

Volunteering in British Columbia

Fact Sheet #27

How many? How much?

Nearly one-third (32%) of British Columbians aged 15 and over volunteered for a charitable or nonprofit organization, according to the National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating (NSGVP).¹

Volunteers contributed an average of 169 hours each during the year, for a total of 169 million hours. This is equivalent to 88,000 full-time jobs – approximately equal to 4% of British Columbia's labour force.

Much comes from the few

Just over one-third of all volunteer hours were contributed by the 5% of volunteers who gave 618 hours or more of their time. The 20% of volunteers who gave from 198 hours to 617 hours per year accounted for 37% of all volunteer hours. Together, these groups comprised just 25% of volunteers, but contributed 71% of all volunteer hours.

Variations by size of community

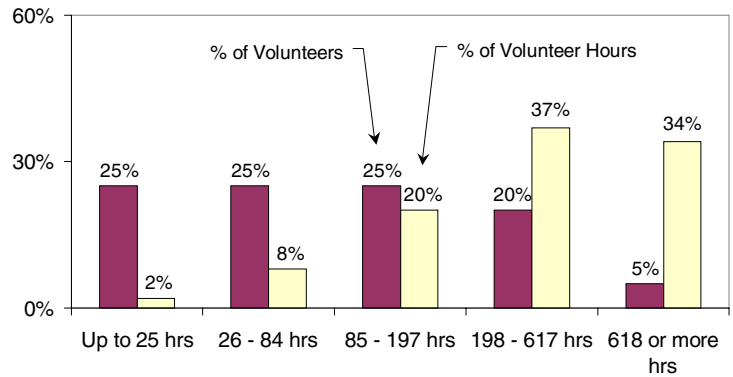
The volunteering patterns for British Columbia as a whole are similar to those in large urban areas of the province because the majority of the population resides in such areas. There are differences, however, between volunteering patterns in large urban areas and those in smaller communities.

A higher percentage of rural British Columbians volunteered, compared to those who lived in cities and towns of 500,000 or more residents.

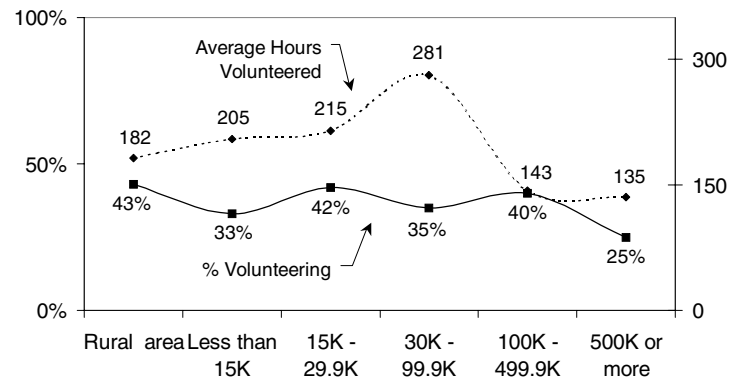
Volunteers in towns of 30,000 to 99,999 residents (e.g., Nanaimo, Chilliwack) contributed the highest average number of volunteer hours annually. However, nearly half of all volunteer hours were contributed by those who were residents of cities with populations of 100,000 or more.

Rural volunteers contributed 18% of all volunteer hours.

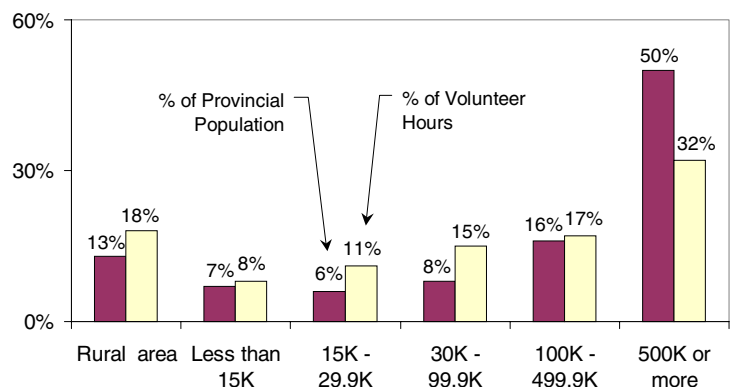
Percentage of British Columbia Volunteers and Total Hours Volunteered by Number of Hours Volunteered



Percentage of British Columbia Population Volunteering and Average Hours Volunteered by Size of Community



Percentage of Total Volunteer Hours and Percentage of Population in British Columbia by Size of Community



1. Findings from the NSGVP are based on reports of charitable giving and volunteering over the one-year period from November 1, 1996 to October 31, 1997 by Canadians aged 15 and older.

What volunteers do...

British Columbian volunteers do everything from fundraising to providing transportation for others. The most common volunteer activities were:

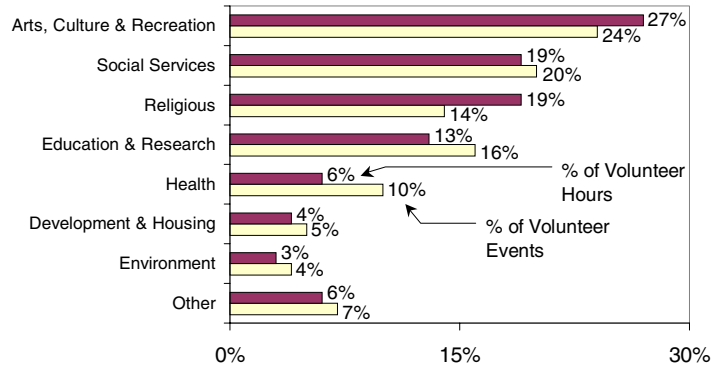
- 🍁 Organizing or supervising activities or events (51%)²
- 🍁 Canvassing, campaigning or fundraising (43%)
- 🍁 Serving as an unpaid member of a board or committee (40%)
- 🍁 Consulting, executive, office or administrative work (30%)
- 🍁 Teaching or coaching (29%)
- 🍁 Providing information or helping to educate people, influence public opinion or lobby others on behalf of an organization (29%)
- 🍁 Driving for an organization (25%)
- 🍁 Providing care or support to others (24%)

...And where they volunteer

In British Columbia, most volunteering occurs in 5 types of organizations:

- 🍁 Arts, culture and recreation organizations
- 🍁 Social service organizations
- 🍁 Religious organizations
- 🍁 Education and research organizations
- 🍁 Health organizations

Percentage of Volunteer Hours and Percentage of Volunteer Events in British Columbia by Type of Organization



QUICK facts...

The top four motivations for volunteering were:

- 🍁 To help a cause in which they personally believe (95%)
- 🍁 To use their skills and experience (83%)
- 🍁 Because they have been personally affected or know someone who has been personally affected by the cause the organization supports (73%)
- 🍁 To explore their own strengths (56%)

2. Each occurrence of volunteering for an organization reported by an individual volunteer constitutes one volunteer event. Percentages do not add up to 100% because many volunteers engage in more than one type of activity.



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VOLUNTEER
BÉNÉVOLES
CANADA

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More information on the results of the NSGVP, including the full text of the highlight report *Caring Canadians, Involved Canadians*, is available online at our Web site: www.nsgvp.org

Or contact us:

Manager, Research Projects
Canadian Centre for Philanthropy
425 University Avenue, Suite 700
Toronto Ontario, M5G 1T6
Phone: 416-597-2293 ext. 238 Fax: 416-597-2294
e-mail: ccpresearch@ccp.ca

Fact Sheet #27 written by Stephanie Saunders, Research Associate, Canadian Centre for Philanthropy.