

Why individuals donate

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Highlights

- Over 80% of donors say they make charitable donations because of a compassion towards people in need and to help a cause in which they personally believe.
- Also, 80% of donors state they wish to make a contribution to their community.
- Health-related and social service organizations receive more donations than other types of organizations.
- The top three ways of giving are responding to a canvasser at a retail store or shopping centre, sponsoring someone in an event such as a walk-a-thon and a donation in the name of a person who has passed away.

Why look at charitable donors?

Contributing to a charitable cause is one important way to engage in your community. Understanding these patterns may help charitable organizations to maintain or to grow the donations they receive.

In this FactSheet, we review the reasons that individuals make charitable donations, the type of organizations that are supported, the type of solicitations to which they respond and their reasons for not donating more.

We focus on the overall patterns in non-metro¹ Ontario. Information on the patterns by age and a comparison to metro Ontario is shown in an on-line [Appendix](#).

Findings

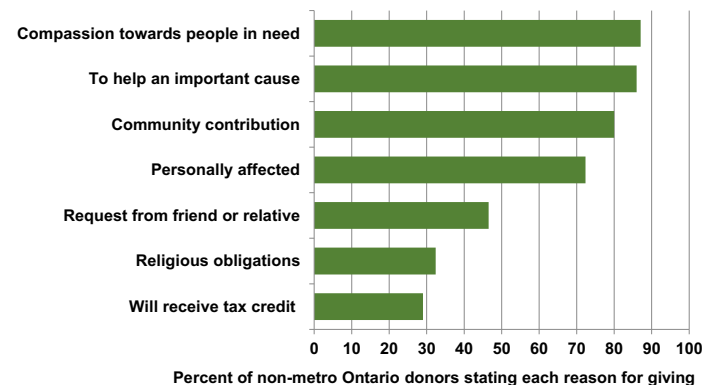
In 2013, over 85% of non-metro donors say they made a donation because of “compassion towards people in need” and “to help a cause in which you personally believe” (Figure 1).

Also highly ranked (mentioned by 80% of donors) was a desire “to make a contribution to

the community”. Further, 72% made a donation to a cause because they or someone they knew “has been personally affected by the cause the organization supports”. A request from “a family member, friend, neighbour or colleague” was important for 47% of donors.

Figure 1

In 2013, over 85% of non-metro donors said they made a donation because of “compassion towards people in need” and “to help a cause in which you personally believe”



Source: Statistics Canada. General Social Survey Giving, Volunteering & Participating, 2013.

In terms of the number of donations, for each 100 non-metro donors, they made 159 donations to health-related² organizations³ (Figure 2).

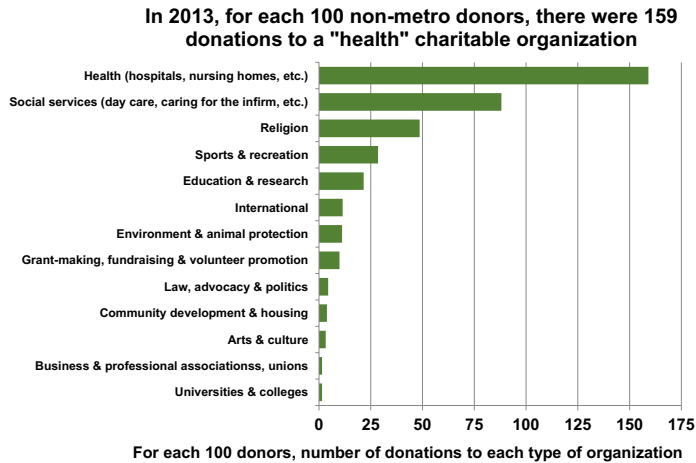
² This includes hospitals and rehabilitation facilities, nursing homes, mental health and crisis intervention services, public health services, outpatient services, emergency services, etc.

³ For definitions of each type of organization, see pages 47-51 in Statistics Canada. (2009) **Satellite Account of**

¹ Non-CMA is outside a Census Metropolitan Area (CMA). See “Overview of Ontario’s rural geography” (June, 2013) (<http://ruralontarioinstitute.ca/file.aspx?id=1c38f15e-df4e-41a8-9c4d-7ad02cf55b0b>).

Social service agencies⁴ ranked second with 88 donations per 100 non-metro donors. In addition, per religious organizations received 49 donations per 100 donors and sports and recreation organizations⁵ received 28 donations per 100 donors.

Figure 2



Source: Statistics Canada. General Social Survey Giving, Volunteering & Participating, 2013.

In 2013, 41% of donors gave a donation when solicited at a retail store or shopping centre (Figure 3). Ranking second was 37% of donors made a charitable donation to sponsor someone (such as in walk-a-thon) or in memoriam⁶.

In 2013, three reasons were stated by over 70% of donors as reasons for not donating more:

- they were happy with what they had already given;
- they could not afford to give a larger donation; and
- they are concerned about charity fraud or scams (Figure 4).

Interestingly, 32% stated that no one asked them to give more.

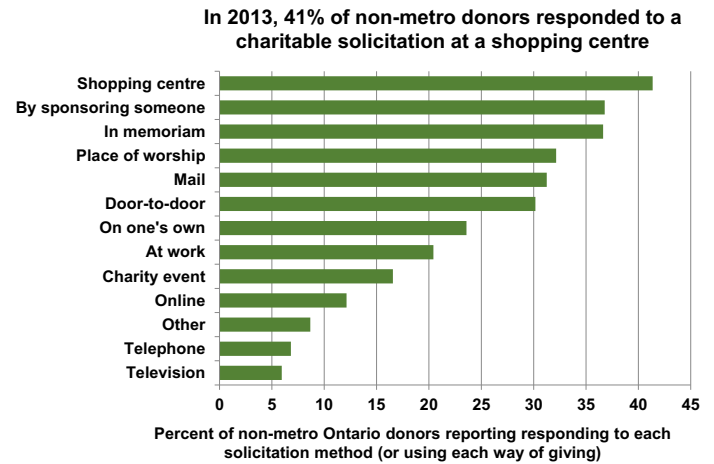
Non-profit Institutions and Volunteering (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, Catalogue no. 13-015) (<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/13-015-x/13-015-x2009000-eng.htm>).

⁴ This includes day care, youth services, family services, services for the handicapped and the elderly, emergency and relief services, income support services and maintenance services, etc.

⁵ This includes sports clubs, physical fitness and recreation facilities, community clubs, service clubs, etc.

⁶ That is, donating in the name of someone who has passed away.

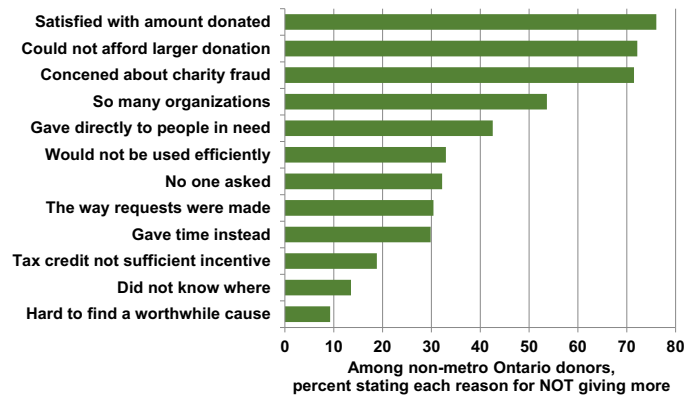
Figure 3



Source: Statistics Canada. General Social Survey Giving, Volunteering & Participating, 2013.

Figure 4

In 2013, over 70% of non-metro donors did not give more because: a) satisfied with present level of giving; b) could not afford to give more; and c) concerns of charity fraud



Source: Statistics Canada. General Social Survey Giving, Volunteering & Participating, 2013.

Summary

Compassion for people in need, helping an important cause and making a contribution to your community are the top reasons stated by non-metro donors for making charitable donations.

Charity fraud is one of the concerns (stated by 71% of non-metro donors) for not giving more. However, 32% of donors indicate they did not give more because no one asked them

Understanding these issues and the relative success of solicitation methods may help non-metro charitable organizations to maintain and to grow their base of donors.

Rural Ontario Institute gratefully acknowledges the work of Ray Bollman in preparing this edition of *Focus on Rural Ontario*. Questions on data sources can be directed to RayD.Bollman@sasktel.net. Any comments or discussions can be directed to NRagetlie@RuralOntarioInstitute.ca.