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# Quarterly Volunteering and Donating Indicators

This is an update of the key indicators of volunteering and donating in New Zealand through the quarter ending 30 September 2014.

## Background

This update provides statistics for the most recent quarter, including comparisons with the previous quarter and the same quarter in the previous year. It also identifies some long-term trends.

The Quarterly Volunteering and Donating Indicators include:

* the percentage of people volunteering;
* average and median hours volunteered;
* the percentage of people donating money and goods; and
* the average and median dollars donated.

## Source

The Quarterly Volunteering and Donating Indicators are sourced from the Nielsen Consumer and Media Insights (CMI) survey. The Nielsen CMI survey results are based on a mixture of face-to-face interviews and a self-completion diary with a representative sample of 3,000 people per quarter aged 10 years and older spread throughout New Zealand.

## Overall findings

The overall findings for the September 2014 quarter are:

* During the September 2014 quarter, nearly 35 per cent of all respondents volunteered at least one hour of their time. This is the highest volunteering rate of the five years measured.
* Of those who volunteered, 59 per cent were female and 41 per cent were male.
* Results from the September 2014 quarter show that people between the ages of 30-39 volunteered the most.

## Further information

Please see the table at the end of this report for a complete list of Quarterly Volunteering and Donating Indicators from the March 2010 quarter onwards.



## Volunteering

Thirty-four and a half per cent of respondents said they had volunteered at least one hour during the September 2014 quarter. This is nearly a five per cent increase from the previous quarter (30.0 per cent) and a seven per cent increase from the September 2013 quarter (27.5 per cent).

The median hours volunteered in the September 2014 quarter was nine hours, the same as the previous quarter. When comparing the current quarter with the same quarter in the previous year, the median hours volunteered dropped by one hour.

### Long-term trends

Since June 2013, the percentage of people surveyed who volunteered in New Zealand has generally trended upwards. The median hours volunteered per month has remained stable at around 10 hours over the last five years.

Volunteering and donating indicators remain relatively stable over time. As the Nielsen survey does not ask questions about respondents’ intentions, changes in volunteering rates are not easy to interpret. Seasonal variation does occur. Volunteering rates are lower during the summer months.

By way of comparison, Statistics New Zealand’s General Social Survey (NZGSS) 2012 reported that 30.0 per cent of their respondents had undertaken volunteer work with a group or organisation.[[1]](#footnote-1) This is similar to the Nielsen statistics presented in this report which show that, on average, 31.0 per cent of respondents participated in some form of volunteer work during the year ending March 2013 (roughly the same period as that of the NZGSS).



## Donations of money

Forty-one per cent of respondents said they had donated money to a charity or worthy cause in the September 2014 quarter. This is the same as the previous quarter and is a four per cent increase from September 2013 (37.0 per cent).

The median dollars donated in the September 2014 quarter was $40, the same as the previous quarter. Compared to the same quarter in the previous year, the median amount of money donated has increased by $19.

### Long-term trends

The percentage of the population aged 10 years and older donating money reached a peak of 46 per cent in the June 2011 quarter, most likely due to donations related to the Canterbury earthquakes.

From December 2010 through to September 2012 the median amount of money donated was stable at around $40 per month. December 2012 saw a 25.0 per cent decline to $30 per month, before a spike to $48 in March 2013 and subsequent return to $30 in the June 2013 quarter. The median amount of money donated declined again in the September 2013 quarter to $21 per month, before steadily rising again to $40 per month by the September 2014 quarter.



## Donations of goods

In the September 2014 quarter, 18.5 per cent of respondents had donated goods to a charity or worthy cause, the same as the previous quarter. When comparing the current quarter with the same quarter in the previous year, the percentage of respondents who donated goods has risen by nearly four per cent.

### Long-term trends

Overall the percentage of people donating goods is less than for those donating money. However, trends for the donation of money show greater variation than for the donations of goods.



## Gender and Volunteering

In the September 2014 quarter, 34.5 per cent of respondents 10 years and older mentioned they volunteered at least one hour of their time. Of those respondents who said they volunteered, 59.0 per cent were females and 41.0 per cent were males.

Compared with the previous quarter, there has been a small decrease in the percentage of males volunteering, from 43.0 per cent in June 2014 to 41.0 per cent in the September 2014 quarter. The percentage of females volunteering increased from 57.0 per cent to 59.0 per cent over the same period.

### Long-term trends

Over the previous four years, females have generally volunteered more than males. In 16 of the 19 quarters analysed, females volunteered more than males.

## Age and Volunteering

The age profile of respondents shows that during the September 2014 quarter people between the ages of 30-39 years volunteered the most, and those aged 10-19 years volunteered the least.

When comparing the volunteering numbers of the September 2014 quarter with the previous quarter, five age groupings saw an increase in the percentage of those volunteering, while the remaining three saw decreases. The 20-29 age grouping saw the largest change occur with around a 12.0 per cent increase in volunteering between quarters.

### Long-term trends

Over the previous five years, people between the ages of 40-49 have had the highest percentage of volunteers for 11 of the 19 quarters analysed.

In comparison, people between the ages of 10-19 have had the lowest percentage of volunteers for 16 of the 19 quarters analysed.

## Ethnicity and Volunteering

The ethnic profile of respondents who volunteered during the September 2014 quarter roughly aligns with the ethnic profile of Statistics New Zealand’s Projected Ethnic Population.[[2]](#footnote-2) This means the ethnic profile of New Zealand volunteers in the survey is therefore similar to the ethnic profile of the wider New Zealand population.

It is important to note that different cultures may define 'volunteering' in a variety of ways. For example, Māori define mahi aroha as the unpaid activity performed in accordance with cultural obligations and the principles of tikanga. Pacific Peoples and other cultural groups may also not consider the unpaid work they do in their communities to be volunteering. Volunteering figures may therefore be under-reported for some ethnic groups.[[3]](#footnote-3)

### Quarterly Volunteering and Donating Indicators

March 2010 – September 2014



1. Statistics New Zealand (13 August 2013), *New Zealand General Social Survey: 2012.* [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. “Projected Ethnic Population of New Zealand, by Age and Sex ” *Statistics New Zealand’s Projected Population Estimates, 2006 (base) – 2026*. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector (2007). *Mahi Aroha: Maori Perspectives on Volunteering and Cultural Obligations.* [*http://www.ocvs.govt.nz/documents/work-pragramme/encouraging-participation/volunteering-research/mahi-aroha.pdf*](http://www.ocvs.govt.nz/documents/work-pragramme/encouraging-participation/volunteering-research/mahi-aroha.pdf%20) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)