

# Generous People, Stingy Nations or Stingy People, Generous Nations? Explaining Cross-national Differences in Donations to Charitable Organizations

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## Summary of research proposal

Large differences in generosity between individuals in different nations exist. Why do people in one country give more frequently and more generously to charitable organizations than people in another country? Charitable organizations provide important services for societies all over the world. If charitable organizations did not exist, in some countries poor people would have little to eat, research on terrible diseases would be conducted at a much lower pace (if at all), and many forms of culture and arts would perish.

*Generous People, Stingy Nations* builds on theoretical insights from sociology, economy, and psychology to explain cross-national differences in donations to charitable organizations. Do people in some countries donate more to charities because they have access to higher levels of human, financial or social resources? Or because they differ in religious, political or social values? Another plausible explanation originates in major country-specific differences in governmental, fiscal, and legal policies for charitable organizations.

This research project will advance theoretical knowledge on the subject of charitable giving by developing and testing innovative explanations for charitable giving, and implementing knowledge from several disciplines. The proposed research will thus contribute to the understanding of individual motivations for donations, as well as provide insight into the contextual factors that affect charitable giving. I will use different large-scale micro level datasets in combination with (aggregated) country-level data to answer my research question. The hypotheses will be tested using quantitative research methods, including multi-level modeling.

The results of this project can be used to make 'good work better': Increase private contributions to the public good, for example through more efficient solicitation by charitable organizations or by suggesting changes in country-level policies and regulations for charitable organizations.

## Approach

*Generous People, Stingy Nations* will describe and explain cross-national differences in charitable giving across the world. The project will start to provide answers to the question why some people in some countries are more generous than other people in other countries.

The project has build and will continue to build collaborative relationships with researchers all over the world, from various disciplines, that have conducted quantitative micro data surveys on individual or household donations and/or other forms of pro-social behavior (formal and informal giving as well as volunteering, organ and blood donations) in their own country.

Over the next year (October 2010 - October 2011), the project will make the micro data files from the different countries comparable and merge these datasets into one file, so researchers can work with these data to answer their own questions.

So far, the following micro level data sources which are included in the project are:

United States	COPPS	2005
Netherlands	Giving the Netherlands Panel Study	2005
France	Giving France	2008
Australia	Giving Australia	2005
Canada	CSGVP	2004
Hungary	ADOMA	2004
United Kingdom	Helping Out	2007

Europe	Eurobarometer Survey	2004
Europe + US	European Social Survey	2001/2002

Researchers collaborating in the project will have the option to author a paper with the merged dataset (including all micro level datasets). Email Pamala Wiepking (P.Wiepking@fsw.vu.nl) for more information about this.