

Religion Gets Largest Share of Charity in US

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Americans gave about two hundred ninety billion dollars to charity last year. That was ten billion dollars more than the amount of charitable giving in two thousand nine. The estimates are from the Giving USA Foundation and its research partner, the Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University.

Charities are nonprofit organizations that raise money to provide social services or other programs. Giving USA has been reporting on charitable donations since nineteen fifty-six. The group estimates that about seventy-five million households gave to at least one charitable organization in the United States last year. A household is one or more people living in a home.



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Charity workers dressed as Santa Claus pass St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City in an annual parade to raise money for a holiday food program for needy residents

The largest share of charitable giving goes to religious groups. Giving USA says they received thirty-five percent of all donations in twenty-ten. Some people give a percentage of their pay to religious organizations.

Schools and other education-related organizations were second on the list. They received an estimated fourteen percent of all charitable giving last year.

The federal tax agency, the Internal Revenue Service, recognizes donations to official charities. Those who give to charity may be able to get tax breaks and reduce the amount of taxes they owe.

People who give to charity may want to know how their donations are being spent. Organizations like Charity Navigator and the American Institute of Philanthropy look at how charities spend the money they receive. Their reports and ratings offer a measure of how effectively the charities use their money. For

example, donors can learn how much a group spends on services, compared to how much it spends on itself in administrative costs.

Charity Navigator recently asked donors and charities to answer questions about year-end giving trends this year. More than five hundred donors and one hundred charities completed the questionnaire.

On average, these charities said they received forty-one percent of all their donations in the last few weeks of the year. Charity Navigator also asked donors about the kinds of charities they would likely support this holiday season. Human services rated at the top of the list. Arts, culture and humanities rated at the bottom.

And that's the VOA Special English Economics Report, written by George Grow. You can read and listen to our programs and find activities for English learners at voaspecialenglish.com. I'm Christopher Cruise.