

Key Volunteering Statistics

February 2022

Disclaimer

These statistics have been compiled primarily from external sources. While every effort has been made to provide accurate and up to date data, Volunteering Australia does not accept any liability for the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of data in this summary. Users are encouraged to visit the source report to assist in the understanding of the data and context of information provided.

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	5
Volunteering numbers and rates	6
Formal volunteering	6
<i>Formal volunteering rates by State/Territory, 2019 and 2020</i>	6
Key characteristics of formal volunteering.....	7
Informal volunteering.....	7
<i>Informal volunteering rates by State/Territory, 2019 and 2020</i>	7
Geography	8
<i>Rate and estimate of volunteers by remoteness of residence, 2020</i>	8
Demographics.....	8
Gender	8
<i>Formal and informal volunteering rates by gender, 2019 and 2020</i>	8
Disability	9
<i>Formal and informal volunteering rates by health status, 2019.....</i>	9
<i>Formal and informal volunteering rates by health status, 2020.....</i>	9
Cultural and linguistic diversity	9
<i>Formal and informal volunteering by cultural and linguistic diversity, 2019 and 2020.....</i>	10
<i>Volunteering and Settlement in Australia, 2019.....</i>	10
Age.....	10
<i>Formal and informal volunteering rates by age, 2019 and 2020.....</i>	11
<i>Formal volunteering numbers and proportions by age, 2016.....</i>	11
Labour force status.....	11
<i>Formal and informal volunteering by labour force participation, 2019 and 2020.....</i>	12
<i>Relationship between volunteering and employment, 2018.....</i>	12
Household type	12
<i>Formal and informal volunteering by household type, 2019</i>	12
Level of education	13
<i>Formal and informal volunteering by level of education, 2020</i>	13
Income	13
<i>Formal and informal volunteering by income, 2019 and 2020.....</i>	13
Method of travel.....	14
Level of satisfaction with volunteering	14

Nature of organisations and activities.....	14
Type of organisation.....	14
<i>Formal volunteering rate by type of organisation, 2019 and 2020</i>	<i>15</i>
Nature of volunteering activity	15
<i>Type of volunteering activity, 2014</i>	<i>15</i>
Number of volunteering organisations	16
<i>Number of organisations volunteered for in last 12 months, 2020</i>	<i>16</i>
Reasons for volunteering	16
<i>Reasons for being a volunteer, 2020</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>How first became involved in voluntary work, 2020.....</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>Family history of volunteering, 2014</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>Childhood activities, 2014</i>	<i>17</i>
Nature of volunteering.....	17
<i>How voluntary work was undertaken, 2019 and 2020.....</i>	<i>17</i>
Duration of volunteering.....	18
<i>How long ago first became involved in voluntary work, 2020</i>	<i>18</i>
Volunteering hours	18
<i>Annual hours spent volunteering by sex, 2020</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Type of volunteering by annual hours, proportions, 2014.....</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>Type of volunteering by annual hours, estimates, 2014.....</i>	<i>19</i>
Volunteer involving organisations and recruitment.....	19
Volunteer recruitment.....	19
<i>On-line volunteer recruitment, 2019</i>	<i>20</i>
Volunteer training	20
<i>How volunteer training takes place, 2020.....</i>	<i>20</i>
Corporate volunteering.....	20
<i>Corporate volunteering, 2019.....</i>	<i>21</i>
The value of volunteering.....	21
Economic value.....	21
<i>Non-profit institutions volunteering hours and value, Australian National Accounts, 2012-13.....</i>	<i>21</i>
Social and community value.....	22
<i>How volunteers and non-volunteers contribute to community life, 2010</i>	<i>22</i>
Financial costs.....	22
<i>Financial costs of volunteering, 2014</i>	<i>22</i>
Trends in volunteering	23

National	23
COVID-19	23
Global.....	24
<i>Deployment of digital tools, 2020 and 2021</i>	22
Challenges for volunteer managers.....	25
<i>Volunteer management challenges, 2016 - 2020</i>	25
Spontaneous volunteering	25
Volunteering in charities and the wider not-for-profit sector	26
Volunteering in regional, remote, and rural Australia.....	26
Sources of data on volunteering	27

Introduction

This document provides key statistics about volunteering in Australia.

Multiple sources of data on volunteering exist and this document draws on relevant information from across this data landscape. A key source of data utilised is official statistics produced by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), specifically the General Social Survey which includes a series of questions about volunteering. The most recent data available is the 2020 General Social Survey,¹ with previous surveys conducted in 2019, 2014, 2010, 2006, and 2002.

This document provides largely a national picture, with some State and Territory breakdowns being provided where the data is available. Increasingly, States and Territories produce their own ‘State of Volunteering’ surveys and reports which are a rich source of information within each jurisdiction. These can be found via the State and Territory peak volunteering bodies.²

Volunteering Australia’s definition of volunteering is “time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain.”³ This document deploys this definition and hence includes information on formal and informal volunteering. The ABS defines ‘formal volunteering’ as unpaid voluntary work through an organisation and ‘informal volunteering’ as the provision of unpaid work/support to non-family members outside of the household.

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic had a profound impact on volunteering. A study conducted by the ANU Centre for Social Research and Methods found that the proportion of adult Australians engaging in formal voluntary work, which is done through an organisation or group, fell from 36.0 per cent in late 2019 to 24.2 per cent in April 2021.⁴ Further, only slightly more than half (56.4 per cent) of those who stopped volunteering in 2020 resumed in the 12 months leading up to April 2021, despite the easing of lockdowns and social distancing restrictions in many jurisdictions at that time. A similar decline is found by the General Social Survey, which found that the rate of formal volunteering decreased from 29.5 per cent in 2019 to 24.8 per cent in 2020. The Household Impacts of COVID-19 Surveys found further decreases month-on-month, reaching 20.6 per cent in March 2021.

With these changes in mind, this factsheet has been updated to include data collected in 2020 and 2021, since the outbreak of COVID-19. However, noting that this data may be strongly influenced by the social and economic impacts of the pandemic—including lockdowns and other public health restrictions, changes in patterns of paid work, and mental and physical health consequences—official data from 2019 is also included.

For further information on the impact of COVID-19 on volunteering, see the following factsheets:

Volunteering and the early impact of COVID-19 (May 2020)

Volunteering and the ongoing impact of COVID-19 (May 2021)

Continuity and change: volunteering during the COVID-19 pandemic (December 2021)

Key Statistics about Volunteering in Australia: The General Social Survey 2020 and the Household Impacts of COVID-19 Survey (October 2021)

Note: Throughout this document, estimates marked with a ‘#’ have a high margin of error and should be used with caution.

Volunteering numbers and rates

Formal volunteering

Across Australia, it is estimated that over 5 million (5.025 million) people volunteered through an organisation or group in 2020. This is almost one quarter (24.8%) of people aged 15 years and over. By comparison, 29.5 per cent (5.897 million people) volunteered through an organisation or group in 2019.

Rates of formal volunteering (through an organisation or group) are similar across the country.

Formal volunteering rates by State/Territory, 2019 and 2020

<i>State/Territory</i>	<i>Formal volunteering rate (2019)</i>	<i>Formal volunteering rate (2020)</i>
<i>New South Wales</i>	28.9%	23.1%
<i>Victoria</i>	32.1%	24.4%
<i>Queensland</i>	26.5%	25.4%
<i>South Australia</i>	27.1%	26.2%
<i>Western Australia</i>	27.1%	25.6%
<i>Tasmania</i>	34.2%	30.2%
<i>Northern Territory</i>	28.7%	28.4%
<i>Australian Capital Territory</i>	29.8%	30.9%

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (September 2020) 'Table 15: Persons aged 15 years and over, Social Experiences—By State and territory, estimate' [data set], General Social Survey, Australia; Customised report, ABS, 2021

The rate of volunteering through an organisation has declined over time: for people aged 18 years and over, the rate has declined from 36.2% in 2010 to 28.8% in 2019.⁵

The decline is most evident for women, whose rate decreased from 38.1% in 2010 to 28.1% in 2019. By comparison, the proportion of men who volunteer decreased from 34.4% to 29.4%.

Volunteers contributed 596.2 million hours to the community in 2019. This is a 20% decrease in the total number of volunteering hours from 2014 (743.3 million hours). In 2020, they contributed 489.5 million hours, a further decrease of 18%.

Alternative sources provide different estimates for volunteering and of trends over time.

For example, according to the 2016 Census,⁶ 3.6 million people, or 19% of the population aged 15 years and over, were engaged in voluntary work through an organisation or group. This represents a slight increase from the 2011 Census results, where 17.8% of people responded they were engaged in voluntary work. Data on volunteering was also collected in the 2021 Census, which is due to be released in June 2022.

The 2016 Giving Australia Survey estimated that 8.7 million people volunteered their time to charities and Non-Profit Organisations in 2016, which is 43.7% of the population. This is an increase from the 2005 Giving Australia survey which estimated 41% of the population volunteered.⁷

Key characteristics of formal volunteering

- Based on GSS 2019 data, men and women now volunteer at similar rates, 30.7% and 28.5 % respectively (aged 15 years and over).
 - In 2020, 23.1% of men and 26.3% of women volunteered formally.
- People aged 40-54 years are more likely to volunteer (30.5%) than other age groups. Volunteering rates for other age groups are: 15-24 (19.4%), 25-39 (20.9%), 55-69 (24.9%), and 70 years and over (28.0%).
- The most common types of organisations for which people volunteered were those relating to sport and physical recreation (30.7% of volunteers), religious groups (23.1%) and education and training (18.8%). This was largely unchanged between 2019 and 2020, though the proportion of people involved in community/ethnic groups increased from 11.6% to 15.7%.
- 66.4% of people volunteered for one organisation only, 23.0% for two and 10.4% for three or more.
- In 2019, nearly all formal volunteering (98.3%) involved volunteering in person, in the office or the field, but 8.5% of people said they volunteered over the internet and 9.5% over the phone. In 2020, 96.6% of volunteers undertook some in person volunteering, 17.3% volunteered over the internet and 13.9% over the phone.

Further detail on these characteristics is provided in sections below.

Informal volunteering

Over 6.5 million (6.511 million) people aged 15 years and over provided informal volunteering support in their community in the four weeks prior to the 2020 GSS survey. This is 32.1% of the population. In 2019, 6.676 million (33.4%) volunteered informally.

Informal volunteering rates tend to be higher than formal volunteering. This pattern is consistent across the country. Further, the rate of informal volunteering was less strongly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic than the rate of formal volunteering.

Informal volunteering rates by State/Territory, 2019 and 2020

<i>State/Territory</i>	<i>Informal volunteering rate (2019)</i>	<i>Informal volunteering rate (2020)</i>
<i>New South Wales</i>	29.1%	33.8%
<i>Victoria</i>	36.0%	31.0%
<i>Queensland</i>	31.9%	32.6%
<i>South Australia</i>	36.3%	28.9%
<i>West Australia</i>	35.6%	30.0%
<i>Tasmania</i>	36.3%	32.9%
<i>Northern Territory</i>	42.3%	36.2%
<i>Australian Capital Territory</i>	40.9%	38.9%

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (September 2020) 'Table 15: Persons aged 15 years and over, Social Experiences—By State and territory, estimate' [data set], General Social Survey, Australia; Customised report, ABS, 2021

In 2020, most informal volunteers (89.7%) contributed between 1 and 20 hours in the past four weeks. This

proportion is similar to 2019 (87.2%).

In 2020, the most common types of informal volunteering were ‘providing emotional support’ (53.8%), ‘providing transport and running errands’ (38.2%), and ‘domestic work, home maintenance or gardening’ (37.2%). In 2019, these were ‘domestic work, home maintenance or gardening’ (41.9%), ‘providing transport or running errands’ (42.4%) and ‘providing emotional support’ (50.5%).

Geography

The rate of formal volunteering is higher in regional areas than capital cities.

Rate and estimate of volunteers by remoteness of residence, 2020

<i>Residence</i>	<i>Rate of formal volunteering (%)</i>	<i>Number of formal volunteers</i>
<i>Major cities</i>	24.4	3.685 million
<i>Inner regional</i>	24.9	0.958 million
<i>Outer regional and Remote Australia</i>	28.2	0.377 million
<i>Total persons</i>	24.8	5.025 million

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (June 2021) 'Table 7.1: Persons aged 15 years and over, Social Experiences–By Remoteness area, estimate [data set], General Social Survey, Australia; Customised report, ABS, 2021

Demographics

Gender

Volunteering rates for males and females are similar.

Formal and informal volunteering rates by gender, 2019 and 2020

<i>Gender</i>	<i>2019</i>		<i>2020</i>	
	<i>Rate of formal volunteering</i>	<i>Rate of informal volunteering</i>	<i>Rate of formal volunteering</i>	<i>Rate of informal volunteering</i>
<i>Women</i>	30.7	33.9	26.4	32.7
<i>Men</i>	28.5	32.6	23.1	32.4
<i>Total persons</i>	29.5	33.4	24.8	32.1

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (September 2020) 'Table 3.3: Persons aged 15 years and over, Social Experiences–By Age and Sex, proportion of persons [data set], General Social Survey, Australia; Australian Bureau of Statistics (June 2021) 'Table 3.3: Persons aged 15 years and over, Social Experiences–By Sex and Health Characteristics, proportion of persons [data set], General Social Survey, Australia

However, the type of volunteering, hours of volunteering and length of time someone has volunteered vary by gender. For further information, see below and the [Volunteering Australia - Volunteering and Gender Key Statistics](#) fact sheet.

Disability

In 2020, 26.0% of people with disability volunteered for an organisation, compared to 24.3% of people without disability. People with disability make up more than one quarter (29.1%) of all people volunteering for an organisation. Between 2019 and 2020, the number of people with disability who volunteered in Australia remained steady, despite an overall decrease in the rate volunteering.

In relation to informal volunteering, 29.6% of people with disability undertook informal volunteering in the four weeks prior to the survey, compared to 33.1% of people without disability. People with disability make up over one in four (27.6%) of all people volunteering informally.

Formal and informal volunteering by health status, 2019

	Formal volunteering		Informal volunteering	
	Number	% of volunteers	Number	% of volunteers
People with a mental health condition	580,400	9.8	931,000	13.9
People with a long-term health condition	2,423,000	41.1	3,009,000	45.1
People with a disability	1,472,600	25.0	1,833,000	27.5

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (September 2020) 'Table 4: Persons aged 15 years and over, Social Experiences—By Sex and Health Characteristics' [data set], General Social Survey, Australia

Formal and informal volunteering by health status, 2020

	Formal volunteering		Informal volunteering	
	Number	% of volunteers	Number	% of volunteers
People with a mental health condition	641,800	12.8	741,400	11.4
People with a long-term health condition	2,362,400	47.1	2,842,500	43.7
People with a disability	1,464,100	29.1	1,670,200	25.7

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (June 2021) 'Table 3: Persons aged 15 years and over, Social Experiences—By Sex and Health Characteristics' [data set], General Social Survey, Australia

Cultural and linguistic diversity

People from culturally and linguistically diverse communities are more likely to volunteer informally in their community rather than formally through an organisation.

In 2020, 25.7% of people whose main language is English volunteered formally (through an organisation), compared to 18.2% of people whose main language is a language other than English. In relation to informal volunteering, 32.0% of people whose main language is English volunteer informally, compared to 32.7% of people whose main language is another language.

Formal and informal volunteering by cultural and linguistic diversity, 2019 and 2020

Cultural and linguistic diversity	2019		2020	
	Formal volunteering rate	Informal volunteering rate	Formal volunteering rate	Informal volunteering rate
Born in Australia	30.9	33.5	27.2	31.9
Total migrants	26.5	32.8	19.7	32.4
Born in another country – recent arrivals	20.3	31.8#	15.0	37.3
Born in another country – other	28.8	34.1	22.3	31.0
Main language spoken at home				
English	31.3	34.5	25.7	32.0
Other language	18.9	27.3	18.2	32.7

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (September 2020) 'Table 5.3: Persons aged 15 years and over, Social Experiences–By Migrant Status, proportion of persons' [data set], General Social Survey, Australia; Australian Bureau of Statistics (September 2020) 'Table 7.1: Persons aged 15 years and over, Voluntary and Unpaid Work/Support–By Personal Characteristics, estimate and proportion' [data set], General Social Survey, Australia; Australian Bureau of Statistics (June 2021) 'Table 4.3: Persons aged 15 years and over, Social Experiences–By Migrant Status, proportion of persons' [data set], General Social Survey, Australia; Australian Bureau of Statistics (June 2021) 'Table 9.3: Persons aged 15 years and over, Voluntary and Unpaid Work/Support–By Personal Characteristics, proportion of persons' [data set], General Social Survey, Australia

Volunteering and Settlement in Australia, 2019

VIOs who recruited volunteers identifying as from migrant or refugee backgrounds in 2018-19	Proportion (%)
Migrant and refugee	65
Migrant (only)	23
Refugee (only)	5
None	5
Unsure	2

Source: Volunteering Australia and Settlement Council of Australia, May 2019

A report on giving and volunteering in culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and First Nations communities in Australia by the Cultural and Indigenous Research Centre Australia (CIRCA) found that both communities are deeply involved in volunteering and sharing for cultural maintenance and community wellbeing.⁸ The report states that:

'CALD participants described volunteering as an inseparable element of their culture that needed to be passed onto the next generation and shared with other Australian communities.'

Similarly, for First Nations participants *'sharing, giving and helping others are integral to Indigenous culture and play a key role in maintaining culture and traditions.'*

Age

People volunteer across the lifecycle. Based on 2020 GSS data, people aged 40-54 were more likely to have participated in unpaid voluntary work through an organisation (30.5%) than any other age group. People aged 25-39 has the highest rate of informal volunteering (38.9%). The proportion of people volunteering formally declined across all age groups in 2020. However, this decline was most significant for the 15-24

years age group, among which the formal volunteering rate fell from 28.8% in 2019 to 19.4% in 2020. The rate of informal volunteering also decreased significantly among people aged 15-24 years (from 36.5% to 27.2%) but remained relatively steady among other age groups.

Older people are more likely to volunteer in welfare, community, and health settings. The proportion of volunteers over 65 years of age is 17% (16.6%). However, 30% of those who did voluntary work for welfare or community organisations are aged 65 years and over, 19% for health organisations, and 27% for both types of organisations.⁹

Formal and informal volunteering rates by age, 2019 and 2020

Age	2019		2020	
	Formal volunteering rate	Informal volunteering rate	Formal volunteering rate	Informal volunteering rate
15-24 years	28.8	36.5	19.4	27.2
25-39 years	25.7	38.8	20.9	38.9
40-54 years	36.2	34.0	30.5	32.7
55-69 years	29.0	27.3	24.9	29.1
70 years and over	24.5	26.9	28.0	26.1

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (September 2020) 'Table 7.1: Persons aged 15 years and over, Voluntary and Unpaid Work/Support—By Personal Characteristics, estimate and proportion' [data set], General Social Survey, Australia; Australian Bureau of Statistics (June 2021) 'Table 9.3: Persons aged 15 years and over, Voluntary and Unpaid Work/Support—By Personal Characteristics, proportion of persons' [data set], General Social Survey, Australia

The Giving Australia 2016 Report found that younger Australians were more likely to have volunteered in the previous 12 months, with nearly half (47%) of 18-24-year old's having volunteered, compared to 28% of those aged 55 and over.

Formal volunteering numbers and proportions by age, 2016

Age	Number of volunteers 000s	% all volunteers
15-17 years	347.4	6%
18-24 years	564.5	10%
25-34 years	931.0	16%
35-44 years	1,244.1	21%
45-54 years	966.2	17%
55-64 years	773.9	13%
65-74 years	656.8	11%
75 years and older	314.4	5%
Total	5.8 m	100%

Source: Giving Australia (2017)

Labour force status

Almost a third (29.8%) of part-time employees' volunteer. They are the most likely segment of the labour force to volunteer, followed by people who are unemployed (26.3%#).

Formal and informal volunteering by labour force participation, 2019 and 2020

Labour force participation	2019		2020	
	Formal volunteering rate	Informal volunteering rate	Formal volunteering rate	Informal volunteering rate
Employed Full-time	30.7	37.5	23.3	35.9
Employed Part-time	34.4	36.6	29.8	39.6
Unemployed	23.4#	40.1#	26.3#	29.7
Not in the labour force	25.4	24.4	22.8	23.4

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (September 2020) 'Table 7.1: Persons aged 15 years and over, Voluntary and Unpaid Work/Support—By Personal Characteristics, estimate and proportion' [data set], General Social Survey, Australia; Australian Bureau of Statistics (June 2021) 'Table 9.3: Persons aged 15 years and over, Voluntary and Unpaid Work/Support—By Personal Characteristics, proportion of persons' [data set], General Social Survey, Australia

Research data also demonstrates that volunteering can support a pathway to paid employment. For example, in a 2018 SEEK survey, 85% of recruiters thought volunteering was just as credible as paid work if it was relevant to the role or industry.

Relationship between volunteering and employment, 2018

Pathway to employment	Proportion
% employers who believe volunteering is a credible way to gain real world experience	95%
% recruiters who believe that volunteering is just as credible as paid work if it is relevant to the role or industry	85%
% employers who believe volunteering gives an advantage at job interviews	92%

Source: SEEK, Get ahead in volunteering in 2018¹⁰

Household type

Households that comprise couples with children are the most likely (37.3%) to volunteer formally. Along with couples without children (34.5%), this group also has high levels (34.1%) of informal volunteering. In 2020, households that comprise couples with children experienced the most significant decrease in formal volunteering, while other household compositions were less strongly affected.

Formal and informal volunteering by household type, 2019

Household type	2019		2020	
	Formal volunteering rate	Informal volunteering rate	Formal volunteering rate	Informal volunteering rate
Couples with children	37.3	34.1	30.1	32.5
One parent family with dependent children	23.0	25.6#	28.3	28.3
Couple only	27.2	34.5	24.8	30.2
Other one family households	22.2	28.6	19.4	29.8
Lone person	23.4	32.5	21.8	35.8
Other households	23.5#	30.3#	16.3	36.6

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (September 2020) 'Table 7.1: Persons aged 15 years and over, Voluntary and Unpaid Work/Support—By Personal Characteristics, estimate and proportion' [data set], General Social Survey, Australia; Australian Bureau of Statistics (June 2021) 'Table 9.3: Persons aged 15 years and over, Voluntary and Unpaid Work/Support—By Personal Characteristics, proportion of persons' [data set], General Social Survey, Australia

Level of education

Volunteering is associated with higher levels of post-secondary education. The rate of both formal (31.4%) and informal (38.4%) volunteering is highest among people with a bachelor's degree or above.

Formal and informal volunteering by level of education, 2020

Highest level of education achieved	Rate of formal volunteering	Rate of informal volunteering
Bachelor Degree or above	31.4	38.4
Advanced Diploma/Diploma or below	24.6	34.0
No non-school qualification	18.0	23.9

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (June 2021) 'Table 9.3: Persons aged 15 years and over, Voluntary and Unpaid Work/Support—By Personal Characteristics, proportion of persons' [data set], General Social Survey, Australia

Income

People volunteer across the income distribution. For example, in 2019, the lowest quintile (those in the bottom 20%) have a formal volunteering rate of 26.1%; those in the highest quintile have a formal volunteering rate of 30.0%. However, the gap in volunteering rates between the lowest and highest quintiles increased in 2020 compared, at 20.1% and 27.1% respectively.

Formal and informal volunteering by income, 2019 and 2020

Main source of household income	2019		2020	
	Rate of formal volunteering	Rate of informal volunteering	Rate of formal volunteering	Rate of informal volunteering
Employee income	30.5	35.7	24.6	34.4
Unincorporated business income	31.4#	39.2	39.2#	34.4
Government pensions and allowances	20.5	24.7	19.4	25.8
Other income	34.5	32.4	36.4	31.4

Gross household income	2019		2020	
	Rate of formal volunteering	Rate of informal volunteering	Rate of formal volunteering	Rate of informal volunteering
Lowest quintile	26.1	28.3	20.1	24.6
Second quintile	23.0	30.0	23.2	28.7
Third quintile	33.4	34.5	26.0	36.5
Fourth quintile	32.8	36.8	28.1	33.2
Highest quintile	30.0	38.6	27.1	39.6

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (September 2020) 'Table 7.1: Persons aged 15 years and over, Voluntary and Unpaid Work/Support—By Personal Characteristics, estimate and proportion' [data set], General Social Survey, Australia; Australian Bureau of

Statistics (June 2021) 'Table 9.3: Persons aged 15 years and over, Voluntary and Unpaid Work/Support—By Personal Characteristics, proportion of persons' [data set], General Social Survey, Australia

Method of travel

In the 2016 Census, adult volunteers' methods of travel in their organisational capacity were as follows:

- Public Transport – 11%
- Personal Vehicle – 65%
- Active Transport – 5%
- Worked at home – 18%¹¹

Level of satisfaction with volunteering

In 2011, the National Survey of Volunteering Issues found that the level of satisfaction among volunteers was:¹²

- Very satisfied – 47%
- Satisfied – 45%
- Unsatisfied – 5%
- Very unsatisfied – 3%
- Not sure – 1%.

In the 2016 State of Volunteering report, 93% of survey participants responded that they had seen positive changes because of their volunteering efforts.¹³

Nature of organisations and activities

Type of organisation

In 2019, overall people were most likely to volunteer for a sport and physical recreation organisation (39.1%), followed by religious organisations (23.3%) and education and training (21.8%). These were still the most common types of organisation in 2020, though the proportion of volunteers in sport and physical recreation organisations fell significantly to 30.7%.

Men are more likely than women to volunteer for sport and physical recreation – 47.5% and 30.5 % respectively. Women are more likely to volunteer than men in 'health and welfare' organisations and in 'community/ethnic groups'. Although women volunteered for 'parenting, children and youth' organisations at a significantly higher rate than men did in 2019 (16.4% compared to 9.3%), this difference is much smaller in 2020, at 9.2% among women and 7.0% among men. Also, while women and men volunteered for 'education and training' organisations at similar rates in 2019, women (24.4%) volunteered for these organisations at a much higher rate than men (12.1%) in 2020.

Formal volunteering rate by type of organisation, 2019 and 2020

Type of organisation	2019			2020		
	Persons	Females	Males	Persons	Females	Males
Arts/Heritage	5.1	6.4	4.7	5.6	6.1	4.5
Business/Professional/Union	2.5	2.1#	3.3#	4.3	2.5	6.8
Community/Ethnic groups	11.6	13.1	9.2	15.7	17.7	14.1
Education and Training	21.8	21.2	21.7	18.8	24.4	12.1
Parenting, children and youth	12.3	16.4	9.3	8.0	9.2	7.0
Emergency services	4.7	3.6	7.2	4.9	3.7	6.6
Environmental/Animal welfare	6.0	4.8	5.8	5.0	5.2	4.6
International Aid/Development	1.8	2.3#	1.1#	1.7	2.7	1.0
Health/Welfare	11.6	15.6	7.1	12.1	13.6	9.8
Law/Justice/Political	1.0	1.2	1.3	2.7	1.8	3.1
Religious	23.3	21.8	24.3	23.1	22.4	25.1
Sport and physical recreation	39.1	30.5	47.5	30.7	25.1	37.8
Other	8.1	7.9	7.4	8.7	9.2	8.1

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (September 2020) 'Table 8.3: Persons aged 15 years and over who have undertaken unpaid voluntary work through an organisation in last 12 months, Characteristics of voluntary work—By Sex, proportion of persons' [data set], General Social Survey, Australia; Australian Bureau of Statistics (June 2021) 'Table 10.3: Persons aged 15 years and over who have undertaken unpaid voluntary work through an organisation in last 12 months, Characteristics of voluntary work—By Sex, proportion of persons' [data set], General Social Survey, Australia

Note: Totals add up to more than 100% as people volunteer for more than one type of organisation.

Nature of volunteering activity

Most reported volunteering is undertaken in fundraising/sales roles followed by management/operations and coaching/refereeing.

Type of volunteering activity, 2014

Type of voluntary activity spent most time on in last 12 months	Proportion of persons
Fundraising/sales	23%
Management/committee work/coordination	12%
Coaching/refereeing/judging	14%
Food preparation/serving	14%
Teaching/instruction/providing information	15%
Administration/recruitment/information management	12%
Befriending/supportive listening/counselling/mentoring	10%
Repairing/maintenance/gardening	9%
Other	21%

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (September 2015) 'Table 23.1: Persons who volunteered in the last 12 months, Selected characteristics of voluntary work—By state/territory—Estimates ('000) and Proportions (%)' [data set], General Social Survey, Australia

Number of volunteering organisations

About two thirds of volunteers (66.4%) work for a single organisation. 23.0% volunteer for two, and 10.4% volunteer for three or more organisations.

Number of organisations volunteered for in last 12 months, 2020

Number of organisations	% of volunteers
One	66.4%
Two	23.0%
Three or more	10.4%

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (June 2021) 'Table 10.3: Persons aged 15 years and over who have undertaken unpaid voluntary work through an organisation in last 12 months, Characteristics of voluntary work—By Sex, proportion of persons' [data set], General Social Survey, Australia

Reasons for volunteering

People reported multiple motivations for volunteering with the most often cited being to help others, for personal satisfaction and to do something worthwhile. One in five people (20.8%) reported undertaking volunteering to learn new skills or gain work experience. Despite other changes in volunteering activity during 2020, motivations to volunteering remained consistent with previous years.

Reasons for being a volunteer, 2020

Reasons	Persons	Females	Males
Personal satisfaction/To do something worthwhile	66.2	64.7	68.1
Help others/Community	74.2	76.4	71.6
Personal/Family Involvement	37.0	36.3	36.6
Social contact	33.7	34.1	34.0
To be active	30.8	27.6	34.4
Use skills/Experience	36.6	35.5	38.2
To learn new skills/Gain work experience	18.9	21.6	15.6
Religious beliefs	20.3	18.9	22.2
Just happened	9.0	8.8	9.1
Felt obliged	9.5	7.9	11.6
Other	1.4	0.9	2.6

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (June 2021) 'Table 10.3: Persons aged 15 years and over who have undertaken unpaid voluntary work through an organisation in last 12 months, Characteristics of voluntary work—By Sex, proportion of persons' [data set], General Social Survey, Australia

The main reason people first became involved in volunteering is that they knew someone who was involved or that they were asked.

How first became involved in voluntary work, 2020

How first became involved	Proportion of persons
Knew someone involved/was asked	43.7
Self-involvement in organisation	37.0
Saw advertisement/found out about it myself	9.3

Other 9.6

Source: Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (June 2021) 'Table 10.3: Persons aged 15 years and over who have undertaken unpaid voluntary work through an organisation in last 12 months, Characteristics of voluntary work—By Sex, proportion of persons' [data set], General Social Survey, Australia

Family history may be a predictor of future participation, with 70% of all volunteers having parents who also undertook voluntary work. In addition, most volunteers reported as being personally involved in a volunteering organisation or endeavour as a child.

Family history of volunteering, 2014

Family history	Proportion of persons
Volunteers' parents have volunteered	70.1
Volunteers' parents have not volunteered	21.3

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (September 2015) 'Table 23.1: Persons who volunteered in the last 12 months, Selected characteristics of voluntary work—By state/territory—Estimates ('000) and Proportions (%)' [data set], General Social Survey, Australia

Childhood activities, 2014

Activities participated in as a child	Proportion of persons
Organised team sport	83.2
Youth group	50.1
Arts/culture related activities	58.8
Did some kind of volunteer work	43.9
Raised money door-to-door or in public place for a cause or organisation	41.8
Active in student government	14.0
Active in a religious organisation	34.4

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (September 2015) 'Table 23.1: Persons who volunteered in the last 12 months, Selected characteristics of voluntary work—By state/territory—Estimates ('000) and Proportions (%)' [data set], General Social Survey, Australia

Nature of volunteering

During 2019, nearly all formal volunteers (98.3%) stated their work involved volunteering in person, in the office or the field. This decreased only slightly in 2020, with 96.6% of formal volunteers undertaking voluntary work in person. However, the proportion of people volunteering over the internet increased from 8.5% in 2019 to 17.3% in 2020, and the proportion of people volunteering over the phone increased from 9.5% to 13.9%.

How voluntary work was undertaken, 2019 and 2020

	2019	2020
How voluntary work was undertaken	Proportion of persons	Proportion of persons
In person/at the organisation/in the field	98.3	96.6
Over the internet	8.5	17.3
Over the phone	9.5	13.9
Other	2.4	2.3

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (September 2020) 'Table 8.3: Persons aged 15 years and over who have undertaken unpaid voluntary work through an organisation in last 12 months, Characteristics of voluntary work—By Sex, proportion of persons' [data set], General Social Survey, Australia; Australian Bureau of Statistics (June 2021) 'Table 10.3: Persons aged 15 years and over who have undertaken unpaid voluntary work through an organisation in last 12 months, Characteristics of voluntary work—By Sex, proportion of persons' [data set], General Social Survey, Australia

Duration of volunteering

A large proportion of people (42.5%) have volunteered for more than 10 years.

How long ago first became involved in voluntary work, 2020

Reasons	Persons	Females	Males
Less than one year	9.9	9.9	9.3
One to five years	36.4	36.9	36.5
Six to nine years	11.2	11.6	10.1
Ten years or more	42.5	41.0	43.5

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (June 2021) 'Table 10.3: Persons aged 15 years and over who have undertaken unpaid voluntary work through an organisation in last 12 months, Characteristics of voluntary work—By Sex, proportion of persons' [data set], General Social Survey, Australia

Volunteering hours

Over one in four volunteers (28.3%) undertake voluntary work for an organisation for 100 hours or more each year. The hours undertaken by different proportions of volunteers remained steady between 2019 and 2020.

Annual hours spent volunteering by sex, 2020

Hours	Persons	Females	Males
1-20 hours	38.0	40.9	42.2
21-99 hours	34.0	30.8	29.0
100 hours or more	27.9	29.1	27.0

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (June 2021) 'Table 11.3: Persons aged 15 years and over who have undertaken unpaid voluntary work through an organisation in last 12 months, Annual hours—By Age and Sex, proportion of persons' [data set], General Social Survey, Australia

Using the 2014 GSS data (the latest data available on this breakdown), there was a wide variation in the number of hours of work done by volunteers across different sectors. Over 50% of volunteers contributed more than 50 hours a year. Nearly one in five (18.7%) volunteers undertake voluntary work for over 200 hours in the year.

Volunteers in emergency services volunteer more hours than in other sectors. Two thirds (67.2%) of emergency service volunteers contribute 50 hours or more.

Type of volunteering by annual hours, proportions, 2014

Type(s) of organisation(s) did unpaid voluntary work for in last 12 months	1 to 10 hours	11 to 49 hours	50 hours or more	100 to 199 hours	200 hours or more	Total involvements	Total hours
Sport and physical recreation	21.4	37.8	19.4	13.0	8.9	100.0	100.0
Welfare/Community	27.0	31.7	15.5	12.0	13.8	100.0	100.0
Religious	13.6	35.2	15.4	19.7	16.0	100.0	100.0
Education and training	33.8	42.4	11.5	6.9	5.1	100.0	100.0
Health	44.8	30.5	7.8	9.9	9.9	100.0	100.0
Parenting, children and youth	29.2	36.7	13.7	11.4	6.5	100.0	100.0
Arts/Heritage	27.3	37.5	14.7	13.7	7.6	100.0	100.0
Business/Professional/Union	16.5	27.4	32.0	13.8	12.2	100.0	100.0
Emergency Services	6.8	23.8	15.9	27.0	24.3	100.0	100.0
Environment/animal welfare	24.7	38.0	9.1	14.2	13.8	100.0	100.0
Other	21.5	46.0	8.3	13.2	11.8	100.0	100.0
Total volunteering involvements	25.4	36.6	14.7	12.5	10.8	100.0	100.0
All volunteers (%)	17.5	31.5	16.9	15.3	18.7	100.0	100.0

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (September 2015) 'Table 24.3: Volunteering involvements, State/territory, Type of organisation—by annual hours—Proportions (%)' [data set], General Social Survey, Australia

Type of volunteering by annual hours, estimates, 2014

Type(s) of organisation(s) did unpaid voluntary work for in last 12 months	1 to 10 hours	11 to 49 hours	50 hours or more	100 to 199 hours	200 hours or more	Total involvements	Total hours millions
Sport and physical recreation	446.8	788.1	405.1	272.3	184.9	2,087.7	157.5
Welfare/Community	367.2	431.4	210.8	163.6	187.3	1,360.2	141.1
Religious	156.4	403.3	176.3	226.3	183.7	1,146.1	147.6
Education and training	504.1	633.3	172.3	102.3	76.3#	1,492.0	71.2
Health	284.8	194.3	49.9#	63.3#	63.1#	636.4	43.4
Parenting, children and youth	98.4	123.6	46.2#	38.5#	21.8#	337.1	17.9
Arts/Heritage	65.3#	89.7	35.1#	32.9#	18.1#	239.3	18.5
Business/Professional/Union	22.9#	38.2#	44.6#	19.3#	17.0#	139.3	15.9#
Emergency Services	15.4#	54.1	36.1#	61.3#	55.1#	227.2	42.5
Environment/animal welfare	61.1#	94.2	22.6#	35.2	34.1#	247.8	29.4
Other	146.0	312.0	56.2	89.7	80.3	678.3	58.3
Total volunteering involvements	2,180.0	3,142.8	1,266.6	1,075.0	928.0	8,595.7	743.3#
All volunteers	1,015.1	1,824.9	979.7	886.5	1,082.8	5,790.6	743.3#

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (September 2015) 'Table 24.1: Volunteering involvements, State/territory, Type of organisation—by annual hours—Estimates ('000)' [data set], General Social Survey, Australia

Volunteer involving organisations and recruitment

Volunteer recruitment

On-line recruitment is particularly strong in the community services sector.

On-line volunteer recruitment, 2019

Sector	Number of advertisements	%	Ratio of applications to positions (x:1)
Community service	4,604	34%	14
Other	2,657	19%	14
Seniors	2,259	17%	9
Disability Services	999	7%	9
Education	794	6%	15
Young people	743	5%	16
Health	633	5%	32
Environment and conservation	506	4%	18
Arts & culture	262	2%	23
Emergency response	151	1%	11
Total	13,608	100%	210,209
	advertisements		applications

Source: Viktor data set, on-line recruitment, 2019

Volunteer training

Most volunteer training happens on the job or is classroom based.

How volunteer training takes place, 2020

Type of training	Proportion (%) who offer
On the job	71
Classroom based	63
Paper based (worksheets, reading)	44
Peer mentoring	38
Email	25
Online courses	20
Recorded videos (You Tube etc.)	19
Webinars or video chats	8
Online platform	4
Social media (Facebook group etc.)	3
Average hours volunteer induction and orientation	14 hours

Source: Volunteer Management Progress Report, Johnson T, 2020 (international data)¹⁴

Corporate volunteering

Corporate or employee volunteering is defined as allowing staff to engage in unpaid work for a community organisation during work hours for a wider societal benefit, and for the possible benefit of the volunteer and for the corporation.¹⁵

A 2019 survey found 78% of companies have a volunteering program, with 15 % of employees participating in corporate volunteering.

Corporate volunteering, 2019

<i>Findings</i>	<i>Proportion/estimate</i>
<i>Companies that have a volunteering program</i>	78%
<i>Employees who participated in corporate volunteering</i>	15%
<i>Amount contributed by corporate volunteers (cash, employee time, in-kind and management costs)</i>	Over 1,000,000 hours Average 27.5 hours per volunteer
<i>Proportion of corporate community budget in time</i>	10%
<i>Available FTEs not utilised in corporate volunteering</i>	500 FTE per annum

Source: LBG Corporate Citizenship and Volunteering Australia, 2019¹⁵

The value of volunteering

Economic value

Estimates of the economic value of volunteering vary significantly depending on the valuation method used. The most common method is the monetary value of volunteers' time based on a notional hourly wage rate. Many organisations use the average hourly part-time wage of a person of their age in their state or territory of residence, plus 15% employer on-costs (inclusive of superannuation, payroll tax and administration expenses). However, different figures may be used for the amount of voluntary work being done, the hourly wage rate, and projections of future growth in volunteering. There is also a broader debate about how to calculate a dollar figure for the social and cultural value of volunteering.

In the 2012-13 National Accounts, volunteering was estimated to have an imputed value of \$17.3 billion.

Non-profit institutions volunteering hours and value, Australian National Accounts, 2012-13

<i>Non-Profit Institutions</i>	<i>Estimate</i>
<i>Number of organisations</i>	56 894
<i>Income</i>	\$107.5 billion
<i>Assets</i>	\$176.0 billion
<i>Employment</i>	1,081,900 persons
<i>Volunteers</i>	3,882,300 persons
<i>Volunteering hours</i>	520.5 million hours
<i>Imputed value of volunteer services (replacement cost methodology)¹⁷</i>	\$17.3 billion

Source: Australian National Accounts: Non-Profit Institutions Satellite Account, 2012-13

Note: Non-profit institutions (NPIs) surveyed by the ABS in this report were those registered with the ATO.

ABS Satellite Accounts 2006-07

The contribution of the volunteer workforce was estimated in the Australian Bureau of Statistics Non-profit Institutions Satellite Account to provide over **\$14.6 billion** of unpaid labour to not-for-profit organisations in 2006-07. A revised national figure for the economic contribution of volunteers has not yet been released.¹⁸

Social and community value

Analysis of the 2010 GSS showed that volunteers were much more likely to be involved in other aspects of community life than non-volunteers:¹⁹

- Volunteers (81.8%) were more likely than non-volunteers (55.2%) to have attended a community event recently.
- Volunteers (44.4%) were much more likely than non-volunteers (15.1%) to have ever provided a service or activity in their local area.
- 62.2% of volunteers agreed (either strongly or somewhat) that most people could be trusted, compared with 49.5% of non-volunteers.
- 82% of volunteers were delighted, pleased or mostly satisfied with their lives, compared to 75% of non-volunteers.
- People who volunteered through an organisation (64%) were more likely to provide informal assistance to someone outside their own household than non-volunteers (41%).

How volunteers and non-volunteers contribute to community life, 2010

<i>Participation in community life</i>	<i>Volunteers</i>	<i>Non-volunteers</i>
<i>Attend a community event in last 6 months</i>	81.8%	55.2%
<i>Ever provided a service in their local area</i>	44.4%	15.1%
<i>Agreed that most people could be trusted</i>	62.2%	49.5%
<i>Feel able to have a say in the community on important issues all or most of the time</i>	33.5%	26.5%
<i>Delighted or pleased with their lives</i>	47.9%	40.7%

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (September 2015) 'Table 7 PERSONS AGED 18 YEARS AND OVER, Volunteer status by sex and age by community involvement, trust and life satisfaction–2010' [data set], Voluntary Work, Australia

Financial costs

About half of all volunteers reported incurring costs to volunteer, with the most common being travel and phone.

Financial costs of volunteering, 2014

<i>Expenses personally incurred as a result of volunteering</i>	<i>Proportion (%)</i>
<i>All volunteers incurring expenses</i>	52.6
<i>Phone calls</i>	32.1
<i>Postage</i>	7.6
<i>Travel costs</i>	4.5
<i>Meals</i>	41.5
<i>Other</i>	13.8
<i>No expenses</i>	4.9
<i>Expenditure reimbursement available (all volunteers – incl. those not incurring)</i>	6.3

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (September 2015) 'Table 23.1: Persons who volunteered in the last 12 months, Selected characteristics of voluntary work–By state/territory–Estimates ('000) and Proportions (%)' [data set], General Social Survey, Australia

Trends in volunteering

National

The rate of volunteering through an organisation has declined over time. For people aged 18 years and over, the rate has declined from 36.2% in 2010 to 28.8% in 2019. Both men and women are volunteering less.

In the 2019 GSS, more females (43.1%) reported 'Always' or 'Often' feeling rushed for time than males (35.8%). This trend is stable over time, with similar data reported in the 2014 GSS²⁰ and the 2020 GSS.²¹

Volunteers contributed 596.2 million hours to the community in 2019. This is a 20% decrease in the total number of volunteering hours from 2014 (743.3 million hours). In 2020, this number fell further to 489.5 million hours—a decrease of 18%.

The review of the Volunteer Management Activity undertaken for the Department of Social Services highlighted several ways in which the volunteering landscape in Australia is changing:²²

- The population is ageing, the workforce is contracting, and people are more discerning about how they want to volunteer their time.
- There is growing demand for services that traditionally rely heavily on volunteers to supplement government funding (such as community, aged care, and disability support services).
- Government programs are encouraging volunteering to engage people experiencing disadvantage, for example to meet mutual obligation requirements or to help build skills and relationships for people living with a disability.
- Information technology is providing new opportunities for people to find a volunteering opportunity that suits their interests and circumstances, and to volunteer in different ways.

The term 'new volunteerism' has been used to portray how volunteering is becoming more episodic, more self-oriented in volunteer motivations and taking place with weaker organisational attachments.²³ At the same time, the potential of volunteering to promote social innovation and strengthen people-state relationships, especially in developing countries, is increasingly acknowledged.²⁴

The 2016 State of Volunteering in Australia report found an increasing misalignment between the volunteering roles that people are interested in and the roles that organisations are offering.²⁵ For example, arts and culture and animal welfare tend to be oversubscribed; disability services, community services, aged care and education have high volunteer vacancies.

COVID-19

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the rate of volunteering through an organisation or group in Australia fell sharply from 29.5% in 2019 to 24.8% in 2020. A study on the impact of COVID-19 on volunteering found that only slightly more than half (56.4 per cent) of those who stopped volunteering in 2020 resumed in the 12 months leading up to April 2021, despite the easing of lockdowns and social distancing restrictions in many jurisdictions in Australia at that time.²⁶ The Household Impacts of COVID-19 Survey found a further decrease

in formal volunteering, from 25.9 per cent before March 2020 to 20.6 per cent in March 2021.²⁷ However, the rate of informal volunteering remained steady at 32.1% in 2020, compared to 33.4% in 2019.

Between December 2020 and April 2021, the proportion of people who volunteered formally one or more times a week within a four-week period increased steadily, from 7.6 per cent to 8.4 per cent. This rate fell to 7.3 per cent in June 2021, following the reintroduction of restrictions in many jurisdictions.²⁸

The number of people who volunteered online increased from 8.5 per cent in 2019 to 17.3 per cent in 2020. Further, of those who indicated that online volunteering was available in their organisation or group, 75.6 per cent participated in online volunteering.

In March 2021, the most common reasons for not participating in formal volunteering were ‘cannot fit around paid work’ (30.6 per cent), ‘cannot fit around family or care commitments’ (22.4 per cent), and ‘my previous volunteering group stopped or reduced their operations’ (15.5 per cent). The most common reasons for not volunteering informally were ‘do not think there is a need’ (39.7 per cent), ‘cannot fit around paid work’ (26.5 per cent), and ‘cannot fit around caring responsibilities for my household’ (20.9 per cent).

Volunteer involving organisations have been significantly affected by these changes. According to the 2021 Pulse of the For-Purpose Sector survey, 31 per cent of organisations that engage volunteers indicated that they had fewer volunteers than six months prior. A similar rate was found in the 2020 survey. When asked, the vast majority of for-purpose organisations that engage volunteers indicated that they needed volunteers (84%), and that they were experiencing a demand for volunteer-led services (59%).²⁹

Global

The following global trends in volunteering policy and practice have been identified:³⁰

- Concern for the effects of time pressure on individuals
- Variations in the definition and value of volunteering from country to country
- Demographic changes and volunteer programs that concentrate on the extremes of the age continuum
- The importance of pluralistic approaches to recruitment, engagement and management
- Recognition of the role of volunteering in building community, reciprocity, social solidarity and citizenship
- The role of information technology in volunteering

Volunteering has undertaken significant digital advances over the last decade.

Deployment of digital tools, 2020 and 2021

<i>Digital tools for volunteer management on a regular basis</i>	2020	2021
<i>Online Application Forms</i>	63.4	62.1
<i>Broadcast Emails/Newsletters</i>	54.1	60.0
<i>Volunteer Opportunity Listings</i>	73.4	59.9
<i>Video Meetings/Conferencing</i>	15.7	54.7
<i>Online Volunteer Training</i>	31.7	53.4
<i>Time Tracking</i>	50.5	46.5
<i>Background Screening</i>	45.3	41.4

Shift Scheduling/Check-In	40.9	40.5
Online Document Sharing	34.3	36.8
Automated Drip Email Campaigns	6.0	22.1
Broadcast Group Texts	13.6	17.3
Discussion Forum/Chat	11.1	15.6
Online Collaboration/Editing	13.6	15.3

Source: Volunteer Management Progress Report, Johnson T, 2020³¹; Volunteer Management Progress Report, Johnson T, 2021

Challenges for volunteer managers

The challenges for volunteer management have stayed remarkably consistent in recent years (prior to the COVID19 pandemic).

Volunteer management challenges, 2016 - 2020

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
1	Recruitment	Recruitment	Recruitment	Recruitment	Recruitment
2	Support and buy-in	Respect & reliability	Respect and buy-in	Respect and buy-in	Respect and buy-in
3	Time	Roles & matching	Retention	Retention	Time
4	Financial investment	Retention	Roles and matching	Roles and matching	Roles and matching
5	Retention	Time	Time	Time	Retention

Source: Volunteer Management Progress Report, Johnson T, 2020³²

Spontaneous volunteering

Potential 'spontaneous volunteers' are people who seek or are invited to contribute their assistance during and/or after a disaster, and who are not affiliated with recognised volunteer agencies, and may or may not have relevant training, skills or experience.

Following Victoria's 2009 Black Saturday bushfires, more than 22,000 potential spontaneous volunteers offered their help online, via the Go Volunteer website, and by a phone hotline managed by the Victorian Government.³³

A surge in interest from the public has occurred in support of the emergency COVID-19 response. In partnership with their relevant Governments, the State and Territory peak bodies for volunteering have established registration and matching platforms to organise assistance from spontaneous volunteers. For example, Volunteering Queensland in partnership with the Queensland Government received over 28,000 registrations for the 'Care Army'.³⁴

Volunteering in charities and the wider not-for-profit sector

The ACNC Australian Charities Report 2019 reported that:³⁵

- Charities employ 1.38 million people.
- Volunteer numbers decreased by approximately 200,000 to 3.6 million.
- More than half of all charities (51%) operated without any paid staff.

In 2010, the Productivity Commission estimated that there were around 600,000 not-for-profit organisations (NFPs) in Australia.³⁶

In 2006-07, over 4.6 million Australians volunteered with the NFP sector (out of a total of 5.2 million volunteers).³⁷

Around two-thirds of these volunteers worked for small NFPs that do not have paid employees.³⁸ Volunteers provided 623 million hours of work to the NFP sector (equivalent to 317,000 full-time positions).³⁹

Volunteering in regional, remote, and rural Australia

According to the 'Heartbeat of Rural Australia Research Study' by the Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal (FRRR), over half of all community organisations in regional, remote, and rural Australia employ no paid staff and are run primarily by volunteers. Volunteering in regional, remote, and rural Australia was also significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Approximately a third of community organisations have either reduced volunteer hours, lost volunteers altogether to illness, isolation, relocation or caring responsibilities, or lost them due to a lack of need, as a result of COVID-19 restrictions.
- Conversely, some report that volunteers are working more to deal with demand (22%), and that they are recruiting or trying to recruit more volunteers (25%).
- Three-quarters of respondents who had tried to recruit new volunteers indicated that it has become more difficult over the last 18 months (75%).
- Of those who indicated that their volunteer cohort has changed over the last 18 months, by far the biggest concern is that current volunteers were getting older and looking to retire. For some, this desire has been accelerated by COVID-19, with many feeling unsafe about returning to volunteering.
- Organisations with lower turnover were far more likely to “struggle to meet operational costs, let alone have money to spend on technology”. They were more reliant on volunteers using their own devices to meet organisational needs, rather than funding it as a business.
- In general, volunteer-only organisations were significantly less likely to be using most forms of digital technology than were their counterparts with paid employees, with the largest difference being in their use of video conferencing (41% vs. 83%).

Sources of data on volunteering

On volunteers

- General Social Survey
 - 2002
 - 2006
 - 2010
 - 2014
 - 2019
 - 2020
- Census 2016 (latest release)
- Census 2021 (scheduled for release 30 June 2022)
- Household Impacts of COVID-19 Survey
 - March 2021 (full module on unpaid voluntary work)
 - June 2021 (full time-series [before 1 March 2020 to June 2021]—includes rates of formal and informal volunteering)
- Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia
- ANUPoll 46 (April 2021)
- Giving Australia 2016

By demographic

- Youth
 - Mission Australia Youth Survey 2021
- Migrants
 - Building a New Life in Australia: The Longitudinal Study of Humanitarian Migrants, Release 5 (Waves 1-5)
- Australians in regional, remote, and rural communities
 - The Heartbeat of Rural Australia Research Study

By sector

- Aged care
 - Aged Care Workforce Census 2016
 - Aged Care Workforce Census 2020
- Arts and heritage
 - The State of the Arts Survey (House of Representatives Standing Committee on Communications and the Arts report)
- Disability support
 - NDS Workforce Census
- Emergency management

- Report on Government Services 2021 D: Emergency Management
- Mental health
 - State of the Nation in Suicide Prevention 2021
- Sports
 - AusPlay Survey
- All sectors (data on volunteers broken down by sector)
 - Australian Charities Report Data (includes volunteers in ACNC-registered charities and not-for-profit organisations only)
 - Pulse of the For-Purpose Sector

Despite the diverse sources of data on volunteering in Australia listed above, there are a number of significant gaps in the available data.

Enquiries about this information sheet should be directed to:

Jack McDermott
Policy Officer
Volunteering Australia
jack@volunteeringaustralia.org

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- ³ <https://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/resources/definition-of-volunteering/>
- ⁴ <https://csrcm.cass.anu.edu.au/research/publications/volunteering-during-first-year-covid-19-pandemic-april-2021>
- ⁵ <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/australias-welfare/volunteers>
- ⁶ <https://www.abs.gov.au/census>
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- ¹⁰ <https://www.seek.com.au/career-advice/get-ahead-in-volunteering-in-2018>
- ¹¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), *Census 2016 – Employment, Income and Education, Census of Population and Housing, 2016*
- ¹² *National Survey of Volunteering Issues 2011*, op. cit., Table 15
- ¹³ <https://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/wp-content/uploads/State-of-Volunteering-in-Australia-full-report.pdf>
- ¹⁴ [Volunteer Progress Report 2020.pdf](#)
- ¹⁵ The Allen Consulting Group *Global Trends in Skill-based Volunteering, report prepared for NAB*, The Allen Consulting Group, 2007, p1.
- ¹⁶ <https://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/wp-content/uploads/Corporate-Volunteering-Snapshot.pdf>
- ¹⁷ Refer for more information on valuation methodology and options <https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/5256.0Appendix62012-13>
- ¹⁸ Volunteering Australia, *State of Volunteering in Australia 2012*, Volunteering Australia, 2012, p.10
- ¹⁹ Voluntary Work Australia 2010, op. cit., p.26-27
- ²⁰ <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/people-and-communities/general-social-survey-summary-results-australia/2014#summary-of-findings>; 45% of women and 36% of men were ‘Always’ or ‘Often’ rushed or pressed for time, compared with 21% of women and 28% of men who were rarely or never rushed or pressed for time.
- ²¹ 34.8% of females reported that they “Always or Often feel rushed for time” compared to 30.3% of males
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- ²⁷ Household Impacts of COVID-19 Survey – March 2021, Table 5.1
- ²⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics (July 2021) 'Table 25.1: Persons aged 18 years and over, Frequency of activity in the last four weeks, by selected characteristics: Proportion' [data set], Household Impacts of COVID-19 Survey, Australia
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- ³⁷ *Contribution of the Not-for-Profit Sector*, op. Cit., p. 251
- ³⁸ *Contribution of the Not-for-Profit Sector*, op. Cit., p. 250
- ³⁹ *Contribution of the Not-for-Profit Sector*, op. Cit., p. 251