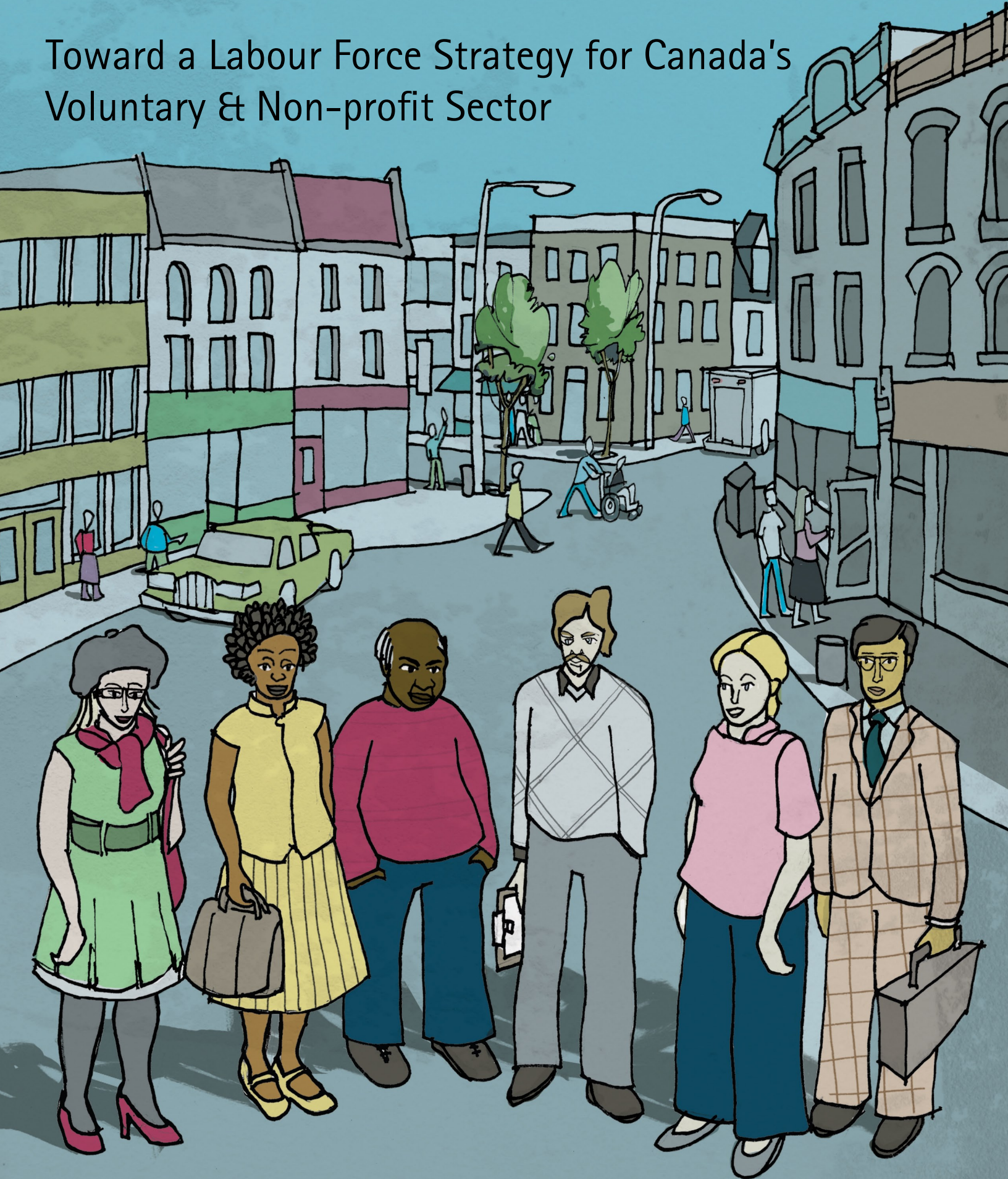


# Toward a Labour Force Strategy for Canada's Voluntary & Non-profit Sector



Report #2

Findings from Canada-wide  
Surveys of Employers and Employees

# HR Council for the Voluntary & Non-profit Sector

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## About the HR Council

The HR Council for the Voluntary & Non-profit Sector (HR Council) works with organizations, educators, labour and government to identify and address issues related to paid employment in the voluntary and non-profit sector.

Our priorities are to:

- Build and share knowledge
- Promote good HR practices
- Foster training and learning opportunities
- Provide leadership on HR issues
- Engage voluntary and non-profit organizations in our work



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## Executive Summary

The surveys are integral to the HR Council's Labour Force Study, a comprehensive look at paid employment leading to a first-ever labour force strategy for the sector.

This second report (in a three-part series) released by the HR Council for the Voluntary & Non-profit Sector (HR Council) contains the key findings from Canada-wide Surveys of Employers and Employees. The Survey of Employers provides empirical evidence about the characteristics of organizations, their recruitment and retention practices and challenges, as well as their skills needs. The Survey of Employees provides new statistical information about the demographic characteristics of the people who work in the sector and examines some key aspects of the work they do. It also provides information about what employees like and don't like about their jobs and about their plans and expectations for the future.

These two surveys are an integral part of the HR Council's Labour Force Study, a comprehensive look at paid employment in the sector leading to a first-ever labour force strategy for the sector. The goal of a labour force strategy is to make sure that the sector has access to the people and skills it needs. The new information from this Labour Force Study will shape strategies to attract, develop, engage and retain appropriately qualified people to work in the sector.

The scope of the surveys corresponds to the HR Council's Labour Force Study.<sup>1</sup> The Study and the surveys cover most of the "core non-profit sector" as it is defined in Statistics Canada's Satellite Account of Nonprofit Institutions and Volunteering,<sup>2</sup> except that they do not include organizations in the category "professional associations, trade unions and cooperatives." Quasi-government organizations (such as hospitals, colleges and universities) are beyond the scope.

1 The first report from the HR Council's Labour Force Study, "Toward a Labour Force Strategy for Canada's Voluntary & Non-profit Sector," provides more information about defining and classifying the sector. The report is available online at [www.hrcouncil.ca](http://www.hrcouncil.ca).

2 Statistics Canada (2007). Satellite Account of Nonprofit Institutions and Volunteering. Ottawa: Minister of Industry. Statistics Canada catalogue no. 13-015-XIE2007000. <http://www.statcan.ca/cgi-bin/downpub/listpub.cgi?catno=13-015-XIE2007000>

The HR Council commissioned Ipsos Reid to conduct the surveys between November 2007 and January 2008. Dr. Adam Lodzinski and Associates carried out the primary analysis of the survey findings. The HR Council's Labour Force Study is guided by a Steering Committee whose members come from stakeholder organizations across the country.

## About the Canada-wide surveys of sector employers and employees

The intent of both the surveys is to provide an overall, national picture of employment in the sector (full-time, part-time, permanent or temporary) and compare across:<sup>1</sup>

- Three size categories (small organizations with less than 10 employees; medium-sized organizations with 10 to 99 employees; and, large organizations with 100 or more employees)
- Seven geographic regions (Atlantic provinces, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba/Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, Northwest Territories/Nunavut/Yukon<sup>2</sup>)
- Five areas of activity (Sports/Recreation, Health/Social Services, Development/Housing, Religion, Other types<sup>3</sup>)<sup>4</sup>

A weighted sample of 1 300 employers was drawn from a list of 34 000 voluntary and non-profit organizations. Individuals with responsibility for human resources completed the survey on behalf of these organizations either online or in a telephone interview.

The Survey of Employees covered individuals who are currently employed for pay by a non-profit organization, including full-time and part-time,

permanent and temporary workers at all levels within an organization. A total of 2 873 respondents completed online surveys yielding a weighted sample of 1 500.

## Key findings from the Survey of Employers

### Characteristics of organizations

- More than half of voluntary and non-profit organizations have existed for 28 years or more.
- In 60% of organizations, the responsibility for human resources management is one part of one person's job (Executive Director, CEO or senior manager) as opposed to a dedicated staff person with sole responsibility for human resources.
- Sector organizations employ a median of five people (including all full-time and part-time staff).
- More than one-third of small organizations do not offer any employee benefits. In contrast, more than 92% of large organizations provide one or both of life/disability insurance and a drug plan.

### Recruitment and retention

- Both recruitment and retention present some degree of challenge; however, many more organizations report difficulty in recruitment than retention.
- Nearly half of employers reporting recruitment activity in the last 12 months say it was "difficult" or "very difficult" for their organization to find qualified people.

1 Notable differences in survey responses based on organization size, region or area of activity are presented in the full report. However, given the size of the survey sample there is a limit to how far the data can be broken down and still be reliable and valid. Comparisons between groups should be interpreted with caution when the number of cases (n) is small. It is also important to note that the sample sizes for these surveys do not generally support the analysis of differences within the subgroups.

2 The total number of employers from the Northwest Territories, the Yukon and Nunavut combined is 16. This number is too small to be analyzed meaningfully. Results from this region are for descriptive purposes only and should not be viewed as reliable findings – either on their own or in comparison with other regions.

3 The "Other" category is made up of the following areas of activity: Arts and Culture; Education and Research; Environment; Grant-making and Voluntarism Promotion; Law, Advocacy and Politics; International; and uncategorized non-profit activity.

4 Quasi-government organizations (such as hospitals, colleges and universities), and organizations in the category "professional associations, trade unions and cooperatives" are beyond the scope of the HR Council's Labour Force Study and the surveys.

- When they are not able to find a qualified candidate, one-third of employers distribute the responsibilities among a number of existing staff.
- “Did not do anything” is the most common response to the question, “What did your organization do in the last 12 months to make your workplace more attractive?”

### Skills needs

- Asked about the extent to which employees’ generic skills meet their organization’s needs, employers give high ratings for literacy and numeracy, as well as communication and the ability to work in teams. Generic skills most often identified as meeting an organization’s needs only “partly” or “not at all” are computer skills and time management skills.
- Employers indicate that their organization’s needs for several specific kinds of skills are mostly or fully met. These areas include: client service, working with a diverse population, management of paid staff, working in partnerships with other organizations, leadership, procurement and purchasing and management of volunteers. Employers also identify certain areas in which employees’ specialized skills meet their needs only “partly” or “not at all” (e.g., legal knowledge, marketing, research, fundraising/resource development).

## Key findings from the Survey of Employees

### Characteristics of employees and their jobs

- 76.4% of employees are female and 23.6% are male.
- Employees range in age from 19 to 76, with the mean age being 43.4.
- Nearly all employees have completed high school and over 70% of employees have post-secondary education.
- 89% of employees identify themselves as white/Caucasian.
- More than half (53.5%) have been with their current employer over five years and almost a third (29.6%) ten or more years.
- 80.8% of employees hold full-time<sup>1</sup> positions and 19.2% hold part-time positions.
- More than 1 in 5 full-time employees (22.6%) report that they hold more than one paid job (including self-employment). Not surprisingly, among part-time employees the percentage is considerably higher: 46.9% of part-time employees hold more than one job.
- Overall, 85.7% of employees are in permanent positions<sup>2</sup> and 14.3% are in temporary positions.
- 20.9% of employees are members of a union or covered by a collective agreement.
- 95.7% of employees feel either “somewhat” (30.8%) or “very committed” (64.9%) to their organization. Similarly, when asked about the value they place on working for a cause, employees report a high degree of attachment to their cause.

1 The definition of “full-time” is working 30 hours or more per week, either on-site or off-site.

2 The definition of “permanent” is that there is no set end date to the employment.

## Job satisfaction

- Employees' ratings of overall job satisfaction are very positive.
- Job satisfaction varies for specific aspects of work. Employees identify some areas of dissatisfaction – specifically around compensation (for overtime, retirement savings options, pay, and benefits) as well as feedback and evaluation, and opportunities for advancement and career development and training.

## Skills needs

- The vast majority (96.2%) of employees indicate that they believe their skills meet their organization's needs either “fully” (57.8%) or “mostly” (38.5%).
- The survey asked employees about the extent to which they believe the specific skills they actually use meet the requirements of their current job. More commonly used skills are typically rated higher (e.g., client services, leadership, monitoring and evaluation). However, strategic planning skills, while used by a significant number of employees (44.1%), are deemed to meet job requirements only “partly” or “not at all” by nearly one in five.

## Future plans

- One quarter (24.6%) of employees indicate they are currently looking for a new job and the most frequent reason they give is dissatisfaction with salary.

## Next steps

The survey findings contained in this report will provide the foundation for developing strategic recommendations. Input from sector stakeholders will strengthen the recommendations and the labour force strategy for the voluntary and non-profit sector. The third and final report from the HR Council's Labour Force Study, featuring these recommendations, will be released in March 2009.

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## 1

## Introduction

Information from the surveys will help to shape strategies for the sector to attract, develop, engage and retain qualified people.

This second report (in a three-part series) released by the HR Council contains the key survey findings from the Canada-wide Surveys of Employers and the Survey of Employees. The Survey of Employers provides empirical evidence about the characteristics of organizations, their recruitment and retention practices and challenges, as well as their skills needs. The Survey of Employees provides new statistical information about the demographic characteristics of the people who work in the sector and examines some key aspects of the work they do. It also provides information about what employees like and don't like about their jobs and about their plans and expectations for the future.

These two surveys are an integral part of the HR Council's Labour Force Study, a comprehensive look at paid employment in the sector leading to a first-ever labour force strategy for the sector. The goal of a labour force strategy is to make sure that the sector has access to the people and skills it needs. The new information from this Labour Force Study will shape strategies to attract, develop, engage and retain appropriately qualified people to work in the sector. This study will diagnose the sector's short-term and longer-term labour force needs and provide recommendations leading to a national human resources strategy for the sector.

There are three main stages in the Labour Force Study:

1. **Bring the sector's paid labour force into focus.** What are the key trends and demands that shape the sector's need for people and skills? What factors affect the supply of talent and the sector's ability to find the people it needs? These questions form the basis of Report 1: Toward a Labour Force Strategy for Canada's Voluntary and Non-profit Sector, which can be downloaded at [www.hrcouncil.ca](http://www.hrcouncil.ca).
2. **Conduct Canada-wide surveys of sector organizations and employees.** This report provides a summary of the findings from these two national surveys.
3. **Develop recommendations for action.** These recommendations will be grounded in current trends and developments in the sector, shaped by the survey results and strengthened by input from sector stakeholders. The final report from the HR Council's study of the sector's labour force, featuring these recommendations, will be published in March 2009.

The scope of the surveys corresponds to the HR Council's Labour Force Study.<sup>1</sup> The Study and the surveys cover most of the “core non-profit sector” as it is defined in Statistics Canada's Satellite Account of Non-profit Institutions and Volunteering,<sup>2</sup> except that they do not include organizations in the category “professional associations, trade unions and cooperatives.” Quasi-government organizations (such as hospitals, colleges and universities) are beyond the scope.

The Labour Force Study is guided by a Steering Committee whose members come from the HR Council's network of stakeholders across the country. The Steering Committee provides overall guidance for the Study by contributing perspectives, expertise and ideas that reflect the sector's scope, complexity and diversity. In addition to providing input throughout the study, the committee has the task in the final stage of the work to develop recommendations for follow-up activities that will lead to a labour force strategy for the sector.

1 The first report from the HR Council's Labour Force Study, “Toward a Labour Force Strategy for Canada's Voluntary & Non-profit Sector,” provides more information about defining and classifying the sector. The report is available online at [www.hrcouncil.ca](http://www.hrcouncil.ca).

2 Statistics Canada (2007). Satellite Account of Non-profit Institutions and Volunteering. Ottawa: Minister of Industry. Statistics Canada catalogue no. 13-015-XIE2007000. <http://www.statcan.ca/cgi-bin/downpub/listpub.cgi?catno=13-015-XIE2007000>

## 2

## Survey Design and Methodology

The intent of both the Survey of Employers and the Survey of Employees is to provide an overall national picture of employment in the sector.

### General information about the surveys

The HR Council for the Voluntary & Non-profit Sector commissioned Ipsos Reid to conduct both the Survey of Employers and the Survey of Employees. Ipsos Reid designed the sampling strategy, the survey process and the survey instruments. The HR Council's Labour Force Study Steering Committee reviewed the survey instruments prior to the pre-test phase. After refining some of the survey questions and the survey process based on pre-testing, Ipsos Reid collected the data (in December 2007 and January 2008) and prepared the datasets for analysis.

Dr. Adam Lodzinski and Associates carried out the primary analysis of the survey data for the HR Council.

The intent of the two surveys was to provide an overall national picture of employment in the sector and to permit comparisons across:

- Three size categories (small organizations with less than 10 employees; medium-sized organizations with 10 to 99 employees; and large organizations with 100 or more employees)
- Seven geographic regions<sup>1</sup> (Atlantic provinces, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba/Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, Northwest Territories/Nunavut/Yukon<sup>2</sup>)
- Five areas of activity (Sports/Recreation, Health/Social Services, Development/Housing, Religion, Other types<sup>3</sup>)<sup>4</sup>

1 Manitoba and Saskatchewan; the Atlantic provinces, and the three territories are combined because they individually have smaller numbers of sector employers and employees than other regions.

2 The total number of employers from the Northwest Territories, the Yukon and Nunavut combined is 16. This number is too small to be analyzed meaningfully. Results from this region are for descriptive purposes only and should not be viewed as reliable findings – either on their own or in comparison with other regions.

3 According to the 2003 National Survey of Nonprofit and Voluntary Organizations (NSNVO), the first four areas of activity together account for about three-quarters of the sector's employers and employees. The "Other" category is made up of areas of activity that together account for the remainder. These areas of activity include: Arts and Culture; Education and Research; Environment; Grant-making and Voluntarism Promotion; Law, Advocacy and Politics; International; and uncategorized non-profit activity.

4 Quasi-government organizations (such as hospitals, colleges and universities) and organizations in the category "professional associations, trade unions and cooperatives" are beyond the scope of the HR Council's Labour Force Study and the surveys.

Whenever there are notable differences in survey responses based on size, region or area of activity, that information is included in the report.<sup>1</sup>

## Survey of Employers

The target population for the Survey of Employers was all voluntary and non-profit organizations in Canada with paid staff (at least one part-time paid employee).<sup>2</sup> A sample of employers was drawn from a list of 34 000 voluntary and non-profit organizations. Most of the organizations in the sample came from the database of charities maintained by Canada Revenue Agency, and was supplemented with the names of nearly 1 100 organizations that are not registered charities.<sup>3</sup>

Introductory letters were sent to a random sample of 18 000 organizations to notify them of the HR Council's Labour Force Study and the role of the survey in the study, and to invite the individual "most responsible for human resources" to participate. Employers were offered the choice of completing the survey online or over the telephone.<sup>4</sup> A screening process was used with all respondents to ensure they fit the criteria for the survey (non-profit organization with at least one paid employee working a minimum of 15 hours per week). The content of the survey was the same whether it was online or by telephone. In either case, it took about 30 minutes to complete the survey.

Ipsos Reid used targeted follow-up phone calls and e-mail messages to achieve the desired sample of employers. The goal was a sample of 1 570 employers comprised of sufficient numbers in each organization size, region and area of activity category to permit valid and reliable comparisons between these sub-groups. By the end of the data collection phase, Ipsos Reid telephone interviewers had contacted 3 705 employers of which 724 had completed the interview and 1 300 remained on a "call back" list.<sup>5</sup> A total of 1 191 employers had accessed the online survey of which 266 did not meet the screening criteria and 118 started the survey but did not complete it. A total of 807 respondents completed the survey online.

The employer survey data were weighted to ensure they reflected a representative sample of voluntary and non-profit organizations in Canada (Figure 1). The weights are proportionate to the population of employers in the sector in each region, organization size and activity category. They are based on the distribution of employers in the 2003 National Survey of Nonprofit and Voluntary Organizations.<sup>6</sup>

The overall margin of error for the Survey of Employers is 2.7% (19 times out of 20)<sup>7</sup> and the margins of error for sub-groups (by organization size, region and area of activity) are higher.<sup>8</sup>

- 1 Notable differences in survey responses based on organization size, region or area of activity are presented in the full report. However, given the size of the survey sample there is a limit to how far the data can be broken down and still be reliable and valid. Comparisons between groups should be interpreted with caution when the number of cases (n) is small. It is also important to note that the sample sizes for these surveys do not generally support the analysis of differences within the subgroups.
- 2 Organizations with only one part-time employee are not included if that employee worked less than 15 hours per week.
- 3 The supplementary list was purchased from Grey House Publishing. It included organizations in their directory "Associations Canada" that were identified as non-charities with paid staff.
- 4 The introductory letter from the HR Council and Ipsos Reid provided a URL with a unique user name and password, as well as a toll-free number that employers could call to set up a telephone interview. Respondents were also given the option of filling in a printed copy of the survey and mailing or faxing it back but no one used this option.
- 5 In addition, 892 employers who were contacted declined participation and 642 did not meet the screening criteria.
- 6 Specifically, the distributions are based on custom tabulations from Statistics Canada that match the scope of the HR Council's Labour Force Study, the Survey of Employers and the Survey of Employees.
- 7 Statistically, this means that chances are if the survey was completed 20 times, then 19 times out of 20, the results would not vary by more than 2.7%.
- 8 In survey work, the most commonly sought after margin of error is 5%. The size of the employer sample together with its weighting by region, area of activity and organizational size, contribute to the excellent overall margin of error of 2.7%, based on the core sample of 1 300. Margins of error for sub-groups: (Region) Atlantic 7.5%; Quebec 5.2%; Ontario 5.1%; Manitoba/Saskatchewan 6.9%; Alberta 6.5%; British Columbia 6.5%. (Organization Size) Small 2.9%; Medium-sized 5.3%; Large 8.0%. (Activity) Sports/Recreation 7.5%; Health/Social Services 4.7%; Development/Housing 10.3%; Religion 5.4%; Other 4.1%.

FIGURE 1

## Composition of sample of employers (weighted)

By region	%
Atlantic	9.0
Quebec	28.5
Ontario	28.5
Manitoba & Saskatchewan	11.0
Alberta	11.0
British Columbia	11.0
NWT/Nunavut/Yukon	1.0
Total	100.0
By area of activity	%
Sports & Recreation	13.0
Health & Social Services	24.5
Development & Housing	7.9
Religion	28.9
Other	25.7
Total	100.0
By organization size	%
Small (1-10 employees)	74.4
Medium (11-99 employees)	22.5
Large (100+ employees)	3.1
Total	100.0

## Survey of Employees

The target population for the Survey of Employees was all adults in Canada who are currently employed for pay by a non-profit organization, including full-time and part-time, permanent and temporary workers at all levels within an organization. Volunteers were not included in the survey.

The design for the Survey of Employees was complex because there was no readily available comprehensive list of employees from which to draw a sample. Employee respondents came from two distinct sources:

1. Employers who participated in the Survey of Employers, if they agreed, received an e-mail message to forward to their employees. This message contained a link for employees to connect to the online questionnaire with no further involvement of their employer. Communication with employees stated clearly that their employer would have no access to information about their participation in the survey or about responses they provided.<sup>1</sup>
2. Ipsos Reid screened its entire online survey panel of 200 000 to identify individuals who qualified for the Survey of Employees. All qualified panellists received an electronic link to the Survey of Employees.<sup>2</sup>

The total number of respondents to the survey of employees was 2 873 – 830 respondents referred by their employers and 2 043 from the Ipsos Reid online survey panel. Prior to analyzing the findings, a comparison of the distributions of referral and panel respondents verified that the subgroups were not disproportionately made up of respondents from one source or the other.

The employee survey data were weighted to ensure they reflected a representative sample of voluntary and non-profit organizations in Canada. The weights are proportionate to the distributions of employees in the sector in each region, organization size and activity category in the 2003 National Survey of Nonprofit and Voluntary Organizations<sup>3</sup> (Figure 2).

The employee survey sample size is large enough to provide reliable and valid findings. However, it is not possible to accurately calculate its margins of error because there is no source of information about the characteristics of the whole population of non-

- 1 The pretest showed limited success in securing employee participation by relaying information through employers. The referral process was improved after the pretest (by clarifying the instructions to employers and by providing them with a direct link to the survey that they could forward by e-mail to employees) and the Ipsos panel became the primary source.
- 2 It is important to note that employees in the Territories, new Canadians and members of ethnic minorities are underrepresented in the Ipsos online panel.
- 3 Specifically, the distributions are based on custom tabulations from Statistics Canada that match the scope of the HR Council Labour Force Study, the Survey of Employees and the Survey of Employers

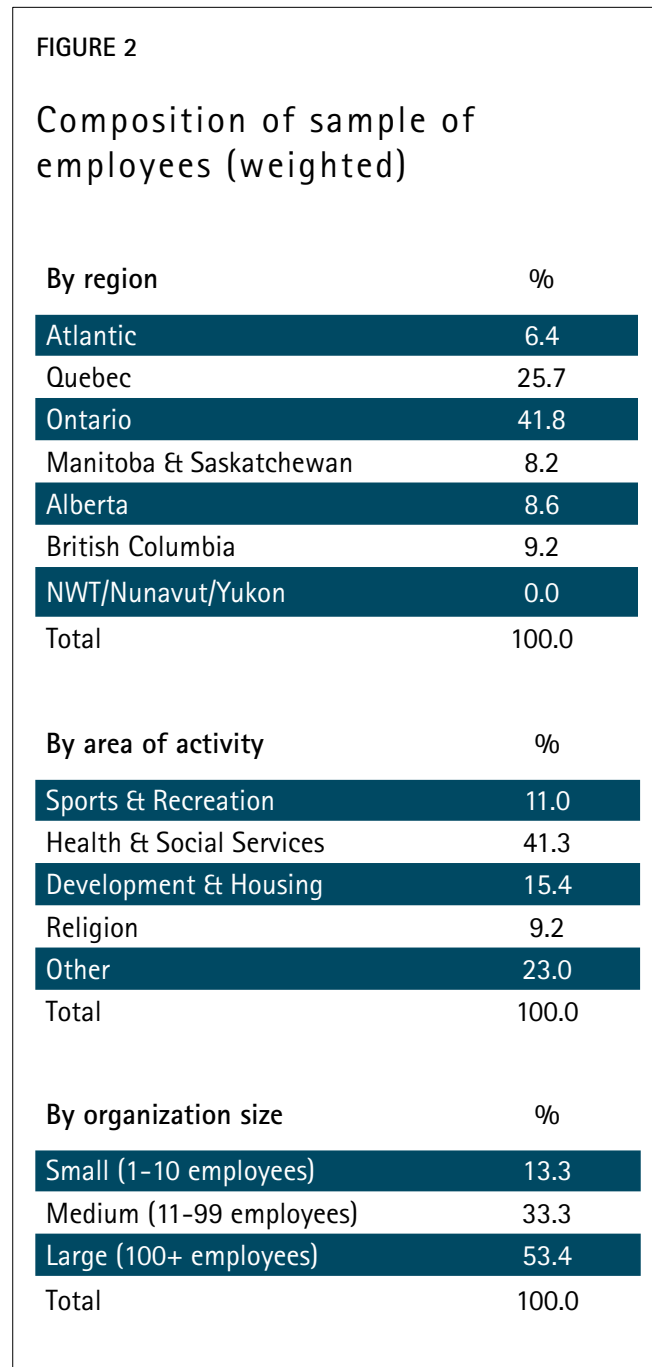
profit employees in Canada.<sup>1</sup> Apart from weighting by the same key factors that guided the weighting of the Survey of Employers, relevant parameters for matching the sample to the population of employees are unknown.

There is an important difference in sample composition between the Survey of Employers and the Survey of Employees (Figures 1 and 2) with respect to organizational size. In the Survey of Employers, respondents from small organizations far outnumber those from medium-sized and large organizations, whereas in the Survey of Employees it is the reverse (respondents from medium-sized and large organizations far outnumber those from small organizations). This means that while the results of the Survey of Employers reflect to a significant degree the realities of small organizations, the results of the Survey of Employees tend to reflect the workplace realities of large organizations. It is very important to know that this is *not* a bias but mirrors the fact that although small organizations dominate the non-profit landscape in Canada, large organizations employ over half of the sector's labour force.

## About the survey instruments

The survey instruments were online questionnaires for employers and employees plus an interview protocol for employers. They were designed so that answers were required to every question that applied to a respondent (some questions were asked only of respondents who gave a particular answer or answers to previous questions). “Don’t know” and “does not apply” options were included when they were needed to cover all possibilities. Otherwise, there are no “missing” data.

Several questions in both the Survey of Employers and the Survey of Employees asked for responses to a list of items. This is the case, for example, in the question asked of employers about reasons for difficulty recruiting and hiring new employees and in the question asked of employees about reasons



they are looking for a new job. To ensure that the order of possible responses in a list did not bias the findings, the list was presented in random order, whether the survey was completed online or by telephone.

1 The Canadian Policy Research Networks' 2002-2005 Research Series on Human Resources in the Non-profit Sector produced information about the characteristics of the sector's employees but it was based on Statistics Canada's 1999 Workplace and Employees Survey, which does not match the scope of the HR Council's Labour Force Study.

## Glossary

### Margin of Error

Expressed as a percentage, the margin of error estimates how close the results of a given survey are to the results that would have been obtained had everyone in the population taken the survey. The margin of error is a measure of confidence: the lower the margin of error, the more confident we can be in a survey's results. In survey work, the most commonly sought after margin of error is 5%. Not surprisingly, the margin of error depends a great deal on the size of the sample. It also depends on several other factors, including knowing as much as possible about the target population that the survey sample aims to represent.

### Mean

The mean is the arithmetic average of a set of numbers (calculated by summing the values and dividing by the number in the set).

### Median

The median is the midpoint of a distribution. Like the median dividing two highways, the statistical median splits a set of numbers so that exactly half the scores are above it and half the scores are below it. The median does not change in response to extreme scores. In contrast, the mean is affected by extremes on either side of the distribution (also called outliers). Scores that are far above or below the mean will pull the mean in that direction, and thereby present a biased picture.

### Population

Population refers to the specific group of people or organizations you are interested in surveying. That number could indeed be quite large (e.g., all voting-age citizens of Canada or all retail stores), but it could also be far more modest (e.g., the members of a given professional association, all graduates of a particular training program or daycare centres that provide infant care).

### Sample

If there are more people in the population than is feasible to survey, then a representative sample has to be drawn from that population. On the basis of the responses of the sample, providing it is a representative sample, you can draw reasonable inferences about how the population would have responded had everyone in it been surveyed.

### Statistical Significance

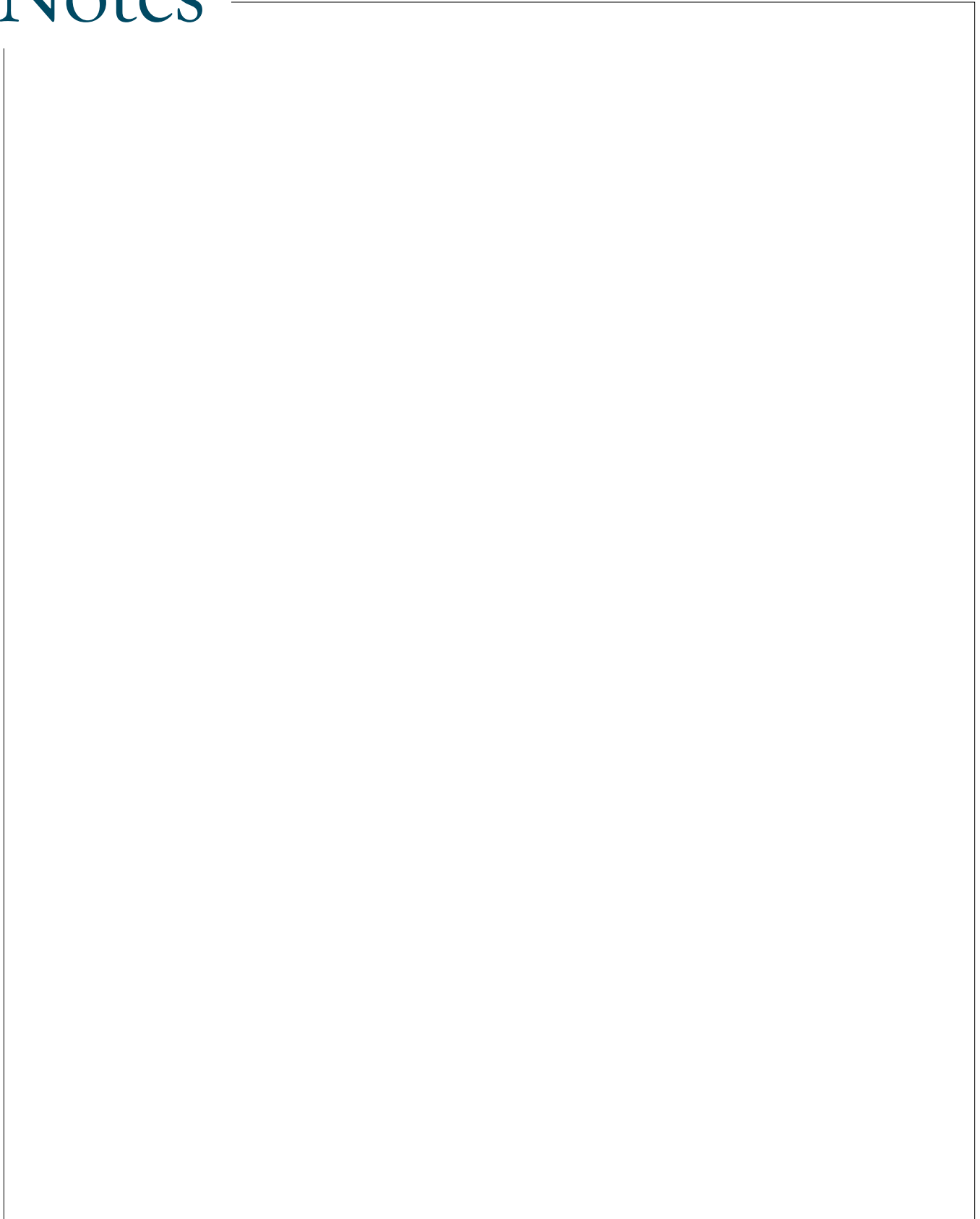
The starting assumption of all statistical tests is that any differences (e.g., between means) are due to chance. In other words, they indicate random errors in measurement or random fluctuation. Statistical tests calculate the probability that this is the case and results are deemed statistically significant when the probability is low that the observed difference is due to chance. The researcher chooses an appropriately low level of probability depending on how important it is to rule out differences due to chance. In social research, "low" often means a probability of no more than 1 in 20 (or 5%).

### Weighting

When key parameters (e.g., demographics) of the population are known and a sample turns out not to completely reflect these characteristics, it is possible to weigh each of the respondents in the sample by a factor that compensates for any over or under representation of one or more of these population parameters. Weighting has the effect of helping to bring a sample into better alignment with known population parameters, which enhances its representativeness.

# Notes

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## 3

## Findings from the Survey of Employers

Voluntary and non-profit sector organizations are a well established part of Canada's social and economic fabric. More than half of Canada's voluntary and non-profit organizations have existed for 28 years or more.

## About the sector's employers

## Many sector employers have a long history

More than half of Canada's voluntary and non-profit organizations have existed for 28 years or more while religious organizations report an average of 70 years in existence (Figure 3).

FIGURE 3  
Years in existence by area of activity

Area of activity	Mean <sup>1</sup>
Sports & Recreation	35.9
Health & Social Services	26.7
Development & Housing	26.1
Religion	70.9
Other	31.1

1. Mean number of years organizations have existed.

## Most organizations operate independently

Overall, about two-thirds of organizations operate completely independently, with no parent organization or sub-units (chapters, branches, districts, etc.). There are, however, some noteworthy differences between the areas of activity. More than 80% of organizations in Health/Social Services and Development/Housing operate independently.

In comparison, more organizations in Religion and Sports/Recreation are either parents or sub-units of other organizations. Compared to small voluntary and non-profit organizations, a higher percentage of medium-sized and large organizations are independent and more of them have sub-units.

### Half of the sector's large employers are unionized

There are clear differences in rates of unionization. While half of the sector's large employers are unionized, 19.4% of medium-sized organizations and only 8.8% of small organizations are unionized. Overall, 12.1% of organizations have one or more collective agreements.

Statistically significant differences were not found among regions<sup>1</sup> or areas of activity, although the percentages were higher than average both in Quebec (13.3%) and British Columbia (16.1%) and in both Health/Social Services (16.1%) and Development/Housing (16.7%).

### Responsibility for human resource management varies with organization size

In 60% of organizations, the responsibility for human resource management is typically one part of one person's job (such as the Executive Director, the CEO or other senior manager).

In most large organizations (61.5%) and some medium-sized organizations (16%), there is a dedicated staff person with sole responsibility for HR management.

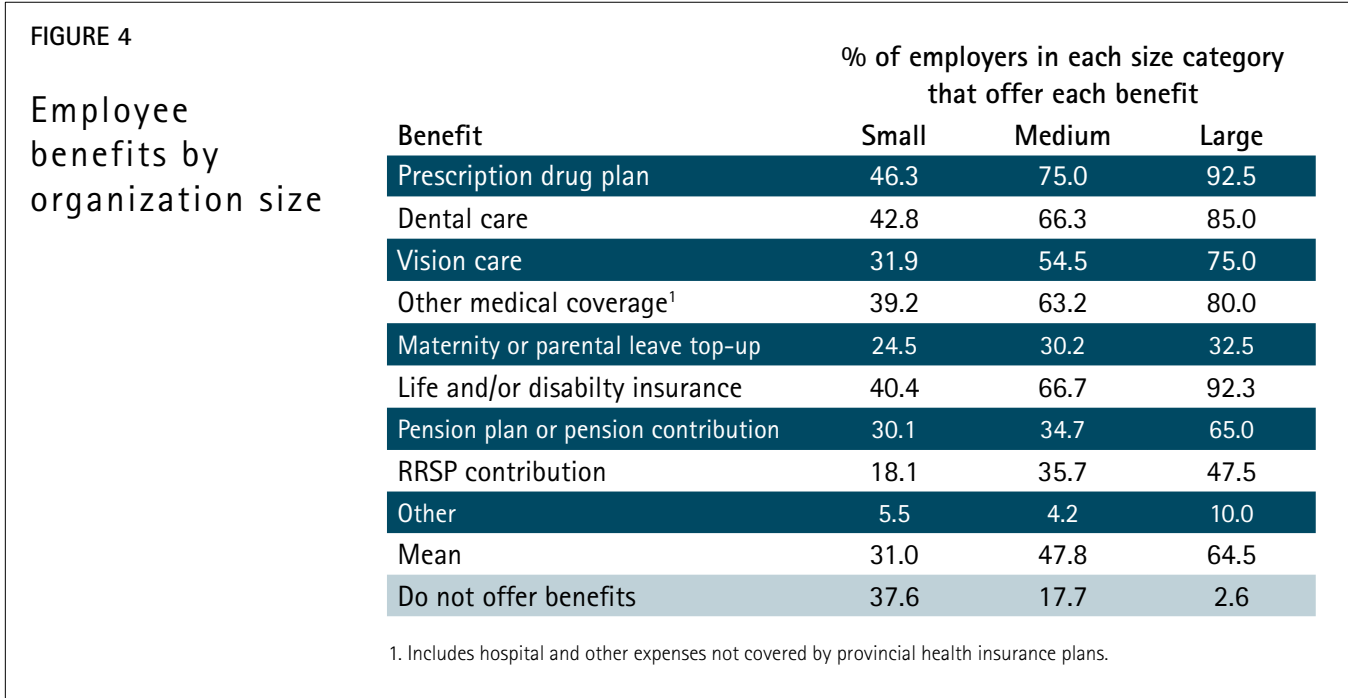
### Benefits are clearly connected to organization size

More than a third of small organizations (37.6%) do not offer any employee benefits while most large organizations do. In particular, life/disability insurance and drug plans are nearly universal in large organizations; these two benefits are provided by more than 92.0% of large organizations. Patterns did not emerge to show differences in the availability of benefits by region or area of activity.

Supplementary Employment Insurance (EI) benefits for maternity or parental leave are less common than most other benefits (see Figure 4). Also, the availability of supplementary EI benefits is consistently low regardless of organization size.



Does your organization provide any of the following employee benefits?



<sup>1</sup> The total number of employers from the Northwest Territories, the Yukon and Nunavut combined is 16. This number is too small to be analyzed meaningfully. Results from this region are for descriptive purposes only and should not be viewed as reliable findings – either on their own or in comparison with other regions.

## Employers describe their workforces

### Number of employees

Voluntary and non-profit organizations employ a median of five people (including all full-time and part-time employees). Figure 5 shows the mean and median number of employees by organization size.

FIGURE 5

#### Mean and median number of employees by organization size

	Mean	Median
Small (1-10 employees)	4.2	4
Medium (11-99 employees)	28.6	21
Large (100+ employees) <sup>1</sup>	280.7	166
Total	18.2	5

1. The largest number of employees reported by a single organization is 5 500, but as Figure 8 shows, the number of employees in most large organizations is closer to the lower end of the range.

Figures 6, 7 and 8 show how the total number of employees in small, medium-sized and large organizations skews toward the lower end of each range.

### Organizations rely on both full-time and part-time employees

9.2% of organizations have no full-time employees at all. In other words, close to 10% of organizations have only one or more part-time employee(s). Three-quarters of organizations have only full-time staff.

The median number of full-time employees is 3.0 (mean 10.2) and the median number of part-time employees is 2.0 (mean 9.8).<sup>1</sup> 85.7% of all employees are permanent<sup>2</sup> (14.3% are temporary). A higher percentage of part-time (22.9%) than full-time (12.3%) staff are employed on a temporary basis.

FIGURE 6

#### Number of employees in small organizations

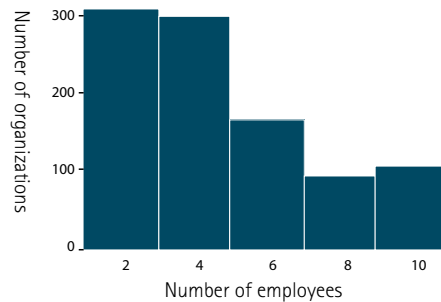


FIGURE 7

#### Number of employees in medium-sized organizations

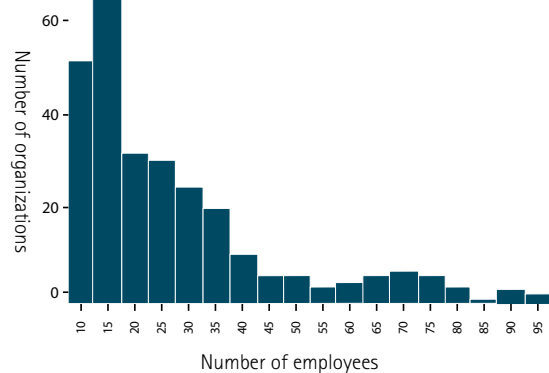
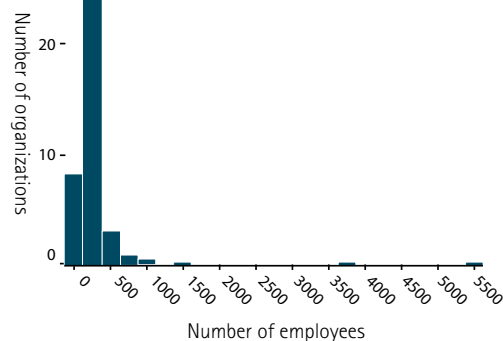


FIGURE 8

#### Number of employees in large organizations



1 The median is lower than the mean in both cases because of several large organizations with a very large number of employees.

2 Defined as having employment with no fixed end date.

## Recruitment and retention: easy or difficult?

When you compare the ease or difficulty of both recruitment and retention (Figure 9), although there is considerable difference among organizations, both recruitment and retention present some degree of challenge. However, many more organizations experience difficulty in recruitment than retention.

### Recruitment efforts by employers

65.3% of employers report recruitment activity in the past 12 months regardless of whether or not they actually hired any new employees.

Medium-sized (90%) and large (97.5%) organizations show the highest levels of recruitment activity when you look at the average percentages by region, area of activity and organization size (Figure 10).

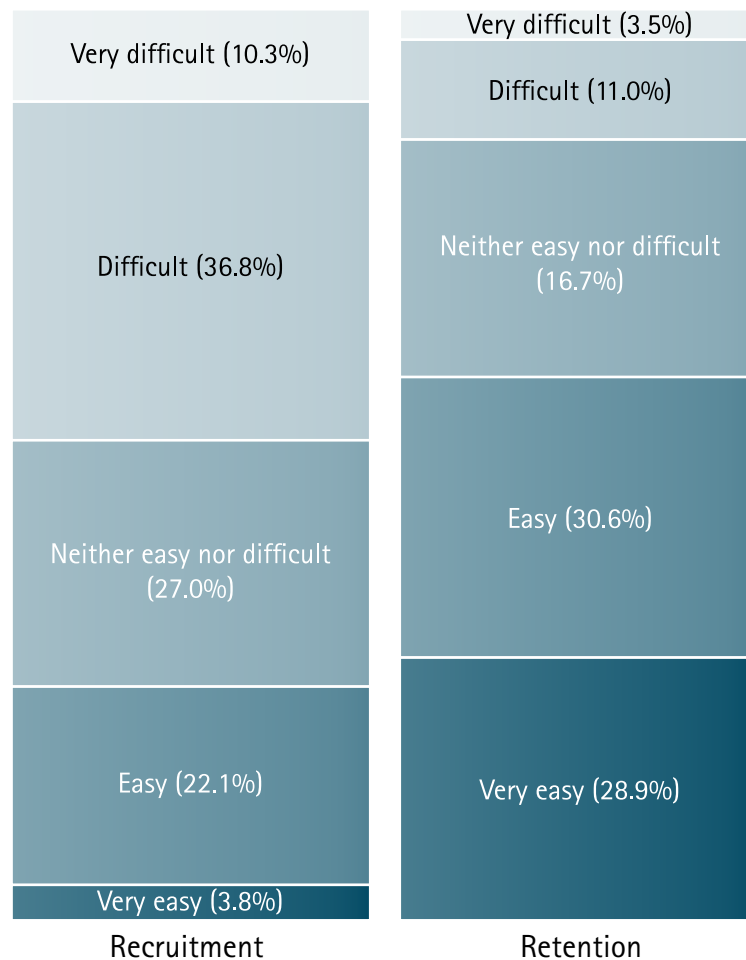
Nearly half (47.1%) of the employers that reported recruitment activity also said that it was either “difficult” or “very difficult” for their organization to find qualified people. A look at the average percentages by region, area of activity and organization size reveals above average recruitment challenges in Western Canada, particularly in Alberta as well as in the Health/Social Services sector and in medium-sized and large organizations, which do most of the recruiting (Figure 11).



Thinking about the past 12 months, to what extent has it been easy or difficult to recruit and retain qualified paid staff?

FIGURE 9

### Ease/difficulty of recruitment and retention



29% of organizations reported that they did not hire new staff in the last 12 months. Among the 921 organizations that did hire, the median number of hires was 3.0 (includes full- and part-time, temporary and permanent) It is important to note that a relatively small number of large organizations account for most of the hiring. (Figure 12).

About a quarter of organizations (23%) report difficulty in recruiting professionals (Figure 13).

## Reasons for recruitment difficulties

45% of employers or more identify the following as either “somewhat challenging” or “very challenging”:

- Few or no applicants to choose from (70%)
- Salary offered is too low (67%)
- Applicants lack relevant work experience (57%)
- Applicants lack skills required for the job (56%)
- Lack of money/funding for recruiting (54%)
- Competition from for-profit organizations and government agencies/departments (45%)

FIGURE 10

### Employers reporting recruitment activity in the past 12 months

By region	% <sup>1</sup>
Atlantic	53.0
Quebec	67.1
Ontario	65.4
Manitoba & Saskatchewan	62.9
Alberta	68.5
British Columbia	67.4
NWT/Nunavut/Yukon <sup>2</sup>	84.6
By area of activity	%
Sports & Recreation	69.2
Health & Social Services	77.0
Development & Housing	76.7
Religion	43.4
Other	73.2
By organization size	%
Small (1-10 employees)	56.4
Medium (11-99 employees)	90.0
Large (100+ employees)	97.5

1. % of employers reporting recruitment activity in the past 12 months.
2. Due to the small number of respondents, results from this region are for descriptive purposes only and should not be viewed as statistically reliable.

FIGURE 11

### Employers reporting difficulty recruiting qualified paid staff

By region	% <sup>1</sup>
Atlantic	35.0
Quebec	45.3
Ontario	38.5
Manitoba & Saskatchewan	52.8
Alberta	66.0
British Columbia	53.3
NWT/Nunavut/Yukon <sup>2</sup>	77.8
By area of activity	%
Sports & Recreation	38.3
Health & Social Services	54.8
Development & Housing	41.3
Religion	45.9
Other	46.1
By organization size	%
Small (1-10 employees)	42.7
Medium (11-99 employees)	54.1
Large (100+ employees)	60.5

1. % of employers reporting recruitment activity in the past 12 months who also reported that it was “difficult” or “very difficult” to find qualified people. N= 847.
2. Due to the small number of respondents, results from this region are for descriptive purposes only and should not be viewed as statistically reliable.

FIGURE 12

Total new hires by organization size

		Total hires	Total permanent new hires	Total temporary new hires	Total full-time new hires	Total part-time new hires
Small	Mean	2.7	1.1	1.6	1.2	1.6
	Median	2	1	1	1	1
Medium	Mean	9.3	4.1	5.1	4.3	5.0
	Median	5	2	2	2	2
Large	Mean	77.7	24.4	52.9	16.6	60.4
	Median	26	15	7	10	14
Total	Mean	7.9	3.0	4.8	2.8	5.1
	Median	3	1	1	1	1

Note: Small = 1-10 employees, Medium-sized = 11-99 employees, Large = 100+ employees

FIGURE 13

Recruiting for specific job categories

Job category	% of organizations that experienced difficulty recruiting in this category <sup>1</sup>	% of organizations that hired in this category <sup>2</sup>
Senior management	7.9	16.1
Mid-level managers and supervisors	11.1	18.8
Professionals	22.7	39.1
Paraprofessionals and technical staff	16.7	34.9
Clerical and administrative staff	13.7	38.4
None	18.8	-

1. Responses are from employers reporting recruitment activity in the past 12 months (N=964)  
 2. Responses are from employers reporting hiring in the past 12 months (N=921)

FIGURE 14

Response when unable to recruit qualified candidates

What organizations did when they could not find a qualified applicant	% of organizations <sup>1</sup>
Share the job responsibilities among existing employees	32.7
Hire a less qualified applicant	20.6
Not hire for the position	19.3
Engage volunteers to do the work	16.0
Transfer someone internally to the position	12.8
Contracted out the work	8.5
Other	2.8
Introduced technology to help get the work done	2.3
Nothing	0.0

N=964

1. Multiple responses were accepted so percentages do not add to 100.

## What organizations do when recruitment efforts do not result in hiring

When not able to recruit qualified candidates, one-third of employers distribute the responsibilities among a number of existing employees. Figure 14 describes what else employers did when they weren't able to find qualified applicants in the last 12 months.

## Retention and turnover

In contrast to the 47.1% of employers who found it difficult to recruit qualified paid staff over the last 12 months, well over half (59.5%) indicate that it was either “easy” (30.6%) or “very easy” (28.9%) to retain current employees. Only 14.5% found retention “difficult” or “very difficult.”

Almost half (49.2%) of all the organizations experienced one or more voluntary resignations (that is, employees left by choice) in the last 12 months. The overall average number of voluntary resignations among all surveyed organizations in the past 12 months was 2.2. Voluntary resignation is highest among professionals (36.3%), followed closely by clerical and administrative staff (32.2%) and other support staff (30.5%) (Figure 15).

The average turnover rate was 17.1%, however, turnover rate estimates varied widely by region, area of activity and organization size (Figure 16).

## Making workplaces more attractive

The survey provided a list of actions organizations might have taken in the past 12 months to make their workplaces more attractive. To be sure the order of items on the list did not influence respondents' choices, the list was in random order in both interviews and online versions. The highest-ranking response (28.8%) was that organizations did not do anything (Figure 17), followed by “increased salaries throughout the organization” (16.5%).

**FIGURE 15**  
Voluntary resignations by job category<sup>1</sup>

Job category	% <sup>2</sup>
Senior management	18.6
Mid-level managers & supervisors	20.1
Professionals	36.3
Paraprofessionals & technical staff	28.6
Clerical & administrative staff	32.2
Other support staff	30.5

1. Employees left by choice.

2. % of organizations reporting one or more resignations in the past 12 months.

**FIGURE 16**  
Estimated employee turnover rate<sup>1</sup>

By region	%
Atlantic	17.8
Quebec	17
Ontario	14.5
Manitoba & Saskatchewan	19.9
Alberta	21.1
British Columbia	16.4
NWT/Nunavut/Yukon <sup>2</sup>	25.2

By area of activity	%
Sports & Recreation	24.9
Health & Social Services	18.9
Development & Housing	15.8
Religion	11.1
Other	18.8

By organization size	%
Small (1-10 employees)	18.3
Medium (11-99 employees)	14.1
Large (100+ employees)	11.1

1. To estimate the per organization turnover rate, the number of voluntary resignations reported by each organization was divided by the total number of employees (full-time employees plus part-time employees). This is a conservative estimate of total turnover because the number does not take into account dismissals (which were not reported). In addition, it is not possible to be exact about whether the resignations were among part-time, full-time or both types of employees.

2. Due to the small number of respondents, results from this region are for descriptive purposes only and should not be viewed as statistically reliable.

FIGURE 17

### Actions taken to make workplaces more attractive<sup>1</sup>

Actions	% of employers taking this action <sup>2</sup>
Did not do anything to make the workplace more attractive	28.8
Increased salaries throughout the organization	16.5
Introduced or increased flexibility in work schedules	11.0
Improved physical environment and/or working conditions	10.5
Introduced or improved non-wage benefits (health benefits etc.)	10.1
Introduced or increased regular salary increments	7.1
Introduced or improved training opportunities for employees	5.0
Introduced or improved employee rewards and recognition	4.7
Modified job descriptions, duties or responsibilities	4.6
Introduced or improved efforts to make workplace more fun	4.3
Implemented ways to improve communication	4.0
Invested in work tools or technology	3.0

N = 1300

1. This figure includes items listed in the survey that were selected by at least 2.0% of respondents. Fewer than 2.0% of respondents reported that their organizations had taken each of the following actions: Changes in sick leave and vacation; Introduction/encouragement of team/social environment; Changed hiring processes; Enriched offer(s) to individual applicant or employee; Introduced or improved career advancement opportunities; Introduced or improved opportunities for employees to work from home or off-site; Introduced or improved orientation for new employees; Introduced or improved efforts to help employees feel they make a difference in the community or lives of others; Introduced or improved opportunities for employees to connect with the community. No organizations reported that they "Introduced strategies to recruit and retain immigrant and refugee employees." 11.3% responded "Don't Know" and 9.4% responded with "Other".

2. Multiple responses were accepted, so percentages do not add to 100.0%.

### Anticipating the future

Although the majority of employers (58.5%) anticipate that the number of paid employees in their organization will stay about the same over the next two years, over a third (36.6%) believe the number will increase. Only 2.1% of employers anticipate a decrease.<sup>1</sup>

Broken down by organization size (Figure 18), it is clear that large organizations are most likely to hire in all job categories.

### The need for people and the need for skills

91.7% of employers indicate that overall, the skills of their current employees "mostly" (54.4%) or "fully" (37.3%) meet their organization's needs.

When asked about the extent to which employees' generic skills meet organization needs, employers gave a high rating for literacy and numeracy, as well as the ability to work in teams and communication. However, approximately one in four employers (24.4%) state that their current employees' level of computer skills only "partly" meets the organization's needs or "not at all." Almost one in five (18.3%) employers indicate that their employees' time management capabilities only "partly" meet organizational needs or "not at all."

Employers identify several areas in which the specialized skills of their employees mostly or fully meet their organization's needs. These areas include: client service, working with a diverse population, management of paid staff, working in partnerships with other organizations, leadership, procurement and purchasing and management of volunteers.

Employers also identify areas in which employees' specialized skills meet their needs only "partly" or "not at all". These areas are shown in Figure 19.

1 2.9% indicated that they did not know.

FIGURE 18

Likelihood of hiring in the next two years by job category

Job category	% of organizations likely to hire in this job category in the next two years			
	Overall	Small	Medium	Large
Senior management	14.5	11.6	19.8	45.5
Mid-level managers and supervisors	20.9	14.4	36.1	67.5
Professionals	35.4	28.3	53.9	71.2
Paraprofessionals and technical staff	29.0	22.7	44.6	66.4
Clerical and administrative staff	36.0	32.6	44.0	59.3
Other support staff	28.3	22.5	44.1	52.7
Other	1.7	1.9	1.2	0.9

FIGURE 19

Employers identify skills that fall short of organization needs

Skill area	% <sup>1</sup>
Legal knowledge	62.5
Marketing	48.8
Campaigning	48.2
Research	44.7
Fundraising/resource development	42.1
Proposal writing	34.3
Strategic planning	32.7
Monitoring and evaluation	30.7
Understanding of technology	28.8
Finance	24.9
Contract management	23.2
HR/personnel management	22.6
Project management	21.3

1. % of employers indicating employee skills meet organization needs "Partly" or "Not at All".

### Important skills in the next couple of years

A third of employers believe that two years from now the skills their organization needs will either be "somewhat different" (27.1%) or "substantially different" (6.2%) from today.

When employers reviewed a wide range of general skills, there was little consensus about whether their organization would need these skills over the next two years. Management skills as well as specialized skills were the most important.

Over 10% of employers identify skills in the following areas as important for their organizations in the next two years: communication (22%), computer literacy/IT (17%), fundraising/resource development (15%) and marketing (11%).



To what extent do your employees' skills meet your organizations needs?

## How employers build the skills of their employees

Just over three-quarters of organizations (76.3%) pay for staff development or skills training and a slightly lower percentage (62.4%) provide paid time off for development activities (Figure 20). A smaller percentage of employers (42.4%) report staff development through mentoring or job shadowing and 19.6% provide career counselling or self-assessment tools.

71.6% of employers have a budget for staff training and development (Figure 21). There is a noticeable difference between the likelihood of a training and development budget in small, medium-sized and large organizations. Fewer organizations in the Atlantic region have staff training budgets (the same can be said to some extent for organizations in British Columbia). Employers from the Sports/Recreation and Religion sectors are less likely to have a budget for staff training and development.

45.1% of all employers evaluate the impact of staff training and development programs, though it is not known exactly what impacts they evaluate (for example, morale, effectiveness of the training, improvement in services) or how they evaluate.

FIGURE 21

### Do organizations have a budget for staff training & development?<sup>1</sup>

By region	% of organizations <sup>2</sup>
Atlantic	55.2
Quebec	74.2
Ontario	75.4
Manitoba & Saskatchewan	73.8
Alberta	72.9
British Columbia	65.2
NWT/Nunavut/Yukon <sup>3</sup>	69.2
By area of activity	%
Sports & Recreation	68.1
Health & Social Services	80.3
Development & Housing	85.3
Religion	64.2
Other	69.0
By organization size	%
Small (1-10 employees)	65.5
Medium (11-99 employees)	88.6
Large (100+ employees)	95.0

1. Employers were not asked how much money was budgeted for staff training and development.  
 2. % of organizations with a budget for training and development.  
 3. Due to the small number of respondents, results from this region are for descriptive purposes only and should not be viewed as statistically reliable.

FIGURE 20

### Staff development activities

Activity	% of organizations <sup>1</sup>
Paid some or all of the expenses for staff development or skills training, such as taking a specific course, workshop, or attending a relevant conference	76.3
Provided paid time off for employees to participate in learning and development activities, such as taking a specific course, workshop, or attending a relevant conference	62.4
Provided in-house training programs or courses	46.5
Provided staff training and development through mentoring, job shadowing, etc.	42.4
Provided career counselling or self-assessment tools to help employees better understand their skills levels and needs	19.6
None of the above	12.1

1. % of employers reporting this activity in the past 12 months.

## Meeting organizations' objectives

Almost half (47.9%) of employers either “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” with the statement “My organization has difficulty meeting its objectives because it does not have enough employees” (Figure 22).

Almost one in five (18.4%) employers indicate that they either “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” with the statement “My organization has difficulty meeting its objectives because its employees do not have sufficient skills” (Figure 23).



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

My organization has difficulty meeting its objectives because we do not have enough employees.

My organization has difficulty meeting its objectives because our employees do not have sufficient skills.

FIGURE 22

Meeting organizations' objectives:  
Is a lack of employees a barrier?

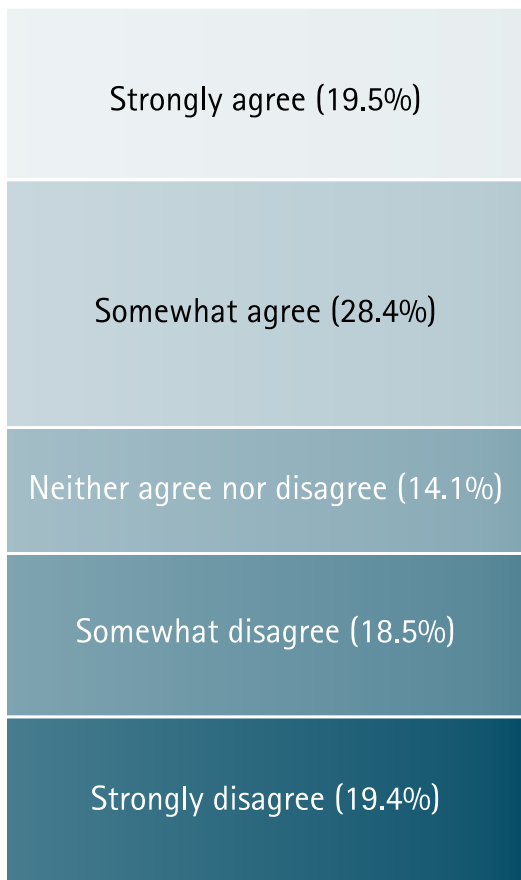
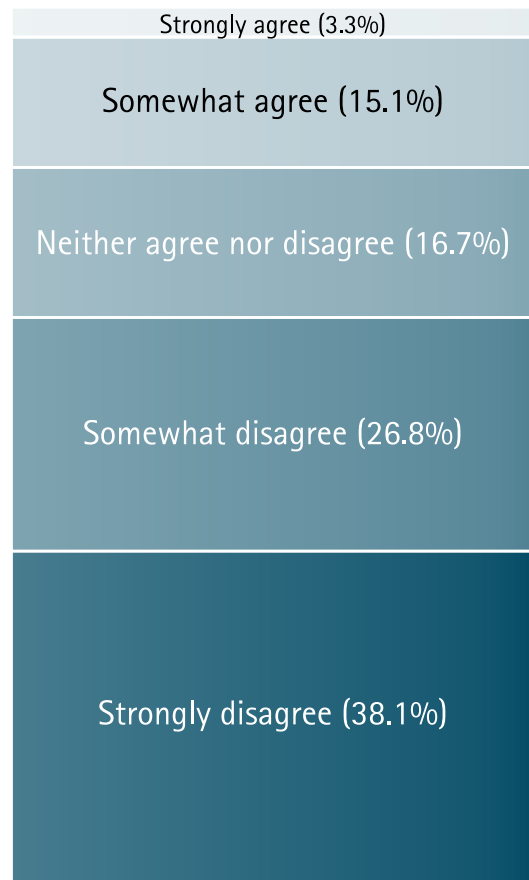


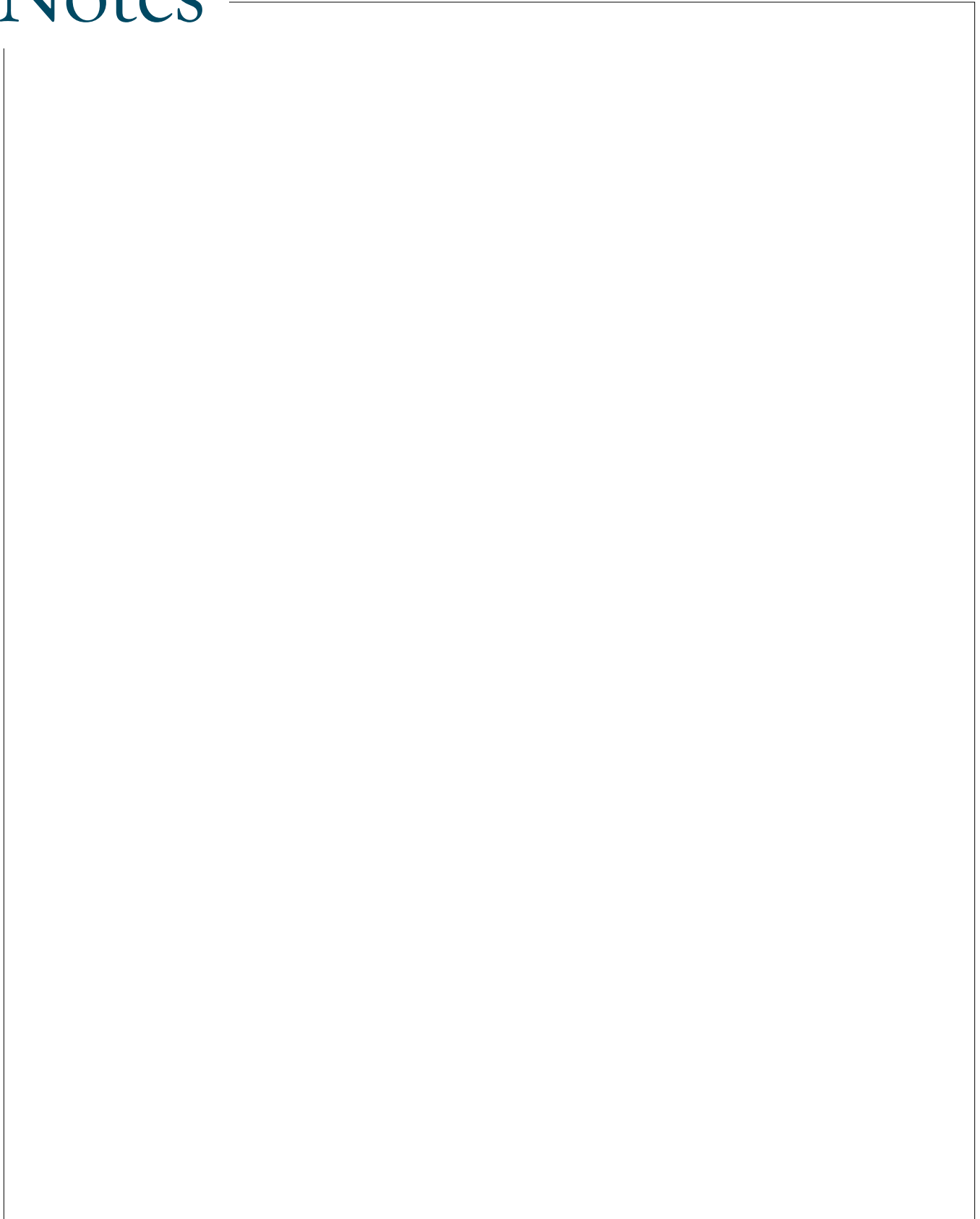
FIGURE 23

Meeting organizations' objectives:  
Is a lack of skills a barrier?



# Notes

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## 4

## Findings from the Survey of Employees

Employee ratings of overall job satisfaction are very positive, but some specific aspects of their jobs are less satisfying.

## Employee demographics

More than three-quarters (76.4%) of employees in the voluntary and non-profit sector are female, 23.6% are male. Employees range in age from 19 to 76, with the mean age being 43.4. Males on average are older than females (46.9 compared to 42.3 years old). Nearly all employees have completed high school and over 70% of employees have post-secondary education (Figure 24).

FIGURE 24  
Employee education levels

	% of employees
Grade school or some high school	1.2
High school	8.5
Some community college or university, did not finish	18.8
Technical or trade school or community college diploma	26.3
Undergraduate degree	31.1
Post-graduate degree (master's or doctorate)	14.1

The vast majority of employees are Canadian citizens born in Canada (88.9%) while 8.6% were born in a country outside of Canada and now hold Canadian citizenship. Only 1.8% of respondents are landed immigrants/permanent residents.<sup>1</sup>

1 New Canadians are underrepresented in the Ipsos online panel.

**FIGURE 25**  
Employee group identification<sup>1</sup>

	% of employees <sup>2</sup>
White/caucasian	89.0
Member of a visible minority	17.6
Member of an ethnic minority	9.7
Prefer not to say	9.4
Aboriginal	5.4
Other	– <sup>3</sup>

1. New Canadians and members of ethnic minorities are underrepresented in the Ipsos online panel.

2. Percentages do not add to 100.0% as not all categories were mutually exclusive (e.g., White and ethnic minority).

3. The respondents who identified themselves as "other" included: Metis (5.4%), Quebecois (1.1%), Greek (.6%) and Asian (.5%).

89.0% of employees identify themselves as white/Caucasian (Figure 25).

About one in eight employees (12.7%) has a chronic illness, long-term health problem or disability that limits their ability to work or affects the kind of work they can do.

Nearly one-third (31.4%) of all employees have dependent children age 17 or younger and about 6% care for a family member who is elderly and/or disabled or has a chronic illness.

## Routes to current jobs

Before working for their current organization, employees worked in a wide range of settings including 47.9% who previously worked for private, for profit companies (Figure 26).

### Work experience in their current organization

41.1% of employees have had more than one paid position within their current organization.

More than half (53.5%) have been with their current employer over five years and almost a third (29.6%) ten or more years (Figure 27).

About a third (37.9%) of employees have been in their current position for five years or more and 16.7% ten or more years (Figure 28).

**FIGURE 26**  
Previous work setting

	% of employees <sup>1</sup>
Private, for-profit company	47.9
Non-profit organization	36.4
Government	16.6
Self-employed	12.3
Hospital/nursing home/hospice	10.6
University or college	8.5
Public school board	5.6
Business/professional association	4.9
Not employed	3.9
Other	– <sup>2</sup>

1. Multiple responses were accepted, so percentages do not add up to 100.0%.

2. Includes: cooperative (1.3%), trade union (.9%) and none (.1%)

**FIGURE 27**  
Length of time employed by current organization

	% of employees
6 months or less	9.6
7-12 months	6.1
1-2 years	13.9
3-4 years	16.9
5-9 years	23.9
10-19 years	21.5
20+ years	8.1

**FIGURE 28**  
Length of time in current position

	% of employees
6 months or less	11.3
7-12 months	9.6
1-2 years	19.9
3-4 years	21.4
5-9 years	21.2
10-19 years	13.2
20+ years	3.5

FIGURE 29

How employees learned about current position<sup>1</sup>

	% of employees <sup>2</sup>
From people in the organization	35.1
From friends, family, neighbours or work colleagues	20.9
Notice in newspaper or journal	14.6
Internal posting on current organization's website	13.7
Internet job sites	9.9

1. Fewer than 10% identified the following: did not have to apply for position (5.1%), postings in network or coalition websites and newsletters (4.2%), professional recruiter (3.4%), employer contacted me (2.3%), dropped off resume / approached employer (2.1%), ad in current organization's newsletters (2.1%) and job/career fair (1.3%).

2. Multiple responses were accepted, so percentages do not add up to 100.0%.

## How employees learned there was a job opening

Word-of-mouth is the most common way that people learn about employment opportunities in the voluntary and non-profit sector. Over half of all employees heard about their current position this way (Figure 29).

## Why did employees take their current job?

Employees accepted their current job for many reasons as listed in Figure 30.



What were the top three reasons for taking your current job?

FIGURE 30

Reasons for accepting current job

	% of employees <sup>1</sup>
Type of work	12.6
Adheres to personal beliefs/values	10.6
Flexibility, better or full time hours	9.6
Salary	9.9
Enjoyable work	7.2
Fit with skillset/training	7.2
Availability	6.3
Good work location	6.3
Good work environment	4.9
No reason	4.7
Desire for a challenge	4.1
Opportunity for career advancement	3.0
Promotion	2.9
Career change / left previous job	2.8
Ability to make a difference	2.8
Work experience / skill development	1.9
Job security	1.8
Benefits	0.6
Other	0.1

1. Multiple responses were accepted so percentages do not add up to 100.0%.

## Employees' current situations

### Occupation categories

The largest single job category in the sector is clerical, administrative and support staff followed by mid-level managers or supervisors (Figure 31).

### Part-time and full-time positions

80.8% of employees hold full-time<sup>1</sup> positions and 19.2% hold part-time positions. Overall, 85.7% of employees are in permanent<sup>2</sup> positions and 14.3% in temporary positions (Figure 32).

### Multiple jobs

More than 1 in 5 full-time employees (22.6%) report that they hold more than one paid job (including self-employment). Not surprisingly, among part-time employees the percentage is considerably higher: 46.9% of part-time employees hold more than one job.

### Hours worked

On average, full-time employees work 39.7 hours a week and part-time employees work an average of 15.6 hours a week (Figure 33).

FIGURE 31

#### Employee job categories

Job category	N	% of employees
Senior management	180	12.0
Mid-level manager or supervisor	300	20.0
Accredited or certified professional	229	15.3
Other profession requiring a university degree	218	14.5
Technical staff and paraprofessionals	175	11.6
Clerical, administrative or support staff	376	25.0
Other	22	1.6
Total	1 500	100

FIGURE 32

#### Full-time versus part-time and permanent versus temporary

Status	Permanent <sup>2</sup>		Temporary		Total	
Full-time <sup>1</sup>	1063	70.9%	149	9.9%	1212	80.8%
Part-time	222	14.8%	66	4.4%	288	19.2%
Total	1285	85.7%	215	14.3%	1500	100%

1. The definition of "full-time" is working 30 hours or more per week, either on-site or off-site.

2. The definition of "permanent" is that there is no set end date to the employment.

FIGURE 33

#### Hours worked by full- and part-time employees<sup>1</sup>

Status	Mean number of hours worked	N	Minimum	Maximum	Median
Full-time	39.7	1204	30	70	40
Part-time	15.6	288	1	29	15

1. Employees were asked to report hours worked in their "current position" to which they referred to for their responses to the survey, not including hours worked at a second job.

1 The definition of "full-time" is working 30 hours or more per week, either on-site or off-site.

2 The definition of "permanent" is that there is no set end date to the employment.

## Compensation and benefits

Figure 34 shows the distribution of full-time employees across salary ranges.<sup>1</sup> Across all job categories, fully 80% of employees reported salaries under \$60,000.

Almost a quarter of all employees (23.2%) do not receive any employee benefits (Figure 35). Of those who receive benefits, the three most common are: drug plan (66.8%), life and/or disability insurance (63.8%) and dental care (61.4%).

Of the forms of compensation for overtime that the survey listed, equivalent time off is the most common form of compensation (Figure 36).

## Unions and collective agreements

20.9% of employees are members of a union or covered by a collective agreement. Compared to other areas of activity, Health and Social Services has the highest percentage of unionized employees (26.8%).



Which of the following categories best describes your total annual income?

FIGURE 34

### Salaries of full-time employees

Job category	% of employees						N
	Under \$19,999	\$20,000 to \$39,999	\$40,000 to \$59,999	\$60,000 to \$79,999	\$80,000 to \$99,999	\$100,000 or more	
Senior management	3.6	17.4	32.9	25.1	13.2	7.8	167
Mid-level manager or supervisor	3.6	33.6	37.5	17.0	6.1	2.2	277
Professional with accreditation from a professional body	3.4	24.2	40.4	18.5	10.7	2.8	178
Other professional occupation requiring university degree	2.1	46.0	34.4	12.7	3.2	1.6	189
Technical staff and paraprofessionals	8.7	62.7	26.2	2.4	-	-	126
Clerical, administrative and support staff	10.0	64.8	24.1	1.1	-	-	261
N across all categories	63	500	392	152	64	27	1198
Overall %	5.3	41.7	32.7	12.7	5.3	2.3	-

1 The distribution of part-time employees by salary range is not presented because variation in the number of hours they reported working makes the findings difficult to interpret.

FIGURE 35

### Employee benefits<sup>1</sup>

Benefit	% of employees covered
Prescription drug plan	66.8
Life and/or disability insurance	63.8
Dental care plan	61.4
Other medical coverage <sup>2</sup>	52.2
Vision care plan	50.5
Pension plan or pension contribution	45.3 <sup>3</sup>
Family and/or parental leave	39.1
Maternity/parental leave top-up	32.6
RRSP contribution	29.6
None	23.2
Other	– <sup>4</sup>

1. The questionnaire provided a list of the benefits shown in this figure.  
 2. Benefit that covers medical expenses not covered by provincial/territorial health plans.  
 3. The percentage of employees receiving both pension plan contributions and RSP contributions may be slightly overstated. 223 employees (14.9%) reported that they receive both types of benefits. It is possible that some of these 223 respondents may have blurred the distinction between the two benefits which created a double counting.  
 4. Other benefits mentioned include: Employee Assistance Program (.6%), Tuition/Education fund (.4%), Bonuses/ Cash in lieu (.2%).

FIGURE 36

### Compensation for overtime

Type of compensation	% of employees <sup>1</sup>
Equivalent time off	42.0
No financial compensation	19.3
I do not work overtime	15.3
More than equivalent time off	9.6
Pay at premium rate	8.2
Pay at regular rate	7.4
Combination of pay and time off	5.7

1. Multiple responses were accepted so percentages do not add up to 100.0%.

### Flexible work and work-life balance

Employees were asked to agree or disagree with three negative and five positive randomly presented statements about their work-life balance (Figure 37).



To what extent do you agree or disagree about each of the following statements on your work-life balance?

FIGURE 37

### Work-life balance

Positive statements	% of employees who agree "Somewhat" or "Strongly"
I can work from home when and if I want to.	57.5
My work day has flexible arrival and departure times.	30.7
I can take my vacations days pretty much when I want to.	18.8
I can interrupt my work day for personal reasons and then return.	17.8
The number of working hours is manageable.	9.0

Negative statements	% of employees who agree "Somewhat" or "Strongly"
My work schedule is subject to last minute changes.	47.2
My job leaves me with little time to get other things done.	46.3
I often end up working more hours than planned.	29.5

## Opportunities for learning and development

### Performance evaluation

Almost two-thirds (65.9%) of employees indicate having a performance evaluation process with written reports and formal discussion with a supervisor. In small organizations, only slightly more than a third of employees (36.5%) have formal job evaluations while 57.9% of employees in medium-sized organizations and 78.2% of employees in large organizations do.

### Participation in professional development

Just over half (50.7%) of employees have access to in-house training programs or courses (Figure 38) and almost as many (45.3%) receive paid time off to pursue learning opportunities. Almost a quarter of employees (24%) report they had no professional development opportunities in the past 12 months.

Workshops, seminars and conferences are clearly the favourite types of professional training (Figure 39). Online training ranks much further down the list at 19.8%.

The 348 employees who did not participate in professional or skills training in the past 12 months did not do so for several reasons. Over a third (39.2%) indicate that their organization does not provide any incentives for educational/training activities while a third (33.3%) state no need for further training at this time and about a quarter (24%) feel that it is too expensive. Some employees also indicate a lack of time (18.1%).



What are the top three types of professional training that you prefer?

FIGURE 39

### Preferences for types of training

	% of employees <sup>1</sup>
Workshops, seminars or conferences	73.6
Professional association courses	44.2
University or college courses	38.1
Courses provided by organization	36.6
Informal mentoring or coaching	22.3
Online training	19.8
Formal mentoring or coaching	14.6
Job shadowing	11.0
Internships	8.9

1. Multiple responses were accepted so percentages do not add up to 100.0%.

FIGURE 38

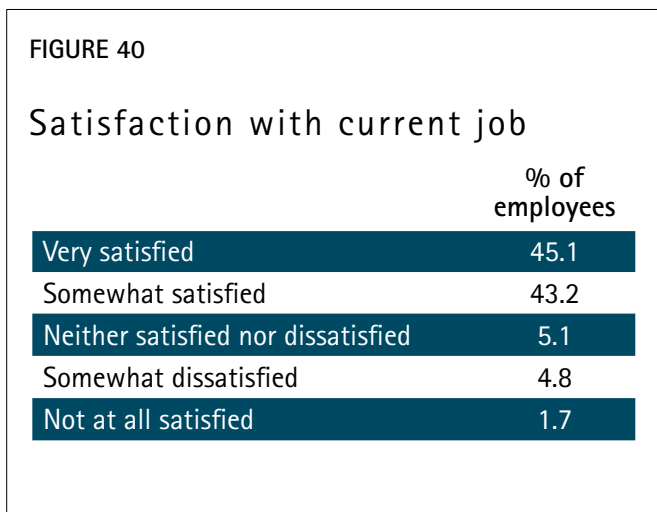
### Professional development opportunities

Type of professional development opportunity provided in the past 12 months	% of employees <sup>1</sup>
Paid time off for learning opportunities or skills training	45.3
Payment of some/all fees for tuition & career development	32.7
In-house training program or course	50.7
In-house career counselling or self-assessment tools	12.1
In-house mentoring or job shadowing	0.3
Unpaid time off for self-study	0.3
Other	2.1
None	24.0

1. Multiple responses were accepted so percentages do not add up to 100.0%.

## Satisfaction at work

Employees’ ratings of job satisfaction are very positive as shown in Figure 40.



Employees identify some areas of dissatisfaction – specifically around compensation (for overtime, retirement savings options, pay and benefits) as well as opportunities for advancement and career development and training (Figure 41).

Satisfaction ratings were significantly higher among employees of large organizations in two areas: benefits plan and retirement savings options. Conversely, ratings were somewhat higher among employees of small organizations in recognition for work and influence on decision making.<sup>1</sup>

Figure 42 provides a detailed percentage breakdown of satisfaction ratings for each job aspect. Ratings of 4 or 5 (“somewhat” or “very satisfied”) appear on the left. Ratings of 3 (“neither satisfied nor dissatisfied”) are in the middle and “dissatisfied” ratings of 1 or 2 (“somewhat” or “very dissatisfied”) are on the right.

### Employees' commitment and loyalty

95.7% of employees feel either “somewhat” (30.8%) or “very committed” (64.9%) to their organization. Similarly, when asked about the value they place on working for a cause, employees report a high degree

of attachment to their cause which also translates to organizational commitment, as shown in Figure 43.

There is a very strong connection between employees’ organizational loyalty and their personal commitment to the cause. 92.7% of those employees who agree “somewhat” or “strongly” with the statement “I am loyal to this organization” also agree “somewhat” or “strongly” with the statement “I am strongly committed to the cause(s) my current organization supports”.



<sup>1</sup> Mean satisfaction ratings among employees in large, medium-sized and small organizations, respectively, were: 3.8, 3.3 and 3.1 for benefits and 3.7, 2.9 and 2.7 for retirement savings options. In the areas of recognition for work, means were 3.8, 3.9 and 4.1 for large, medium-sized and small organizations, respectively; and for influence on decision making the means were 3.7, 3.9 and 4.1.

FIGURE 42

### Employee satisfaction with aspects of job

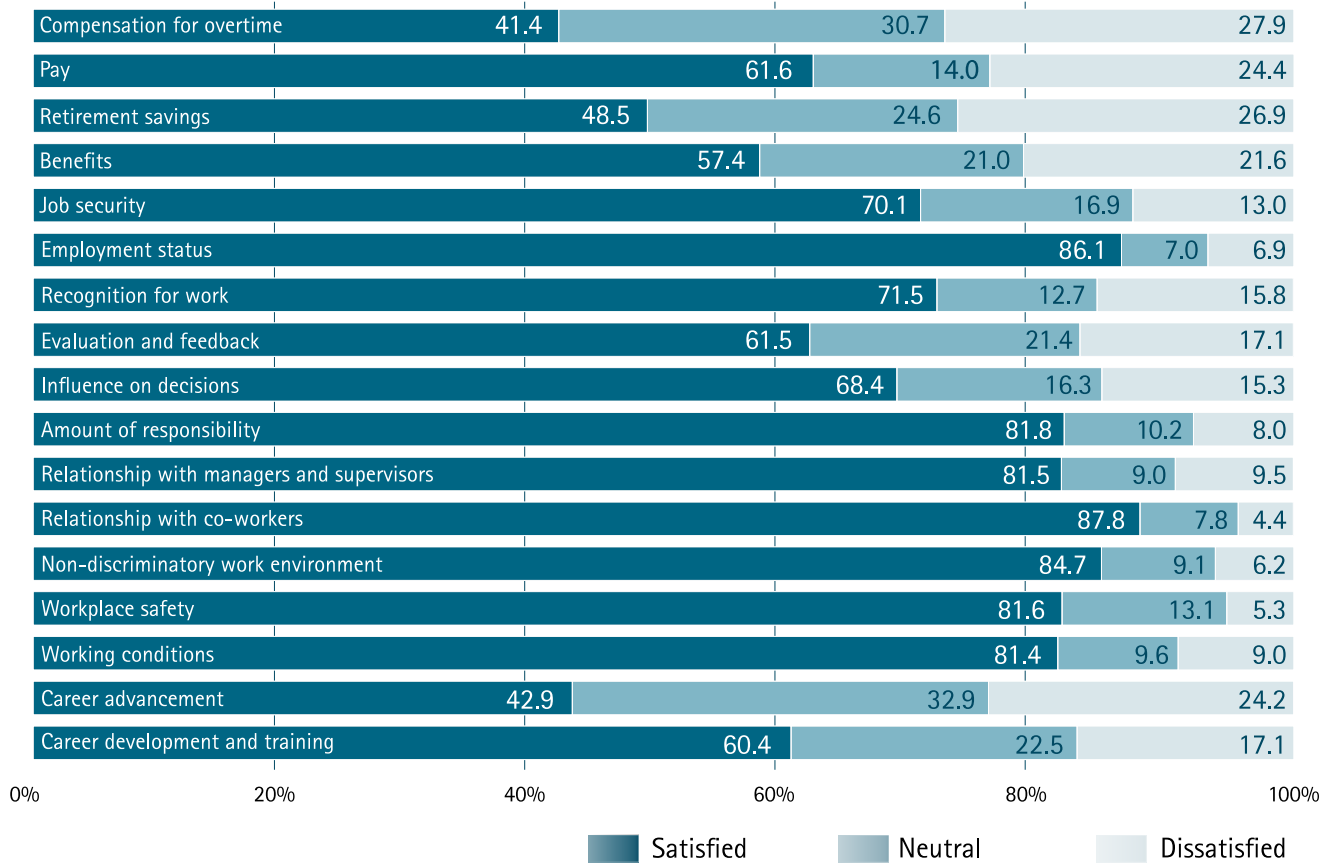


FIGURE 43

### Commitment to work and the cause

#### Statements about commitment

% of employees who agree<sup>1</sup>

I am strongly committed to the cause(s) my current organization support(s).	85.4
I could work for any organization as long as it supports a cause I believe in.	70.2
I am strongly committed to working for an organization in the voluntary and non-profit sector.	63.8
I continue to work at this organization because I do not have any better alternatives.	25.9

1. % of employees who agree "somewhat" or "strongly".

## Skills

The survey asked employees to indicate whether, overall, they believe their skills meet their organization's needs. Then it asked employees about particular skills in areas that are generally required of all employees: literacy, numeracy, computer, teamwork and collaboration, communication and time management. The final set of questions about skills focused on the requirements for employees' current jobs. Employees identified from a list the specific skills they actually use in their job and then, for the skills they selected, they indicated how fully they believe their skills meet their job requirements.

The vast majority of employees (96.2%) indicate they believe that, overall, their skills meet their organization's needs either "fully" (57.8%) or "mostly" (38.5%). No significant relationships emerged between employees' overall skills ratings and organization size or region. It is interesting to note, however, that clerical/administrative support staff tend to rate their skills somewhat lower than other employees.

Employees believe their generic skills meet their job requirement with very high ratings in all but computer skills and numeracy (Figure 44).

Figure 45 summarizes the specific skills that employees identify as a requirement for their current job and Figure 46 shows employees' assessments of how fully these specific skills meet their job requirements.<sup>1</sup> Generally, skills that are required more often are rated more favourably. Skills gaps are indicated where skills often used are rated less favourably. For example, Figure 45 shows that 44% of employees use strategic planning skills and Figure 46 shows that nearly 1 in 5 of these employees believe their current skills meet their job requirements "only partly" or "not at all". By contrast, more than 7 in 10 employees use client service skills and only 3.7% of them believe their skills meet their job requirements "only partly" or "not at all".

### Building skills for the future

When employees think about the position they would like to have in the next one to three years, in what areas will they need training? Six skill areas top employees' lists (Figure 47). No significant patterns were evident when broken down either by job category or, more broadly, by organization size or region.



To what extent do your skills meet the requirements of your current job?

FIGURE 44

#### Generic skills required for current job

	% of employees <sup>1</sup>
Communication	96.7
Ability to work in teams and collaborate	93.0
Literacy for daily activities	92.2
Computer skills, including proficiency with computer programs	80.0
Numeracy for daily activities	75.8

1. % of employees who believe their skills "Fully" or "Mostly" meet their job requirements.

1 Ratings of how well each skill meets job requirements were obtained only from employees who said they used that skill.

FIGURE 45

### Specific skills required for current job

	% of employees
Client services	71.3
Leadership	57.8
Monitoring & evaluation	57.5
Working with other organizations	55.8
Strategic planning	44.1
Project management	43.3
Research	37.5
HR & personnel management	34.0
Finance	32.8
Management of volunteers	31.4
Management of paid staff	30.8
Proposal writing	28.3
Procurement & purchasing	27.3
Fundraising or resource development	23.6
Legal knowledge	23.1
Marketing	22.0
Managing contracts with suppliers	19.9
Campaigning	13.0
Language skills <sup>1</sup>	8.2
None of the above	4.8

1. Other than English or French.

FIGURE 46

### Employees identify skills that fall short of job requirements

	% of employees <sup>1</sup>
Client services	3.7
Leadership	5.2
Monitoring & evaluation	9.7
Working with other organizations	11.9
Strategic planning	19.0
Project management	10.8
Research	16.6
HR & personnel management	14.7
Finance	16.4
Management of volunteers	15.8
Management of paid staff	10.4
Proposal writing	18.4
Procurement & purchasing	15.9
Fundraising or resource development	24.5
Legal knowledge	26.5
Marketing	22.0
Managing contracts with suppliers	14.4
Campaigning	29.5
Language skills <sup>1</sup>	19.9

1. % of employees who said they require each skill that believe their skills meets their job requirements only "Partly" or "Not at All".

FIGURE 47

### Skills needed for future position

Skill <sup>1</sup>	% of employees <sup>2</sup>
Computer/internet/IT	25.4
Accounting	12.4
Finance	11.8
Communications & public relations	11.6
HR & personnel management	11.4
Leadership	8.7

1. Employees identified the top three types of skills they would need a lot more training in.

2. % of employees who believe this skill will be required in the position they hope to hold one to three years from now.

## Looking to the future

Three-quarters of employees say they are not currently looking for a new job. Of the 24.3% (364 employees) who are looking, 4.2% will limit their search to within their own organization while the remainder will look within and without (Figure 48).

likely to resign are, in fact, not looking for a new job and almost one in ten employees (9.3%) who indicate they are “very unlikely” to resign or “definitely will not” are looking for work elsewhere.

### Likelihood of resigning in next 12 months

All employees were asked how likely they are to resign in the next 12 months. A quarter of them (24.6%) indicate some likelihood of resigning (Figure 49).

The correspondence between the intention to resign and taking action by looking for work is strong but not perfect. Over a third (34.3%) of those employees who are “definitely” or “very”



Which of the following statements best describes your current job search situation?

FIGURE 48

Job search situation	% of employees <sup>1</sup>
I am not currently looking for a new job	75.7
I am looking for a new job within my current organization	4.2
I am looking for a new job either in my current organization or in a different organization	8.3
I am looking for a new job in a different organization	11.8

1. Multiple responses were accepted so percentages do not add up to 100.0%.

FIGURE 49

Likelihood of resigning in the next 12 months	Number of employees	% of employees
Definitely will	68	4.6
Very likely	102	6.8
Somewhat likely	197	13.2
Somewhat unlikely	231	15.4
Very unlikely	412	27.5
Definitely will not	440	29.4
Does not apply <sup>1</sup>	49	3.3%

1. Current job ends within 12 months.

## Employees' top reasons for looking elsewhere

Salary dissatisfaction is the most frequently cited reason for looking for a new job (Figure 50) although it is clear there are at least several other key factors.



What are the top three main reasons why you are looking for a new job?

FIGURE 50

### Reasons for looking for a new job

Reasons	% of employees <sup>1</sup>
Dissatisfaction with salary	40.9
Keeping all my options open	33.5
Lack of promotion opportunities	26.0
Current position not challenging	21.6
Not feeling valued	19.5
Limited opportunities for career or skill development	18.2
Lack of job security at my current organization	13.9
Dissatisfaction with current employment status	12.5
Interested in pursuing opportunities outside of the sector	12.4
Workload too heavy	12.3
Poor relationship with manager	11.7
Dissatisfaction with work schedule	10.2
Dissatisfaction with benefits	9.6
Dissatisfaction with physical working conditions	6.8
Poor relationships with co-workers	4.5

1. Multiple responses were accepted so percentages do not total 100.0%.

## Next steps

The survey findings contained in this report will provide the foundation for developing strategic recommendations. Input from sector stakeholders will strengthen the recommendations and the labour force strategy for the voluntary and non-profit sector. The third and final report from the HR Council's Labour Force Study, featuring these recommendations, will be released in March 2009.

The success of the Survey of Employers and the Survey of Employees and the richness of the data are due to the many people who took the time to respond to yet another survey.

We heartily thank you for your participation.

HR Council for the  
Voluntary & Non-profit Sector

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