Understanding the Capacity of

Religious Organizations

A Synthesis of Findings from the National Survey of Nonprofit and Voluntary Organizations and the National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating

By
Barbara Brownlee, Glenn Gumulka,
Cathy Barr & David Lasby

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ISBN : 1-55401-122-1

This research was supported by funding from the Government of Canada through the Department of Canadian Heritage. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the Government of Canada.

Canada

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Executive Summary

This report presents the first comprehensive portrait of Canada's Religious organizations—a major sub-sector within the nation's nonprofit and voluntary sector. Religious organizations serve the people in their communities by providing not only a place to worship, but also a place to receive many services that enhance their lives. Using data from the 2000 National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating (NSGVP)[1] and the 2003 National Survey of Nonprofit and Voluntary Organizations (NSNVO),[2] we explore the key characteristics of Religious organizations, their financial and human resources, and the challenges they face as they attempt to fulfill their missions.

According to the NSNVO, there are approximately 31,000 Religious organizations in Canada, accounting for 19% of the country's estimated 161,000 nonprofit and voluntary organizations. Collectively, these organizations report annual revenues of $6.8 billion[E]—6%[E] of total sector revenues. Compared to other nonprofit and voluntary organizations, Religious organizations are moderately sized. Over one-third (38%) have revenues between $100,000 and $999,999, compared to only 29% of all organizations.

Virtually all Religious organizations (94%) are registered charities, a status that gives them access to foundation funding and allows them to issue tax receipts for donations. More than half (51%) have been in operation for 40 years or more. Together, Religious organizations report a total membership of over 20 million people and over 30,000[E] organizations. Interestingly, however, only 27% of Religious organizations say that their members benefit most from their activities, while most (69%) report that both members and non-members benefit from their services.

In the nonprofit and voluntary sector as a whole, revenues tend to be concentrated among a small percentage of large organizations. The same pattern exists in the Religious sub-sector, where the less than 4% of organizations with revenues over $1 million account for 48% of revenues. The distribution of revenues among Religious organizations is, however, more even than it is in many other sub-sectors.

Religious organizations are very dependent on gifts and donations. Gifts and donations from individuals, foundations, other nonprofits, and corporations provide 64%[E] of the revenues of Religious organizations. Individual donations are particularly important to Religious organizations, providing 57%[E] of their revenues. Three-quarters of Religious organizations (77%) reported that their revenues either increased or stayed the same between 2000 and 2003.

The NSGVP estimates that 32% of Canadians aged 15 and older—almost 8 million people—made a donation to a Religious organization in 2000. On average, each donor gives $310 annually. Religious organizations receive 14% of all donations and 49% of the total value of all donations made to nonprofit and voluntary organizations in Canada. Donors to Religious organizations tend to be older than donors in general, and they are more likely to say that they donate out of a sense of commitment to their community or fulfill religious obligations or beliefs.

Religious organizations are less likely than other nonprofit and voluntary organizations to report financial capacity problems. Their most common financial capacity problem is obtaining funding from individuals, but even this problem is only reported by 44% of Religious organizations. Only

[1] The NSGVP is a national survey that asks Canadians aged 15 and older about the time and money they contribute to nonprofit and voluntary organizations.

[2] The NSNVO is a national survey that asks Canadian nonprofit and voluntary organizations about their revenues, human resources, and the challenges they face in attempting to fulfill their missions.

[E] Use with caution

14% of Religious organizations receive funding from other organizations. However, about a third of these organizations report problems with their funding model (e.g., an over-reliance on project funding, a lack of funding for core operations, and reductions in government funding). Larger organizations and those that are dependent on government funding are the most likely to report problems with external funding.

The NSNVO estimates that Religious organizations employed more than 109,000[E] people in 2003, or about 5%[E] of the total nonprofit and voluntary sector workforce. Religious organizations are more likely than the sector as a whole to have paid staff. Just under two-thirds (65%[*]) have at least one paid staff member, compared to less than half (46%) of all nonprofit and voluntary organizations. Religious organizations are also more likely to have small staff contingents. More than one-half (51%) of Religious organizations have between 1 and 4 staff members, compared to 26% of all organizations.

Religious organizations are less likely than organizations in general to report problems regarding paid staff. For example, 26%* of Religious organizations say the lack of paid staff to recruit and manage volunteers is a problem for them, compared to 34% of all organizations in the sector. Similarly, only 22% of Religious organizations say they have difficulty providing staff training and development, compared to 27% of all organizations. Stability in paid staff levels (73% of Religious organizations reported no change in staff levels between 2000 and 2003) may help to explain this finding.

Volunteers also play an important role in Religious organizations. According to the NSGVP, about 1.3 million Canadians volunteered with a Religious organization in 2000. These volunteers gave an average of 126 hours each and together they contributed a total of 170 million hours. When compared to volunteers in general, those who volunteer with Religious organizations are more likely to be: women, 45 years of age or older, married or in common-law relationships, post-secondary graduates, households with annual incomes of less than $60,000, in attendance weekly at religious services.

Religious organizations are well-established institutions with stable revenues. The key strengths of Religious organizations appear to be their local community focus, and the strength that they draw from their dedicated donors, volunteers, and staff.

Some of the most significant challenges facing Religious organizations are their heavy reliance on a single source of revenue — individual donations — which makes these organizations vulnerable to changes in donation levels, and their over-reliance on older and less affluent Canadians for donations and volunteer support. In order to ensure their continued success, Religious organization must find ways to engage a broader cross-section of the Canadian population.

[E] Use with caution
[*] Figure differs from sum derived from chart due to rounding of numbers for individual categories.

Introduction

This report presents the first comprehensive portrait of Canadian Religious organizations. Religious organizations have a significant social and economic presence in this country, collectively reporting annual revenues of $6.8 billion,[E] employing over 109,000[E] people, and benefiting from the assistance of 1.3 million volunteers. Religious organizations receive almost two-thirds (64%[E]) of their total annual revenues from gifts and donations – five times the sector average. Although they are less likely than other organizations to report capacity problems, Religious organizations face a number of challenges, including difficulties obtaining funding from individuals, increasing demands for products and services, and difficulties obtaining and retaining the types of volunteers and board members they need.

For the purposes of this report, Religious organizations are defined as:

- *Congregations*—churches, synagogues, temples, mosques, shrines, monasteries, seminaries, and similar organizations promoting religious beliefs and administering religious services and rituals; and
- *Associations of congregations*—associations and auxiliaries of religious congregations and organizations supporting and promoting religious beliefs, service, and rituals (Salamon & Anheier, 1997).

The data in this report are from two complementary surveys: the 2003 National Survey of Nonprofit and Voluntary Organizations (NSNVO) and the 2000 National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating (NSGVP). The NSNVO asked a random sample of 13,000 organizations across the country about their activities, financial resources, human resources, and capacity challenges. The NSGVP asked over 14,000 randomly selected Canadians about the time and money they contribute to nonprofit and voluntary organizations. Both surveys used the International Classification of Nonprofit Organizations (ICNPO) to classify organizations into various sub-sectors. This allows us to combine the two surveys to create a complete picture of Religious organizations.

The purpose of this report is to allow people with a specific interest in Religious organizations—board members, staff members, volunteers, donors, corporate and government funders—to develop a better understanding of these organizations and the challenges they face. Because understanding is deepened by comparison, considerable attention is paid to explaining how Religious organizations compare to the nonprofit and voluntary sector in general. The information in this report can be used to:

- increase awareness of the importance and contributions of Religious organizations,
- improve fundraising and volunteer management practices within Religious organizations,
- draw attention to areas where Religious organizations are performing well and to areas where they may need assistance, and
- develop evidence-based policies to help strengthen Religious organizations.

This is the first published report on Canadian Religious organizations to use data from both the NSNVO and NSGVP. Although some of the information is published elsewhere (see, for example, Hall et al., 2001, 2003; Lasby & McIver, 2004a, 2004b; McKeown et al., 2004), it has never before been brought together in one report. This report also presents most information in graphical format, which we hope will make it useful for quick reference.

[E] use with caution

This report is divided into three parts:

1. *Key Characteristics.* In this section, we use data from the NSNVO to describe how many Religious organizations there are, how long they have been in operation, their legal status, and the populations they serve.

2. *Financial Resources and Challenges.* This section uses the data on individual donors and donations from the NSGVP and organizational revenue information from the NSNVO to explore the financial resources available to Religious organizations and the financial challenges they face.

3. *Human Resources and Challenges.* In this section, we use the data on volunteers from the NSGVP and data on paid staff and capacity problems from the NSNVO to examine the human resources—both voluntary and paid—that are available to Religious organizations and the challenges they have in this area.

This report is intended to provide a comprehensive portrait of Religious organizations and their donors and volunteers. From it, a picture emerges of a group of organizations that provides services that are critical to the quality of life in our communities.

Key Characteristics

Religious organizations have many characteristics that differentiate them from other types of nonprofit and voluntary organization. In this section, we use data from the NSNVO to describe these key characteristics. Their implications will be discussed more fully in the sections on financial and human resources.

Highlights

Quick facts

- 31,000 organizations in Canada (19% of the 161,000 Canadian nonprofit and voluntary organizations)
- Total revenues of $6.8 billion[E] (6% of the sector total of $112 billion)
- 64% report annual revenues of between $30,000 and $499,999
- 94% are registered charities, compared to 56% of all organizations
- 51% have been in operation for over 40 years

Locally focused organizations serving all Canadians

- 79% primarily serve their neighbourhood, city, town, or rural municipality
- 73% serve the general public, compared to 46% of all organizations

Members are integral

- Over 20 million individual members, accounting for 15% of all members in the sector
- Only 33% restrict membership, compared to 43% of all organizations
- 69% report that both members and non-members benefit equally from their services

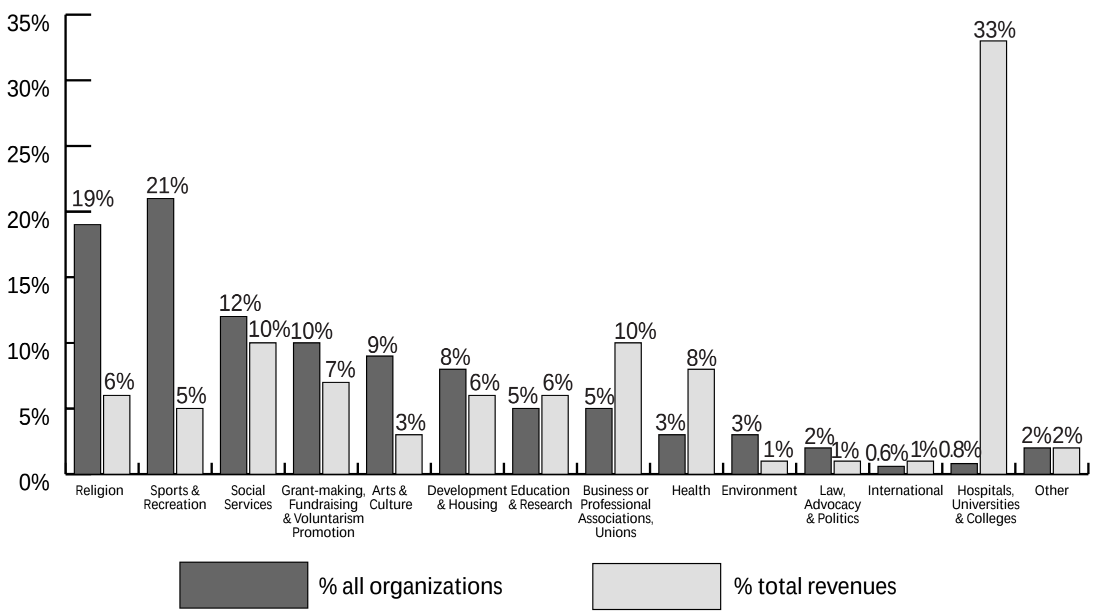
[E] Use with caution.

Number of organizations

According to the NSNVO, there are approximately 31,000 Religious organizations in Canada, accounting for 19% of the country's estimated 161,000 nonprofit and voluntary organizations (see Figure 1). Collectively, these organizations report annual revenues of $6.8 billion.[E]

Religion is the second most common activity area next to Sports and Recreation (21% of all organizations). It ranks sixth, however, in terms of annual revenues, accounting for just 6% of total revenues.

Figure 1: Percentage of organizations and percentage of total revenues by primary activity area, NSNVO 2003

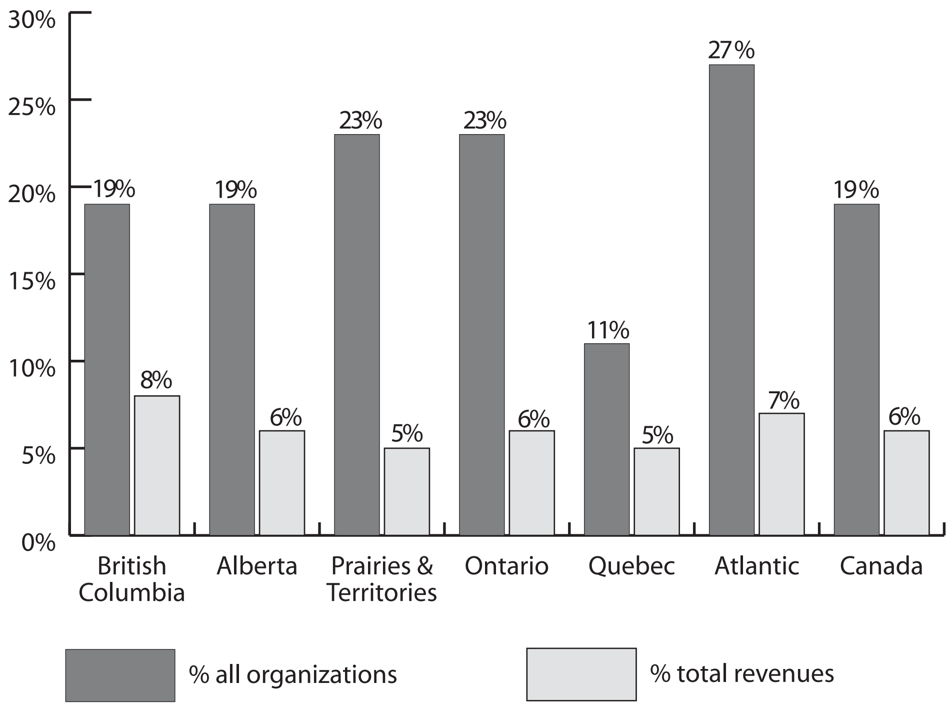


Regional distribution of organizations and revenues

The prevalence of Religious organizations varies considerably by region. They are the most prevalent in the Atlantic Provinces, where they represent 27% of the region's nonprofit and voluntary organizations. They are the least prevalent in Quebec, where they represent just 11% of organizations in the province (see Figure 2).

The proportion of revenues received by Religious organizations in each region is fairly consistent, ranging from a low of 5% in the Prairies and Territories and Quebec to a high of 8% in British Columbia. More information on revenues is presented in the *Financial Resources and Challenges* section.

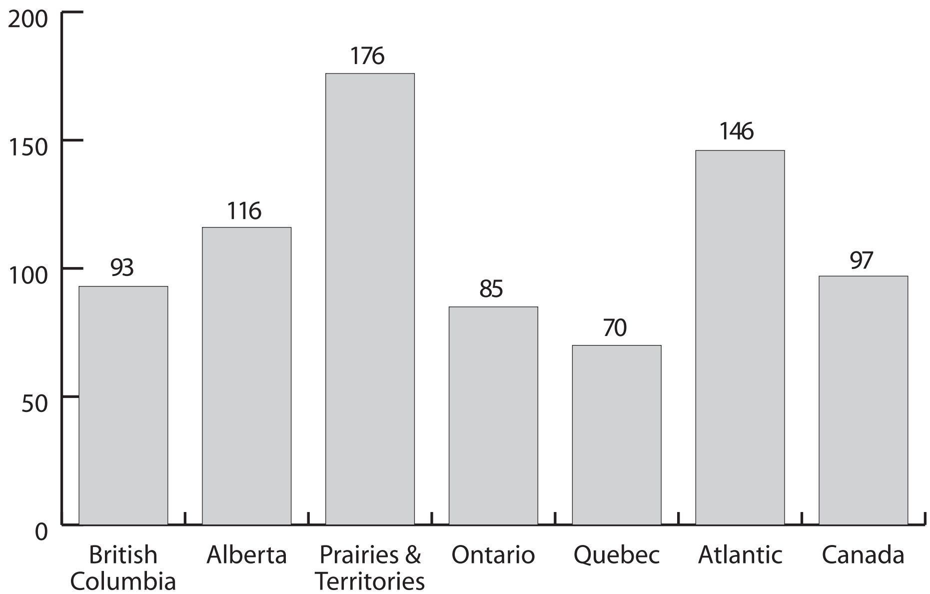
Figure 2: Percentage of organizations and percentage of total revenues by region, Religious organizations, NSNVO 2003.



The Prairies and Territories and the Atlantic Provinces have the largest concentration of Religious organizations, with 176 and 146 organizations per 100,000 people, respectively (see Figure 3). Quebec has the lowest concentration of organizations—70 per 100,000 people.

The relatively small number of Religious organizations in Quebec probably reflects the after-effects of the Quiet Revolution of the 1960s, which diminished the influence of organized Christian religion in the province (Bowen, 1999; Lamoureux, Mayer, & Panet-Raymond, 1989).

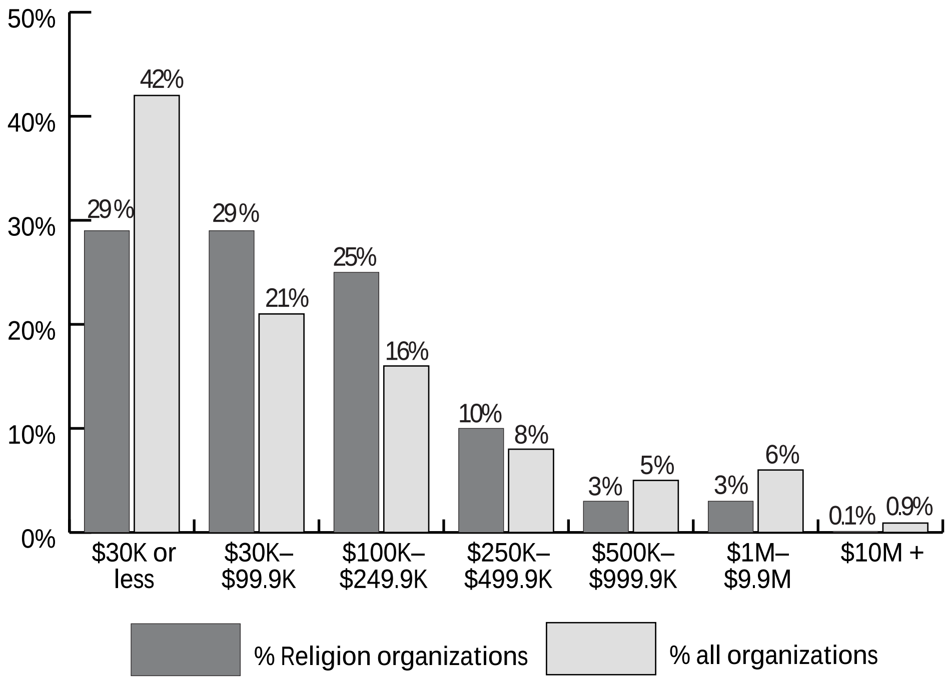
Figure 3: Number of Religious organizations per 100,000 population by region, NSNVO 2003



Size of revenues

In terms of revenues, Religious organizations tend to be mid-sized. Almost two-thirds (64%) have revenues between $30,000 and $499,999 (see Figure 4). Only 29% have annual revenues under $30,000 (compared to 42% of all organizations) and only 7%* have revenues of $500,000 or more (compared to 12% of all organizations).

Figure 4: Percentage of organizations by annual revenues, NSNVO 2003



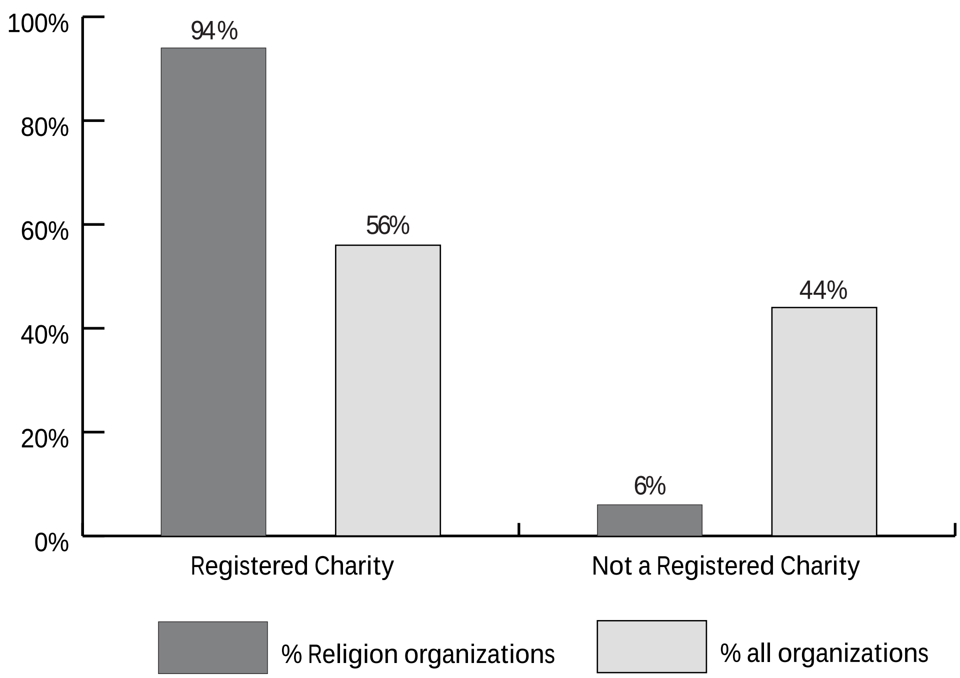
* Figure differs from sum derived from chart due to rounding of numbers for individual categories.

Legal status

Legally, two broad classes of nonprofit and voluntary organizations exist in Canada: charitable and non-charitable. Charitable organizations must be formally registered as such with the Canada Revenue Agency. To be eligible for charitable status, an organization's major purpose must be the relief of poverty, the advancement of education, the advancement of religion, or other purposes of a charitable nature beneficial to the community as a whole, including health. Charitable status allows organizations to issue tax receipts for donations and to access foundation funding, which by law is restricted to registered charities.

Fifty-six percent of all nonprofit and voluntary organizations are registered charities. In contrast, almost all (94%) Religious organizations are registered charities (see Figure 5). Religious organizations are more likely than any other type of organization to have charitable status.

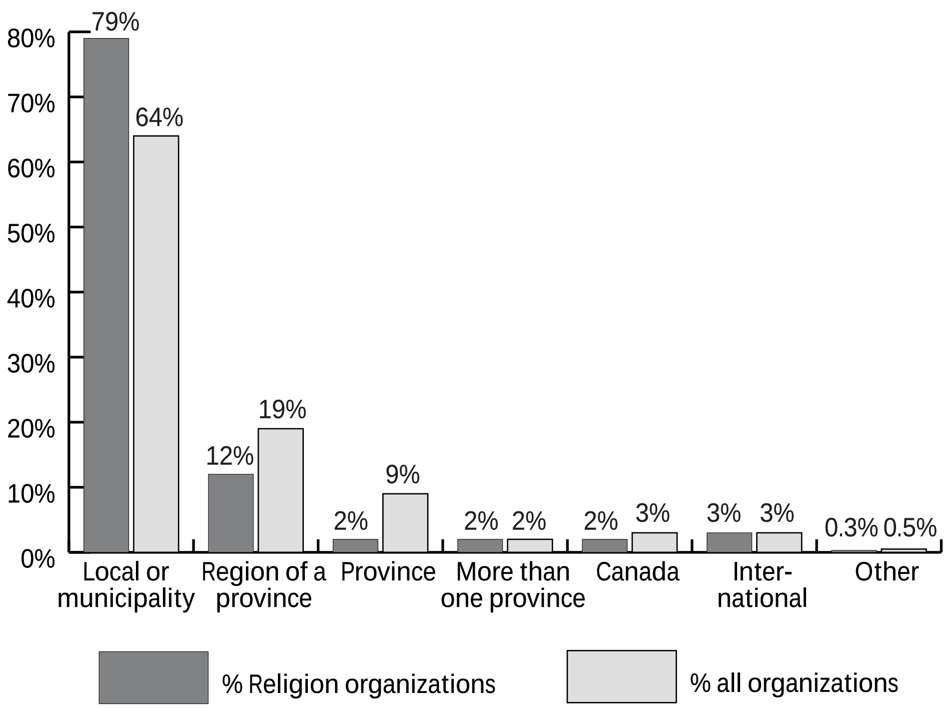
Figure 5: Charitable status of organizations, NSNVO 2003



Geographic focus

Religious organizations tend to be more locally focused than the nonprofit and voluntary sector in general. Over three-quarters (79%) of Religious organizations serve populations located in their neighbourhood, city, town, or rural municipality, compared to 64% of all organizations (see Figure 6). Just over one tenth (12%) serve a region of a province, compared to 19% of all organizations. Only 2% of Religious organizations serve a province and even fewer serve more than one province or the entire country.[3]

Figure 6: Main geographic areas served, NSNVO 2003



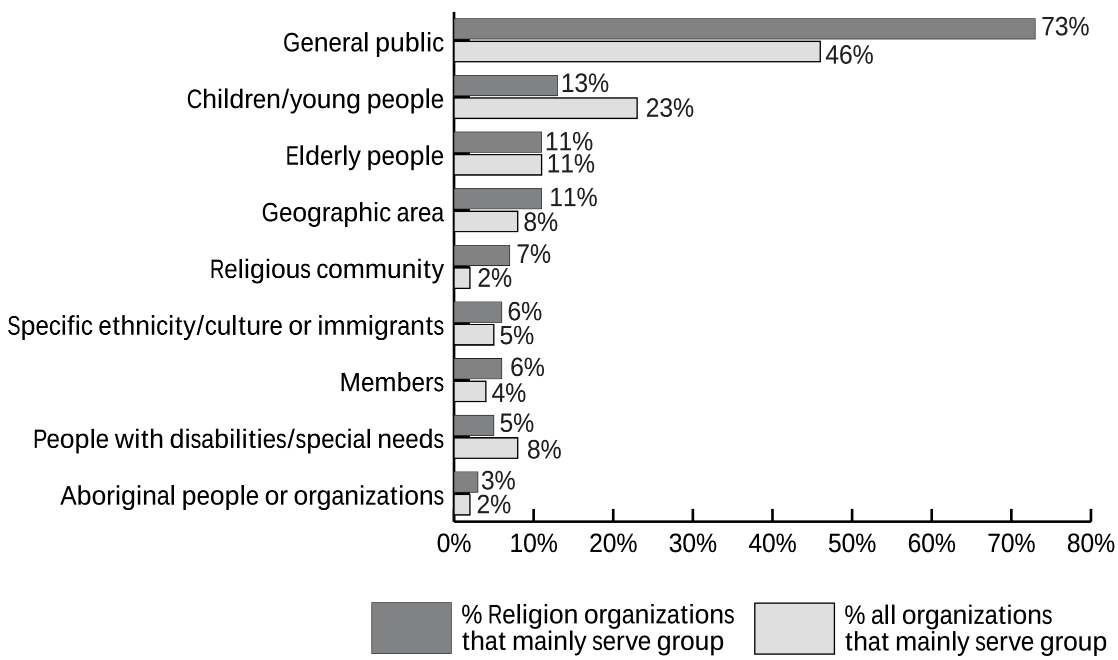
[3] Values in chart round to 2%.

Population served

An overwhelming majority of Religious organizations (89%) provide products or services to people directly (as opposed to other organizations). This is a larger proportion than in the nonprofit and voluntary sector as a whole, where 73% of organizations report serving people directly.

Of those Religious organizations that serve people directly, 73% primarily serve the general public, compared to 46% of organizations generally (see Figure 7). Religious organizations are also somewhat more likely to serve a specific geographic area (11% vs. 8%), a religious community (7% vs. 2%), or members (6% vs. 4%). They are less likely to primarily serve children and young people (13%, compared to 23% for all organizations).

Figure 7: Population served, NSNVO 2003 *



* Includes only organizations that serve people directly

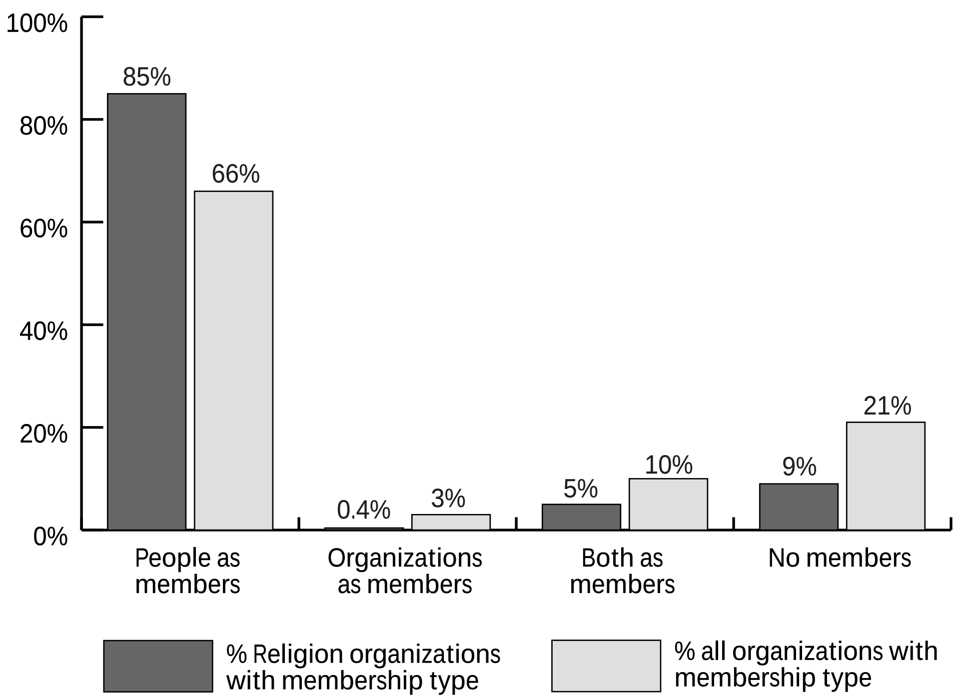
Membership

Members are an integral component of Religious organizations. These organizations report a total membership of over 20 million individuals and 30,000[E] organizations. Only 9% of Religious organizations have no members, compared to almost a quarter (21%) of all organizations (see Figure 8).[4]

Religious organizations that have members are most likely to have people as members (85%). Only 5% have both people and organizations as members and less than 1%[E] report that their members are other organizations.

Religious organizations are less likely to have restricted membership (33%) than organizations in general (57%). Instead, the majority of Religious organizations with individual members report that anyone can join (67%).

Figure 8: Membership composition, NSNVO 2003

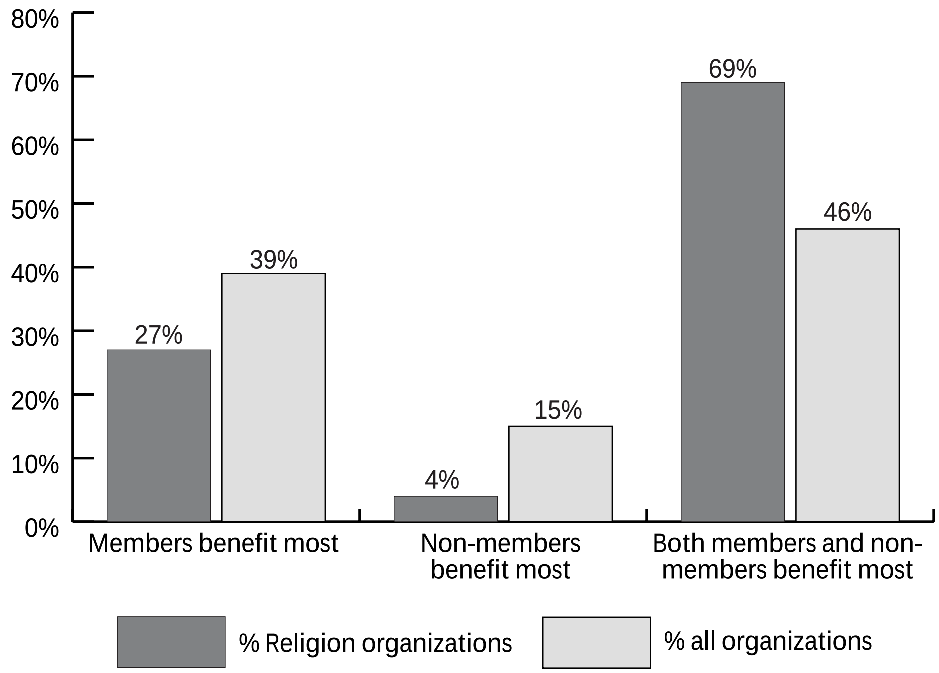


[E] Use with caution.

[4] Respondents to the NSNVO were asked to estimate membership size based on their own organization's definition of a member. This definition may vary from one organization to another.

Some nonprofit and voluntary organizations provide members with special privileges or benefits. In the sector as a whole, 39% of organizations report that their members benefit the most from their activities. In contrast, only 27%[E] of Religious organizations say that their members benefit most from their activities (see Figure 9). Sixty-nine percent of Religious organizations say that members and non-members benefit equally from their activities, compared to 46% of all organizations.

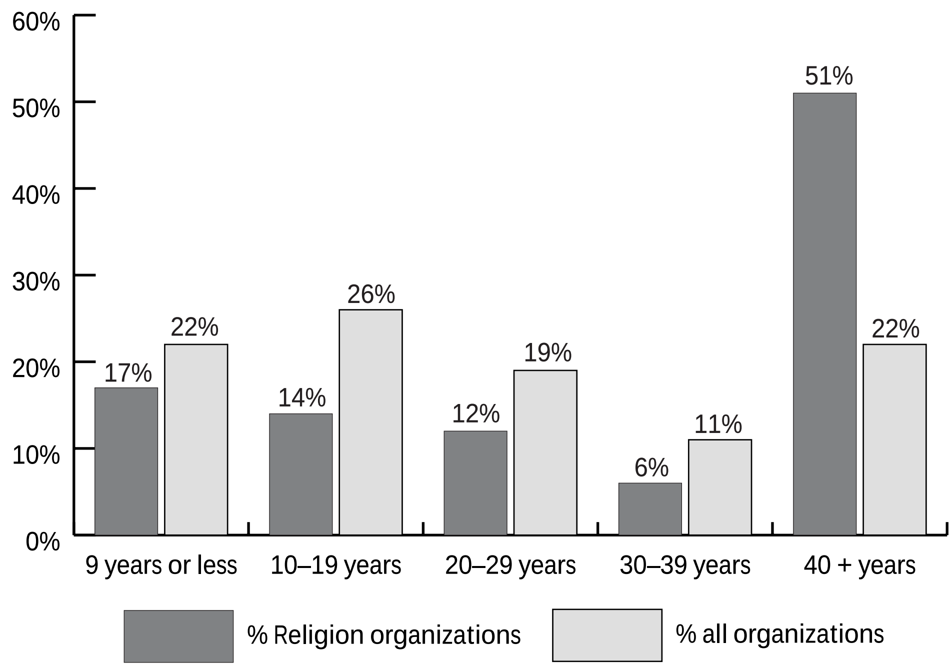
Figure 9: Primary beneficiaries of services or products, NSNVO 2003



Years in operation

Religious organizations are generally well established. They are, for example, far more likely than nonprofit and voluntary organizations in general to have existed for 40 or more years (51% vs. 22%, see Figure 10). The average age of a Canadian Religious organization is 56 years, whereas in the sector as a whole, the average organization has been in operation for only 29 years.

Figure 10: Years of operation, NSNVO 2003



Summary

Religious organizations represent 19% of Canada's nonprofit and voluntary sector and account for 6% of total sector revenues. Religious organizations tend to be mid-sized organizations—almost two-thirds have revenues between $30,000 and $499,999.

The number of Religious organizations varies widely across Canada. The Prairies and Territories have the largest concentration of Religious organizations, with 176 organizations per 100,000 people, whereas Quebec has the lowest concentration of organizations, with only 70 organizations per 100,000 people.

Most Religious organizations serve the general public within their local neighbourhood, city, town, or rural municipality. Collectively, Religious organizations have more than 20 million individual members. Interestingly, however, 69% report that members and non-members benefit equally from their services.

Religious organizations are well established. Ninety-four percent are registered charities and 51% have been in existence for over 40 years.

Financial Resources and Challenges

Nonprofit and voluntary organizations have a substantial economic presence in Canada. In this section, we explore the financial resources of Religious organizations, and the constraints they face with regard to their financial capacity. The data on organizational revenues and capacity challenges come from the NSNVO, while the data on individual donors and donations come from the NSGVP.

Highlights

Quick facts

- The 4%* of organizations with annual revenues of $1 million or more account for 48% of all revenues in the sub-sector
- 64%[E] of revenues come from gifts and donations, compared to 13% for all organizations
- 36% of Religious organizations reported increases in revenues between 2000 and 2003, virtually identical to the sector as a whole
- 32% of Canadians aged 15 and over (almost 8 million individuals) donate to Religious organizations

Donors and donations

- Religious organizations receive 14% of all donations and 49% of the value of all donations
- Average annual donation is $310
- 86% of the value of donations comes from the top 25% of donors
- Donors to Religious organizations tend to be older than donors in general and are more likely to have a religious affiliation, attend religious services weekly, and/or consider themselves to be very religious.

Capacity challenges

- Religious organizations are less likely than other nonprofit and voluntary organizations to report financial capacity challenges and challenges relating to external funding
- They are most likely to report problems with obtaining funding from individuals and increasing demands for services and products

Distribution of revenues

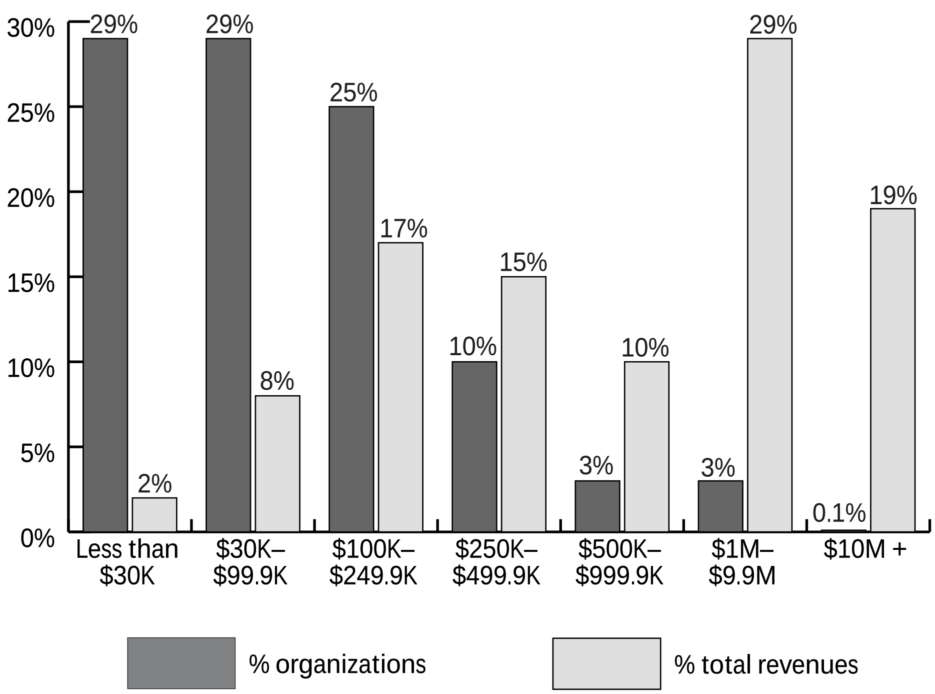
Most revenues in the Religious sub-sector are concentrated among larger organizations, as is the case in the nonprofit and voluntary sector as a whole. The 4%* of Religious organizations with annual revenues of $1 million or more account for almost half (48%) of all revenues in the sub-sector and the 58% of organizations with revenues under $100,000 account for only 10% of revenues (see Figure 11).

[E] Use with caution.
[*] Figure differs from sum derived from chart due to rounding of numbers for individual categories.

That said, the distribution of revenues in the Religious sub-sector is considerably more even than it is in the sector as a whole. In the entire sector, the 1% of organizations with annual revenues of $10 million or more account for 59% of all revenues, while the 63% of organizations with revenues less than $100,000 account for just 2% of all revenues.

Along with this unique revenue profile, come distinct funding, staffing, and volunteer profiles and, as a result, distinct capacity challenges. We will explore these unique capacity challenges later in this report.

Figure 11: Percentage of organizations and percentage of total revenues by revenue size, Religious organizations, NSNVO 2003



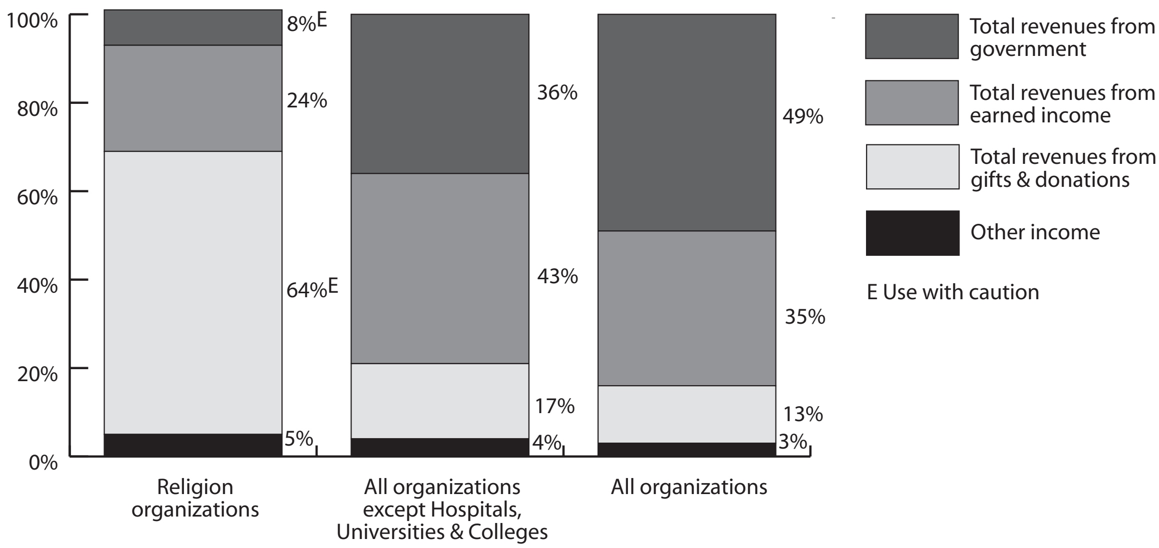
Sources of revenue

Religious organizations depend heavily on gifts and donations. Almost two-thirds (64%[E]) of all revenues in the sub-sector come from gifts and donations (see Figure 12). The second most important source of revenues is earned income[5] (24%), followed by government (8%[E]).

The revenue profile of Religious organizations is distinct from all nonprofit and voluntary organizations, which receive 49% of their revenues from government, 35% from earned income, and only 13% from gifts and donations. It is also distinct from the sector excluding Hospitals, Universities, and Colleges, which receives 36% of its revenues from government, 43% from earned income, and 17% from gifts and donations.

[E] Use with caution.
[5] Earned income excludes government revenue sources, but includes items such as charitable gaming, membership fees or dues, fees for goods and services, and earnings from endowments or investments, including interest income.

Figure 12: Sources of revenue, NSNVO 2003



Detailed sources of revenue

Religious organizations are much more dependent on a single revenue source than are nonprofit and voluntary organizations in general. More than half (57%[E]) of the revenues received by Religious organizations come from individual donations (see Table 1). Among all organizations, the single largest source of revenue, government grants, accounts for only 31% of revenues. If we exclude Hospitals, Universities, and Colleges, the single largest source of revenue, still government grants, accounts for only 22% of revenues.

Overall, Religious organizations receive 49% of all individual donations; 26% of all disbursements from other nonprofits; and 11% of all investment income received by Canadian nonprofit and voluntary organizations (excluding Hospitals, Universities and Colleges). In contrast, they receive just 2% of all revenues from government.

[E] Use with caution.

Table 1: Detailed sources of revenue, NSNVO 2003

	All organizations	All organizations excluding Hospitals, Universities & Colleges	Religion organizations	Religion organizations' share of total sector revenues, excluding Hospitals, Universities & Colleges
Total revenues	$111,595,560,896	$74,762,761,886	$6,805,011,670	9%
Revenues from government				
Total government payments for goods and services	18%	15%E	2%	1%
Total government grants and contributions	31%	22%	6%E	2%
Total revenues from government	49%	36%	8%E	2%
Earned income from non-governmental sources				
Charitable gaming	1%	2%	1%	3%
Membership fees	11%	16%	9%	5%
Fees for goods or services (non-government)	20%	21%	9%	4%
Investment income (including interest)	4%	4%E	5%	11%
Total revenues from earned income	35%	43%	24%	5%
Gifts and donations				
Individual donations	8%	11%E	57%E	49%
Fundraising organizations/family community foundations	1%	1%	1%	5%
Disbursements from nonprofits	2%	2%	5%	26%
Corporate sponsorships, donations or grants	3%	3%	1%	3%
Total revenues from gifts and donations	13%	17%E	64%E	34%
Other income	3%	4%	5%	11%

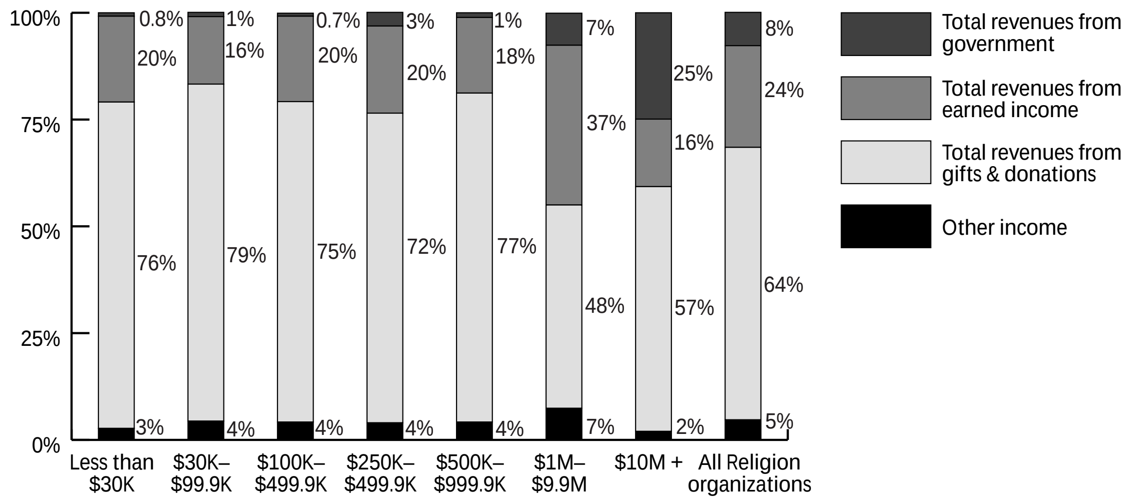
E Use with caution.

Sources of revenue by organization size

Gifts and donations are the largest source of revenue for all Religious organizations. They are, however, much more important to those organizations with annual revenues under $1 million than they are to organizations with annual revenues of a $1 million or more. Among the former, gifts and donations account for at least 72% of revenues; among the latter, they account for no more than 57% (see Figure 13).

Organizations with revenues of $1 million or more receive a much higher proportion of their revenues from earned income or government than do smaller organizations. Earned income is particularly important to organizations with revenues between $1 million and $9.9 million, accounting for 37% of their revenues. Organizations with annual revenues of $10 million or more receive 25% of their revenues from government. This is likely because these very large Religious organizations are providing significant services to needy populations.

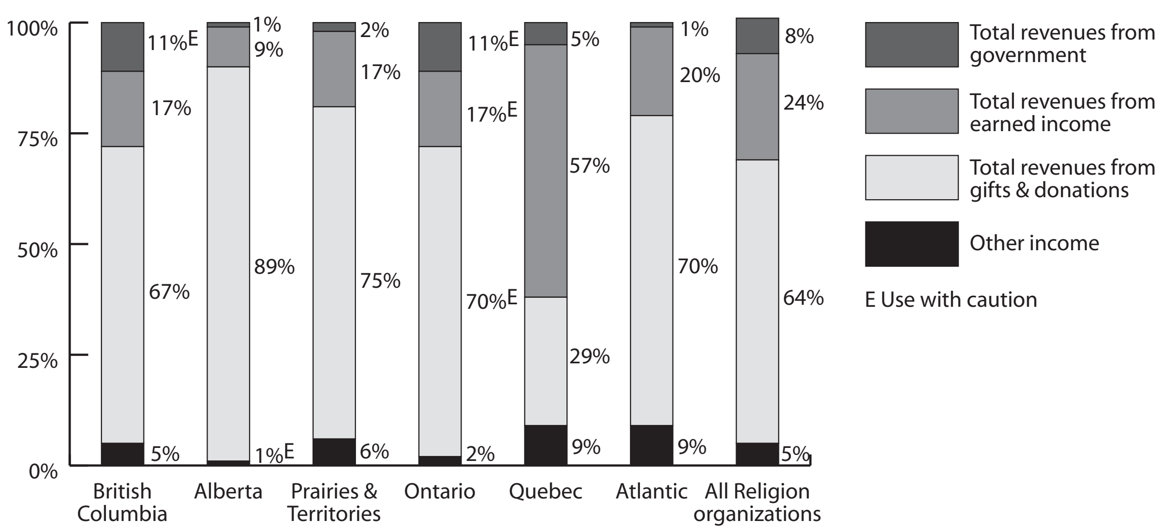
Figure 13: Sources of revenue by annual revenues, Religious organizations, NSNVO 2003



Sources of revenue by region

In Religious organizations across Canada, gifts and donations account for at least 67% of all revenues, with the notable exception of Quebec, where gifts and donations account for only 29% of revenue (see Figure 14). In Quebec, earned income accounts over one-half (57%) of all revenues, whereas in other regions of Canada, earned income accounts for 20% or less, of total income.

Figure 14: Sources of revenue by region, Religious organizations, NSNVO 2003



Share of revenue by region

Organizations in Ontario receive 43% of all revenues received by Religious organizations, 63%[E] of government revenue, 47% of gifts and donations, and 30% of earned income (see Table 2). In contrast, organizations in Quebec receive 19% of all revenues, 13% of government revenue, 9% of gifts and donations, and 45% of earned income.

If we compare each region's share of revenues to its share of the population, we find that the Prairies and Territories receive the most revenue relative to population, followed by Ontario and British Columbia. Overall, however, revenues are more evenly distributed across regions than is the case for other types of nonprofit organizations (e.g., Social Services, Sports and Recreation).

Table 2: Share of revenues by region, Religious organizations, NSNVO 2003

	Share of revenues by source				Share of total revenues from all sources	Percentage of population	Ratio of revenue to population
Region	Government	Earned income	Gifts & donations	Other Income			
British Columbia	20%	10%	14%	15%	14%	13%	1.05
Alberta	1%	3%	13%	2%	9%	10%	0.92
Prairies & Territories	3%	7%	11%	11%	9%	7%	1.31
Ontario	63%E	30%	47%	23%	43%	39%	1.11
Quebec	13%	45%	9%	37%	19%	24%	0.79
Atlantic	1%	5%	6%	11%	6%	7%	0.82

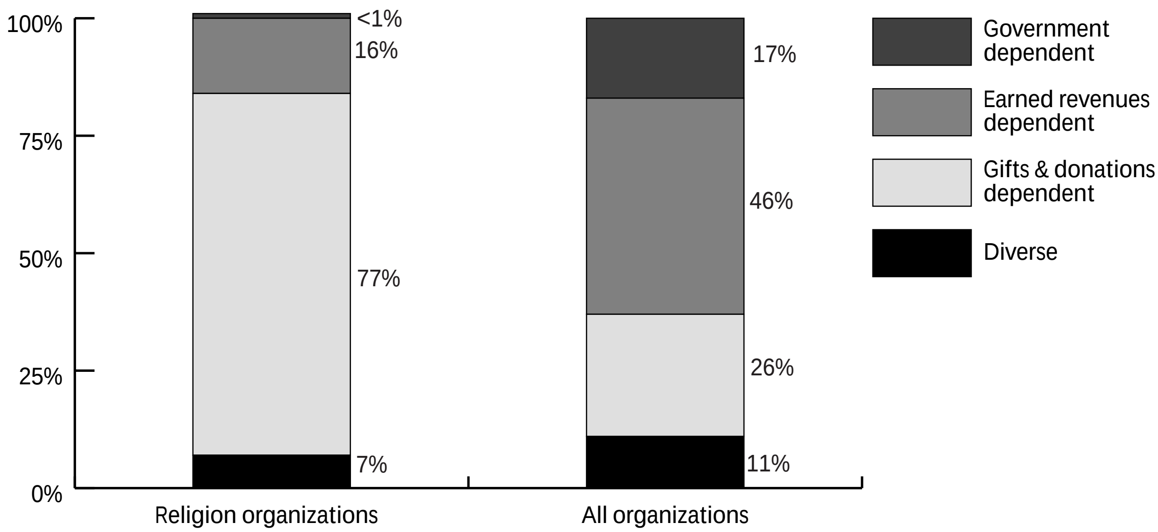
E Use with caution

Revenue dependency

An organization that receives 50% or more of its revenues from one source (government, earned income, or gifts and donations) can be considered to be dependent on that source. Organizations without a dominant funding source are labeled "diverse." Figure 15 shows that Religious organizations are much more likely than all nonprofit and voluntary organizations to depend on gifts and donations and much less likely to depend on earned income and government funding.

Over three-quarters (77%) of all Religious organizations are financially dependent on gifts and donations, compared to just over one-quarter (26%) of all organizations. Only 16% of Religious organizations are dependent on earned revenues, compared to 46% of all organizations. Less than 1% of Religious organizations are dependent on government, compared to 17% of all organizations. This dependency on gifts and donations comes with a distinct set of financial capacity issues that we will investigate further in this section.

Figure 15: Revenue dependency, NSNVO 2003



Donations and donors

As previously noted, Religious organizations rely far more on individual donations for revenue than do organizations in the nonprofit and voluntary sector as a whole. The NSNVO estimates that individual donations account for 57%[E] of the total revenues for Religious organizations, compared to 8% of revenues for nonprofit and voluntary organizations in general.

Estimates of the total value of donations made to Religious organizations range from $2.4 billion (NSGVP) to almost $4 billion [E] (NSNVO). Although the gap between these estimates is substantial, it is not unexpected given the different time frames and data collection methodologies of the surveys (see Appendix).

The NSGVP tells us that approximately 32% of Canadians aged 15 and over—almost 8 million individuals—donate to Religious organizations. On average, donors to Religious organizations give $310 annually. This is the highest average donation in the nonprofit and voluntary sector. In comparison, Sports and Recreation donors give an average of $40 per year; Social Services donors give an average of $55; donors to Grant-making, Fundraising and Voluntarism Promotion organizations give an average of $105; and donors to Business, Professional Associations and Unions give an average of $142.

Distribution of donations

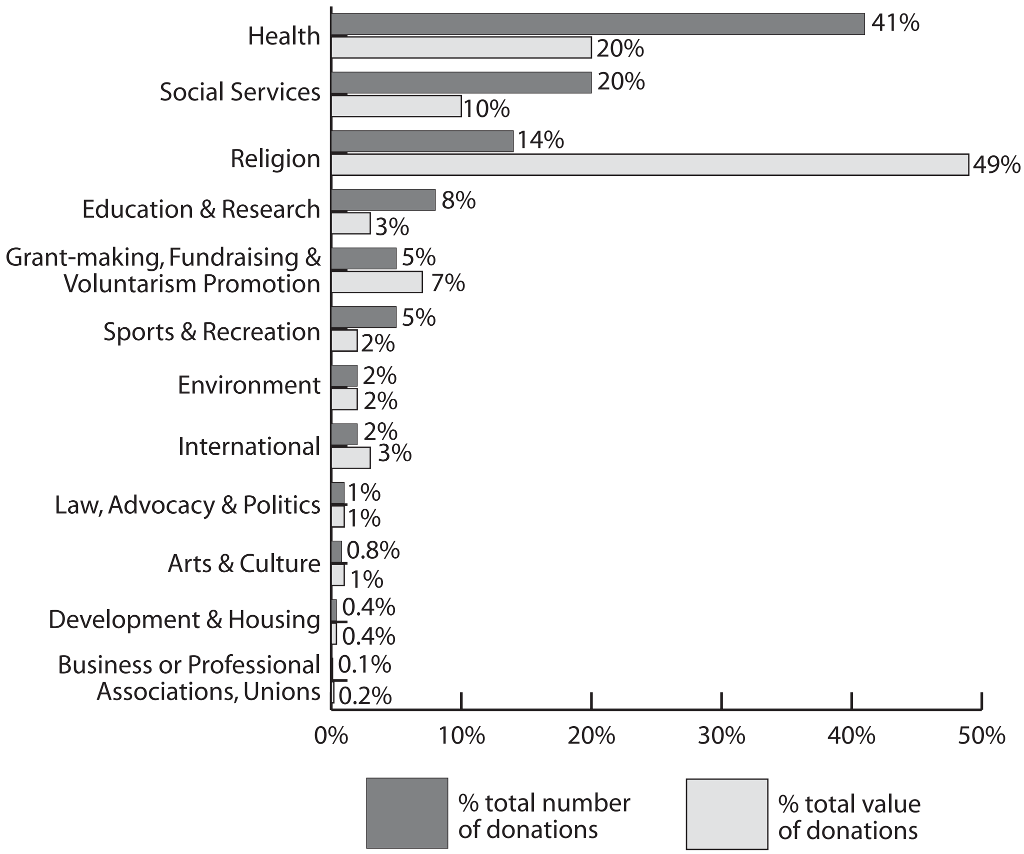
According to the NSGVP, Religious organizations receive 14% of all donations[6] and 49% of all donation dollars[7] made to nonprofit and voluntary organizations in Canada (see Figure 16). This places the Religious sub-sector third behind Health and Social Services in terms of the number of donations received, but first in terms of the value of donations.

[E] Use with caution.

[6] That is, Religious organizations received 14 out of every 100 donations made to a nonprofit or voluntary organization, regardless of the amount of each donation.

[7] That is, Religious organizations received 49% of the total monetary value of all donations made to nonprofit and voluntary organizations.

Figure 16: Percentage of the total number of donations and total donation value by primary activity area, NSGVP 2000

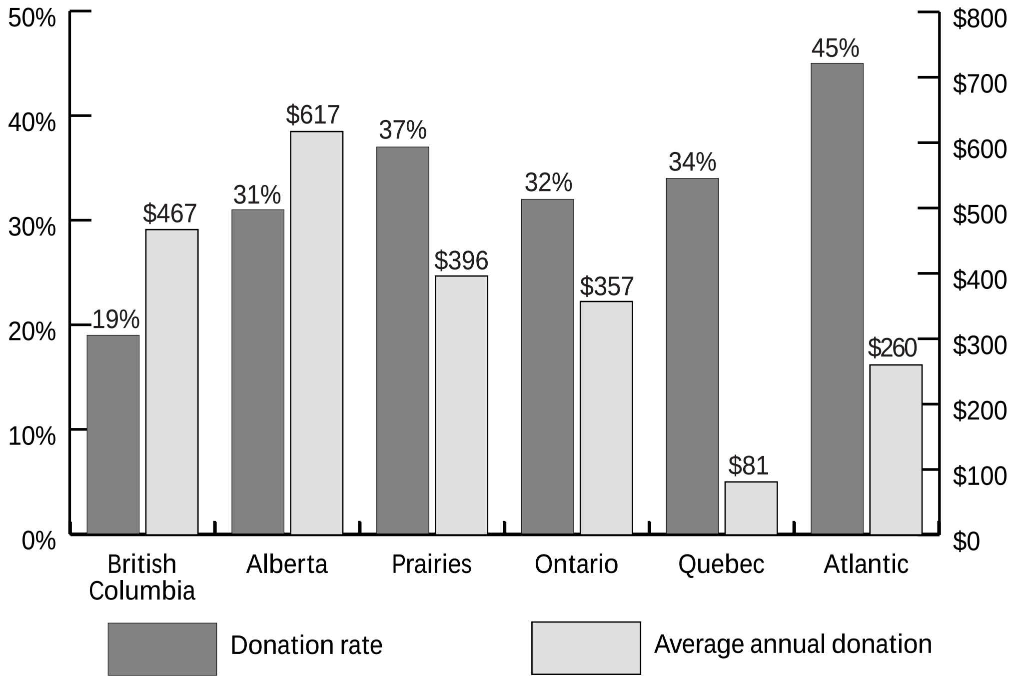


Donation rates and amounts vary by region

Donation rates range from a low of 19% in British Columbia to a high of 45% in the Atlantic Provinces (see Figure 17). In all other regions, the donation rate ranges from 31% to 37%. The low donation rate in British Columbia may be related to the fact that a high proportion of British Columbians (55%) report that they do not have a religious affiliation. Quebec and the Atlantic Provinces, on the other hand, have the lowest percentage of Canadians reporting no religious affiliation (7% and 17%, respectively).

Average donations to Religious organizations vary from a high of $617 in Alberta to a low of $81 in Quebec. In all other regions, average donations range between $260 and $467.

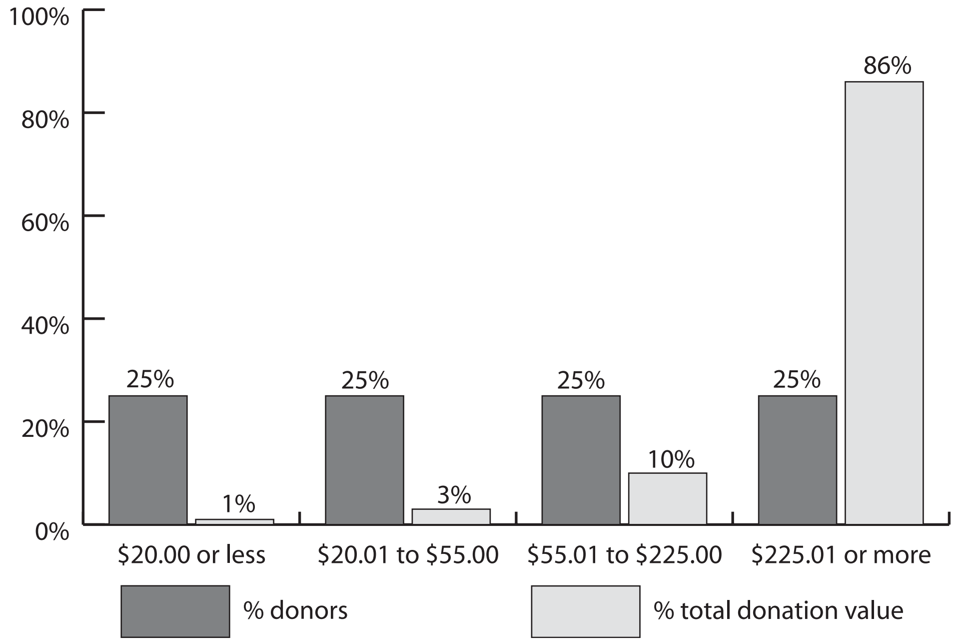
Figure 17: Donation rate and average annual donation by region, Religious organizations, NSGVP 2000



Much comes from the few

Although many Canadians donate to Religious organizations, the vast majority of donation money comes from a small subset of donors. If we group donors into four equal-sized groups based on their annual donations to Religious organizations (see Figure 18), we find that 86% of the total value of donations made to Religious organizations comes from the top 25% of donors who contribute more than $225 per year (see Figure 18). This means that 8% of Canadians (one-quarter of the 32% who donated to Religious organizations in 2000) account for 86% of the total value of donations.

Figure 18: Percentage of donors and percentage of total donation value by size of annual donation, Religious organizations, NSGVP 2000



Personal and economic characteristics of donors

Like donors in general, donors to Religious organizations are more likely to be women than men. They also tend to have post-secondary educations and annual household incomes over $60,000. However, they tend to be older than other donors and are more likely to be out of the labour force. Not surprisingly, they are also more likely to have a religious affiliation, attend religious services weekly, and consider themselves to be very religious. The personal and economic characteristics of donors to Religious organizations are presented in Table 3.

Age

Canadians aged 65 and over are the most likely to make a donation to a Religious organization (45% donated), represent the highest percentage of top donors (26%), and contribute 20% of the value of all donations. The highest average donations, however, are made by those aged 45 to 54, who contribute an average of $437 per year.

Collectively, Canadians aged 45 and older comprise 52% of all donors to Religious organizations and 63% of top donors, and provide 60% of the value of all donations to Religious organizations.

Sex

Donors to Religious organizations are more likely to be women (55%) than men (45%). Top donors are also more likely to be women (57%) and women contribute 56% of the total value of all donations made to Religious organizations. In comparison, in the sector as a whole, women contribute 53% of the value of all donations.

Marital Status

Canadians who are widowed are most likely to donate to Religious organizations (46% donated). Canadians who are either married or are in a common-law relationship, however, make the highest average donation ($334) and, as a consequence, contribute 75% of the total value of all donations to Religious organizations compared to 72% of the value of all donations in the sector as a whole.

Education

As is the case in the sector as a whole, donation rates to Religious organizations increase with level of education, from 29% among those with less than high school to 38% among those with a university degree. Average donations also increase with level of education, from an average of $194 among those with less than high school to an average of $534 among those with a university degree.

It is not surprising, then, that post-secondary graduates comprise 51% of donors to Religious organizations and 60% of their top donors. They also contribute almost two-thirds (62%) of the value of donations made to Religious organizations.

Labour Force Status

Canadians who are not in the labour force are more likely to donate to Religious organizations than are employed Canadians (37% vs. 30%). They also make up a larger proportion of donors (38%) and top donors (40%) to Religious organizations than one would expect based on their presence in the population (33%). However, because of their large numbers and larger average donations, employed Canadians contribute 66% of the value of donations to Religious organizations.

Household Income

Both donation rates and average donations increase as household incomes rise. Twenty-eight percent of Canadians with household incomes under $20,000 donated an average of $178 to Religious organizations in 2000. In comparison, 36% of those with household incomes of $100,000 or more donated an average of $576.

Canadians with household incomes of $60,000 or more account for 41% of donors and 46% of top donors to Religious organizations, and contribute 53% of the total value of all donations made to Religious organizations.

Religious Factors

Canadians who report a religious affiliation attend religious services weekly, or consider themselves to be religious are more likely than other Canadians to donate to nonprofit and voluntary organizations. They also contribute more money, on average. Not surprisingly, this pattern holds for Religious organizations, and is more pronounced.

Those who attend religious services weekly make up a particularly large proportion of top donors to Religious organizations (69%). In comparison, this group comprises 41% of all donors to Religious organizations and 21% of all donors. Donors who attend religious services weekly also account for 70% of the dollars donated to Religious organizations compared to 47% of the dollars donated to all nonprofit and voluntary organizations.

Table 3: Personal and economic characteristics of all donors and donors to Religious organizations, NSGVP 2000

	Donor rate, total sector	Average donation, total sector	Donor rate, Religion	Average donation, Religion	% all Canadians	% all donors	% of Religion donors	% of top Religion donors	% of total sector donation value	% of Religion donation value
Age										
15 – 24 years	64%	$118	21%	$162E	17%	14%	11%	5%	6%	6%E
25 – 34 years	77%	$229	26%	$353	18%	17%	15%	14%	15%	17%
35 – 44 years	86%	$242	33%	$256	21%	24%	22%	18%	22%	18%
45 – 54 years	83%	$338	33%	$437	18%	19%	18%	20%	25%	26%
55 – 64 years	81%	$316	37%	$321	11%	12%	13%	17%	14%	14%
65+ years	77%	$308	45%	$297	15%	15%	21%	26%	17%	20%
Sex										
Male	75%	$260	29%	$301	49%	47%	45%	43%	47%	44%
Female	81%	$259	34%	$317	51%	53%	55%	57%	53%	56%
Marital status										
Married or common-law	84%	$282	36%	$334	62%	66%	69%	74%	72%	75%
Single (never married)	66%	$169	22%	$214	26%	22%	18%	10%	15%	12%
Widowed	77%	$328	46%	$318	5%	5%	8%	10%	7%	8%
Separated or divorced	72%	$286	26%	$302	7%	6%	5%	6%	7%	5%
Education										
Less than high school	68%	$152	29%	$194	27%	23%	25%	20%	14%	15%
High school diploma	80%	$210	28%	$289	20%	20%	17%	15%	16%	16%
Some postsecondary	77%	$231	28%	$248	9%	9%	8%	6%	8%	6%
Postsecondary diploma	84%	$252	35%	$285	28%	30%	31%	30%	29%	28%
University degree	84%	$480	38%	$534	17%	18%	20%	30%	33%	34%
Labour force status										
Employed	82%	$273	30%	$345	63%	66%	59%	59%	69%	66%
Full-time (30+ hrs)	83%	$274	30%	$346	80%	82%	80%	80%	82%	81%
Part-time (<30 hrs)	76%	$271	30%	$344	20%	18%	20%	20%	18%	19%
Unemployed	65%	$139	21%	$206E	4%	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%E
Not in labour force	73%	$243	37%	$262	33%	31%	38%	40%	29%	32%
Household income										
Less than $20,000	63%	$142	28%	$178	13%	11%	11%	9%	6%	7%
$20,000 – $39,999	75%	$190	32%	$263	26%	25%	26%	25%	18%	22%
$40,000 – $59,999	79%	$214	31%	$258	23%	23%	22%	21%	19%	18%
$60,000 – $99,999	85%	$275	34%	$318	25%	27%	27%	26%	29%	28%
$100,000 or more	86%	$529	36%	$576	12%	13%	14%	20%	27%	25%
Religious affiliation										
Affiliation	83%	$296	42%	$318	74%	77%	94%	99%	87%	98%
No affiliation	72%	$146	7%	$130E	26%	23%	6%	1%	13%	2%E
Religious attendance										
Weekly attender	90%	$577	73%	$519	19%	21%	41%	69%	47%	70%
Not a weekly attender	77%	$176	24%	$159	81%	79%	59%	31%	53%	30%
Strength of belief										
Very religious	85%	$618	60%	$659	11%	12%	21%	38%	29%	45%
Not very religious	79%	$210	29%	$213	89%	88%	79%	62%	71%	55%

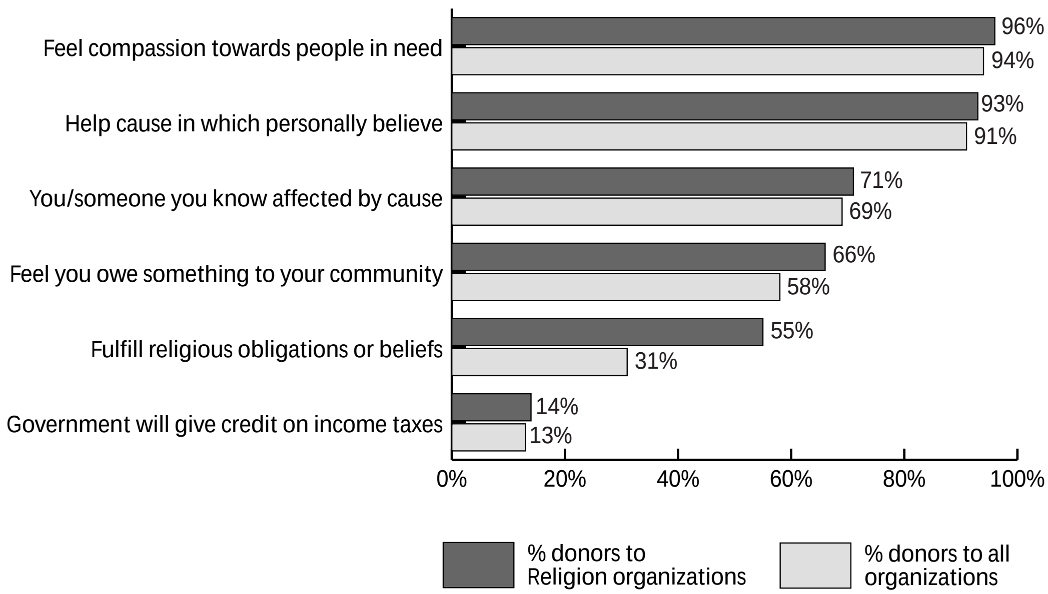
E Use with caution

Motivations for donating

The NSGVP asks donors whether any of six reasons (see Figure 19) motivated them to make a charitable donation. Donors to Religious organizations have the same motivations as all donors: a feeling of compassion towards those in need (96%), a desire to help a cause in which they personally believe (93%), or knowing someone affected by the cause (71%).

In contrast, to donors in general, however, donors to Religious organizations are more likely to cite a sense of commitment to their community (66% of donors to Religious organizations vs. 58% of all donors). They are also, not surprisingly, more likely to say that they donate to fulfill religious obligations or beliefs, (55% vs. 31% of all donors). McKeown et al. (2004) found that those who attend religious services weekly are the most likely to say that they donate to fulfill religious obligations or beliefs.

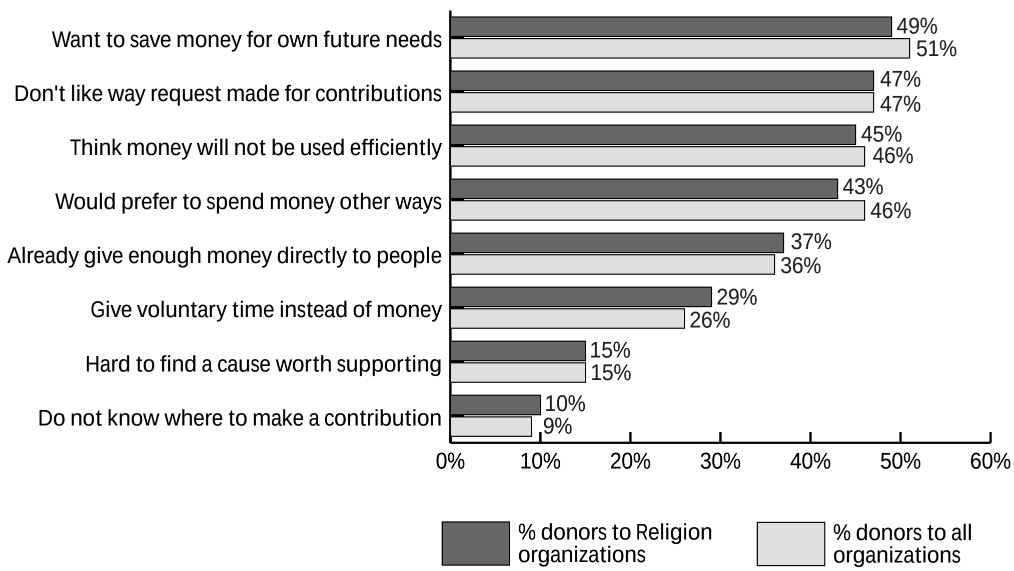
Figure 19: Motivations for donating, NSGVP 2000



Barriers to donating more

Donors to Religious organizations also cite the same deterrents to donating more as all donors (see Figure 20). For both groups, the major barriers to donating more are: want to save money for future needs (49% of donors to Religious organizations), don't like the way requests are made (47%), think that the money will not be used efficiently (45%), and prefer to spend money in other ways (43%). Donors to Religious organizations are slightly more likely than donors to all organizations to say that they give time instead of money (29% vs. 26%).

Figure 20: Barriers to donating more, NSGVP 2000

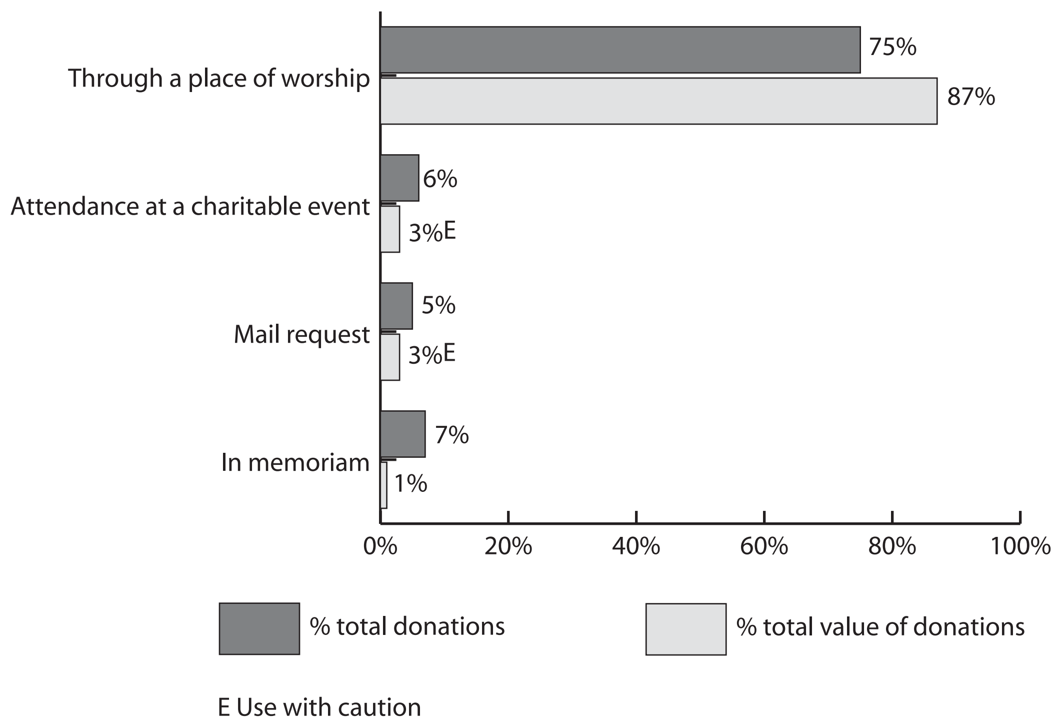


Donation methods

According to the NSGVP, the most common way to donate to a Religious organization is through a place of worship (see Figure 21). Seventy-five percent of donations to Religious organizations are made through a place of worship. No other donation method accounts for more than 7% of donations.

The 75% of donations that are made through a place of worship account for 87% of the value of all donations made to Religious organizations. In contrast, the 7% of donations made in memoriam (the second most common donation method) account for only 1% of the value of all donations. Although donations provide a stable source of revenue for Religious organizations, their dependence on donations makes them vulnerable should donation rates decline.

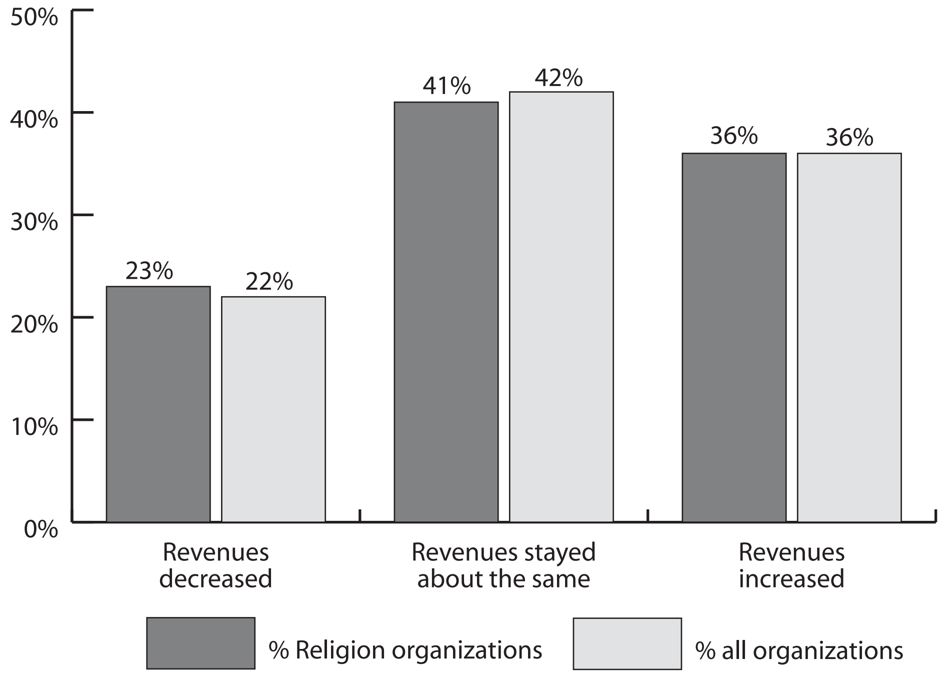
Figure 21: Percentage of donations and percentage of donation value by method of donation, Religious organizations, NSGVP 2000.



Changes in revenues

The results of the NSNVO indicate that more than three-quarters (77%) of Religious organizations report that their revenues either increased or stayed the same between 2000 and 2003 (see Figure 22). This pattern of revenue change is almost identical to that in the nonprofit and voluntary sector as a whole.

Figure 22: Reported change in revenues over the past three years, NSNVO 2003

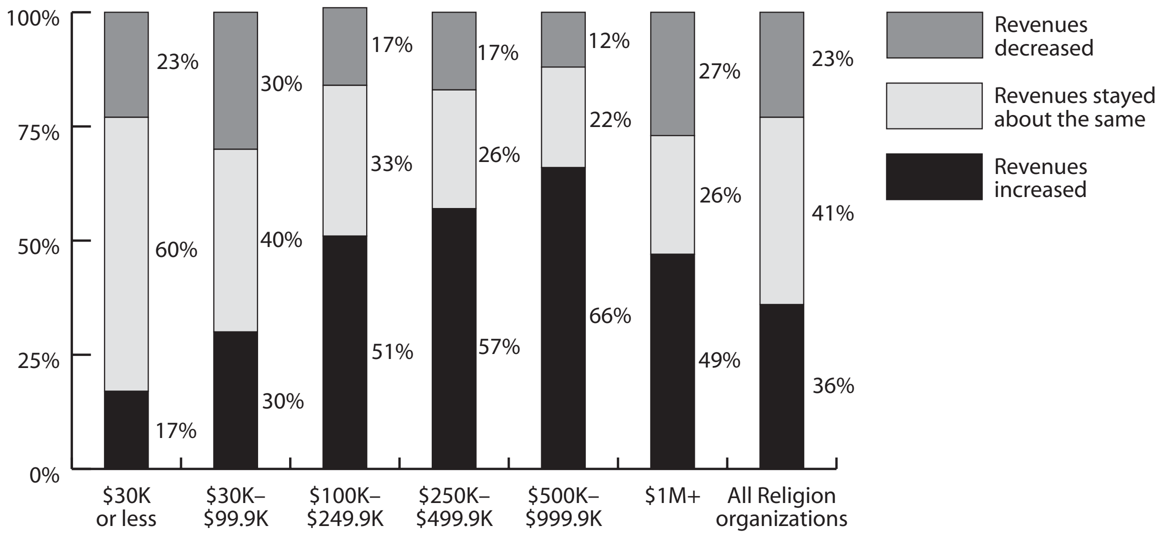


Changes in revenues by organization size

For the most part, larger Religious organizations are more likely than smaller ones to report that their revenues increased between 2000 and 2003. Only 17% of organizations with annual revenues under $30,000 say that their revenues increased during this period (see Figure 23). In contrast, 66% of organizations with annual revenues between $500,000 and $999,999 report increased revenues. The only exception to this trend is that organizations with revenues of $1 million or more are less likely to report increased revenues than are organizations with revenues between $100,000 and $999,999.

Organizations with annual revenues of at least $100,000 are more likely to report increasing revenues than decreasing revenues. In comparison, organizations with revenues under $30,000 are more likely to report decreasing revenues. Organizations with revenues from $30,000 to $99,999 are as likely to report increasing revenues as decreasing revenues (30% report each).

Figure 23: Reported change in revenues over the past three years by annual revenues, Religious organizations, NSNVO 2003

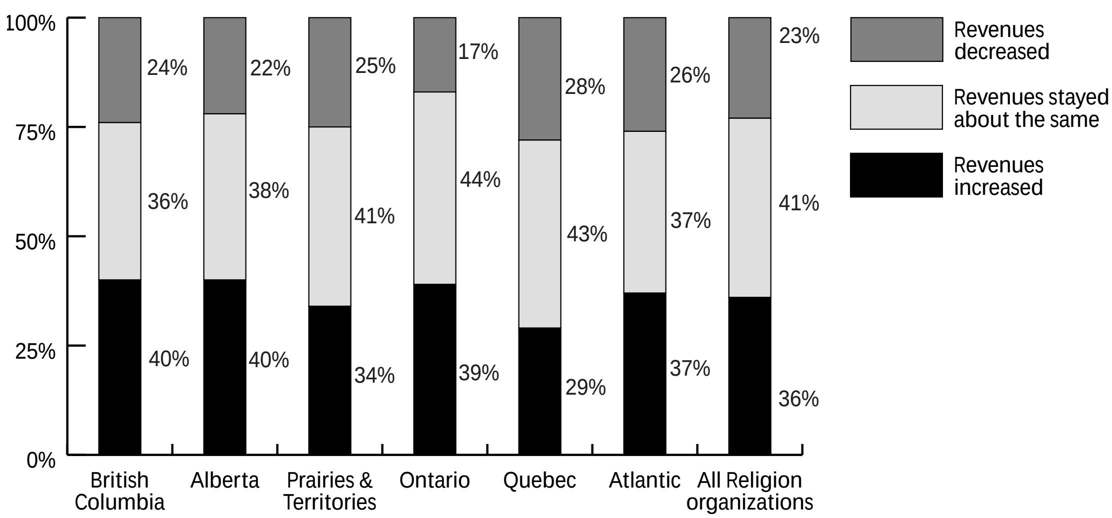


Changes in revenues by region

Religious organizations in Quebec appear to be experiencing the most financial difficulties. They are the most likely to report decreasing revenues (28%) and the least likely to report increasing revenues (29%).

Organizations in British Columbia and Alberta are the most likely to report increasing revenues (40%), followed by organizations in Ontario (39%). Those in Ontario are the least likely to report decreasing revenues (17%).

Figure 24: Reported change in revenues over the past three years by region, Religious organizations, NSNVO 2003



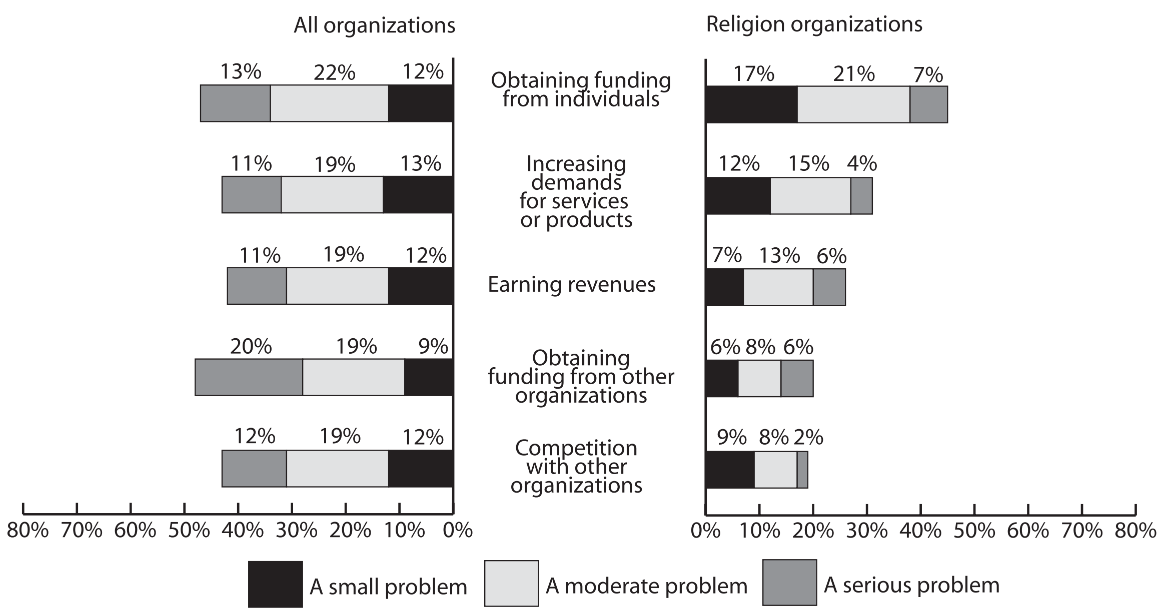
Financial capacity issues

The NSNVO asked respondents if a variety of financial and funding issues were not a problem, a small problem, a moderate problem, or a serious problem for their organization. Specifically, organizations were asked if they had problems earning revenue, obtaining funding from other organizations or individuals, or competing with other organizations for money. Organizations were also asked if increasing demands for their services or products were problems for them.

Religious organizations are less likely than other organizations to report all financial capacity problems (see Figure 25). They are far less than likely than other organizations to report problems competing with other organizations (20%* vs. 43%), obtaining funding from other organizations including government (20% vs. 48%), earning revenues (26% vs. 42%), and dealing with increasing demands for services or products (32%* vs. 43%). Religious organizations are also far less likely than other organizations to say that these problems are serious.

The most common financial capacity problem among Religious organizations is obtaining funding from individuals. Forty-four percent* of Religious organizations say this is a problem for them, and 7% say that it is a serious problem. In the sector as a whole, however, 48%* of organizations report this problem and 13% report that the problem is serious.

Figure 25: Financial capacity issues, Religious organizations compared to all organizations, NSNVO 2003



Financial issues by organization size

The smallest Religious organizations (those with annual revenues under $30,000) are the least likely to report most financial capacity problems (see Table 4).

Those with annual revenues between $30,000 and $249,999 are the most likely to report difficulties obtaining funding from individuals. Those with annual revenues of $1 million or

* Figure differs from sum derived from chart due to rounding of numbers for individual categories.

more are most likely to report problems obtaining funding from other organizations and dealing with increasing demands for goods and services.

Table 4: Financial capacity issues by revenue size, Religious organizations, NSNVO 2003

	Percentage of organizations reporting each problem						
Capacity issues	**Less than $30K**	**$30K-$99.9K**	**$100K-$249.9K**	**$250K-$499.9K**	**$500K-$999.9K**	**$1M+**	**All Religion organizations**
Obtaining funding from individuals	35%	49%	49%	43%	37%	42%	44%
Increasing demands for services or products	20%	30%	42%	37%	37%	48%	32%
Earning revenues	25%	31%	21%	25%	17%	29%	26%
Obtaining funding from other organizations	13%	18%	25%	25%	30%	32%	20%
Competition with other organizations	13%	20%	24%	23%	36%	26%	19%

Financial issues by region

Difficulty obtaining funding from individuals is the primary financial capacity concern of Religious organizations across the country, with the exception of Alberta where slightly more organizations report problems with increasing demands for services or products (see Table 5). Religious organizations in Quebec are the most likely to report problems obtaining funding from individuals, obtaining funding from other organizations, and earning revenues.

Table 5: Financial capacity issues by region, Religious organizations, NSNVO 2003

	Percentage of organizations reporting each problem						
Capacity issues	**British Columbia**	**Alberta**	**Prairies & Territories**	**Ontario**	**Quebec**	**Atlantic**	**All Religion organizations**
Obtaining funding from individuals	31%	35%	49%	42%	57%	49%	44%
Increasing demands for services or products	30%	36%	28%	32%	33%	30%	32%
Earning revenues	14%	26%	22%	21%	46%	25%	26%
Obtaining funding from other organizations	16%	26%	15%	17%	27%	22%	20%
Competition with other organizations	11%	15%	24%	21%	23%	25%	19%

Financial issues by revenue dependency

Government-dependent Religious organizations are the most likely to report problems obtaining funding from individuals (62%), but the least likely to report other financial problems (see Table 6). Those that are dependent on earned income are the most likely to report problems earning revenues, obtaining funding from other organizations, and coping with increased demands for products and services. Organizations with diverse revenue sources are the most likely to report problems competing with other organizations.

Table 6: Financial capacity issues by revenue dependency, Religious organizations, NSNVO 2003

	Percentage of organizations reporting each problem				
Capacity issues	**Government dependent**	**Earned revenues dependent**	**Gifts & donations dependent**	**Diverse**	**All Religion organizations**
Obtaining funding from individuals	62%	52%	42%	49%	44%
Increasing demands for services or products	19%	36%	31%	25%	32%
Earning revenues	15%	41%	22%	36%	26%
Obtaining funding from other organizations	16%	29%	18%	24%	20%
Competition with other organizations	16%	17%	20%	28%	19%

Financial issues by revenue change

Not surprisingly, Religious organizations that experienced a decrease in revenues between 2000 and 2003 were the most likely to report most financial capacity problems (see Table 7). The only exception is increasing demands for products and services, which is equally problematic for organizations with increasing and decreasing revenues. Religious organizations with stable revenues are the least likely to report all problems.

Table 7: Financial capacity issues by reported revenue change, Religious organizations, NSNVO 2003

	Percentage of organizations reporting each problem			
Capacity issues	**Revenues decreased**	**Revenues stayed about the same**	**Revenues increased**	**All Religion organizations**
Obtaining funding from individuals	56%	40%	42%	45%
Increasing demands for services or products	38%	24%	38%	32%
Earning revenues	45%	23%	23%	26%
Obtaining funding from other organizations	30%	15%	21%	20%
Competition with other organizations	22%	17%	20%	19%

External funding issues

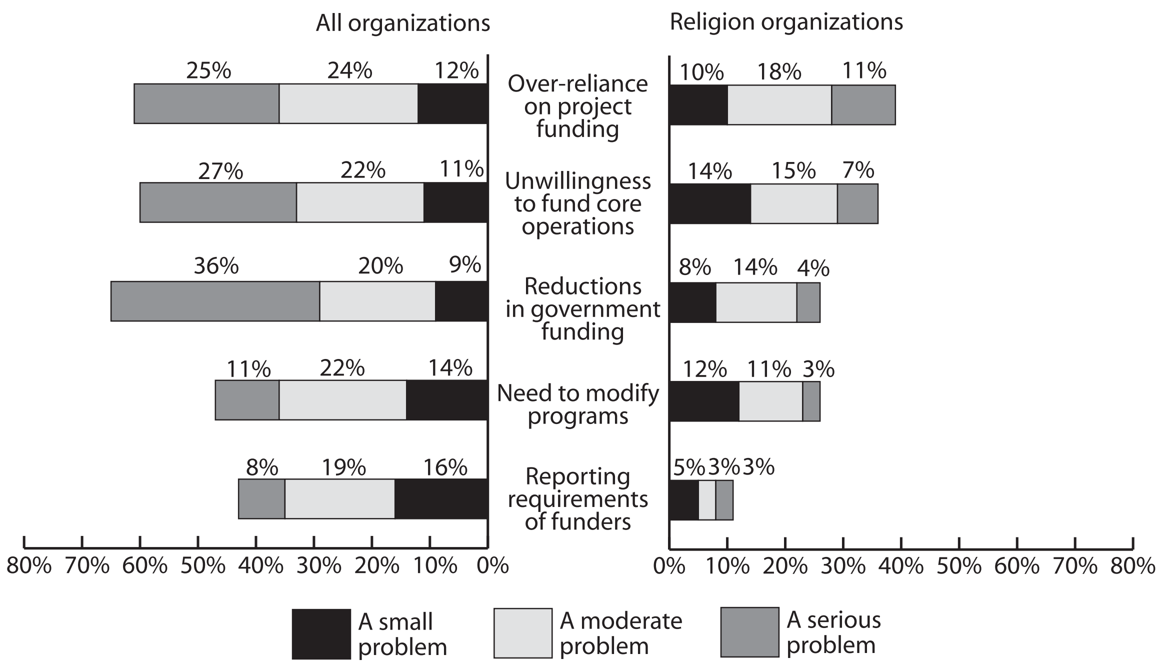
In addition to questions about financial capacity, organizations that reported receiving funding from other organizations in the past three years were asked a series of questions relating to external funding. Only 14% of Religious organizations reported receiving external funding, compared to 48% of all organizations.

More than a third of Religious organizations that receive external funding report that over-reliance on project funding (40%[*]) and the unwillingness of funders to fund core operations (36%) are problems for them (see Figure 26). More than a quarter (26%) report that reductions in government funding and the need to modify programs in order to receive funding are problems.

Religious organizations are, however, only about half as likely as other organizations to report external capacity problems.

[*] Figure differs from sum derived from chart due to rounding of numbers for individual categories.

Figure 26: External funding issues, Religious organizations compared to all organizations, NSNVO 2003



External funding issues by organization size

Religious organizations with annual revenues of $500,000 or more are more likely than smaller organizations to report most external funding problems (see Table 8). More than half of these organizations say they have problems with over-reliance on project funding, the unwillingness of funders to fund core operations, and the need to modify programs to receive funding.

Table 8: External funding issues by revenue size , Religious organizations, NSNVO 2003

	Percentage of organizations reporting each problem						
Capacity issues	Less than $30K	$30K–$99.9K	$100K–$249.9K	$250K–$499.9K	$500K–$999.9K	$1M+	All Religion organizations
Over-reliance on project funding	14%	46%	45%	37%	59%	54%	39%
Unwillingness to fund core operations	17%	29%	42%	38%	63%	52%	36%
Reductions in government funding	17%	11%	38%	30%	28%	31%	26%
Need to modify programs	19%	20%	17%	26%	51%	51%	26%
Reporting requirements of funders	11%	4%	11%	19%	5%	12%	11%

External funding issues by region

The most common external funding problem among Religious organizations in Ontario, Quebec, and the Prairies and Territories is over-reliance on project funding (cited by 46% to 52% of organizations, see Table 9). The most common problem in Alberta is reductions in government funding (cited by 65%[E] of organizations). In the Atlantic Provinces, the most common problem is the unwillingness of funders to fund core operations and reductions in government funding (cited by 37% of organizations).

[E] Use with caution.

Table 9: External funding issues by region, Religious organizations, NSNVO 2003

	Percentage of organizations reporting each problem						
Capacity issues	**British Columbia**	**Alberta**	**Prairies & Territories**	**Ontario**	**Quebec**	**Atlantic**	**All Religion organizations**
Over-reliance on project funding	15%	23%E	52%	46%	49%	32%	39%
Unwillingness to fund core operations	30%	37%E	40%	24%	43%	37%	36%
Reductions in government funding	19%	65%E	13%	13%	31%	37%	26%
Need to modify programs	25%	15%	31%	13%	34%	19%	26%
Reporting requirements of funders	6%	17%	27%	7%	4%	15%	11%

E Use with caution.

External funding issues by revenue dependency

Government-dependent Religious organizations are the most likely to report all external funding problems (see Table 10). More than half of these organizations report problems with the unwillingness of funders to fund core operations (70%), reductions in government funding (63%), and an over-reliance on project funding (55%).

Table 10: External funding issues by revenue dependency, Religious organizations, NSNVO 2003

	Percentage of organizations reporting each problem				
Capacity issues	**Government dependent**	**Earned revenues dependent**	**Gifts & donations dependent**	**Diverse**	**All Religion organizations**
Over-reliance on project funding	55%	40%	38%	46%	39%
Unwillingness to fund core operations	70%	37%	37%	31%	36%
Reductions in government funding	63%	30%	24%	32%	26%
Need to modify programs	42%	30%	24%	24%	26%
Reporting requirements of funders	50%	10%	12%	4%	11%

External funding issues by revenue change

Religious organizations with decreasing revenues are the most likely to report most external funding problems (see Table 11). The notable exception is that organizations with increasing revenues are the most likely to say that the unwillingness of funders to fund core operations is a problem for them. Organizations with stable revenues are least likely to report all external funding problems.

Table 11: External funding issues by reported revenue change, Religious organizations, NSNVO 2003

	Percentage of organizations reporting each problem			
Capacity issues	**Revenues decreased**	**Revenues stayed about the same**	**Revenues increased**	**All Religion organizations**
Over-reliance on project funding	45%	29%	45%	39%
Unwillingness to fund core operations	38%	23%	46%	36%
Reductions in government funding	31%	22%	27%	26%
Need to modify programs	32%	15%	29%	26%
Reporting requirements of funders	17%	8%	9%	11%

Summary

Although the majority of revenues in the Religious sub-sector are concentrated among a small percentage of large organizations, the distribution of revenues is considerably more even among Religious organizations than it is among all nonprofit and voluntary organizations.

Religious organizations are more financially self-sufficient than nonprofit and voluntary organizations in general, receiving the majority of their revenues in the form of gifts and donations. This revenue profile seems to shelter Religious organizations from serious financial capacity problems. They are not immune from financial problems, however. They are, for example, just as likely as other organizations to report decreasing revenues.

Only 14% of Religious organizations receive funding from other organizations. However, about a third of these organizations report problems with their funding model (e.g., an over-reliance on project funding, a lack of funding for core operations, and reductions in government funding). Larger organizations and those that are dependent on government funding are the most likely to report problems with external funding.

Donors to Religious organizations have a unique profile. For example, they tend to be older, and they are more likely to say that they donate out of a sense of commitment to their community or to fulfill religious obligations or beliefs.

Human Resources and Challenges

Many nonprofit and voluntary organizations consider their human resources—both paid and volunteer—to be their greatest strength (Hall, 2003). In this section, we examine Religious organizations from a human resources perspective. The data on volunteers come from the NSGVP.[8] The data on paid staff and capacity issues come from the NSNVO.

Highlights

Quick facts

- 1.3 million people (6% of Canadians aged 15 and older) volunteer for Religious organizations
- More than 109,000[E] Canadians, or about 5%[E] of the total nonprofit and voluntary sector workforce, are employed by Religious organizations

Volunteers

- Religious organizations receive 16% of all volunteer hours
- Volunteers give an average of 126 hours each to Religious organizations for a total of 170 million hours
- 70% of hours volunteered to Religious organizations are contributed by 1% of Canadians
- Volunteers tend to be women, over age 44, married or in common-law relationships, with post-secondary educations, attend religious services weekly
- Many organizations report problems recruiting, training, and retaining volunteers and board members

Paid staff

- 65% of Religious organizations have at least one paid staff member, compared to 46% of all organizations; 51% have between 1 and 4 paid staff, compared to 26% of all organizations
- They are less likely than other organizations to report that their staffing levels increased between 2000 and 2003
- One-quarter of Religious organizations report difficulties obtaining the type of paid staff they need

Volunteers

The NSGVP estimates that 6.5 million Canadians volunteered in 2000. These volunteers contributed an average of 162 hours each per year for a total of just over 1 billion hours.

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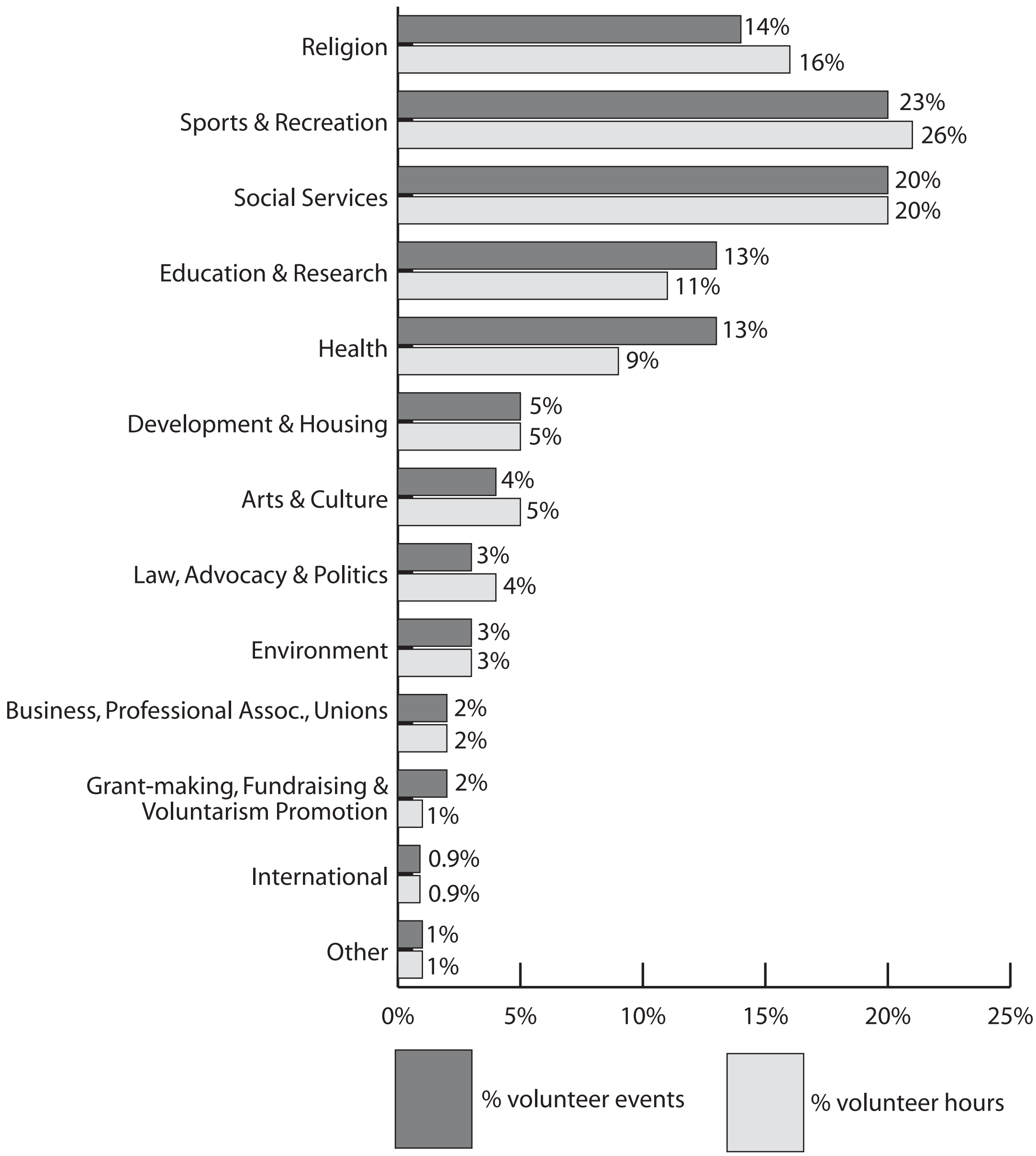
[8] The NSNVO asked organizations about their volunteers. However, because the NSNVO is an organizational survey, individual volunteers who contribute to more than one organization are counted more than once. Therefore, we have chosen to rely on the NSGVP for data on volunteers.
[E] Use with caution.

The NSGVP also estimates that 1.3 million Canadians (6% of the population aged 15 and over) volunteered an average of 126 hours per year with Religious organizations in 2000, for a total of 170 million hours. Religious organizations received 14% of volunteer events[9] and 16% of volunteer hours (see Figure 27). As impressive as these levels of volunteer support appear to be, they are lower than one might expect given that Religious organizations represent 19% of all nonprofit and voluntary organizations.

Figure 27: Percentage of volunteer events and percentage of volunteer hours by primary activity area, NSGVP 2000

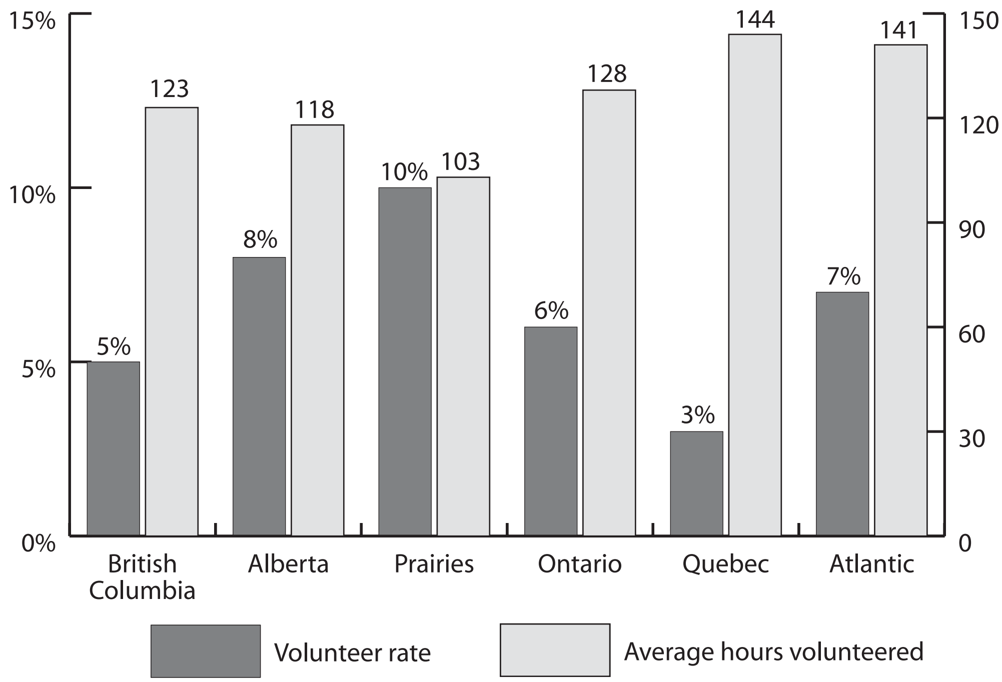


[9] A volunteer event is a single activity where a volunteer participates. A volunteer may participate in several volunteer events in a single year. Therefore, the total number of volunteer events is expected to exceed the total number of volunteers in any given year.

Volunteer rates and hours vary by region

Volunteer rates and hours vary considerably across the country (see Figure 28). Interestingly, there appears to be an inverse relationship between volunteer rates and average hours volunteered. The region with the lowest volunteer rate (Quebec at 3%) has the highest average hours (144) and the region with the highest volunteer rate (the Prairies at 10%) has the lowest average hours (103).

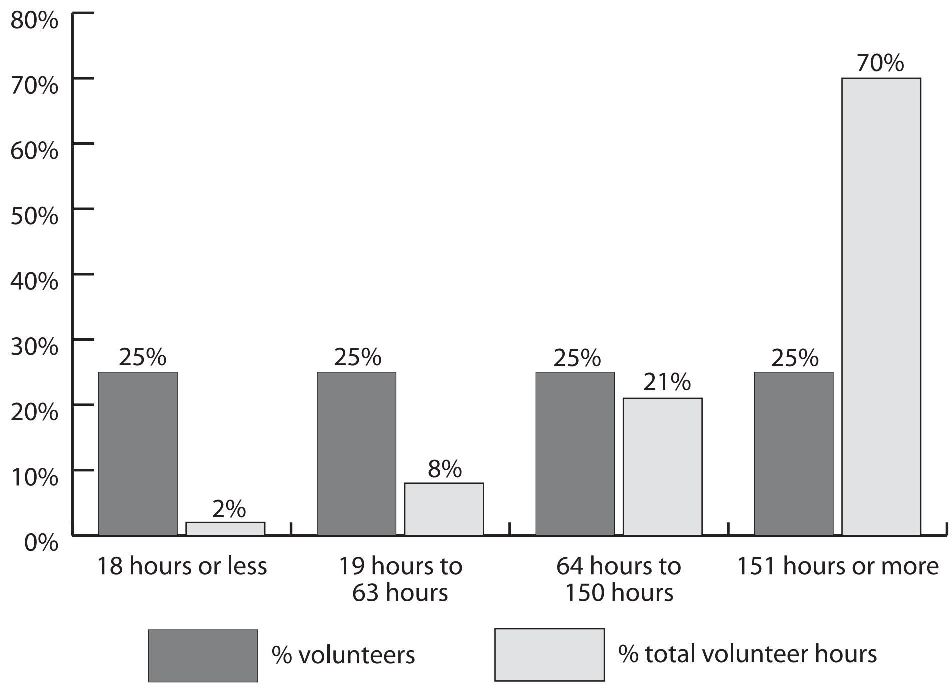
Figure 28: Volunteer rate and average hours volunteered, Religious organizations, NSGVP 2000



Much comes from the few

When we group volunteers into four equal-sized groups based on the number of hours they volunteer each year, we find that a small proportion of volunteers contributes the vast majority of volunteer hours. According to the NSGVP, the top 25% of volunteers with Religious organizations, who volunteered an average of 151 hours or more each, accounted for 70% of the hours contributed to Religious organizations in 2000 (see Figure 29). This means that 1% of Canadians (one-quarter of the 6% who volunteered with Religious organizations in 2000) account for 70% of all volunteer hours.

Figure 29: Percentage of volunteers and percentage of total volunteer hours by annual hours volunteered, Religious organizations, NSGVP 2000



Personal and economic characteristics of volunteers

Compared to volunteers in general, those who volunteer for Religious organizations are more likely to be women, over age 44, married or in common-law relationships, with post-secondary educations. They are also more likely to out of the labour force, to have annual incomes under $60,000 and, not surprisingly, to have a religious affiliation, attend religious services weekly, and/or consider themselves very religious. The personal and economic characteristics of volunteers to Religious organizations are presented in Table 12.

Age

Canadians aged 45 and over make an important contribution to Religious organizations. Collectively, this group comprises 57% of all volunteers for Religious organizations and 58% of top volunteers. They also provide 57% of all volunteer hours contributed to Religious organizations. This is a considerable contribution, given that those over the age of 45 represent only 44% of all Canadians and only 42% of all volunteers.

Those aged 55 to 64 are the most likely to volunteer with a Religious organization (8% volunteered) and those under age 35 are the least likely to volunteer. The highest average number of hours (148) comes from volunteers 65 years of age and older, followed by those 55 to 64 (143).

Sex

Volunteers as a whole are more likely to be women than men. This trend is even stronger among Religious organizations. Women comprise 61% of all volunteers in Religious organizations and 58% of top volunteers. They also contribute 57% of all volunteer hours. Male volunteers, however, contribute more hours, on average, than female volunteers (140 hours vs. 117 hours).

Marital Status

Religious organizations seem to be particularly attractive to volunteers who are either married or are in common-law partnerships. People who are either married or in common-law relationships represent 62% of all Canadians and 65% of all volunteers, but nearly three-quarters (72%) of volunteers in Religious organizations. They also account for 71% of all hours volunteered with Religious organizations. In contrast, single people who have never been married represent 26% of all Canadians and 25% of all volunteers, but only account for 18% of all volunteers in Religious organizations.

Education

Compared to nonprofit and voluntary organizations in general, Religious organizations are more successful at attracting volunteers with a post-secondary education. Post-secondary graduates make up 53% of all volunteers, but 58% of volunteers with Religious organization.

Labour force status

Canadians who are employed represent 63% of the population but only 61% of volunteers for Religious organizations. On the other hand, those who are not in the labour force represent one-third (33%) of all Canadians, but 36% of volunteers for Religious organizations. Canadians who are not in the labour force also volunteer the most hours on average (137) and represent 40% of the top volunteers in Religious organizations.

Household income

Religious organizations are more dependent on mid- to low-income volunteers than are nonprofit and voluntary organizations in general. In the sector as a whole, 52% of volunteers have household incomes under $60,000 and this group contributes 56% of volunteer hours. Among Religious organizations 58% of volunteers have household incomes under $60,000 and this group contributes 62% of the volunteer hours.

Religious Factors

Canadians who report a religious affiliation, attend religious services weekly, or consider themselves to be very religious are more likely than other Canadians to volunteer and they volunteer more hours, on average. These patterns are even more pronounced for Religious organizations. For example, 22% of Canadians who attend religious services weekly volunteer with a Religious organization, compared to just 2% of those that do not attend services weekly. Those who attend services weekly account for 72% of all volunteers to Religious organizations compared to 28% of all volunteers. Finally, those who attend services weekly contribute 83% of all volunteer hours to Religious organizations, compared to just 35% of volunteer hours to all organizations.

Table 12: Personal and economic characteristics of all volunteers and Religion volunteers, NSGVP 2000

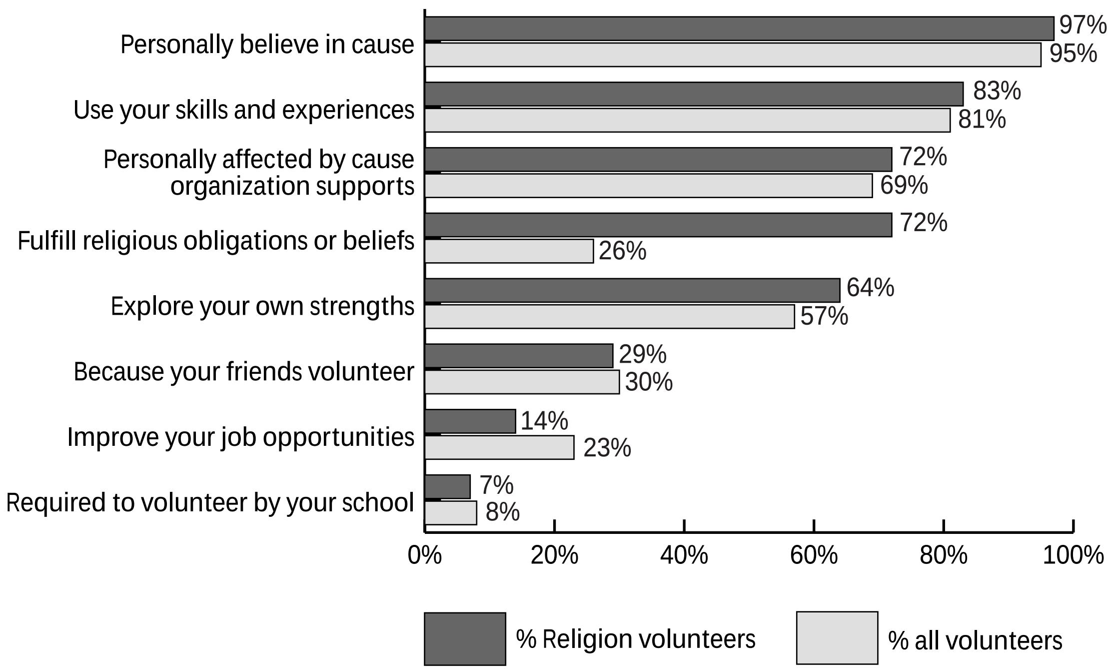
	Volunteer rate, total sector	Average hours, total sector	Volunteer rate, Religion	Average hours, Religion	% all Canadians	% all volunteers	% of Religion volunteers	% of top Religion volunteers	% of total sector volunteer hours	% of Religion volunteer hours
Age										
15 – 24 years	29%	130	4%	130E	17%	18%	13%	12%	15%	13%E
25 – 34 years	24%	131	4%	118	18%	16%	12%	13%	13%	12%E
35 – 44 years	30%	153	5%	122	21%	24%	19%	18%	23%	18%
45 – 54 years	30%	158	7%	103	18%	20%	23%	23%	20%	19%
55 – 64 years	28%	181	8%	143	11%	12%	17%	17%	13%	19%
65 + years	18%	269	6%	148	15%	10%	17%	18%	17%	19%
Sex										
Male	25%	170	4%	140	49%	46%	39%	42%	49%	43%
Female	28%	155	7%	117	51%	54%	61%	58%	51%	57%
Marital status										
Married or common-law	28%	165	6%	124	62%	65%	72%	72%	67%	71%
Single (Never married)	26%	136	4%	135E	26%	25%	18%	17%	21%	19%E
Widowed	17%	253	5%	111	5%	3%	5%	4%	5%	4%
Separated or divorced	25%	181	5%	133E	7%	6%	6%	6%	7%	6%E
Education										
Less than high school	19%	154	4%	123	27%	19%	19%	17%	18%	19%
High school diploma	23%	150	4%	99	20%	17%	15%	13%	15%	12%
Some postsecondary	33%	173	5%	228E	9%	11%	8%	14%	12%	15%E
Postsecondary diploma	28%	165	6%	118	28%	29%	30%	29%	30%	28%
University degree	39%	166	9%	122	17%	24%	28%	28%	25%	27%
Labour force status										
Employed	28%	147	5%	119	63%	67%	61%	58%	61%	58%
Full-time (30+ hrs)	27%	145	5%	115	80%	77%	73%	69%	75%	71%
Part-time (<30 hrs)	33%	155	7%	131	20%	23%	27%	31%	25%	29%
Unemployed	25%	175	3%	*	4%	4%	2%	2%	4%	*
Not in labour force	24%	193	6%	137	33%	30%	36%	40%	35%	*
Household income										
Less than $20,000	17%	207	4%	157	13%	8%	9%	12%	10%	11%
$20,000 – $39,999	21%	179	5%	124	26%	21%	24%	20%	23%	23%
$40,000 – $59,999	26%	162	6%	142	23%	23%	25%	30%	23%	28%
$60,000 – $99,999	32%	145	6%	108	25%	31%	26%	22%	27%	23%
$100,000 or more	39%	150	7%	117	12%	18%	16%	17%	16%	15%
Religious affiliation										
Affiliation	28%	168	7%	130	74%	76%	96%	98%	78%	98%
No affiliation	26%	149	1%	59E	26%	24%	4%	2%	22%	2%E
Religious attendance										
Weekly attender	41%	202	22%	146	19%	28%	72%	87%	35%	83%
Not a weekly attender	24%	149	2%	76	81%	72%	28%	13%	65%	17%
Strength of belief										
Very religious	37%	200	18%	159	11%	15%	37%	52%	19%	48%
Not very religious	26%	156	4%	104	89%	85%	63%	48%	81%	52%

* Suppressed for confidentiality
E Use with caution

Motivations for volunteering

The top three motivations among those who volunteer for Religious organizations are the same as the top three motivations among all volunteers: belief in the cause, opportunity to use skills and experiences, and being personally affected by the cause the organizations supports (see Figure 30). It is not surprising that people who volunteer for Religious organizations are far more likely than volunteers in general to say that they volunteer to fulfill religious obligations or beliefs (72% vs. 26%). However, it is interesting that this is not the most common motivation among volunteers to Religious organizations.[10]

Figure 30: Motivations for volunteering, NSGVP 2000

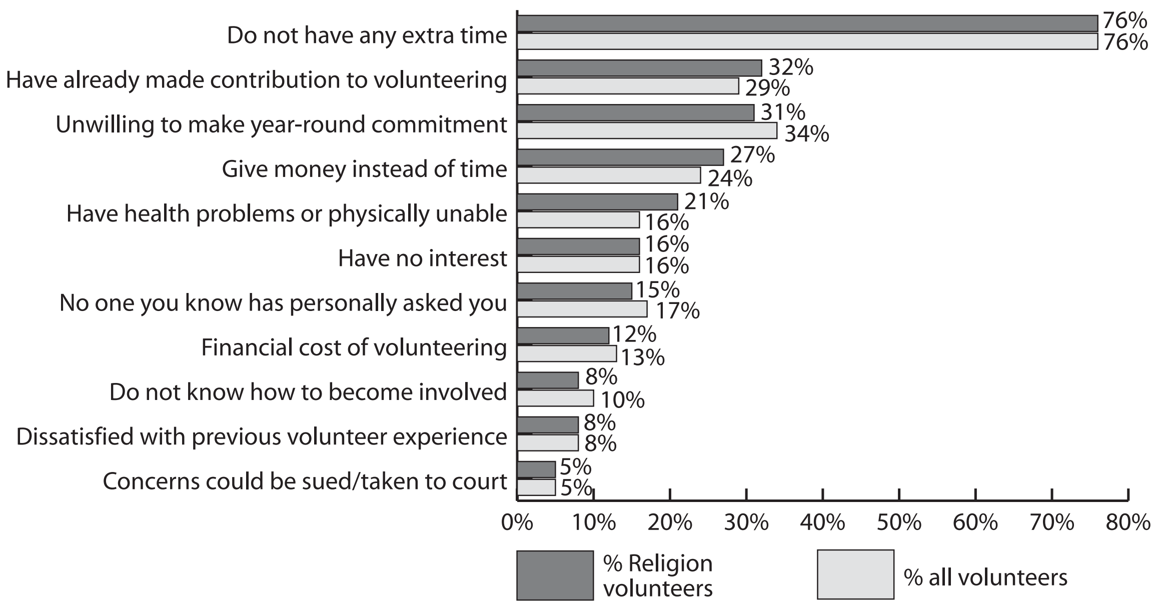


Barriers to volunteering more

The most common barrier to volunteering more among all volunteers and volunteers for Religious organizations is lack of time (cited by 76% of both groups, see Figure 31). Volunteers in Religious organizations are, however, somewhat more likely than volunteers in general to say that they didn't volunteer more because they have already made a contribution to volunteering (32% vs. 29%), they give money instead of time (27% vs. 24%), and they have health problems or are physically unable (21% vs. 16%). This may be a result of the fact that Religious volunteers are somewhat older than volunteers in general (see Table 12).

[10] It is important to note that volunteers often volunteer with more than one type of organization over the course of a year. Therefore, respondent motivations are related to volunteering in general and not to volunteering for Religious organizations in particular.

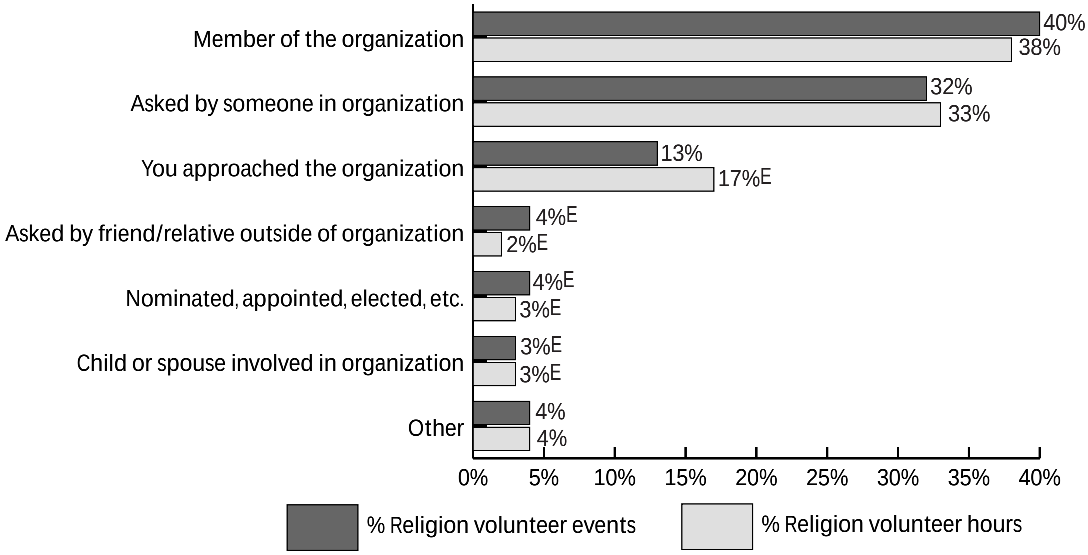
Figure 31: Barriers to volunteering more, NSGVP 2000



How volunteers become involved

The most common way for those who volunteer with Religious organizations to become involved in volunteering is through their membership in the organizations. More than a third (40%) of volunteer events in the Religion sub-sector start this way (see Figure 32). The second most common way that people become involved with a Religious organization is to be asked by the organization (32% of volunteer events).

Figure 32: Percentage of volunteer events and volunteer hours by method of initial involvement, Religion volunteers, NSGVP 2000



E Use with caution

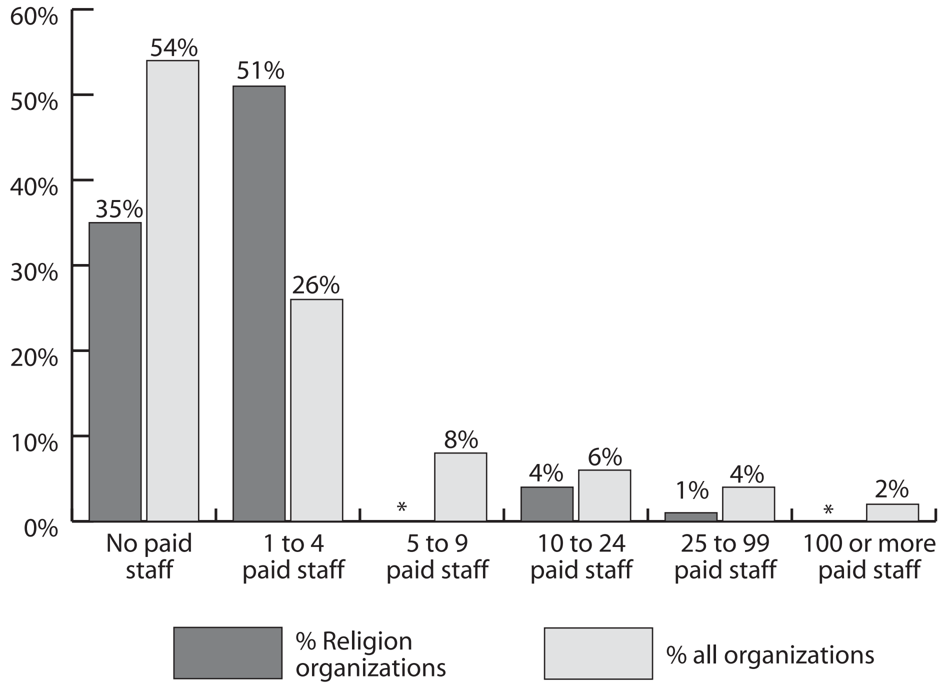
Paid Staff

The NSNVO estimates that Canada's nonprofit and voluntary sector employed over 2 million people in 2003, 65% of whom were permanent staff and 56% of whom worked full-time. Religious organizations employed more than 109,000 [E] people in 2003, or about 5%[E] of the total nonprofit and voluntary sector workforce. Eighty-four percent [E] of these employees (92,000 [E] people) had permanent positions and 65% [E] (71,000[E] people) work full-time.

Religious organizations are more likely than nonprofit and voluntary organizations in general to have paid staff. Just over one-third (35%) of Religious organizations have no paid staff, compared to more than half (54%) of all nonprofit and voluntary organizations (see Figure 33). Compared to the sector as a whole, Religious organizations are also more likely to have small staff contingents. More than one-half (51%) of Religious organizations have between 1 and 4 staff members, compared to 26% of all organizations.

[E] Use with caution.

Figure 33: Percentage of organizations by number of paid staff, NSNVO 2003



* Suppressed for confidentiality

Paid staff by region

Staff complements among Religious organizations are relatively consistent across the country (see Table 13). Religious organizations in British Columbia and Ontario are the least likely to have paid staff (60% of organizations in these regions have staff, compared to 65% overall). Organizations in Quebec are most likely to have large staff complements — 13% have 10 or more staff members.

Table 13: Paid staff levels by region, Religious organizations, NSNVO 2003

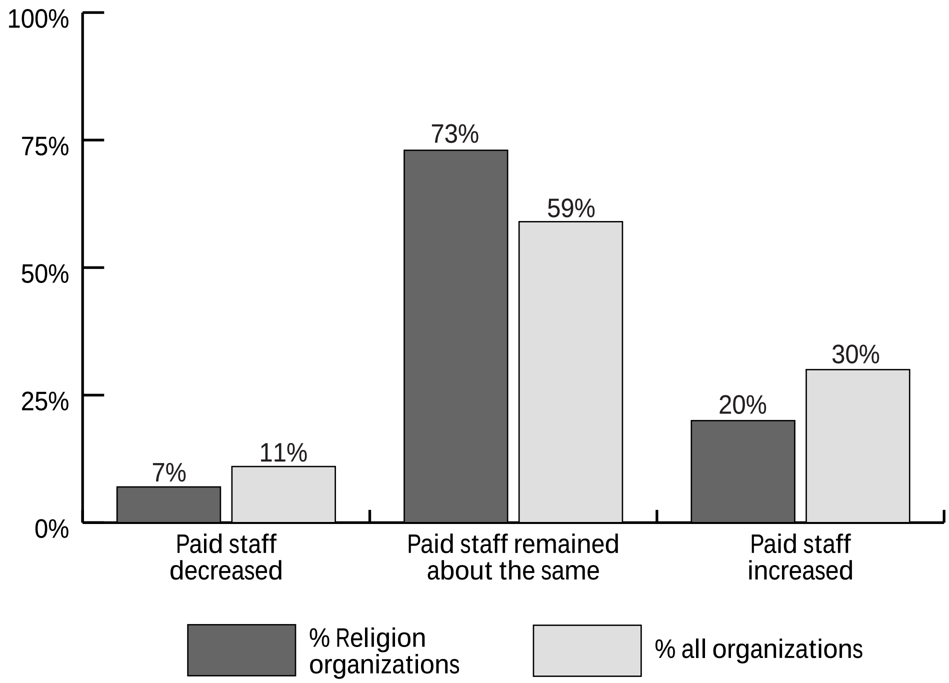
Number of paid staff	Region						
	British Columbia	Alberta	Prairies & Territories	Ontario	Quebec	Atlantic	All Religion organizations
0	40%	27%	30%	40%	36%	31%	35%
1 – 4	44%	63%	59%	49%	41%	58%	51%
5 – 9	9%	8%	8%	8%	10%	8%	*
10 – 24	5%	1%E	2%	2%	10%	2%	4%
25 – 99	*	*	*	*	*	*	1%
100 +	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

* Suppressed for confidentiality
E Use with caution

Changes in levels of paid staff

Religious organizations report very stable staffing levels compared to the sector as a whole. The vast majority of Religious organizations (73%) said that their staff level did not change between 2000 to 2003 (compared to 59% of all organizations, see Figure 34). Twenty percent of Religious organizations reported increasing staff levels and 7% reported declining staff levels. The sector as a whole is much more dynamic, with 30% of organizations reporting increasing staff levels and 11% reporting declining staff levels.

Figure 34: Reported changes in levels of paid staff over the past three years, NSNVO 2003



Human resources capacity issues

We have seen that Religious organizations are less likely than nonprofit and voluntary organizations in general to report problems related to financial and external funding capacity areas. The same is true with regard to human resources, but the difference is much less pronounced. The NSNVO asked respondents if a variety of human resources capacity issues were not a problem, a small problem, a moderate problem, or a serious problem for their organization. The results indicate that Religious organizations are less likely than nonprofit and voluntary organizations in general to report all problems with regard to all human resources capacity issues (see Figure 35).

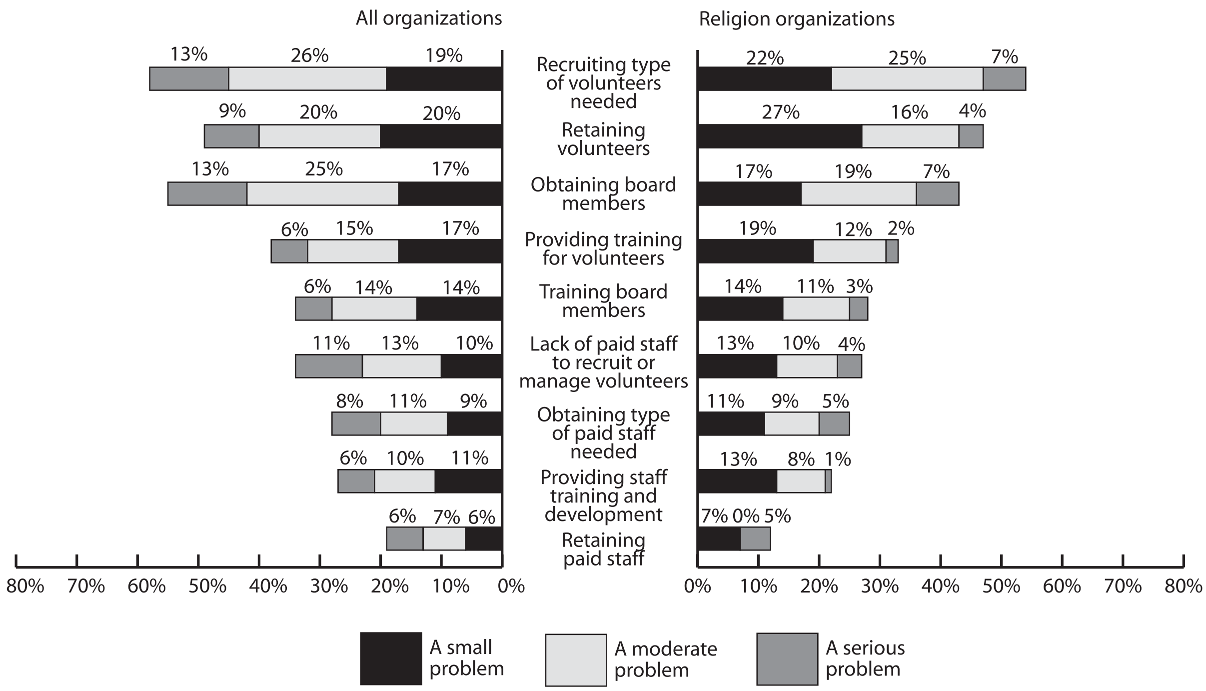
Problems with recruiting and retaining volunteers plague the entire nonprofit and voluntary sector and they are also the most common human resources problems reported by Religious organizations. Fifty-five percent* of Religious organizations report problems recruiting volunteers (compared to 57%* of all organizations), 48%* report problems retaining volunteers

* Figure differs from sum derived from chart due to rounding of numbers for individual categories.

(reported by 49% of all organizations), and 42%* report problems recruiting board members (reported by 56%* of all organizations).

Religious organizations are less likely to report problems retaining paid staff (reported by 12% of Religious organizations compared to 19% of all organizations), or providing training and development for paid staff (reported by 22% of Religious organizations compared to 27% of all organizations).

Figure 35: Human resources capacity issues, Religious organizations compared to all organizations, NSNVO 2003



Human resources issues by organization size

The smallest Religious organizations (i.e., those with annual revenues of less than $30,000) are the least likely to report all human resources capacity issues, with the notable exception of retaining paid staff (see Table 14). Forty percent of Religious organizations with annual revenues of less than $30,000 report problems retaining paid staff compared to no more than 15% of larger Religious organizations.

Religious organizations with annual revenues between $100,000 and $499,999 are more likely than those in most other revenue categories to report problems with recruiting the types of volunteers they need, retaining volunteers, and obtaining board members.

Religious organizations with annual revenues of $1 million or more are more likely than other organizations to report problems training board members (37% reported this as a problem) and providing staff training and development (34%).

Table 14: Human resources capacity issues by revenue size, Religious organizations, NSNVO 2003

	Percentage of organizations reporting each problem						
Capacity Items	Less than $30K	$30K–$99.9K	$100K–$249.9K	$250K–$499.9K	$500K–$999.9K	$1M+	All Religion organizations
Recruiting type of volunteers needed	40%	54%	66%	66%	73%	52%	55%
Retaining volunteers	33%	50%	56%	61%	50%	49%	48%
Obtaining board members	33%	47%	48%	49%	27%	33%	42%
Providing training for volunteers	21%	31%	47%	35%	43%	26%	33%
Training board members	13%	34%	33%	29%	27%	37%	27%
Lack of paid staff to recruit or manage volunteers	14%	25%	36%	32%	44%	26%	26%
Obtaining type of paid staff needed	14%	24%	34%	31%	38%	35%	25%
Providing staff training and development	12%	19%	33%	23%	31%	34%	22%
Retaining paid staff	40%	7%	10%	5%	15%	12%	12%

Human resources issues by region

The clearest relationship between region and human resources capacity issues is that Religious organizations in Alberta and the Prairies and Territories appear to have more challenges in this area than Religious organizations in other regions (see Table 15). For example, organizations in Alberta are more likely than organizations in other regions to report problems training board members and providing training and development for paid staff. Organizations in the Prairies and Territories are more likely than those in other regions to report problems recruiting and retaining volunteers and recruiting paid staff.

Table 15: Human resources capacity issues by region, Religious organizations, NSNVO 2003

	Percentage of organizations reporting each problem						
Capacity issues	British Columbia	Alberta	Praires & Territories	Ontario	Quebec	Atlantic	All Religion organizations
Recruiting type of volunteers needed	49%	53%	63%	53%	59%	51%	55%
Retaining volunteers	51%	48%	58%	45%	43%	48%	48%
Obtaining board members	28%	54%	51%	33%	55%	44%	42%
Providing training for volunteers	36%	34%	34%	37%	23%	30%	33%
Training board members	28%	32%	28%	29%	21%	25%	27%
Lack of paid staff to recruit or manage volunteers	30%	30%	29%	25%	21%	27%	26%
Obtaining type of paid staff	23%	28%	31%	24%	25%	21%	25%
Providing staff training and development	22%	25%	24%	22%	18%	20%	22%
Retaining paid staff	11%	10%	12%	13%	12%	12%	12%

Human resources issues by revenue dependency

Interestingly, Religious organizations with diversified funding are more likely to report a wide variety of human resources capacity problems (see Table 16). A majority of these organizations say that they have difficulty recruiting the type of volunteers they need (62%), obtaining board members (54%), and retaining volunteers (51%).

Government-dependent Religious organizations are generally the least likely to report most human resources capacity problems. This is in sharp contrast to the sector as a whole where organizations that are government-dependent are the most likely to report all types of human resources capacity problems. Government-dependent Religious organizations are, however, more likely than others to have difficulties training board members (64%), providing training for volunteers (58%), and providing staff training and development (26%).

Table 16: Human resources capacity issues by revenue dependency, Religious organizations, NSNVO 2003

Capacity issues	Percentage of organizations reporting each problem Government dependent	Earned revenues dependent	Gifts & donations dependent	Diverse	All Religion organizations
Recruiting type of volunteers needed	25%	58%	53%	62%	55%
Retaining volunteers	31%	40%	49%	51%	48%
Obtaining board members	19%	46%	41%	54%	42%
Providing training for volunteers	58%	25%	35%	20%	33%
Training board members	64%	26%	27%	23%	27%
Lack of paid staff to recruit or manage volunteers	8%	19%	28%	29%	26%
Obtaining type of paid staff needed	23%	19%	26%	29%	25%
Providing staff training and development	26%	21%	23%	13%	22%
Retaining paid staff	5%	14%	12%	10%	12%

Human resources issues by revenue change

Religious organizations with declining revenues are the most likely to report almost all capacity problems related to human resources (see Table 17). Religious organizations with growing revenues are, however, more likely than other organizations to report problems providing training for volunteers (39%), obtaining paid staff (33%), and retaining paid staff (18%).

Table 17: Human resources capacity issues by reported revenue change, Religious organizations, NSNVO 2003

Capacity issues	Percentage of organizations reporting each problem Revenue decreased	Revenue stayed about the same	Revenue increased	All Religion organizations
Recruiting type of volunteers needed	77%	48%	57%	55%
Retaining volunteers	61%	41%	52%	48%
Obtaining board members	64%	40%	36%	42%
Providing training for volunteers	36%	25%	39%	33%
Training board members	32%	24%	30%	27%
Lack of paid staff to recruit or manage volunteers	30%	21%	33%	26%
Obtaining type of paid staff needed	37%	18%	31%	25%
Providing staff training & development	33%	20%	31%	22%
Retaining paid staff	12%	8%	18%	12%

Summary

Religious organizations have the third largest volunteer complement in the nonprofit and voluntary sector. Despite this, more than half of Religious organizations report problems recruiting volunteers. While Religious organizations are generally less likely to report all types of human resources issues, problems related to recruiting, retaining and training volunteers and board members are still common among these organizations.

The majority of those who volunteer with Religious organizations are congregation members (attend services weekly). They also tend to be older and less affluent than volunteers in general.

Unlike volunteers in general, the majority of volunteers with Religious organizations are motivated by a need to fulfill religious obligations. Possibly due to their age, these volunteers are more likely to cite health problems as a barrier to volunteering more of their time.

Paid staff levels are more stable in Religious organizations than they are in the sector as a whole. Almost three-quarters of Religious organizations reported that their staff levels remained about the same between 2000 and 2003.

Religious organizations that are mid-sized, diversely funded, and those experiencing declining revenues are generally the most likely to report human resources capacity problems.

Conclusions

Canadian Religious organizations provide more than just a place of worship. The findings presented in this report indicate that Religious organizations:

- collectively, have a substantial social and economic presence;
- individually, tend to be mid-sized organizations;
- tend to be financially self-sufficient;
- are donor-driven organizations;
- have unique donor and volunteer profiles;
- are likely to serve the general public, regardless of faith;
- tend to have at least one paid staff member; and
- are less likely than other types of nonprofit organizations to report capacity problems.

Social and economic presence

According to the NSNVO, there are approximately 31,000 Religious organizations in Canada, accounting for 19% of the country's estimated 161,000 nonprofit and voluntary organizations. In terms of number of organizations, Religion is the second most common activity area in the nonprofit and voluntary sector. It ranks only eighth in terms of revenues, however, reporting $6.8 billion[E] in annual revenues (6% of the total sector revenues).

Religious organizations are also important vehicles for citizen engagement. According to the NSGVP, they receive the support of 1.3 million volunteers (6% of the population 15 years of age and older), who contributed over 170 million hours of their time in 2000. This significant volunteer support presumably reflects the commitment of Canadians to their Religious organizations and the value they place on them and the services they provide.

Size of revenues

Religious organizations tend to be mid-sized organizations. Almost two-thirds (64%) report annual revenues between $30,000 and $499,999.

As in the sector as a whole, the majority of revenues in the Religious sub-sector are concentrated among a small percentage of large organizations. For example, the 4% of Religious organizations with annual revenues over $1 million receive almost half (48%) of all revenues in the sub-sector. The distribution of revenues among Religious organizations is, however, more equitable than it is in many other sub-sectors.

Financial self-sufficiency

Religious organizations tend to be financially self-sufficient, receiving almost two-thirds (64%[E]) of their revenues from gifts and donations and almost one-quarter (24%) from earned income. The share of revenues they receive from government is much lower than in the sector as a whole (8%[E]). As organization size increases, earned revenue and government funding play a larger role in revenue generation. Mirroring the sector as a whole, larger Religious organizations are more likely to say that their revenues increased between 2000 and 2003 and smaller Religious organizations are most likely to report stable revenues.

[E] Use with caution.

Donor-driven organizations

Religious organizations get over one-half of their revenues from individual donations (57% E). Individual donations made to Religious organizations account for 49% E of the total value of all individual donations made in the sector.

Almost all Religious organizations (94%) are registered charities. This helps them collect donations because it allows them to issue tax receipts to donors. Three-quarters (75%) of the total number of donations and 87% of the total value of all donations made to Religious organizations are made through a place of worship, which furthers the notion that donations from members are vital to their existence.

Unique donor and volunteer profiles

Religious organizations look internally for their revenues and volunteers. Three-quarters of donations to Religious organizations are made through a place of worship, and volunteers with Religious organizations are most likely say that they volunteered because they were members of the organization or they were asked to do so by the organization. Moreover, religious obligation is a significant motivation for both donors and volunteers.

There is considerable variation in the donation rate and the average donation value across Canada, but the volunteer rate and average hours volunteered are relatively stable. As we see in the sector as a whole, most of the time and money contributed to Religious organizations comes from the top 25% of volunteers and donors. Donors and volunteers to Religious organizations come from all demographic groups, although they tend to be women, over the age of 45, married, have post-secondary educations, and attend religious services weekly.

Community-focused organizations

Religious organizations are more likely than other nonprofit and voluntary organizations to have a local community focus. Often at the heart of their communities, Religious organizations can act as a point of initial contact for people new to a neighbourhood. Perhaps contrary to expectation, Religious organizations tend to serve the general public, regardless of faith. Religious organizations are also less likely than nonprofit and voluntary organizations in general to have membership restrictions or to serve a specific segment of the population. In fact, more than two-thirds (69%) of Religious organizations say that both members and non-members benefit from their services.

Volunteer-driven

According to the 2000 NSGVP, Religious organizations engage over 1.3 million volunteers. Only Sports and Recreation and Social Services organizations attract more volunteers and volunteer hours than Religious organizations. Religious organizations are less likely than organizations in general to report capacity problems relating to volunteers. That said, over one-half (55%) of all Religious organizations report that volunteer recruitment is a problem, with 7% reporting that it is a serious problem.

Paid staff are a critical component

Religious organizations are more likely than many other types of nonprofit and voluntary organizations to have paid staff, but they generally have small staff complements. Almost two-thirds (65%) of all Religious organizations (compared to 46% of all organizations) have at least one staff member. Most, however, have between 1 and 4 staff members. Paid staff in Religious organizations are more likely to be employed on a permanent, full-time basis than paid staff in the sector as a whole. Religious organizations are less likely than other organizations to report capacity problems relating to paid staff. However, 40% of the smallest Religious organizations report problems retaining their paid staff, compared to less than 15% of all other Religious organizations.

Implications for the future

Religious organizations are well-established institutions with stable revenues. The key strengths of Religious organizations appear to be their local community focus, and the strength that they draw from their dedicated donors, volunteers, and staff.

Some of the most significant challenges facing Religious organizations are their heavy reliance on a single source of revenue — individual donations — which makes them vulnerable to changes in donation levels, and their over-reliance on older and less affluent Canadians for donations and volunteer support. In order to ensure their continued success, Religious organization must find ways to engage a broader cross-section of the Canadian population.

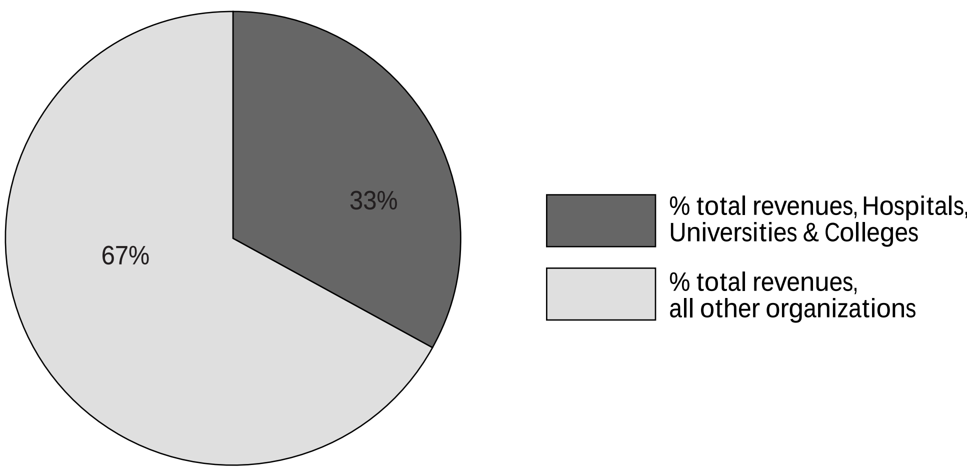
Appendix
Methodological Notes

Comparing Religious organizations to all organizations

Throughout this report, Religious organization data are usually compared to *all* nonprofit and voluntary organizations. This comparison helps to demonstrate where Religious organizations diverge from sector norms, thus highlighting areas of strength or potential concern.

This comparison can be problematic in some instances, however. The concern arises from the very high concentration of revenues accounted for, and resources consumed by, Hospitals, Universities, and Colleges. According to the NSNVO, the nonprofit and voluntary sector accounted for $112 billion in revenues in 2003. Hospitals, Universities, and Colleges, which represent only 1% of all nonprofit and voluntary organizations, accounted for 33% or $37 billion of those revenues (see Figure A1). The remaining $75 billion is accounted for by the other 99% of organizations in the sector. Hospitals, Universities, and Colleges also employ 35% of all paid staff in the nonprofit and voluntary sector and 39% of these organizations have staff complements of 100 or more (Hall et al., 2004).

Figure A1: Share of total nonprofit and voluntary sector revenues, Hospitals, Universities, and Colleges vs. all other organizations, NSNVO 2003



Where data from Hospitals, Universities, and Colleges significantly skew the total sector values, they have been removed to provide a more meaningful base of comparison to Religious organizations. Instances where comparisons have been made between Religious organizations and the total sector *excluding* Hospitals, Universities, and Colleges have been clearly identified for the reader.

The National Survey of Nonprofit and Voluntary Organizations

The National Survey of Nonprofit and Voluntary Organizations (NSNVO) data were collected by Statistics Canada via personal interviews with 13,000 individuals representing incorporated nonprofit organizations and registered charities in 2003. The data presented in this report have been weighted to provide estimates for the 161,000 incorporated nonprofit and voluntary organizations and registered charities in Canada.

The NSNVO defines nonprofit and voluntary organizations as:

- non-governmental (i.e., institutionally separate from government);
- non-profit distributing (i.e., do not return any profits generated to their owners or directors);
- self-governing (i.e., independent and able to regulate their own activities);
- voluntary (i.e., benefit to some degree from voluntary contributions of time or money); and
- formally incorporated or registered under specific legislation with provincial, territorial, or federal governments.

The NSNVO excluded grass-roots organizations or citizens' groups that are not formally incorporated or registered with provincial, territorial, or federal governments. It also excluded some registered charities that are considered to be public sector agencies (e.g., school boards, public libraries, and public schools).

The National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating

The National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating (NSGVP) provides the most comprehensive picture of giving, volunteering, and participating in Canada. The 2000 survey was based on a representative sample of 14,724 Canadians aged 15 and older who were asked about their giving and volunteering over a one-year period from October 1, 1999 to September 30, 2000.

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