Different Approaches to Volunteering in the Official Statistics

Jitka Fořtová[1] | *Czech Statistical Office, Prague, Czechia*
Gabriela Strašilová[2] | *Czech Statistical Office, Prague, Czechia*

Abstract

Volunteer work constitutes an important input into the activities of non-profit institutions and for society as a whole. Volunteering is 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.

There are two main sources of the data on volunteer work, the data from Satellite Account of Non-profit institutions and the data from the Sample survey on volunteer work by Labour force survey. Both data sources provide a basis for valuation of volunteer work.

The article represents methodology of Satellite Account of Non-profit institutions, which presents basic information about volunteers and valuation of volunteer work organized by non-profit organizations. The article also presents methodology of the Sample survey on volunteer work by Labour Force Survey, which provides a comprehensive overview of organized and unorganized (direct) volunteering in Czechia. Based on the data from these two sources, the article also presents a methodology for estimation of the value of volunteer work and compares the specific values of these estimates.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, attention has been focused on the role of volunteers in society. Volunteering is an unpaid, non-compulsory activity, for which no wage or remuneration is obtained, namely not even in the form of a service in return or in kind.

For analytical purposes two kinds of volunteer work can be separately identified:

1) organization-based volunteering – volunteer work performed formally for or through organizations, community groups or any platform that allocates support;

---

[1] Department of Non-market Economy, Czech Statistical Office, Na padesátém 3268/81, 100 82, Prague 10, Czechia. E-mail: jitka.fortova@csu.gov.cz.

[2] Department of Labor Statistics, Czech Statistical Office, Na padesátém 3268/81, 100 82, Prague 10, Czechia. E-mail: gabriela.strasilova@csu.gov.cz.

2) direct volunteering – volunteer work performed informally as part of everyday activities to help other people, directly for other households, excluding the household of the volunteer or of family members living in other households.

The intensity of volunteer engagement can be episodic, involving short-term, emergent, sporadic engagement of volunteers and may even be a one-off event. Volunteering can also be more regular and long-term activity, with fixed patterns.

Volunteering can be performed online, also known as virtual or digital volunteering, which has boomed especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. In the Sample survey on volunteer work, this type of volunteering turned out to be a minority, only 5.1% (130.2 thousand) of volunteers reported that their volunteer activity was conducted online (or at least partially online).

In 2023, the Czech Statistical Office conducted two surveys on volunteering, each of them with a different approach. The first is a survey of non-profit institutions, which is carried out annually. The output is The Satellite Account of Non-profit Institutions (hereinafter „SANPI") complements and extends the national accounts. It both unifies all the data for all non-profit institutions into one sequence of accounts and extends the statistical monitoring by indicators that are characteristic for non-profit institutions. Non-profit institutions are all the institutions that meet specified conditions, regardless of the institutional sector under which they are classified according to the System of National Accounts. An important contribution of the SANPI is the representation of voluntary work and inclusion of its value in the national accounts. The next benefit of SANPI is distribution of current transfers for Non-profit institutions serving households according to institutional sectors as payers of these transfers. The article also presents specific attributes by type of units and special classification CZ-COPNI used for Non-profit institutions. This classification is intended for the monitoring of the purpose which the funds of a non-profit institution were spent on. A non-profit institution is included in one or more of the sectors according to the shares of resources spent by it. Here is the difference from the CZ-NACE sectoral classification, where a non-profit institution is included in one sector according to its prevailing activity.

The second volunteer survey – Sample survey on volunteer work – was an add-on module of questions attached to the Labour Force Survey (LFS). It was conducted in the second half-year of 2023 as a one-time survey with possible repetition until 2030. Since 2002 LFS questionnaire has been fully harmonized with the Eurostat survey and corresponds to Council Regulation (EU). All sample data are recalculated to the age structure of the population according to population aggregates from demographic statistics, which takes into account the 2021 census. LFS allows making expert estimates of employment in organizations and companies, including activities of self-employed persons in business under the Trade Licensing Act and other legal regulations. The LFS examines the current structure of employment by gender, age group and educational attainment level, CZ-NACE activity and respondents' employment status. Also, data on total unemployment, unemployment pattern, structure of unemployed persons. Together with data on economically inactive population, LFS allows for quantifying the level and structure of disposable labor force, combining a wide range of social and demographic indicators on the respondents and their households.

There are not many countries in Europe which have annual survey of volunteering. Some of them has it as part of Labor Force Survey or other surveys in households once a few years (for example Poland in 2022, Austria in 2025), some of them held one-time survey focused on special type of organizations in rural areas (Germany – Thewes, 2024) and some of them held survey in nonprofit organizations (Italy).

1 SATELLITE ACCOUNT OF NON-PROFIT INSTITUTIONS
1.1 Methodology of SANPI

To begin with, we present the relevant definitions and the classification issue. The restated structural-operational definition of non-profit institutions is used for the purposes of statistical monitoring

of non-profit institutions in the Satellite Account of Non-profit Institutions. According to this definition from the handbook of Non-Profit institutions (UN, 2018), institutions should meet the following five structural or operational criteria to fall within the scope of the non-profit institutions:

1. They must fulfil the defining characteristics of being organizations, that is, be institutionalized to some extent;
2. They must be completely (NPI) or significantly (cooperatives, mutual societies and social enterprises) limited in their capacity to distribute any profit they might generate to members, directors or investors;
3. They must be self-governing;
4. They must engage people on the basis of free choice; and
5. They must be private (not controlled by government).

The main reason for establishing non-profit institutions is either voluntary or charitable activity, or the effort to support certain groups of people in business, politics, or other areas of social life.

There is newly defined Third or Social Economy sector (TSE), that includes not only non-profit institutions but also other related institutions as cooperatives, mutual societies and social enterprises in Handbook of National Accounting: Satellite Account on Non-profit and Related Institutions and Volunteer Work (UN, 2018). The definition is very similar, the biggest change is about distributing profit to members, directors, or investors. Related Institutions must be completely (NPIs) or significantly limited in their capacity to distribute any profit they might generate. Even, there are Mutual societies in Czechia, they don´t have any limit to distribute their profit, that´s why these units are not included in the Satellite Account. Social enterprises also exist in Czechia, although there is no specific legislation for them. Instead, they are defined by guidelines of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and included in the national registry named CESOP. They can take various legal forms (non-profit, non-financial institution or self-employed person) and are therefore classified across different sectors of the national accounts. Although they are not systematically identified by the CZSO in the core national accounts, their activities can be partially captured through satellite accounts or administrative registries.

Compilation of national accounts requires working with a number of classifications in the Business Register such as sector classification, classification of branches or, most importantly, so-called legal forms. Legal forms reflect the mode of operational functioning of different kinds of units. The delimitation of the sphere composed of NPI is thus based on the legal forms' codes. In 2023, the definition of non-profit institutions meets the following legal forms (see Table 1).

Table 1 Number of NPI included into satellite account by legal form for the year 2023

Code [1]	Title	NPI	NPI in S.11 and S.12 [2]	NPISH
	Total	**146 653**	**837**	**145 816**
	from this active units	*115 591*	*776*	*114 815*
117	Foundation	**598**		598
118	Endowment fund	**2 679**		2 679
141	Public service company	**2 424**	127	2 297
161	Institute	**1 620**	38	1 582
641	School legal entity	**371**	8	363

Table 1				(continuation)
Code [1]	Title	NPI	NPI in S.11 and S.12 [2]	NPISH
704	Special organization for representation of Czech interests in international non-governmental organizations	16		16
706	Society	96 227	162	96 065
	from this active units	*67 720*	*108*	*67 612*
707	Trade union	7 199		7 199
708	Employers' organization	79	79	0
711	Political party, political movement	276		276
721; 722; 723	Church organization	3 976		3 976
734	An organizational unit of a special organization for representation of Czech interests in international non-governmental organization	0		
736	Branch of society	25 510	20	25 490
	from this active units	*22 955*	*13*	*22 942*
741	Professional organization/chamber	22		22
745	Other chamber (excl. professional ones)	206	206	
751	Association of legal persons	1 028	197	831
761	Hunting community	4 210		4 210
907	International trade union	2		2
921	International non-governmental organization (NGO)	177		177
922	An organizational unit of a international NGO	21		21
936	Foreign branch of society	12		12

Note: [1] legal form of organization, [2] S.11 means sector of non-financial institutions, S.12 means sector of financial institutions.
Source: CZSO, SANPI

Societies and branches of societies represent the largest group of non-profit institutions. For the year 2022, the CZSO received the first updated database from the Ministry of Justice, when those associations that have not fulfilled the obligation to send a notification of their establishment/activity to the registry court are considered inactive. There is 31 thousand of inactive units in 2023 that represents 25% of societies and Branch of societies.

Following the System of National Accounts, the SANPI presents NPI classified by individual institutional sectors according to the producer type, and by individual industries according to the product type. As shown in Table 1, non-profit institutions are included not only in the sector of Non-profit institutions

serving households (S.15 – thereinafter "NPISH") but a number of them is included in the institutional sector of nonfinancial corporations (S.11) and financial corporations (S.12).

In 2024, an audit of the methodology and data processing within SANPI was carried out. Based on the recommendations from the audit, units of international non-governmental organizations operating in Czechia were included into SANPI, which have not yet been comprehensively surveyed and data for 2022 are available for the first time. Also based on the audit, the Public Universities and other units (Associations of health insurance companies) in the general government sector were excluded from SANPI during publication for 2023. These units and Public Universities were considered as borderline cases; the main discussion was about the fulfilment of the condition of separation from government institutions.

Concerning the data sources for the NPI, an exhaustive annual statistical survey is conducted for units with 10 or more employees. Units with 0–9 employees are surveyed once in five years, whereas each year a certain legal form is picked to be the subject of survey (or group of legal forms). Data for units with 0–9 employees which are not surveyed in given year are grossed up.

1.2 Funding of NPISH and volunteer work

NPI are usually funded differently from other economic sectors. Since the relevant breakdown is available for the NPISH sector only, let´s focus on this sector for now. Though the explanatory power is not much undermined by doing so, because the NPISH sector plays a crucial role in the SANPI.

NPISH, as well as NPI in their entirety, are funded differently from other economic sectors. NPISH can similarly as other sectors raise revenues from selling its own products or from property income, it represents only 11% of total income. Part of revenues NPISH sells for economically insignificant prices that are lower than market prices (22% of income). About 58% of the total income comes from other sectors in the form of current transfers.

These transfers are recorded under the item D.751 (Current transfers to NPISH); for other sectors, the given transfers are covered by the item D.759 (Other current transfers). The largest transfers came from the general government sector (about 64%), subsidies from the EU also contributed (another 8%). The contribution of households to non-profit institutions reached 17% in 2022. On the top of these, the NPISH collect membership fees and they normally receive donations from other economic sectors, including non-financial and financial corporations (11%). NPISH may obtain funds from non-profit organizations themselves (especially foundations). Because the sector is consolidated, the amount of these revenues cannot be determined.

A very specific source of input into operation of NPI recorded on the resources side is a contribution of volunteering. Volunteering concerns not only households, but also corporations. Mentioning the work of volunteering brings us to the key question, how the work of volunteers should be valued? The evaluation of volunteer work and its inclusion into the accounts represents an important step beyond the standard framework of national accounts. Unpaid volunteer work does not fall within the production border as defined by the methodology; however, it is unquestionably an important input into the activities of non-profit institutions. Disregarding volunteer work leads to underestimation of the actual contribution of non-profit institutions to the welfare of society.

Here, the term volunteer means a person who is not in an employment relationship with an economic entity as regards the respective voluntarily done activity and performs his or her activity without any financial or other remuneration or legal entitlement (including any entitlements arising from obligations of the entity's members according to the statutes or other resolutions adopted by the economic entity). Voluntary workers may be volunteers performing work for an economic entity, on volunteer service, as well as other persons performing work in an organization without entitlement to remuneration (unpaid members of administrative and control bodies, members of an economic entity and other persons).

It remains valid that it is not possible to establish the number of inhabitants of Czechia performing volunteer work for non-profit institutions on the basis of source data. This is due to the fact that one person can perform volunteer work for several non-profit institutions. Therefore, the number of volunteers is given as a number of natural persons converted on the basis of the number of hours worked by volunteers (full-time equivalent approach, thereinafter "FTE"), it means 20 810 FTE in 2023.

Table 2 shows the number of volunteers in natural persons by legal form in the years when the legal forms were surveyed. International non-profit organizations operating in Czechia were surveyed in 2022 for the first time. As can be seen, the number of volunteers involved in non-profit institutions is around 1 million people.

Table 2 Number of volunteers and hours worked in particular kind of NPI (2019–2023)

		Year	Number of volunteers	Hours worked (in thousand of hours)	Average of hours worked per person/year
0–9 employees	Foundation/endowment fund	2019	12 215	463.7	38
	Trade union	2019	4 843	260.0	54
	Other	2020	11 583	270.3	23
	Church organization	2021	11 451	880.5	77
	Society	2022	393 670	18 593.4	47
	Branch of society	2022	407 321	14 134.0	35
	International NPI in the CR	2022	1 880	50.8	27
	Public service company/institute	2023	10 769	405.3	38
More than 10 employees	Foundation/endowment fund	2023	117	2.3	19
	Trade union	2023	10	0.8	82
	Other	2023	492	23.6	48
	Church organization	2023	14 956	489.8	33
	Society	2023	182 178	2 900.7	16
	Branch of society	2023	1 823	110.5	61
	International NPI in the CR	2023	15	525.0	35
	Public service company/institute	2023	7 975	256.2	32
	Total		1 061 298	39 366.9	42

Source: CZSO, SANPI

From the survey of non-profit institutions, we can also get information about what kind of work volunteers do. The first part is focused on how often volunteers come to NPI. Irregular work is occasional unpaid work performed by one volunteer, e.g. 5 times a year, regular work means fixed-scheduled work. The second part is about which kind of work volunteers do. The categories are defined similarly to the classification of occupation (CZ-ISCO).

| Table 3 Volunteer work according to kind of work (Survey NI 1-01)			
		2023	
Hours worked by volunteers (thousands)		36 962	
Of which	One-time work	5 027	11%
	Irregular work	18 702	41%
	Regular work	13 196	29%
According to the nature of the work	Management and professional mental work	7 731	17%
	Lower administrative work, operational work, craft and qualified production work	22 769	50%
	Work in operating machines, auxiliary and unskilled work	6 390	14%

Source: CZSO, SANPI

1.3 Valuation of Volunteer work

The method of valuation by means of the median determined on the basis of the results obtained from the Average Earnings Information System (ISPV, which is the national realization of the Structure of earnings survey) is used for valuation of volunteer work at SANPI. The Average Earnings Information System (ISPV) is carried out by the Statistical Services Department of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs according to Act No. 43/1992 Coll., on salary and remuneration for stand-by duty in budgetary and certain other organizations and bodies.

For the year 2023, the median value of salaries in Czechia according to ISPV reached 221.79 CZK/hour. The number of hours worked by volunteers, that the Czech Statistical Office obtained from the statistical surveys by means of questionnaires NI 1-01 (a), was multiplied by this median. To illustrate, the median in 2013 was 126.42 CZK/hour. The following graph shows the valuation of volunteer work for non-profit institutions in Czechia for the years 2013 to 2023.

Figure 1 Hours worked by volunteers and the valuation of volunteer work for non-profit institutions (NPI) in total from 2013 to 2023
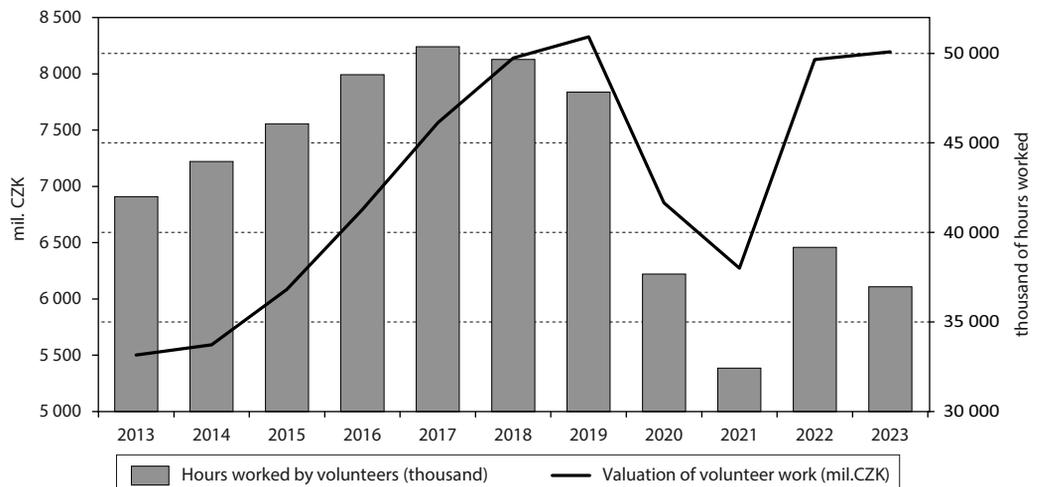
Source: CZSO, SANPI

The evaluated volunteer work still enters the Satellite Account of Non-profit Institutions as part of the Wages and Salaries (D.11) item. The increase in item D.11 is reflected in the change to the total remuneration of employees (D.1). For NPISH, the non-market output (P.132), which is calculated using the cost method, will increase in addition. There is no impact to balancing items (the operating surplus, disposable income, net savings, net loans, and others) as the evaluated volunteer work is added also into the item Current transfers to NPISH (D.751).

2 SAMPLE SURVEY ON VOLUNTEER WORK BY LFS

2.1 Methodology of the sample survey on volunteer work

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 Survey (LFS). Interviewers in all Regions of Czechia addressed respondents aged 15+ years. This survey on the initiative of the Office of the Government of the Czech Republic was financed by the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic.

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, bank payment, or a donation in cash. For the purposes of this survey, neither blood donation was considered volunteering, namely because 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.

A direct link to the LFS allows us to obtain detailed information about respondents such as gender, age, educational attainment level, economic activity, employment status etc.

2.2 Basic characteristics of the volunteers and types of volunteering in the sample survey on volunteer work

One of the key tasks of the survey on volunteer work was to quantify the number of volunteers involved and their share in the adult population – i.e. the volunteering rate. In total 19.2% of the respondents were involved in volunteering, which represents 1 662.3 thousand inhabitants of Czechia aged 15 years and over. Women predominated among the volunteers, numbering 947.5 thousand, the volunteering rate of women (21.4%) was higher than the volunteering rate of men (16.9%), but on the other hand men reported a greater number of hours devoted to volunteering.

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 up 30.1% of volunteers, and 1.5% were unemployed. Among both the inactive and the unemployed volunteers, females were significantly prevailing.

Volunteering is divided into organized, where activities are organized by an umbrella institution (a company, an association, a club, a state, a municipality, a community, etc.) and unorganized (direct), where activities are managed and coordinated directly by an individual.

Organized volunteering was prevailing, 941.1 thousand (56.6%) volunteers were organized by some institution. The volunteer activity was organized most often by a non-profit, charitable or a church organization, by an association, a club, a health or social establishment (502.7 thousand, 30.2% from the total number of volunteers), by a state or municipal organization (249.7 thousand, 15.0%), by an informal community (95.0 thousand, 5.7%), other organization (47.0 thousand, 2.8%) or by a workplace of a respondent (46.6 thousand, 2.8%).

As for unorganized (direct) volunteering, the volunteer activity was most often organized directly by the respondent (455.0 thousand, 27.4%), by a person helped by the respondent (213.8 thousand, 12.9%), or another person (45.9 thousand, 2.8%).

Because SANPI captured organized volunteers, in the sample survey on volunteer work we present not only the results for the total number of volunteers, but also for the part of volunteers which is made up of the organized volunteers.

Table 4 Volunteers in total and organized volunteers by age, education, economic activity (in thousands of people)

Classification	Total number of volunteers	In which		Organized volunteers	In which	
		Males	Females		Males	Females
Age groups (years)						
15–24	157.5	59.5	98.0	103.3	39.7	63.7
25–44	603.8	279.7	324.1	346.6	158.1	188.5
45–64	602.6	269.2	333.4	352.2	160.3	191.9
65+	298.4	106.4	192.0	139.0	47.6	91.4
Education						
Primary education	135.0	41.4	93.6	65.9	19.4	46.6
Secondary education without A-level examination	463.4	253.2	210.3	246.7	136.6	110.1
Secondary education with A-level examination	585.7	228.6	357.1	333.4	134.5	198.9
Higher education	478.2	191.6	286.6	295.1	115.1	180.0
Economic status						
Working person	1 137.1	554.5	582.6	677.5	326.7	350.9
Unemployed	24.6	8.1	16.5	12.4	4.5	7.9
Inactive	500.6	152.2	348.5	251.2	74.5	176.7
Total	1 662.3	714.8	947.5	941.1	405.6	535.5

Source: CZSO, sample survey on volunteer work

2.3 Volunteering activities by classification of occupations (CZ-ISCO)

The range of volunteer activities is very wide, and the activities are similar to occupations, therefore the CZ-ISCO classification was used to classify the volunteer activities. CZ-ISCO is a national version of the International standard classification of occupations.

Generally, it is not surprising that the most frequently reported volunteer activities were included in the main class of Elementary occupations, which included 611.5 thousand (36.8%) volunteers. Volunteers were also engaged in qualified activities, a large proportion of volunteers were in the main class of Technicians and associate professionals (382.7 thousand, 23.0%), where they were most often in a subclass of Professional workers in the business sector and public administration, this activity was reported by 86.6 thousand men and 222.7 thousand women.

Organized volunteers were more often engaged in qualified activities, e.g. all volunteers in the main class of Managers were organized, a large proportion of organized volunteers also were in the main class of Clerical support workers were organized volunteers and in the main class of Professionals.

Table 5 Volunteers and organized volunteers by main classes of CZ-ISCO (in thousands of people)

CZ-ISCO	Total number of volunteers	In which		Organized volunteers	In which	
		Males	Females		Males	Females
1 Managers	4.7	3.9	0.8	4.7	3.9	0.8
2 Professionals	113.5	45.2	68.3	67.8	27.0	40.8
3 Technicians and associate professionals	382.7	133.1	249.6	206.5	78.1	128.5
4 Clerical support workers	20.5	7.5	13.0	17.4	6.1	11.3
5 Service and sales workers	312.8	134.1	178.7	184.9	109.3	75.6
6 Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	53.4	31.5	21.9	30.0	18.4	11.6
7 Craft and related trades workers	98.8	63.2	35.6	35.8	14.7	21.1
8 Plant and machine operators and assemblers	64.4	46.4	17.9	19.1	13.1	6.1
9 Elementary occupations	611.5	249.8	361.7	374.9	135.2	239.7
Total	1 662.3	714.8	947.5	941.1	405.6	535.5

Source: CZSO, sample survey on volunteer work

2.4 Valuation of volunteer work in total in the sample survey on volunteer work

In the sample survey on volunteer work, there were two different methods used to estimate the financial value of volunteer work, both of them on the basis of the results obtained from the Average Earnings Information System (ISPV). The first method used the basic framework for calculating the hourly rate of volunteering. The framework is appropriate to the principles for determining the value of volunteer work based on the median gross monthly wage and the median average hours worked in the wage sector according to the results of the Average earnings information system (ISPV) for the given year (2023). The first method is more general, does not take into account the type of volunteer work and it is the same method that was used to evaluate the volunteer work in SANPI. The only difference is in the rounding, because in the sample survey on the volunteer work were used the principles for determining the value of volunteer activities, which follows from the government resolution and recommend rounding down to the nearest whole CZK.

The median gross monthly wage according to ISPV was 38 236 CZK. The median average monthly hours worked according to ISPV was 172.4 hours. By dividing these two values, we obtain an hourly rate, which rounded down to the nearest whole CZK was 221 CZK. The number of volunteers according to the results of the survey was 1 662.3 thousand people. The average number of hours worked by volunteers according to the results of the survey was 9.8 hours in the last 4 weeks. Converting to a whole year (i.e. multiplying by the corresponding number of weeks according to the calendar) we obtain a value of 128.4 hours per volunteer.

The final estimate of the financial value of volunteer work in the sample survey on volunteer work in 2023 was obtained by multiplying the number of volunteers (1 662 300 people) by the annual number of worked hours per person (128.4 hours) and the hourly rate (221 CZK), which comes out to 47 170.1 million CZK. Using the first method, the total financial value of volunteer work in Czechia in 2023 according to the sample survey on volunteer work was estimated for more than 47 billion CZK.

The second method of valuation is more detailed, takes into account the types of volunteer work, and it is based on the average wages for the main CZ-ISCO classes according to ISPV. The determined average number of hours spent volunteering in the last 4 weeks was divided by 4 to obtain the average weekly numbers of hours spent volunteering and multiplied by the number of volunteers to obtain the annual number of hours worked per volunteer. To obtain the annual volume of hours, the annual number of hours per volunteer is multiplied by the number of volunteers in each CZ-ISCO class. The hourly average wage was obtained by dividing the monthly average wage by the number of paid hours. By multiplying the annual volume of working hours by the hourly average wage (according to ISPV), we obtain an estimate of the valuation of volunteer work in individual CZ-ISCO classes, which in total is almost 43 billion CZK. If these activities were not carried out by volunteers, the state or local governments would have to pay this amount.

Table 6 Estimated financial value of volunteer work based on average wages for the main CZ-ISCO classes according to ISPV

CZ-ISCO	Number of people (thousand)	Average number of volunteering hours in the last 4 weeks	Annual number of hours per person	Annual number of hours	Monthly average salary (ISPV, CZK)	.. by number of paid hours	Average hourly wage (ISPV, CZK)	Value (CZK million)
1 Managers	4.7	17.0	222.8	1 051 834	102 316	172.0	595	625.5
2 Professionals	113.5	15.4	201.4	22 852 932	66 207	173.2	382	8 733.6
3 Technicians and associate professionals	382.7	7.1	92.7	35 460 397	49 200	172.0	286	10 144.7
4 Clerical support workers	20.5	11.1	145.1	2 978 256	36 842	172.1	214	637.5
5 Service and sales workers	312.8	11.3	148.2	46 361 180	32 275	172.2	187	8 687.5
6 Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	53.4	10.3	134.5	7 177 123	33 440	179.1	187	1 339.9
7 Craft and related trades workers	98.8	9.8	128.2	12 668 924	38 890	172.7	225	2 853.0
8 Plant and machine operators and assemblers	64.4	8.0	104.8	6 746 982	37 186	173.0	215	1 449.9
9 Elementary occupations	611.5	6.9	90.2	55 187 574	26 499	173.1	153	8 447.4
Total	1 662.3			190 485 202				42 919.1

Source: CZSO, sample survey on volunteer work 2023, ISPV

2.5 Valuation of volunteer work of organized volunteers in the sample survey on volunteer work

In the Sample survey on volunteer work, we can divide organized and unorganized volunteers. Volunteer activities of organized volunteers in the sample survey of volunteer work were organized by a company, association, club, state, municipality, community, charitable or church organization, association, club or medical or social institution etc., we can therefore assume, that the range of the institutions includes a non-profit organizations, but not only them. In order to get closer to the range of volunteers who are monitored by the satellite account of non-profit institutions, we are taking a closer look at the organized volunteers. According to the sample survey on volunteer work, there were 941.1 thousand of organized volunteers (56.6% of the total number of volunteers). In this group women significantly predominated (535.5 thousand, 56.9%).

To estimate the financial value of the work of the organized volunteers, there were used the same two methods as in the total estimation of the value of the volunteer work. In the first method, the median gross monthly wage according to ISPV (38 236 CZK) was used again. The median average monthly hours worked according to ISPV were 172.4 hours, hourly rate was 221 CZK. The number of organized volunteers according to the results of the survey was 941.1 thousand people. The average number of hours worked by organized volunteers according to the results of the survey was 10.6 hours in the last 4 weeks. Converting to a whole year we obtain a value of 139.4 hours per volunteer.

The final estimate of the financial value of volunteer work of organized volunteers in 2023 was obtained by multiplying the number of volunteers (941 100 people) by the annual number of hours per person (139.4 hours) and the hourly rate (221 CZK), which comes out to 28 992.8 million CZK. According to the first method, the financial value of organized volunteer work in Czechia in 2023 was estimated for nearly 29 billion CZK.

The second method based on average wages for the main CZ-ISCO classes according to ISPV provided the result of 31 030.6 million CZK. If the activities were not carried out by volunteers, the state or local governments would have to pay more than 31 billion CZK.

Table 7 Estimated financial value of organized volunteer work based on average wages for the main CZ-ISCO classes according to ISPV

CZ-ISCO	Number of people (thousand)	Average number of volunteering hours in the last 4 weeks	Annual number of hours per person	Annual number of hours	Monthly average salary (ISPV, CZK)	.. by number of paid hours	Average hourly wage (ISPV, CZK)	Value (CZK million)
1 Managers	4.7	21.0	275.2	1 299 324	102 316	172.0	595	772.7
2 Professionals	67.8	26.8	350.6	23 771 265	66 207	173.2	382	9 084.5
3 Technicians and associate professionals	206.5	11.3	148.3	30 630 359	49 200	172.0	286	8 762.8
4 Clerical support workers	17.4	17.0	222.8	3 882 250	36 842	172.1	214	831.0
5 Service and sales workers	184.9	10.8	140.9	26 043 577	32 275	172.2	187	4 880.2
6 Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	30.0	13.8	180.9	5 423 474	33 440	179.1	187	1 012.5
7 Craft and related trades workers	35.8	9.6	126.0	4 505 029	38 890	172.7	225	1 014.5
8 Plant and machine operators and assemblers	19.1	12.8	167.5	3 206 663	37 186	173.0	215	689.1
9 Elementary occupations	374.9	5.3	69.4	26 021 493	26 499	173.1	153	3 983.0
Total	**941.1**	**10.6**		**124 783 435**				**31 030.6**

Source: CZSO, sample survey on volunteer work 2023, ISPV

3 COMPARISON OF SANPI AND SAMPLE SURVEY ON VOLUNTEER WORK

Comparing volunteers and the value of their work from the sample survey on volunteer work by LFS and the SANPI survey is challenging due to differences in scope and methodology. Even SANPI and Sample survey on volunteer work focus on volunteering at the different groups of volunteers and take volunteering from a different perspective, both of these sources are valuable for observation the situation of volunteers in Czechia. The sample survey on volunteer work includes volunteers in a much broader sense than SANPI. According to the sample survey on volunteer work, 1 662.3 thousand inhabitants of Czechia aged 15 years and over in total were involved in volunteering in 2023. The sample survey on volunteer work also provides other information on the classification of volunteers, such as gender, age, employment status, level of education etc. On the other hand, the biggest advantage of the survey for SANPI is a continuous time series from 2009, when the new system was held. Trends in volunteering involvement in non-profit institutions can be traced there.

If we compare a number of organized volunteers that more or less correspond to itself in both data sources, we obtain similar numbers. The sample survey on volunteer work by LFS includes not only non-profit institutions but also volunteer activities organized by other types of institutions (company, association, club, state, community, municipality, charitable, or church organization). In the sample survey on volunteer work, there were 941 thousand such volunteers, of which only 502 thousand volunteers worked directly in NPI. In total, it corresponds to the data for natural persons in SANPI, which was around 1 million.

The difference can be explained by the different approach to counting volunteers. In SANPI, some volunteers can be counted more than once if they work for more than one organization. On the other hand, in the sample survey a volunteer is counted only once, even if he works for more than one organisation, whether NPI or other.

The biggest discrepancy in the estimated value of volunteer work comes from the very different number of hours worked by volunteers per year in each data source. In the long-term SANPI data, the average annual working time is relatively low, between 35–50 hours per year, and in the recent years a decrease has been seen. In contrast, in the sample survey on volunteer work, the number of hours worked in the last 4 weeks ranges around 10 hours, thus on average more than 120 hours per year. In addition, organized volunteers in the sample survey reported a greater number of hours dedicated to volunteering, on average nearly 140 hours of volunteering per year. This is also related to the estimated value of volunteer work, which is much greater for volunteers from the sample survey on volunteer work than from SANPI, even though the methodology for valuing volunteer activities is the same in both surveys. With such a difference in hours worked, it is self-evident, that the estimates of the value of volunteer work in both data sources differs greatly. In 2023 in SANPI the value of volunteer work in non-profit organization was estimated for 8.2 billion CZK and in the sample survey the total value of volunteer work was estimated for 47.2 billion CZK. From that 29.0 billion CZK was the value of organized volunteer work in the sample survey, as also not NPI organizations are included. If only volunteers in NPI and other organizations (could be political parties or other legal forms considered as NPISH in SANPI) were considered in the sample survey, the estimate of valuation would take 58% of the 29.0 billion CZK, that is 16.9 billion CZK. Even this value of volunteer work in the sample survey is twice as large as the value of volunteer work in SANPI. These estimates are based on a similar methodology, the only difference being in the hours worked and in the rounding process.

The sample survey on volunteer work also provides a second estimate, which takes into account the type of volunteer work according to CZ-ISCO. Based on this method, the total value of volunteer work was estimated at 42.9 billion CZK. Within that, the value of organized volunteer work was estimated at 31.0 billion CZK, of which 18.0 billion CZK was attributed to volunteers in non-profit institutions and other organizations. One of the major challenges in estimation of the value of volunteer work therefore remains in a more accurate recording of the hours worked by volunteers. Estimating the number of hours

worked by volunteers is complicated, as volunteers often do not track the hours, they simply help when they can, without remembering or writing down the number of hours worked. Therefore, in the sample survey on volunteer work some volunteers did not report the number of volunteering hours at all, some volunteers gave only a rough estimate of volunteering hours in the survey.

Figure 2 Comparison of the number of volunteers and the volunteer work valuation (2023)
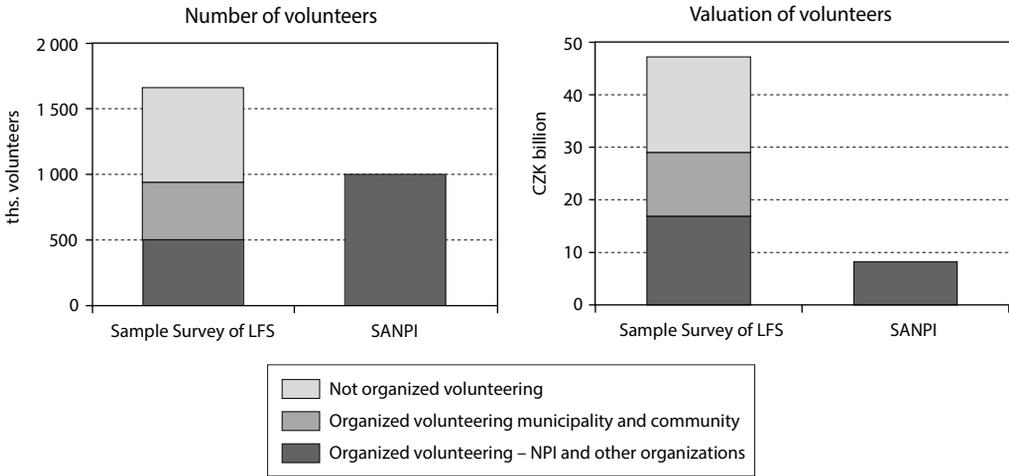
Source: CZSO, sample survey on volunteer work, SANPI, ISPV

CONCLUSION

Volunteering is a great way to help those in need, support the community and contribute to solving various social problems, moreover the volunteer work plays a key role in the functioning of non-profit institutions. This paper presented two major data sources for measuring and valuing volunteer work in Czechia: the Satellite Account of Non-profit Institutions (SANPI) and the sample survey on volunteer work by LFS. While both sources offer valuable insights, they differ in scope, methodology, and focus.

SANPI provides consistent time series data specific to volunteers within non-profit institutions and is based on data from national accounts, offering a macroeconomic view over time. In contrast, the sample survey on volunteer work captures a broader spectrum of volunteer activities – including direct, unorganized volunteering – and offers more detailed demographic and occupational data.

Regarding the number of volunteers, the results do not differ substantially. SANPI reports around 1 million volunteers in NPI, the sample survey has 1.6 million volunteers in total, of which 941 thousand works as volunteers in organizations. And 502 thousand of these volunteers works directly in NPI. The divergence in total numbers can be explained by different approach in surveys, as NPISH don´t monitor if their volunteers work for another organization or not.

Despite methodological alignment in the valuation of volunteer work, the estimated financial contributions differ substantially due to discrepancies in reported hours and coverage. While SANPI reports lower average annual hours per volunteer, the sample survey on volunteer work suggests significantly higher involvement, highlighting the challenges inherent in accurately capturing volunteer activity.

Both SANPI and the sample survey on volunteer work contribute to a better understanding of the scope, structure, and value of volunteer work in Czechia. Together, they provide a robust basis for policy development, support for the non-profit sector, and recognition of the substantial economic and social value generated by volunteers.

References

CZSO. (2025). *Basic methodological approaches in LFSS* [online]. Prague: Czech Statistical Office. <https://csu.gov.cz/docs/107508/bc303824-2d8a-ee5a-ad06-4aa96974d353/25012924q4m01.pdf?version=1.0>.

CZSO. (2023a). *Notes on Satellite account of NPI* [online]. Prague: Czech Statistical Office. <https://apl.czso.cz/nufile/fdktjr8s/SUNI_2022trfjsdhe.pdf>.

CZSO. (2023b). *Structure of satellite account of non-profit institutions* [online]. Prague: Czech Statistical Office. <https://apl.czso.cz/pll/rocenka/rocenkavyber.satelit_en>.

CZSO. (2024). *Volunteering in the Czech Republic – 2023* [online]. Prague: Czech Statistical Office. <https://csu.gov.cz/docs/107508/6defcc25-1d53-e14c-4c29-dffe7b522ee2/990283-24_en.pdf?version=1.0>.

DEDERICHS, K. (2022). *Volunteering in the United Kingdom During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Who Started and Who Quit?* [online]. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08997640221122>.

EUROSTAT. (2014). *European System of National and Regional Accounts (ESA2010)* [online]. <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/esa2010/chapter/view/1/#h1>.

ILO. (2011). *Manual on the measurement of volunteer work* [online]. International Labour Organization. <https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groupc/public/%40dgreports/%40stat/documents/publication/wcms_162119.pdf>.

ISPV. (2025). *Wage sphere – year 2023* [online]. <https://www.ispv.cz/cz/Vysledky-setreni/Archiv/2023.aspx>.

STATISTICS POLAND. <Statistics Poland/Topics/Social economy/Volunteering and other types of unpaid work outside own household/Volunteering in 2022>.

ISTAT. Statistics Italy. <Nonprofit institutions – Istat>.

STATISTICS AUSTRIA. <Volunteering – STATISTICS AUSTRIA – the Information Manager>.

THEWES, C. (2024). Asking Volunteers: Pitfalls and Solutions for Surveying Voluntary Organisations in Germany [online]. *Survey Methods: Insights from the Field.* <https://surveyinsights.org/?p=18408>.

UNITED NATIONS. (2003). *Handbook on Non-Profit Institutions in the System of National Accounts* [online]. New York: UN. <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/publication/seriesf/seriesf_91e.pdf>.

UNITED NATIONS. (2018). *Satellite Account of Non-profit and Related Institutions and Volunteer work* [online]. New York: UN. <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/nationalaccount/docs/UN_TSE_HB_FNL_web.pdf>.

UNITED NATIONS VOLUNTEERS. (2020). *21st Century Volunteering Practices* [online]. <Volunteering Practices in the 21st Century_en.pdf>.