Do Millennials care about NPOs? Intergenerational differences in attitudes towards nonprofit organizations

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Abstract

Attitudes within society towards different types of NPOs are not fixed over time. In this paper, we explore one potential source of attitudinal change: intergenerational differences. An exploratory cluster analysis based on survey data from Switzerland indicates that intergenerational differences in attitudes towards NPOs probably do exist in some instances, and these differences partly fit the popular narrative of the Millennials generation, Generation X, and the Babyboomer generation. Importantly, however, these differences do not indicate that intergenerational effects amount to an erosion of attitudes towards NPOs. Millennials, therefore, probably care about NPOs about as much as previous generations, but they might be doing so in slightly different ways compared to previous generations.

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1 Introduction: Changing values and attitudes as a challenge for the third sector

The third sector, or the nonprofit and voluntary sector, is customarily understood as a third pillar of organizational activity in society, performed by organizations that are neither governmental nor for-profit entrepreneurial in nature (Corry 2010; Lester M. Salamon and Helmut K. Anheier 1997). Third sector nonprofit organizations are concerned with a large variety of issues, and they have impact on the micro, the meso, and the macro level of society.

Even though the third sector as a whole is a functionally persistent societal subsystem (it is, in all likelihood, here to stay), the specific makeup of the third sector is not immutable. Individual nonprofit organizations (NPOs) are continuously being created as well as disbanded, and NPOs can change their goals and the means with which they pursue their goals over the course of their organizational lifetimes. NPOs are similar to for-profit businesses in that regard, since both individual NPOs and individual businesses represent ephemeral organizations that, collectively, constitute persistent macro-level structures. NPOs and businesses are similar with regard to another dimension as well: Demand and supply. Both NPOs and businesses provide goods and services that have to meet some form of demand by some target audiences. The goods and services that NPOs provide might often have a somewhat idealistic and intangible quality, but they are goods and services nonetheless.

However, NPOs are not organizations that operate in traditional markets. Rather than selling goods and services, they are providing some forms of public goods that are not provided otherwise (Weisbrod 1986; Kingma 1997; DiMaggio and Helmut K. Anheier 1990). This means that the work of any NPO is inherently difficult: NPOs have to align the interests of their internal members with the interests of society at large. The general problems of collective action (Olson 1965) are, consequently, even more prominent for NPOs, because the ability of NPOs to provide public goods is contingent on the values and attitudes of of society at large. If the values and attitudes of significant segments or strata of the population are congruent with the values and attitudes of a specific NPO, it stands to reason that that NPO can draw upon those segments and strata of the population for support. If, on the other hand, the values and attitudes of large segments or strata of the population are incongruent with the values and attitudes of a specific NPO, then it will be harder for that NPO to receive support. This results in an exacerbated freerider problem: Even though the public good the NPO is providing is (at least indirectly) beneficial to all individual members of society, those individual members are not actively supporting the NPO, simply because

they do not care for it.

The relation between NPOs and society at large can be thought of as the relation between different populations of NPOs and their environments (Hannan and J. Freeman 1977): The better NPO populations fit to their environments, the more successfully they can operate. When the environments change, NPO populations have a harder time to survive. In the present paper, we are interested in NPO environments as the explicit attitudes of the population towards different populations, or types, of NPOs. The goal of this paper is to explore one specific aspect of changes in the environments of NPOs: Intergenerational differences in attitudes towards NPOs.

2 The idea of generations as theory and as heuristic

The concept of generations is fairly straightforward from a biological point of view. If we imagine a set of organisms A, and those organisms produce a set of offspring B, then A and B represent two distinct generations. From a sociological perspective, however, the concept of generations is more complicated. Rather than a simple measurement of procreation activity, we usually refer to generations as cohorts of people who have been born and socialized into similar socio-historic circumstances (Mannheim 1952; Lambert 1972). The mere idea that there are sociological generations and that people within different generations view the world in different ways is not all that controversial. On one hand, there is plenty of empirical evidence that indicates that intergenerational difference in the domain of values and attitudes are real. For example, a prominent strand of research on value change has documented for some time that the socio-historical socialization of cohorts of people leads to similar socio-political values within those cohorts (Inglehart and Welzel 2010; Welzel and Inglehart 2010; Norris and Inglehart 2011). On the other hand, the idea of generations in the sociological sense is an oft-used popular heuristic for thinking about possible generational differences and peculiarities. For example, the notion that there is a generation of so-called "Millennials" (Howe and Strauss 2009) stems from public rather than from strictly scientific discourse. This latter use of the concept of generations as a heuristic for differential values and attitudes in society feeds back into different strands of scientific research. Especially the so-called Millennials generation (people born, roughly, between 1980 and 2000) or, more or less synonymously, "Generation Y" has received a considerable amount of scientific attention in recent years. The overarching hypothesis is that the Millennials

generation exhibits a set of particular attitudes in different contexts that are different from attitudes of previous generations, often labeled Generation X and Babyboomers. And, indeed, there is plenty of evidence that suggests that such intergenerational differences might indeed exist. For example, there is broad consensus that Millennials have sligthly, but not dramatically different attitudes when it comes to professional work in that work is somewhat less central to them, that they are more assertive in their work lives, and that they tend to value flexibility (Twenge and Campbell 2012; Deal, Altman, and Rogelberg 2010; Eisner 2005; Parry and Urwin 2011), that Millennials as consumers tend to value ethics and authenticity (Mangold and Smith 2012; Jessica Hill and Hyun-Hwa Lee 2012; Mangold and Smith 2012), or that Millennials as digital natives and digital immigrants have distinct information seeking and communication styles (Tkalac Verčič and Verčič 2013; Anderson and Rainie 2012).

Even though the generational labels Millennials / Generation Y, Generation X, and Babyboomers have popular origins, as heuristics, they do seem to have a non-trivial degree of scientific relevance in the sense of explanatory power. The belief that there is something like the Millennials generation and that the Millennials generation differs from previous generations in terms of values and attitudes is plausible.

2.1 Intergenerational differences in attitudes towards NPOs

If we assume that generalized generational differences in values and attitudes exist, then it is valid to wonder whether such differences extend to attitudes towards NPOs. Scientific research in this regard is rather scant compared to the effects of intergenerational differences in other areas.

There is some evidence that Millennials care more about one particular type of nonprofit activity than previous generations: Corporate social responsibility (Feldmann, Hosea, et al. 2015; Lynne Leveson and Therese A. Joiner 2014; T. McGlone, Spain, and V. McGlone 2011). Corporate social responsibility is a set of actions that contributes to general social welfare rather than to direct profit maximization of a company (McWilliams 2015). From the perspective of the logic of collective action, corporate social responsibility represents the attempts of a business to provide public goods to the general public and not just to its internal members. The fact that the Millennials generation seems to have a stronger preference for corporate social responsibility than previous generations could be indicative of a general positive attitude towards nonprofit work. Contrasting somewhat with such an interpretation is the

finding that Millennials who work in the nonprofit sector can be induced to switch sectors through pecuniary incentives (Johnson and Ng 2016). However, the extrinsic financial incentives might only work for Millennials who don't have a strong altruistic impetus (Rose 2013).

In a more general vein, NPOs and nonprofit activities have been found to have a generally high salience with Millennials. Millennials report to be willing to volunteer to a greater degree than other generations (Taylor and Keeter 2010), and Millennials are willing to donate to NPOs as well (Feldmann, Nixon, Brady, Brainer-Banker, Wheat, et al. 2012). However, an important factor regarding Millennials' attitudes towards NPOs seems to be the object of their interest: The Millennials generation seems to be interested in and mobilized by causes rather than by organizations (Feldmann, Nixon, Brady, Brainer-Banker, and Wheeler 2013). Some popular accounts and interpretations of the available data suggest that the Millennials generation uniquely primed to NPOs and the nonprofit sector (Saratovsky, Feldmann, and Case 2013; Feldmann 2016).

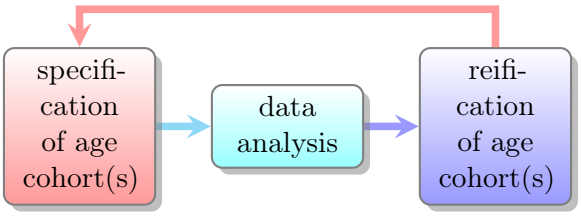
Overall, the available research on intergenerational differences in attitudes towards NPOs offers a mixed picture. It is probably safe to say that the Millennials generation's attitude towards NPOs is not significantly more negative or positive than the attitude of other generations. Any finding beyond that, however, has to be taken with a substantial grain of salt. That is because research on intergenerational differences as differences between Millennials, Generation X, and Babyboomers suffers from severe methodological limitations.

2.2 Methodological problems of Millennials-related research

Within Millennials-related research, the Millennials as well as other generations are predominantly defined *a priori*. This means that fixed ranges of birth years are specified beforehand. Those ranges of birth years constitute and demarcate the Millennials generation, the Generation X, and so forth. Afterwards, the data analysis is conducted in such a manner that differences between between the specified groups are compared. The results of the data analysis are, finally, interpreted as intergenerational effects. It is easy to see what the problem with this approach is: If we specify generational birth year cohorts a priori *a priori* in a very specific manner, but we lack a valid justification for doing so, we are engaging in circular reasoning. This problem is visually summarized in Figure 1.

If we, more or less arbitrarily, specify age cohorts *a priori*, any results of a

Figure 1: *Circular reasoning of conventional Millennials-related reasearch on intergenerational differences.*



data analysis based on such a design decision will reinforce the belief that the specified age cohorts are true. This logical fallacy is related to the Maslow's hammer bias (Maslow 1966): If your only tool is a hammer, you treat every problem as a nail. In the context of the circular reasoning fallacy in Millennials-related research, every observation one makes is due to intergenerational differences if one declares that to be so *a priori*. Such a research design is not only logically fallacious, but also analytically problematic. Since there is no particularly rational reason why, for example, Millennials should be defined as people born between 1980 and 2000 and not as people born between 1981 and 2000, 1982 and 1999, 1983 and 1999, and so forth, we are dealing with an almost prototypic case of researcher degrees of freedom (Simmons, Nelson, and Simonsohn 2011). The way we specify generational age cohorts can influence our results tremendously. And even more than that: If you bin data around long enough, you one is guaranteed to end up with a "solution" that fits one's preexisting beliefs.

A number of studies on Millennials-related questions engage in a particularly egregious variant of this logical and analytical fallacy. Some studies do not even bother to compare different generational age cohorts that have been defined *a priori*. Instead, they simply define an age cohort of interest *a priori* (mostly the suspected Millennials age cohort) and collect data on this age cohort only.

2.3 Research question

The methodological shortcomings of existing Millennials-related research motivates us to adopt an *exploratory research design*. Rather than arbitrarily defining different generational age cohorts *a priori*, we opt explore whether some properties of some data could be indicative of intergenerational differences.

More specifically, the goal of this paper is to answer the following research question:

- *Are there intergenerational differences in the attitudes towards nonprofit organizations within the population?*

3 Design, data and methods

3.1 Design

In order to explore our research question, we have conducted an online survey among residents of the German- and French-speaking parts of Switzerland. The survey was fielded in February 2017 through a general population online panel curated by a market research firm[1], and 735 participants have participated. Surveys that rely on online panels apply so-called nonprobability sampling (Callegaro et al. 2014), meaning that not every member of the target population has an equal probability of being included in the survey sample. A consequence of nonprobability sampling is that one cannot calculate survey variance (popularly referred to as "margin of error"). However, through a Bayesian approximation, it is possible to estimate so-called Bayesian credible intervals for online panel-based surveys (Roshwalb, El-Dash, and Young 2016). The credible interval for the survey used in this study is 3.7%. 75% of the survey respondents reside in the German-speaking part of Switzerland, and the other 25% in the French-speaking part. 49.9% of respondents are women, and the mean and median ages of all respondents are 43.8 and 45, respectively. The survey sample resembles the Swiss population closely, and we have decided against *post hoc* adjustments such as post-stratification or raking (Zhang 2000).

A cross-sectional design has obvious limitations. The goal of this paper is to explore potential intergenerational differences, and a longitudinal panel-based design would be ideally suited to this task. When we use a cross-sectional sample rather than a longitudinal one, we potentially risk confounding life cycle effects or even pure randomness as intergenerational differences. That is one of the reasons why this study is *exploratory* rather than confirmatory in nature: We cannot causally infer how intergenerational differences materialize within attitudes towards NPOS because, as we argue above, we cannot logically presuppose that intergenerational differences actually exist; that would be circular reasoning. But we can meaningfully explore the data at hand and discuss whether some patterns in the data potentially point to intergenerational differences in attitudes towards NPOs.

[1] Innofact AG, http://innofact.ch/

3.2 Data

The data collection that pertains to the attitudes towards NPOs consists of two dimensions: We asked our study participants about *different aspects of attitudes* towards *different kinds of NPOs*.

We have operationalized the dimension of attitudes towards NPOs with five survey items as summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: *Operationalization of the attitude dimension.*

Item	Question	Item scale
General interest	How interested are you, generally, in the following types of NPOs?	1 – 10
Membership	How likely are you to join one of the following types of NPOs as a member in the next 12 months?	1 – 10
Donating	How likely are you to donate to one of the following types of NPOs in the next 12 months?	1 – 10
Volunteering	How likely are you to volunteer for one of the following types of NPOs in the next 12 months?	1 – 10
Professional work	How much would you like to work professionally for one of the following types of NPOs?	1 – 10

Our operationalization of the attitudes towards NPOs dimension consists, as summarized in Table 1, of five items. The first item is general interest in different kinds of NPOs. With the next three items, we measure how likely the participants are to engage in specific actions: Joining an NPO as a member, donating money to an NPO, and volunteering for an NPO. With the final item, we measure how interested the study participants are to work professionally for an NPO. Volunteering, donating, and becoming a member are traditional activities associated with the nonprofit sector (Tchirhart 2006; R. B. Freeman 1997; Lee and Chang 2007; García-Mainar and Marcuello 2007). Professional, paid work is increasingly relevant in the nonprofit sector (Leete 2006; Onyx and Maclean 1996), which is why we include interest in working for an NPO it as part of the attitudes towards NPOs.

The second dimension relevant for the attitudes towards NPOs are the different types of NPOs. We have operationalized this dimension as six types: *Professional associations*, *charities*, *religious* organizations, *political* organizations, *cultural* organizations, and *sports* organizations. This typology is a simplification of the typology proposed in the International Classification of Non-profit Organizations (ICNPO) (Lester M. Salamon and Helmut K. Anheier 1997; Lester M Salamon and Helmut K Anheier 1996). We have opted

for a simplified typology for two reasons. First, the full ICNPO typology is simply far too complex to be meaningfully applied in a survey. Second, our simplification aims to employ a most different systems logic (Teune and Przeworski 1970): We have included only such types of NPOs that are clearly distinct from one another.

Overall, then, the survey participants answered five attitudinal questions for six types of NPOs. This results in thirty separate measures of different kinds of attitudes towards different kinds of NPOs. These thirty measures are the empirical basis of this paper. Descriptives of this data are summarized in Appendix A.

3.3 Methods

The goal of this paper is to perform an exploratory analysis in order to find out whether there might be intergenerational differences in the data. Our method of choice for this purpose is *cluster analysis*. The basic idea of cluster analysis is to group data in such a way that data points within groups are more similar to each other than data points between groups (Anderberg 2014). This approach fits well with our research question. We have conducted thirty separate cluster analyses, each with two variables. The first variable was the same for all analyses: the age of the respondents. This is necessary, obviously, if we are interested in potential intergenerational effects. The second variable in the thirty cluster analyses were the thirty answers of the respondents regarding different attitudes toward different NPOs. This means that our cluster analysis show whether, for every answer about their attitudes, there are possible intergenerational differences.

The starting point for our cluster analysis is the rationale of our research question: We did not have justified prior beliefs about the numbers, shapes or sizes of groups in our data. For that reason, we chose a specific clustering method that is suited to such fundamentally exploratory clustering: Gaussian mixture modeling in combination with the expectation-maximization algorithm (C. Fraley and Raftery 1998). This approach has one significant benefit in the context of this paper. We did not manually specify *a priori* or choose *a posteriori* the number of groups per cluster analysis. Instead, we have determined the cluster solution with the best fit to the data according to the Schwarz criterion (Schwarz 1978) (or, as it is sometimes referred to as, the Bayesian Information Criterion). In addition, the group membership of each data point is not a deterministic, but a probabilistic function. This means that the method we chose does not only propose which group each individual data point might belong to, but also with what probability. We have conducted the cluster analysis with the package mclust (Chris Fraley

et al. 2017) within the statistical environment R (R Core Team 2014).

4 Results

We present the results of the cluster analyses in graphical form. Each of the following subsections is dedicated to one aspect of attitudes towards NPOs, and in each of these subsections, we present a chart with the results of the cluster analyses for all six types of NPOs.

The charts contain two layers of information. First, the different groups within each clustering result are demarcated with different colors. These colors have no meaning other than the function of demarcating groups within a single cluster analysis. The same colors are present in different cluster analyses, but there is no connection between the colors in different cluster analyses; a specific color does not indicate some specific group that always remains the same. Second, the data points in the charts, the participants, have varying degrees of transparency. That is a visualization of of the probability that a single data point is actually a member of the group it has been assigned to. If a data point is perfectly opaque, the probability is 1; if it is perfectly transparent, the probability is 0 (There are no 0s in any of the clusters.).

In order to increase legibility of the charts, we have introduce slight random jitter on the y-axes (Without jitter, many points are overlapping.). The random jitter is part of the plotting procedure; naturally, we have not manipulated the underlying data in any way.

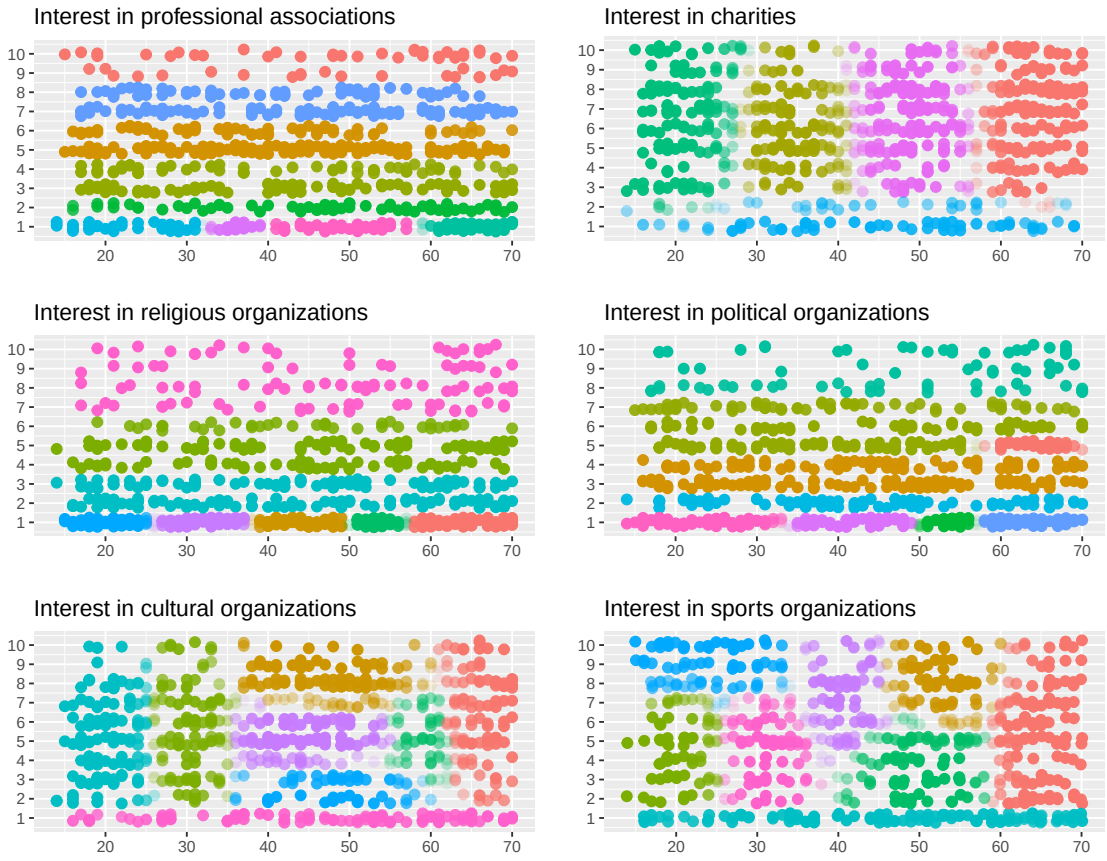
4.1 General interest

The cluster results for general interest in the six NPO types are summarized in Figure 2.

There is a number of general observations to be made in Figure 2. First, not all clusters are the same for the six types of NPOs. Second, for each NPO type, there is a sediment of people who have very low interest in general. In some instances, the cluster algorithm has identified subgroups within this apathetic sediment (professional associations, religious and political organizations), but it is safe to assume that there are no important intergenerational differences when it comes to a very low level of interest in NPOs.

For professional associations as well as for political and religious organizations, the cluster analysis has mostly only produced strata. For charities, cultural organizations and sports organizations, however, there are segments that are possibly indicative of generational effects. Those segments, however, are not always the same. For cultural and sports organizations, there is a

Figure 2: *Cluster results for general interest in NPOs.*



Note: The x-axis is age, and the y-axis is the level of general interest.

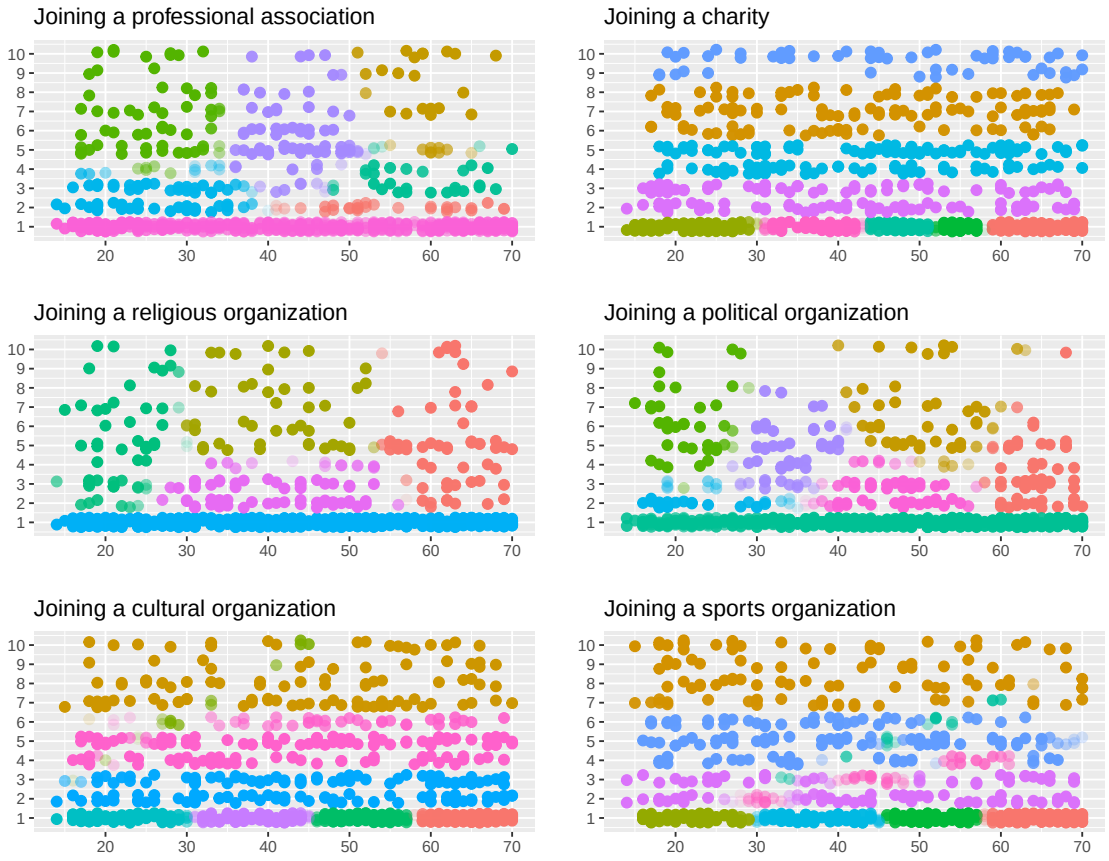
segment between 14 and ∼25 and between ∼26 to ∼36. In the latter case, however, highly interested individuals form a new group between the ages of 14 and ∼34. The segments identified for charities bear some similarities to those identified for cultural and sports organizations: There is a segment of the, relatively speaking, elderly (≥∼60), and two segments (14 to ∼27 and ∼28 to ∼40) that are similar to the two segments in those rough age brackets.

4.2 Membership

The cluster results for interest in joining different types of NPOs as a member are summarized in Figure 3.

The most obvious finding in Figure 3 is that many participants have no interest in joining any kind of NPO, as evidenced by the very prominent

Figure 3: *Cluster results for interest in becoming a member.*



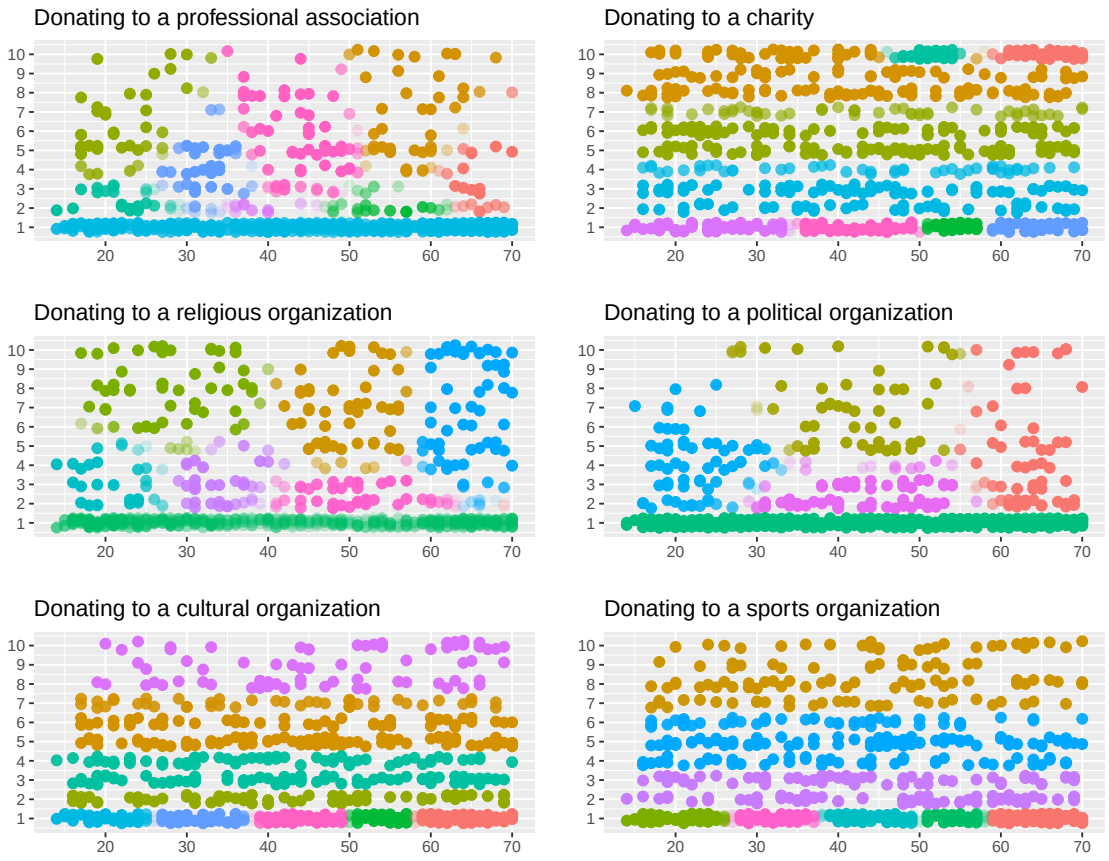
Note: The x-axis is age, and the y-axis is the level of interest in becoming a member.

sediment of low interest. For three NPO types, charities, cultural organizations and sports organizations, there are no relevant age-specific segments. For professional associations, religious organizations and political organizations, a number of segments are observable. For religious and political organizations, there is a prominent segment of 14 to ∼30 year olds. In the case of professional associations, a similar segment encompasses the ages of 14 to ∼34. Both for professional associations and political organizations, that segment consists of people with medium to high interest in joining as a member. For religious and political organizations, there is a segment of the, relatively speaking, older part survey sample ($\geq$∼55). Other segments are less consistent across NPO types.

4.3 Donating

The cluster results for the willingness to donate to an NPO are summarized in Figure 4.

Figure 4: *Cluster results for donation willingness.*



Note: The x-axis is age, and the y-axis is the willingness to donate.

The results for the willingness to donate show that, once again, there is a prominent sediment of people who have no interest in donating to any kind of NPO. For several NPO types, there are age-related segments for professional associations, charities, religious as well as political organizations. For charities, two small segments have been identified: Very motivated people in the age brackets of ∼45 to ∼55 and ≥∼60. These small segments probably don't represent any kind of intergenerational effect, but they might be indicative of small groups of older people who are, relatively speaking, well off and willing to donate some of their wealth to charitable organizations. Once again,

the most prominent age-related segments are observable for professional associations, religious organizations, and political organizations, and, once again, the segments are not identical across the NPO types. For professional associations and religious organizations, there are younger segments (∼16 to ∼34 and ∼16 to ∼40, respectively) with medium to high levels of willingness to donate. The youngest segment for political organizations (15 to ∼34) is, in direct comparison, less willing to donate. For religious and political organizations, there are also segments at the other end of the age scale (≥∼58 and ≥∼55, respectively).

4.4 Volunteering

The cluster results for the willingness to volunteer for an NPO are summarized in Figure 5.

As in the previous cluster analyses, there is a thick sediment of people who are not at all interested, in this case in terms of volunteering. Also, similar to the dimensions of joining as a member and donating, the age-related segments for the dimension of volunteering are present for professional associations, religious organizations, and political organizations. For professional associations, there is a thin sliver of rather young people (∼17 to ∼22) with a wide range of volunteering willingness, a broader segment (∼18 to ∼41) that is slightly more willing to volunteer, and a rather broad segment (≥∼42) with high volunteering willingness. These age-related segments might be life cycle rather than intergenerational effects: The later people are in their professional careers, the less diffuse the willingness to volunteer for a professional association. For religious and political organizations, the division between low-interest and high-interest segments is rather pronounced.

4.5 Professional work

The cluster results for the interest in working professionally for an NPO are summarized in Figure 6.

In terms of interest in professional work, the cluster analysis has yielded relevant age-related segments only for religious and political organizations. The segments are somewhat similar. On the younger end of the age scale, there are two similar low-interest segments (∼14 to ∼25 and ∼25 to ∼38 for religious, ∼16 to ∼25 and ∼26 to ∼37 for political organizations) as well as one moderate- to high-interest segment (∼17 to ∼36 and ∼17 to ∼34, respectively). At the other end of the age scale, there is, once again, a prominent segment (≥∼59 in both cases). The segments in between these two age poles are, for once, also rather similar for both NPO types.

Figure 5: *Cluster results for volunteering willingness.*

Note: The x-axis is age, and the y-axis is the willingness to volunteer.

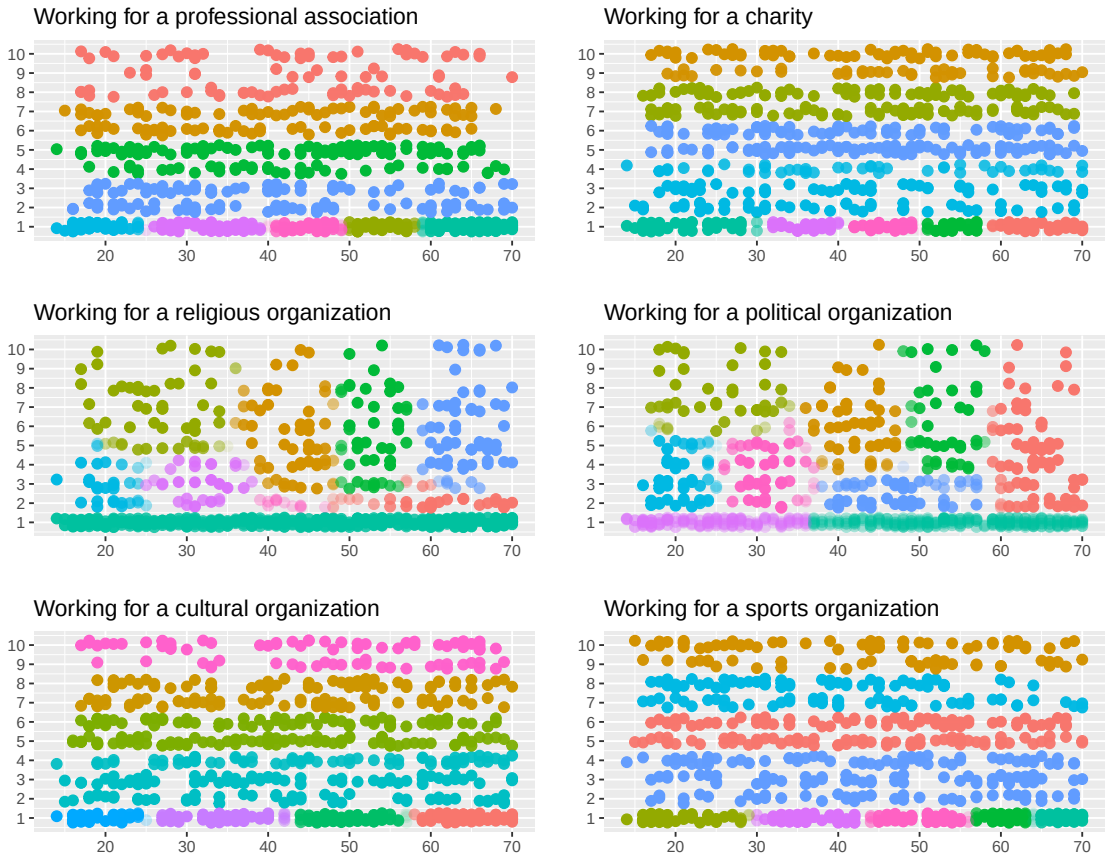
5 Discussion

The cluster analysis results presented in the previous sections contain a lot of information that can be distilled into several core insights.

First, it is very clear that for all dimensions of attitudes towards NPOs and for all types of NPOs, there is a significant sediment of very low-interest people. This finding is not all that surprising, of course, but it is important: Even if various age-related segments are indeed indicative of intergenerational effects, those effects are never absolute, but they only pertain to parts of the population.

Second, age-related segments that are potentially indicative of intergenerational effects are not present consistently across all NPO types in our data. On the attitudinal dimension of general interest, age-related segments

Figure 6: *Cluster results for interest in professional work.*



Note: The x-axis is age, and the y-axis is the level of interest in working professionally for an NPO.

are observable for charities, cultural organizations and sports organizations. When it comes to more precise attitudinal dimensions, however, age-related segments are observable for different NPO types: Religious organizations, political organizations, professional associations, and charities (the latter only in the case of donating). This might reveal that, in terms of attitudes towards NPOs, simply being interested in some type of NPO is very different from considering some specific and concrete action with regards to some type of NPO.

Third, the age-related segments that have been produced by the cluster analyses are, to a degree, consistent with popular accounts of the Millennials generation, the Babyboomer generation and, to a smaller extent, Generation X. Segments fit the Millennials narrative, however, might better be described

as "Millennials+": In some instances, groups within the age brackets of ∼14 to ∼40 (birth years ∼1977 to ∼2003) form one group, and in other instances, there is a divide within this age bracket, roughly around ∼14 to ∼27 (birth years ∼1990 to ∼2003) and ∼28 to ∼40 (birth years ∼1977 to ∼1989). Instances of segments in the former age bracket might represent a generational effect of the so-called Generation Z, whereas the latter might be regarded as the Millennials generation. The possible generational effect of Babyboomers for ages of roughly ≥∼57 (birth years ∼1947 to ∼1960) has also manifested in multiple analyses. The purported Generation X, however, is much less clearly, if at all, present in the results. There are multiple segments in the rough age brackets of ∼40 to ∼55, but a consistently strong pattern compatible with the narrative of a Generation X is not present.

Fourth, disentangling potential intergenerational from potential life cycle effects in the results is not entirely straightforward. This is one of the core limitations of this study: Since we apply a cross-sectional design for this study, differentiating between two possible longitudinal effects is difficult, if not impossible. However, the fact that the groups that have been observed via exploratory cluster analysis do, to some degree, fit popular narratives of generations does lend a degree of credibility to those narratives – it is not a causal confirmation, but a plausible description that warrants further scientific investigation.

Fifth, the age-related segments identified in the results differ in terms of overall interest levels with regard to the attitudinal dimensions, but not categorically and not dramatically. This means that *ad hoc* hypotheses about Millennials' attitudes towards NPOs might not be very accurate. The segment that potentially corresponds to the Millennials(+) generation displays, in multiple instances, about as positive or even more positive attitudes than other generational segments. Given these results, there is no reason to believe that Millennials(+) care categorically less about NPOs and about different types of NPOs than other generations do.

5.1 Practical implications

One overarching result of this study is that many people do not care about any kind of NPO in any kind of way. There is a thick sediment of people who are, in general, very apathetic. But even beyond this very low-interest sediment, the analyses have, in about half of all cases, yielded no age-related segments, but only purely interest-related strata. In addition, the age-related segments that have been identified are not telling a strong story of intergenerational attitude change. Overall, these findings suggest that the effects of intergenerational differences are weak to moderate, and that they do not imply an erosion of

positive attitudes towards NPOs within newer generations.

This overall finding and interpretation means that even though Millennials embrace individualism and do not seek attachment to organizations (Taylor, Parker, et al. 2014), that does not translate into negative attitudes towards NPOs. From the point of view of NPOs, this finding is important: Younger generations do not necessarily have attitudes much different from previous generations, but in order to reach and attract younger generations and segments within younger generations, strategies that account for overall value change need to be implemented.

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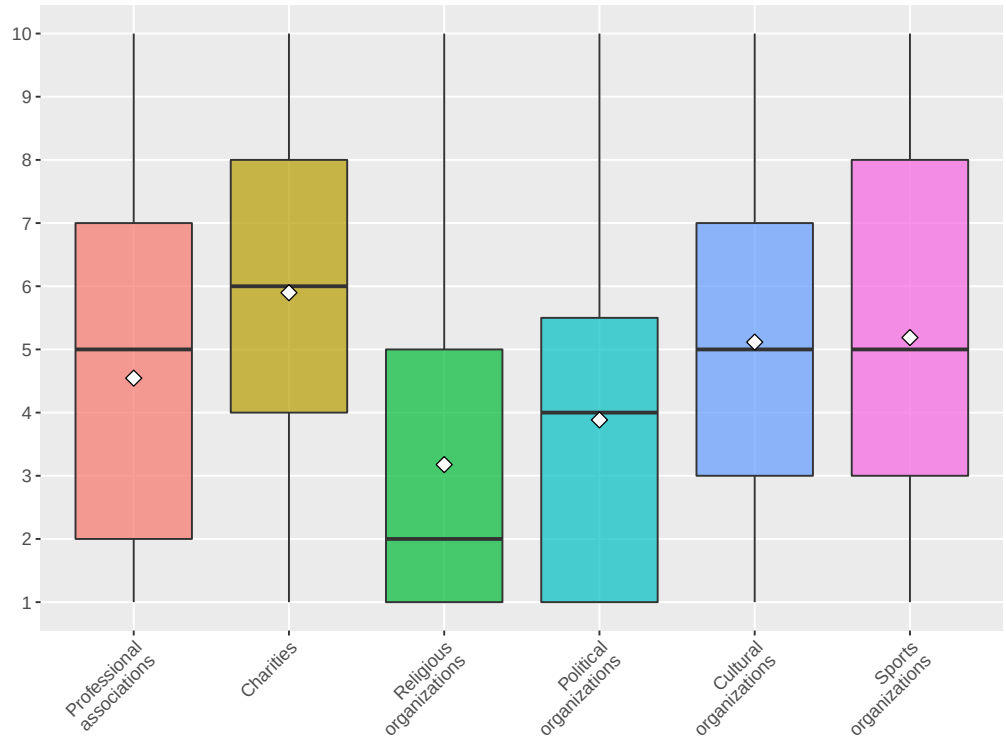
A Appendix: Descriptives of the data

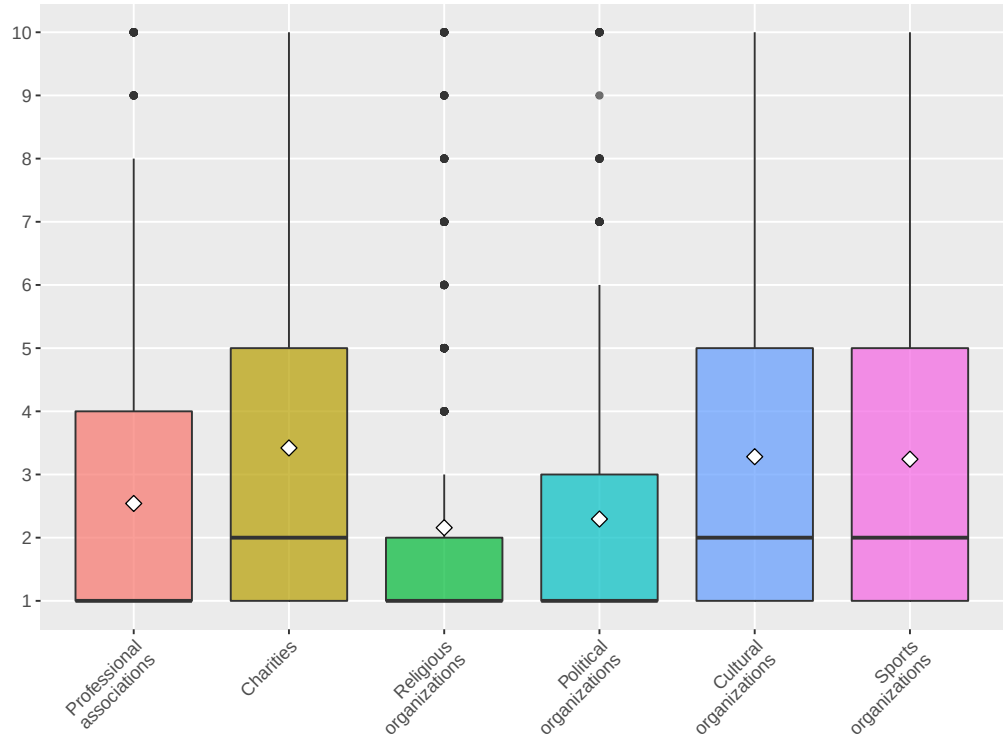
Figures 7 to 11 contain boxplots for the five attitudinal dimensions towards the six types of NPOs.

Figure 7: *Boxplots for general interest in NPOs.*



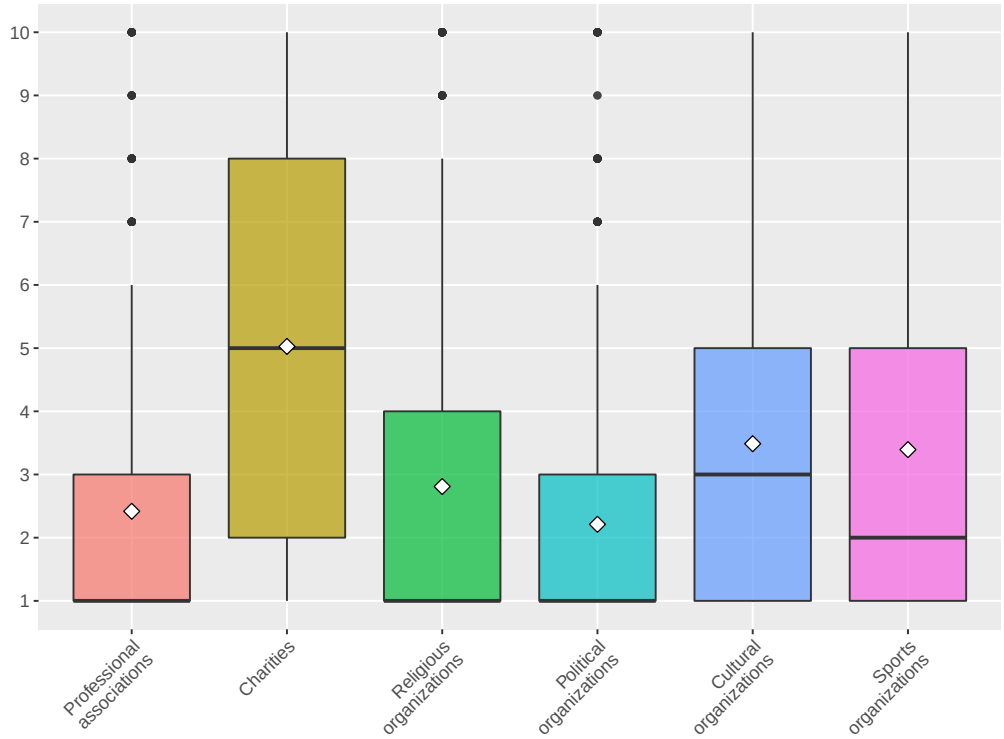
Note: The diamond represents the mean.

Figure 8: *Boxplots for interest in becoming a member.*



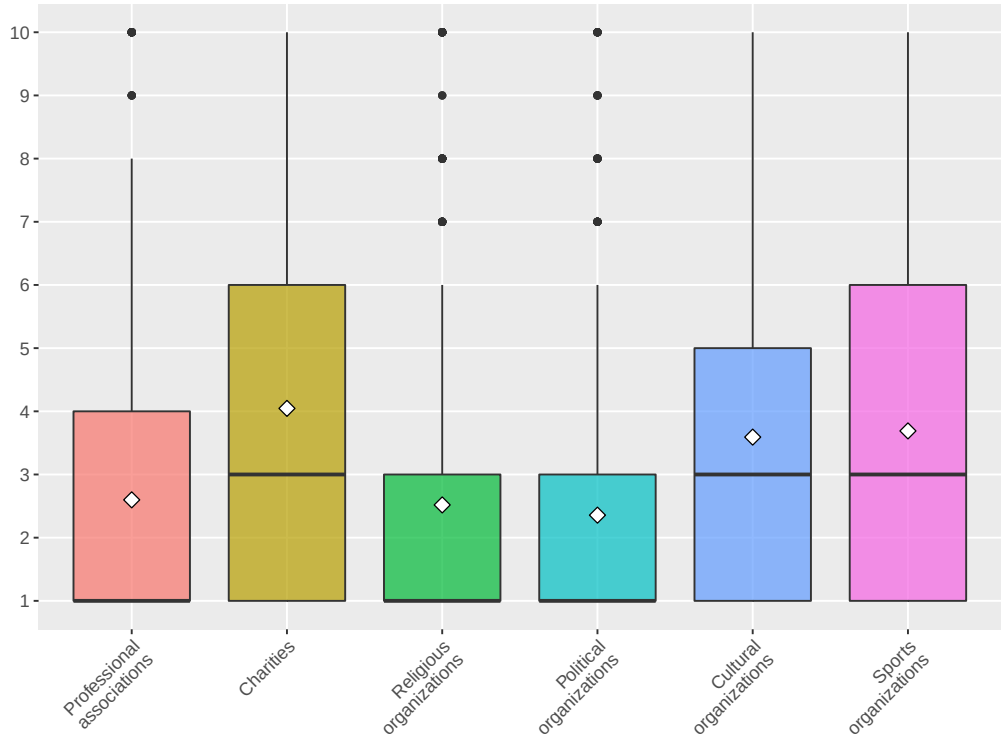
Note: The diamond represents the mean.

Figure 9: *Boxplots for donation willingness.*



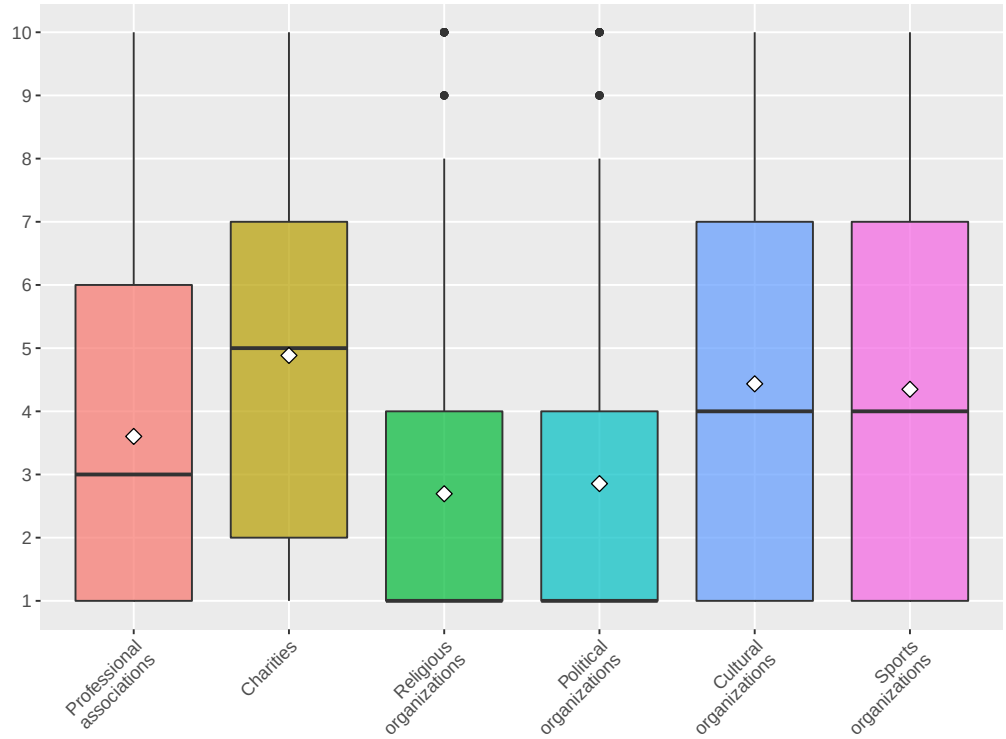
Note: The diamond represents the mean.

Figure 10: *Boxplots for volunteering willingness.*



Note: The diamond represents the mean.

Figure 11: *Boxplots for interest in professional work.*



Note: The diamond represents the mean.