

Arrabal-AID website:

<https://asociacionarrabal.org/volunteering-after-covid19-are-we-more-philanthropic-12096>

Volunteering after COVID19. Are we more philanthropic?

With the outbreak of the pandemic, one of **the sectors affected by the virus was citizen participation, specifically in the activities carried out by public bodies and organizations, seeing how the use of public space was paralyzed since March 2020. citizen activity (BOJA, 2020)**. Spaces of Town Halls, associations, foundations, among other institutional bodies, which carried out labor orientation work, training, development of conferences, centers for shared work spaces, libraries, in short, spaces for citizen participation, meeting points where they pooled resources and citizenship and that in the face of the pandemic situation they have found themselves with the dilemma of how to continue this work in contact with people,

A study carried out by the Volunteering Observatory called "Volunteer action in 2020. Volunteering in times of pandemic" (Volunteering Platform, 2020) highlights:

- Citizens collaborate in an associative way, in kind, economically or with volunteering, reflecting the surveys carried out in June and October, on average, **37.2% of the population over 14 years of age collaborates with an NGO**. This percentage would increase slightly, up to 38.4% counting only the population over 18 years of age.
- Regarding the actions, economic collaboration is the one that stands out above the rest of the types of collaborations.
- **The number of men and women in these tasks has balanced in this 2020, 53% women compared to 47% men**. Regarding the profile of the volunteer, the average age is between 45 and 54 years, and their socioeconomic level is medium-high.
- **35% of the volunteers had to suspend their work due to confinement or because they were a population at risk**; 14% adapted their activity to carry it out online and only 7% were able to continue with their usual work during the worst moments of the crisis.

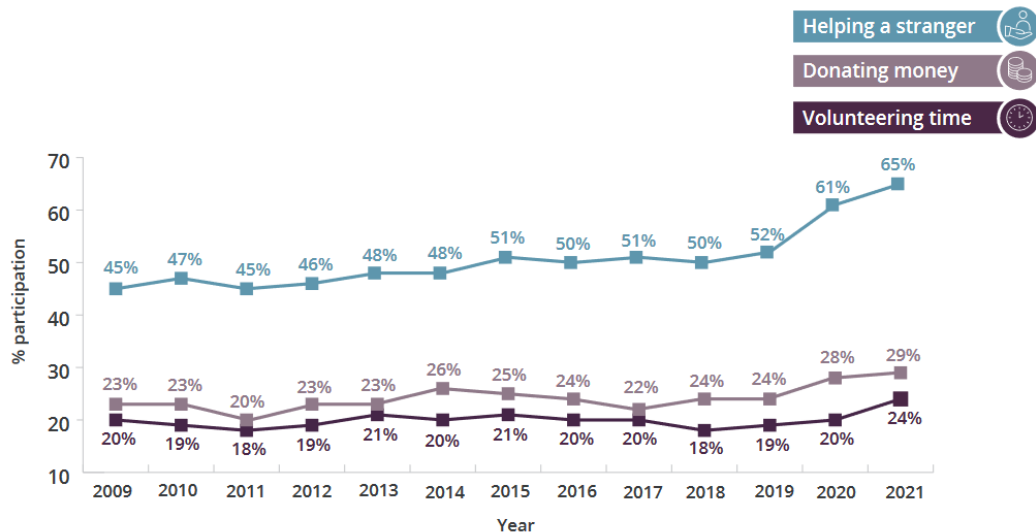
The data collected relativizes the enthusiasm of the media. It is true that in June, 3.1% of the population over 14 years of age in Spain did some kind of volunteering and the October survey raised this percentage to 6.1%. In other words, if in absolute terms, in June 1.2 million people would have mobilized throughout Spain, in October, the figure would be 2.5 million. **Of these, 5.8% were people who were joining volunteering for the first time and more than half (52.2%) affirm that they will continue to participate in volunteering when the pandemic is a memory**. However, in general information, the data on the collaboration of the Spanish population with NGOs maintain the trend of previous years: although the economic donation continues to stabilize (or on the increase according to other data),

Younger people seem to be experiencing this situation with more extremes. It is true that they are the ones who have adapted the most to the new situation (87.3%), but they also tend to be the ones who see themselves much better and, at the same time, much worse in it, for example, regarding their physical health, and they are also the ones who have the most (logical) doubts about whether their relationships are changing. Among their main concerns are finishing their studies, traveling and seeing their friends, but they are also the group that is most aware of the need for solidarity with people who are having a hard time. **They are also the ones who most believe that there are enough people collaborating, that NGOs are helping to improve the situation and that creating jobs should be their second task (50.3%).**

Looking globally, the pandemic has altered the landscape of global giving behavior. In 2018, seven of the 10 most generous countries were classified by the United Nations as high-income countries. However, in 2020, during the height of the pandemic, seven of the top 10 were low- and middle-income economies. This trend continued in 2021. Only four of the 10 most generous countries this year are classified as high-income countries, and six are low- and middle-income countries (CAF, 2022). The research highlights:

- **A record 40% of the global population took part in charitable actions** in 2021.
- More people than ever (**62%**) **helped a stranger last year, which is the highest score since 2009.** The need created by the pandemic, and the feeling of community and solidarity, were likely behind this rising trend.
- Many high-income countries saw a steep decline in scores in 2018 which continued and even accelerated during the first year of the pandemic. But during 2021, this trend was largely reversed with some of those countries now returning to the top 10, albeit some with lower Index scores. However, low-and-middle-income countries tended to see increased scores during the first year of the pandemic, with further rises in 2021, most notably for volunteering and helping a stranger.
- **Globally, nearly a quarter of all adult volunteers. Volunteering time saw a small increase from 19% to 23%, returning to pre-pandemic levels, in a similar trend to the other two measures.** Despite the barriers produced by the pandemic, this is the highest rate of volunteering reported since 2009. The country with the lowest rate of volunteering is Egypt (4%). Egypt has been blighted by poverty, unrest and social injustice¹⁴. The country saw a steep decline of ten percentage points in its overall Index score, and a six percentage point decline in volunteering in 2021. Serbia, which is one of the top 3 biggest risers on the overall Index, nevertheless remains in the bottom 10 countries for volunteering. In 2021 it ranked #116, with only 9% of people volunteering time. As discussed in section 3, Serbia recorded a sharp jump in its scores for helping a stranger and donating money over the past five years. However, the country has traditionally been among the lowest ranking nations in terms of volunteering time.

The global rate of volunteering saw a smaller but significant increase to 21%, from 17% in 2020 when lockdowns likely limited these opportunities. During the first year of the pandemic, volunteering rates were particularly low – but rates have been low since as far back as 2018. The improvement shown in the latest results represents a return to the higher levels of volunteering that were typical in the early and mid-2010s.



Like most high-income countries, many low- and middle-income economies (LMICs) employed lockdown restrictions in response to the pandemic. However, the difficulties to obtain vaccines meant these countries tended to impose much longer lockdowns, with social and economic problems. While there is some improvement in the LMICs scores in both helping a stranger and volunteering time, donating money has remained in line with the highest rate which was first recorded in 2020.

Two out of three (65%) adults reported helping a stranger in LMICs, up from 61% in 2020. This score is significantly higher than in high-income countries, indicating increased need, and perhaps solidarity as the pandemic continued. Volunteering in LMICs also increased slightly from 20% to 24%. The increase in the overall global Index score is likely driven by a combination of high-income countries returning to pre-2018 giving norms, coupled with a more gradual improvement in scores for the low- and middle-income countries.

If you volunteer, or are interested in doing so, we present the NEXT project, where you can find resources and vacancies for it: <https://next-project.pt/results/>

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