

# Who are Canada's Volunteers?

## Personal and economic characteristics

Twenty-seven percent of Canadians (6.5 million people) volunteered an average of 162 hours each, according to the 2000 National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating (NSGVP).<sup>1</sup>

However, the contribution of volunteers is influenced by a variety of factors, including their age, sex, level of education, involvement in the labour force, and household composition.

### Age

Canadians in their middle years were the most likely to volunteer. Thirty percent of Canadians between the ages of 35 and 54 volunteered in 2000.

Canadians aged 64 years and over volunteered at the lowest rate (18%), but contributed the highest number of hours on average over the year (269).

Youth between the ages of 15 and 24 also volunteered at a rate above the national average (29% vs. the national average of 27%). Almost one in five youth volunteers (18%) were required to volunteer by their school, their employer, or the government.

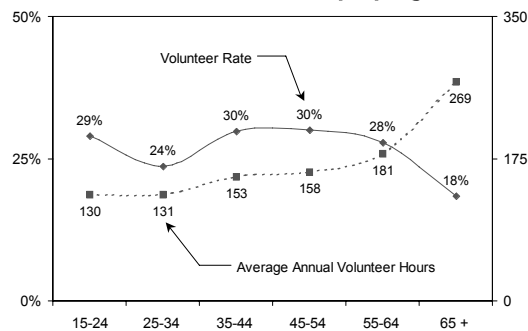
### Education

Volunteering tends to increase with the amount of formal education. Those Canadians with at least some post-secondary education volunteered at a higher rate than those with less education. Canadians with a university degree were the most likely to volunteer (39%).

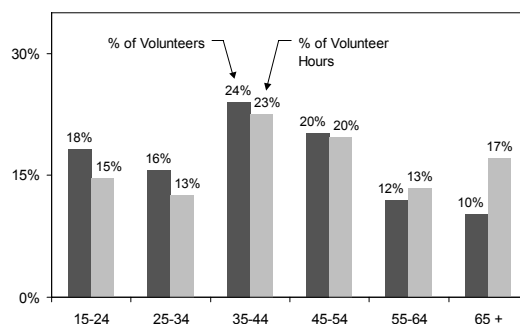
Canadians with higher levels of formal education also tended to contribute more hours. Canadians with some post-secondary contributed the most on average (173 hours).

<sup>1</sup> Findings from the 2000 NSGVP are based on reports of charitable giving and volunteering over a one-year period by Canadians aged 15 and older.

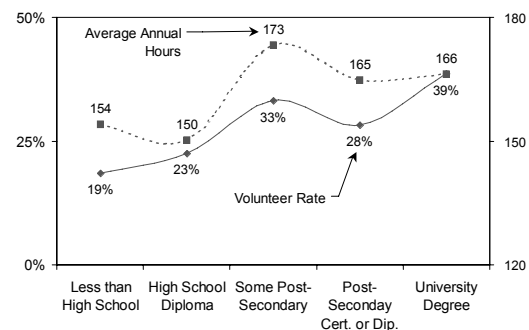
**Volunteer Rate and Average Hours Volunteered Annually by Age**



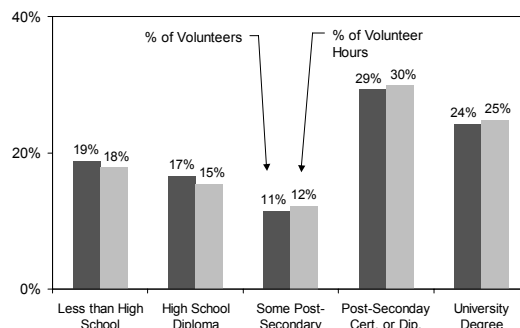
**Percentage of Volunteers and Percentage of Total Volunteer Hours by Age**



**Volunteer Rate and Average Hours Volunteered Annually by Education**



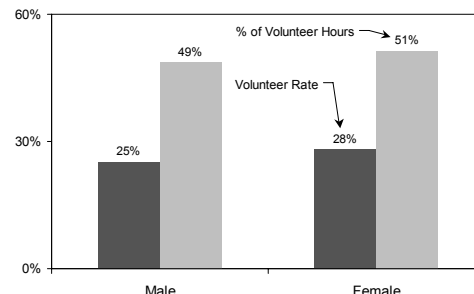
**Percentage Volunteers and Percentage Total Volunteer Hours by Education**



**Sex**

Women volunteered at a higher rate than did men (28% vs. 25%). However, men contributed more hours on average than did women (170 vs. 155). In 1997, both women (33%) and men (29%) volunteered at a higher rate but contributed, on average, fewer hours (140 for women and 160 hours for men).<sup>2</sup>

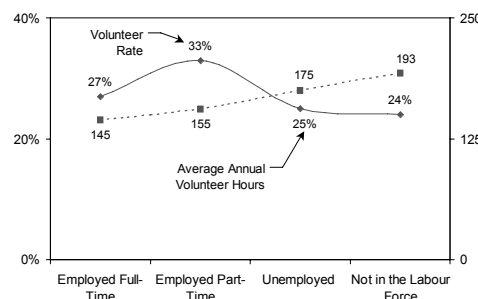
**Volunteer Rate and Percentage of Total Volunteer Hours by Sex**



**Labour force status**

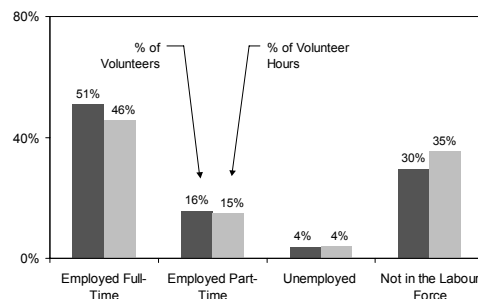
Two thirds (67%) of volunteers in 2000 were employed. Employed Canadians tended to volunteer at a higher rate than Canadians who were unemployed or not in the labour force. Canadians who were employed part-time volunteered at the highest rate (33%).

**Volunteer Rate and Average Hours Volunteered Annually by Labour Force Status**



However, the 30% of volunteers who were not in the labour force contributed the most hours on average (193), followed by the 4% of volunteers who were unemployed (175 hours).

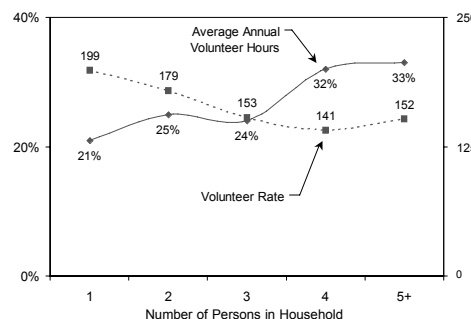
**Percentage of Volunteers and Percentage of Total Volunteer Hours by Labour Force Status**



**Household size and composition**

Canadians living in households with more people tend to volunteer at a higher rate because larger households are more likely to contain children. And almost one of every three (32%) of Canadians in a household with children under the age of 18 years volunteered.

**Volunteer Rate and Average Hours Volunteered Annually by Household Size**



Canadians without children in the household volunteered at a lower rate (24%). However, volunteers with children in the household contributed fewer hours on average (150) compared to those without children (168).

<sup>2</sup> 1997 figures from the 1997 NSGVP, which is based on reports of charitable giving and volunteering over a one-year period by Canadians aged 15 and older.

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](http://www.givingandvolunteering.ca).

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