

Who are Ontario's Volunteers?

Personal and economic characteristics

Twenty-five percent of Ontario residents (2.4 million people) volunteered an average of 165 hours each, according to the 2000 National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating.¹ Whether individuals volunteer and how many hours they contribute vary with a number of personal and economic characteristics. This fact sheet explores the relationship between volunteering and age, education level, sex, labour force status, and household size.

Age

Residents of Ontario aged 45 to 54 were the most likely to volunteer (31% volunteered in 2000), while those aged 25 to 34 and 65 and older were the least likely to do so (19% and 17%, respectively).

Although comparatively few Ontarians aged 65 and older volunteered, this group contributed the most hours on average (261*), followed by those aged 35 to 44 (163). Volunteers aged 25 to 34 contributed the fewest hours on average (149*).

Volunteers aged 65 and over also accounted for a disproportionately large percentage of total volunteer hours. Although they made up only 10% of volunteers, they contributed 16%* of all volunteer hours.

Education

Volunteering in Ontario tends to increase with the level of formal education attained. Almost four in ten (38%) Ontarians with a university degree volunteered. In contrast, fewer than two in ten (18%) Ontarians with less than a high school diploma volunteered.

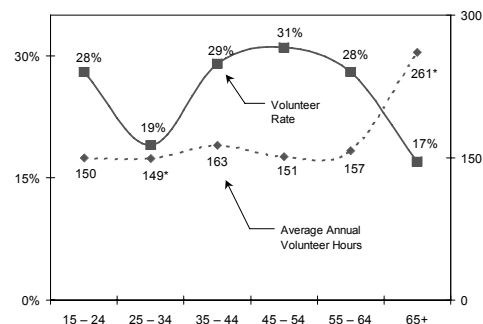
Volunteers with some post-secondary education volunteered the most hours on average (187*), while those with a high school diploma volunteered the fewest (135).

Volunteers with at least some post-secondary education contributed a disproportionately large percentage of the total hours volunteered. Those with a high school diploma or less contributed a disproportionately small percentage.

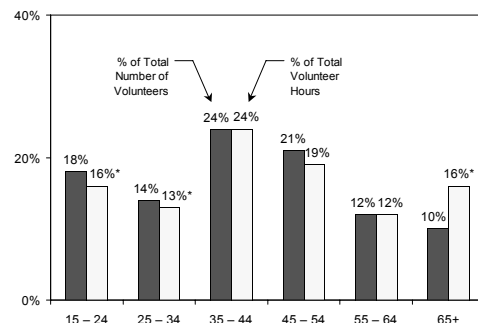
¹ NSGVP estimates are based on reports of charitable giving and volunteering over a one-year period by Canadians aged 15 and older.

* Sample size limitations affect the reliability of this estimate.

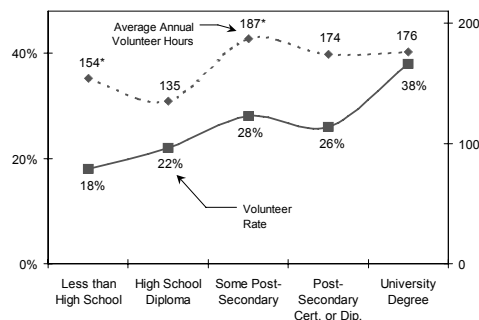
Volunteer Rate and Average Annual Volunteer Hours by Age



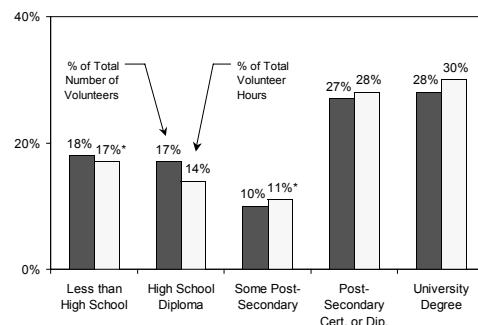
Percentage of Volunteers and Percentage of Total Volunteer Hours by Age



Volunteer Rate and Average Annual Volunteer Hours by Education



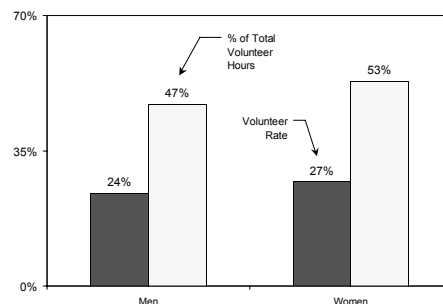
Percentage of Volunteers and Percentage of Total Volunteer Hours by Education



Sex

Women in Ontario were slightly more likely than men to volunteer (27% of women volunteered, compared to 24% of men) and accounted for a higher percentage of the total hours volunteered (53% versus 47%). However, men who volunteered contributed more volunteer hours on average than did women (172 versus 160).

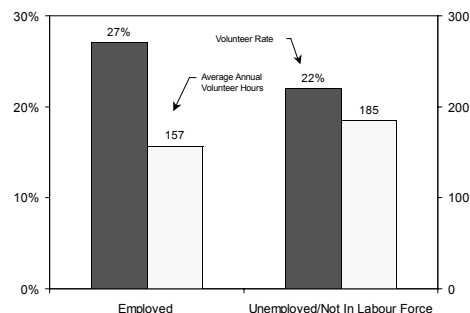
Volunteer Rate and Percentage of Total Volunteer Hours by Sex



Labour force status

Employed residents of Ontario were more likely to volunteer (27%) than were those who were unemployed or not in the labour force (22%).

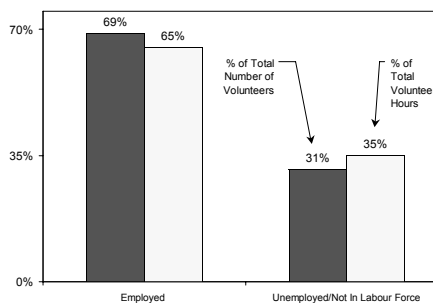
Volunteer Rate and Average Annual Volunteer Hours by Labour Force Status



However, those who were unemployed or not in the labour force volunteered more hours on average (185) than did those who were employed (157).

Volunteers who were unemployed or not in the labour force also accounted for a disproportionately large percentage of the total hours volunteered. Although they made up 31% of volunteers, they contributed 35% of all volunteer hours.

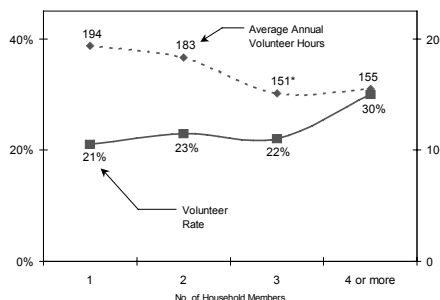
Percentage of Volunteers and Percentage of Total Volunteer Hours by Labour Force Status



Household size

Ontarians living in households with four or more members were more likely to volunteer than were those residing in smaller households (30% versus 23% or less).

Volunteer Rate and Average Annual Volunteer Hours by Number of Household Members



However, volunteers living in single-member households contributed the most hours on average (194). Those living in three-member households contributed the fewest hours on average (151*), followed by those living in four-member households (155).

For more information on the 1997 and 2000 National Survey for Giving, Volunteering and Participating, including full text of the highlight report, *Caring Canadians*, *Involved Canadians*, please visit www.givingandvolunteering.ca.

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