



# 16 Years of Charitable Giving Research

THE INDIANA UNIVERSITY LILLY FAMILY SCHOOL OF PHILANTHROPY'S PHILANTHROPY PANEL STUDY (PPS)

**A GenerosityForLife Research Brief**

researched and written by the Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy at IUPUI

**GenerosityForLife**



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Based on data collected in 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015, and 2017 about giving in 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, and 2016, respectively





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## Acknowledgments

The Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy is dedicated to improving philanthropy to improve the world by training and empowering students and professionals to be innovators and leaders who create positive and lasting change. The School offers a comprehensive approach to philanthropy through its academic, research and international programs, and through The Fund Raising School, Lake Institute on Faith & Giving, Mays Family Institute on Diverse Philanthropy, and the Women's Philanthropy Institute.

Learn more at [www.philanthropy.iupui.edu](http://www.philanthropy.iupui.edu).

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## About the Dataset

The underlying data for this research brief is drawn from the Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy's Philanthropy Panel Study (PPS)—a signature research project of the school. The PPS, formerly known as the Center on Philanthropy Panel Study (COPPS), follows the same families' philanthropic behaviors throughout their lives. The study provides nonprofit sector professionals, fundraisers, policymakers and public officials a unique perspective of household giving and volunteering behaviors over time.

The PPS is the best resource for measuring charitable giving and volunteering by the general U.S. population, accurately representing households up to the 97 percentile of income. Conducted every two years in partnership with the University of Michigan Institute for Social Research's Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID), this panel study has tracked the same families' giving and volunteering over time, alongside personal and socioeconomic factors informing philanthropic behavior. Genealogical sampling ensures that adult children starting their own families are also included.

The PSID is the longest-running longitudinal household survey in the world. The study began in 1968 with a nationally representative sample of more than 18,000 individuals from 5,000 families in the United States. The PSID tracks the same families' charitable giving biennially. In order to keep the PSID representative of the U.S. population, a refresher sample of post-1968 immigrant families was introduced in 1997. The PSID is based at the Institute of Survey Research at the University of Michigan, and the data are publicly available to researchers and analysts.

The PPS module was added in the year 2001, and to date, includes nine waves of data measuring giving in the previous calendar years (2000-2016). Data were collected in 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015, and 2017 about giving in 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, and 2016, respectively.

The PPS is unique because it provides high-quality data on charitable giving comparable to U.S. Individual Taxpayer Return data<sup>1</sup> (Wilhelm, 2006). In addition, the PSID contains high-quality data on income and wealth, which are typically unavailable in existing data sets on philanthropic behavior. This allows researchers to more fully control for a household's economic resources.

In the PPS, giving to charitable and nonprofit organizations is measured through gifts of money, assets, and property/goods to organizations with different goals and purposes. These include giving to religious congregations (e.g., churches, synagogues, mosques) and other organizations (e.g., TV and radio ministries) whose primary purpose is religious activity or spiritual development. The secular category encompasses giving for the purpose of helping people in need, providing health care or conducting medical research (e.g., hospitals, cancer charities, telethons), delivering education (e.g., schools, universities, PTAs, libraries), providing youth and family services (e.g., boys' and girls' clubs, Big Brothers or Big Sisters, sports leagues), promoting

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<sup>1</sup> The PSID philanthropy module is the only data set on giving comparable in coverage to the IRS taxpayer data. However, we should note that the IRS taxpayer database provides a more accurate picture of charitable giving at and above the 90th percentile of charitable giving. The IRS tax data is less suitable for this study because immigrant status and experience is not recorded, and immigrants may be less likely to itemize their deductions.

the arts and culture (e.g., museums, theatre, public broadcasting), improving neighborhoods and communities (e.g., community associations, service clubs), preserving the environment or advancing sustainability, and providing international aid (e.g., international children's funds, disaster relief, human rights). Throughout this paper, the term "combined purposes" giving refers to organizations like the United Way and other public-society benefit groups that collect donations for reallocation to a variety of secular causes. Giving to all of these causes, except religious activity or spiritual development, is referred to as secular giving.

The PPS definition of charitable giving includes any gifts of money, assets, property, or goods made directly to the organization, through payroll deduction, or collected by other means on behalf of the charity. It does not include political contributions. The PPS questionnaire uses a threshold amount of \$25, meaning respondents must have given at least \$25 to charity in the previous calendar year to be asked subsequent detailed questions about their giving.

The sample for the present study consists of individuals who were heads of households or partners of heads of households in at least one wave of the sample. We used all sub-samples within the PSID: the nationally-representative sub-sample, the low-income over-sample, and the 1997 and 2016 immigrant refresher samples. Previous studies show that the PSID sample remains nationally-representative despite attrition (Fitzgerald, Gottschalk, & Moffitt, 1998; Schoeni et al., 2013). Our results use the PSID's weights. The data has been pooled from the 2001-2017 PPS samples. After dropping obvious outliers and observations with missing values, the sample size for this study is 73,423 families.

Visit <https://philanthropy.iupui.edu/research/current-research/philanthropy-panel-study.html> to learn more.

The Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy thanks Atlantic Philanthropies for the initial funding to launch PPS in 2001, and the donors whose recent contributions make continued waves of PPS possible.

Recent funders include:

- Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- Charles Stewart Mott Foundation
- John Templeton Foundation

To contribute, please contact Andrew Keeler ([ackeeler@iupui.edu](mailto:ackeeler@iupui.edu)) or give online at [www.philanthropy.iupui.edu/give-now](http://www.philanthropy.iupui.edu/give-now) and select "School of Philanthropy Fund."



## Overview

Generosity is a core American value and a complex duality. According to Dr. Paul Schervish, Professor Emeritus and Director (retired) of the Center on Wealth and Philanthropy at Boston College, “On the one hand, generosity is a disposition—a moral or spiritual orientation that inclines our affections to care for others. On the other hand, generosity is also a deed and a practice by which individuals dedicate financial assets, in-kind gifts, or personal services for the care of others. Generosity, as a virtue, combines this duality: it is the habit of fusing the affective disposition and the practical care” (Schervish, n.d.).

From the time of Alexis de Tocqueville to today, the majority of Americans support causes that help shape the nation’s identity. In 2018, total giving by Americans surpassed \$427 billion, a record-breaking milestone (*Giving USA 2019*). Although charitable donations vary in size, frequency, and proportion of income, they collectively contribute substantial support to areas such as education, health care, basic needs, arts and culture, and disaster relief services.

This research brief on household charitable giving in the United States uses the nationally representative data from the 2001-2017 waves (about giving in 2000-2016) of the Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy’s Philanthropy Panel Study (PPS), a module of the Panel Study on Income Dynamics (PSID). The PPS is the nation’s first and largest ongoing panel study examining the charitable giving of American households over time.

The brief presents key facts about charitable giving based on responses provided by households in the first 16 years of the 21st century.<sup>2</sup> This report presents giving rates for all households and average gift amounts for donor households, comparing charitable giving in 2000 (the first wave of the PPS) with giving in 2016 (the most recent wave of PPS data available for analysis).

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<sup>2</sup> Over 9,000 households participate in the PSID today. Households that answered the philanthropy questions were asked first if they made charitable donations totaling \$25 or more in the previous calendar year. Households responding in the affirmative were asked further questions about how much they gave to each of 10 different types of charities. In our analysis, we used the sampling weights provided by the PSID at the University of Michigan to yield nationally-representative results.

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## Key Questions Examined

1. **What percentage of American households gave to charity in 2000 compared to 2016?**
  2. **How much did American households give to charity in 2000 compared to 2016?**
  3. **What types of charitable causes did Americans support in 2000 compared to 2016?**
  4. **How did age affect the types of charitable causes American households supported in 2016 compared to 2000?**
- 

There are many different ways to conceptualize American generosity. People can give of their time, talent, and treasure. They can give formally to 501(c)3 charitable organizations or informally to friends and family. Two common ways to consider the state of charitable giving in America include measuring giving rates (that is, the percent of American households who give to formal charities) and giving amounts (that is, how many dollars, on average, American households give to formal charities).

The practice of generosity plays a significant role in the well-being of children and adults. Yet, despite growing interest in generosity, we are still learning about how generosity evolves over individuals' lives. This research brief contributes to the study of generosity "for life" by examining how age has influenced the types of charitable organizations that American households support and how that support has changed over time.

Learn more about GenerosityForLife and the school's Philanthropy Panel Study by visiting <http://generosityforlife.org/>



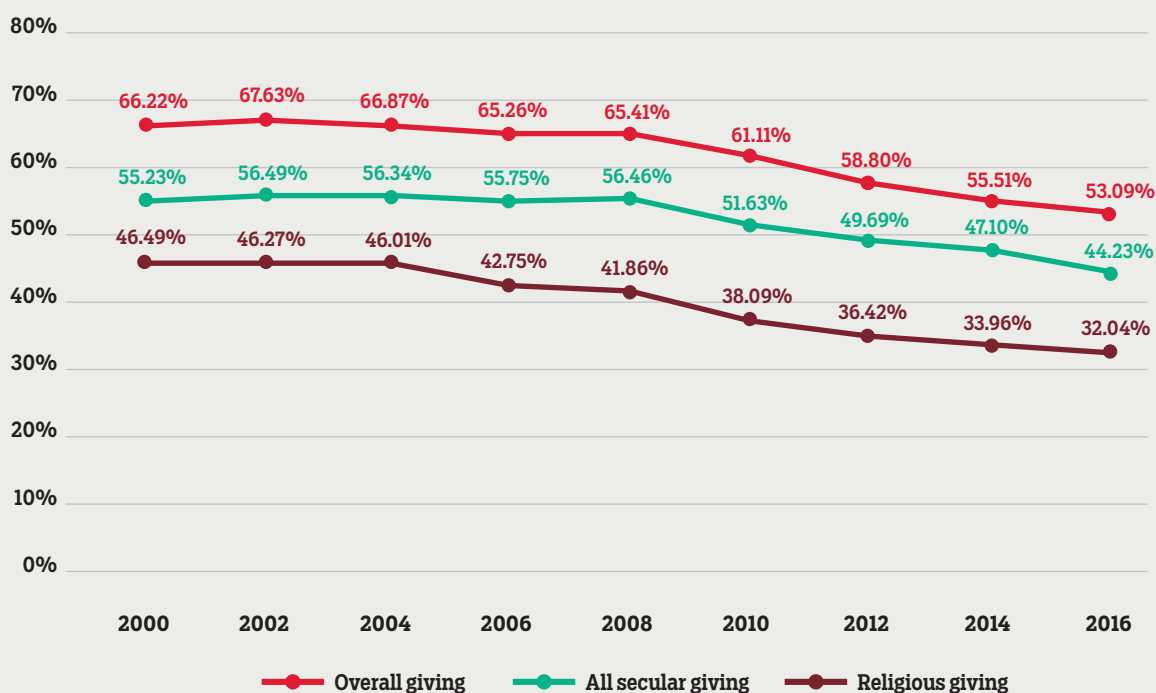
## Findings

### Question #1: What percentage of American households give to charity?

In 2000, when the Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy began collecting PPS data, 66.22% of American households gave to charitable causes overall. By 2016, the most recent wave of data available for analysis, the percentage of Americans giving to charitable causes had declined significantly to 53.09%.

Similarly, the percentages of American households who gave to secular organizations and religious congregations were down significantly in 2016 (44.23% and 32.04%, respectively) compared to the percentage who gave in 2000 (55.23% and 46.49%, respectively).

Overall, Secular, and Religious Congregation<sup>3</sup> Giving Incidences: 2000–2016



<sup>3</sup> PPS survey text: *Did you make any donations specifically for religious purposes or spiritual development, for example to a church, synagogue, mosque, TV or radio ministry? Please do not include donations to schools, hospitals, and other charities run by religious organizations.*



Type of Statistic	Sample Size in 2000	Average in 2000	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant? <sup>4</sup>
Overall Giving Rates	7,063	66.22%	9,049	53.09%	significant
Secular Giving Rates	7,063	55.23%	9,049	44.23%	significant
Religious Giving Rates	7,063	46.49%	9,049	32.04%	significant

As depicted above, there has been a downward trend in participation rates with fewer Americans making donations than in the past. The PPS shows a broad and consistent decline of more than 13 percentage points in the share of households who gave overall in 2016 compared to 2000. The percentage equates to approximately 20 million Americans who were no longer giving to charitable institutions as of 2016. Secular and religious giving rates also declined significantly during the same time period.

A number of socio-economic and demographic factors influence the likelihood of giving and the amount given to charity by American households over time. While business cycles often influence giving patterns, the recent Great Recession (December 2007–June 2009), also exposed the sector’s vulnerability to economic shocks. Moreover, various components of 21st century life—such as large scale demographic shifts, decreasing congregational affiliation and attendance, and increased use of technology—can and are altering and reshaping future giving patterns.

<sup>4</sup> Findings referred to as “statistically significant” are statistically significant at the  $p < .05$ -level, meaning that there is a less than 5% likelihood of the result occurring by chance alone.

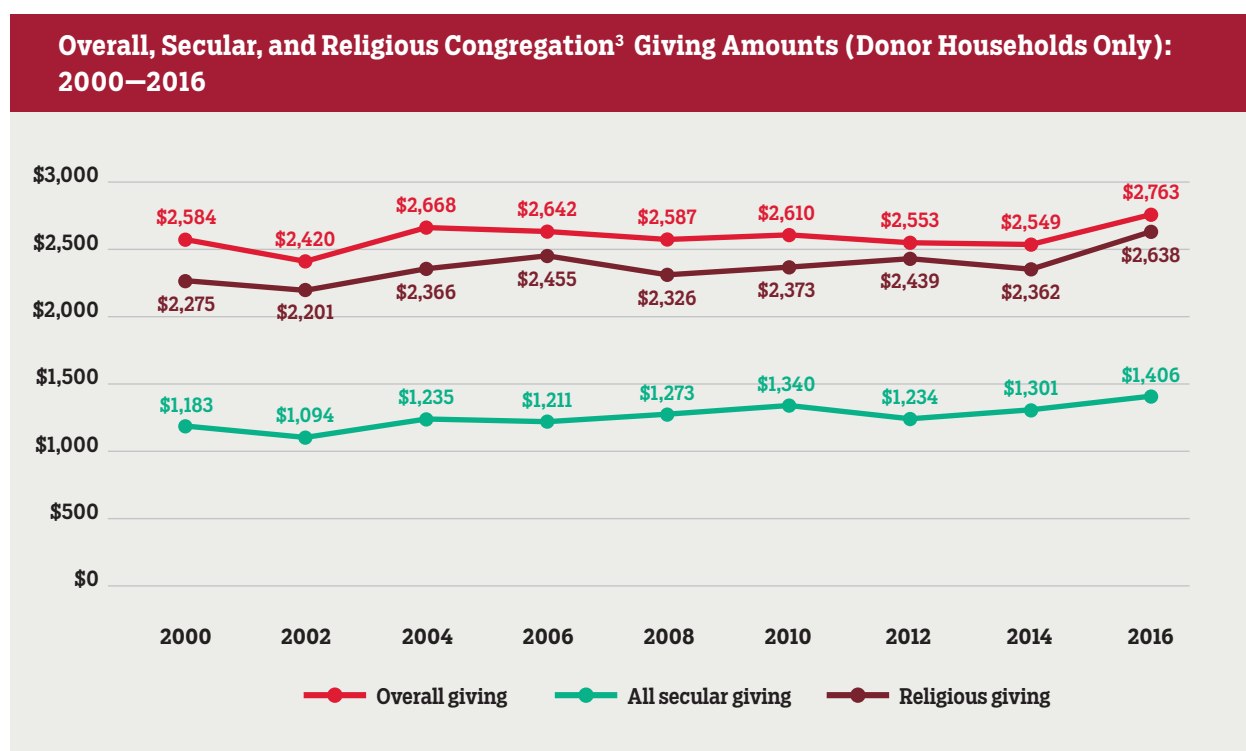


## Question #2: How much do American households give to charity?

Despite a significant decline in the percentage of American households giving to charitable causes between 2000 and 2016, the average dollar amount given by American donor households has generally increased over time. This is often described as “donors down, dollars up.” This pattern may reflect underlying trends in wealth and income inequality as charitable giving is linked to financial and economic security.

The average amount that donor households gave to religious congregations when the PPS began in 2000, was \$2,275. In 2016 (the most recent year of data available), that average had risen significantly to \$2,638<sup>5</sup>.

The average gift amounts for overall giving and for giving to secular charities did not change significantly from the year 2000 to 2016.



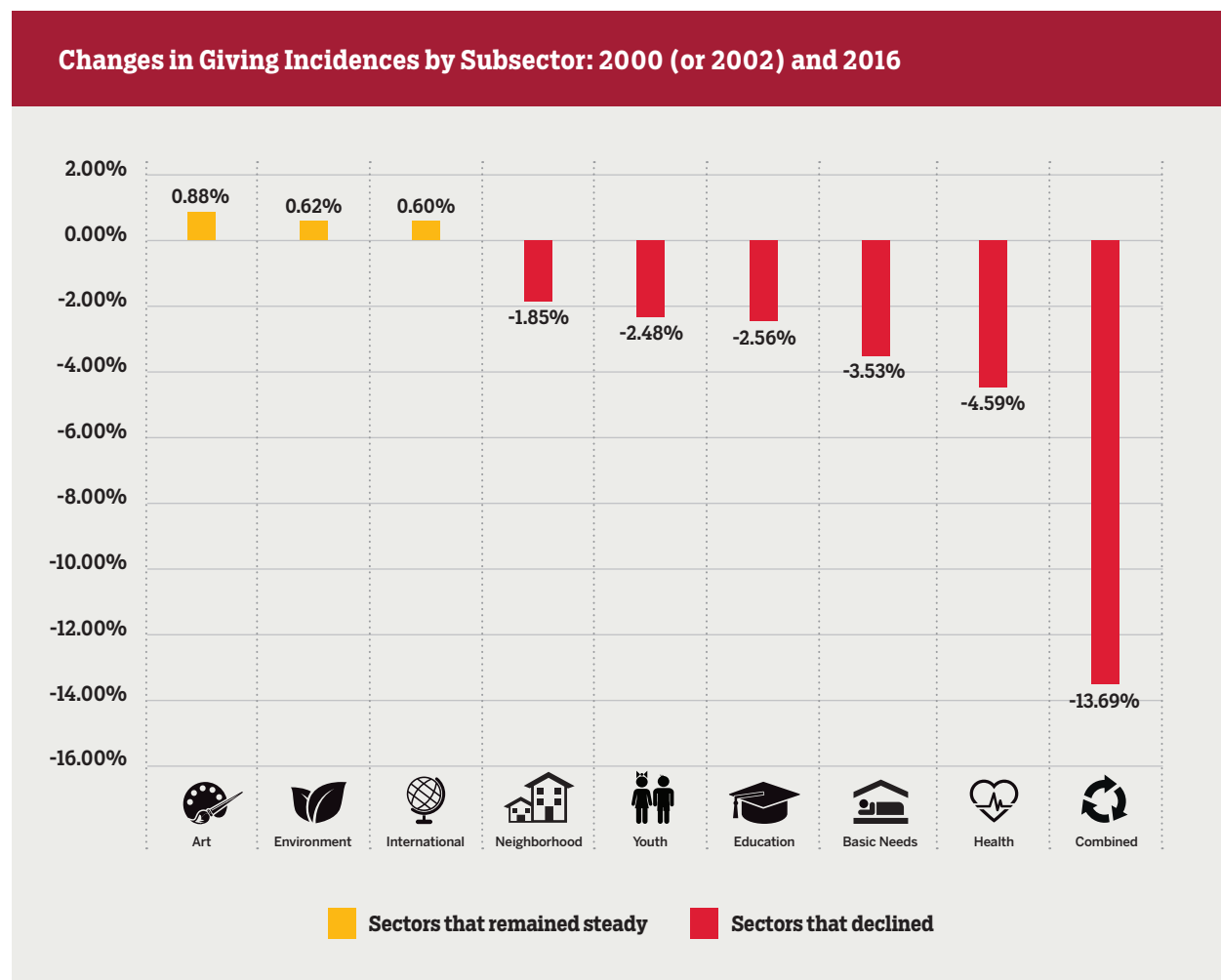
Type of Statistic	Sample Size in 2000	Average in 2000	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
Overall Average Giving Amounts	4,314	\$2,584	3,993	\$2,763	not significant
Average Secular Giving Amounts	3,459	\$1,183	3,197	\$1,406	not significant
Average Religious Giving Amounts	3,098	\$2,275	2,531	\$2,638	significant

<sup>5</sup> All dollars are inflation-adjusted to 2016 U.S. dollars.

### Question #3: What types of charitable causes do Americans support?

In addition to asking about giving to religious congregations, the PPS asks respondents about their giving to a variety of secular charitable causes, including the following: Basic Needs, Combined Purposes, Health, Education, Youth & Family, Arts & Culture, Environment, International Aid, and Neighborhood & Community.

In this section, we present results from subsector analyses that reveal some significant changes in the types of organizations to which American households gave to and the amounts they donated to these organizations in the year 2000 (or 2002, depending on the subsector<sup>6</sup>) compared to 2016.

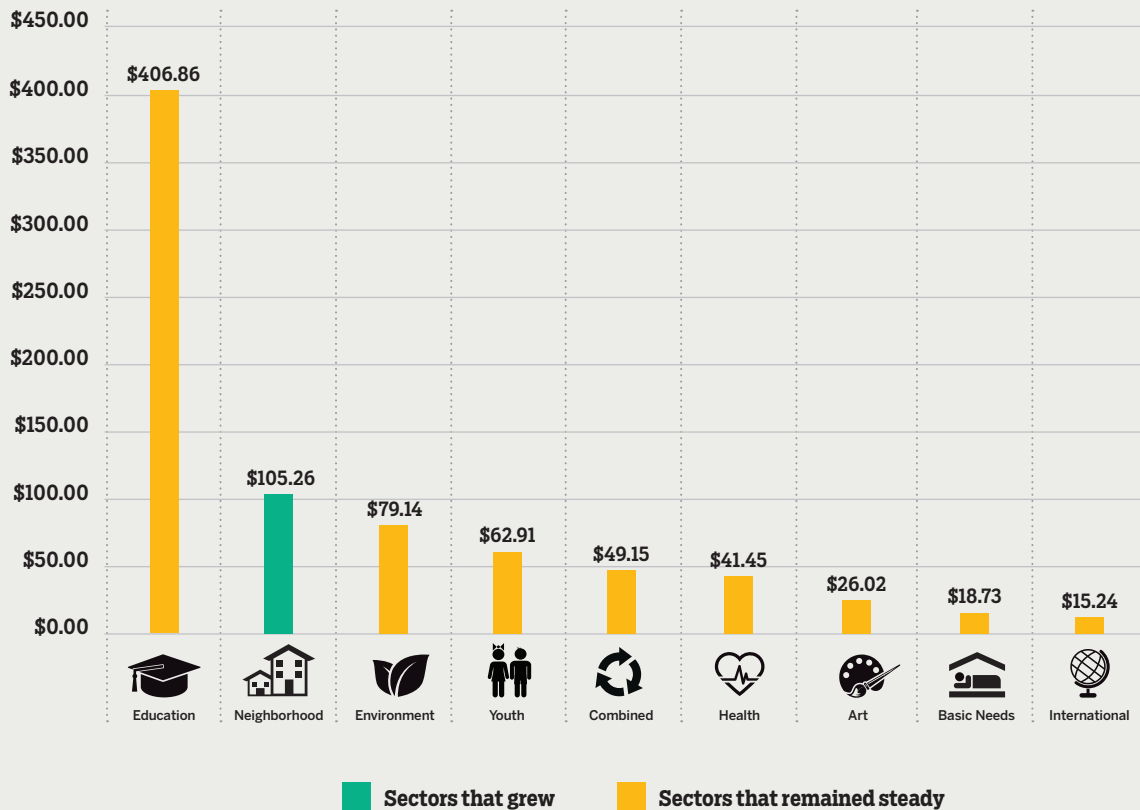


Note: For the following subsectors the table above compares incidences in 2000 and 2016: Combined Purposes, Education, Health, and Basic Needs. For the following subsectors the table above compares incidences in 2002 and 2016: Arts & Culture, Environment, International Aid, Neighborhood & Community, and Youth & Family.

<sup>6</sup> In 2002, the PPS expanded the range of secular charities for which it directly asked about giving rates and gift amounts. New categories included the following: Arts & Culture, Environment, International Aid, Neighborhood & Community, Youth, and Other.



## Changes in Giving Amounts by Subsector (Donor Households Only): 2000 (or 2002) and 2016<sup>7</sup>



Note: For the following subsectors the table above compares amounts in 2000 and 2016: Combined Purposes, Education, Health, and Basic Needs. For the following subsectors the table above compares amounts in 2002 and 2016: Arts & Culture, Environment, International Aid, Neighborhood & Community, and Youth & Family.

There are many reasons why the different charitable subsectors experienced uneven growth in giving incidences and/or amounts from the first year of PPS data on giving in 2000 (or 2002, depending on the subsector) compared to the most recent year of PPS data on giving in 2016. Some changes in giving incidences or amounts are likely based on activities of the recipient organizations within each subsector.

<sup>7</sup> From the graph, it may appear that the education subsector grew the most between 2000 (or 2002) and 2016. However, this is due to two large outlier donations to education in 2016. We chose not to remove the two large outlier donations from our analysis because large donations, such as these, are not rare. Despite the seemingly large increase in the average amount given to the education subsector between 2000 and 2016, the change was not statistically significant and instead giving to the subsector held steady over time.

Some charitable subsectors are connected to various public policy-related issues and are publicized by technology platforms and the media (see Stiffman & Haynes, 2019; Dabbs, 2017; Charity Navigator, 2017; The White House, 2017; Chappell, 2017). Potential donors may be more aware of environmental causes and international aid organizations thanks to media coverage of natural disasters or discussions of humanitarian crises around the world. Making these issues salient to the average American may have helped keep the percentage of donors and amounts donated constant over time.

Arts and cultural organizations have been doing a lot in recent years to reach out to new donor bases, including appealing to younger donors and donors of more diverse backgrounds (see Blackbaud, 2018; M+R and NTEN, 2018). Being innovative in how they market to and reach new audiences may help explain the steady rate of giving and amounts given to these organizations between 2002 and 2016, while other subsectors experienced declining rates of giving, amounts given, or both.

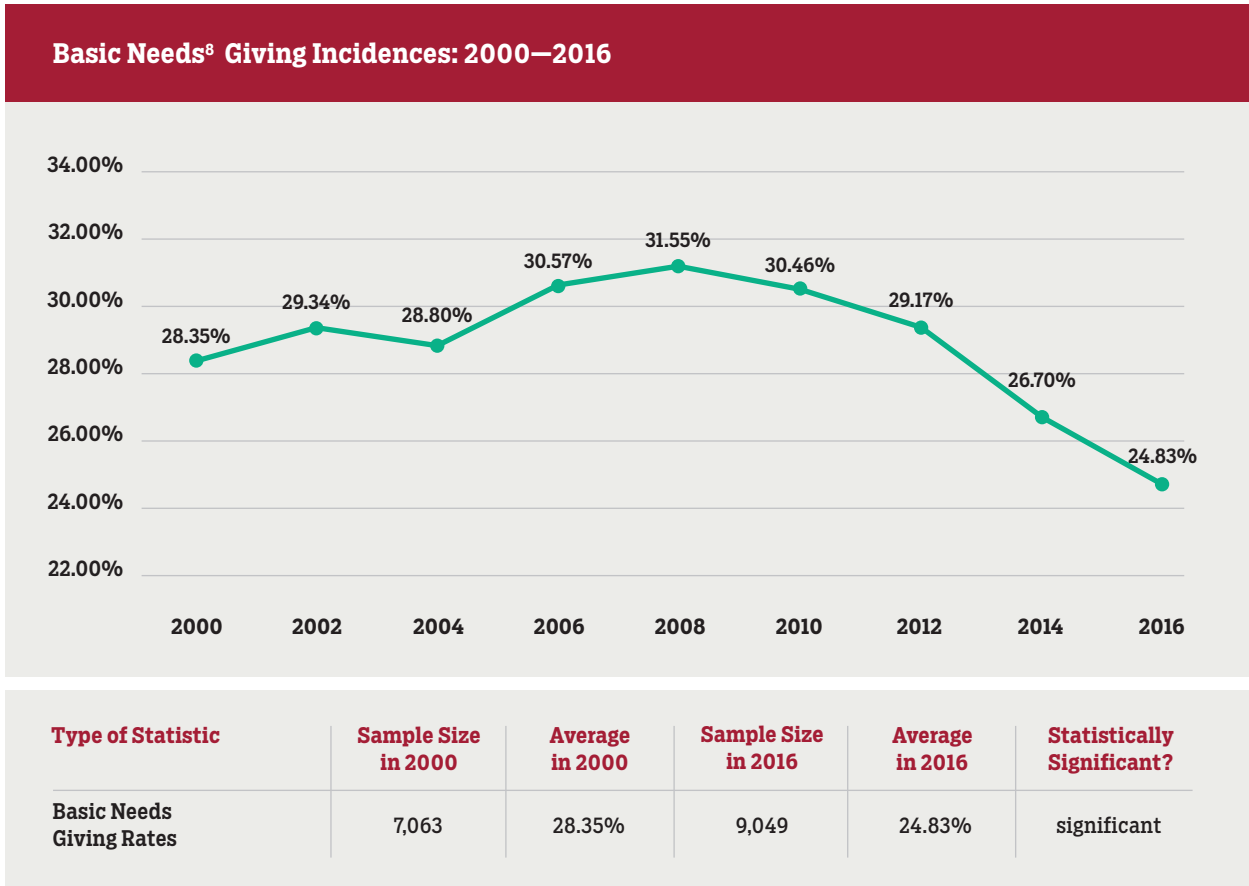
Finally, as demographic shifts continue to occur, changes in giving incidence may be attributed in part to the appeal—or lack thereof—of a subsector to younger and more diverse donors (see Stiffman & Haynes, 2019). Educational organizations have noted declines in alumni giving trends over the years. While older households (over age 60) play an outsized role in giving for educational purposes (both in terms of rates and amounts), giving to educational institutions by younger households has grown more slowly during the past decade. These trends may help explain the significant decrease in the percentage of households giving to education between 2000 and 2016. Likewise, basic needs charities have struggled to reach younger, more diverse donors in recent years and giving incidence to these types of organizations also experienced a significant decline during the timeframe analyzed.

Few charitable subsectors experienced much growth—In terms of giving incidence and/or gift amounts—during the first 16 years of the 21st century. Instead, most subsectors have held steady or experienced declines during this timeframe. As the socio-demographic profile of the average American donor shifts, organizations and subsectors will need to branch out, developing new strategies to engage younger Americans, communities of color, and women, who—given their increasing visibility in philanthropy—are all vital contributors.



## Basic Needs

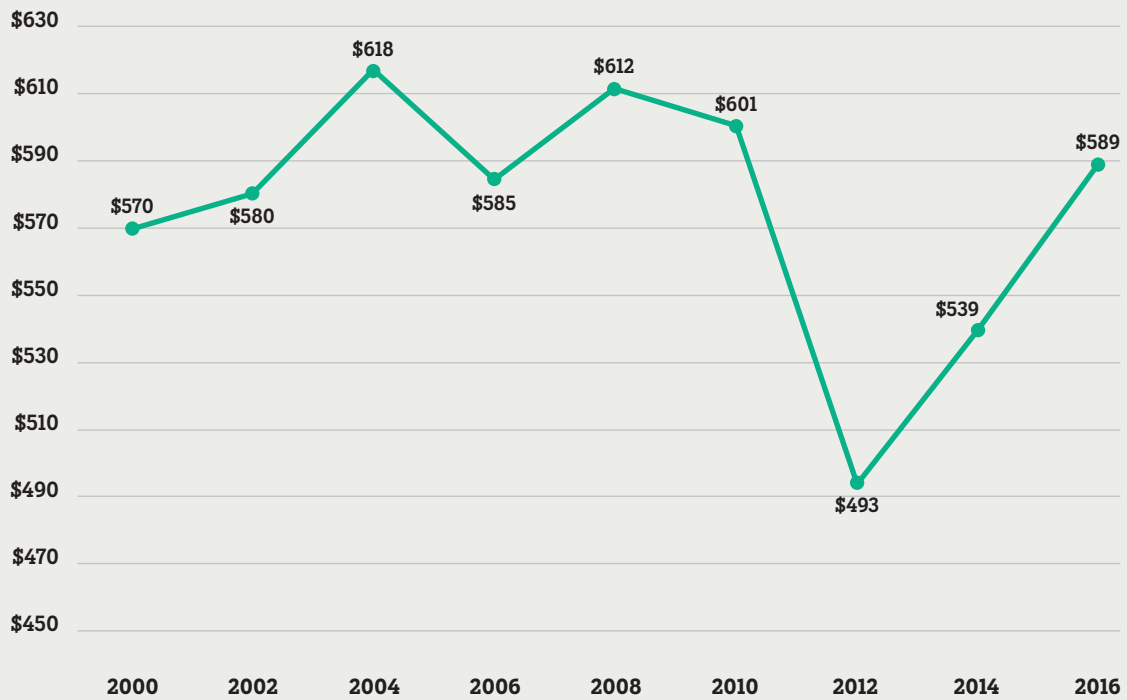
In 2016, the highest percentage of American households donated to Basic Needs charities, with 24.83% of households indicating that they gave to such organizations. However, in 2016 this rate was down significantly from the beginning of the PPS in 2000 (28.35%).



<sup>8</sup> PPS survey text: to organizations that help people in need of food, shelter, or other basic necessities

In terms of amounts given to basic needs organizations, there was not a significant change from 2000 (\$570) to 2016 (\$589).

### Basic Needs Giving Amounts (Donor Households Only): 2000–2016



Type of Statistic	Sample Size in 2000	Average in 2000	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
Basic Needs Average Amounts	1,794	\$570	1,775	\$589	not significant

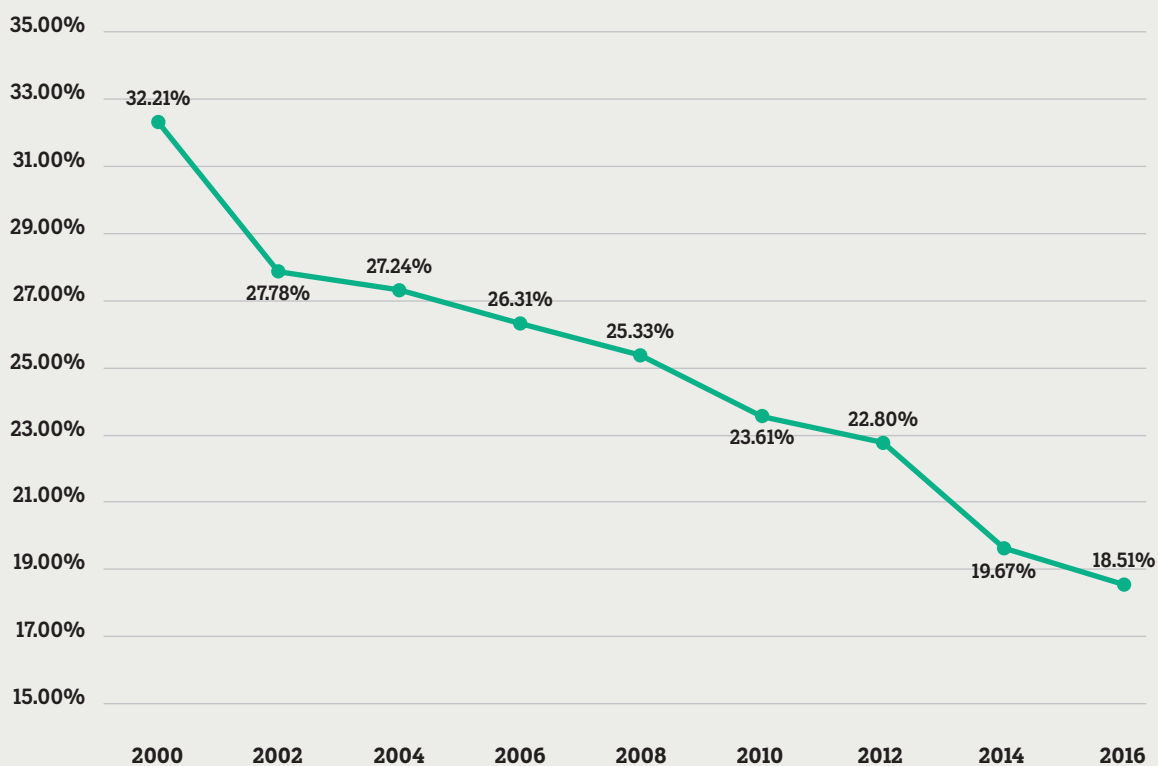


## Combined Purposes

Following giving to basic needs, the second-highest percentage of American households gave to Combined Purpose charities in 2016 (18.51%). However, this rate decreased significantly from its high point in 2000, when nearly a third of all households (32.21%) gave to Combined Purpose charities.

This decline may be partially explained by changes in the concept of community in America. Barman (2006) analyzed workplace charitable giving showing that traditional notions of community are declining and new understandings of community are emerging. These different communities compete with the United Way and other traditional fundraisers working in the combined purposes/community space.

**Combined Purposes<sup>9</sup> Giving Incidences: 2000–2016**



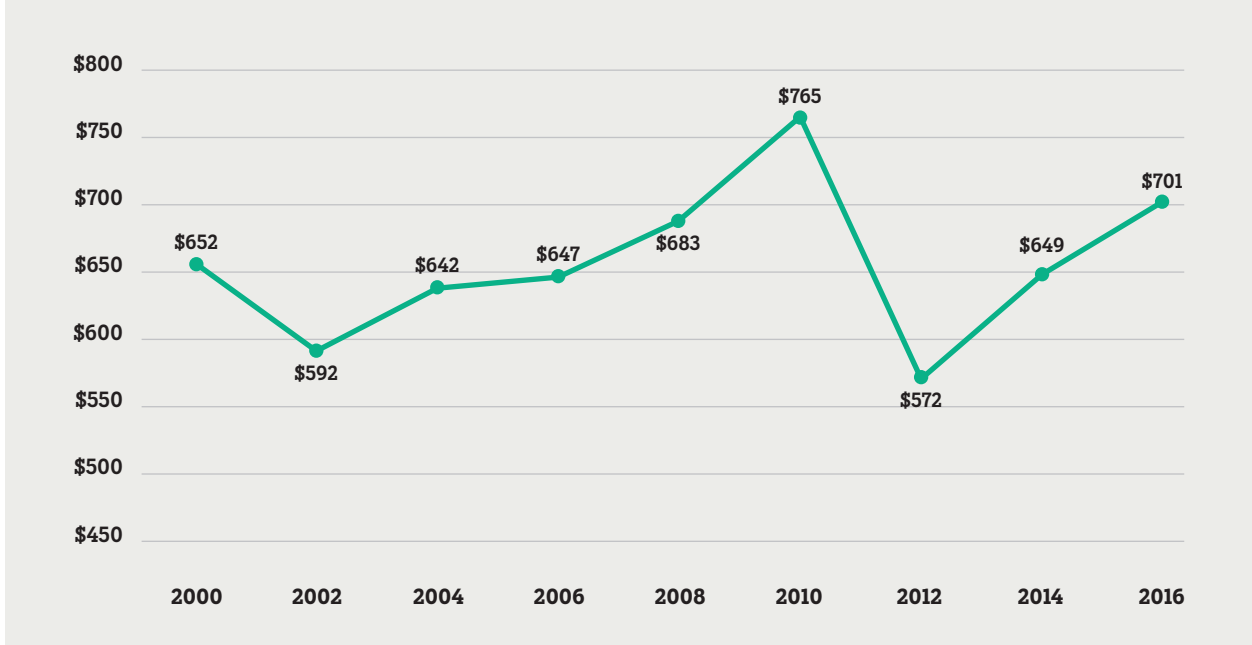
Type of Statistic	Sample Size in 2000	Average in 2000	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
Combined Purposes Giving Rates	7,063	32.21%	9,049	18.51%	significant

<sup>9</sup> PPS survey text: For example, the United Way, the United Jewish Appeal, the Catholic Charities, or your local community foundation?



In terms of average amounts given to combined purpose charities there was not a significant change between 2000 (\$652) and 2016 (\$701).

**Combined Purposes Giving Amounts (Donor Households Only): 2000–2016**

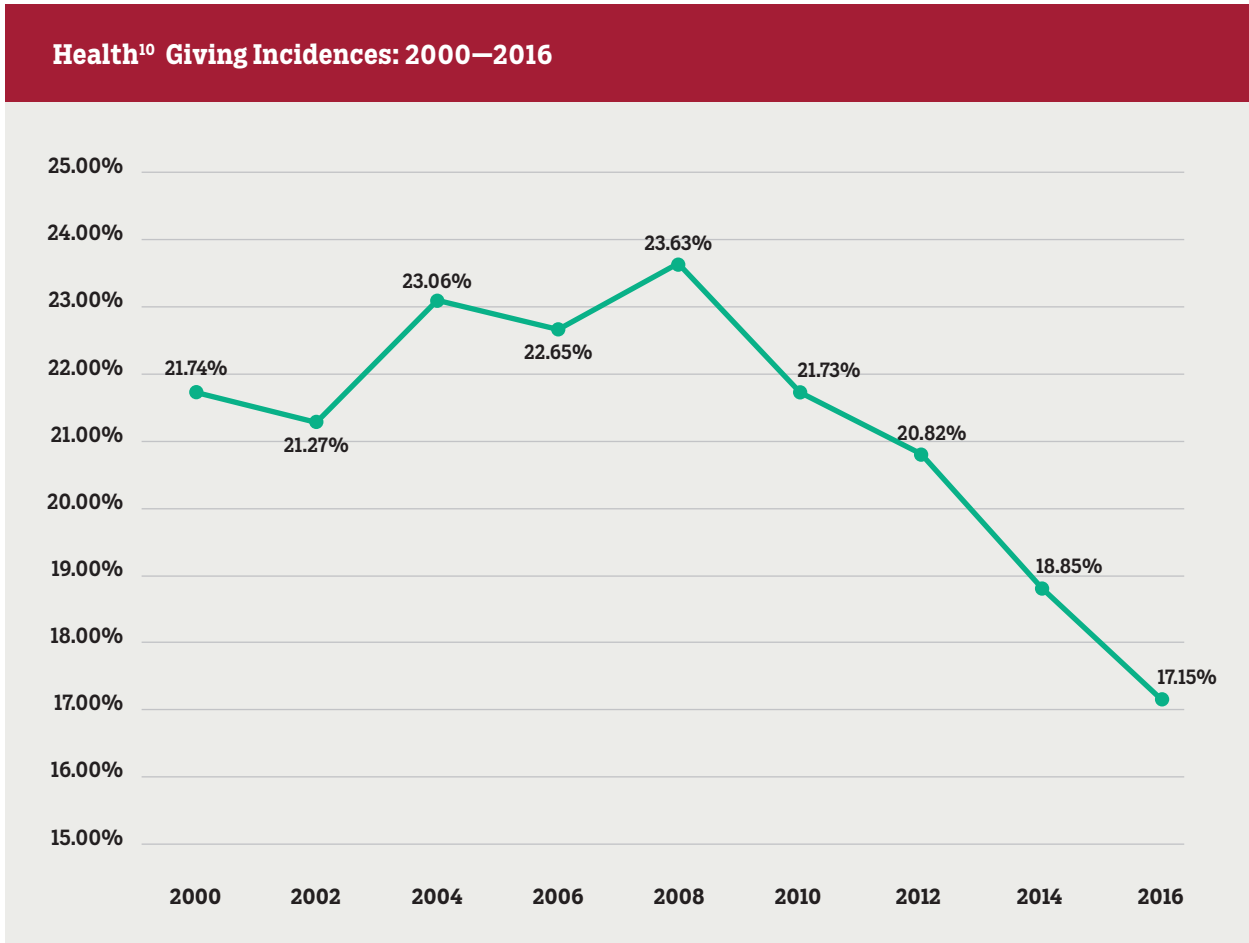


Type of Statistic	Sample Size in 2000	Average in 2000	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
Combined Purposes Giving Amounts	2,027	\$652	1,334	\$701	not significant



## Health

Following giving to combined purpose charities, charities supporting health-related issues and causes received the third-highest share of donations by American households in 2016 (17.15%). However, this was a significant decline from the share of donations received by health-related charities when the PPS began 2000 (21.74%).

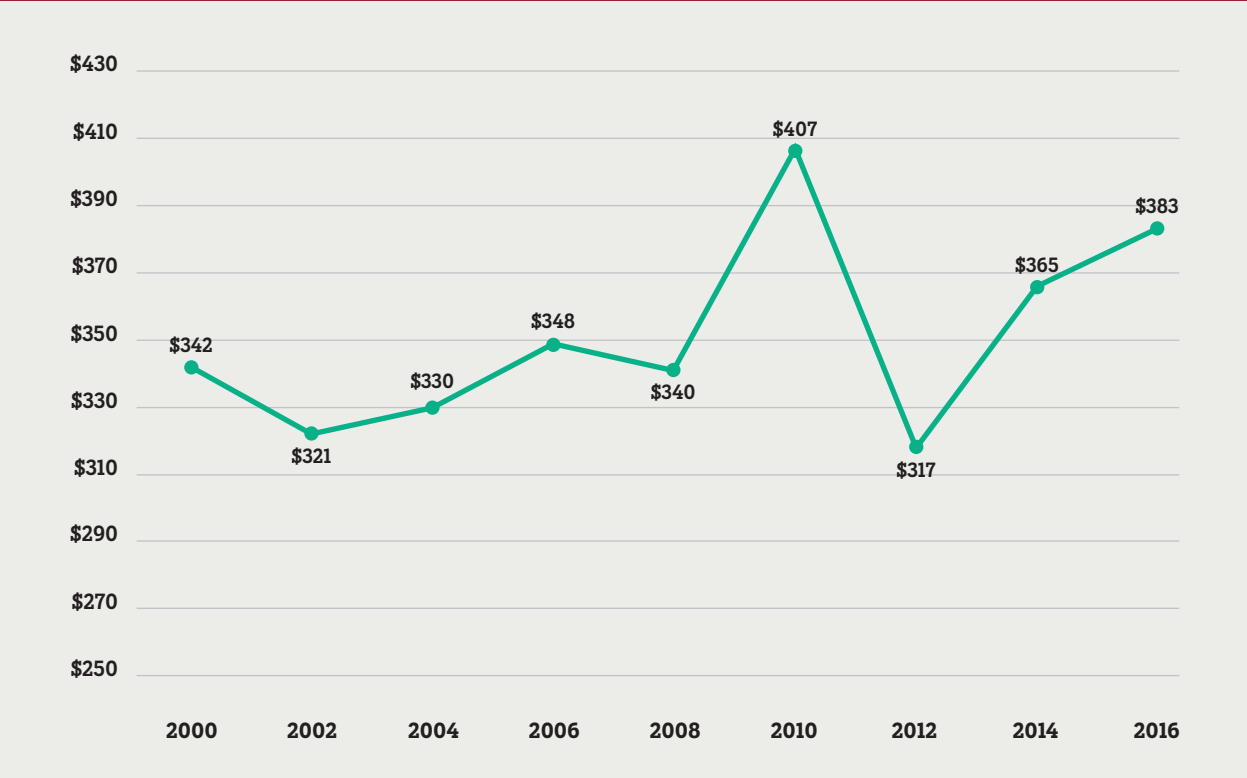


Type of Statistic	Sample Size in 2000	Average in 2000	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
Health Giving Rate	7,063	21.74%	9,049	17.15%	significant

<sup>10</sup> PPS survey text: to health care or medical research organizations? For example, to hospitals, nursing homes, mental health facilities, cancer, heart and lung associations, or telethons?

The average amount given by American donors to health-related charities did not increase significantly from 2000 (\$342) to 2016 (\$383).

**Health Giving Amounts (Donor Households Only): 2000–2016**

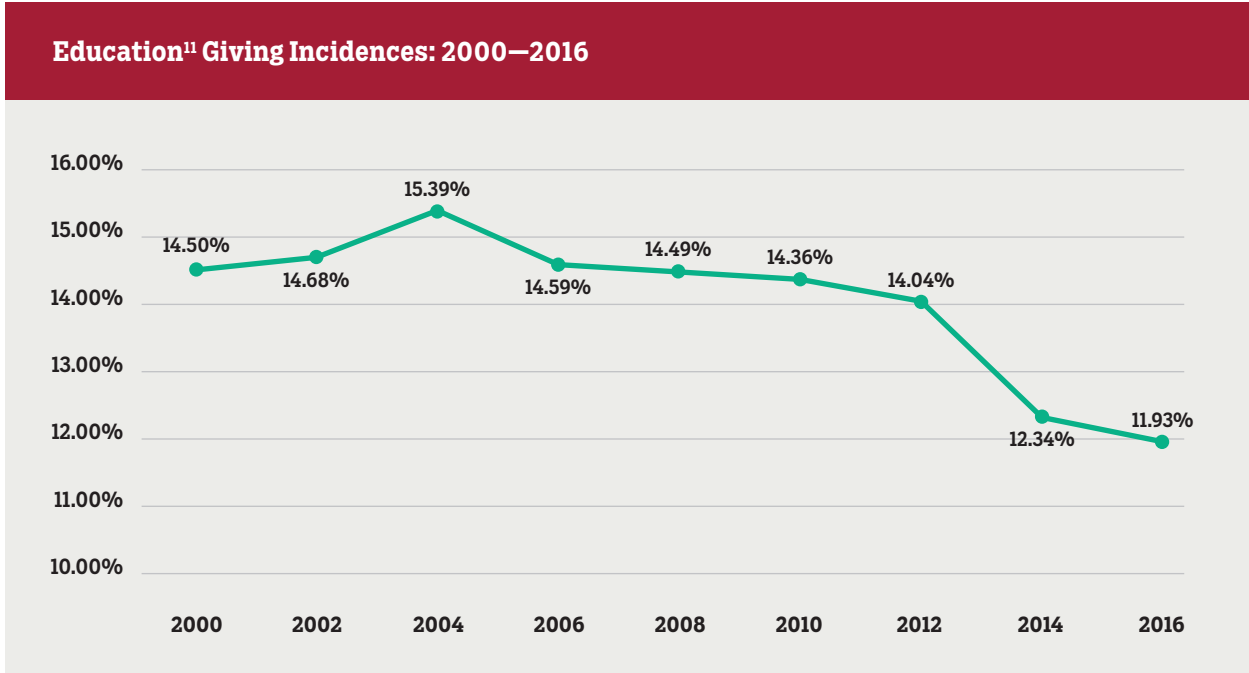


Type of Statistic	Sample Size in 2000	Average in 2000	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
Health Giving Amounts	1,230	\$342	1,163	\$383	not significant



## Education

A sizeable percentage of American households donate to organizations that support education—both K-12 and higher education. In 2000, 14.5% of households gave to educational causes and organizations. However, that percentage decreased to 11.93% in 2016—a significant drop.

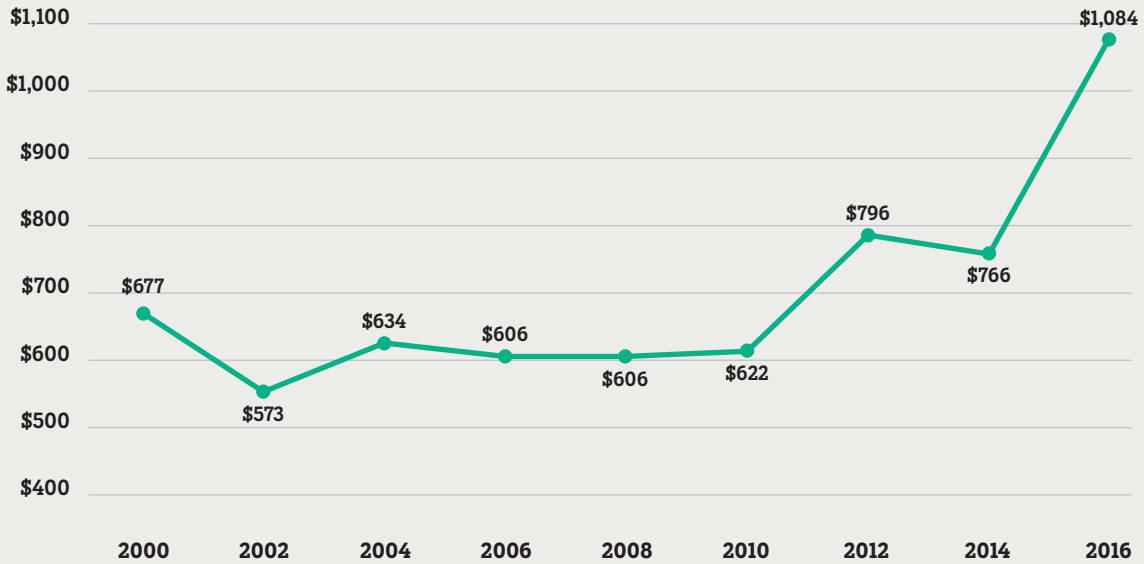


Type of Statistic	Sample Size in 2000	Average in 2000	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
Education Giving Rates	7,063	14.50%	9,049	11.93%	significant

<sup>11</sup> PPS survey text: towards educational purposes? For example, to colleges, grade schools, PTAs, libraries, or scholarship funds? Please do not include direct tuition payments for you or other family members.

While the percentage of Americans giving to education-related charities in 2016 dropped significantly from 2000, the average amount given by donor households to education-related charities did not change significantly during this same time period.

### Education Giving Amounts (Donor Households Only): 2000–2016



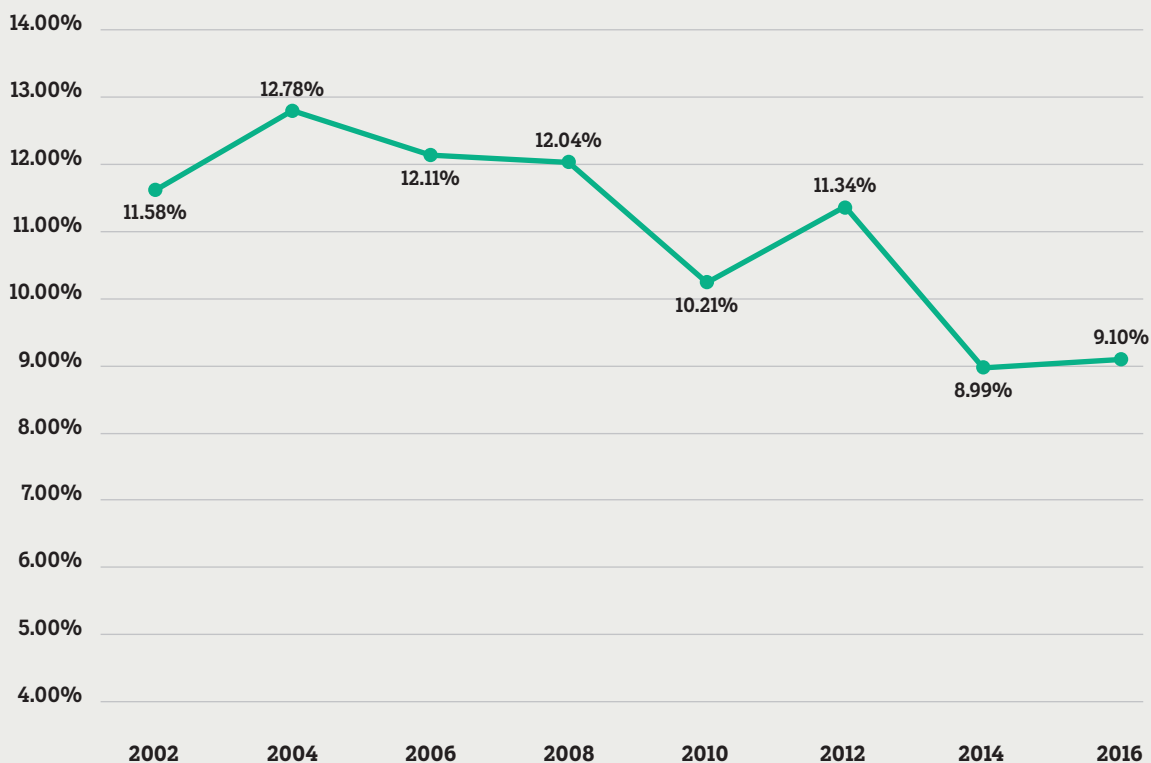
Type of Statistic	Sample Size in 2000	Average in 2000	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
Education Giving Amounts	902	\$677	855	\$1,084	not significant



## Youth

A small fraction of American households give to youth-related causes and organizations. In 2002, 11.58% of American households gave to youth organizations. This percentage decreased significantly to 9.10% in 2016.

**Youth<sup>12</sup> Giving Incidences: 2002–2016**

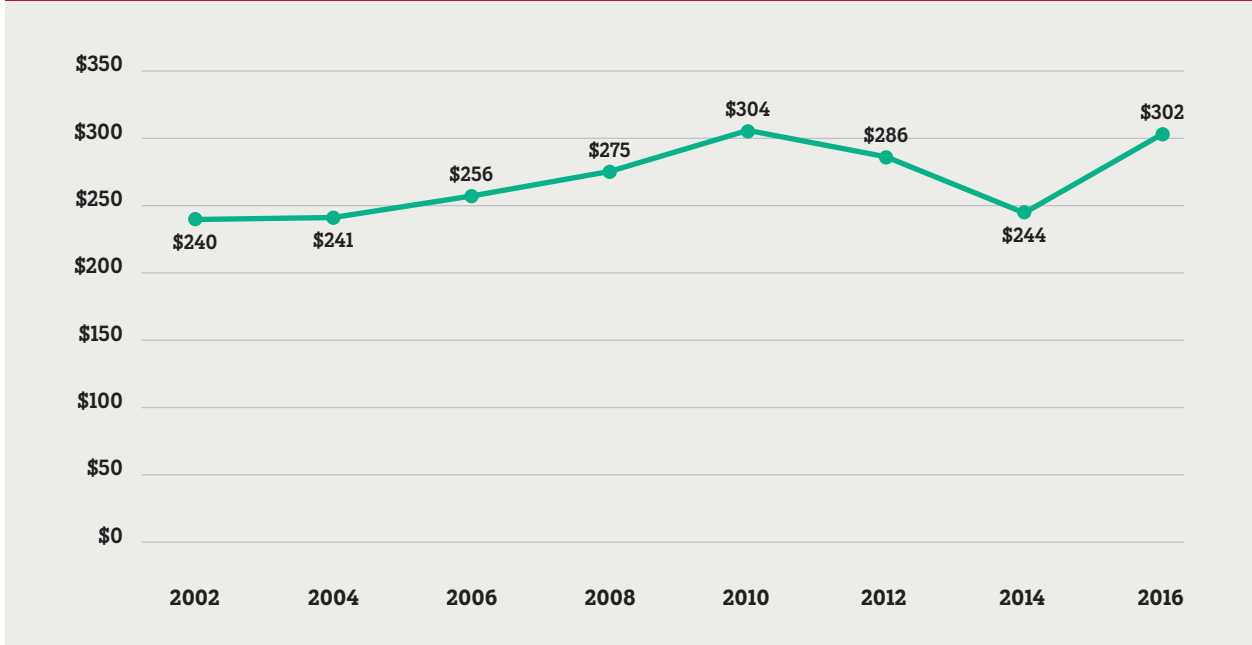


Type of Statistic	Sample Size in 2002	Average in 2002	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
Youth Giving Rates	7,421	11.58%	9,049	9.10%	significant

<sup>12</sup> PPS survey text: to organizations that provide youth or family services? Such as to scouting, boys' and girls' clubs, sports leagues, Big Brothers or Sisters, foster care, or family counseling?

The average amount given by donor households to youth organizations did not change significantly from 2002 (\$240) to 2016 (\$302).

**Youth Giving Amounts (Donor Households only): 2002–2016**

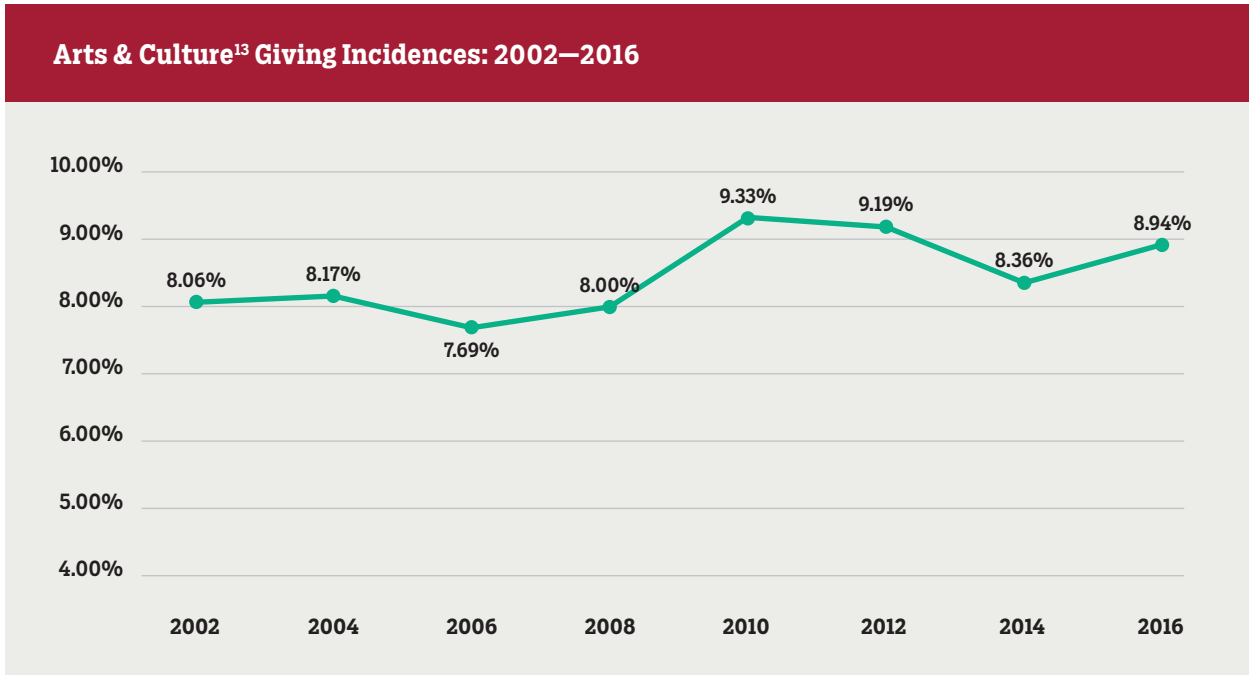


Type of Statistic	Sample Size in 2002	Average in 2002	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
Youth Giving Amounts	768	\$240	626	\$302	not significant



## Arts & Culture

American households who give to arts and culture-related charities represent a minority of overall donors but the percent who give to such organizations has remained stable over time. In 2002, 8.06% of households gave to arts organizations. In 2016, 8.94% of American households gave to such causes.



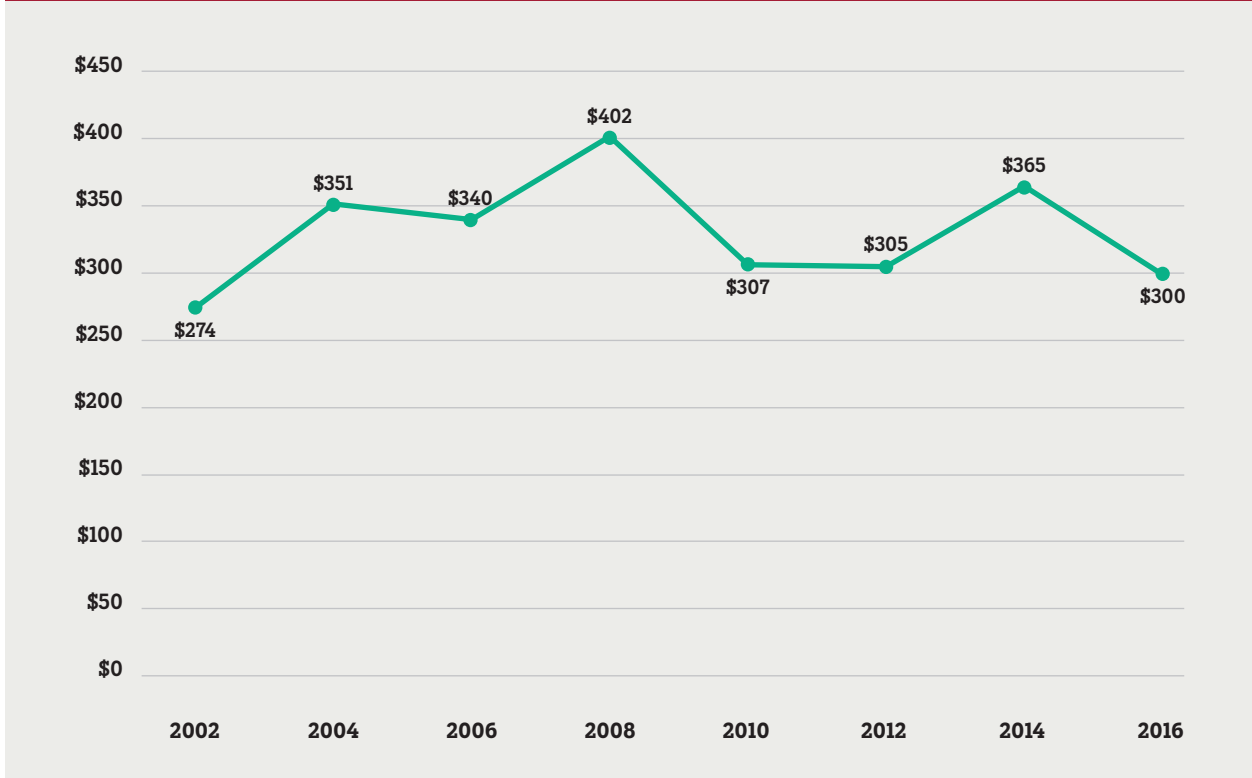
Type of Statistic	Sample Size in 2002	Average in 2002	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
Arts & Culture Giving Rates	7,421	8.06%	9,049	8.94%	not significant

<sup>13</sup> PPS survey text: to organizations that support or promote the arts, culture, or ethnic awareness? Such as, to a museum, theatre, orchestra, public broadcasting, or ethnic cultural awareness?



Average amounts given by donor households to arts and cultural charities did not significantly increase or decrease from 2002 (\$274) to 2016 (\$300).

**Arts & Culture Giving Amounts (Donor Households Only): 2002–2016**

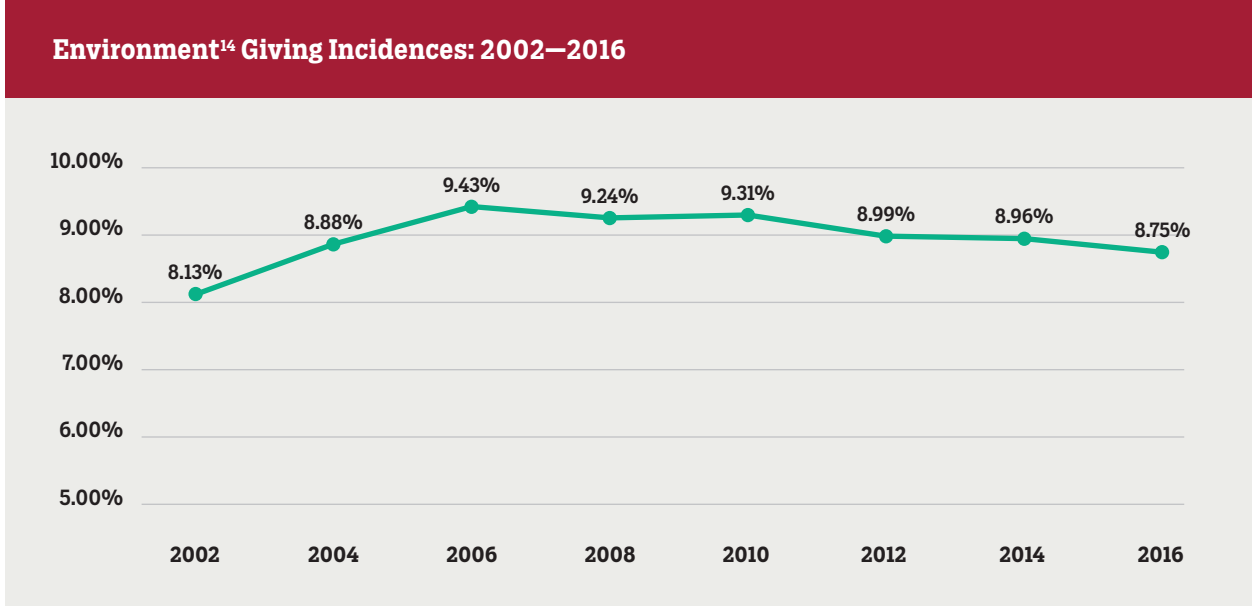


Type of Statistic	Sample Size in 2002	Average in 2002	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
Arts & Culture Giving Amounts	453	\$274	523	\$300	not significant



## Environment

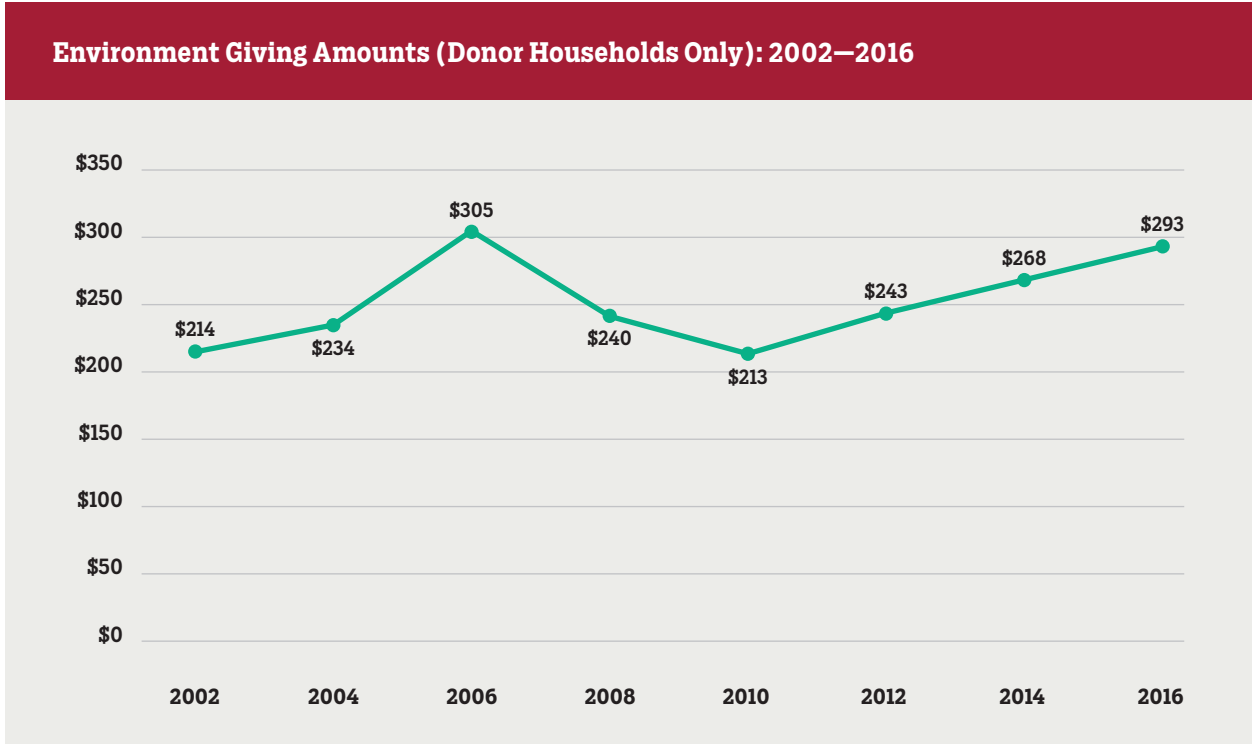
The percentage of American households that give to environmental charities has hovered between 8% and 9% over time. In 2016, 8.75% of households gave to environmental organizations, compared to 8.13% in 2002.



Type of Statistic	Sample Size in 2002	Average in 2002	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
Environment Giving Rates	7,421	8.13%	9,049	8.75%	not significant

<sup>14</sup> PPS survey text: to organizations that preserve the environment? Such as, for conservation efforts, animal protection, or parks?

Average amounts given by donor households to environmental causes did not change significantly from 2002 (\$214) to 2016 (\$293).

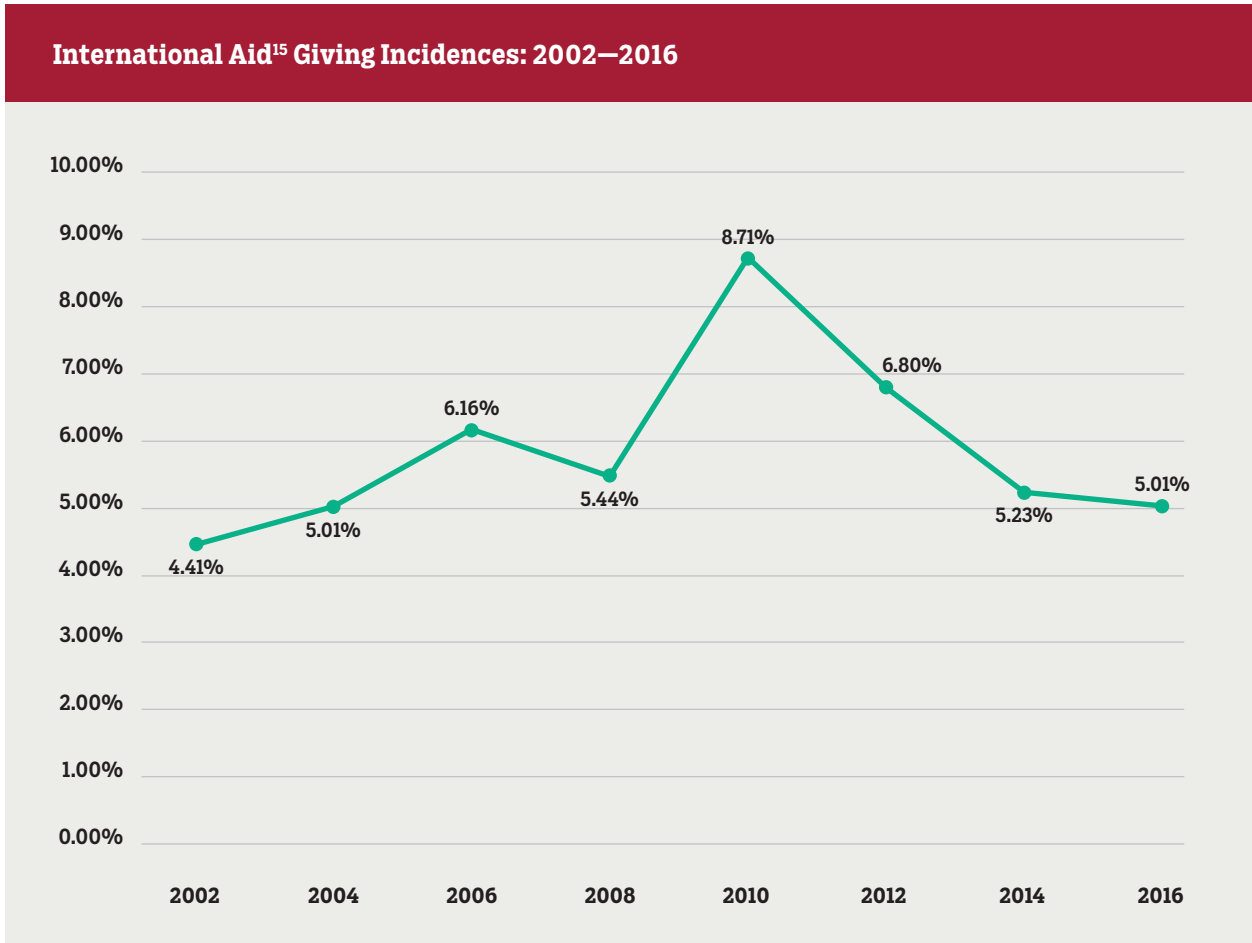


Type of Statistic	Sample Size in 2002	Average in 2002	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
Environment Giving Amounts	471	\$214	531	\$293	not significant



## International Aid

Only supported by a small share of American households, giving to international aid organizations has fluctuated over time, including a spike in 2010. Yet the percent of households who gave to support international aid organizations in 2016 did not change significantly from the percent of households who gave to support such causes in 2002.

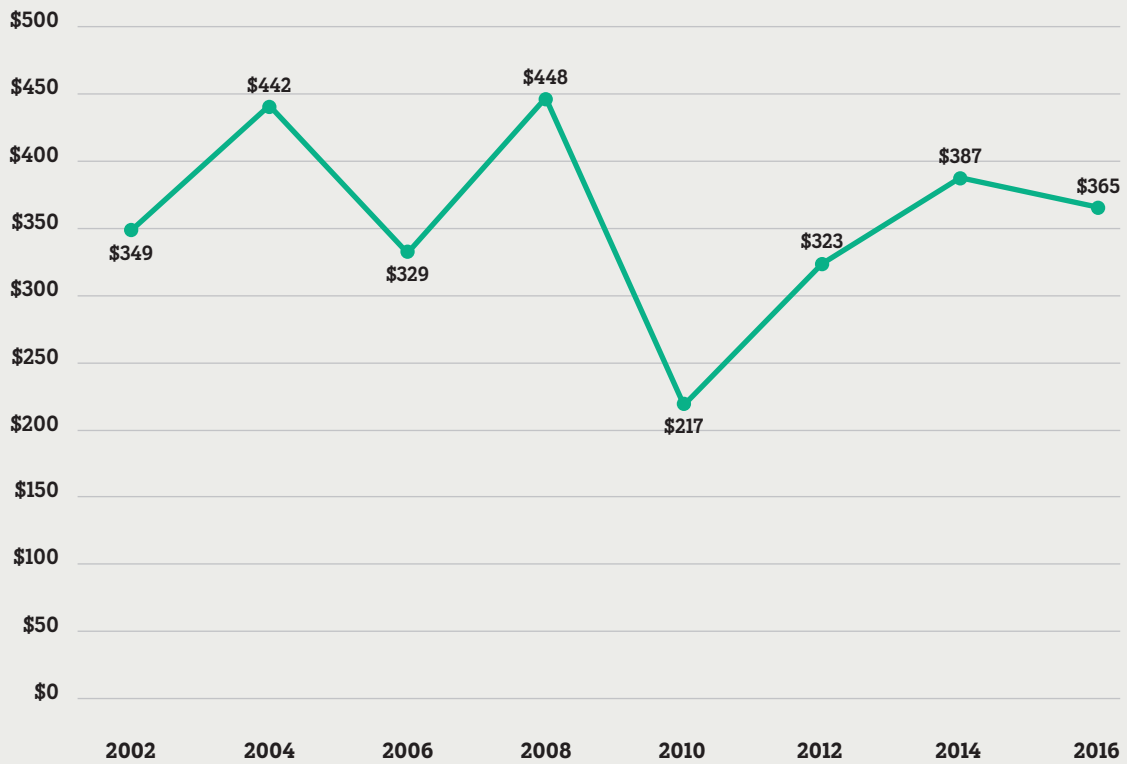


Type of Statistic	Sample Size in 2002	Average in 2002	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
International Aid Giving Rates	7,421	4.41%	9,049	5.01%	not significant

<sup>15</sup> PPS survey text: to organizations that provide international aid or promote world peace? Such as, international children's funds, disaster relief, or human rights?

Average dollar amounts given by donor households to international aid organizations did not significantly change from 2002 (\$349) to 2016 (\$365).

### International Aid Giving Amounts (Donor Households Only): 2002–2016



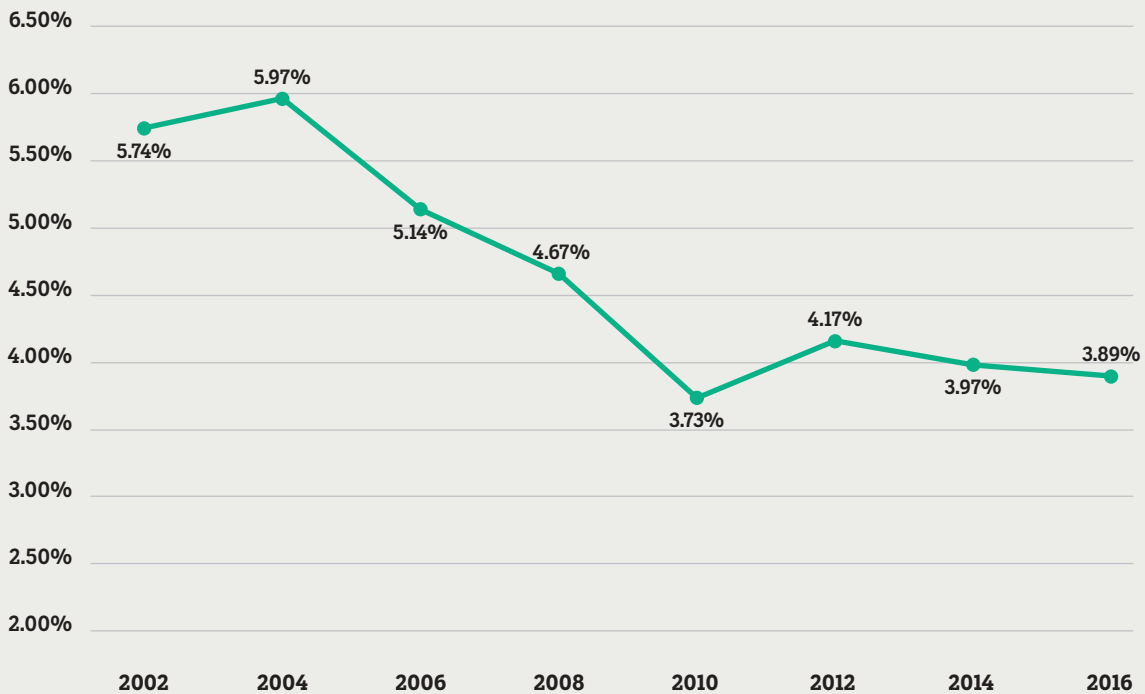
Type of Statistic	Sample Size in 2002	Average in 2002	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
International Aid Giving Amounts	260	\$349	342	\$365	not significant



## Neighborhood & Community

Few American households report giving to support their neighborhood or community. In 2002, 5.74% gave to this cause, but this percentage decreased significantly to 3.89% in 2016.

**Neighborhood<sup>16</sup> Giving Incidences: 2002–2016**



Type of Statistic	Sample Size in 2002	Average in 2002	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
Neighborhood Giving Rates	7,421	5.74%	9,049	3.89%	significant

<sup>16</sup> PPS survey text: to organizations that improve neighborhoods and communities? Such as, to community associations or service clubs?

Despite a very small percentage of American households giving to support neighborhood and community-related organizations, this was the only secular subsector that experienced significant growth in giving amounts from 2002 (\$182) to 2016 (\$287).

**Neighborhood Giving Amounts (Donor Households Only): 2002–2016**



Type of Statistic	Sample Size in 2002	Average in 2002	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
Neighborhood Giving Giving Amounts	355	\$182	259	\$287	significant



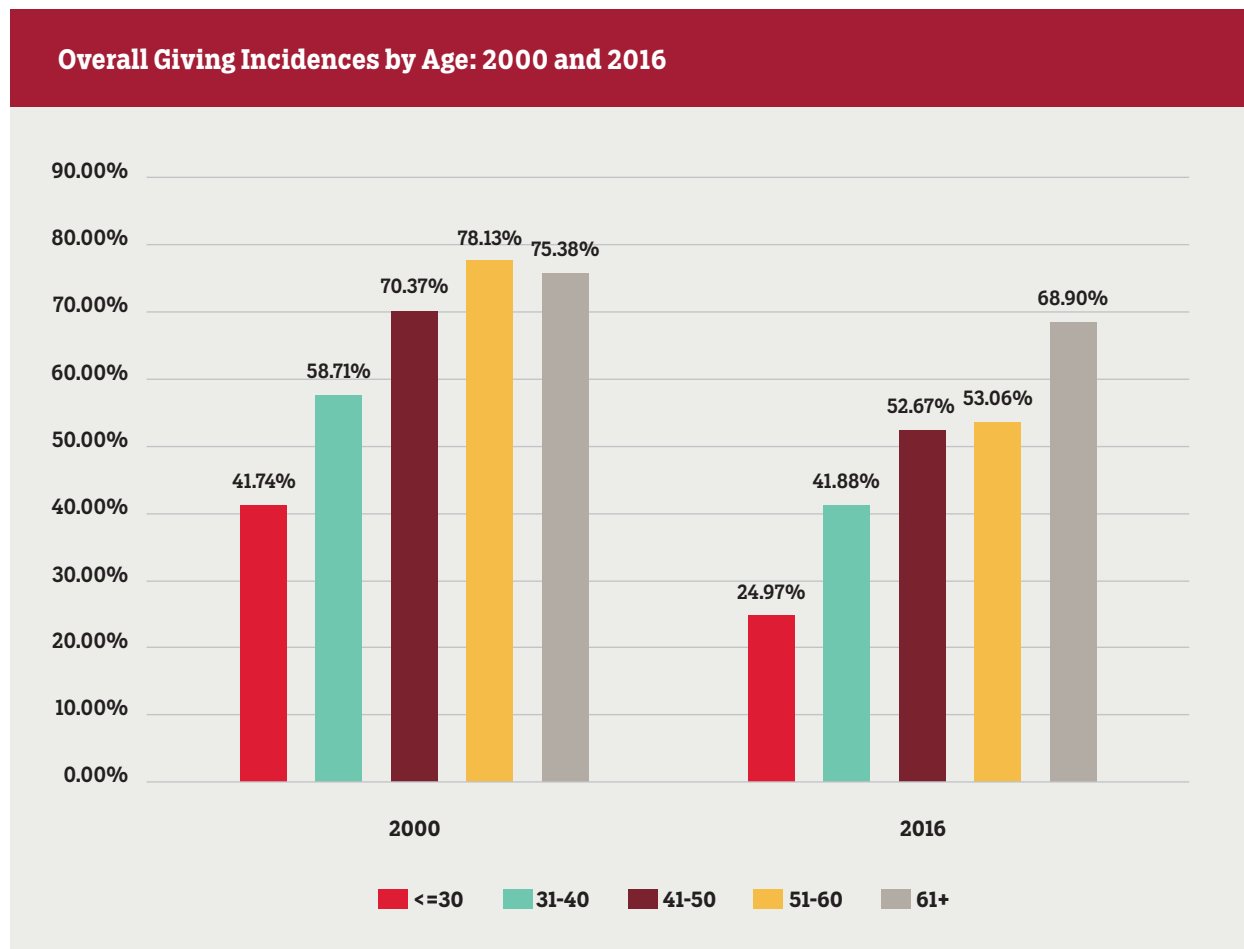
## Question #4: How did age affect the types of charitable causes American households supported in 2016 compared to 2000?

Because the PSID measures head of household age at the time of each interview, we are able to analyze subsector giving by age cohorts to explore how age affects the types of charitable causes American households have supported over time.

In this section, we present results from our age-based analyses that reveal many significant changes in the types of organizations to which American households gave and the amounts they donated to these organizations in 2000 (or 2002, depending on the subsector) compared to 2016.

### Overall Giving

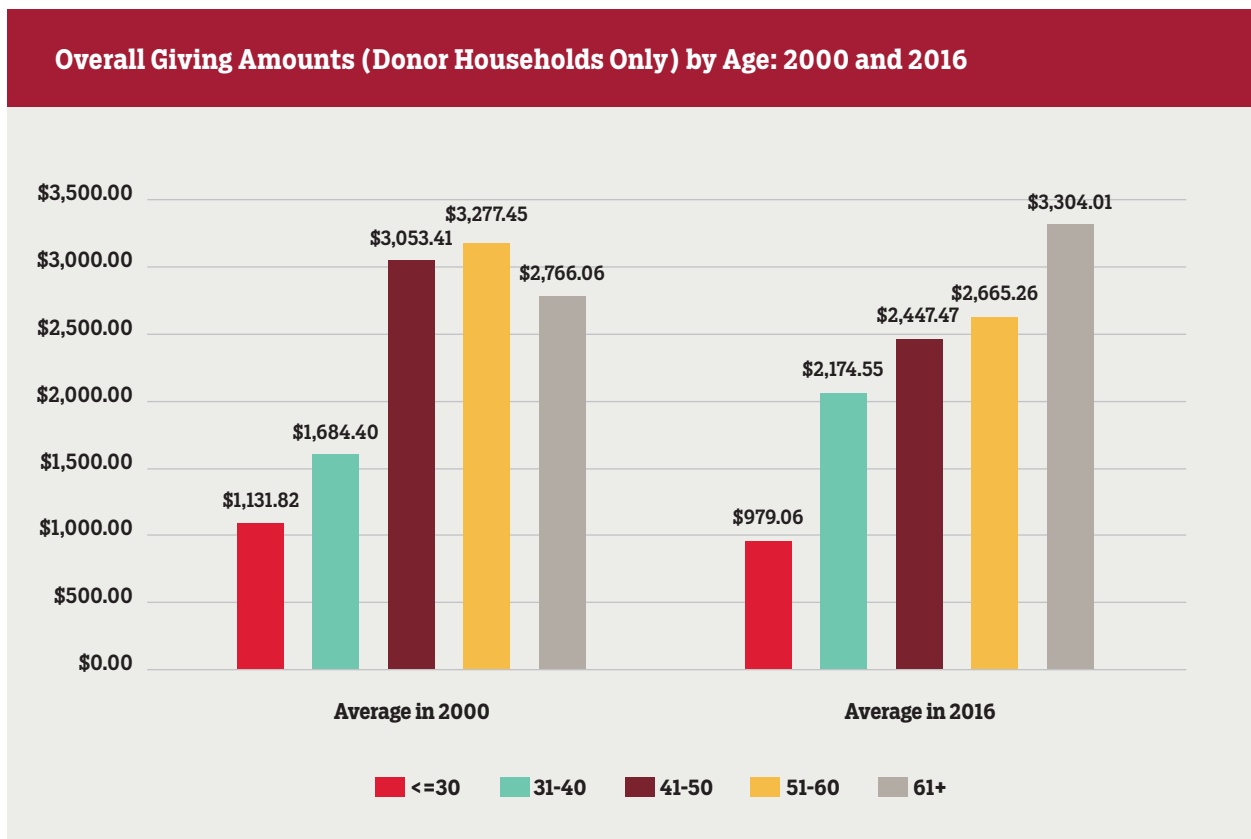
As noted in the previous section, the percentage of all households giving to charities overall in 2016 was significantly less than in 2000. Similarly, when we analyzed overall giving by age cohort, we found that, significantly fewer households gave to charitable organizations overall in 2016 compared to 2000 for all five age cohorts.





Subgroup	Sample Size in 2000	Average in 2000	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
<=30	1,429	41.74%	1,824	24.97%	significant
31-40	1,689	58.71%	2,305	41.88%	significant
41-50	1,824	70.37%	1,450	52.67%	significant
51-60	998	78.13%	1,507	53.06%	significant
61+	1,120	75.38%	1,961	68.90%	significant

For donor households only, none of the age cohorts' average gift amounts were significantly different in 2016 compared to 2000.



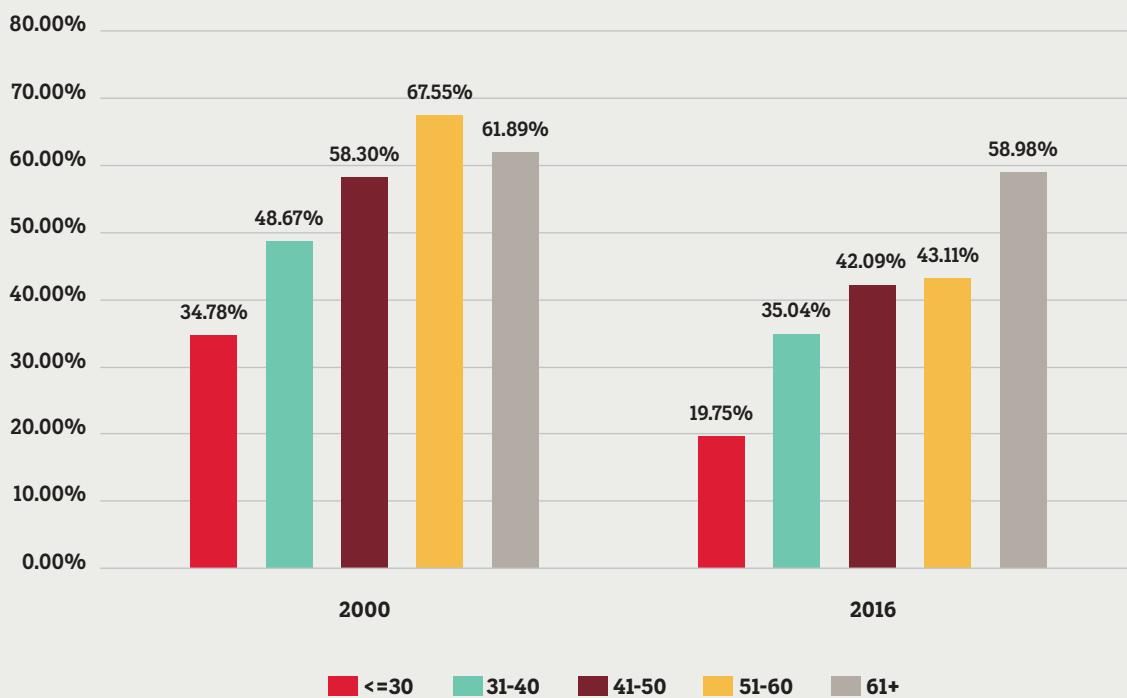
Subgroup	Sample Size in 2000	Average in 2000	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
<=30	591	\$1,131.82	397	\$979.06	not significant
31-40	948	\$1,684.40	860	\$2,174.55	not significant
41-50	1,223	\$3,053.41	698	\$2,447.47	not significant
51-60	748	\$3,277.45	751	\$2,665.26	not significant
61+	804	\$2,766.06	1,287	\$3,304.01	not significant



## Secular Giving

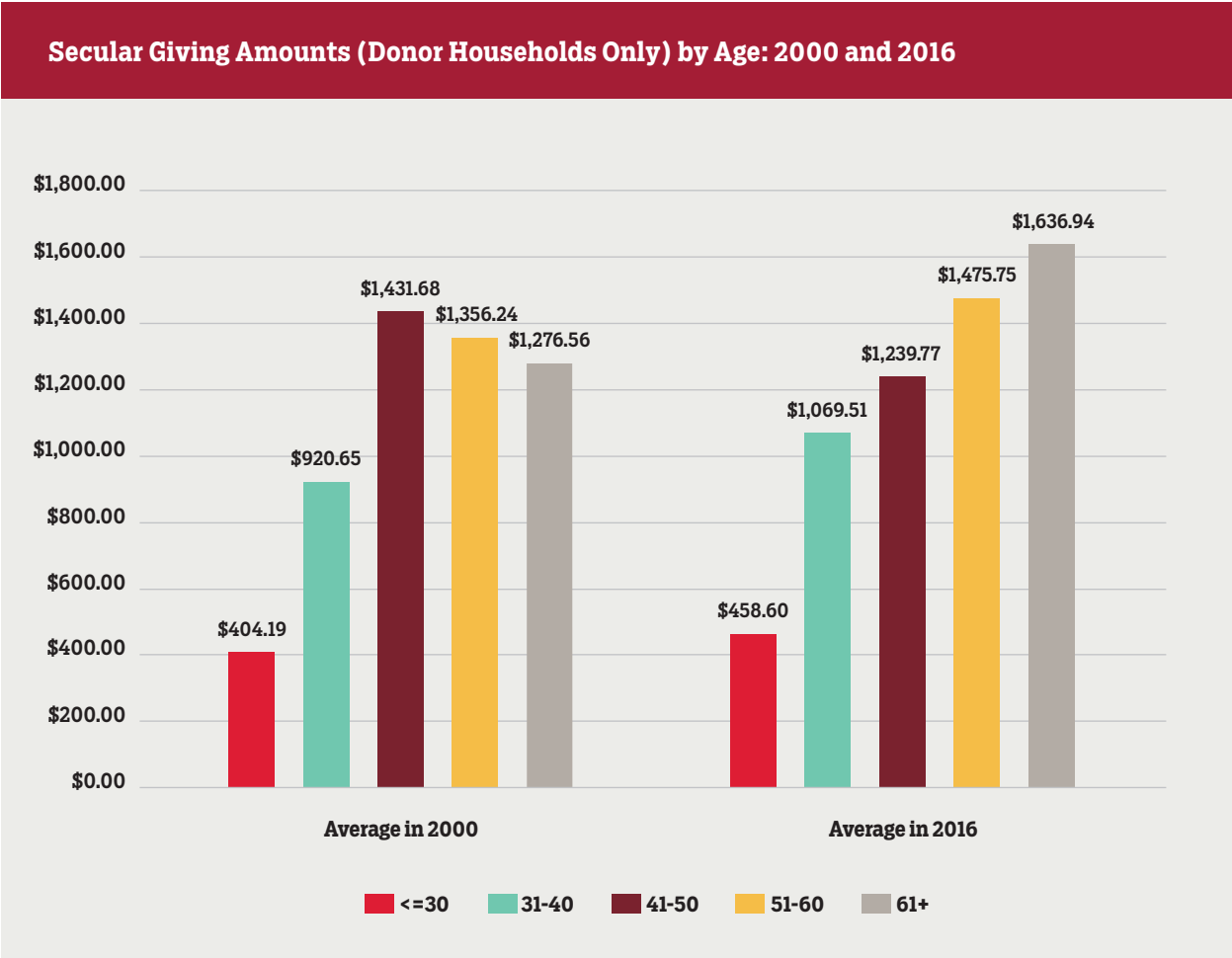
As previously noted, in the previous section, the percentage of all households giving to secular charitable organizations in 2016 was significantly less than in 2000. Similarly, when we analyzed secular giving by age cohort, we found that significantly fewer households gave in 2016 compared to 2000 for four of the five age cohorts. The only age cohort for which the percentage of households who gave to secular charities was not significantly less in 2016 compared to 2000 was the oldest cohort (61+).

**Secular Giving Incidences by Age: 2000 and 2016**



Subgroup	Sample Size in 2000	Average in 2000	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
<=30	1,429	34.78%	1,824	19.75%	significant
31-40	1,689	48.67%	2,305	35.04%	significant
41-50	1,824	58.30%	1,450	42.09%	significant
51-60	998	67.55%	1,507	43.11%	significant
61+	1,120	61.89%	1,961	58.98%	not significant

For donor households only, none of the age cohorts significantly changed the amount they gave to secular organizations in 2016 compared to 2000.



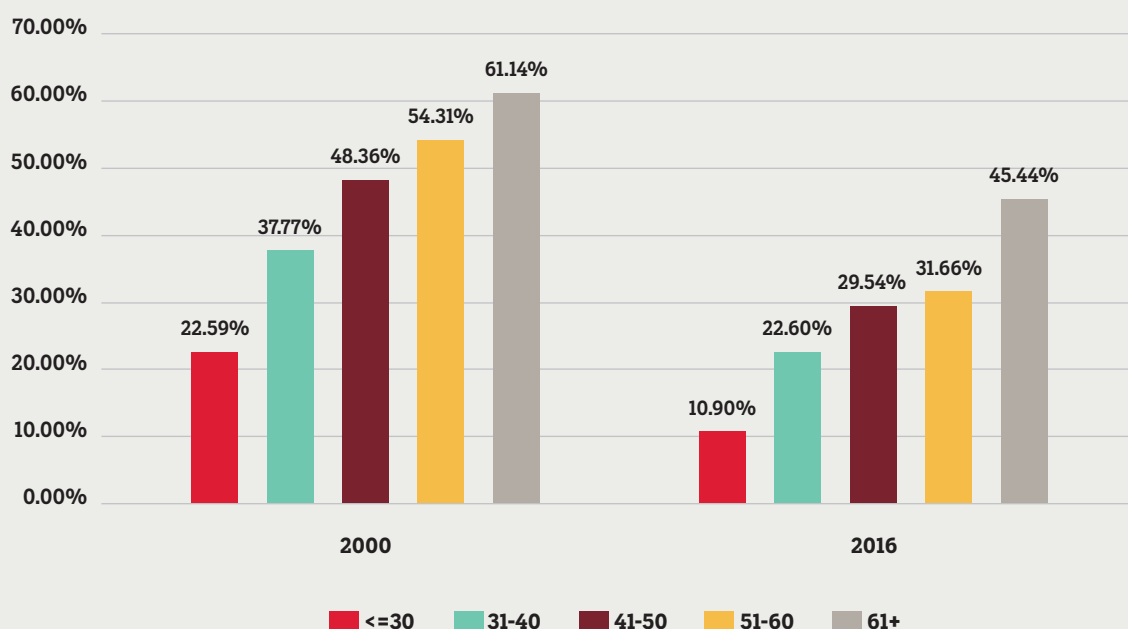
Subgroup	Sample Size in 2000	Average in 2000	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
<=30	464	\$404.19	303	\$458.60	not significant
31-40	757	\$920.65	703	\$1,069.51	not significant
41-50	976	\$1,431.68	548	\$1,239.77	not significant
51-60	637	\$1,356.24	580	\$1,475.75	not significant
61+	625	\$1,276.56	1,063	\$1,636.94	not significant



## Religious Giving

As previously noted, the percentage of all households giving to religious congregations in 2016 was significantly less than in 2000. Similarly, when we analyzed giving to religious congregations by age cohort, we found that significantly fewer households gave in 2016 compared to 2000 for all five age cohorts.

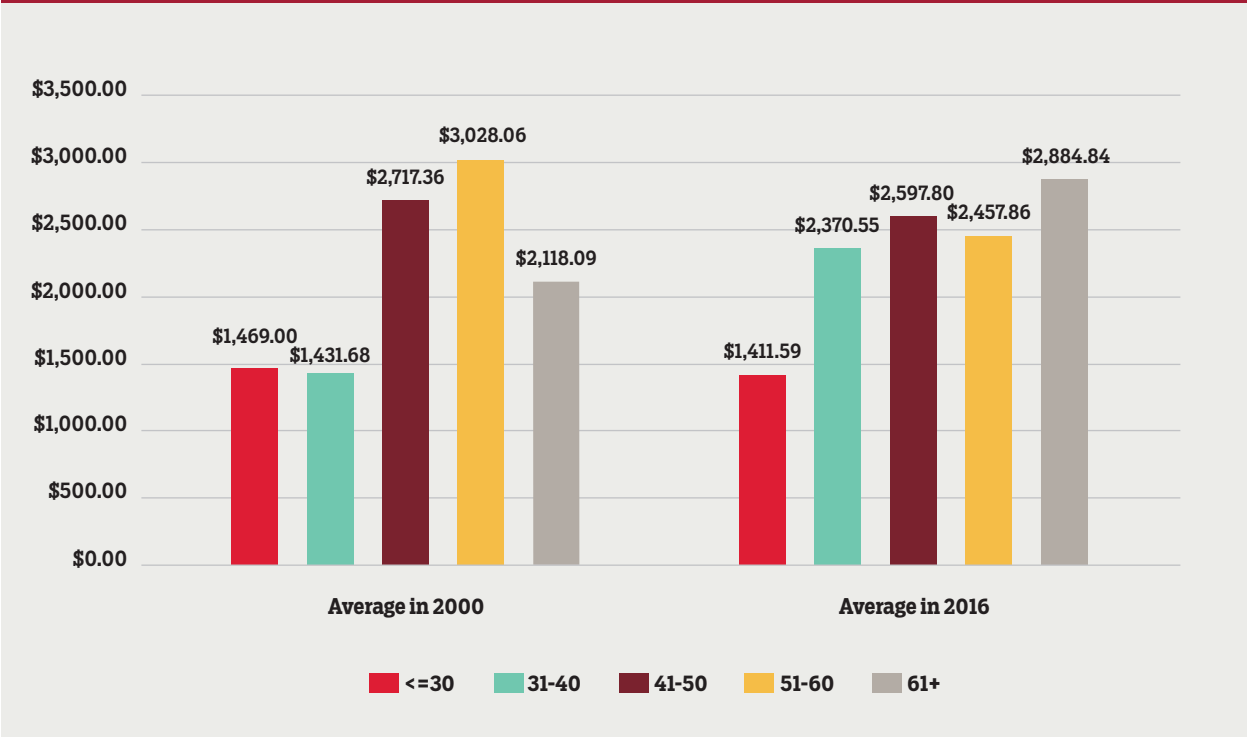
**Religious Giving Incidences by Age: 2000 and 2016**



Subgroup	Sample Size in 2000	Average in 2000	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
<=30	1,429	22.59%	1,824	10.90%	significant
31-40	1,689	37.77%	2,305	22.60%	significant
41-50	1,824	48.36%	1,450	29.54%	significant
51-60	998	54.31%	1,507	31.66%	significant
61+	1,120	61.14%	1,961	45.44%	significant

The average amount given to religious congregations overall was significantly higher in 2016 compared to 2000. Looking at donor households, two age cohorts (31-40 and 61+) significantly increased their giving to religious congregations in 2016 compared to 2000.

**Religious Giving Amounts (Donor Households Only) by Age: 2000 and 2016**

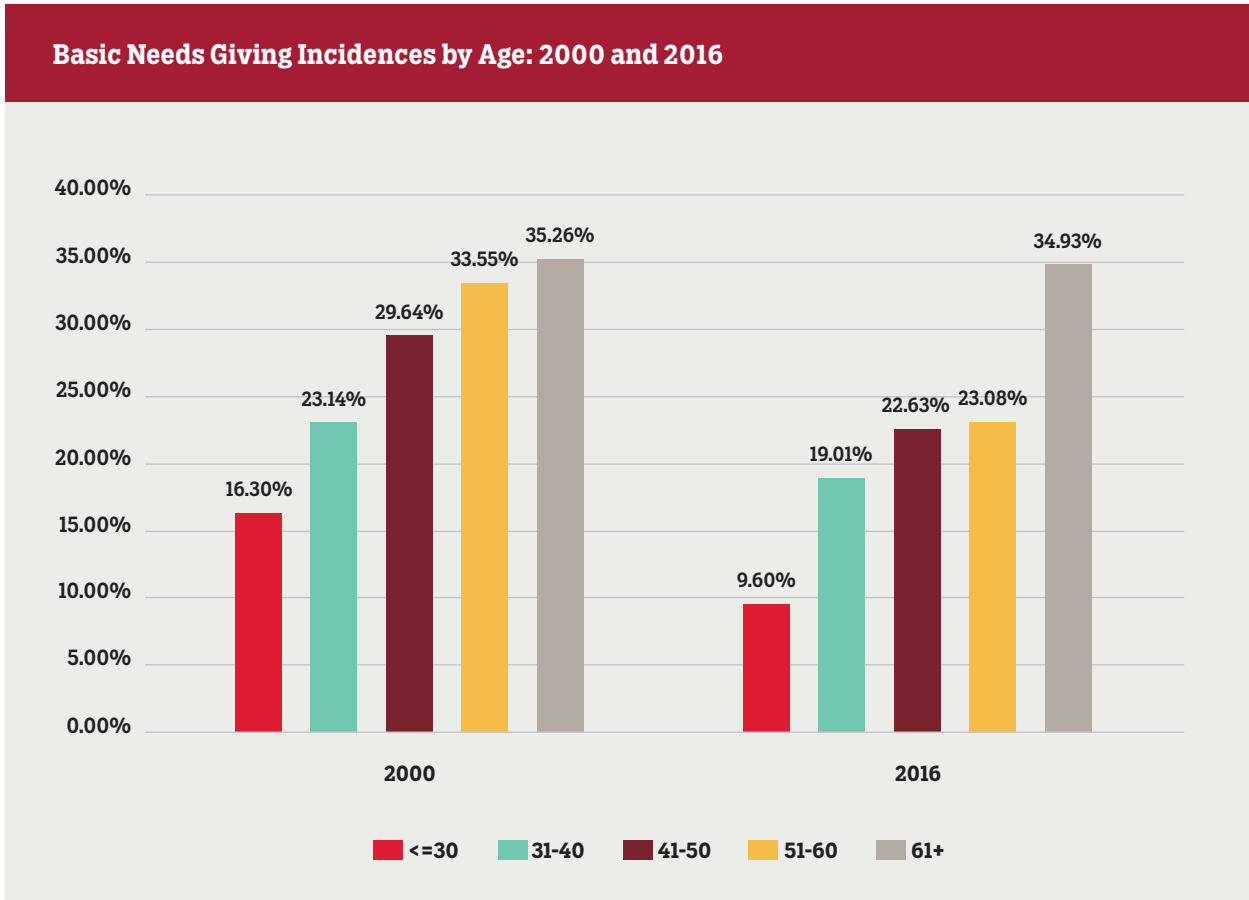


Subgroup	Sample Size in 2000	Average in 2000	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
<=30	355	\$1,469.00	205	\$1,411.59	not significant
31-40	654	\$1,431.68	496	\$2,370.55	significant
41-50	890	\$2,717.36	431	\$2,597.80	not significant
51-60	541	\$3,028.06	500	\$2,457.86	not significant
61+	658	\$2,118.09	899	\$2,884.84	significant



## Basic Needs Giving

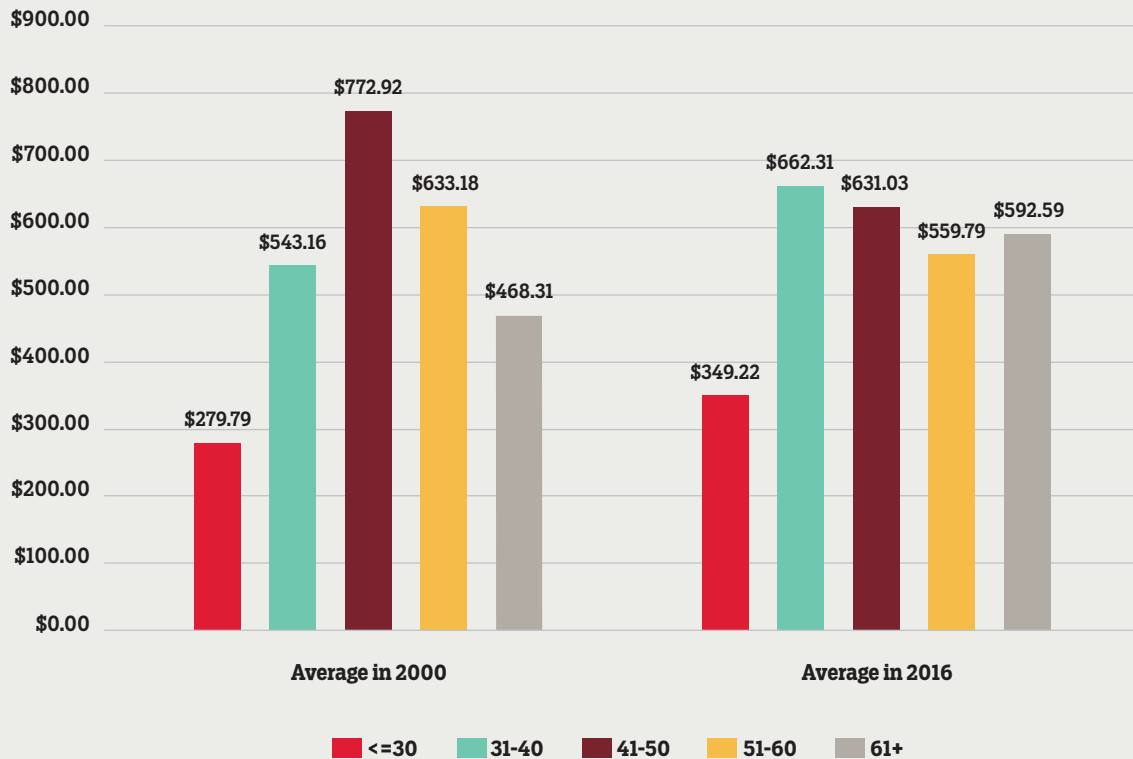
The percentage of all households giving to support basic needs charities in 2016 was significantly lower than in 2000. Likewise, when we analyzed giving to basic needs charities by age, we found that significantly fewer households gave to basic needs organizations in 2016 compared to 2000 for three of the five age cohorts (<=30, 41-50, and 51-60).



Subgroup	Sample Size in 2000	Average in 2000	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
<=30	1,429	16.30%	1,824	9.60%	significant
31-40	1,689	23.14%	2,305	19.01%	not significant
41-50	1,824	29.64%	1,450	22.63%	significant
51-60	998	33.55%	1,507	23.08%	significant
61+	1,120	35.26%	1,961	34.93%	not significant

For donor households only, none of the age cohorts significantly changed the amount they gave to basic needs organizations in 2016 compared to 2000.

### Basic Needs Giving Amounts (Donor Households Only) by Age: 2000 and 2016

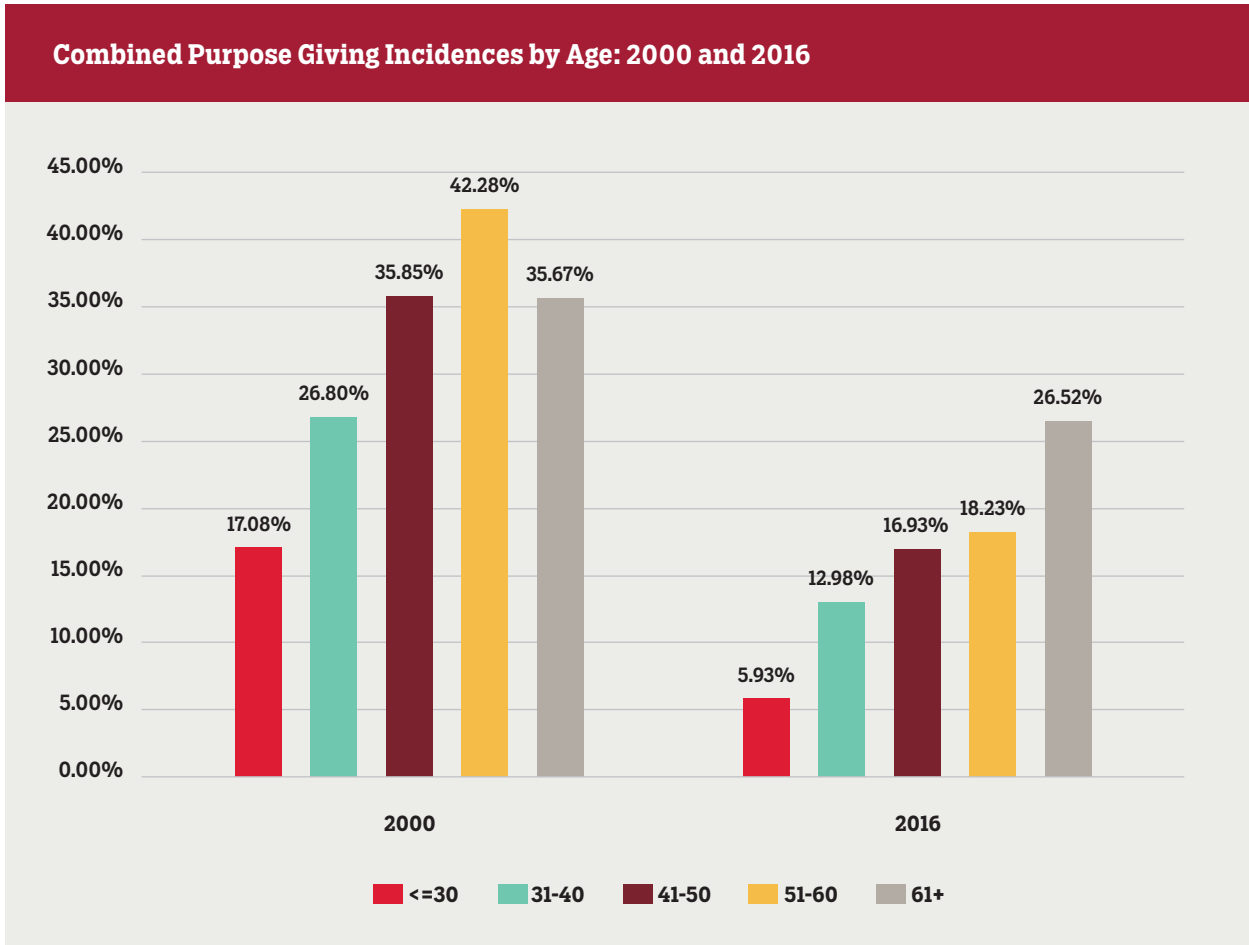


Subgroup	Sample Size in 2000	Average in 2000	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
<=30	227	\$279.79	162	\$349.22	not significant
31-40	363	\$543.16	382	\$662.31	not significant
41-50	510	\$772.92	299	\$631.03	not significant
51-60	337	\$633.18	317	\$559.79	not significant
61+	357	\$468.31	615	\$592.59	not significant



## Combined Purpose Giving

The percentage of all households giving to support combined purpose charities in 2016 was significantly lower than in 2000. Likewise, when we analyzed giving to combined purpose charities by age, we found that significantly fewer households gave to combined purpose charities in 2016 compared to 2000 for all age cohorts.

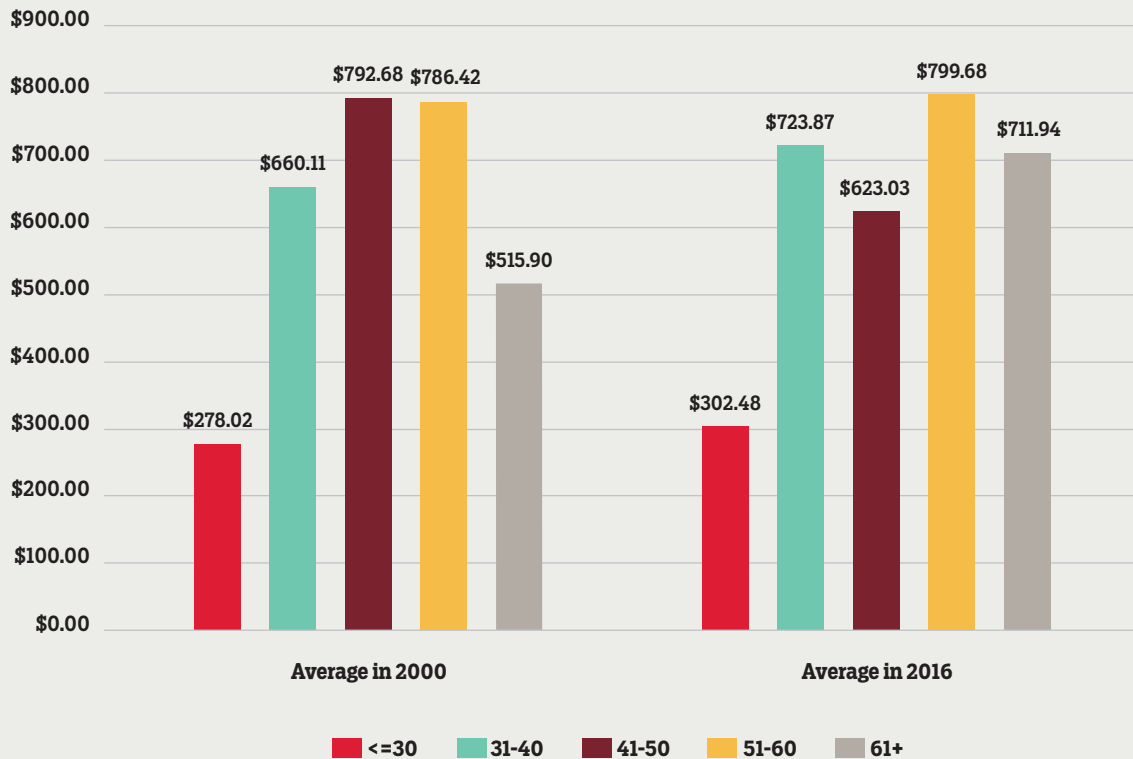


Subgroup	Sample Size in 2000	Average in 2000	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
<=30	1,429	17.08%	1,824	5.93%	significant
31-40	1,689	26.80%	2,305	12.98%	significant
41-50	1,824	35.85%	1,450	16.93%	significant
51-60	998	42.28%	1,507	18.23%	significant
61+	1,120	35.67%	1,961	26.52%	significant



Looking at donor households only, there was no statistically significant change in the average amount given to combined purpose organizations in 2016 compared to 2000 by any age cohort.

### Combined Purpose Giving Amounts (Donor Households Only) by Age: 2000 and 2016

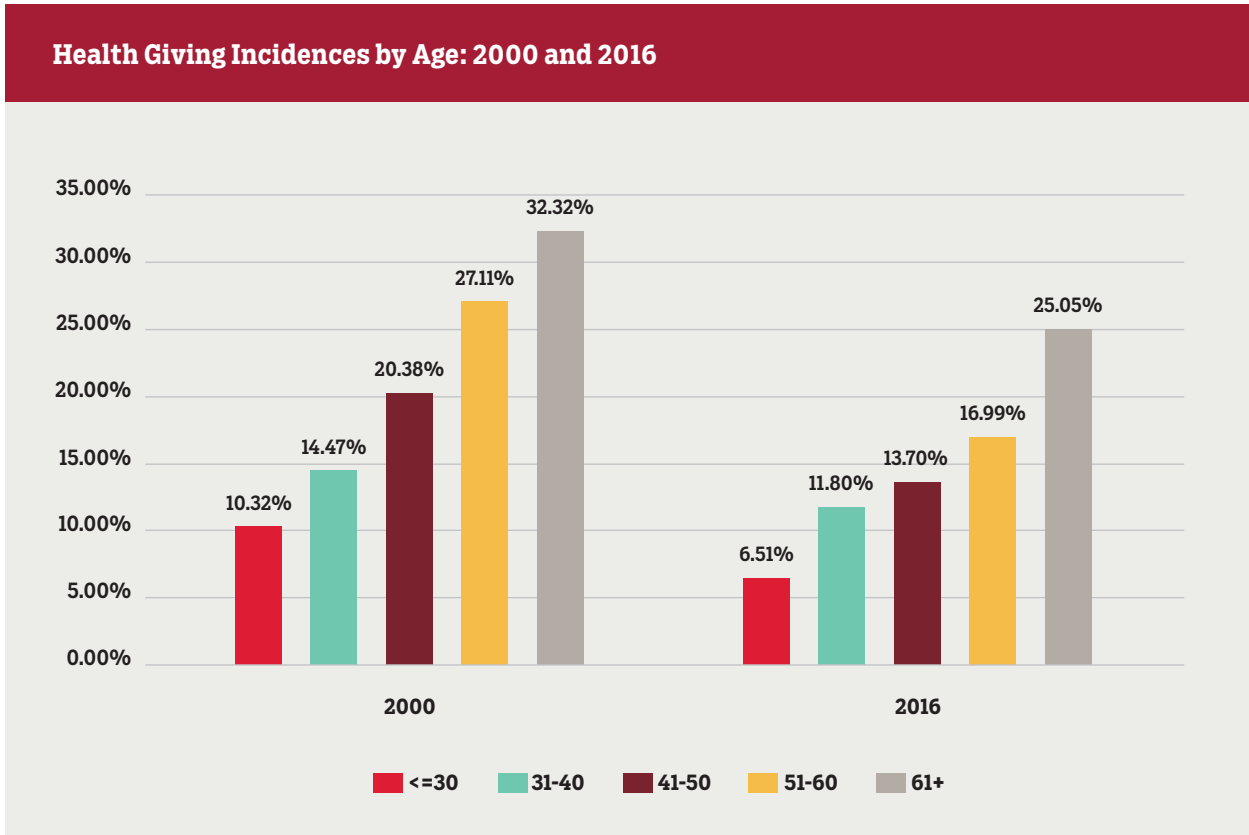


Subgroup	Sample Size in 2000	Average in 2000	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
<=30	249	\$278.02	97	\$302.48	not significant
31-40	413	\$660.11	266	\$723.87	not significant
41-50	609	\$792.68	235	\$623.03	not significant
51-60	409	\$786.42	264	\$799.68	not significant
61+	347	\$515.90	472	\$711.94	not significant



## Health Giving

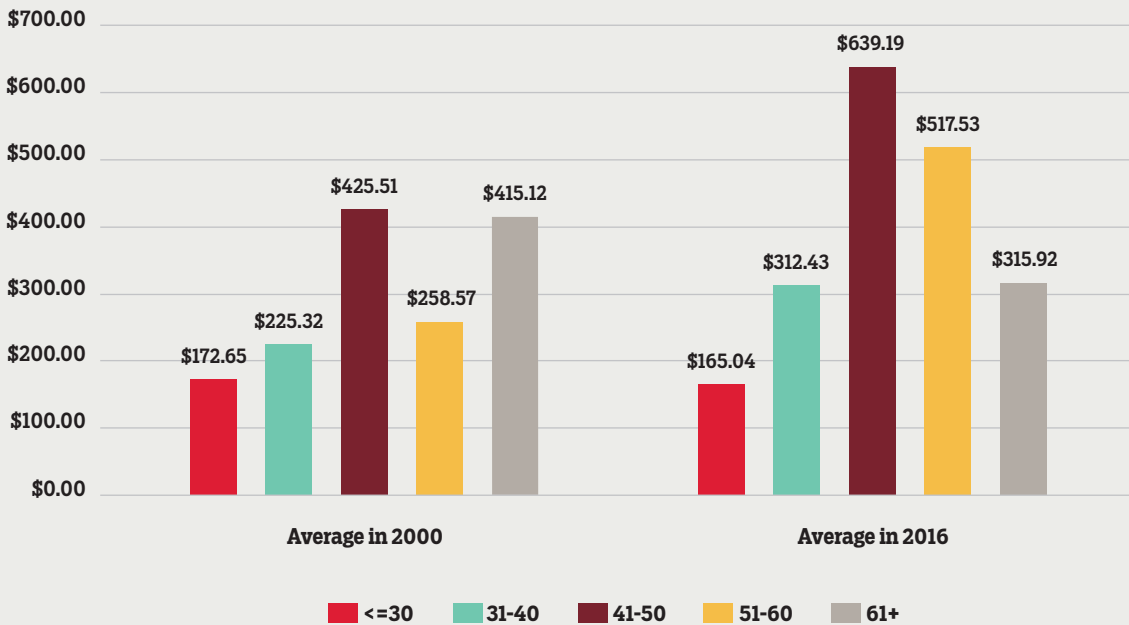
The percentage of all households giving to support health-related charities in 2016 was significantly lower than in 2000. Likewise, when we analyzed giving to health charities by age, we found that significantly fewer households gave to health-related charities in 2016 compared to 2000 for four of the five age cohorts. The only age cohort that was not less likely to give in 2016 was the 31-40 group.



Subgroup	Sample Size in 2000	Average in 2000	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
<=30	1,429	10.32%	1,824	6.51%	significant
31-40	1,689	14.47%	2,305	11.80%	not significant
41-50	1,824	20.38%	1,450	13.70%	significant
51-60	998	27.11%	1,507	16.99%	significant
61+	1,120	32.32%	1,961	25.05%	significant

For donor households only, the average amount given to health organizations did not change significantly from 2000 to 2016 for any age cohort analyzed.

### Health Giving Amounts (Donor Households Only) by Age: 2000 and 2016

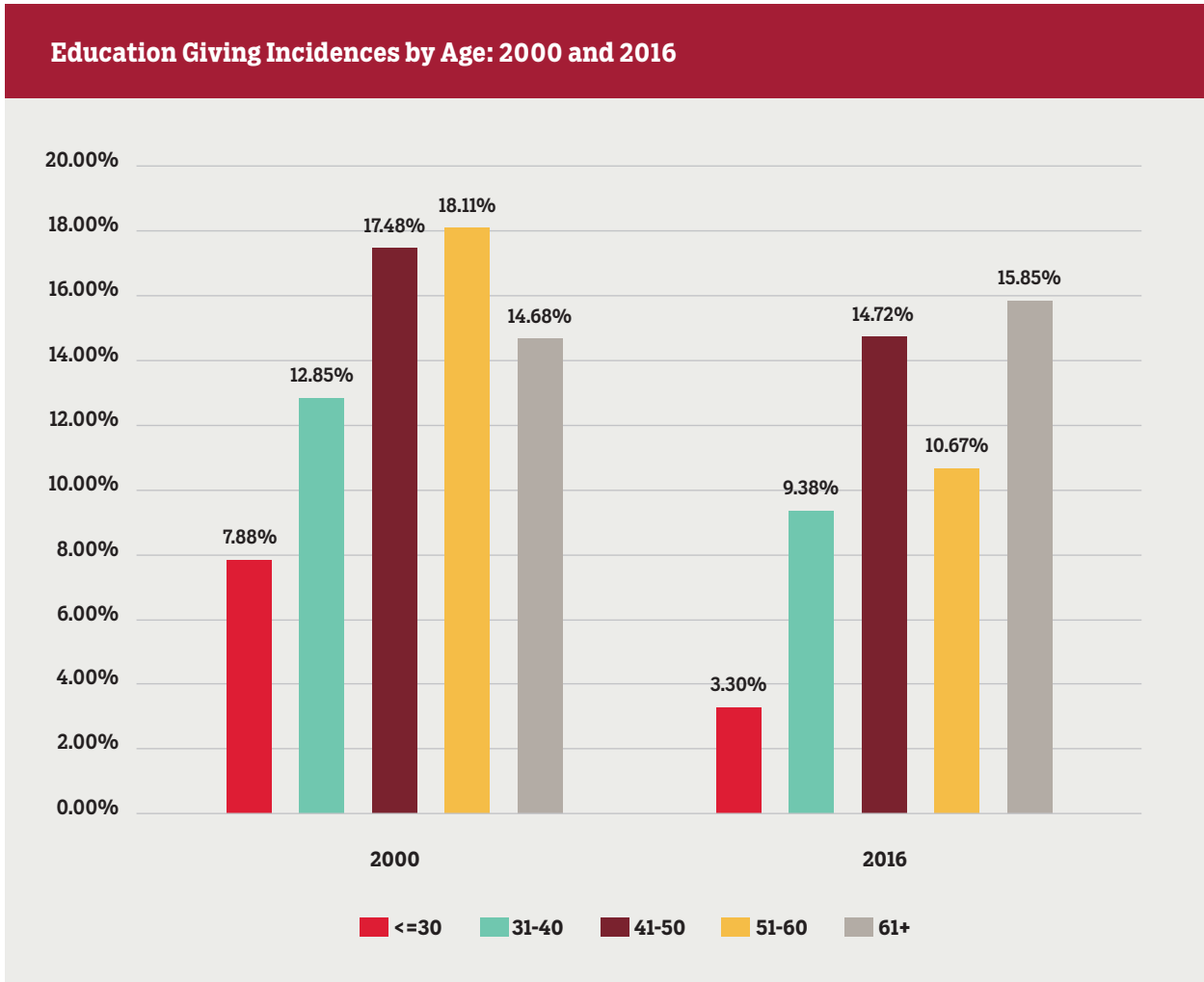


Subgroup	Sample Size in 2000	Average in 2000	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
<=30	121	\$172.65	86	\$165.04	not significant
31-40	222	\$225.32	224	\$312.43	not significant
41-50	318	\$425.51	169	\$639.19	not significant
51-60	251	\$258.57	227	\$517.53	not significant
61+	318	\$415.12	457	\$315.92	not significant



## Education Giving

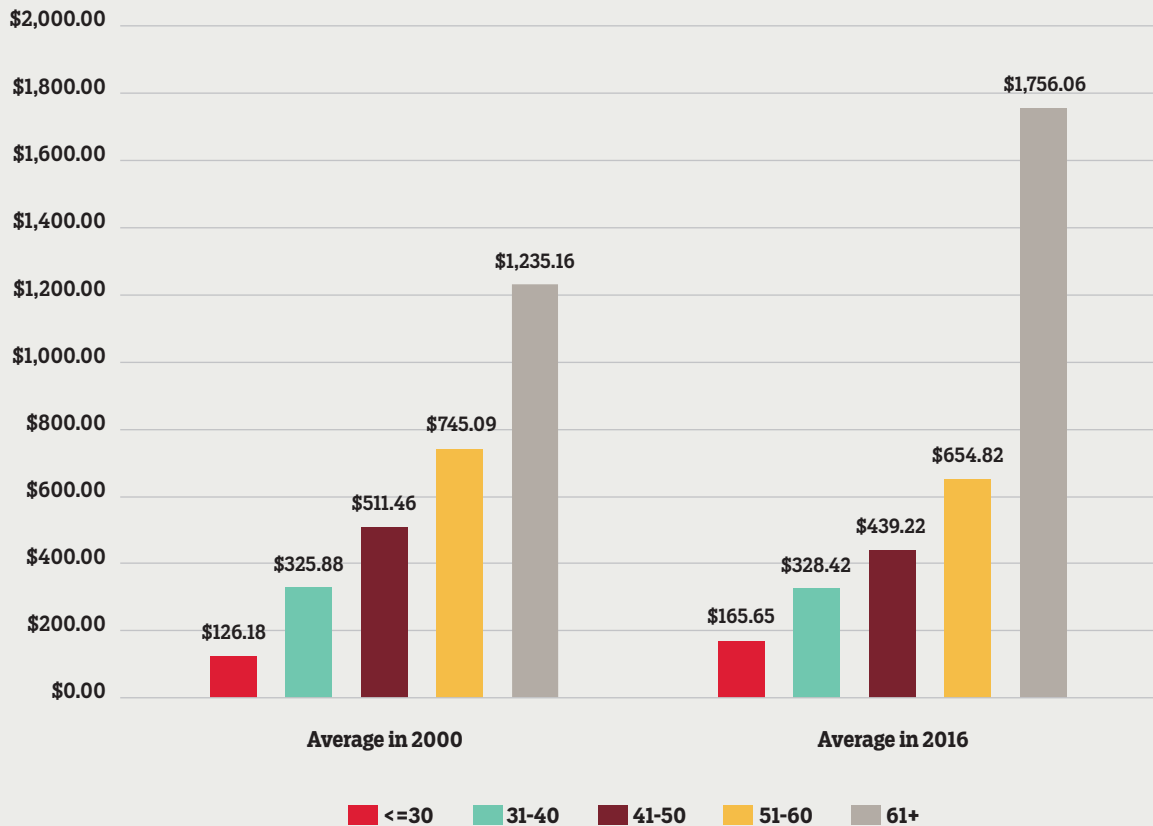
The percentage of all households giving to support education in 2016 was significantly lower than in 2000. Likewise, when we analyzed giving to education charities by age, we found that significantly fewer households gave to education-related charities in 2016 compared to in 2000 for three of the five age cohorts (<=30, 31-40, 51-60).



Subgroup	Sample Size in 2000	Average in 2000	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
<=30	1,429	7.88%	1,824	3.30%	significant
31-40	1,689	12.85%	2,305	9.38%	significant
41-50	1,824	17.48%	1,450	14.72%	not significant
51-60	998	18.11%	1,507	10.67%	significant
61+	1,120	14.68%	1,961	15.85%	not significant

For donor households only, the average amount given to education charities in 2016 compared to 2000 did not change significantly for any of the five age cohorts analyzed.

### Education Giving Amounts (Donor Households Only) by Age: 2000 and 2016



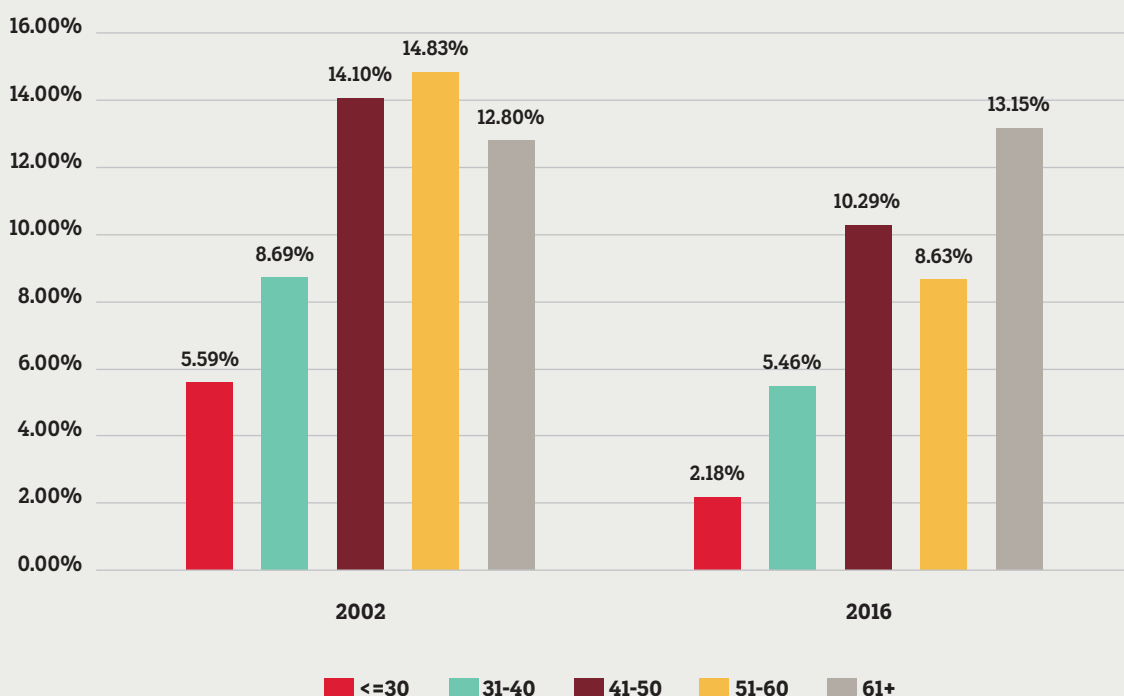
Subgroup	Sample Size in 2000	Average in 2000	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
<=30	85	\$126.18	59	\$165.65	not significant
31-40	202	\$325.88	197	\$328.42	not significant
41-50	294	\$511.46	179	\$439.22	not significant
51-60	174	\$745.09	139	\$654.82	not significant
61+	147	\$1,235.16	281	\$1,756.06	not significant



## Youth Giving

The percentage of all households giving to support youth-related charities in 2016 was significantly lower than in 2002. Likewise, when we analyzed giving to youth-related charities by age cohorts, we found that all cohorts except the 61+ group were significantly less likely to give to youth organizations in 2016 than in 2002.

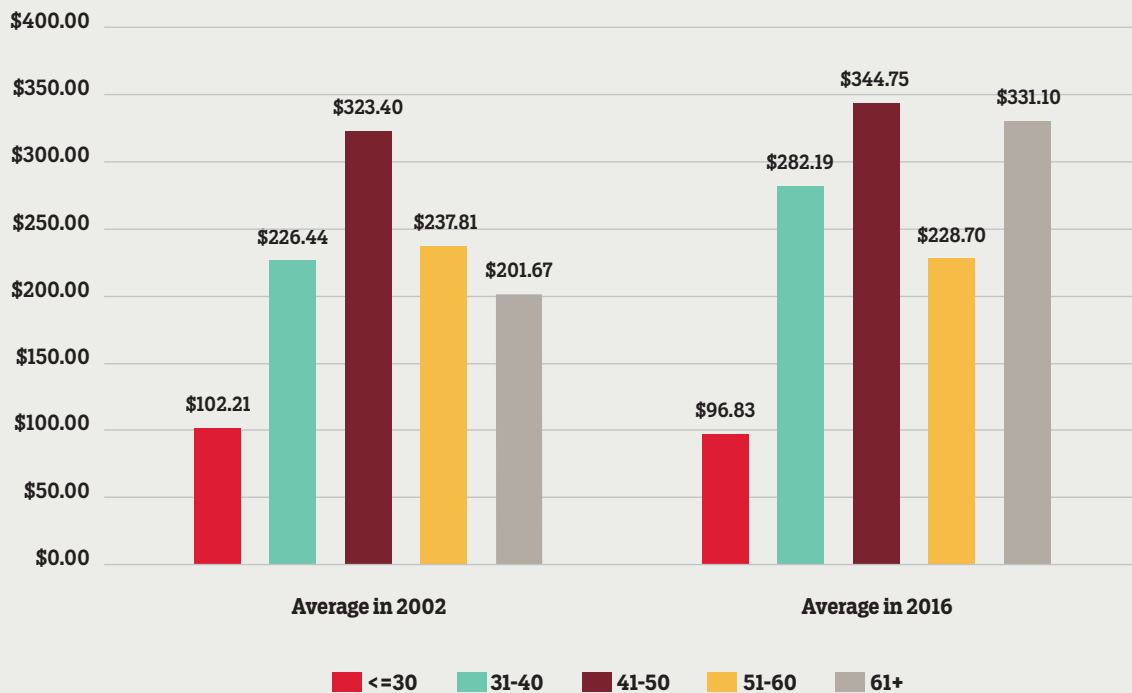
**Youth Giving Incidences by Age: 2002 and 2016**



Subgroup	Sample Size in 2002	Average in 2002	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
<=30	1,578	5.59%	1,824	2.18%	significant
31-40	1,639	8.69%	2,305	5.46%	significant
41-50	1,861	14.10%	1,450	10.29%	significant
51-60	1,175	14.83%	1,507	8.63%	significant
61+	1,167	12.80%	1,961	13.15%	not significant

For donor households only, the average amount given to youth organizations did not change significantly for any of the five age cohorts analyzed between 2000 and 2016.

### Youth Giving Amounts (Donor Households Only) by Age: 2002 and 2016



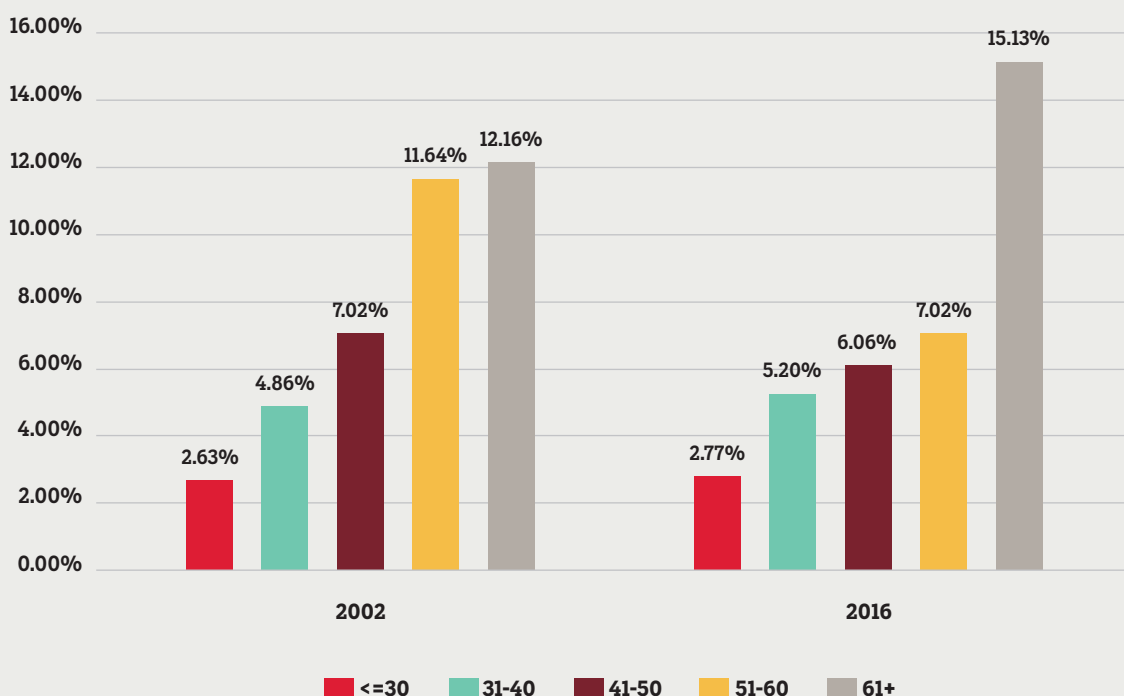
Subgroup	Sample Size in 2002	Average in 2002	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
<=30	90	\$102.21	33	\$96.83	not significant
31-40	139	\$226.44	122	\$282.19	not significant
41-50	236	\$323.40	117	\$344.75	not significant
51-60	167	\$237.81	110	\$228.70	not significant
61+	136	\$201.67	244	\$331.10	not significant



## Arts & Culture Giving

The percentage of all households giving to support arts and cultural charities in 2016 held steady compared to 2002. However, when we analyzed giving to arts and cultural charities by age cohorts, we found that significantly fewer households headed by individual ages 51-60 gave to arts and culture organizations in 2016 compared to 2002.

**Arts & Culture Giving Incidences by Age: 2002 and 2016**

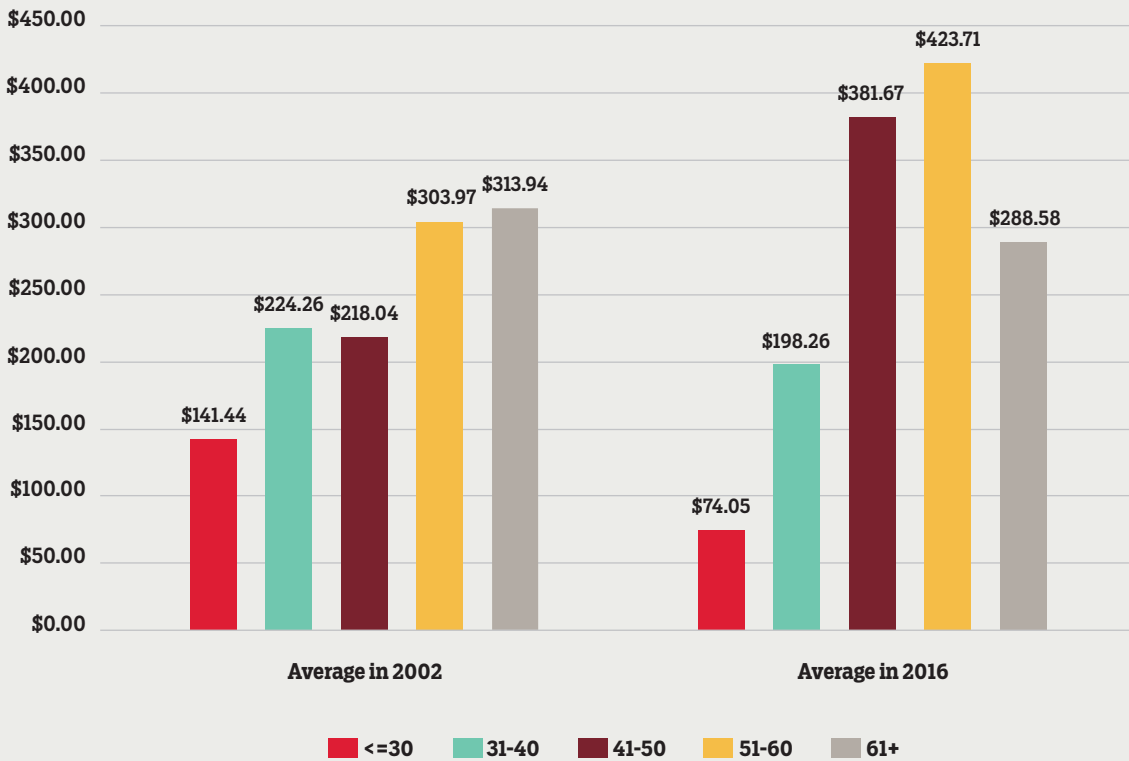


Subgroup	Sample Size in 2002	Average in 2002	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
<=30	1,578	2.63%	1,824	2.77%	not significant
31-40	1,639	4.86%	2,305	5.20%	not significant
41-50	1,861	7.02%	1,450	6.06%	not significant
51-60	1,175	11.64%	1,507	7.02%	significant
61+	1,167	12.16%	1,961	15.13%	not significant



For donor households only, the average amount given to arts and cultural organizations in 2016 was significantly lower than in 2002 for the youngest age cohort (<=30).

### Arts & Culture Giving Amounts (Donor Households Only) by Age: 2002 and 2016

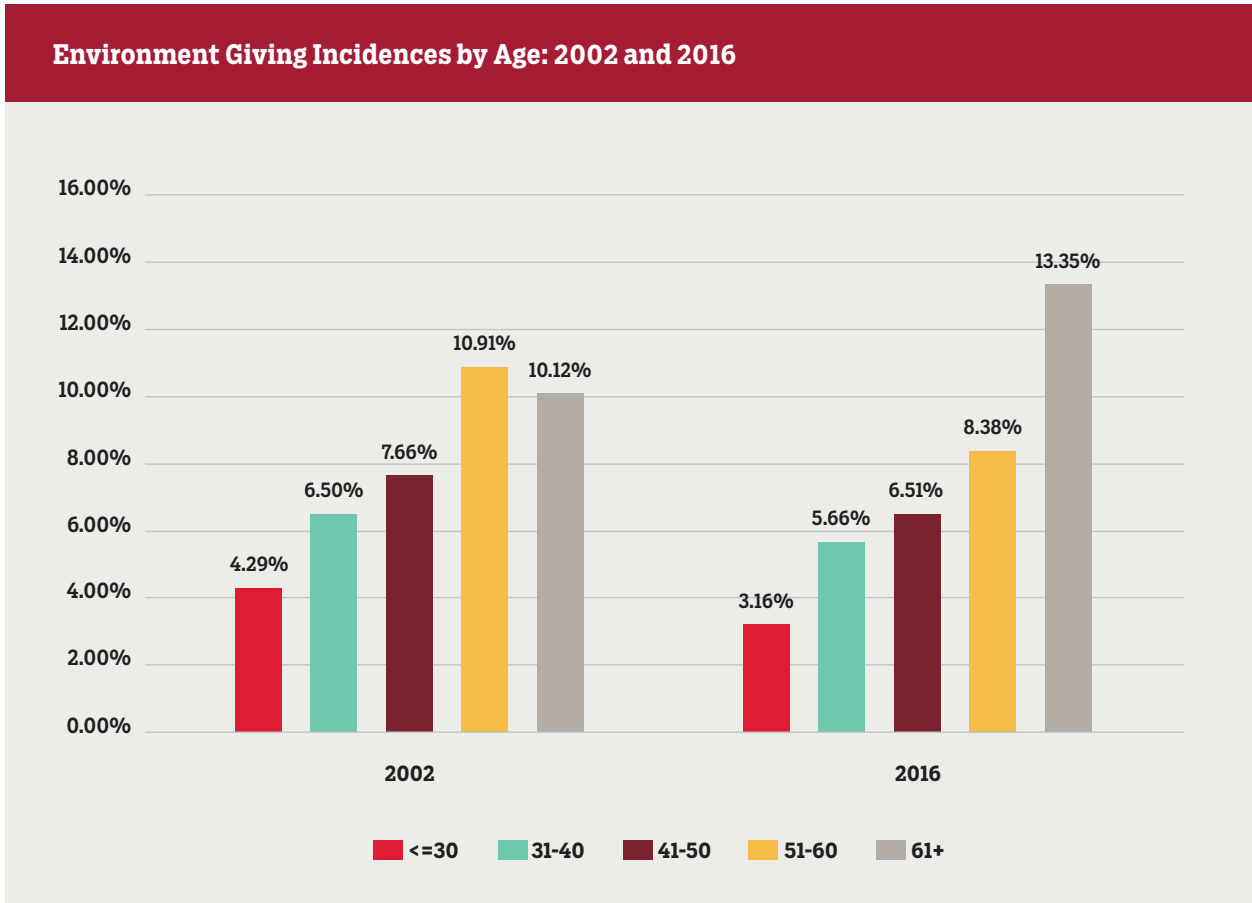


Subgroup	Sample Size in 2002	Average in 2002	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
<=30	35	\$141.44	32	\$74.05	significant
31-40	60	\$224.26	85	\$198.26	not significant
41-50	109	\$218.04	75	\$381.67	not significant
51-60	127	\$303.97	85	\$423.71	not significant
61+	122	\$313.94	246	\$288.58	not significant



## Environment Giving

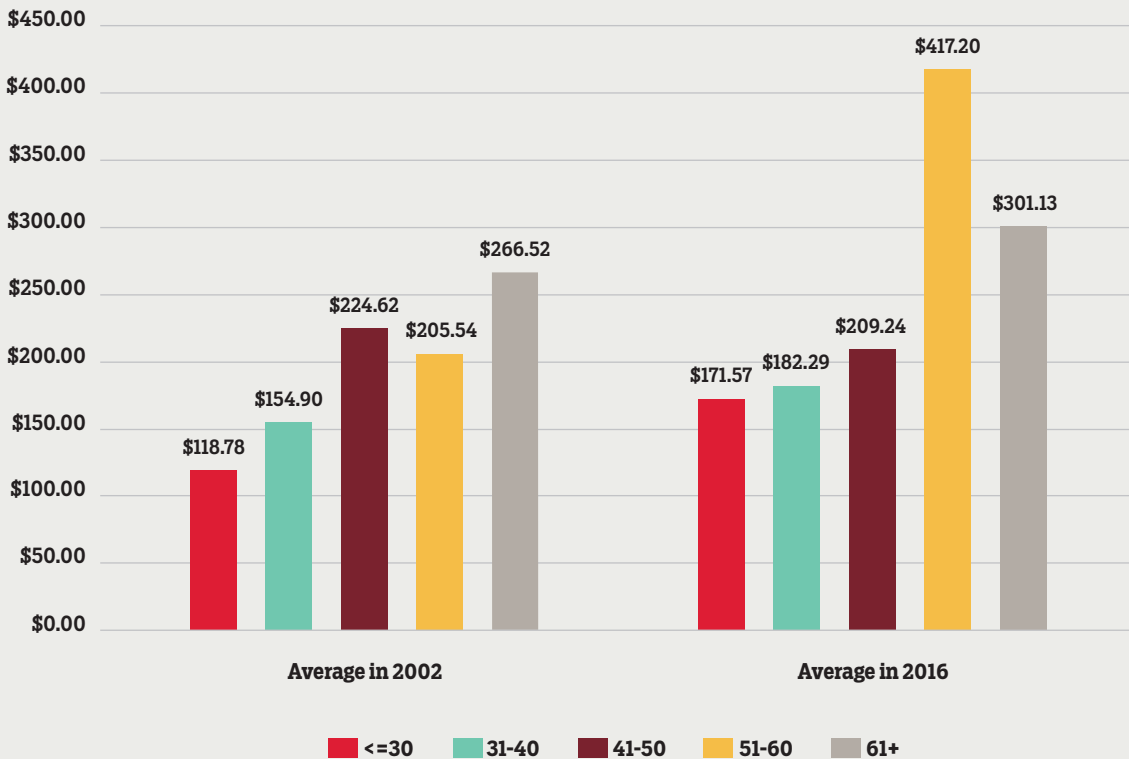
The percentage of all households giving to support environmental charities in 2016 held steady compared to 2002. However, when we analyzed giving to environmental charities by age cohorts, we found that significantly more households gave to environmental charities in 2016 compared to 2002 for the oldest age cohort (61+).



Subgroup	Sample Size in 2002	Average in 2002	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
<=30	1,578	4.29%	1,824	3.16%	not significant
31-40	1,639	6.50%	2,305	5.66%	not significant
41-50	1,861	7.66%	1,450	6.51%	not significant
51-60	1,175	10.91%	1,507	8.38%	not significant
61+	1,167	10.12%	1,961	13.35%	significant

For donor households only, the average amount given to environmental organizations did not change significantly from 2002 to 2016 for any age cohort analyzed.

### Environment Giving Amounts (Donor Households Only) by Age: 2002 and 2016

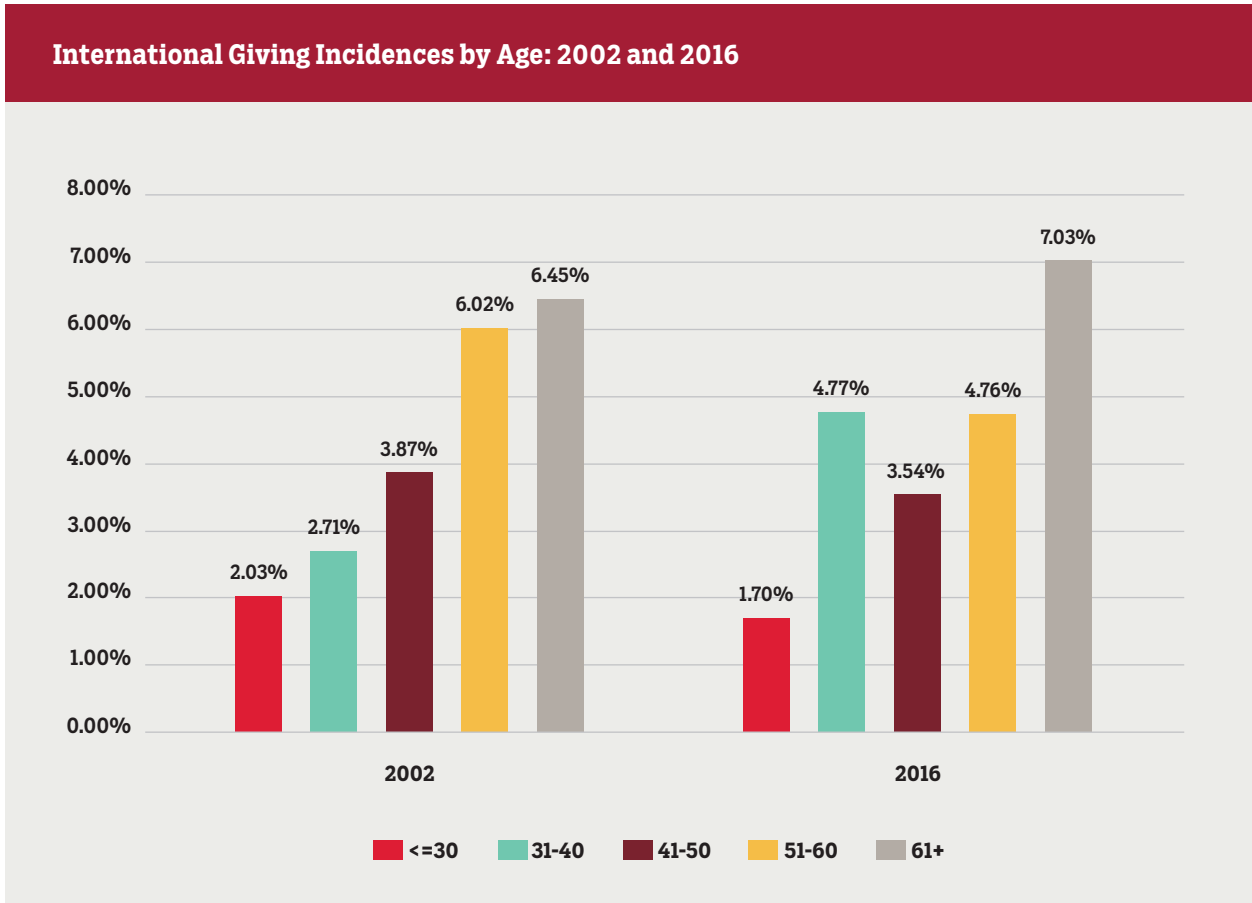


Subgroup	Sample Size in 2002	Average in 2002	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
<=30	59	\$118.78	43	\$171.57	not significant
31-40	81	\$154.90	96	\$182.29	not significant
41-50	117	\$224.62	70	\$209.24	not significant
51-60	116	\$205.54	97	\$417.20	not significant
61+	98	\$266.52	225	\$301.13	not significant



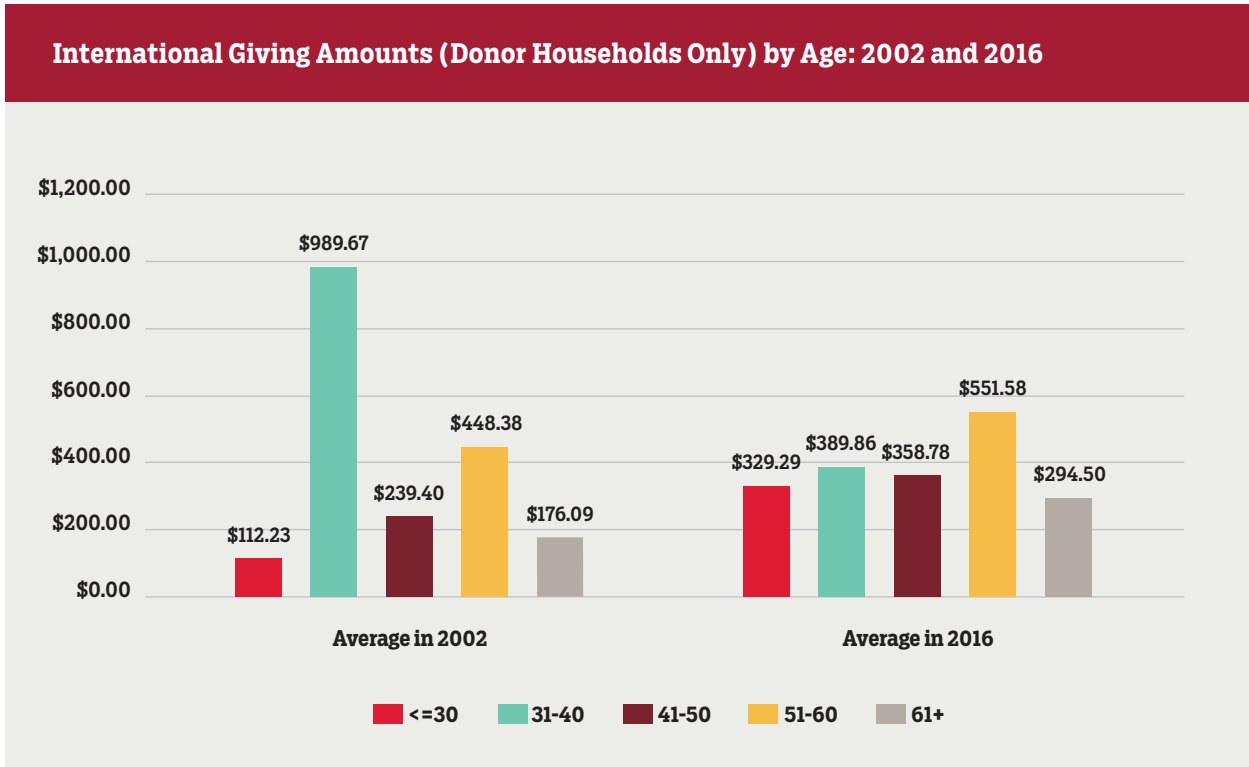
## International Giving

The percentage of all households giving to support international charities in 2016 held steady compared to 2002. However, when we analyzed giving to international charities by age cohort, we found significantly more households gave to international charities in 2016 compared to 2002 for one age cohort (31-40).



Subgroup	Sample Size in 2002	Average in 2002	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
<=30	1,578	2.03%	1,824	1.70%	not significant
31-40	1,639	2.71%	2,305	4.77%	significant
41-50	1,861	3.87%	1,450	3.54%	not significant
51-60	1,175	6.02%	1,507	4.76%	not significant
61+	1,167	6.45%	1,961	7.03%	not significant

For donor households only, the average amount given to international organizations did not change significantly from 2002 to 2016 for any age cohort analyzed.

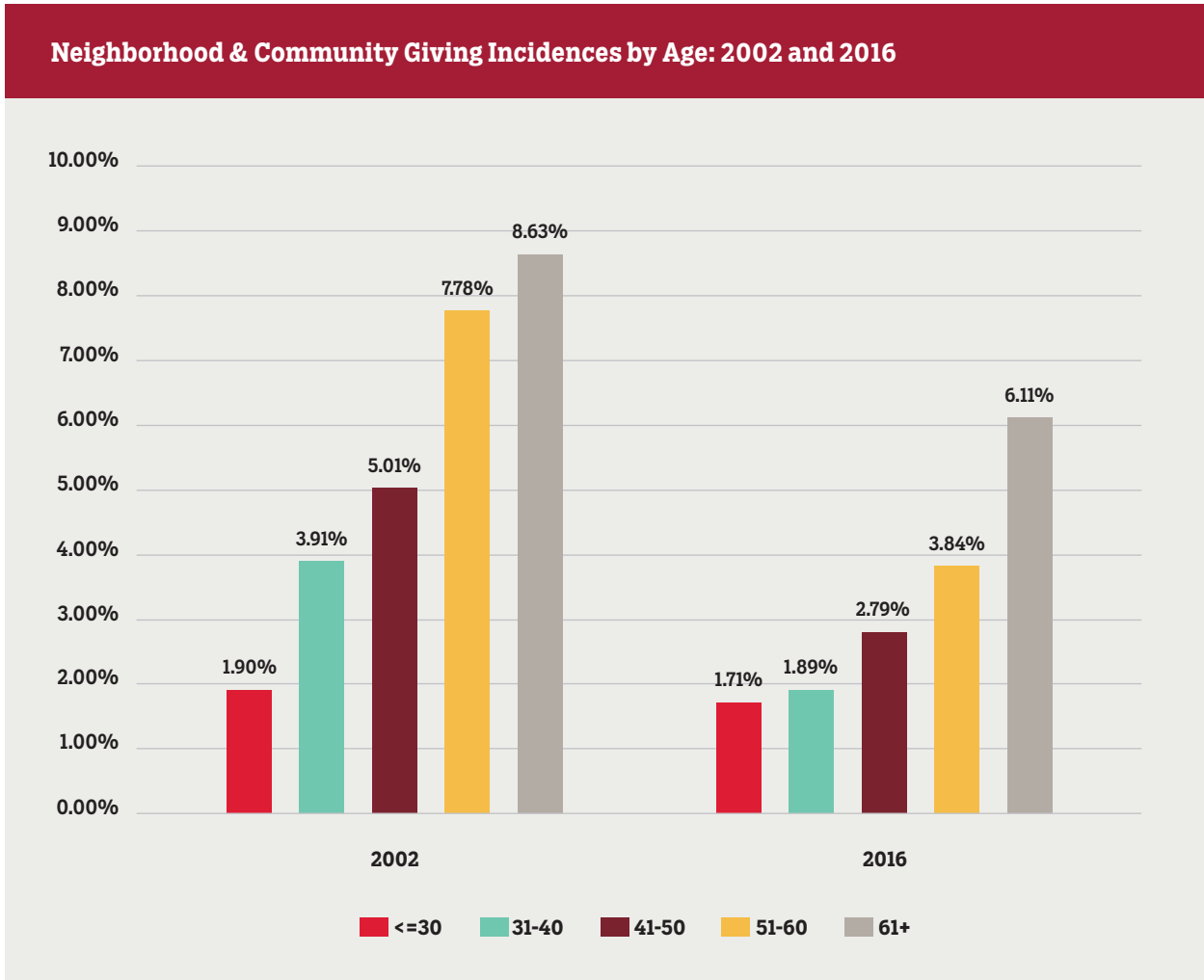


Subgroup	Sample Size in 2002	Average in 2002	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
<=30	27	\$112.23	23	\$329.29	not significant
31-40	38	\$989.67	84	\$389.86	not significant
41-50	64	\$239.40	40	\$358.78	not significant
51-60	65	\$448.38	66	\$551.58	not significant
61+	66	\$176.09	129	\$294.50	not significant



## Neighborhood & Community Giving

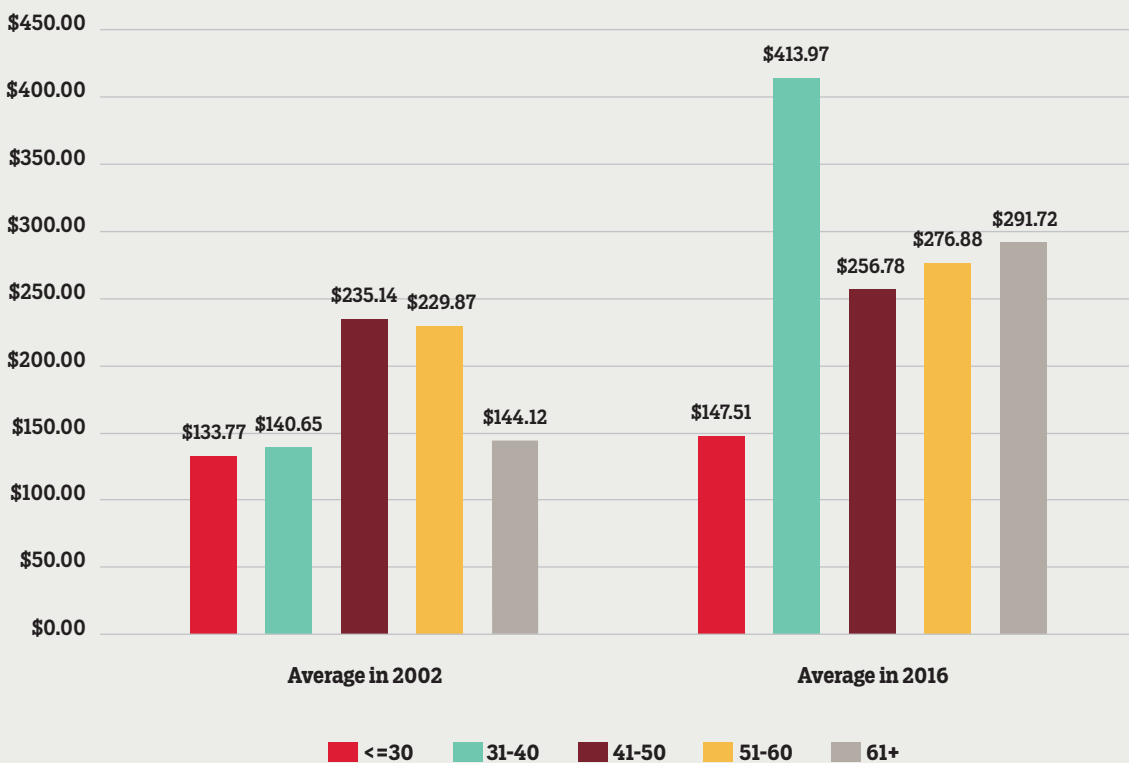
The percentage of households who gave to neighborhood organizations in 2016 was statistically significantly lower compared to 2002. Likewise, when analyzed by age cohorts, we found three age cohorts (31-40, 41-50, and 51-60) that were significantly less likely to give in 2016 compared to in 2002.



Subgroup	Sample Size in 2002	Average in 2002	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
<=30	1,578	1.90%	1,824	1.71%	not significant
31-40	1,639	3.91%	2,305	1.89%	significant
41-50	1,861	5.01%	1,450	2.79%	significant
51-60	1,175	7.78%	1,507	3.84%	significant
61+	1,167	8.63%	1,961	6.11%	not significant

For donor households only, the average amount given to neighborhood and community organizations between 2002 and 2016 did not change significantly for any of the five age cohorts analyzed.

### Neighborhood & Community Giving Amounts (Donor Households Only) by Age: 2002 and 2016



Subgroup	Sample Size in 2002	Average in 2002	Sample Size in 2016	Average in 2016	Statistically Significant?
<=30	29	\$133.77	20	\$147.51	not significant
31-40	58	\$140.65	36	\$413.97	not significant
41-50	89	\$235.14	35	\$256.78	not significant
51-60	89	\$229.87	54	\$276.88	not significant
61+	90	\$144.12	114	\$291.72	not significant



## Conclusion

A significantly smaller percentage of American households gave to charitable causes in 2016 compared to when the School began collecting PPS data in 2000. This decline can be attributed to many factors that affect charitable giving, such as the Great Recession, demographic shifts, and declining religiosity in America. Technological innovations have likely influenced how and when Americans give to charitable organizations, as well. Although the share of U.S. households that give has fallen dramatically, the households that continue to give do so generously overall, and to both secular and religious organizations. In other words, despite the percentage of households that are donors being down, the dollar amount given by those who do continue to give has increased over time.

When comparing the year 2000 (or 2002) with the year 2016, the rate of giving to several charitable subsectors (Religion, Basic Needs, Combined Purposes, Education, Health, Neighborhood & Community, and Youth & Family) declined significantly. Demographic shifts and associated changes in attention and interest may be linked to these declines. For example, more diverse donors appear less interested in contributing to educational organizations and giving to educational institutions by younger households has grown more slowly during the past decade. Basic needs charities have also struggled to cultivate younger, more diverse donors in recent years and instead rely on donations from older donors who may be entering retirement and thus unable to give consistently in the future.

Despite declines in giving rates in these subsectors, the percentage of American households giving to Arts & Culture, Environment, and International Aid held steady during the same time frame. This may be partially based on activities conducted by organizations in these subsectors. Arts and cultural organizations have developed specific outreach strategies designed to attract new donor bases, including younger donors and donors of more diverse backgrounds. Additionally, environmental and international aid charities may be benefiting from their connections to public policy issues that are publicized through technology platforms and the media.

In terms of dollars, the amount given by donor households to most subsectors held steady between 2000 and 2016. On a positive note, the amounts donor households gave to religious congregations and neighborhood and community organizations increased significantly in 2016 compared to 2000 and 2002, respectively.

Generosity continues to remain a core American value for many households. Although charitable donations vary in size, frequency, and proportion of income, every gift is worthwhile and appreciated.

This brief presented key facts about charitable giving during the first 16 years of the 21st century based upon the Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy's Philanthropy Panel Study (PPS). As new data become available, we will be able to evaluate whether the "donors down, dollars up" trend continues throughout the 21st century or whether a resurgence of charitable giving by a larger share of American households occurs in the future.



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