



ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE GLOBAL GOALS & CLIMATE CHANGE AMONG THE IRISH PUBLIC

/ 4 January 2024
// Dochas Worldview Survey: Wave 4
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BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH

- The Development Engagement Lab (DEL) is 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.
- DEL has partnered with Dochas to support the Worldview programme since its inception in 2021. This deck sits alongside the Wave 4 B&A analysis and provides a snapshot into attitudes towards SDGs and climate change in Ireland.

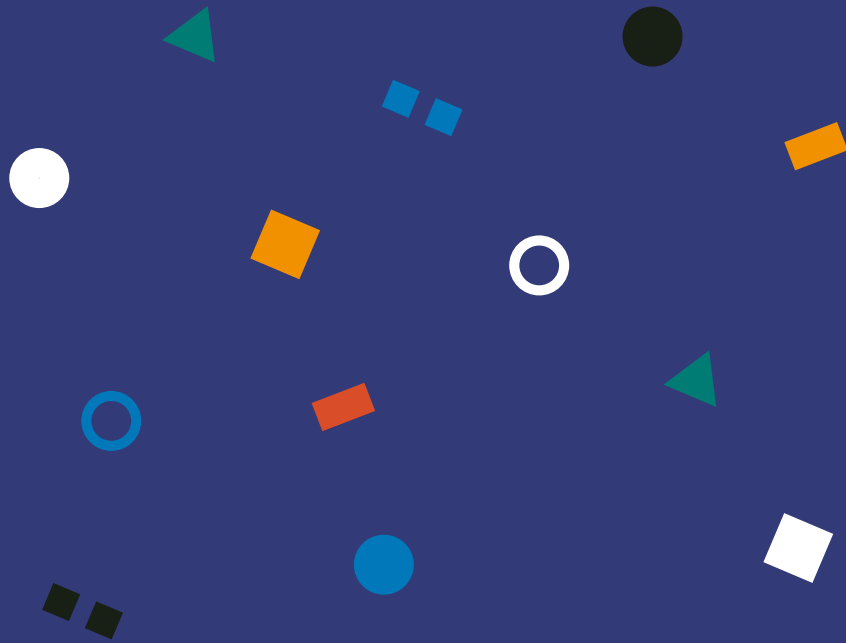
USE, DATA & CITATION

- Use
 - DEL data and analysis are a public good and can be used and shared with the appropriate citation.
- Data
 - Worldview Overseas Development Aid survey. Fieldwork conducted by B&A, 17 October – 13 November, 2023 (n = 2,515). Data are weighted to be nationally representative.
- Citation
 - Hudson, D. & Hudson, J. 2024. Attitudes towards the global goals and climate change among the Irish public. London: Development Engagement Lab.

CONTENTS

1. SDGs: Awareness & Knowledge (5)
2. SDGs: Importance & Achievability (14)
3. Climate Change (23)
4. Key insights (37)

1. SDGs: AWARENESS & KNOWLEDGE



The Irish public's awareness of the UN Global Goals and knowledge of them among key socio-demographic groups

AWARENESS AND KNOWLEDGE QUESTIONS

- Since 2018, DEL has asked about SDGs to gauge public knowledge/awareness in other countries. Our research has shown that knowledge is highest in Canada and France and significantly lower in Germany, Britain and the U.S.
- DEL questions:
 - *Have you ever heard or read about the Sustainable Development Goals, also known as the SDGs or Global Goals?*
 - *Which countries do the Sustainable Development Goals apply to?*
 - *How many Sustainable Development Goals are there?*
 - *When is the deadline to meet the SDGs?*

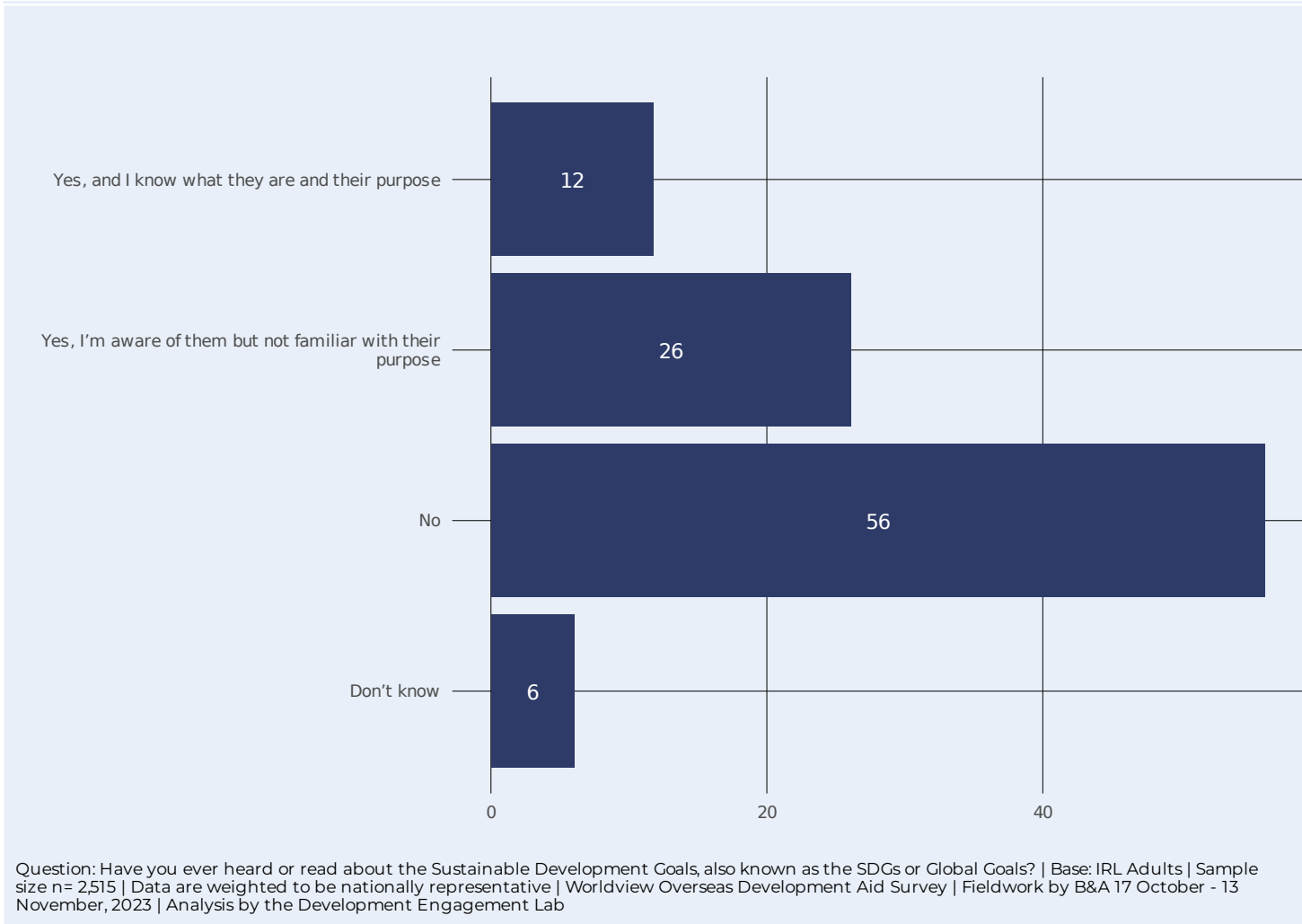
SDG KNOWLEDGE & AWARENESS



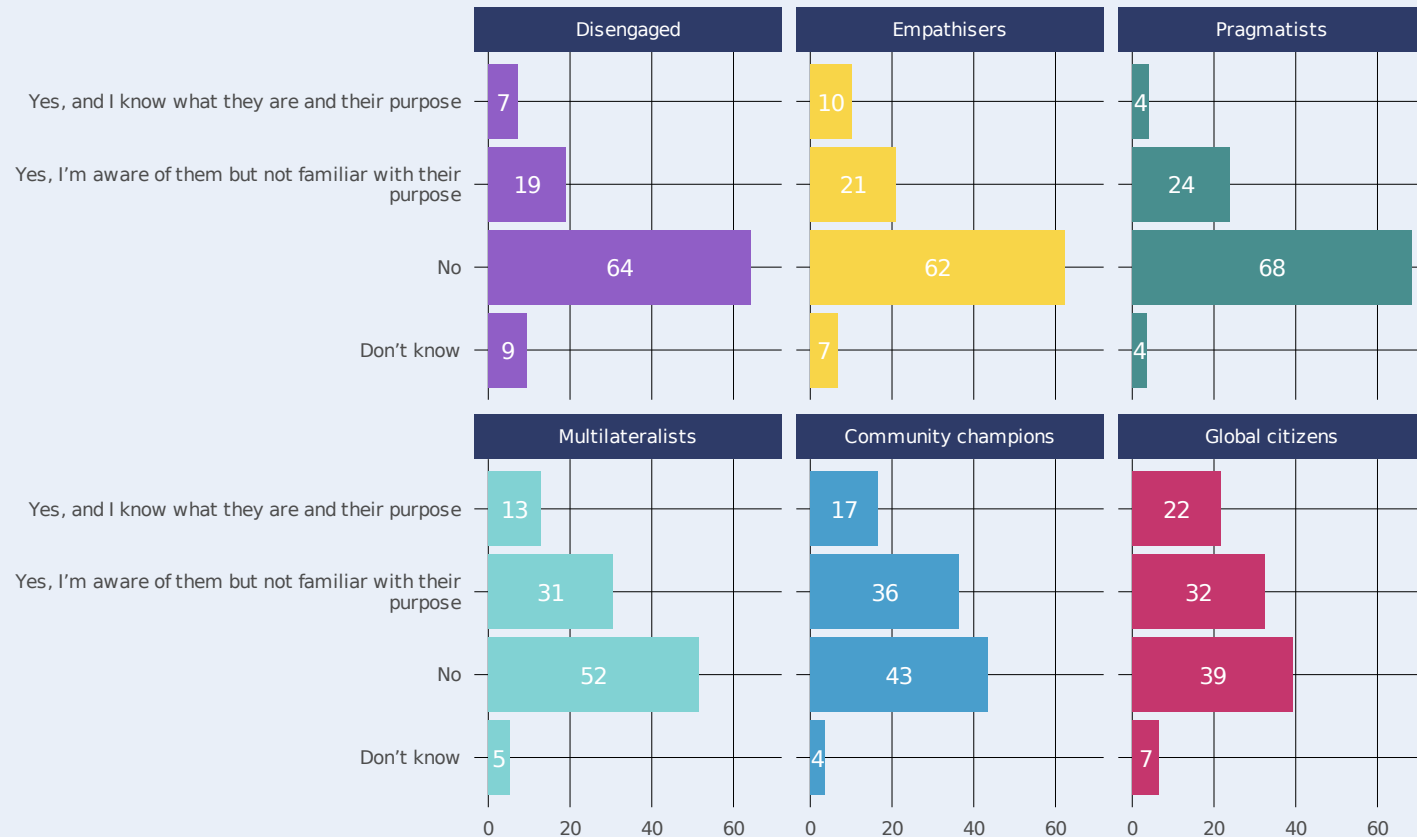
12%

of the Irish public know what the SDGs are

- More than half (56%) of the Irish public have not heard of or know what the SDGs are.
- Just 12% of respondents say they have both heard of, and know what, the SDGs are. This is comparable to the U.S, and is higher than in France, Germany, and Britain ([link](#))
- A further 26% have heard of the SDGs but do not know what they are



AWARENESS BY WORLDVIEW AUDIENCE

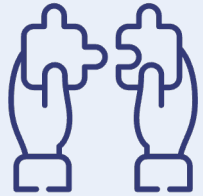


- Looking at knowledge of the SDGs by the Worldview audience segmentation, we see that it conforms to expectations: more engaged audiences – e.g. *Multilateralists, Community champions, and Global citizens* – are more likely to have heard of and know about the SDGs.
- These groups are also more likely to have heard of, if not know about, their purpose.
- For less engaged audiences – *Disengaged, Empathisers and Pragmatists* – more than 6 in 10 have not heard of the SDGs.

Question: Have you ever heard or read about the Sustainable Development Goals, also known as the SDGs or Global Goals? | Base: IRL Adults | Sample size n= 2,515 | Data are weighted to be nationally representative | Worldview Overseas Development Aid Survey | Fieldwork by B&A 17 October - 13 November, 2023 | Analysis by the Development Engagement Lab



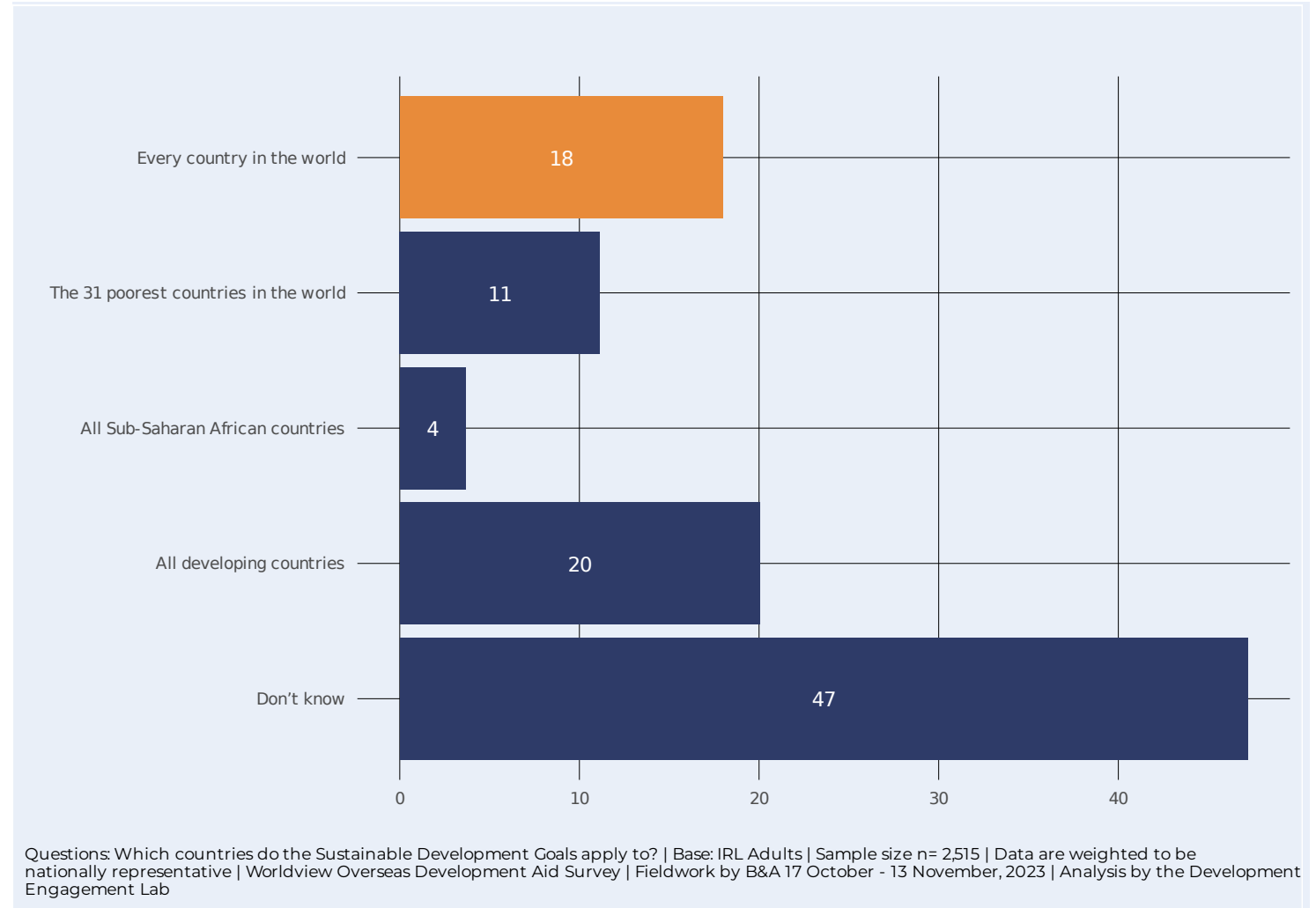
WHICH COUNTRIES DO THE SDGS APPLY TO?



47%

of Irish respondents say they 'Don't know' which countries the SDGs apply to

- 18% of respondents chose the correct response option – the SDGs apply to all countries in the world.
- The most common response (after Don't know) is that the SDGs apply to all developing countries (20%).
- More generally, the set of responses tell us that the Irish public think the SDGs are for poor countries, however defined, or don't know.



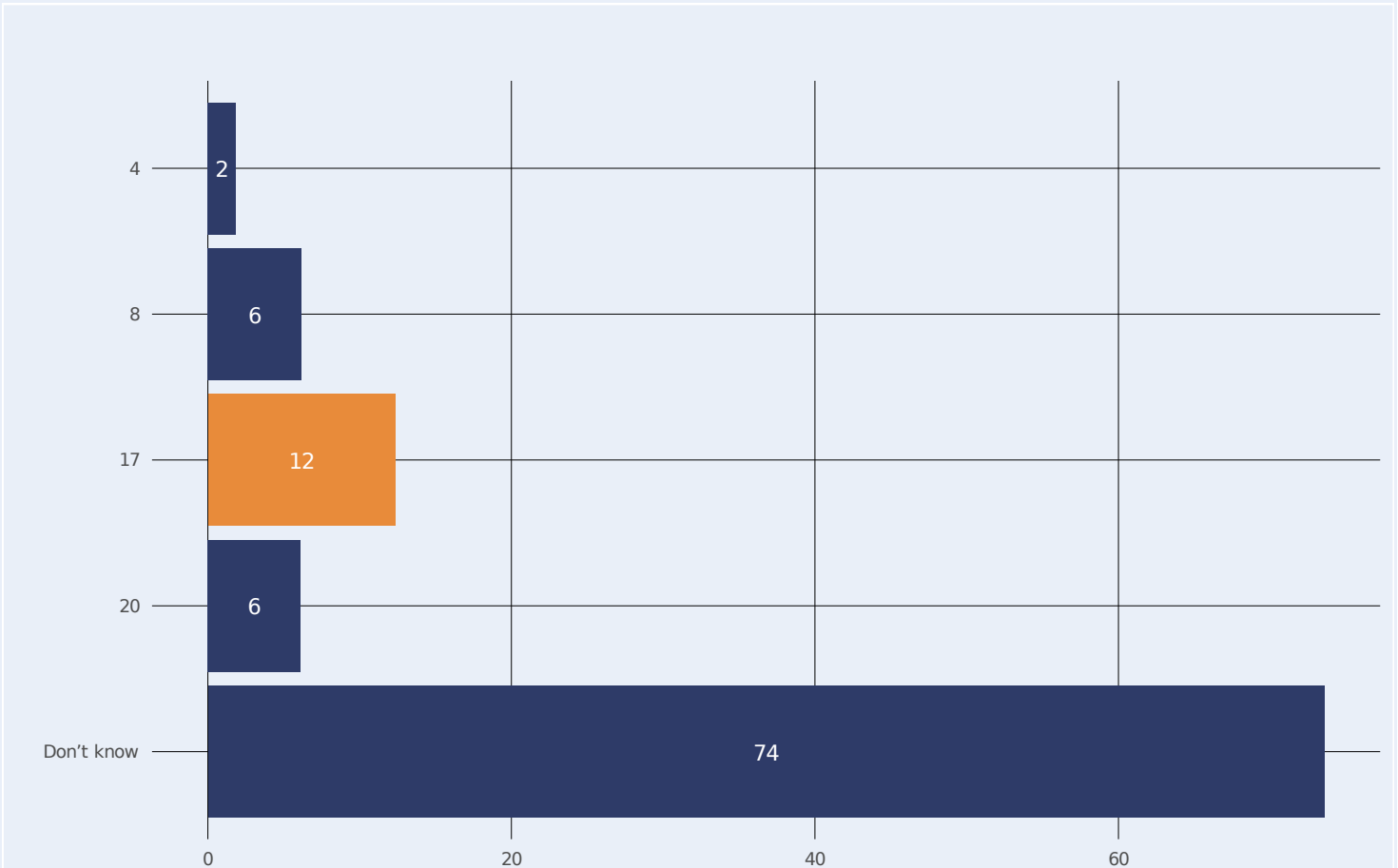
KNOWLEDGE OF THE NUMBER OF GLOBAL GOALS IS LOW



12%

of respondents know that there are 17 Global Goals

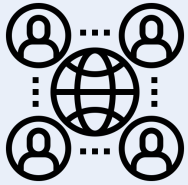
- Just over 1 in 10 respondents know that there are 17 Global Goals.
- Nearly three-quarters (74%), said they Don't know, indicating that the discussion among policymakers and the development community is not reaching the wider Irish public. This is similar in other DEL countries surveyed.



Questions: How many Sustainable Development Goals are there? | Base: IRL Adults | Sample size n= 2,515 | Data are weighted to be nationally representative | Worldview Overseas Development Aid Survey | Fieldwork by B&A 17 October - 13 November, 2023 | Analysis by the Development Engagement Lab



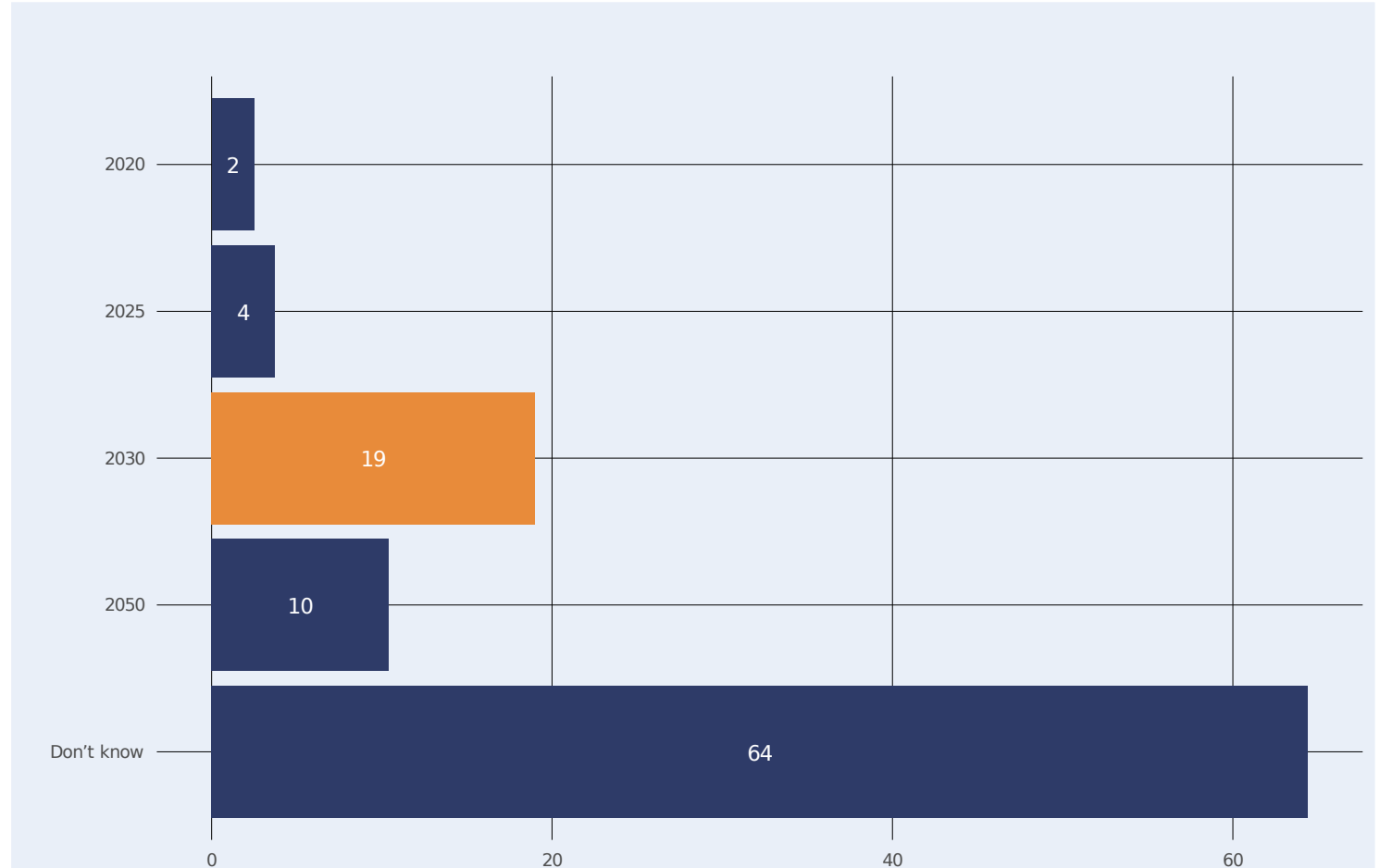
19% OF THE IRISH PUBLIC KNOW THE 2030 SDG DEADLINE



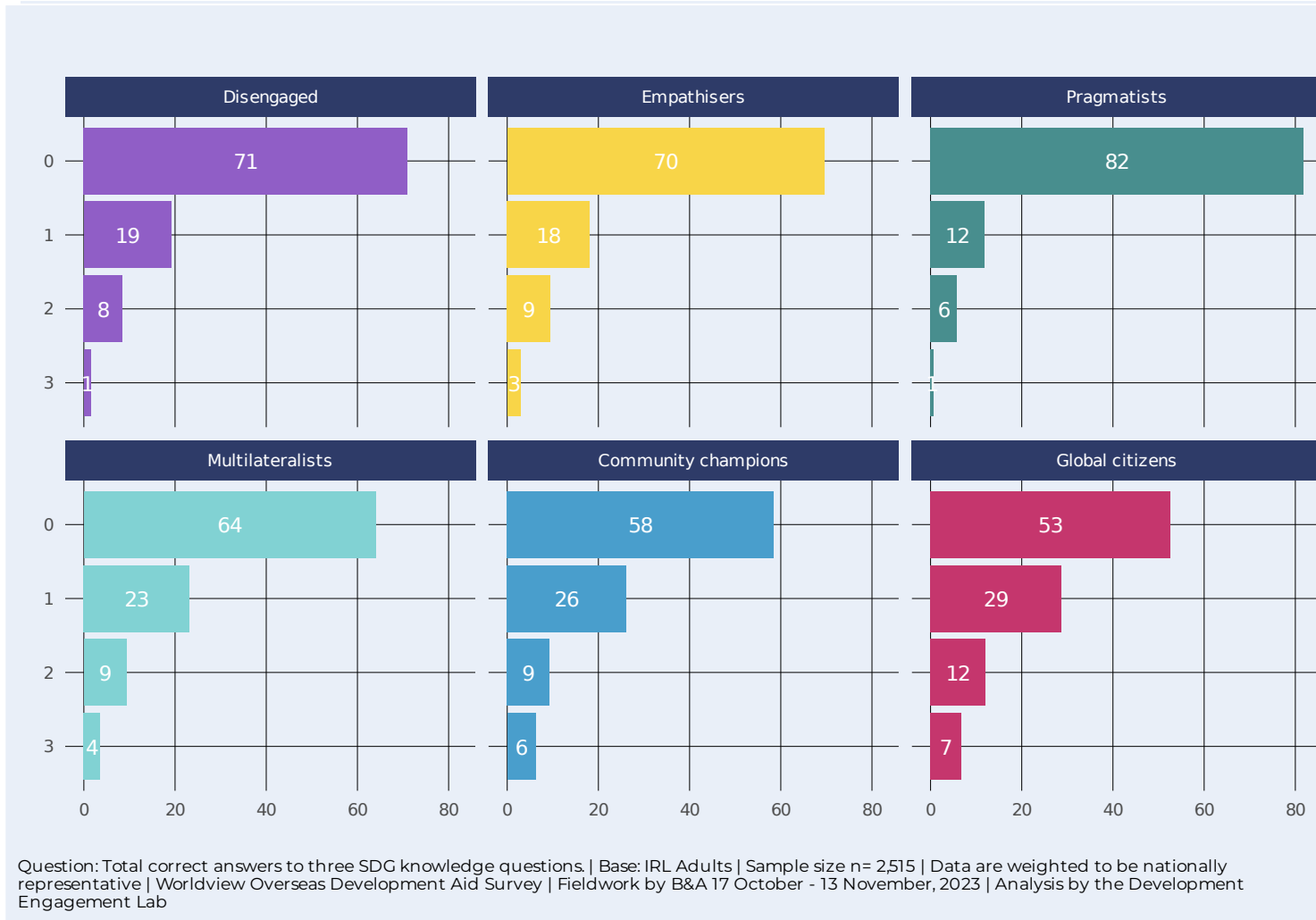
19%

of the Irish public can identify the 2030 SDG deadline

- Similar to knowledge of the number of Global Goals, knowledge of the deadline is low in Ireland. Less than 2 in 10 can accurately identify the 2030 deadline.
- Nearly two-thirds (64%) said they Don't know the deadline for the SDGs, again indicating the low-levels of penetration in the wider public discourse.



SDG KNOWLEDGE BY WORLDVIEW AUDIENCE



- We took the three previous knowledge questions – countries, number and deadline – and show the percentage of respondents who got 0, 1, 2, or all 3 items correct by the Worldview audience segments.
- Even among the most engaged audience group – *Global citizens* – a majority (53%) got 0 of the 3 questions correct. Among *Global citizens*, just 7% got all three questions correct. However, the most engaged groups were more likely to get 1 question correct than the least engaged groups.
- Among the least engaged groups – *Disengaged* (71%), *Empathisers* (70%), & *Pragmatists* (82%) – at least 7 in 10 were unable to answer one question correctly.
- Low levels of SDG knowledge is the norm across many countries. Ireland is no different. NB these questions are not just policy wonk issues, but core to the messaging of the SDGs: universal, 17 of them, to be met by 2030.



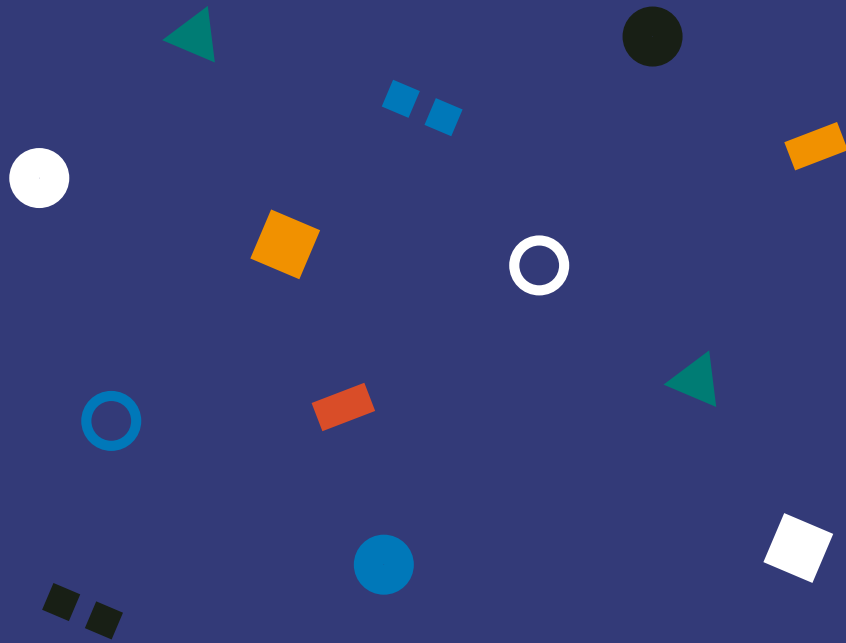
CORRELATES OF SDG AWARENESS & KNOWLEDGE

- What predicts awareness of the SDGs or greater levels of knowledge? We examine whether awareness and knowledge of the SDGs is higher among particular socio-demographic groups in Ireland.
- The summary table shows that women and older respondents are less likely to have heard about and know what the SDGs are; sex and age are also negatively related to knowledge about the SDGs.
- Those with a university degree and living in Dublin are more more likely to have heard about the SDGs and know what they are, and know key facts about the SDGs.
- Catholics are no more likely to be aware/know about the SDGs than other religions.

	Awareness (Yes, know what are and purpose)	Knowledge (0-3 correct answers)
Female	Negative	Negative
Age	Negative	Negative
Dublin	Positive	Positive
University degree	Positive	Positive
ABC1F	Positive	NULL
Catholic	NULL	NULL



2. SDGs: IMPORTANCE & ACHIEVABILITY

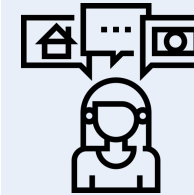
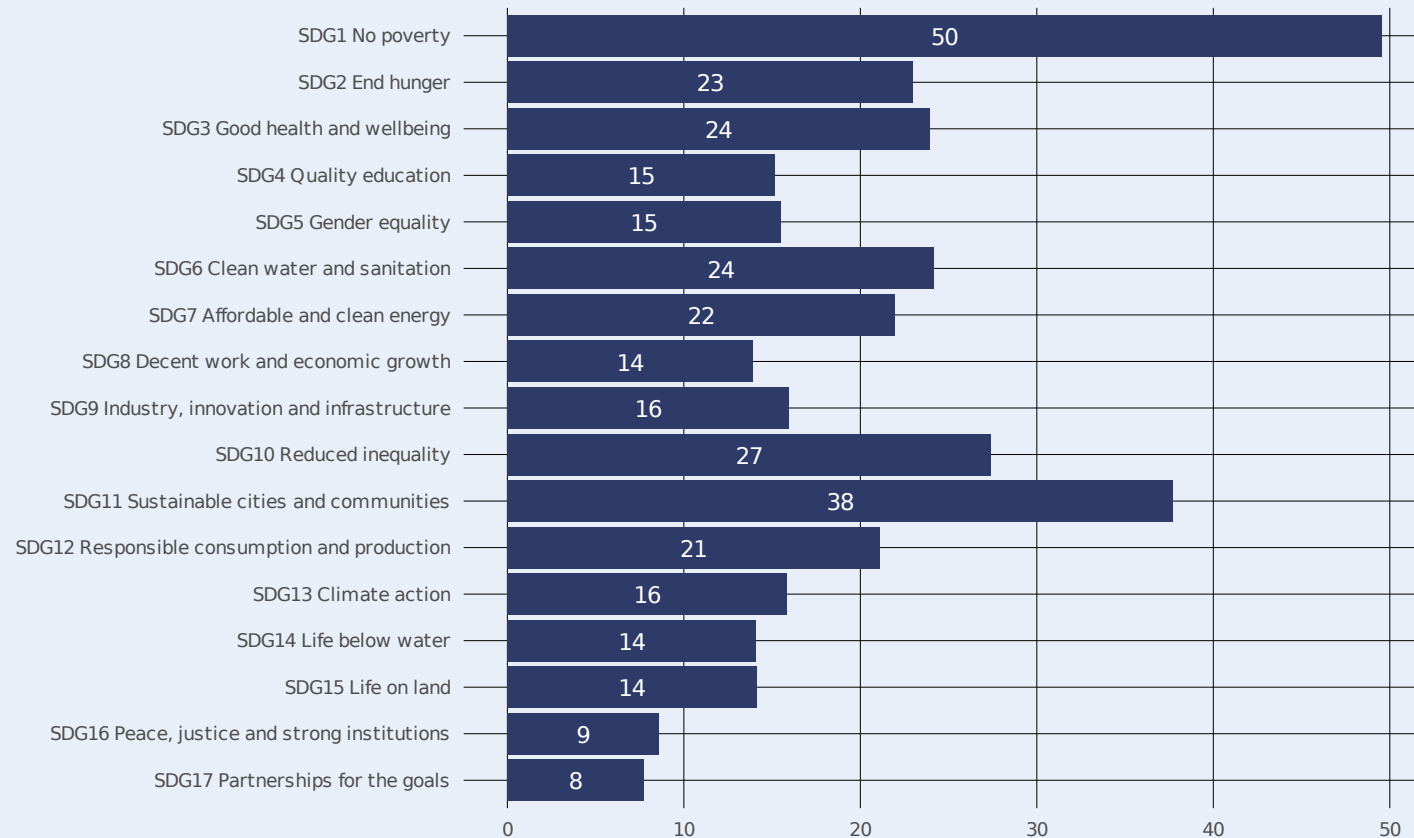


Which goals do
respondents think are
important *and*
achievable?

WHICH GOALS ARE SEEN AS IMPORTANT & ACHIEVABLE BY THE IRISH PUBLIC?

- We asked respondents to indicate which of the Global Goals they thought were most important and which would be achieved (globally) by 2030.
 - *Which do you think are the most important Global Goals?(Please select up to 4 items)*
 - *Shown list of all 17 SDGs*
 - *Do you think that the following Goals will or will not be achieved globally by 2030?*
 - *Shown list of all 17 SDGs*
 - *Will be achieved by 2030*
 - *Will be achieved but later than 2030*
 - *Will not be achieved*
 - *Don't know*

IRELAND'S VIEW: MOST IMPORTANT GLOBAL GOALS



50%

of the Irish public said SDG1 'No poverty' was the most important SDG

- Asked to choose up to 4, the Goal of most importance is SDG1, followed by SDG11 Sustainable cities & communities, both significantly ahead of other options.
- Rounding out the top 5 are SDG10 Reduced inequality (27%); SDG3 Good health and wellbeing (24%); and SDG6 Clean water and sanitation. These options align with other opinion surveys that show WASH, health and inequality to be important development issues for donor publics.

Question: Which do you think are the most important global goals?(Please select up to 4 items) | Base: IRL Adults | Sample size n= 2,515 | Data are weighted to be nationally representative | Worldview Overseas Development Aid Survey | Fieldwork by B&A 17 October - 13 November, 2023 | Analysis by the Development Engagement Lab



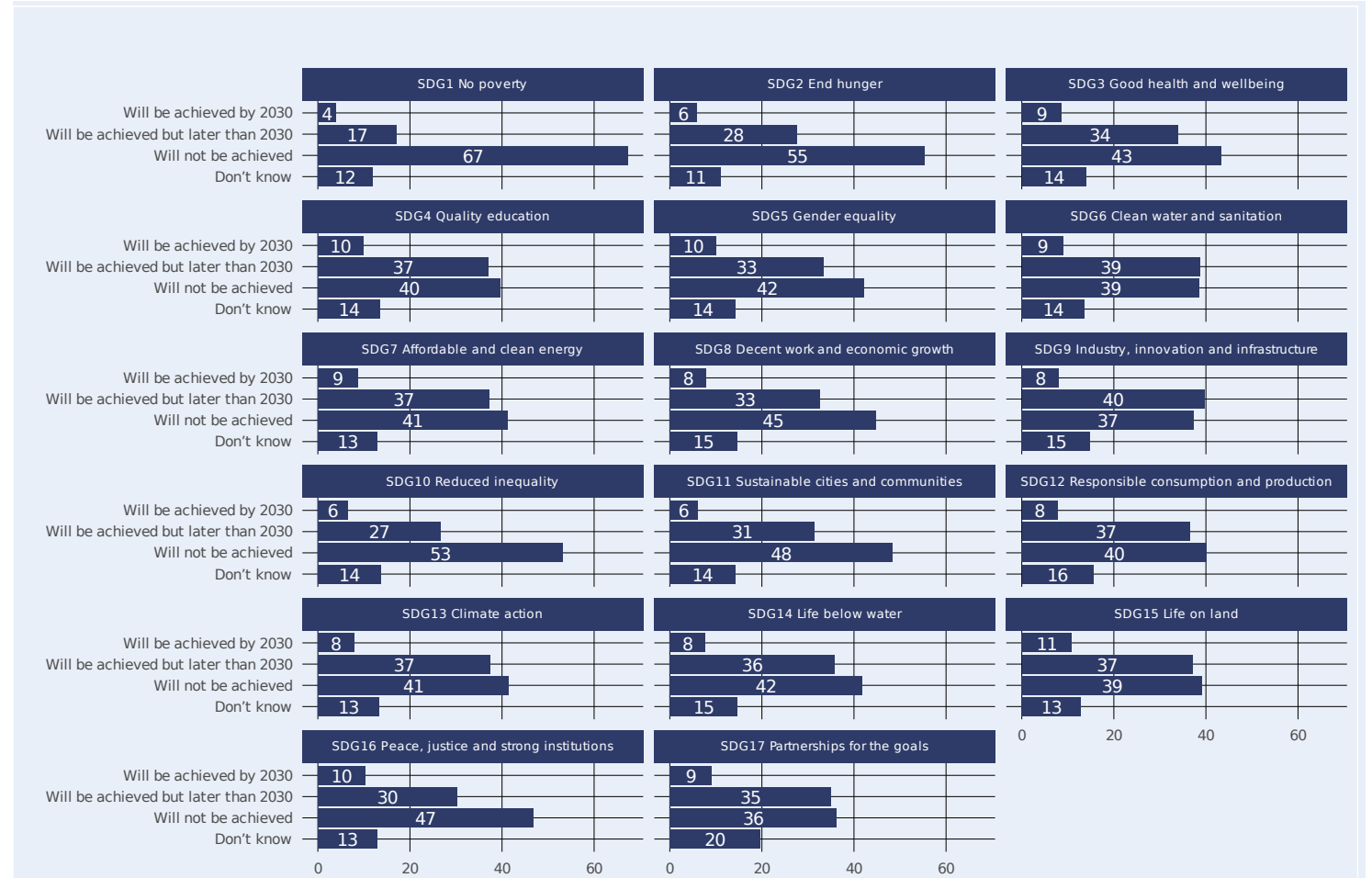
ACHIEVABILITY OF THE SDGs



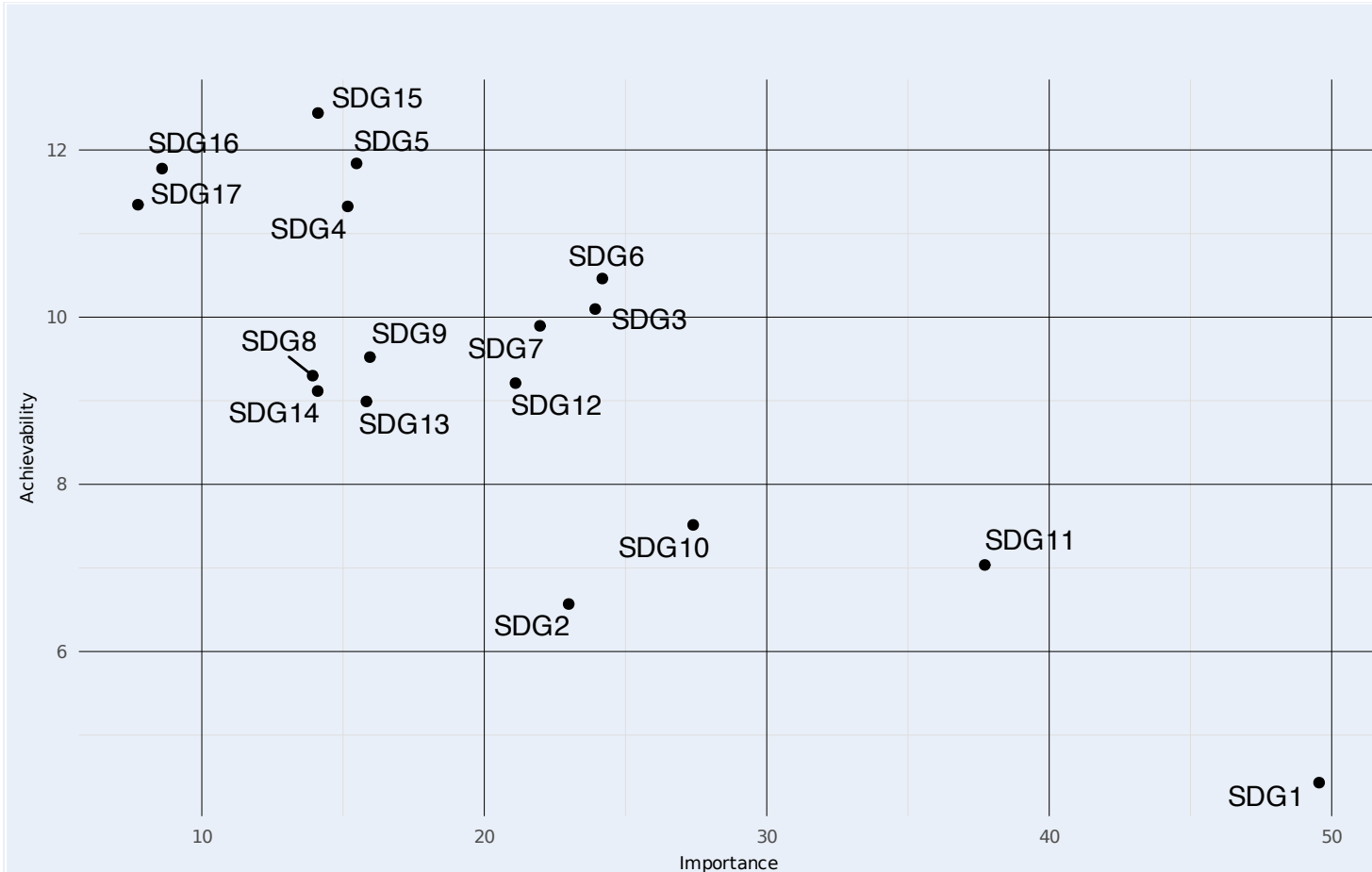
11%

said that SDG 15 Life on Land was most likely to be achieved by 2030

- However, only 14% rated SDG15 as important (previous slide).
 - There is an inverse relationship between importance and achievability: the most important Goal, SDG1 No poverty, was least likely to be thought to be achieved by the Irish public. Moreover, there is very little hope that this Goal will ever be achieved: just 17% said it would be achieved but after 2030 (the lowest of all of the SDGs).



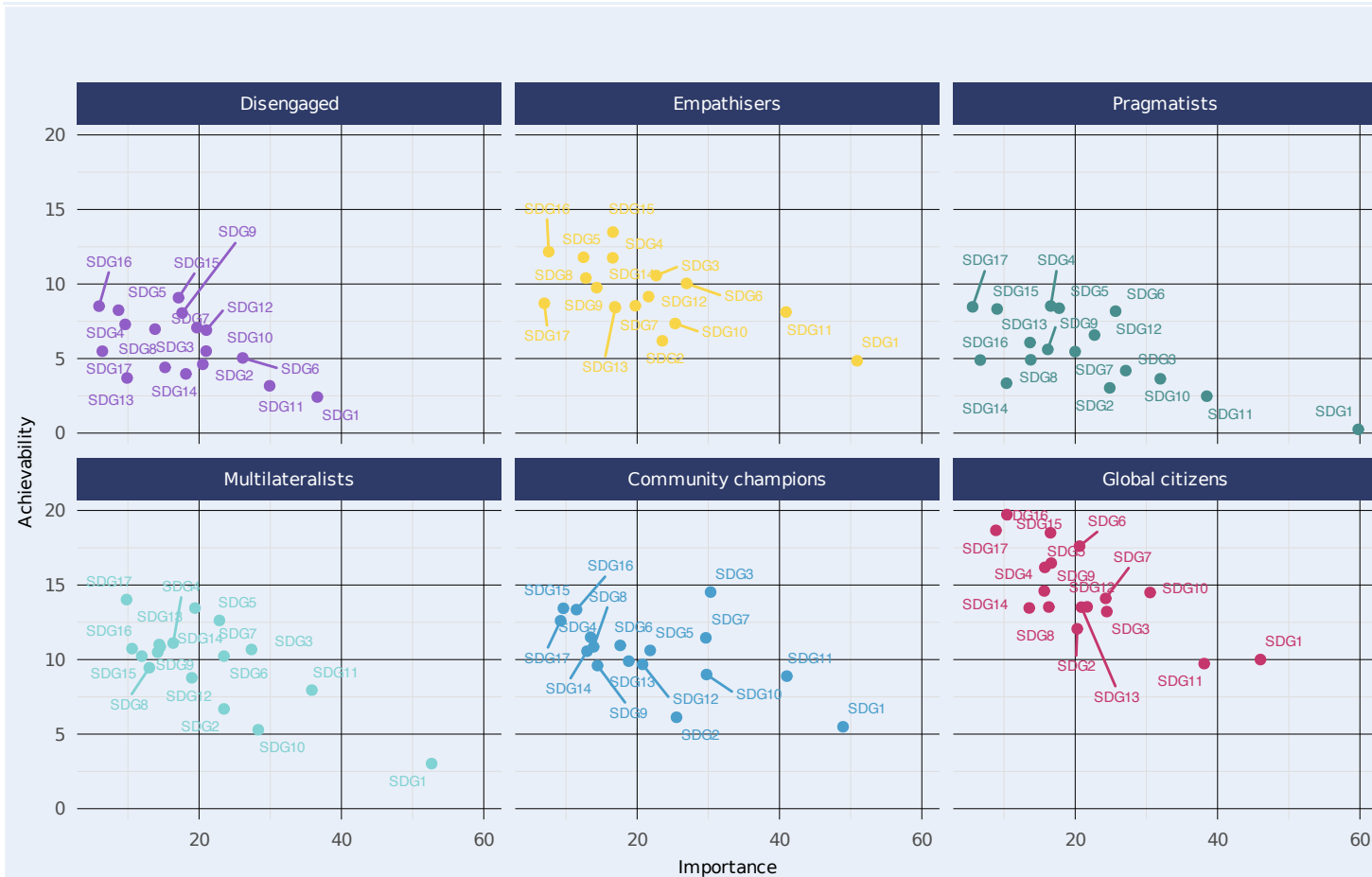
SDG IMPORTANCE BY ACHIEVABILITY



- This plot summarises and contrasts the previous two questions about the importance and achievability of individual SDGs. The x-axis shows the percentage of respondents who placed the SDG as one of the 4 most important. The y-axis shows the percentage of respondents who agreed that the SDG would be met by 2030.
- The data show a clear inverse relationship: the more important the goal, the less likely it is perceived to be achievable.
- SDG1 No poverty, is the most important goal, but thought least achievable. This may reflect the public's experience of decades of anti-poverty campaigns. SDG2 No hunger, is also rated as one of the most important, but least achievable.
- SDG 10 & 11 follow a similar inverse relationship.
- SDG4, 5, 15, 16, 17 most achievable, but less important. It is interesting that SDG4 Quality education, ranks so low on the importance scale, and similar to SDG5 Gender equality. Respondents may differentiate between access to education (which has been historically very important) and quality education.

Questions: Importance: Which do you think are the most important global goals? (Please select up to 4 items). Achievability: Do you think that the following goals will or will not be achieved globally by 2030? | Base: IRL Adults | Sample size n= 2,515 | Data are weighted to be nationally representative | Worldview Overseas Development Aid Survey | Fieldwork by B&A 17 October - 13 November, 2023 | Analysis by the Development Engagement Lab

SDG IMPORTANCE BY ACHIEVABILITY BY WORLDVIEW AUDIENCE



- This slide shows the importance of the SDGs by their perceived achievability, cut by the Worldview audience segments.
- SDG1 remains the most important Goal for each group, but by varying degrees.
- SDG 16 and 17 remain the least important across the groups.
- As expected, *Global citizens* are more optimistic of the Goals' achievability, on average, with *Pragmatists* and *Disengaged*, the least likely to think the Goals are achievable.

Questions: Importance: Which do you think are the most important global goals? (Please select up to 4 items). Achievability: Do you think that the following goals will or will not be achieved globally by 2030? | Base: IRL Adults | Sample size n= 2,515 | Data are weighted to be nationally representative | Worldview Overseas Development Aid Survey | Fieldwork by B&A 17 October - 13 November, 2023 | Analysis by the Development Engagement Lab

SDG IMPORTANCE BY ACHIEVABILITY BY SDG

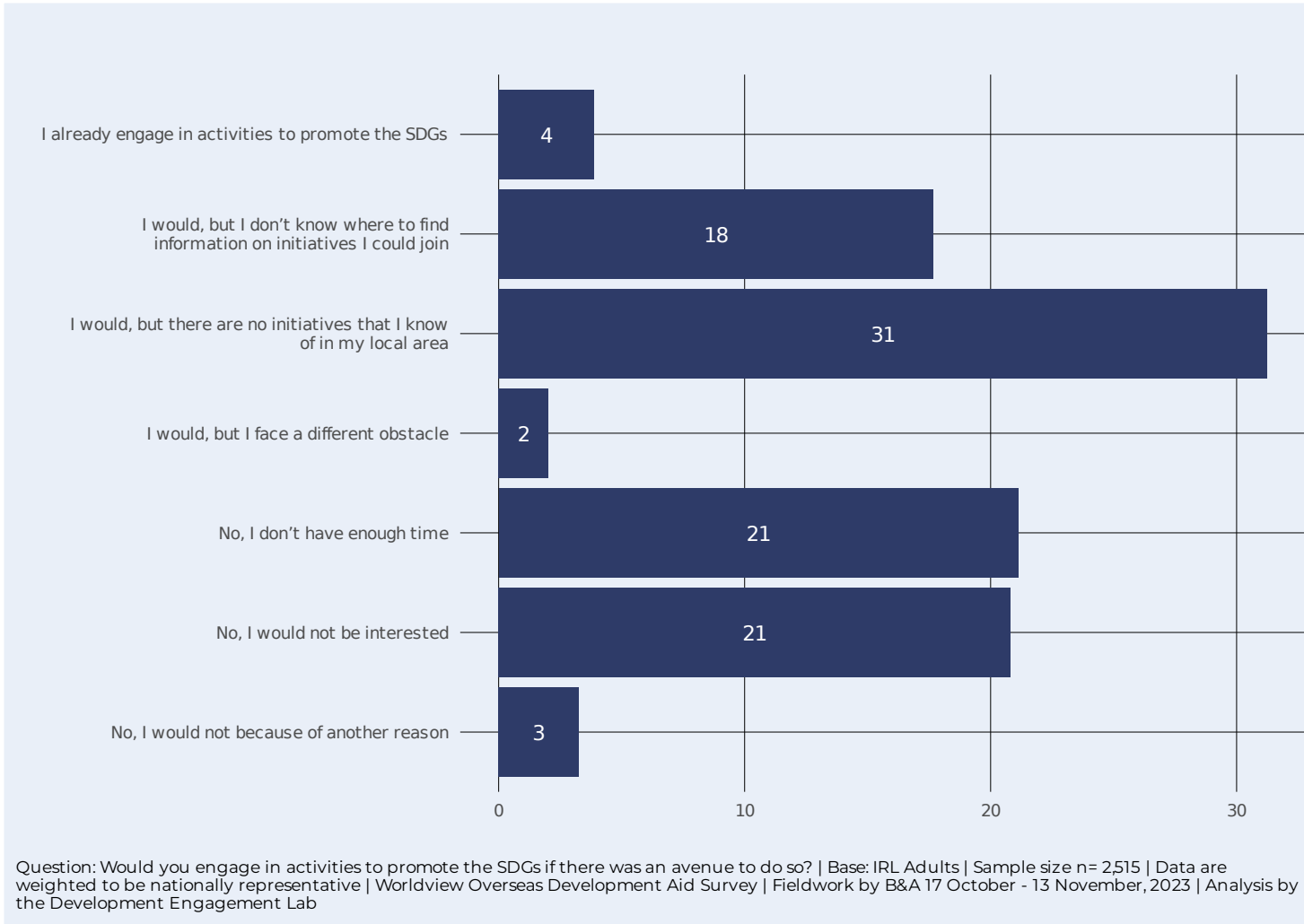
- This slide shows the importance of the SDGs by their perceived achievability, cut by the Worldview audience segments. In this slide we show each of the 17 Goals, with the dots representing one of the audience segments.
- This slide shows very clearly *Global citizens'* view that the Goals are more achievable than other groups. Empathisers are an interesting group, on most goals they look very similar to *Multilateralists*. There may be scope to engage with this audience on the SDGs.
- The groups view SDG 12 Responsible consumption and production identically in terms of importance, but different on achievability. Similarly for SDGs 16 & 17.



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT WITH THE SDGS

- To better understand the public's willingness to take action to engage with the SDGs, we presented a range of engagement options.
 - *Would you engage in activities to promote the SDGs if there was an avenue to do so?*
 - *I already engage in activities to promote the SDGs*
 - *I would, but I don't know where to find information on initiatives I could join*
 - *I would, but there are no initiatives that I know of in my local area*
 - *I would, but I face a different obstacle {follow up with free text}*
 - *No, I don't have enough time*
 - *No, I would not be interested*
 - *No, I would not because of another reason {follow up with free text}*

GETTING STUCK IN: INFORMATION & ACTIVITY ARE KEY



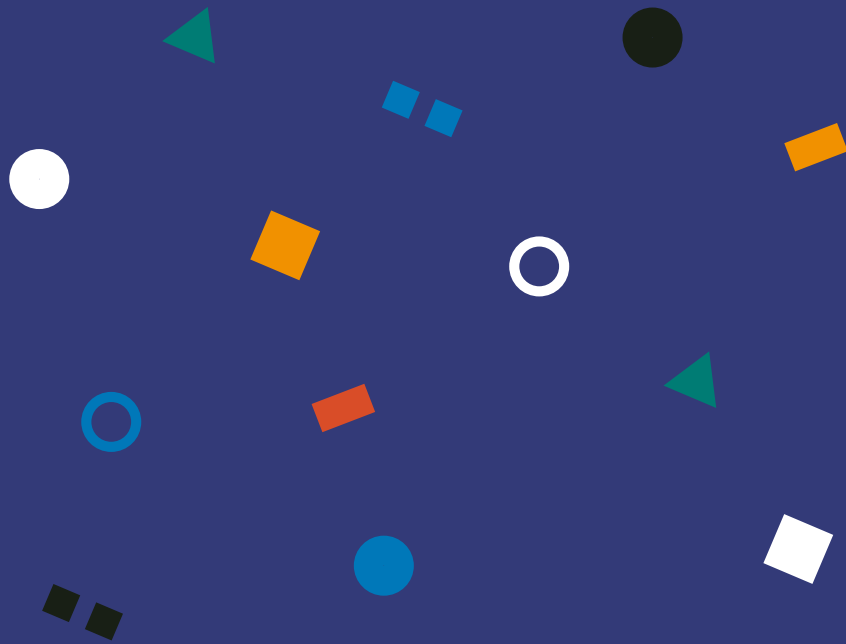
31%

would get involved with SDG activity, but didn't know of any initiatives in their local area

- 18% of respondents said they would be interested in getting involved, but either didn't know of local initiatives or couldn't find relevant information to get involved.
- Just 4% said they were involved in SDG activities.
- 21% of respondents said they don't have time to get involved, with a further 21% saying they are not interested in getting involved.
- Free text responses suggest people do not engage because of lack of trust in the UN; age, illness or disability; and 'home first' sentiments



3. CLIMATE CHANGE



Consequences for the
Global South,
responsibility to take
action & impacts

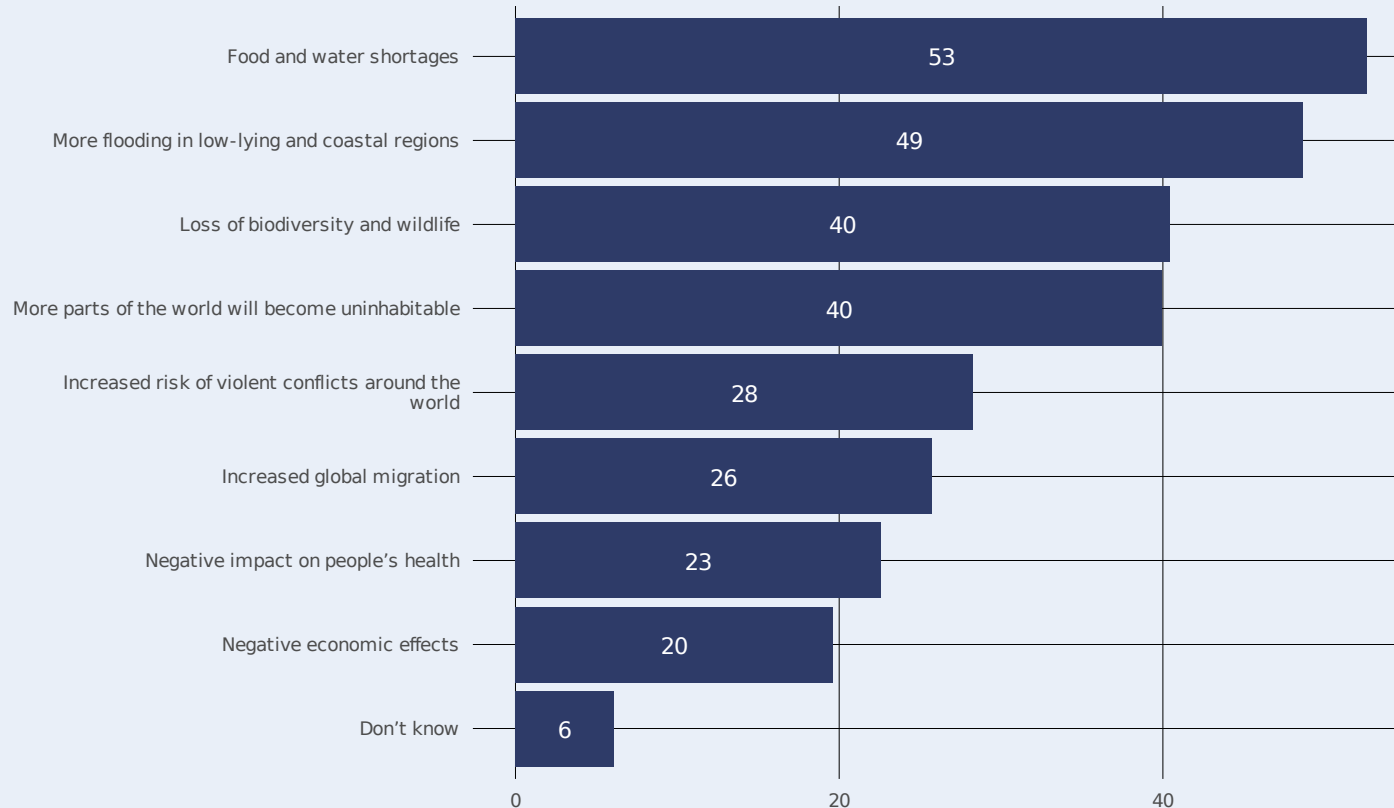
UNDERSTANDING THE IRISH PUBLIC'S PERCEPTIONS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

- To better gauge the public's understanding of climate change, we asked a series of questions that examine:
 - The consequences of climate change for the global south
 - The impacts of climate change – from local to global
 - Perceptions of who should take action to address climate change
 - The actions that would have the biggest effect on reducing the negative impacts of climate change

CONSEQUENCES OF CLIMATE CHANGE FOR THE GLOBAL SOUTH

- *Thinking about the following consequences of climate change for developing countries in the Global South, please rank the three you personally believe are most strongly connected to climate change.*
 - *Loss of biodiversity and wildlife*
 - *Food and water shortages*
 - *Negative economic effects*
 - *Negative impact on people's health*
 - *Increased global migration*
 - *Increased risk of violent conflicts around the world*
 - *More flooding in low-lying and coastal regions*
 - *More parts of the world will become uninhabitable*
 - *Don't know*

CLIMATE CHANGE CONSEQUENCES



Question: Thinking about the following consequences of climate change for developing countries in the Global South, please rank the three you personally believe are most strongly connected to climate change | Base: IRL Adults | Sample size n= 2,515 | Data are weighted to be nationally representative | Worldview Overseas Development Aid Survey | Fieldwork by B&A 17 October - 13 November, 2023 | Analysis by the Development Engagement Lab



53%

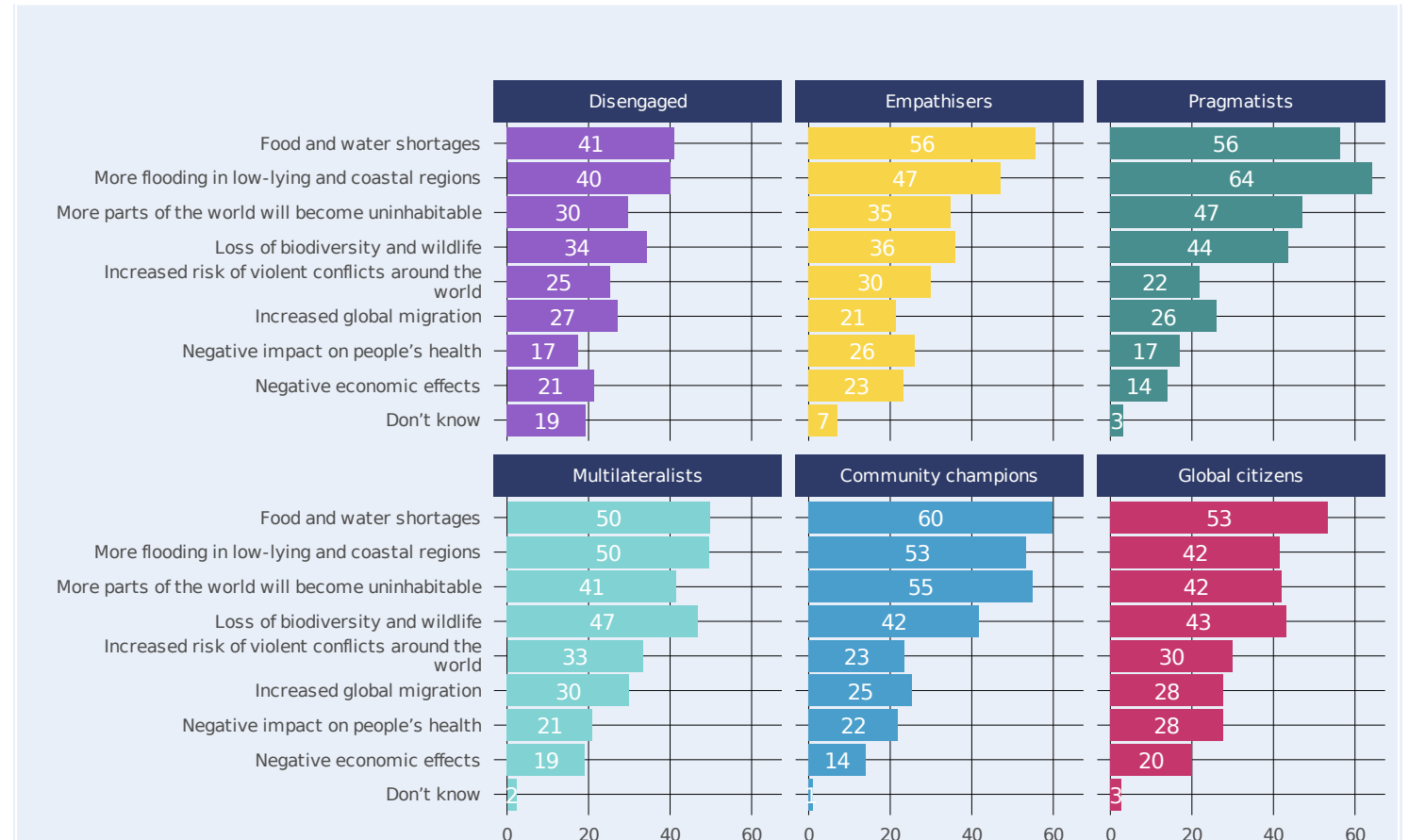
said food & water shortages will be the biggest impact of climate change for the Global South

- 49% of respondents thought that flooding would present the next biggest consequence of climate change, followed by loss of biodiversity and wildlife and increasing levels of uninhabitable spaces, both at 40%.
- Interestingly, just 1 in 5 respondents (20%) said negative economic effects would be an impact of climate change. This may reflect the general negative state of the global economy and economic crisis or a failure to connect climate and the economy.



CLIMATE CHANGE CONSEQUENCES BY WORLDVIEW SEGMENT

- Looking at the impacts of climate change on the Global South by the Worldview audience groups, food and water shortages remains the top consequence, save for *Pragmatists*, who think flooding is the biggest consequence, followed by food and water shortages.
- The patterns – i.e. perceived consequences – are very similar to the whole sample in terms of rank order. However, the *Disengaged* audience is far more likely to say they Don't know.



Question: Thinking about the following consequences of climate change for developing countries in the Global South, please rank the three you personally believe are most strongly connected to climate change | Base: IRL Adults | Sample size n = 2,515 | Data are weighted to be nationally representative | Worldview Overseas Development Aid Survey | Fieldwork by B&A 17 October - 13 November, 2023 | Analysis by the Development Engagement Lab



HOW CLOSE ARE THE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE?

- *How much do you think climate change is impacting ...*
 - *You personally*
 - *Your family*
 - *People in Ireland*
 - *People in developing countries in the Global South*
 - *People in the Global North*
 - *Future generations*

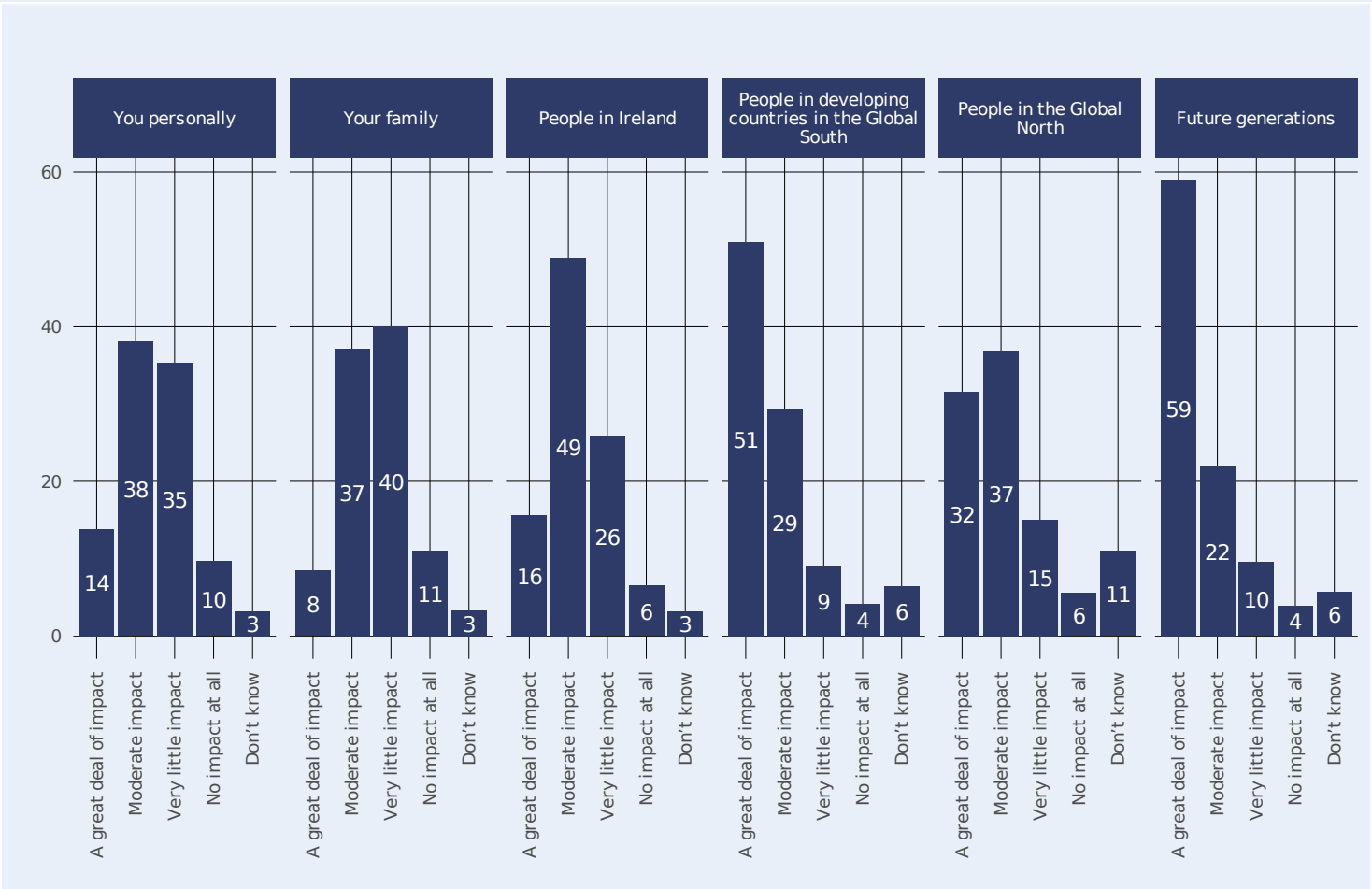
HERE & NOW? THE PERCEIVED IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE



14%

said that climate change would have a great deal of impact on them personally

- Similar to other DEL surveys, the Irish public are less likely to think that climate change will have a great deal of impact themselves, their families or people in Ireland (and people in the Global North to a lesser extent). They do think it will have a moderate or very little impact, but even within Ireland, the impact is perceived to be more for other people than individuals or their families.
- The biggest impacts are seen to be for future generations (59%) and people living in the Global South (51%).

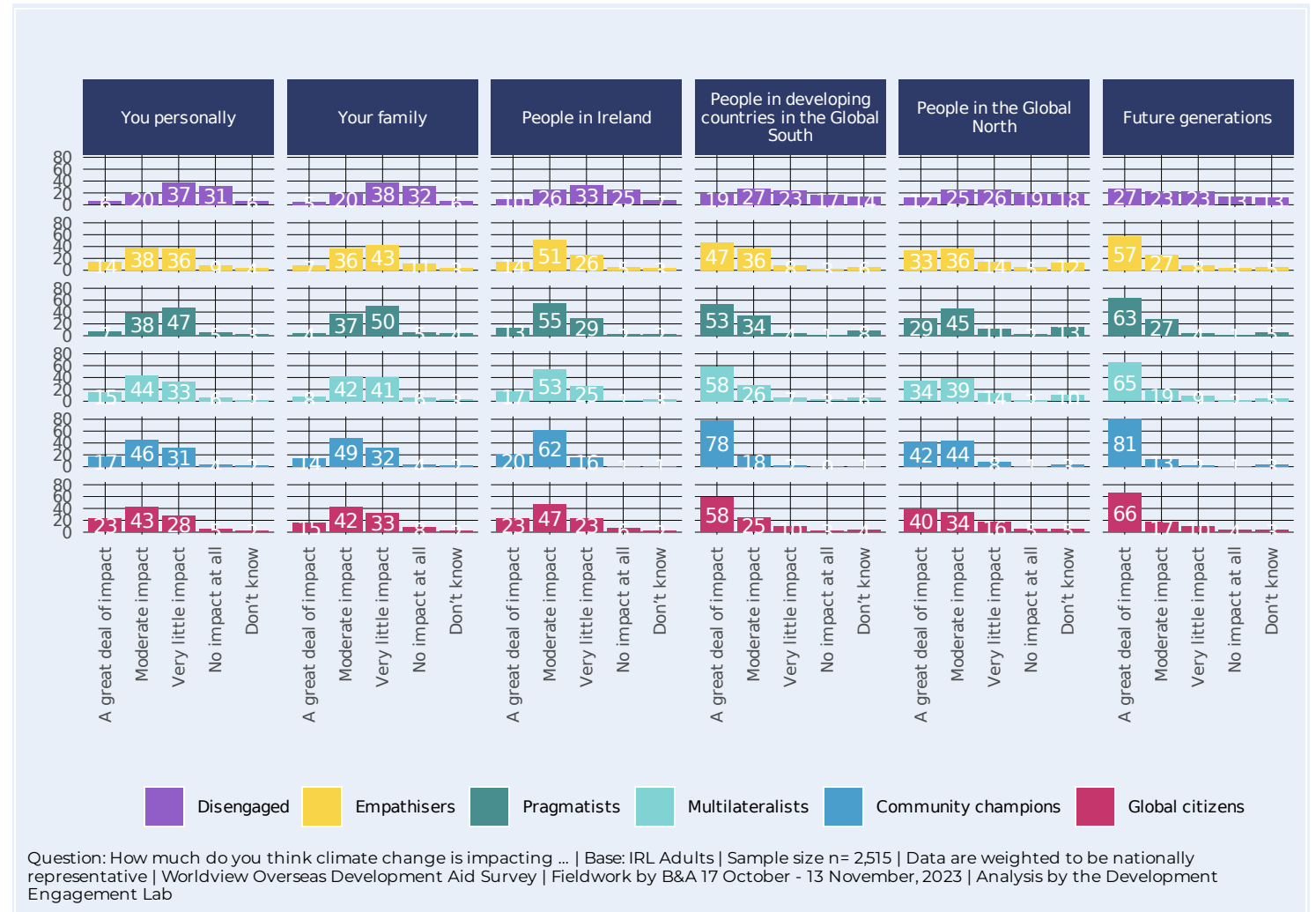


Question: How much do you think climate change is impacting ... | Base: IRL Adults | Sample size n= 2,515 | Data are weighted to be nationally representative | Worldview Overseas Development Aid Survey | Fieldwork by B&A 17 October - 13 November, 2023 | Analysis by the Development Engagement Lab



IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE BY WORLDVIEW SEGMENT

- The *Disengaged* audience sees less impact of climate change overall than any other group: 31% said climate change would have no impact on them personally; 32% said no impact on their family; and 25% said no impact on people in Ireland.
- That aside, similar patterns hold in that all groups see the biggest impacts on those farthest away: future generations and people living in countries in the Global South.
- Even among the *Global citizen* group, just 23% said climate change would have a great deal of impact on people in Ireland, while 40% said a great deal of impact on people living in countries in the Global North.



Question: How much do you think climate change is impacting ... | Base: IRL Adults | Sample size n= 2,515 | Data are weighted to be nationally representative | Worldview Overseas Development Aid Survey | Fieldwork by B&A 17 October - 13 November, 2023 | Analysis by the Development Engagement Lab

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE TO TAKE ACTION TO REDUCE THE NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE?

- *Below are three statements about who needs to take more action to reduce the negative effects of climate change. Please indicate which one you agree with the most, second most and third most.*
 - *The Irish government should do more to try to do more to reduce the negative effects of climate change for developing countries in the Global South*
 - *I feel a responsibility to do more to reduce the negative effects of climate change for developing countries in the Global South*
 - *In general, people in Ireland should do more to reduce the negative effects of climate change for developing countries in the Global South*

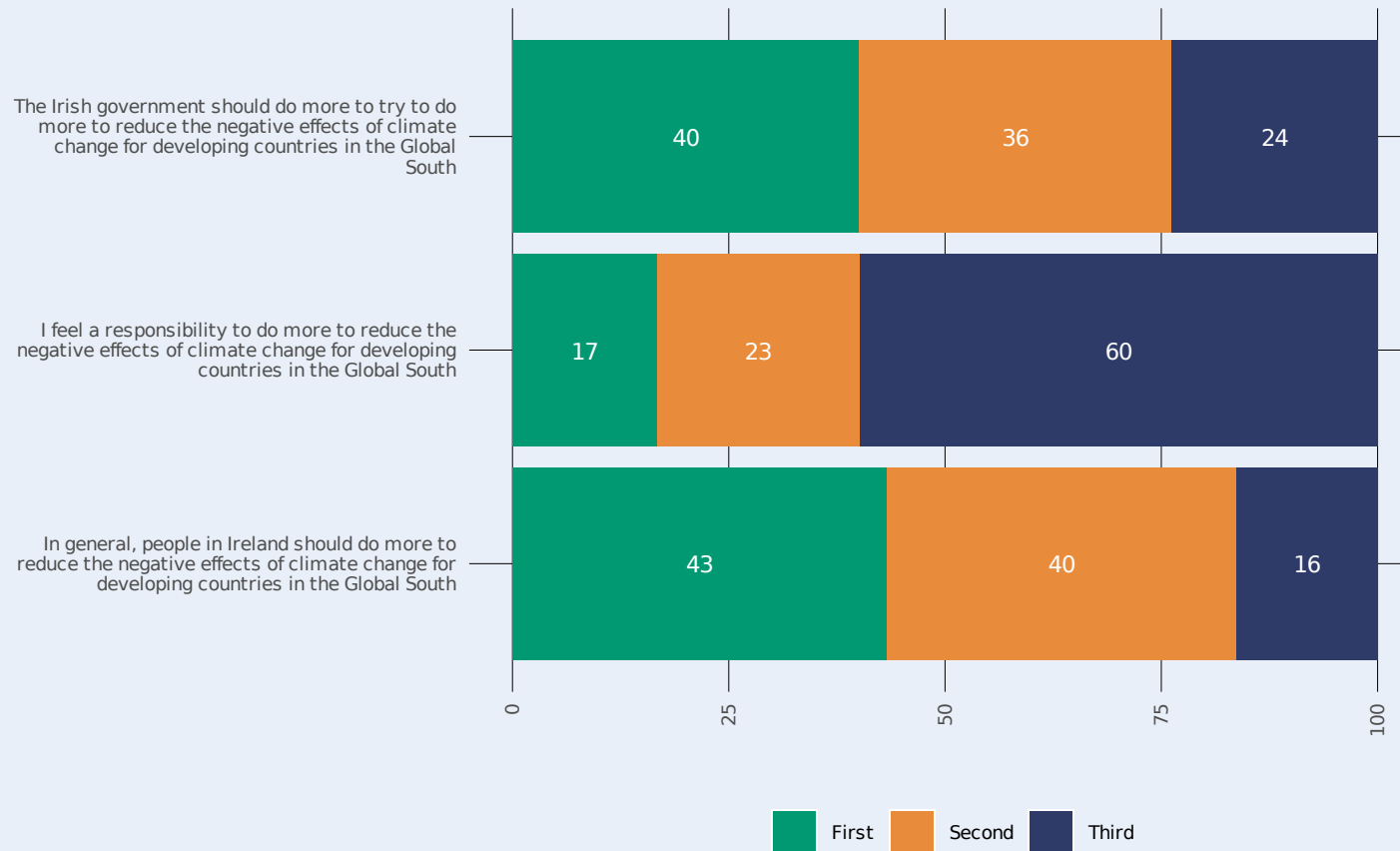
THE IRISH GOVERNMENT & PEOPLE IN IRELAND SHOULD DO MORE TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES



43%

of respondents think that (other) people in Ireland should do more to address climate change in developing countries

- Following closely behind, 4 in 10 respondents (40%) said the Irish Government should do more to address climate change in developing countries.
- Only 17% of respondents said they personally have a responsibility to reduce the negative impacts. Individual action was ranked third by 60% of respondents, far behind others in Ireland and the Irish Government.

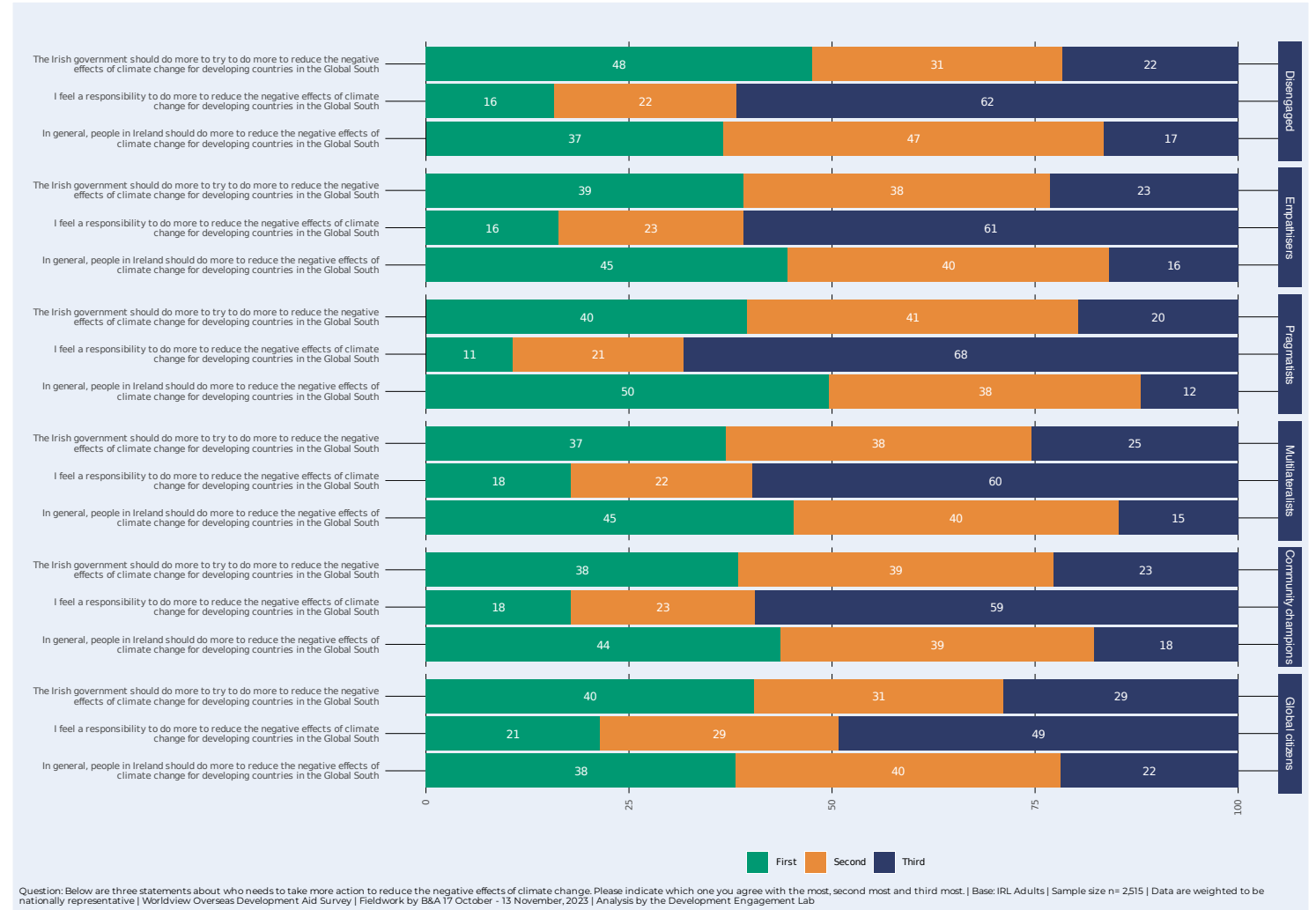


Question: Below are three statements about who needs to take more action to reduce the negative effects of climate change. Please indicate which one you agree with the most, second most and third most. | Base: IRL Adults | Sample size n= 2,515 | Data are weighted to be nationally representative | Worldview Overseas Development Aid Survey | Fieldwork by B&A 17 October - 13 November, 2023 | Analysis by the Development Engagement Lab



CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION BY WORLDVIEW AUDIENCE

- We analysed the previous question by the Worldview audience segmentation. The sub-analysis shows a similar pattern to the results on the previous slide.
 - For every audience, 'I feel a responsibility to do more...' was ranked as third among the choices. For *Global citizens*, 21% ranked it first, compared to 16% for both the *Empathisers* and *Disengaged* groups.
- While in the main analysis the Irish government was the most common first choice, followed closely by People in Ireland, the groups have slightly different preferences: the *Disengaged* and *Global citizens* want the government to do more, while all other groups want People in Ireland to do more.



MOST EFFECTIVE GLOBAL ACTIONS TO REDUCE THE NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

- *At a global level, what actions do you personally think would be the three most effective in reducing the negative effects of climate change?*
 - *Changing global food systems, reducing meat consumption*
 - *Banning the use of fossil fuels*
 - *Incentivising increased use of renewable energy*
 - *New technologies such as electric cars and clean cookstoves*
 - *Taxing or limiting air travel*
 - *Halting deforestation and restoring nature*
 - *Increase energy efficiency in heating and cooling buildings*
 - *Tighter emissions standards for vehicles*
 - *Reduce consumption, encourage reuse, repair and recycling*
 - *Don't know*

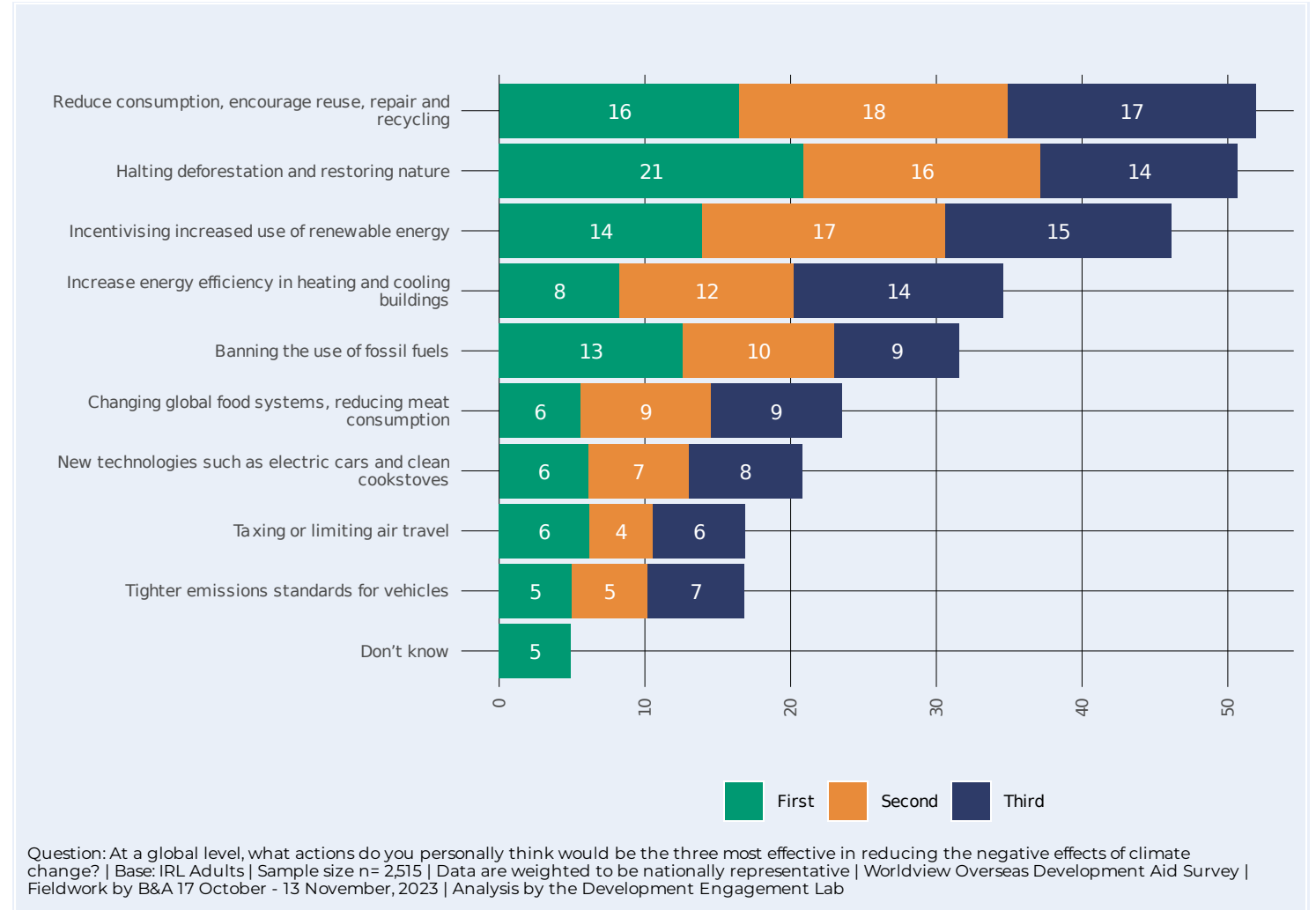
MOST EFFECTIVE GLOBAL ACTIONS



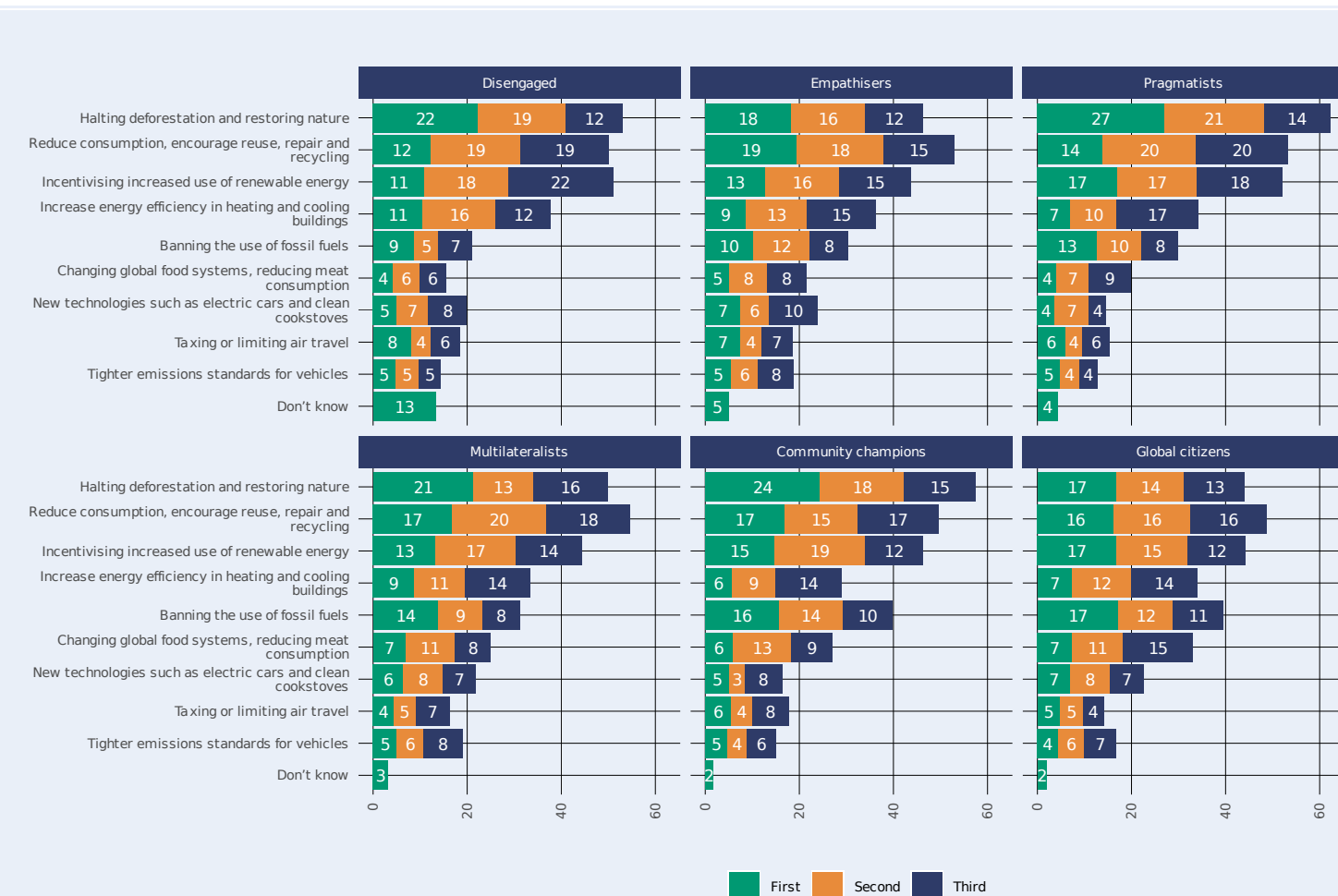
51%

think that reducing consumption, encouraging reuse, repair & recycling is the most effective way to reduce impact of climate change

- A similar percentage (51%) think that halting deforestation and restoring nature is most effective, followed by incentivising increased used of renewable energy (46%).
- At the other end of the scale, taxing or limiting air travel and tighter emissions standards for vehicles were seen as less effective (and perhaps more punitive).



EFFECTIVE ACTIONS TO REDUCE NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE BY WORLDVIEW AUDIENCE

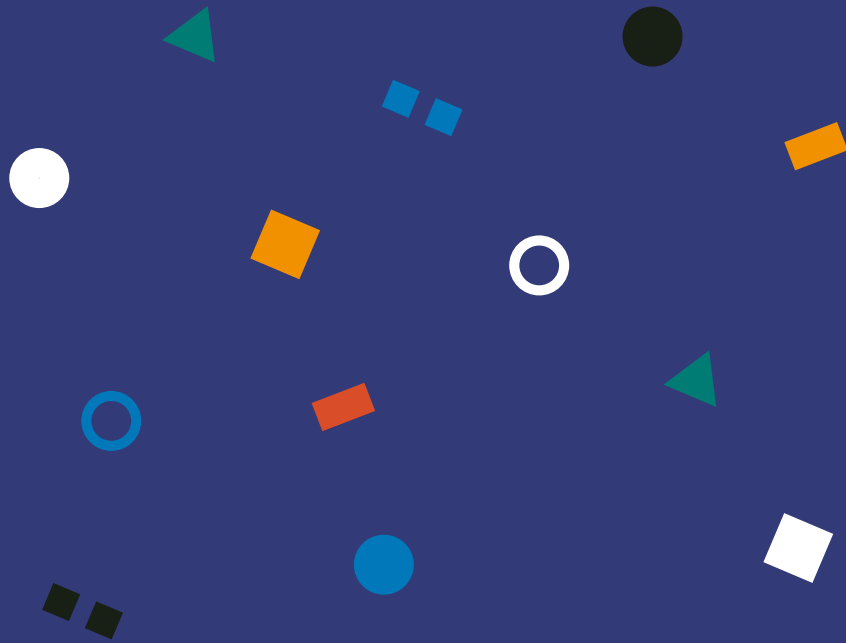


- There are some clear differences between audiences. The *Disengaged*, *Pragmatists*, *Multilateralists* and *Community champions* ranked Halting deforestation and restoring nature more highly than *Empathisers* and *Global citizens*.
- A key dividing line between groups based on level of engagement is the banning of fossil fuels: for the *Disengaged* audience, 9% selected this as a top ranked action, compared to 14% for *Multilateralists* and 17% for *Global citizens*.
- The *Disengaged* group is much more likely to say they 'Don't know' (13%) compared to the next highest group, *Empathisers* (5%).

Question: At a global level, what actions do you personally think would be the three most effective in reducing the negative effects of climate change? | Base: IRL Adults | Sample size n= 2,515 | Data are weighted to be nationally representative | Worldview Overseas Development Aid Survey | Fieldwork by B&A 17 October - 13 November, 2023 | Analysis by the Development Engagement Lab



4. KEY INSIGHTS



Top takeaways from
Wave 4 survey

KNOWLEDGE & AWARENESS OF THE SDGS IS LOW IN IRELAND

- Just 12% of Irish respondents say they have heard about and know what the SDGs are.
- Understanding of the universality of the Global Goals, the scope of activity, and the 2023 deadline is limited to a very small segment of the public: among the most engaged audience, *Global citizens*, just 7% have knowledge across key areas.
- SDGs are not part of the public's everyday or policy consciousness.



ENGAGING WITH THE SDGS

- Respondents cited a lack of awareness of SDG initiatives in their local area and information as barriers to getting involved.
 - The free text options suggested the following reasons why people have not engaged with SDGs: lack of trust in the UN; age, illness or disability; and 'home first' sentiments
- Organisations will need a step change in communication to reach the Irish public on the SDGs.



CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS ON THE GLOBAL SOUTH

- The Irish public think that food and water shortages and flooding in low lying areas are likely to be the biggest negative consequences of climate change for people living in countries in the Global South.
- 26% thought increased pressure on migration would be a consequence and only 2 in 10 (20%) think negative economic impacts are a consequence.



CLIMATE CHANGE: NOT ME, NOT NOW



- Very few respondents think they personally have a responsibility to take action to reduce the negative impacts of climate change.
 - The responsibility to do more is with 'people in Ireland' more generally and with the Irish government.
- Respondents think the biggest impacts of climate change will happen to others: particularly future generations, those living in countries in the Global South and other people living in Ireland or Global North countries.
 - The persistence of the 'not me, not now' view is widely shared among donor publics DEL surveys.

CLIMATE CHANGE – EFFECTIVE SOLUTIONS

- The Irish public say that halting deforestation and restoring nature and reducing consumption, encouraging reuse, repair & recycling are the most effective way to reduce impact of climate change.
- Dominance and persistence of the of the 'reduce, reuse & recycle' approach to addressing climate change.
 - Solutions that have a more immediate impact on respondents – e.g. taxing/limiting flights or tighter regulations on car emissions – were seen as less effective.





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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 a grantee of 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.

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