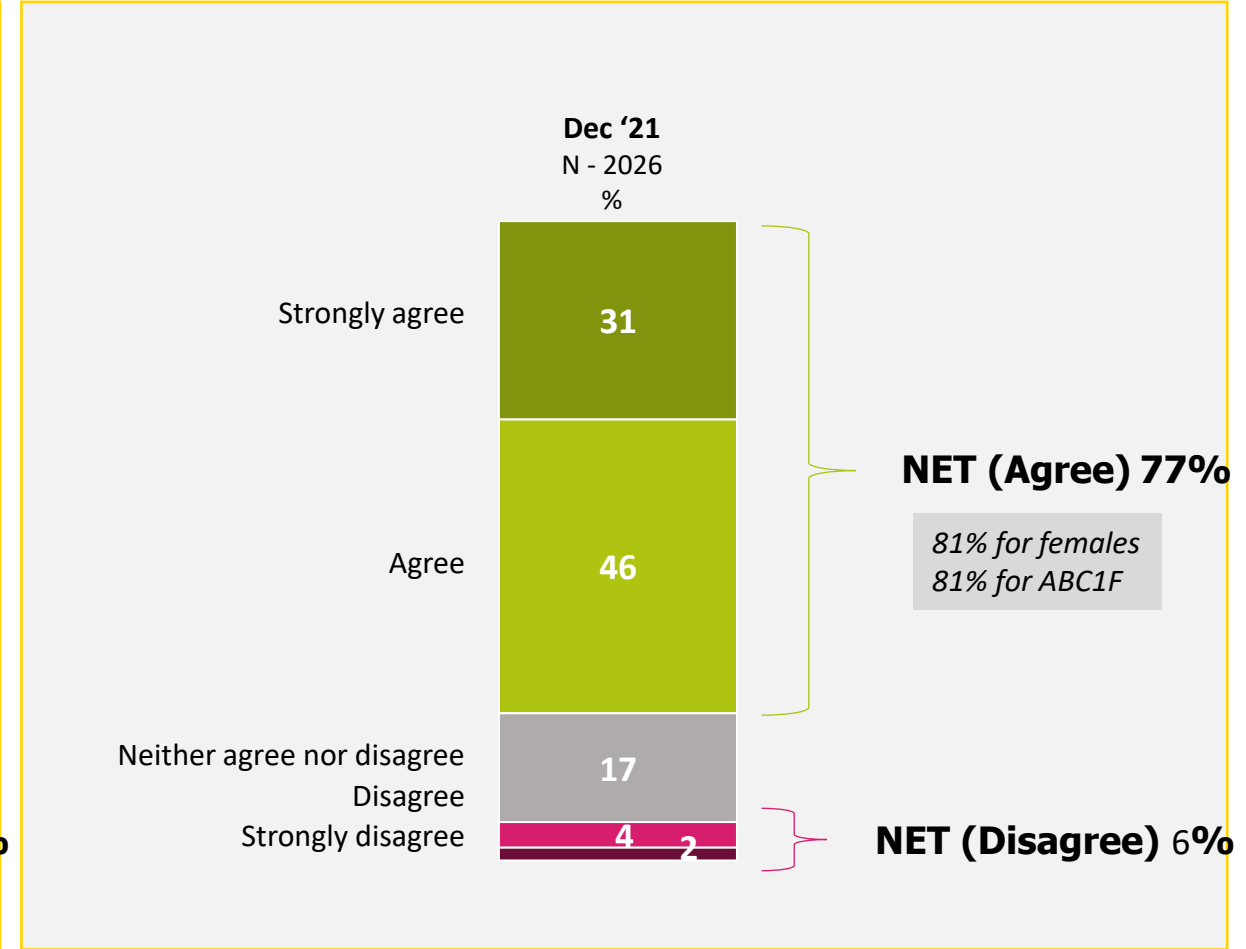
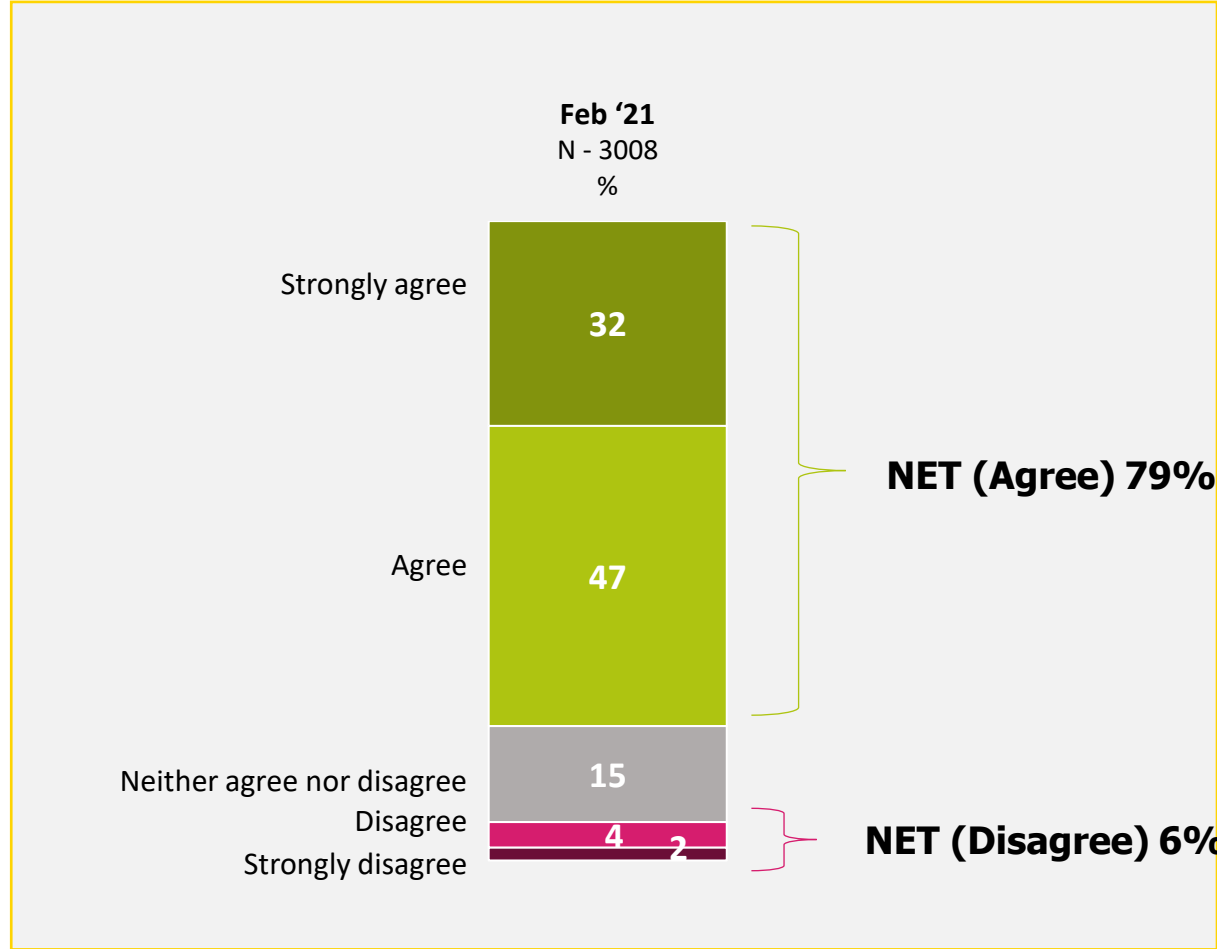
Q.33 Do you feel it is very important, fairly important, not very important or not at all important that the Irish Government provides overseas aid to help people in developing countries?

# Level of agreement that Overseas aid can help bring about positive change for those living in developing countries



Base: All Adults (Feb 21 N – 3,008; Dec 21 N – 2,026)

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Similar to last wave three quarters of the Irish population agree that overseas aid can bring about positive change to those living in developing countries.

Q.35 Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement. Overseas aid can help bring about positive change for those living in developing countries.

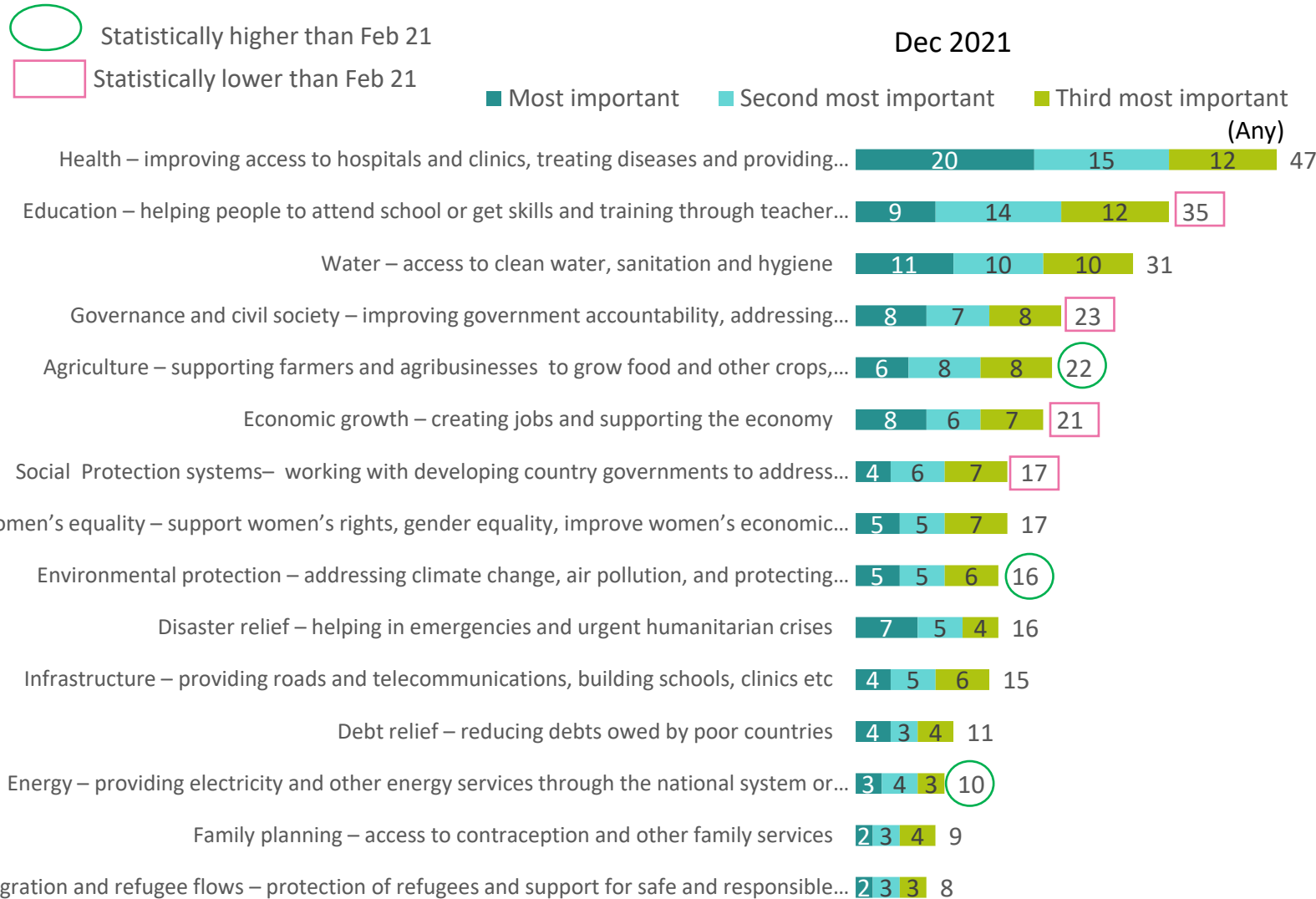




# Most important priorities for Irish Government support on overseas aid



Base: All Adults (Feb 21 N – 3,008; Dec 21 N – 2,026)



Feb 2021		
Most important	Any important	Change ± Any Importance
19	47	=
11	40	-5
12	31	=
10	26	-3
5	19	+3
9	25	-4
5	19	+2
4	14	-3
4	13	+3
7	16	=
3	13	+2
3	10	+1
2	8	+2
2	9	=
2	8	=

**In terms of the most important priorities for the Irish Government to support on overseas aid, the areas of health, education and water remain the top three priorities for people. Both Agriculture and environmental protection have increased by three percentage points on the last wave with economic growth declining by 4 percentage points.**

Q.58-72 The Irish government supports long term development, capacity building and provides humanitarian assistance in over eighty countries, on behalf of the Irish people. It provides financial and technical assistance to developing country governments (bilateral), international organisations such as the United Nations (multilateral) and to non-governmental organisations (civil society) to address challenges in different sectors. Which of the following do you think should be the first, second and third most important priorities for Irish Government support on overseas aid to developing countries?





## Key Take-Outs



- At a **macro economic level**, while confidence in a general economic recovery has improved since the beginning of last year, people's view of their household's financial situation remains in negative territory – confirming that the general public will still need to be convinced that personal donations and/or government support for overseas development aid is being put to demonstrably good use.
- **Key issues competing with overseas aid** in terms of public expenditure include a perceived critical need to get the economy back on track post covid, addressing broader health service (including mental health) shortcomings, affordable housing for those who need it, and a desire to address ever-increasing concerns around climate change and sustainability. The great majority of individuals will need to be reassured that the Irish Government has a clear plan, with associated investment, to address all of these issues first and foremost, if they are to be convinced to support any increase in overseas aid Government spending.

# Key Take-Outs



- Regarding the potential to involve more people in activism around areas such as global poverty, **reported levels of activism** across all areas researched has **decreased** quite significantly over the last 12 months. To some extent, this may be due to restraints on participating in activities during 2021 lockdowns, but the qualitative research also suggests that it is also due at least in part to covid fatigue and its effect on focusing people on their immediate financial and social needs over and above broader societal concerns.
- None of this is to suggest that there has been a fundamental shift away from levels of concern with poverty in developing countries or the moral imperative to address such inequalities at a human level. It simply means that **Dochas agencies will need to work that bit harder** over the coming 12 to 24 months to communicate its messaging to all segments, and particularly to Global Citizens and Community Activists. Indeed, when questioned directly, the percentage of Irish adults that would like to see an increase in Irish Government overseas aid spending has increased between survey waves, and three quarters still attest to the importance of the Government providing such aid.





- As to the **most important perceived priorities** that the Irish Government should channel **overseas aid** towards, health, education, and access to water, remain top of the wish list, with environmental protection increasing in importance for European Multilateralists, Community Activists and Global Citizens.
- From a **media planning perspective**, TV remains an influential channel for most audiences, although compared to the last wave, there is evidence to suggest an increased relevance of radio, and newspapers (either traditional or digital) which may in part be due to a return to traditional working patterns, and a rejuvenation of the drivetime radio slot.

# Thank you.



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# Delve Deeper