

# The UK Civil Society Almanac 2010: Workforce



**skills**  
THIRD SECTOR

ncvo  **TSRC**  
THIRD SECTOR RESEARCH CENTRE 

## Fast facts

Civil society	2007/08	2006/07 <sup>1</sup>
Number of organisations	900,000	*2
Total income	£157 billion	*2
Civil society paid workforce (headcount)	1.6 million	*2

Voluntary and community groups and social enterprises	2007/08	2006/07
Number of organisations	208,000	*2
Total income	£79.5 billion	*2
Paid workforce (headcount)	1.0 million	*2

Core voluntary sector	2008	2007
Paid workforce (headcount)	668,000	634,000
Paid workforce (full time equivalents)	539,000	508,000

<b>Employment status</b>	Full time	63%	63%
	Part time	37%	37%
<b>Gender</b>	Women	68%	71%
	Men	32%	29%
<b>Highest qualification</b>	Degree or equivalent	38%	35%
	No qualification	4%	5%
<b>Type of contract</b>	Permanent	91%	91%
	Temporary	9%	9%
<b>Type of activity</b>	Social work activities	56%	55%
	Housing	5%	6%
	Hospital activities	4%	5%
<b>Size of workplace</b>	Under 10	32%	31%
	Under 25	54%	52%
	500 +	3%	4%

	2007/08	2006/07
Number of organisations	171,074	170,905
Total income	£35.5 billion	£34.5 billion
Staff costs	£12.1 billion	£12.4 billion
Staff costs (% of expenditure)	37%	38%
Costs per FTE employee	£22,800	£24,400
Organisations that employ staff	22%	*2

Volunteering		2008/09	2007/08
Number of people volunteering	at least once a month	26%	27%
	at least once a year	41%	43%
Gender of people formal volunteering once a month	Women	28%	29%
	Men	23%	25%

<sup>1</sup>Adjusted to April 2008 prices.

<sup>2</sup>Due to improvements in methodology the civil society results are not yet directly comparable year-on-year.

# The UK Civil Society Almanac 2010: Workforce



Voluntary and community organisations and social enterprises play a key role in developing and supporting communities, designing and delivering public services and they make a significant contribution to the UK economy.

This report summarises essential data and information about the people who make up the voluntary sector workforce as trustees, volunteers and paid staff. It is the fruit of a successful partnership between Skills – Third Sector, the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) and the Third Sector Research Centre (TSRC) and is part of our joint employment research programme.

We will continue to review a wide range of data on this workforce to develop a dynamic information resource on voluntary sector skills and labour market information. It builds on existing historic relationships, combined expertise, and work programmes in preparation.

We are publishing this report in the context of a new government, which is committed to collaborating with the sector both in delivering good public services and in supporting communities. Policy and practice in this area will benefit from a robust and accessible evidence base, which this initial publication provides. There is a longer in-depth review of a broad range of datasets and surveys to come from this research programme.

*Julie Wilkes*

**Julie Wilkes**  
Chief Executive, Skills – Third Sector  
July 2010

## Question 1... How many people work in the voluntary sector?



### Total UK workforce by sector, 2008



The Labour Force Survey (LES) estimates that 668,000 people were employed in the UK voluntary sector in 2008. The sector employs two out of every hundred people in the UK workforce, accounting for 2.3% of all UK employees. In comparison the public sector employed just over seven million employees in 2008 and the private sector employed just under 21 million employees.<sup>1</sup>

Total employment can also be expressed as full-time equivalents (FTEs<sup>2</sup>), a more accurate indicator of workforce capacity. In 2008, the voluntary sector employed an estimated 539,000 FTE paid staff. Charity accounts identify that 696,000 people work in the voluntary sector, a figure slightly higher than that estimated from the LFS (our preferred estimate of the total workforce).

■ Private sector ■ Public sector  
■ Voluntary sector

▲ Source: Labour Force Survey  
Base: All people aged 16 and over

<sup>1</sup>See Appendix for a description of the methodology used within this analysis.

<sup>2</sup>The FTE (full-time equivalent) measure reflects the paid human resource available by converting hours worked by part-time staff into the equivalent number of full-time staff.

## Question 2... Is the number of people working in the voluntary sector changing?

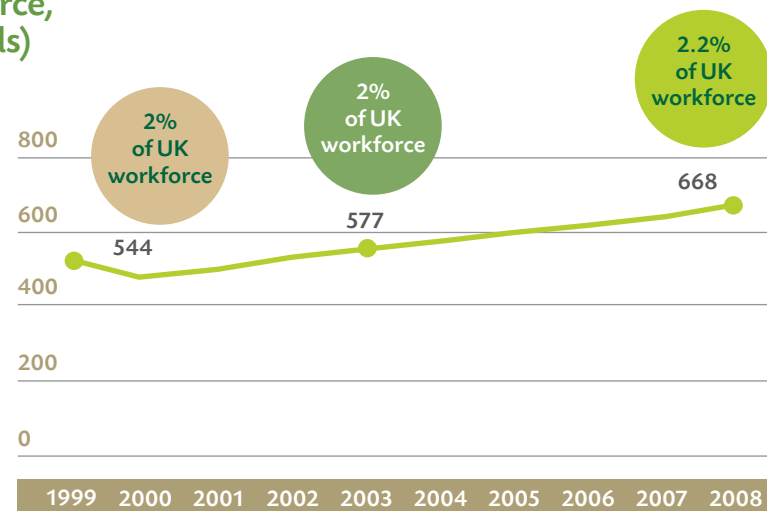


### Total UK voluntary sector workforce, 1999-2008 (headcount, thousands)

Between 1999 and 2008 the voluntary sector workforce increased by 124,000 employees. In comparison, the public and private sectors' workforces increased by 1.3 million and 1 million employees respectively. As a percentage, the voluntary sector has experienced a higher rate of increase (23%) than the private sector (7%) and the public sector (18%).

The growth in the voluntary sector is linked to almost twenty years of public service delivery being contracted out by central and local government agencies to the sector (Kendall, 2003).<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup>The voluntary sector: comparative perspectives in the UK (Kendall, 2003)

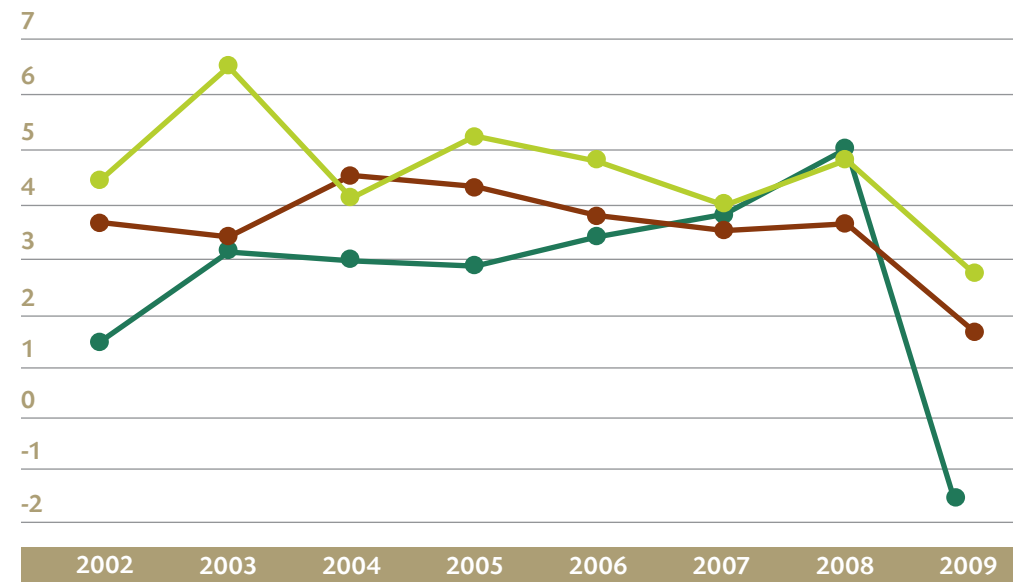


▲ Source: Labour Force Survey  
Base: All people aged 16 and over

## Question 3... How much are voluntary sector staff paid?



### Earnings growth, 2002-2009 (%)



### Median voluntary sector total earnings by job role, 2009/10 (£)

Chief executive	71,070
Director	67,500
Senior function head	52,839
Function head	44,792
Department or section manager	37,479
Senior specialist/ professional/ technical staff; administration manager	30,900
Specialist/ professional/ technical staff; administration supervisor	23,172
Junior professional/ technical staff; senior care staff	18,871
Trainee professional/ technical staff; administrative assistant	15,291
Trainee non-professional staff; office services	13,661

● Increase in voluntary sector average earnings  
● Average earnings index (whole economy)  
● Retail price index (RPI)  
▲ Source: XpertHR, 2009

# £71,070

Median total earnings for a voluntary sector CEO

No single source can give definitive information about salaries within the voluntary sector. But the XpertHR Voluntary Sector Salary Survey provides data collected from 178 voluntary sector employers on 29,000 employees. The most recent report was published in July 2009. The survey provides data both on salaries and other payments at a point in time, and on movements in salaries over the year.

The movement in the voluntary sector's average earnings has continued to increase over the previous year (2.9%) but at a slower rate than in the previous seven years. It is

however a higher rate of increase than both the average earnings index (1.7%) and the retail price index (-1.4%). The median earnings<sup>4</sup> for a CEO in 2009, was £71,070, whilst trainee non-professional staff received £13,661. The ratio between the CEO salary and the trainee non-professional salary is 5:1.

Voluntary organisations use a range of salary systems to set remuneration levels. The most popular system, for over half of the respondents (52%), was to use the XpertHR survey.

Other systems often used were RPI (used by 44% of respondents) and the NJC scale (used by 20% of respondents). Labour turnover now stands at 13%, up from 8% in 2006. Resignations accounted for just over half of this figure.

<sup>4</sup>Annual earnings are before deductions for tax, national insurance, pension contributions etc but including London or other location allowances, performance or skills supplements plus any bonuses, commission payments and mortgage subsidies as well as any car allowances, shift or standby allowance paid.

# 668,000

people work in the voluntary sector

### Find out more

XpertHR (2009) 21st Annual Voluntary Sector Salary Club 2009/10.

To find out more or to participate in the next salary survey please visit [www.xperthr.co.uk/job-pricing/about/chr\\_s09/jobpricing-l-01-charities](http://www.xperthr.co.uk/job-pricing/about/chr_s09/jobpricing-l-01-charities).

## Question 4... Are voluntary sector staff union members?

**22%**

Proportion of voluntary sector employees who are trade union members

Within the voluntary sector in 2008, just over one-fifth (22%) of employees were trade union or staff association members. This is lower than in the public sector, where 56% of employees are members, but higher than in the private sector where 14% of employees are members. A similar proportion of voluntary sector employees (22%) are employed in organisations where agreements between trade unions and their employer affect pay and conditions. This is again much lower than in the public sector (73%) but slightly higher than in the private sector (20%). The unions with the largest number of voluntary sector members are Unite and Unison.

**Find out more**  
**Unite the Union:**  
[www.unitetheunion.com/nonprofit](http://www.unitetheunion.com/nonprofit)  
**Unison:**  
[www.unison.org.uk/Voluntary](http://www.unison.org.uk/Voluntary)

## Question 5... How much does the voluntary sector spend on staff costs?

**Voluntary sector expenditure on staff costs by size of organisation, 2007/08**

	Micro	Small	Medium	Large	Major	Total
Staff costs (£ millions)	13.0	378.1	2,410.1	4,223.9	5,110.3	<b>12,135.5</b>
Staff costs (% of expenditure)	4.2	20.4	39.3	40.9	35.9	<b>36.9</b>
Cost per FTE employee (£000s)	13.0	10.6	18.5	24.1	26.9	<b>22.8</b>
Organisations that employ staff (%)	1	31	73	89	93	<b>22</b>

▲ Source: NCVO, GuideStar Data Services ►

Expenditure on staff costs can be identified through the accounts of voluntary organisations. Staff costs cut across the range of expenditure categories within the accounts as organisations employ staff to undertake a range of activities from income generation to service provision. Staff costs can include: the costs of employing staff who work for the charity whether or not the charity has incurred those costs, employers' national insurance costs and pension costs and so are higher than employee's salary costs.

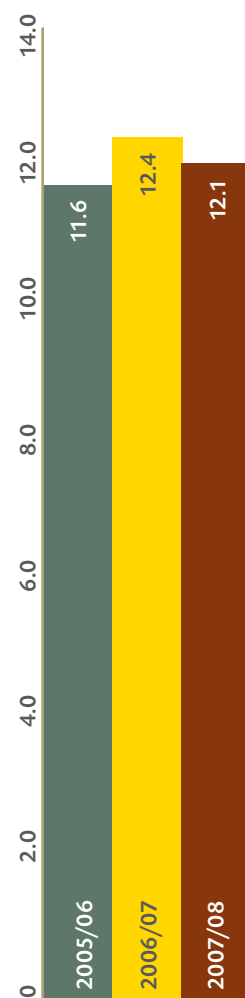
In 2007/08, voluntary organisations spent £12.1 billion employing staff. Whilst this is a decrease from the previous year's figure of £12.4 billion, it is still higher than in previous years. This is a reflection of a larger workforce.

Over time it appears that staff costs have fallen as a proportion of total expenditure, from 43% in 2001/02 to 37% in 2007/08.

Over three-quarters of staff costs (77%) are incurred by large and major organisations. Large organisations in particular, spend 41% of their total expenditure on staff. This is unsurprising, given that nearly nine out of ten (89%) large and major organisation employ staff, compared to 31% of small and 1% of micro organisations. Overall, just over one fifth (22%) of voluntary organisations employ staff.

The average cost per FTE employee within the sector is £22,800 but this varies from £10,600 within small organisations through to £26,900 within major organisations.

**Voluntary sector expenditure on staff costs, 2005/06 – 2007/08 (£ billions)**



## Question 6... Who works in the voluntary sector?

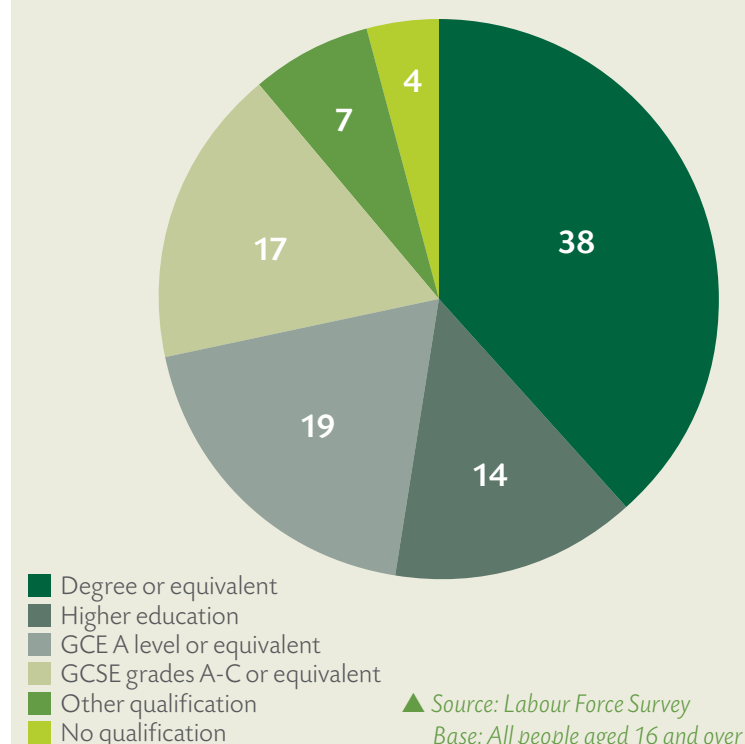
**19%**

Proportion of people working in the voluntary sector who are disabled

**Women employees by sector, 2008 (%)**



**Highest qualification of voluntary sector employees, 2008 (%)**



▲ Source: Labour Force Survey  
Base: All people aged 16 and over

More than two-thirds of the voluntary sector workforce are women (68%). This compares with the public sector (65%) but contrasts with the private sector (39%). The high proportion of women in the voluntary sector has implications for the sector's employment policies and practices, such as maternity leave, part-time working and flexible working practices.

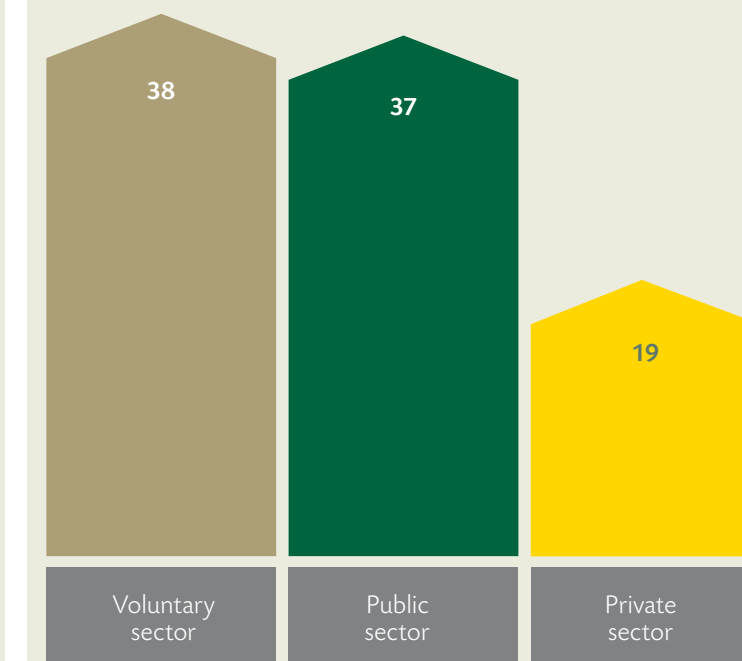
The voluntary sector workforce contains a higher proportion of disabled people than the public and private sectors. Nearly one in five people (19%) working in the voluntary sector has a disability compared to 14% of the public sector workforce and 12% of the private sector workforce. The proportion of disabled people working in the voluntary sector has increased from 14% in 1999 to 19% in 2008. As nearly one in five voluntary sector employees has a disability, it is important for voluntary sector organisations to ensure that they have the employment policies and practices in place to provide reasonable adjustments, as well as equal opportunity and flexible working practices.

◀ Source: Labour Force Survey  
Base: All people aged 16 and over

The ethnicity of over nine in ten of the voluntary sector workforce is white (93%). This is slightly higher than in the public and private sectors (each equating to 91%). Between 2002 and 2008, the proportion of white employees has decreased slightly across all sectors by just over 1%.

Voluntary sector employees are highly qualified. Two out of three voluntary sector employees (71%) have a qualification at 'A' level or beyond and nearly four out of ten voluntary sector employees (38%) have a degree-level qualification. The voluntary sector employee profile of qualifications is very similar to that of the public sector (68% and 37% respectively). In the private sector just over half the employees (52%) have an 'A' level qualification or higher and nearly one in five (19%) have a degree or equivalent qualification. Between 1998 and 2008 the number of voluntary sector employees with a degree increased from 147,000 to 252,000, an increase of 71%. This again gives weight to the suggestion that there has been a professionalisation of the voluntary sector. Employees are now highly qualified and see a career path within the voluntary sector.

**Employees with a degree, by sector, 2008 (%)**



▲ Source: Labour Force Survey  
Base: All people aged 16 and over

## Question 7...

# What proportion of jobs in the voluntary sector are full-time?

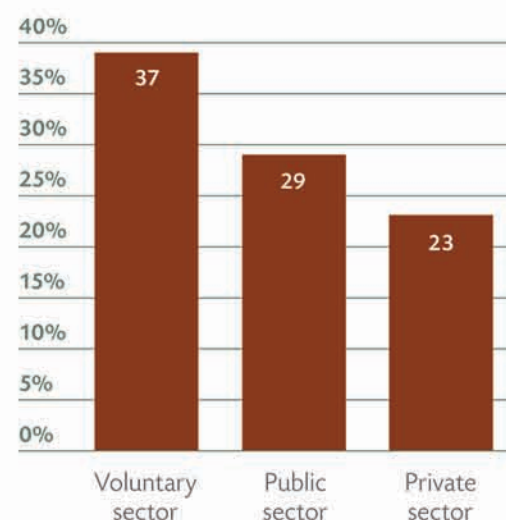
Part-time work is a significant part of voluntary sector employment with nearly four out of ten workers in the UK voluntary sector (37%) working part-time, equating to 247,000 employees. This proportion is much higher than in the public sector (29%) and the private sector (23%). Part-time working has implications for the management of human resources both in terms of organisational and individual development.

Most voluntary sector part-time employees do not want a full-time job. Less than one in ten (8%) voluntary sector part-time employees are working part-time because they could not find a full-time job, equating to 20,000 employees. More than eight out of ten (81%) voluntary sector part-time employees (200,000 employees) do not want a full-time

job, which suggests that they are attracted to the part-time opportunities that the voluntary sector offers.

Just over two in five female employees in the voluntary sector are employed part-time (43%) compared to just over one in five (23%) of males. The proportion of women who work part-time has fluctuated but has remained basically unchanged. The proportion of men working part-time in the sector has increased from 14% in 1996 to 23% in 2005. The growth in the proportion of men who work part-time in the voluntary sector could reflect the growing number who view the voluntary sector as providing an alternative career path and wish to take up the sector's flexible working practices.

### Part-time employment by sector, 2008 (%)



▲ Source: Labour Force Survey  
Base: All people aged 16 and over

## Question 8...

# How secure are jobs in the voluntary sector?

# 9%

Proportion of voluntary sector employees on temporary contracts in 2008

Just over nine in ten employees (91%) in the voluntary sector are on permanent contracts. Both the private and public sectors have a higher proportion of employees on permanent contracts (96% and 93% respectively). Between 1998 and 2008, the number of private sector employees on temporary contracts decreased by 27%, 273,000 employees, whilst the number of public sector employees on temporary contracts decreased by 16%, 97,000 employees. Conversely, the number of voluntary sector employees on temporary contracts increased by 15%, 8,000 employees.

The unions continue to highlight this situation as a major cause of concern for their members<sup>1</sup>. Voluntary sector employers recognise such concerns, plus additional mission-related risks. Employees with poor job security or short-term contracts are relatively difficult to recruit and retain, with resignation before the completion of a fixed-term contract anecdotally perceived to be a common problem.

More than two out of three temporary voluntary sector employees (67%) are on fixed-term contracts; this equates to 40,000 employees. In the public sector a smaller proportion are on fixed-term contracts (60%) and in the private sector only 29% of temporary employees are on fixed-term contracts. The number of fixed-term contracts in the voluntary sector is likely to be related to the fact that many voluntary sector organisations depend to a considerable extent on short-term funding.

<sup>1</sup>Unite. 2009b. Unite recommendations for funding in the sector. [www.uniteunion.com/sectors/community\\_youth\\_workers/campaigns-1/funding\\_campaign/unite\\_recommendations\\_for\\_fund.aspx](http://www.uniteunion.com/sectors/community_youth_workers/campaigns-1/funding_campaign/unite_recommendations_for_fund.aspx).

## Question 9...

# Where are the jobs in the voluntary sector?

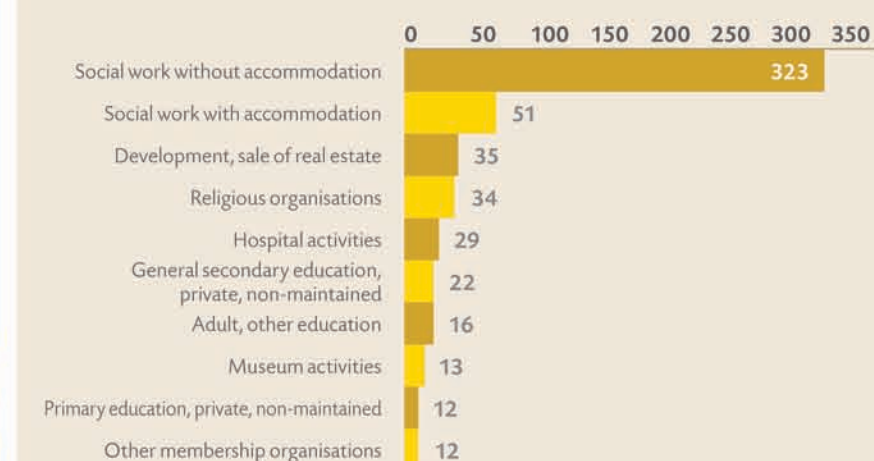
Analysis of the voluntary sector workforce using the 1992 Standard Industrial Classification (SIC(92)) helps to identify the areas of activity that employees work in. The SIC was designed to disaggregate industrial activities and so is not ideal when exploring the workforce of the voluntary sector. It does, however, provide an indication of the changing boundaries between the sectors.

More than half (56%) of all voluntary sector employees – 374,000 employees – are employed in social work activities. Of this, 86% are employed in social work activities without accommodation. Overall, voluntary sector organisations providing social services receive a much larger amount of statutory income than

any other sub-sector: £4.2 billion in 2006/07. The period 1996-2008 saw a huge increase in the number of voluntary sector workers employed in social work activities – from 202,000 employees in 1996 to 374,000 in 2008 – an increase of 85%. The transfer of social care activities from the public sector may in part explain this substantial increase. Over the same period the number of employees working in social work activities in the public sector decreased from 480,000 to 424,000, a decrease of 13%.

There are 35,000 voluntary sector employees (6%) working in 'real estate activities' (for example housing). Between 1996 and 2008 employment in this area has increased in both

### The ten largest voluntary sector employment industries, 2008 (headcount, thousands)



▲ Source: Labour Force Survey. Base: All people aged 16 and over

# 26%

Proportion of social care workforce employed in the voluntary sector

the private sector and the voluntary sector (by 52% and 46% respectively), while in the public sector such employment has decreased (by 25%). This is likely to reflect the continuing transfer of housing provision from local authorities to the private and voluntary sectors.

## Question 10...

# How large is the typical workplace?

Voluntary sector employees are mainly concentrated in small workplaces with one-third of voluntary sector workers (32%) employed in workplaces with less than ten employees<sup>2</sup>. This is markedly different to both the private sector (25%) and the public sector (7%). These findings, particularly when combined with the prevalence of part-time employment and short-term contracts, have real implications for voluntary sector employment policy and practice. With most voluntary sector employees located in small workplaces, the task of providing support such as training and development becomes difficult. Small workplaces are less likely to provide internal training courses and have less capacity for peer support. Research shows that over two-thirds of small and medium-sized voluntary sector organisations do not have a dedicated

HR specialist<sup>3</sup>. This means that it is unlikely that the training and HR needs of these employees are being met.

<sup>2</sup>The size of the workplace refers to the total number of employees at the respondents workplace.

<sup>3</sup>Cunningham, J. and Newsome, K. 2003. More than just a wing and a prayer: Identifying Human Resource capacity among small and medium sized organisations in the voluntary sector. NCVO: London.

# 32%

Proportion of voluntary sector employees who work in an organisation with less than 10 staff

### Workplace size by sector, 2008 (headcount, %)



▲ Source: Labour Force Survey  
Base: All people aged 16 and over

## Question 15... Has the number of people volunteering changed over time?

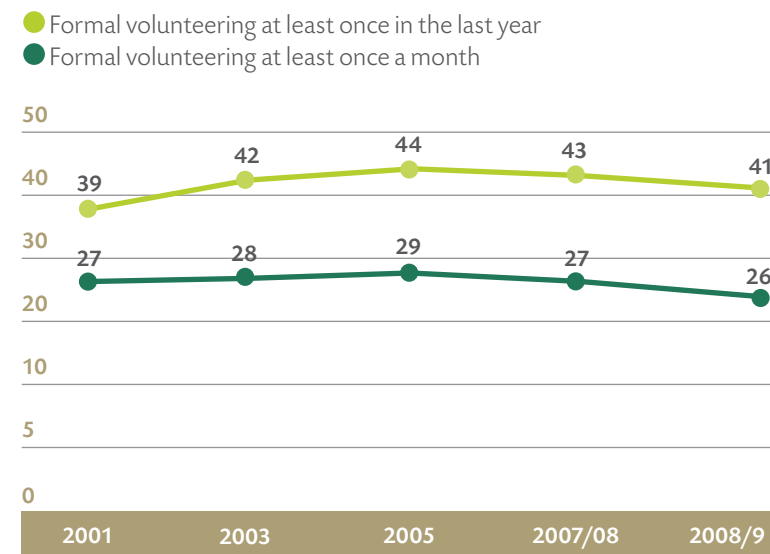
TREND

Volunteering in England is a popular activity. Volunteers contribute significantly to local communities, individual lives and the environment. Just over four in ten adults (41%) formally volunteer at least once a year with just over one-quarter (26%) formally volunteering at least once a month. In England, levels of formal volunteering at least once a year have fallen since 2005 (44%). Levels of formal volunteering at least once a month have not changed since 2007/08 (27%) but have fallen since 2005 (29%) (DCLG, 2009).

Since the recession began there has been a huge rise in demand for volunteering placements. Nearly 90% of volunteer centres have experienced an increase in the number of enquiries about placements between March and August 2009 and seven out of ten centres placed a larger number of volunteers (IVR, 2010).

Source: DCLG, 2009

### Levels of formal volunteering in England, 2001 – 2008/09 (%)



### What do we know about long-term trends in volunteering?

#### John Mohan Deputy Director, Third Sector Research Centre (TSRC)

It's a truism that the answer you get to a question depends on the question you ask. Some surveys about volunteering ask very specific questions, others ask very general questions. The more detailed and specific the questions are, the higher the reported level of volunteering. This is why estimates of the level of the adult population's involvement in volunteering at least annually range between 20% and 50%, and between 10% and 30% in relation to volunteering on a monthly basis. Some surveys have been criticised for their broad and inclusive definition of volunteering. Researchers therefore need to be very clear about definitions used, and there is a need for flexible survey instruments to capture a wide range of voluntary activity.

Whatever the source, there is considerable stability. In upwards of 20 surveys covering two decades, we find that the more specific surveys produce results of around 40% for the adult population with the more generalist ones indicating a figure of around 20%. This may be a sobering message for those wishing to increase volunteering rates.

Some of the most interesting results derive from the British Household Panel Survey which has tracked the same individuals over time since 1991, and allows changing patterns of involvement to be examined in relation to life events such as unemployment. Although people do respond to unemployment by seeking to volunteer, it tends to be more educated and middle-class sections of the population that do this. This may be a point to bear in mind in present recessionary conditions.

A working paper summarising the review of volunteering statistics on which this comment draws will shortly appear on the TSRC website [www.tsrc.ac.uk](http://www.tsrc.ac.uk).

31:1

Ratio of volunteers to paid staff

#### Find out more

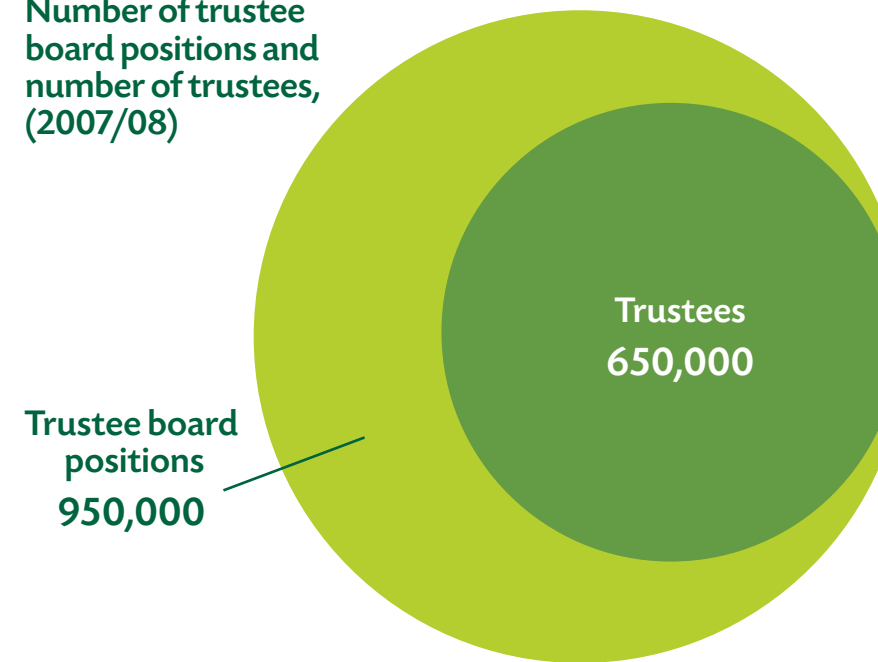
Citizenship Survey: 2008/09 (DCLG, 2009) [www.communities.gov.uk/documents/statistics/doc/1324451.doc](http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/statistics/doc/1324451.doc)

Volunteering in the recession: Outline report for the Recession Summit 21 January 2010 (IVR, 2010) [www.volunteering.org.uk/WhatWeDo/Policy/whatwearesaying/Volunteering+in+the+recession.htm](http://www.volunteering.org.uk/WhatWeDo/Policy/whatwearesaying/Volunteering+in+the+recession.htm)

## Question 16... How many trustees of voluntary organisations are there in the UK?

SNAPSHOT

### Number of trustee board positions and number of trustees, (2007/08)



Charity trustees are the people who serve on the governing body of a charity. They may be known as trustees, directors, board members, governors or committee members. Trustees have, and must accept, ultimate responsibility for directing the affairs of a charity, and ensuring that it is solvent, well-run, and meeting the needs for which it has been set up. The great majority of trustees serve as volunteers, and receive no payment for their work.

In 2007/08 there were nearly 950,000 trustee board positions within voluntary organisations in the UK. The number of trustees is likely to be substantially less: research suggests 45% of trustees are members of two boards<sup>1</sup>. We therefore estimate that there are 650,000 trustees in UK voluntary organisations.

Source: Charity Commission, NCVO

0.97:1  
Ratio of trustees to paid staff

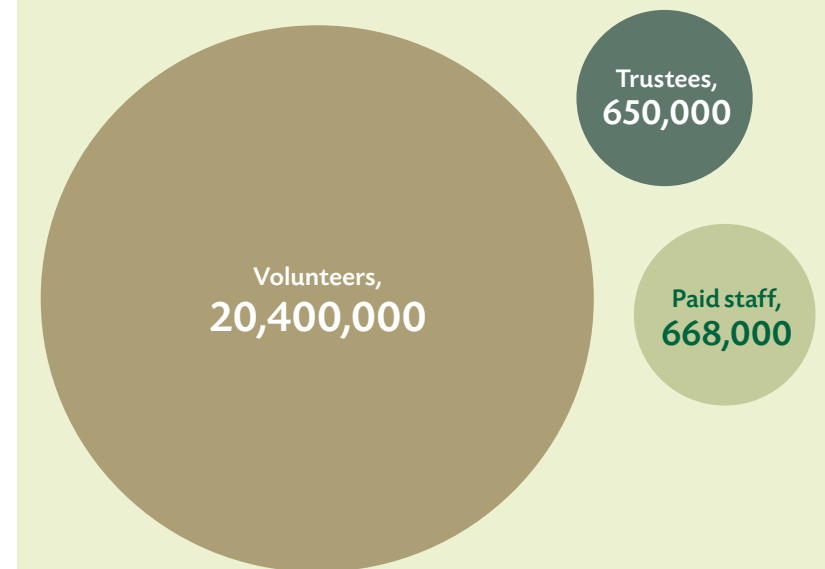
### Age distribution of trustees and the adult population, England and Wales, 2005 (%)

Age Group	Proportion of trustees (%)	Proportion of adult population (%)
Over 60 years	42	27
45-59 years	35	25
25-44 years	23	36
18-24 years	1	12

Source: Charity Commission, 2005

Three-quarters of charity trustees (76%) are aged 45 and over. This is much higher than the proportion of the adult population in this age group. Conversely, only 1% of trustees are aged 18-24, compared to 12% of the adult population in England and Wales. Linked to this, almost one third of respondents to a Charity Commission survey said they found it difficult to attract young people to act as trustees.

### Number of volunteers<sup>2</sup> (2008/09), trustees<sup>3</sup> (2007/08), and paid staff<sup>4</sup> (2008), in the UK



31:1

Ratio of volunteers to trustees

Overall, one in ten voluntary organisations (11%) identified that they always had difficulties in filling vacancies in their trustee body with four in ten organisations (39%) identifying that they had difficulty sometimes. The situation appeared worse for the larger organisations. The main reasons identified for trustee recruitment issues were difficulties finding people willing to make the time commitment (82%) and difficulty finding people who want the responsibility or are willing to take on the legal obligations (53%).

<sup>1</sup>Latest trends in charity governance and trusteeship (Cornforth, 2001)

<sup>2</sup>Citizenship Survey: 2008-09 (DCLG, 2009) [www.communities.gov.uk/documents/statistics/doc/1324451.doc](http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/statistics/doc/1324451.doc)

<sup>3</sup>Charity Commission, 2008/09

<sup>4</sup>Labour Force Survey, 2009

## Developing learning and skills in the sector

### Why developing skills matters

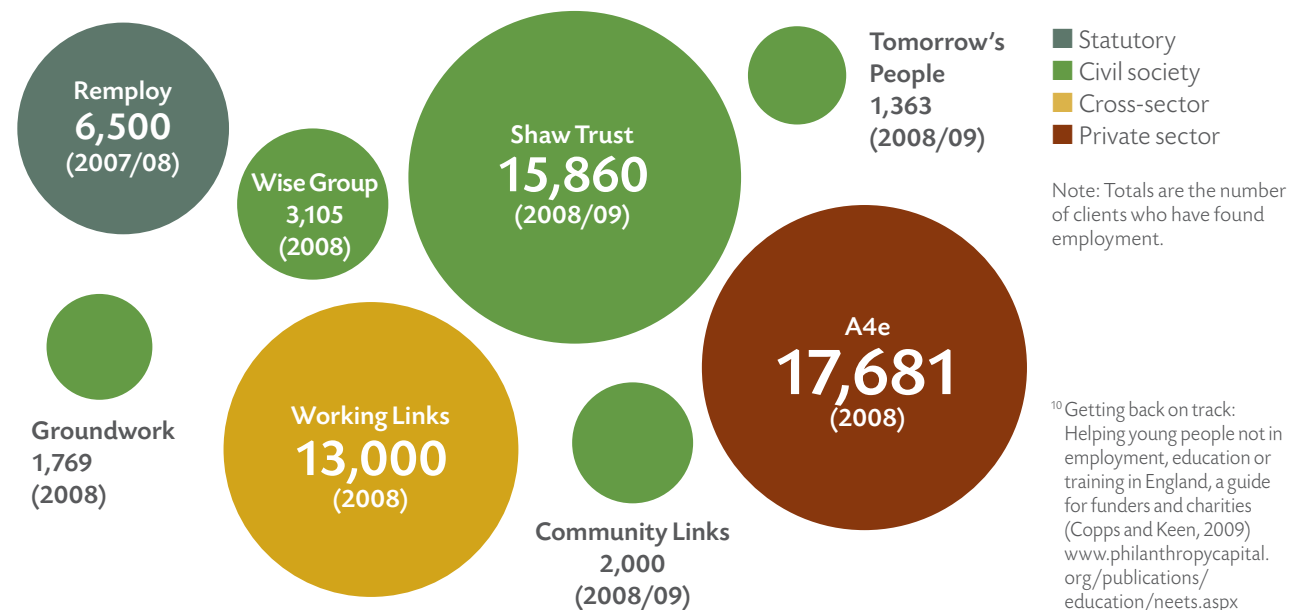
#### Jane Slowey CBE Chair, Skills Third Sector

In difficult times, organisations have to focus on the skills they need to help sustain their work. Sustainability is not only about fundraising and winning contracts: it is about high quality services and better partnership working, both of which require high level skills. Organisations need to use every opportunity to develop the skills of their paid and unpaid workforce, so that they can be more cost effective in the way they work. This means taking advantage of any public funds available for learning, such as for training apprentices.

All the skills that will be critical to our efforts to build a low carbon society – community engagement, energy conservation, fuel poverty initiatives, and green building skills in particular – are held by the third sector, and they must seize their share of the investment any government will want to make in this growth area. Staff, volunteers and trustees can also capitalise on low cost ways of sharing knowledge and skills to equip themselves with the tools they need for an uncertain future. The need for collaboration, partnerships, and mergers will grow, and trustees in particular, will need to share learning across their networks, ensuring they are well equipped to lead their organisations through change and unpredictable income.

This is vital if the sector is to continue supporting the millions of individuals least able to survive in the current recession.

### Getting the disadvantaged back to work: examples of major providers



### Volunteering as a route into employment?

#### Helen Timbrell, Head of Volunteering, National Trust

That volunteering can be a route into employment is widely acknowledged. We know this can benefit the volunteer, the volunteer-involving organisation and wider society. But this link and these benefits are not automatic: not all volunteering will, or should, lead to employment.

Links between volunteering and paid work rely on strong volunteer management. The right volunteers recruited to the right roles and then supported by managers with the time, skills and resources to invest in supporting their development. Volunteers consciously looking to use their experience to lead

to employment can be the most demanding for volunteer managers to work with. They know what they need to get from volunteering and they are focussed on getting it. The flip side of this is that they can also be among the most rewarding to work with.

But volunteering should never just (or even mainly) be about routes into employment. For thousands of volunteers the absolute joy of volunteering is that it has nothing to do with their current or potential paid work. And we should not forget that this type of volunteering is just as valuable for individuals, organisations and society.

If we are serious about increasing the numbers and diversity of volunteers (and we should be) too narrow a focus on linking volunteering to employment is deeply unhelpful. Ensuring volunteering is flexible, fun and a leisure choice in its own right is much more important.

## Fast facts

Voluntary and community groups and social enterprises (2007/08)

	Number of organisations	Income (£ millions)	Paid staff
General charities	171,100	35,500	668,000
Co-operatives	4,600	24,490	167,500
Housing associations	1,820	11,570	148,100
Common investment funds	60	640	1,600
Credit unions	490	60	1,000
Companies limited by guarantee	22,700	6,100	41,100
Friendly societies	200	1,650	5,000
Leisure trusts	120	630	26,000
Community interest companies	1,400	600	4,300
Benevolent societies	2,200	310	3,200
Clubs and societies	6,600	200	8,600
Duplications	3,700	2,200	59,000
<b>Voluntary and community groups and social enterprises</b>	<b>208,000</b>	<b>79,500</b>	<b>1,015,000</b>

## Methodology

This Almanac is based on data from a wide range of sources. Due to the number of civil society areas covered and the variety of methods used, only a brief outline of the methodology can be given here: for further information visit [www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/almanac](http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/almanac).

Our employment figures are largely based on Labour Force Survey (LFS) data. The LFS surveys an estimated 60,000 private households every quarter. By pooling data for unique individuals from four quarters, it is possible to produce reliable estimates of the sector's workforce. Weighting is used within the LFS to compensate for non-response rates in certain groups and produce population estimates.

To identify the sector a respondent is employed in, a two-stage self-classification process is used. Respondents are first asked whether they work for 'a private firm, business or a limited company' or 'some other kind of organisation'. Those respondents who choose the second option are then asked, 'what kind of non-private organisation is it?' They are then presented with a range of options including 'charity, voluntary organisation or trust'. For the purposes of the analysis for the Almanac, responses to these questions were recoded into a sector variable and defined as 'private', 'public' or 'voluntary'.

The most recent statistics on volunteering are available from the 2008/09 Citizenship Survey. For further information see Citizenship Survey: 2008-09 (DCLG, 2009) [www.communities.gov.uk/documents/statistics/doc/1324451.doc](http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/statistics/doc/1324451.doc). All extrapolated figures are based on ONS 2008 mid-year estimates.

A thriving voluntary sector is crucial to building stronger communities and delivering good quality services. Charities, voluntary and community groups and social enterprises need people with the right skills to be able to make a difference to the people and communities they serve.

This report is based on the Work chapter of the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) UK Civil Society Almanac 2010 and covers key trends and characteristics of the voluntary sector workforce, employment and volunteering. It is aimed at everyone with an interest in better partnerships with voluntary organisations.

Skills – Third Sector identifies the skills priorities and needs of the staff, volunteers and trustees who make up the voluntary sector's workforce and then works collaboratively with national, regional and local organisations to:

- provide information and resources
- develop national standards and qualifications
- and carry out research to prove why skills matter to our sector.

This report was produced in partnership between Skills – Third Sector, NCVO and the Third Sector Research Centre (TSRC).

NCVO, the umbrella body for the voluntary sector in England, believes its members and those with a stake in civil society need the best quality evidence base to help them inform policy and practice and plan for the future.

The Third Sector Research Centre (TSRC), led by the universities of Birmingham and Southampton, exists to develop research on, for and with the third sector in the UK.

For more information see [www.skills-thirdsector.org.uk](http://www.skills-thirdsector.org.uk)