

VDS Research Team

Research, Policy and Strategy
Research
November 2007

Background

This is a summary of the main findings arising from the volunteering suite of questions included as part of the Scottish Household Survey (SHS) 2006. This is not VDS data. For full details, please go to: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/08/01084217/0-2>

The SHS is a major cross-sectional survey that was first commissioned by the Scottish Executive in 1998 to provide reliable and up-to-date information on the composition, characteristics and behaviour of Scottish households, both nationally and at local authority level. The SHS is currently carried out in partnership by Ipsos MORI and TNS Social.

The SHS is continuous and surveys 31,000 households over a two year period. Nationally representative results are available each quarter, larger local authority results on an annual basis, and all local authority results are available every two years. The volunteering questions are asked of around 7000 individuals.

The SHS asks about volunteering undertaken through an organisation, group or club, not volunteering, commonly referred to as 'formal' volunteering rather than volunteering undertaken as an individual to help others, commonly referred to as 'informal' volunteering.

Main Findings from the SHS 2006

Levels of volunteering

- **25%** of adults have taken part in voluntary activities through an organisation, group or club in the last 12 months.

Trends on the levels of volunteering

The trend of the levels of volunteering between 2000 and 2006 (SHS) would appear to be fairly stable as can be seen below.

SHS	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
%	26%	25%	27%	24%	23%	20%	25%

Levels of volunteering by Local Authority grouping (descending)

Table 1

LOCAL AUTHORITY GROUPING	%
Highlands and Islands (Eilean Siar, Highland, Orkney, Shetland, Argyll & Bute and Moray)	40
Grampian (City of Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire)	32
Central (Stirling, Clackmannanshire and Falkirk)	29
Dunbartonshire (East and West Dunbartonshire)	27
Tayside (Angus, Dundee City and Perth & Kinross)	24
South Lanarkshire (South Lanarkshire)	23
Lothians (West, East and Midlothian)	23
Southern Scotland (Borders and Dumfries & Galloway)	23
Edinburgh (Edinburgh City)	22
Renfrewshire and Inverclyde (East Renfrewshire, Renfrewshire and Inverclyde)	22
Glasgow (Glasgow City)	21
Fife (Fife)	20
Ayrshire (South, East and North Ayrshire)	19
North Lanarkshire (North Lanarkshire)	18
Scotland	25

*The breakdown for Local Authority areas is not yet available.

Age and voluntary activity in Scotland

Voluntary activity is more common among the following groups:

- those in the 35-44 age group
- those who are self-employed (36%)
- those who are working part-time (31%)
- higher income households 45% of adults in households with an annual income of more than £40,000

Rural and urban volunteering¹

Volunteering is significantly more common in rural areas (41% of adults in remote rural areas compared with 22% in large urban areas). It is worth noting that remote small and accessible rural areas have higher volunteering rates than large urban areas.

Although not SHS data Helen Timbrell's PhD study has some interesting qualitative data on the nature of volunteering trends in rural and urban areas, see <http://www.vds.org.uk/Resource/1553/go.aspx>

¹ For the Scottish Executive 6 fold urban rural classification see end of paper

Reasons for people stopping volunteering

- The most common reason overall for stopping volunteering is lack of time (25%)
- Lack of time is the most likely reason to be given by those on higher incomes (31% of annual household income over £40,000)
- Illness was the most likely reason to be given by those on lower incomes (23% of annual household income less than £10,000)

Returning to volunteering

What would motivate respondents to return to volunteering?

- Overall across income groups 41% said nothing would
- A higher percentage, 56% of those on lower incomes say nothing would
- 17% of those on higher incomes feel that they would consider taking up volunteering again if it fitted with their other commitments
- 16% of those on higher incomes would if they had more time.

Most common activities

The five most common volunteering activities undertaken are:

- Raising money (32%)
- Generally helping out (28%)
- Doing whatever is required (24%)
- Committee work (23%)
- Helping to organise or run events or activities (23%)

Number of hours spent volunteering per month

Table 2 below shows the number of hours spent on volunteering per month, by sex, by age, by income and by urban/rural classification. It is worthy of note that those people in the 60-74 age category give 36 hours or more of their time per month to volunteering.

Number of hours spent volunteering per month

Table 2	Less than 1 hour	Up to 5 hours	6 to 10 hours	11 to 15 hours	16 to 20 hours	21 to 35 hours	36 hours or more	Don't know
Sex								
Male	2	46	17	9	7	6	8	5
Female	2	48	20	8	7	5	6	4
Total	2	48	18	8	7	6	7	4
Age								
16 - 24	1	55	12	7	7	6	5	6
25 - 34	1	51	16	9	6	6	5	6
35 - 44	0	54	23	8	6	3	5	1
45 - 59	2	47	21	9	6	6	6	4
60 - 74	2	40	15	8	9	8	12	6
75 plus	3	37	17	10	13	5	5	11
Total	2	48	18	8	7	6	7	4
Income								
£6001 - £10,000	2	40	16	8	11	11	6	5
£10,001 - £15,000	2	46	20	7	9	5	7	4
£15,001 - £20,000	1	50	19	6	4	9	8	5
£20,001 - £25,000	2	48	15	10	9	4	7	5
£25,001 - £30,000	2	48	18	10	9	3	7	3
£30,001 - £40,000	2	51	20	9	8	2	4	6
£40,001+	1	51	22	7	4	6	8	2
Total	2	48	18	8	7	6	7	4
Large urban	2	47	18	9	7	5	7	5
Other urban	2	47	18	8	7	7	8	3
Accessible small towns	2	49	18	7	6	2	6	9
Remote small towns	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Accessible rural	1	47	19	9	7	7	9	2
Remote rural	2	46	20	8	8	6	6	5
Total	2	48	18	8	7	6	7	4

References

Corbett, J., MacLeod, P., Hope, S., TNS System Three., & Ipsos MORI., (2007) *'Scotland's People Annual Report: The results from the 2005/6 Scottish Household Survey'*. Scottish Executive. Edinburgh.

Definitions

Scottish Executive 6-fold urban rural classification

- Large urban areas (with a population over 125,000)
- Other urban areas (with a population of 10,000 to 125,000)
- Accessible small towns (with a population of 3,000 to 10,000)
- Remote small towns (with a population of 3,00 to 10,000)
- Accessible rural (within a 30 minute drive from a town with a population of 10,000 or more)
- Remote rural

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VDS acknowledges the assistance it receives from the Scottish Executive.
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