

Charitable giving in 2003

This edition of *Inside Research* is the latest in a new series of joint NCVO-CAF publications looking at issues related to charitable giving. It presents our latest findings on who gives to charity, how they give, the causes they give to, and how much is generated from these individual donations.

Key findings for 2003

How much and how many?

- We estimate that the total amount given to charities by individuals in 2003 was £7.1bn.
- Just under two-thirds of adults give to charity in a typical month. In 2003, the 'participation rate' stood at 65.8% - slightly less than the 67.3% who gave in a typical month in 2002
- The average monthly donation in 2003 was £12.32.

Who gives?

- Women gave more than men. The average monthly donation by women was £13.55, compared with £10.81 for men. Women are also more likely to give (70.7% compared with 60.1%).
- Those aged 55-64 are most likely of all age groups to give. They also give more.
- A small proportion of the population (fewer than one in twenty) gave more than £50 per month. This group contribute well over half of the total amount donated (55.9%).

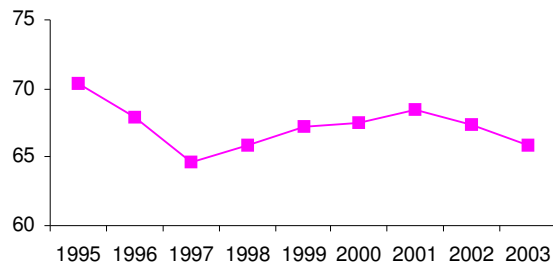
How and to what?

- Street collections and door-to-door collections remain the most popular ways of giving to charity. 18.8% and 15.5% of the population respectively give via these methods.
- The two causes that draw the widest support from the general public are medical research (24.4% of the population) and children and young people (21.6% of the population).

Charitable giving since 1995

NCVO has been tracking charitable giving by the general public since the mid-1990s. This year sees a fall in giving. The average monthly donation was £12.32 in 2003. The decline in the average amount given is coupled with a slight decline in the proportion giving to charity each month, which fell from 67.3% to 65.8%. The total amount given to charity in 2003 was £7.1bn

Figure 1: Proportion giving (% popn)



Who gives?

The by now familiar profile of charitable donors was again evident in 2003:

- Again, women were more likely to give than men, and their average monthly donations were higher;
- average donation and propensity to give decreased in order of socio-economic group: AB > C1 > C2 > DE;
- 16 to 24 year-olds are least likely to give, while the 55-64 age group are the most likely to give.

Table 1: Who gives?

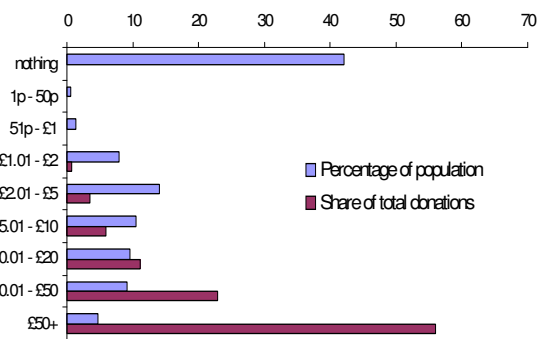
| | | Average donation (£/month) | Proportion giving to charity |
|-----------------------------|-------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Gender | Men | 10.81 | 60.1 |
| | Women | 13.55 | 70.7 |
| Socio-economic group | AB | 28.63 | 76.4 |
| | C1 | 12.49 | 70.3 |
| | C2 | 7.56 | 66.0 |
| | DE | 6.11 | 57.6 |
| Age | 16-24 | 6.56 | 54.2 |
| | 25-34 | 11.02 | 63.8 |
| | 35-44 | 14.12 | 70.7 |
| | 45-54 | 13.33 | 68.6 |
| | 55-64 | 16.60 | 72.5 |
| | 65+ | 11.86 | 63.7 |

The differences in giving behaviour by socio-economic group and age group are likely to be related to income. The socio-economic groups are based on professional status: a reasonable indicator of income. Younger people also tend to have less income at their disposal. However, this fails to explain the gender difference in giving, as men earn more (though give less) than women.

Elite givers

While the widespread engagement of donors is indicative of public trust in charities, most donors give relatively small amounts, meaning that a lot of charity activity is reliant on a small number of high value donors. Two-thirds (66%) of the population donated up to £5 in a typical month, but this generated only 4.2% of the total amount donated. At the other end of the scale, less than one in 20 people (4.7%) gave over £50 in a typical month, but these donations generated well over half (55.9%) of the total amount donated.

Figure 2: The importance of elite givers



Ways of giving

Table 2 shows the various methods of giving. As in previous years, popular methods in 2003 included street and door-to-door collections, which reached large numbers of the general public. While these loose change methods usually generate relatively small amounts of cash, they play an important role in promoting charities to a wide audience.

Table 2: Ways of giving

| | % pop | % given |
|--|-------|---------|
| Street collection | 18.8 | 3.6 |
| Door to door collection | 15.5 | 4.0 |
| Buying raffle/lottery tickets - not NL | 12.2 | 4.7 |
| Buying in a charity shop | 10.6 | 8.0 |
| Shop counter collection | 10.2 | 1.9 |
| Church collection | 10.0 | 14.4 |
| Sponsorship | 9.0 | 12.6 |
| Collection at work | 6.0 | 2.4 |
| Buying goods for a charity | 5.5 | 4.2 |
| Pub collection | 4.9 | 1.0 |
| Appeal letter | 4.2 | 4.9 |
| Buying in a jumble sale | 4.1 | 2.0 |
| Attending a charity event | 4.3 | 6.0 |
| Subscription/membership fee | 2.8 | 3.8 |
| Covenant | 2.5 | 8.7 |
| Buying through a charity catalogue | 1.4 | 2.1 |
| TV or radio appeal | 3.0 | 5.5 |
| Payroll deduction | 1.5 | 0.7 |
| Telephone appeal | 0.9 | 0.6 |
| Appeal advertisement | 0.8 | 1.7 |
| Affinity card | 0.1 | 0.1 |
| Stocks and shares | 0.2 | 0.1 |
| Other gifts of money | 4.8 | 7.2 |

What are the most popular causes?

Table 3 shows the popularity of various causes. Medical research and children/young people drew the widest public

support in terms of both numbers of people and cash.

Table 3: Support for different causes

| | % of pop | % given |
|---------------------------|----------|---------|
| Medical research | 24.4 | 16.6 |
| Children or young people | 21.6 | 14.9 |
| Animals | 11.1 | 6.3 |
| Other medical/health care | 10.8 | 6.8 |
| Religious organisations | 10.0 | 12.6 |
| Overseas relief | 8.5 | 10.8 |
| Blind people | 6.7 | 4.7 |
| Disabled people | 6.6 | 3.9 |
| Elderly people | 5.6 | 4.1 |
| Education | 5.5 | 4.2 |
| Rescue services | 4.4 | 2.5 |
| Homeless people | 4.3 | 4.9 |
| Other | 3.1 | 1.4 |
| The environment | 2.5 | 2.0 |
| Disaster relief | 2.4 | 1.9 |
| Deaf people | 1.8 | 0.7 |
| Heritage | 0.8 | 1.0 |
| Museums, music, art etc. | 0.7 | 0.5 |

Conclusion

Inside Research has highlighted a slight decrease in giving compared with 2002. Looking ahead, maintaining voluntary income and encouraging donors and charities to make better use of tax efficient methods will continue to be a key challenge for the sector.

About this and future research

The data in this edition of *Inside Research* are based on a survey carried out on our behalf by NOP.

The Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) and the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) have joined forces to manage a new survey of charitable giving. The programme has an independent Advisory Group made up of experts in the field of charitable giving.

The new approach entails larger sample surveys and an updated methodology to enable us to comment in more detail on evolving trends in giving. The first data based on the new survey will be published in 2005.

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