

Volunteering Trends in Canada 1987-1997



Fact Sheet #10

Volunteering on the Rise

In 1997, 7.5 million Canadians aged 15 and over volunteered for a charitable or nonprofit organization, according to the National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating (NSGVP).¹

This is 2.2 million more than the number who volunteered in 1987² — an estimated 5.3 million.

Almost one-third (31.4%) of the Canadian population volunteered in 1997, 4.6 percentage points higher than in 1987.

Total volunteer hours increased

In 1997, Canadians volunteered a total of 1.11 billion hours (equivalent to 578,000 full-time jobs), up from 1.02 billion hours (equivalent to 530,000 full-time jobs) in 1987.

Canadians contributed 9% more volunteer hours (91 million more hours) in 1997 than in 1987.

Individuals contributed less time

While the proportion of volunteers in Canada and the total number of hours volunteered increased, the average number of hours volunteered decreased.

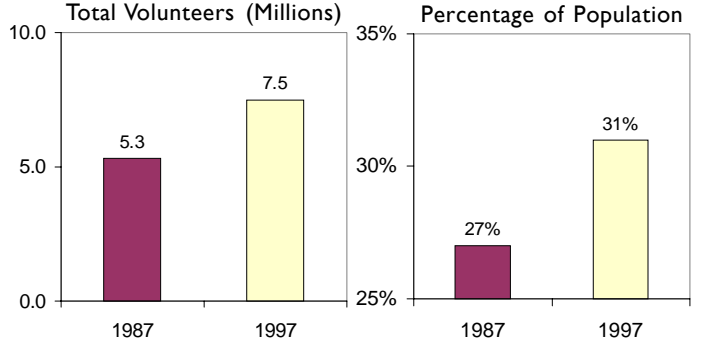
In 1987 Canadians volunteered an average of 191 hours. In 1997 this declined to 149 hours.

Provincial Variations

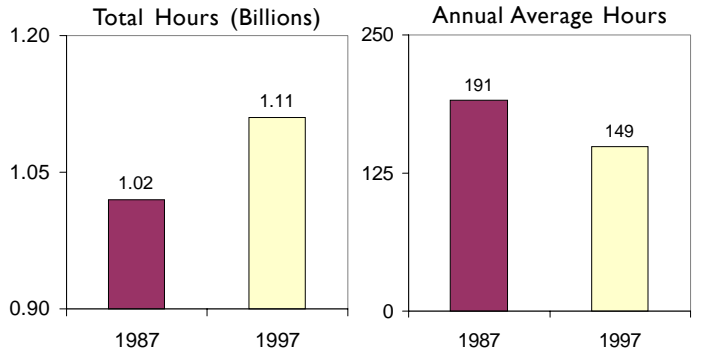
Between 1987 and 1997 the percentage of Canadians volunteering increased in every province except Alberta. Newfoundland and Saskatchewan experienced the largest increases.

1. Findings from the NSGVP are based on reports of volunteering over the one-year period from November 1, 1996 to October 31, 1997 by Canadians aged 15 and older.
2. 1987 Volunteer Activity Survey, Statistics Canada.

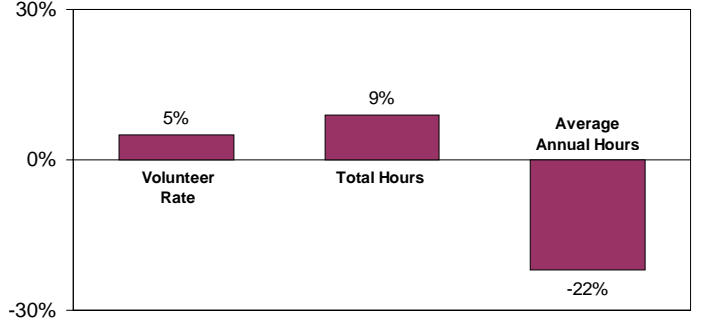
Number of Volunteers in Canada, 1987 and 1997



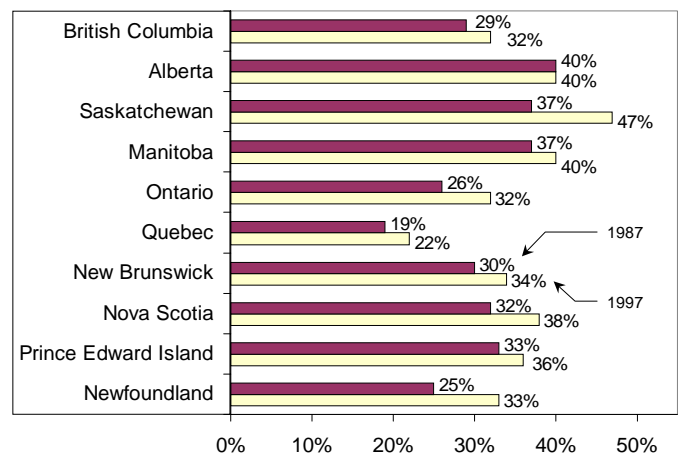
Hours Volunteered in Canada, 1987 and 1997



Change in Volunteer Rate, Percentage Change in Total Hours and Average Hours Volunteered from 1987 to 1997



Percentage of Population Volunteering by Province, 1987 and 1997



Variations by Age

- ✿ The percentage of 15 to 24 year-olds who volunteered in Canada nearly doubled from 1987 to 1997 (18% versus 33% respectively). The volunteer rate for other age groups increased only slightly; 2% for 25-44 year-olds and 3% for those aged 45 and older.
- ✿ The increase in total number of hours volunteered from 1987 to 1997 was not uniform among the three age groups.³ The proportion of hours contributed increased by 3% for volunteers aged 15 to 24, decreased by 7% for volunteers aged 25 to 44, and increased by 6% for volunteers over 45 years.

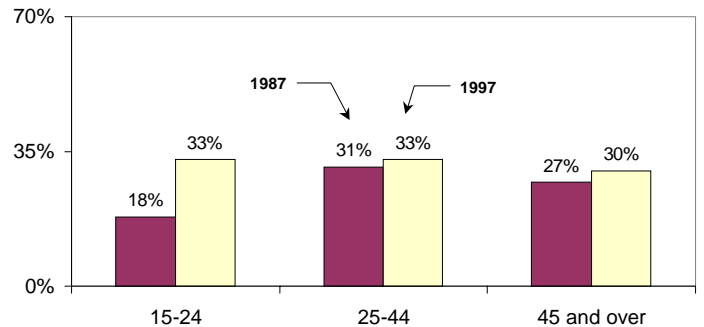
On average, Canadians of all ages spent less time volunteering in 1997 than in 1987.

The smallest average decrease was observed for volunteers aged 45 and older who contributed an average of 203 hours in 1987 and 170 hours in 1997 — a 16% decrease.

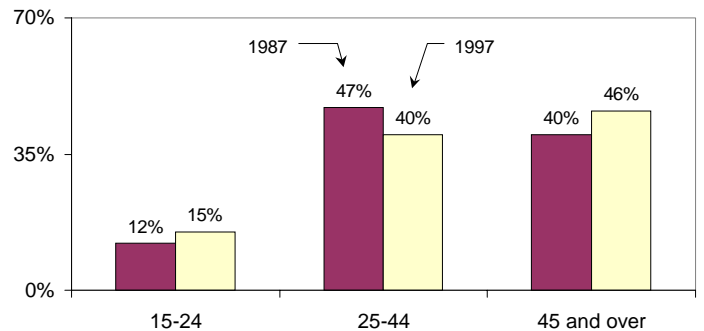
The largest average decrease was among those aged 15 to 24 for whom the average number of hours per year declined from 174 hours in 1987 to 125 hours in 1997— a 28% decrease.

3. Giving Freely: Volunteers in Canada. Doreen Duchesne, Labour and Household Survey Analysis Division, Statistics Canada. Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1989.

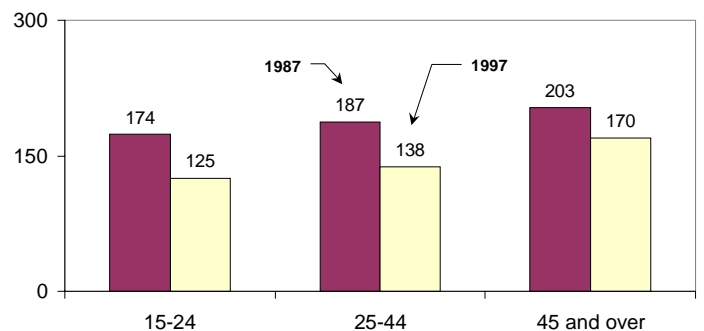
Percentage of Population Volunteering by Age



Percentage of Total Hours Volunteered by Age



Average Number of Hours Volunteered by Age



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VOLUNTEER
BÉNÉVOLES
CANADA

We would like to acknowledge the support provided by Community Foundations of Canada for the production of these fact sheets.

Published February 2000

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 Website: www.nsgvp.org

Or contact us:

Research Coordinator
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 #10 written by Laura Heinz,
Research Associate, Canadian Centre for Philanthropy.