

WORLD GIVING REPORT

GIVING IN UAE

2025

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An aerial photograph of a large crowd of people participating in a marathon or triathlon. The participants are spread across a wide asphalt road and a grassy area. Many are wearing colorful athletic gear. A red banner with white text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

01 INTRODUCTION

Welcome

Introduction

This report reveals public attitudes and behaviours in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) towards giving and charity. It is the result of our partnership with the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF), and part of the [World Giving Report](#) 2025 (WGR).

The WGR is a global initiative led by the Charities Aid Foundation to survey over 55,000 people across 101 countries. The data presented in this country report unpacks the giving landscape in the UAE and shows how the country compares regionally and internationally. It identifies trends and focus areas and tells us about people's motivations for giving and preferred models for doing so.

Key findings

- People gave an average of 1.92% of their personal income to charity, making them the seventh most generous globally, and the most generous high-income country surveyed.
- Faith and religion are key drivers for giving in the UAE.
- When it comes to volunteering, just 19% of respondents gave up their time during 2024, presenting an untapped opportunity for NGOs to engage with their donors.
- More than three quarters (79%) of respondents said they thought the Government had either a positive or very positive influence on the charity sector in the UAE, significantly higher than regional and global averages.



Louise Redvers
Managing Editor, Circle
MENA

“The UAE stands out as a beacon of generosity on the global stage with a culture of giving woven into the psyche of its residents.”

About us

Circle

Circle is a community platform committed to enhancing the impact and effectiveness of philanthropy throughout the Middle East and beyond. Our mission is to foster a more collaborative, strategic, and results-driven philanthropic ecosystem.

We connect donors, foundations, nonprofits, and social enterprises to build strong networks, share actionable knowledge, and generate insights that amplify giving across the region. By working together, we aim to unlock the full potential of philanthropy and create a powerful multiplier effect for social good.

The Circle website offers a trusted hub of curated resources—from practical how-to guides and real-world case studies to expert-led workshops and exclusive member events. All our content is available in English and Arabic.

We also have a podcast, called **Shaping Philanthropy**, and the **Circle Index**, a database profiling more than 170 regional donors and nonprofits.

Circle is a joint initiative by **Philanthropy Age** and the **Pearl Initiative**, with support from the **Gates Foundation**.

www.CircleMena.org

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 vibrant pattern. The surfboards come in various colors including blue, yellow, red, and black. The people are small figures from this high angle, mostly wearing dark clothing. The ocean waves are visible at the top of the frame, with white foam breaking onto the shore.

02 THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

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

UAE donors among world’s most generous.

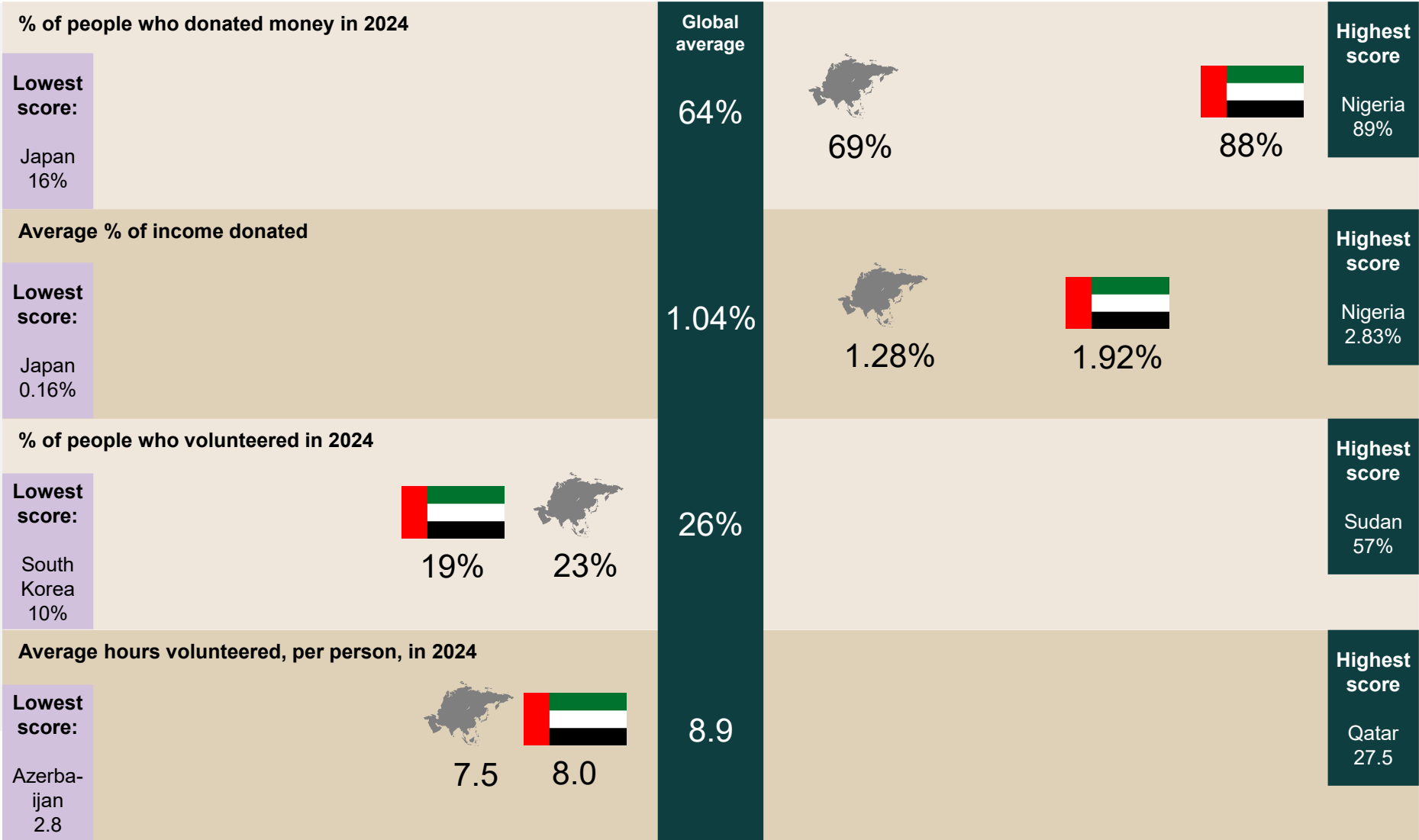
Nearly nine out of 10 (88%) of UAE respondents donated money during 2024, well above the Asian and global averages.

People in the UAE were also more generous when compared to other parts of the world, allocating 1.92% of their income — nearly double the global average of 1.04%.

These percentages reflect a deeply-ingrained culture of giving across the UAE and an active charity sector.

Volunteering, however, was less prevalent in the UAE than elsewhere, with less than one in five (19%) having given up their time over the last 12 months.

Local NGOs should consider ways to get more members of the community more involved.



Base: All (507)

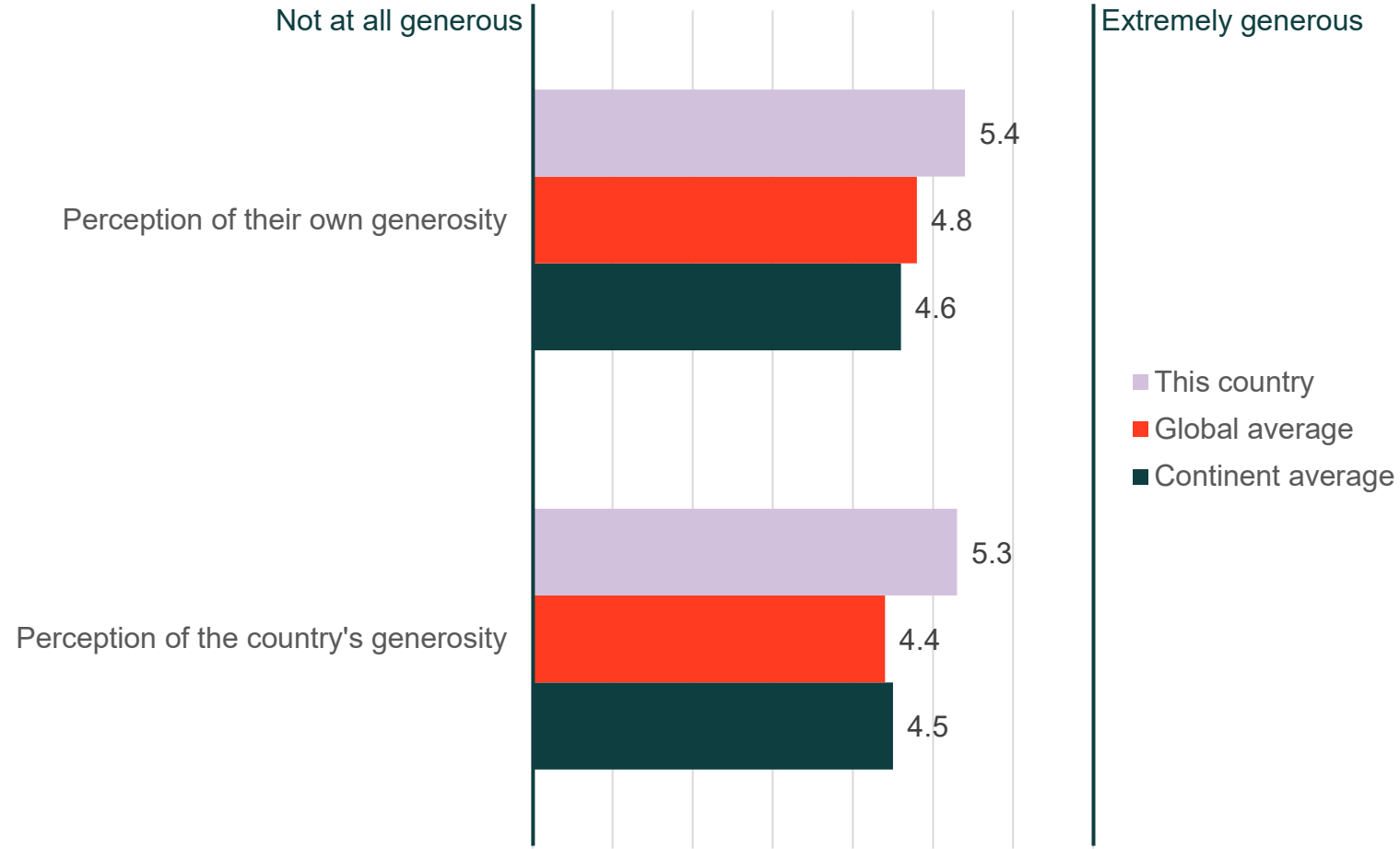
Perceptions of their own generosity.

Proud to give.

UAE residents aren't shy about their charitable spirit, ranking themselves 4th globally in perceived generosity.

Interestingly, their self-perception slightly exceeds their actual ranking (9th) measured by actual donations as a percentage of income.

This confidence reflects a nation proud of its giving culture, though it may also signal an opportunity to convert perceived intent into even more impactful giving, particularly beyond financial support.



UAE ranks 4th out of 101 countries for how generous they think they are.

They are 9th in terms of the proportion of income they donate.

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 bags, boxes, and chairs are scattered around the tents and the edges of the court. A row of white folding chairs is lined up along the top edge of the court. The court has yellow and red painted areas, including a large yellow semi-circle on the right side. The surrounding area is grassy.

03 ASPECTS OF GENEROSITY

The proportion of people who give money in different ways.

The influence of faith.

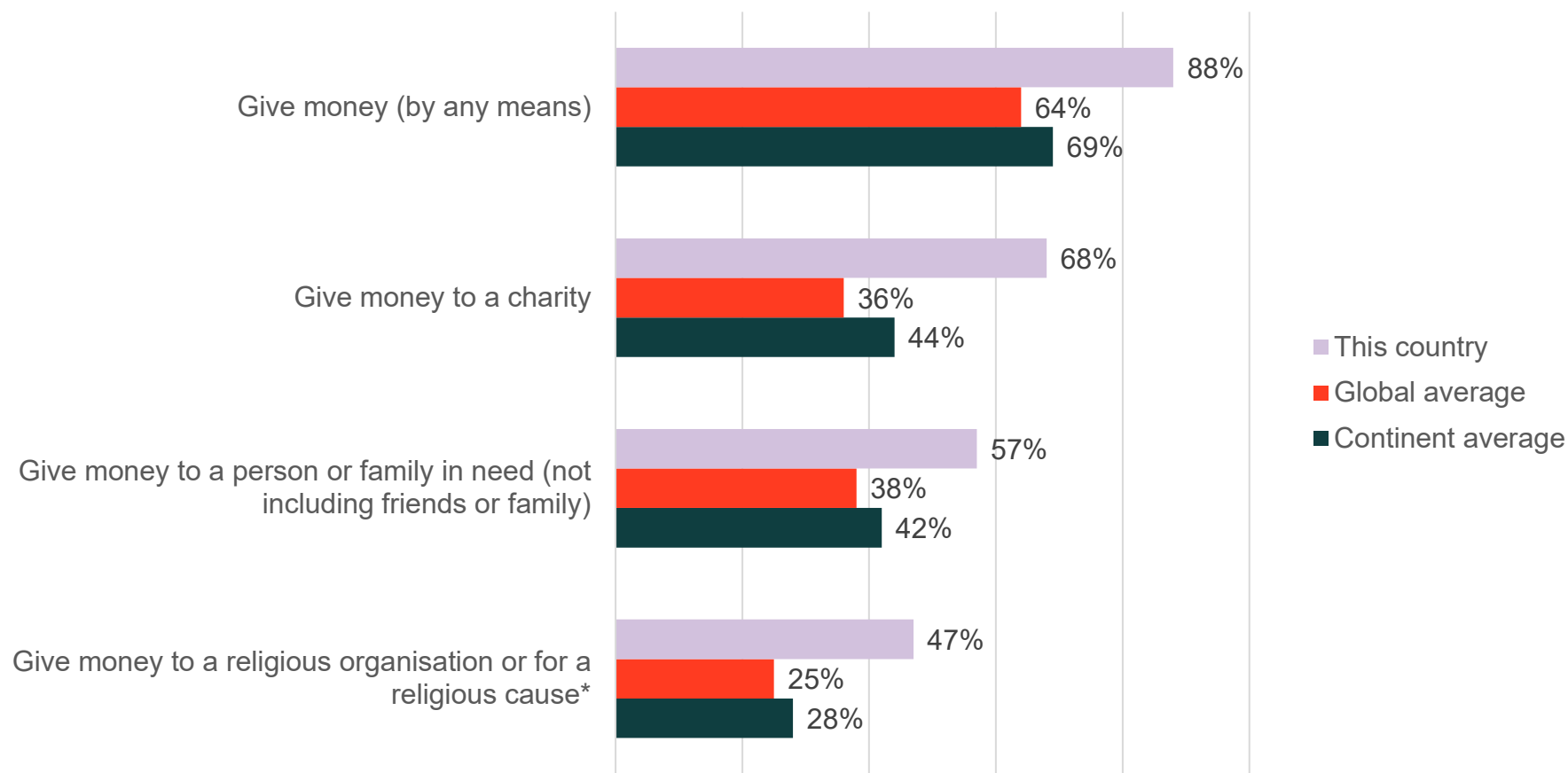
Giving in the UAE is shaped by tradition, community and faith.

Most donors give to charities (68%) and individuals in need (57%), but religious causes command a powerful 47% — almost double the global average.

This underlines how deeply faith drives generosity in the country, whether through zakat or other forms of religious giving.

Yet, the balance of recipients also hints at a nuanced trust landscape where people are nearly as likely to help a neighbour as they are to support a formal charity.

Q: During 2024, did you do any of the following? (All, n = 507)



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 recurring rhythm.

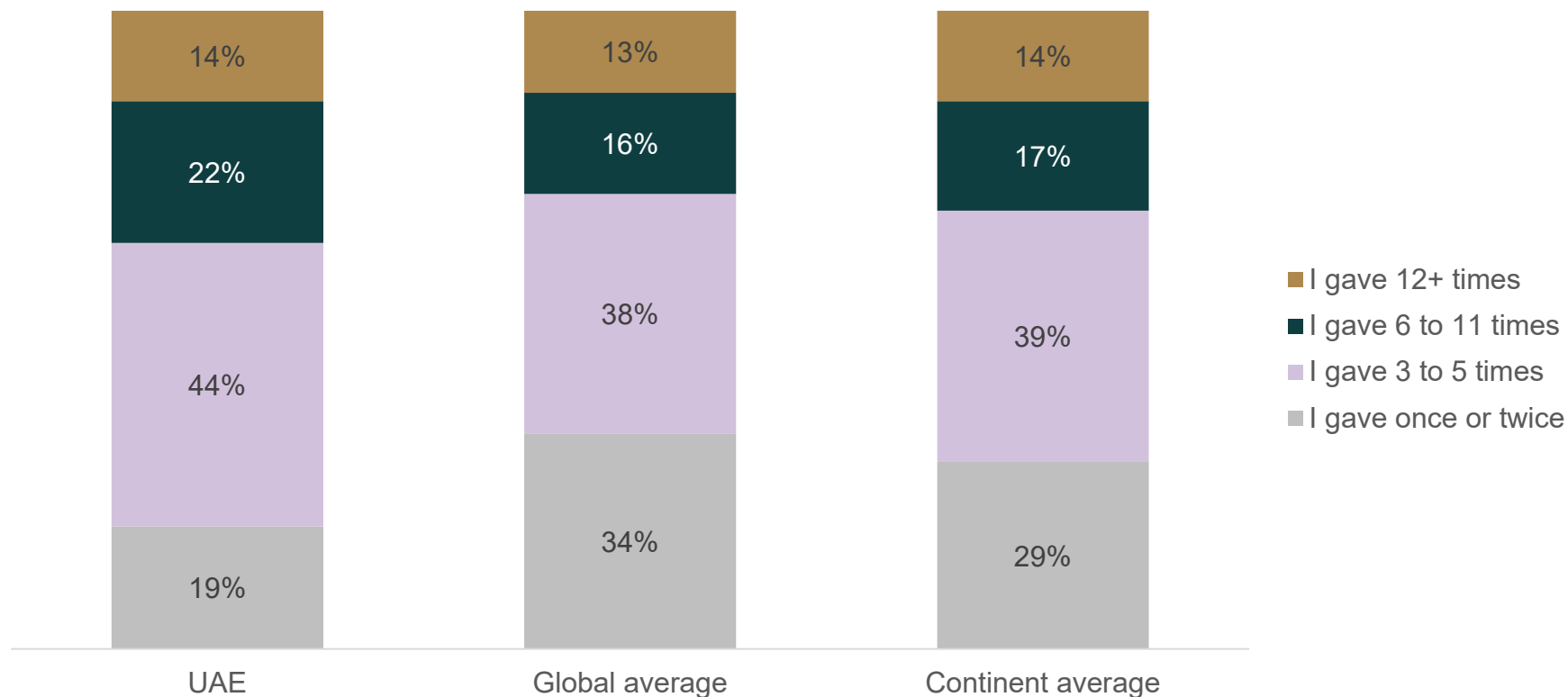
Philanthropy in the UAE isn't just a seasonal gesture; it's a recurring rhythm.

Almost half of donors (44%) gave between 3–5 times during the year, and more than one third (36%) gave more than six times.

This pattern reflects a community that integrates generosity into daily life, not just during Ramadan and other calendar events.

It may also be explained by the frequency of humanitarian appeals linked to regional crises, as well as the high volume of overseas workers sending money in response to natural / climate-related disasters in wider Asia.

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 = 448)



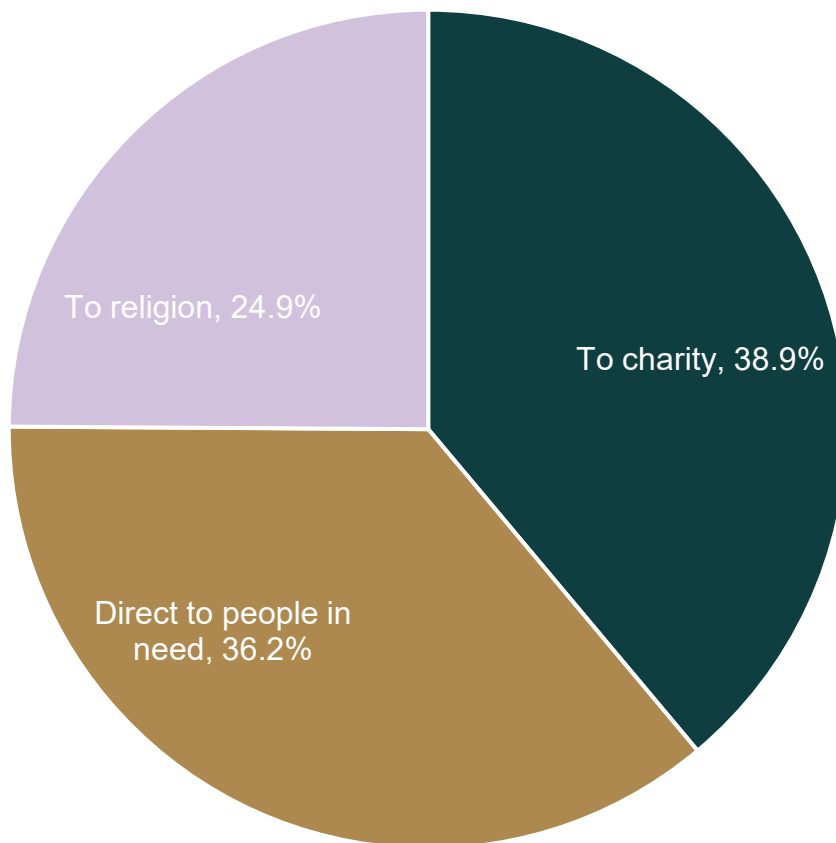
Share of donations.

Charities received the highest share of the value of all donations.

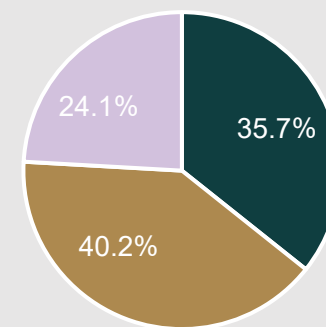
The value shares broadly mirror the trend in how likely people are to give through each means — showing that levels of generosity are similar, regardless of the route.

The UAE is very comparable with the global and Asian averages.

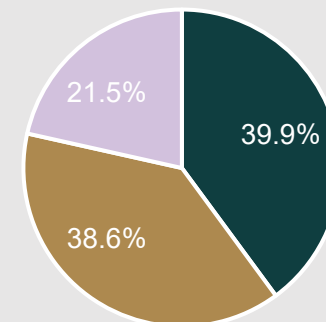
The share of the value of all donations made in 2024, across the three different routes. *(People who had given money, n = 448)*



Global average



Continent average



Donations as a proportion of income.

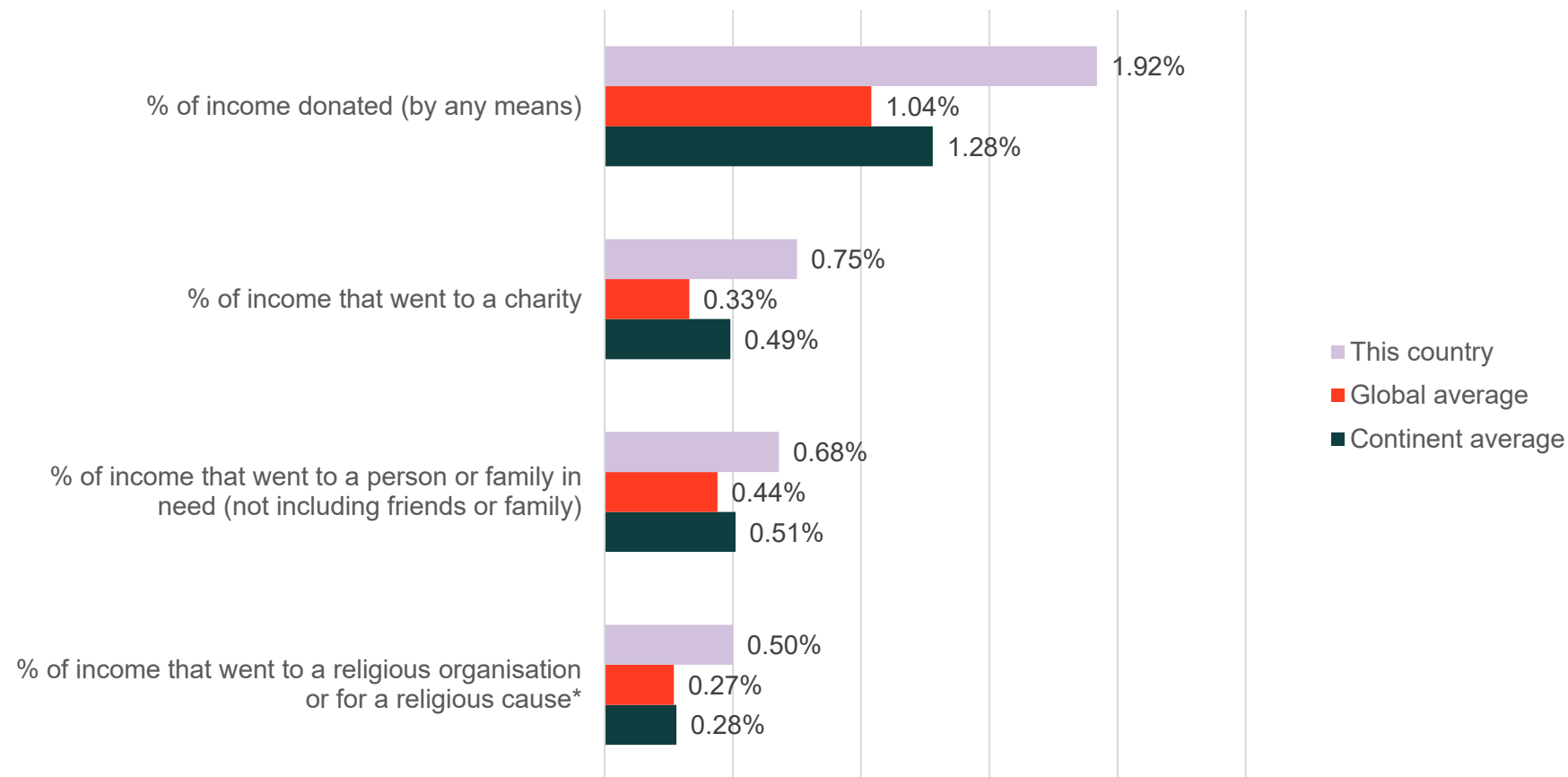
The UAE among world's most generous.

People in the UAE gave away 1.92% of their income — putting them in the global top ten for generosity by this measure.

The percentage of income gifted by people in the UAE was almost double the global average of 1.04% and well above the 1.28% recorded across Asia.

Religious obligations like zakat make giving an ingrained part of financial planning. There is also a strong sense of duty among expatriate workers who live in the UAE primarily to earn money to support communities back home (although some of this may be through remittances, which aren't captured here).

The average proportion of income people gave to each of the three donation routes, and overall. (All, including those donating zero, $n = 507$).



*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.

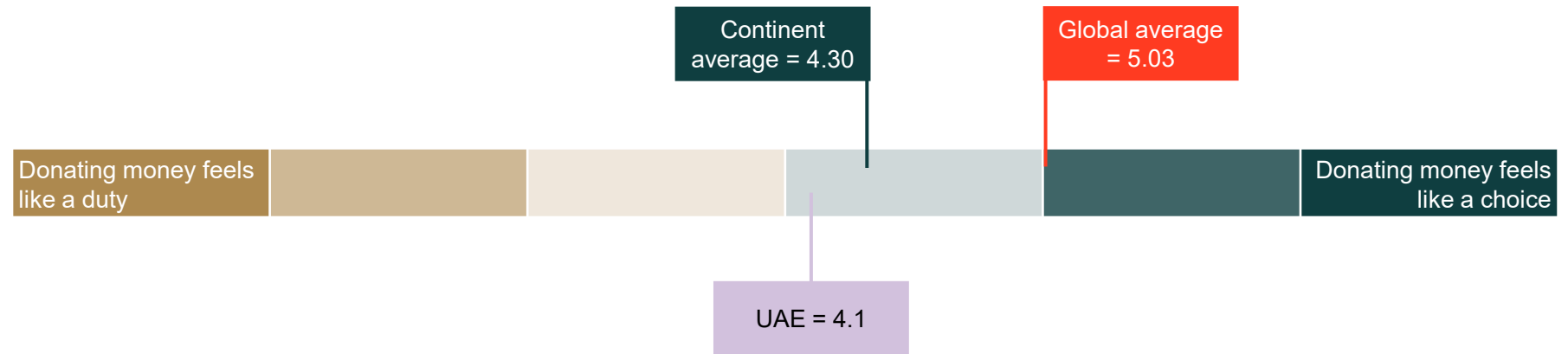
Giving is ingrained in the culture of the UAE.

People were asked how they felt about giving money, on a scale of 1 (feeling like a duty) to 7 (feeling like a choice).

The UAE scored 4.1, which sits somewhere between duty and desire.

This figure is lower than both the regional and global averages, reinforcing how deeply charity is embedded in the UAE psyche, often guided by faith obligations like zakat rather than purely discretionary acts.

The average score when people were asked how donating money feels.
(People who had given money, $n = 448$).



Reasons for giving money.

Making a difference.

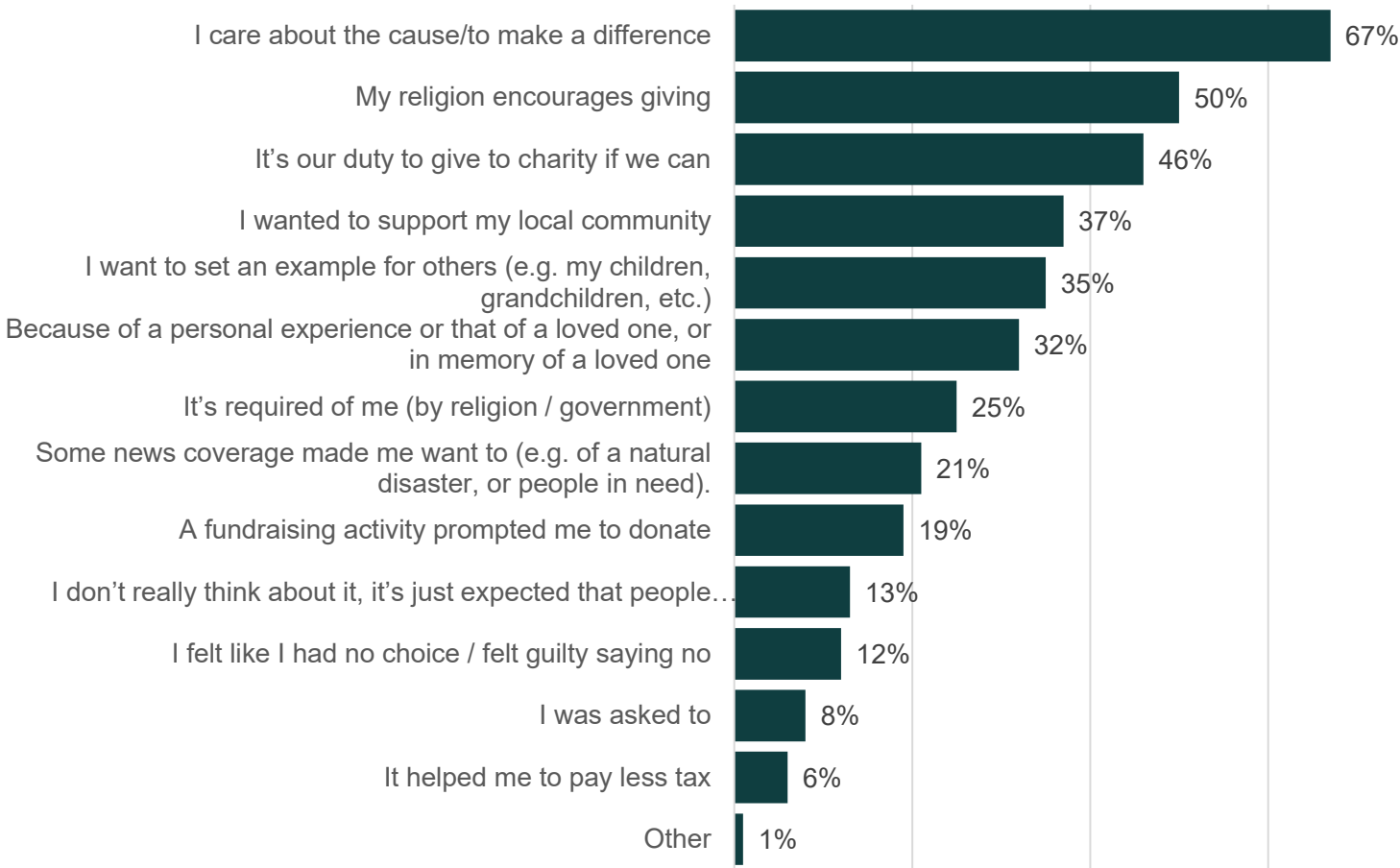
More than two thirds (67%) of people in the UAE cited caring about a cause / wanting to make a difference as a reason to donate, largely consistent with the overall averages.

Another standout reason for giving (cited by 50% of respondents) was being encouraged by religion. This is significantly higher than the regional and global scores (37% and 29%, respectively.)

In a country where faith permeates daily life, it's no surprise that giving is both spiritual and strategic.

Just 6% of respondents cited tax reasons as a motivator, to be expected in a country where rules around tax relief on charitable donations are still being developed.

Which of the following, if any, are reasons that you gave away money in 2024?
(People who had given money, n = 448).



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 (62%)
2. It's our duty to give if we can (39%)
3. My religion encourages giving (37%)

Reasons for not giving money.

Non-donors like to give in-kind.

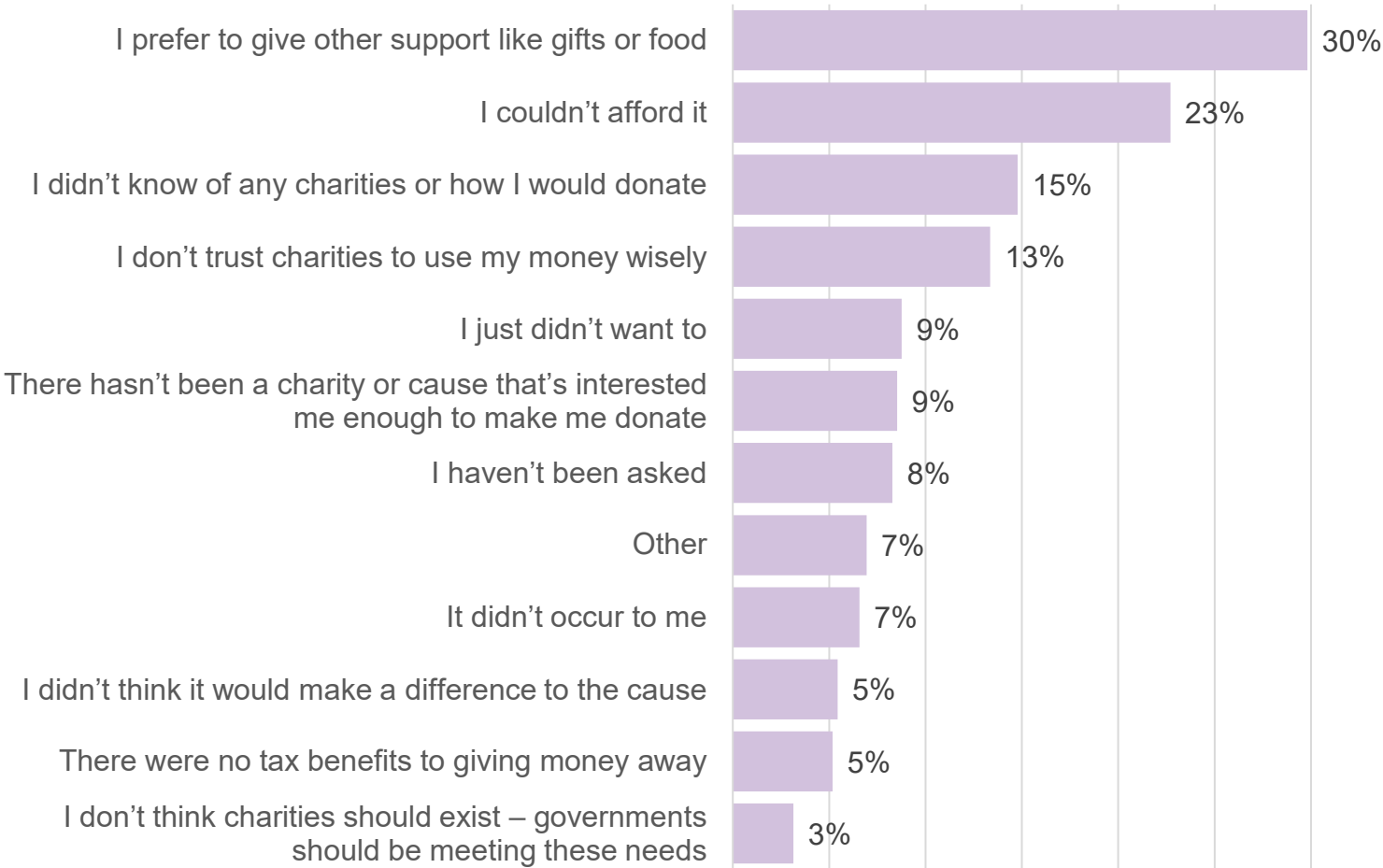
Close to one third (30%) of non-donors in the UAE said they did not make financial donations during 2024 because they preferred to give in-kind support like clothes, gifts, or food.

Meanwhile, 15% of non-donors said they didn't know how to donate and 13% said they did not trust charities to use their money wisely.

While regionally and globally, a lack of means was the main barrier to giving, in the UAE, just 23% reported this, much lower than global and regional averages.

This suggests that whether people in the UAE do/ don't give, it's more about an accessible method than their means.

What would you say are the main reasons that you did not give money away in 2024? (People who had not given money, n = 59).



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 (35%)
2. I prefer to give other support like gifts or food (20%)
3. I don't trust charities to use my money wisely (14%)

What would increase donations?

Impact matters.

People in the UAE care deeply about how their charitable donations are used. Nearly half (42%) of respondents said they would be more inclined to give if charities provided clearer information about their outcomes and impact, and if they had greater confidence in the sector's regulation.

Additionally, 38% expressed a desire to better understand how their contributions are spent.

Amid this demand for transparency and accountability in the non-profit space, there are clear opportunities for nonprofits to tap into this thirst for information to engage new donors.

The top three reasons that would make the respondent likely to give more money, goods or time to charities in 2025. (All, n = 507)

42%

Knowing more about the results and impact that a charity has

42%

Knowing the charity sector is well regulated

38%

Knowing more about how my money would be spent

The causes people support through donating.

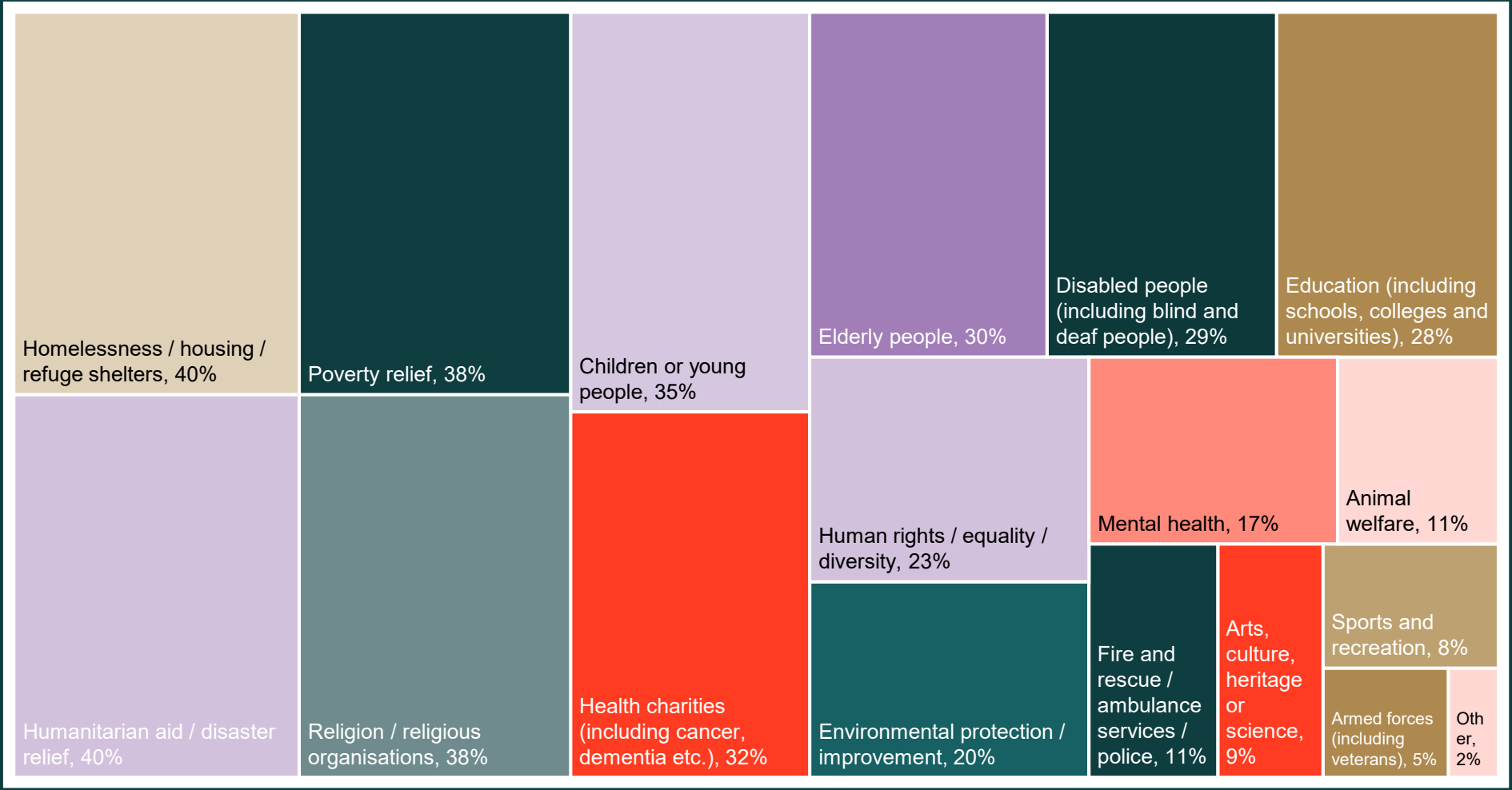
Humanitarian response.

When crises strike, UAE donors step up. Humanitarian and disaster relief causes drew the broadest support, with a significant number of donors contributing both locally and abroad.

The strong level of support for overseas causes reflects the UAE’s deeply international population — and a global sense of responsibility from an emerging economy keen to make a name for itself in the Global South.

Religious organisations and charities working to support children, help with homelessness, and provide healthcare were other leading focus areas for UAE donors.

Which cause(s) did you give money to in 2024? (People who had given money, n = 448)



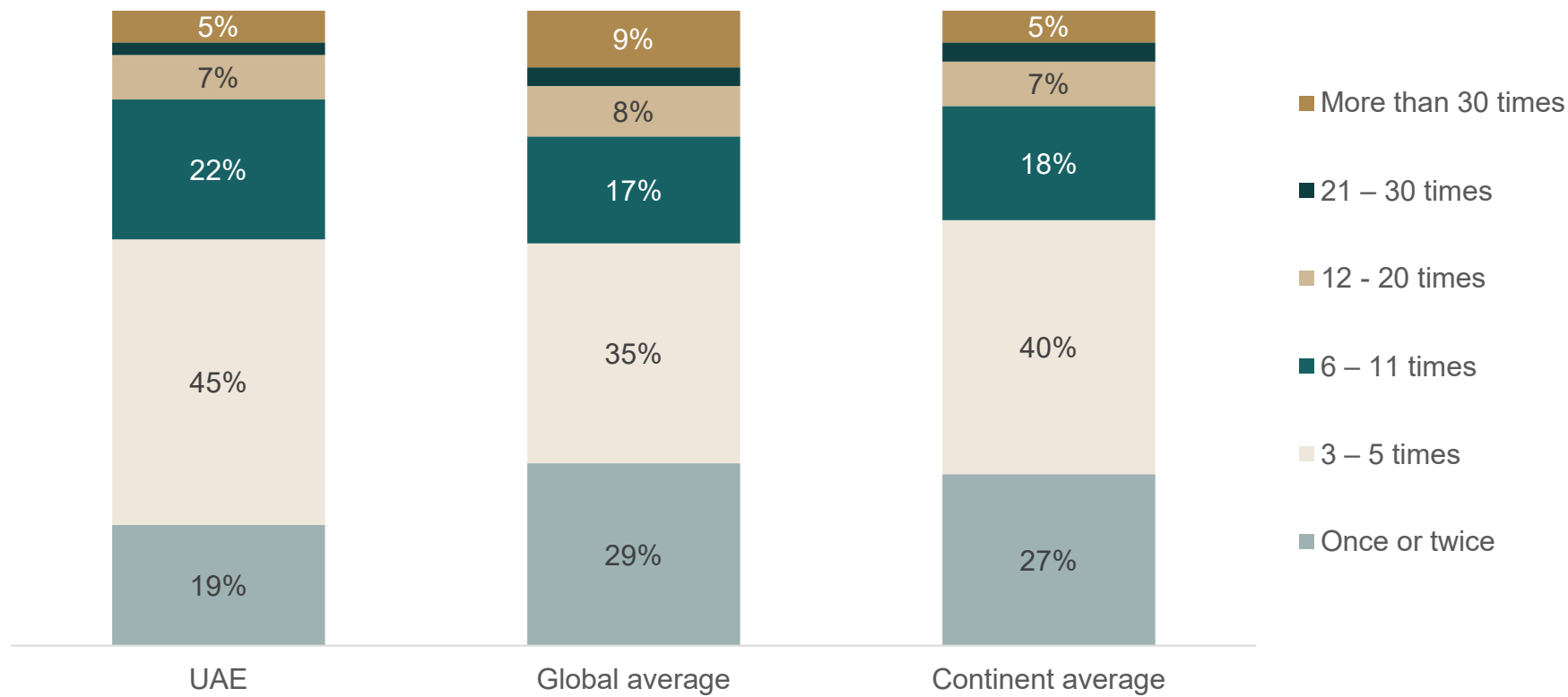
Frequency of volunteering, per person.

Committed to a cause.

Nearly half (45%) of UAE respondents who said they volunteered did so between 3-5 times during the year, and one in five (22%) 6-11 times.

This is above regional and global averages and shows deep commitment to a cause, even if the actual number of volunteers was low compared to other countries.

How often did you do unpaid, voluntary work in 2024 that benefitted people other than your family or friends? *(Those who volunteered, n = 96)*



Average time spent volunteering, per person.

Generous with time.

Although the number of people in the UAE who said they had volunteered during 2024 was lower than global and regional averages, the average time they spend doing it was in the middle at eight hours.

This time commitment is impressive and shows a strong responsibility to a cause or campaign.

NGOs in the UAE may wish to explore ways to create more volunteering opportunities to tap into this rich stream of generosity.

8 hours

On average, people in the UAE spent this time volunteering in 2024

(All, n = 507) [nb – this is overall, so includes all those who did nothing within the average]

9 hours

Global average

7 hours **30** minutes

Continent average

The causes people supported through volunteering.

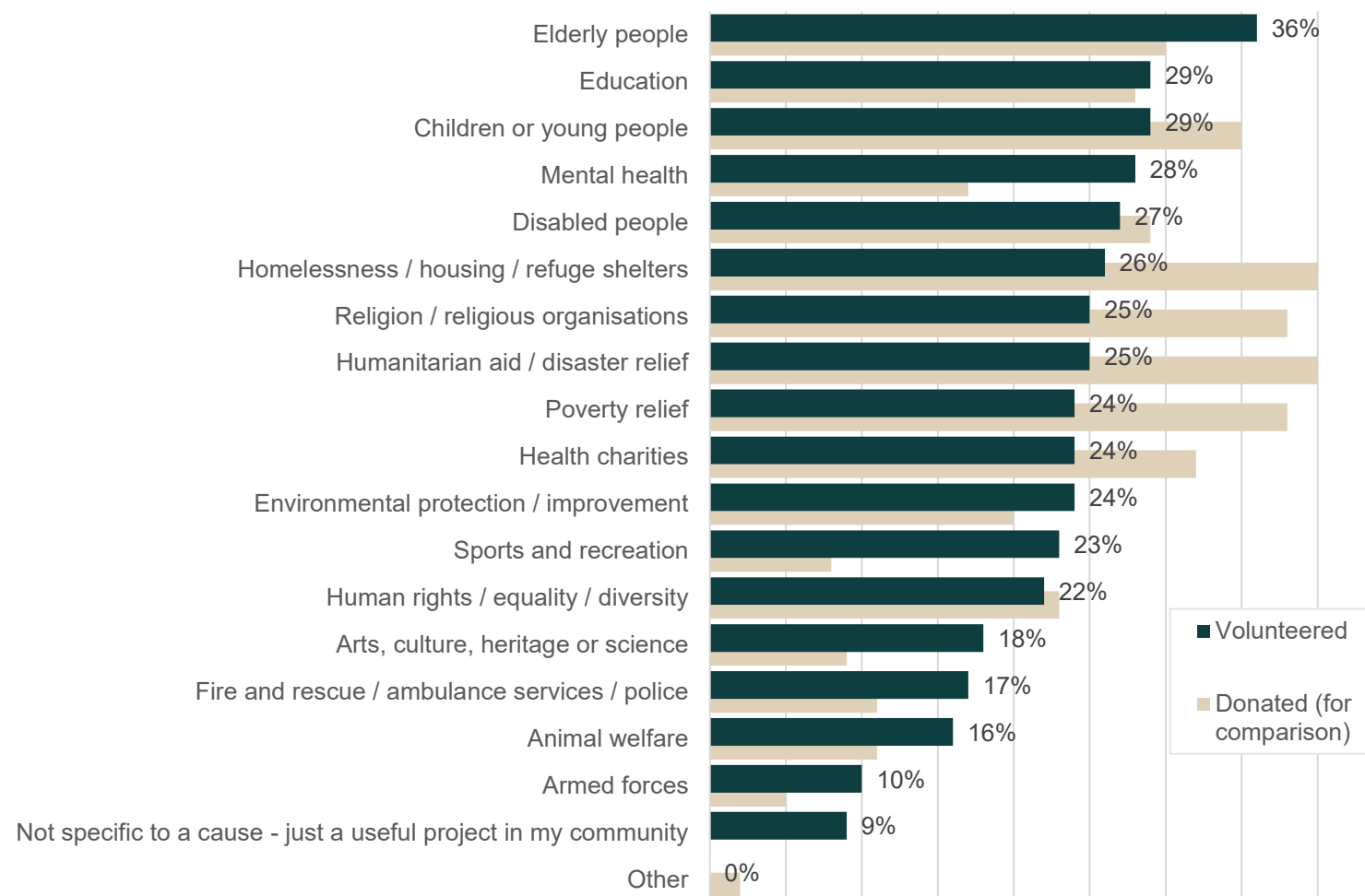
Diverse focus.

Of the small number of people in the UAE who said they volunteered in 2024, the highest proportion (36%) did so to support the elderly.

Next came education and young people (both 29%), followed by mental health and people with disabilities.

For the most part, where people volunteered matched where they donated. This presents potential for NGOs to further engage with their donors by creating more volunteering opportunities.

Which cause(s) did you do unpaid voluntary work for in 2024? (People who had volunteered, n = 96)



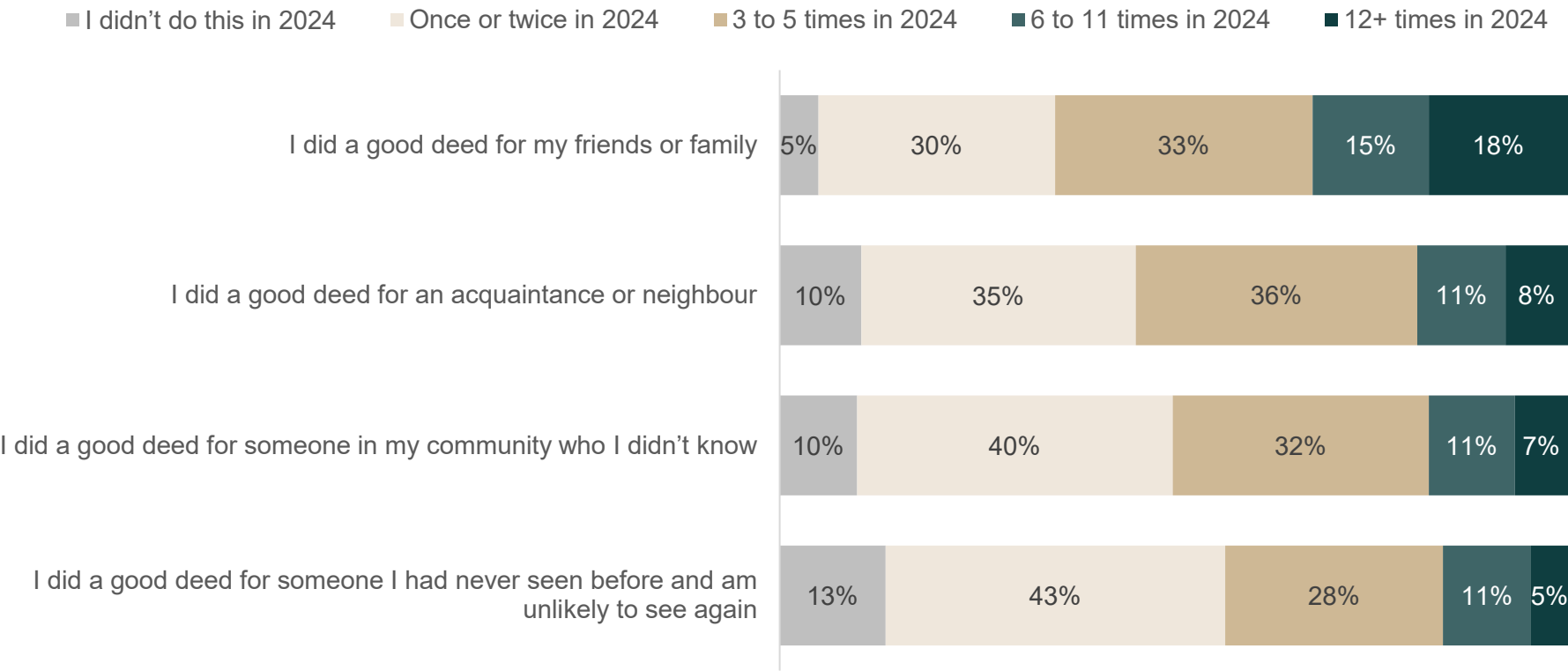
How helpful people are to others.

Everyday generosity.

Beyond formal giving, kindness is alive and well in the UAE.

Whether it's helping a neighbour, assisting a stranger, or pitching in during emergencies, virtually everyone surveyed reported having done at least one good deed in 2024.

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 = 507)





04 PERCEPTIONS OF CIVIL SOCIETY

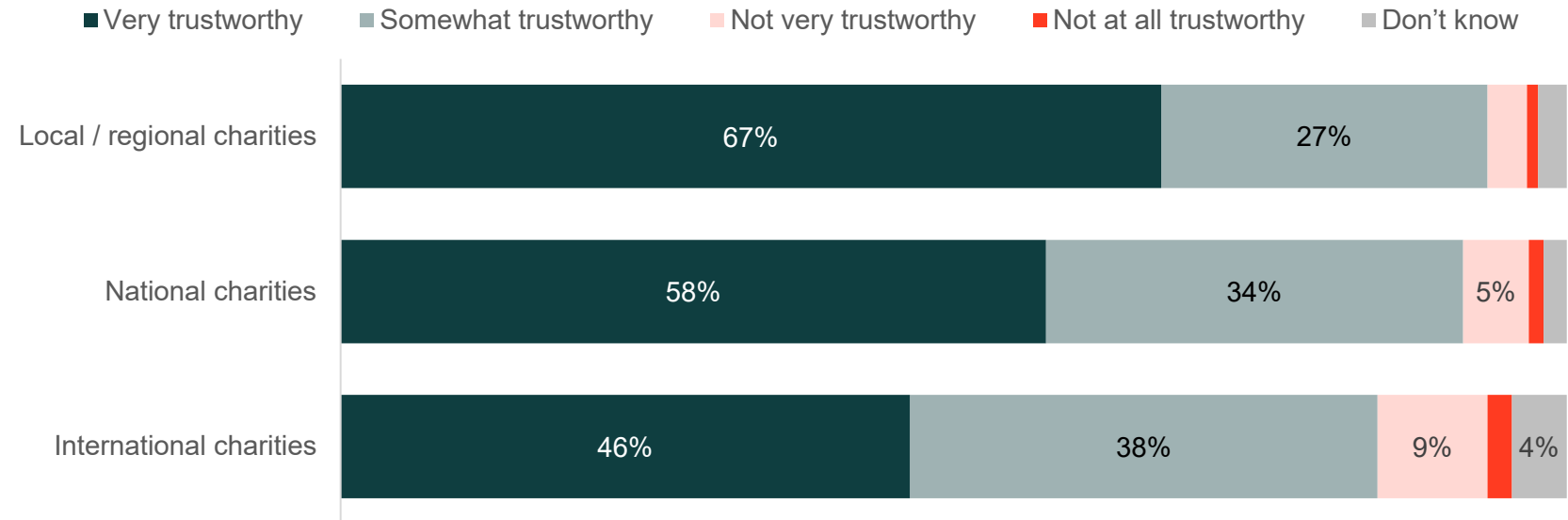
How much the public trusts charities.

Trust in local NGOs.

Trust in charities runs high in the UAE. With an average score of 11.8 out of 15, public confidence in charities in the UAE exceeds both regional and global levels.

Moreover, confidence in local and regional charities was higher than in international NGOs (iNGOs), with around 10% of people regarding iNGOs as not very or not at all trustworthy.

How trustworthy do you tend to find each of these types of charities? (All, n = 507)



Overall, the public in the UAE gave a score of 11.8/15 for how much they trust charities. This compares to a continental average of 9.65 and a global average of 9.22.

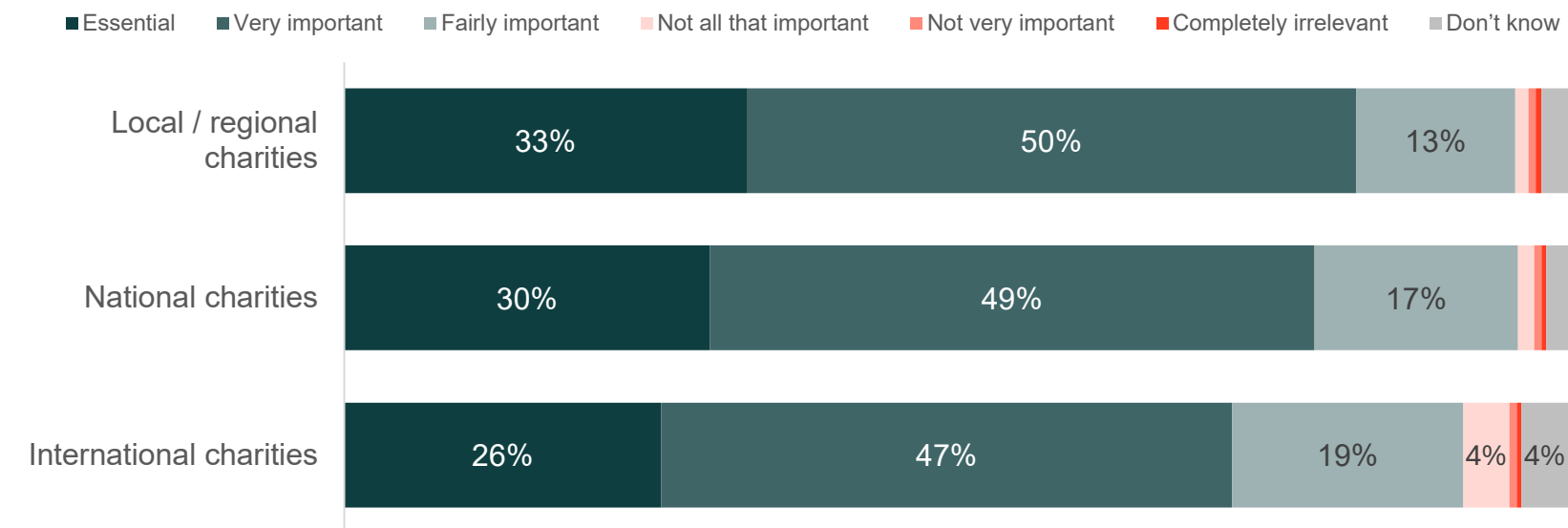
The perceived importance of charities to society.

Charities matter.

With an average importance score of 12.1 out of 15, the public in the UAE places slightly higher value on charitable organisations than people in most parts of the world.

This reflects a strong belief in civil society's role in shaping community wellbeing and driving social change.

How important, in general, do you believe these different types of charities are to your country's society? (All, n = 507)



Overall, the public in the UAE gave a score of 12.1/15 for how much they value charities. This compares to a continental average of 11.04 and a global average of 10.98.

How people discover charities.

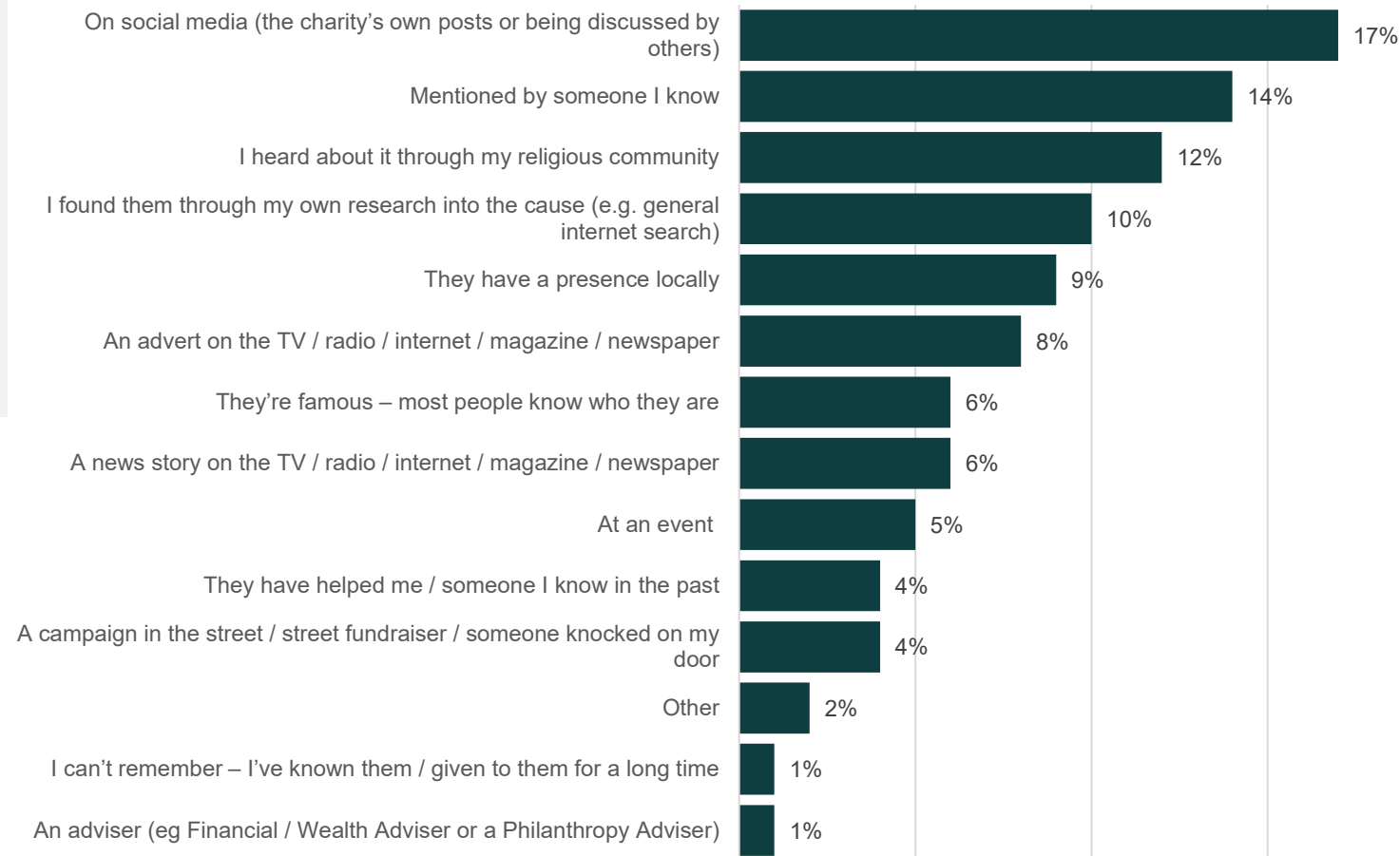
The power of social media.

When it comes to discovering charities, the UAE is digital-first, with one in five donors saying they first learned about an NGO via social media.

However, word of mouth and local visibility also play an important role, showing that even in a connected world, community trust still matters.

News articles and street campaigns had little impact, as did private advisers.

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 = 346)



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. On social media (18%)
2. They have a presence locally (12%)
3. Mentioned by someone I know (11%)

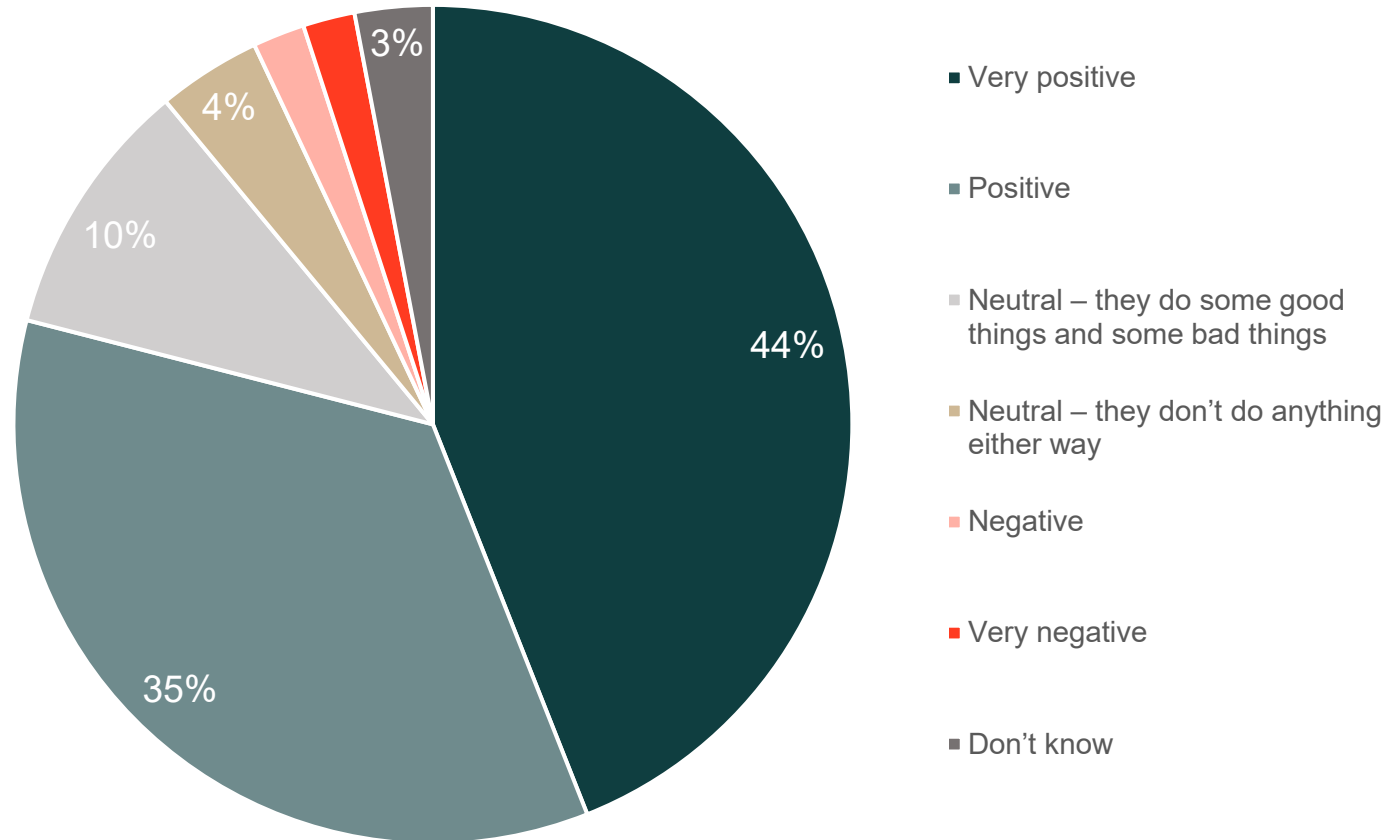
Overall influence of government on charities.

Positive influences.

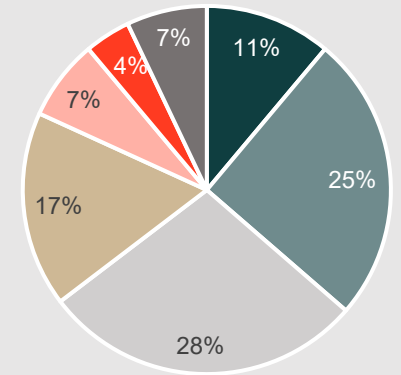
More than three quarters (79%) of respondents said they thought the Government had a positive or very positive influence on the charity sector in the UAE, significantly higher than elsewhere.

This positive perception of the Government's influence on charities in the UAE reflects the growth of entities like Abu Dhabi's Authority of Social Contribution, Ma'an, and the Majra National CSR Fund, which are helping to develop a more dynamic third sector ecosystem in the country.

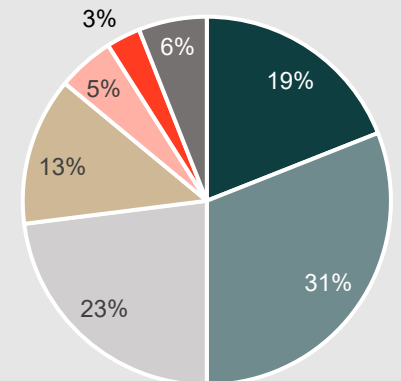
Overall, do you think the Government is a positive or negative influence on the charity sector? (All, n = 507)



Global average



Continent average



Specific opinions on the role of government.

Enabling the NGO sector.

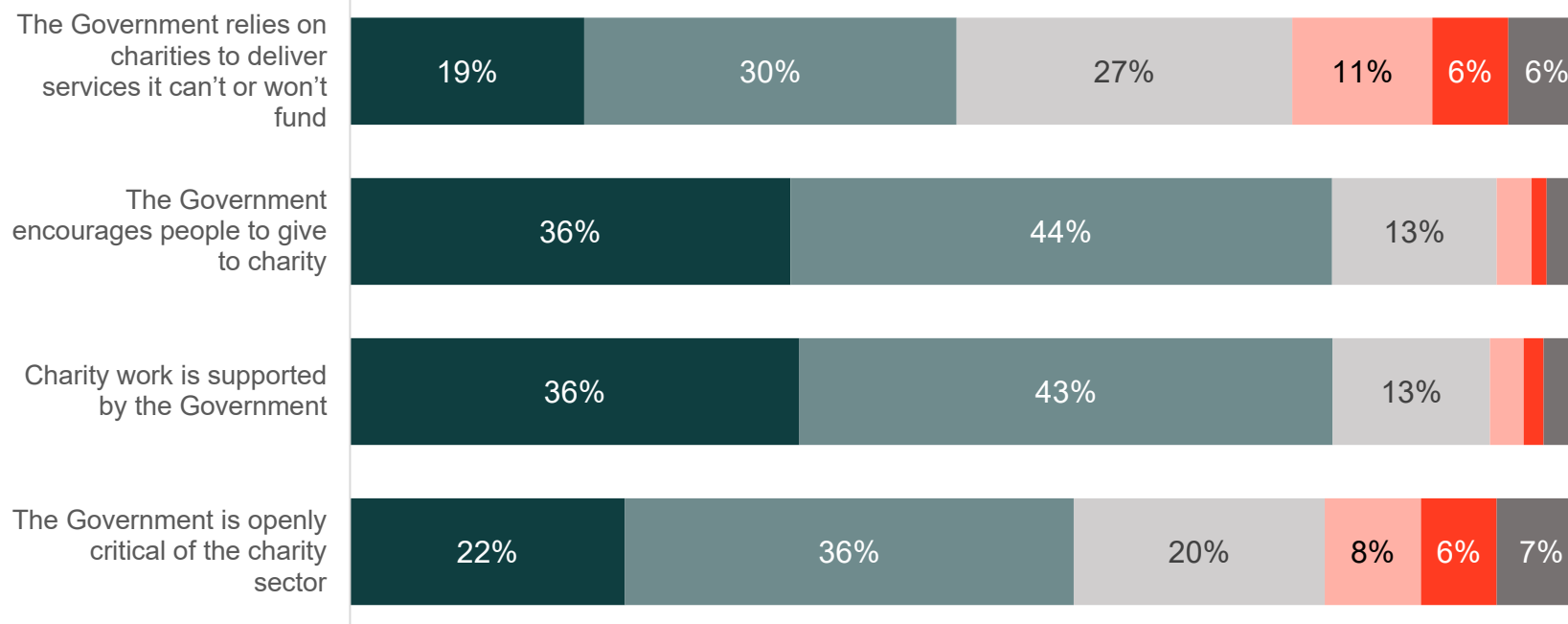
People in the UAE spoke positively about the Government's influence on the charity sector.

Eight in 10 (80%) agree or strongly agree that the Government encourages people to give and an equal amount believe the Government supports charity work.

This positive relationship can be explained by continued investment from the Government into improving the regulatory environment for charities in the UAE.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the Government's involvement in the charity sector? (All, n = 507)

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



THANK YOU

www.worldgivingreport.org

Charities Aid Foundation registered charity number 268369

