

Key facts and statistics about volunteering in Victoria

2016 Census Update (January 2018)

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Introduction

This information sheet below provides a ‘snapshot’ of key facts and statistics about volunteering in Australia. The source of each fact or statistic is provided as an end note. If you are seeking additional or more specific data, we suggest you look at our companion information sheet *Key sources of information about volunteering in Australia*.

How many people volunteer?

Formal volunteering

Volunteering is defined by Volunteering Australia as “time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain”ⁱ. In the 2016 Census, a volunteer is defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) as someone who has “spent time doing unpaid voluntary work through an organisation or group, in the twelve months prior to Census night”ⁱⁱ. The 2014 General Social Survey (GSS) defines a volunteer as “someone who, in the previous 12 months, willingly gave unpaid help, in the form of time, service or skills, through an organisation or group.”ⁱⁱⁱ Both definitions do not include people who volunteer as part of some form of compulsion or study commitments.

Notes about the data:

Information about the rates of formal volunteering comes from two ABS surveys which provide different figures for the rate of volunteering:

- *The 2014 General Social Survey was collected via a series of questions asked by trained interviewers from a sample of the Australian community aged 15 years and above.*
- *The 2016 Census data was collected via a single question on a self-completed form from all households.*

Self-reporting is considered less reliable and tends to give lower volunteering rates than interview surveys. Despite this limitation, the Census data is very valuable for comparing volunteering rates between smaller geographical areas (e.g. regions, local government areas or suburbs). The General Social Survey does not provide data at this level.^{iv}

The percentages calculated for the 2016 Census data is a measurement of the rate of formal volunteering within that specific bracket. For example, the rate of formal volunteering in Inner Melbourne is 20%; the remaining 80% did not volunteer or did not state on their Census form.

A complication of the General Social Survey is that the measurements it uses to gauge involvement in volunteering changed from 2010 to 2014. In 2014 the General Social Survey measured the number of volunteers under the age of 18 for the first time, but it did not, for example measure the number of organisations that each individual volunteered for or the frequency of volunteering. For this reason, at times throughout this document we provide 2010 data as the most up-to-date relevant information.

Australia: In 2016, 19% (3.6 million) of people aged 15 years and over participated in formal volunteering.^v

The 2011 Census rate for formal volunteering was 19.4%.

Victoria: In 2016, 19.2% (931,544) of Victorians participated in formal volunteering.

The 2011 Census rates for formal volunteering in Victoria were 19.3% (772,400).

The 2016 Census rate for formal volunteering for regions within Victoria are:

- Melbourne – 17.6% (645,437)
 - Inner – 20% (104,986)
 - Inner East – 23% (69,151)
 - Inner South – 21.4% (70,706)
 - North East – 16% (63,923)
 - North West – 13.6% (39,333)
 - Outer East – 20.8% (85,040)
 - South East – 15.2% (91,818)
 - West – 13.6% (78,008)
 - Mornington Peninsula – 17.9% (42,473)
- Outside Melbourne – 24.3% (285,322)
 - Ballarat – 23.2% (29,811)
 - Bendigo – 24.9% (31,095)
 - Geelong – 21.7% (49,200)
 - Hume – 25.9% (36,140)
 - Latrobe-Gippsland – 23.4% (52,405)
 - North West – 27.5% (33,949)
 - Shepparton – 22.7% (23,930)
 - Warrnambool and South West – 28.6% (28,787) ^{vi}

Informal volunteering

Informal volunteering is time offered for the common good outside of an organizational context.^{vii} The 2016 Australian Census measured people who provided unpaid assistance to a person with a disability, long-term illness or problems related to old age. It also measured time spent exclusively looking after a child or children under 15 years without pay two weeks prior to Census night. It does not include work done through a voluntary organization or group.

Australia: In 2016, 9.2% (2.1 million) of people aged 15 years and over provided care to someone with a disability, long-term illness or problems related to old age. 8.9% (1.3 million) of Australians provided care to a child other than their own.

Victoria: In 2016, 9.5% (560,867) of Victorians aged 15 years and over provided care to someone with a disability, long-term illness or problems related to old age. 8.7% (333,385) of Victorians provided care to a child other than their own.^{viii}

Who volunteers?

Gender

Australia: In 2016, 20.9% (2 million) of females aged 15 years and over volunteered and 17.1% (1.6 million) of males aged 15 years and over volunteered.^{ix}

Victoria: In 2016, 20.8% (518,547) of females aged 15 years and over volunteered and 17.6% (413,006) of males aged 15 years and over volunteered.^x

Disability

Australia: In 2016, 9.8% (106,485) of Australians volunteered aged 15 years and over with a profound disability and needing help, compared with 21% (3.5 million) of Australian aged 15 years or over who did not have a profound disability.^{xi}

Victoria: In 2016, 9.3% (25,780) of Victorians volunteered aged 15 years and over with a profound disability and needing help, compared with 21.2% (894,611) of Victorian aged 15 years or over who did not have a profound disability.^{xii}

Cultural and linguistic diversity

Australia: The 2016 Census rate for volunteering based on country of birth was:

- Oceania and Antarctica – 22.1% (2.8 million)
- North-West Europe – 20.1% (274,502)
- Southern and Eastern Europe – 9.2% (59,264)
- North Africa and the Middle East – 11.8% (40,281)
- South-East Asia – 14.9% (122,167)
- North-East Asia – 13.1% (98,099)
- Southern and Central Asia – 14.2% (101,800)
- Americas – 22.9% (56,195)
- Sub-Saharan Africa – 22.6% (65,719)
- Other – 18% (47,554)^{xiii}

Victorians: The 2016 Census rate for volunteering based on country of birth was:

- Oceania and Antarctica – 23.1% (697,190)
- North-West Europe – 21.3% (59,445)
- Southern and Eastern Europe – 8.2% (20,816)
- North Africa and the Middle East – 12.3% (12,545)
- South-East Asia – 15.3% (37,978)
- North-East Asia – 13.2% (27,193)
- Southern and Central Asia – 14% (36,743)
- Americas – 23.1% (12,834)
- Sub-Saharan Africa – 21% (13,718)
- Other – 17.4% (13,079)^{xiv}

Australia: The statistics of English proficiency in non-English speaking volunteers were:

- Speaks English only – 22.1% (3 million)
- Very well – 18.2% (413,838)
- Well – 11.1% (131,925)
- Not well – 6.5% (34,717)
- Not at all – 3.3% (3,705)^{xv}

Victoria: The statistics of English proficiency in non-English speaking volunteers were:

- Speaks English only – 23.1% (751,028)
- Very well – 17.4% (124,287)
- Well – 10.9% (40,585)
- Not well – 6.2% (10,831)
- Not at all – 3.3% (1,200)^{xvi}

- Australia: The statistics of Indigenous status among volunteers were:
- Non-Indigenous – 20.3% (3.5 million)
 - Aboriginal – 14.7% (57,393)
 - Torres Strait Islander – 15.3% (3,425)
 - Both Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander – 15.9% (2,479)
 - Not stated – 1.88 (22,233)^{xvii}

- Victoria: The statistics of Indigenous status among volunteers were:
- Non-Indigenous – 20.3% (919,875)
 - Aboriginal – 18.6% (5,512)
 - Torres Strait Islander – 15.1% (234)
 - Both Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander – 16.8% (131)
 - Not stated – 2% (5,784)^{xviii}

Age

- Australia: In 2016, the volunteer rates for individuals by age group were:
- 15-19 years – 20.1% (285,545)
 - 20-24 years – 17.2% (268,797)
 - 25-29 years – 14.6% (242,153)
 - 30-34 years – 15.4% (261,794)
 - 35-39 years – 19.6% (306,745)
 - 40-44 years – 23.5% (371,426)
 - 45-49 years – 23.3% (369,066)
 - 50-54 years – 20.4% (310,534)
 - 55-59 years – 19.2% (278,496)
 - 60-64 years – 19.8% (257,696)
 - 65-69 years – 21.5% (255,996)
 - 70-74 years – 21.8% (193,315)
 - 75-79 years – 18.9% (123,077)
 - 80-84 years – 13.5% (62,133)
 - 85-89 years – 8.5% (26,355)
 - 90-94 years – 4.6% (6,390)
 - 95-99 years – 3.2% (1,078)
 - 100 years+ - 3.5% (125)^{xix}

- Victoria: In 2016, the volunteer rates for individuals by age group were:
- 15-19 years – 19.8% (70,480)
 - 20-24 years – 18.3% (75,516)
 - 25-29 years – 14.9% (65,836)
 - 30-34 years – 15.1% (67,751)
 - 35-39 years – 19.4% (78,551)
 - 40-44 years – 23.7% (95,125)
 - 45-49 years – 24% (95,502)
 - 50-54 years – 21% (79,348)
 - 55-59 years – 19.6% (69,959)
 - 60-64 years – 20.1% (64,284)
 - 65-69 years – 21.6% (63,003)

- 70-74 years – 22.1% (48,202)
- 75-79 years – 18.9% (31,262)
- 80-84 years – 13.7% (16,428)
- 85-89 years – 8.7% (7,081)
- 90-94 years – 5% (1,828)
- 95-99 years – 3.5% (309)
- 100 years+ - 7.3% (84)^{xx}

Labour force status

Australia: In 2016, the labour force status for volunteers were:

- Employed, full-time – 19.8% (1.3 million)
- Employed, part-time – 24.2% (844,972)
- Employed, away from work – 17.1% (97,097)
- Unemployed, looking for full-time work – 21.2% (94,913)
- Unemployed, looking for part-time work – 28.8% (97,821)
- Not in labour force – 18.5% (1.2 million)^{xxi}

Victoria: In 2016, the labour force status for volunteers were:

- Employed, full-time – 20% (334,510)
- Employed, part-time – 24.7% (226,985)
- Employed, away from work – 17.7% (25,597)
- Unemployed, looking for full-time work – 21.7% (22,340)
- Unemployed, looking for part-time work – 29% (26,198)
- Not in labour force – 18.2% (293,372)^{xxii}

Total personal income

Australia: In 2016, the 2016 Census rate on volunteering based on total personal income on a weekly basis was:

- Negative income – 17.2% (16,979)
- Nil income – 18.6% (320,124)
- \$1-\$149 (\$1-\$7,99) – 26.1% (209,502)
- \$150-\$299 (\$7,800-\$15,599) – 21.5% (288,644)
- \$300-\$399 (\$15,600-\$20,799) – 17.9% (289,917)
- \$400-\$499 (\$20,800-\$25,999) – 18.2% (282,566)
- \$500-\$649 (\$26,000-\$33,799) – 20.2% (287,245)
- \$650-\$799 (\$33,800-\$41,599) – 18.2% (259,259)
- \$800-\$999 (\$41,600-\$51,999) – 17.9% (278,811)
- \$1,000-\$1,249 (\$52,000-\$64,999) – 19.3% (305,954)
- \$1,250-\$1,499 (\$65,000-\$77,900) – 21.1% (229,859)
- \$1,500-\$1,749 (\$78,000-\$90,000) – 23% (211,928)
- \$1,750-\$1,999 (\$91,000-\$103,999) – 24.4% (55,926)
- \$2,000-\$2,999 (\$104,000-\$155,999) – 26% (249,821)
- \$3,000 or more (\$156,000 or more) – 29.1% (173,533)^{xxiii}

Victoria: In 2016, the Census rate on volunteering based on total personal income on a weekly basis was:

- Negative income – 16.5% (4,487)
- Nil income – 18.1% (84,567)
- \$1-\$149 (\$1-\$7,99) – 25.5% (55,818)
- \$150-\$299 (\$7,800-\$15,599) – 21.3% (74,426)
- \$300-\$399 (\$15,600-\$20,799) – 17.9% (72,693)
- \$400-\$499 (\$20,800-\$25,999) – 18.5% (72,364)
- \$500-\$649 (\$26,000-\$33,799) – 20.5% (74,037)
- \$650-\$799 (\$33,800-\$41,599) – 18.3% (67,132)
- \$800-\$999 (\$41,600-\$51,999) – 18.3% (73,852)
- \$1,000-\$1,249 (\$52,000-\$64,999) – 19.5% (79,555)
- \$1,250-\$1,499 (\$65,000-\$77,900) – 21.5% (59,708)
- \$1,500-\$1,749 (\$78,000-\$90,000) – 23.4% (53,030)
- \$1,750-\$1,999 (\$91,000-\$103,999) – 24.9% (38,087)
- \$2,000-\$2,999 (\$104,000-\$155,999) – 27.2% (59,946)
- \$3,000 or more (\$156,000 or more) – 30.9% (44,475)^{xxiv}

Social marital status

Australia: The 2016 Census rate for volunteers by social marital status were:

- Married in a registered marriage – 23.3% (1.9 million)
- Married in a de facto marriage – 16% (279,996)
- Not married – 18% (1.3 million)
- Not applicable – 9.6% (216,791)^{xxv}

Victoria: The 2015 Census rate for volunteers by social marital status were:

- Married in a registered marriage – 22.9% (472,490)
- Married in a de facto marriage – 17.2% (72,433)
- Not married – 18.2% (333,007)
- Not applicable – 10.1% (53,618)^{xxvi}

Education

Australia: The 2016 Census rate for volunteers by highest level of education were:

- Postgraduate Degree – 31.4% (288,709)
- Graduate Diploma and Graduate Certificate – 37.2% (140,515)
- Bachelor Degree – 28.1% (810,183)
- Advanced Diploma and Diploma – 25.5% (429,517)
- Certificate III & IV – 18.4% (551,535)
- Secondary Education – Years 10 and above – 16.7% (999,554)
- Certificate I & II – 19.1% (3,090)
- Secondary Education – Years 9 and below – 11.8% (181,003)
- Other – 18.3% (120,786)^{xxvii}

Victoria: The 2016 Census rate for volunteers by highest level of education were:

- Postgraduate Degree – 31% (80,570)

- Graduate Diploma and Graduate Certificate – 36.9% (43,943)
- Bachelor Degree – 27.7% (221,040)
- Advanced Diploma and Diploma – 24.9% (111,324)
- Certificate III & IV – 18.7% (129,569)
- Secondary Education – Years 10 and above – 16.8% (243,516)
- Certificate I & II – 19.7% (768)
- Secondary Education – Years 9 and below – 11.4% (49,158)
- Other – 16.4% (26,744)^{xxviii}

Where people volunteer

State and Territory

The 2016 Census rate for volunteers by state and territory were:

- ACT – 23.3% (75,115)
- SA – 21.4% (295,668)
- TAS – 21.3% (89,213)
- VIC – 19.2% (931,544)
- WA – 19% (379,579)
- QLD – 18.8% (714,140)
- NSW – 18.1% (1.1 million)
- NT – 17.1% (30,720)
- Other¹ – 25.6% (967)^{xxix}

Types of organisations

Note: the totals are greater than 100% as some volunteers worked for more than one type of organization.

Australia: In 2014, volunteers worked in the following types of organisations:

- Arts/heritage – 4%
- Business/professional/union – 2%
- Welfare/community – 21%
- Education and training – 24%
- Emergency services – 4%
- Environment – 4%
- Health – 10%
- Parenting, children and youth – 5%
- Religious – 19%
- Sport and recreation – 31%
- Other – 11%^{xxx}

Victoria: In 2014, volunteers worked in the following types of organisations:

- Welfare/community – 21%
- Education and training – 25%
- Health – 11%
- Religious – 19%

¹ The 'Other' category refers to the four territories of Jervis Bay Territory, the Territories of Christmas Island, Cocos (Keeling) Islands and Norfolk Island.

- Sport and recreation – 32%
- Other – 29%^{xxxii}

Other ways people volunteer

Spontaneous volunteering

Spontaneous volunteering refers to the sudden act of volunteering and usually occurs during times of crisis, including natural and man-made disasters.

Up to 22,000 Victorians volunteered in the wake of the Black Saturday fires. Volunteers ranged from being victims of the fires themselves to being people who simply wanted to help.^{xxxii}

In 2014, 182,000 volunteers partook in search and rescue, first aid, firefighting and community safety.^{xxxiii}

Employee/corporate volunteering

Employee or corporate volunteering refers to volunteering through their employers or place of business.

A London study conducted in 2014 showed employees who participated in this form of volunteering directly increased attitudes. These were:

- Job satisfaction – 69%
- Pride in the company – 74%
- Commitment to the company – 66%
- Motivation – 73%^{xxxiv}

Occupation

Australia: The 2016 Census rate of volunteers by their occupation were:

- Managers – 26% (361,032)
- Professionals – 29% (687,287)
- Technicians and Trade Workers – 14.3% (207,574)
- Community and Personal Service Workers – 21.9% (253,499)
- Clerical and Administrative Workers – 22.4% (325,002)
- Sales Workers – 17.6% (177,633)
- Machinery Operators and Drivers – 11.4% (76,324)
- Labourers – 13.6% (137,032)^{xxxv}

Victoria: The 2016 Census rate of volunteers by their occupation were:

- Managers – 26.2% (96,954)
- Professionals – 28.9% (183,933)
- Technicians and Trade Workers – 14.6% (52,332)
- Community and Personal Service Workers – 22.3% (64,652)
- Clerical and Administrative Workers – 22.5% (81,737)
- Sales Workers – 18% (47,623)
- Machinery Operators and Drivers – 11.3% (17,921)
- Labourers – 13.9% (34,356)^{xxxvi}

How often people volunteer

Number of organisations

Australia: In 2014, the number of organisations volunteers worked for were:

- One – 63% (3.6 million)
- Two – 24% (1.4 million)
- Three or more – 14% (795,600) ^{xxxvii}

Frequency

Australia: In 2010, the frequency of work done by volunteers was:

- At least once a week – 35%
- At least once a fortnight – 11%
- At least once a month – 16%
- Several times per year – 24%
- Less regularly – 14% ^{xxxviii}

Number of hours

Australia: The work a volunteer does for an organization is referred to as a volunteering involvement. In 2014, there were 8.6 million volunteering involvements. On average, volunteers contributed 128 hours of voluntary work in the previous 12 months or an average of 86 hours per involvement. ^{xxxix} In 2014, Australian volunteers worked a total of 743 million hours. ^{xl}

In 2014, the frequency of work done by volunteers was:

- 1 to 10 hours – 17.5%
- 11 to 49 hours – 31.5%
- 50 to 99 hours – 16.9%
- 100 to 199 hours – 15.3%
- 200 hours or more – 18.7% ^{xli}

In 2010, the median number of hours worked by each volunteer, broken down by age and gender was:

- 18-24 years – 48 hours per year
- 25-34 years – 38 hours per year
- 35-44 years – 48 hours per year
- 45-54 years – 64 hours per year
- 55-64 years – 80 hours per year
- 65-74 years – 104 hours per year
- 75-84 years – 104 hours per year
- 85+ years – figure considered unreliable
- Total for men – 52 hours per year
- Total for women – 60 hours per year
- Total for all people – 56 hours per year (or 1.1 hours per week). ^{xlii}

Victoria: In 2014, the frequency of work done by volunteers was:

- 1 to 10 hours – 26.6%
- 11 to 49 hours – 39.1%
- 50 hours or more – 34.3% ^{xliii}

In 2010, the median number of hours worked by each volunteer, broken down by location and gender was:

- Men – 52 hours per year
- Women – 62 hours per year

- People in capital city – 49 hours per year
- People in the rest of the state – 81 hours per year
- Total for all people – 60 hours per year^{xliv}

Barriers to volunteering

In March 2016, the Volunteering Australia *State of Volunteering* Report listed the following barriers to volunteering for those who will continue to volunteer (participants were able to provide more than one response):

- Work commitments – 35.8%
- Family commitments – 34.3%
- None – 23.8%
- Income – 18.4%
- Health issues – 16.5%
- Out-of-pocket expenses – 16.4%
- Lack of appropriate opportunities – 14.3%
- Access to transport – 7.2%
- Disability – long-term/permanent – 4.9%
- Disability – temporary – 2.2%
- Communication issues – 2.2%
- Cultural issues – 0.9%
- Other – 6.6%^{xlv}

In 2013, Canadian statistics showed the most common reasons for not volunteering were:

- Did not have time – 66%
- Unable to make a long-term commitment – 62%
- Gave enough time already – 24%
- Preferred to give money instead of time – 54%
- No one asked – 49%
- Had no interest – 29%
- Health problems or physically unable – 25%
- Did not know how to become involved – 24%
- Financial cost of volunteering – 18%
- Dissatisfied with a previous experience – 9%^{xlvi}

Type of voluntary activity

Australia: In 2014, the type of activity volunteers spent most time on were:

- Administration/recruitment/information management – 12%
- Coaching/refereeing/judging – 14%
- Performing/media production – 3%
- Befriending/supportive listening/counselling/mentoring – 10%
- Fundraising/sales – 23%
- Food preparation/serving – 14%
- Transporting people/goods – 4%
- Repairing/maintenance/gardening – 10%
- Management/committees/coordination – 12%

- Personal care/assistance – 3%
- Teaching/instruction/providing information – 15%
- Lobbying/advocacy-policy research – 1%
- Search and rescue/first aid/firefighting/community safety – 3%
- Environmental protection – 1%
- Other – 8% ^{xlvii}

Volunteering in sport

Australia: In 2014, the sport and physical recreation sector attracted the largest number of volunteers (31% of volunteers aged 15 years and over). ^{xlviii}

In 2010, 14% of the population of adults (2.3 million people) volunteered in the sport and recreation sector. ^{xlix} Of these:

- Males were more likely to volunteer for sport and physical recreation organisations (15% or 1.2 million men) than women (12% or 1 million women) ⁱ
- People in capital cities were more likely to volunteer (8% or almost 1.4 million people) than people in the rest of the country (6% or 0.9 million people) ⁱⁱ
- People in couple families with children under 15 years of age were more likely to volunteer (23%), than other family types (11-14%) ⁱⁱⁱ
- People who volunteered for sport and physical recreation organisations had higher rates of participation in physical activity for exercise or recreation (90%), compared to other volunteers (80%) and non-volunteers (65%) ⁱⁱⁱⁱ
- The rate of volunteering by age group was:
 - 18-24 years – 8%
 - 25-34 years – 11%
 - 35-44 years – 20%
 - 45-54 years – 20%
 - 55-64 years – 14%
 - 65+ years – 6%
 - Total – 14% of the adult population ^{liv}

Victoria: In 2010, 13.6% (580,000) of adult Victorians volunteered for sport and physical recreation organisations. Of these, people in capital cities were more likely to volunteer (9% or almost 382,000 people) than people in the rest of the state (5% or 197,000 people). ^{lv}

The economic value of volunteering

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. 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 value of volunteering (see section below for qualitative data).

Australia: The contribution of the volunteer workforce was estimated in the Australian Bureau of Statistics *Satellite Accounts* to provide over **\$17.3 billion** of unpaid labour to not-for-profit organisations in 2012-13. ^{lvi}

Dr Lisel O’Dwyer estimated the dollar value of the contributions made by Australian volunteers in 2006 and 2010, based on the average annual number of hours worked multiplied by the average wage rate. Dr O’Dwyer found that in 2006, formal volunteering (excluding travel) was worth **\$19.4 billion** to the Australian economy. In 2010, formal volunteering (excluding travel) was worth **\$25.4 billion** to the Australian economy.

Following this method, in 2015 formal volunteering (excluding travel) was worth **\$29.3 billion** to the Australian economy.^{lvii}

In an unpublished 2014 study on the value of volunteering, Dr Lisel O’Dwyer estimated the economic contribution of volunteering in Australia at \$290 billion. The study attempted to account for the broader social and economic benefits provided volunteering including the value of saved lives and qualitative benefits from the social multiplier effect.^{lviii}

Value of volunteering in Australia 2010

Hourly wage rate 2010	\$27.45
<u>Volunteer time inputs</u>	(\$ millions)
● Formal volunteering	\$22,547
● Informal volunteering	\$52,609
● Travel time	<u>\$13,528</u>
● Total value of time	\$111,230

Other volunteer inputs (use of car, phone etc.)

● Formal volunteering	\$2,863
● Informal volunteering	\$6,681
● Travel (other inputs)	<u>\$1,718</u>
● Total value of other inputs	\$11,263

Total volunteer inputs

● Formal volunteering	\$25,410
● Informal volunteering	\$59,290
● Travel time & inputs	<u>\$15,246</u>
● Total value of volunteering	\$99,946 ^{lix}

Australia: In 2014, the percentage of those incurring expenses for their voluntary work was 53%. Common expenses incurred related to phone calls (32%), Travel costs (42%) and meals (14%). Of those volunteers incurring expenses a small minority (18%) were able to access reimbursement for expenses.^{lx}

Victoria: Dr Duncan Ironmonger estimated the dollar value of the contribution made by volunteers in Victoria in 2006, based on the number of hours worked multiplied by a notional hourly wage rate (see below for rates in 2011-2021).^{lxi} Dr Ironmonger found that in 2006, formal volunteering (excluding travel) was worth **\$4.9 billion** to the Victorian economy (equivalent to \$1,241 per adult). Of that total amount:

- women contributed \$2.6 billion
- men contributed \$2.3 billion
- people living in Melbourne contributed \$2.9 billion
- people living outside Melbourne contributed \$2 billion.^{lxii}

Value of volunteering in Victoria 2006

Hourly wage rate 2006 \$24.09

Volunteer time inputs (\$ millions)

- Formal volunteering \$4,342
- Informal volunteering \$7,978
- Travel time \$2,214
- Total value of time \$14,535

Other volunteer inputs (use of car, phone etc.)

- Formal volunteering \$552
- Informal volunteering \$1,013
- Travel (other inputs) \$281
- Total value of other inputs \$1,846

Total volunteer inputs

- Formal volunteering \$4,894
- Informal volunteering \$8,992
- Travel time & inputs \$2,495
- Total value of volunteering \$16,381^{lxiii}

Value of formal volunteering in Victoria by type of organisation 2006

- Sport and recreation – \$1,281 million
- Education and training – \$1,037 million
- Welfare/community – \$723 million
- Religious – \$646 million
- Health – \$285 million
- Parenting, children and youth – \$197 million
- Other recreation/interest – \$153 million
- Other – \$175 million
- Arts/heritage – \$153 million
- Emergency services – \$110 million
- Environment/animal welfare – \$99 million
- Total – \$4.9 billion^{lxiv}

Future projections of total value of volunteering in Victoria

The projected total value of volunteering (including formal, informal and travel) in the future, based on increases in the population and annual hours of volunteer work, are:

	2006	2011	2016	2021
Series A	\$16.4 billion	\$22.7 billion	\$31.0 billion	\$42.1 billion
Series B	\$16.4 billion	\$21.4 billion	\$27.8 billion	\$35.7 billion
Series C	\$16.4 billion	\$20.3 billion	\$24.9 billion	\$30.3 billion

Note: Series A assumes the total average hours of volunteering per adult continues to increase at the rate of 1.1% per year (as they have done during the period 1992-2006). Series B assumes that the 2006 average hours remain unchanged. Series C assumes that the average hours decline by 1.1% per year. All three scenarios are then combined with the ABS population projections (Series B) for Victoria.^{lxv}

Hourly wage rates for volunteers in Victoria

The projected gross opportunity cost wage rates for volunteers (based on Australian Bureau of Statistics *Unpaid Work and the Australian Economy 2000*) are:

- 2006 – \$24.09 per hour
- 2011 – \$28.99 per hour
- 2016 – \$34.89 per hour
- 2021 – \$42.00 per hour.^{lxvi}

The social value of volunteering

Community involvement by volunteers

Australia: In 2010, volunteers were much more likely to be involved in other aspects of community life than non-volunteers. This is demonstrated in the following measures:

- Volunteers (82%) were more likely than non-volunteers (55%) to have attended a community event recently.^{lxvii}
- Volunteers (44%) were much more likely than non-volunteers (15%) to have ever provided a service or activity in their local area.^{lxviii}
- 62% of volunteers agreed (either strongly or somewhat) that most people could be trusted, compared with 50% of non-volunteers.^{lxix}
- 82% of volunteers were delighted, pleased or mostly satisfied with their lives, compared to 75% of non-volunteers.^{lxx}
- People who volunteered through an organisation (64%) were more likely to provide informal assistance to someone outside their own household than non-volunteers (41%).^{lxxi}

Level of satisfaction with volunteering

Australia: In 2011, the level of satisfaction among volunteers was:

- Very satisfied – 47%
- Satisfied – 45%
- Unsatisfied – 5%
- Very unsatisfied – 3%
- Not sure – 1%^{lxxii}

Volunteering and happiness

Volunteering Australia compiled the following facts about volunteering and happiness:^{lxxiii}

- Volunteers are happier, healthier and sleep better than those who don't volunteer – doctors should recommend it.^{lxxiv}
- 96% of volunteers say that it “makes people happier”.^{lxxv}
- 95% of volunteers say that volunteering is related to feelings of wellbeing.^{lxxvi}
- Volunteering results in a “helper's high”, a powerful physical and emotional feeling experienced when directly helping others.^{lxxvii}

- Just a few hours of volunteer work makes a difference in happiness and mood.^{lxxviii}
- Sustained volunteering is associated with better mental health.^{lxxix}
- Altruistic emotions and behaviours are associated with greater well-being, health, and longevity.^{lxxx}
- A strong correlation exists between the well-being, happiness, health, and longevity of people who are emotionally kind and compassionate in their charitable helping activities.^{lxxxi}
- The experience of helping others provides a meaning, a sense of self-worth, a social role and health enhancement.^{lxxxii}
- Volunteering is highly associated with greater health and happiness.^{lxxxiii}
- Volunteers often found themselves to be more confident and better leaders.^{lxxxiv}

Importance of volunteering to the not-for-profit sector

Australia: There are approximately 600,000 not-for-profit organisations (NFPs) in Australia. The majority (440,000) are small unincorporated organisations.^{lxxxv} In 2012-13, almost 3.9 million Australians volunteered with the NFP sector.^{lxxxvi} The majority of people volunteering for culture and recreation not-for-profits (163 million hours), followed by social services not-for-profits (159 million hours).^{lxxxvii} Volunteers provided 521 million hours of work to the NFP Sector (equivalent to 265,600 full-time positions).^{lxxxviii}

Victoria: There are estimated to be more than 120,000 not-for-profit community organisations operating in Victoria. The majority are informal and rely entirely on volunteers. Around one third have established a legal identity (via various forms of incorporation or as co-operatives).^{lxxxix} Of the 33,000 that are incorporated associations, more than half have fewer than 50 members and a quarter have fewer than 20 members.^{xc} More than 90% of Victoria's incorporated associations rely on volunteers to do what they do.^{xc}

Role in community strengthening

Victoria: This report highlights that:

- Volunteering is a form of civic participation that creates 'bridging networks' (i.e. broad networks of loose connections to people from diverse backgrounds), which generate positive social practices that strengthen communities (by fostering positive social norms; spreading information and innovation; and providing the mechanism for collective problem solving).^{xcii}
- Volunteering mediates the negative psychological effect of disadvantage, with volunteers from disadvantaged backgrounds having similar levels of psychological well-being as professional, educated non-volunteers.^{xciii}
- Volunteering is important for connecting people to career paths and labour markets that are better paid and more stable.^{xciv}
- Volunteering builds collective efficacy by bestowing a sense of altruism and citizenship; developing political and negotiation skills; and inspiring people to work together to solve problems and take action to improve community life.^{xcv}

Trends in volunteering

In 2011, the *National Volunteering Strategy* identified the following trends:^{xcvi}

- Growth in volunteering is uneven. Rates of volunteering have grown in sport, religion and education but have declined in community services and emergency management.
- More volunteers want roles that are flexible, or require shorter hours or a shorter term commitment.
- People are increasingly time poor and volunteering competes with greater work and caring responsibilities.
- People are more mobile than in the past so volunteers are less likely to stay for many years in a single role.
- The frequency of natural disasters requires a ready supply of skilled emergency volunteers.

It also identified that more people are volunteering for less time than in the past. The number of adult volunteers almost doubled from 3.2 million in 1995 to 6.1 million in 2014. However, the average number of hours per volunteer has reduced by almost a quarter from 74 hours per year in 1995 to 56 hours per year in 2006.^{xcvii}

Year	Number of adult volunteers	Rate of volunteering	Total volunteer hours per year	Median hours per person per year
1995	3.2 million	24%	512 million	74
2000	4.4 million	32%	704 million	72
2006	5.2 million	34%	713 million	56
2010	6.1 million	36%	Not collected	Not collected

This trend is supported by results from the General Social Survey in 2014, which in addition to noting a decline in the number of people engaged in formal and informal volunteering, found on average volunteers contributed 128 hours per year compared to the average of 160 hours per year in 1995.^{xcviii}

In 2014, the *Giving and Volunteering in Australia 2014* review identified the following trends:^{xcix}

- Family and work commitments are reported to be the main barriers affecting volunteering.
- The rate of volunteering has declined since 2007 however the number of volunteers has increased.

In 2016, the *State of Volunteering in Australia* report identified the following additional trends:

- A trend of virtual volunteering has appeared over the past decade, with 44% of respondents to the survey having done some form of virtual volunteering within the past 12 months, 19% of so interested in committing to this form of volunteering.^c
- 53% of respondents worked within the Community Service sector. When compared to the *2011 National Survey of Volunteering Issues*, there has been a stronger emphasis on Young People and less on Sport and Recreation.^{ci}
- Although 45% of women and 36% of men continue to report time commitments as barriers to volunteering, full-time and part-time employees were more likely to volunteer compared to casual employees or those who are unemployed.^{cii}

- Those under 24 years of age mostly found volunteering opportunities through online platforms. Those above 24 were more likely to discover opportunities through word of mouth, followed by self-referrals or personally approaching organisations.^{ciii}

Volunteer Support Organisations

Volunteer Support Organisations (VSOs) undertake the following activities:

- Provide information to individuals about volunteering
- Provide a referral service that is responsive to the needs of volunteers, potential volunteers and volunteer involving organisations
- Provide support to not-for-profit organisations and community groups in the recruitment and management of volunteers
- Promote volunteering and volunteering opportunities
- Provide these services beyond the agency's own activities.

A current list of VSOs (including their contact details and information about which suburbs or towns they cover) is available on our [website](#).

Volunteering networks

Victorian volunteering networks meet regularly throughout the year and often provide professional development opportunities – for example, guest speakers and workshops. Networks operate according to region or focus. A current list of network (including their contact details, information about which region or area of interest they cover and a calendar of upcoming events) is available on our [website](#).

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About Volunteering Victoria

Volunteering Victoria is the state peak body for volunteering and we have a singular and specialised focus on volunteering.

Through our dynamic and transformative leadership we will promote and build a vibrant, prosperous and strong volunteering community that is inclusive, respected and sustainable. Our vision is resilient communities and empowered and active citizens through volunteering.

We provide support to volunteers and to organisations that involve volunteers in their workforce, support volunteering in their communities, or offer volunteering programs for their employees.

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Volunteering Victoria is endorsed as a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR)

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