

ANALYSIS

25 June 2024

Almost a fifth of the population of the Czech Republic volunteered, females were prevailing

Volunteering in the Czech Republic – 2023

The volunteering rate reached 19.2% in the second half-year of 2023. Involved in volunteering were 1 662.3 thousand population of the Czech Republic (CR) aged 15+ years. The female volunteering rate (21.4%) was higher than the male volunteering rate (16.9%); however, males stated a higher number of hours devoted to volunteering. People were predominantly helping in an organised way.

In the second half-year of 2023, the Czech Statistical Office carried out a survey with the topic of Volunteering, which was an add-on module of questions attached to the Labour Force Sample Survey (LFSS; *VŠPS in Czech*). Interviewers in all Regions of the Czech Republic addressed respondents aged 15+ years (15 years old and older). This survey on the initiative of the Office of the Government of the CR was financed by the Ministry of the Interior of the CR.

Definition of volunteer work (volunteering)

In the survey, volunteering was defined as a beneficial activity, for which no wage or remuneration is obtained, namely not even in the form of a service in return or in kind. Activities resulting from an obligation (e.g. to an employer, a school, etc.) or activities only aimed at family members were not considered volunteering. This definition is based on a definition of volunteering as it was determined by the International Labour Organization (ILO).

Making financial donations alone was not considered a volunteering activity in the survey, because it is usually a one-time aid, which lies in sending a donation SMS, entering a bank payment, or a donation in cash. For the purposes of this survey, neither blood donation was considered volunteering, namely because a more precise statistics can be obtained from administrative sources, which are available for blood donation.

Respondents were first answering three basic filtering questions that were to select from the population those who in the last 12 months participated in a volunteering activity, which they carried out for at least 1 hour; for those respondents, details were further examined. However, when respondents gave negative answers to all of the three filtering questions, the module ended up for them.

Females devote more to volunteer work

One of the key tasks of this survey was to provide the number of volunteers involved and their percentage in the adult population – the volunteering rate.

19.2% of addressed respondents were involved in volunteering, which is 1 662.3 thousand population of the CR aged 15+ years. 947.5 thousand females and 714.8 thousand males were

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devoted to volunteering. Among respondents, who were engaged in some volunteering activity, possible other volunteer activity was surveyed. A second activity was stated by 189.0 thousand volunteers (11.4% of all volunteers).

It followed from initial questions that volunteers helped most often to their friends, neighbours, or unknown people (33.8%), or to some organisation – a club, association, etc. (33.2%), help was also directed to the nature, the environment (9.2%), some informal community, their community (5.4%), or it was a combination of the aforementioned beneficiaries of volunteer help (6.8%). Moreover, 8.5% of volunteers stated that they purchased, collected, and distributed products or goods intended to be donated and 3.1% dealt with preparation of products and goods to be donated.

Volunteers by age, education, economic activity, and degree of urbanisation

The biggest proportion of volunteers was in the age group of 25–44 years (36.3%) and 45–64 years (36.2%). There were 18.0% of volunteers aged 65+ years and the smallest proportion belonged to volunteers aged 15–24 years (9.5%). Females were considerably prevailing among volunteers in the age group of 65+ years, they made 64.3%.

The largest share of volunteers consisted of people with secondary education with A-level examination (35.2%) followed by those with higher education (28.8%), secondary vocational education (27.9%), and the lowest number of volunteers was among those with primary education (8.1%).

Over two thirds of volunteers were working persons (68.4%), the inactive (students, the retired, etc.) made 30.1% of volunteers, and 1.5% were the unemployed. Among both the inactive and the unemployed volunteers, females were significantly prevailing.

Interviewers found volunteering activities most in rural areas (40.6%), less in cities (30.0%), and in towns and suburbs (29.4%).

Table 1: Volunteers by age, education, economic activity, and degree of urbanisation

Breakdown	Total number of volunteers (thousand)			Percentage of volunteers
		Males	Females	
Age groups (years)				
15–24	157.5	59.5	98.0	9.5
25–44	603.8	279.7	324.1	36.3
45–64	602.6	269.2	333.4	36.2
65+	298.4	106.4	192.0	18.0
Education				
Primary education	135.0	41.4	93.6	8.1
Secondary education without A-level examination	463.4	253.2	210.3	27.9
Secondary education with A-level examination	585.7	228.6	357.1	35.2

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Higher education	478.2	191.6	286.6	28.8
Economic status				
Working person	1 137.1	554.5	582.6	68.4
The unemployed	24.6	8.1	16,5	1.5
Inactive	500.6	152.2	348.5	30.1
Degree of urbanisation				
Cities	499.0	204.5	294.5	30.0
Towns and suburbs	488.1	193.8	294.3	29.4
Rural areas	675.2	316.5	358.7	40.6

Source: CZSO, Sample survey on volunteer work

Volunteering activities by Classification of Occupations (CZ-ISCO)

The CZ-ISCO classification was used as another breakdown; it serves, as standard, for breakdown of paid employments (occupations), while similarity of activities performed was used. It turned out that the range of volunteer activities is very wide indeed. However, it will probably not be surprising that the most frequently stated ones were classified to the major group of elementary occupations, which 611.5 thousand (36.8%) of volunteers had.

However, volunteers were also engaged in skilled activities; a great percentage of volunteers was classified to the major group of technicians and associate professionals (382.7 thousand, i.e. 23.0%), in which it was the most often the sub-major group of business and administration associate professionals, activities therein were stated by 86.6 thousand of males and 222.7 thousand of females.

Young males aged 15–24 years stated the most often that they were engaged in activities of volunteer firemen or that they collected trash and garbage (i.e. rubbish, litter picking), females in the age of 15–24 years also mentioned most often collecting trash and garbage, the second most often mentioned activity was walking someone else's dogs (or help in animal shelters).

Males aged 25–64 years also engaged the most in activities of volunteer firemen or neighbourly help such as purchases for their neighbours, acquaintances, for food banks or for children in children's homes. Among females aged 25–64 years, collecting, sorting, and donating of clothes was prevailing; neighbourly help in the form of purchases was stated on the second place.

Both males and females aged 65+ years were engaged the most often in purchasing for their neighbours or acquaintances; males aged 65+ years mentioned as their second most often activity mowing the grass and maintenance of the greenery (green areas); females stated collecting, sorting, and donating of clothes.

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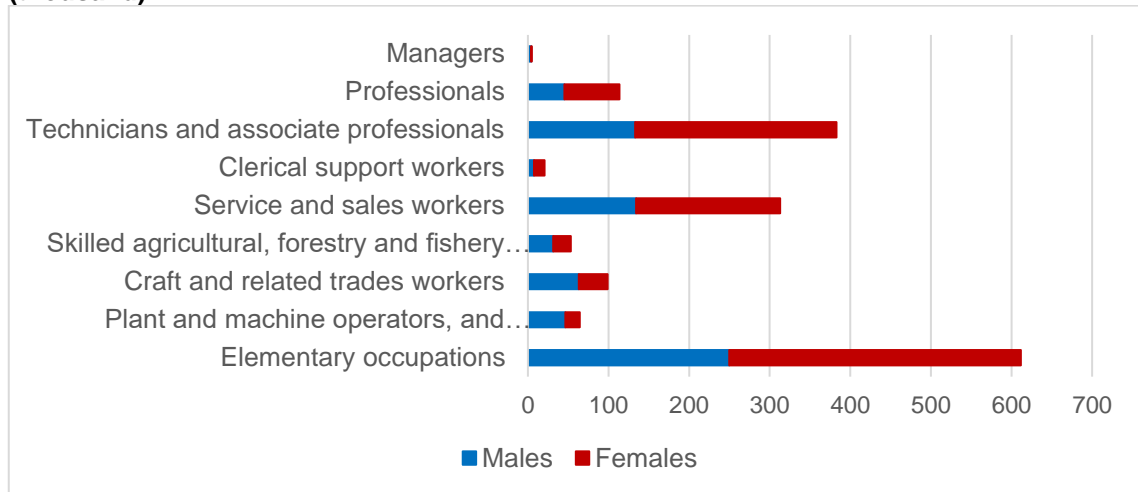
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Chart 1: Number of volunteers according to the Classification of Occupations CZ-ISCO (thousand)



Source: CZSO, Sample survey on volunteer work

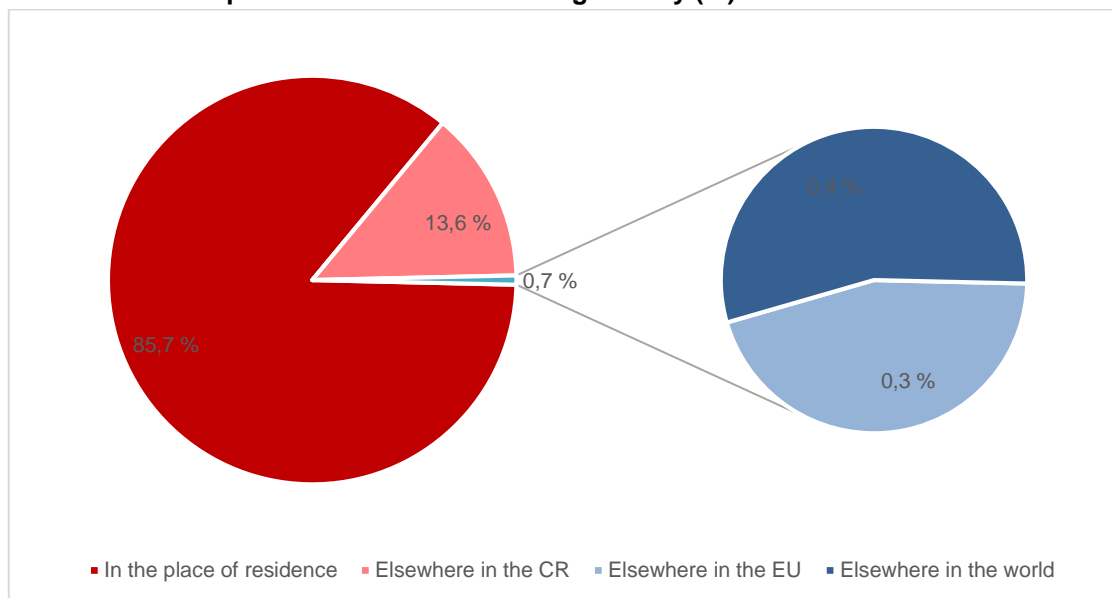
As for volunteers who stated the second activity, those were mainly activities in the major group of elementary occupations (46.3%).

Volunteering took place most often in the place of residence and offline

Most of the volunteers were volunteering directly in the place of their residence (85.7%), only 13.6% of volunteers stated that they helped elsewhere in the Czech Republic (CR). Volunteering abroad was only found in 0.7% of volunteers. It was very similar as for the second activity, too; 79.1% of volunteers stated activity in their place of residence and 20.9% elsewhere in the CR.

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Chart 2: Place of performance of volunteering activity (%)



Source: CZSO, Sample survey on volunteer work

Since we live in the digital age, one of the questions also focused on whether volunteering activity took place (at least partially) online / in a virtual way, which was stated as for the first activity by 103.2 thousand (5.1%) of volunteers. Mainly activities in the major group of technicians and associate professionals (41.6 thousand) were carried out online (or at least partially online); most often, organising various charity events and charity collections was mentioned. A large proportion of online activities also took place in the major group of professionals (28.2 thousand), where activities such as tutoring, teaching foreign languages, and also leading scout groups were stated the most often. As for the second activity, online/virtual volunteering was stated by 9.44 thousand (5.0%) volunteers.

Organised volunteering is prevailing

Volunteering is divided into organised, where activities are organised by an umbrella organisation (a company, an association, a club, a state, a municipality, a community, etc.) and unorganised (direct), where activities are organised and coordinated directly by an individual.

In both surveyed activities, organised volunteering was prevailing – in the first activity, it was 941.1 thousand (56.6%) volunteers, in the second activity, 117.3 thousand (62.1%) volunteers. As for organised volunteering, the first activity was organised most often by a non-profit, charitable, or a church organisation, by an association, a club, a health or social establishment (502.7 thousand, 30.2%), by a state or municipal organisation (249.7 thousand, 15.0%), by an informal community (95.0 thousand, 5.7%), other organisation (47.0 thousand, 2.8%), or directly by a workplace of a respondent (46.6 thousand, 2.8%).

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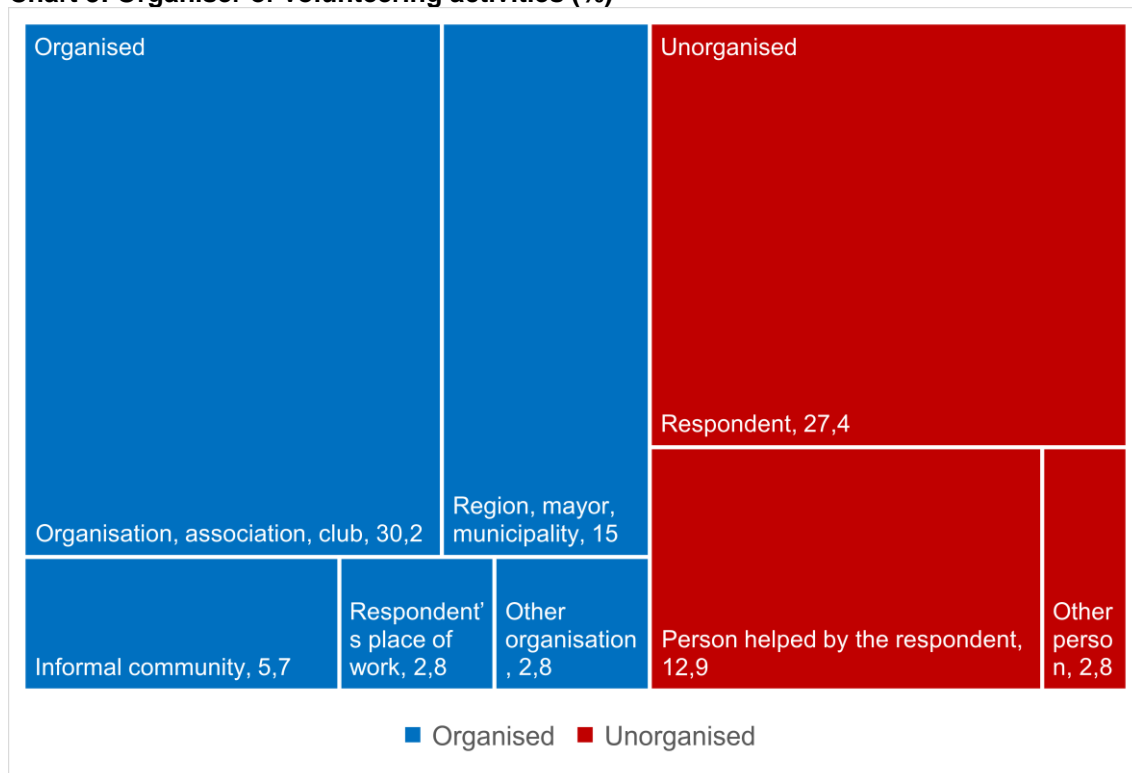
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As for unorganised (direct) volunteering, the first activity was most often organised directly by the respondent (455.0 thousand, 27.4%), by a person helped by the respondent (213.8 thousand, 12.9%), or other person (45.9 thousand, 2.8%).

Chart 3: Organiser of volunteering activities (%)



Source: CZSO, Sample survey on volunteer work

Also as for the second activity, it was in most cases organised volunteering, when activities were organised most often by an organisation, an association, a club, and the like (70.9 thousand, 37.5%); as for direct volunteering, activities were organised most often directly by the respondent (44.6 thousand, 23.6%).

Activities focusing on development of a municipality, communities, and neighbourly help are prevailing

The questionnaire also looked at the areas of volunteering activities, i.e. what the volunteering activities were focused on. As for the first activity, it was mainly focusing on development of a municipality, communities and on neighbourly help (393.6 thousand, 23.7%), social care (390.3 thousand, 23.5%), care for the environment and animals (291.5 thousand, 17.5%), help in emergencies (180.2 thousand, 10.8%), and sport or physical activities (161.8 thousand, 9.7%).

From two most frequently stated categories, social care was predominantly stated by females, whereas males helped more in development of a municipality.

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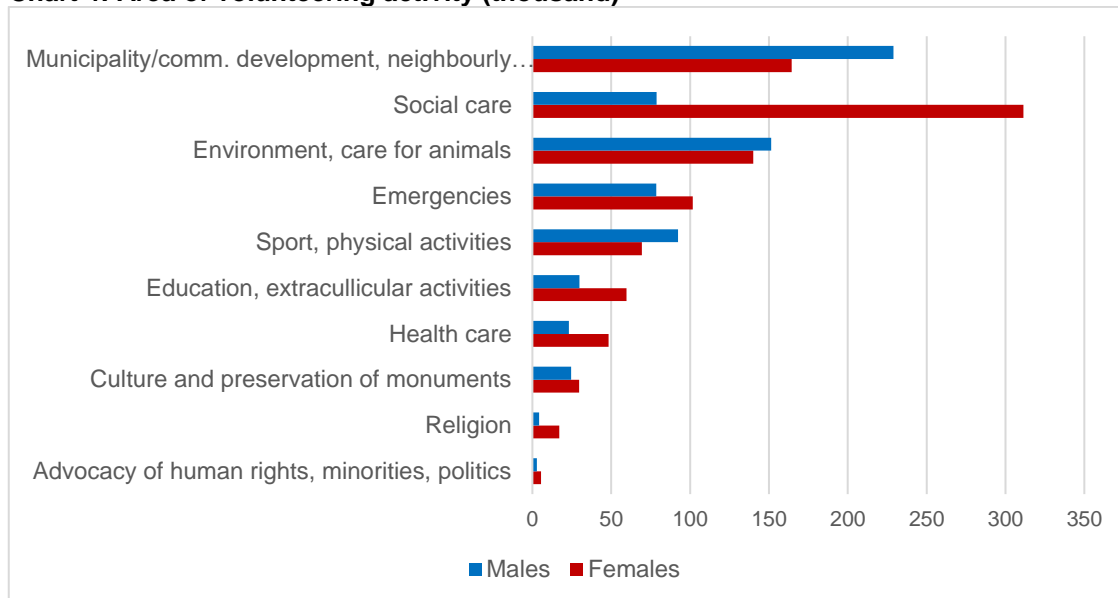
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Chart 4: Area of volunteering activity (thousand)



Source: CZSO, Sample survey on volunteer work

As for the second volunteering activity, the most frequent areas were similar; respondents were predominantly stating focusing on the development of a municipality, communities, and neighbourly help (51.9 thousand, 27.5%) and care for the environment and animals (44.7 thousand, 23.7%).

Volunteering activities were most often without focus on a certain group of persons (717.0 thousand, 43.1%). Respondents were further stating that provided that their activity is in favour of a certain group of persons, it regards children and the youth (385.5 thousand, 23.2%) or elderly people (329.4 thousand, 19.8%). Less frequently, their activity was focused on minorities (67.3 thousand, 4.1%) and on persons with disabilities (38.1 thousand, 2.3%). Alternatively, they focused on a combination of the aforementioned groups of persons (125.0 thousand, 7.5%).

Also the second activity was the most often without focus on a certain group of persons (98.4 thousand, 52.4%).

Males devote more time to volunteering

The volume of time volunteers devote to the activities was surveyed, too; the survey questionnaire focused on the number of hours spent by volunteering during the last 4 weeks and also on an estimate of the total number of hours spent by volunteering during the last 12 months. Since volunteers often stated that they did not make notes anywhere about how much time they had spent by volunteering and they do not observe that, it was difficult for them to guess the total time. Therefore, some respondents did not report the hours spent and the numbers of hours are thus underestimated.

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Table 2: Population aged 15+ years, volunteering rate

	Population of the CR (thousand)	Number of volunteers (thousand)	Volunteering rate (%)	Average number of hours spent by volunteering during the last 4 weeks	Average number of hours spent by volunteering during the last 12 months
Total	8 665.2	1 662.3	19.2	9.8	57.6
Males	4 231.5	714.8	16.9	10.2	62.7
Females	4 433.7	947.5	21.4	9.5	54.2

Source: CZSO, Sample survey on volunteer work

However, it can be stated that respondents who were volunteering during the last 4 weeks and stated the number of hours, spent on average 9.8 hours by volunteering activities (i.e. 2.5 hours a week). A larger volume of hours was stated by men, among whom the average number of hours of volunteering reached 10.2 hours during the last 4 weeks, for women it was 9.5 hours. The average number of hours spent by volunteering during the last 12 months amounted to 57.6 hours.

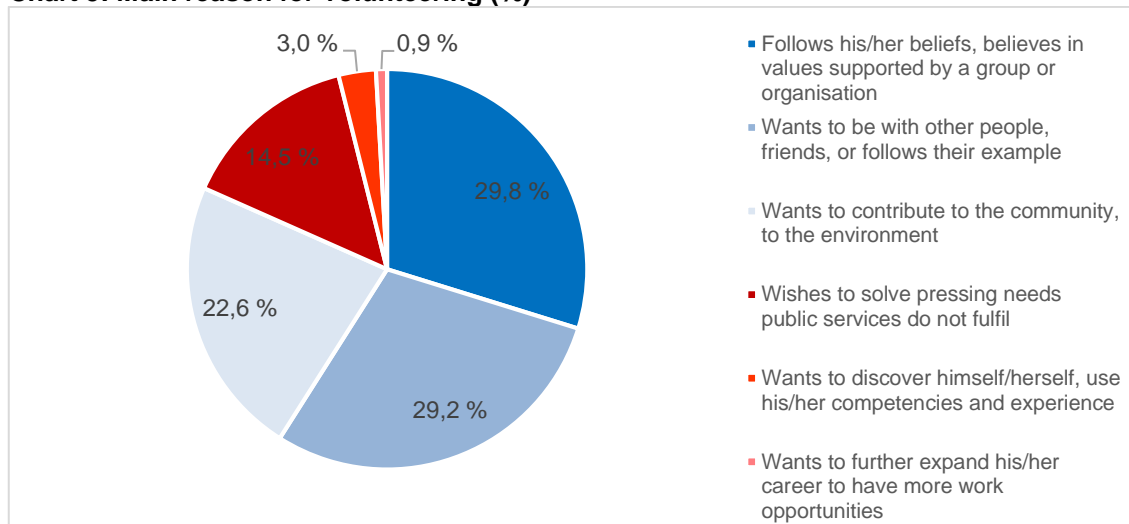
Volunteers stated they spent 132 786 hours in total by volunteering during the last 12 months. The sum of hours volunteers stated for the last 4 weeks amounted to 16 650.1 hours. These totals of "hours worked" can be considered as a minimum worked by volunteers; in fact, the volume of hours was much bigger, because some volunteers were not able to state the number of hours.

Reason for volunteering

The most often mentioned main reasons for involvement in volunteering activities were purely altruistic: belief and trust in values supported by a given group or organisation (29.8%) or the fact that the volunteer wants to be with other people, friends, or he/she follows their example (29.2%), or wants to contribute to the community, to the environment (22.6%) or wishes to solve pressing needs public services do not fulfil (14.5%). The wish to discover himself/herself and use his/her competencies and experience was stated as the main reason for volunteering only by 3.0% volunteers and only 0.9% of volunteers stated they want to expand their career.

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Chart 5: Main reason for volunteering (%)



Source: CZSO, Sample survey on volunteer work

Elaborated by:

Gabriela Strašilová

Unit for Labour Forces, Migration, and Equal Opportunities

Phone number: (+420) 567 109 071

E-mail: gabriela.strasilova@csu.gov.cz