

2004 CANADA SURVEY OF Giving, Volunteering & Participating



The Giving and Volunteering of Seniors

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Findings from the Canada Survey of Giving,
Volunteering, and Participating

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INTRODUCTION

The Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering, and Participating (CSGVP) measures the support Canadians provide to each other and their communities, with particular emphasis on their contributions of time and money to charitable and nonprofit organizations. This report draws on data from the 2004 CSGVP to look at the roles, concerns, and contributions of seniors. The information presented here is intended to help nonprofit and voluntary organizations better understand seniors and their contributions.

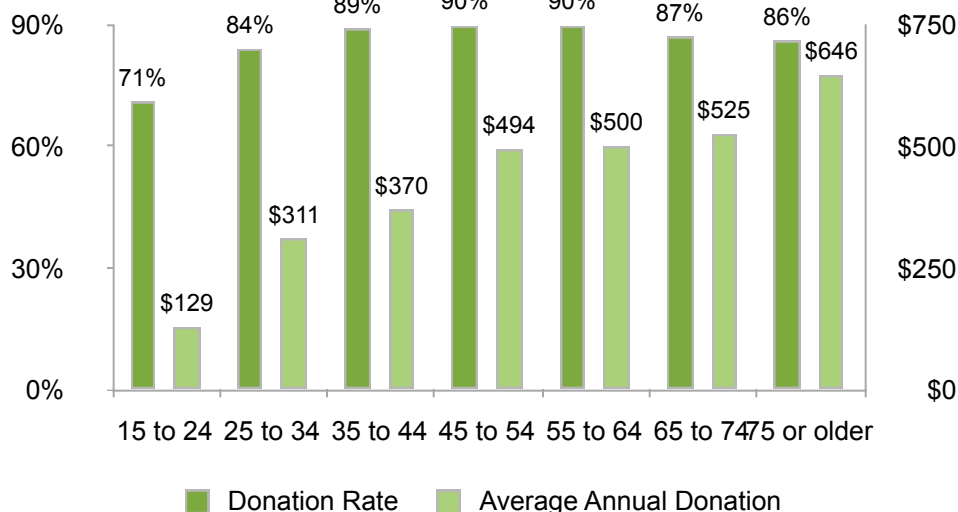
For the purposes of this report, *seniors* are defined as those Canadians aged 65 and over. Most data presentations in this report compare seniors with younger Canadians. However, where germane, some presentations distinguish between seniors aged 65 to 74 and those 75 and older.

MAIN FINDINGS: CHARITABLE GIVING

- On average, seniors donate more than younger Canadians (\$572 vs. \$369). Collectively, they account for almost one quarter (22%) of total donations but make up just 15% of the population.
- Seniors make more donations throughout the year than do younger Canadians (5.1 vs. 4.1). They are also more likely to donate to almost every type of organization.
- Seniors are more likely than younger donors to plan in advance how much they will donate and which organizations they will support. They are also more likely to donate to the same organizations year after year.
- Seniors are more likely than younger donors to be motivated by religious obligations or beliefs. They are also more likely to not donate more because they are happy with what they had already given, because they give money directly to people without going through an organization and because they do not believe the money they donate will be used efficiently.

CHARITABLE GIVING

Seniors are about as likely as most other Canadians to donate, but they tend to give more. Seniors were only slightly less likely to donate than Canadians aged 45 to 64, who were the most likely to donate. Eighty-seven percent of those 65 to 74 and 86% of those 75 and over donated in 2004, compared to 90% of those aged 45 to 64 (see Figure 1). However, the amounts they donated tended to be larger – an average of \$525 annually among those aged 65 to 74 and \$646 among those 75 and older, compared to \$500 or less among younger donors.

Figure 1: Donor rate and average annual donation by age group, 2004

Although seniors are slightly less likely than some younger Canadians to donate, their larger average donations mean they account for more of the total value of donations than their numbers might suggest. For example, although those aged 65 to 74 accounted for just 9% of the Canadian population, they contributed 12% of the total value of all donations (see Table 1). Similarly, those 75 and over accounted for just 6% of the population but contributed 10% of the total value of all donations.

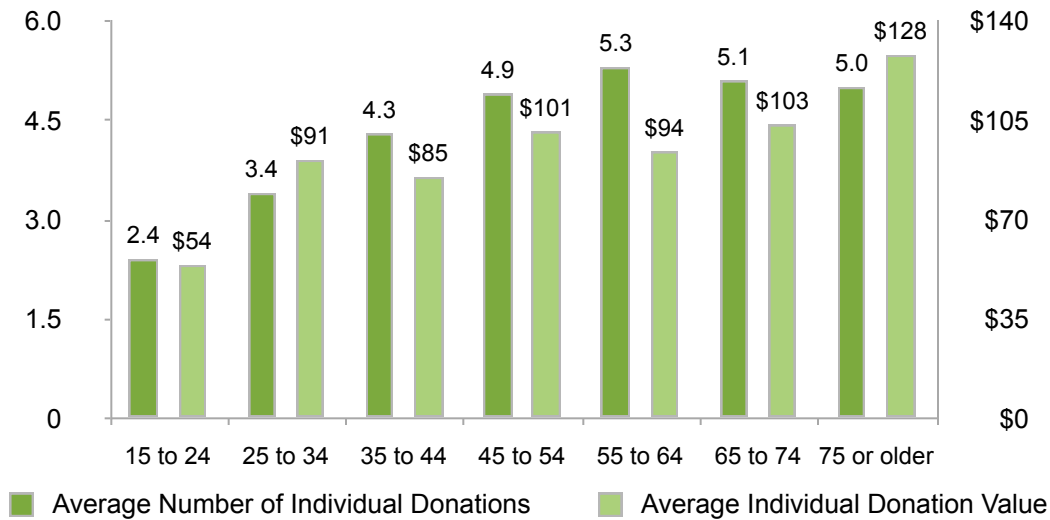
Table 1: Population distribution and percentage of total annual donation value by age group, 2004

	% Population	% Donation Value
15 to 24	17%	4%
25 to 34	17%	13%
35 to 44	20%	19%
45 to 54	19%	24%
55 to 64	13%	17%
65 to 74	9%	12%
75 or older	6%	10%

Individual donations

Most Canadians make more than one donation over the course of a year. Compared to many younger donors, seniors tend to make more and larger individual donations. Those 65 to 74 made an average of 5.1 individual donations of \$103 each, while those aged 75 and older made an average of 5.0 individual donations of \$128 each (see Figure 2). Only those aged 55 to 64 made more individual donations (5.3), although these donations tended to be smaller (\$94).

Figure 2: Average number and value of individual donations by age group, 2004

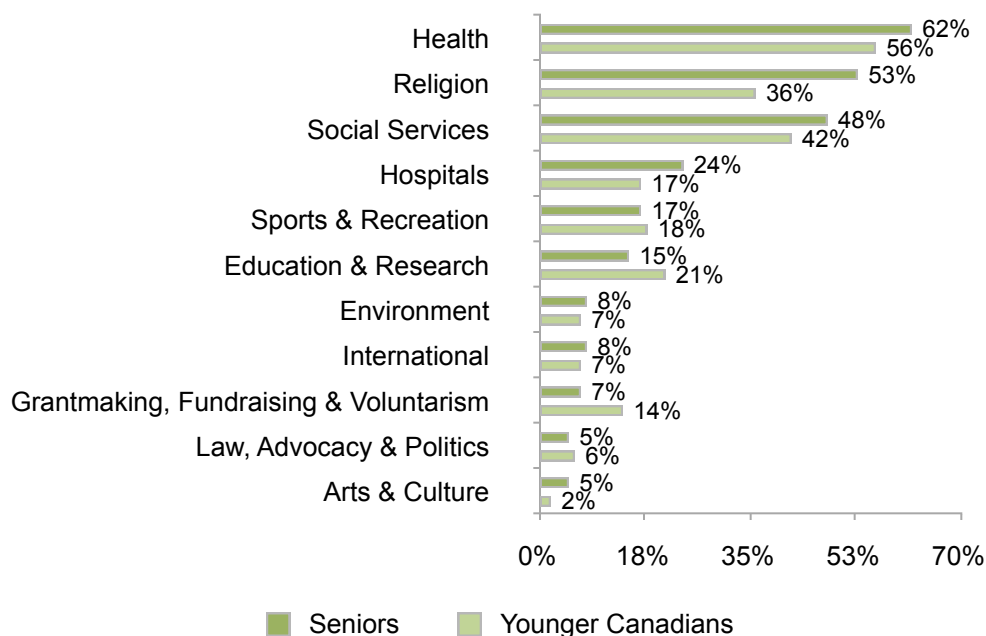


The organizations seniors support

Generally speaking, seniors and younger Canadians are most likely to support the same types of charitable and nonprofit organizations. Both groups were most likely to give to organizations working in the areas of Health, Religion, and Social Services. Almost two thirds of seniors (62%) gave to Health organizations, 53% gave to Religious organizations, and 48% gave to Social Services organizations.

In keeping with their tendency to make many individual donations, seniors are more likely than younger Canadians to give to almost every type of organization, such as Religious (53% vs. 36% of younger Canadians) and Health organizations (62% vs. 56%) (see Figure

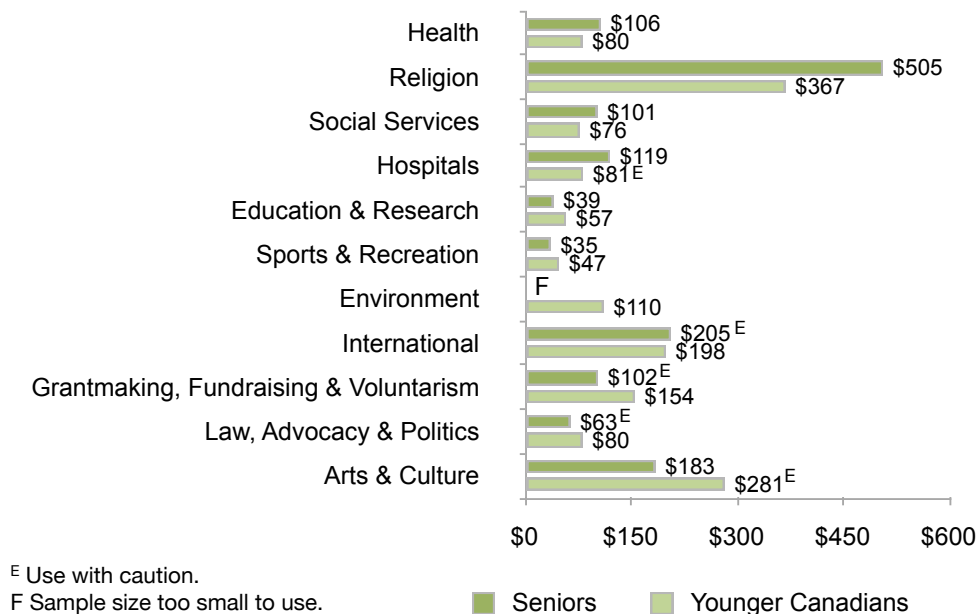
Figure 3: Donor rate by selected organization types, seniors and younger Canadians, 2004



3). However, they were noticeably less likely to give to organizations working in the areas Grantmaking, Fundraising, and Voluntarism Promotion (7% vs. 14% of younger Canadians) and Education and Research (15% vs. 21% of younger Canadians).

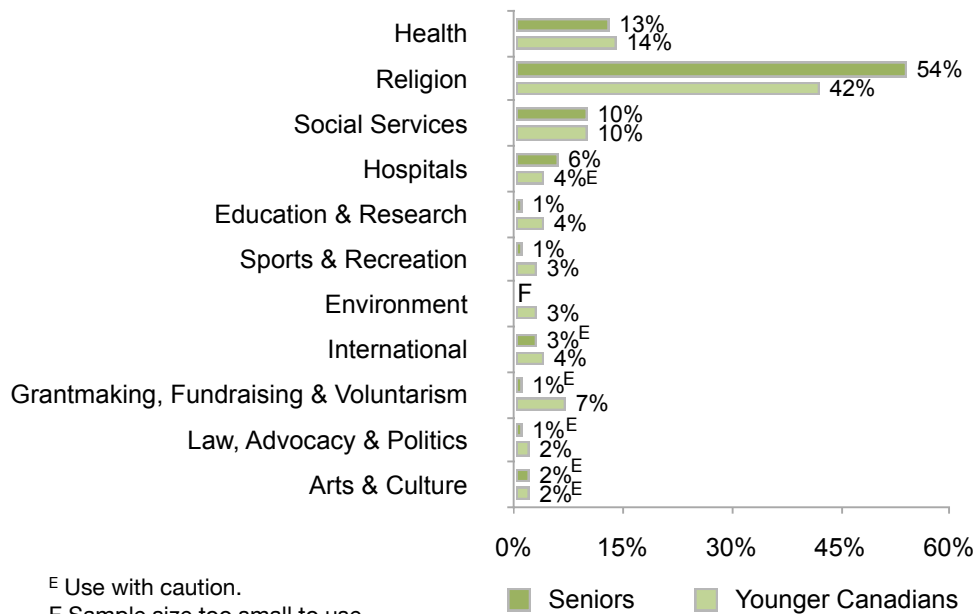
Seniors and younger donors also tend to give the largest amounts to the same types of organizations. For instance, both groups made their largest average donations to Religious, International, and Arts and Culture organizations. In absolute terms, seniors made larger average donations to a number of types of organizations than did younger donors, particularly Religious organizations (\$505 vs. \$367), Hospitals (\$119 vs. \$81^E), Health (\$106 vs. \$80), and Social Services organizations (\$101 vs. \$76) (see Figure 4). Conversely, they gave smaller average donations to Arts and Culture organizations (\$183 vs. \$281^E for younger donors) and Grantmaking, Fundraising, and Voluntarism Promotion organizations (\$102^E vs. \$154), among others.

Figure 4: Average amounts donated to selected organization types, seniors and younger Canadians, 2004



Seniors and younger Canadians tend to allocate their donations in broadly similar ways. For example, both groups gave the largest proportion of their donations to Religious organizations, although seniors gave more than younger donors (55% of the total value of their donations vs. 42% for younger donors) (see Figure 5). Both groups gave virtually identical percentages of the total value of their donations to organizations working in many other areas, such as Health, Social Services, and the Environment. However, seniors gave smaller percentages to organizations working in the areas of Grantmaking, Fundraising, and Voluntarism Promotion (1%^E for seniors vs. 7% for younger donors), Education and Research (1% vs. 4%), and Sports and Recreation (1% vs. 3%).

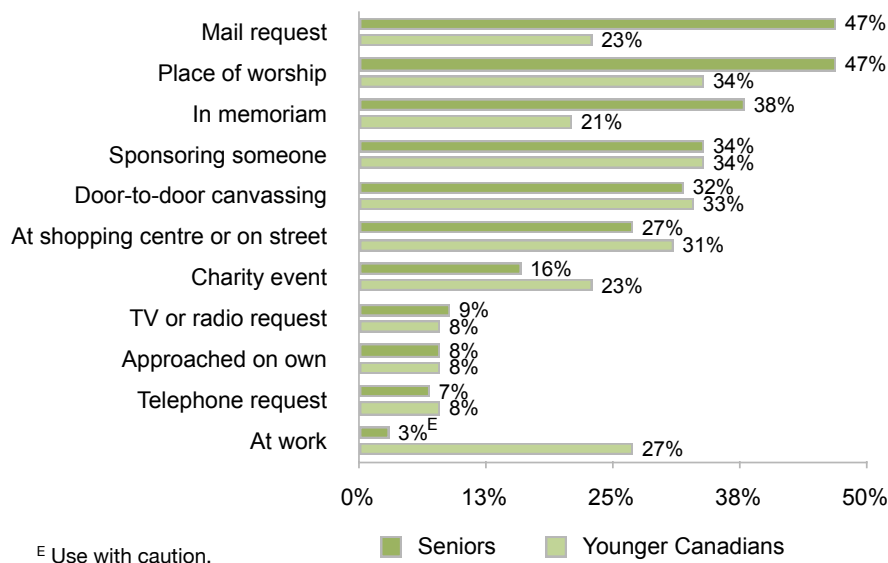
Figure 5: Distribution of total donation value by selected organization types, seniors and younger Canadians, 2004



How seniors make donations

Seniors tend to use somewhat different methods to donate than do younger Canadians. Seniors were much more likely to donate through a place of worship collection (47% of seniors used that method vs. 34% of younger Canadians), in response to a mail request (47% of seniors used that method vs. 23% of younger Canadians), in response to a mail request (47%

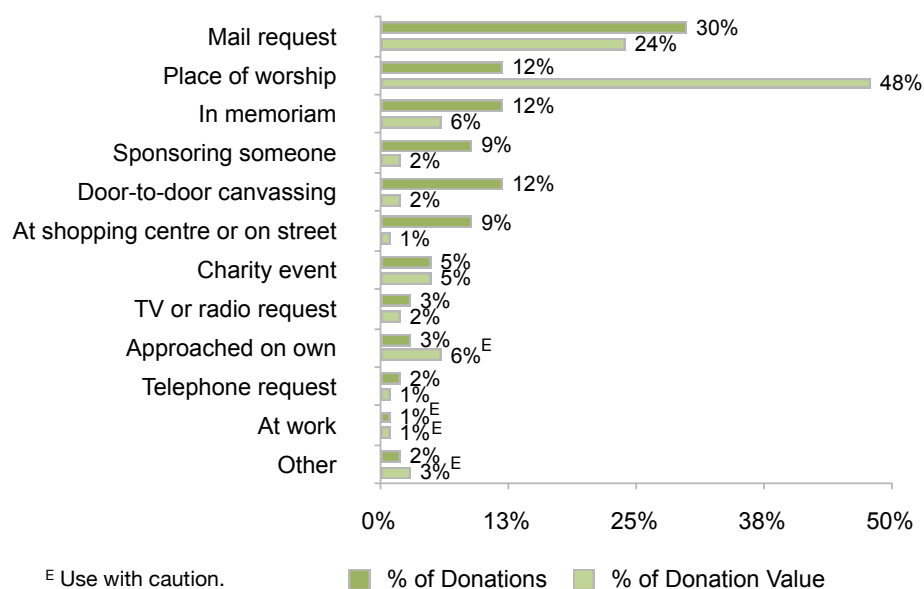
Figure 6: Percentage of donors responding to selected solicitation methods, seniors and younger Canadians, 2004



vs. 23% of younger Canadians), and in memory of someone (38% vs. 21%) (see Figure 6). Conversely, they were less likely than younger Canadians to make a donation at work (3%^E vs. 27%) or by paying to attend a charity event (16% vs. 23%).

Although seniors used many methods to donate, just two methods accounted for almost three quarters of the money contributed. Almost half (48%) was contributed through place of worship collections, and 24% was donated in response to mail requests (see Figure 7). All other methods accounted for much smaller percentages of the total donation value.

Figure 7: Distributions of total number of donations and total value of donations by selected solicitation methods, seniors, 2004.



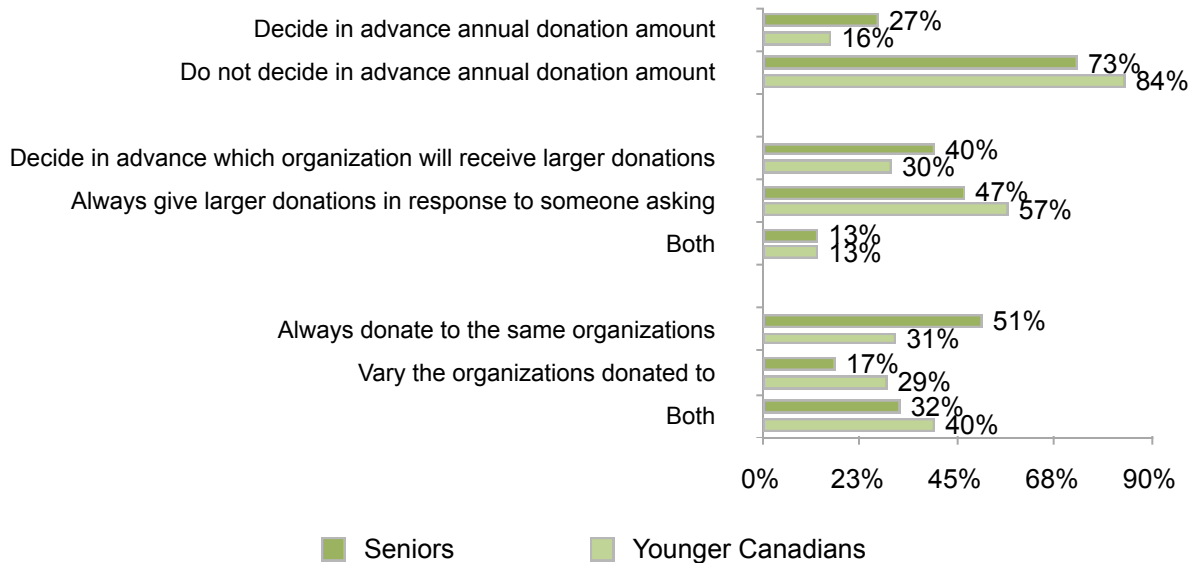
Although some types of donations are relatively common, they do not account for large percentages of the money donated. For example, although seniors made 9% of their donations in response to solicitations in a public venue, such as on the street or in a shopping centre, these donations accounted for only 1% of the total value of their donations. Similarly, seniors made 12% of their donations in response to door-to-door canvassing, but contributed just 2% of the total value of their donations this way. Conversely, seniors who approached organizations on their own initiative tended to donate large amounts relative to the number of donations they made in this way (3% of donations accounting for 6%^E of total donation value).

Decision making around donations

Seniors are more likely than younger Canadians to plan their giving in advance and to give to the same organizations year after year. Seniors were more likely to say that they decide in advance how much they will give in total to charitable and nonprofit organizations in a year (27% of senior donors vs. 16% of younger donors) (see Figure 8). Similarly, they were more likely to say that they decide in advance which organizations they will donate to (40% vs.

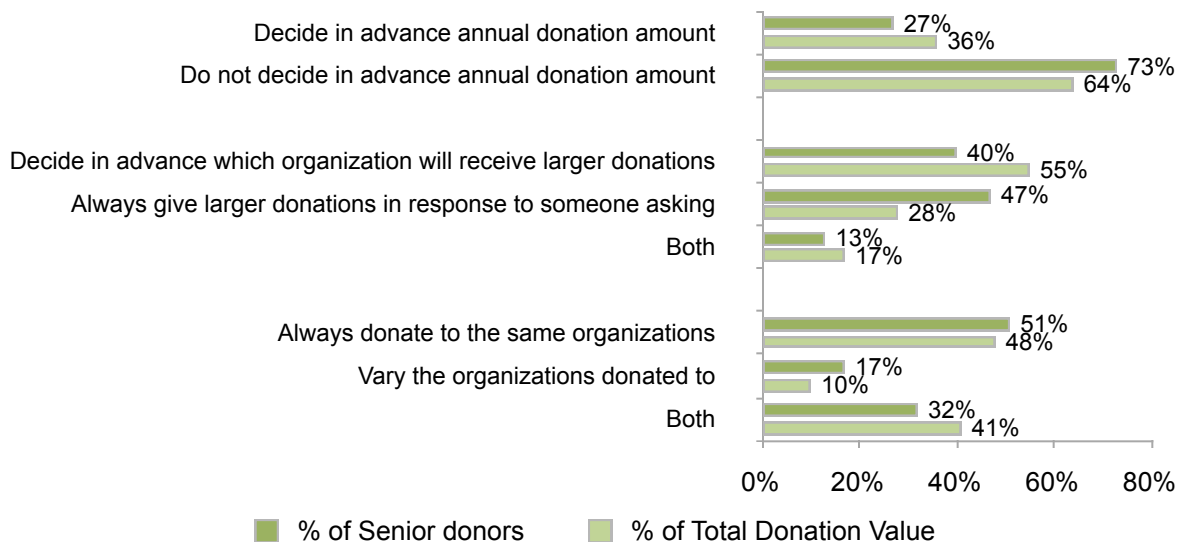
30% of younger donors) and that they always donate to the same organizations (51% vs. 31%).

Figure 8: Percentage of donors making giving decisions, senior and younger donors, 2004.



Donors who make their decisions in advance are important because they tend to contribute more, making them more valuable to organizations than their numbers might otherwise suggest. For instance, the 27% of seniors who decided in advance how much they would donate during the year accounted for 36% of the total value of seniors' donations (see Figure 9). Similarly, the 40% of seniors who decided in advance which organizations they would support accounted for 55% of the total value of seniors' donations.

Figure 9: Distributions of senior donors making giving decisions and of total annual donation value by giving decisions, seniors, 2004

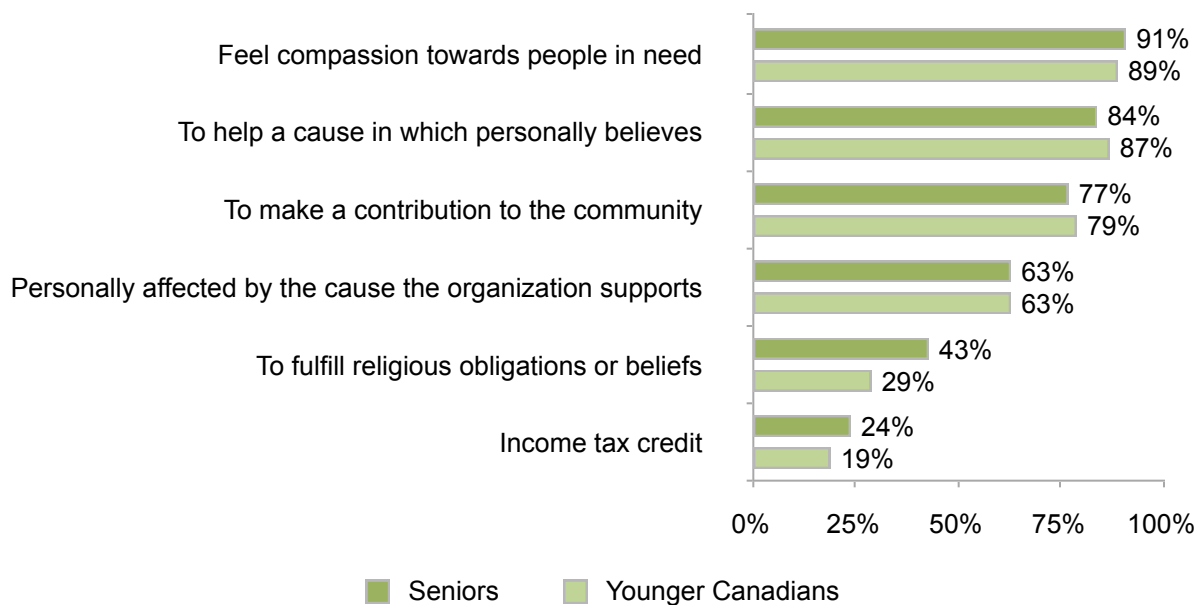


Donors who contribute to the same organizations year after year also tend to give more. Among Canadians as a whole, the 34% of donors who donated to the same organizations year after year accounted for 41% of total value of all donations. However, among seniors the picture is slightly different: the 51% of seniors who donated to the same organizations accounted for just 48% of total donation value. Among seniors, it was the 32% who donated to a mixture of organizations who were more important than their numbers might suggest (they accounted for 41% of total donation value).

Why seniors give

Seniors tend to donate for the same reasons as younger donors. However, they were noticeably more likely say they gave to fulfill religious obligations or beliefs (43% of senior donors cited this motivation vs. 29% of younger donors) and somewhat more likely to give because they would receive a tax credit (24% vs. 19% of younger donors) (see Figure 10).

Figure 10: Reasons for making financial donations, senior and younger donors, 2004



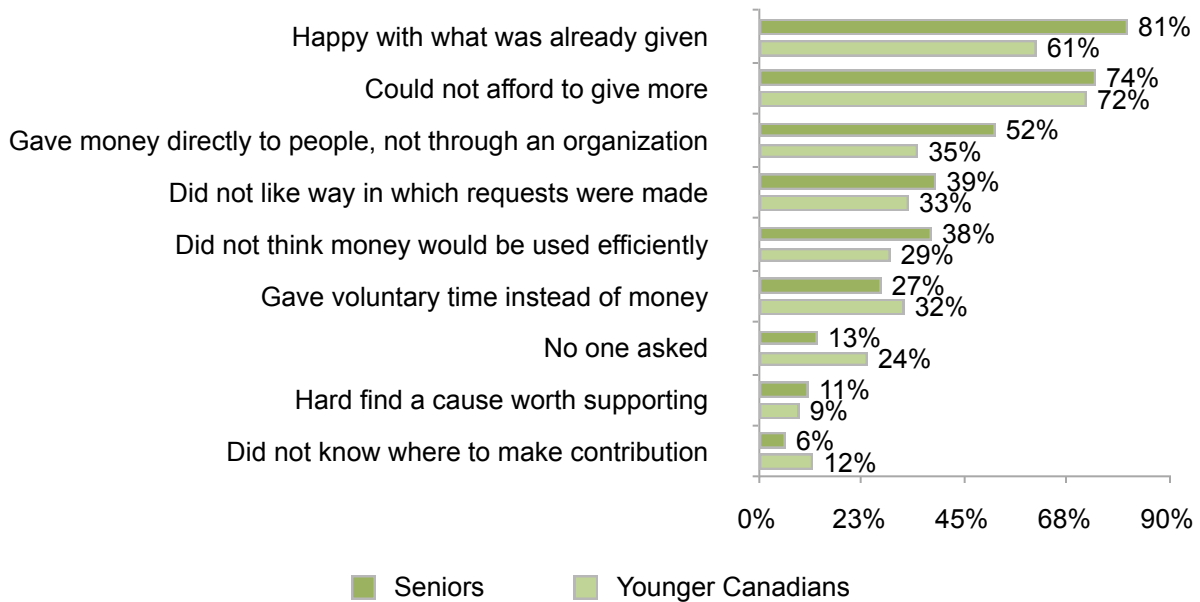
The barriers to giving seniors face

Seniors are more likely than younger donors to cite most barriers to giving more. Seniors were strikingly more likely than younger donors to say that they did not give more because they already gave enough (81% of seniors vs. 61% of younger donors) (see Figure 11). They were also much more likely to say they did not donate more because they gave to people in need without going through an organization (52% vs. 35% of younger donors).

Seniors are also more likely than younger donors to show signs of dissatisfaction with how organizations solicit and use their donations. They were more likely to say that they did not give more because they did not like how organizations asked for donations (39% vs. 33% of younger donors) and because they did not think organizations would use the money efficiently (38% vs. 29%). This may be why seniors were slightly more likely to report

difficulty finding a worthy cause (11% vs. 9%) while at the same time being less likely than younger donors to say that they did not give more because they did not know where to make a donation (6% vs. 12%) or because no one had asked them to (13% vs. 24%).

Figure 11: Reasons for not making more financial donations, senior and younger donors, 2004



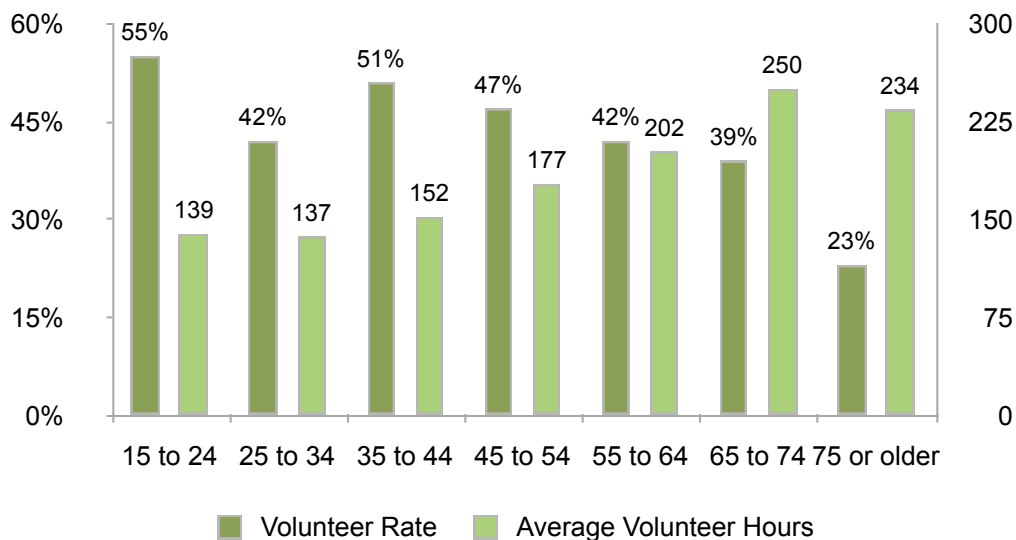
MAIN FINDINGS: VOLUNTEERING

- Seniors are less likely than younger Canadians to volunteer, although those who do volunteer tend to contribute more hours.
- Seniors give more time than younger volunteers to Religious and Health organizations, Hospitals, and Arts and Culture organizations, and less to Education and Research organizations.
- Seniors tend to devote more volunteer time to activities such as sitting on committees or boards and doing office work, and less time to activities such as coaching, refereeing, or officiating, and teaching, educating, or mentoring.
- Compared to younger volunteers, seniors are more likely to be motivated by religious convictions and the desire for social interaction and less likely to be motivated by job opportunities and the desire to explore their strengths.

VOLUNTEERING

Seniors are less likely than younger Canadians to volunteer, but seniors who volunteer tend to contribute more hours. The likelihood of volunteering is highest among Canadians aged 15 to 24 (55% volunteer), declines among those aged 25 to 34 (42%), reaches a secondary peak among those aged 35 to 44 (51%), and then decreases gradually with age (see Figure 12). Just over one third (39%) of those aged 65 to 74 volunteered, as did one quarter of those 75 and older (23%). In terms of hours volunteered, those aged 65 to 74 contributed the most hours (250 annually), while those 75 and older volunteered slightly fewer hours (234).

Figure 12: Volunteer rate and average annual volunteer hours by age group, 2004



Although 65-to-74-year-olds are less likely than younger Canadians to volunteer, they contribute a larger share of total volunteer hours than their numbers might suggest. Seniors aged 65 to 74 accounted for 9% of the population but contributed 12% of the total volunteer hours (see Table 2). Seniors aged 75 and older, however, accounted for somewhat fewer volunteer hours than their numbers would suggest (6% population vs. 4% total hours).

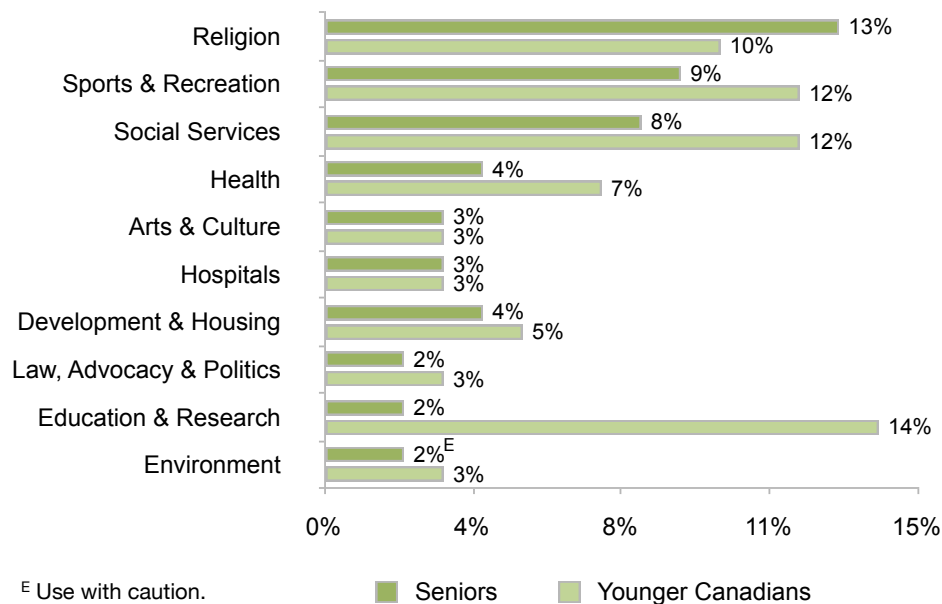
Table 2: Population distribution and percentage of total volunteer hours donated by age group, Canada, 2004

	% Population	% Total Hours
15 to 24	17%	17%
25 to 34	17%	13%
35 to 44	20%	20%
45 to 54	19%	20%
55 to 64	13%	15%
65 to 74	9%	12%
75 or older	6%	4%

The organizations senior volunteers support

Seniors were most likely to volunteer for Religious organizations (13% volunteered), followed by Sports and Recreation (9%) and Social Services organizations (8%) (see Figure 13). They were least likely to volunteer for organizations working in the areas of Law, Advocacy and Politics, Education and Research, and the Environment (2% volunteered for each type of organization).

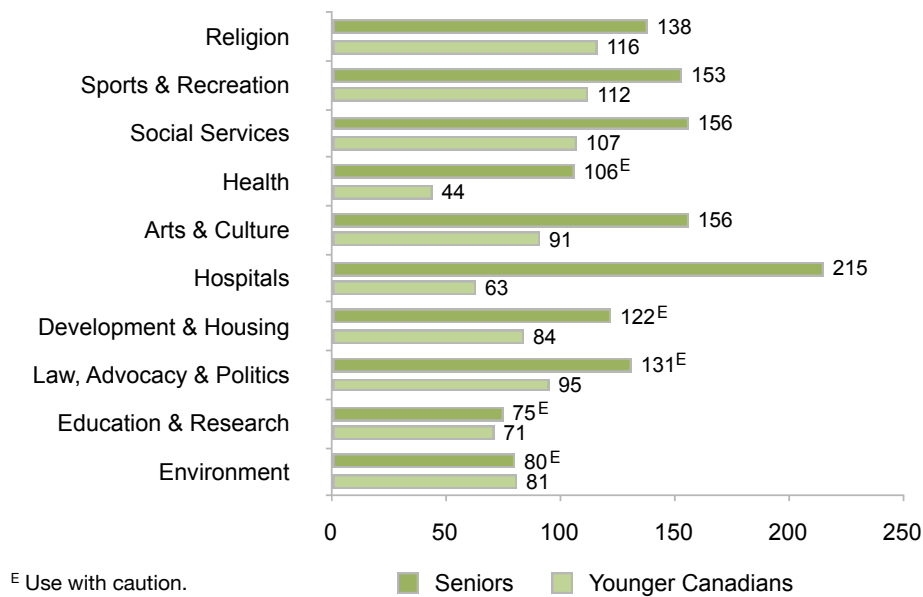
Figure 13: Volunteer rate by selected organization types, seniors and younger Canadians, 2004



However, seniors are less likely than younger Canadians to volunteer for most types of organizations. For example, seniors were much less likely to volunteer for Education and Research organizations (2% of seniors vs. 14% of younger Canadians) and somewhat less likely to volunteer for Social Services (8% of seniors vs. 12% of younger Canadians) and Health (4% vs. 7%) organizations. The only exception to this general pattern occurs with Religious organizations – 13% of seniors volunteered for Religious organizations, compared to 10% of younger Canadians.

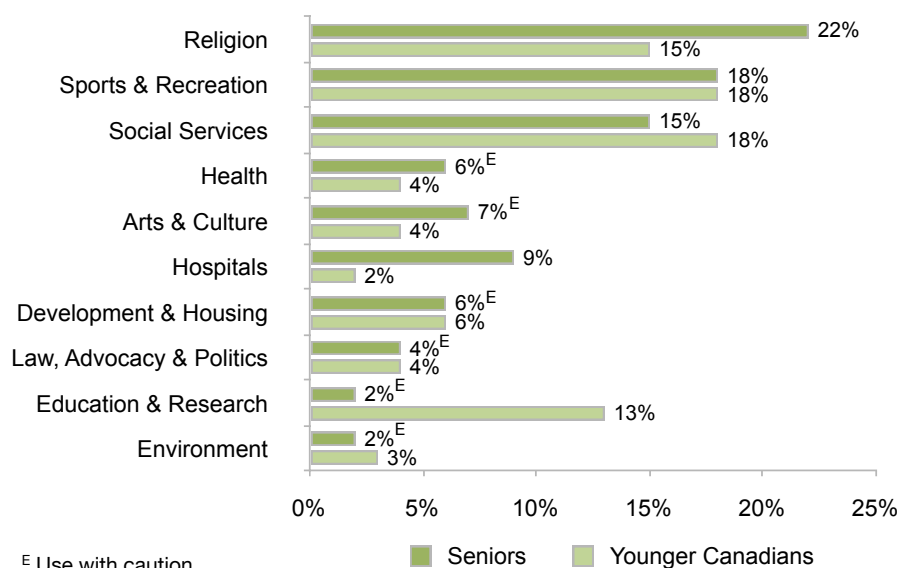
Although they are less likely to volunteer for most types of organizations, seniors who volunteer tend to contribute more hours than their younger counterparts. The differences between senior and younger volunteers were perhaps most striking among those volunteering for Hospitals (seniors volunteered an average of 215 hours annually vs. 63 hours for younger volunteers) and Health organizations (106^E hours vs. 44 hours for younger volunteers) (see Figure 14). Although they were much less likely to volunteer for Education and Research organizations, the difference between the average hours volunteered by senior and younger volunteers in those areas is much less pronounced (75^E hours by seniors and 71 hours by younger volunteers).

Figure 14: Average hours volunteered by selected organization types, seniors and younger Canadians, 2004



Seniors tend to allocate their volunteer hours somewhat differently than do younger volunteers. Seniors devoted more of their total volunteer hours to organizations working in the areas of Religion (22% of total hours vs. 15% of total hours for younger volunteers), Hospitals (9% vs. 2%), Arts and Culture (7%^E vs. 4%), and Health (6%^E vs. 4%) (see Figure 15). Conversely, they allocated a much lower percentage of their total volunteer hours to Education and Research organizations (2%^E vs. 13%).

Figure 15: Distribution of annual volunteer hours by selected organization types, seniors and younger Canadians, 2004



What senior volunteers do

Senior volunteers tend to be involved in the same range of volunteer activities as younger volunteers. However, they were more likely to be involved in some activities, such as sitting on a committee or board (46% vs. 35% of younger volunteers), providing health care or support (22% vs. 19%), collecting or delivering materials such as food (28% vs. 25%), and doing office or administrative work (27% vs. 25%) (see Figure 16). Conversely, older volunteers were less likely to engage in a number of other activities, particularly coaching, refereeing, or officiating (6% vs. 20%), fundraising (35% vs. 47%), and teaching, educating or mentoring (22% vs. 31%).

Seniors tended to spend the largest part of their volunteer time sitting on committees or boards (an average of 17% of total hours), followed by organizing or supervising events (13%) and fundraising (13%) (see Figure 17). Conversely, they tended to spend very little of their time coaching, refereeing, and officiating (1%^E) or engaging in environmental protection or conservation activities (2%^E).

Senior and younger volunteers spend their volunteer hours differently. Seniors tended to devote more time to sitting on boards or committees (an average of 17% of total hours vs. 11% for younger volunteers), providing health care or support (7% vs. 4%), collecting, serving, and delivering food and other goods (9% vs. 6%), and doing office work (9% vs. 6%). Conversely, they tended to spend less time engaged in activities like coaching, refereeing, and officiating (1%^E vs. 8%) and teaching, educating, or mentoring (6% vs. 11%).

THE GIVING AND VOLUNTEERING OF SENIORS

Figure 16: Percentages of volunteers involved in different volunteer activities, senior and younger volunteers, 2004

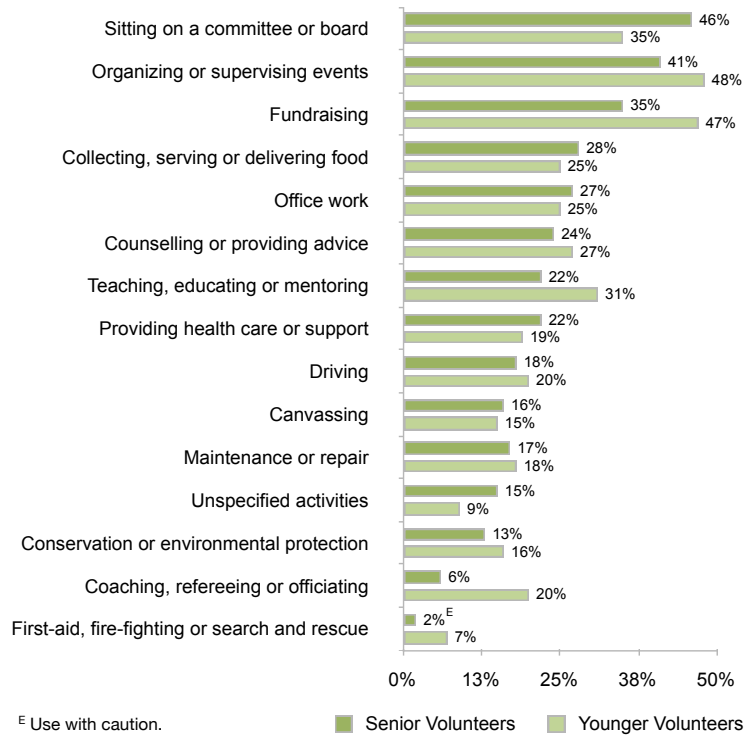
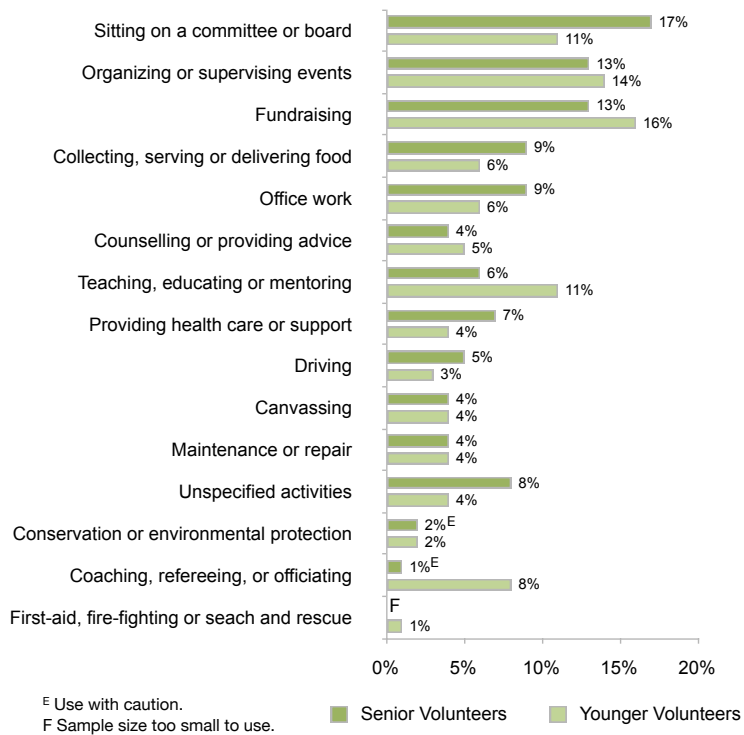


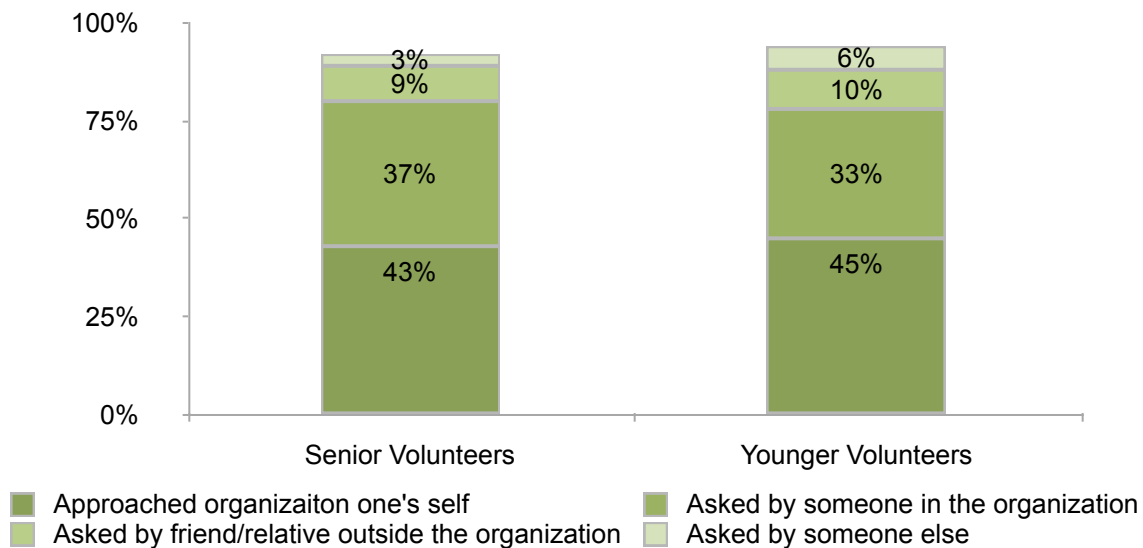
Figure 17: Average percentage of total hours devoted to primary organization by volunteer activity, senior and younger volunteers, 2004



How senior volunteers become involved

The CSGVP asks volunteers how they became involved with the organization to which they contributed the most hours. Just over two fifths (43%) of seniors said that they approached the organization on their own initiative, while nearly half (49%) said they were asked to volunteer by someone (see Figure 18). The largest difference between seniors and younger volunteers is that seniors were slightly more likely to have been asked to volunteer by someone within the organization (37% vs. 33% of younger volunteers).

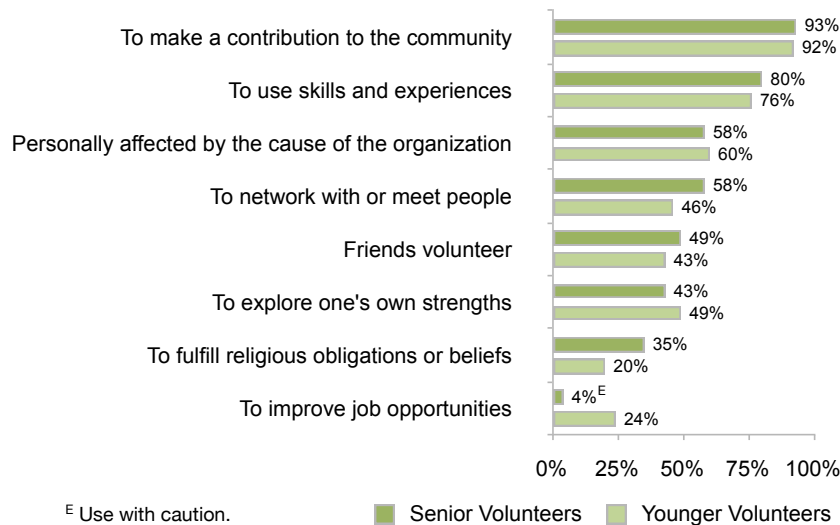
Figure 18: Methods of initial involvement with primary organization, senior and younger volunteers, 2004



Why seniors volunteer

Seniors who volunteer are more likely than younger volunteers to be motivated by religious and social concerns and less likely to be motivated by job opportunities or strength exploration. Seniors were more likely than their younger counterparts to volunteer to fulfill religious obligations or beliefs (35% of seniors vs. 20% of younger volunteers), to network and meet people (58% vs. 46%), or because their friends volunteered (49% vs. 43%) (see Figure 19). Seniors were less likely to volunteer to improve their job opportunities (4%^E vs. 24%) or to explore their own strengths (43% vs. 49%).

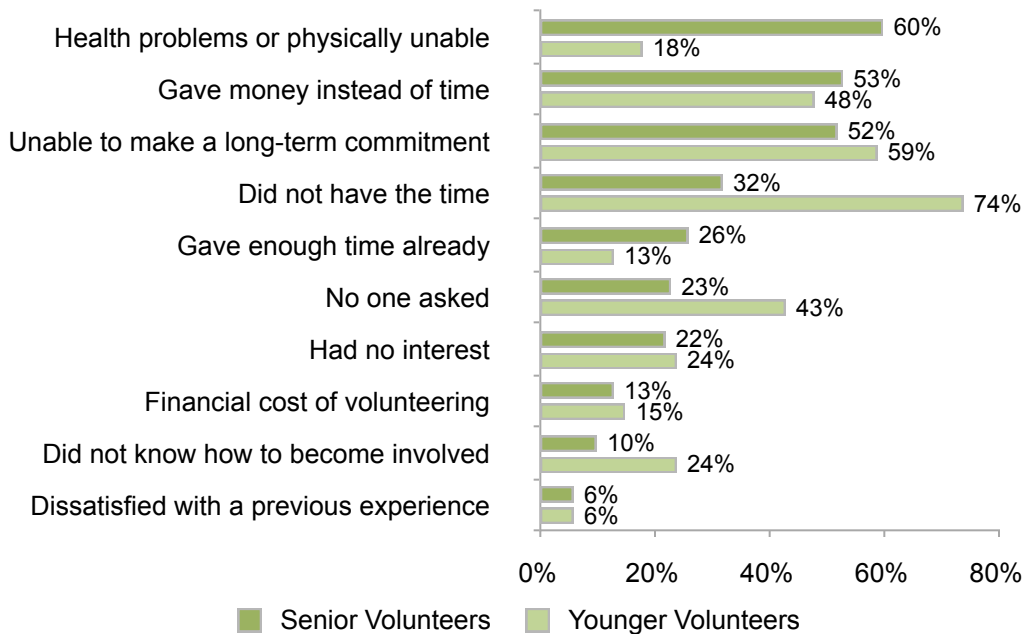
Figure 19: Reasons for volunteering, senior and younger volunteers, 2004



The barriers to volunteering faced by seniors

Seniors were most likely to say that they do not volunteer because they have health problems or are physically unable to volunteer (60% of seniors who did not volunteer cited this barrier) (see Figure 20). About half said they gave money rather than time (53%) or were unable to make a long-term commitment (52%). Relatively small numbers of seniors

Figure 20: Reasons for not volunteering at all, senior and younger non-volunteers, 2004



said they didn't know how to become involved (10%) or were dissatisfied with a prior volunteering experience (6%).

Seniors and younger Canadians have very different responses to barriers to volunteering. Seniors were much more likely than younger Canadians to cite health issues as a reason for not volunteering (60% vs. 18% of younger Canadians). They were also more likely to say that they have already contributed enough time (26% vs. 13%) or gave money rather than time (53% vs. 48%). Conversely, seniors were much less likely to say that they do not have the time to volunteer (32% vs. 74%), that no one had asked them to volunteer (23% vs. 43%), and that they did not know how to become involved (10% vs. 24%).

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About Imagine Canada

Imagine Canada is a national charitable organization whose cause is Canada's charities and nonprofits. We reinforce the sector's collective voice, act as a forum and meeting place and create an environment in which organizations contribute to building stronger communities.

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For more information about Imagine Canada please visit www.imaginecanada.ca

For more information on the 2004 Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating please visit www.givingandvolunteering.ca

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