



Charities Aid Foundation
UK Giving Report 2022

CONTENTS

1.0

OVERALL ENGAGEMENT WITH CHARITABLE AND CIVIC ACTIVITIES

How do people get involved?
Who engages the most?

2.0

GIVING MONEY

How many people give?
How much do people give?
What is the total amount given?
Which causes do people give to?
Proportion given to each cause area
Who gives to what?
How people give
Being asked to give
Frequency of giving

3.0

OTHER WAYS IN WHICH PEOPLE GET INVOLVED

Volunteering
Using charity shops
Protesting and petitioning

4.0

TRUST IN CHARITIES

Trust in charities increased in 2020, and remains higher than pre-pandemic

5.0

METHOD

CAF has been producing the UK Giving report since 2004, and has been tracking giving in the UK for several decades



About CAF

The Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) is a leading charity operating in the UK and internationally. Our work connects and enables the vital organisations, institutions and individuals working together to ensure that everyone has a stake in the future. We believe that the power of lasting change lies across sectors and borders, in the hearts, minds and hands of those driven to make a difference. We exist to **accelerate progress in society towards a fair and sustainable future for all.**

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

“CAF is dedicated to helping us all to understand how giving happens in the UK, and what this reality means for charities and those they seek to help.”



The UK's giving landscape reveals not only how individuals, organisations, and wider societies support one another in everyday circumstances, but also how we respond in times of crisis. Many expected, or at least hoped, that the end of 2021 and early 2022 would herald a year of recovery; of tentative steps into a new normal post-pandemic. Yet with climbing energy and food prices starting to bite late last year and the crisis in Ukraine unfolding over the winter, that much-desired stability was not to be.

Amid all this turbulence, the value of charities has been steadfast. Whether addressing the rising demands from those facing food and fuel poverty, or humanitarian need abroad, charities and those who support them continue to help the most vulnerable and disadvantaged when they need it most.

As a leading voice in the charity sector, CAF is dedicated to helping us all to understand how giving happens in the UK, and what this reality means for charities and those they seek to help, both now and in the future.

That is why we place such value on producing our annual UK Giving Report, the largest and most detailed study of its kind. The report provides insights into how people in the UK give to charity; who gives the most; and to which causes. The report's findings not only deepen the national conversation around our culture of giving, but they also inform Government, policymakers, and fellow charities and their leaders.

This report, which covers 2021 and also reflects the first few months of 2022, will be sombre reading for those in the charity sector. The decline in the number of people giving that we have highlighted since 2016 was briefly stalled during the initial stages of the pandemic, but this year we again report that donations have continued to fall even further. Fewer people are giving – and those who do continue to give on a regular basis tend to be older. The cost-of-living crisis has also prompted one in eight to say they will cut back on their donations to charities.

Nevertheless, our report also found that in times of crisis, people in the UK are generous: in March 2022, around a third of people said they had donated money specifically in response to the crisis in Ukraine. The average donation that month increased to £85 – the largest monthly donation average we have ever recorded in our research.

Our report does show that supporting causes close to one's heart remains a valued practice, but reminds us that engaging newer generations in giving and ensuring that donors have a strong sense of the impact of their generosity are vital challenges if we are to continue our work to deliver a sustainable future for all.

Neil Heslop, OBE
Chief Executive, Charities Aid Foundation



£10.7b

Total amount given to charity over the course of 2021
(£11.3 billion in 2020)



57%

Percentage given to charity in 2021, down from 62% in 2020 and 65% in 2019



Key findings



THE BRITISH PEOPLE DONATED £10.7 BILLION TO CHARITIES IN 2021.

We estimate that the total amount given in the UK in 2021 was £10.7 billion. This is a substantial decrease from the £11.3 billion that was given in 2020 and represents a return to pre-pandemic levels of giving. Although at face value this may not appear too concerning, inflationary pressures point to the likelihood that in real terms, the result will be fewer financial resources available for charities.



THE TREND TOWARDS FEWER PEOPLE GIVING IS NOW FIRMLY ESTABLISHED.

For every month of the year in 2021, the proportion of people making a donation was lower than the equivalent month in 2019, suggesting a substantial and established trend. Although there was a slight improvement towards the end of 2021, the results from 2022 thus far are following a similar pattern of declined levels of giving. The notable exception was March 2022 when an increase in giving occurred, likely in response to the war in Ukraine.



THE MOST POPULAR CAUSES REMAIN BROADLY UNCHANGED, WHILST THERE ARE SIGNS THAT GIVING TO CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL CAUSES MAY BE INCREASING.

Nearly three in 10 donors support animal welfare, and this has slightly increased over the past few years. Giving to conservation and environmental causes has also increased a little over the same time period, signalling a slow but real shift as the average donation to this cause increased from £17 in 2017 to £24 in 2021.



A THIRD OF PEOPLE GAVE IN RESPONSE TO THE CRISIS IN UKRAINE, AND MARCH SAW THE LARGEST AVERAGE MONTHLY DONATION EVER RECORDED.

In March 2022, around a third of people (32%) said they had donated money specifically in response to the crisis in Ukraine. During the same month, the average donation increased to £85 – significantly higher than usual levels, and the largest monthly donation average we have ever recorded in our survey.



AROUND TWO THIRDS OF PEOPLE PLAN TO CUT BACK IN THE FACE OF RISING LIVING COSTS AND AROUND ONE IN EIGHT SAY THIS WILL INCLUDE CHARITABLE DONATIONS.

Just under two thirds of people (62%) say they plan to cut back on discretionary spending to help them manage their bills. Around one in eight people (13%) are considering cutting back on donations to charity in the next six months whilst one in 12 people (8%) said they had already chosen not to make a one-off donation.



1.0 | Overall engagement with charitable and civic activities



1.1 How do people get involved?

The ending of restrictions has not been reflected in overall engagement, which remains below pre-pandemic levels.

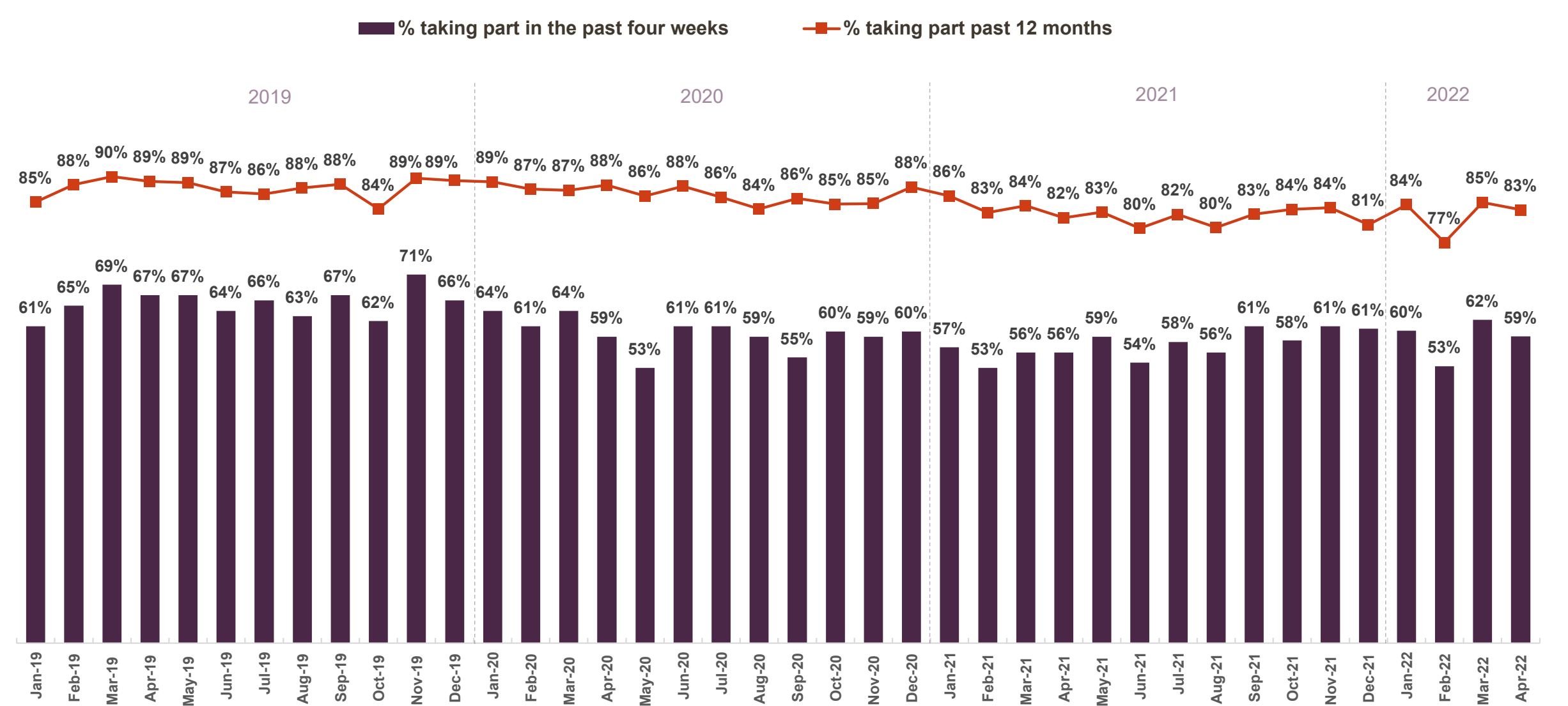
Respondents were shown a list of charitable and civic-minded activities and asked which they had done in both the four weeks and the 12 months preceding the survey.

Our analysis shows that the decline in monthly participation seen over the past two years continues into 2022. In February of this year, participation was as low as it had been during the first lockdown in May 2020. This was despite the arrival of 'Freedom Day' in England, signifying an end to all pandemic restrictions.

Participation in the last 12 months shows a similar pattern. In February 2022, the number of people who reported engaging in at least one of these activities during the preceding 12 months dipped to the lowest levels recorded since we began our survey in 2016 (77%). This may be related to the peak of Omicron infections which occurred in January 2022.

Overall participation in a charitable or civic activity: January 2019 to April 2022

Figure 1: Which, if any, of the following have you done in the past 12 months/four weeks (any activity)?



Base: all adults 16+; N= approximately 1,000 per month.



1.2 Who engages the most?

Fewer young people took part in charitable or civic activities in 2021.

A large majority of people in all age groups continued to report engaging in charitable and civic activities over the past 12 months, ranging from 79% of 16-24 year olds to 86% of the over 55s.

However, amongst younger respondents, the proportion taking part in such activities has decreased over time. Those aged 16-24 bucked the wider trend in 2020 (85%) and were more likely to have taken part than in 2019 (83%), but in 2021 this figure declined (79%). Participation similarly declined among those aged 25-34 (85% in 2019, 84% in 2020, and 80% in 2021). It is possible that these reductions are linked to rising cost of living, or perhaps represent a shift in priorities as the economy re-opened after the lockdowns of 2020 and early 2021. It may also be the case that younger people have had fewer opportunities to participate.

Activities continue to vary by age with young people being more likely to have bought an ethical product (31% of 16-24 year olds vs. 22% of the over 65s). In contrast, older people are far more likely to have given goods to charity, with 58% having done so in the last 12 months compared to 26% of 16-24 year olds.

Women are more likely than men to engage in charitable activity in many of its different forms. However, participation fell among both groups with fewer men and women taking part than in previous years. The proportion of men who took part fell from 83% in 2020 to 78% in 2021 while the proportion of women doing so fell from 90% to 87%.

Regionally, those in the South East are the most likely to have taken part in one of the activities listed (86%) while those in the North East are the least likely (76%). Indeed, participation in the North East has fallen significantly since 2020 when 84% had taken part. Most regions saw a small decrease in 2021, except Wales where participation levels remained consistent.

Fewer younger people are taking part in charitable or civic activities



2.0 | Giving Money



2.1 How many people give?

The trend towards fewer people donating is now firmly established.

For every month of the year, donation levels in 2021 were lower than their equivalent in 2019, suggesting a substantial and established trend. The 2021 results started to improve towards the end of the year, with a third (33%) having given in November and 36% in December, but these results are still below the pre-pandemic figures for the same time of year.

The results from 2022 so far are following a similar pattern to 2021. The notable exception was March 2022, when the proportion who gave to charity increased to 34%; this is likely a result of more donations and sponsorships to support charities responding to the war in Ukraine.

Overall, during 2021 as a whole, the proportion who had given through donation or sponsorship in the past 12 months fell again to 57%, having decreased from 65% to 62% between 2019 and 2020. The decrease is particularly significant for giving through sponsorship; the proportion who had done this in the past 12 months fell significantly from 28% in 2020 to 22% in 2021.

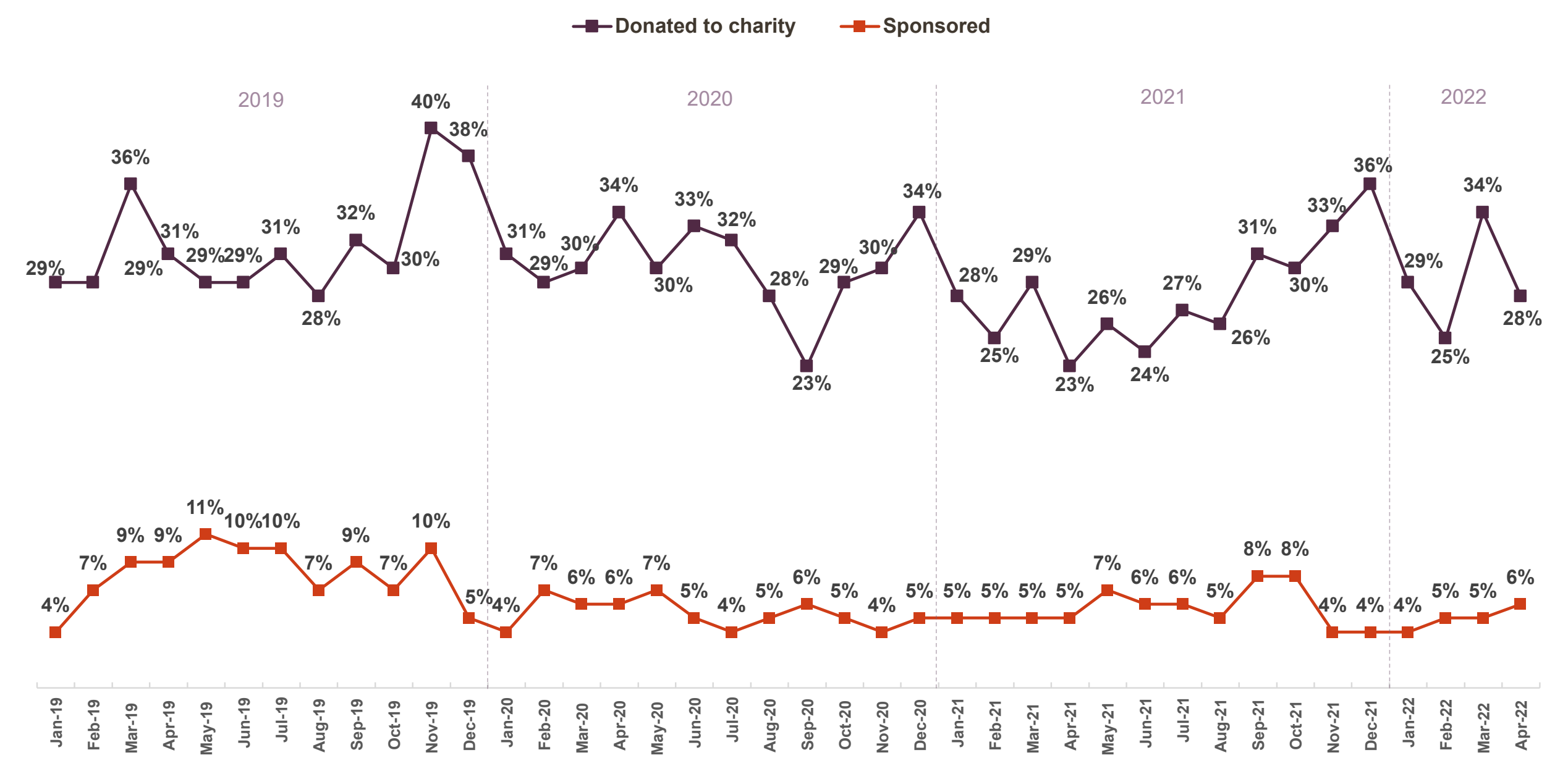
These decreases are seen across gender, age groups and regions. The proportion of men giving to charity fell from 58% in 2020 to 52% in 2021 and the proportion of women giving also fell from 67% to 63%. Similarly, fewer 16-24 year olds are giving to charity than in 2020 (54% in 2020 vs 44% in 2021), and the same applies to those aged 65 (69% in 2020 vs 66% in 2021).

For every month of the year, donation levels in 2021 were lower than their equivalent in 2019



Proportion of adults who donated or sponsored someone: January 2019 to April 2022

Figure 2: Which, if any, of the following have you done in the last four weeks? (Donated money to charity, sponsored someone for a charity).



Base: all adults 16+; N= approximately 1,000 per month.

Levels of sponsorship remain subdued. While in previous years sponsorship levels started low but then increased as the weather got warmer in the springtime, during 2020 and 2021 they stayed relatively flat all year round, albeit with an increase in September (9%) and October (8%) 2021. This temporary increase was likely due to the return of some large-scale sponsorship events, such as the London Marathon and Great North Run, which were postponed from the spring.

It will remain to be seen if the 2022 results show a marked difference now that restrictions have ended, but sponsorship donations for the first four months of the year are at the same low level seen during the height of the pandemic, with little sign of the usual springtime increase.



2.2 How much do people give?

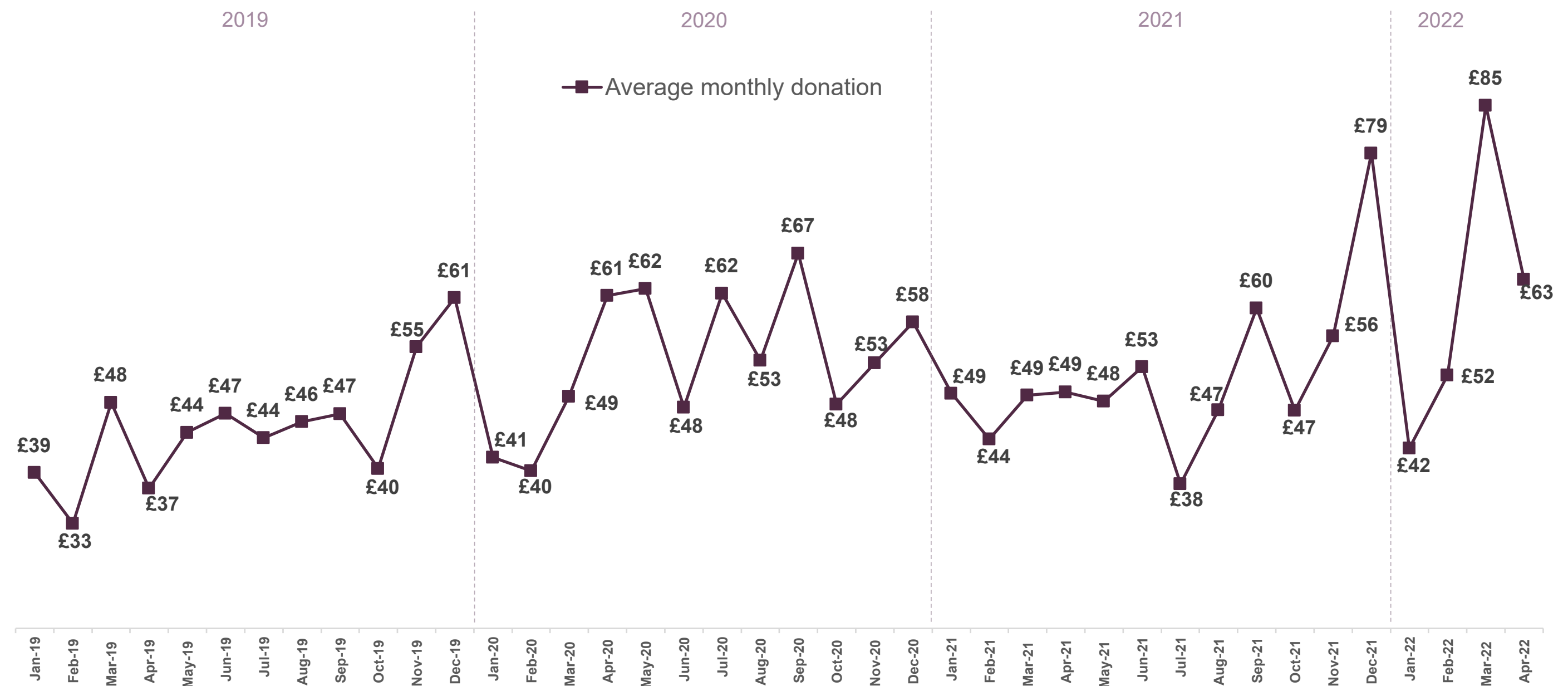
The British public responded to the crisis in Ukraine with much larger donations than usual – even more so than in response to the initial Covid-19 crisis.

For large parts of the year, the pattern of donations and sponsorship in 2021 was similar to 2020. However, whilst in the spring of 2020 – as the coronavirus pandemic hit the UK – levels of giving rose significantly, this pattern was not repeated in the winter lockdowns of 2021. Overall, average donations were lower in 2021 than they had been in 2020, but remain higher than in the three years preceding the pandemic.

Whilst January 2022 was a fairly typical month for giving, in February, and especially March, there was a very significant increase in the average gift. The average amount given by donation or sponsorship in March 2022 was £85 – much higher than usual for the time of year, and the highest monthly gift ever recorded in our survey. This is likely a result of the charitable response to the war in Ukraine. During March, a third (32%) of respondents said they had donated money specifically in response to the crisis. Indeed, the Disasters Emergency Committee Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal raised just under £62,000,000 between 3 and 10 March 2022 – the most money raised by an online campaign in a single week¹.

Average (mean) monthly donation to all causes: January 2019 to April 2022

Figure 3: You said you donated to [cause]. How much did you give in the last four weeks?



Base: All adults 16+ who donated or sponsored in the past 4 weeks: (N=approximately 300 per month).

¹<https://www.dec.org.uk/appeal/ukraine-humanitarian-appeal>

Overall, age-related donation amounts have largely returned to pre-pandemic patterns.

A pattern that emerged during the pandemic was that the increase in the average donation seen in 2020 was driven by older adults, whilst donations fell amongst the younger age groups. However, the latest results show that this was not a permanent increase, with average donations coming back in line with historical norms in 2021.

Nevertheless, all age groups responded more generously than usual in March 2022, likely in response to the Ukraine crisis. Again, the older donors were the most generous, giving an average of £132 during the month of March (mean donation amongst donors aged 65+ to all causes).

As seen in previous years, the value of the average amount given is higher among men than women. While the average amount given by men in 2021 is in line with previous years at £60 (£59 in 2020) the amount given by women has decreased from £50 in 2020 to £47 in 2021. The median donation for both has remained at £20 since 2019.

Most people plan to cut back in response to rising living costs, including on charitable donations.

Between February and April 2022, respondents were shown a list of activities and asked whether they might cut back on any of them in the next six months to help manage their bills. Overall, six in 10 (62%) said they were considering cutting back on at least one activity and only a quarter (24%) said that they would not be cutting back on anything. Eating/drinking out and takeaways were the items people were most likely to say they would cut back on (38% and 37% of people respectively), followed by buying clothes (30%), holidays/trips away (24%), and days out (24%). Around one in eight people (13%) said they were considering cutting back on donations to charity.

The cost-of-living crisis intensified in spring, with widespread increases in household energy bills and the price of food. Against this backdrop, in March and April more than a quarter of people said they had friends or family members who were struggling to pay their regular bills (27%) or afford petrol/diesel (28%) and a fifth (21%) knew someone who was struggling with the cost of heating their home. One in eight (13%) people said a friend or family member was facing food poverty (i.e. struggling to buy enough nutritious food or having to use a food bank).

In April, one in 25 people (4%) reported that they had already cancelled a regular donation to charity (such as a direct debit) as a direct response to the rising cost of living. One in 12 people (8%) said they had chosen not to make a one-off donation, and slightly fewer (6%) said they had reviewed how much they give to charity. Separate CAF research with charities highlighted the concerns many of them have around meeting their own costs, coupled with an expected increase in demand for their services because of the cost-of-living crisis.

Use of the Gift Aid scheme has remained higher than it was pre-Covid.

After an increase during 2020, use of the Gift Aid scheme in 2021 remained higher than it was pre-pandemic – 55% of those who donated in the past year applied Gift Aid to at least one of the donations they reported in the survey. There has also been a significant increase in the proportion of donors using Gift Aid on their sponsorship, from 62% in 2020 to 65% in 2021.

As shown in previous reports, Gift Aid continues to be more popular among the ABC1 social grades, two-thirds (65%) of whom used it on their donations in the past year compared, to 41% of the C2DE social grades.

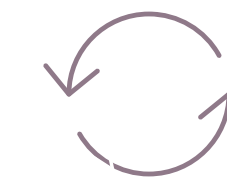
Social grades are a system of socio-economic classification based on occupation³. Income does not form part of the classification, although there are strong correlations between social grade and income levels. There are six grades: A (e.g. Higher managerial, professionals); B (e.g. middle management executives of large organisations); C1 (e.g. junior management, owners of small establishments); C2 (e.g. skilled manual workers); D (e.g. semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers); and E (e.g. long-term recipients of state benefits, including those whose only income is a state pension). They are often combined into ABC1 and C2DE, corresponding approximately to middle class and working class respectively.

HOW THE COST OF LIVING CRISIS IS IMPACTING DONATIONS



1 in 4

More than a quarter (27%) of people had friends or family members who were struggling to pay their bills.



1 in 8

One in eight (13%) are considering cutting back on donations to charity due to help them manage their bills.



1 in 25

In April, one in 25 people (4%) reported that they had already cancelled a regular donation to charity.

³ Further information about social grading can be found here: <https://www.mrs.org.uk/resources/social-grade>



2.3 What is the total amount given?

The total amount donated by the public during 2021 is estimated to be £10.7bn.

The total amount donated in the UK during 2021 has decreased back to pre-pandemic levels, falling from £11.3 billion in 2020 to £10.7 billion in 2021⁴. Whilst this is in line with pre-pandemic trends, against the recent backdrop of high inflation, it represents a decline in real terms.

Although 2021 saw a decrease in the total amount donated, the average (mean) monthly donation of £52 has changed very little since 2020 when it stood at £54. This means that the reason for the decline is not that individual donors are giving less, but that there are fewer people donating overall – a trend we have been monitoring for several years. Our analysis shows that the proportion of people who donated or sponsored fell from 33% in 2020 to 31% in 2021, and this relatively small change has had a significant impact on the overall amount being given. The total amount donated now sits in line with the results from 2019, when more people donated (36%) but the average donation was much smaller (£46).

The average (mean) amount given rose significantly in 2020 and has remained higher than historic norms in 2021. This may be a result of inflation, or it may also be the case that the coronavirus pandemic led to those who give to charity increasing the value of their donation to support the charitable response. Either way, the 2021 results suggest that the higher average value of donations and sponsorship seen in 2020 may not be a one-off, but rather a newly established trend. It remains to be seen whether this trend will continue, but the initial results from the first few months of 2022 show a higher average donation than in previous years.

The total amount donated in the UK decreased back to pre-pandemic levels in 2021

⁴ The UK Giving estimate for total giving is calculated from respondents' own recollection of what they gave and so is subject to respondent reliability as well as other considerations that apply to surveys based on a sample of a population rather than a census

Average percentage of people who donated/sponsored in past four weeks; average (mean) donation to all causes in past four weeks; annual total amount given

Figure 4: Average and total amount given to charity in the past four weeks



Base: All adults 16+ who donated or sponsored in the past 4 weeks: 2021: (n=4,243), 2020: (n=3,863), 2019: (n=4,040), 2018: (n=3,948), 2017: (n=3,730).

2.4 Which causes do people give to?

Animal welfare continued to be the most widely supported cause.

The top causes for donations⁵ in 2021 were the same as in 2020. Animal welfare remained the most popular, with 28% of donors giving to this cause in the past four weeks. This was followed by children or young people (23%) and medical research (21%). The proportion who gave to medical research has continued to fall since 2019 (25%), indicating that the pandemic has not inspired giving to this cause, which is perhaps seen as quite separate to Covid-19. It may also be the case that fundraising events in favour of medical research charities continue to be fewer in number or scaled back.

The proportion donating to children or young people (23%) has also continued to fall since a high of 26% in 2018 and 2019. Support for disability charities remained lower than usual at 11%, compared to 14% in 2020.

Whilst animal welfare remained the most popular cause in January and February 2022, it was then overtaken by giving to overseas aid and disaster relief, which saw a very large increase in March when 44% of donors reported giving to this cause, seemingly in response to events in Ukraine.

Over the past five years, there have been subtle shifts in the number of donors giving to particular causes. The proportion giving to animal welfare charities has slightly increased over time, but it has slowly decreased for medical research charities, and hospitals and hospices. Giving to conservation and environmental causes has also increased slightly over the past five years, although the increase in 2021 was very small despite climate change featuring so highly on the Government's agenda.

THE TOP FIVE CAUSES SUPPORTED WERE THE SAME AS IN 2020



28%

Animal welfare continued to be the most popular with 28% of donors giving to this cause in the past four weeks.



21%

The proportion who gave to medical research has declined over time (from 25% in 2019 and 22% in 2020).

⁵ Note, data refer to direct donations only, and exclude donations through sponsorship

Figure 5: Which of the following causes have you given to in the last four weeks?



Base: All adults 16+ who have donated to a charity in the last four weeks: 2021: (n=4,016), 2020: (n=4,251), 2019: (n=4,464), 2018: (n=4,243), 2017: (n=4,028), 2016: (n=2,903).

2.5 Proportion given to each cause area

Religious organisations continue to receive the biggest donations.

Religious organisations continued to receive by far the largest donations in 2021, but on average those donations have fallen by £11 to now stand at £80.

The cause which receives the second highest average donation is the arts, with an average donation of £36. This is lower than 2019, when the average donation was £65, but represents a small increase from £30 in 2020.

Schools, colleges, and universities saw the third highest average donation (£36), closely followed by overseas aid (£34) which has increased substantially since 2019 (£20). The average donation to sports and recreation causes was the second largest in 2020 at £48, but this declined to £27 in 2021.

Donations to medical research have not changed significantly since before the pandemic (£20 in 2019; £20 in 2021), but for hospitals and hospices they have increased (£20 in 2019; £24 in 2021).

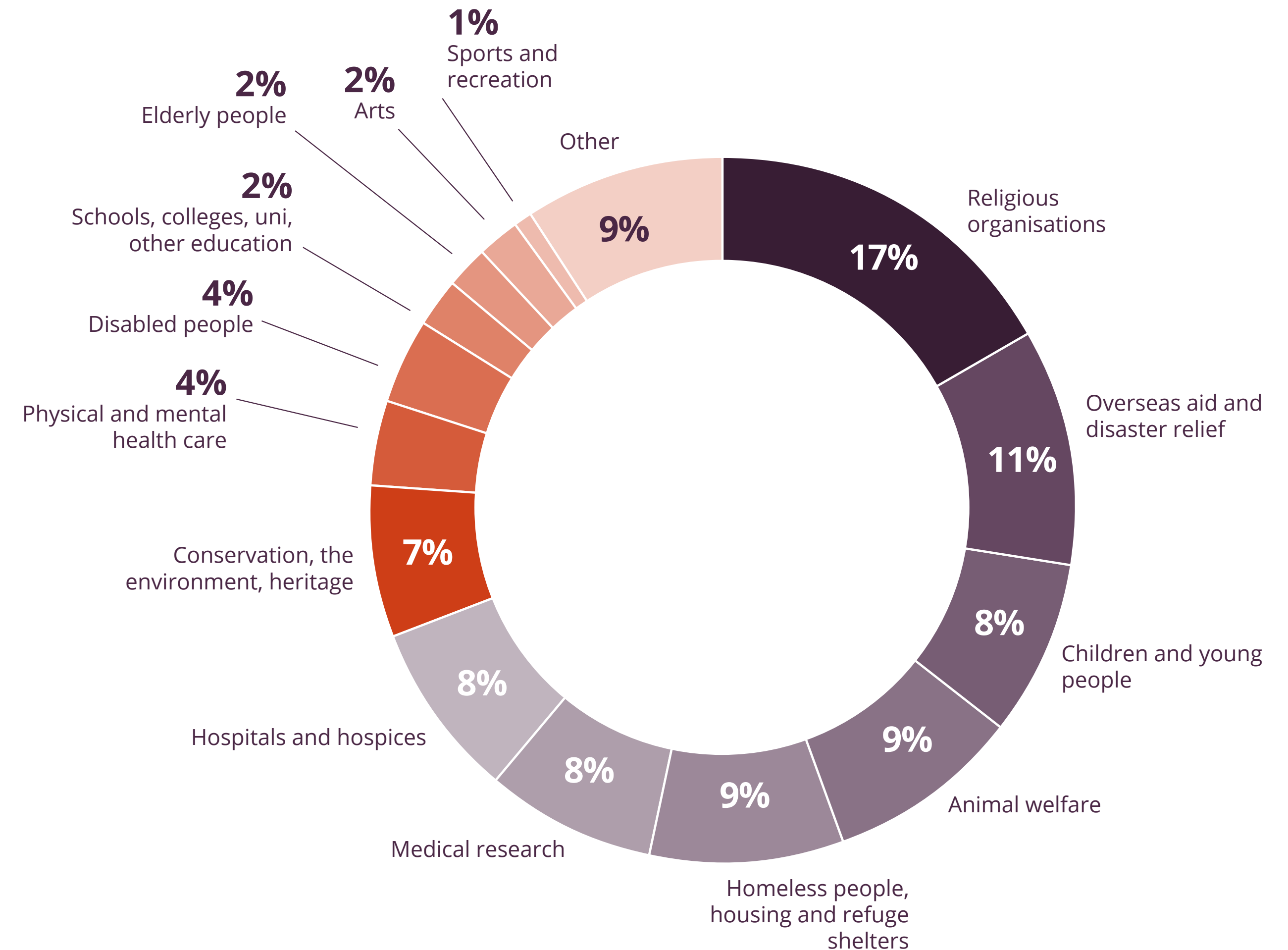
As a proportion of money donated, religious organisations continue to receive the most (17%) due to the much higher donations they receive compared to other causes. The total amount received by overseas aid causes comprises the second-highest proportion of donations (11%), closely followed by homelessness-related causes (9%). Despite the pandemic, the proportion received by medical research has decreased slightly from 11% in 2019 to 8% in 2021.

Charities related to the environment, conservation and heritage received the eighth largest portion of total donations during 2021. The average gift to this cause has increased from £17 in 2017 to £24 in 2021.

Other causes only receive a small proportion of the total amount given. Elderly people, schools and education, and the arts all received only 2% of the total amount donated while sports and recreation received only 1%. This pattern is consistent with previous years.

Religious organisations continue to receive the largest donations

Figure 6: Proportion of total amount donated that was received by each cause in 2021



Base: all adults 16+ who have donated/sponsored in the last four weeks (n=3,325).



2.6 Who gives to what?

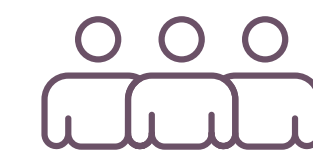
The choice of cause that people donate to varies by certain demographics.

Women are more likely than men to support animal welfare charities (34% vs 22%) and children or young people (26% vs 20%). By contrast, there is only one cause which men are more likely than women to support (the category 'other'). Across 2021, women gave to an average of 2.15 causes in the past four weeks whilst men gave to an average of 1.98. These are well established differences that we have noted in previous years.

Some causes are more popular among particular age groups. A quarter (25%) of those aged 65 and above had given to hospitals and hospices in comparison to 12% of 25-34 year olds. Similarly, 17% of those over 65 had given to religious causes compared with just 10% of 16-24 year olds. Middle aged people (45-55 and 55-64 year olds) are more likely than any other age groups to have donated to animal welfare causes (35% and 32%). Younger donors are instead more likely to donate to charities supporting physical or mental healthcare: 15% of 24-35 year olds have given to this cause in the past four weeks compared with 7% of those aged 65 and above. There is little difference between age groups in terms of whether they give to a greater variety of causes.

Regionally, those in London are more likely to have given to causes supporting homeless people, housing, and refuge shelters (25% vs 18% average), likely as a result of greater prevalence of homelessness in big cities. Those in Northern Ireland are most likely to have given to religious organisations (21%), which likely reflects the high proportion of people from the country who identify as religious. The data indicates people from Yorkshire and the Humber give to the most causes (2.29), whilst those from the East Midlands appear to give to fewer causes overall (1.87).

CHOICE OF CAUSE VARIES BY CERTAIN DEMOGRAPHICS



26%

Women are more likely than men to support charities that are working with children or young people (26% vs 20%)



25%

A quarter (25%) of those aged 65 and above had given to hospitals and hospices

2.7 How people give

Donating by direct debit and standing order is now the most common way of giving.

We have reported previously on the decline in cash donations during 2020 and 2021. In early 2021 during the third lockdown, cash donations were at their lowest level (23% of donors in the past 12 months). However, more people returned to this method of giving throughout the year, peaking at 39% of donors in December 2021. Nevertheless, as of April 2022, cash giving remains far below its historical norms.

The most common way people report giving to charity in the past 12 months is now through a direct debit or standing order. The proportion using this method steadily increased year on year from 33% in 2018 to 38% in 2021 and early 2022. Buying goods is the second most common method used to donate to charity (31% in 2021), but since mid-2020 there has been a trend towards fewer donors supporting charities in this way. The same is true for purchasing raffle/lottery tickets, which fell to a low of 29% in 2021 since a peak of 38% in 2019.

The proportion of donors giving via a website or app remains higher than it was pre-covid, but not as high as during the first lockdown in spring 2020. In April 2022, 26% of donors gave in this way, compared to 30% in April 2020 and 20% in April 2019.

Giving at a fundraising event has also declined. In 2019 this stood at 23% of donors, falling to 19% in 2020 and further still to 14% in 2021, and 13% in early 2022.

Cash giving remains low, and direct debits/standing orders are now the most common ways of giving to charity





2.8 Being asked to give

Two thirds of people were asked to donate, down from around three-quarters pre-pandemic.

The ongoing trend away from traditional ways of asking for donations continued in 2021, including some channels which were not obviously affected by covid, such as direct mail (28% in 2016 vs 20% in 2021), telephone (7% in 2016 vs 3% in 2021), and television (30% in 2017 vs 25% in 2021).

Overall, fewer people were approached to donate to charity in 2021 than in previous years, with the proportion not approached at all increasing from 27% in 2019 to 32% in 2020 and 36% in 2021.

Some of the most significant decreases over the course of the pandemic are related to in-person interactions or physical places. For example, the proportion saying they have been approached in the street to donate has fallen since 2019, from 34% to 15% in 2021 and 16% so far in 2022. Similarly, door-to-door collections have decreased from 13% in 2019 to 8% in 2021, although this remained unchanged from 2020 (8%). Even as society has become increasingly open in early 2022, the proportion of people being approached to donate in the street is only around half its historic average. The proportion approached at a charity event fell to just 5% – less than half the amount in 2019. With many offices shut or partially open, the proportion approached at work in 2021 remained as low (5%) as it was in 2020 (6%).

More are being approached for a charitable donation online than in the years before the pandemic. In 2021, this figure is 26%, albeit down from 30% in 2020. People were most likely to have been approached online in the early part of 2021 (31% in March and 30% in January), when strong pandemic restrictions were in place. While the proportion being approached this way is similar between men and women, there is a difference between age groups – people aged 16 to 24 are more likely than those 65 and older to have been approached online for donations (31 vs 24%).

Among those contacted by direct mail, 79% received physical mail in the post. However, the proportion receiving an email has increased to 38% in 2021 from 33% in 2019. Charities may have moved to online mailouts to increase the speed with which they can contact potential donors, to save costs, or to reduce their environmental impact by going paperless.

Figure 7: Regardless of whether you gave to charity or not, in which of the following ways have you been approached to donate to charity in the last four weeks?



Base: All adults 16+ 2021 (n=13,575); 2020 (n=13,406); 2019: (n=13,499), 2018: (n=13,277), 2017: (n=12,211), 2016: (n=8,137).



2.9 Frequency of giving

Young people are significantly more likely than they were pre-Covid to say they never give to charity.

The proportion of people who are giving regularly to charity (i.e. either weekly or monthly) is in line with the previous year's results. In total, 27% are regular givers, with most of these giving monthly (24%) and few weekly (3%). In the same pattern as previous years, women are more likely to be regular givers than men (30% vs 24%), and older people are also more likely to be regular givers than younger people (38% over 65s vs 20% 25–34-year-olds).

In line with results on declining donations, fewer are giving from time to time than in 2020 (51% in 2020; 49% in 2021) and more say that they never give to charity (5% in 2020; 6% in 2021).

The increase in the proportion who say that they never give to charity is being driven by younger respondents: the proportion of those aged 16 to 24 who never give to charity has significantly increased, from 6% in 2020 to 9% in 2021, with the proportion of those aged 25 to 34 following a similar pattern (6% in 2020; 8% in 2021). In contrast, there have been no significant changes among those aged 55 to 64 (3% in 2020; 4% in 2021) or 65 and above (2% in 2020; 3% in 2021). The decrease is driven by fewer young people giving from time to time rather than fewer giving regularly. However, it is worth restating that the proportion of older respondents who gave to charity in the past 12 weeks and past four months has fallen since 2020.

There remains a divide within social lines, with ABC1 respondents being more likely to give regularly than C2DEs (32% vs 22%). C2DE respondents are now more likely to say that they never give to charity than they were in 2020 (8% vs 6%).



3.0 | Other ways in which people get involved

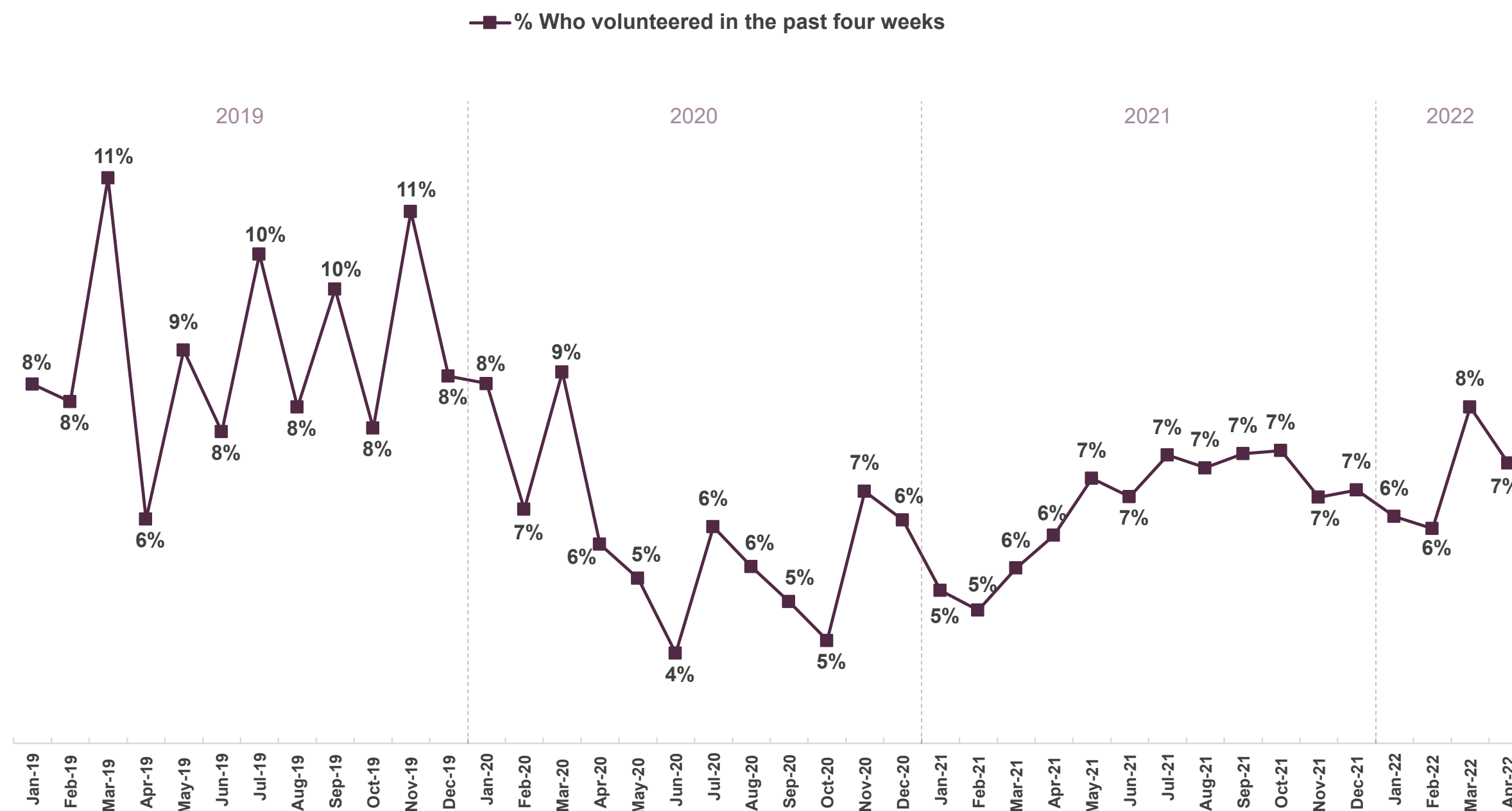


3.1 Volunteering

Our analysis shows that fewer people volunteered than normal throughout 2021 and into 2022. There was a hint of an increase in March 2022, coinciding with efforts towards helping people in Ukraine, but it was not statistically significant.

Full-time students and those working less than eight hours per week are typically amongst those most likely to have volunteered in the past 12 months (17% and 19% respectively). With many universities delaying the return of face-to-face learning, some of the volunteering opportunities that students might normally have had during their studies may not have materialised.

Figure 8: Which, if any of the following have you done in the last four weeks? (Volunteered for a charity)



Base: All adults 16+ 2021 (n=13,575); 2020 (n=13,406); 2019: (n=13,499); 2018: (n=13,277); 2017: (n=12,211); 2016: (n=8,137).

3.2 Using charity shops

IN 2022, A NEW QUESTION WAS ADDED TO THE SURVEY TO CAPTURE HOW PEOPLE ARE ENGAGING WITH CHARITY SHOPS



21%

Between January and April 2022, one in five people (21%) said that they had bought an item from a charity shop and just over three in 10 had donated their clothes or goods.



2%

A very small number - 2% - said that they had volunteered at a charity shop during the same period. 16-34 year olds were significantly more likely to have done this than all older age groups.



3.3 Protesting and petitioning

One notable change during 2021 was that political engagement appears to be falling.

The proportion who took part in a public demonstration or protest fell from 8% in 2019 and 7% in 2020 to just 4% in 2021, a trend which has continued into 2022. At first glance it might seem that this is a result of the various lockdowns, but there has also been a significant decrease in the proportion who signed a petition, including online petitions which would have been unaffected by lockdowns or social distancing (54% in 2019 and 2020; 49% in 2021; and 46% between January and April 2022). The same pattern also emerges in the responses covering behaviour in the past four weeks: in 2021, only 22% had signed a petition in the past four weeks compared to 27% in 2020, and it has remained low into 2022. This broad decrease is reported across the demographics of gender, age, and geography.

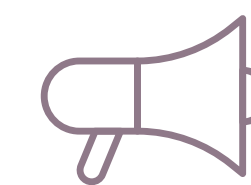
It may be that the decline seen during 2021 reflects a trend back towards the 'baseline' for political engagement of this kind. It is worth noting that responses to this question have been collected since the summer of 2016 when the current iteration of the UK Giving survey commenced – this was just a few weeks before the Brexit referendum. Since then, there were a number of high-profile protests and petitions, particularly around Brexit, climate change, Black Lives Matter and the Covid response, as well as two general elections. It is likely that these issues kept engagement particularly high during that time. Whilst it is our assumption that protesting and petitioning in response to Brexit and Covid policies is likely to be lower in the future (even if feelings remain strong on these points) it will be interesting to see what happens to engagement with other, longer term social issues which have also driven activism in recent times.

ONE NOTABLE CHANGE DURING 2021 WAS THAT POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT APPEARS TO HAVE FALLEN



49%

There has been a significant decrease in the proportion who signed a petition, (54% in 2019 and 2020; 49% in 2021)



4%

Public demonstration or protest participation fell from 8% in 2019 and 7% in 2020 to just 4% in 2021



4.0 | Trust in charities



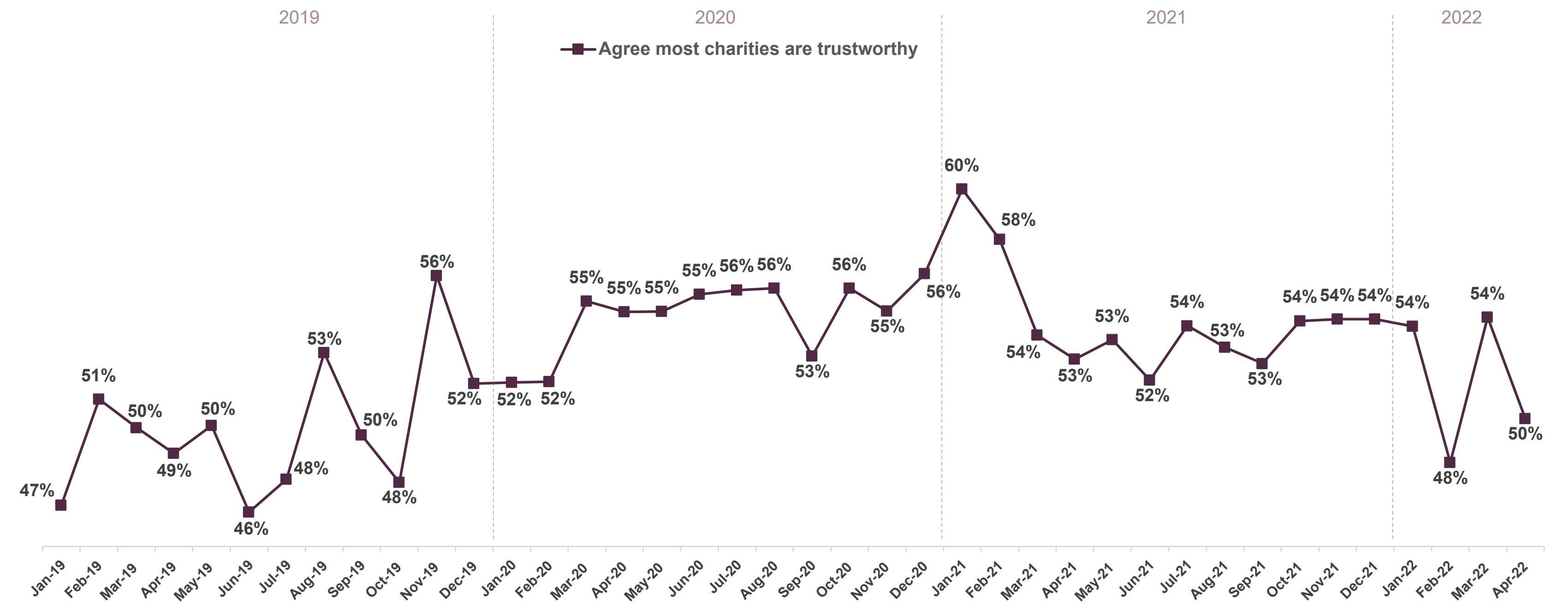
Trust in charities remained higher in 2021, but there are signs it may be returning to baseline.

Over the course of 2021, trust in charities remained stable at 54%, higher than pre-pandemic levels. However, there are some tentative signs that levels of trust may be reverting to their historical average. The number of people who agreed that most charities were trustworthy dipped to 48% in February 2022 – its lowest level since 2019 – and stood at 50% in April, more in line with results dating back before the pandemic.

Men remain less likely to trust charities than women (51% vs 58%) but age does not appear to have that much impact. For example, 16 to 24 year olds are the most likely to say that they trust charities (57%), and people 65 and over are the least likely (53%) – but the difference is small and not statistically significant.

There are larger differences in opinion between social grades. Those from higher social grades are more likely than others to trust charities - three-fifths (60%) of ABC1 respondents trust charities compared with just under half (48%) of C2DE respondents. However, across all social grades, more people trust charities than not.

Figure 9: Proportion of people agreeing that most charities are generally trustworthy (net of 'strongly agree' and 'agree')



Base: All adults 16+ 2021 (n=13,575); 2020 (n=13,406); 2019: (n=13,499); 2018: (n=13,277); 2017: (n=12,211); 2016: (n=8,137).

A woman with glasses and a brown sweater is sitting at a wooden desk, writing in a notebook with a white pen. A laptop is open to her right. The background is a blurred indoor space with plants and a window. A purple banner is overlaid on the left side of the image.

5.0 | 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 a number of changes to how the study is conducted in terms of approach and questions asked. CAF has run the UK Giving survey in its current guise since 2016. The survey is conducted online and collects responses from c. 1,000 people each month. This monthly approach enables us to capture changes in behaviour and attitudes at a granular level, including the impact of the cost of living crisis on charitable giving across the country.

In this report, findings for the calendar year 2021 are based on the responses of 13,575 individuals, unless otherwise indicated. A total of 4,405 interviews from early 2022 have also been included where indicated throughout the report. The sample is constructed in such a way that it is nationally representative of the UK in terms of respondents' sex, age, region/nation and social grade.

All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. The survey was carried out online and the figures have been weighted and are representative of all GB adults (aged 16+).



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