It's all about time

Volunteering in Northern Ireland 2007
Full Report

V OLUNTEER
DEVELOPMENT
AGENCY

Foreword

As Minister for Social Development I welcome this report on volunteering in Northern Ireland. It paints a comprehensive picture from the perspective of both individuals and organisations which, when considered with the previous reports in 2001 and 1995, provides a sense of how volunteering is changing and evolving. Twelve years after the first report we live in very different times. Peace is bringing stability, investment, optimism and opportunity. There are also changes taking place in a society in which we seem to lead ever busier and faster lives – changes which are impacting on volunteers and that are reflected in this report.

Volunteers are remarkable people from all walks of life and, in actions large and small, they are making a great difference to the lives of individuals and communities all across Northern Ireland. I am encouraged by many of the findings in the report. Today's volunteers have a very real sense of satisfaction and achievement. Many have said the benefits of their volunteering included new experiences, learning new skills, gaining qualifications and increased confidence.   For the vast majority making friends and personal enjoyment go hand in hand with their volunteering. Though motivations are complex, most people volunteer because they want to help people and make a difference.

As an MLA and local Minister, with my work and roots firmly in Northern Ireland, I am heartened to learn that volunteering has a strong cross-community aspect and that volunteers are more likely to be active citizens and have higher levels of civic and social engagement. Volunteers increasingly feel that their efforts are appreciated by their organisation. In a society where commentators are quick to criticise young people it is heartening to note that the 16-24 age group is amongst the most likely to volunteer.

However, there is no room for complacency. The survey shows that volunteer numbers and hours given have both fallen since 2001. Many organisations reported that volunteer numbers had decreased in the last five years and that it is getting harder to recruit volunteers because of pressures on their time. These and other findings in the report point to a potential decline in volunteering which lays down challenges for government, the statutory sector and the voluntary and community sector.

Now is an appropriate time to reflect and consider what needs to be done to create the conditions that enable us to build on the strong volunteering base, which undoubtedly exists. We need to create a culture that encourages people to volunteer, that raises awareness of the importance and benefits of volunteering, and that creates a society in which volunteering is seen as the social norm. As we move into a more peaceful, stable and prosperous time I believe we have an opportunity for the full potential of volunteering to be realised.

My Department will take forward the development of a new volunteering strategy for Northern Ireland. This strategy will be created in partnership with volunteer organisations and with other departments. It will recognise and endorse the contribution of volunteers to our community life and will aim to create the conditions that enable volunteering to flourish. Volunteering is a cornerstone of our society, the lifeblood of our communities and a lifeline to the vulnerable. We all must rise to the challenges that lie ahead to ensure that volunteering thrives.

MARGARET RITCHIE MLA
MINISTER FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

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Acknowledgements

This research was initiated by the Volunteer Development Agency, the lead organisation for the promotion and development of volunteering in Northern Ireland, and follows on from research undertaken in 1995 and 2001. The research was funded by the Voluntary and Community Unit in the Department for Social Development.

The research was carried out by Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action (NICVA) and overseen by a Research Reference Group which was chaired by Joe McVey (chairperson of the Volunteer Development Agency). Members were:

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Padraic Murphy - Rural Community Network (from April 2007)
Chris Morris - Statistics and Research Branch, Department for Social Development
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We would not, of course, have had the data on which the project is based without the many volunteers and organisations throughout Northern Ireland who took the time to complete the questionnaires. Through their participation in the project, they have had a say in how they would like to see volunteering in Northern Ireland promoted and supported in the future. The Volunteer Development Agency expresses its gratitude to all individuals and organisations which took part or assisted in any way with this important piece of research.

Summary

This report describes the extent and scale of volunteering in Northern Ireland in 2007 as well as describing the experiences of volunteers, the impact of volunteerism on organisations and why some individuals choose not to volunteer. It is based on the results from face to face interviews with 1,020 individuals across Northern Ireland and the responses from 745 (24.4% response rate) organisations that involve volunteers.

Volunteering in Northern Ireland

- 21% of individuals surveyed are formal volunteers (in 2001 this figure was 29% and in 1995 it was 18%). This equates to an estimated 282,067 individuals aged over 16 years old who have volunteered for an organisation over the previous 12 months.

- Informal volunteers accounted for 35% of the individuals surveyed of which almost a third were also formal volunteers (31%). This equates to an estimated 470,111 individuals who over the last twelve months have been engaged as informal volunteers. An estimated 145,734 individuals are both formal and informal volunteers

- In 2007 the overall economic value of formal volunteers, based on the Northern Ireland average hourly wage, was £504 million per year. This equates to an average of 13.4 hours given by formal volunteers each month.

- In 2007 the number of hours informal volunteers gave has increased from eight hours to nine hours per month when compared to 2001. The overall economic value of informal volunteers was £433 million.

- Almost three quarters of all formal volunteers have stated that their circle of friends/networks have increased as a consequence of formal volunteering.

- 56% of formal volunteers have attributed an increased contact with other communities/religions to their engagement in volunteering.

- 15% of formal volunteers have attended a public consultation event/meeting/forum whereas only 2% of non-volunteers stated they had done the same.

- Just under one third of all formal volunteers are engaged with a voluntary or community organisation which equates to an estimated 87,723 individuals. The next most common type of organisation volunteers are engaged with is the church or religious bodies (70,799).

Who volunteers?

- Females are more likely than males to be formal volunteers. As a proportion of all formal volunteers six out of every ten are females (61%).

- Individuals aged between 35 and 49 years old and those aged between 16 and 24 years old are the most likely to volunteer.

- The most common types of formal voluntary activities undertaken by respondents were raising or handling money (32%) and helping to organise or run an activity or event (26%).

- 16-24 year olds are more likely to volunteer for organisations that are involved in sports or exercise based activities, whereas 35-49 year olds are more likely to be formal volunteers when it relates to organisations that are involved in children's education (schools).

- Almost three quarters of all formal volunteers (74%) give time to organisations at least once a month (in 2001 this figure was 62% and in 1995 it was 61%).

- Personal contact through word of mouth, through someone already volunteering in a group, through the church or religious organisation or through friends or family are the main ways through which individuals found out about volunteering opportunities.

- Those informal volunteers in the younger age brackets are more likely to be involved in baby sitting or caring for children than those who are older. However, those individuals who are aged over 65 years old and those who are aged between 50 and 64 years old are more likely to keep in touch with someone who has trouble getting out and about.

- Looking at the activities that are undertaken the most often (once a week), the results from this survey found that 70% of informal volunteers who sit with or provide personal care (e.g. washing, dressing) for someone who is sick or frail do so on a weekly basis

- Two thirds of all informal volunteers (66%) give between one to five hours over a period of four weeks compared to 54% in 2001.

- The overwhelming reason as to why informal volunteers helped out was that individuals wanted to get involved.

Experiences of being a volunteer

- Two thirds of formal volunteers (66%) feel that their efforts are appreciated by the organisation they volunteer with.

- Almost three quarters (74%) of formal volunteers get the greatest level of satisfaction from seeing the results of their contribution. Enjoyment also rates very highly on the scale of what is important to individuals who volunteer for an organisation.

- Almost half of all formal volunteers (48%) have reported a family member who has been involved in some type of voluntary activity over the last five years. Almost a quarter of all informal volunteers (24%) report a similar situation with only 6% of non-volunteers stating that a member of their family had volunteered over the past five years.

- 58% of formal volunteers aged between 25 and 34 years old voted in the last General Election whereas 48% of non-volunteers in the same age bracket voted.

Recruiting and retaining volunteers

- Approximately one quarter of all volunteers (26% of formal volunteers and 28% of informal volunteers) would like to spend more time volunteering.

- If they were directly asked to volunteer, the most common response from formal and informal volunteers is that they would be pleased to help some more (45 % and 45% respectively).

- The pressure of work commitments is the single most common reason why individuals do not become more involved in voluntary activities. Approximately a third of all formal and informal volunteers (33% and 32% respectively) feel the fact they are doing enough already precludes from becoming more involved.

- Overall respondents felt that articles/advertisements in local newspapers would be the most useful way to promote volunteering opportunities. This is followed by word of mouth (friends/family) as being perceived as an effective way of promoting volunteering opportunities.

Supporting volunteers

- Three out of every ten formal volunteers had to go through an interview or a chat prior to becoming a volunteer.

- Those individuals who volunteer with a public sector organisation are more likely to have had to complete a pre-employment consultancy check (68%), complete an application form (55%) and attend an interview (55%).

- Overall this survey found that 19% of all formal volunteers are engaged with organisations that cover volunteer expenses.

- 60% of formal volunteers do not claim out of pocket expenses even though they can and the most common reasons given are they didn't get around to it (23%) and that they viewed it as a form of donation (18%).

- A third of all formal volunteers (34%) stated in 2007 that they had received training from the organisations they volunteered with.

Attitudes towards volunteering

- Just under half of all formal volunteers (49%) strongly agreed that many organisations could not survive without unpaid workers. Almost a third of individuals (30%) who decide not to volunteer, strongly agree with the statement that volunteers are integral to the survival of many organisations.

- Very few respondents (7%) feel that the divisions in Northern Ireland society are in themselves a reason why individuals cannot become more involved in voluntary activities. 39% of formal volunteers consider being involved in unpaid work can contribute to an improvement in cross -community relations.

- In 1995, 15% of volunteers agreed that organisations that involved volunteers were amateurish. In 2007 this has fallen to just 10% of all respondents.

Volunteering in organisations

- 38% of organisations stated that in the last five years the number of volunteers involved in their organisation has increased. 42% of organisations have reported a decrease in the level of volunteers in the last five years.

- The most common type of volunteering is organising or helping to run an activity with 79% of organisations stating that this is one of the main roles undertaken by volunteers. The second most common volunteering activity is leading a group or being a member of a committee or trust.

- 84% of all organisations stated that volunteers are very committed/flexible and enthusiastic and 82% of all organisations stated that volunteers bring new/additional skills to the organisation.

- 77% of organisations stated they could not operate without the support of volunteers.

- The top three methods used by organisations to recruit volunteers are through personal contact, word of mouth and local newspapers.

- 14% of organisations believe that the 2005 Year of the Volunteer either greatly impacted or had some impact on increasing the number of individuals who approached them wanting to volunteer.

- Organisations stated that they felt the most common reason why individuals do not volunteer is that they have insufficient time.

- In relation to how the recruitment of volunteers could be made easier, 38.3% of organisations believe that local volunteering campaigns would be beneficial. In addition 37.2% of organisations stated that if more resources became available to cover the activities of volunteers this could make it easier to recruit volunteers.

- 31.1% of organisations that involve volunteers have a budget which covers volunteer activities and expenditure. The average volunteer budget is £7,877, which could include staff costs, volunteer expenses, equipment etc.

- Over 60% of organisations stated that having a dedicated volunteer manager has had a positive impact on the recruitment and retention of volunteers.

Conclusion

This report also examines the trends and key messages that have emerged from this research and from the information gathered over the past 12 years into volunteering in Northern Ireland. This research found that young people are motivated to become volunteers by the cause, whereas older people tend to cite having more time to spare as the reason for them getting involved. Younger people also expressed their desire to improve their careers and develop new skills through voluntary activity more than any other age group. This research also found that individuals are still prepared to volunteer but they are giving less time than in the past. There appears to be a trend developing whereby individuals are becoming more selective in the amount of time they are committing in order to fit their voluntary activities around their lifestyle.

Individuals who choose not to volunteer also raise a number of interesting challenges for organisations and policy makers alike. There appears to be a significant pool of non-volunteers who would be pleased to help if they are directly approached. This is extremely important given the static nature of voluntary activity over the past 12 years and the reliance of organisations on volunteers. Equally there are a significant number of individuals who have never volunteered because they have never considered becoming involved. Nevertheless the crux of the issue is that significantly more people choose not to volunteer than do so, therefore ways must be sought to encourage non-volunteers to become more involved.

This report also examines the attitudes of individuals and organisations towards volunteering. From the perspective of organisations which involve volunteers the attitudes towards the value, impact and contribution individuals make is extremely positive. It is not overstating the value organisations place in the contribution individuals make when 77% of respondents stated the organisation could not operate without the support of volunteers. This was a view also held by individuals when asked if they felt organisations could not survive without volunteers. This is an incredibly important finding when set against the wider environment where the overall number of volunteers is essentially static and those who do volunteer are being more selective in terms of how often and how much time they commit to voluntary activities.

As society changes, how organisations engage with volunteers and attract new volunteers must therefore also change. This research has highlighted a number of trends that, when set against the static nature of volunteering in Northern Ireland, point to a pivotal moment in the promotion and recognition of volunteering. Things can continue as they are and at best, the situation will remain the same and small gains made through volunteering initiatives will continue to be achieved, but for a large portion of the population volunteering will not be a viable option. The alternative is the development of a strategy that will foster an environment in which organisations can be adequately resourced and supported to adopt more flexible and innovate ways of tapping into a large pool of potential volunteers.

1.   Introduction

"I don't know who — or what — put the question. I don't even remember answering. But at some moment I did answer YES to someone — or something — and from that hour I was certain that existence is meaningful and that, therefore, my life, in surrender, had a goal."

Dag Hammarskjold[1]

For many individuals the quotation above perhaps best encapsulates how their involvement in volunteering began and their subsequent feelings after they became involved. Volunteering has become the clearest expression of civic participation amongst individuals and is increasingly a focus of Government initiatives and policies. For many, volunteering is a very simple concept. It is about giving time to do something useful without getting paid (apart from expenses). In return the individual volunteer gets the satisfaction of time and effort well spent. In addition, volunteering can be a great way to meet new people, learn new skills and to gain useful experience.

This report describes the extent and scale of volunteering in Northern Ireland as well as describing the experiences of volunteers, the impact of volunteerism on organisations and why some individuals choose not to volunteer.

1.1   Background to volunteering research in Northern Ireland

The first survey into volunteering in Northern Ireland was carried out and published in 1995[2] by the Volunteer Development Agency. This report produced the first comprehensive picture of volunteering in Northern Ireland as prior to this publication volunteering was measured as part of wider UK surveys where the sample sizes for Northern Ireland were very small (generally around 50 interviews in large scale population surveys). A total of 1,063 individuals across Northern Ireland were surveyed between January and March 1995.

The 1995 report was followed up in 2001 with another volunteering in Northern Ireland survey. On this occasion Ulster Marketing Surveys[3] conducted interviews with a representative sample of 1,312 Northern Ireland residents. The *Volunteering in Northern Ireland 2001* report was published by the Volunteer Development Agency in June 2001. Both the 1995 and 2001 reports were based on the same questionnaire administered as part of a wider omnibus survey. There are slight variations between the two surveys but the essence of both surveys remains the same as it was deemed necessary to measure changes in volunteering over time.

In 2001 the Volunteer Development Agency also published a report into volunteering within organisations in the voluntary and community sector. *Volunteering in Organisations 2001* was the first attempt to look at the various policies and procedures that existed amongst voluntary and community organisations in order to recruit, manage and generally engage with volunteers. Although published as a separate report from the *Volunteering in Northern*

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[1] http://academic.regis.edu/volunteer/Ivan/sect05/sect05b.htm **(**The New Volunteerism Project)
[2] Volunteer Development Agency (1995) *Volunteering in Northern Ireland*, Williamson and Associates, Belfast
[3] Millward Brown (www.ums-research.com/)

Ireland 2001 report, there were many areas relevant to volunteering, both from an individual and organisational perspective, which were covered in both reports.

This third survey of volunteering in Northern Ireland follows the same format and methodology as employed for the 1995 and 2001 surveys. On this occasion a total of 1,020 individuals across Northern Ireland were surveyed by Millward Brown as part of their omnibus survey during January 2007. In addition a sample of 3,045 organisations was also surveyed as a repeat of the *Volunteering in Organisations 2001* report. *It's All bout Time* is a combination of both studies.

1.2   Definitions

Volunteering, as defined here, refers to both volunteering through organisations and volunteering carried out in more informal ways, often at a neighbourhood level but outside the family. The definition used in this report and in the 2001 and 1995 surveys is as follows:

"*Volunteers and volunteering refer to individuals and the work or action they undertake for the benefit of others or the community (outside the immediate family), undertaken by free choice and not directly in return for wages.*"

All three reports examining volunteering in Northern Ireland have included both formal volunteering within organisations and informal volunteering carried out on behalf of people outside an individual's immediate family. The definitions of both types of volunteering are as follows:

Formal volunteering
"Unpaid voluntary work carried out with, or under the auspices of, an organisation."

Informal volunteering
"Unpaid or voluntary work carried out outside organisations, often at neighbourhood level, but outside the immediate family."

1.3   Objectives of the research

As well as discussing trends and developments in volunteering since 1995, this research will inform the development of a Volunteering Strategy for Northern Ireland being led by the Voluntary and Community Unit within the Department for Social Development. There are two clear aims associated with this research project:

- To undertake a large scale population based survey, based on interviews with individuals, to provide credible baseline information regarding the quantity and range of volunteering and community involvement undertaken by individuals in Northern Ireland. To track trends in volunteering such as motivation and attitudes and to benchmark against earlier reports completed in 1995 and again in 2001.
- To provide an understanding of current good practice and needs of organisations in relation to volunteers and highlight significant issues around volunteering. This part of the research will provide a follow up to the *Volunteering in Organisations* survey

completed in 2001 and will include an analysis of trends as well as exploration of new issues.

A range of key questions were posed prior to this research being undertaken. These were as follows:

Volunteering in Northern Ireland
- What is the level of volunteering and community activity in Northern Ireland?
- What is the profile of volunteers in terms of age, gender, socio-economic background, employment status, disability status, racial group, marital status and religious belief?
- How many people are involved and how often do they volunteer?
- What levels of support do volunteers receive/require?
- Why do people volunteer?
- What are the barriers to volunteering?
- How do people view their volunteer experience?
- What is the general public's attitude to volunteering and community involvement?
- How does volunteering in Northern Ireland in 2007 compare with results from the 1995 and 2001 surveys and other relevant surveys from other parts of the UK?
- What is the impact of volunteering on good relations between those of a different religious belief, political opinion and racial group?

Volunteering in Organisations
- What kinds of organisations involve volunteers?
- Why do organisations involve volunteers?
- How many volunteers are involved?
- What is the profile of volunteers in terms of age, gender, socio-economic background, employment status, disability status, racial group, marital status, religious belief and sexual orientation?
- How do organisations recruit volunteers?
- What are the barriers to recruitment?
- How do organisations manage volunteers?
- What are the challenges for organisations concerning the involvement of volunteers?
- How do organisations involve volunteers in governance?
- What are the financial implications for organisations of involving volunteers?

1.4   Policy context

The valuable contribution volunteers make to society is increasingly being recognised. In a time when governments at all levels are promoting the desire to increase active citizenship, volunteering is being promoted as one of the best examples of how individuals can make a meaningful contribution to civil society. Indeed, volunteering is seen as an important expression of citizenship and fundamental to democracy.

There have been a number of interesting policy developments at the international, UK and Northern Ireland level to promote volunteering and to improve the volunteering infrastructure. This section of the report will highlight some of the major policy initiatives that have impacted on volunteering.

Volunteering policy initiatives at the international level

The idea of volunteering has been on the international policy agenda for some time. This section summarises the key issues that have influenced volunteering policy at an international level.

In 1983, a Resolution of the European Parliament recognised the general interest nature of volunteering and the contribution of adequate infrastructure to effective policies on volunteering. In 1997, a Communication of the EU Commission on 'Promoting the Role of Voluntary Organisations and Founders' (COM (1997) 241) which recognised the political, economic and social significance of voluntary action for 'developing a cohesive and inclusive European society based on active citizenship'.

The United Nations 2001 International Year of Volunteers (IYV) was seen as an important catalyst for increasing attention in volunteering. Nearly 130 countries took part in the IYV and more than 500 committees were established to plan and host a range of activities. In follow up to the IYV, 142 Member Countries of the United Nations co-sponsored a General Assembly resolution (RES 57/106). It recommended governments, non-governmental organisations, the private sector and researchers must promote volunteer work. It also recommended that improvements are needed in volunteer working conditions.

At the European level, a network of 38 volunteer development agencies and volunteer centres have come together to form The European Volunteer Centre (CEV). It launched a Manifesto for Volunteering in Europe on 28 March 2006 (see http://www.vds.org.uk/docs/CEVManifesto.pdf). The manifesto is targeted at European decision makers and it explains why volunteering matters and proposes actions that can recognise, promote and facilitate volunteering in the EU. The manifesto clearly states that there is currently no targeted funding for a European support infrastructure for volunteering. It states that such an infrastructure is needed to build capacity and exchange good practice.

One of the recommendations of the Manifesto for Volunteering in Europe is the need for reliable statistics. For this reason the CEV have been involved in a 'Facts and Figures Research Project' which began in 2003 (Refer to 'Who Volunteers' for more details).

Eurofestation 2004 produced a Roadmap 2010 for the EU, national member states, multinational organisations, national volunteer centres and volunteer involving organisations. The purpose of Roadmap 2010 is to prioritise the issues that must be addressed with regard to volunteering, and to be an influential tool for further policy developments, events and activities on volunteering.

On the 5 December 2006, the UN International Day of the Volunteer, there was a public hearing in the European Parliament on 'Mainstreaming Volunteering in EU Policy'. Speakers addressed the issue of what the EU institutions can do to actively promote volunteering throughout Europe (http://www.cev.be/publichearing.htm). Then on the 13 December 2006, the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) published an 'Opinion on Voluntary activity: its role in European society and its impact' (SOC/243) and it was adopted at its 431st plenary session held on the 13 and 14 December. The opinion contained a number of recommendations on volunteering. Key among these, was the recommendation to the

European Commission to announce a Year of Volunteers, and to publish a White Paper on voluntary activity and active citizenship in Europe. It stresses that the White Paper should contribute to a strategy to strengthen voluntary activity. It encourages Governments at the national level to frame policies so that they recognise and encourage volunteering. It also encourages Member States and the EU itself to design a policy on voluntary activity, with proposals for targeted support, public awareness raising. The Opinion recommends the need for more reliable and comparable volunteering statistics at the EU level. The Opinion includes a specific recommendation for the promotion of voluntary activity by senior citizens. It also states that EU funding, policies and programmes should do more to promote voluntary activity.

Volunteering policy initiatives in the UK

There are two broad policy streams that encourage voluntary activity; civil renewal and social inclusion (Rochester, 2006). The civil renewal policy stream was launched in 2003, by the then Home Secretary, David Blunkett who stated it had three key ingredients: active citizens, strengthened communities and partnerships with public bodies. The priority given to this policy stream is demonstrated in the establishment of a Civil Renewal Unit (now part of the Department for Communities and Local Government), to take it forward. The Government also launched an Active Citizenship Centre to provide a range of research reports on different aspects of civil renewal. The Centre is part of the Together We Can initiative which sets out the Government's plan to enable people to engage with public bodies and influence the decisions that affect their communities. Together We Can [4] is led by the Department for Communities and Local Government and 12 Government departments are contributing with policies that empower citizens to get involved.

The second policy stream, social inclusion was a high profile issue of the early days of the Labour Government. Social exclusion was seen to be about more than income poverty. It is a short–hand term for what can happen when people or areas have a combination of linked problems, such as unemployment, discrimination, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime and family breakdown. These problems are linked and mutually reinforcing. Social exclusion is an extreme consequence of what happens when people don't get a fair deal throughout their lives, often because of disadvantage they face at birth, and this disadvantage can be transmitted from one generation to the next. Government initiatives, such as The GoldStar Exemplar Programme, were designed to target socially excluded groups. For many people at risk of social exclusion, working as a volunteer, mentor or befriender is an important first step to personal development. The GoldStar Exemplar Programme is aimed at encouraging and enabling voluntary organisations and projects across England to realise the potential of volunteers, mentors and befrienders from socially excluded or disadvantaged groups. This programme in particular has made a very clear link between the impact of volunteering on an individual's personal development and the wider policy imperative of tackling social exclusion.

Since the Labour Government entered power in 1997, there have been a number of initiatives that recognise and support volunteering. Key among these has been the Compact initiative, Millennium Volunteers, Active Community Initiative, the Year of the Volunteer and the Russell Commission.

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[4] http://www.togetherwecan.info/

Many of the initiatives aimed at recognising and supporting volunteering apply only to England but where there is a UK wide element, devolution has had an impact on volunteering initiatives as in many instances it is a devolved matter. Often the expression of the policy will be different throughout each of the devolved powers. Equally not all UK initiatives which have resources associated with them are necessarily translated into a proportionate share in terms of resources for Northern Ireland.

The responsibility for volunteering rests with the Volunteering and Charitable Giving Unit in the Office for the Third Sector in the Cabinet Office. The Unit's remit is to increase overall levels in volunteering across all age ranges and backgrounds (cited in Rochester, 2006, p. 32). It has pursued this through the following initiatives:

- The Year of the Volunteer 2005
- The Volunteering for All programme
- Support for mentoring and befriending
- The GoldStar (volunteering and mentoring) Exemplar Programme
- Implementation of the Russell Commission's recommendations
- Millennium Volunteers
- The Beacon Scheme

The Year of the Volunteer 2005 was a national campaign across the UK, funded by the Home Office to a cost of £7 million (in England only) and by pro bono contributions valued at a further £3 million. Its main aim was to raise awareness of volunteering, increase the opportunities for people to become involved in it and encourage more individuals to volunteer. There have been a number of evaluations of the relative success of the Year of the Volunteer. It is generally felt that the success of the initiative was the impact it had on raising awareness of volunteering. It is generally felt that the limitations of the initiative was the lack of lead-in time and the absence of a clearly targeted communications strategy had constrained what could be achieved in a short time of a one year period.

The Volunteering for All programme is a Home Office programme announced in the Volunteering Debate in the House of Lords on the 9 March 2006 by The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Baroness Andrews). The Volunteering for All strategy led by the Home Office is a two-year cross Government initiative, there is £3 million available to organisations with an England wide coverage and who have the ability to secure substantial pro bono support. It aims to identify and remove any barriers to volunteering and to increase volunteering by adults at risk of social exclusion, as well as to increase cross government working. In doing so, it also aims to address the Public Service Agreement (PSA) 6 target of increasing volunteering by adults (16-plus) at risk of social exclusion in England.

The GoldStar Exemplar Programme is a two year initiative designed to enable voluntary organisations and projects throughout England to realise the potential of volunteers, befrienders and mentors from the disadvantaged communities. It was initially launched in November 2005 with a budget of £5 million. It funds 46 exemplar projects and enables them to actively spread good practice in the recruitment and retention of volunteers.

The Russell Commission was set up in May 2004, and following extensive consultations with voluntary and community organisations, as well as young people it produced its report two years later. The Commission's challenge was to design a new national framework to bring together all youth volunteering activities in a shared sense of purpose. It is hoped the framework would create more opportunities to volunteer, as well as giving individuals more meaningful choice. The Commission calls for greater emphasis on celebrating young volunteers' achievements, as well as recognising their value on their contribution to society. The vision and 16 detailed recommendations through which it was to be implemented has been accepted by Government. £100 million of public funding has been allocated over three years to support their implementation. A new independent youth–led charity, 'v', was launched on 8 May 2006 to take the lead in delivering a change in the quality, quantity and diversity of volunteering opportunities available to young people aged 16–25 in England as set out in the Russell Commission report (http://www.wearev.com/index.php). The aim of the charity is to involve one million more young people in volunteering within the next five years.

Millennium Volunteers (MV) is an initiative targeted at individuals' aged 16 to 24, giving young people an opportunity to be involved in tackling issues that matter to them. Volunteers must commit 200 hours of voluntary work over one year to receive a UK recognised Award of Excellence as well as a Personal Profile on completion of the programme. MV is a national movement with 114 MV Projects established around England, mostly based in local volunteering centres, schools or colleges. From 1 April 2007, v, the independent charity assumed management of the MV programme.

The Beacon Scheme is based on 'Positive Youth Engagement'. It is a local authority scheme co-ordinated by Improvement and Development Knowledge (IDeA Knowledge) that works for local government to provide news and examples of good practice from councils across England and Wales. It aims to increase positive youth engagement by working to provide direct support and practical examples of how to engage senior decision makers in local authorities with regard to the youth agenda, as well as providing practical advice and support to those working with young people. In the most recent round (March 2006), eight councils have been awarded to take part in the Beacon council status.

In response to a wider policy drive for quality assurance of standards, a new programme to raise the standard of volunteering across the UK has been launched. Investing in Volunteers is the new quality assurance programme for volunteer involving organisations wanting to improve the way they involve volunteers (www.investingvolunteers.org.uk).

The wide diversity of volunteering policies at the UK level is evidence of the recognition of the value of volunteering. In such a dynamic environment, it was felt essential to establish The United Kingdom Volunteering Forum (UKVF) which acts as a mechanism that in a devolved UK, national volunteer agencies in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland can work collaboratively to promote volunteering as an expression of citizenship, to advocate for further resources for volunteering and to work to influence volunteering social policy at the UK and EU level. All members of the UKVF are in membership of the European Volunteer Centre (CEV) and two are represented on the CEV Board of Directors, providing an opportunity to feed into the European policy agenda on volunteering.

Volunteering policy initiatives in Northern Ireland

Volunteering has made an invaluable contribution to society in Northern Ireland. A number of the volunteering policies designed and implemented at the UK level, have been modified, as appropriate to the needs and policy framework of Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland, like other regions in the UK, took part in the Compact initiative. The 1998 Compact between Government and the Voluntary Sector in Northern Ireland was seen to represent a new relationship between Government and the voluntary and community sector. In this Government recognised the role of volunteering as an important expression of citizenship, as individuals actively contribute to developing communities and meeting the needs of others in a way that is complementary and of equal importance to financial investment. The Compact recognised the importance of volunteering within all sections of society and by all age groups. Government committed itself to support strong and effective infrastructure for volunteering. In addition the Compact committed government to:

> *'Assess proposed legislation, new policies and policy changes for their potential impact on the voluntary and community sector and on volunteering and to consider where possible the scope for mitigating any unintended negative impact.'*
> *(Compact, 1998, p14)*

After the publication of the Compact, a Joint Government/Voluntary and Community sector forum was set up to '*to discuss issues of mutual interest and to monitor its operations in practice'* (Knox, 2002, p10). The *Partners for Change* (2001) strategy was designed to underpin and take forward to recommendations of the Compact.

Since this time there have been a number of developments which are of interest to the volunteering agenda in Northern Ireland.

The Active Community Initiative was first launched in January 1999, when the Prime Minister in his speech to the National Council for Voluntary Organisations, called for people to mark the Millennium with an explosion of giving. The Government's overall aim for the Active Community Initiative (ACI) is; "To help rebuild a sense of community throughout the UK, by encouraging and supporting all forms of community involvement". Within Northern Ireland, the Department for Social Development, through the Voluntary and Community Unit, made available funding of £1.8 million to deliver the Initiative over the period April 2001 to June 2004. The Initiative focused on four principal objectives, namely:

- Bringing about a change in attitudes to volunteering and community involvement;
- Increasing the number of volunteers;
- Broadening the base of volunteers to make volunteering an inclusive process;
- Acting with other initiatives to promote a community empowerment approach.

These were to be achieved primarily by two complementary approaches; firstly, through the implementation of a comprehensive Action Plan with a focus on key action points and secondly, through a grant funding programme. The Volunteer Development Agency was appointed as managing agent for the administration of the ACI grants process on behalf of the Department for Social Development.

The Department for Social Development currently supports volunteering in Northern Ireland in two main programmes — the Volunteer Bureau Initiative and the Community Volunteering Scheme. Both programmes are administered by the Volunteer Development Agency on behalf of the Department.

The Volunteer Bureau Initiative supports the network of 15 Volunteer Centres across Northern Ireland. The Volunteer Centres provide advice, support and training for a range of voluntary organisations on a broad range of volunteer management and good practice issues. They promote volunteering at a local level, develop volunteering opportunities, recruit volunteers and place volunteers with organisations. In 2007/2008 the Department provided funding for the Volunteer Centres of almost £1.1 million.

The Community Volunteering Scheme seeks to encourage and support volunteering, create and enhance opportunities for volunteers that will encourage learning and good practice, and, promote a positive image of volunteering and community participation. The scheme comprises two distinct elements — Main Grants and Small Grants. In the 2006/2009 funding round Main Grants of £2.2 million were awarded to 27organisations with a further £0.7 million was available in Small Grants to help local volunteer involving organisations. The Small Grants are administered by the network of Volunteer Centres.

The Russell Commission, which places youth volunteering high on the political agenda, is a UK wide initiative but the funding associated with the recommendation only applies to England. The Home Office had indicated there would be funding available for youth volunteering but the devolved administration in Northern Ireland did not draw down the funding for this particular area. However, the Department of Education's Youth Work Strategy does include youth volunteering and participation but no specific funding has been made available for this. The Volunteer Development Agency continues to lobby for greater support for youth volunteering initiatives across government.

Since the Millennium Volunteers Programme was launched in Northern Ireland in 1999, the programme has offered the opportunity for over 3,000 young people to work towards their Award of Excellence. Now in its 8th year in Northern Ireland Millennium Volunteers now has 21 delivery partners providing a range of placements. In 2007/2008 the Department of Education is providing funding to Millennium Volunteers of £324,000.

The Year of the Volunteer 2005 was a national campaign across all of the UK, to raise awareness and promote volunteering opportunities. Approximately £149,000 (£76,000 on promotion and £63,000 on grants) funding was made available from the £10 million funding for this campaign. The Volunteer Development Agency was the lead agency in the delivery of this campaign in Northern Ireland. An evaluation of the relative success of this campaign in Northern Ireland has been carried out and the findings were published in April 2006[5]. The evaluation found that the Year of the Volunteer was received and well supported by volunteer involving organisations. The findings of the evaluation indicate it had some impact in raising awareness. Similar to the rest of the UK, the Year of the Volunteer in Northern Ireland suffered from a short lead in time. A key legacy of the Year of the Volunteer is the development of a Northern Ireland Volunteering Strategy.

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[5] http://www.volunteering-ni.org/siteadmin/publications/pdf/Year%20of%20the%20Volunteer%202005%20Evaluation%20Report.pdf

The Investing in Volunteers[6] standard is a new UK quality standard for all organisations which involve volunteers in their work. The Volunteer Development Agency is responsible for managing Investing in Volunteers in Northern Ireland and for assessing organisations against the standard. The Investing in Volunteers standard was launched and promoted widely in Northern Ireland in the last year. In order to ensure this scheme is accessible to smaller groups, a bursary scheme has been launched. This has been made possible by funding received from the Northern Bank and Community Foundation for NI.

A wider policy development in Northern Ireland that could potentially impact on volunteering was the publication of *Positive Steps* in March 2005 which was Government's response to *Investing Together*, the report of the Task Force on Resourcing the Voluntary and Community Sector. *Investing Together* described volunteering as the 'golden thread' running through much of the work of the voluntary and community sector and must continue to be encouraged (Investing Together, 2005, p10). *Positive Steps* made a number of recommendations for improving the sustainability of the voluntary and community sector. One of the key recommendations of the report (para 10.9) was that voluntary and community organisations must invest in developing their staff and volunteers to ensure that they have the necessary skills and expertise, particularly re the need for good governance (para 8.9). Government explicitly recognised that this type of expenditure is appropriate and legitimate and made a commitment to consider support on a case by case basis (para 10.9).

The most recent policy development on volunteering is the work to develop a volunteering strategy for Northern Ireland. The Voluntary and Community Unit, Department for Social Development have been consulting widely on this future strategy. It is anticipated that the strategy will be published in 2008. This strategy will take the lead in directing future volunteering policies and initiatives in Northern Ireland.

From a policy perspective volunteering has been afforded a significant amount of attention by the government at Westminster. As was described in an earlier section in this report a number of initiatives have been implemented in England to promote and recognise voluntary activity. Devolution has meant that the interpretation and implementation of many of these initiatives formulated in Whitehall have been expressed in a different way across each of the devolved jurisdictions.

Given the analysis of volunteering policies in the UK, it is perhaps not inaccurate to suggest that there has been a paucity of policy and resources aimed at the promotion and recognition of volunteering in Northern Ireland. The resources for the 2005 Year of the Volunteer and the Millennium Volunteers programme in Northern Ireland were small in comparison to the budgets for these initiatives in Great Britain but yet progress has been made. To date there has been no one overarching policy designed to promote volunteering in Northern Ireland. It is therefore important that such issues are taken into consideration when assessing the scale and scope of volunteering in Northern Ireland.

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[6] www.investinginvolunteers.org.uk

1.5   Structure of the report

Before discussing the findings of the 2007 survey into volunteering it is important to describe how the report is structured. In 2001 the Volunteer Development Agency published two important reports into volunteering in Northern Ireland. The first, *Volunteering in Northern Ireland 2001,* looked at the profile, experiences and attitudes of volunteers from the perspective of the individual. The second, *Volunteering in Organisations 2001*, looked at volunteering from the perspective of the organisation which engages with and ultimately benefits from the contribution made by volunteers. The two reports were published as separate reports. Although this report is strongly influenced by both these reports in terms of methodology and focus, it was decided that it would be advantageous to present the findings in one single report. Therefore this report is essentially broken into two parts, with a section that draws out any similarities between the experiences of individuals who volunteer and those organisations which engage with them. Of course any differences that emerge between the two sets of findings are also drawn out and discussed.

The first half of the report looks at the profile and experiences of individuals who are classified as formal and informal volunteers. This section of the report is in essence the continuation of the *Volunteering in Northern Ireland 2001* report. The second half looks at how organisations support and manage volunteers and what methods are most effective in terms of recruiting and retaining volunteers. Where appropriate, comparisons have been made with all of the Volunteer Development Agency's previous reports into volunteering in Northern Ireland.

Throughout this report and in particular in any analysis of the demographic profile of volunteers, two figures are reported. One relates to the number of responses in the sample for a particular variable, for example of all the formal volunteers, 59% are females – this is only a count of all the females who responded that they were formal volunteers. If, as is the case in this omnibus study, females make up a larger proportion of the overall sample than males, the chances of them answering more often is increased. This can skew the results so that it looks that females volunteered more often than males if the sample is not fully representative of the overall population. To counteract this issue, a second figure is given which examines the likelihood of a particular group to volunteer. So for example the number of females who stated they are formal volunteers is taken as a proportion of the entire female population surveyed for this project (22% in the case of this report). By doing this additional analysis, any variation in the respective sample sizes in terms of gender or age is taken into consideration when discussing how likely it is that a particular group will volunteer.

1.6   Methodology

As mentioned above this report is the combination of two separate research projects. First, there was the survey of individuals to measure the extent of volunteering in Northern Ireland. Second, there was the survey of organisation's which engage with volunteers.

Looking at the survey of individuals in Northern Ireland first, Millward Brown was commissioned to include in their January 2007 omnibus survey a series of questions examining volunteering amongst individuals. For a more detailed explanation of how the

sample for the omnibus survey was generated, go to Appendix 2. Interviews were conducted face to face in the respondent's home using Computer Aided Personal Interview software.

The survey of volunteering in organisations was based on a sample of 3,045 organisations. This sample was drawn from a list of voluntary and community organisations held on the NICVA's and the Volunteer Development Agency's databases (2,553 organisations). The sample also included statutory organisations (24), a cross section of churches from the main dominations (376), sports clubs and sports governing bodies (92). A postal survey was used to administer the questionnaire and these were sent out to organisations during December 2006. However due to a relatively low initial response rate the survey was repeated in February 2007. A total of 745 organisations responded which represented a 24.4% response rate. An online survey was also used during the project and this method elicited a total of 105 responses (14.1% of the total completed questionnaires). For a more detailed breakdown of response rates to the volunteering in organisations survey see Appendix 2.

Although the surveys for both aspects of this report are heavily influenced by the 1995 and 2001 volunteering surveys there have been slight variations in the structure and nature of some of the questions. Where this is the case it has been highlighted at the appropriate point throughout this report.

2.   Volunteering in Northern Ireland

This section of the report provides an overview of the main findings from the omnibus survey of 1,020 individuals across Northern Ireland which was carried out in January 2007. Where appropriate, comparisons have been made with the 2001 and 1995 surveys.

Summary

- 21% of individuals surveyed are formal volunteers. This equates to an estimated 282,067 individuals aged over 16 years old who have volunteered for an organisation over the previous 12 months.

- Informal volunteers accounted for 35% of the individuals surveyed of which almost a third were also formal volunteers (31%). This equates to an estimated 470,111 individuals who over the last 12 months have been engaged as informal volunteers. An estimated 145,734 individuals are both formal and informal volunteers.

- In 2007 the overall economic value of formal volunteers, based on the Northern Ireland average hourly wage, was £504 million per year. This equates to an average of 13.4 hours volunteered by formal volunteers each month.

- In 2007 the number of hours informal volunteers gave has increased to from eight hours to nine hours per month.

- Almost three quarters of all formal volunteers have stated that their circle of friends/networks have increased as a consequence of formal volunteering.

- 56% of formal volunteers have attributed an increased contact with other communities/religions to their engagement in volunteering.

- 15% of formal volunteers have attended a public consultation event/meeting/forum whereas only 2% of non-volunteers stated they had done the same.

- Just under one third of all formal volunteers are engaged with a voluntary or community organisation which equates to an estimated 87,723 individuals. The next most common type of organisation volunteers are engaged with is a church or religious bodies (70,799).

2.1   Profile of volunteering in Northern Ireland

Of the 1,020 individuals surveyed for this research 21% stated they had engaged in formal volunteering over the previous twelve months. This works out to be an estimated 282,067 individuals who are formal volunteers. Informal volunteers accounted for 35% of the sample of which almost a third were also formal volunteers (31%). This works out to be an estimated 470,111 informal volunteers. An estimated 145,734 individuals are both formal and informal volunteers. The corresponding figures for 2001 and 1995 are shown below in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1: Levels of formal and informal volunteering (1995 to 2007)[7]
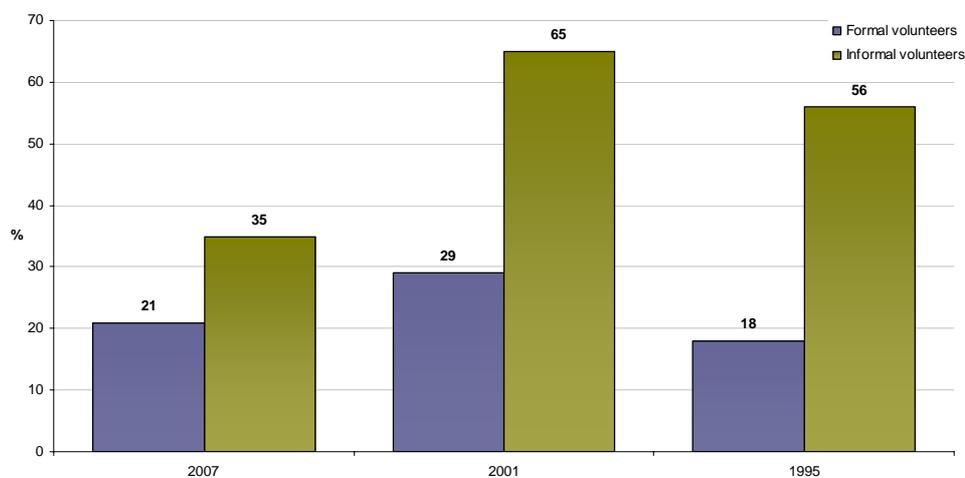
As is demonstrated in Figure 1.1, there has been considerable variation in the level of formal and informal volunteering since 1995. For instance, between 1995 and 2001 the proportion of formal volunteers of the overall population increased by 10%. Whilst it is difficult to attribute any one factor to this increase, changes in the wider social and cultural landscape in Northern Ireland, the influence of the millennium and a more co-ordinated approach aimed at promoting volunteering may have all contributed to this increase. It is also difficult to attribute why the levels of volunteering reported in 2001 have not been maintained in 2007. The pressures of time and other commitments on individuals or a wider cultural shift in Northern Irish society, which may be indicative of a wider apathy towards volunteering or civic participation, could be impacting upon the overall number of volunteers. This is only speculation as it is impossible to really examine wider social and cultural changes over time in the context of an omnibus survey.

Nevertheless when the levels of formal volunteers are examined over the 12 years covered by the volunteering research programme it is arguable that volunteering has remained relatively static in Northern Ireland. Between 1995 and 2007 the proportion of formal volunteers of the entire population has only increased by 3% which is within the margin of error.

It is also difficult to attribute specific reasons to the decline in the number of informal volunteers which has shown a steady decline since 1995 (56% of the population in 1995 compared to 35% in 2007). However, an increase in care giving responsibilities and the increase of working parents, single parents and those caring for the older generation could be attributed to this fall in the number of informal volunteers.

The population of Northern Ireland is 1,724,408 of whom 1,343,174 are aged over 16 years old[8]. If the survey is representative of the population the estimated numbers of individuals involved in volunteering are shown in Table 1.1.

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[7] Base: 2007 (1,020 respondents), 2001 (1,312 respondents) and 1995 (1,063 respondents). It is important to note that there is a margin of error of plus or minus 5% associated with omnibus surveys of this type.
[8] Source: www.nisra.gov.uk – estimated population in Northern Ireland by sex and age, 30 June 2005.

Table 1.1: Estimates of total numbers of volunteers (1995 to 2007)

	Formal volunteers population estimate	Informal volunteers population estimate
2007	282,067	470,111
2001[9]	358,493	759,000
1995	200,000	600,000

An estimated 282,067 individuals have volunteered for an organisation over the previous twelve months, a decrease of just a fifth since 2001. Put another way, one in every five formal volunteers in 2001 is no longer involved in volunteering of this nature. There has been a decrease in the number of individuals engaged in this informal volunteering since 2001 (38% fewer informal volunteers in 2007 compared to 2001).

Throughout this report various aspects of what motivates individuals to volunteer and why and how they became involved in either volunteering for an organisation or as an individual are examined. The survey also examined volunteering activity over the past five years so some conclusions can be drawn with regard to the patterns of volunteering in terms of the commitment of existing volunteers and the prevalence of new volunteers. On the other side of the coin, those who do not volunteer have been asked what it is that stops them from becoming involved and what their general attitudes are towards volunteering. Combining all these aspects of volunteering in Northern Ireland should assist in producing a more complete picture of why the patterns in the level of volunteering reported above are occurring.

The economic value of volunteering is an area that although difficult to quantify accurately, is one way of demonstrating the impact and value of volunteering in Northern Ireland. For the purposes of this report the average hourly wage in Northern Ireland (£11.49) is used to estimate the economic value of formal and informal volunteering[10]. In 2007 the overall economic value of formal volunteers, based on the average hourly wage, was £504 million per year. This equates to an average of 13.4 hours volunteered by formal volunteers each month. This is a small decrease compared to the average hours volunteered in 2001 which was 15 hours per month. So despite the fact that there are fewer formal volunteers in 2007 compared to 2001, individuals are more or less committing the same amount of time each month to voluntary activities.

Informal volunteering on the other hand has seen a small increase in the number of hours volunteered per month. In 2001 informal volunteers on average committed eight hours per month to helping others who were not members of their immediate family. In 2007 the number of hours informal volunteers gave has increased to nine hours per month. Using the average hourly wage this level of commitment made by informal volunteers equates to an estimated economic value of £433 million per year.

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[9] *Volunteering in Northern Ireland 2001* (Volunteer Development Agency) reported that formal volunteering stood at 35% of the population. This figure was an aggregation of those individuals who stated they were formal volunteers and also those who were members of a committee, were involved in fundraising or running an activity for a trade union, club for social or recreation activities or a professional or technical association. When the responses to Question 1 on the 2001 survey are examined in isolation (formal volunteers), the number of formal volunteers is 29% of the total population. For the sake of comparison, it is this figure which will be used throughout this report in order to analyse change over time.

[10] Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE): http://www.detini.gov.uk/ (DETI NI).

Comparing the economic value of formal and informal volunteering in 2007 with 2001 requires the figures reported in *Volunteering in Northern Ireland 2001* to be adjusted for inflation. So what would the economic value of volunteering in 2001 be in 2007 prices? When adjusted for inflation (expressed in real terms) the economic value of formal volunteering in 2001 was £519 million compared to £504 million in 2007. Informal volunteering (when the 2001 economic value is adjusted for inflation) was worth £432 million to the Northern Ireland economy in 2001 compared to £433 million in 2007.

Of course the economic contribution volunteers make is only part of the impact that volunteers have. Indeed, 77% of organisations which engage volunteers stated they could not operate without volunteers. This survey examined the link between volunteering and wider civic participation, and the impact that volunteering has on good relations and networking between the communities. For instance, almost three quarters of all formal volunteers have stated that their friendships have increased as a consequence of formal volunteering. In terms of bringing communities/religions closer together through volunteering, 56% of formal volunteers have attributed an increased contact with other communities/religions to their engagement in volunteering.

Volunteering can also be closely linked to wider civic participation. For instance this survey found that 15% of formal volunteers have attended a public consultation event/meeting/forum whereas only 2% of non-volunteers stated they had done the same (overall 6% of the population stated they had attended public consultations). In terms of raising issues with an MP, MLA, MEP or local councillor, a similar pattern can be seen. Almost one in five formal volunteers (19.5%) have raised an issue with an elected representative, whereas only 4.3% of non volunteers have done so (8.4% of all respondents had raised an issue with an elected representative). Finally, 18% of formal volunteers have signed a petition. Only 7% of non volunteers had signed a petition compared to 11% of the overall population.

Another important aspect of volunteering is the type of organisations individuals give their time to. Table 1.2 gives a breakdown of the level of volunteering in a number of different types of organisations and an estimate of the number of individuals who over the past year have volunteered with them[11].

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[11] Respondents were asked to describe the nature of the organisation they volunteer for the most (if they volunteered for more than one organisation).

Table 1.2: Type of organisation respondents volunteered with

	%	Estimate of volunteers[12]
Voluntary and community sector	31.1	87,723
Church/religious body	25.1	70,799
Sports club	13.2	37,233
Other	12.7	35,823
Public sector (eg hospital, nursing home, etc)	10.4	29,335
Private sector	4.2	11,847
Don't know	2.4	6,769
Political party	0.9	2,538
Trade union	-	-
Total	**100**	**282,067**

Base: 212 (all formal volunteers)

As can be seen in Table 1.2 just under one third of all formal volunteers are engaged with a voluntary or community organisation which equates to an estimated 87,723 individuals. The next most common type of organisation volunteers are engaged with is a church or religious bodies (70,799). One quarter of all formal volunteers describe this as the type of organisation they volunteer with most. This is followed by sports clubs which have an estimated 37,233 individuals who have formally volunteered with them over the previous twelve months. This question was not asked on the 2001 or 1995 surveys and therefore there is no direct comparison. In following sections the purpose of the various types of organisations that individuals volunteer with will be examined in more detail.

The next section will look in a little more detail about who volunteers in Northern Ireland and how the profile of volunteers (both formal and informal) has changed, or not, since 1995.

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[12] Estimates based on the Northern Ireland population aged over 16 (1,343,174). Source NISRA estimated population 30th June 2005.

3.   Who volunteers?

There are some stereotypical views associated with volunteers but do these preconceived notions still apply to those individuals involved in volunteering today? This next section looks in a little more detail into who volunteers as well as those individuals who choose not to volunteer. Each type of volunteer (formal and informal) will be examined separately in terms of an individual's demographic and socio-economic status. A comparison will be drawn between the findings in 2007 and those reported in 2001 and 1995.

3.1   Formal volunteers

Summary

- Females are more likely than males to be formal volunteers. As a proportion of all formal volunteers six out of every ten are females (61%).

- Individuals aged between 35 and 49 years old and those aged between 16 and 24 years old are the most likely to volunteer.

- The most common types of formal voluntary activities undertaken by respondents were raising or handling money (32%) and helping to organise or run an activity or event (26%).

- The most common activity of organisations that formal volunteers are most engaged with is sports/exercise. This is closely followed by organisations or institutions that are involved in children's education (schools) and youth/children's activities (outside school).

- 16-24 year olds are more likely to volunteer for organisations that are involved in sports or exercise based activities, whereas 35-49 year olds are more likely to be formal volunteers when it relates to organisations that are involved in children's education (schools).

- Almost three quarters of all formal volunteers (73.6%) give time to organisations at least once a month (in 2001 this figure was 62% and in 1995 it was 61%).

- Those formal volunteers aged over 50 years old are the most likely to volunteer at least once a week. Over half of all formal volunteers aged between 50 and 64 years old and those over 65 years old (54%) volunteer once a week.

- Almost three quarters of all formal volunteers (74.6%) confine their voluntary activities to a single organisation which works out as an estimated 204,000 individuals. Only a very small number of individuals volunteer for five or more organisations (1.5%).

- Personal contact through word of mouth, through someone already volunteering in a group, through a church or religious organisation or through friends or family are the main ways through which individuals found out about volunteering opportunities.

A total of 21% of all respondents stated that they had been engaged in some form of formal volunteering over the previous twelve months. When this figure is applied to the overall population aged over 16, it is estimated that there are 282,067 formal volunteers in Northern Ireland.

Figure 1.2: Formal volunteers as a percentage of the total population by gender, age, marital status and number of children[13]
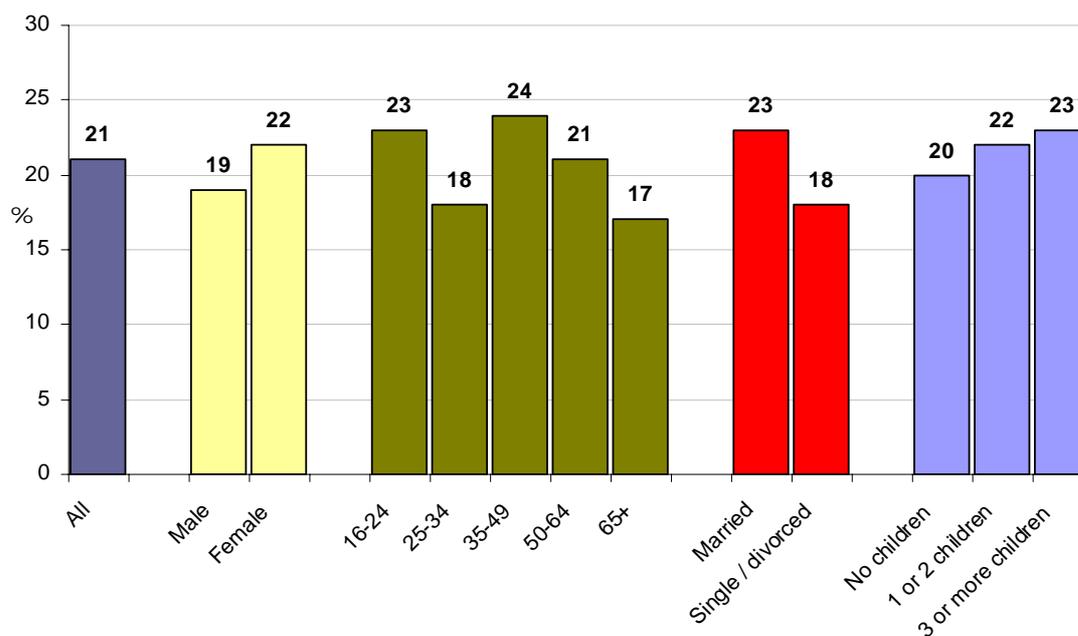
This survey found that involvement in formal volunteering varies according to the respondents' demographic characteristics. Based on the findings in Figure 1.2 the following variations in the likelihood of certain groups to volunteer were found:

- *Gender:* Females are more likely than males to be formal volunteers (22% of all females surveyed are formal volunteers). As a proportion of all formal volunteers six out of every ten are females (61%). See Appendix 3 for a more detailed breakdown of the sample. The participation rates of females compared to males are consistent with the findings of the 2001 (58%) and 1995 (56%) surveys.

- *Age:* Examining the likelihood of particular groups to be a formal volunteer it is clear that individuals aged between 35 and 49 years old and those aged between 16 and 24 years old are the most likely to volunteer. Almost a quarter of all 35 to 49 year olds of the 1,020 individuals surveyed are engaged as formal volunteers. Those individuals aged over 65 are the least likely group to be formal volunteers.

- *Marital status:* Those individuals who stated they were currently married were more likely than single or divorced individuals to be volunteers.

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[13] The results examine the likelihood of a particular group to volunteer as a proportion of the overall population for that group. So for example, the number of females who stated they are formal volunteers is taken as a proportion of the entire female population surveyed for this research.

- *Children:* Individuals with three or more children are more likely than those with no children to volunteer for an organisation.

Figure 1.3 examines the likelihood of certain groups to be formal volunteers in relation to the respondents' socio-economic characteristics.

Figure 1.3: Formal volunteers as a proportion of the total population by socio-economic status, employment status and religion
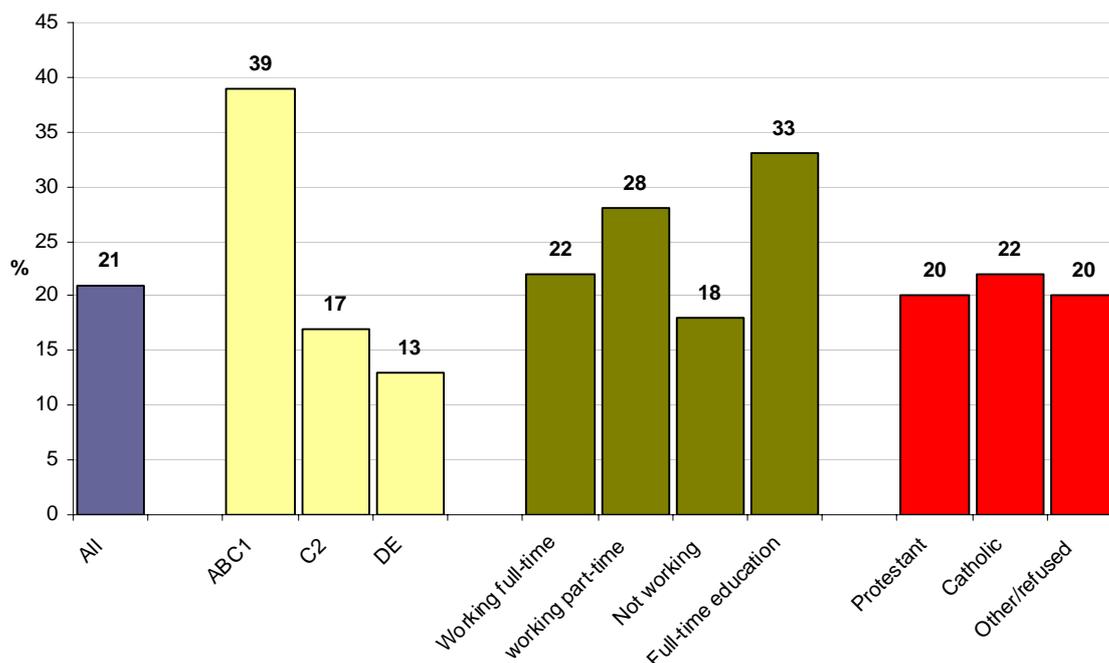
- *Socio-economic group*: There is a clear relationship between socio-economic status and the likelihood that an individual will volunteer. For instance, 39% of all individuals deemed to be in the ABC1[14] socio-economic category are formal volunteers. The level of participation in voluntary activities falls quite sharply when the other two socio-economic categories are considered.

- *Employment status*: One third of all individuals who are in full-time education are formal volunteers. It should be noted that the number of individuals in full-time education was very small in comparison to the other categories. That aside those respondents in part-time employment were the most likely to be formal volunteers. These individuals conceivably have more free time and more flexibility in terms of work to devote to volunteering. However, those not in work at the time the survey was conducted are the least likely group to be a formal volunteer. This could be a concern related to jeopardising benefits, or as stated in the previous section, retirees may be less inclined to be formal volunteers.

[14] NRS social grade: Originally developed by the National Readership Survey in order to classify readers but is now used by other organisations for wider applications and market research. A = upper middle class; B = middle class; C1 = lower middle class; C2 = skilled working class; D = working class and E = underclass (those at the lowest levels of subsistence). For more information visit http://www.nrs.co.uk/open_access/open_methadology/2003demogdefinitions.cfm

- *Religion:* Based on the findings of this research respondents from a Catholic background are only slightly more likely than Protestants to volunteer (22% of all Catholics compared to 20% of all Protestants).

What has changed?

- In 2007 females are just as likely as females in 2001 and 1995 to be formal volunteers.
- Those individuals aged 16 to 24 years old are much more likely in 2007 to be formal volunteers compared to 16 to 24 year olds in 1995.
- Over the past 12 years individuals from the ABC1 socio-economic group remain the most likely to be formal volunteers.

Over the last decade of research into volunteering in Northern Ireland females are consistently more likely to be formal volunteers compared to males. If anything, the findings in 2007 point to a slight increase in the number of females volunteering when compared to previous studies. Without exception the series of Citizenship Surveys [15] conducted by the Home Office since 2001 have also found that females volunteer more often than males.

The age profile of formal volunteers is perhaps the most interesting aspect of the demographic and socio-economic make up of formal volunteers. The age group most likely to volunteer (35-49 year olds) hasn't changed since 1995 but it is the level of volunteering occurring at the both ends of the age distribution that has seen significant change. In 1995 approximately 16% of volunteers were aged 18-25 years old — this increased to 18% in 2001. In 2001 this figure represented the third most likely age group to volunteer. In 2007, 23% of 16-24 year olds volunteer, making them the second most likely age group to be involved in formal volunteering.

The 2005 Citizenship Survey found that 16-19 year olds have the highest participation rates in formal volunteering whilst those respondents aged over 75 have the lowest. Being married, coming from the ABC1 social category and having children remain consistent indicators of the likelihood of individuals in those groupings to be a formal volunteer.

For a very long time, the stereotype of volunteers in Northern Ireland has been the white, middle-aged, middle class women. The evidence from this survey perhaps reinforces this view to a certain extent but it also shows a much more complex picture of comparatively high levels of participation from younger adults. Therefore any attempt to describe the typical volunteer in very broad terms is difficult and as will be shown throughout this report the reasons for volunteering are much more nuanced than first appears.

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[15] The Citizenship Survey is a biennial survey, designed to contribute to the evidence base for the Home Office's community policy area. The survey is currently in its third year. It was also run in 2001 and 2003. The survey covers adults (over 16) in England and Wales and covers a sample of 10,000 individuals. To find out more visit http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/citizensurvey.html

3.2   What do formal volunteers do?

Those individuals who stated they were formal volunteers were asked to describe the activities they undertake for the organisation they have most often volunteered with over the previous 12 months.

Table 1.3: Activities undertaken by formal volunteers over the last 12 months

	%
Raising or handling money	32.1
Organising or helping to run an activity or event	25.9
Leading the group/member of a committee/trustees	19.3
Working with young people	14.6
Helping in church or religious organisation	13.2
Visiting people	10.4
Coaching	9.0
Giving advice/information/counselling	9.0
Befriending or mentoring people	8.5
Selling tickets	6.6
Teaching or training	6.1
Secretarial, administrative or clerical work	5.7
Collecting/making things to be sold for charity	4.2
Working in a charity shop	4.2
Representing	3.8
Providing transport/driving	3.3
Promotion	3.3
Other practical help (eg shopping, gardening)	2.4
Campaigning	1.9
Don't know	1.9
Other	9.9

Base: 212 (responses exceed 100% as this was a multiple response question)

By far the most common types of formal voluntary activities undertaken by respondents were raising or handling money (32%) and helping to organise or run an activity or event (26%). Being involved in the governance or leadership of a group was also a feature of the type of activities that formal volunteers have undertaken. Almost one in five respondents (19.3%) stated they undertook this type of role for the organisation they volunteer for.

The data presented in Table 1.3 provides only one dimension of the different types of activities that formal volunteers undertake. When age is factored in, a number of interesting variances in the different activities that different age groups undertake become apparent. For instance those individuals aged 65 or over (the least likely group to be formal volunteers) are most likely to raise or handle money than any other activity. Of all the age groups the over 65s are most likely to help out in a church or a religious organisation. On the other hand those formal volunteers aged between 16 and 24 years old are the least likely to be involved in this type of activity (3%). For those in the 16-24 year old age bracket the activity they are most likely to be involved in, more than any other age bracket, is in the organisation and

running of events. This is followed by working with young people and raising or handling money.

Gender also plays a role in determining the type of activity that formal volunteers will become engaged in. Males are more likely to organise or help run an activity or event or be involved in coaching, whereas females are more likely to visit people, raise money or be involved in befriending or mentoring people. Interestingly, exactly the same proportion of males compared to females leads the group or is a member of the committee.

The type of activity undertaken by formal volunteers is determined by the nature of the organisation the individual is engaged with. For instance, when the activities of formal volunteers are assessed against voluntary and community organisations, they are focused on raising money (19.1%), organising or running an event (11.2%) and leading the group or a member of a committee (8.6%). Formal volunteers engaged with churches and religious organisations are most involved in generally helping out in the church or religious organisation (22.3%), organising and running events (15.5%) and visiting people (11.7%). In sports clubs the three main activities undertaken by formal volunteers are coaching (22.4%), organising and running events (20.4%) and working with young people (12.2%).

What has changed?

- In 1995, almost 40% of respondents stated they helped out in a church or religious body. In 2001, 35% of individuals stated they helped out in a church or other religious organisation. In 2007 this figure had fallen to 13.2%.
- In 1995, 23% of formal volunteers helped raise money. In 2001 this had risen to 40%. In 2007 32% of formal volunteers helped raise money.

In 2001 raising money, assisting at an event/activity and helping out in a church or religious organisation were the top three activities undertaken by formal volunteers. A similar situation was found to be the case in 1995. The most common activity then was fundraising, followed by helping out in a church or religious organisation and helping with the organisation of an event.

Perhaps the most significant change has been the decline in the number of formal volunteers who stated they help out in a church or religious organisation. The numbers of formal volunteers involved in this capacity are still significant but the change since 1995 and 2001 could be attributed to the fact that individuals have been better able to describe the activities they undertake in a voluntary capacity for a church outside of the generic helping out in church, etc.

The findings are in line with the 2005 Citizenship Survey where raising or handling money/taking part in sponsored events and organising and helping run an activity or event were the most common types of voluntary activities undertaken by formal volunteers.

3.3   In what type of organisation do people volunteer?

In Section 2 of this report, estimates were produced for the number of formal volunteers engaged with different types of organisations (e.g. voluntary or community organisations, public sector and so on). In addition to this, formal volunteers were asked to provide a description of the purpose of the organisation they volunteered for the most. The following analysis examines the nature of the work of the organisations or institutions which receive support and help from formal volunteers.

As is shown in Table 1.4 the most common activity of organisations that formal volunteers are most engaged with is sports/exercise. This is closely followed by organisations or institutions that are involved in children's education (schools) and youth/children's activities (outside school). Religion, health and social welfare and older people all featured prominently in terms of the activity undertaken by the organisation that the volunteers are engaged with. As in the previous section this analysis provides only one perspective on the characteristics of formal volunteers and the organisations they volunteer with.

Table 1.4: Activity of the organisation most volunteered with

	%
Sports/exercise (coaching or organising or assisting with)	14.6
Children's education/schools	12.3
Youth/children's activities (outside school)	12.3
Religion	10.4
Health and social welfare	7.1
Older people	6.1
Overseas aid/disaster relief	4.2
Disability (e.g. learning, physical, mental)	3.3
Local community, neighbourhood or citizens' groups	2.8
Advice and information	2.4
Animal welfare	2.4
Politics	1.4
Conservation, the environment and heritage	1.4
Hobbies/recreation/social clubs	1.4
Single issue groups (women's or men's issues)	0.9
Culture/arts/crafts	0.9
Cross-community (Protestant/Roman Catholic)	0.9
Safety, first aid	0.5
Justice and human rights	0.5
Emergency services	0.5
Housing and homelessness	0.5
Other	10.8
Don't know	2.4

Base: 212 (all formal volunteers)

As before, age is an important factor in terms of determining the type of organisation volunteers will engage with. For instance 16-24 year olds are more likely to volunteer for organisations that are involved in sports or exercise based activities, whereas 35-49 year olds are more likely to be formal volunteers when it relates to organisations that are involved in

children's education (schools). This could be explained by the fact that more individuals in this age bracket are likely to have children who are at school and their volunteering is dictated by their children's needs. Formal volunteers in the 65 and over age bracket are more likely to volunteer for organisations that have religion as their main purpose than any other age group. Organisations which focus on youth/children's activities (outside school) are most likely to benefit from formal volunteers who are aged between 25 and 34 years old.

Gender also plays less of a role in determining the type of organisations individuals volunteer with. There are however some differences. Males are more likely than females to be volunteers with organisations involved in sport (27% of male formal volunteers compared to 7% of females). On the other hand females tend to volunteer with organisations which focus on youth/children's activities (outside school) more often than males (16% of female formal volunteers compared to 7% of males). There appears to be a reasonable degree of equity in terms of the proportion of male and female formal volunteers who give their time to organisations which focus on children's education/school (11% and 13% respectively).

Table 1.4 describes the activity of the organisation that individuals volunteer for most but the survey also allows for the nature of the organisation to be considered. In terms of voluntary and community organisations, formal volunteers are most likely to be involved with groups that focus on health and social welfare issues (12.1%), children's education/schools (12.1%), local community, neighbourhood or citizens' groups (7.6%), youth/children's activities (outside school) (7.6%) and older people (7.6%). With the exception of religion (42.1% of formal volunteers involved with churches/religious organisations cited this as the main activity of the organisation), a quarter of all formal volunteers engaged with churches were involved in youth/children's activities (outside school). One in ten formal volunteers involved with churches and religious organisations cite engagement with older people as the main activity the organisation is involved in. For public sector organisations formal volunteers are most likely to be engaged with children's education/schools (36.4%), disability (18.2%) and health and social welfare (18.2%).

What has changed?

- 30% of formal volunteers in 2001 volunteered for an organisation involved in sport and recreation. In 1995, 23% of formal volunteers engaged with a organisation involved in sports or recreation. In 2007 this has remained the most common activity of the organisation that individuals volunteer with.
- In 1995 religion was the most common activity of organisations individuals volunteered with. In 2001 religion was the second most common activity reported. In 2007 religion as an activity of the organisations individuals volunteered with was the fourth most common response.

As mentioned previously, the big three activities of organisations that formal volunteers engaged with between 1995 and 2001 have been sports and recreation, religion and youth/children. Very little has changed in 2007 with regard to the main activities of organisations that formal volunteers are engaged with. However the position overall of some of the activities undertaken by organisations which engage with formal volunteers have changed slightly. In 1995 for instance religion was the top activity but in 2001 this was replaced by sport and recreation. This has remained the same in 2007 but religion has now moved further down the list to the fourth most stated activity of the organisations that formal

volunteers engage with. This is perhaps a reflection of the growing secularisation of society in Northern Ireland and the extent to which individuals attend church on a regular basis.

3.4   How often do people volunteer?

This next section looks at a number of areas concerning how often formal volunteers undertake various activities, the amount of time formal volunteers devote to volunteering and the number of organisations each volunteer engages with.

First of all, respondents were asked to give a rough estimate of how often they volunteer for the organisation they give the most time to. Table 1.5 gives a breakdown of how often volunteers had engaged with organisations over the previous twelve months.

Table 1.5: Frequency of formal volunteering

	%
Once a week	48.6
Once a fortnight	9.4
Once a month	15.6
A few times	17.5
Only once in the last year	7.1
Don't know/No reply	1.8

Base 212 (all formal volunteers)

As can be seen in Table 1.5 almost three quarters of all formal volunteers (73.6%) give time to organisations at least once a month (in 2001 this figure was 62% and in 1995 it was 61%). This demonstrates a very high level of commitment on the part of these individuals. Looking behind these figures reveals some interesting differences in terms of how often individuals volunteer.

Those formal volunteers aged over 50 years old are the most likely to volunteer at least once a week. Over half of all formal volunteers aged between 50 and 64 years old and those over 65 years old (54%) volunteer once a week. Almost a quarter of all 16-24 year olds had volunteered a few times over the previous twelve months with a further 19% stating they had only volunteered once in the previous year. Although males are less likely than females to volunteer, 55% of male formal volunteers do so at least once a week compared to 44% of female formal volunteers.

Two thirds of all formal volunteers involved with churches/religious organisations volunteer on a weekly basis. In fact 85% of all formal volunteers who are involved with churches/religious organisations volunteer at least once a month. Over half of all those (57.1%) who volunteer with sports clubs or groups do so on a weekly basis whereas voluntary or community organisations only receive this level of support from four out of every ten formal volunteers. Three out of every ten formal volunteers involved with a voluntary or community group had volunteered once or a few times over the previous twelve months.

The type of activity that formal volunteers are engaged in is affected when the frequency of how often they do that particular activity is assessed. As was seen in section 3.2, raising or handling money as a volunteer was the most common activity carried out overall. However,

when the frequency of this activity is assessed, a different picture emerges. Almost four out of every ten formal volunteers who stated they raised or handled money in a voluntary capacity for an organisation do so only once or a few times a year. On the other hand, secretarial, administrative or clerical work is carried out by only one in twenty formal volunteers but 83% of them carry out this activity at least once a week. Visiting people, coaching and other practical help are significant in so far as they all have significant numbers of volunteers participating in these activities at least once a week.

Examining the activity of the organisation provides some insight into how often formal volunteers engage with different organisations. For instance those organisations which focus on older people can expect eight out of every ten formal volunteers to engage at least once a week. Organisations which have religion as their main activity receive a significant contribution from formal volunteers who engage at least once a week (77.3%). The same is true for organisations involved in sports and exercise where almost two thirds of formal volunteers participate at least once a week.

As was the case in 1995 and 2001, respondents were asked to give an indication of the average number of hours they had spent doing voluntary work for their respective organisations over a four week period. Figure 1.4 below presents the findings from each of the volunteering surveys since 1995 in terms of how much time volunteers give over a four week period.

Figure 1.4: Average hours volunteered over a four week period
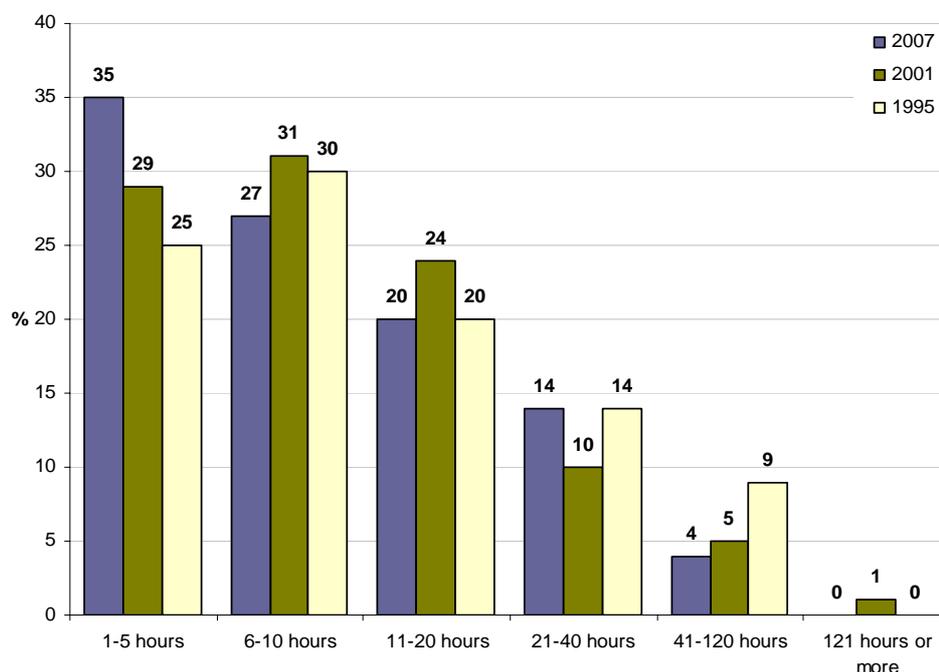
The most significant aspect of the results presented in Figure 1.4 is the increase in the number of formal volunteers giving between one and five hours over a four week period. In 1995 a quarter of all formal volunteers volunteered between one and five hours per month whereas in 2007 this increased to 35% of all formal volunteers. This appears to be indicative of a general trend since 1995 where more individuals are giving less time to voluntary activities. In other words the results in Figure 1.4 would suggest that individuals are being

more selective or circumspect about the amount of time they can reasonable give to voluntary activities.

However there remains a consistent number of individuals over the past 12 years who give significant amounts of time over a four week period. When the profile of individuals who give this amount of time are examined in a little more detail some interesting patterns emerge. For instance, 34.8% of all formal volunteers who give between 21 and 40 hours per month are aged 65 and over which is significantly more than any other age group. For example, only 4.3% of those who undertake this level of commitment are aged between 16 and 24 years old. On the other hand those individuals who give between one and five hours per month are most likely to be aged between 35 and 45 years old. In subsequent sections in this report the factors influencing the level of time that volunteers feel they can give will be examined.

Trying to place an economic value on volunteering is a difficult task and one that is often open to conjuncture. Nevertheless it is still necessary to attempt to provide a general overview of what the time that volunteers give would be worth if they were being paid. The ideal way to measure this would be to attribute an average wage to the specific activity carried out by the volunteer. This was not achievable within the remit of this survey so the overall average hourly wage in Northern Ireland has been applied to produce an estimate of the economic value of volunteering. It should be noted that the estimates in Table 1.6 are based on the assumption that there is a consistent level of involvement across the year.

Table 1.6: Hours volunteered (formal volunteers)

	2007	**2001**	**% change**
Annual hours volunteered	43,927,201	50,326,176	-12.7
Monthly hours volunteered	3,660,600	4,193,848	-12.7
Average monthly hours volunteered	13	15	-11.0
Average annual hours volunteered	160	181	-11.5
Value (hourly wage)[16]	**£504,723,542**	**£519,670,479**	-2.8

Formal volunteers gave approximately two hours less per month in 2007 compared to volunteers in 2001 but this must be considered against wider social and cultural changes that have taken place in Northern Ireland in the past five years. As can be seen in Table 1.6 the time that formal volunteers give to organisations is worth annually £504 million. Using the Home Office's 2005 Citizenship Survey the average hours volunteered over a twelve month period was 104 hours per person. Formal volunteers in Northern Ireland give considerably more time to voluntary work compared to their counterparts in England and Wales. Finally, the number of organisations in which formal volunteers undertake voluntary work was assessed. This is a useful barometer to assess the level of commitment individuals are making in terms of voluntary work.

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[16] Average hourly wage in 2006 was £11.49 (Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings). Average hourly wage in 2001 was £9.03. The figure presented in Table 1.6 for the economic value of volunteering in 2001 has been adjusted to 2006 prices using the Retail Price Index (www.statistics.gov.uk). As reported in *Volunteering in Northern Ireland 2001* the economic value of volunteering was estimated to be £452 million.

Table 1.7: Number of organisations volunteered for

	%	Estimate
1	74.6	210,419
2	18.5	52,182
3	5.4	15,232
4	-	-
5 or more	1.5	4,230
Total	100	282,063

Base: 212 (all formal volunteers, 7 missing)

Almost three quarters of all formal volunteers confine their voluntary activities to a single organisation which works out as an estimated 210,419 individuals. Only a very small number of individuals volunteer for five or more organisations and clearly time commitments and other external pressures mean that this level of engagement is no longer viable for a significant number of individuals.

What has changed?

- In 1995, 59% of formal volunteers were involved with a single organisation. In 2001 this figure was 65%. In 2007 this had risen to 74.6%.
- 35% of formal volunteers in 2007 volunteer between 1-5 hours every month. In 2001, 29% of formal volunteers gave between 1-5 hours per month. In 1995, 25% of formal volunteers gave between 1-5 hours per month.

In 2001 65% of formal volunteers were working for a single organisation, with a further 23% engaging with two organisations. These figures represented a significant change in the number of organisations individuals had volunteered with since 1995. A pattern was identified between 1995 and 2001 which stated that fewer individuals were volunteering with multiple organisations and more confining their activities to a single organisation. In 1995, 59% of formal volunteers were engaged with a single organisation.

Based on the findings of this survey there appears to be a clear pattern developing with regard to the level of commitment individuals are making in terms of the amount of time and number of organisations they volunteer with. Although there has not been a dramatic decrease in the average number of hours given by formal volunteers between 2001 and 2007, there is a change in the profile of the number of hours volunteered each month. More formal volunteers gave fewer hours each month compared to 2001 and especially when compared to 1995. There are also fewer formal volunteers who contributed a significant number of hours each month. Allied to this is the increase in the number of formal volunteers giving their time to a single organisation compared to 1995 and 2001 when individuals volunteered with multiple organisations.

It is difficult to attribute any direct causal effects of an increasing demand on an individual's time or wider changes in society to these patterns of the level of commitment emerging from this study. However, one thing that is clear from this analysis is that volunteers in 2007 are being more focused and to a certain degree more selective in the amount of time and number of organisations they volunteer with.

3.5   How formal volunteers got involved

Formal volunteers were asked about how they found out about opportunities to volunteer and what factors motivated them to become involved. Table 1.8 below gives a breakdown of the different methods formal volunteers have used to find out about volunteering opportunities.

Table 1.8: Method of finding out about volunteering opportunities

	%
By word of mouth	22.2
From someone else already involved in the group	19.2
Through the church or a religious organisation	14.7
From a friend/family member not involved in the group	9.8
Through previously using services provided by the group	7.9
School/college/university	5.3
I set up the group with like-minded people	4.1
Community centre	1.9
Volunteer bureau or centre (e.g. VSB)	0.8
Local events	0.8
National newspaper	0.8
Employer's Volunteering Scheme	0.4
Local newspaper	0.4
Other	10.2
Don't know	1.9

Base 212

Personal contact through word of mouth, through someone already volunteering in a group, through a church or religious organisation or through friends or family are the main ways through which individuals found out about volunteering opportunities. These four methods of finding out about volunteering opportunities account for two thirds of all the ways in which formal volunteers found out about volunteering. There were a number of other options that did not elicit any responses such as:

- Millennium Volunteers
- Library
- Internet/organizational website

- TV or radio (local or national)
- Promotional events/volunteer fair
- Leaflet (material from the organisation)

Looking at how formal volunteers found out about volunteering opportunities by the type of organisation produced some interesting variations in the overall figures. For instance word of mouth and finding out about opportunities from someone else already involved in the group were the most common ways for volunteers to find out about opportunities in voluntary or community organisations. Of those formal volunteers involved with public sector organisations or institutions, one in four found out about volunteering opportunities through schools, universities or colleges. The most common method associated with sports clubs for formal volunteers was hearing about the opportunity to volunteer from someone else already involved in the group.

Formal volunteers aged over 65 years old are the group least likely to hear about volunteering opportunities through word of mouth. However those aged over 65 years old are most likely to hear about opportunities through the church or other religious organisations. This is followed by hearing about opportunities through someone already involved in the group.

16 to 24 years olds are most likely to hear about opportunities via family or friends (not already involved in a group) more than any other age group. Indeed the likelihood of individuals hearing about volunteering opportunities through this method declines as the individuals get older. One in five of all 16 to 24 year old formal volunteers have heard about opportunities to volunteer via a school, university or college. As one would expect the prevalence of this as a method formal volunteers use to find out about volunteering opportunities decreases with age.

Formal volunteers were asked why they started helping the organisation they volunteered with most.

Table 1.9: Entry to volunteering

	%
I applied or offered to help	45.8
I was asked to help	42.9
I started the group	5.2
Other	3.8
Don't know/Can't remember	2.3

Base 212 (all formal volunteers)

As can be seen in Table 1.9 the overwhelming reason given for first becoming involved in volunteering was either through applying or offering to help (45.8%) or through simply being asked (42.9%). In 2001 over half of all formal volunteers started their voluntary work because they were asked to help (54%). Applying or offering to help accounted for 41% of how formal volunteers in 2001 entered into voluntary work. This was largely the same situation as presented in the 1995 survey.

As with most aspects of volunteering, age seems to play a role in how individuals initially got involved as formal volunteers. For instance those aged between 16 and 24 years old are most likely to have applied or offered to help, whereas those individuals aged between 35 and 49 and those aged over 65 years old were most likely to have become involved through being asked to help.

Respondents were asked to give a more detailed assessment of why they initially became involved with the organisation they volunteered with most. This question examined the individual's own motivational reasons for becoming involved. Later on in this report an assessment will be made of whether or not those original reasons for becoming involved are still relevant. Table 1.10 lists the most commonly cited reasons why individuals started volunteering for an organisation.

Table 1.10: Motivational factors associated with becoming involved in voluntary work

	%
I wanted to improve things/help people	49.5
The cause was really important to me	27.8
I had time to spare	23.6
I felt there was a need in my community	22.6
It's part of my religious belief or philosophy of life to help people	22.2
I thought it would give me a chance to use my existing skills	16.5
My friends/family did it	14.6
I wanted to meet people/make friends	12.3
It was connected with the needs of my family/friends	12.3
I felt there was no-one else to do it	4.7
I thought it would give me a chance to learn new skills	4.2
Other	3.8
It helps me get on in my career	2.8
My social or political principles	2.8
It gives a chance to get a recognised qualification	2.4
Don't know	1.9
I had received voluntary help	1.4
I wanted to structure my day	0.9

Base 212 (responses exceed 100% as this was a multiple response question))

The results to this question suggest that the original factors influencing an individual to become involved as a volunteer are altruistic[17] in nature. Just under half of all respondents stated they became involved because they wanted to improve things or help people. Beyond the altruistic motivational factors that encourage someone to volunteer there appear to be other factors of equal importance in this decision making process. Motivational factors such as solidarity and associating with a cause such as "the cause was really important to me" and "there was a need in my community" were also important. Nevertheless an altruistic desire appears to be the primary motivational factor influencing individuals when they first decide to become engaged in voluntary activity.

Over recent years debate has grown with regard to the egotistic nature (self-interest) of contemporary volunteering (Rochester, 2006). Some commentators believe the focus on what volunteers get out of their participation masks the real value base that is driving individuals to volunteer. This has led to an altruism-egoism debate on volunteering. This debate has often involved the two opposing arguments for volunteering, either for entirely selfless or selfish reasons. However some commentators suggest that individuals volunteer for a multiple of reasons and cannot be neatly classified as either altruistic or egotistic (Clary & Snyder, 1999). The results in Table 1.10 would suggest that the egotistical aspects of why people volunteer are not as significant as one would perhaps believe. For instance, only 12% of respondents became involved because of wanting to broaden their social base and only 4% and 3% of respondents felt becoming a volunteer would give them a chance to learn new skills and get on in their career respectively. Nevertheless the analysis of the motivational factors that influence voluntary activity are not clear cut and the diversity of reasons given suggest that it is a much more complex set of processes at work. Formal volunteers aged between 50 and 64 years old were the group most likely to be motivated by wanting to

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[17] Regard for others as a principal of action.

improve things or to help people. Almost two thirds of this group cited this as the reason that got them involved in voluntary work. Only three out of every ten 16 to 24 years old cited this as the reason that first got them invovled. On the other hand this age group was primarily motivated by the cause the organisation represented when compared to the other age groups. Invididuals aged over 65 years old were the most likely age group to become involved because they had time to spare. Equally this age group was the most likely to have become involved in voluntary work with an organisation because of their religious belief or philosophy.

Young people (16 to 24 years old) were the most likely to have become involved in volunteering because their friends and family were already involved in volunteering in some capacity. As mentioned above the more egotisitcal reasons for becoming involved in voluntary work were perhaps not as pronounced as some commentators have suggested but a closer examination by age of the results to these types of motivational factors paints an interesting picture. Approximately one in ten formal volunteers who are aged between 16 and 24 years old have cited learning new skills (10%), help in getting on with their career (10%) and the chance of getting a recognised qualification (13%). For the other age groups these reasons do not really register.

What has changed?

- 49% of all formal volunteers in 2001 found out about volunteering opportunities through family and friends. In 1995 51% found out about opportunities through the same source. 51% of individuals in 2007 found about volunteering through personal contacts.
- 30% of formal volunteers in 2001 would give more time if a need arose in the community. In 1995, 43% cited a need in the community as the main reason why individuals engaged in voluntary activities. 49.5% of formal volunteers in 2007 stated they wanted to improve things/help people as their main motivational factor.

In 2001 and 1995 family and friends were the single most significant way in which formal volunteers found out about volunteering opportunities. In both surveys approximately half of all respondents cited this as the primary method they had found out about volunteering opportunities. The 2005 Home Office Citizenship survey also found out that word of mouth was the main method by which individuals found out about volunteering opportunities. The simple message to emerge from previous surveys was that simply asking someone to volunteer was the most successful way to get people involved. In 2007 asking people to volunteer is still very significant but individuals appear to be more proactive in how they enter into voluntary work. It is very encouraging to see that the majority of formal volunteers have become involved because they applied or offered to help rather than waiting to be asked. As mentioned above this survey found that altruistic reasons are the main motivational factors why individuals originally started volunteering. Formal volunteers in the 2001 and 1995 surveys were no different with meeting a need in the community in both surveys being the most common reason given.

3.6   Informal volunteers

This next section of the report examines the profile, activities and commitment of those individuals who volunteer but are not linked to an organisation. This type of volunteering which is referred to as informal volunteering is an unpaid activity that an individual undertakes that is not for a close relative.

Summary

- There are an estimated 470,111 informal volunteers in Northern Ireland. An estimated 145,734 individuals (31% of all informal volunteers) are both formal and informal volunteers

- As is the case with formal volunteers, females are more likely to be informal volunteers. However, the proportion of females compared to males who are informal volunteers is much more pronounced when compared to formal volunteers.

- Baby sitting or caring for children (32.6 %) is the most common activity undertaken by informal volunteers. This was closely followed by keeping in touch with someone who has difficulty getting out (26.5%) and doing shopping, collecting pensions or paying bills (23.7%).

- Those in the younger age brackets are more likely to be involved in baby sitting or caring for children than those who are older. However, those individuals who are aged over 65 years old and those who are aged between 50 and 64 years old are more likely to keep in touch with someone who has trouble getting out and about.

- A third of all informal volunteers undertake activities for other individuals who are not close relatives at least once a week.

- Looking at the activities that are undertaken the most often (once a week), the results from this survey found that 70% of informal volunteers who sit with or provide personal care (e.g. washing, dressing) for someone who is sick or frail do so on a weekly basis.

- Two thirds of all informal volunteers give between one to five hours over a period of four weeks compared to 54% in 2001.

- The overwhelming reason as to why informal volunteers helped out was that individuals wanted to get involved and indeed only a small number felt that they had to.

A total of 35% of all respondents stated that they had been engaged in some form of informal volunteering over the previous twelve months. When this figure is applied to the overall population aged over 16, there are an estimated 470,111 informal volunteers in Northern Ireland. Approximately three out of every ten informal volunteers (31%) are also formal volunteers, which works out to be an estimated 145,734 individuals.

Figure 1.5: Informal volunteers as a percentage of the total population by gender, age, marital status and number of children[18]
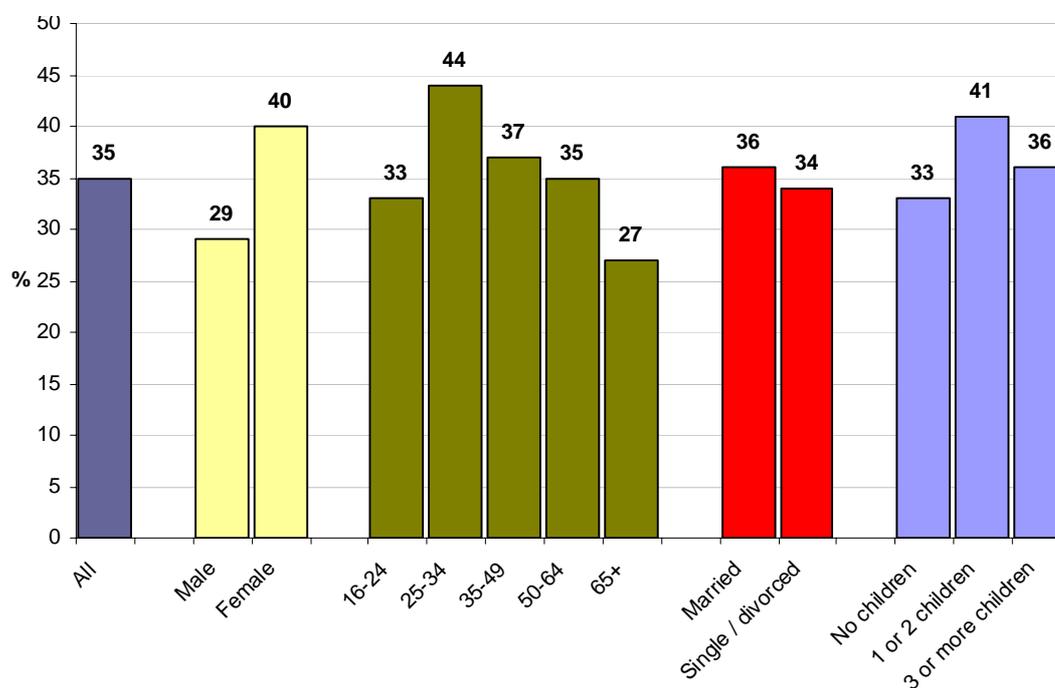
This survey found that involvement in informal volunteering activities varies according to the respondents' demographic characteristics. Based on the findings in Figure 1.5 the following variations in the likelihood of certain groups to volunteer were found:

- *Gender:* As is the case with formal volunteers, females are more likely to be informal volunteers. However, the proportion of females compared to males who are informal volunteers is much more pronounced when compared to formal volunteers.

- *Age*: In terms of the age distribution of informal volunteers there is a different profile compared to formal volunteers. Those individuals aged between 25 and 34 years old are more likely than any other age group to be engaged in informal volunteering activities. The least likely group to be involved as an informal volunteer is those individuals aged over 65 years old.

- *Marital status*: The likelihood of married individuals being informal volunteers over those who are not married is not significantly different.

- *Children*: Like formal volunteers, those individuals who are informal volunteers are more likely to be involved in these activities if they have children. Unlike formal volunteers those individuals with one or two children are more likely to volunteer than those with three or more.

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[18] The results examine the likelihood of a particular group to volunteer as a proportion of the overall population for that group. So for example, the number of females who stated they are formal volunteers is taken as a proportion of the entire female population surveyed for this research.

Figure 1.6: Informal volunteers as a percentage of the total population by socio-economic status, employment status and religion, marital status
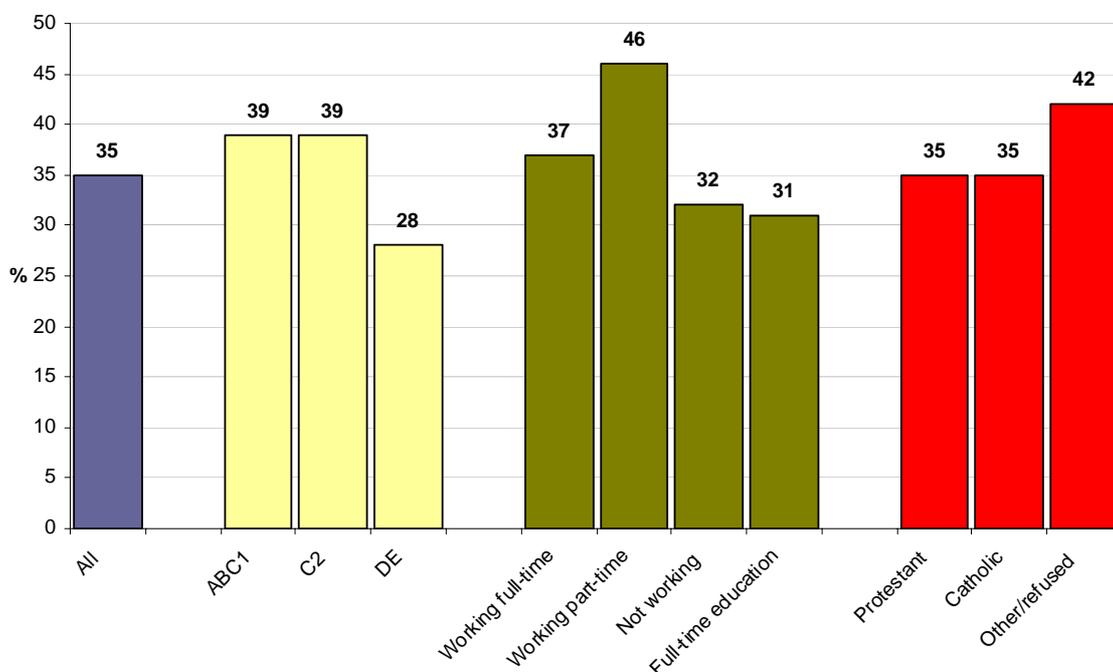
Figure 1.6 examines the likelihood of certain groups to be formal volunteers in relation to the respondents' socio-economic characteristics.

- *Socio-economic group*: Unlike formal volunteers, an individual who is an informal volunteer is not more likely to be from ABC1 social classification. Indeed informal volunteers are just as likely to come from the C2 category as much as those in ABC1. However what remains the same is that individuals in social category DE are the least likely group to be informal and formal volunteers.

- *Employment status*: Almost half of all individuals in part-time employment are most likely to be informal volunteers (46% of all respondents who work on a part-time basis).

- *Religion:* Based on the findings of this research individuals from both Protestant and Catholic community backgrounds are as likely as each other to be informal volunteers.

What has changed?

- The estimated number of informal volunteers has fallen from 600,000 in 1995 to 470,111 in 2007. In 2001 the estimated number of informal volunteers was 759,000.

In *Volunteering in Northern Ireland 2001* little change had been reported in the demographic and socio-economic profile of informal volunteers since 1995. Generally speaking informal

volunteers tended to be female, middle aged (but at the lower end of the age bracket), in full-time employment and in socio-economic group ABC1.

In 2007 many of these characteristics hold true but there has certainly been a change in the age profile of informal volunteers whereby 25 to 34 year olds are more likely to be involved in informal volunteering activities compared to 2001 and 1995 where 35 to 49 years olds were the more likely to volunteer.

3.7   What do informal volunteers do?

Those individuals who volunteer, but not for an organisation, were asked what were the main activities they had carried out over the last twelve months.

Table 1.11 Activities undertaken by informal volunteers

	%
Baby sitting or caring for children	32.6
Keeping in touch with someone who has difficulty getting out and about	26.5
Doing shopping, collecting pension or paying bills	23.7
Looking after a property or a pet for someone who is away	22.0
Giving advice	15.0
Cooking, cleaning, laundry, gardening or other routine household jobs	14.5
Writing letters or filling in forms	13.9
Anything else done for someone in your neighbourhood or for benefit of neighbourhood	12.0
Transporting or escorting someone (for example to a hospital, or on an outing)	10.9
Improved the environment (e.g. picked up litter or swept pavement)	8.1
Sitting with or providing personal care (e.g. washing, dressing) for someone who is sick or frail	5.6
Decorating, or doing any kind of home or car repairs	5.3
Representing someone (for example talking to a council department, or to a doctor)	3.1

Base 359 (responses exceed 100% as this was a multiple response question)

Baby sitting or caring for children (32.6%) is the most common activity undertaken by informal volunteers. This was closely followed by keeping in touch with someone who has difficulty getting out (26.5%) and doing shopping, collecting pensions or paying bills (23.7%). As with other aspects of voluntary work, age determines the type of activity that individuals undertake as informal volunteers. For instance those in the younger age brackets are more likely to be involved in baby sitting or caring for children than those who are older. However, those individuals who are aged over 65 years old and those who are aged between 50 and 64 years old are more likely to keep in touch with someone who has trouble getting out and about.

What has changed?

- 65% of informal volunteers in 1995 visited an older or sick person. In 2001, 58% visited an older or sick person. In 2007 only 5.6% of informal volunteers sat with or

provided personal care for someone who is sick or frail. However, 26.5% stated they kept in touch with someone who has difficulty getting out and about.
- 38% of informal volunteers in 2001 baby sat or cared for children. In 1995 this figure was 31% and in 2007 it was 32.6%.

In 2001 the most commonly reported informal activity was visiting an old or sick person. One in four informal volunteers carried out shopping for some and over a third were involved in baby sitting or providing child care. These main activities also featured in the 1995 survey where visiting an elderly or sick person was the most common activity.

3.8   How often do people informally volunteer?

This next section looks at a number of areas concerning how often informal volunteers undertake various activities and the amount of time informal volunteers devote to volunteering. Respondents were asked to give a rough estimate of how often they undertake informal volunteering activities. Table 1.12 gives a breakdown of how often informal volunteers undertook the activities as described in the previous section over the previous twelve months.

Table 1.12: How often informal volunteers undertake activities

	%
Once a week	34.3
Once a fortnight	12.5
Once a month	16.7
A few times	28.7
Only once in the last year	6.1
Don't know	1.7

Base: 359 (all informal volunteers)

A third of all informal volunteers undertake activities for other individuals who are not close relatives at least once a week. Almost two thirds (63.5%) of informal volunteers do these activities at least once a month. Looking at the activities that are undertaken the most often (once a week), the results from this survey found that 70% of informal volunteers who sit with or provide personal care (e.g. washing, dressing) for someone who is sick or frail do so on a weekly basis. Other activities such as cooking, cleaning, laundry, gardening or other routine household jobs (50.0%), doing shopping, collecting pension or paying bills (48,2%) keeping in touch with someone who has difficulty getting out and about (45.3%) are all carried out once a week.

Activities which are carried out less often by informal volunteers include such things as looking after someone's property or pet and decorating, or doing any kind of home or car repairs which are more often only done once a twice a year.

Figure 1.7 gives a breakdown of the average number of hours informal volunteers give over a four week period towards helping and supporting other individuals.

Figure 1.7: Number of hours volunteered by informal volunteers over a four week period[19]
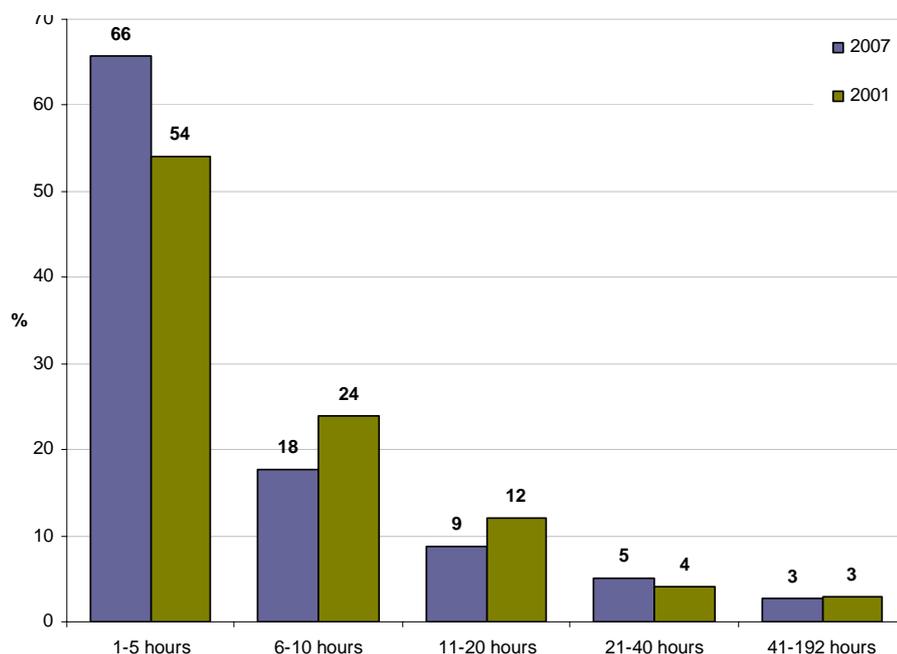
Perhaps the most significant difference in the average number of hours informal volunteers give over a four week period when compared to 2001 is the fact that more informal volunteers in 2007 are giving less time. Two thirds of all informal volunteers give between one to five hours over a period of four weeks compared to 54% in 2001. The number of individuals who give significant amounts of time (21 hours plus) has remained fairly static when 2007 is compared to 2001.

Table 1.13: Hours volunteered
(informal volunteers who volunteer at least once a month)

	2007	2001	% change
Annual hours volunteered	37,762,824	41,853,372	-9.7
Monthly hours volunteered	3,146,902	3,287,781	-4.2
Average monthly hours volunteered	11	8	+37.5
Average annual hours volunteered	132	99	+33.3
Value (hourly wage)[20]	**£433,894,848**	**£432,179,904**	+0.3

Although there are fewer informal volunteers in 2007 compared to previous studies, the average monthly hours volunteered has slightly increased. Although the economic value is not the equivalent of that reported in 2001 (when adjusted to reflect inflation) there is only a

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[19] Figures from the 1995 survey were not available in relation to the number of hours informal volunteers gave over a four week period.

[20] Average hourly wage in 2006 was £11.49 (Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings). Average hourly wage in 2001 was £9.03. The figure presented in Table 1.6 for the economic value of volunteering in 2001 has been adjusted to 2006 prices using the Retail Price Index (www.statistics.gov.uk). As reported in *Volunteering in Northern Ireland 2001* the economic value of informal volunteering was estimated to be £370 million.

0.3% difference. This reinforces the view that there may be fewer informal volunteers but individuals are giving more time.

Respondents who stated they are involved in activities that are associated with informal volunteering were asked to give an indication of the reasons why they started.

Table 1.14: Why individuals are informal volunteers

	Count	%
Want to	302	84.1
Sometimes have to/want to or both	29	8.1
Have to	21	5.8
Don't know	7	1.9

Base 359 (all informal volunteers)

The overwhelming response to this question was that individuals wanted to get involved and indeed only a small number felt that they had to. This reinforces the altruistic nature of volunteering that was described in the formal volunteering section. In 1995, 75% of informal volunteers stated they volunteered because they wanted to; only 3% stated they had to.

What has changed?

- In 2001, 54% of informal volunteers spent five hours or less each month on volunteering. In 2007 this figure had increased to 66%.
- In 2001, 20% of informal volunteers participated at least once a week (in 1995 this figure was 21%). In 2007, 34.3% of informal volunteers do something for someone who is not a close relative at least once a week.

The biggest change that seems to have occurred in relation to the level of commitment of informal volunteers is the fact that significantly more individuals are volunteering more often. When the proportion of informal volunteers who give their time to help someone who is not a close relative over the period of a month, both the 1995 and 2001 surveys found that half of formal volunteers do something at least once a month. In 2007 this figure has risen to 63.2% of informal volunteers giving their time at least once a month.

In 2007 there are fewer informal volunteers but of those who do engage in these types of activities, they do so more often and for longer than informal volunteers in 2001 and 1995.

3.9   Non-volunteer profile

This section examines the demographic and socio-economic profile of those individuals who do not participate in any voluntary activities. Overall 55% of respondents stated they have not been involved in any voluntary activities over the past 12 months. This equates to an estimated total of 738,745 individuals aged over 16 who have not volunteered over the past 12 months.

Figure 1.8: Non-volunteers as a percentage of the total population by gender, age, marital status and number of children
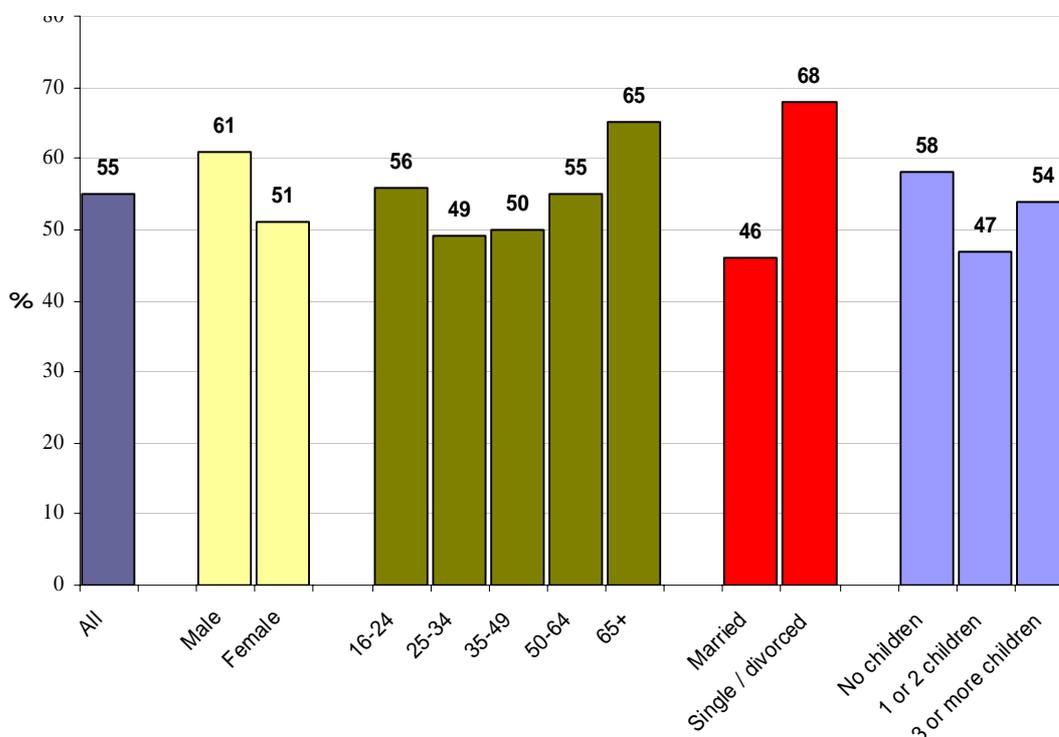
This survey found that the profile of non-volunteers varies according to the respondents' demographic characteristics. Based on the findings in Figure 1.8 the following variations in the likelihood of certain groups not to volunteer were found:

- *Gender:* Six out of every ten males included in this survey are not involved in any voluntary activities.

- *Age*: In terms of the age distribution of non-volunteers, individuals aged over 65 years old are the group most likely not to be involved in voluntary activities.

- *Marital status*: Individuals who are single, divorced or widowed are significantly more likely than individuals who are married not to volunteer.

- *Children*: Those individuals without children are most likely not to have undertaken any voluntary activities over the past twelve months.

Figure 1.9: Non-volunteers as a percentage of the total population by socio-economic status, employment status and religion, marital status
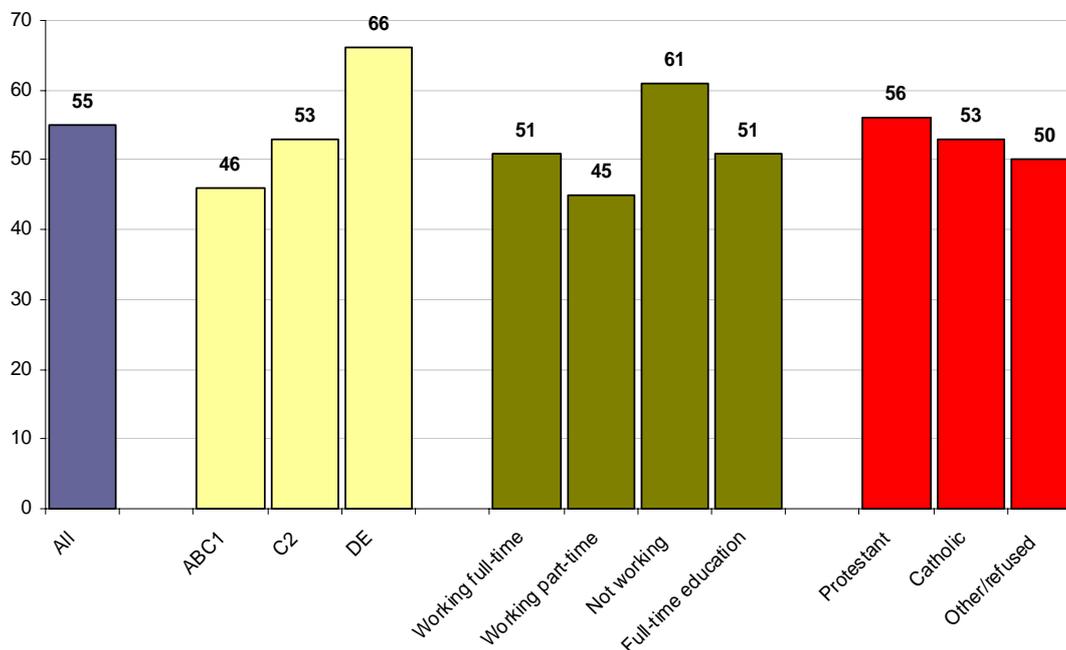
Figure 1.9 examines the likelihood of certain groups not to volunteer over the past twelve months in relation to the respondents' socio-economic characteristics.

- *Socio-economic group:* Individuals in the social-economic group DE are by far the least likely group to volunteer with two thirds of all individuals in this group not having participated in any voluntary activities over the past twelve months.

- *Employment status:* Those individuals who are currently not working are the group, in terms of employment status, least likely to have volunteered in any capacity over the past twelve months.

- *Religion:* Based on the findings of this research individuals from a Protestant community background are the group least likely to volunteer overall when religious background is assessed.

What has changed?

- In 1995 non-volunteers stated that the most common reason for not becoming involved was a lack of time (45%). In 2001 42% of non-volunteers gave the same reason. In 2007, work commitments were given by 38% of non-volunteers as the reason why they do not participate in voluntary activities.
- In 2001, 17% of non-volunteers stated they would be willing to do some unpaid work if they were asked. The same result was achieved in 2007 with 17.5% of non-volunteers stating they would be pleased to help if directly asked.

In 1995 non-volunteers were found to be slightly older with 22% aged 65 years and over. Non-volunteers were less likely to be married compared with those individuals who do volunteer. A similar pattern was found to be the case in 2001 when non-volunteers were most likely to come from socio-economic group DE and not working.

In many respects, the results in 2007 are a mirror image of the profile of non-volunteers in 1995 and 2001.

4.   The experience of being a volunteer

In the previous section there was a discussion of what initially motivated individuals to become volunteers and indeed many commentators on volunteering often criticise research as it does not follow what happens individuals once they have been volunteering for a while. In other words are the expectations and hopes of individuals being met once they have been involved with an organisation for a while? This section aims to delve into this matter in a little more detail. Respondents were asked generally how they found the experience of volunteering with an organisation[21].

Summary

- Two thirds of formal volunteers (66.0%) feel that their efforts are appreciated by the organisation they volunteer with.

- Six out of ten formal volunteers believe they can cope with the things they are asked to do.

- Maintaining motivation and interest does not seem to be a problem for formal volunteers with two thirds definitely disagreeing with the statement that they get bored or lose interest in being involved.

- Over half of all formal volunteers (56.6%) do not agree with the statement that the organisation they volunteer for most is too concerned with risk. Half of all formal volunteers (56.6%) definitely do not believe their voluntary activities take up too much of their time.

- Almost three quarters of formal volunteers get the greatest level of satisfaction from seeing the results of their contribution. Enjoyment also rates very highly on the scale of what is important to individuals who volunteer for an organisation.

- Almost half of all formal volunteers have reported a family member who has been involved in some type of voluntary activity over the last five years. Almost a quarter of all informal volunteers report a similar situation with only 6% of non-volunteers stating that a member of their family had volunteered over the past five years.

- Over half of all formal volunteers (56.1%) feel that their contact with people from other religions has increased as a consequence of their voluntary activity.

- The propensity to volunteer is linked to some degree with a propensity to be more active as a citizen.

- 58% of formal volunteers aged between 25 and 34 years old voted in the last general election whereas 48% of non-volunteers in the same age bracket voted.

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[21] The analysis in this section applies to formal volunteers only, unless otherwise stated.

4.1   Experiences

Respondents were asked to give their impressions of their experiences of being a volunteer so far and the level to which they either agree or disagree with a number of statements that were presented to them.

Table 1.15: Positive experiences of being a formal volunteer

	Definitely agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Definitely disagree	Don't know
My efforts are appreciated by the organisation	66.0	28.8	0.9	1.4	2.8
I can cope with the things I'm asked to do	61.8	32.5	1.9	1.4	2.4
I am given the opportunity to do the sort of things I'd like to do	53.3	39.2	3.3	1.9	2.4
The organisation has reasonable expectations in terms of workload	36.8	44.8	6.6	7.5	4.2
I am given the opportunity to influence the development of the organisation	34.9	31.1	20.3	9.4	4.2

Base 212 (all formal volunteers)

The findings presented in Table 1.15 suggest a number of encouraging aspects concerned with the experiences that formal volunteers have had of being involved with organisations in a voluntary capacity over the previous twelve months. For instance two thirds of formal volunteers (66%) definitely agree with the statement that their efforts are appreciated by the organisation they volunteer with. How organisations recognise the contribution that volunteers make will be discussed in a later section of this report. Equally encouraging is the fact that six out of ten formal volunteers believe they can cope with the things they are asked to do.

Just over half of all formal volunteers (53.3%) definitely agree that they are being given the opportunity to do the sort of things they like to do. Over a third (36.8%) definitely agree with the statement that the organisation has a reasonable expectation in terms of workload. Finally, just over a third (34.6%) of formal volunteers feel they are definitely given the opportunity to influence the development of the organisation.

From these results it is very clear that formal volunteers are valued by organisations, they are not being overloaded and can cope with what they are being asked to do, and they have a reasonable opportunity of influencing the direction of the organisation. From the perspective of retaining volunteers these are very encouraging results for both organisations and individual volunteers alike.

Table 1.16: Negative experiences of being a formal volunteer

	Definitely agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Definitely disagree	Don't know
I get bored or lose interest in my involvement	0.9	2.4	28.3	66.5	1.9
I feel the organisation isn't really going anywhere	0.9	2.8	30.7	62.3	3.3
My help is not really needed	3.8	3.8	30.2	58.0	4.2
I feel the organisation is too concerned about risk	0.5	4.2	33.5	56.6	5.2
I feel that there is too much bureaucracy	2.4	2.4	35.4	53.3	6.6
I feel that volunteering is becoming too much like paid work	2.4	6.1	33.0	53.3	5.2
My involvement takes up too much of my time	0.5	4.2	40.6	51.9	2.8
I find it difficult to balance my volunteering commitments with my work/home commitments	4.2	14.2	26.9	50.5	4.2
I feel things could be much better organised	4.7	12.7	36.3	42.0	4.2
I feel I would be unable to leave my role as there is no-one to take over	4.7	11.3	41.0	28.8	14.2

Base 212 (all formal volunteers)

From Table 1.16 it is clear that maintaining motivation and interest does not seem to be a problem for formal volunteers with two thirds definitely disagreeing with the statement that they get bored or lose interest in being involved. Although difficult to assess this is probably linked to the fact that the majority of formal volunteers are given the opportunity to do things they like to do and that they are appreciated and valued. This value that individuals believe organisations place on them is reinforced by the fact that 58% felt that their help is needed.

Over half of all formal volunteers (56.6%) do not agree with the statement that the organisation they volunteer for most is too concerned with risk. Half of all formal volunteers (56.6%) definitely do not believe their voluntary activities take up too much of their time. This again is a very positive result as the organisation is not asking too much time of the individuals which is important as individuals increasingly face more and more pressures on their spare time. Although 18.4% of formal volunteers feel that they either tend to agree or definitely agree with the statement that it is difficult to create a balance between voluntary activities and commitments at home or at work.

What has changed?

- 21% of formal volunteers in 1995 felt that their efforts were not always appreciated. In 2001, 14% of formal volunteers felt that their efforts were not appreciated. However, in 2007 only 2% felt that this was the case which would suggest that since 1995 organisations have improved when it comes to recognising the contribution that volunteers make.

In 2001 formal volunteers were asked if things could be better organised in terms of their experiences of being a volunteer with an organisation. Approximately 16% of formal volunteers agreed with this statement and a similar number (17.4%) felt the same was true in

2007. However since 1995 things (with regard to this particular statement) have improved when approximately 26% of formal volunteers felt that poor organisation was a significant negative aspect in terms of their volunteering experience.

In terms of the expectations organisations placed on individual volunteers, the results have changed very little over the last decade or so. In 1995 and 2007 approximately 14% of formal volunteers felt that the organisation was placing unreasonable expectations on them in terms of workload. This figure fell to 11% in 2001 but it would suggest there is still a small but significant number of volunteers who feel they are being asked to do too much. These individuals could potentially reduce or indeed stop altogether their voluntary activities if they continue to feel under pressure in terms of the expectations that are being placed on them.

However, across all three surveys the experiences of formal volunteers remain very positive and in some instances things, that were previously perceived to be negative concerning being a volunteer, have improved significantly.

4.2   Benefits of volunteering

As mentioned in previous sections of this report the reasons individuals begin to volunteer are often altruistic but there is of course something in it for the individual. As mentioned before, this could be an increase in one's career prospects or the development of new skills but more often than not it is something more intangible that the individual gets from their involvement as a volunteer. This section attempts to look at the benefits of being a volunteer for the individual and what is the greatest source of satisfaction in terms of their involvement.

In Table 1.17 below formal volunteers were asked to rate the relative importance of a number of statements concerning what they get out of being a volunteer.

Table 1.17: Benefits of being a volunteer

	Very important	Fairly important	Not very important	Not at all important	Don't know
I get satisfaction from seeing the results	74.1	21.2	1.9	0.9	1.9
I really enjoy it	73.6	20.8	1.9	1.9	1.9
It gives me a sense of personal achievement	64.2	28.3	2.8	2.8	1.9
I meet people and make friends through it	63.2	25.9	6.6	2.4	1.9
It gives me a chance to do things I'm good at	63.2	25.0	8.0	1.9	1.9
It broadens my experience of life	59.4	29.7	6.1	2.8	1.9
It makes me feel less selfish as a person	57.5	28.8	7.1	3.8	2.8
It makes me feel needed	48.6	26.9	12.3	8.5	3.8
It gives me the chance to learn new skills	46.2	22.2	17.9	11.8	1.9
It gets me 'out of myself'	44.3	25.5	17.9	10.4	1.9
It gives me a position in the community	43.4	22.2	20.3	11.8	2.4
It gives me more confidence	41.5	21.7	21.2	12.7	2.8
It makes me feel less stressed	31.6	24.5	20.8	20.3	2.8
It improves my physical health	30.2	23.1	22.6	21.7	2.4
It gives me the chance to improve my employment prospects	23.6	10.4	23.1	38.2	4.7
It gives me the chance to get a recognised qualification	18.9	11.8	27.4	37.7	4.2

Base 212 (all formal volunteers)

As can be seen in Table 1.17 almost three quarters of formal volunteers get the greatest level of satisfaction from seeing the results of their contribution. Enjoyment also rates very highly on the scale of what is important to individuals who volunteer for an organisation. Very deep seated feelings of personal achievement, feeling wanted and a degree of virtuousness are all associated with the benefits of being a volunteer. At the other end of the scale the more practical and perhaps more selfish aspects of being a volunteer such as increased employment opportunities and getting a recognised qualification (23.6% and 18.9% agree these benefits are very important respectively) are not as important as the other less tangible benefits.

As is shown in Table 1.17 above, meeting people and making friends is seen as an important aspect of the benefits associated with volunteering (almost two thirds see this as an important element of their volunteering experience). To this end both formal and informal volunteers were asked if as a result of their involvement as a volunteer their circle of friends had increased. 72.6% of formal volunteers reported that their circle of friends had increased as a consequence of their involvement as a volunteer over the previous twelve months. A quarter stated their number of friends had remained the same but not one formal volunteer admitted to having fewer friends as a result of doing voluntary work. For informal volunteers the picture is slightly different in that fewer individuals felt that their circle of friends had increased which is understandable as they are not linked to an organisation. Nevertheless one in five informal volunteers (21.7%) reported that their number of friends had increased through their

involvement in voluntary activities (75.5% felt their number of friends had remained the same).

An area which is particularly important in the Northern Ireland context is the contribution that volunteering can make towards bringing people from different communities together. Therefore individuals who were either formal or informal volunteers were asked if their contact with members of the opposite religion had increased through their voluntary activity. Table 1.18 below shows the results to this question for both formal and informal volunteers.

Table 1.18: Contact with people from other religions as a consequence of volunteering

	Formal %	Informal %
Increased	56.1	16.7
Remained the same	40.6	81.1
Decreased	0.0	0.0
Don't know	3.3	2.2

Base: (all formal volunteers 212 and all informal volunteers 359)

Over half of all formal volunteers (56.1%) feel that their contact with people from other religions has increased as a consequence of their voluntary activity. Perhaps unsurprising is that the number of informal volunteers who felt that their contact with other religions has increased is lower than that for formal volunteers. Again it is not a surprise that no volunteers, either formal or informal, reported that their contact with people from other religions decreased as a consequence of their voluntary activity.

4.3   Role models

As was discussed in previous sections of this report, the fact that someone already involved in a group as a volunteer is a key factor in attracting other volunteers is a well established fact about the recruitment of volunteers. Equally the impact of friends and family who are already volunteers plays a significant role in attracting new volunteers. In order to further test this assumption individuals were asked if anyone else in their family had volunteered over the previous five years.

Table 1.19: Volunteers and their family's history of volunteering

Family member volunteer in the last five years	Yes %	No %	Don't know %
Formal volunteers	47.6	43.4	6.4
Informal volunteers	24.0	69.9	9.0
Informal volunteers (excluding formal volunteers)	11.3	83.5	5.2
Non-volunteers	6.1	89.6	4.3
All	16.0	78.4	5.6

Base: 1,020 (formal volunteers = 212; informal volunteers = 359 (excluding formal volunteers = 248); non-volunteers = 556)

From Table 1.19 it is fairly clear that if there is a culture of volunteering in an individual's family then the likelihood of that individual also being a volunteer is increased. This is particularly true of formal volunteers. Almost half of all formal volunteers have reported a family member who has been involved in some type of voluntary activity over the last five years. Almost a quarter of all informal volunteers report a similar situation with only 6% of

non-volunteers stating that a member of their family had volunteered over the past five years. To a certain extent the evidence is fairly conclusive if a culture of volunteering exists in a family then the likelihood of another individual in that family being a volunteer is increased.

Another aspect that has been examined in this research is the impact of having been the beneficiary of another volunteer's involvement. Again the likelihood of individuals to volunteer or not has been assessed against the impact of this intervention by another volunteer.

Table 1.20: Directly benefiting from another's volunteering and the likelihood of being a volunteer

Benefited from another's volunteering	Yes %	No %	Don't know %
Formal volunteers	25.5	74.5	0.0
Informal volunteers	19.8	77.7	2.5
Informal volunteers (excluding formal volunteers)	15.3	81.0	3.6
Non-volunteers	10.2	87.5	2.3
All	14.5	83.2	2.3

Base: 1,020 (formal volunteers = 212; informal volunteers = 359 (excluding formal volunteers = 248); non-volunteers = 556)

Figure 1.20 does demonstrate that if an individual had in some way benefited from another's volunteering then the likelihood of them being a volunteer is increased. Like the previous analysis into the impact of having family members who are already volunteers, having benefited from another's volunteering is most pronounced for formal volunteers. Just over a quarter of all formal volunteers had benefited compared to just 10% of non-volunteers. It would be reasonable to suggest that the link between being a volunteer and being the beneficiary of someone else's volunteering is not as immediately evident as the link with a family member who is also a volunteer. Nevertheless an apparent link does seem to exist and it would suggest that a degree of reciprocity is being demonstrated by volunteers.

What has changed?

- In 1995, 81% of formal volunteers cited enjoyment as the major benefit of volunteering. 74% of formal volunteers in 2001 felt that personal enjoyment was the major benefit of being a volunteer. In 2007, 73% of formal volunteers stated personal enjoyment was a very important benefit of volunteering.
- In 1995, 61% of formal volunteers got satisfaction from seeing the results of their voluntary activity. In 2001 this figure had fallen slightly to 55%. In 2007, 74% of formal volunteers stated this to be the main benefit of being a volunteer.

Respondents in 1995 and 2001 were not asked if their circle of friends or their level of contact with people from other religions had increased or decreased as a consequence of their being a volunteer. However, both surveys asked respondents to articulate the benefits to them of being a volunteer. In both 1995 and 2001 personal enjoyment was the single most important benefit that individuals felt they got from being a formal volunteer, a similar result as reported in 2007. However the satisfaction of seeing the results of an individual's voluntary activities has increased in importance in 2007 compared to the results in 2001 and 1995. This could be attributed in part to the fact that organisations have become more practised in describing and recording the outcomes of their activities and this is being translated to volunteers.

These slight differences aside, it is the less tangible and more altruistic aspects of volunteering that individuals see as the greatest benefit they receive from being a volunteer, regardless of which year they were asked.

4.4   Civic participation

Another aspect of volunteering is the influence it can play in terms of wider civic participation. In previous volunteering surveys there has been an attempt to measure the extent to which individuals become more active in terms of voting, signing petitions, etc, in relation to their level of voluntary activity. The following analysis looks at levels of civic participation for volunteers and non-volunteers.

Table 1.21: Civic participation over the last 12 months

	Formal volunteers (%)	Informal volunteers (%)	Informal volunteers (excluding formal) %	Non-volunteers (%)	All %
Attended a public consultation event/ meeting/forum	15.1	10.3	6.0	1.8	5.6
Been involved in raising an issue with an MP, MLA, MEP or local councillor	9.4	6.1	3.6	2.5	4.2
Written on an issue to an MP, MLA, MEP or local councillor	10.4	7.0	4.4	1.8	4.2
Signed a petition	18.4	17.5	14.5	6.6	11.0
Attended a lawful demonstration	1.9	1.1	0.4	0.5	0.8
Joined a boycott (for example stopped buying certain products or stopped using certain shops or services)	1.4	1.4	1.2	0.7	1.0
Engaged in any other form of public consultation	1.9	0.8	0.4	0.4	0.7
None of the above	66.5	73.3	79.0	88.6	81.7

Base: 1,020 (formal volunteers = 212; informal volunteers = 359 (excluding formal volunteers = 248); non-volunteers = 556)

Across each of the different forms of civic participation formal volunteers are more likely than any other grouping to be involved in some type of activity as listed above. Although overall levels of civic participation are lower in Northern Ireland than throughout the rest of the UK, Table 1.21 does demonstrate that the propensity to volunteer is linked to some degree with a propensity to be more active as a citizen.

Voting patterns are seen as a barometer of how civically active an individual is. Individuals were asked to state if they had voted in the General Election in 2005. Table 1.22 below gives a breakdown of those who voted by their level of involvement in terms of volunteering.

Table 1.22: Voting patterns by voluntary activity

Voted in the General Election in 2005 (yes)	Formal volunteers (%)	Informal volunteers (%)	Informal volunteers (excluding formal) %	Non-volunteers (%)	All (%)
Yes	67.9	66.6	66.5	61.9	65.4
No	29.2	31.2	31.9	28.9	30.2
Don't know	6.0	2.2	1.6	9.2	4.4

Base: 1,020 (formal volunteers = 212; informal volunteers = 359 (excluding formal volunteers = 248); non-volunteers = 556)

As can be seen in Table 1.23 there is only a slight variation in voting patterns when volunteers are compared to non-volunteers. Nevertheless the results from this survey found that formal volunteers are the most likely group to have voted in the last General Election[22]. When age is considered again there is little variation between the voting patterns of formal volunteers compared to the overall population. However when formal volunteers are compared to non-volunteers (see Table 1.23 below) there are some interesting differences.

Table 1.23: Voting patterns by age

Voted in the General Election in 2005 (yes)	Formal volunteers (%)	Informal volunteers (%)	Informal volunteers (excluding formal) %	Non-volunteers (%)	All (%)
16-24	19.4	25.0	31.0	17.3	20.7
25-34	58.8	57.3	56.7	48.9	53.2
35-49	81.7	75.5	71.8	69.5	73.1
50-64	79.5	81.5	81.8	75.7	78.0
65 +	78.4	77.6	81.1	84.1	82.5

Base: 1,020 (formal volunteers = 212; informal volunteers = 359 (excluding formal volunteers = 248); non-volunteers = 556)

As mentioned above there is only a slight difference in voting patterns between formal volunteers and the overall population. However, when formal volunteers are compared with non-volunteers there are some significant differences in the likelihood that different age groups will vote. For instance, 58% of formal volunteers aged between 25 and 34 years old voted in the last General Election whereas 48% of non-volunteers in the same age bracket voted. This difference becomes even more pronounced in the 35 to 49 year old age bracket where 81% of all formal volunteers voted compared to 69% of non-volunteers. Age has always been a factor in voting patterns but it would appear that the likelihood of an individual voting is increased when the likelihood to volunteer is also considered.

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[22] Overall voter turnout at the last General Election in 2005 was 63% in Northern Ireland (www.ark.ac.uk).

What has changed?

- In 2001, 19% of formal volunteers had attended a public consultation event/meeting/forum. In 2007, 15% of formal volunteers stated they had attended a public consultation event.
- 12% of informal volunteers in 2001 had attended a public consultation. The corresponding figure in 2007 was 10.3%.

The levels of overall civic participation have changed very little since 2001. The last survey into volunteering in Northern Ireland found that the majority (80%) of the all respondents had not taken part in any kind of civic action over the previous 12 months. Almost one in ten (9%) had attended a public consultation event which is higher than the figure reported in 2007 (5.6%). A further 9% had also been involved in raising an issue with an MP, MLA, MEP or local councillor (in person and in writing). In 2007 this figure was 8.4% of all respondents.

The likelihood of formal volunteers to be more involved in civic action compared to non-volunteers was the same in 2001 as it is in 2007. These results from over the past six years reinforce the importance of volunteering in relation to civil society and the development of more active citizens. Although it is difficult to establish any causal link between volunteering and the propensity to be a more active citizen there is nevertheless a link between the two.

It appears that a culture of volunteering, either amongst family or friends makes individuals more predisposed to volunteer themselves and it is possible a culture of being an active citizen is also something that is inherited.

5. Recruiting and retaining volunteers

This section of the report looks at the issues affecting the recruitment and retention of volunteers. In the first instance this section will look at volunteering patterns over the last five years which will be followed by an exploration of what barriers individuals believe exist in terms of getting more involved. Finally this section will look at what volunteers believe would encourage them to volunteer more often.

Summary

- 20% of all respondents have volunteered over the last five years (excluding the last 12 months).

- 70.8% of all formal volunteers have volunteered over last five years.

- Of those individuals who had not volunteered over the previous five years (but had started volunteering in the previous twelve months) the most likely group to have started volunteering are those aged between 16 and 24 years.

- Just over half of all volunteers who were no longer involved with a group they had been involved with for the previous five years cited changing home or work circumstances as the main reason for stopping their involvement.

- Approximately one quarter of all volunteers (formal and informal) would like to spend more time volunteering.

- The majority of formal and informal volunteers would be pleased to help some more (45.3% and 45.1% respectively) if they were directly asked.

- 28.6% of non-volunteers have not even thought about becoming more involved in voluntary activities.

- The pressure of work commitments is the single most common reason why individuals do not become more involved in voluntary activities. Approximately a third of all formal and informal volunteers feel the fact they are doing enough already precludes from becoming more involved.

- A need arising in the community would be the most decisive factor in terms of influencing an individual to become more involved in voluntary activities.

- Overall respondents felt that articles/advertisements in local newspapers would be the most useful way to promote volunteering opportunities. This is followed by word of mouth (friends/family) as being perceived as an effective way of promoting volunteering opportunities.

5.1   Volunteering over the last five years

An important aspect of the volunteering experience is the length of time individuals commit to an organisation over an extended period of time. As mentioned previously in this report motivational factors are often assessed as to why individuals volunteer but often the factors that keep them involved are not that deeply explored.

Respondents were asked if they had carried out any voluntary activity over the preceding five years (excluding the last 12 months).

- **20%** of all respondents have volunteered over the last five years (excluding last 12 months).
- **70.8%** of all formal volunteers have volunteered over the last five years.

This of course paints only a limited picture as the more interesting aspect of this question is which individuals have stopped volunteering and who are new to volunteering. The next set of tables examines the patterns of volunteering over the last five years by demographic profile.

Table 1.24: Profile of individuals who have not volunteered at all in last five years (including the last 12 months)[23]

	Never volunteered (%)	Committed volunteers (%)	New volunteers (%)	No longer volunteers (%)
Male	74.6	14.1	4.8	4.8
Female	71.2	15.2	6.3	5.6
16-24	69.6	12.6	9.6	6.7
25-34	76.3	11.8	5.9	5.4
35-49	67.8	18.6	5.0	7.3
50-64	73.7	15.1	5.9	3.2
65 +	77.4	12.7	3.8	3.3
Population estimates[24]	**991,262**	**200,132**	**76,560**	**71,188**
%	**73.8**	**14.9**	**5.7**	**5.3**

Base: 1,003 (non volunteers = 741, committed volunteers = 150, new volunteers = 58, no longer volunteers = 54)

From the figures presented in Table 1.24 there are some interesting dynamics in terms of the profile of volunteers who no longer volunteer, are new volunteers or have never volunteered at all. For instance, for those individuals who had never volunteered during the previous five years the most likely group to have not participated at all are those aged over 65 years. In terms of the group most likely to be a volunteer over the previous five years (and still one in the previous twelve months) are those individuals aged 35 to 49. Interestingly there is very little difference between males and females who are in the 'committed' category which is not the case when all formal volunteers are considered. In terms of those individuals who had not volunteered over the previous five years but had started in the previous twelve months, the most likely group to have started volunteering are those aged between 16 and 24 years. This is partly due to the fact that five years ago many of the individuals now in this age bracket would have been too young to be volunteers but it nevertheless demonstrates an encouraging trend for the future. Finally those individuals who over the previous five years were involved in some type of voluntary activity but in the previous twelve months stopped were also assessed. The group most likely to have stopped are those individuals aged between 35 and 49 years.

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[23] Applies to formal volunteering only.
[24] Estimates based on the Northern Ireland population aged over 16 (1,343,174).

If the figures above are applied to the wider Northern Ireland population (aged 16 and over) the following estimates presented can be produced. For instance there are 191,794 individuals who are currently volunteers and have been so for the last five years. There have been 76,560 new volunteers in the last 12 months who had not previously volunteered. However, there were also 71,188 individuals who had been volunteers in the previous five years but had stopped volunteering over the last 12 months. Therefore the number of volunteers is basically static with very few new volunteers replacing the ones who have stopped volunteering over the last 12 months.

Respondents were asked if they still volunteered with the same group as they had done over the previous five years. Two thirds of volunteers stated they were with the same group or organisation they had volunteered with for the previous five years. The remaining 34% were asked why they had stopped their involvement with the group.

Table 1.25: Reasons for stopping involvement with a group

	%
Due to changing home/work circumstances	52.1
It took too much time	9.9
Moved away from area	9.9
Due to new involvement with other organisations	4.2
Due to increasing time demands of involvement with this organisation	4.2
Organisation wasn't relevant to me any more	4.2
Organisation folded up	2.8
Due to increasing time demands of involvement with other organisations	1.4
Lost interest	1.4
Too much concern about risk and liability	1.4
Other	38.0

Base: 71 (responses exceed 100% as this was a multiple response question)

Just over half of all volunteers who were no longer involved with a group they had been involved with for the previous five years cited changing home or work circumstances as the main reason for stopping their involvement. Very few of the reasons cited by respondents related to issues specific to the organisation and its management and development of volunteers which is an encouraging sign.

5.2 Barriers to becoming more involved

The previous section looked at volunteering patterns over the previous five years which has provided a degree of insight into who continues to volunteer and who has decided not to anymore. This section looks at the attitudes of formal, informal and non-volunteers towards the barriers they face in terms of becoming more involved as volunteers or indeed starting to volunteer. Individuals were asked if they would like to spend more time volunteering. The results are shown in Table 1.26 below.

Table 1.26: Desire to spend *more* time (or *any* time in the case of non-volunteers) helping groups, clubs or organisations?

	Yes %	No %	Don't know %
Formal volunteers	26.4	59.9	13.7
Informal volunteers	27.6	54.0	18.4
Informal volunteers (excluding formal volunteers)	26.2	53.2	20.6
Non-volunteers	13.8	75.7	10.6
All	19.4	67.0	13.6

Base: 1,020 (formal volunteers = 212; informal volunteers = 359 (excluding formal volunteers = 248); non-volunteers = 556)

Those individuals who are already involved in some capacity as volunteers would be happy to spend more time helping groups, clubs or organisations. Approximately one quarter of all volunteers (formal and informal) would like to spend more time volunteering. On the other hand one quarter of all non-volunteers stated they would not like to spend any time helping out groups, clubs or organisations. Overall, one in five respondents stated they would like to give more (or some) time to help out organisations in a voluntary capacity. Individuals were then asked if someone approached them directly and asked them to help what their response would be.

As is shown in Table 1.27 below, the majority of formal and informal volunteers would be pleased to help (45.3% and 45.1% respectively) if they were directly asked. Despite the fact that this figure drops to 17.5% of non-volunteers who would be pleased to help, it still represents approximately one in six individuals who are not currently volunteers but who would help out if they were asked directly. It is perhaps unsurprising that a significant proportion of non-volunteers would refuse because of a lack of time (19.0%) or because of other reasons (15.9%) but almost three out of ten would consider offering help depending upon circumstances, etc.

Table 1.27: Response to a direct approach for help

	Formal volunteers (%)	Informal volunteers (%)	Informal volunteers (excluding formal) %	Non-volunteers (%)	All %
I would be pleased to help	45.3	45.1	42.3	17.5	29.3
I would feel I couldn't refuse	20.3	17.8	17.3	9.7	13.7
I would refuse because I haven't got the time	9.0	7.2	6.9	19.0	14.0
I would refuse for other reasons	3.3	3.1	3.6	15.9	10.3
It would depend	20.8	24.2	26.2	29.7	27.0
Don't know	1.4	2.5	3.6	8.2	5.7

Base: 1,020 (formal volunteers = 212; informal volunteers = 359 (excluding formal volunteers = 248); non-volunteers = 556)

The messages to emerge from Tables 1.26 and 1.27 is that individuals are willing to give more time (particularly if they are already volunteers) and a direct request for help will more often than not elicit more help for the group or organisation. There appears to be a significant pool of non-volunteers who would be pleased to help only if they are approached directly.

Respondents were then asked to give their opinion to a series of statements designed to test why individuals don't get involved (or become more involved in the case of existing volunteers) in voluntary activities, even when they feel they might like to.

Table 1.28: Reasons for not becoming more involved (or involved at all in the case of non-volunteers)

Applies a lot (only)	Formal volunteers (%)	Informal volunteers (%)	Non-volunteers (%)	All %
I have work commitments	32.5	40.1	37.9	38.7
I am already doing enough	33.5	32.3	23.4	27.3
I have to look after children/the home	20.3	31.8	26.7	27.2
I've never thought about it	4.2	17.3	28.6	22.4
I feel I'm too old to get involved with voluntary activities	7.1	10.6	21.3	16.4
I haven't heard about opportunities to give help	5.7	15.6	15.6	15.0
I would be worried about the risks and being liable if anything goes wrong	8.0	12.5	15.7	13.7
I haven't got the right skills or experience to be able to help	5.2	12.3	12.5	11.7
I wouldn't know how to find out about getting involved in voluntary activities	2.4	10.0	13.6	11.3
I have an illness or disability that I feel prevents me from getting involved	4.7	6.7	15.4	11.1
I would be put off by all the associated bureaucracy	4.2	10.0	10.6	9.7
I'd be worried that I might end up out of pocket	0.9	7.0	10.0	8.1
My family/partner wouldn't want me to get involved	2.4	9.2	8.6	8.1
I wouldn't be able to stop once I had got involved	10.4	9.7	6.8	8.1
I'd be worried that I wouldn't fit in with the other people who were involved	2.4	6.4	8.9	7.5
I would be worried about any threat to my own physical safety	3.8	6.7	8.1	7.2
I'd be worried that I'd lose my benefits	2.4	4.2	7.3	5.8
I have to look after someone who is elderly or ill	5.2	5.6	5.5	5.5
I'm too young	1.4	5.0	3.9	4.0
I'm new to the area	0.5	4.5	4.1	3.9

Base: 1,020 (formal volunteers = 212; informal volunteers = 359 (excluding formal volunteers = 248); non-volunteers = 556)

Across each of the different types of groupings (formal, informal and non-volunteers) the pressure of work commitments is the single most common reason why individuals do not become more involved in voluntary activities. Approximately a third of all formal and informal volunteers feel the fact they are doing enough already precludes from becoming more involved. Looking after children or the home was also a reason for not becoming more involved which a significant number of respondents felt applied to them.

Looking exclusively at non-volunteers a number of patterns emerge when certain reasons as to why they have not become involved in voluntary activities are examined. For instance, one in five non-volunteers (21.3%) feel they are too old to contribute in a voluntary capacity (this figure is only 7.1% for formal volunteers). This is all the more interesting when the group least likely to volunteer is those individuals who are aged over 65 years old. An even higher number of non-volunteers (28.6%) have not even thought about becoming more involved in voluntary activities. Again placing this finding into a wider context, the fact that almost one in six non-volunteers (17.5%) would be pleased to help if they were asked strengthens the argument that there is an untapped pool of potential volunteers that is not being engaged with. Approximately 15% of non-volunteers are not aware of the opportunities that exist to get more involved in voluntary activities (which is not the case for formal volunteers). There also appears to be a reticence amongst non-volunteers to become more involved because they feel they would be liable if anything goes wrong. Amongst formal volunteers this is less of an issue.

Respondents were asked to give their attitudes to a series of statements which other people have felt would make it easier for them to get involved in helping groups, clubs or organisations. For each of these things respondents were asked if they would make them more likely to get more involved in voluntary work. In Table 1.29 below only the responses to the statements which respondents felt would make a big difference have been listed.

Table 1.29: Factors that would make it easier to become more involved in volunteering

Would make a big difference	Formal volunteers (%)	Informal volunteers (%)	Non-volunteers (%)	All %
If a need arose in the community	35.8	33.7	12.3	21.7
If I could develop new skills/knowledge	28.3	27.0	14.5	20.1
If there was more flexibility when I could get involved	24.1	23.4	11.4	17.4
If the group offered training and accreditation	20.8	23.4	12.5	16.8
If it would help develop my career	23.6	23.1	11.4	16.7
If there was more information on opportunities	24.1	22.3	10.4	15.9
If I could meet new people	23.6	18.9	12.0	15.3
If I received support/time off from my employer	17.9	21.2	9.5	14.3
If the group offered to reimburse my expenses	17.5	17.5	7.7	12.1
If childcare facilities were available	12.3	18.1	7.7	11.6
Nothing is stopping me, I am not interested	4.2	7.0	10.6	8.8

Base: 1,020 (formal volunteers = 212; informal volunteers = 359 (excluding formal volunteers = 248); non-volunteers = 556)

If a need arose in an individual's community would be the most decisive factor in terms of influencing them to become more involved in voluntary activities. However, for non-volunteers this is less of a factor (only 12.3% stated this would make a big difference) when compared to how big a difference this issue would make to existing volunteers (35.8% of formal volunteers and 33.7% of informal volunteers claimed this would make a big difference). The most common factor that would make it easier for non-volunteers to become involved would be if the voluntary activities develop new skills and knowledge. This was also important for existing volunteers. Aside from the initial altruistic reason that would make it easier for someone to become more involved, a lot of the other most commonly cited reasons are more to do with what the individual can receive. For instance, developing skills, the offer of training and accreditation and the opportunity to develop their career were all rated fairly highly by formal and informal volunteers as potentially making a big difference in terms of becoming more involved.

Finally respondents were asked about what methods would assist them in finding out about volunteering opportunities.

Table 1.30: Most effective methods to find out about volunteering opportunities

	Formal volunteers (%)	Informal volunteers (%)	Non-volunteers (%)	All %
Articles/advertisements in local newspaper	42.9	42.6	34.5	38.4
Word of mouth (friends/family)	45.8	40.9	29.2	34.8
Advertisements on local TV/radio	30.2	32.6	24.3	27.8
Word of mouth (others)	32.5	23.4	18.8	22.2
Local centre where I could find out about volunteering	16.0	15.6	9.5	12.2
Advertisements on national TV/radio	8.0	14.8	8.1	10.2
Other	8.5	5.6	13.4	10.2
Information in job centres	14.2	10.6	7.3	9.1
Articles/advertisements in national newspaper	3.8	10.9	5.2	6.9
Local telephone helpline	6.6	8.9	5.7	6.8
Database of opportunities on the internet	11.3	7.5	5.0	6.6
Organisations publishing their volunteering opportunities on the internet	7.1	6.4	3.0	4.4
Email	5.2	4.7	2.3	3.4
Information on ceefax/teletext	2.4	3.3	1.3	2.1
A national telephone helpline	1.4	3.1	1.3	1.8

Base: 1,020 (formal volunteers = 212; informal volunteers = 359 (excluding formal volunteers = 248); non-volunteers = 556)

Overall respondents felt that articles/advertisements in local newspapers would be the most useful way to promote volunteering opportunities. This is followed by word of mouth (friends/family) as being perceived as an effective way of promoting volunteering

opportunities. Indeed the top four methods are with promotion through local media channels or through word of mouth and personal contact which by virtue is also local. This notion of maintaining a local dimension to the promotion of volunteering opportunities is reflected across each of the groups analysed in Table 1.30 and is certainly the dominant message to emerge from the responses to this question.

Somewhat surprisingly the internet and the use of new technologies were not seen as an especially effective method of promoting volunteering opportunities. On closer examination of the results in terms of the age of respondents there is a slight variation in attitudes. For instance, 10% of both 16-24 and 25-34 year olds felt the internet was a good way to find out about volunteering opportunities whereas only 4.4% overall felt this way.

Please also see table 1.8 and 1.45 for further information.

What has changed?

- In 1995, 51% of formal volunteers stated that family and friends was the main way in which they found out about volunteering opportunities. In 2001, 49% of formal volunteers gave the same response to how they found about volunteering opportunities. In 2007 45.8% of formal volunteers heard about volunteering opportunities through word of mouth.
- In 2007, 35% of formal volunteers would become more involved if a need arose in the community. In 2001, 41% of formal volunteers felt the same. In 1995 this figure was 45%.

Many of the questions analysed in this section were new to the 2007 survey but there are still some areas that can be compared to the 2001 and 1995 surveys. For instance in 2001 when all formal volunteers and non-volunteers were asked about factors that would encourage them to give more time in the future, the majority would do so if a need arose in their community. This remains the case in 2007.

When non-volunteers were asked in 1995 and 2001 why they did not volunteer, the main reason that was given was a lack of spare time. Although the wording is slightly different in the 2007 survey, a pressure on an individual's spare time remains the overriding factor why individuals do not volunteer.

6. Supporting volunteers

This section examines policies and procedures which organisations that engage with volunteers put in place to help manage and develop these individuals. The analysis in the section will focus on the experiences of formal volunteers. In subsequent sections in this report an analysis will be conducted from the perspective of the organisation and what policies and procedures they have in place.

Summary

- Three out of every ten formal volunteers had to go through an interview or a chat prior to becoming a volunteer.

- Those individuals who volunteer with a public sector organisation are more likely to have had to complete a pre-employment consultancy check (68.2%), complete an application form (54.5%) and attend an interview (54.5%).

- Six out of every ten formal (61%) volunteers are aware of health and safety regulations and over half are covered by insurance.

- In 2001 64% of respondents stated they had a named person to go to for support, in 2007 this figure has fallen to 45%.

- Overall this survey found that 18.9% of all formal volunteers are engaged with organisations that cover expenses.

- 60% of formal volunteers do not claim expenses even though they can and the most common reasons given are they didn't get around to it (22.5%) and that they viewed it as a form of donation (17.5%).

- A third of all formal volunteers (34%) stated in 2007 that they had received training from the organisations they volunteered for.

6.1   Recruitment policies

In this section all formal volunteers were asked about the various policies and procedures they went through prior to their recruitment as a volunteer.

Table 1.31: Procedures taken prior to recruitment of volunteers

	2007 %	2001 %
Attend an interview/chat	30	16
Undergo a pre-employment consultancy check (police check)	26	11
Complete an application form	25	25
Provide references	24	18
Declare any criminal record	24	14
Undergo a trial period	10	11

Base: 212 (all formal volunteers)

Three out of every ten formal volunteers had to go through an interview or a chat prior to becoming a volunteer. One quarter had to undergo a pre-employment consultancy check before becoming a volunteer. Only one in ten formal volunteers had to undergo a trial period as a volunteer.

If the type of organisation the individual volunteers with is examined there are some interesting variations. For instance those individuals who volunteer with a public sector organisation are more likely to have had to complete a pre-employment consultancy check (68.2%), complete an application form (54.5%) and attend an interview (54.5%). In voluntary and community organisations 28% of volunteers had undergone a pre-employment consultancy check, 31.8% have had to complete an application form and 33.8% had had to attend an interview or chat. One explanation for these differences is that in the public sector the types of people volunteers come into contact with means there is a greater degree of scrutiny in terms of selecting appropriate individuals. As a consequence of this there is more bureaucracy when it comes to recruiting volunteers.

Looking at how things have changed in recruitment policies since 2001 there appears to be a greater emphasis on completing interviews and pre-employment consultancy checks in 2007 compared to 2001. This is as a consequence of the greater requirements placed on organisations to conform to legislation. This being particularly pertinent to organisations which work with children (such as requirements of The Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (NI) Order (2003) and this has been the impetus for much of this change since 2001.

Formal volunteers were asked about what procedures were put in place once they became volunteers.

Table 1.32: Procedures experienced by volunteers

	2007 %	2001 %
Aware of health and safety regulations	61	63
Covered by insurance	51	51
A named person to go to for support	45	64
Attend support and/or supervision meetings	36	46
Received induction into the role	33	31
Written role description	15	18
Written volunteer agreement	14	14

Base: 212 (all formal volunteers)

Six out of every ten formal volunteers (61%) are aware of health and safety regulations and over half are covered by insurance. On the other side of the coin 15% of formal volunteers received a written role description and 14% of volunteers have received a written volunteer agreement. There has been a significant drop in the number of formal volunteers who have a named person to go to for support within the organisation they volunteer with. In 2001 64% of respondents stated they had a named person to go to for support, in 2007 this figure has fallen to 45%

In public sector organisations 90% of formal volunteers are made aware of health and safety regulations compared to 65% of volunteers in voluntary and community organisations. Eight out of ten volunteers who participate in public sector organisations have a named person to

go to for support (just over half of volunteers (53%) in voluntary and community organisations have a named person). Finally 53% of volunteers in voluntary and community organisations believe they are covered by insurance whereas 72% of volunteers in public sector organisations believe they covered.

In Table 1.32 a comparison has been made with the results from the 2001 survey. The majority of areas are relatively similar in terms of the experiences expressed by all formal volunteers. However, the areas of having a named person to go to for support and attendance at support/supervision meetings appear to be less prevalent in 2007 than in 2001.

6.2   Out of pocket expenses

Although volunteers are not paid they do, in some circumstances, receive money to cover any costs they may have personally incurred during the time of their voluntary activity. This next section examines the likelihood of volunteers to receive out of pocket expenses, what areas are covered and why in some cases they do not claim their out of pocket expenses.

Overall this survey found that 18.9% of all formal volunteers are engaged with organisations that cover out of pocket expenses. The types of areas covered by out of pocket expenses are listed in Table 1.33 below.

Table 1.33: Areas covered by out of pocket expenses

	%
Travel	72.5
Telephone, postage if volunteering from home	17.5
Meals	12.5
Special equipment	10.0
Other	10.0
None	5.0
Child/dependent care	2.5

Base: 40 (all formal volunteers who receive expenses)

The most common out of pocket expenses which are covered by organisations are travel costs with almost three quarters (72.5%) of all formal volunteers who participate with an organisation being reimbursed travel expenses. This was a similar finding to that presented in the 2001 report (75% of organisations paid travel expenses).

60% of formal volunteers do not claim out of pocket expenses even though they can and the most common reasons given are they didn't get around to it (22.5%) and that they viewed it as a form of donation (17.5%). One in ten formal volunteers felt that if they claimed expenses it would be taking money away from the organisation.

What has changed?

- In 2001, 25% of all formal volunteers had to complete an application form. In 2007, 25% of formal volunteers also had to complete an application form.
- 46% of formal volunteers in 2001 had a named person to go to for support. In 2007, this figure had fallen to 36%.

- 23% of formal volunteers were engaged with an organisation which paid out of pocket expenses. In 2007, 18.9% of formal volunteers stated the organisation they volunteer with provides out of pocket expenses.
- In 2001 and 2007 the most common type of out of pocket expense paid to formal volunteers was travel (75% and 72.5% respectively).

6.3   Training

Formal volunteers were asked what training opportunities, as volunteers, were being made available to them. A third of all formal volunteers (34%) stated in 2007 that they had received training from the organisations they volunteered with. This is an increase from 28% in 2001 and 31% in 1995. Volunteers with public sector organisations are the most likely to receive training (81% of all formal volunteers). In voluntary and community organisations, 37% of formal volunteers had received training, 32% of volunteers with sports clubs received training and 28% of volunteers in churches received some training.

Of those formal volunteers who received training 34% felt it was very helpful and a further 64.2% felt it was fairly helpful. Only 2% of formal volunteers felt that the training was not helpful. In 2001, 91% felt this training was adequate which is comparable with the 2007 findings.

A total of 34% of formal volunteers felt that they should receive training from the organisation they volunteer with.

Finally, formal volunteers were asked to assess how helpful or unhelpful the supervision, support and advice they received from the organisation that they volunteer with were. Just over three quarters (76%) felt the level of support was very or fairly helpful to them. In 2001, 84% of formal volunteers considered the supervision and support provided by their organisation to be adequate. This compares to a figure of 74% reported in 1995.

6.4   Employer Supported Volunteering (ESV)

Businesses and the public sector are becoming increasingly interested in how their own employees can become involved in volunteering. Many and varied programmes are being set up to assist employees to volunteer, whether during work hours or in their own time. This is called employer supported volunteering (ESV).

This survey looked at the number of individuals[25] who have employers who actively encourage, or have schemes for employees to take part in community projects, help voluntary or charity organisations, or give money. Of the 359 respondents to this question 23% stated they had employers who offered these types of schemes. In 2001, 30% of full or part-time employees stated their employer supported volunteering.

Respondents who worked for an employer who offers these schemes were asked if they covered only the giving of time or only money or both.

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[25] Full-time or part-time employees only.

Table 1.34: Type of ESV scheme offered

	%
Both helping and giving	40.7
Scheme for helping (time) only	19.8
Scheme for giving (money) only	17.6
Neither helping nor giving	13.2
Don't know	8.8

Base: 91 (all full-time and part-time employees who work
for an employer who offers ESV schemes)

As can be seen in Table 1.35 the most common type of scheme offered by employers covers both helping and giving (40.7%). This was followed by schemes that focused solely on helping (or more precisely volunteering).

Respondents were asked if they had personally participated in any activities of this sort that were encouraged by their employer. Just over half (51.6%) stated they had not, with between 15% and 16% of respondents stating they had participated in either helping only, or giving only or both.

Respondents were then asked to articulate what they perceived as the benefits of being involved in an ESV scheme offered by their employer.

Table 1.35: Benefits of being involved in an ESV scheme

	%
I get satisfaction from seeing the results	37.9
It makes me feel less selfish as a person	19.7
I really enjoy it	10.6
It gives me the chance to mix with a range of different people	9.1
It allows me to develop a range of transferable skills	7.6
It gives me a sense of personal achievement	6.1
It gives me something good to put on my CV	4.5
It allows me to start to volunteer on a regular basis	3.0
It allows me to make new contacts that might help my career	1.5

Base: 66 respondents

In a similar vein when formal and informal volunteers were asked what they personally get from volunteering, they rated the satisfaction of seeing results as the most important benefit of being involved in an ESV scheme. As before, the more altruistic and less tangible aspects of volunteering are being placed above the more selfish or career driven factors that some associate with the volunteering experience. When respondents were asked if they would like their employer to provide a scheme to take part in community projects or help voluntary or charity organisations, just over a third stated they would (14.2% stated their employer already did).

Finally, all respondents (not just full-time or part-time employees) were asked to comment on a number of statements that might encourage employees to take part in community projects or to help voluntary organisations or charities with the support of their employer.

Table 1.36: Factors to encourage greater participation in ESV schemes

Would encourage me a lot …	%
If I was able to get paid time off from my work to do it	15.7
If I could choose the activity	13.2
If I could do it as part of a group of people at work	12.7
If I knew it would benefit me in my career	12.3
If I knew it would help me improve my skills	11.8
If it helped me to get qualifications	11.6
If more information or guidance about the sort of things I could do were available in the workplace	10.1
If my employer let me use materials or equipment (eg stationery/photocopying) for the organisation I helped	9.0
If I was able to get unpaid time off from my work to do it	7.6

Base 1,020 (all respondents)

As can be seen in Table 1.36 the issue of time has once again emerged as the most pertinent factor when it comes to volunteering and in this case it relates to getting time off work (and still be paid) to be involved in an ESV scheme.

7. Perceptions of volunteering

This section examines the attitudes of respondents to a series of statements about volunteering and the context in which volunteering takes place. Table 1.37 below presents the attitudes of formal and informal volunteers as well as the views of those individuals who choose not to volunteer.

Summary

- Just under half of all formal volunteers (49.1%) strongly agreed that many organisations could not survive without unpaid workers. almost a third of individuals (30.2%) who choose not to volunteer strongly agree with the statement that volunteers are integral to the survival of many organisations.

- Very few respondents feel that the divisions in Northern Ireland society are in themselves a reason why individuals cannot become more involved in voluntary activities. 38.7% of formal volunteers consider being involved in unpaid work can contribute to an improvement in cross community relations.

- In 1995, 15% of volunteers agreed that organisations that involved volunteers were amateurish. In 2007 this has fallen to just 10% (strongly agree and agree) of all respondents.

Table 1.37: Attitudes to volunteering

Strongly agree …	Formal volunteers (%)	Informal volunteers (%)	Non-volunteers (%)	All %
Many organisations could not survive without unpaid workers	49.1	44.3	30.2	36.8
Unpaid workers offer something different which could not be provided by paid professionals	43.9	37.9	19.7	27.9
If Government fulfilled all of its responsibilities there should be no need for people to do unpaid work	24.1	25.1	24.2	24.7
Being involved in unpaid work can contribute to an improvement in cross community relations	38.7	33.4	16.8	24.4
Engaging in unpaid work helps people to take an active role in democratic society	24.5	22.3	10.6	16.0
Everyone has a moral responsibility to do unpaid work at some time in their life	19.8	17.8	8.1	12.3
Unpaid work is a threat to paid work and is used to make cutbacks in public spending	5.2	7.0	7.3	6.9
Divisions in society in Northern Ireland prevent people from becoming more involved in unpaid work	6.1	10.3	4.7	6.6
Organisations using unpaid workers are usually amateurish and unprofessional	2.8	1.7	1.3	1.5

Base: 1,020 (formal volunteers = 212; informal volunteers = 359 (excluding formal volunteers = 248); non-volunteers = 556)

The value of volunteers to organisations is the most commonly accepted view of volunteering help by all respondents. This attitude is most strongly expressed amongst formal volunteers of whom just under half strongly agreed that many organisations could not survive without unpaid workers. Interestingly almost a third of individuals (30.2%) who choose not to volunteer strongly agree with the statement that volunteers are integral to the survival of many organisations.

When asked if unpaid workers offer something different which could not be provided by paid professionals, 43.9% of formal volunteers strongly agreed, whereas only one in five of non-volunteers felt the same way. Perhaps the actual experience of being a volunteer highlights the differences between unpaid and paid staff in terms of a commitment to a cause, enthusiasm and a general willingness to help out wherever possible.

A consensus of opinion amongst all the different groups emerged when asked if Government fulfilled all of its responsibilities, there should be no need for people to do unpaid work. One quarter of all respondents felt that with greater Government intervention the need for volunteers would be reduced.

The attitudes towards the next three statements (volunteering as a way to improve community relations, develop civic participation and volunteering as a moral duty) all seem to be dependent upon whether or not an individual is actually a volunteer or not. As can be seen in Table 1.37, if an individual has volunteered, the impacts associated with voluntary activities are much more evident to them than if they had never volunteered. There could be a degree of scepticism amongst non-volunteers that is influencing their opinions towards these statements but without further investigation it is difficult to pinpoint why non-volunteers are less positive about these issues.

Finally and encouragingly, very few respondents feel that the divisions in Northern Ireland society are in themselves a reason why individuals cannot become more involved in voluntary activities. Overall, 6.6% of respondents strongly agreed that it was a factor in influencing an individual's ability to volunteer.

The results to this and all the other statements are examined in relation to the results produced in 1995 and 2001.

Table 1.38: Attitudes to volunteering (1995 to 2007)

Strongly agree and agree …	2007 (%)	2001 (%)	1995 (%)
Engaging in unpaid work helps people to take an active role in democratic society	70	-	63
Unpaid workers offer something different which could not be provided by paid professionals	69	-	57
If government fulfilled all of its responsibilities there should be no need for people to do unpaid work	60	48	52
Everyone has a moral responsibility to do unpaid work at some time in their life	47	49	45
Unpaid work is a threat to paid work and is used to make cutbacks in public spending	28	26	36
Organisations using unpaid workers are usually amateurish and unprofessional	10	12	15

Base: 1,020 (2007), 1,312 (2001), 1,063 (1995)

As can be seen in Table 1.38, across each of the statements that were asked in 1995 and 2001 there is a fairly consistent level of agreement amongst all respondents about volunteering. Perhaps the one area where the attitudes of respondents have become more pronounced is in relation to Government and the level to which it fulfils its responsibilities. In 1995 just over half of all respondents felt that if Government fulfilled all of its responsibilities there would be no need for people to volunteer. In 2007, 60% of respondents agreed with this statement. It would of course be unwise to make any sweeping statements about any perceived failure of Government in terms of public service delivery but there does appear to be a trend towards feeling that volunteers and by extension organisations are filling the gaps.

One other area where there has been a slight, but nevertheless significant, change is in relation to the perception of organisations which involve volunteers as being usually amateurish and unprofessional. In 1995, 15% of volunteers agreed that organisations that used volunteers were amateurish. In 2007, this has fallen to just 10% of all respondents agreeing with this statement. This would suggest that the image of organisations that involve volunteers is improving and they are being seen as more professional whether they involve volunteers or not.

What's changed?

- 63% of all respondents in 1995 felt that engaging in unpaid work helps people to take an active role in democratic society. In 2007 the number of respondents agreeing with this statement has increased to 70%.
- A consistent number of respondents over the 12 years have felt that everyone has a moral responsibility to do unpaid work at some time in their life (1995, 45%; 2001, 49%; 2007, 47%).

8.   Volunteering in organisations

This section of the report focuses on the results of a survey that was circulated to 3,045 organisations and institutions across a number of sectors. In this sample voluntary and community organisations, churches, sports governing bodies, social enterprises and statutory agencies were surveyed. A total of 745 questionnaires were returned (a breakdown of the response rate by organisation type can be seen in Appendix 2) which works out at a response rate of 24.4%.

Summary

- 38% of organisations stated that in the past five years the number of volunteers involved in their organisation has increased. 42.1% of organisations have reported a decrease in the number of volunteers in the past five years.

- The most common type of volunteering is organising or helping to run an activity with 79% of organisations stating that this is one of the main roles performed by volunteers. The second most common volunteering activity is leading a group or being a member of a committee or trust.

- 84.3% of all organisations stated that volunteers are very committed/flexible and enthusiastic and 81.7%of all organisations stated that volunteers bring new/additional skills to the organisation.

- 77% of organisations stated they couldn't operate without the support of volunteers.

- The top three methods used by organisations to recruit volunteers are through personal contact, word of mouth and local newspapers.

- 14.1% of organisations believe that the Year of the Volunteer 2005 either greatly impacted or had some impact on the number of individuals who approached them wanting to volunteer.

- Over half the organisations (55.3%) stated that they have difficulty recruiting volunteers.

- Organisations stated that they felt the most common reason why individuals do not volunteer is that they have insufficient time.

- In relation to how the recruitment of volunteers could be made easier, 38.3% of organisations believe that local volunteering campaigns would be beneficial. In addition 37.2% of organisations stated that if more resources became available to cover the activities of volunteers this could make it easier to recruit volunteers.

- 31.1% of organisations that involve volunteers have a budget which covers volunteer activities and expenditure. The average volunteer budget is £7,877.

- Over 60% of organisations stated that having a dedicated volunteer manager has had a positive impact on the recruitment and retention of volunteers.

8.1   Profile of volunteers

The first part of this section will examine the overall number of volunteers who organisations have stated engage with them. The demographic profile of the volunteers will also be examined in this section.

Table 1.39: Extent of volunteering by organisation type

	All (%)	Voluntary and community (%)	Churches/ religious bodies (%)	Sports groups/ governing bodies (%)	Social enterprises (%)	Statutory agencies (%)
Involve volunteers	94.0	93.3	98.0	92.9	100	66.7
Total number of organisations	720	601	50	28	34	9
Average number of volunteers[26]	16	15	60	40	12	88
Estimate of total volunteers	**203,800**	**75,000**	**60,000**	**40,000**	**2,400**	**26,400**
% of total volunteers		**36.8**	**29.4**	**19.6**	**1.1**	**12.9**

Although two different methodologies have been employed, the estimates for the number of volunteers for different types of organisations are quite similar when the two surveys are considered. For instance, the survey of individuals produced an estimate of 84,068 volunteers who are involved with voluntary and community organisations. In Table 1.39, this figure is 77.400 (if social enterprises are included) for voluntary and community organisations.

Table 1.40 below provides an indication as to the demographic profile of volunteers in Northern Ireland. It indicates that women are more likely to volunteer than men with 60.9% of the volunteers involved in this research being female. It also indicates that over one third of volunteers are aged between 19 and 24 years old. In addition nearly 30% of volunteers are between the ages of 25 and 54 years old.

The demographic profile of volunteers changes when examining volunteers by organisation type. For example, in sporting groups, governing bodies and social enterprises men are more likely to volunteer. In relation to age, just over 50% of volunteers are aged between 25 and 44 years old in sporting groups and governing bodies. The most common age of volunteers in social enterprises is between 45 and 64 years old with two thirds of volunteers falling within that age bracket.

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[26] The median was used to estimate the average number of volunteers as a small number of organisations had very significant numbers of volunteers. The use of the mean would have meant any estimates produced on theses figures would have been skewed.

Table 1.40: Demographic profile of volunteers by organisation type

	All (%)	Voluntary and community (%)	Churches/ religious bodies (%)	Sport groups/ governing bodies (%)	Social enterprises (%)	Statutory agencies (%)
Male	39.1	36.9	43.9	60.2	76.3	48.7
Female	60.9	63.1	56.1	39.8	23.7	51.3
<18	7.2	7.6	5.0	4.6	0.3	17.1
18-24	34.4	38.8	7.9	8.4	2.9	9.4
25-34	11.4	10.4	18.4	24.1	4.4	7.1
35-44	17.6	17.8	15.0	26.8	10.6	3.8
45-54	12.0	10.8	20.3	19.3	16.1	16.4
55-64	11.3	9.5	19.8	10.8	50.5	22.1
64-74	4.6	3.9	10.1	3.8	12.3	18.8
74 >	1.5	1.2	3.5	2.2	2.9	5.3

In voluntary and community organisations 63.1% of volunteers are female and 46.4% of volunteers are 24 years old or younger. These results are similar to results found in *State of the Sector IV*[27] which established that 67.2% of volunteers in the voluntary and community sector are female. In churches and religious bodies, females are more likely to volunteer than males making up 56.1% of volunteers. The most common age bracket for volunteers in churches and religious bodies is between 45 and 64 years old.

The *Volunteering in Organisations 2001* report found that whilst there was a range of ages in the volunteer body, the age range 25-54 year olds represents the core volunteer base for most groups. The findings from this survey found that the volunteers in this age range made up 41% of all the volunteers recorded by respondents.

In addition this survey looked at the ethnicity of volunteers. It found that 98.7% of volunteers are white. A further 0.17% of volunteers are of mixed ethnicity while 0.16% are Chinese. These results are reflective of the Northern Ireland Census 2001 which reports that 99.1% of the population in Northern Ireland are white (0.2% of the population are of mixed ethnicity and 0.25% are Chinese[28]).

In addition to examining ethnicity this research looked at the number of disabled individuals who volunteer. When organisations that involve volunteers were asked to provide the number of disabled individuals who volunteer with their organisation, 46.3% stated they engaged with volunteers with a disability. Overall disabled individuals who volunteer make up approximately 3% of all volunteers (an estimated 6,300 individuals). When compared to the number of individuals who have some degree of disability in Northern Ireland (18% of people

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[27] *State of the Sector IV*, 2005, NICVA.
[28] Northern Ireland Census 2001 Key Statistics (NISRA)
http://www.nisranew.nisra.gov.uk/Census/pdf/Key%20Statistics%20ReportTables.pdf

living in private households[29]) there appears to be a significant under representation of disabled individuals who volunteer. In 2001, less than half (41%) of organisations stated they involved volunteers with a disability.

Organisations were asked to indicate whether or not they monitor the sexual orientation and community background (religious composition) of volunteers. A third (32.5%) of organisations stated that they do monitor the community background of their volunteers. In relation to monitoring the sexual orientation of volunteers, only 12.8% of organisations stated that they monitor this area.

Organisations were also asked to indicate the number of volunteers engaged in the governance of the organisation.

Table 1.41: Number of volunteers engaged in governance by organisation type

	All	Voluntary and community	Churches/ religious bodies	Sport groups/ governing bodies	Social enterprises	Statutory agencies
Average volunteers	10	9	12	10	10	2
Estimate of total volunteers	**70,100**	**45,000**	**12,500**	**10,000**	**2,000**	**600**
% of total volunteers	**34.3**	**60.0**	**20.8**	**25.0**	**83.3**	**2.2**

Based on the findings of this research just over a third of all volunteers (34.4%) are involved in the governance of an organisation. Of course this does not preclude them from being involved in other voluntary activities so there may be instances of double counting in terms of the roles individuals fulfil. Nevertheless the estimate of the number of volunteers involved in governance in voluntary and community organisations is 45,000. The *Committee Matters* report published by the Volunteer Development Agency found that in voluntary and community organisations there were an estimated 33,519 individuals involved in the governance of organisations. There was an average of 10 individuals per committee which is slightly higher than the figure recorded in Table 1.41.

Organisations were asked if the numbers of volunteers had altered at all in the past five years.

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[29] The Prevalence of Disability and Activity Limitations amongst adults and children living in private households in Northern Ireland, NISRA 2007

Table 1.42: Level of volunteering in last five years

	All	Voluntary and community	Churches/ religious bodies	Sports groups/ governing bodies	Social enterprises	Statutory agencies
Increased	38.0	37.7	52.1	28.0	26.5	57.1
Decreased	42.1	42.1	35.4	52.0	50.0	14.3
Stayed about the same	17.0	17.4	12.5	12.0	17.6	28.6
Don't know	1.4	1.5	-	4.0	-	-
Did not have any volunteers 5 years ago	1.5	1.3	-	4.0	5.9	-

Base: 660 (all respondents which involve volunteers; 17 missing)

As is shown in Table 1.42, 38.0% of organisations stated that in the past five years the number of volunteers involved in their organisation had increased. This is especially the case when looking at voluntary and community organisations, and churches and religious bodies, where 37.7% and 52.1% of organisations respectively believe the number of volunteers has increased. Over 25% of sporting bodies, social enterprises and statutory agencies have also seen an increase in the number of volunteers in the past five years.

Nevertheless, 42.1% of all organisations which involve volunteers have reported a decrease in the number of volunteers in the past five years. This finding substantiates the results presented earlier in this report which have shown a decrease in the number of volunteers between 2001 and 2007. It is not possible using the results in Table 1.42 to determine the scale to which the number of volunteers have increased or decreased. It nevertheless helps to develop a more rounded picture of the state of volunteering in Northern Ireland which is at best remaining static and at worst is on a downward trend.

8.2   Benefits of volunteering

This section examines the different roles carried out by volunteers and also the perceived benefits the organisations believe they receive through their engagement with volunteers. There are numerous different roles that volunteers carry out in organisations ranging from helping with events to visiting people. Table 1.43 below indicates the most common roles that volunteers undertake.

Table 1.43: Volunteer activities

	%
Organising or helping to run an activity or event	79.0
Leading the group/member of a committee/trustees	78.0
Raising or handling money	63.4
Secretarial, administrative or clerical work	55.5
Promotion	39.3
Working with young people	39.0
Giving advice/information/counselling	36.2
Representing	34.1
Arts/crafts/drama/music	32.2
Providing transport/driving	31.3
Visiting people	29.5
Selling tickets	28.7
Befriending or mentoring people	27.8
Teaching or training	27.6
Campaigning	25.7
Information technology	22.5
Youth work	22.2
Other practical help (e.g. shopping, gardening, building)	20.1
Helping in church or religious organisation	16.1
Coaching	16.1
Childcare	16.0
Collecting/making things to be sold for charity	15.5
Health/social care	12.6
First aid	12.6
Working in a charity shop	5.3
Rescue work	4.7

Base: 677 (responses exceed 100% as this was a multiple response question)

Volunteering takes many shapes and forms but in this instance the most common type of volunteering is organising or helping to run an activity with 83.9% of organisations stating that this is one of the main roles of their volunteers. The second most common volunteering activity is leading a group or being a member of a committee or trust. 82.8% of organisations state that this is one of the different roles that volunteers carry out within their organisation. In 67.2% of organisations, volunteers have a financial role such as raising or handling money. This is done through methods such as selling tickets which occurs in just over 30% of organisations.

In 2001, committee work was the most common role carried out by volunteers (80%). This was followed by raising money (56%) and the provision of assistance in the office (50%). With the exception of the predominance of organising or helping run an event the main roles undertaken by volunteers in organisations have largely remained unchanged.

Organisations were asked to indicate the benefits of involving volunteers in their organisations.

Table 1.44: Benefits of volunteers

	All (%)	Voluntary and community	Churches/ religious bodies	Sport groups/ governing bodies	Social enterprises	Statutory agencies
Volunteers are very committed/flexible/enthusiastic	84.3	84.5	85.7	76.9	79.4	100.0
Volunteers bring new/additional skills to the organisation	81.7	83.2	81.6	65.4	61.8	100.0
Volunteers assist in the governance and management of the organisation	79.3	78.6	75.5	88.5	91.2	66.7
We couldn't operate without their support	77.0	78.1	83.7	92.3	70.6	33.3
Volunteers enhance the effectiveness of the organisation	72.7	73.3	69.4	69.2	64.7	83.3
Volunteers can help improve services or increase service provision	69.9	71.3	63.3	61.5	55.9	83.3
Volunteers raise the profile of the organisation	67.4	69.5	61.2	46.2	58.8	50.0
Volunteers promote a sense of community ownership as they are local	67.1	75.2	71.4	38.5	73.5	50.0
Volunteers save the organisation money	65.9	65.4	63.3	65.4	79.4	50.0
Volunteers provide a service that we do not have paid staff for	64.7	64.9	75.5	61.5	55.9	33.3
Volunteers assist with fundraising	63.5	66.3	67.3	46.2	91.2	16.7
Volunteers enable the continuance of programmes — it is the only way we can continue to work	60.3	59.7	75.5	69.2	47.1	33.3
Volunteers provide cover/assistance/support to staff	57.2	58.8	53.1	30.8	55.9	33.3
Volunteers provide the core work of the organisation	53.3	52.2	71.4	65.4	44.1	16.7

Base: 677 (responses exceed 100% as this was a multiple response question)

Volunteers are considered to be a valuable asset to most sectors in Northern Ireland. This is definitely reflected in the results above in Table 1.44, with 84.3% of all organisations stating that volunteers are very committed/flexible and enthusiastic and 81.7% of organisations stating that they bring new/additional skills to the organisation. Indeed 53.3% of organisations state that volunteers provide the core work of their organisation. This is recognition of the valuable contribution that volunteers make towards the work of a wide range of organisations and institutions.

77% of organisations stated they could not operate without the support of volunteers. In addition 33.3% of statutory agencies stated that they couldn't operate without the support of

volunteers, which is a very positive result given the nature of statutory agencies. Sporting bodies stated they were the most dependent upon volunteers with 92.3% of respondents believing they couldn't operate without the support of their volunteers. When assessing if volunteers enhance the effectiveness of organisations it is clear to see that the majority of organisations (72.7%) believe this to be the case.

When looking at these results by organisation type it is evident that voluntary and community organisations believe that volunteers increase the effectiveness of their organisations as 73.3% of voluntary and community organisations stated this to be true. In 2001 the involvement of volunteers was also found to confer on the host organisation a wide variety of benefits. These included the addition of valuable skills and experience, the enhancement of the organisation's effectiveness and efficiency and the high levels of commitment that volunteers bring.

8.3   Recruiting volunteers

The recruitment of volunteers is an ongoing concern for every organisation as turnover of volunteers can at times be high and organisations face many challenges in recruiting volunteers. This is especially true given the results in Table 1.42 which found that 42.1% of organisations had reported a decrease in volunteers over the last five years. Therefore organisations were asked to rank what are perceived to be the most effective methods for recruiting volunteers.

Table 1.45: Methods of recruiting volunteers

	Rank
Personal contacts	1
By word of mouth	2
Local newspaper	3
Volunteer bureaux or centres (eg VSB)	4
Local events	5
Community centre	6
Leaflets (material from the organisation)	7
Internet/organisational website	8
Promotional events/volunteer fair	9
Through a church/religious organisation	10
National Campaigns (eg Volunteers Week)	11
TV or radio (local or national)	12
Library	13
School/college/university	14
Employers' Volunteering Scheme	15
National newspaper	16
Millennium Volunteers programme	17

Base: 677 (all respondents which involve volunteers)

The top three most effective methods used by organisations to recruit volunteers are through personal contact, word of mouth and local newspapers. In relation to using word of mouth

many organisations ask their staff to inform family and friends (and to ask them to spread the word) of new volunteering opportunities. This is a very fast and effective way to let people know that they are looking for volunteers and also a very cost effective method of recruitment. The local media is also seen as an effective recruitment tool by organisations as it means that local people are being made aware of volunteering opportunities within the local community. Usually this is quite an inexpensive recruitment method. The Millennium Volunteers programme, national newspapers and employer's volunteering schemes were perceived by organisations to be not as effective as personal contact or advertising in local media.

For the majority of organisations in 2001, the main methods of recruiting volunteers were through personal contacts (83%), word of mouth (83%), the organisation's membership (55%) and the use of posters and leaflets (41%). This is largely consistent with the findings presented above in Table 1.45.

This survey found that nearly 25% of organisations actively target volunteer recruitment at specific groups. As the demographics of society change so organisations have to broaden their target groups for volunteers. When asked to specify which groups organisations targeted, the most common responses were people involved in the same church or parents of children by getting them involved in clubs and schools, etc. In 2001, almost half (48%) of the organisations surveyed tried to recruit particular types of people to become volunteers. The main reasons that were given by organisations for targeting certain groups were the under representation of some groups amongst volunteers and the organisation was aiming to match volunteers to clients.

In addition organisations were asked if they believed the Year of the Volunteer 2005 initiative had increased the number of individuals who have approached them wanting to volunteer.

Table 1.46: Year of the Volunteer 2005

	%
Great deal	2.4
Some	11.7
Not sure	22.7
Limited	10.7
Not at all	38.7

Base: 634 (all respondents which involve volunteers; 43 missing)

Overall, 14.1% of organisations believe that this initiative either greatly impacted or had some impact on the number of individuals who approached them wanting to volunteer. Nearly 50% of organisations however felt that this initiative only had a limited or no impact at all.

With regard to recruitment, organisations were asked if they have had any difficulty in recruiting volunteers. Over half the organisations (55.3%) stated that they have difficulty recruiting volunteers. Organisations were asked to rank the reasons they feel stop individuals from volunteering.

Table 1.47: Perceptions of why people do not volunteer

	Rank
Individuals have insufficient free time	1
People may be worried about the risk and being liable if anything goes wrong	2
Fear of bureaucracy puts people off	3
Potential volunteers may fear losing benefits/being out of pocket	4
People may not know how to find out about opportunities or getting involved	5
Potential volunteers have trouble accessing transport	6
Lack of flexibility and variety in types of volunteering opportunities on offer	7
People may be put off by criminal record checks	8

Base: 677 (all respondents which involve volunteers)

There is a general belief that time is the biggest barrier to people volunteering and that people feel that volunteering can be time intensive[30]. People's perceptions of time, both of the amount of their 'spare' time available and the time demands of volunteering create barriers to involvement[31]. This belief is confirmed by this research. Organisations stated that they felt the most common reason why individuals do not volunteer is that they have insufficient time. Organisations also believe that people are worried about risk and being liable if anything goes wrong while they are volunteering and also fear that they could loses benefits or not get paid expenses. Few organisations believe that people are put off volunteering because of criminal record checks or due to a lack of flexibility and variety in types of volunteering opportunities on offer.

The main impediments to volunteering as reported in 2001 were felt to be the limitations on people's time, the lack of information and advice on how people can become involved in volunteering and a lack of awareness about the particular activities and functions of the organisation that involve volunteers. In addition, around a third of organisations consider that those on state benefits are cautious about volunteering in case it should affect their claims. Although the question was posed in a slightly different way in 2007, the main impediment that organisations believe stops individuals from volunteering is time.

As already mentioned earlier in this report over 50% of organisations stated that they have difficulty in recruiting volunteers and the reasons for this are analysed above. Therefore those organisations which have stated they have a difficultly in recruiting volunteers were asked to indicate what initiatives they believe could make volunteer recruitment more effective.

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[30] Young people speak out on volunteering, Institute of Volunteering Research
http://www.ivr.org.uk/generationvbulletin.htm
[31] Volunteering for All? Exploring the link between volunteering and social exclusion
http://www.ivr.org.uk/socialexclusion/Final%20Research%20Bulletin%20Text%20-
%20Volunteering%20for%20All%20-%20large%20print%20version.doc

Table 1.50: Factors that influence volunteer recruitment

	%
Local volunteering campaigns	75.2
More resources to cover the activities of volunteers	73.2
Greater media coverage of volunteering activities	56.6
Less red tape associated with volunteers	46.4
Better volunteering opportunities in the organisation	37.9
Centralised resource listing available volunteers	35.6
More flexible volunteering opportunities	35.0
Regional volunteering campaigns	26.5
Internet/organisational website	17.2

Base: 343 (all respondents which indicated a difficulty in recruiting volunteers)

In relation to how the recruitment of volunteers could be made easier, 75.2% of organisations believe that local volunteering campaigns would be beneficial. In addition 73.2% of organisations stated that if more resources became available to cover the activities of volunteers this could make it easier to recruit volunteers. Quite a large number of organisations feel that individuals are put off volunteering because of the amount of red tape associated with voluntary activity. Just under half of all organisations which find recruitment difficult (46.4%) believe that if there was less red tape more people would be interested in offering their time and services in the form of volunteering. Few organisations believe that using the internet or having an organisational website would make it easier to recruit volunteers.

Organisations are becoming more aware of the importance of having a formal application and monitoring process with regard to volunteer recruitment. Table 1.51 below looks at the percentage of organisations that have these structures in place.

Table 1.51: Formal application and monitoring processes

%	Yes	No	Don't Know
Ask new volunteers to complete an application form	53.0	47.0	1.0
Interview/informal chat with potential volunteers	78.8	20.3	0.9
Ask new volunteers to provide references	49.8	47.9	2.3
Undertake a POCNI[32] check	59.5	37.6	2.9
Require new volunteers to undergo a trial period?	43.6	52.3	4.1

Base: 677 (all respondents which involve volunteers)

As can be seen in Table 1.51, 78.8% of organisations undertake an interview or informal chat with potential volunteers to give them an idea of what is involved in volunteering in the organisation and to ensure that the individuals have the necessary skills and experience for the volunteer post. Not all organisations ask potential volunteers to complete an application form. Over half (53%) of organisations require potential volunteers to complete an application form, whilst 43.6% of organisations require new volunteers to undergo a trial period. POCNI checks are undertaken by nearly 60% of organisations. However this check may not always

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[32] The Protection of Children (NI) Service [POC (NI)]
http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/hss/child_care/child_protection.htm

necessary, depending on the nature of the volunteering. With regard to references, 49.8% of organisations require potential volunteers to provide them with a reference.

The *Volunteering in Organisations 2001* report found that there was no uniformity across respondent organisations in terms of the basic pre-entry procedures such as the completion of an application form, checking of criminal records and so on. Just under half (48%) of organisations undertook a criminal record check compared to 59.5% in 2007. The completion of an application form was required by 50% of the organisations which responded to the survey in 2001. This has only increased slightly to 53% in 2007.

There is widespread consensus associated with the importance of volunteer recognition and appreciation in terms of the recruitment and retention of individuals. Organisations were asked to indicate if they do anything to recognise the contribution of their volunteers.

Table 1.52: Volunteer recognition

	%
Contribution of volunteers is included in annual reports and other documents	68.2
Include and recognise volunteers at events	61.8
Provide social events	52.2
Include volunteers in developing organisational policies and strategic plans	50.7
Present certificates, etc, for long service	20.7
Have a volunteer of the month/year award	6.1

Base: 677 (all respondents which involve volunteers)

As can be seen in Table 1.52, in organisations which involve volunteers, 68.2% recognise the contribution of volunteers in an annual report and other documentation. 61.8% of organisations include volunteers at events and just over half of all organisations (52.2%) arrange and provide social events for volunteers to show recognition and appreciation for their contribution. In addition 6.1% of organisations have established a recognition award scheme where volunteers are recognised on a monthly or yearly basis for their work. A further 20.7% present volunteers with certificates in recognition of their long service. 50.7% of organisations have included volunteers in developing organisational policies and strategic plans. The different methods of recognising volunteer contributions give volunteers a sense of being valued and that their contribution is worthwhile.

Organisations were also asked if they do exit interviews or discussions with volunteers when they leave the organisation. Only 28.7% of organisations stated that they carry out exit interviews, however 6.8% are unsure if this occurs in their organisation.

8.4   Managing volunteers

Organisations were asked to indicate if volunteers or paid staff are responsible for the role of volunteer management within their organisation.

Table 1.53: Volunteer managers

	No. Orgs	%
Volunteers	168	27.1
Paid staff	290	46.8
There is no one fulfilling this role	161	26.1

Base: 619 (all respondents which involve volunteers; 58 missing)

For the most part organisations incorporate volunteer management into the roles and responsibilities of their paid staff. 27.1% of organisations which have a volunteer management post enlist the services of volunteers to fill it. 26.1% of organisations currently have no-one in this role.

When examining the amount of time paid staff and volunteers spent on volunteer management, paid staff spend 34.1% of their time on volunteer management. Volunteers on the other hand spend on average 27.2% of their time on volunteer management. In relation to formal training, 45.3% of volunteers and 53.7% of paid staff have had the opportunity to undertake training in volunteer management.

Managing volunteers involves more than recruitment and monitoring although this research has found that these are two of the main responsibilities of that role. Table 1.54 below looks at the different aspects of this role.

Table 1.54: Different aspects of managing volunteers

	%
Volunteer support/mentoring	80.6
Day-to-day volunteer supervision/management	73.9
Volunteer recruitment	67.4
Volunteer training	63.0
Liaison with other organisations on volunteering issues	55.3
Promoting volunteering	54.8
Developing volunteer policy	42.6

Base: 387 (all respondents which have either paid staff or volunteers managing volunteers)

Over 80.6% of organisations state that their volunteer managers are responsible for volunteer support and mentoring. In most organisations volunteer managers are also responsible for the day-to-day supervision and management and for the recruitment of volunteers with 73.9% and 67.4% respectively carrying out these tasks. For 54.8% of organisations the promotion of volunteering and liaising with other organisations (55.3%) on volunteering issues are some of the responsibilities of their volunteer managers. In relation to a volunteer policy 42.6% of organisations stated that their volunteer manager is responsible for this role.

In 2001, 74% of organisations provided some form of induction training/orientation to the organisation and its work. However, the 2001 report found that only half (52%) of organisations provide volunteers with access to accredited training.

Table 1.55: Volunteer management

	Yes	No	Don't know
An induction with regard to the organisation	84.5	13.6	1.9
A named person to go to for support	81.5	16.1	2.4
Training to carry out their role	76.2	20.5	3.3
Copy of/information about child protection policy	71.7	24.9	3.4
Support and/or supervision meetings	69.3	26.9	3.8
Copy of/information about health and safety regulations	68.9	27.1	4.0
Copy of/information on equal opportunities policy	61.3	33.6	5.1
Copy of/information about insurance cover	56.7	37.5	5.8
A written role description	53.4	42.4	4.3
A written volunteer agreement	38.6	55.4	6.0

Base: 677 (all respondents which involve volunteers)

Having a well thought out induction for new volunteers is important and more and more organisations are seeing the value of it. Induction can be used as an opportunity for both the volunteer and the volunteer co-ordinator (or designated personnel) to go over the role of the volunteer and make them aware of the organisation's aims and values and policies and procedures. In this research nearly 85% of organisations now have an induction process in place for their volunteers. The second most common practice in relation to volunteer management is providing volunteers with a named person to whom they can go for support. 81.5% of organisations provide such a person for their volunteers.

Another common practice in relation to volunteer management is providing training to volunteers in how to carry out their role. Over two thirds of organisations provide this training for their volunteers. A written volunteer agreement outlining what the volunteer can expect from the organisation and outlining their roles and responsibilities, training and supervision is the least most common practice offered to volunteers with 38.6% of organisations providing this. A written role description is also good practice in relation to volunteers however only 53.4% of organisations provide this. Supervision and support meetings are for the most part viewed as important with nearly 70% of organisations providing this for their volunteers.

Most organisations see the importance of ensuring that volunteers have access to specific information with over 71% of organisations providing their volunteers with information on their child protection policy, 61.3% on equal opportunities and 68.9% on health and safety regulations. Organisations are less commonly providing volunteers with a copy of or information about insurance cover. Only 56.3% of organisations provide volunteers with this.

Organisations were asked to indicate the overall impact of having an individual (either paid or voluntary) with responsibility for the management of volunteers.

Table 1.56: Impact of dedicated volunteer manager

	%
Positive impact	61.4
No difference	19.5
Not sure	17.8
Negative impact	1.3

Base: 298 (all respondents which have either paid staff or volunteers managing volunteers; 89 missing)

Over 60% of organisations stated that having a dedicated volunteer manager has had a positive impact on the recruitment and retention of volunteers. Only 1.3% of organisations stated that having a volunteer manager has had a negative impact on the recruitment and retention of volunteers within their organisation.

Not all organisations have the personnel or resources for volunteer management and development. Even those that do at times require support or advice in relation to this. Table 1.57 illustrates the most common sources of support which organisations access.

Table 1.57: Sources of support and advice on the management and development of volunteers

	%
Local volunteer bureaux/centre	28.8
NICVA	28.6
Volunteer Development Agency	26.2
Local network/support organisation	25.1
Have not received any advice or support	14.6
District council(s)	13.5
Rural Community Network	9.8
Northern Ireland Sports Forum/Council	4.7
YouthNet	3.8

Base: 677 (all respondents which involve volunteers)

The two most common sources of advice and support are local volunteer bureaux (28.8%) and centres and NICVA (28.6%) with respondents stating that they contact these organisations in relation to receiving advice and support on volunteer management and development. The Volunteer Development Agency is the next most common source of advice and support in relation to volunteer management and development. This organisation is seen as a good source of up to date information about volunteer management and also provides training on all aspects of volunteer management. The Volunteer Development Agency also has a range of initiatives to develop standards of good practice for managing volunteers and promoting the role of the volunteer manager.

Local networks and/or support organisations are also seen as a reliable source of advice and support in this area with 25.1% of respondents contacting them frequently for help and support in relation to volunteer management and development. 13.5% of organisations also stated that they have received or accessed support and advice from a district council. It is important to mention here that nearly 14.6% of organisations have not received any advice or support. This could be for numerous reasons such as being unaware of where this support is available or not having the resources to pay for such support.

Due to a reduction in European funding and a competitive funding environment, not all organisations are in a position to have a separate budget in relation to their volunteers. This research found that 31.1% of organisations which use the services of volunteers have a budget which covers volunteer activities and expenditure. The average volunteer budget is £7,877, however larger organisations have more resources to invest. The maximum organisation volunteer budget in this research was £100,000.

Table 1.58: Profile of volunteer budgets

	% of budget headings	Proportion of overall budget %
Volunteer expenses	87.1	20.5
Volunteer training	65.2	10.1
Materials and equipment for volunteers	52.3	7.9
Volunteer insurance	42.3	9.1
Recruitment of volunteers	36.1	4.8
Volunteer support and supervision	33.3	8.5
Volunteer recognition	30.4	7.9
Delivery of volunteer led services	20.0	10.0

Base: 210 (all respondents which have a budget for volunteers)

As is shown in Table 1.58, 20.5% of volunteering budgets are spent on volunteer expenses such as travel and meals. This is the most common expenditure from volunteer budgets. Unsurprisingly volunteer training is the second most common expenditure. There is recognition that volunteer training is essential to help volunteers work effectively whatever their role and most organisations understand the importance of relevant training. Costs incurred for volunteer training include supplying volunteers with training material and providing a venue with appropriate equipment for training to be delivered. If training is to last a day the organisation must supply refreshments and if there is not an appropriate individual within the organisation to deliver this training, organisations have to pay for an external facilitator to do this. On average organisations commit 10.1% of their volunteer budget towards training.

The delivery of volunteer led services is one of the main expenditures of volunteer budgets with organisations spending on average 10% of this budget on initiating, managing and improving them. However, only 20% of organisations with a budget for volunteers have indicated that this is an area covered by the budget. Organisations mentioned a number of other expenses that are covered by their volunteer budget. 16% mentioned other costs which include organising social events for volunteers, childcare costs and volunteer co-ordinators' salaries.

Paying expenses to volunteers is common practice for the majority of organisations involved in this research with 82.1% of them reimbursing volunteers for the out of pocket expenses they incur while carrying out volunteering tasks and activities. This is not always possible as many organisations cannot find the resources to pay for out of pocket expenses within their budget. This is particularly the case for organisations with an income of less than £100,000. Out of pocket expenses usually are considered as travel to and from the place of volunteering, travel undertaken in the course of volunteering, meals taken during volunteering, postage and telephone costs, special equipment and on occasion childcare costs. Table 1.59 below looks at out of pocket expenses in more detail.

Table 1.59: Out of pocket expenses

	%
Travel	87.0
Meals	53.6
Telephone, postage if volunteering from home	44.8
Special equipment	19.1
Child/dependent care	15.5

Base: 470 (all organisations which provide out of pocket expenses)

Travel expenses are the most common out of pocket expenses covered by organisations to their volunteers with 87% reimbursing their volunteers for any travel. In addition 53.6% of organisations give volunteers an allowance for meals taken during the course of the volunteering although most organisations set an upper limit as to the amount a volunteer can spend on this meal. If volunteering from home, telephone and postage are the next most common out of pocket expenses to be reimbursed by organisations with 44.8% of organisations stating that these costs are covered. Organisations however are less likely to reimburse childcare/dependent care and specialist equipment costs. One explanation why organisations may not cover childcare costs is that childcare can be expensive and some organisations find it difficult to equate the value of volunteer contributions against the backdrop of additional expenses such as childcare. Specialised equipment can also be expensive and organisations may not have provision in their budget to pay for specialist equipment for volunteers.

In 2001, 81% of organisations offered volunteers out of pocket expenses (52% offered out of pocket expenses all the time; 29% offered out of pocket expenses sometimes). Where expenses were offered they generally covered travel costs (91%), meals (41%) or costs associated with volunteering from home (40%). As can be seen from the analysis above the number of organisations that offer out of pocket expenses has not changed and indeed the areas which out of pocket expenses cover have changed relatively little over the last six years.

When examining the reasons behind why organisations (30.5%) do not reimburse volunteers for out of pocket expenses, the most common explanation was that organisations do not have sufficient funds to cover such costs (61.7%).

Table 1.60: Reason why out of pocket expenses are not refunded

	%
Insufficient funds	61.7
There is no policy on volunteer expenses in the organisation	24.3
Volunteers do not incur expenses	20.4
The paperwork is too complicated for the amounts involved	3.4

Base: 206 (all organisations which do not provide out of pocket expenses)

24.3% of organisations that do not pay out of pocket expenses to volunteers state that the reason for this is that they have no policy on volunteer expenses within their organisation. This means that these organisations have no systems in place to record, monitor and pay the volunteer's out of pocket expenses and therefore have taken the decision not to pay volunteers, even on an ad hoc basis. Some organisations however (3.4%) do have a system in place to pay out of pocket expenses. These systems at times are quite complicated and as

most of volunteer expenses are quite low in cost, some organisations find it easier not to offer this to volunteers as it generates a lot of work for staff.

One additional explanation that organisations gave for not paying out of pocket expenses to their volunteers is that their volunteers give up their time freely and they do not expect or ask to be reimbursed for any out of pocket expenses they incurred during the course of their volunteering.

8.5   Why organisations do not engage with volunteers

There are some organisations that find it difficult to attract volunteers for a number of reasons and other organisations that feel that volunteers may not necessarily be an asset to them. Table 1.61 below examines why some organisations do not use the services of volunteers.

Table 1.61: Reasons why organisations do not involve volunteers

	%
The work our organisation does is not really suitable for volunteers	46.3
Lack of paid staff to properly train and supervise volunteers	27.8
Lack of adequate funds for supporting volunteer involvement	27.8
Can't recruit volunteers with the right skills or expertise	25.9
There are regulatory, legal or liability constraints on volunteer involvement	25.9
Can't recruit sufficient numbers of volunteers	18.5
Can't recruit volunteers who are available when we need them	16.7
We are put off by the cost of insuring volunteers	14.8
We have experienced absenteeism, unreliability, or poor work habits or work quality on the part of volunteers in the past	11.1
The organisation is indifferent or resistant towards the value of volunteers	7.4

Base: 43 (all organisations which do not involve volunteers)

Although volunteers are considered to be one of the most important and valuable assets in the voluntary and community sector not all organisations find it easy to attract or retain volunteers.

Over 46% of the organisations that do not have volunteers stated that the main reason for this is that the work they carry out is not really suitable for volunteers. This is the most common reason why organisations do not involve the services of volunteers. Lack of paid staff to properly train and supervise volunteers and lack of adequate funds for supporting volunteer involvement were the next two main common reasons why some organisations do not have volunteers with over 27.8% of organisations stating that this was the case. Getting the right target group can be difficult also. 25.9% of organisations here stated that they cannot recruit volunteers with the right skills or expertise.

Worth noting here are the reasons which are not due to finances as to why organisations do not have volunteers. For example 25% of organisations stated that there are regulatory, legal or liability constraints on volunteer involvement. A further 7.4% of organisations indicated they are indifferent or resistant towards the value of volunteers. In addition a further 11.1% of organisations no longer choose to involve volunteers because of the absenteeism, unreliability, poor work habits or quality of work of volunteers in the past.

Organisations in 2001 were asked to give reasons why they did not involve volunteers. For over a third (36%) of the organisations, there was no perceived need for volunteers.

8.6   Perceptions of volunteering

This section examines the attitudes, opinions and perceptions that respondent organisations have in relation to volunteering.

Table 1.62: Perceptions of volunteering

	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Volunteers are becoming harder to recruit because people do not have the time or inclination.	25.7	33.7	21.5	15.6	3.5
It is hard to draw a line between appropriate work for volunteers and paid staff's work.	8.7	22.5	21.7	35.0	12.2
Volunteers bring special qualities to an organisation's work, which paid staff cannot supply.	30.2	36.3	17.8	12.5	3.3
Initiatives such as Millennium Volunteers provide important recognition and promotion for volunteering.	15.7	29.3	44.1	6.0	4.9
The main reason for involving volunteers is that they save money.	11.3	11.3	8.1	37.2	32.0
Volunteers should not be used to offset cuts in public spending services.	55.1	26.8	9.0	3.9	5.1
If the organisation had all the money in the world we would still involve volunteers.	58.1	29.3	7.6	1.7	3.3
The contribution volunteers make is not widely recognised enough by the general public.	57.0	31.2	6.7	2.6	2.6
Volunteers only want to do the interesting things.	3.4	11.0	20.1	45.4	20.1
It is difficult to attract volunteers from ethnic minorities.	14.2	31.5	42.4	9.0	2.8

Table 1.62 above gives an overview of organisational perceptions on ten different themes relating to volunteering in organisations. Some of the key findings are listed below:

- 25.7% of all organisations strongly agreed that volunteers are becoming harder to recruit because individuals do not have the time or inclination to get involved. 59.4% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with this statement.
- 66.5% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that volunteers bring special qualities to an organisation's work.
- 44.1% of respondents were uncertain as to the impact of initiatives designed to promote volunteering. However, 29.3% agreed that such initiatives do provide important recognition and promotion opportunities for volunteering.

- Even if organisations had all the money in the world 58.1% strongly agreed that they would still involve volunteers.
- 88.2% of all respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the contribution volunteers make is not widely recognised by the general public.

The responses presented in Table 1.62 are further broken down by organisation type in the following tables to give a more in depth analysis of organisations' views and opinions.

Table 1.63: Recruiting volunteers

Volunteers are becoming harder to recruit because people do not have the time or inclination. %	All	Voluntary and community	Churches/ religious bodies	Sports groups/ governing bodies	Social enterprises	Statutory agencies
Agree strongly	**25.7**	27.4	14.8	14.8	26.7	12.5
Agree	**33.7**	33.2	40.4	37.0	30.0	12.5
Uncertain	**21.5**	20.1	29.8	29.6	20.0	50.0
Disagree	**15.6**	15.8	12.8	14.8	20.0	12.5
Strongly disagree	**3.5**	3.4	2.1	3.8	3.3	12.5

Base: 663 (82 missing)

Recruiting volunteers can be difficult for a number of reasons including the lack of resources to run a recruitment campaign, no designated personnel to manage the recruitment and retention of volunteers and, of course, that it is becoming harder to recruit volunteers because people no longer have the time or inclination. When looking closer at these results by breaking down the responses by organisation type, it is easy to see that voluntary and community organisations firmly believe (60.6%) that it has increasingly become more difficult to recruit volunteer as a consequence of people not having the time or inclination to volunteer. Over 50% of churches and religious bodies, sports groups and governing bodies, social enterprises and statutory agencies also believe this to be the case.

The line between the roles of employees and volunteers can sometimes become blurred. This survey asked organisations if they found it hard to draw a line between appropriate work for volunteers and paid staff's work.

Table 1.64: Differentiating between the work of volunteers and paid staff

It is hard to draw a line between appropriate work for volunteers and paid staff's work.%	All	Voluntary and community	Churches/ religious bodies	Sports groups/ governing bodies	Social enterprises	Statutory agencies
Agree strongly	**8.7**	9.5	6.8	-	7.1	-
Agree	**22.5**	21.8	20.5	27.3	32.1	37.5
Uncertain	**21.7**	22.6	11.4	27.3	17.9	25.0
Disagree	**35.0**	34.3	45.5	22.7	35.8	37.5
Strongly disagree	**12.5**	11.8	15.8	22.7	7.1	-

Base: 607 (138 missing)

47.5% of organisations believe that it is not hard to draw the line between paid staff and volunteer work. When looking at responses by organisation type however it is clear that social enterprises and statutory agencies have more difficulty with this than other organisations with over 37% of both stating that this is the case. Many organisations involved in this research however did state that they were uncertain if they could draw the line between paid staff and volunteer work. For example 27.3% of sport groups or sport governing bodies stated that they were uncertain if it is easy to distinguish between the two types of work.

The survey also looked at organisations' perceptions on if volunteers bring special qualities to an organisation's work, which paid staff cannot supply.

Table 1.65: Contribution of volunteers

Volunteers bring special qualities to an organisation's work, which paid staff cannot supply. %	All	Voluntary and community	Churches/ religious bodies	Sports groups/ governing bodies	Social enterprises	Statutory agencies
Agree strongly	**30.2**	31.6	20.5	28.0	24.2	25.0
Agree	**36.3**	35.4	40.9	52.0	31.0	25.0
Uncertain	**17.8**	17.2	22.7	12.0	24.2	25.0
Disagree	**12.5**	12.9	11.4	4.0	10.3	25.0
Strongly disagree	**3.3**	2.9	4.5	4.0	10.3	-

Base: 640 (105 missing)

Nearly two thirds of all organisations felt that volunteers bring special qualities to an organisation's work which paid staff cannot supply. This was particularly the case with sport groups and governing bodies of sport with 70% believing this to be the case. Voluntary and community organisations also firmly believe this, with 67% stating that they either agree or strongly agree that volunteers bring special qualities to their organisation which paid staff cannot.

In addition the survey looked at organisations' perceptions on initiatives, such as the Millennium Volunteers programme, as a way of providing recognition and promotion for volunteering.

Table 1.66: Volunteer initiatives

Initiatives such as Millennium Volunteers provide important recognition and promotion for volunteering. %	All	Voluntary and community	Churches/ religious bodies	Sports groups/ governing bodies	Social enterprises	Statutory agencies
Agree strongly	**15.7**	17.9	2.4	4.3	3.6	12.5
Agree	**29.3**	31.5	14.6	8.7	21.4	50.0
Uncertain	**44.1**	42.6	46.3	74.0	53.5	25.0
Disagree	**6.0**	4.5	14.6	8.7	17.9	12.5
Strongly disagree	**4.9**	3.5	22.1	4.3	3.6	-

Base: 615 (130 missing)

Table 1.66 above shows that quite a significant percentage of organisations (44.1%) are uncertain as to the impact of volunteer initiatives such as the Millennium Volunteers programme. For example over 74% of sports groups and governing bodies and over 53% of social enterprises stated that they were unsure of the impact of such initiatives. Statutory agencies are more positive with 62.5% of them stating that they do value initiatives such as the Millennium Volunteers programme as a way of providing recognition and promotion for volunteering.

This survey also examined organisations' perception on whether or not the main reason for involving volunteers is that they save money.

Table 1.67: Involving volunteers to save money

The main reason for involving volunteers is that they save money. %	All	Voluntary and community	Churches/ religious bodies	Sports groups/ governing bodies	Social enterprises	Statutory agencies
Agree strongly	**11.3**	11.6	8.9	18.5	7.1	-
Agree	**11.3**	10.7	13.3	14.8	21.5	-
Uncertain	**8.1**	8.7	2.2	7.4	7.1	12.5
Disagree	**37.2**	37.9	24.4	55.6	35.7	12.5
Strongly disagree	**32.0**	31.1	51.2	3.7	28.6	75.0

Base: 651 (94 missing)

There are a variety of reasons why organisations involve and rely on volunteers namely that they help organisations achieve their missions, aim and values by giving up their free time to assist in a number of worthwhile tasks. As already stated, over 67.9% of the organisations involved in this research indicated that volunteers save them money while a further 67.4% of organisations stated that their volunteers help them with fundraising. There is no denying the financial benefits of involving volunteers, however that is not to say that this is the main reason why organisations involve them. Overall, only 22.6% of organisations felt that this was the main reason why they involved volunteers, while nearly 70% of organisations stated that this was not the case. When looking at this by the nature of the organisation it is unsurprising to see that the majority of voluntary and community organisations and churches and religious bodies do not believe that the main purpose of their volunteers is to save money. Organisations were asked their opinion on the use of volunteers to offset cuts in public spending on services.

Table 1.68: Cuts in public spending on services

Volunteers should not be used to offset cuts in public spending on services. %	All	Voluntary and community	Churches/ religious bodies	Sport groups/ governing bodies	Social enterprises	Statutory agencies
Agree strongly	**55.1**	57.6	42.9	32.0	46.7	50.0
Agree	**26.8**	26.2	28.6	36.0	30.0	25.0
Uncertain	**9.0**	8.6	7.1	16.0	13.3	12.5
Disagree	**3.9**	2.6	14.3	16.0	3.3	-
Strongly disagree	**5.1**	5.0	7.1	-	6.7	12.5

Base: 640 (105 missing)

Overall, 81.9% of organisations either agreed or strongly agreed that volunteers should not be used to offset cuts in public spending. Looking at responses by organisation type most reflected this statistic. In fact 83.8% of voluntary and community organisations believe this. Over one fifth of churches and religious bodies however believe that volunteers should be used to offset cuts in public spending on services.

The survey asked organisations to indicate if they would retain volunteers even if they had all the money in the world in an attempt to estimate how much organisations value their volunteers.

Table 1.69: Involving volunteers

If the organisation had all the money in the world we would still involve volunteers. %	All	Voluntary and community	Churches/ religious bodies	Sports groups/ governing bodies	Social enterprises	Statutory agencies
Agree strongly	**58.1**	57.5	71.1	53.8	44.8	62.5
Agree	**29.3**	29.6	24.4	30.8	34.5	25.0
Uncertain	**7.6**	7.3	4.5	14.4	13.8	12.5
Disagree	**1.7**	2.0	-	-	-	-
Strongly disagree	**3.3**	3.6	-	-	6.9	-

Base: 659 (86 missing)

The general view is very positive in relation to the value that organisations place in terms of the contribution volunteers make. Overall, 87.4% of organisations stated that they would continue to retain volunteers even if they had all the money in the world. Only 6.9% of social enterprises and less than 6% of voluntary and community organisations either disagreed or strongly disagreed that this would be the case. This is a strong indication that organisations of all types value the contribution made volunteers regardless of the amount of money they have.

Recognition of work whether it is paid or unpaid is seen as a great motivator in the workplace. This survey went beyond that and asked organisations if they believe that the contribution volunteers make is not widely recognised by the general public.

Table 1.70: Recognising the contribution of volunteers

The contribution volunteers make is not widely recognised by the general public. %	All	Voluntary and community	Churches/religio us bodies	Sports groups/ governing bodies	Social enterprises	Statutory agencies
Agree strongly	**57.0**	59.1	37.0	57.7	46.7	50.0
Agree	**31.2**	29.9	45.6	30.8	36.7	25.0
Uncertain	**6.7**	6.2	13.0	3.8	3.2	25.0
Disagree	**2.6**	2.4	2.2	7.7	6.7	-
Strongly disagree	**2.6**	2.4	2.2	-	6.7	-

Base: 658 (87 missing)

The general consensus is that the majority of organisations (88.2%) agreed or strongly agreed that the contribution made by volunteers is not widely recognised by the general public.

Organisations were also asked to indicate if they believe that volunteers only want to do the interesting part of the organisation's work.

Table 1.71: Volunteers only want to do the interesting things

Volunteers only want to do the interesting things. %	All	Voluntary and community	Churches/ religious bodies	Sports groups/ governing bodies	Social enterprises	Statutory agencies
Agree strongly	**3.4**	3.7	2.2	4.0	-	-
Agree	**11.0**	10.9	11.1	16.0	6.9	25.0
Uncertain	**20.1**	20.3	13.3	20.0	24.1	25.0
Disagree	**45.4**	44.9	42.2	52.0	55.2	50.0
Strongly disagree	**20.1**	20.2	31.1	8.0	13.8	-

Base: 650 (95 missing)

The above statistics indicate strongly that the majority of organisations (65.5%) believe that volunteers do all aspects of the job and not just limit themselves to the 'interesting stuff'. This is particularly the case with churches and religious bodies. Over 73% of churches indicated that they believe their volunteers to be versatile and committed to all aspects of volunteering. 60% of sports groups and governing bodies also believe this to be an accurate statement.

Across the UK organisations have experienced difficulties in recruiting volunteers from different ethnic minorities. As the population of Northern Ireland changes and becomes more diverse so the need to have more volunteers from ethnic minorities increases. Organisations were asked if they found it difficult to attract volunteers from ethnic minorities.

Table 1.72: Attracting ethnic minorities

It is difficult to attract volunteers from ethnic minorities. %	All	Voluntary and community	Churches/ religious bodies	Sports groups/ governing bodies	Social enterprises	Statutory agencies
Agree strongly	**14.2**	14.9	12.5	8.3	13.8	-
Agree	**31.5**	32.1	20.0	25.0	34.5	50.0
Uncertain	**42.4**	41.6	45.0	50.0	48.3	37.5
Disagree	**9.0**	9.1	10.0	12.5	3.4	12.5
Strongly disagree	**2.8**	2.3	12.5	4.2		-

Base: 630 (115 missing)

The perception of 45.7% of organisations is that it is difficult to attract volunteers from ethnic minorities. A further 43.4% of organisations are uncertain if there is a difficulty associated with recruiting individuals from ethnic minorities. A possible reason for this is that for some

organisations most of their volunteers are recruited by word of mouth and generally live within a close distance therefore usually they are of a similar background. They therefore have no experience in actively trying to recruit volunteers from different ethnic backgrounds.

What has changed?

Some of the attitudinal statements listed above were also asked of organisations in 2001. Across some of the statements that were asked in 2001 there has been some variation in the attitudes of organisations towards the involvement of volunteers. For instance, when respondents were asked if volunteers bring special qualities to the organisation, 67% agreed with this statement in 2007 compared to 73% in 2001. When asked if it was hard to draw a line between appropriate work for volunteers and paid staff's work, 31% of respondents in 2007 agreed with this compared to 40% in 2001. It is difficult to ascribe a particular reason as to why these attitudes have changed over the past six years but in the last example the predominance of role descriptions for volunteers may have made it easier for organisations to differentiate between the work of paid staff and volunteers.

In 2001, 15% of respondents stated the main reason they involved volunteers was to save money. In 2007, the number of respondents stating they involved volunteers to save money had risen to 22.6%. It is once again difficult to fully assess why this change may have occurred in respondents' attitudes towards the involvement of volunteers but greater strain on budgets may have caused this change.

Across each of the other statements that were asked in 2001 and 2007 the results were generally similar. For instance there is a consistently strong opinion that volunteers should not be used to offset cuts in public spending services with 82% of respondents in both surveys agreeing with this statement. Equally, respondents in both surveys felt strongly that if they had all the money in the world they would still involve volunteers. 91% of respondents felt this in 2001, with 87.4% expressing a similar sentiment in 2007.

9. Volunteering from the perspective of the individual and organisations

This report has produced one of the most comprehensive pictures of volunteering in Northern Ireland from both the perspective of the individual volunteer and the organisations that benefit from their engagement. Although two different methodologies were employed there are many similarities between the findings of both pieces of research. For instance the estimates of the numbers of volunteers engaged with different types of organisations are broadly similar. In the case of voluntary and community organisations it is estimated that there are between 77,400 and 87,723 volunteers engaged directly with them in voluntary activities. Equally the gender profile of volunteers in both surveys is broadly the same which suggests that there is general consensus developing as to the numbers of volunteers and who they are.

However, there are some areas where no such similarities exist. The reimbursement of out of pocket expenses and the policies and procedures that volunteers must adhere to vary depending upon which survey is considered. For example, when asked about these issues, individuals had a much lower level of recollection of having a written role description compared to the responses given by organisations. One area that produced somewhat contradictory results was in relation to the existence of a named person to go to for support. In the organisational survey 81.5% of respondents stated there was a named individual to whom volunteers go for support. When asked the same question, 45% of formal volunteers stated they had a named person to go to for support. This represents a significant decrease from 2001, when 64% of formal volunteers stated they had a named person to go to for support. Clearly there is a considerable gap in the experiences of volunteers when compared to organisations when discussing the nature of support that is provided. A similar situation exists in terms of the provision of support and/or supervision meetings that volunteers receive. In 2001, 46% of formal volunteers stated they received such meetings but in 2007 this had fallen to 33%. From the organisational perspective, 69.3% of organisations stated they provide such support meetings. Again there is a considerable difference of opinion between volunteers and organisations. It is difficult to state accurately why this difference exists as it could be down to how individuals and organisations interpret support or that polices in organisations exist to provide support but it is not being translated in practice. Regardless of such reasons, the support and development of volunteers is a vital element in volunteer management as it keeps individuals focused and it recognises their contribution whilst giving the organisation the opportunity to receive feedback and plan future work.

The methods through which individuals find out about volunteering opportunities and the methods organisations feel are the most effective is a source of some confusion. For instance, individuals cited word of mouth and personal contact as the main methods through which they found out about volunteering opportunities. Organisations also felt that word of mouth and personal contacts were the most effective methods but that is where the similarities end. Local newspapers and volunteer bureaux/centres were seen to be the third and fourth most effective means of recruiting volunteers from an organisation's perspective. However, for individuals these two methods of finding out about volunteering opportunities are not significant at all. But when asked what would be the most effective ways of finding out about volunteering opportunities in the future, individuals thought that articles/advertisements in local newspapers would be the most effective. This is clearly a very confused issue with contradictory messages coming from volunteers and organisations alike. Obviously this has implications for the promotion of volunteering opportunities in the future.

A similar situation exists between the number of individuals who state they can claim travel expenses and the number of organisations which state they reimburse volunteers for this expense. This could in part be explained by the difference in the existence and application of policies and procedures.

The reasons cited by individuals as to why they do not volunteer differ from the reasons given by organisations in relation to why people do not volunteer. There is a consensus of opinion between individuals and organisations in terms of the main reason why individuals do not volunteer and that is time, or more precisely the lack of it. However, organisations believe that concerns about risk and being liable if anything goes wrong is a significant factor in stopping individuals from volunteering. This is not seen as quite as important by individuals who felt that not hearing about opportunities, being too old and the fact they had never thought about volunteering were more significant than risk and liability in terms of not becoming more involved. Equally organisations rated the fear of bureaucracy as an important factor in preventing more individuals from volunteering. From the individual's perspective this issue was not seen to be especially significant. Of course there is no right or wrong when it comes to describing the reasons why people volunteer or not but what the results of both surveys show's that the perceptions differ between individuals and organisations. This is significant as organisations may focus attention on dispelling some concerns that they feel individuals have when they are considering whether or not to volunteer. This may however be a wasted effort as some of these issues do not necessarily resonate with individuals when it comes to informing their decision about becoming a volunteer. This is clearly a complex area and one that should be afforded a greater degree of examination as it seems there is a gap in the understanding of what factors prevent individuals from becoming more involved.

Nevertheless, there is broad agreement from both surveys as to the beneficial nature of voluntary activity. It is widely understood that without the invaluable input from volunteers the future sustainability of a great number of organisations would be under threat. This is a very encouraging state of affairs but a drop in the number of volunteers has been recorded since 2001 and indeed a significant number of organisations have recorded a decrease in the number of volunteers available to them (particularly voluntary and community organisations). This gets to the very heart of the problems volunteering faces in Northern Ireland and that is the recruitment and retention of volunteers.

10. Overall assessment of volunteering in Northern Ireland

The factors that motivate and stimulate individuals to volunteer are complex and cannot be attributed to a single theory or notion. Therefore policies intended to promote and recognise the contribution individuals make through voluntary activities cannot be one dimensional in nature. This section of the report will examine the trends and key messages that have emerged from this research and from the information gathered over the past 12 years into volunteering in Northern Ireland.

From a policy perspective, volunteering has been afforded a significant amount of attention by the Government at Westminster. As was described in an earlier section in this report, a number of initiatives have been implemented in England to promote and recognise voluntary activity. Devolution has meant that the interpretation and implementation of many of these initiatives formulated in Whitehall have been expressed in a different way across each of the devolved jurisdictions. It is perhaps not inaccurate to suggest that there has been a paucity of policy and resources aimed at the promotion and recognition of volunteering in Northern Ireland. The resources for the Year of the Volunteer 2005 and the Millennium Volunteers programme in Northern Ireland were negligible in comparison to the budgets for these initiatives in Great Britain. To date there has been no one overarching policy designed to promote volunteering in Northern Ireland. The promotion and recognition of volunteering tend to occupy small sections of policies that have wider aims and objectives. Though commentators welcome these Government initiatives, it is generally felt that they have fallen short in three key ways. Firstly, they were often not structured in a considered and sustainable manner. Secondly, there is a feeling that the initiatives have been successful in raising awareness and generating demand for volunteering, but they have been less successful in developing the supply side to meet the resulting expectations. Lastly, there is a belief that there is a tendency for Government to opt for new, headlining programmes, rather than building on what was already in existence and could be more cost effective (Evans and Saxon, 2005).

Given this policy environment, the fact that volunteering over the last 12 years has basically remained static should be seen as positive and a position of strength from which volunteering can develop. As mentioned throughout this report, volunteering is a simple concept but reasons why individuals become involved are complex. For instance, this research found that young people are motivated to become volunteers by the cause, whereas older people tend to cite having more time to spare as the reason for them getting involved. Younger people also expressed their desire to improve their careers and develop new skills through voluntary activity more than any other age group. It is a very encouraging sign that the propensity of younger people (particularly those aged 16-24 years old) is increasing but the reasons why individuals in this age group volunteer are different from the reasons given by individuals in the older age brackets. This is an important distinction and it is clear that a one size fits all approach to encouraging more individuals to volunteer is going to be less effective than one which targets the motivational levers for different socio-demographic groups.

As mentioned above, the propensity for younger people to volunteer is one of the very encouraging findings to emerge from this research. It has been widely thought that young people (under 25 years old) are less inclined to volunteer and older people, who have potentially more spare time, are more likely to get involved. This was found not to the case in

Northern Ireland where young people are engaging in voluntary activities more and more, and clearly schemes such as the Millennium Volunteers programme are working. This is substantiated by the relatively high proportion of young people who have found out about opportunities through schools and colleges. On the other hand those individuals aged over 65 years old are the least likely group to volunteer and their activities are focused on specific activities and organisations. It appears to be the case that younger people view and approach volunteering in a different way to older people and this becomes most apparent when considering the amount of time the various age groups give towards voluntary activities is examined.

Nevertheless, the reasons why individuals become volunteers are, in the main, driven by a desire to help others but this desire is undoubtedly being tested in terms of the impact of wider social pressures. Therefore, recruiting new volunteers becomes more important but the evidence from this survey would suggest that nothing has changed in terms of how individuals find out about volunteering opportunities. An individual's own personal contacts and being directly approached to volunteer are still the most effective methods of recruitment. That is not to say that wider scale initiatives are redundant but there needs to be a more nuanced approach to how volunteers are approached and recruited. Indeed, one of the most interesting findings from this research is the impact of family members who have previously volunteered on an individual's likelihood to also be a volunteer. Clearly, role models such as a family member or friends are important and play a significant role in the recruitment patterns of new and existing volunteers.

Older people give more time towards voluntary activities over a four week period than any other age group. Despite the fact that those individuals in the 65 years old and over age group are the least likely to actually volunteer, their contribution in terms of time is invaluable to organisations. The results in this research found that individuals are still prepared to volunteer but they are giving less time than in the past. There appears to be a trend developing whereby individuals are becoming more selective in the amount of time they are giving in order to fit their voluntary activities around their lifestyle. Therefore we see a greater number of individuals volunteering with just one organisation and for only a few hours per month. Whereas the results from the previous volunteering surveys suggested that there were more individuals volunteering with multiple organisations for a greater length of time each month. In the main, organisations have reported a decrease over the last five years in the number of volunteers they are engaging with. There is a case to be made that organisations themselves have yet to fully embrace the impact of this change in how individuals view volunteering and perhaps the flexibility required by individuals in terms of volunteering is not seen to be a priority for organisations. Of course there are many cases where a flexible approach to the involvement of volunteers is not necessarily applicable but nevertheless the different motivational factors that influence volunteers should be considered more broadly in this context. The issue of individuals becoming more selective in terms of the frequency and scope of their voluntary activities appears to be deepening and it is incumbent upon policy makers and organisations to adapt to meet this challenge.

Individuals who choose not to volunteer also raise a number of interesting challenges for organisations and policy makers alike. There appears to be a significant pool of non-volunteers who would be pleased to help if they were directly approached. This is extremely important given the static nature of voluntary activity and the reliance of organisations on volunteers. Equally there are a significant number of individuals who have never volunteered

because they have never considered becoming involved. Nevertheless the crux of the issue is that significantly more people choose not to volunteer than do so, therefore ways must be sought to encourage non-volunteers to become more involved. For instance, the most common factor that would make it easier for non-volunteers to become involved would be if the voluntary activities developed new skills and knowledge. Therefore this could be promoted to non-volunteers as a reason to start doing some type of voluntary activity. However pressures of time remain a barrier to volunteering. Therefore organisations and employers should look to develop more flexible approaches towards engaging and supporting voluntary activity. Of course this is not applicable in every situation but it may provide sufficient room in terms of an individual's schedule to volunteer.

Volunteering is freely given but not cost free. Resources, support, development and promotion for volunteers all incur costs and this research has uncovered some interesting trends in this area. This research found that support of volunteers from both an individual's perspective and that of the organisation is very important. However, the number of individuals which stated they had a named person for support has fallen since 2001 which is a concern in terms of helping retain and develop current volunteers. The impact of having a dedicated volunteer manager is clear to see but the overall trend appears to be that it is becoming more difficult for organisations to provide this type of support.

Volunteering is an important expression of citizenship and fundamental to democracy. This research has highlighted one of the less tangible impacts of volunteering in Northern Ireland in 2007. Individuals who volunteer are more likely to be active citizens and participate more widely in terms of signing petitions or voting in elections. There is no way to ascertain which is the determining factor, i.e. does voting make individuals more likely to volunteer or vice versa? Indeed there may not be a direct link between the two but it is clear that individuals who do volunteer are more active citizens and this should be recognised and promoted.

This report also examined the attitudes of individuals and organisations towards volunteering. From the perspective of organisations which involve volunteers, attitudes towards the value, impact and contribution individuals make is extremely positive. It is not overstating the attitudes of organisations towards the contribution individuals make when 77% of respondents stated the organisation could not operate without the support of volunteers. This was a view also held by individuals when asked if they felt organisations could not survive without volunteers. This is an incredibly important finding when set against the wider environment where the overall number of volunteers is static and appears to be decreasing and those individuals who do volunteer are being more selective in terms of how often they volunteer.

It is perhaps too early to start to describe a crisis in volunteering, but if the trends described in this research continue unabated and organisations do not adapt to this changing environment, there may be some serious repercussions for organisations which appear to be extremely reliant on volunteers. To date organisations which involve volunteers have been the recipients of an extraordinary amount of good will from individuals, but the danger is that this contribution could be taken for granted. Volunteering is often seen as a barometer through which wider societal changes are reflected and the results of this research point to a change in how individuals approach volunteering and how they rationalise their involvement. With a strengthening economy and increasing pressures being placed on people's spare time, the reasons for not volunteering are becoming more and more compelling. As society

changes the ways in which organisations engage with volunteers, and attract new volunteers must therefore also change.

This research has highlighted a number of trends that when set against the static nature of volunteering in Northern Ireland point to a pivotal moment in the promotion and recognition of volunteering. Things can continue as they are and at best the situation will remain the same and small gains through volunteering initiatives will continue but for a large portion of the population voluntary activity will not be a viable option. The alternative is the development of a strategy that will foster an environment in which organisations can be adequately resourced and supported to adopt more flexible and innovative ways of tapping into a large pool of potential volunteers.

Appendix 1: National and international volunteering

Who volunteers?

Across the world the importance of developing a statistical picture of volunteering is becoming more important. This is partially in response to the growing interest in civic participation and the drive for civic renewal. Statistics on volunteering are much more than a number count, rather they provide a real insight into the social and economic value of volunteering, and often the statistics help reveal the impact that volunteering can have on society as a whole.

Below is a summary of some of the most recent volunteering statistics available in the USA, EU, UK and Ireland.

Volunteering in the USA

The key source of volunteering statistics in the USA is produced by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the latest statistics available are for 2006 (www.blo.gov/news.release/volun.nr0.htm). This survey defines a volunteer as a person who did unpaid work (except for expenses) through an organisation throughout the period of September 2005 to September 2006. This survey found that 61.2 million people volunteered through an organisation at least once in this period.

According to these volunteering statistics it is estimated that the economic value of volunteering is worth $152 billion (http://www.prnewswire.com/cgi-bin/stories.pl?ACCT=109&STORY=/www/story/04-16-2007/0004566179&EDATE=).

- Approximately 26.7% of individuals aged 16 years and over were involved in volunteering.
- 23% of volunteers were male and 30% are female.
- The age groups most likely to be involved in volunteering are 35 to 44 and then 45 to 54, with 31.2% of individuals involved respectively. The age group least likely to be involved in volunteering is 16 to 24 year olds.
- Individuals who define their ethnicity as white are most likely to be involved in volunteering (28.3%) and individuals from a Hispanic or Latino ethnicity are least likely to be involved (13.9%).
- Individuals with less than a high school diploma are least likely to be involved in volunteering (9.3%), whereas college graduates are most likely to be involved in volunteering (43.3%).
- Married individuals are more likely to be involved in volunteering (32.2%) than people who are single (20.3%).
- Volunteers spent a median of 52 hours on volunteer activities during the period of September 2005 to September 2006.
- In 2006, the organisations for which volunteers worked the most were religious (35%).

- The main activities volunteers are involved in are fundraising (10.9%) and tutoring or teaching (10.8%).
- Approximately every four in ten people (43%) became involved in volunteering after being asked.

Volunteering in Europe

There are an estimated more than 100 million volunteers in Europe (European Volunteer Centre, 2006). The European Volunteer Centre (Centre Europeen Du Volontariat (CEV)) an association of Europe's national and regional volunteer centres that works to support and promote volunteering. The CEV has been involved with a 'Facts and Figures Research Project' from 2003, with the aim of providing comprehensive statistical data about volunteering in the different Member states. Currently there are country reports about volunteering on 12 of the Member States. Some of these reports were published as early as 2004, with the most up to date report being August 2006 (available from http://www.cev.be/facts&figures.htm). The CEV Manifesto for Volunteering stresses the need for further research on volunteering throughout the EU.

Volunteering in England

In England, the key source of volunteering information are the Citizenship Surveys of the Home Office. The 2005 survey found that 50% of those questioned had been involved in some kind of volunteering (formal and informal).

- 76% of individuals questioned had taken part in some form of volunteering activity, formal and informal, at least once in the past year.
- 50% had been involved in volunteering at least once a month.

Formal volunteering

- 44% of those questioned had taken part in formal volunteering at least once in the last year.
- 29% had been involved in formal volunteering at least once a month.
- More women volunteer than men volunteer (31% to 27% for formal volunteering).
- The 75 years and over age group has the lowest rates in formal volunteering (21%) while there are varying but higher levels amongst the other age groups.
- Those with no qualifications are less involved in volunteering.
- 29% of individuals involved in formal volunteering are white, compared to 24% from ethnic minority backgrounds.
- Participation in formal voluntary activity at least once a month is considerably higher among people who have formal qualifications than those who have none (33% compared to 16%).
- The most common activities formal volunteers are involved with included raising or handling money or taking part in a sponsored event (51%), followed by organising or helping to run an activity or event (47%).

- Formal volunteers had spent on average 11.9 hours on formal voluntary activities a month.

Informal volunteering

- 37% had undertaken informal volunteering at least once a month.
- More women than men are involved in informal volunteering (41% to 32%).
- Younger people (16 to19 year olds) are most likely to participate in informal volunteering at least once a month (50%), while those in the oldest age group (75 +) are least likely to volunteer (29%).
- 37% of individuals involved in informal voluntary activities are white, compared to 34% from ethnic minority backgrounds.
- Participation in informal voluntary activity is higher for individuals with qualifications than those without qualifications (40% compared to 29%).
- The most common activities informal volunteers are involved with included giving advice (52%), transporting or escorting someone (38%) and keeping in touch with someone (38%).
- Informal volunteers had spent on average 7.9 hours volunteering in the previous four weeks.

Volunteering in Scotland

The key source of volunteering statistics in Scotland is produced by Volunteer Development Scotland, the National Centre for Excellence in Volunteering. The latest statistics available are the Annual Digest on Volunteering (2006).

This research estimated that volunteering is worth £2.52 billion to the Scottish economy.

Formal volunteering

Around 38% of adults in Scotland had formally volunteered in the last year.

- The age groups most likely to be involved in volunteering are the 45 – 54 and the 55 to 64 age groups (with 44% respectively). The age group least likely to be involved in volunteering is the 65+ group (making up 31% of volunteers).
- There is a positive correlation between socio-economic group and propensity to be involved in formal volunteering. The AB socio-economic group is the most likely to be involved in formal volunteering (56%) and the DE socio-economic group is the least likely to be involved (26%).
- The majority of people involved in formal volunteering help to raise money (68%), followed by organising and helping to run an event (31%).
- Over half of all formal volunteers (53%) had spent up to five hours per month volunteering.

Informal volunteers

Around 81% of adults in Scotland have volunteered informally in the last year.

- 81% of informal volunteers are women, and 78% are men.
- 16 to 24 year olds are most likely to be involved in informal volunteering (88%), closely followed by 35 to 44 age group (87%). The 65+ age group is the least likely to be involved in informal volunteering (72%).
- There is a positive correlation between socio-economic group and informal volunteering. Individuals in the AB socio-economic group are most likely to be involved (84%) and socio-economic group DE is least likely to be involved (78%).
- The most common activity is visiting an elderly or sick person (37%), followed by doing shopping for someone (32%).

Volunteering in Wales

The most comprehensive statistics on volunteering in Wales are derived from the 2005 Home Office Citizenship survey. As yet, these statistics are not widely available. Early findings from this research are detailed below.

It is estimated that volunteering is worth £2.4 billion.

- This research found that 69% of adults in Wales volunteered in 2004–2005, equivalent to 1.64 million people.

- It is estimated that 1.13 million adults volunteer in an organisation, where they contribute an average of 2.3 hours per week.

Volunteering in the Republic of Ireland

The Taskforce on Active Citizenship commissioned a 'Survey of Civic Engagement' in September 2006, 1,045 persons aged 16 and over were interviewed. This research recorded activity in the previous 12 months.

1) Unpaid and regular volunteering (outside the home).
2) Active involvement in the community.

Regular volunteers

- This research found that 23.1% of individuals were involved in volunteering regularly in the last 12 months.
- Marginally, more males than females are involved in regular volunteering (23.7% compared to 22.5%).
- Individuals aged between 40 and 49 years old are the most common age group to be involved in regular volunteering (33.2%), with individuals under 29 years old being the least likely to be involved (14.7%), closely followed by individuals over 65 (14.8%).

- Participation in regular voluntary activity is higher for individuals with a third level qualification than those without qualifications (28.2% compared to 10.3%).

Active involvement in the community

- This research has revealed 29% of individuals were actively involved in the community.
- More males than females are actively involved in the community (31.4% compared to 26.7%).
- Individuals aged 40 to 49 are most likely to be actively involved in the community (39.7%), and individuals aged 65 years and over are the least likely to be involved (19.1%).
- Individuals whose highest qualification is a Leaving Certificate are most likely to be involved in volunteering (40.1%) and is lowest with individuals with no qualifications (9.8%).

Appendix 2: Methodology

Volunteering in Northern Ireland

The Millward Brown Ulster Omnibus is a research vehicle that delivers a fully representative cross section of the NI adult population. A total of 1,020 face-to-face interviews are conducted in home. Geographic spread is assured by the random selection of 45 sampling points, and representativeness is controlled by quota controlling for gender, age, socio-economic group and working status.

It is not the policy of Millward Brown Ulster to set quota controls for religion, as doing so should not be necessary if there is good geographic dispersal of the sample and rigorous adherence to the randomly-selected sampling points. Religion is, however, a standard demographic question on all Omnibus surveys, which enables Millward Brown Ulster to carefully monitor representativeness by religion - over the years the Millward Brown Ulster Omnibus has delivered samples well-representative of the denominational mix in Northern Ireland. The religion variable is available for cross-analysis against all questions placed on the Millward Brown Ulster Omnibus**.**

Volunteering in Organisations

A postal survey was used to administer the questionnaire and these were sent out to organisations during December 2006. The questionnaire was partly based on the questions used for the Volunteering in Organisations 2001 report. The list of voluntary and community organisations were drawn from the respective databases of the Volunteer Development Agency and NICVA. The list of sports clubs/governing bodies was provided by the Northern Ireland Sports Forum. The sample of churches was drawn from list held by the main governing bodies for each of the major dominations. A list of statutory agencies was provided by the Volunteer Development Agency.

Sample profile	Valid sample	Return	Return rate
Voluntary and community	2,553	623	24.4
• Housing associations		4	0.2
• Grant making trusts		3	0.1
• Social enterprises		16	0.6
• Credit unions		9	0.4
• Co-operatives		1	0.0
• Mutuals		1	0.0
Total voluntary and community		*657*	*25.7*
Church/faith based	376	50	13.3
Sports clubs/governing bodies	92	28	30.4
Statutory	24	10	41.7
Total	**3,045**	**745**	**24.4**

Appendix 3: Sample profile

Table 1: Required and achieved sample by main demographic classification

		% Omnibus	% NISRA 2001[33]
Sex	Male	42.5	48.9
	Female	57.5	51.1
Marital status	*Married/living with partner*	*56.4*	*54.9*
	Single/widowed/divorced	*43.6*	*45.1*
Age	16-24	13.3	16.9
	25-34	18.2	17.0
	35-49	29.5	27.7
	50-64	18.2	20.9
	65 plus	20.8	17.6
Religious denomination	*Protestant*	*56.2*	*53.1*
	Catholic	*38.9*	*43.8*
	Other/refused	*4.9*	*3.1*

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[33] The statistics relating to sex and age are taken from the estimated population by sex and age, 30 June 2005 (www.nisra.gov.uk)

Table 2: Demographic profile- formal volunteers (total: 212)

		%
Sex	*Male*	*39.1*
	Female	*60.9*
Marital status	Married/living with partner	61.7
	Single/widowed/divorced	38.3
Household status	*Chief income earner*	*54.2*
	Not chief income earner	*45.8*
Age	16-24	14.6
	25-34	16.1
	35-49	33.5
	50-64	18.4
	65 plus	17.4
Social class	*ABC1*	*60.8*
	C2	*16.0*
	DE	*23.2*
Area	Greater Belfast	41.0
	Rest of Northern Ireland	59.0
Working status	*Full-time*	*35.8*
	Part-time	*16.0*
	Not working	*41.5*
	Full-time education	*6.7*
Religious denomination	Protestant	52.8
	Catholic	42.0
	Other/refused	5.2
Number of children in household	*None*	*60.8*
	1 or 2	*31.6*
	3 or more	*7.5*

Table 3: Demographic profile- informal volunteers (total: 359)

		%
Sex	*Male*	*35.1*
	Female	*64.9*
Marital status	Married/living with partner	57.9
	Single/widowed/divorced	42.1
Household status	*Chief income earner*	*57.4*
	Not chief income earner	*42.6*
Age	16-24	12.2
	25-34	22.8
	35-49	30.6
	50-64	18.2
	65 plus	16.2
Social class	*ABC1*	***48.7***
	C2	***21.7***
	DE	***29.6***
Area	Greater Belfast	41.5
	Rest of Northern Ireland	58.5
Working status	*Full-time*	***36.2***
	Part-time	***15.9***
	Not working	***44.3***
	Full-time education	***3.6***
Religious denomination	Protestant	55.1
	Catholic	38.9
	Other/refused	6.0
Number of children in household	*None*	***58.2***
	1 or 2	***34.8***
	3 or more	***7.0***

Table 4: Demographic profile- non-volunteers (total: 559)

		%
Sex	*Male*	*46.9*
	Female	*53.1*
Marital status	Married/living with partner	54.4
	Single/widowed/divorced	45.6
Household status	*Chief income earner*	*34.5*
	Not chief income earner	*65.5*
Age	16-24	13.4
	25-34	16.5
	35-49	27.0
	50-64	18.4
	65 plus	24.7
Social class	*ABC1*	*37.0*
	C2	*18.6*
	DE	*44.4*
Area	Greater Belfast	46.9
	Rest of Northern Ireland	53.1
Working status	*Full-time*	*32.0*
	Part-time	*9.2*
	Not working	*54.6*
	Full-time education	*4.2*
Religious denomination	Protestant	57.8
	Catholic	37.7
	Other/refused	4.5
Number of children in household	*None*	*67.3*
	1 or 2	*25.9*
	3 or more	*6.8*

Tables 5 and 6 below provide an estimate of the number of individuals (aged over 16 years old) who are formal and informal volunteers by age.

Table 5: Estimate of formal volunteers by age

	% of overall population	Estimate of volunteers
16-24 years old	23	52,333
25-34 years old	18	41,194
35-49 years old	24	89,299
50-64 years old	21	58,955
65 years old and over	17	40,286
Total	**21**	**282,067**

Table 6: Estimate of informal volunteers by age

	% of overall population	Estimate of volunteers
16-24 years old	33	74,007
25-34 years old	44	99,491
35-49 years old	37	136,576
50-64 years old	35	97,150
65 years old and over	27	62,887
Total	**35**	**470,111**

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Questionnaires

Volunteering in Organisations

Please return in the FREEPOST envelope provided by **15 December 2006**.
Thank you for your co-operation.
Please amend address and contact details below if incorrect

	Organisation
	Contact
	Position
	Address
	Town
	Postcode
	Tel
	Email
	Web

Your organisation

1. Which of the following best describes the nature of your organisation? *Please tick one only.*

Voluntary/community organisation		Social enterprise	
Church/faith based		Credit Union	
Sports club/group		Co-operative	
Housing association		Mutual	
Grant making trust			
Other *(please specify)* …			

2. Please indicate the approximate annual income of your organisation.

Less than £1,000		£250,001-£500,000	
£1,001-£10,000		£500,001-£1 million	
£10,001-£100,000		More than £1 million	
£100,001-£250,000			

3. Which of the following applies to your organisation? *Please tick one only.*

Stand alone organisation	
Head office of a NI wide organisation	
Local/branch office of a NI wide organisation	
NI branch office of a UK organisation	
NI branch office of an all Ireland organisation	
NI branch office of an international organisation	
Other *(please specify)* …	

Involvement of volunteers

4. Does your organisation involve volunteers (including management committee members or trustees) in any of its activities?

Yes *(Go to Q5)*		No *(Go to Q39)*	

5. Please indicate the number of volunteers who are currently involved with your organisation.

Males		Females		Total	

6. How many of these volunteers are involved in the governance of your organisation (ie serving on a management committee or board of trustees in their own time)?

Males		Females		Total	

7. Please indicate the number of volunteers who fall into the following age groups:

Under 18 years old		45-54 years old	
18-24 years old		55-64 years old	
25-34 years old		65-74 years old	
35-44 years old		75 years old and over	

8. Please indicate the number of volunteers from each of the ethnic groups listed below.

Black – African		Irish Traveller	
Black – Caribbean		Mixed ethnicity	
Black – other		Pakistani	
Bangladeshi		Other Asian	
Chinese		White – GB and Ireland	
Indian		White – other	
Other ethnic group(s)…			

9. Does your organisation monitor the …	Yes	No	Don't know
Community background (religious composition) of your volunteers?			
Sexual orientation of your volunteers?			

10. Please indicate the number of disabled individuals who volunteer for your organisation.

11. Approximately how many hours do ALL of your volunteers contribute in a typical week?   **hours**

12. On average what is one hour of volunteer's time worth to your organisation?   £

13. Over the past five years has the number of volunteers involved with your organisation …

Increased		Decreased	
Stayed about the same		Don't know	
Didn't have any volunteers five years ago			

14. From the list below please indicate which of the different roles are carried out by volunteers for your organisation. *Please tick all that apply.*

Raising or handling money		Promotion	
Visiting people		Campaigning	
Organising or helping to run an activity or event		Other practical help (eg shopping, gardening, building, meals on wheels)	
Leading the group/member of a committee/trustees		Helping in church or religious organisation	
Giving advice/ information /counselling		Collecting/making things to be sold for charity	
Coaching		Teaching or training	
Befriending or mentoring people		Selling tickets	
Secretarial, admin or clerical work		Working with young people	

Childcare		Information technology	
Providing transport/driving		Working in a charity shop	
Representing		Health/social care	
Arts/crafts/drama/music		Youth work	
Rescue work		First aid	
Other *(please specify)*…			

15. From the list below please indicate the benefits of involving volunteers in your organisation. *Please tick all that apply.*

Volunteers save the organisation money	
Volunteers are very committed/flexible/enthusiastic	
Volunteers bring new/additional skills to the organisation	
Volunteers can help improve services or increase service provision	
Volunteers promote a sense of community ownership as they are local	
We couldn't operate without their support	
Volunteers provide cover/assistance/support to staff	
Volunteers raise the profile of the organisation	
Volunteers assist in the governance and management of the organisation	
Volunteers assist with fundraising	
Volunteers enhance the effectiveness of the organisation	
Volunteers enable the continuance of programmes — it is the only way we can continue to work	
Volunteers provide a service that we do not have paid staff for	
Volunteers provide the core work of the organisation	
Other benefits *(please specify)* …	

Recruiting volunteers

16. Which of the following methods does your organisation use to recruit volunteers? Please rank each method by its effectiveness in terms of recruiting new volunteers *(1 being the most effective and so on)***.**

Personal contacts		Community centre	
By word of mouth		Internet/organisational website	
Through a church/religious organisation		Employer's Volunteering Scheme	
School/college/university		Local newspaper	
Volunteer bureaux or centres (eg VSB)		National newspaper	
Millennium Volunteers		TV or radio (local or national)	
National Campaigns (eg Volunteers Week)		Promotional events/volunteer fair	
Local events		Leaflets (material from the organisation)	
Library			
Other *(please specify)* …			

17. Does your organisation target volunteer recruitment at specific groups?

Yes		No	

If yes, please specify which groups your efforts are targeted at and why you are targeting these groups?

18. Do you believe that in 2005 the Year of Volunteer initiative increased the number of individuals who have approached your organisation wanting to volunteer?

Great deal		Some		Not sure		Limited		Not at all	

19. Does your organisation have difficulties in recruiting volunteers?

Yes *(Go to Q20)*		No *(Go to Q23)*	

20. Which of the following reasons do you feel stops people from volunteering? Please rank in order of relevance in terms of your organisation's own experiences *(1 being the most relevant and so on).*

Individuals have insufficient free time	
Potential volunteers may fear losing benefits/being out of pocket	
Potential volunteers have trouble accessing transport	
Fear of bureaucracy puts people off	
People may be worried about the risk and being liable if anything goes wrong	
People may not know how to find out about opportunities or getting involved	
People may be put off by criminal record checks	
Lack of flexibility and variety in types of volunteering opportunities on offer	
Other *(please specify)* …	

21. From the perspective of your organisation which of these things do you believe would make it easier to recruit volunteers? *Please tick all that apply*.

Regional volunteering campaigns		Less red tape associated with volunteers	
Local volunteering campaigns		Internet/organisational website	
Better volunteering opportunities in the organisation		More flexible volunteering opportunities	
Centralised resource listing available volunteers		More resources to cover the activities of volunteers	
Greater media coverage of volunteering activities		Other *(please specify)* …	

22. When recruiting new volunteers does your organisation do any of the following …

	Yes	No	Don't know
Ask new volunteers to complete an application form?			
Interview/informal chat with potential volunteers?			
Ask new volunteers to provide references?			
Undertake a POCNI check?			
Require new volunteers to undergo a trial period?			

23. Once recruited, do new volunteers receive any of the following …

	Yes	No	Don't know
An induction with regard to the organisation?			
Training to carry out their role?			
A written role description?			
A named person to go to for support?			
Support and/or supervision meetings?			
A written volunteer agreement?			
Copy of/information about health and safety regulations?			
Copy of/information about child protection policy?			
Copy of/information on equal opportunities policy?			
Copy of/information about insurance cover?			
Copies of any other policies or guidance *(please specify)* …			

24. How does your organisation recognise the contribution of your volunteers? *Please tick all that apply.*

Contribution of volunteers is included in annual reports and other documents	
Have a volunteer of the month/year award	
Present certificates, etc for long service	
Include and recognise volunteers at events	
Providing social events	
Include volunteers in developing organisational policies and strategic plans	
Other *(please specify)…*	

25. When volunteers leave your organisation do you have an exit interview/ discussion with them?

Yes		No		Don't know	

Managing volunteers

26. Does your organisation have a volunteer(s), or paid staff member(s) whose responsibilities include the management of volunteers?

	Yes	No
Volunteer(s)		
Paid staff		
There is no-one fulfilling this role		

27. What percentage of his or her time does this person devote to volunteer management?

Volunteer(s)	%	Paid staff member(s)	%

28. Does this person(s) have any formal training in volunteer management?

Yes		No	

29. Which of the following areas is this person(s) responsible for? *Please tick all that apply.*

Volunteer recruitment		Developing volunteer policy	
Volunteer support/mentoring		Promoting volunteering	
Volunteer training		Volunteer recruitment and selection	
Day to day volunteer supervision/ management		Liaison with other organisations on volunteering issues	
Other *(please specify) …*			

30. What specific challenges does the individual(s) in your organisation face with regard to the management of volunteers?

31. Has having a dedicated staff member(s)/volunteer(s) to manage volunteers impacted on the recruitment and retention of volunteers?

Has had a positive impact		Has made no difference		Has had a negative impact		Not sure	

32. From which of the following sources have you received or accessed support or advice in terms of volunteer management and development?

Local network/support organisation	
Local volunteer bureaux/centres	
District Council	
NICVA	
Rural Community Network	

YouthNet	
Volunteer Development Agency	
Northern Ireland Sports Forum/Council	
Have not received any advice or support	
Other *(please specify)* …	

Resources for volunteers

33. Does your organisation have a budget to cover the activities of volunteers?

Yes *(Go to Q34)*		No *(Go to Q36)*	

34. If yes, approximately what is the annual budget for volunteer activities in your organisation?

£

35. What activities/practices are covered by this budget (where possible provide a percentage of the overall budget given above)?

	%		%
Volunteer expenses		Volunteer insurance	
Volunteer training		Delivery of volunteer led services	
Recruitment of volunteers		Materials and equipment for volunteers	
Volunteer support and supervision		Volunteer recognition	
Other *(please specify)* …			

36. Does your organisation offer to refund 'out of pocket' expenses which a volunteer could claim in connection with the voluntary work they carry out?

Yes *(Go to Q37)*		No *(Go to Q38)*	

37. What kind of expenses does your organisation refund to volunteers?

Travel	
Meals	
Child / dependent care	
Special equipment	
Telephone, postage if volunteering from home	
Other	

38. If your organisation does not refund expenses why is this?

Insufficient resources	
Volunteers do not incur expenses	
There is no policy on volunteer expenses in the organisation	
The paperwork is too complicated for the amounts involved	
Other *(please specify)* …	

39. Not all organisations directly involve volunteers. If your organisation does not involve volunteers please select the reasons why from the list below?

The work our organisation does is not really suitable for volunteers	
Can't recruit sufficient numbers of volunteers	
Can't recruit volunteers with the right skills or expertise	
Can't recruit volunteers that are available when we need them	
The organisation is indifferent or resistant towards the value of volunteers	
Lack of paid staff to properly train and supervise volunteers	
Lack of adequate funds for supporting volunteer involvement	

There are regulatory, legal or liability constraints on volunteer involvement	
We have experienced absenteeism, unreliability, or poor work habits or work quality on the part of volunteers in the past	
We are put off by the cost of insuring volunteers	
Other *(please specify)* …	

Attitudes towards volunteers

In this section you are asked about your attitudes towards a number of statements relating to volunteer involvement from the perspective of your organisation

1   Strongly agree   2   Agree   3   Uncertain
4   Disagree   5   Strongly disagree

41. Volunteers are becoming harder to recruit because people don't have the time or inclination.

1	2	3	4	5

42. It is hard to draw a line between appropriate work for volunteers and paid staff's work.

1	2	3	4	5

43. Volunteers bring special qualities to an organisation's work, which paid staff cannot supply.

1	2	3	4	5

44. Initiatives such as Millennium Volunteers provide important recognition and promotion for volunteering.

1	2	3	4	5

45. The main reason for involving volunteers is that they save money.

1	2	3	4	5

46. Volunteers should not be used to offset cuts in public spending services.

1	2	3	4	5

47. If the organisation had all the money in the world we would still involve volunteers.

1	2	3	4	5

48. The contribution volunteers make is not widely recognised enough by the general public.

1	2	3	4	5

49. Volunteers only want to do the interesting things.

1	2	3	4	5

50. It is difficult to attract volunteers from ethnic minorities.

1	2	3	4	5

51. Have you any further comments about the contribution volunteers make to your organisation?

SECTION X – VOLUNTEERNG IN NORTHERN IRELAND
ASK ALL

The following questions are about time given freely and without pay to any activity which has the aim of benefiting people (outside your immediate family), the community or a particular cause. Unpaid work or activities done for the benefit of a cause or with a local community group; sports organisations, arts and cultural groups or religious groups; activities associated with the environment or animals are included.

It is important that your replies refer only to **unpaid** work or activities.

If you carry out such activities and receive no salary or wages, but **DO** receive out-of-pocket expenses (for example, travel expenses or honorarium), please **INCLUDE** these activities in your answers. Some people call this type of work volunteering or voluntary work. Throughout this survey we will use the terms volunteering or voluntary work So, firstly …

Q.1	In the past year, have you carried out voluntary work or activity for or with an organisation, which is not to do with your work and is not solely for your own benefit or the benefit of your family?	Yes .... 1 No .... 2 Don't know / no reply 3	(10)

Q.2	Have other members of your family, including your parents, been involved in any kind of voluntary work or activity over the past 5 years?	Yes .... 1 No .... 2 Don't know / not stated 3	(10)

SHOWCARD

Q.3 Here are a number of fields of activities in which groups, clubs or organisations work. Please could you tell me the fields of activity of any groups, clubs or organisations which you have been involved in a voluntary capacity during the last 12 months? That's anything you've taken part in, supported, or that you've helped in any way, either on your own or with others? Please exclude giving money and anything that was a requirement of your job.

	ONCE A WEEK	ONCE A FORTNIGHT	ONCE A MONTH	A FEW TIMES	ONLY ONCE IN THE LAST YEAR	NOT AT ALL
Children's education / schools	1	2	3	4	5	
Sports / exercise (taking part, coaching or going to watch)	1	2	3	4	5	
Youth / children's activities (outside school)	1	2	3	4	5	
Religion	1	2	3	4	5	
Politics	1	2	3	4	5	
The elderly	1	2	3	4	5	
Overseas aid / disaster relief	1	2	3	4	5	
Disability (e.g., learning, physical, mental)	1	2	3	4	5	
Health and social welfare	1	2		4	5	
Safety, First Aid	1	2	3	4	5	
Conservation, the environment and Heritage	1	2	3	4	5	
Single issues groups (women's or men's issues)	1	2	3	4	5	
Advice and information	1	2	3	4	5	
Animal welfare	1	2	3	4	5	
Culture / arts / crafts	1	2	3	4	5	
Offenders / ex-prisoners	1	2	3	4	5	
Justice and human rights	1	2	3	4	5	
Local community, neighbourhood or citizen's groups	1	2	3	4	5	
Hobbies / recreation / social clubs	1	2	3	4	5	
Trade union activity	1	2	3	4	5	
Cross-community (Protestant / Roman Catholic)	1	2	3	4	5	
Emergency services	1	2	3	4	5	
Education for adults	1	2	3	4	5	
Asylum / refugee / new immigrant groups / associations	1	2	3	4	5	
Black and minority ethnic support groups / associations	1	2	3	4	5	
Housing and homelessness	1	2	3	4	5	
Employment and training	1	2	3	4	5	
Other *Specify:*	1	2	3	4	5	
Don't know / none of these	1	2	3	4	5	

TO Q.30

I'd now like to ask you some further questions to find out a bit more about the nature of your involvement with the organisations you mentioned above.

SHOWCARD

Q.4 Please could you tell me which kinds of voluntary work you have done for the organisations you described above during the last 12 months? Please exclude giving money and anything that was a requirement of your job.

	ONCE A WEEK	ONCE A FORTNIGHT	ONCE A MONTH	A FEW TIMES	ONLY ONCE IN THE LAST YEAR	NOT AT ALL
Raising or handling money	1	2	3	4	5	
Leading the group / member of a committee / trustees	1	2	3	4	5	
Organising or helping to run an activity or event	1	2	3	4	5	
Visiting people	1	2	3	4	5	
Befriending or mentoring people	1	2	3	4	5	
Coaching	1	2	3	4	5	
Giving advice / information / counselling	1	2	3	4	5	
Secretarial, administration or clerical work	1	2	3	4	5	
Providing transport / driving	1	2	3	4	5	
Representing	1	2	3	4	5	
Promotion	1	2	3	4	5	
Campaigning	1	2	3	4	5	
Other practical help (e.g., shopping, gardening, building, meal on wheels)	1	2	3	4		
Helping in church or religious organisation	1	2	3	4	5	
Collecting / making things to be sold for charity	1	2	3	4	5	
Teaching or training	1	2	3	4	5	
Selling tickets	1	2	3	4	5	
Working with young people	1	2	3	4	5	
Working in a charity shop	1	2	3	4	5	
Other *Specify:*	1	2	3	4	5	
Don't know / none of these	1	2	3	4	5	

Q.5 Thinking about the last 12 months, how many organisations do you do voluntary work for?

(xx)

Q.6 Approximately how many hours have you spent doing voluntary work for this / these group(s), club(s) or organisation(s) in the past 4 weeks?

(xx)

Q.7 If you do voluntary work for more than one group or organisation, please answer the following questions about the organisation you do the most work for? **PROMPT FOR NAME OF ORGANISATION OR GROUP**

NAME OF GROUP:

....

SHOWCARD

Q.8 Which of the following best describes the type of organisation you do the most work for?

Public sector (e.g., hospital, nursing home etc.) ..	1
Private sector	2
Voluntary and community sector	3
Political party	4
Church / religious body	5
Trade Union	6
Sports club	7
Other *Specify:*	
....	8
Don't know	9

SHOWCARD

Q.9 What is the primary activity of this group, club or organisation?

Children's education / schools ....

Sports / exercise (coaching organising or assisting with)...

Youth / children's activities (outside school) ....

Religion...

Politics ....

The elderly ....

Overseas aid / disaster relief...

Health and social welfare ....

Disability (e.g., learning, physical, mental) ....

Safety, First Aid ....

Conservation, the environment and heritage..

Single issue groups (women's or men's issues)...

Advice and information...

Animal welfare ....

Culture / arts / crafts ....

Offenders / ex-prisoners...

Justice and human rights ....

Local community, neighbourhood or citizen's groups ....

Hobbies / recreation / social clubs ....

Trade union activity ....

Cross-community (Protestant / Roman Catholic) ....

Emergency services ....

Education for adults..

Asylum / refugee / new immigrant groups / associations ....

Black and minority ethnic support groups / associations..

Housing and homeless..

Employment and training ....

Other *Specify:* ....

SHOWCARD

Q.10   What are the main activities you do for this group, club or organisation?

Raising or handling money
1

Leading the group / member of a committee / trustees
2

Organising or helping to run an activity or event
3

Visiting people
4

Befriending or mentoring people
5

Coaching
6

Giving advice / information / counselling
7

Secretarial, administration or clerical work
8

Providing transport / driving
9

Representing
0

Promotion
V

Campaigning
X

Other practical help (e.g., shopping, gardening, building, meals on wheels)
1

Helping in church or religious organisation
2

Collecting ./ making things to be sold for charity
3

Teaching or training
4

Selling tickets
5

Working with young people
6

Working in a shop
7

Other *Specify:*
8

Don't know / none of these
9

Q.11 How often are you involved with this group, club or organisation?

Once a week 1
Once a fortnight 2
Once a month 3
A few times 4
Only once in the last year 5

Q.12 How did you find out about this particular opportunity for voluntary work? **PROBE FULLY**

Through previously using services provided by the group
    1
From someone else already involved in the group
    2
From a friend / family member not involved in the group
    3
By word-of-mouth
    4
Through the church or a religious organisation
    5
School / college / university
    6
Volunteer bureau or centre (e.g., VSB)
    7
Millennium Volunteers
    8
Local events
    9
Library
    0

Community centre
    1
Internet / organisation website
    2
Employer's Volunteering Scheme
    3
Local newspaper
    4
National newspaper
    5
TV or radio (local or national)
    6
Promotion events / volunteer fair
    7
I set up the group with likeminded people
Leaflet (material from the organisation)
    8
Other *Specify:*
    9

Q.13   I would like to find out a bit more about why you started helping this particular organisation (name of organisation)?

I applied or offered to help	1
I was asked to help	2
I started the group	3
Other *Specify:*	
....	4
Don't know / can't remember	5

SHOWCARD

Q.14   For which of these reasons did you become involved in this type of work?

I wanted to improve things / help people
    1
I wanted to meet people / make friends
    2
The cause was really important to me
    3
My friends / family did it
    4
It was connected with the needs of my family / friends
    5
I felt there was a need in my community
    6
I had received voluntary help
    7
I wanted to structure my day
    8
I thought it would give me a chance to learn new skills
    9

I thought it would give me a chance to use my existing skills
    1
It helps me get on in my career
    2
It's part of my religious belief or philosophy of life to help people
    3
It gives a chance to get a recognised qualification
    4
I had time to spare
    5
I felt there was no-one else to do it
    6
My social or political principles
    7
Other *Specify:*

....
.... 8
Don't know
    9

VOLUNTEER EXPENSES

Q.15 Does the organisation offer to refund 'out of pocket' expenses which you could claim in connection with the voluntary work you carry out?

Yes ....1-**GO TO Q.16**
No.......................................2-**GO TO Q.19**
Don't know / no reply ....3-**GO TO Q.19**

SHOWCARD

Q.16 What kind of expenses does the organisation refund you?

Travel 1
Meals 2
Child / dependent care 3
Special equipment 4
Telephone, postage if volunteering from home ...5
Other *Specify:*
....6
None 7

Q.17 And in the past year, have you on any occasion NOT claimed any out-of-pocket expenses that you are entitled to?

Yes ....1-**GO TO Q.18**
No, always claimed............2-**GO TO Q.19**
No, have no expenses.......3-**GO TO Q.19**
Don't know ....4-**GO TO Q.19**

Q.18 Why was that?

Too difficult / too much paperwork...........................1
Didn't get around to it..2
As a form of donation 3
I'd feel I was taking money from the organisation ...4
I felt it would impact on benefits..............................5
Other *Specify:*
....6

Q.19 And in the past year, have you received any other fees or allowances (over and above your direct out-of-pocket expenses)?

Yes 1
No......................................2
Don't know / not stated 3

VOLUNTEER TRAINING

Q.20 In the course of your volunteering work, have you had to …

	Yes	*No*
	(xx)	(xx)
Complete an application form	1	2
Attend an interview / chat...............................	1	2
Provide references	1	2
Declare any criminal record	1	2
Undergo a pre-employment consultancy check (police check)	1	2
Undergo a trail period	1	2

Q.21 I am going to read out some statements, and for each one, please tell me whether they apply to your experiences in terms of voluntary work?

	Yes	No	Don't Know
		(xx)	(xx)	(xx)
You received induction into your role	1	2	3
You have a written role description	1	2	3
You have a named person to go to for support	1	2	3
You attend support and / or supervision meetings	1	2	3
You have a written volunteer agreement	1	2	3
You are aware of health and safety regulations	1	2	3
You are covered by insurance	1	2	3

Q.22 Have you been given any training for your voluntary work with this organisation?

Yes .... 1-**GO TO Q.23**
No .... 2-**GO TO Q.24**
Don't know / no reply......... 3-**GO TO Q.24**

SHOWCARD
Q.23 How helpful or unhelpful do you feel the training was?

Very helpful
.... 1
Fairly helpful
.... 2
Neither helpful or unhelpful
.... 3
Fairly unhelpful
.... 4
Very unhelpful
.... 5
Don't know / not stated
.... 6

Q.24 Do you feel you should be given training?

Yes 1
No.......................................2
Don't know / not stated 3

SHOWCARD

Q.25 Overall how helpful or unhelpful is the supervision, support and advice from the organisation that you help?

Very helpful 1	
Fairly helpful 2	
Neither helpful or unhelpful 3	
Fairly unhelpful 4	
Very unhelpful 5	
Don't know / not stated 6	

THE VOLUNTEERING EXPERIENCE

SHOWCARD

Q.26 Typically, people find that there are some parts of their volunteering experience which they find good, and some which they find not so good. Again, thinking of what you do for … (main organisation), would you tell me, for each statement I read out, to what extent you agree or disagree with them?

	DEFINITELY AGREE	TEND TO AGREE	TEND TO DISAGREE	DEFINITELY DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW
I'm given the opportunity to do the sort of things I'd like to do	1	2	3	4	
I get bored or lose interest in my involvement	1	2	3	4	
I can cope with the things I'm asked to do	1	2	3	4	
I feel things could be much better organised	1	2	3	4	
My involvement takes up too much of my time	1	2	3	4	
My help is not really needed	1	2	3	4	
The organisation has reasonable expectations in terms of workload	1	2	3	4	
My efforts are appreciated by the organisation	1	2	3	4	
I feel the organisation isn't really going anywhere	1	2	3	4	
I feel that there is too much bureaucracy	1	2	3	4	
I feel the organisation is too concerned about risk	1	2	3	4	
I find it difficult to balance my volunteering commitments with my work / home commitments	1	2	3	4	
I am given the opportunity to influence the development of the organisation	1	2	3	4	
I feel that volunteering is becoming too much like paid work	1	2	3	4	
I feel I would be unable to leave my role as there is no-one to take over	1	2	3	4	

People do voluntary work for, or give help to all kinds of groups for all kinds of reasons. They also get different kinds of satisfaction from it.

SHOWCARD

Q.27 I am going to read out some things that people have said to us about this. Thinking about the things you do for … (main organisation), would you tell me, from this card, how important or unimportant each one is to you?

	VERY IMPORTANT	FAIRLY IMPORTANT	NOT VERY IMPORANT	NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT	DON'T KNOW
I meet people and make friends through it	1	2	3	4	
I get satisfaction from seeing the results	1	2	3	4	
It gives me a chance to do things I'm good at	1	2	3	4	
It makes me feel less selfish as a person	1	2	3	4	
I really enjoy it	1	2	3	4	
It broadens my experience of life	1	2	3	4	
It gives me a sense of personal achievement	1	2	3	4	
It gives me the chance to learn new skills	1	2	3	4	
It gives me a position in the community	1	2	3	4	
It gets me 'out of myself'	1	2	3	4	
It gives me the chance to get a recognised qualification	1	2	3	4	
It gives me more confidence	1	2	3	4	
It makes me feel needed	1	2	3	4	
It gives me the chance to improve my employment prospects	1	2	3	4	
It makes me feel less stressed	1	2	3	4	
It improves m physical health	1	2	3	4	

Q.28 Since you began your voluntary work, has your network of friends and acquaintances increased, decreased or remained the same?

Increased 1	
Remained the same 2	
Decreased 3	
Don't know 4	

Q.29 Since you began your volunteering work, has your contact with people of a different community or religious background increased, decreased in frequency or remained the same?

Increased in frequency 1	
Remained the same 2	
Decreased in frequency 3	
Don't know 4	

VOLUNTEERING IN THE PAST 5 YEARS

Q.30 Can I just check in the **past five years (excluding the last 12 months)** have you done any voluntary work to help a group, club or organisation?

Yes.................................... 1-**GO TO Q31**
No .... 2-**GO TO Q33**
Don't know / not stated ..... 3-**GO TO Q33**

Q.31 Are you still doing voluntary work with that group, club or organisation?

Yes.................................... 1-**GO TO Q33**
No .... 2-**GO TO Q32**
Don't know / not stated ..... 3-**GO TO Q32**

Q.32 I'd like to ask you a little more about just one of the groups, clubs or organisations that you've volunteered with but that you no longer help. What would you say were the main reasons for stopping your involvement with that organisation?

Due to new involvement with other organisations 1
Due to changing home / work circumstances... 2
Due to increasing time demands of involvement with this organisation 3
Due to increasing time demands of involvement with other organisations...... 4
It took too much time 5
Organisation folded up 6
Moved away from area.. 7
Organisation wasn't relevant to me any more 8
Lost interest.. 9
Didn't get asked to do the things I'd like to 1
Felt the organisation was badly organised 2
Felt my efforts weren't always appreciated 3
Felt organisation wasn't going anywhere 4
Found myself out-of-pocket 5
It was too bureaucratic 6
Too much concern about risk and liability 7
Other *Specify:*
.... 8

INFORMAL VOLUNTEERING
      <u>SHOWCARD</u>

Q.33 As well as doing, or instead of doing, voluntary work or giving help through an organisation or group, sometimes people help or do voluntary work just as an individual. Have you, in the last year, done any of these things voluntarily, in your neighbourhood? Do not include things you have done for close relatives (i.e., spouse / partner; parents (including in-laws), grandparents including in-laws), or children (including in-laws)?

Keeping in touch with someone who has difficulty getting out and about (visiting in person, telephoning or e-mailing) 1
Doing shopping, collecting pension or paying bills...2
Cooking, cleaning, laundry, gardening or other routine household jobs 3
Decorating, or doing any kind of home or car repairs 4
Baby sitting or caring for children 5
Sitting with or providing personal care (e.g., washing, dressing) for someone who is sick or fail 6
Looking after a property or a pet for someone who is away 7
Giving advice..8
Writing letters or filling in forms 9

Representing someone (for example talking to a council department, or to a doctor).............1
Transporting or escorting someone (e.g., to a hospital, or on an outing) 2
Improved environment (e.g., picked up litter or swept pavement)..3
Anything else done for someone in your neighbourhood or for benefit or neighbourhood 4
No help given in last 12 months ....5-**GO TO Q.39**

Q.34	Over the past 12 months about how often have you done this kind of thing / all the things you mentioned?	Once a week .... 1 Once a fortnight .... 2 Once a month .... 3 A few times .... 4 Only once in the last year 5

Q.35	About how many hours do you normally spend on this type of voluntary activity each month?					(xx)

Q.36 When you do this kind of thing, is it usually because you feel you have to or just because you want to?

Have to 1	
Want to 2	
Sometime have to / want to or both 3	
Don't know 4	

Q.37 Since you started doing voluntary activity has your network of friends and acquaintances increased, decreased or remained the same?

Increased 1	
Remained the same 2	
Decreased 3	
Don't know 4	

Q.38 Since you started doing this voluntary activity, has your contact with people of a different community / religious background increased, decreased in frequency or remained the same?

Increased in frequency 1	
Remained the same 2	
Decreased in frequency 3	
Don't know 4	

ASK ALL

BARRIERS TO VOLUNTEERING

Q.39 Do you ever feel that you would like to spend *more* time (or *any* time in the case of non-volunteers) helping groups, clubs or organisations?

Yes....................................1	
No 2	
Don't know / not stated......3	

SHOWCARD

Q.40 If someone asked you directly to help in some way, how do you think you would respond?

I would be pleased to help	1
I would feel I couldn't refuse	2
I would refuse because I haven't got the time	3
I would refuse for other reasons	4
It would depend	5
Don't know	6

SHOWCARD

Q.41 There are a lot of reasons why people don't get involved *(or become more involved in the case of existing volunteers)* in these kinds of activities, even when they feel they might like to. I am going to read out some reasons other people have given. For each of these things, please indicate how much they apply to you. Do they apply a lot, a little, or not at all? **JUST CALL OUT LETTER**

		Applies a lot	Applies a little	Does not apply at all
A	I have work commitments	1	2	3
B	I haven't got the right skills or experience to be able to help	1	2	3
C	I'd be worried that I wouldn't fit in with the other people who were involved	1	2	3
D	I'd be worried that I might end up out of pocket	1	2	3
E	I feel I'm too old to get involved with voluntary activities	1	2	3
F	I'd be worried that I'd lose my benefits	1	2	3
G	My family / partner wouldn't want me to get involved	1	2	3
H	I wouldn't be able to stop once I had got involved	1	2	3
I	I would be put off by all the associated bureaucracy	1	2	3
J	I would be worried about any threat to my own physical safety	1	2	3
K	I would be worried about the risks and being liable if anything goes wrong	1	2	3
L	I wouldn't know how to find out about getting involved in voluntary activities	1	2	3
M	I have an illness or disability that I feel prevents me from getting involved	1	2	3
N	I have to look after someone who is elderly or ill	1	2	3
O	I have to look after children / the home	1	2	3
P	I'm too young	1	2	3
Q	I've never thought about it	1	2	3
R	I'm new to the area	1	2	3
S	I haven't heard about opportunities to give help	1	2	3
T	I am already doing enough	1	2	3

SHOWCARD

Q.42   The following are some things other people have said would make it easier for them to get involved in helping groups, clubs or organisations. For each of these things, please indicate whether they would make you more likely to get more involved in voluntary work. Would they make a big difference, a small difference, or no difference at all?

	BIG DIFFERENCE	SMALL DIFFERENCE	NO DIFFERENCE AT ALL
If there was more information on opportunities and how I can contribute	1	2	3
If there was more flexibility when I could get involved	1	2	3
If childcare facilities were available	1	2	3
If the group offered to reimburse my expenses	1	2	3
If the group offered training and accreditation	1	2	3
If a need arose in the community	1	2	3
If I could develop new skills / knowledge	1	2	3
If it would help develop my career	1	2	3
If I had access to better / more time off from my employer	1	2	3
If I could meet new people	1	2	3
Nothing is stopping me, I am not interested	1	2	3
Other *Specify:*..	1	2	3
Don't know	1	2	3

SHOWCARD

Q.43 What ways would you find most useful in terms of finding out about volunteering opportunities? **CODE ALL THAT APPLY. PROBE FULLY**

A national telephone line	1
Local telephone helpline	2
Local centre where I could find out about volunteering	3
Adverts on national TV / radio	4
Adverts on local TV / radio	5
Articles / adverts in local newspaper	6
Articles / adverts in national newspaper	7
Organisations publishing their volunteering opportunities on the internet	8
Database of opportunities on the internet	9
Information on ceefax / teletext	1
Information in job centres	2
Word-of-mouth (friends / family)	3
Word-of-mouth (others)	4
Email	5
Other *Specify:*	
....	6

EMPLOYER VOLUNTEERING

ASK ALL IN FULL-TIME OR PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT: OTHERS GO TO Q.50

The following is a definition of Employment Supported Volunteering: Employer Support Volunteering occurs when an employer actively encourages and supports his / her employees to do volunteering work in the local community.

Q.44   Some employers actively encourage, or have schemes for, employees to take part in community projects, or help voluntary or charity organisations, or to give money. Does your employer offer anything of this sort?

Yes.....................................1-**CONTINUE**
No ....2-**GO TO Q.48**
Don't know / not stated......3-**GO TO Q.48**

Q.45 Is the scheme for helping, for giving or both?

Scheme for helping only
.... 1
Scheme for giving only
.... 2
Both helping and giving
.... 3
Neither helping or giving
.... 4
Don't know
.... 5

Q.46 Did you personally participate in any activities of this sort that were encouraged by your employer?

Yes, helping only........................1
Yes, giving only..........................2
Yes, both helping and giving 3
No..4-**GO TO Q.47**
Don't know 5

Q.47 What do you see as the key benefits to yourself of helping through your employer scheme?

CODE UP TO 3

It gives me the chance to mix with a range of different people ......
I get satisfaction from seeing the results..
It gives me something good to put on my CV ....
I really enjoy it..
It makes me feel less selfish as a person ....
It allows me to develop a range of transferable skills ....
It gives me a sense of personal achievement................................
It allows me to make new contacts that might help my career ....
It allows me to start to volunteer on a regular basis ....
It offers a change of scene ....

Q.48 Would you like your employer to provide a scheme for taking part in community projects or helping voluntary or charity organisations?

Yes	1
No	2
Already does	3
Don't know / not stated	4

ASK ALL

SHOWCARD

Q.49 I'm going to read out a number of things that might encourage employees to take part in community projects or to help voluntary organisations or charities with the support of their employer. For each of these things, please indicate how much each would encourage you to participate in such activities in the future. Would they encourage you a lot, a little, or not at all?

	ENCOURAGE A LOT	ENCOURAGE A LITTLE	WOULD NOT ENCOURAGE AT ALL	DON'T KNOW
If I was able to get unpaid time off work to do it	1	2	3	
If more information or guidance about the sort of things I could do were available in the workplace	1	2	3	
If my employer let me use materials or equipment (e.g., stationary / photocopying) for the organisation I helped	1	2	3	
If I could do it as part of a group of people at work	1	2	3	
If I could choose the activity	1	2	3	
If I knew it would help me improve my skills	1	2	3	
It is helped me to get qualifications	1	2	3	
If I knew it would benefit me in my career	1	2	3	
If I was able to get paid tome off from work to do it	1	2	3	

PERCEPTIONS OF VOLUNTARY WORK

SHOWCARD

Q.50 I would like to ask you some questions about how to perceive unpaid work and the role it has to play in Northern Ireland. Please state whether you agree or disagree with the following statements. So firstly ...

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW
Unpaid workers offer something different which could not be provided by paid professionals	1	2	3	4	
If the Government fulfilled all of its responsibilities there should be no need for people to do unpaid work	1	2	3	4	
Many organisations could not survive without unpaid workers	1	2	3	4	
Everyone has a moral responsibilities to do unpaid work at some time in their life	1	2	3	4	
Being involved in unpaid work can contribute to an improvement in cross community relations	1	2	3	4	
Organisations using unpaid workers are usually amateurish and unprofessional	1	2	3	4	
Divisions in society in Northern Ireland prevent people from becoming involved in unpaid work	1	2	3	4	
Engaging in unpaid work helps people to take an active role in democratic society	1	2	3	4	
Unpaid work is a threat to paid work and is used to make cutbacks in public spending	1	2	3	4	

Q.51 Have you personally ever benefited from another's volunteering?

Yes .... 1-**GO TO Q.52**
No .... 2-**GO TO Q.53**
Don't know / not stated ..... 3-**GO TO Q.53**

Q.52 What impact did the work the volunteer did make on your life?

A significantly beneficial effect 1
A small beneficial effect............................ 2
It made no chance 3
It had a negative effect 4
Don't know 5

Q.53 Did you vote in the last Westminister General Election in 2005?

Yes.....................................1
No......................................2
Don't know / not stated......3

Q.54 Over the last 12 months have you done any of the following?

Attended a public consultation event / meeting / forum ....
Been involved in raising an issue with an MP, MLA, MEP, or local councillor ....
Written on an issue to an MP, MLA, MEP or local councillor...
Signed a petition ....
Attended a lawful demonstration ....
Joined a boycott..
Engaged in any form of public consultation *Specify:*

SECTION X – SOCIAL CAPITAL

ASK ALL

Now I'd like to ask you a few questions about your immediate neighbourhood, by which I mean your street or block.

SHOWCARD

Q.1 Suppose you lost your purse or wallet containing your address details, and it was found in the street by someone living in this neighbourhood. How likely or unlikely is it that it would be returned to you with nothing missing?

Very likely	1
Fairly likely	2
Neither likely nor unlikely	3
Fairly unlikely	4
Very unlikely	5
Don't know	6

SHOWCARD

Q.2 How much of a problem are the following statements?

	VERY BIG PROBLEM	FAIRLY BIG PROBLEM	NOT A VERY BIG PROBLEM	NOT A PROBLEM AT ALL	DON'T KNOW
People being drunk or rowdy in public places	1	2	3	4	5
Rubbish or litter lying around	1	2	3	4	5
Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property or vehicles	1	2	3	4	5
People using or dealing drugs	1	2	3	4	5
People being attacked or harassed because of their skin colour, ethnic origin or religion	1	2	3	4	5
Teenagers hanging around on the street	1	2	3	4	5
Troublesome neighbours	1	2	3	4	5

Q.3 **In the last 12 months have you taken any of the following actions in an attempt to solve a problem affecting people in your local area?**

Contacted a local radio station, television station or newspaper	1
Contacted the appropriate organization to deal with the problem, such as the council	2
Contacted a local councilor, MLA, or MP	3
Attended a public meeting or neighbourhood forum to discuss local issues	4
Attended a tenants' or local residents' group	5
Attended a protest meeting or joined an action group	6
Helped organise a petition on a local issue	7
No local problems	8
None / Don't know	9

SHOWCARD

Q.4 How often do you speak to …?

	MOST DAYS	ONCE OR TWICE A WEEK	ONCE OR TWICE A MONTH	LESS OFTEN THAN ONCE A MONTH	NEVER
Relatives on the phone	1	2	3	4	5
Friends on the phone	1	2	3	4	5
And how often do you speak to neighbours	1	2	3	4	5
How often do you meet up with relatives who are not living with you	1	2	3	4	5
How often do you meet up with friends	1	2	3	4	5

VOLUNTEER
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AGENCY

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