

Giving Australia 2016

Individuals: Volunteering Overview

How much did Australians volunteer?

An estimated 43.7% of adult Australians volunteered a total of 932 million hours in the 12 months prior to when surveyed in 2016. On average, volunteers gave 134 hours of their time over 12 months in 2015-16* or about 2.5 hours a week. The median number of hours volunteered annually was 55 hours (half did more and half did less).

*Participants were surveyed over February to September 2016 about giving in the 12 months prior.

What is the trend?

Volunteering participation and hours have both increased over the past decade.

Table 1: Volunteering, 2005 & 2016

<i>Giving Australia</i>	2005	2016
Percentage volunteering	41%	43.7%
Total number of hours in past 12 months	836 million hours	932 million hours
Average number of hours	132 hours	134 hours
Median number of hours	44 hours	55 hours

Who volunteers?

Different types of volunteering are more common depending on age, life stage, income, education, gender, cultural background and religious group:

- ❖ women are more likely to volunteer than men
- ❖ people aged between 35 and 44 are more likely to volunteer than other age groups, with 45-54 year olds the second most likely to volunteer, and
- ❖ volunteers 65 years and over volunteered the most hours on average.

Table 2: Volunteering by age group & gender 2016

Age group	Percentage volunteering	Average hours volunteered
18-24	38.3%	106
Male	35.5%	80
Female	41.4%	130
25-34	37.1%	98
Male	34.2%	94
Female	40.0%	101
35-44	50.7%	109
Male	41.7%	114
Female	59.6%	105
45-54	47.4%	131
Male	46.3%	113
Female	48.4%	149
55-64	43.6%	157
Male	41.2%	165
Female	45.9%	149
65+	43.8%	193
Male	42.6%	191
Female	44.9%	195
Total	43.7%	134
Male	40.3%	130
Female	46.9%	138

Do volunteers give more?

Some 38.2% of people responding both volunteered and donated to nonprofit organisations.

Table 3: Giving of money and time 2016

	% donated	Average donation (\$)
Volunteer and donor	87.4%	\$1,017.11
Non-volunteer and donor	75.6%	\$536.69
Total*	80.8%	\$764.08

* Totals may not equal the sum of components due to rounding



Where do people volunteer?

The most common cause areas people volunteered for were:

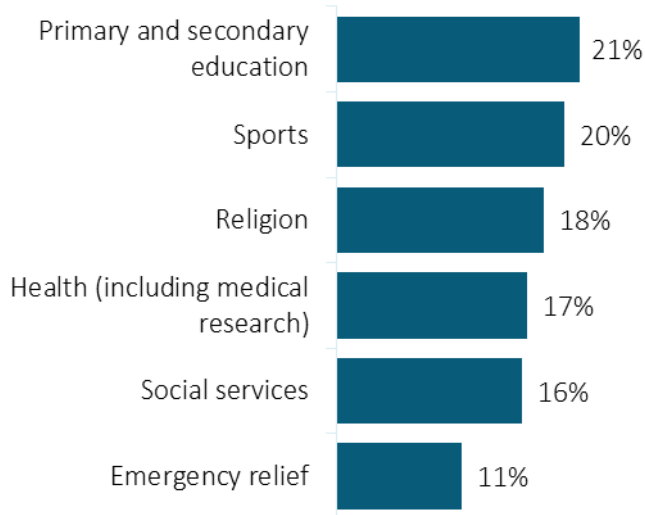


Figure 1: Most common volunteer cause areas 2016

The cause area most likely to attract volunteers differs according to volunteer age:

- ❖ younger volunteers (18–24 year olds) most commonly volunteer for religious causes, sports, health and social services
- ❖ those aged 35–44 most commonly reported volunteering for primary and secondary education
- ❖ 45–54 year olds most commonly volunteered in sports, and
- ❖ those aged 65 years and over are most likely to volunteer for religious causes, followed by health and social services.

Reasons for volunteering

Key reasons people volunteer:

- ❖ personal satisfaction
- ❖ connection to community
- ❖ practical benefit (e.g. to gain skills)
- ❖ keep busy when no longer working
- ❖ mental health benefits, and
- ❖ family tradition.

Emerging issues

From our review of the literature, some emerging issues are:

- ❖ systemic change in nonprofit sector, including use of information technologies, is both a barrier and an opportunity, and
- ❖ lack of knowledge about engaging culturally and linguistically diverse groups in formal volunteering with nonprofit groups.

Giving Australia 2016 report series

- ❖ *Giving Australia 2016: a summary*
- ❖ *Philanthropy and philanthropists*
- ❖ *Giving and volunteering – the nonprofit perspective*
- ❖ *Business giving and volunteering*
- ❖ *Individual giving and volunteering*
- ❖ *Giving Australia 2016 Literature review summary report*
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For more information:

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