

# volunteering in ireland – civic participation and lifelong learning

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# what is volunteering?

Volunteering is the commitment of time and energy, for the benefit of society, local communities, individuals outside the immediate family, the environment or other causes. Voluntary activities are undertaken of a person's own free will, without payment, except for the reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses.



# Facts about volunteering in Ireland

Estimates on the in kind revenue from volunteering in Ireland range up to €600 million per year

In 2006 responding organisations to 'the hidden landscape' survey reported having a total 1,570,408 volunteers.

According to the 2006 Census 50.3% of those who had volunteered in the last month were women with 49.7% being men.

58 per cent of people get involved in voluntary work because they are asked in the first place

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# the value of volunteerism

Volunteering is a way that enriches lives and communities, that gives expression to our need for interconnection as social beings, generates wealth that is not quantifiable in monetary terms and brings a dimension of quality to peoples lives and to society as a whole.

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# starting with first principles



Everyone has the  
right to volunteer  
and to be involved

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# first principles continued

everyone has a unique  
and valuable contribution  
to make



# first principles continued

society as a whole is enriched by the contribution of all its members



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# Why people volunteer

- to feel needed
- to make a difference
- to help someone
- to gain or improve skills
- to make new friends
- for recognition
- to feel good
- to get out of the house
- to feel proud
- to be part of a team
- for fun

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# Why is volunteering important?

- Empowers individuals
- Adds value to not for profit organisations
- Strengthens communities
- It's worth millions to the community
- It enables organisations to do more
- Volunteers increase the diversity of an organisation
- Volunteers extend networks

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# volunteers as citizens.....

- are more likely to vote
- feel a sense of ownership for the society they live in
- bring cohesion to communities

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# volunteering in ireland

it is part of who we are

the hidden landscape survey says over 1.5 million people volunteer

contributes up to 600 million to gdp

up to 33 per cent of the adult population volunteer on a regular basis

volunteering plays a vital role in integration of people from new communities

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# volunteering –the benefits

## volunteers:-

- have better health and mental health outcomes
- extend their social networks
- learn new skills and get to apply existing ones in a range of situations

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but.....

Not everyone has equal access to  
volunteering opportunities

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# Reasons for not volunteering

The Tipping the Balance Report found there was a number of reasons for why people did not volunteer and why they stopped

<b>Reasons for not volunteering</b>	<b>%</b>
No time	32.5
Never thought about it	16.7
Was never asked	13.7
Too old	11.4
No transport	8.2
<b>Reasons for giving up volunteering</b>	<b>%</b>
New demands on time	34.7
Got older	10.2
Change in personal circumstances	10.2
Lost interest	10.2
Got sick	9.0
Moved away from area	9.0
No longer needed	4.9
Stopped when left school	4.1

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Tipping the Balance, 2002

# overcoming barriers and creating equal opportunities through volunteering

- identify barriers to inclusion and involvement through volunteering- what might the barriers be?
- identify interventions that level the playing field and create equal opportunities – how?
- why is this important?



# a final thought

Cooperation is the thorough conviction that nobody can get there unless everybody gets there.

- *Virginia Burden*



thank you for your attention

## Contact details

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