

VDS Research Team

Research, Policy and Strategy
Research
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Background

Volunteer Development Scotland (VDS) commissioned TNS System Three to conduct a survey into volunteering activity in Scotland on their behalf. This is a summary of the main findings arising from the data gathered in late 2006. The volunteering questions are asked of around 1000 individuals across Scotland. Due to the sample size that data is only broken down into three Local Authority Grouping areas (North, West and East). The VDS survey asks about both volunteering undertaken through an organisation, group or club commonly referred to as 'formal' volunteering as well as about volunteering undertaken as an individual to help others commonly referred to as 'informal' volunteering. The data presented here are the headline statistics and a full discussion on trends within and comparisons between the Scottish Household Survey (SHS) and the VDS survey will be available later in 2007. The statistics on volunteer disclosures is provided by Central Registered Body in Scotland (CRBS), a service provided by VDS. The various definitions used in this summary can be found at the end of the paper.

Main Findings from the VDS survey 2006

Formal Volunteering

- **32%** of adults in Scotland have volunteered formally in 2006.
- This is a decrease from last years figure of 38%, and the 2004 figure of 43%.
- This equates to around **1.3 million** adults participating in formal volunteering.

Informal Volunteering

- **74%** of adults in Scotland have volunteered informally in the past year.
- This is a decrease from 81% in 2003 (no data available in 2004/5).
- This equates to around **3 million** adults participating in informal volunteering.

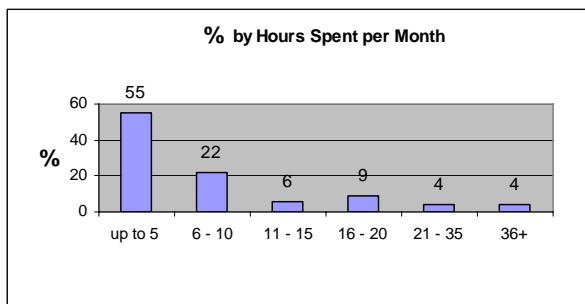
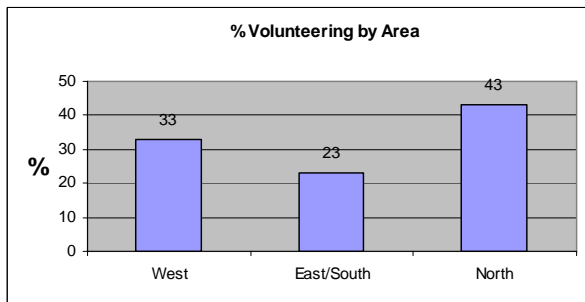
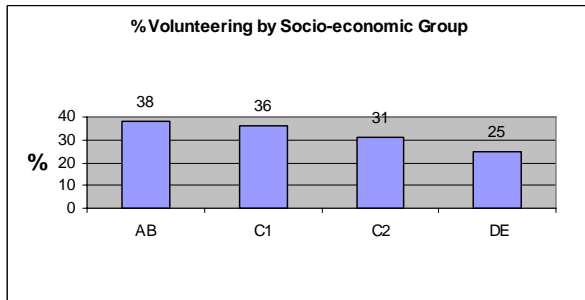
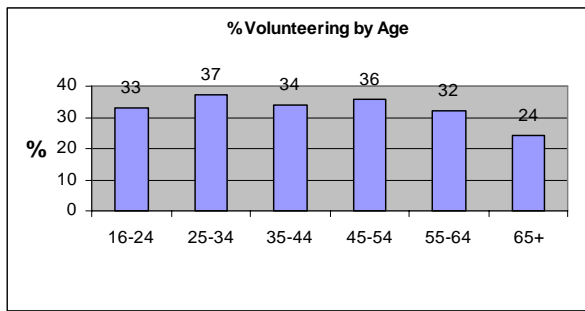
The Economic Value of Formal Volunteering

- Formal volunteering has contributed the equivalent of **£1.8 billion** to the Scottish economy in 2006.
- This is a decrease from last years figure of £2.52 billion.
- This equates to **3.8 million 35 hour weeks** and represents over 79,000 FTE jobs.

Volunteer Disclosures (April 2006 – March 2007)

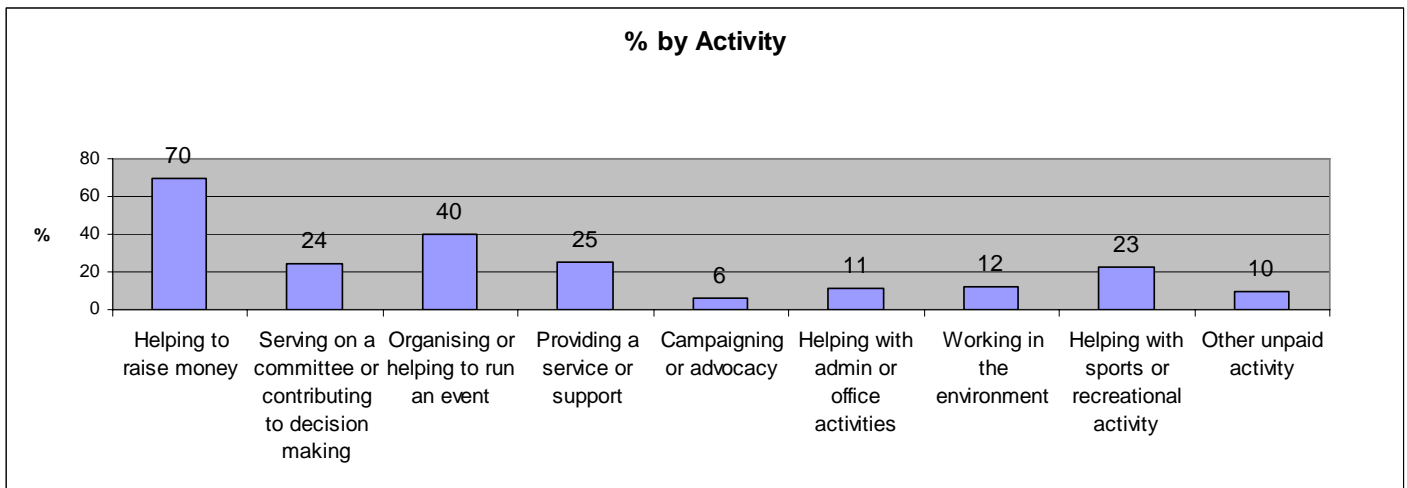
- **55,418** disclosures for volunteers in the voluntary sector were processed by CRBS.

Formal Volunteering in 2006



- **Graph 1** shows that those most likely to volunteer formally are between 25-34 years.
- Previous statistics have shown that those aged 35-44 and 45-54 years were more likely to volunteer.
- **Graph 2** shows that formal volunteering levels in 2006 remain higher in the socio-economic groups AB and C1. {For information on these groups see definitions section}
- Levels of volunteering remain stable in socio-economic groups C2 and DE when compared with 2005.
- Although socio-economic groups AB and C1 retain higher levels of volunteering, the levels of volunteering in these groups decreased from 2005.
- **Graph 3** shows that volunteering levels remain greater in the Local Authority groupings located in the North of Scotland. {For information on these groups see definitions section}
- **Graph 4** shows that most volunteers contribute up to five hours per month to their volunteering activities.

Graph 5 shows that helping to raise money continues to be the most common **formal** volunteering activity in Scotland¹

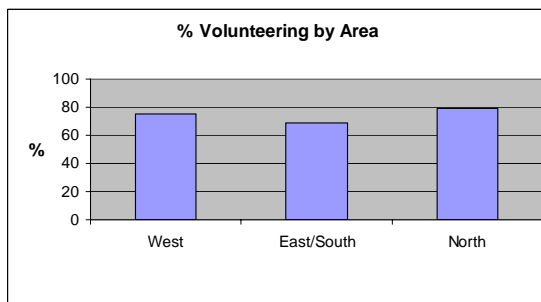
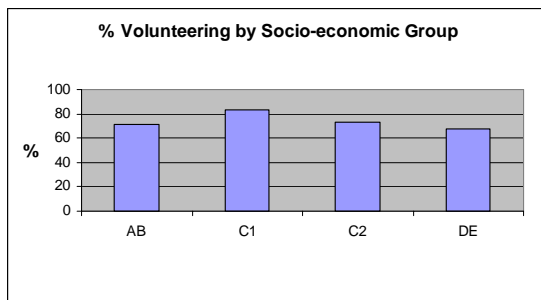
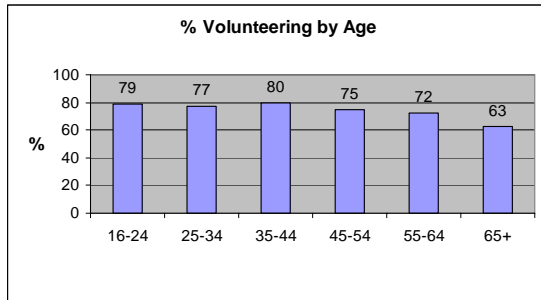


Other statistics on formal volunteering in 2006

- Women (34%) are slightly more likely to volunteer than men (30%).
- 69% of existing volunteers became involved in volunteering by being asked to help.
- 3% of existing volunteers became involved in volunteering via a local Volunteer Centre.
- 85% of people say that the need for a Disclosure would not affect their willingness to volunteer (undertake unpaid activities) with children or adults at risk.
- 71% of people say that we are achieving a balance between safety and risk, regarding the use of Disclosures for volunteers helping with children or adults at risk.
- 90% of those who volunteer formally also volunteer informally.
- 66% of those who do not volunteer formally volunteer informally.

¹ The total percentage is more than 100% as volunteers take part in more than one activity

Informal Volunteering in 2006

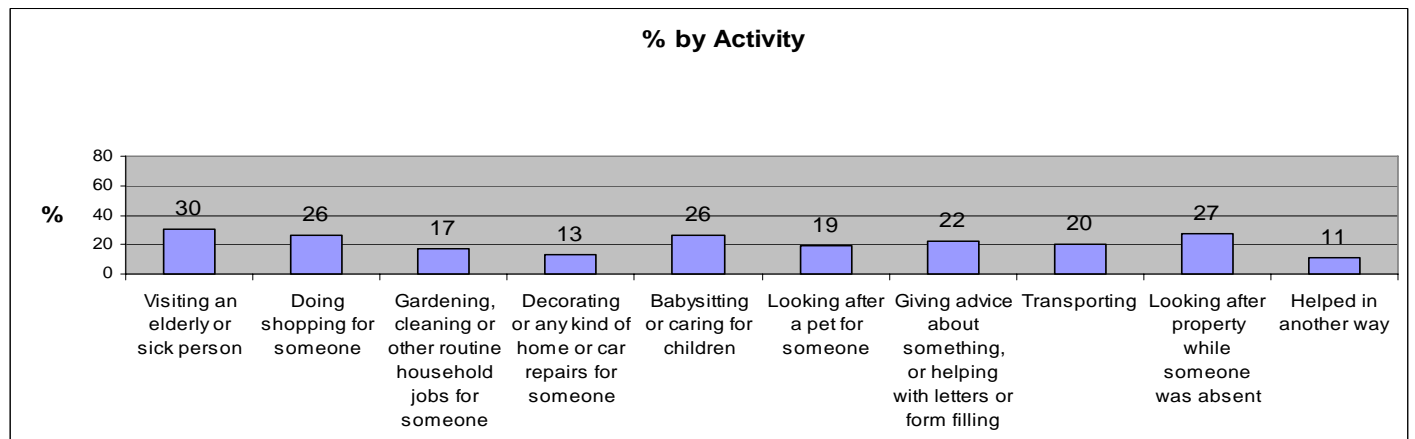


- **Graph 6** shows that those aged 35-44 years continue to be the most likely age group to volunteer informally

- **Graph 7** shows that informal volunteering levels are greater in socio-economic group C1.

- **Graph 8** shows that informal volunteering levels remain higher in the Local Authority Groupings located in the North of Scotland.

Graph 9 shows that visiting an elderly or sick person remains the most common **informal** volunteering activity in Scotland².



² The total percentage is more than 100% as volunteers take part in more than one activity

The Economic Value of Formal Volunteering in 2006

Data on volunteer hours is used to calculate the approximate economic value of formal volunteering in Scotland. It should be noted that volunteers should not be valued in purely economic terms; the added value of freely given time should be considered. Indeed the value of volunteering can be considered and demonstrated through other forms of capital such as cultural, social, physical and human (Volunteering Impact Assessment Toolkit, Institute of Volunteering Research:2004)

While the survey cannot provide an actual figure for the total volunteering hours worked in Scotland, by projecting the data in the survey, it can be estimated that a minimum of **134,250,168 hours** were worked by **1,331,552 volunteers** in 2006.

Using the average Scottish weekly wage (ONS, 2006):

$$£378.40 \times 3,835,719 \text{ (number of FTE weeks)} = 1.5 \text{ billion per annum}$$

This figure could be seen to represent a 'notional volunteer wage bill' for Scotland, and with the addition of employment overheads, we can estimate the cost to buy in the work carried out by volunteers in Scotland each year to amount to the figure below. After calculating the total volunteer value, you can add an additional 20% to represent employment overheads such as pension and holiday pay.

Annual value inc. employment overheads = £1.8 billion per annum

Volunteer Disclosures (April 2006 – March 2007)

Disclosure Processing

- **55,418** Disclosures for volunteers in the voluntary sector were processed by CRBS.
- Of these, **12,025** were returned to organisations due to error or omission.
- **60%** of Disclosures processed are for females, **40%** for males.
- The most common age group for which Disclosures are requested is 40-60, (**40%**), followed by 25-40, (**28%**).
- The most common organisation types requesting Disclosures are Faith/Religious groups (**26%**), Sports and Leisure groups (**19%**), and Youth groups (**13%**).

Registered Organisations

- There are **12,117** not for profit organisations **registered** with CRBS.

Definitions

For the purpose of this survey Volunteering is the giving of time and energy through a third party, which can bring measurable benefits to the volunteer, individual beneficiaries, groups and organisations, communities, environment and society at large. It is a choice undertaken of one's own free will, and is not motivated primarily for financial gain or for a wage or salary (Scottish Executive, 2004)

Volunteering can be sub-divided into:

- a) Formal – volunteering undertaken through an organisation, group or club to help others
- b) Informal – volunteering undertaken as an individual to help others

Adults – those aged 16 and over

Socio-economic groups:

AB – Upper middle class/middle class

C1 – Lower middle class

C2 – Skilled working class

DE – Lowest grade workers/state pensioners

Geographical classifications

North covers the Local Authorities Groups of Highlands and Islands, Grampian, Tayside and Central.

East covers the Local Authorities Groups of Lothian, Southern Scotland, Fife and Edinburgh.

West covers the Local Authorities Groups of South and North Lanarkshire, Glasgow, Dunbartonshire, Ayrshire, Renfrewshire and Inverclyde.

References

ONS (2006) *Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2005 – results* London:ONS (updated 26th October 2006)
<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=14203> (accessed 2nd April 2007)

Scottish Executive (2004) *Volunteering Strategy*, Scottish Executive (now Scottish Government)

TNS (unpublished) *System Three Scottish Opinion Poll, November 2006*.

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