

## 2008: Giving dropped \$6.4 billion; largest decline on record

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Overall giving in the United States declined last year by 2%, the largest drop since records have been kept and the first since 1987. Giving by individuals again made up about three-quarters of all giving but declines in foundation endowments and grantmaking might make for an even more challenging environment for next year's report.

The \$307.65 billion estimate in giving last year represents a decline of \$6.42 billion, or 2%, but 5.7% when adjusted for inflation, the largest drop recorded since Giving USA has been keeping track of America's donations. Total giving was still estimated to be around 2.2% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

The only subsectors that experienced an increase last year were religion, public society-benefit and international affairs while foundations and human services saw the largest declines:

- Religion, \$106.89 billion, +5.5% (1.6% inflation adjusted)
- Education, \$40.94 billion, -5.5% (-9%)
- Foundation, \$32.65 billion, -19.2% (-22.2%)
- Human services, \$25.88 billion, -12.7% (-15.9%)
- Public society benefit, \$23.88 billion, +5.4% (+1.5%)
- Health, \$21.64 billion, -6.5% (-10%)
- International affairs, \$13.3 billion, +0.6% (-3.1%)
- Arts/culture/humanities, \$12.79 billion, -6.4% (-9.9%)
- Environment/animal, \$6.58 billion, -5.5% (-9%)

The largest drop in giving among subsectors was at foundations, which still comprised 10.6% of the overall charitable pie. And despite the increased need reported by human services organizations last year, those agencies received 9% of all giving.

Source: [The NonProfit Times](#)