

Study: Social participation of full-time workers, 2010

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The extent to which Canadians do unpaid volunteer work for organizations is affected by their working arrangements. In 2010, about one in five full-time workers aged 25 to 54 (or 2,036,000 persons) volunteered five or more hours per month on a regular basis. In comparison, about one third of part-time workers and nearly one quarter of those who were unemployed volunteered with the same frequency.

Among full-time workers with flexible work conditions, that is, those who can choose their start and finish times and who work at home at least occasionally, 26% volunteered on a regular basis. The corresponding number for those with fixed working schedules and who did not work at home was 18%.

This difference between workers with flexible and fixed work schedules remained after taking into account the influence of education, age group, industry, parenthood as well as other factors.

Commuting time also affected the likelihood of being a regular volunteer. Among full-time workers who took 45 minutes or more to get to work, 15% were regular volunteers. For those whose commute was 30 minutes or less, the rate was 21%.

In contrast, the number of hours worked by full-time workers had no impact on the extent of volunteering. Those who worked 50 hours or more per week were as likely to be regular volunteers as those who worked fewer hours.

Among the self-employed, women (35%) were more likely than men (21%) to volunteer on a regular basis. In comparison, the proportion was 19% among male and female employees.

Self-employed women also reported having a greater connection between their employment and their volunteer activities. For example, they were more likely to report that their volunteer work had helped them get a job or start a business.

Other factors associated with the likelihood of being a regular volunteer among full-time workers included attending religious services on a weekly basis, holding a university degree or being a parent of school age children.

Note to readers

This study is based on the research paper "Social participation of full-time workers," released today, which used data from the 2010 General Social Survey (GSS) on Time Use, as well as information from the Canadian Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating, 2010. The 2010 GSS was administered to a sample of people, aged 15 and older, totalling 15,390 respondents. Of those, 7,345 respondents aged 25 to 54 were selected. Analysis of the factors associated with social participation was limited to the 4,495 respondents aged 25 to 54 whose main activity was paid employment or self-employment, and who had spent at least 30 hours doing this activity during the week prior to the survey.



Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers 4430 and 4503.

The article " The Social Participation of Full-time Workers " is now available online in the publication *Labour Statistics: Research Papers series* (75-004-M), from the *Browse by key resource* module of our website under *Publications*.

For more information, contact us toll-free at 1-800-263-1136 (infostats@statcan.gc.ca).

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