UniCredit Bank

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To give or not to give? – Hungarians donate willingly but with doubts

A joint research by UniCredit Bank and SteiGen revealed how aware people in Hungary are of the concept of ESG and what sustainability means to them. The research also showed that 16% attributed sustainability to donating everyday items. People are keen to help others, but what factors influence their decisions to donate?

As a reminder, ESG (E, environmental; S, social; G, governance) makes the work done for sustainability visible and measurable for medium and large companies. A recent joint research by UniCredit Bank and SteiGen showed that only 12% of Hungarians are familiar with the concept of ESG, and even fewer with its social and governance aspects. In terms of sustainability, 73 per cent of respondents cited environmental protection, 66 percent conscious consumption and **16 per cent donated consumer goods**.

We prefer to help if we know where the donation goes

The results clearly show that among the social initiatives in the ESG „S" area, **donations top the list in terms of both awareness (54%) and participation (36%)**.

However, experiences with donations are mixed, with more than half of respondents not believing that their donations are going to the right place. This explains why they are most likely to support **local initiatives**. They say that their activity is positively influenced if they know the people behind the initiative, who may be friends, acquaintances, local businesses, organisations, educational or church institutions, Facebook pages they know and groups they are members of. An important aspect is that in these cases they have the opportunity to be **personally involved in the initiative**: *„It is good to help a specific person or foundation, whose activities and situation you have real information about"*, said one of the participants in the research during the focus groups. „*People are happy to support such initiatives if they have some kind of personal connection with the organisation or with the specific cause"*, said another respondent.

We are more cautious on a large scale

Respondents have **bad experiences with donations, especially monetary ones**, so they are most likely to get involved in national initiatives if a well-known organisation is running the campaign. These are the donation lines and fundraising efforts of large, nationally known aid organisations, while trust in smaller or newly established organisations takes longer to build.

Another characteristic of national initiatives, according to the research, is that they are **campaign-like; Hungarians are more willing to participate in one-off initiatives** than in those that require regular commitment. One-off opportunities, such as donating 1% of tax, campaigns timed to Christmas or specific events, or aid campaigns picked up by the media.

Why do we help?

68% of respondents said they take part in fundraising activities because it feels good to help others. The joy, the satisfaction of conscience and even making new friends are important for the participants.

The joint research by UniCredit Bank and SteiGen shows that building from the bottom up, harnessing the power of local initiatives can also involve a wider range of people in donating and volunteering. However, it is clear that, as trust is of paramount importance in this area, **economic actors need to play a significant and inspiring role**.

UniCredit Group, among its other social initiatives, supports local NGOs that fight against social inequalities through their educational and equal opportunities projects in the international Call for Europe programme. The Hungarian bank supports a wide range of initiatives, with priority given to initiatives aimed at improving children's health and helping disadvantaged communities to catch up and improve their lives. It also actively responds to current social needs, whether it is the purchase of equipment to help protect the health of the most vulnerable elderly during the pandemic, material support for refugees fleeing the war conflict in Ukraine, the volunteering of the Bank's staff for social housing projects or environmental projects, or a range of other donation and volunteering opportunities.

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About the research
Our bank seeks to raise awareness of the importance of sustainability issues and regularly conducts research in this area and publishes the results. Recent research has highlighted the differences in the attitudes of different generations towards sustainability. The data presented above is taken from an online survey of 1,000 people, representative of the adult population, conducted by SteiGen on behalf of our bank, and complemented by focus group discussions and in-depth interviews.

About UniCredit
UniCredit is a pan-European Commercial Bank with a unique service offering in Italy, Germany, Central and Eastern Europe. Our purpose is to empower communities to progress, delivering the best-in-class for all stakeholders, unlocking the potential of our clients and our people across Europe.

About SteiGen
SteiGen Consultancy has decades of market experience helping clients achieve their goals. With a long-term and experiential approach, the company works with a unique approach that takes into account generational differences. SteiGen aims to ensure that their partners experience and maximise the benefits of their time with them.