

General Social Survey: Giving, volunteering and participating, 2013

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In 2013, 44% of Canadians volunteered their time and almost twice as many (82%) gave money to a charitable or non-profit organization.

While the proportion of Canadians who volunteered their time declined by 3 percentage points between 2010 and 2013, the total number of hours volunteered remained virtually unchanged.

In 2013, volunteers devoted almost 2 billion hours to their volunteer activities, or the equivalent of about 1 million full-time jobs.

Canadians who volunteered did so for an annual average of 154 hours in 2013.

Mirroring patterns in volunteering, the percentage of Canadians donating to charitable or non-profit organizations declined in recent years, falling from 84% in 2010 to 82% in 2013. Donation amounts, however, increased.

The average annual amount per donor in 2013 was \$531, up \$61 from 2010.

Overall, Canadians gave \$12.8 billion to charitable or non-profit organizations in 2013, 14% higher than 2010.

A range of charitable and non-profit organizations benefited from these donations.

Of the total donated in 2013, 41% or \$5.2 billion were donated to religious organizations, 13% or \$1.7 billion to organizations in the health sector and 12% or \$1.6 billion to social services organizations.

Changing profile of volunteers and donors

As with the population in general, the population of volunteers and donors is getting older.

In 2013, 28% of all Canadian volunteers were aged 55 and older, compared with 26% in 2010, 24% in 2007 and 23% in 2004.

Older people, when they volunteer, are more likely to do certain types of activities. For example, in 2013, 42% of volunteers aged 55 and over sat on a committee or board, compared with 34% of volunteers aged 35 to 54 and 26% of volunteers aged 15 to 34.

The typical donor is also getting older. In 2013, 35% of all donors were aged 55 and over, up from 29% in 2004.

Older donors give more on average. In 2013, donors aged 55 and over gave an average of \$702 to charitable or non-profit organizations, or about \$400 more than donors aged 15 to 34.

Together with the aging profile of Canadian donors, the proportion of the total amount of charitable donations contributed by Canadians aged 55 and over has increased, from 39% in 2004 to 47% in 2013.

Regional variations in volunteering and giving

The rate of volunteerism and donation varies across Canada. In 2013, the volunteer rate was highest in Saskatchewan (56%) and Manitoba (52%). Both were significantly above the national average (44%).

In contrast, the rate of volunteering was lowest in Quebec, where about one-third (32%) of the population aged 15 and over volunteered their time for an organization. The average number of volunteer hours during the year was also lower in Quebec (123 hours) compared with Canada as a whole (154 hours).



There was less variation between provinces in terms of donor rate. In 2013, the proportion of the population which made a financial donation was highest in Newfoundland and Labrador (87%) and lowest in British Columbia (78%).

The amount of donations differed throughout the country, with donors in Alberta (\$863), British Columbia (\$704) and Manitoba (\$699) reporting the highest average financial contributions in 2013. Conversely, average donations were lowest in Quebec (\$264) and New Brunswick (\$345).

Note to readers

Today, Statistics Canada releases a report on "Volunteering and charitable giving in Canada" in Canada, based on new data from the 2013 General Social Survey (GSS) on giving, volunteering and participating.

The target population included all persons 15 years and older living in the 10 provinces of Canada, excluding full-time residents of institutions.

Definitions

Volunteers are people who have provided a service, without monetary compensation, for a group or organization. This includes any unpaid help provided to schools, religious organizations, sports, or community associations.

Donors are defined as those who have made at least one monetary donation to a charity or non-profit organization during the 12 months preceding the survey. This definition excludes donations of food, clothing and household goods.

Not all donations reported to the GSS on giving, volunteering and participating are eligible for a tax receipt and thus would not be included in the data collected from income tax returns.

Differences in total donation amounts were calculated using constant dollars.

Available in CANSIM: tables [119-0001 to 119-0016](#).

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [4430](#).

The article "Volunteering and charitable giving in Canada" is now available online in *Spotlight on Canadians: Results from the General Social Survey* ([89-652-X](#)). From the *Browse by key resource* module of our website, choose *Publications*.

Additional data are available upon request.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; infostats@statcan.gc.ca) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; mediahotline@statcan.gc.ca).