

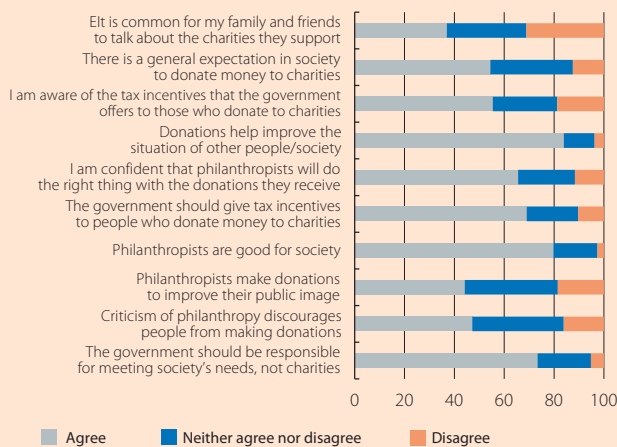
Philanthropy in Spain: social attitudes and behaviours

Donating blood, making a donation or collaborating with NGOs are common forms of solidarity throughout the world. Even a gesture as simple as giving up one's seat for an elderly person can be considered a selfless act of kindness towards others. Solidarity, in short, is expressed through multiple forms of social participation. And philanthropy – the etymological origin of which comes from the Greek φίλος (filos) and άνθρωπος (anthropos), literally «friend of man» or «person who is distinguished by love for their fellow men and by their work for the good of the community», according to the Royal Spanish Academy (Real Academia Española) – is a complement to the actions of the welfare state in addressing social needs. However, there is a lack of evidence on how often and in what way we help others. This Dossier, produced in collaboration with the "la Caixa" Foundation, CaixaBank Research and Pompeu Fabra University, offers a comprehensive view of solidarity in Spain from a dual perspective: offering an overview of the various forms that altruism takes and of the donations made by Spaniards.

In this first article, we examine the social attitudes and philanthropic behaviour of the Spanish population through the representative survey commissioned by the Social Observatory of the "la Caixa" Foundation in 2024.¹ The survey gathers the various perceptions of solidarity and the different ways it is expressed by Spaniards, and it is complemented by the subsequent analysis of monetary donations, identified using anonymised transaction data from CaixaBank customers. This information source allows us to identify donations made by direct debit, transfers, Bizum payments and card payments, and to match it with socio-demographic and financial variables. Specifically, the other articles that make up this Dossier explore the financial contributions made to NGOs and the nature of the recipient entities;² the socio-demographic characteristics of donors and the volumes and amounts of the donations,³ as well as the social response to emergencies, taking the floods that swept the Valencia province in October 2024 as a reference.⁴

Opinions about philanthropy

(% of the total responses to each statement)



Source: «Philanthropy in Spain and Portugal. Knowledge, social attitudes and behaviours», published by the Social Observatory of the "la Caixa" Foundation (2025).

The survey data reveal first, how Spanish citizens perceive philanthropy and, secondly, what their philanthropic behaviours are. In response to the question «Do you know what philanthropy is?», 60% of the population claims to be familiar with the term, although in turn this also means that more than a third is not. Therefore, a first conclusion is that if philanthropic organisations were to improve their communication and explain more clearly to citizens what their activities involve and how they benefit society, it could increase awareness among the population about their function and scope. The perception of philanthropy among citizens, measured based on the degree of respondents' agreement or disagreement with 10 related statements, suggests a fairly favourable overall results in Spain, as seen in the first chart. However, there is a certain distrust of the true motivation of philanthropists: almost 45% of respondents believe that the purpose of their donations is «charity washing». There is also a clear perception that it is the state,

not philanthropy, that should assume the main role in «meeting society's needs» (73%). However, it should be noted that in most cases the two perform complementary functions. Paradoxically, when asking respondents if they believe that donations help improve the situation of others or whether they believe that philanthropists are good for society, the percentage of affirmative responses is resounding: 84% and 80%, respectively.

When asking respondents which issues should be addressed most urgently, health is by far the top priority: over three-quarters (76%) consider it to be the «most important» issue. This is followed by research (62%), human rights (55%), education and

1. See «Philanthropy in Spain and Portugal. Knowledge, social attitudes and behaviours», published by the Social Observatory of the "la Caixa" Foundation (2025).
2. See the article «Donations in Spain: how and to which causes Spaniards donate» in this same Dossier.
3. See the article «The profile of donors in Spain: a charitable majority and a key group of superdonors» in this same Dossier.
4. See the article «The charitable response after the Valencia floods» in this same Dossier.

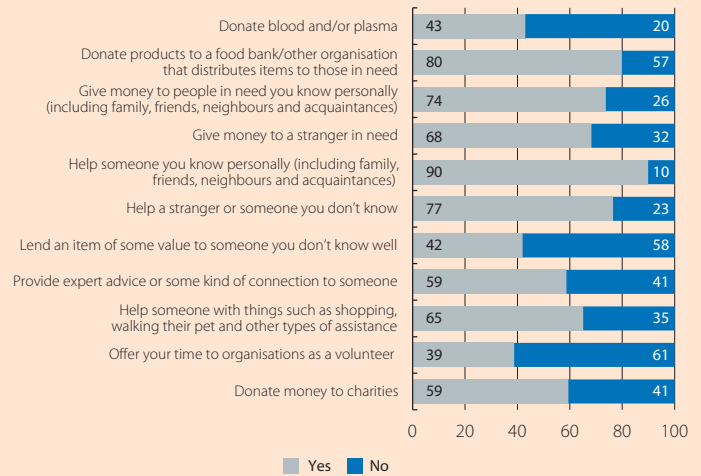
universities (51%), the environment and animals (46%), social action (38%), international cooperation (19%), culture, art and the humanities (17%), sport and leisure (10%), and religion (6%).

The survey also delves into real philanthropic behaviours in relation to a number of prosocial acts. The results show that Spaniards tend to be supportive and charitable in their daily lives. The majority of respondents have performed an act of solidarity at least once during the past year – and in some cases at least once a week or a month. Also, 77% of Spaniards helped a stranger and 74% gave money to an acquaintance. At the more formal end of philanthropic acts, involving the explicit dedication of time to volunteering activities, Spaniards also participate actively: 39% of respondents volunteer with charities, mainly in causes related to health, social action, and the environment and animals. However, despite these very tangible results, respondents are not fully aware that their participation in philanthropic activities is commonplace, nor do they perceive that the degree of altruism among their fellow citizens is relatively high. In fact, they state that the level of solidarity in society is not very high: on a scale from 0 to 10, the average of all the responses lies close to 6. In this context, it would be interesting, as a positive reinforcement, to remind society that philanthropy is a normalised and everyday practice, and that contributing to the collective well-being is part of many people's daily lives.

As for economic support, donating money to charitable causes is quite common: 59% of the Spanish population declares that they have made at least one donation in the last year. The three causes cited above – health, social action, and the environment and animals – were not only the ones that had the most time allotted, but they were also the ones that received the most financial support according to the survey.

In short, Spaniards are more generous than they often realize, and collaborate with time or money on a recurring basis to support the work of charities. Health is the cause that we prioritise the most and to which we donate the most, both in terms of time dedicated to volunteering and in economic terms, but this does not stop us from helping other causes such as food banks (80%) or from helping someone with everyday activities for which they need assistance (65%). As in so many other facets of Spanish life, we just need to believe it a little more.

Acts of solidarity carried out during the last year (% of the total)



Note: «Yes» includes having performed the act with any frequency, i.e. whether weekly, monthly or annually.

Source: «Philanthropy in Spain and Portugal. Knowledge, social attitudes and behaviours», published by the Social Observatory of the "la Caixa" Foundation (2025).

Beth Breeze and Maria Gutiérrez-Domènech

Donations in Spain: how and to which causes Spaniards donate

Solidarity in Spain tends to surge during crises or in the face of crisis or in the face of major collective causes. During the Great Recession, intergenerational aid was a key pillar that helped many families to cope with economic hardship. In the pandemic, the dedication of thousands of essential workers, from both the public and private sectors, was key for society to move forward. Campaigns such as *La Gran Recogida* (the Great Collection) by Los Bancos de Alimentos (Food Banks), *Rastrillo* (Charity Bazar) by Nuevo Futuro (New Future) and *La Marató* (The Marathon) by TV3 show how citizens respond en masse to critical situations. However, solidarity is not limited to certain times of the year or to specific emergencies: every day, thousands of people discreetly support non-profit organisations through financial donations. These daily gestures, although less visible, allow thousands of NGOs to carry out vital work. In this article, we analyse how and to which causes Spaniards donate.

For this analysis, we draw on a unique dataset: the donations made by CaixaBank customers through their banking transactions, duly anonymised.¹ While other survey-based analyses ask individuals about the amount donated, this database records the donations actually made to NGOs at some point of the year throughout the country.² The sample analysed includes donations made by direct debit, transfers, Bizum payments and card payments.

This database contains the monetary donations made by Spaniards in 2024 and allows us to analyse them both from the perspective of the donors (which we analyse in the following article) and from that of the recipient entities, which we analyse here. To do this, we group them according to the main cause they support (international cooperation, health or social services, among others)³ and we use public information that helps us to determine the main purpose of each organisation, combining automatic classification processes with a subsequent manual review. In this way, we classify more than 2,000 NGOs into categories that reflect the predominant cause they support.⁴

Donations to NGOs classified by philanthropic cause in 2024

(%, unless otherwise indicated)

Main cause					Type of donors									
					Women	Age (% in each category)				Annual income (% in each category)			Average annual donation (euros)	Average annual donation as % of income
						16-29 years	30-49 years	50-64 years	65+ years	€0-20,000	€20,000 - €40,000	More than €40,000		
International cooperation	5.3	38.4	21.2	22	52	3.3	24.6	35.9	36.2	30.0	43.8	26.2	262	1.1
Health-related activities	5.6	25.5	18.8	19	54	6.1	26.5	34.0	33.5	34.0	43.0	23.0	164	0.8
Social services	14.3	14.8	28.1	26	53	5.0	24.9	33.9	36.2	31.4	43.3	25.3	247	1.0
Religion	68.7	11.0	52.2	28	49	5.9	20.0	25.4	48.7	35.5	42.7	21.7	347	1.3
Human rights	0.8	3.4	15.4	10	51	7.4	22.1	32.5	38.0	30.7	43.3	26.0	125	1.1
Research	0.5	2.4	20.9	13	53	4.3	17.3	31.3	47.2	29.0	43.3	27.7	166	1.0
Environment, flora & fauna	2.4	2.2	13.9	6	52	8.2	32.6	33.9	25.3	31.9	44.0	24.0	124	0.9
Culture, art & humanities	1.6	1.9	46.4	15	44	1.8	16.5	32.3	49.4	23.3	43.1	33.6	90	0.4
Education & universities	0.9	0.3	41.6	42	51	12.9	44.2	35.3	7.7	37.7	26.6	35.8	314	1.4
Average NGO			25.2	21	52	4.8	24.4	33.6	37.1	31.8	43.3	24.9	231	1.0

Notes: Includes only NGOs with a defined sector. The December effect corresponds to the extra percentage received by an NGO in December compared to a standard month. The annual income and the amount donated as a percentage of income are only defined for customers who have their income deposited into their account. The average NGO corresponds to the amount received by an NGO, regardless of the main cause it supports.

Source: CaixaBank Research, based on financial transaction data of anonymised donations.

1. Due to the nature of data on financial transactions, cash contributions are not included.
2. This analysis focuses on donations made by individuals, and excludes corporate philanthropic work carried out by companies, foundations or other entities.
3. The causes were included according to the classification used in [«Philanthropy in Spain and Portugal. Knowledge, social attitudes and behaviours»](#), published by the Social Observatory of the "la Caixa" Foundation (2025).
4. In order to classify the main cause that the recipient entities support, we use information collected from the entity's name, tax ID number (NIF) or CNAE (National Classification of Economic Activities) code, or other publicly available information, first classifying the NGOs automatically before subsequently performing a manual review. For example, the first letter of an NGO's NIF allows us to identify the legal nature of the entity (G corresponds to associations, F identifies foundations and R is used for religious institutions) and the CNAE code identifies the economic activity carried out by the entity, so an NGO engaged in social action would fall under social services (e.g. 8899 «Other social services without accommodation») and one that provides health services would fall under health activities (e.g. 8690 «Other health activities»).

In 2024, around 90% of the donations made were concentrated in four major causes: international cooperation (38.4%), health (25.5%), social services (14.8%) and religion (11%). The other five causes identified (human rights; research; environment, flora and fauna; culture, art and humanities; and education and universities) received the remaining 10% of the amount donated (see table for further details). Most of the entities that received donations in 2024 are of a religious nature (68.7%), which shows the extent to which they are spread throughout the country – an advantage for responding better in times of crisis – although they received 11% of the total amount donated (based on financial transactions).⁵

The average donation is 25 euros, although some causes typically receive smaller donations, such as those for human rights and those that support health-related activities. In addition, a given entity receives an average of 230 euros annually from the same donor (although they may donate to multiple NGOs). Religious NGOs receive higher amounts on average (347 euros), followed by educational entities (314 euros) and those dedicated to international cooperation (262 euros), while for those linked to culture and the environment it is around 90-120 euros.

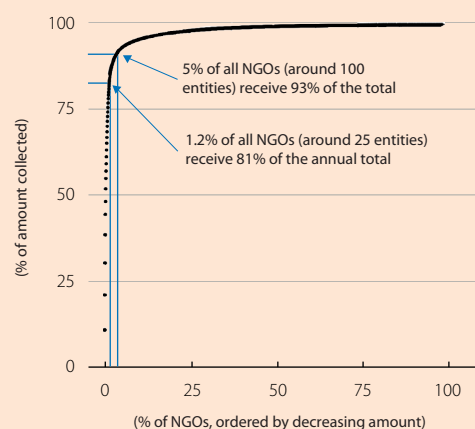
The month of December is the month in which the most donations to NGOs are registered. The *December effect* (i.e. the increase in donations compared to a typical month) is as high as 21% for an average NGO, indicating a strong seasonality in all cases, although there are differences between them and the effect is more pronounced in education (+42%) and religion (+28%).

Causes which support the environment and education have a higher proportion of young donors than average, while culture, religion and research have a higher proportion of older donors. In terms of income level, culture has a higher proportion of high-income donors, while health-related activities and religion have a higher proportion of low-income donors.

What stands out is the heavy concentration of donations among a handful of organisations. As can be seen in the chart, which shows the cumulative sum of donations according to the percentage of NGOs by decreasing amount, a small number of organisations capture the majority of donations. More specifically, 1.2% of all NGOs (around 25 entities) receive 81% of the annual sum of all donations.

In conclusion, our analysis shows that just a handful of causes and entities receive most of the charitable donations made in Spain, with strong seasonality in December and different patterns according to donors' age and income level. The richness of this first analysis opens the door to further research on the patterns of solidarity in Spain that allow non-profit organisations to carry out their work.

Cumulative donations by percentage of NGOs, ordered by decreasing amount (%)



Source: CaixaBank Research, based on financial transaction data of anonymised donations.

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5. It should be recalled that, due to the nature of the data, cash contributions are not included, which may result in an underestimate of the percentage of donations to a greater extent than in other non-profit entities.

The profile of donors in Spain: a charitable majority and a key group of superdonors

After examining how philanthropy is perceived in Spain, and the main charitable causes that Spaniards support, in this third article of the Dossier we address the socio-demographic characteristics of donors who collaborate financially with non-profit entities. To do this, we analyse the donations that individual CaixaBank customers made in 2024 through their banking transactions, using aggregate and duly anonymised data,¹ which allows us to present a detailed profile of donors in Spain and, therefore, understand what they are like and how their help reaches the causes they support.

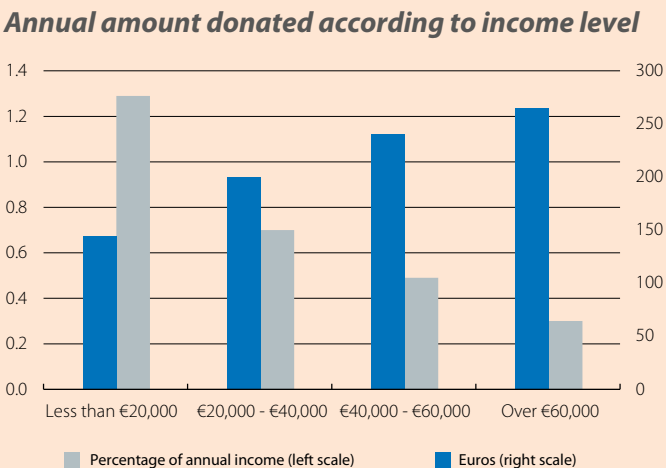
The profile of donors in Spain in 2024

		Frequency	Amount donated						December effect*	Frequency of donations	
		(%)	(in euros)				(as a % of income)		(%)	Regular (3 or more donations per year) (%)	Sporadic (1 or 2) (%)
			Average	P25	P50 (median)	P75	Average	P50 (median)			
TOTAL		100	345	120	180	330	1.5	0.7	21.4	75.0	25.0
Sex	Women	52.3	300	120	180	323	1.6	0.8	15.9	75.5	24.5
	Men	47.7	321	120	192	340	1.4	0.7	18.2	74.6	25.5
Age	From 16 to 29 years old	6.2	147	60	111	168	1.6	0.7	-4.2	62.4	37.6
	From 30 to 49 years old	26.9	237	120	168	262	1.3	0.6	5.7	77.6	22.4
	From 50 to 64 years old	33.7	306	120	204	348	1.4	0.7	15.6	78.8	21.2
	65+ years old	33.2	390	120	234	408	1.7	0.9	29.4	74.8	25.2
Country of birth	Spain	91.1	317	120	192	340	1.5	0.7	17.6	74.9	25.1
	Outside Spain	8.9	235	96	144	240	1.8	0.8	9.6	77.2	22.8
Area of residence	Urban	89.9	321	120	190	340	1.5	0.7	17.7	75.5	24.5
	Rural	10.1	261	120	180	276	1.4	0.7	20.0	70.5	29.5
Annual net income	Less than €20,000	34.5	235	96	144	246	2.9	1.3	14.1	73.3	26.7
	€20,000 - €40,000	42.5	317	120	200	349	1.1	0.7	18.4	77.6	22.5
	€40,000 - €60,000	13.0	368	144	240	400	0.8	0.5	19.0	78.8	21.2
	Over €60,000	10	457	164	265	492	0.5	0.3	26.8	79.2	20.8

Notes: The frequency corresponds to the percentage of the total for each socio-demographic category. * The December effect corresponds to the extra percentage donated by an individual in December compared to a standard month. The annual income and the amount donated as a percentage of income are only defined for customers who have their income deposited into their account.
Source: CaixaBank Research, based on financial transaction data of anonymised donations.

The profile of donors in Spain is diverse: it includes men and women of all ages and income levels, as shown in the first table. However, generally speaking, we note that the average donor is older (two thirds are over 50 years old, vs. 49% of the population), has higher incomes (two thirds earn more than 20,000 euros a year, vs. 48% of the population) and is more likely to reside in urban areas (90%, vs. 84% of the population). Most donors also collaborate on a regular basis, with 3 out of 4 donating at least three times a year, while the remaining quarter donates more sporadically (once or twice).

The average monthly amount donated to charities is almost 30 euros (345 euros per year), although there is significant dispersion among donors. If we divide them into four equal groups according to the amount donated, from lower to higher, we see that the first 25% of donors contribute 10 euros or less per month (120 euros per year); the second group, from 10 to 15 euros per month (from 120 to 180 euros per year); the third group, from 15 to 27.5 euros per month (from 180 to 330 per year), and the fourth, more than 27.5 euros per month (330 euros per year).



Note: Median amount donated in each income tranche. The amount donated as a percentage of income is only defined for customers who have their income deposited into their account.
Source: CaixaBank Research, based on financial transaction data of anonymised donations.

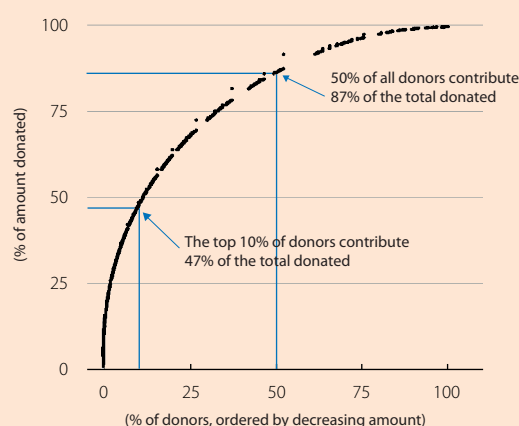
1. See the article [«Philanthropy in Spain: social attitudes and behaviours»](#) in this same Dossier for further details on the characteristics of the data.

As seems logical, individuals with higher incomes make larger donations than those with lower incomes (see first chart). However, lower-income donors make a greater effort relative to their income: donors earning less than 20,000 euros per year contribute 1.3% of their income to charities on average, while this effort is less for higher income brackets, up to the minimum of 0.3% donated by the highest-income group.

Most donors make small contributions. However, the half of donors who donate the highest amounts contribute 87% of the total amount raised. Moreover, a group of *superdonors* who make up the top 10% contribute 47% of the total alone, as can be seen in the second chart.

These *superdonors* are mostly older people (85% are over 50 years old) and are highly consistent in their contributions (8 in 10 donate more than 12 times a year). In general, *superdonors* donate around 740 euros a year, compared to 120 euros for other donors. In addition, their economic effort is proportionately greater: they allocate 2.3% of their income to charitable causes, compared to 0.5% in the case of other donors. Although they tend to have higher incomes, they are not necessarily millionaires: more than 4 in 10 *superdonors* earn between 20,000 and 40,000 euros a year. In short, *superdonors* not only contribute more, but they do so regularly and at the cost of greater effort.

Cumulative amount donated by percentage of donors, ordered by decreasing amount (%)



Source: CaixaBank Research, based on financial transaction data of anonymised donations.

Characteristics of donors according to the annual amount donated in 2024

Proportion, unless otherwise indicated (%)

		Superdonors	Other donors	Total of the sample
Percentage of donors		10	90	–
Total donations received		47	53	–
Percentage of donors who make more than 1 monthly donation		80	20	25
Average annual donation in euros		1,204	150	345
Median annual donation (P50) in euros		740	120	180
Average annual donation as a % of income		5.4	0.9	1.5
Median annual donation (P50) as a % of income		2.3	0.5	0.7
Age	From 16 to 29 years old	1.0	6.6	6.2
	From 30 to 49 years old	15.0	27.8	27
	From 50 to 64 years old	34.8	33.3	33.7
	65+ years old	49.3	32.4	33.2
	Total	100	100	–
Annual net income	Less than €20,000	18.2	36.4	34.5
	€20,000 - €40,000	44.8	42.2	42.5
	€40,000 - €60,000	18.1	12.4	13
	Over €60,000	18.9	8.9	10
	Total	100	100	–

Source: CaixaBank Research, based on financial transaction data of anonymised donations.

In short, financial giving in Spain is supported by a broad base of donors who make modest contributions, complemented by a small group of *superdonors* who account for a large part of the total amount donated. This pattern reflects the importance of both mass participation and the intensive commitment of some individuals. What defines a *superdonor*? Becoming one does not mean donating exorbitant figures, but rather giving regularly and within your means. Every contribution counts, but commitment is what makes the difference.

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The charitable response after the Valencia floods

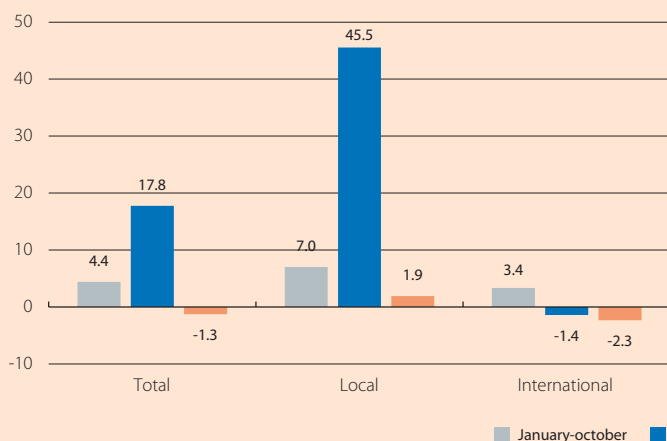
On 29 October 2024, the Valencian Community suffered one of the worst natural disasters in its history. A high-altitude isolated low-pressure system – known as a «DANA» in Spanish – caused torrential rains, with burst river banks and severe floods, destroying homes, businesses, and claiming the lives of more than 200 people. Thousands of public servants mobilised to help in the face of the catastrophe, joining the extraordinary response from citizens and organisations.¹ Undoubtedly, we all have images engraved in our minds of men and women crossing the Turia river, bailing the water out of houses, battling the mud with shovels and brooms, and supplying the volunteers with water and food.

From the outset, at CaixaBank Research we were able to analyse the impact of this disaster from an economic perspective. By monitoring consumption in the area hardest hit by the floods, we were able to track the recovery and note its inequality; today there are still areas and business establishments that have not fully returned to normal.² With the passage of time, we have also been able to understand the charitable reaction of citizens to an emergency of this magnitude, based on their monetary contributions. In particular, in collaboration with Pompeu Fabra University, we have studied the change in the aggregate volume and in the number of donations that were made in the wake of the floods through CaixaBank banking operations, using duly anonymised data.³ To this end, in this analysis we will separate the change in donations made to NGOs that operate primarily within Spain, and who could mobilise resources *in situ* more expeditiously (usually larger and better-known organisations, and those which had the ability to implement campaigns to attract donations the quickest),⁴ from those which operate mainly outside Spain.⁵ We also compare the charitable reaction of donors according to the distance between their place of residence and the epicentre of the floods. This first descriptive analysis is complementary to another academic analysis currently underway, which is more focused on how people's differing degree of altruism impacts their charitable reaction following a natural disaster, and which we will publish soon.⁶

The first conclusion of the study is that Spaniards' reaction to the disaster was highly supportive: charities saw the donations they receive increase by 18% year-on-year in November, compared to 4.4% recorded in the previous months. In particular, NGOs operating within Spain registered an increase of 45% in November. This figure is much higher than the +7% year-on-year that they received from January to October, and it stands out even more because of the fall recorded in donations made to NGOs operating in the international arena (–1.4% year-on-year in November vs. +3.4% from January to October). A similar phenomenon, albeit less pronounced, is observed when analysing the number of donations. This increase, concentrated in local NGOs, is the same one that we find using more

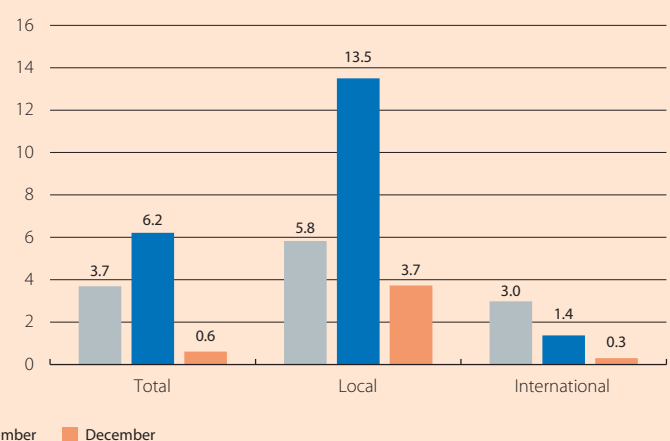
Aggregate donations to charities in 2024, by period and location of their activity

Year-on-year change (%)



Number of donations to charities in 2024, by period and location of their activity

Year-on-year change (%)



Source: CaixaBank Research, based on financial transaction data of anonymised donations.

1. See, for example, the response of the associative sector to the floods: «El papel de las fundaciones ante la DANA: solidaridad, reconstrucción y futuro», Spanish Foundations Association (Asociación Española de Fundaciones, AEF).

2. See the Focuses «Economic impact of the floods in the Valencia province» in the MR12/2024, «Economic situation in the Valencia province six months after the floods» in the MR06/2025 and «Economic situation in the Valencia province one year after the floods» in the MR11/2025.

3. See the article «Donations in Spain: how and to which causes Spaniards donate» in this same Dossier for further details on the characteristics of the data.

4. Among these campaigns, it is worth mentioning the one carried out by the Social Action teams at CaixaBank among the bank's customers and employees.

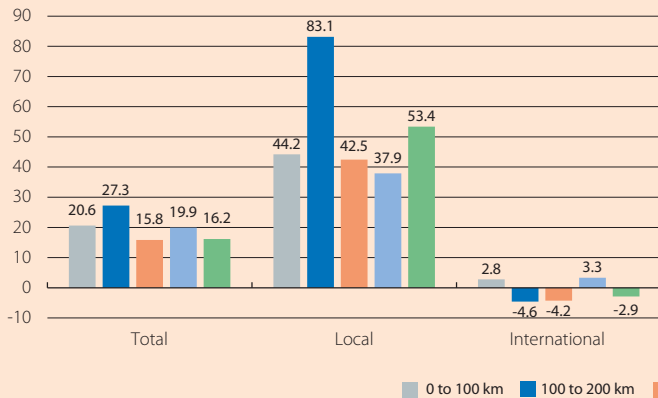
5. The data do not allow us to analyse donations directed strictly to the floods, only to differentiate between entities that operate predominantly at the local or international level.

6. We will present the article «Universalist preferences and natural disasters: a view from bank accounts» at the American Economic Association conference to be held in Philadelphia in January 2026.

sophisticated statistical techniques that allow us to identify the exceptional nature of the wave of solidarity that emerged as a result of the floods. Specifically, we estimate a differences-in-differences regression of the average donation at the census district level, controlling for socio-demographic variables (age, income, etc.), with treatment exposure determined by the distance from the epicentre of the floods and whether the area is prone to flooding.

Aggregate donations to charities in November 2024, by distance from the epicentre of the floods

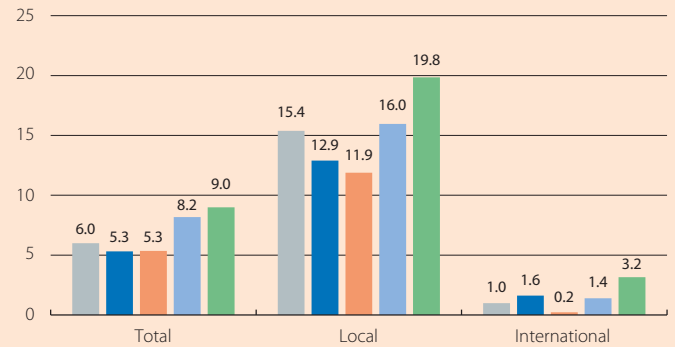
Year-on-year change (%)



Source: CaixaBank Research, based on financial transaction data of anonymised donations.

Number of donations to charities in November 2024, by distance from the epicentre of the floods

Year-on-year change (%)



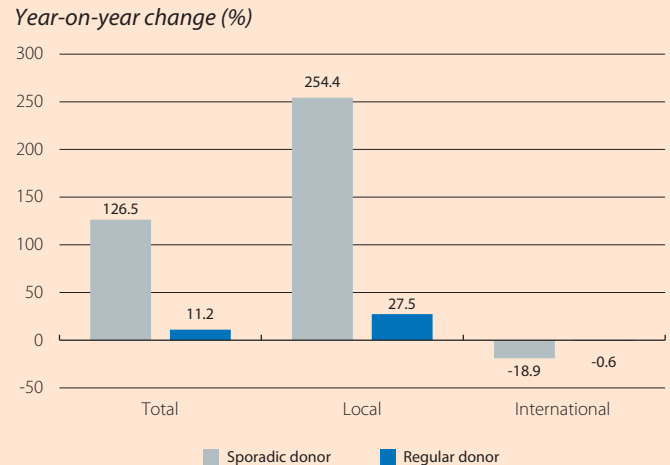
The peak of solidarity observed in November, however, seems to rapidly fade. In December, donations collected for local causes increased even less than in the period from January to October, indicating that the increase in donations we normally see in the last month of the year was perhaps brought forward to November to support those affected by the floods. This phenomenon (the sharp increase in donations in the few weeks following the disaster and the rapid decline thereafter) suggests that the charitable response to an emergency is intense but brief.

On the other hand, the geographical proximity to a disaster also has a significant influence on the charitable reaction. People residing closer to the flooded areas increased their donations to a greater extent than those living further away (excluding the very nearby areas, probably themselves affected by the disaster, albeit to a lesser extent). Residents in areas located between 100 and 200 kilometres from the epicentre, mostly within the Valencian Community, contributed 83% more to local causes than in November of the previous year, and they reduced their donations to NGOs operating mostly abroad by 4.6% year-on-year. The increase was significant, but minor, in areas more than 300 kilometres away, with increases of around 40% and 50%. This result shows how people's altruism or empathy can be greater in the communities closest to the disaster, a phenomenon known in economic literature as «particularism» or «in-group bias».

Finally, sporadic donors were the ones who reacted the most to the floods, with their donations to local causes surging by over 250% in November 2024. Regular donors (those who donate three or more times a year) also increased their contributions, albeit to a lesser extent (+27%). The most likely reason for this is that, as we explained in the previous article, their contributions were already higher, accounting for 55% of the increase in donations to local causes (compared to 45% for sporadic donors).

Donations in November 2024, by frequency of the donor

Year-on-year change (%)



Source: CaixaBank Research, based on financial transaction data of anonymised donations.

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