

WORLD GIVING REPORT

GREECE — CHARITY INSIGHTS

2025



CONTENTS

01.	Introduction	3
02.	The health of the sector and resilience	9
03.	Financial and operational fitness	17
04.	People and culture	24
05.	External awareness and networks	29
06.	Purpose and impact	37
07.	Conclusion	41



01 INTRODUCTION

Welcome.

The Greece Charity Insights 2025 report presents a comprehensive picture of the country's non-profit sector, examining how organisations are adapting to an ever-changing social and economic landscape.

The study, conducted by Higher Incubator Giving Growth & Sustainability (HIGGS) in collaboration with the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF), explores the resilience, financial health, and changing needs of Greek charities within the broader context of the World Giving Report 2025.

The findings reveal a sector that continues to demonstrate adaptability and determination, despite ongoing challenges, from funding insecurity to operational pressures. At the same time, the report highlights a growing emphasis on collaboration, professionalisation, and community engagement, signalling the maturation of the civil society ecosystem.

For HIGGS, the data confirm our mission to empower organisations with the knowledge, tools, and connections they need to grow and strengthen their social impact throughout Greece.



SOTIRIS PETROPOULOS
Cofounder, HIGGS

“Greek civil society has shown remarkable resilience, transforming uncertainty into opportunity and collaboration into lasting social change”

About us.

HIGGS

HIGGS is based in Athens, Greece, founded in 2016 with the vision to strengthen civil society in the country through education, capacity-building, and collaboration.

HIGGS's core mission is to support charities and social enterprises in becoming more effective, sustainable, and impactful in their missions. We believe that social change is driven by empowered organisations that have access to knowledge, resources, and strategic partnerships.

We deliver accelerator and incubator programmes, offer expert mentoring, and facilitate access to funding and partnerships. HIGGS also promotes a culture of philanthropy, civic participation, and collaboration between the non-profit, public, and private sectors.

Since its founding, HIGGS has supported more than 245 organisations across Greece, helping them grow their capacity, strengthen their voice, and increase their social impact. Through research, innovation, and advocacy, we aim to contribute to a more inclusive and resilient society.

CAF

The Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) exists to accelerate progress in society towards a fair and sustainable future for all. Over the last 100 years, we have led the way in developing innovative approaches to giving. Annually, we distribute over £1 billion to social purpose organisations around the globe.

As a leading charity operating in the UK, US and Canada, alongside an international network of partners, CAF works at the centre of the giving world. We collaborate with corporate and individual donors to enable them to give more effectively, strategically and impactfully. This includes connecting them to charities globally and providing access to our in-depth sector knowledge, governance expertise and innovative giving solutions.

We help social purpose organisations to strengthen their resilience and do more of their life changing work, through strategic advisory services from our Impact Accelerator, tools to support charities' fundraising activities, and charity financial services from CAF Bank Limited and CAF Financial Solutions Limited. Using our research, policy and campaigns work, we understand and influence the wider environment for charities and donors.

Together, we give more.

The World Giving Report captures the public's attitudes and behaviours around giving in 101 countries across the world and — working with local partners — the state of the charity landscape in 27 of these countries.

- This report is one of 16 country-specific Charity Insights reports and is produced by CAF in partnership with leading social purpose organisations around the world.
- You can access all our global and country-specific insights — from both donors and charities — at: www.worldgivingreport.org

Our methodology.

The results described in this report were collected as part of the Charity Landscape aspect of the World Giving Report between March and June 2025.

All fieldwork was conducted by HIGGS. Partners reached out to charities in their countries with an online survey. Sometimes, the partners encouraged responses by conducting telephone or face-to-face interviews and simultaneously (or subsequently) completing an online response that accorded to the answers given in person. Surveys were available in the predominant local language or English.

The sample collected is an indicative snapshot of charity perspectives in this country as, in most cases, there is no data on the sample universe with which to guide any sampling or post-hoc weighting.

A note on 'Charity'

Across the report, we use the words 'charity' and 'charities' to represent any organisation that works to try and improve issues that are affecting individuals, communities, animals or the natural environment, and society as a whole.

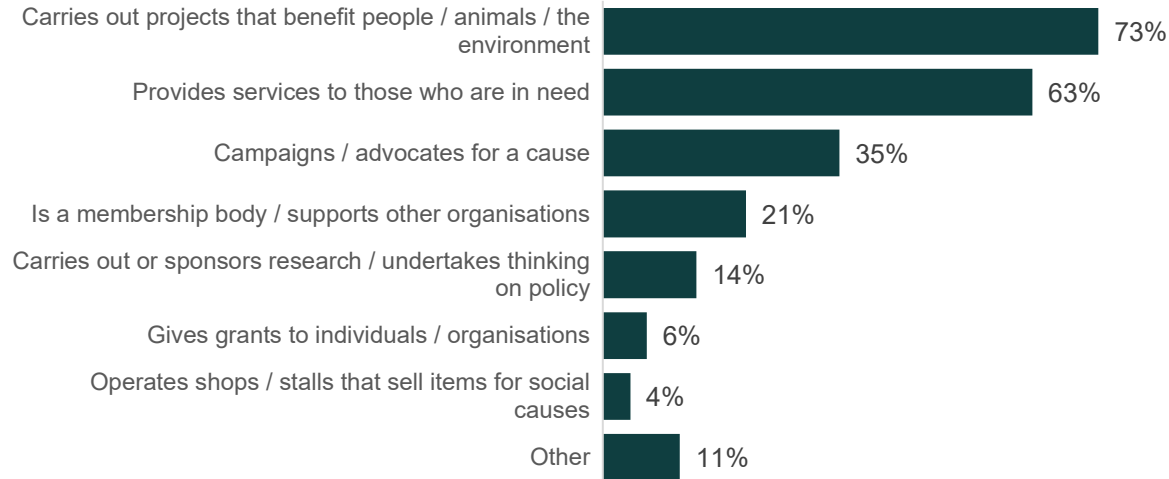
In doing so, we recognise that these terms and their definitions differ around the world, with this type of organisation also described as: non-governmental organisations (NGOs), non-profit organisations (NPOs), community organisations, social purpose organisations, associations and other names.

www.worldgivingreport.org

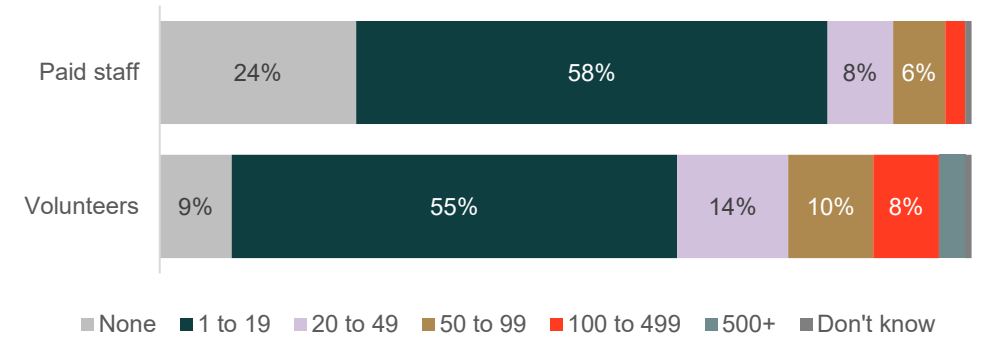


The organisations in the sample: 124 in total.

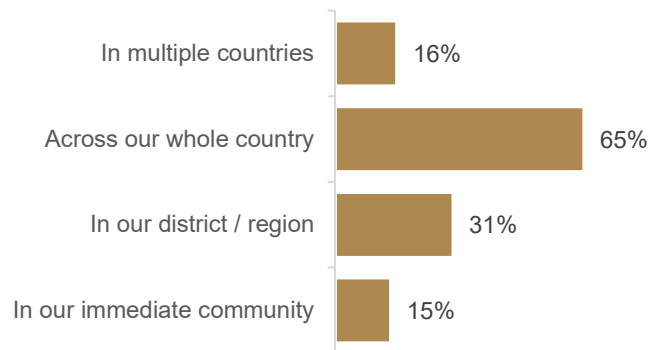
The role of the organisation:



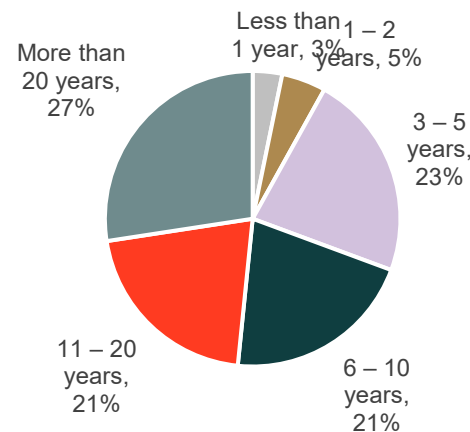
Size of organisation:



The scope of their work:



How long the organisation has operated:



The main cause area supported:

In total, 15 different main cause areas were represented within the sample, with the five most common being:

1. Other causes (14%)
2. Disabled people (13%)
3. Children or young people (12%)
4. Arts, culture, heritage or science (12%)
5. Health and human rights/equality/diversity (both 10%)

A photograph of three men from behind, wearing bright yellow t-shirts with the word 'VOLUNTEERS' and a decorative emblem. They are standing at an outdoor event, possibly a festival or fair, with blurred buildings and lights in the background. Two red text boxes are overlaid on the image.

02 THE HEALTH

OF THE SECTOR

The biggest challenges for the sector.

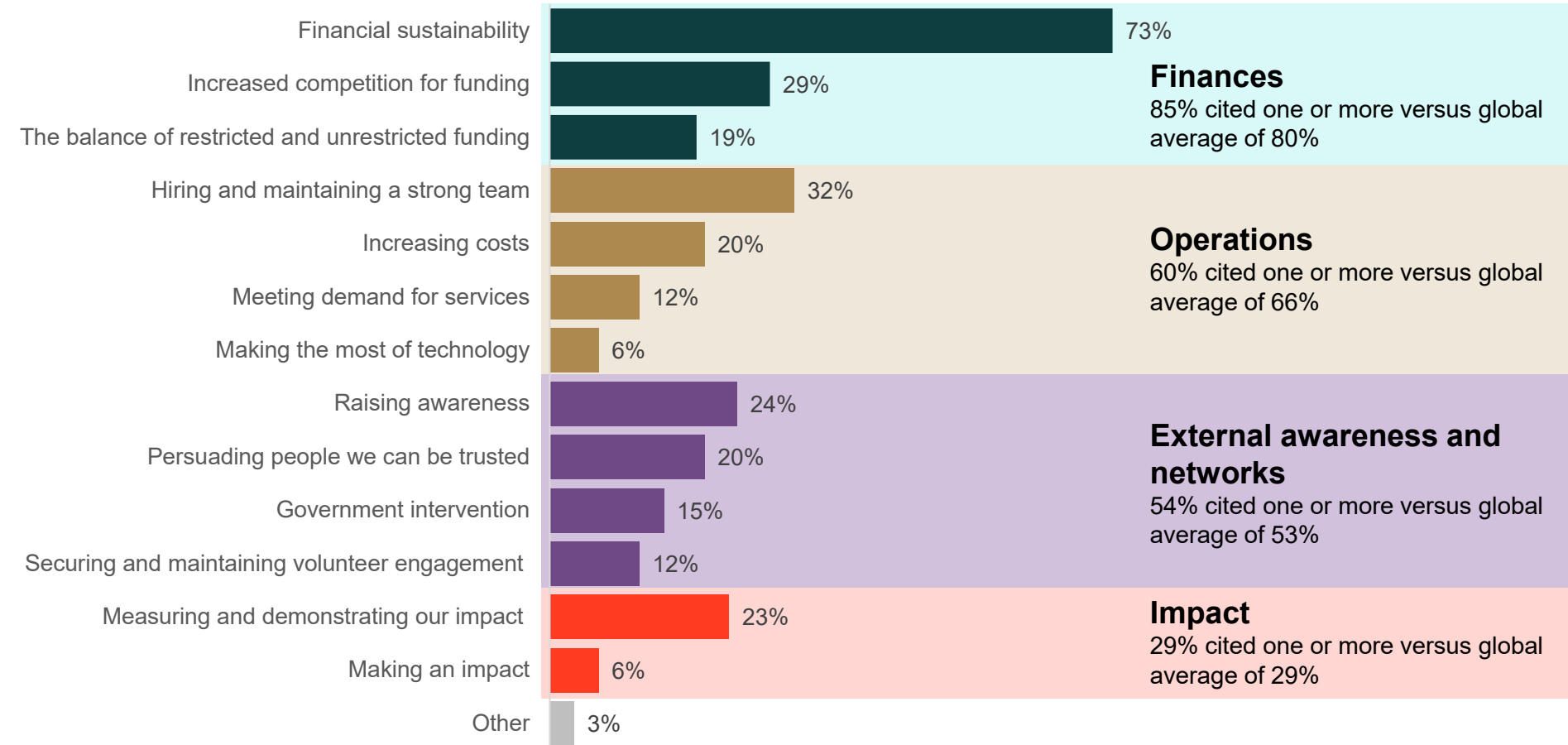
Responses on challenges faced by charities in Greece reveal the sector-wide anxiety about finances with a strong focus on financial sustainability.

With current disruption in the sector — such as the US turning away from grants, various charitable foundations decreasing funding and the weakness of the sector to increase individual donation — being able to achieve financial resilience has become a top priority.

The latter is also imperative for retaining the most talented people in your team, as turnover also among charities increases.

Interestingly, for a sector that tends to lag behind on the introduction of new technologies, such a challenge is ranked relatively low.

Q. Below is a list of challenges that charities might be facing. Please select the three that are most pressing for your organisation: (All charities answering, n = 94.)



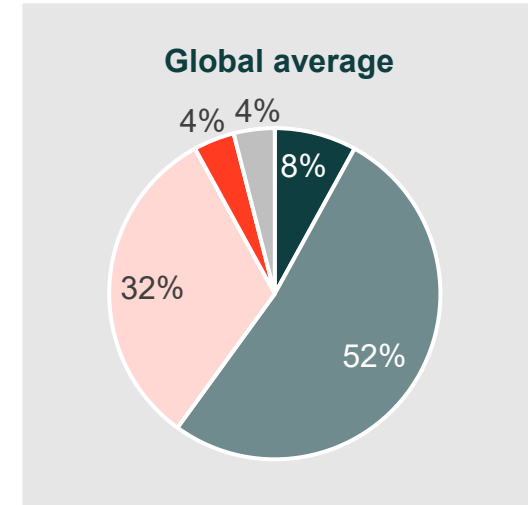
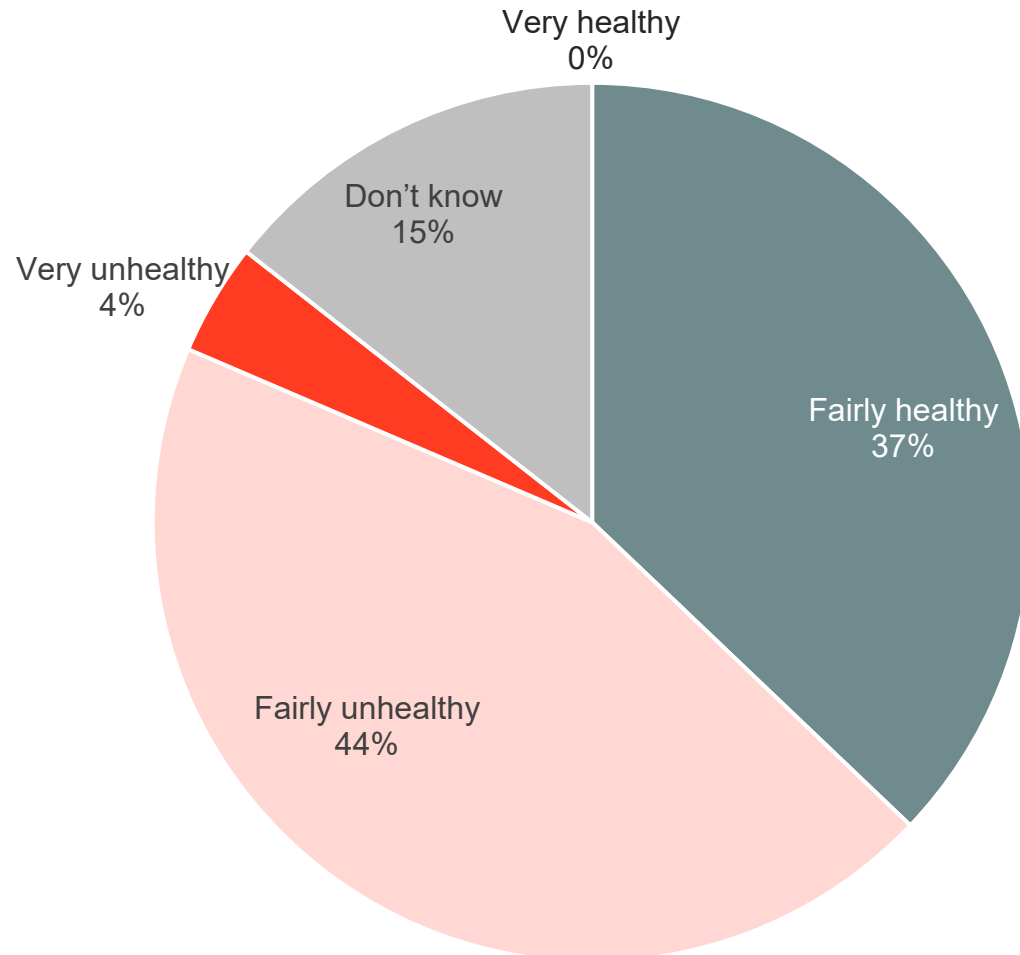
Perceptions on overall sector health.

Views of Greek charities on overall sector health reveal a worrying situation.

Though answers to the question are affected by a generally pessimistic approach to the sector's standing, this concern is grounded in available data and discussions at major events concerning charities in Greece.

Compared to the global averages, what is also striking is the increased percentage of Don't know responses. This reflects a negative reality in Greece. Overall, charities are not open enough on their standing, while at the same time, the sector experiences low levels of interactions and collaborations between charities.

Q. Overall, would you say the charity sector in your country is... (All charities answering, n = 97)



Deep dive: sector health.

The Greek charity sector is perceived as unhealthy primarily due to a deep-seated crisis of public trust. Widespread scepticism, fuelled by media negativity and political caution, has been exacerbated by isolated scandals, leading to a generalised belief that organisations lack transparency and are mismanaged.

This toxic environment makes it difficult for even legitimate charities to gain the public confidence and support they need to operate effectively.

On the other hand, despite challenges, the sector shows promising signs of health and growth. Respondents highlight a post-2015 flourishing of active organisations that are becoming increasingly professional, leveraging technology for transparency and producing tangible results.

In addition, a rise in citizen engagement and volunteering, coupled with strategic collaborations between charitable foundations, demonstrates a strengthened civil society.

These organisations are widely recognised for filling critical gaps left by the public sector, earning reliability through their quality work, and gaining cautious but growing support from companies and the public. This indicates a sector that is maturing and solidifying its vital social role.

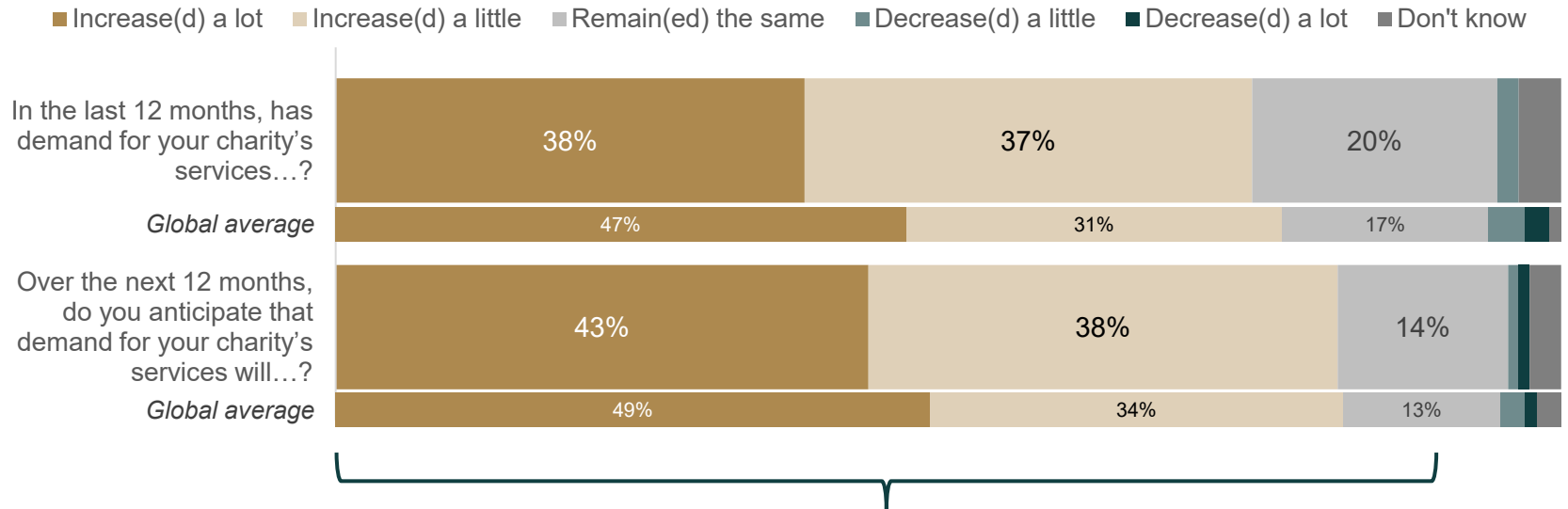


Demand for services.

Demand for charity services has increased and is expected to grow even further.

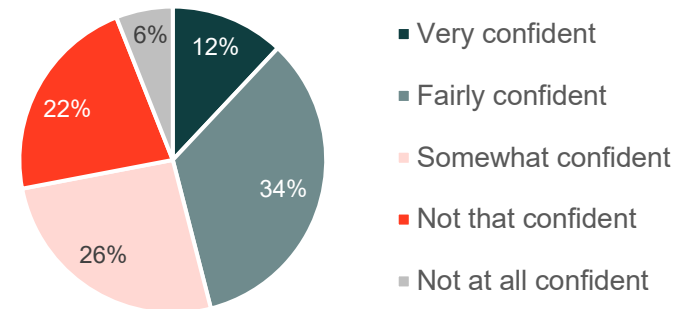
The low levels of confidence in the ability of the charity ecosystem to cope with this rise in demand is connected to the rather volatile operational environment. This includes the ability to reach out to individuals for donations — both monetary and in-kind — and volunteering.

Perceptions of demand: (Charities that provide services, give grants and / or do project work, n = 115)



How confident are you that your charity will be able to meet this increased demand?

(Charities that expect demand to increase, n = 94.)



Optimism for the future.

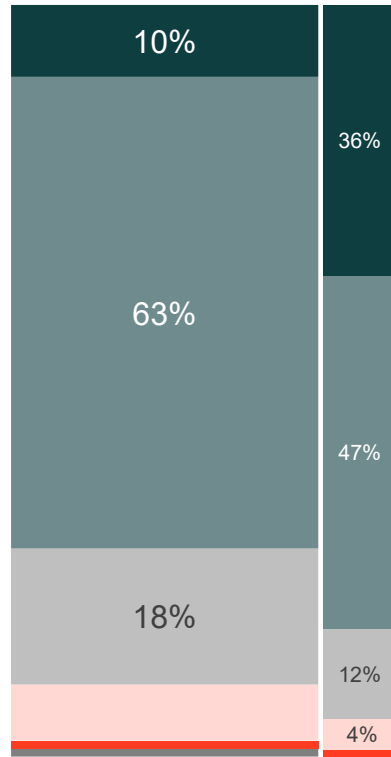
Overall, Greek charities are pessimistic about both their own future and the sector's prospects.

Dealing with a negative operational environment and much uncertainty on the funding side does not leave much room for optimism.

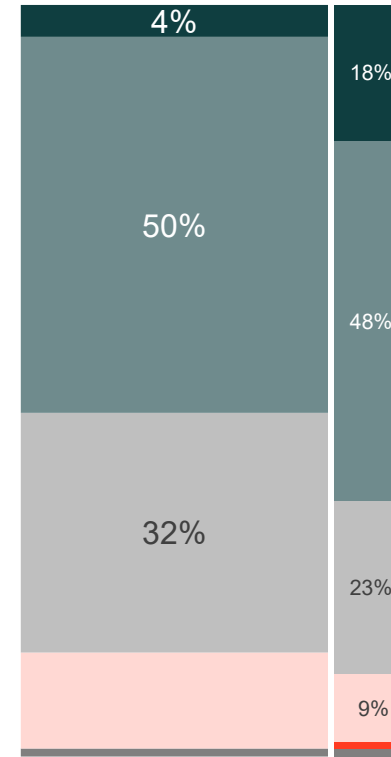
With growing demand for charities' services, and the absence of a strong enabling environment, charities are expected to face increased barriers to implementing their growth plans.

Q. How optimistic or pessimistic are you about...? (All charities answering, n = 94)

The future of your organisation



The future of the charity sector in general



- Very optimistic
- Optimistic
- Neither optimistic nor pessimistic
- Pessimistic
- Very pessimistic
- Don't know

Global average

CAF's six characteristics of a resilient charity.

Through our extensive research and advisory work with charities, we have identified six characteristics that show an organisation has the potential to be resilient.



Purpose



Understanding what the organisational purpose is, and just as importantly, what it is not.

Evidencing impact



The ability to identify and communicate the needs being met, and the impact that is having.

Well networked



Being well connected and able to get support from working in partnership with others.

Financially & operationally fit



Being financially and operationally fit with sufficient income from a diverse range of sources.

People & culture



Having the right staff and prioritising their development and wellbeing with effective leadership.

External awareness



Awareness of the political, economic, local and national context. Horizon scanning for threats and opportunities.

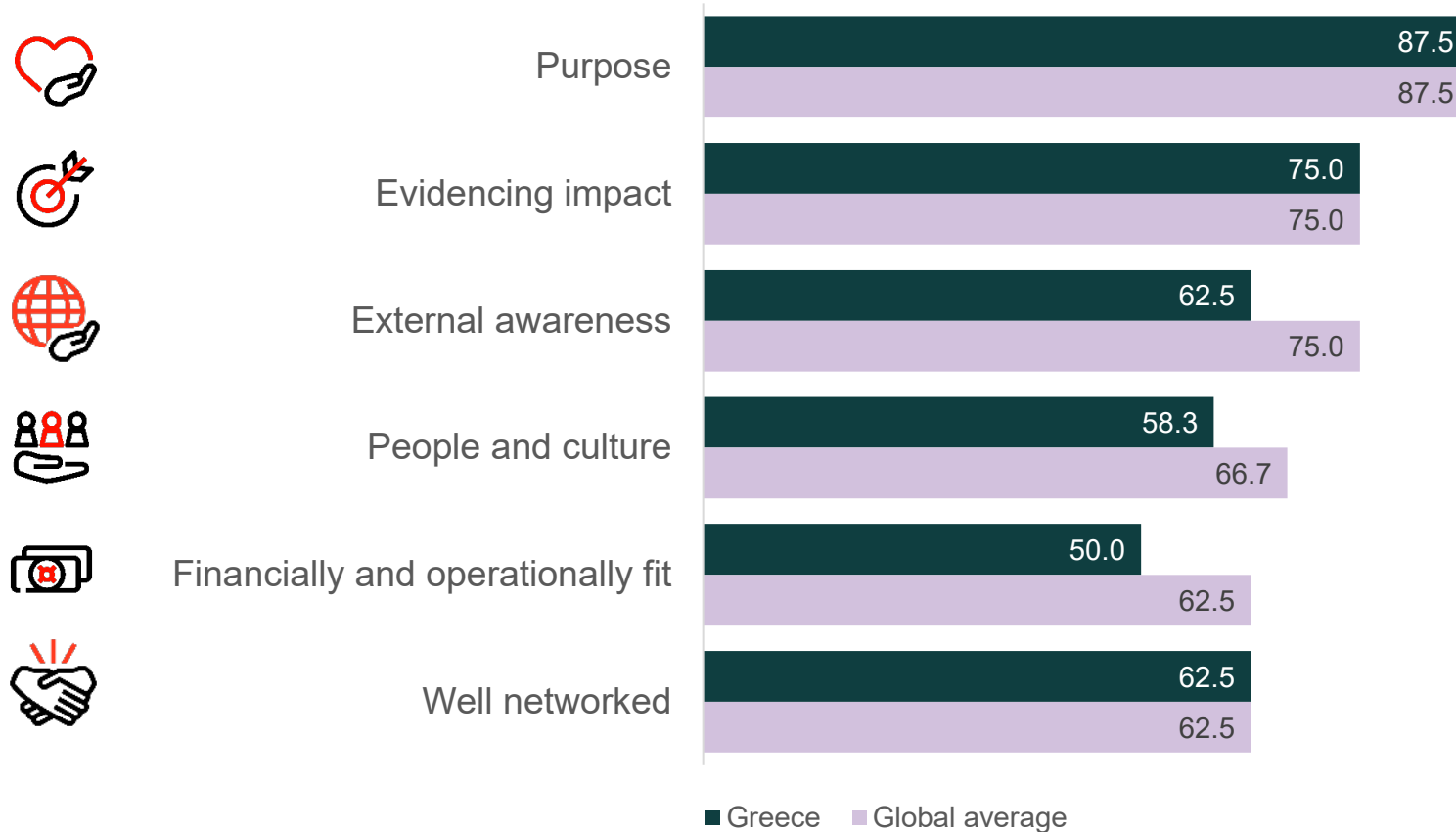
The questionnaire included a number of questions that, when taken together, give each organisation a score for each of the six characteristics. Please see page 16 for the scores for Greece.

Levels of resilience.

Greek charities appear relatively resilient.

External awareness, People and culture and Financial and operational fitness are the three areas that are significantly below the global average.

Resilience scores showing the median score for each aspect: *(All charities answering, n = 101)*



03 FINANCIAL AND OPERATIONAL FITNESS



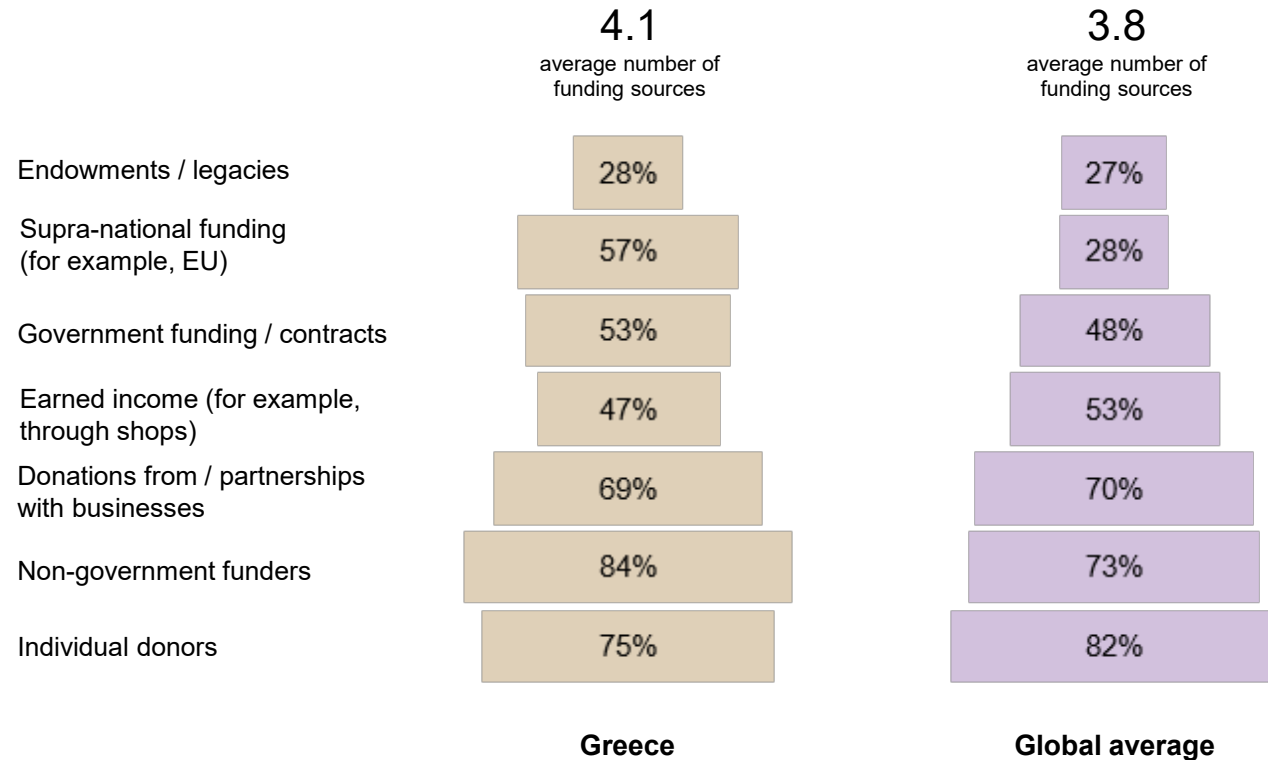
Diversity of income streams.

Charitable foundations and institutional (for example, EU and state) remain the primary sources of income.

The results suggest that Greek charities exhibit a lower utilisation of revolving funding sources, such as earned income and individual donations, which is in line with contemporary knowledge.

This can be attributed to a persistent public trust deficit, which is compounded by limited organisational outreach that impacts public engagement and fundraising potential.

The proportion of charities that receive each type of funding: *(All charities answering, n = 115-118.)*

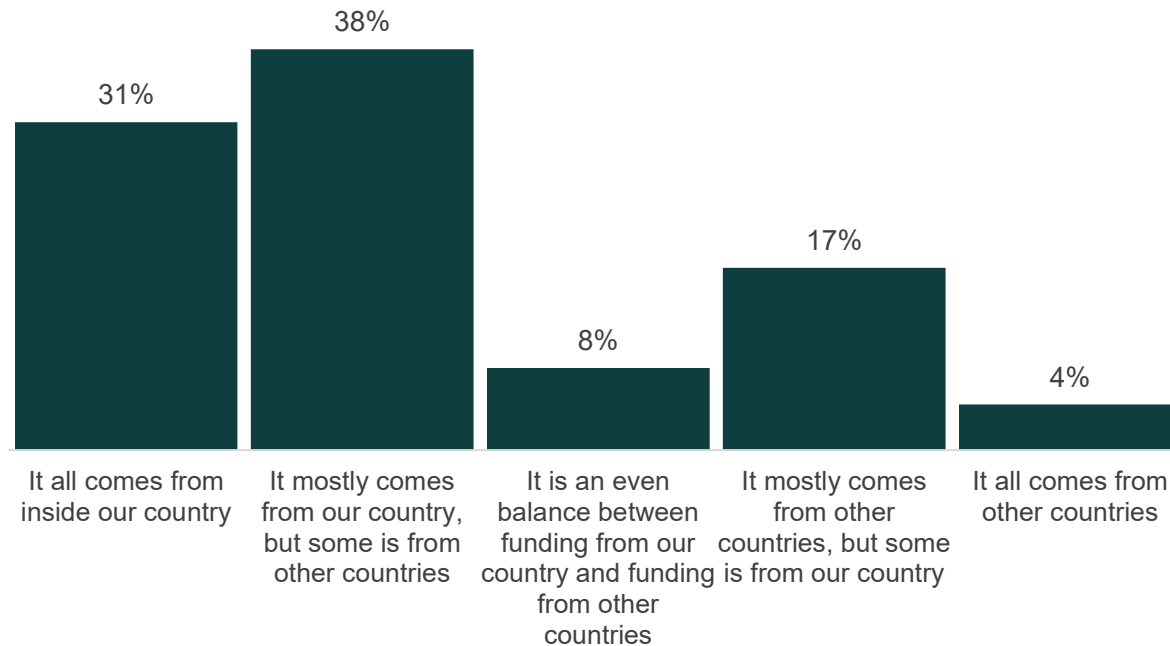


Where funding comes from geographically.

The majority of Greek charities are focused on fundraising nationally.

Only 4% of charities receive all their funding from overseas.

Q. Geographically, where does your funding come from? *(All charities answering, n = 115)*



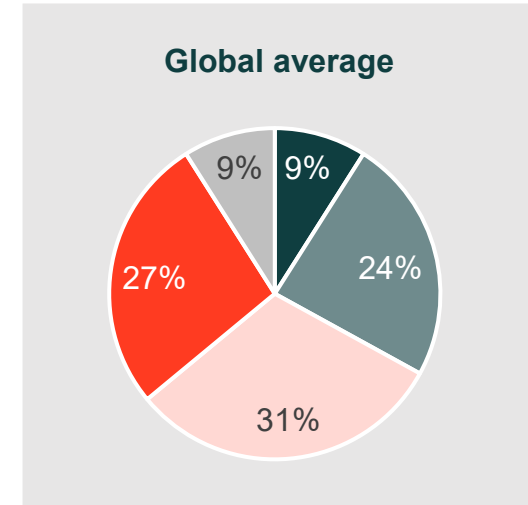
Confidence in the diversity of income streams.

Greek charities are not confident in the diversity of their income streams.

As most charities are of a small or medium size, they tend to refrain from expanding their fundraising activities beyond several sources.

This decreased diversification of income streams also contributes to uncertainty over the financial standing of charities.

Q. How confident are you that your income streams are diverse enough to cope easily with sudden decreases from any one of them? *(All charities answering, n = 124)*



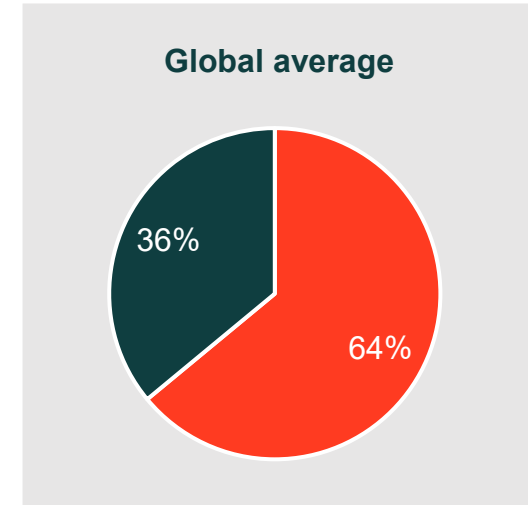
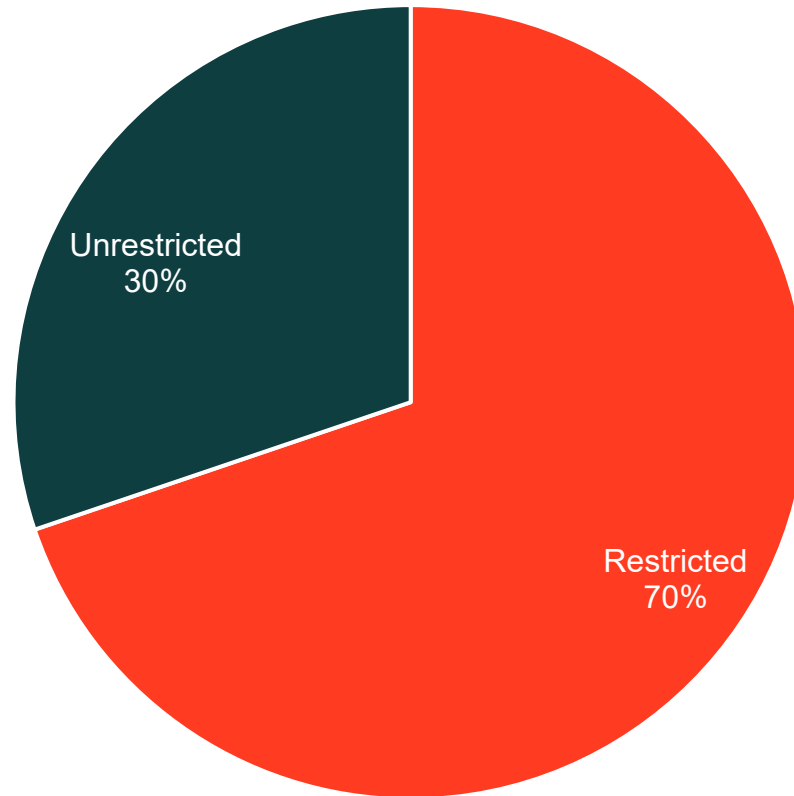
Restricted versus unrestricted funding.

Most funding for Greek charities is project-based.

As individual donations and earned income are rather low in the funding mix of the average charity, it is very difficult to receive high levels of unrestricted funding.

Likewise, just a few charitable foundations are open to unrestricted funding while the same applies for most EU programmes.

Q. How much of your funding is given as 'restricted' funds (for example, only able to be spent on a specific project / purpose)? (Charities that were able to provide an answer, n = 91.)



Satisfaction with their funding mix.

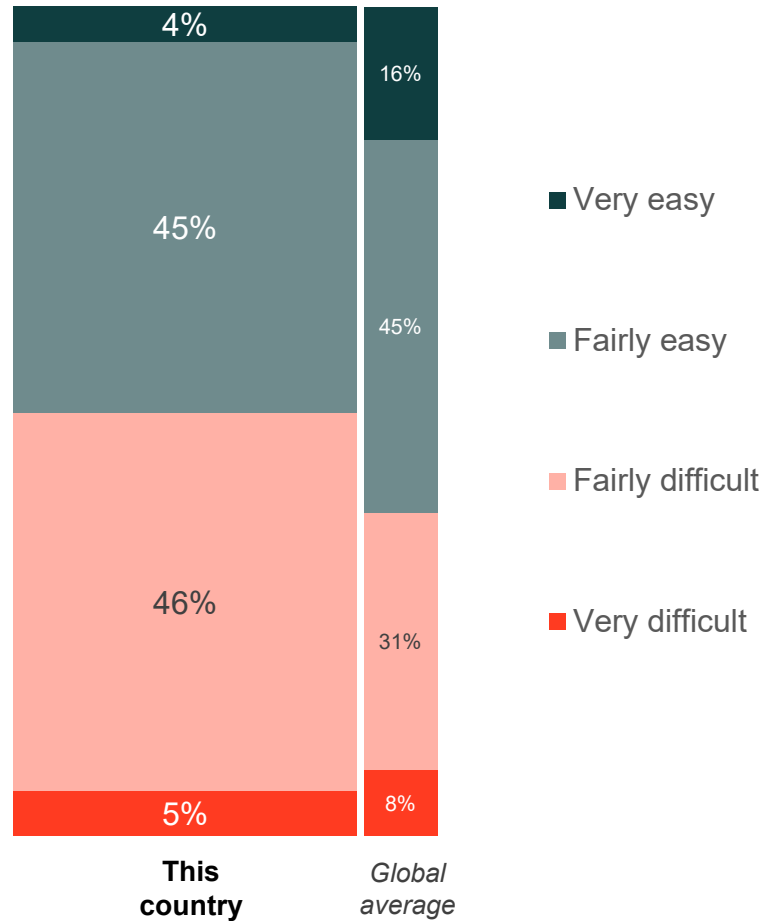
There are mixed feelings on the existing funding mix.

Greek charities have a good understanding of the barriers created to their activities and growth by the limited variety in their funding mix.

The sector exhibits a pronounced vulnerability to fluctuations in its funding environment. Charities remain insufficiently prepared for income stream disruptions and have yet to achieve meaningful financial diversification.

Consequently, the scarcity of credible, unrestricted funding impedes their capacity to weather current volatile conditions and invest in long-term development.

Q. Does this mix of funding make it easy or difficult for you to achieve your goals?
 (All charities answering, n = 94.)



“We have been unsuccessful to tap on other sources of income from the ones we are currently rely on. On the one hand it is difficult to create expertise on new funding sources, and we cannot hire someone that already has relevant know-how as this is costly and with uncertain results. On the hand we continue to invest our energy in those sources we have been successful in the past.”

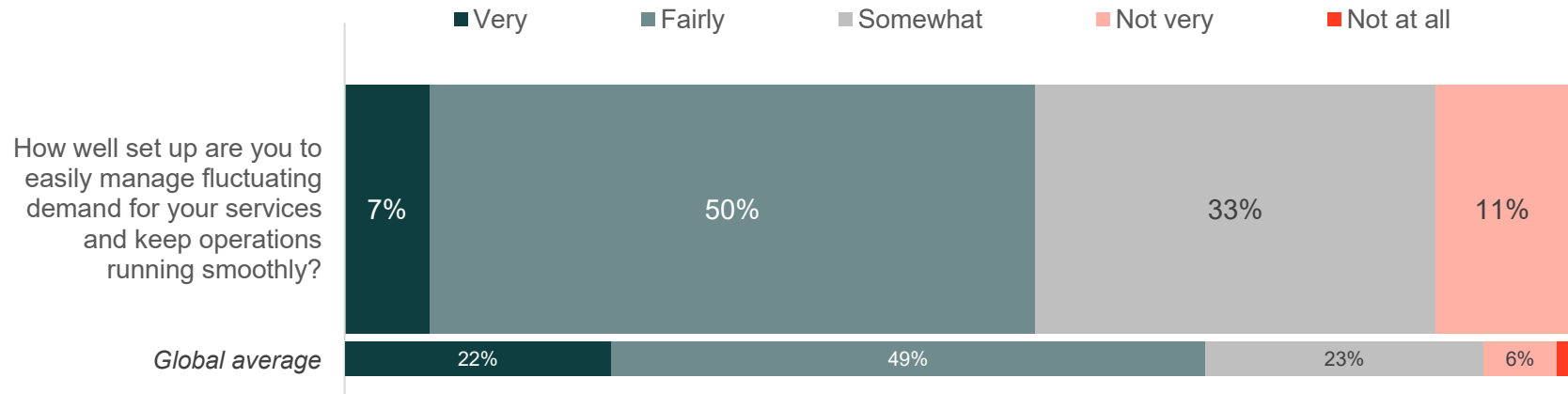
Charity leader

Operational fitness to meet demand.

While most Greek charities have a moderate level of preparedness to manage fluctuating demand for their services, significant challenges remain.

This can be attributed to a general lack of systems and resources needed to ensure smooth operations under varying conditions.

How they would rate their charity: (All charities answering, n = 101)



04 PEOPLE

AND CULTURE



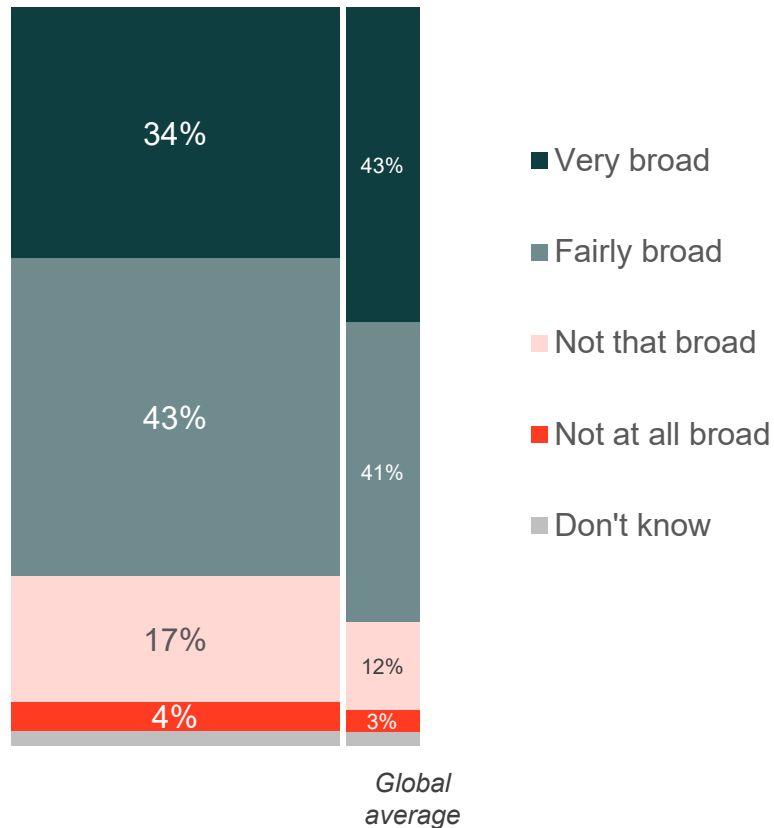
The senior team.

As with charities all over the world, senior teams spend too much time on day-to-day issues.

Though the last decades have seen a professionalisation of the sector with many skilled people entering this ecosystem, this wealth of skills is primarily used for main operations and not directed to strategic planning.

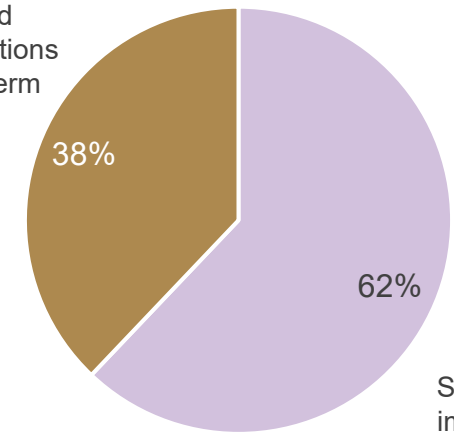
This short-term focus does not help Greek charities plan and grow for the future.

How broad are the skills and experience of the most senior leadership team in your organisation? In some cases, this might be your board, an external board of trustees or a C-suite team (for example, CEO, CFO) *(All charities answering, n = 100)*

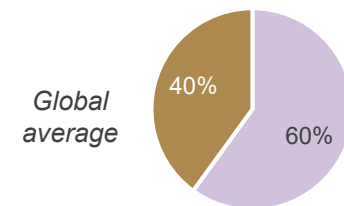


Roughly speaking, what proportion of time does your senior team spend on each of the following? *(All charities answering, n = 98)*

Thinking and planning more strategically and making connections for the longer-term



Solving day-to-day, immediate problems that ensure we can keep operating



Recruitment and retention.

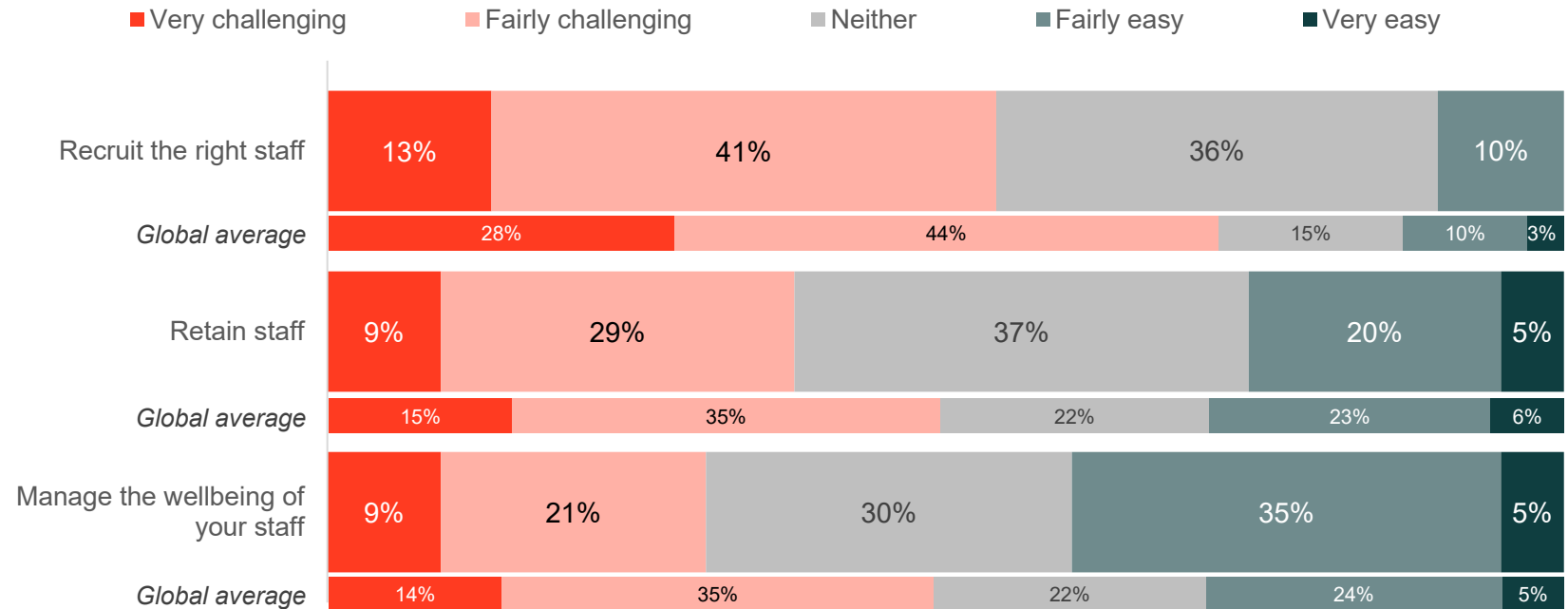
Greek charities have been positively affected by three subsequent crises.

The socioeconomic crisis that was initiated in 2010 and the refugee and Covid crises that followed enhanced the attractiveness of the sector for skilled employees.

Because of this sudden but long-lasting sensitisation of (mostly young) people, a great number of them are willing to work and stay in the charities sector.

Nevertheless, it is still hard to retain talented people, with turnover significantly affecting the developmental paths of charities.

How challenging is it to do the following? (All charities answering, n = 98.)



Strength and depth of the team.

Charity employees are a growing strength.

But they are not properly supported by a huge influx of volunteers.

Greece has never capitalised on the 70,000+ volunteers of the 2004 Olympic Games. Though volunteers' numbers are growing, they typically do not represent mostly regular ones.

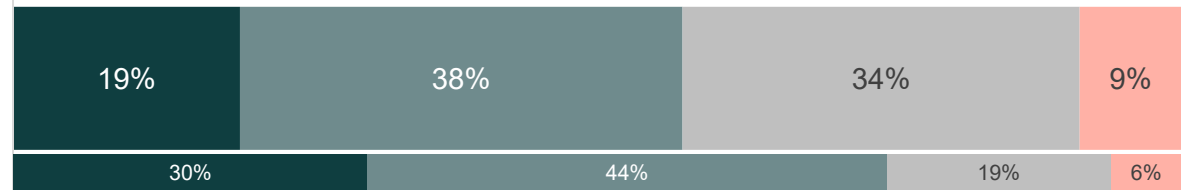
The negative public view of charities somewhat decreases their ability to both recruit and retain volunteers.

How they would rate their charity: (All charities answering, n = 103)

■ Very ■ Fairly ■ Somewhat ■ Not very ■ Not at all

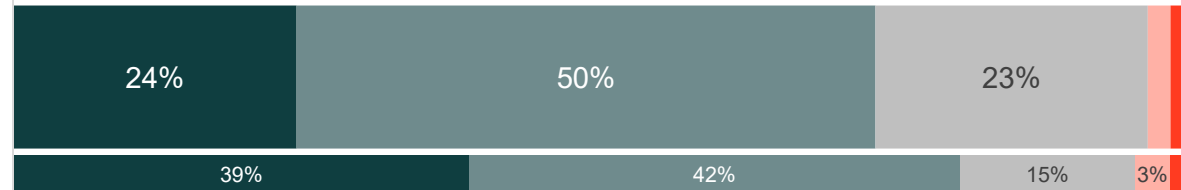
How strong is the team? (i.e. do you have the right roles, organised in the right way and with the right people doing them?)

Global average



How confident are you that the organisation learns from its mistakes and evolves how it works as a result?

Global average



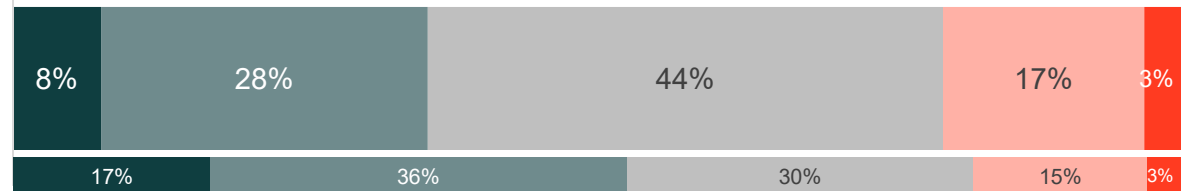
[organisations that use volunteers, n=93] How easy it is to recruit volunteers to help out on projects?

Global average



[organisations that use volunteers, n=93] How easy is it to retain volunteers once you've recruited them?

Global average



Deep dive: the importance of the right people.

GIVMED is a charity created by a group of talented, young people who could easily have found employment in large multinational companies.

Their decision to first use their talent and advanced degrees to set up an organisation that aims at reducing the widespread waste of medicine was a huge support to Greek society. Though they struggled to retain some of the first employees, they invested in choosing the right people and allowing enough room for development to retain those that came to fill their shoes as they gradually selected to move to more strategy-related positions.

The Tipping Point is a typical example of Greek charities that are struggling with huge workloads during their first years of existence. Through setting up a robust recruiting and retaining programs for volunteers they managed to create a 14-people strong team and to put in the foundations for the charity's take-off.

At one point the volunteers were so engaged with the charity's mission and their contribution to it that they would constantly reach out to the founding team for more tasks to handle.



05

EXTERNAL AWARENESS AND NETWORKS



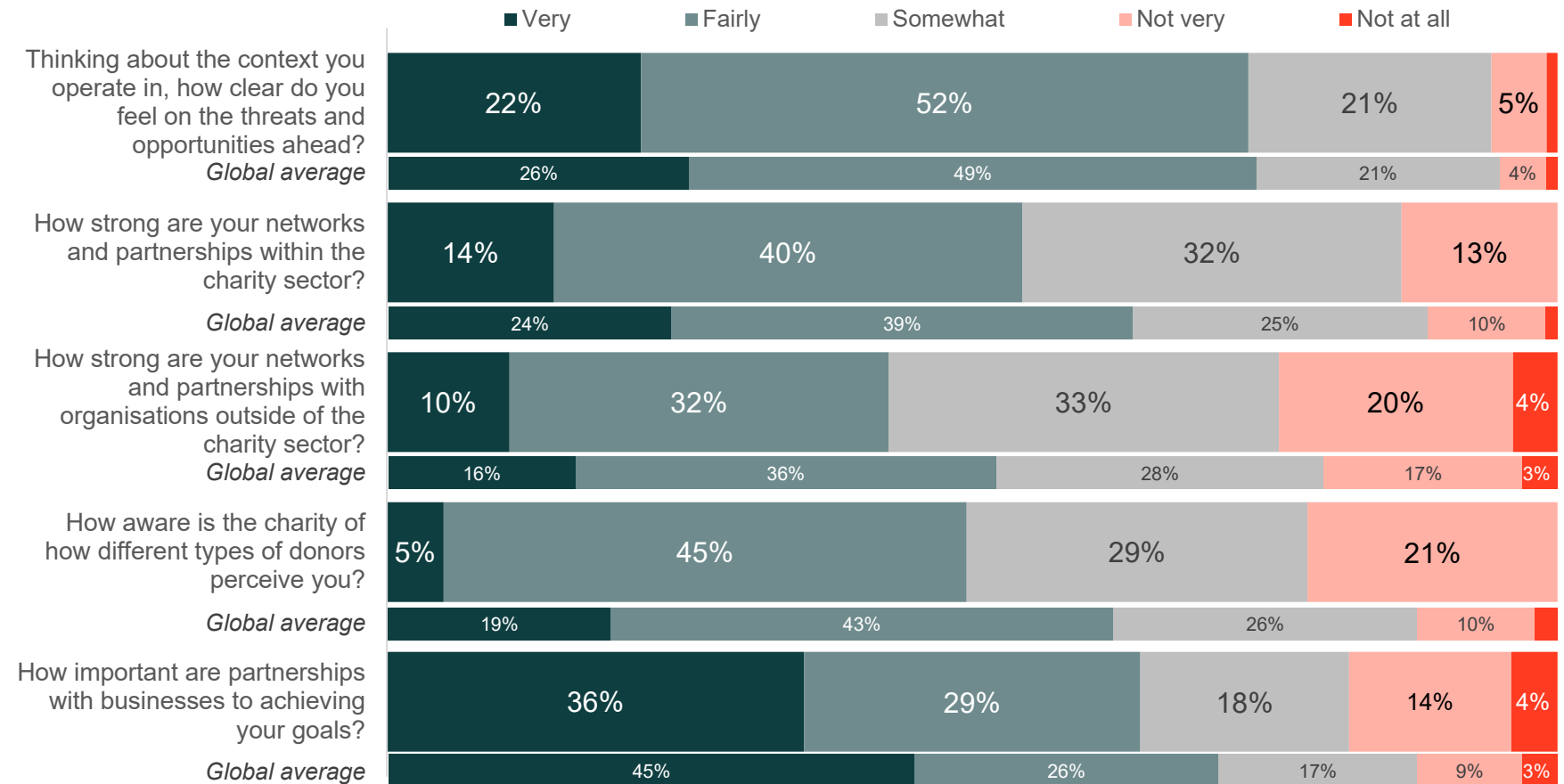
External awareness & partnerships.

Greek charities operate under significant resource constraints, which limits their capacity for strategic environmental scanning and in-depth analysis of external factors.

Periodic scandals within the sector have eroded trust among organisations, constraining the development of robust and expansive collaborative networks.

Similarly, the dual pressures of overwhelming service demand and perpetual fundraising leave little room for charities to conduct deeper analysis into their donors' underlying support drivers.

How they would rate their charity: (All charities answering, n = 101-106)



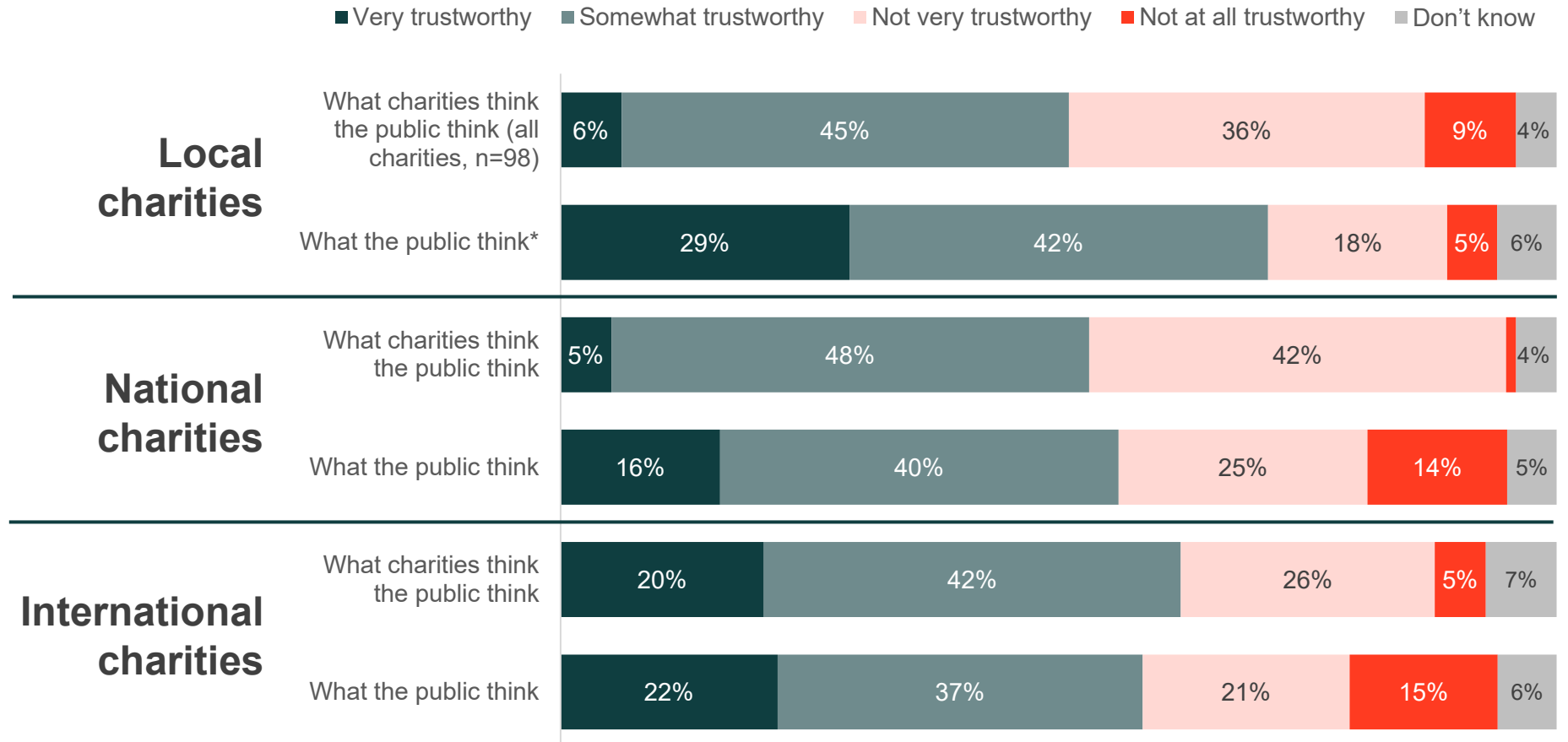
Trust in charities.

The Greek public holds a generally mixed view of the charitable sector, but local charities perceive it to be worse than it is.

Ironically, this scepticism is more pronounced toward local and national organisations, despite — or perhaps because of — the public's more direct exposure to their operations.

In contrast, international charities initially benefited from a reservoir of public goodwill rooted in the widespread support for refugees during the peak of the migration crisis.

Trustworthiness of charities — what charities think the public thinks, and what the public actually thinks:



*Data from CAF World Giving Report – Donor Insights, 2025.

Deep dive: building trust.

In late 2022, the Ark of the World (Kivotos tou Kosmou), once a highly trusted Greek charity, was rocked by a major scandal involving widespread allegations of physical, psychological, and sexual abuse of the minors in its care, as well as financial misconduct.

These revelations, detailed in a scathing Greek Ombudsman report and criminal investigations, led to a profound crisis of confidence and a significant decrease in support from both institutional funders and the public.

In a decisive move, the Greek Government intervened using new legislation, replacing the entire leadership and appointing a new board of directors with expertise in social services and children's rights. Concurrently, the Greek Orthodox Church suspended the founder, Father Antonios, from his duties. This laid the groundwork for the new administration's recovery plan, "The Arc is Changing".

The new administration worked to reverse this image by establishing better management policies, enhancing transparency, and implementing whistleblowing processes. It embarked on a campaign to rebuild the much-needed trust among Greek society. By directly projecting the impact of its work — supporting minors during hardships and their separation from families — the charity succeeded to a great extent in changing its image among the general public. With enhanced trust in the charity in this new era, its future became more promising.



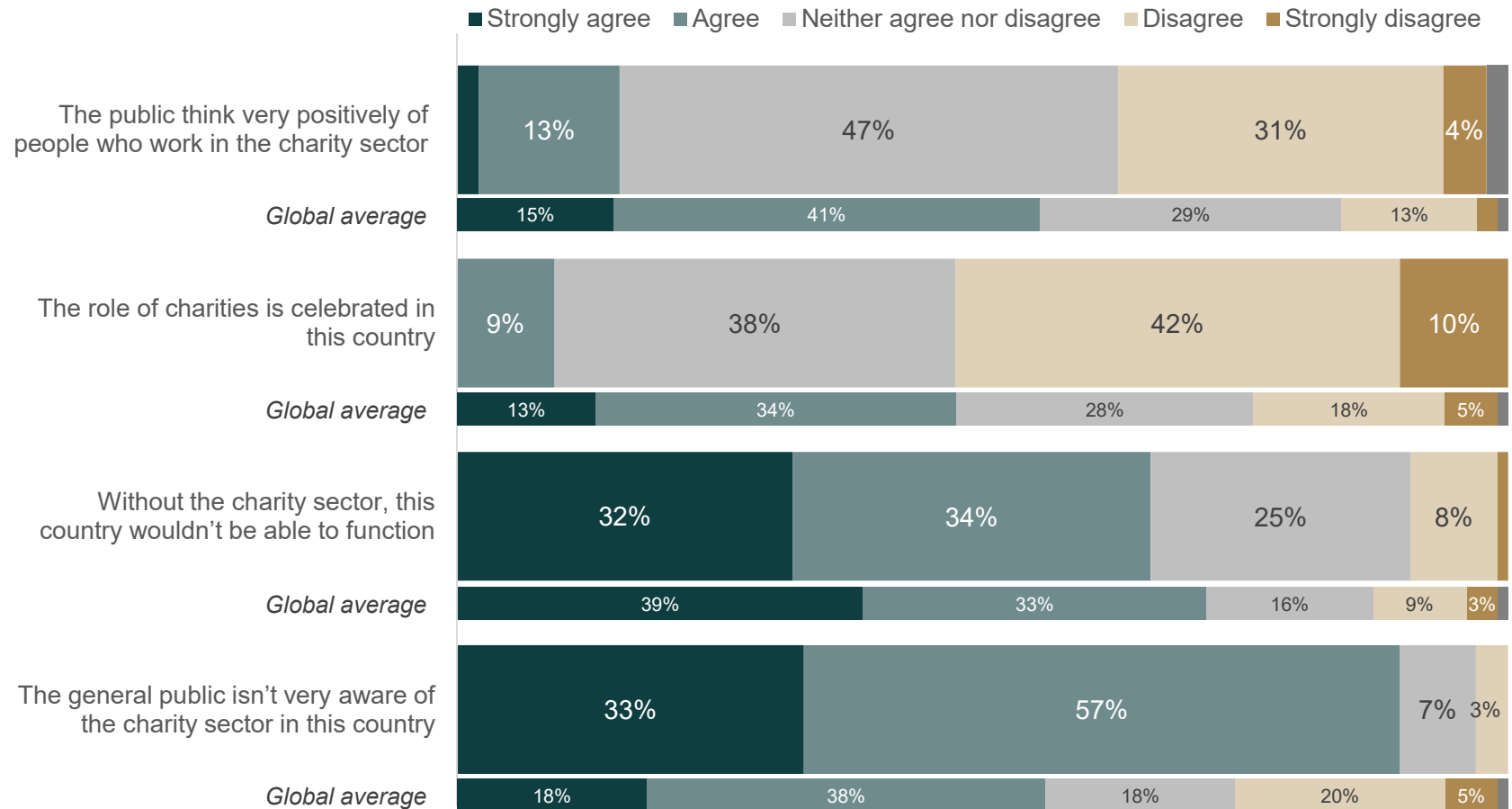
Charities' perceived role and reputation.

The Greek charity sector faces significant challenges in managing its public perception.

While organisations have proven effective at securing media coverage to disseminate their results, this has not translated into broader public awareness or trust.

This disconnect is largely attributable to a damaging external narrative, fuelled by political rhetoric targeting the sector — particularly organisations working with refugees — and exacerbated by periodic scandals.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the charity sector? (All charities answering, n = 97.)

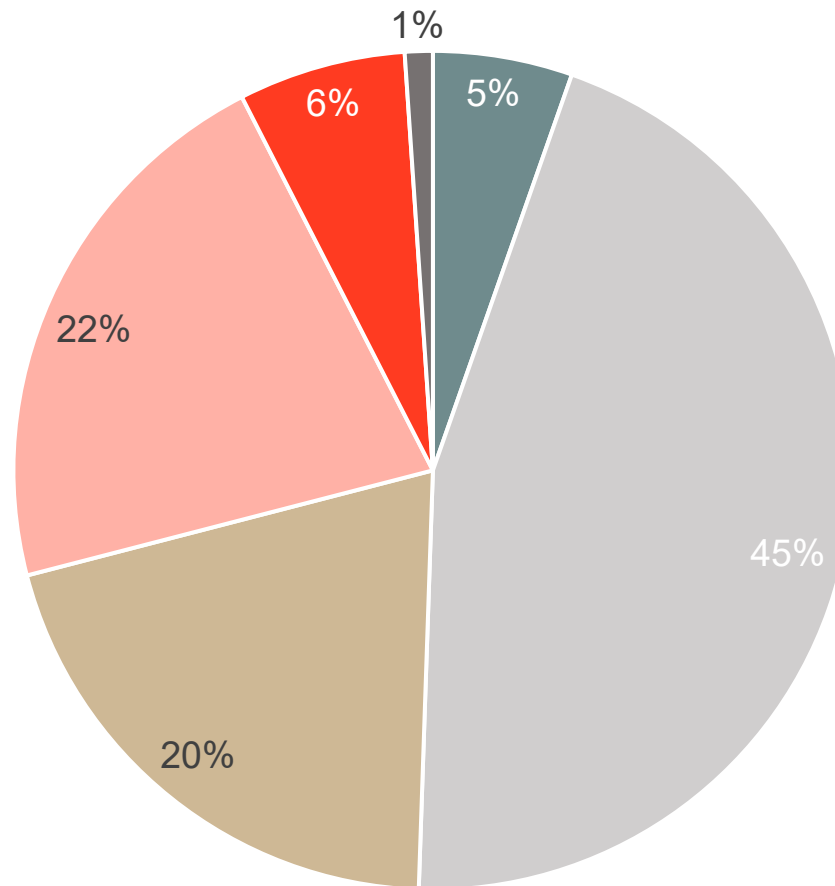


Overall influence of government on charities.

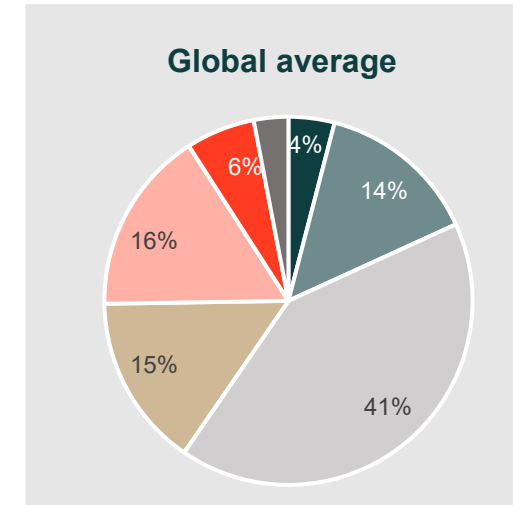
The relationship between Greek charities and the state is typically characterised by mutual criticism and a lack of warmth from the governmental side.

A significant exception exists in the domain of social protection, where the state collaborates with and supports organisations providing essential services—such as care for minors and the elderly—that fall outside the state's own operational capacity or willingness to provide.

Overall, do you think the Government is a positive or negative influence on the charity sector? (All charities answering, n = 93.)



- Very positive
- Positive
- Neutral – they do some good things and some bad things
- Neutral – they don't do anything either way
- Negative
- Very negative
- Don't know

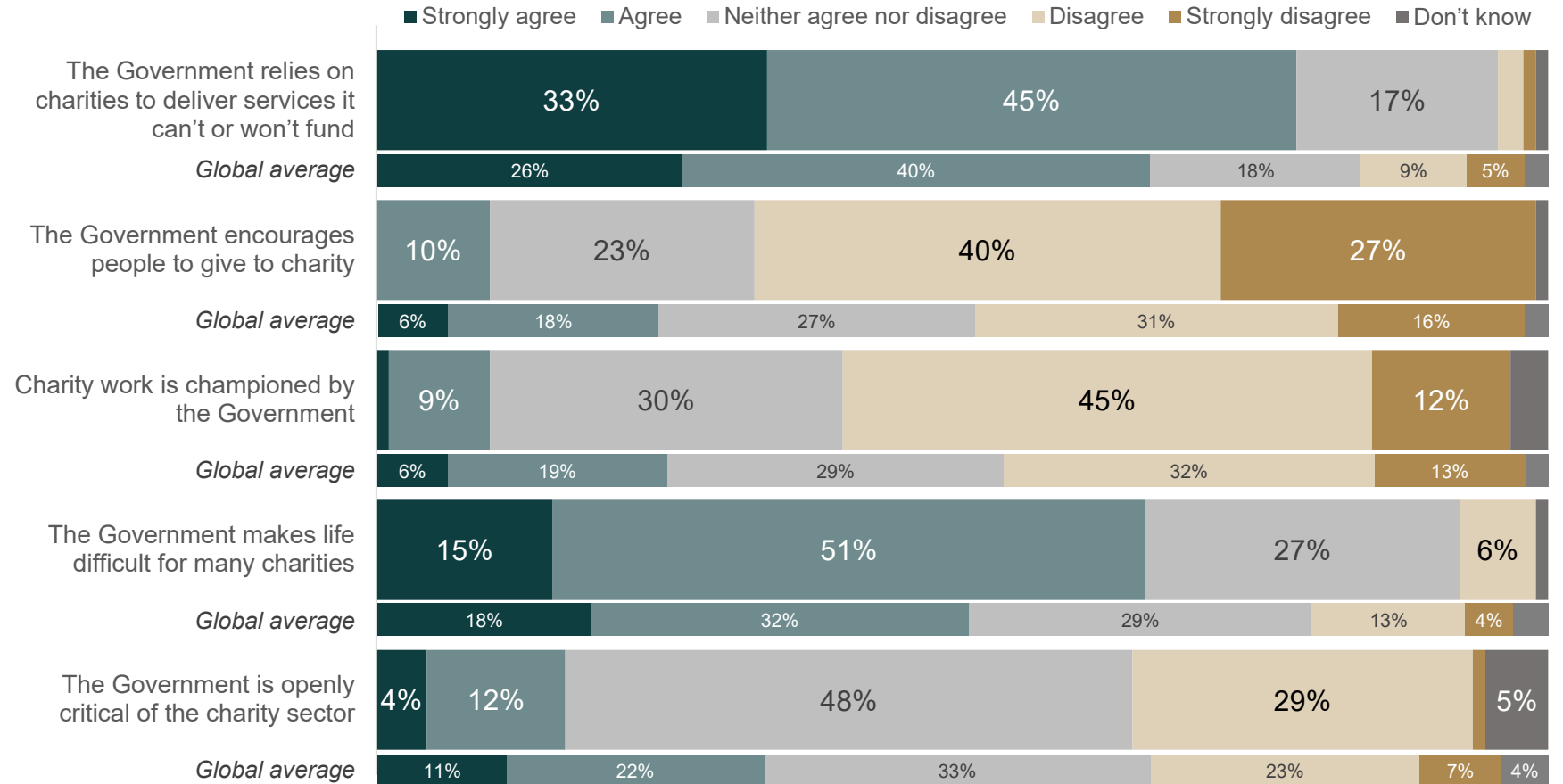


Specific opinions on the role of government.

Despite the critical role charities play in supplementing or even substituting state services, the sector operates without robust governmental support.

This is evidenced by a regulatory approach focused on oversight through new registries, a tax system that offers minimal incentives for donors, and public commentary from state officials that is, at best, neutral towards the sector's contributions.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the Government's involvement in the charity sector? (All charities answering, n = 93.)



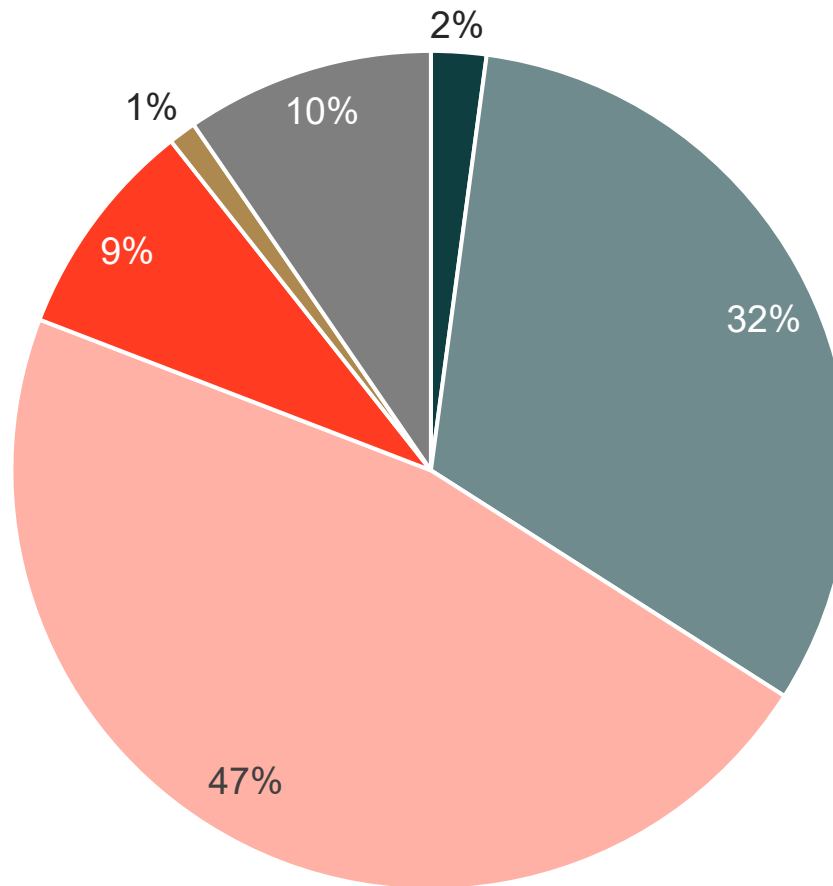
Effectiveness of regulation.

The Greek state's attempt to regulate the charitable sector through the introduction of new registries has been largely unsuccessful.

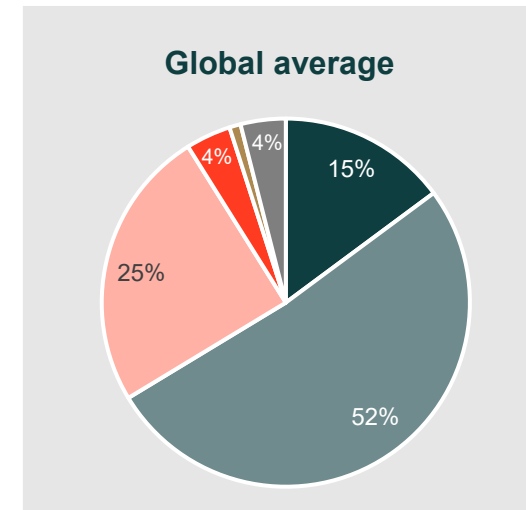
This is primarily due to three intersecting challenges: a vast and often contradictory legal framework, a deficit of specialised understanding within the bureaucracy, and critical resource shortages.

As a result, ineffective oversight has created a regulatory environment where scandals — many of which proactive, informed supervision could have prevented — continue to emerge.

Overall, how effectively do you think charities are regulated in your country?
(All charities answering, n = 94)



- Very effectively
- Fairly effectively
- Not very effectively
- Not at all effectively
- Charities are not regulated here
- Don't know



06

PURPOSE AND IMPACT



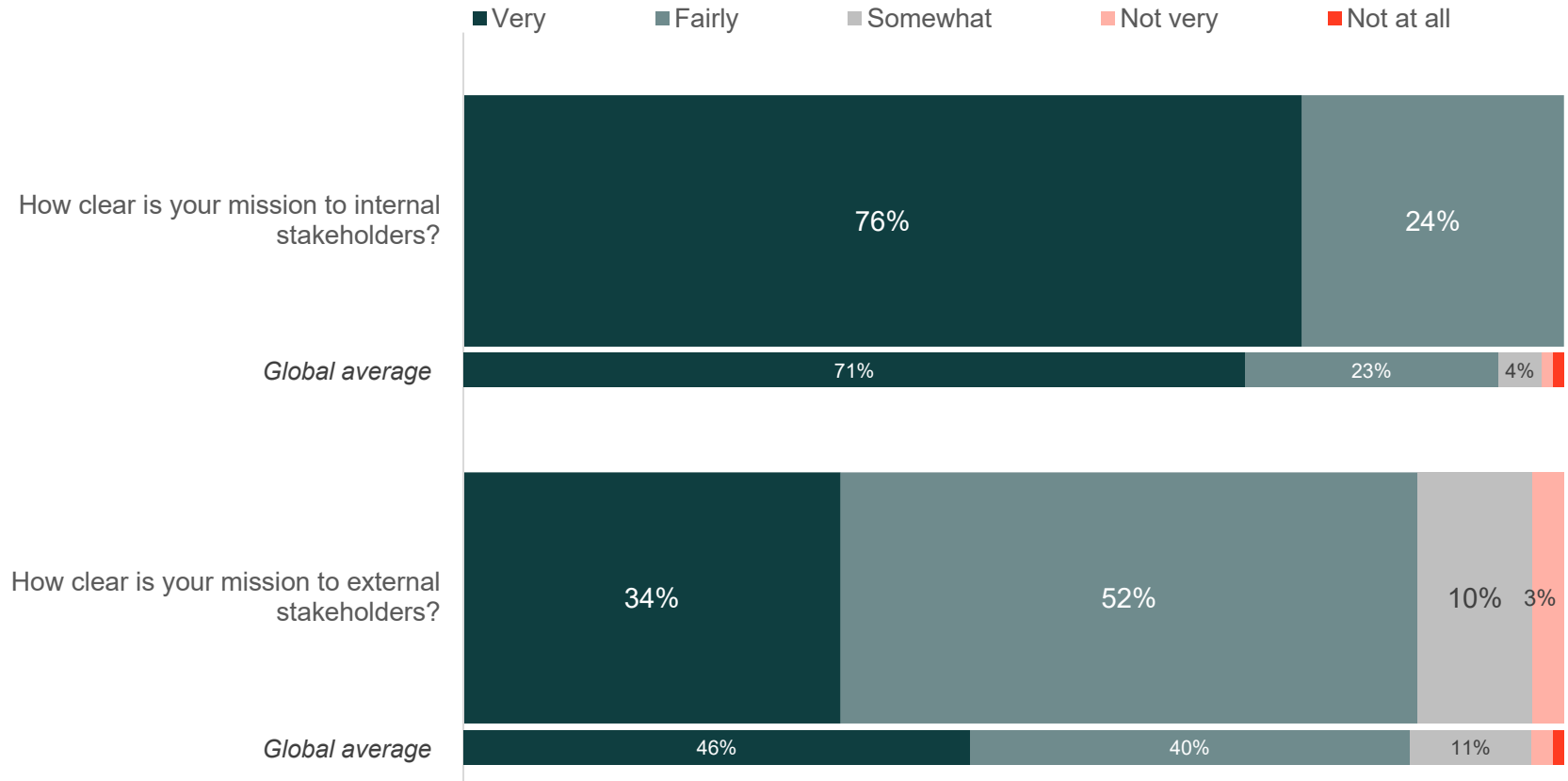
Clarity of purpose.

Greek charities demonstrate a pronounced internal focus, often remaining closely tied to their grassroots origins.

While this fosters a strong, direct understanding of their mission among internal stakeholders, it limits their capacity for extroversion.

Consequently, organisations have been unable to build substantive, multi-faceted relationships with external stakeholders, often defaulting to basic fundraising and low-level collaborations.

How they would rate their charity: (All charities answering, n = 105)

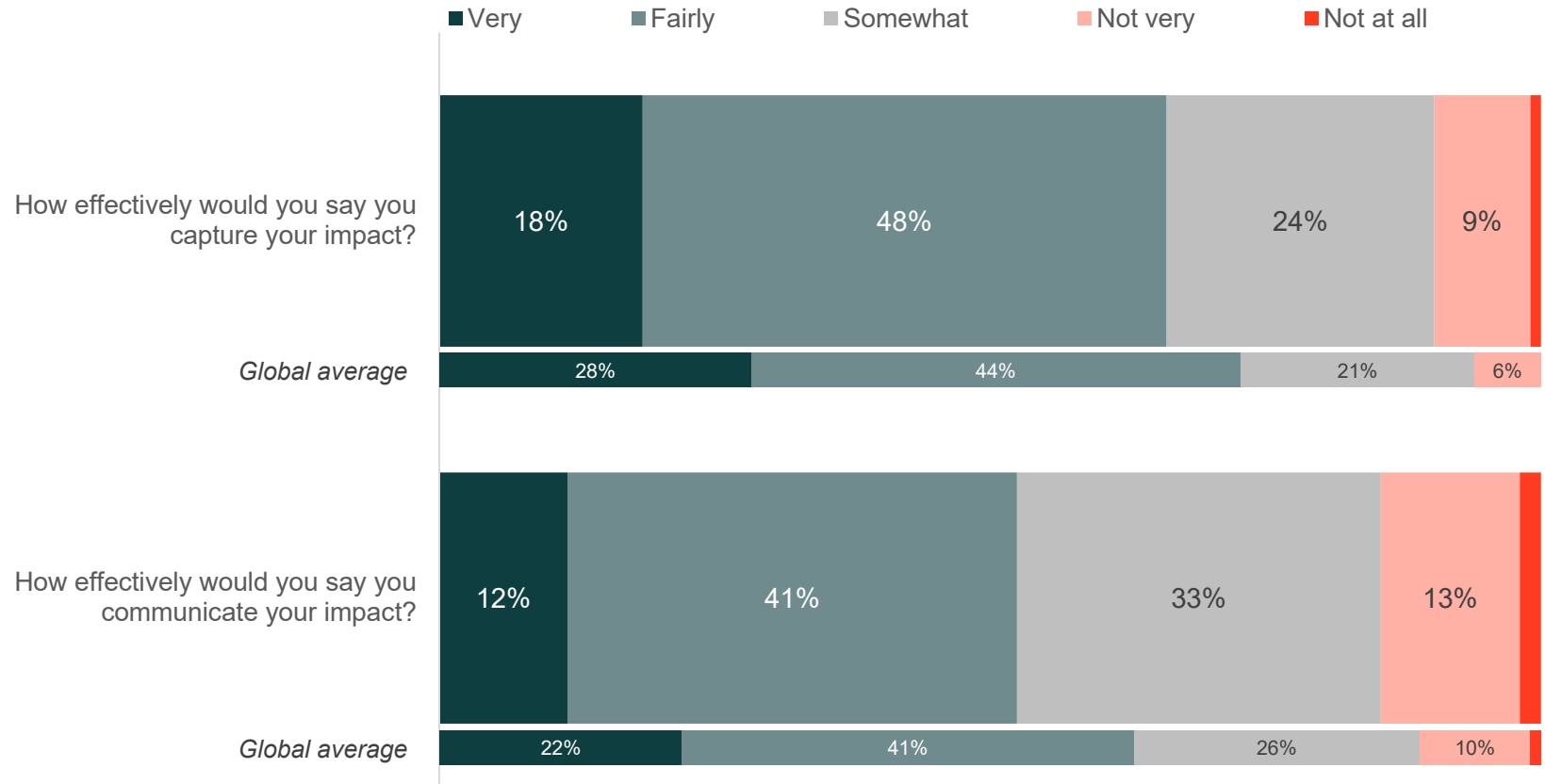


Translating purpose into impact.

Interest in impact measurement is demonstrably growing within the Greek charity sector, evidenced by high demand for training in Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) systems and a rising number of specialised service providers.

However, the application of these activities remains limited; the results are primarily utilised as communication tools to bolster fundraising efforts, rather than being fully integrated into strategic learning and programme adaptation.

How they would rate their charity: (All charities answering, n = 103,)



Deep dive: communicating purpose and impact clearly.

Enaleia stands as a paradigm of how to effectively communicate purpose through demonstrable, large-scale action. Its flagship initiative, the Mediterranean CleanUp, tackles marine plastic pollution by empowering the very communities most affected by it: the fishing industry.

The model is elegantly simple yet powerful: professional fishers are trained and incentivised to collect plastic waste caught in their nets during their normal fishing activities.

The effectiveness of this approach is staggering. From its start in Greece, Enaleia has grown into a global force.

The communication of this impact is strengthened by a compelling circular economy narrative. The collected plastic is not simply discarded. It is given a second life. Enaleia partners with sustainable brands to upcycle the waste into new products, a process that is both environmentally and communicationally valuable.

This tangible loop — from sea to product — provides a clear and engaging story for the public, making the abstract problem of ocean pollution feel immediate and solvable.

Furthermore, Enaleia's credibility is cemented by significant international recognition. Founder Lefteris Arapakis was named a UN Young Champion of the Earth in 2020, one of the highest global honours for young environmental leaders. This prestigious award, along with features by UN agencies, acts as a powerful validator, convincingly communicating the urgency of the issue and the importance of the impact Enaleia creates.



07 CONCLUSION



Civil society in Greece.

The Greek charity sector is defined by a critical paradox: it delivers essential public services yet operates within an environment of profound fragility.

A deep-seated crisis of public trust, fuelled by political scepticism and amplified by sporadic scandals, has crippled its ability to secure stable funding and build strong public networks.

This is compounded by a challenging operational landscape where organisations, often small and grassroots-focused, lack financial diversification and strategic extroversion. Overwhelmed by service demand and a constant search for resources, they remain vulnerable to disruptions and struggle to move beyond transactional relationships with stakeholders.

Despite these systemic challenges, the sector shows nascent signs of maturation and resilience. There is a growing professionalisation, evidenced by a rising interest in impact measurement, training in Monitoring and Evaluation systems, and increased media engagement to communicate results.

Furthermore, a clear exception to the state's typically distant stance exists in specific social service areas, revealing a pathway for functional cooperation.

Ultimately, the sector's future health depends on its ability to convert this growing internal professionalism into greater external trust, while advocating for a more supportive regulatory and fiscal framework that recognises its indispensable role in Greek society.



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