



EFFICACY

SEE THE GOOD

/ Bond
// 26 September 2025
/// www.developengagementlab.org

Molly Anders

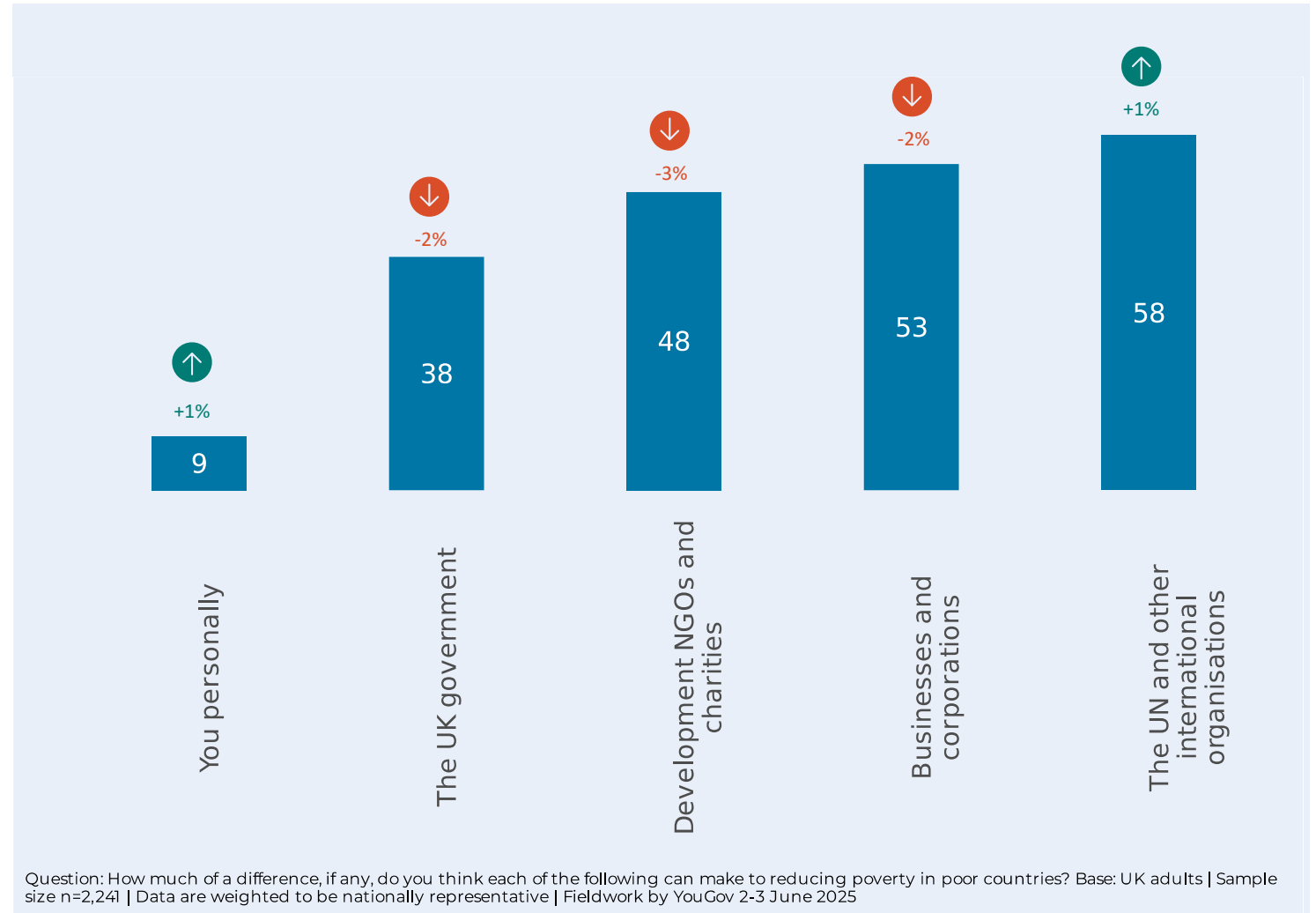
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EFFICACY – WHO CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

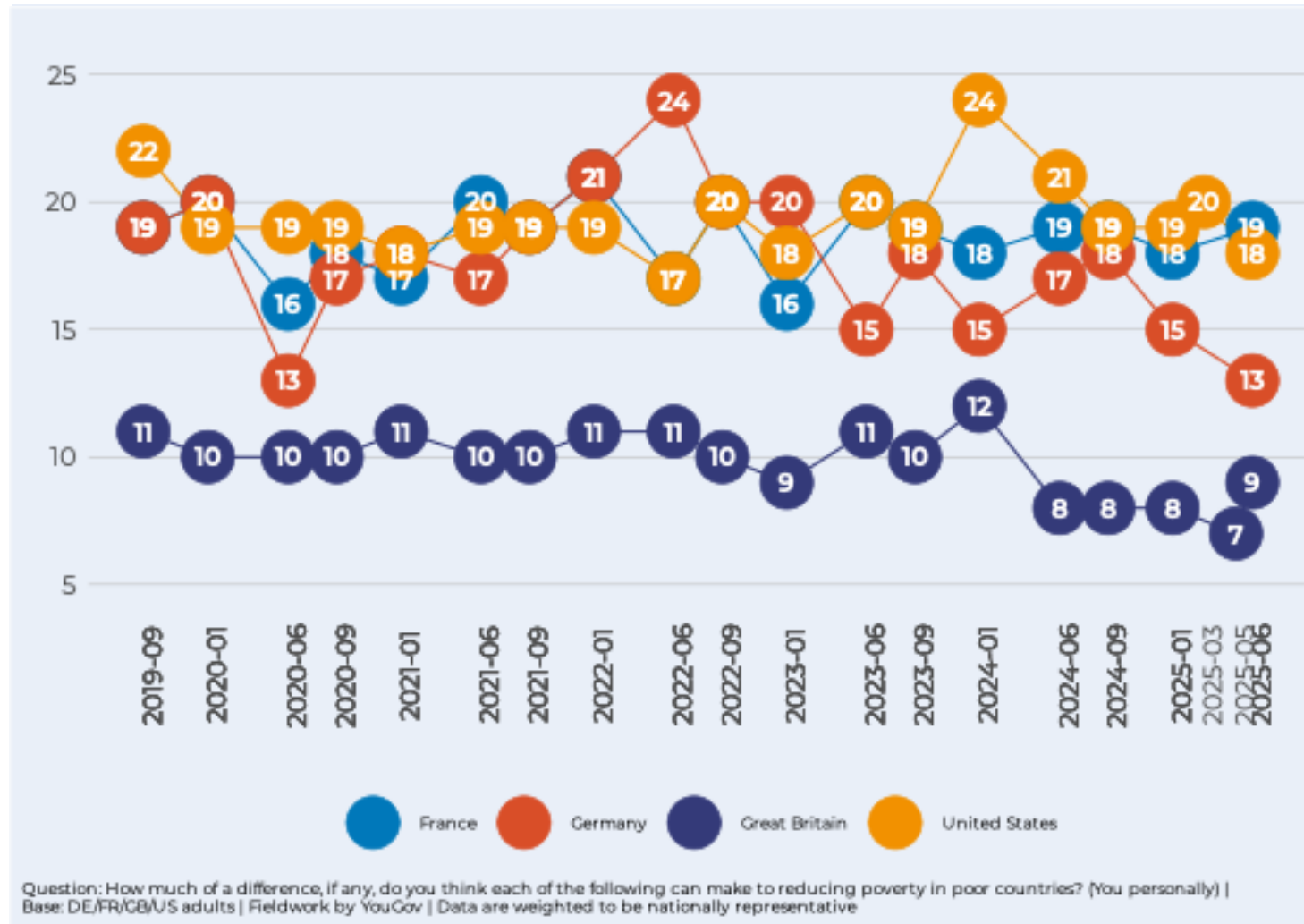
Perceptions around who can make a difference to global poverty have remained steady.

There has been a slight drop in perceived efficacy of the UK government, NGOs, and businesses/corporations, but the changes are nominal.

Perceptions of efficacy have been steady since DEL started tracking in 2019. Global poverty is seen as a big and complex issue which requires large organisations to affect change. More work is needed to show how individual actions cumulatively matter for poverty reduction.



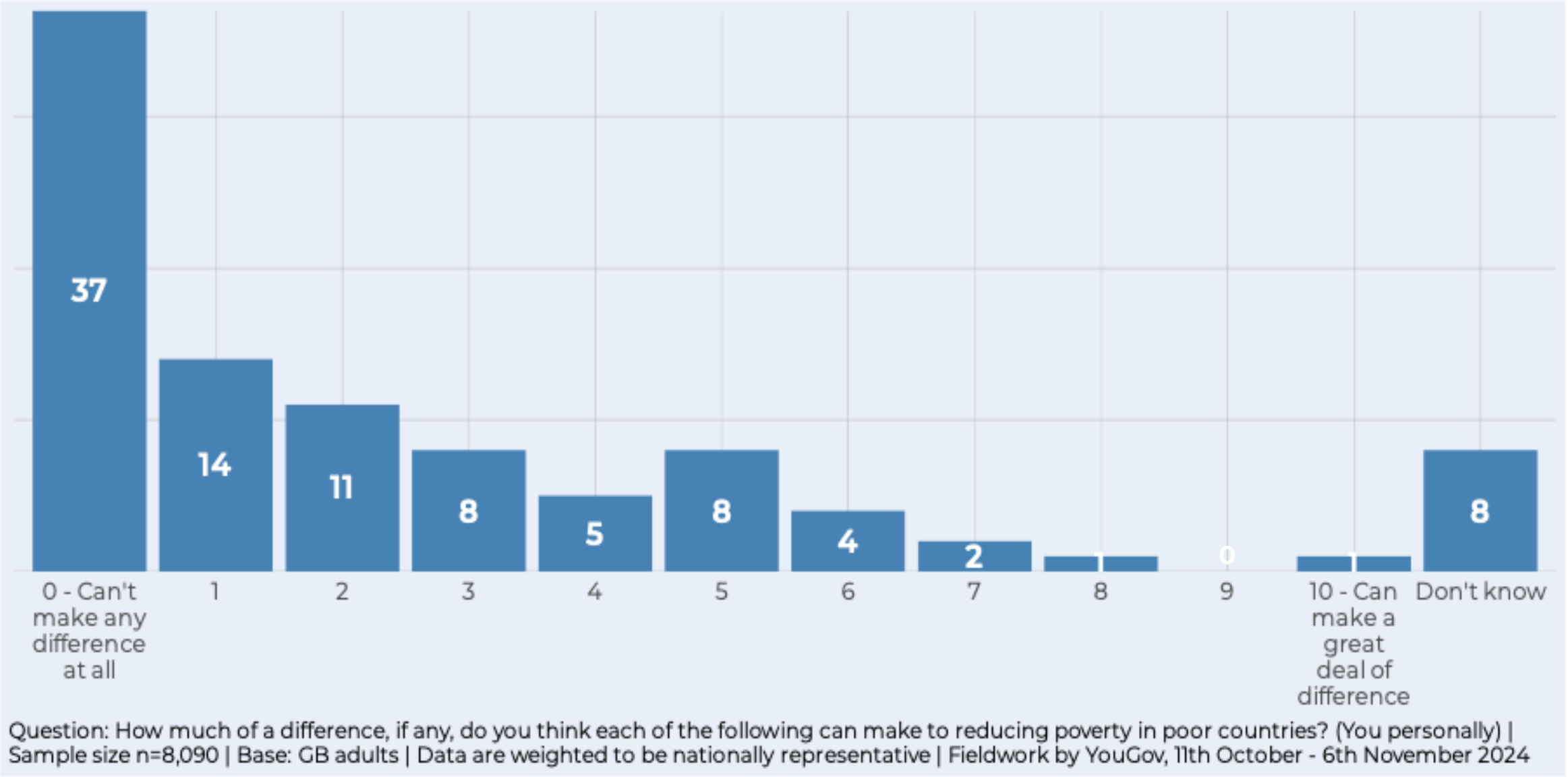
TRENDS IN SELF-EFFICACY



- Efficacy has remained largely stable in France, UK, and the US (2019—2025).
- Germany has seen a decline overall (6pp), but the change is not significant and the trends more volatile.



MOST PEOPLE SAY THEY CAN'T MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE IN REDUCING GLOBAL POVERTY

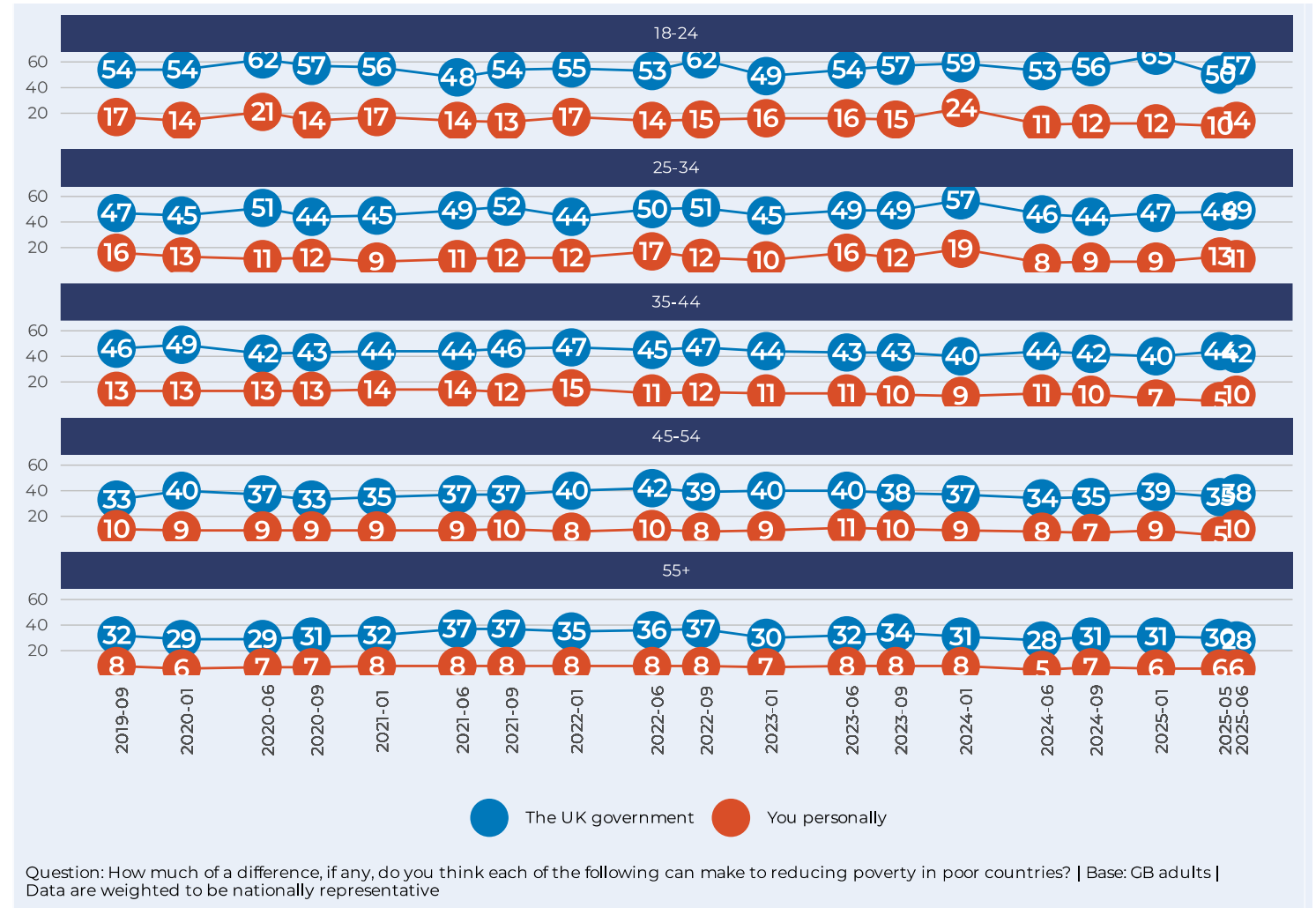


HOW HAS EFFICACY CHANGED OVER TIME?

Perceptions around who can make a difference to reduce global poverty have remained steady.

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EFFICACY AND ACTION



- We use a battery of 10 actions on global poverty and development.

How strongly is efficacy correlated with taking action on issues?

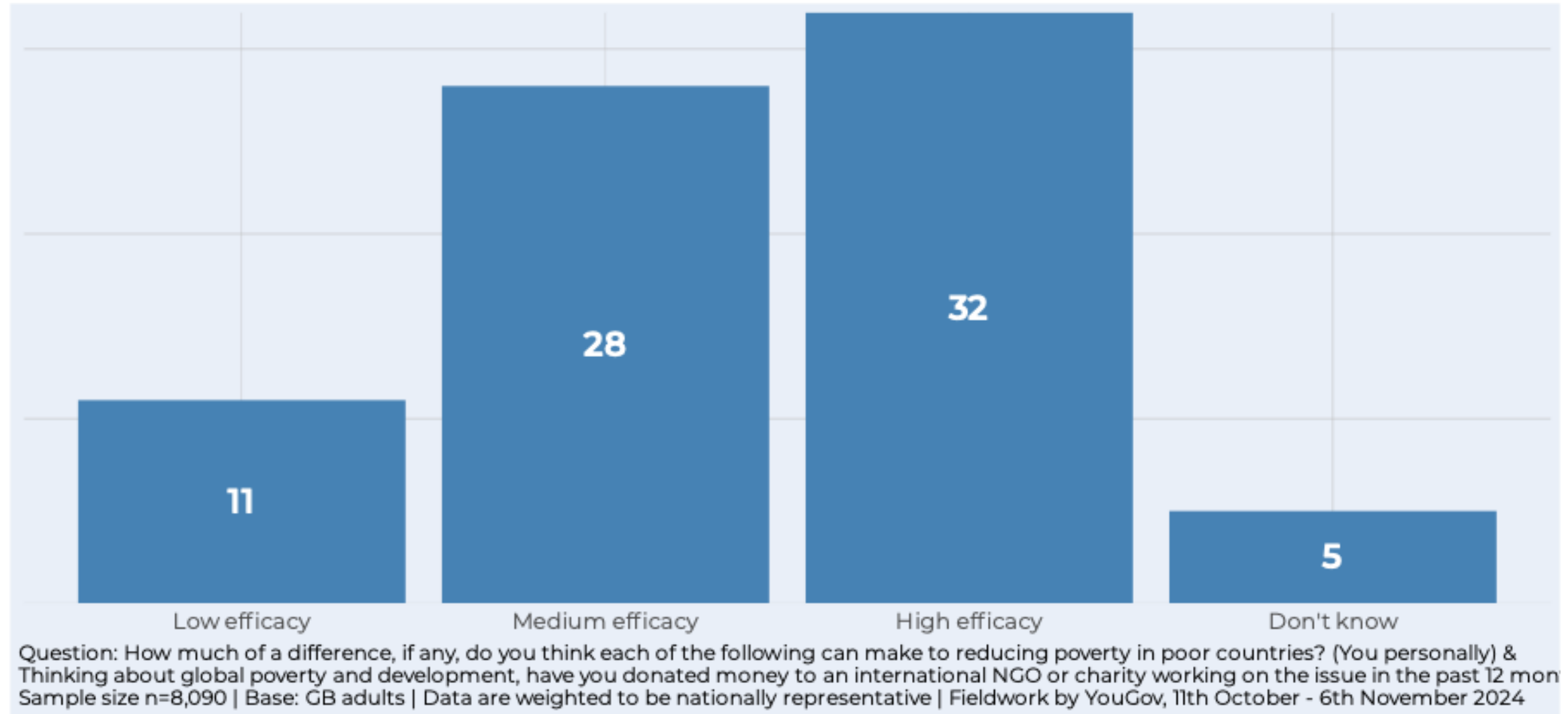
- Efficacy is **consistently and positively associated** with the likelihood of taking action. Across all countries and actions, individuals who feel more efficacious are significantly more likely to engage — a 1-point increase in efficacy (on a 0–10 scale) increases the odds of taking action by **10% to 30%**, depending on the action.

Are there certain actions that need higher efficacy?

- Yes. Higher-effort actions** like donating, contacting MPs, or protesting are **more strongly predicted by efficacy** than lower-effort actions like reading or discussing. This suggests that some actions are more ‘efficacy-dependent’ while others remain accessible to those who may not yet feel fully confident or capable of making a difference.

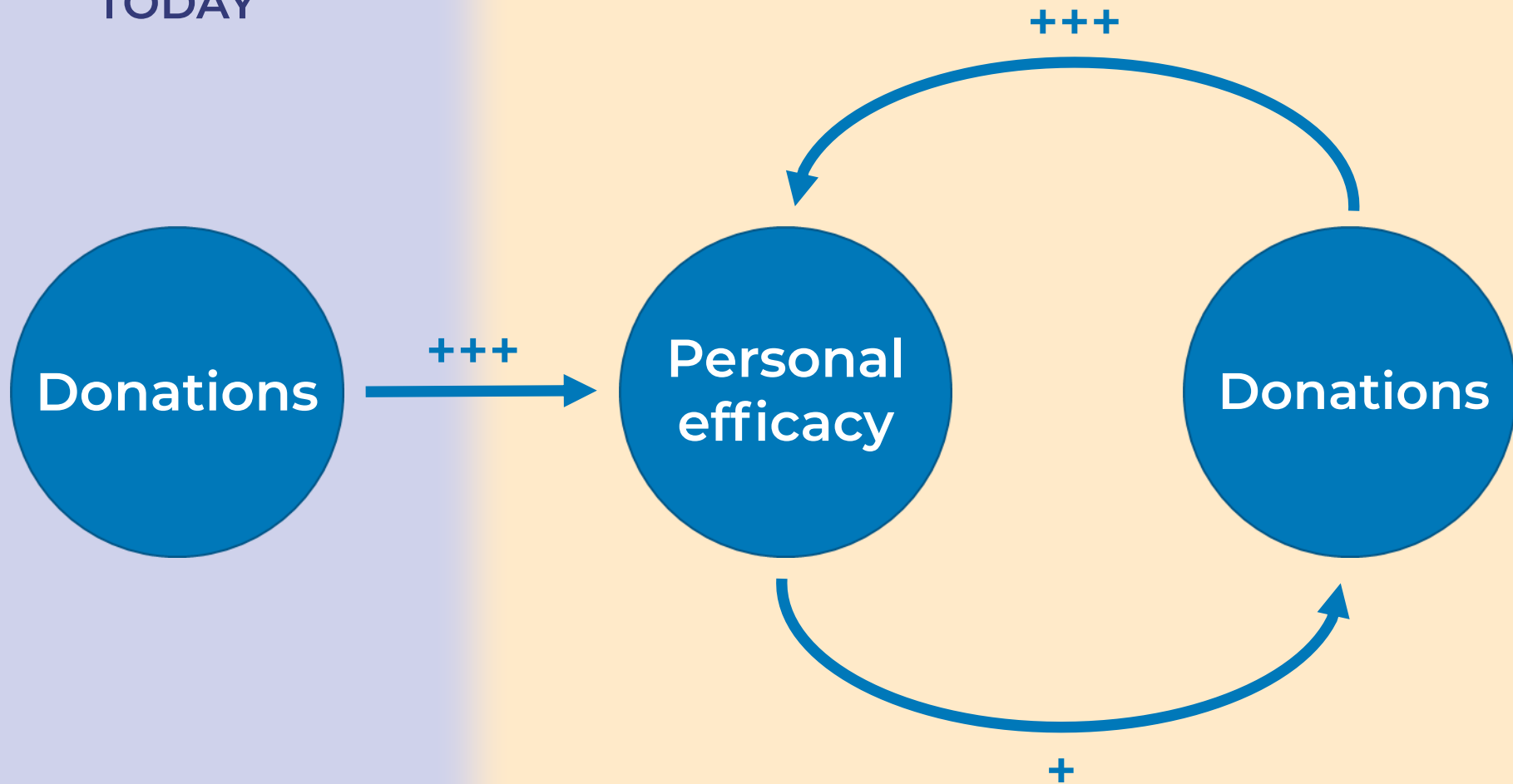


PERCENT OF UK DONORS BASED ON PERSONAL EFFICACY



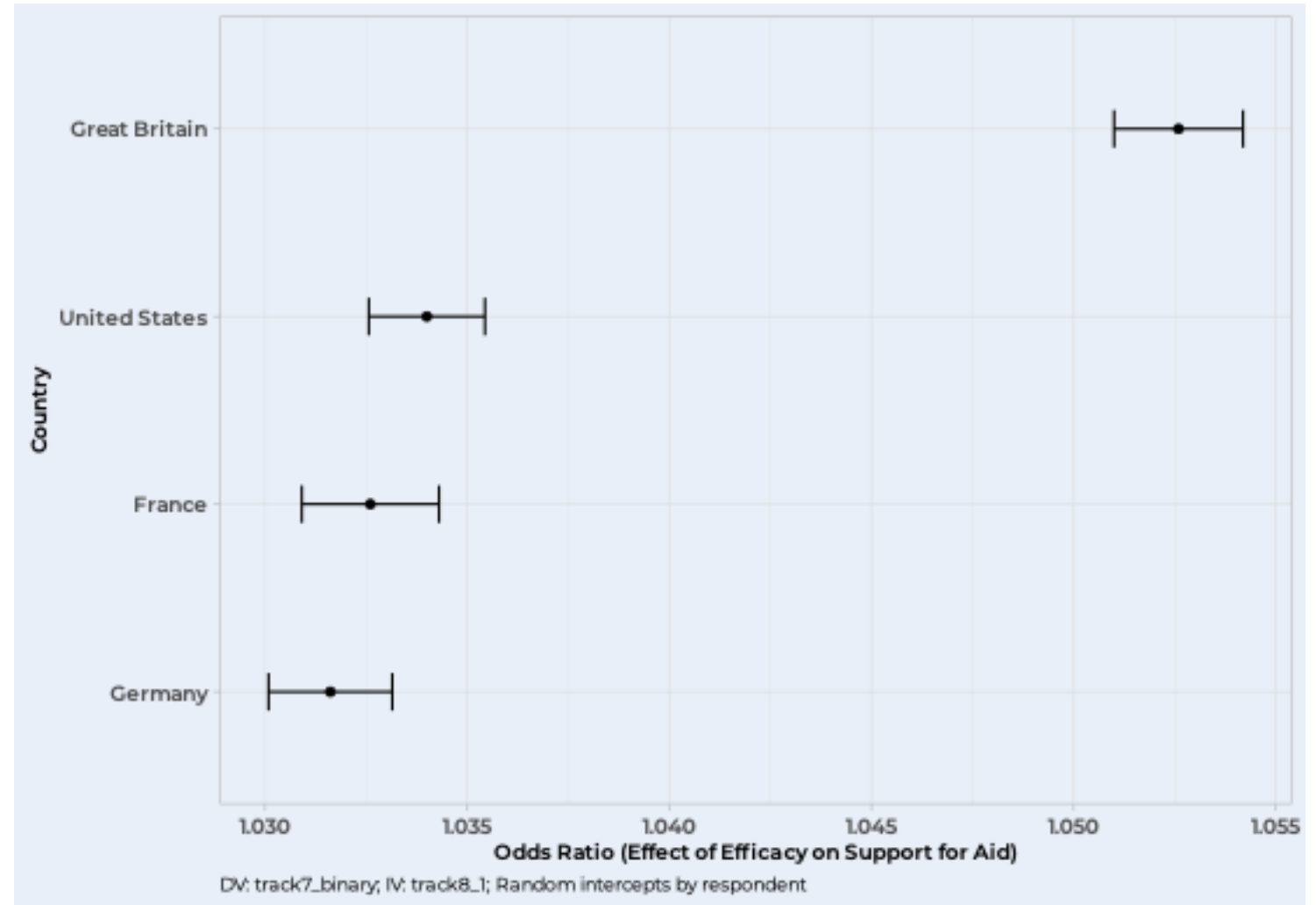
IF A PERSON
DONATES
TODAY

THEY WILL ENTER AN EFFICACY/
DONATIONS VIRTUOUS CIRCLE



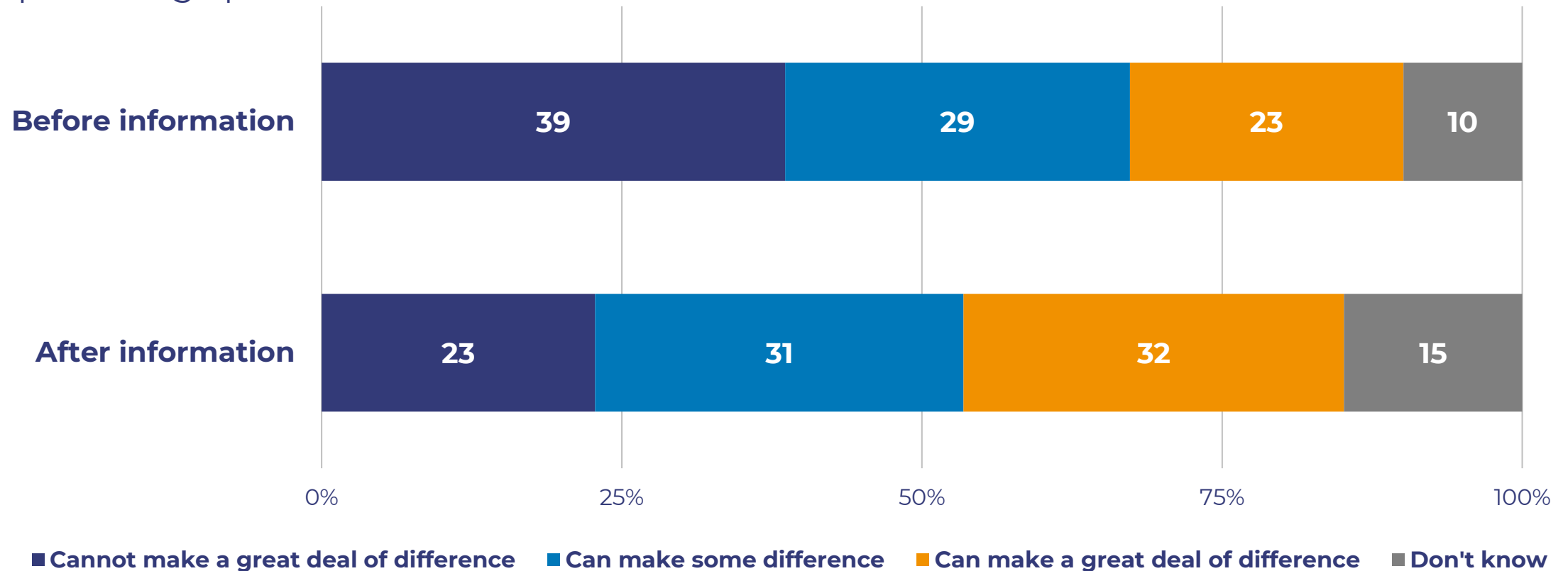
HOW STRONGLY IS EFFICACY CORRELATED WITH SUPPORT FOR AID?

- **Self-efficacy is strongly and positively correlated with support for aid.** Using data from 2019-2025, we see that one unit increase in self-efficacy increases the likelihood of support for aid by around 3% in Germany, France, and the United States, and around 5% in the United Kingdom.
- Note that self-efficacy is a 10-point scale ranging from 0 to 10.



PERCEIVED GOVERNMENT EFFICACY IS LOW, BUT INFORMATION ABOUT PROGRESS INCREASES PERCEPTIONS OF GOVERNMENT EFFICACY (2017)

Progress messaging increases perceptions of the efficacy of UK aid; a reduction of 16 percentage points.



WE MUST SHOW THE GOOD TO SEE THE GOOD

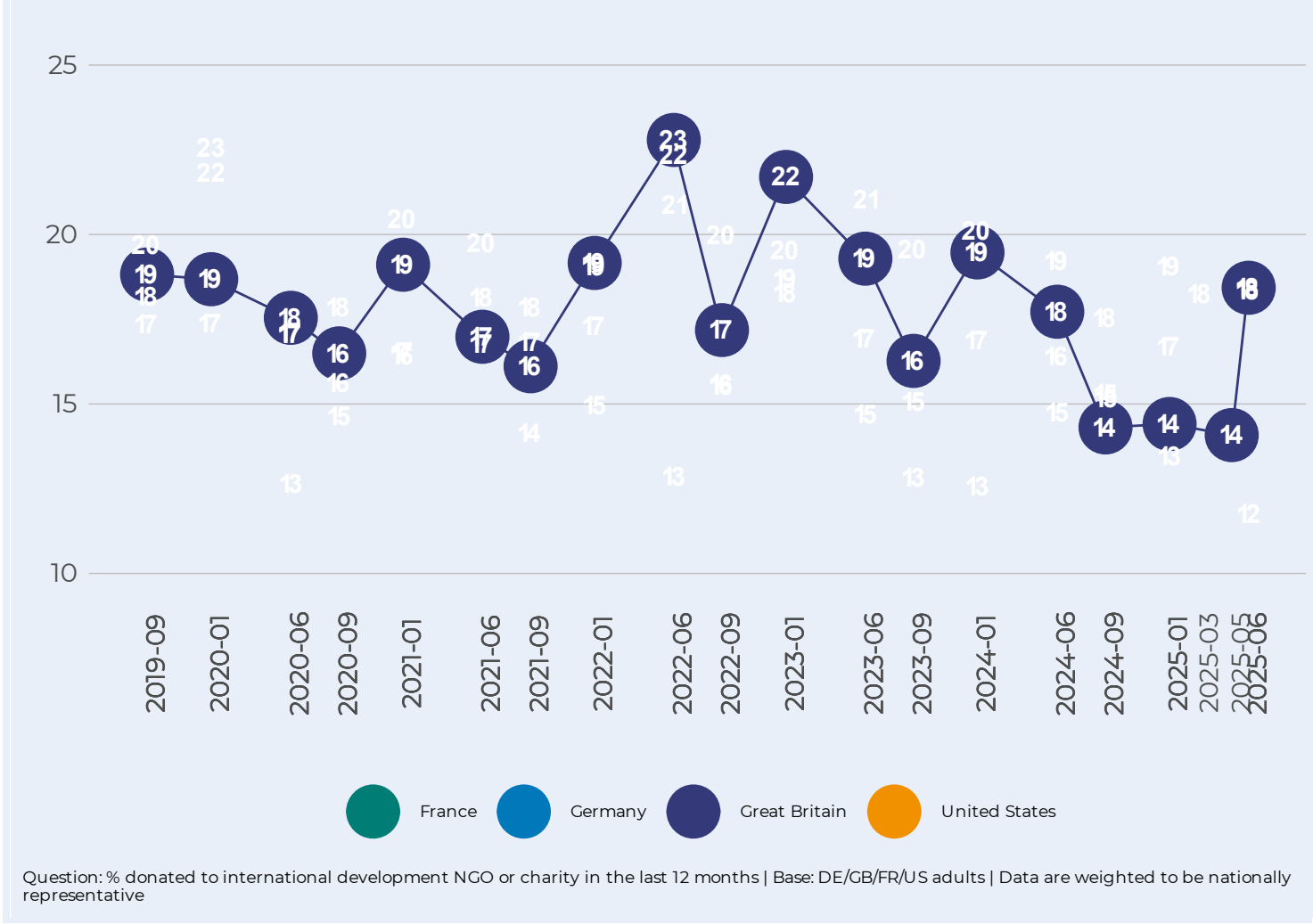


- Personal efficacy remains low in the UK.
- Support for aid is **strongly correlated** with personal efficacy, along with likelihood to donate or take other actions in support of poverty reduction.
- There is an **efficacy-donations virtuous cycle**, wherein the act of donating actually creates more efficacy than efficacy drives donations (aka efficacy must be created in surplus to drive action).
- Stories of progress, evidence of impact create efficacy, likely all types (e.g. personal, government, NGO, international institutions).
- **But who is best-placed to make the public feel like they can make (and have made!) a difference to global poverty, and how?**

APPENDIX



TRENDS IN DONATIONS – 2019/2025



Question: % donated to international development NGO or charity in the last 12 months | Base: DE/GB/FR/US adults | Data are weighted to be nationally representative



18%

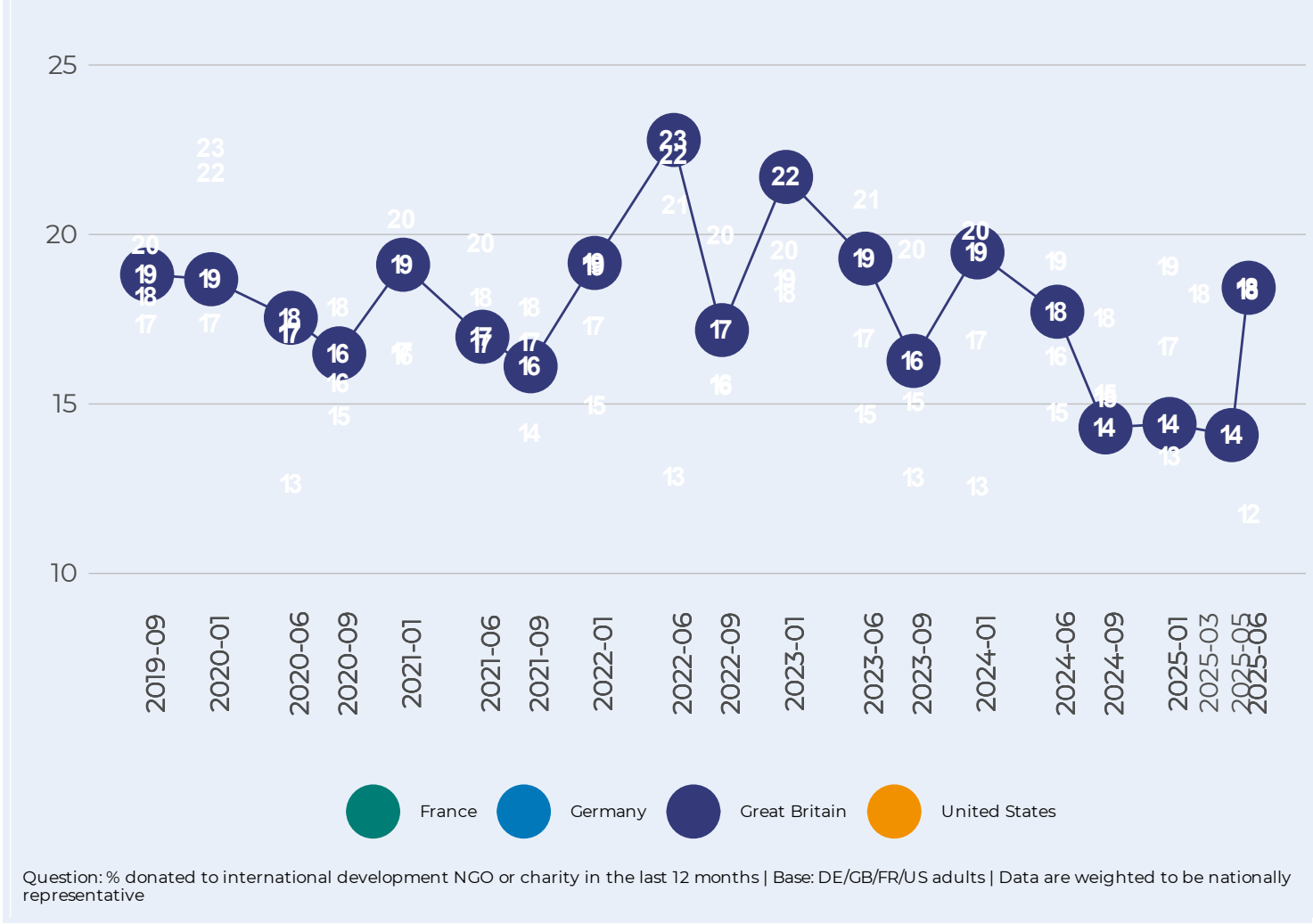
↑ +4%*

have donated to a global poverty charity in the past 12 months in GB

The percentage of respondents who have donated to a global poverty charity in the past 12 months has increased significantly since January 2025 in GB.

The public in the other countries either stayed the same(US, FR) or declined (DE), but the changes are nominal.

TRENDS IN DONATIONS – 2019/2025



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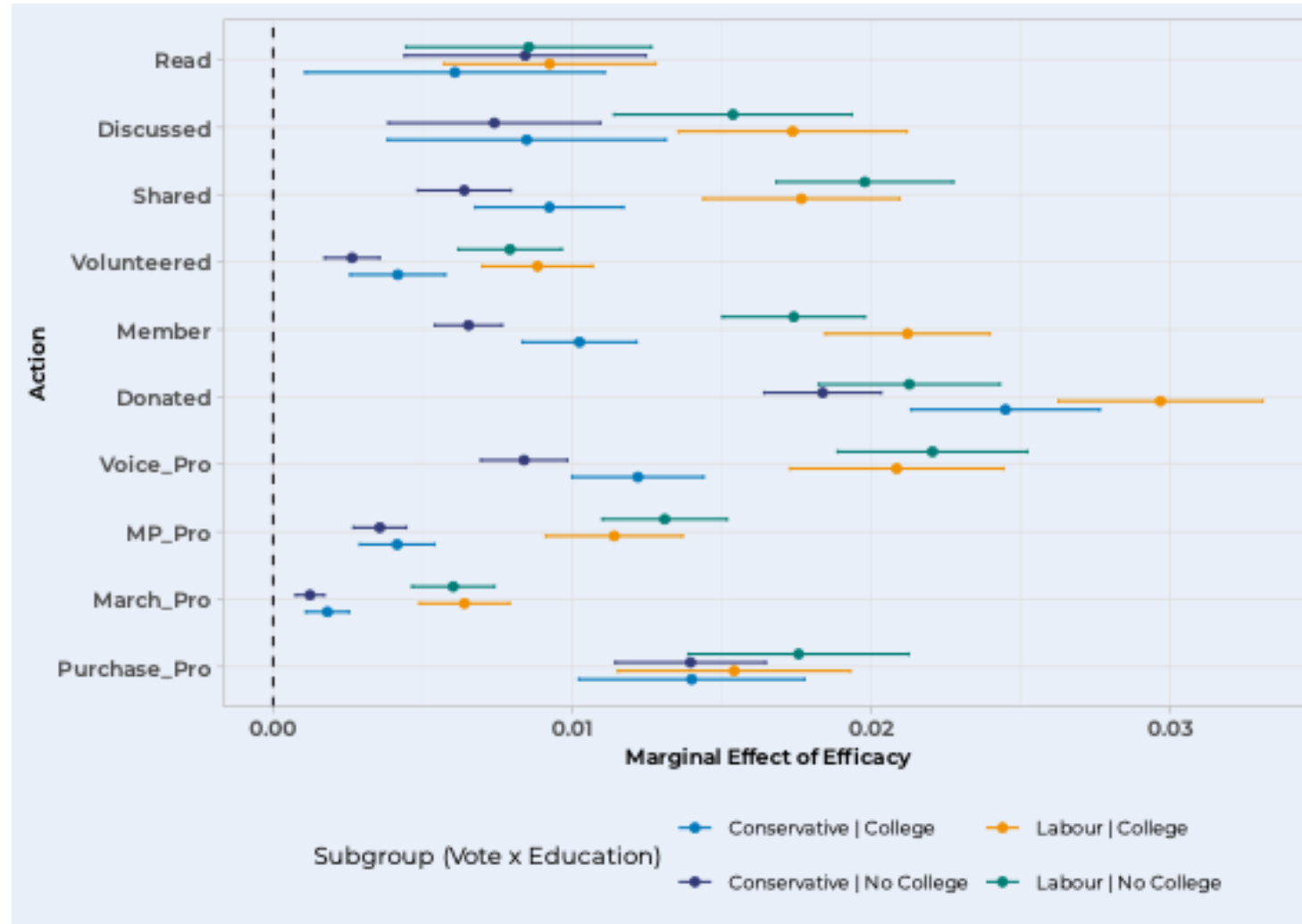
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EFFICACY AND ACTION: VOTE X COLLEGE



- Plot shows how efficacy increases likelihood of taking action for different subgroups.
- Across most actions, college-educated individuals tend to show stronger associations between efficacy and action-taking than those without a college degree.
- Differences within the same vote group (e.g., College vs. No College Conservatives) are generally small – education alone does not drastically change the role of efficacy in driving action. Differences between vote groups (e.g. Labour vs Conservative) tend to be larger when combined with education level.
- Targeting high-efficacy messages may be more effective for driving high-effort actions (like using voice, contacting MPs) among college-educated progressives.

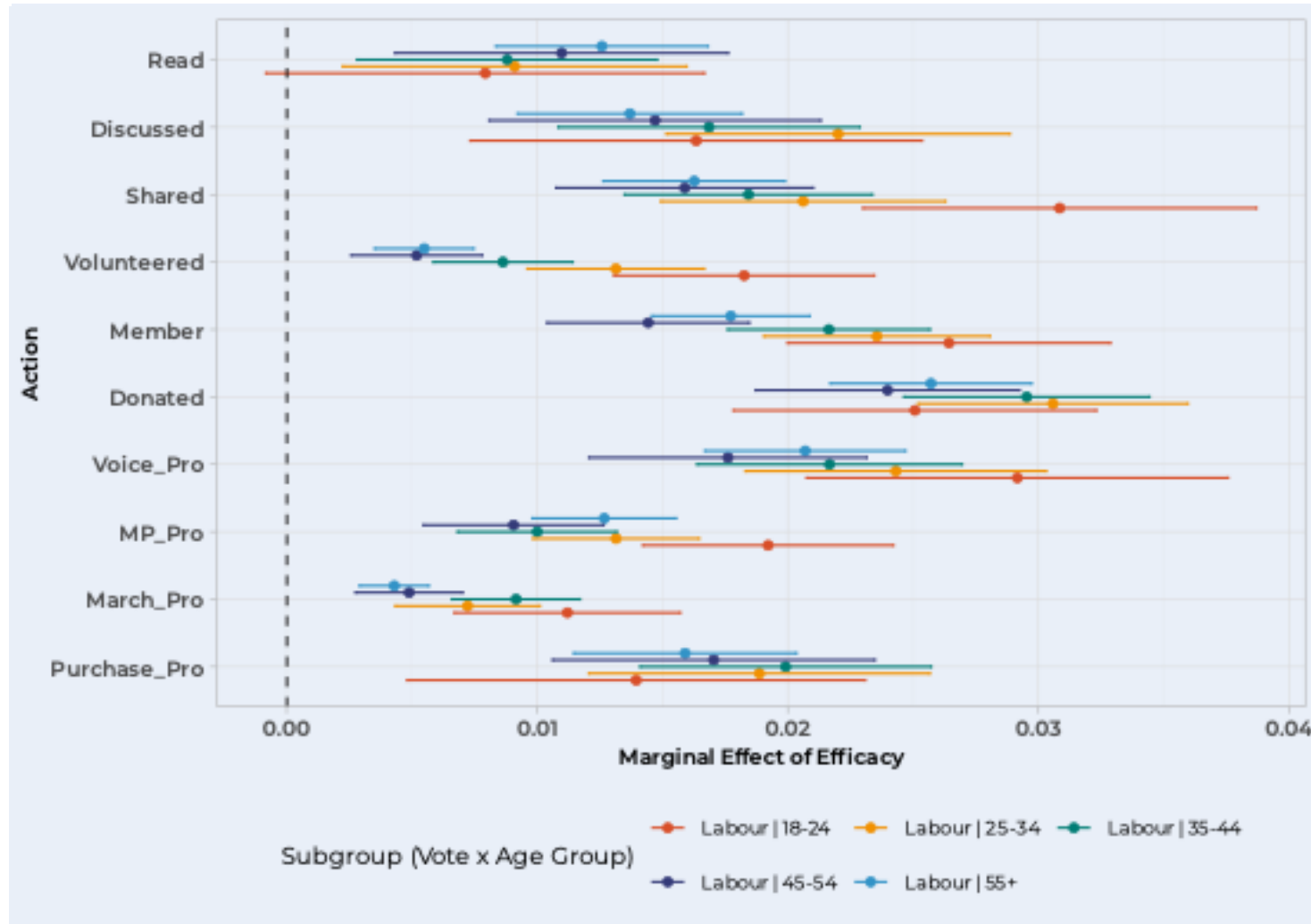
Are efficacious college educated Labour voters likely to take different actions than efficacious less educated Conservative voters?

- Yes, efficacious college-educated Labour voters are significantly more likely to take a range of actions, especially those involving voice, political contact, and donations, than non-college-educated Conservative voters.





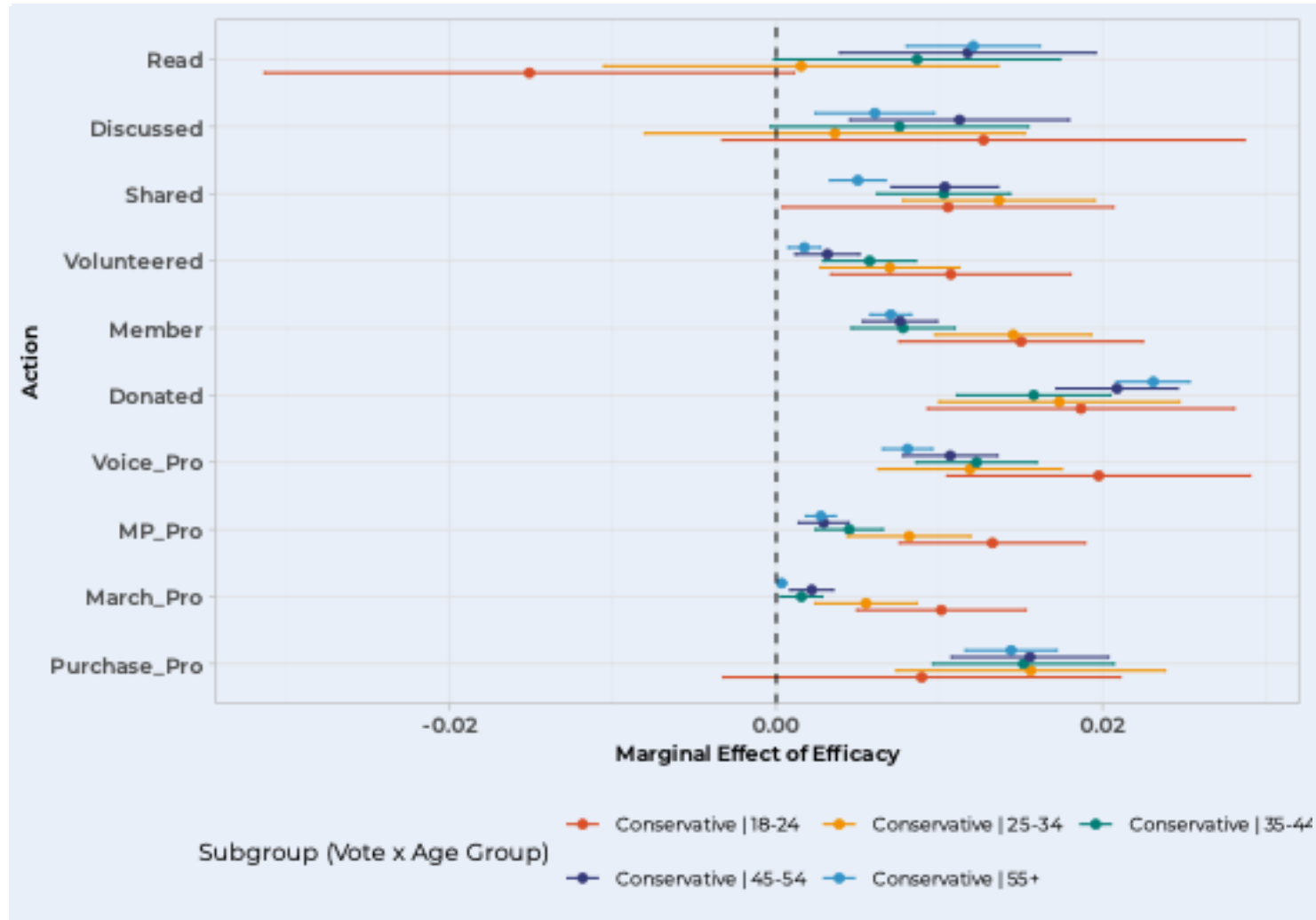
EFFICACY AND ACTION: VOTE (LABOUR) X AGE



- Among Labour voters, younger individuals (18–24) are more responsive to efficacy when it comes to higher-effort actions — including sharing information, volunteering, becoming a member, contacting MPs, and participating in a march.
- In contrast, for marginal or transactional actions — such as reading, discussing, sharing, donating, and purchasing — there are no meaningful differences across age groups amongst the Labour voters.



EFFICACY AND ACTION: VOTE (CONSERVATIVE) X AGE



- Among Conservative voters, younger individuals (18–24) are more responsive to efficacy when it comes to purposive actions — including volunteering, voicing opinions, contacting MPs, and participating in a march. These civic-oriented actions require a sense that they can make a difference; this suggests that self-efficacy is a key to engaging younger conservatives in meaningful public action around development and global poverty.
- In contrast, for marginal or transactional actions — such as discussing, sharing, donating, and purchasing — there are no meaningful differences across age groups.
- Older conservative voters (55+) are slightly more responsive to efficacy when it comes to reading about development, a form of informational engagement.





**DEVELOPMENT
ENGAGEMENT
LAB**



**UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM**

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.

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EFFICACY CASE STUDIES

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