

Giving in Europe

The state of research on giving in 20 European countries

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Research on Giving in Sweden

The state of research on giving by households, corporations, foundations and charity lotteries to charitable organisations in Sweden



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Research on Giving in Sweden

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Introduction on Giving Research in Sweden

Research on giving is a relatively underdeveloped field in Sweden. Charitable giving is widespread and extensive, but the average donation is small and fundraising was until recently carried out by unpaid, non-professional members of a few large charitable organisations. Giving follows the pattern of other civil society activities in Sweden in that it is a popular movement with widespread grass roots organisation and participation. Giving is also influenced by the Scandinavian type of welfare state, which seems to direct donations to international aid and medical research, while domestic medical and social care and education receive fewer donations, both because of a lesser need and a general perception that such causes lie within the realm of government responsibility (Vamstad and von Essen, 2013). Research on giving has, therefore, been sparse in traditional areas of philanthropy studies such as donor behaviour, and economic or psychological theories on giving and fundraising. Instead, much of what research there is, is on the history of social movements. A few historians have written about organisations concerned with charitable causes in the 19th century and their typical objects of study are local philanthropic societies, large social movements like the Labour and Temperance Movements, religious organisations, and large aid organisations like the Red Cross (Förhammar, 1997; 2000; Jordansson and Vammen, 1998; Karlsson, 2012; Plymoth, 2002; Qvarsell, 1993). Research on contemporary giving in Sweden is mainly conducted at the Institute of Civil Society Studies at Ersta Sköndal University College in Stockholm and at the Stockholm School of Economics. Ersta Sköndal University College conducts a recurring national survey of giving and volunteering, and philanthropy is generally studied within the context of other civil society areas such as voluntary work, member organisations, and citizen participation. The institution is multi-disciplinary with researchers representing social work, political science, sociology, business administration, and theology. Research at the Stockholm School of Economics includes some work on economic theories of giving, as well as research on foundations. The researchers are typically in the fields of business administration or economics. Giving and philanthropy are, however, not the primary research fields at either of these two institutions; the research is rather limited. Ersta Sköndal University College employs about 20 civil society researchers, but only three or four of them (for example, Vamstad, von Essen and Svedberg) could be said to be philanthropy researchers. The Stockholm School of Economics has about ten researchers in the civil society field, and two or three of them (for example Breman, Wijkström and Einarsson) conduct research related to philanthropy. There are, in addition to these two centres of civil society studies, a few individual philanthropy researchers spread among various universities and other research institutions in Sweden. Seen as a whole, they represent a diverse set of disciplines, with researchers from history (e.g. Förhammar), social work (e.g. Levander), economics (e.g. Braunerhjelm), ethics (e.g. Romare) health studies, (e.g. Eklöf), and gender studies (e.g. Jordansson). Overall, the Swedish philanthropy research community is small and thinly spread, and there is no major research centre or resource devoted exclusively to the study of philanthropy. There is, however, growing interest in research on giving, driven in a large part by the ongoing professionalization of fundraising in Sweden. There is also emerging interest in newer areas

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of philanthropy research, like corporate social responsibility and social enterprises, especially in the economic sciences (Frostenson and Borglund, 2006; de Geer, Borglund and Frostenson, 2009; Nilsson, 2009; Gawell, Johannisson and Lundqvist, 2009). It seems plausible that the Swedish research on giving might be catching up with that in other countries, and that Sweden might reach a more “normal” or average level of research in this field. There is, however, still a long way to go before that can be achieved.

Giving by individuals

There are three sources of data on giving by individuals in Sweden, where the two major ones are the Ersta Sköndal national study of giving and volunteering, and the official statistics on giving to accredited charities collected by the Swedish Fundraising Control. The latter data source includes all the major charitable organisations and practically all charitable giving in Sweden. In addition to these, the Swedish Fundraising Council (FRII) also conducts an annual survey of certain aspects of giving, the results of which are presented in a report made in cooperation with PricewaterhouseCoopers.

The Ersta Sköndal study has been conducted five times since 1992, and it provides data not just about giving, but volunteering, informal social care, membership, political activism, and generalized trust. It allows, in other words, for an analysis of giving in relation to a number of other civic activities. The segment on giving was first included in the 2004 study and widely expanded in the 2014 study. This study is based on a large random sample of respondents who were asked about their civil society activities, using structured telephone interviews. The segment on giving includes questions on how and how much the respondents give, as well as their attitudes towards giving. Specific attention is given to their attitudes towards giving in relation to the welfare state and to giving as a moral act. The Swedish Fundraising Control is in itself a non-profit organisation that is funded and run by a coalition of the large confederations of trade unions and the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise, or in other words the central organisations on the labour market. Their mission is to monitor fundraising and to give accreditation to organisations adhering to sound fundraising and accounting practices. In doing so, they also collect data on giving to the 411 accredited organisations. The Swedish Fundraising Council is an umbrella organisation for many of these 411 organisations, and they also collect and keep some data on giving. Their annual report is in part based on a structured interview study with a representative sample of 1 000 respondents from a large national panel. The questions regard how the giving is done and how the respondents want to give, as well as their trust in charitable organisations, with a focus on providing the member organisations with operational data for their fundraising. The specifics of the three data sets are described in figure 22.3.

Figure 22.3 Description of the three datasets

	Ersta Sköndal University College	Swedish Fundraising Council	Swedish Fundraising Control
Nature of data	Survey performed in 1992, 1995, 1999, 2004, 2009 and 2014	Survey performed in 2013 and 2014	Financial statistics
Target population	General public	General public	
Sampling criteria	Random sample of 2 250 (2014)	Representative sample of 1 000 panellists	Statistics for giving to 411 organisations
Response rate	56% (1 258/2 250)(2014)		
Technique	Structured telephone interviews	Structured interviews	Accounting
Background variables	Extensive general (age, income, etc.), civil society activities, trust	Some general	None
Funding	Swedish Research Council	Swedish Fundraising Council, PriceWaterhouseCoopers	Fees from organisations
Accessibility	Private	Private	Public
Location	Ersta Sköndal University College	Swedish Fundraising Council	Swedish Fundraising Control
Availability	Available for secondary analysis	Not available	Available
Completed studies	Five main reports, numerous research papers (see further reading)	Two annual reports	Official statistics presented annually

The Ersta Sköndal study is the by far the most appropriate for research; it has the most extensive and diverse set of variables and it is designed exclusively for research purposes. The two other data sets are good for some descriptive purposes. The purpose of the annual reports presented by the Swedish Fundraising Council is to provide the member organisations with accessible data on giving in an effort to promote fundraising. The report includes, for instance, an index measuring giving to charitable giving in relation to the consumption of sweets and ice-cream in Sweden. The purpose of such an index is, of course, to provide the fundraising organisation with an argument for increased giving by showing that Swedish people on average spend (five times) more on sweets and ice-cream than on charitable giving. The statistics provided by the Swedish Fundraising Control is entirely different; it

simply measures the volume of giving to 411 organisations, including all of the major ones. The Ersta Sköndal study also provides some descriptive statistics not covered by the two other data sets. One such example is the combined statistics of the percentage of individuals that donated to different causes. The Ersta Sköndal study uses a wide definition of giving, where anyone not explicitly stating that he or she has not been giving is considered a giver. Any type of giving and any size of giving is counted, which is why 80% of the respondents are counted as givers. The percentage of givers to different causes is presented in table 22.1 from the 2014 round of the Ersta Sköndal study.

Table 22.1 Percentage of individuals donating to different goals in 2014

	% individuals that donated to
Religion	19 %
Health*	45 %
International aid	56 %
Public/social benefit (national)	29 %
Culture	8 %
Environment/nature/ animals (inter)national	26 %
Education	-
Other (not specified)	5 %
Total	

*Source: Ersta Sköndal University College *Medical research*

These results mostly confirm previous research on Swedish giving (Vamstad and von Essen, 2013). One surprising finding from the 2014 study is the relatively high figure for domestic social benefits. Between one third and one quarter of the respondents stated that they had been giving to such social causes in Sweden, which could indicate that giving to domestic causes is on the rise. The Ersta Sköndal study also includes data on the size of the donations, but these are measured as a total for each respondent and each respondent might have donated to more than one cause. The average sum of donations for the last 12 months was € 194, controlling for a few outliers.

There are no statistics on the total giving by individuals to various causes, but a rough estimate of the distribution between them can be made from the data collected by the Swedish Fundraising Control. They present numbers for the total giving to the 20 largest organisations, which represent about 66% of the giving to accredited organisations. Individuals donated a total of € 646.8 million in 2013, but the sum of the categories in table 22.2 is only € 427.9 million. There are no statistics on giving to non-accredited organisations, but the accreditation system has extensive coverage in Sweden, the most serious organisations are accredited, all organisations of any size are, and the statistics therefore represent practically all donations to organisations in Sweden. The numbers representing the 20 largest organisations in table 22.2 have a relative distribution between causes similar to the one in table 22.1table 22.1, even though some causes were left out because they were not represented among these particular organisations.

Table 22.2 Uses of donations to the 20 largest organisations by individuals in 2013

	million EUR*	percentage
Religion	20.5	4.8 %
Health**	86	20.1 %
International aid	220.2	51.5 %
Public/social benefit (national)	51.2	12 %
Environment/nature/ animals (inter)nat.	40.4	9.4 %
Human rights (Amnesty international)	9.6	2.2 %
Total	427.9 (646.8)***	100 %

Source: *The Swedish Fundraising Control* *1€=9SEK ** Medical research ***Total for all organisations: 646.8

International aid and medical research remain by far the largest causes for Swedish donors, which is also evident in table 22.1. The donations to religious causes are lower in table 22.2 than would be expected from table 22.1, but only one religious organisation was represented among the 20 largest; the Church of Sweden. Environmental organisations receive relatively little funding considered how frequently Swedes give to them, which in part could be explained by the fact that younger donors are over-represented among those giving to these organisations.

The research on individual giving has, in conclusion, made a lot of progress in recent years. Both the Ersta Sköndal study and the annual study and report from the Swedish Fundraising Council are important additions to the official statistics provided by the Swedish Fundraising Control. The growing interest in research on giving should be seen in light of the changes in giving itself in Sweden. More data and more research are the logical consequences of the growth and diversification of giving, as well as of the professionalization of fundraising and civil society as a whole.

Giving by bequest

Giving by bequest is one of the least popular forms of giving in Sweden. The reason for this has most likely both to do with tradition as well as more mundane reasons such as tax legislation. There are generally few tax incentives for giving in Sweden, and there are no incentives for giving by bequest. It is an underdeveloped area from a fundraising perspective, and this, in combination with the fact that bequests often concern rather large sums of money, has led to growing interest in this type of donation among fundraising organisations in recent years. The Swedish Fundraising Council represents these organisations, and their annual study therefore includes some basic data on the donor attitudes towards bequests. It is their study that shows us that giving by bequest is the least popular form of giving in Sweden. Only 13% of the respondents state that they “definitely” would consider giving by bequest, while another 30% said that they “perhaps” would. A thought-provoking finding is that the respondents between 18 and 29 years old are the most positive towards bequests, while those between 50 and 79 are the least positive (FRII 2015). Giving by bequest is in spite of the low popularity a substantial source of income for Swedish charities. The 2015 report from The

Swedish Fundraising Council shows that 62 major organisations collected donations through bequests, and that the total sum of these donations amounted to 882 million SEK, or € 98 million. It is, in other words, easy to see how even a small increase in willingness to give by bequest could result in significant gains for fundraising organisations. This € 98 million is included in the total sum of individual giving, but we do not know how it is distributed among the different causes in table 22.2. We do know, however, that giving by bequest is to a great extent directed towards medical research, which is something that has been recognized by fundraising organisations.

The Ersta Sköndal study makes no mention of giving by bequest, and the official statistics from the Swedish Fundraising Control does not single out this or any other ways of giving. There is, therefore, relatively little information about this type of giving, but the push to gain awareness of it might very well lead to better data and more research in the future.

Giving by corporations

Sweden has a long but relatively undocumented history of corporate giving to charitable causes. Philanthropic causes were formed around the leading industrialist families during the second half of the 19th century, and several of them are still active today, even if in many cases they have switched their focus from relieving social needs to promoting research over the years (Einarsson, 2009). Swedish industry is traditionally centred on a limited number of large corporations aimed at the export market, and it is hence relatively internationalized. International trends in corporate giving such as corporate social responsibility have for this reason become quite widespread in Sweden. Still, there is also a great deal of scepticism towards CSR in Sweden since the concept challenges deep-rooted perceptions of the role of corporations in Swedish society (de Geer, Borglund and Frostensson, 2009). This contradiction is explained by de Geer et al. (2009) as an illustration of the flexibility in the concept that has allowed CSR to gain a foothold in the Swedish welfare state context. The perception of the role of corporations in society might be part of the reason why there are no tax incentives for corporate giving to charitable causes. A more important reason is the strongly held Swedish principle that public money should be used for public causes, the legitimacy of high taxes and the whole tax system depends on the tax money being spent on public goods chosen by political representatives (Trägårdh and Vamstad, 2009). The tax regulation for corporations states that they cannot deduct charitable gifts from their taxes, but they can deduct business expenses. Corporations can, in other words, only make a deduction if they can show that they have received something of material value in return for their expense, and the good that will come from giving to charities is not considered “material” by the Swedish tax authorities (Trägårdh and Vamstad, 2009).

The available data and research on corporate giving in Sweden are limited. While the availability of data and the amount of research on giving by individuals has increased, corporate giving is in large part still uncharted territory in Swedish philanthropy research. The annual reports from the Swedish Fundraising Council include not only a recurring study on individuals, but also a study based on a theme that varies from year to year. The 2015 study focused specifically on corporate giving in an effort to shed new light on this overlooked area. A structured telephone interview study with representatives from 201 Swedish corporations was conducted for this reason, and the results showed that 48% of them both cooperate with civil society organisations and run their own projects. 34% stated that they cooperate with more than one organisation. The study did not map which

causes they were currently supporting, but one question in the structured interviews asked them what causes they would choose if they had to prioritize. They could choose more than one alternative; the results can be seen in table 22.3.

Table 22.3 “What causes would you give priority to if you had to choose?” 2014

	percentage
Children and young people in Sweden	67 %
The environment	42 %
Sport	41%
Public/social benefits in Sweden	34 %
Research	28 %
Culture	19 %
Human rights	18 %
Children and young people abroad	18 %
Aid and development abroad	17 %
Other (not specified)	3 %

Source: The Swedish Fundraising Council

Corporate givers clearly choose differently from individual givers when it comes to charitable causes. Corporations seem to be more concerned with causes in Sweden and in their local community, which can be partly explained by the motives for giving that they stated in the interviews. The by far most important motive was “giving back to society” (71%), followed by “strengthening the brand” (49%) and “motivating employees” (39%). The study from the Swedish Fundraising Council was a one-off effort and there are little other data to be found in this area.

Giving by foundations

The Swedish foundation sector is extensive, old and under-researched. The most recent data – from 2002 – state that there are about 14 500 large foundations and perhaps as many as twice that number of smaller ones (Einarsson, 2009). The number of smaller foundations is difficult to estimate since only foundations with more capital than € 38 000 (350 000 SEK) need to register with the County Administration Board. These foundations make up a substantial part of charitable giving in Sweden, but there are surprisingly few data and research on Swedish foundations. The latest extensive mapping of Swedish foundations took place in 2002, but an update is presently being done at the Stockholm School of Economics, and was published in 2015¹³⁹ (Wijkström and Einarsson, 2004). The initial research had funding from the Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation and the generated data are owned by the Stockholm School of Economics. The data have resulted in a number of research publications (Einarsson, 2009; Wijkström, 2007). The Stockholm School of

¹³⁹ Unfortunately, this update came too late to be included in this overview.

Economics has the foremost research resources in the area, with several researchers devoted to the subject and participation in international research projects such as FOREMAP 2009 and EUFORI 2014 (Einarsson, 2009; 2014).

The main data source for foundations in Sweden is the County Administration Boards, the central government agencies in each of the 21 counties and regions in Sweden. The County Administration Boards handle the registration of foundations and they keep the files on existing foundations. The 14 500 foundations found in the 2002 overview were distributed between a wide range of causes.

Table 22.4 Number of foundations donating to different goals and their assets, 2012

	Number of foundations	Assets million EUR*
Culture and recreation	1 420	1 400
Education	2 420	3 800
Research	2 800	9 600
Healthcare	670	1 100
Social services	4 100	4 700
Environment	300	300
Development and housing	870	4 400
International activities	320	200
Religion	670	900
Unclassified	290	200
Total	13 860	26 600

Source: Wijkström and Einarsson (2015)

It should be emphasized once more that monetary value has changed significantly since 2002; these historical data could be converted to today's worth by increasing the numbers by 18%, which would bring up the total assets to € 20 112 million. The 2002 study also made a first ever attempt to estimate the annual grant making by Swedish foundations. This attempt faced many methodological challenges, which are presented in great detail in Wijkström and Einarsson (2004), but the pioneering efforts by the two researchers were still an important contribution, one that has yet to be repeated. Their findings about the annual grant making can be seen in table 22.5.

Table 22.5 Uses of donations by foundations in 2002

	Number of grants	million EUR	percentage
Religion	410	9	1 %
Health	480	10	2 %
International aid	170	3	0.5 %
Social benefits (national)	3 140	77	12 %
Culture	790	14	2 %
Environment/nature/ (inter)national animals	150	3	0.5 %
Education	1 990	62	9 %
Research	2 130	444	68 %
Development and housing	370	29	4 %
Other (not specified)	310	3	0.5 %
Total	9 940	656	100 %

Source: *Wijkström and Einarsson (2004)* *€ 1=9 SEK, based on 2002 SEK

The most striking result from this study is, of course, the complete dominance of research grants as the preferred type of donation from Swedish foundations. The most interesting result is probably the fact that no fewer than 3 140 grants and € 77 million were awarded to domestic social causes in 2002. Giving by foundations, like giving by corporations, differs significantly from giving by individuals.

Giving by charity lotteries

All established charity lotteries in Sweden are registered with the Swedish Gambling Authority. This government agency is also the best source for data on charity lotteries, even though lotteries are not recognized as being charitable in their descriptive statistics. The charity lotteries fall into the category of “popular movement lotteries” (*“folkrörelsernas spel på lotterier”*) and it is doubtful that all civil society organisations in that category could be called charitable. Twenty organisations are on the list of popular movement lotteries, and it includes both clear cases of charities like the Swedish Cancer Trust and less obvious cases like The Swedish National Pensioners’ Organization. The latter example is an interest organisation, as are the three temperance organisations on the list. The distinction between charities and interest organisations is, however, not clear cut in the Swedish context. Both the pensioners’ organisation and the temperance organisations provide a lot of public good works like open social activities, education, and health and safety work. All the organisations are popular civil society organisations, and the only organisation on the list that should definitely not be considered a charity is the Social Democratic Party. Charity lotteries, or lotteries benefiting civil society organisations, bring in a total annual income of about € 656 million and profits of € 180 million.

The by far largest charity lottery in Sweden is the Swedish Post Code Lottery, the Swedish version of a concept developed in the Netherlands. The revenue of the Swedish Post Code Lottery was € 233 million in 2013, which is almost four times that of the second largest lottery. The Post Code Lottery is also one of the main reasons why there are only 20 organisations on the list of charity lotteries at the Swedish Gambling Authority. The Post Code Lottery distributes funds to 49 Swedish charity organisations, most of which used to have their own lotteries. Once an agreement is made between the Post Code Lottery and one of these 49, the receiving organisation must stop conducting their own lotteries, which has raised concerns in Sweden that the Post Code Lottery is monopolizing the lottery market as well as transforming it according to its professional business structure. The dominant position of the Post Code Lottery also makes it a bit difficult to provide good data on charity lotteries. The gifts from the Post Code Lottery have therefore been divided up into its 49 parts in the following two tables, in order to provide a more accurate picture of giving from charity lotteries. The first table concerns the number of charity lotteries and different causes, and the Post Code Lottery beneficiaries are included individually, since the Post Code Lottery gives money to practically all of these causes. One problem with this approach is that the figures for the 49 post code beneficiaries show what they receive from the Post Code Lottery, while the figures for the remaining 20 with their own lotteries show the income minus the expenses, or the profits they can spend on their causes. These figures are comparable in that the funding from the Post Code Lottery is also after expenses.

Table 22.6 Number of charity lotteries donating to different goals and mean amount donated, 2013

	Number of charity lotteries	Mean total funding EUR*
Religion	-	-
Health	13	1.6
International aid	22	1.3
Public/social benefits (national)	14	2.4
Culture	2	6.1
Environment/nature/ animals (inter)national	4	2.7
Education	-	-
Sports	5	4.4
Human rights	2	1.1
Total	61	

*Source: The Swedish Gambling Authority and The Swedish Post Code Lottery *Total income after expenses/number of organisations, € 1=9 SEK*

Some of the 69 charity lotteries were excluded due to a lack of data. The number of charity lotteries is, as seen from this table, relatively low, and the mean sums are therefore in some cases skewed by a few outliers. The culture category includes a special culture fund kept by the Post Code Lottery and

the sports category includes gifts from the *Folkspel* lottery, which collects large sums from voluntary organisations, mainly but not only sports organisations. The following table shows the total income from charity lotteries for a few different causes:

Table 22.7 Uses of donations by charity lotteries, 2013

	million EUR	percentage
Religion	-	-
Health	20.5	16 %
International aid	28	22 %
Public/social benefits (national)	34	26 %
Culture	12.3	9 %
Environment/nature/ animals (inter)national	10.7	8 %
Education	-	
Sports	22	17 %
Human rights	2.2	2 %
Total	129.7	100 %

This approximately € 129.7 million consists of gifts from charity lotteries conducted by civil society organisations and the Swedish Post Code Lottery, but it is not only those giving from lotteries that benefit charitable causes in Sweden. There are two major players in Swedish gambling that are not included in these figures; the State-owned *Svenska Spel* and the horse racing company *Aktiebolaget Trav och Gallop (ATG)*. Svenska Spel controls about 55% of the Swedish market for lotteries and gambling. Most of their profits go straight into the State budget, but about € 27.8 million is used to sponsor five national sports associations, as well as amateur sports. ATG is an interesting player since it itself is owned by the Swedish equestrian organisations and a surplus of € 178 million goes into Swedish equestrianism annually. One could, in other words, add another € 200 million to the sports column in table 22.7. There are, in conclusion, fairly precise statistics on charity lotteries in Sweden, mainly because it is a strictly regulated area. There are, however, no more sophisticated data sources that could provide information about charity lotteries beyond the simple description of how much money they bring in and for what.

Conclusion

The data on charitable giving in Sweden are lacking in many areas, and it is not possible to make an estimate of the total giving in Sweden with any accuracy. Giving by corporations and foundations is especially difficult to measure, which is a significant limitation considering that charitable giving from

these players is potentially substantial. Table 22.8 illustrates the poor state of the Swedish data sources on giving.

Table 22.8 Sources of contributions in 2013, 2002 in millions

Sources of contribution	million EUR	percentage
Individuals	647	45 %
In vivo	545	
Bequests	98	
Corporations	n.a.	
Charity lotteries	129,7	9 %
Foundations*	656*	46 %
Total	1 429¹⁴⁰	100 %

*2002

It is difficult to value the significance of a number like € 1 429 million. The corporate giving is missing, but the figures for the other types of giving are also only best guesses. The giving by individuals is measured by the giving to 411 accredited charity organisations. This represents a very significant part of the total giving – probably about 95% or so – but we do not know exactly how much. The giving by charity lotteries is measured by using data from several sources, data that are comparable but not identical. It is also unclear which lotteries should be included; the total giving from popular movement lotteries is € 180 million. The € 129.7 million comes from lotteries in civil society, but one could imagine including State lotteries as they also contribute to private charity organisations. Giving by foundations makes up almost half of the total giving in this table, and it is fairly certain that this type of giving really is the most extensive. The numbers are, however, very old, and it is a painstaking task to go through the 14 500 large foundations in order to update them¹⁴¹. The lack of data and the difficulty of combining them have prevented researchers from making an estimate of the total giving for different causes in Sweden. Table 22.9 is, therefore, a rather original contribution to Swedish philanthropy research. One problem with this table is that we only know the distribution of giving by individuals for the 20 largest organisations, or about 66% of the total. The different causes therefore only add up to € 1 213.6 million.

¹⁴⁰ Amounts may defer due to rounding off.

¹⁴¹ At time of writing, new data collection by the Stockholm School of Economics is underway and it is likely that these data will be published by the time this report comes out.

Table 22.9 Uses of contributions in 2013

	million EUR	percentage
Religion	29.5	2 %
Health	116.5	10 %
International aid	251.2	21 %
Public/social benefits (national)	162.2	13 %
Culture	26.3	2 %
Environment/nature/ animals (inter)national	54.1	4 %
Education	62	5 %
Research	444	37 %
Development and housing	29	2 %
Sports	22	2 %
Human rights	13.8	1 %
Other (not specified)	3	1 %
Total	1 213.6 (1 432.5)*	100 %

* Only 66% of giving by individuals included

The single greatest charitable cause in Sweden is, in other words, research. All of this € 444 million comes from foundations, and the numbers are a little misleading since some of the research grants from foundations might not be what we usually think of as charitable. The foundations are in many cases set up by wealthy industrialists, and some of the research is performed in order to provide Swedish industry with new products and ideas.

An interesting finding from this overview is that individuals, foundations and charity lotteries give to distinctly different causes. Giving in Sweden is, according to the established description, directed towards international aid, and other causes not covered by the universal welfare state. The reason for this description is that the research on Swedish giving has focused almost exclusively on giving by individuals. That is, as is clear from this overview, only part of the picture; foundations and charity lotteries do not follow this pattern, and neither do the corporations from what we know about their prioritized CSR projects. The availability of data on giving by individuals has increased in recent years and there is a need for more research in this area. It is clear, however, that the need for more data and more research is even greater in other areas of giving. To create a more complete understanding of all types of charitable giving will be a great challenge for the small, Swedish philanthropy research community.

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A stylized map of Europe in white with a drop shadow, set against a blue background. The map shows the outlines of the continents and major islands.

About Giving in Europe

Philanthropy is not an American, but a European invention. 'Giving in Europe' shows: European philanthropy takes itself seriously.

This study is an initial attempt by members of the European Research Network On Philanthropy (ERNOP) to map philanthropy in Europe and presents a first overall estimation of the European philanthropic sector. Containing an overview of what we know about research on the philanthropy sector, it provides data and an assessment of the data on giving by households, bequests, foundations, corporations and charity lotteries in 20 European countries.

Despite the promising signs of an emerging philanthropy sector in Europe, it is still a phenomenon and a sector that is not very well understood. As a matter of fact, besides the anecdotal glimpses from national researchers and the great work that has been carried out on the subdomains of philanthropy, we know little about its actual scope, size and forms in Europe. For a better discussion and assessment of the (potential) role that philanthropy can play in solving societal problems, we need a clear picture of the size and scope of philanthropy. What amounts are donated by households, through bequests, corporations, foundations and charity lotteries, and to what goals? To what extent can we draw a picture of the philanthropy sector in Europe, what is the quality of the data involved?

In answering these questions, this publication aims to stimulate researchers, policy makers and philanthropy professionals in fostering research on philanthropy and to inspire to exchange knowledge and information. For more information visit www.ernop.eu.