

WORLD GIVING REPORT

GIVING IN GERMANY

2025

MAECENATA FOUNDATION

CAF
Charities Aid Foundation

CONTENTS

01.	INTRODUCTION	4
	Welcome	5
	About us	6
	Our methodology	7
02.	THE GLOBAL CONTEXT	8
	How Germany compares on key indicators of generosity	9
03.	ASPECTS OF GENEROSITY	11
	Giving money away	12
	Volunteering	21
	Helping people	24
04.	PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF CIVIL SOCIETY	25
	On charities	26
	On the Government	29

An aerial photograph of a marathon starting line. A massive, dense crowd of runners, many wearing colorful athletic gear, is gathered on a wide asphalt road. The crowd is organized into lanes, with some runners already in motion. The road is flanked by green grass and trees. In the background, a small building with a red roof and a flagpole are visible. The overall scene is one of a large-scale public event.

01 INTRODUCTION

Welcome

This report sheds light on public attitudes and behaviours towards giving and charity in Germany. It is the result of our partnership with the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF), and part of the [World Giving Report 2025 \(WGR\)](#).

The WGR 2025 represents a unique global collaboration between the Charities Aid Foundation, Maecenata Foundation, and leading social purpose organisations to survey over 55,000 people across 101 countries, that enables us to understand each country's giving landscape in more detail, as well as how each country, Germany in this case, compares internationally.

With the headquarters of many international charities and foundations in Europe, it's often easy to assume a level of generosity across the continent. The following results demonstrate clearly that as Europeans we're not as generous as we could be – every single other continent gives more as a proportion of income.

The results of this report are encouraging as many respondents from Germany are aware of the importance of charities for society overall. This forms a good basis for minimising a lack of trust and convincing more people in Germany to support the work of charities with donations or voluntary work. With generally high-quality charity infrastructures and governance in Germany, we need to find new ways to encourage donors to give more of their income to these organisations.



ANSGAR GESSNER
Executive Director,
Maecenata Foundation

“We need to find new ways to encourage donors to give more of their income to charities.”

About us

Maecenata Foundation

The Maecenata Foundation is an independent, non-profit foundation whose aim is to strengthen and promote civil society as a basic condition for an open and democratic society. Its work is based on the conviction that civic engagement plays a central role in social equity and cohesion, intercultural dialogue and the realisation of democratic values.

The Maecenata Foundation pursues its goals through four programmes: The Maecenata Institute is a non-university research institution. It investigates topics such as commitment and the connection between democracy and civil society. The Tocqueville Forum translates the foundation's scientific research into political communication. The Forum organises public and political debates on the topics of civil society, charitable work, philanthropy and foundations.

With Transnational Giving, the foundation facilitates cross-border donations – tax-deductible, legally secure and simple. Since its inception, Maecenata Foundation successfully facilitated over 200 million euros in donations. The MENA Study Centre focuses on civil society developments in West Asia/Middle East North Africa (MENA) and the Islamic region.

For more information, visit www.maecenata.eu.

CAF

The Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) 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 social purpose organisations to strengthen their resilience and do more of their life changing 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.

The World Giving Report (WGR) is a survey that captures the public's attitudes and behaviours around giving in 101 countries around the world.

- Access our global insights hub at: www.worldgivingreport.org
- This report is one of over 20 country-specific giving reports that uses the WGR data and is produced by CAF in partnership with leading social purpose organisations around the world.

Later this year, we are also publishing:

- Insights on the world charity landscape from partner-led surveys of social purpose organisations in over 20 countries (September).
- Country-specific charity insights reports (winter).

Our Methodology

The results described in this report were collected as part of the World Giving Report survey in January 2025.

All fieldwork was conducted online by our partners, Focaldata. The data was weighted, post-hoc to be representative of the population. All sample sizes are specified throughout the report, where relevant.

A note on 'Charity'

Across the report, we use the words 'charity' and 'charities' to represent any organisation that works to try and improve issues that are affecting individuals, communities, animals or the natural environment, and society as a whole.

In doing so, we recognise that these terms and their definitions differ around the world, with this type of organisation also described as: non-governmental organisations (NGOs), non-profit organisations (NPOs), community organisations, social purpose organisations, associations and other names.

You can find further details about our methodology at www.worldgivingreport.org



An aerial photograph of a crowded beach. The sand is a light tan color, and the water is a murky greenish-brown. Numerous people are scattered across the beach and in the shallow water. Many colorful surfboards are stuck upright in the sand, creating a dense pattern of bright colors like blue, yellow, red, and green. The ocean waves are breaking in the distance, creating white foam. A red banner with white text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

02 THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

Giving money and giving time: Worldwide and within the continent.

Given the stagnation of economic conditions and increased inflation in recent years, Germany's rather average performance in terms of monetary donations and the low percentage of salary donations is not surprising.

However, the level of volunteering is in line with the European average.

In addition, other research shows that young people, in particular, are becoming increasingly involved in informal volunteering¹, which is often not collected in the data.

% of people who donated money in 2024

Lowest score:

Japan
16%



49%



59%

Global average

64%

Highest score

Nigeria
89%

Average % of income donated

Lowest score:

Japan
0.16%



0.39%



0.64%

1.04%

Highest score

Nigeria
2.83%

% of people who volunteered in 2024

Lowest score:

South Korea
10%



18%



19%

26%

Highest score

Sudan
57%

Average hours volunteered, per person, in 2024

Lowest score:

Azerbaijan
2.8



6.4



7.1

8.9

Highest score

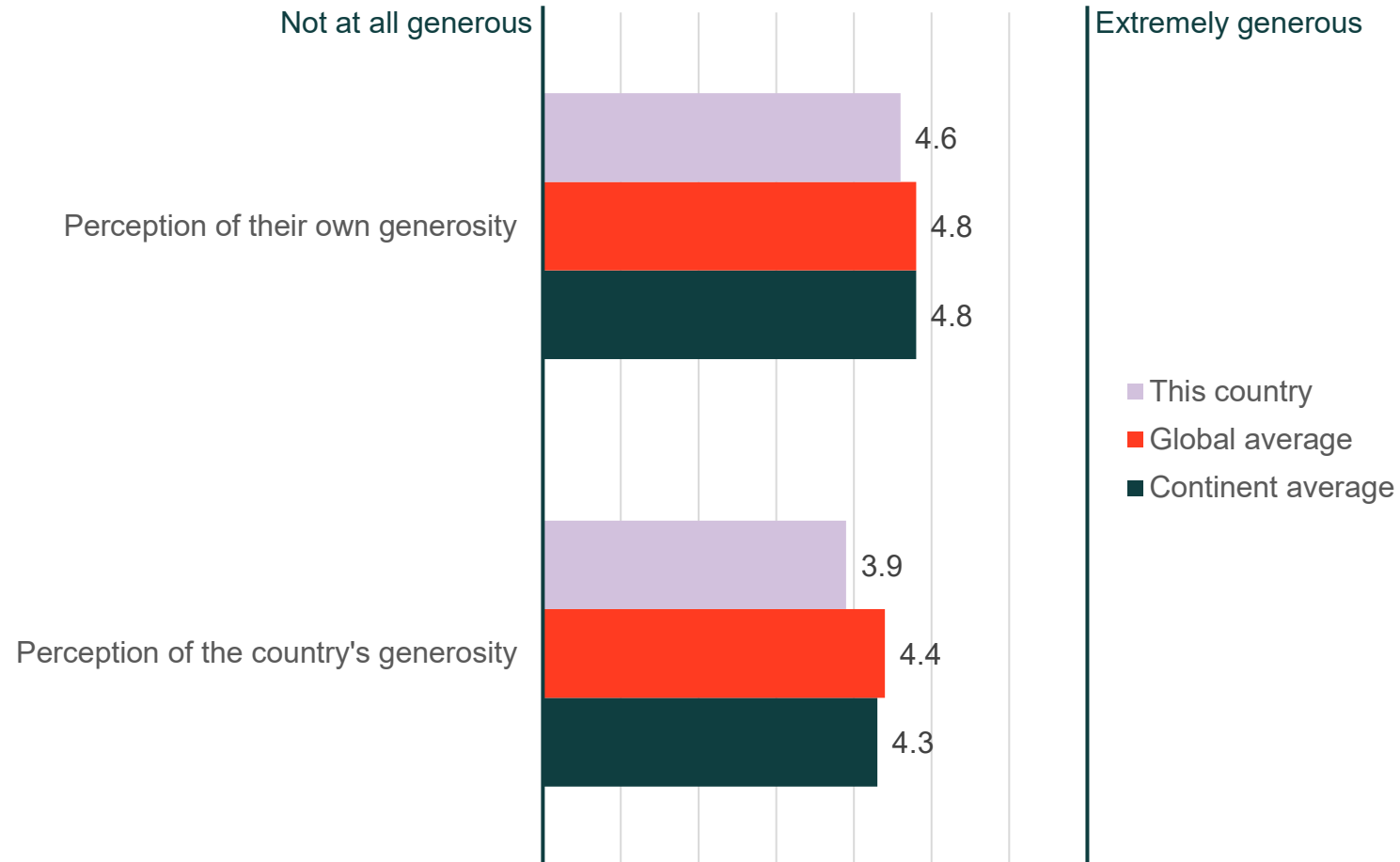
Qatar
27.5

¹ Briefing_Jugendstil_final.pdf

Perceptions of our own generosity.

While generosity of donations in Germany has increased in recent years, it has not yet been widely recognised by the general public or the wider population ¹.

However, while Germans rate the country's generosity a little lower than average, this perception is quite accurate.



Germany ranks 89th out of 101 countries for how generous we think we are.

We are 100th in terms of the proportion of income we donate.

¹ Spendenstatistik - DZI

An aerial photograph of a community event on a concrete basketball court. A large group of people, mostly wearing blue shirts, are arranged in a circular formation in the center of the court. To the left and right of the circle are two white pop-up tents. The left tent has a basketball hoop and backboard attached to its side. The right tent also has a basketball hoop and backboard. Various items like chairs, bags, and boxes are scattered around the court. The court has yellow and red painted areas. A red banner with white text is overlaid across the middle of the image.

03 ASPECTS OF GENEROSITY

The proportion of people who give money in different ways.

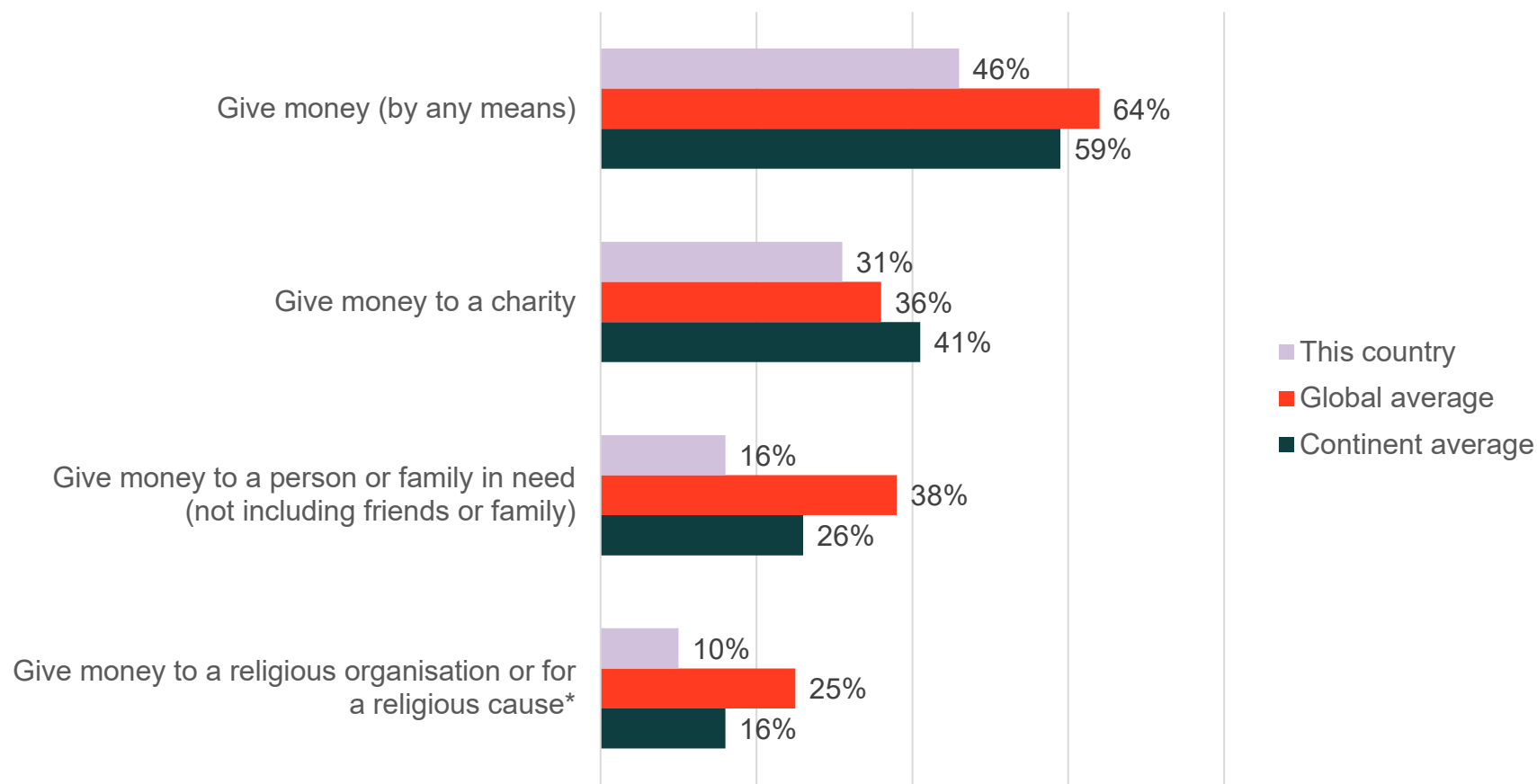
In continental and global comparisons, Germany's donation behaviour seems to be below average.

The relatively low levels of donating directly to those in need could be attributed to the country's well-developed social security welfare system and diverse network of charities.

The low proportion of donations to religious organisations could be explained by the collection of church tax in Germany, which is automatically deducted from salaries.

Most taxpayers thus give a percentage to these organisations each month but may not perceive this as a donation.

Q: During 2024, did you do any of the following? (All, n = 998)



*The full answer code was worded, 'Give money to a religious organisation or for a religious cause' (for example: at church, through zakat, tithing, ma'aser or daana, etc.). This includes any money you give voluntarily, even if it is collected by your government'.

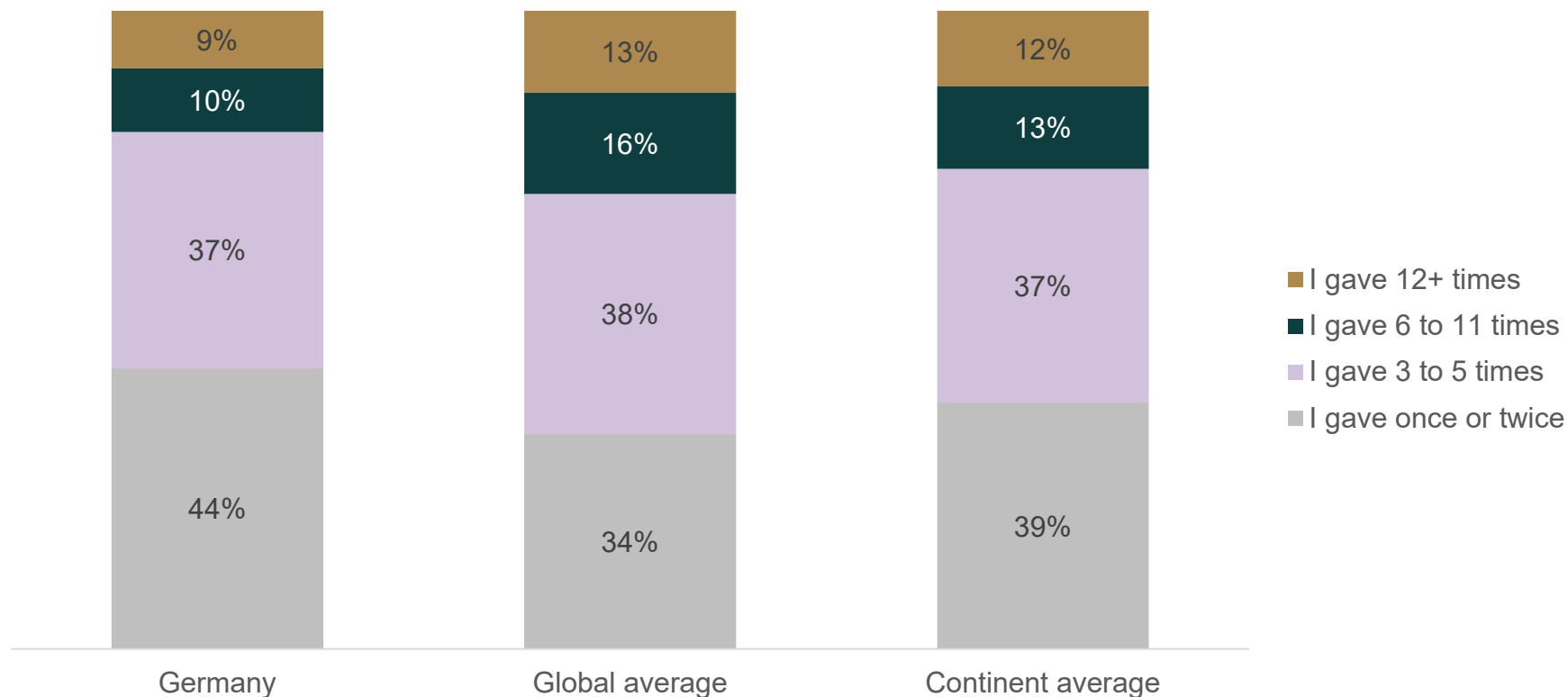
How frequently people gave.

A small majority of respondents who donated tended to do so several times last year, while a small minority tended to donate once or twice.

However, it should be noted that frequency does not necessarily reflect the value of donations, and every donation is associated with costs.

Increasing the frequency of donations, especially for small amounts, can sometimes be detrimental to the charities receiving them.

Q: How often did you give money away in 2024, either to charity, a person or family in need, or to a religious organisation? (People who had given money, n = 456)

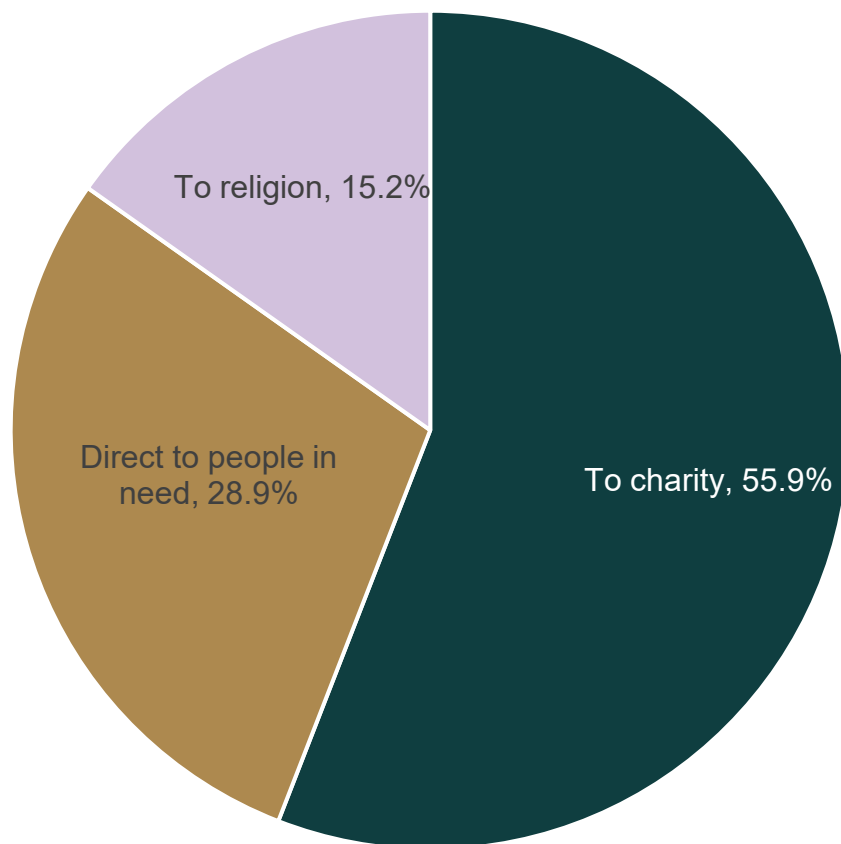


Share of donations.

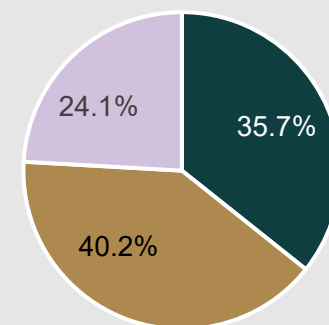
Given the welfare system and the collection of church tax in Germany, it is unsurprising that, compared to the global and continental averages, a majority of respondents from Germany donate to charities rather than to religious institutions or directly to people in need.

Moreover, both the Protestant and Catholic Churches have charities and international aid organisations to which Germans may donate, while perceiving donations to go either to charities or to religion.

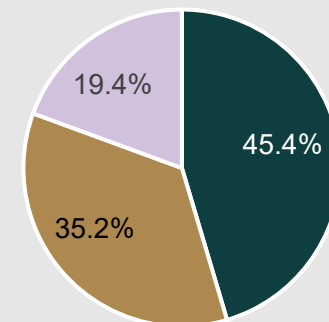
The share of the value of all donations made in 2024, across the three different routes. *(People who had given money, n = 456)*



Global average



Continent average



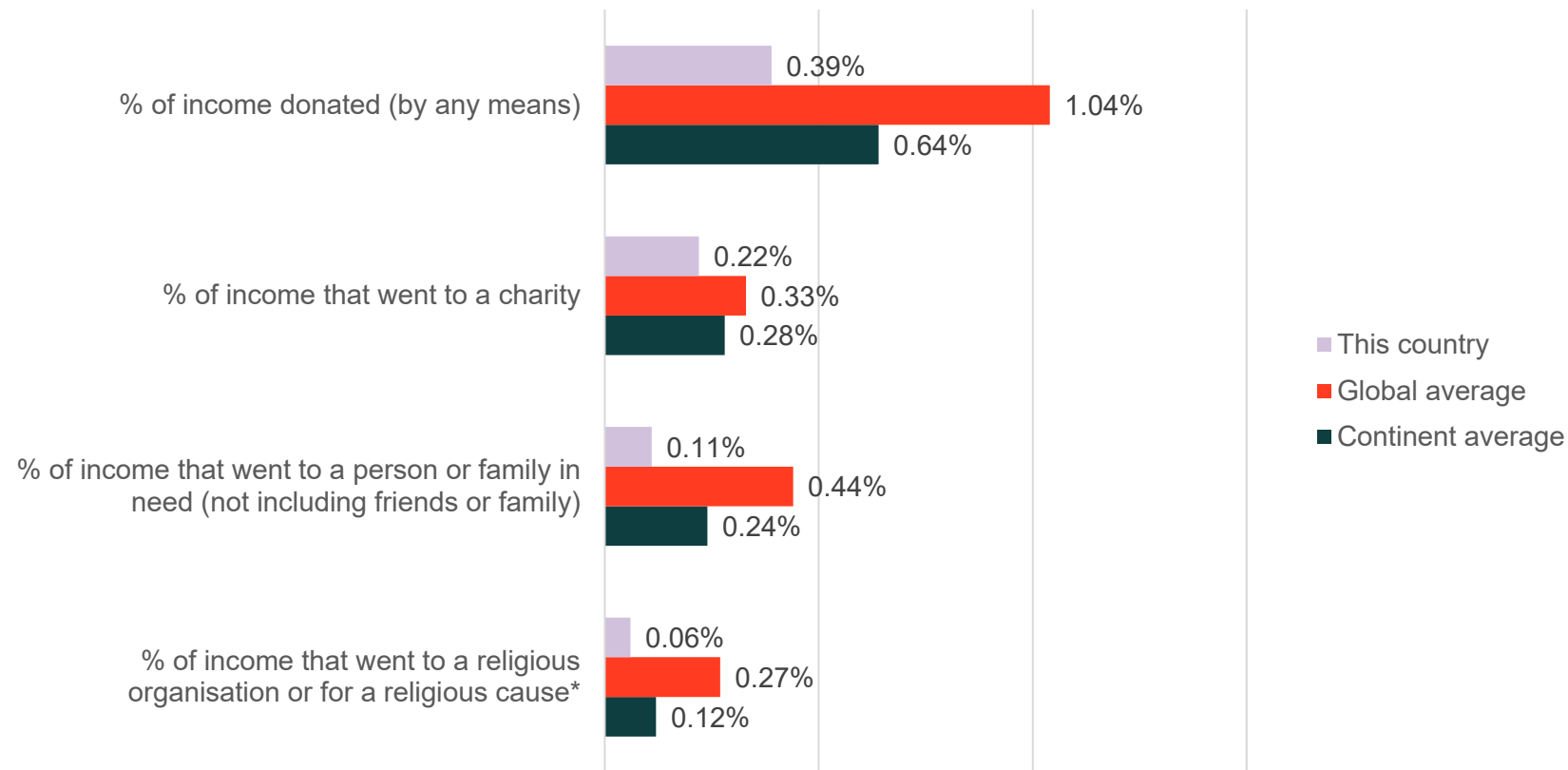
Donations as a proportion of income.

The average proportion of income people gave through each of the three donation routes is considerably lower among respondents from Germany than the global and continental average.

While the difference is less pronounced when comparing donations to charities, it is much more significant when comparing donations to religious organisations and directly to people in need.

As previously highlighted, this is likely explained by Germany's social security and welfare system and government church tax collection.

The average proportion of income people gave to each of the three donation routes, and overall. (All, including those donating zero, $n = 998$).



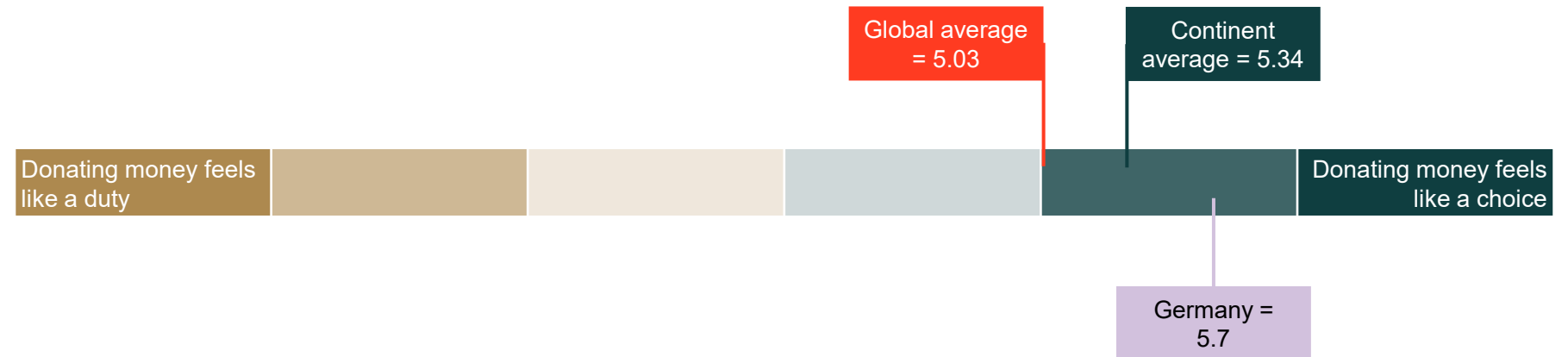
*The full answer code was worded, 'Give money to a religious organisation or for a religious cause, (for example, at church, through zakat, tithing, ma'aser or daana, etc.). This includes any money you give voluntarily, even if it is collected by your government'.

How people feel about giving money.

In Germany, donating money is seen as an intrinsic, free decision.

This may explain why it has lower levels of giving than those found elsewhere, since respondents do not consider donating to be their duty.

The average score when people were asked how donating money feels.
(People who had given money, $n = 456$).



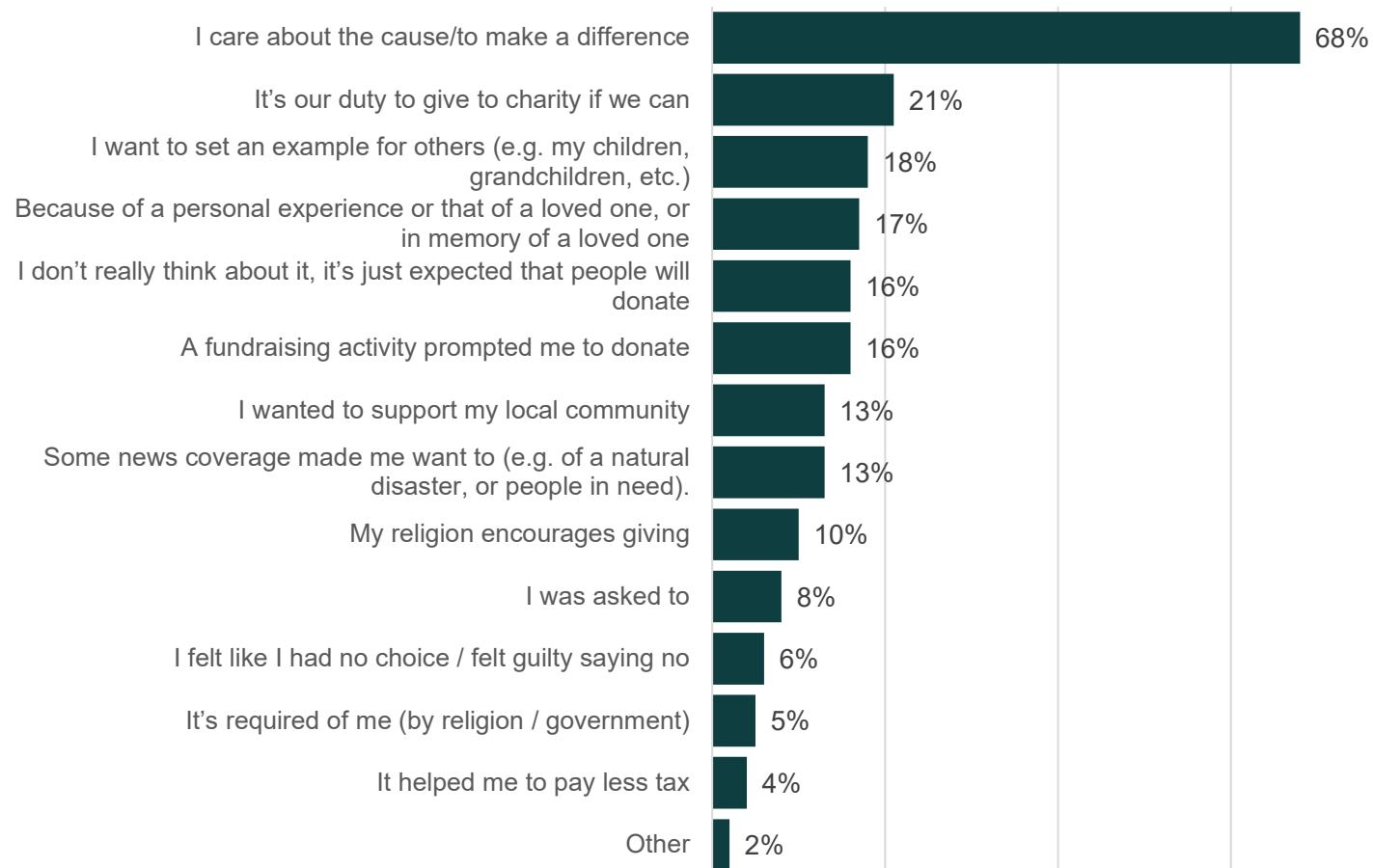
Reasons for giving money.

These results support the previous assumption that the majority of respondents from Germany see donating as voluntary, and they primarily donate because they want to support a cause that is important to them.

In global and continental comparisons, German donors deviate most clearly on the reason, 'my religion encourages me'.

This confirms the differing perception in Germany of the less common practice of donating to religious organisations.

Which of the following, if any, are reasons that you gave away money in 2024?
(People who had given money, n = 456).



Global top 3

1. I care about the cause/to make a difference (65%)
2. It's our duty to give to charity if we can (31%)
3. My religion encourages it (29%)

Continental top 3

1. I care about the cause/to make a difference (64%)
2. It's our duty to give if we can (30%)
3. I want to set an example for others (23%)

Reasons for not giving money.

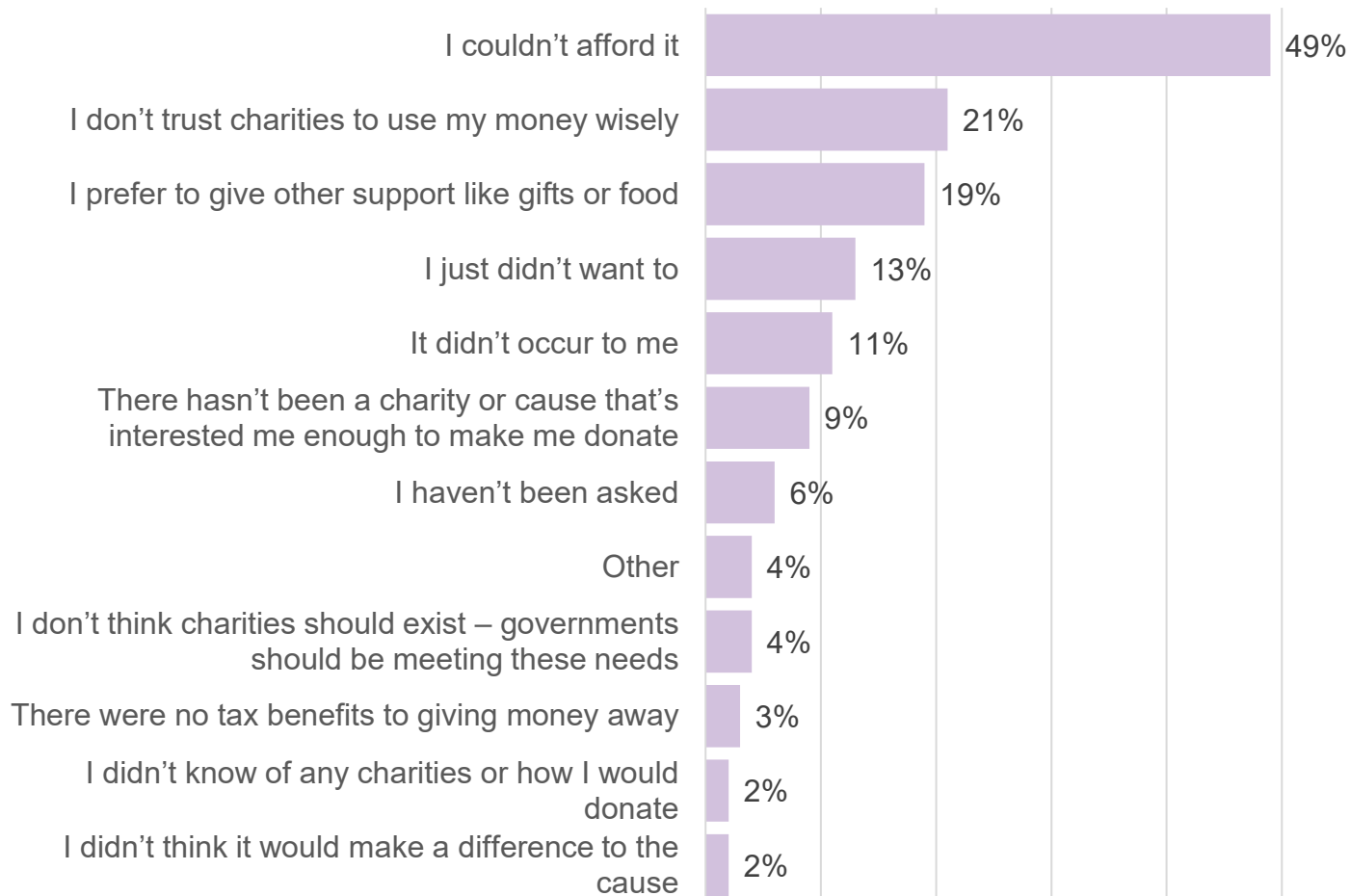
Of those surveyed in Germany who did not donate in 2024, almost half stated that they could not afford to do so.

This shows that, among other things, high inflation in Germany in recent years has likely influenced donation behaviour.

Around a fifth of respondents indicated a lack of trust and / or preferring to give other types of support (like gifts or food).

Overall, the results highlight the significant potential for fundraising professionalisation in Germany.

What would you say are the main reasons that you did not give money away in 2024? (People who had not given money, n = 542).



Global top 3

1. I couldn't afford it (40%)
2. I prefer to give other support like gifts or food (20%)
3. I don't trust charities to use my money wisely (14%)

Continental top 3

1. I couldn't afford it (43%)
2. I don't trust charities to use my money wisely (21%)
3. I prefer to give other support like gifts or food (19%)

What would increase donations?

The results make it clear that charities could theoretically encourage respondents in Germany to donate more by being more transparent and communicating more clearly how donations are used.

However, it remains to be seen whether this would actually lead to an increase in donations, as this depends primarily on how respondents assess their financial situation.

The top three reasons that would make the respondent likely to give more money, goods or time to charities in 2025. (All, $n = 998$)

44%

Having more money myself

32%

Knowing more about how my money would be spent

24%

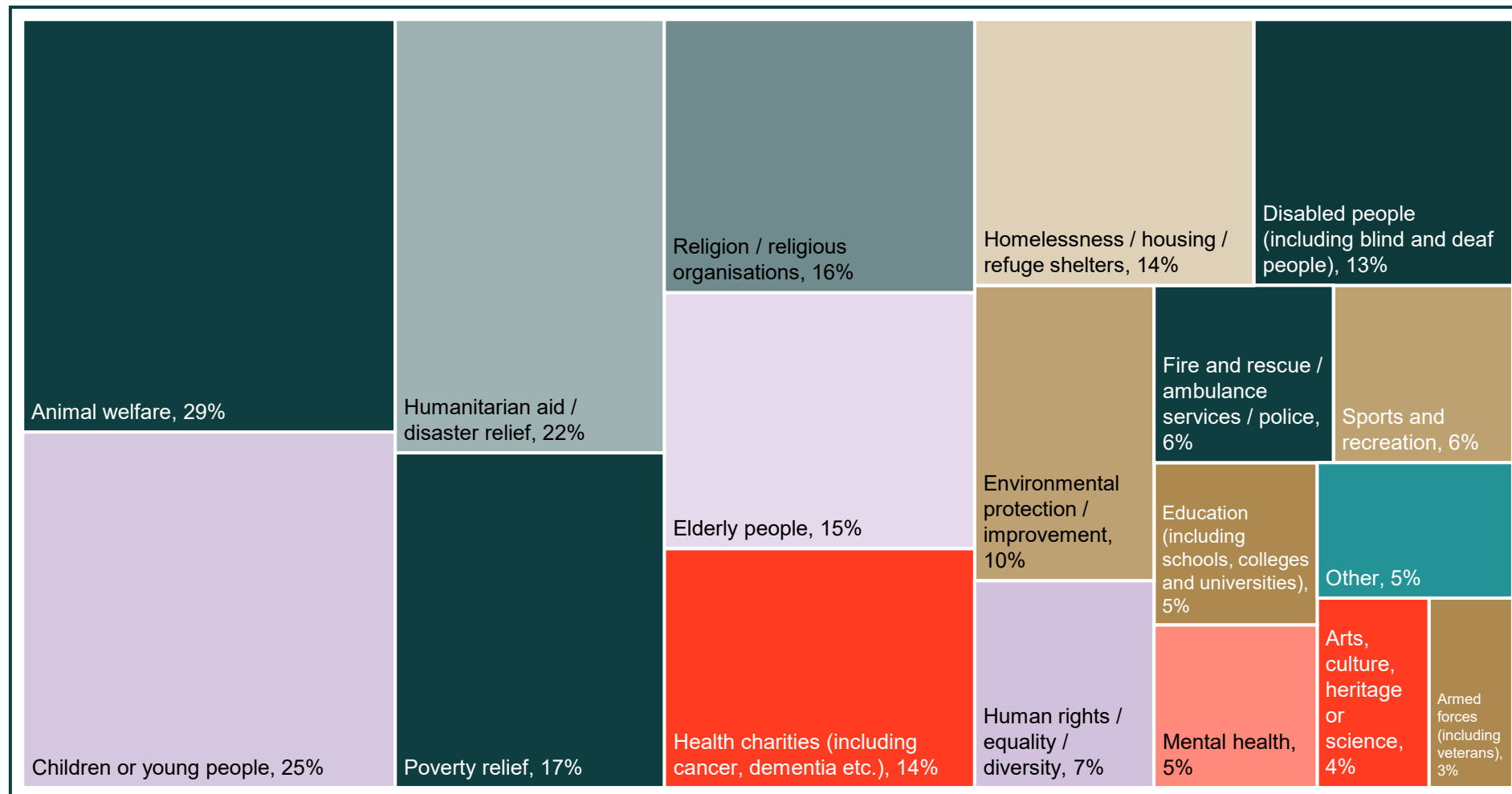
Knowing more about the results and impact that a charity has

The causes people support through donating.

Respondents from Germany donate primarily to social causes, including children and young people, humanitarian aid and poverty relief.

However, the cause with the widest support is animal welfare, to which nearly three in 10 donors gave money in 2024.

Which cause(s) did you give money to in 2024? (People who had given money, n = 456)



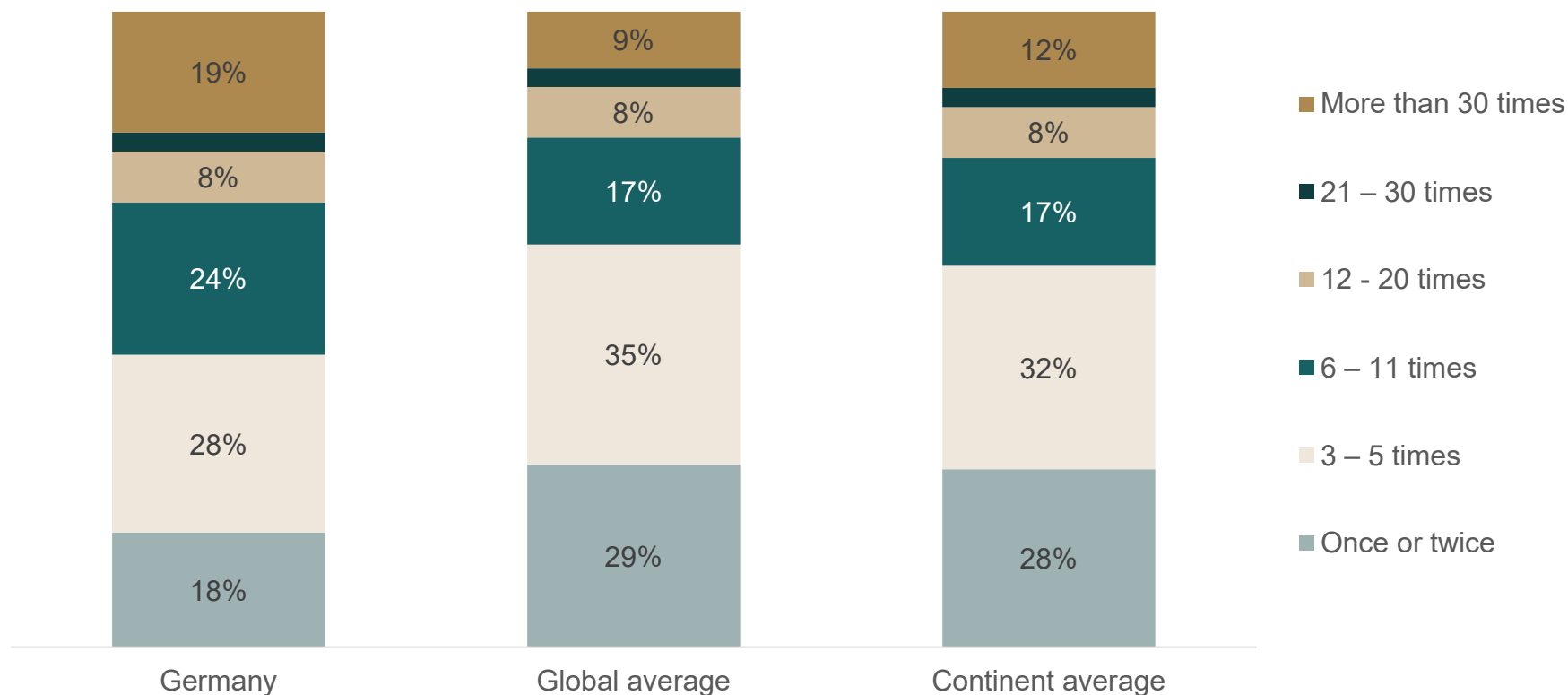
Frequency of volunteering, per person.

The majority of respondents from Germany who do volunteer do so multiple times a year, rather than just once or twice.

This reflects the strong culture of (voluntary) engagement in Germany.

In addition to the approximately 3.7 million employees in the non-profit sector, around 30 million volunteers are involved in roughly 700,000 organisations that are part of civil society in Germany.¹

How often did you do unpaid, voluntary work in 2024 that benefitted people other than your family or friends? *(Those who volunteered, n = 192)*



¹ ssoar-2024-troschke-Civil Society in Germany Data.pdf

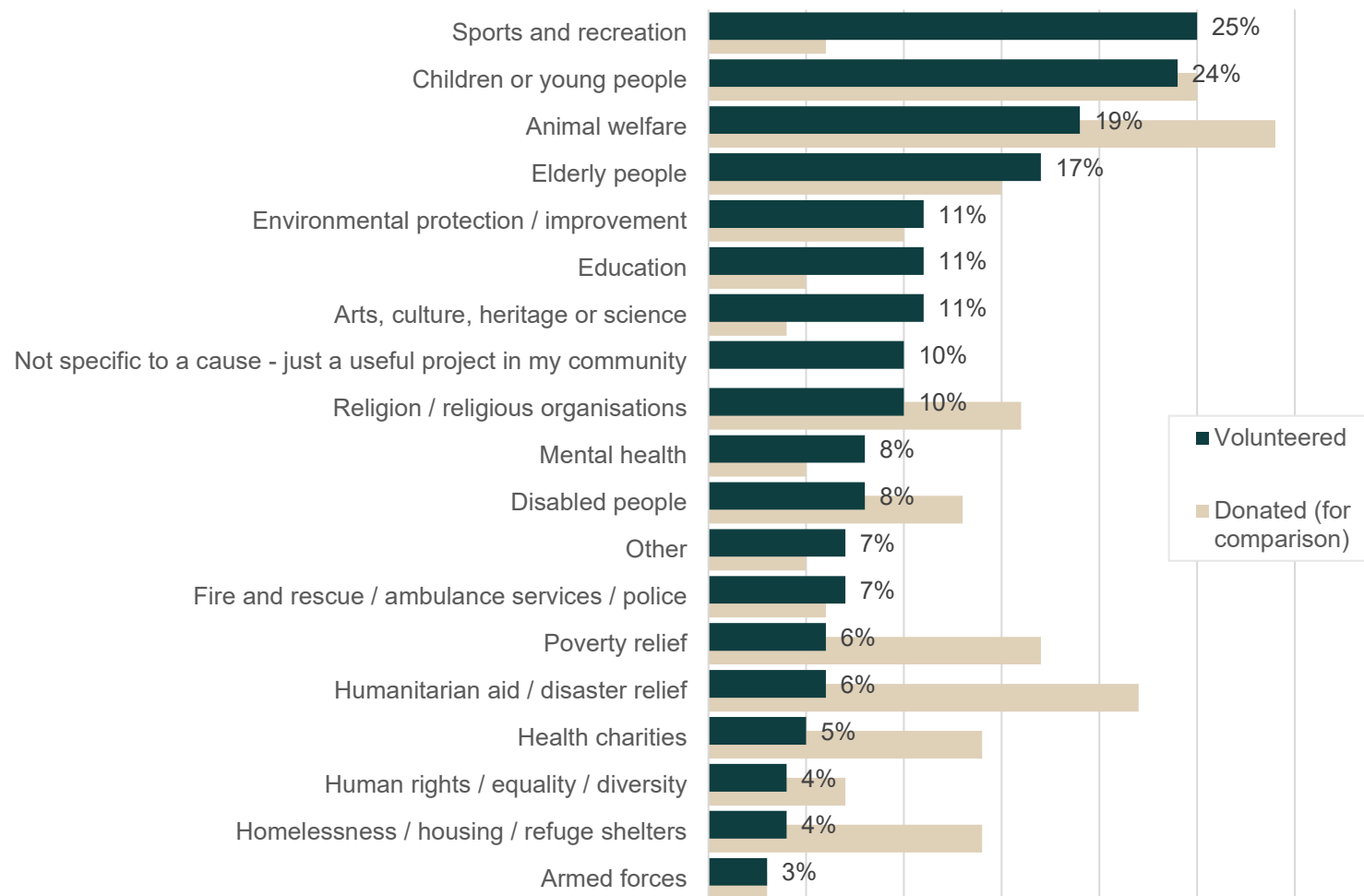
The causes people supported through volunteering.

Sports and recreation, and the social sphere — particularly with regards to children and young people — are the areas in which many people engage in volunteering.

Some causes which received significant support from donors (eg poverty relief, humanitarian aid and homelessness) receive much less widespread support from volunteers.

However, in general, there is a great deal of diversity in the types of voluntary activity the public takes part in.

Which cause(s) did you do unpaid voluntary work for in 2024? (People who had volunteered, n = 192)



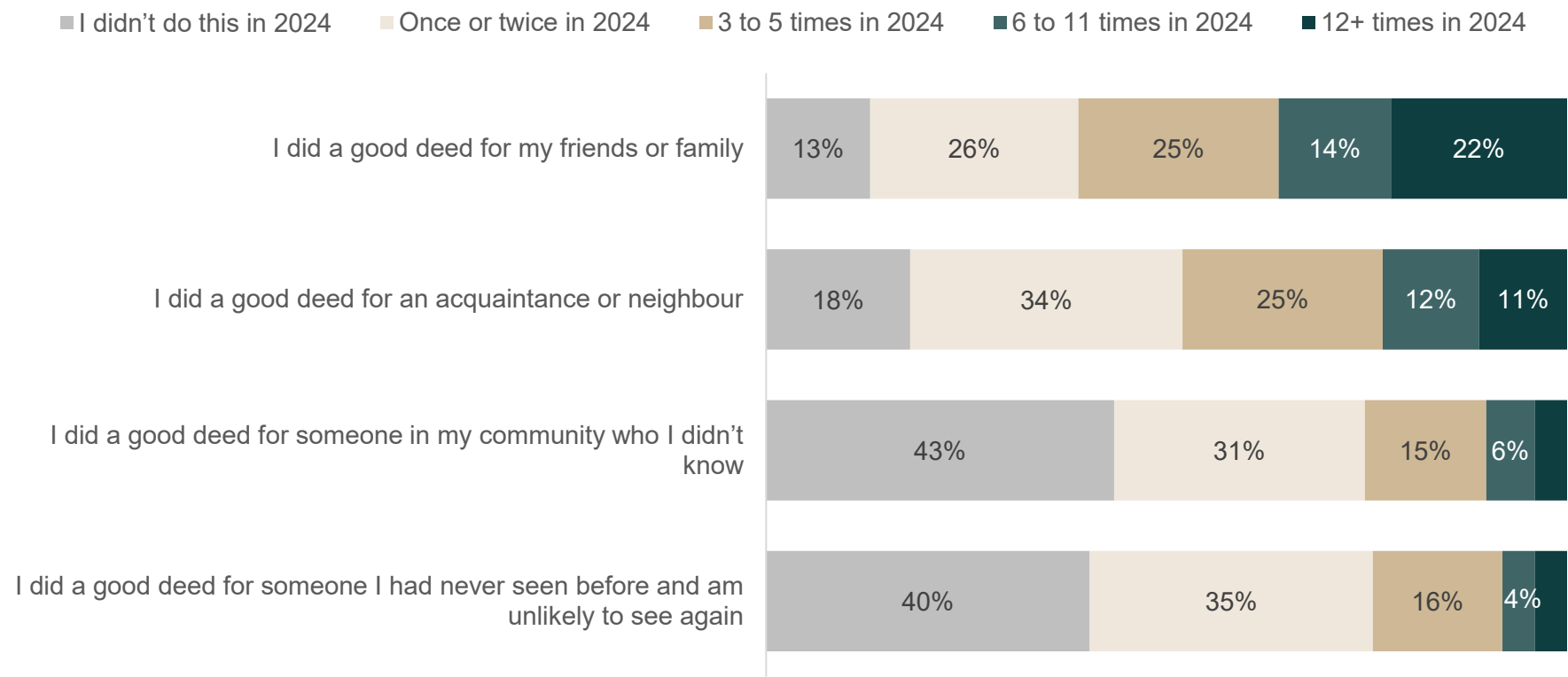
How helpful people are to others.

People are most likely to help those closest to them, and that assistance is more likely to be very frequent.

Nearly everyone did a good deed for friends and family at least once in 2024, and most people did so at least a few times.

However, more than half of people also did a good deed for a total stranger.

Beyond easy acts of kindness or simple good manners that do not require much effort, for example, holding open a door or picking up a dropped item, did you do a good deed in 2024?
(All, n = 998)





04 PERCEPTIONS OF CIVIL SOCIETY

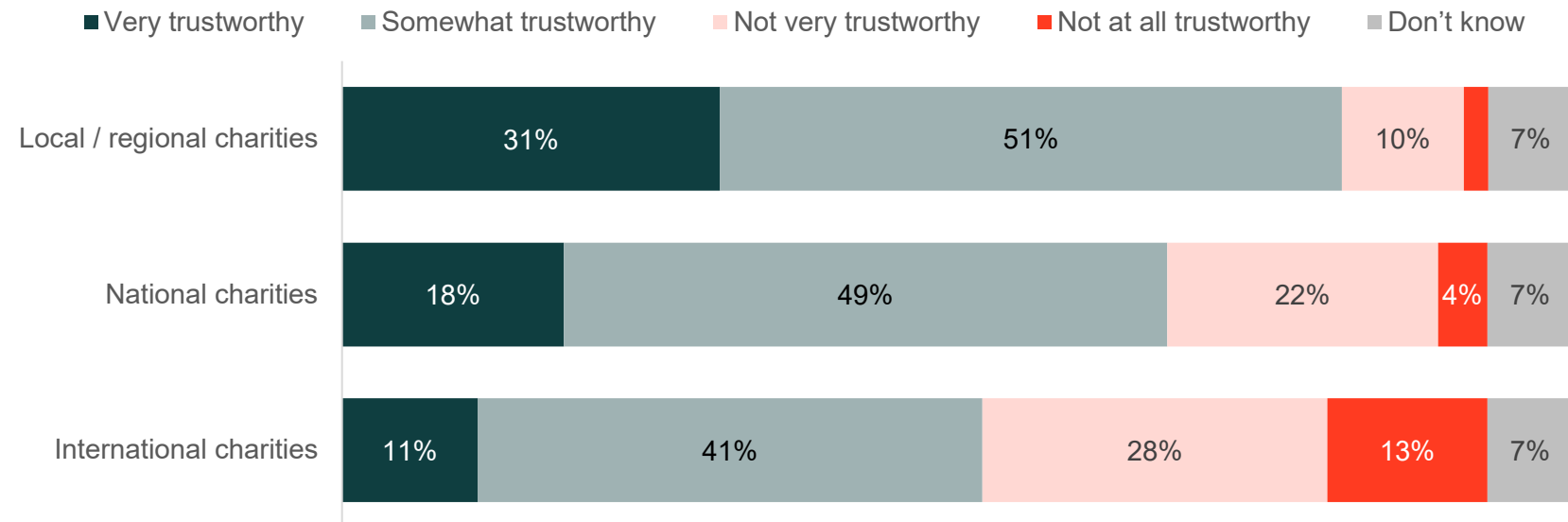
How much the public trusts charities.

Respondents from Germany trust local charities much more than charities that work a national or international level.

The greater the perceived distance to the charity, the less trust there appears to be.

However, the survey also revealed that more than half of the respondents expressed at least some degree of trust in international charities.

How trustworthy do you tend to find each of these types of charities? (All, n = 998)



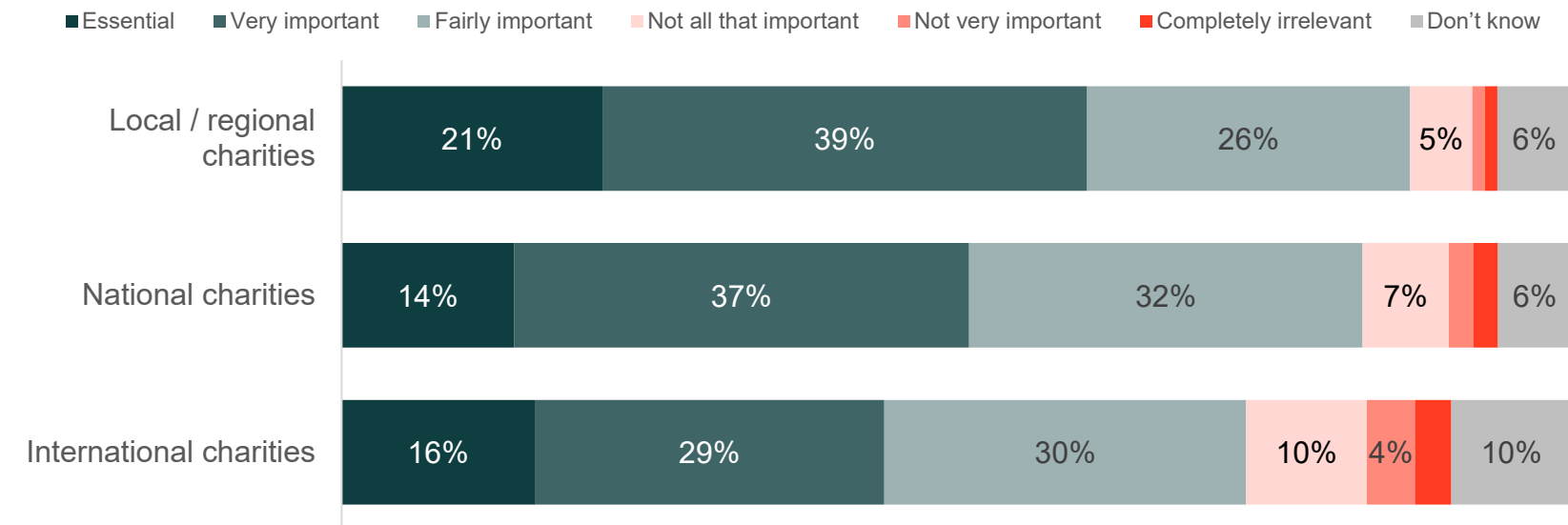
Overall, the public in Germany gave a score of 8.1/15 for how much they trust charities. This compares to a continental average of 8.09 and a global average of 9.22.

The perceived importance of charities to society.

An overwhelming majority of respondents from Germany recognise the importance of charities, particularly local ones, but also national and international ones.

This indicates that there is the potential to increase trust in charities with more transparency and communication, and possibly also to increase the willingness to donate, because many respondents are already convinced of their importance.

How important, in general, do you believe these different types of charities are to your country's society? (All, n = 998)



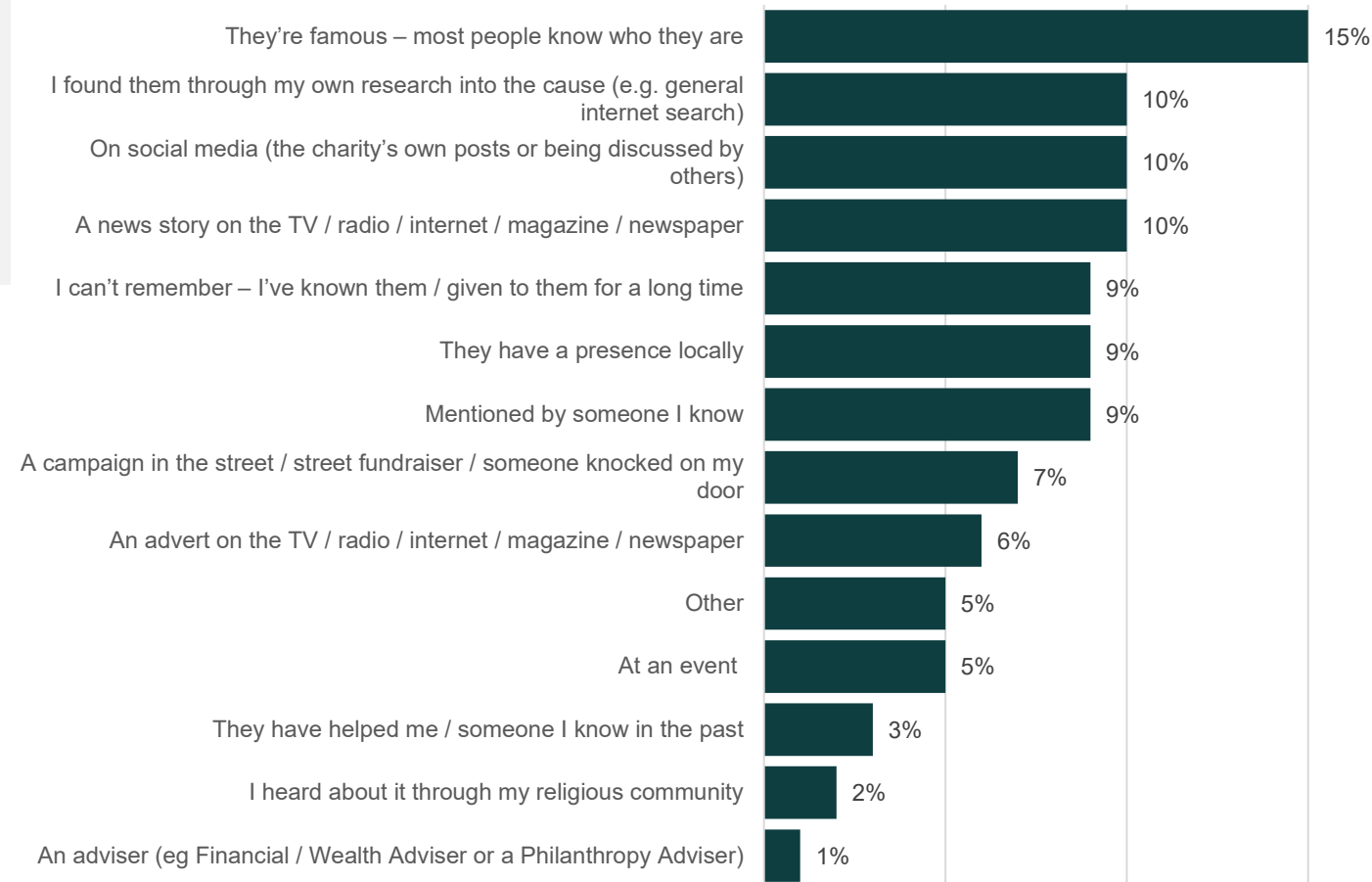
Overall, the public in Germany gave a score of 10.4/15 for how much they value charities. This compares to a continental average of 10.16 and a global average of 10.98.

How people discover charities.

The results show that media coverage and representation impact the perception and awareness of charities.

Therefore, better public relations work and fundraising capacity seem to pay off for charities, increasing their profile.

For the last charity that you gave money to, how did you first find out about them?
(People who had given money to charities, n = 456)



Global top 3

1. On social media (14%)
2. They have a presence locally (11%)
3. They were mentioned by someone I know (10%)

Continental top 3

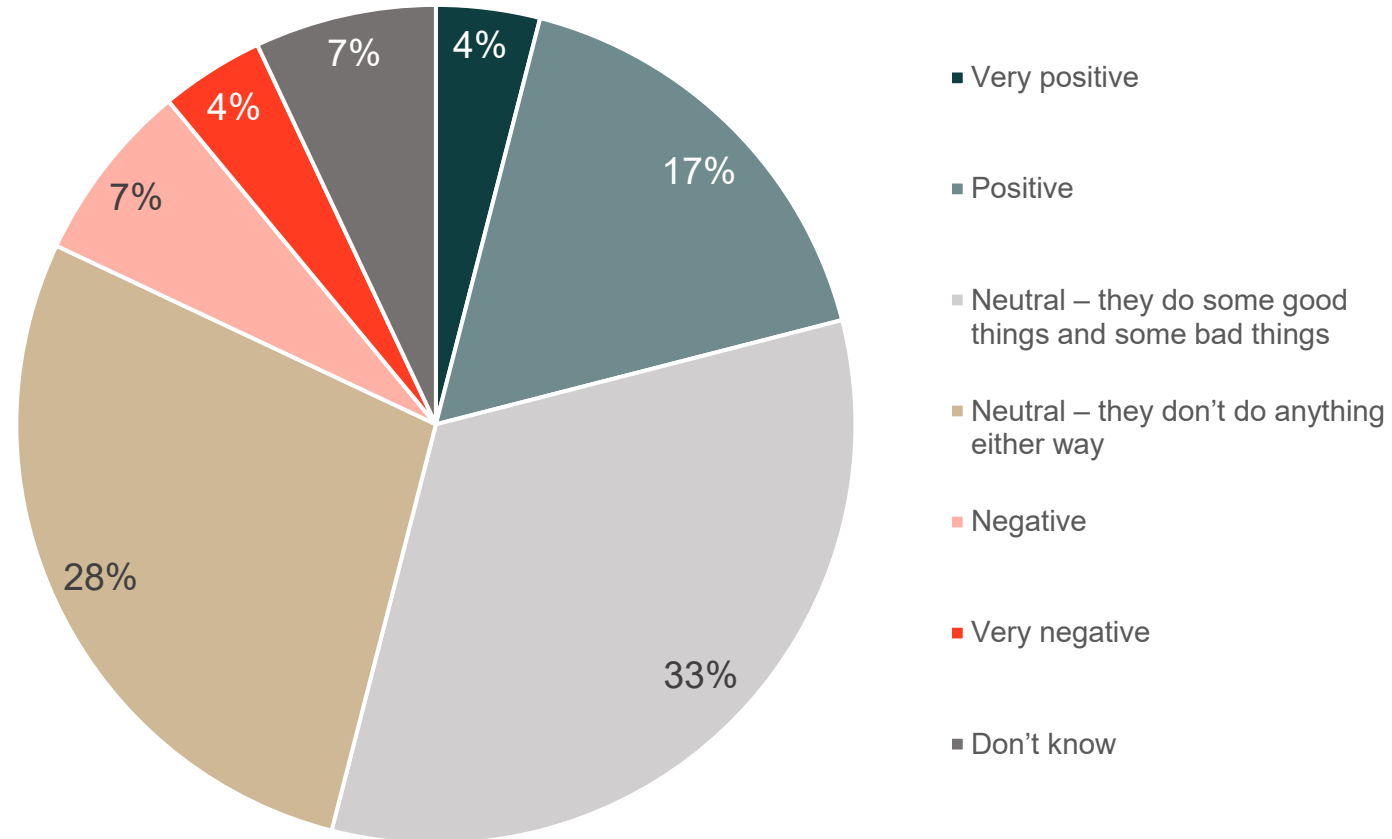
1. They're famous – most people know who they are (14%)
2. On social media (13%)
3. A news story on the TV / radio / internet / magazine / newspaper (10%)

Overall influence of government on charities.

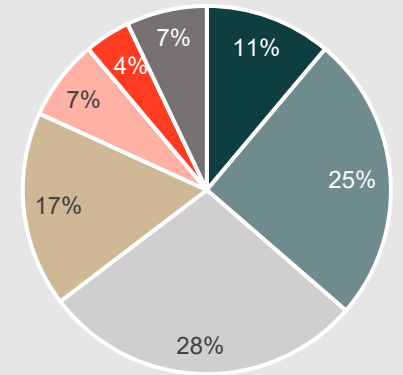
These results suggest that most respondents from Germany either underestimate or are unaware of the Government's influence on charitable organisations.

The vast majority provide a neutral rating with slightly more being positive than are negative.

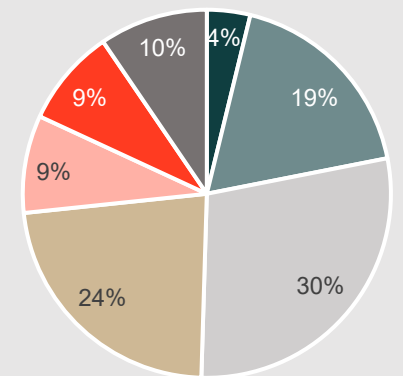
Overall, do you think the Government is a positive or negative influence on the charity sector? (All, n = 998)



Global average



Continent average



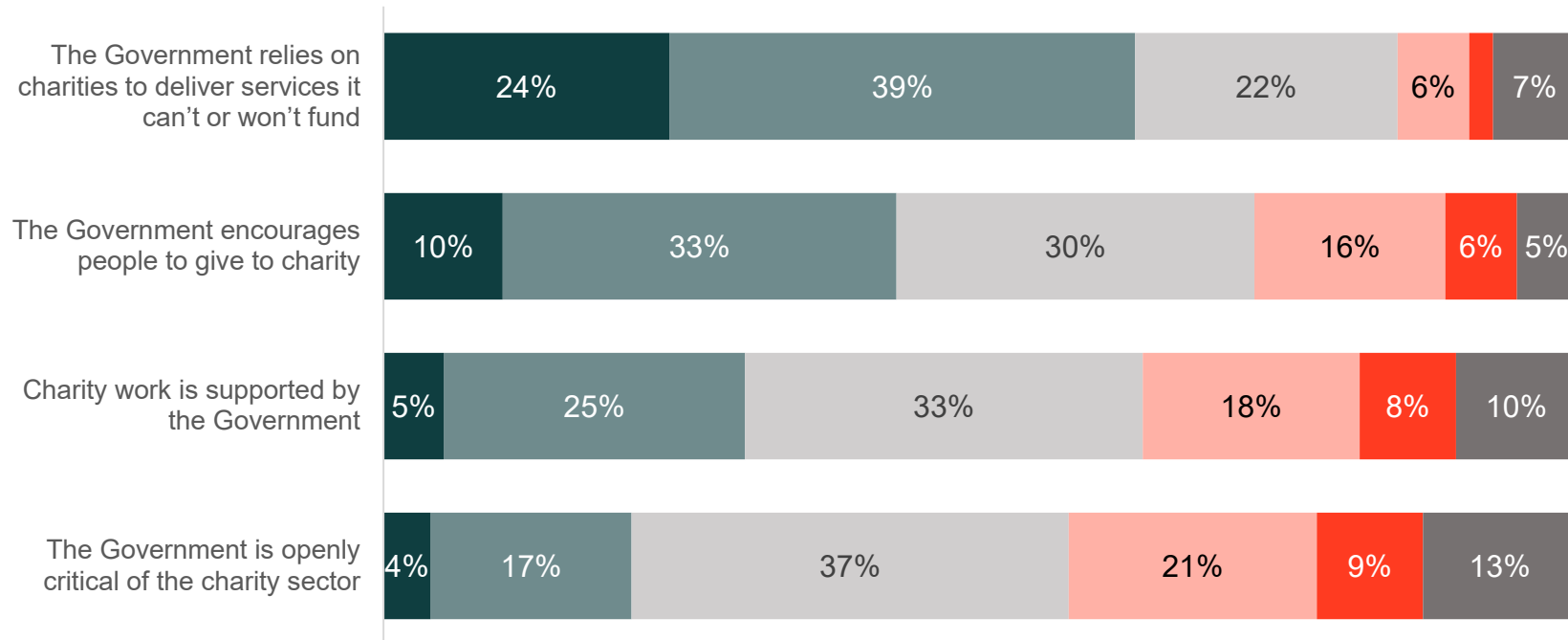
Specific opinions on the role of government.

In Germany, non-profits and charities have become integral and essential parts of the public welfare system and are often commissioned by government, social security, welfare, or health care entities to provide services.¹

These services are remunerated by those commissioning them. Many respondents in Germany seem to be aware this international peculiarity that the German Government relies on charities.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the Government's involvement in the charity sector? (All, n = 998)

■ Strongly agree
■ Agree
■ Neither agree nor disagree
■ Disagree
■ Strongly disagree
■ Don't know



¹ Civil Society in Germany – Data, Facts, Developments • Maecenata Stiftung

THANK YOU

www.worldgivingreport.org

Charities Aid Foundation registered charity number 268369



MAECENATA FOUNDATION