



# Opinion poll

3<sup>rd</sup> survey 2006

CONCLUSIONS

Youth,  
Solidarity and Volunteer Work



injuve



**POLL ON THE OPINION AND SITUATION OF THE YOUNG  
(3<sup>rd</sup> survey 2006)**

**Youth, Solidarity and Volunteer Work**

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## POLL ON THE OPINION AND SITUATION OF THE YOUNG (3<sup>rd</sup> survey 2006)

### Youth, Solidarity and Volunteer Work

## Introduction

This poll belongs to young people's opinion on three questions that, little by little, have obtained a greater prominence in the processes of young socialisation.

1. The first one has to do with young solidarity and the visions young people have about this concept, which are sometimes so abstract but, however, so full of sense. Young people's opinions relating to the institutions in charge of managing solidarity in our country, solidarity education in educational centres and different solidarity actions have been taken into account.
2. The second issue mentioned is young volunteer work. This time we have focused on two basic questions:
  - Young experience in volunteer work: current and past practice, intention to collaborate, identification with solidarity actions, knowledge of programmes, etc.
  - Volunteer workers' opinion and image: importance given to volunteer work, motivations and compensations, role of public administrations.
3. The third question is related to the perception young people have on social inequalities: the level of poverty in our country, the evolution of social differences, the cooperation with less developed countries and the improvement on inequalities.



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### Youth, Solidarity and Volunteer Work

## I. YOUNG PEOPLE AND SOLIDARITY

### 1.1. DEFINITION OF SOLIDARITY

**MOST OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE (52%) AGREE WITH THE STATEMENT "SOLIDARITY IS TAKING OTHERS INTO ACCOUNT"**

The term **solidarity** is increasingly present as an obligatory and necessary referent in our society and is usually **linked to the group of young people**. In this survey from 2006 we have tried to mark out and define this concept more precisely. In order to do this, young people have been asked to value some of the statements used to define solidarity.

The greatest agreement levels between young people in our country when defining solidarity are shown in the following statements: "Solidarity is taking others into account" (52%), "Solidarity is dividing and sharing (time, money, whatever you have)" (49%), "Solidarity begins in one's self" (44%). A smaller number of people agree with the statement "Real solidarity consists in fulfilling one's responsibilities properly" (27%).

**THE YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE IDENTIFIED WITH A CONCEPT OF SOLIDARITY BASED ON DIVIDING AND SHARING AND ON HELPING OTHERS ARE MORE WOMEN, YOUNG PEOPLE WHO IDEOLOGICALLY SUPPORT THE LEFT WING AND PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN URBAN SETTINGS**

The young people who agree with the statement "Solidarity is taking into account others" belong mostly to the group of **women** more than men, and this number increases as **young people become older**. They are usually placed on the left wing, ideologically speaking, and live in semi-urban and urban settings.

The people who think that "Solidarity is dividing and sharing (time, money, whatever you have)" belong mostly to the group of **women**, the **youngest ones (15-19)**, people who are ideologically placed on the left wing and people who live in semi-urban or urban settings.

### 1.2. SOLIDARITY ACTIONS.

**MOST OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE INTERVIEWED (83%) DECLARE TO HAVE CONVERSATIONS WITH FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES ABOUT COUNTRIES AND PEOPLE IN NEED.**

In order to complete the solidarity section, some **solidarity actions** carried out by young people at any time during the year have been valued.

The great majority of the **young people interviewed (83%)** have conversations with their friends and colleagues, more or less regularly during the year, about **countries or people in need**.



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The following solidarity activities, the most frequent ones amongst the young people interviewed, are related with the money **donated to countries or people who need it (48%)** and the more or less specific collaboration in **solidarity actions -helping neighbours, protection of the environment, etc-** (39%).

The group of young people who say they have collaborated in **solidarity actions** when extraordinary events have occurred - *wars, natural disasters, etc.* - (34%) is smaller; together with those people who spend some of their leisure time **helping other people (29%)** and those who say they attend **fund-raising concerts (26%)**. There are still less people who are **blood donors (15%)**.

The **conversations on needy countries and people** are more frequent amongst women than young men, and as they become older, amongst those people who have a **greater economic and training level**, people who studied in **religious schools** and those who live in **urban settings**.

**SOLIDARITY PRACTICES ARE MORE FREQUENT AMONGST THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE HIGHER SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND TRAINING LEVELS AND AMONGST THOSE WHO HAVE STUDIED IN RELIGIOUS SCHOOLS AND DECLARE TO BE CATHOLICS**

**Donating money to charitable causes and people in need** is a young practice which is more frequent in the group of **older people (25-29)** and amongst those people who have a **higher socio-economic and training level**.

The **daily solidarity participation (helping neighbours, environmental protection...)** and the participation after extraordinary events (*wars, natural disasters...*) seem to increase as **young people become older** and as their **training level increases**.

The young people who declare to spend **part of their leisure time** in activities related to **helping others** are mostly people who have a **high qualification**, young people who have **higher socio-economic levels**, who have studied in **religious schools** and those who are **practising Catholics**.

Attendance to **fund-raising concerts** is a solidarity practice which is more common amongst people with a **higher training and socio-economic situation**, people who live in **big cities** and those who declare to be **non-believers**.

Lastly, young **blood donors** are mostly young people who belong to the group of the **older ones (25-29)**, with a **higher level of studies** and people who live in **urban and semi-urban settings**.



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The data on solidarity practices also show in every case that the young people who have or have had a **relation with volunteer work**, are much more in favour and willing to participate in solidarity actions to help others.

### 1.3. INSTITUTIONS AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO SOLIDARITY

**THE INSTITUTIONS THAT MAKE THE GREATEST CONTRIBUTION TO SOLIDARITY, ACCORDING TO YOUNG PEOPLE, ARE, IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE, FAMILY, ASSOCIATIONS AND ORGANISATIONS, EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND FRIENDS**

The institutions that, according to young people, contribute the most to the development of solidarity are the **family (89%)**, associations and organisations (76%), educational institutions (73%) and friends (62%).

This is followed by another group of institutions that, according to young people, also contribute, to a lesser extent, to solidarity. We are talking about the media (55%) and the church (52%).

And lastly, there is a group of institutions that, according to young people in our country, does not contribute much to the development of solidarity awareness. We are talking about the State (29%), city councils (29%) and political parties (18%).

Amongst the profiles of young people relating to their identification with the **main institutions that promote solidarity** in our country, we can underline the following ones:

**AMONGST THE YOUNG PEOPLE WHO TRUST MORE INSTITUTIONS AS ENTITIES PROMOTING SOLIDARITY, WE HAVE TO MENTION THOSE PEOPLE WHO HAVE HIGHER TRAINING AND SOCIO -ECONOMIC LEVELS AND THOSE WHO DECLARE TO BE PRACTISING CATHOLICS**

- a. The young people who consider that the **family** promotes solidarity practices and feelings belong mostly to the group of **students**, young people with a **higher level of studies**, and people who live in their family home and define themselves as **practising Catholics**.
- b. The people who think that **associations and organisations** participate with solidarity are young people with a **higher level of studies**, belonging to **higher socio-economic levels** and considered to be **practising Catholics**.
- c. **Education** as an entity promoting solidarity is mentioned especially by young people with a **higher level of studies**, with a **higher socio-economic level** and by people who belong to the group of **practising Catholics**.



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- d. The young people who think that **friends** contribute to the development of solidarity awareness are mostly **women over twenty**, with **higher training levels** and with a **religious educational background**.
- e. The **church** as a promoting institution of solidarity is mentioned, above all, by **women**, by the **youngest people (15-19)**, by those who place themselves on the **right wing**, **ideologically speaking**, by **Catholics** and by **foreign young people**.

Relating to institutions, young people have been asked to give their opinion on the **training for solidarity** they have received in the educational centres where **they have studied**.

Most of the **people interviewed (63%)** think that the received solidarity education has been satisfactory and say that they have been **very or quite well-educated in solidarity practices and values**. Against that, there is an important number of **young people (35%)** who think they have received a **poor or non-existent training for solidarity** in these educational centres.

**FOR MOST OF THE  
YOUNG PEOPLE  
(63%), THE  
EDUCATIONAL  
CENTRES CARRY  
OUT CORRECTLY  
THE TRAINING ON  
SOLIDARITY VALUES  
AND PRINCIPLES**

Amongst the people who think they have received a **proper training** for solidarity there are more **women** than men; this is more common amongst **younger people (15-19)**, people who have studied in **religious centres** and people who say they are **Catholics**.

On the contrary, the young people who say they have had training deficiencies relating to solidarity are mostly young men; they belong to the group of older people (25-29), have studied in state schools and are not believers.

There is a feature that should be underlined relating to training for solidarity, according to these data. The fact that we have the group of the youngest ones (15-19) as the ones who value better this training and the group of the oldest ones (25-29) as the ones who values it worse could be explained by the inclusion of these contents for solidarity in the syllabus in recent years.



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## II. YOUNG PEOPLE AND VOLUNTEER WORK

### 2.1. EXPERIENCE AND APTITUDE FOR VOLUNTEER WORK

**ALMOST A THIRD OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUR COUNTRY SAY THEY HAVE EXPERIENCE IN VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES: 10% COLLABORATES NOWADAYS AND 18% DOES NOT, ALTHOUGH THEY HAVE DONE BEFORE**

The second section of this survey refers to the relations young people have with social organisations destined to voluntary activities.

Around a third of young people say they have experience in voluntary activities. Amongst these people, 10% of them say they usually collaborate with voluntary organisations and 18% say they are ex-volunteers.

Against this number, there is a majority of young people (72%) who say they have never collaborated with voluntary organisations.

10% of the young people who participate in voluntary organisations belong mostly to the group of young people with a high level of studies, who belong to higher classes and are practising Catholics.

These young volunteers say they collaborate regularly in these organisations: 56% say they have collaborated in these activities in the last month and 14% in the last three months.

**THE PARTICIPATION IN VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS IS MORE FREQUENT AMONGST PEOPLE WHO HAVE HIGHER TRAINING AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC LEVELS**

The young *ex-volunteers* (are not collaborating now, but they have done before) belong mostly to the group of older people (25-29), those with higher training levels and higher socio-economic levels, and the people who say they are non-believers and are placed, ideologically speaking, more towards the left wing.

Amongst the people who have never collaborated with voluntary organisations we find mostly young people (15-19), who have completed lower level studies, who belong to low or middle social classes and who say they have studied in state schools.

**THE NUMBER OF POTENTIAL VOLUNTEERS (THEY HAVE THOUGHT ABOUT COLLABORATING) IS 42% OF THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE NEVER PARTICIPATED IN VOLUNTEER WORK**

Amongst these young people who have never collaborated with voluntary organisations there is an important number, 42%, who say they have sometimes thought about participating in voluntary activities. This group of potential volunteers represents almost three million young people in our country. Against this number, 58% say they have never thought about participating in voluntary activities.



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The number of people who have thought about participating in voluntary organisations tends to increase as young people have higher training levels.

Amongst the reasons given by these young people who not to collaborate, we can underline, above all, the lack of time (46%) and the fact that they have not thought about it seriously (27%).

Other less used reasons by young people not to collaborate are convenience (8%) and the fact that none of the organisations have invited them to do so (8%).

Young people who collaborate or have collaborated before with voluntary organisations by providing a regular economic contribution represent a fourth of the people interviewed (26%). Half of them keep doing it and the other half gave up.

The young people who nowadays collaborate economically with voluntary associations are mostly women, young people with higher university studies, people who study and work, people who belong to middle-upper and upper classes and people who live in urban settings (cities with more than 400,000 inhabitants), people who have studied in religious centres and people who work as volunteers.

Most of the young people asked identify themselves with the solidarity activities that help people who live close to them, close to their neighbourhood (24%), activities in their towns or cities (13%), international activities (13%) and national activities (8%).

**42% OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE ASKED SAY THERE ARE PEOPLE AMONGST THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS OR FRIENDS WHO COLLABORATE WITH VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS**

Young people have been asked about the people around them who collaborate with voluntary organisations. More than half of these young people (53%) say they do not know people around them who collaborate with these organisations; against this number, 42% of the people say they know people around them who are members of voluntary organisations. These people are basically family members and maybe less friends.

The number of people who say they know people around them who belong to voluntary organisations increases as young people become older, amongst those people who have higher training levels and those who live in semi-urban and urban settings (more than 100,000 inhabitants).



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**YOUNG MEN PREFER AS VOLUNTARY ACTIVITIES THOSE RELATED WITH ECOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT, WHILE WOMEN PREFER THOSE RELATED WITH SUPPORT AND HELP (YOUTH, HEALTH, OLD PEOPLE, ETC.)**

Amongst the most popular voluntary activities for people and organisations in our society, the most interesting ones for young people are those related with childhood and youth (14%), help to the Third World and countries in conflict (11%), working with disabled people (11%), ecology and environment (10%) and work related to health (9%).

This is followed by working with old people (8%), drug addicts and alcoholics (7%), working with the poor (7%) and with immigrants (6%).

The less popular voluntary activities for young people in our country are cultural activities and restoration of heritage (4%), helping with emergencies (3%), support for women (3%) and people with AIDS (2%).

Young men and women show important differences relating to their interests for voluntary activities. Young men prefer to concentrate on activities related with ecology and environment; while women mostly prefer activities related with support to young people, health and old people.



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## 2.2. KNOWLEDGE AND IMAGE OF VOLUNTEER WORK

Most of the young people asked (63%) do not know if their city councils develop voluntary programmes. On the contrary, around three out of ten young people (31%) say they know of the existence of local voluntary programmes in their cities. These last people belong mostly to the group of people who have higher training levels and people who have or have had a relation with volunteer work.

**ALTHOUGH MOST OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE ASKED AWARD QUITE A LOT OF IMPORTANCE TO VOLUNTARY ACTIVITIES, THEY DO NOT SEE MANY VOLUNTEERS IN THEIR TOWNS AND CITIES**

The valuation young people make about the importance volunteers have in their cities can be said to be high. Around half of the Spanish young people (49%) consider the role of volunteers to be very or quite important in their places of residence. However, the people who think these voluntary activities are not so important are only 12% of the people asked.

Despite the importance young people give to voluntary activities in their cities, most of the interviewed people (48%) say that the presence of volunteers in their towns is low. 28% think that the presence of volunteers is normal and 6% think it is quite abundant or very abundant. The data offered by young people seem to show that, as the town increases in size, young people tend to see a greater presence of volunteers.

**MOST OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE AND ESPECIALLY VOLUNTEERS THINK THEIR WORK MUST BE DONE IN AN ALTRUISTIC MANNER, WITHOUT RECEIVING ANY COMPENSATION FOR IT**

Young people have been asked about the imaginary profile of volunteers, the characteristics young people use to create the representations of voluntary people in our country. The image young people have about volunteers is associated with young people, with women more than with men and with people with a high level of efficiency. It is also common to think about people with high levels of training and people with a religious education.

The main motivations for young people who consider voluntary activities are important are focused especially in the feeling of being useful (88%), the performance of a social service to the community (87%), moral beliefs (81%), being connected to people (74%) and religious beliefs (60%).

This is followed by motivations such as spending their free time (48%), giving a good image (41%), and professional aspirations (37%).



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Although most of the young people asked (52%) consider volunteers should not receive any kind of compensation for their work, there is an important number (44%) who is favourable to thinking that young volunteers should receive compensations for their work. The young people who participate or have participated in voluntary organisations are the ones who think that this work must be carried out without obtaining any compensation.

The young people who say that volunteers should receive a compensation for their work consider as main compensations the promotion of volunteers in the professional field (41%), discounts and advantages in public services (35%) and tax benefits (14%).

Relating to the work public institutions must develop with volunteer work, most of the interviewed young people (70%) think that the work carried out by voluntary organisations must be developed by volunteers, with the support of public institutions. Against this group, 25% of the young people think that the work of these organisations should be carried out exclusively by public institutions.

The role of public institutions relating to volunteer work, according to young people, should be especially to finance the organisations (38%), the promotion of volunteers (26%) and the regulation and control of organisations (25%).



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### III. YOUNG PEOPLE AND SOCIAL INEQUALITIES

#### 3.1. PERCEPTION OF SOCIAL INEQUALITIES IN THE WORLD

**TWO THIRDS OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE IN SPAIN THINK THAT THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN POOR AND RICH COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD ARE INCREASING**

In this survey we have asked for the opinion of young people relating to the evolution of inequalities in the world between poor and rich countries. Around two out of three interviewed young people (67%) think that these differences between countries are increasing, 21% think that they are stable and 7% think they are decreasing.

This increase on inequalities between countries is perceived by most of the young people over twenty, as their education levels increase, and by people who place themselves on the left wing, ideologically speaking.

In this sense, it has been proposed that young people value the possibility of the Spanish State being the one who gives 0.7% of its GDP to helping underdeveloped countries. The great majority (83%) is favourable to this idea and only 9% is against.

**MOST OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE (83%) ARE IN FAVOUR OF THE IDEA THAT SPAIN SHOULD GIVE 0.7% OF ITS GDP TO HELPING UNDERDEVELOPED COUNTRIES**

The level of training of the interviewed people shows that the higher the level of studies, the more favourable the opinion about Spain giving 0.7% of its GDP to helping the less developed countries.

Following this idea, there are people who think that *first we have to solve the necessities of our country and - later on - the necessities of other countries*. Most of the interviewed young people agree with this statement (54%), although there is also an important group (28%) who does not agree.

Amongst the people who agree with the idea of solving our country's problems first and other countries' issues later on, there are more young people with a lower level of training, people who are ideologically on the right and people with a lower socio- economic level.

On the contrary, the ones who do not agree belong mostly to the group of young people with higher levels of studies, those who are placed more on the left and those belonging to middle-upper and upper economic levels.



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**THE GREATEST LEVELS OF POVERTY IN OUR COUNTRY ARE PERCEIVED MOSTLY BY WOMEN AND BY PEOPLE WHO ARE BECOMING OLDER, AS WELL AS BY THOSE PEOPLE WHO HAVE A HIGHER LEVEL OF TRAINING**

### 3.2. PERCEPTION OF THE LEVEL OF POVERTY AND SOCIAL INEQUALITIES IN SPAIN

Once we have raised the problem of social inequality in the world, we have considered asking young people's opinion on the perception they have relating to the level of poverty in our country. In this sense, there are more people who think that poverty in our country is quite or very extended (51%) comparing to those people who think there is not much poverty or no poverty at all in Spain (47%). If we focus on extremes, we can say that the number of young people who perceive great poverty in our country (96%) doubles the number of people who does not perceive any poverty at all (5%).

**THE SITUATION OF NECESSITY OF CERTAIN PEOPLE IN OUR COUNTRY IS ASSIGNED TO SOCIAL INJUSTICE (44%)**

The perception of high levels of poverty in our country belongs mostly to the group of women (56%) more than to men (47%); it is more extended as young people become older and it is more frequent amongst young people with a Spanish nationality (53%) than amongst foreigners (29%).

**AMONGST THE PEOPLE WHO SAY SOCIAL INJUSTICE IS THE ORIGIN OF POVERTY FOR SOME FAMILIES, THERE ARE MORE WOMEN THAN MEN, PEOPLE WITH HIGHER LEVELS OF STUDIES, WITH A SPANISH NATIONALITY, PLACED ON THE LEFT (IDEOLOGICALLY SPEAKING) AND LIVING IN URBAN SETTINGS**

This perception of inequality increases as young people have higher levels of studies; and it is more obvious for those people who live in middle-sized cities with 100,000 and 400,000 inhabitants (57%).

When asked about the causes for the necessity that some people have in our country, most of the people assign this problem to social injustice (44%), followed by those people who think that they are in that situation due to laziness and lack of willingness (25%), due to an inevitable progress (17%) and due to bad luck (8%).

Social injustice as cause of social inequalities is mentioned mostly by women (49%) more than by men (39%); by Spanish young people (46%) more than by foreign people (30%); by people with higher levels of studies; by people placed on the left, ideologically speaking (51%), and by people who live in cities with 10,000 and 50,000 inhabitants (48%).

Amongst the young people who say that laziness and lack of willingness are the causes for the necessity of some families in our society, there are more men (27%) than women (22%); more foreigners (35%) than young Spanish people (23%): people who only work (30%), people who have finished compulsory secondary education; people placed on the



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right, ideologically speaking (32%), and people who live in rural settings and towns with less than 10,000 inhabitants (37%).

Young people have also been asked about the evolution of social inequalities between poor and rich people in our country in the last years. More than half of the interviewed people (51%) think that these differences have increased, 35% think they remain stable and 8% think they have decreased.

**MOST OF THE  
YOUNG PEOPLE  
(51%) THINK THAT  
SOCIAL  
DIFFERENCES  
BETWEEN POOR  
AND RICH PEOPLE  
HAVE INCREASED  
IN OUR COUNTRY  
IN RECENT YEARS**

The young people who think that these differences between poor and rich people have increased in the last years are mostly young Spanish people (52%), with university degrees (56%), ideologically on the left (60%) and people who collaborate in volunteer work (61%).

The decrease in the differences between poor and rich people is mentioned more by foreigners than by Spanish people and by people who place themselves on the right, ideologically speaking.