CONTENTS

Foreword  3
Introduction  4
About CAF  4
Key findings  5
Detailed findings  6
  Overall picture of how people get involved  6
How people get involved – detail  7
  Giving money  7
  Giving goods  7
  Volunteering  7
  Protesting and petitioning  8
  Who engages most  8
  Frequency of giving  8
  Typical amount given  9
  What people give to  9
  Who gives to what  10
  How people give  10
  Being asked to give  12
  Reasons for giving  12
  Trust in charities  13
  The impact of charities  14
Method  15
It is with great pleasure that we are able to bring you our first ever dedicated Ireland Giving report, thanks in large part to the guidance and support of our dedicated colleagues at Philanthropy Ireland.

At CAF we produce these reports in order to help inform charities, policy makers and donors of the state of play in their respective jurisdictions, but also to spark conversations about the nature of giving in all its forms and how that varies across borders.

The Irish people have a tradition of giving that makes them one of the most generous countries in the world.

It is through more detailed reports into a country’s giving behaviour that we are able to identify not just the similarities, but the differences that set each apart.

I particularly noted the high level of support that the Irish people give to the homeless, housing and refuge shelters, which was listed as the leading cause areas that people had given to in the last four weeks, cited by 35% of respondents. These causes set the Irish people apart from all of the other countries that CAF has studied in our international giving research and signals a clear determination to help those in their communities who are in dire straits.

Our colleagues at Philanthropy Ireland will no doubt agree that none of the impressive generosity detailed in this report can be taken for granted. Instead it must serve as a starting point for all of us to identify gaps and source opportunities to build upon this solid foundation and work to grow giving in all its forms.

Sir John Low
Chief Executive
Charities Aid Foundation

By shining light on giving patterns, key insights emerge which contribute to understanding the giving landscape. Building understanding is important for donors, grantees and policy makers. It can provide clarity on areas of need and of interest.

This report provides a richer picture of understanding of giving in Ireland, most importantly in terms of engagement in giving and causes of concern. The availability of comparative international benchmarks adds real value, the CAF World Giving Index reports being a notable annual feature in the charitable sector.

Consideration of the findings provides a platform to open conversations on giving. All forms of giving are valid, resources of time and money being fundamental for the delivery of services in support of civil society.

While there may be much here that was expected, the objectivity is important. There is much to celebrate here. Ireland is indeed a giving nation, our commitment to community initiatives and supporting those in need is something of which we can be justifiably proud of.

But good giving needs to be nourished, supported and championed. A dynamic giving culture signals a belief in civil society and voluntary action in all their forms as being a vital part of our society and democracy.

Philanthropy Ireland welcomes this report. While we are generous in Ireland, we are predominantly reactionary givers, with short term timeframes. We have capacity to do more. Strategic, planned multi-annual giving can add value and impact to the generosity evident in this report.

Sincere thanks to all the team at CAF for their professionalism and work on producing this report. It adds real value to understanding of giving in Ireland.

Éilis Murray
CEO - Philanthropy Ireland
INTRODUCTION

The Ireland Giving 2020 report is one of an international series of reports produced by Charities Aid Foundation (CAF), a world-leading organisation working at the forefront of philanthropy and civil society. CAF has been tracking giving in the UK for several decades and in recent years began conducting similar research in countries across its global network. With a clear goal of assisting charities, governments and wider society to better understand charitable giving, we are delighted to now launch our first CAF Ireland Giving report. The series also includes reports covering Australia, Bulgaria, Canada, India, Russia, South Africa, the United States and the UK, as well as separate reports for Scotland and Wales.

The Republic of Ireland is one of the world’s most generous countries, ranked 5th in the recent tenth edition of the CAF World Giving Index which looked at generosity across the globe over the past decade. That study found that 62% of Irish people had helped a stranger in the past month, 69% had donated money to charity and 38% had volunteered their time. This CAF Ireland Giving report goes deeper than our global study is able to, giving us a richer understanding than ever before of the different ways in which people give and what they give to, as well as gaining a better understanding of people’s participation in social and civic activities beyond financial donations and volunteering.

We believe that this is the only comprehensive study of giving behaviour in the Republic of Ireland made freely available to charities, and we hope that this report, which will be an annual event, will help to inform debate around charitable giving in Ireland.

We produce a number of research reports each year and all of these are freely available; you can receive them straight into your email and you can sign up at: https://www.cafonline.org/about-us/research. We do hope you find this report both topical and useful – if you do have any questions, comments or suggestions, please contact the CAF Research team at research@cafonline.org

We are delighted to have worked together with Philanthropy Ireland in the development of this report and would like to thank them for their input into the questionnaire and analysis.

ABOUT CAF

Charities Aid Foundation is a leading international charity registered in the United Kingdom. We exist to make giving go further, so together we can transform more lives and communities around the world. We are a champion for better giving, and for over 90 years we’ve been helping donors, companies, charities and social organisations make a bigger impact.

CAF is a founding partner of the CAF Global Alliance, a leading international network of independent and locally-led organisations working at the forefront of philanthropy and civil society. The CAF Global Alliance includes partners from Australia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, India, Russia, South Africa, United Kingdom, and the United States. We are CAF and we make giving count.
KEY FINDINGS

Our analysis provides these key findings for individual giving in the Republic of Ireland in September 2019:

- Nine in ten (90%) people in Ireland participated in at least one charitable or social action in the last year, and more than seven in ten (72%) did so in the last four weeks.

- Three fifths of people in Ireland donated money to charity within the last year (62%) and just under two fifths sponsored someone for charity (38%).

- The median amount of money donated in Ireland within the last four weeks was €30. The most common method of donating was cash (68% of donors).

- The top three causes that people donated to within the last four weeks were homeless people, housing and refuge shelters in Ireland (35%), children or young people (30%) and hospitals and hospices (28%).

- Nearly a quarter of people in Ireland volunteered in the last year (23%), with the level of volunteering higher amongst women (27% vs. 19% men).

- In-person requests for donations are very common in Ireland, whether on the street (49%), on the doorstep (24%) or through family and friends (29%).

- More than half (54%) of people in Ireland either ‘strongly’ or ‘tend to’ agree that most charities are trustworthy.
Overall picture of how people get involved

All those interviewed were shown a list of eight behaviours and asked whether they had done any of these in the last four weeks or the last year. The list was made up of a range of charitable and social actions.

**Figure 1: Which, if any, of the following have you done in the last year/four weeks?**

- **Donated money to charity**: 62% in the last year, 34% in the last four weeks
- **Given goods to charity**: 61% in the last year, 36% in the last four weeks
- **Sponsored someone for a charity**: 38% in the last year
- **Signed a petition**: 37% in the last year
- **Bought an ethical product**: 32% in the last year
- **Volunteered for a charity**: 23% in the last year
- **Taken part in a consultation about local services or problems in your local area**: 13% in the last year
- **Taken part in a public demonstration or protest**: 8% in the last year
- **None of the above**: 28% in the last year

Base: All adults 16+ (n=1,057)

At an overall level, nine in ten (90%) people in Ireland participated in at least one charitable or social action in the last year, and more than seven in ten (72%) did so in the last four weeks.
This section of the report looks at people’s charitable behaviour in more detail.

Giving money

Giving money to charity is one of two main ways that people in Ireland participate, with 62% claiming to have donated money to charity within the last year and just over a third (34%) claiming to have done so within the last four weeks. Those aged 65 and over are significantly more likely to have donated money to charity within the last four weeks, compared to younger age groups (49% of 65+s vs. 25% of 16-24s).

Just under two fifths (38%) of people sponsored someone for a charity within the last year, whilst just over one in ten (13%) have given money in this way within the last four weeks. People living in Dublin have amongst the lowest rates of sponsoring someone for charity – just 8% had done so in the last four weeks, significantly less than people living in the West (17%), Mid-West (18%), South East (13%) Mid-East (20%) and the Midlands (16%).

Amongst those who donated money to charity in the last year, only 14% said that they used the S.848(A) scheme which allowed them to claim back tax against the value of their donation.

Around one in ten people in Ireland expect to give more to charity over the next 12 months (11%) whilst a similar proportion expect to give less (9%). Most people (63%) think that they will give about the same amount and 16% are not sure. Younger people aged 35 and under are the most likely to say that they will give more in the next year (19%), perhaps anticipating a higher income in the future than they have at present. Those aged over 45 are the most likely to anticipate their giving levels to stay the same (70%).

Giving goods

After donating money, giving goods is the second most common way of participating in a charitable activity. 61% of people in Ireland claim to have given goods to charity within the last year, whilst just over a third (36%) say that they have done so within the past four weeks. Giving goods within the last four weeks is most common amongst older people (47% of 65+s vs. 20% 16-24s) and women (40% vs. 32% men).

Volunteering

Nearly a quarter (23%) of people in Ireland claim to have volunteered for a charity within the last year, with one in ten (13%) saying that they had done so within the past four weeks. Significantly more women claim to have volunteered than men within the last year (27% vs. 19%).

Across the last year as a whole, volunteering is relatively more common in the West of Ireland, where 31% of people volunteered for a charity, significantly higher than the Border region (15%) and Dublin (21%).

When looking at the last four weeks, just 2% of people in the Border region had volunteered for a charity – this is significantly lower than almost every other region and the average for Ireland as a whole (13%). The region with the highest level of volunteering is the Midlands, where 18% of people volunteered in the last four weeks.
Protesting and petitioning

Just under two fifths (37%) of people signed a petition in the last year, with 14% having done so in the past four weeks. Women (42% vs. 32% of men) and 16-24 year olds (46% vs. 28% of the over 65s) are the groups most likely to have signed a petition in the last year.

16-24 year olds are also more likely than average to have attended a public demonstration or protest in the last year (14% vs. 8% average), although this is the least common of all the actions included in this report.

Who engages most

Women (92%) are slightly more likely than men (87%) to have participated in one of the activities in the last year. Although participation is very high amongst all age groups, participation tends to increase broadly in line with age. Overall, individuals aged over 45 are slightly more likely to engage in charitable or social activities, with 92% of those aged 45+ having done so in the last year compared to a low of 85% amongst 25-34 year olds.

There is very little difference in overall participation levels across the country with people from all regions showing a similar propensity to have done at least one of the social and charitable activities. However, when we look in more detail at the individual actions in turn, differences emerge.

Frequency of giving

When asked about how often they give to charity, six in ten people in Ireland state that they usually give to charity from time to time (59%), with a further fifth (20%) giving monthly. Seven per cent give to charity every week.

**Figure 2: Which of the following best describes how often you give to charity?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>From time-to-time</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All adults 16+ (n=1,057) 'Don’t know' responses not displayed
We would define regular giving as those who give weekly or monthly and when looked at in this way, just over a quarter (27%) of people in Ireland give regularly.

People in Ireland tend to give more frequently with age and regular giving is highest amongst those aged 55 and over. The 55 – 64 age group in particular has high levels of weekly giving (12%), possibly linked to making donations to their place of worship. Only 1% of people in the oldest age group (65+) say that they never give to charity.

**Typical amount given**

This section focuses on the amounts given via both direct donations and sponsorship.

The typical (median)\(^1\) monthly amount given by Irish donors via donating or sponsoring is €30, whilst the average (mean) amount given is €112. When looking at direct donations only, the typical amount given is €30 whilst the mean is €101. The typical sponsorship amount is €20 and the mean is €82. We often see in our research in the UK that sponsorship amounts are, on average, lower than direct donations, likely due to donors feeling a stronger emotional connection to a cause when they have personally chosen it.

On average, men give slightly more than women when looking at donating and sponsoring combined (€35 median for men vs. €30 for women and €120 mean for men vs. €105 for women).

**What people give to**

All those who had donated in the last four weeks were asked which cause area they had given to and the top five causes are shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Homeless people, housing and refuge shelters in Ireland</th>
<th>Children or young people</th>
<th>Hospitals and hospices</th>
<th>Disabled people</th>
<th>Animal welfare</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>35%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All respondents who have donated in last four weeks (n=362)

\(^1\) Mean = average amount given across all individuals. Median = middle value of all amounts given by individuals.
The top five cause areas all attracted donations from around a quarter or more of donors, followed by a drop off to the sixth most popular case, overseas aid and disaster relief (19%). Donations to religious organisations were made by nearly one in five donors (18%).

It is interesting to note that the number one cause area is homeless people, housing and refuge shelters in Ireland. In all the international giving research that CAF has conducted, this is the first time that we have seen this occupy the top three causes given to. This is likely to be as a result of the growing number of homeless people in Ireland and the media coverage around it.

The least popular causes given to are the arts (3%), conservation, the environment and heritage (7%), sports and recreation (8%) and schools, colleges, universities and other education (9%).

Who gives to what

The youngest age group are three times more likely than average to donate to causes related to conservation, the environment and heritage (21% of 16-24 year olds vs. 7% average). They are also much more likely than average to donate to schools, colleges, universities and other education (20% vs. 9% average). By contrast, donations to religious organisations are much more prevalent amongst the older generation (34% of the over 65s vs. 18% on average).

Men and women show little difference in their support of most causes. The exception is sports and recreation charities, which were supported by 11% of men compared to 5% of women.

How people give

Those who had given money to charity in the last year were asked about the ways in which they gave, and cash (68%) was by far the most common way for people in Ireland to make a donation. This was followed by buying raffle or lottery tickets (48%) and buying goods (38%). The least popular ways to donate were by payroll giving (4%), cheque (5%), credit card (6%) and through membership fees and subscriptions (6%). Giving in the last four weeks follows a similar pattern.

---

Men and women who donate are equally likely to have given in cash, and by buying a raffle or lottery ticket. However, women (43%) are significantly more likely to buy goods than men (33%), a pattern we have seen in similar research that CAF has conducted in other countries. Women are also more likely to donate via text (14% vs. 8% of men).

The likelihood to donate via a website or app, by text, or by debit card broadly decreases with age. In contrast, giving by direct debit/standing order, through buying a raffle or lottery ticket and, to a lesser extent, giving in cash all tend to become more prevalent with age.

Online giving via a website/app is most common amongst 25-34 year old donors (26%), who are almost twice as likely as average (13%) to give in this way, and nearly four times more likely than the over 65s (7%) to do so. Similarly, debit card donations are highest amongst the under 35s (22% vs. an overall average of 13%). The over 65s are three times as likely as 16-24 year olds to have made a donation by direct debit or standing order (24% vs. 8%).
Being asked to give

All respondents were asked about the ways in which they had been approached and asked to give to charity in the four weeks before they were interviewed; respondents were asked regardless of their overall giving behaviours.

Half of people in Ireland (49%) were approached on the street at some point in the previous four weeks and asked to make a donation. Door to door collections were the next most common way that people were approached, with a quarter (24%) having experienced this in the last four weeks. Social circles also play a strong role in being asked to donate with 29% being asked to give by family and friends, either through sponsorship (23%) or some other form of donation (12%). Television (20%), online (19%) and charity events (18%) were also common ways of being approached. Direct mail reached 17% of people overall, rising to a quarter (24%) of the over 65s.

Young people aged 16-24 were most likely to be approached online (33%) or at a charity event (27%), whilst the 45-54 year olds were most likely to be approached on the street (58%) or the doorstep (30%). The over 65s were most often contacted by direct mail (24%) and telephone (16%).

There was little difference in the way men and women were approached and asked to give, with the exception of telephone which was more commonly cited by men (11%) than women (7%).

Reasons for giving

Two thirds of donors in Ireland give because they care about the cause (66%) and nearly six in 10 because they want to help people less fortunate (58%). Realising that they can make a difference was a motivator for 39%, and trust in the recipient organisation played a part for 37% of donors.

Women donors are particularly likely to say that they care about the cause (72% vs. 59% of men), because they believe we all need to help solve social problems (47% vs. 37% of men) and because they want to set an example to others (28% vs. 13% of men).
Figure 4: Which of the following, if any, are reasons that you have given money in the last 12 months?

- **Because I care about the cause**: 66%
- **Because I want to help people less fortunate than me**: 58%
- **Because I believe we all need to help solve social problems**: 42%
- **Because I realise I can make a difference**: 39%
- **Because I trust the organisation(s) I donate to**: 37%
- **Because it makes me feel good**: 29%
- **Because I want to set an example for others (my children, friends, colleagues, employees, etc.)**: 21%
- **Because it helps me become a better person**: 20%
- **Because people ask me to**: 19%
- **Because my religion encourages giving**: 11%
- **Because society expects this behaviour from me**: 6%
- **Because everyone in my family donates**: 5%
- **Other**: 3%

Base: All who have donated in last year (n = 653)  ‘None of the above’, ‘Don’t know’ and ‘Prefer not to say’ responses not displayed

Older people aged 65 and over are more likely than average to say they give because they care about the cause (76% vs. 66% on average), because they want to help people less fortunate (66% vs. 58% average) and because they trust the organisation they’re donating to (50% vs. 37% average).

Whilst not common reasons for giving, young people aged 16-24 are the most likely to say that they make donations because everyone in their family does (12% vs. 5% average), and because they believe it helps them to become a better person (30% vs. 20% average).

**Trust in charities**

Trust in charities has been discussed over the last few years, with a number of reports\(^3\) claiming that trust in all kinds of institutions is at an all time low. In 2019, just over half (54%) of people in Ireland either ‘strongly’ or ‘tend to’ agree that most charities are trustworthy.

Trust is lowest amongst those aged 45-54 years (45% agree) and highest amongst the under 35s (56% agree). It also varies slightly across the different regions, from a low of 50% amongst people living in Dublin to highs of 62% and 63% in the West and Mid-West of Ireland respectively.

\(^3\) [https://www.edelman.com/trust-barometer](https://www.edelman.com/trust-barometer)
The impact of charities

Around three quarters of people in Ireland say that charities have had a positive impact on their own local community (73%) and the Republic of Ireland as a whole (75%). Nearly seven in ten think that charities have had a positive impact internationally (69%). Very few people think that charities had had a negative impact on any of these areas (7% or less for each).

People in the Mid-West are particularly positive about the impact on their local communities with 42% saying that it has been ‘very positive’, compared to 27% on average.

Although the proportion is small, people living in the Border region are more likely than average to say that the impact on Ireland as a whole has been negative (12% vs. 4% average).

Figure 5: What impact, if any, do you think charities have had?

All adults 16+ (n=1,057)
This report is based on data collected by YouGov on behalf of CAF. In Ireland, 1,057 interviews were completed online between 6 September and 16 September 2019. The survey was conducted using YouGov’s panel partner Toluna.

The sample is nationally representative and is weighted to known population data on age and gender. Differences are reported at the 95% confidence level (the level of confidence that the results are a true reflection of the whole population). The maximum margin of error (the amount of random sampling error) is calculated as +/- 3%.
An overview of charitable giving in Ireland

March 2020

Registered charity number 268369
Charities Aid Foundation
25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4TA
T: +44 (0)3000 123 000
E: research@cafonline.org