



INSIDE GIVING

UK GIVING REPORT 2025

CAF
Charities Aid Foundation

THE STATE OF THE NATION'S GIVING



March 2025

The Sports Trust

Toynbee Hall

FOREWORD

“It’s time to start a new chapter in Britain’s giving story and build a sustainable landscape for the future.”



NEIL HESLOP OBE
Chief Executive
Charities Aid Foundation

Most giving starts with a personal or emotional story that connects us to a cause. But the act of giving itself can build connection between people and places, bring us together and help us to understand each other better – which has never been more essential.

This research starkly demonstrates that we need to do much more to build our culture of giving. We are relying on an ever smaller group of people to give. For the first time, the number who have donated or sponsored someone for charity in the past year has fallen to just half. While this is across all age groups, the decline is especially pronounced among young people. Certainly, many people feel that they don’t have money to spare to give, but these numbers reflect a continuing decline in giving in this country, which those of us in the charity sector have recognised for several years.

Moreover, the challenging economic environment continues to place significant strain on charities. From food banks to community clubs to hospices, charities are helping a growing number of people in need, but with less funding available and higher costs to cover.

As a society, we must consider how to build a sustainable giving landscape for our future and encourage more people to connect with their communities through charity. And there is hope. Young people in particular

have a drive for change, and we know that charities up and down the country are on the ground delivering that change and are increasingly trusted to do so.

There are inspiring stories across the UK showing how this can be done – how giving contributes to regenerating our communities, improving outcomes, and strengthening social cohesion. An incredible £15.4 billion was donated by the public to charities and good causes last year, reflecting the generosity evident every day, in every place, in the UK. So to further build on this report, we will be publishing additional in-depth research to understand localised giving and connection in different places and help share insight from great stories.

This year’s UK Giving Report makes one thing abundantly clear: we need to write a new chapter in Britain’s giving story. One that sees us encourage giving across all age groups and in every part of the country. Revitalising our culture of giving will help to build a more connected, more generous and more resilient society for all of us in the future.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

The Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) has been studying and reporting on charitable giving for many years.

This approach to the UK Giving research has been running since 2016. Each year, minor updates to the questionnaire have been made, but there were very few material changes to the survey until 2024.

To keep a consistent understanding of the state of charitable giving across the country over time, we ensured that crucial questions around donating behaviour in both the 12 months and four weeks prior to interview remained very similar to previous years. However, at the beginning of 2024, changes were made to the questions about donation method and the causes supported by the public.

The change to our question on donation method was made to modernise the list of options presented to respondents, and more fairly reflect the reality of giving, nine years on from beginning this research. At the same time, we made several changes to the list of cause areas shown to respondents,

to better represent how the public perceives the charities they support. In 2016, our original cause list used a set of definitions from the Charity Commission for England and Wales. However, there were areas of overlap between cause areas and, this year, we have merged categories to make the list more intuitive for respondents.

In making these changes, we structured our survey in a way that respondents were prompted to think first about all the different ways they had donated over the previous month. This might include rounding up a purchase at an online till or dropping coins in a collection bucket. The sorts of ways of giving that, without being asked to specifically recall, many of us might forget about. To the charity sector, these methods are valuable, which is demonstrated by our new data on the amount of money that finds its way to charity through these different channels.

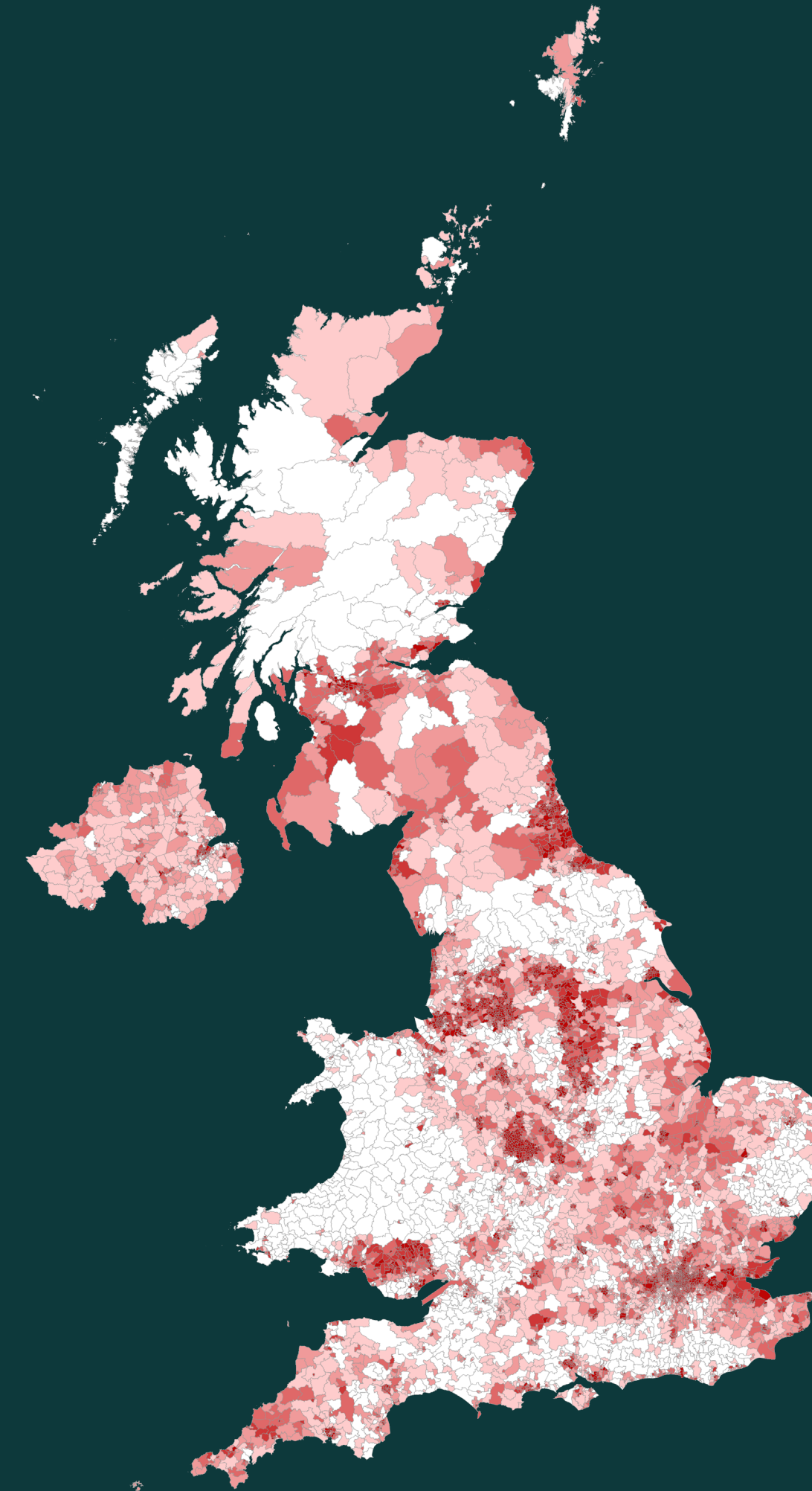
In making these changes, we have been able to more accurately and fully capture a snapshot of the giving landscape in 2024.

COMING UP

UK LOCAL GIVING REPORT 2025

Last year, for the first time, we published a series of maps that showed which parts of the UK have the most donors, which are the most generous, and where people have the highest levels of trust in charities.

As part of our UK Giving series, we will explore the geography of giving once again, bringing a greater level of detail to our understanding of how generosity maps across the country. Our *UK Local Giving Report* – to be published later this spring – will examine the interplay between the places where people donate the most, where they use charities the most, where they are the most neighbourly, and where people feel the strongest sense of belonging.



KEY FINDINGS

1.

FEWER PEOPLE THAN EVER ARE GIVING TO CHARITY.

Donations and sponsorship levels are at the lowest levels we have recorded. Compared to 2019, there are four million fewer donors, and the number of people sponsoring has fallen by nearly six million. London is the first and only region where less than half donate to charity.

2.

THE PUBLIC DONATED AN ESTIMATED £15.4 BILLION IN 2024.

Those who do give, are giving more, with an average donation value of £72.

3.

ONLY A THIRD OF YOUNG PEOPLE GAVE TO CHARITY – THE LOWEST PROPORTION OF ANY AGE GROUP.

Donation rates are down across the board, but 16–24-year-olds are the only demographic where well under half (36%) say they donate or sponsor for charity.

4.

HEALTH CHARITIES RECEIVED AN ESTIMATED £2.22 BILLION FROM THE PUBLIC.

Charities such as hospices and medical research were supported by 43% of donors who gave around £2.22 billion – the largest amount going to any of the different cause areas in the research.

5.

SOME 5.6 MILLION PEOPLE VOLUNTEERED.

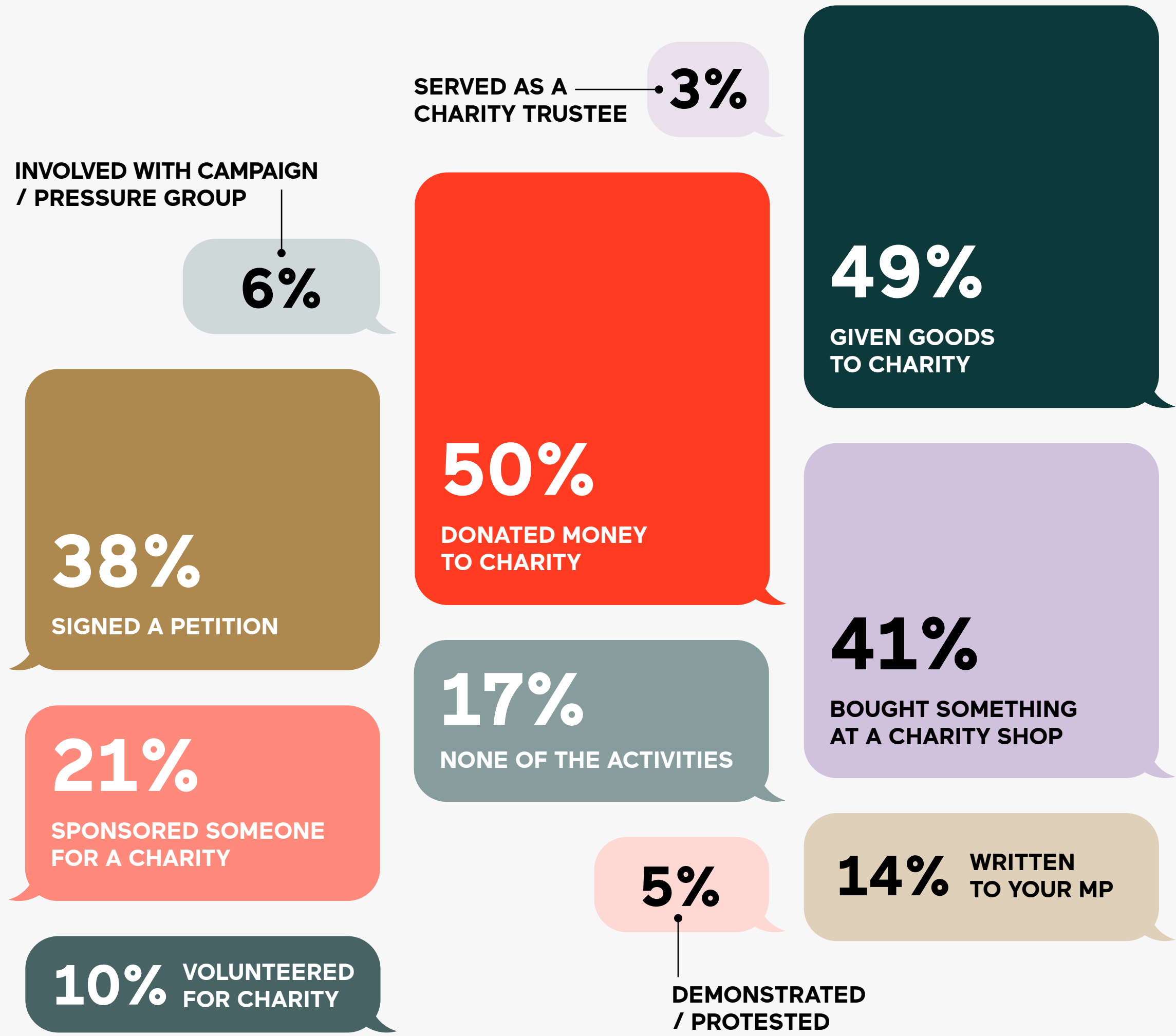
One in 10 people said they volunteered in 2024, equivalent to 5.6 million adults – a decline of 1.5 million since 2023.

IN 2024, 83% OF PEOPLE GOT INVOLVED IN CIVIL SOCIETY.

Most people (83%) did something charitable or engaged with civil society in the past 12 months, and the three most common actions were charity focused. Women (87%) and the over 65s (90%) were the most likely to have done at least one of the listed activities.



Figure 1: Proportion of people who engaged in charitable or civic activities in the past 12 months



Base: All respondents, N=13,459.

DONATION TRENDS

ONLY HALF OF PEOPLE GAVE TO CHARITY IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS.

For the first time since we began tracking this metric, the proportion of people donating to charity has fallen to only 50%.

Sponsorship levels, already on a downward trajectory, appear to have been permanently lowered by the pandemic, following the temporary restrictions on public events.

When combining both metrics, 55% of people in the UK gave to charity through donation or sponsorship in the last 12 months.

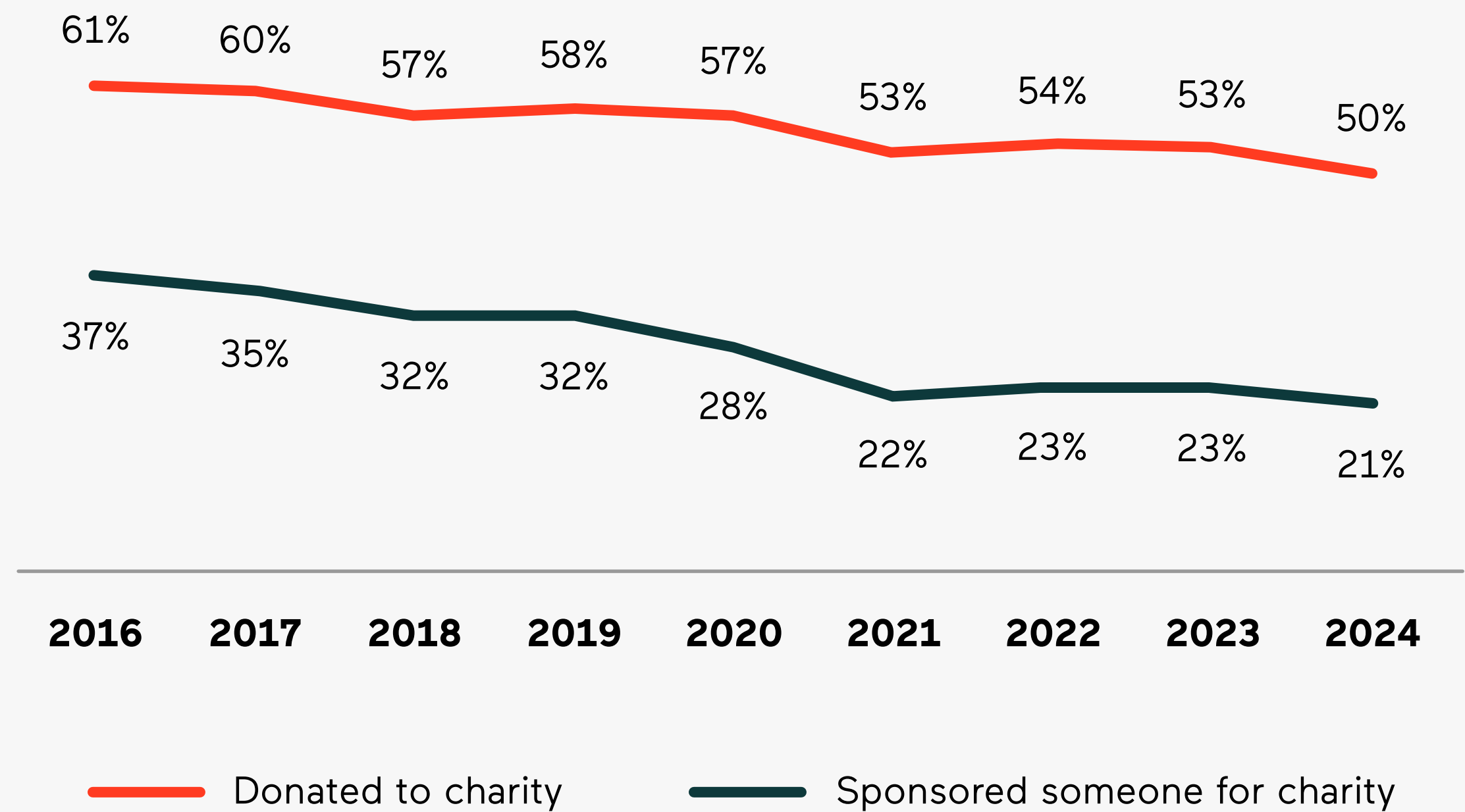
The largest decreases in donors are in the North West, the North East and London.

The decline in donor numbers is evident in every single region of the UK, but it is biggest in the North West, North East and London – all down around a quarter since 2017.

London is now the first and only region where fewer than half of people report that they donated or sponsored for charity (49%, down from 64% in 2017).

By contrast, Wales declined the least over the same period – down from 68% of people in 2017 to 61% in 2024.

Figure 2: Proportion of people who donated and sponsored in the past 12 months



Base: All respondents. 2016, N=8,137; 2017, N=12,211; 2018, N=13,277; 2019, N=13,499; 2020, N=13,406; 2021, N=13,575; 2022, N=13,140; 2023, N= 13,164; 2024, N=13,459.

London is the first region where fewer than half of people give to charity.

DONATION TRENDS

THE NUMBER OF YOUNG DONORS HAS DROPPED BY A THIRD SINCE 2017.

Only 36% of 16-24-year-olds say they donated or sponsored in the past 12 months. This is a decline of around a third since 2017, when 55% had done so. The percentage of young people who give to charity has been in steady decline since that time.

Although donation rates are down across the board, young people are the only demographic in our study where well under half say they give to charity. The pandemic years appear to be the inflection point. With schools and colleges closed to in-person learning, there were fewer opportunities to attend or organise fundraising events. Young people seem less interested in engaging with charities. Furthermore, the overall decline in the use of cash means there are fewer opportunities to donate smaller amounts spontaneously and the discretionary income of younger people is especially squeezed.

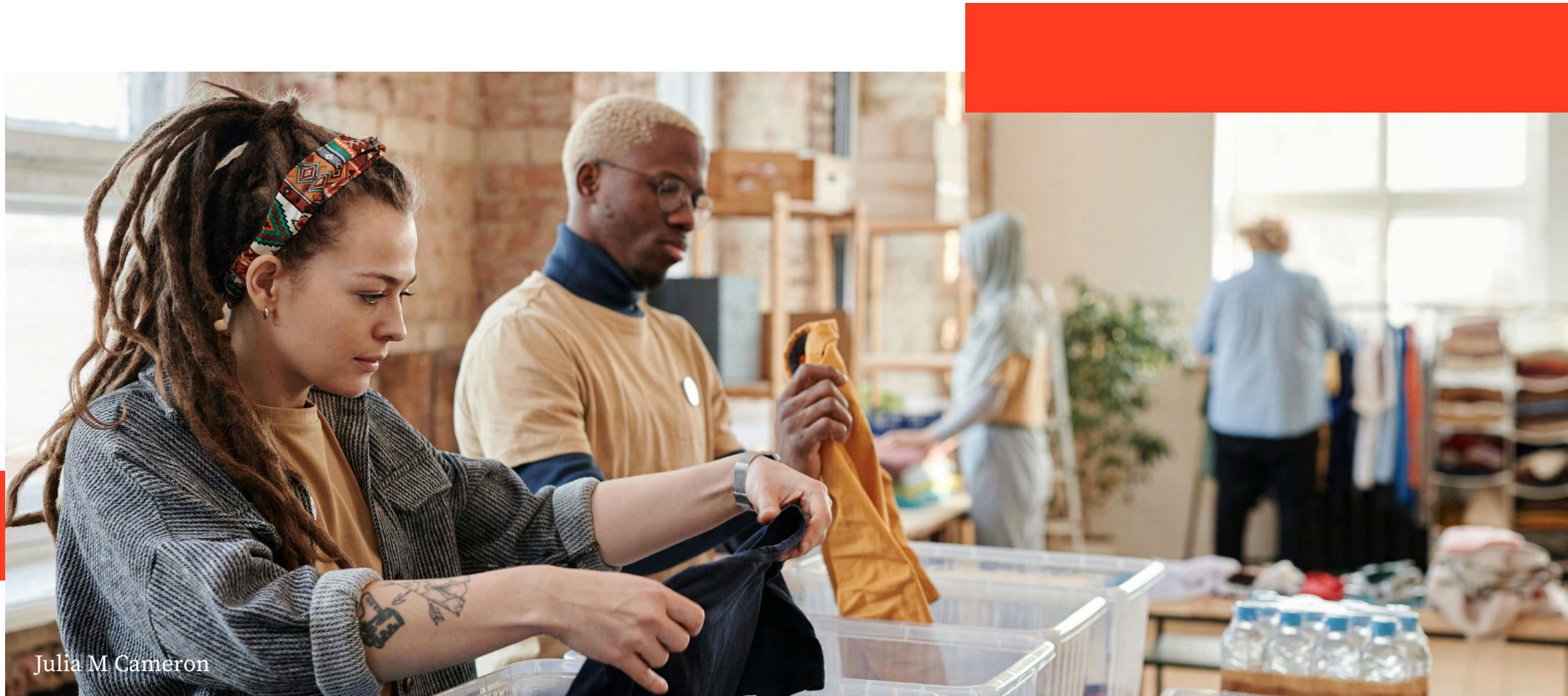
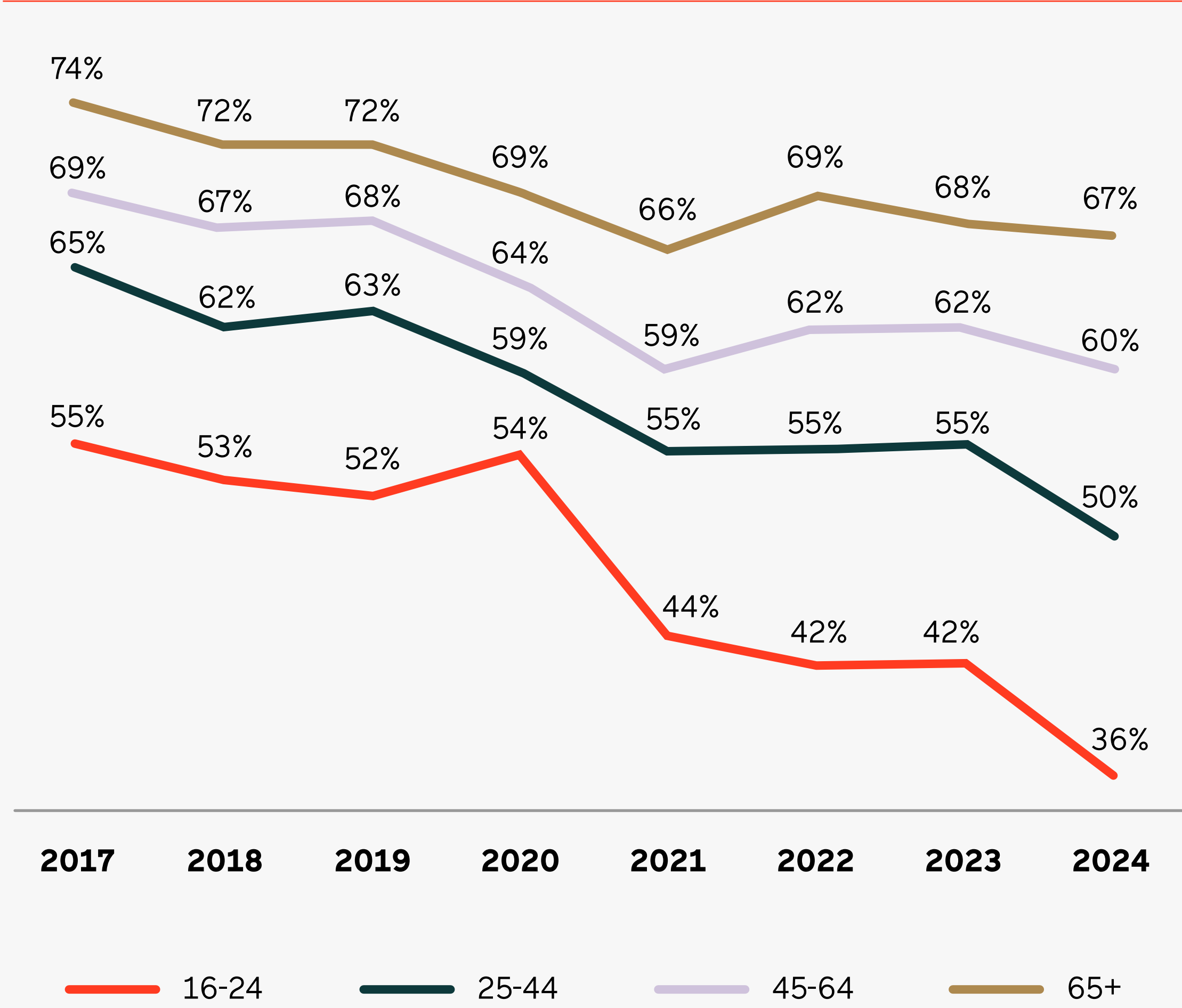


Figure 3: Proportion of people who donated and/or sponsored in the past 12 months, shown by age group



Base: All respondents. Ages 16 to 24, N= c.1,400 per year; Ages 25 to 44, N=c.4,000 per year; Ages 45 to 64, N=c. 4,400 per year; Ages 65+, N=c. 3,300 per year.

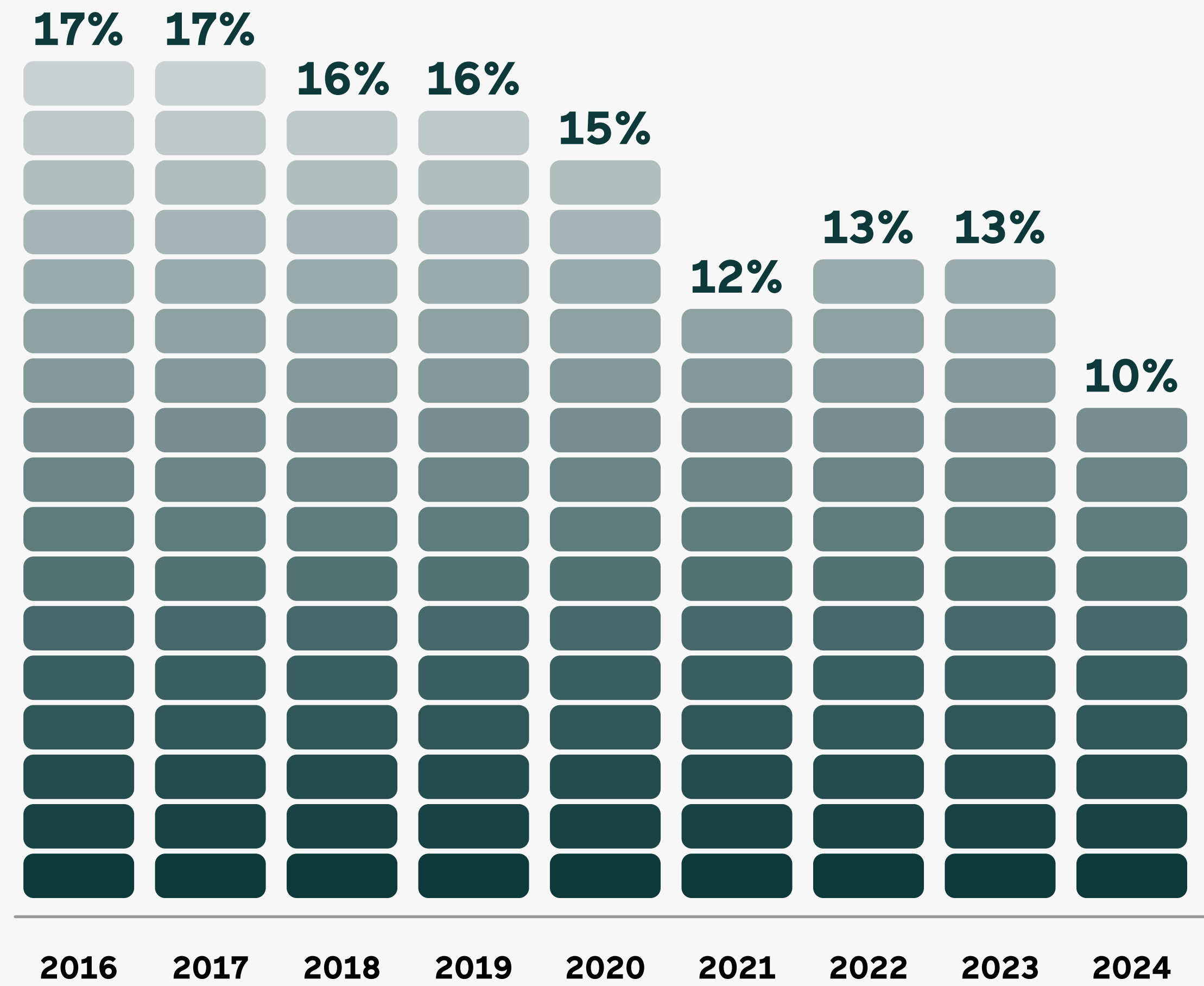


AN ESTIMATED 5.6 MILLION PEOPLE VOLUNTEERED THEIR TIME IN 2024.

One in 10 people said they volunteered for a charity in 2024. This is equivalent to 5.6 million adults, a significant drop from the estimated 7.1 million recorded in 2023. This means that 1.5 million fewer people volunteered in 2024 than had done so the year before.

The decrease occurred across the country and in each age group, but women dropped out of the volunteer force at nearly twice the rate of men.

Figure 4: Proportion of people who volunteered in past 12 months



Base: All respondents. 2016, N=8,137; 2017, N=12,211; 2018, N=13,277; 2019, N=13,499; 2020, N=13,406; 2021, N=13,575; 2022, N=13,140; 2023, N= 13,164; 2024, N=13,459.

£15.4 BILLION

ESTIMATED TOTAL DONATED BY THE PUBLIC IN 2024.

In 2024, we asked respondents to report their charitable giving in a new way, which included prompting respondents to recall the types of donations they had made (eg direct debits, collection tins, raffle tickets, etc.). For each donation type we then collected the amount donated and the cause it was donated to, and we did this at the level of each individual donation. This has given us a more detailed picture of the interaction between cause, amount given, and method of donation than was previously possible.

By asking our question in this way, respondents were prompted about the different ways that people support charities. This has likely led to respondents more accurately recalling their donation behaviour over the previous four weeks. We believe this is likely to be the cause for much of the uplift seen in this year's overall amount.

Although the change in methodology means the total is not directly comparable with previous years, it suggests a continuing trend of a decreasing cohort of donors giving more.

The median donation to charity has increased for the first time in eight years. This could be partly because of the extra prompts that we added to our survey in 2024, helping respondents to more accurately recall their donations. The mean donation has also increased, following the pattern of small incremental uplifts that we have seen every year for some time.

£72

mean amount donated
in past four weeks

£28

median amount donated
in past four weeks

Base: All respondents who donated in the past four weeks and reported their donation amount, N=4,275.



WAYS OF DONATING

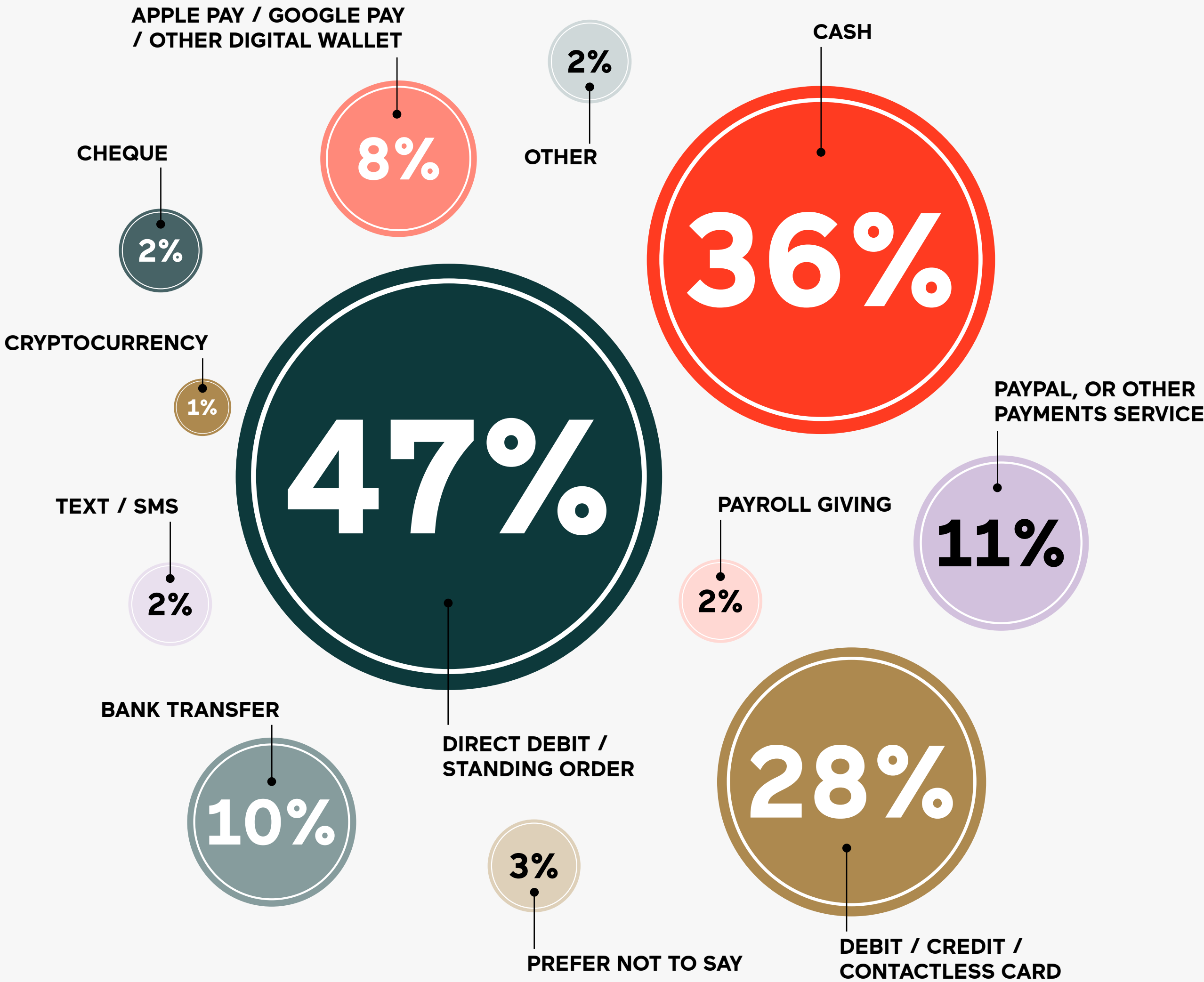
AROUND 3.9 MILLION PEOPLE CANCELLED A REGULAR PAYMENT TO CHARITY LAST YEAR.

In any given month, around 8.2 million people report they donate to charity by direct debit or standing order. At £2.7 billion worth of donations, regular donations like these can be crucial to allow charities to plan more effectively.

In 2024, around 3.9 million people said that they had cancelled a regular payment to charity in the past 12 months, while 3.3 million people increased their direct debit or standing order to charity last year.

Around 2% of people say they use payroll giving, which allows people to give to charity directly from their pay or from their pension before tax. As well as being tax-effective for individuals, donations made through payroll giving provide charities with a regular and dependable source of income.

Figure 5: Payment methods used to make donations



Base: All who donated or sponsored in the past four weeks, aggregated across 2024, N=4,448.

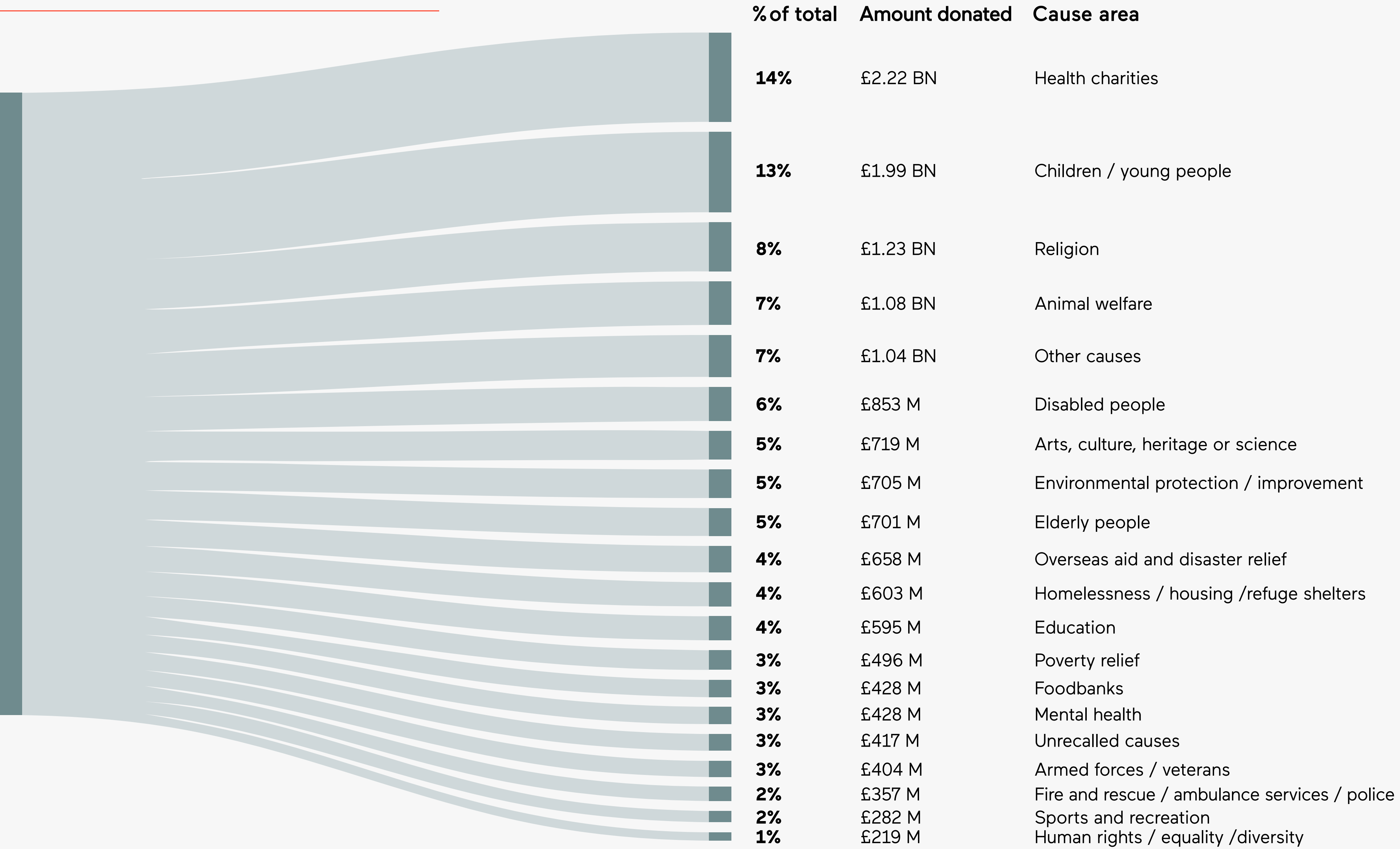
£15.4BN

SHOWN BY
CAUSE AREA

Estimated total
amount donated
to each cause area.

Base: All respondents who
donated in the past four weeks
and reported their donation
amount, N=4,275.

Figure 6: Total £15.4 billion donated



CAUSES SUPPORTED

VOLUNTEERS ARE MOST LIKELY TO GIVE UP THEIR TIME FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE.

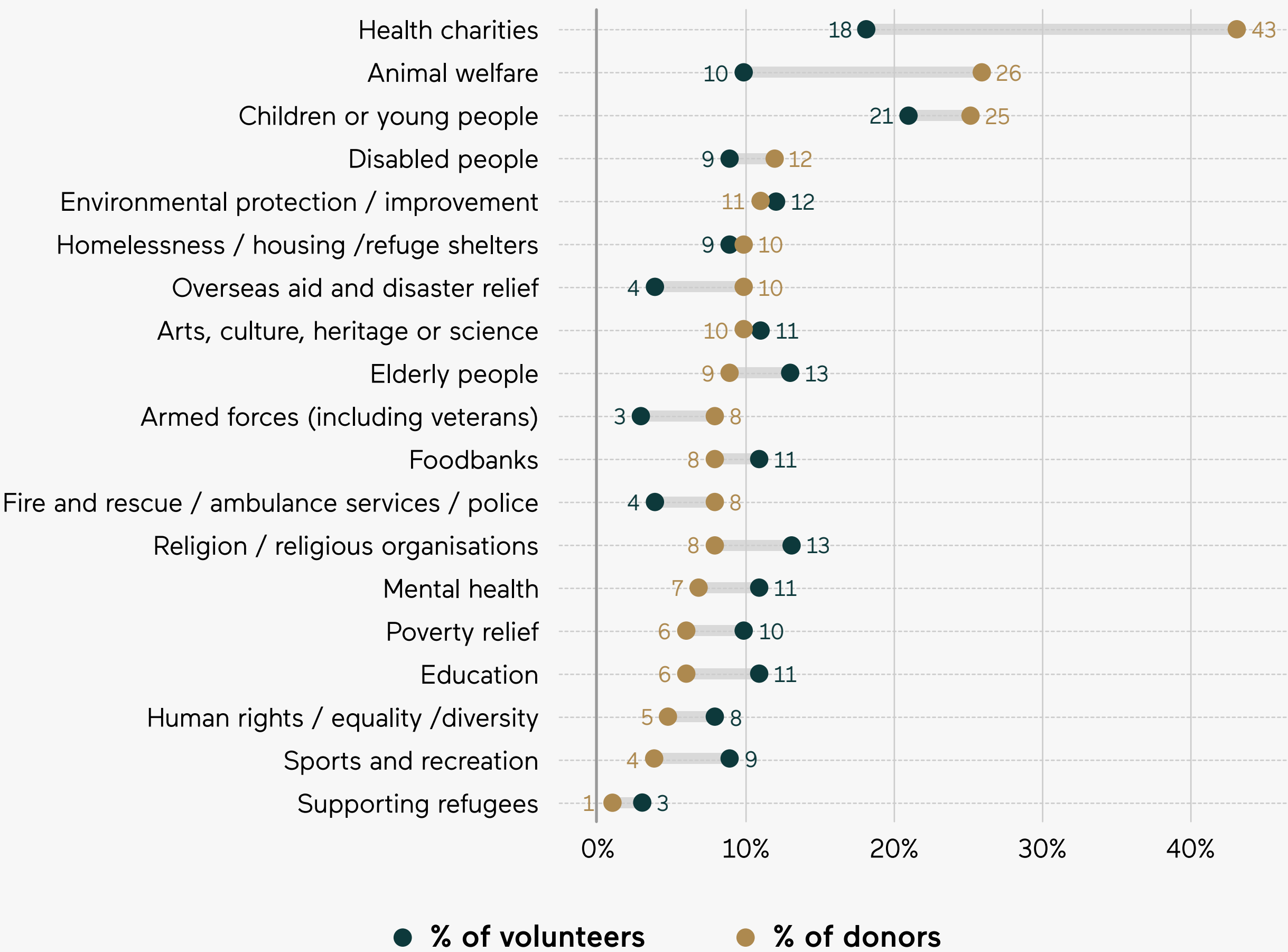
This year, we slightly changed the cause areas, so the top cause area – health charities – includes areas that had previously been separate categories such as hospitals and hospices, medical research and physical health.

Health charities enjoy the broadest support, with more than two in five (43%) donors supporting with gifts of money, and 18% of volunteers supporting with their time.

Animal welfare is the second most popular cause in terms of number of donors, with a similar number supporting these charities as we have reported in previous years. It may have remained the country’s top cause if we had not grouped together health charities under one umbrella.

The most popular cause to volunteer for is children and young people, which is also one of the most popular causes for donations. It will include youth clubs, Girlguiding or Scouts, and these volunteers are often parents of children aged under 18 (34%), or young people themselves (28% of volunteers aged 16-24).

Figure 7: Proportion of donors who gave money vs. proportion of volunteers who gave time



Base: All who donated or sponsored in the past four weeks, aggregated across 2024, N=4,275. 'Other' causes (21% of donors; 11% of volunteers) and 'unrecalled' causes (11% of donors; 1% of volunteers) are not shown.

YOUNGER DONORS

AGED 16-24

Most likely to donate through buying goods (25% of younger donors), fundraising app or website (22%), direct debit / standing order (22%), crowdfunder (19%) and rounding up at the till (19%).

Most likely to donate because they care about the cause (49% of younger donors) and want to help people less fortunate (40%).

More likely than donors over 65 to give because they want to set an example to others (15% vs. 7%) and because their religion encourages it (18% vs. 8%).

Most recent donation was most likely to be prompted by friends or family (17% of younger donors).

Donated an estimated

£1.9BN

to charity in 2024

Young donors base: N=298 for donation methods in the past four weeks; N=593 for reasons for donating in the past 12 months; N=270 for £ billions donated.

OLDER DONORS

AGED 65+

Most likely to donate through direct debit / standing order (56% of older donors), a charity lottery (29%) and buying goods (29%).

Most likely to donate because they care about the cause (62% of older donors) and trust the organisations they donate to (46%).

Most recent donation was most likely to be automated (eg direct debit) (22% of older donors).

More than twice as likely to sponsor someone for charity than young people (22% of older people vs. 10%).

Donated an estimated

£4.5BN

to charity in 2024

Older donors base: N=1,366 for donation methods in the past four weeks; N=2,061 for reasons for donating in the past 12 months; N=1,326 for £ billions donated.

REASONS FOR MOST RECENT DONATION



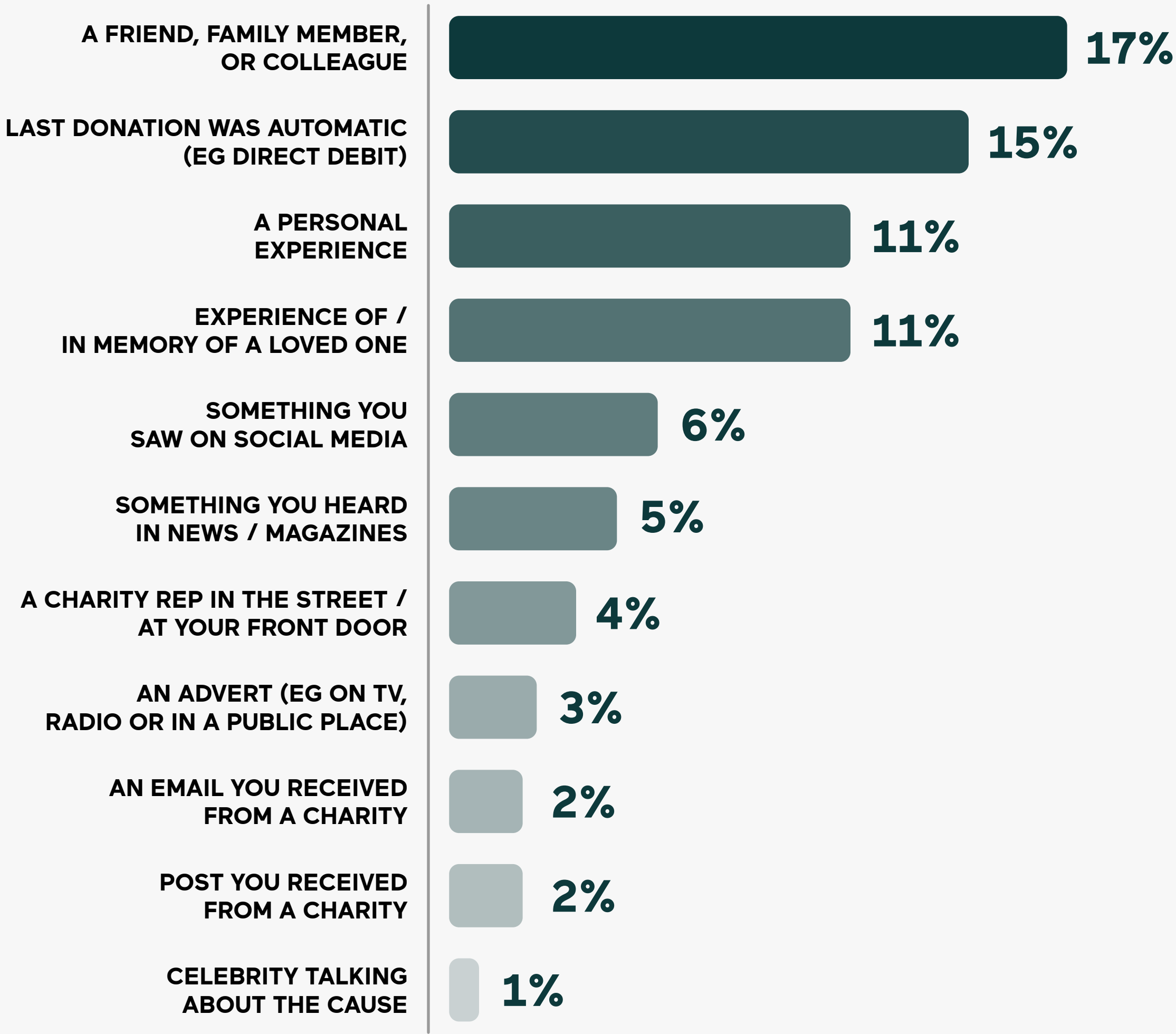
Milton Keynes YMCA

FOR MOST DONORS, THEIR LAST DONATION WAS PROMPTED BY SOMEONE THEY KNOW PERSONALLY.

For one in seven donors (15%) their most recent donation was made automatically (eg by direct debit).

Social media was the driver for only 6% of donors' recent gifts to charity – increasing to 12% of 16- to 24-year-olds – while only 1% said it was because a celebrity or well-known person had highlighted the cause.

Figure 8: Did any of the following prompt your last donation?



Don't know (4%), Other (4%) and none of these (16%) not shown on chart.
Base: All respondents who donated or sponsored in the past 12 months, N=7,514.

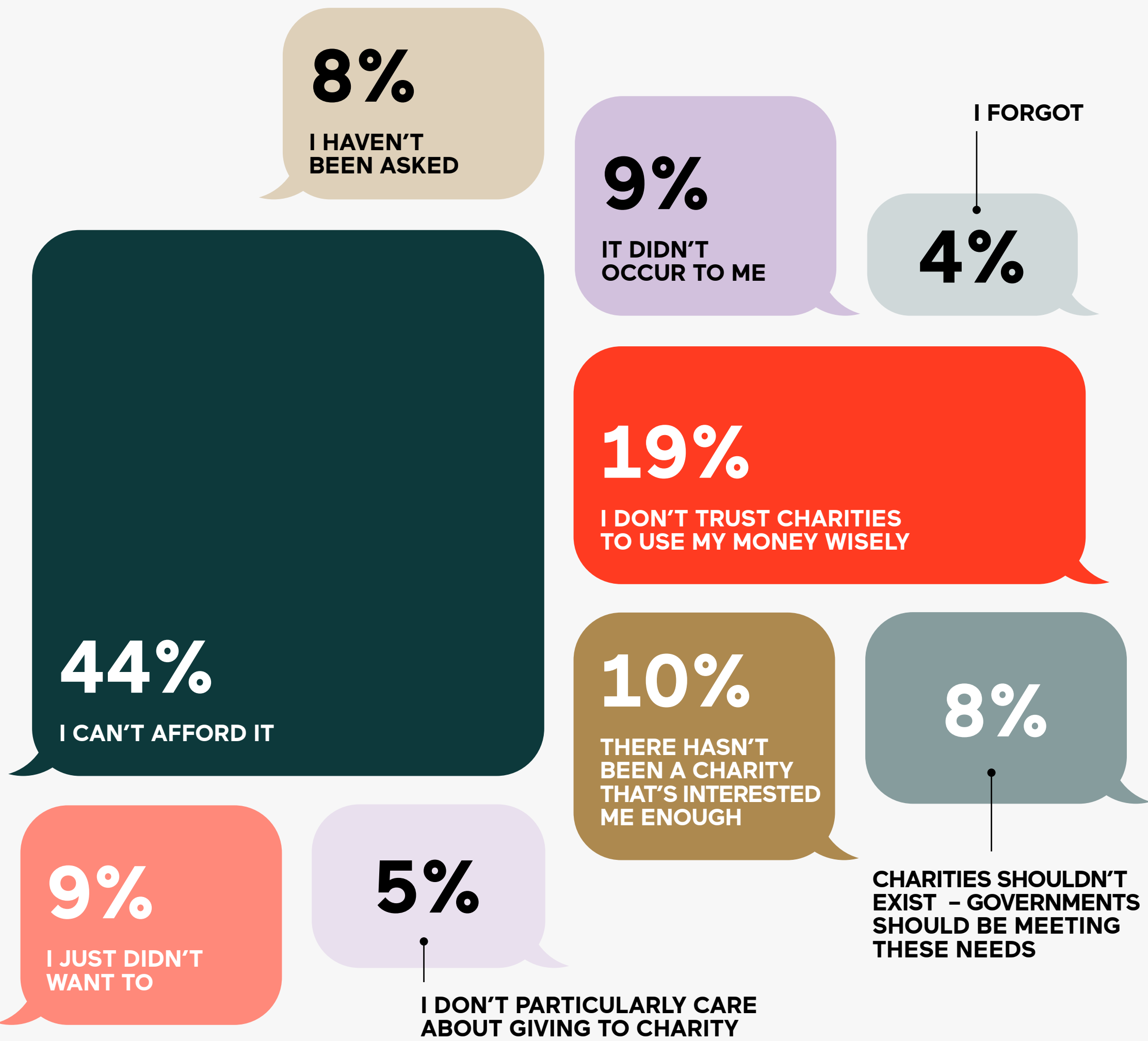
REASONS FOR NOT DONATING

REASONS FOR NOT DONATING INCLUDE AFFORDABILITY, LACK OF TRUST, AND A LACK OF INTEREST.

Across all age groups, the main reason provided for not donating is affordability. However, it was particularly the case among 35- to 54-year-olds, while not trusting charities was a bigger concern for older people (aged 55+), and not being interested was more of an issue among the young.

In total, 29% of people who had not donated gave a reason that indicated a lack of interest in charities, rising to 34% of 16- to 24-year-olds and 38% of 25- to 34-year-olds. This included the answers: “There hasn’t been a charity that’s interested me enough”; “I just didn’t want to”; “It didn’t occur to me”; “I forgot”; and “I don’t particularly care about giving to charity”.

Figure 9: Main reasons for not donating to charity in the last 12 months



Base: All respondents who did not donate in the past 12 months, N=5,945.
Graphic does not show don't know (9%), other (6%) and prefer not to say (7%) answers.

MOST PEOPLE WOULD NOT OBJECT TO FUNDING A CHARITY’S CORE COSTS – EXCEPT FOR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S SALARY.



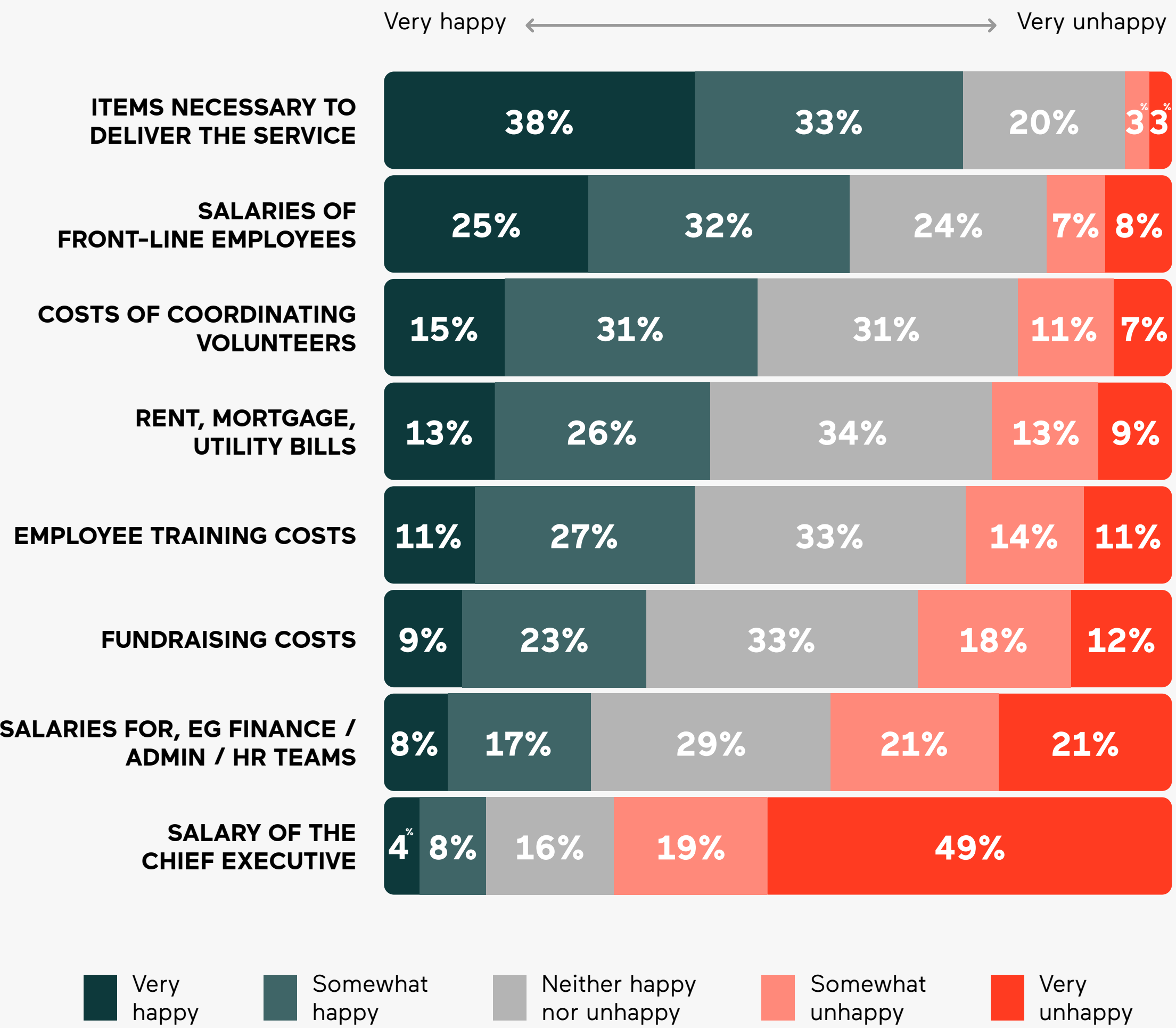
Most people (71%) are happy to contribute to the costs of providing items that are necessary to deliver the service of the charity.

While 57% of people would be happy for their donation to contribute to the salaries of front-line employees, only 25% would be happy to pay for the salary of functions like Finance and HR.

Only 12% would be happy for their donations to go towards a chief executive to run the charity, rising to 22% of 25- to 34-year-olds, and falling to just 5% of the over 65s. Only 21% of respondents who are employed in the charity sector would be happy if their donation went towards a chief executive’s salary.

Core costs for charities are increasing. For example, they are paying more to heat their properties or for transport costs on visits. Charities are under pressure to increase pay for staff that they cannot afford, while also facing national insurance increases. However, unlike businesses, charities cannot pass these costs on to customers.

Figure 10: If you were to give £25 to a charity, how happy or unhappy would you be if your donation was spent contributing towards...?



Base: All respondents, N=9,342.

AROUND A THIRD OF DONORS SUPPORTED AN EMERGENCY APPEAL IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS.

Around a third (31%) of donors said they responded to a charity appeal in the last 12 months – equivalent to 8.9 million people.

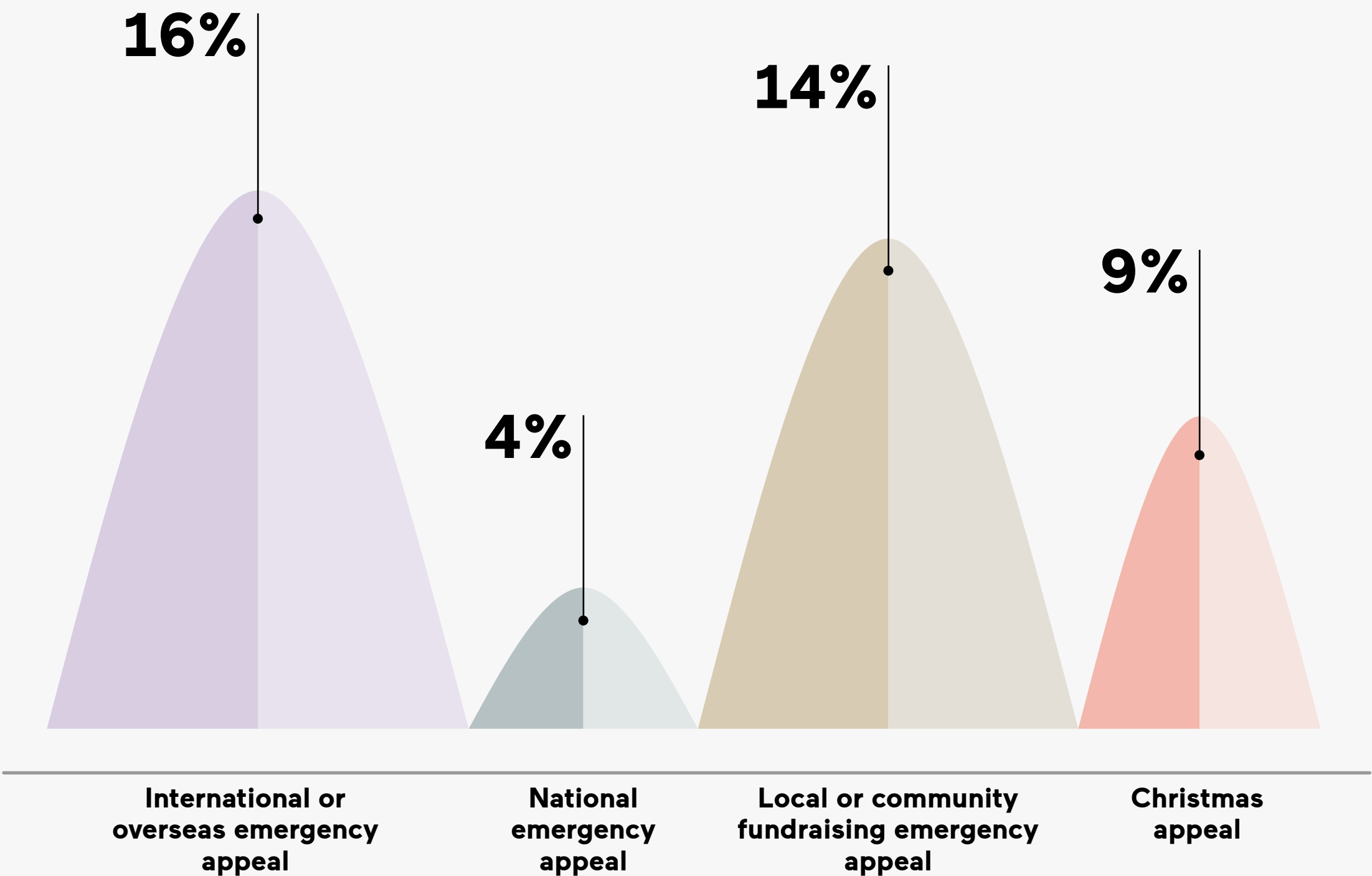
Londoners were the most likely to respond to an appeal overall, particularly international (23%) and national (9%) appeals. International appeals also had the most effect on donors aged between 16 and 24 (23%).

Local campaigns garner the widest support in London and Scotland, as well as among donors who have children under 18-years-old.

Christmas appeals had the highest support in the North East and Northern Ireland, and the lowest support in Yorkshire and the Humber, and the East Midlands.

People who are more optimistic about their financial future are more likely to donate to a charity appeal, regardless of their current income level.

Figure 11: Proportion of donors who gave to different types of appeal in the last 12 months



Base: All donors in the last 12 months; N=6,791.



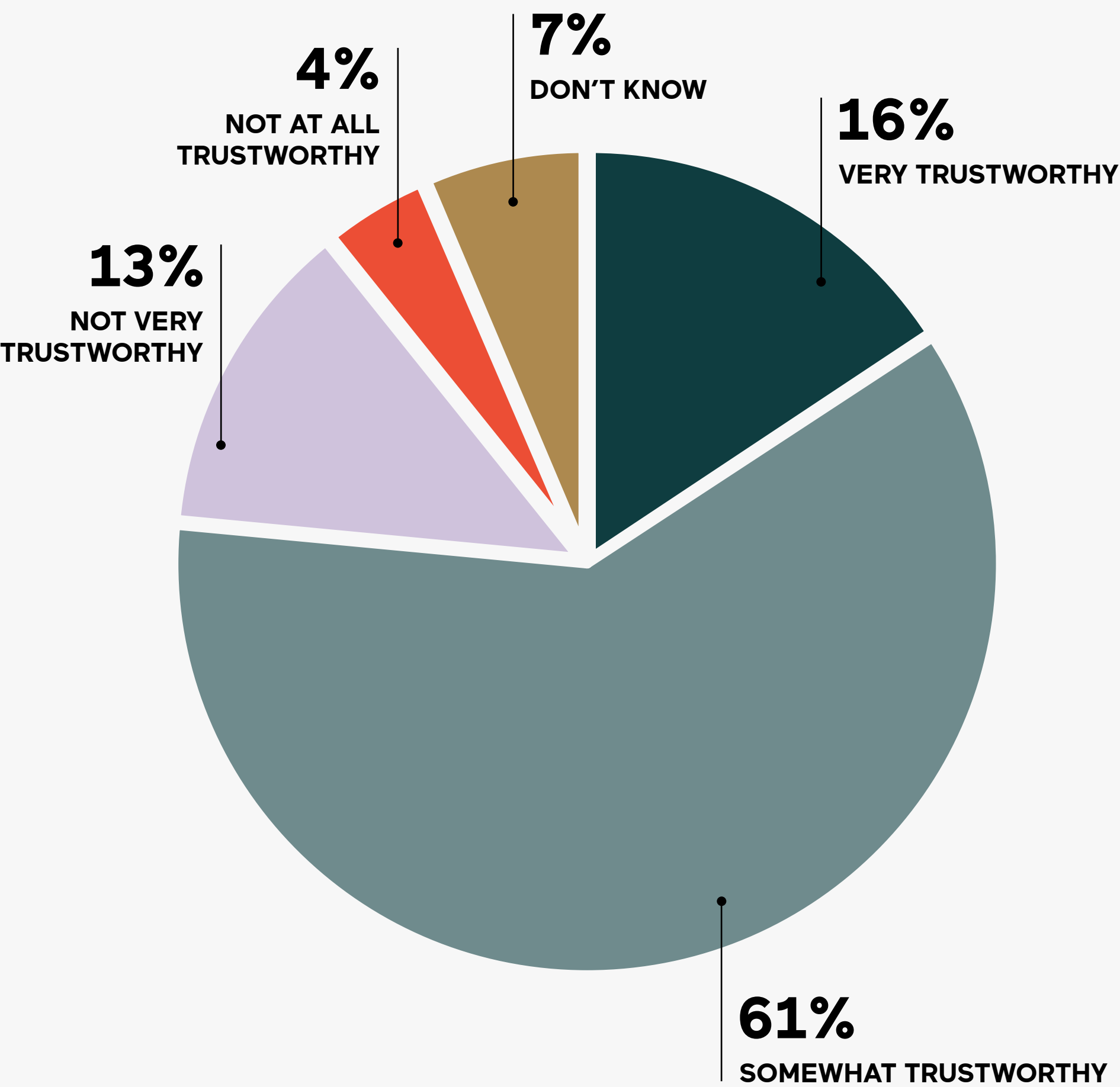
MORE THAN THREE QUARTERS OF PEOPLE THINK CHARITIES ARE TRUSTWORTHY.

Three fifths (61%) of those in our survey think that charities are somewhat trustworthy, and 16% say they are very trustworthy. Londoners are more likely than average to have a very positive perception – 20% think charities are ‘very trustworthy’.

Those who work in the third sector have the highest levels of trust, while those in the private sector have the lowest. Public sector employees sit between the two.

Even among those who say charities are generally trustworthy, only 15% would be happy if their donation went towards the salary of a charity chief executive (compared to 12% on average).

Figure 12: Public perception of the trustworthiness of most charities (% of people aged 16+)



Base: All respondents; N=13,459.

TYPE OF CHARITY SUPPORTED

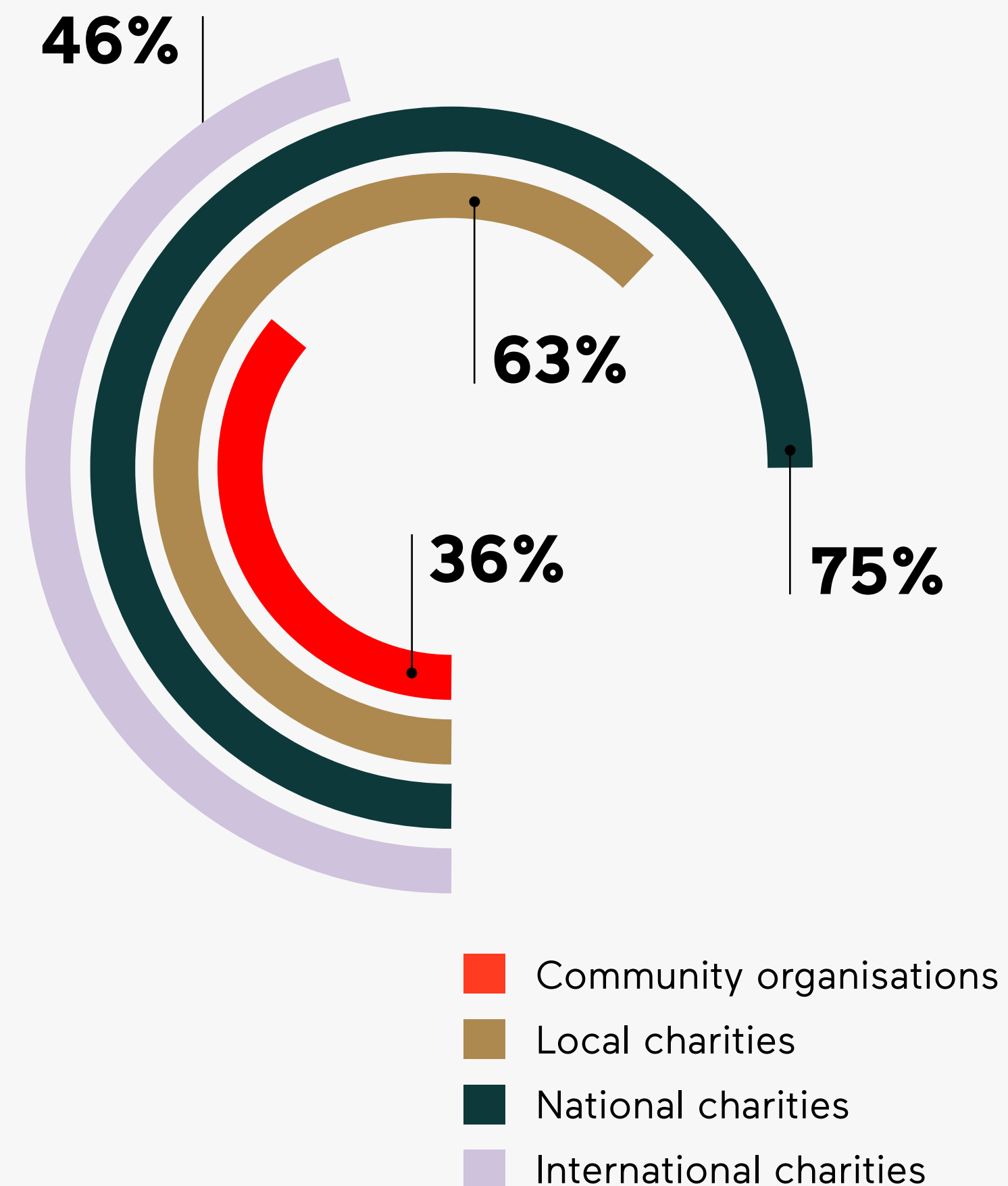
NATIONAL CHARITIES RECEIVE THE BIGGEST PROPORTION OF DONATIONS.

Three quarters (75%) of donors said they gave at least some of their donations to national charities in the past 12 months, with a third (35%) saying they made all, or most, of their donations to these causes. This is compared to 63% who donated at least something to local charities, and under a quarter (22%) who said they gave all or most of it to local causes.

Only around a third (36%) of donors gave any money to local community organisations, like a sports club, Parent Teacher Association or local fête group.

In fact, donors are as likely to give to an international charity – either foreign, or UK registered charity with an international focus – as they are to a local community organisation.

Figure 13: Percentage of donors who gave at least some of their donations to each charity type



Base: All who donated or sponsored in the past 12 months, N=7,514.

'International charities' is a net of respondents who answered yes to donating to either 'An internationally-registered charity working elsewhere in the world' and/or 'Charities that are registered in the UK but that have an international focus'.



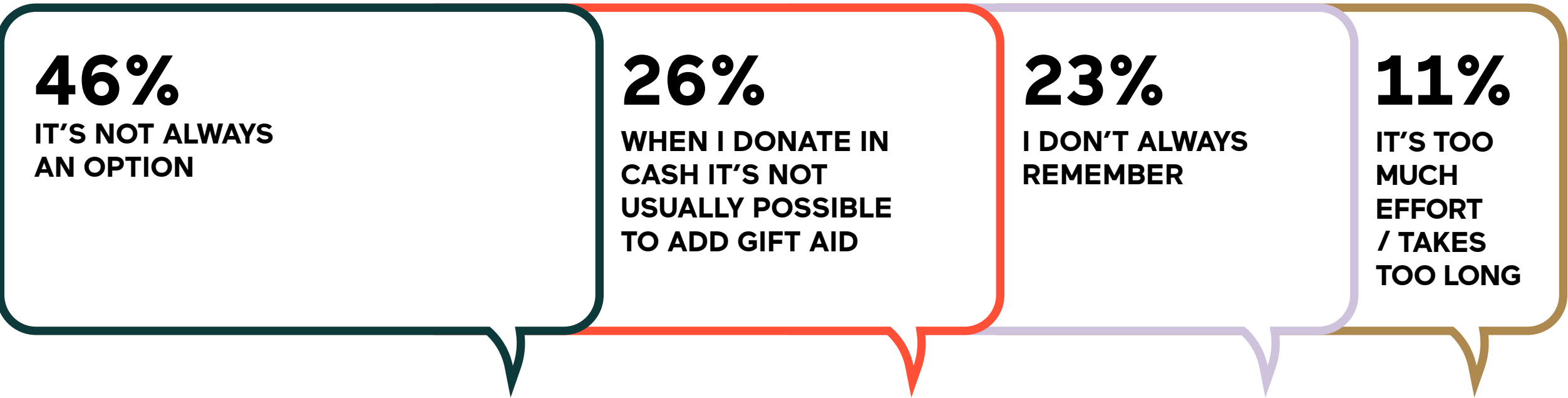
WHILE MOST DONORS ARE AWARE OF GIFT AID, MANY YOUNGER PEOPLE DO NOT UNDERSTAND HOW IT WORKS.

More than three quarters of donors say they ‘always’ or ‘sometimes’ add Gift Aid to their donations. Among donors who do not use it, nearly half (46%) say this is because they are not taxpayers and, therefore, not eligible.

Among young donors, however, a quarter (24%) have either never heard of it, do not know anything about it, or do not understand how it works.

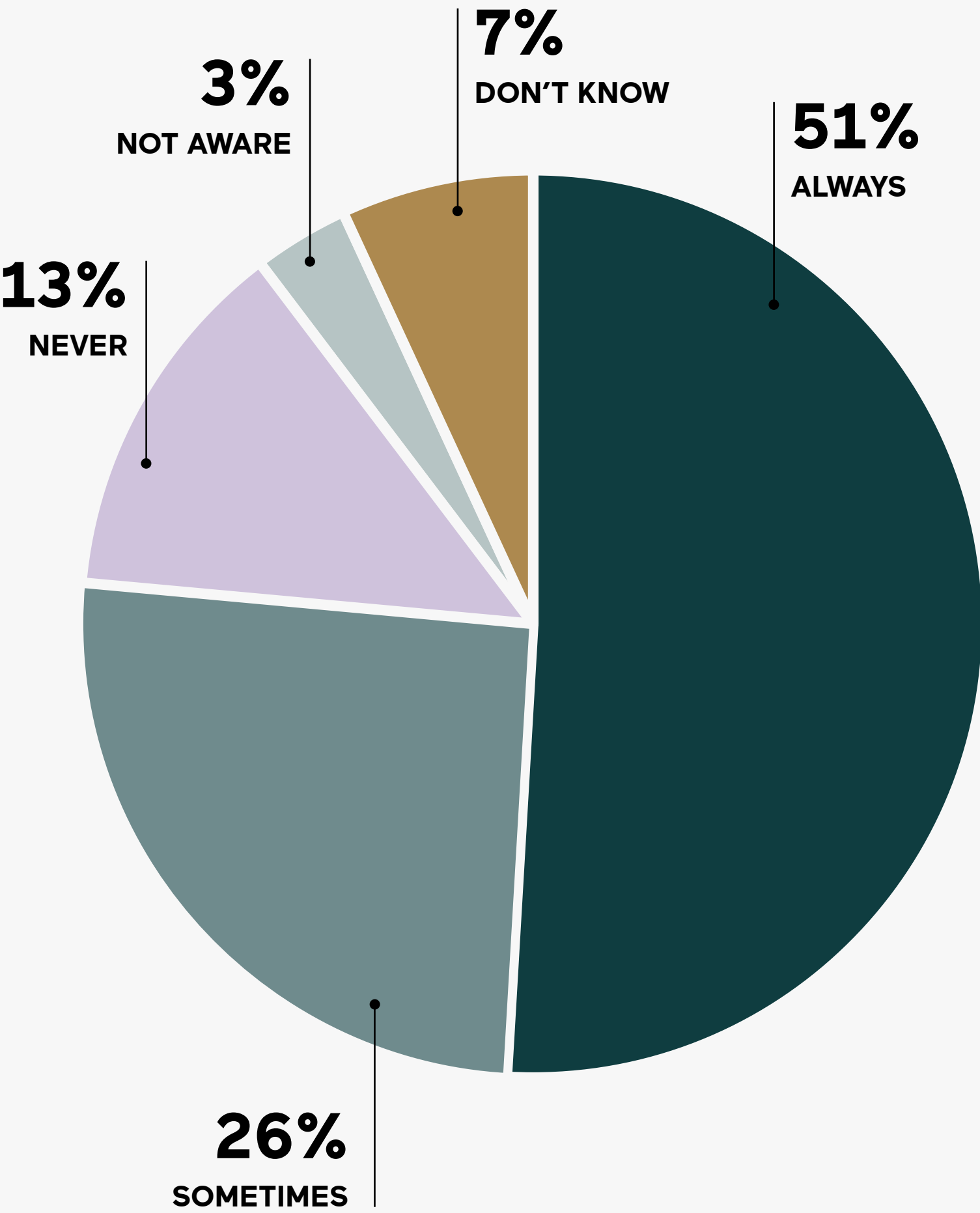
Only 12% of people are against tax relief on donations in principle. Most people, whether donors or not, think that charities rely on Gift Aid (77%) and that people should be encouraged to add Gift Aid to their donations where appropriate (79%).

Figure 14: Reasons for only using Gift Aid ‘sometimes’



Base: All donors who use Gift Aid 'sometimes'; N=1,918.

Figure 15: Percentage of donors adding Gift Aid in the past 12 months



Base: All who donated or sponsored in the past 12 months; N=7,514.

RECOMMENDATIONS – FOR CHARITIES

1.

Communicate the importance of Gift Aid to donors and the benefits of regular donations to help your charity to plan for the long term.

2.

Tell stories about your work and the difference donations can make to build trust in your organisation and your ability to deliver impact.

3.

Consider how you can channel the social interests of young people into engagement for your organisation.

4.

Communicate how unrestricted funding helps your charity to do its work and how this funds your service delivery.

5.

Regularly review your fundraising strategy, taking into account market trends, to ensure it is fit for purpose and that you are making the most of different opportunities.



RECOMMENDATIONS – FOR DONORS

1.

Consider increasing your donations in line with inflation if you can, for instance, topping up your direct debits or payroll giving contribution if you have not changed them for a few years.

2.

Make your donation unrestricted to give charities the confidence to continue delivering their life-changing services.

4.

Consider how to involve younger people in your charitable giving. Parents and grandparents can embed a habit by setting an example for younger members of the family.

5.

Tick the box for Gift Aid, if you are eligible, to boost the value of your giving at no increased cost to you.

3.

Speak to friends and family about your giving – sharing your story can encourage others to give.



RECOMMENDATIONS – FOR POLICYMAKERS

To renew a culture of giving across the UK, the Government should deliver a national strategy for philanthropy and charitable giving, to support charities as they deliver their life-changing work. This should include:

1.

A strong presence for philanthropy and giving throughout government to join up different initiatives. A philanthropy champion in the heart of government could spearhead this work.

2.

Improving Gift Aid processes for donors and charities to make them easier to use, and increasing the understanding of Gift Aid to make sure eligible donors claim what they are entitled to.

3.

Recognising and promoting the crucial role that philanthropy plays in society and how it supports organisations to drive forward positive change.



Milton Keynes Snap

METHOD

CAF has been producing the UK Giving report since 2004 and has been tracking giving in the UK for several decades. Over time, there have been changes to how the study is conducted in terms of approach and questions asked. CAF has run the UK Giving survey in its current form since 2016.

The survey is conducted online and collects responses from around a thousand people each month. This monthly approach enables us to capture changes in behaviour and attitudes at a granular level, for instance, the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on charitable giving.

In this report, findings for the calendar year 2024 are based on the responses of 13,459 individuals, unless otherwise indicated. The sample is constructed in such a way that it is nationally representative of the UK adults aged 16+ in terms of respondents' sex, age, region/nation and social grade. All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc.



StreetScene

ABOUT CAF

The Charities Aid Foundation exists to accelerate progress in society towards a fair and sustainable future for all. Over the last 100 years, we have led the way in developing innovative approaches to giving. Annually, we distribute over £1 billion to social purpose organisations around the globe.

As a leading charity operating in the UK, US and Canada, CAF works at the centre of the giving world. We partner with corporate and individual donors to enable them to give more effectively, strategically and impactfully. This includes connecting them to charities globally and providing access to our in-depth sector knowledge, governance

expertise and innovative giving solutions. We help charities to strengthen their resilience and do more of their lifechanging work, through strategic advisory services from our Impact Accelerator, tools to support charities' fundraising activities, and charity financial services from CAF Bank Limited and CAF Financial Solutions Limited. Using our research, policy and campaigns work, we understand and influence the wider environment for charities and donors.

TOGETHER, WE GIVE MORE.

Registered charity number 268369

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